

Wesley Playing Fields Improvements Survey 2024 Report

Introduction

The report below summarises the feedback received for improvements to Wesley playing fields.

Ealing Council and Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) are working together to make improvements to Wesley Playing Fields. We have recently got funding to improve the park, so we asked local people to tell us what they would most like to see and do there. We also asked them to tell us about how they use the park now and what they like and dislike about it.

Engagement process

A leaflet was hand delivered to nearby homes to advertise the online survey and site drop in event. The online survey ran from 5 June to 7 July. The survey included a range of questions to understand how people currently used the park and what 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 drop in events in the park on Saturday 8 June (11 to 2pm) and on Thursday 13 June (11 to 2pm and 3:30 to 6:30pm) with display boards showing the range of proposals. Residents were invited to come and talk to officers about the park and the range of possible improvements.

19 local people completed the survey online and around 50 residents attended the drop in event and gave feedback.

Survey results

There were several recurring concerns about the park that were raised in the feedback we received:

- concerns about poor maintenance of the park and lack of care
- the need for improvements to the park
- concerns about anti-social behaviour in the park including rough sleeping, drug dealing and issues with dogs
- concerns about future plans to open up a route to the canal-side from the park, with safety for young children being a key issue
- concerns about ongoing flooding/drainage in the field that make it difficult to use
- concern about the data centre being built next to the park and its impact on their daily lives

What the survey results told us

We asked a series of questions to understand the following:

- how people currently use the park
- what area the priorities for improvements to the park
- what improvements people would like to see for each area in the park

To find out why people currently visit the park we asked them to tell us their main reason for visiting the Wesley Playing Fields

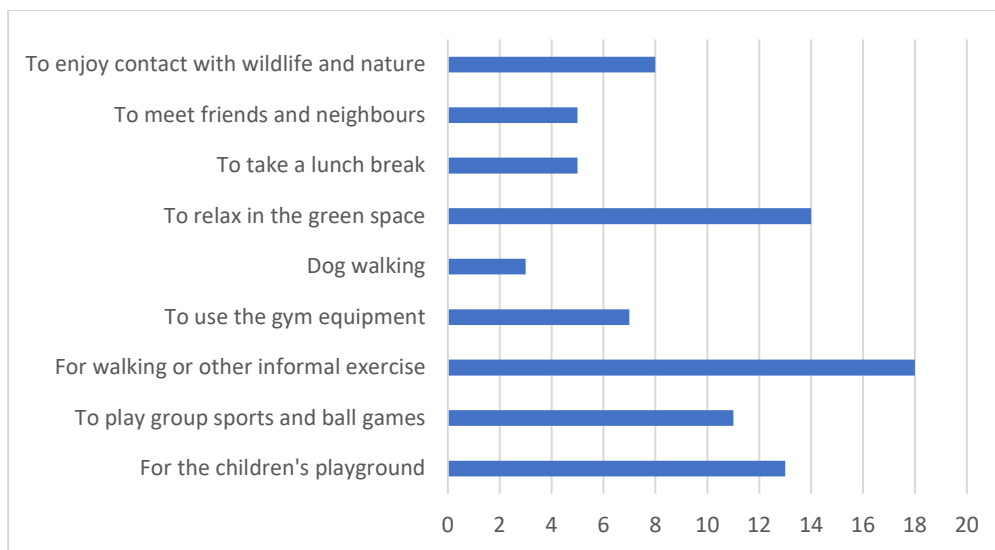


Table showing the reasons why people visit the park.

The most popular reason for visiting the park was for walking an informal exercise (18 responses), with relaxing in the green space (14 responses), using the children's playground (13 responses) and playing group sports (11 responses) also being popular choices. The least popular choice was dog walking (3 responses)

We asked which areas of the park people would most like to see improved and we showed them an illustrated list of nine areas to choose from.

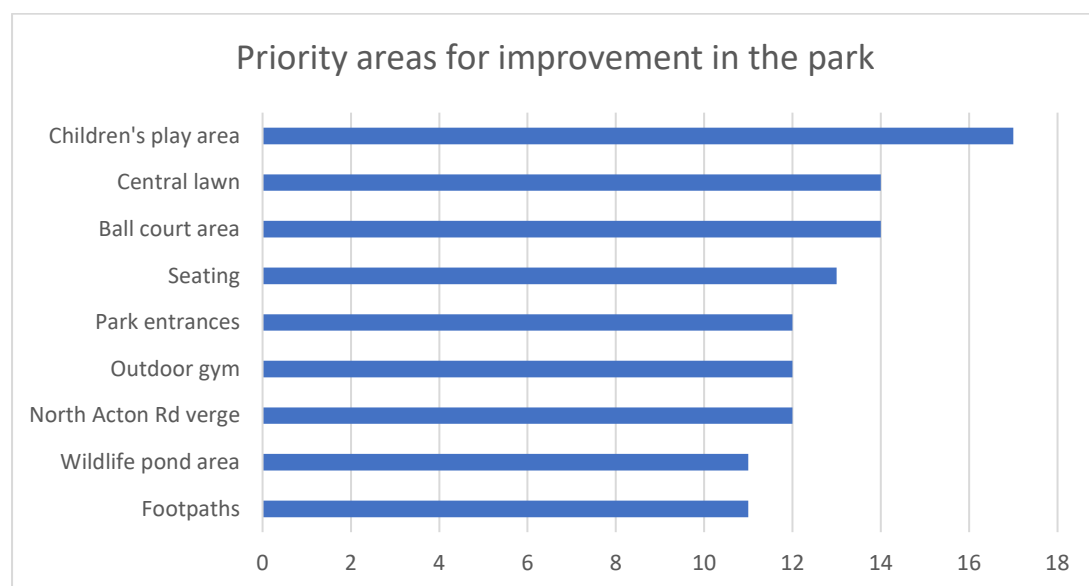


Table showing which areas of the park people most wanted to see improved.

The most popular choices were to improve the children's play area, the central lawn, the ball court area and for more seating areas. Least popular were to improve the wildlife pond area and the footpaths.

General feedback included concern that play equipment was boring and outdated, the ball court needing a better surface and hoops, making the main lawn more suitable for ball games, concern about entrances being narrow and intimidating, improving signage and providing a greater range of seating.

To find out what sort of improvements people would like to see for the play area we gave them six choices

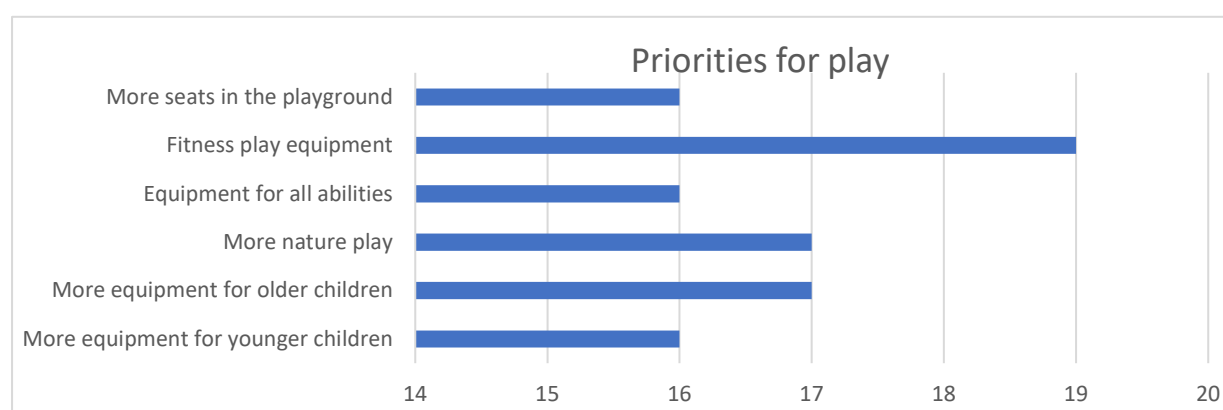


Table showing what playground improvements people most wanted.

All six play improvement options scored highly but fitness play scored the highest, followed by more nature play and providing more equipment for older children.

A wide range of specific play equipment was requested and general comments included requests for a teen social and hang out area and equipment for older

children that is separate from the existing children's play area. There was a consistent message that play equipment, and activities need to be suitable for all ages and abilities and any improvements need to reflect this.

We asked people what sport and fitness improvements they would like to see and we gave them six choices

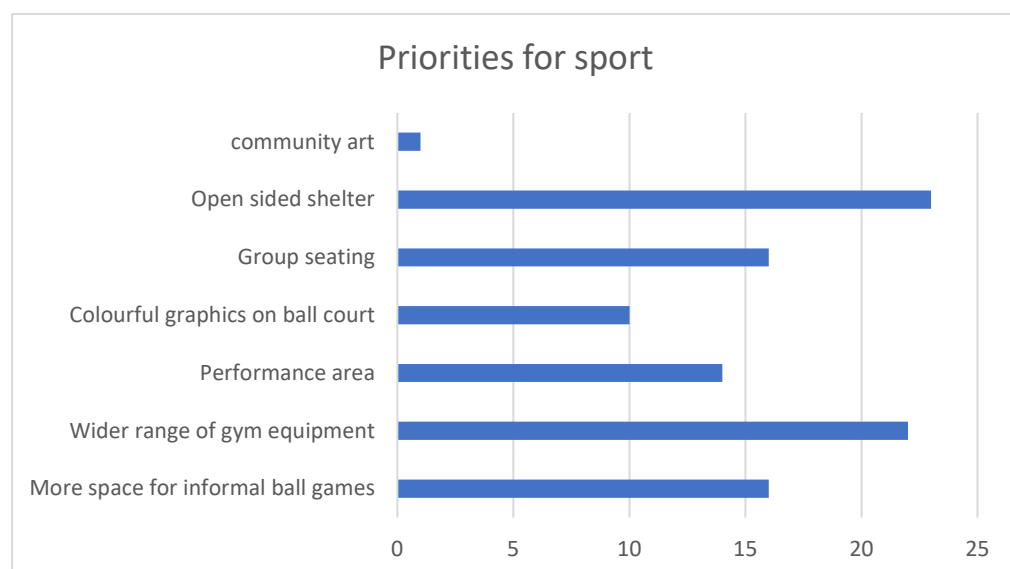


Table showing the scores for the sport and fitness area improvements.

Most popular was to have an open sided shelter near the ball court and to have more gym equipment. Group seating, a performance area and more informal space for sports also scored well whilst colourful graphics on the ball court and community art scored lowest.

There was concern that the existing gym equipment at the back of the fields feels unsafe and hidden and that new gym equipment should be sited in a more open area to make it safer to use. There were suggestions for specific items of gym equipment, for a trim trail and to ensure that existing and new gym equipment and table tennis tables should be accessible for those with disabilities and for older people. Ball court lighting was requested to make it usable in the evenings during winter months.

Next we gave people six choices for what improvements to the planting and wildlife they would most like to see

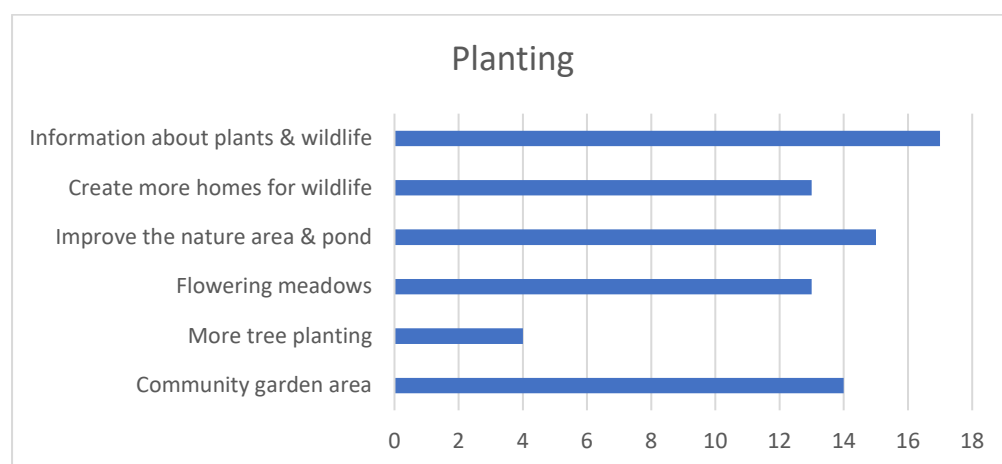


Table showing scores for types of planting and wildlife improvements.

People told us that they would most like to see information about plants and wildlife in the park, an improved nature area and pond, more flowers and a community gardening area. Meadows and more homes for wildlife were quite popular, but more tree planting was least popular.

There was a lot of concern about recent lack of grass mowing and large areas of overgrown shrubs and brambles. Most people felt that maintenance must be improved before any new planting is carried out. Some people suggested running volunteer sessions and nature activities for kids.

For the last question in this part of the survey we asked people to tell us what improvements to paths and entrance areas they would most like

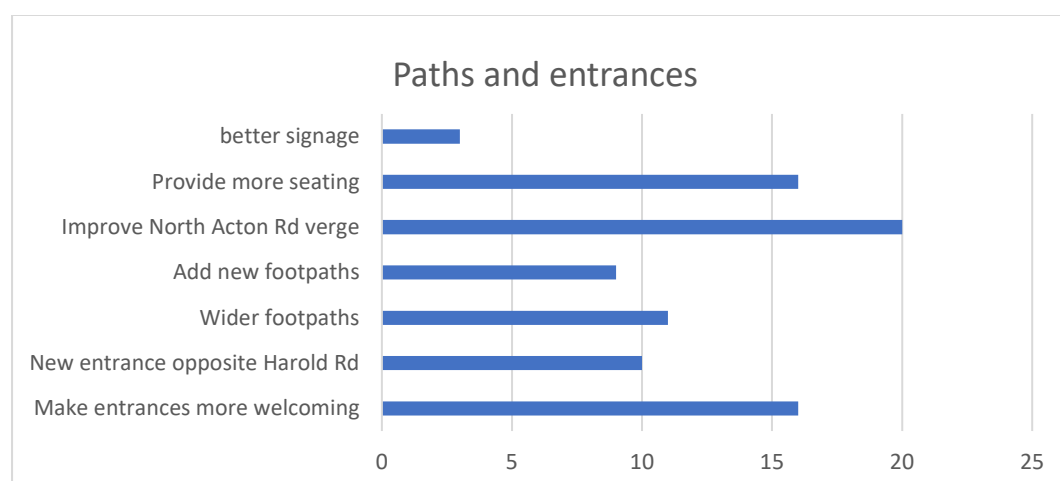


Table showing scores for a path and entrance improvements.

Improvements to the wide verge on North Acton Road was the most popular choice. Providing more seating and making the park entrances more welcoming also both

scored highly. Less popular were to widen footpaths, add new footpaths and create a new entrance opposite Harold Road. Least popular was to improve signage.

Many respondents agreed that more and better seating was required and several asked for covered seating areas and more picnic tables. People were worried about possible road safety issues if a new entrance was added opposite Harold Road and noted that there had been a handful of fatalities on that road already.

Drinking water fountains were also requested, especially to have one located close to the playground.

Other general comments

Some people expressed concern that there is no community meeting space in the Wesley Estate area and asked that something to be re-provided in the local area to ensure that the community could get together.

Others told us that many people have no idea where Wesley Playing fields is and that there is a shortage of green spaces in the area where people can go to relax and to escape from the ongoing works from HS2 and other development works.

We then asked a series of questions to find out how people currently use Wesley Playing Fields and how they feel about the park

50% of respondents rated the park as 'Very Poor', 24% rated it as 'poor' and the remaining respondents rated it as 'neither good nor poor' or 'good'. No respondents rated the park as 'very good'. The main reasons given were the lack of maintenance, safety concerns, anti-social behaviour, and outdated equipment.

39% of respondents told us they visit the park every day, 11% visit at least once a week and 16% visit several times a month. The remaining respondents only visit 2 or 3 times a year or less. Reasons for not visiting very often were the poor maintenance and not feeling safe.

Most respondents (68%) live less than 2 minutes' walk from the park and all respondents lived within 10 minutes' walk including those who completed the survey online.

32% of respondents said they feel 'very unsafe' in the park whilst 26% told us they feel 'fairly unsafe' but another 26% said they felt 'fairly safe' (26%). Only 11% felt 'very safe' and the remainder felt 'neither safe nor unsafe'. The main reasons were for this were anti-social behaviour including drug users and dealing, people sleeping in the park, people drinking and people not controlling their dogs. Poor maintenance was also a concern.

95% of respondents agreed that spending time in the park helped to improve the health and wellbeing of themselves and their families.

Next steps and conclusions

Respondents were generally supportive of the proposals to make improvements to the park and felt these were long overdue. But they were also concerned over the current poor standards of maintenance and with anti-social behaviour, both of which they felt should be addressed as part of any proposals.

Ealing Council and OPDC will take all the above feedback and use it to guide the next stages of design for the park. It is hoped that we will be able to come back to residents in late Autumn with an update on the progress.

Ongoing issues with maintenance of the park are already being addressed by Ealing Council and concerns about anti-social behaviour will also be followed up by teams at Ealing Council.