



FAIR OAK & HORTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

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15 March 2021

Dear Resident,

RE: PEMBERS HILL DRIVE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE.

The Parish Council would like to update you on the situation regarding the public open space.

Unfortunately, due to various issues there has been a delay in the legal transfer of the open space and subsequently the ability to be able to provide facilities on the open space which the Parish Council have been anxious to implement. For this we apologise but it has been out of our hands.

However, we are pleased to advise you that the Parish Council, Eastleigh Borough Council (Planning Authority) and the Developer, Drew Smith have agreed a way forward and conditions required in the planning application will now be completed over the next few weeks and include extra safety fencing at the end of the footpath, litter bins and some additional planting, which will then allow for the formal adoption of the public open space by the Borough Council which will then be devolved to the Parish Council for the future management and maintenance.

Residents may recall that a short initial survey was carried out by the Parish Council to try and ascertain what facilities residents would like to see on the open space and the function it should play.

There was no out right direction with many comments given from leaving it as it is, to providing a play area, increased landscaping, a sensory garden, and space for community events such as BBQ's.

The Parish Council must assess all the requests and concerns residents have and look to provide a suitable balance of facilities which would meet the requirements of what it is legally required to provide as part of the planning application and what residents would like.

The planning application agreement called for a local children's play area to be provided on the public open space and this was secured in a legal document known as a Section 106 agreement and to be funded by the developer and implemented by the council.

Of the residents who responded a traditional play area was not wanted, but those who did want a play area, suggested a natural imaginative wooden play area. The Parish Council are currently working up a design brief for this aimed for young children up to about 8/9 years of age. Residents will be invited to vote on the design they would like to see implemented in due course.

We would also like to allay residents' fears about a covered young people's meeting shelter and the Parish Council can confirm that there is no plan or funding for this type of facility.

Once the current landscaping gets established it should be sufficient and will provide screening and enhance the look of the open space as well as providing habitats for birds and insects. The Parish Council are also looking to provide 'bug' hotels and areas of naturalised bulb planting around the open space.

Some residents have requested seating and although there were some concerns that these could become a meeting point for young people and thus lead to anti-social behaviour, this is only a

perception and if it were an issue, it would be a police matter, but can always be reviewed if necessary.

As a start, the Parish Council will look to commission two bespoke 'chunky' wooden seats to be sited on the open space along the Knowle Lane boundary.

One of the comments was for an area for residents to be able to use for community events such as BBQ's and the Parish Council welcome this.

The Parish Council are looking to work up some of these projects and enhancements in the next few weeks so that once it becomes responsible for the Management and Maintenance of the open space it will be able to start implementing them.

Thank you for your patience over the delay, which was not of the Parish Council's liking, but we are confident we have now been able to agree the way forward for the benefit and enjoyment of the community.

Should you have any further comments or ideas please do not hesitate in getting in touch with me on the email below.

Kind regards

Melanie Stephens
clerk@fairoak-pc.gov.uk

Clerk to the Parish Council