

PLAYSPACE ROLLING PROGRAMME 2002/2003

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 A rolling programme of playspace refurbishment commenced in 1999/2000 with two or three playspaces being refurbished each year. This report provides Members with a recommendation for the playspaces to be refurbished in the current financial year, as part of this ongoing programme.
- 1.2 Following refurbishment of these playspaces, Rochford District Council should seek the views of the Parish Councils on whether they wish to transfer the playspace to the Parish Councils.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The rolling programme has previously been based on a complete survey of playspaces that was carried out in 1996/97. To date works have been completed on six sites. Many of these schemes have been carried out in conjunction with Parish Councils who have taken an active part in the consultation process.
- 2.2 A detailed site inspection of all the playspaces was carried out in July 2002 as a means of updating the priority list, which it was felt was now out of date and new problems have been identified. A summary of the playspace inspection is provided as Appendix A.
- 2.3 In the mid 1980's eight large wooden multi-play units were installed at the same time at eight different sites. These units have begun to reach the end of their useful life, with some having deteriorated quicker than others. Two of these units located at High Street, Great Wakering, and Grove Road, Rayleigh, have been vandalised. Both have been made safe in order to keep the playspaces open and useable. Grove Road requires new 1.8 metre high fencing to improve security as it needs to be locked in the evenings because of anti social behaviour.

3 PROGRAMME FOR 2002 - 2003

3.1 First Priority – Hawkwell Common

Following the new survey, Hawkwell Common has been identified as being first priority for refurbishment. This priority is due to the fact that the multi-play unit is showing signs of becoming unsafe, although

deemed to be safe in the short term, and needs to be replaced in its entirety, as repair is not possible in this instance. All other equipment in this playspace dates back to the mid 1980's and is in need of replacement to provide good play value. This site achieved a Play Value of 29 points. The maximum score for "Play Value" is 80, representing equipment that provides good levels of imagination, activity and interest.

3.2 Second Priority – Hockley Woods

Prior to the inspection carried out in July 2002, a number of people had contacted the Council in relation to the provision of equipment at the Hockley Woods playspace, particularly relating to the lack of toddler equipment. This playspace was previously refurbished in the mid 1980's, with all of the equipment made from wood, which has now reached the end of its useful life. The equipment here currently provides very little play value having a score of 36 points out of a possible 80.

There is there the opportunity to refurbish this playspace, not only to provide good play facilities but also in conjunction with Woodlands development, including Hockley Woods and Cherry Orchard Country Park, to provide a more comprehensive attraction for families to utilise the woodlands and surrounding area.

3.3 Joint Third Priority – Grove Road, Rayleigh

Due to the crime and disorder issues at this playspace, it is proposed to provide secure fencing, in this case 1.8 metre paling in 2002/03 funded through revenue budgets. This will facilitate the opportunity for locking of the playspace in the evening, potentially by a local resident/s. This matter is being pursued with local residents and it is hoped to have an agreement with a number of people to lock and unlock this playspace at appropriate times. It is proposed therefore that this playspace refurbishment be deferred until 2003/04 or later.

3.4 Joint Third Priority – High Street, Great Wakering

The multi-play unit here has been vandalised, and although made safe, is in need of replacement along with the other equipment, which overall provides this playspace with low play value to current standards. It is proposed therefore that should funding be available following priorities one and two, that this be included as part of this year's programme. This site scored a play value of 37 out of 80.

3.5 Refurbishment Standards

When a playspace is refurbished, the equipment features, site location, layout/design, appeal and overall environment that is provided is designed to provide what is called “play value” this being a NPFA scoring system for the overall site (maximum 80 points).

All new equipment will now be constructed in steel, apart from Hockley Woods, where it would be more in keeping to use wooden equipment as far as possible. All equipment is manufactured to current British and European Standards. All equipment is also provided with the relevant safety surface and is spaced at appropriate safe distances.

Currently all but three of the playspaces have been enclosed with galvanised hoop top fencing and gates to keep dogs out of the playspaces. This work is being funded from maintenance budgets.

4 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The provision of play equipment can contribute to the reduction in crime and disorder issues.
- 4.2 Where crime and disorder issues affect a playspace, as indicated in the case of Grove Road, the source of nuisance is being identified and will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- 4.3 All playspaces require an element of passive surveillance from nearby houses/ regular passers by etc. to improve the security of playspaces.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Refurbishment of the playspaces does improve the local environment of these areas and contributes to the wellbeing of families within the area, by providing safe areas of play.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A sum of £50,000 has been set aside in the Capital Programme as part of the playspace rolling programme for refurbishment.
- 6.2 Provision of fencing to playspaces is funded through the maintenance budgets and not through the playspace rolling programme.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council has a legal obligation when providing play facilities to ensure that they are in a safe condition. This rolling programme contributes to providing safe playspaces.

8 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Hockley, Hawkwell and Great Wakering Parish Councils, who are involved in the recommended schemes, will be consulted on whether they are prepared to contribute towards the cost of refurbishment and as to whether they are prepared to take on the management of these playspaces.
- 8.2 Should any consultation be required for these works, this will be carried out in conjunction with the Parish Councils.

9 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) That the priorities be identified and that the 2002/2003 playspace rolling programme includes Hawkwell Common and Hockley Woods playspaces
- (2) That should sufficient funding remain from the first two priorities, High Street, Great Wakering be identified as a third scheme. (CD(F&ES))
- (3) That following refurbishment, Officers seek Parish Council views on taking on the transfer of playspaces to the Parish Councils. (CD(F&ES))

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Background Papers:

None

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**PLAYSPACE SITE VISIT SURVEY
JULY 2002**

Site	Survey	Priority High, Med, Low
	<i>Most sites fenced. Signage, general maintenance and woodchips etc. picked up by Parks Officer /Serviceteam Grounds Maintenance</i>	
Seaview Drive Gt.Wakering	Metal unit/timber structure – o.k. possible re-paint/stain in future. No space for other equipment but could consider springy. Fairly quiet although ball games a problem – signage could be improved – no seat.	L
Morrins Close Gt. Wakering New Senior. Playspace constructed 2001	Youth playspace. Basketball posts replace nets, football goals for 5-a-side – to be set into ground this summer. Buffer zone planting growing well.	L
Glebe Close Gt.Wakering New toddler playspace constructed 2001	Toddler playspace. Planting along fence trimmed regularly, seat and bins – locked by residents.	L
Conway Avenue Gt. Wakering	Toddler playspace – additional springy could be provided. Seat/bin in place. Locked at night (some problems with locking times) Minor damage one corner – rubber surface. Cut back shrubs – maintenance.	L
High Street Gt. Wakering	Kicking wall, basketball area. Multi-activity kit – section missing multiplay / damaged surface area – needs replacement. Springy ok. Rubber surface replaced last year.	H (3)
Barling Lt.Wakering	Generally toddler – multiplay, swings, springy. Would benefit from restrain/repaint. Needs woodchip top-up. Bin/seat.	L
Warwick Drive Rochford	Teenage & toddler. Teenshelter, basketball. Bin liner removed – minor vandalism. Springy damaged but safe needs replacement through Revenue. Tall fencing installed to prevent football.	L
Doggetts Rochford	Building Maintenance fence – needs green pallisade, currently chain link. All new kit – good site – mixed usage – 5-11years. Some tree planting done.	L
Ashingdon Rd. Rochford	Cantilever swing showing age, some rot. Multiplay needs replacement, roundabout wearing out – replace through Revenue, safety surface issues on swing – needs general refurbishment.	M
Rowan Way Canewdon	No fence – one swing only.	L

Site	Survey	Priority High, Med, Low
Althorne Way Canewdon	Skateboard park. Toddler unit refurbished last year. Woodchip needs replacing aerial runway and swings. 2 new seats going in. Seat/bin.	L
Clements Hall Hawkwell	Swings need rubber surface when refurbished. Generally toddler usage. Seats/bins. Has space for more equipment, generally good condition..	L
Hawkwell Common Hawkwell	Multiplay unit starting to move – tower becoming unstable. Safety issues on swings surface. Slide in wrong position – should face North. Well used site – needs complete refurbishment	H (1)
Betts Wood Hockley	Aerial runway – some rot starting and wear on net. Needs new fence to front and woodchips topped up.	L
Hockley Woods Hockley	Unit looks old – starting to rot – only one wobble board – in need of new kit – keeping timber style. Sand unit good but worn – replace? Refurbish tyre unit. Remove horse/house? Needs equipment for toddlers. Prime site for long term development as flagship for the District. Possible picnic tables within playspace. Pathway needs improvement.	M – H (2)
Pooles Lane Hullbridge	Skateboard and new 5-a-side / basketball. Possible new litter bin near to area. Playspace repainted – possible springy's / picnic tables – liaise with Parish. All well used.	L
Rawreth Lane Rawreth	Re-painted and woodchip replaced, fencing renewed, unit restrained. Possible seat/bin. Possible additional trees.	L
Sweyne Park Rayleigh	Fencing ok - gate spring needs adjustment. Land drainage going ahead. Recently repainted, toddler, junior & senior areas and kicking wall. Access pathway needs to be in stone possibly extending to kicking wall.	L
Causton Way Rayleigh	Repainted – no further action – meets requirements – gate locked 7pm/dusk by local resident.	L
Fairview Rayleigh	Basketball, repainted playspace with new fencing. Multikit/roundabout need upgrading within next 2 years. Swings need safety surface upgrading in near future. Picnic area tables/seats need replacement.	M

Site	Survey	Priority High, Med, Low
Hartford Close Rayleigh	Wetpour damaged. Kit good has been repainted – new 2 years ago. Swing missing to be replaced through revenue. Site closed until wetpour repaired - awaiting contractor, (need to provide several areas of repair to meet contractor costs).	L
Boston Avenue Rayleigh	Fencing needs replacement. – too low. Recently repainted, needs new safety surface in future. Possible springy and seat.	L
St. John Fisher Rayleigh	Repainted recently – fencing – gate post leaning and bent railing. Needs refurbishment within 5 years. Safety surface issues.	L
Elsenham Court Rayleigh	Upgraded last year – no further action	L
Fyfield Rayleigh	Upgraded last year – no further action	L
Bedford Close Rayleigh	Anti-Social problems would indicate no further equipment – fenced. Roundabout needs replacement through Revenue.	L
Grove Road Rayleigh	Anti-Social problems (monitored). New fencing going in, 2002/3. Possibly repaint existing equipment short term. Equipment needs upgrading but await outcome of fencing installation.	M – H (3)

PROGRAMME WORKS IN ORDER OF PRIORITY

1. **Hawkwell Common**
2. **Hockley Woods**
3. { **Great Wakering**
3. { **Grove Road**