

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

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Report Originator	Valerie Hitchman Head of Community Services	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i>	
Wards Affected	All	3 rd December 2014	
Title	Outdoor Gyms		

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide general information in respect of outdoor gym provision in the Borough

2. **INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Outdoor gyms are a growing phenomenon within the United Kingdom. Over the last ten years there has been a growing movement for outdoor spaces for adults, not just for children and young people. Trim trails were probably the forerunner of outdoor gyms and a small number could be found dotted about the UK. A good example of a trim trail can be found in a Victorian park near Skegness seafront. Smaller versions of trim trails were developed locally for children, for example at Broughton Village Hall, Charlotte Place Park and Hall Meadow Park in Kettering.

The first outdoor gym equipment was installed in Charlotte Place Park many years ago, the two items provided were prototypes and were supplied free of charge by Wicksteed Playscapes.

The next provision was unplanned, but was an offer that could not be refused. Again, the equipment was provided free of charge with Kettering Borough Council (KBC) funding its installation. The timescale for installation was very short and the equipment was installed at Hall Meadow Park, adjacent to Kettering Conference Centre. This installation has worked well and has complemented the existing play provision that now caters for all ages, toddlers to senior residents.

The next outdoor gym provision was led by Mawsley Parish Council and was part of their plan for play facilities for older children and adults. Mawsley carried out their own consultation, submitted funding applications, secured funding and delivered the whole project in May 2013.

Currently agreed projects are based at Rockingham Road Pleasure Park and Millennium Park, Brambleside, both in Kettering. The project at Rockingham Road Pleasure Park is not only an outdoor gym, but will also feature enhancements to the play area in this Green Flag park. As part of its Green Flag status, there is a requirement for a management plan and an action plan which is reviewed on an ongoing basis by KBC and the Friends of Rockingham Road Park Group (FORRP). Enhancements to the play area and the provision of an outdoor gym have been long standing objectives of the management plan. An intensive consultation was carried out with both the

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local school and the community. This evidence supported a successful £48,000 funding application to Waste Recycling Environmental Limited (WREN). An additional £10,000 has come from KBC's capital programme and £2,500 from the County Councillor Empowerment Fund. This has allowed KBC to procure a contractor to deliver the scheme. Construction is currently in progress and will be completed by the end of December 2013 (Photo 2). A key point of interest is that the children's play equipment is also based on 'fit-play' as it was selected for its high degree of physical interaction. Moreover the play equipment will be painted the same colour as the fitness equipment to further blur the lines between the two.

The Brambleside outdoor gym project has been led by the Brambleside Community Association (Photo 1). KBC submitted a £15,000 successful funding application to WREN. This outdoor gym will be delivered in 2014. The play area will also be re-worked to encourage a more 'physical environment'. Fit-play type play equipment will also be considered for this site.

There has been a lot of interest from other parish and town councils. KBC are currently supporting Desborough Town Council for an outdoor gym and shelter within Dunkirk Avenue Recreation Ground. The Town council will be carrying out a consultation exercise with local residents on the boundary of the park, which will then be reviewed before consultation with potential users of the scheme. The outcome of both consultations will be used to inform the funding applications. Once the scheme and funding have been agreed, the project will be delivered.

Outdoor Gyms are only one aspect of free or very affordable play/sport provision that has been provided within the Borough, directly by KBC or by other organisations. Some examples are:-

- Healthy Happy Families – Delivered at Children's Centre and Schools
- Wicksteed Park
- Kettering by the Sea (KBC)
- Museum and Art Gallery Children's Activities
- Summer Play Schemes
- Summer Sports Schemes
- Equipped Play Areas
- Multi Wheeled Sports Facilities
- Tennis Courts
- Multi Use Games Areas
- Bowls Greens
- BMX tracks
- Grassed football pitches

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- Artificial Sports pitches
- Athletics Track
- Allotment Sites
- 'Walking for Health' Health Walks

There are a number of potential health benefits from having outdoor gym provision in the Borough. Sefton Council have produced an evaluation of the use of their outdoor gym provision and its impacts on the health of their residents. They reported that residents had found that access to this equipment had increased their levels of physical activity and also reduced barriers to being active such as cost and transport. Research has also shown that contact with green spaces and the natural environment promotes better physical and mental health, and also improves self-esteem and confidence.

3. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT

3.1 Any enhanced or new play provision should always consider the impact on residents living on the boundary of public open spaces. The normal sequence of events for such provision is as follows:

- Consultation with residents on boundaries
- Review
- Consultation with users
- Review
- Provide feedback to all and finally agree scheme
- Seek and secure funding
- Procure and deliver scheme
- Celebration event

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The PPG17 Assessment provided KBC with the information to develop and adopt the 'Open Space Supplementary Planning Document' (SPD) in 2008. The SPD provides standards for quality, quantity and accessibility standards for different types of open space. This includes 'provision for children' and provision for young people. These standards are used by KBC when responding to planning applications of ten or more dwellings. As a result of new housing developments, additional play provision may be provided. The full SPD may be found on KBC's website but for ease of reference the standards have been replicated at Appendix 1.

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If there is no on site requirement, an off site contribution is sought if there are existing play sites within the accessibility standard. The SPD does not consider equipped site for older adults but outdoor gyms are suitable for young people and could be considered by developers as part of on site provision under the typology of 'provision for young people'

5. FINANCIAL RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are additional resource implications, and installations have required successful external funding applications. The additional equipment will be included in existing Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) inspections that area carried out twice per annum.

6. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no additional human resource implications in respect of this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no additional legal implications in respect of this report.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 To note the resource implications and the active role of community groups in securing funding for the recent installations of outdoor gyms.

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Background Papers:

Title

Date

Contact Officer

Previous Minutes/Reports:

Ref:

Date:

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Photo 1: Brambleside Consultation



Photo 2 : Rockingham Road Pleasure Park Agreed Scheme

BRAND NEW FITNESS ZONE



WICKSTEED playscapes www.wicksteed.co.uk

COMING SOON.....
ROCKINGHAM ROAD PLEASURE PARK

Kettering
Borough Council