

Open Spaces – June 2020:

Update from Inspector Craig Berry - West Bridgford Police:

The police authorised a Dispersal authority (Sec 35 ASB and Policing Act 2014) for the weekend for Ten Acre Field (Adbolton Lane Playing Fields) due to the escalating levels of anti-social behaviour by groups gathering on the park and the direct effect it was having on local residents. Police officers visited the park numerous times during their patrols and we spoke with a number of small groups early Friday evening so they were aware of the plan to ensure there were no surprises. We revisited the park at about 10 pm and with the cooperation of all the groups present we cleared the area with their consent and to my knowledge had no further issues that night. I do appreciate this is not the only place that people are gathering at present but Ten Acre Field was the only location that there was justification for a measure to empower officers to direct people to leave an area and non-compliance then amounts to a criminal offence.

This is all a very fluid situation and we await with interest the impact of the reopening of the hospitality industry on Saturday 4th July to see what effect that has on social gathering in parks and open spaces. There have been a number of challenges for policing and our colleagues at Rushcliffe Borough Council around the Coronavirus Regulations and we have worked hard with local communities who have been supportive throughout. However when people flagrantly disregard the law and by doing so put public health at risk, and also show no respect for others through their behaviour then it is appropriate and necessary for the police to move to enforcement. The Dispersal legislation is not a permanent solution and must be used with other preventative and environmental measures in order to influence the poor behaviour of the few without impinging on the majority who want to use our green spaces considerately.

There will be many factors which will influence how we police situations like this in coming weeks

I (Councillor Sue Mallender) responded as follows:

We had a good meeting on Thursday 25th June with PCSO Lee Sampson, the head teacher from Lady Bay Primary School, a representative of Adbolton and Gamston Parish Council and residents of Adbolton Grove on Thursday, and Lee came to visit Councillor Richard Mallender and I on Friday with further information. We do understand how difficult it is for you to police all the open spaces in the borough and realise that the problem is the same all over the country on open green spaces and beaches. There has been a further meeting on Monday 29th June with the headteacher of Lady Bay Primary School and the Community Safety Officer of Rushcliffe Borough Council.

Thanks to the weather I gather it was pretty quiet on Saturday and yesterday, and residents were very pleased with the dispersal of the people on the field on Friday evening.

I have had some information from the owners of the horses kept in the fields next to 10 Acre Field that their animals have been deliberately attacked and also have been frightened by the amount of noise and the fires, as you know this was a particular concern on Thursday 25th June when aerosol cans were thrown onto fires causing loud banging noises.

However, on a more positive note, I have also heard from residents that groups of young people have engaged in litter picking activities.

As we suspected would happen we had a whole lot of other residents complaining that a very large group of teenagers who had left 10 Acre Field/ Adbolton Lane Playing Fields, on Friday, gathered from 10 pm to 02:00 around Lady Bay skate park causing a lot of noise nuisance. We met with residents and as this is Rushcliffe's land have some ideas as to possible preventative measures. Councillors Richard and Sue Mallender met with Rushcliffe's Community Safety Officer on Wednesday 1st July on the Hook near the skate park - we are looking at some possible ways of reducing the inappropriate use of this area - such as litter from people having picnics on the flood banks. However, this is yet another area that may need to be visited, as I'm sure it is already, by the police.