

Play Area Improvement Survey – Bewerley Recreation Ground

North Yorkshire Council is working to improve the quality of the Bewerley recreation ground in Pateley Bridge. This survey aimed to gather opinions from local residents and park users to help us decide on a new piece of equipment for the play area.

The money (£12,264.36) for this project would come from the S106 money (Commutated Sums) and Capital funding from the former Harrogate district. Commuted Sums is money paid to North Yorkshire Council by property developers when providing residential properties within the council area.

The online survey was open from Thursday 21 May 2026 until Thursday 2 July 2026, available on North Yorkshire Council's consultations web page. Posters were put up locally and paper copies were available at the local community hub.

Headline Results

- 18 respondents in total.
- The most popular equipment is climbing equipment, followed by swings and slides. Respondents clearly value opportunities for active physical play and challenge.
- The majority of respondents were aged between 31 and 40 and were female.
- Swinging, climbing and sliding appear to be the favourite activities.
- Climbing frames / climbing walls / boulders, swings and slides most popular with respondents.

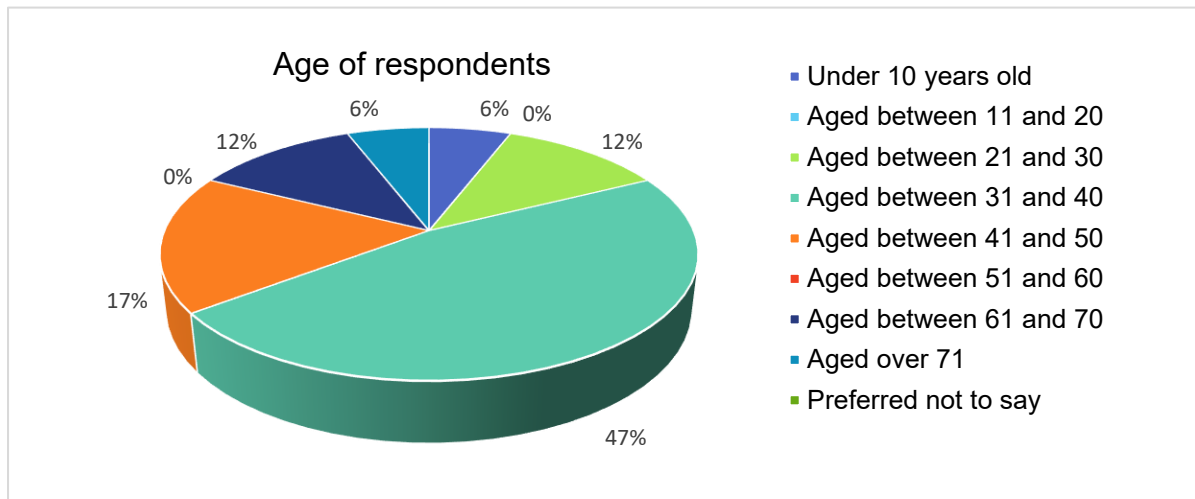
Feedback highlighted the playground is well used, with most respondents visiting at least monthly and typically spending up to two hours on site. Climbing, swinging and sliding were identified as the most popular activities, while climbing equipment, slides and swings were the most favoured pieces of play equipment.

The strongest feedback theme was a desire for more facilities for older children and pre-teens, including zip wires, monkey bars, cargo nets, obstacle courses and challenging climbing equipment. Respondents also highlighted a need for more imaginative play opportunities, with suggestions including a timber fort, castle, treehouse or adventure-style play structure that would complement the village's rural setting.

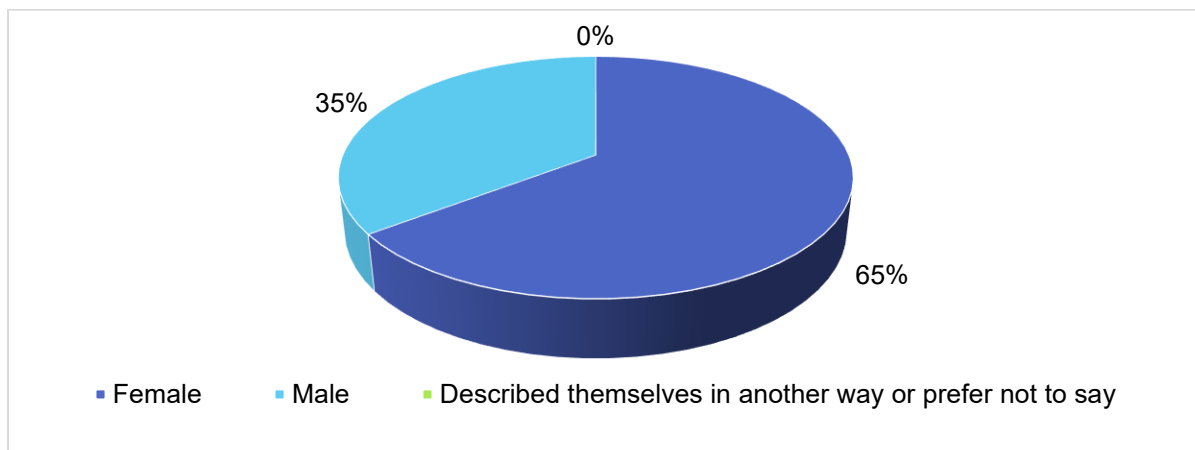
There was strong support for retaining the existing climbing frame, which was described as a valued and popular feature. Additional suggestions included a seesaw, improved provision for children aged 3 to 7, extra benches, litter bins, resurfacing works and potential expansion of the play area.

About the respondents

The survey received 17 responses, the largest age category was 31-40 years (47%), followed by 41-50 (18%), 21 to 30 (12%) and 61 to 70 years (12%) and 0-10 and 71+ both 6%.

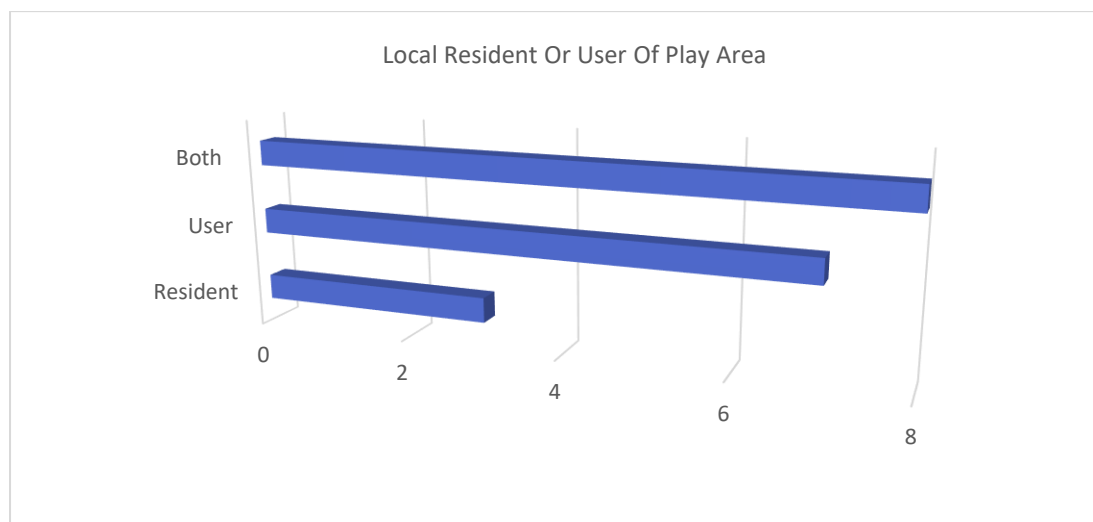


The majority of respondents were female accounting for 11 of respondents and males 6.



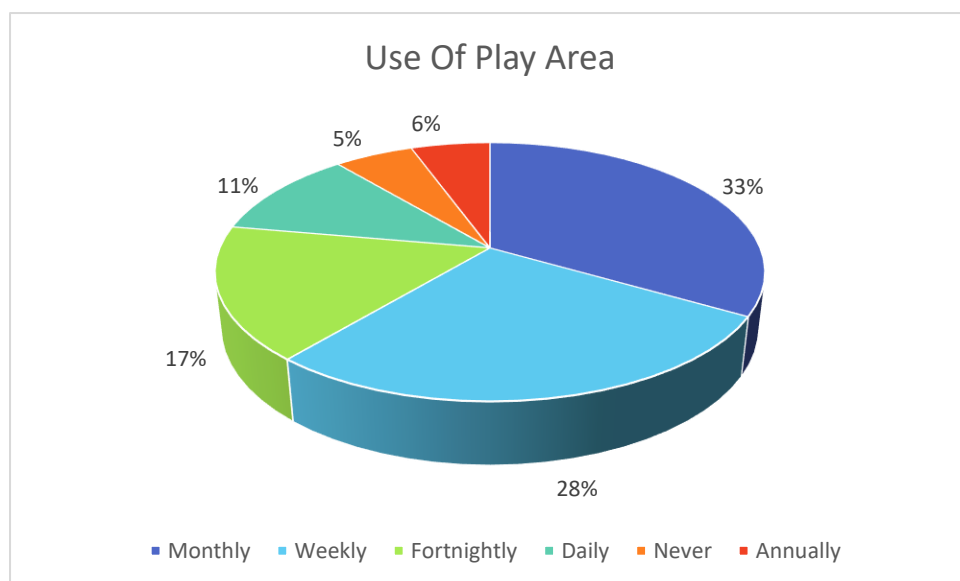
Are you a local resident or user of this play area?

A total of 18 responses were received. The largest group of respondents (44%) identified as both a resident and a user of the play area. Users accounted for a further 39% of responses, while residents who were not service users represented 17%.



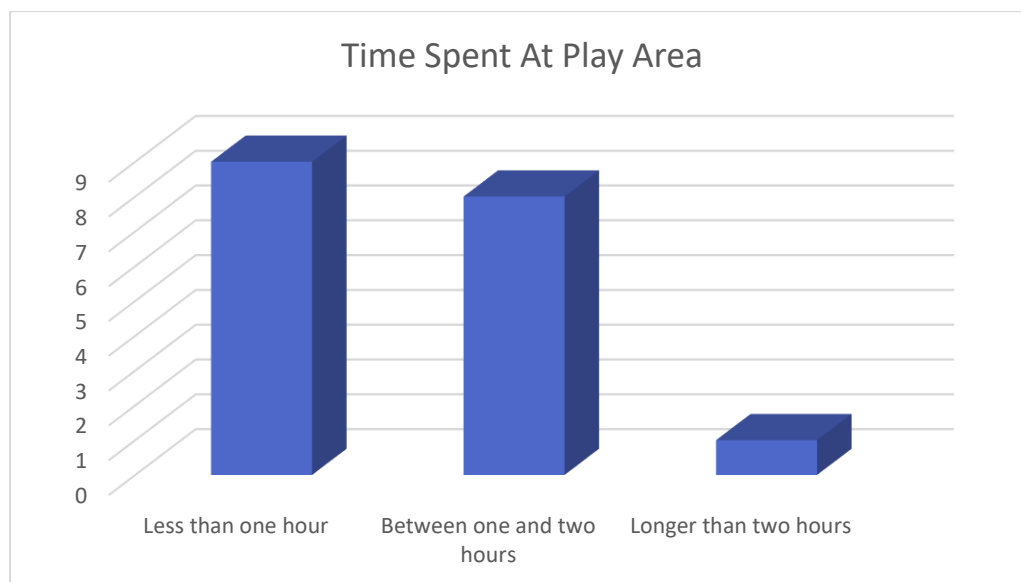
How often do you use the play area?

A total of 18 responses were received regarding frequency of use. The most common frequency of use was monthly (33%), followed by weekly (28%). A further 17% used the play area fortnightly, while 11% visited daily. Only 6% of respondents reported never using the play area, and 6% used it annually.



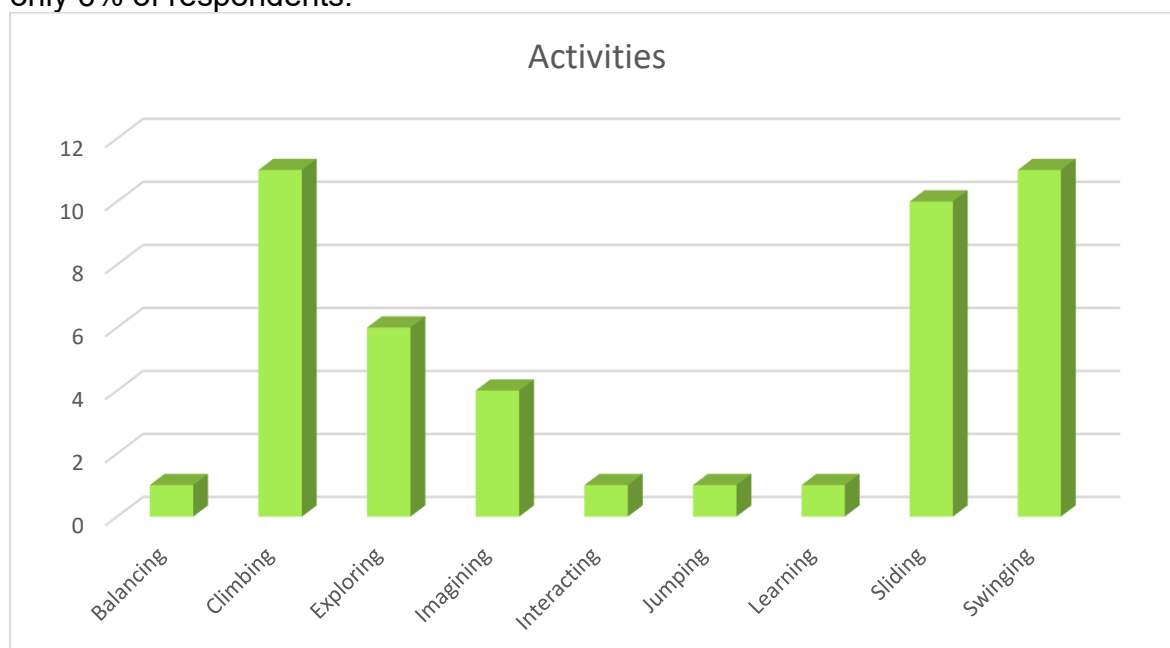
How long do you spend in the play area?

A total of 18 responses were received regarding the length of time spent at the service or facility. Half of respondents 50% reported spending less than one hour per visit, while 44% typically spent between one and two hours. Only one respondent 6% reported staying longer than two hours.



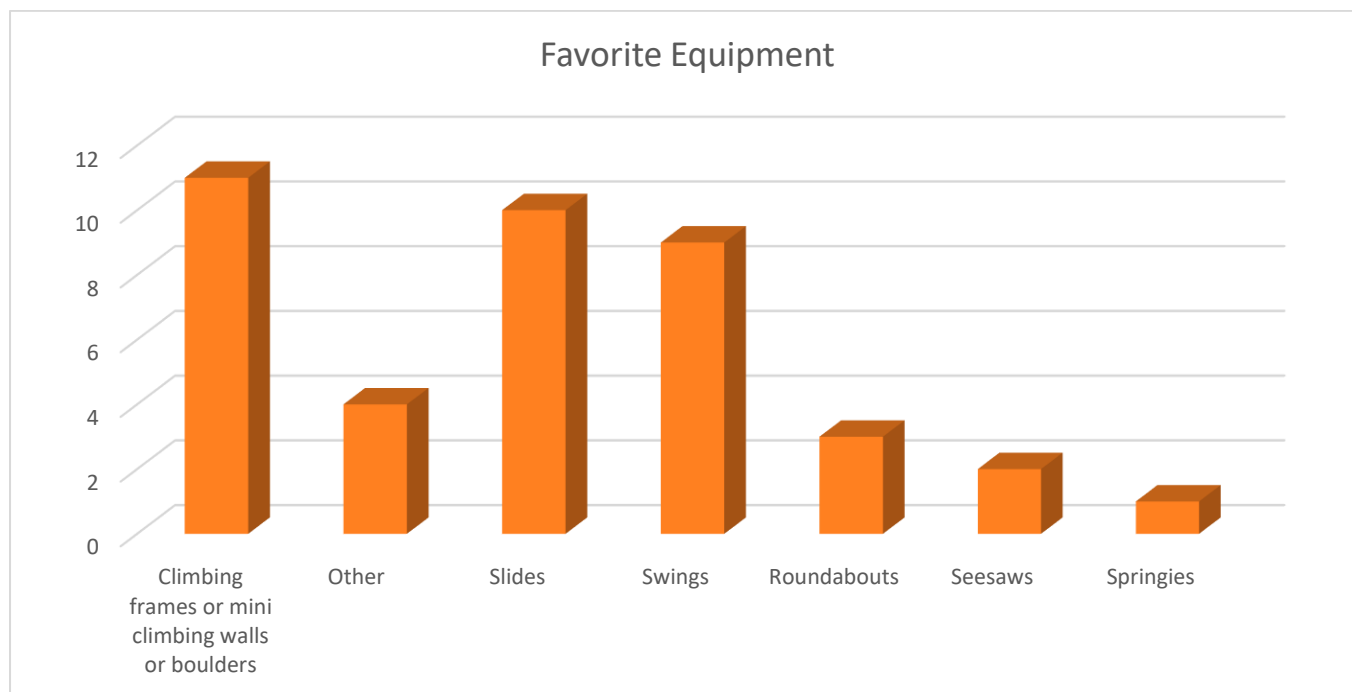
What activities do you like best?

The most popular activities were climbing and swinging, each selected by 69% of respondents, closely followed by sliding at 63%. Exploring was chosen by 38%, while imagining was selected by 25%. Other activities, including balancing, interacting, jumping, and learning, were each chosen by only 6% of respondents.



What play equipment do you like best?

Climbing frames / climbing walls / boulders (65%), slides (59%), and swings (53%) are most popular with respondents, followed by other (24%), roundabouts (18%), seesaws (12%), springies (6%).



Other suggestions were...

Equipment suited to older children, such as zip lines or den-building areas.
The zip wire is a firm favourite.
"I don't use any climbing frames, I just sit on the swing."
The current playground offers good opportunities for physical play, but it lacks a focal feature that encourages imaginative play and appeals to older primary-aged children. A natural timber fort or castle would fit particularly well with the rural setting.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions for the play area?

More parks should include equipment for children with physical disabilities, such as a wheelchair-accessible swing. Every child deserves the opportunity to play alongside their peers, and inclusive equipment would make a significant difference to families who currently have limited access to suitable play opportunities.
Simple, engaging information boards placed around the park could help parents understand how everyday play supports their child's development while providing ideas to encourage interaction and conversation. For example: 5 things you can see (visual), 4 things you can touch (tactile), 3 things you can hear (auditory), 2 emotions you feel while at the park (interoception and emotional awareness), 1 movement you enjoyed today (vestibular)

The design of the equipment, choice of materials and impact-absorbing surfaces all play an important role in helping children to take appropriate risks safely. Children learn through appropriately managed risk, and well-designed play environments encourage them to develop balance, coordination, strength, resilience, confidence and problem-solving skills while giving parents reassurance that they can explore within an environment that has been thoughtfully designed with safety in mind.
Please keep the climbing frame. It's amazing, best for miles.
A see-saw would be a good addition, along with a cargo net and a climbing frame aimed at 3-7 years (the small climbing equipment is fine for under 3's and the climbing pyramid ideal for 7+ years but there's nothing in between).
It's a big very well used space but it could be modernised or added to. Harestanes in the Scottish borders has a wonderful interactive play area that could be replicated.
More equipment for older children - pre teens especially - that still love to play and climb and balance and use their bodies, to encourage time outside and encourage them to exercise and engage with friends in a positive way rather than hanging round the high street. An obstacle course or set of outdoor exercise stations perhaps. More benches for adults would be helpful, and please return the litter bins!!
rope climbing and balancing assault course monkey bars and area for 5 and under in a separate fenced off area.
For the children to have great equipment they can learn from. Our play area is good. I would like to see what you plan to do our parks.
Whilst Bewerley Playground provides opportunities for physical play through swings, slides and climbing equipment, I feel it lacks facilities that encourage imaginative and creative play. There is provision for younger toddlers and a large climbing net that appeals to older children, but there is a gap for primary-aged children who benefit from a combination of physical and imaginative play. Imaginative play is an important part of child development. It helps children develop creativity, communication, confidence, problem-solving skills and social interaction. Children often gain as much benefit from role play, storytelling and creating their own games as they do from purely physical activities. I would strongly support the addition of a large timber fort, castle, treehouse or adventure-style play structure. Unlike equipment with a single purpose, a fort can become a castle, pirate ship, woodland hideout, café or meeting place depending on the children's imagination. This type of equipment keeps children engaged for longer periods and appeals to a wide range of ages. Given Bewerley's rural setting, a natural timber structure would fit well within the landscape and complement the character of the village. It would also create a focal point and destination within the playground. This would be greatly appreciated, even if it required the replacement of some existing equipment. Some items, such as the spring riders and spinning equipment, appear to receive relatively little use. A larger multi-purpose structure could incorporate features such as slides, climbing elements, bridges and lookout towers within a single piece of equipment, making better use of the available space while providing far greater play value for children and families.
Re- tarmac it and extend the park area slightly to the back hedge. We see other children there all the time using the swings and the motorbike springie but extending backwards to the hedge would enable space for a climbing frame,etc.