

Community Consultation by Portpatrick Community Council

Response by Portpatrick Community Development Trust

To: Community Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposal by Portpatrick Community Council, to seek funding for fencing to secure Euan's play space and asking for alternate proposals.

In the first instance it is not clear from the information presented what the proposal actually is. This is a high amenity area. The pathway to the start of the Southern Upland way, that section of the Rhins Coastal Path and a pathway access to cliff top path passes through the play park. Within its setting it is of high visual impact and high amenity use, used by a wide range of community groups and visitors alike.

It would appear to us that there are three options for fencing:

1. To fence the whole playpark and re-route the Coastal path.
2. To provide gates at each side of the playpark.
3. To isolate the playpark into two islands.

We are of the opinion that **any** of these three options would be counter-productive in terms of what the proposal is designed to address and would significantly diminish the amenity of both the playpark and the wider community amenity use of the area.

As a means of dealing with the issue of dog fouling, firstly, we would applaud PCC efforts to deal with this throughout the village. We would however be concerned that fencing the area or areas, without any other attempt at enforcement would simply increase the incidence of fouling out-with the fenced-in area, which is also used for play and would be counter-productive. **The alternate proposal** is to properly tackle dog fouling throughout the village and harbour area. This might mean improved signage, increased dog warden activity, and more severe and well-publicised penalties.

The second reason given for the proposal is the anecdotal reports of a perceived risk at the far end of the play park. Given that the hazard here is less than elsewhere in the harbour area, it is our concern that in the absence of any properly assessed risk-benefit analyses that any of the fencing options identified above would actually add additional hazards. Additional hazards would include reduced visibility, it is therefore possible that fencing will actually increase risk.

Before proceeding with this proposal, we suggest that PCC assess the proposed loss of amenity both as a playpark and as an amenity area as the gateway to the coastal path and consult with the various stakeholders including for example: Rhins of Galloway Coast Path, D&G Outdoor Access Trust, Euans Playspace Trustees.

We would also request that any proposal for fencing is accompanied by a proper risk-benefit assessment, reference to government policy on play provision and fencing, and appropriate visual and loss of amenity impact assessments so that the full impact and justification for the proposal can be assessed.

Lastly, we would ask PCC to comment on the decision to refer to the area as “Portpatrick Harbour Playpark” rather than Euan’s Playspace.

On behalf of Portpatrick Community Development Trust

David Telford

Chair

