

WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL**Play Area Refurbishment Update****1. Play Refurbishments 2019**

- 1.1 Generally play areas were originally installed as part of housing developments and as a result, some are in need of a review/upgrade. The Parish Council maintains 20 play areas across the Parish. West Swindon Parish Council has annual programme of refurbishment for play areas across West Swindon. A budget of £91,000 has been set for 2019/20 plus there is an underspend of approximately £19,000 from the previous year.

2. Refurbishment/Renewal Programme

- 2.1 Even though West Swindon has had small play areas removed over the years, it still offers a higher number of good-sized play areas.
- 2.2 Generally, partial upgrades can be achieved within a budget of £25,000 (as at Clayhill Copse/Camden Close/Claypits Youth area). Full upgrades of larger play areas are likely to require a budget of £40-£60,000 depending on the play surfaces. New rubber or bark mulch surfaces are high cost in comparison to the play equipment.
- 2.3 Feedback from the play maintenance team, coupled with site visits previously identified a shortlist of the following play areas:

Play Area	Date built or refurbished	Current Condition/proximity to play space
The Holbeins	2003	Limited play value. Basketball area in poor condition. Fence to play area is in reasonable condition. Play equipment functional but looks tired. This is sited within reasonable walking distance of Camden Close.
Tumpy Field	Not known	Some wear and tear to wooden structures including damp and rot. Play area has been vandalised including arson in 2018. Some equipment could be adjusted to be more usable e.g. raising chains.
Shelfinch	2009	Junior kickabout floor and hoops are in poor condition. Additional equipment could be added to the grassed area. Limited offer for toddlers in the toddler area, including no swing.

The Chesters	2009	Limited play offer. Main structure cannot be easily repaired but is in a functional condition. Swing has been vandalised in the past. Would benefit part upgrade.
Nine Elms	2009	Wooden based play equipment. Large play area which is still functional but limited play offer. Some resident feedback to the Parish indicates local disappointment in the facility and concerns about lack of use during wet months due to grass/muddy areas.

- 2.4 During 2018/19, Parish Councillors have supported surveys and consultations for The Chesters play area and Shelfinch. A summary of the surveys is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 2.5 Informal consultation regarding Shelfinch included the following feedback:
- Residents like the idea of traditional equipment such as slides, roundabouts, swings.
 - General agreement that Shelfinch has limited use for pre school children currently e.g. toddler swing/slide and that the size and shape of the site has limitations to what could be offered.
 - Whilst it is in poor condition, the ball kickabout area is very popular and residents would not like to lose this facility in Toothill however it could be moved to another site. It was previously reported to the Parish Council that new tarmac in the Shelfinch kickabout zone could be in the region of £28,000.
 - Toothill Big Local have pledged a contribution up to £15,000 towards a refurbishment.
 - Folly Park open space (off Flint Hill) has a number of anti social behaviour issues which are seen to be exacerbated by the presence of a youth shelter. Some residents have commented that this shelter could be removed and the park could be upgraded to include a new ball/kickabout area. This has not been tested with the wider community although it is possible that it could open up opportunities to seek external funding support.
- 2.6 We are required to follow a formal tender process in order to procure services on this scale. The Parish Council posts any tender opportunities on the Contract Finder website and invites any prospective contractors to submit proposals. The tender documentation usually sets out details of the location and a description of the type of equipment required e.g. age range, types of equipment preferred, flooring preferred etc. In the past the Parish Council also specified a fixed budget available in order to fairly compare quotes and proposals. The majority of interested companies will ask for a site visit and will submit details drawings and designs. If included in the tender documentation, designers can also be requested to attend an event or meeting to explain their designs. This can help the Parish

Council consider what other public consultation it would like to undertake ahead of a final decision.

- 2.7 There can be some economies if a group of tender opportunities are advertised and companies invited to offer discounts if approved to deliver on more than one site.
- 2.8 To achieve installation in 2019/20, the Parish Council should seek to advertise the tender opportunities no later than the end of July 2019. This would give a submission date of end of August and a decision date in September with a view to installation in October/November. Realistically, installation will be at risk of adverse weather conditions in the Winter months which may delay completion. The earlier the Parish Council advertises the opportunities, the better the conditions for delivery.

3 Recommendations:

- 3.1 The Leisure and Amenities Committee identifies play areas to be refurbished 2019/20 and recommends an allocated budget for each play area to support the tender process.
- 3.2 That the Leisure and Amenities Committee agrees the tender process and timeframes proposed for tender documentation.

Paula Harrison

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