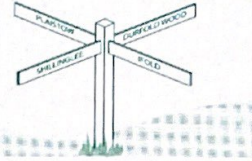


PLAISTOW AND IFOLD PARISH COUNCIL



28th September 2021

Mr. Brian McNulty
Chair of the Kelsey Hall Management Committee
Kelsey Hall, Ifold

Sent via email

Dear Mr McNulty,

Re: Play equipment at Kelsey Hall, Ifold

Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council is writing this open letter to you in your capacity as Chair of the Kelsey Hall Management Committee (KHMC) in advance of your AGM on 4th October 2021 to make representations on behalf of the Ifold community in support of the installation of children's play equipment on the Kelsey Hall curtilage.

The Parish Council was first made aware of the demand for play equipment within Ifold when it began the Neighbourhood Planning public consultation process in 2013. More recently, the results of the June 2021 public consultation have illustrated that the requirement and strength of feeling to see play equipment installed within Ifold remains resolute. The purpose of the public consultation is to inform and direct Parish Council expertise, spending and resources over the next three to five years, to progress and achieve priority community projects.

The consultation received 135 responses, which is considered a good response rate at 27%; (typical survey response rates can vary anywhere between the 5% to 30% range). 51% of respondents live in Ifold and 31% of those specifically called upon the Parish Council to provide dedicated playpark facilities within Ifold. The following represent a sample indicative of the comments received:

"Play area in Ifold. Plaistow has nearly all the facilities in the Parish, we should try and arrange some more for Ifold."

"Children's play park facilities in Ifold".

"Ifold now has many young families living here but there are no play facilities, it would be wonderful if the Parish Council could find an area to buy or rent where a play area could be installed within safe walking distance."

Unfortunately, it is not within the Parish Council's gift to purchase land within Ifold for the creation of recreation facilities, due to prohibitive land costs. The Parish Council's annual Precept is derived via local taxation. A percentage of everyone's Council Tax, which is collected by Chichester District Council comes to the Parish Council. To afford land, the Parish Council would have to increase the Precept by an unreasonable amount, which it would be unable to justify.

However, the Parish Council can fund the installation of play equipment and meet all the annual costs if a landowner, such as the KHMC, would consider dedicating land for the purpose. The Kelsey Hall has a sizable curtilage and is centrally positioned within Ifold to offer the community the desired play equipment. The building's purpose is a charitable community centre, and it additionally hosts Little Acorns Pre-School, which would benefit from play equipment during their sessions.

The Parish Council appreciates that the hall is used by many different groups and requires sufficient parking provision to avoid causing a nuisance to neighbouring residents and Ifold Estates Ltd due to overspill parking along the road verges. However, the hall benefits from a small parcel of grass to the front, which could accommodate a few items of play equipment. The area is already partially fenced and would not interfere with the hall's parking facilities or any other of its day-to-day functions.

The Parish Council has a budget of £10,000 this financial year to install play equipment in Ifold if land can be found. This budget could potentially be increased in 2022/23, subject to the results of further investigations into this project. Additionally, Ifold Estates Ltd are willing to consider financially contributing towards the cost of installing play equipment for the benefit of the Ifold community. Therefore, the KHMC would not be asked for, nor expected to financially contribute towards the project.

Moreover, the Parish Council pledges to:

- Organise and manage the project, including further public consultation to advise on the type and style of play equipment.
- Work in partnership with the KHMC to ensure that the project does not adversely interfere with the day-to-day running of the hall, or inconvenience hall users.
- Ensure that the design of the play area is in keeping with the visual amenity of the hall and the Ifold community generally.
- Pay for the equipment, safety surfacing, signage, and additional fencing/gates to ensure that the area complies with health and safety laws and public liability insurance.
- Organise and pay for the annual mandatory play equipment safety inspection.
- Budget for the ongoing maintenance and/or replacement of the equipment.
- Insure the area at the Parish Council's cost.

The Parish Council can cover any designated play area within the Kelsey Hall curtilage under its own insurance, including public liability. Therefore, there would be no additional insurance responsibility and/or cost to the KHMC. This is by no means unusual and is undertaken routinely by large reputable insurance companies who insure local authorities such as the Parish Council. It would not require the Parish Council to own any part of the land; full ownership and control of the area would remain vested

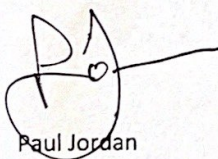
with the KHMC. Any use by Little Acorns Pre-School of the equipment during their sessions would be jointly covered by the Pre-School's own insurance and that of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council is confident that the inclusion of play equipment at the Kelsey Hall will not cause, either directly or indirectly, additional costs to the KHMC. However, it is important to recognise that the KHMC can (and does) apply for annual grant funding from the Parish Council to help deliver improvements to the hall's facilities for the benefit of users. There is no limit *per se* on the annual amount the KHMC can apply for. Therefore, any grant funding from the Parish Council can be used to off-set any *potential* additional day-to-day costs to the KHMC incurred by the play equipment.

Whilst the Kelsey Hall is privately owned, it is administrated on behalf of the community to bring a benefit to the lives of those who live in Ifold. The Ifold community have consistently sought play equipment and look to the Parish Council to facilitate this. The Parish Council hopes that by removing all costs, liability, and project management responsibility from the KHMC, it feels empowered to designate this small grass area at the front of the hall for the purposes of providing the children of the Ifold community with the play equipment they have consistently asked for.

The Parish Council looks forward to working in partnership with the KHMC to realise a long-standing community aspiration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Jordan', with a small heart symbol drawn above the 'o' in 'Jordan'.

Paul Jordan
Chair of Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council

cc. Ifold Estates Limited, IFRA, Little Acorns Pre-School, Plaistow Pre-School, Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School

Open letter published via the Parish Council's website and Facebook pages.