

# Whiteley Parish Council

## Recreation and General Purposes Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the above Committee held at Meadowside Leisure Centre, Whiteley on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 at 9.15pm.

**Parish Council Committee members present:** Pat Thew (Chairman) Al Menzies (Vice-Chairman), Vivian Achwal, Paul Beaumont, Colin Bielckus, Roland Diffey, Mike Evans, Kairen Goves

Parish Councillors: Brenda Hatch, Brian Hughes, David Jenkins, two members of the public, Parish Clerk Nicki Oliver

1. **To receive apologies for absence** None
2. **To receive declarations of interest regarding agenda items** None
3. **To adjourn meeting to allow participation by members of the public**  
Maintenance of the sculpture benches on Meadowside requested.
4. **Meeting resumed to consider the following agenda items:**

4.1 To receive an update on plans for 2010 Annual Parish Assembly (Clerk) **WinAcc to be invited to attend.**

4.2 To receive an update on Area K issues (Cllr P Thew) **Nothing further to report.**

4.3 To receive an update on project for new sculpture benches (Chairman) **Work on the new bench will begin on October 26<sup>th</sup> with the community invited to help with digging out the foundation. The two schools and artist Russell Jakubowski will organise the event.**

4.4 To receive an update on proposal to prepare a management plan for the conservation area (Chairman) **It was agreed to defer a long term plan until the decision on future adoption is made. In the short term some cutting and collecting is needed to open up the area.**

4.5 To receive an update from the Skatepark User Forum (James Wade)

4.5.1 To receive an update on request to paint ramps. **Work to paint the ramps has been completed.**

4.6 To discuss WCC project proposals to refurbish Angelica, Caraway, Cheshire, Mollison and Thyme Avenue play areas and agree way forward. (Chairman) **Following an extensive survey of residents likely to be affected by the refurbishment proposals, a report has been prepared with suggested recommendations to WCC. The Chairman, Cllr Achwal, Cllr Goves and Cllr Menzies to pursue through a working party and report back in due course.**

4.7 To note any outstanding play area repairs and landscape maintenance issues

4.7.1 To receive an update on request for additional grass cutting to play areas.

**After many requests WCC has agreed to carry out weekly cuts on the Saffron Way play area. The standard of grass cutting throughout Whiteley residential areas remains low and complaints are made regularly to WCC by the Committee.**

**Cllr Menzies offered to carry out some maintenance on the sculpture benches.**

4.8 To receive report and recommendations from Climate Change Champions (Cllr Menzies/Cllr Bielckus) **Cllr Menzies has been asked to speak on strategies adopted by the Parish Council at the WDALC meeting to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October.**

**5. To identify any unmanaged risks within this committee's remit** None.

**6. Review effectiveness of communication, development of links with other community organisations and support for local democracy through making information more widely available** Continue to monitor.

**7. Recent correspondence/ reports from meetings attended of relevance to this committee** None.

Meeting closed 9.55pm

# Refurbishment of Whiteley Play Areas a paper for full Whiteley Parish Council

By Cllr Pat Thew

Council members are invited to consider and comment on the recommendations for each play area before these are discussed with WCC.

## **Introduction**

At the end of July Coral Rogers from WCC met with Nicki and myself from Whiteley PC to discuss refurbishing five play areas in Whiteley. A budget of 20K has been allocated in the 2009/2010 financial year by WCC for the work needed on each area, a total of 100K, but the budget is not ring fenced.

The play areas to be refurbished are sited in Mollison Rise, Cheshire Close, Caraway, Thyme Avenue and Angelica Way. There was no budget allocated for the play area in Gibson Close or Rosemary Gardens, the latter has recently been refurbished and is well used.

Each play area was found to have landscaping problems. Mollison and Cheshire both need new gates; Caraway is full of shrubs that have overgrown into the play area, not a place that children would choose to play. The area in Angelica is very wet so few children use it. There is no pathway to the play area in Thyme Avenue and this one is seldom if ever used (the bin was empty!).

As WCC didn't have a budget to carry out a public consultation exercise, Nicki and I agreed to ask the community what they would like to see happen. Nicki drafted an individual questionnaire for each play area, these were delivered by members of the Recreation and GP committee to between 100 and 150 residences near the respective play areas and for Mollison Rise questionnaires were completed by children using the play area. These children also identified some new equipment they would like.

The number of responses received reflected partly on the enthusiasm of the deliverer and the number of children who use each of the play areas. The number of questionnaires returned was: Mollison 26, Caraway 16, Thyme 7, Angelica 5, and Cheshire 4. On 3 visits to each play area I only saw children playing in Cheshire and Mollison.

The table over leaf shows the questions asked for each play park and the numbers show the number of responses or the number of responders who have made the same comment.

## **Recommendations**

### **1. Thyme Avenue Play Area**

This play area is close to the Saffron Way, Meadowside and Rosemary Gardens play areas and the children from the top of Thyme Avenue and Saffron Way play in these areas. It would not affect many children if WCC removed the play equipment and turned the area into an open play space. To save future maintenance they could remove some of the fencing with the remainder forming a barrier between the open play area and the adjacent houses. Use the budget on other play areas, particularly Mollison.

## **2. Angelica Way Play Area**

This area has a large number of trees planted in formation. WCC should remove play equipment, prune trees - remove a couple if possible as there are too many planted in such a small space and hard landscape as the area is very wet. Installing a couple of seats would provide a more social amenity. Any residual budget could be used in other play areas, particularly Caraway.

## **3. Caraway Play Area**

WCC should as a matter of priority remove or severely cut back the boundary hedge and large shrubs surrounding the play area. They should also remove the out of date play equipment and replace with new items suitable for the under 5s. The budget could be increased by a contribution from the Angelica play area.

## **4. Cheshire Close Play Area**

WCC should repair the gate and fencing, add new seat, paint current play equipment, add one new item for the under fives. The preference here was for a Birds Nest swing.

## **5. Mollison Rise Play Area**

WCC should replace the seat that has vanished, repair the gate and look at the possibility of providing a picnic table and a bench in a shaded area. The seesaw and roundabout should be removed as a number of responses state that they have caused injuries. WCC to provide as many new pieces of challenging play equipment for the under 12's as can be installed safely and within the budget that has been increased from contribution from the Thyme Avenue play area. A giant birds nest swing and a Zip-wire were the most requested. The children could be consulted again, once the final budget is established, and a list of possible items has been drawn up.

The responses received are tabulated overleaf.

### **Recycling**

WCC should provide a plan for recycling/reusing the equipment that it removed.

The recommendations are purely personal views based on the replies received.

Play Area	Redevelop for under 5's	Redevelop as community garden	Invest funds elsewhere	Recommendation
<b>Thyme Avenue</b>	3  1 Soft play items with educational benefits	1  1 Can I have the pig (73 Saffron)	3  1 Too near housing.  1 Plenty of other play areas around	7 returns  Not a lot of interest.  Remove equipment leave seat.  Add shrubs.  Invest remainder of allocation in other play parks.
<b>Angelica Way</b>	2  Need to do something about the mud. Re-floor	3  1 Landscape with nice paving and a couple of seats.  1 No seats please.  1 I have a toddler, but still don't want children close to my windows.	0	Only 5 returns. Use allocation to hard landscape as the area is often very wet.
<b>Caraway</b>	10  10 Want a play park like Rosemary/ Coriander.  2 A bit of up to 12's would be nice	6  5 lower the hedge and shrubs a lot!!	0	16 returns.  Remove overgrown hedge and shrubs.  Ask WCC to get 3 companies to submit ideas for a play park mainly for the under 5s. Use surplus money from Angelica to increase budget.

	<b>Refurbish existing equipment</b>	<b>Add equipment under 5's</b>	<b>Add equipment under 12's</b>	<b>Add new seating</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Cheshire Close</b>	3 yes  There were no comments	3 yes  1 Looking forward to additional equipment	1 yes 1 no  1 Looking forward to additional equipment	4 yes	Only 4 responses, but this play area is well used.  Refurbish existing equipment ,add a seat and if funds allow another piece of play equipment for under 5's.
<b>Mollison Rise</b>	6 yes  22 want the seesaw replaced 20 want the roundabout replaced	2 yes  Add new baby swing	26 yes  12 Add A Giant birds nest swing  11 Add A Zip wire  8Add a large climbing frame  5 Add a big slide  5 Add Monkey bars  Also mentioned Skyline2 and football nets	20 yes  A seat has vanished, this needs to be replaced with a picnic bench in the shade if possible.	There were 26 forms returned, and the area is well used.  Remove seesaw and roundabout, add as much new equipment as can be afforded and will fit in. Giving preference to a Birds nest swing. And a Zip-wire.  Repair gate.  Provide picnic table if possible.