

City of Durham Parish Council

The City of Durham Parish Council. Office 3, Clayport Library. 8 Millennium Place. Durham. DH1 1WA.

Telephone: 07510 074875

Email: parishclerk@cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk

Date of Summons: 3rd April 2023

SUMMONS

To all Members of the City of Durham Parish Council's Environment Committee: Councillors V Ashfield, L Brown, D Freeman, R Friederichsen, C Lattin and S Walker.

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Environment Committee meeting** to be held **via Zoom at 13:00pm** for the purpose of transacting the following Agenda business as shown.

The link to join this meeting is below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86905768285>

Meeting ID: 869 0576 8285

Members of the public and press are also cordially invited to attend. Members of the public may address Council, Committee or Sub-Committee meetings for up to three minutes, with the agreement of the Chair of the meeting, provided that the statement is related to an item on the agenda. The speaker should approach the Clerk before the meeting commences to request to speak during the meeting.

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety, Civility and Respect and Human Rights plus Social, Economic and Environmental matters.

Yours faithfully,

A. Shanley

Mr Adam Shanley
Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16th MARCH 2023

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

5. TO CONSIDER THE LATEST NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN REPORT

6. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PRIORITIES:

6a. To decide:

- I) Proposal by Cllr S Walker on greening up the Viaduct Area – report included.
- II) To discuss the offer of volunteers from Unite Students at the most recent meeting of the Crossgate Community Partnership

6b. To complete:

- I) Progressing the proposal by Cllr R Friederichsen on integrating Durham in Bloom with work tackling the Climate and Biodiversity Emergencies
- II) Update on Air Quality Action Plan consultation
- I) Update on the enhanced police service for Durham City
- II) Update on the EV charging station funded by the Parish Council
- III) Update on the Terracycle scheme in Durham City
- IV) Update on the Heritage Trail map project

7. AOB (please note for information only and not for formal decisions).

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

16th May 2023

13th June 2023

11TH July 2023

CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment Committee held on Thursday 16th March 2023 at 13:00pm via Zoom

Present: Councillors C Lattin (Chair), V Ashfield, L Brown, D Freeman and S Walker.

Also present: Parish Clerk A Shanley

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor R Friederichsen.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None received.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 14th FEBRUARY 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th February 2023 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

In agreeing the minutes, Councillor V Ashfield asked that the Parish Council seeks an update on the proposed City-wide clean air consultation in order to assess its remit and timescales. The Clerk **agreed** to contact the Cabinet Member responsible for this.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received.

5. TO CONSIDER THE LATEST NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN REPORT

The Committee welcomed the excellent report by the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Wardens and **agreed** to formally thank Kirk and Antony for their exceptional work.

The Chair advised that she and Councillor V Ashfield were continuing to liaise with DCC and Durham University in order to gain agreement for more bins along the riverbanks on the Pelaw Woods side of the river. At present, the University has agreed to install a bin by St. Hild and St. Bede College but the Chair advised that she hoped to gain agreement for one more bin closer to the Bent House Lane access to the riverbank.

6. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PRIORITIES:

6a. To decide:

III) To discuss the proposal to request a voluntary contribution from landlords to the Parish Council's precept

The Chair reminded Members of the previous discussions on this proposal. As per Full Council agreement, the Chair advised that she had met with the Chair of the Parish Council's Business Committee and both had agreed that this proposal should be progressed as follows:

- That any communication should not go out too soon after the most recent communication (survey) to landlords.
- That a sympathetic landlord be approached as a starting point with a view to getting the supporting this initiative by the Parish Council and encouraging others to take part.
- That any monies raised should not be for general expenditure but for a targeted purpose where landlords may see some mutual benefit, e.g., an additional Neighbourhood Warden to tackle the issue of waste directly with the tenants.

The Committee **agreed** with this proposal and to support this at the next Full Parish Council meeting. Committee Members also suggested that the Council draws on the experience of Councillor H Weston as a student property owner in the City to see if she would support this proposal. The Chair **agreed** to discuss this with Councillor H Weston.

IV) Proposal by Cllr R Friederichsen on integrating Durham in Bloom with work tackling the Climate and Biodiversity Emergencies

The Committee considered a report by Cllr R Friederichsen. The report provided a summary and expanded on the Environment Committee's previous discussions on how to ensure the Parish Council's funding toward Durham in Bloom can best contribute to its priority aims relating to climate action and the protection and restoration of biodiversity.

The report proposed a set of requests and questions to be raised with Durham County Council as follows:

1. Using permanent containers
2. Using plant guilds with emphasis on perennial, pollinator, and edible plants
3. Educational displays that explain a) the choice of plants and how CERP2, EEAP, and Durham in Bloom are connected; and b) send a positive and practical message to tourists inviting them to contribute to protect biodiversity and the climate in e.g., three ways (reducing carbon footprints as part of their visit to Durham through using public transport; eating a plant-based diet; and avoiding the use of peat and pesticides in their gardening)

Committee Members welcomed this report as a good aspirational document. Councillor L Brown highlighted that peat free compost was difficult to purchase at present.

Councillor S Walker particularly welcomed the proposal of having more plants for pollinators as part of Durham in Bloom.

Councillor V Ashfield **agreed** to work with Councillor R Friederichsen to take this paper forward.

6b. To complete:

V) Update on the enhanced police service for Durham City

The Clerk highlighted that the SLA with Durham Police had now been agreed by both parties and the new police officers were due to commence at the beginning of April as per the agreement.

The Clerk advised that the remaining aspect of the SLA to be finalised is the new Coordinator role for this Operation. The Clerk advised that a Coordinator had previously been recruited for this post but had now left this post for a new role. The Clerk advised that he and the Chair of the Parish Council are due to meet with the Police and Crime Commissioner later this month in order to arrange the recruitment of a suitable officer for this post.

VI) Update on the EV charging station funded by the Parish Council

The Clerk advised that the proposed location of outside St. Cuthbert's Church in Durham City for the new EV charging point is now not possible due to the high costs for connection being quoted by Northern Powergrid.

As a result, the Clerk advised that he had contacted the officers leading on this at DCC to request a list of possible other locations within the parish area so that Members could decide on an alternative location for this. The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council's Environment Committee has delegated responsibility from Council to deliver this scheme and to decide on an appropriate location.

The Clerk advised that he would contact Members as soon as possible with a list of alternative locations.

VII) Update on the Terracycle scheme in Durham City

The Chair advised that the boxes at Boots are nearly full and there is a need to purchase more boxes to replace these.

The Committee noted how popular this scheme had become and agreed to continue its support for Terracycle at Boots. The Committee also noted the increasing costs of this scheme and **agreed** that Framwellgate Moor Parish Council and Belmont Parish Council should be contacted to see if they might purchase Terracycle boxes for their own areas in order to provide some relief for the boxes in Boots in the Market Place.

It was also **agreed** that Shincliffe Parish Council should be asked if they might make a contribution to the Terracycle boxes in the Durham City Boots given that residents from outside the City appeared to also be using these boxes.

The Clerk **agreed** to contact all of the above-mentioned Parish Councils to seek their support in the continued delivery of this scheme.

The Clerk also **agreed** to purchase 2 further boxes for Boots and to seek a bulk order discount from Terracycle.

VIII) Update on the Wear Rivers Trust project

The Clerk advised that the leaflet advertising the work of the Wear Rivers Trust and calling for more volunteers for the INNs project would be delivered w/c 10th April 2023 alongside the Coronation Booklet (which would cut down costs for both projects).

IX) Update on the Heritage Trail map project

The Clerk advised that the new Heritage trail leaflets had now arrived and he would be looking for support in distributing these leaflets around areas of the City. The Chair also highlighted that she and Councillor V Ashfield had been part of a test walk with David Miller and others and this had been fantastic.

7. AOB

None received.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

11th April 2023
9th May 2023
13th June 2023

There being no further business, the Chair thanked all those present for attending and for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Signed,

**Chair of the Parish Council's Environment Committee
(11th April 2023)**

ITEM 6A: PROPOSAL BY CLLR S WALKER ON GREENING UP THE VIADUCT AREA

The Parish Council Planters have been in place for some time and are valued by local residents and businesses. Regular maintenance is being carried out via Parish Councillors, permanent residents, students and a local business and make this area of our City more attractive.

There has been a proposal from Councillor Ashby to renovate Peskies Park. Currently, the park is under used, unmaintained and at first sight has little to offer the community. Councillor Ashby has asked Councillor Walker to progress the renovations. The initial proposal was to tidy up the park, add some additional seating, renovate the boat, add some additional play equipment (ideally multi age) and add some wetland plants to the boggy area.

As a first step in this process a consultation has been undertaken. Appendix 1, and the Peskies Park project will continue including the input from the local community and the volunteers who signed up to help.

From that consultation has come the proposal to clear the land at the end of Lawson Terrace and plant a community orchard. This would be an excellent project for the Parish Council and could hopefully be at least in part maintained by members of the community, building on the networks established with maintaining the planters and the Peskies Park consultation. It was a community garden in the past and with the Parish Council's help, the volunteers could periodically be remotivated and new volunteers recruited to maintain the garden.

It is possible that some funding for this could come from the Woodland Revival Project, but it is a project on the edge of their remit. It is a scant 0.1 Hectares (the minimum requirement) and is a trees project rather than a woodland project. However reasonably sized trees can be purchased from £30-£40, and small bare root stock considerably cheaper.

Actions

- 1) To note the proposed project at Peskies Park and acknowledge that although this is a project by Parish Councillors it is not Parish Council Project.
- 2) To agree in principle to funding clearing the end of Lawson Terrace and planting with suitable fruit trees.

Appendix 1

Report on Peskies Park Consultation

Consultations

- 1) With Annabelle Chambers and Abigail Salkeld from the Durham Neighbourhood Police Team and PJ Harding from Durham County Council.

We met on Friday the 17th of March 2023, a sunny dry day. We saw that the access path was litter strewn and there were no bins. Inside the park it was surprisingly litter free and tranquil. The sound of birds was the dominant noise with the occasional train passing by. It was quite boggy underfoot.

The police recommendations were:

- a. that the area of rhododendrons which had come through the fence should be cut back to reduce a potential area for covert activities.
- b. a litter bin should be provided by the gate, to help prevent littering and the contact details of the Clean and Green Team could be displayed.
- c. any planting that is carried out should not prevent the overlooking of the park from Laburnum Avenue.
- d. The park should be tidied up promoted as a place to visit for nature, play, trainspotting etc to increase footfall by responsible users and further reduce the risk of antisocial behaviours at the park.

2) Consultation with the Durham Access Group

One member of the Durham Access Group responded. They noted that access path is difficult to navigate, and litter strewn, the gate is difficult to manage with a wheelchair and the boggy ground also makes crossing the park in a wheelchair difficult.

They made the following suggestions:

- a. a rail for the path from Laburnum Avenue
- b. a wheelchair accessible gate
- c. a hard path suitable for wheelchair users
- d. picnic tables with wheelchair accessibility
- e. alternatively convert the entire area to a dog exercise area suitable for the exercise of guide dogs.

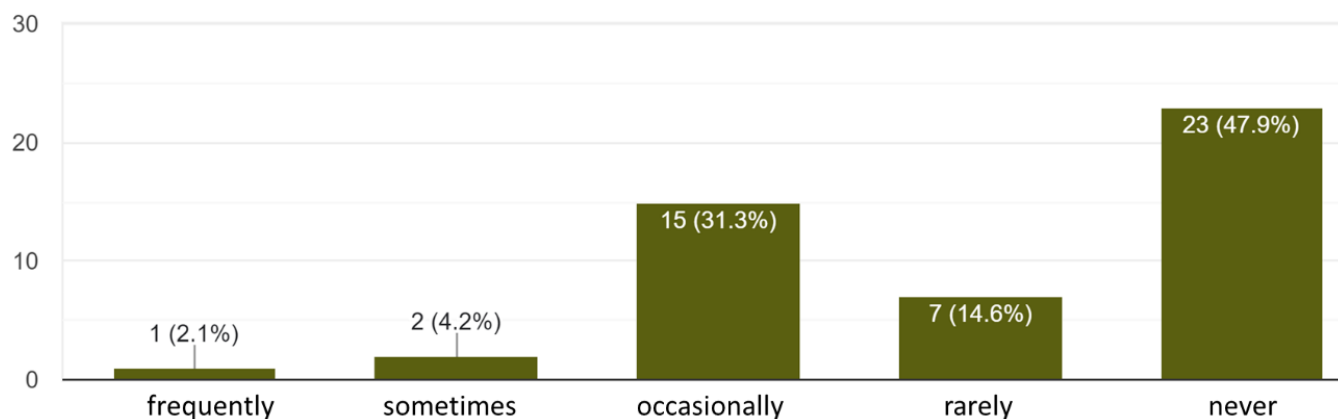
3) Public Consultation

Paper surveys were circulated at the church and around the local area. Electronic versions were also made available via Nevilles Cross Community Association (NXCA) and Crossgate Community Partnership (CCP) resident groups.

Forty-eight surveys were returned, at least eight of which were completed by children who use the park. The results are summarised below:

How often do you currently use Peskies Park?

48 responses

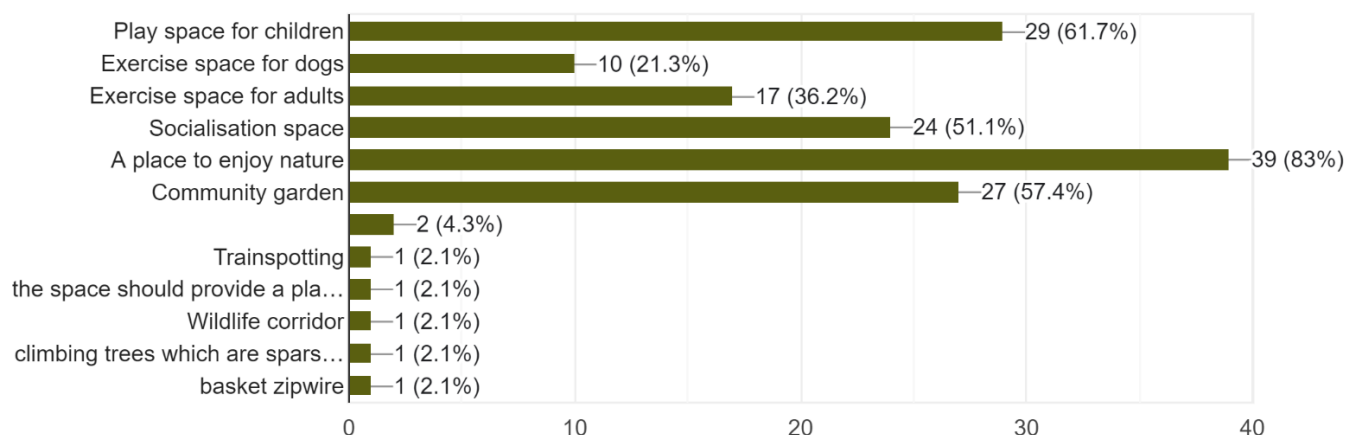


What stops you from using the park?

- Eight people commented that it was run down and grubby.
- Five people cited safety concerns over the poorly maintained boat and gaps under the fence leading to the railway, broken glass and drugs paraphernalia.
- Three people cited issues with access.
- Nine people noted there was nothing there, lack of seats and play equipment.
- Four complained about the boggiess.
- Three people stated they did not know it existed.

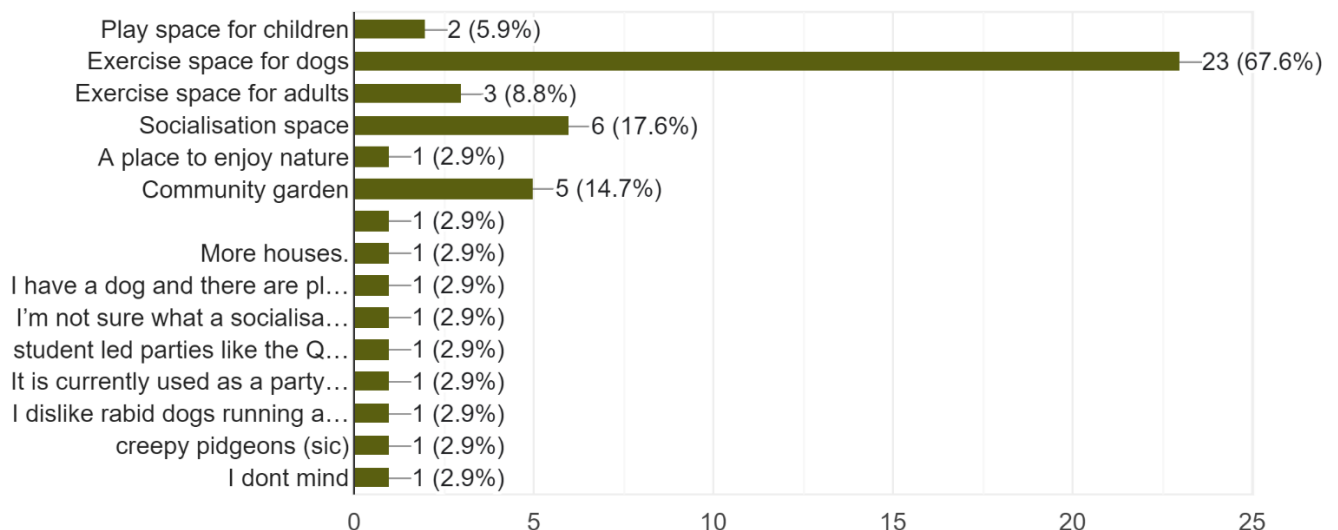
What would you like to use the park for? Please tick all that apply?

47 responses



Are there anything you would not want the park used for? Please tick all those apply.

34 responses



Do you have any other comments or suggestions that would make it a more appealing place for local residents?

- One person asked for whatever was done that it reflected what the majority want.
- One person asked for a specialised dog park.
- Three people asked for sports equipment e.g., a MUGA, goalposts or a wall game wall.
- Six people asked for it to be maintained regularly.
- One person asked for a café.
- Six people asked for more children's play equipment, (a five-person zipwire basket swing was an especially popular request).
- Five people asked for a community garden.
- Two people asked for adult exercise equipment.
- Three people asked for better signage.
- Two people were concerned that any development would lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour.

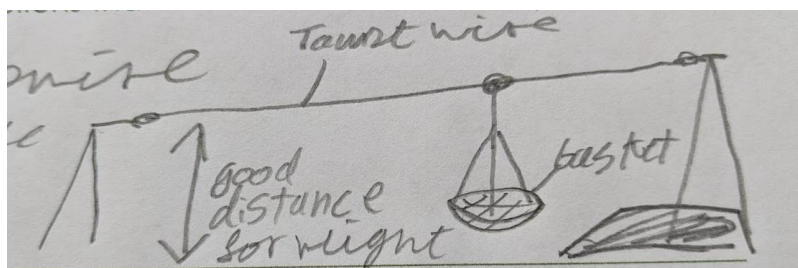


Diagram to show proposed five-person zipwire basket swing.

Fourteen people signed up to continue to be involved further.

4) Conversations whilst delivering the survey, three people asked me to do something with the waste land at the end of Lawson Terrace, one suggested a community orchard.