



# **A proposal for the renovation of Summerfields Park**

By Friends of Summerfields Park

February 2022

## **1. Introduction**

I personally moved into Summerfields in 2006 when the park was mostly furnished. It had a toddler swing on the top level. 2 swings and a medium slide on the middle section. A bank slide from the middle section to the bottom and a see saw in the bottom corner. There was also space for another item in the other bottom corner but this had already been removed. Cormac has subsequently told me there was originally climbing apparatus there.

My own children with many other local youngsters living in the surrounding streets used to spend most of their weekends and school holidays playing in the park with. It was a lovely, local and safe space that they could all play in together.

Around 2009 equipment started to be removed, I contacted Cornwall Council when the swings were taken and was assured that they would be replaced. They never have been. Over the years more and more equipment was removed which led to local children no longer having an enjoyable place to play together. It has now led to many local children not knowing others who are their neighbours.

The area now has no play equipment at all and is not maintained as well as it could be. Trees and brambles have been left to grow over the boundaries considerably and the paths left to grow slippery moss. Some local residents have also allowed dogs to foul in the park amongst the long grass. All of this now makes it a dangerous place for our children to play.

*Lisa Mortimore – Summerfields Resident and Chair of Friends of Summerfield Park*

When I moved here in 2001 my son was two and loved the baby swing. As it was close to our house we used it every day and spent hours in there in each week, no matter the time of year. My daughter soon arrived and then it was a place of safety for them both to grow, learn and play also meeting children from the area. As they grew they could play on the bigger equipment and also using fallen branches to build dens, pirate ships and all manner of make believe. It was a big part of their childhood and we would like to bring it back to a place of safety for children to play and have fun.

*Sarah Hirst – Summerfields Resident and Friends of Summerfields Park committee member*

Like many of the local grandparents, I took my granddaughter to play in the park when the play equipment was in place. When it was removed, we were repeatedly told it would be replaced. Since then, there are now 2 new housing estates in St Stephens.

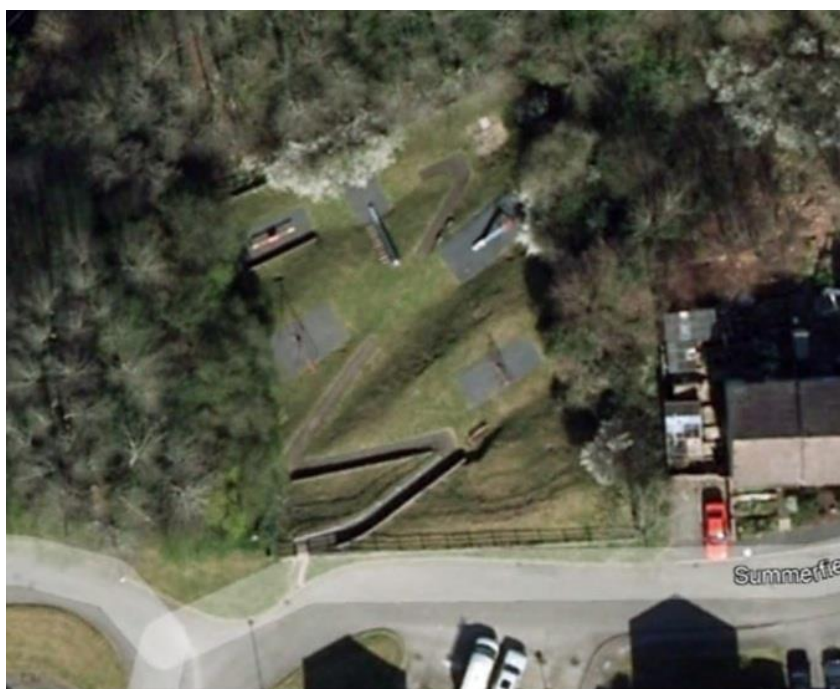
Local children are experiencing social problems affecting their wellbeing and Covid 19 has exacerbated this. Communities are rightly being urged to become greener and cut fuel consumption. Many local families cannot afford to travel to alternative sites and little children lack the strength to walk far. For these and many other reasons, we think it is vital that positive action is taken to ensure Summerfields Park is reinstated as soon as possible.

*Jane Scantlebury, Summerfields Resident and Secretary of Friends of Summerfields Park*

## **2. History**

One of the play equipment providers advising us did some research and told us the following:

“ This was a satellite image from 2007, it clearly shows the original locations of equipment. I would initially focus on all the areas where equipment once was, I have also attached a google street view from 2011 when the site was well maintained. It looks like between 2010 and 2015 the majority of the equipment was removed, and maintenance ceased in 2018/2019. ”





### **3. Vision**

The aim of Friends of Summerfields Park is:

“ To re-establish and promote Summerfields Park as a beautiful, fun and safe environment for young people and families to enjoy. “

We, and local residents as a whole, are desperate for the local play park to be refurbished.

We would like a multi play area with several pieces of equipment for all ages.

#### **3.1 Equipment specification**

When we conducted a consultation survey with local residents, we asked what play equipment they would like. This is what they said in order of preference:

- Swings
- Slide
- Climbing Frame / Monkey Bars
- Roundabout
- Obstacle / Trim Trail
- See Saw
- Toddler Swing
- Toddler Area
- Trampoline
- Zip Wire

In addition, we also contacted teachers in local primary schools who asked children in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes what they would like to see in the park. The children stated, in order of preference, that they would like to see:

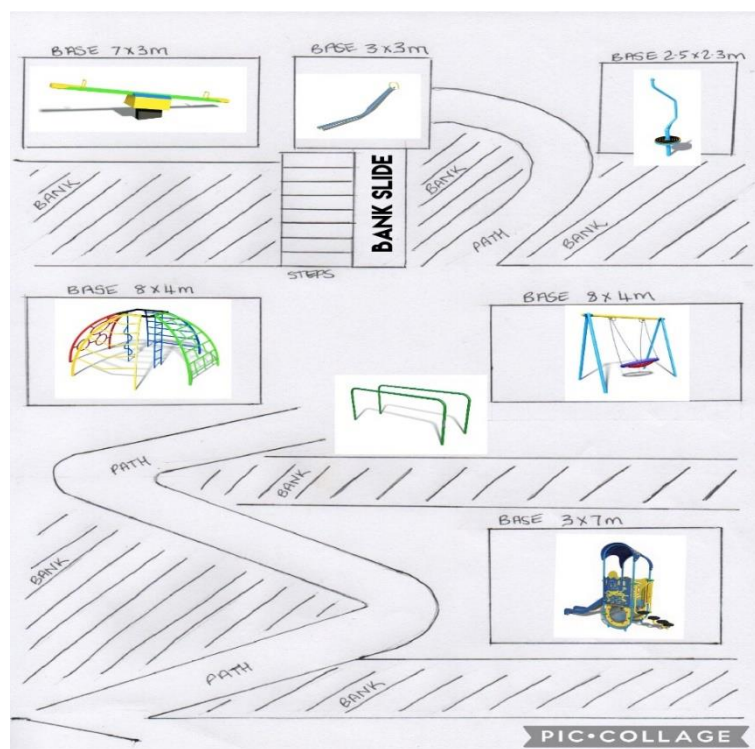
- Swings
- Climbing frame
- Slide
- See Saw

After considering the above feedback we have established the following wish list of preferred equipment:

- Bank Slide
- Swings
- Climbing Frame
- See Saw
- Roundabout
- Toddler Area

### 3.2 Location plan

Following advice received from Cormac and play equipment providers, we have devised the following location plan for the play equipment utilising the current spaces in the park and ensuring that the required falling space is provided:





We also would like to take advantage of the banks by planting wildflowers or plants that will attract wildlife. We also would like bird boxes and bug hotels to be placed around the site.

### **3.3 Durability, access and space considerations**

Cormac and play providers have advised us that we should opt for steel over wood as it has a much longer shelf life. Wood is also not a good choice for this site as it down in a dip and surrounded by tall trees. As we are limited on space, due to the width of each level, we have been advised that we should opt for a basket swing. This is also inclusive for disabled children and also suitable for toddlers and older children.

There is not the space to accommodate all the equipment in the wish list. There is a small space in the bottom right hand corner that will only fit a small item. We decided to opt for a spinner instead of a roundabout as this can be placed in this small space. If we were to go with a full sized roundabout we would lose either the climbing frame or swing.

### **3.4 A phased approach**

We would like to explore the possibility of completing the restoration in stages as we feel this will get equipment in the park quickly and generate more local support in fundraising as people see the progress step by step. This will help to maintain their interest and enthusiasm to reach each stage.

### **3.5 The current state of the site**

Below are some pictures of the site currently, as you can see the site is very overgrown and unkept compared to the earlier pictures above when equipment was in place.

View from top



View from middle to bottom left corner



View from top of steps to bottom where bank slide was positioned



View from bottom path to right side





#### **4. Evidence of Need**

Since we established ourselves in autumn 2021, many local Saltash residents have come forward to offer help, support and feedback. The overwhelming evidence is that this park is really needed, the next local play area being over 1 mile away.

There are many families within the local area who will hugely benefit from the park being restored. Currently, children and their families are losing out. This park has been redundant for many years now and it is unfair that youngsters should have nowhere to play.

The park originally provided a safe community space for local children to play together, they now have nowhere to go. We now see in our community DIY swings being put up in trees in precarious positions over dangerous roads. A furnished park will stop these unofficial play areas sprouting up.

An outdoor play area is vital to support children and young people's positive wellbeing and social development. What better childhood is there than playing outside with your friends in a safe outdoor space?

Here's a photo of local children, residents and supporters, which accompanied an editorial in the local press in October 2021. We had very short notice to take the photo. We had a very good turn-out on the day considering we had less than 24 hours' notice and it was a weekday, meeting just after school.





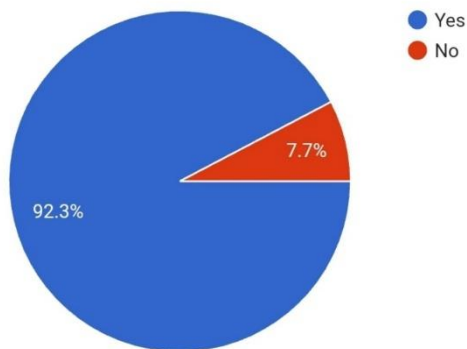
## 4.1 Our survey to assess evidence of need

A survey of local residents was devised and distributed in October / November 2021 asking for their views. We had an amazing response, receiving 286 responses. These results illustrate and reinforce how much Summerfields Park is needed by the local community.

A summary of the results follows:

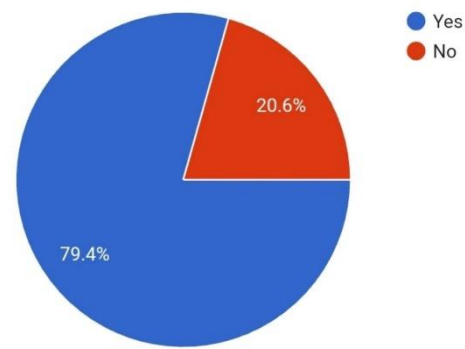
Would you like to see the park in Summerfields refurbished?

286 responses



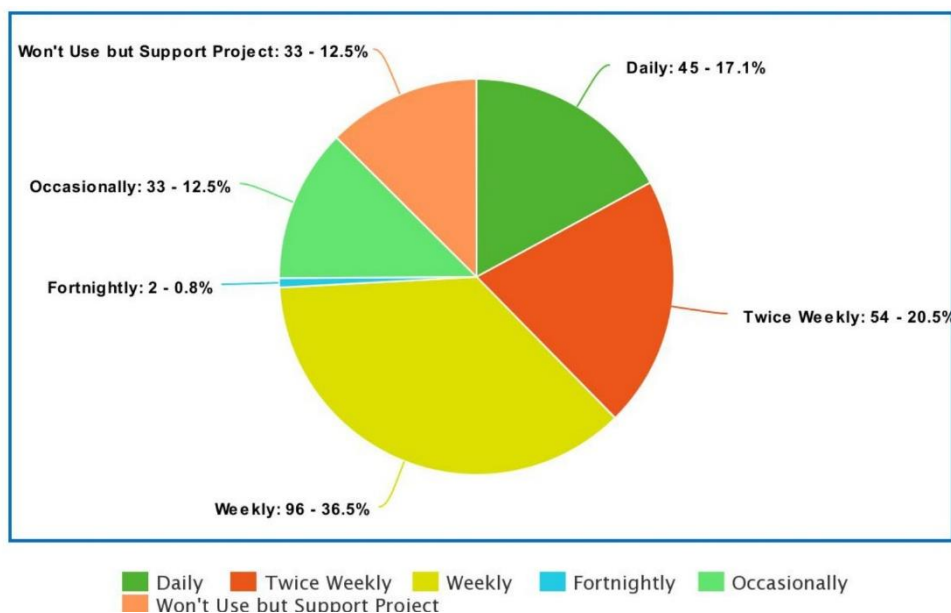
If the park were to be refurbished would you use it?

286 responses



These 2 charts clearly show there is a lot of support for the park being refurbished with 92% of respondents saying they would like to see the park refurbished and 79% of respondents saying they would use it.

*How much would you use the park?*



You can see from the chart above that 74.9% of respondents have said that they would use the park regularly. ‘Occasionally’ refers to grandparents and people who visit the area. ‘Won’t use but support project’ refers to people in the area who support the aim of the project but will not directly use it themselves.



75.9% of respondents would like to see play facilities that incorporate nature on site. We aim to incorporate nature by utilising the grass banks and placing bird and bug boxes around the site as mentioned earlier.

## 4.2 Comments from local residents in the survey

Here is a selection of the comments received:

“Saltash doesn’t have any decent parks that my children enjoy visiting we always have to travel to Plymouth or outlying villages if we want to use a park. Parks like Central Park or St Dominick, Crafhole, Tothill Park, have so much to offer compared to Saltash.”

“Having a park close to home for children is really important for their health, physical and mental. Additionally it’s part of what creates a community. A nearby park which is safe to get to is key to building independence in children.”

“Children need a place to play that is safe within a safe area. Children will use anything to play with. If they are not provided with safe things they will use anything and may hurt themselves as a result.”

“The park was awesome when I was younger and brought all the kids together, not only from Summerfields but also the surrounding areas. I made so many friends and it was a big part of life growing up.”

“My children and local children, even children visiting family have no safe park to play in, so sad a beautiful area such as this has no play area for kids and family to make memories and friends.”

"As there are no other parks or safe spaces to play near to Summerfields it would be great if this was refurbished as there are more and more houses been built in the area."

"It's a great shame that this facility has fallen into disrepair. There are a lot of children and families in the area that would use it regularly if it was refurbished."

"I think it is important to have a local play area for the kids so they can make friends with local kids of different ages etc and not just kids from there school class."

"This play park would be brilliant; I live in the St Stephens area and have no park within short walking distance. More to the point the children would love it!"

"Would love to see a park that is a less than 20 minute walk, Summerfields would fulfil that nicely. Would also like to see a decently equipped park in Saltash."

"My grandson loves climbing frames. Perranporth has excellent play facilities. Play facilities are not distributed fairly around the County. It's not fair."

"Having the ability to take our kids somewhere local and safe to play is very important! Little things like this bring a community together."

"Local play facilities are needed for our children. Our grandchild is 9 months old and we would like somewhere to take him when he visits."

"Need play facilities within walking distance for little ones. Other playgrounds are too far away for little ones to walk to."

"There are many young children in the local area who would benefit massively from the play facilities being reinstated."

"I feel this is needed for that part of Saltash it would be a great asset to the area and will get a lot of good use."

"This area of Saltash does not have alternative play facilities/park in safe walking distance for smaller children."

"The park has been empty and unused for far too long. Getting it 'up and running' again is a splendid project."

"My sons used to play there with their friends from Summerfields , please give it back to the children."

"Children need somewhere to play. If it isn't provided and they cannot find it then that's when trouble arises."

"I loved playing in this park as a child and would love it to be restored for other children to enjoy."

"Would be amazing to have a decent park in Saltash. One that would accommodate smaller children too."

"So many happy memories of this park and growing up in Summerfields. So sad it's like this now. Really hope it's made into a park again for all the kids in the area."

"My children would absolutely love a park here."



"Kids need to keep active, as much time as possible outdoors in the fresh air, playing safely!!!!!"

"I would love to see the park come back to life; it is very much wanted for the local residents."

"I never had children but I believe children should be provided with local playgrounds to play in."

"My grandchild visits several times a week and I would like to walk to a playground with her."

"So important to have out of doors play facilities for everyone to get us out of the house."

"The reinstatement is LONG overdue as there are NO play facilities in the area at all."

"Other Saltash parks are too far away for little children to walk to from their homes."

"We have a baby and would like to be able to take her to the park and use baby swings."

"Although I have no children I think local children need a playground with equipment."

"We'd really appreciate it as there is no play equipment in this area for children."

"Thanks for all you're doing. Important to get this park re-established."

"We played here as kids and would like to continue to use with our kids."

"Important to have play facilities close by for visiting grandchildren."

"Not many parks for children in the area such a shame if not developed."

"Children currently cross a busy road to play on a non-maintained swing."

"It would be nice to be able to visit a park within walking distance."

"Vital to have this for youngsters as little else available nearby."

"Give children the option, a healthy lifestyle and fresh air."

"There are not enough safe places on the doorstep to play in."

"It is important to have play equipment for different ages."

"My children are grown up but I think playgrounds are important."

"There is section 106 money for the playground, spend it."

"My kids are so happy at the thought of getting a park."

"1 adult and 4 children here would use the playground."

"This is an incredibly important community facility."

"This area will help towards individuals wellbeing."

"Children need high quality safe play equipment."

"Would really like to see this park refurbished."

"My children would absolutely love a park here."

"This is very important for the local community."

“Play facilities are a real need for children.”

“These spaces are important to the community.”

“Desperately needed facility for the area.”

“This is really what our community needs.”

“Children need safe play facilities.”

“I live locally and have 3 children.”

“This has been a long time coming.”

“Do not close any more parks!”

“Please don’t close the park.”

“I have 2 children under 7.”

“Please make it happen.”

“We need a park NOW.”

“Please do it.”

“We need it.”

## **5. Friends of Summerfields Park Committee**

Friends of Summerfields Park was formally constituted as an unincorporated group on 1 November 2021 (the constitution is attached).

We decided to form an official committee to ensure the refurbishment of Summerfields Park happens. In addition to our constitution, we have set up a bank account and a Facebook page - Friends of Summerfields Park - to stay connected with local residents and informed about progress.

Forming an official committee also enables us to fundraise and apply for grants that Cornwall Council / Saltash Town Council cannot access and to set up our own fundraising activities.

Below is a list of all the residents who form the committee.

Chair – Lisa Mortimore

Secretary – Jane Scantlebury

Treasurer – Stacie Simpson

Committee Members – Sarah Hirst, Jodie Childs

## **6. Budget**

### **6.1 Draft expenditure for equipment and its installation.**

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Cost £</b>	<b>Install £</b>	<b>Delivery £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
See Saw	4,882	7,323		12,205
Slide	7,861	11,791		19,652
Basket Swing	3,584	5,376		8,960
Toddler Multi Play	9,336	14,004		23,340
Climbing Frame	3,340	5,010		8,350
Spinner	982	1,473		2,455
Parallel Bars	519	778		1,297
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,200</b>	<b>77,459</b>

These prices are based on information provided by Wicksteed Playgrounds. Installation cost is calculated at 1.5 times equipment cost as a working estimate as suggested by Cormac.

### **6.2 Income**

We understand from Cornwall Council that Section 106 money of £21k is available.

We plan to raise more money through applying for different grants and funds. We will also be doing our own fundraising events.

We currently have a small bank balance of £181.48 which was raised through kind donations by local residents in autumn last year.

## **7. Questions for Saltash Town Council**

We believe the proactive involvement of Saltash Town Council will be invaluable and essential to make the aspirations to refurbish Summerfields Park a reality.

We therefore put the following four questions to Saltash Town Council to assist the initial discussions:

1. Is Saltash Town Council interested in formally working with us?
2. If so, would Saltash Town Council be agreeable to either leasing the park at a peppercorn rent from Cornwall Council or through a license agreement with Cornwall Council?



3. Would Saltash Town Council also agree to managing the park including being responsible for its upkeep, safety and maintenance?
4. Would Saltash Town Council also agree to be the 'banker' for the project, settling bills for the refurbishment and drawing down the Section 106 funds from Cornwall Council? (Friends of Summerfields Park aren't in a position to do this due to very limited cashflow)

## **8. Provisional timeline for 2022**

- 9<sup>th</sup> Feb** Meeting of Services Committee of Saltash Town Council to discuss the proposal.
- 12<sup>th</sup> Feb** Friends of Summerfields Park committee meeting to discuss outcome of meeting and agree next steps.
- 26<sup>th</sup> Feb** Volunteer day to clear overgrown site, organised with Cormac.
- End of Apr** Governance and management arrangements confirmed between Cornwall Council and Saltash Town Council.
- Summer 22** Fundraising events.
- Autumn 22** New equipment begins to be installed as part of a phased approach.

## **9. Contact Details**

Lisa Mortimore, Chair of Friends of Summerfields Park

Tel: 07834955734

Email: [lisa6086@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lisa6086@hotmail.co.uk)