

Anti-social behaviour at Iver Heath Recreation Ground – May 2022

Appendix 16

This report brings to the Council's attention current issues being identified by our Grounds team and specifically our weekend cover who inspects and litter picks at our recreation grounds and play areas on a Saturday & Sunday.

In 2022 there has been a significant increase in litter including broken bottles being left at our open spaces. It would appear evening / night-time activities involving large gatherings of people are occurring and as a result the mess left is increasing.

The staff are taking an incredibly large amount of time diligently clearing this mess so other users the next day can enjoy the facilities safely without injury. The team are equipped with litter pickers, brooms and now dustpan and brush particularly where broken glass is found on paved areas.

Particularly at the weekend the site inspection and litter pick are done first thing in the morning so that the areas are at the high standard of cleanliness we wish to provide and is expected by our users and residents. This is particularly true at Iver Recreation Ground where Delaford Colts use our facilities from 9am in the morning.

Whilst both Recreation Grounds are suffering from this situation, it has become increasingly obvious that Iver Heath Recreation Ground is becoming a target particularly on a Saturday night but not exclusively.

We have recently installed new rubbish bins in both Recreation Grounds and whilst these are generally used effectively, a few people are not which spoils it for others and make additional work for the team who keep these areas clean and tidy.

Our part time caretaker is becoming increasingly frustrated that bottles are actually being broken. An empty unbroken bottle is significantly easier to clear than one that is smashed with shards and splinters of glass everywhere. There is also an implication to the health and safety of our staff having to clear this. They are quite clear on the requirements to clean and the PPE etc required and this is fully supplied by the Council.

The weekend of 14th & 15th May was particularly bad at Iver Heath Recreation Ground. Unfortunately there wasn't time to get pictures as well as clear up the extensive mess but he has been requested where possible to get photographic evidence so this can be shared and noted.

The Deputy Clerk has discussed this increasing problem with the Safer Neighbourhood team who will attempt to step up regular patrols of the area.

This situation will continue to be monitored and reported on but as we move towards Summer longer warmer evenings it is anticipated the situation could get worse.

One further consideration could be how the people abusing our facilities get to the Recreation Grounds. It could be largely on foot but equally could be by vehicle and the

Deputy Clerk is investigating the rising bollard at Iver Heath which seems to be in the down position permanently and whether there is any arrangement to see if this can be 'activated' to provide some sort of deterrent.

Councillors views on this situation are welcome so we can jointly, where possible, improve this situation for the users of our Open Spaces and to ensure we meet the high standards of cleanliness and safety we expect of ourselves and expected by the community.

Jeremy Day
Deputy Clerk
May 2022