



ALDERNEY RECREATION GROUND

Public Consultation 2005

INTRODUCTION

A phased consultation with residents was organised by Sarah Austin (Project Officer for the Bourne Stream Partnership) and Kate Mitchell (Poole's Bourne Valley Ranger) during August and September, in order to:

- Assess the level of local interest in improvement works at Alderney Recreation Ground
- Ensure that plans progress in line with local hopes and expectations, and to
- Meet the requirements of potential funding partners

METHOD

Proposals were presented that described a plan to create a wide, terraced channel carrying the Bourne Stream through the long field at the Recreation Ground, together with the introduction of bridges, weirs and a pond, formal and informal seating areas, footpaths and lighting. Some recreational facilities were suggested for the lower field with the aim of stimulating further discussion and residents' own ideas.

Approaches to residents have been as personal and as informal as possible:

- I. **9th, 12th & 17th August:** an informal user consultation was carried out at Alderney Recreation Ground during the school holidays, on hot & sunny days. A total of 11 hours was spent over the three-day period. Very few people were seen to be using the Rec. In order to ensure that only current users were reached at this stage, the consultation was not publicised, and it might be assumed that the low level of usage is the norm, reducing further during term time and inclement weather.
- II. **Questionnaire:** a 'pilot' questionnaire was handed to those adults met on site (above) but due to the low volume of users the questionnaire was later also distributed to 100 residents in the Eving & Manor Avenue area. It was originally intended that it would soon be distributed more widely, but it is now believed that those not yet engaged, i.e. residents of Bourne Estate and the outer 'catchment' (some 9,000 homes in total) might be more difficult to reach at this early stage, and unlikely to respond to a questionnaire. Their views will be sought by other methods.
- III. **12th – 14th September:** a consultation with residents was held at the Rossmore Library & Learning Centre, Herbert Avenue. The event was publicised through the use of posters at all access points to the Rec and on surrounding streets, at community centres, toddler groups, schools, the local GP surgery, the library & leisure centre. Notices were sent to the existing e-mailing list, and by letter to those who had already responded to the questionnaire. A6 fliers were distributed to the students at Manorside and St Josephs RC Schools, and left at the library and GP surgery. The event was also advertised on the Partnership's website (the Alderney Rec web page received 81 unique visitors in the 10-day period leading up to and during the consultation).

Residents were invited to meet with Kate and Sarah upstairs at the library during various set hours (3.5 hours on each of the three days) ranging between 9.00am and 7.00pm. The consultation was informal, with proposals illustrated on a range of A3 & A4 laminated sheets, and described on a personal basis by either Kate or



Sarah; any concerns expressed were noted and addressed. Contact details have been retained to keep residents up-dated with progress.

RESULTS

- I. Just 25 users were interviewed at the on-site consultation, 14 of them (56%) under the age of 16.
- II. Response to the pilot questionnaire reached 48%. A further nine questionnaires have been received back since the public consultation (a small supply was made available).
- III. Forty-seven people attended the consultation in the library and/or responded in some other way (via phone or email) to the proposals; some of these had also completed questionnaires.

The views of 95 residents (81 adults, 14 young people) have been collected thus far.

FINDINGS

Findings are grouped by 'young people' and 'adults'. The young people's comments were noted during conversations on site. There are too few for any meaningful analysis, and so they have simply been transcribed in an abbreviated form and attached as part of a six-page appendix.

Below are the responses from questionnaires, which simply asked residents about their use of the site and then to score various proposals from 1-5 in terms of "improving your personal use & enjoyment of the space":

Responses from the questionnaire (adults)	
Age Group of respondents	70% are aged 55+, i.e. 38% aged 55-64 yrs 32% aged 65+ Only one response from the 16-24 yrs age group.
Usage – frequency	On average 6.8 times a week
Usage – purpose	45% for dog walking 42% for informal or family recreation 12% use the Rec to reach shops, library etc
<i>How much would these proposals increase your personal use and enjoyment of the Recreation Ground, on a scale from 1-5:</i>	
Proposal	Score (mean)
Creation of a terraced stream channel with informal seating, weirs and pond	4.4
Creation of dual-use footpaths/cycleways along and across the space	3.5
Installation of lighting along footpaths/cycleways	3.8
Creation of formal seating areas with litterbins	4.3
Improved signage and access – (a) for pedestrians/cyclists and (b) for vehicles, with provision of car parking	3.7 2.8

/continued...

Recreational facilities were proposed based on the previous consultation with young people:

Small fishing lake	3.9
Six-a-Side Football Pitch	3.6
Rugged Wooden Outdoor Fitness Trail	3.7
Cycling Challenge Circuit	3.4
Childrens Play Park ¹	4.3

Four recurring themes have been pulled from comments taken from the questionnaire distributed to residents, and from the consultation, and they can be summarised as:

1. A high level of local interest in and support for the project overall; the high response rate to the "pilot" questionnaire (48%) is particularly encouraging.
2. A belief that whatever is achieved is likely to be spoiled by vandalism without proper policing, either by a full-time park warden or by a more reactive Police response;
3. Widespread concern about vehicular access (mainly related to travellers);
4. A wish for something to be done about the use of motorcycles and mini motos on the site, coupled with the realisation that only Police action will have a bearing on such behaviour;

A good number of those attending the library consultation would have liked a discussion on the future of the Pavilion; it was explained that this was not in our remit.

All comments have been transcribed (and abbreviated) and are attached as a six-page appendix.

CONCLUSION & FUTURE WORK

There is an unusually high level of local interest in plans for the Recreation Ground, coupled with some serious and widespread concerns involving anti-social behaviour and misuse of the site.

Consultation with such a small number of young people does not provide us with statistically significant or particularly reliable data; further work through a school project is designed to have children developing findings so far and involving parents and grandparents in a vision-building exercise. It is hoped that such involvement will also promote a sense of inclusion and 'ownership'.

At the same time, we will continue to communicate updates to those residents already involved, and make efforts to engage more residents by ad hoc methods. This would include, for instance, interviewing parents/carers using the Safe Route to School across the recreation ground during term time.

¹ The scoring for the Children's Play Park (4.3 out of 5) reflects the views of only nine respondents who have returned a late version of the questionnaire available at the public consultation in the library; a play park was not an option offered in the pilot questionnaire but proved to be a popular 'other facilities to consider' with respondents to the pilot.



APPENDIX

COMMENTS

Young People at the on-site consultation

- 11 yrs (M) Basketball. Recycle circuit & fishing pond "way good". Big fair once a year. Climbstone would get boring. Get rid of the hut – hates it.
- 6½ yrs (F) Likes riding her bike. Too many big people on the BMX track and at skate park "don't go there now". Scared of the hut – someone lives in it. Would like seesaw.
- 11 yrs (M) Would like properly organised football. One pitch enough and fine where it is, but with nets and marked out. Trains at Manorside. Agreed Recycle circuit and fishing pond "way good". Climbstone wouldn't get boring.
Would like water fountain, golf, outdoor swimming pool, running track, quad biking, music, campsite.
- 14 yrs (M) Getting a Mini Moto for Christmas. Wants dirt track made legal to ride it. Riders used to go to "Sandies" (nr Canford Heath) but Sunseeker have bought the land. Only place to ride now is Toys'R'Us on a Friday – racing in the car park. Wants playing park (nearest one is Rossmore). Likes Moors Valley stuff – wooden – fitness trail. Recycle circuit is good. Climbstone is quite good. Likes fishing, would like fishing pond. Doesn't play football, except sometimes in winter.
Fed up with people throwing rubbish into the woods (backing Winfrith/Milbourne Crescents). Has heard the school might be using Middle Field for rugby. Older people drinking and smoking up at the skate park, doesn't go there now – and "now they're building a skating bowl". Suggests the Pavilion is knocked down to make a bigger car park, and a proper path created from Turbary Close.
- 10 yrs (M) Likes to play gold in the Rec. Fishing pond a good idea.
- 10 yrs (M) Not interesting in fishing or football. Fitness Trail a good idea.
- 16 yrs
(2 x F) Want a track to ride mini motos. Claims that friends were recently stopped by police from riding mini motos on the BMX track, yet they then went on to ride their scrambling bikes on the track themselves for 10 or 15 mins.
Scared to use the woodland walk after dark, would like some lighting there. Kids play park good. Rossmore Park no good, too much smashed glass so kids can't use it. Seating area – by the open bit of stream by Monkton Crescent is their favourite place. A little golf course, "everyone is playing golf these days". Want the steps back in use through the SSSI. Would like an annual fair with rides.
- 11 yrs & 13 yrs (2
x M) Like football, would like improved pitch (posts are wonky) with white lines. Play in a Little League now, very informal - 8-16 yr olds, however many turn up. Five separate teams around (Bindon Close, Arne Avenue, Turbary Road, Melbury Road & Rossmore Road, play every Saturday and sometimes after school. Pitch better if a bit bigger and more central in the field. Can't play on school field any more. Play at Hatchards Field at the moment – would like goals and white lines there too.
Like the BMX track but it's not very good any more, too many stones.
Might use a fishing pond – older brother (24 yrs) would definitely use it.
The Pavilion should be used for something, but don't know what.
Would like a fair with rides.
- 17 yrs (M) Fishing a good idea. Knock down the Pavilion – or turn it into a ballpit and charge an entrance fee. Needs a play park, for all ages. Outdoor fitness trail is good. Should let mini motos on the BMX track but need to improve and enlarge it. Climbing boulder would get boring.
- 10 yrs Likes motorbikes and golf. Has BMX but the track is rubbish at the moment. Wants mini motos allowed on BMX track. Would like tree-top trail like Moors



Valley. Would like running track – we could hold mini Olympics.

11 yrs & 12 yrs (Accompanied by Dad, with golf clubs & balls). All like the idea of the fishing pond. Fond of golf, would like some holes. Keen on athletics. Some sort of cycling track would be good.

Adults at the on-site consultation:

- A1 (Elderly). Would like toilet facilities
- A2 (Elderly). Pull down the 'hut'.
- A3 (30s). Dog walker. Lighting would be nice, especially in winter. Paths would be good, as ground gets very boggy. Seating nice – would like to sit and chat to other dog owners. Annoyed that the school has fenced off the field, now no circular walk. New Safe Route to School “not as successful as it might have been” – feet slip on loose gravel, not confident walking down it. Objects to motorbikes. Younger kids with little Mini Motos are more respectful, not too bothered about them so long as they don't make a noise at night. Requests dog bin at Tollard Close access point.
- A4 (20s). Fishing “lovely”. Seats & benches would be nice. Toilets and lighting. Play park for little kiddies (he has a young daughter) as the bigger kids go to Rossmore. Cricket?
- A5 & 6 (Elderly couple). Have lived here 40 yrs. Worried about ditch getting blocked if stream opened up, “yobs would chuck things in”. Concerned about the Pavilion.
- A7 (Elderly). Likes the idea of opening up the stream. Says Rec and old football pitches were well used until gypsy horses turned up. Play area would be a good idea. Wouldn't want a skate ramp here – too much noise. More people would mean toilets needed – but worried about vandalism.
- A8 (Elderly). Hut is an eyesore
- A9 (Elderly). Problems with vandalism, otherwise a nice site
- A10 (Elderly). Use the Rec to cut through to Tesco and the library. Doesn't like to use the new path (Safe Route to School), too steep and slippery, “lots of mothers complaining”.
- A11 (Middle-aged). Violently anti 'lethal' mini motos and we would be mad to consider the BMX track for them. He can hear motorbike engines from his back garden (which does not back on to the Rec). Doesn't mind traditional recreational facilities (swings, slides).

Comments from Questionnaire Responses:

Respondent

No:

- Q1. Could use building for information about nature reserve centre. Small Playground. BBQ area. Needs to be easier access for buggies, not motorbikes.
- Q2. Toilets. CCTV to help police area. Control vandals. Some area of cover for people to meet.
- Q3. Improvement to stony & slippery path from Benbow Crescent entrance onto common - steps perhaps and/or a handrail.
- Q5. Regarding Q.8. WE DO NOT WANT TO MAKE IT AN EASY ACCESS FOR THE TRAVELLERS!!!
- Q6. A children's play area with swings & slides, etc. Combat vandalism & anti-social behaviour.
- Q7. Childrens play area, swings & slides
- Q10. What about a check on kids (?) on motorbikes going out there, also it needs speed bumps by Manorside School instead of build-out, to stop speeding.



- Q11. Tennis court. Kids park. Re Q.8. History of problems with travellers and bikers.
- Q12. *Letter attached:* lived here since 1957, what is proposed is a waste of money.
- Q13. Small fishing lake a danger to small children, fence it off; Football pitch not good if you back on to field like we do. Re Q.8. Against access score - 'more travellers'.
- Q14. *Letter attached:* walked dogs on Rec for 20 yrs & how it is now is the best - grass cutting, less rubbish. Vehicular access would be a disaster - youngsters used to drive stolen cars onto Rec, plough up grass then set fire to them. Due to motorbike problems any improvement to access a bad idea. All sports facilities youngsters need at nearby leisure centre so please leave the fields & common to dog walkers who respect the open space & wildlife - the only ones you see using it.
- Q16. I would not feel comfortable going onto the heath alone, however I would really like to be able to.
- Q18. Small decking areas around pool to enable youngsters to fish they really enjoy it at Bourne Bottom on South Park Road
- Q19. The gate at Turbary Close should be LOCKED
- Q20. Crazy idea to open access to field; travellers will love access to field.
- Q21. Nature trails for schools and individuals. Raised area with seats to improve views. A bit more shade. *Letter attached:* detects very little interest in soccer in this area. Stresses uses of the Rec should be appropriate, that is - QUIET (no music, motorcycles, tannoy or loudspeakers) - SAFE (no motorised vehicles esp. with safe route to school) and - respectful to others and the unique environment.
- Q22. CCTV - to stop vandalism and other suspicious characters loitering. Plenty of rubbish bins. *Letter attached:* Very bad idea to allow vehicular access - how are you going to stop travellers & boy racers? Asks what will happen to the old changing room building.
- Q23. There's no point installing anything which isn't indestructible as it will only be vandalised. I would like to see perhaps the changing rooms turned into open plan seating.
- Q26. Skate ramps - Adventure Playground - Nature Trail (use of schools)
- Q28. Solar lighting.
- Q30. *Letter attached:* No mention of measures to stop vandalism; unless area policed structures like outdoor fitness trail will be trashed in a week, and cycling challenge circuit torn up by motorbikes in days (like the BMX track). Dangerous to walk on common at certain times - illegal motorcycling continually taking place all around you. What makes you think it will be any better when they have a 20m wide stream bed to ride through ... proposed car park will make a bad situation worse ... I have many other points to make in the future but would emphasise I would like to see many of the improvements mentioned carried out successfully.
- Q31. How do you stop vandals destroying all these good works?
- Q32. *By email 31st August:* The plans seem excellent. Couple of concerns - her property is above a storm drain, will work affect access to rec? Will ditches be filled in? Will there be a circular path? Lighting very welcome. Will edges to rec be cut back & maintained? When will work start & finish? Advise consultation dates.
- Q33. *Note attached:* vehicle access limited time-wise, shut at night, otherwise cars dumped, set on fire, vandals & a meeting place at night. Street lights a good ideas but open to vandals? Build a small flat onto the pavilion so that a warden is on site to police the area at all times.
- Q36. Steps to keep 'small' motor bikes OFF the rec/field as they are becoming more frequent and ruin the peacefulness for ALL and are very dangerous for walker/small children, etc. Seating areas will encourage youths to congregate.
- Q37. Play area for children. Seating area maybe picnic benches.
- Q40. Trees & shrubs. Childrens playground. Scored zero for vehicular access - worried about travellers getting access.

- Q42. Informal seating & litterbins likely to be covered in graffiti.
- Q43. *Note attached:* Lighting - this area is one of the few places in Parkstone where it is possible to see and study stars. If lights are to be festooned around the recreation ground it will destroy any chance for amateur astronomers, such as myself, to enjoy our hobby. I have enclosed a leaflet regarding light pollution, and I suggest that you contact Mr Bob Mizon at 38 The Vineries, Colehill, Wimborne, who is a member of the Wessex Astronomical Society and an expert on this subject. Access - Easier access to the space is likely to increase the incidence of arson - not a comforting prospect for those of us who live nearby!
- Q44. A playground for younger children perhaps. The improved paths and ground drainage would make the area more used by me, especially with the improved stream and its consequent wildlife.
- Q45. All of these are great ideas however many people park in Monkton Crescent now to access the fields for dog walking etc. I feel great consideration should be given to this as even though parking is being provided elsewhere, people will park in Monkton Crescent. The hill is dangerous when vehicles are parked on any side, the function of Gussage Road would become a hazard and buses could find it difficult to get round. Also, who would police this area against vandals & motorcycles, as this is a huge problem and the police are unable or unwilling to take action.
- Q51. Timber children's play equipment/trail. Warden/Leader/Questionnaires on the space (nature reserve/heathland), guided walks - educational.
- Q54. Ice-cream and café/bar in Pavilion for spectators of events (no piped music, please) ? Macdonalds to have an interest. Inside walls used for hanging pictures of local wildlife (see tiled wall by Sainsburys main entrance) and artwork from local schools for short-term exhibition. Some vigorous sports other than football! Outdoor competitions, or is this non-PC?
- Q55. Running track. Proper irrigation of the field for winter to improve its useability for sport.
- Q56. It would have been nice to have been notified about the display in Rossmore Library, I found out about it too late as several other people I know also did. Make the area a proper wet heathland area which it once was and not half urbanise it. Cars mean motorbikes legally and police will do nothing about these now even when phoned by a warden. I should think it would create problems to encourage people at night with lighting & hard paths & if it is to become a nature reserve the flora & fauna need some darkness. Does formal mean tarmac?? Has been replied to (*letter 27 September*)
- Q57. A lot of cyclists are a menace to pedestrians therefore, giving them a cycle track (which a lot won't stick to) is a bad idea. Giving access to any type of vehicle is also not a good idea i.e. the despised 'travellers' will doubtless "get through" despite your assurances. Cars are not necessary!

Comments noted during public consultation in the library:

- C1. We should give people a list of what (behaviour) is not acceptable
- C2. Concerned about (1) maintenance - complicated site needs good maintenance and it's not done properly now. Mustn't end up as a dumping ground. Kate advised formal maintenance plan in the pipeline, will be out for public comment; (2) vehicular access (still very upset at travellers arriving 2/3 years ago), and (3) motorbikes.
- C3. Walk dogs & family recreation. Why are we doing this? Rats on Rec. She approves, he sitting on the fence - maybe concerned stream will take up too much kite-flying space?
- C4. Walk dogs. Very positive, love it. Concerned that it retains its natural character - nothing too intensive. Kate spoke to them extensively.

- C5. Pond now is a mess, was lovely with Purbeck stone walls, etc. Did have old photos (27 yrs ago) but his wife's been having a clear out (moving?). Remembers ten land drains draining to ditch (Evering Avenue side) but ditch filled and land drains blocked up. Biggest concern - motorbikes will use new path, frightening. In principle a grand idea. Concerned that kids from new Herbert Avenue development will play football on Newtown-side grassland, kick ball into the road and run out to get it - should be fenced off?
- C6. Worried about motorbikes speeding along new path - put fence across width of field? Travellers, people are very afraid of what happened before (June 2003), so must be careful about vehicular access. Would like to see model boating lake.
- C7. Concerned about Travellers, Motorbikes, Parking (is there enough?), Warden (will there be one? - maybe at least for the first 2/3 months?), Kids cutting through Evering Ave residents' gardens to reach the Rec (reports that a neighbour has also experienced this). Police - can we get them to promise to attend complaints when new park open?
- C8. Wants back of property protected from children trespassing/using cut-through. CCTV?
- C9. Manor Avenue Residents Association. Kate's notes? Mrs T would like 50 x leaflets to distribute to the Manor Avenue residents.
- C10. Advises hundreds of rhododendron bushes buried beneath fill, Philips just knocked them flat. Believes we will need to 'gully' the stream and wall it otherwise it will just soak away (previously it was a very marshy area). Claims old stream was 3ft below ground level, and the level of the new one will need to be lower. Visualised the new stream being only 2.5-3m wide and walled. Says the old pond floods a lot at the moment. Claims there was a pond beneath the Trinidad School site, and another below a bungalow on the opposite side of the road (between Berkeley and Evering Avenue) - hence the one bungalow lower than the others. Particularly - doesn't want access made easy for travellers. Concerned about the future of the Pavilion. If stream done properly will be good.
- C11. Concerned about vehicular access and travellers. Remembers Philips started filling the site 32/33 years ago - took them 5 years?
- C12. *Phoned.* Saw us in the Rec in August, has completed questionnaire. Please keep him informed.
- C13. *Phoned.* Says she was active in getting the swimming pool at Rossmore Leisure Centre. She claims to have spoken to about 200 people, particularly mothers at the school, and thinks the whole thing is brilliant. She has also asked if we could include a paddling pool for kids, it works at Redhill and Hamworthy, where she points out crime rates are much lower than here because the kids have things to do. She says this suggestion has popular support. Mothers particularly keen because she says many of them on the estate don't drive and they would like somewhere to go with kids for picnics etc.
- C14. Concerned about joint cycle/footpath - cyclists tend to go very fast and don't stick to their side. People might not stick to their bit, especially if they're enjoying the site. Cyclists need their own space. Worried about policing of the site. Infra-red CCTV would be very good - have lots of problems with ASB. Would lighting attract too many anti-social people? Main concern security. Envisages problems getting worse in the future. Likes the concept though. Mr B has seen large light brown leeches in the pond. Asks what will happen with the Pavilion. Thinks motorbikes will use stream channel & slopes.
- C15. Believes kids come over from Rossmore on their motorbikes. They use the wooded walk - so do the bikes. Asks if the stream along the wooded walk can be cleared - is blocked and floods across the path when wet - takes gravel with it. Would like to see a children's play area.
- C16. Doesn't want children's play area - for selfish reasons (no children)
- C17. Netball Development Officer, with netball league at Rossmore. Works with Active Sports. Rossmore is an outdoor pitch. Is interested in the Pavilion for indoors pitch but will probably need to be enlarged. Min size required (pitch + runoffs) is 112 x 62ft and needs good height. Has own personnel/coaches. 8-60yr old play (mainly female). Might be good for badminton too?

- C18. Has been thinking about comments made on Monday and believes a barrier should be erected along the public green space beside the new Trinidad housing development (see C5. above) If the development houses children then they are likely to use that space.
- C19. Very enthusiastic about the proposals. Concerned about height of viewpoint, but if below the tree line that's fine. Noticed Skills Register on the website, retires in a couple of years and happy to help out with whatever he can.
- C20. Reports that a Mrs T has requested that the steps at Corbiere Avenue are improved. She also advises she has entered Kate's volunteer group for a community award.
- C21. Very enthusiastic. Will liase with her re wetland planned for the sws that runs through her property. Is happy so long as she has access for her dogs. Has also had children trespassing through her property to reach the Rec. Would like to see more dog bins.
- C22. Has had problems with trespassers in the past but now uses 'gripper rod' on fences etc - effective. Happy that golfers will no longer have a clear 'fairway' to play.
- C23. Problems with vandalism, worried about motorbikes, graffiti at the Pavilion. Kids damming stream at Monkton Crescent. Ideas are fantastic - policing is a problem now and concerned this will continue. Problems with fly tipping in stream, not cleared. Is happy to do a monthly litter pick of the Rec with others. Advises that Mr W has recently died, he used to clear out the open stream & grille at Monkton Crescent and also build the swings for the kids.
- C24. Concerned about existing ASB, will this continue? Lighting & CCTV would be good. Like the idea and just want it maintained properly - more people would make it safer.
- C25. Both very keen on ideas, but concerned about ASB. Think scheme is very good. Would like more signs about dog mess.
- C26. Keen on more natural play features. Concerned about lights on cycle path - would attract more young people who might misbehave. Very keen on stream idea. Would seats attract people?
- C27. Librarian, lives locally to the Rec. Would like to be kept informed.
- C28. Received my invite letter too late to attend consultation; has recently moved from Monkton Close to Aspen Way. *Will visit resident at home with plans etc on Tuesday, 27th September at 5:00pm.*
 27/09: works with two youth groups (Alder Road Baptist Church & Bournemouth Family Church, about 40 young people in total) and is interested in using the Pavilion for football and other youth events. Friday evenings 7.00-9.30 is meeting time. Loves the fitness trail (rugged, natural) and the idea that kids would be involved in building it. His youth team would love to use the fishing lake, also a running track if one was available.
 Received my invite letter too late to attend consultation; has recently moved from Monkton Close to Aspen Way. Wanted to speak about open space & ASB at Aspen Way (had prepared a letter which has been passed to Kate Mitchell).