

BRAEMAR VILLAGE PLAY PARK PROJECT



1.0 Executive Summary

Our project is to create a fantastic community play park! We aim to provide an inclusive play park offering an enriching and varied play experience for children.

The existing facility is in real need of upgrade and expansion to offer a wider range of equipment essential to improving the wellbeing and development of children.

The rural village of Braemar lies 17 miles south of the nearest village of Ballater. It is a thriving village with a vibrant community and is also a popular tourist destination. The whole community is very supportive of the project and the recent local Community Action Plan identified a strong need for the play facilities in the village to be improved. The project also has the support of Invercauld Estate who lease the land to Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeenshire Council who have already agreed financial support of £35,000.00. The project is being led by a group of parents and grandparents under the auspice of Braemar Community Ltd. Braemar Community Ltd is a registered charity and was set up in 2004 to undertake the development and operation of major projects on behalf of the community.

This project targets the education, health, wellbeing and development of our children, is fully inclusive across all abilities, promotes equality in the community and is an outstanding opportunity for your organisation to support an important community project.

Further information can be obtained from one of our committee members, Joanne Morris, by email at braemarplaypark@outlook.com. Details of the project can also be viewed on the Facebook Page "Braemar Playground"

2.0 Aims and Objectives

The main aims and objectives of the Braemar Village Play Park Project are as follows.

- Improve the range of facilities, equipment and play opportunity at the children's play park.
- Improve the social and physical wellbeing of local children, families and carers and those visiting the area.
- Create a free, inclusive play park for all abilities and needs.
- Promote a sense of community pride and responsibility.
- Add provision for the expanding local population.
- Create a welcoming place for the whole family to enjoy.

We will achieve these aims by

- Working collaboratively with Aberdeenshire Council, local business and the community.
- Installing new equipment in the children play park.
- Installing inclusive equipment for children with learning and physical disabilities.
- Involving the community in the whole process from design to realisation.
- Add benches and seating areas where families and children can come together.
- Full compliance with health and safety regulations and legal obligations.

3.0 Project Background

There has been a children's play area for many years on this current site in Braemar. The current equipment was installed by Aberdeenshire Council over 20 years ago. The park is the only public play area for the children of Braemar and also provides a focal meeting point for families. Only one small piece of equipment remains usable and the rest requires removal. Also in line with national trends new equipment available is much more varied, stimulating, inclusive and in keeping with the natural surroundings.

Adding new equipment will increase usability, provide much more imaginative and creative play and appeal to a wider demographic. Currently the only equipment which is usable is for children up to four years of age and therefore there is nothing for older children. There is also a lack of provision for children with learning and physical disabilities. Moreover in recent years the population of young children living in and around the Braemar area has increased and the current play facilities are wholly inadequate.

The need and agreement for the improvement and upgrade of the park was widely recognised by the community and in fact was laid out in the Community Action Plan dated May 2013 and has now been championed by a committee of parents and grandparents who are keen to see the project come to fruition.

The park is in a stunning location at the foot of the Creag Choinnich woods. The aim is make the park more in keeping with its natural surroundings and we have therefore asked the equipment providers to use natural materials whenever possible.

Although Braemar is a small rural village with a population at 2011 of just 839, the local school is thriving with 11 nursery children, 17 infant children and 22 junior children. There is also a toddler group with around 15 very young children. The Youth Club has around 19 young people who attend Aboyne Academy which is 34 miles away. The village is also a popular holiday destination and figures obtained from Visit Scotland showed that for the year to 31 August 2015 there were almost 18,000 visitors through the door of the village tourist information office. Many of these visitors will be young families and it is hoped that the park will be a real tourist attraction.

4.0 Consultation

A full consultation with the community commenced in May 2015. We distributed questionnaires amongst all the villagers and visitors asking them how often they used the current play park and what improvements they would like to see. We felt it was very important to find out what equipment the children wanted, so the play park committee visited the toddler group and the nursery to find out. We also asked the young people at the Youth Club. The results of the questionnaires showed quite clearly that 90% of the respondents felt that the current condition of the park was poor or very poor and if it was improved 78% said they would use it on a daily/weekly basis. The majority of suggestions were simply for new equipment and some for improved seating/picnic areas. The questionnaires also asked what things are important in a play area and the responses came back with “physical exercise, imaginative play, inclusivity and links to nature and the unique beautiful surroundings”.

We then invited the representatives of various play park equipment providers to the village primary school to show the children what equipment was available and to get some more feedback from them. Based on the results of our questionnaires and the feedback from the children we then asked the three play park equipment companies to provide us with a draft plan.

Based upon this consultation process there was a clear preference for one of the three options put forward. The chosen design has then been modified to take into account some of the additional comments and wishes of the community.

The proposed new play park (see attached plan) will keep two items from the existing park, namely the toddler climbing frame and the slide built into the banking. The new items as shown in the plan are a Combo Spinner, a wooden play house together with a tube slide and rope nets, two climbing boulders, a woodland climber, a wooden swing set together with a basket swing, an inclusive roundabout, a wooden drum, a cable runway and a spring board. In choosing these items we have tried to most importantly take into account what the various groups of children indicated that they wanted in their park. Also we have tried to choose equipment which is in keeping with the beautiful natural surroundings of the area. The plan also shows picnic tables and benches which are to be provided by Aberdeenshire Council.

Full details of the consultation can be made available upon request.

5.0 Project Plans & Costs

Aberdeenshire Council will assume full responsibility for the ongoing public liability insurance, checks and maintenance of the new play park facility.

Project execution will be done in collaboration with Aberdeenshire Council Landscape Services and the new equipment providers. Aberdeenshire Council will ensure that all

applicable standards are met. Invercauld Estate, who own the land, fully support the proposals and will also provide assistance.

Aberdeenshire Council will undertake the following work;

- Commission and install a sign board providing details about the project, acknowledging sponsors and awarding bodies.
- Provide picnic tables and benches together with litter bins.
- Provide new signage directing people to the park.
- Provide signage for new disabled parking spaces which are to be created.

Invercauld Estate, with some help from Aberdeenshire council, will undertake to remove the existing equipment, with the exception of two pieces. They will also prepare the ground ready for the new equipment.

The remaining work will be completed by the new equipment providers.

The overall project cost is estimated at: £ 90,377.00

(This is broken down as follows:

Installation and provision of new equipment	£ 79500.00
Removal of old equipment	£ 8477.00
Provision of disabled car parking spaces	£ 2400.00)

To date the following commitments have been received:

Local Authority – Aberdeenshire Council	£ 35,000.00
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Braemar Community – Donations and Local fundraising	£ 1,420.00
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Removal of old equipment by Invercauld Estate	£ 8,477.00
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Project funding sought	£ 45,480.00
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(All the above costs include VAT)

6.0 Sponsorship and Donations

We believe this is an outstanding opportunity to support a real community project. Ideally we would like to complete this project in the financial year ending March 2016. However, if this is not possible we will split the project into two phases so that we can deliver as much of the refurbishment and new equipment as possible.

The potential exists for companies to be suitably acknowledged through signage and a series of press releases and articles. We would also consider any other requests that you might have for linking your support to suitable promotional opportunities.

We would welcome a discussion on your specific wishes and requirements. Please contact Joanne Morris by email at braemarplaypark@outlook.com



Photographs of the playpark at present



Consulting with the Primary School children and the Toddler Group