

St Luke's Open Space – Proposed Improvements to the Community Garden Consultation

Summary of Results

1. Background

The Parks and Open Spaces Team carried out a consultation to garner public opinion on enhancing the community garden at St Luke's Open Space, Kew. The Council's proposal was to improve the accessibility of the garden, to upgrade the planting scheme throughout the site and to provide further enhancements to the garden. A new access point that is DDA accessible would be created from Sandycombe Road, creating two raised planters instead of one. One of the pedestrian entrances on Victoria Cottages would be removed in order to extend the existing raised planter, whilst the other entrance that runs direct into the playground would remain. A new planting scheme would be devised across the site with low-lying shrubs and perennials and a permanent chessboard table would be installed. Other repairs to the existing surface would also be carried out and a review of the provision of bins and benches would be undertaken.

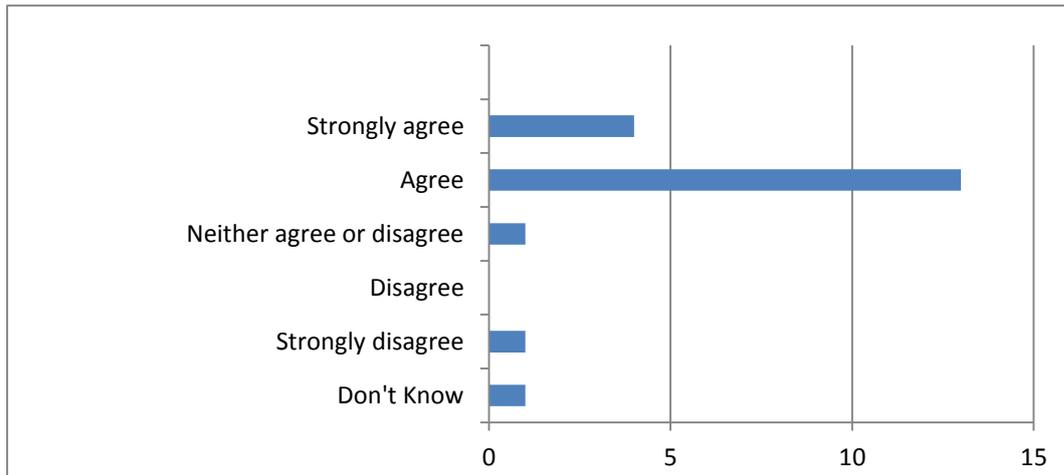
The consultation ran from Wednesday 11th October to Wednesday 1st November 2017.

2. Summary of Results

There were 20 responses submitted online to this consultation. The Parks and Open Spaces Team received no paper responses. Two emails were received in response to this consultation, but no phone calls, emails or letters were received.

2.1. Proposal to enhance the community garden.

There was a strong showing of support for the proposal with 85% (17/20) of respondents stating that they either agreed or strongly agreed with the improvements. 5% (1/20) of respondents were neither for nor against the proposal, 5% (1/20) did not answer and 5% (1/20) strongly disagreed with the proposals. The full results are displayed in the below graph:



2.2. Comments supporting the proposal

The majority of comments that were in support of this consultation were pleased with the idea to create a new entrance from Sandycombe Road as it was felt that this would open up the site and make it more welcoming to visitors. A new entrance would improve the safety of the site as currently it is felt to be quite secluded. One respondent commented that a refurbishment of the site would renew interest in the garden and add value to the community area.

2.3. Comments against the proposal

1 of the 20 respondents strongly disagreed with the proposals citing that although no costs of the project were disclosed, if it were to be over £5,000 (as they believe it would be so) that it was a waste of tax payers money. They felt that no improvements were required and that public funds should be used on more important items such as social housing. One of the respondents, who did not disclose an opinion in support or against, stated that they thought the plans were hard to decipher in relation to the location, and therefore, it was difficult to comment. They added that they thought it was a waste of money.

These comments will be considered by ward Councillor's, the Joint Deputy Leader who is the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Business and Community, and community representatives who have been involved in the proposals.

2.4. Other General Comments

The Kew Montessori School, which is across the road on Victoria Cottages commented that they support the proposals, but requested that the community garden is made to be as natural as possible so that the school children can use the space to learn about nature. They requested that more trees are planted and that a possible shade sail is installed so that the site can be visited regardless of the weather. Another respondent suggested that additional enhancements such as mosaics installed on the adjoining wall would improve the look of the area further. As the Council does not own the wall in question permission would need to be sought if mosaics were to be considered.

3. Next steps

The Parks and Open Spaces Team plan to:

- Share this report with ward Councillors, the Joint Deputy Leader who is the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Business and Community and community representatives who have been involved in the proposals.
- Publish this report on the Council's consultation finder website.
- Consult with long term contractors on delivering the project and agree upon a start date for the works to take place, with an aim to be completed before Christmas.