

For those of you who don't know it, Porters Wood is a small piece of land in the hamlet of Petteridge. The Parish Council purchased the land from Dame Elena Bennett in 1957 for use by the community for recreation. Whilst the field has always been open and accessible to the community, there hasn't been much investment for the younger generation growing up there. The current Parish Council therefore decided to improve the amenities in the area and a playground, on council owned land, seemed like an obvious solution.

However, funds needed to be sourced and, with the larger developments in the Parish contributing Section 106 money, the project looked finally to be possible. Other projects around the parish, such as the pond and Matfield Pavilion as well as Brenchley Recreation ground also benefit from this funding.

I joined the Parish Council in August 2022 and, having a young son myself, was tasked to take the reins of the Porters Wood project. The priorities in choosing the equipment for Porters were:

- Inclusivity – providing something that everyone could use, no matter their age or ability.
- Blending into the surroundings - Porters Wood is a beautiful area, the play equipment needed to be as sympathetic to the location as possible.
- Sustainability – using recycled materials that would be durable, long lasting and easy to maintain.

There is a play trail with easy and hard options to cater for different age groups.



PLAYGROUND FOR PORTER'S WOOD

The metal bars of the chain bridge give scope for adults and teenagers to practice their pull ups. Two horizontal bars enable varieties of exercise sequences at different heights to suit the tall or short and the swing is suitable for those with additional physical needs. There is a bench with a back which was aimed to give the older generation some rest while watching their grandchildren, and a picnic table suitable for eight occupants.

The project in its entirety has cost in the region of £20,000. We hope that it will get much use from those in the parish, and that it will be well cared for by all that frequent it.

The facility will be officially opened on Wednesday 6th September at 5pm, and we would love to meet you there.

There are currently two vacancies for Parish Councillors and there are many opportunities to make Brenchley and Matfield even better, so why not consider joining, and help to make a difference.

Cllr Charlotte Anderson

