

## CHURCH GARDENS, HAREFIELD, UXBRIDGE UB9 6DU

(<https://www.churchgardens.co.uk/>)

On the 7th September 2019 Church Gardens will be running a guided tour that anyone can sign up for. You will be guided you around the gardens, and given an in-depth insight into thier restoration story. They will also explain garden features, how they recycle, companion planting, permaculture, gardening and the history of thier gardens.

The tour will begin at 2:00 and will last approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. After the tour, homemade refreshments will be available in the courtyard.

This guided tour visit costs: £10 per person (including garden entrance, guided tour and refreshments). Places must be booked in advance via email

([churchgardensharefield@gmail.com](mailto:churchgardensharefield@gmail.com)), or online via their website

(<https://www.churchgardens.co.uk/event-info/public-guided-tour-7th-september-2019>).

### **About Church Gardens**

Church Gardens are the original walled gardens of the Harefield Place estate which are probably amongst the oldest surviving walled gardens in England, the walls date from the late C16th and early 17th Century.

There are three walled areas; the kitchen garden, a smaller courtyard behind the main house, and a final much larger area comprising of a nuttury/orchard. This larger walled garden is one of the only surviving renaissance pleasure gardens in the country and includes a unique arcaded wall.

It is believed that this mysterious wall was constructed sometime between 1601 and 1636 for Sir Thomas Egerton and his wife the Countess of Derby,- the residents of Harefield Place at that time. The function of the arcade niches has been a matter of great debate. Locally it was believed to be a 'bee' wall (unlikely due to the size of the alcoves) or the alcoves could have been used to protect delicate fruits, like an early orangery or to display life sized statues. The most interesting possibility is that it was constructed as a backdrop for a performance of a masque called 'Arcades' written by the poet Milton with music by Henry Lawes which was written for the 70 year old Countess of Derby as an entertainment to celebrate her life.