

Letton Open Space

could be a small park area

CALLING DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS

Two years ago Kinnersley Group Action Committee was offered for free an area off the A438 in Letton. The site is bounded by 4 dwellings but the rest of Letton is well spread out, and divided down the middle by the boundary between Kinnersley Group Parish Council and Staunton Parish Council.

The site contains a number of unusual trees, probably planted by the Hereford sculptor, Walenty Pytel. The site has been cleared and the trees named and listed by the Kinnersley Tree Warden. The site was surveyed by Mr. John. Warman who drew up preliminary plans for liaison with the Hereford Council.

The purpose of the park was not intended primarily as a children's play area, but as a part woodland and part open area with broad tarmac paths and seating aimed at all ages and where the infirm could walk safely and smoothly with their aids and wheelchairs and safely improve their mobility whether following an orthopaedic operation or to cope with a chronic condition. It was planned to have a play area for younger children and an outdoor gym for adults.

Part of the area would be designated a separate car park and one could walk in the park daily as part of a planned rehabilitation. Anyone who lives in rural Hereford with mobility issues knows how hard it is to find somewhere to walk safely alongside the traffic, when there are so few villages with pavements.

Needless to say the preliminary discussions have thrown up a number of issues which need to be mitigated, before further progress can be made.

1. Highways: the A438 is designated a main road with a speed limit of 50mph, (though the villagers have requested a lower speed limit as there is no pavement and no lighting). Access to the proposed site is, as ever, questionable.
2. The Staunton on Wye Neighbourhood Development Plan, while being supportive of providing open space and recreation with a natural feel suggest the focus of such sites should be within the village of Staunton on Wye.
3. Difficulties for pedestrian or cycling access could be improved by slightly diverting current footpaths (to landowners benefit) to give safer pedestrian access.
4. This site was offered to Kinnersley Group Action Plan Group who are responsible for some of Letton, but not the half holding the site.

(The preliminary report from the council's Principal Leisure, Recreation and Countryside Officer is available)

Before we finally 'chuck' this back into the long grass we need to know if there are a group of residents locally, who value the idea of a safe area to walk and play, who are willing to commit to a long term community project, possibly against all the odds.

Any one interested in putting their head above the parapet a please contact Derys Maddox for further information.

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