

## PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**Title:** Major Projects

**Contact Officer:** Project Officer – Adam Cook

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### Background

As you are aware, Witney Town Council's Open Spaces Strategy cited 5x themes to deliver improvements for our community: Parks, Sport, Leisure, Infrastructure & Effectiveness.

This report aims to provide you with an update on the major projects linked to Parks and Recreation, which are: 'Wheeled Sports Park', 'West Witney Sports & Social Club', 'Courtside Master Plan', 'Raleigh Crescent Sports & Social Area', 'Splashpad' and 'Parking Restrictions on the Leys'.

### The Leys - Wheeled Sports Park



The park was opened at the end of March 2024 and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The project is now complete, but officers are in the process of planning a "Street Art competition/event" to be held in the Skatepark to; tackle the increase in ugly/offensive graffiti, make the park more vibrant and increase social value.

#### Event update:

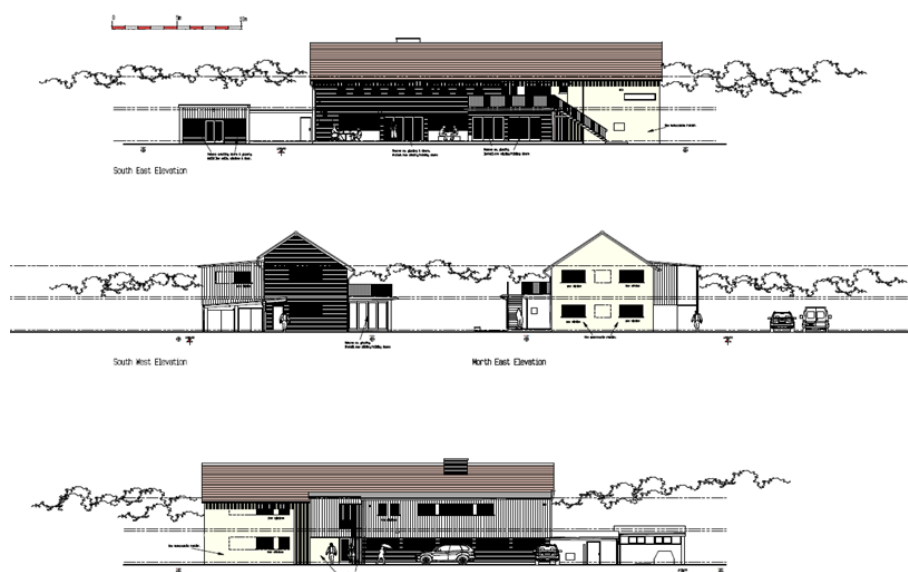
- Proposed dates for event to be held is either the 16<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> September
- Witney Town Council to partner with MES Creations, who are a local street art academy who are responsible for the artwork at the Lakes underpass and A40 bridge (by Premier Inn and Lidl). They have 10x local artists ready to take part.
- Officers have had to change the approval process to encourage entries by dropping the requirement to pre-approve designs prior to the event. This is because, street art philosophy relies heavily on creativity whilst painting and a pre-approval process would have resulted in no artists entering the competition. MES have confirmed

that all their artists conform to a strict code of conduct to ensure art is not offensive, political or provocative. Officers have managed the risk by agreeing with MES that artists will abide by their existing code of conduct and our brief. In addition, MES are passionate about this events success and will take full responsibility for all artwork and take immediate action should officers or councillors dislike any artwork.

## Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

## West Witney Sports & Social Club (WWSSC)



## Current Situation

- Officers have identified a funding opportunity with the FA Foundation to amalgamate this building renovation project, with the expected creation of a 3G pitch and FA offices at the West Witney Site. This will enable WTC to apply for 60% funding (approx. £1.2m) for the total project cost from the FA and reduce the burden for Witney Town Council/taxpayers following the closure of the Government's Community Ownership Fund.
- Officers have made decision to temporarily pause the renovation project to explore funding requirements and options with WODC and the FA.
- Initial meetings have taken place involving WODC, the FA and WTC to agree next steps to assess feasibility of amalgamating projects and funding criteria.

## Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

## The Leys - Courtside Hub



### **Current Situation**

- Please see separate confidential Courtside update listed as Agenda Item 12.

### **Recommendations**

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

## Raleigh Crescent – New Sports and Social Area



### **Current Situation**

- Officers and Councillors have conducted 3x public consultation events at Witney Carnival, West Witney Fun Day and at the cadet hut in Raleigh Crescent. Officers also hand delivered letters to residents overlooking proposed site.

- Officers created and promoted an online survey which received over 100 responses, which was an encouraging level of engagement.
- Results and data are still being analysed and a detailed report will be published shortly. However, the highlights are:
  - Versatile MUGA including additional games preferred
  - ‘Ninja Warrior’ style assault course was popular with youngsters
  - Hard standing floor preferred to grass
  - Open, circular seating preferred over covered seating. Some seats with a backrest required for breast feeding mothers.
  - Pull-up bars and dip beams preferred over moving gym equipment and sit-up platforms
  - Large consensus that this park is much needed for local youngsters
  - Need for lighting/CCTV to discourage Anti-Social Behaviour

Common concerns/comments:

- New park would create more anti-social behaviour
  - Why can't the park be placed in Deer Park Field?
  - On street parking is an issue for many residents – will this park increase the parking problem?
- Officers have noted the concerns residents have expressed and are exploring the rationale and suitability of the Ralegh Crescent location with WODC.
  - Officers will use results and data to create brief for tender and engage interested suppliers.

**Recommendations**

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

**The Leys Splashpad – reactivation and refurbishment**



## Current Situation

- The Splashpad has been reactivated for the summer period. Work has been carried out to repair several components, such as pumps, electronics and drainage pipework, which means the community can now enjoy this popular park during Summer.
- Started work on exploring refurbishment of Splashpad for 2025 to improve appearance, reliability, energy efficiency and water usage and engaged with interested suppliers.
- Community consultation was successful with over 100 responses to online survey and public engagement at Witney Carnival and West Witney Fun Day. Highlights were:
  - Needs to be more reliable
  - Colourful
  - Some overground features/showers

## Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

## The Leys Parking Restrictions



## Current Situation

- Officers have researched and clarified the intricate process to implement a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).
- Courtside have offered to assist with any associated costs.
- Officers are currently assessing the appropriate level of parking restrictions to impose on the parking bays.

## Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.