

## LOCKINGTON VILLAGE COMMUNITY GREEN

In the last Gazette, we outlined the overwhelming support for the proposed land exchange and Community Green.

The Parish Council will now proceed with the permissions and legal formalities for the land exchange (scheduled for July 2021). As mentioned, there was a wide range of ideas for potential uses and facilities to be developed on the Community Green, and also concerns about what would not be welcome. A public meeting (as intended) is clearly not now possible due to the Corona Virus situation (or likely any time soon) so the Parish Council will have to progress and consult on the proposals via the Gazette and Parish Council website.

A schedule summarising all the responses is available on the Parish Council website. In terms of trying to narrow down and prioritise the ideas, the Parish Council have so far focussed on the "Top Five Results" – see below

### FOR

Grass Field, Wild Flowers,  
Shrubs and Trees (58)  
Seating/Benches/Tables (52)  
Children's Play Area (25)  
Area for National/Village  
Celebrations/Fete (8)  
Covered Seating/Pavilion (6)

### AGAINST

Children's Play Area (25)  
Groups of Youths (9)  
Car Parking provided (8)  
Covered Seating/Pavilion (8)  
No dogs/Dogs roaming free (7)

In addition, we have taken into account that there seems to be a consensus about:

- No Car Parking Provision (except for disabled).
- No Lighting or Services (Toilets, etc).
- No development or uses that resulted in undue noise or disturbance or resulted in significant maintenance issues and costs.
- Keeping the paddock as natural and green as possible and avoidance (where practicable) of hard standing (concrete, etc) and plastic.

In developing the first stage (Stage 1) of a "plan" for the Community Green, our intention is to follow the community feedback and develop a scheme incorporating the following:

- (a) Grass, Wildflowers, Shrubs and Trees.
- (b) Seating, Benches and Tables.
- (c) Adequate Litter Bins, etc.

The second stage (Stage 2) of a "plan" is trickier because of the diverse views, namely:

- (d) Children's Play Area and Facilities – the Consultation was split 50/50 about Play Areas, with understandable concerns about potential nuisance, maintenance, etc.

Such provision could range from:

- (i) Small compact play areas for toddlers.
- (ii) Swings and climbing frames for young children.
- (iii) More extensive provision including kick-about/ballgame areas.
- (iv) No Children's facilities.

This is not a large site and any provision would have to be limited in scope and size; it would also be dependent on funding, grants, etc. However, given that this is intended to be a "community" facility for all the village, it would be helpful to get further comments or views to see if there is an acceptable consensus and way forward.

- (e) Permanent Structure/Shelter/Pavilion – again quite diverse views for and against. Our view is that this idea should be deferred until the Green is up and running and reviewed in the light of experience.
- (f) Area for Village/National Celebrations/Fete/Remembrance – there seems to be support for occasional use of the Green for such uses. Apart from say Commemorative Benches, this is unlikely to involve any permanent structures and may not amount to anything more than ensuring any "plan" leaves sufficient space for fetes, etc, although such uses may result in some temporary nuisance/disruption.
- (g) Dogs – All parks and greens have rules; some allow or provide a separate dog walking area where space permits although most take the decision to say "sorry" – no dogs allowed, based usually on health and safety and insurance advice, particularly where there are children's play areas. It might be possible to incorporate into the design a limited/dedicated area for dogs on leash but the Green is a relatively small space overall. Additionally, we are blessed with ample dog walking facilities around the village. The Parish Council are aware that this is an emotive and sensitive issue, but on balance are minded not to provide dog walking areas or allow dogs on to the proposed Green.
- (h) Other Ideas/Uses – the above focuses on the top five issues. Other ideas from the Consultation have not been forgotten but are thought to be best left for consideration at a subsequent stage. All the ideas and uses mentioned above have capital cost, maintenance and funding/grant implications – they all present a challenge but our view at the moment is to focus on trying to deliver the key priorities as evidenced by the Consultation.

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- The Parish Council will review the further comments and feedback and finalise an initial scheme that has broad community support. Projected costs and maintenance implications will need to be estimated and possible funding/grants explored. The resulting scheme, likely phasing and other details will be explained as soon as we have some certainty on these issues.
- A Planning Application for change of use of the paddock to community green and for a new access is being prepared and will be submitted in the near future.
- Offers to get involved and help were much appreciated and will be taken up.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in this project.

**YOUR COMMENTS** – further comments and feedback on the above would be welcome and help guide the Parish Council in finalising a scheme to take forward. Please submit your comments in writing or by email to the address below, by the 14th December 2020.

**Mr Gareth Rees - Clerk to Lockington Parish Council**  
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**Next Issue** Please submit items in writing via the egg box at School Farm or the letter box at 21 Front Street. E-mail text and photographs to [peter\\_barbara@btinternet.com](mailto:peter_barbara@btinternet.com)

The Gazette team reserves the right to edit any material to fit the space available. **Deadline is noon on Thursday 21st January 2021**