



9th August 2024

Didcot Town Council would like to thank all those who attended the Splash Pad opening in Edmonds Park on Wednesday 31st July 2024. We are excited to provide this amazing free facility for residents!

We have noticed a few comments and questions on social media so would like to take this opportunity to address some of them:

- Opening times

The Splash Pad will initially open from 12-4pm Monday to Saturdays and 12-3pm on a Sunday for this summer. This is mainly due to staffing. To have the toilet and changing facilities open for users of the Splash Pad, the building needs to be manned. Not only this but staff will be on hand to sell refreshments from the kiosk.

The Splash Pad itself needs to have the water tested at least three times per day. This is important to ensure all the chemical levels are correct and safe for users. If any of the chemical levels need adjusting the Council have two qualified members of staff who need to be on call seven days a week, so that this can be done. They had to attend a three-day course to obtain this qualification and both members of staff work full time for the Town Council in other departments. We are relying on current staff to manage the Splash Pad this year to see how things will work. These staff have other roles within the Council and are manning the Splash Pad in addition to this. Eight members of staff undertook training to be able to test the water, this included many of our 'casual workers' who are students and available for limited periods. Some of these will be leaving the town at the beginning of September for university.

The Splash Pad needs cleaning before and after each use. This can take up to two hours each time. The Pad will need grass and leaves blowing off, jet washing and 'backwashing' the system (at the end of everyday) to ensure it is clean and safe for the next use. We have witnessed items such as chips, chip paper and broken glass strewn across the site which needs additional care and attention to clear.

- Location

Some people have mentioned the location being near to the main road. The Splash Pad itself is fenced in. There are areas to sit outside the fencing so that adults can always supervise their children, but this also deters people from sitting next to the pad with food and reduces the risk of food being dropped into the filters and potentially causing a shut down. Each shut down event will mean the Splash Pad is closed for at least 24 hours.

The area immediately surrounding the Splash Pad is still unfinished. More benches and bins will be installed, and the area will eventually have new grass, but the Town Council wanted to ensure the Splash Pad was open for use this summer so work on this will come later.

The Splash Pad being situated next to the pavilion allows users the use of the facilities without having to walk across the field. Not only that but logistically electric and water supply was already in situ, so this made more sense to locate it where it is. This also ensured that no football pitches were lost due to the need of having to dig long trenches for piping and wires.

As you can appreciate, this is the first Splash Pad in Didcot, and this summer will be a learning curve for all. Our aim is to provide a free, fun and exciting facility for the community, and we believe we have managed this. All staff have worked above and beyond to make this project a reality and negative and nasty comments across social media diminishes staff morale. 99% of the staff live in Didcot and always strive to do the best for all residents. Please be mindful of the upset your comments can make.

The future management of the Splash Pad will be considered after this first year. It is important to note that the area is not finished, and the Town Council are constantly looking at ways to make improvements which can include shading options and amending the opening hours in future.

Any questions regarding this facility can be sent to council@didcot.gov.uk where a member of staff will be happy to answer.

Thank you.

Didcot Town Council Staff

