

Leisure & Amenities Committee

Plattes Close/Claypits Toddler Play Area

1	Resident Feedback
	<p>I am contacting you regarding the play area on Cartwright Drive, I believe its officially called Clay Pits play area.</p> <p>There is an ongoing problem with groups of older teenagers gathering in the play area in the evenings (after 9pm) especially in the train.</p> <p>This has been the case for many years and I'm wondering if there is anything that the council can do to discourage it?</p> <p>I've phoned the police non-emergency number on numerous occasions, most recently this month, and each time I'm told that a patrol car will be sent. This has only actually happened once or twice in the 10 years I've lived here! We've also been promised by the police that they will include the play area on their evening patrol, to my knowledge this hasn't happened and if it has then the patrol aren't actually coming up to the park.</p> <p>I understand that older teens want somewhere to go, but they use the train as somewhere to sit and shout, play music, drink and do drugs until the early hours. On my latest call to 101 I told the call handler that there were 4 lads in the train making and sharing joints, as it was dark they were using the torches on their phones which just made it very obvious to any onlookers. Unfortunately their shouting woke my daughter and I then had to explain to an 8 year old what it was they were doing as she'd been watching from her window.</p> <p>This is something that happens most evenings after about 9.30pm until around midnight and on weekends will continue until about 3am.</p> <p>A few weeks ago on a Sunday night the group left the park shortly after midnight and walked along Cartwright Drive smashing bottles from peoples recycling bins. A resident on the road was out before 5 am sweeping up the glass.</p> <p>Due to recent incidents with knife crime and the fact that my 15 year old son tells me that most groups like this have at least 1 member who carries a knife, I am not willing to attempt to move them on myself.</p>
2	OPTIONS
2.1	Consider adjusting the train play equipment to make it less attractive for shelter and anti social behaviour
2.2	Consider removal of the train equipment.
4	OPTIONS & IMPACT
4.1	It is difficult to predict whether the options above would impact on the frequency and volume of behaviour that is currently established. It may move it on to another site.

5	COSTS
5.1	Possibly minimal if adjustments or removal are conducted in house and do not impact on the overall safety of play use.
6.	BUDGET
6.1	The Parish Council has an annual budget of £91,000 for play area upgrades. For 2021-22 this has been earmarked for Bess Road Toddler Play area, and, if other funding routes materialise, Rivermead pump track. Other play areas to be reviewed due to ongoing material condition issues are Shaw Ridge Play Area and Bess Road kickabout.
7	FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS
7.1	Options are within the annual budget allocation.
8.	RECOMMENDATIONS
8.1	That this Committee notes the resident's feedback and considers any actions to progress.

Paula Harrison, Parish Manager