

St. James Park, Southampton

CABE Spaceshaper Workshop Facilitators Report



Venue: Wordsworth Infant School, Stratton Road, Shirley, Southampton
17th November 2007

Workshop design & facilitation for Southampton City Council by Westley Design

Facilitator: Mike Westley of Westley Design with Hannah Loizos of CABESpace & Ellen Bramhill

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Introduction

About the space:

St James Park, Southampton is a small neighbourhood park of 2.3 hectares. It is open to the public 24/7, all year around.

St James Park is the key green open space in an otherwise urban area of Southampton. It is located within one of the city's eleven priority neighbourhoods within which there are high levels of deprivation. The park is well used and valued by local people, to the extent that its Friends Group numbers over 400 members.

Initial research indicates that St James Park was established as parkland in 1907, and was originally known as Shirley Recreation Ground. It has a varied history including industrial, military and social heritage that have all contributed to making the park the popular place it is today.

2007 will mark the centenary of the parkland being purchased by the Council and will be an opportunity to celebrate the parks history and heritage. Records show that in around 1911 the landscaping plans for the park were developed. Some of the original features, such as a major stepped entrance into the park from Winchester Road, have been lost over time, but it seems that much of the original layout remains intact today. Further research will confirm this.

100 years later, it is proposed that the park will be restored and refurbished to meet the needs of today's local communities. Current provision on site includes:

- Play area
- Toilets/building
- Gardens and ornamental areas
- Expanse of open grassland
- Tree lined perimeter
- Network of footpaths
- Tennis courts

All of the above are in need of refurbishment. There is a keen interest from local people, including the Friends of St James Park group, to restore the park to its former glory. The enthusiasm of this support has meant that despite the Park needing improvement, it nevertheless received the Community Green Space Award 2006 (Local Civic Societies) & Green Space Park IT 2007 regional award.

St. James Park is managed and maintained by Southampton City Council & Friends of St James Park (FoSJP). The direction of this space is steered through the Council's Draft Green Space Strategy and Business Plan. The management complies with the authority's Local Agenda 21 Policy & Environmental Management System.

A lot of the environmental issues are being addressed in the Parks for People Bid expected in March 2008. The Park receives £30000 core funding per year. Additional grants have been recently been applied for & approved from both HLF (£33,000) & Breathing Places (£9,050).

The Spaceshaper event formed a complementary addition to an ongoing process of public consultation, which has provided the brief for the design proposals already put forward and has supported the successful funding applications already made. This consultation has raised many key issues, concerns & possibilities, which the Southampton City Council, wished to explore further through Spaceshaper. This consultation feedback included the results of the 2007 GreenSTAT survey (set out below).

GreenSTAT responses -February 2007

St James Park, Shirley Southampton

- Needs a refresh and the toilet block needs to be refurbished and opened. The idea of a friends group opening a cafe is great and the whole park would benefit from some investment in the planting, paths, and play equipment and information boards. Some new provision for young people would be really good too.
- Needs a refresh
- It would be great if the tennis courts could be revived as they are unplayable at the moment, also a source of water would be great for the dogs.
- Is a good park with good open spaces for people to play a variety of activities? Maybe a bit uninspired, except for a small part of the children area, planted with shrubs and flowers.
- It is diabolical what the local teenagers do in this park of an evening i am forever spending my mornings picking up broken bottles and general litter from this park. We have a number of dog owners who do not clean up after their dogs, at present there is only one sign asking people to pick up their rubbish and dog waste which doesn't help the situation
- There is not generally a great deal of litter but there is frequently broken glass to be found from late night drinking that goes on in the park.
- The maintain it well, but in the mornings dog walkers find regularly glass from smashed bottles, and general rubbish.
- Please fix the gate so children and dogs can't just run out on to the road
- Maybe widening the path around the children playing area, as it is too narrow for bikes and people walking.
- Some of the steps are in need of updating
- Needs a toilet and the old toilet block could be made more like a community space / cafe
- There are no toilets.
- The facilities are well used; the tennis court is popular as is the field for football. It is unfortunate that there is no water available from a broken fountain as the main users of the park are dog walkers. It is also unfortunate that the toilets have been closed due to vandalism.
- It is not a big park therefore is a good idea to balance large open spaces for people to develop their own activities, and other more defined sport facilities. There are good sport centres close by so you don't want to spoil it as a park for general activities.
- But in need of updating (see above)
- But it could be so much more - it could be a real magnet for the local area and provide a wider catchment role if the toilets and changing block were brought back into use
- It is my understanding that a local church has plans for the park which include opening a cafe, banning dogs and replacing the tennis courts with a five-a-side football pitch. Whilst the cafe would be welcome the other suggestions demonstrate a striking ignorance over how the park serves the community at present. Dog owners are the predominant users of the park, it is a place where they can meet, socialise, and generally keep an eye on the park. I go everyday in the early mornings and frequently find myself clearing broken glass and litter from the path as I walk. Most owners are also attentive to cleaning their dogs mess as well, although, like anything, this is not perfect. Also, although I do not use the tennis courts myself, as a daily visitor I am aware that they are a popular attraction and should be developed rather than replaced, especially as the field provides plenty of space for ball games which again is readily taken advantage of.
- But does need a refresh
- Opening up the toilet block building with a cafe / community room, better lighting and information about the park and the Friends group
- Invest some resources into it to bring it back up to a higher standard - starting with the toilets
- I am there day in day out, as a responsible dog owner and parent
- In the winter evenings - lighting is required to the main field for dog walkers, water should be made available and also toilet facilities.
- Toilet facilities and drinking water
- I understand that a church group will be opening a cafe. I think is a great idea. But then again if they want to stop us, dog walkers, from using the park I think they should open the cafe somewhere else.
- Some really good events recently held which are great for getting people into the park who don't usually visit. The new Friends group seems to be really getting things going in terms of improvements and helping make the park even better
- The new Friends groups is a good idea and I hope they are able to work with the local residents and the council in getting some much needed extra resources to upgrade the park and the buildings
- The church group that are involved in restoring the cafe are very inconsiderate to other people's views in the park and they need to stop driving their cars inside the park it is dangerous to children and animals. Why isn't this park locked at night????
- I understand a Friends of St James Park has been set up which seems to consist of the church, mainly people who do not visit or use the park like the dog walkers do and I have heard that they are not happy with dogs being in the park.
- The park provides a valuable green resource for a wide range of people in the local community and this inclusiveness should be encouraged.
- I would ask for a glass container so we can collect the glass we find during our walks and put it in a safe place. St James Park is a great small park in an area with many old people, dog owners many of them, and well used by many children, adults and dogs. I hope the church does not take something that is working and changing into something that suits them and their plans, not for a greater good. It is a public space and as such it should fulfil general requirements not specific group's plans. That is privatization.

Spaceshaper Workshop Aim & Objectives:

The broad aim of the Spaceshaper event was to consider & re-evaluate the site itself in the light of the schedule of proposed improvements; some already made some still to be implemented. This was to be achieved in the following ways:

- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of a space by testing it against draft proposals for the park. In particular the play space project (design coordination & consultation by Parklife)
- Compare different people's views than those usually heard & extend consultation to wider variety of stakeholders
- Check that Southampton City Council have established what is most important to local people.
- Measure how well the space is meeting users needs now in order to compare in the future – post improvements
- Begin the process of tracking changes in people's perception over time to assess impact of major park refurbishment planned between 2008-2010
- Stimulate new ideas for improvements as part of an ongoing planning and design process
- Spaceshaper contributing to benchmarking for the Parks for People project funding bid, by demonstrating capability of measuring the success & travel direction of improvements
- Specifically targeting young and elderly people & dog walkers to balance views already obtained through previous feedback obtained by other groups.

Background to the Spaceshaper Workshop day & the inclusion of the Children's Spaceshaper Event

Event facilitator Michael Westley is a CABE Enabler and has been part of CABE's Spaceshaper development team including the Children's version of this tool, which was nearing the end of its developmental phase and was ready for trialling. Therefore, given Southampton's desire to involve some of its younger park users to a greater extent, Michael suggested that the Council consider running both an adults' and a children's Spaceshaper session as part of its ongoing consultation process. The client & CABESpace agreed to the proposal and the two sessions were run simultaneously on Saturday 17th November, 2007 in an infants' school close to the park.

The adult session ran from 10.00 until 16.00 and the children's session ran from 11.30 to 14.30. Michael Westley & Nick Yeats (lead project officer for Southampton City Council) developed the collaborative program and briefed the CABE team. The Children's Spaceshaper session was lead by Hannah Loizos. This was the first live trial Children's Spaceshaper. Westley Design commissioned Ellen Bramhill, CABE Spaceshaper facilitator to assist Hannah deliver the children's workshop. Parents and CRB checked teachers were present throughout the day, and basic health and safety measures were put in to place. Photographic consent forms were signed by parents as there was a professional photographer present.

Phil Heaton of Parklife (Southampton's play design consultant to the project) attended the day to both present and discuss Parklife's initial design ideas.

The day was publicised by Southampton as being a drop-in for families, who might chose to participate in either/ or both the adult of children's version of Spaceshaper. The intension was to provide an opportunity for both groups of participants to view each set of results, in order to widen participation and mutual awareness. (See the event flyer and original program below)

Southampton City Council Spaceshaper Event Flyer

Shaping the Future of St James Park

On Saturday 17th November there is an event being held to get people involved in the shaping of the future of St James Park with the local community and members of the Friends Group. There will be a family activity session in the morning and a larger meeting in the afternoon, where anybody can come along and have their say.

Straight after the Park Clean Up event Southampton City Council will be running a special activity session for children to come along and tell us what they think about the park now and how they would like to see it in the future.

Family Event

The family activity session will start at 11:00am and end at 1:30pm and will include a lunch at 12:15pm. It will be held at Wordsworth Infant School, Stratton Road and will give the kids the chance to tell the adults what they think about St James Park and help to shape the future of the park. The session will be most suitable for 7 to 11 year olds but all ages are welcome. Activities will include a walk around the park we therefore suggest that you come dressed in old warm clothes.

There will be refreshments during the day and a light buffet lunch will be provided at 12:15pm. If you would like to come along then please contact either Nick Yeats or Nina Jetten on 023 8083 2713 to let us know you are coming by no later than 12th November.

Open Event

In the afternoon there will be an open session and all are welcome to attend, there is no need to book, just turn up at 2:15pm and have your say.

The session will last about an hour and you are invited to come along to Wordsworth Infant School and see what has been going on during the morning and to make your own comments on the current condition of the park and how you would like to see it designed for the future.

For more information please either call Nick Yeats on 023 8083 2713 or you can visit the following web site: <http://www.cabe.org.uk/spaceshaper>

Facilitation Plan – (Draft) Timetable

Spaceshaper Event, St. James Park, Southampton - Saturday 17th November 2007 – Westley Design

(This was modified on the day as described below)

times	Spaceshaper	times	Children's Spaceshaper
10.00	Spaceshaper group arrival & refreshments @ Church Hall Introduction to the St. James Park project, and its context (Parklife's work etc.) Introduction to the days program & Spaceshaper NY / MW + CABE Team		
10:30	Introduction of group to Spaceshaper forms and to methodology for site visit. Introduction of group members to one another & establishing peoples main concerns / areas of interest. MW + CABE Team		
11.00	The group visit the park for coordinated visit and to view Parklife exhibition. (Parklife short presentation @ 11.15) NY + CABE Team	11.00	(Park Clean-up finishes) (MW welcomes parent / guardian helpers & children at Church Hall) Refreshments MW + CABE Team
11.45	Complete the assessment forms. Refreshments MW / AP + CABE Team	11.15 11.45	Start children's version in Hall with separate parent / guardian helpers supporting Spaceshaper facilitators MW Short tour of Park NY + CABE Team
12.00	Facilitated feedback session on the response to Parklife work MW + CABE Team (Spaceshaper results inputted)	12.15	Children's lunch in Church Hall NY
12.30	Lunch in Church Hall Viewing of children's work as exhibition goes up (Spaceshaper results inputted results previewed, splits and main themes for discussion established within team)	12.45 – 13.15	Children, parent / guardian helpers supporting Spaceshaper facilitators complete their work and put up exhibition in Church Hall NY + CABE Team
13.15	Spaceshaper results discussed with reference to Parklife work & children's exhibition MW, NY + CABE Team	13.15	(Children & Parents welcome to either remain for Fishbowl at 2.30 or depArt)
2.00 – 2.15	Spaceshaper event concludes Main themes & issues remaining to take to Fishbowl are identified Feedback loop for future action agreed MW, NY + CABE Team	2.15	(Children's exhibition open for viewing to wider Fishbowl group)
2.30	A "fishbowl" group session will be held which will be open to a much larger group. The morning group will share its findings and they will be discussed with the larger group. MW, NY + CABE Team		
3.00	Conclusions and Feedback loop for future action agreed MW, NY + CABE Team		
3.15	Event closes MW, NY + CABE Team		
3.30 – 4.00	Event team initial 'download' & feedback MW, NY + CABE Team		

Notes:

Whilst the total program will stick to its start / finish times, the individual parts of the day will to a certain extent remain flexible to respond to opportunities / constraints on the day.

Spaceshaper Consultation Event - St James Park Reportage

(Children's event reportage follows that of the adult's workshop)

10:00-11:00 Arrival, refreshments & user group introductions

Introduction to the St. James Park project, and its context (Parklife's work etc.)

Introduction to the days program & Spaceshaper

Introduction of group members to one another & establishing peoples main concerns / areas of interest

The group shared their experiences of the park and explained who they wished to represent as a park user. A quick exercise was conducted into what the group considered were the key areas that the park development process should address. The results were as follows (see also table overleaf):

The users represented included,

Parents of toddlers,
 Parents of older children (7-12 year olds),
 Open Spaces staff,
 Local Police Force representatives,
 St James Park Friends of Group,
 Youth workers,
 Older generation,
 Disabled people
 General park users.
 The afternoon session was joined by a group of 4 teenage park users



Key areas to address:

- Refreshments provision and the improvement of the existing kiosk.
- The building – needs to be enhanced in some way
- Toilets condition and possible provision of more toilets
- Young people's use of the park in the evenings and the problems/benefits that go with them using the park.
- There is a need for provision for older children
- Increased provision for youth especially teenagers
- Neighbourhood safety issues within the park need to be considered
- Anti-social behaviour within the park needs to be addressed
- Management quality – the park is seen to be run down and in much poorer condition than years gone by.
- Sustainable design – with any new design it needs to enable to last into the future
- Local History – The area has always been called the "Rec", it is important to celebrate the history of this park.
- Recreation – the park is used a lot for sport and this needs to be maintained.
- The park provides a good walk to socialise in but otherwise is a drab and boring space.
- Improving the park needs to make it more inviting and therefore increase the human presence



10:30-11:00 **Introduction of group to Spaceshaper forms and to methodology for site visit.**

11:00 – 11:30 Workshop group visit the park for Spaceshaper assessment
 Parklife play design proposals exhibition in the park were also reviewed



Having raised their key issues in a facilitated discussion, user group representatives were able to share their thoughts on key issues with others in the group informally on site before completing the Spaceshaper forms alone. The group elected to begin this process on site before completing the form infilling back at the workshop venue.



11:30 – 12:00 Completion of Spaceshaper Questionnaire



Group members filled in their reports individually as refreshments were served.

Through previous consultation and the strong representation of people at the workshop around the subject of young people's use of the park, it was decided to compare the results of those people below the age of eighteen and / or involved in youth work activity with those above the age of eighteen.

Questionnaires were accordingly marked in order that their specific numbers were attributable to these criteria.

12:00 – 12:30 Group response to Parklife’s design work, & wish list for park facilities

In a facilitated feedback session the whole group were asked individually to give a wish list of desired activity or change for the particular area they were representing.

(During this exercise Spaceshaper data was imputed and the group was joined by a group of four teenagers, who completed the Spaceshaper questionnaires and remained for the following sessions.)

Parents and Teenagers

7-10 year olds (parents)

- Some type of warden (ranger) on site to have a presence and be responsible for information provision
- Separate play area for this age group.

Toddlers (parents)

- Separate play area for this age group with simple play equipment
- A shelter for showers

Teenagers (and Youth Worker)

- A shelter to meet in rather than a community building so they get some ownership and responsibility
- Improved lighting in park
- Improved recreation/sports facilities in the park
- Like to see Police presence in the park

Community Police representatives

- Support teenager’s needs for a shelter for the teenagers to use as it gives a focal point for the local youths.
- Lighting to increase the safe use.

FOSJP

- To see the priorities of the people in the room are considered and supported.
- Want more provision for younger people who are often left with no facilities
- Want improved sports and recreation facilities
- Would like the kiosk building improved

Other Park Users

- Make the park more interesting to visit
- Provide a proper community hall facility rather than a shelter.*
(*see overleaf)



St. James Park, Southampton CAGE Spaceshaper Workshop Report – Westley Design 2008

There was a discussion over the priority for provision of a community building or a shelter. The two options represented were:

'For' a Shelter

- Focused youths to one spot that made them easier for friends to find one another, for community police to locate & monitor, and drew them away from more sensitive areas of the park perimeter
- Gave the youths some ownership of one part of the park
- Gave the youth somewhere to hang out and meet friends in all weathers
- Was preferred to a community hall as these were often restricted and the youths felt they may be stifled or over-controlled there

'For' a Community Hall

- Would provide a improved building for all the community to use
- Youth using the hall could be more closely monitored
- There could be improved café facilities and toilets
- Shelters were often considered to be eyesores if not well designed

When asked to decide between the two choices:-

In general the young people and youth worker and police representative favoured the shelter provision.

Other group members favoured the community hall concept.

No conclusion was made from this discussion, but Southampton City Council representatives agreed that both sides of the argument would be considered when designing and funding the future layout of the park.

13:15 – 13:30 Parklife response to the group's park design

Short facilitated discussion on the group's evaluation of the Parklife designs and design process, with feedback from Parklife Director, Phil Heaton



The key points taken from this session were:

Children's needs

- River/water play
- Animal Park

Teen needs

- Refreshments provision and toilet improvements
- Youth provision in park, shelter especially needed
- Evenings activities an issue

Adults

- Manage quality - keep up high standard of management in future
- Sustainable, lasting design, life-long impact
- Above plus
- Staff presence in park
- Design to tackle 'drab and boring place'
- Separate play area for older kids and toddlers

Modifications to Parklife's proposals in addition to above

- Add distance pegs / jogging circuit
- Operable toilet door to allow use out of hours
- Consider teen shelter in far NE corner of park (possible Youth Service project)
- Warden service needed
- Ambient evening lighting

13:30 – 14.15 Discussion Parklife's proposals in relation to Spaceshaper issues

This lead to key themes & issues being identified and finding connections to the Spaceshaper Questionnaire leading to more informed & relevant exploration of the results obtained

Access: Finding your way and getting about

- Great improvement on access, especially from Winchester Road and the improvement on the main entrance opposite the church. Circulation changed but still good.
- New entrances good. Easy to find for locals. Tuck away for others. Easier access for disabled. More paths good. Use of banks and paths. Paths through plants.
- Would like a more gentle access (slope). I do not want access direct onto the main roads from a safety perspective for U5's

Use: What Activities & opportunities the space has to offer.

- Much improved – wider appeal to all ages whilst keeping the well used "Sports Pitch" and popular tennis courts. Improvement to building including café and toilets is great – keeping the integrity of the building.
- Nature boards? Multi use. Nature Walks. Play areas. Older children, more activities. Café space good. Increase local history
- Like the idea.

Other People: how the space caters for different needs

- As above, much wider appeal whilst maintaining current needs. Building available for community use. Better 'chill out' space with improved horticulture.
- More for older kids. Better access good shelter and picnic tables. Elderly need to feel safe, and catered for. Seating areas. Young play area great.
- Good to see older children. Would like to see more use of the bank areas East and West – keep fit stations. Ensure access to café for buggies, young families and have space for other users. Play equipment

Maintenance: - How clean and care for the space is

- Shelter space is also improved. This needs to be sustainable and have longevity – problem is funding. Parklife's proposal is for a H.L.F. capital grant, revenue grants are harder to find.
- Unknown yet. How safe will be once improved. Security. Warden. Preventing vandalism.
- Clean and care for. Could have more time/money invested and a person presence. Would like a design which is easily maintained.

Environment:-. How safe and comfortable the space is

- The proposals keep the open aspect whilst keeping the fenced perimeter. Also other 'specialist' areas' e.g., older play, are contained whilst still being accessible and open to the rest of the park.
- Use of banks, nature trails. Plans look good. More activity/seating/play. Lighting, fencing and access. Keeping field and football goal. Shelters.
- Very open which make the park feel safe at present.

Design: What the space looks like and what materials it uses

- Innovative, whilst still keeping the feel of the park changes are sympathetic to current attributes, plenty of excitement and tranquillity around the park, plus attractive adaptation of flora, playground and best of all the building.
- Bamboo mazes, toddler area good being separate. Natural resources. Not crowded with too much staff. Using planting to create play areas. Wooden play structures.
- Low cost sustainable equipment is paramount that can be maintained.

Community: How important the space is to local people

- Very, it would hopefully be more so, especially with the provision of the building and better café facilities. 'A Green space for all.'
- After school use essential, weekend events. Events needed. Café for meeting place. Somewhere for kids to meet. Sport activity.
- Very important the space is an incredibly social place for 3-8 year olds and their parents.

You: how the space makes you feel

- Excited and proud
- Space! Attractive sight, natural feel. More Walkways. Great play areas. Appealing café fab - conservatory.
- A sense of belonging. A sense of community.

Spaceshaper Questionnaire Results Discussion

This involved considering the data of 17 Respondents.

During the discussion of the results the facilitator encouraged those people whose personal response to the Spaceshaper questionnaire were at variance to the general trends to draw their own personal 'Spider Diagrams' on blank paper copies provided before the session. This allowed people to successfully raise & explore key issues for discussion and made the rest of the group reflect on their own personal preferences.



Top 5 & Bottom 5 Statements

– Top Five Statements

This is an important place to the local area	5.7
This place is easy to find	5.6
This place is always open when I want to come here	5.6
I can get here easily	5.5
This place is in a good spot	5.3

Bottom 5 Statements

There is shelter from the weather	1.7
This place has good lighting	2.4
This place has got all the things I need	2.8
I can learn new things here	2.8
There is a good mix of plants and animals	2.9

In summary, through discussion with the group it was established that these statements reflect the general perception that; the space is a generally positively perceived and valued as important in its locality, handily located and valued for its accessibility in terms of constant opening hours. However, it is viewed as a generally comfortless place with issues of poor safety due to lack of lighting. It is fairly boring due to the limited range of environments or activities available to the user.

Likes & Dislikes – Sorted to show subject focus

- Top 5 shown in bold – subject scores shown on all

Likes (Top 5 in bold, scores shown on all)

17-KIOSK kiosk, Kiosk, food is nice, food is nice, food to buy, having a building as a base in the park, especially with toilets, food is nice, kiosk, kiosk, café, kiosk, Shelter, café, café, café, somewhere to eat

9-OPEN SPACE Openness and visibility, open space, the openness, its open space, space, open space within Shirley, the space, large open green for games, location

9-TOILETS toilets, toilet is open, toilet open, toilet open, toilet, toilet, toilets, toilet facilities now open

7-SAFE PLAY FOR SMALL CHILDREN The basic layout especially the defensible play space, highly visible and good play area, children's play area, young children play area, children love being in it, play park for children, swings and other things for youngsters

6-PARK EVENTS Park events, park events, park events, big events, events, great for community events

5- Being able to look down into the park, Positioning- sunk in the ground, a safe enclosed space, safety of young children- enclosed/ visible, area surrounded by secure fences,

4- sports/ recreation facilities, sports recreation, safe for play and sport, Grass tennis court

4- always open, always open, always open, always open

3- flowerbed- big one with no flowers, flower bed1, Flower beds

3- big trees, mature trees, surrounding trees

3- Division of sports/ play facilities, goals and basketball court, sports and playground facilities/ separation

3- community space well used, community meeting / café, Feeling of community- sociability/ respect

3- Community involvement in running the park, community involvement, local involvement in FoSJP

2- easy access, accessible to all

2- future potential, has so much potential to be a great place

2- mixture of uses, the balance of facilities

1- cleanliness of park

1- plenty of rubbish bins

1- Large fenced dog free area

1- local close to where i live

1- the picnic area

These opinions (discussed below) are the verbatim transcriptions of those made by the group in their Spaceshaper Questionnaires with reference to St. James Park. They add specific detail to the general perceptions described in the previous section.

Dislikes (Top 5 in bold, scores shown on all)

19- BORING no colour, plainness, not colourful, boring and square, shabby look to play area, boring, no flowers, appearance of building looks not too good, good large space but unstructured and boring, drab, lack of colour/ planting, cafe building ugly, poor horticulture, sleeper bed, it doesn't look too nice, paths too straight for a walk, lack of natural vision paths, walks

11-NO LIGHTING no street lights, No lights in the evenings, poor lighting, no lighting, lack of lighting at night, lighting, lack of lighting, lighting, lighting, lighting, no lighting

9-UNDERPROVISION FOR TEENS no space for teenagers, lack of facilities for older children, no provision for youth, no teenager places, no teenager places, no use by teenagers, nothing for teenagers, lack of facilities for toddlers/ teenagers/ elderly

7- NO SHELTER nowhere to sit or shelter from the weather in winter, nowhere to shelter, nowhere to shelter when it rains, not enough shelter, no shelter lack of shelter in bad weather/ café, shelter from the weather

7-POOR REPAIR state of repair of the walls by steps, Feels run down in several areas, poorly maintained, broken furniture e.g. seats, toilet block could be smartened up, uneven paths in some places, its not looked after,

5- building is a missed opportunity, not used to full potential, Building under-utilised, some wastage of space, building needs to be improved and used more

4- price of food, price of coke, price of coke, price of food

4- tennis courts- quality, tennis courts, quality of tennis courts, run down tennis courts

3- no 'wild' bits and no shelter, no nature trails, no use of natural resources to make play equipment

3- information - signs etc. re. history, no information about the history of the place, lack of street signage in community

3- more light and seating needed, not enough seating, lack of quality plants- quiet sitting area

2- one toilet- more needed, poor toilet facilities

2- dog poo, dog poo

2- no disabled access opposite Stratton rd., steep slopes/ accessibility/ western path narrow

2- lack of facilities for older children 8+ , Play area limited especially for older children/ young people

2- lack of sports/ recreation facilities for wider audience, poor sport facilities

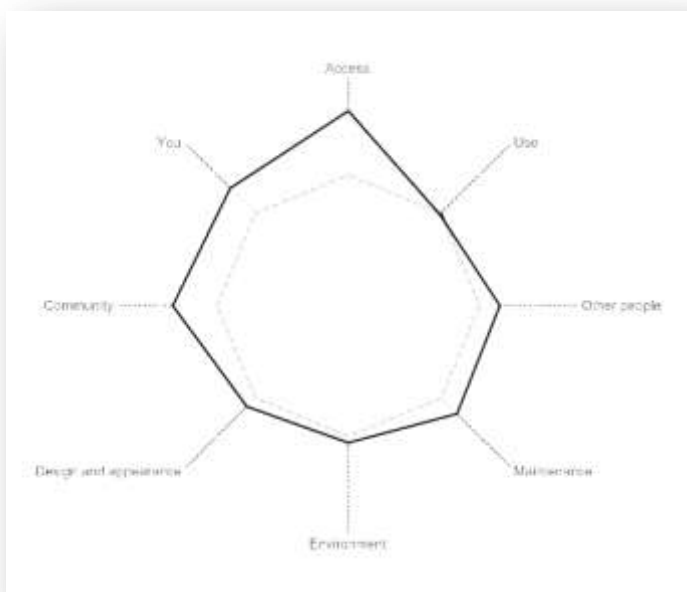
1- lack of facilities for toddlers/ teenagers/ elderly

Likes & Dislikes - Analysis

The account below describes the top 5 'likes & dislikes' responses with reference to other key feedback comments.

- With 17 positive references, the Kiosk and its sale of refreshments is clearly felt to be the major attribute of the park. However a significant (5) negative references are made to this being a lost opportunity to create something better in the place of the existing facility.
- Attracting 9 mentions, the presence of usable toilets was felt to be the second most valued attribute of the park, though they did receive negative comments regarding their appearance.
- The Openness and visibility of the space comes joint second in the parks positive references (9), however it is clear that this attribute may, in part also be responsible for the most commonly held negative assertion; that the park is too plain and boring (19 mentions). Clearly, it is felt that the open space needs balancing with incident and variety & informing with opportunity.
- Key elements felt to be lacking from the park which people felt might help provide interest were: colour, curving / more interesting walks, an exciting play area, flowers & horticulture, wildlife interest and a brighter building.
- Easily the most keenly felt aspect felt to be missing from the park was lighting (11 mentions). This subject was felt to be intimately concerned with safety and the ability of key user groups such as teenagers to safely use the park at times favoured by them
- It was perhaps the issues of the lack of lighting and appropriate shelter which led to the under-provision for teens being viewed as the third most widely held negative perception of the park (9 negative mentions).
- The issues of lack of shelter in the park and its poor general repair were joint 4th in terms of negative mentions with 7 negative comments each.
- Whilst the group felt the existing play area had its limitations, its presence and provision of safe play was greatly valued (7 positive mentions)
- Coming just below this in terms of its popularity (6 positive mentions) were the regular park events, largely organised by the community management group FoSJP.

Likes & Dislikes interrogated by Spider Diagram



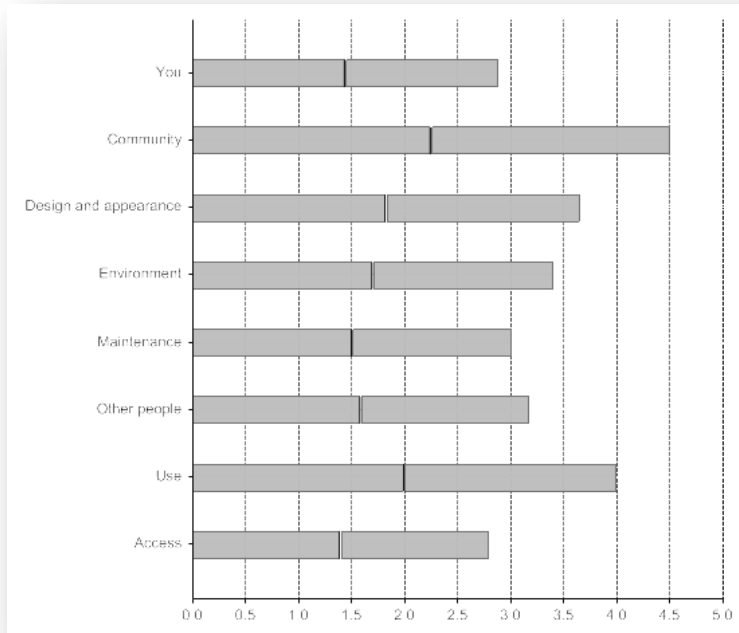
The Spider diagram was produced from the combined results of all 17 respondents. In discussion, its results were effectively used to explore and substantiate the particular comments and evaluation given above.

Key Strengths: *Accessibility* (visual as well as physical convenience of location), *Community* (events and the perception of control over its management)

Key Weaknesses: *Use* (limited range of activity available), *environment* (bleak, comfortless, poorly lit)

Bar Charts - priorities for action

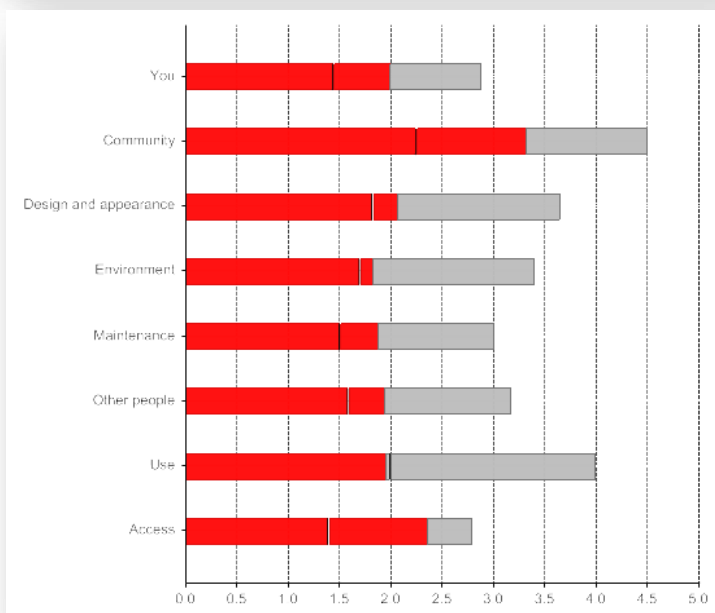
Exploring likes & dislikes trends and need for change on key issues



This 'un-weighted bar chart bar chart was produced using the data from just those group members not under 18 years old or in some way involved in youth work.

The trends here show that whilst 'Community' issues are still felt to figure strongly on the positive side, 'Use' figures positively too, suggesting that the older spectrum of park users get more out of the space than the younger

Access issues rate more poorly, perhaps reflecting the more keenly sensitivities to the poor physical access criteria which the park currently has



This 'weighted bar chart bar chart was produced using the data from just those group members not under 18 years old or in some way involved in youth work.

The trends here show that whilst 'Community' issues are felt to figure strongly on the positive side, there is a perceived need to enhance this aspect of the parks life and use.

Access issues are assessed as needing equal degree of change.

Spaceshaper information splits

At the session, the data sets for different user groups were compared. These were as follows: Below 18 years age (including youth workers and local community police) and people over 18 years. Subsequently, other data set comparisons were made, such as between green space staff and users. None of these splits showed significant divergence, indicating that by and large there was a high degree of agreement between stakeholders.

The divergence between the Spider Diagrams of the Children's and Adults Spaceshaper is marked in some areas, but it should be borne in mind, that the Children's version's convergence in terms of data comparison with the adult version is still in the process of refinement.

14:15- 14:30 **Presentation of Children’s Spaceshaper Event to the wider group**

Hannah Loizos & Ellen Bramhill presented the work of the Children’ Spaceshaper session which they had facilitated in an adjacent space during the morning workshop session.



The Event Program as delivered, showing how the Children’s Event dovetailed with the Adult Spaceshaper Workshop

times	Spaceshaper	times	Children’s Spaceshaper
10:00-10:30	Arrival & refreshments @ School Hall Introduction to the St. James Park project, and its context (Parklife’s work etc.) Introduction to the days program & Spaceshaper		
10:30-11:00	Introduction of group to Spaceshaper forms and to methodology for site visit. Introduction of group members to one another & establishing peoples main concerns / areas of interest.		
11:00 – 11:30	The group visit the park for coordinated visit and to view Parklife exhibition.		
11:30 – 12:00	Complete the assessment forms. Refreshments	11:15 – 12:30	Start children’s version in Community Room with separate parent / guardian helpers supporting
12:00 – 12:30	Facilitated feedback session on the response to Parklife work and groups wish list for facilities in the park		
12:30 – 13:15	Lunch in School Hall		Children’s lunch in School Hall
13:15 – 13:30	Parklife presentation and discussion on the designs so far	13:15 – 14:15	Children, parent / guardian helpers supporting Spaceshaper facilitators complete their work and put up exhibition in School Hall
13:30 – 14:15	Spaceshaper event concludes results of questionnaires discussed Main themes & issues remaining to take to afternoon session are identified		
14:15-14:30	Group session welcome and children’s work viewed.		
14:30 – 15:30	Group session starts with the morning’s findings being shared and discussed with the larger group. Conclusions and Feedback loop for future action agreed		
15:30	Event closes		

ACTIVITY 3: 'HOW I USE THIS PARK': SHARING PARK WITH OTHERS

Comments and information from the map

Who do you share the park with? Is it easy to share? Does this change at different times of the week/day/year.

Comments from the kids:

'Too crowded'

'Easy to share'

'I share the park with friends'

'It's the same to share, all year round'

'I'm not in the park when it's dark so I don't know how it is to share then'

'Same in summer and winter'

'Winter is too busy'

'Winter is the best, summer is too busy'

'Summer is busy'

'In summer it is full'

Voting on the statements (10 kids)

- There are so many things it do here, I wish I had more time here: (1)
- **There are always enough fun things to do here: (6)**
- Sometimes lots of people want to use the same thing: (2)
- People don't always share the fun things: (1)



ACTIVITY 4: 'IS THIS PARK CARED FOR?'

This activity involved a discussion about where most of the rubbish in the park was concentrated, and then children sticking down real bits of rubbish.

Comments and information from the map

Most rubbish was described as being under or near the bushes at the edge of the park and next to the path that goes round the park. These comments were made:

About rubbish:

'By the swings'

'Near the gates'

'Near the bushes and under them'

'In the playground'

About dog poo:

'At the corner of the park'

'Near the bushes and under them'

'On the grass banks at the sides of the gates'

Voting on the statements (9 kids)

- Everything is clean and well cared for (1)
- **Most things are clean and well cared for (7)**
- Some things are broken and dirty (1)
- There are lots of broken and dirty things (0)



ACTIVITY 5: 'WHO DO YOU COME HERE WITH? WOULD YOU BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY HERE?'

This question is about pride in one's local park or other local space. A discussion was facilitated around the idea of pride, asking the children what it meant to them and if they could give examples of it.

Comments

'If you are proud of something, you really respect it and you're really happy with it'

'I saw a picture about what being proud is: it was someone getting a prize'

'When your mum and dad are happy, like when you did good work at school'

When asked who they went to the park with, the vast majority mentioned a parent. No child went to the park alone.

My parents (3)

My family (3)

My Dad (1)

My friends (3)

'Mummy takes me to the park, with 2 or 3 friends from the Friends Group'

Voting on the statements (7 kids)

- **I love to show/tell my friends/family about the park; 'I am very proud of the park': 7**
- I like to/don't mind showing/telling my friends/family about the park (0)
- I don't like to show/tell my friends/family about the park (0)
- I would never show/tell my friends/family about the park (0)

Because no kids went to the park on their own and always went with parents and sometimes siblings and friends too, the question 'I love to show/tell my friends/family about the park' was less relevant to them. One child said: 'I'm proud of the park, but I don't tell my friends about it because they already know about it'. The question was changed to 'I am very proud of the park' and as the voting above demonstrates, the kids showed that they were very proud of the park.

ACTIVITY 6: 'SAFETY'

Comments and information from the map

Facilitators raised issues of safety and which areas of the park were seen as safe and which as dangerous. These are the comments:

'Most of the playground feels safe as little kids are there with their parents'

'A nasty poisonous thing could be put in a place where not many people go'

'At the swings, there is often a big queue and lots of teenagers hanging around so I don't feel safe there'

'I don't like it when teenagers are at the bottom bit of the slide when it's raining'

'When it's raining, you can't see clearly and lots of big kids go under the slide and I don't feel safe''

It's worse at night, after 5.00 o'clock in winter; you might have accidents'

'It's not safe in the places people can't see'

'The top of the slide feels safe'

Voting on the statements (7 kids)

- I always feel safe here (1)
- Most of the time I feel safe here (2)
- **Sometimes I think it's unsafe (4)**
- This place is unsafe



ACTIVITY 7: 'WHAT IS THIS PLACE MADE FROM?'

The kids went outside in to the grassed school play area to do some crayon rubbings. On this occasion the kids were not able to go to the park, as it was felt to be too far on what was a very cold, wet afternoon, so instead they were asked to only pick things they knew were in the park and to explain this when they got back.

Comments and information from the map

'I like the pattern the drain makes'

'I drew a leaf because I like kicking them'

'I did an evergreen tree; it makes me feel safe because it has a hollow; I would like places like this in the park'

'I did the bench because it's a good place to rest'

'I like gravel because it's uneven and it makes a good rubbing. I like to ride my bike on gravel'

'There are two surfaces and one where it all goes bumpy which I don't like'

(continued overleaf)

Voting on the statements (7 kids)

- I like the way the materials in this park look/feel/smell (1)
- **I quite like the way some of the materials in this park look/feel/smell (5)**
- Some of the materials look/feel/smell wrong (1)
- The materials in this space are all wrong (0)

ACTIVITY 8: 'WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS PARK?'

Voting on the statements (7 kids)

- I love coming here (2)
- **I like this park (4)**
- This park isn't bad (0)
- I don't like this park (1)

Additional activity: 'what would you like to see in this park?'

At the end of the 8 key activities facilitators encouraged the children to give their views on what improvements they would like to see to the park. They were asked to brain storm and wrote their ideas up on the board. They then shared their work in a 'hands up and shout out' activity.

As well as the content of this question being important, varying the types of activity was popular. Their ideas have been split in to four categories:

Playing in the park

- More adventure play
- Good places to ride a bike
- Good places to play football
- Places to play underground
- Better slides
- Steeper slides

Environment, maintenance and shelter

- More bins
- Signs about picking up litter
- Signs about recycling
- More security
- A place to shelter in bad weather
- A place like a tiny house with furniture in it where you can play when it rains
- A better café

Fun ideas and crazy ideas

- Chocolate fountain
- A TV studio
- Movie screens
- A moving wall to climb on
- Bumper cars
- A raffle stall
- A wild animal park
- A river
- A swimming pool
- A moving walkway



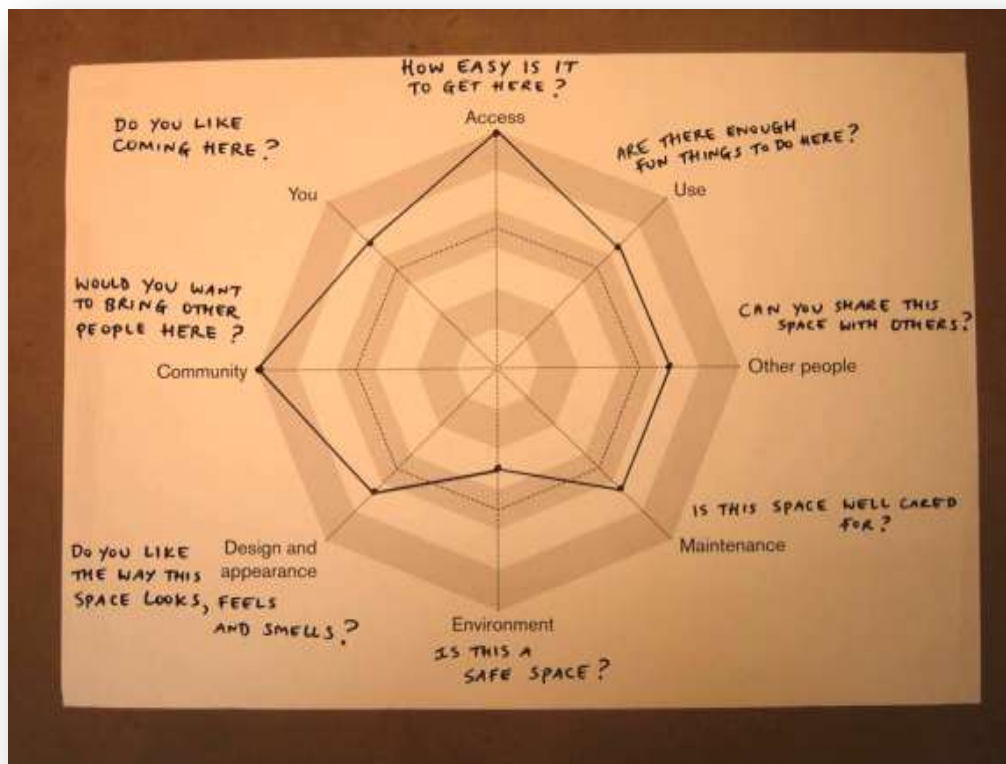
Summary of children's views

- This park is easy to find (score 4)
- There are some fun things to do in this park (score 3)
- There are always *enough* fun things to do in this park (score 3)
- Most things in this park are clean and work well (score 3)
- Sometimes I think this park is unsafe (score 2)
- I quite like the way some of the materials in this park look/feel/smell (score 3)
- I am very proud of this park (score 4)
- Overall, I like this park (score 3)

A Spider diagram was produced from these scores. Interestingly, it shares the general adult workshops assessments of the parks qualities around the issues of **Access** and **Community**.

Use, Environment, Design & Appearance also broadly mirror the trends in results obtained from the below 18 years and youth-work involved section of the workshop group.

One observation which may be useful is that the young children taking part said the 'big kids' sheltered under the slide when it was raining and this made the little kids scared to use the playground. From this it might be implied that provision of alternative shelter for youth is needed.



Group session shares findings from both workshops

14:30 – 15:30 Conclusions, key issues & Feedback loop for future action

The results of the Children's event were welcomed by the adult Spaceshaper group as essential additional briefing for Parklife. Southampton City Council has been consulting since 2005. Today's session was recognised as a chance for fine tuning. Consultations were recognised as being ongoing in the build up to planning application stage. It was clarified that existing proposals should not be seen as cast in stone, and would respond to relevant input.

It was recognised that the Spaceshaper workshop process was designed to act as a procedure for monitoring change of user group perceptions across a project's development, such as the St. James Park refurbishment program. As such it was welcomed as a check which should be repeated at critical stages down the development program path. In this role Spaceshaper could provide an essential element of the iterative feedback / development loop between use groups and the park design / management team. It was agreed to reconvene the workshop group in future to continue this ongoing process. FoSJP & Southampton City Council would continue to collaborate to deliver on this inclusive process

The group reflected that there were a number of key issues coming out of the workshops which would require prioritised consideration and resolution within the project development process. These were:

Young people / teenager's use of the park:

- More direct physical adaptations discussed in the workshop, such as provision of a specific shelter on the periphery of the park would require further discussion regarding resourcing.
- Improving the management of area was felt to be the best immediate course of action to engage and promote positive park use by young people. Greater presence of people (particularly rangers) in the park at hours to coincide with young people's use of the park might be explored.
- Managed sports were suggested as a further means of engendering positive teenager engagement in the park. It was felt that there was a need for the organisation of more people to join in and get involved. It was suggested that Southampton Football Club and sports co-ordinators might be approached to engage local young people and support them to make better use of the park and its recreation facilities.
- Provision of effective lighting in the park was felt to be a key challenge to be faced, both in support of more positive young person's use of the park, and also regarding the safe, increased enjoyment of the space by other park user groups.

Sports provision:

- Given the above, it was felt that the subject of sports provision on the old "Rec" was important to resolve.
- There was a consensus that the lawn tennis court was a well used, unique facility needing improvement.
- Whilst there was a big reaction in the workshop against the dull, bleak appearance of the park, it was felt that a balance needed to be achieved between greater interest, variety, provision of comfort in general around the park, and the retention of a viable proportion of the large central area of grass
- Sports development activity should be more integrated with other community activity and supported to reach more people when it comes to the park in summer and half terms. Staff should particularly seek to engage with older teenagers as well.
- Provision of goal posts and basket/netball hoops should be prioritised at an appropriate location in the park.
- Refurbishment & upgrading of the toilet facilities to support these uses will be critical

Wider representative consultation:

- Worries were expressed about consultation not involving enough responses from the housing estates. To the west & south of St. James Park. Neighbourhood Partnership discussions were felt to offer opportunities to promote greater involvement from this quarter and to begin talking about the park as a living welcoming place for the whole of the neighbourhood of Shirley.

15:30 Event closes

Contact details of participants were collated for disseminating feedback in the form of the event report.

Thanks were offered to all participants and to the host venue for their support.

Appendices

Spaceshaper Consultation Day St James Park - Itinerary of Program as delivered 17/11/07

times	Spaceshaper	times	Children's Spaceshaper
10:00-10:30	Arrival & refreshments @ School Hall Introduction to the St. James Park project, and its context (Parklife's work etc.) Introduction to the days program & Spaceshaper		
10:30-11:00	Introduction of group to Spaceshaper forms and to methodology for site visit. Introduction of group members to one another & establishing peoples main concerns / areas of interest.		
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11:30 – 12:00	Complete the assessment forms. Refreshments	11:15 – 12:30	Start children's version in Community Room with separate parent / guardian helpers supporting
12:00 – 12:30	Facilitated feedback session on the response to Parklife work and groups wish list for facilities in the park		
12:30 - 13:15	Lunch in School Hall		Children's lunch in School Hall
13:15 – 13:30	Parklife presentation and discussion on the designs so far	13:15 – 14:15	Children, parent / guardian helpers supporting Spaceshaper facilitators complete their work and put up exhibition in School Hall
13:30 – 14:15	A facilitated discussion of the Spaceshaper questionnaires results & Parklife's proposals, lead to themes & issues being identified under the Spaceshaper Questionnaire headings to take to afternoon session were identified		
14:15-14:30	Group session welcome and children's work presented and explained to the wider group		
14:30 – 15:30	Group session shares morning's findings from both workshops in a facilitated discussion with the larger group. Conclusions and Feedback loop for future action agreed		
15:30	Event closes		

