

DARSHAM VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
PLAYGROUND CONSULTATION REPORT - 21st August 2023

Introduction

In July 2023 the Darsham Village Hall Management Committee invited residents of the village to share their views on plans to create a children's play area behind the village hall. The section of land to be used was designated a local area for play within the Cheyney Green development plans. It is now time to move forward with this project, creating an accessible space that will offer stimulating and engaging opportunities for play to the children in our community.

This report seeks to summarise the Consultation document below sent out to all the Village between 1st and 13th August 2023. These forms were numbered to keep control of the potential of duplications/photocopies. A control sheet was also utilised to ensure that all properties in the village received a copy. The Treasurer also sent out a whatsapp asking people to contact him if they hadn't received their document to complete; there was one response to this.

Scope

This Consultation incorporated all the residents of Darsham Village. In total 227 Consultation documents were delivered. Of these 89 were returned – a 39% response rate.

Findings

Question 1a asked would members of your household, or visitors to your household, use the new play area? **55% said yes, 43% said no, 2% had no view.**

Question 1b asked - if yes, how often would they be likely to use the new play area: more than once a week; weekly; fortnightly; monthly; or less often. The results are as follows:

more than once a week – 8 respondents
weekly – 13 respondents
fortnightly – 5 respondents
monthly – 5 respondents
less often – 17 respondents

Question 1c asked into which age bracket would those from your household hoping to use the new play area fall? Please state the number of children who fall into each category. The results are as follows:

0 to 4 years – 42 children 5 to 8 years – 54 children

Question 2 asked which age range/s do you think the new play area should cater for? The results are as follows:

0 to 4 years – 49 children 5 to 8 years – 56 children

Question 3 asked which type of play equipment would you like to see installed in the play area? Please rank the following options from 1-10, where 1 is your most preferred playground equipment and 10 is your least preferred playground equipment. Some respondents did not complete this section in full; any non - ticked boxes were counted as 11 points. Allowing for the above, the ranking of preferences for play equipment is as follows:

1. Swings
2. Slide
3. Toddler climbing frame
4. Adventure trail
5. Imaginative play

6. Seesaw
7. 5+ climbing frame
8. Rockers
9. Interactive panel
10. Spinners

Question 4 asked which size play area would you prefer to occupy the designated section of land? (The size chosen would have a bearing on the number of pieces of equipment that could safely fit into the play area.) The results are as follows:

105m2 – 36%

180m2 – 60%

No view – 4%

Summary of question 5 – what would a new play area in Darsham mean to you/your household:

- A majority of respondents felt that this is a long overdue facility, and would give children a place to play in a safe environment, and would be good for their physical and mental development – in line with current government guidance.
- Some respondents claimed that this would not add any value to the village, and could become an eyesore.

Summary of question 6 - Feedback/concerns

- Nothing planned for older children at this point in time.
- Concern regarding funding of upkeep and maintenance.
- Concern that teenagers could use this as a gathering point for smoking, leaving rubbish etc; and also add to noise levels.
- Budget should be allowed to include trees and soft planting around playground areas.
- Speed of project delivery appears to be slow.
- The inclusion of a bench(s) for people to sit whilst children play was seen as a requirement.
- Playground equipment colour to be sympathetically chosen to fit in with local environment.

In response to the above, and other points raised, the DVH Committee would seek to have sensible risk management and rules regarding: times for playground usage; need for supervision by parents etc. We will seek to take into account peoples representative views where possible.

Next steps

1. We will go out to a minimum of three groundwork contractors to obtain quotations for the full groundworks and playground preparation.
2. We will request quotations for play equipment from a minimum of three suppliers taking into account the findings we have regarding children's ages and play equipment preferences.
3. From the above we can then finalise a budget and determine the successful bidders.
4. We would then submit an application for planning permission to encompass the above, and subsequently seek any required grant funding for this programme of works.