

Runnymede Pleasure Grounds refurbishment project example

Parks and Leisure Services along with (former) Cllr David Wright met with the Parks and Amenities Manager and Head of Community Development at Runnymede Borough Council to hear about their experience of a very similar project involving the refurbishment of Runnymede Pleasure Grounds. Their park offers play equipment, a paddling pool, café, pay and display car park and toilets on the River Thames. The site is smaller than Stoke Park but is similarly in need of investment and modernising to develop the potential of the site. Runnymede employed landscape architects, a specialist leisure consultancy to assess income potential and project managers who in turn appointed a professional team. They are shortly to consult on the final scheme. The project managers will then tender for a contractor to construct the design on behalf of the council.

Their project costs to date are:

- Landscape architects - £25,000
- Leisure consultants - £11,500
- Project managers, professional team, surveys etc. - £450,000 to £500,000

Runnymede's project confirmed our thinking on the level of consultancy support and associated costs we will need to undertake the major planning of Stoke Park. Without a project management company, able to swiftly employ required professions, the project will only move forward when there is any capacity from the day to day job of managing the borough parks and countryside and completing a range of other projects also needed to progress. With hindsight, Runnymede regretted a three-year delay attempting to progress the project in-house before deciding to appoint project managers.