Survey results:

Arun Play Strategy Survey Report

August 2017
1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Arun District Council manages approximately 80 play areas within the District and is in the process of revising its strategy for the future management and provision of these sites. The Council is aiming to provide outdoor play areas that meet the needs of residents and visitors to the District whilst at the same time ensuring tax payers’ money is spent the most efficient and appropriate way.

1.2 This survey was carried out to collect residents’ views. It was available online on ADC’s website and on Arun’s Facebook page, with links to versions formatted specifically for use with PCs/laptops; tablets; and smartphones.

1.3 Each of Arun’s play areas had posters\(^1\) put up inviting residents to take part in the survey. New for this survey, a QR Code was provided. This code allowed access to a version of the survey formatted specifically for use with smartphones.

1.4 A print version of the survey was available in the reception areas at the Arun Civic Centre, Littlehampton and Bognor Regis Town Hall. Print questionnaires were available to ADC parks staff and ISS Landscaping staff to hand out during site visits.

1.5 A £100 prize draw was offered in order to increase the response rate.

1.6 The survey ran from 22\(^{nd}\) May to 30\(^{th}\) June inclusive. 357 responses were received\(^2\).

**Table 1 – Survey format used by respondent age group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper version [Base: 12]</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC/laptop version [Base: 60]</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet computer version [Base: 67]</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smartphone version [Base: 217]</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.7 Table 1 illustrates the importance of providing a range of survey formats in order to attract responses from all ages. Over 60% of responses were received via a smartphone\(^3\). This rises to 75% for respondents aged 30 or under. At the other end of the age range, just 16% of 60+ year olds used a smartphone. The most popular method for this group is a tablet computer (e.g. iPad).

---

\(^1\) See appendix A.

\(^2\) This is subject to a maximum standard error of +/-5.2% at the 95% confidence level on an observed statistic of 50%. Thus we can be 95% confident that if the whole population had responded the actual figure would lie between 55.2% and 44.8%.

\(^3\) N.B. the QR Code provided access to the survey via the smartphone format only. Some respondents may have captured the QR Code via a tablet computer (e.g. iPad), however this would have been recorded as a smartphone.

---

2
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Two play areas, in Hotham Park (23%) and in Mewsbrook Park (21%), come out well ahead of the others in terms of popularity. The only other play areas to be mentioned by more than 5% of respondents are West Park (10%), Brookfield Park (9%), and Avisford Park (6%).

2.2 The more local the play area is to a respondent; the more likely it is to be mentioned as their favourite. Hotham Park is the favourite of 48% of Bognor Regis based respondents; Mewsbrook Park is the favourite of 57% of Rustington based and 42% of Littlehampton based respondents.

2.3 ‘A good selection of play equipment’; ‘being in a park with other attractions/activities’; and ‘a safe play area’, are the three top reasons respondents give why they visit their favourite outdoor play area. ‘Nearness to home’; ‘age appropriate equipment’; and ‘good quality equipment’ are also seen important.

2.4 40% say they visit their favourite play area frequently (at least once a week), with a further 42% visiting at least once a month. Two thirds of those who ticked ‘other play area’ (i.e. not in one of the main parks) as their favourite, say that they visit this play area frequently (at least once a week).

2.5 80% use other play areas within the district more than once a year. The ranking of popularity is very similar to that for favourite play areas. Hotham Park and Mewsbook Park are the top two venues, followed by West Park, Aldwick; Lion's Den, Littlehampton; Brookfield Park, Littlehampton.

2.6 94% of respondents agree with the statement: “Following recent public consultation aimed at setting Open Space Standards for the emerging Local Plan, a recommendation has been set that everyone in the district should have access to a good quality play area within a 10 minute walk. In your opinion is this a reasonable recommendation?”

2.7 There is a high level of agreement with each of four listed factors when assessing the true value of a play area to a community. Net agreement is high for three of them: “The amount of use it gets used” (+77%); “Its accessibility” (+73%); “The number of children living in that locality” (+63%); but more modest for “The availability of other play areas nearby” (+42%).

2.8 A number of themes emerged when respondents were asked if there are any additional factors which they feel should be considered when assessing the ‘value’ of a play area to a community.

• Range of play equipment (for all age ranges)
• Other facilities available nearby (e.g. parking, toilets, benches, bins)
• Safety/no anti-social behaviour
• Situated in areas of greatest demand/areas where children have limited options
• Disabled friendly

\[a\] Net agreement: the percentage who agree, less the percentage who disagree.
• Quality/design of play
• Well maintained/clean
• Dog free area/dog controls
• Something for adults, not just children
• But also important to keep smaller/less well used play areas

2.9 Respondents were asked to say how strongly they agree or disagree with each of eleven statements about play areas. In terms of net agreement, top three are:
• “The quality and safety of public play areas is important” (+99%);
• “Good play areas should provide a range of equipment and play features for children of different ages and abilities” (+99%);
• “Public funds should be spent maintaining and where possible enhancing those sites which have a high value to communities” (+96%);

2.10 Respondents were invited to consider a budget trade-off scenario. “There are examples in the district of near identical play areas within 100 yards of each other. Assume you control the funding for play area improvements, would you? (a) spend your budget equally on each play area, replacing the equipment like for like on both sites or (b) spend the entire budget on one of the sites, making it bigger and providing better play equipment for a wider range of children and removing the other one.” There was a 60/40 split in favour of spending the entire budget on one of the sites [i.e. option (b) above].

2.11 Reasons given for selecting option (a) “Spend your budget equally on each play area....” fall under the following main headings:
• Some children may prefer smaller/quieter play areas
• Keep providing a choice
• Provide for older and younger children

2.12 Reasons given for selecting option (b) “Spend all of the budget on one of the sites....” fall under the following main headings:
• A short distance between them, so combine the sites
• Bigger is better
• Makes economic sense

2.13 The final survey question invited respondents to provide any further comments they had. The main themes are very similar to those emerging in section 2.8:
• Quality/design of play equipment
• Well maintained/clean
• Range of play equipment (for all age ranges)
• Should be situated in areas of greatest demand/areas where children have limited options
• Disabled friendly
• Safety/no anti-social behaviour
• Dog free area/dog controls
• But also important to keep smaller/less well used play areas
• Something for adults, not just children
3. KEY FINDINGS

The first section of the survey asked respondents for some background information:

3.1 Respondents were asked to provide some details about themselves and their family (postcode, age, gender, and ages of children\(^5\)). These, combined with their responses to later questions, can help determine the type and location of equipment to focus on.

3.2 Table 2 shows that 83% (292) of respondents are female, and 56% (198) are aged 31 – 44. This was expected given that mothers of young children are the most likely group of adults to visit outdoor play areas (and most likely to be aware of what’s available). 48% (169) of all respondents are females aged between 31 and 44.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 – Ages and gender of survey respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent counts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total counts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Between them, respondents have 812 children. The spread is fairly even: 220 x 0-3 year olds; 254 x 4-8 year olds; 188 x 9-12 year olds; and 150 x 13-17 year olds.

The next section asked respondents about their favourite play area in the district:

3.4 Two play areas, in Hotham Park (23%) and in Mewsbrook Park (21%), come out well ahead of the others in terms of popularity (see figure 1). The only other play areas to be mentioned by more than 5% of respondents are West Park (10%), Brookfield Park (9%), and Avisford Park (6%).

![Figure 1 – Favourite outdoor play area in the Arun District [Base: 342]](image)

---

\(^5\) “For the purposes of this survey, these may be your own children or else children that you regularly take to outdoor play areas within the district (for instance, your grandchildren).”

\(^6\) The total number of respondents who provided age and gender information.
3.5 As expected, the more local the play area is to a respondent, the more likely it is to be mentioned as their favourite. For example, Hotham Park is the favourite of 48% of Bognor Regis based respondents; Mewsbrook Park is the favourite of 57% of Rustington based and 42% of Littlehampton based respondents. Table 3 below highlights this correlation.

Table 3 – Favourite outdoor play area by location of respondent [Base: 342]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hotham Park, Bognor Regis</th>
<th>Mewsbrook Park, Littlehampton</th>
<th>West Park, Aldwick</th>
<th>Brookfield Park, Littlehampton</th>
<th>Avisford Park, Aldwick</th>
<th>King George V Rec, Felpham</th>
<th>Lion’s Den, The Green, Littlehampton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldwick, Pagham, Rose Green</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bognor Regis</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downland Area (Arundel, Angmering, Findon, six villages)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felpham, Middleton-on-Sea</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Littlehampton</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rustington, East Preston, Ferring</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6 There are no significant differences in opinion regarding favourite outdoor play area when the findings are analysed by the age; gender of respondents; and by ages of children. As all/most of these larger play areas cater for a range of children’s age groups, this is not unexpected.

3.7 Respondents were invited to select from a list of reasons why they visit their favourite outdoor play area. There is no single, overriding reason for their choice. Figure 2 shows that a ‘good selection of play equipment’; ‘being in a park with other attractions/activities’; and ‘a safe play area’, are the three top reasons given; slightly ahead of ‘nearness to home’; ‘age appropriate equipment’; and ‘good quality equipment’.

Figure 2 – Why do you visit this play area? [Base: 345]

3.8 Respondents selecting ‘other reason’ were invited to say what this is. Appendix B, section B.2 lists all responses, sorted by the outdoor play area. There is no significant ‘other reason’ mentioned.
3.9 Figure 3 below looks at the reasons given for visiting the two most popular play areas in the district, Hotham Park and Mewsbrook Park (the favourites of 44% of survey respondents) and compares them to the overall reasons given for all play areas.

**Figure 3 – Why do you visit this play area? (Hotham Park, Bognor Regis and Mewsbrook Park, Littlehampton)** [Bases: All 330; Hotham Park 82; Mewsbrook Park 71]

3.10 Mewsbrook Park scores more highly than average for the selection of play equipment, the safety aspects, and the quality of the play equipment. Both Mewsbrook and Hotham Park score more highly than average as parks with further attractions/activities in them. Hotham Park does not score well regarding safety aspects (safety surfacing, perimeter fencing etc) or particularly well for the quality of the play equipment. It is worth noting here that whilst the play area in Mewsbrook Park had a £75,000 upgrade in April 2016, the play area in Hotham Park is due for refurbishment, hopefully in spring 2018.

3.11 40% of survey respondents say they visit their favourite play area frequently (at least once a week), with a further 42% visiting at least once a month (figure 4). However, two thirds (65%) of those who ticked ‘other play area’\(^7\) (i.e. not in one of the main parks) as their favourite, say that they visit this play area frequently (at least once a week).

**Figure 4 – How often do you visit this play area? [Base: 350]**

\(^7\) Appendix B section B.1, lists these other play areas.
3.12 Respondents were asked if they use any other play areas within the district more than once a year. 80% say they do. The other play areas used are listed in appendix B, section B.3. Again, Hotham Park (73 mentions), Mewsbook Park (59 mentions), are the top two destinations. The other play areas receiving more than 10 mentions are: West Park, Aldwick (52); Lion's Den, Littlehampton (32); Brookfield Park, Littlehampton (28); King George V Rec, Felpham (17); Mill Road, Arundel (16); Avisford Park, Aldwick (13); and Flansham Lane, Felpham (13). This ranking of popularity is similar to that for favourite play areas.

The next section of the survey asks for views on play areas in general:

3.13 94% of respondents agree with the statement: “Following recent public consultation aimed at setting Open Space Standards for the emerging Local Plan, a recommendation has been set that everyone in the district should have access to a good quality play area within a 10 minute walk. In your opinion is this a reasonable recommendation?” (94% agree, 3% disagree, and 3% unsure).

3.14 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with certain factors when assessing the true value of a play area to a community. Figure 5 shows that there is a high level of agreement with each of the four factors listed.

Figure 5 - In order to assess the true value of a play area to a community an assessment of the ‘value’ can be based on a range of factors. How strongly do you agree/disagree with each of the following factors? [Base: 355]

3.15 Net agreement is positive for each factor, and high for three of them: “The amount of use it gets used“ (+77%); “Its accessibility” (+73%); “The number of children living in that locality“ (+63%); but moderate for “The availability of other play areas nearby” (+42%).

3.16 A number of themes emerged when respondents were asked if there are any additional factors which they feel should be considered when assessing the ‘value’ of a play area to a community. Full responses all provided in appendix B, section B.4. These are summarised and grouped by theme and sorted by number of responses received. These are shown below: (sample comments are provided to illustrate each theme).

---

8 Net agreement: the percentage who agree, less the percentage who disagree.
Range of play equipment (for all age ranges) (25 responses)
“Appeal across different age ranges so there is something there for the whole family."
“What's in them needs to be for various ages and be stimulating and good exercise.”

Other facilities available nearby (e.g. parking, toilets, benches, bins) (17 responses)
“Facilities nearby e.g. toilets, baby change, refreshments.”

Safety/no anti-social behaviour (14 responses)
“Every child should/must have easy access to a good and safe play area.”
“Make sure it’s not an area where anti-social behaviour occurs. If it does ensure it is tackled.”

Should be situated in areas of greatest demand/areas where children have limited options (13 responses)
“Close to areas that don't have other play areas.”
“Flats nearby without outside gardens as opposed to homes that already have a garden that are nearby.”

Disabled friendly (11 responses)
“Is it inclusive? Play facilities for children with disabilities.”

Quality/design of play equipment (10 responses)
“A play area may have a lot of potential to be a well-used one but it may not be well used due to its poor quality or poor range of play equipment.”
“Originality and creative design.”

Well maintained/clean (9 responses)
“Maintenance and cleanliness.”
“The last time equipment was quality checked and also replaced.”

Dog free area/dog controls (4 responses)
“No dogs in play areas.”

Something for adults, not just children (4 responses)
“As Arun covers a large population of elderly generation too, safe parks with exercise machines …… for all ages to enjoy. Not just children’s play areas considered please.”

But also important to keep smaller/less well used play areas (3 responses)
“Just because there are fewer children living in a particular area doesn't mean those children shouldn't have access to a range of equipment.”
3.17 Respondents were asked to say how strongly they agree or disagree with each of eleven statements about play areas. Figure 6 shows the level of agreement with each.

**Figure 6 – How strongly do you agree/disagree with each of the following statements about play areas? [Base: 356]**

- Good play areas should provide a range of equipment and play features for children of different ages and abilities
  - Strongly agree: 81%
  - Agree: 19%
  - Disagree: 5%
  - Strongly disagree: 51%

- The provision of seats/benches for parents/carers to use and socialise is an important feature of a play area
  - Strongly agree: 44%
  - Agree: 5%
  - Disagree: 36%
  - Strongly disagree: 51%

- The provision of facilities such as toilets and cafes near to a play area mean I would be more likely to choose to use it
  - Strongly agree: 83%
  - Agree: 17%
  - Disagree: 20%
  - Strongly disagree: 44%

- The quality and safety of public play areas is important
  - Strongly agree: 60%
  - Agree: 38%
  - Disagree: 11%
  - Strongly disagree: 12%

- Public funds should be spent maintaining and where possible enhancing those sites which have a high value to communities
  - Strongly agree: 54%
  - Agree: 43%
  - Disagree: 31%
  - Strongly disagree: 22%

- Spending public money maintaining and replacing equipment in play areas that rarely get used is a poor use of Council resources
  - Strongly agree: 38%
  - Agree: 11%
  - Disagree: 47%
  - Strongly disagree: 38%

- The opportunity for children to play and explore in parks and open spaces should extend to the whole area, not just a fenced off area with play equipment
  - Strongly agree: 34%
  - Agree: 33%
  - Disagree: 28%
  - Strongly disagree: 28%

- More dog free parks would provide better opportunities for children to play and explore in a safe environment
  - Strongly agree: 27%
  - Agree: 43%
  - Disagree: 31%
  - Strongly disagree: 22%

- Where new large scale housing developments are built, focus should be on providing larger, centralised play areas rather than a number of individual/smaller play areas on the fringes of the development
  - Strongly agree: 54%
  - Agree: 27%
  - Disagree: 17%
  - Strongly disagree: 32%

- Where an existing high value play area may exist within close proximity to a new housing development, funding for play provision should be directed towards the existing facility
  - Strongly agree: 39%
  - Agree: 39%
  - Disagree: 37%
  - Strongly disagree: 43%

- Providing fewer but better quality, strategically important play areas would be a sensible strategy for the Council to adopt

3.18 There is a wide range in the levels of net agreement:

3.18.1 Extremely high (% net agreement in brackets for each statement):
- “The quality and safety of public play areas is important” (+99%);
- “Good play areas should provide a range of equipment and play features for children of different ages and abilities” (+99%);
- “Public funds should be spent maintaining and where possible enhancing those sites which have a high value to communities” (+96%);

---

9 Net agreement: the percentage who agree, less the percentage who disagree.
• “The provision of seats/benches for parents/carers to use and socialise is an important feature of a play area” (+89%).

3.18.2 High:
• “The opportunity for children to play and explore in parks and open spaces should extend to the whole area, not just a fenced off area with play equipment” (+72%);
• “Where an existing high value play area may exist within close proximity to a new housing development, funding for play provision should be directed towards the existing facility” (+63%);
• “The provision of facilities such as toilets and cafés near to a play area mean I would be more likely to choose to use it” (+60%).

3.18.3 Moderate:
• “More dog free parks would provide better opportunities for children to play and explore in a safe environment” (+34%);
• “Where new large scale housing developments are built, focus should be on providing larger, centralised play areas rather than a number of individual/smaller play areas on the fringes of the development” (+30%).

3.18.4 Weak:
• “Providing fewer but better quality, strategically important play areas would be a sensible strategy for the Council to adopt” (+12%);
• “Spending public money maintaining and replacing equipment in play areas that rarely get used is a poor use of Council resources” (+1%).

3.19 Those respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the statements were invited to give their reasons. Full responses are shown in appendix B, sections B.5.1 to B.5.12. These are summarised below in order that the question was asked: (sample comments are shown in order to illustrate the type of responses given).

3.19.1 "Good play areas should provide a range of equipment and play features for children of different ages and abilities" [reasons given for disagreeing] (3 responses)
“l love having use of an area that is ideal for pre-schoolers only. I know my children can safely play on any equipment (with supervision) and will not witness any behaviour that is not appropriate for their age. They feel happy and safe to enjoy themselves alongside children their own age. Completely separate areas for older children with sports facilities or tracks are probably good.”

3.19.2 "The provision of seats/benches for parents/carers to use and socialise is an important feature of a play area" [reasons given for disagreeing] (14 responses)
“Because I prefer to be supervising my children on the equipment, not chatting to other mums.”

3.19.3 "The provision of facilities such as toilets and cafés near to a play area mean I would be more likely to choose to use it" [reasons given for disagreeing] (63 responses)
“A nice extra for a day out but for a 30 min trip to the park it’s not essential.”
“Because if it's near home you don't need those facilities.”

“We don't usually stay more than 1 hour, I wouldn't want to be pressured into buying ice creams, fizzy drinks etc at every visit.”

3.19.4 "The quality and safety of public play areas is important" [reasons given for disagreeing] (0 responses)

No replies as all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

3.19.5 "Public funds should be spent maintaining and where possible enhancing those sites which have a high value to communities" [reasons given for disagreeing] (6 responses)

“Important to have many rather than one or two exceptional ones.”

“It's unfair on families who might use lesser used parks.”

“Maintaining should be standard but enhancing should be in areas of need, not those with established high value where maintenance not enhancement is the priority.”

3.19.6 "Spending public money maintaining and replacing equipment in play areas that rarely get used is a poor use of Council resources" [reasons given for disagreeing] (151 responses). Given the high number of responses for this question, they have been split by theme.

Don’t exclude children (57 responses)

“Because it may be the only resource in that area and would deprive some children access to a play area.”

“Because there may be few users but it may be a 'lifeline' to those who do use it.”

Ensure they are properly maintained (34 responses)

“Because it might encourage people to use the play areas if they're seen to be maintained.”

Invest in a play area/better play equipment to increase demand (24 responses)

“I would get evidence of usage first to understand what 'rarely used' means and also to look at reasons for less usage as it could be that with investment the play area may be used more.”

Ensure safety (13 responses)

“A child's safety must come first.”

Changes in demand (4 responses)

“Areas change. More children moving to an area ups the need for that park.”
Miscellaneous (17 responses)

“Because it is a circular argument. Take a run down play area, then use the fact that nobody visits it (because it’s run down) to justify running it down more, ad infinitum.”

3.19.7 “The opportunity for children to play and explore in parks and open spaces should extend to the whole area, not just a fenced off area with play equipment” [reasons given for disagreeing] (39 responses)

“I feel they need to be fenced to keep small children safe and not to run off.”

“Much easier to keep your children safe in an enclosed space. Plus dog mess is still a big problem!”

3.19.8 “More dog free parks would provide better opportunities for children to play and explore in a safe environment” [reasons given for disagreeing] (98 responses)

“Because people have a right to walk dogs. As long as the owner is responsible with the dog it doesn’t bother me.”

“Children love dogs, and providing dogs are under control and owners do not enter ‘no dog’ areas, I do not see a problem.”

3.19.9 “Where new large scale housing developments are built, focus should be on providing larger, centralised play areas rather than a number of individual/smaller play areas on the fringes of the development” [reasons given for disagreeing] (107 responses)

“A large play area means a busy play area. Lots of individual play areas mean not as busy and therefore not as intimidating for small children.”

“I like the small play parks, it means that families can grow to know each other, community bonds can be formed.”

3.19.10 “Where an existing high value play area may exist within close proximity to a new housing development, funding for play provision should be directed towards the existing facility” [reasons given for disagreeing] (55 responses)

“Because it’s nicer to have additional / smaller ones. Some children are afraid of larger parks that are full and busy.”

“I believe this to be a poor excuse for not building new play parks on new estates.”

“Variety is good. Prevents overcrowding. Allows different opportunities for children to play and explore.”
3.19.11 “Providing fewer but better quality, strategically important play areas would be a sensible strategy for the Council to adopt” [reasons given for disagreeing] (124 responses)

“Because unless you are lucky enough to live close to the "strategically important area" to benefit from the park then it seems unfair to others that may lose their park to pay for this.”

“When the big park is busy the younger children prefer to use the smaller parks on our estate.”

“With too much distance between play areas they might become inaccessible to those families without cars.”

3.20 Respondents were then asked to consider a budget trade-off scenario. The question posed was: “There are examples in the district of near identical play areas within 100 yards of each other. Assume you control the funding for play area improvements, would you? (a) spend your budget equally on each play area, replacing the equipment like for like on both sites or (b) spend all of the budget on one of the sites, making it bigger and providing better play equipment for a wider range of children and removing the other one.

Figure 7 shows a 60/40 split in favour of spending all the budget on one of the sites [i.e. (b) above].

**Figure 7 – Preference for spending play area budget given near identical play areas within 100 yards of each other [Base: 343]**

3.20.1 Reasons given for selecting (a) “Spend your budget equally on each play area, replacing the equipment like for like on both sites”. (82 responses)

Some children may prefer smaller/quieter play areas (18 responses)

“Because it spreads the amount of people between the parks so one park doesn’t become overcrowded.”

“If only one park, it would become extremely busy and you’d get lost children, small accidents etc, so a couple of smaller parks would be better.”
Keep providing a choice (18 responses)
“Choice of sites will be better as they would be less busy and give variety.”
“They both have their benefits to the people that use them.”
“Variety, choice, control of overcrowding, protection from bullying, proximity.”

Provide for older and younger children (15 responses)
“As you replace equipment why not make one for older children one for younger?”
“You could use the money making sure that they are not identical. One could be for older children one could be for younger.”

Other option (6 responses)
“There is no ‘other’, if there was, I would spend the money equally, but give a different ‘feel’ to each site.”
“You haven’t given the option to spend say 70% on a newer larger park and 30% on a smaller park.”

Miscellaneous comments (25 responses)
“I believe these answers were worded to make you tick the second option! Of course better equipment for a wider range would be preferential but I do not believe that bigger play areas are better.”
“This is a question intended to mislead and give councils a mandate to close play areas.”
“This is difficult to answer, it would depend on if children were able to access both play areas safely i.e. road crossings, and the equipment, is it safe and useable or dangerous? Then of course it should be replaced.”

3.20.2 Reasons given for selecting (b) “Spend all of the budget on one of the sites, making it bigger and providing better play equipment for a wider range of children and removing the other one”. (157 responses)

A short distance between them, so combine the sites (59 responses)
“100 yards is a very short walk between them so one bigger one would be all that’s needed.”
“If it’s within 100 yards it’s fine, as long as there are no major roads to cross.”
“If the proximity is that close and the budgeted amount of money would not reduce, it is common sense.”

Bigger is better (57 responses)
“Because one really good play area is better than two average ones.”
“Children will go to the park more often and stay for longer if there’s a wider range of equipment.”
“Making play areas exciting and inviting with a variety of equipment makes them appeal more.”

“One good park, well maintained, rather than two not looked after to a good standard.”

Makes economic sense  (23 responses)

“Easier to maintain one better play area, and it’s more social.”

“Funds are limited, so it is better to have a good quality one rather than have two mediocre ones, particularly as 100 yards is no distance.”

“I appreciate that funds are limited and some of the play spaces are very limited, so bigger ones with more equipment would be better as long as they are still easily and safely accessible.”

Other option  (4 responses)

“This is a rather limited choice. I would prefer an option that reads something like 'Direct majority of money towards key sites, but retain basic levels of service/provision at local sites that attract usage’.”

Miscellaneous comments  (14 responses)

“Before making these changes though I would ensure I understood that that would work both for those using the parks and for others who could use them.”

“Provided ‘better’ does indeed mean bigger and not too busy, then absolutely.”

“This will give a choice of parks, depending on time or children’s ages. One park might suit better than the other rather than neither being suited.”

3.21 The final survey question invited respondents to provide any further comments they had. 144 responses were received, many of which reinforced the views expressed earlier. Full verbatim responses are provided in appendix B, section B8. The responses have been sorted by key theme and by number of responses within each theme. The commentary below shows the themes illustrated by sample comments.

Quality/design of play equipment  (21 responses)

“I believe that beyond this survey there should be a further one regarding what options are there for play equipment. What the modern child of today would enjoy”

“Not all play areas need expensive equipment. Natural areas for children to explore can be equally as exciting. They may still need some upkeep but will provide a rich variety of experience.”

“Please give some consideration to all weather surfaces at the largest park sites. Hotham Park is great. Well connected by foot to town, good parking, lovely new cafe, toilets, train, good number of events; but the playground, whilst great, is so muddy in winter, or indeed any wet weather! Thanks. Thanks for consulting too.”
Well maintained/clean (11 responses)
“All parks should be regularly checked and maintained.”
“Grass of play areas should be regularly cut and maintained short/clean, as diseases can easily be spread between children. Dogs should only be allowed on leads nearby play areas.”

Range of play equipment (for all age ranges) (10 responses)
“A good combination of large and small play areas is vital. One size never fitted all! Large areas provide more diverse equipment and the ability for children to meet and share. Small play areas are quieter and permit children to play, use imagination, gain independence and confidence.”
“It would be great to see more new equipment and things for older children that are more challenging and stimulating, not just basic play equipment you find in most parks as it gets a bit boring.”
“Facilities need to recognise that different age groups have different needs and may not want to mix with each other while playing.”

Should be situated in areas of greatest demand/areas where children have limited options (9 responses)
“The gist of this survey implies the council wants to shut a whole load of play facilities and that thought makes me extremely upset and angry for the local kids that will end up missing out.”
“There is definitely a sense in this survey that the intention of the council is to sell off some park space. Littlehampton and Bognor Regis are areas of high deprivation and parks are often a lifeline for some children who need fresh air. I would totally disagree with any proposals to sell off the public land.”
“Villages tend to miss out on suitable play equipment due to not such a high concentration of children per square mile.”

Disabled friendly (9 responses)
“Refurbished play areas should include some equipment that can be used by children with disabilities. It was disappointing that when Mewsbrook was refurbished last year this did not happen.”
“There are no local parks that are suitable for children with additional needs, or in wheelchairs - not even one! This needs to be addressed.”

Safety/no anti-social behaviour (8 responses)
“I feel if you make play parks bigger you will encourage groups to form if you don’t have someone watching them.”
“The main consideration for parks should be the safety of the equipment. Safety of the area i.e. fenced in.”
Dog free area/dog controls  (6 responses)

“I’m not keen on dogs but most dog walkers know when something’s up - they have a community and mostly look after their dogs and keep children safe.”

“Maybe just increase the amount of dog poo bins around the parks. This may help with the anti-dog people.”

But also important to keep smaller/less well used play areas  (6 responses)

“As it is not as safe for children to walk alone nowadays it’s important for some sort of play area to be easily accessible to as many as possible.”

Something for adults, not just children  (6 responses)

“Parks with exercise apparatus in too (like Woodlands in Rustington). Apparatus for getting healthy for adults; not just children’s play equipment. Allotment areas were always good for all.”

“We really would like to see more workout playgrounds in the area. These are used by people of all ages, and are great for improving health and fitness.”

Other facilities available (e.g. parking, toilets, benches, bins)  (3 responses)

“I think it would be useful to make some of the larger parks more accessible to all, and provide further facilities, even if this takes funds away from smaller parks. Perhaps town councils could take on/provide the smaller parks? If ADC works to build on the larger parks, by adding in newer equipment, toilet facilities (I would be happy to pay to use these, many councils now do this), cafe areas/mobile coffee van licences on these facilities. Make them more like community spaces, with more events etc, so that people are more likely to stay longer.”

Miscellaneous comments  (24 responses)

“Ask local people to come forward and set up working parties to help maintain play areas and raise funds for developing sites. I would happily take on a coordinating role.”

“I am happy for part of my council tax to go to the upkeep of these parks/play areas.”

“I didn’t know before doing this survey how many parks there were in the Arun area. Maybe more advertising is required?”

“I think parks are hugely important for young children. They enjoy being out and as a parent it is invaluable to have a good park to walk to as a way to entertain children for free.”

“Thank you for our local provision. We appreciate it is hard to maintain all the play areas.”

“The importance of play in a child’s development can’t be stressed enough. A good council recognises this and does not favour one town’s play provision over another.”
APPENDIX A – THE A4 POSTER DISPLAYED AT ALL ADC OUTDOOR PLAY AREAS (INC. QR CODE)
### APPENDIX B – VERBATIM COMMENTS TO OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

Please note: Where a response covers two or more subjects, it has been split and allocated accordingly

#### B.1 Other play areas mentioned for Q5. Which is your favourite outdoor play area? (i.e. those play areas NOT listed on the questionnaire) (59 responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ascot Way, Rustington.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnham Community Hall.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bersted Park, Bersted.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluebell Park, Marlborough Estate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brickfields, Rustington.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burpham Recreation Ground.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clun Road, Littlehampton.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Preston.</td>
<td>(x 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldon Way, Wick.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farnhurst Road, Barnham.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferring village green.</td>
<td>(x 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fletcher Way, Bognor Regis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldcrest playground.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homewood, Findon.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hothamton, Bognor Regis.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunters Mews, Fontwell.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larksfield, Middleton on Sea.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linden Park, Littlehampton.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March Hare, Aldingbourne.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murrells Field, Barnham.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Bersted Village Green.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver’s Meadow, Westergate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemead open space.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea Lane, East Preston.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrubbs Fields, Middleton on Sea.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cloisters, Littlehampton.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nurseries, Rose Green.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walberton.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Lane, Littlehampton.</td>
<td>(x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wickbourne Swan. (Park running between Clun Road and behind Arundel Road).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willows Edge/Bersted Park development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodlands Park, Rustington.</td>
<td>(x 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yapton.</td>
<td>(x 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### B.2 Other reasons given for Q6. Why do you visit this play area? (i.e. reasons NOT listed on the questionnaire) (49 responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avisford Park, Aldwick</td>
<td>Good parking. Toilets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This play area has recently had improvements made, making it attractive to a wider age group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In doing so I find more and families using the facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookfield Park, Littlehampton</td>
<td>Good for dog walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have different play parks aimed at different age groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relatively close for a variety of places to visit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferring Recreation Ground</td>
<td>Such a lovely place!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hothamton, Bognor Regis</td>
<td>Because there’s nothing better around.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lovely open spaces.....hills for rolling down.....trees to climb......nice cafe.....bushes to hide in...park with loads of different equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Park run takes place there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“The cafe in the park.”
“There is a good cafe on site with indoor and outdoor seating.”
“Variety of activities.”

Hunters Mews, Fontwell
“As the children are getting older now, it's a nice place for them to sit out in when they visit.”

King George V Rec, Felpham
“Children play football here. Use it to cycle round.”
“It is reasonably close to where we live. I would generally use the play park on the Blake’s Mead Estate, Blackthorn Avenue. However it is not being maintained by DWH. I am hopeful this will change when the council takes it over. Hotham is also a jewel for Bognor and very underused.”

Larksfield, Middleton on Sea
“We can also take the dog along.”

Lion’s Den, The Green, Littlehampton
“It occupies all three of my children without one getting upset they can't do an activity.”
“Kids love the zip wire and it's near the beach.”
“Nearest to beach and grandparents which we visit often. Near East Beach cafe so can get a coffee whilst the children play.”
“I use them with my grandchildren when they visit.”

Mewsbrook Park, Littlehampton
“Next to nursery.”
“Our local parks are dismal.”
“The park is well kept and has a good amount of plants and trees and bird life. We walk our small Jack Russell Terrier there.”
“Toilets and cafe.”

Mill Road, Arundel
“Convenient location and accessible.”
“Has ducks to feed, a train and a cafe and is near a swimming pool and the beach.”

No favourite
“Crazy golf.”
“I prefer ones in Worthing. They have disabled equipment.”
“I visit various sites which provide the children with a change of scene.”
“None of the parks have everything I want/need in one area.”
“The children generally tell us which park they would like to go to!”
“We visit many parks looking for accessible and inclusive play equipment.”

Queens Fields, Aldwick
“Walk dog.”
Sea Lane, East Preston
“Clean, safe, and no older teenagers hanging around at weekends.”

Water Lane, Littlehampton
“It’s quiet.”

West Park, Aldwick
“Car park.”
“Close to grandparents’ home where we can access free car parking.”
“Close to the beach, and a big field to be able to walk the dog.”
“It’s near to the beach.”

“Monkey bars!! Daughter is obsessed with monkey bars.”
“Near the beach too.”
“Park Rangers in the holidays.”
“We visit the beach and park at same time.”

Woodlands Park, Rustington
“Feel safer and exercise machines.”

B.3 Q8. Do you use any other play areas within the Arun District more than once a year? (i.e. those NOT selected in Q5) (the results are sorted by number of respondents mentioning a play area) (277 responses)

- “Hotham Park, Bognor Regis.” (x 73)
- “Mewsbrook Park, Littlehampton.” (x 59)
- “West Park, Aldwick” (x 52)
- “Lion's Den, Littlehampton.” (x 32)
- “Brookfield Park, Littlehampton.” (x 28)
- “King George V Rec, Felpham.” (x 17)
- “Mill Road, Arundel.” (x 16)
- “Avisford Park, Aldwick.” (x 13)
- “Flansham Lane, Felpham.” (x 13)
- “Bersted Park, Bersted.” (x 9)
- “Jubilee Park, North Bersted.” (x 9)
- “Hampshire Avenue, Bognor Regis.” (x 8)
- “West Meads, Bognor Regis.” (x 8)
- “Woodlands Avenue, Rustington.” (x 8)
- “Queensfield, Aldwick.” (x 7)
- “Larksfield, Middleton on Sea.” (x 6)
- “Longbrook Park, Felpham.” (x 6)
- “Brickfields, Rustington.” (x 4)
- “Fletcher’s Field, Angmering.” (x 4)
- “Foxglove Way, Littlehampton.” (x 4)
- “Hook Lane Park, Pagham.” (x 4)

- “Hothamton, Bognor Regis” (x 4)
- “Lashmar Road, East Preston.” (x 4)
- “Pagham Village Hall play park.” (x 4)
- “Rosemead, Littlehampton.” (x 4)
- “Yapton play park.” (x 4)
- “Blakes Mead, Felpham.” (x 3)
- “Bluebell Drive, Littlehampton.” (x 3)
- “Bramley Green, Angmering.” (x 3)
- “Farnhurst Road, Barnham.” (x 3)
- “Goldcrest Avenue, Wick.” (x 3)
- “Linden Park, Littlehampton.” (x 3)
- “Murrells Field, Barnham.” (x 3)
- “Walberton.” (x 3)
- “Brooks Lane, Bognor Regis.” (x 2)
- “Decoy Drive, Angmering.” (x 2)
- “Elidon Way, Wick.” (x 2)
- “Holmdale, Eastergate.” (x 2)
- “Hunters Mews, Fontwell.” (x 2)
- “Shrubbs Field, Middleton on Sea.” (x 2)
- “The Nurseries, Rose Green.” (x 2)
- “Water Lane, Littlehampton.” (x 2)
B.4 Q11. Are there any additional factors which you feel should be considered (when assessing the ‘value’ of a play area to a community)? (115 responses)

Range of play equipment (for all age ranges) (25 responses)

“A variety of equipment to cater for all ages.”

“A wide range of equipment. For example my nearest park is only suitable for under 3 year olds. There are other swings but behind the basketball court where I cannot see my other children.”

“Appeal across different age ranges so there is something there for the whole family.”

“Full age range covered.”

“Have play equipment that spans all age ranges, including outdoor gym equipment that can be used by teenagers and adults.”

“I think all these factors are dependant as to what is in the space. Question being, are they catering for all interests?”

“If the park isn’t very well equipped it won’t get as much use therefore it could be considered not popular when in fact lots of children would use it but there aren’t a lot of things for them to use!”

“It may be easy to label something as being "underused" but there will be a reason for that. Is the provided equipment actually what local young people want? Have young people been listened to?”

“Plenty of facilities to play for various ages of kids.”

“Range of play equipment.”

“Should be a variety of areas for children. As many as possible with something for older children.”

“Should cater for all ages.”

“Some of the play areas are only suitable for certain age groups so that should be taken into consideration as to how close they are.”

“Suitable for a varied age range.”

“Suitable for different ages.”

“The age groups it’s aimed at.” (x 4)

“The variety of equipment provided.”

“Variety of what’s available i.e. swings etc.”

“What it has in it. Such as swings climbing frames see saws etc. Some of the parks are boring and some are not covering lots of ages and are dirty.”

“What the park offers: age ranges and suitability.”

“What’s in the park as Water Lane is a 5 minute walk from us but we don’t go there as play equipment isn’t suitable for kids under six.”

“What’s in them needs to be for various ages and be stimulating and good exercise.”

Other facilities available nearby (e.g. parking, toilets, benches, bins) (17 responses)

“All parks should have public toilets, as this is essential for children and even adults, and can cut a park stay down to only a short length of time if the toilet is needed  All parks should also have benches/seating areas for children and adults alike as then you can spend longer at the park to have a picnic etc”

“Car parking should be available so that we can visit different play areas for a change of scene.”

“Facilities nearby e.g. toilets, baby change, refreshments.”

“Facilities within the play area.”

“How protected it is from the weather; makes all the difference.”

“Is it part of the community? e.g. cafe facilities for grandparents, mothers groups etc.”

“More bins needed and benches.”
“Other children's facilities nearby.”
“Parking cost is ridiculous at some places, or is not available!”
“Places for family to sit.”
“Provision of public toilets nearby.”
“Proximity to local businesses that depend upon passing trade to free play areas, local shops, cafes etc.”
“Should have toilet facilities and a covered area.”

“The play equipment available in nearby parks.”
“Toilet facilities are accessible to all. Pay-style as it could deter vandals.”
“Usage is correlated strongly with the quality of the play area. Areas with toilet facilities will always attract families with young children.”
“What other facilities are available close to or as part of the park.”

Safety/no anti-social behaviour (14 responses)
“A place where children can play safely. Sadly Hothamton Playground is often used by adults for drinking.”
“Also need to assess if it can be adequately maintained and kept clean and safe.”
“Every child should/must have easy access to a good and safe play area.”
“If it’s a local hang out for teenage drinkers close to troubled areas.”
“Keep them clear of drunks and addicts.”
“Make sure it’s not an area where antisocial behaviour occurs. If it does ensure it is tackled.”
“Safe and varied play equipment. Safe location.”
“Safety factors and play areas that are different from those for dogs.”

“Safety of location.”
“Safety.”
“Separate areas for teenagers to hang out. Some of them are intimidating for younger children.”
“That the use is appropriate use, not just teenagers using it as a meeting place so families stop using it.”
“The right for any child to be able to play outside in a safe and fun environment with no broken or missing play apparatus in a regularly serviced park with toilet facilities!!!”
“The value of a park should be based on the safe enjoyment any child gets from it. It should not be determined by the gathering of targeted statistics.”

Should be situated in areas of greatest demand/areas where children have limited options (13 responses)
“Children who live in flats on upper floors need outside play areas.”
“Close to areas that don't have other play areas.”
“Consider not just value of the equipment but also how it breaks up areas of housing and is a natural space for greenery too.”
“Deprivation levels; Health and wellbeing levels; Demand and local feeling.”
“Flats nearby without outside gardens as opposed to homes that already have a garden that are nearby.”
“How isolated the place is e.g. Clapham and Patching. Parents will have to drive to access a park.”
“I have recently moved into a new development and there isn't a park within walking distance. Certainly not a safe one! The play area that has been put on our development is not good enough. One swing and a few logs in the ground is not a play area. If you live on the main A259 as we do we have no other choice but to drive to a park which we shouldn't have to do!”
“Is the park in an area where people don't have other options for outside play, e.g. small or no garden?”
“More important in areas where there is a larger number of social housing as very often these properties have no garden.”
“Numbers of children living nearby.”
“Playgrounds need to be provided when areas of new housing are created.”
“The ability to enhance the green environment of the locality. Reducing the property/concrete footprint.”

Disabled friendly (11 responses)
“Accessibility for those with different needs.”
“Disability access.”
“Disabled access...Mewsbrook had nothing new for wheelchair users after all that money spent.”
“Equipment for those with varying needs.”
“Is it inclusive? Play facilities for children with disabilities.”
“More disability-friendly equipment/activities.”
“Play areas that are accessible to children with disabilities.”

“Special needs children and materials used.”
“That there is adequate parking for the disabled.”
“Toddlers and disabled children are poorly catered for (Ferring Country Centre has it perfectly laid out with enough there for it to be inclusive for all users).”
“Whether equipment is suitable for children with disabilities. Whether it's accessible for parents with disabilities.”

**Quality/design of play equipment** (10 responses)

“A play area may have a lot of potential to be a well-used one but it may not be well used due to its poor quality or poor range of play equipment.”
“I think a 20 minute walk is reasonable to have to walk to a good quality play area. It is better to have fewer better quality play areas than more with limited equipment.”
“Originality and creative design.”
“Quality.”
“Stimulation or adventure offered to the child.”
“The quality and variety of the equipment at a play park.”

“Visibility from seating areas as grandparents and disabled people need to look after the children.”
“While these are good factors, I'm concerned they will be used ineffectively. For example if a park is not well used it might be a reflection of the quality of equipment rather than a lack of need.”
“You can only use the amount of use a play area gets as a measure of its value if you are satisfied that the play area is of a high standard in the first place. So if you have a play area with rusty swings, a broken roundabout, and graffiti and other vandalism, you can't suggest its value is diminished on the basis that young children and families don't use it.”

**Well maintained/clean** (9 responses)

“Any opportunity for families to use outdoor space is essential. Maintaining and keeping the smaller individual play areas provides this and should be a high priority alongside the substantial parks in all areas.”
“Facilities and the standards of cleanliness etc.”
“How well it is maintained. If it is neglected.”
“Maintenance and cleanliness.”

“Maintenance.”
“Should be well maintained and up to date.”
“The last time equipment was quality checked and also replaced.”
“The tidiness etc.”
“Well maintained.”

**Dog free area/dog controls** (4 responses)

“Completely away from where dogs are exercised. Brookfield Park is a no go area for a lot of parents with children due to the excessive dog fouling there.”
“I'd like to see dogs on leads in more areas, especially Hotham Park where there is always dog mess and dogs intimidating small children.”

“No dogs in play areas.”
“Security around the parks and picnic areas so that dogs cannot get near them. Some picnic areas are out in the open and dog owners do not seem to keep the dogs away or pick up the mess.”

**Something for adults, not just children** (4 responses)
“Although this survey is more for those young and with families, outside areas are for the older generations to enjoy as well. As Arun covers a large population of elderly generation too, safe parks with exercise machines like in Woodlands Park (Rustington) for all ages to enjoy. Not just children’s play areas considered please.”

“Children and adults need access to open spaces for physical and mental good health. In addition, green spaces help to counteract pollution and more consideration needs to be given to dog walking, which is a positive and healthy experience for adults, children and their animals.”

“Greater community value is important. The area should have good wildlife value and be accessible for all ages to use the facilities for fitness.”

“Is it in a multi use area, such as a green space, and will only people with children benefit from the money spent on the space?”

**Important to keep smaller/less well used play areas** (3 responses)

“Its value remains important whether a few or many use it. If only a few it is important to those few and that is why it is valued.”

“Just because there are fewer children living in a particular area doesn’t mean those children shouldn’t have access to a range of equipment.”

**Comments on specific play areas** (9 responses)

“Fletcher Way needs a big re vamp. Fence panels coming loose, better play equipment for children who use it. Also a sign in playground for no football playing as this also wrecks the panels. A lot of children do use it, but would be good to have a re vamp.”

“I live in Pagham, all the play areas are important, especially those close to schools, which is the case for all in the Pagham areas. Both Rose Green infants and junior schools are a prime example. I regularly take my grandchildren to all play areas locally, within walking distance.”

“Many of the playgrounds have had money or large improvements e.g. Mewsbrook, Brookfield, Lion’s Den, Littlehampton. Would it not make sense and be fair to invest in other areas? e.g. the Worthing Road playground, Eldon Way - where decent outdoor provision would also send a message that these areas "matter".”

“My daughter prefers to go to certain parks because of the equipment there - sometimes we specifically go to West Park or Bersted Park SOLELY for her to use the monkey bars.”

“The last time the park was significantly updated, regenerated and refurbished. For example, Mewsbrook is now lovely, however West Park (our nearest park) seems tired and worn out. Much of the play equipment is dull and the climbing bit isn't fit for purpose; it is a terrible design and the kids don't use it. (A small but vertical cargo net leading nowhere! It needs a climbing web built into other structures or a large witches’ hat like at Donnington's new park or Sherborne Road. It also needs better cafe facilities, bins that are emptied more regularly, and toilets that are free to use!”

“The new play park (Mewsbrook) is too much aimed at big children.”

“The park on Guildford Road near Georgian Gardens School used to be a nice little park that LOTs of the school children would use after school as well as the children who were living nearby (of which there are lots) now there is practically nothing there! It is such a shame and really needs addressing as the park would get lots of use.”

“The pathways are overgrown in Larksfield and a gate is badly broken.”

“You don’t mention the little parks on the Marlborough Place estate. The Bluebell playground in particular is very popular (and increasingly so). Parents need somewhere to pop to for a short time with fractious children. If it’s too much of an outing, they might not be able to ‘fit it in before tea’.”

**Miscellaneous comments** (6 responses)

“Amount of space to provide an adequate sized area.”

“Size of the park for the amount of children using it.”
“Outdoor play for children is very important, I'd like to see more not less.”

“This question has confused me! So I would say that all of our play parks and green spaces are of great value.”

“Should not compete with other local businesses.”

“Surely there are many factors regarding green play areas - bad weather, out of school hours' activities, that can affect the use. All green areas are vital to all ages.”

PLEASE NOTE: FOR Q12, ONLY RESPONDENTS DISAGREING WITH A STATEMENT WERE ASKED TO PROVIDE THEIR REASONS

B.5.1 Q12a. "Good play areas should provide a range of equipment and play features for children of different ages and abilities" [reasons given for disagreeing] (3 responses)

“Having some that are just suitable for young children means people can choose which to go to, without each site having to be huge.”

“I love having use of an area that is ideal for pre-schoolers only. I know my children can safely play on any equipment (with supervision) and will not witness any behaviour that is not appropriate for their age. They feel happy and safe to enjoy themselves alongside children their own age. Completely separate areas for older children with sports facilities or tracks are probably good.”

“Not every play area should contain something for every age. Localised centres targeted at certain age profiles would, in my opinion, be far more beneficial. This would also, I would suggest, increase usage amongst teenagers.”

B.5.2 Q12b. "The provision of seats/benches for parents/carers to use and socialise is an important feature of a play area" [reasons given for disagreeing] (14 responses)

“Although a nice extra I would not describe this as an important part.”

“Because I prefer to be supervising my children on the equipment, not chatting to other mums.”

“Because you don't need to be sitting down to socialise.”

“Bench can be dangerous for children running around.”

“Encourages older teens to congregate - parents are happy to supervise their children.”

“Happy children are more important.”

“I don't go to a playground to socialise with other parents, I don't go to particular playgrounds because they have more benches or seating areas than another. I meet up with other families but we are too busy supervising our children to sit down. We may have a picnic in which case we take rugs etc.”

“I don't think a bench is important for play.”

“I go to play with my children not sit and chat that's what my garden is for.”

“I never get to sit down - busy with my children.”

“I see play areas as primarily for a short period to involve yourself with your children's playing, not socialising.”

“Parents/carers should be encouraged to play with their children, not to sit on a bench.”

“Play area facilities should primarily be for children. But picnic benches would be a good addition.”

“The provision of play equipment far outweighs the seating area.”

B.5.3 Q12c. "The provision of facilities such as toilets and cafés near to a play area mean I would be more likely to choose to use it" [reasons given for disagreeing] (63 responses)

“A nice extra for a day out but for a 30 min trip to the park it’s not essential.”

“As we can bring our own food.”

“Because children need to experience different environments and as much as these things are 'nice to have' they are not essential.”

“Because I am not generally visiting play areas for extended periods. But I think toilet facilities are very important because they increase accessibility for some disabled people.”

“Because I come to enjoy the play equipment and play with my friends.”

“Because I don’t go to play areas to spend money, and I would take the option to go home, or elsewhere to use toilets as I would not like to use public toilets if they were of sub-par
standard. They cost too much to keep up for a few people who do use them.”

“Because I don’t necessarily want to buy food but want the kids to have a good play experience.”

“Because if it’s near home you don’t need those facilities.”

“Because if there are toilets close by I’ll walk the park. The priority is that it’s fun for all ages.”

“Because it isn’t needed.”

“Because while it may be convenient it isn’t important. It is more important to have lots of well-equipped play areas for children to play in, rather than having a few play parks with toilets and a cafe nearby.”

“Because you don’t always need a cafe and toilets; sometimes it’s just to get out of the house, on a little walk etc... on the way to school.”

“Don’t need a cafe.”

“Existing established local businesses can supplement where appropriate (e.g. 5-10 minute walk from play area).”

“Go there for the play not to sit in a cafe.”

“I always take snacks for my grandchildren.”

“I can take a drink with me.”

“I don’t feel the need to have a cafe to take my children to a park.”

“I have used parks without these.”

“I would argue that this depends on who a play area is aimed at. Yes for play areas for young children who would be accompanied by parents/carers; less important for sites for teenagers, who are more likely to be unaccompanied and using bikes/skateboards or the like.”

“If it is near your home these facilities are not required as much.”

“If it’s close to home then it doesn’t need these.”

“If it’s in a residential area close to home it’s not necessary.”

“If it’s only 10 minutes from home then it wouldn’t be necessary.”

“If the park is within walking distance of home, this is not a factor that would bother me. I go to the park for my child to have fun, not so I can go to a cafe.”

“It doesn’t affect my decision as we don’t stay there long enough to need them.”

“It is not an important factor.”

“It would be near home.”

“It’s beneficial but not a deciding factor.”

“Just using park to play as it’s near home; other things not required.”

“My children are still of nappy or potty age so I don’t need toilets nearby.”

“My choice is based on the quality if the playground for my child.”

“My nearest park is 2 minutes from my house but as it’s not age appropriate I drive to other parks.”

“Neither of our play areas is close to these amenities and this would apply in most villages.”

“No everywhere has toilets and if it’s close to home you can quickly walk home and use the toilet.”

“No, I take a portable potty wherever we go.”

“Not a deal breaker.”

“Not all good park areas need one!”

“Not all park areas are used for full days out and alternative eating and toilets could be found close by.”

“Not always required.”

“Not bothered by cafes.”

“Not something I consider when choosing a park.”

“Often take a picnic, so green space is more important.”

“Parks are primarily for playing. All that’s needed.”

“Play equipment is more valuable rather than a cafe space! I go to the park to play with my child not to drink coffee!”

“Proximity of toilets and cafes is irrelevant.”

“Sometimes I like to go where we can’t spend any money!”

“The parks I go to without cafes have much less litter and vermin. Toilets would be nice in rural areas, but not essential.”

“The play area outside my house has no cafe or toilets and it is used by loads of people. Even from out of the estate.”

“The public do not generally look after public conveniences and, being within 10 minutes’ walk of home, I would choose to go home.”

“This would not affect the use of the play area although I feel the local authority should provide suitable facilities.”
“Toilets and cafes are an added bonus, but the lack of them would not stop me using a playground.”

“We don’t usually stay more than 1 hour, I wouldn’t want to be pressured into buying ice creams, fizzy drinks etc at every visit.”

“Toilets maybe but cafes no. I spend my time having to watch my child and don’t have time to eat/drink. Plus cafes would encourage unnecessary snacking on junk food and more litter.”

“We go by car for a short time frame.”

“Toilets yes, but I dislike the mobile vans units some places have for food and drink.”

“We sometimes go to Worthing Road as this is on the way home from school. We can pick up snacks en route. Would rather have a decent playground put there than not if this is a reason for not sorting it out.”

“We take picnics - but toilets are always handy!”

“We would use the Mill Road play area without these facilities if the equipment was better.”

“You don’t need a café at a good park.”

B.5.4 Q12d. “The quality and safety of public play areas is important” [reasons given for disagreeing] (0 responses)

No replies as all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

B.5.5 Q12e. “Public funds should be spent maintaining and where possible enhancing those sites which have a high value to communities” [reasons given for disagreeing] (6 responses)

“I really like the new equipment at Mewsbrook, but I wasn’t unhappy with the old stuff, and it seemed a bit unfair to redo a perfectly good park when others are in desperate need of improvement.”

“If you only PROMOTE and spend on those already heavily funded, then other smaller play areas will become less attractive. Perhaps this is your remit which would make these areas ripe for development, which is what is wanted in my area of Pagham.”

“Important to have many rather than one or two exceptional ones.”

“It’s unfair on families who might use lesser used parks.”

“Maintaining should be standard but enhancing should be in areas of need, not those with established high value where maintenance not enhancement is the priority.”

“Should self-fund eventually.”

B.5.6 Q12f. “Spending public money maintaining and replacing equipment in play areas that rarely get used is a poor use of Council resources” [reasons given for disagreeing] (151 responses)

Don’t exclude children (57 responses)

“A little use is still important to those few who use it.”

“All children have the right to a stimulating play area, not just the ones in areas with a higher population of children.”

“All children need access to play facilities. Just because a lot of children aren’t using a facility, those that are using it shouldn’t miss out.”

“All parks are used and children should not lose the opportunity by closing them.”

“All play areas are of value to some families. A more popular alternative might be too far for some people to walk.”

“As all children should have access to a local play area.”

“Because children in all areas should be encouraged to play more, not less.”

“Because everywhere deserves investment.”

“Because it may be the only resource in that area and would deprive some children access to a play area.”
“Because it prevents kids getting up to mischief elsewhere.”

“Because it will be important to someone.”

“Because it’s not fair for the children that do use that area who may not be able to get to another one.”

“Because Local Authorities have a duty to provide for all and a certain play area, if closed, could mean some children would have to travel a much longer distance and therefore put themselves in ‘harm’s way’.”

“Because people still use them.”

“Because some children and parents need a quiet not busy environment to be able to enjoy themselves. If only the heavily used busy parks were maintained then a large section of the community would end up excluded.”

“Because someone uses it and it is valuable to them.”

“Because the area is still used, albeit not as often as others, and why should families miss out on decent equipment just because the park isn’t as popular as others?”

“Because there may be few users but it may be a ‘lifeline’ to those who do use it.”

“Because they are still played on from time to time.”

“Because those who do use it and have restricted access to other sites should not be deprived of a suitable play area. Insist on more money from Central Government to provide well for local needs, rather than merely acquiescing to the extreme Government cuts to funding.”

“Children are the future adults of the district. Treat them and their parents well now and it should foster loyalty in both groups.”

“Children’s exercise and good health are vital for our future.”

“Despite being rarely used, they may still be used by families. They are still valuable to those children.”

“Even if it enhances the lives of a few children it is money well spent.”

“Even if it only gets used occasionally it’s still being used, so keep it tidy.”

“Even if rarely used they are still used by those few people.”

“Even though a couple of the parks we use in the Parklands/Bluebell estate aren’t often very busy it is lovely to be able to use a play park where there aren’t so many other children so we can play together as a family. Being able to use the equipment without having to wait and queue is far better for our little ones.”

“Every child deserves a play area, whether it is fully utilised or not.”

“Everyone should have access and people should have the freedom to visit parks not on their doorstep. A policy of “most used” causes congestion and penalises families who live in quieter areas or those with fewer children. I will often avoid busy parks as my children and I dislike it when it’s busy and it’s less safe.”

“For the families that do use it, it’s really important in the fight against obesity and electronic gadgets.”

“How can we reliably know what gets regularly used or not? Also, why should the users of less used places not benefit from the same equipment and investment as others?”

“How do you measure the value? Those that do use ‘rarely used’ facilities might not have access to other parks.”

“How do you monitor how much use a play park has? May be a lifeline for some.”

“I answer the question with caution as I feel it’s essentially leading. All children should have access, regardless of the amount in the community.”

“If 5 or 6 kids use it, it encourages others to.”

“If a park is only used by a few children because not many live near to it, those children that do live near it should still have access to a range of high quality, well maintained equipment.”

“If there are not many children in an area you could deem it a low usage park, but by removal of the facility you’d be denying children that do use it. You can’t single out these children to be discriminated against.”

“If you live in a rural area then the use is less, but children still need this resource.”

“In areas of deprivation, where there may be a higher chance of vandalism, children shouldn’t miss out because a few have decided to spoil their play area.”

“It could be a lifeline for those that use it.”

“It will still be used by some children.”

“Just because an area may not be used a lot doesn’t mean it isn’t used at all. Some people who live locally may not use it every day but it may be the closest one to them.”
“Just because it isn’t used as much as a council would like doesn’t mean it should be removed, it’s important to those that do use it.”

“Just because it’s not used by a lot of people doesn’t mean it’s not beneficial to children, especially less privileged. Every child is important.”

“Just because it’s not used by lots of children you shouldn’t take that away from those that do use them.”

“Just because they rarely get used doesn’t make them unimportant to some children who do use it.”

“One cannot pre-suppose the pleasure, enjoyment, activity and wellbeing users’ experience. An asset should be available 24/7.”

“Our children are the future of our town and the more they enjoy it as children the more they’ll use and respect it as they grow.”

“Quieter playgrounds are more inviting to those with both young and vulnerable (ASD etc) children.”

“Some people may still use it.”

“Some people will use it.”

“I disagree because the park is probably not used due to the state of it. I would travel to a new park with my family and I know plenty of people who would also.”

“I feel it is essential to ascertain why it is poorly used. If there is no demand then obviously it would be a waste but if it is rarely used due to lack of maintenance then clearly funding would be effective.”

“If a park was maintained well it would probably be used more.”

“If it was better spent and looked after, people would use them.”

“If parks are maintained people are more likely to use them.”

“If the area is maintained it will get used more. Nobody wants to play on old damaged equipment.”

“If the play areas were better maintained they would be used more often.”

“If they are broken they won’t get used anyway.”

“If they are well maintained and replaced with good, safe equipment it could encourage more use.”

“Ensure they are properly maintained. (34 responses)

“All play areas should be maintained no matter how much they are used!”

“All the play areas should be well maintained.”

“Be used more if kept well.”

“Because if money was spent on maintaining and replacing equipment people would then start to use it more.”

“Because it might encourage people to use the play areas if they’re seen to be maintained.”

“Because poor maintenance may well be the cause of the little use! Anti-social behaviour may also be contributing to the lack of use as there seems to be little enforcement.”

“Because regardless of how many use it, it should still be updated and maintained.”

“Because they probably don’t get used because they don’t get maintained.”

“Foxglove playground is somewhere I visit a great deal, almost every day. But I’m aware it isn’t frequented much by many. But I think that shouldn’t mean it isn’t maintained and kept safe. Not refurbished nor added to, but being generally maintained is something that should still happen.”

“The children in that locality would not have access to a play area.”

“The children we support and enable now are the adults of our future. The opportunity to develop skills, socialise and explore is paramount to the adults they become. Positive spaces are vital. The children we educate (not just ‘school education’) will either be adults who are economically/socially negative or positive for our future community and economy. Investing early in positive opportunities is very much a forward thinking thing as well as an immediate resource.”

“There may be a few children in that area who are unable to travel to another play area.”

“They add to a sense of community and pride in the local area for young people.”

“They are being used by some families and some children may struggle at the more popular/loud parks.”

“We need green areas and with the increase in housing they will be more used. And it’s good to have plenty of open space so children can go to or be taken to many different places, instead of just the one which is closest.”
“If they are well maintained they will get more use.”

“If they were in good condition they would be used!!!”

“It depends whether they are not getting used due to the fact that the equipment is in poor condition.”

“It is not enough to say it rarely gets used. We need to know why: poor equipment, vandalism, etc? With investment it might become very well used.”

“It might get used if it was fixed.”

“Just because it rarely gets used doesn’t mean it should be left badly maintained and therefore unsafe for those who do use it.”

“Not maintaining means risks to people who do use it.”

“Perhaps the reason for poor use is that they are not maintained.”

“Play areas when well maintained will encourage use.”

“Poorly maintained equipment is dangerous and looks bad. If it’s not going to be maintained, remove it.”

“There is no point in having a play area if the equipment is broken.”

“They may be poorly used if the equipment is old and broken.”

“They probably don’t get used because they’re not being maintained.”

“They will never get used if they are run down. If this is even one child’s place to play it should be maintained.”

“This is a leading question. There may be a reason why a playground is underused, for example poor equipment, or under maintained. In which case, it should have money spent. On the other hand it may simply be in the wrong place and therefore could be closed to pay for a better, more popular playground.”

“Would more people use it if it was in better condition?”

Invest in a play area/better play equipment to increase demand (24 responses)

“Because if some places are improved they may get more use.”

“Because if they don’t get used much, spending money to upgrade the park would mean more people are likely to use it.”

“Because if you improve these play areas people will travel to use them. We spend our weekends travelling around visiting play parks in our local area that aren’t our usual ones as it is nice to go somewhere different. We only recently discovered Mewsbrook Park.”

“Because improved equipment might mean that the park is used far more often in future.”

“Because poor use maybe because the play equipment is not age appropriate to the area.”

“Because the play areas that are rarely used….are rarely used because they have poor play equipment or not enough play equipment!”

“I think that the council should improve the area so that it is a pleasant and stimulating green area.”

“I would get evidence of usage first to understand what ‘rarely used’ means and also to look at reasons for less usage as it could be that with investment the play area may be used more.”

“Because if areas are improved it shows the Council needs to revamp them.”

“If the area has investment it is likely to be used more.”

“If the play equipment was better more people would use it.”

“It could be rarely used due to (lack of) variety provided.”

“It is difficult to quantify usage of some play areas. In my opinion some are less used due to lack of toilet facilities nearby or a poor range of equipment.”

“Local parks need updating.”

“Perhaps improvement would see the facility being used more often.”

“Perhaps some low use play areas need updating to encourage new users?”

“Perhaps the reason certain play areas are not used as frequently as others is because equipment is substandard and needs updating. In my opinion these areas should be promoted more and not left to fall into disrepair. Children need more open spaces, promoting health and wellbeing.”

“Poor equipment leads to low usage.”
“Replacing and upgrading play areas stimulates more usage. Current usage is not a reflection of interest, but a reflection of attractiveness of the play area.”

“The better the park equipment the more it will be used. All children should have the right to a good park close to home.”

“Replacing and upgrading play areas stimulates more usage. Current usage is not a reflection of interest, but a reflection of attractiveness of the play area.”

“The condition/age of the equipment may be the reason for the lack of use.”

“The less money spent on an area not being used is likely to stop it being used altogether.”

“They may be used more if they were nicer.”

“Ensure safety  (13 responses)

“A child's safety must come first.”

“All play areas should be kept safe.”

“Because the facilities still need to be safe for when children do use them/move into the area.”

“Even if they're not used on a daily basis they should still be maintained to ensure they are safe for when they do get used.”

“If it is not maintained or replaced it can become dangerous and cause harm. If it is available for use it should be maintained!!”

“If they rarely get used then it's because they are lacking something, whether it be quality equipment or safety aspects and other factors. A well-equipped, safe park will be used.”

“In my view our closest park (Berghestede) is not used as it is used by the drug dealers and children that intimidate others.”

“It’s important for children to have a safe place to play. Whether they live in a town or a village.”

“Probably because it does not look safe or the whole area is not maintained is probably why it doesn’t get used in the first place.”

“Some children can only get to one park; this should still be maintained to a high quality to ensure its safety.”

“The children who do use it still have a right to safe play equipment.”

“The council should make them more appealing and safe to encourage more people to use it, not write it off.”

“The reason a play area might not be being used may not be being used may be due to poor equipment or safety.”

“Changes in demand  (4 responses)

“Areas change. More children moving to an area ups the need for that park.”

“As previously mentioned, discussions need to be had with local communities about WHY areas are not being used. If it’s just no demand, then withdraw funding, but if it is because local people want something different, this should be sought to be provided to improve usage, and bring about positive consequences.”

“Because parks and play spaces are an investment in our ever-changing communities. To discard or fail to maintain parks and plays spaces now is a disservice to our future residents and cannot be reinstated once lost. Parks and play spaces should be protected.”

“Because things change.”

“Miscellaneous  (17 responses)

“Because it is a circular argument. Take a run down play area, then use the fact that nobody visits it (because it’s run down) to justify running it down more, ad infinitum.”

“Because you are just trying to justify not funding areas of recreation.”

“How do you know if a play area is barely used?”

“If it was ‘never’ then there might be a point.”

“Maybe this is the reason they are rarely used. The reason behind this needs to be established first. If it was maintained and replaced properly and it was still being poorly used then this would be a waste, but all equipment should be maintained and safe as a minimum or else not available for use.”

“More ground level consultation is needed with parents. More natural play space is needed.”
rather than lots of parks with the same equipment!”

“More investigation why an area is not used needs to be done. Problems can be safety, access...”

“No clarification of 'rarely used'?“

“Should assess why not used and consider alternatives.”

“There should be no cutback on funds for playing areas.”

“We should be encouraging children to play outside.”

“We should be encouraging its use by improving and enticing”

“We should first understand why the area is rarely used before pulling the plug.”

“What is the definition of rarely?”

“Who is watching and counting how many people are visiting?”

“Why is money not going into them to make people use them?”

“You won’t meet the 10min walk target only focussing on the most used sites. What is the definition of 'rarely'?“

B.5.7 Q12g. "The opportunity for children to play and explore in parks and open spaces should extend to the whole area, not just a fenced off area with play equipment" [reasons given for disagreeing] (39 responses)

“A fenced area means the guardian can let the child run about and have greater freedom than if we're fully open. Hazards such as dogs, drunks, litter, and dog and fox poo in wider areas mean the child needs to be closely monitored, and cannot run free.”

“A secure fenced in area ensures children don't wander off on their own and it gives a clear safe boundary.”

“As a mother of an ASD child, fencing is very important to me.”

“As a parent with an exploitative toddler I prefer the safety of the fenced off area, offering her a bit more freedom to roam safely and contained when we are inside.”

“Children are safe within a fence making it easy to look after multiple children.”

“Children can run free in a fenced off area. If there are multiple children of different age ranges it makes it more difficult for the parent/guardian to keep an eye on them. Some children may be scared of dogs, having the separate area reduces the risk of a child being frightened or not enjoying their time at the park.”

“Exploration is an important element of a playground but safety is the priority so a playground needs clear and safe boundaries.”

“For safety.”

“I do not believe in segregating children from the wider world, it does not teach them risk analysis skills or, as it used to be called, "common sense".”

“I don’t want my 4 year old running off near roads.”

“I feel they need to be fenced to keep small children safe and not to run off.”

“I have two young children and I feel happier knowing they cannot escape into areas where they may get lost. I can take them to open areas when I want to. It also keeps dogs out of the areas so you don't have to worry about dog poo being at the bottom of the slide.”

“I prefer dog free areas.”

“I think it’s important to have a mix of areas to play.”

“I think there should always be a fence at least round the toddler play area. Parks for older children don't really need a fence as they should know not to run off.”

“It's a security blanket for parents with multiple children.”

“It's more safe and secure if it's fenced off.”

“Much easier to keep your children safe in an enclosed space. Plus dog mess is still a big problem!”

“No, for safety reasons. Young children could wander off.”

“Number one problem is dog mess. I like to know the area is free from dogs.”

“Of course exploration, but sometimes young people just want a safe, defined space in which to hang out/play/live!”

“Parental responsibility to do this. A decent play area should be sufficient.”

“People need space for other uses...dog walking.”
“Safer to be fenced in. We can take our children for walks outside the park area so they are suitably supervised.”

“Safety aspect for small children.”

“Safety is important...equipment outside the fenced area will be abused by teenagers.”

“Safety, dog mess.”

“Safety.” (x 3)

“There needs to be fences for safety as young children use them.”

“This can be unsafe.”

“This keeps children safe.”

“To keep them safe.”

“We live on the doorstep of the South Downs and the seafront, this experience is easily accessible and not a reason to not invest in play parks.”

“We need fenced off areas to stop dog owners letting their animals foul on play equipment. Fences keep children safe.”

**B.5.8 Q12h. "More dog free parks would provide better opportunities for children to play and explore in a safe environment" [reasons given for disagreeing] (98 responses)**

“A fenced off park with no dogs allowed is plenty.”

“A lot of children's areas are dog free anyway, it’s the surrounding areas that aren’t. Responsible dog owners are needed rather than dog free parks.”

“As a dog owner and a grandparent, the children and I usually like to take the dog when we go to the park. Most dogs are friendly and their owners are conscientious and responsible.”

“As a responsible dog owner, I would object to a dog free park but support a larger area for children to be fenced off. Why assume all dogs off leads are unsafe? There would be uproar locally if our area was made dog free.”

“A playground is where children can play safely. A park should be free for anyone to use in a respectful and responsible manner. Dog owners must pick up after them and ensure dogs are on a lead if they can’t be trusted with children.”

“As long as dogs are on leads I cannot see the problem.”

“As long as owners clear up after their dogs and are conscious of children playing and know the temperament of their dog and therefore make sensible judgements I don’t have a problem with dogs being walked. The parks should be for everyone to share.”

“Because dog walkers notice strangers and keep parks safer.”

“Because dogs don't make the environment unsafe.”

“Because dogs should be on leads, and are an important part of families.”

“Way too much dog poo in almost all playparks where you can walk around outside of the play areas. This is why we prefer Aldingbourne and the play parks at Bluebell and Foxglove. I won't let my children go to Brookfield or Mewsbrook as there is always dog poo around the play areas and on the occasions where we’ve decided to try again we have witnessed children treading poo into the play equipment.”

“Because most dogs are safe, and my daughter loves to see dogs in the park.”

“Because people have a right to walk dogs. As long as the owner is responsible with the dog it doesn't bother me.”

“Because some parents and grandparents go to the park for a dog walk then go to the park to play after.”

“Because we have a dog and taking them both to the park is invaluable, otherwise one or the other misses out and usually it’s only one person who doesn’t clear up after their dog that ends up ruining it for the 100s who are responsible. I agree with small areas being dog free but no more. Where else are we meant to exercise our dogs and let our children run and play?!”

“Better patrolling of dogs and their owners e.g. to prevent poo being left, should enable more children to use areas safely.”

“Children can enjoy and benefit from some play with pets.”

“Children can play safely when there are dogs around as long as both dogs and children are under supervision.”

“Children love dogs. Dogs on leads is a better option.”

“Children need to learn about animals.”

“Children need to learn how to behave and interact around animals. Dogs should be on a
lead in an urban park environment and mess bins provided.”

“Children need to learn how to interact with animals. As long as parents and dog owners are responsible this should not be a problem.”

“Children should be able to play, but to target dogs as an issue is wrong as long as there are waste bins and appropriate facilities.”

“Dogs aren't allowed in play areas as they are fenced off, surely dogs can use the rest of a park?”

“Dog free areas are great, but consider how many families have a dog which is out together in the open spaces. Hotham Park is a good example. Parents can tie up the dog and enter the dog-free zone and still have eyes on the children/dog. For some, going out together with the dog is the only outside time. However, including areas that are dog free is a great idea.”

“Dog owners have children too. My children hate leaving their dog at home.”

“Dog owners need to be responsible for their dogs; get them to wear leads/muzzles (if needed) etc if the dog is boisterous. Parents/carers should teach their children about unleashed dogs, not approaching them etc so the adjoining field etc can be enjoyed by both parties.”

“Dog owners should clear up! Children need to socialise with dogs and other adults.”

“Dog walkers have every right to walk in the park as much as anyone else as long as the dogs are under control and they pick up after them (I say this as a non dog owner).”

“Dogs are dangerous in areas where children are running/playing around.”

“Dogs are not a problem, irresponsible owners are.”

“Dogs are part of families’ lives. Banning them could mean families can’t combine walks and playing.”

“Dogs are part of many families.”

“Dogs have never caused a problem.”

“Dogs need spaces to walk to and not everyone has a car to go to the woods.”

“Dogs on leads are OK.”

“Dogs should be kept on a lead but not removed completely.”

“Dogs shouldn’t affect safety.”

“Dogs that are kept under control are not a problem and of course many families use the

opportunity to walk the dog whilst taking their children to the park.”

“Dogs with responsible owners aren’t a problem and some families take their children and dog to the park.”

“Dogs, under control, are fine.”

“Everyone should have the opportunity to use any outdoor space.”

“Family dogs can enhance play experience.”

“Happy to share but emphasis should be on fining people who let their dogs poo in parks and walk off. West Park especially.”

“I don’t have a problem with dogs in parks; most owners I have met are responsible.”

“I don’t see dogs as a limiting factor, so long as they have responsible owners.”

“I don’t think there needs to be more parks, just improvements to the existing ones.”

“I have a dog and being able to take my dog and child is important to me. Would just mean I wouldn’t use the park any more.”

“I have a dog and going to the park is an activity that occurs after the dog has been walked. He is then tied to the buggy which we leave outside of the park play area. If the entire park was not dog friendly this would leave me in a predicament. If a dog is not safe and trusted around children, the owner should be responsible enough to keep the dog on a lead and a safe distance away from any children.”

“I have a dog that is controlled. As long as a dog is on a lead it shouldn’t affect how children play.”

“I take my dogs and kids to the park. As long as owners clean up after dogs.”

“I think this would limit family use if they have a pet.”

“I used to think this but realised that there is fox poo everywhere and children need to be used to dogs. Strict punishment to anyone who does not control their dog.”

“If dogs are antisocial, they should always be kept on leads!”

“If it's a public space then it should be available to all. Who would police the parks to ensure dogs aren't in there? That would be a waste of money.”

“If the parks are fenced it's not an issue.”

“I'm more in favour of dog free areas than dog free parks.”

“Important for children to interact with dogs.”
“In not sure why dogs = unsafe. A 'lead only' policy could be implemented if necessary.”

“It is necessary for children and dogs to learn to socialise well. Preventing this will only increase badly handled situations. The council also needs to consider the needs of dog owners who are also part of our community.”

“It’s not dogs that aren’t safe, it’s the people who own them. We don’t have a dog, but spend time with friends who do and I don’t think dogs (unless dangerous) should be excluded. You will end up excluding a large number of families this way.”

“It’s the owners not the dogs at fault here.”

“I’ve never had any problems with dogs in our local parks. Dogs are only a problem when they are not under proper control.”

“Lots of families have dogs and would be restricted to which parks they could use.”

“Lots of families own pets, and children need to learn to socialise with them.”

“Many families have pet dogs so the area needs to accommodate both.”

“Many families own dogs, banning them will effectively ban children. More prosecution of fouling is the answer, not banning dogs.”

“Most dog owners are responsible for either controlling their dog or keeping them on a lead. We shouldn’t make the places where we can walk dogs fewer as many families have dogs too.”

“Most families have pet dogs who are a part of that family. The whole ‘family’ needs to enjoy outings together.”

“Most kids love animals.”

“Most parks are dog free anyway. And dogs should be kept on leads in play areas without fences.”

“My children aren’t concerned with dogs so this isn’t really an issue for us.”

“Never been an issue for me.”

“No strong view. As long as dogs are under control I see no issue.”

“Not everyone likes dogs.”

“Parks (not play areas - I don’t disagree that these should be dog-free) provide outdoor spaces for a WHOLE community - not just families with children.”

“People often walk their dogs while the kids are in the park.”

“Poo bins are a priority near a park so the whole family can enjoy. Dogs on leads only and poo must be picked up or fines issued. Give parents power to report.”

“Providing dogs are safely on a lead, families can enjoy the whole area with their dogs too.”

“Removing dogs from parks does not educate children in socialising with animals and evaluating risk. Dog free fenced play areas are different and acceptable though. There should be more fenced dog play parks like in the US.”

“So long as dogs are controlled as much as dogs can be, it is fine to mix dogs and children.”

“So long as owners are responsible then children and dogs do not need to be separated by councils.”

“Some families have dogs and possibly walk the dog and the children play.”

“Some families like taking their dog out for walks.”

“Some parents walk the dog at the same time as taking their children out to play. As long as dog owners are responsible I don’t feel that they are a problem. It may be that more policing to ensure dog mess is cleaned up etc. is required.”

“The chance to interact with dogs can be rewarding for children.”

“The onus should be on the dog owners to be aware of any behaviour issues their dog may have. The majority of dog owners are sensible.”

“The problem isn’t dogs, it’s owners who don’t pick up poo. However, all playgrounds should be dog free.”

“The question presupposes most dogs are unsafe. Whereas it is just a few.”

“The reason I like Mewsbrook Park is that it is accessible to all.”

“There are less and less places to walk dogs, people with children often have dogs as well.”

“Until the management of dog faeces is implemented it is unfair for children to be subjected to its presence.”

“We should all be able to use the space together. The current fenced in play space works as it keeps dogs out of there.”

“Well trained dogs aren’t a danger and accessibility dogs are used by all ages.”

“What we need is for dogs to be kept on leads. Especially where there is a play park. It’s ridiculous that dogs can run free around kids.”

“Why do dogs stop children from playing and exploring?”
“Why punish dogs? Everyone has dogs and it would mean I couldn’t take my children to the park. That’s why fenced off areas are better.”

B.5.9 Q12i. "Where new large scale housing developments are built, focus should be on providing larger, centralised play areas rather than a number of individual/smaller play areas on the fringes of the development" [reasons given for disagreeing] (107 responses)

“A centralised area might lead to larger groups of children congregating there, which could lead to problems.”

“A couple of smaller ones are better than one big one due to distance and number of children.”

“A large play area means a busy play area. Lots of individual play areas mean not as busy and therefore not as intimidating for small children.”

“A large play park could be daunting for some children and adults. If smaller parks aren’t cared for it becomes less attractive, miserable place to be.”

“A range of equipment close to home will encourage children to play near home where parents feel safer.”

“A variety of different parks to go to.”

“As a non-driver I would prefer to have a playground within a short walk of my house than a large one further away.”

“As there are no longer park keepers like we had when we were children. Bigger areas I think would make it a meeting place for the wrong reasons. Smaller places will be looked after by the locals, even if they don’t use them. Of course, if you are going to bring back park keepers, I see no reason not to have bigger places.”

“Because a combination works better. For example Brookfield Park and the smaller play area within the estate.”

“Because I think it’s nice to have little play areas dotted around, sometimes larger areas get dominated by a few children and for those children that are quieter/less confident, it’s nice for them to have somewhere quieter to go.”

“Because one large play area cannot possibly be the best for everyone.”

“Because they can end up crowded and unappealing for younger children. Smaller quieter areas can be far more appealing.”

“Big does not always equate to better! Small play areas are important and can provide extra security.”

“Bigger parks with a lot of children can feel very intimidating for children.”

“Breaking up creates space and gives a ‘walking trail’ for kids to visit.”

“Children are less likely to have to cross roads to access play areas, and they are possibly closer to home.”

“Children do not always want to go to great central parks.”

“Children like to play unsupervised, but this needs to be near their home.”

“Children need to be able to walk easily to a close play area.”

“Children should have choice.”

“Choice of location is important. Access to various sites within easy travel is important.”

“Could still be a distance to travel to. Local is best.”

“Either option can work. Need a balance in each area, if there is already a large play facility, smaller ones can be useful and vice versa.”

“Existing should remain plus areas within these new housing estates, better still don’t build these houses where they aren’t wanted.”

“Find it becomes busy, so less playtime for children.”

“Getting out with children can be very difficult. Going to a bigger park further away can be more of an "event". Having smaller areas dotting around is perfect for just popping out for a 20min play, detour after school etc.”

“I believe a number of play parks are important. They often get used for hangouts for older children who lack facilities.”

“I don’t feel it necessary. Parents/carers can get to a local park if they so desire.”

“I don’t think this really makes a difference to how a park is used.”

“I have two under 4s and sometimes like to pop to the park. This can be a military operation sometimes. The further away, the harder this is, and can easily become a few hours which isn’t always possible and so may not happen. I am able bodied and am married so this would be harder for those not in my situation.”
“I like more smaller parks. I have 2 kids of different ages. The large parks get taken over by older kids and are not safe for my 18 month old. The smaller parks are used more for little ones.”

“I like the little parks that are close to home. We use ours frequently rather than the big park.”

“I like the small play parks, it means that families can grow to know each other, community bonds can be formed.”

“I like the smaller areas as you are more likely to have one on your doorstep.”

“I think a large, noisy play area would be an undesirable feature for most house buyers, whereas a small play area with low volumes of foot traffic and limited quantities of play equipment means noise levels and disturbances are kept to a minimum and therefore add value to the development as a desirable feature. You can’t introduce unwanted features into a development else it will become unsustainable, undesirable houses won’t sell or will only sell for reduced values, this won’t attract developers.”

“I think both are equally valid. Sometimes a smaller quieter area nearby for a ten minute visit is preferable. Also less of a magnet for antisocial behaviour.”

“I think children play well in smaller groups and large play areas would be fine if supervised or attached to a cafe. This being unlikely I have to disagree.”

“I think having a few small ones around an estate would mean it would be less busy then having one big one.”

“I think play is important but I find smaller parks have less visitors and more older children.”

“I think smaller ones are great. My friend lives opposite one which means her kids can have a little bit more independence and she can keep an eye on them. But they do seem to be targeting younger children.”

“I think smaller parks can create a safer feeling for children and parents and can also be tailored to age groups.”

“I think that parents would like one nearer to home for convenience. Smaller groups of people/children promote confidence/friendships.”

“I think the areas we have need improvements first.”

“I think you need both. And it’s no use putting in a huge fancy park if people can’t get to it easily. I think Brookfields is a good example of a great park, poorly situated - most people who want to visit it, have to cross Worthing Road.”

“I would think a big area could be made better and maintained easier at less cost than many smaller less exciting areas.”

“If a number of smaller, linked by footpath, play areas are provided, children have the choice of where to go. They get more exercise walking between them and avoid potential clashes by not having all the kids in one place.”

“If the estates are large enough I think easy access to smaller, local play areas is important in ensuring people let their children out to use them with a sense of safety.”

“Improves the environment.”

“In large developments breaking areas down so they are age appropriate would be better.”

“It is important for all local residents to have easy access to a park - having just one centralised park may mean that some people are a long way from it.”

“It is important for parents to keep their children nearby.”

“It is important to have a range of play areas, especially in new large developments, to (hopefully) help with creating a community.”

“It is useful to have a playground close to home for smaller children - as in Foxglove Way, Littlehampton. Could we please have secure closures on the two gates at this playground?”

“Large areas contribute to anti-social groups congregating and people stop taking their children due to the roll on effect.”

“Less busy if spread out.”

“Lots of facilities would be better.”

“Makes it too busy/noisy for those living opposite the ‘main’ park.”

“More and smaller is often much better where large numbers of children are housed.”

“More choice.”

“More parks offer more equipment. It also allows children to play closer to home therefore encourages independence for slightly older children as well as quick trips for parents with smaller ones.”

“More play areas are better for children’s development as change is challenging.”

“More small parks near to homes encourage kids and parents outside after school for quick visits numerous times. One large park will not be
visited so often by people living further away and would be a weekend treat rather than daily exercise and play.”

“Nearer for supervision.”

“Need variety and to be able to access easily.”

“No need for more houses at all.”

“Not all adults accompany children if it is close to home, and visibility is important.”

“No all children like busy playgrounds.”

“No far from home.”

“No sure, would have to see what works best from lessons learnt in other areas.”

“On our estate we have a lot of smaller parks and this is nice and means we can choose which park to visit.”

“One big one will be very crowded and have all age groups together. Smaller, more age focussed is preferable.”

“Over-crowding.”

“People with young children need them to be close to home.”

“Play areas should be many and varied.”

“Reduce big groups gathering. This scares the elderly.”

“Several smaller play areas give more children a chance to actually play rather than constantly queuing to use the play equipment.”

“Should be a choice so large groups don’t congregate just in one area. Maybe different age equipment in different parks? Nothing worse than taking my child to a park full of teenagers hogging the swings.”

“Single large play areas become busy and can be intimidating for small children.”

“Small ones are more friendly.”

“Small play areas mean we walk more and use every different play area en route.”

“Smaller (and more) play parks would be easier to maintain and could be targeted at specific age groups.”

“Smaller areas focused on an age group helps kids play at appropriate level without being disturbed by younger or older kids.”

“Smaller areas make it easy for you to keep an eye on your children, you are more likely to socialise with your neighbours and their children.”

“Smaller areas would mean they wouldn’t be as busy and can be better used.”

“Smaller ones are handy on estates as a big one would be crowded and more bullying would take place.”

“Smaller ones seem to work in these estates from what I’ve heard. Focus on places that have little or no provision.”

“Smaller parks give good interaction between local children.”

“Smaller play areas are quite nice, especially for smaller children.”

“Some children are overwhelmed by lots of others.”

“Some of the developments are large and means children having to cross roads. More green spaces on a development would be better for the environment.”

“Sometimes larger parks intimidate as you can get groups who use it so other individuals would avoid it.”

“Sometimes smaller parks are preferable. A larger park where every child goes can be quite daunting.”

“That should be for developers to decide, not the council.”

“There should be a mix of both.”

“They wouldn’t be used by families who live too far away.”

“They wouldn’t be walking distance.”

“This depends on walking distance from the play area, for example a smaller play area closer to home would mean that older children could safely walk there with friends.”

“This has the potential to make these areas problematic in large housing developments. I have seen this first hand in London which in turn gives the area a ghetto feel.”

“To centralise play areas and close what we have may make it difficult for some people to access.”

“Too big an area will cause children to congregate.”

“Variety, choice and proximity to home is more important. So is not being overcrowded.”

“We all have one within walking distance for a small child on Bersted Park.”

“We enjoy the small play areas that are dotted around the estate.”
“We in Pagham do not want LARGE SCALE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS, as has been made very clear from over 2000 letters of objection in recent weeks. Is this another attempt to make taking away our green fields more palatable????”

“Won’t this just increase traffic? I personally prefer smaller age appropriate parks. Perhaps small parks each with different strengths for different age groups is ideal?”

B.5.10 Q12j. “Where an existing high value play area may exist within close proximity to a new housing development, funding for play provision should be directed towards the existing facility” [reasons given for disagreeing] (55 responses)

“Again, this depends on safe walking access to the play area.”

“Another large and high quality play area should be incorporated into the development and funded by the developers (with ongoing funding).”

“No new housing development should build their own play areas.”

“As above – ease of access should be paramount.”

“Because it’s nicer to have additional / smaller ones. Some children are afraid of larger parks that are full and busy.”

“Because not everyone can drive or afford public transport (when it’s even an option).”

“Because the new developments do not have play areas and we need them!”

“Because the statement doesn’t define “close proximity” and I am wary of this answer being used to help developers get out of making proper provision for infrastructure and leisure within their developments.”

“Could go into a general pot.”

“Depending on the distance and the condition of the equipment.”

“Depends how close, road safety etc.”

“Depends what you mean by close proximity. We live on Kingley Gate estate and would love a proper play area on the estate, which the children can walk to safely.”

“Developers should be made to provide more public amenities.”

“Every play area has a safe capacity. If it is fully used already then it would not be suitable for additional families.”

“Families need local opportunities and this helps families develop community cohesion.”

“Funding should go where it’s needed not to fund an already high value play area.”

“Housing developers make enough money from these schemes; make them contribute more and for longer to more play areas rather than making existing ones over-crowded.”

“I believe this to be a poor excuse for not building new play parks on new estates.”

“I still think smaller ones are good too.”

“I would prefer to have a playground within a short walk of my house than a large one further away.”

“If for maintenance I would agree; if to add further space I would disagree.”

“If there is already one large, high quality park then adding to that one will mean it becomes incredibly busy. It would make sense to have two large, high quality parks rather than one huge one or many small ones.”

“Is it lovely to have a smaller play park for younger children.”

“It depends on the size of the new housing development and what else is available within that housing development. Small developments maybe but large scale developments should have provision within them as well as contributing to enhancing existing facilities.”

“It is important to ensure sufficient play areas in new housing developments to help with community cohesion, as well as not swamping current facilities.”

“It is important to provide smaller areas as well.”

“It may become overcrowded.”

“It’s a cop out.”

“Make the builders supply a play park as part of the agreement.”

“More families = more space required to play so more land needed. Not just cramming a bit more equipment into an existing space.”

“More homes means more children so more equipment and areas are needed.”

“More housing = more children, a second option is needed for those who are only able to use 1 or 2 pieces of equipment.”
“More is better. Toddlers won’t wait ten minutes for a turn on the swing.”

“New estates are more attractive with their own parks.”

“New housing will mean more families and to build a sense of community in the development there should be additional facilities.”

“New playgrounds provide children in new homes a chance to build memories to share as they grow up. New equipment promotes imaginative play for new games.”

“Newer is always better.”

“Play areas developed already for infants within housing estates should be maintained but probably not enhanced as younger families use these facilities.”

“Smaller parks give good interaction between local children.”

“Smaller play areas should be provided to complement the larger provision.”

“The quality and level of equipment should be equal to all.”

“There should be provision of open space.”

“They need something on their doorstep which is theirs.”

“Too many people trying to use the play areas. We need more play areas as some of these housing estates going up are huge.”

“Until the park is overcrowded there isn’t a need for more equipment and it sounds as though the quality of equipment is already high.”

“Variety is good. Prevents overcrowding. Allows different opportunities for children to play and explore.”

“What about the rest of the people?”

“Why is new housing relevant to how much funding?”

“With all new housing they should provide green spaces for nature and relaxation, not just cramming extra houses in because there’s already a park around the corner.”

“Smaller play areas should be provided to complement the larger provision.”

“All children should have access to play areas near to their home.”

“All local housing, new or otherwise, should have a well-equipped and cared for park, large or small.”

“All our play parks are important. Small parks in the new housing developments, I suppose, will have to be built to provide for them to cater for our increasing population of Bognor.”

“All play areas are important, maybe the onus should be placed on companies who are making vast amounts of money by building on everything to fund (via the local authority) suitable facilities?”

“All play areas should be maintained.”

“Because if I agree then the council will see that as a giving them the go ahead to remove some play areas ‘carte blanche’.”

“Better quality means what?”

“Cheaper but not as convenient and community focused.”

B.5.11 Q12k. ”Providing fewer but better quality, strategically important play areas would be a sensible strategy for the Council to adopt” [reasons given for disagreeing] (124 responses)

“A mixture of larger, well equipped and smaller, less crowded areas would be best.”

“Agree in principle but not when it interferes with the existing economic balance for local businesses and affects jobs.”

“All children should have access to play areas near to their home.”

“All local housing, new or otherwise, should have a well-equipped and cared for park, large or small.”

“All our play parks are important. Small parks in the new housing developments, I suppose, will have to be built to provide for them to cater for our increasing population of Bognor.”

“All play areas are important, maybe the onus should be placed on companies who are making vast amounts of money by building on everything to fund (via the local authority) suitable facilities?”

“All play areas should be maintained.”

“Because if they are too far away from where I live we wouldn’t use them as much.”

“Because small villages lose their parks as parents can travel to other ones in towns or larger villages.”

“Because some parents can get to the bigger parks, so having a park here and there is a better idea.”

“Because the existing park will be built on.”

“Because then it risks play areas not being conveniently located.”

“Because there is already a discrepancy in the development of play areas that are well equipped; which is leading to the neglect of smaller play parks and from what I have witnessed particularly smaller parks in poorer areas.”

“Because unless you are lucky enough to live close to the “strategically important area” to benefit from the park then it seems unfair to others that may lose their park to pay for this.”

“Better quality means what?”

“Cheaper but not as convenient and community focused.”
“Children and guardians are not always able to travel long distances to take their children to playgrounds. Managing smaller play areas might be cheaper as well.”

“Children of today are the adults of tomorrow and investing in them will result in happier children with somewhere to meet up with friends. And it gives them somewhere to go instead of hanging around the streets bored and causing trouble.”

“Currently I don’t have an Arun park in walking distance. They should be spread throughout the area.”

“Cutting down parks may well leave children and parents with no local park which could become a big problem especially for people with mobility issues, lack of a car and a low income.”

“Cutting provision for local families is not progress.”

“Depends on how few. Needs to be easily accessible for all children. Some parks may become too busy.”

“Don’t decrease the parks, just keep them maintained.”

“Don’t see why they would have less playgrounds with better equipment. Make all playgrounds suitable and fun for all ages.”

“Every child should have access to a local play park.”

“Every child should have reasonable access to a secure play area.”

“Families are often time poor. If it takes more than 30 minutes to reach the park they are unlikely to use it.”

“Families need the play areas and larger parks should be kept.”

“Fewer equals less choice for children. Not giving our children a chance to actually play properly where so many children are competing to use things.”

“Fewer might be good for you but not for the people that use them, they may not be able to travel to another park and why should they?”

“Fewer? More, more, more!!!”

“For reasons above, children love a swing set, climbing frame/slide and roundabout. The larger more equipped parks are there for suitable occasions.”

“Free, challenging, social play is great. Looking after the run-down parks will give more opportunities and variety for children.”

“I don’t think the current number should be reduced, but I think that tiny little play equipment areas are a little unnecessary and the funding that would go into these should go into the ones which already exist.”

“I don’t think there should be fewer parks. Children don’t require much to entertain themselves, they can be very resourceful, if we adults are creative we can provide many good parks for little cost.”

“I don’t think this really makes a difference either way.”

“I don’t think we should lose any play areas. Ones close to home are really important.”

“I don’t want any parks to close; we should focus on maintaining ALL our green areas and parks.”

“I feel all should be of a good quality (a larger playground split in two costs the same).”

“I have seen this approach in other places and whilst it makes commercial sense it does penalise families without car transport.”

“I neither agree nor disagree. I can see arguments for and against this. But checked agree because strategically placed is ambiguous. Some children need a smaller quieter environment in which to play.”

“I think making better smaller parks is better than just making a few big good ones. Some people don’t like to be around very busy places especially children with learning difficulties that struggle to be in very busy places.”

“I think the ones you have spent money on are great but it’s equally important to maintain others. Not looking for lots to be done but range in each is a start.”

“I think there should be lots of good quality play areas. We like to go to different ones.”

“I think this would reduce access too much for those who live further away.”

“I would disagree with such a broad, sweeping statement; it, of course, has some merits, but each location needs to be individually considered on its merits.”

“I would not like to see any play areas closed because of funding cuts, even if larger better quality play areas are provided in densely populated areas. Isolation is a big issue for families in more rural areas that do not have play facilities.”

“It implies loss to some communities.”

“It is clearly a ploy to make money and would see the less mobile kids due to poverty suffer.”
“It is important to sustain quality, however many people don’t drive or have regular/reliable public transport and so a good range of play areas is vital in ensuring that children have easy access to good play areas.”

“It needs to be local so everyone can access it, not just people with cars or rich enough to take public transport.”

“It would be a shame to lose what we have.”

“It would take away local play areas.”

“It’s important to have an area nearby so that everyone has easy access.”

“Just an excuse to reduce quantity of parks.”

“Local options are needed. Maintenance is essential for all so safety is not an issue.”

“More and more green spaces are disappearing.”

“More facilities mean more children have access. Responsible parents don’t want their children traipsing for miles on their own just to go to the swings.”

“More play areas would increase the opportunity for children to play outside.”

“Need to be local, within walking distance.”

“Need to keep the variety of play areas.”

“NO.....once again play areas should be within walking distance making them available to all children and not relying on transport to take them further afield. Smaller well equipped play areas are much better for younger children who may feel threatened by much older kids and young adults.”

“Not all residents have cars and so cannot reach just a few select areas. It’s also important for each smaller community to feel valued and have an area in which to interact.”

“Not always possible for everyone to reach areas. If areas are nearer their homes children would be able to attend without having to be transported by parents.”

“Not every child wishes to go to large play areas. Smaller quieter ones are very often more friendly, and important for quieter times, which all children need.”

“Not everyone can travel.”

“Not everyone is able to walk longer distances.”

“Not everyone is capable of travelling further distances to get to parks. These outdoor spaces should be available for everyone to enjoy. Not just the ones able to travel a greater distance.”

“Not everyone would be able to use it.”

“Our children need a range of outdoor play opportunities.”

“Outdoor play areas are important.”

“Parking would then be an issue, really needs to be within reasonable walking distance to people’s homes.”

“Parks should be within a close distance.”

“Play areas need to be easily accessible.”

“Play areas should be close to housing.”

“Play is important and not everybody has a car.”

“Prefer the choice of more areas. Different kids in different parks. Depends what you’ve got in mind but it just sounds like a money saving exercise rather than anything that’s actually meant to favour children.”

“Providing the same number of play areas would be a good strategy.”

“See comment above a balance is needed; fewer may mean inaccessible to those who don’t drive.”

“Smaller parks give good interaction between local children.”

“So much of children’s cognitive building is grown through active play. Making fewer areas means there is less opportunity for access. It is well documented how vital physical activity has major positive effects on our brains and bodies. We should be building a society where this is the norm and encouraged everywhere!”

“Some children would not be able to access a park if it is too far to walk.”

“Some of the smaller parks are a great asset away from cafes etc, wouldn’t want to lose these.”

“Some parents need these spaces closer to home.”

“Sometimes too much focus on one large area can inhibit children as many younger children appreciate space and can be intimidated by too many other children taking over equipment.”

“Strategically important” to whom? The residents or corporate interest? It’s more important that families can access these spaces easily than how many vendors the council can charge rent to on that site. Play spaces are for playing, not selling.”

“Taking play areas away from children is not what you should be aiming for.”

“That might make the distance for play further than 10 mins away.”

“That’d just be a reason to close play parks.”
“The existing facilities would become overcrowded and therefore less appealing.”

“Those without cars.”

“The total usage of these small sites will be substantial. I fear no further investment in the larger sites at their cost.”

“Unfair to some areas and families.”

“There are too few play areas as it is, the final choice is an invitation to cut. No, Arun needs to do more. BTW The Town Council says it doesn’t want to get involved, more’s the pity. Lazy ******s.”

“We have a good range of play areas. I don’t see how fewer would benefit the area.”

“There should be as many viable, excellent quality play areas.”

“What does "strategically important" mean in this context? If you are only counting money then yes, cut the numbers. But if you are really worried about providing a decent quality environment and helping children to get outside and keep healthy then you have to make play areas convenient and easy to reach - so everybody should be able to reach one without having to cross a main road.”

“There should still be a suitable number of play areas across the district.”

“When the big park is busy the younger children prefer to use the smaller parks on our estate.”

“They need be local and fewer play parks usually means not a free swing!”

“Why does there have to be a compromise?”

“This appears to be a 'stealth' cut to local services in my opinion. I have seen this with youth centres at county level, which has led to widespread closures.”

“This could mean that some families would have to travel further, limiting their children's outdoor time and play at a park. Both good quality large play areas are needed and smaller ones too to cover the Arun District.”

“This is a money saving exercise then. Younger generations suffering again.”

“With the current approach around public toilets for example, I am sceptical that the improvement in quality would outweigh the reduction in quantity.”

“This means the council say to cut. No, Arun needs to do more.”

“We have a good range of play areas. I don’t see how fewer would benefit the area.”

“This sounds like the council want to limit how many play areas they have to maintain.”

“This would not provide easily accessible parks for all.”

“With too much distance between play areas they might become inaccessible to those families without cars.”

“Those without cars.”

“Won’t this just increase traffic? I personally prefer smaller age-appropriate parks. Perhaps small parks, each with different strengths for different age groups, is ideal?”

“Because not all children cope well in larger busier settings, those parks already exist locally to travel to if desired. It’s normally parents that get hung up with all there is to offer, kids just want to play.”

“Would have to have good transport links and facilities e.g. toilets.”

“If one park has a group of high energy children playing in one, children of a quieter disposition can choose the other one.”

B.6 Q13a There are examples in the district of near identical play areas within 100 yards of each other. Assume you control the funding for play area improvements, would you?

Reasons given for selecting “Spend your budget equally on each play area, replacing the equipment like for like on both sites” (82 responses)

Some children may prefer smaller/quieter play areas (18 responses)

“All the parks within walking distance to me (and also further) are valuable to the area. To keep then updated equally would mean not everyone descends on one particular park just because it’s the only one with new things.”

“Because not all children cope well in larger busier settings, those parks already exist locally to travel to if desired. It’s normally parents that get hung up with all there is to offer, kids just want to play.”

“As already said, it’s nice to have smaller areas as well as large ones, some children may not wish to go to large ones.”

“I visit quieter play areas as I normally visit with 3 under 5s and older children. I need to be able to see all the children at all times. Busy play areas I avoid.”

“As mentioned earlier, larger facilities may be problematic.”

“If one park has a group of high energy children playing in one, children of a quieter disposition can choose the other one.”

“Because it spreads the amount of people between the parks so one park doesn’t become overcrowded.”
“If only one park, it would become extremely busy and you’d get lost children, small accidents etc, so a couple of smaller parks would be better.”

“Not everyone is able to travel to parks, so small ones close to them are all they have. Keep the small parks up to date and well maintained and people will use them. If one park is done up it then it becomes overcrowded because people want to use the new facilities.”

“Otherwise one park becomes busy and people from out of the area travel there, rather than using a local one (Mewsbrook Park is a good example).”

“Smaller and older children have different needs.”

“Smaller parks give good interaction between local children.”

“Smaller, more friendlier, groups I think might be better.”

“So that it isn’t as busy and there is a choice.”

“Some children/families are deterred from using parks which are busy/overcrowded.”

“Spend equally, but use different equipment.”

“Spend the budget equally, but make the parks different.”

“The children like to visit the different parks on our estate and don’t always like being at the bigger park if it’s too busy.”

Keep providing a choice  (18 responses)

“All play/green areas are important and need to be maintained. We need a variety of recreational areas; these need supervising so these areas remain pleasant and not taken over by anti-social groups making it a no go area for children.”

“Both locations should be maintained for the children.”

“For varying reasons, people have preferences as to where they go and who they play with.”

“Gives kids more areas to play.”

“I think over-crowding would be a problem.”

“If you had two parks and one was only done up and the other removed it wouldn’t be fair on the kids that use it. Why should they lose out on their play area so they get one big amazing one that’s 100 yards away? All should be made equal.”

“Keeping all the play parks is important as people visit different places.”

“Keeping each little park maintained will prevent inconvenience than if one Central Park is continually out of use.”

“More play areas are better than fewer but larger.”

“More variety of parks is needed.”

“One site shouldn’t miss out for another.”

“They both have their benefits to the people that use them.”

“This way the children have more choice of where to go.”

“To provide choice for local children.”

“Too many children wanting the same equipment leads to rivalry and negates the idea of freedom to choose. Large play areas are good but not at the expense of smaller play areas.”

“Two are better than one.”

“Variety is important.”

“Variety, choice, control of overcrowding, protection from bullying, proximity.”

Provide for older and younger children (15 responses)

“Allocate equal budget each with different equipment offering alternate play sites.”

“As you replace equipment why not make one for older children one for younger?!!”

“Children like variety but also deserve to have safe equipment that they are able to play on.”

“Choice of sites will be better as they would be less busy and give variety.”

“Different parks can be used for different age groups.”

“I would split money equally but I would buy different equipment so that each park became different and enjoyable in its own right.”

“I wouldn’t do like for like, I would provide a mix for both to suit all ages. They don’t need to be identical.”
“If both play areas are well used then keep both, they could be different with one for younger and the other for older age groups, meaning both get plenty of space to play without cramming all age groups into one park and shutting the other.”

“It could be that one should be for young children and the other for older children.”

“It depends who uses them. They could attract different age ranges and abilities. They could be on opposite sides of a busy road.”

“Some play areas are designed for a particular age group of children and therefore enables them to play safely. All children should be free to play on quality equipment in a safe environment without worrying about older children taking over, or younger children taking too long to do something.”

“Sometimes you have two playgrounds close together aimed at different age groups as at Brookfield Park. I think it is wise to keep babies and toddlers separate from older children.”

“Would keep two play areas, aim one at older children and one at younger.”

“You are not sure of the local dynamics, often young teens will adopt one and the other gets used for young families (day time use). Variety of play and differing age aspects of equipment is more important than pooling into one site for lower maintenance budgets.”

“You could use the money making sure that they are not identical. One could be for older children one could be for younger.”

Other option (6 responses)

“Both options are too extreme and definitive. I do believe both should have budgets spent fairly, but works to expand and grow can also be undertaken in turns. e.g. equal budget share for repairs and maintainable (assuming the same amount of repairs needed) but a portion of the budget put aside to develop one in one financial year, the other in another. Doing minor development can be more costly in design and labour man-hours. But with this, communication is key. Oh, and actually delivering it!”

“I needed a third option of maintaining one area but providing different equipment in the other.”

“She should be more than two options, I believe you should select current utilised areas and replace with better equipment, don't need to always make things bigger. Especially when encroaching on free and open space.”

“There is no 'other', if there was, I would spend the money equally, but give a different 'feel' to each site.”

“Why are there only two options? The two play areas could be developed differently so that they catered for different customers. That might mean disparate spending. But there is nowhere in the district where there are too many options for children to get outside and play.”

“You haven't given the option to spend say 70% on a newer larger park and 30% on a smaller park.”

Miscellaneous comments (25 responses)

“A sense of belonging to a community.”

“As some parks are closer/easier to get to via public transport/parking etc than others, both parks should be kept to a standard, otherwise the other park if no money is spent on it will get run down, vandals will come and ruin it, park would be busier, more accidents could occur”

“Because each play area is valuable to that community. They not only give mums and dads a place to take the kids but it’s lovely to take the grandchildren to play areas and let them enjoy their time with grandparents.”

“Because you've said already you want to shut down parks but they enhance the places where people live - it was the main reason we chose our house over similar ones.”

“Continue as you started or check usage and then decide if one park should have more equipment than the other.”

“Currently unaware of any locations with that close a proximity. Spending should be used to bring all areas up to standards.”

“I believe these answers were worded to make you tick the second option! Of course better equipment for a wider range would be preferential but I do not believe that bigger play areas are better.”

“I think that existing parks should be well maintained but putting funding into newer, smaller ones is not necessary. One of our parks has recently been re-done with brand new, high quality equipment so it would be unnecessary to
spend more on that one, whereas the one on the beach could do with a bit of an update, if there was funding available.”

“If both areas were being used equally I would want to improve both areas, but if one was being used more, then I would want to put all the budget into that area and close the other.”

“If both were used regularly and of value. It may be very difficult for parents from one end to go the extra distance to the other park, this should be checked to see the impact of the loss of one and whether the benefits outweigh the disadvantages.”

“In the 100 yards example yes but could that be applied to more distant play areas within Arun? Hope not. Bit difficult to say without knowing what the budget actually is and the cost of equipment and repairs.”

“In the 100 yards example yes but could that be applied to more distant play areas within Arun? Hope not. Bit difficult to say without knowing what the budget actually is and the cost of equipment and repairs.”

“Increase the budget if needs be, perhaps getting local parish councils involved in helping to find ways of funding part of the cost, thus promoting a sense of community. I would like to think parents, grandparents may also want to be involved because they have a vested interest in providing a safe, and well equipped, and looked after venue.”

“It depends on how much they are both used.”

“It’s a fairer way.”

“Local community.”

“Lots of areas need upgrading.”

“Maybe the budget can be enhanced by taxing those who have benefited greatly from the current system and those that are making profits from building new homes.”

“All play areas are needed. This sounds like an excuse for Arun to close play areas to suit their own needs rather than the needs of the kids. Because, although to Arun District Council one play area seems pointless, it probably means a lot more to the nearby residents that use it.”

“Popular parks need maintenance and less popular ones need revamping.”

“Similar to previous comment - otherwise the district will lose smaller areas of open space and become seamless swathes of housing.”

“So the land wouldn’t be built on.”

“Talk to residents of that specific area. Go and observe use, maybe one doesn’t get used at all? Maybe one is used by older kids, one by younger ones. Look into it further before making big decisions like this.”

“The budget doesn’t need to be equal just what needs upgrading when required.”

“There are no play areas within 100 yards of each other that I know of. This is a question intended to mislead and give councils a mandate to close play areas.”

“This is difficult to answer, it would depend on if children were able to access both play areas safely i.e. road crossings, and the equipment, is it safe and useable or dangerous? Then of course it should be replaced.”

B.7 Q13b There are examples in the district of near identical play areas within 100 yards of each other. Assume you control the funding for play area improvements, would you?

Reasons given for selecting “Spend all the budget on one of the sites, making it bigger and providing better play equipment for a wider range of children and removing the other one” (157 responses)

A short distance between them, so combine the sites (59 responses)

“100 yards apart is still accessible by most standards, so concentrate on one.”

“100 yards apart. All residents would understand this reasoning.”

“100 yards between sites is unreasonable to manage. Option 2 better and more sensible, more equipment!”

“100 yards doesn’t sound very far to walk.”

“100 yards is a very short walk between them so one bigger one would be all that’s needed.”

“100 yards is a very small space. Better to have a good range that all can make use of than two small identical parks.”

“100 yards is not that far for a person to travel, this would still be walking distance.”

“100 yards is very close, and better to have one nice one.”

“100 yards is very close, seems silly to maintain two unless one is for younger kids and one is for older. Or turn one into a skate park. We need more of those, maybe bike tracks?”
“100 yards is very easy to walk. Better play equipment keeps children challenged and they will want to return more often.”

“100m is a small area; consolidating to make them bigger and better makes sense.”

“As long as enough equipment is provided in the larger one, it seems superfluous to have them so close together.”

“As long as the one park meant that a walk was still 15 mins or less for the residents closest to the demolished park, this seems a sensible idea.”

“Because 100yds is a very short distance. However, it would also be pertinent to know the amount of children in that area and whether one park would suffice.”

“Because most families now have cars.”

“Because of the distance between them.”

“Because they are close.”

“Don’t need duplicate facilities in same area of lower quality.”

“Due to close proximity, better to get more value for money.”

“Due to the close proximity, take one down, enhance the other.”

“Identical areas in close proximity provide no additional benefit.”

“If it is only 100 yards then it makes sense to enlarge.”

“If it is within 100 yards then yes it would make sense to develop one park....however this should be handled sensitively depending on the make-up and needs of the area.”

“If it’s just a matter of 100yds, then yes join the two.”

“If it’s within 100 yards it’s fine, as long as there are no major roads to cross.”

“If only 100 yards from another play area then that makes total sense. If any further then it’s a different matter entirely!”

“If parks are very close it would make sense to have one larger and better park as long as its capacity exceeds the two smaller ones.”

“If play areas are very close in proximity it would seem sensible to spend money on improving the range of equipment on offer.”

“If playgrounds are 100 yards from one another there is no need to continue with two. Often two of the same will be underused and become neglected and misused.”

“If that close, then one better park would be preferential. However the displaced park area should not be turned over to developers.”

“If the parks are that close you’re just combining resources.”

“If the proximity is that close and the budgeted amount of money would not reduce, it is common sense.”

“If they are close by each other and one is just as easily accessible to the community as the other then one park should be prioritised.”

“If they are identical and really close then it makes sense to merge them.”

“If they are in such close proximity it would make sense to have one better site as the children would find it more stimulating.”

“If they are only 100 yards it’s better to have one bigger space with very good and lots of equipment in a central place.”

“If they are that close and accessible then better to have one.”

“If they are that close and provide for the same age group of children then it makes sense to improve one. If two play areas are near to each other, but one is targeted at older children and one to under 5s then both should be retained and maintained.”

“If they truly are that close, it would make sense.”

“If they’re only 100 yards away from each other it’s not going to affect walking time to get there.”

“If they’re that close then fine, maintain one but careful consideration should be given to these cases.”

“It seems a waste of resources if they are this close to each other.”

“It seems pointless having two so close when you could focus on having one big site with something for everyone.”

“It seems silly to have identical facilities so close together.”

“Make it better and to fully maintain it. No need for two to be so close.”

“No need for two areas within 100 yards of each other.”

“Only if they are genuinely within 100 yards of each other (I’m watching you, Arun.)”

“Ridiculous to have two sites within 100 yards, can’t think of any local examples.”
“There is no point in having play areas that close together.”

“There isn’t a need for two play areas within 100 yards of each other. Have one better equipped, bigger and better maintained play area, as opposed to two small ones.”

“They are close to one another so it makes more sense.”

“They are too close together.”

“This is very close - a fair proposal.”

“Two within 100 yards is a waste of public money.”

“When they are this close it is a sensible use of funds.”

“Why double up on equipment within that close proximity?”

“Within 100 yds I would change the function of one of the areas; maybe a skate park or open space for ball games.”

“Within that distance it would be more practical, but if further apart my answer would be different.”

**Bigger is better** (57 responses)

“A better area benefits everyone; the second park could be simplified as a playing field or picnic area.”

“A bigger park is better.”

“A more central place for the children to play together.”

“A wider selection means more fun for children.”

“As long as the others do not become neglected and dangerous it would be more beneficial to have a more stimulating environment, even if it becomes a bit busy as this would help social development (waiting turns etc).”

“As long as there is budget set aside to maintain the smaller playground. It’s nice to have a really impressive playground to take the kids to.”

“As nice as the smaller community parks are, there are some which receive little use. I would prefer to see upgrades to the parks which are used frequently, with more diverse/themed play areas. More money spent on providing facilities which cater for the disabled.”

“Because one really good play area is better than two average ones.”

“Because they are so close by and it enables the children greater opportunities in a better park. My answer would be different if the distance between was greater than this.”

“Better equipment.”

“Better facilities for all.”

“Better play equipment for a wider age range.”

“Better play equipment in a larger area would be better. There’s no money in budgets so might as well be concentrated!”

“Better to have a high quality park rather than two average ones.”

“Better to have one good one.”

“Better to offer opportunities for more children across the age ranges and abilities.”

“Better use of money and will provide better facilities.”

“Better use of money.”

“Better use of resources but access such as footpaths and alleyways needs to be considered so that previous users of the closed site can easily access the big site. 100 yards is only 100 yards more if you can actually reach it, without a huge detour!”

“Children will go to the park more often and stay for longer if there’s a wider range of equipment.”

“Children would much rather have a wide variety of play equipment.”

“Close proximity means one bigger, varied area which would be beneficial.”

“Common sense. You don’t need two parks within 100 yards of each other. One big park with more stuff is better.”

“Higher quality and just one, seems more sensible than splitting that quality across two.”

“I think this area would benefit with one bigger space where it houses more innovation and variety for all.”

“I think you would benefit in doing one up right like Mewsbrook Park, then more people visit.”

“I would prefer quality over quantity.”

“I would rather have a better quality park. The majority of people are more than capable of travelling 100 yards.”

“Improved facilities.”
“Improved options rather than the same options.”

“It is better to have more of an offer for children and young people of all ages rather than a poor quality small play area that a lot of people wouldn’t use.”

“It makes more sense, plus kids are less likely to get bored with more activities and other children in one place.”

“It makes sense to cater for a wider age range.”

“It would be better to have one really good park than two average ones.”

“It would be the main hub for people to meet with a wider range of different equipment for all ages. West Park has a cafe which needs to open; so many opportunities have been missed. If you really want to make things better, reopen the cafe.”

“It’s better to have a park/open space that is suitable for all and is regularly used, rather than two or more sites that are used less and may not be suitable for all.”

“It’s better to have a variety of good equipment rather than the same equipment in close proximity.”

“It’s better to have one awesome park than lots of mediocre parks.”

“Makes a larger and better site with more equipment/facilities.”

“Making a larger site for families and children to socialise.”

“Making play areas exciting and inviting with a variety of equipment makes them appeal more.”

“More choice and range.”

“More people are likely to use one more attractive site than two less so.”

“Much better to have a larger, better equipped playground for all than two smaller ones that are very close by.”

“My grandchildren often prefer to tour around the collection of smaller play areas where there are similar equipment, whereas they would probably be better entertained playing in a single area with more variety.”

“New is always good. I think there needs to be a new attraction like on Paignton seafront, Devon. Look it up, it’s amazing!”

“One good park, well maintained, rather than two not looked after to a good standard.”

“One larger site with sufficient play area and equipment could possibly leave the other area free for development.”

“One very good play park would be better than several poor ones.”

“Prepared to travel for better play equipment, choose parks with different things to keep trips interesting.”

“The distance is too small to impact the community if one was closed and the other one expanded. Expanded and made better to accommodate not just the extra children but it will also give them a better range of equipment to play on and can be aimed at children of all ages.”

“There is a need to save money but to also invest in the children’s activities. I would rather travel further for a better quality and well maintained park.”

“This would ensure the park was used to its full potential also promoting socialisation for children and their parents.”

“To bring people together.”

“To bring the community together and spend money with more impact vs several playgrounds.”

“To have more choice.”

“Too many small parks don’t get used enough. Kids would rather go to a big park especially with friends, so there are enough facilities for them all to use at any one time.”

“When play parks are so close to each other it makes sense to improve the area and expand provision on one site rather than just do the minimum at each site.”

“Would be nice to have better equipment.”

Makes economic sense  (23 responses)

“Because money is tight and people need to learn to be happy with what they do have no what they want.”

“Depending on the budget and its impact overall.”

“Easier to maintain one better play area, and it’s more social.”

“Economic.”

“Economies of scale.”
“Financially prudent and will provide a better quality facility for the local community.”

“Financially prudent. Quality more important than quantity.”

“Funds are limited, so it is better to have a good quality one rather than have two mediocre ones, particularly as 100 yards is no distance.”

“Having significant investment into one site is preferable to slight investment in two.”

“I appreciate that funds are limited and some of the play spaces are very limited, so bigger ones with more equipment would be better as long as they are still easily and safely accessible.”

“It is more logical and makes better sense financially.”

“It seems to make sense to invest in one big good quality play area.”

“It would be more cost effective to maintain.”

“Logical use of resources.”

“Makes more economic sense and a better range of equipment for the kids.”

“Makes sense.”

“More cost effective when parks are so close together.”

“More efficient use of money, better to have one quality play area.”

“More sensible spending.”

“Realistic about costs.”

“Seems better use of time and money.”

“Simple economics.”

“Spend money on what needs doing, so if one year one site gets 70% of budget, so be it.”

**Other option** (4 responses)

“I wouldn’t actually do either of these. If budget allowed, I’d put different equipment on each site so they weren’t nearly identical.”

“OR develop each for different age needs. For example, one area for over 12s and one for 12 and under, with age appropriate equipment/features.”

“Preferred option of the choices BUT why not see if the local Parish Council might take on responsibility for one?”

“This is a rather limited choice. I would prefer an option that reads something like ‘Direct majority of money towards key sites, but retain basic levels of service/provision at local sites that attract usage’.”

**Miscellaneous comments** (14 responses)

“Before making these changes though I would ensure I understood that that would work both for those using the parks and for others who could use them.”

“I have never seen two similar play areas in close proximity.”

“Introduce disabled swings. Look at Staunton Country Park, Near Havant.”

“More differentiation is required, many of the parks in the area provide exactly the same equipment! More natural play spaces would be welcomed, such as ones visited in Moors Valley Country Park (Dorset) and the Forest of Bere (Hampshire). These provide more open ended play opportunities for children rather than the normal swings/slides.”

“No option to provide different play equipment in each park.”

“Provided ‘better’ does indeed mean bigger and not too busy, then absolutely.”

“Quality rather than quantity.”

“The smaller parks are normally for younger children.”

“There is a park my children call "Bird Poo Park" because its play equipment is covered in bird poo. My wife walks past this park twice a day and my children never want to go in, it's always empty. They mainly detour to Queens Field. I believe this should be closed and money spent elsewhere even though it's the closest park to us. It’s Kew Gardens Park.”

“This will give a choice of parks, depending on time or children’s ages. One park might suit better than the other rather than neither being suited.”

“This will naturally attract more crowds and encourage noise and activities around one area which will only disturb others near the facility. Spreading this out will cause more noise generally for more neighbours.”

“Too many clusters of kids hanging around, more opportunities to create problems.”
“Tough call but quality is important.”
“We have an under-used play area in a development near us which is hardly, if ever, used. The equipment is unsuitable for small children and the steps on the slide too far apart for the targeted age group.”

B.8 Q14. Please provide any further comments: (144 responses)

Quality/design of play equipment (21 responses)

“A splash pad area in the Bognor area would be brilliant. Such as the one in Southsea. Free splash area with picnic benches.”

“A splash park would be a great addition to West Park or another park. We have to travel miles to access one. Also West Park desperately needs a decent cafe.”

“Green space and play areas are vitally important, especially on new estates where houses are so close together and there is a slightly claustrophobic feel. Very important to have a range of equipment catering for different ages and abilities.”

“Hopefully no one would recommend two within close proximity if they were aimed at the same age range. Different parks near to each other if they had different uses i.e. an under 5 park and a teenage gym would work in different areas of the same park.”

“I am disappointed that there appears to be very little references to Skate Parks/BMX tracks and the like in this consultation. As a teacher at a secondary school in Arun I am acutely aware how keen teenagers are for there to be some improvements in this area, and that they are keen to become involved. I would urge there to be consideration of ‘community groups’ to be part of, or even lead on managing and financing some aspects of improvements. Our young people want to be involved, so please let them.”

“I believe that beyond this survey there should be a further one regarding what options are there for play equipment. What the modern child of today would enjoy? Water fountains would be good.”

“I definitely feel that some of our local play parks need either vast improvement or, as mentioned in the survey, removed to make way for fewer but better equipped parks. There are quite a few very small underused parks locally and I feel this is due to poor choices of equipment in them or that they are abused. I have been to local parks that have very poor facilities and have also had dog faeces, broken glass, and general rubbish in them, which makes me not return.”

“I moved here from Hove. I didn’t appreciate the wonderful outdoor spaces we had there until I moved here. I think the council needs to look further than its front door to compare play areas, particularly if you want to include town regeneration within this strategy.”

“I think we need a splash or water area in Wick for kids to play to cool down, and perhaps a scooter ramp area or skateboard area.”

“It would be lovely to add a ‘splash point’ to our lovely seafront, such as ones visited in Gosport and Bournemouth. This would complement the sand pit on the seafront. There are some lovely park spaces locally but many of these are mirror images of each other and provide little challenge/differentiation for children. Many of the parks are run down and do not complement their surrounding areas. More log tunnels and tree houses make exciting open ended opportunities for children!”

“Moores Valley wooden sculptures to climb on are a great idea. Have a path round a park to learn to ride bikes. I think cctv is a good idea.”

“More play area dens, wooded areas with imaginative areas. As in e.g. Aldingbourne centre wood. More resource into analysing uses and impact of change - new / closures / additions / reductions etc.”

“Need more areas of wilderness for children in the parks; groups of trees that could be climbed. Natural playgrounds.”

“Not all play areas need expensive equipment. Natural areas for children to explore can be equally as exciting. They may still need some upkeep but will provide a rich variety of experience.”

“Parks need to have more imagination put into them. Southwater Country Park near Horsham is an excellent example of how a park should be. People travel miles to go there as we have nothing like it in our area. The parks we have are quite boring and not very stimulating. Physical development is so important for children of all ages and yet all the parks in our area are awful. It would be a good idea for people with children to be part of the design process!”
“Please give some consideration to all weather surfaces at the largest park sites. Hotham Park is great. Well connected by foot to town, good parking, lovely new cafe, toilets, train, good number of events; but the playground, whilst great, is so muddy in winter, or indeed any wet weather! Thanks. Thanks for consulting too.”

“Recently visited Matlock and Nottingham and they had lovely outdoor splash areas in their parks. Soft flooring and water squirting out from the floor or equipment (they have a similar indoor version in Westgate swimming pool in Chichester if you are not sure what I mean).

Well maintained/clean (11 responses)

“All parks should be regularly checked and maintained. Sadly the one in Yapton has been forgotten about and the rope climber is broken. This park is used every day and is beginning to look run down!”

“Any current play area should be kept in good condition. Removing less used places means some children will go without.”

“Areas for older kids and younger infants should be checked so there is nothing dangerous that could cause a possible accident, especially drugs, syringes, alcohol etc.”

“As a parent of a young child, opportunities to take him to the park with well maintained equipment are invaluable. But don’t restrict other park users (e.g. dog walkers). That makes us have to choose who gets a run out or limits our options!!!”

“Grass of play areas should be regularly cut and maintained short/clean, as diseases can easily be spread between children. Dogs should only be allowed on leads nearby play areas.”

“Grass surfaces in playgrounds are prone to littering and feel unsafe.”

“In Littlehampton we have a good variety of play areas but some need more care, love, and attention than others to help reduce the busy parks that are over-crowded.”

“Keeping the grass cut short in the playground area as at times it can be quite long.”

“Maintaining current areas to high standards is important.”

“Maintaining play areas is important.”

“The Hothamton area must be maintained properly, never mind Regeneration Plans. A serious dog attack will mean ADC will have no answer re neglect, so no inaction and penny-pinching whilst Regeneration proceeds, or doesn’t......”

Range of play equipment (for all age ranges) (10 responses)

“A crowded play area is not a play area I would want to visit with young children. Little ones need a very different provision to older children. I don’t like the play area in Littlehampton as the older children tend to hog the equipment. Two quieter parks are better. Better still is two facilities that cater for different age ranges.”

“A good combination of large and small play areas is vital. One size never fitted all! Large areas provide more diverse equipment and the ability for children to meet and share. Small play areas are quieter and permit children to play, use imagination, gain independence and confidence. Children should never be treated en masse, they require different styles/types of equipment. A good combination of play areas which encompasses large and small facilities in an area meets the needs of all. Children cannot play in streets and nearby, local facilities are vital in allowing a child to grow and develop. Play areas need to be local or they will not be used frequently.”

“All parks should cater for all age ranges and should have a forest area for den making, with logs to step across too. Helps them to learn and explore.”

“I feel there is a good range of equipment for my children’s ages. I think the area could do with some more play equipment for older children as you frequently get teens sitting around on the younger children’s climbing frames and slide. If they had a bigger and better range of climbing equipment themselves I think there would be
more for them to do/sit around on to free up the younger children’s equipment. If you want to see a good range of teenager equipment then have a look at photos for Mote Park in Maidstone, Kent. The equipment is used and challenging enough that it seems quite popular.”

“It would be great to see more new equipment and things for older children that are more challenging and stimulating, not just basic play equipment you find in most parks as it gets a bit boring.”

“More provision is needed for older children and young teens to reduce obesity, prevent antisocial behaviour (which is often as a result of boredom), and improve community relationships across generations.”

“My oldest child is coming into her teen years and I’m worried. There is very little for older kids to do but ”hang around”. Please consider the

value and importance of their needs. Also look at Play England for initiatives for needs of all children and young people. Living in Wick, it feels that other areas have been invested in, and this area and Lyminster get barely a look in.”

“Play and adventure facilities are vital for the social development of children and young people, not an optional extra. Facilities need to recognise that different age groups have different needs and may not want to mix with each other while playing.”

“Teenagers need better provision of facilities and equipment.”

“There should be areas for older children to play, with more exciting, and interesting, like the pedal go karts they had at Hotham Park. There should also be more countryside walks in the area, while there are some footpaths they are pretty boring and could’ve been made more interesting.”

Should be situated in areas of greatest demand/areas where children have limited options (9 responses)

“Children should not be forced into playing in set areas. Equipment should be spread so they are encouraged to explore within a safe environment. Villages tend to miss out on suitable play equipment due to not such a high concentration of children per square mile.”

“Concentration of funds to well used, not necessarily large, play areas would ensure that those with and without cars are within easy travelling distance of a well-kept and equipped play area.”

“Having lived where parks are too far away, I know how much more I use them now. And it’s healthy and fun! My children were in a bad mood, so we just went for a walk round Brookfield Park, fed birdseed to the ducks and now everyone is calmer. Bedtime will be less stressful. My 5 year old was in Bluebell playground after school too, but my husband was able to join us this time after a day at a desk. Please don’t take away everything that makes it lovely to live here!”

“There is definitely a sense in this survey that the intention of the council is to sell off some park space. Littlehampton and Bognor Regis are areas of high deprivation and parks are often a lifeline for some children who need fresh air. I would totally disagree with any proposals to sell off the public land.”

“There is precious little space for kids available to play as it is, all the old open spaces and meadow fields that I remember and played in as a child have been built on. With new build houses having tiny unsuitable gardens for a growing family it is more important than ever that there are plenty of spaces available for children to play. The gist of this survey implies the council wants to shut a whole load of play facilities and that thought makes me extremely upset and angry for the local kids that will end up missing out.”

“These areas are too important re health and exercise to cut, there are too few in Bognor Regis. Maybe ADC should also work with schools to enable opening up of their outdoor facilities as well? I am well-versed in children’s play.”

“We live on the new Kingly Gate housing estate and find the tiny parks made from logs with 1 baby swing are not good enough for the kids. One bigger one with proper equipment needs to be built near to us.”

“When planning new large developments it is vital that infrastructure such as play areas, new GP surgery(ies) and community centre(s) are available for use when the first tranche of building is completed to enable and support community cohesion.”

“Where larger housing sites have been built with a mixture of families and non-families an outdoor or indoor area close for motherly gatherings and children’s play and exploring so as not to disturb other residents; and for socially including community events.”

Disabled friendly (9 responses)
“Disabled swings should be located in all large park areas. Inclusion is just not happening!”

“Each play area should reflect the needs of the immediate area. However some areas, like the ones on the seafront in Littlehampton, people will travel to for a cheap afternoon out. It’s popular for me as there is disabled parking overlooking the area and I do not feel I have abandoned my grandchildren if getting out of the car is difficult or if all the seats are already taken.”

“Facilities for disabled children need to be provided, particularly swings. i.e. Mewsbrook Park.”

“I do not have a disabled child, however I do feel, in comparison to other towns, we do not provide wheelchair accessible equipment for those who need it. I think West Park would benefit from free toilets and an open cafe. This is what pulls us towards Hotham Park over West Park. I would like to see a dog lead free area in Hotham Park and the rest lead only. Children running often get chased by (albeit friendly) dogs which can be a frightening experience for those who are nervous of dogs. Also I would love to see the boating lake in Hotham Park turned into a splash area (similar to Fishers Farm or Paultons Park). If it needed funding a nominal charge of £1 per person could be added. I feel it would be very welcomed and used much more than a boating lake (and safer too as no deep water).”

“Parks around here need more inclusive equipment. Such as for children with physical disabilities. Better variety of equipment is also needed. Such as sound/music equipment. Also more shaded areas.”

“Play equipment for disabled/wheelchair users in the larger parks.”

“Refurbished play areas should include some equipment that can be used by children with disabilities. It was disappointing that when Mewsbrook was refurbished last year this did not happen.”

“There are no local parks that are suitable for children with additional needs, or in wheelchairs - not even one! This needs to be addressed.”

“We need wheelchair accessible play equipment in our parks and multi sensory equipment to make them inclusive.”

Safety/no anti-social behaviour (8 responses)

“As mentioned above it would be useful to have secure closures on the playground at Foxglove Way as toddlers can easily open the gate.”

“I feel if you make play parks bigger you will encourage groups to form if you don’t have someone watching them.”

“I find the main problems are older children misusing equipment, making it a potential danger area for small children. Also swearing within the hearing of small children.”

“I think that parks should be manned by police or security so that they remain safe spaces for children and families. I would be happy if public funding went into this. Currently if a group of teenagers take over the park and swear/drink alcohol/smoke/are abusive then nothing can be done about it, I have to remove my children and take them home.”

“In Farnhurst play area in Barnham at night and during the day you get a lot of teenagers making loads of noise and vandalising some of the play equipment. They swear and use offensive language in the park when there are other children. I think the park needs touching up, a bit a more vaster range of play equipment and a new fence, and a bit more play equipment. The teenagers come in the park setting fire to stuff, dropping litter, making noise, slamming the gates, vandalising the equipment etc. and they never let anyone else sit on the bench which I find really horrible of them. The teenagers spray paint loads of the equipment and put condoms on the floor near the bench and the spider web swing. The car park next to the park needs re tarmacking and people in the flats leave their vans, scrap vehicles and a really old caravan and loads more. These vehicles and rubbish don’t make the park really inviting it just makes it look like a really horrible place and it makes it look messy. There is a big field next to the park and we could do with some more equipment on that to fill it up.”

“Play area warden patrols to regularly check parks and play areas.”

“The main consideration for parks should be the safety of the equipment. Safety of the area i.e. fenced in. Accessibility for all within a reasonable distance from home. And it would be nice to have facilities such as toilets, snacks available etc.”

“There’s a lot of Arun parks that are disgusting and vandalised and have inappropriate equipment for young kids. All parks should be like Woodlands with a big fence and locked at night to keep youth vandalism out.”
Dog free area/dog controls (6 responses)

“Dogs should have separate closed in areas as I’m sick to death of my younger children being closed in. When they do go out of the fenced area they end up running in dog mess!! Fence in dogs before children!!”

“I’m not keen on dogs but most dog walkers know when something’s up - they have a community and mostly look after their dogs and keep children safe.”

“Maybe just increase the amount of dog poo bins around the parks. This may help with the anti-dog people. And please get someone into West Park cafe.”

“Please, please do something about the dog fouling. It is impacting our children being able to safely play.”

“But also important to keep smaller/less well used play areas (6 responses)

“All children should have a space nearby with appropriate, safe, exciting, play equipment for a variety of ages. Just because a play area is only used by a few families doesn’t mean those families don’t deserve the area to be safely maintained.”

“As it is not as safe for children to walk alone nowadays it’s important for some sort of play area to be easily accessible to as many as possible.”

“Prefer smaller play parks.”

but dogs are such a problem. I generally only allow my children within the fenced off playgrounds in order to keep away from the dogs, for so many reasons. The dogs absolutely charge across that field, we’ve had dogs run up to us numerous times and my children have at times almost been knocked over by them, especially bigger ones, just by walking down the path to the playground. Dogs loiter around the play equipment within the open field area; I’ve even seen some cock their leg and toilet up against the play equipment. You can’t let your children run free or roll around in grass for fear of dog muck from those less responsible owners. More open, natural places like Brookfields - but please, ban dogs!”

“Would be good to have dog exercise areas so they don’t need to use play areas. In my local park it is the children who have a designated area not the dog walkers. As a grandmother and a dog walker I would be happy to have a fenced in area for the dog to be off the lead so the children can play anywhere.”

Something for adults, not just children (6 responses)

“Also villages should have ‘adult’ exercise equipment available for older/teenage children.”

“I understand that you are focusing on play areas with equipment, but open spaces, trees and other aspects of nature are also extremely important to children and adults alike.”

“Larger parks give space for more equipment and all children/families to play safely and explore. But a need for the elderly to have space so as not to be on top of each other or unsafe!”

“Parks with exercise apparatus in too (like Woodlands in Rustington). Apparatus for getting healthy for adults; not just children’s play equipment. Allotment areas were always good for all.”

“We live in Yapton, we go to playparks here, in Littlehampton and Bognor. One thing that I have noticed is that some of the play equipment is age specific, but children don’t see it that way and want to go on it regardless. For example; our Yapton playpark has what I call a toddler climb/slide and the same for older children with a larger slide, however, my toddler does not want to be held back and loves to go on the big slide. At two years old it is a bit worrying when the only way he can climb up is up the actual slide itself as it’s up the ropes otherwise and he just doesn’t have the proper skills to master it that high yet.”
So I spend my time running around him, getting him up the slide and then keeping him away from the high edges that only have rope net on the sides for him to come back down. I believe this particular one to be a bad design and needs rethinking as otherwise it limits the little ones. Also, there just isn’t enough variety at the Yapton park, surely there must be more that can be added? A sand pit is always appreciated by the little ones; and some sort of play house that they can go in? Also Yapton doesn’t have a roundabout, but has a few things that the children never use, such as a funny big thing on springs with separate sections that doesn’t do much, and a couple of broken spring animals.”

“We really would like to see more workout playgrounds in the area. These are used by people of all ages, and are great for improving health and fitness. We particularly would love to see this in King George field in Felpham.”

Other facilities available (e.g. parking, toilets, benches, bins) (3 responses)

“A lot of people will choose to go to larger parks that have more of an offer including a café, toilets, open spaces, and other activities as a longer trip out, but may use smaller sites particularly after school on the way home.”

“I think it would be useful to make some of the larger parks more accessible to all, and provide further facilities, even if this takes funds away from smaller parks. Perhaps town councils could take on/provide the smaller parks? If ADC works to build on the larger parks, by adding in newer equipment, toilet facilities (I would be happy to pay to use these, many councils now do this), cafe areas/mobile coffee van licences on these facilities. Make them more like community spaces, with more events etc, so that people are more likely to stay longer.”

“Shaded play areas are essential for all ages. Sitting under trees is not always the answer (bird droppings). Water fountains kept in good condition, notices clear and precise with phone numbers for assistance for anything going wrong in the park. Do not assume all have mobile phones.”

Comments on specific play areas (31 responses)

“Arundel has no central play space and no provision for older children/young adults.”

“Arundel play parks haven’t been updated for years and are focused more on the smaller children. So 8+ year olds go with siblings but are bored as there is hardly anything there for them to play on.”

“Brookfield is an amazing space and park, but too much dog mess.”

“Brookfield needs toilet facilities. And maybe a cafe to get used more.”

“Children and families need resources like Hotham Park. A cafe helps parents and grandparents build community links and enables kids to socialise. We need this opportunity in Avisford Park please.”

“Eldon Way park is so close to our house that we can walk to it within a couple of minutes, however the equipment in there is minimal for young children. It would be wonderful if the park had some more equipment like a slide, roundabout and additional swings for older children.”

“Grass areas where events take place should take priority. Linden Park is sadly lacking in decent facilities although used for community events. On the whole I believe the majority are well looked after and maintained.”

“I feel the play park in Palmer Road recreation ground is awful. The equipment is aimed just at older children.”

“I have been a childminder for over 15 years and seeing the Larkspur play park area go was very sad. Please don’t let Bluebell Park go as well!”

“I live in Angmering, where playgrounds are owned by the Parish Council. If I made any of the suggestions in this survey to them, I feel they would get defensive and do their own thing. :-(

“I live opposite a park which is very basic; it is positioned on a playing field so there is room to expand it, it is a well-used playing field yet the play equipment is for young children. There is so much more that could be done with it (Southfields rec)."

“I really feel that the Burpham play area should be upgraded urgently. It is in a very poor state. There are a lot of visitors to this area, with cricket being played every weekend during the summer, weddings, fetes and visitors to the area all the year round. You have ignored this facility for years, Burpham and Wepham pay their share of council tax, it’s about time you remembered we are here.”
“I think Hothamton play park would be improved by the removal of all large shrubs. It is quite dark in this park and this would allow more light in. The openness would also decrease the problem of adult anti-social behaviour.”

“In Hotham Park we often encounter angry dogs running at scared children, dogs running around with squirrels they have killed in their mouths and pile after pile of dog mess every single time we visit the park. Not ideal in a family space. Just this week my toddler son ran through a big pile, it really is disgusting and above all else a health hazard. How long before a child becomes ill or blind because of it? I understand that most dog owners are great and will pick up mess but how can they be expected to see where it is when a dog is off the lead and running loose? How do you try and stop this happening? All dogs on leads would be a good solution or a fenced off dog area. In Priory Park in Chichester you can’t take a dog in at all, we could be somewhere in the middle.”

“It would be really nice to have the cafe open again in West Park.”

“Littlehampton would benefit from a large, decent park closer to the town centre.”

“Longbrook Park needs updating. It is in an excellent position for locals and visitors but the equipment is dire. The nearest park to this is Hotham Park which for many is some considerable distance and means crossing major roads.”

“Mewsbrook Park’s upgrade has been very disappointing to many as the equipment is large and aimed at older children, so sadly the reception aged kids no longer enjoy it there.”

“More picnic benches would be great in all the parks as one bench doesn’t really help seating arrangements. For Ferring park, perhaps more sensory items for the children as it’s the only park in Ferring, along with maybe a small trampoline that we have seen at other parks, as some of the equipment is large outgrown the other facility. An area of the park which is a shame. Also dogs need to be kept on leads to help with situations such as the zip wire getting constantly broken.”

“The options of play parks, particularly on the sea front where most visitors are to be found, are terrible. West Park has a good quality play park, however Longbrook is dire and has no real alternative at the western end of the promenade. Encouraging visitors out and about and signing play amenities along the sea front is undoubtedly a common sense approach.”

“The park equipment provisions in East Preston are poor.”

“The play park on Larksfield / Pulborough park located on the Flansham park estate has so much potential due to its size within the fenced off area, why not develop this further?”

“The two parks in Angmering (I don’t think either are run by Arun) are poor. The main park in Bramley Green has nothing but two swings for younger children. My 3 year old is too small for the large climbing frames and there is nothing else safe for her to play on. The other park has a smaller climbing frame and swing set but is too small for my son and he gets bored. He is 7. The main Bramley Green Park by the community centre could do with a smaller climbing frame/slide set for the younger children.”

“The Worthing Road Rec, which is closest for my children to visit, is an absolute disgrace. The ground in the toddler park is uneven and unsafe; the pathetic, unfenced area with a token set of swings is covered in dog mess and isn’t challenging or inviting for 5+ children which have outgrown the other facility. An area of deprivation which Wick is, where families would benefit from taking their children to an exciting, stimulating, outdoor green space is a major let down. Just to have the stinging nettles cut back from park equipment would be a start!”

“We have some play areas in Arun which have a lot of potential to be great assets to the community, these should be added to and the focus of play area funding (i.e. West Park in Aldwick and King George V in Felpham).”
“West Meads is the poor cousin to all the other parks; it is the only park for us within walking distance so we are reliant on a car. Desperately needs an upgrade!”

“West Park is a highly used park yet it is in dire need of improvement - old, worn equipment, little variety, and the flooring is dangerous.”

“West Park needs immediate attention. It is a very high value play area and facilities need to be improved. Free toilets, better cafe, bins emptied more regularly so they don’t overflow in summer. Better play equipment for all ages, I particularly feel it is lacking for 4+ other than the zip wire which they often have to queue at 10 minutes or more for a go! It’s a huge space, please make it great. We’d love to help! See Donnington, Sherborne and Mewsbrook for inspiration!!”

Miscellaneous comments  (24 responses)

“10 minutes seems a sensible distance to have access to a local well maintained play park with good equipment in a safe environment. This should make it more appealing to families to pop to these areas to get outside, let the children explore, get exercise, and have fun. This is particularly important to reduce families using their vehicles and staying indoors. And the use of these local facilities will help children to stay fit and encourage a healthier lifestyle.”

“Ask local people to come forward and set up working parties to help maintain play areas and raise funds for developing sites. I would happily take on a coordinating role.”

“Green space and play parks are important to our community; everyone should have access whether walking, cycling or driving. I suppose this not the right place to say it, but stop building new housing developments and concentrate on what we have.”

“I am happy for part of my council tax to go to the upkeep of these parks/play areas.”

“I didn’t know before doing this survey how many parks there were in the Arun area. Maybe more advertising is required?”

“I hope that Arun will continue to support our local play areas as vital resources for public health, including mental health, of children and families. I would like to see a commitment to suitable areas for different abilities and age groups including facilities for teenagers such as basketball courts, youth shelters and skate parks. Play areas should be viewed as integral to social cohesion and also a tool to tackle childhood obesity and health problems. I hugely value our parks and play areas as a parent and as a professional working with families in this area.”

“I think parks are hugely important for young children. They enjoy being out and as a parent it is invaluable to have a good park to walk to as a way to entertain children for free.”

“I would like the parks to continue to be smoke free. If the park allows dogs there should be a dispenser of bags so that parents without dogs can clean areas when unfortunately dog owners have slipped up and failed to clean up in high traffic areas for play. Play is not only about equipment; ball games and others should be taken into account.”

“It would be easier if you told us which parks you were actually referring to and then we could give you a better answer based on our experiences there.”

“Kids are only young once.”

“Many of your questions provide a narrow scope for responses, forcing either/or answers, many of which might ‘con’ respondents, as did the earlier Amenity Tip questionnaire.”

“Play areas are important for young families in the community but don’t forget that so is open green space for other family/group activities like quick cricket, frisbee, learning to ride a bike, and rounders/softball.”

“Play spaces are really important to our family.”

“Please do not apply the logic if a site 100 yards away. Those further away - such as 300 or 400 yards.”

“Please save our play areas.”

“Spend some money on our kids for once before all your Tory voters die of old age and you’re left with an under-educated, deprived, generation who were never given the advantages to grow and develop...and all the kids, not just the middle class, able bodied ones, whose parents vote.”

“Stop penny pinching. Children who play are less likely to suffer obesity.”

“Thank you for our local provision. We appreciate it is hard to maintain all the play areas.”

“The importance of play in a child’s development can’t be stressed enough. A good council recognises this and does not favour one town’s play provision over another.”

“Kids are only young once.”

“Many of your questions provide a narrow scope for responses, forcing either/or answers, many of which might ‘con’ respondents, as did the earlier Amenity Tip questionnaire.”

“Play areas are important for young families in the community but don’t forget that so is open green space for other family/group activities like quick cricket, frisbee, learning to ride a bike, and rounders/softball.”

“Play spaces are really important to our family.”

“Please do not apply the logic if a site 100 yards away. Those further away - such as 300 or 400 yards.”

“Please save our play areas.”

“Spend some money on our kids for once before all your Tory voters die of old age and you’re left with an under-educated, deprived, generation who were never given the advantages to grow and develop...and all the kids, not just the middle class, able bodied ones, whose parents vote.”

“Stop penny pinching. Children who play are less likely to suffer obesity.”

“Thank you for our local provision. We appreciate it is hard to maintain all the play areas.”

“The importance of play in a child’s development can’t be stressed enough. A good council recognises this and does not favour one town’s play provision over another.”
“The relative cost of these parks compared to some of the other costs are not really comparable. Parks give people a reason and a place to get outside.”

“This question is far too simplistic to answer.”

“This survey came to me via a friend, I have not seen it widely publicised, the issues raised are important to our children, grandchildren and future generations. Green spaces must not be taken away in an attempt to turn less frequently used play areas into a developer’s dream. Oh look another piece of land to build on!!”

“We have had huge cuts to public spending, I do not feel this is an area we should be scrimping on. If budget is an issue I am sure many people would pay more. It just needs to be transparent.”

“While I agree investing in one quality site is preferable, if the council adopt this policy we will see closure of play spaces and decline in maintenance of these green spaces. This is not acceptable.”