

## **Golf Course Consultation – Views of the Friends of Middleton Park**

As Trustees of the Friends of Middleton Park we have very strong views over what we would like to see in Middleton Park in the future should the golf course be closed.

We have significant concerns that the current proposed design for the former golf course area will not be what the local community want to see in Middleton Park. As the voice of the local community we would like to put forward some themes and ideas for what should be included in the design and would like to work with the Council, Wades Charity, and the many other stakeholders with a vested interest in the Park to develop a design that would be relatively easy for Parks staff to maintain and truly benefit all, and really show Middleton Park to be what it is – a green jewel in South Leeds.

The following themes that we would like to see taken into account are discussed in more detail below:

1. Alignment with the current Park
2. Celebrate our local heritage
3. Inclusion of sporting themes / areas
4. Attract wildlife
5. Shopping List of Aspirations

### **1 Alignment with the current Park**

- Additional benches and interpretation need to align with what we have currently in the Park
- Picnic benches are unrealistic and not reflected elsewhere in the Park
- The current proposed design is very enclosed and doesn't link to the rest of the Park – the golf fairways are still golf fairways which don't make sense if the land is to be used for something else.
- The current design for the network of paths could become a speedway used by local undesirable motorbikes and would not be used by walkers.
- The plan for what happens to the old golf course needs to be integrated with what happens elsewhere in the Park and not just an additional area.
- Paths and other routes need to be coordinated across the rest of the Park and not just the area to be converted
- There need to be viewpoints that show off / highlight the Park's historical and natural heritage, e.g. from the Rose Garden towards the City / Temple Newsom, from the Main Entrance to view over the Park, from the Clearings to the Visitor Centre. These are just possible examples, which would need to be worked through, and would mean the removal of trees to restore views
- We feel the plan for the areas would benefit from being themed with different activities taking place in different areas

### **2 Celebrate our local heritage**

- The Park is the remnant of an earlier estate and we strongly feel that some of the land should be returned to the look and feel of the 1850 estate, especially around the site of Middleton Lodge. This would mean the taking out of trees to restore views
- Creation of a small destination garden area (to commemorate the golf course) at the 12<sup>th</sup> tee where there is already a surrounding hedge.
- Link to the Equestrian Centre who use the Park on a daily basis – could we include a dedicated trail for them to use around the whole of the Park?

### **3 Inclusion of sporting themes / areas**

The following should be included in the design to help to provide for play and sporting activities for those in the local community (a view supported by Wades Charity):

- A trim trail from natural materials
- A dedicated BMX track on one of the sloping areas – possibly the area around the 13<sup>th</sup> green, 14<sup>th</sup> tee and fairway.
- A dedicated and defined cyclo-cross trail to link to those already on the north side of the Park (Beeston Park Wood). This would also seek to further protect the current Scheduled Ancient Monument site in the Park already damaged by cyclo-cross trail making activities. Middleton Park recently hosted a successful cyclo-cross event and we understand that four parks in Leeds have been earmarked for tracks.
- Refurbishment or redefinition of the current ‘tennis court’ area – either turn back into tennis courts or into a skate park
- Use of one of the greens and surrounding bunkers near the main entrance as a site for using remote controlled cars – something seen regularly in the Park
- Creation of a dedicated area for a rounders’ pitch on the open area of the 9<sup>th</sup> fairway
- Parts of the golf course have also been extensively used for toboggan runs in the winter – we feel that areas could be unofficially set aside for this

### **4 Attract wildlife**

- Creation of a natural marshland area alongside the 9<sup>th</sup> fairway, or across the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> fairways – this would attract wildlife we don’t get elsewhere in South Leeds.
- There should be more meadow planting in the Park as a whole, as it is colourful, bio diverse and cheaper to maintain in the long run.

### **5 Shopping List of Aspirations**

- Small petting farm and area – possibly near / at the current golf club-house?
- A sculpture trail using local artists to create sculptures that reflect the Park’s heritage

### **Signed – Friends of Middleton Park Trustees**

Alan Shaw – Chair of Trustees

Rachel Darton - Secretary and Trustee

Richard Barker – Treasurer and Trustee

Frances Jones – Fund raiser and Trustee

Nick Rose – Trustee

Kim Groves – Trustee

Paul Hebden – Trustee

Sherieda Joseph – Trustee  
Carole Bloom – Trustee  
Gayle Graham – Trustee

**Date: 1 September 2014**