

STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

PLAY /LEISURE FACILITIES

KATE'S PLAIN IN GUESSBURN

PROGRESS UPDATE from Councillor Robinson

I thought it may be helpful to update on progress with one of my lead roles during my time as a parish councillor.

Our outdoor spaces in the Tyne Valley are beautiful and well used by a variety of age groups and there has been noticeable progress on access issues for those who are differently abled. We are fortunate to have such terrific assets here to use and enjoy.

One gem of an outdoor space is Kate's Plain which is rented from Allendale estates and the parish council maintains the land and facilities.

The quality and safety of the equipment there is part of a wider parish risk assessment strategy and will be formally reported on separately by the clerk.

Those who have visited the space will note that the land is uneven, muddy and of variable quality and the seating and play equipment is many years old and in need of urgent review.(I won't repeat myself here as I submitted a paper on Kate's Plain earlier this year and I would direct you to this for fuller details)

After my proposal Kate's Plain was signposted to GGAG and as a GGAG member I participated in discussions resulting in myself, Kevin and Tim drawing up draft papers including a questionnaire to consult with our community and inviting views on the best use of Kate's Plain. The outcome of work was due to come back to the Parish for further discussion however the summer break, resignations and weighty agendas mean that a fuller discussion has not yet been possible.

In my view Kate's Plain is once again slipping down the agenda and it may do so even further.

(The last community involvement which had several funding streams was over 20 years ago and the setting is looking tired and neglected)

As an interim measure I met informally with some children and adults whilst out and about using the paths and space and the feedback I received was as follows:-

1. The gate at the end of the bridge needed fixing
2. Who knows where Kate's Plain is as the signage is old and hard to see?
3. The equipment is out of date and better suited for preschool and younger children
4. Seating is too low, some of it is leaning and needs replacing
5. The gazebo shelter provides a welcome relaxing and chatting area and needs updating – perhaps more sheltered areas like this would enhance making friends and safe supervision of children and young people at play?
6. The land is lumpy and often wet - ball games are affected and tripping up happens
7. The baseball and football nets need replacing
8. Litter bins are tilting and sometimes used to dispose of dog faeces
9. The space could perhaps lend itself to an adventure trail or nature spotting walk and more family outdoor events?

I hope this update is helpful to the parish council and I leave it with you all for further decisions on ways forward.

Regards
Cllr Robinson
15/09/25