

Committee: Open Spaces

Date: 7 February 2023

Title: Fitness Trail

Purpose of Report

To consider and agree the location of the fitness trail on the recreation ground.

Recommendation:

Members resolve to Recommend to Full Council Route X for the location of a fitness trail on the recreation ground.

Background:

1. There are two existing rights of ways on the recreation ground. One starts at Orchard Vale, where the fair enter the recreation ground. It runs along the length of the zip-line, and around the skate park in the direction of the public conveniences and then across to the trees and fencing of Canal Way. The second right of way runs from Orchard Vale across the play park area and up the bank to meet the junction of Orchard Vale and Canal Way.
2. The original plans for the regeneration of the recreation ground included a path which generally followed the boundary of the recreation ground.
3. The initial idea of the path was changed to a fitness trail to include gym equipment as requested by some residents of Ilminster who met councillors at various events during 2022.
4. The fitness trail was included in a recent Public Consultation which was carried out from 18th November 2022 to 9th December 2022. The public were asked if they would support the installation of a fitness trail with outside gym equipment, and this was favoured by the majority of respondents.
5. The Recreation Manager was tasked with identifying a suitable route for the fitness trail and to source ideas for the gym equipment which could be located along the trail.

Report:

6. Members need to decide on the exact route of the fitness track. This will allow officers to produce a tender inviting contractors to accurately quote for all costs.

7. Due to the nature of the recreation ground and the different uses of the area, careful consideration needs to be made on the route the track takes.
8. **Appendix 11A - Route 1** - This is the initial route that was quoted for. The main issue for this route is the fair. The section parallel to Orchard Vale would be reinforced to cope with vehicles driving across. It would be difficult to set up the fair as it would encroach on the fitness track along by the zip wire, setting up on the track could also damage it.
9. **Appendix 11B - Route 2** - This route would pass through the play park enabling access to all of the park for any user of any ability. The area shown in red would be made of tarmac and reinforced to allow the fair vehicles to cross onto the recreation ground, and it would provide space for the fair to set up. In the play area, the path could be all 'Conipave' surface or the current tarmac path could be widened to match the width of the fitness track. There would be an extra cost for closing the public right of way through the play area of about £1500. In addition, the table tennis table might need to be repositioned to allow disabled access, but this would be a minimal cost of either laying a concrete base or changing the fixings from concrete to something more suitable to fix to the ground. The 3 purple dots are where the fitness equipment would be best located, please see appendix 4 for possible ideas of equipment.
10. **Appendix 11C - Route 3** - This would be a good solution for the fair to be able to set up unhindered, however, it would be an incomplete track and people would not be able to do a full circuit. In the winter, people would have to cross muddy ground or use the public footpath, which is not a fitness track causing a possible conflict between users.
11. The Recreation Manager recommends Route 2 as this would provide a complete track and allow all the recreation facilities to be disabled accessible and used year-round. It would also provide more room for the fair to set up.
12. If members are unfamiliar with the specific areas outlined on the various maps, then the Recreation Manager is happy to arrange a meeting to walk members around the planned route and discuss details further.
13. Members to consider the three options and agree on a preferred route for the Fitness Trail Members are free to suggest an alternative solutions.

Jason Fontana
Recreation Manager
February 2023