

**Appendix I – St Matthew’s Piece Timeline 1890–2020**

Public Interest

Government Action

Private Interest

<b>Public Interests</b>	<b>Gov’t Actions</b>	<b>Private Interests</b>
	<p><b>1890, July 12<sup>th</sup>:</b> The Mayor (Alderman Wace) recorded receipt of a "memorial signed by the Chairman of a meeting recently held in St. Matthew's Parish, asking the Council to take steps to provide a recreation ground for that district."</p>	
	<p><b>1890, September 11<sup>th</sup>:</b> St Matthew's parish requested Cambridge Town Council to "exercise the powers vested in them under the Public Health and Open Spaces Act of Parliament to acquire a piece of land for the purposes of a public recreation ground". Councillor Spalding said "provision of open spaces was one of the best provisions they could make, not simply for the health of the town but for the morality of the town". A resolution for the establishment of a "recreation ground" was passed, in the interests of the 2,000 children in the "immediate neighbourhood".</p>	
	<p><b>1891, April 16<sup>th</sup>:</b> A 'special meeting' of Cambridge Town Council approved a report from its 'General Purposes Committee', pursuant to a Council Resolution of 11 September 1890 – for the establishment of a "recreation ground" for children of St Matthew's Parish. The report recommended £1,675 be made available for purchase of the freehold of land belonging to Mr E. C. Young.</p>	
	<p><b>1891, October 30<sup>th</sup>:</b> "The Finance Committee recommended that application be made to the <a href="#">Local Government Board</a> by the Town Council for permission to borrow the sum of £1,675, in order to complete the purchase of the land which the Council had decided to acquire for the purpose of a recreation</p>	

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	ground for the parish of St. Matthew and the neighbourhood. This was agreed to without discussion”.	
	<b>1891, December 2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Conveyance of property between Edward Collier Young and the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Cambridge of 1.67 acres (0.68ha) of land on Sturton Street. (Land Registry CB290025) Recorded as F/DB00029	
	<b>1892, January 9<sup>th</sup>:</b> Vacant freehold land of 0.2 acres (0.08 ha) in area was sold for £200 by Edward Collier Young for an extension to the planned recreation ground, and was included in Land Registry CB290025 (cf. 02/12/1891); recorded as F/DB00034.	
	<b>1892, May 31<sup>st</sup>:</b> "No Opposition" was reported at an Enquiry held "at the Aldermen's Parlour, Guildhall, Cambridge... on behalf of the Local Government Board, in the matter of the application by the Cambridge Town Council for leave to borrow £1,675 for the purpose of purchasing land for public walks and pleasure grounds in St. Matthew District."	
	<b>1892, July 14<sup>th</sup>:</b> A letter was recorded as having been received by the Council "from the Local Government Board, giving their sanction for the borrowing by the Corporation of the sum of £1,675 for the purchase of land for the purpose of a recreation ground for the parish of St. Matthew."	
	<b>1892, September 16<sup>th</sup>:</b> A report from the Council's General Purposes Committee was adopted, agreeing to two payments. The first was to Messrs. Alsop & Sons of "about £122 16s 3d" for "the erection of 165 yards of an unclimbable iron fence... on the eastern	

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	part of the south sides of the ground purchased” for the St Matthew’s Recreation Ground. A second approved payment was for £187 10s to Mr. Banyard, for “erection of a retaining wall to carry the fencing”.	
	<b>1893, November 28<sup>th</sup>:</b> The Commons Committee raised concerns about the state of the playground ‘on Abbey Walk’.	
<b>1894, July 13<sup>th</sup>:</b> A letter published by J. Hargrove (the caring and devoted Vicar at St Matthew’s Church) read: “Sir,— Unlike other parts of the favoured town of Cambridge, we have here no open spaces where a man can enjoy a shady seat when his work is done, though we hope that we shall have such when the Recreation Ground, which the Town Council has purchased, is completed and laid out. Meanwhile ... in the midst of narrow streets, among houses destitute of gardens... [it] would be a pleasant and convenient resort for summer evenings... but <i>seats</i> are lacking. Have any of your readers an old garden seat to spare, or will they help us to procure a few?”		
	<b>1895, September 19<sup>th</sup>:</b> A meeting of Cambridge Town Council was held to determine “What steps had been taken with regard to laying out St. Matthew’s Recreation Ground”. Although some urged “that the work of laying out the St. Matthew’s Recreation Ground be commenced forthwith”, it was unanimously agreed that “the General Purposes Committee be asked to report on the work required to render the recreation ground suitable for the purposes desired”.	

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<p><b>1896, May 28<sup>th</sup>:</b> Death of Mrs Eleanor Katherine Hargrove, age 46, wife of Rev. Hargrove of St Matthew’s Church. “Quite 500 persons were present” at her local funeral.</p>		
	<p><b>1897, April 2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Rev. J. Hargrove of St Matthew’s Church was minuted as having written to the Commons Committee to raise concerns about the state of the land for the St. Matthew’s Recreation Ground.</p>	
	<p><b>1897, June 4<sup>th</sup>:</b> The Borough Surveyor was minuted as responding to the Commons Committee that he had done all he had been directed to do.</p>	
	<p><b>1897, August 6<sup>th</sup>:</b> A tender from Mssrs Alsop &amp; Sons for £9 15s 0d for providing and fixing a pair of gates; it was recommended the Council should accept this.</p>	
	<p><b>1897, November 23<sup>rd</sup>:</b> The Cambridge Commons Committee agreed trees should be planted along the sides of St Matthew’s recreation ground.</p>	
	<p><b>1897, December 21<sup>st</sup>:</b> The Cambridge Commons Committee minuted that the Borough Surveyor should obtain estimates for “making up the Northern half of the ground as a gravelled playground with bordering trees about 11 feet apart”.</p>	
	<p><b>1898, January 7<sup>th</sup>:</b> A vote was taken by the Commons Committee to authorise the spending of £170 for the laying out of the ground, per the costs specified by the Surveyor.</p>	
	<p><b>1898, February 4<sup>th</sup>:</b> The Commons Committee agreed to make a Site Visit to St</p>	

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	Matthew’s recreation ground at 3pm the following Monday.	
	<b>1898, March 4<sup>th</sup>:</b> Following competitive tendering a quote from Messrs Headly & Edwards for fencing was accepted (No 1 fencing at £29 17s 6d, and No 2 fencing at £39 17s 0d.) This was the lowest of the 4 quotes obtained. At the same time, the quote from Mr Geo. Willers for £29 17s 6d (the lower of two bids) was the tender accepted for planting trees on the St Matthew’s recreation ground.	
	<b>1898, March 18<sup>th</sup>:</b> A recommendation from the Commons Committee was unanimously adopted by Cambridge Town Council to purchase for £273 the freehold of a piece of land belonging to Mr R. Smith. This adjoined “the piece of ground of St. Matthew’s parish to be made into a recreation ground”, and would improve its otherwise “somewhat irregular” shape and ease its laying out.	
	<b>1898, May 24<sup>th</sup>:</b> Vacant freehold land of 0.14 acres (0.06 ha) in area was sold for £800 by Robert Smith for an “Addition to recreation ground”, and was included in Land Registry CB290025 (cf. 02/12/1891); recorded as F/DB00057	
<b>1898, June 23<sup>rd</sup>:</b> The establishment of St Matthew’s Piece involved “many delays” but, in 1895, “the Commons Committee took the ground over” and, on 23 June 1898, took “great pleasure in handing over St Matthew’s Piece to the Mayor”. The 1898 Mayor, Mr S. R. Ginn, declared St Matthew’s Piece “open for the recreation of the inhabitants for ever”. The City held this land “as	<b>1898, June 24<sup>th</sup>:</b> Three independent published records detailed all the Commons controlled by the Cambridge Commons Committee: Parker’s Piece; Christ’s Pieces; Midsummer Common; Stourbridge Common; Coldham’s Common; Coe Fen; Sheep’s Green; Queens’ Green; Petersfield; Empty Common; and “last but not least, St Matthew’s Piece”.	

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<p>custodian and trustee for the public, who were entitled to have free and unrestricted access to it".</p>		
	<p><b>1898, November 8<sup>th</sup>:</b> Mayor Ginn attended a meeting in the Norfolk St Schoolrooms and Rev. J Hargrove to “solve “the almost universal question in that portion of town”, namely “What’s the time?”. It was agreed to fund a chiming clock (“so that not only those who could see, but those who could hear should know the time of day”) on the church tower then being built in memory of the late Mrs Hargrove. Rev. Hargrove “wished to see the clock in its place for the sake of the children, who were frequently late for school, but it would be also an advantage to men when they went to work”. The Mayor was thanked for doing “whatever he could for the advancement of that part of the town which he represented on the Council”. Rev. Hargrove would not neglect that kind offer, the first priority having been “the completion and opening of St. Matthew’s Piece.... Although that had not gone on as quickly as they should like, the sub-committee had been purchasing many beautiful plants and shrubs, to the number of about 150, for planting in the ground”. Rev Hargrove also noted that “the mayor, had been too modest in his speech to tell them that he had headed the subscription list with £5” toward the new clock.</p>	
	<p><b>1965:</b> When the Cambridge Commons were registered, St Matthew’s Piece was not included (for reasons that remain obscure).</p>	
<p><b>1965, February 19<sup>th</sup>:</b> Cambridge City architect wrote to the Planning Department explaining that siting of a Youth Club on “land zoned for Public Open Space” was justified</p>	<p><b>1966, March 30<sup>th</sup>:</b> Minister of Housing authorised purchase of <b>0.91 acre</b> of St Matthew’s Piece land for the construction of a Youth Centre on condition that it be exchanged for “other land,</p>	

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<p>as: 1) the building would be “related to the centre of the area it is to serve”; 2) the use is “complementary to an urban public open space”; 3) an equivalent area “will be made available in the redevelopment of the adjoining areas to the east”.</p>	<p>not being less in area and being equally advantageous to the persons... entitled to rights of common or other rights, and will be vested in the Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of the City of Cambridge and subject to the like rights, trusts and incidents as attached to the first-mentioned land”.</p>	
	<p><b>1967, March 8<sup>th</sup></b>: Using powers under Sections 53 and 90 of the Education Act 1944, the Compulsory Purchase Order issued for purchase of <b>0.91 acre (3683 m<sup>2</sup>)</b> of the northern half of St Matthew’s Piece by Cambridgeshire County Council from Cambridge City Council for the establishment of the Howard Mallett Centre,</p>	
<p><b>HOWARD MALLETT CLUB</b> LEISURE CENTRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE</p> 	<p><b>1968, March 11<sup>th</sup></b>: Howard Mallett Centre was opened by Cambridge City Council’s Education Department; successfully operated for 30 years and loved by many generations.</p>	
	<p><b>1971, March 17<sup>th</sup></b>: Deed of Exchange; the Mayor Aldermen and Citizens of the City of Cambridge sold to Cambridgeshire Country Council for £1,250 92A &amp; 92B New Street (together with land, outhouses and other buildings comprising 300 square yards ‘or thereabouts’, increasing the net area of St Matthew’s Piece by about 7 sq. yds.</p>	
	<p><b>~1971 (?)</b>: Demolition of housing beyond the original SE corner of St Matthew’s Piece, to allow a ‘compensatory’ extension’ of the Piece. This was intended to make up for loss of land from the northern part of St Matthew’s Piece, taken for the building of the Howard Mallett Centre (cf. both of 19/2/65 &amp; 30/3/66 above and also 27/2/2006 below).</p>	
	<p><b>1974</b>: Responsibility for the Howard Mallett Youth Centre was transferred from</p>	

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	Cambridge City Council to Cambridge County Council, in the course of Local Government Reorganisation	
<b>1998:</b> No public knowledge of the signing of the Dawe Media lease; loss of Howard Mallett Youth Centre and all associated youth activities.	<b>1998:</b> Howard Mallett Youth Centre was closed by County Council.	<b>1998, March 11<sup>th</sup>:</b> 14-year lease signed by Dawe Media ( <b>Developer #1</b> ) for the Howard Mallett Centre & the northern half of St Matthew’s Piece to run for 14 years with a possible breakpoint halfway through the term of the lease.
<b>1998:</b> Strong local opposition to Dawe Media proposals have no impact on outcome.	<b>1998, December 7<sup>th</sup>:</b> Dawe Media received planning approval for C/97/1020/FP, allowing change of use of the Howard Mallett Centre from a youth club to a “broadcasting studio, café-bar, and multi media education centre, and community facility (a <i>sui generis</i> use)”.	



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### SOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

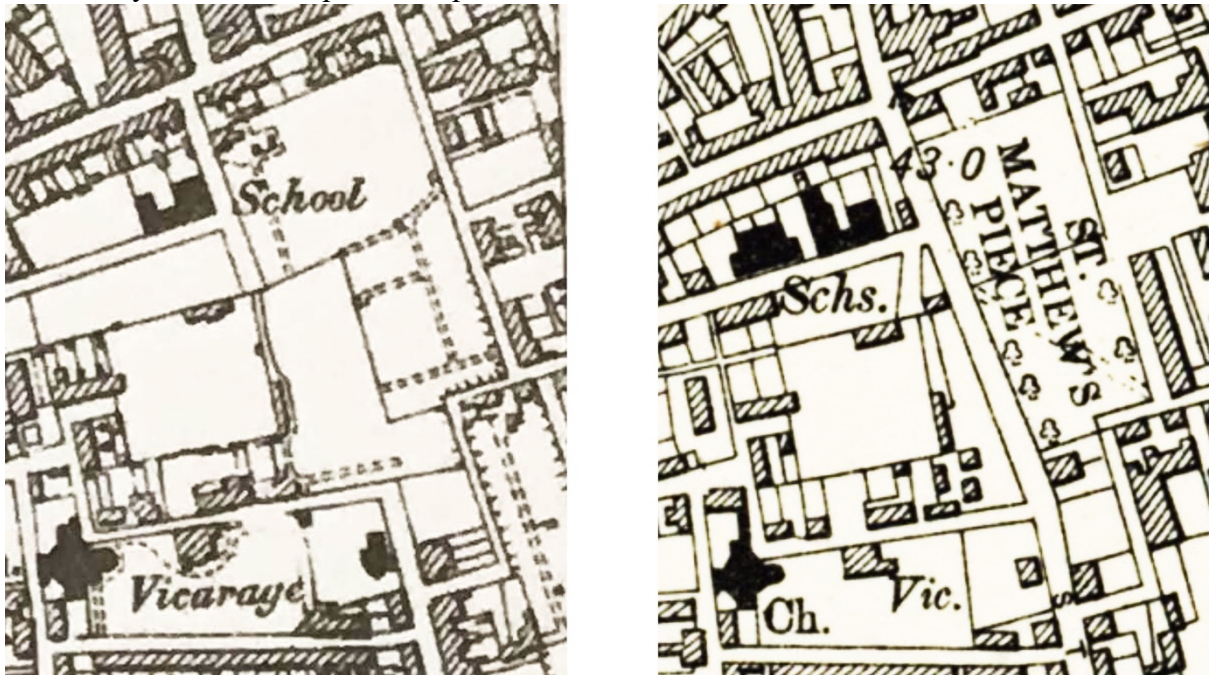
#### ON THE ORIGINS & SIGNIFICANT EARLY EVENTS OF ST MATTHEW’S PIECE

1. *The Minute Books* for the Committee for the Borough of Cambridge, with remit for looking after The Commons, held in the Cambridgeshire Collection, Ely (CA: CB/2/CL/3/5/4).
2. The Howard Mallett Club, in all its new glory in 1968, image extracted from a leaflet provided courtesy of the Cambridgeshire Collection Archives.
3. *The Cambridge Independent Press*, 12 July 1890, page 5, column 5, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
4. *The Cambridge Independent Press*, 13 September 1890, page 5, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
5. *Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald, and Huntingdonshire Gazette*, Friday 17 April 1891, page 8, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
6. *The Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald, and Huntingdonshire Gazette*, 30 October 1891, page 8 column 4, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
7. *The Cambridge Independent Press*, 3 June 1892, page 7, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
8. *The Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald, and Huntingdonshire Gazette*, 15 July 1892, page 6, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
9. *The Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald, and Huntingdonshire Gazette*, 15 July 1892, page 8, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
10. ‘Wanted – a Seat for the Weary’, Letter to the Editor, in *The Cambridge Independent Press*, 16 September 1892, page 7 column 3, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
11. *The Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald, and Huntingdonshire Gazette*, Friday 13 July 1894, page 8 column 6, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
12. *The Cambridge Independent Press*, 20 September 1895, page 6, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
13. *The Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald, and Huntingdonshire Gazette*, Friday 5 June 1896, page 4, column 8, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
14. *The Cambridge Independent Press*, 18 March 1898, page 5, column 4, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
15. *Cambridge Daily News*, 24 June 1898
16. *The Cambridge Chronicle and University Journal, Isle of Ely Herald, and Huntingdonshire Gazette*, 24 June 1898, page 8 column 4, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
17. *The Cambridge Independent Press*, 24 June 1898, page 5, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
18. *The Cambridge Independent Press*, 11 November 1898, page 7, available via the [British Newspaper Archive](#).
19. ["WP-6-1967DeedOfAcqSMP.pdf". Google Docs.](#)
20. [History of land at ST MATTHEWS PIECE \(extracts from notes written in 2009\)](#): Notes from the Head of Property Services, Cambridge City Council.

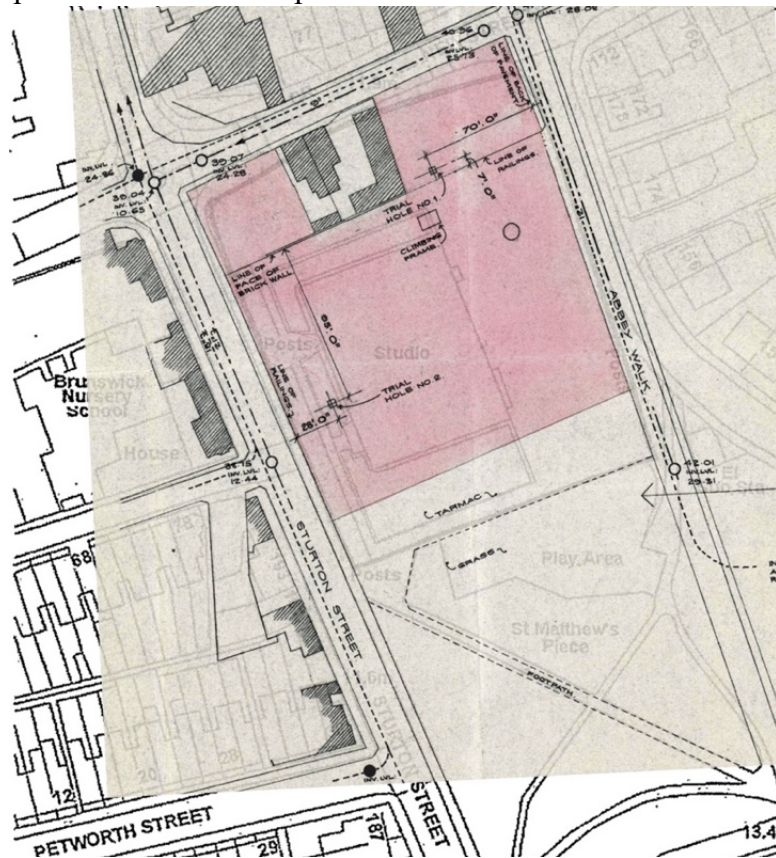
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### RELEVANT MAPS

(A) Comparison of extracts from 1886 (left) and 1904 (right) Ordnance Survey Maps (revised 1901, published 1904), showing the land of St Matthew’s Piece both shortly before and shortly after it was opened for public recreation “for ever”.



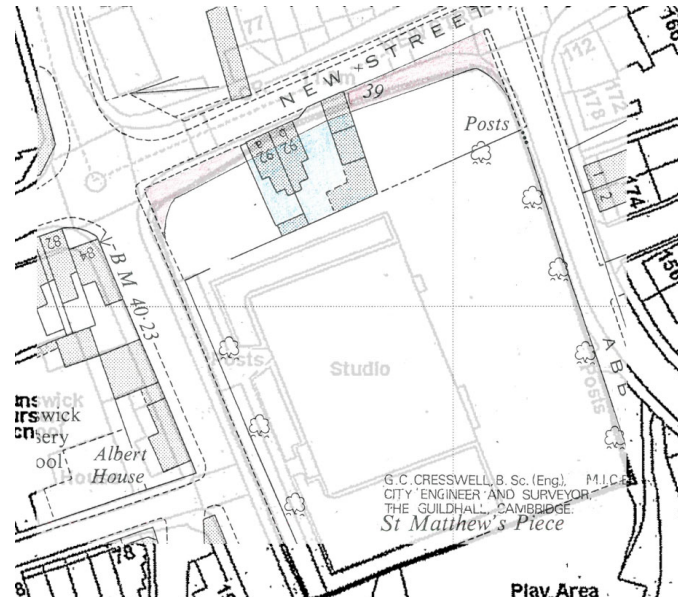
(B) 1967 Map shows **area in pink** of 0.91 acre of land (3683 m<sup>2</sup>) sold to Cambs County Council, superimposed over a 2006 map of St Matthew’s Piece. N/B southern boundary:





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(C) 1971 Map shows area in pale blue of ~300 sq. yd sold to County Council, layered over a 2006 map of St Matthew’s Piece. Two areas in pale pink of ~293 sq. yd were carved from the original 0.91 acres, to create pavement along New Street, also using part of land from 92A & 92B New St. Net change to the area of northern half of St Matthew’s Piece was +~7 sq. yd.



(D) 1997 Map of area leased by County Council to Dawe Media, from Planning Portal.

