



‘Fountain Fields’ Public Consultation

Middlewich Vision Parks & Play Areas Group - Report

Fountain Fields Park, Queen Street, Middlewich, Cheshire CW10 9AR

Public Consultation Event: Thursday 28 January 2016 - 3pm until 7pm

Fountain Fields Park - Brief Background

Fountain Fields Park was officially opened in 1952 and it has been the focus of many community events, carnivals and activities over the years and it is considered a town centre flagship green space

In 2016, Fountain Fields Park remains a well used site. The current facilities include a tennis court, bowling green, small outdoor adult gym, a range of play equipment, toilet facilities (officially closed to the public) and a small office/building with kitchen facilities (also closed to the public).

The site is completely enclosed by metal fencing and the grounds contain a wide selection of shrubs and trees. The park is bordered by three roads – one is an entrance point to the Middlewich Tesco Superstore, one is a gated road to the Wallcroft Gardens mews houses and the third road is Queen Street which is heavily used and frequently congested due to the location of the nearby high school and Tesco store main entrance.

Over the years the park has undergone routine maintenance but large sections of the site and the equipment have deteriorated or become unsuitable and this is restricting people’s enjoyment of the park.

In 2012, the Middlewich Vision Parks & Play Areas Group listed Fountain Fields Park as a key priority project. The aim is to secure enough funding to create a park that the town can be proud of, that is fit for purpose and can enjoyed by residents and visitors alike for generations to come.

To ensure that the future rejuvenation of Fountain Fields Park reflects what local people want, a consultation event was organised to seek people’s opinions and ideas about the equipment and facilities for the site as a whole. This report highlights the results of the consultation which took place on Thursday 28 January 2016 over a four hour period.

Fountain Fields Park Consultation - Actual handwritten comments (filed)

The comments listed below are individual comments written by members of the public at the Fountain Fields Consultation Event which took place on 28 January 2016 at the Wych Centre, Civic Way, Middlewich

1. New Equipment

Natural wooden climbing trees
Buggy Park, Lockers for Bags
Baby changing area
Safe climbing equipment
Flipping Bars
Small Helter Skelter
Trampolines built into the ground (example can be seen at Winsford Knights Grange)
Obstacle course
Hill/mound with slide – safe and fun to climb grassy hill (achievable on the existing slope maybe?)
Tree house on a pole with zip line
Climbing Frame
Climbing frame made of wood (like Middlewich Primary School)
Balance trail from wood
Monkey Bars
Adventure course/jungle climb
Zip Wire
Sandpit with diggers, buckets and spades (covered at night)
See saw and roundabout
A tall slide
Swings, slides and a net to climb on. A path to ride bikes on. A tunnel
Things on the floor to jump on e.g. ABC Snake. Think Moss Lane/Booth lane
Keep adult keep fit equipment

2. Facilities

Picnic benches
Use the building for food and drink (cafe)
More shaded areas
Toilets open
Well maintained gardens/borders
Shaded areas to get out of the summer heat/wet weather
More benches and picnic tables and more trees
Picnic Tables
Keep toilets unlocked and open especially after 3.30pm in summer after school
The toilets are always locked. After school on sunny days we go to the Kinderton to play because they have toilets
Enclosed dog play area and bin
Automatic fountain like Piccadilly Gardens in Manchester for kids to run through
Clean toilets and baby changing facilities

Paddling pool like Congleton Park
Childrens Party Area
Refreshment area would be great for long stay visits
Boules Area = low maintenance. All ages etc
Toilets open later and open after school in the summer

3. Park Layout

Smooth paths around the park for roller skating or scooters
Bins that are regularly emptied and won't get tipped over or things blown out off
Shrubs should be chosen that do not grow more than 4 – 5ft high so that they do not need trimming
Tall hedge along entrance to Tesco Car Park should be maximum 5ft high so the park can be seen from all around
Raised grassed areas. Make tunnels/bridge over sturdy stuff 'Rope Play'
Cycle area/walk area around the park

4. Access and Safety in and around the park

Not obvious it is a park – make it more visible (this would tie in with the ornate gates idea and the heritage board)
CCTV – overwhelming request
Locked at night
Higher fencing to keep secure at night
Please can parking and traffic be sorted before someone is hurt. School times are very dangerous (potentially a separate issue but can any form of landscaping etc help resolve whatever the issues are?)
Gates that stay closed around the play area (example Booth Lane Skate Park)
Gates should be closed from evening until morning plus CCTV

5. Innovative ideas

Could be another venue for FAB Festival and local young bands. (somebody else added 'Totally Agree' to this comment)
Bird Hide and Bird watching area
Separate older/younger equipment like Sandbach Park
No dogs
Community Food containers 'Take & Share' See/refer to Holmes Chapel
Measured track for running

6. Events/Activities

Joint uniform organisation events. Brownies/Guides/Cubs/Scouts etc And Sportsday/music
More youth events and cafe Youth Centre
Teddy bears picnics and events during term time
Football. Scrap the bowling green
Monthly football match
'Middlewich Mummies' Summer Meals (local group on FB, good membership)

Childrens Gardening Club
Weekend Childrens Festival, bouncy castle, crafts etc. Age appropriate

7. Additional Important Comments

Go into schools and engage with teenagers – show effects/pictures of small children with glass injuries.
Shock factor
Prevention of play area becoming very muddy and boggy (sadly Stallard Way suffers from this)

15 DECEMBER 2015 Consultation Forms

A separate, earlier form was also distributed in 2015 as part of the consultation process. The content of completed forms generally reflects the comments in points 1 – 7 listed on pages 2, 3 and 4.

The responses are variable and the percentage of returns was too small to truly reflect the general thoughts of the public. However, I have picked out some common statements which were repeated by the majority of submissions. Please note the number next to each question below reflects their order in the paper survey.

8. Do you walk your dogs in the park?

Overwhelmingly 'no' was the response and people felt dogs should be barred. A small number of responses requested that a special dog area should be set aside.

13. List Two things in the park you would get rid of:

Bowling Green
Tennis Courts
One of the netted areas (tennis court)
The fencing around the Bowling Green
Teenage Boys
Outdated equipment
Ramp steps to the slide need replacing
Hard surfaces in the ball courts
Bushes/Plants
High hedges
Litter
Steps going down the slope (next to the tennis court area)

14. List three things you like about the park

Enclosed area for football/basketball
Pleasant access from the car park to Queens Street

Facilities for different ages
Safe with gates around
Fairly clean
Certain flower beds
Open space – clear lines of site
Lots of room for running but safely fenced
Ease of nearby car parking
Childrens play area is good
Tennis/Football court (given that many people disliked this space maybe the suggestion of halving it and sprucing it up

15. If you, or a member of your family, has learning or physical challenges what could we include in the park to make your visit a better one? List up to three

Higher bench seats for people with mobility problems
Easier access (wide enough for wheelchairs etc)
Play equipment that can be used by wheelchair users

16. Other ideas/suggestions to improve the park

Keep fit at the weekend
Tai Chi
Keep fit on site
Friends of Fountain Fields
Allotment area
Garden area
Sensory Outdoor Garden