

Play Area Improvement Survey – Masham Recreation Ground, Masham

North Yorkshire Council is working to improve the quality of the Masham recreation ground play area in Masham. 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 (£10,000.00) for this project would come from the S106 money (Commuted 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

- 22 respondents took part in the survey.
- The majority of respondents were female, with the largest age group being 41 to 50 years.
- The play area is used regularly, respondents visiting weekly.
- Swinging, sliding and climbing were the most popular play activities.
- The most popular types of play equipment were slides, climbing frames, climbing walls or boulders, and swings.

A recurring theme throughout the comments was the need for improved maintenance and investment. Respondents frequently referred to long grass, overgrown areas, worn equipment, muddy and uneven surfaces, and the need for repairs. The large slide was highlighted repeatedly as an iconic and valued feature, although many felt it no longer functions properly and should either be repaired or replaced.

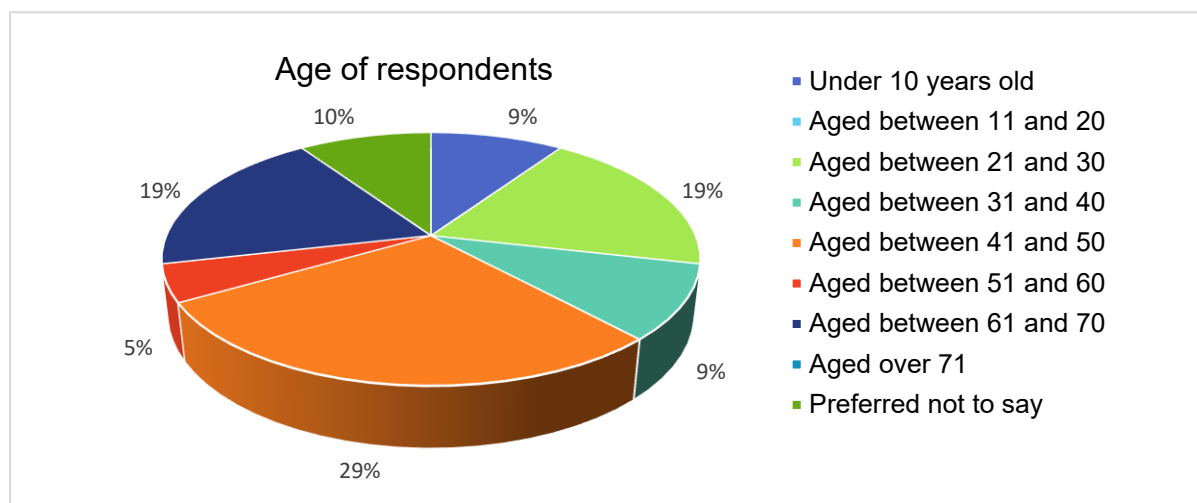
Many respondents expressed a desire to retain popular existing features, particularly the castle fort and large slide, while modernising other parts of the play area. There was strong support for additional equipment and facilities that would cater for a wider age range, especially older children and young people.

Several respondents also raised concerns about older children using the playground for cycling and ball games, which can affect younger children's enjoyment of the space. Overall, respondents clearly value the play area as an important community asset and family destination. The feedback indicates strong support for a programme of maintenance, refurbishment and investment that preserves popular existing features while introducing new opportunities for play, recreation and physical activity for children and young people of all ages.

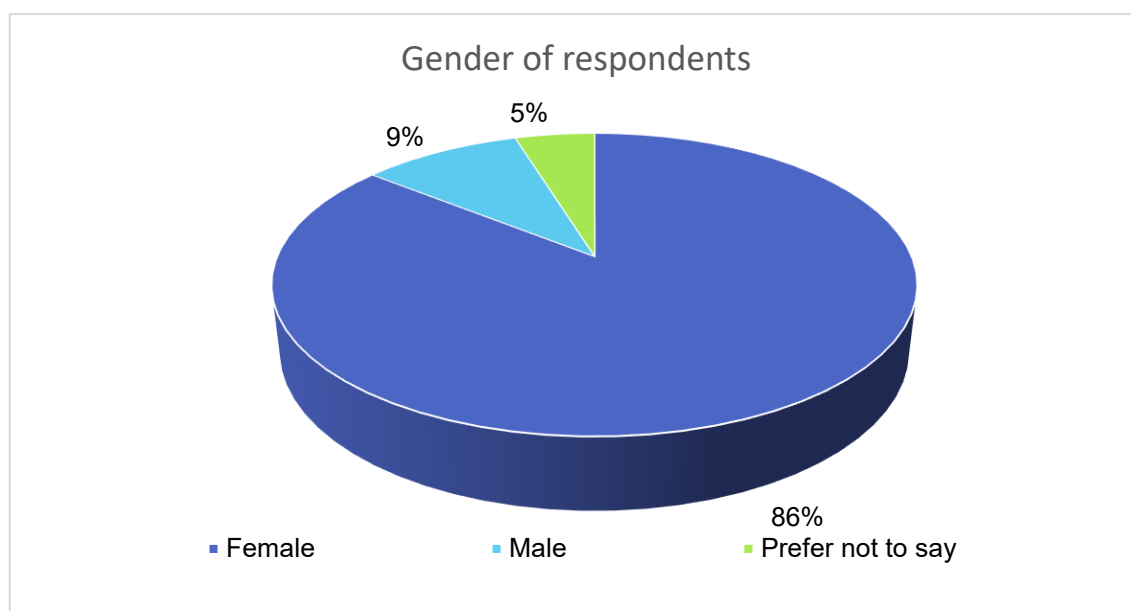
About the respondents

Of the 21 respondents, the largest age group was 41 to 50 years, with 6 respondents (29%). The 21 to 30 and 61 to 70 age groups each included 4 respondents (19%). The 0 to 10, 31 to 40, and prefer not to say

categories each had 2 respondents (10%), while 51 to 60 was the least represented age group with 1 respondent (5%).

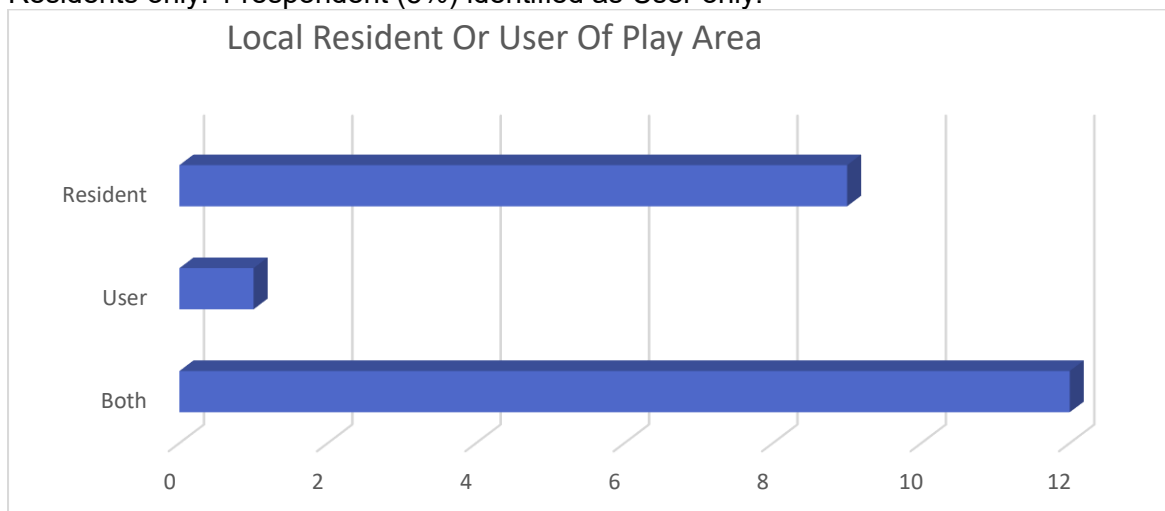


The majority of respondents were female (18 respondents, 86%), with 2 male respondents (10%) and 1 respondent (5%) who preferred not to say.



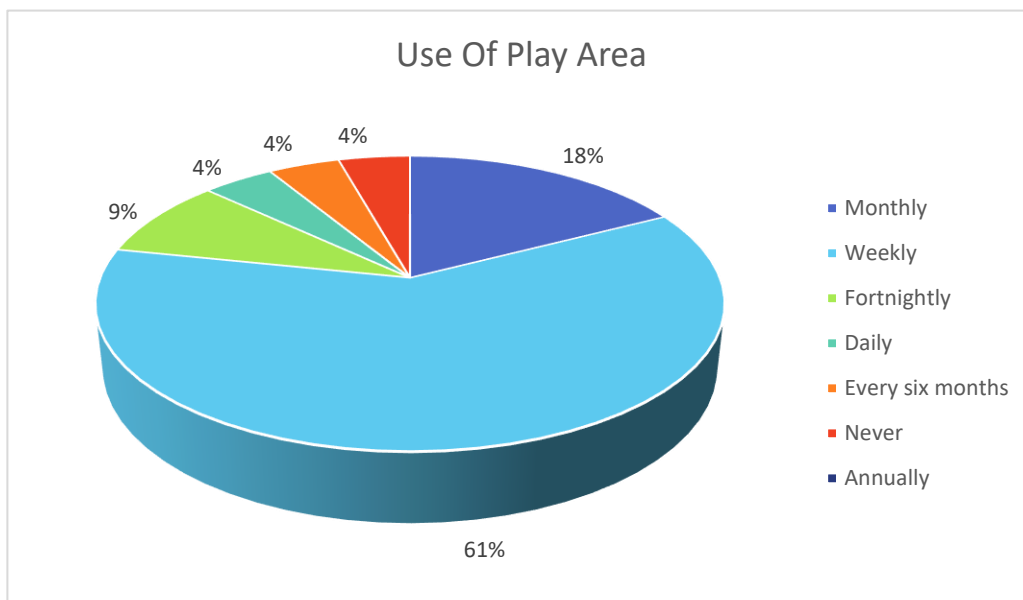
Are you a local resident or user of this play area?

Of the 22 respondents who answered this question, the majority of respondents (12 people, 55%) identified as Both, meaning they are both a resident and a user of the play area. 9 respondents (41%) identified as Residents only. 1 respondent (5%) identified as User only.



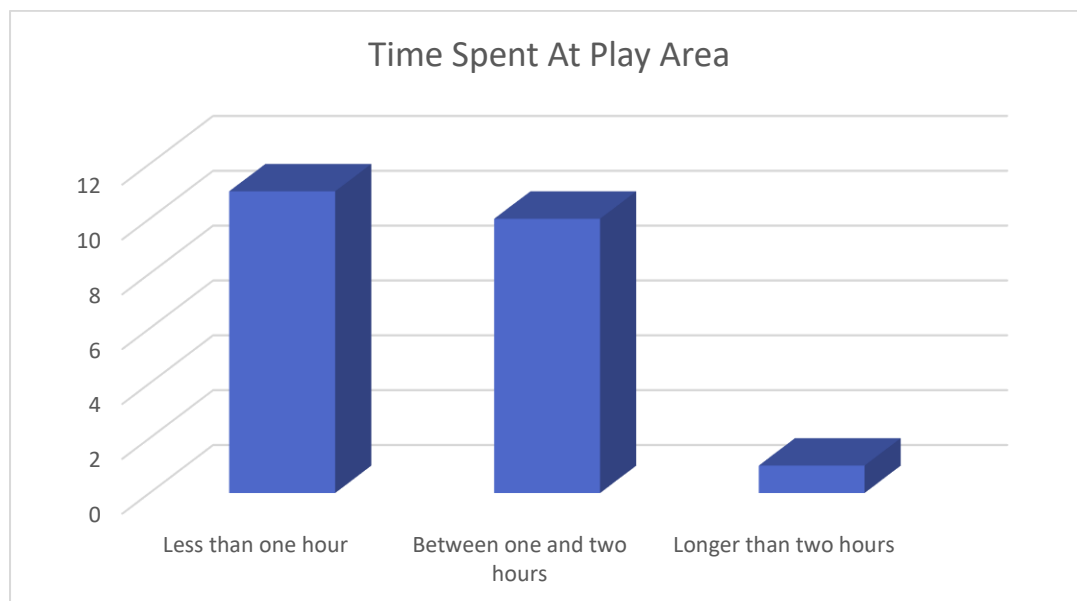
How often do you use the play area?

There were 22 respondents in total. 14 of respondents (61%) use the play area on a weekly basis. A further 18% (4) use the play area monthly. Fortnightly users represent 9% (2). While only a small minority reported using the play area daily, every six months and never 4% (1) each.



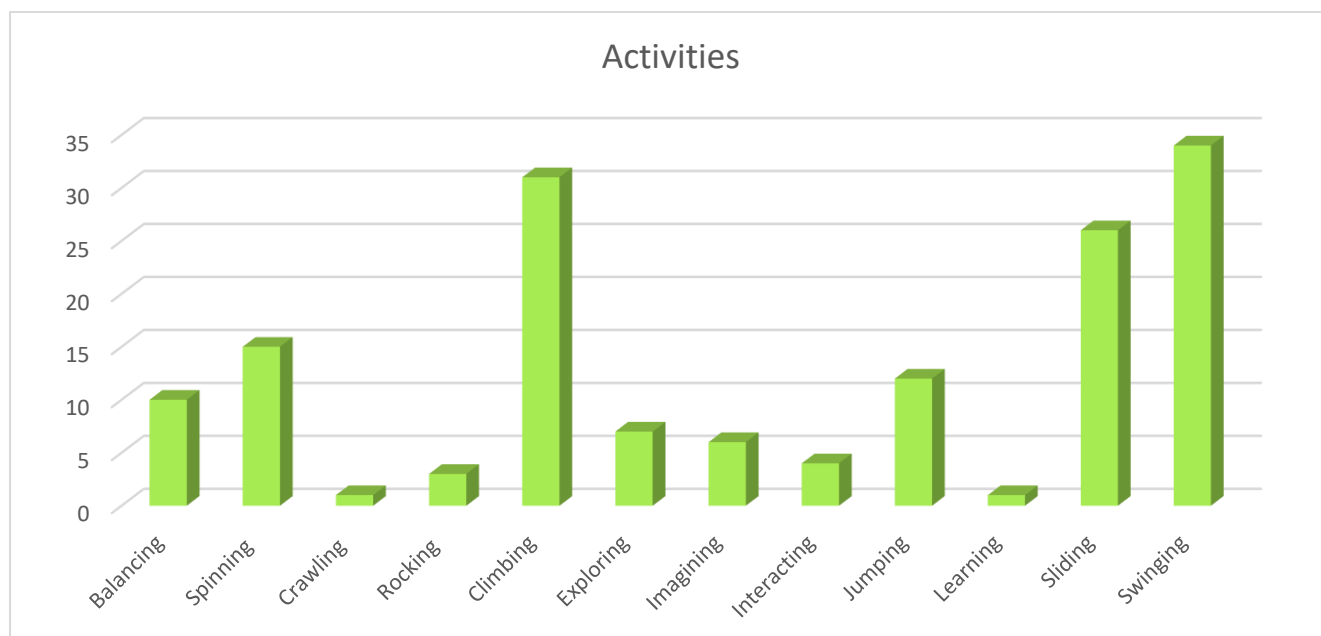
How long do you spend in the play area?

50% of respondents spend less than one hour at the play area. 45% of respondents spend between one and two hours. 1 (5%) respondent reported spending more than two hours.



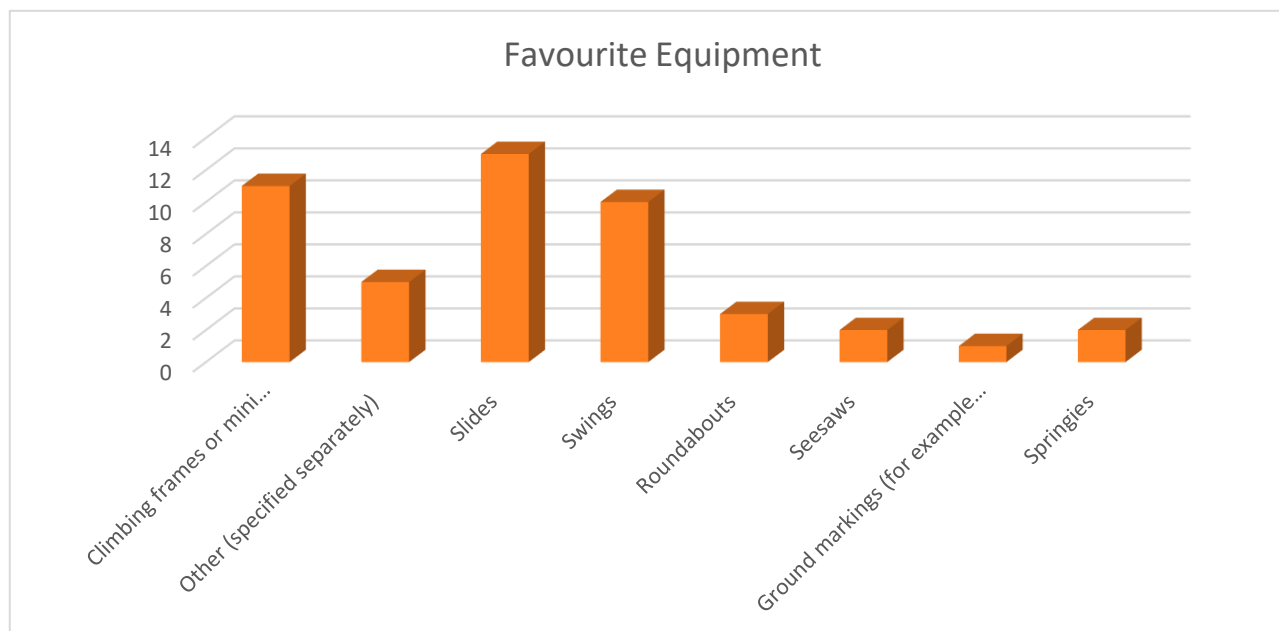
What activities do you like best?

Swinging (68%), Sliding (63%), Climbing (37%), Spinning (32%), Exploring (32%), Balancing (16%), Interacting (11%), Rocking (11%), Jumping (11%), Imagining (11%), and Learning (5%).



What play equipment do you like best?

Slides (68%), Climbing frames or mini climbing walls or boulders (58%), Swings (53%), Other suggestions (26%), Roundabouts (16%), Seesaws (11%), Springies (11%), and Ground markings (5%)



Other suggestions were...

The MUGA more than anything
Things for older children - ball games so hoops, goals for football
Paddling pool, zip wire more picnic areas
Assault courses
Play equipment with a tunnel

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.
The play area is run down . The slides don't slide . The big slide would be amazing if it actually worked ! You cannot slide down it . It needs sprucing up or new equipment
I am answering this survey in behalf if my grandchildren. The live away so only use the playground when they visit here. They do enjoy the playground but are sometimes are wary of older children who very often cycle in the playground and use it for ball games (football and rugby), even though there is a notice on the gate prohibiting this. It is also common for the older children to climb and balance on the perimeter fence which makes it very unstable. I think the equipment generally need updating, with perhaps additionally a small climbing frame and a new slide. I have always believed the present one has been installed the wrong way round. My main concern is older children spoiling the enjoyment of the younger ones. I would welcome comments as to how these problems could be addressed.
Overall improvement. Too many trees. Overgrown. Not safe.
Yes - it needs some maintenance as grass is very long and there are some neglected temporary barriers.
The activity's are currently great for a mix of ages, specifically younger children & toddlers which is really handy. The large slide is ICONIC please replace with once just as great. The park would suck without it. Maybe out 2 in so kids can race down. More swings, maybe no grass (don't hate me north wales has enough grass) so it's cleaner for kids and easier to maintain as it's currently a level 10 jungle. Maybe little football goals because that's equally iconic, a little racecourse for running/ bikes/ scooters would be adored. A sand pit would be chefs kiss, thing go hard or go home, make it an attraction, kids spend too much time on iPads and need fun out door spaces. Why not put a splash pad in while you are at it. INVEST in the kids because they will be the ones looking after you when you are older and we all know how important play is for developing.
Keep it tidier (grass cutting) Repair or refresh the equipment that is old or out of use- balancing bar/monkey bars Rock climb Zip wire Bigger area for picnics- more tables together so you can meet friends
It would be good to see a bike trail or skate park for the older children, it would also be good to see a proper useable basket ball court and that the tennis courts are free to use and open like they are at Kirkby malzeard even if it's just through the summer months.
Lots of kids in Masham love this park and it is used regularly so would be good to see it updated.
Not wooden equipment as it gets slippery in wet weather
More pic nic areas Football pitch is very much needed
I take my grandchildren to a few different parks and they particularly liked a floor trampoline and timer, to time themselves running
To include a longer assault course with more/ new sections
Having slightly older children, we feel that the playground is focused on younger children and there is nothing for older ones to do down at the Rec. A scooter park for local children who are a bit older, would be amazing and greatly used by the local youth community. The Mugga area is hardly ever used and we feel this area could be re-purposed and designed to incorporate a scooter park. There are so many children in Masham and surrounding area that are very much interested in mountain biking or scootering. A bike/ scooter park would be very beneficial to Masham

The grass is often very long and could do with cutting more often. The castle fort is great and good for imaginary play but some of the other equipment is looking tired and worn and could do with updating.
Exercise equipment, like in Bedale town hall park, would encourage people of all ages to get outside, exercise and use the park more. Especially as there is no local swimming pool or gym.
A lot of the equipment is starting to look tatty and needs at least a lick of paint and some TLC. My child loves the castle and is a unique feature of the play area! A few more bits for younger children would be good such a mud kitchen or floor trampoline. A splash pool like in ripon and Harrogate would be well used too.
I visit the play area with grandchildren. Personally I think the area could be updated and be maintained on a more frequent basis
Needs constant maintenance
The ground gets very muddy and is uneven. We love the castle. The slide is brilliant, it just needs a handrail adding up the steps. We would love a bike pump track!