

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 3 August 2011

VICTORIA PARK PLAY AREA

The new play area in Victoria Park is proving to be extremely popular and is very well used.

Newbury Town Council has received some comments, both positive and negative, from members of the public with regards to the play area not being fenced.

Fencing provision was investigated thoroughly and expert advice was sought during the design stage. Before deciding on the final scheme of the new play area we discussed fencing with ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents), Playbuilder and Sport England. They were all fully supportive of creating the new play area as an inclusive open space.

In addition to this, the new play area was designed to give the flexibility for expansion in the future when further funds become available. Once a play area has been fenced it becomes difficult to expand without relocating and increasing the amount of fencing. We shortly anticipate adding to the already popular facility with additional swings and springers, and in the future, once new funding is secured, other popular equipment.

We also found that the timber fencing around the old play area was regularly subjected to acts of vandalism and required costly ongoing maintenance at the taxpayer's expense. Therefore metal fencing would be needed but is extremely expensive to purchase and install.

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There are other play areas in Newbury that are fenced (for instance, Northcroft Park, City Playground, Shaw and Stroud Green). If parents are particularly concerned that there is no fence at Victoria Park the other play areas are available to them.

The new play area at Victoria Park has a modern open feel and integrates well with the openness of its surroundings, creating an environment which is both safe and open for all to enjoy.

Councillor Julian Swift-Hook (Leader of the Council) said, “A full risk assessment has been carried out, which considered the issue of dogs and the adjacent pond, but appropriate mitigation aspects such as signage and plenty of benches to enable parent supervision have been included. We will however listen to users comments and if more needs to done we will consider it.”

END

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