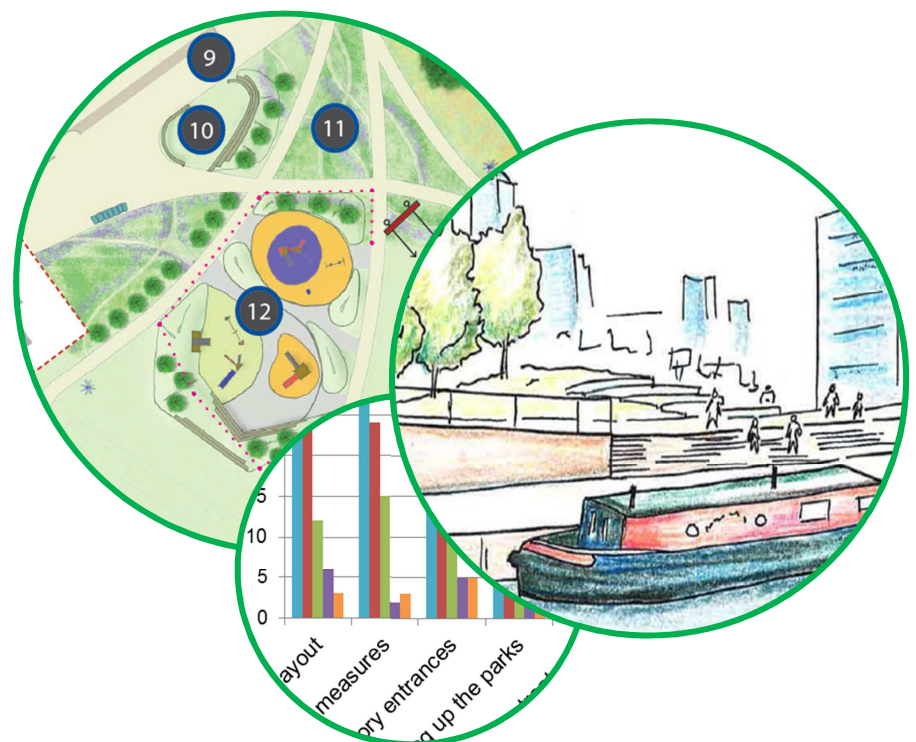


# Consultation Summary Report

## Bartlett Park Landscape Masterplan





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## Introduction

Tower Hamlets Council is currently preparing a Masterplan to improve Bartlett Park in Poplar. The draft version of the plan suggests a number of small and large improvements to many elements of the park as well as to the road network bordering the park.

To help us understand what park users, local residents and local organisations would like to see in the park, we carried out a six week consultation to gather feedback.

The consultation ran from 21<sup>st</sup> May to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 and was carried out by Council officers from the Strategy & Resources team in the Communities, Localities & Culture Directorate (which includes the Parks & Open Spaces team). The intention was to gather feedback on what people liked, what they didn't like, and to ask for suggestions on anything else that might have been missed.

Throughout the six weeks of consultation officers put on a range of activities and events to gather feedback, including:

- Administering a questionnaire survey (online and hard copies);
- Holding a number of drop in sessions at Chrisp Street Idea Store where people could drop by without appointment;
- Holding weekend exhibitions at Bartlett Park for park users and residents
- Arranging a stakeholder workshop for key local organisations to meet and discuss the plans.

A summary of the findings of the events and activities that were carried out is presented in this report. The report is presented in three parts:

- The first section provides the context to the Masterplan, setting out why we consulted, who we consulted with and how the consultation will help us in preparing the final Masterplan;
- The second section presents findings from the consultation, including an analysis of the questionnaire survey and summaries of the discussions we had at the drops in sessions at the Idea Store and Bartlett Park and from the stakeholder workshop we arranged;
- The third section sets out what we will do next and provides a simple timeline for the preparation of the Masterplan.

## Context

### What did we consult on?

The draft Masterplan identified a range of proposals such as the closure of Cottall Street, the extension of the park to the canal, removal of fencing and realignment of the road network. The questionnaire survey asked for broad feedback and also specific comments on some of these individual proposals. In our discussions with people we encouraged people to comment on any aspect of the park they felt was important.

Whilst the draft Masterplan showed the footprint of the proposed development by Poplar HARCA and East Thames Housing at Stainsby Road and Cottall Street, we did not seek any comments, nor included any in this report, on any aspect of these developments as they are not part of the Council's Masterplan. Poplar HARCA are one of many consultees on the Masterplan and the footprint was included because we wanted to show residents and local groups that the plans were being drawn up with recognition of potential local developments. Poplar HARCA will be holding a separate consultation exercise on their proposals.

### How did we publicise the consultation?

We wanted to talk to as many people as possible to get a clear picture of local aspirations for the park. Therefore we worked in partnership with Poplar HARCA, who used their knowledge of the area, contacts and facilities to ensure the message was publicised as much as possible.

Officers worked with limited resources and used a range of methods, including some which were suggested by local people, to publicise the consultation.

- Two articles were published in East End Life, one at the beginning of the consultation and the other as a reminder towards the end.
- East London Advertiser were persuaded to run two additional brief articles
- Electronic slides were placed on the TV screen at Idea Store Chrisp Street for the entire duration of the consultation, advertising the questionnaire and drop-in sessions
- Poplar HARCA undertook a leaflet drop to their properties around the park.
- Leaflets were also available at Poplar HARCA's housing offices
- The consultation was advertised on Tower Hamlets Council's website – on the front page, the 'consultation' page, and the Parks homepage.
- Posters were put up around Bartlett Park, and in local shops and cafes
- Local organisations and other interested parties were contacted directly

### What activities took place?

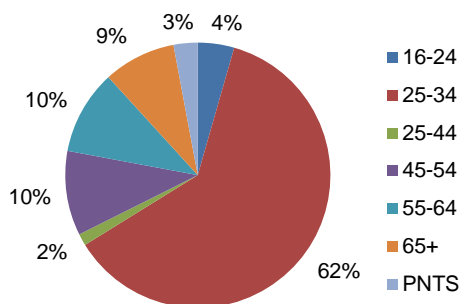
To try and engage with as many groups of people as possible, we held a number of activities and events throughout the six weeks of consultation.

- A questionnaire survey was administered. The survey was available online or as a hard copy.
- Three drop in sessions were held at Idea Store Crisp Street, on three separate days and at different times of the day.
- Two exhibitions were held in Bartlett Park over two different weekends to specifically target those people that use the park. Initially only one session was proposed, but due to the interest and the numbers of people who attended, a second session was organised.
- A workshop was held which provided local organisations and other interested parties (such as the Canal and River Trust) to meet and discuss the plans
- The plans were presented to two residents associations: Lansbury West and Lansbury South
- A separate drop-in session was held for Members

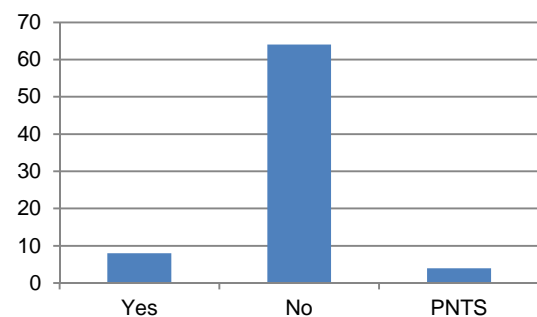
### Who did we speak to?

The graphs and charts below provide a snapshot of the residents and park users who took part in the questionnaire survey. The results do not include those people we spoke with at various drop in sessions who chose not to complete the questionnaire.

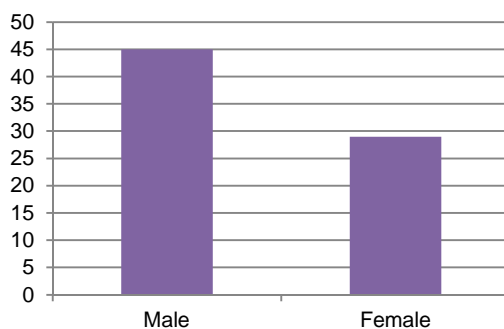
Age groups



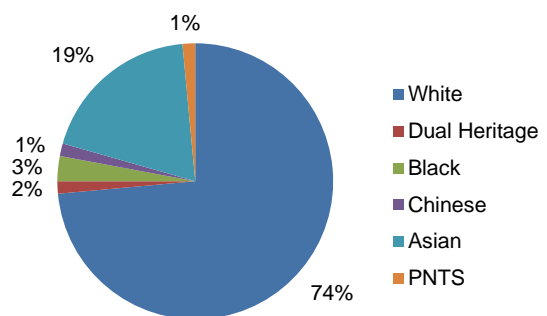
Disability



Gender



Ethnic origin



\*PNTS: Prefer not to say

Whilst we have spoken to a large number of residents and park users, below we have only provided a list of the voluntary and non-voluntary organisations that we have engaged with.

Colmans Wharf TA  
Abbots Wharf TA  
Poplar HARCA  
Bromley By Bow Football Club  
East Thames Housing  
Lansbury South TA  
Lansbury West TA  
Bangladesh Football Association UK  
Silver Gardeners  
Friends of Bartlett Park  
Canal & River Trust  
Lansbury Gardeners  
Greater London Authority  
Play Association of Tower Hamlets

**How will the consultation help us?**

The purpose of the consultation is to help officers to understand the views and preferences of local residents and park users. This will help us to decide what parts of the Masterplan are taken forward to the final stages, what is left behind, and what needs to be adapted.

Whilst the findings of the consultation are a key element in helping us to determine which parts of the Masterplan we take forward, it is important to remember that the decision to take something forward or discard it will need to include a number of other factors including costs.

# Consultation and engagement findings

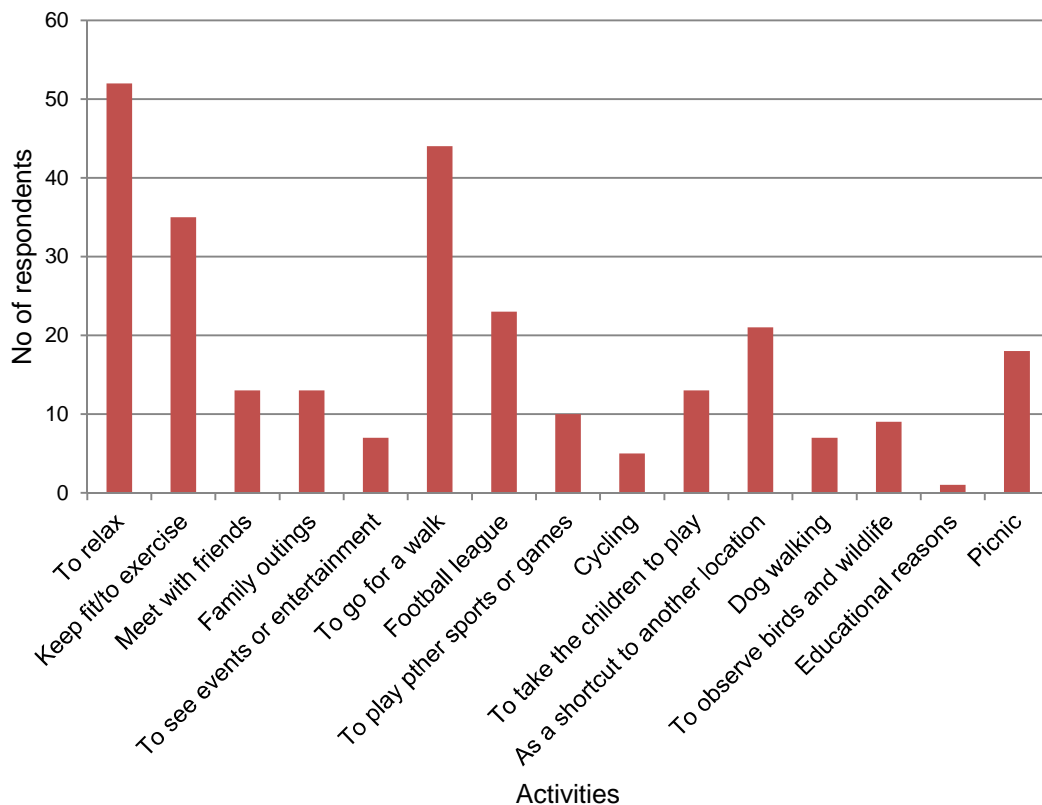
## Questionnaire Survey

The Council has a responsibility to ensure that the borough’s parks and open spaces are utilised as much as possible, and cater to everyone’s needs. The survey was intended to help us understand why people visited the park, as well as what was holding them back from using it.

Most importantly, the survey provided us with specific feedback on the draft proposals that we presented in the Masterplan. Some questions were included so as to obtain feedback on certain, more sensitive proposals, such as whether we should fence children’s play areas or not.

In total, 84 people completed the questionnaire. We do understand that the number of people who completed the questionnaire are relatively low and are therefore not completely representative. Nevertheless, when considered together with direct feedback we received from the drop-in sessions and exhibitions, the responses do give us some indication on which proposals people like and which they don’t.

### Question 1: Why do you visit or use Bartlett Park?



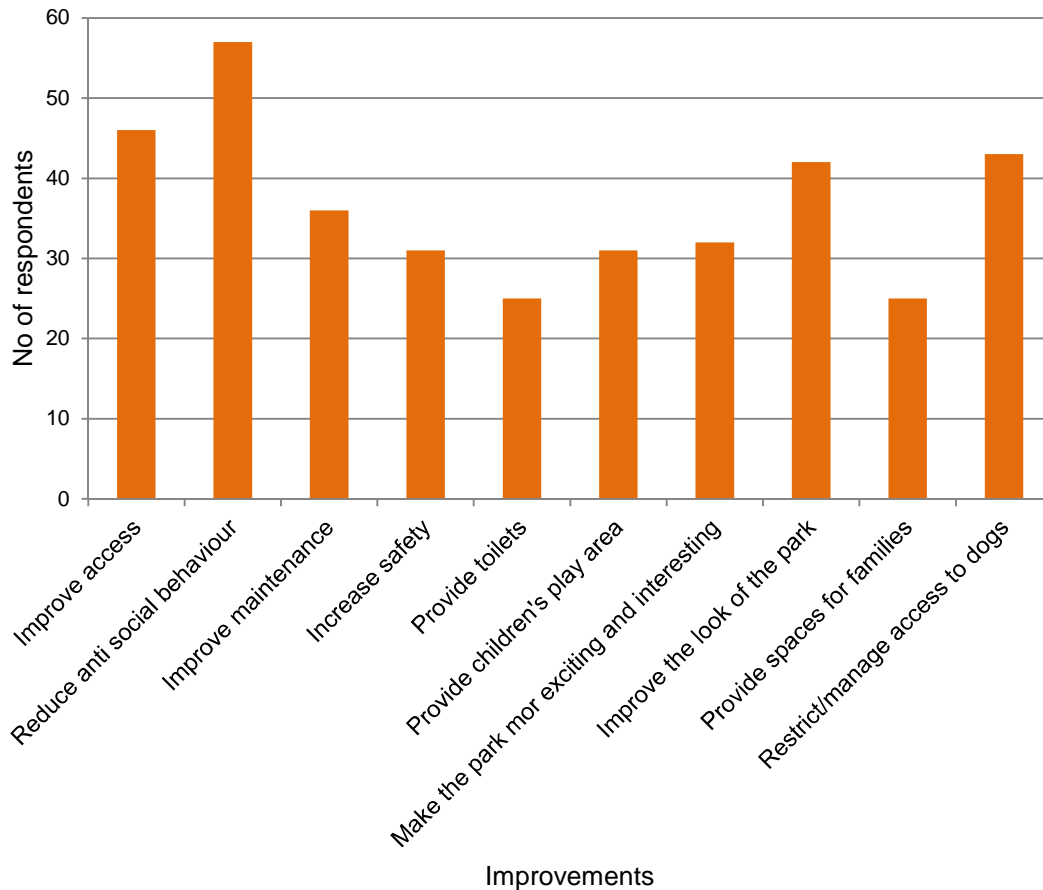
This question was asked to help us understand why people visit or use Bartlett Park. The responses we have received will ensure we not only provide suitable facilities within the park but also design the park in a way which will allow existing users to continue doing popular activities whilst encouraging new activities and new people into the park.



As the chart shows, from the responses received, a large number of people who use the park use it to either relax, go for a walk or to keep fit/to exercise.

Usage of the park for family and friends orientated activities is low, with only a small number of people saying they use or visit the park for family outings, taking the children to play or meeting with friends or to play other sports or games.

**Question 2: What improvements can we make to Bartlett Park that would make you visit or use it more often or increase your enjoyment of it?**

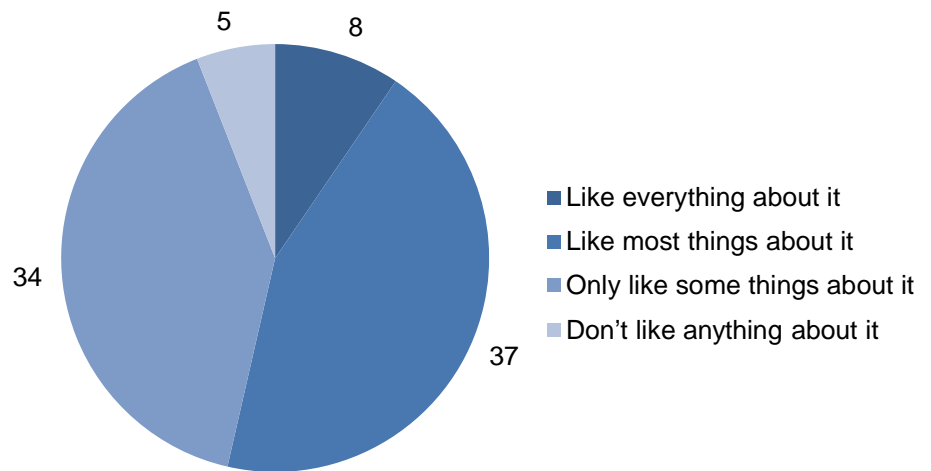


This question was asked to help us understand what improvements people would like to see implemented in the park that would encourage them and other people to visit or use the park.

The question listed a number of improvements that could be made to the park as part of the Masterplan.

The responses we received indicates there is a there is a strong desire to carry out a wide range of improvements to the park, including providing spaces for families, improving the look of the park and providing children’s play areas. However, the main priorities are the need to reduce anti-social behaviour, improve access to the park and restrict/manage access to dogs.

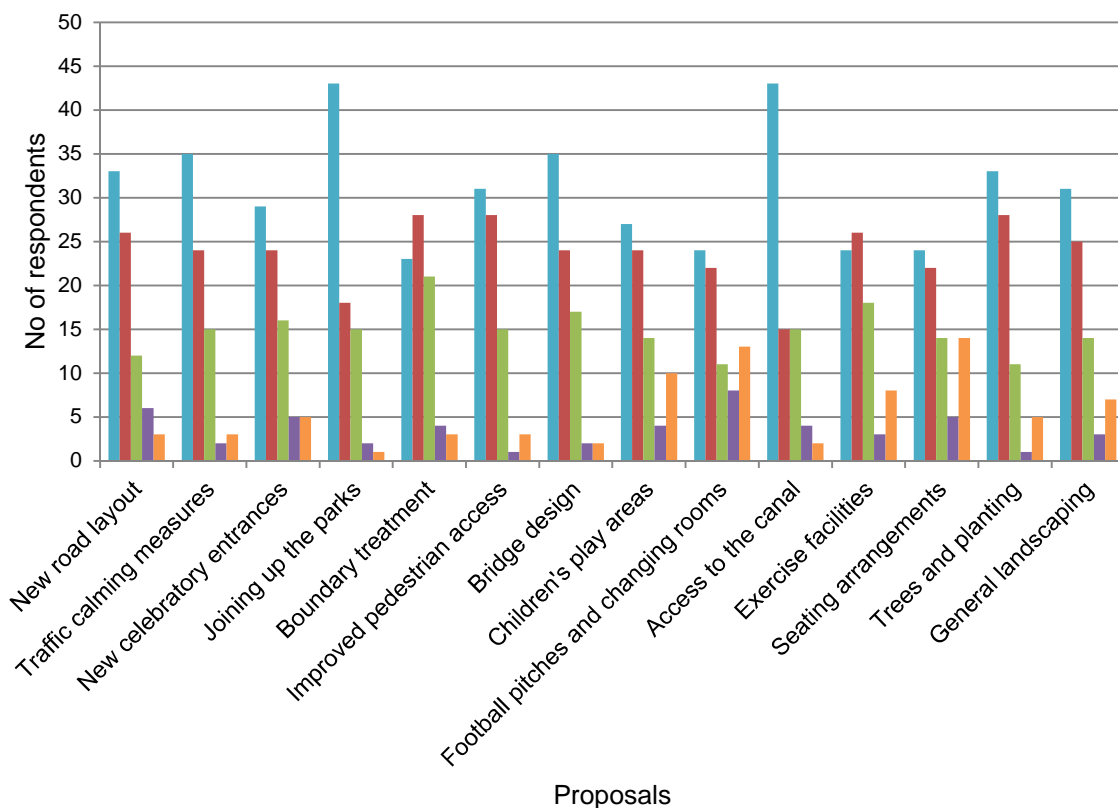
**Question 3: What are your overall impressions of the proposed plans?**



This question was asked to gauge what people's overall impression were of the draft masterplan.

As the chart shows, the majority of people, 71 out of 84 (85%), liked most or some things about the plans. A very small number of people, 5 out of 84 (6%), did not like anything about them, and a small number, 8 out of 84 (9%) liked everything about them.

### Question 4: Can you tell us how much you like each of the proposals?



■ Like it a lot ■ Like it a little ■ Neither like it nor dislike it ■ Dislike it a little ■ Dislike it a lot

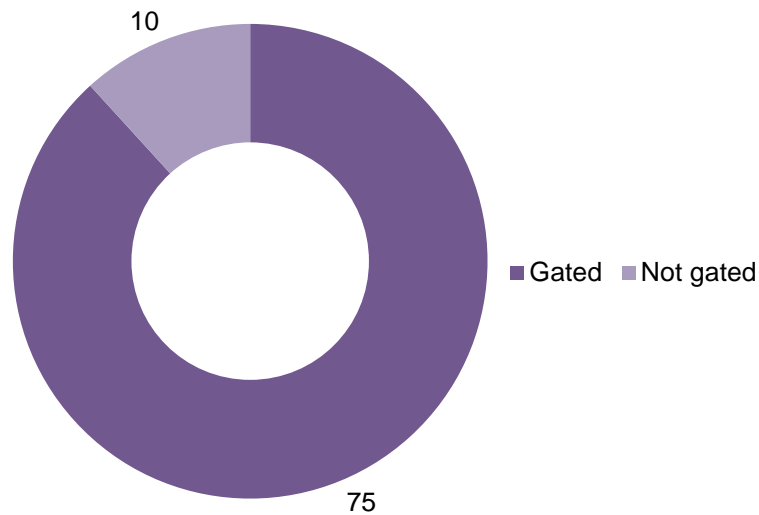
This question was asked to gather specific feedback on the individual proposals presented in the Masterplan.

As the responses show, nearly all of the proposals were very well received by the people who took part in the survey, with the majority of people saying they liked them either a lot or a little.

Across almost all the proposals, only a small number had a significant proportion (more than 10%) of responses that disliked them a little or a lot. The most prominent of these were the football pitches and changing rooms, and the seating arrangement. Even in these cases, it is worth noting that an overall majority still liked both proposals a lot or a little.

The proposals that people seem to like the most are the traffic calming measures, joining up the parks, the bridge design and improving access to the canal.

**Question 5: Do you prefer younger children's (0-5 years) play spaces to be gated or not gated?**

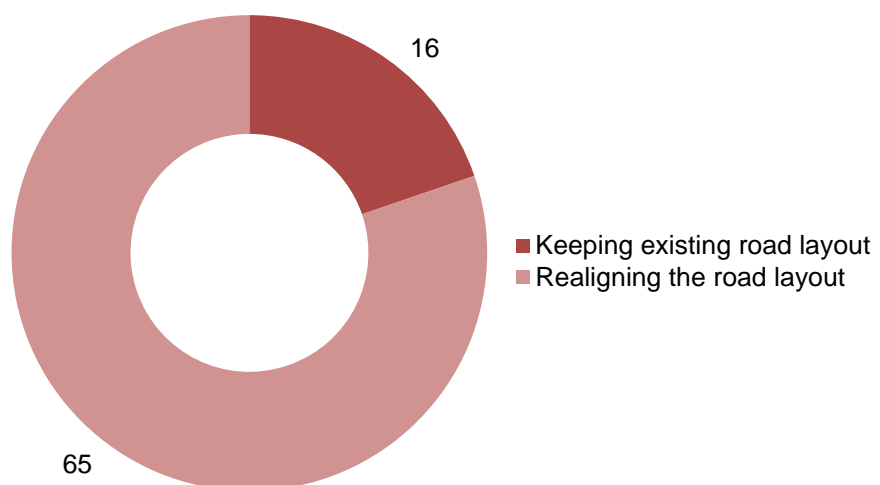


Delivering high quality and safe children's play spaces is crucial to ensure the spaces we provide are well used and encourage more children and families to use the spaces.

Whilst there are numerous arguments for and against keeping play spaces gated from a design, safety and usability point of view, the question was asked to specifically to help us understand what the people who will use the park prefer.

As the chart shows, the overwhelming majority of people who responded, 75 out of 85 (88%), prefer children's play spaces to be gated.

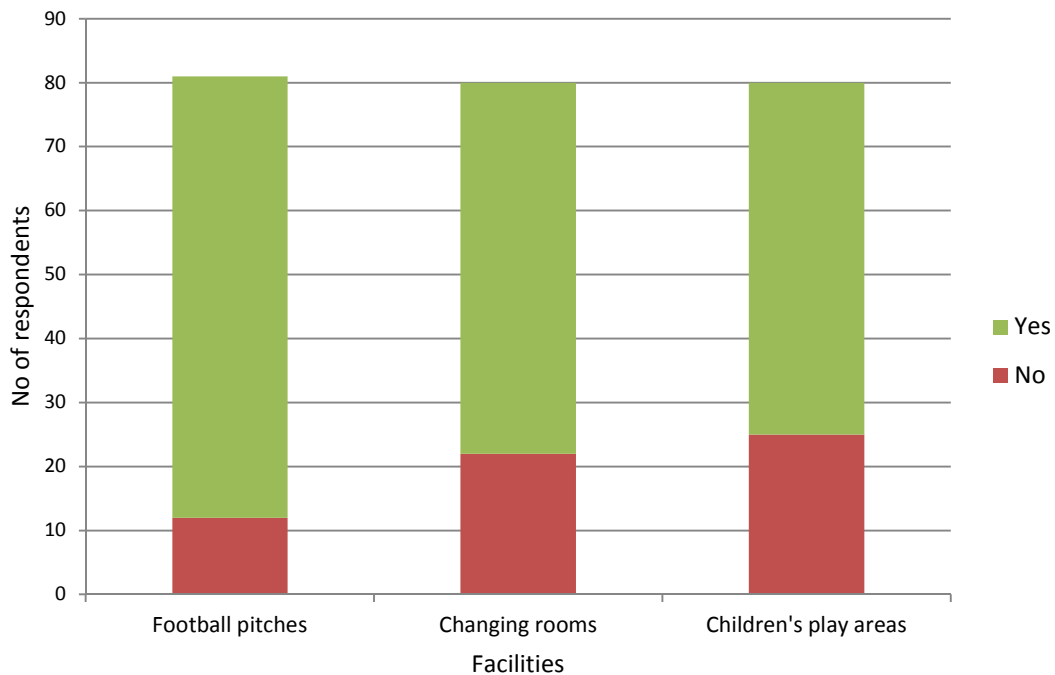
**Question 6: Which option do you prefer for integrating the space on which the adventure playground is currently situated into the main body of the park?**



As one of the key major proposals put forward in the Masterplan, it was crucial to ensure we understand which option people preferred.

As highlighted by the chart, a clear majority of people who responded, 65 out of 85 (76%), prefer the option of realigning the road network and physically incorporating parcel of land on which the adventure playground is located in to the park.

**Question 7: Do you agree that the following facilities have been located in the right place?**



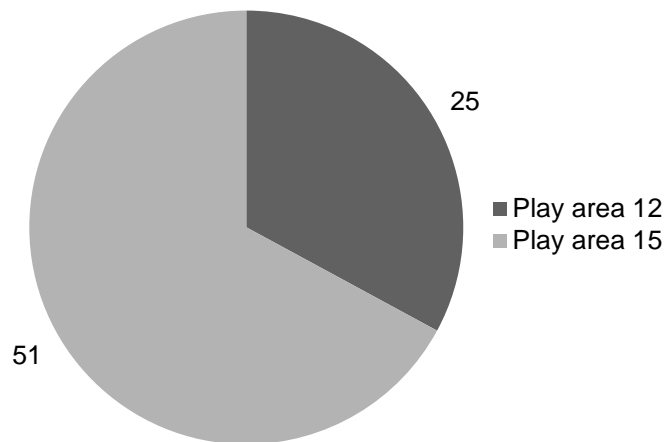
Ensuring facilities are located in the right places is important to make sure everyone can enjoy the park without disturbing others too much.

The question was asked to gauge people’s opinion as to whether the three main facilities in the park, the football pitches, changing rooms and children’s play areas, were located in the right places.

As the chart shows, an overwhelming majority of people agreed that all three facilities were located in the right places.

We also received a number of comments suggesting a third option for children’s play areas, which is to keep the adventure playground where it is and to locate the younger children’s play area next to the adventure playground. This is a viable option and one which will be considered.

**Question 8: In which play area would you prefer to see the adventure playground relocated?**



The questions was asked to help identify which of the two potential play areas identified in the Masterplan people would prefer to see the existing adventure playground relocated to.

As the chart shows, majority of people would prefer the adventure playground relocated to play area at the north/south of the park.

As with Question 7, a number of people commented that the adventure playground should remain where it is. This is a viable option and will be considered.

## Feedback from discussions

The majority of feedback that was received at the drop in sessions and exhibitions was positive, with people having a favourable opinion on the initial proposals in the draft Masterplan. There were some concerns, including from local residents on implications of some parts of the Masterplan. However, the clear message we received from a large number of residents and park users was that the park definitely needs improvement works and new facilities to encourage more people to visit and use the park for different activities.

We have provided below a summary of the main comments, ideas and concerns put forward during the discussions. What is apparent is that it will be a difficult balancing act to keep all groups and people happy. Often, the preferences of one group were in direct contradiction to the preferences of other individuals.

### Concrete seating

We received a number of mixed messages regarding the concrete seating that was proposed around the football pitches for spectators. The majority of the people we spoke to liked the idea of the concrete seating, saying it was tiring having to stand to watch the football games. However, some of the people that we spoke to were concerned that the seating will attract anti-social behaviour and therefore did not want the seating at all. Other people said that the seating should be relocated so it is not so close to homes in and around the park.

### Grass mounds

As part of the landscaping, the Masterplan proposed a number of low level grass mounds. The concrete seating would also be incorporated into the mounds, as would the changing room. Some local residents expressed concerns that the mounds will attract more anti-social behaviour, particularly youths on motorbikes and quad bikes late in the evening.

### Floodlights

Whilst floodlights for the football pitches are not part of the Masterplan proposals, some users of the park did suggest installing floodlights on one or both of the pitches to extend the usability of the pitches into the evening during the winter season. However, residents living in and around the park were unsupportive of this suggestion due to the impact it would have on them.

### Removal of fencing

The proposal to remove all of the fencing from around the perimeter of the park was received well by some people. However, a large number of people we spoke to were concerned of the safety implications of removing the fencing, such as children wandering off on to the roads. The preference amongst this group of people is to maintain the fencing around the entire perimeter of the park.

### Growing area / Community garden

A number of local residents and community groups suggested that a small portion of the park should be allocated as a growing area (for example a vegetable garden) for local people and community groups to maintain. The area would not necessarily be fenced and would be accessible to all park users.

### **Quiet areas**

A number of people we spoke to also wanted there to be dedicated quiet areas where people can relax. They were concerned that the park was providing too many activities, which would mean there wouldn't be sufficient space for people to engage in quiet activities like reading.

### **Public toilets**

Some people suggested the need to provide public toilets in the park, saying that a lack of provision can stop some people, especially those with young children, from visiting parks. People felt that the toilets would be more appropriate as part of a café or other facility rather than on their own, as they can easily become vandalised and this encourages anti-social behaviour.

### **Fenced off area for dogs**

A number of dog owners who currently use the park to walk their dogs suggested a fenced off area for dogs. This would provide them with a space to let the dogs of the lease so they can run around without interfering with other park users.

### **Access for emergency vehicles**

There was concern amongst some residents that the closure of Cottall Street will create a bottleneck at Lindfield Street. Residents asked that any impact is mitigated by rethinking parking arrangement around the park and speaking to the emergency services to ensure appropriate access is maintained for emergency vehicles to access all developments, existing and new ones, around the park.

### **Stinkhouse Bridge (over the Limehouse Cut)**

Whilst the design of the bridge was received well, there was some concern amongst people and organisations that we spoke to that it may not be well suited to this location and may in fact become a destination for anti-social behaviour.

Furthermore, we were asked that if improvement works were to take place on the bridge then we consider both sides of the bridge rather than just the side facing the canal. Also, if the bridge is to be widened as proposed, it should include better pedestrian access alongside the road and provide improved lighting for towpath users below.

A large number of residents we presented the plans to also said that they would like to see the name 'Stinkhouse Bridge', as the bridge is known as to local residents, be somehow commemorated on the bridge.

### **Keep everything as it is**

A couple of residents we spoke to wanted the park to remain as it is. They felt that any changes to the park to encourage greater levels of use would attract anti-social behaviour.



## What next?

The next stage in the Masterplan preparation is to draft the final version of the plan which will form the basis of the improvement works to the park.

Prior to preparing the final draft, we will present and discuss the findings from the consultation at a Steering Group meeting. The Steering Group is made up of representatives from different services (including Parks & Open Spaces) across the Council. Taking into consideration factors such as delivery costs and overall benefits, the Steering Group will decide which elements of the Masterplan should be delivered and which elements should be discarded.

Following this, we will have further discussions with the landscape architects to determine how best to take forward the proposals which have been selected. We will also meet with Poplar HARCA and East Thames Housing to discuss how to design the boundaries between the park and the proposed developments at Cottall Street and Stainsby Road.

Once the details are agreed we will prepare the final Masterplan. This final version of the Masterplan will set out the design and improvement works for the park as well as provide detailed costs and other information needed to deliver the projects.

Delivering the proposals will commence once the Masterplan has been adopted by the Council. Due to the nature of how the improvements are being funded, the works will be packaged into smaller projects and delivered as and when funding becomes available. The Masterplan will contain details on the order that projects will be delivered. It is important to remember that the complete Masterplan may take several years to implement, subject to funding.

### Masterplan preparation timeline

