Belmont Recreation Ground Masterplan: Engagement Report

September 2025



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1. **Background**

In 2022 and 2023, the Friends of Belmont Recreation Ground approached the council with a view to obtaining permission to improve the park in line with consultations they had undertaken with the local community, and in line with a masterplan they had drawn up to reflect that consultation.

This work produced on a voluntary basis, included:

- An original masterplan produced by Merrett Houmøller Architects in Nov 2022,
- A survey which received over 200 responses in Spring/Summer 2023,
- A detailed report analysing that data in Autumn 2023,
- A report critique in Autumn 2023,
- Site priorities in Jan 2024,
- A further iteration of the masterplan produced by Merrett Houmøller Architects.



Masterplan design by Merrett Houmøller Architects utilised in engagement

In 2023 and 2024, prior to submitting a bid to the Football Foundation, the council held engagement to ascertain best location, design principles and programming for its PlayZone bid. This engagement consisted of three strands:

- An on-line survey,
- A number of focus group meetings including with the Friends of Belmont Recreation Ground and Haringey Friends of Parks Forum,

- Professional meetings including with:
    - The Haringey Playzone Consortium,
    - Haringey sport and physical activity providers,
    - Haringey Football Forum,
    - Haringey Safer Parks for Women and Girls Network,
    - Tottenham Hotspur Foundation,
    - Streetgames,
    - Local clubs and NGB's,
    - Disability Action Haringey.

This engagement led to the selection of Belmont Rec as a priority site with a proposal for football and basketball facilities to accommodate an absence of facilities for older children and adults. The engagement also helped to inform the approach towards the booking process, lighting requirements and programming for community use and targeted groups.

2. Engagement Overview

In 2025, with a project officer in place to oversee development in Belmont Rec, engagement commenced on three lines of enquiry: sentiment towards Belmont Rec in its current condition, feedback on the Friends of Belmont Rec's masterplan, and refinement of the PlayZone design following successful grant award.

Outline of 2025 engagement:

Date and Times	Type, location	Comments
28th January	Tree planting	Led by Urban Forest Officer
18th March	Tree planting	Led by Urban Forest Officer
3rd April 15:00-16:30	Safer Parks for Women and Girls Survey	Part Two (Quarterly) With Friends of Belmont Rec
16th April	Online Commonplace Engagement launch	
28th April	Secure by Design (SBD) assessment	With Met Police Design Out Crime Officer and Parks Enforcement Officer
30th April	Meeting with Disability Action Haringey	
Various	Friends of Belmont Rec and Ward Councillor engagement	
Various	Contractor engagement	Regarding drainage, pathways, outdoor gym, masterplan, nature conservation, PlayZone partners
12th May 10:30-12:30	In park engagement	With Parks Development Team
13th May 15:00-18:00	In park engagement	With Parks Development Team
14th May	Alfred Findlay House	

17th May 11:00-14:00	In park engagement	With Friends of Belmont Rec
19th May	Belmont Infant School	With Community Engagement Officer
19th May	Belmont Junior School	With Community Engagement Officer
3rd June 24th June	Door knocking/letter drop Door knocking/letter drop	First session postponed due to heavy rain
3rd July	The Grove School	With Community Engagement Officer
16th July	Park View School	With Community Engagement Officer

3. Engagement Summaries

3a. Safer Parks for Women and Girls survey

Haringey Council conduct quarterly surveys within Belmont Recreation Ground. The objective is to provide valuable data on how we can support women and girls to feel safer in our parks and enable us to monitor the effectiveness of the work we are doing already. The survey consists of two parts – an observational survey of women and girls using the park facilities and a Q&A with women and girls using the parks. Surveys were carried out in pairs and community members who contribute their time received a £30 One4All voucher as a thank you.

On this occasion we spoke with 20 women and girls across a range of ages from under 16 to 74, with the majority in the 30–49 range. Respondents were of diverse ethnic backgrounds including White, Black British, Mixed, Asian, and North African.

Key insights:

- Majority visited with others, often children,
- Most respondents felt “very welcome”, many felt “very safe”, but some noted feeling “somewhat safe” or “very unsafe”,
- Respondents use the playground (especially with children), walk, relax, picnic, cycle, run and play football,
- Most liked: Open space, proximity to school/home, community feel, new trees,
- Areas of concern:
    - Picnic area frequently mentioned as feeling unsafe due to antisocial behaviour (ASB), big dogs and lack of visibility,
    - Evenings/dusk: several respondents avoid the park during these times.
- Suggestions for improvement:
    - More seating and benches
    - Toilets
    - Coffee kiosk/snack shop
    - Better maintenance (e.g. fixing broken equipment)
    - More shade/trees
    - Play for older children
    - Inclusive equipment for children with disabilities

3b. In park engagement sessions

We spoke with 81 people across 3 in person sessions in Belmont Rec in the morning, late afternoon/evening and at the weekend. During each session, we provided plans, questions and space for feedback.



Key insights:

Nature and biodiversity

- Strong support for increasing tree planting, flowers, and natural play areas,
- Many value the “no mow” areas as long as there is space to play,
- Some like rain gardens and some would like more topography,
- Hedge: majority want it lowered or removed and with wider gaps for visibility and safety, few want it preserved for wildlife. Many mention wanting more frequent cutting back.

Play and recreation

- Desire for more imaginative and inclusive play equipment (e.g. pyramid nets, monkey bars, trampolines, zip wires),
- Natural play and wood-based structures preferred,
- Interest in obstacle courses and features like bridges and mounds.

PlayZone (Multi-Use Games Area)

- Mixed sentiment:
    - Supporters:
        - Want facilities for older kids,
        - Like proximity of facility to homes,
        - Would use for activities like football, yoga, boxing, tennis, girls’ football, birthday parties,
        - Have recommended coaches,
        - Some would prefer astroturf pitch instead,
        - Families would use with their children.
    - Opponents:
        - Concerned about noise and antisocial behaviour (ASB),
        - Feel lighting is inappropriate/on too late,
        - Concerned about ecological impact on sparrows and bats,
        - Feel courts are male dominated,
        - Feel would change character of park,
        - Lack of toilets.
    - Booking system seen as a barrier—many feel kids won’t book in advance, some feel the handover period could be challenging,

- Some feel it is in the best location, others suggest relocating to a larger park like Lordship Rec or Downhills Park.

Paths and access

- Strong support for improving boggy paths, requests for better drainage and more accessible routes,
- Mixed views on new path:
  - Most people would like 1 path only using desire line, but slightly curved,
  - Some don't feel it is necessary if the main path is fixed, preferring the open space.

Seating and shade

- More benches needed, especially under trees and spread across the park,
- Shade is a recurring priority—more trees and covered areas requested,
- Some prefer wooden benches.

Dogs

- Concerns about dog fouling and off-leash dogs,
- Suggestions for dog-free zones and clearer signage.

Requests for:

- Water fountains, toilets, coffee kiosk or mobile café (although mixed views), table tennis, better lighting (some support, some opposition), outdoor gym/calisthenics, more bins and improved waste management.

3c. Local Schools

Belmont Infant School



Images from the workshop: responses to questions and plan-making

We held a session in the classroom with 20 Year 2 students. The children enjoy the playground, playing football, badminton, doing PE, sports day and the daily mile. The Rec is a social space for meeting friends after school, making new friends and having picnics. The children like the big open space, trees, tiny forest and picnic spots. They have some concerns about safety and dangerous dogs, there being not enough for older kids and too little seating.

Ideas for improving the park:

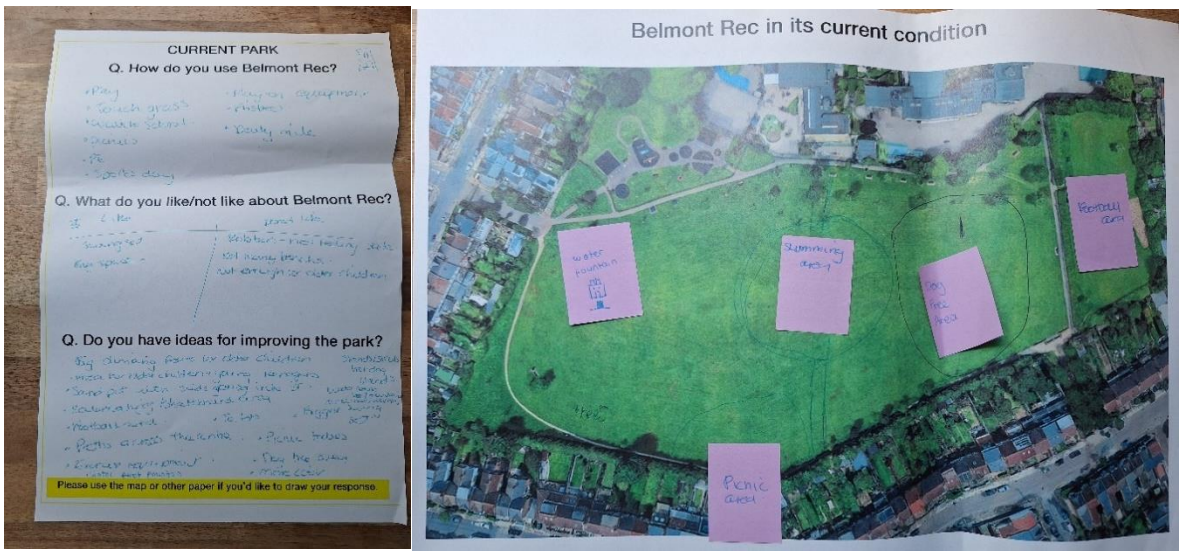
- Play facilities: Big climbing frame, football pitch, monkey bars, high slides, zipwire, sand pit, climbing wall, dirt track for bikes, gym/exercise equipment, roller skating/skateboard area
- Nature and environment: More trees, orchard with fruit trees, pond/lake, bug hotel
- Amenities: Picnic tables, water fountains, café/shop, CCTV, litter pickers, better paths, dog-free area/designated dog area
- The children liked the new play areas, PlayZone, picnic area, café, bridges, rain gardens and paths within the Friends' Masterplan. They would like to see hammocks, bug hotels, dog area/notices included. They would like to preserve open play space whilst improving the pathways.

Belmont Junior School

We held a session in the classroom with 15 Year 6 students. The children use Belmont Rec for football, cricket, rounders, running, climbing trees, PE, sports day, picnics, walking their dogs and playing after school. They like the existing playground and large open space, but don't like how small the playground is, the lack of equipment for all ages, smoking, dog fights and litter.

The children would use the PlayZone for football, roller skating, netball, cricket, racket sports. They feel it is creative and beneficial for sports lovers, but some have concern it might take up too much space.

The children like the play areas, multi-sports area, café, rain gardens, paths, trees and benches within the Friends' Masterplan.



Images from the workshop: responses to questions and plan-making

Ideas for improving the park:

- Play facilities: Bigger playground, more swings, climbing frame, monkey bars, zipline, obstacle course, basketball pitch, football pitch, exercise/gym equipment,

- Nature and environment: More trees, pond/stream,
- Amenities: Café, more benches (especially near trees), picnic tables, toilets, flower garden,
- Cleanliness and safety: Dog-free playground, dog area, more bins.

The Grove School

We combined in park and classroom activity with 6 Year 12 and 13 students. This included a tour of Belmont Recreation Ground, visiting the entrance, picnic area, main field and playground, followed by activity at the school. Tasks involved describing, drawing, envisioning, and thoughts on improvements to the space.

Key Insights:

Nature and environment

- Need more shaded areas and trees, more flowers,
- To cut back the hedge in picnic area,
- Would like open space to be kept. Unsure if new paths are needed. Like space to be open, grass to be kept short, no mow for edges and clearly demarcated.
- Would love the community garden which would link with school activities. Preferred location picnic area. Storage recommended.

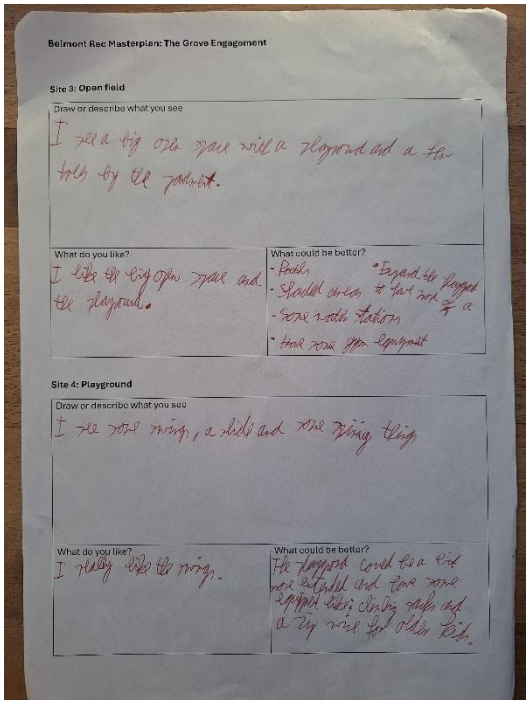
Play facilities

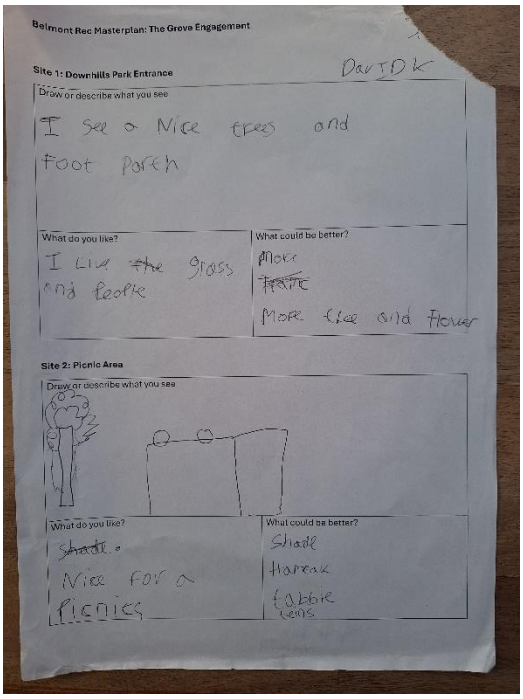
- Need more play for older kids like climbing frames, hammocks, table tennis and zipwire. Love the swings,
- Would like calisthenics/outdoor gym equipment like monkey bars, pull up bars,
- Space for running,
- Would love the PlayZone, would definitely get used,
- Preference for metal for longevity and stability. Don’t like natural play aesthetic.

Amenity

- Need for clear layout, not too many areas to get lost, clear signage,
- Café, more bins across park, events like funfair.

Concerns over safety, accessibility, dogs and parking restrictions discouraging visitors.





Images from the on-site activity

Park View School

We worked with 15 11–16-year-olds from the Year Council and Student Leadership Partners. We combined engagement with Downhills play area improvement and held a tour of Downhills playground and Belmont Recreation Ground followed by activity at the school. Tasks involved drawing, designing, discussion and sharing ways to be involved with developments in local parks.

Belmont Rec site visit:

- Entrance:
    - Like the mosaic entrance, open space, trees,
    - Improvements: fix wall bricks, add art/signage, neater grass, more bins, better path surfacing (tarmac preferred),
- Picnic Area:
    - Potential for football and MUGA in picnic area, need shade, bins, water fountain, benches under trees, simple play equipment.
    - Suggestions: open up hedge, remove ivy, add fruit bushes/trees, bug hotels, community garden (preferred location picnic area),
- Main Field:
    - Mixed views: some want to keep it natural, others suggest dog training area, tarmac paths, benches under trees.

Ideas for improvement through ‘Design Your Park’ activity:

- Zoning, nature area, lake, flowers,

- Fitness area near entrance/playground,
- Accommodate sports day,
- “No mow” areas with long grass and more trees.




Images from the ‘design your park’ activity

PlayZone

- Desired uses: football, basketball, netball, rollerskating (popular with all genders),
- Used as both social and sport space,
- Suggestions: signage for how to book, competitions, organised sports with local schools.

Would like to be involved in outdoor education, litter picking, recycling/art, taster days.

3d. Care homes

We spoke with 6 residents from Alfred Findley House.

Key insights:

- Uses greenspace closest to residency (Russell Park) for walking, sitting on bench,
- Visits other parks like Finsbury Park and Alexandra Palace to feed the ducks or visit café,
- Important for a park to feel safe and accessible,
- Walking an enjoyable and healthy activity for all. All recognise importance of keeping active for physical and mental health,
- Some feel underconfident, exposed, worried about getting hurt regarding using an outdoor gym but others would like to with support/coaching,
- Concerned about safety, ASB and lime bikes in Belmont Rec,
- Likes organised trips away.

3e. Door knocking/letter dropping

28 households on Downhills Park Road and Downhills Way received letters as neighbours closest to the proposed PlayZone with potential to be most affected by the development. 9

households provided feedback in person and the remaining households invited to provide feedback online.



Parks & Leisure

Haringey LONDON

Date: June 2025
Your ref: BelmontRecPlayZones

Dear Sir or Madam,

Because you are a very close neighbour to this proposed facility, I am writing to inform you about a consultation currently being undertaken to introduce a PlayZone in Belmont Recreation Ground.

Following an earlier consultation in 2023, where Belmont Recreation Ground was prioritised along with three other sites for this purpose, the council has been successful in bidding for £250,000 funding through the Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation PlayZone Programme to build a new PlayZone in Belmont Recreation Ground. The PlayZone is a small-sided pitch for football and basketball, although it can be booked for any activity.

The PlayZone design has seating for spectators placed outside the court, alongside bins and a small cage to keep equipment. There will be new lighting columns installed along the path, that connects to Downhills Road entrance to provide safe access to and from the new facility. Year-round use will be supported, subject to planning permission, by floodlights, which will only be activated during booked sessions and will cease by 9pm. Modern lighting designs mean that there will be very little in the way of light-spill beyond the boundary of the PlayZone.

The council has many outdoor sporting and play facilities such as this across the borough and it is important to note that very few complaints are ever received because of noise or nuisance.

The Football Foundation PlayZone Programme is aimed at tackling inequalities and enhancing access to sport for groups facing the greatest inequalities. PlayZones will incorporate Smart Access which will include an online booking system and a keypad entry system. The PlayZone will be free to use the vast majority of the time. For regular block bookers and any commercial use, there are proposed fees, however these bookings will be kept to a minimum to ensure easy access to the community.

If you haven't had an opportunity to give your feedback on the proposal, our online survey will be available until 30th June 2025. Please visit belmontrecmasterplan.commonplace.is or scan the QR code below.

For any further queries please email parkprojects@haringey.gov.uk

With kind regards

David Theakston
Principal Parks Development Manager

Supportive comments:

- Some residents expressed support, especially for basketball use and youth engagement,
- One resident felt it was a good use of investment and part of the site's positive transformation,
- Another appreciated the relocation of the facility away from the school due to previous noise issues.

Concerns raised:

- Lighting and noise were common concerns, especially for homes backing onto the park.
- Teenagers and drinking in the area were mentioned, though one resident saw the facility as a way to redirect that energy positively.
- Gender inclusivity was questioned, with one resident feeling the facility benefits boys more than girls and excludes disabled people and women.
- Environmental concerns were raised, including the impact on the "tiny forest" and potential flooding.

Neutral or no feedback:

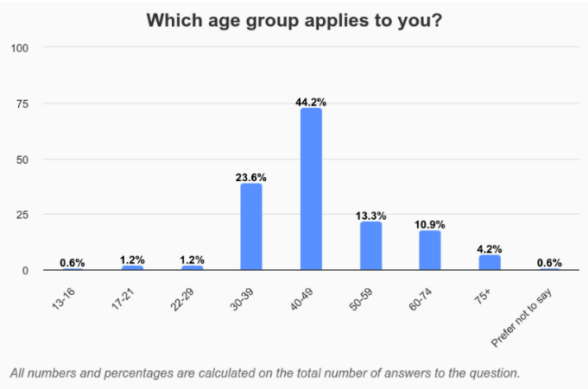
- Language barriers were noted, with few residents not fluent in English.
- Some residents were not interested or felt the facility wouldn't affect them

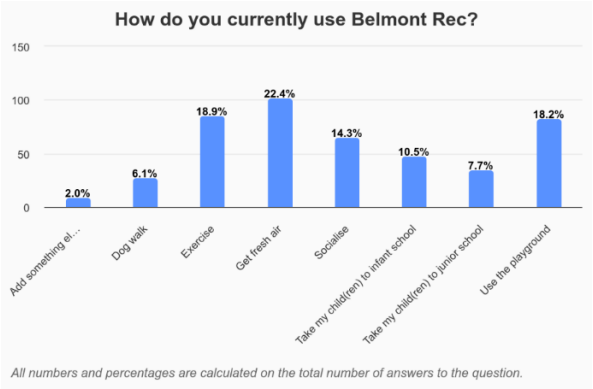
3f. Commonplace engagement



- 3 surveys were created to gather information on: sentiment towards Belmont Rec in its current condition, feedback on the Friends of Belmont Rec's masterplan and refinement of the PlayZone.
- The questions were co-produced with the Friends of Belmont Rec,
- The survey was open for feedback from April 16th until June 30th. This included a short extension to allow for feedback from immediate neighbours following a session of door knocking/letter dropping,
- QR codes and website links on posters were located at park entrances, in notice boards, at schools and shared to the Friends group and ward councillors,
- Flyers with QR codes and weblinks were handed out at each engagement session,
- We had 473 responses to our online surveys with 85.2% of respondents living in the area, 6.1% working in the area, 4.6% visiting.

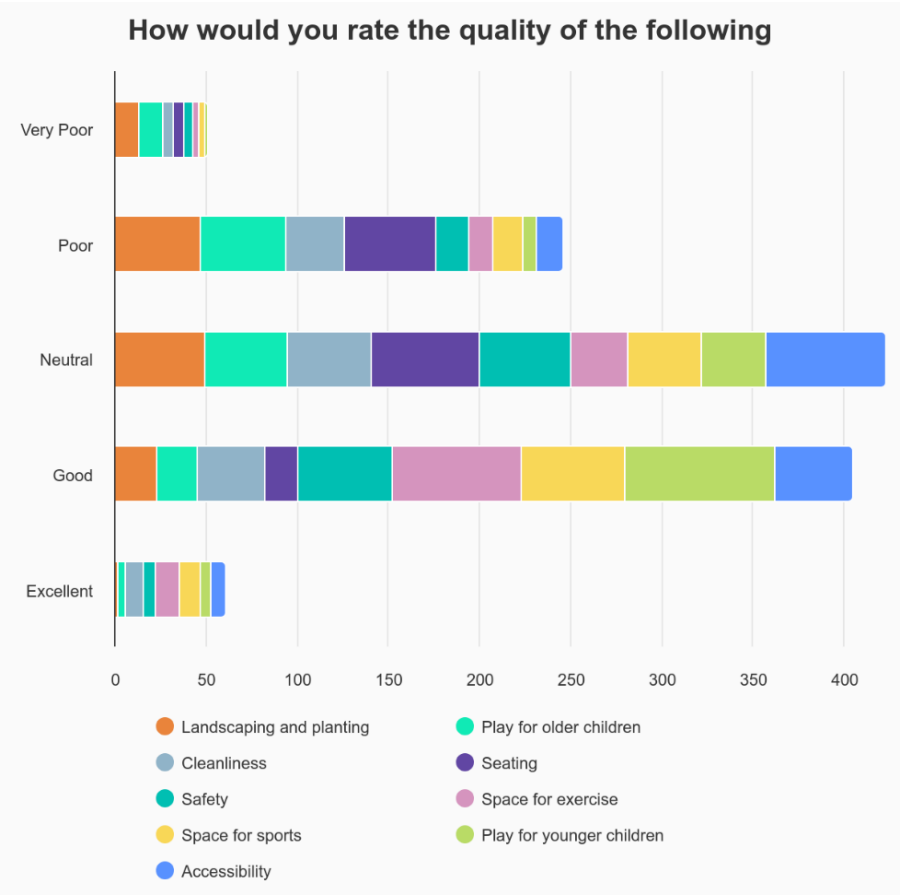
Key insights:

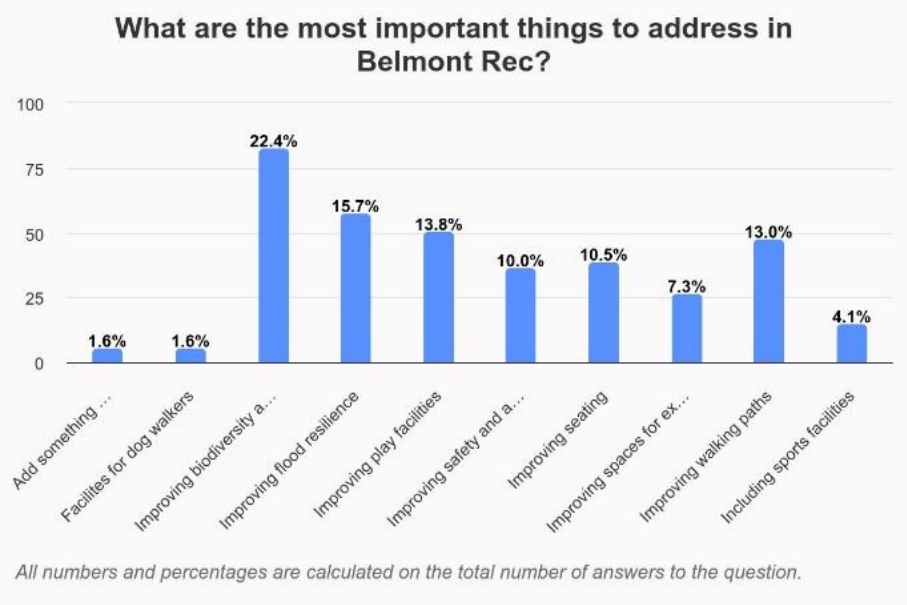




Belmont Rec is cherished for its spaciousness and calm atmosphere. 42.5% of respondents visit every day, 27.6% a few times a week and 13.4% every week. Commenters appreciate the playground's proximity to the school and the park's natural

beauty, including its trees and greenery. However, many feel it lacks essential facilities for older children and adults, with requests for more seating, play equipment, and recreational activities.





Pathways

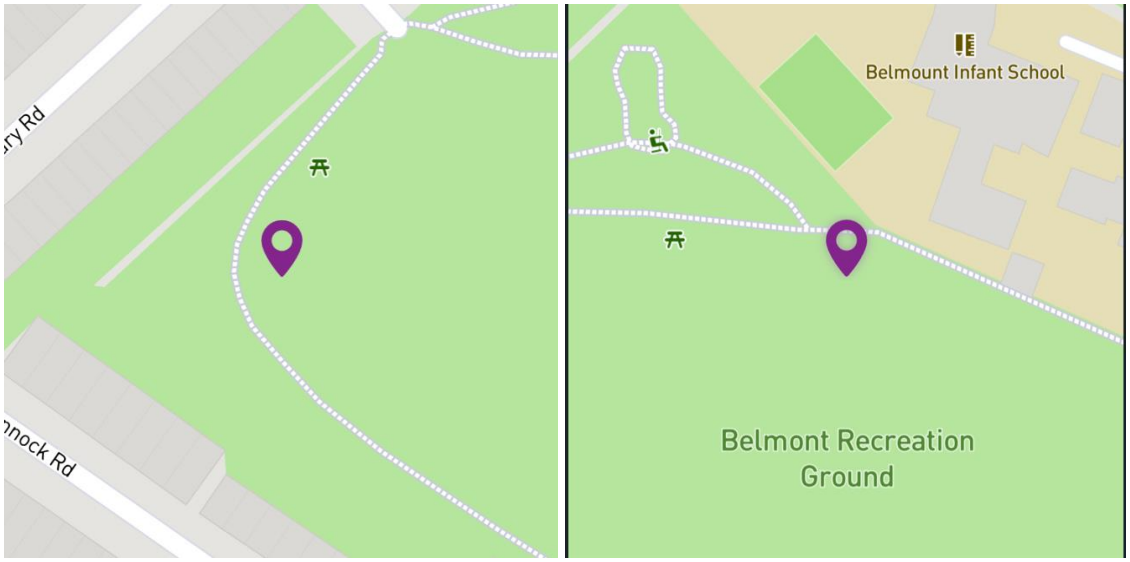
- To improve accessibility for users of wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and pushchairs across the park, substantial enhancements to the existing pathways are necessary,
- Park users express concerns about narrow paths, flooding and muddy conditions along the west side,
- Suggestions include widening paths and improving drainage,
- While some support the addition of new paths for easier access, others worry about losing the park's open character,
- Park users highlight the importance of well-maintained, level, and clear paths for everyone.



Popular suggestions for cross-park path

Seating

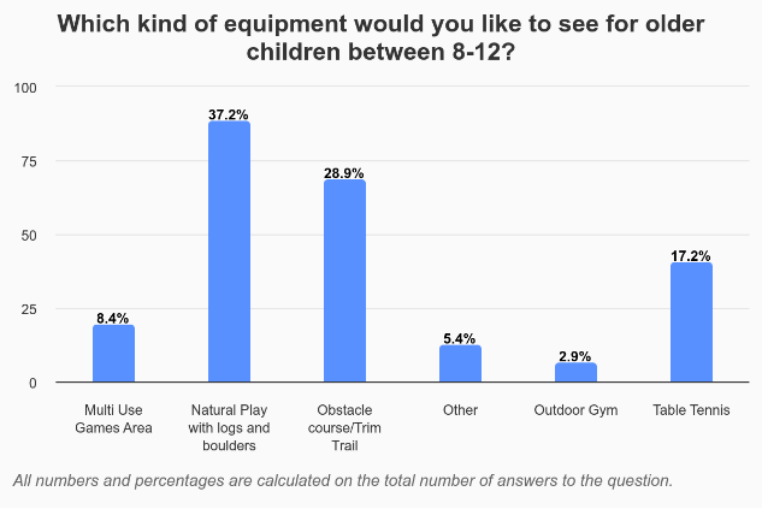
The most popular suggestions for location of picnic benches were on the western bend of the footpath and near the play area which currently has two. A few suggested a location on the southern footpath and the picnic area which currently has four.

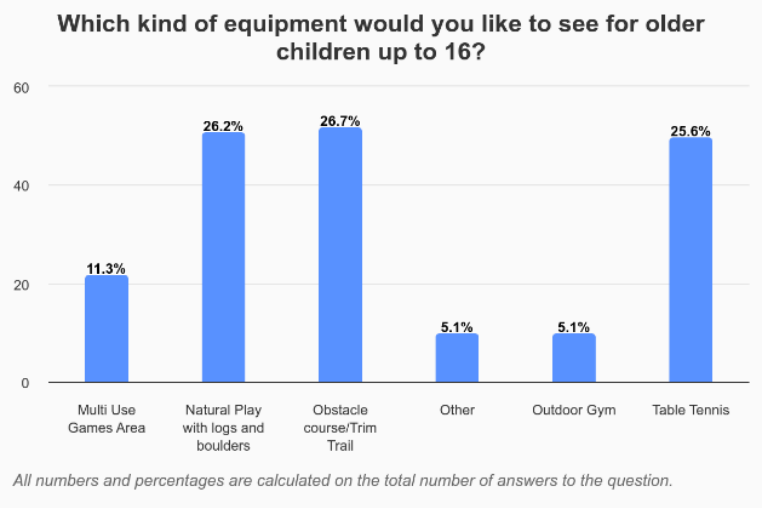


Popular suggestions for picnic benches

Recreation and Play

- Respondents would like natural materials and colours for play equipment,
- The majority (53.6%) would like provision for older children outside the playground,
- For children 8-12, the most popular equipment requests are natural play with logs and boulders (37.2%), obstacle course/trim trail (28.9%), table tennis (17.2%) and Multi-Use Games Area (8.4%),
- For children up to 16, the most popular requests are obstacle course/trim trail (26.7%), natural play (26.2%), table tennis (25.6%), Multi-Use Games Area (11.3%),
- Other suggestions include climbing facility, monkey bars, nets and imaginative play,
- There are concerns that Belmont Rec cannot house everything and that teenagers can use provision in other parks.





Safety

Many feel safe during the day, particularly when families are present. However, concerns arise at night due to lack of lighting and fear of anti-social behaviour, particularly in the picnic area. Suggestions include lighting, locking the park at night, and removing hedges that obscure visibility.

Biodiversity and landscape





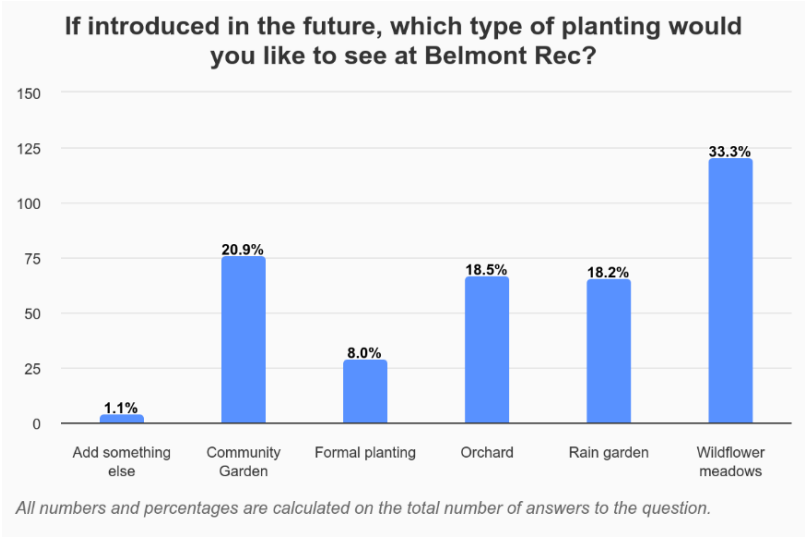


Greenspace images shared

Suggestions:

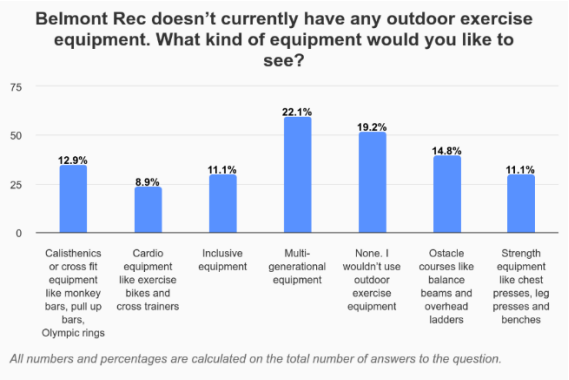
- Increase native trees, native planting, wildflower meadows to support local wildlife,
- Introduce features like ponds and mini woodlands for biodiversity,
- Implement no-mow zones outside of sporting areas to encourage wildflower growth,
- Create nesting sites and habitat features for insects and birds like loggeries, nesting boxes and hedgerows,

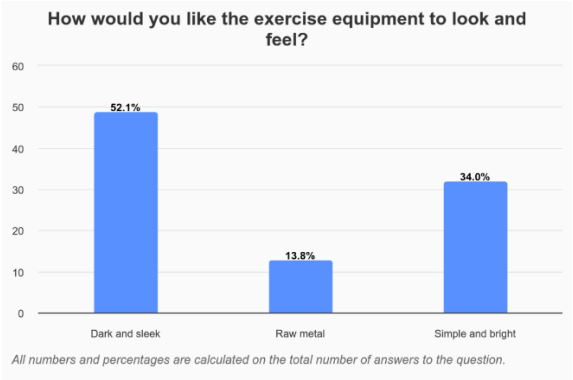
- Lower the number of no mow zones to maintain open spaces for sports and recreation. Ensure visibility from playground to field is maintained for supervision,
- The kind of planting most popular are wildflower meadows (33.3%), a community garden (20.9%), orchard (18.5%) and rain gardens (18.2%).

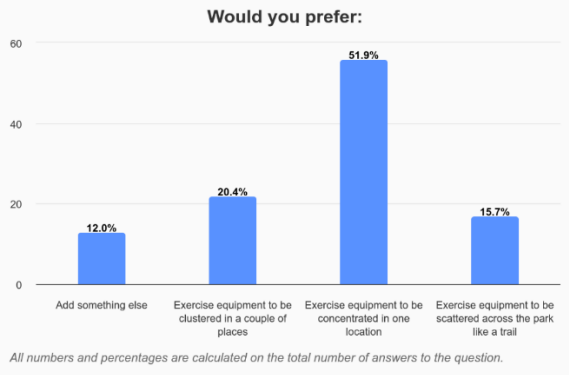


Outdoor gym equipment

Respondents would like equipment to be multi-generational (22.1%). There is a mixed response to the kind of equipment people would like to use including obstacle courses (14.8%), calisthenics (12.9%), strength equipment (11.1%), inclusive equipment (11.1%), and cardio (8.9%). The majority of respondents (52.1%) would like exercise equipment that is dark and sleek. The suggested locations for this was very varied across the park, however the top 3 options amongst a selection of respondents were the North-East corner of the park, the picnic area and near Downhills entrance. The majority (51.9%) would like this concentrated in one location only.

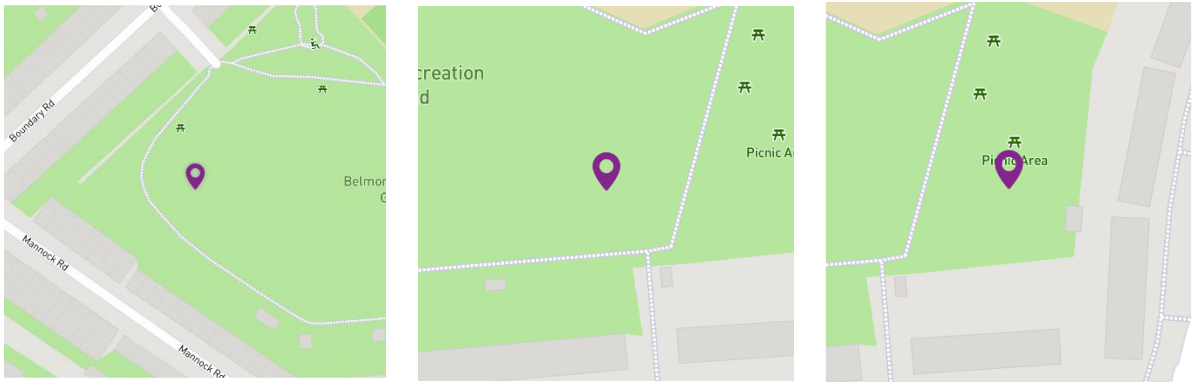








Outdoor gym images shared



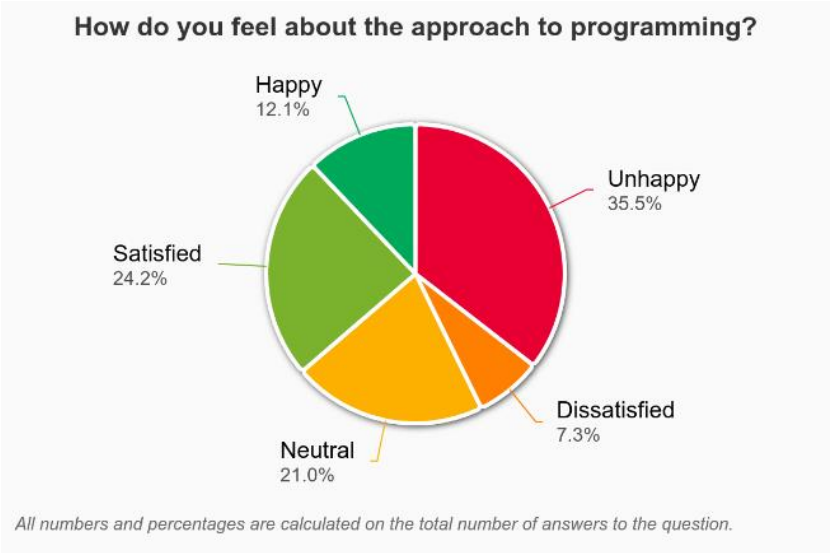
Popular suggestions for location of outdoor gym

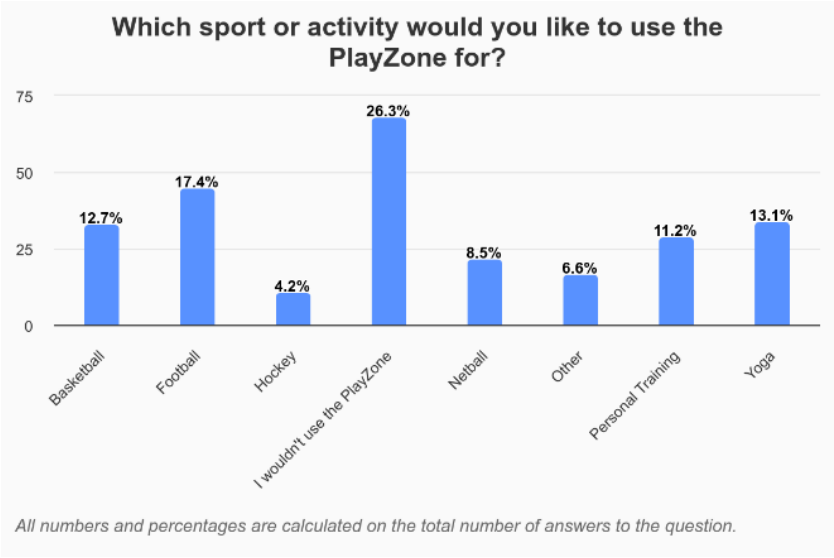
Amenity

- Comments on additional amenities for Belmont Rec show a mix of enthusiasm for further development and concern for preserving the park's tranquil character,
- Suggestions include installing a water fountain and public toilets,
- Some believe a coffee shop or community hub would enhance the space, while others insist on maintaining its simplicity and avoiding overdevelopment.

PlayZone

- Many comments express strong opposition to the proposed PlayZone, citing concerns over noise, light pollution, negative impact on wildlife, its proximity to residential areas, lack of toilets and changing the parks character. Residents believe it will attract antisocial behaviour and is unnecessary given the nearby facilities at Downhills Park and Lordship Recreation Ground,
- Suggestions to reduce these concerns include creating a vegetative buffer, limiting lighting, relocation and reports about the impact on wildlife.





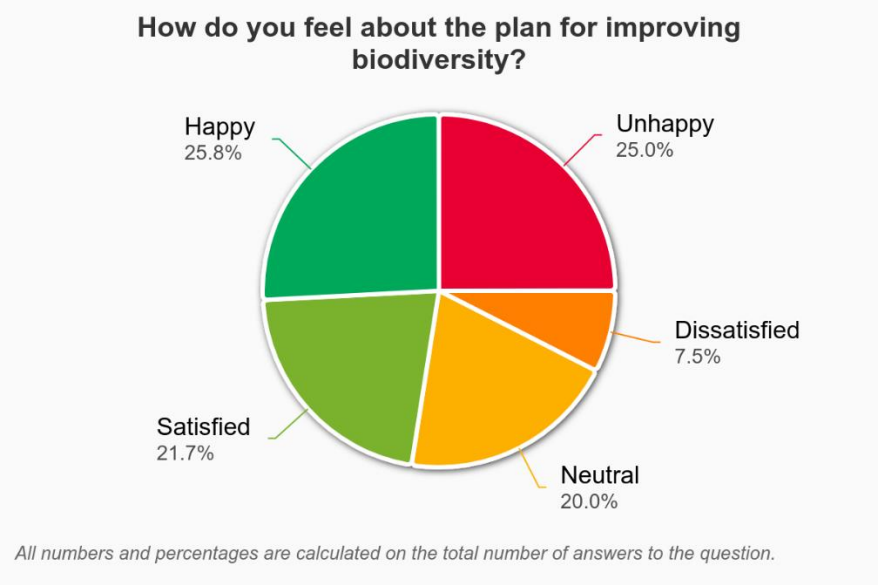
Booking system and usage

- There are concerns about the booking system and suggestions for this to be open access for the majority of the time, particularly after school.
- Football (17.4%), yoga (13.1%), basketball (12.7%), personal training (11.2%) and netball (8.5%) most popular sports mentioned. Tennis and cricket were also mentioned.

Location

- Opinions on the proposed location for the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Belmont Recreation Ground are mixed to negative,
- Supporters argue it is convenient for the adjacent school and may reduce anti-social behaviour currently seen in the picnic area,
- However, many commenters express significant concerns about noise, light pollution, and its proximity to residential properties and the tiny forest. They highlight the risk of exacerbating existing anti-social issues, the loss of green space, and the detrimental impact on wildlife,
- Suggestions include limiting operational hours of lighting and relocation to an area of lower impact.

Biodiversity Net Gain



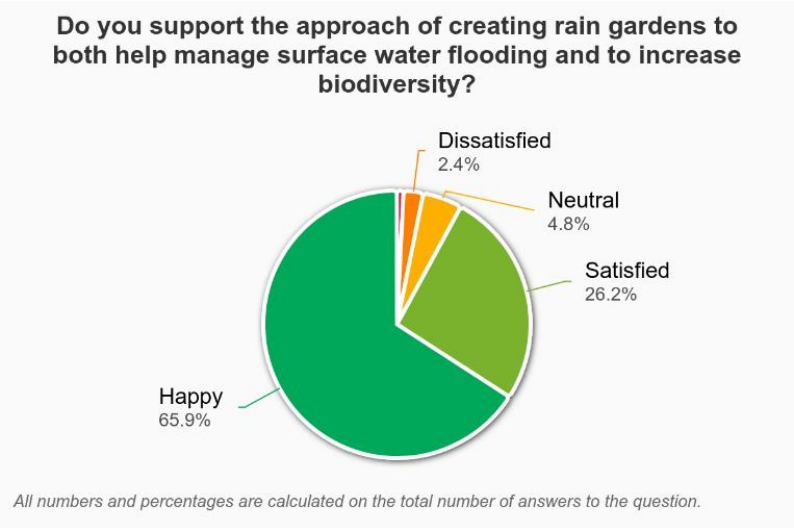
- Biodiversity initiatives should focus on planting trees and creating a wildflower meadow throughout the park and align with the masterplan, rather than confining the efforts to a small area close to the PlayZone,
- There are concerns about the negative impacts of artificial constructions on wildlife and nearby residents,
- Advocate for a holistic approach to biodiversity that avoids encroachment on existing habitats,
- Utilise the opposite corner of the rec for planting initiatives, as it is currently underutilised,

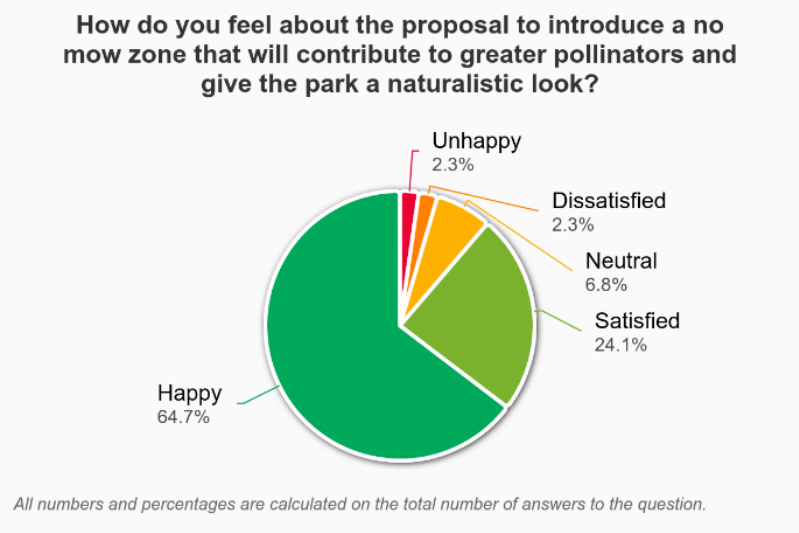
- Ensure biodiversity patches are distributed throughout the rec instead of in a confined area and maintain existing shrubs and trees to support local wildlife,
- Create natural barriers like trees around the PlayZone to reduce noise and enhance the biodiversity area.

Feedback on Friends of Belmont Rec masterplan

Zoning

- Feedback on the zoning and no mow plan at Belmont Rec reflects mixed views,
- Many appreciate the potential for biodiversity and aesthetic improvement, however, there are concerns about reduced openness for sports and some worry that litter and dog waste could become problematic in the no mow areas,
- Some feel the proposal disrupts existing habitats and the park's character.





Community hub and cafe

- The proposal has both strong proponents and significant reservations within the community,
- Supporters highlight the potential for enhanced social interaction and greater park usage, noting existing successful examples like Lordship Hub,
- However, many express concerns about increased litter, the sufficiency of local cafes, and the possibility of gentrification affecting nearby businesses,
- The playground on Boundary Road is mentioned as an appropriate place.

Community garden

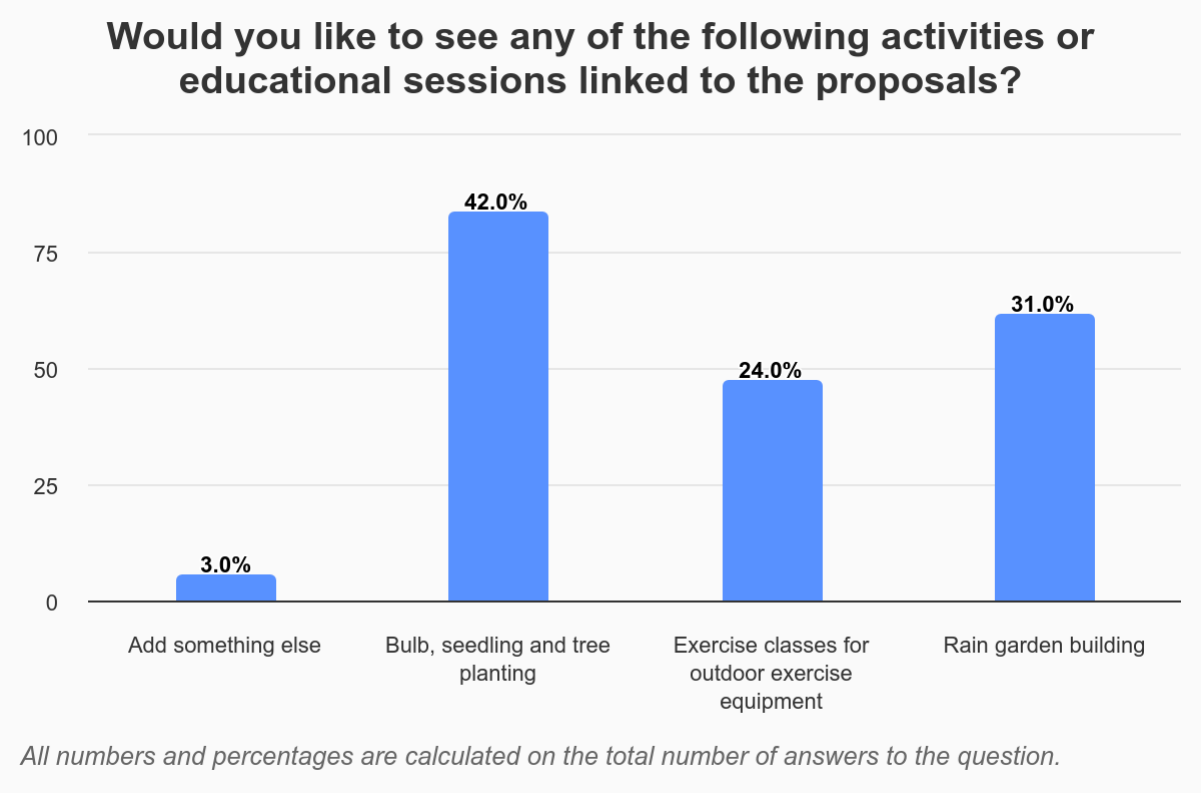
Some comments express enthusiasm, indicating they would use it, noting the location as generally appropriate, while others feel it would require significant maintenance or worry about vandalism.

Suggestions:

- Provide clear guidance on community involvement in the garden,
- Consider a low maintenance garden with fruit trees and herbs,
- Include a water supply and storage for tools.

Community involvement

Respondents would like to be involved with planting sessions, rain garden building and exercise classes for outdoor exercise equipment.



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

3g. Friends of Belmont Rec engagement

Various meetings have been held with the Friends of Belmont Rec in 2023-2025, with the key priorities of the group remaining:

- Clear existing drainage system as the drainage line is completely blocked with silt and roots. Similar for the gullies at both entrances, especially Downhills Park Road entrance,
- Improve, re-build, raise and widen path which is in very poor condition. Sections of the path flood badly for half of the year,
- Improve safety, especially in the picnic area and Downhills Park Road entrance. This includes trimming the hedge, widening entrances to the picnic area and removing the gates. Consider CCTV near Downhills Park Road entrance, where there is significant fly tipping and drug dealing or locking the park at nighttime,
- Advance the master plan for Belmont Rec, noting the Friends carried out significant work in 2023 to run a survey, survey report and revised design,
- Increase planting and biodiversity by building on the Tiny Forest, trees and wildflower meadow areas planted in 2024, and the trees and hedges planted throughout the Rec in the early 2000s,
- Suggested location for outdoor gym on northern path between schools or by playground.

3h. Secure by Design (SBD) review with Met Police Design Out Crime Officer

The councils project team and enforcement officer had a walk about of the park with both the PlayZone and Friends' masterplan for review.

Key feedback:

- The PlayZone location isn't ideal due to visibility issues. Locating it in the middle of the main field would break up the open space, other locations in the main field would back on to housing. Locating close to play area would increase visibility and connection with families/siblings,
- The space to the right of the PlayZone will be a deadzone with risk of ASB/littering or leaving people feeling watched using the court. The suggestion is to fence off this area for nature or to consider changing the orientation by 90 degrees,
- The hedge is an issue and is suggested to be cut back severely to 1m, which would still give some division of space, but improve lines of sight incredibly,
- The spectator seating should be placed on the other side of the PlayZone (if remaining in its current orientation to give sight over play and onto the park). The current location is too narrow,
- Exercise equipment should be kept separate from the other facilities to reduce issues with looking into playground/PlayZone,
- The paths should be widened across the park. If funding permits, the path could be separated into cycling/walking routes to alleviate issues with fast/electric bicycles,
- The entrances should be cleaned up. The barbed wire on a residential property at the Downhills entrance needs to be removed.

4. Conclusions

Residents and users of Belmont Recreation Ground are passionate about their local greenspace and both protecting its character and enhancing biodiversity, usability and amenity. It is particularly important for its connection to local school children, as well as other notable users like dog walkers and those seeking fresh air, socialisation and exercise.

Whilst there is a desire for greater amenity, there is a strong preference for maximising open space and balancing human centred needs with the need to increase and protect biodiversity.

4a. Project priorities

Clear site issues and project aspirations have been identified across different user groups as follows:

1. Alleviate Flooding
    - Ensure boggy ground, flooded paths and localised pooling is alleviated through:
        - Clearance and surveying of drainage system,
        - Creation of swales seeded with wildflower (spoil to be repurposed as small mounds for topographical interest),

2. Increase Biodiversity
    - Tree planting across the park with more fruit trees and more established trees where possible,
    - Increase and improve meadow landscapes,
    - Nesting sites and habitat features for insects and birds like log piles, bird and bat boxes and hedgerows,
    - A refined ‘no mow’ that retains open space for sports and recreational use,
    - A small, contained pond,

3. Improve Accessibility
    - Works to improve, repair and widen pathways,
    - Priority to improve the western path which experiences frequent flooding,
    - One well integrated cross park pathway,

4. Improve Amenity
    - Play for older children
        - The key items suggested are climbing frames/nets, a sports court, zipline, monkey bars, obstacle courses, hammocks, table tennis,
        - Play equipment to be in natural colours/materials and include natural play like logs and boulders,
    - Seating:
        - Relocate 2 picnic benches from the picnic area to western and southern pathways,
        - New bench seating on southern edge,

        - Ensure seating has canopy cover over time,
    - Outdoor gym
        - Suggested multi-generational equipment that encompasses calisthenics as well as obstacle course equipment,
        - Location to be confirmed alongside masterplan refinement. Key suggestions near playground, western edge and Downhills Road entrance,
    - Community gardening
        - Activities suggested include meadow and swale creation and management,
        - Potential location for an established site within the picnic area alongside orchard and small pond,
        - Low maintenance, drought tolerant and hardy plants recommended,
        - Storage for tools and water point recommended,
        - Memorandum of Understanding required with management group,

5. Improve Safety
    - Picnic Area
        - Cut back the hedge to ensure greater visibility whilst still providing essential habitat and delineating quieter/nature focused space. This will need to be phased to ensure the longevity of the habitat,
        - Create wider entrance points and remove gate to picnic area,
    - Dogs
        - New public spaces protection order notices to be placed at park entrances,
        - Parks enforcement officer to patrol site for any issues,
        - Install 2 new bins at entrances to park,
    - Entrances
        - Fix the Downhills Park entrance wall,
        - New signage at the entrance gates to be more welcoming,

Further community aspirations subject to further decision-making and future budget availability:

- Café kiosk, toilets, water fountain

5. Next steps

PlayZone

The PlayZone scheme has highlighted key concerns amongst local residents around ecology, lighting, proximity to housing, the booking system, site lines, visibility and connection to the masterplan. In order to ensure these concerns are taken into account when finalising the scheme, the council will:

- Conduct an independent Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to understand baseline, assessment and mitigation,

- Appraise alternative location to ensure ecological impact is minimised and that the Biodiversity Net Gain requirement can be utilised across the park,
- Ensure programming that is family friendly and inclusive – with a preference for football, yoga, netball and roller skating,
- Create a booking system and programme that is responsive to community desire for mixed open access and booked/coaching sessions. The recommendation is for open access 3-6pm on weekdays and 9-12pm on weekends. This system will be managed by Haringey Council and can be further refined based on testing and feedback,
- Implement signage and clear instructions on how to book,
- Design pathway and flood lighting informed by ecological constraints. Flood lighting will only be activated during booked sessions, and floodlighting will not extend beyond 9pm. This allows a balance between recreational/sports usage and biodiversity.

Planning permission will be submitted Autumn 2025 with works expected on site late Winter/early Spring 2026.

Masterplan

- Following the PlayZone location appraisal, the council will update the masterplan based on this engagement report,
- Once the masterplan has been finalised, a cost management exercise will be undertaken to develop routes to access funding.

Initial works in 2025/26

- Alleviate Flooding:
    - Drainage clearances and surveys,
- Improve Safety:
    - Hedge trimming and works to tackle ASB,
    - Lighting as part of PlayZone installation
- Increase Biodiversity:
    - Habitat creation and landscape initiatives that support flooding alleviation priority,
    - Biodiversity Net Gain implementation for PlayZone
- Increase amenity:
    - PlayZone installation

We would like to thank and acknowledge the importance of everyone that has contributed their thoughts, time and concerns in order to help refine the masterplan for Belmont Rec

and the design and programme for the new PlayZone. This has been hugely valuable to make meaningful progression based on community needs, concerns and aspirations.