

# Peace and Memorial Garden

The Peace and Memorial Garden, located in Central Park, Dagenham, is a living memorial to all those who have suffered abuse, persecution and death during hostilities and war.

It has been designed by artist, Anuradha Patel, and the borough's Landscape Architect, Elizabeth Greenwood, in response to the call for a designated memorial, for individual and community contemplation and remembrance.

The garden contains distinctive features and designs, integrated into a similarly colour coded planting scheme, to create zones of reference, which convey the sentiments of the memorial. The result is an engaging and distinctive public space that encourages interaction, attention, thought and question.

A section of a poem by Brian Patten is reproduced, courtesy of the artist, as a literal statement of humanity and individual strength in the face of adversity.

The section is reproduced within the fence and seating design and for the purposes of conveying the full sentiment of the scheme, has been amended, by kind permission of the artist, to reflect non-gender status - replacing the word man, with person.

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## The colours and design of the garden

Colour is very important in the garden and is applied to represent the range of emotions and responses an individual may experience during times of great stress and conflict, whilst indicating life and hope for the future.

All the features, including planting, gates, seating, trellis and finials are colour coded, from the entrance through to the exit gates, to represent emotions such as despair, depression and desperation with dark reds and purples, emerging - through the colour wheel - to lighter blues and greens of the garden, its life and growth - through to bright orange and yellow, indicating hope, optimism, progression and a bright future.

# **The garden itself is composed of 3 parts:**

## **The Garden of Persecution**

The entrance gates from Rainham Road North are in purple and red colours and open onto the first section of the garden, designed as an awkward and enclosed space with closely planted trees, to give the impression of imprisonment.

The trees have red foliage or variegated or patterned bark and the planting is of predominately red or purple foliage, or flower. Purple or red wildflowers and bulbs will be planted next autumn to provide a continuity of colour throughout the winter period.

The Gates of Persecution signify threat and the risk of injury at its centre. The only way forward is through the Garden of Despair.

## **The Garden of Despair**

The circular Garden of Despair is surrounded by a 3 metre high trellis, with a spiked chain, representing imprisonment and posts, with spear-shaped finials, representing violence.

The colours of these finials change from dark purple near the entrance to bright yellow at the end. The planting is white, variegated leaved or with white flowers, indicating innocence and purity.

An existing yew forms the centre of the garden, which in itself is symbolic of loss, but this garden is for contemplation and although representing despair, is part of a living and ever changing environment, with seasonal variations to give hope for the future and the continuation of life and growth.

The sequence and colours of the seats relate to the changing stages in the garden, climbing plants on the trellis, thorns, foliage, budding plants and blossom. As you move through the garden, the colours of the seats become lighter and brighter as one progresses to Hope.

Views out of the Garden of Despair lead into The Garden of Hope.

## **The Garden of Hope**

The Garden of Hope provides views to the outside. Colourful bulbs will be planted next autumn with colourful flowering shrubs and grasses.

You leave the garden through the Gates of Hope, of bright golden yellow and a vibrant central feature, representing the sun, itself a source of life and growth. The designs signify leaving behind persecution and progression to the wider world.

# So many different lengths of time

## a poem by Brian Patten

How long is a man's life, finally?  
Is it a thousand days, or only one?  
One week, or few centuries?  
How long does a man's death last?  
And what do we mean when we say, 'gone forever'?

Adrift in such preoccupations, we seek clarification.  
We can go to the philosophers,  
But they will grow tired of our questions.  
We can go to the priests and the rabbis  
But they might be too busy with administrations.

So, how long does a man live, finally?  
And how much does he live while he lives?  
We fret, and ask so many questions  
Then when it comes to us  
The answer is so simple

A man lives for as long as we carry him inside us,  
For as long as we carry the harvest of his dreams,  
For as long as we ourselves live,  
Holding memories in common, a man lives.

His lover will carry his man's scent, his touch:  
His children will carry the weight of his love.  
One friend will carry his argument,  
Another will hum his favourite tunes,  
Another will still share his terrors.

And the days will pass with baffled faces,  
Then the weeks, then the months,  
Then there will be a day when no question is asked  
And the knots of grief will loosen in the stomach,  
And the puffed faces will calm.  
And on that day he will not have ceased,  
But will have ceased to be separated by death.  
How long does a man live, finally?

A man lives so many different lengths of time.