

Beech Tree Place

Sutton

The transformation of Beech Tree Place represents a bespoke approach to urban renewal. Moving away from the site's previous low-density 1950s layout, the new development introduces 92 high-quality, net-zero carbon homes with one block tailored specifically for older residents and the remaining three blocks for affordable housing. The design philosophy centers on "right-sizing" - providing elegant, accessible apartments and maisonettes for individuals and families.

By delivering this project as a 100% affordable rented scheme, the Council is creating a secure, supportive environment that prioritises the wellbeing of Sutton's residents. What sets Beech Tree Place apart is its seamless blend of Sutton's past with its future. The architectural vision replaces isolated blocks with four distinct "mansion-style" buildings that frame new, lushly landscaped communal gardens and rooftop terraces. A key highlight for the community is the preservation of the site's historic stone eagles, which will be reinstated as a nod to the area's local character. This sustainable enclave is being brought to life by the Council in partnership with a professional team featuring Bugler Developments Ltd, HTA and Saunders architects and CPC Project Services Ltd. Once completed in 2026, it will serve as a quiet, green sanctuary that proves social housing can be both architecturally ambitious and environmentally restorative.



Heddeshire House

Beech Tree Place

Named after Sutton's first recorded parish priest

Nicholas de Heddeshire (served 1291–1301)

Heddeshire House takes its name from Nicholas de Heddeshire, the earliest known priest of St Nicholas Church whose name has been preserved in the historical record. He was appointed on 23 October 1291, serving the parish for almost a decade during the reign of King Edward I.

When Nicholas arrived in Sutton, it was a small medieval village surrounded by open countryside. A handful of farms clustered around St Nicholas Church, with fields, woodland and grazing land stretching across the landscape. Sheep farming was particularly important, and daily life was closely connected to the seasons and the agricultural calendar.

As parish priest, Nicholas would have played a central role in village life. He led services, baptised children, celebrated marriages, buried the dead and cared for parishioners in times of both celebration and hardship. In an age when the Church lay at the heart of every community, the parish priest was one of the village's most familiar and trusted figures.

During this period, Sutton formed part of the Manor of Sutton, owned by Chertsey Abbey. The Abbot not only appointed the parish priest but also exercised considerable influence over the surrounding land and the daily life of the village.

A link to Sutton's earliest history

Although little is known about Nicholas de Heddeshire himself, his name provides one of the earliest surviving personal connections to Sutton's past.

Heddeshire House celebrates over 700 years of local history and the enduring importance of St Nicholas Church as the historic heart of the community.



A 13th Century Priest



Image: abbeycwmhir.org



With special thanks to St Nicholas Church for providing the information

Dendy House

Beech Tree Place

Dendy Napper (1847–1918)

Dendy House commemorates Dendy Napper, one of Sutton's best-known businessmen during the late Victorian and Edwardian periods.

Arriving in Sutton as a young man in the 1860s, he established a successful steam flour mill and bakery on the High Street, supplying bread to local families at a time when the town was expanding rapidly. Deliveries by horse and cart became a familiar sight throughout Sutton.

Dendy Napper made an important contribution to civic life as well as local business. He served as a churchwarden at St Nicholas Church and was a member of Sutton's Local Board of Health. Before the creation of modern local government, the Board was responsible for public health, drainage, sanitation and street maintenance, helping to improve living conditions for a growing population.

His lifetime coincided with one of the most significant periods in Sutton's history. The arrival of the railway transformed the former agricultural village into a thriving commuter town. New homes, shops, schools and public buildings appeared across the area, while the population grew from just over 10,000 in 1881 to almost 14,000 ten years later.

Helping Sutton grow

Dendy House honours a man whose enterprise and public service helped support Sutton through a period of remarkable change. His story reflects the determination and civic pride that shaped the modern town.



MR. DENDY NAPPER.

Ellis and Co. Sutton.

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Best English & Foreign Oats
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ROLLER FLOUR MILLS,
SUTTON, SURREY.



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More House

Beech Tree Place

Isabella More Douglas (1852–1888)

More House is named after Isabella More Douglas, whose family became part of Sutton's growing Victorian community and whose memory continues to be preserved at St Nicholas Church.

Born in Liverpool in 1852, Isabella moved to Sutton with her family during the 1860s. Her father, Charles Douglas, was a successful merchant who settled on Carshalton Road as Sutton was experiencing a period of rapid growth. Isabella died in 1888 at the age of just 36 and was buried in the churchyard of St Nicholas Church.

During Isabella's lifetime, Sutton was transformed by the arrival of the railway. What had once been a small rural village developed into a thriving Victorian town, with new homes, churches, schools and public buildings serving a rapidly growing population. Isabella and her family witnessed this remarkable period of change as Sutton evolved into the community we know today.

A lasting memorial

Inside St Nicholas Church, Isabella is remembered through a beautiful stained-glass memorial window. Believed to have been dedicated by her father, Charles Douglas, the window commemorates both Isabella and her mother, Mary Douglas. The surviving tracery depicts angels carrying scrolls bearing the words "Now abideth Faith Hope Love These Three", a reference to the well-known passage from St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians.

Remembering Sutton's Victorian families

More House celebrates the lives of the families who helped shape Victorian Sutton. Isabella's story offers a glimpse into a period of extraordinary growth, while her memorial window continues to provide a lasting connection between Sutton's past and present.



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Sango House

Beech Tree Place

Named after the first known African recorded in Sutton's history

John Sango (recorded 1677)

Sango House is named after John Sango, the first known African person to appear in Sutton's surviving historical records. On 15 April 1677, Easter Day, he was baptised at St Nicholas Church. The parish register, reproduced here, records him as "John Sango, a Moor" - the language used in seventeenth-century England to describe a Black African. Today, this single entry is the only surviving record of his life.

Little is known about John himself. Historians believe he may have arrived in England through the transatlantic slave trade, reflecting the wider movement of people during a period when Britain's expanding overseas trade connected even small communities such as Sutton with events across the world. His story reminds us that people of African heritage have been part of Britain's history for centuries and that local history is often connected to global events.

When John was baptised, Sutton was a small rural village of around 250 people. St Nicholas Church stood at its centre, surrounded by fields, commons and farmsteads. England was emerging from a turbulent period marked by civil war, plague, the Great Fire of London and the restoration of the monarchy, while overseas trade was becoming an increasingly important part of the nation's economy.

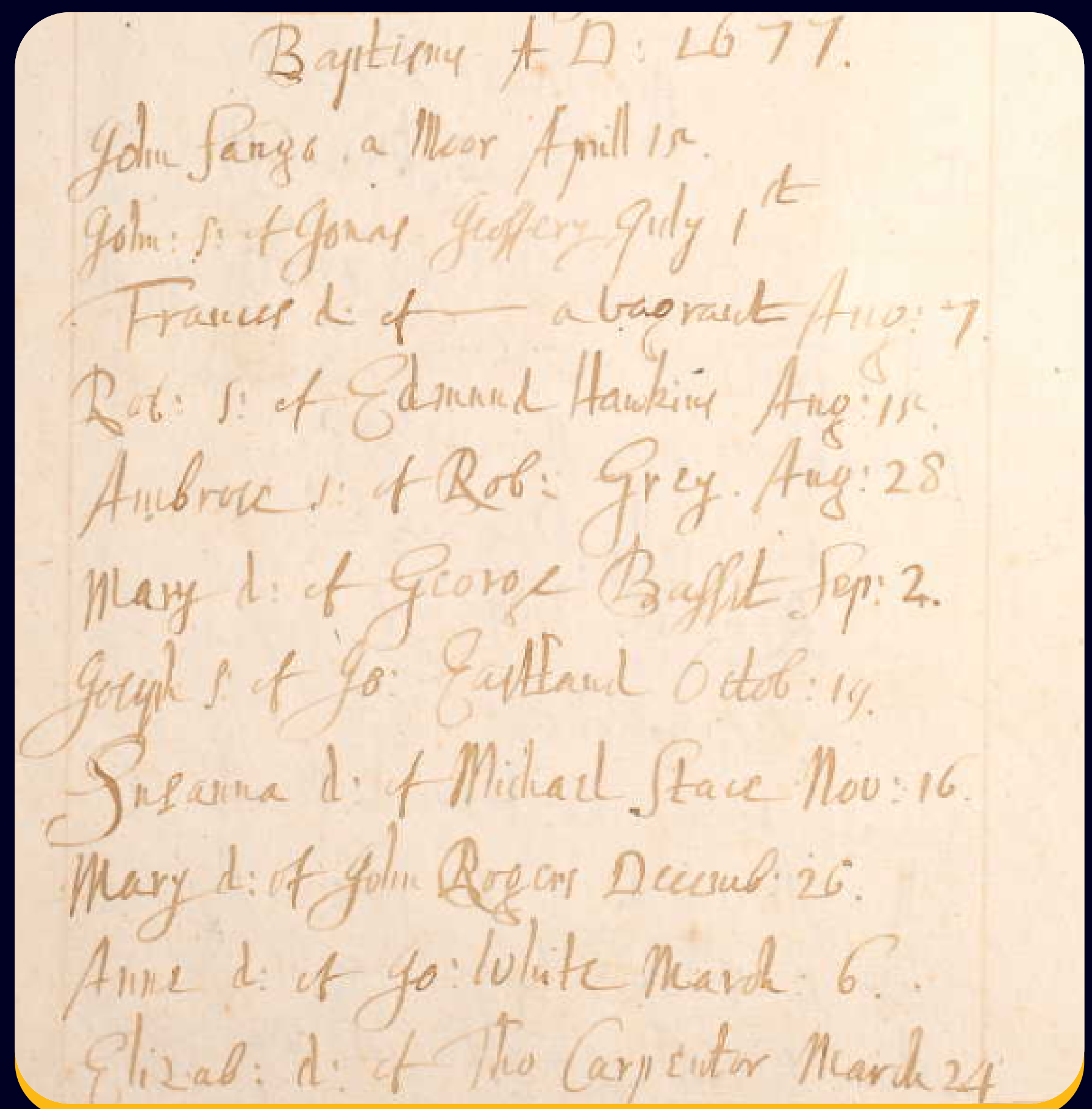
Reflecting on Sutton's Shared History

Research by the Friends of St Nicholas Churchyard has shown that St Nicholas Church contains several historic memorials and monuments connected to individuals whose lives, wealth or public careers were linked to Britain's overseas trade during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Some of these connections include the East India Company, the Royal African Company and the South Sea Company, organisations associated with the expansion of empire and, in different ways, the transatlantic slave trade. These memorials, together with John Sango's baptism record, provide an opportunity to better understand Sutton's place within this wider history.

Remembering John Sango

Although only a single line in a parish register records his life, John Sango's story has become an important part of Sutton's heritage. Sango House recognises his place in the borough's history and encourages us to reflect on the many different people whose lives have shaped our community over the centuries.



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