

# COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT 2023



The trustees are committed to listening to levy payers and users of the green spaces while working towards a great West Park community where we are **Caring** of the environment, **Sharing** within our community with one another and nature and **Daring** to innovate to deliver best practice which leads to positive community and environmental impact.

## CONSULTATION SNAPSHOT

99

Responses received

13

It took on average just under 13 minutes to help us set our strategic direction

76

People wanted to receive updates via email.

5

Prize winners

## A year with unique challenges A renewed focus

2022 brought the end of Covid restrictions and beginning of life returning to a new normal. The pandemic had left many of the Trust's plans behind schedule, its major music event undeliverable and the search for contractors and partners to deliver planned projects back at square one.

This focussed the Trustees to complete the projects in progress such as leaf notice boards and maintenance of paths and fencing while being able to consult with the community what their priorities would be moving forward. in 2023 and into 2024.

# QUESTION

# RESULTS

# OUTCOME

Would you be supportive of a community facility within West Park Village

We recieved 99 responses and overall their was a 4.2/5 response

Respondents felt there is a need for a community facility

"I think a community facility would be a great addition to West Park. It would need to have activities and opportunities for all ages..."

"It would be an essential part of bringing the community together."

" This would bring a village together in many ways."

"Depending on what is available as to whether it would benefit me personally, but I'm sure it would be of great benefit to many residents."

"Needed to help build and consolidate our community."

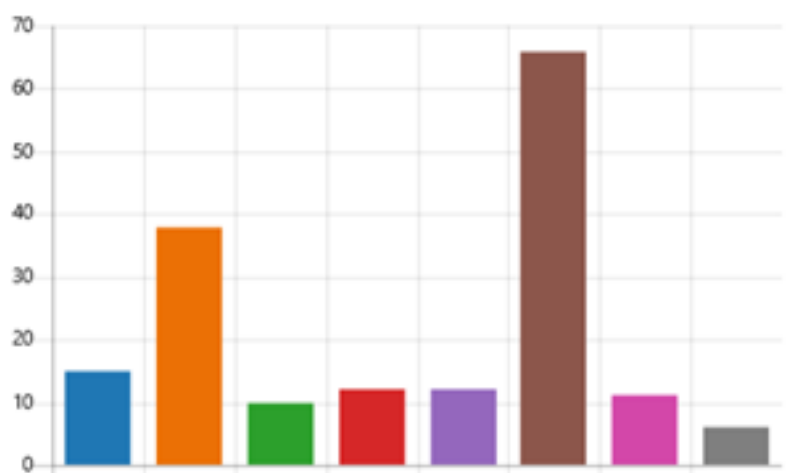
"Also a shortage of venues on this side of town for events and classes "

"I would be very keen to help get this up and running!! "

The Trust can not deliver the change the community would want without the community being fully involved.

How would you like or see yourself being involved in this project.

Not at all	15
Volunteer	38
Group organiser or leader	10
Managment committee mem...	12
Project member (Project plann...	12
Community user / participant	66
Fundraiser	11
Other	6

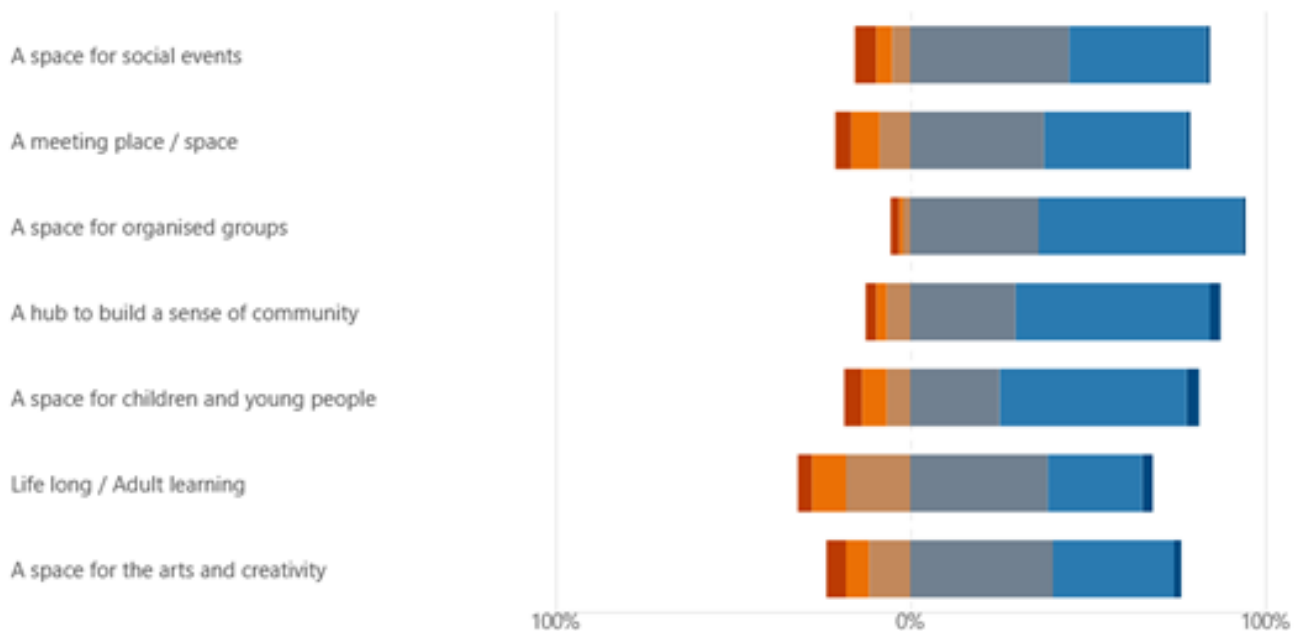


# QUESTION

# RESULTS

If built, what should the purposes of the community facility be? Please rate the answers below by importance to you

■ Not Very Important ■ Not Important ■ Not Sure ■ Important ■ Very Important ■ N/A



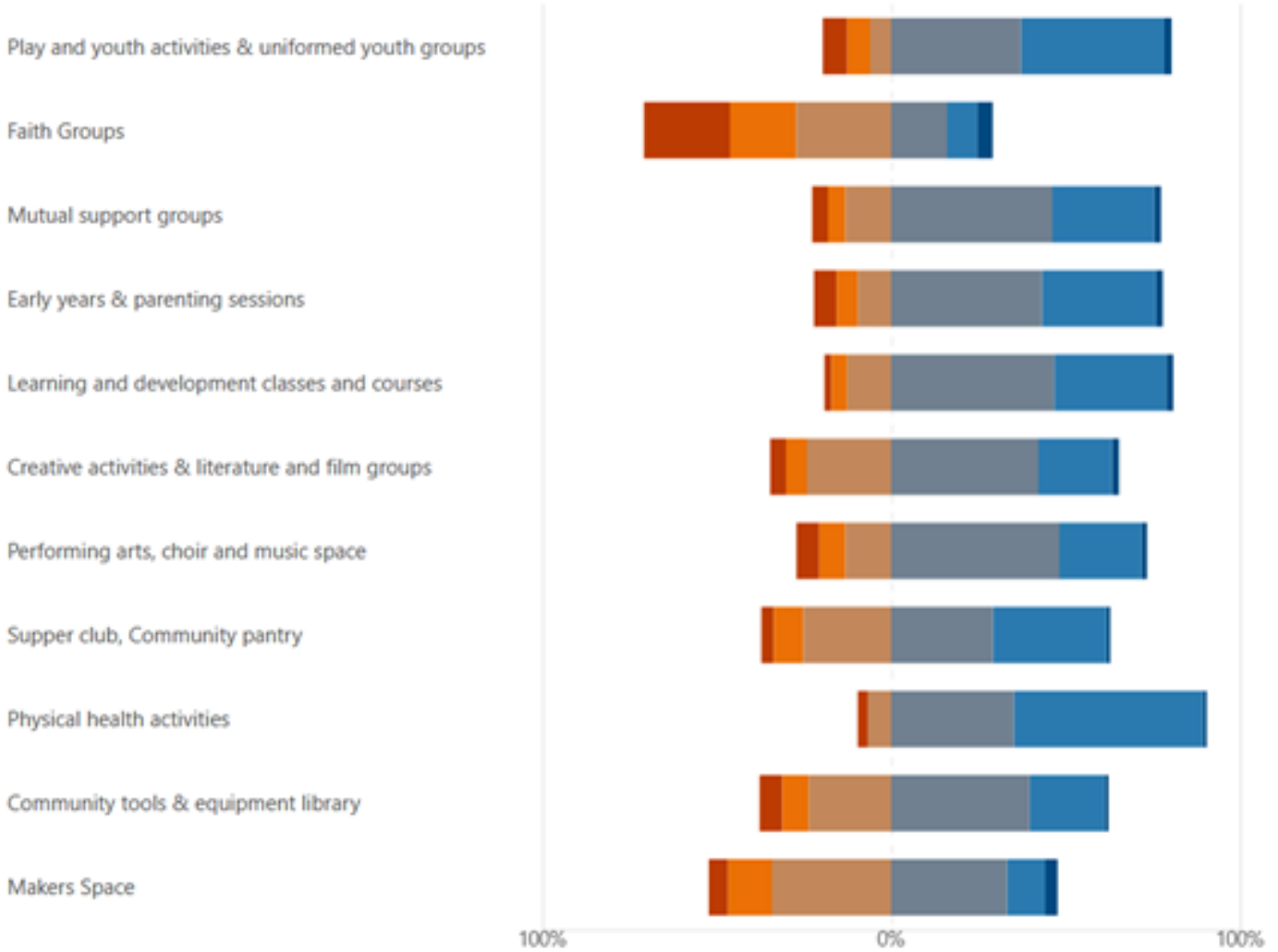
Feedback received will help the Trust engage a architect to develop a scale plan ensuring appropriate space and scale is achieved to meet community expectation.

# QUESTION

# RESULTS

Please rank the possible activities or events below which you think should take place in a facility?

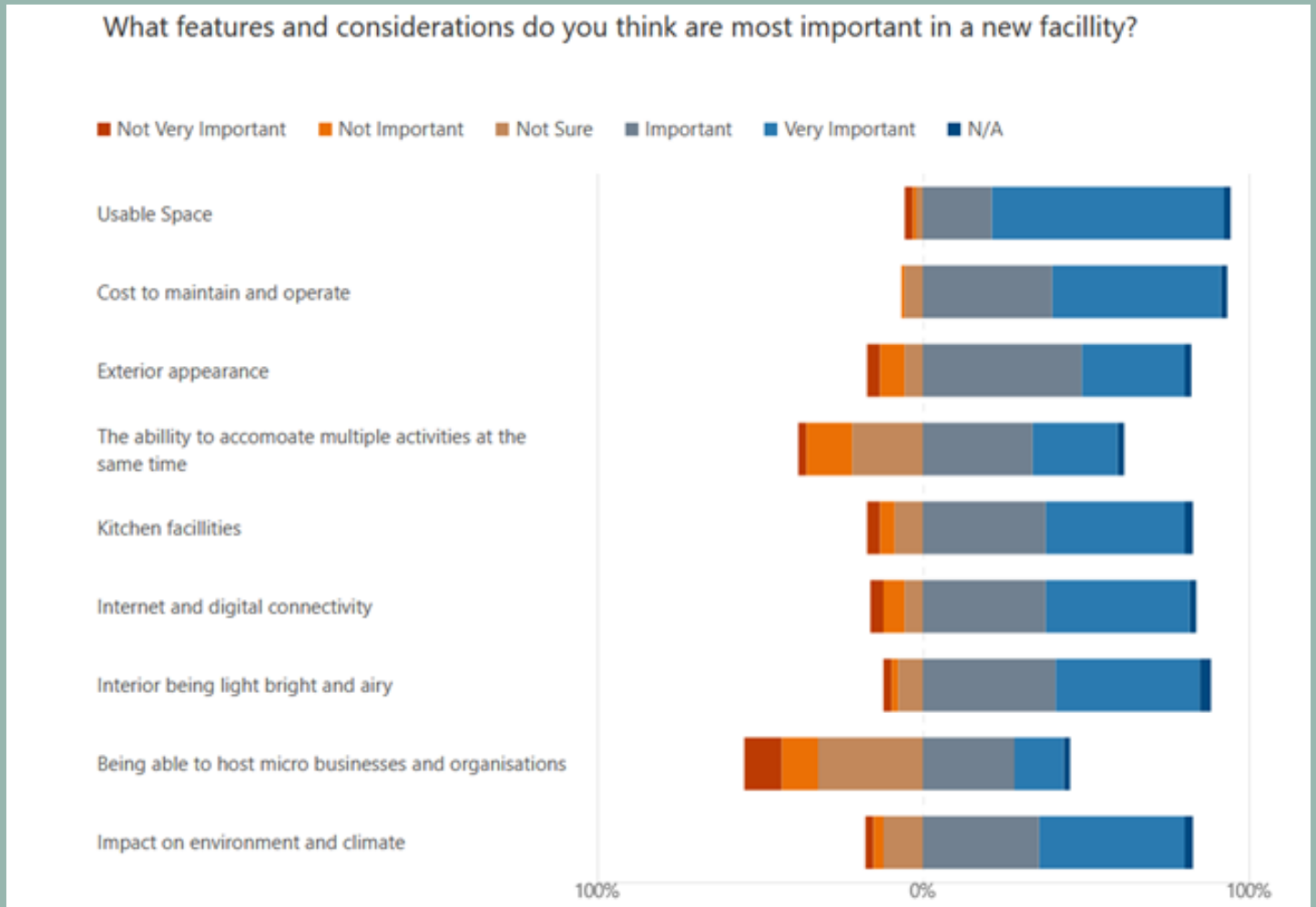
■ Not Very Important ■ Not Important ■ Not Sure ■ Important ■ Very Important ■ N/A



Feedback received will help ensure a building has appropriate spaces and facilities to meet community expectation.

# QUESTION

# RESULTS



What would you name the community facility



The main themes were  
Community Centre, Village Hall, Hub

## QUESTION

## RESULTS

Please tell us how the strategic Green Space and its amenities makes you feel?

99 Respondents meant a 4.2 positive rating.

## COMMENTS

Happy to be outside, proud of where I live 😊

Just love living near to green space, it's great to walk the dog, it's fairly well maintained, friendly etc. Would love to see the green spaces used more e.g. for music events like in the past / a Christmas event e.g. craft stalls / Christmas tree on Winding Way / Easter egg hunt

West Park is of such great value to Darlington. A fairly wild park and large outdoor space on the edge of the town. I didn't really factor in the park when buying my house here but it has honestly made a massive difference to my life and I use it most days of the week - dog walks, a lunchtime stroll, as a cut through to Cockerton.

The nature reserve was a lifeline to many during the pandemic and continues to enable local residents to enjoy the outdoors on their doorstep

The green space and park was one of the main reasons we moved here 11 years ago. Having a park on our doorstep is fantastic

They break up the building landscape so you don't feel like you're on yet another new build estate. They were invaluable in lockdown also as they gave residents a green space on their doorstep, despite not being in the countryside

I love seeing the wild flowers come out every year and think that they brighten up the park every year.

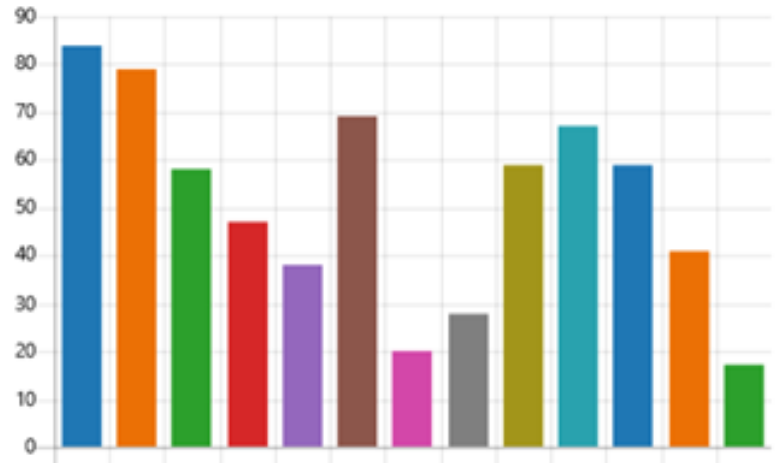
It's great to have an outdoor space that feels bigger than it is where you can get lost in nature.

# QUESTION

# RESULTS

What do you think improves these shared green spaces?

Wild flowers, bulbs	84
Litter reduction	79
Quiet reflective spaces	58
Space for physical activity suc...	47
Refreshment kiosk / toilet facil...	38
Seating areas	69
Location interpretation / signa...	20
Art	28
Safe dog / pet areas	59
Nature Trails	67
CCTV, safety	59
Community orchard / foragin...	41
Other	17



## Outcome

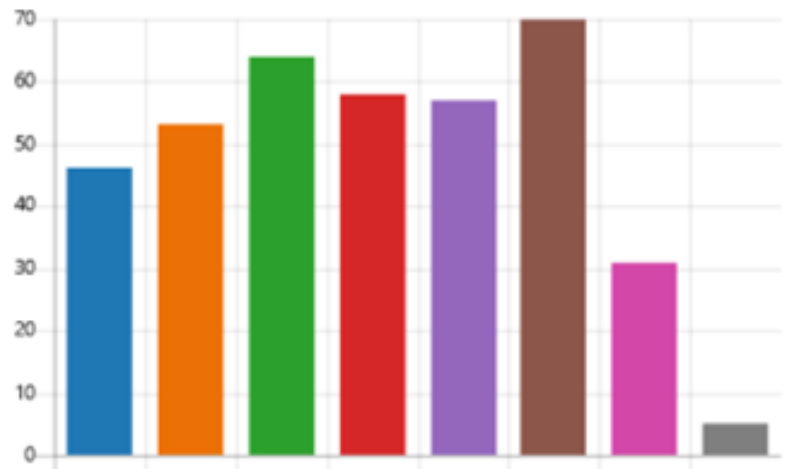
This feedback will help Trustees allocate levy funding and apply for external funding to support the communities ambition.

# QUESTION

# RESULTS

What events or regular activities would you like to see developed and supported ?

Arts events and festivals	46
Sports Events (park run, cyclin...	53
Family fun days	64
Nature and wildlife sessions	58
Music Events	57
Seasonal Events	70
Volunteering sessions	31
Other	5



The Trustees can focus on funding and finding partners to help organise and deliver these activities

Things for little ones to do, nature related and fun days for families and dogs

Park Run (official one) - South Park is too far away and a hassle to park etc

Cycling for beginners, using the park route

Seasonal events - Easter, Christmas, a summer fayre

Music events / family fun days. Local businesses could even sponsor events?

Community food day

Sustainable fashion show ie clothes sale and swap

Community book space/library

Orchard activities, learning sessions about nature, local wildlife, local apples

Markets and street food

It's just a nice place to walk and for peace and quiet.

Spend the levy on upkeep and maintenance.

We really enjoyed the music festival on the hill. Some of the other events have been very 'child focused' which doesn't really appeal to everyone.

Regular opportunities for local people to volunteer their time to help the local area, litter pick, bulb planting and so on.

Followed by a coffee and cake would help bring the community together.



# QUESTION

---

## Please let us know how accessibility and usability could be improved for you

Some additional seating but not so that it impacts the look of the park  
Just needs to be inviting

The paths through the park aren't brilliant for prams/strollers when there's been lots of rain.

All well and good putting sand/gravel paths down but they're hazardous during the winter months

Also due to the park having next to no lighting it's useless to use as a walkway to the estates as it just breeds antisocial behaviour  
Improved security to reduce asb

Areas to sit and admire the view. Picnic areas with tables, stone ones like in the playground so they can't be vandalised or damaged. Spend money on maintenance so it remains a nice place

A few of the paths could be resurfaced as show some fairly severe wear and tear

Lights (solar panels) around the park to encourage night usage

Paths which are easy to walk on and dry

Overly boggy/wet/muddy areas improved

Wheelchair access smoother paths it's really hard pushing a wheelchair up a rocky sandy path

Easy Access for prams is essential

Smoother pathways off the black path, the water has caused ditches to form across some of the pathways

Improved drainage on the green corridor

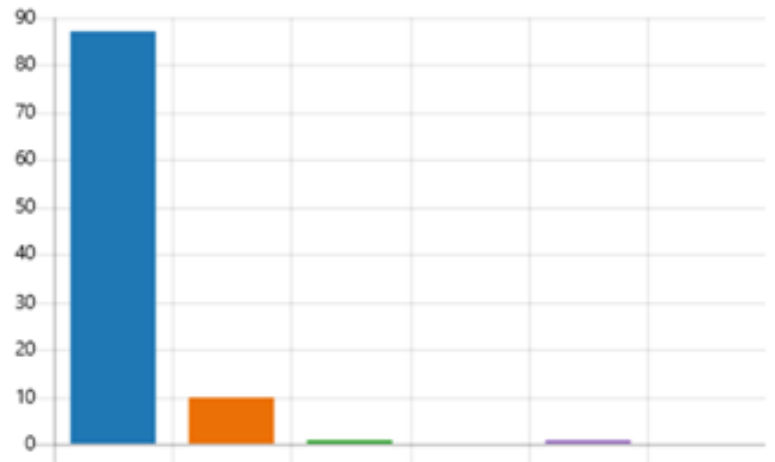
I think there needs to be a dog area and non dog area...

Ensure paths are maintained to a high standard and repaired quickly after washouts. Also seating areas should be maintained

# About the Respondents

## I am

● A local resident / Levy Payer	87
● A local resident / non Levy Pa...	10
● Vistor to WestPark	1
● Organisation interested in We...	0
● West Park Levy Paying business	1
● Other	0



## Age

● Under 18 years	0
● 18-29 Years	5
● 30-45 Years	63
● 46-60 years	20
● 60 years and older	11



# THANK YOU

for your feedback and ideas



**W:** [www.friendsofwestpark.com](http://www.friendsofwestpark.com)

**E:** [Info@westparklevytrust.org.uk](mailto:Info@westparklevytrust.org.uk)

This piece of research was developed and delivered by the WestPark Levy Trust  
A full copy of the responses from this consultation is available from our website.

Caring Sharing Daring