

Consultation Strategy for The Friends of Spencer Park and Recreation Ground.

The Aim is to give people choices about what is happening in our project and a chance to shape it.

Introduction

We will inform the local community about our plans for Spencer Park and Recreation Ground, in doing this we will work closely with the Parks Team of Coventry City Council, who own the site. The consultation we will use will be agreed by Coventry City Council.

Process

1. We reviewed the consultation which has already been carried out by Coventry City Council in Spencer Park, in 2012. The consultation carried out in Spencer Park identified only 2% of survey respondents visited the park to play; with 32% who played sport and 34% used the park for walking. When asked what facilities they would like in the park: Access Improvements 26%; Play areas 37%; Natural Play 32%; Youth Facilities 42%; Boundary fences and hedges 18% and bins and benches 35%. By using this data we were able to identify the need to improve the play offer in Spencer Park.
2. Advice was taken by the Friends with The Parks Team and Neighbourhood Management Team. A questionnaire was put together and it was piloted on 19 February 2013 with local residents and children attending an event in the park, where children made bird feeders.
3. The developed questionnaire will be a supplement to ECHO the local Earlsdon Community Newspaper in the April 2013 edition. ECHO has a circulation of c2,000 issues a month. This will also inform local people of the Friend's Plans for the park, as well as giving a wide range of local people the ability to take part in our consultation.
4. The Friends of Spencer Park will also use The Earlsdon Festival on Monday 6 May 2013 as a means of getting local people to take part in the survey. This will enable us to consult with a wide range of the citizens of Coventry as attendance at the Festival is normally very large.
5. The questionnaire will also be used at events in the Park in April, May and June 2013. Where members of the Friends Group will talk to people.
6. The questionnaire will also be available for park users to fill in, by getting the Park staff to give the questionnaire to users of the tennis and bowls facilities in the park. Copies will also be made available in the local library and the local toy shop.

Using the results of the questionnaire

The results will be analysed to ensure that the plans of the Friends group for Spencer Park reflect the needs of park users and local residents. If not we will review our plans and tailor our funding bid, to reflect local needs.

The results will be communicated to local people by using ECHO community newspaper, online and by a poster in the park.

Consultation after the funding bid has been submitted.

Working with young people from the Real Challenge we will be holding a Community Fair in Spencer Park on Saturday 7 September 2013, where we will be using the young people to help facilitate consultation with local children in the form of focus groups to identify which plan of the play ground to go with, from plans developed with Play ground equipment suppliers.

What are the benefits of consulting?

There are many benefits of effective and timely consultation. These include:

- people feeling they have had a say and been heard;
- reducing the risks of conflict with people later in the project;
- learning new information and ideas or gaining advice that will improve our project;
- getting new people interested in opportunities for more active participation in our project.

Conclusion

The Friends Group will use the results of our consultation to improve and develop our vision for the improvement of Spencer Park and Recreation Ground, with the aim to increase the usage of the park by local people.