

Bath and North East Somerset Council – Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee

Health and Safety and Safeguarding Issues – Alice Park

As a result of the construction of the skate park adjacent to the children's playground a new fence has been installed separating the playground from a newly designated skate park area. Two new gates have been installed: one in the newly created fence allowing access between the playground and the skate park area, a second set of double gates allowing access between the playground and the general park area.

Concern has been expressed by parents and carers that these new gates have reduced the safety and security of children using the playground.

There are two issues:

1. Both of the new gates open OUTWARDS. Convention relating to areas where small children play open INWARDS. This stops children, particularly toddlers, from being able to easily exit the playground area whilst allowing the maximum opportunity for free play. Particular concern has been expressed about the gate leading to the skate park area as allowing easy access to the skatepark area exposing them to hazards from the use of the skate park.
2. Until recently entry to the skate park area was solely via the children's playground. As the skate park is used by all ages concern has also been expressed relating to children being exposed to alcohol and drug misuse and the presence of people in the playground area who have no legitimate reason to be there.

The gate allowing access directly from the general park area to the skate park has been re-opened which now exposed all users of the park access to the skate park area and the danger that poses to both skate park activities and the dangers of people inadvertently falling into what is in effect an unguarded deep hole sufficient to cause serious injury.

A report was submitted for consideration by the management sub-committee relating to these issues, but the chair of the sub committee prevented that report from being considered. That report is attached as an appendix.

In the light of these concerns these matters need to be revisited and measures undertaken in modifying gates and or introducing additional protective measures to minimize the risks outlined.

Graham Page

Independent Member of the Charitable Trust Board