

## **Appendix D: Hunsdon Playground Report**

### **A. Introduction (updated 2019)**

Hunsdon is a small village in East Hertfordshire with a population of 1080 in 450 households, with 190 children under 16 (17.6%) (figures from 2011 Census data). The popular village primary school is currently oversubscribed.

Hunsdon is a well-connected village being 10 miles from Stansted Airport, 6 miles from the M11 and 4 miles from a fast (30 minutes) train service directly into London Liverpool Street station. Accordingly, it is a popular village for commuters and is facing several planning applications for housing developments, over and above those specified in the Parish Plan (33 houses).

Since the 2011 census a new development of 16 houses has been completed and there are 3 developments under construction, totalling 40 houses. None of these developments include green play space for children.

Within the village there are two recreation areas -

The Dell, owned by East Herts District Council, which is a small, underused, hummocky green space.

The Recreation Ground which is owned by the Parochial Church Council and leased to the Parish Council. The Recreation Ground contains the only playground equipment - 4 swings, a climbing frame with slide, a springer and a seesaw in a fenced area. With Section 106 money from the already completed development and based on the results of the 2016 consultation, the springer was replaced, the seesaw was removed, a climbing frame installed, safety surfacing was installed, and 2 picnic benches purchased. Two very poor-quality tennis courts adjoin the recreation ground, which also houses a 5-a-side football pitch. There is currently planning permission for the building of a chapel on the Recreation Ground, which will result in the loss of approximately 25% of the area (based on the measured site boundary of the planning application). The planned building does not impinge on the current fenced playground area.

### **B. Overall Aim of the 2016 Consultation**

To consult with all Hunsdon residents and village organisations on what equipment they would like to see in the Playground, and on wider recreational facilities in the village.

### **C. Consultation Objectives**

The objectives of the consultation are to ascertain: -

- What type of play equipment was needed?
- Preferred materials for play equipment
- What wider recreational facilities were wanted in the village?
- How often people visited the playground
- Age groups of children living in or visiting homes in the village.
- To gather views on the use of an aviation theme to reflect the village's history.

## **D. Methodology**

**Questionnaires:** an A5 questionnaire was distributed to all households in the village. Printing costs were paid by a village charity.

Separate, age-appropriate questionnaires were completed by Cubs and Beavers and by the school. These mainly consisted of picture checklists which covered a wide variety of equipment involving balance, climbing and sharing equipment.

### **Open Meeting:**

An open meeting was held in the village hall. Draft plans were displayed, together with photographs from other local playgrounds and pictures of different types of playground equipment.

## **E. Household Survey Results**

Number of Respondents; 52

1. Do you visit Hunsdon Playground?  
 Yes - 38     No - 11    2 - rarely    1 - No Response
  
2. If no, why not?  
 Lack of facilities - 4     Unsafe     No children or children too old - 9
  
3. If yes, how often (weather permitting)?  
 Every day - 1     Few times a week 12     Few times a month 18  
 once a month - 7    Occasionally - 1
  
4. Do you think additional play and recreation facilities need to be provided?  
 Yes - 49     No - 1  
Unsure - 1    Maybe 1 or 2 more - 1

### **Comments**

20 comments on the theme of "Not a sufficient variety of equipment and nothing for older children". "Dated", "old", "Tired"

One refers to having to travel to Little Hadham or Stansted Abbots for equipment for older children.

Two mention creating a community meeting space where people can go and sit.

One would like to see a toilet and 2 or 3 supervisors

5. What type of material would you like the play equipment made of?  
 Natural - 8     Metal - 3     Mixture - 35    Don't mind - 3  
Comments: - wood is easy to burn, needs more maintenance, not practical  
metal is a target for metal thieves

6. Do you agree that an air/aviator theme for the play area would create an important link to the area's use/history?

Yes - 37       No - 9

Don't mind - 1

Other Comments:

What about other historical links?

Do we need a theme?

Not sure a theme is a good idea

8. What type of equipment would you like to see in the play area?

	No. of ticks	% of 52 responses	Ranking
Slide	22	42%	8
Zip Wire	41	79%	1
Monkey Bars	24	46%	7
Bucket Swing	36	70%	2
Swings	27	52%	5
Climbing Frame	29	56%	4
Bouncy Bike	15	29%	9
Bouncy Bench	10	19%	11
Roundabout	25	48%	6
Seesaw	14	27%	10
Cone Climber	33	63%	3

9. Please indicate your views on what you feel is needed (additional to toddler and infant equipment already mentioned)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Youth Facilities 11 – 16 yrs</b>				
Basketball / Multisport Wall	34	13	2	
Outdoor gym	24	11	8	
Bike / Scooter Park	22	16	4	6
<b>Existing Facilities</b>				
Update / Improve grass pitches	22	20	2	1
Resurface Tennis Court	30	13	3	
<b>Amenities</b>				
Buggy Park	4	12	5	8

**NB There was some confusion about a bike/scooter park - somewhere to park them or a track to ride them on.**

**Comments**

Seating & picnic tables mentioned specifically in 6 comments

Activities/equipment specified - basketball, zip wire (2), obstacle course (2), hill slide, climbing cone (2), climbing frame, bigger football goals (2), table tennis table, multisports wall, better football pitch (2), playhouse, wooden train, equipment with seating

2 requests for more signage about dogs - 1 request for somewhere to park dogs!

1 request for supervisor

1 request for toilets

**Age range of responding households:**

0-6 **15** 6-11 **21** 11-15 **16** 16 – 19 **8**

20 – 29 yrs **3** 30 -39 yrs **15** 40 – 49 yrs **20** 50 – 59 yrs **7** 60+ **13**

**F. Cubs Survey Results**

This was conducted as a picture ticking exercise and discussion in their Sixes. Most votes were for:

Activity Net 6-12

Rota Glide

Goal Wall

Pendulum swing

Activity Basket Swing

Comments made during the discussion how to improve the playground included ideas for additions including a Zip Wire, Mini swimming pool, toilet facilities, table tennis tables, gymnastics ground, football and basketball wall and picnic tables.

We want a chilling out place

Like the climbing nets - lots of routes

Straight bars are not good fun

Better monkey bars

We love the pendulum swing; they have one at Stansted Abbots

Make the existing football goals higher

Obstacle course

Astro Turf

Football & Basketball wall

Put it near parents so the little ones can use it.

Better climbing things

**G. Beaver Survey results**

The survey was conducted in the same way as the Cub survey - picture ticking and discussion.

Most votes were for:

Activity Basket Swing

Goal Wall

Aero tilt

Diamond Net 6-12

Rota Rock

## **H. School Results**

2 Age appropriate (3-6 years and 7-11 years) picture checklists were given to all children at Hunsdon School. Children were asked to put a smiley face next to their choices of playground equipment.

In the 3-6-year-old category there were 47 responses. The top 5 choices were: zip wire, climbing frame, Basket Swing, slide and pendulum swing, in that order.

In the 7-11-year-old category there were 59 responses. The top 5 choices were: zip wire, Rota Glide, Pendulum swing, Activity Net and climbing frame in that order.

## **I. Conclusions**

There is support in the community for a refurbished playground, attractive and accessible for all ages.

The current playground is underused - parents prefer to take their children to other playgrounds where the equipment is more varied and challenging

Playground equipment - favourites are a zip wire, basket/pendulum swing, net climbers, balance equipment such as rota glide/rota rock/aero tilt, climbing frame

Equipment materials - a mixture is favoured

Picnic tables and seating are needed

Other recreational facilities: outright favourite is goal/basketball wall.

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