

Erewash Play Strategy

DRAFT SUMMARY REPORT ON PLAY RELATED CONSULTATIONS.

Prepared For



By

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Appendix 1:

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1. Introduction

This report summarises the findings of a number of play-related consultations that have taken place in recent years in Erewash. The report draws on these findings to identify the key issues relating to children's play and makes recommendations on the actions needed to improve the provision of play opportunities Erewash.

1.1 Consultations relating to Children and Young People in Erewash

The consultation exercises covered by this report are as follows:

- Web-based survey of school children mostly aged between 6 years and 16years undertaken for the Play Strategy.
- The Sure Start Survey of parents undertaken for the Play Strategy in Spring 2007.
- Questionnaire survey of representative sample of local residents of Erewash for the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study
- A qualitative study involving children and young people undertaken as part of the for the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study
- Informal consultation with young people of a variety of ages, to explore their play experience and aspirations undertaken for the Play Strategy.
- Two surveys of Parish Councils:
 - Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study Spring 2006
 - Play Strategy Spring 2007
- Surveys undertaken by Derbyshire County Council Youth Service.

1.2 Key Themes

A number of themes emerged from the various consultation exercises and these form the framework for this report. The themes are:

- Where children play
- Barriers to Play
- The activities that children and young people prefer.

- Opportunities to play or ‘hang out’.
- What makes a good place to play or ‘hang out’?
- What improvements are needed?

1.3 Methods Employed

1.3.1 Web-based survey of school children

This survey of children and young people was carried out in the spring of 2007, using an online survey accessed through a hyperlink from the Council’s website. The survey ran through the spring term and closed just before Easter, by which time 709 responses had been received.

A response of 709 individuals from a population of 16,250 children gives an error margin of +/- 3.6% at the 95% confidence interval. This means that we can be confident that, for any given result in this report, the figure for the whole population is within +/- 3.6% of the result achieved in this study. The age profile in this sample is shown in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: Age profile of respondents.

Age group	Proportion of response
6 – 10	49%
11 -12	26%
13 – 14	15%
15 - 16	8%
17 or over	3%

51% of the sample are male, and 49% are female. The vast majority of respondents are white (94%) but there are small proportions of Asian (2%) and Black (2%) children in the sample.

One in eight (12%) of children responding said they had some kind of disability that affects their play, but the true proportion of children with disabilities in the sample is probably around 10%.

A good cross section of schools participated as **Table 2** shows:

Table 2: School type.

School type	Proportion of respondents
Primary school	34%
Junior school	31%
Secondary school	29%
Special school	2%
College	2%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	642

Respondents were asked to indicate whereabouts they live, and **Table 3** shows a reasonably good geographical spread of responses:

Table 3: Where the children live.

Location	Proportion of respondents
Ilkeston	27%
Long Eaton	20%
Sandiacre	32%
Rural Erewash	18%
Elsewhere	2%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	628

1.3.2 Sure Start Survey

A survey of parents was carried out in the spring of 2007, using a paper based questionnaire survey. Questionnaires were distributed via Sure Start, Bennerley School and Three Valleys Housing. One of the objectives of the survey was to capture the views of families on low incomes i.e. via Sure Start and families with a

disabled child i.e. via Three valleys Housing. The survey was conducted in May 2007, and 39 responses were received.

The age profile of respondents is shown in **Table 4** below:

Table 4: Age profile of respondents

Age group	Proportion of response
17 – 24	7.7%
25 -34	38.5%
35 – 44	33.3%
45 - 54	12.8%
55 - 60	2.6%
Not Known	5.1%

Participation in the survey was concentrated in the 25 years to 44 years age band who account for 71.8% of the responses. Almost exclusively women provided responses with only one male respondent. All but one of the respondents was white. The age profile of the children of the respondents is shown in **Table 5** below.

Table 5: Age profile of children of respondents

Age group	Proportion of response
0 – 4	38.5%
5 - 11	36.9%
12 – 18	24.6%

The age of the children of respondents is spread fairly evenly across the three age bands although there are slightly fewer older children. This survey differs from other

surveys undertaken in that it covers the activities of the very young in the 0-4 years age band.

One in ten (10.3%) of respondents said they had some kind of disability and two in five (41.7%) of respondents said that their child had some kind of disability.

There was a reasonably good geographical spread of responses as shown in **Table 6** below.

Table 6: Location of Respondents

Location	Proportion of respondents
Ilkeston	54%
Kirk Hallam	15%
Long Eaton	10%
Rural	3%
Sandiacre	5%
Sawley	3%
West Hallam	8%
Not Known	10%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	39

The majority of respondents live in the Ilkeston area with smaller numbers from the Long Eaton area.

1.3.3 Questionnaire survey of residents for the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study

The survey was undertaken in Spring 2006, and involved sending a questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of 1600 residents. A reminder was issued after a suitable interval to those residents who had not yet responded, and a total response of 633 was achieved. The profile of the residents who responded is shown in **Table 7** below.

The survey primarily focused on designated equipped spaces for play.

Table 7: Profile of Residents for the Questionnaire survey of residents for the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study

Age

Age Group	%
16-30	15
31-49	37
50-64	22
65+	22

Gender

Gender	%
Male	47
Female	53

1.3.4 Peer sessions with local young people for the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study

Three peer sessions with local young people recruited from the Council's own contacts at schools was undertaken in Spring 2006. The young people were given disposable cameras with which to photograph aspects of parks and open spaces they wished to discuss.

1.3.5 Informal interviews with young people

Informal interviews were undertaken in three different settings.

- (a) Discussions with twelve 'disaffected' groups or individuals who encountered in the street at known meeting points in the following locations¹:

¹ This element of the project was undertaken by Mike Elliot of Derby and Derbyshire Groundwork Trust

- Four groups in Cotmanhay
 - Two groups in Ilkeston Town Centre
 - Two groups in Kirk Hallam
 - One group in Sandiacre
 - One group in Borrowash
 - One group in West Park, Long Eaton
 - One group in Petersham
- (b) Discussions with ten groups or individuals at the Cotmanhay Neighbourhood Management Group Visioning Day on Sun 13th March.
- (c) Discussions with four groups or individuals at Borrowash Youth Club and Draycott Detached Youth Work Project.

The interviews were informal but followed broadly the same structure. On average 25 responses were received to each question posed.

The groups were predominantly male although four groups were either all females or included females. Ages ranged from nine years up to eighteen years. Two BME individuals were interviewed.

1.3.6 Parish Council Survey

A series of face to face and telephone interviews with Parish Council Clerks to examine the quantity and quality of existing provision and to identify the needs and priorities of individual Parish Council's.

1.3.7 Derbyshire County Council Youth Service Surveys

Derbyshire County Council Youth Service has undertaken a Youth Participation Survey and a further survey of young people between February and March 2007 on what participants would like to do over the summer.

2. Where children and young play or hang out.

2.1 Web-based schools survey

The web-based schools survey asked children where they generally play in a typical week. The overall results are shown in **Table 8** and **Graph 1** below:

Table 8: Where children play

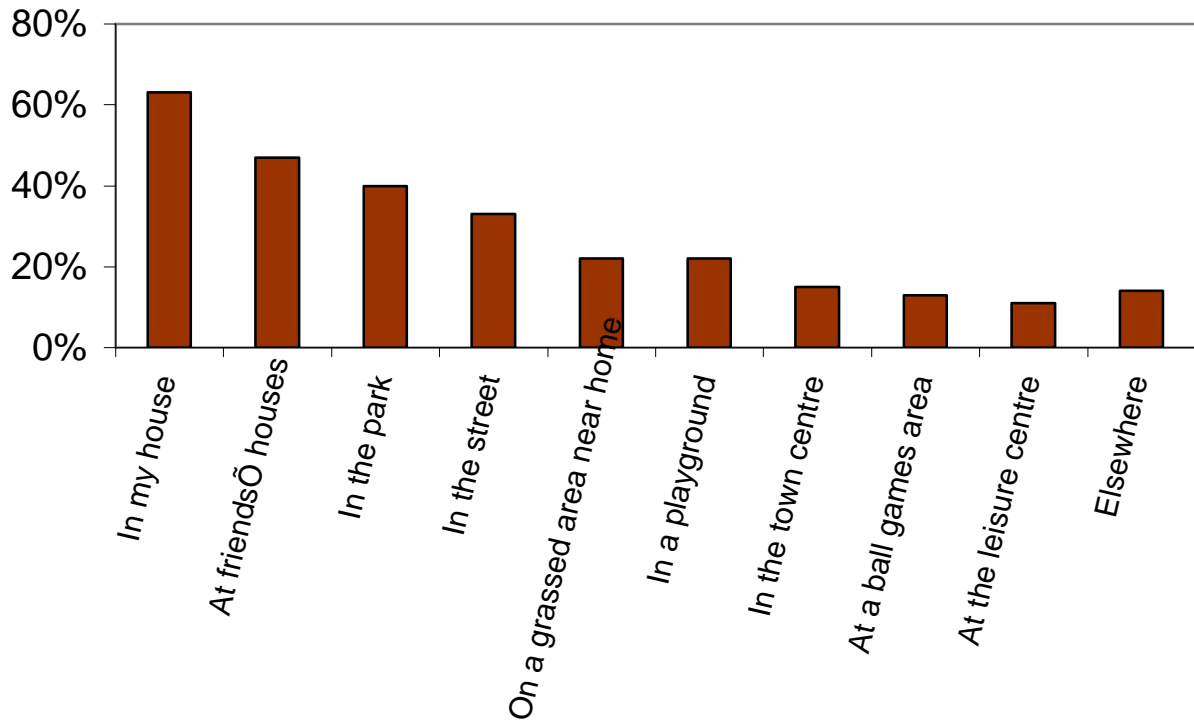
Play location	Proportion of respondents
In my house	63%
At friends' houses	47%
In the park	40%
In the street	33%
On a grassed area near home	22%
In a playground	22%
In the town centre	15%
At a ball games area	13%
At the leisure centre	11%
Elsewhere	14%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>700</i>

Two out of three children who participated in the survey said they played at their **own homes**. This was the case with all age groups and for both genders. Around half of the respondents played **at friends' houses**, and this proportion rose to nearly 60% of all those children who played at their own homes.

Two in five children play **in the park**, and about half this proportion use a **playground**. Both the park and the playground were a little more popular with girls, and use of these venues falls away with increasing age, especially playgrounds which are used by 33% of children age 6 – 10, but just 6% of over 15. The park is also less popular with older children, although 26% of over 15s use it. **Ball games**

areas are used by one in eight children (13%) but are more popular with girls (20% of girls, 5% of boys).

Graph 1: Where children play².



About a third of children play **in the street**, and this is a proportion that does not change much with age. It is also popular with both genders. **Grassed areas** near home attract about one in five children, and appear much more popular with girls than boys; 28% of girls play here, in comparison with just 17% of boys. One in nine children use the **leisure centre** in a typical week (11%). The **town centre** is not an especially popular play venue but one in five 11 – 14s use it and a third of older teens do so.

2.2 Sure Start Survey

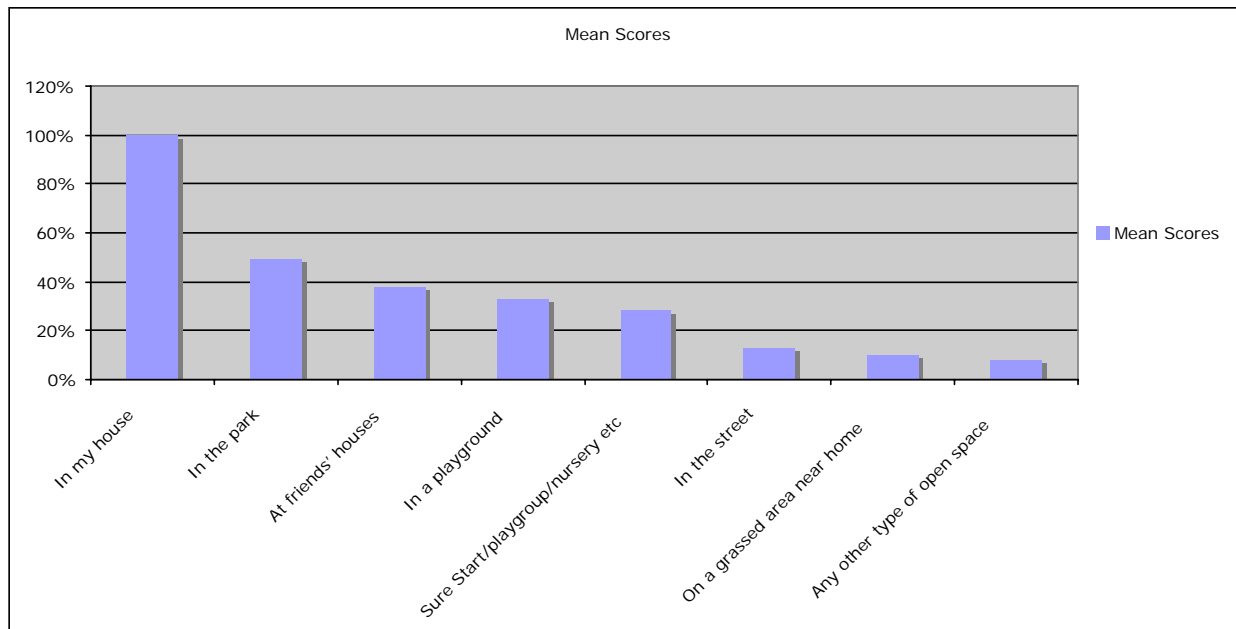
Parents were asked where their children generally play in a typical week. The overall results are given in **Table 9 and Graph 2** below:

² The answers add to up to well over 100% because children choose a variety of places to play, even in an ordinary week.

Table 9: Parents responses to where their children play.

Play location	Proportion of respondents
In my house	100%
In the park	49%
At friends' houses	38%
In a playground	33%
Sure Start/playgroup/nursery etc	28%
In the street	13%
On a grassed area near home	10%
Any other type of open space	8%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>700</i>

Graph 2: Where Children Play



The parents view coincides with the view expressed by children that the most likely venue for play is **at home** although parents stated that all children played at their own homes. In the parents survey the extent to which children play **at friends' houses** is slightly less than in the view of children themselves. Parents consider that children play **in the park** and in the **playground** rather more than the children themselves. Interestingly, parents think that only a relatively small proportion of children play in the street compared to that stated by children.

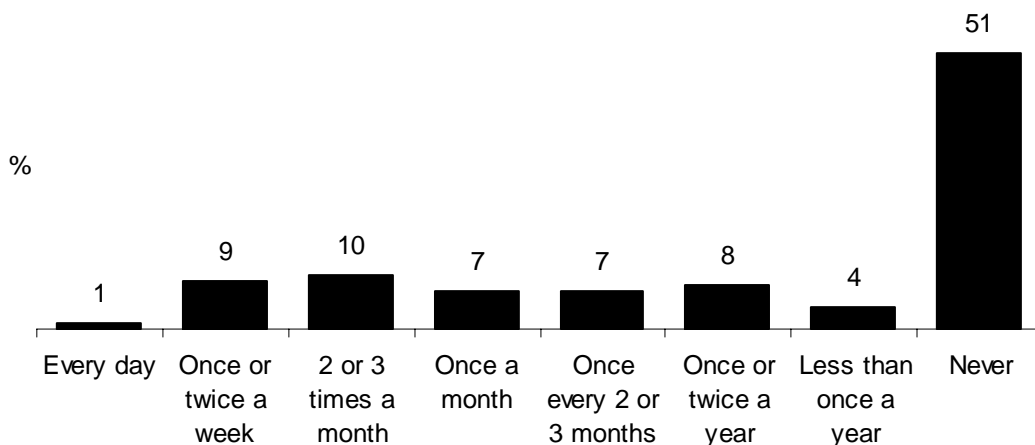
2.3 Questionnaire survey of residents for the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study

Residents who visit play areas for children and young people in the borough were asked which play area they visit most often. The two most popular play areas are in West Park and Victoria Park (23% and 9% respectively of play area visitors say they visit these parks' play areas most often). No other play area is visited by more than 6% of the sample interviewed.

Residents were asked how often, if at all, they visit a play area in Erewash. The results are shown in **Graph 3** below.

Graph 3 Frequency of visiting play area

Base: All residents (unweighted: 633; weighted 605)



Approximately half of all residents (45%) say they make at least some use of a play area in the borough. One in ten residents (10%) are frequent visitors (at least once a week), one in six (16%) are occasional visitors (at least once a month but less than

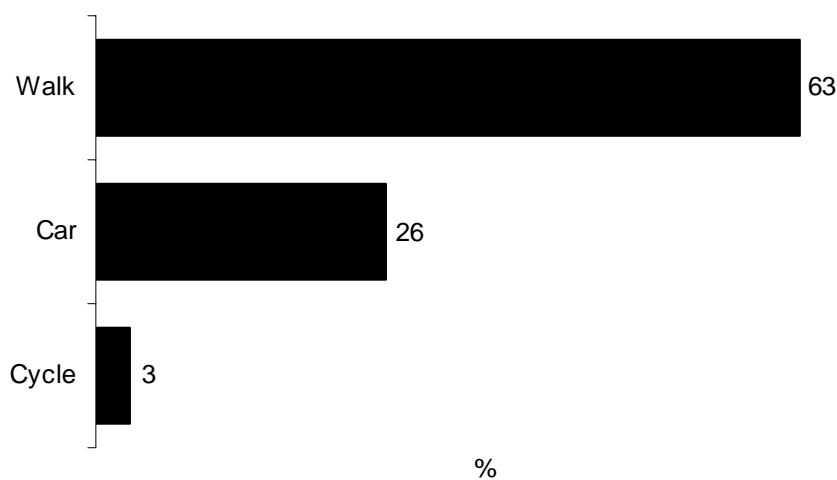
once a week) and one in seven (15%) are infrequent visitors (at least once a year but less than once a month).

Play area visitors are most likely to say they usually travel to their most visited play area by foot (63% say this). The next most common mode of transport is by car (26%).

Frequent visitors are more likely than occasional and infrequent visitors to walk to their play area (77% compared with 58% and 61% respectively); occasional and infrequent visitors are more likely than frequent visitors to go by car (30% and 33% respectively, compared with 14%). The results are shown in **Graph 4** below.

Graph 4: Usual mode of transport to reach most often visited play area

Base: Play area visitors (unweighted: 244; weighted: 271)



Frequency of visits correlates with length of time to get to the play area – three-quarters of frequent play area visitors (76%) say their journey takes less than ten minutes (compared with 45% of infrequent visitors); half of infrequent visitors (49%) say their journey takes more than ten minutes (compared with 17% of frequent visitors).

2.4 Informal interviews with young people

Individuals or groups were asked where they usually go to hang out and why they went there. Most young people replied that they usually hang around in the street. Some go to Parks, another open space or woods. Some hang around shops or at a MUGA.

The most common reason for going to this location was to meet up with friends or because it was close to home. Some felt that there was 'nowhere else to go'. The

nature of the space and its capacity for different types of activity such as somewhere to take bikes or play football is also a factor.

Asked what sort of things do they usually do at this place, the prime motive was social to meet up with friends and talk. This was also the main activity for girls. One in two play football sometimes as the main activity but often this was mentioned as a secondary activity to meeting with friends. One in five travel to the venue on their bikes and riding bikes is then the main focus of their activity.

The overwhelming response to the question what was good about the place they usually hang out was negative with three in five stating, 'nothing'. In some cases this was qualified with the statement that it was the only place where they could go to meet friends or that it was close to home.

If they want to chill from other adults or children most will stay at home or go to the local park or woods.

3. Barriers to play or hanging out.

3.1 Web-based schools survey

Respondents to the web-based schools survey were given a list of possible obstacles to play, and asked to indicate how big a problem they thought each was. The results are shown in **Table 11** and **Graph 5** below:

Table 11: Barriers to Play

Obstacle	A serious problem	A bit of a problem	Not really a problem	Mean score³
Older kids behaving badly	43%	31%	26%	1.17
Bullies	47%	19%	34%	1.13
Dog poo and litter	35%	34%	30%	1.04
Your parents get worried	30%	41%	29%	1.01
Adults complaining	28%	33%	39%	0.89
Older children	28%	32%	39%	0.88
Traffic on the roads	28%	32%	40%	0.88
Broken play equipment	28%	28%	44%	0.84
<i>Base (=100%) varies from 575 to 601</i>				

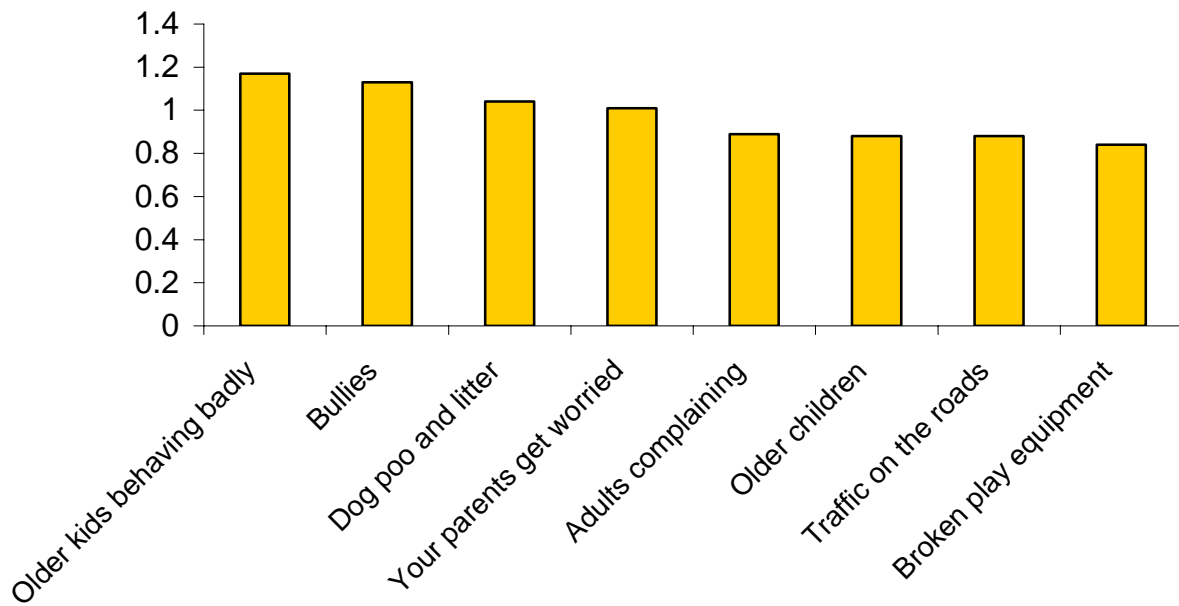
The key issues with barriers to play is the difficulties children have with their peers, both in the form of **anti-social behaviour** by other children, and from **bullying**.

Litter and dog poo also inhibit play to a degree. Children also indicated that **parents' concerns** about certain play locations and activities sometimes got in the way of doing what they would otherwise choose for themselves.

One in four children feel their play choices are affected by **adult complaints**, and that a quarter of children identify **broken play equipment** as an inhibitor.

³ The mean score is calculated by assigning a score of 2 to each "big problem" answer, 1 to each "bit of a problem" answer, and 0 to each "not really a problem" answer. The result is the average score assigned to each problem, ranging from 0 to 2; the higher the score, the bigger the perceived problem.

Graph 5: Barriers to Play



The is not a lot of difference between genders, although girls seem a little more restricted by their parents, and by the complaints of adults, whilst boys have a slightly larger problem with bullies. Problems reduce in scale with increasing age with all the mean scores fall dramatically as the age of the respondent increases. This is particularly true of traffic, where a mean score of 1.12 among under 11s reduces to just 0.47 for over 15s. In fact the only issue for over 15s where the score is comparable to other age groups is for adult complaints, which reduces from 0.92 for under 11s to 0.83 for over 15s – this issue is a bit of a problem for all children, regardless of age or gender.

3.2 Sure Start Survey

Parents were given a similar list of possible obstacles to play as children, and asked to indicate how big a problem they thought each was. The results are shown in **Table 12** and **Graph 6** below.

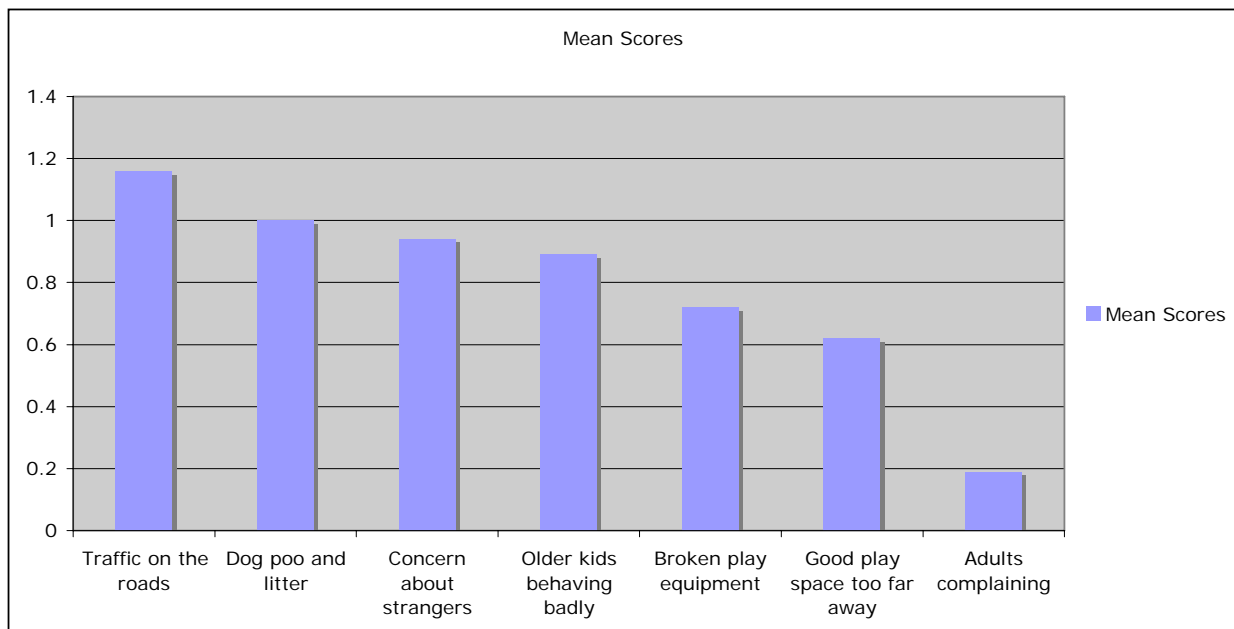
The common theme of the safety of was again top of the list of issues for parents but for different reasons than that stated by children. For parents, the most important issue is **traffic on the roads** and the third most important is **concern about strangers**. Cleanliness in terms of **litter and dog poo** is of greater significance than **anti-social behaviour** by other children

Table 12: Barriers to play

Obstacle	A serious problem	A bit of a problem	Not really a problem	Mean score⁴
Traffic on the roads	46%	24%	30%	1.16
Dog poo and litter	35%	27%	38%	1.00
Concern about strangers	36%	22%	42%	0.94
Older kids behaving badly	30%	30%	41%	0.89
Broken play equipment	22%	28%	49%	0.72
Good play space too far away	24%	14%	62%	0.62
Adults complaining	3%	14%	83%	0.19

Base (=100%) varies from 36 to 37

Graph 6: Barriers to play



⁴ The mean score is calculated by assigning a score of 2 to each “big problem” answer, 1 to each “bit of a problem” answer, and 0 to each “not really a problem” answer. The result is the average score assigned to each problem, ranging from 0 to 2; the higher the score, the bigger the perceived problem.

3.2.1 Barriers to taking part in organised activities

Parents were also asked what factors made it difficult for their children to take part in organised activities. The results are shown in **Table 13** and **Graph 7** below.

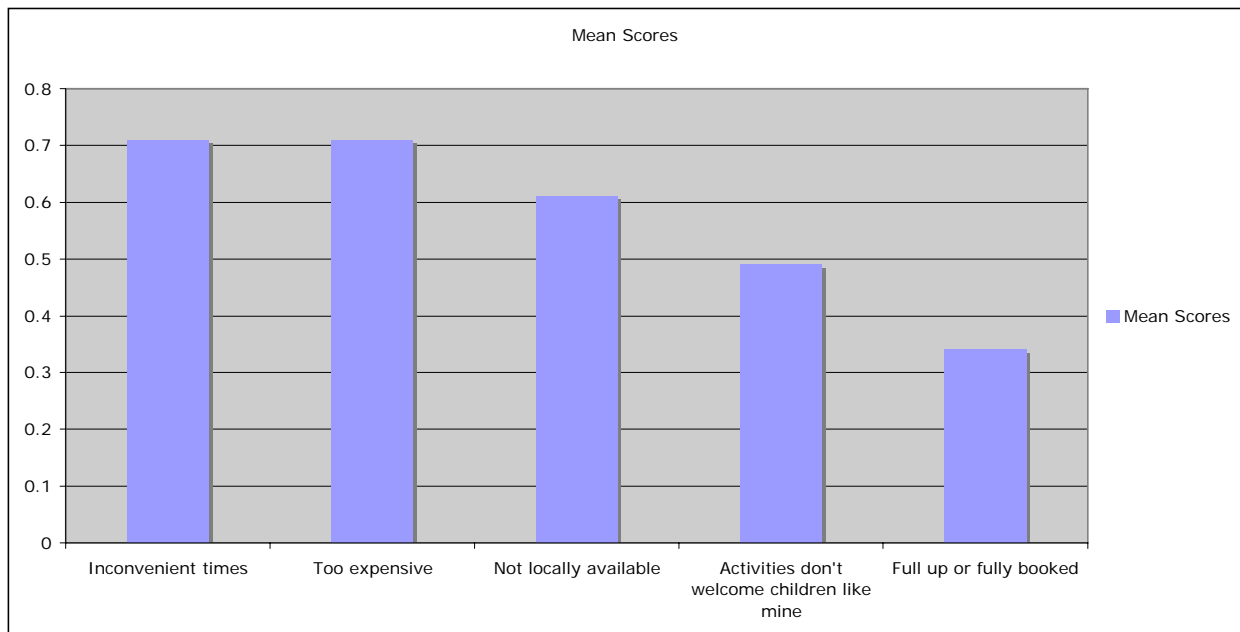
Table 13: Barriers to taking part

Factor	Major problem	Minor problem	Not a problem	Mean Scores ⁵
Inconvenient times	20%	31%	49%	0.71
Too expensive	14%	43%	43%	0.71
Not locally available	14%	33%	5%	0.61
Activities don't welcome children like mine	19%	11%	70%	0.49
Full up or fully booked	6%	23%	71%	0.34
<i>Base (=100%) varies from 35 to 37</i>				

None of the factors that could present difficulties to parents in being able to access organised play opportunities was particularly significant. The two most significant problems are **inconvenient times** and **too expensive**. For one in five parents, **inconvenient times** when the activities are available were a major problem for them in gaining access. Although not a major issue, one in five respondents reported that **activities don't welcome children like mine** was a barrier. Whilst these factors were not considered significant, nevertheless a significant minority of parents would appear to face some difficulty in providing their child/children with the opportunity to participate in some form of organised play activity.

⁵ The mean score is calculated by assigning a score of 2 to each "big problem" answer, 1 to each "bit of a problem" answer, and 0 to each "not really a problem" answer. The result is the average score assigned to each problem, ranging from 0 to 2; the higher the score, the bigger the perceived problem.

Graph 7: Barriers to taking part



3.3 Informal interviews with young people

A series of questions were put to young people about personal safety including whether individuals encountered any problems or had a bad experience in the place where they usually hang out and whether they felt safe there.

One in two stated that they had not encountered any problems. Of those that had experienced problems, six complained that they were regularly hassled by the police, five mentioned bullying or threats from groups of older teenagers and four mentioned problems with complaints about adults.

Asked if they had ever had a 'dodgy' experience, most stated that they hadn't but four mentioned abusive behaviour by older teenagers and two mentioned threats from adults. One girl had received unwanted attention from an adult at night.

When asked about whether they felt safe during the day, there was a virtually unanimous positive response with only one exception. However, only seven groups or individuals provided a positive response to whether they felt safe at night.

3.4 Derbyshire County Council Youth Service Surveys

This survey found that young people lack of somewhere to go which is safe, accessible and has lighting. Some spaces have access issues; e.g. a young man in

their group is in a wheelchair and needs a place that is accessible i.e. not at the end of a muddy field.

Petersham has no facilities at all except for a community hall, which caters for under 11s. There is a Christian youth group run by a volunteer but no outdoor facilities.

The only space available is Petersham Green which is used but it has no lighting and usage is restricted to times of good weather..

Sawley does have MUGAs but they are all poorly located hence are not used.

Young men tend to use MUGAs, BMX tracks and climbing walls. The problem with creating these is opposition from residents.

It is difficult to know what the women want. More work needs to be done in relation to the possibilities presented music or dance.

3.5 Parish Council Survey

Parish Council's are having difficulties in providing sufficient opportunities for children and young people. The key issues are:

Lack of suitable land

Particularly a problem in Stanton by Dale where there is no suitable place for a playground in the village. The parish recognises that the recently installed playground in the middle of a field is not in a good location. Young children tend not to go to the playground unaccompanied.

Lack of suitable premises

Some parishes lack a community building/ village hall, which could be used for youth clubs etc.

Lack of volunteers

Generally not a problem for groups for younger age children e.g. pre school but there does seem to be a shortage of volunteers who are suitably qualified to run youth clubs.

4 Organised activities

4.1 Web-based schools survey

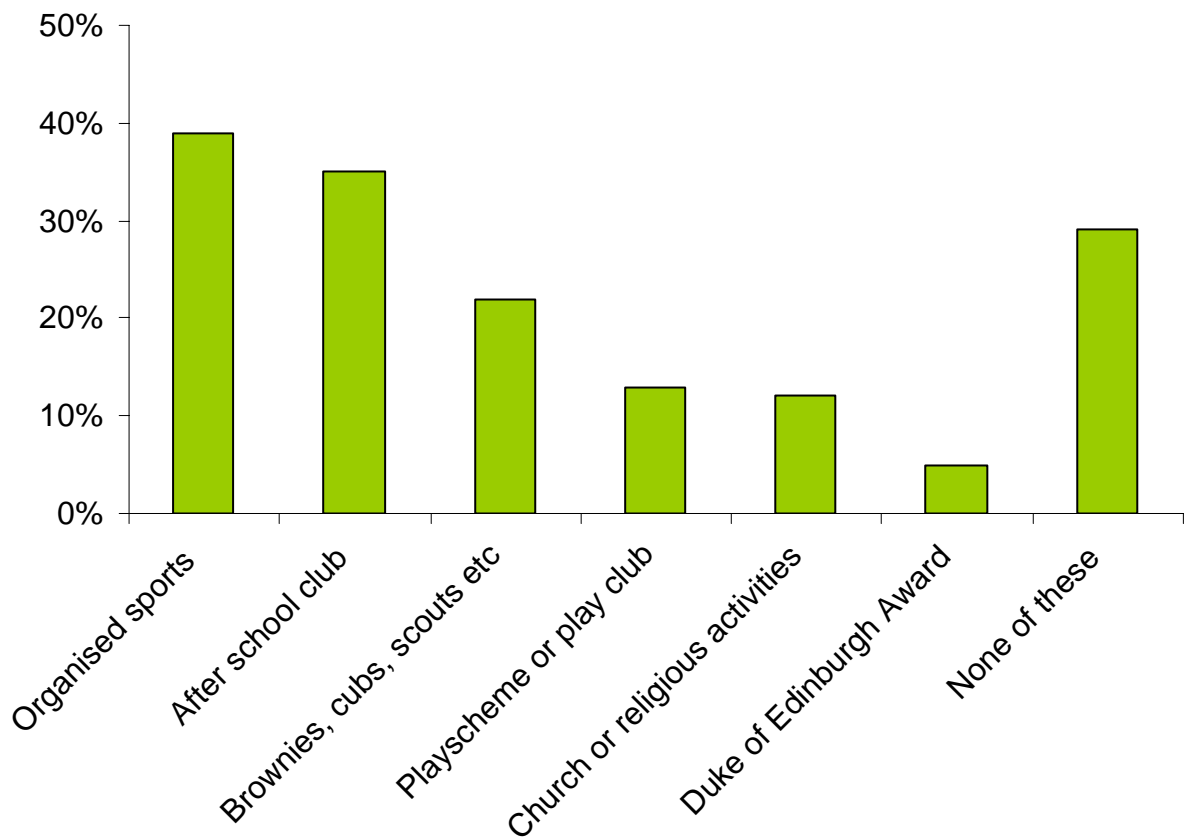
Table 14 and Graph 8 below show the proportions of children who take part in different organised activities.

Table 14: Children's participation in organised activities

Activity	Proportion of respondents
Organised sports	39%
After school club	35%
Brownies, cubs, scouts etc	22%
Playscheme or play club	13%
Church or religious activities	12%
Duke of Edinburgh Award	5%
None of these	29%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>658</i>

For children the focus in terms of organised activity is on **organised sport**. This is an activity that is popular with all ages and both genders, and the proportions taking part are consistently at this kind of level. The other popular activity is **after-school clubs** which also attract children in all age-groups, but are much more popular with girls. One in eight children attends a **play scheme** or play club.

Graph 8: Children’s participation in organised activities



4.2 Sure Start Survey

Table 15 and **Graph 9** below show the proportions of children who take part in different organised activities.

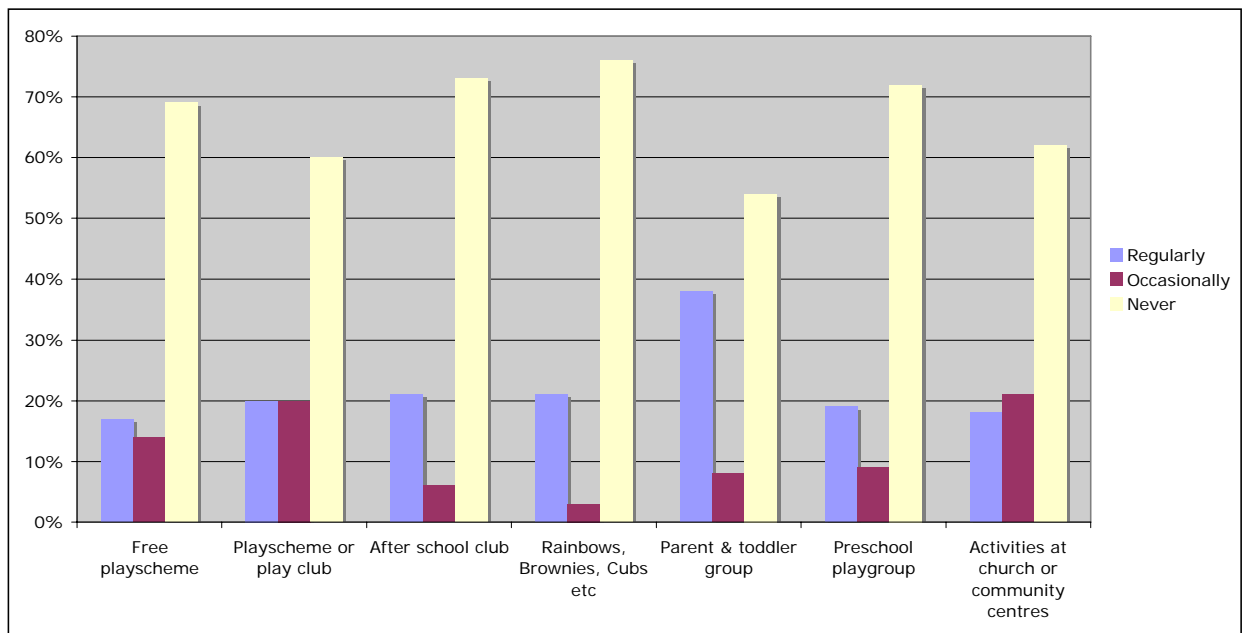
The questions asked in this survey were somewhat different and did not include a question on organised sport but does ask about parent and toddler groups which would not be appropriate for a school survey. To this extent the surveys are not comparable. However, it is worth noting that the parents survey indicates a lower level of participation in **after school clubs** and a higher level of participation in **activities at church or community centres**.

Table 15: Organised Activities

Activity	Regularly	Occasional	Never
Parent & toddler group	38%	8%	54%
After school club	21%	6%	73%
Rainbows, Brownies, Cubs etc	21%	3%	76%
Playscheme or play club	20%	20%	60%
Preschool playgroup	19%	9%	72%
Activities at church or community centres	18%	21%	62%
Free playscheme	17%	14%	69%

Base (=100%) varies from 34 to 37

Graph 9: Organised Activities



4.2.1 Times children need access to organised activity

Parents were asked to indicate the most important times children need access to organised activity. The results are shown in **Table 16** and **Graph 10** below.

Table 16: Times children need access to organised activity

Factor	Very important	Fairly important	Not important	Mean Scores ⁶
School Holidays	63%	18%	18%	1.45
Weekend	30%	27%	43%	0.86
Early evening	16%	34%	50%	0.66
When working	16%	16%	69%	0.47

Base (=100%) varies from 32 to 38

Graph 10: Times children need access to organised activity



⁶ The mean score is calculated by assigning a score of 2 to each “very important” answer, 1 to each “fairly important” answer, and 0 to “not important” answer. The result is the average score assigned to each problem, ranging from 0 to 2; the higher the score, the more important the factor.

The **School holidays** period is clearly considered by parents to be the most important time for their children to have access to organised activities.

4.3 Informal interviews with young people

A question was asked of individuals or groups of young people about whether they participated in any organised activity.

One in two of those interviewed do not participate in any organised activity. The most popular activity for those that do participate was football with seven being members of a junior football club. Sport was also a preferred activity for seven others with four involved in cricket and others involved in boxing and swimming. Three respondents attend a youth club and another three attend arts activities. One group plans to join a scout group.

Asked what it is that they enjoy about the organised activity that they attend, most responded that they enjoy sport. Youth clubs provide a warm dry place with a relaxed atmosphere where it is possible to meet friends and there are things to do such as pool.

5. Preferred activities

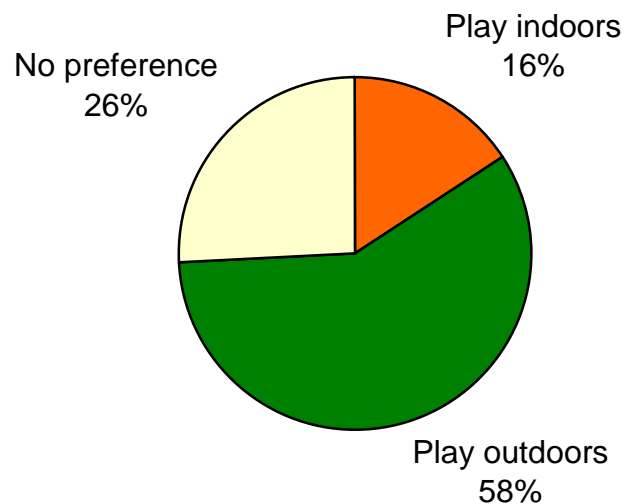
5.1 Web-based schools survey

A short series of questions was put to respondents inviting them to indicate their preferences between different pairs of activities. The first of these explored indoor versus outdoor play, with these results are shown in **Table 17** and **Graph 11** below:

Table 17: Indoors or Outdoors

Preference	Proportion of response
Play indoors	16%
Play outdoors	59%
No preference	26%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>664</i>

Graph 11: Indoors or Outdoors



Although one in four respondents had no preference between indoor and outdoor play, the clear preference for most children is to get outdoors – nearly four times as many children prefer outdoor play to indoor play. Only the 11-14s show any

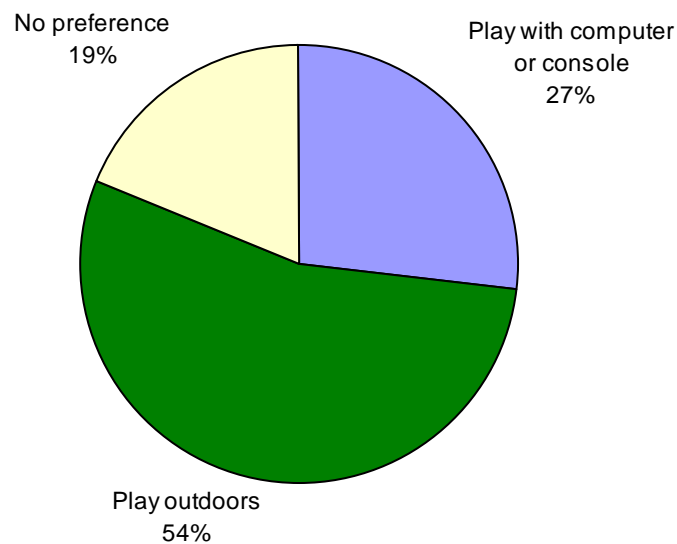
difference to the overall result, and they prefer the outside by an even bigger margin, of 65% to 12%.

The second comparison was between playing on a computer or games console, and playing outside, and the results are shown in **Table 18** and **Graph 12** below::

Table 18: Indoors or Outdoors

Preference	Proportion of response
Play with computer or console	27%
Play outdoors	54%
No preference	19%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>649</i>

Graph 12: Computer/Games console or Outdoors



The difference is not so marked, but the preference is still clear and strongly in favour of outdoor play. A quarter of children would find the games console more

attractive, but they are outnumbered two to one by those who want to play outside. However, the overall figures mask the difference between girls and boys – just 19% of girls expressed a preference for the computer or console, but twice as many boys (36%) did so. Interest seems to fade with age – one in three (34%) of under 10s prefer to play on a computer, but this falls to 23% of 11-14s and 15% of older children.

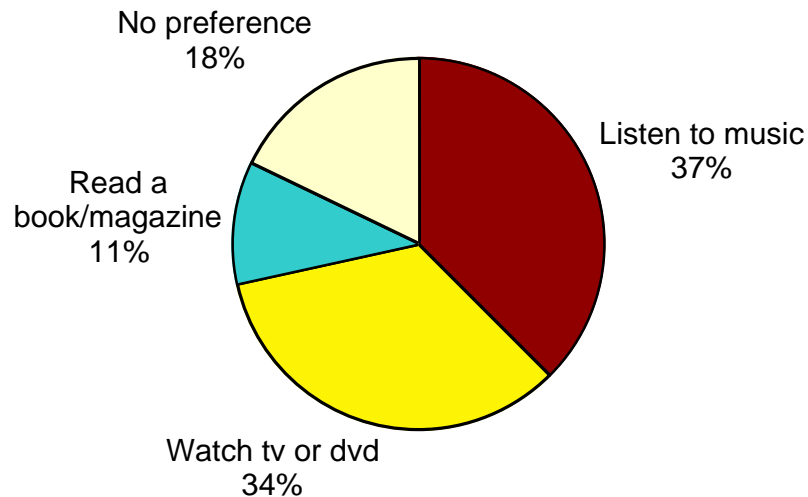
A third comparison was between different types of indoor play, and the results are shown in **Table 19** and **Graph 13** below:

Table 19: Different types of indoor play

Preference	Proportion of response
Listen to music	38%
Watch TV or DVD	34%
Read a book/magazine	11%
No preference	18%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	655

One in five respondents shows no preference, but among those who do the preference is strongly in favour of music, TV or DVD. These attract two in five children, whilst reading books or magazines appeals to just 11% of respondents.

Graph 13: Different types of indoor play



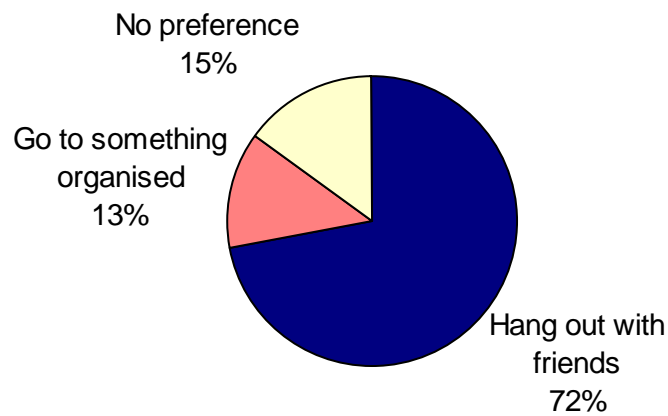
The final preference was between informal and formal activity: and the results are shown in **Table 20** and **Graph 14** below:

Table 20: Informal or formal activity

Preference	Proportion of response
Hang out with friends	72%
Go to something organised	13%
No preference	15%
<i>Base (=100%)</i>	<i>657</i>

The preference here is very strong; three quarters of children would prefer to play in an informal setting rather than in an organised activity. There is very little difference here between any of the age or gender groups.

Graph 14: Informal or formal activity



5.2 Sure Start Survey

Although the Sure Start survey asked different questions, it does provide an insight into what parents consider are important in terms of children's activities and the potential barriers which might hinder their ability to pursue those activities. Respondents were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the types of play available to their children. The results are shown in **Table 21 and Graph 15** below.

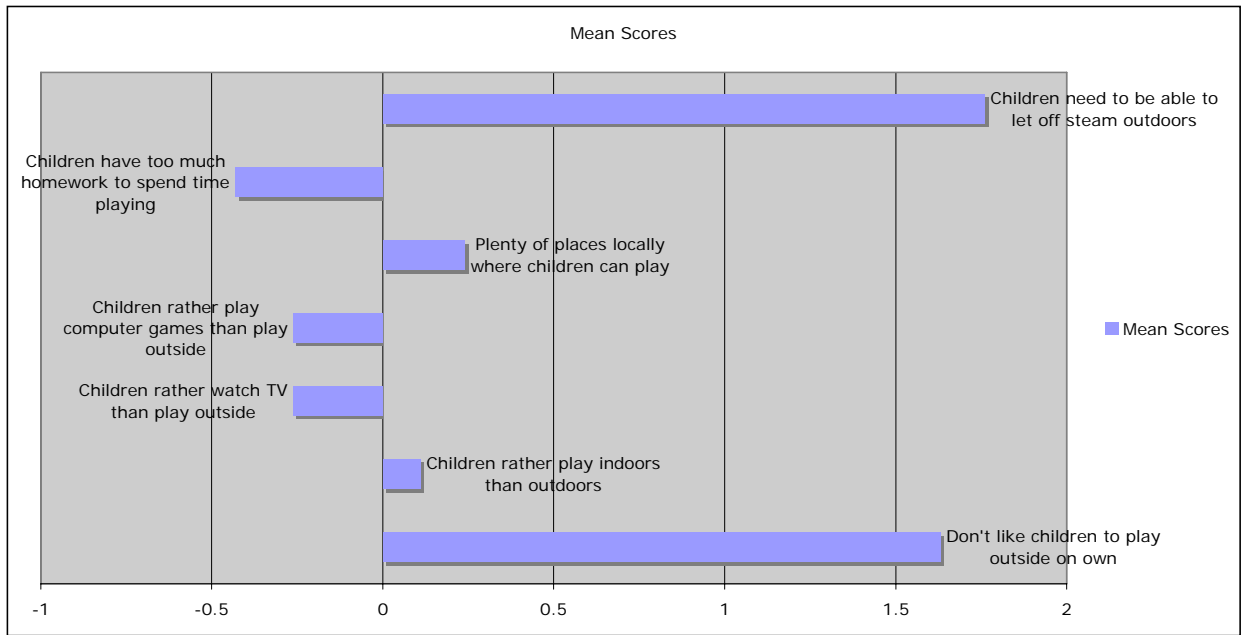
Parents indicated a strong support for the statement '**Children need to be able to let off steam outdoors**' on the one hand but also strongly agreed with the statement that they, '**Don't like children to play outside on own**'. This appears to reflect parental concern about child safety and this may be inhibiting children's opportunities to freely play out it might indicate that parents are accompanying their children when they go out to play. Parents support the view that there are '**Plenty of places locally where children can play**'. They don't appear to consider that '**Children rather watch TV than play outside**', '**Children rather play computer games than play outside**'. This accords with the view expressed by children themselves.

Table 21: Parents views on children’s activities

Statement	Agree strongly	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Disagree strongly	Mean score ⁷
Children need to be able to let off steam outdoors	57%	32%	8%	0%	3%	1.76
Don't like children to play outside on own	66%	18%	11%	5%	0%	1.63
Plenty of places locally where children can play	18%	13%	29%	26%	13%	0.24
Children rather play indoors than outdoors	18%	8%	32%	32%	11%	0.11
Children rather watch TV than play outside	11%	5%	26%	34%	24%	-0.26
Children rather play computer games than play outside	11%	8%	18%	37%	26%	-0.26
Children have too much homework to spend time playing	0%	5%	41%	35%	19%	-0.43
<i>Base (=100%) varies between</i>						

⁷ The mean score here is calculated by assigning a value of +1 to each “agree” response, and –1 to each “disagree” response. Neutral and don’t know responses are ignored for scoring. The result ranges from +1 to –1, with a higher score indicating a higher degree of agreement.

Graph 15: Parents views on children's activities



6 Opportunities for play or hanging out.

6.1 Web-based schools survey

Children were asked to indicate whether or not they agreed with series of statements. The answers they gave are shown in **Table 22** and **Graph 16** below:

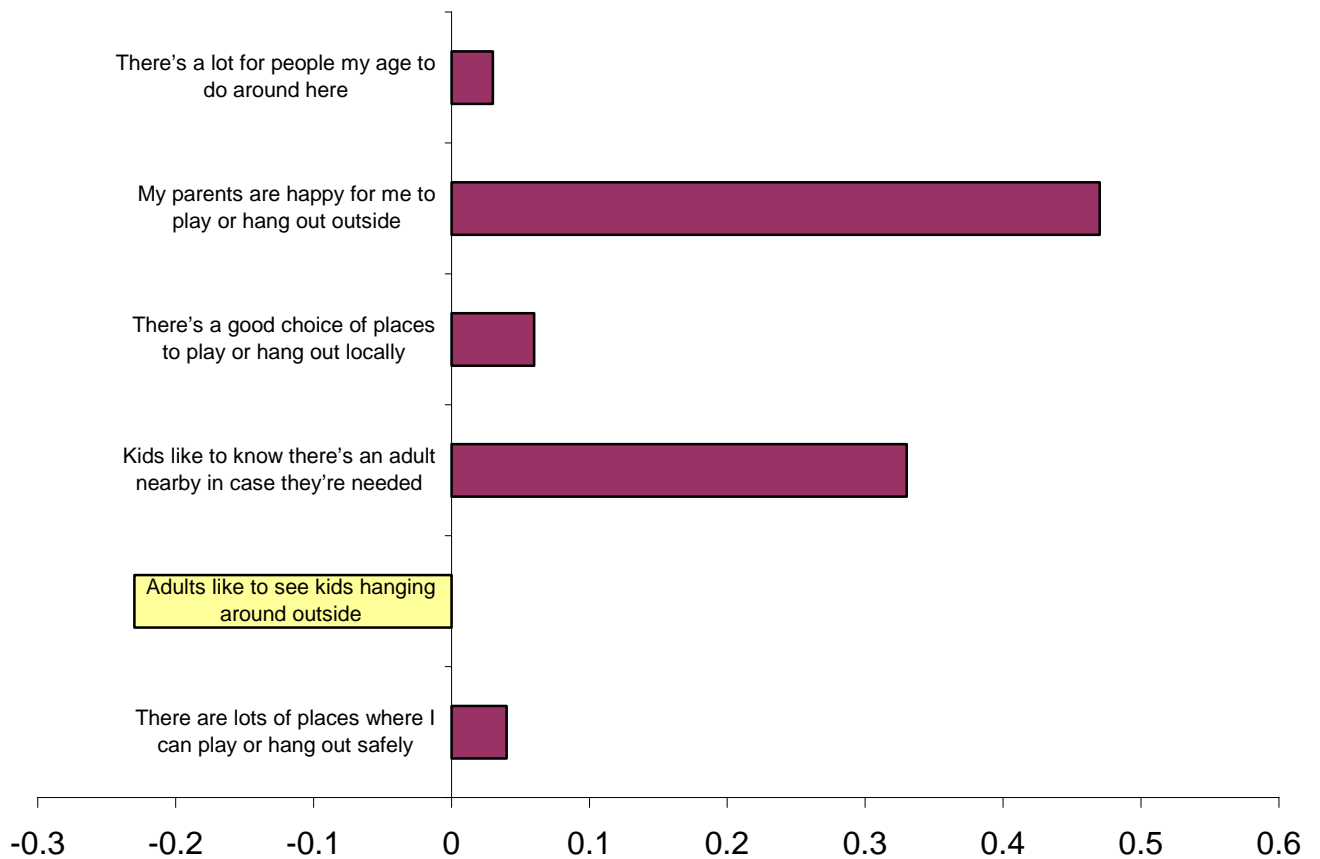
Table 22: Opportunities to play or ‘hang out’

Statement	Agree	Not sure	Dis-agree	Don't know	Mean score ⁸
There are lots of places where I can play or hang out safely	34%	23%	30%	14%	+0.04
Adults like to see kids hanging around outside	19%	20%	42%	19%	-0.23
Kids like to know there's an adult nearby in case they're needed	52%	16%	19%	13%	+0.33
There's a good choice of places to play or hang out locally	40%	18%	34%	9%	+0.06
My parents are happy for me to play or hang out outside	60%	18%	13%	9%	+0.47
There's a lot for people my age to do around here	37%	17%	34%	12%	+0.03
<i>Base (=100%) varies between 605 and 633</i>					

One in three children think that they have a lot of places where they can play or hang out safely, but the choices of another 30% seem much more limited, and the result is a mean score very close to zero as a result of this polarised view. The same is true of the statement about a choice of places, and the view that there's a lot to do for people my age. In each of these instances, the overall opinion is more or less evenly balanced between those who agree and those who disagree, suggesting that provision is not evenly spread across the borough.

⁸ The mean score here is calculated by assigning a value of +1 to each “agree” response, and –1 to each “disagree” response. Neutral and don't know responses are ignored for scoring. The result ranges from +1 to –1, with a higher score indicating a higher degree of agreement.

Graph 16: Opportunities to play or 'hang out'



Positive agreement is achieved on two of these statements: most children agree that their parents are happy for them to play outside, and relatively few disagree; there is also a measure of agreement on the perception that a nearby adult is an advantage. Children do not think adults feel the same, however, with a modest disagreement on the perception that adults like seeing kids hanging around outside.

These overall results mask some differences between age and gender groups, as the comparison of mean scores demonstrates in **Table 23**:

Table 23: Views of Boys and Girls of different ages about opportunities for play and hanging out.

Statement	Mean scores				
	Boys	Girls	Under 10s	11-14s	15+
There are lots of places where I can play or hang out safely	+0.07	0.0	+0.14	+0.01	-0.25
Adults like to see kids hanging around outside	-0.17	-0.29	-0.04	-0.34	-0.54
Kids like to know there's an adult nearby in case they're needed	+0.37	+0.33	+0.63	+0.12	-0.09
There's a good choice of places to play or hang out locally	+0.11	+0.02	+0.18	+0.06	-0.32
My parents are happy for me to play or hang out outside	+0.52	+0.42	+0.42	+0.51	+0.55
There's a lot for people my age to do around here	+0.07	+0.02	+0.17	+0.04	-0.47

The key observations are:

- Girls are less confident about adult happiness than boys are.
- Boys take a slightly more positive view choice of places.
- Boys' parents also appear a little more confident about their children playing outside.
- Younger children are positive about the range and choice of places for safe play or hanging out .
- Older teens have a very negative view about the range and choice of places for safe play or hanging out.
- Over 15s seem to prefer to be out of range of adults compared to the other age groups.

- Parental anxiety seems to diminish a little as children get older.

6.2 Sure Start Survey

The Sure Start survey also asked the question about whether there are ‘ **Plenty of places locally where children can play**’. Although not strongly supported, parents views were slightly more positive than the children’s.

6.3 Questionnaire survey of residents for the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study

Less than a third of local people (30%) think there is sufficient children’s play space in their locality, and nearly twice as many (54%) disagree with this judgment. This disagreement is spread across the whole borough, but is particularly strong in Ilkeston, where 62% of residents say there is a need for more space for children to play, and in Long Eaton where 53% of residents want more play space.

When it comes to space for teenagers, the views are even stronger. Just 10% say there’s enough play space for teenagers, and 68% disagree – a majority in favour of increased provision of seven to one. This view is strong in all areas, but especially in the rural area where four out of five (79%) residents want to see more provision for teenagers.

6.4 Parish Council Surveys

The Parish Council survey in 2006 identified of “teenagers hanging around” as a significant problem.

The view of Parish Council’s in the 2007 survey is that on the whole provision for pre-school children and children of infant and junior school age was considered to be fairly good or good. The Capital Grants Fund from Erewash Borough Council has been used by many parish councils to upgrade and improve their equipped playgrounds and to add new equipment. Some have observed that usage has considerably increased as a result.

However, this survey also found that the level of provision for teenagers and young people in most parishes is considered to be poor. Some Parish Councils are trying hard to provide facilities e.g. Sandiacre who involve the local community police to help with consultations in the provision of a BMX track and MUGA.

Parish Council's are actively consulting young people and trying to provide what they request. In Stanley, young people requested a skate park and a roundabout. The parish was committed to providing the skate park but local residents thwarted this plan. In Borrowash consultation with residents revealed problems with the siting of the old teenage shelter and this has been replaced in the grounds of the Youth Centre and has proved to be popular.

The role of Junior Sport

Many villages have thriving junior sports clubs e.g. football, cricket and bowls. For young people who wish to play sport these activities seem to be compensating to some extent for the lack of youth facilities for informal sport and play –e.g. Breadsall and Little Eaton.

However, one Parish Council is has a policy of providing no facilities because the council would prefer teenagers will go elsewhere.

7. Improvements

7.1 Web-based schools survey

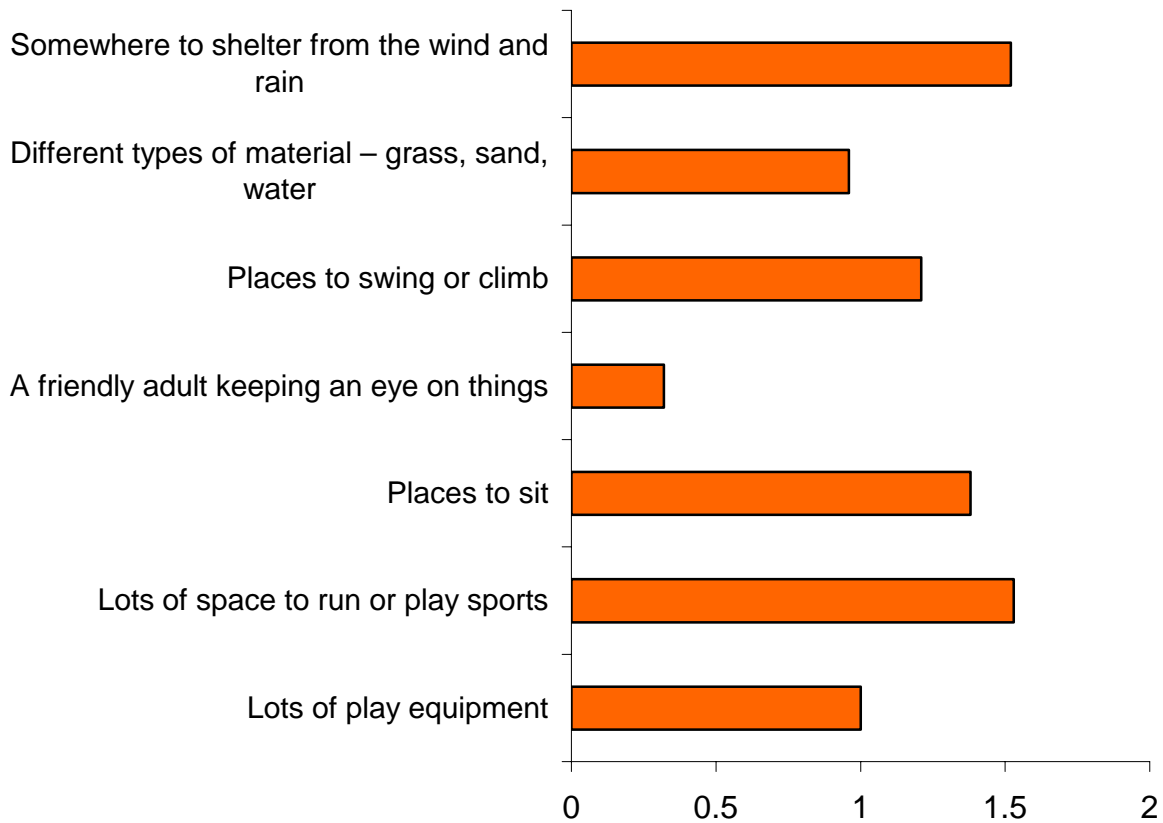
Respondents were given a list of possible attributes of a new play space, and asked which they thought would be essential and which were optional. The results are shown in **Table 24** and **Graph 17** below:

Table 24: Improvements

Attribute	Percentage of respondents				Mean score ⁹
	Must have	Nice to have	Not needed	Not wanted at all	
Lots of space to run or play sports	67%	27%	4%	2%	+1.53
Somewhere to shelter from the wind and rain	72%	20%	4%	4%	+1.52
Places to sit	58%	34%	6%	3%	+1.38
Places to swing or climb	54%	32%	9%	5%	+1.21
Lots of play equipment	42%	40%	12%	6%	+1.00
Different types of material – grass, sand, water	46%	34%	12%	9%	+0.96
A friendly adult keeping an eye on things	30%	30%	22%	18%	+0.32
<i>Base (=100%) varies from 178 to 394</i>					

⁹ The mean score here is calculated by assigning a score of +2 to each “must have” answer, +1 for each “nice to have” answer, and –1 and –2 respectively to “not needed” and “not wanted”. The result can range from +2 to –2, with a higher score indicating a stronger opinion either positively or negatively.

Graph 17: Improvements



The value of this question lies in the relative importance of different attributes, as represented by the mean scores. The results would clearly endorse an increase in play equipment, but demonstrate that space is actually much more important than equipment, and that provision on that space would best be focussed on shelter, seating and on providing opportunities for climbing or swinging. There is less endorsement for the the idea of different materials, whilst the friendly adult receives a fairly equivocal score .

There are also different perspectives from different age and gender groups, as the comparison of mean scores indicates in **Table 25**. Boys highlight their desire for space to run and play, and for shelter; these two attributes, in reverse order, are also the most popular choices for girls. Boys are a little keener on play equipment, and on swinging and climbing opportunities, whilst girls come out more in favour of places to sit.

Table 25: Different view of boys and girls about improvements.

Attribute	Mean score				
	Boys	Girls	Under 10s	11-14s	15+
Somewhere to shelter from the wind or rain	+1.42	+1.59	+1.43	+1.61	+1.54
Places to sit	+1.32	+1.47	+1.31	+1.41	+1.50
Lots of space to run or play sports	+1.57	+1.45	+1.66	+1.45	+1.13
Lots of play equipment	+1.11	+0.90	+1.33	+0.79	+0.54
Places to swing or climb	+1.27	+1.17	+1.47	+1.16	+0.35
Different types of material – grass, sand, water	+1.02	+1.03	+1.18	+0.94	+0.23
A friendly adult keeping an eye on things	+0.35	+0.30	+1.03	-0.28	-0.49

Younger children are more positive about play equipment, and more positive than older children about swinging or climbing. They are also positive about the presence of a friendly adult, in contrast to children aged 11 or above who would on balance prefer not to have this. Older children vote in favour of shelter and seating far ahead of any other attribute, and the middle age group add that they would like to have more space to run and play sports.

7.2 Sure Start Survey

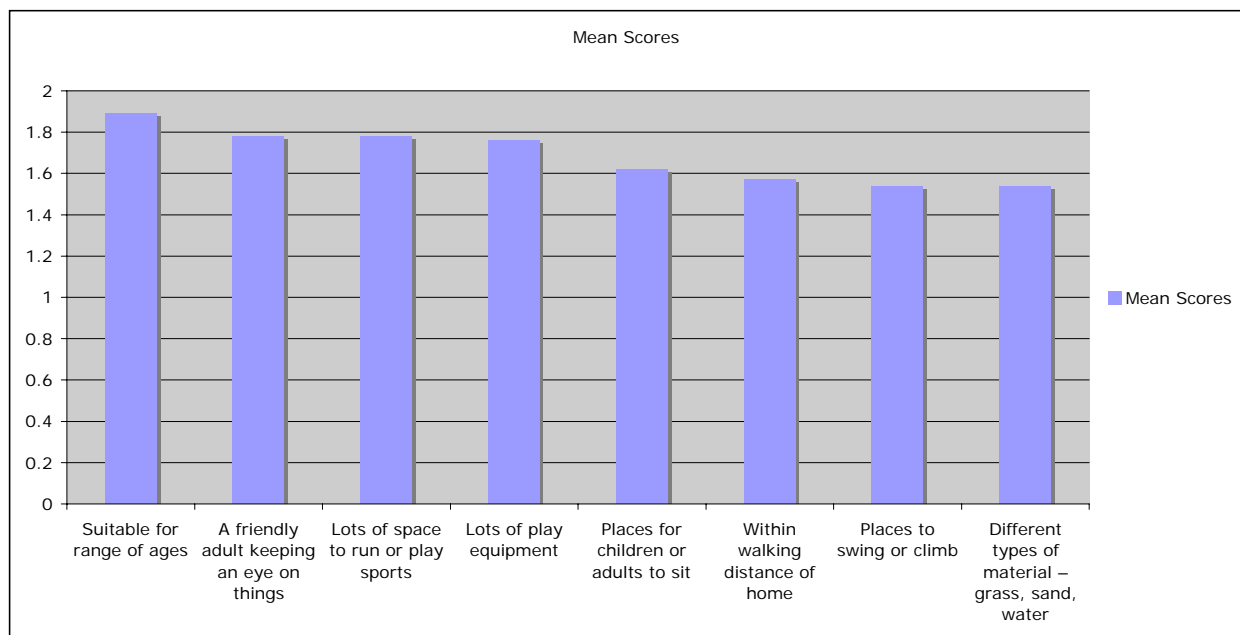
The Sure Start Survey asked parents similar questions as children about how important individual factors are in creating an individual play space. The results are shown in **Table 26** and **Graph 18** below:

Table 26: Parent’s views on the importance individual factors are in creating an individual play space

Attribute	Percentage of respondents			Mean score ¹⁰
	Very important	Fairly important	Not important	
Suitable for range of ages	89%	11%	0%	1.89
A friendly adult keeping an eye on things	81%	16%	3%	1.78
Lots of space to run or play sports	78%	22%	0%	1.78
Lots of play equipment	76%	24%	0%	1.76
Places for children or adults to sit	62%	38%	0%	1.62
Within walking distance of home	65%	27%	8%	1.57
Places to swing or climb	57%	41%	3%	1.54
Different types of material – grass, sand, water	57%	41%	3%	1.54

¹⁰. The mean score is calculated by assigning a score of 2 to each “very important” answer, 1 to each “fairly important” answer, and 0 to each “not important” answer. The result is the average score assigned to each attribute, ranging from 0 to 2; the higher the score, the more important the attribute.

Graph 18: Improvements to play provision



Parents expressed a very strong support for play opportunities that are **suitable for a range of ages**. This was not a question asked of children. Concern about children’s safety is reflected in the second most important attribute, which is ‘**a friendly adult keeping an eye on things**’ whereas this was an attribute that attracted a negative response from children. Children and parents agree that having ‘**Lots of space to run or play sports**’ and having ‘**Lots of play equipment**’ is important. This result endorses the view that providing space is equally as important as the provision of play equipment.

7.3 Improvements wanted

Both children and parents were asked an open ended question seeking their views on what else might encourage children to play outside more often. For children, the results range widely across a number of possibilities and the views expressed largely reflected the familiar themes of wanting more, better equipped space, and wanting to feel safer when using it, both from traffic and from antisocial activities. Parents views were more focussed and strongly reflected concerns about the safety of their children. A stronger focus on the needs of children with disabilities was also sought.

7.4 Questionnaire survey of residents for the Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study

The survey asked people to rate the play area they visit most often on a number of different aspects. The full results are shown in **Table 27** and **Graph 19** below.

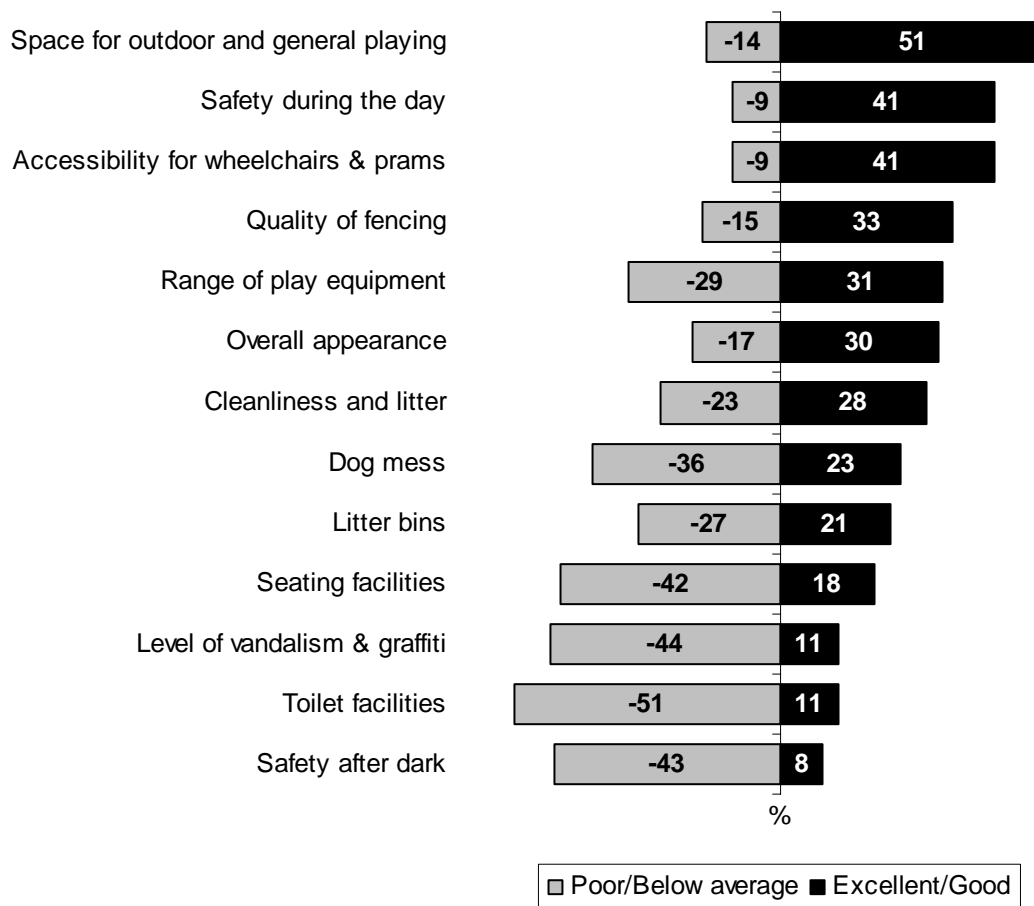
Table 27: Rating of play areas (Q14)

Base: Play area visitors (unweighted: 244; weighted: 271)

Attribute	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor	Don't know/NA
Space for outdoor and general playing area	8%	43%	28%	8%	5%	*%
Safety during the day	6%	36%	39%	6%	3%	4%
Accessibility for wheelchairs and prams	4%	37%	26%	5%	4%	16%
Quality of fencing	6%	26%	33%	8%	7%	12%
Range of play equipment for children	5%	27%	31%	15%	15%	1%
Overall appearance	3%	27%	46%	8%	9%	*%
Cleanliness and litter	3%	25%	41%	14%	9%	*%
Dog mess	3%	19%	28%	15%	21%	7%
Litter bins	*%	21%	41%	14%	13	%3%
Seating facilities	2%	16%	31%	18%	24	1%%
Level of vandalism and graffiti	1%	11%	32%	22%	22	5%%
Toilet facilities	1%	10%	11%	13%	38	20%
Safety after dark	*%	8%	12%	21%	22	28%

Graph 19: Rating of play areas – summary (Q14)

Base: Play area visitors (unweighted: 244; weighted: 271)



Opinion is divided on the range of play equipment for children (31% saying excellent/good, 29% saying below average/poor). More equipment/facilities for children and better facilities for younger children are among the top improvements singled out by play area visitors (13% and 12% respectively say this).

Overall, other aspects in which play area visitors are more likely to say their most visited play area underperforms include:

- Personal safety (43% say safety after dark is below average/poor). Concern over safety seems to be a particular problem for play area visitors living in the Ilkeston area (only 31% say safety during the day is excellent/good compared with 50% elsewhere; 54% say safety after dark is below average/poor)

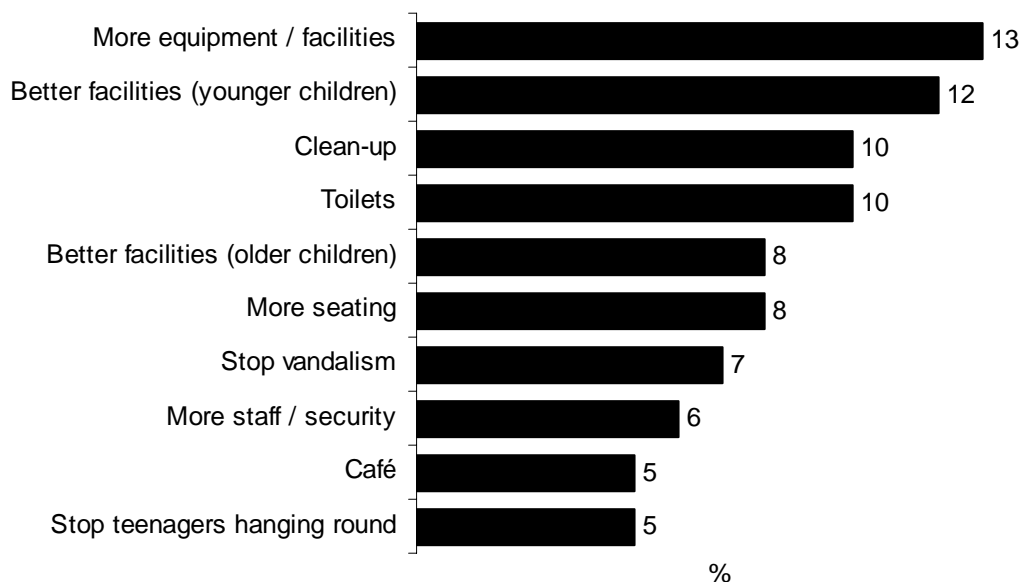
compared with 35% elsewhere). This finding has been subsequently supported by the surveys undertaken for the Play Strategy.

- Amenities (27% say litter bins are below average/poor, 42% say the seating facilities are below average/poor, 51% say the toilet facilities are below average/poor). Occasional visitors are particularly concerned about the toilet facilities (62% say below average/poor, compared with 38% of frequent visitors). Men are more concerned about the toilet facilities than women (62% of men who visit play areas say the toilet facilities are below average/poor compared with 43% of women). Improving the toilets and installing more seating are among the top improvements singled out by play area visitors (10% and 8% respectively say this).
- Dog mess and vandalism (36% say dog mess is below average/poor, 44% say the level of vandalism and graffiti is below average/poor). Play area visitors who live in Ilkeston are more concerned about dog mess than play area visitors who live in Long Eaton (41% and 26% respectively say dog mess is below average/poor). Similarly, play area visitors who live in Ilkeston are more concerned about the level of vandalism/graffiti than play area visitors who live in Long Eaton (55% and 37% respectively say the level of vandalism/graffiti is below average/poor).

The full list of single most important improvements for their respective play areas noted by at least 5% of play area visitors is shown in the following chart.

Graph 20: Most important improvement to play areas (Q15)

Base: Play area visitors (unweighted: 244; weighted: 271)



7.5 Informal interviews with young people

Groups of young people were asked a series of questions about what their ideal place to hang out would be like, whether an adult would be present.

One in three indicated that their ideal hanging out place would be indoors. A warm, dry drop-in centre was mentioned and appeared to be something that girls would appreciate. Some were looking for activities, not unlike a youth club, with pool, table tennis and games.

Two out of three respondents indicated that their ideal place would be outdoors. Six of these described a youth shelter with lighting and comfortable seats, which could accommodate a reasonable number of young people. A further five wanted a park possibly with an adventure playground or more challenging equipment. Other ideal places included a bike track with jumps, a MUGA, and a large tarmac area for skating. Several respondents mentioned the need for lighting.

Three out of five felt that having an adult around in case of problems would be a good idea.

The overriding message from young people about the location of their ideal place is that it should be close to home within a ten or fifteen minute walk time.

The most frequently mentioned improvements mentioned were:

Indoor Space - a dry indoors lit space, with places to sit and chat, food and drink, pool and games

Lighting - Better lighting to local hangout spots and lighting to MUGAs particularly over the weekend.

Bikes - A facility for bikes including ramps and jumps

Ball Courts - Facilities and space for Netball, Volleyball, Tennis, not just a basketball court because it's different.

Challenging Play Equipment - Challenging multi play equipment for older children.

Personal safety - Not leaving sites such as closed shops, derelict because they are more likely to be vandalised and become unsafe places.

Action on consultation carried out, has been asked to vote on things before but has seen no changes.

Skate park – needs to be well designed.

Adult Perceptions - Adults have stereotypes about young people and these need to be changed. Police are not the answer. We need someone we can talk to.

Better Quality - Young people in Draycott felt that fencing to their MUGA should have been high enough to keep the balls in. The surface is now uneven and needs to be replaced. Panels in fencing shouldn't keep falling out.

Something different - An outdoor movie screen.

7.6 Parish Council Surveys

Eight out of the nine parish councils who responded to the survey said that there are children's play areas within their parish. When asked to rate their play provision, at least half of the parishes rated themselves as average. Four out of eight parishes rated themselves as 'good' on safety during the day, the range of play equipment for children and accessibility for wheelchairs and prams (although two parishes said 'poor' for the latter). Three parishes rated their toilet facilities as 'poor' (and only one

said 'good'). Four out of eight parishes rated the level of vandalism and graffiti as below average/poor.

With regard to provision for children with disabilities, parishes considered that there was not an expressed demand for such facilities so they have not considered providing them. However some authorities have improved access to equipped play areas when refurbishing them with the capital grants programme.

7.7 Derbyshire County Council Youth Service Surveys

Petersham

The local youth worker is of the view that what is needed is a MUGA on Petersham Green opposite the shops. The area opposite the shops is the farthest away from the old people's bungalows so this would be the preferable location. The MUGA should have a timer for lighting and which could be used for informal games and also for more structured leisure activities e.g. those run by the youth workers. The young people will know when the lights come on and that this would be a safe place to go.

In the youth worker's opinion it is better to have a place where young people can gather which is lit and where they can be observed. Otherwise they tend to get moved on and this is more likely to result in hanging round in undesirable places and experimenting with drugs etc.

Sawley

There is a need for a MUGA on Sawley Park with lighting. The local youth worker considers that if such a facility were built there it would be well used.