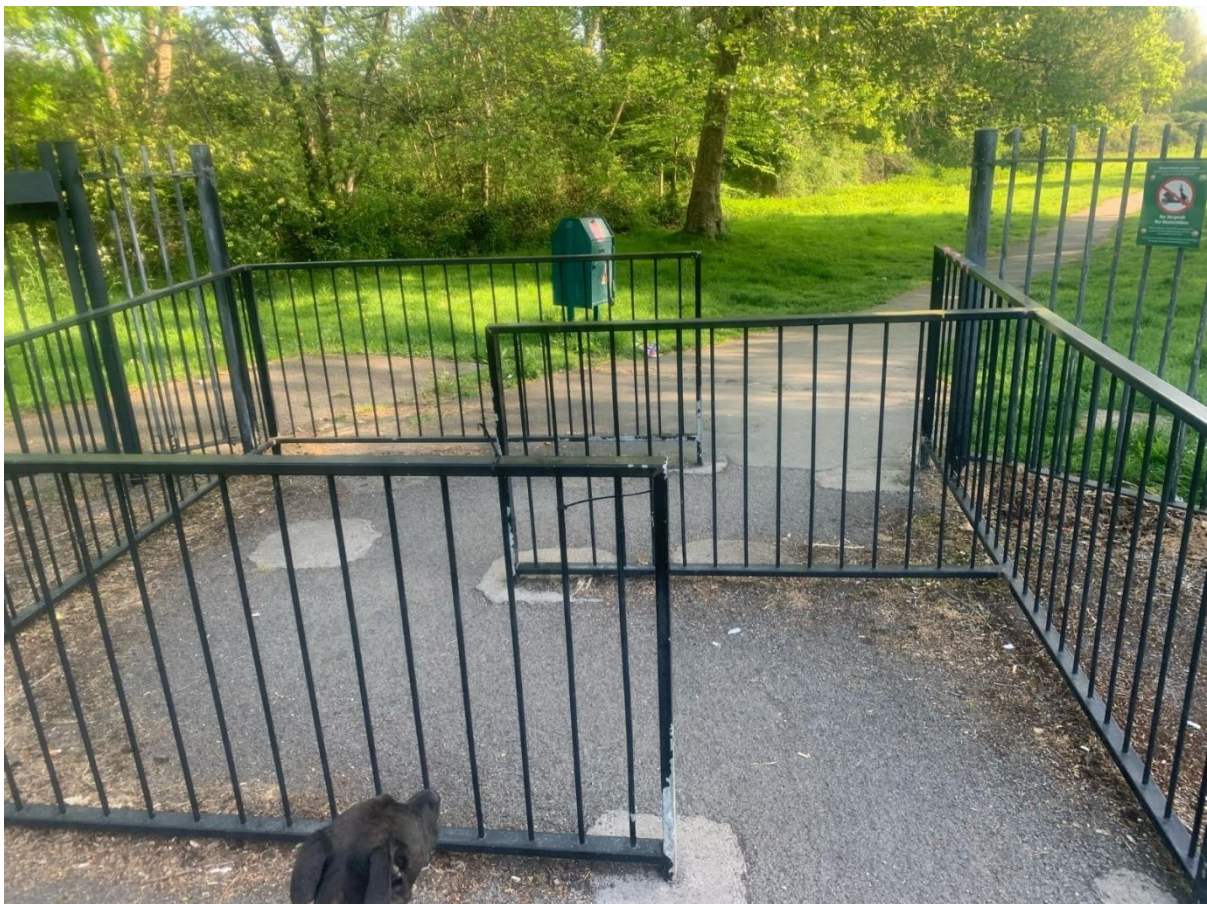


Withywood Park

Accessibility Plan



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Our Partner Organisations

Carers Support Bristol, Bristol Disability Equality Forum, Friends of
Withywood Park and Sensory Trust UK.

Note on bolded words

Words in bold are explained in the Jargon Buster at the end of the document.

Introduction

This plan is a list of changes needed to make Withywood Park more accessible for Disabled people and carers. The ideas came from a group of local Disabled people and carers working with the charity Your Park Bristol & Bath. The Disabled people and carers represented a wide range of conditions and impairments including **neurodiversity**, and **mobility** and **sensory impairments**. This group came up with lots of changes they need and decided together which were the most important **priorities** to this plan to improve access.

All **accessibility** changes needed by the group have been added to the plan. The aim is to work on all the ideas in time but to start with the high priority ideas that will have the biggest impact.

Several other **priorities** based around ‘community’, ‘nature’ and ‘health’ are included. These are ideas that will make the park more interesting to visit and better looked after by the community.

The learnings from the project are being used to make a toolkit that other communities can use to make their park inclusive for Disabled people and carers.

Accessibility changes

High priorities

1. Entrances

Currently many users are not able to access all the gates, these need to be widened to be made **accessible** to everyone.

Arrival makes a big difference to how people feel about a visit, so work is also needed so that entrances are more welcoming and help people walking by notice that the park is there. This could include plant management, large letter and brail signage, noticeboards and maps of the park.

Who: Council and local community

Cost: Medium

Time: Medium

2. High level seating and other seating provision

There is a shortage of seating in the park as well as accessible high-level seating. More benches are needed along the long pathway through the

centre of the park. The benches that are currently on site could be relocated to make better use of the views. New seats should always be high-level and benches could be used as distance markers. Extra tarmac next to high-level seating should provide space for mobility scooters and prams.

Who: Council

Cost: Medium

Time: Low

3. Shelter

There is no shelter in Withywood Park. The park can suffer from **vandalism** and **antisocial behaviour** so the design of the shelter needs to be open, and it should be placed away from the edges that back onto people's gardens. There should be two shelters at either ends of the park. One should be placed to enjoy the view to Dundry Hill and Dundry Church.

Who: Council

Cost: Medium

Time: Medium

4. Bins

Litter is a big problem in the park. There are few bins and the ones there are not in good condition or in the right places.

Who: Council

Cost: Low

Time: Low

5. Dropped kerbs to connect the northern and southern sites

Working with Planning and the Local Area Committee needs to take place to ensure that the installation of dropped kerbs will be given permission and funding. This is a high priority for the park and a zebra crossing or additional signage should be considered.

Who: Council

Cost: High

Time: High

Medium priorities

1. Easy to access information about the park online

Changes will be made to websites so it will be easy to find information about the park online, including accessibility, location, address, features, images, description, noisy areas and things that people might be interested in. These sites will be made accessible. This will use the use the [Sensory Trust's idea of the 'Access Chain'](#) to make an inclusive experience for people using the park and include audio information.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath and the local community with council support

Cost: Low

Time: Low

2. Litter picking

Friends of the park are already doing regular litter picking. Volunteers can tie transparent bags on the high-level seats and then take them to the road to be picked up by the rubbish collectors.

Who: Community

Cost: Low

Time: Low

3. Accessible paths and handrails

The current paths have areas that need to be raised and levelled so they are flat and without cracks and drainage issues (where the path floods between the mounds of wildflowers). Any new paths will be accessible. This includes adding handrails to the paths that have a greater incline and improving access on the slopes for Disabled users.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath with council support

Cost: High

Time: High

4. Pedestrian crossing to connect the northern and southern sites

Again, advice would need to be sought to ensure that this would be possible, given the proximity of the two sharp bends. This would provide a safer crossing for those with visual and hearing impairments.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath with council support

Cost: High

Time: High

4. Accessible information in the park

Accessible signs will be put in the park, meeting the needs of people who need **BSL**, **audio descriptions**, large print or **Braille**. This will include information about the size of the park, the different areas of the park, pathways, wildlife and how people can use things in the park. A map of the park will be added to help direct visitors. Distance markers will be added to the maps.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath with community and council support

Cost: Low

Time: Low

Low priorities

1. Accessible toilet

A conversation will be held with local businesses to see if they can offer the use of their **accessible** toilet to Disabled people and carers. As this idea moves up the **priority** list and funding is found, discussions can be held about if it's possible to have an **accessible** toilet in the park itself.

Who: Council

Cost: High

Time: High

2. Lighting

Additional lighting is preferred to increase the visibility. The cost of installation and maintenance is understood by participants and is therefore a low priority.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath with council support

Cost: High

Time: High

3. Parking

There is currently no official parking for Withywood Park, Disabled parking would be beneficial.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath and the local community with council support

Cost: Medium

Time: Low

Nature Priorities

High priorities

1. Planting and general maintenance

Planting will be carried out to add interest and colour and smells to the park and help wildlife. The planting will follow the paths to make a sensory trail. Some bat and bird boxes will also be added. Replacing vandalised trees and carrying out regular community litter picks would be an advantage.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath and the local community with council support

Cost: Low

Time: Low

2. Nature trail

A nature trail will be added to the park incorporating interpretation and signage. This trail will link up with the sensory area and other key features in the park.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath and the local community with council support

Cost: Low

Time: Medium

Community Priorities

High priorities

1. Accessible and fun pop-up events

Events will help bring people into the park and make it feel more owned by the community, as the events gain momentum this will help to further promote the park. This will mean the park is looked after better and there is less vandalism, making it feel safer. Popular ideas for events included youth theatre, community planting, yoga, fitness, and sports.

Who: Community with Your Park Bristol & Bath and council support

Cost: Low

Time: Low

2. Age-appropriate play equipment including equipment for older children and accessible equipment

Provision of equipment for older children/people with impairments would be a great asset to Withywood Par. A zip line, exercise equipment or other inclusive equipment could be installed in another area of the park separate from the existing play area. A rope should be added to the existing slide in the play area to enable children to pull themselves up the hill.

Who: Council

Cost: High

Time: High

3. Addition of BMX Track

In another park in Hartcliffe the BMX track has made a big impact on the community. The group suggested that the skate park and MUGA could be changed into a BMX track.

Who: Zak Dugdale and Simon Long from Hartcliffe and Withywood

Community Partnership would like to help set this up.

Cost: High

Time: High

Medium priorities

1. Improvement to the skate park and MUGA (Multi Use Games Area).

Who: Council with community support

Cost: Medium

Time: Medium

2. Pond

Research into whether creating a pond would be viable/sustainable after initial improvements are made.

Who: Your Park Bristol and Bath in partnership with other nature groups.

Cost: Low

Time: Low

Low priorities

1. Forest school

After improvements have been made it may be possible for a forest school to use Withywood Park. Contact should be made with local forest schools to consider viability.

Health and Wellbeing Priorities

High priority

1. Sensory area/quiet space

A sensory area will take people to different areas of the park and give them different types of experience. If a certain smell or sound makes someone uncomfortable, they will be able to move away from it and still experience something interesting. [Information from the Sensory Trust](#) will be used to help choose plants that survive well and make a good experience. The quiet area will be a part of the park that is less noisy so people can go there when experiences are too much, or they want to relax. The quietest area of the park will be found, away from the road, play equipment and school. The sensory area and the paths already there will link with this area. Planting will be used to dampen sounds on this route and in the quiet area.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath with community and council support

Cost: Medium

Time: Medium

2. CCTV and surveillance

Connect local residents who already have CCTV into a network and then create signage to put in the parks that lets people know about this.

Who: Your Park Bristol & Bath

Cost: Medium

Time: Medium

Accessible: When something meets the needs of Disabled people so that they can use it without problems.

Antisocial behaviour: Antisocial behaviour is when someone acts in a way that causes alarm, harassment or distress to someone who isn't part of their family or home. To be classed as antisocial, the behaviour must happen more than once, carry on over time and be something that could be stopped.

Audio descriptions: When something is described with spoken words so that the **visually impaired community** can access it.

Braille: is a way of writing using raised dots that can be read with the fingers of people who are blind or **visually impaired**.

British Sign Language (BSL): This is a language that uses hand gestures. It is used by many **d/Deaf** people in the UK.

CCTV: Cameras that film an area so that it is easier to tell who carried out any **vandalism** that happens.

Contributors: People who were part of making something.

d/Deaf: People who don't have any hearing. The capital 'D' is used when someone is part of the community of Deaf people. **BSL** is often their first language.

Deafblind: People who don't have much hearing and sight so talking or **BSL** might not be **accessible** for them.

Designed: Planning how something will be made.

Dropped kerb: When part of the pavement slopes down so that people can get up and down from it easily.

Mobility impairments: When someone finds it harder to move around.

Neurodiversity: The natural diversity in people's brains.

Priorities: Something that is very important.

Sensory impairments: When someone is **d/Deaf, visually impaired**, or **deafblind**.

Sensory trail: A walk that has lots of experiences that are good for people who have **sensory impairments**. For example, there might be lots of flowers that smell nice for **VIs**.

Tapping rails: A small, raised edge to the side of a path so that **VIs** can find it with their canes.

Toolkit: A guide people can use to help them do a piece of work.

Raised kerb: When pavement is raised up so that it easy for wheelchair users to get from it into a bus or other type of transport.

Research: When people look into something to understand it better.

Unmonitored: When something isn't watched over by a real person all the time.

Vandalism: When something is damaged or broken or made to feel unsafe.

Visually impaired community (VIs): The community of people who are blind or who find it hard to see.