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Vital all children can enjoy Fr Collins Park amenities

Parks across the county have been a Godsend for families during Covid lockdowns providing safe, outdoor spaces for families and individuals to exercise or socialise in all seasons. For the community of Clongriffin, Fr Collins Park became the major hub for the growing populous.

"It's a relatively new area with a wonderful park, and a thriving voluntary community," said Lauren Cosgrave, a mother of two living in the area and also a member of Clongriffin Community Association.

"Fr Collins Park has been the centre-point of our community over the past year as there's no community centre so the park is effectively the core community centre!

"However, while the park is widely used by members of all ages and abilities, there are no wheelchair accessible parking spaces – and not even an ability swing for wheelchair users.

"Following the installation of a new ability swing in Cabinteely Park by Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Clongriffin Community Association wrote to every councillor and TD and of course, to the relevant Parks Department at Dublin City Council," continued Lauren.

"We don't feel our local park meets statutory requirements as outlined under Part M 2010 Building Regulations Access and Use. This requires five per cent of car spaces to be designated wheelchair accessible car parking spaces."

To date, Ms Cosgrave has said the response from TDs in Dublin Bay North and councillors in Dublin City Council has been positive and they await correspondence from DCC.

"We do have a Central Remedial Centre in Clongriffin, both adults and children from this facility use our park daily, along with members of St Michael's House residential services in Coolock and Baldoyle.

"One of our residents, Christian Batt aged 12, is a wheelchair user and uses our park every day. He is extremely popular and well-known in Clongriffin, he hosted a bake sale for our community on May 22 last – and raised €350 for Temple St!

"We feel he should experience the joy of our local park like all other children do. There is currently no ability swing for Christian or his friends to use on the northside of Dublin.

"The lack of universal access to such amenities infers a negative message to the community and indeed young residents such as Christian.

"We need amenities that are inclusive and accessible to all," concluded Ms Cosgrave.

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