

Bridport Town Council

Riverside Gardens Management Plan 2020-2025

Consultation Report

As part of the development of the new Management plan for Riverside Gardens two phases of community consultation were undertaken:

- A pre Plan consultation exercise undertaken in November and December 2019 asking “*what people liked about Riverside Gardens and what issues or improvements should be considered*” and
- A formal consultation on the draft Management plan for Riverside Gardens took place between January and February 2020. An online questionnaire was completed by 25 respondees’ and a further 9 emails/ letters were received by the Town Council.

Postcard promoting the pre plan consultation were distributed to households and businesses within close walking distance of Riverside Gardens and a walk with Town Council staff, open to the public, helped focus early feedback.

:

**Pre Plan Consultation Feedback
December 2019**

Headlines:

- **More trees**
- **More colour – more flowers for pollinators**
- **Benches and dog bins**
- **Better lighting**
- **Informal play areas**
- **Think about needs of dogs and dog walkers**

What people liked about Riverside Gardens

What I like best about Riverside gardens is the horse chestnut tree.

The value of the area is in its informality and (relatively) natural state.

I live in East Street and appreciate Riverside Gardens being there every single day.

My family use the gardens almost daily, with our small children on their bikes and walking our dog. We really value the space and think it works really well.

I think the improvements on the south side of the river have worked well

GREEN SPACE away from traffic, that offers a useful connecting route through the town and a river bank to follow.

It's location and proximity to the river.

It is near home and is wonderful because it provides options – and the river goes through it.

What are the issues/concerns the Management Plan needs to address?



I'd like to see more variety of things to look at there, and take time to watch, and less just plain grass to keep mowing
A plea to take a minimalist approach. The value of the area is in its informality and (relatively) natural state. There is a general trend that any open green space must be "useful". So, please, no street furniture type additions, no new facilities but just maintenance and perhaps additional planting - especially along the river with replacement trees etc.
Reduce to a minimum any "manicured" appearance of this precious piece of public space. We seem to be getting an increased urbanization of our green spaces with the inevitable feeling of sterility that brings when maximising biodiversity is what is needed as is recognized in the consultation card I am responding to.
Improvements I'd like to see: a fenced children's play area. There's nothing at this end of town
A pleasant walk into Bridport
I live in Melville Square, a few hundred yards from Riverside Gardens. I would like to see significant planting of bee-friendly flowers. I would also like to see some tree planting, including fruit trees and native trees whose berries support birds and other wildlife.
We would like to see more trees & shrubs planted, to replace the ones that were either removed or severely cut back. The noise levels have increased drastically as a result of that action. The traffic doesn't get any less, nor the pollution, so more trees /shrubs would help considerably. Another benefit for us would be this would reduce the lights from the fuel station & accompanying business.
Like at all Bridport's riverside sites I would like to see a lot more native tree planting to enable continuity of tree cover with all the benefits accruing. Eg Wildlife habitat, soil stability, carbon sequestration. A well-designed tree and shrub planting scheme would certainly enhance this area which could be a great introduction to Bridport being on major routes into the town. I would love to see a decent area of native scrubland (great wildlife habitat) away from the main path as well as groups and bands of trees/shrubs that create green corridors. A really generous planting plan would be great to see- we now need to think big and bold. Naturally grass areas are needed too for recreation but they are so high-maintenance.
Trees, Many of which have had to be cut down because of age/wind need to be replaced
More trees, copses and bushes, with some wandering mown paths between
Plant lots of trees and reduce carbon, also they are more dog friendly
More wildlife-encouraging habitat, especially along the area's borders and along the riverside
I think all green spaces in the town should see more provisions for wildlife. Areas that can be protected for wildflowers, bug hotels, bee houses, bird boxes, hedgehog houses and other habitats should be the priority.
I think the gardens could be improved by widening the path a little on the north side of the river. Adding more planting of shrubs, spring flowers, wild flower meadow and trees, especially along the banks of the river.
More flowers/ shrubs planting = hardly any colour

Poo bins I would like to see a rubbish/dog waste bin placed somewhere
Locating Dog Bins by Sea Road North for ease of collection
Essential to separate dog walking and wildlife – They are incompatible.
Enclose area where dog owners can safely exercise their dogs
Retain the large grassy in its current state with no more seats and NO picnic tables so that dogs can have a free range frolic. Having created the hard surface on the other side I would have no objection to a picnic table or two on that side but tree planting would be better
Repair seating - Repairing damaged seats
Replace battered signs in area near East Street – Incorporate old sign information into a new sign?
A bin or two on cycle path
More considerately placed bench sites, maybe closer to the river than to the main path, and the occasional table for picnics too
Lighting on the cycle path very dodgy – sometimes no lighting at night? At this time of year when it gets dark early I would like the gardens to be better lit, from 4.30pm. It can be intimidating to the elderly and school children walking home in the dark. Maybe you could consider turning the lights on earlier in the afternoon and the morning at this time of year
Re surface footpath, dangerous for disabled walkers.
Ensuring that the NW path remains cycle-free Removing the central wooden bollard from the SW path to make cycle access less hazardous. Signing the SW path at both ends as a cycle path Prosecuting the graffiti vandal
Consider would be a small pump track. If your not aware of what they are it's a small track normally made from tarmac with small bumps and burms in a oval or similar shape. They don't have to be very big as the idea is to ride, scoot, roller skate around the track using your body weight and movement to get round without pedalling. They are suitable for all ages and abilities of users from kids on balance bikes to adults on bicycles who was to learn to ride in a safe environment. Pump tracks are different to the skate park near the bus station as mainly aimed at bicycles. If there isn't enough money for one even a small flat oval tarmac area in the park for cyclists to learn would be a start
My particular interest relates to the notice board at the East Street end of Riverside Gardens. As you can see from the accompanying emails, the anticipation was that details relating to the visit and stay of Richard III would be included in the planned update of the information board.
Do not create a hard surface that is too hot in high temperatures for dogs to walk on without burning their paws. Do not use fine gravel without rolling as it creates a hazard for dogs' paws. Every time a hard surface is laid and fine gravel is spread over the top it takes about 6 months for the new path to be safely usable for dogs.
When I read the comments there seemed to be an emphasis on tree planting, wildlife and dog exercising yet nearby off Jessop Avenue is a large area where dogs are exercised and lots of scrubland therefore is it necessary for these gardens to also become a dog exercising area? Perhaps picnicking could be encouraged in the gardens so that scenery can be enjoyed by all at their leisure and the flowers will give encouragement to wildlife.

Formal Consultation on the Draft Management Plan 2020-2025

Headlines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support expressed for the vision and objectives of the new management plan (92%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More Tree planting (96% support)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More Wildflowers (100% support)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better information (88% support)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community tree nursery (83% support)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A BMX track (47% support, 32% object)

1. Do you support the new vision for the management of Riverside Gardens? Vision: "A well used green open space with enhanced tree planting providing a range of community uses".

					Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes				92.00%	23
2	No				8.00%	2
3	Don't Know				0.00%	0
Analysis	Mean:	1.08	Std. Deviation:	0.27	Satisfaction Rate:	4
	Variance:	0.07	Std. Error:	0.05		
					answered	25
					skipped	0

Comments: (12)

1	16/01/2020 08:55 AM ID: 134049559	What the hell has anything to do with BMX bikes being a help to the environment!!!! It is an AONB and it appears the council want to dig it up. I voted for the Liberal Party last time, the first time ever because I thought they would sort out Bridport and its problems ALAS I fell I was wrong
2	16/01/2020 09:22 AM ID: 134051576	I SUPPORT THIS PLAN WITH ENTHUSIASM.
3	16/01/2020 15:36 PM ID: 134086243	I support the plan and think its a good idea that more trees will be planted in the Riverside Gardens.
4	17/01/2020 07:37 AM ID: 134125794	A children play area us vital as nothing exists for children at this end of town. It is however a key dog walking area and so space needs to be made for both.
5	18/01/2020 11:57 AM ID: 134190166	But please don't make it too 'smart'. Leave wild areas / strips (the planting along the road edge for starters) for wildlife. Have you considered planting willow hurdles to the bank? In Brookmill park SE London they did this when they naturalised the river ravensbourne through the park, and some sprouted so the bank was reinforced and tress/shrubs grew
6	18/01/2020 13:55 PM ID: 134195573	In theory, with planting more trees and flowers
7	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210625	Sounds like a brilliant idea to utilise ""dead space"" but maintain it's natural setting! Something for all ages to enjoy and a pleasant space plotted in our busy town.
8	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210627	Sounds like a brilliant idea to utilise ""dead space"" but maintain it's natural setting! Something for all ages to enjoy and a pleasant space plotted in our busy town.
9	03/02/2020 16:13 PM ID: 135093201	It's fine as it is apart from maybe the addition of some more trees.
10	04/02/2020 10:48 AM ID: 135139378	The draft for the Gardens offers a really good mix of areas for all users. I am really pleased that you have included my suggestion for a small BMX pump track. Along with the children's play area I think the park will see a lot more usage from the younger residents of Bridport who currently don't have many facilities at this end of the town. I read the comments from dog walkers about the space but think that with the open nature and proximity to the road this would not be suitable for off the

1. Do you support the new vision for the management of Riverside Gardens? Vision: "A well used green open space with enhanced tree planting providing a range of community uses".

			Response Percent	Response Total
		lead walking so to designate the area by the river for them is a good compromise.		
11	09/02/2020 14:51 PM ID: 135409937	I like the promotion of wild flowers & wildlife.		
12	14/02/2020 15:02 PM ID: 135750203	This is a clear and well thought-out plan with some really interesting ideas.		

**2. Do you support the new objectives for the management of Riverside Gardens?
Objectives:**




Maintain and enhance the open spaces for the community to enjoy.

Safeguard walking and cycling access along the river corridor.

Undertake tree and wildflower planting to provide wildlife interest and structure

Enhance community uses of the site; interpretation boards, community tree nursery, dedicated dog areas and BMX pump track.

Provide natural play and fitness opportunities as well as additional seating to encourage people to enjoy and get to know the area..

						Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Yes					92.00%	23	
2	No					4.00%	1	
3	Don't Know					4.00%	1	
Analysis	Mean:	1.12	Std. Deviation:	0.43	Satisfaction Rate:	6	answered	25
	Variance:	0.19	Std. Error:	0.09			skipped	0
Comments: (13)								
1	16/01/2020 08:55 AM ID: 134049559	Some is Good and a lot Bad						
2	16/01/2020 15:36 PM ID: 134086243	I like the idea of fitness opportunities to be installed the current one next to St Mary's School is out of reach to some people.						
3	17/01/2020 07:09 AM ID: 134125087	The proposed BMX pump track may not be appropriate at this location. There are probably more suitable sites in Bridport that could be used for this.						
4	17/01/2020 11:30 AM ID: 134141729	Maybe put in a picnic table or two.						
5	18/01/2020 11:57 AM ID: 134190166	A play area at the east end of town does make sense.						
6	18/01/2020 13:55 PM ID: 134195573	Not at keen on the "fitness" equipment or the BMX pump in such a small area, it would be so out of place in this green area, hard landscaping should not happen. This is a really nice gentle green space and should try and keep it so. How about St Mary's playing field for the BMX pump?						
7	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210625	All sounds really good. Hope to see it all implemented, especially the flowers, access and play area						
8	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210627	All sounds really good. Hope to see it all implemented, especially the flowers, access and play area						
9	21/01/2020 22:06 PM ID: 134366664	apart from the bmx track						
10	30/01/2020 11:11 AM ID: 134888500	Simple and sturdy new or repaired benches/seating. Some simple and sturdy gym equipment for the use of all age groups would be welcome. Possibly a dog free area.						
11	03/02/2020 16:13 PM ID: 135093201	It's fine as it is apart from maybe the addition of some more trees.						
12	04/02/2020 10:48 AM ID: 135139378	A mix of areas will enhance the gardens and encourage more people to use this currently under used area. The combination of natural areas and man made facilities has been achieved with the plan.						

2. Do you support the new objectives for the management of Riverside Gardens?

Objectives:

Maintain and enhance the open spaces for the community to enjoy.

Safeguard walking and cycling access along the river corridor.




Undertake tree and wildflower planting to provide wildlife interest and structure

Enhance community uses of the site; interpretation boards, community tree nursery, dedicated dog areas and BMX pump track.

Provide natural play and fitness opportunities as well as additional seating to encourage people to enjoy and get to know the area..

			Response Percent	Response Total
13	14/02/2020 15:02 PM ID: 135750203	As there are currently no play spaces at this end of town, I'd like to see the natural play areas given more priority in the plan, with installation taking place earlier.		



3. Do you agree with the new proposals for information and interpretation?

						Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Yes					88.00%	22	
2	No					8.00%	2	
3	Don' Know					4.00%	1	
Analysis	Mean:	1.16	Std. Deviation:	0.46	Satisfaction Rate:	8	answered	25
	Variance:	0.21	Std. Error:	0.09			skipped	0

Comments: (6)

1	16/01/2020 09:22 AM ID: 134051576	I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS MEANS.
2	16/01/2020 15:36 PM ID: 134086243	The boards at the moment are very old and need updating.
3	17/01/2020 07:37 AM ID: 134125794	Not clear what the children play area will be like.
4	21/01/2020 22:06 PM ID: 134366664	not bothered
5	03/02/2020 16:13 PM ID: 135093201	It's fine as it is apart from maybe the addition of some more trees.
6	09/02/2020 14:51 PM ID: 135409937	I love to know history of a place , good for tourists too.

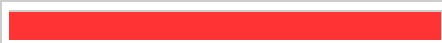
4. Do you agree with the new proposals for Tree Planting?

					Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes				96.00%	24
2	No				4.00%	1
3	Don' Know				0.00%	0
Analysis	Mean:	1.04	Std. Deviation:	0.2	Satisfaction Rate:	2
	Variance:	0.04	Std. Error:	0.04		
					answered	25
					skipped	0




Comments: (9)

1	15/01/2020 20:21 PM ID: 134032939	Tree planting would be a great idea for this space as over the years a few have died back. As listed Alders and Willows are ideal! Birch woodland is also a good decision as they don't grow too dense and allow light through once mature If its relatively damp in areas plant Downy Birch
2	16/01/2020 08:55 AM ID: 134049559	Depends on the amount we don't want a Tree Allotment
3	16/01/2020 09:22 AM ID: 134051576	I love this idea.
4	17/01/2020 07:09 AM ID: 134125087	Providing they are positioned in a way that does not have an adverse effect on local gardens/houses.
5	17/01/2020 11:30 AM ID: 134141729	Care needs to be taken if trees are planted near to the northern boundary so that they don't eventually shade the adjacent gardens. Plant more flowering shrubs that give interest at different times of the year, especially along the road boundary.
6	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210625	This is a really lovely idea and great community
7	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210627	This is a really lovely idea and great community
8	18/01/2020 23:01 PM ID: 134213761	Could these include some heritage fruit trees or an edible hedge? As well as other native species?
9	09/02/2020 14:51 PM ID: 135409937	All tree planting good to my mind

5. Do you agree with the new proposals for wildflower and grassed areas?

				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes			100.00%	25
2	No			0.00%	0
3	Don' Know			0.00%	0
Analysis	Mean:	1	Std. Deviation:	0	Satisfaction Rate: 0
	Variance:	0	Std. Error:	0	
				answered	25
				skipped	0
Comments: (5)					
1	15/01/2020 20:21 PM ID: 134032939	YES This is such a great step forward I think more areas need to be wildlife oriented, as our wildlife is in decline any small areas of flowers/long grasses would benefit our ecosystems.			
2	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210625	This is a fab notion and encourages wildlife and a variation of floral presence			
3	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210627	This is a fab notion and encourages wildlife and a variation of floral presence			
4	18/01/2020 23:01 PM ID: 134213761	Yes, it's important to mow these areas at the right time of year (once everything had flowered and set seed which might be July rather than June?). Signage might be needed to begin with to inform people why it isn't being cut like regular lawns. The signage put up in St Mary's church yard in recent years is a good example			
5	09/02/2020 14:51 PM ID: 135409937	Love to see wild flowers			




6. Do you agree with the new proposal for a BMX Pump Track?

						Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Yes					48.00%	12	
2	No					32.00%	8	
3	Don' Know					20.00%	5	
Analysis	Mean:	1.72	Std. Deviation:	0.78	Satisfaction Rate:	36	answered	25
	Variance:	0.6	Std. Error:	0.16			skipped	0
Comments: (15)								
1	15/01/2020 20:21 PM ID: 134032939	Yes, however ideally be located in an area in which it won't disrupt wildlife - which in the image I doubt it would be a problem (furthest from the wildflower / wooded area)						
2	16/01/2020 08:55 AM ID: 134049559	NO, NO and NO nothing to do with the environment						
3	16/01/2020 09:22 AM ID: 134051576	This is a good idea but the amount of litter that is left around the Skateboard park must not be allowed and tolerated in this area that is specifically aimed at leisure and wildlife.						
4	17/01/2020 07:09 AM ID: 134125087	A good idea but not at this location, more suitable sites probably exist in Bridport						
5	17/01/2020 07:35 AM ID: 134125713	Young people definitely need more facilities at this end of town						
6	17/01/2020 11:30 AM ID: 134141729	I agree that a facility like this would be beneficial but feel that Riverside Gardens is not the right location. It is too near the road and river where any "mucking about" could lead to an accident. There are wide green spaces along from St Mary's playing fields which may be better. An alternative for this site (alongside the southern path) could be a fitness trail with a series of exercise stations like the one on the big green at Poundbury.						
7	18/01/2020 11:57 AM ID: 134190166	If it is used. If it isn't. consider removing it after a two year trial						
8	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210625	Not sure if it's the right place or where it will fit but a nice idea.						
9	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210627	Not sure if it's the right place or where it will fit but a nice idea.						
10	30/01/2020 11:11 AM ID: 134888500	Not really clear on what a 'pump track' is but in principle, anything that encourages physical play for children would be welcome.						
11	04/02/2020 10:48 AM ID: 135139378	The positioning of the track on the road side away from the few houses would allay any fears about noise and anyone cycling through would have easy access to the track. With the new cycle tracks and traffic lights now in operation links to the park are very safe for all ages of cyclists,						
12	09/02/2020 14:51 PM ID: 135409937	Nice to have something for everyone. Good to promote healthy & eco friendly cycling.						

6. Do you agree with the new proposal for a BMX Pump Track?

			Response Percent	Response Total
13	10/02/2020 09:59 AM ID: 135434564	Great to have some outdoor area for everyone at this end of town		
14	14/02/2020 15:02 PM ID: 135750203	While I do agree with the idea for a BMX track, I'd like to see some careful thought put into provision for younger children and those without bikes.		
15	19/02/2020 22:24 PM ID: 136129628	While it is good to provide facilities, a BMX track on this site would be highly inappropriate. Riverside Gardens is already a place of peace and if this is to be enhanced with further plans like tree planting and improved wildlife habitat then a potentially noisy BMX track would surely negate these benefits? Far better to provide this facility at a site already purposed for sport activities i.e. Plottingham or St Mary's.		

7. Do you agree with the new proposal for a Community Tree Nursery?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		83.33%	20
2	No		4.17%	1
3	Don' Know		12.50%	3
Analysis	Mean: 1.29	Std. Deviation: 0.68	Satisfaction Rate: 14.58	answered 24
	Variance: 0.46	Std. Error: 0.14		skipped 1
Comments: (4)				
1	15/01/2020 20:21 PM ID: 134032939	This would be an excellent resource, so long as it is monitored/maintained great for those who don't have access to a garden/allotment, or would love to learn more about growing trees/plants		
2	17/01/2020 11:30 AM ID: 134141729	Provided it is well fenced to avoid casual damage to the saplings.		
3	18/01/2020 11:57 AM ID: 134190166	Though would that not be better further down the asker? Is the thought that it is less likely to be vandalised close to the houses?		
4	09/02/2020 14:51 PM ID: 135409937	Good for education too,. Visits by local schools . Ask residents to sponsor a tree.		

8. Any other comments you'd like to make about the Riverside Gardens management plan:

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	13
1	15/01/2020 20:21 PM ID: 134032939	<p>I look forward to seeing this space evolve, and it's great that you have plans for incorporating wildlife into the space, as well as activities/resources for the community.</p> <p>Possibilities:</p> <p>Wildlife Pond area (fenced off):</p> <p>Since the area is near a river, having a Pond would be a valuable asset and attract even more wildlife to the space. Dragonflies, frogs, newts and such! but can understand if this isn't possible</p> <p>-</p> <p>Hope this helps!</p> <p>I would love to get involved with this somehow if you need any suggestions/help with projects. I'm working on transforming an allotment into a wildlife community space currently, perhaps we could work with you</p> <p>Sam allotmentsforwildlife@gmail.com</p>		
2	16/01/2020 10:09 AM ID: 134055913	Great to see the things I asked for in the consultation included in the plan!		
3	16/01/2020 15:36 PM ID: 134086243	I agree with all of the proposals in the new Management Plan. The space as it is at the moment is not used well and the options in the plan will enhance it the area.		
4	17/01/2020 07:01 AM ID: 134124894	This area is an important migratory route linking Askers Meadow with the Brit Valley northwards. A bug highway. Although this will probably happen naturally given time, more planting making a continuous route between the two bridges may be useful.		
5	18/01/2020 13:55 PM ID: 134195573	It's a great gardens please don't ruin it.		
6	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210625	I would hope that the original path on the left of the river might be widened? It's a bit tricky to take a bike and a pedestrian crossing/alongside each other and also prams/buggys are slightly wider, it would be nice to "travel" at ease down the path especially alongside children		
7	18/01/2020 20:33 PM ID: 134210627	I would hope that the original path on the left of the river might be widened? It's a bit tricky to take a bike and a pedestrian crossing/alongside each other and also prams/buggys are slightly wider, it would be nice to "travel" at ease down the path especially alongside children		
8	18/01/2020 23:01 PM ID: 134213761	Not sure if this is included already but widening the older path might be useful as it's difficult to pass others at the moment		
9	21/01/2020 22:06 PM ID: 134366664	keep it natural		

8. Any other comments you'd like to make about the Riverside Gardens management plan:

			Response Percent	Response Total
10	30/01/2020 11:11 AM ID: 134888500	I live in St Andrews Road, overlooking the Riverside Gardens, and I like to see it being used. There is a dearth of parks/play areas in Bridport and well maintained green spaces should be encouraged.		
11	03/02/2020 16:13 PM ID: 135093201	It's fine as it is apart from maybe the addition of some more trees.		
12	04/02/2020 10:48 AM ID: 135139378	Thanks you for a well balanced plan for Riverside Gardens.		
13	09/02/2020 14:51 PM ID: 135409937	<p>Please can you ensure NON dog owners can enjoy the space in peace especially without having to deal with dog poo.</p> <p>Too many green amenities just end up being glorified dog loos with dogs running loose and owners thinking they have priority over all other users.</p> <p>Please think about children using the space without any fear of dog poo contamination or being bothered by dogs Barking, leaping up and even biting them.</p> <p>I would ask all dog owners to use a leash in the area so they can keep control of dogs & be aware of when dog has done a poo so they can clear it up every time.</p>		
			answered	13
			skipped	12