

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT #7

In the final posting of this series, we will consider recreational use of the Sports Centre and representation of different user groups and hopefully dispel a few more myths that are currently doing the rounds.

Yesterday an article was posted elsewhere claiming “When people were given a free vote at the Sports Centre drop in sessions in 2013, these were their high priorities. Number 1 priority was restoring the boating lake....” The posting was accompanied by a screenshot of part of the draft spreadsheet of collated results from the drop-ins, the final version of which was sent to all participants and has been available from FoSSC’s www site (<http://www.fossc.info/140213%20Table%20of%20Suggestions%20Final.pdf>). On the screenshot there is a number 1 against the boating lake. That number is categorically NOT a ranking, the number 1 simply refers to the number on a thumb tack pin as can be seen by the header row of the spreadsheet. At the drop ins, everyone was asked to write their thoughts on a numbered post-it note and then write the number on a pin and place it at the appropriate location on a large map of the sports centre. FoSSC was asked to look after the map and attach a photo showing the pins. All suggestions made were then ranked low, medium or high based on the number of people registering that suggestion. Retention of the boating lake was definitely not top of the list, it was only 2/3 as popular as the most popular suggestion and only one post-it note ahead of those wanting to replace the boating lake with a skate park. Moreover it was only one of 22 ideas which were ranked as attracting high support in what Council were also at pains to point out should not be interpreted as a scientifically sound poll.

Others are also claiming that the 2015 consultation on the draft plan did not include an option to vote on the boating lake - there was plenty of opportunity to make as long and detailed a free text comment as one wished. Moreover, others are claiming that the 2013 drop ins did not identify indoor sports facilities, however the 2013 consultations with the sports users emphatically did identify this as a priority. Surely they should have an equal voice? Sir Sydney Kimber considered the Outdoor Sports Centre to be a resource for all City residents to use and enjoy for sport and recreation. FoSSC has recognised this from the start and our constitution pledges us to “work in an apolitical way to preserve, maintain, promote and improve the Sports Centre site for sports recreation and leisure purposes for the well-being and pleasure of all City residents, of visitors to the city and of future generations in the spirit of its founder's vision”.

Local residents are an important user group and FoSSC has done its best to keep them informed and actively engaged with the improvement plan. FoSSC helped organise and run the 2013 drop ins, we organised drop ins to promote the 2015 consultation on the draft plan and we have continually posted information on the developing improvement plan online as it becomes available. We have also worked to get the Outdoor Sports Centre formally designated as local green space under the Bassett Neighbourhood Plan which has now been ratified.

FoSSC thought it would be interesting to look in more detail at where those responding to the 2015 consultations lived, so we asked Council if they would provide a breakdown by postcode sector, which they readily did. The highest number of responses (5.9% overall) came from postcode sector SO16 7 (Bassett). – i.e. the most immediate local residents. Therefore any suggestion that local residents were not engaged or consulted is without foundation. Moreover 51% of respondents overall were walkers and dog walkers, so claims that recreational users didn't have a say are equally unfounded.

What makes even more interesting reading is the next few postcode sectors in the response table. Second, on 5.1% was SO15 5 (Shirley), third, on 4.7% was SO16 8 (Coxford, Lordshill, Rownhams) and fourth on 2.9% were both SO16 6 (Shirley Warren and Dale Valley) and SO16 9 (Wimpson, Millbrook and Maybush). We attach a map showing the highest represented areas. It is abundantly clear from these data that not only did a very large number of people respond to the public consultation (nearly 1,300), but that they responded from across the entire City, confirming Kimber's vision of the Outdoor Sports Centre as a City facility for all City Residents.

So what about the Sports vs. Recreation question and whether sport dominates on the outdoor Sports Centre? Here are the figures for ground area:

% of Outdoor Sports Centre currently not dedicated to formal sport = 68%

% of Outdoor Sports Centre area currently dedicated to formal sport (i.e. all pitches, courts, track, ski slopes) = 32%

% of Outdoor Sports Centre area currently dedicated to fenced off formal sport (courts, track, ski slope, all weather pitches) = 11%

% of Outdoor Sports Centre area currently not dedicated to fenced off formal sport and so available for recreation some or all of the time = 89%

And under the draft improvement plan assuming 2 new 3G football pitches and a cycling track.

% of Outdoor Sports Centre not dedicated to formal sport = 67%*

% of Outdoor Sports Centre area dedicated to formal sport (i.e. all pitches, courts, track, ski slopes, 4 weather pitches (hockey and football), cycling) = 33%

% of Outdoor Sports Centre area dedicated to fenced off formal sport – 18%

% of Outdoor Sports Centre area not dedicated to fenced off formal sport and so available for recreation some or all of the time - 82%

* Because 2 current football pitches would revert to open space.

Therefore, non sporting users have free access to by far the majority of the facility's space both now and into the future.

In summary, FoSSc believes

(1) that development of the Sports Centre Improvement plan has actively and proactively involved both local residents and the wider city

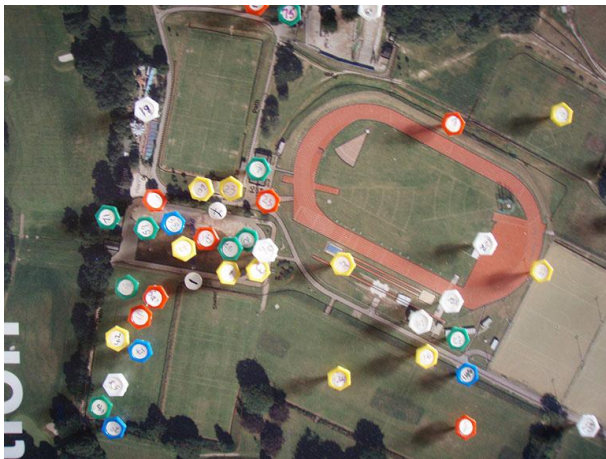
(2) that both recreational and sports users views have been fully considered

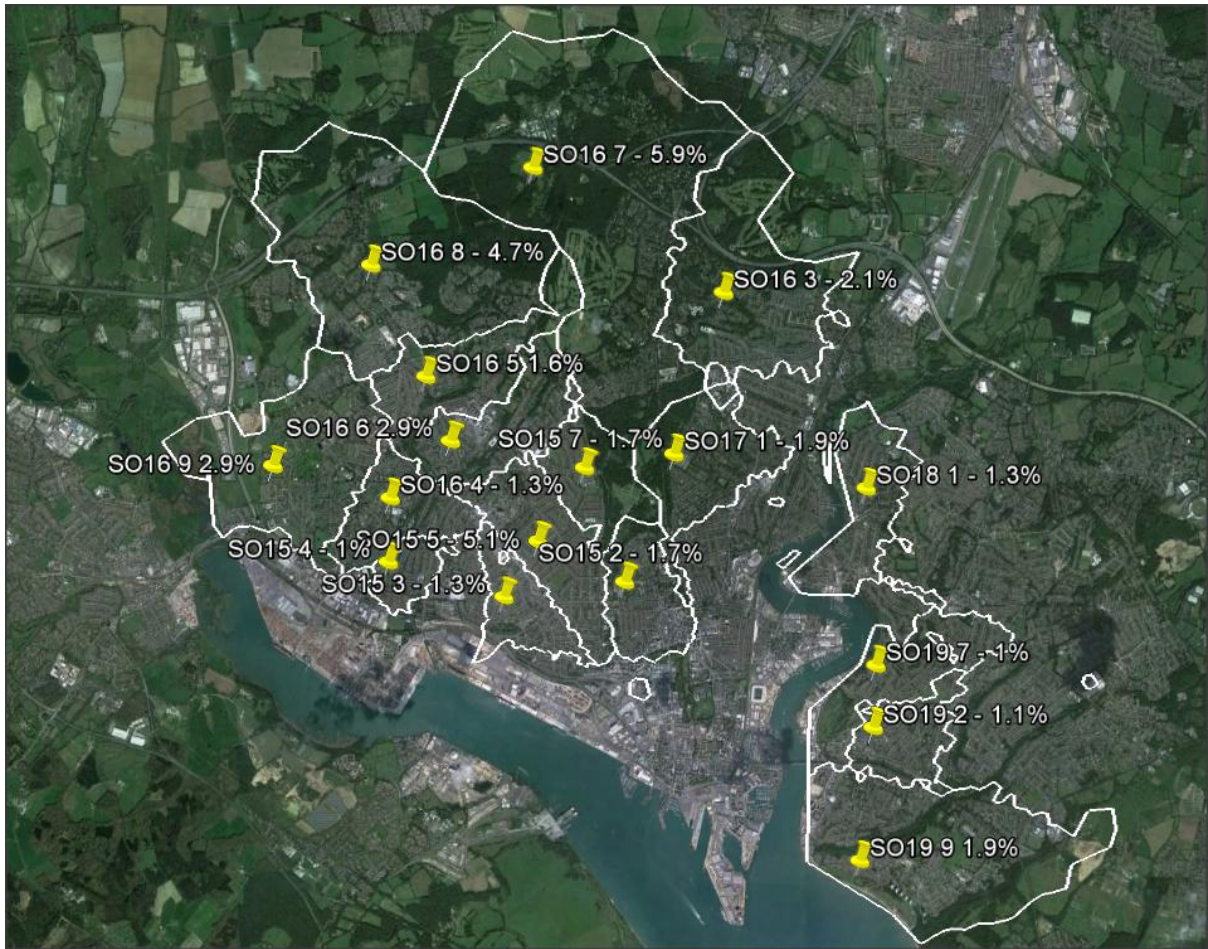
(3) that the proposed improvements will not result in loss of open green space

(4) that they will benefit both sports and recreational users from across the entire City into the future.

We sincerely hope that Council Cabinet will endorse the report tomorrow night.

Accompanying Pictures





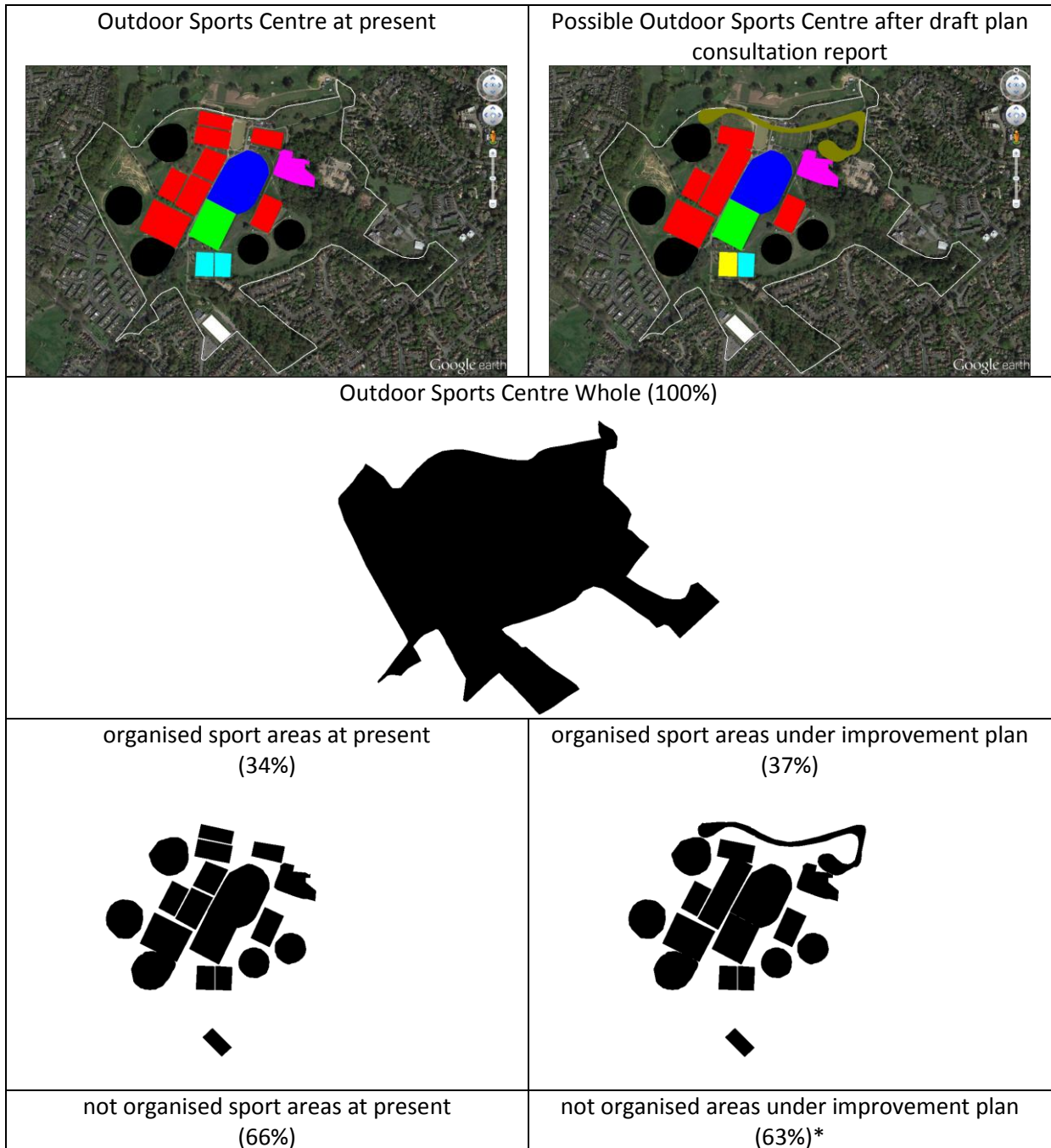
Supplementary data – postcode sector breakdown (data supplied by SCC)

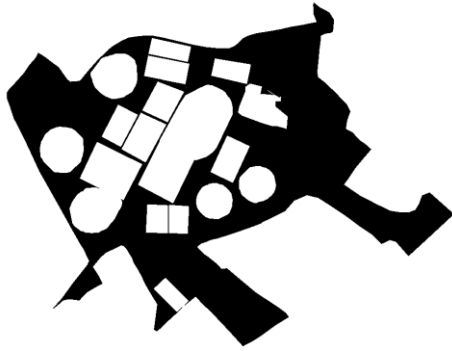
| Postcode sector | Number of responses | % of total responses |
|------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| SO16 7 | 75 | 5.9% |
| SO15 5 | 64 | 5.1% |
| SO16 8 | 59 | 4.7% |
| SO16 6 | 36 | 2.9% |
| SO16 9 | 36 | 2.9% |
| SO16 3 | 26 | 2.1% |
| SO17 1 | 24 | 1.9% |
| SO19 9 | 24 | 1.9% |
| SO15 2 | 22 | 1.7% |
| SO15 7 | 22 | 1.7% |
| SO16 5 | 20 | 1.6% |
| SO16 4 | 17 | 1.3% |
| SO15 3 | 16 | 1.3% |
| SO18 1 | 16 | 1.3% |
| SO19 2 | 14 | 1.1% |
| SO15 4 | 13 | 1.0% |
| SO19 7 | 13 | 1.0% |
| SO18 5 | 11 | 0.9% |
| SO14 3 | 10 | 0.8% |
| SO17 2 | 10 | 0.8% |
| SO19 8 | 10 | 0.8% |
| SO18 4 | 8 | 0.6% |

| | | |
|---------------|----------|-------------|
| SO15 1 | 7 | 0.6% |
| SO15 8 | 7 | 0.6% |
| SO18 6 | 7 | 0.6% |
| SO14 6 | 6 | 0.5% |
| SO16 0 | 5 | 0.4% |
| SO17 3 | 5 | 0.4% |
| SO18 2 | 5 | 0.4% |
| SO18 3 | 5 | 0.4% |
| SO19 5 | 5 | 0.4% |
| SO19 6 | 5 | 0.4% |
| SO14 0 | 4 | 0.3% |
| SO15 0 | 4 | 0.3% |
| SO14 1 | 3 | 0.2% |
| SO16 | 3 | 0.2% |
| SO19 0 | 3 | 0.2% |
| SO19 1 | 3 | 0.2% |
| SO19 4 | 3 | 0.2% |
| SO14 2 | 2 | 0.2% |
| SO14 5 | 2 | 0.2% |
| SO16 2 | 2 | 0.2% |
| SO14 7 | 1 | 0.1% |
| SO15 6 | 1 | 0.1% |
| SO18 8 | 1 | 0.1% |

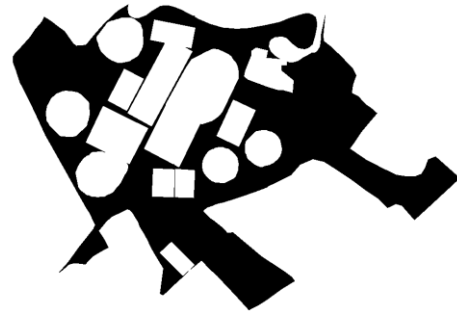
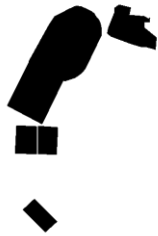
Supplementary data – ground usage

Note: these are indicative based on those **features** that are specified in the April 2016 consultation report, locations are not confirmed,.





fenced off sport areas at present
(12%)



*"Loss" due to cycle track nearly completely compensated for by gain of areas previously used as mini and junior soccer pitches

fenced off sport areas under improvement plan
(20%)

