

Over the last 20 years this section of the common has seen increased footfall and usage.

It is a large flat area of public amenity land, close to transport hubs with paths around the edge, but not dissecting it.

This easily accessible space, aside from being used for events, is popular with dog walkers, recreational use, personal fitness, training sessions, bootcamps and organised sports games. It has become evident this sports usage also impacted the ground conditions, without the maintenance that dedicated sports areas have.

It is the cumulative result of all these activities that has led to the poor ground condition. Characterised by areas of sparse grass coverage, pooling water on surface and prolonged muddy areas - due to poor drainage.

The only enhanced ground maintenance work in that location was from pre and post event work. Funded by the events team and the event organisers.

In 2018 the events team looked at allocating surplus income to a wholesale reconditioning project for this site. The intention being to ensure that the space was robust and had a speedy recovery from reinstatement work, for all.

The initial commencement date was October 2019 but this was postponed to September 2020 to ensure that the weather risks to the works were mitigated as far as possible. Covid-19 also impacted work schedules.

The reconditioning project has undertaken intensive ground decompaction, stripped vegetation and top layer of soil, amelioration – adding sand to clay soil to increase absorption and aid drainage, new top layer of nutrient rich soil, overseeding with a seed mix used in sports / high usage and fertilising.

Prior to hand back at the end of May 2021 the grass will be cut – to encourage additional growth.

It is anticipated that the fence will come down completely end of May. Only a month later than the initial finish date of April 2021.

There will be an ongoing programme of ground maintenance with verti-draining to decompact the ground and aerate the soil. Overseeding in areas of high footfall in spring and autumn to encourage a denser grass coverage.