

North Hinksey Parish Council Leisure Working Group

Interim report to Recreation & Amenities Committee, 28th January 2016

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Progress since last report

Since September the Leisure Working Group has continued work on its two agreed priorities:

- 1) Improved multi-use indoor facilities for all ages, chiefly to be pursued via the Council's negotiations (in concert with Seacourt Hall Management Committee) on provision of a replacement community hall within the West Way development.
- 2) Increased / improved facilities for older youth and teenagers within the parish. This is the age group for which leisure provision was identified as poorest within the Leisure Facilities Survey.

Since last reported the Leisure Working Group has met on 29th October and 1st December 2015. The work during this period has focused on clarifying the criteria against which any future provision of leisure facilities should be evaluated, and beginning to apply these assessment criteria against identified preferred options.

The preferred options agreed for facilities aimed at 12- to 18-year-olds, and the Councillors investigating them in more detail, are:

- 1) adventure playground (Cllrs Mayne and Potter)
- 2) skatepark (Cllrs Kay and MacKeith)
- 3) youth club aimed at older teenagers (Cllrs Bolder and Berrett)

Discussion has also continued on the importance of identifying leisure needs for parishioners who are elderly and/or limited in their mobility. This work is at a high-level exploratory phase, with the aim of identifying what kind of leisure facilities are wanted and needed by this group. Cllrs Carr, Hammett and Pritchard are leading on this work.

At the meeting on 29th October the 2015 NHPC Leisure Survey was considered for a third and final time. Following general discussion regarding the low level of youth representation in local surveys, it was agreed that no further conclusions could be drawn from the 2015 Leisure Survey beyond what had already been discussed. Its formal consideration by the Leisure Working Group has thus been completed.

Agreed assessment criteria for potential leisure provision

Following discussion at the meeting on 29th October, thirteen broad assessment criteria for potential leisure provision in the parish were agreed (black text below). At the meeting on 1st December, these criteria were discussed in more detail and specific descriptors for each of these criteria were defined (blue text below). The criteria that will potentially require direct input from parishioners and other stakeholders were also identified (red text below):

Assessment of need

1. Evidence of demand / projected use: past NHPC surveys and petitions, wider evidence (e.g. demographics, Vale leisure strategy)
*may require additional input from parishioners on if they would use specific proposed options

Assessment of impacts

2. Impact on other users / residents: noise, light, traffic, security, demand for alternative uses
*may require additional input from specific groups of parishioners, e.g. immediate neighbours
3. Environmental impact: materials used, water flows, effects on local ecology
*may require professional specialist advice to assess potential impacts of specific proposals
4. Impact on neighbouring facilities: competition for similar uses, overlapping catchments
*may require additional input from specific stakeholders, e.g. Brookes Sport Botley

Assessment of potential sites

5. Land provision / space needed: size of land/space needed, distance from housing and other buildings
6. Access: walking distances, transport links, age and disability considerations
7. Availability of equivalent facilities in neighbouring areas: distance to other facilities, overlapping catchments

Assessment of financial requirements

8. Capital costs: dependent on scale of proposed facility, site acquisition, planning costs, construction costs
9. Potential funding available: e.g. Sport England, Lottery funding
10. Maintenance costs: safety checks, repairs, cleaning, insurance, personnel (e.g. youth worker)

Assessment of management issues

11. Security: gates, lights, conditions for access
12. Risk management: identification of risks, who will manage risk and how
13. Accessibility (costs to users): user contributions. NB: we cannot legally charge users for leisure on land owned by NHPC (e.g., activities on the playing fields must be available for free)

Preliminary assessment of preferred options

Since the Leisure Working Group last met on 1st December, sub-groups have been investigating the three preferred options for youth facilities.

Cllrs Bolder and Berrett have provided a summary of considerations for a youth club, following the agreed assessment criteria. Additionally the Community Development Initiative (CDI) in Blackbird Leys was cited as a case example where youth club activities are being run alongside activities for older residents.

Cllr MacKeith has provided a summary of potential costs for a skatepark. In conversation with skatepark constructors Wheelscape she has provided three illustrative examples of designs for a smaller-scale skatepark (approx 30m x 9m).

Cllrs Mayne and Potter have compiled an illustrative range of equipment that could feature in an adventure playground, with quotes requested from play equipment companies to clarify the range of potential costs.

Investigation of the three preferred options is ongoing and will be discussed at the next Leisure Working Group meeting on 11th February.

Next steps and projected timescale

Assessment of the three preferred options for youth facilities (adventure playground, skatepark, youth club for older teenagers) will be discussed at the next Leisure Working Group meeting on 11th February, with the aim of compiling all information in relation to the agreed assessment criteria by the end of February.

Investigation and discussion for identifying potential leisure facilities aimed at older / mobility impaired residents will continue during this period.

The possibility of a public information / engagement event was discussed at the meeting on 1st December. The purposes of this event would be:

- to inform parishioners about the evidence gathered by the Leisure Working Group to date, on leisure facilities available to parishioners generally and on the three specific options for youth facilities being explored
- to gather parishioners' views on the three options for youth facilities, with the aim of determining current levels of demand for each option in relation to the others.

The timing of such an event would likely be the spring, following the Annual Parish Meeting in mid-March where the event could be advertised.

Cllr Caroline Potter

Chair, NHPC Leisure Working Group

28th January 2016