

Play Area Improvement Survey – The Spinney, Knaresborough

North Yorkshire Council is working to improve the quality of The Spinney play area in Knaresborough. 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 (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

- 36 respondents in total.
- The play area is used regularly, with most respondents visiting weekly.
- Swinging and climbing were the most popular play activities
- The majority of respondents were aged between 31 and 40 and were female.
- The most valued types of equipment were climbing frames or climbing walls, swings, and slides.

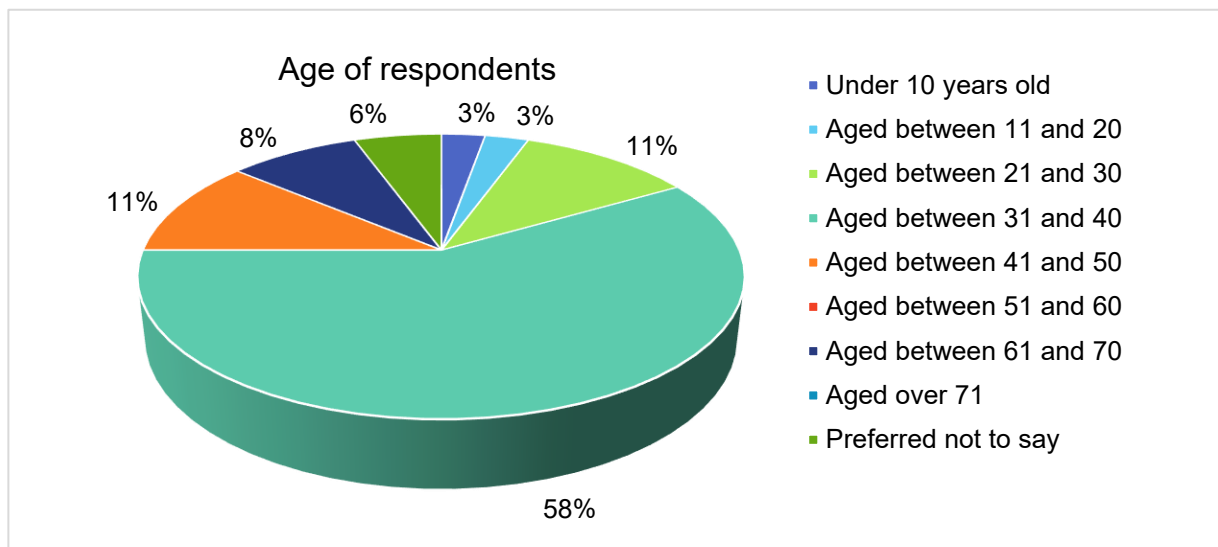
Respondents expressed strong support for improving the play area, with common requests including larger climbing frames, swings, slides, trampolines, roundabouts and inclusive play equipment. Many also highlighted the need for more facilities for toddlers and children with additional needs, as well as educational and interactive play features.

Maintenance was a recurring theme, with comments focusing on overgrown grass, ageing equipment, cleanliness and gate repairs. Respondents also requested additional seating, picnic benches and shaded areas to improve the experience for families.

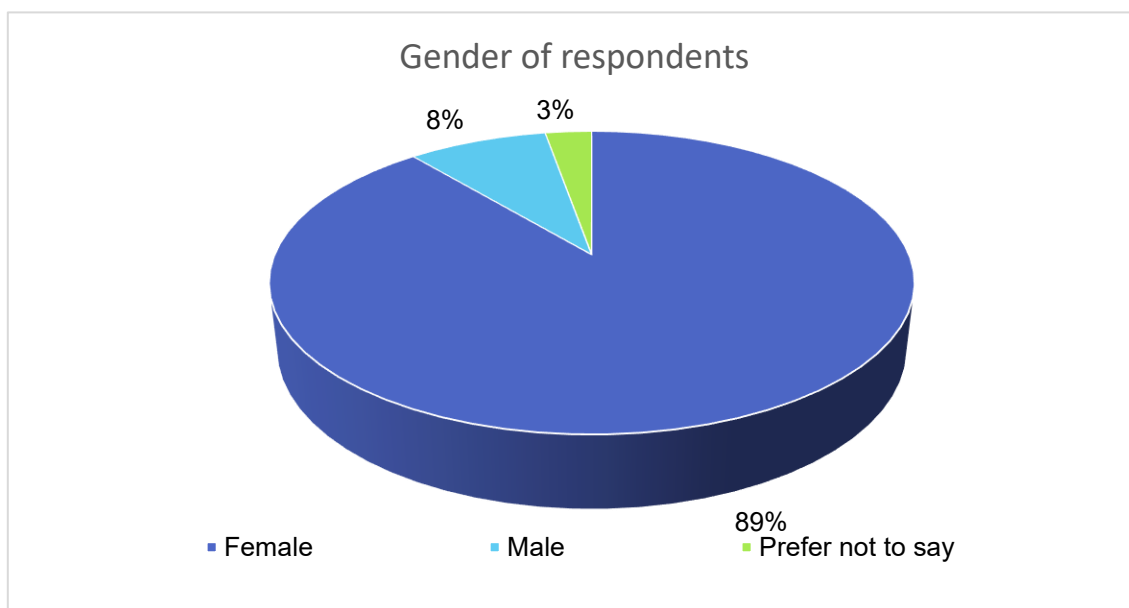
Safety concerns included gate security, anti-social behaviour and dogs entering the play area. Overall, respondents would like to see a modern, inclusive and well-maintained play space that offers a wider variety of play opportunities for children of different ages and abilities.

About the respondents

There were 36 respondents in total. The largest age group was 31 to 40 years old, accounting for 21 respondents, followed by those aged 21 to 30 years old with 4 respondents, and 41 to 50 years old with 4 respondents. A further 3 respondents were aged 61 to 70 years old, while 1 respondent was aged 0 to 10 years old and 1 respondent was aged 11 to 20 years old. Two respondents preferred not to state their age.

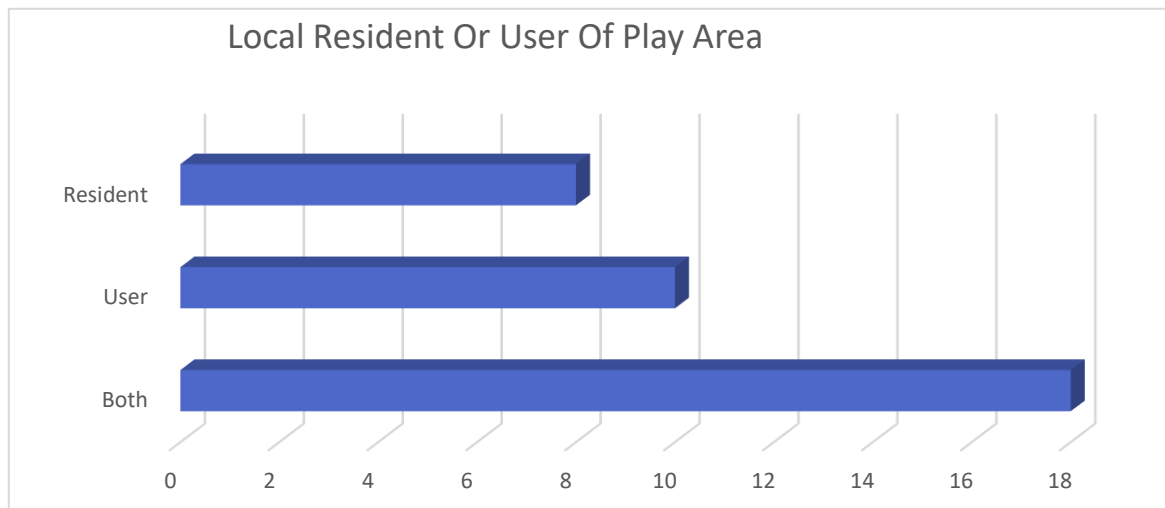


The majority of respondents were female (32 respondents, 89%), with 3 male respondents (8%) and 1 respondent (3%) who preferred not to say.



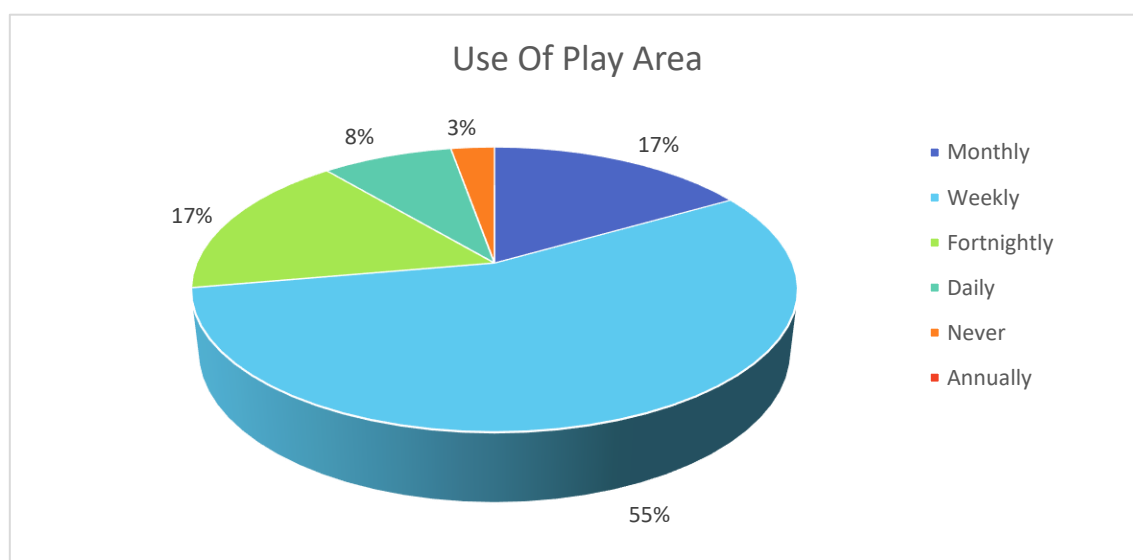
Are you a local resident or user of this play area?

Of the 36 respondents who answered this question, the majority 18 (50%) were both a resident and a user of the area. A further 10 (28%) identified as user only, while 8 (22%) identified as resident only.



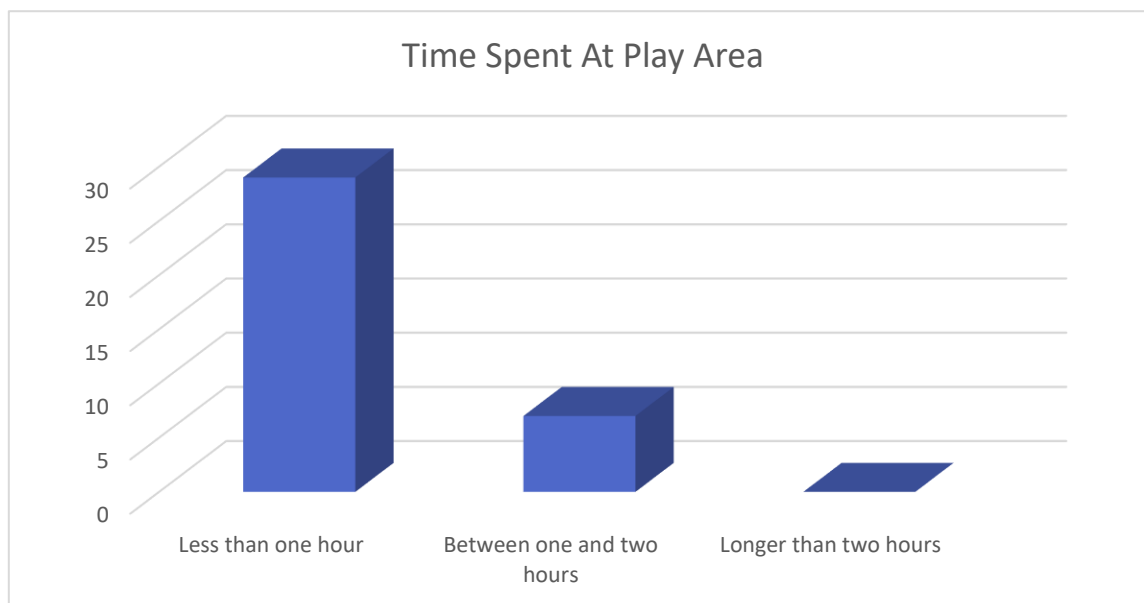
How often do you use the play area?

There were 36 respondents in total. The most common frequency of use was weekly, accounting for 20 respondents. This was followed by both fortnightly and monthly use, with 6 respondents each. A further 3 respondents reported using the service daily, while 1 respondent indicated that they never used it.



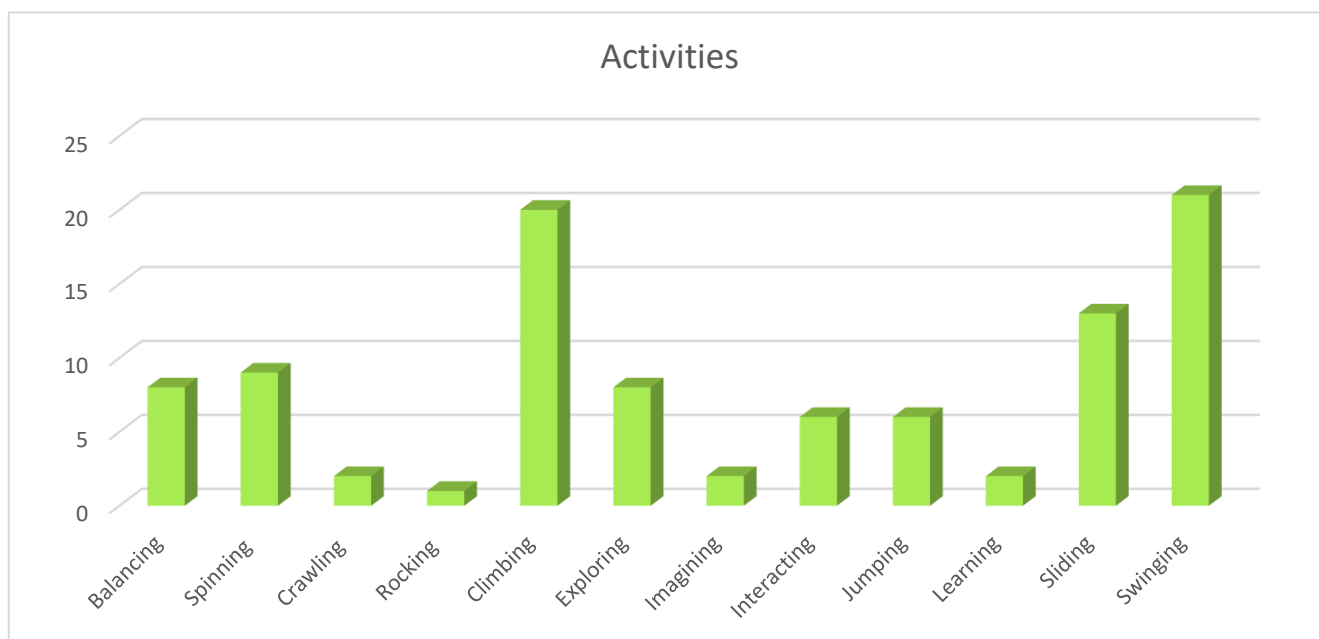
How long do you spend in the play area?

81% of respondents (29) spend less than one hour in the play area, 19% of respondents (7) spend between one and two hours in the play area and 0 responses for longer than two hours.



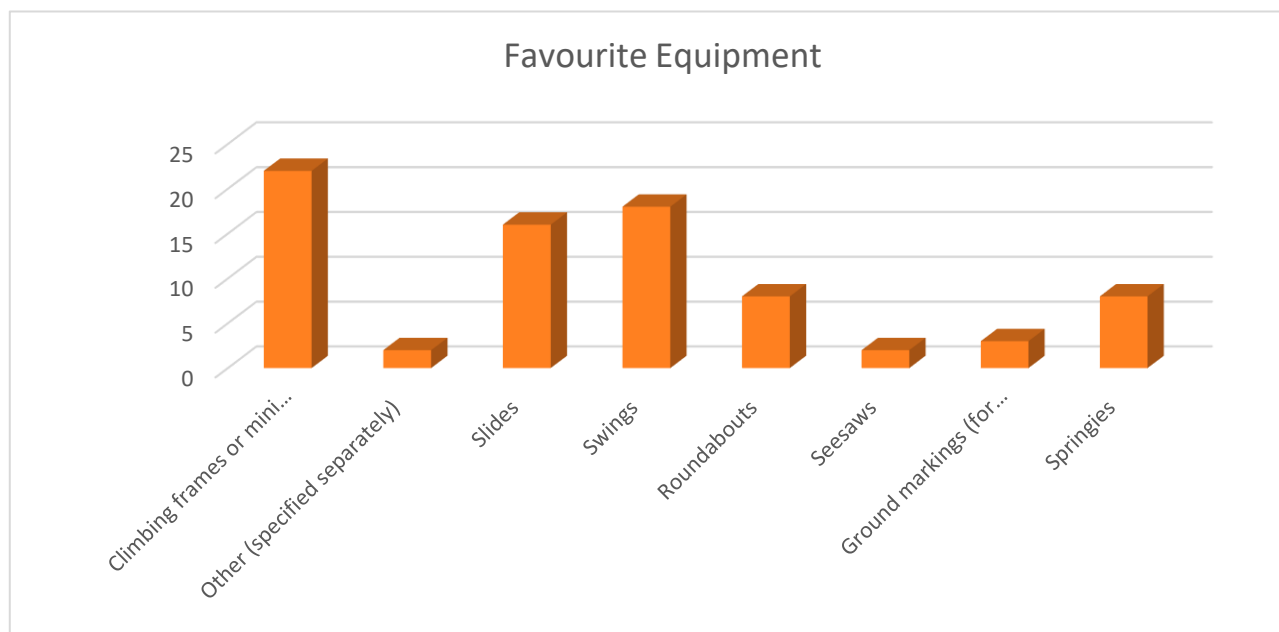
What activities do you like best?

Swinging (60%), Climbing (57%), Sliding (37%), Spinning (26%), Balancing (23%), Exploring (23%), Interacting (17%), Jumping (17%), Imagining (6%), Learning (6%), Crawling (6%), Rocking (3%)



What play equipment do you like best?

Climbing frames or mini climbing walls or boulders (22, 61%), Swings (18, 50%), Slides (16, 44%), Roundabouts (8, 22%), Springies (8, 22%), Ground markings (for example trails and games) (3, 8%), Seesaws (2, 6%), and Other equipment (2, 6%)



Other suggestions were...

Zip line
There needs to be a variety of toddler and child play equipment

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

More seating would be helpful, especially when there are multiple families. A picnic bench would mean we could have a nice place to snack. Something to shade the middle area (like a tree) would be good, when it is sunny it is extremely hot as none of the nearby trees shade the play area.
The grass within the play area is often overgrown, it would be good to see the soft painted flooring in areas and some refreshed equipment, more colour and interactive elements for children to play with.
It would be nice to have balancing activities like the swimming pool. At the swimming pool lots of teens which scare my child so come here
We love the mini trampolines. We prefer wooden climbing frames. Lots of sensory items for SEND children
Provide something different to other play areas so there is a variety
Needs to have spaces for smaller toddlers as well as older kids so it is accessible for everyone to use at their own heights and ages.
Play areas always need swings as these suit all ages but often little ones can't then play on anything else. They need something like the picture you used on your Facebook to promote the survey. Somewhere they can use safe steps, walk and crawl around with some interactive bits then slide down and go again. They can also then play with their friends
Both baby swings and child swings are needed. A bigger slide as well as a toddler climb&slide. The trampolines that are in the floor are great but would need upkeep and looking after as they tend to break easily. The permanent instruments are good. Role play activities are also very good for all ages
Remove it due to the ASB after dark
It would be lovely to have an upgrade to this park. A roundabout would be a great addition, as well as a climbing frame type thing or castle with tunnels etc

Some educational equipment for primary school children.
Educational equipment would be great for primary school children.
Needs to be cleaned - cleaning anll of the equipment in anll of the playgrounds should be routine they degrade over time annd don't get used because they are filthy. Items needed for smaller children. Family area and the equipment is mostly for bigger children
There are no full size publicly accessible basketball courts in Knaresborough, it is a growing sport especially for children and teenagers. A number of young people in Knaresborough have to travel to York or Leeds to play for national League teams but there is nowhere to practice locally
It would be great to have more for the kids to do like a mini trampolines or a climbing frame. Also the park on Nidderdale Drive could do with an update too!
It would be nice to maybe have an extra child lock on the gate in/out. My toddler loves walking around and 1 worry I have is her opening the gate and wondering off.
Duel swing Trampoline Big seasaw Climbing frame (Similar to applebys)
This is a really big play area and it is wasted space by the fairly awful equipment. A big climbing frame with a bridge, fireman's pole and a slide would be very welcomed as well as better swings. I see a lot of children playing at other playgrounds on the gymnastic bars. Something to balance and bounce on would fit well. Our favourite play area is outside Knaresborough leisure and wellness and something similar to this would be amazing.
As a dog owner I am always astounded when I see people with dogs in the play area, I presume they think as it is enclosed it is safe to let their dog off their lead.
I would love to see more of the facilities that are at the park at Appleby estate like the trampolines, roundabout and rockers along with the learning markings on the floor and castle frame
Merry go round Trampoline
The current precision is very old. The slide gets hot in summer, and is often dirty.
Grass often very long so my little one trips over a lot!
A better climbing frame with a slide attached. And maybe the mini trampoline
Please fix the gates so they shut properly, and cut the grass more often.
Basket swings interesting climbing frames and zip wires provide loads of energy for bigger and little kids
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.