

History of St Paul's Park

St Paul's Park is the former graveyard of St. Paul's Church, Portland Square, a Grade I listed building. Remnants of the churchyard are still preserved around the church.

The parish of St Paul's was created by an Act of Parliament in 1787 following pressure to establish a new residential suburb for Bristol. The committee for building the church met at the Full Moon public house for the first time on 27 November 1786 and the church was completed in 1794. The church fronted the newly laid out Portland Square and to the rear was a rectangular churchyard. Parish records show the first burials commenced between 1794 and 1866 and that subsequent burials were made periodically until 1934.

Correspondence from 1933 – 1936 charts the attempts of Reverend W. Ward, the Vicar of St Paul's, to persuade both the City of Bristol to accept the churchyard under the Open Spaces Act of 1906, and the Diocese of Bristol to grant him a faculty to do so. After negotiations, part of the vicarage garden was also included in the conveyance to Bristol City Council in December 1935 and the park was formally opened on 10 June 1936.

The park has had relatively little development over the last 70 years and, following partnership work by the St Paul's Park Group and Bristol City Council, a new park design was agreed and work was completed in Spring 2008. As part of the development, an archaeological survey of the site was undertaken. If you would like to see a copy of the survey, please contact us on the details below.