

Auriol Park Visitor Survey - 2016



Report prepared for:
Operations Management Team

Date: January 2017

Please contact the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Consultation and Communication Team should you require any information on the Auriol Park Visitor Survey 2016
Email: contactus@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Auriol Park Visitor Survey 2016

Summary of main findings:

- The survey ran from 07 November to 02 December 2016 - a period of four weeks. The survey was available in paper and electronic formats. The electronic version was featured on the Council's main webpage and via our social media platforms Twitter and Facebook - all containing links to the online survey. Postcard-size fliers were also distributed to:
 - Mead Infant School
 - Auriol Junior School
 - Cuddington Primary School.
- In total, 372 survey responses were received; of which 316 were paper-based (85%, n=316/372) and 56 were online submissions (15%, n=56/372).
- Respondent profile:
 - The majority of respondents were female (66%, n=206/312) and 34% (n=105/312) were male.
 - Based on age groupings: 52% (n=178/340) were over 55 years old and 48% (n=162/340) were under 55 years old.
 - When asked about ethnicity, the majority of respondents (83%, n=274/330) described themselves as British white or English white.
 - The majority of respondents (64%, n=209/329) said they were Christian.
 - Four per cent (n=14/315) of respondents indicated they had a disability according to the Equalities Act of 2010.
- Nearly six in ten respondents (58%, n=210/364) visit the park multiple times weekly; this comprises 19% (n=69/364) visiting daily and 39% (n=141/364) visiting two or three times weekly. A further 27% (n=98/364) visit the park two or three times monthly and 12% (n=45/364) visit the park two or three times a year. Only 1.4% (n=5/364) visit less than once a year.
- Over eight in ten respondents travel to the park on foot (82%, n=341/414), whilst 13% (n=52/414) travel by car and 5% (n=20/414) by bicycle.
- Overall, the most popular reason for visiting the park was to 'go for a walk' (14%, n=90/657). This was followed by 'use the playground' (13%, n=87/657) and 'children/family outing' (12%, n=82/657).

- Looking at the age profile, most respondents between:
 - 35-44yrs 'use the playground' (49%, n=41/84) and use the park for a 'children/family outing' (42%, n=32/77)
 - 45-54yrs use the park to 'walk the dog' (28%, n=15/53)
 - 55-64yrs use the park to 'walk the dog' (30%, n=16/53)
 - 65-74yrs use the park to 'go for a walk' (37%, n=30/81) or use it 'as a short cut' (47%, n=18/38).
- The top three positively rated aspects of the park were:
 1. 'Accessibility' (88%, n=300/340)
 2. 'Grass areas' (84%, n=295/350)
 3. 'Facilities for 12's and under' (72%, n=204/283).
- The top three negatively rated aspects of the park were:
 1. 'Toilets' [lack of] (83%, n=186/225)
 2. 'Range of visitor facilities' (29%, n=86/298)
 3. 'Flower/shrub displays' and 'Facilities for over 12's' (tie: 23%; n=76/335, n=57/252; respectively).
- Overall, 74% (n=275/352) of respondents rated 'the park in general' positively, 20% (n=70/352) rated the grounds fair and 2% (n=7/352) rated the grounds negatively.
- Respondents who gave a negative response to an opinion relating to the park were also asked to provide reasons for their answer. The three most prevalent reasons were:
 1. 'Toilets needed' (40%, n=152/379)
 2. 'Benches/ seating' (10%, n=39/379)
 3. 'Café needed' and 'Flowerbed/ shrubbery improvements' (tie: 8%, n=32/379).
- When considering improving the visitor experience, the three most prevalent suggestions for using the park more often or staying for longer include:
 1. Café needed (31%, n=107/342)
 2. Toilets needed (25%, n=87/342)
 3. Better range of facilities (12%, n=42/342).
- Of the respondents that took part in this survey, 40 people kindly provided their names and contact information for volunteering activities. This information will be passed onto the management team for future volunteering opportunities.

Objectives and methodology:

Auriol Park is amongst five green spaces in the Borough and is situated in Ewell, Surrey. It is managed by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and facilities include: football pitches, tennis courts, children's playground, bowling green, and pavilion.

The survey was conducted by the Council on behalf of its Operations Management Team. The team is responsible for ensuring the park meets the needs of local residents, visitors and develops in a sustainable way.

Questionnaire development:

The questions were developed in liaison with the Head of Operational Services and the Patrol Ranger. Areas include:

- Frequency of visiting the park
- Method of travel to the park
- Reasons for visiting the park
- Opinions on various aspects of the park
- Improving visitor experience and encouraging more use of the park, or staying for longer
- Volunteering opportunities.

Methodology:

The survey ran from 07 November to 02 December 2016 - a period of four weeks. The survey was available in paper and electronic formats. Of the 1,000 paper surveys, 906 were posted to properties in the surrounding roads and the remaining 94 were distributed to:

- Bowlers
- Park users
- Footballers using park at the weekend.

A5 postcard-size fliers were distributed to:

- Mead Infant School
- Auriol Junior School
- Cuddington Primary School.

Links to the electronic survey were promoted via:

- Council website
(www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk)
- Twitter
(www.twitter.com/@EpsomEwellBC)
- Facebook
(www.Facebook.com/EpsomEwellBC).

Of the 1,000 paper copies distributed, 316 were returned - resulting in a paper-copy response rate of 32%



The flyer for the Auriol Park Survey 2016 features the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council logo on the left, which includes a crest with a sun and a tree. To the right of the logo, the text reads 'Auriol Park Survey 2016' and 'Your views wanted!'. Below this, a dashed box contains the following text: 'Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is conducting a survey to ensure Auriol Park meets the needs of local residents, visitors and is developed in a sustainable way. We want you to tell us how the park can be improved by taking part via the link below. www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk (click on the right hand side button) Please take part by Friday, 2 December 2016.' To the left of this text is a small image of a park scene with a building in the background.

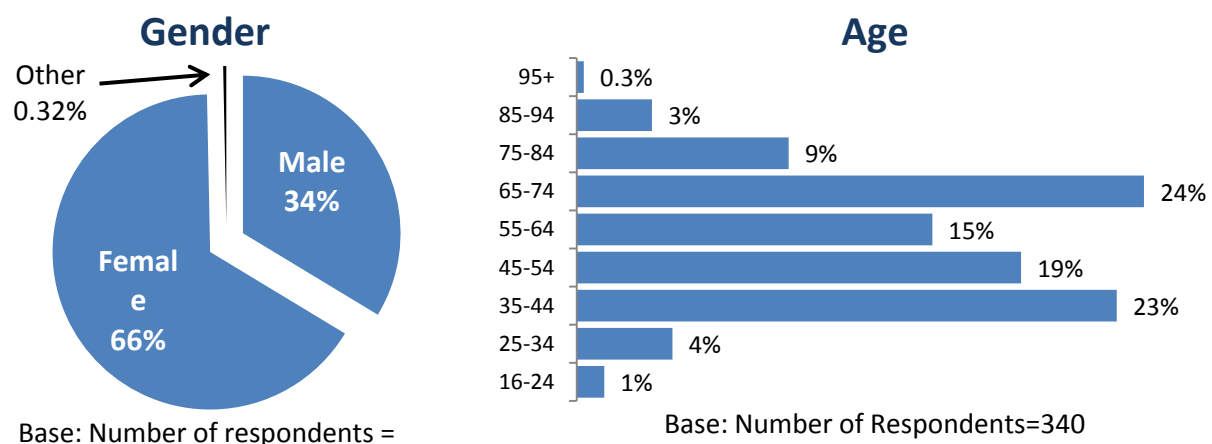
In total, 372 survey responses were received. Responses to the electronic questionnaires were automatically imported into the survey design and analysis package (SNAP v11). The paper returns were sent to SnapSurveys for data inputting, then merged with the online version. Of the 1,000 paper copies distributed, 316 were returned - resulting in a paper-copy response rate of 32% (n=316/1,000). Overall, 85% (n=316/372) of responses were paper-based, whilst 15% (n=56/372) were online submissions. The results were analysed by the Council's Consultation and Communication Team.

The figures in this report are calculated as a proportion of respondents who answered each question – excluding 'No Reply' or 'No Opinion' responses. Percentages in a particular chart might not always add up to 100% due to rounding, or because a respondent was allowed to give more than one answer to the question.

Respondent profile and equalities monitoring:

Age and gender:

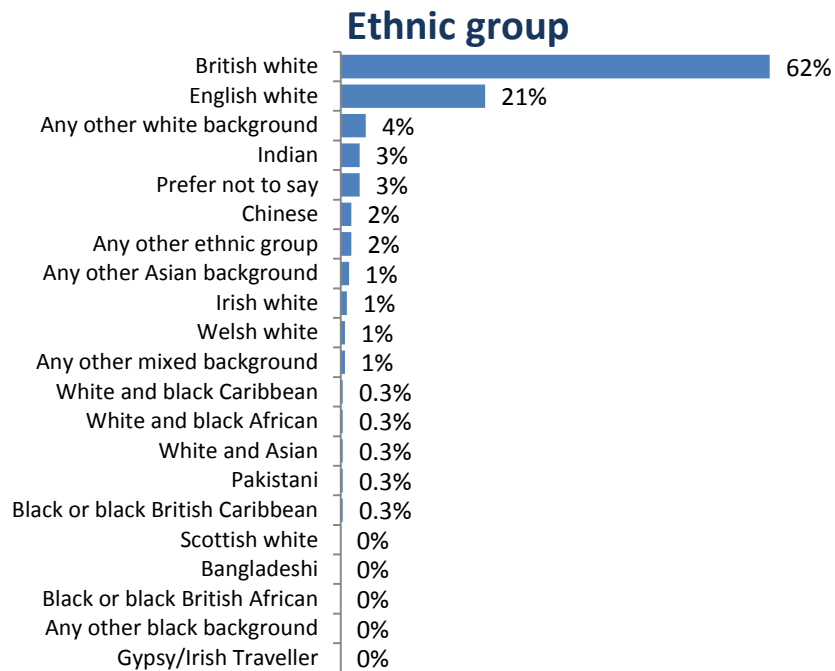
Respondents were asked their gender and which age group they fit into. The majority of respondents were female (66%, n=206/312) and 34% (n=105/312) were male. Based on age groupings: 52% (n=178/340) were over 55 years old and 48% (n=162/340) were under 55 years old. The highest number of respondents were people aged between 65 & 74yrs (24%, n=83/340) followed by those aged between 35 & 44yrs (23%, n=79/340).



Other demographics:

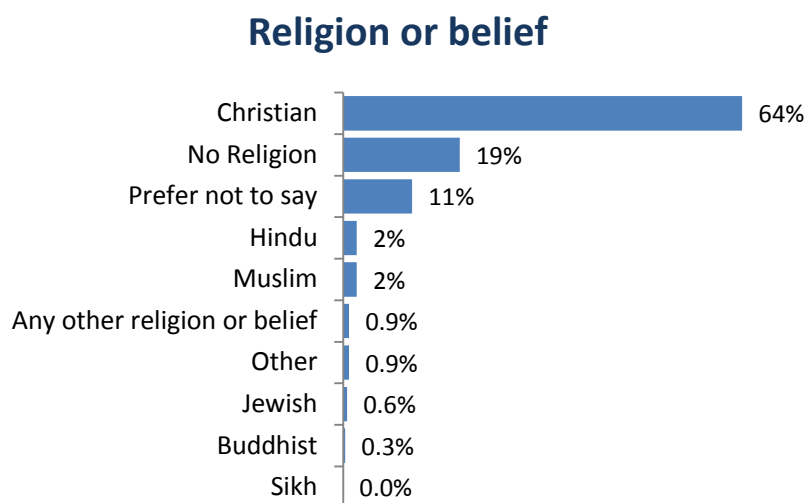
Four per cent (n=14/315) of respondents indicated they have a disability according to the Equalities Act of 2010. A person has a disability for the purposes of the Act if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

When asked about ethnicity, the majority of residents (83%, n=274/330) described themselves as British white or English white.



Base: Number of Respondents=330

In terms of religious beliefs; over six in ten (64%, n=209/329) said they were Christian and 19% (n=61/239) said they were not religious.

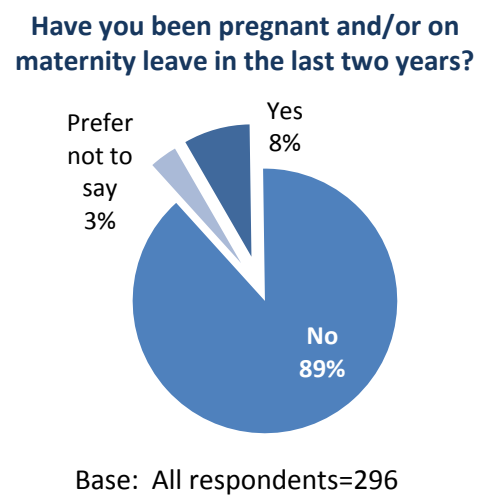
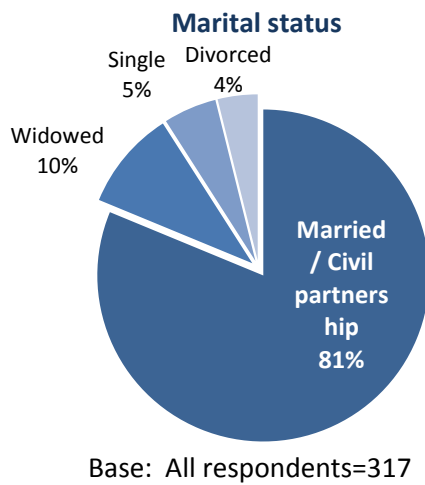


Base: Number of Respondents=329

When asked about sexual orientation, 92% (n=275/298) said they were heterosexual whilst 6% (n=18/298) preferred not to say. Five respondents said either 'Gay man/woman/lesbian' (1%, n=3/298) or 'Other' (0.67%, n=2/298). 4% (n=11/311) said their gender identity was different from their sex assigned at birth.

When asked about marital status, 79% (n=251/317) said they were married or in a civil partnership, 10% (n=30/317) were widowed, 5% (n=16/317) single and 4% (n=12/317) divorced. Eight per cent of respondents (n=24/296) said they had been

pregnant or on maternity leave in the last two years, whilst 3% (n=10/296) preferred not to say.

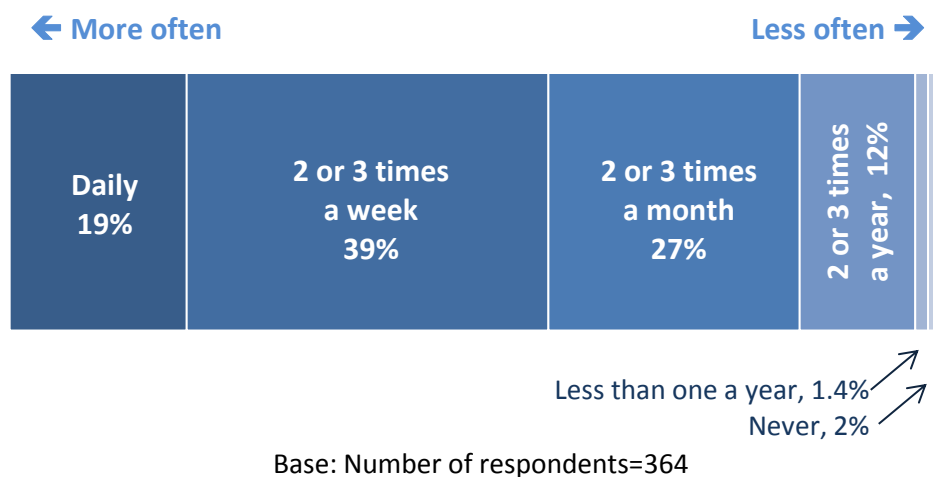


Analysis of results:

Frequency of visiting Auriol Park:

Nearly six in ten respondents (58%, n=210/364) visit the park multiple times weekly; this comprises 19% (n=69/364) visiting daily and 39% (n=141/364) visiting two or three times weekly. A further 27% (n=98/364) visit the park two or three times monthly and 12% (n=45/364) visit the park two or three times a year. Only 1.4% (n=5/364) visit less than once a year and six people said 'never' (2%, n=6/364).

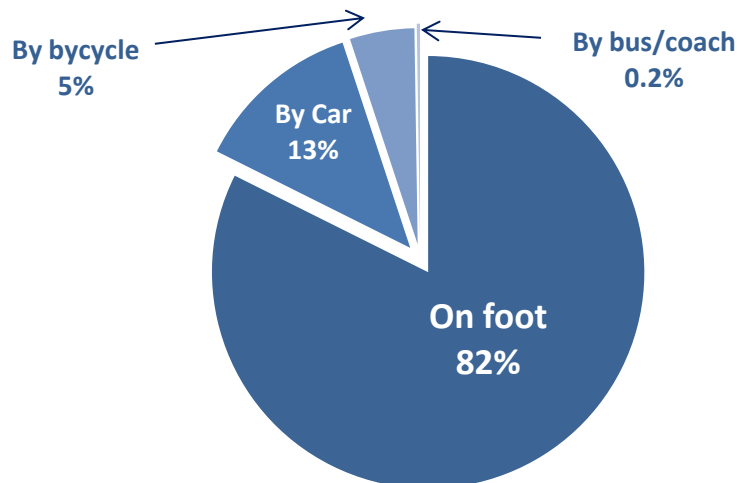
How often do you visit Auriol Park?



Method of travelling to Auriol Park:

Over eight in ten respondents travel to the park on foot (82%, n=341/414), whilst 13% (n=52/414) travel by car and 5% (n=20/414) by bicycle. One respondent said they travel by bus/coach (0.2%, n=1/414).

How do you normally travel to the park?



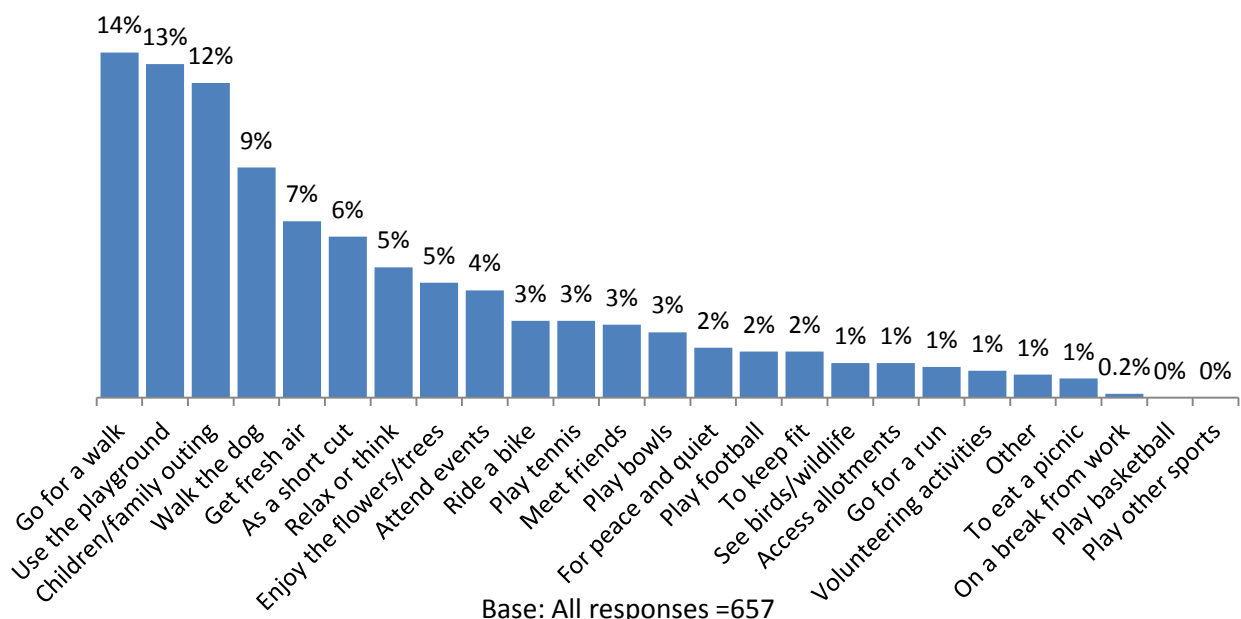
Base: Number of responses=414

Reasons for visiting Auriol Park:

This section looks at the reasons for visiting the park (respondents were asked to choose up to three reasons). The most popular reason for visiting the park was to 'go for a walk' (14%, n=90/657). This was followed by 'use the playground' (13%, n=87/657) and 'children/family outing' (12%, n=82/657).

Additional reasons for visiting the grounds include:

Why do you visit the park?

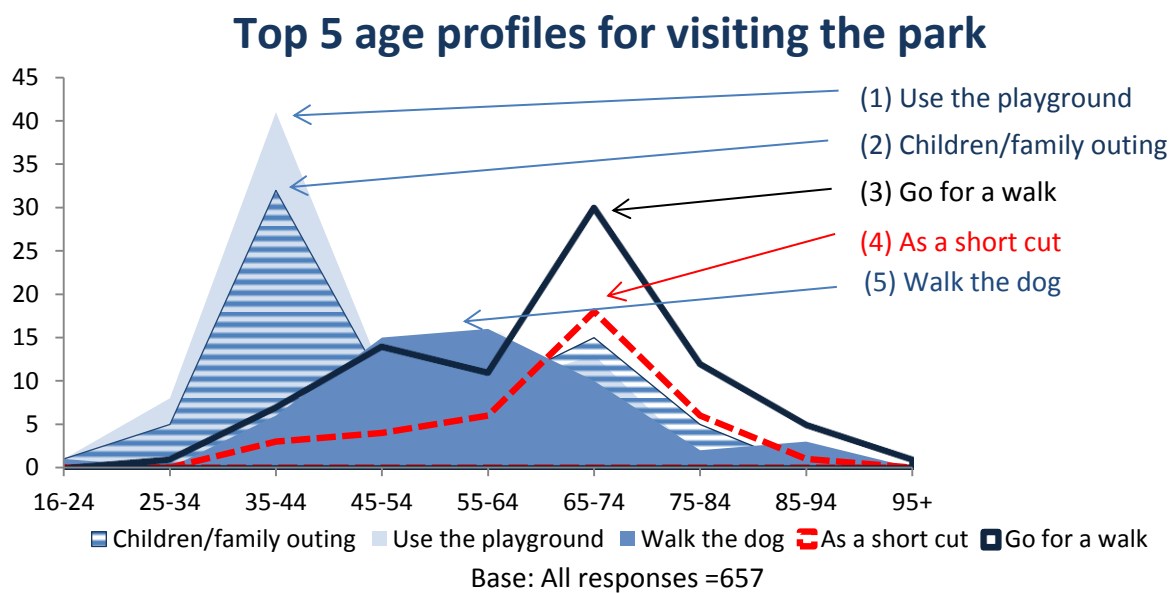


Base: All responses =657

Looking at the age profile, most respondents between:

- 35-44yrs 'use the playground' (49%, n=41/84) and use the park for a 'children/family outing' (42%, n=32/77)
- 45-54yrs use the park to 'walk the dog' (28%, n=15/53)
- 55-64yrs use the park to 'walk the dog' (30%, n=16/53)
- 65-74yrs use the park to 'go for a walk' (37%, n=30/81) or use it 'as a short cut' (47%, n=18/38).

The graph below illustrates the top five age profiles for visiting the park:



'Other' reasons for visiting the park include:

- Trifest event
- Ride bikes
- Walk through
- Catch the setting sun!

Opinion of aspects of the park:

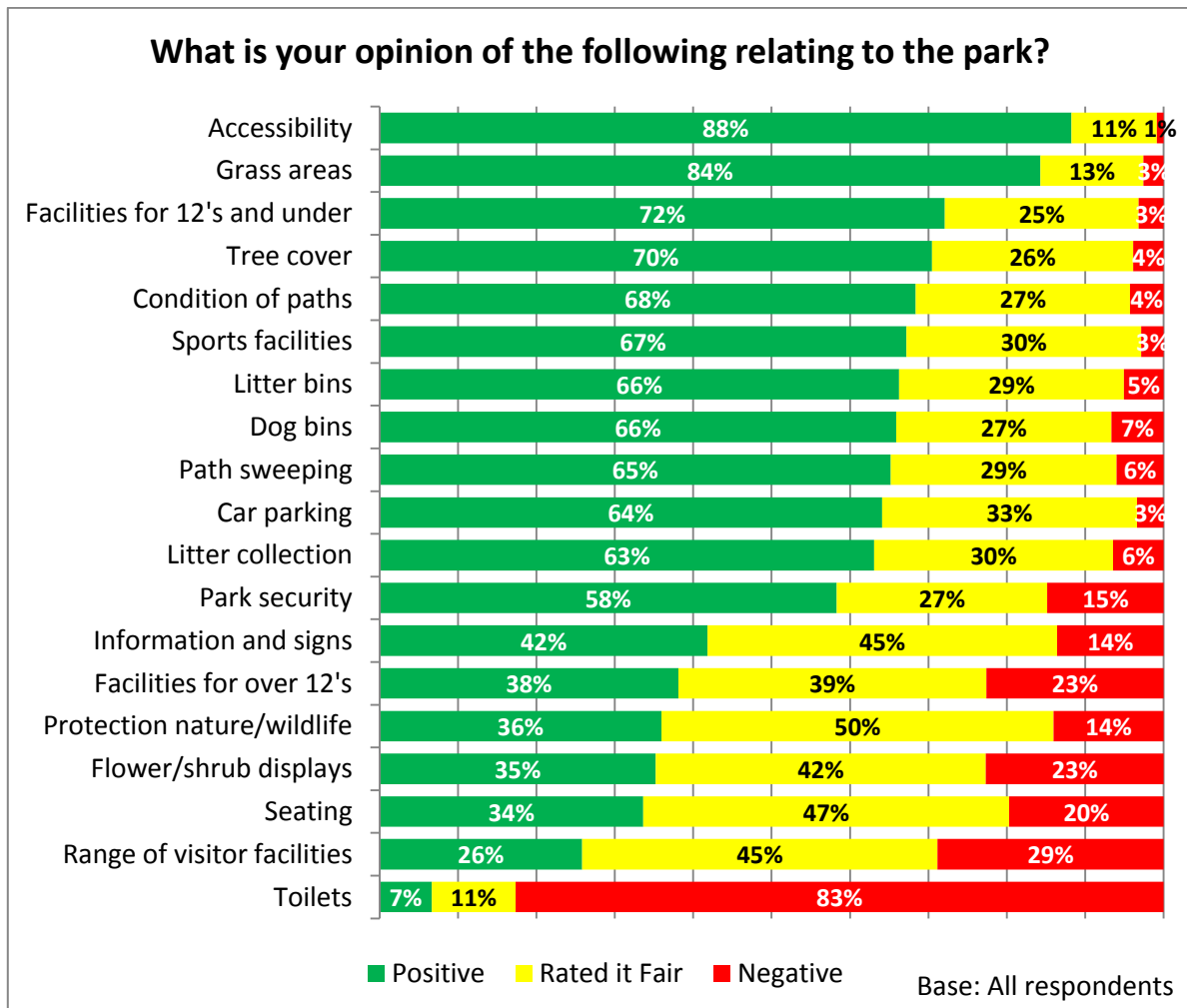
This section looks at peoples' opinions relating to various aspects of the park.

The top three positively rated aspects of the park were:

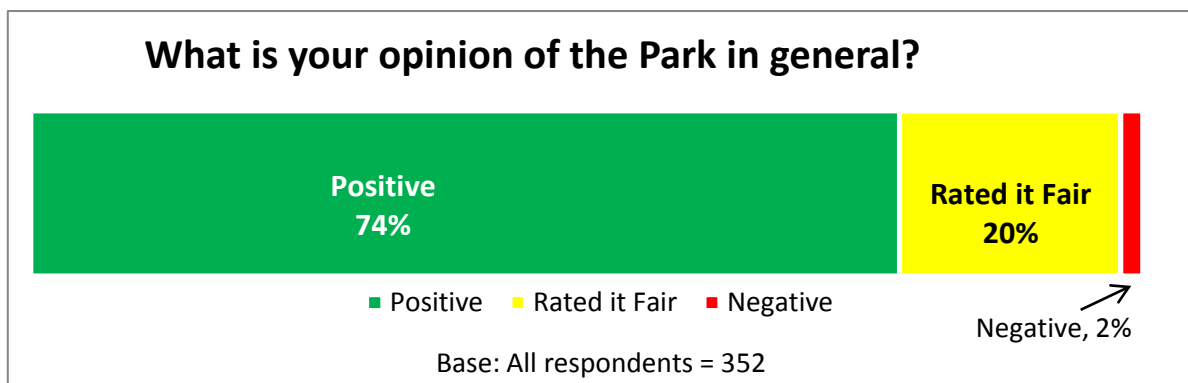
1. 'Accessibility' (88%, n=300/340)
2. 'Grass areas' (84%, n=295/350)
3. 'Facilities for 12's and under' (72%, n=204/283).

The top three negatively rated aspects of the park were:

1. 'Toilets' [lack of] (83%, n=186/225)
2. 'Range of visitor facilities' (29%, n=86/298)
3. 'Flower/shrub displays' and 'Facilities for over 12's' (tie: 23%; n=76/335, n=57/252, respectively).



Overall, 74% (n=275/352) of respondents rated 'the park in general' positively, 20% (n=70/352) rated the grounds fair and 2% (n=7/352) rated the grounds negatively.

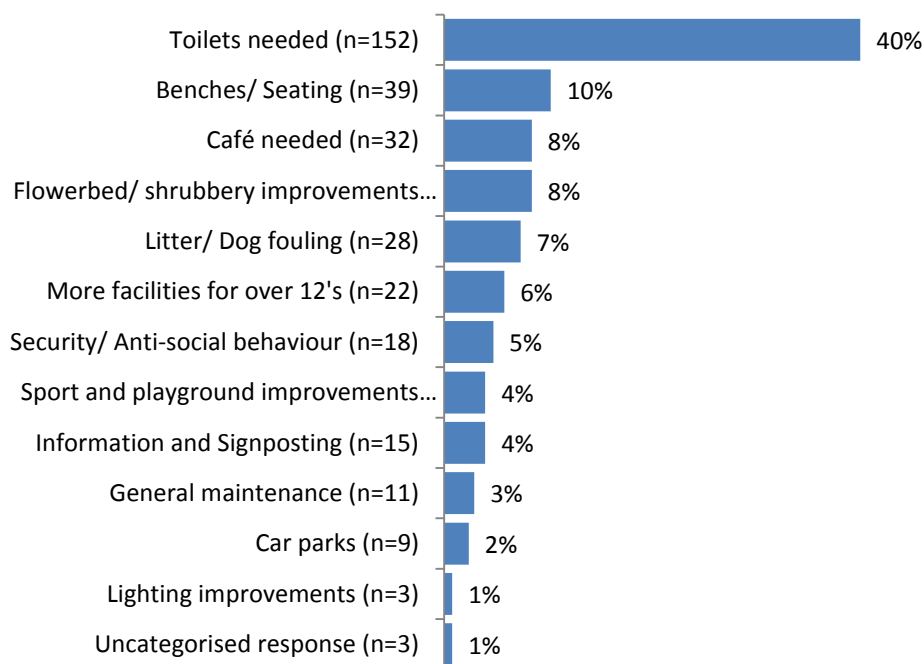


Respondents who gave a negative response to an opinion relating to the park were also asked to provide reasons for their answer. The three most prevalent reasons were:

1. 'Toilets needed' (40%, n=152/379)
2. 'Benches/ seating' (10%, n=39/379)
3. 'Café needed' and 'Flowerbed/ shrubbery improvements' (tie: 8%, n=32/379).

The table below illustrates additional reasons:

**If you ticked 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' on any of the options,
please give your reasons below:**



Base: Number of responses=379

Examples of literal responses include:

Q5: If you ticked 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' on any of the above options, please give your reasons below: (Base: All responses=379)	
Theme:	Examples:
1. Toilets needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No toilets!!! Very well used park by young families who need more than bushes when caught short! • There are no toilets in the park which puts me off taking the children there more regularly. • No toilet facilities, numerous times the park visit is cut short to go home to use a toilet.
2. Benches/ Seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited seating - would be better if more benches were dotted around. • Not sufficient seating. • Not many seats in the park.
3. Café needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could do with a cafe to encourage people to stay a while. • A small refreshments shop selling water/juices and nibbles would be a great addition. • It would be great to have a cafe or even a kiosk selling basic refreshments.
4. Flowerbed/ shrubbery improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flower shrub displays - no formal flower beds, park lacks colour in summer. • No flower beds maintained well. • It would be lovely to see more flower displays in the Spring as when they finish the colour goes.
5. Litter/ Dog fouling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog walkers don't care about using bins which doesn't make it pleasant for other users. • Dog owners need monitoring to pick up their dog mess. • Sometimes a lot of dog mess and litter left in the park. • The whole area needs action on litter.
6. More facilities for over 12's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing for older kids. • Nothing specific for the over 12's • There are no facilities for teenagers which is critically needed!

Q5: If you ticked 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' on any of the above options, please give your reasons below: (Base: All responses=379)	
Theme:	Examples:
7. Security/ Anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no presence of any security and at times older children abuse the playground and monopolise the children's equipment. • Security is poor as there are often kids with footballs and motorised skateboards on the new tennis courts. • Security - we saw youths acting suspiciously but could not see any security onsite.
8. Sport and playground improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None of the equipment in the children's playground is suitable for 3 to 5 year olds. You removed the old slides and replaced them with slides that children cannot climb. • Needs a better playground/areas for children. • I feel the playground needs updating a bit.
9. Information and signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info and signs - very poor at moment. • Signage is illegible and inadequate. • Park signs are worn and out of date.
10. General maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The park is in a general state of disrepair and isn't maintained to a high standard. • The park required more regular maintenance of paths, shrubs, weeds. • Paths in need of maintenance.
11. Car parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although car parking is limited I think it is a good idea not to have too much parking on site. • Car parking is a problem on a Sunday. • The car park should be better fenced off from the rest of the park. It is too exposed to children and dogs.
12. Lighting improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is very poor lighting in the evenings/winter. • Please utilise solar energy and install more lighting in the park. Make it brighter and more cheerful. • Better lighting.

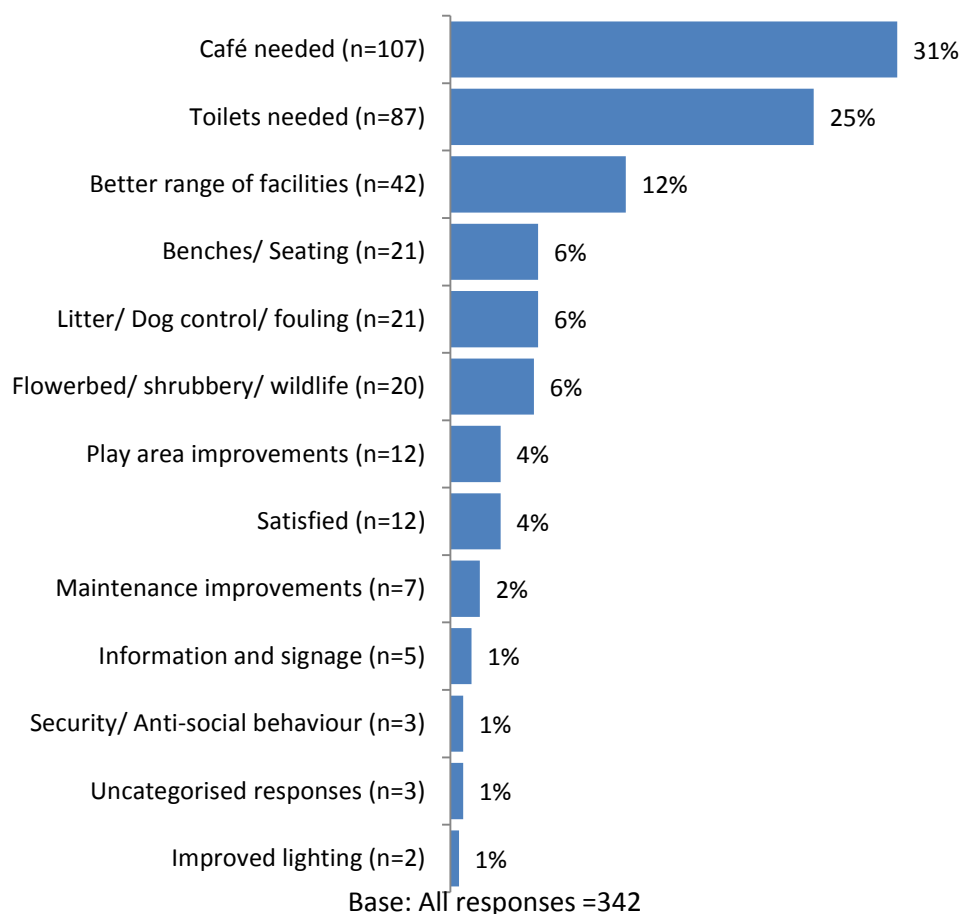
Improving visitor experience and encouraging more use of the park or staying for longer:

This section looks at the visitor experience and suggestions for using Auriol Park more often or to stay for longer. When considering improving the visitor experience, the three most prevalent suggestions include:

- Café needed (31%, n=107/342)
- Toilets needed (25%, n=87/342)
- Better range of facilities (12%, n=42/342).

The graph below illustrates common suggestions:

Can you think of one thing that would encourage you to use Auriol Park more often or to stay for longer?



Examples of literal responses include:

Q6: Can you think of one thing that would encourage you to use Auriol Park more often or to stay for longer? (Base: All responses=342)	
Theme:	Examples:
1. Café needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some kind of refreshment area. Hot drink in the winter, ice creams, etc. in the summer. A cafe - it would be great to be able to sit and have a coffee. If there was a cafeteria for people to meet and spend longer in the park.
2. Toilets needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there were toilets. Having a child they would be a benefit. Toilets, children can't hold themselves! Toilet facilities are a must if you want parents with young kids to stay longer.

Q6: Can you think of one thing that would encourage you to use Auriol Park more often or to stay for longer? (Base: All responses=342)

Theme:	Examples:
3. Better range of facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More activities for children...perhaps an outdoor gym? • I would stay for longer if there were things like exercise activities there as I could enjoy it more as well. • Organised runs (Park Run?) for families. Teen play equipment. Better tennis courts.
4. Benches/ Seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More places to sit and relax. • More seating. • Picnic benches, somewhere for parents to socialise whilst children play.
5. Litter/ Dog control/ fouling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less dog litter. • If people took control of their dogs and did not assume that everyone is okay with a dog "wanting to play" with them! • No dogs waste on the grass.
6. Flowerbed/ shrubbery/ wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural nature reserve area. • More wildlife. • Better flower displays.
7. Play area improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More exciting play area. • Bigger playground with more variety. • A better playground for children. Current one is looking quite tired.
8. Satisfied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall we are very happy with it. • Auriol is a lovely, safe park and I feel very fortunate to live so close to be able to enjoy it several times a day. • I love Auriol Park. Great for families and friends and good to relax.
9. Maintenance improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it were less muddy in winter! • Parts of the park are hazardous to dogs, oil filled/slick puddles. • Better drainage on the fields in the autumn/winter.
10. Information and signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer opening and closing times. • How do you get to us the courts? I can't find any information.
11. Security/ Anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some type of security would be reassuring. • There are often large groups..., which can be intimidating whenever I have visited.
12. Uncategorised responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting for the children to start playing sport but they are too young at the moment.
13. Improved lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting in the park for when it is dark.

Volunteering opportunities:

In response to the question “Would you be interested in participating in volunteer activities in the park”, 40 people kindly provided their names and contact information. This information will be passed onto the management team for future volunteering opportunities.

Conclusion:

The results of the survey show that people visit the park on a regular basis – nearly six in ten respondents (58%, n=210/364) visit the park multiple times weekly. Over eight in ten respondents travel to the park on foot (82%, n=341/414) - which would suggest they live nearby or in close proximity to the park.

Overall, the most popular reason for visiting the park was to ‘go for a walk’ (14%, n=90/657). This was followed by ‘use the playground’ (13%, n=87/657) and ‘children/family outing’ (12%, n=82/657). Most respondents between 35-44yrs ‘use the playground’ (49%, n=41/84) and use the park for a ‘children/family outing’ (42%, n=32/77), whilst most respondents between 45-54yrs and 55—64yrs use the park to ‘walk the dog’ (28%, n=15/53 and 30%, n=16/53; respectively). Most respondents between 65-74yrs use the park to ‘go for a walk’ (37%, n=30/81) or use it ‘as a short cut’ (47%, n=18/38).

The top three positively rated aspects of the park were its ‘accessibility’ (88%, n=300/340), followed by ‘grass areas’ (84%, n=295/350) and ‘facilities for 12's and under’ (72%, n=204/283). Whilst over seven in ten respondents rated the ‘park in general’ positively (74%, n=275/352), the top three negatively rated aspects were the lack of ‘toilets’ (83%, n=186/225) followed by ‘range of visitor facilities’ (29%, n=86/298), and ‘flower/shrub displays’ and ‘facilities for over 12's’ (tie: 23%; n=76/335, n=57/252; respectively).

When asking respondents to provide reasons for scoring any aspect of the park ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’, a number of respondents cited the lack of toilet facilities – with some people saying they have to leave early because of this.

The most popular suggestion to encourage people to use the park more often or to stay for longer was the need for a Café (31%, n=107/342). This was followed by the need for toilets (25%, n=87/342) – with a number of respondents citing both (ie. a café with toilets).

As a result of the survey, 40 people kindly provided their names and contact information for volunteering activities. This information will be passed onto the management team for future volunteering opportunities.

Overall, visitor responses were very positive with a few developmental areas identified.