



# A Playground Folkestone Gardens



Folkestone Gardens is a small park located in Deptford SE8. This part of the London Borough of Lewisham has a child poverty rate of 37% against a borough average of 24%. The former playground in Folkestone Gardens had a limited amount of sturdy equipment and some SEN equipment. There was a small skate area used by local children on scooters, skates, skateboards and bikes.

In 2016 residents learned that Lewisham council was to install a Skatepark in Folkestone Gardens at the expense of the playground. There was no consultation but a new playground in the remaining area was promised. Appeals to elected representatives, who thought this was a “good idea”, to halt the process and consult on where to locate the new skatepark were dismissed. No time was taken to understand the sanitation and drinking water requirements of the people who would be now attracted to this sub-regional asset. No time was taken to consult on the proposed new playground.

A quarter of a million pounds (250k) of Section 106 money (funding provided by developers to mitigate the costs of a development on local infrastructure) was allocated to this project. A “new” playground never materialised. Instead the old equipment was relocated. The playground is not used much anymore. Balls from the MUGA come straight into the play space; Gates are missing causing safety issues and the SEN equipment is gone. There is an unacceptable level of ASB on the skatepark including drug use and dealing, public urination and an increased level of graffiti in the area. DeptfordFolk have embarked on a project to find solutions to the problems in this area.







Folkestone Gardens was once an area of Victorian Terraces and mansion Blocks on Oarborough Road, Deptford



On 7th March 1945 a V2 bomb landed on Oarborough road killing 53, destroying homes and making other buildings unsafe. Prefabs were erected on site to address post war housing issues.



Like many bomb sites in London the rubble in Oarborough Road became a playground for local children.



In the 1970's the area was developed into a park and named after one of the former mansion blocks: Folkestone Gardens.



DeptfordFolk was formed in 2015 in response to a number of attempts to remove green space from our local parks and make costly changes without consultation.

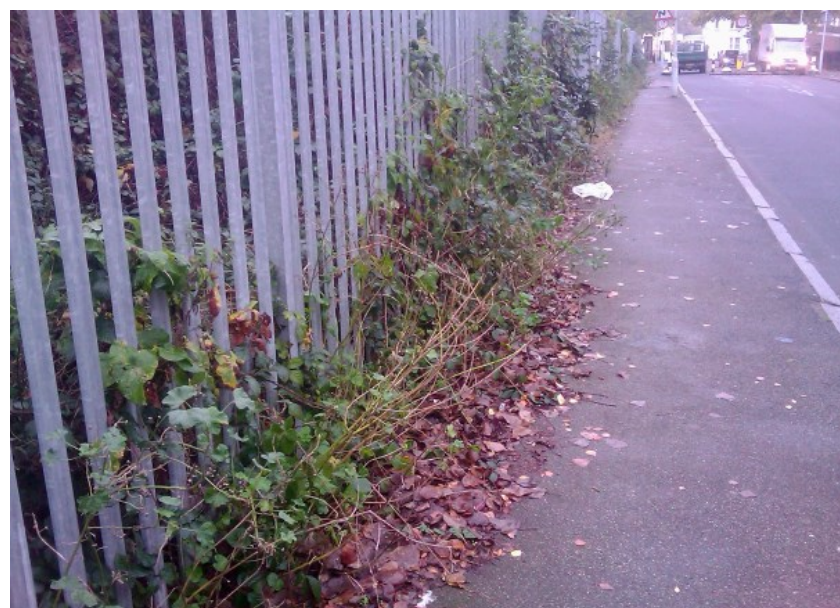
DeptfordFolk's approach is to consult with all interested parties (or stakeholders). When we work together and share ideas, projected problems and solutions we can enhance our parks to best respond to the needs of the local community who make up the vast majority of park users (see DeptfordFolk survey data 2017)

There are some key issues facing children in the play area of Folkestone Gardens:

- **Poor Quality equipment**
- **Anti-Social Behaviour**
- **Personal Safety**
- **Road and access Safety**
- **Poor quality Environment**
- **Access to sanitation and drinking water**

Our aim is to address these issues through community consultation and Collaborative Design

In order to keep children safe and promote play in a clean healthy environment  
DeptfordFolk are campaigning for...



... improved pavement maintenance and removal of scrap cars from the roads around the playground. This is a school route.

... a water fountain in the new play space.

... a solution from Lewisham Council to address the sanitation issues. It is not acceptable to pass this responsibility to the Café.

... a strategy to monitor the area from the local Safer Neighbourhood team



... a new playground with high quality equipment addressing the needs of all age groups and abilities



... a safe crossing and pedestrian priority on Rolt Street connecting Woodpecker Road to Folkestone Gardens.



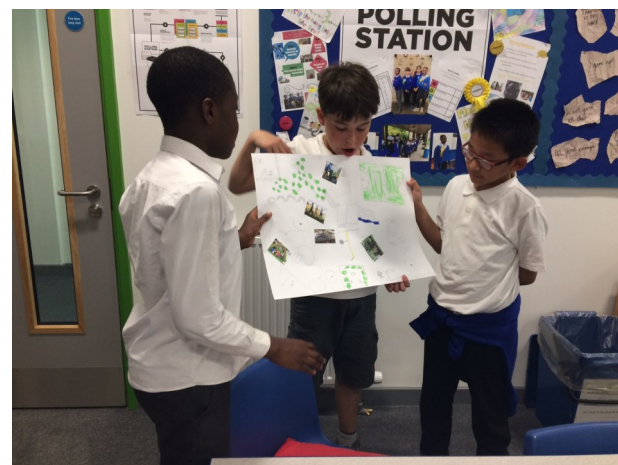


## Let's Get a New Playground!

DeptfordFolk have started work to realise the potential of this vast unused playground space. In June 2017 we ran a consultation and design workshop with the very people who will be using the space: children at Sir Francis Drake Primary School.

DeptfordFolk teamed up with Sir Francis Drake School. We were joined by local developers Anthology, who will offer us some technical support for the project. Dream Network, a non-profit playground design organisation headed by a former aerospace engineer turned playground designer came too.

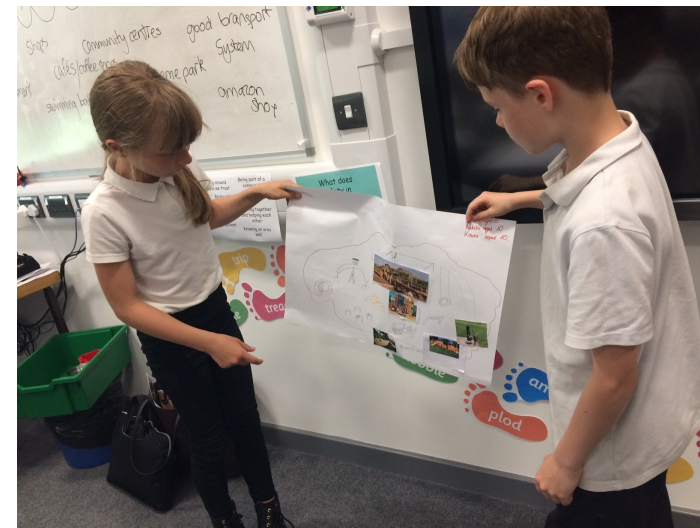
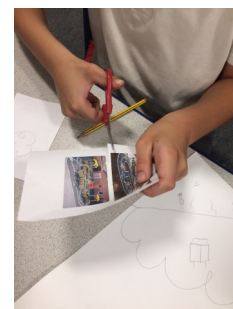
The children had great ideas and considered children of all ages and abilities. The next step will be to secure funding, build the playground and reclaim the space for local children and their families.



*"There should be a separate space for small kids to play".*



*"When will we get a playground that one is rubbish".*

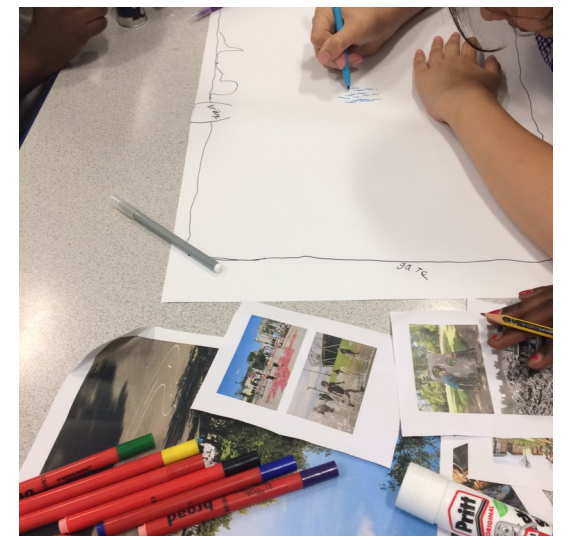


The children confidently explained their plans explaining how different equipment would address the needs of all park users. Picnic areas, areas for younger children, drinking fountains with a dog bowl and tree cover for shade and nature.

Children would like to use the skatepark but the current situation makes it difficult at times.



*"A splash park with a slide and sandpit".*



*"We can have a track to ride our bikes on".*

