

Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee notes for 14 December

122. To consider five-year plans for the Town Council's parks, including the following:

- 122.1 An update on planting plans, including scheduling a Zoom meeting with Norse – Zoom call still needs to be arranged, on my list but not forgotten.
- 122.2 The cost of over-entrance archway signs – I have used the measurements that Paul (the Community Warden) has taken to seek quotations. Will circulate quotations once received.
- 122.3 The cost of items relating to the Kensington Gardens centenary – Pending further information from the Friends of Kensington Gardens' AGM this week.

124. To consider whether to explore the option of installing swift bird boxes in the Town Council's parks

Cllr Brooks has kindly been looking into this. I asked about the mess and noise (particularly as a call sign needs to be played), if we are to potentially install these onto cafes in our parks. I also asked about the need for an electricity supply if a call sign needs to be played, and whether the noise of an outdoor seating area may scare the birds away. The following response has been received from the Suffolk Bird Group:

Nothing in nature is completely clean, but Swifts come close. The adults either consume or remove the young's faecal sacs from the nest site, there is no pile of droppings beneath. Swifts nest both above and adjacent to Snape Maltings café and my local, The Woodbridge Mariners, has a healthy population in its roof which put on amazing flight displays during June and July. No one complains about the mess.

Swifts are an urban bird, they won't be put off by people below. A call system is essential to attract them in to breed and needs to be played until a couple of nest boxes are occupied, this can take several seasons. It does require a 240V socket inside for the control box, and there is a 10.0m thin speaker cable to be threaded out to where the nest boxes are positioned. I would suggest that if the location is suitable the calls are timed to play before the café opens, and after it closes. The volume is adjustable, it doesn't need to be blasted out if there are neighbours affected.

The main benefit of having nesting swifts is their acrobatic displays, something that will wow the customers there. I've attached a link below a link to a recent ITV report into our conservation work.

<https://www.itv.com/news/anglia/2021-08-10/communities-across-the-region-come-together-to-save-the-swifts>

Please feel free to email me photographs of where you think would be best. 4.5m high with a clear line of flight is needed, and where the call system can be plugged in and the the cable threaded out. Not all buildings are suitable though.

126. To progress the decision of Full Council to install reflective strips and/or spotlights at the bicycle racks in Normanston Park, within a maximum budget of £6,000 (under delegated authority to this Sub-Committee)

Advice on appropriate measures and cost is pending.

127. To consider installing spotlights at the Normanston Park Skate Park (some aspects may be confidential)

The AID Committee discussed this in confidential session. Norse have recommended against spotlights but I have gone back for further advice following AID's discussions and am awaiting a response.

128.2 A priority order for play area refurbishments – A site visit to Rosedale Park is strongly recommended, but the most urgent issues identified there in the Play Inspection Report have been addressed.

128.3 Refurbishment options for the St Margaret's Plain play area – Site visits with two suppliers have been arranged for early January, to which Councillors will be invited. Although no health and safety issues have been identified with the existing equipment in

the Play Inspection report, the equipment is approximately twenty years old and may be nearing end of life. Norse will be in attendance at the first site visit to give their advice on the lifespan of the existing equipment.

128.4 Repair and maintenance of the damaged matting at Fen Park – Replacement pieces have been ordered.

128.5 An update on the installation of gates for the gaps in the fencing around the Fen Park play area – A quotation is pending.

128.7 An update on commencement of approved works at the Britten Road play area (some aspects may be confidential) – Matting is being replaced at the moment. Quotations are still pending for the fence.

128.8 The installation of a music-themed piece of art or play equipment at the Britten Road play area – Quotations/site visit pending.

128.9 Replacement signage – Paul (Community Warden) is looking into this and liaising with our Health and Safety Consultant on the wording, particularly regarding dogs in parks. The advice is that dogs should be kept on a leash (excluding service dogs where applicable) and no fouling. The AID Committee will be asked to consider whether to apply for a Public Space Protection Order to ban dogs from our play areas.

130.1 Progress with the Fen Park and Gainsborough Drive pond dredging – The company who dredged the Fen Park pond back in 2009 has visited Gainsborough Drive and will be providing a quote and their availability for a Zoom call or site visit to quote for Fen Park.