

Oxford Road Play Area



This area has been popular with residents and visitors for many years, though somewhat eclipsed in 2010 by Dovehouse “Come and Play”. It was turned around in partnership with West Oxfordshire District Council, who helped secure funding from new housing developments at Eynsham East and Merton Court to add to the Parish Council’s existing play area budget, and played an invaluable role with design and management.

The new park includes a 25 metre zip-wire, large sandpit area with sit-on digger, ground-level trampoline, mounds with bridge and slide, climbing frame, space net, seating and more – at a total cost of just over £140,000. Equipment and installation were supplied by Blakedown Sport & Play, who have a reputation for high quality, safe, challenging and interactive playgrounds. Plans and equipment were subject to careful consultation with local residents (including young users), the police and Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association. Parish Clerk Malcolm Anderson said: “Local residents came up with plenty of suggestions and we’ve tried to take on board as many of these as possible. The park will cater for a range of ages and I’m sure it will provide a great place where they can meet and play together.”

Construction began on 11 June 2012 and the gates re-opened on 5 September. The work was scheduled to finish in time for (most of) the school holiday, with planting deferred until autumn to help it establish. Unfortunately prolonged wet weather delayed refurbishment by some weeks. The Parish Council agreed to turf instead of seed in the most heavily used areas, to speed things up a little, only to run into a dryer spell!

The completed park is managed and maintained by Eynsham Parish Council. The Play Area Committee continues to explore options for improving the skateboard area and has not forgotten Witney Road. Chairman Richard Andrews said: “We’re always interested to hear from parents and carers, as well as young people themselves. Please get in touch with your comments and suggestions.”

Key milestones are reported overleaf >>

05/02/2011: Members of the Parish Council's Play Area Committee are working with West Oxfordshire District Council's landscape architects on a design for consultation.

Two preliminary concept drawings are available, showing an overview for the north side playing field and more detail for the play area itself. The architects comment:

"This play area is designed to fit within the landscape and uses a combination of natural materials and inclusive play equipment to encourage children of all ages to play freely and with imagination."



15/06/2011: An ambitious refurbishment scheme agreed last night by the Play Area Committee opened for consultation today. Key features and equipment proposals follow:

- Equipment: nest swing, aerial runaway, springers, ground trampoline, see-saw, space net (single activity net), trim trail, multi-climber small (Borneo), bridge, sand play tables;
- Fewer logs in the 'logs and boulder' features, no tree in sand pit;
- Benches (2 posts and a plank as at Dovehouse Close) to be adult size;
- Bow top metal fencing;
- Consider simplifying boundary line - making straighter;
- Keep planting on the corner away from football field (3m gap from the corner of the football field);
- Skate park to be considered separately and after Witney Road - a similar open shelter was suggested.

16/08/2011: Following the meeting on 14 June two mounds were incorporated in the plan. A connecting bridge was suggested and a slide down one side. Further adjustments were agreed:

- More comfortable seating. Three benches were included in the plan;
- Swings accessible for disabled children;
- A sand digger instead of the springers;
- A double-seated see-saw;
- Adjustment to the border near the football field, to increase the gap;
- Moving one of the existing litter bins;
- A gate in a different colour from the fence - yellow was suggested;
- The hedge would not be needed;
- Costings for a 4-person swing to be placed near the skate ramps.

Extensive consultation about the site ended on 30 September and a display in Market Square, arranged to coincide with the second Eynsham Fruit Festival on 24 September, was very well received.



16/11/2011: The Play Area Committee considered detailed design sheet 3 last night. They agreed to replace the Borneo climber with a Kompan slide 6; to keep a climbing wall rather than a single rope climber; and to have a zip wire included in the quote. The trim trail is to be costed separately. If funds allow, consideration will be given to a shelter near the skate park.