

Midland Terrace Playground Improvements Survey Report

Introduction

This report summarises the feedback received from local residents about the proposed improvements to Midland Terrace Playground.

Ealing Council and Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) are working together to make improvements to Midland Terrace Playground. In 2020 local people came together to work with Ealing Council and OPDC to develop a vision to improve the playground and neighbouring open spaces at Victoria Gardens and Cerebos Gardens. We have recently secured funding to deliver a first phase of these improvements at Midland Terrace playground. We asked local people to tell us what playground improvements they wanted to see and also to tell us about how they use the playground and what they like and dislike about it.

Engagement process

A leaflet was hand delivered to nearby homes to advertising the online survey and site drop in event. The online survey ran from 15th May to 17th June. The survey included a range of questions to understand how people currently used the play area and what equipment and other improvements they would like to see. Information about the consultation was also sent out by Ealing Council and OPDC social media before and during the online survey period.

We held a drop in event in the playground on 22nd May from 3.30-7pm with display boards showing the range of proposals. Residents were invited to come and talk to officers about the playground and the range of possible improvements.

17 local people completed the survey online and around 30 residents attended the drop in event and gave feedback.

Survey Results

To find out what type of play activity people would like at the Midland Terrace Playground we asked them to select their favourite items from an illustrated list of 8 items of play equipment.

The most popular requests were to refurbish the swings, to add a junior slide and climbing unit, to replace the wooden balance trail, to add a ground level trampoline and a wide springy seesaw. The least popular item was the sensory play panel for toddlers.

Other feedback about play equipment included requests to remove the old rocking rocket and springers and to make sure that all play equipment is well maintained in the future. There were also suggestions to move the play boulders away from the play equipment and concern that there is no room for ball games in this site.

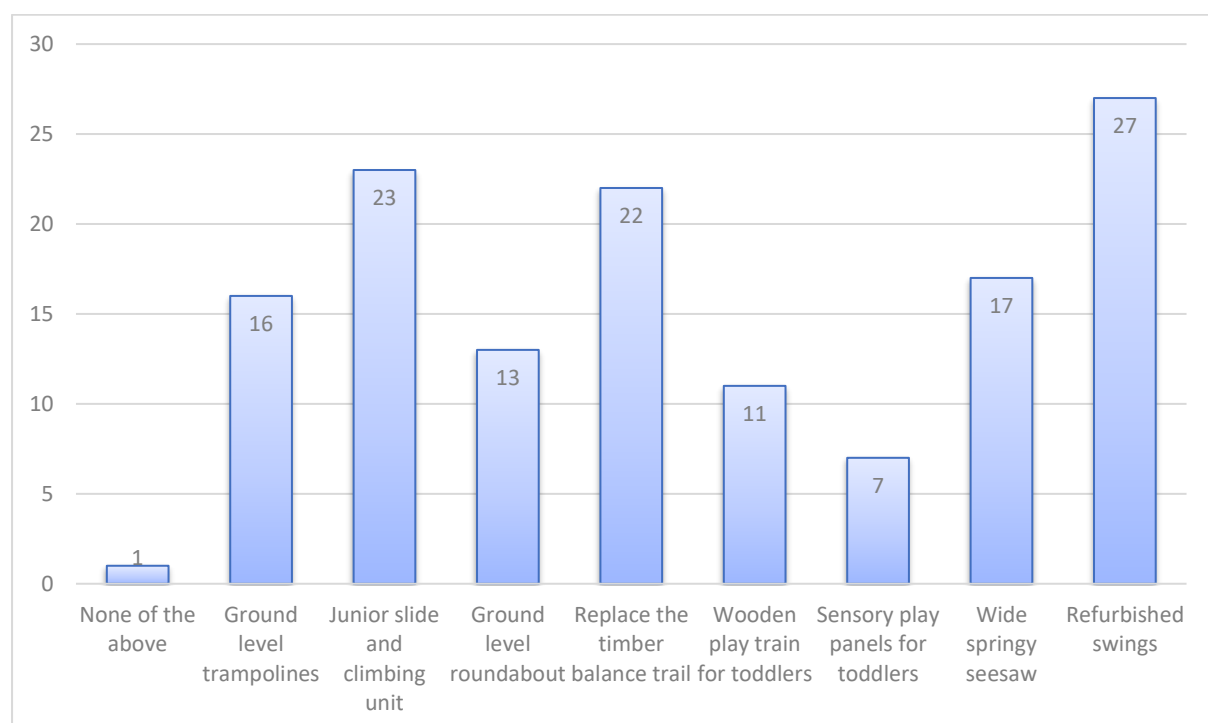


Table showing scores for the choice of play equipment.

We asked what other improvements people would like to see in the playground and we showed them an illustrated list of 8 ideas.

The most popular improvements were to provide picnic tables, to create a community art mural, to add more seating and to make bird boxes and bug hotels for wildlife. The least popular idea was to create a flowering meadow area.

General feedback included concern about the lack of existing maintenance to play equipment and grass mowing making the playground feel unsafe. Several respondents felt that that new planting such as wildflower meadows may not be properly maintained. There were also concerns about the playgrounds’ location next to Victoria Road, to make sure that access gates had secure latches and requests for planting to buffer the site from the noisy, busy main road.

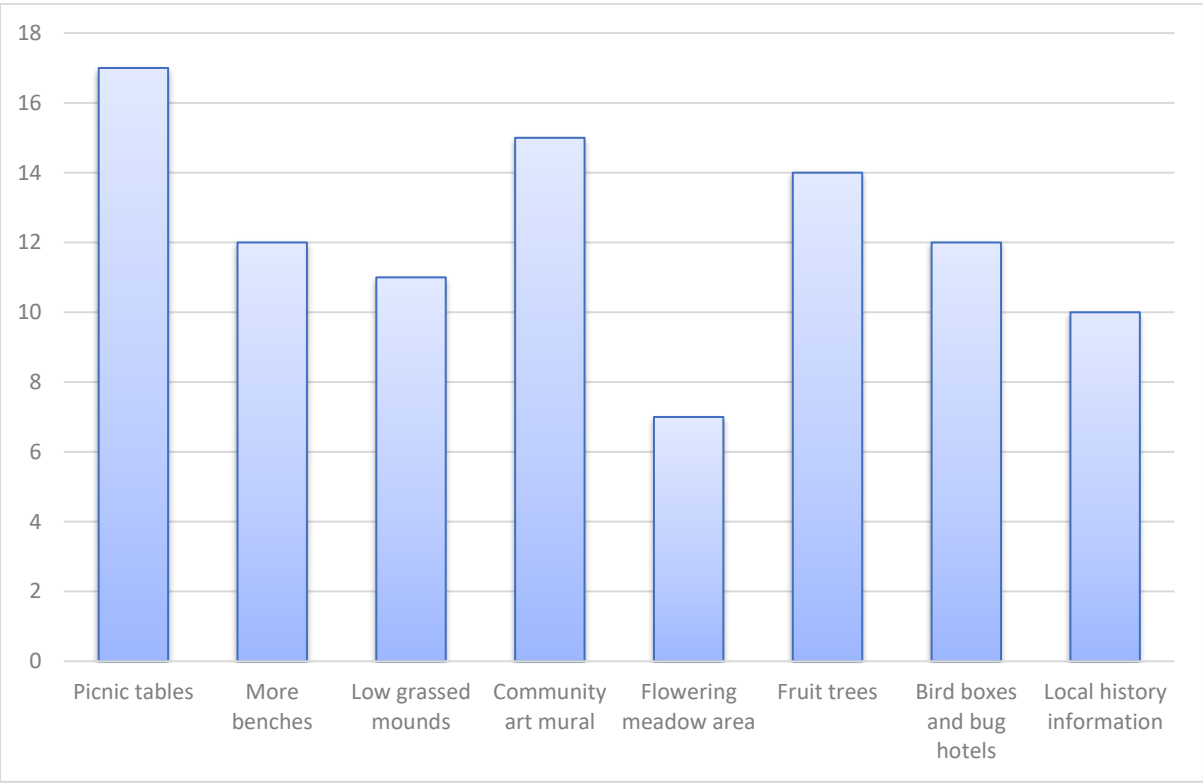


Table showing the scores for the other playground improvements.

We then asked a series of questions to find out how people currently use the playground and how it makes them feel.

46% of respondents rated the playground as ‘Very Poor’, with the remaining 54% of respondents also only rating it as either ‘poor’ or ‘neither good nor poor’. The main reasons given for such low scores were the lack of maintenance, the outdated play equipment and the location next to the busy road.

Most respondents told us they visit the park every day or several times a week. People who told us they visited the playground less often said they did not visit

because of poor maintenance and not feeling safe. Several respondents said they preferred to travel further to other playgrounds which have better facilities and are better looked after including Acton Green playground and Wesley Playing Fields.

The main reasons for visiting were to use the toddler play equipment, the junior play equipment, to relax in the greenspace and to meet friends and neighbours.

Most respondents said they feel 'fairly unsafe' (25%) or 'neither safe nor unsafe' (25%) in the playground, but a few respondents said they felt very unsafe (16%). The main reasons were for this were the poor maintenance, the nearby road making it feel unsafe due to noise and pollution, and issues with people using the park inappropriately including drinking and sleeping in the park.

77% of respondents agreed that spending time in the park helped to improve the health and wellbeing of themselves and their families, but some were concerned about the location of the playground next to the road. Most respondents like that the playground provides a space for interaction, play and exercise with other children, which respondents felt was extremely important to both the children and parents.

We asked people to give us any other comments they felt were relevant to this survey.

Feedback included concern about the overall lack of green spaces within the area, the need for improvements to other local green spaces and the need to prioritise children's and adults' health. Relocating the play area away from the main road in the future was suggested to make it safer for children to play in and to be more overlooked by housing so that parents can keep an eye on their children.

Conclusions and next steps

Respondents were generally very supportive of the proposed improvements to the playground which they felt were long overdue.

Ealing Council and OPDC will take all the above feedback and use it to guide the design of the refurbished playground. The residents' choice of new play equipment and features will be incorporated into the design.

Ealing Council Parks team will look into the current issues with poor maintenance of the playground as a matter of urgency and we will monitor it closely going forwards.