

2010 HAYSDEN COUNTRY PARK ACCESS AUDIT

Inspected by: Members of the Tonbridge & Malling Access Group and Chris Fox, Leisure Services Officer, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council			
Date of site inspection: 3 August 2010			
Priority 1 = High, 5 = Low			
Weather conditions: Fine and sunny			
This assessment is based on the Fieldfare Trusts and Sensory Trust guidelines.			
Issue	Comment/Recommendation	Cost (approximate) £	Priority
Information about the site			
1. Website	Comment The website pages from www.tmbc.gov.uk/HCP are much improved. The website includes the BrowseAloud software which enables web pages to be read to users. Recommendations (i) None.	N/A	N/A
2. Promotional literature	Comment The Park has several leaflets and an 'Easy Access Walks for All' map, both of which are readily available and on the website. The Tonbridge and Malling Access Guide does not include the Park. Recommendations (i) Add the Country Park details to the 'Tonbridge and Malling Access Guide'.	None	1

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Physical Access			
3. Car parking	<p>Comment Height restriction barriers (2 metres) at the entrances restrict access for some disabled users. Sleeping policemen speed bumps along the main drive cause a large jolt making it uncomfortable and difficult for some disabled users when driving in and out of the Park. The rumble strips are fine. Shallow speed ramps of tarmac would be much better.</p> <p>Recommendations (i) The Height Barrier at main entrance is being re-considered under Project 48 of the site Management Plan. Speed ramps are still felt to be needed to reduce the speed of drivers. Alternative speed control measures will, however, be considered when the existing speed ramps come to the end of their life.</p>	£500-1,000	4
4. Paths	<p>Comment The best access is around Barden Lake which is the circular walk within the Walks for All map. Access along all paths and to bridges has improved greatly over the last few years but there are still some uneven surfaces which ideally could do with being smoother. The bridge widths in places are (Sharpes and Shallows Bridge) too narrow for some motorised mobility vehicles. Rainbow Bridge has slats and a steep slope and cannot be crossed by mobility vehicles.</p> <p>Recommendations (i) Repairs to paths will continue to be carried out as required within the Park. (ii) As the bridges come to the end of their life, DDA requirements need to be taken into consideration in their re-design/ replacement. These comments were also passed over to KCC with regard to bridges in its ownership.</p>	<p>Unknown</p> <p>Unknown</p>	<p>2</p> <p>3</p>

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5. Entrances and gates	<p>Comment The 3-counties access barriers restricted access for mobility vehicles. The 5-bar gate at Heusenstaam Wood with RADAR padlock was difficult to open because it dragged on the ground. There was no sign that the RADAR padlock was present nor in the information about the Park.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Any new entrance points to be considered in liaison with the Access Group. (ii) Five bar gate to be adjusted (iii) Sign stating RADAR key to be installed on gate (iv) Website and leaflets to be updated 	<p>Unknown</p> <p>None</p> <p>£20</p> <p>None</p>	<p>2</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>
6. Places to rest	<p>Comment Many more seats have been provided around the Park, but more could still be accommodated. The seats with backs and arms are very good.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The sponsored seat scheme to continue. More seats to be installed and older benches to be replaced with seats as and when sponsors or funding is identified. 	<p>£850 each</p>	<p>2</p>
7. Children's play area	<p>Comment It would be desirable to have more play equipment and less bark surfacing.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Bark surfacing to be replaced with a rubber surface as and when new equipment is installed. More play equipment is seen as a desirable outcome but at this stage no funding has been identified. 	<p>£10K</p>	<p>3</p>

Issue	Comment/Recommendation	Cost (approximate) £	Priority
8. Disabled Facilities	<p>Comment Disabled fishing platform – the sloping path down to these platforms needs surface improvements to repair water erosion. At present it is difficult to use due to the loose surface which gives poor grip, and grass which is overgrowing and narrowing the path.</p> <p>Recommendations (i) Resurface the path.</p>	£5K	1
9. Sensory experiences	<p>Comment The Group were all regular visitors to the Park and enjoyed the range of sensory experiences that the Park gave them.</p> <p>Recommendations (i) Further sensory experiences to be considered within the new Interpretation Plan for the Park.</p>	Unknown	2
10. Cycle route	<p>Comment The Tonbridge to Penshurst Cycle route provided visitors with easy access to the Park. Bollards located in the middle of the path near the railway were difficult to see in low light of the woodland. Overgrown vegetation along the path presented a hazard to users. The chicane barriers by the railway restricted access for mobility vehicles. Lucifer Bridge had loose decking which worried users.</p> <p>Recommendations (i) Relocation of bollards (ii) Paths are monitored and overgrown areas cut back by volunteers (iii) Consider relocating the chicane barrier to allow easier access (iv) Lucifer Bridge decking to be repaired by the owner (KCC)</p>	<p>£100 None £100 Unknown</p>	<p>1 1 2 1</p>