



PLAY AREA CONSULTATION

BANKTON MAINS PLAY AREA

WEST LOTHIAN COMMUNITY CHOICES

SURVEY REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2024



INTRODUCTION

West Lothian Council has allocated funding to make improvements to the Play Area at the Bankton Mains District Park in 2025/26. The aim of the project is to bring the Play Area up to our Open Space standards, carry out necessary repairs and future proof this strategic space.

A Community Choices survey was issued, asking the public to vote for their preferred improvements and provide supplementary comments.

Feedback from local stakeholders will inform the improvements and help to shape a longer-term vision for the space.

Bankton Mains Play Area is within a designated District Park in the West Lothian Open Space Plan and is safeguarded for open space in the West Lothian Local Plan (2018). There is a Core Path running adjacent to the site.

The Park contains a mix of habitats, varied path routes, a range of public leisure facilities including the home grounds to Murieston United Community Football Club. The park is connected to car parks, cycle routes and bus stops. It is also linked to Bellsquarry Plantation and Williamston Primary School, resulting in a busy, central greenspace.

The Bankton Mains Play Area is a NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play), and it's located along the core path to the North East of Murieston. In close proximity to Livingston South Train Station and includes a Public Ball Court and Outdoor Gym.

Known park users include local residents, children and dog walkers, although visitors from elsewhere in also attend the park, for example when attending Football Matches.

SUMMARY

KEY SURVEY THEMES

The key themes that emerged through the survey is that:

- The public has a really positive perception of this play area but there is a lack of seating, picnic tables and covered seating.
- To retain the open natural feel and landscaping around the area and incorporate this into the design.
- There is a demand for the park to be more accessible and inclusive play friendly.
- Public concerns for the area are dogs off the lead, cyclists passing speed & teenagers gathering.

INFORMATION GATHERING

Feedback from local stakeholders was gathered via an online survey. The survey period ran from 3rd—29th July 2024.

Emails were sent to all known stakeholders, including council officers, local Community Council, local schools, relevant businesses & community groups and local Councillors. Posters were displayed in and around the Play Area. The survey was also advertised through the council's Media team. A total of 47 consultees gave their feedback altogether.

FEEDBACK

FROM WLC OFFICERS

Officers noted no issues with the proposed plans.

FROM SURVEY

Q1. Meeting the District Park NEAP criteria

The survey identified which NEAP criteria (as per the West Lothian Council Open Space Plan & Play Strategy) were still to be met on site. These actions will be prioritised to ensure West Lothian Council improvement projects help the Council meet their standards. The list and status of this is shown in the table adjacent. This table was included in the survey.

The public were asked to vote on which criteria mattered to them to most, and should be prioritised. The results are listed below with 1 being most voted for and 4 least voted for:

1. Improved Seating / Social Area
2. Accessible Surfacing / Inclusive Equipment
3. Improved and more Engaging Signage
4. Safe Cycle Parking

Play Area Requirement	Status	Action if required
Aimed at children of all ages 0-18	Met	N/A
Close to a well-used pedestrian route with an access path to the play area	Met	N/A
Fencing only where necessary—where play area is within 15m of a road or similar risk	Met	N/A
Min. 30m from the nearest dwelling	Met	N/A
Signage including guidelines for use and contact details of operator	Limited	Limited signage / insufficient signage information—improve if funding sufficient
Includes a range of park furniture to encourage social play, and allow families to spend multiple hours at the play area	Action required	Limited seating in need of refurbishment—create an improved seating / social area
A min. of 9 unique pieces of play equipment	Met	N/A
Approximately 1,000m2 in size	Met	N/A
Surfacing chosen to suit the site and locality, aiming for a min. of 3-5 pieces of formal play equipment to have accessible surfacing	Action required	No accessible surfacing within play area—upgrade surfacing under min. 3 pieces of equipment. Consider more inclusive play equipment if funding sufficient
Convenient and secure cycle parking	Action required	Install cycle parking bays
Accessible parking areas where possible and appropriate	Met	N/A
Well drained, reasonably flat, grass, loosefill or hard surface	Met	N/A
Recognisable boundary (it is clear where the play area ends)	Met	N/A

FEEDBACK

Q2. Play Area Assessment

2.1 Is there anything attractive or unique about the space which you like or think could be a feature in the new design?

The public have an overall positive impression of the space. They enjoy the greenspace, the trees and open feel of the park. A brighter design incorporating the local wildlife. Keeping the large climbing frame and slide was highlighted as a must for the new design.

2.2 What are the biggest issues with the Play Area?

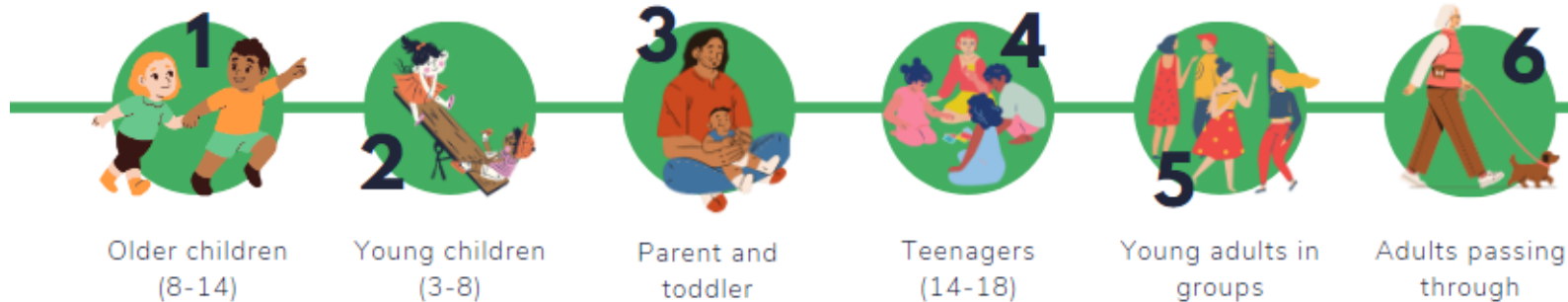
The most common response is that there is a lack of inclusive play and seating compared to other district parks. Old and dated equipment and a more accessible slide for younger children.

2.3 Current users

The public were asked which age groups currently use this Play Area the most. The results are shown below.

2.4 Is there anyone you think feels unwelcome or unable to use this Play Area? What could be done to improve this?

The public have noted that the user group they feel is most excluded from this space are people with disabilities. This is due to lack of inclusive, sensory equipment and suitable surfaces for children with Motability issues. Older girls are currently excluded highlighting a need for a safe hang out area.



Summary of Additional Comments and Suggestions

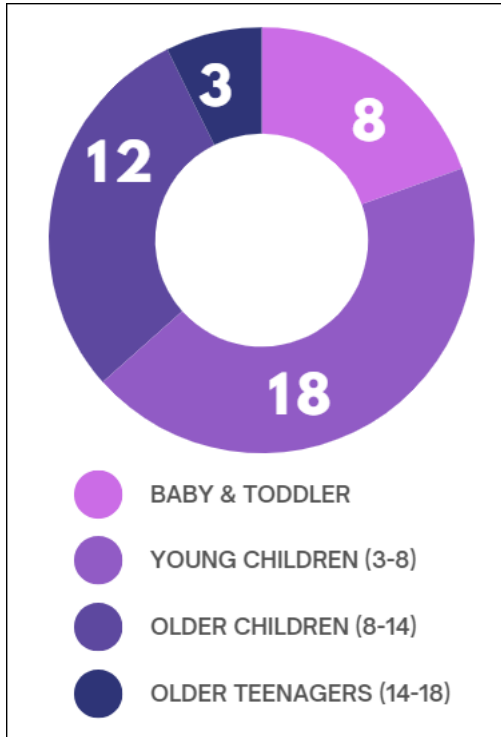
- Cut the wild grass areas to avoid wasp nests and Tick issues
- Fence around the play area
- Car Park to be resurfaced
- Toilet Facilities to be made available
- Not to have additional seating so youths are not attracted to hang around
- Sheltered seating area
- Provide additional bins

- Play activities available for older children and social space
- Disabled spaces need allocated in car park
- Cyclists to dismount when passing play area
- Graffiti Issues
- No clear visual line of sight available from the Play Area to the Outdoor Gym.

Please note: West Lothian Council will consider all additional suggestions, but may not be able to accommodate all, depending on a range of site and budgetary constraints.

Q3. Consultee statistics

3.1 Age groups of children involved in this survey

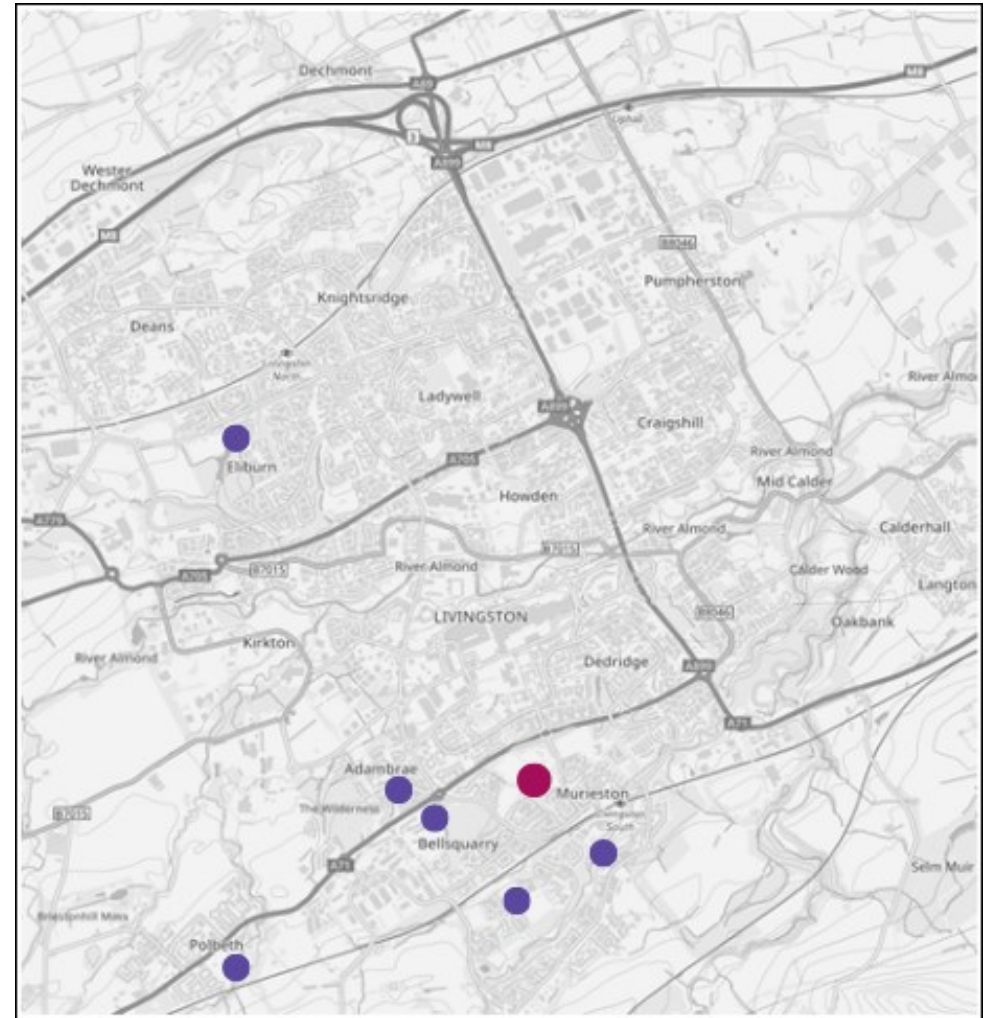


NEXT STEPS

This report will be posted on the parks webpage www.westlothian.gov.uk/parkinfo

Based on the feedback and recommendations in this report, designs will be drawn up and a play area constructed to represent these as best as possible. West Lothian Council aims to have to project completed by Spring 2026.

3.2 Play Areas regularly used by consultees at the moment



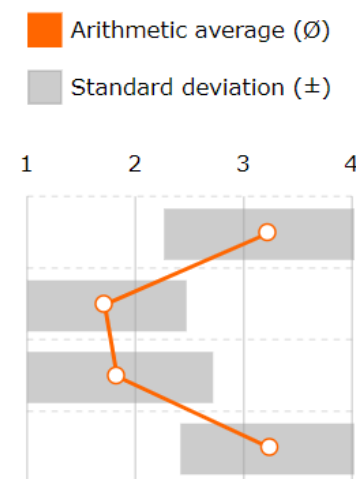
Appendix 1 – All survey answers

1. 1.1 Which of the actions outlined above is most important to you? Please number the options from 1 (most valuable) – 4 (least valuable).

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Number of participants: 46

	1.		2.		3.		4.		Ø	±
	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%		
Improved and more engaging signage	5x	10.87	2x	4.35	17x	36.96	22x	47.83	3.22	0.96
Improved seating / social area	19x	41.30	23x	50.00	2x	4.35	2x	4.35	1.72	0.75
Accessible surfacing / inclusive equipment	21x	45.65	13x	28.26	11x	23.91	1x	2.17	1.83	0.88
Safe cycle parking	1x	2.17	8x	17.39	16x	34.78	21x	45.65	3.24	0.82



2. 1.2 Feel free to provide any additional comments below.

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Number of participants: 21

- There needs to be a focus on better equipment for under 5s. Spacing on ladders needs to be thought of in terms of how young children can actually access equipment.
- Bins emptied regularly
Park cleaned
- A big slide that is easy to access! The cargo robes are not accessible to many children who still want to be able to use the slide
- Toilets would be useful
- This should be an area for people to be together. Far more seating is required. Secure cycle parking would be brilliant
- Some of the play activities are not accessible for everyone. I.e the chute is quite tall and requires climbing (no stairs)

Also cyclists use the path as a cycle path and often are very quick and expect pedestrians and children to give way. Signage should be clear of expectation
Cyclists should dismount near the park

- Access to toilets would be required if aiming to stay for multiple hours. This is the main problem with using the park as well as no access to a shop for beverages and snacks.

- Picnic tables, signs to show dogs are not allowed and dog fouling is illegal (too many incidents of owners allowing their dogs to foul in or around parks!!)
- We need a little smoking booth so the children do not inhale second hand smoke and become addicted to nicotine at the ages of 4-12
- A public toilet would be helpful.

A spinning seesaw, like the one in the park behind the Livi South train station would be a big hit too.

- Would be good to have more benches to sit at possibly picnic benches .
- we use this park often and love to go there as a family, we have a member in the family who is special needs, there is nothing in the park for her to enjoy so we have to travel out to eliburn park to use their accessible equipment, we would love for there to be at least an accessible swing in the park so our beloved family member can enjoy using the park as much as our other children enjoy it.
- Improved seating and social area would encourage undesirable gatherings

More bins needed

- In terms of including play equipment for children with special needs, it is paramount to create inclusive environments that cater to all children. By incorporating specialized play equipment, such as swings with back support, sensory play structures, and wheelchair-accessible features, kids with special needs can engage in play alongside their peers. This not only fosters social interaction and a sense of belonging but also promotes physical activity and sensory stimulation, which are vital for their overall well-being.
 - This park currently serves children well - there's not too much seating which means it doesn't attract teenage drinkers ! It would be fantastic if you could keep this in mind - don't change it to seating where people will drink drop glass etc
 - Picnic benches situated around the play park would encourage families to spend more time in the park and bring a picnic.
 - I think there should be bigger slides more swings and climbing area
 - More bins, they are always overflowing ,soft area behind the bouncy swan needed as children bang their head when bouncing in it .. The area that is the exercise area needs cleared as parents need to be able to see that front the play park if they have slightly older children .we can't see a thing from the park it's so not safe .
- A fence round the park is highly needed for safety for the children and stop the dogs wandering in too and doing their business in it .The park is not regularly maintained either for things being left in the park by older children /adults .
- Flat trampoline would be amazing for the children ,and we have the space for a zip wire too .This would so enhance the park experience for all children in the area off all ages and ASN sensory boards
- Car park is inaccessible for wheelchair use
 - Picnic benches and more seating are a must, along with more rubbish bins.
 - Would need quite a lot of improvement to make this somewhere you could spend a few hours but would absolutely love to see this!

3. DISTRICT PARK PLAY AREA SURVEY

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The following questions will help us understand how best to address the gaps in our standards, collect statistics on play area demographics and gather public opinions on how best to improve the play area.

The results of the public vote will be implemented as much as possible within remaining budgets.

2. EXISTING PLAY AREA ASSESSMENT

2.1 Is there anything attractive or unique about the space which you like or think could be a feature in the new design?

Number of participants: 22

- More could be made of the adjoining spaces
- The giant tube slide is great and the park makes for great long walks
- The large slide is always popular
- No
- The grass area behind could be put to better use, basket ball nests or goals etc
- It's a good space, I like how it's got something for all ages. Some monkey bars would be good and maybe some more sort of gymnastics style equipment
- The large spider climbing frame is fun and attractive for all ages and I would like to see this kept in the new design.
- It's very easily accessible via the car park. It could be bit brighter or incorporate a design with the wildlife that lives nearby
- Swings for younger and older children, a good slide, seesaw, climbing frame/wall, tunnels and bridges, roundabout. A scooter and bike track would be amazing!!
- It's a massive piece of land you could easily extend the park
- The kids
- My kids love the high climbing frame and slides.
- Please provide sand pit area for children to play
- I think re painting the area would be good and possibly adding some sensory toys in the area ,
- Kids love the big climbing frame and slide!
- Keep as much REAL grass and trees as possible please
Lighting to prevent groups loitering at night
- Not enough being done for kids with special needs.
- The amount of green space and woodlands around the play park make it a lovely setting to spend time in, keeping the open feel of the park with no fencing around would maintain that
- Me

- Q R codes for interaction play //stories
- More equipment such as a zip line and sunken trampolines would be great. More baby/toddler friendly equipment too. The 'swan' rocker seat is a hazard due to children banging their face on the back of the swan's head due to rocking motion of the swan.
- Like that it's split into sections and something for babies/toddlers mid range kids a d then a bit older so like that concept but equipment needs updating
The idea of the little house/den with the slide and the climbing stones is great. A more modern version of that would be fab.

4. 2.2 What are the biggest issues with the Play Area?

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Number of participants: 36

- The play area is directly adjacent to a busy footpath, as such there will be issue with dog off leads and bicycles speeding past.
- Needs more seating and picnic area, possibly even a covered seating area for when weather poor. More activities for older children. Like the Whitrly gig at eilburn park?
Water play area
- Some of the equipment looks dated
- Needs more accessible & inviting play equipment for all ages
- Not much for 3 to 5 to do. Bored easily. Dogs go onto the space as fencing removed which means other children then go away if scared of dogs. Also a very small space overall compared to facilities given over to football etc.
- Bins left to overflow and rubbish everywhere!
Park ruined by older children who congregate there at night time
No cafe/ice cream vans etc around
- Teenagers grafting
- Not many issues really, could do with some more seats for adults to sit on maybe but overall it's quite good!
- No toilets
Cover during rain/sun
- Seating/picnic benches not really available
- It's not really attractive to teenagers - more for younger children
- There is a limited number of play activities available for older children and social space. It would be nice to see this added to and improved in the new design.
- It's a bit dated and doesn't have kit for younger children to climb.

Also cyclists are a big issue round the park as they cycle down at a high speed which could be a danger for children running about. There should be clear signage showing cyclists should dismount as they are more likely to expect pedestrians to give way

- Needs power washed to refresh.
- The surface.
- It could be better contained as it's very open especially for younger children who could be at risk of running off. Old equipment.
- Small yet got lots of land available
- To many Karen's

- Teens hanging out occasionally in the shelter above the slide, but generally they are pretty well behaved to. Perhaps if there was another small shelter built just outside the park, they would choose to sit in that instead.
- Not accessible, limited play for small toddlers
- Old and in need of refurbishing
- Lack of seats.
- More swings required. A zip wire would be good.

Dogs easily access it either due to being off the lead or owners take them in. A fence would be good.

Graffiti which includes swear words.

- Graffiti
- non accessible equipment
- Not so much an issue, but it would be great if the play park was fenced off to keep toddlers/young kids from being able to wander out of the area and more younger/toddler aged play equipment.
- Litter and older kids hanging around at night
- It's disheartening to see the lack of adequate play equipment for kids with special needs in parks due to government shortcomings. By not prioritizing inclusivity in recreational spaces, governments are inadvertently excluding a significant portion of the population from enjoying these public facilities. This neglect not only hinders the physical and social development of children with special needs but also perpetuates societal barriers that prevent them from fully participating in community activities. It's crucial for governments to recognize the importance of inclusivity and take proactive steps to ensure that all children have equal access to play equipment that meets their unique needs.
- The really large slide needs to be more accessible to kids who cannot climb the web
- The slide is not accessible to younger children and encourages older children to hang out at the top of it, which could be intimidating for younger children. An area that was shaded or had seating with a bit of protection from the weather would encourage parents to spend more time at the park, as standing around in the cold prevents you spending too long there at times
- children
- No fence , we need more bins definately , needs cleaned and maintained regularly .risk assessment regularly is needed and all the above
- Access to car park, inhibiting play park use.

Dangerous with limited lighting.

Pot holes will cause injury not to mention damage to vehicles

- The car park is very bumpy and has lots of holes in it.
- Due to the park being open, there is a lot of dog fouling in the bark. The children all love the 'big' slide but it is a worry for parents due to being open at the top and children slipping out the cage.

The equipment is dirty and not cleaned regularly. There is an issue with bird droppings on the swings and basket swing. If children are using the exercise area, they cannot be observed from the park due to the overgrown bushes. As a childminder with mixed ages, this is a worry.

The footpath running along the wide of the park is horrific for children due to being bumpy. The children fall all the time on it especially toddlers stepping from the park onto the path. It rips their knees to shreds,

The wild grass area behind the park has had a wasp nest in it the past 3 years. It is also a worry for children running off and getting tics.

The equipment could do with being modernised and be more useful and meaningful e.g the spinny thing with the cups isn't really practical for any age. The little bridge is a pretty pointless piece of equipment.

Would love to see a couple of trampolines. The kids absolutely love these! (There's one in eliburn park)

Would benefit from a couple more swings for mixed ages.

Would also love to see soft foam ground suitable for babies and toddlers to walk easily on.

Could get a few more pieces of equipment in the space.

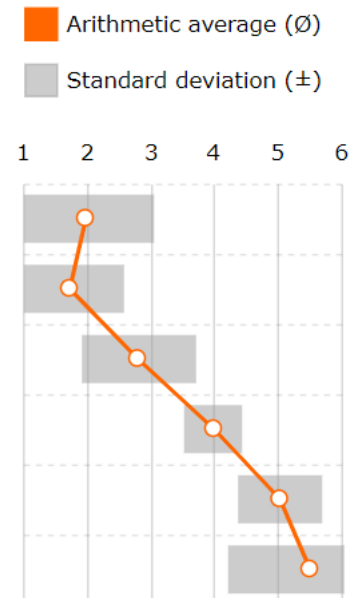
The other piece of equipment that takes up so much space but doesn't seem to be used is that big circular wheel that's in the older children section.

5. 2.3 Please number the current Play Area user groups from 1 (most common user group) - 6 (least common user group).

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Number of participants: 45

	1.		2.		3.		4.		5.		6.		Ø	±
	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%		
Parent and toddler	18x	40.00	16x	35.56	9x	20.00	-	-	1x	2.22	1x	2.22	1.96	1.09
Young children (3-8)	19x	42.22	22x	48.89	2x	4.44	1x	2.22	1x	2.22	-	-	1.73	0.84
Older children (8-14)	5x	11.11	5x	11.11	31x	68.89	3x	6.67	-	-	1x	2.22	2.80	0.89
Older Teenagers (14-18)	-	-	1x	2.22	2x	4.44	39x	86.67	3x	6.67	-	-	3.98	0.45
Young adults in groups	-	-	1x	2.22	1x	2.22	-	-	37x	82.22	6x	13.33	5.02	0.66
Adults passing through only	3x	6.67	-	-	-	-	2x	4.44	3x	6.67	37x	82.22	5.51	1.31



6. 2.4 Is there anyone you think feels unwelcome or unable to use this Play Area? What could be done to improve this?

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Number of participants: 22

- The workout area is used by the kids and is an accident waiting to happen!
- Nothing inclusive and nowhere for older girls to hang out
- Often broken glass in surrounding area. Play area is not enclosed and path is regularly used by dog walkers.
- Children and adults who dislike dogs as it's open and dogs are regularly in the space. I have a dog but feel they shouldn't be in a play area.
- Not disabled friendly equipment
- Disabled children or children with Mobility issues have nothing much to do there
- I have a friend who's child has cancer and is getting chemo and they can't come and play because of their weakened immune system and because bark is not good for him so maybe something that is compatible for kids going through chemo.
- Those with accessibility needs would struggle to use this park
- I think it would be lovely for older people to be able to sit and watch and to be able to chat. Same for mums who are on their own all day or teens at night
- The playpark isn't well suited to those with mobility difficulties due to the bark surface and non-accessible play activities. It would be nice to see the park be made more inclusive with things such as wheelchair accessible swings (we-go-swings) or similar.
- I think there is some small accessibility for the park itself eg the chute needs to be climbed up with the rope which may not be inclusive.
- People with disabilities
Children who don't want to climb
- Don't think so
- Smokers as there is no smoking area
- People with disabilities / mobility issues
- I think more needs to be provided for older children.
- children who are fully dependent on another person, i think if there was equipment that could be used with the wheelchair was available the park would be more welcoming
- Consider the needs and also the challenges faced by kids with mobility restraints - they also deserve enrichment and acknowledgement.
- Just more accessible things for wheelchair or disabled users - I honestly think you have this pretty well covered
- It is not accessible for all due to the surface. There are large pieces of play equipment that are not accessible also and too hard for some children to use
- Not good at all for wheelchair users of all ages .
- Disability access

Car park improvements

7. 3. CONSULTEE STATISTICS

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3.1 What age group are you, or your children if filling out on their behalf?

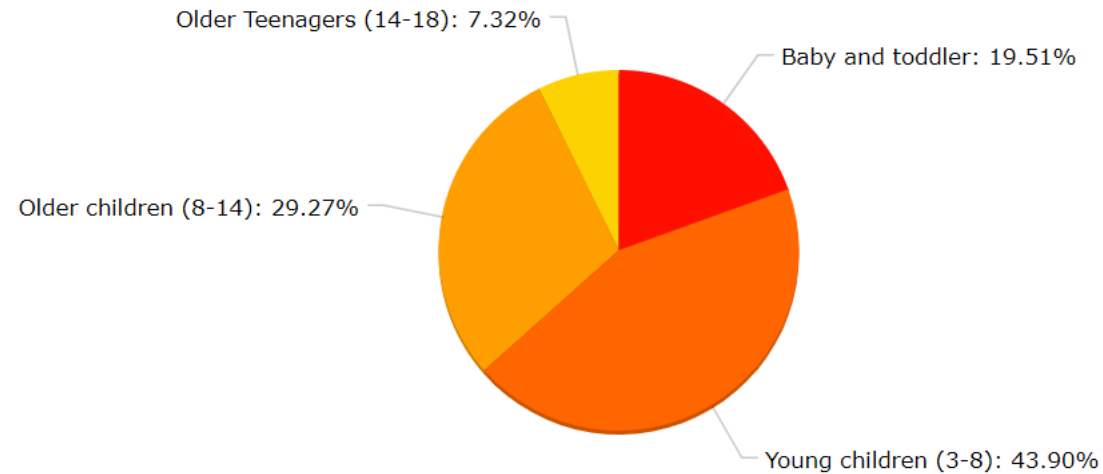
Number of participants: 41

8 (19.5%): Baby and toddler

18 (43.9%): Young children (3-8)

12 (29.3%): Older children (8-14)

3 (7.3%): Older Teenagers (14-18)



8. 3.2 Which play area and leisure facilities in your neighbourhood do you or children use at the moment? Why?

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Number of participants: 32

- Dedridge bankton
- Bankton Mains most often
- Play Area at Eliburn Reservoir and Play Area at Bankton Mains are the most frequently used by us.
- My grandchild has a better play space in Polbeth. I stopped taking her to local ones in this area as she doesn't get much fun from them. Also she can't climb some of the equipment as the spacing is too wide for her age.
- Bankton mains and Eilburn
- Bankton mains because it's close by, bellsquarry park has some different equipment so go there for a bit of a change
- Bellsquarry park
- Adambrae park

- Parks at Murieston village hall and Murieston Valley do to location
West Calder school swimming pool for lessons
- The football pitches. They also use the park behind the co-op and occasionally Bankton mains park
- Bankton Mains park due to the close proximity [REDACTED] My daughter enjoys the park be it with us, her parents, or with her friends.
- Bankton park as I live beside it
Murieston trail park
Park at the cricket club
- We travel to Bankton Mains or Bellsquarry park from polbeth as they are generally kept tidier and safer than closest park (polbeth).
- Crathes Gardens - closest to home, although could do with some updated equipment.
Then Bellsquarry park and then the Bankton Mains as we feel the Bellsquarry park is a better park and play area.
- Cricket club park, Bellsquarry park, Robin's lane park, crathes gardens park, Bankton mains park. Murieston trail. Bellsquarry woods. 5 sisters leaping lemurs softplay, aerial adventures softplay, Ratho EIC softplay scrambles. No xcite leisure facilities locally at all now which is really disappointing. We have to use bannantynes for swimming.
- Birrell gardens play park as it's very smoker and child friendly
- Bankton mains park.
The park by Livi South train station

Both close to walk to these parks.

Bathgate and Deans swimming pool,s, shame we don't have bubbles anymore.

- Murieston play park, although it needs improvement too as per above criteria
- Murieston park behind Livi south station very regularly as it's a short walk. Kids favourite park is bankton. They also love Bellsquarry as a change. None of them have enough seating for adults, especially grandparents who need to sit down.
- Behind Livingston South station.
It us usually quite quiet & not too many older children as my 6 year old granddaughter feels intimidated if there is a large group.
- Love bankton park , just needs more in it brighter more sensory , in ground trampoline , music toys , climbing for smaller kids
- We use this park, bellsquarry and Eliburn a lot!!
- We used to use Bubbled swimming pool but now looking to find a new pool to go to.

Craigswood running track for Lothian running club juniors.

Due to graffiti and issues with dogs we have stopped going to Bankton play park.

- eliburn park, due to there being a mix of equipment for able and unable children
- Bankton mains park and Murieston park because my children love them.

- Not many - as already mentioned there is not enough for kids with special needs.
- This exact play area - the choice is fab
- My son is 13 and uses the grass facilities around the play area a lot to play football. We are due a baby next month and look forward to using the park area early next year.
- Lanthorn park , bellsquarry park
- Corrie park as local
- This one, Bellsquarry park as its [REDACTED] Adambrae park as its [REDACTED]
- As a childminder, I am generally at Bankton Mains Playpark every day, occasionally Bellsquarry Playpark. We use the small astro pitch too and along with the playing fields either side of Bankton Mains. The playpark behind Murieston Community Hall isn't suitable for toddlers and the grass/field is full of dogs dirt. We love woodland walks but these can be tricky with a double buggy.

Our childminding group meets up Tues/Thur at Scout Hall and there is also Music Makers (Mon) and Toddlers (Fri). We meet there due to the Lanthorn being closed.

- Almond Valley - amazing variety of things to do
- Eliburn Park- good variety of equipment, social area, good for multiple ages
- Ratho soft play - livingston and thr local area doesn't have many nice soft plays
- 5 sisters soft play