

## **Bexhill Drive play area, Hindley Green – Frequently asked questions**

### **Why has the site been closed for such a long time?**

The site was in private ownership and the decision to close the site was made by the previous owners.

### **When does the Council expect to take over the site?**

The Council have been in discussions with the current owners for many months to bring the site into council use and we expect to take control of the site in January 2021 at the earliest.

### **What will happen when the Council take over the site?**

Just prior to the formal transfer to the Council, we will carry out a full safety inspection, and undertake general maintenance and clear up of the site.

### **Is the existing play equipment safe to use?**

This is unknown at this stage. The play equipment is at least 15 years old and therefore a full technical safety inspection will be required to determine if it meets current standards and if it is safe to use.

### **Is there any funding to improve the play area?**

Unfortunately, there is no capital funding to improve the play area. Any general maintenance will be covered from existing budgets. However moving forward we will explore all available funding options.

### **What will happen if the play equipment isn't safe to use?**

Public safety is a priority for the Council and the equipment will be removed from the site if it is deemed to be beyond economical repair.

### **What will happen if the play equipment is safe to use?**

We will reopen the site and maintain and regularly inspect the equipment in line with all play areas in the borough.

### **Who will be able to use the site if it reopens?**

The site will be open to the general public, as with other council owned public open spaces in the borough. We would also like local schools and uniform groups to use the site.

### **What are the long term options for the whole site?**

Moving forward we would like to upgrade and improve the site to realise its full potential, subject to funding. The initial three proposals under consideration are:

1. Traditional play area with a public open space (as existing) – Traditional equipment such as swings, multi unit, see saw, roundabout

, rockers. These are metal and mechanical in nature and on an artificial surface or on a sand surface or play bark. (number of pieces is dependent on what equipment can fit in the defined area)

2. Natural (trim trail) play area with a community nature park with tree planting, wild flowers etc.- Natural equipment would be majority wooden and range from planks and stepping stones, to wooden log bridges. It would form an agility trail that would have a mixture of equipment for both the younger age and older age range and pieces that also would challenge different ages. This type of equipment is popular in a number of primary schools. The natural landscaping such as tree planting and wild flowers will then be planned around the remaining space.
3. Community nature park- a completely natural site with no play equipment. This would include tree planting and possible community orchard with fruit trees; and the planting of wild flower to improve bio diversity and natural habitat. General landscaping of shrubs and paths would also be including to keep a natural space for residents.

Any other options raised during the community engagement process will be considered.

### **What are the plans for the circular grassed area?**

There are currently no plans at present but we would like your views and ideas for this area. An example could be a community nature park or similar.

### **What if the site attracts Anti-Social Behaviour?**

[Any instances of anti-social behaviour should be reported](#). Our Community Resilience Team will investigate any complaints they receive.

### **Is the site suitable for community events?**

We would like your views as to whether the site could be used for community events. We hope that the local community, schools and uniformed groups will work with the Council and use the site for recreational, cultural and education purposes and that it becomes a focal point of the community that the residents can be proud of.

### **Will the community have a say on any proposed changes to the site?**

We really want to hear your views on how the site can be improved.

A letter has been sent out with details of the community engagement webpage. This webpage will include a survey that the community can complete and submit. We will work with the community and ward councillors to ensure the best outcome for the site. Residents can also contact council officers directly via telephone or email.

**What if my neighbours cannot access the internet but wish to make comments?**

The letter includes details for a named contact officer, who will post out any surveys and answer any enquiries as required.