



The Ilminster Recreation Ground Update

Ilminster Town Council are very pleased that so many of our younger residents have enjoyed playing on the barge. We have had lots of positive feedback but there have been a lot of questions which we would like to address here.

This is an ongoing project and there is a lot of work still to be done. Around the 9th February, a contractor will be installing a wooden walkway across the sand from the grass to the barge and also replacing the grass matting beneath the rope climbing frame. From mid-February onwards, we will be closing off the two footpaths in the corner of the playpark, one from Canal Way, and the opposite one that meets it, which comes off Orchard Vale. Work is going to be completed to reduce the gradient and make it safer and accessible for pushchairs and wheelchairs.

Towards the end of March, our contractor will start to remove and replace the old play equipment, (except the rope climbing frame), and we hope to be completed by the end of May, just in time for the summer months. The only outstanding piece of equipment will be the slide. You may have seen the large mound of earth next to the barge which is where the slide will be positioned. We must wait for it to be shaped and settle before we can fit a new slide which may not be until August, but it will be worth the wait!

We know that it is hard to ignore the large area of ground at the back of the barge that no longer has grass. We used a metal trackway to avoid churning up the ground, and although we lost the grass, we kept the area flat. This area will be used by our contractor as the playground develops and will also form part of a new zipline. There will be grass matting installed and it will be seeded/turfed in that area on completion.

The area around the barge, where we turfed, is still incredibly wet and soft but this will firm up after the winter. The ground was churned up and we were unable to do much with it other than level it the best we could and turf it. Clearly in 'normal' circumstances we would have completed this project by autumn last year and avoided all the mess caused by the autumn/winter weather, but we believed it was important to Ilminster residents to get this project underway.



The barge was fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's detailed plans and instalment instructions. The ground underneath was layered with a geotextile membrane, followed by clean stones, which allows water to collect and slowly soak away, and then the sand was laid.

The area we turfed will undoubtedly need some work, probably some top-dressing and local reseeded. It seemed pointless to make all the ground good when we have so much more work to do in the next few months.

It is also worth noting that we are also having a lot of problems with drainage from Herne Hill, West Crescent play area and the rest of the field along Canal Way. All are considerably boggy at the moment due to the weather we've had. Please take care if you need to venture out onto our open spaces.

We hope we have answered the many questions about the recreation ground update, but if you have any more questions, please contact the Town Council office through our website www.ilminster.gov.uk, by email town.council@ilminster.gov.uk or call 01460 52149.