



AGENDA ITEM NO. 10b

St George Neighbourhood Partnership 26th June 2012

Report of: Denise James, Area Environment Officer, Environment and Leisure.

Title: PARK INVESTMENT PLAN, S106 FUNDING RELEASE REQUEST

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RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Neighbourhood Committee agrees the two projects, identified by the Environment Sub Group for S106 spend of £3,684 as detailed in **appendix 1**.

That the Neighbourhood Committee notes that costing for these projects are an approximate figure and may require a small amount of additional S106 funding.

Background

1. The St George Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) Committee agreed St George Parks Investment Plan at the Neighbourhood Partnership meeting on 6th December 2011. The Neighbourhood Committee requested that further work was carried out by the Environment Sub Group to develop a schedule of projects across the NP area. These works to be carried out jointly by the Area Environment Officer and Environment Sub Group.
2. The NP requested that a volunteer 'resident champion' to help move the projects forward and report on a regular basis to the Environment Subgroup.

3. The Area Environment Officer has been working closely with local residents in both the proposed project areas and is in the process of setting up a 'Fiends Of Group', whereby it is hoped that these groups will then with the support of the Area Environment Officer continue to develop both projects further.
4. Site visits have been carried out with the Area Environment Officer, Parks Officers and residents to cost up the recommended works.
5. The Neighbourhood Committee is asked to note that delivery of prioritised schemes will depend on officer capacity. Councillors will be kept informed of timescales and the progress of schemes will be updated within the Area Coordinators report at Neighbourhood Partnership meetings.

PROPOSAL

1. **Meg Thatcher's Green (Open Space)** – Residents who have been involved with the project proposals have resided at Meg Thatcher's for twenty years or more. They have all commented that over the years the open space area has been allowed to become overgrown, thus reducing the amount of green space. There are also large quantities of fly-tip within the scrub and bramble area. Residents would like to see the overgrown scrub removed, in particular along the path line, directly in front of the houses. There also used to be a children's play area on part of this site, it is envisaged that Meg Thatcher's should remain more natural looking to encourage the use of the surrounding woodland for play, as in previous years. They have also requested for a small informal seating area, whereby residents can sit, relax and enjoy the natural landscape. The residents appreciate that part of this area has a variety of wildlife. It should be noted that the intended works will be carried out on the top level of Meg Thatcher's Green, directly in front of the house, so as not to disturb any wildlife, as the management of wildlife is high on the resident's priorities. It is the intention that subject to NP approval the works will commence from September onwards, which takes into account the current Bird Nesting Season.
2. **Rodney Road Playing Fields** – Concerns have been raised by local residents that this particular location has had little or no investment in recent years. The Area Environment Officer has been working closely with one local resident, to look at ways of enhancing this location and encourage use by local residents and young children. It is recognised that the main user group is dog walkers, although some local residents use the space for informal kickabouts and for children to run around. There are currently no features on the playing fields except for one litter bin. There are two entrances to the playing fields, the main entrance located on Rodney Road, but the gate is locked and is only used by Parks maintenance crews. The other entrance is located on the side of

the field, at the rear of Rosemary Court. At the last NP Forum on 29th May 2012, a number of parents of young children requested for more investment at the Playing Fields, to enhance the area and make it more attractive and user friendly for the local community. The Area Environment Officer is currently looking at setting up a Friends of Group with the interested residents. The initial proposals are for seating, notice board, litter bin and a set of mini goal posts. These works will form part of the initial process to further develop these playing fields.

RISK ASSESSMENT

1. There are no main risks associated with these projects. The Area Environment Officer will work closely with the Nature and Conversation Officer, with regards to works at Meg Thatcher's Green, to ensure that there is no risk to wildlife.
2. It has come to the attention of the Area Environment Officer that Rodney Road Playing Fields is in the ownership of the Council's Sport and Health Development section. The Area Environment Officer is currently seeking clarification from Sport and Health Development that they have no concerns with the proposals for this location. An update on this will be provided at the NP Committee meeting on 26th June 2012.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. It is not expected that there will be any adverse impacts to any equalities community from this investment decision.

REVENUE

1. The revenue implications of investment are taken into account through the way in which the Council allocates S106 income. Therefore there are no additional revenue implications for this spend proposal.

St George East & St George West NP- S106 Funding Approval Request**Location – Meg Thatchers Open Space**

Spending Priority	Objective	Scope of work	Approximate costs	General comment
Scrub & vegetation more assertively managed to provide a better balance between natural green space and accessible open space, without detriment to any wildlife on the site.	Significantly cut back bushes and shrubs so that the land in front of houses 20 – 36. Residents would like to see area grassed and put back to how it originally was some 20 years ago. This would allow both young children to play in the natural space and for residents to enjoy the natural views of this valley.	Scrub thinning and selective clearance of bramble, clear back and re-claim, up to first line of trees alongside the grass margin, approx 1 mtr along the path line. Plant woodland mix spring bulbs along the area where new seats are being installed. The completed works would enhance views of existing trees. Works will also include removal accumulation of fly-tip.	£1,750 including supply of bulbs	Ward Cllr and local residents support these works, as this has been an area of concern for some while. Fly tipping has also occurred amongst the scrub, it is felt that by re-seeding the area, this will be reduced. It is recognised that further consultation would be required with residents living adjacent to the area in question. The Area Environment Officer will work proactively with the residents to develop a Friends of Group.
	Seating to be introduced at selected locations. Residents would also like to see natural bulbs planted on slopes leading down from houses.	Supply and install 2 x benches at selected area along side tarmac walkway.	£1,934	Total funds requested £3,684

NB: Prices and scope of work are outline only subject to more detailed design and site investigation/measurement of quantities.

St George East & St George West S.106 Spend – Rodney Road Playing Fields

Spending Priority	Objective	Scope of work	Approximate costs	General comment
Enhance the use of green spaces for play and general recreational use.	This space has had little or no investment in recent years. The two entrances are not clearly marked. The main user group are dog walkers, but local residents also use the spaces for informal kick abouts and for children to run around. There is currently interest from local residents and users to form a Friends of Group, who wish to make this green space more attractive and more user friendly for the local community. This was raised at the NP forum on 29.5.12.	1 x set of mini goal posts to allow informal kick abouts.	£1,100.00	There is also a request for new gates at the entrances, in particular on Rodney Road, which is classed as the main entrance. This entrance gate is currently locked and only used for contract maintenance vehicles. Other entrance is located on the PROW entrance. Site visit still to be made to determine costs and design of gate, with proposal to request funding at future NP Committee meeting
		3 x metal seats	£3,150.00	
		1 x litter bin	£650.00	
		1 x parks notice board to be located at entrance on Rodney Rd	£1,500.00	

NB: Prices and scope of work are outline only subject to more detailed design and site investigation/measurement of quantities.