

Leisure And Recreation Committee

Report Title: Play Area Improvements – Early Resident Consultation Findings

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1. Purpose of Report

To present initial findings from resident consultation on proposed improvements to 2 play areas and provide Members with an interpreted overview of feedback, including key themes, prior to further design refinement.

Alanbrooke Crescent Play Area



Barnum Court Play Area



2. Background

Draft concept designs for both sites were developed in partnership with Wicksteed and reviewed by the Play Area Working Group.

Public consultation was undertaken via SurveyMonkey to gather resident views on:

- Overall support for proposals
- Suitability of designs
- Accessibility and inclusivity
- Equipment priorities and preferences

The consultation remains open; therefore, results should be considered indicative and evolving.

3. Survey Response Overview

Site	Responses
Alanbrooke Crescent	8
Barnum Court	5

Response levels are currently low and should be treated as early indicators rather than definitive conclusions.

4. Interpretation of Results

The results present a mixed but not contradictory picture.

While some detailed responses highlight areas where designs could better meet user needs, this sits alongside consistently high levels of overall support.

This reflects a common consultation outcome where residents:

- Provide critical feedback on specific elements, while
- Still supporting the overall direction of improvement

In summary, residents broadly consider both schemes to be a clear improvement on existing provision, but would like to see further refinement where feasible, particularly at Alanbrooke Crescent.

5. Alanbrooke Crescent – Key Findings

5.1 Local Relevance

- 85.7% of respondents live near the site
- 85.7% currently use the play area

5.2 Target Users

Strong demand identified for:

- Children aged 5–10
- Older children (10+)
- Children with additional needs

Indicates need for a broad, inclusive, multi-age offer

5.3 Design Feedback

- 57.1% indicated the design may not meet the local need.
- However, 85.7% stated the proposal is much better than the existing site

This highlights a key theme:

Residents see the scheme as a major improvement, but not 100% ideal.

5.4 Future Use

- 85.7% likely or very likely to use the improved site

5.5 Feature Priorities

Highest priorities:

1. Swings
2. Multiplay unit
3. Accessible spinner

Lower priority:

- Sensory equipment
- Seating

5.6 Resident Priorities

- 57.1% prioritised more equipment overall
- 28.6% prioritised better quality equipment

5.7 Support Levels

- 85.7% strongly support the proposals

5.8 Qualitative Feedback

- Desire for greater play variety
- Requests to consider teenagers / older users
- Recognition that the site has capacity for more provision

6. Barnum Court – Key Findings

6.1 Local Context

- 50% of respondents live nearby
- 50% do not currently use the site

Indicates opportunity to increase usage

6.2 Target Users

Primary users:

- Children under 5
- Children aged 5–10

Confirms suitability as a local neighbourhood play space

6.3 Design Feedback

- Mixed responses on how well needs are met
- However:
 - 75% say design is much better than existing
 - 75% feel space is used effectively

6.4 Feature Priorities

Top priority:

- Multiplay unit

Lower priorities:

- Springer
- Sensory panels

6.5 Resident Priorities

- 50% prioritised better quality equipment

6.6 Support Levels

- 100% strongly support the proposals

6.7 Qualitative Feedback

- Request to address uneven surfacing / trip hazards

7. Key Themes Across Both Sites

Positive

- Strong overall support for investment
- Clear perception of improvement over existing provision
- High likelihood of increased usage

Areas for Consideration

- Alanbrooke Crescent:
 - Opportunity to increase **play value and variety**
 - Consider broader provision for older children
- Barnum Court:
 - Focus on quality and durability
 - Address existing surfacing issues

8. Conclusions

The consultation indicates that:

- Residents support both schemes in principle
- Both proposals are seen as significant improvements
- There is a clear desire to maximise play value, particularly at Alanbrooke Crescent

The feedback should not be interpreted as opposition but rather support with a request for refinement.

9. Next Steps

- Continue to promote and gather further consultation responses
- Engage with Wicksteed to explore:
 - Increased play provision (Alanbrooke)
 - Quality and layout refinements
- Present updated proposals to Committee

10. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. **Note** the early consultation findings
2. **Accept** that proposals are supported but would benefit from refinement
3. **Agree** to continue consultation prior to final design approval