

Castle Park Colchester

Restoration and Development Plan

Have your Say



**Results of Public Consultation
October 2009**

Introduction

The Castle Park Restoration and Development Plan has been produced to identify a list of potential facilities and features in Castle Park. The aim of the Plan is to increase the range of audiences who use and enjoy the park and to conserve and improve its heritage value. Castle Park is a special place for a variety of reasons and the wish is to improve visitors' skills and knowledge through opportunities for learning and training.

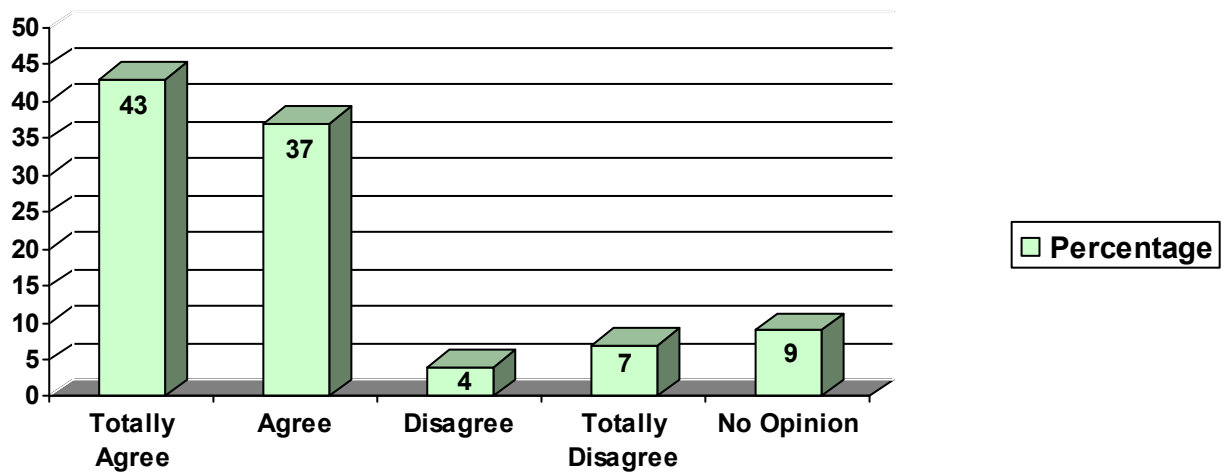
The consultations aim was to gauge the public's support for these proposals before any further action in detailed design and costing was taken. The questionnaire was open to all members of a household, copies of the questionnaire were available at Colchester Borough Council's Angel Court Offices along with a display outlining the proposals, and the VisitColchester shop, in the High Street, The Café in the Park or on line at www.colchester.gov.uk/castleparkrestoration.

Also two events were held at Castle Park on Saturday the 29th August and Saturday the 12th September: 12 - 4pm on Hollytrees Lawn. Here members of the public had a chance to talk to officers about the proposals before completing the questionnaire.

A total of 115 questionnaire were returned and analysed using pinpoint. The questionnaire asked for further comments. Some of these which relate to specific questions have been included along with the results. A full list of comments can be found in Appendix 1.

Q1. Creation of an “Activity Area” which includes;

New Play Area



77% of people either totally agreed or agreed with the provision of a new play area within the proposed activity area.

Comments included:-

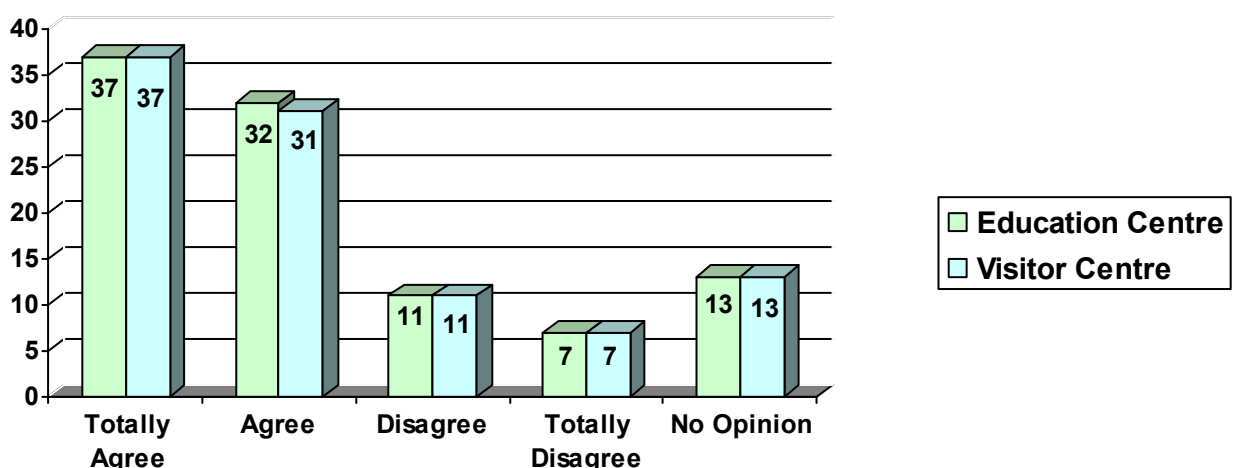
- I think it is important that the Castle Park and its play and entertainment areas are brought up to date and are interesting and enjoyable for everyone.
- As a family with a 6½ yr old daughter we are in the park a lot. Regarding the play area –
 - ◇ Please could you include a roundabout (of traditional style).
 - ◇ Some form of Castle to climb about.
 - ◇ More swings.
 - ◇ A water fountain near the play area.
 - ◇ Some form of maze with a look out post.
 - ◇ Some form of paddling pool eg the splash / soft play water area (Diploland) in Legoland.We know money is an issue but these are suggestions from our daughter.
- There should be more games in the play area for children above 7 yrs old.
 - ◇ A water fountain to drink water from is essential close to the swings.
 - ◇ Frames like the play area at Black Notley and the water feature like the one in Maldon are amazing.
 - ◇ A sand area would be great too.The games at the Upper Park are out of date.
- I think consultation and inspection of the children’s play area in Maldon would be instructive. This park is more for adults to enjoy, Maldon caters for adults, young children, teens.
- The play area if it has to be moved should cater for all age school children.
 - ◇ Provide a shelter if it should rain.
 - ◇ Seats around the perimeter for mums and child minders to sit on.
 - ◇ Toilet not too far away.
 - ◇ An area to play ball games as at present.

◇ Open space not hemmed in with hedges and trees that need maintenance. Doesn't look like there is enough room has been allowed for all of this..

- I also agree that the play area needs to be looked at – some of it is the same as when I was little 30 yrs ago! Maldon Park is an excellent example with water and sand play.
- Themed golf needs to be included to the play area and another home for the themed golf. New play area must be up and running before removal of existing one.
- The current play area is completely inadequate. The equipment is in poor condition and there is not much there especially considering the focal point of the park to the town centre. Play equipment for the under fives is important but also something for those up to 11 – 12 to attract the whole family.
- Please make the new play area include equipment for older children e.g. 5 – 10yr olds.
- The plan to move the play area to 'busier' surroundings will hopefully cut down the usage of it by 'overage' children – but I think the existing hedges should be replaced by railings.
- What about an area for older children – even teenagers – Ipswich's Christchurch Park has an area in its excellent playground where older kids can hang out.
- However in the play area I would love to see a purpose built castle with ramps for slides, a scramble net, rope ladders, a place for imaginative play. Assault courses, to build confidence and physical capabilities. Play equipment for children with special needs and a splash pool.
- All is ok except the changing of the children's play area. This has only just been refurbished and is fine where it is. You'd save a lot of money by leaving well alone and just restoring existing facilities.
- New play area should be enclosed with railings or something similar not hedging.
- Fence of swings in park, Water fountain, Big slide.

For the full list of comments see Appendix 1.

Education and Resource Centre / Visitor Centre

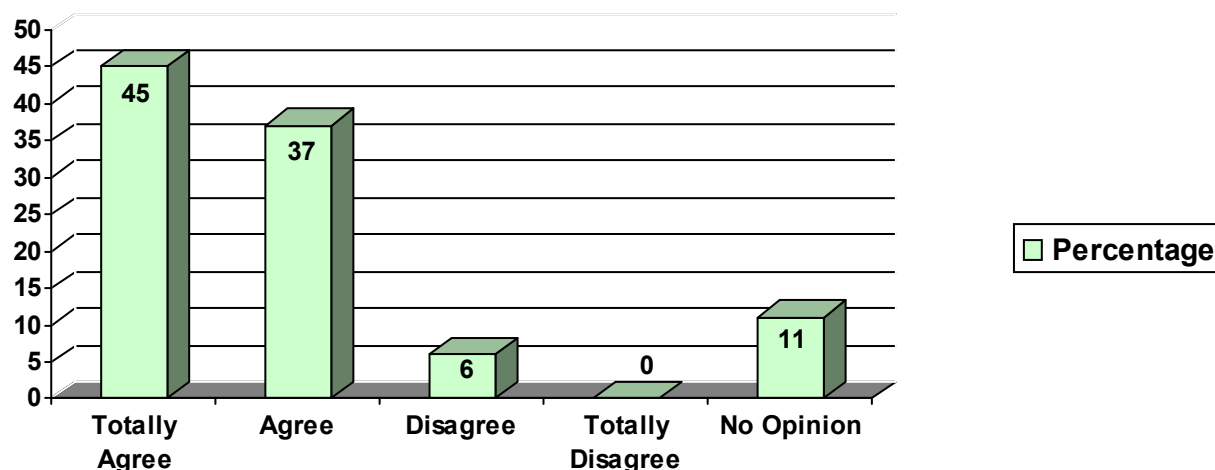


69% of people either totally agreed or agreed with the provision of an Education and Resource Centre and 68% with a Visitor Centre within the proposed activity area. 18% of people either disagreed or totally disagreed with both proposals.

Comments included

- Visitor Centre, education Centre and function room in one building.
- It's a park – so why have a visitors centre?
- The old nursery area (Q1) is wasted at the present and improvement could be linked to Duncan's Gate.
- The proposal to site a volunteer building in the 'working hub' of the park is an excellent idea.
- I also think an education building is un wanted and unnecessary

Café & function room



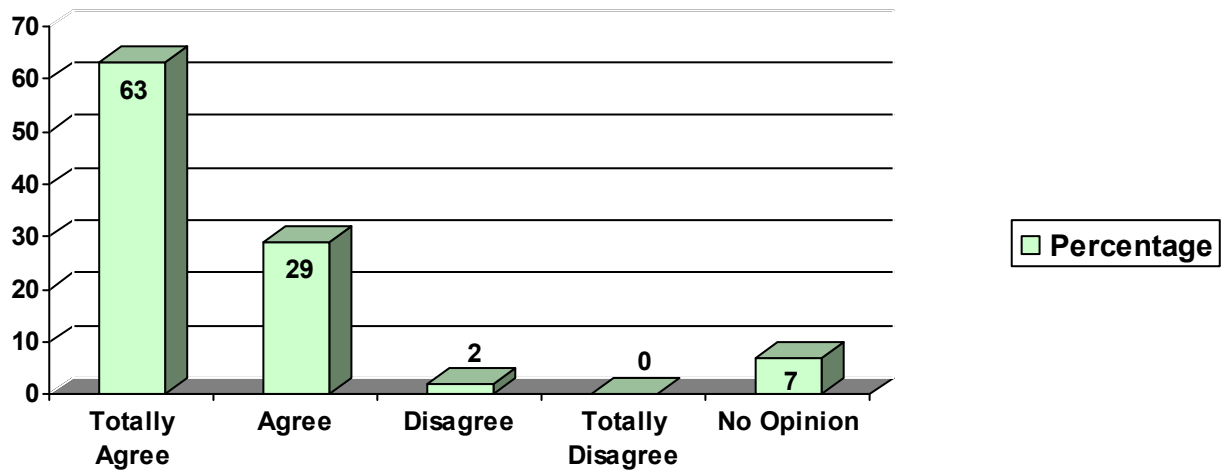
82% of people either totally agreed or agreed with the provision of an improved café and function room.

Comments included:-

- Supplying cafes, restaurants and toilets are also important, as long as they are kept clean and safe to use.
- Another catering facility and baby facility would be welcomed.
- The provision of a good catering facility will always be essential.
- The café has a pleasant 1930's atmosphere even though the seated area seems little used. I would like to see the bower area adjacent the left hand side of the café – donated by a Colchester family – be restored. As should a similar and neglected donation – the water fountain behind the café. I do however suggest that something be done to use the somewhat strange open areas under the café.

For the full list of comments see Appendix 1.

New Toilets

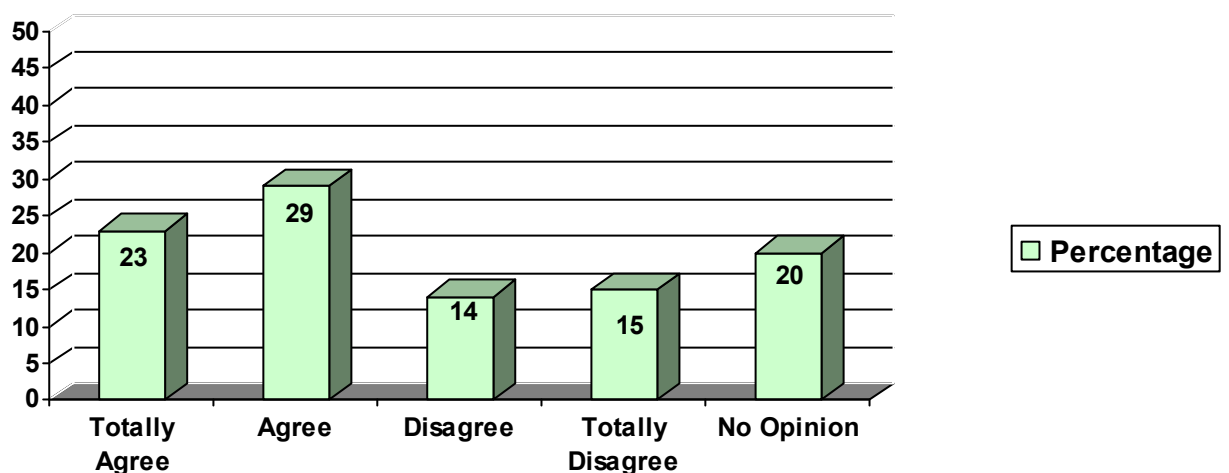


92% of people either totally agreed or agreed with the provision of new toilet facilities within the 'Activity Area'.

Comments included:-

- The toilets – please could they have seats rather than the wooden supports. Also some children sized toilets would be good.
- Toilets need upgrade.
- The park is in desperate need of new toilets as well.
- I strongly agree with updating the toilets as these are disgusting.
- New / more toilets are a priority.
- Please install 'changing places' (see changingplaces.org.uk) accessible toilets suitable for people with profound disabilities. Castle Park is our best community resource – let's make it accessible to all. This does not mean a slightly wider toilet with a bar rest.

Themed Golf

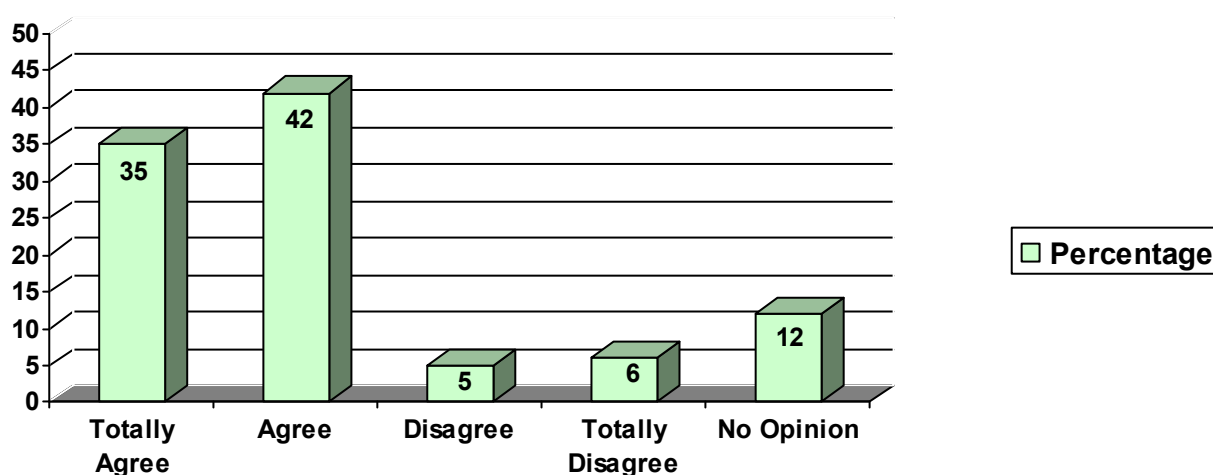


Just over half the respondents (52%) either totally agreed or agreed with the proposal of the provision of themed golf within the activity area. 19% either disagreed or totally disagreed.

Comment included:-

- We would like putting green – not crazy golf. What is themed?
- Themed golf needs to be included to the play area and another home for the themed golf.

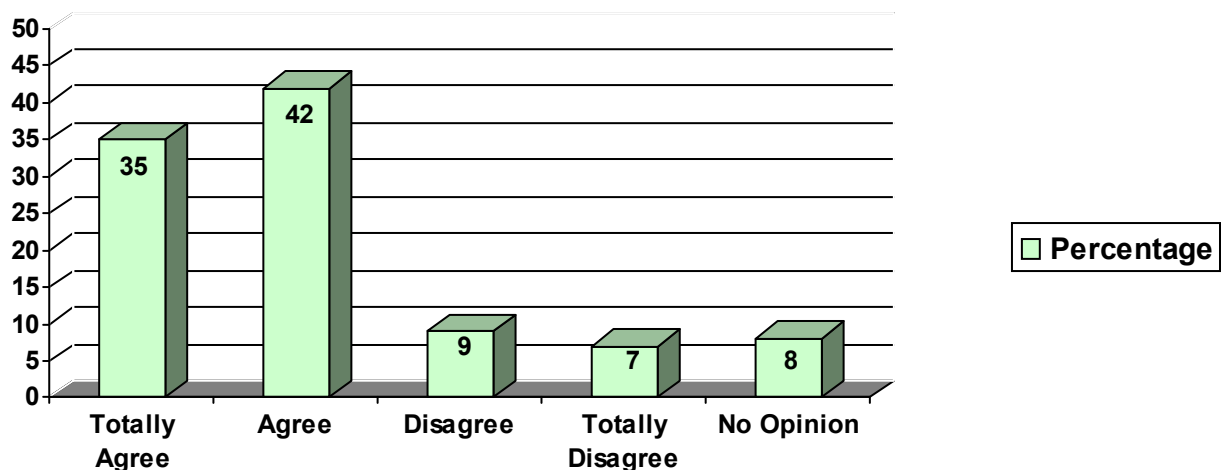
Q2 Bringing the Lower Bowling Green and thatched pavilion in to use by provision of appropriate bowls facilities and relocation of the current facilities at the Upper Bowling Green. Following relocation, the Upper Bowling Green to be removed and replaced with parkland and a recreation of the Roman Rampant.



77% of respondents totally agree or agree with proposals for the bowling greens.

- The top bowling green is in my opinion the finest in this town. If the lower green is to replace this it is vital that this is properly laid to allow satisfactory drainage – which it currently has not.
- Re lower bowling green. I understand the plans contain a proposal to relay the bottom green. This green has been virtually unplayable since the millennium fireworks ruined the playing surface and so far only very perfunctory repairs have been carried out. This has not encouraged the bowling club to use the green. The top green has been allowed to deteriorate over the past few years. Up to about ten yrs ago this was one of the best playing surfaces in NE Essex and I suggest that if money is to be spent on a bowling green it would cost only a very small fraction of the amount needed to lay a new green to restore the top green to its once excellent standard.
- Question 2 is ambiguous or incomprehensible - depending on your point of view - but if the intention is to replace the Roman rampart destroyed by the Council back in the early 1970s then I am in support.
- The proposal to return the upper bowling green to parkland should make another delightful area of the park.

Q3 Creation of a new park entrance should be created at Duncan's Gate offering interpretation of the Roman walls and town ditch.

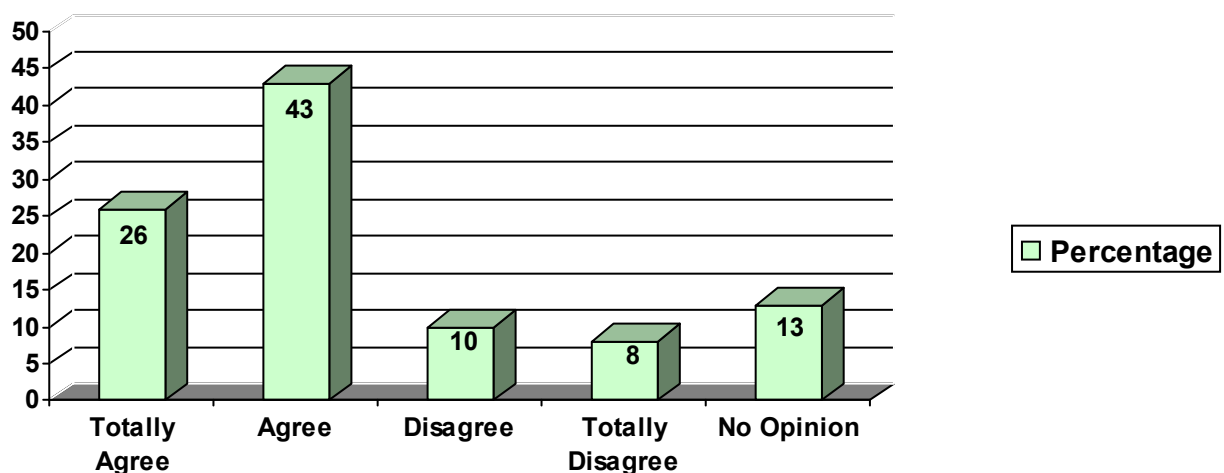


77% of respondents totally agreed or agreed with the creation of a new park entrance at Duncan's gate.

Comments included:-

- I strongly disagree with any disturbance to Duncan's Gate that means that the fallen archway should be moved or relocated. Understand it fell where it lies many centuries ago. Find another park entrance!
- We fully support the 'opening up' (by means of footpath and new Duncan's Gate entrance) by the east side of the park.
- Duncan's gate would attract vandals and there is already access.

Q4 Provision of a new gate and vehicle bridge immediately south west of the cricket pavilions to facilitate access to the Lower Park for events minimising the need for the St Peters Street entrance by large vehicles.



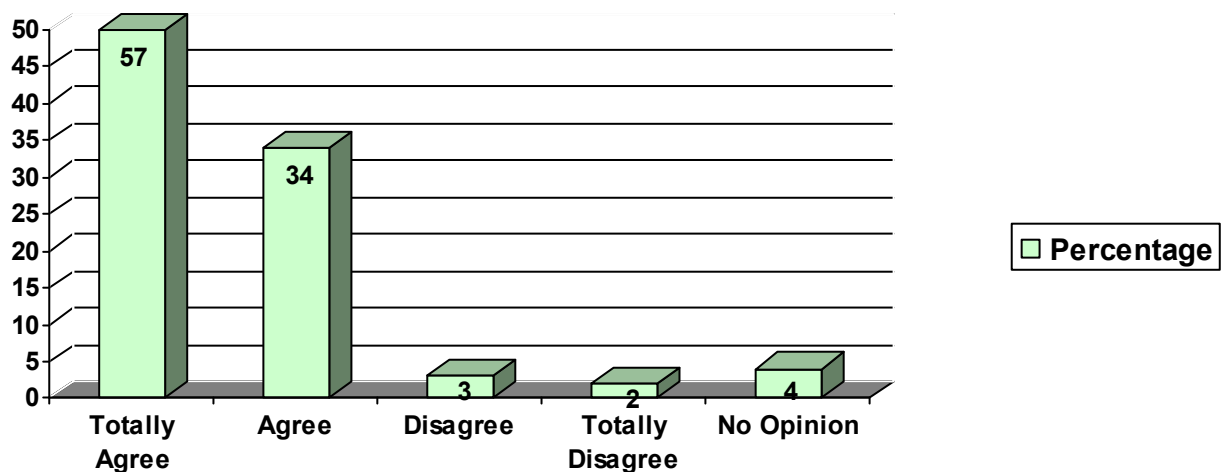
69% of respondents either totally agreed or agreed with the provision of a new gate and bridge to the south west of the cricket pavilions. 18% either disagreed or totally disagreed.

Comments included:-

- I do not understand how a new gate and vehicle bridge can be created without the necessity to remove trees and grass to make a roadway / approach bridge.
- Lower Castle Park would still need to be closed when large vehicles & equipment are being moved.
- It appears a waste of money when you have a perfectly good entrance at St Peters St. What is needed is the pedestrian gate on the wooden bridges by the pavilion to be unlocked during cricket matches.
- I am totally opposed to the idea of building a new access road over the river. The area around the weir has a special rural character which should be preserved.
- The proposal to build a new bridge across the Colne by the cricket pavilions is the sort of civic vandalism one gets used to in Colchester. The not-so-hidden-agenda seems to be to turn the park into a venue for events and to make it a kind of amusement arcade.

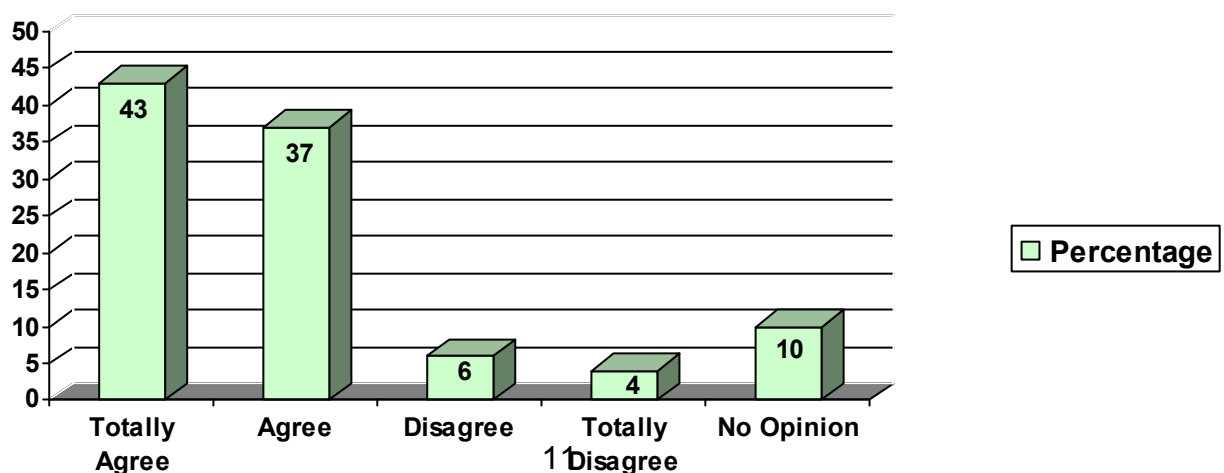
Q5 Improving facilities at the boating lake to include

New Toilets



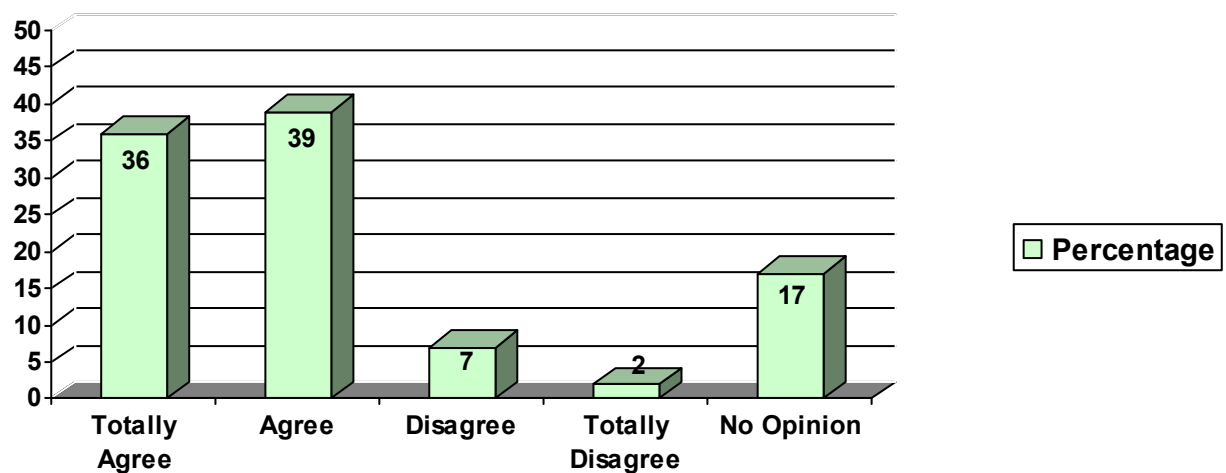
91% of respondents with totally agreed or agreed with the provision of new toilets by the boating lake.

Café Kiosk



80% of respondents either totally agreed or agreed with the provision of a new café kiosk by the boating lake.

Boat concessionaire shelter, boat store and terrace

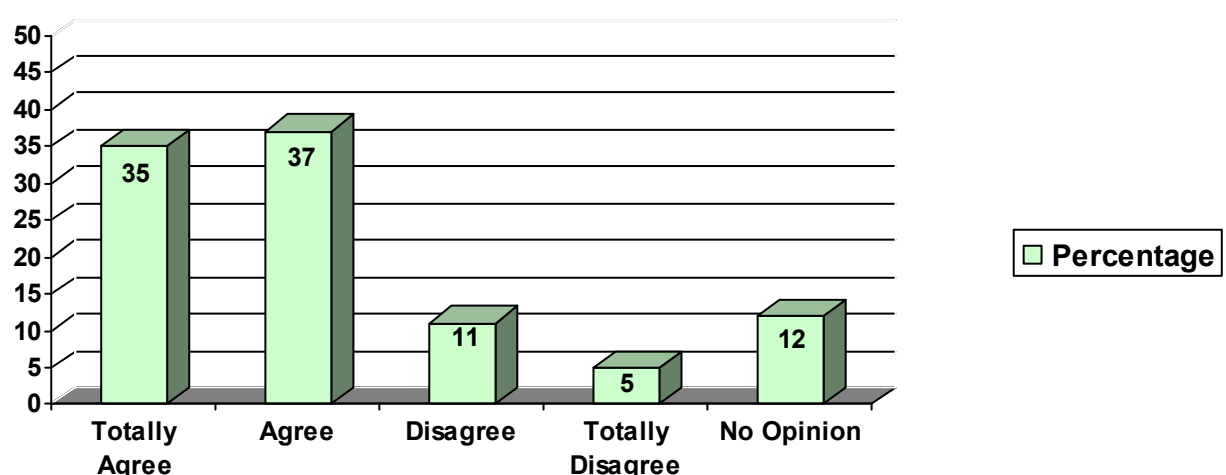


75% of respondents either totally agreed or agreed with this proposal.

Comments about improvements at the boating lake included:-

- I think the development by the boating lake is very important as is improving the toilets by the existing café.
- It would be nice to remove the shed by the boating lake and turn lake into an ornamental lake. The shed ruins the area without it the willow tree could be seen in all its glory.

Q6 Redesigning the Sensory Garden including the restoration of Hollytrees lawn as laid out by Charles Gray in the 18th Century.



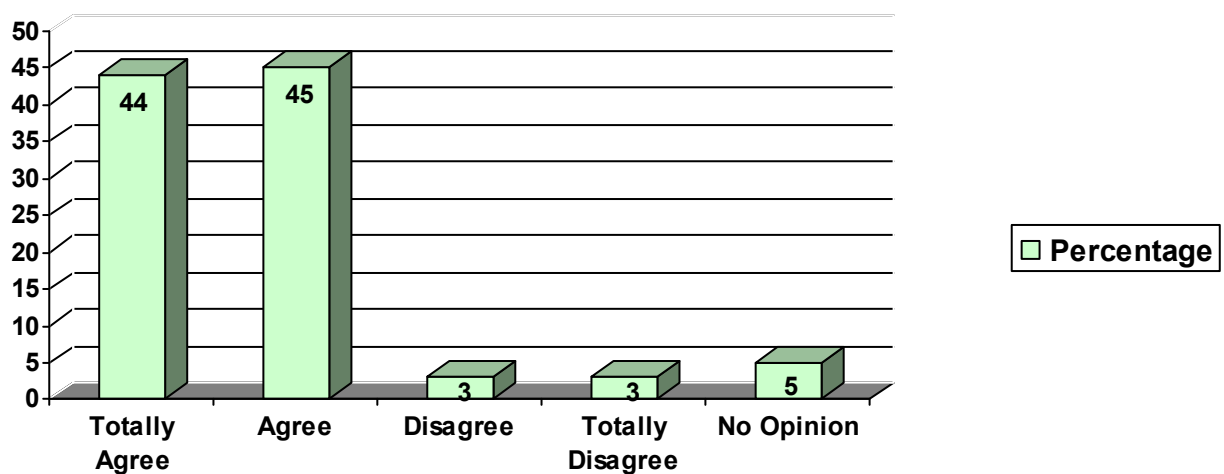
72% of respondents totally agreed or agreed with the redevelopment of the Sensory Garden and restoration of Hollytrees Lawn. 16% disagreed or totally disagreed.

- Sensory Garden vital.
- The planting of trees behind the Sensory Garden to hide new ugly flats and retain

privacy to Hollytrees.

- I think to revert back to the past e.g. Hollytrees lawn is a little narrow minded. Forward thinking and new modern concepts will show Colchester to be a more vibrant town.
- I feel that the sensory garden is an asset. I hope that it isn't lost by the restoration of Hollytrees lawn.
- Please keep an eye on new flats by the Sensory Garden. NO MORE TREE PRUNNING we do not want to see any more of the monstrosity.
- Difficult for people to answer if they have not see the Charles Grey layout.

Q7 I support the implementation of the Restoration and Development of Castle Park.



89% of respondents either totally agreed or agreed with the implementation of the Restoration and Development Plan.

Comments included:-

- Q1,4,5 – a little worried about the amount of building work and subsequent loss of grass and areas for peaceful enjoyment.
- Would like to see an interpretation board for the church ruins in front of Castle.
- Accentuate 'Roman aspect and information.
- Q7.(Implementation) The heritage lottery funding was an unnecessary expense!
- Any new building would have to be in keeping – not modern – use traditional materials.
- The park would clearly benefit from improved signage and better interpretation of the archaeological remains would enable visitors to appreciate the significance of these remains. The plans to improve the current facilities are very welcome as this would be a real benefit.
- Please improve cycle routes through town and include them in the park.

- I am very concerned that this restoration and development plan may spoil Castle Park's very special character which is near perfect as it is and a precious asset for future generations.
- I agree with all of the above.
- I support any necessary improvements and updating of facilities in the Castle Park but trust that the unique character of the park will be preserved.
- I do not see how we can justify spending money on the Castle Park other than to improve existing facilities – e.g. toilets, sensory garden.
- Any enhancements that are sensitive to the current nature of the park and improve its historical value are to be welcomed.
- The plans to improve the current facilities are very welcome as this would be a real benefit.
- There is some merit in the proposals, but precious little. What is alarming is the almost complete lack of reference to grass and plants. We are talking about a park after all.
- The proposed new cycle route on the north side of the river (ref. 18) is a welcome response to the need to improve cycle routes and to reduce the pedestrian-cycle conflict that often exists with the current woefully inadequate provision. However, the proposal is inadequate in two respects.

First, there is no indication of how the new route connects with existing routes at its western end. Indeed, the plan appears to indicate the route curving northwards to connect to the cricket club driveway. It is essential that the route continues westward to connect with the route across Middle Mill Weir. Without this, the new route will be worse than useless and very few east-west cyclists will use it.

Second, the replacement bridge at the north-east corner of the park, and the approaches to it, need to be designed to offer attractive angles to cyclists. As shown, the route appears to involve a turn of more than 90 degrees onto the bridge heading west from national route 51 and then another turn of more than 90 degrees onto the new route on the north side of the river. Both these turns should be reduced to around 45 degrees or less. Without this, the new route will not lie on a desire line and some cyclists will continue to be tempted to use the south bank of the river instead.

For a full list of comments see Appendix 1

Appendix 1. Full list of comments.

- I think it is important that the Castle Park and its play and entertainment areas are brought up to date and are interesting and enjoyable for everyone.
Supplying cafes, restaurants and toilets are also important, as long as they are kept clean and safe to use.
- I think the development by the boating lake is very important as is improving the toilets by the existing café. My daughter is too old now for the play area but I can see this being a big talking point with families and I am not sure how popular its relocation will be – it will probably depend on its new size and what ‘toys’ are included.
- Firstly I think this park is wonderful and well used.
I noticed on the leaflet – illustrating and informing about the park (available in the café) that there was no sign of the Wetzlar Garden, any visitor from Wetzlar would be a little sorry as I was!
I particularly liked the idea of an education centre / better toilets/ café / and bettering the Roman bits.
- As a family with a 6½ yr old daughter we are in the park a lot. Our first suggestion would be regarding the toilets -
 - please could they have seats rather than the wooden supports.
 - Also some children sized toilets would be good.Next regarding the play area -
 - Please could you include a roundabout (of traditional style).
 - Some form of Castle to climb about.
 - More swings.
 - A water fountain near the play area.
 - Some form of maze with a look out post.
 - Some form of paddling pool eg the splash / soft play water area (Diploland) in Legoland.We know money is an issue but these are suggestions from our daughter.
- Restoration of Castle park and its facilities is necessary to keep it up to date as well as supplying sufficient facilities for all ages that are clean and safe to use.
- I can see, with all the new housing and people around this area you will need far more facilities. The park is beautiful and the rangers deserve to be entered for a prize.
But Colchester is becoming a ruin, I can see the new arts centre from my window and it is disgusting - do something about it. Eld Lane which had some decent shops and sold different types of goods, for which people from abroad are looking for. Stop messing about and get it sorted, Colchester is a nice town, if only you people run it sorted it.
- Re question 4 (New gate & bridge). I do not understand how a new gate and vehicle bridge can be created without the necessity to remove trees and grass to make a roadway / approach bridge.
- The proposals are good, the only fear is that antisocial behaviour, the absence of visual park wardens will sadly mean that the park will still not be used to its full potential but if security can be stepped up I am sure it will be lovely.
- Bedding plants are very good but shrubs and perennial plants are looking tired. Otherwise it is a lovely park and well worth a visit.
- More facilities for disabled.
- Would like to have the use of mobility scooters or wheelchairs available for hire.
- Shop mobility stand near Hollytrees museum so we can hire mobility scooters.
- Castle Park would be a good place to base a shop mobility. Disabled people find it difficult to walk around it. It could be incorporated into the resource centre or into a new block of toilets by Hollytrees.
- Q4. (New gate & Bridge) Lower Castle Park would still need to be closed when large vehicles & equipment are being moved.
- Q1,4,5 - a little worried about the amount of building work and subsequent loss of grass and areas for peaceful enjoyment.

- More parking for the disabled.
A memorial to remember our Colchester soldiers killed in service in present wars placed near the war memorial. Well over due!!!
- Would like to see an interpretation board for the church ruins in front of Castle.
There are currently far too many unnecessary vehicle movements in the park. Cars driven to Hollytrees, bandstand, and castle even when no heavy loading is involved and the journey could be made on foot. Bollards should be installed to restrict vehicles to designated access points – and then only when unavoidable.
- I am very proud of Castle Park. I enjoy it regularly, nearly weekly with both sons and my husband. Our weekend wouldn't be the same without it.
Another catering facility and baby facility would be welcomed.
- Hollytrees always looks attractive - a lovely aspect of Colchester. Castle Hollytrees and Castle Park are one of the jewels in Colchester's crown. Archaeological heritage should be promoted - a rich resource vastly neglected.
- There should be more games in the play area for children above 7 yrs old. A water fountain to drink water from is essential close to the swings. Frames like the play area at Black Notley and the water feature like the one in Maldon are amazing. A sand area would be great too. The games at the upper ark are out of date.
- I would like to see the implementation and upgrading of the playground area (see the Notley Park and discovery area) as well as water park (see Maldon water area). There is nothing for older children to enjoy. Hope you take this into account as the materials are not too expensive.
- Make use of the river to provide cheap electricity for the park by installing some sort of turbine at the weir.
- I live in Castle Rd backing onto Hollytrees meadow and the path along the line of trees will help to stop the footballers playing near the wall. We have a constant battle with footballers, not necessarily with balls coming over but the intrusion of players climbing into our gardens to retrieve their ball. Footballers climbing over the wall are often rude and very threatening. The benches have considerably helped the situation but the path may reduce the problem further.
- I think water driven turbine to produce electricity for the park facilities at middle mill would be good. I suggest you contact the environment agency as those projects are undertaken by them and they may also pay for it!
- Sensory garden vital. Labels – names of shrubs, trees etc would be helpful.
Accentuate 'Roman aspect and information.
- Visitor Centre, education Centre and function room in one building.
- I agree with all of the above.
- Can we see park keepers walking around also PCSO's to prevent cyclist and rowdy teenagers so older visitors can also enjoy the park and facilities.
- I agree with the above redevelopment and hope – unlike the VAF the people in charge listen to the people of Colchester this time. It would be nice to see the park patrolled by PCSO's and rangers regularly.
- I love the park as it is and am surprised at the proposals. I would keep it all very low key and not develop for sake of it. I think development of the playground and education facilities in the existing café area will spoil the ambience of the whole natural surrounding area and make it feel overdeveloped and noisy, don't forget older people don't want to necessarily have children at close proximity when having tea etc.
- I think consultation and inspection of the children's play area in Maldon would be instructive. This park is more for adults to enjoy, Maldon caters for adults, young children, teens.
- I like the ambience of the park at all times.
- The top bowling green is in my opinion the finest in this town. If the lower green is to replace this it is vital that this is properly laid to allow satisfactory drainage – which it currently has not.

- Fence of swings in park. Water fountain. Big slide.
- The castle park is already beautiful but there are some room for improvements. Family activities such as fun golf, improved bowling green and visitors centre would be welcome.
- Q7.(Implementation) The heritage lottery funding was an unnecessary expense! Q1 (activity area) feel the new play area will not be good for people visiting from the town – but understand it is necessary.
- Any new building would have to be in keeping – not modern – use traditional materials. The park as we all know is the jewel in Colchester's crown changes should be of low impact and be in keeping with heritage of 'Britain's oldest recorded town'. So much class, history and culture has already been demolished from the town, that any changes need to stick to tradition, brick, tiles, traditional architecture, quality versus cost – in this case quality should be upmost even if it takes longer to implement as the project / the park is here for generations to come. Modernisation does not have to mean glass and contemporary materials. Moving forward sometimes means preservation and tradition. If some of these principles are considered, then some of the proposals would seem acceptable and appropriate.
- I strongly disagree with any disturbance to Duncan's Gate that means that the fallen archway should be moved or relocated. Understand it fell where it lies many centuries ago. Find another park entrance.
- 54.(new play area) The play area if it has to be moved should cater for all age school children.
 - Provide a shelter if it should rain.
 - Seats around the perimeter for mums and child minders to sit on.
 - Toilet not too far away.
 - An area to play ball games as at present.
 - Open space not hemmed in with hedges and trees that need maintenance.
 - Doesn't look like there is enough room has been allowed for all of this.
- 53, (interpretation of roman drains). Is there going to be an archaeological dig in the present play area – if not what is it going to be used for, hopefully remain a ball games area.
- 17.(new path along castle rd) I am against a road being laid on the far side of the play area as mature trees will need to be removed otherwise so much of the park will be taken up by tarmac to supply visitors centre and education centre.
Car park for extra paid staff that will be needed to service visitor centre and education centre.
Themed golf needs to be included to the play area and another home for the themed golf.
New play area must be up and running before removal of existing one.
- Living in Castle Rd we have problems with footballs. The path to Duncan's gate will help this as players will be away from the wall.
- Re lower bowling green. I understand the plans contain a proposal to relay the bottom green. This green has been virtually unplayable since the millennium fireworks ruined the playing surface and so far only very perfunctory repairs have been carried out. This has not encouraged the bowling club to use the green. Neither has the intimidation of players by foul mouthed insults and by bottles and other missiles being lobbed onto the green by gang's of feral youths who are allowed to roam the park unchecked. Hence the lack of use over the past few seasons. The top green has been allowed to deteriorate over the past few years. Up to about ten yrs ago this was one of the best playing surfaces in NE Essex and I suggest that if money is to be spent on a bowling green it would cost only a very small fraction of the amount needed to lay a new green to restore the top green to its once excellent standard.
- I support any necessary improvements and updating of facilities in the Castle Park but trust that the unique character of the park will be preserved. Its beauty and tranquillity as well as its facilities are much appreciated and enjoyed by residents all year round as well as by seasonal visitors.
- Please please do not over restore and develop part of the parks charm is its simplicity and that it has old fashioned things. It needs to retain this and its tranquillity – not become another hectic developed area. I always admire the planting thro' out the year and all visitors I have taken to the park remark on how beautiful it looks.
- Suggestion that the Borough Council go look at Maldon for ideas.
- The planting of trees behind the Sensory Garden to hide new ugly flats and retain privacy to Hollytrees .
- I feel that the sensory garden is an asset. I hope that it isn't lost by the restoration of Hollytrees lawn.

- I do not see how we can justify spending money on the Castle Park other than to improve existing facilities – e.g. toilets, sensory garden. The provision of a good catering facility will always be essential. There is also the important archaeological importance of disturbing a valuable world heritage site.
- Any enhancements that are sensitive to the current nature of the park and improve its historical value are to be welcomed.
- Please keep an eye on new flats by the Sensory Garden. NO MORE TREE PRUNNING we do not want to see any more of the monstrosity.
- I strongly agree with updating the toilets as these are disgusting. I also agree that the play area needs to be looked at – some of it is the same as when I was little 30 yrs ago! Maldon Park is an excellent example with water and sand play.
- Q4(Bridge) I appears a waste of money when you have a perfectly good entrance at St Peters St. What is needed is the pedestrian gate on the wooden bridges by the pavilion to be unlocked during cricket matches.
- We fully support the 'opening up' (by means of footpath and new Duncan's Gate entrance) by the east side of the park. We were advised by Cllr Hunt that 'digging' is to take place where the playground is now placed. We are against any unsightly excavation which would spoil Hollytrees Meadow.
- The park would clearly benefit from improved signage and better interpretation of the archaeological remains would enable visitors to appreciate the significance of these remains.
- Potential plans however should consider very carefully the full implications of proposed alterations and whether there is truly the necessity for potentially damaging intervention. Perhaps the focus of the plans would be better redirected to improve the interpretation of the current incomparable remains rather than suggesting the excavation of further remains. The plans to improve the current facilities are very welcome as this would be a real benefit.
- We love the park as it is and wouldn't want to see major changes but would like to make the following suggestions. Loan of scooters for the disabled. Music for young people. Tea dances (could the function room be of a size to accommodate tea dances in the Afternoon?).
- The excellent features of the Castle Park should be retained with flowerbeds, trees and encouragement for birdlife. Aviary in Castle Park? Pets corner for children?
- I think to revert back to the past e.g. Hollytrees lawn is a little narrow minded. Forward thinking and new modern concepts will show Colchester to be a more vibrant town.
- Extended play area should include items for all age children e.g. Rowntree Park, York. Plans for the plot below the present area would not be so accessible for young families and also not so visible to passers by providing security.
- Café expensive. Park good but need little help.
- Please make the new play area include equipment for older children e.g. 5 – 10yr olds.
- I would like to see more done to enforce bylaws i.e. bicycles and dogs.
- I am totally opposed to the idea of building a new access road over the river. The area around the weir has a special rural character which should be preserved.
- Castle Park is a unique and precious example of an ionic English park. These are some of the words that come to my mind if asked to describe its uniqueness (apart from its obvious attributes, the physical features themselves), understated, old world, gentle, secret, enclosed, a refuge.
I am very concerned that this restoration and development plan may spoil Castle Park's very special character which is near perfect as it is and a precious asset for future generations.
- Bowling – no one (including Ranger) knows how to get a casual game – Do you? Thought it was a private club green. Perhaps could hire for bowls game. We would like putting green – not crazy golf. What is themed?
Duncan's gate would attract vandals and there is already access.
Toilets need upgrade. According to the 'Standard' showers were mentioned but not in the exhibition listings. Showers are unnecessary in a park and would attract the wrong people.

The exhibition should have been on Hollytrees for weeks! 2 half days Saturdays is not enough for the public to visit, many people have sat. as a working day (shops/transport/health etc) and not everyone is on line especially elderly, low income and unwaged.

- I am unable to complete this form but would like to congratulate all involved in the park the designers of the colours of the beds, the gardeners who plant out the beds, the maintenance men etc. These gardens are a pleasure to walk in, sit in and admire every season of the year. Colchester should be proud of them.
- Let us not spoil what is already good. The old nursery area (Q1) is wasted at the present and improvement could be linked to Duncan's Gate.
- It would be nice to remove the shed by the boating lake and turn lake into an ornamental lake. The shed ruins the area without it the willow tree could be seen in all its glory. Apart from this I think the park is perfect – a real jewel in the crown of Colchester. What ever the time throughout the year the park is a joy to visit. I am very proud of it and it needs very little changing. It is perfect as it is.
- The current play area is completely inadequate. The equipment is in poor condition and there is not much there especially considering the focal point of the park to the town centre. Play equipment for the under fives is important but also something for those up to 11 – 12 to attract the whole family.
- The children's play area is in urgent need of an upgrade. There are exposed lumps of concrete at the bottom of a slide and the potential for splinters on many of the activities are very high. The ground covering is unsuitable and dirty particularly in rainy weather. It is looking very tired and not very attractive in its current form.
I would be very wary of spending large sums of money on some of the suggestions when they are probably not needed and would not add value to the Castle Park experience.
- Whilst I fully appreciate and support the need for the Castle Park to develop to meet the ever changing needs of the population and perhaps more importantly to act as a greater focal point for tourism and local residents. I am not wholly convinced that now is the right time to progress such a development. It is also questionable whether the investment gain could ever justify the £3.5m capital outlay, when there are more worthy local projects requiring similar funding.
Some of the proposals which relate to the screening of adjacent buildings to the park, may on the surface appear well intentioned, but such action may ultimately create a place of tranquil sterility instead of a vibrant place which combines the beauty of nature with the progressive historical architectural development of the surrounding area and its buildings.
- The planned change of the play area appears smaller than the current one, making the park seem less accessible to people with children. It would be good, and I feel would bring more people to the park if a 'splash park' similar to the one in Maldon could be included. Children love to splash in water this would then make the park more appealing to families. It appears so far that the changes are geared for the older generation. Having a splash park would make Colchester far more appealing.
- The documents concerning these proposals make reference to a need for discouraging large groups of teenagers from congregating in certain areas of the park. However, although the proposals discuss facilities targeted specifically at families, at older people and at younger children, nowhere in the proposals is any discussion of facilities aimed specifically at teenagers or methods of encouraging or managing their involvement in the park. The facilities at nearby Colchester Leisure World, in particular the skate park, provide one aspect of leisure facilities geared specifically towards teenagers.
Therefore
 - Is there easy pedestrian access from Castle Park to Leisure World facilities?
 - Would it be possible for any improvements to signage and visitor information at the park, to clearly mention leisure world facilities including the skate park, and provide signposts of the pedestrian routes to reach them? (Q1 and Q5 would be good places for this)
 - Are there any plans in the proposals for facilities aimed particularly at teenagers?
- As a Colcestrain ie born here, I would strongly recommend that only minimal changes if any be made if at all necessary and that the Colchester Civic Society be involved.
The café has a pleasant 1930's atmosphere even though the seated area seems little used. I would like to see the bower area adjacent the left hand side of the café – donated by a Colchester family – be restored. As should a similar and neglected donation – the water fountain behind the café.
I do however suggest that something be done to use the somewhat strange open areas under the café. An extension of the play area is perhaps necessary; otherwise I would suggest the park is fine as it is. One should remember its original purpose – to provide a tranquil area just off the High Street – for

Colchesterians to enjoy, it matters not a jot what the peoples from London boroughs or anywhere else want.

I think there should also be very strict control on its use for events – being restricted to the Military event and the 5th November fireworks. The current events calendar is purely for making money by outside organisations and the entertainment of officers.

I also think an education building is unwanted and unnecessary.

- There is some merit in the proposals, but precious little. What is alarming is the almost complete lack of reference to grass and plants. We are talking about a park after all.
The proposal to build a new bridge across the Colne by the cricket pavilions is the sort of civic vandalism one gets used to in Colchester. The not-so-hidden-agenda seems to be to turn the park into a venue for events and to make it a kind of amusement arcade.
What you should really be doing is planting more and different trees and shrubs. My advice would be to go and have a look at the University Botanic Gardens in Cambridge and import that concept to the park. Then we could have an exquisite and relaxing green experience that would bring calm and rest to visitors.
Question 2 is ambiguous or incomprehensible - depending on your point of view - but if the intention is to replace the Roman rampart destroyed by the Council back in the early 1970s then I am in support.
- The plan to move the play area to 'busier' surroundings will hopefully cut down the usage of it by 'overage' children – but I think the existing hedges should be replaced by railings.
The proposal to return the upper bowling green to parkland should make another delightful area of the park. The proposal to site a volunteer building in the 'working hub' of the park is an excellent idea.
- Any improvements to the park are welcome but we hope that any 'commercialisation' will not have to be met by an entrance charge. Vandalism is an everyday occurrence and no doubt the proposed new facilities will attract vandals, how will the necessary improved security be paid for? We like the map – but we would also like to know what the little numbers represent. We have a spare copy of the map to which we can then refer.
- We do not wish to lose 'stag beetle reserve' – careful relocation if necessary. View excellent planting on Avignon garden – use rampart above as viewing platform. Use watermill, waterwheel for energy creation.
- Please do update the facilities in Castle Park. Please install 'changing places' (see changingplaces.org.uk) accessible toilets suitable for people with profound disabilities.
Castle Park is our best community resource – let's make it accessible to all. This does not mean a slightly wider toilet with a bar rest.
Please improve cycle routes through town and include them in the park.
Please create a café/ restaurant with lovely views that would be a treat to stop at – with good local food.
- Q6. Difficult for people to answer if they have not seen the Charles Grey layout.
- Colchester Park is the most beautiful and best maintained I have seen anywhere in the world. Why change something that cannot be improved.
- What about an area for older children – even 'god forbid' teenagers – Ipswich's Christchurch park has an area in its excellent playground where older kids can hang out
Alcohol free zone or even alcohol free park would be good too.
- It's a park – so why have a visitors centre?
Litter is currently a real problem, esp in the summer – bins, education and enforcement are vital.
Make the park an ALCOHOL FREE ZONE – drunkenness, rubbish and aggression again a real problem in the summer.
- Castle Park is beautiful in its gardens, seating, walking, peaceful and enjoyable for games.
However in the play area I would love to see a purpose built castle with ramps for slides, a scramble net, rope ladders, a place for imaginative play. Assault courses, to build confidence and physical capabilities.
Play equipment for children with special needs and a splash pool.
The park is in desperate need of new toilets as well.
However I love the park for its naturalness and appreciate those who work so hard for us, Thank you.
- I am a resident in Grey Frairs Court and would not welcome an increase in Council taxes to fund improvements. Sorry! But the idea to improve the visual aspect of the park and its enjoyment by all is a good idea.

- It would be nice to have a dance area around the bandstand as the current concrete floor / ground is not suitable for dance. Also it would be a good idea to have tea dances using the bandstand and the café.
- I use Castle Park most weekends as it is very beautiful and community minded.
- Overall, the RDP is excellent and, if implemented in full, will dramatically improve the park. At this stage, I would offer just four specific comments:
 The proposed new cycle route on the north side of the river (ref. 18) is a welcome response to the need to improve cycle routes and to reduce the pedestrian-cycle conflict that often exists with the current woefully inadequate provision. However, the proposal is inadequate in two respects.
 First, there is no indication of how the new route connects with existing routes at its western end. Indeed, the plan appears to indicate the route curving northwards to connect to the cricket club driveway. It is essential that the route continues westward to connect with the route across Middle Mill Weir. Without this, the new route will be worse than useless and very few east-west cyclists will use it.
 Second, the replacement bridge at the north-east corner of the park, and the approaches to it, need to be designed to offer attractive angles to cyclists. As shown, the route appears to involve a turn of more than 90 degrees onto the bridge heading west from national route 51 and then another turn of more than 90 degrees onto the new route on the north side of the river. Both these turns should be reduced to around 45 degrees or less. Without this, the new route will not lie on a desire line and some cyclists will continue to be tempted to use the south bank of the river instead.
 A preferred route to the one proposed - and especially if the two issues described above cannot be resolved - would be on the south side of the river. It is my belief that the space available there is adequate to allow a cycle route. This would allow cyclists access to Castle Park for the first time, thereby contributing to two of the ten plan objectives stated on p.91, namely to "increase the number and range of audiences ... using Castle Park" and to "enhance access and orientation throughout Castle Park".
 The proposed widening of the central stretch of the folly (ref. 16) would provide an opportunity to regularise cycling on this stretch too. The folly is already well used by cyclists, despite the no cycling signs, as it is on a desire lines for many routes (e.g. from the east via Guildford Road to the Sixth Form College) and recognised cycle routes involve considerable detours. The widening should be extended to include the path alongside the eastern stretch of the wall.
 The plan includes the replacement of benches (ref. 57) to provide "a unified feel". While I understand the intention, it must be taken into account that many of the park's benches have been erected as memorials and carry dedications. It is important that any plan to replace such benches should involve the full co-operation and agreement of those who have paid for and been involved with the establishment of these memorials. The plaques themselves should of course be replaced with identically-worded plaques of appropriate (and presumably unified) design on the new benches and any location changes should be agreed with the persons affected.
 I particularly welcome the plan to install steps through the sensory garden shelter (ref. 41). The improved permeability that this would provide would greatly improve the quality of this area of the park. I am glad to see that this particular proposal has been given a high priority, and I would suggest that its implementation should be prioritised independently of proceeding with the other changes to the sensory garden.
- My partner and I spend a lot of time in Castle Park. It's such a beautiful place to chill out and there are always great events, musicians and things to see and do. We welcome any plan that increases other people's enjoyment of this wonderful space.
- The working Group acknowledged the considerable benefits that the proposed restoration and development proposals would bring to those visiting the park. However the suggested continued enforcement of the cycling prohibition throughout the whole of the park was considered to be restrictive to cyclists and the aspirations of Cycle Colchester to reduce the barriers to cycling and encourage more people to cycle within the town. The Working Group identified that there are a number of key cycle routes that currently converge on to Lower Castle Park which accommodate a considerable number of cyclists wishing to enter the town from the east and north of Colchester, and also crossing east to west.
 It was considered that the proposed improvements to the Castle Park still offer no direct improvements to cyclists as there remains no direct link between cycle routes as a result of the cycling prohibitions within the park. It was acknowledged that a new section of shared cycle and pedestrian path is proposed along the southern edge of the cricket ground linking the cycle routes however the proximity of the river and the need to deviate off the desire line remains a barrier particularly to those cyclists wishing to travel in an east/west direction. There are also further questions to be resolved over how the cycle route will be separated from the cricket ground and what the situation would be when cricket matches are taking place, and how it would connect into the existing routes at its western end. The consultation document states that the provision of the proposed cycle route allows current policy of no cycling within the Park to be enforced, which appears to portray the wrong message for a high profile cycling town, when there may be an opportunity to consider integrating clearly defined and well planned cycle routes within the Park as part of the restoration and

development programme.

Cycle Colchester would therefore urge Colchester Borough Council to undertake a review of access for cycling through the Park with a view to introduce a number of key strategic safe cycling links. Cycle Colchester would also like the opportunity to make representation to Groups involved in the restoration and development of Castle Park Colchester to discuss cycle routes through the Park with a view to investigate and deliver a package of cycle route improvement measures that will both meet the aspirations of Cycle Colchester and provide a premier park recreational facility that will be for the enjoyment of all.

- Essex University currently has around 2,000 staff and over 9,000 students. Many of them live in Colchester. The BUG is interested in improving cycle routes to campus from all areas in which staff and students live. Currently around 250 members of the University community regularly cycle to campus. The University's transport and cycling policies involve the promotion of cycling (and walking) as active commuting methods, so we hope to see that number increase significantly over the next few years.
East-west routes in the area affected by this Restoration and Development Plan are of particular interest to us as they provide access to national cycle route 51 which follows the River Colne to the University. Members of the University community coming from Victoria Chase, the Rotary Way/Sheepen Place development, the lower Dutch Quarter and other areas west of the park might benefit greatly from the proposed new cycle route on the north side of the river (point 18 on the map).
We support the introduction of this route, provided that it links up at its western end to the junction of paths on the immediate north side of the Middle Mill weir bridge.
However, we also note that the desire line for many cyclists is on the south side of the river, not the north. A cycle path on the south side would be far preferable to one on the north. It would also eliminate illegal cycling along this path. We doubt that the north-side cycle path would achieve this.
Finally, we would also note that Castle Park is a very popular destination for all of the University community and for our many short-term visitors. This includes many of the students with on-campus accommodation, who cycle as a means of accessing Colchester. With this in mind, we would encourage the provision of improved cycle parking at each entrance to the park. The entrance in the north-east corner is particularly important in this respect – as it is adjacent to NR51 – and we suggest that the existing Sheffield stands should be extended to a minimum of ten stands with a minimum distance of 90cm between stands (which would provide a capacity of 20 bikes). The stands by the northwest entrance are currently of rather poor quality and could be upgraded as part of the redesign of that entrance, and then promoted as a parking facility for visitors to events in the park. The racks by the main Museum Street entrance are also currently few in number and of poor quality. This should be addressed as part of the redevelopment of the park.
- Keep any signage very clear but minimal – i.e. not too much!
- With constraints on funding I feel only one or two of these ideas should be implemented at a time but good quality job made of them. Attempting too many at a lower specification would be short sighted and not in keeping with the high standards we already have
- Possible introduction of ice skating on boating lake in winter?
- All is ok except the changing of the children's play area. This has only just been refurbished and is fine where it is. You'd save a lot of money by leaving well alone and just restoring existing facilities.
New / more toilets are a priority
More rubbish bins are desperately needed in Lower Park and outside to the east towards Riverside estate where all bins have disappeared.
What on earth is the gate that leads to nowhere for outside the upper bowling green in the side of the footpath that leads from Duncan's gate down to the little bridge?
- New play area should be enclosed with railings or something similar not hedging
I would like to see a community garden (allotment) within the park.
- Although agreeing with some of the proposals I am unable to support such an ambitious scheme. New buildings need continuing maintenance and often exceed development costs, leaving the council tax payer to foot the bill as with the still unresolved VAF fiasco.
There are already toilets at the boating lake and the café and education rooms will be available at the VAF – use them!
- I love the park for all it has to offer (on a personal level) but also for the Volunteer Centre. We have appreciated the use of the Bandstand for our 'Time Bank Annual Picnic and Knit-a-thon. The Knit and Natter Volunteers enjoy clicking their needles in the lovely surroundings of the park – along with an icecream.

- Think of the children of Colchester make the park their place. Heaven knows the play area has been forgotten for years along with children and their families. Think of the money laid out of the VAF?? I suggest before any work is commenced, you all take a trip to any or all of the parks in Ipswich – Christchurch Park, Holywell Park, the park by Ipswich Football Club, they put Colchester to shame. Holywell Park has a giant double spider web climbing frame and water feature. Christchurch not only has the museum but a superb park for kids of all ages with large swinging basket big enough to summon a bit of excitement and thrill instead of the petty equipment Colchester comes up with. Ok if you are 2 yrs old – otherwise at 5 you hit your head the equipment is so bad! The apparatus needs a bit of a scare factor about them. How about some excitement for a change??? A zip even? Surely you can do better than replacing the bark? Which is all you have managed for the last 10 yrs. You tool away the most exciting things – two slides, a roundabout, large swings & rocking horse all manufactured by Wicksteed and replaced by c**p! Leaving it rusty to boot. Don't hide the children's area up a corner out of the way – give them space – remind the whole of Colchester that they are our future – give them fun – lots of it – let them play. The park is for them. Big and tiny.

Castle Park Restoration and Development Plan Consultation

Submission from the Essex University Bicycle Users Group (BUG)

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Essex University Bicycle User Group
c/o Peter Lynn (Co-ordinator)
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21-09-2009

Essex County Council
Environment, Sustainability and Highways
E3
County Hall
Chelmsford
Essex CM1 1QH

Colchester Borough Council
Freepost CL3862
PO Box 5215
Colchester
CO1 3GG

Date: 21st September 2009
Our ref: CCT/ME/001
Your ref:

Dear Sir/ Madam

**Response to Castle Park, Colchester
Restoration and Development Plan Consultation Document**

The Government, together with Cycling England, is investing almost £100million in 18 towns and cities throughout the country to help transform them into areas where cycling becomes a genuine option, improving the local environment, congestion and fitness for 2.5 million people.

Colchester is one of 12 locations that make up the second wave of the Cycling Town projects, benefiting from the largest investment in cycling the country has ever seen.

Over a three year period, more than £ 4million will be spent on improving Colchester's cycle routes and signs and offering appropriate training to children and adults. The Cycle Colchester project is being delivered by Essex County Council, Colchester Borough Council, local cycling groups and a number of other organisations. A series of ambitious targets have been set to make sure that Colchester makes a real difference which amongst others, include increasing the number of cyclists cycling regularly by at least 75% over the life of the initial plan period and to increase the number of people travelling to the town centre by bike by 50%.

Cycle Colchester is currently approaching mid term within the life of the project and is currently focussing on the delivery of infrastructure schemes that will increase cycle usage.

On 15th September 2009 the Cycle Colchester Working Group met to discuss project progress. One of the items on the agenda was the Castle Park Restoration and Development Plan consultation document. This document (particularly section 6) was discussed at length between the Working Group representatives and below is a collective response to the consultation document on behalf of Cycle Colchester.

The working Group acknowledged the considerable benefits that the proposed restoration and development proposals would bring to those visiting the park. However the suggested continued enforcement of the cycling prohibition throughout the whole of the park was considered to be restrictive to cyclists and the aspirations of Cycle Colchester to reduce the barriers to cycling and encourage more people to cycle within the town. The Working Group identified that there are a number of key cycle routes that currently converge on to Lower Castle Park which accommodate a considerable number of cyclists wishing to enter the town from the east and north of Colchester, and also crossing east to west.

It was considered that the proposed improvements to the Castle Park still offer no direct improvements to cyclists as there remains no direct link between cycle routes as a result of the cycling prohibitions within the park. It was acknowledged that a new section of shared cycle and pedestrian path is proposed along the southern edge of the cricket ground linking the cycle routes however the proximity of the river and the need to deviate off the desire line remains a barrier particularly to those cyclists wishing to travel in an east/west direction. There are also further questions to be resolved over how the cycle route will be separated from the cricket ground and what the situation would be when cricket matches are taking place, and how it would connect into the existing routes at its western end. The consultation document states that the provision of the proposed cycle route allows current policy of no cycling within the Park to be enforced, which appears to portray the wrong message for a high profile cycling town, when there may be an opportunity to consider integrating clearly defined and well planned cycle routes within the Park as part of the restoration and development programme.

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Yours Sincerely

Mark Eves

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Castle Park review

This is the response by Colchester Cycling Campaign to the Castle Park restoration and development plan.

The Cycle Colchester Project

Colchester is an official English Cycling Town. The aim is to have in place a high quality cycle network that encourages people to ride their bikes as part of their everyday lives – so-called active travel. If we can achieve even a 30% cycling rate, the benefits to the environment and individuals' health will be huge.

What has held back cycling in the past 30 years is the lack of an efficient network and poor quality provision for riders.

The current situation

Cycling is prohibited in Upper and Lower Castle Park in their entirety, and the folley between the parks. My understanding is that cycling is permitted on the riverside path between Middlemill and North Station Road.

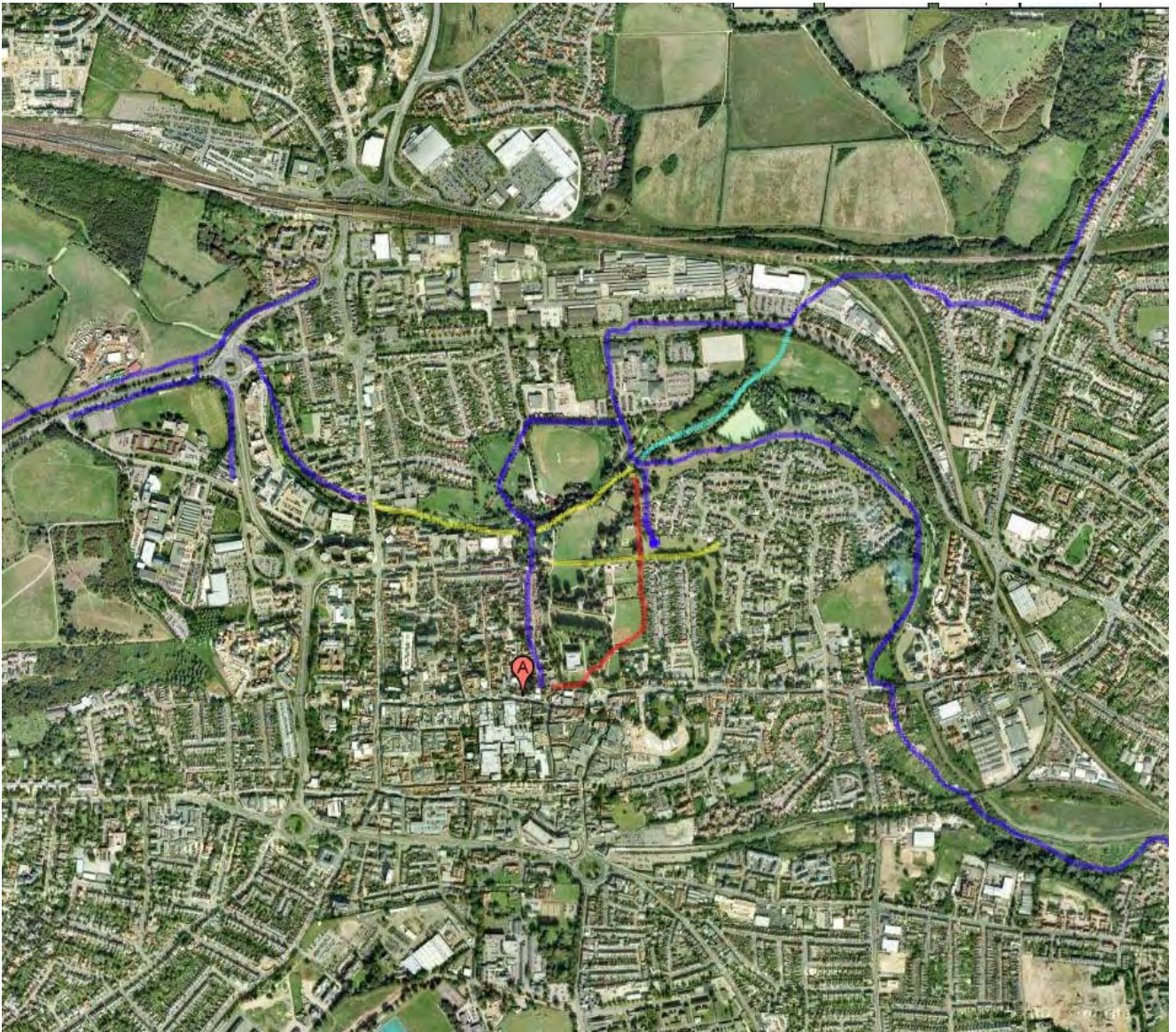
Experience in other communities

Most other UK towns allow cycling in their parks without a problem. People also use their cycles to travel to the park for concerts and other events. Castle Park's ban on cyclists send out all the wrong messages. It is fair to say that many park users drive to Leisureworld then walk into the park – a "park and park" if you like.

The type of cycling facility we seek

Most cyclists would prefer to be separated from pedestrians rather than having a shared use path (with or without white-line separation). In Holland, segregated paths are the norm and there is very little shared use. We respect pedestrians' right to enjoy the park and therefore request segregated paths along the three routes we propose. An example of such high quality provision is shown in the picture, above, of Bristol.





How Castle Park fits into the overall network

How the town has grown up around the park

Residential and road development since the park opened in the nineteenth century means it is now in the centre of a built-up area and at the hub of several cycle routes. The cycling prohibition obstructs several cross-town desire lines:

- Medium journey cyclists (trips of two to five miles) travelling from the north and east of Colchester (Highwoods, St John's and Greenstead) ride into the town centre via Havering Close, Cowdray Avenue, and a shared use path beside Megabowl. This leads to Sportsway and another shared use path taking riders over the river to the north-east corner of the park. A new route will open shortly linking Cowdray Avenue with the north-east corner of the park (shown in aqua on map one)
- Medium journey cyclists (trips of two to five miles) also travel from the east of Colchester (Wivenhoe, the Hythe and New Town) to access the sports centre and the railway station via the Wivenhoe Trail, which crosses East Bay and heads west to the north-east corner of the park.



For all medium journey cyclists the diversion around two or three sides of the cricket field (Bridge > Sportsway > King's Meadow) is an inconvenience. Links across the park would create a better network.

Local cyclists (trips of less than two miles) are more likely to break the law by cycling on the riverside path in the park or the folley. Most of these cyclists are cycle commuters to/from town or students at either Colchester Institute or St Helena secondary school. Children at North primary school are increasingly likely to cycle in years five and six, or with their parents when younger. Their short journeys mean that the Sportsway diversion is a real inconvenience which leads to illegal use of the paths in the park.

While two-mile journeys may seem relatively short it should be pointed out that a large proportion of car journeys are making trips of less than two miles. It is important to provide an attractive alternative to people carrying out this type of journey.

What we propose

We would like to see the creation of three links:

Riverside. North-east gate to north west gate. This path will link both the Wivenhoe Trail and the new Cowdray Avenue route with the riverside path west of the park which is already used by cyclists. This path leads on to the Avenue of Remembrance and has links to St Helena School and Colchester Institute. The possibility of a further connection across Cymbeline Meadows to the railway station is being investigated.

Folley. We note the proposals to widen the Castle Folley. Turning it into a segregated path would provide a 24-hour east-west connection.

Spine. From the north-east gate to the south-west gate. CCC has previously only called for the Riverside and Folley routes but we note the study's call for an eastern path, part of which will be used by park vehicles. We would like to see a segregated path running north-south across the park via Duncans Gate and the Cowdray Crescent gate, and passing in front of the castle.

Archaeology and trees

There are problems where ancient earthworks and/or the Roman wall may prevent a path of sufficient width; We believe that simple platforms (mainly on the Folley route) with minimal ground disturbance would be possible. Modern path creation techniques (Hilly Fields and High Woods) can be sensitive to archaeology and trees.

Speed reduction

We would anticipate speed-reducing staggered barriers (passable by tricycles) on downhill sections and where pedestrians cross a dedicated cycle path.

The north-east bridge

The north-east bridge is being renewed with s106 money from the Persimmon housing development being built on the south side of Cowdray Avenue. This bridge must be usable by cyclists and pedestrians, so width is a critical factor. Depending on whether a cycle route is secured north or south of the river, the alignment of this bridge is critical, so as to avoid sharp bends for cyclists, which a) are dangerous for all users; b) reduce the attractiveness of the route to cyclists and may therefore impact on usage. If the bridge has to be built before a decision is made, the design should be subject to separate consultation.

The north side path

The cricket pitch and clubhouse are currently isolated from the park by the river. Security for the cricket field would probably require the erection of a 2m chain link fence which would disrupt views from Castle Park. This path would also be isolated and lead to concerns over personal security.

Creating a north side path would also mean that east-west cyclists would have to cross the river twice, increasing journey times and inconvenience. The south side path through the lower park would remain the desire line.

Conclusion

We recognise that meeting our request could lead to substantial remodelling of parts of the park. At the same time we note that the current proposals would also require major work. Improved access to the park for all types of users is a stated objective of the redevelopment plan. This should include improved access for cyclists, especially given Colchester's Cycling Town status. The three links proposed here would significantly improve links to and through the park and the town centre, and should reduce conflict between pedestrians and bicycles.

We would suggest that provision of the Riverside link should be the top priority as this would dramatically improve east-west journeys from several directions and towards several major destinations. Second priority is then the Spine link as this provides direct access to the town centre for cyclists from east and north-east via a pleasant route with relatively gentle gradients (compared to the alternative of Maidenburgh Street). If the Riverside link is not introduced, then the Folley link becomes much more important, as the main route for many east-west cyclists. We recognise that there will be particular challenges with the width of the westernmost and easternmost sections of this link but we believe these are not insurmountable. In both cases, railings would need to be realigned, as is being proposed for the central section. Finally, we would stress that the Riverside and Folley links are not simple alternatives. They both have great merit in their own right and we would like to see both routes established as the establishment of only one of the two would still leave a significant detour for some journeys.

Finally we believe that the cycle parking in the provision needs to be reviewed whatever the result of this consultation.

Will Bramhill, Paul Avison, Peter Lynn, Neil Allen
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