



Shieldfield Green Udecide

A fresh approach, a fresh look at the Green but **Udecide** what goes ahead...

Hello and welcome to your newsletter update about Shieldfield Green Udecide from the project's Working Group...

We hope you have had a chance to take part in the first stage of the project. We have been encouraging people to talk to us about the Green and to fill in our special postcards with ideas and suggestions for the improvements and the future of Shieldfield Green.

This stage of the project is drawing to a close and we want to use this newsletter to feedback the things you have told us so far and tell you about our plans for the next stage of the project.

What you've told us so far...

How you see the Green being used in the future:

We have read all the postcards and emails (just over 200!) you have sent in and grouped similar ideas together – we hope you'll be able to recognise your ideas and appreciate the ideas that have been put forward by your neighbours.

Many of you want to see Shieldfield Green becoming a **notable local feature** in your area, a gateway to Shieldfield which is attractive to look at. The space would be quite formal and be used as a thoroughfare. People would not be encouraged to come to the Green or spend any time there – any improvements would concentrate on access and security rather than amenities and facilities for people.

In stark contrast, many residents would like to see the Green become a positive **asset to the community** and play an integral part in building community spirit. A place where there is a lot going on: community events and activities; organised entertainment & performances; informal exercise; community gardening & growing schemes; the space used by the school and community groups. People would be attracted to the Green and the space would be welcoming and encourage people to stay by providing the things they need.

Many of you felt that the Green could provide a flexible community resource, like a **big back garden** or an **urban village green**. The space could provide different areas for active use and quiet relaxation. The Green would be flexible enough to be a venue for more vibrant community activities and events but also could be tranquil and relaxed for people to enjoy it alone or in small groups.

For others, the Green should become a **natural area** in the midst of a built up area close to the city centre. The space would encourage wildlife and bio diversity. Planting, landscape features and human activity would be designed to develop the space for nature rather than the design being led by the needs of people. The Green would be an educational resource for the community and encourage volunteering and more planned and structured use of the space.



There are some suggested uses which are not within the scope of this project, such as:

A number of residents suggested that the Green could be partly or entirely used to provide more car parking spaces in Shieldfield. Parking problems in the area have been acknowledged and appreciated but the solutions can not be reached through this project. The purpose of this project is to invest in improving Shieldfield Green as open space and parking issues are being investigated through other avenues.

You have also suggested a number of improvements that you would make to achieve your ambitions for the Green:

We have read all your postcards and emails and you have made so many suggestions that it is sensible to sort them and organise them into groups of similar ones so they are easier to read and appreciate.

The suggestions are presented to you in descending order – the most frequently suggested ones appear at the top of the list and so on to the least frequently mentioned one.

Improvement ideas have been grouped into the following categories:

Improvements to existing features:

- Remove the paved area
- Get rid of the plinth
- Demolish the brick hut
- Remove redundant signposts
- Demolish the redundant brick walls around the garages and the end terrace on Falconer Street.

Improvements about active use:

- Community activities, events and performances
- Open a café / refreshment bar in the old hut
- Create community allotment gardens
- Bring the hut back into community use
- Spaces for outdoor games such as boules, chess, hopscotch
- Retain informal kick about space
- A putting green or crazy golf
- Install a maypole
- Outdoor gym equipment / trim trail

Improvements about recreational use:

- More and more attractive seating (and dedicated)
- Picnic benches (away from the pub)
- Add public art
- Create a raised stage area with lighting
- Put a statue on the plinth
- Install a shelter or canopy
- BBQ area
- Free WiFi
- Information and heritage boards



Improvements about the soft landscape:

- Create flower beds
- Plant more trees
- Extend the grassed area and remove the paving
- Flowering shrubs
- Landscape the space
- Seasonal planting
- Add contours – flat grass is boring
- Informal woodland style
- A green boundary or hedge planted
- Planting which encourages birds, bats and insects.
- Screen from the road and the pub
- Topiary
- Build a rockery
- Create an earth ramped amphitheatre.

Improvements about the hard landscape:

- Lighting improvements
- Consistent style of attractive fencing or railings
- Litter bins
- Create a water feature, fountain, pond or paddling pool.
- Access improvements such as dropped kerbs
- Lockable gates
- Re-plan and relay the paths in better places
- Dog grills at entrance points to stop strays getting in
- Create a distinct entrance or entrances to the Green.
- Improve the surfaces of the paths
- Upgrade the paved area
- Decorate the walls of the garages facing the green.
- Make it wheel chair friendly.
- Improve the areas around the Green as well to make them fit in.

Make few or no physical improvements but:

- Ban dogs
- Do nothing but mark the historical significance
- Make sure it's clean and tidy
- No more building
- Keep it simple, not over developed
- Control dog fouling better
- Put in CCTV to make people feel safe
- Don't do anything to attract anti social behaviour.

A few residents raised issues and made suggestions about improvements which are not with in the scope of this project – they are listed here with an explanation about why they are not achievable:

Building children's play areas and spaces for older young people:

Some residents did suggest that the Green could be improved by building a children's play area or skate board area but because there is a new play area for younger children in nearby Wretham Place and plans to install a Multi Games Area on Napier Green, there won't be any formal play space included in this improvement scheme.

Relocation of the trees from the middle of the Green to the perimeter:

It is not possible to relocate trees of this size and maturity. It is the council's policy to retain healthy trees and remove them only if they are diseased or dangerous. There are 34 trees currently on the Green, all bar two are in good condition and the two which aren't healthy are being monitored.

Bring the hut back into community use as a community centre or youth club:

There isn't enough funding to rebuild or refurbish the hut and the Council will not be adding more community buildings to its portfolio for the foreseeable future. Because the running costs for even a small public building are considerable it is not possible to consider this idea at this time.

Build some bungalows for older people on it:

The purpose of this project is to preserve and improve the green as open space and building homes is inconsistent with this aim.

As you can see there is no shortage of ideas for spending over £100,000 of funding to improve the Green – what we need to do now is to narrow these ideas down and start to build a picture of what your priorities are.

The next stage of our project is about involving you in deciding which of these uses and improvement measures you would prioritise so that the landscape designer can start to build up a picture of what is important to you and your community.

We are opening this stage of the project with a community BBQ on the Green – come along and enjoy some BBQ food and talk over the ideas with neighbours and other residents before you decide what your priorities are...

Everyone is welcome to join us at:

Shieldfield Green Udecide Free Community BBQ

On Friday 23rd July 2010 between 5 and 7pm on Shieldfield Green

Please note that under 12's must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Don't worry if you can't make the BBQ, we will be out and about in the area in August and early September so you will have plenty of other chances to have your say.

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If you need this information in another format or language, please contact Ali Lamb as above.

