

Merstham Recreation Ground refurbishment

Newsletter 4 - December 2024

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Merstham Rec refurbishment newsletter. Read on for an update on our open space project in Merstham.

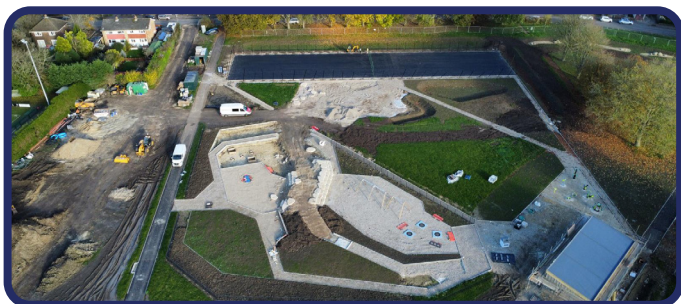
Work on site started on 13 May and is expected to be complete in February 2025 to provide:

- a new pavilion with a café kiosk, toilets and changing rooms, with solar panels and a green roof
- a new play area with equipment for children of all ages and abilities
- a parkour course for over 12s
- an outdoor gym
- an improved network of footpaths with better accessibility for wheelchairs and buggies
- a picnic area and community orchard
- new trees, landscaping and swales (ditches) to improve drainage.

In this issue

In this edition you can read about:

- progress on site
- what is happening next
- update on the youth area - parkour
- how to keep in touch.



Progress on site

During the last few weeks, our contractor has continued to make great progress on the construction of the pavilion. The building is now fully up and the waterproofing of the roof is almost complete.

In the play area, the stone mound is almost finished, which will provide opportunities for children to climb and jump. The play equipment continues to be installed, with the group swing frame and see-saw in place, joining the trampoline frame and other swing frames already installed.

The refurbishment of the tennis court and MUGA (multi-use games area) have progressed well, and the new surface and fencing are now complete.

To the south of the Rec, works continue to construct the new path and seating areas. Works to the water channel have moved forward, with most of the excavation carried out and a part of the gravel beach installed. The contractor has also worked with a parkour specialist to develop the final design proposals for the youth area and works to the youth area will start in December.

What is happening next

Over the next month or so, the contractor will:

- continue to construct the pavilion with the installation of the green roof, which will include a range of plants to attract insects, and photovoltaic (solar) panels.
- carry on building the footpaths
- continue to install the play equipment
- complete the MUGA and tennis court refurbishment
- prepare the planting beds and begin to plant with trees and shrubs
- seeding the swales (drainage ditches)
- start preparing and setting up the parkour area.

Youth area - parkour

Our contractor, Blakedown Landscapes, working with a parkour specialist – Parkour Designs, have finalised the plans for the parkour area and aim to start the construction of this exciting new facility in December.

The parkour course will include a series of walls and bars that will encourage movement, play, exploration, fitness and personal development. It will include a variety of challenges and difficulties for different levels and abilities.



How to keep in touch

We will be issuing a newsletter every five to six weeks to provide regular progress updates on the project. You can see the various editions of the newsletter on our website.

You can also keep in touch with us in a variety of ways:

Website: reigate-banstead.gov.uk/Merstham-Rec

Email: MersthamRec@reigate-banstead.gov.uk

Social media: [@ReigateBanstead](https://www.instagram.com/ReigateBanstead)

Community engagement

Merstham Park School students collaborate with Surrey artist on Rec murals

Creative Year 9 students at Merstham Park School are collaborating with Surrey artist 'Uncle Stubble' to design artwork that will feature on the new pavilion and parkour course at Merstham Rec. They will help to create vibrant, dynamic imagery that blends the themes of art, nature and community.

Uncle Stubble is known for his diverse, versatile work and has created large-scale murals in schools and communities and believes art has the power to influence positive change in young people. He visited the school in November, along with the project manager for the refurbishment project and the Council's arts officer, to talk about the scheme and help the students to begin to develop their initial ideas.

The final designs are expected to be an eye-catching mix of the students' intertwined designs. Once complete, the artwork will serve as a lasting legacy for both the students and the Merstham community, fostering a sense of ownership and pride.



Students join forces with Greenspaces team to plant spring bulbs

Merstham Park School students teamed up with the Council again at the end of November; this time working with our Greenspaces team to plant spring bulbs. Armed with gloves and tools, the participants worked diligently to dig the soil and plant the bulbs that will lie dormant through the winter and will bloom come springtime, ready for when the Rec refurbishment is complete.

The initiative provided students with an opportunity get hands-on experience with their local environment, while contributing to enhancing the park for years to come. It provided lessons in teamwork, environmental stewardship and civic responsibility, along with the importance of biodiversity in urban green spaces. It also shows that even small projects like this can have a lasting positive impact, both on our local area and in the shared sense of accomplishment that engenders community spirit.

"Projects like these teach valuable lessons about community and the environment. Plus, they're a lot of fun!" said Mrs Harkness, Associate Assistant Headteacher.

