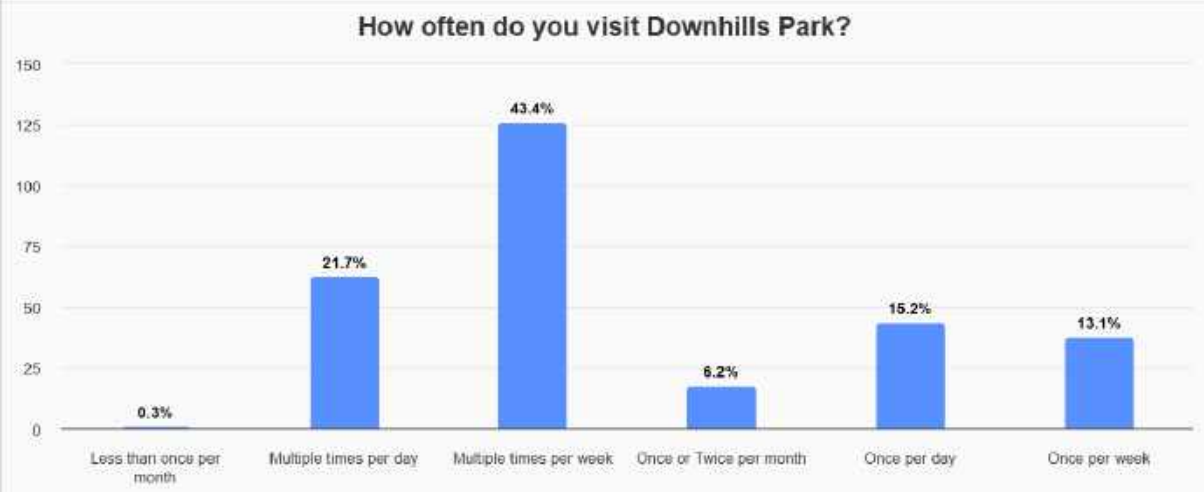
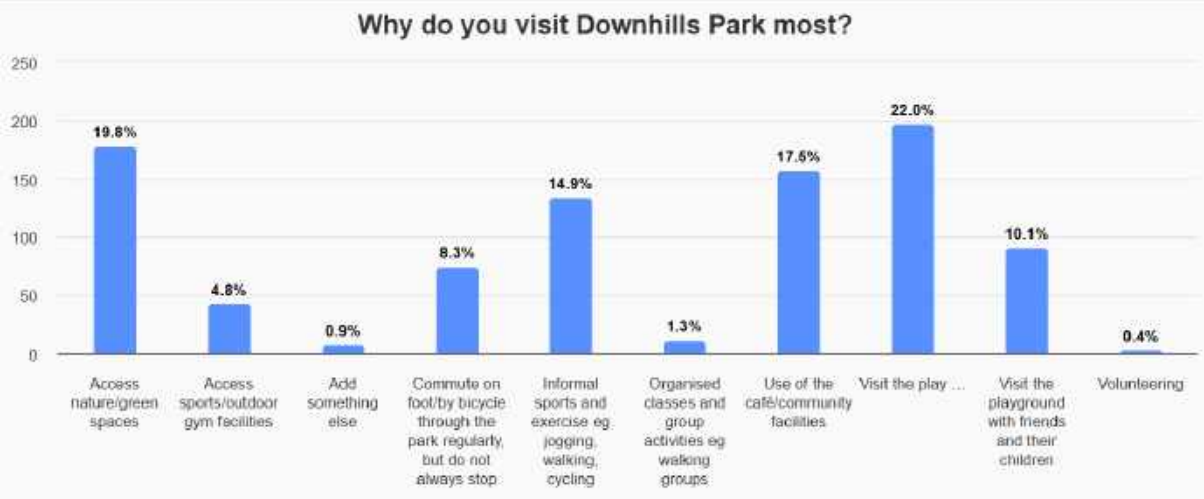
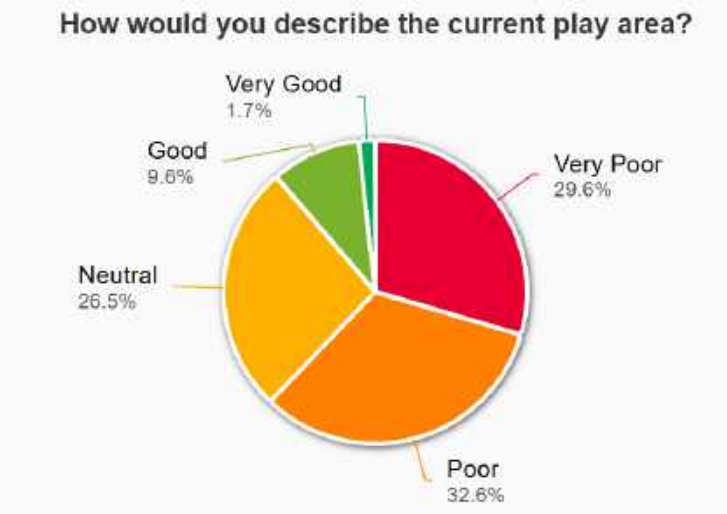
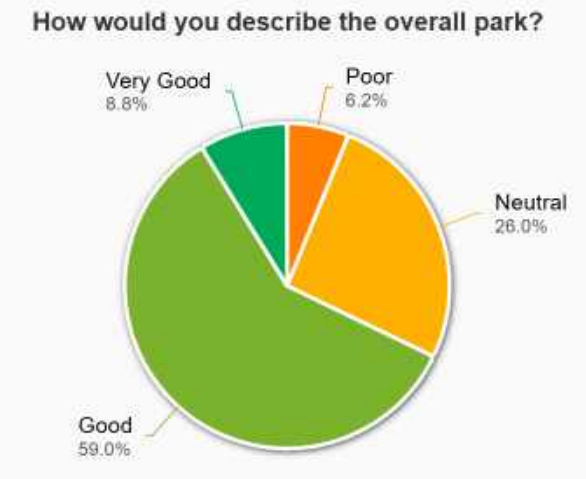
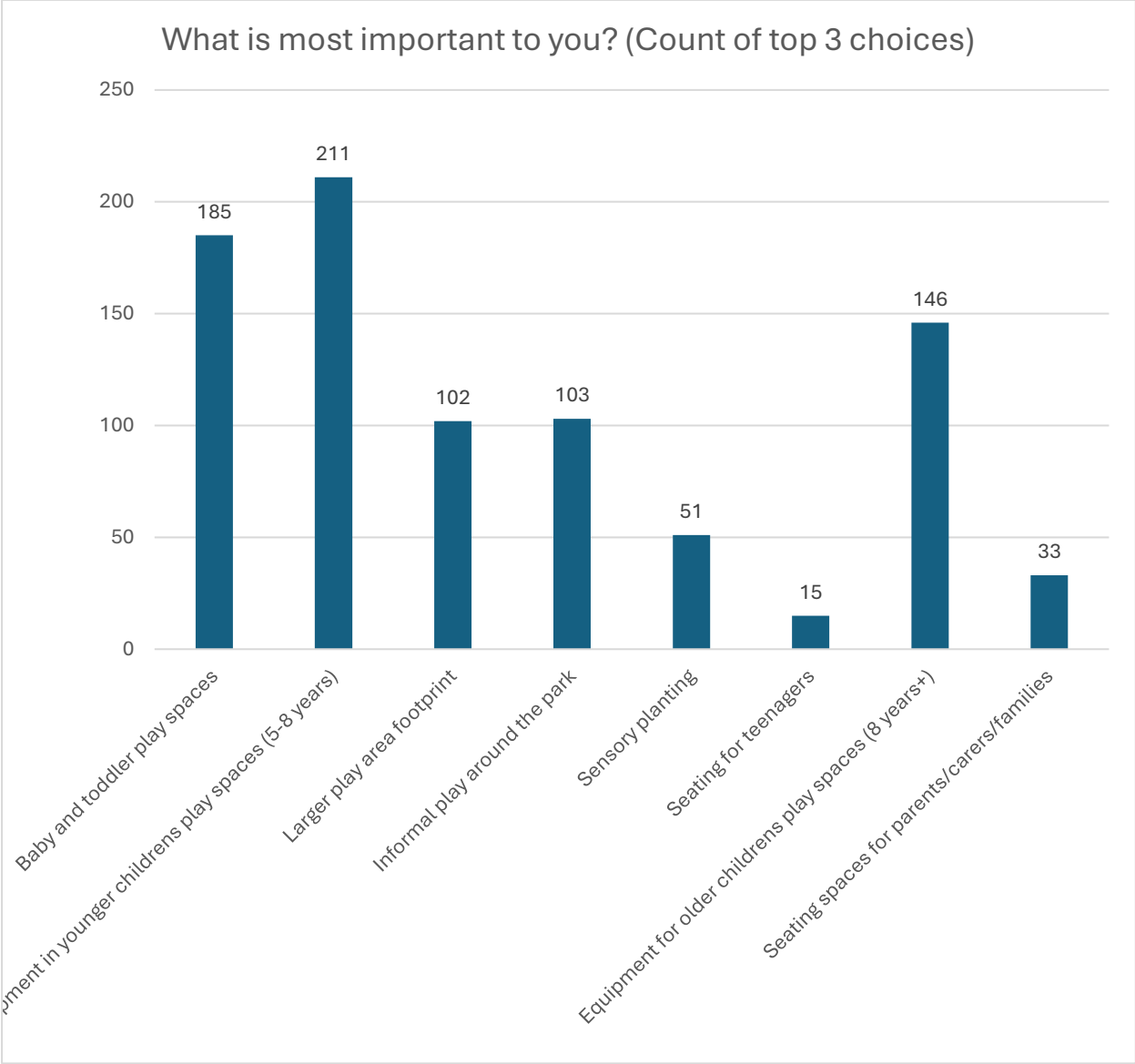
Tottenham Parks- Downhills Playground Engagement Summary








How would you describe the overall park?
Very Good
8.8%
Poor
6.2%
Neutral
26.0%
Good
59.0%


What is most important to you? (Count of top 3 choices)
250
200
150
100
50
0
185
211
102
103
51
15
146
33
Baby and toddler play spaces
Larger play area footprint
Informal play around the park
Sensory planting
Seating for teenagers
Equipment for older childrens play spaces (8 years+)
Seating spaces for parents/carers/families

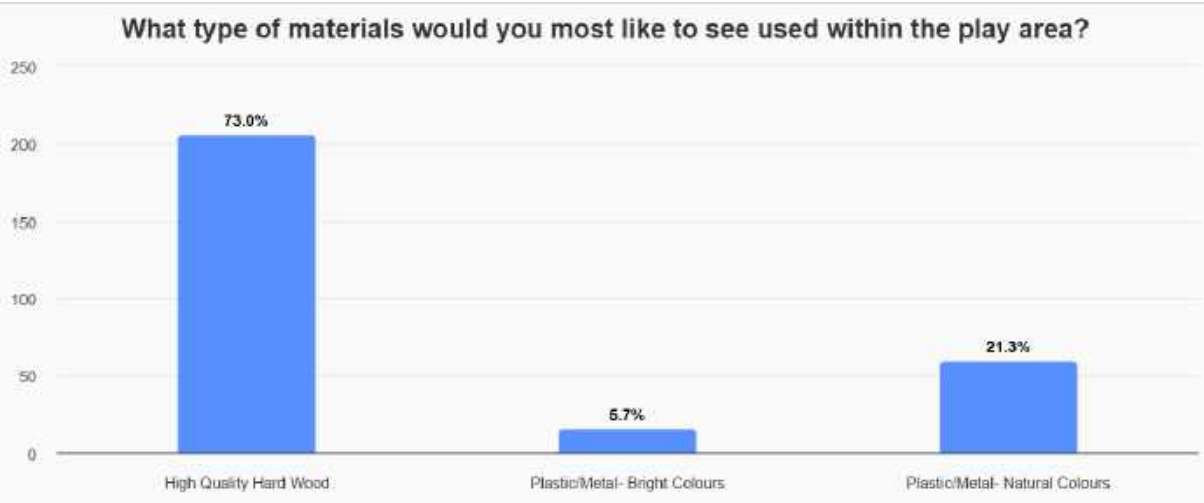
What would you specifically like to see improved in your play area and what play pieces would you like to see?

Focus on high quality
Focus on safety
Spaces for adults with children
Better use of space
Greater challenge and equipment for older children
Monkey bars to be retained
Safety surfacing throughout
Larger footprint
Incorporate a slide
Sand/Water play
One single play space for mutlple ages
Large swings eg bucket swing to encourage group play
Trampolines
Greater landscaping/naturalistic feel
Spaces for imaginative play eg houses/shops
Musical/sensory equipment
Benches/spaces for families to sit
Slides/tunnel slide
Focal piece tower
Spaces for babies/toddlers
Rope climbing structure
Seesaw
Concerns current climbing frame is not fully secured
Remove interior fencing
Bright colours
Trim Trail
Roundabout
Incorporating natural materials/recycled materials
Zip line/flying fox
Large climbing frame
More seating
Climbing frame for smaller children
Shaded spaces for hot weather
Tunnels- perhaps willow tunnel
Spaces for hiding
Environmental features
Sensory planting
Floor markings
Hammocks

Skateboarding area
Space for football/basketball
Trim trail
Separate area for toddlers
Spinning disc
Incorporate wooded area
Wheelchair accessible
Bike/scooter locks
Non-prescriptive play eg nature spaces, logs, boulders
Focus on durability/lifespan
Swings for toddlers/babies
Create a specific sensory area
Seats not picnic benches
Mounds with pathways
Consider locale and splitting funding between lordship and downhills playgrounds eg have larger childrens play at Lordship and younger at Downhills
Obstacle course
Rope tunnels
Play on the way/activation around the park
Spend money on libraries/Bernie Grant not parks
Zoned play spaces
Consider usability in wet conditions- wood can become slippery
No woodchip
Scooter ramps
Trees for shade
Accessible swings for wheelchairs
Xylophone
Mirrors
Climbing wall
Mound with slide
Concerns over plastic materials/microplastics
Large wooden/imaginative structure
Bike track area
Design for younger children should include lower first step
Sensory play panels

Other comments:
Issues with litter and full bins in summer
Signage to prevent litter and BBQs
Wider park landscaping should be considered

Surface next to tennis courts to be regreened/meaningful use
Support/Refurbishment of the cafe
Wider park lighting
Skatepark on concrete behind the tennis courts
Drainage on football pitches
Wider field has large holes
Floodlights
CCTV
Park enforcement/Patrols
Seating within flower beds
Community garden spaces to sit
Issues with ASB- Specifically drug dealer and drinking
Focus on ongoing maintenance
Larger cafe
Issues with lime bikes
Dogs off lead/dangerous dogs
MUGA/Tennis courts to not have digilock access
Formal play equipment beside the café
Toilets
Pathways throughout the park
No floodlighting
Bowling green could be used for childrens play
No trees to be removed
Water fountain

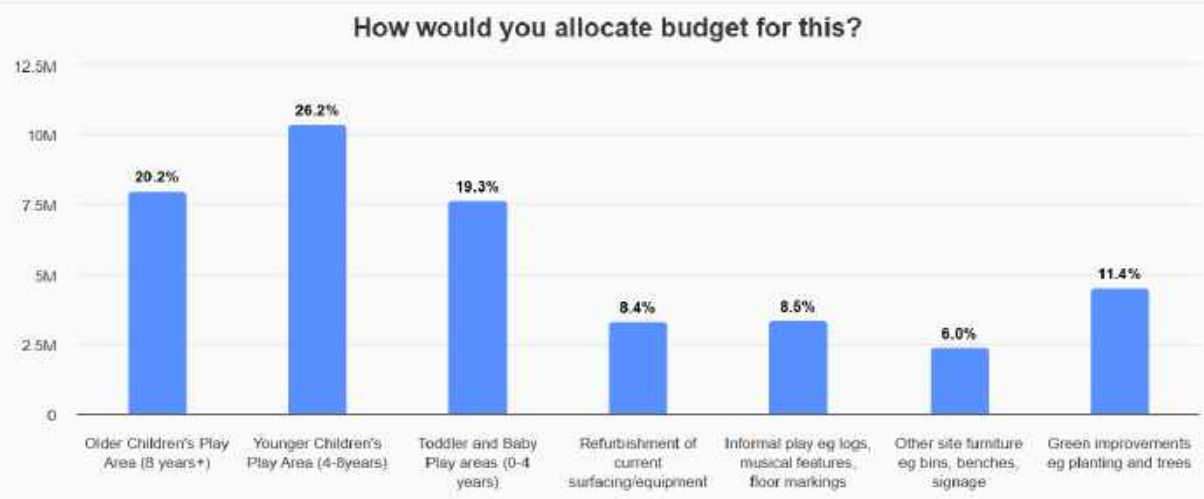


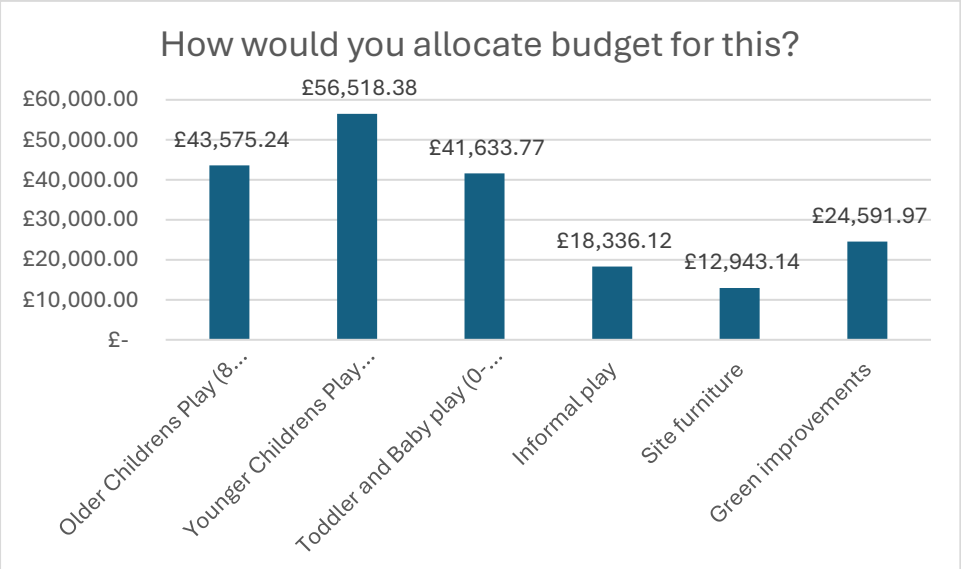
How could we make this play area more accessible and inclusive?

Wheelchair friendly equipment eg seesaw, swing, carousel
Ramps
Floor games
Imaginative play
Sensory spaces with music/tactile equipment
Sensory planting
Water/Sand play
Seating spaces/shaded seating spaces/Seating with side transfer
Disabled toilets at the café
Wider entrances/exits with easily usable gates
Trampolines
Quiet spaces
Education/information panels eg British Sign Language
Larger footprint
Safety surfacing throughout with level access- avoid grass as it is not durable enough
Monkey bars are commonly used by Girls
Spaces for pushchairs, bikes and scooters to be locked up
Equipment for younger children
Potholes on access route to the playground
Encourage independent play
Low level climbing features for children with balance/mobility issues
Different language signage
Non-prescriptive/informal play
Wood can be difficult for people who are visually impaired
Wood can cause splintering
Bright colours most suitable for younger children. A mix of material types would be good compromise.
Spaces for older children to be considered
Consideration given to location of metal slides due to heat retention

Are there any play areas you have visited that you would like to replicate at Downhills Park?

Please note the below is most frequently mentioned, not an exhaustive list.
Clissold Park
Victoria Park
Lordship Recreation Ground
Priory Park
Russel Park
Shoreditch Park
Princess Diana Memorial Playground
Finsbury Park
Meridian Water
Lloyd Park
Highgate Woods





In-person feedback

Design should include more slides (particularly toddler slide)
Like the existing timber play so would like it to stay or be replaced
Higher fencing surrounding area
Sand play
More for smaller children
Broader age ranges with different zones
Swings are essential
Current area gets very busy
Should have more equipment
Accessible roundabout/swings
Sensory play eg sand or sound
Trampolines
Imaginitive play eg house
Water play/splash pad
Stepping stones
Musical play
Zip wire
Consider location of swings- should be accessible with seats and lighter buckets for toddlers
Rope climber for older children
Safety flooring throughout
Greater number of pieces
Monkey Bars
Seating for parents
Climbing wall
Metal climbing frame gets too hot in summer
Would like to see wooden equipment but rainbow colours on the floor
Landscaping throughout
Less grass, as hard to maintain
Spinning cups/roundabout
Current metal climbing frame is too high and therefore children need help to get on
Joint swings for parents/children together
Climbing/boulders for informal climbing
Grass areas for informal seating
Ensure installs are sustainable and maintainable
Tunnel
Communal tyre swing
Spaces suitable for teenagers
Expand footprint

Covered spaces for sun/rain
Naturalistic playgrounds preferred
Wildlife/nature area with education spaces
Trees (for climbing)
Mounds/hills with landscaping
Keep blue climbing structure
Remove internal fence
Timber gets slippery when wet
Twirly tunnel slide
Secret tunnel out of the hedge by the trees
Trail through the woodland
Remove internal fence
Higher gates/fix gates
Remove bark
Bright and colourful
Slide currently needs help to use- would like more independent play
Remove roundabouts
Resurface throughout
Keep what is currently here but extend
Seesaw
Spinners
Encourages group play
Football area

Other comments:
Park should be locked in the evening
Maintenance considerations
Concerns about ASB
Café
Access to toilets
Concerns over budget cuts at other projects eg Down Lane Park
CCTV
Patrols of the park eg enforcement

Schools feedback

Park View Secondary School- Ages 11-16

Children were largely drawn to monkey bars, swings and larger climbing frame.

Comments and discussions from the site visit included:

- The location of baby swings could be dangerous for little kids as close to bigger equipment.
- Current play area not accessible – would like more wheelchair inclusive equipment
- Concerned about the trip hazards like the sleepers and low fencing
- Concerned about finger entrapment in gate into the play area
- Not enough play equipment for younger kids
- Majority of children would like to remove the fences between the spaces, but would still like areas zoned by age. Fencing around the play area to be higher
- Some children would like to see sensory planting/flowers whilst others were concerned about allergies, spikiness and that children would pick the flowers. Taller plants would be preferred
- Would like new baby area to be closer to the reception gate
- Would like more swings, a rope or dragon swing, the old slide back or more slides, accessible roundabout for wheelchair users
- Would like to remove the wood chip
- Would like to increase age range of equipment to 14/15
- Some would like dogs to be allowed in the playground, others would like dogs to be kept out
- Would like more standalone units, rather than the current ones which are all connected
- Would like more accessible picnic benches and standard benches
- Would like edible garden like at Railway Fields with fruit bushes

Other ways students would like to be involved in the wider park:

- Outdoor education missing in secondary school
- Would like to learn about ecosystems in parks in geography
- Would be fun and engaging
- Litter picking competitions – which form groups picks up the most

- Picnics, games
- Seedbombs
- Nature art classes – using grass and leaves
- Bringing art classes into park
- Make art out of recycling
- Plant identification
- Taster days for the park – for year 9 and upward
- Markets for selling art and flowers
- Art in the Park
- Park Run

Participatory budgeting task.

Students were given indicative prices and asked to create a shopping list of items they would purchase with the project budget. The below is the most frequently chosen items when considering cost.

12	Bench
6	Bug Hotel
5	Carousel
2	Extra Large Tower With Large Slide
8	Floor Markings For Play/Learning
6	Large Bucket Swing Set
7	Large Junior Climbing Frame
3	Large Rope Swing
8	Large Tower Piece
5	Learning Panel
4	Medium Climbing Rope
2	Medium Junior Climbing Frame
16	Medium Toddler Tower
6	Medium Toddler Tower Creative Play (Café)
3	Medium Toddler Tower Creative Play (House)
2	Mini Spinning Net
1	Outdoor Classroom
9	Planting
11	Seesaw Accessible For Wheelchairs
2	Single Spinner
2	Small Toddler Creative Play (Snail)

The Grove School

Ages 17-19, young adults with additional needs

Likes: exercise, video games, football, gardening, running, music

Landscape:

- Need more shaded areas and trees
- Need for clear layout, not too many areas to get lost, signage
- Cut back hedge in picnic area
- More flowers
- Would like open space to be kept. Unsure if new paths are needed
- Like space to be open, grass to be kept. No mow for edges and clearly marcated

Play/action:

- 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

Amenity:

- Community garden which the school could be part of
- Café
- More bins across park
- Events like funfair
- Concerns over safety, accessibility, dogs

Downhills entrance

- Like: greenery, grass, people, trees x 3, shade, signage x 2
- Could be better: bins, mural could be retouched, more trees and flowers, pathway, gates, benches

Picnic area

- Like: picnic benches, quiet space, nice for picnics, calmness, forest area, hedge, privacy, open space
- Could be better: some shade, decorative water fountain, shade, hammock, table tennis x 2, café, less spiky things, bins, fun fair, cut back hedge x 2, add river, gym equipment

Main field

- Like: open space x 5, planted trees x 2
- Could be better: water point x 2, horse riding, café, gym equipment x 2, bins, shade, pull up bars, pagoda

Playground

- Like: the swings x 2, spinning thing, everything you need

- Could be better: more gym equipment/calisthenics x 2, space for running, ice cream van, fun fair, zipwire x 3, toilet, monkey bars, bulb planting/flowers x 2, climbing frame x 2
    - Metal preferred due to longevity and stability
    - Loves swings, climbing frames, hammocks, calisthenics equipment, monkey bars, high slides
    - Don't like natural play – feels tacky, doesn't look good, waste of money but good for young people
    - Like games/competition
    - Funky look
    - Musical pieces
    - Playhouse
-

Other comments:

- Concerns over getting lost, feeling under confident in using space if too wild through 'no mow'
- Like the idea of community gardening and The Grove would love to link up with any initiatives
- No parking can restrict visiting

Collage task:





Previous engagement- Friends of Downhills Park




Toddler Area
Downhills Park, LB of Haringey


Junior Area
Downhills Park, LB of Haringey



Friends Engagement – Site Meeting

19/09/2025

The site meeting was held in the playground with members of the Friends group and a councillor in attendance. Its purpose was to discuss the first draft of the high-level proposal. The proposal text and accompanying zonal sketch were updated following the meeting.

Points discussed at the meeting included (based on own notes and notes/emails provided by members of the Friends):

- Prioritising durable materials over fully naturalistic ones was considered a sensible option given long-term maintenance requirements
- Toddler area should be included in the design but not prioritised over junior and older children's play – the consultation is deemed to have highlighted need for toddler play due to a lack of existing provision (Friends interpretation)
- Informal spatial division helps prevent any one group from dominating the space, and low-level planting was considered a good way to achieve this
- The proposal for seating beneath the existing trees in the northern part of the playground was well received, and the provision of an additional gate considered appropriate for this area → post-meeting: the original proposal to move the fence further north was considered impractical due to cost implications and putting additional strain on existing tree root zones, and the extension south prioritised instead. Some members of the Friends suggested potential use of the

woodland area along the eastern edge for natural play, which was deemed acceptable by the council's tree officer

- The sandpit should not have been included in the first draft of the high-level proposal due to the council's maintenance considerations and was removed from the design; this was generally supported by the Friends
- Design should consider parents with multiple children, enabling supervision of all ages
- Older girls (8+) prefer spaces where they can climb, sit, and socialise, especially elevated areas and equipment that allows face-to-face interaction, as well as monkey bars (recommended research from 'Make Space for Girls' report)
- Fencing was highlighted as an element to be considered for visual improvement, even if reused, and multiple entrances flagged as a means to improve the design in terms of accessibility.
- Request for a gate at the south-west corner of the southern extension, and for straightening out the western indent → post-meeting: during a site visit with the council's tree officer on 26/09/2025, the existing lime trees along the path were highlighted as a priority, resulting in the decision to follow the existing fence line, away from tree stems. This area would not be useable for play equipment or placing new seating in any case due to tree protection requirements, whereas small foundations for new fencing posts (hand dig) were deemed acceptable. Two existing gates along the western boundary are deemed sufficient, particularly as there will be provision for a new gate to the north side of the playground providing improved connection from the proposed toddler area to the café.
- It was noted that there will be an opportunity to suggest small design changes post-award, and that the Friends Group and other members of the local community could be involved with e.g. planting works in the playground → post-meeting: this would be mainly for trees, with ornamental grasses, wildflower verges and bulb planting being additional options, and will be coordinated with the contractor's programme for the works

Local Residents Engagement (Ariane House, Apple Tree Road)

07/10/2025

A targeted outreach session was carried out with residents of the block adjacent to the proposed extension of the Downhills Park play area. This followed the identification of a small number of properties potentially affected by the updated plans.

During the door-knocking visit, six residents were spoken to. While most were supportive of improving play provision for children, some raised concerns around potential increases in noise, encroachment on their privacy, and anti-social behaviour. Specific issues mentioned included the use of nearby bushes as an informal toilet, children climbing trees, and a resulting desire for increased screening and security measures. Other issues around general maintenance of park facilities were also highlighted.

Information was provided to residents clarifying that the proposed extension will mostly include an existing grassed area which will be informally used for picnics, pieces that are suitable for accessible and small group play, e.g. a basket swing, as well as non-noise-making sensory items and natural play elements. Additional mitigation includes signage clarifying the location of the nearest toilet and evergreen planting along the boundary.

High-level proposal- Downhills Park Playground

Proposal includes removing all existing play equipment to improve flow, play value and ensure longevity. Internal fencing/low post and rail also to be removed. Existing springers to be set aside for repair and reuse in other park.

Extend footprint of playground create a wider area, which incorporates an existing grassed area and some of the woodland space which is already used by children for informal play. Consider requirement for additional fencing panels and potentially additional gate(s) but re-use existing where possible to reduce cost. Extension to stop short of the large oak leaning into the space which is part of the eastern boundary.

A mix of materials throughout to ensure the area remains easy to maintain. Naturalistic feel to be achieved through surfacing and landscaping and wooden accents (i.e. metal/plastic in natural colours combined with some Robinia elements where possible within the budget), also by introducing as little additional safety surfacing to the south area as possible. Bright colours preferrable to avoid overheating of metal/plastic parts in the summer.

Rubber mulch surfacing to be used throughout. Mixed colour brown/cream recommended for naturalistic feel.

Repair tarmac surface where necessary to remove cracks and trip hazards where applicable.

Zoned by ages to achieve greater challenge as you move through the playground space.

Toddler zone to be located at the north end closest to the café, this area will feature a new access gate, signage including directions to nearest toilet, and require a no dig rubber mulch path connecting to the main path. Parents bench type seating near the gate within the play area.

To include new toddler play tower/multi-play. Tower should have steps not ladder to ensure appropriate for age. Where possible to include a tunnel feature. Could be the opportunity for a covered space here. Option to include slide or equivalent play value.

Two toddler swings with bucket seats. Parent and toddler seat could be included here.

Two springers

Separating the toddler and other play space with grass to reduce risk of toddlers walking unhindered into more active areas of wider play space.

Junior and older children play space combined

Large junior tower (focal piece) in the centre of the playground with a mix of sensory features on the lower level and more challenging play features integrated higher up (4.0m height max), e.g. towers, ladders, climbing net, climbing wall, slide, bridge, monkey bars, imaginative features, space to sit on higher level etc.

Rope climber - medium size if can be accommodated within the space, if not then integrate rope climbing play value within the focal piece

Sensory features **not to include any musical/acoustic items** due to the shared boundary with residential buildings nearby

Accessible carousel to be included

Communal swing/hammock swing

Trampoline(s) including wheelchair accessible design if can be accommodated within the available space

Swings with one accessible seat

Nature area with non-prescriptive play to incorporate existing woodland e.g. logs, boulders, sensory features, native groundcover, shrubs, ferns and bulb planting, art/nature/educational panel, signage for directions to nearest toilet. Proposed rubber mulch footpath to create accessible route through this space.

All existing trees to be retained and their root protection zones (RPZs) to be protected during the works. Trees/RPZs to be integrated within any changes to the existing grassed area and areas under trees, e.g. through the introduction of proposed rubber mulch and other permeable surfaces (no dig) or soft areas, and works to be coordinated and agreed with local tree officer and operational staff. New foundations within RPZs only where absolutely necessary and to be designed for low impact (e.g. the extension of the existing fence line under existing lime trees which will be extended further south) – hand dig only.

Soft landscape works to include additional tree planting to create more shade in the informal grassed area in the south of the proposed play area, also opportunity to include ornamental grasses and wildflower verges to create separation between areas within the playground. Further requirement for a buffer of low shrub, groundcover, climbers and ferns to create separation towards shared boundary with neighbouring residential block, this should meander to follow the rubber mulch informal play path through the woodland. Also opportunity for bulb planting to improve areas under trees.

Optional/added value:

- Replace or repair/repaint existing fencing
- Provision of plants and organisation of planting workshops which are outside of the budget for the play area

Downhills Park Playground - Concept sketch zoning - indicative only

