



Summary of responses to the 2015 Troopers Hill Field Play Questionnaire

Introduction

The consultation was run through distribution of a questionnaire. Summerhill Infants School and Air Balloon Hill Primary School sent children home with a combined total of 994 questionnaires in their backpacks for parents to sign and return. Volunteers delivered 500 questionnaires to homes immediately surrounding Troopers Hill Field and Troopers Hill. The questionnaire was also made available online and the link sent to the Friends of Troopers Hill mailing list and published on Twitter and Facebook.

Period of consultation

The online consultation opened on Wednesday 13th May and closed on Monday 1st June.

Questionnaires were delivered to schools on Thursday 14th May and parents were given until Friday 22nd May, the end of term, to return questionnaires but a small number were returned and logged in the first week of the following term.

Home delivered questionnaires were given a date of Monday 1st June by which to return questionnaires. All received after that date until Thursday 18th June were recorded.

Number of responses

A total of 481 responses were received. Paper questionnaires were copy-typed by volunteers into the online system so the results could be seen as a single report.

135 questionnaires came from the schools, a 13% response, 110 from home deliveries, a 22% response and 236 were online responses. This is a very high response to a survey.

These percentages do not take into account that people who live near Troopers Hill Field with children at the two schools will have received the questionnaire more than once. A number cannot be put on how often this happened but it means that in terms of households surveyed the percentage of responses is even higher.

A report of the results is shown in appendix A. This gives the number of responses as 494. 13 of the responses have been excluded because:

- 7 responses were test responses which failed to be removed, due to a software problem, at the start of the survey and cannot be removed from the report. 5 of those responses were in favour of a new play area and 2 were against.

- 6 responses were duplicates, 5 in favour of a new play area and one against. We believe these were caused by system problems because the same address details were recorded against each duplicate.

Responses to tick box questions

Just over 95% of replies were in favour of a new play area with just under 5% against.

Over 84% of respondents said children under 5 needed play equipment with a slightly higher percentage, nearly 91% saying children aged 5-11 needed play equipment.

Nearly 82 % of replies were in favour of a play area for children under 5 being fenced, this fell to just under 50% for 5-11 years old.

Over 67% of respondents felt that as much green spaces as possible should be left in Troopers Hill Field but over 87% of respondents said that having a path that led fairly directly to the play area rather than around the edge of the Field would not prevent them giving their support for a new play area.

Written responses

171 respondents said they wished to help with the project and gave contact details.

People were asked if they had any other comments. 282 people took the time to add more information which covered the following themes:

Theme Description	Number of responses in that theme
1. Supporting comments in favour of a play area	161
2. Comments against a play area	12
3. Distance to the nearest park often about how a new play area would reduce car journeys or just be more convenient	12
4. Location - covering other sites for the play area or pointing out a conflict with goalposts	5
5. Support for fencing	42
6. Comments against fencing	4

7. The new play area would encourage people to visit more often and/or stay longer.	7
8. The path to the play area should not go through the middle of the Field	10
9. Comments about the path covering a range of issues including location, no path at all, "not tarmac", wheelchair accessible	17
10. Ideas for design or the equipping of the play area	45
11. Other ideas for the Field not directly related to the play area	21
12. Football - mainly express great support for the retention of the existing goalposts*	16
13. Dog issues - out of control dogs, fouling etc.	5
14. Keeping the existing slide	1
15. Other areas need play equipment too	1

* Neither Friends of Troopers Hill nor the parents leading this project have any intention of asking for the removal the goalposts from Troopers Hill Field

Conclusion including next steps

The results of this survey give Friends of Troopers Hill and the parents leading this project a clear mandate to go ahead with a design consultation aimed at encouraging local people to say what should be included in a play area for children under 5 and 5-11 year olds. This design consultation will take place on the afternoon of Sunday 5th July from 2pm-4pm in Troopers Hill Field.

The information gathered will be used to create a design brief so quotations can be requested from play equipment companies approved by Bristol City Council. Letters of support will be requested from local councillors, police and our local MP. Other necessary documents will be gathered and a tree inspection carried of the trees adjacent to the proposed space for the play area so ensure they are safe. This information will then be used to apply for grants to fund the installation of a new play area on Troopers Hill Field. £15,000 has already been set aside by the St George Neighbourhood Partnership for use towards this project.

Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks to:

- Bristol City Council for printing the questionnaires and freepost envelopes
- Summerhill Infants School and Air Balloon Hill Primary School for sending questionnaires home with children in their backpacks and receiving and holding the responses for us.
- John Knowlson, Bristol City Council's children's play and youth officer for advice and guidance about play area design and contacts
- HAGS-SMP for providing a free design showing what could be included in a small play area.

Project Team

Local parents: Chris and Lisa Deane, Richard and Bethany Evans, Millie Colwey

Representatives of Friends of Troopers Hill: Susan and Rob Acton-Campbell

Appendices

Appendix A

Summary of questionnaire results

Appendix B

Answers to questions raised in responses to the survey

Appendix C

Samples of comments included in responses.

Appendix A

Summary of questionnaire results

494 responses

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Summary

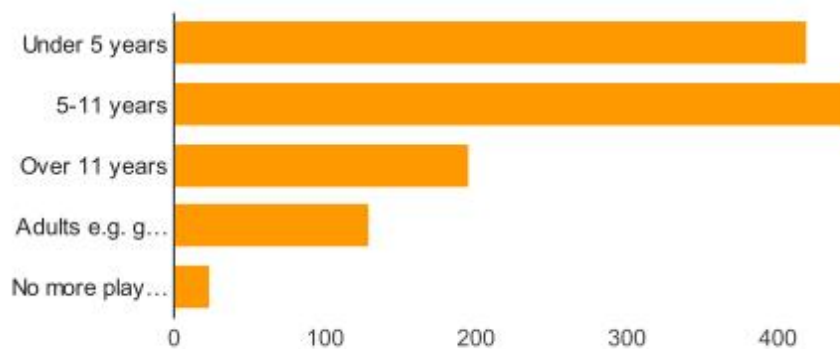
1. Is more play equipment needed in Troopers Hill Field?



Yes **470** 95.1%

No **24** 4.9%

2. What age needs more play equipment?



Under 5 years **419** 84.8%

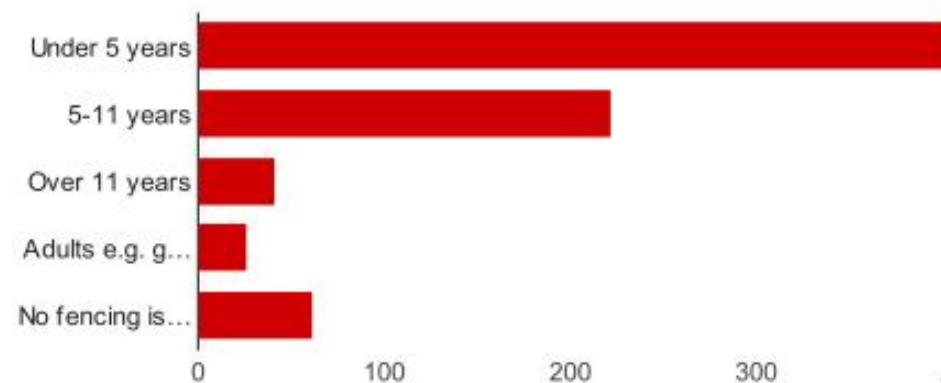
5-11 years **449** 90.9%

Over 11 years **195** 39.5%

Adults e.g. gym equipment **129** 26.1%

No more play equipment is needed **24** 4.9%

3. Should any part of the play area be fenced off?



Adults e.g. gym equipment **27** 5.5%
 No fencing is needed **62** 12.6%

4. Previous surveys have had the response that as much open green space as possible should be left in Troopers Hill Field. Do you agree?



Yes **335** 67.8%
 No **161** 32.6%

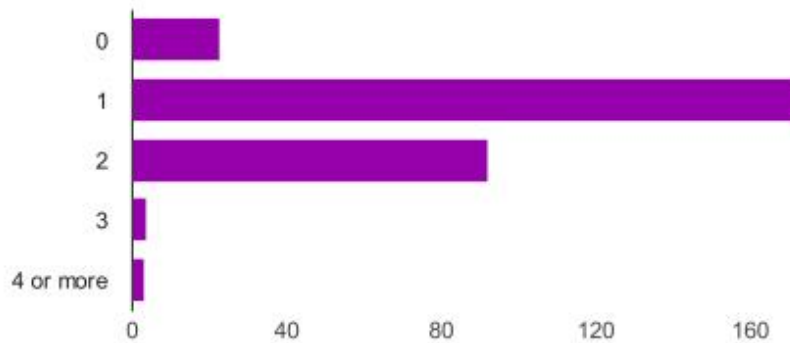
5. A path would need to be built from the Summerhill Terrace entrance to the new play area because the Field becomes so boggy in winter. People tend to walk in a direct line to their target so this path will not be able to go along the edge of the Field but have to take a fairly direct route. Would this prevent you giving your support to the project?



Yes **60** 12.3%
 No **428** 87.5%

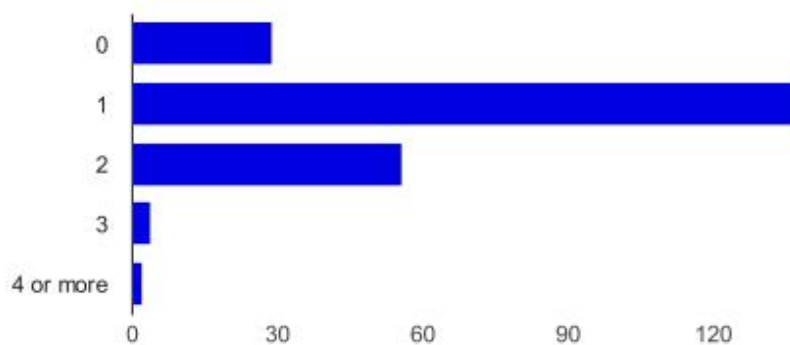
Your Household

Aged 0-5 [A. How many people in your household are:]



0	23	7.8%
1	173	58.6%
2	92	31.2%
3	4	1.4%
4 or more	3	1%

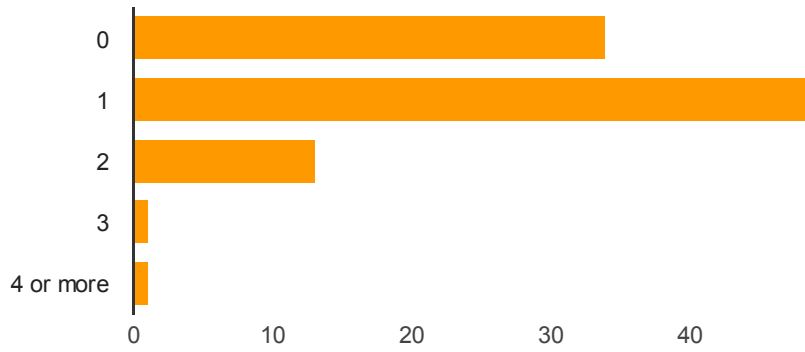
Aged 6-11 [A. How many people in your household are:]



0	29	12.7%
1	138	60.3%
2	56	24.5%
3	4	1.7%

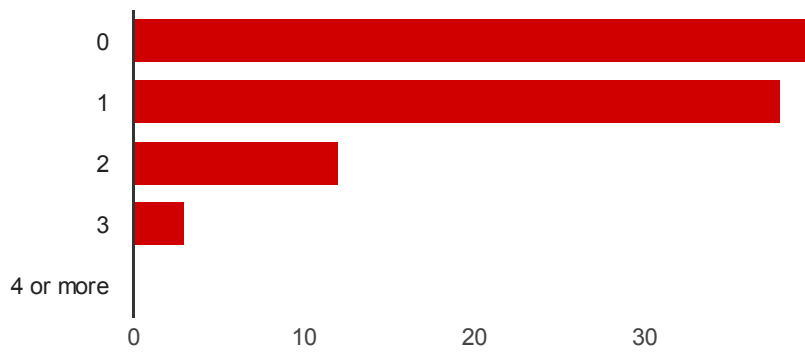
4 or more **2** 0.9%

Aged 12-17 [A. How many people in your household are:]



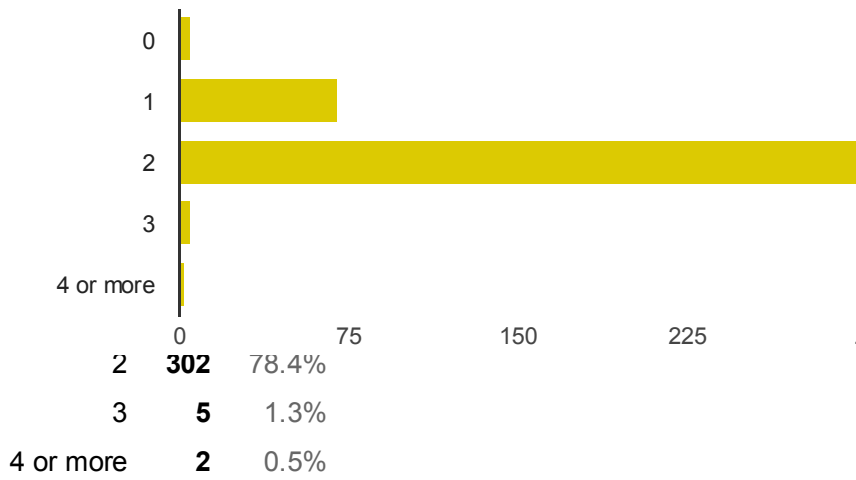
0	34	34.7%
1	49	50%
2	13	13.3%
3	1	1%
4 or more	1	1%

Aged 18-25 [A. How many people in your household are:]

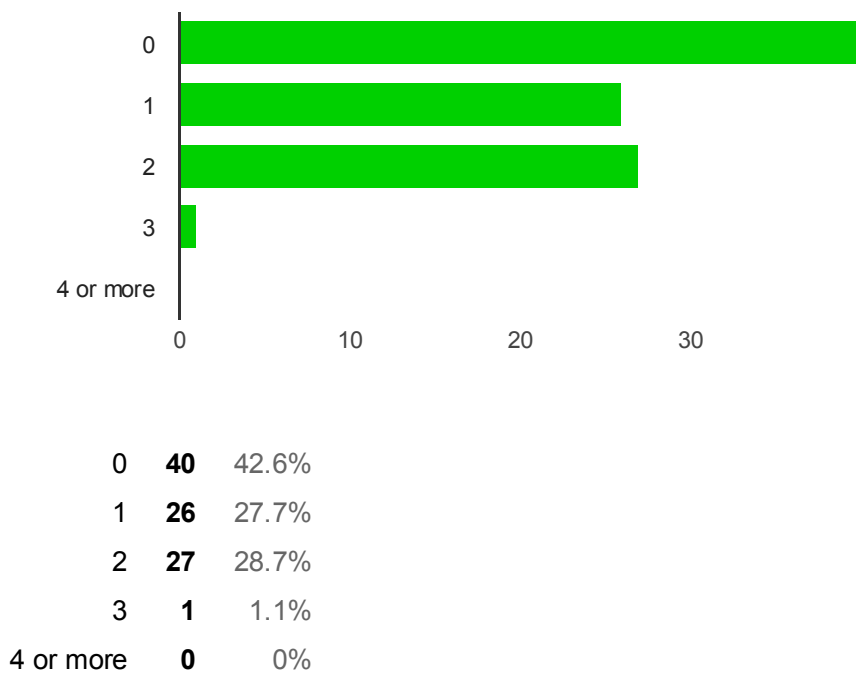


0	40	43%
1	38	40.9%
2	12	12.9%
3	3	3.2%
4 or more	0	0%

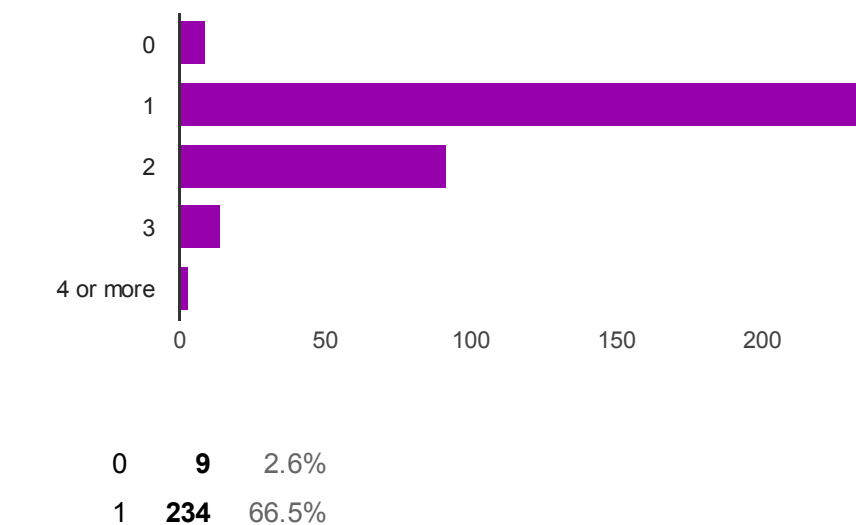
Aged 26-60 [A. How many people in your household are:]



Aged over 60 [A. How many people in your household are:]

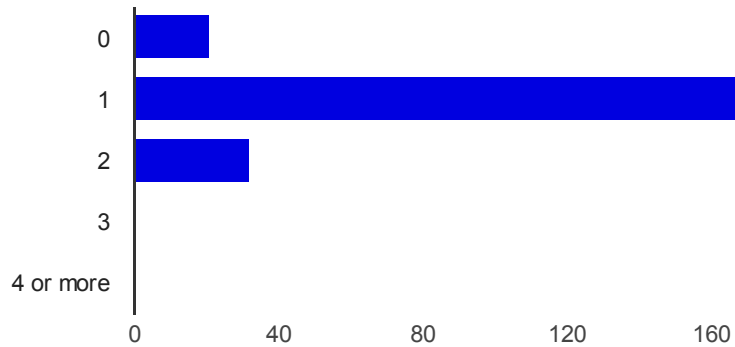


Employed full-time [A. How many people in your household are:]



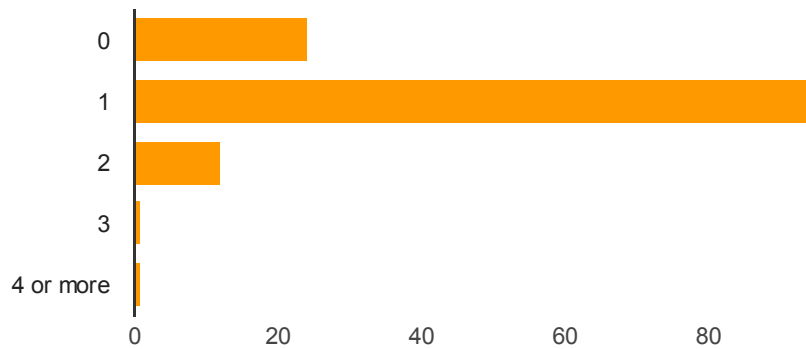
2	92	26.1%
3	14	4%
4 or more	3	0.9%

Employed part-time [A. How many people in your household are:]



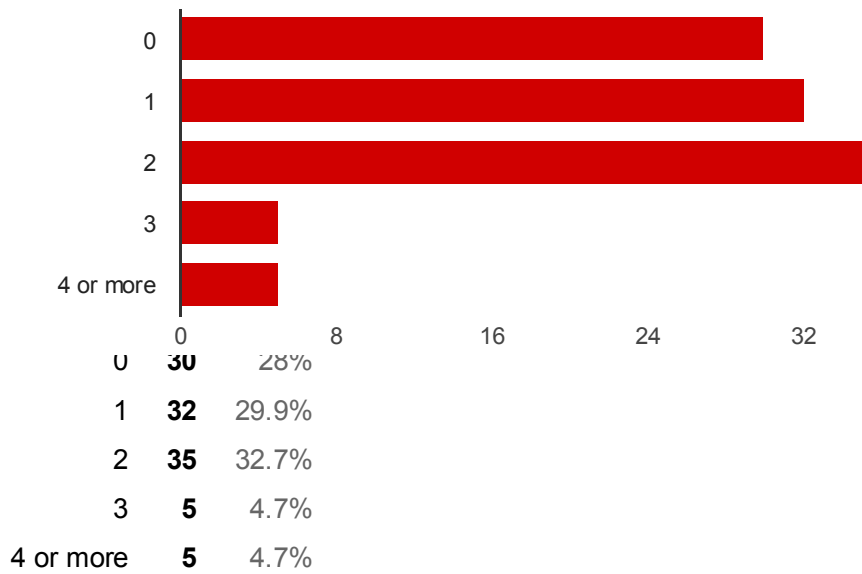
0	21	8.7%
1	189	78.1%
2	32	13.2%
3	0	0%
4 or more	0	0%

Looking after home/family [A. How many people in your household are:]

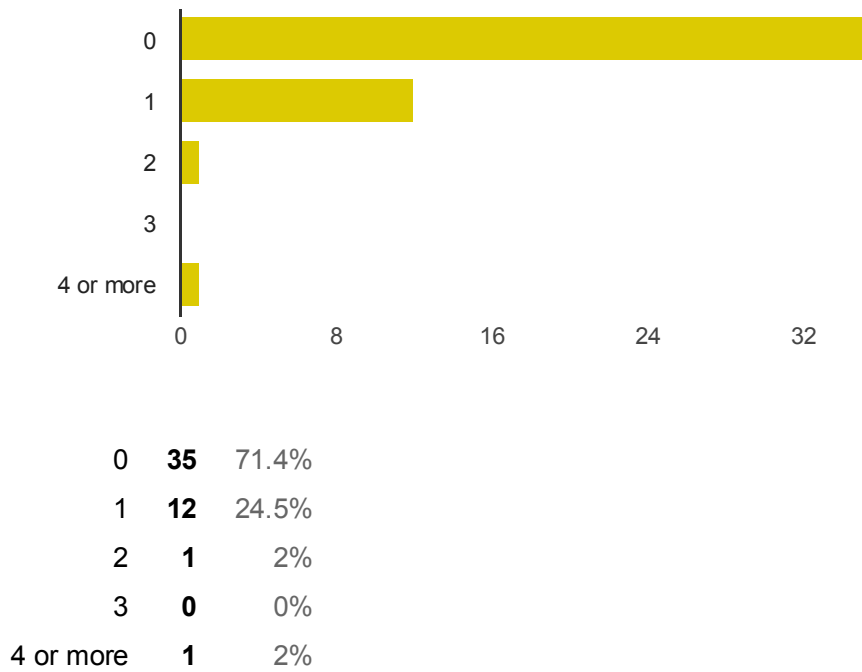


0	24	18%
1	95	71.4%
2	12	9%
3	1	0.8%
4 or more	1	0.8%

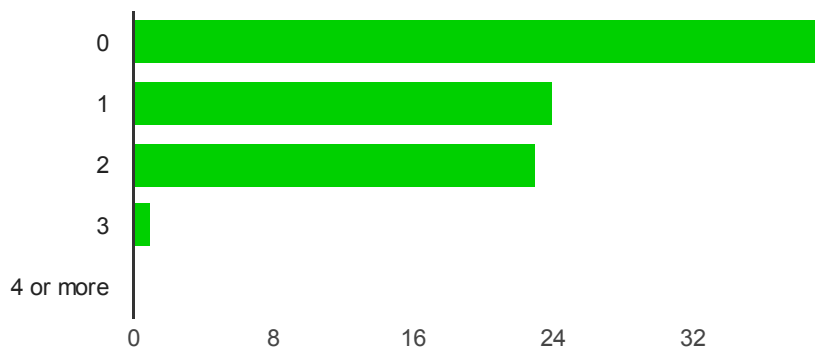
Student/pupil/training [A. How many people in your household are:]



Unemployed [A. How many people in your household are:]

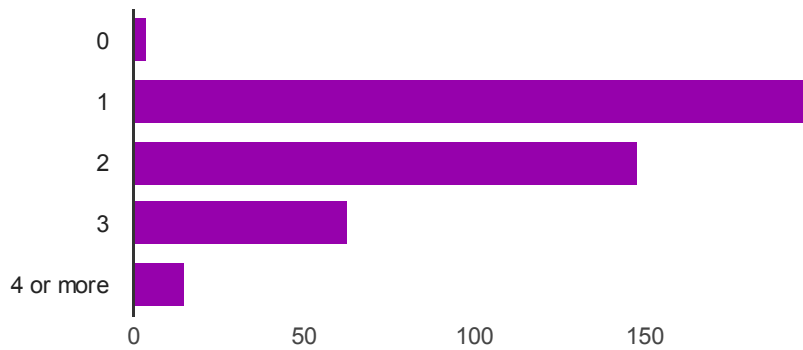


Retired [A. How many people in your household are:]



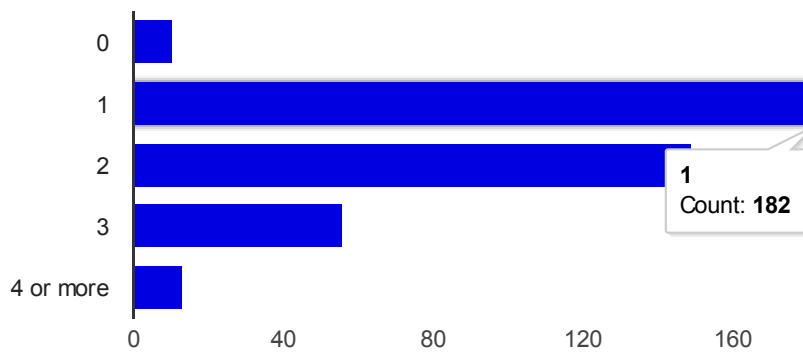
0	39	44.8%
1	24	27.6%
2	23	26.4%
3	1	1.1%
4 or more	0	0%

Female [A. How many people in your household are:]



0	4	0.9%
1	200	46.5%
2	148	34.4%
3	63	14.7%
4 or more	15	3.5%

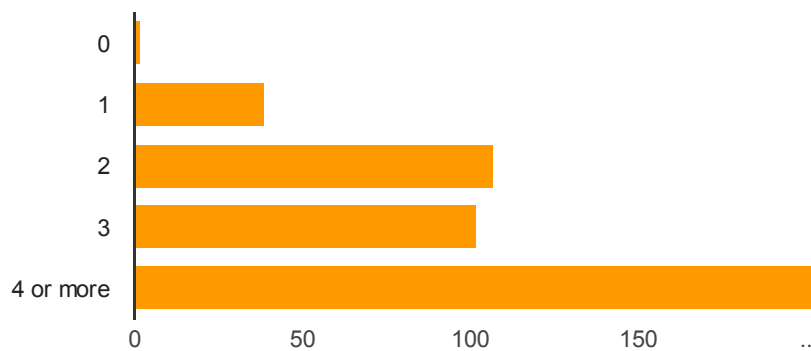
Male [A. How many people in your household are:]



0	10	2.4%
1	182	44.4%
2	149	36.3%
3	56	13.7%
4 or more	13	3.2%

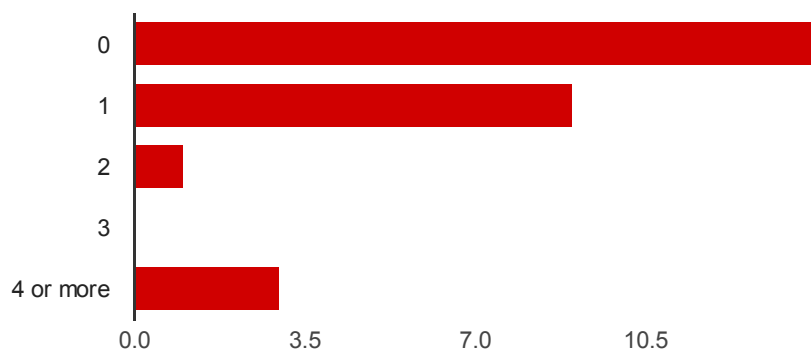
White or White British [B. How many in your household are of the following

ethnic origins?



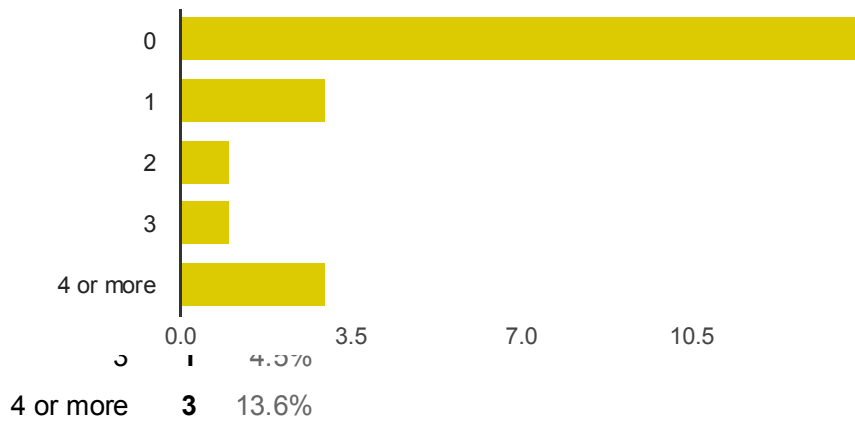
0	2	0.4%
1	39	8.6%
2	107	23.6%
3	102	22.5%
4 or more	203	44.8%

Black or Black British [B. How many in your household are of the following ethnic origins?]

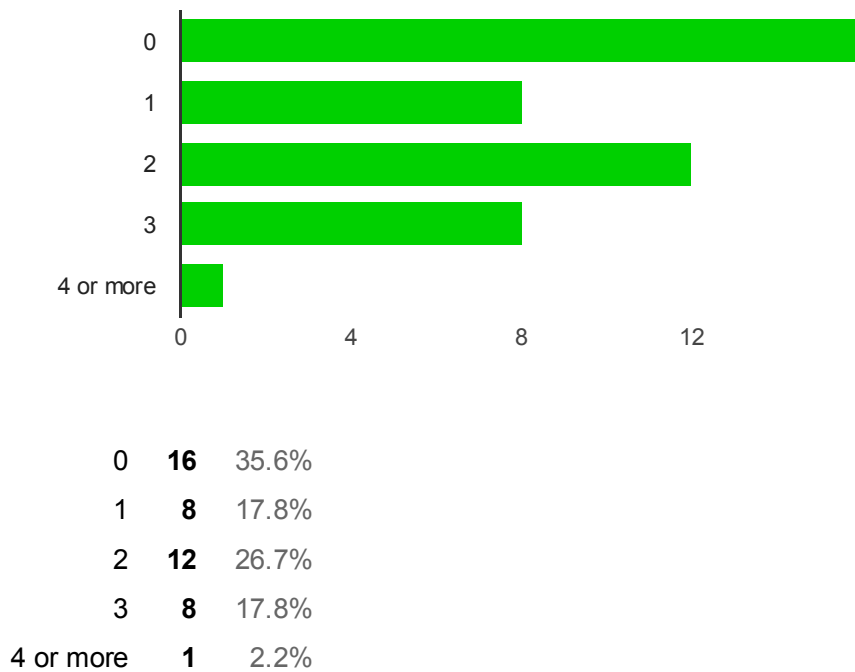


0	14	51.9%
1	9	33.3%
2	1	3.7%
3	0	0%
4 or more	3	11.1%

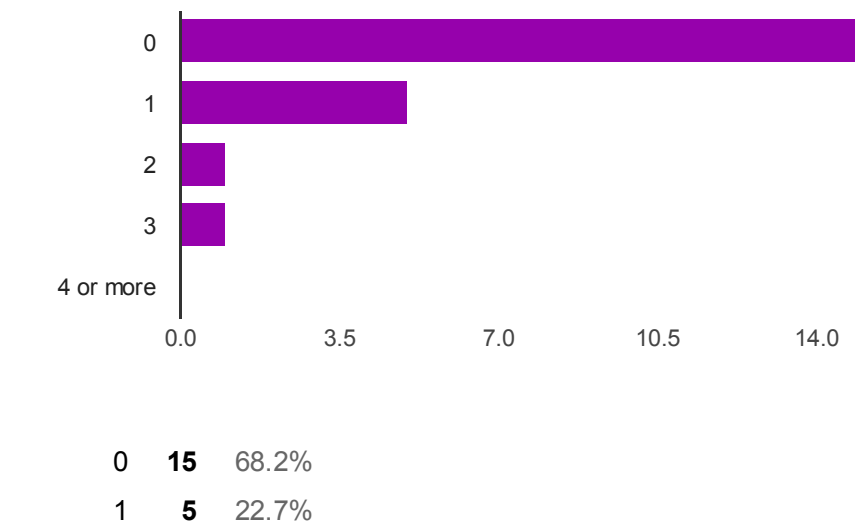
Asian or Asian British [B. How many in your household are of the following ethnic origins?]



Mixed [B. How many in your household are of the following ethnic origins?]

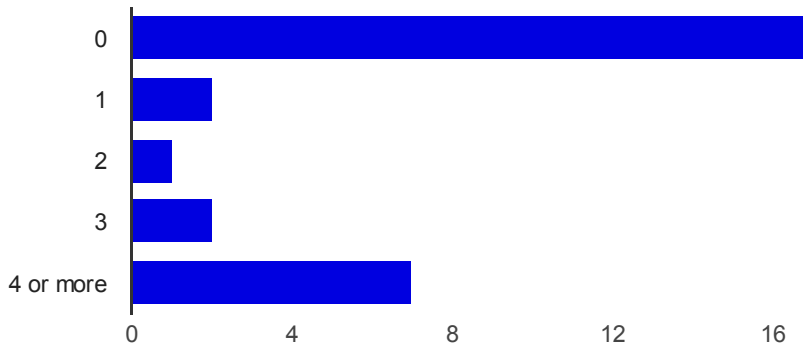


Chinese or other minority ethnic group [B. How many in your household are of the following ethnic origins?]



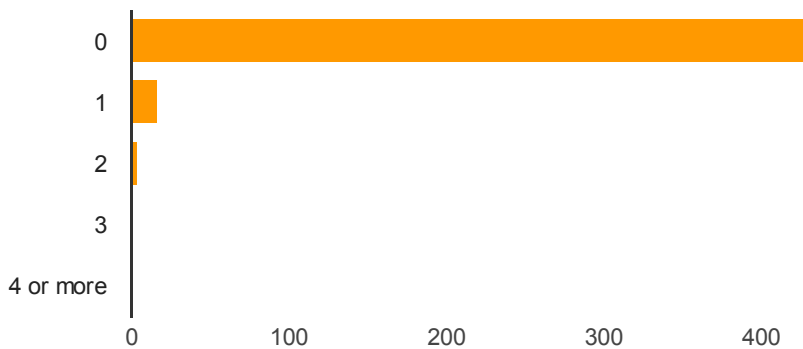
2	1	4.5%
3	1	4.5%
4 or more	0	0%

Prefer not to say [B. How many in your household are of the following ethnic origins?]



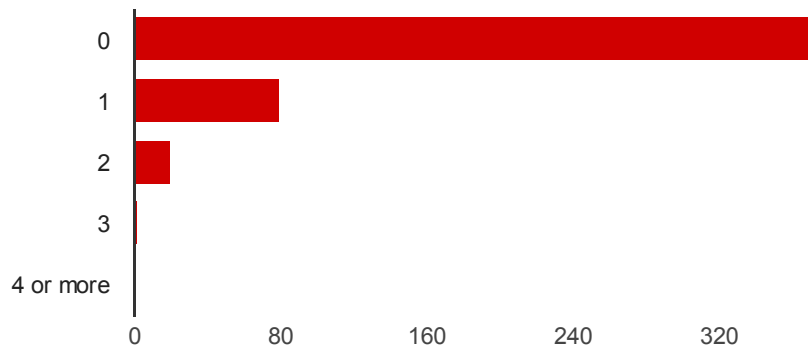
0	17	58.6%
1	2	6.9%
2	1	3.4%
3	2	6.9%
4 or more	7	24.1%

Unnamed Row 1 [C. How many in your household would consider themselves disabled?]



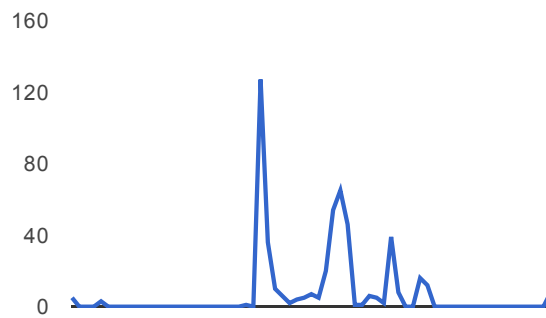
0	433	95.6%
1	16	3.5%
2	4	0.9%
3	0	0%
4 or more	0	0%

Unnamed Row 1 [D. How many dogs are in your household?]



0	373	78.9%
1	79	16.7%
2	20	4.2%
3	1	0.2%
4 or more	0	0%

Number of daily responses



Appendix B

Answers to questions raised in responses to the survey

1. Why can't the path to the new play area go around the edge of the field?

In our design brief we will be clear that the entrances to the play area must be arranged in such a way that a fairly direct path from the Summerhill Terrace entrance will take up as little of the Field as possible but it has been proven that if a path does not go in the direction of people want they will walk away from the provided path wearing their own path. This would result in a worn muddy path being created across the Field that no-one would want.

2. Have you considered having some sort of sand or water play on the design?

We have been advised by Bristol City Council's Children's Play and Youth Officer that there would not be support for sand play. The issue is keeping the sand clean and clear of harmful objects.

Current there is no source of water easily accessible on the site and putting in pipework to supply water would initially be expensive and then there would be maintenance issues.

3. Can you try and find play equipment that doesn't already exist on numerous other playgrounds around Bristol?

Come to our design session and have a look at the catalogues we will have there and/or offer your ideas - we are not experts on what is possible or has already been done.

4. Maybe a seating and table area near to the play area would be handy for families too?

We have been advised that picnic tables lead to problems both with litter and attracting anti-social behaviour. We have experience of the cost of seating and the value of the grants available to us is limited. So rather than reduce the amount of play equipment to provide seating one current idea is to have the existing poplar trunk carved into a seat or seats. We are also approached once or twice a year by people wished to install a bench in memory of loved ones so have thought about leaving space for a bench and then filling that space when a sponsor appears.

5. Could the play park be moved closer to the Summer Hill Terrace entrance to save having to cut up the open green space with a path through the middle?

In previous consultations the most favoured location has been the area between the stepping stone logs and the spiral log staircase. This prevents local residents have a play area immediately at the bottom of their garden but also is close enough to

housing to be overlooked and deter anti-social behaviour. See also the answer to Question 1.

6. How can you make this a more secure setting? (the context of the question was vandalism of the previous play area of which the slide is the only remaining item).

The location of the previous play area was too far away from housing to deter anti-social behaviour, the advice we have from Bristol City Council's Children's Play and Youth Officer is that the proposed location of the new play area will deter vandalism because of its position being more overlooked and closer to the road entrance.

More people using the site will also be a natural deterrent to poor behaviour.

7. Where are extra vehicles going to park?

This will be a small play area, attractive enough, we hope to bring children and parents in on their way walking to and from school, perhaps dropping off older children at school and returning to the play area with younger children. We also hope it will be visited on foot by people who live nearby. Certainly many of our responses are from people saying how wonderful it would be not to have to use the car to reach a play area. We do not think the play area will be big enough to attract people to come by car.

8. How much is this going to cost?

A quotation for the play area design shown on the questionnaire as an example of what could be provided was £65,000, there would also be other costs such as an access path from Summerhill Terrace entrance. There are limits on the amount of grants we can apply for so we will need to plan carefully what we want in our play area.

9. What about toilets?

We are not currently looking at providing toilets, an expensive investment with high running costs in this space, although we would always be interested in what access might be given to any nearby building.

10. What's wrong with the play area at St George park?

The feedback from parents to this survey is they have to put their children into a car to use St George Park and really want a nearby play area they can walk to.

11. Are the goal posts staying?

There are no plans to remove the goal posts, these are much enjoyed by local children, not only for football but as an improvised climbing frame to swing from.

Appendix C

Samples of comments included in responses

The number of samples chosen is in proportion to the number of responses made under each theme as reported on page 2 and 3 of the Summary. With some themes very few comments have been made so a single sample comment is given even though in terms of ratios the theme does not merit a sample.

Theme 1 - Supporting comments in favour of a play area (161 comments)

i) This is a great initiative. We walk our dog here and now have a toddler who is keen to use playgrounds. The solitary slide is rather dismal.

ii) This would be a lovely addition to Troopers Hill, we love to walk to the area and it would prolong our time there.

iii) We feel that a playground on the hill would be of great benefit to the local area. We regularly use the hill with the kids and often see other families over there. Adding a playground would encourage more people to use the space more of the time and also increase the amount of enjoyment during their time there.

I'm sure it will get great use, but with the events held on the hill as well as the visibility afforded to events like the balloon fiesta and fireworks displays, having this would hold the children's attention much better.

iv) I am someone who is very supportive of having a play area with equipment on troopers hill field! I have lived in the immediate area for 10 years. I have a child and it would be so nice to have a play area to take him to that was within a few minutes walk of my home. We already enjoy the grassy field and nature walks on the hill itself but this would be an added bonus. I do feel that having a large amount of green space would be nice too, for those who walk their dogs and like to play football and run. It would just be a fantastic addition to Troopers Hill, and I certainly think it could be done in a way that would fit in nicely and smoothly with the rest of the Troopers Hill and field landscape.

v) I go with children aged 0-8 and even with the open space currently available they quickly become bored and we go back to the woods. Whilst natural space is important, it is next to a lot of open space on the hill and in order for parents to select it as a viable location to visit with children I completely agree that a play area is required. We visit once a month currently and it would dramatically increase with the proposed development.

vi) We have an almost 3 year old and a 6 month old baby, so our priorities would be for younger children. We take them frequently for walks on the hill so a play ground would be amazing and save us having to go all the way to St Georges Park for our 3

year old's "swing fix". It would really enhance their lives if there was a safe outside place for them both to play so close to their home.

vii) I'd be very excited to see a playground installed and would definitely make use of it.

viii) I am fully supportive of proposals to improve play equipment for children. We should be encouraging children to play outside more, especially as Government recommendations are that children should exercise for at least 1 hour per day. In the past, I have tried to generate interest in creating a better play/leisure area at Rodney Road Fields. However, I gave up due to lack of local interest. I'm glad that other parents have similar ideas to me, and are willing to give up their time to make their ideas become a reality.

The plans look great, and I am especially interested to see an adventure trail for slightly older children. Please ensure that play areas are fenced off to ensure that dogs cannot be allowed to foul the area.

ix) Do IT ASAP

x) The installation of additional play equipment on the field is an excellent idea. The field and the hill are community assets and something that everyone in Bristol as well as the immediate surrounding area should be proud of.

The addition of play equipment will encourage both current and future generations to visit Trooper Hill (both field and the LNR) and is to be applauded.

This equipment will also encourage the younger generation to be active and healthy; the benefit to the community would be increased if gym equipment was added as well.

xi) The field has been neglected for many years as far as play equipment is concerned. Although children need space to run in they also need equipment to help their imagination run riot! Well done on getting it started!

xii) We take our children aged 6, 10 and 12 up to Troopers Hill on a weekly basis. We always make use of the woods and the walks but we would love to see more play equipment up there. The field is crying out for that. We are 100% behind the ideas.

xiii) It is a fantastic idea to develop the play area. It's such a lovely space that so many families use in good weather so equipment for the children would be wonderful.

xiv) More play equipment definitely needed, we rarely use the park as my boy will kick a ball around but daughter gets bored. To have wooden play equipment in keeping with the nature reserve would be totally amazing.

xv) Something is really needed in this area - its a lovely spot - and we should encourage little ones to be outside - they are too little to go on imagination adventures in nature, so swings and a few imaginative play pieces would be brilliant.

xvi) I appreciate that any change to green space needs to be weighed up in the city. However the equipment and path would b a well balanced way to ensure more people get to use more of this green space. It is unlikely to detract from the beauty of the area is still adjoined by the, hopefully never to be altered green beauty of the nature reserve. It is also not a permanent structure as such, unlike a building which could really alter the space/ very unlikely to be changed if necessary in the future.

I think greater use of the area will preserve it best for the future use and enjoyment of everyone. I live mins away and hope both my pre-school children and I can have many many happy years and memories there.

Theme 2 - Comments against a play area (12 comments)

i) There are enough playgrounds for children. Troopers hill, even though it has play equipment, remains a place that is quiet and great for walking dogs. Why do kids need more equipment? There is a field and some play stuff already. Wouldn't a couple of goal posts suffice? Troopers hill is my sanctuary and I don't want to hear loads of kids when I'm walking on my own or with the dog. It would attract a lot more people which would make it busier and noisier.

I think leave it as it is.

Theme 3 - Distance to the nearest park often about how a new play area would reduce car journeys or just be more convenient (12 comments)

i) This area of BS5 is suffering from an absence of play areas. In Redfield, there are several small and larger playgrounds servicing a similar population. As a parent and a childminder, our only local options are St Georges Park (a long walk for small children and Barton fields which is unsuitable for small children.

As a driver, I drive the children to Netham, Brook street, st george and Kingswood park. If there was a park at troopers hill we would probably always choose that one and walk there.

since having children I have always considered that a playground at troopers hill should be campaigned for, i just never knew how to do it.

It would also enable dog walkers to continue walking dogs but give children a safe area to play without the risk of coming into contact with dog poop (currently a problem). A separate dog area would be great too, so children could use the football goal posts.

Theme 4 - Location - covering other sites for the play area or pointing out a conflict with goalposts (5 comments)

i) I think there should be enough space for football and dog walking and enough sectioned off for a play area. It is a large area and can accommodate both. I also think the park should be built around the slide and the slide should not be removed

Theme 5 - Support for fencing (42 comments)

i) In my experience as a childminder and mum to a 3 year old I would say that there is a need for more parks in this area. We also need a good range of equipment for the pre-schoolers to use to aid them in their development as well as open space to have a good run around. Fencing off the under 5's area is of utmost importance too as any adventurous toddler can be prone to running off, this would just make life easier and keep the children safe whilst they explore and play.

ii) As a dog walker who uses Troopers Hill Field daily this proposed play area should be securely fenced off so everyone can enjoy the area - safely.

iii) Play area needs to be fenced off, not only for security for young children but to keep dogs out.

iv) There will need to be a fence, especially for the younger children, so dog walkers can continue to walk their dogs without them coming into the playpark, esp as younger children may approach and touch dogs, plus some owners don't pick up their dogs poo!!

Theme 6 - Comments against fencing (4 comments)

i) I feel very strongly about a fence not being built around the play area, troopers hill is a very popular dog walking site, the current slide means any parents with dogs also can interact both activities, fencing off the play area would isolate parents with children and dogs, most users of troopers hill know it as a dog walking site so I don't think a fence is entirely necessary.

Theme 7 - The new play area would encourage people to visit more often and/or stay longer. (7 comments)

i) Troopers is a brilliant space and lots of us use it. My children adore the one old slide that's there so would be delighted with a proper play area. It would definitely need to be fenced off as the dog fouling in the area is appalling. We would use the play area probably more than St. George's park as it's on our way home from school.

Theme 8 - The path to the play area should not go through the middle of the Field (10 comments)

i) I fully support the new creation of a play area on the troopers hill field. I played in the old park as a child and it's a real shame that there is not a broader and more modern range of play opportunities. My only concern is putting a path right through the middle of the field. This is not enough of a concern to stop me supporting the

project but I would hope that an alternative solution could be arrived at. The field is a rare and valuable green space and it seems a real shame to dissect it with a path.

Theme 9 - Comments about the path covering a range of issues including location, no path at all, "not tarmac", wheelchair accessible (45 comments)

i) Can the play area be positioned closer to a gate or long ways beside the path? Thus eliminating the need for a path across the field.

We are a foster family and have used Troopers hill extensively since moving in the area 15 years ago. All the children love Troopers hill their ages ranges from six months to 13 years old. There is no other play area in walking distance in this area.

The number of children below is approximate we can have up to 4 children 3-14 years old at any one time.

Theme 10 - Ideas for design or the equipping of the play area (21 comments)

i) Children under 10 only play out with adult supervision. Please consider adequate seating for parents. This should be close to the play equipment and facing in the right direction. Not logs, as these are usually damp, but something a bit quicker drying, like the red benches maybe

ii) I'm supportive of the idea of more play equipment but I'm less keen on the possible designs and also that part of the field could be fenced off. Troopers hill field is appealing to me because of the opportunities it offers for unstructured play and I would prefer to see play equipment that encourages this rather than more standard equipment that replicates what can be found in St George's park and other local spaces. I also think that a play area in the woods should be considered as a alternative or additional space, something like the one in Leigh Woods.

iii) It would be great to see a proper play park at Troopers Hill after so long without. Any path would need to be sympathetic to it's surroundings. Not too much preferably not concrete/tarmac. From Summerhill TR it could sweep gently towards the allotment fence whilst maintaining a reasonably direct route to the play park, thus reducing the impact on the rest of the field.

A child friendly climbing wall would be an excellent addition.

iv) I think it would be beneficial to have play equipment which is suitable/caters for mixed ages in 1 enclosed area - so climbing equipment/smaller children activities where a parent of multiple aged children can supervise them all at once.

Sand is always good!

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Theme 11 - Other ideas for the Field not directly related to the play area (21 comments)

i) A telescope by the tower on T-Hill would be a great option.

ii) Keep dogs on leads and not mess on grass. Put more litter bins there

Theme 12 - Football - mainly express great support for the retention of the existing goalposts (16 comments)

i) My 10 year old son and his friends use the goalposts a lot. He is concerned he might not be able to continue to play football if they build a play park - for under 5's. I do think a play park for under 5's is a good idea but not to the detriment of older kids

Theme 13 - Dog issues - out of control dogs, fouling etc. (5 comments)

We live quite close to Troopers Hill but have only been there twice, on both occasions we were chased by dogs or just annoyed by dog mess. I would therefore very much welcome any opportunities to improve play facilities and make the space child friendly. I also think it is necessary to fence off for these reasons. Unfortunately I cant offer any time to help at the moment but would support any improvement.

Themes 14 and 15, about keeping the existing slide and play equipments for other parks only had 1 comment each so they are not listed here as being too small to sample.