

# North Hinksey Parish Council Leisure Working Group

Interim report to Recreation & Amenities Committee, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2016

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## Progress since last report

Since last reported the Leisure Working Group has met on 26<sup>th</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> June. The work during this period has focused on engaging specific groups of parishioners in line with the two previously agreed priorities:

- a) exploring the feasibility of improved leisure provision for older children and teenagers within the parish, and
- b) identifying the leisure needs and potential barriers to access for elderly and mobility-impaired parishioners.

Regarding priority a), the Leisure Working Group held two youth forum events on 15<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> July (detailed below).

Regarding priority b), a targeted consultation involving a short questionnaire for elderly/mobility-impaired parishioners has been ongoing since April (detailed below).

## Consultation with youth

A **first youth forum** was held on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May at 4pm at Seacourt Hall. An article advertising the event was published in the *May Sprout*, and the event was advertised on the NHPC website and Facebook page. Others including the Campaign for Botley Skate Park shared the information from the NHPC Facebook page and advertised the event amongst their own members.

Fifteen North Hinksey young people aged 9 to 17 (12 boys, 3 girls) attended the event. Most youth were accompanied by a parent, and nine parish councillors (seven from the Leisure Working Group and two others from the R&A committee) also attended. After an opening statement by Cllrs Potter and Bolder on the

purpose and context of the event (e.g. that at this stage new facilities are not guaranteed), the young people were asked to do an open-ended exercise where they wrote on post-it notes their answers to three questions: what they liked to do in their free time, if and why they got bored, and what other leisure activities they might like to do. Around 4-5 young people and 1-2 councillors (all Leisure Working Group members) sat at each table, which allowed for free discussion as the young people answered these questions. The post-it notes for each question were then put together and displayed at the front of the hall. The young people were given a strip of stickers, asked to look at their peers' responses, and asked to add a sticker to others' ideas that they agreed with.

As a second exercise the young people looked at pictures of example activities and equipment put together by councillors, again using stickers to show which ones they liked most. The pictures were placed on tables at the front of the hall and represented the three options that the Leisure Working Group has been considering so far: adventure playground (outdoor play equipment), skate park, youth club for older teenagers. Leisure Working Group members who had worked on particular options stood near the tables in order to answer any questions raised or respond to comments about particular facilities/equipment.

At the end of the picture exercise the young people were asked to return to the tables, where they were given a short ballot to list up to four top choices for leisure facilities. They were advised that these choices could include things that they had seen in the pictures or other things that they thought of which had not been included. The ballot also asked for gender and age.

From the ballot and sticker responses, this group was most enthusiastic about a skate park, a kids' café / older youth club, an outdoor trampoline, and an adventure playground that could include climbing or fitness equipment. The atmosphere was very positive, and councillors enjoyed talking with young people about the young people's ideas (not just the four above) for improving leisure opportunities in the parish.

At sign-in young people were asked to give their street name to confirm residence within North Hinksey parish. In addition to the fifteen North Hinksey youth, four others from Cumnor Parish (3 Dean Court, 1 Farmoor) attended but were asked not to participate in the sticker or ballot exercises. At the end of the session the young people were asked to indicate if they would like to stay involved in the youth forum process by ticking next to their name on the sign-in sheet. Twelve young people ticked that they would like to stay involved.

An article describing the first youth forum was published in the June *Sprout*, thanking those who had attended and stating that the Leisure Working Group is still looking to get more young people involved. Council contact details were provided in both articles, and comments from two additional youth and two parents were received by email.

A **second youth forum** event was held on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July at 5pm at the Pavilion, immediately following a pop-up café. An invitation was sent to North Hinksey youth who had attended the first forum and who had indicated their willingness to stay involved. In the invitation they were encouraged to bring a friend. This was mainly a targeted consultation with youth who had already expressed interest, although a public notice about the forum was posted on the NHPC website and Facebook page a few days prior to the event.

Eight young people attended: 6 boys, 2 girls. Half had not been to the first event so were coming into the discussions fresh. Four councillors (LB, AM, AP, CP) facilitated the discussion through open-ended questions. Much of the time was spent discussing examples of other places that they liked to go, with follow up discussion about how they got there and what was considered near versus far. The Botley shops, Louie Memorial fields and the facilities at Dean Court were the places that young people said they would go to on a regular basis since they can walk there; others (Oxford city, Cutteslowe, Witney, etc.) were considered weekend or holiday venues since these required to people to drive them there.

The young people were asked for examples of leisure facilities / equipment that they enjoyed. Following a free-flowing discussion where all eight young people offered some ideas, towards the end of the forum the group generated a working list of facilities to ask other young people about. The options put forward were: skate park, big climbing frame with baskets and/or slide, trampolines (potentially more than one so that people could bounce between them), zip line, rounders pitch, youth café at the shops, outdoor ping pong with bats attached, spinning equipment (e.g. like those at Dean Court playground).

When asked about how to reach other young people, going through schools (e.g. assemblies) was suggested. Youth club was seen as too busy. Someone suggested talking to the hockey club that meets at the MUGA on Fridays but noted that a lot of people come from Witney. Dance classes and other activity venues were seen as problematic because young people came to them for a specific purpose and might be unwilling to engage in consultation there. A councillor suggested setting up a stall at the Pavilion after school, but feedback was that young people would likely be distracted/wanting to get away from school and so might not engage.

### **Consultation with elderly / mobility impaired**

As of the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 50 consultation replies had been received. Those most represented are people who attend the over-60's lunch club and residents at the Seacourt Road bungalows. The respondents so far represent a diverse group in terms of needs, but there is emerging consensus that some kind of drop-in event would be supported. Some people asked for things that are already available locally (e.g. bingo), suggesting a role for NHPC in making people more aware of all that is currently available in the parish.

Emerging issues:

- Some people are reporting a need for a carer and/or someone to help them in getting out of the house.
- There is a need for activities that are open to all in the community, not just those living in age-restricted accommodation (e.g. Field House, Seacourt Road).
- It is difficult to reach those who are living alone in the community; currently they are not well represented in the consultation but could have higher support need than those living in more communal settings.

Further strategies planned for taking the consultation forward include approaching local churches as a network focus, contact through Neighbourhood Watch, and advertisement through the local library.

### **Conclusions and next steps**

Consultations with both young people and elderly / mobility impaired parishioners will continue during the autumn. The results of these consultations will guide actions going forward into early 2017.

Youth consultation: Following action points from the 26<sup>th</sup> May meeting, and in line with young people's suggestion at the second youth forum, Cllrs Bolder and Potter spoke with teachers at the three schools within the parish about the possibility of consultation events with students. The head teachers of both Botley and North Hinksey primary schools, and one house leader from Matthew Arnold School, have expressed in-principle support for running consultation events with their students aged 10+. Following e-mail discussion amongst Leisure Working Group members and approval from Council for a consultation budget in July, the Leisure Working Group plans to undertake school-based consultation events on leisure facilities this autumn. Cllr Potter circulated a draft questionnaire (see Appendix) to Leisure Working Group members by email on 12<sup>th</sup> July, for discussion and development at the next meeting.

Elderly / mobility-impaired consultation: The consultation has remained ongoing throughout the summer. An article about the consultation is planned for the October issue of the *Sprout*, with the aim of reaching all those living independently who have not yet taken part.

Cllr Caroline Potter  
Chair, NHPC Leisure Working Group  
8<sup>th</sup> September 2016

**Appendix: Draft content for youth questionnaire** (for discussion at next Leisure Working Group meeting)

**About you:**

To get funding for new facilities we need to ask a wide range of young people from across the area about what they would use. These questions let us (and the people who give out the money) know if we've done that properly.

- 1) Are you (circle one):        female            male
- 2) Your age (please write in): \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Your post code, or the name of your street (please write in): \_\_\_\_\_

We are thinking about new facilities for the **Louie Memorial fields** (up the hill, off Arnold's Way next to Matthew Arnold School). Right now there is a pavilion, football pitch, MUGA (games area), trim trail (fitness equipment), children's play area, and copse (woodland with trails).

**4) The way things are right now, how much do you use the Louie Memorial fields?**

A lot (weekly)    sometimes (monthly)    a little (a few times a year)    Not at all (rarely or never)

**5) How much would you use each of the following facilities if it were built in Louie Memorial fields?**

(grid with five response options: a lot, sometimes, a little, not at all, not sure / don't know) – with pictures of example equipment on the back

Climbing frame with baskets and/or slides

Outdoor gym equipment

Outdoor ping pong table

Outdoor trampoline

Rotating equipment

Rounders pitch

Skate park

Youth café (at Louie Memorial fields)

Youth café (at Botley shops)

Zip line

**Did we miss something? Please tell us if there are any other facilities you would use if they were built in North Hinksey parish:**

**[on back: pictures of example equipment for each category. Could include a map showing location of Louie Memorial Fields if we think it's needed.]**