Shaping the Future of Westwood Park – Survey Results



Prepared by Westwood Parish Council

Survey Feedback

1 Summary

P1 One hundred and eighty responses to the park survey were received over a five-week period up to 08 September 2026 (157 electronic and 23 hard copy). This represents approximately one third of village households, although it should be noted that some households may have completed more than one survey. While not a definitive result, it does provide a useful indication of views on the future of the park.

P2 While there has been some negative feedback, most of the comments received were positive, and sixty-two residents have volunteered to help implement those proposals taken forward.

2 Clear Wins

P3 The following proposals appear to have very strong support with little or no objection and might be considered by the Parish Council as projects carried forward without delay, subject to funding and seasonal restrictions.

a. Plant wildflower beds, areas of meadow grass and wildflower islands plus spring bulbs around the base of trees.
b. Provide additional airshaft screening (but note concerns about plant selection).
c. Provide additional dead hedging, bird & bat boxes and insect & hedgehog hotels.
d. Provide an additional litter bin.
e. Arrange park events and set up a park volunteer group.
f. Increase use of wood mulching.

3 Candidate Projects for Consideration

P4 Other proposals which received strong support (60-80%) require further consultation in terms of practicality, costs and benefits taking onboard the objections raised before considering implementation:

a. Fruit and nut trees (concern about rotting fruit left on ground & kids throwing fruit).
b. Kids bike track (concerns about noise, parking, damage to trees and safety).
c. Summer shade (concerns about cost & maintenance - just plant more trees).
d. Low level lighting (concerns about light pollution).
e. Nature & heritage displays (concerns about vandalism).
f. Arts & crafts workshops.
g. Educational tours.
h. Two valleys trail (concerns about visitors & parking).
i. Rainwater capture (concerns about cost).
j. Bus shelter & bench (concerns about cost).

P5 A small number of proposals might warrant revisiting once alternative solutions have been investigated and potentially put back to the community for their consideration as part of an overall park sustainability plan:

a. Wildlife pond (52%) - concerns about safety, midges & maintenance. (perhaps a stone trough solution with solar powered running water might achieve the benefits of providing wildlife with a water source without the downsides).

b. Boules court (56%) - concerns about the cost & maintenance (if implemented by volunteers the cost is less than £1000 and has low visual impact, the area could additionally be combined with a removable basketball hoop).
c. Table tennis table (44%) - concerns about vandalism, misuse, theft, practicality, noise, cost, and the over development of the park (perhaps a permanent concrete table incorporated into the play area addresses these concerns).

4 Residents Priorities

P6 The following proposals received the greatest support for early implementation:

a. Quick win biodiversity related proposals.
b. Making the park better for youngsters.
c. Kids bike track.

5 Community Participation

P7 The one hundred and eighty responders fell into the following groups:

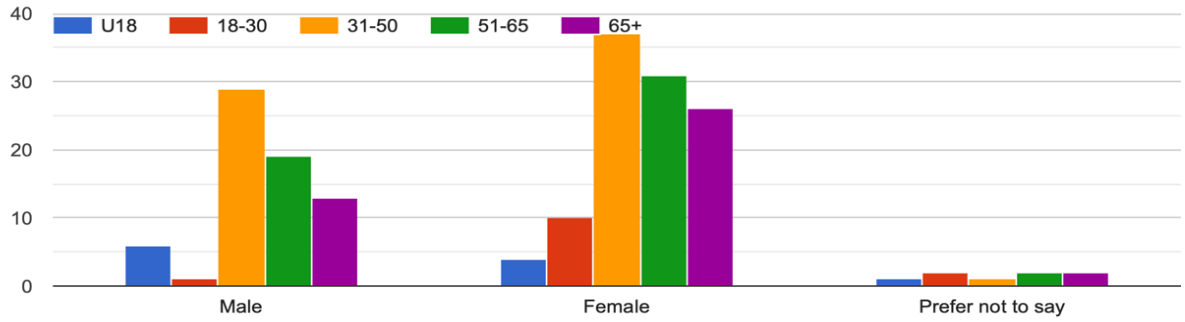


Figure 5-1 Survey Participation

P8 Contact details were provided for sixty-two residents willing to volunteer their time to support various projects. It is proposed that these volunteers are invited to join the 'Friends of Westwood' Volunteer group, to be set up by the Parish Council to help with implementing various projects (management of this group has yet to be determined).

P9 It might also be desirable to draw on this group to support initiatives to smarten up the rest of the village – subject to agreement with Highways and Selwood Housing who own much of the green space around the village.

6 Survey Data

P10 The raw data is presented in Section 7 and summarised in Figures 6-1, 6-2 and 6-3 below with the following data processing applied:

a. Strongly supported responses received (+2) points multiplied by number of votes.
b. Weakly supported responses received (+1) point multiplied by number of votes.
c. Neutral support received zero points.
d. Weak objections received (-1) point multiplied by number of votes.
e. Strong objections received (-2) points multiplied by number of votes.

P11 Specific responder comments are listed in Section 8.

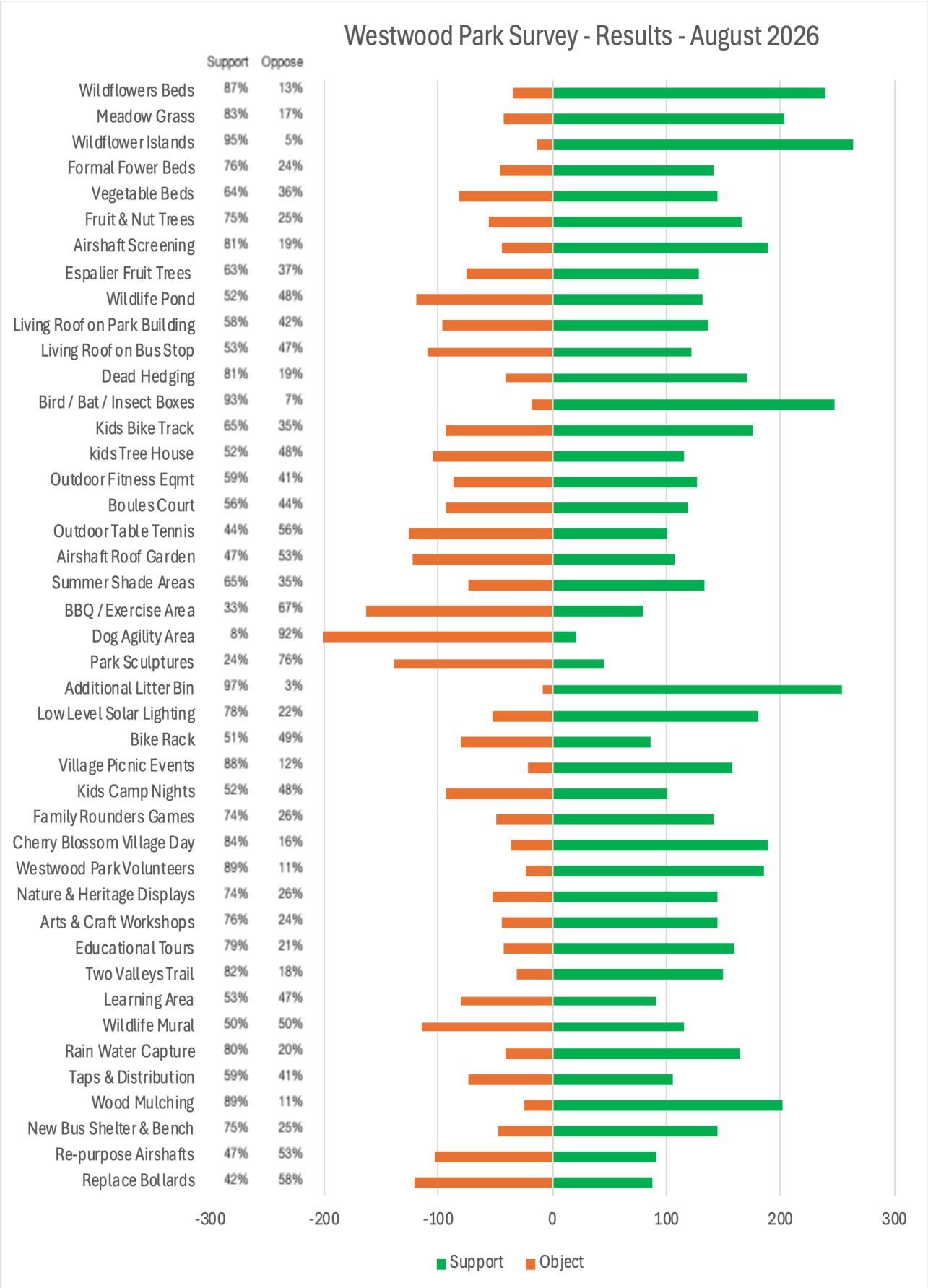


Figure 6.1 - Park Survey Data Summary



Figure 6.2 - Park Survey: Processed Data (Support less Objections)

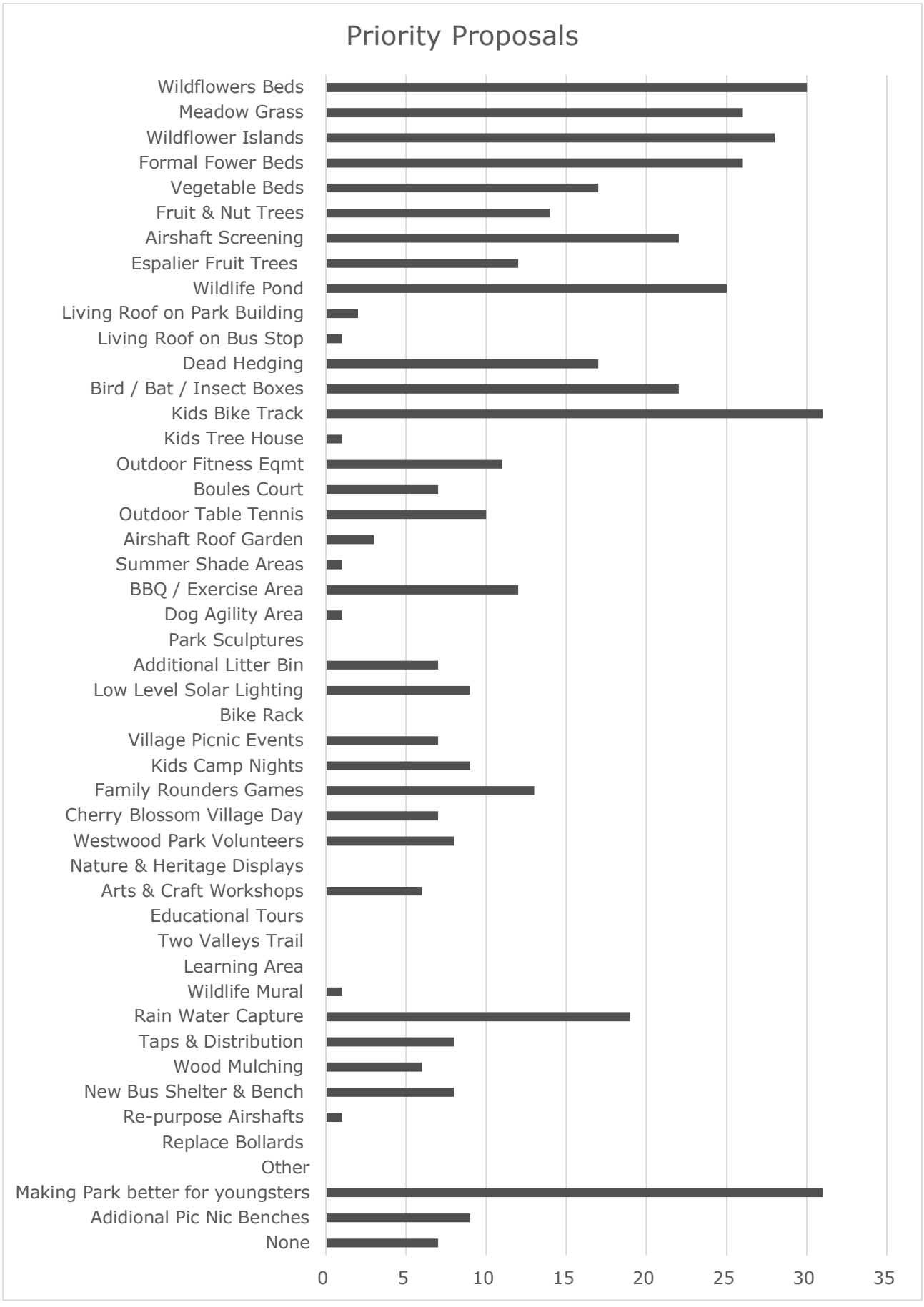


Figure 6.3 - Park Survey: Priority Proposals

7 Raw Data Collected

7.1 Numerical Data

	1	2	3	4	5
1.01 Wildflower areas in the park	13	9	20	22	109
	7.5%	5.2%	11.6%	12.7%	63.0%
1.02 Meadow grass areas in the north	13	17	31	23	90
	7.5%	9.8%	17.8%	13.2%	51.7%
1.03 Wildflower islands around trees	3	7	23	23	120
	1.7%	4.0%	13.1%	13.1%	68.2%
1.04 Formal flower beds	16	14	59	28	57
	9.2%	8.0%	33.9%	16.1%	32.8%
1.05 Vegetable beds in community garden	34	14	46	18	63
	19.4%	8.0%	26.3%	10.3%	36.0%
1.06 Fruit & Nut Trees at south park entrance	22	12	45	30	68
	12.4%	6.8%	25.4%	16.9%	38.4%
1.07 Silver birch cops & climbing rose on airshafts	16	13	37	29	80
	9.1%	7.4%	21.1%	16.6%	45.7%
1.08 Espalier fruit trees	29	17	55	18	55
	16.7%	9.8%	31.6%	10.3%	31.6%
1.09 Wildlife Pond	50	19	29	25	53
	28.4%	10.8%	16.5%	14.2%	30.1%
1.10 Living roof on park building	37	23	32	30	53
	21.1%	13.1%	18.3%	17.1%	30.3%
1.11 Living Roof on bus stop	45	19	37	28	47
	25.6%	10.8%	21.0%	15.9%	26.7%
1.12 Dead hedging	13	15	45	32	69
	7.5%	8.6%	25.9%	18.4%	39.7%
1.13 Bird / Bat / Insect Boxes	7	4	24	34	107
	4.0%	2.3%	13.6%	19.3%	60.8%
2.01 Kids Bike Track	41	12	26	23	76
	23.0%	6.7%	14.6%	12.9%	42.7%
2.02 kids Tree House	42	21	40	33	41
	23.7%	11.9%	22.6%	18.6%	23.2%
2.03 Outdoor Fitness Equipment	30	27	41	29	49
	17.0%	15.3%	23.3%	16.5%	27.8%
2.04 Boules Court	37	20	42	36	41
	21.0%	11.4%	23.9%	20.5%	23.3%
2.05 Outdoor Table Tennis	48	30	37	19	41
	27.4%	17.1%	21.1%	10.9%	23.4%
2.06 Airshaft Roof Garden	49	24	38	23	42
	27.8%	13.6%	21.6%	13.1%	23.9%
2.07 Summer Shade Areas	27	19	43	38	48
	15.4%	10.9%	24.6%	21.7%	27.4%
2.08 BBQ / Exercise / Learning Area	70	24	34	16	32
	39.8%	13.6%	19.3%	9.1%	18.2%
2.09 Dog Agility Area	101	26	36	5	8
	57.4%	14.8%	20.5%	2.8%	4.5%
2.10 Park Sculptures	52	35	56	23	11
	29.4%	19.8%	31.6%	13.0%	6.2%
2.11 Additional Litter Bin	4	1	28	36	109
	2.2%	0.6%	15.7%	20.2%	61.2%
2.12 Low Level Solar Lighting	20	12	35	41	70
	11.2%	6.7%	19.7%	23.0%	39.3%
2.13 Bike Rack by phone box	26	29	60	36	25
	14.8%	16.5%	34.1%	20.5%	14.2%
3.01 Village Picnic Events	6	9	63	42	58
	3.4%	5.1%	35.4%	23.6%	32.6%
3.02 Kids Camp Nights	39	15	56	31	35
	22.2%	8.5%	31.8%	17.6%	19.9%
3.03 Family Rounders Games	19	11	62	26	58
	10.8%	6.3%	35.2%	14.8%	33.0%
3.04 Cherry Blossom Village Day	14	8	39	41	74
	8.0%	4.5%	22.2%	23.3%	42.0%
3.05 Friends of Westwood Park Volunteers	9	5	49	38	74
	5.1%	2.9%	28.0%	21.7%	42.3%
4.01 Nature & Heritage Displays	17	18	49	45	50
	9.5%	10.1%	27.4%	25.1%	27.9%
4.02 Arts & Craft Workshops	13	19	53	39	53
	7.3%	10.7%	29.9%	22.0%	29.9%
4.03 Educational Tours	16	11	51	41	59
	9.0%	6.2%	28.7%	23.0%	33.1%
4.04 Two Valleys Trail	10	12	60	43	53
	5.6%	6.7%	33.7%	24.4%	29.8%
4.05 Learning Area	24	33	62	23	34
	13.6%	18.8%	35.2%	13.1%	19.3%
4.06 Wildlife Mural	48	19	34	32	42
	27.4%	10.9%	19.4%	18.3%	24.0%
5.01 Rain Water Capture	11	19	49	33	66
	6.2%	10.7%	27.5%	18.5%	37.1%
5.02 Taps & Distribution	26	22	60	31	37
	14.8%	12.5%	34.1%	17.6%	21.0%
5.03 Wood Mulching	8	9	38	41	80
	4.5%	5.1%	21.6%	23.3%	45.5%
5.04 Bus Shelter & Bench	15	18	51	36	54
	8.6%	10.3%	29.3%	20.7%	31.0%
5.05 Re-purpose Airshafts	45	13	57	25	33
	26.0%	7.5%	32.9%	14.5%	19.1%
5.06 Replace concrete bollards	50	21	47	27	30
	28.6%	12.0%	26.9%	15.4%	17.1%

NATURE
protect & enhance wildlife & biodiversity

WELLBEING
recreation, exercise, safety & enjoyment

COMMUNITY
Bring people together

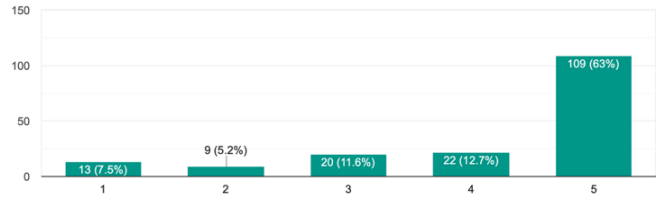
EDUCATION & HERITAGE
discovery & learning

FUTURE GENERATIONS
resilience

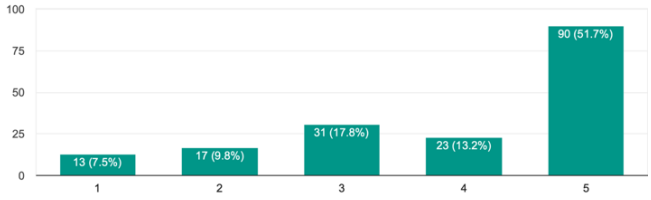
7.2 Graphical Data

Nature

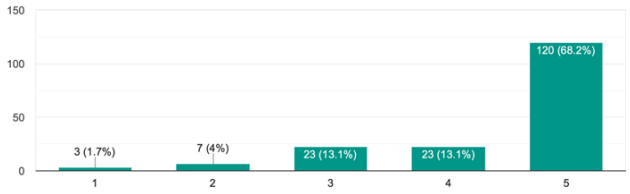
1.01 Wildflower Areas



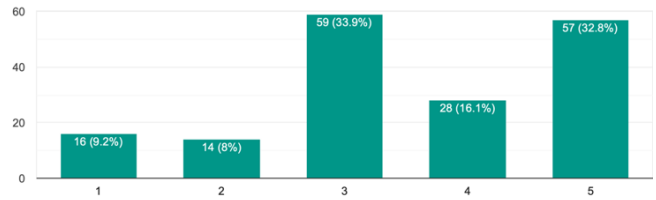
1.02 Meadow Grass Areas



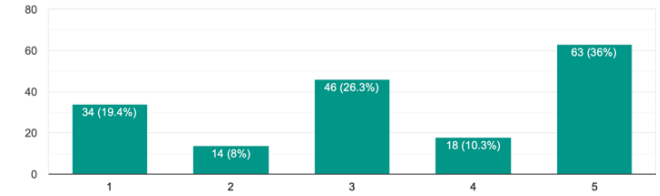
1.03 Wildflower Islands



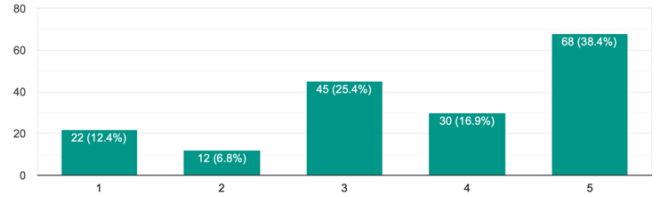
1.04 Formal Flower Beds



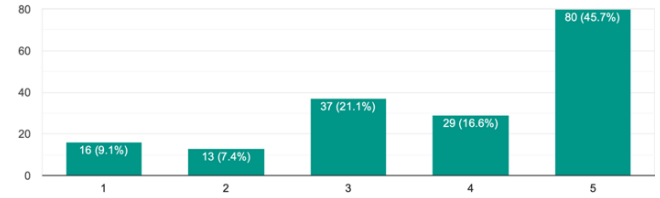
1.05 Vegetable Beds



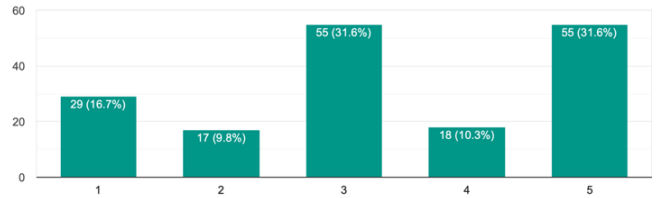
1.06 Fruit & Nut Trees



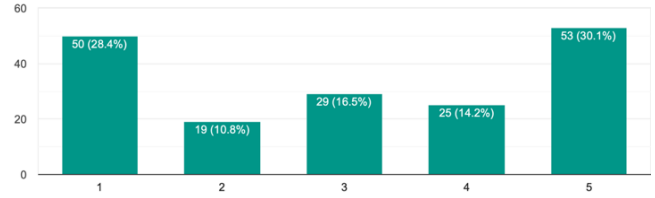
1.07 Airshaft Screening (Silver Birch & Climbing Roses)



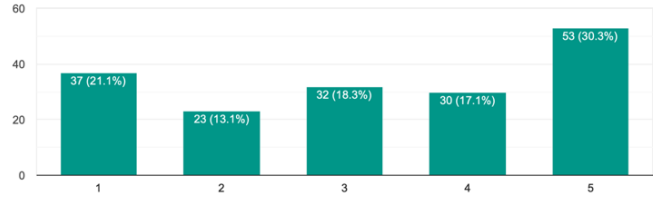
1.08 Espalier Fruit Trees



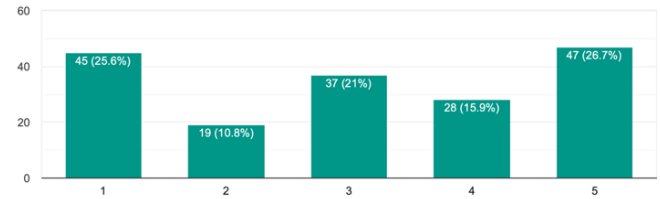
1.09 Wildlife Pond



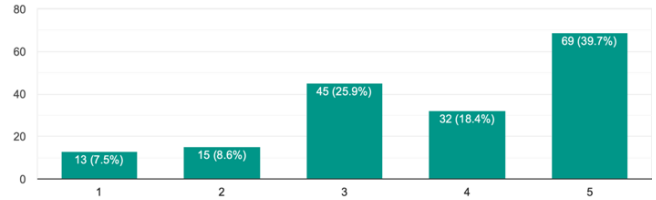
1.10 Living Roof on Park Building



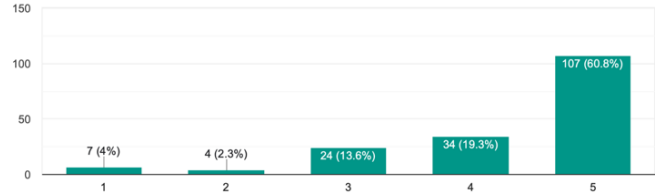
1.11 Living Roof on Bus Shelter



1.12 Dead Hedging

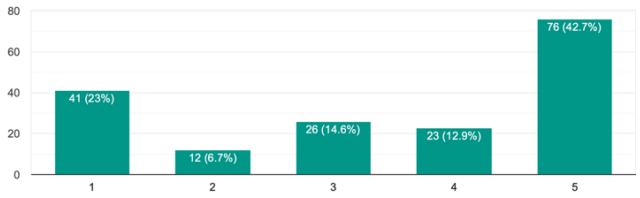


1.13 Bird, Bat, Insect & Hedgehog Boxes

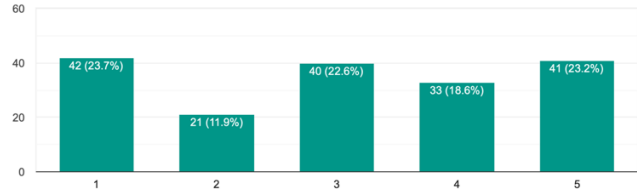


Wellbeing

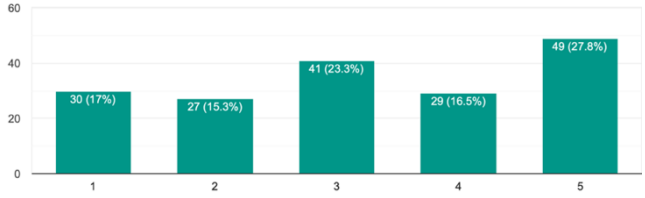
2.01 Kids Bike Track



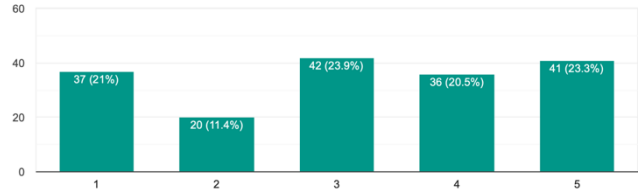
2.02 Kids tree House



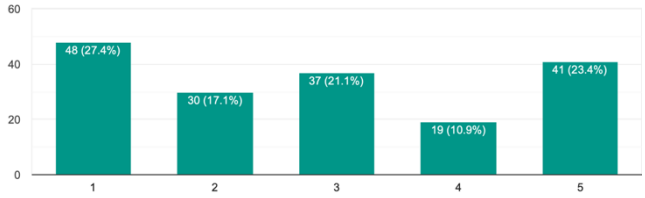
2.03 Outdoor Fitness Equipment



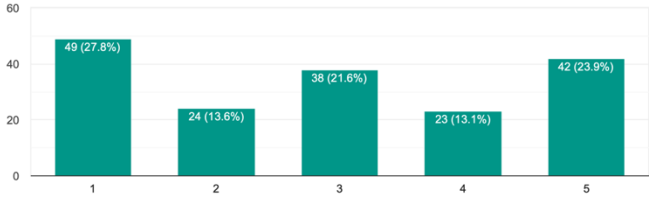
2.04 Boules Court



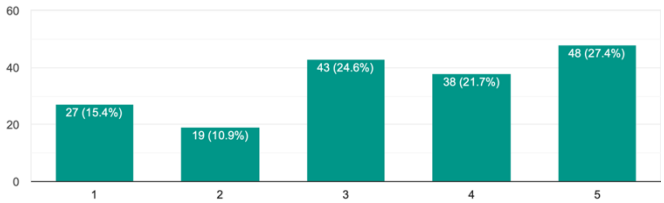
2.05 Outdoor Table Tennis



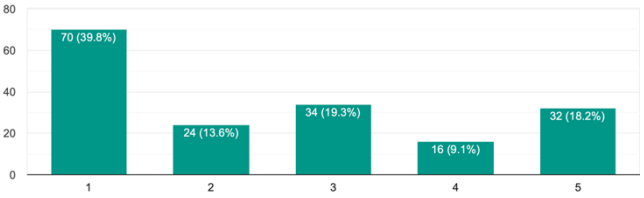
2.06 Airshaft Roof Garden



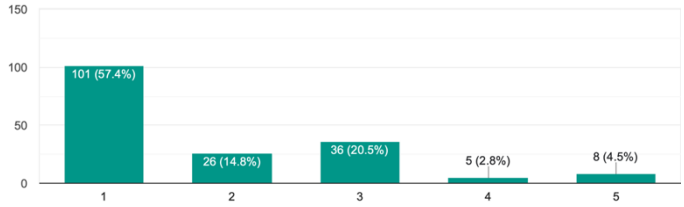
2.07 Summer Shade Area



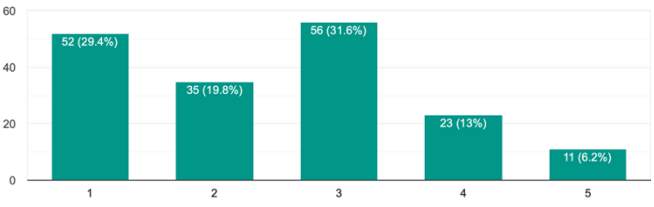
2.08 BBQ, Exercise & Learning Area



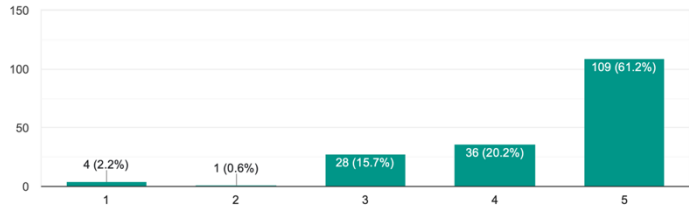
2.09 Dog Play Area



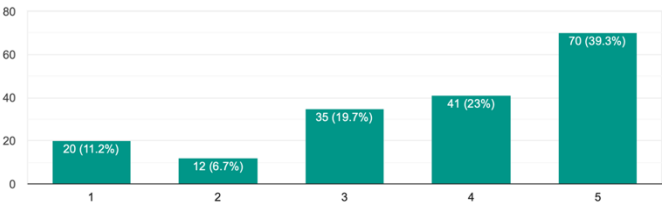
2.10 Park Sculptures



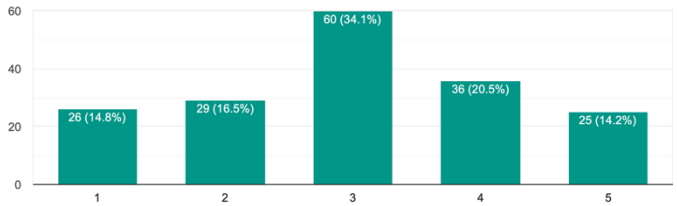
2.11 Additional Litter Bin



2.12 Low Level Solar Lighting

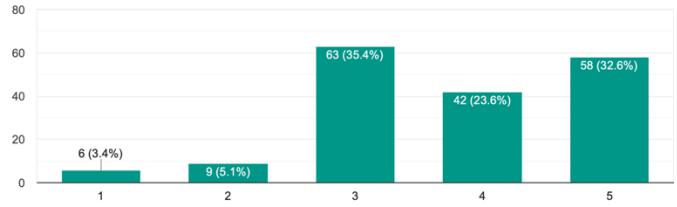


2.13 Bike Rack

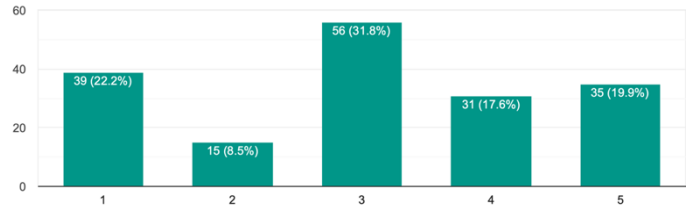


Community

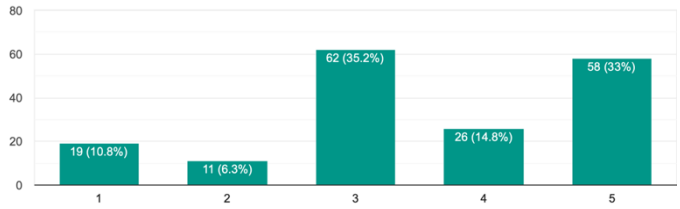
3.01 Village Picnic Events



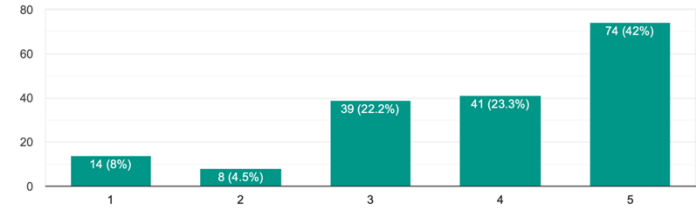
3.02 Kids Camp Night



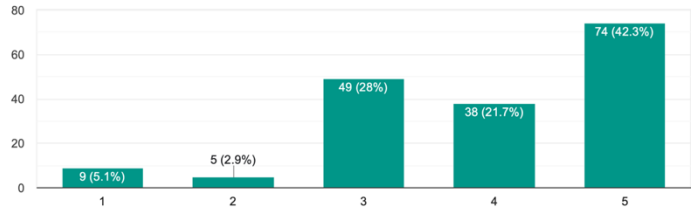
3.03 Family Rounders Games



3.04 Cherry Blossom Day

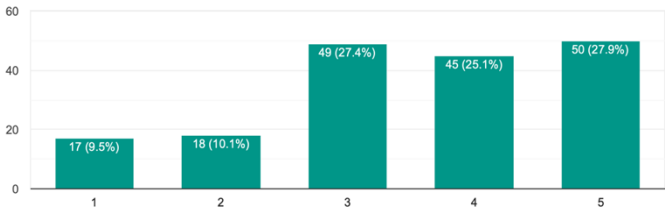


3.05 Friends of Westwood – Volunteer Group

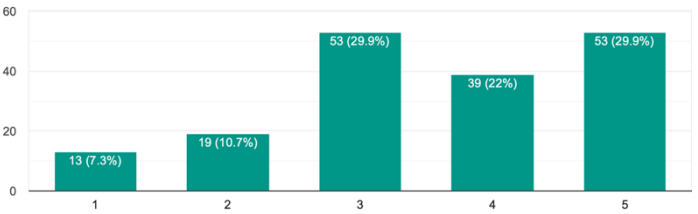


Education & Heritage

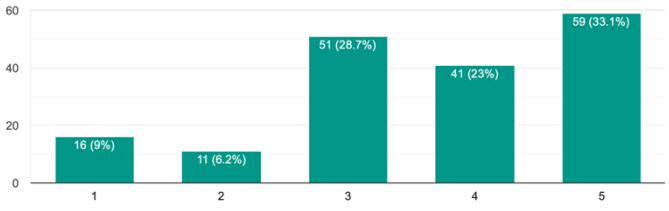
4.01 Nature & Heritage Displays



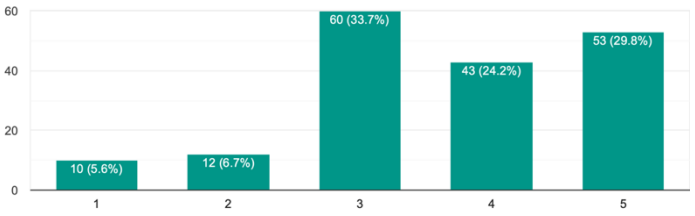
4.02 Arts & Crafts Workshops



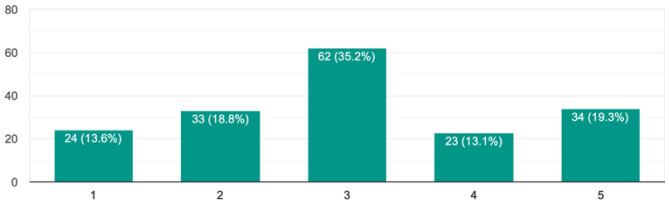
4.03 Educational Tours



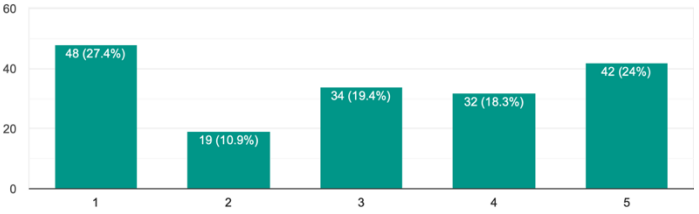
4.04 Two Valley Nature Trail



5.05 Learning & Sensory Play Area

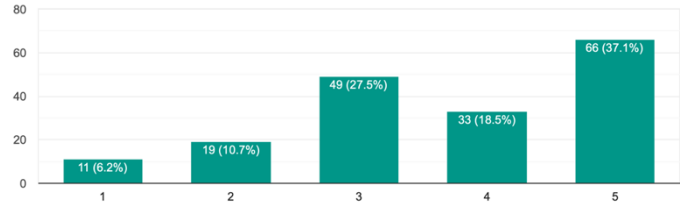


6.05 Wildlife Mural

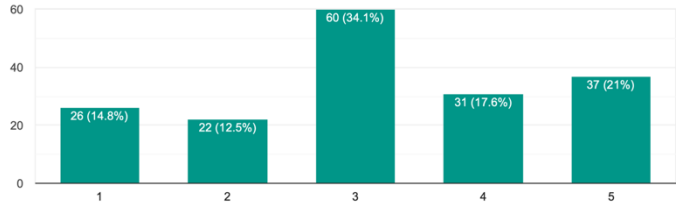


Future Generations

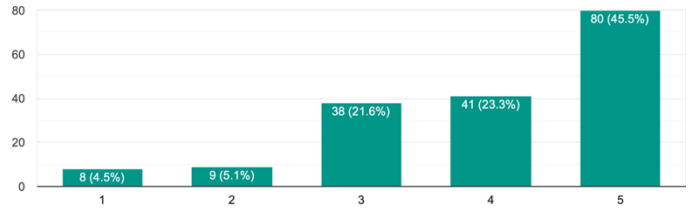
5.01 Rainwater Capture



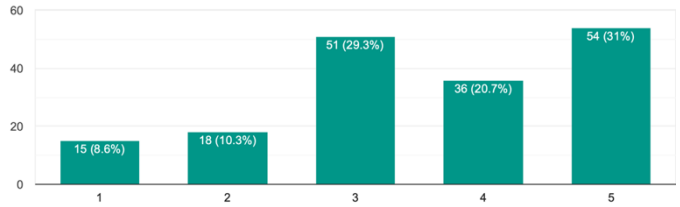
5.02 Park Taps & Distribution System



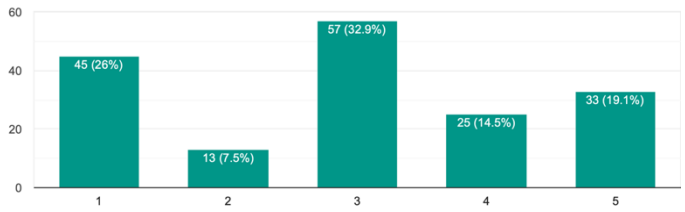
5.03 Wood Mulching



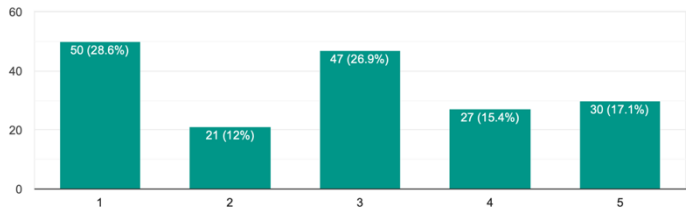
5.04 New Bus Shelter & Bench



5.05 Re-purpose Airshafts



5.05 Replace Concrete Bollards



8 Supporting Comments

P12 A significant number of additional comments were received, many repeating similar themes and have been consolidated where practical, a small number of comments have been judged inappropriate and are therefore not publish. The comments below are a summary of resident's views and ideas.

Proposal	Consolidated Survey Comment
General Comment	• Great survey. • Fantastic initiative. • Superb! • We love the Wildflower café and the flower beds that have already been added. • Thank you for all the work to maintain and improve the park. • Keep the wide-open space behind the bus stop for games, football, frisbee, cricket, bike riding. • Please consider wildlife at every stage. • Please keep the area as natural as possible. • We are surrounded by wildlife; the park should be for recreation. • There should be a wildlife audit before any works is undertaken to inform any proposal. • Don't make the park look like a garden, it should remain wild and low maintenance. • The focus should be on low-cost sustainable development and proposals which enhance wildlife and biodiversity. • Do not undertake unnecessary tidying up & only prune brambles where they impact safety. Scrub is needed for nesting. • Don't over wild the park so that it becomes unusable. • The park development should balance nature, sustainability and recreation for all. • Don't over suburbanise the park. • While I support community events, I would not like to see the park become full of activities and busyness. • Leave our park alone. • Please leave the hedge by the phone box alone. • Park is already perfect, leave it as it is. • The park is already a wonderful communal area for quiet enjoyment for many residents. Too many activates will spoil the peace. • More activities for kids and families, including social areas, there isn't enough for kids to do in the village, they must travel elsewhere. We need a balanced approach for all generations. • Thoroughly impressed with the scope and vision for the park – well done. • These proposals are ridiculous. • The proposals are too expensive and will cost too much to maintain. • The park should be kept low maintenance and does not need to be turned into a structured garden. • Protect horseshoe bats in mineshaft which need scrub area around the airshaft buildings. • There is no parking why are we trying to attract visitors? • We need to consider the impact on parking. • Why is the Upper Westwood carpark always full of resident's cars that don't go anywhere?

	• The park is a relatively small space predominantly used by the older residents of our village to walk their dogs because they are not mobile enough to walk in surrounding fields. If we fill it with too much that can't happen! Currently its shared by the children of the village and dog walkers very happily. • There is already a kids play area and space for older kids to run around in, why do we need anything else? Any proposals should be kept simple and encourage the village community to come together for events. • Some proposals are ridiculous. Leave the park as it is. • Many of these proposals are unneeded and will only benefit visitors. • Only consider park improvements for those who currently use it, older residents and young children. • The proposals seem to be aimed at attracting visitors. • Some of these proposals will lead to direct conflict with Chestnut Grove. • This is the only open space we have for the elderly. • Do not make the park a commercial venture. • The park provides a valuable link between Upper and Lower Westwood. • Making the park better will attract visitors and cause problems with parking and traffic on the roads into Westwood. • Why do we need the park café, we already have the social club that has lots of parking. We don't need another venue in the village. How many times do we need to fight this. • Some of the ideas don't fit Westwood and would be a waste of money. • Yet again these ideas will make it unbearable for residents. • Many of these ideas will shrink the park. • Keep as natural as possible & low maintenance. • Leave the scrub area by phone box it's almost the last place Sparrows nest in Westwood. • Please consider projects for teens to keep them busy. • Projects for 10 yr old upwards please. • More thought needs to be given to teenagers and young people. • Any project that impacts children should be discussed with the head teacher of Westwood & Freshford Primary Schools. • Keep it budget friendly and don't forget maintenance costs. • Why aren't you doing the whole village it's a mess, there are dog poo bags everywhere. • We need flower beds in Lower Westwood. • Money should just be spent on dropped kerbs.
1.01 Wildflower Beds	• It's only a small park and with all these flower beds and long grass there is hardly any room left to walk around. • Great idea and relatively inexpensive.
1.02 Meadow Grass	• Long grass is not good for dogs as they get seeds in their eyes, ears and paws. • Fantastic, since areas of grass has been left untouched there have been lots more insects and birds. Nature needs as much help as it can get. • Some meadow grass would be OK but should not dominate the park.
1.03 Wildflower Islands	• Do not mow grass under trees it damages the roots and has killed the cherry trees.
1.04 Formal Flower Beds	• Will be expensive in install and maintain.

	• Who will maintain these, they will become a mess very quickly if not maintained.
1.05 Vegetable Beds	• Who will maintain these. • They will be plundered by people from outside the village, this already happens with the fruit trees.
1.06 Fruit & Nut Trees	• Please replace the cherry trees which have died off. • There is already lots of wasted fruit that is left to rot for months • I have been asking for years for the dead cherry trees to be replaced. • The fruit trees are not appreciated, and the fruit is just left to rot. • We already have plenty of fruit trees, more seems unnecessary. • Fruit trees are lovely, but teenagers like to throw the fruit at each other and other things. • All the rotten fruit is a safety hazard. • Who will maintain these. • They will be plundered by people from outside the village, this already happens with the existing fruit trees.
1.07 Airshaft Screening	• Remove all weeds and rubbish around the air shafts, clean them up, and celebrate the history of the park rather than cover them up. • The proposed silver birch trees will cause allergies, perhaps select different trees. • Any trees by this airshaft will cut out the light to the neighbouring houses. • Be careful not to make these areas late night haunts for youths who play loud music and loutish behaviour.
1.08 Espalier Fruit Trees	• You can't plant alongside privately owned walls. • Trees planted against private walls will need owner's permission. • If the fruit trees grow over the walls this will become a real nuisance to residents. • Who will maintain these.
1.09 Wildlife Pond	• Children can drown even in very shallow water. • This is a silly idea. A low fence won't stop kids and dog going in the pond. • A pond will be a magnet for dogs and will need a significant fence. • This may quickly degenerate into a mud bath and encourage midges and rubbish.
1.10 Living Roof on Park Building	• This will be expensive and likely to fail. • Good idea but should be paid for by tenants.
1.11 Living Roof on Bus Shelter	• Bus shelter is an eye sore and really needs to be replaced with something more attractive. Doing anything to improve the existing shelter would be a waste of time.
1.12 Dead Hedging	• Strongly support this initiative, and it can be done by the community.
1.13 Bird / Bat / Insect Box	• Strongly support this initiative, and it can be done by the community.
2.01 Kids Bike Track	• Bike track should move to the humps which is an area that is under used and away from the trees. • Track is not needed children can ride on the road. • Children already ride on the humps so a track is not needed. • This is a great idea but needs careful consideration regarding its location so that it doesn't damage tree roots. • The kids already ride all over the park why do they need a track.

	• This will negatively impact on private housing and dog walkers. • Don't let the bike track ruin what is currently a beautiful park. • Please leave the humps alone. • The park already has an excellent play area for kids as well as open areas for them to run around, it doesn't need a bike track. • The bike track needs careful consideration and planning so that it doesn't conflict with dog walkers and other park users. • The kids are happy with the open spaces and won't use a bike track, they just like to ride on the humps. • Kids are happy playing on the humps picking their lines and difficulty. • Local residents won't like the extra noise caused by the proposed location of the bike track. • Strongly object to this, this is currently a quiet and out of the way space. If the track goes ahead, it could be a real nuisance to the neighbouring residents. There would be nothing stopping older riders using it and tearing up the place. It may also attract motor bikes and grownups trying to impress kids.
2.02 Kids Tree House	• Not appropriate for a Village Park and will encourage older kids to use at night playing loud music.
2.03 Outdoor Fitness Equipment	• Not appropriate for a Village Park and will get vandalised.
2.04 Boulds Court	• This will just be a massive cat litter tray. • This will cost too much • Who is going to maintain this?
2.05 Outdoor Table Tennis	• Permanent table tennis table rather than wheeled option. • Holt and Frome have proper concrete one which can't be vandalised. • It won't be used if it needs to be set up. • Any equipment not bolted down will be stolen. • This is not practical and will get vandalised. • Who is going to tidy up?
2.06 Airshaft Roof Garden	• Not appropriate for a Village Park. • Compromises the privacy of neighbouring gardens.
2.07 Summer Shade Area	• Plant more trees to provide shade. • Who is going to set these up and maintain them. • Just plant more trees if more shade is needed.
2.08 BBQ / Exercise Area	• Bad idea, this will just get abused by youths after dark. • There is already a problem around the airshafts.
2.09 Dog Agility Area	• I use the park for walking my dog and don't want more dogs in the park. • Not needed people can just go to a commercial dog agility. • This will just lead to more dog poo. • Not needed there is one at Elms Cross.
2.10 Park Sculptures	• This should be linked with secondary schools and done by village kids. • Highly subjective and contentious.

2.11 Additional Litter Bins	• Litter bins overflow and cause more problems than they solve. • Strongly supported, there aren't any litter bins in the main park. • People should take their rubbish away with them.
2.12 Low Level Solar Lighting	• No extra lighting is needed, we are a country village not an urban park. • Strongly oppose this, dark skies are one of the defining characteristics of a country area. There are already two street lines which create light prolusion. If people are afraid of the dark, then they should carry a torch.
2.13 Bike Rack	• Good idea and can be done cheaply. • This should be encouraged to reduce driving.
3.01 Village Picnic Events	• If they wanted this, then why hasn't it already happened?
3.02 Kids Camp Night	• Strongly object as this will cause noise at night and will put extra pressure on parking. • BoA Scouts already use the park and this causes parking problems.
3.03 Family Rounders Games	• Nice idea but If they wanted this why hasn't it already happened?
3.04 Cherry Blossom Village Day	• Yes please but why is the focus on kids we need something for the elderly? • Village gardening day to smarten up the village and get everyone involved. • Nice idea but If they wanted this why hasn't it already happened?
3.05 Westwood Park Volunteers	• Yes please, set dates (ideally at weekends), post on Waffle and we will help. • This will be an opportunity for residents in the village to meet. • Great idea, it is in all our interests to maintain the park, and this would reduce the cost to the public purse as well as bring people together and foster a sense of community. • I strongly support this idea. • Great idea.
4.01 Nature & Heritage Displays	• No one will bother to read them, and they will just get vandalised.
4.02 Arts & Crafts Workshops	• Great idea, this should be for the whole community not just local schools. • This could be run like a Mens Sheds.
4.03 Educational Tours	• Nice idea but if they wanted this why hasn't it already happened?
4.04 Two Valleys Trail	• This is already well known, so I am not sure what this achieves.
4.05 Learning Area	• Not needed the whole park is a learning area. • Strongly object, this will just cause parking problems, and who will run it?
4.06 Wildlife Mural	• Young people should be do this under supervision. • Happy to do the murals for free.
5.01 Rainwater Capture	• Need to think about planting the right plants rather than rainwater capture. • Tanks need to be stored underground so that they aren't an eyesore.

5.02 Taps & Distribution System	• How to prevent the system from being abused?
5.03 Wood Mulching	• Not suitable for all plants.
5.04 New Bus Shelter & Bench	• Bench is desperately needed. • The old bus shelter needs to be replaced and is a dump.
5.05 Re-purpose Airshafts	• No comment
5.06 Replace Bollards	• This is daft and unnecessary expenditure; concrete will outlast oak. • Strongly in favour of this, the old ones look awful. • This will visually improve the park.
Additional Proposals	• More seats please (five requests) • Seed / plant swap events. • Set up a community shed. • Water refill station, same as Freshford shop (two requests). • Water fountain by the play area. • Consider multipurpose court for basketball, tennis, paddle ball which can be hired out with lockbox. • Small basketball court adjacent to the football pitch. • Make a feature of airshafts and mines. • Teach people about the history of the mines. • Park-run. • Park Yoga. • Paddle court – we can get outside funding. • Allotments next to the Park Café. • Basketball hoop please (six requests). • Alternative energy solutions for the park building. • Solar panels on the airshafts to power the café and park lighting. • Toddler specific activities.