

Horley Town Park

Early engagement report

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

August 2026

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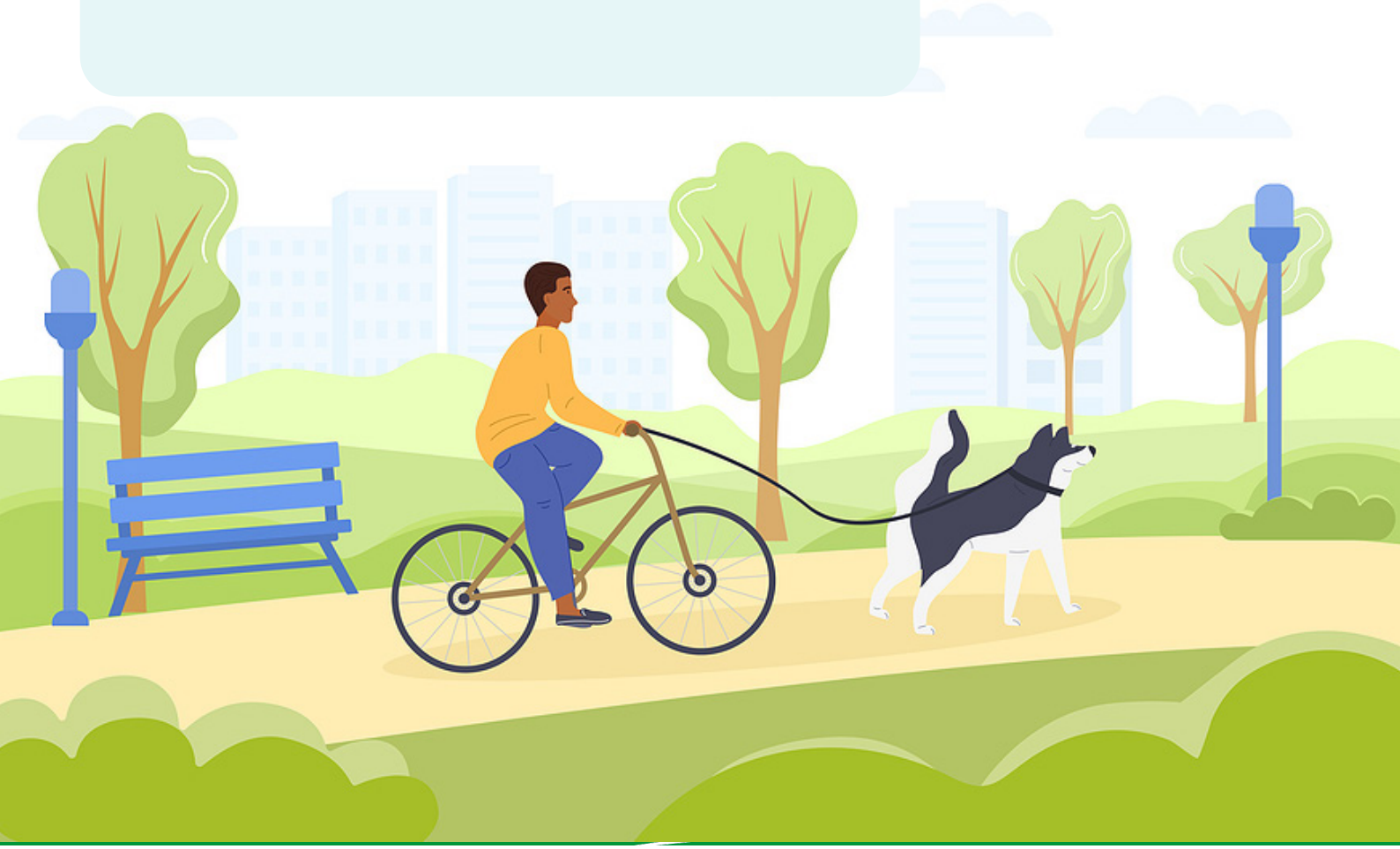


Executive summary

This report provides a summary of the feedback received from stakeholders and members of the community about their aspirations and priorities for the proposed town park at Tanyard Meadows in Northeast Horley.

Drawing on detailed analysis of early engagement outputs, including online survey responses and feedback from in-person events, the report highlights key themes and priorities and presents recommendations to shape concept designs.

Throughout the early engagement period from 15 June to 12 July 2026, we received 166 responses to the online survey. We also captured feedback from over 130 people across three youth workshops and two pop-up sessions at Horley Carnival and the existing play area at Tanyard Meadows.

Key priorities emerging from the feedback included:

- Creating active, play, social and quiet areas for all age groups, with particular emphasis on providing welcoming spaces for teenagers
- Preserving and protecting the natural landscape for people and wildlife to enjoy
- Mitigating flood-risk to protect properties and ensure spaces are usable all year round
- Ensuring parking facilities provide enough space to accommodate all park users without encroaching on residential areas
- Carefully positioning active and seating areas to minimise disturbance to residents and discourage antisocial behaviour
- Creating accessible connections to nature and features of the park



Project background

We are progressing plans for a new town park at Tanyard Meadows in northeast Horley to address gaps in sports, recreation and open space provision.

The need for additional facilities was highlighted through the 2016 Horley Outdoor Space Needs Assessment, which found existing provision did not sufficiently meet the needs of local residents, particularly children and young people. More recently, the Horley Open Space Survey (2025), undertaken jointly by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council and Horley Town Council, gathered responses from 777 residents and visitors and 13 community organisations.

The new park forms part of the Council's commitment to provide outdoor sports and play facilities to support more than 2,600 new homes delivered through the Horley Masterplan and contributes to the Borough's 2030 vision for improved wellbeing and high-quality parks and leisure spaces.

The project aims to create an inclusive and accessible park that:

- Provides opportunities for play, exercise and socialising
- Supports grassroots football and cricket
- Encourages healthy lifestyles and promotes physical and mental wellbeing
- Enhances access to nature and green spaces
- Conserves and enhances the river environment and helps reduce flood risk

Early design ideas include:

- Grassroots football and cricket pitches
- An enhanced play area and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)
- Outdoor gym and trim trail facilities
- A new sustainable pavilion with changing rooms and toilets
- Improved walking and cycling connections
- Youth-focused recreation spaces
- Drainage infrastructure to reduce flooding impacts
- Car parking to support access from across the town

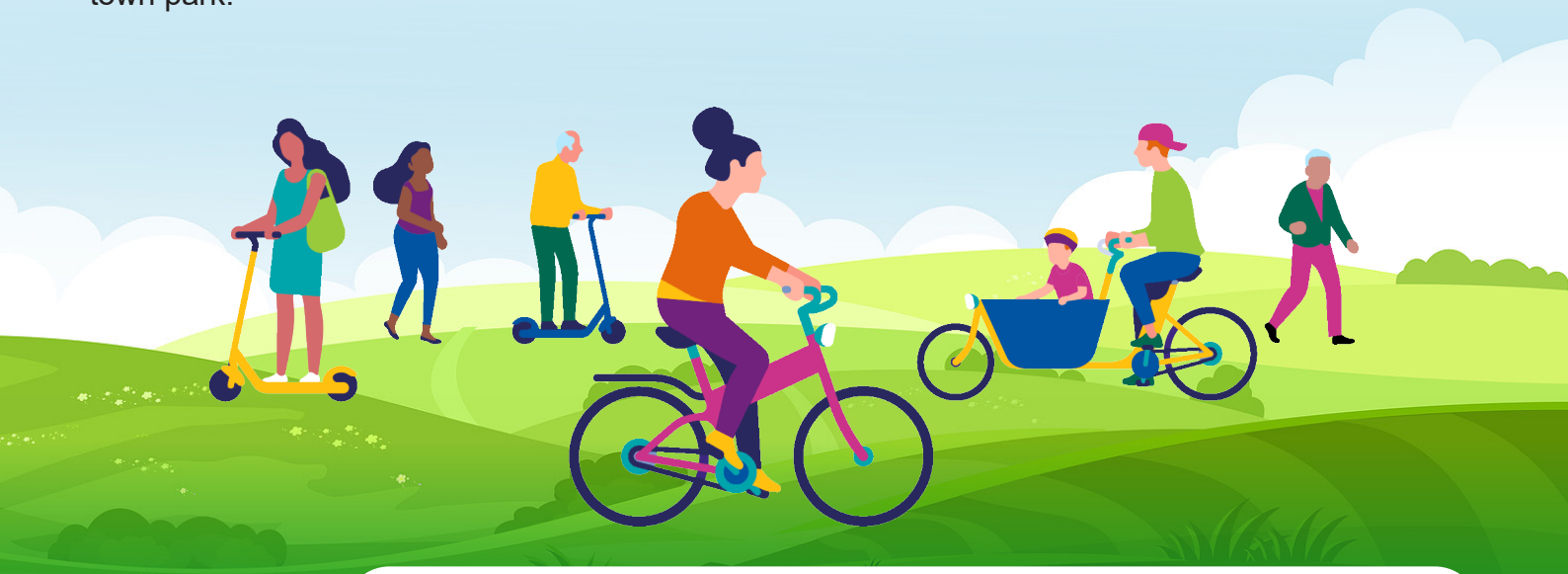


The findings in the Horley Open Space Survey report confirmed that open spaces are highly valued and frequently used for activities such as walking, running and football, while also identifying concerns about the range and quality of existing facilities.

What we did

Early engagement took place from 15 June to 12 July 2026 to gather feedback from the local community on their priorities and aspirations for the park.

To better understand local needs and gather meaningful feedback, we undertook a programme of engagement activities with residents, community groups and young people. This included an online survey, a pop-up session at Horley Carnival, a resident drop-in session, and targeted workshops with youth audiences, including a school session at Trinity Oaks CofE Primary School, a youth workshop with Horley YMCA and a further school session at Oakwood Secondary School. We also reviewed comments and feedback submitted by stakeholders and residents through the Commonplace platform. Together, these activities provided valuable insights into local priorities and helped identify the key opportunities and challenges that should inform the design of Horley's new town park.



Online survey

Residents and visitors were invited to share their views through an online survey hosted on a dedicated project hub on the Commonplace engagement platform. The survey explored priorities for the new park and sought feedback on a range of potential facilities and design principles. 166 responses were received.

Youth engagement sessions

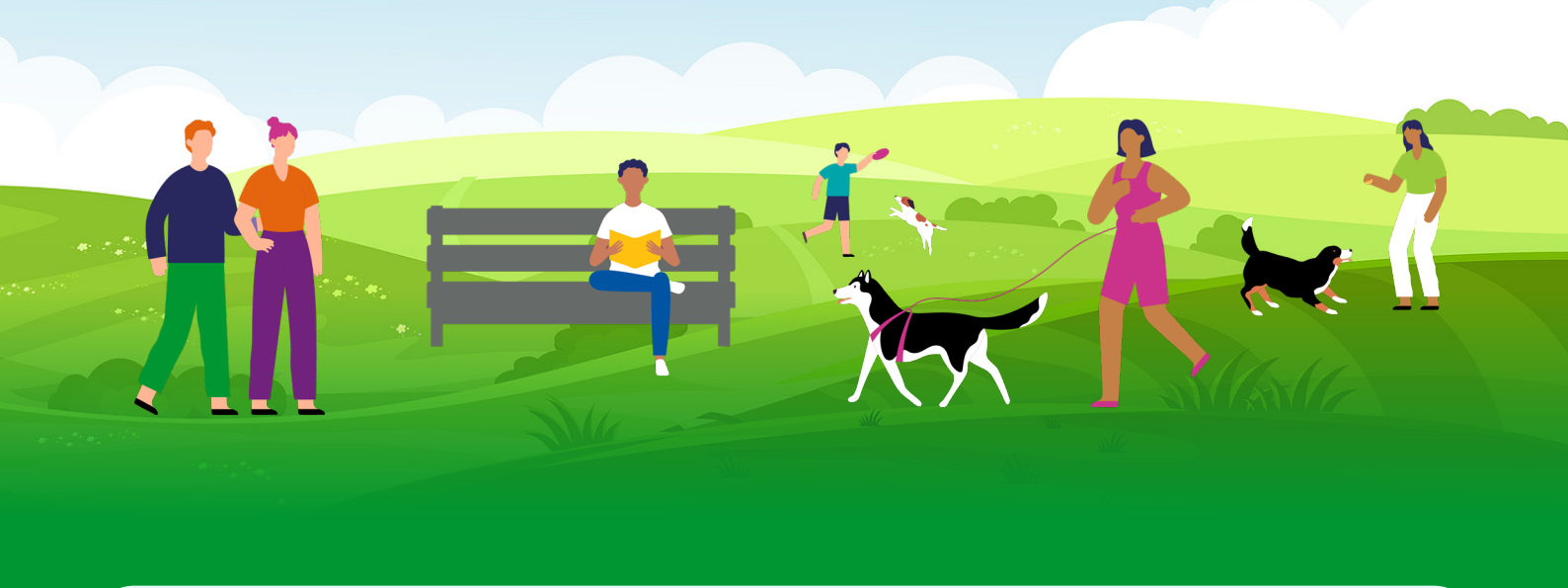
Three school workshops were held with local pupils to understand the needs and aspirations of younger residents. We engaged with around 60 young people across a range of age groups at the sessions, which focused on how children and young people currently spend time outdoors, the types of facilities they value most and ideas for making the park welcoming and enjoyable for all ages.

Horley Carnival pop-up event

A pop-up engagement stall was held at the Horley Carnival, providing an opportunity to speak with residents in an informal setting. We spoke to around 30 attendees who were able to discuss the emerging proposals with members of the project team and share ideas and priorities for the new park.

Resident drop-in session

A dedicated community session provided residents with the opportunity to review information about the project, speak directly with members of the project team and provide feedback on the proposals.



Communications and promotion

The opportunity to participate was promoted through a range of channels to increase awareness, including:

- Social media posts
- Distribution of postcards and posters across approximately 20 community locations.
- Emails to local stakeholders and community organisations
- Direct mailouts to Commonplace subscribers
- Project webpage and council communication channels
- News release sent to local media
- Partner communications channels, such as Horley Town Council

What we heard

This section summarises feedback from across the engagement programme: the online survey, youth workshops, the Horley Carnival pop-up, the resident drop-in session, direct emails and key stakeholders.

Online survey findings

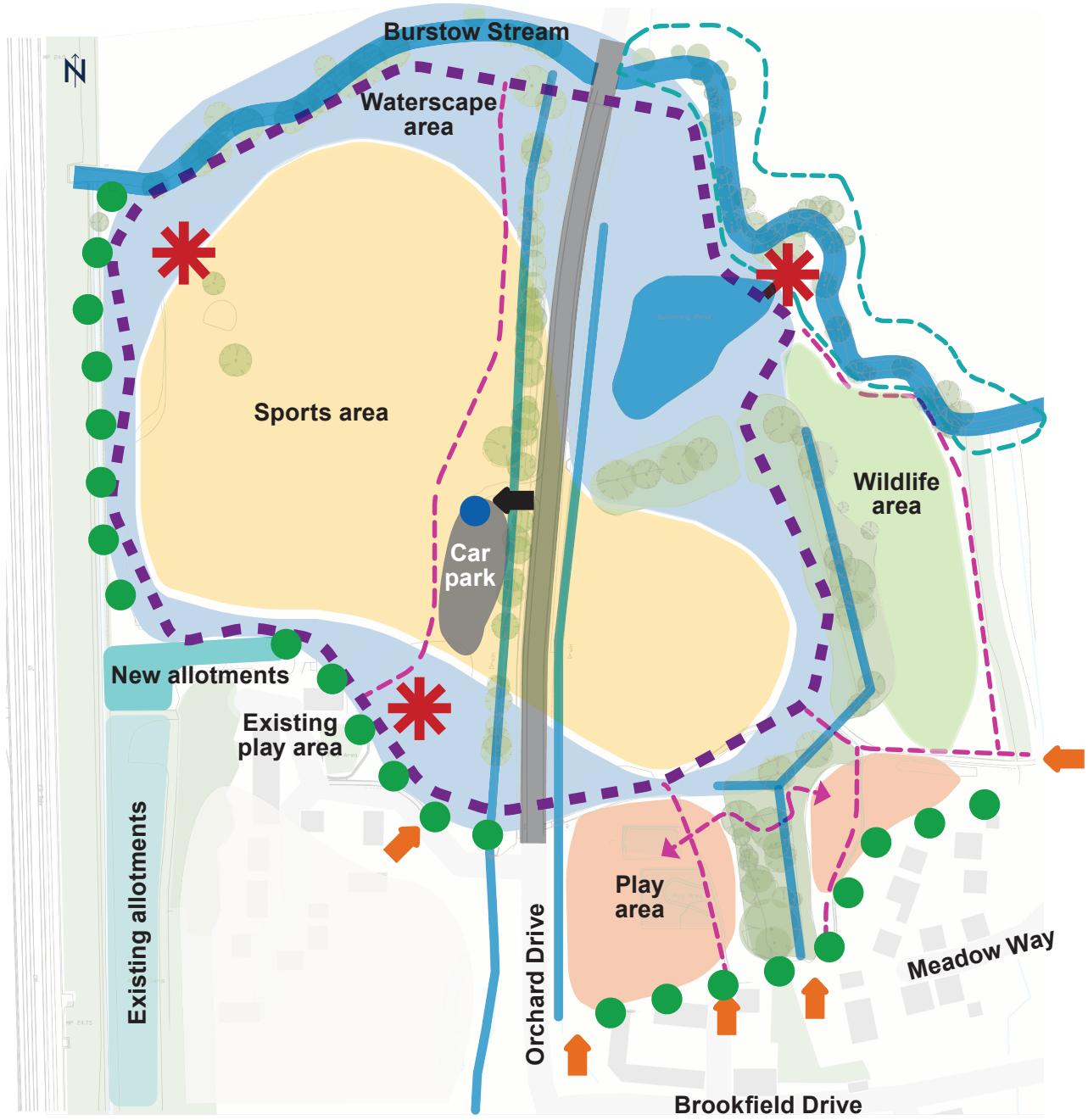
166 people responded to the online survey, sharing their views on how they use the park and what they would like to see included in the new design.

Most respondents live in Horley (93%).

More than 30% of respondents said they would visit the park more than once a week, with 20% expecting to visit daily and a further 16% visiting once a week.

Walking or wheeling was by far the preferred way to travel to the park, chosen by 77% of respondents compared with 13% who would use a car or private vehicle and 5% who would cycle.

Character areas



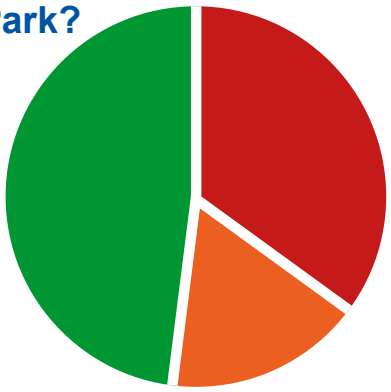
Key (Existing)

- Access on foot and car
- Access on foot
- Footpath
- Circular Trail
- River Walk
- Ditch

Key (New)

- Landmark
- Pavillion
- Planting buffer

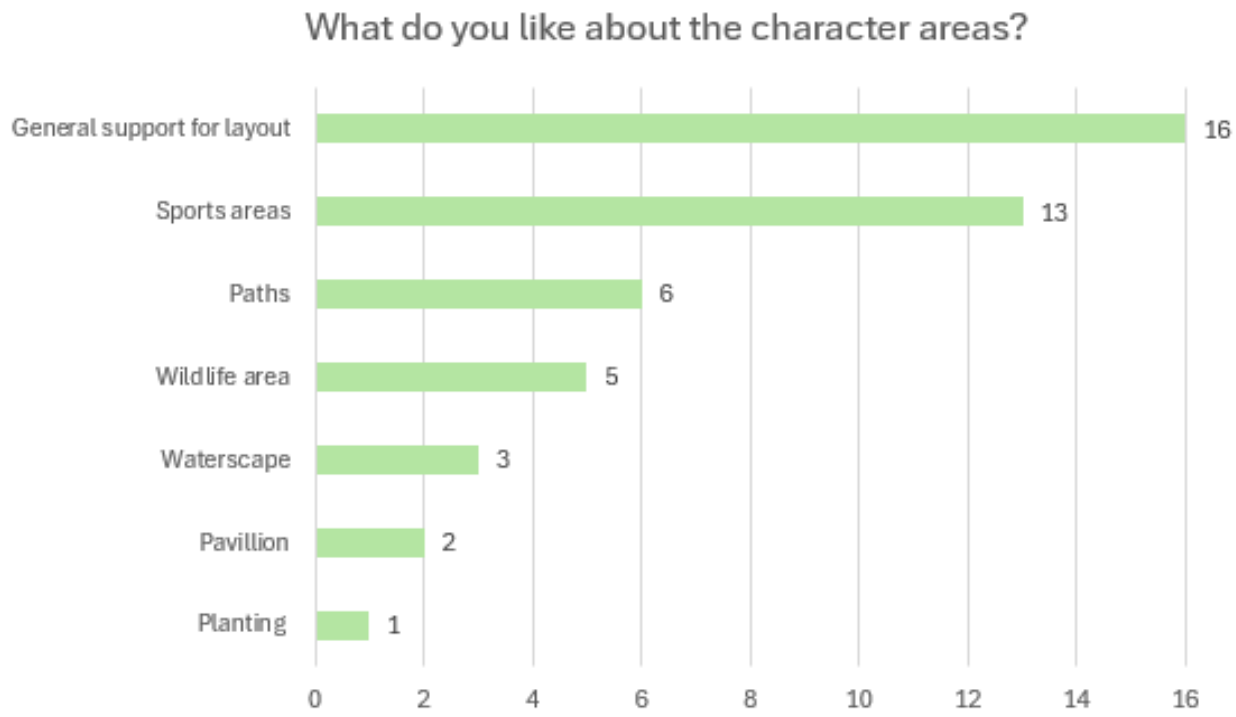
Are the character areas suitable for Horley Town Park?



- There was overall agreement towards the proposed character areas, with **48% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing**, and **17% answering neutrally**.
- **35% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed** with the character areas.

What people liked about the character areas

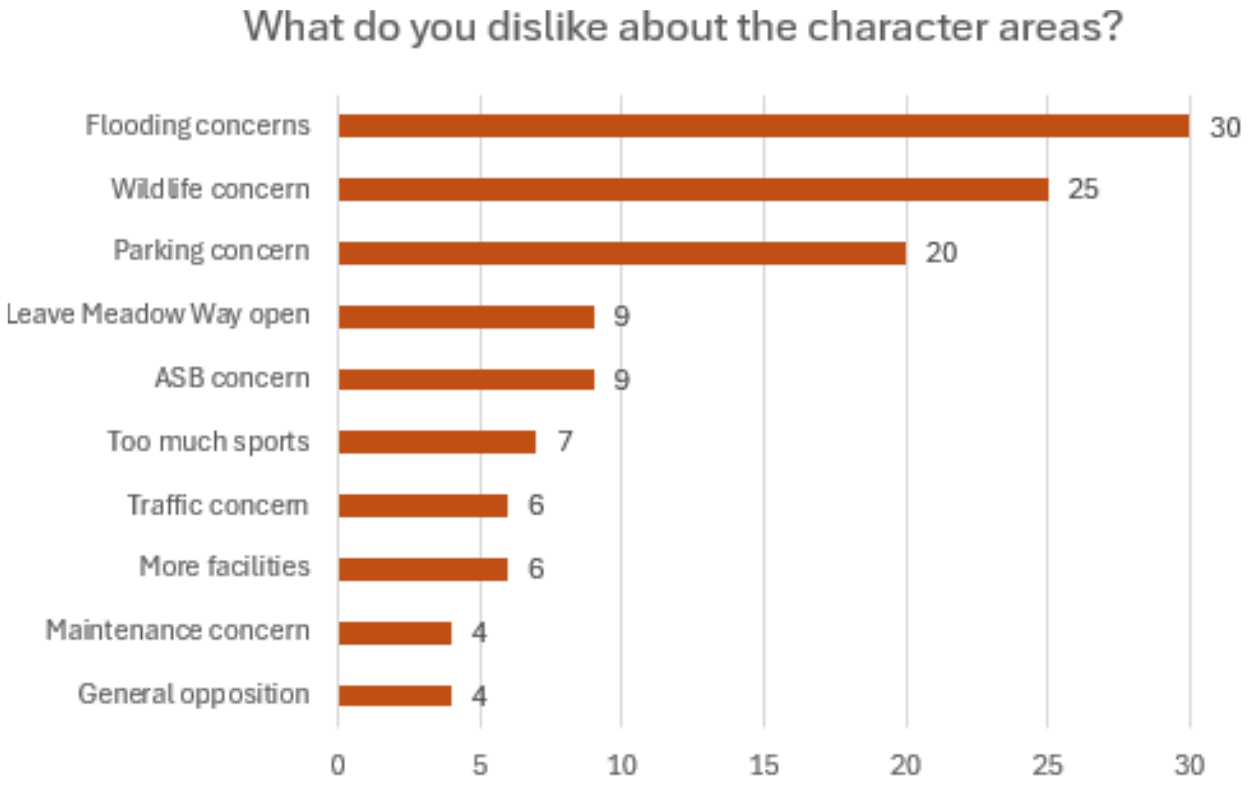
- 133 people left comments about what they like and dislike about the character areas.
- The responses were analysed and key themes for likes and dislikes are shown in the charts below.
- 16 respondents expressed general support for the proposed character areas and park layout.
- 13 respondents said they like the sports areas. Specific comments included:
  - The need for facilities to support grassroots football and cricket, with suggestions Horley Cricket Club are operating over capacity.
  - Strong preference for a running track, either separate from or a part of the proposed paths/circular routes.
- Six respondents said they like the circular trail, with value placed on being able to walk around the whole park on an accessible surface, and five respondents liked the amount of space dedicated to nature and wildlife.



What people disliked about the character areas

The main dislikes about the character areas were concerning flooding (30 mentions), wildlife (25 mentions) and parking (20 mentions), more specifically:

- Concerns that the park is located on a flood plain, which could render large areas unusable for some periods of the year if there isn't sufficient drainage.
- Concerns that activating the area could deter or displace wildlife which currently resides in Tanyard Meadows.
- Concerns there would not be enough parking to serve the parks' users, which could encourage parking on residential streets around the Acres, as well as the potential for people using the car park to access Gatwick Airport.
- Nine people mentioned the grass area in front of the houses on Meadow Way should be left open to continue to operate as an informal community space and prevent noise too close to housing.
- Seven people expressed concerns the park, and seating areas in particular, could attract antisocial behaviour such as drinking and drug use.



15 people made alternative suggestions

- Including dog-free zones to protect people and wildlife
- Introducing running tracks and padel courts
- Incorporating outdoor gym equipment along pathways rather than a central gym
- Dedicated parking for coffee/ice cream vans
- Keeping all sports to the west of Orchard Drive, with the east side dedicated to nature and wildlife
- Providing cycle routes and parking, as well as a bus service to the park
- Traffic calming on Orchard Drive
- Expanding the reed bed on the eastern side
- Water features and splash pools similar to those at Cuckfield
- More trees next to sports and play/activity areas to provide shade



Priority spaces

When asked to rank which types of spaces mattered most, wildlife and quiet areas came out on top; 43% of respondents ranked this their highest priority, followed by waterscape and river access (39% ranked this second). Sports areas were the lowest priority overall, with 46% ranking them least important.



1. Wildlife and quiet areas
2. Waterscape and river access
3. Play and recreation areas
4. Sports areas

Play preferences

Nature inspired play was the clear favourite for play-area types, with 76% of respondents ranking it in their top choice, followed by colourful play (37% ranked it second).

1. Nature-inspired play
2. Colourful play
3. Musical play
4. Themed play

62 respondents left suggestions for play area types and themes

- 17 of the comments suggested new play areas are not needed, citing disruption to wildlife, potential to attract antisocial behaviour, and there already being enough play provision as reasons for their answer.
- 15 respondents mentioned a need for facilities for all ages rather than just young children, with several suggestions there is enough provided for them already and a lack of provisions for teenagers, who would not make use of themed play areas.
- 11 respondents suggested preferred themes for play outside the proposed options, including:
  - Farms e.g. tractors, windmills, silos
  - Planes due to Gatwick connection
  - Puzzles
  - Fitness
  - Educational elements on local nature



Recreation for young people

For recreation facilities aimed at ages 13+, a cycle pump track was the most popular choice (26% ranked it top/second preference), followed by outdoor gyms (21%). Parkour areas were the least popular, with 50% ranking them last.

Ranked in order of preference (recreation areas for 13+):

1. Cycle pump track
2. Outdoor gym
3. Pickle ball / tennis court
4. Skate park
5. Multi-use games area (MUGA)
6. Parkour area

For recreation areas aimed at teenage girls specifically, sheltered tiered seating was most popular (37% ranked top), followed by large adult swings (31% ranked second).

Performance/creative spaces were the least popular choice.

Ranked in order of preference (recreation areas for teenage girls):

1. Sheltered tiered seating
2. Large adult swings
3. In-ground trampolines
4. Group swings
5. Hammocks
6. Performance/creative spaces

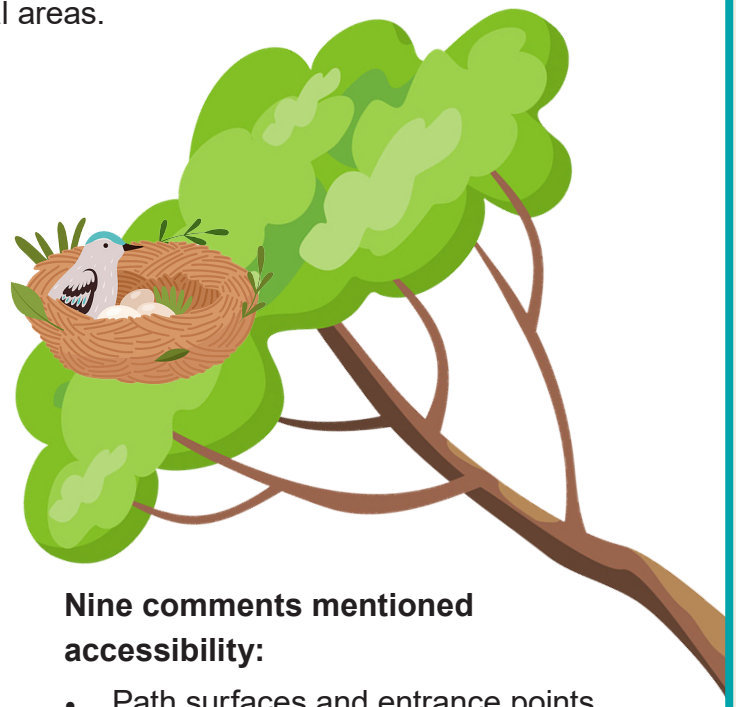


Further comments

95 respondents made further comments or suggestions. Wildlife was the most common theme, with 17 respondents mentioning concerns about disturbing wildlife or the need to prioritise conservation and access to natural areas.

Key themes from further comments:

- Wildlife (17 mentions)
- Play/activity suggestions (16)
- Paths and trails (12)
- Accessibility (9)
- Additional facilities (8)
- Seating (8)



16 respondents made suggestions for play or activities, including:

- Running track with distance markers, or incorporating running into paths/ trails
- Water fountains and splash play
- Pickleball courts as opposed to tennis
- Chess and table tennis but with equipment e.g. pieces/paddles/balls provided
- Skate park and pump track
- Support for cricket pitch

12 respondents made suggestions for paths and trails, including:

- Incorporating running and cycling into paths and trails with multi-purpose surfaces and soft segregation of uses
- Exploration routes with information points so people can enjoy and learn about the landscape and native species
- Support for boardwalks and stepping stones over wetlands
- Including bins throughout trails
- Need for road crossings for continuity of paths

Nine comments mentioned accessibility:

- Path surfaces and entrance points should be suitable for wheelchair and mobility scooter access
- Places to stop and rest

Eight respondents suggested additional facilities including:

- Café/refreshment kiosk
- Defibrillators
- Showers in changing rooms
- Floodlights for winter sports
- Space for an outdoor cinema in summer

Eight respondents made suggestions for seating, including:

- Picnic, BBQ and al-fresco eating areas
- Sun-lounger seats and seats shaded with trees or canvas sails
- Benches not too close to paths and activities for enjoying quiet time

Youth workshops key findings

Three workshops were delivered across different settings to engage with a variety of children and young people in shaping ideas for the future Horley Town Park:

- Trinity Oaks Primary School (15 participants aged 7–8 years, 30-minute classroom session)
- Horley YMCA (approximately 15 participants aged 10–14 years, one-hour drop-in youth club session)
- Oakwood School (30 participants aged 14–15 years, one-hour classroom session).

Across all workshops, a consistent format was used, with activities adapted appropriately for each age group and context. The first activity involved presenting images of potential park features and asking participants to identify their preferences using a voting system. The second activity encouraged participants to design their own park layouts on a blank site map, allowing them to share their ideas for how the space could be used.



Key feedback from the sessions included:

High demand for active and adventurous facilities

- Across both voting and map design activities, features such as skate parks, pump tracks, parkour areas, outdoor gyms, zip lines, and trampolines consistently ranked highly, indicating a strong preference for more adventurous play and sport provision.

Strong emphasis on social and food-related spaces

- Café/food provision was the most frequently included feature in map designs, alongside high demand for rest areas, seating, and informal social spaces, highlighting the importance of places to meet, relax, and stay for longer visits.

Inclusive and accessible design is a priority

- Accessibility was a recurring theme across sessions, including requests for wheelchair-accessible equipment, inclusive swings, accessible routes, and safe surfacing, demonstrating the importance of designing for a wide range of abilities.

Multi-use and integrated spaces are preferred

- Participants frequently suggested combining related activities (e.g., skate park, pump track, and parkour together; multi-use courts for football and basketball), indicating a preference for flexible, joined-up activity zones.

Horley Carnival pop-up findings

On Saturday 20 June, a pop-up information stall was set up at Horley Carnival to build awareness of the project and capture feedback from visitors. Around 30 people spoke to the project team to have their say including representatives of Horley United Football Club, the Acres Residents Association, Horley Conservation Group and a local councillor.

Key feedback from the session included:

Proposed play and recreational facilities too close to properties

- Open grass areas should be kept along residential units, and no play elements should be closer to homes than currently exist.

Drainage and flooding issues

- The site floods constantly, and there is concern that the project could make this worse for local homes, including pitches being unusable through winter.

Loss of rural and biodiversity areas

- Concern about the level of change impacting local ecology and wildlife.

Parking should support sport teams and visitors

- Suggestions to reduce the number of pitches if needed to limit parking pressure, and to restrict use by Gatwick Airport workers.



Resident drop-in key findings

On Saturday 11 July, we held a pop-up session next to the existing play area in Tanyard Meadows to answer questions from local residents and capture their feedback. We were joined by around 50 people, mainly residents of the Acres and surrounding area.

Key feedback from the session included:

Drainage is a key issue as most of the west field floods in winter

- Questions the point of a park if it's not usable
- Some people think swales seem to work well currently

Accessible circular trail and nature information points

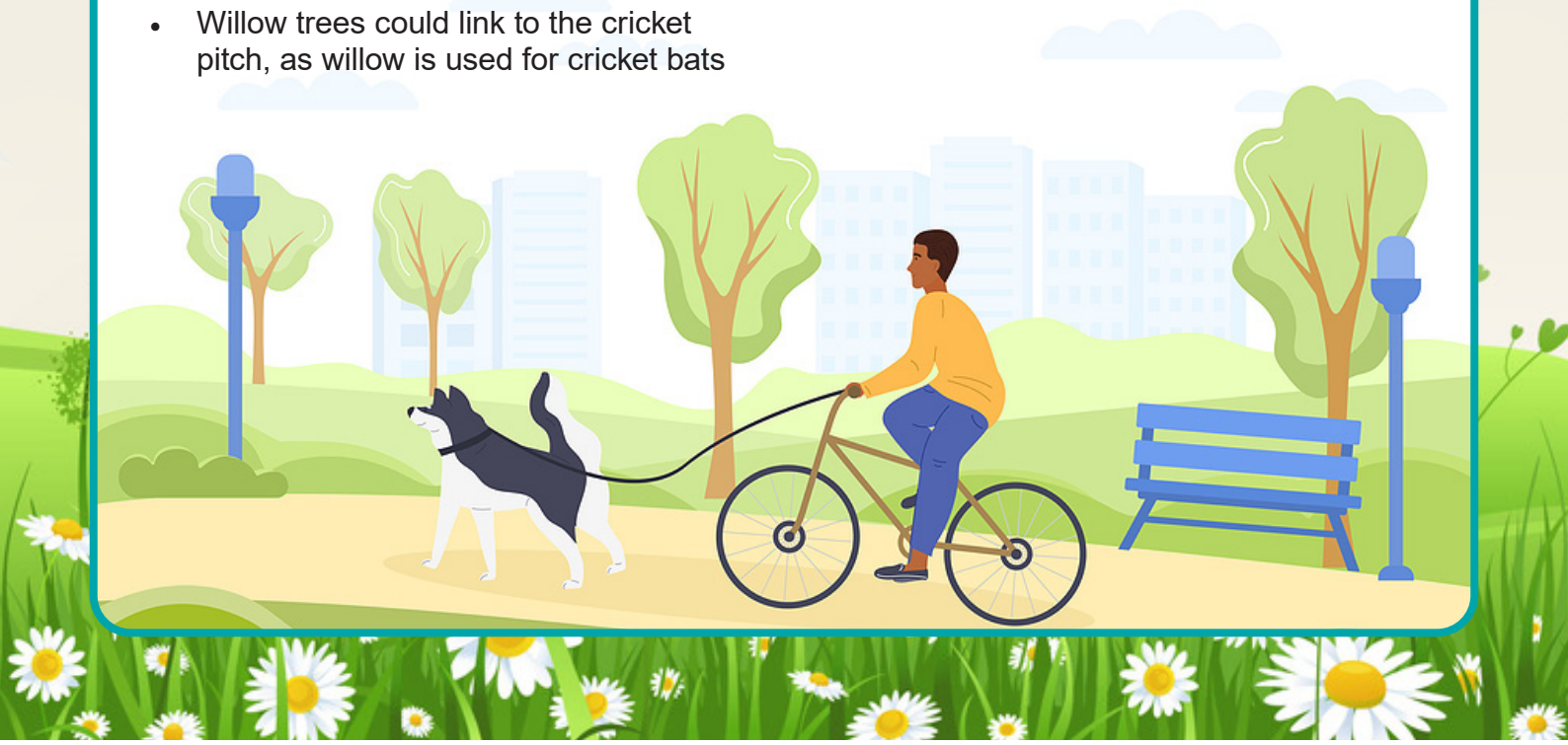
- Formal, well-used paths wanted around the whole park; preference for a circular, all-year-round trail (e.g., stone rather than dirt)
- Paths should have passing spaces and flat surfaces for accessibility
- Suggestion to shorten the circular path on the east side to avoid the balancing pond, aligning with vehicular access on the West side and covering the full West area
- Interest in nature information boards/ plaques (e.g. tree species) and audio elements (e.g. bird calls)
- Willow trees could link to the cricket pitch, as willow is used for cricket bats

Speeding and traffic

- Speed bumps not wanted, but other traffic calming needed, reports of vehicles hitting 80mph in the 40mph zone
- Vehicles not giving way at the Orchard Drive junction, a dangerous rat run at peak times, concerns more traffic could worsen this

Concerns about antisocial behaviour and noise

- Don't want large community gathering spaces (e.g. amphitheatre seating); concerned about antisocial behaviour and drinking
- Don't want play/active areas closer to housing than current; noise is an issue at night (existing MUGA reportedly used as late as 11pm)



Resident drop-in key findings continued

Parking is a key concern, particularly for residents of Field Bank

- Some residents worry the car park is too small and could push overflow parking onto residential roads
- Residents want more formalised parking and a timed gate to prevent traveller sites/misuse

Trees and planting

- Residents don't want planting buffers to block views
- More planting wanted around allotments for deer protection and security
- Planting desired around play/active areas for shade and wildlife
- Mixed views on a community orchard in the wildlife area, some support it, others want it left alone

Seating

- Need more seating near play areas for parents/carers
- Include shaded seating for hot weather
- Teenagers not enthusiastic about performance spaces and would prefer safe places to just hang out

Space for play

- Meadow Way residents strongly oppose play or active areas on the patch of grass in front of their houses, valuing it as informal community space
- Suggestions for water play e.g. low-level splash fountains
- Enough provisions for young children already, but more needed for teenagers
- Suggestion for a putting green, given local demand for golf
- Positive response to a pump track, but need to balance with space for other activities
- Need mix of sports not just football; question whether three pitches are needed

Lighting

- Concerns about light pollution



Email feedback

We received written feedback via email from two residents during the engagement period, including:

- Concern about potential flood risk for properties on Field Bank if surface runoff increases due to play surfaces, suggesting rewilding of the Burstow Stream and floodplain and situating any play areas east of Orchard Drive
- Request for a cycle track for road bikes, enabling racing, with road markings to mimic the highway for learning cycling proficiency
- Concern about loss of parking spaces for residents due to park visitors parking on residential streets

Key stakeholder feedback

We received direct feedback from Sussex Wildlife Trust and Gatwick Greenspace Partnership, who manage and maintain Tanyard Meadows with the help of local volunteers and residents.

Retention pond / reedbed area

- Provides a high-quality refuge for a range of species, and a valuable and sensitive habitat
- Interventions should keep this area as undisturbed as possible
- Footpaths and other human activity should be located away from this habitat wherever feasible

Lighting

- Given the rural character of the site and the presence of protected species along the river corridor, proposals should avoid introducing lighting that could disturb wildlife

River edge and access

- Removing existing vegetation to create river access could encourage the spread of Himalayan balsam, increasing erosion risk when it dies back in winter
- Any vegetation clearance should be limited and carefully managed, with successful replacement planting



Key outcomes

Following an extensive review of insights, the following key findings, priorities and recommendations have been identified and will shape the next steps and development of designs for Horley Town Park.

Character areas

- There was general support for the proposed character areas, with many people acknowledging gaps in provisions for young people and grassroots sports, as well as the need to enable greater access to nature and the waterscape
- Prioritise areas for young people, particularly those aged 13+, who consistently expressed strong interest in facilities supporting physical activity and social interaction
- Consider the distance of play and residential areas to minimise noise impact; the grass area in front of houses on Meadow Way should remain open for informal gathering.
- The natural landscape should be preserved and protected for people and wildlife, retained and enhanced with light-touch improvements that protect habitats and enable quiet enjoyment of nature.
- Planting buffers should be low-level to avoid impacting views for residents and visitors.
- Parking needs to effectively accommodate park users; studies should ensure enough spaces for those playing/spectating sport, while discouraging use by Gatwick Airport commuters.
- A detailed flood management plan needs to be in place to ensure the park can be enjoyed all year round and protect surrounding properties

Road and personal safety

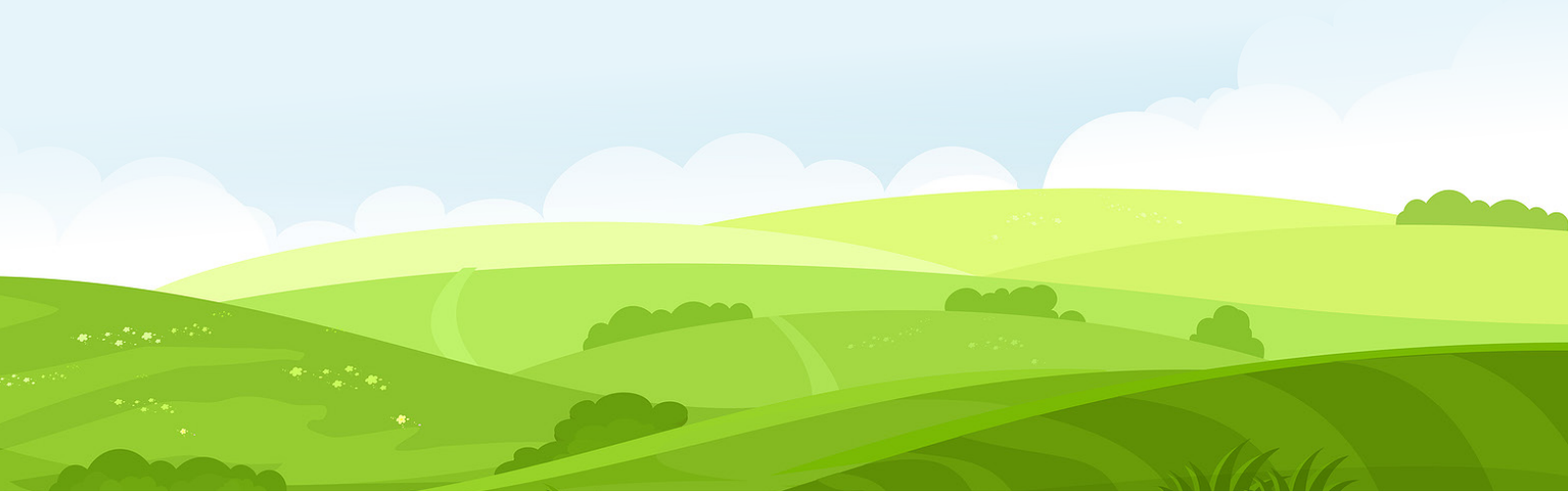
- Traffic on Orchard Drive is a key safety concern; safe crossing points are essential for connecting both sides of the park and maintaining circular trail continuity.
- Residents highlighted antisocial behaviour concerns: the park should balance active and passive surveillance to remain welcoming while discouraging misuse.
- Spaces should be well-lit at night; young people identified improved lighting as important for safety and year-round use.
- Surfaces in play and active areas should be rubberised where possible for soft landings.

Park features

- Providing recreational activities for young people is a key priority; pump track and skate facilities, outdoor gym equipment and padel courts were the most popular, with a preference for dynamic, joined-up spaces.
- Social seating areas, particularly spaces for teenagers to hang out, should be a priority within the designs.
- Natural play should be prioritised for young children, with a preference for nature-inspired play and a neutral palette over themed/gimmick play.
- Joined-up, inclusive walking routes are in high demand; strong support for a circular, accessible path incorporating amenities and different user groups.
- Wayfinding should be subtly educational; trails with information about local flora, fauna and landscape history, rather than public art or landmarks.
- Seating and tree planting should be introduced strategically near points of interest to create shaded resting spots; low-level water elements are highly requested for cooling and informal play.

Accessibility and inclusivity

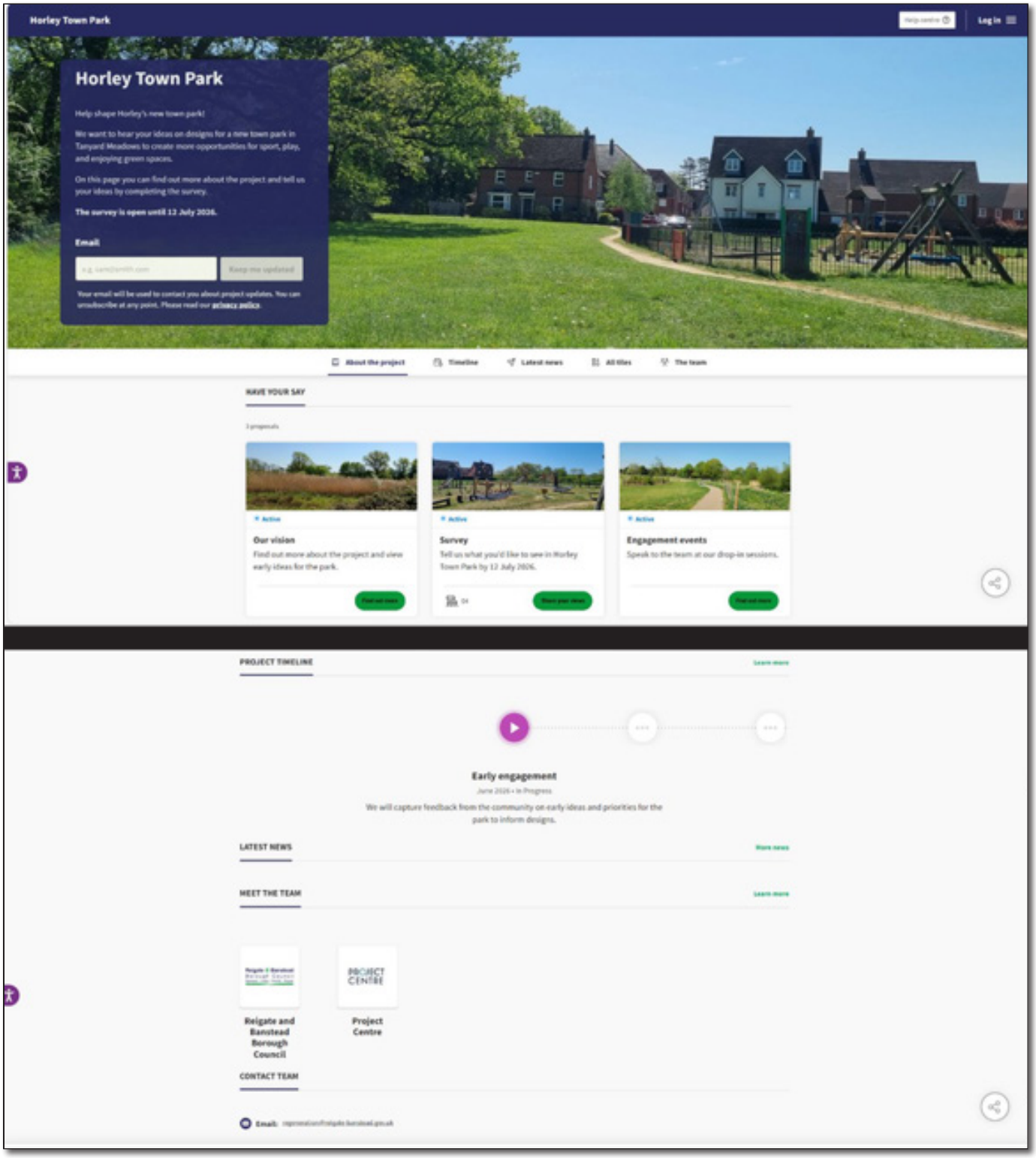
- Walking routes need to be accessible for wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs, with smooth, flat surfaces and adequate passing space.
- Designing spaces for all should be a priority, balancing formal sports facilities with informal spaces, and addressing feedback that teenagers often feel overlooked.
- A comprehensive maintenance plan should be in place to keep the landscape, equipment and paths accessible and well-kept all year round.



Appendices

Appendix A: Commonplace engagement platform

The online survey and project information were hosted on a dedicated project hub on the Commonplace engagement platform.



Appendix B: Postcard

A postcard was distributed across approximately 20 community locations to promote the engagement opportunity.

What could the park include?

Our vision for Horley Town Park includes a variety of new spaces and uses, which could feature:

- High quality pitches for grassroots football and cricket
- An enhanced and well-equipped play area and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)
- Outdoor gym facilities to encourage exercise
- Youth-focused spaces that inspire movement, play and exercise in a relaxed social setting
- A new pavilion with changing and toilet facilities that is sustainable
- Drainage systems to help reduce flood impact
- Improved paths and crossings
- Parking to accommodate people travelling from further away

To find out more and share your views, visit the link below or scan the QR code.

https://horleytownpark.commonplace.is

The site today



Share your views by 12 July 2026

If you have any questions or would like a hard copy survey, please get in touch:

regeneration@reigate-banstead.gov.uk

01737 276 000

If you have a hearing impairment, you can text us on **07834 626 468**

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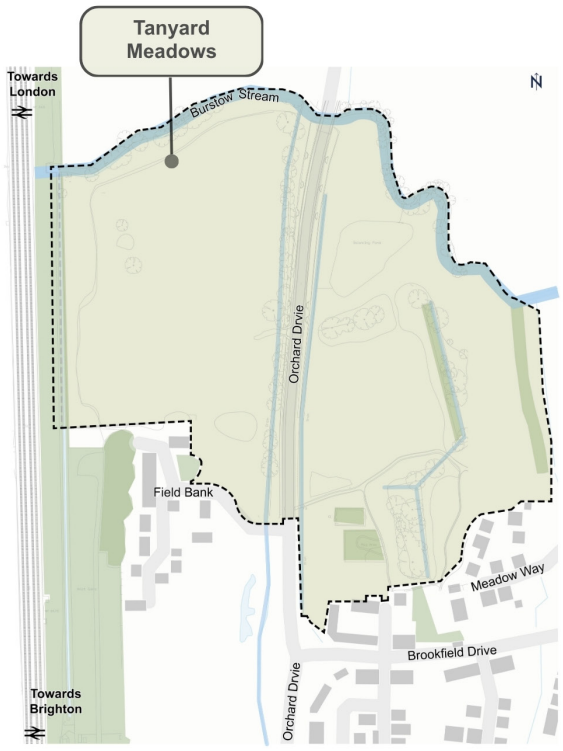

Help shape Horley's new town park

We want to hear your ideas on designs for a new town park in Tanyard Meadows to create more opportunities for sport, play, and enjoying green spaces.

We want to ensure the new park is an inclusive space that is welcoming and accessible to all users and offers high-quality facilities to support a range of activities. To achieve this, we want to hear your ideas.

We have developed early-stage design ideas for the park, and we now want the community to have their say on what they would like to see included.

Turn over to find out more information and complete our survey!

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