Down Lane Park Improvements

In person consultation and on-line survey summary report

August 2025

Introduction

Co-designed Masterplan

At the start of 2022, Haringey Council set out to develop a vision for the future of Down Lane Park, working with a Community Design Group (CDG) made up of local volunteer representatives, co-Chaired by the Council Cabinet Members for Placemaking and Housebuilding and Environment, Transport and Climate Change.

Together the Council and CDG, supported by landscape architects Levitt Bernstein, co-designed design options for the park and invited feedback from residents, park users and the wider community throughout October 2022 and May 2023 via a series of 'in person' exhibitions, drop-ins and workshops, as well as an on-line survey.

In 2022 and 2023 we ran 14 engagement events and two online surveys and spoke to 430 residents and park users, receiving 1,150 responses to our online surveys, school surveys and park surveys).

This feedback was used to inform the co-design and the development of a final masterplan which was granted approval in January 2024. The summary of this feedback can be viewed here, on the project website.

Changes to the co-designed masterplan

With increasing pressure on council budgets from ever-growing demand and rising costs, the council has been working hard to deliver a balanced budget for 2025/26, to address the funding emergency we are facing.

The Down Lane Park project budget has been reviewed, and savings have been identified, that can be reallocated to support essential services to ensure we continue to meet the needs of our residents and prioritise vital and statutory services.

The council has considered project savings to deliver future phases of the park improvements within a reduced project budget and remain committed to delivering ambitious plans for Down Lane Park which address residents' priorities as identified through the co-design and earlier engagement.

In May 2025 we hosted a design workshop and launched a Commonplace Survey, inviting residents and park users to feedback on the project savings being considered. Thank you to everyone who took their time to attend the design workshop and respond to the online survey. We have reviewed all your responses and provided a summary below. We have also summarised how your feedback will be incorporated to shape the final plans for the scheme.

Short Summary

Below we have provided a short summary of resident feedback to the latest online survey and in-person consultation meetings, around the savings being proposed to deliver future phases of the improvement works at Down Lane Park.

Executive Summary

A broad and diverse range of views were expressed through resident feedback to the online survey and in-person consultation meetings. However, there were also some consistent messages about the proposed savings and how survey respondents felt our plans for future phases of the improvements to Down Lane Park could be improved.

Overall respondents to the online survey and in-person consultation events sympathized with the challenge to deliver improvements that meet the needs of residents and park users, within an affordable budget envelop.

Analysis of residents and park users' feedback indicates consensus around some of the key moves proposed, however, respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the reduced scheme and raised questions about how the scheme would still achieve value for the community.

Community Hub and Garden

The Community Hub and Garden were broadly considered the highest priority for respondents and responses considered a variety of suggestions to increase the community offer in the proposals, including removing the café or reconfiguring the layout to increase the size of the bookable community space. Other suggestions included waiting for more funding to become available to support a larger community hub. Toilet provision was universally supported.

Some respondents raised concerns that the size of the bookable community space and garden being proposed would not be sufficient for an incoming VCS operator to succeed.

The community garden was also highlighted as a very important and unique community asset and most felt that the size and landscaping of the garden did not meet the needs of the community.

How will your feedback be used to develop the designs in the next stage.

- Where possible, and with the support of the newly appointed Architect, we will explore opportunities to optimise the layout of the community hub and increase the size of the garden.
- We will continue to prioritise a Voluntary Community Sector organisation to lease this property.
- Where reasonable, we will work collaboratively with our community partners to ensure the design of the new hub supports an incoming VCS operator to succeed.
- When developing the designs in the next stage, we will explore opportunities to incorporate other suggestions, such as water refilling points, additional seating and volunteering opportunities.
- If the project contingency is unspent, we will explore opportunities to enhance the landscaping in the community garden.

Please refer to our latest FAQs Here for more information about the council's consideration to refurbishment of the existing community hub in Down Lane Park.

Landscape Improvements

A new playground was considered the highest priority after the community hub and garden, and families wanted to be involved in the design of the playground and the selection of the play equipment. Enhancements to the existing play area in the south, were also highlighted as a high priority for families to improve the play offer in the park for children under-12.

Although a lower priority for residents and park users, respondents wanted to see more seating and more green space in the southern area of the park to match the quality of the recently completed improvements in the north of the park. Creating more opportunities for residents and park users to volunteer, through planting and other activities, was suggested to support the delivery of landscape improvements and increase the quality of green spaces in the park.

There was consensus around the importance of creating a safer and more welcoming environment in the south of the park. Improving lighting, entrances and visibility were highlighted as important to address anti-social behaviour and enhancing safety.

The re-provision of a basketball court in the park was highlighted as a priority for park users, as well as spaces for other activities, such as cycle training, community gardening and community festivals or celebrations.

Some respondents expressed their disappointment that the co-designed proposals for the southern-most area of the park, including three new entrances and a shared cyclist-pedestrian link between Chesnut Road and Ashley Road, are not included in the plans being proposed.

<u>How will your feedback be used to develop the designs in the next stage.</u>

- We will run an engagement session to co-design the look and feel of the new playground and selection of new equipment in the existing playground in the south of the park.
- If the project contingency is unspent, we will prioritise enhancing and extending the play offer in the park and invite residents and park users to help shape these enhancements.
- We will work with the community to create more volunteering opportunities to enhance green spaces, such as community planting in the park.
- We will ensure the proposals uphold the key principles of the co-designed masterplan to create level and well-lit spaces and entrances, with clear sightlines across the park to improve safety.
- We will deliver a Multi-Use Games Court, incorporating both Basketball and Netball line markings and hoops into the design, allowing for both sports to be played locally. We will also safeguard space to deliver a second sports court to enhance the sports and recreational offer in the park in the future, if funding is available.
- We will incorporate facilities to support the continuation of cycle training activities in the park.
- We will map out plans to deliver and fund the remaining elements of the co-designed masterplan in future, such as the central spine and southern area of the park, new entrances and east-west cycle route between Chesnut Road and Ashley Road.

Long Summary

Below we have provided a longer summary to capture resident feedback to the questions asked in the latest online survey and in-person consultation meetings. These questions sought feedback from the community around the savings being proposed to deliver future phases of the improvement works at Down Lane Park.

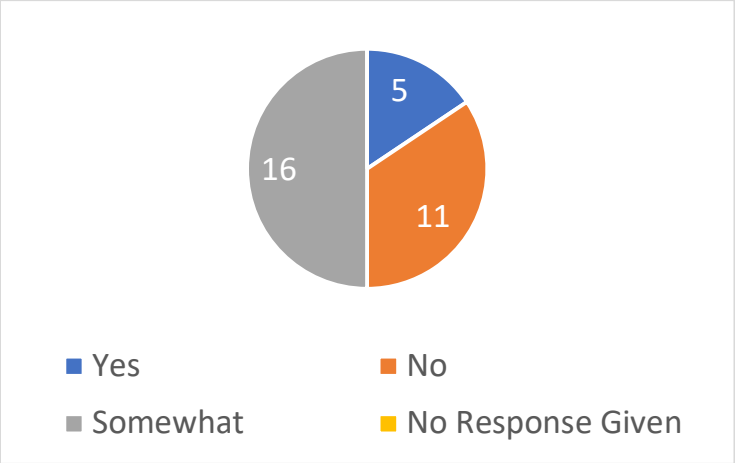
Question 1.

Our revised plans proposed to prioritise core elements of the co-designed masterplan, to address resident's needs and safeguard other elements of the masterplan that could be delivered in future, if funds allow.

Core elements we will deliver	Other elements that will be safeguarded
• New Community Hub and Garden (smaller footprint) • New playground for under 12 years • Berol Link footpath • New sports court • Minor refurbishment to southern playground	• Second sports court • Improved lighting • New entrances and shared cycling-pedestrian route from Chestnut Road to future Ashley Link • Landscape improvements to central spine, including resurfacing, seating, greening and flood mitigation. • Extend new under-12s playground

We asked, '**Do you agree with the priorities being taken forward in this proposal?'**

Two-thirds of respondents somewhat agreed or did fully agree with the priorities being taken forward. One-third of respondents did not agree.



Question 2.

When asked**, 'in what order would you prioritise from the list of elements in the masterplan,** respondents felt the Community Hub and Garden were the highest priority, a Café, New playground and improved entrances were also highly favoured as priority elements.

Rating	Element of the masterplan	No. Votes
1(Top)	Community Hub and Gardens	27
2	Café	21
3	New play area	18
4	Improved entrances	8
5	Second sports court	9
6	Planting and trees	6
7	Lighting	5
8 (Lowest)	Flooding mitigation	2
	Other	3
	No response	7

Question 3.

When asked if there were **other important improvements that were listed in question 2** respondents highlighted:

- Community facilities, such as toilets, water refilling points and rentable spaces for community events.
- Improvements to address anti-social behaviour and improve safety in the park, such as improved lighting and visibility.
- More seating and improved entrances to create better and more equal access for all residents.
- More green space and a large community garden, which is open and accessible to the public, when possible.
- Others felt that the continuity of community services at the hub was important, and that options for refurbishment of the existing pavilion should be explored.

Question 4.

When asked for **feedback on the proposals for the community hub and garden**, respondents told us:

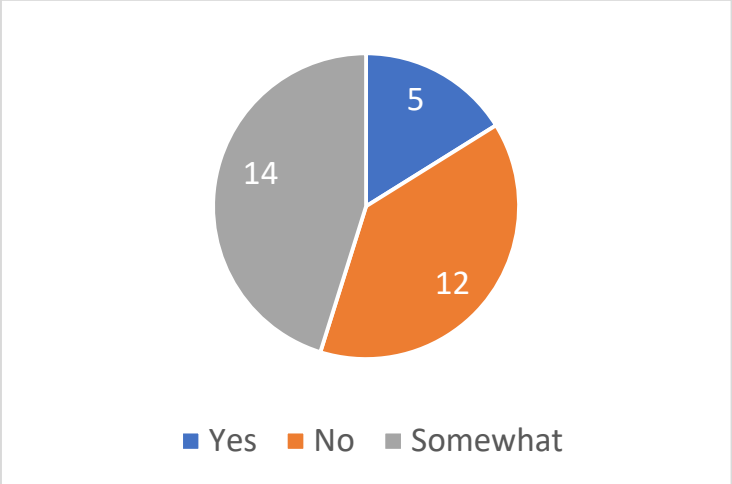
- They were disappointed with the reduced footprint of the community hub and garden and would like the council to explore additional funding options to deliver a bigger hub. Others suggested removing the café from the hub to increase the size of the bookable community space, with reference to other café provision locally to the park but felt that the provision of public toilets was important.
- While others felt that the community hub should be enlarged with an additional story or larger external canopy, others felt that the community hub could be removed from the proposals and the remaining budget used to deliver a better sport and play provision with high-quality landscaping and greening.
- Some respondents were concerned about the functionality of the community spaces being proposed and whether the hub was sufficient in size to meet the needs of a VCS operator.

- Some responses highlighted the reuse of materials and using more affordable materials would achieve cost savings on the construction of the new community hub.

Question 5.

Large savings are required to deliver improvements in the south of the park, and a number of compromises have been proposed which have the least impact on the project. The proposals prioritise the delivery of a smaller community hub with Cafe and community garden; a smaller under-12yrs play area and single sports court but, in each case, there will be opportunities to make further enhancements in future if more funding became available.

When asked if they **agree with the compromises being proposed**, respondents were largely split, with 60% agreeing (15%) or somewhat agreeing (45%) and 40% disagreeing the compromises being proposed.



Question 6.

When asked if they had **any comments or suggestions about the compromises being proposed**, respondents said they wanted the council to explore whether retaining and refurbishing the existing community hub building was feasible. Others suggested the building could remain in community use until further funding was found.

In the park respondents wanted to ensure the basketball court would be re-provided and that the upgrades to the current playground in the south of the park would be prioritised. Others wanted to see more seating in the south of the park, with more green spaces and better lighting.

Some respondents suggested creating more volunteering opportunities to support the delivery of landscape improvements. Concerns about the de-scoping of the southern part of the park, including the shared-cyclist, pedestrian link between Chesnut Road and Ashley Road, were also raised.

Question 7.

Improvement works will bring some disruption to the park. We will take reasonable steps to sequence the works in a way that maintains access to facilities and supports the continuation of activities in the park.

When asked **what activities residents currently took part in and felt were most important to them**, respondents told us they'd like to see sessions for young children, gardening activities, sessions for older residents and community cycling sessions continue.

Where possible, respondents wanted to see some community facilities in the park maintained, in the park such as community spaces at the hub, toilet access and café provision, however there was broad consensus that the project budget should be used for long-term improvements in the park and costs for maintaining facilities or continuing activities should be minimised.

Interim use to support front line services, such as Food Banks was also suggested.

Question 8.

When asked if there was **any other feedback that should be considered when developing the revised designs,** respondents highlighted a range of different considerations. These included:

- Crowdfunding, grants or sponsorship to increase funding.
- Could savings be found by re-providing the hub on the site of the existing Pavilion Building or removing aesthetics from the hub design and focusing on functionality of the building.
- If park improvement such as the sports courts and landscaping could be met by smaller pots of external grant funding, should the project budget prioritise the community hub building and measures which improve safety in the park, such as improved lighting.
- Small interventions such as café seating and bouldering for adult users could benefit park users but have not been considered yet.
- Concerns about how the cost of project management fees and the reasons for reducing the project budget.
- The lack of representation in the latest round of consultation.
- Respondents welcomed ideas about co-designing the new playground with families
- Responses highlighted the importance of temporary toilet provision to replace provision lost in LUOS Café.

To understand how this feedback will be incorporated in development of the designs at the next stage, please refer to the short summary on the second and third page.