



Páirceanna, An Roinn Pobail agus Forbairt Cultúir
Parks, Community & Cultural Development Department

Playground Upgrades at Carysfort Park, Blackrock and Pearse Park, Sallynoggin

Have Your Say Report

Prepared by: Paul Conlon, Executive Parks Superintendent
Approved By: Bridget Treacy, Senior Executive Parks Superintendent
Revision: 1
Date: 15th July 2025

INTRODUCTION

Background

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council playground upgrades at Carysfort Park and Pease Park. The Parks and Landscape Services Department undertook Non-Statutory Public Consultation for the above scheme and welcomed all submissions and observations.

Non-statutory public consultation:

The consultation opened Wednesday May 28th and ran until Friday June 20th. At the closing date for the consultation, a total of 244 submissions were received via Citizens Space.

Summary of feedback from online survey:

DLR Citizen space was the primary portal for feedback during the consultation process where submissions were welcomed via an online survey. Comments were welcomed as part of the submissions. Full details on the comments and observations submitted have been categorised and summarised in report Appendix 1. Submission and Observations– Playground Upgrades at Carysfort Park and Pease Park Online Consultation Report.

KEY SUBMISSIONS/OBSERVATIONS:

Survey Responses:

Question 2:

Question 2: Which local park do you visit most?

Which local park do you visit most?

There were **244** responses to this part of the question.

Survey Response & Design Team observations/comments:

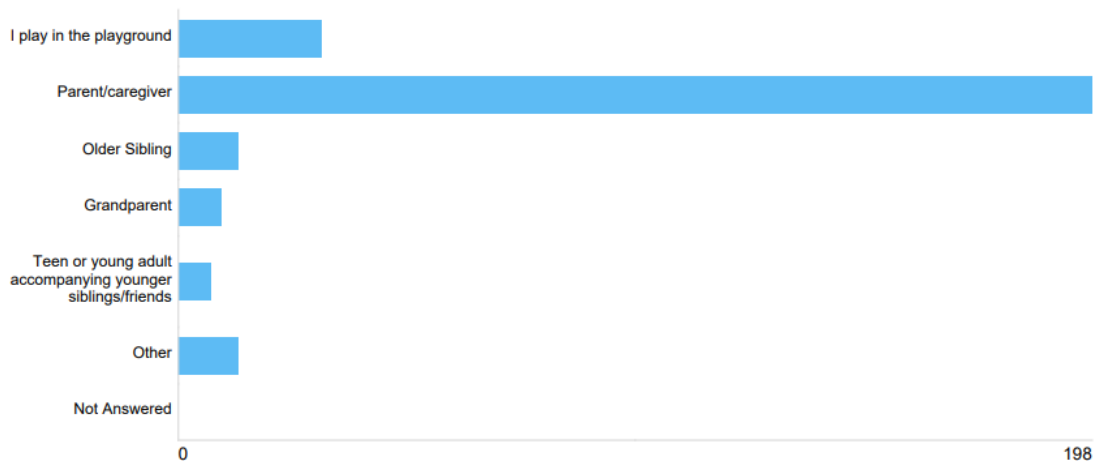
The question gave us the opportunity to understand what local parks of the respondents are. Response was varied. There was a total of 244 responses.

	Total
• Carysfort Park	185
• Pease Park	44
• Blackrock Park	12
• Honey Park	2
• Cabinteely	1

Question 3:

Question 3: What is your role when visiting the playground? (Select all that apply):

What is your role when visiting the playground? (Select all that apply)

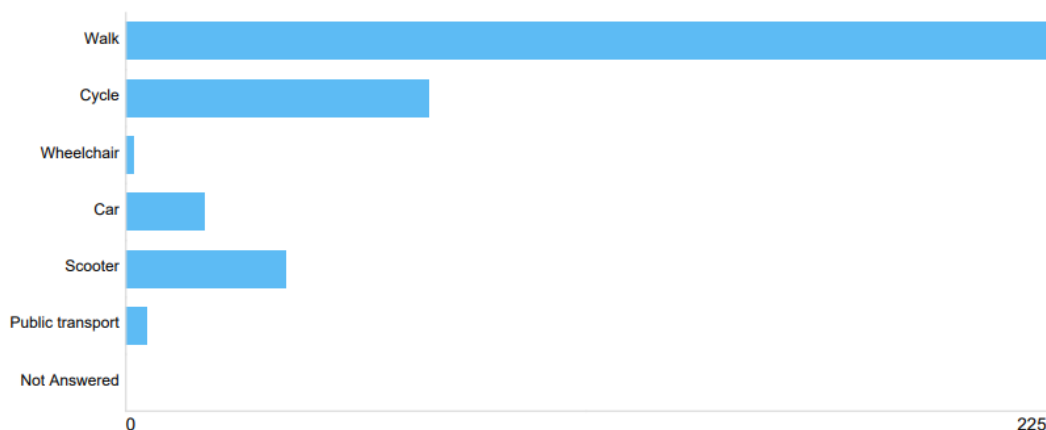


Option	Total	Percent
I play in the playground	31	12.70%
Parent/caregiver	198	81.15%
Older Sibling	13	5.33%
Grandparent	9	3.69%
Teen or young adult accompanying younger siblings/friends	7	2.87%
Other	13	5.33%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Question 4:

Question 4: How do you usually travel to the playground? (Select all that apply):

How do you usually travel to the playground? (Select all that apply)



Option	Total	Percent
Walk	225	92.21%
Cycle	74	30.33%
Wheelchair	2	0.82%
Car	19	7.79%
Scooter	39	15.98%
Public transport	5	2.05%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Design Team Response to the requests and associated observations/comments:

Responses indicate most playground users are local with 92.21% walking to the park.

Question 5:

Question 5: Do you have or care for a child with disabilities?

Do you have or care for a child with disabilities?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	16	6.56%
No	228	93.44%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Design Team Response to the requests and associated observations/comments:

Responses allow the design team to understand the additional needs and requirements for playground users. 6.56% respondents indicated that they are/cared for a child with disabilities. The disabilities included ADHD, ASD, autism, special needs, intellectual disabilities. Sensory corners, swings, see-saws, music corner and sand pit were identified as requirements.

Question 8:

Question 8: Are there any specific challenges you or your children face when using playgrounds?

Are there any specific challenges you or your children face when using playgrounds?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes (Please specify)	93	38.11%
No	151	61.89%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Design Team Response to the requests and associated observations/comments:

38.11% of respondents indicated facing challenges when using playgrounds, highlighting issues related to equipment suitability for various age groups, safety, overcrowding, maintenance, and anti-social behaviour. The challenges are consistent across both Carysfort Park and Pearse Park, although some specific nuances exist for each.

Carysfort Park:

The primary concerns for Carysfort Park revolve around the playground's size, capacity, and suitability for different age groups. Overcrowding leads to queues and limited space for play. There's a notable lack of suitable options for older children (6+). For younger children (under 2), there are insufficient age-appropriate facilities and safe spaces. Safety concerns include high open gaps on climbing frames, which are perceived as dangerous. Practical issues such as the difficulty for parents to navigate and monitor children in the existing climbing house were also raised. Maintenance problems, including littering, broken glass, and dogs off-leash, contribute to an unsafe environment. The lack of bins and toilets also presents an inconvenience.

Most Common Responses:

- Play equipment to serve a range of ages (0-16) (10 mentions)
- Not enough games/playground facilities age (<2) or safe spaces to crawl (8 mentions)
- Not a lot of options for older children (6 and above) (8 mentions)
- Carysfort Park playground is quite small, and serves a large community, so it fills up pretty quickly/overcrowding (6+ mentions)
- Request for a toilet (6 mentions)
- Request for additional seating (6 mentions)
- Carysfort climbing house is difficult to navigate as a parent/difficult to monitor child safety (6 mentions)
- No bins (5 mentions)

Pearse Park Playground:

Pearse Park Playground shares many issues with Carysfort Park Playground, particularly regarding equipment variety for all ages and maintenance. A recurring theme is the lack of suitable equipment for older children and limited options for younger children. Poor ground conditions, and safety surfacing lifting and not being fixed properly," pose safety risks, specifically for toddlers. Anti-social behaviour, including older children taking over equipment, graffiti, broken glass, bottles, cans, and gas canisters, is a major concern, along with unsupervised dogs. The absence of bins is also a repeated complaint.

Most Common Responses:

- Benches and picnic areas required (4 mentions)
- Play equipment to serve a range of ages (0-16) (3 mentions)
- Dirty grounds, lifting/cracked surfacing, overgrown grass/weeds, unsafe for kids (similar themes across multiple comments)
- No bins/no bins in the area (multiple mentions)
- Nothing suitable for older kids / Lack of equipment / Limited equipment for younger children (multiple mentions)
- Antisocial behaviour/older kids taking over equipment/graffiti/damage/bottles/cans/gas canisters (multiple mentions)
- Dogs off the lead (multiple mentions)

Question 9:**Question 9: Do you feel the current playground is inclusive for everyone?***Do you feel the current playground is inclusive for everyone?*

Option	Total	Percent
.Yes (Please specify)	85	34.84%
No	159	65.16%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Design Team Response to the requests and associated observations/comments:

A majority (65.16%) of respondents believe the current playgrounds are not inclusive for everyone. The feedback points to a critical lack of facilities for children with disabilities and inadequate options for older children and very young toddlers. Overcrowding further exacerbates inclusivity issues, as children requiring specific equipment may face long waits or limited access.

Carysfort Park Playground

Analysis of Inclusivity: Observations included the lack of equipment for children with special needs or disabilities, with only one accessible swing identified. Respondents noted the absence of ground-level activities like in-ground merry-go-rounds, sensory areas, or other items for physically impaired children. The playground is generally perceived as too small and not wheelchair-friendly. There's a clear gap in provision for very young children (under 2) and older children (8-12+ years and teenagers), leading to different age groups using the same limited zones and causing overcrowding. Sightlines and fencing issues were also raised as hindrances to safely minding children of different ages, indirectly impacting inclusivity for families.

Most Common Responses:

- Older children are not catered for (5 mentions)
- Too small, no inclusivity for wheelchair users, those with mobility difficulties / Not wheelchair friendly / Limited space and doesn't cater for wheelchair (multiple mentions)
- More equipment for children with special needs is needed / No disability equipment / Nothing really for people with disabilities (multiple mentions)
- Not enough variety for all age groups / Not for all age groups (multiple mentions)
- Very little for under 2, only a swing / Not good for babies, no sand pit / Children <3 yrs have very little to do (multiple mentions)
- Only suitable for very small children / The Carysfort Park playground is only suited to younger kids (5 and under) (multiple mentions)

Pearse Park Playground

Analysis of Inclusivity: Pearse Park was identified as having a lack of inclusivity, particularly for children with disabilities, with respondents observing firsthand that disabled children are left to watch others play. There are limited opportunities for wheelchair users. The equipment is described as limited and primarily suitable for very young children, with insufficient variety for under-2s, older children (9-10+), and teenagers. Some respondents also highlighted a general lack of varied play items and equipment that challenges physical ability, such as structures for heights, speed, and balance, which are more suited to older children.

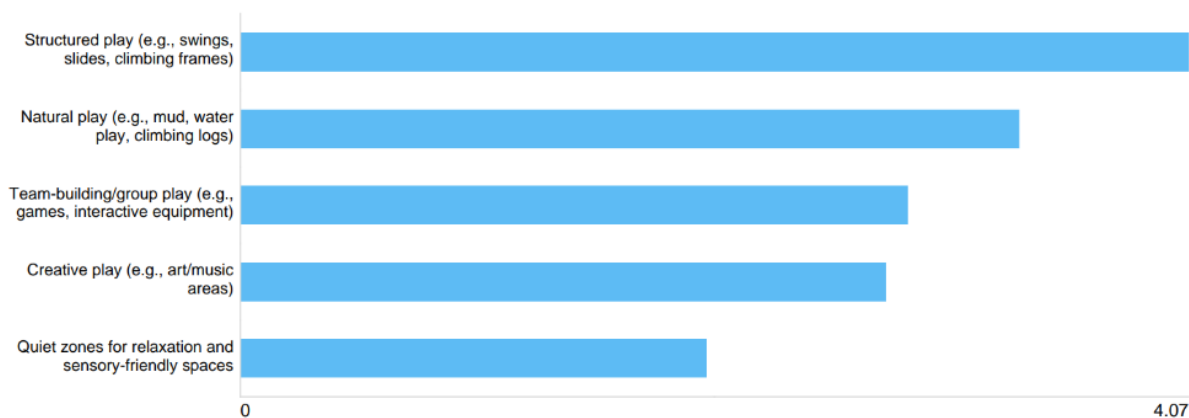
Most Common Responses:

- Nothing for wheelchair users or double swing for parent to sit with child / Nothing there for any child that has a disability / Not inclusive for children with disabilities / No things for kids in wheelchairs / No inclusive swings (multiple mentions)
- Very little for under 2, only a swing / Not very varied play items for younger children (multiple mentions)
- Little for older than 9 or 10 years / Nothing suitable for older kids / Pearse Park is not inclusive of children with disabilities or teenagers (multiple mentions)
- Limited stuff for under 2 / Only good for very young children

Question 10:

Question 10: What kind of play do you most enjoy or would like to see? (by order of preference)

Table of "What kind of play do you most enjoy or would like to see? (by order of preference)" in rank order

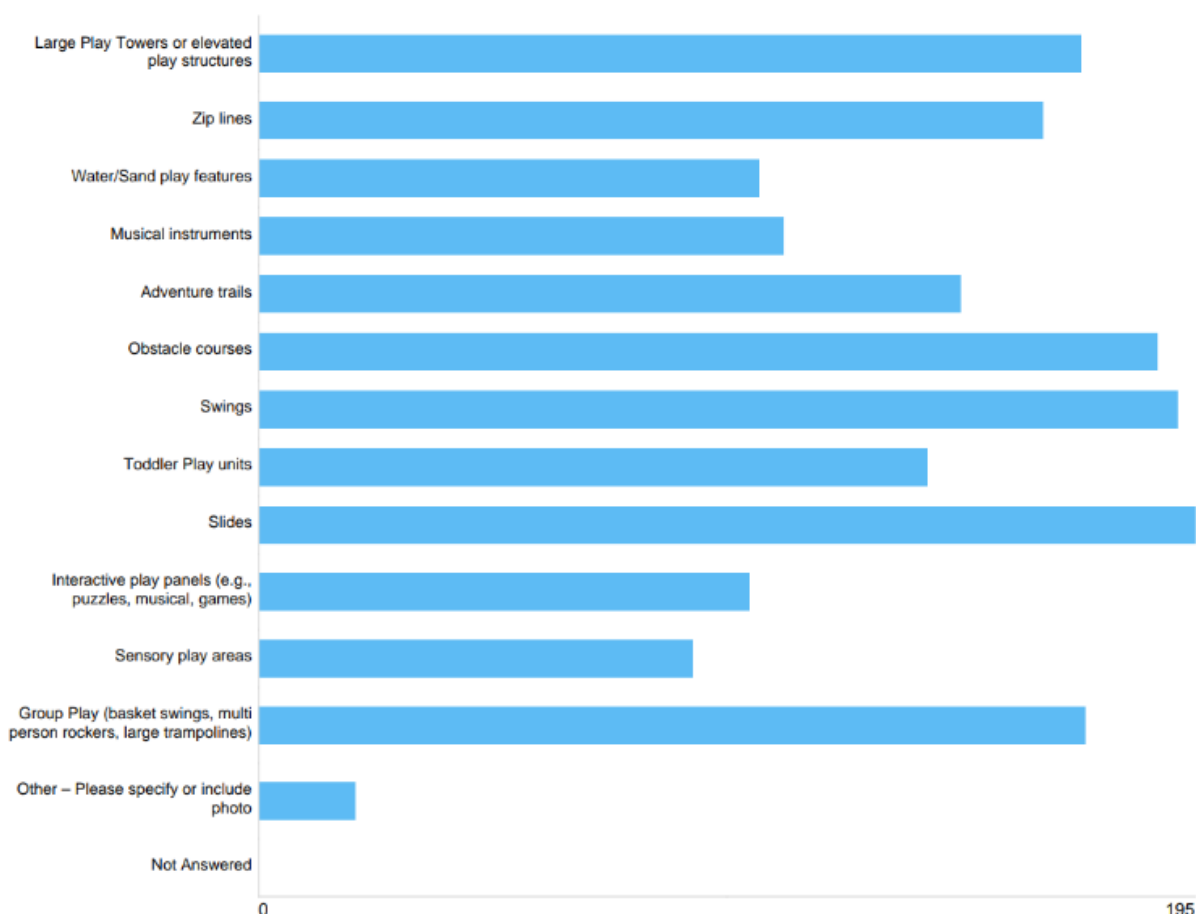


Item	Ranking
Structured play (e.g., swings, slides, climbing frames)	4.07
Natural play (e.g., mud, water play, climbing logs)	3.33
Team-building/group play (e.g., games, interactive equipment)	2.85
Creative play (e.g., art/music areas)	2.76
Quiet zones for relaxation and sensory-friendly spaces	1.99

Question 11:

Question 11: What types of equipment or play structures would you like to see in your playground? (Select all that apply):

What types of equipment or play structures would you like to see in your playground? (Select all that apply):



Option	Total	Percent
Large Play Towers or elevated play structures	171	70.08%
Zip lines	163	66.80%
Water/Sand play features	104	42.62%
Musical instruments	109	44.67%
Adventure trails	146	59.84%
Obstacle courses	187	76.64%
Swings	191	78.28%
Toddler Play units	139	56.97%
Slides	195	79.92%
Interactive play panels	102	41.80%
Sensory play areas	90	36.89%
Group Play	172	70.49%
Other – Please specify or include photo	20	8.20%

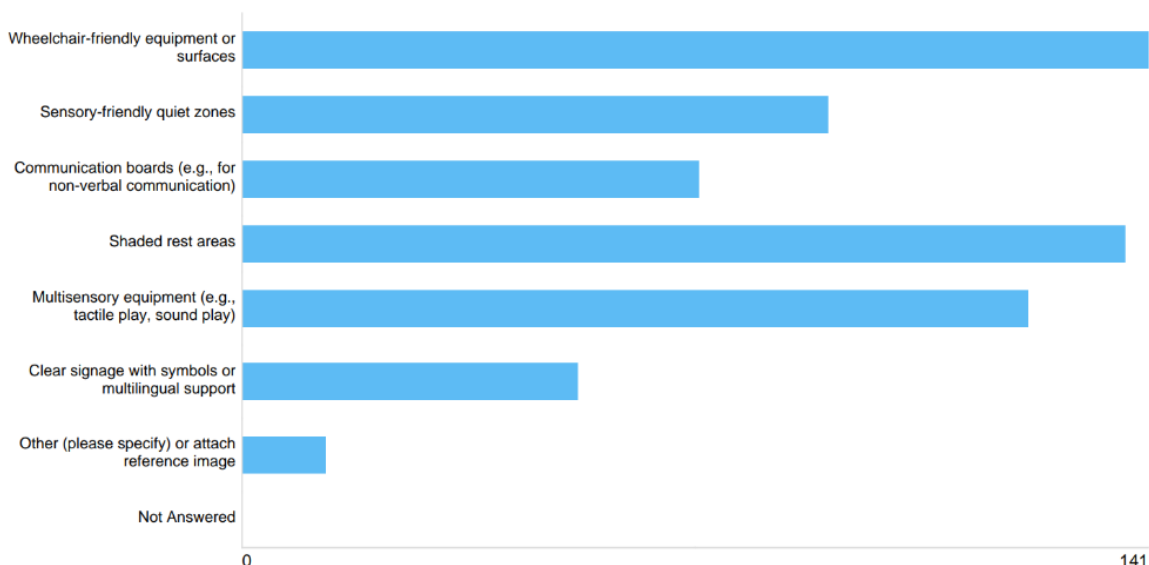
Other associated observations/comments:

Other items requested include monkey bars, skateboard ramps, tennis courts, small football goals, trampolines, accessible swings, table tennis

Question 12:

Question 12: Are there any specific features that would make the playground more inclusive for children with disabilities or sensory needs? (Select all that apply):

Are there any specific features that would make the playground more inclusive for children with disabilities or sensory needs? (Select all that apply):



Option	Total	Percent
Wheelchair-friendly equipment or surfaces	141	57.79%
Sensory-friendly quiet zones	91	37.30%
Communication boards	71	29.10%
Shaded rest areas	137	56.15%
Multisensory equipment	122	50.00%
Clear signage with symbols or multilingual support	52	21.31%
Other (please specify)	13	5.33%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

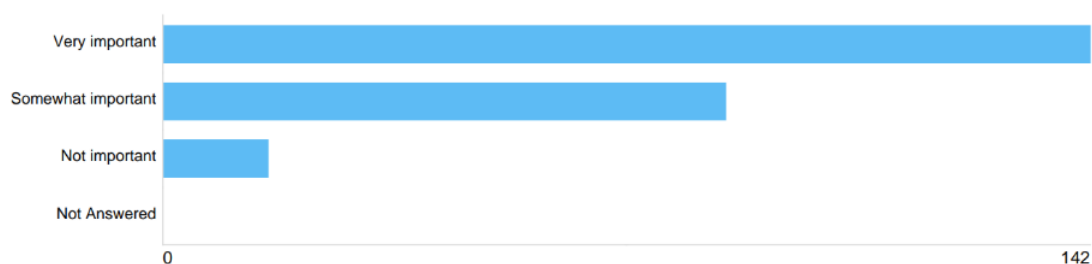
Other associated observations/comments:

Other items requested include seating for parents/carers, Accessible seating and digging/building opportunities

Question 13:

Question 13: How important is it that the playground includes both structured and natural play areas (unstructured play)?

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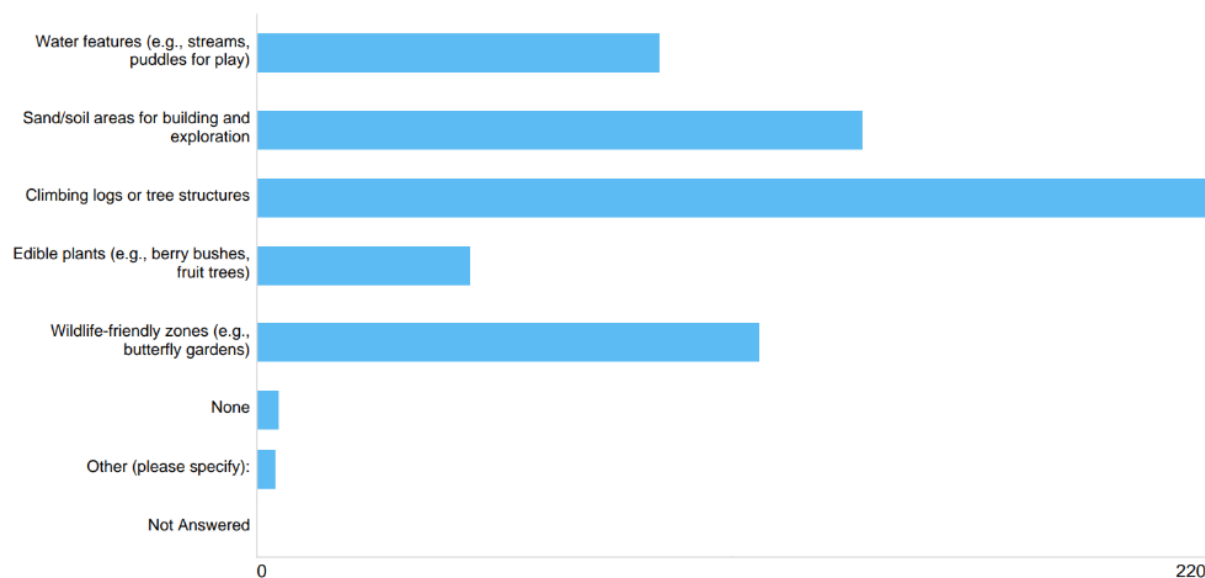


Option	Total	Percent
Very important	142	58.20%
Somewhat important	86	35.25%
Not important	16	6.56%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Question 14:

Question 14: What natural elements would you like to see included in the playground? (Select all that apply)

What natural elements would you like to see included in the playground? (Select all that apply)



Option	Total	Percent
Water features (e.g., streams, puddles for play)	93	38.11%
Sand/soil areas for building and exploration	140	57.38%
Climbing logs or tree structures	220	90.16%
Edible plants (e.g., berry bushes, fruit trees)	49	20.08%
Wildlife-friendly zones (e.g., butterfly gardens)	116	47.54%
None	5	2.05%
Other (please specify):	4	1.64%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

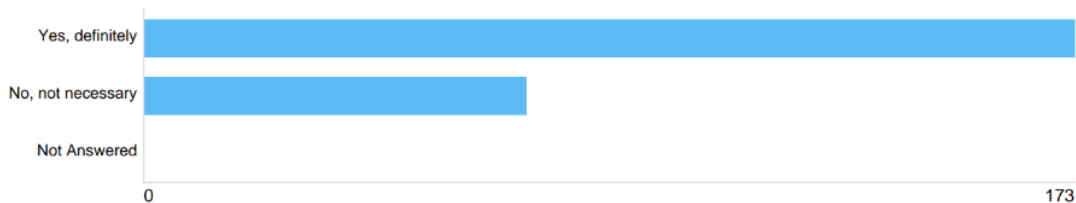
Other associated observations/comments:

Other observations, Messy play may not be appropriate. Natural areas are not important in the playground, butterfly gardens, basketball, signs for plants to eat and not eat, sand

Question 15:

Question 15: Would you like to see native plants or trees incorporated into the design for environmental or educational purposes?

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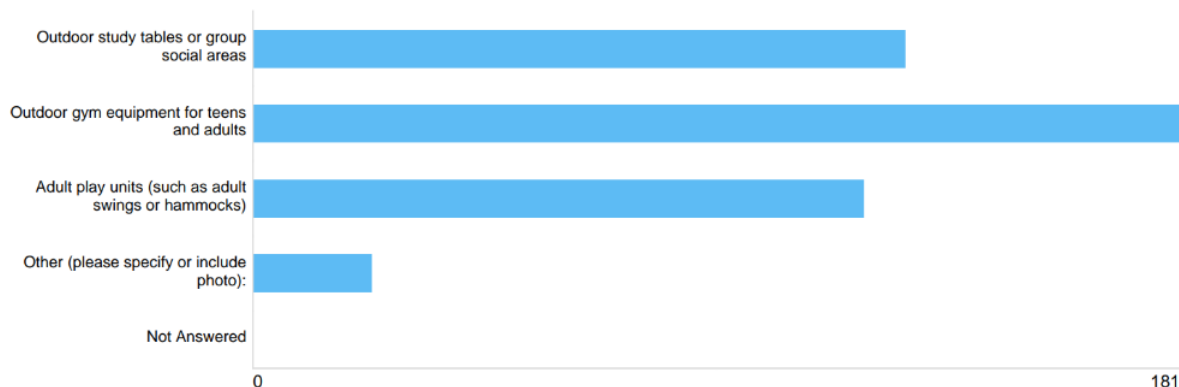


Option	Total	Percent
Yes, definitely	173	70.90%
No, not necessary	71	29.10%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Question 16:

Question 16: What would make the park more welcoming for teenagers? (Select all that apply)

What would make the park more welcoming for teenagers? (Select all that apply)



Option	Total	Percent
Outdoor study tables or group social areas	127	52.05%
Outdoor gym equipment for teens and adults	181	74.18%
Adult play units	119	48.77%
Other (please specify or include photo):	23	9.43%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

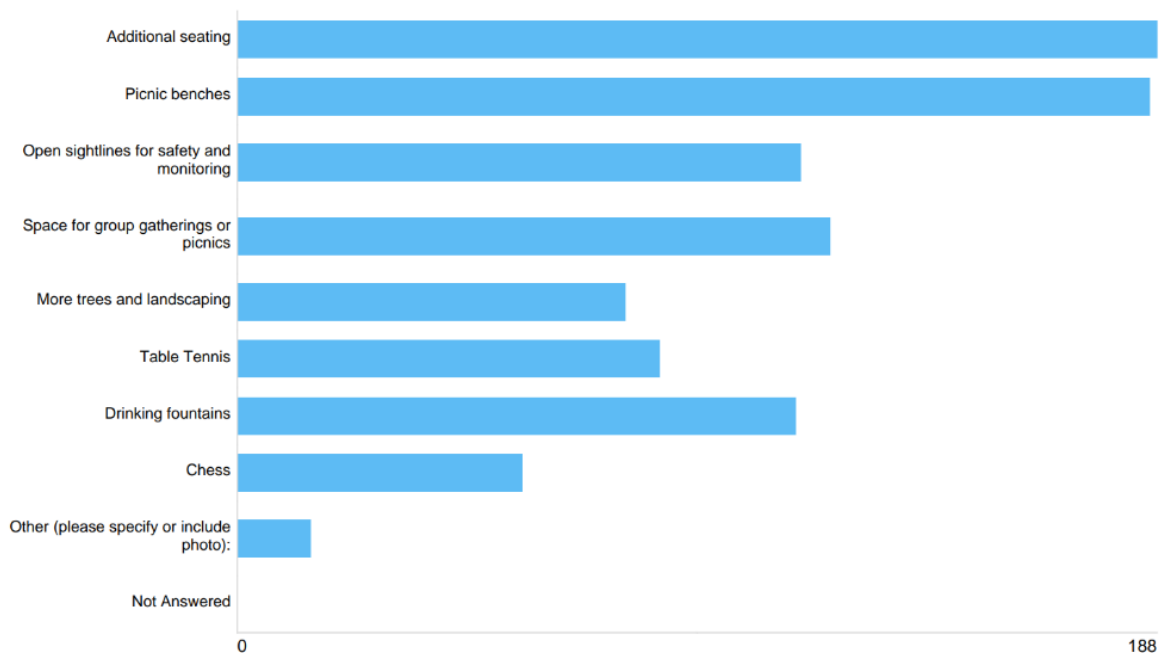
Other associated observations/comments:

Other observations, Seating, Larger swings, High up areas to hang out in, harder and larger balance paths, Basketball courts, Things for teenage girls - structures to hang from, Running tracks, Knock-up tennis/hurling wall, Small football goals, tennis courts, mini golf area among trees would make parks far more interesting and promote golf.

Question 17:

Question 17: What would make the park better for parents and caregivers? (Select all that apply)

What would make the park better for parents and caregivers? (Select all that apply)



Option	Total	Percent
Additional seating	188	77.05%
Picnic benches	186	76.23%
Open sightlines for safety and monitoring	115	47.13%
Space for group gatherings or picnics	121	49.59%
More trees and landscaping	79	32.38%
Table Tennis	86	35.25%
Drinking fountains	114	46.72%
Chess	58	23.77%
Other (please specify or include photo):	15	6.15%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Other associated observations/comments:

Other observations, A toilet with nappy changing facilities, café, fencing, bins

Question 18:

If you have children or care for children, what do they love most about the current playground?

Most Common Responses:**Pearse Park:**

- The zip line was the most popular, frequently cited as a favourite for children including 10-year-olds.
- The tyre swing is also highly regarded.
- The standard swings and slide are enjoyed, though respondents noted they are mainly suitable for younger children.
- The park's proximity to local residents and the fact that it's a place where children meet their friends are valued.
- The presence of the adjacent astro pitch is also seen as a positive.

Carysfort Park

- The swings are highly regarded.
- The enclosed nature of the playground and the presence of a gate are highly appreciated by parents for providing a safe space where children can have more autonomy.
- The little playhouse and slide are enjoyed.
- Children love climbing and playing with the bark (referring to the surfacing material).
- The playground's local accessibility (easy to walk to) and the surrounding green areas are valued.
- The presence of blackberry bushes adds a unique, natural element that children enjoy.

Question 19:

What do you think is missing from the current playground that you would like to see in the new design?

Most Common Responses:**Carysfort Park Playground**

- **More Varied and Age-Appropriate Equipment:** A significant demand for more options for older children (e.g., advanced obstacles, monkey bars, climbing frames, roundabouts, trampolines, gymnastics equipment, sports facilities like table tennis, basketball hoops, and tennis courts).
- **Toddler/Baby Facilities:** Insufficient options for very young children, including a need for more baby swings, dedicated baby sections/areas, sand play, and toddler-safe climbing structures.
- **Inclusive/Sensory Elements:** Requests for equipment for children with special needs/disabilities (e.g., special needs swing, seesaw, accessible slides) and sensory areas (e.g., in-ground merry-go-round, soil area).
- **Increased Capacity:** The playground is perceived as too small, leading to overcrowding and a need for more play stations.
- **Amenities:** Persistent requests for a public toilet (including baby changing facilities), more bins, and additional seating/picnic benches.
- **Design & Safety:** Suggestions for a safer tree house, better climbing frames, and consideration for noise pollution from nearby facilities.

Pearse Park Playground

- Amenities: A clear need for more benches/seating, a sand pit area with a digger, and a toilet area suitable for changing nappies.
 - Equipment Variety: Requests for more swings (including for older children), a bigger slide and climbing frame, gym equipment for older children, and more adventurous play (e.g., higher structures, water elements, balance routes).
 - Maintenance & Upgrade: Specific mentions of the park not being maintained well enough, broken pieces not being fixed, and a general desire for the parks to be better stocked and maintained, with concerns about delays in upgrading.
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Question 20:

Do you have any additional comments, suggestions, or concerns that we should consider when designing the new playground?

Most Common Responses:

- **Safety & Anti-Social Behaviour:**
 - Concerns about anti-social behaviour, including cans and gas canisters left in the playground.
 - Issues with dogs being brought into the playground are a concern.
 - A need for designs that make the playground harder for teenagers to damage.
 - **Maintenance & Dilapidation:**
 - Concerns that many parks are in a very poor state of repair, and that delays in upgrading them are "ridiculous."
 - A strong emphasis on the critical need for parks to be well-stocked and properly maintained.
 - **Space Utilisation:**
 - Comments that the space is poorly utilised and severely dilapidated, with suggestions for better thought-through use of the area.
 - **Environmental Concerns:**
 - Suggestions for more trees and planting around areas like soccer pitches to create more wild areas, indicating a desire for more natural elements beyond just play structures.
 - **Overall Enjoyment of Park Surroundings:**
 - Appreciation for the beauty of the park around the playground, indicating that the natural environment is a key part of the positive experience.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The key requests and observations from the "Have Your Say" public consultation regarding the proposed playground upgrades at Carysfort Park and Pearse Park are captured in the executive summary. The feedback from the process has provided local insight for Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council's Parks Department to create inclusive and engaging play environments.

Key Requests and Themes:

Across both parks, the consultation highlighted several consistent themes:

- **Enhanced Inclusivity and Age Appropriateness:** A request for play equipment that caters to a much broader age spectrum, from very young children (0-2 years) to older children and teenagers (6+ to teens). Existing facilities are often seen as insufficient.
- **Diverse and Challenging Play Structures:** A wider variety of play equipment beyond traditional swings and slides. This includes more adventurous, sensory, and challenging structures like multi-level climbing frames, zip lines, trampolines, and natural play elements such as sand and water features.
- **Improved Amenities:** Consistent requests for essential infrastructure, including accessible public toilets (with baby changing facilities), more bins, and increased seating/picnic areas to enhance comfort and convenience for all users.

Opportunities for Implementation:

Carysfort Park Playground:

- **Key Requests:** Increase the footprint and capacity of the playground to accommodate a variety of additional play facilities for all ages (especially toddlers and teens) to meet local demand.
- **Opportunities for Implementation:** The upgrade layout can create distinct, safe zones for different age groups. Prioritizing the installation of accessible, multi-sensory, and challenging equipment, along with modern amenity blocks, with a fenced boundary.

Pearse Park Playground:

- **Key Requests:** Requests for dedicated sand play areas, more varied swings and climbing structures for older children.
- **Opportunities for Implementation:** The upgrade design can build upon the popularity of dynamic play elements like the zip line by introducing more adventurous and varied equipment suitable for older children. Addressing the critical need for new amenities junior amenities like sand play.