

<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> <b>15 FEBRUARY 2017</b>
---

**Green Space Management Strategy**

**Scrutiny call-in response note, 15/02/2017.**

**1. Opinion Research Services (ORS)**

ORS are a highly qualified nationally recognised independent social research practice that works across the UK. ORS confirm the optimum number for a focus group is between 8-10 and that was either achieved or exceeded in all cases. Attached is the presentation provided to the focus groups.

**2. Demographics**

ORS broke down the demographics into the following groups:

GENDER	Male – 12 Female - 17
AGE	16-34 – 7 35-54 – 12 55+ - 10
SOCIAL GRADE	AB – 13 C1 – 7 C2 – 3 DE - 6
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	Letchworth – 9 Royston - 9 Hitchin – 7 Baldock – 2 Ickleford – 1 Kimpton - 1
CHILDREN UNDER 8	14 - and most over 55s had grandchildren of that age
USE OF GREEN SPACE	All used green space to a greater/lesser degree

Social Grade	Description
AB	Higher & intermediate managerial, administrative, professional occupations
C1	Supervisory, clerical & junior managerial, administrative, professional occupations
C2	Skilled manual occupations
DE	Semi-skilled & unskilled manual occupations, Unemployed and lowest grade occupations

### 3. Response from Focus Groups

The majority of participants felt that, in an ideal world, all 47 equipped play areas across the district would be maintained, while also recognising that investment is in short supply and that change is thus inevitable.

Alternative suggestions made by focus groups as to how the 47 equipped play areas could be retained related to seeking sponsorship, investment and assistance from local businesses, housing developers and community/volunteer groups.

This alternative approach has been adopted and Cabinet have allowed until 1st March 2018 for interested parties to come forward with sustainable proposals for play areas and pavilions.

### 4. Additional correspondence received re reduced investment in play areas:

Site	No.
Brook View, Hitchin	24
Rose Hill, Hitchin	8
General	4
Gt. Ashby	1
Broadmead, Hitchin	2
Linnet Close, Letchworth	1
St. John's, Hitchin	1

### 5. Proactive approach

Officers are adopting a proactive approach to seek interested parties. Below is a time line of actions taken to date. However since the Scrutiny call-in work has had to be put on hold awaiting the outcome of the call-in.

### 6. Time line for Asset transfer of pavilions and play areas

**VW:** Vaughan Watson Head Leisure & Environmental Services (NHDC)

**SG:** Steve Geach Parks & Countryside Development Manager (NHDC)

**AM:** Andrew Mills Service Manager Grounds Maintenance (NHDC)

**JS:** Joanna Softly Communications Manager (NHDC)

**AL:** Alan Lowe Sunday Football League

**JOC:** John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance Ltd

Date	Person	Action
22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2017	VW	A Mr XXXX contacted the Council with a request to use Bakers Close pavilion as a sports & Social club.
30 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	VW / AM / SG	Showed Mr XXXX around Bakers Close Pavilion. He agreed to produce a business case.
22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2016	VW	Invited to meet with the Sunday Football League to discuss future of pavilions.
17 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	SG	Followed up invite for meeting with Sunday Football League.
17 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	AL	Advised he was ill but would come back us to arrange a meeting.

25 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	Mercury Paper	Article in paper requesting interested parties in running play areas to contact NHDC.
26 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	AM	Emailed GT. Ashby Community Council with list of dates to meet to discuss play areas.
30 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	SG	Draft reply to residents produced sent to Cllr Gray for approval
30 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	SG	Emailed Legal and Community Development to meet to discuss asset transfer.
31 <sup>st</sup> January 2017	AM	Instructed JOC to contact all football clubs with covering letter about asset transfer of pavilions.
1 <sup>st</sup> February 2017	JOC	Confirmed letters sent to ten football clubs asking for expressions of interest for asset transfer.
2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2017	SG	Contacted Cllr Henry for a list of Gt. Ashby schools
2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2017	SG	Contacted 38 residents who expressed an interest in play areas asking for expressions of interest for asset transfer.
2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2017	SG	Contacted 44 PTA's asking for expressions of interest for asset transfer of play areas.
2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2017	VW	Received expression of interest from Mr XXXX to use Bakers Close pavilion as a venue for Baldock beer festival and to make changing rooms available for footballers.
2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2017	SG / AM	Met with Mr XXXX on site. He agreed to submit a business case.
3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2017	SG / AM	Met with Legal and Community development to discuss options for asset transfer of play areas. It was agreed a lease would be required.
3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2017	JS	Commenced to produce communication plan
6 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	SG	Commenced to produce information pack to assist interested parties in asset transfer.
6 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	All	Received notification of Scrutiny call in. Work put on hold until outcome of call-in.