

Use of Matrix Paving as a Sustainable Alternative to Coir Matting Under Benches on Englefield Green - (Peter Joyce –Head of Green Spaces)

Synopsis of Report:

To report on the use of matrix paving as a suitable material for use under benches.

Recommendation(s):

- (i) To note that coir matting would not be a sustainable material for use under benches on Englefield Green.**
- (ii) To propose the alternative of matrix paving and a cost of £290 for materials and installation per bench.**

1. Background

- 1.1 The report is to advise the Committee on the use of matrix paving for use as a surfacing material under benches on Englefield Green.

2. Report

- 2.1 Green Space Officers met to discuss the potential use of coir matting under seating in June 2022. Coir matting was not thought to be suitable for protecting grass under benches as the material rots and starts to disintegrate relatively quickly. Therefore, the idea will not be progressed.
- 2.2 A better alternative would be matrix paving. This is a strong interlocking cellular and porous plastic paving system for grass reinforcement and ground stabilisation for regular trafficked pedestrian and vehicle areas. It is open in texture, allowing grass to grow through, but providing a very strong and even surface. It has a high load bearing capacity and is British manufactured. It is SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage System) compliant, and allows for a naturally pleasing, environmentally friendly and free draining surface. Paving can be offset by one-cell increments to fit around obstacles. The paving would be fitted to the ground on a suitable subbase in front of the bench, which would be secured to using metal brackets to avoid theft.
- 2.3 The cost of purchase would be £90 for 4m² of paving material. The cost of installation would be £200. Therefore, total installation costs for two benches would be £580 per bench. The cost should be met from earmarked ringfenced Englefield Green reserves.

3. Policy framework implications

- 3.1 Maintaining Englefield Green in accordance with the Council's sustainability policies.

4. Resource implications/Value for Money

4.1 Total costs per bench to purchase and install matrix paver would be £580 for two benches.

5. Legal implications

5.1 None.

6. Equality implications

6.1 None.

7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

7.1 The Corporate Head of Environmental Services recommends that all maintenance should be in accordance with the Runnymede Borough Council sustainability policies.

8. Conclusions

8.1 To approve recommendations as per the report introduction.

(To resolve)

Background papers

None.