



September 2023

Dear Resident,

**Re: Play equipment at Kelsey Hall**

I write to update you with the results of the public consultation regarding installing play equipment at the Kelsey Hall.

Information about the online survey was delivered to 500 houses in Ifold, as well as publicised on Facebook and the Parish Council's website. The response rate was 19.2%, with 77% of respondents being in favour of a play area. Survey response rates between 5% - 30% are typical; therefore, the Parish Council is heartened by this respectable level of engagement, which can be trusted to provide an accurate indication of project support.

Nevertheless, the Parish Council understands that not everyone will welcome the idea and as a direct neighbour of the hall, the Council wishes to ensure that you have had every opportunity to provide your feedback and have any concerns addressed. Therefore, please do contact the Parish Council with your thoughts and comments: [clerk@plaistowandifold-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@plaistowandifold-pc.gov.uk)

I encourage you to visit the Parish Council's designated webpage for the project, where the survey results can be found, along with information about the concerns raised and how these will be mitigated – you may find that your concerns / comments have already been raised, considered and addressed: - [https://www.plaistowandifold-pc.gov.uk/ifold\\_playarea](https://www.plaistowandifold-pc.gov.uk/ifold_playarea)

The Parish Council agrees that the space is small and, as such, will have limitations. However, Ifold is highly unusual being a large residential settlement without any designated public space for children. Prohibitive land costs mean that identifying an alternative site in Ifold is not an option; therefore, the Parish Council is grateful to the Kelsey Hall for permitting play equipment to be installed.

The Parish Council understands that many in Ifold have the luxury of a large garden; however, the results show that residents seek a public play area, within walking distance, where they can meet other families. Isolation is a key issue for those with childcare responsibilities. Having somewhere 'to go' is paramount for community cohesion and the mental wellbeing of children and their caregivers, as borne out in studies from the Pandemic.

Parking concerns have been raised, and of course there may be some who will drive to the hall to use the play equipment in contravention of permission. However, the survey results demonstrate that accessing the area on foot or by bike will be integral to the overall enjoyment of the space and those who may drive will be a minority.

Noise and appeal / frequency of use are other key issues which have been raised. The age appeal of the equipment will be predominantly 5 years and under. As such, the use times - including noise generation - will be very similar to that which was experienced when Little Acorns Preschool was in operation between 1974 – 2022.

However, from experience, the preferred play equipment borne out in the survey (climbing and balance apparatus, slide, small playhouse, and seesaw) will also appeal to slightly older children (7 – 8 years), thereby maximising the overall use/appeal of the area. The site has been assessed by a play equipment company and can accommodate between 3 – 6 items of equipment, depending on their size. Some equipment can be combined e.g., a playhouse incorporating a slide. For comparison, the park at Plaistow has 8 pieces of equipment, including a zipwire and large multi-play climbing frame.

Preserving the rural, wooded feel of the area is key. None of the existing trees will be felled to accommodate play equipment. As one respondent commented, *“make it an adventure worth going on...”* therefore, the Parish Council will endeavour to prioritise equipment not usually found in private gardens. This montage illustrates the sought after equipment and ‘feel’ of the area. The Parish Council will ask the Ifold community to choose which area design they prefer once various playpark companies have submitted their scheme.



The Parish Council seeks to create an enjoyable public space for children and those with childcare responsibilities, which supports this demographic of Ifold’s community. Kelsey Hall is a busy and well used Community Centre at the heart of Ifold. Introducing a play area at the site will support the hall to continue to offer an integral service to all residents.

Additionally, the Parish Council wishes to take into consideration the views of immediate neighbours of the Kelsey Hall to ensure, as much as possible, the area does not cause unnecessary concern. Where possible, the Council will address all reasonable matters.

Yours sincerely

Cllr. Paul Jordan

Chair of Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council

Clerk & RFO: Catherine Nutting

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