

# Swaffield Pocket Park

Consultation Feedback  
September 2024



Lead: Enable Parks Development



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# Project Background

In March 2024, a petition from residents of Swaffield Road, SW18 (Wandle Ward) was presented by Councillor Paul at a full Council meeting, requesting the creation of a Pocket Park and playground facilities in Swaffield Road. The petition was signed by 279 local people.

In response to the petition, Wandsworth Council carried out a feasibility study for the potential formation of a Pocket Park. This proposal aligned with the administration's manifesto commitment to create more pocket parks and community gardens. Three design options were developed for the provision of a Pocket Park, including playground facilities, which were then consulted upon. This consultation asked people which of the three options they preferred and then explored the preferred materials and features which could be delivered in each design. This allows the preferred design to then be modified to include these preferences.

£400,000 capital from the Council's General Fund was allocated specifically for a Pocket Park at Swaffield Road, with a further £400,000 for Pocket Parks at other sites. The feasibility for the Swaffield Pocket Park estimates a total cost in the range of £375,000 to £415,000 dependent upon which of the three design options is preferred at consultation. Figures are based on the work commencing in 2025. It is likely additional inflationary costs will be incurred if the Pocket Park is not delivered until early 2026. The actual cost of the Pocket Park would not be known until the completion of a procurement process on the preferred design option.



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# Project Overview

Wandsworth Council propose to create a new Pocket Park on Swaffield Road, investing **£400,000** to open up a disused space for everyone to enjoy.

The proposed new Pocket Park would contain a playable landscape along with sustainable planting for wildlife, benches and bins. A new path would lead through the site and the boundary would be changed to give views in and out along Swaffield Road. This will create a place that enhances health and wellbeing of the local community and provides doorstep play.

The proposed new Pocket Park here would have entrance gates on self-closers at both public entrances, would protect and include the mature trees, and would include surfaces that aid sustainable drainage. Secure access to the residential properties surrounding the park will be retained. The space will be maintained and managed by the council's grounds maintenance contractor just like all the other greenspaces.



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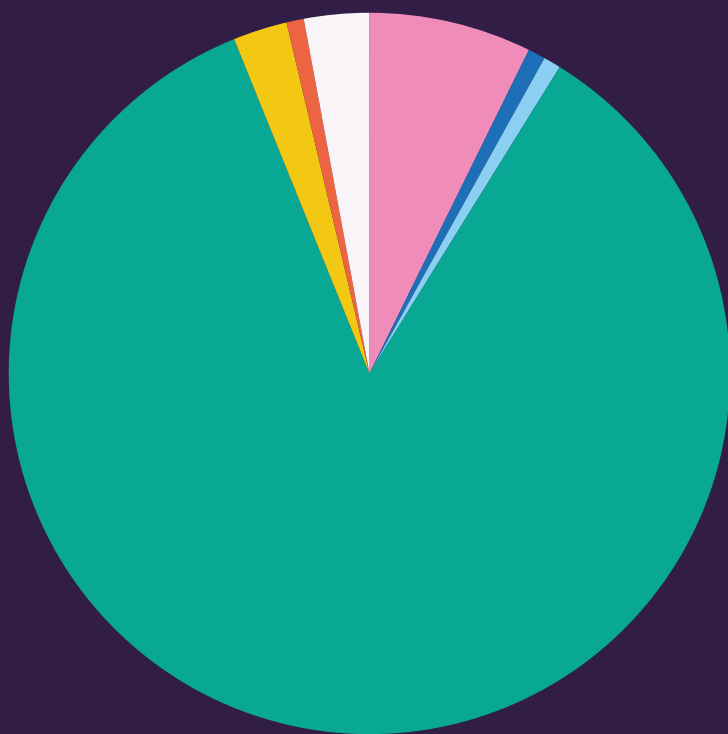
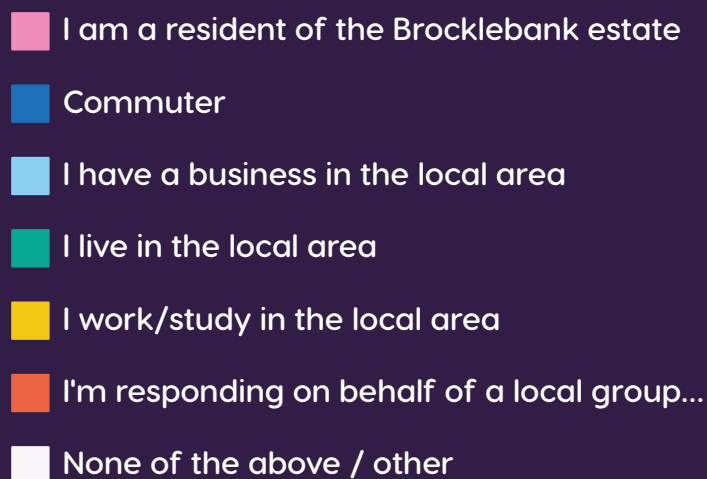
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# Consultation details:

The consultation went live online on Monday 8th July 2024 and closed on Monday 19th August 2024.

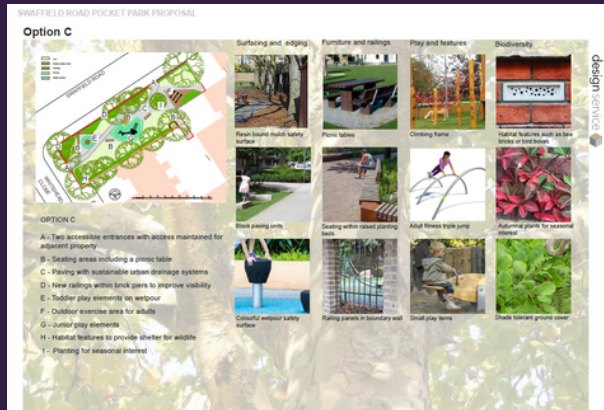
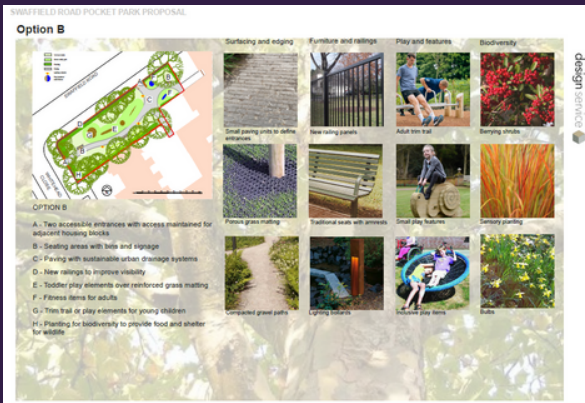
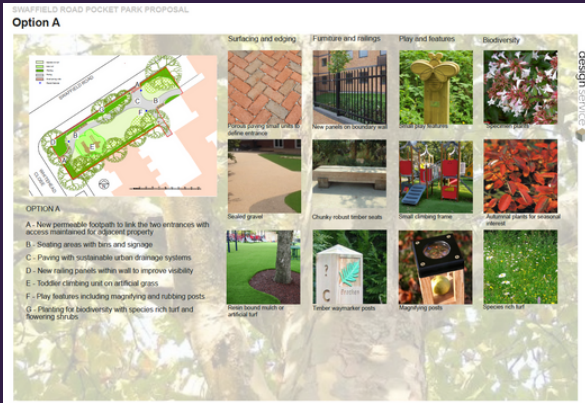
One on site drop in session was held on: Sunday 21st July 12noon - 3pm.

In total, 124 people responded to the consultation, with 85% of respondents living locally to the proposed Swaffield Pocket Park site.

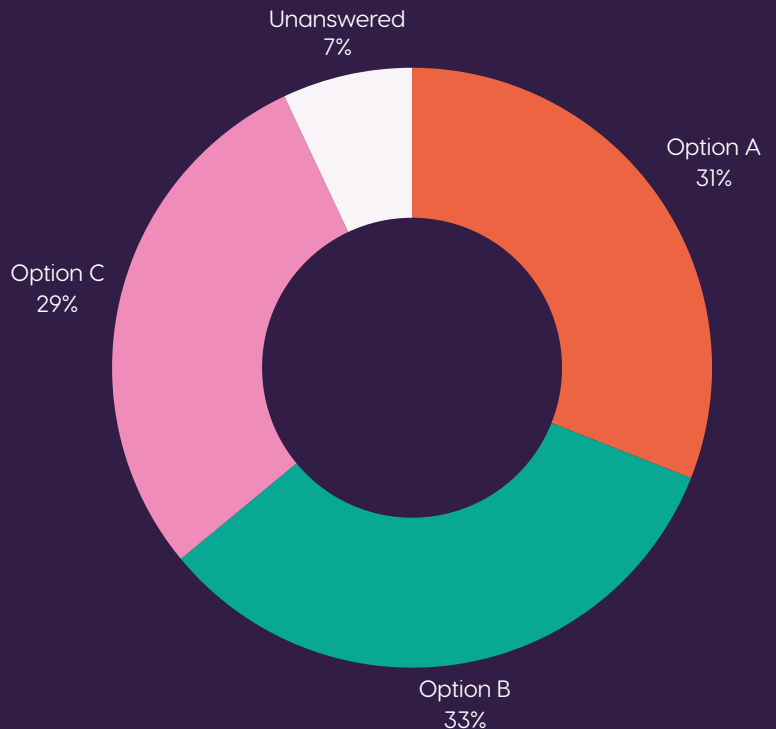


# Design choice

People were asked to rank these three pocket park designs:

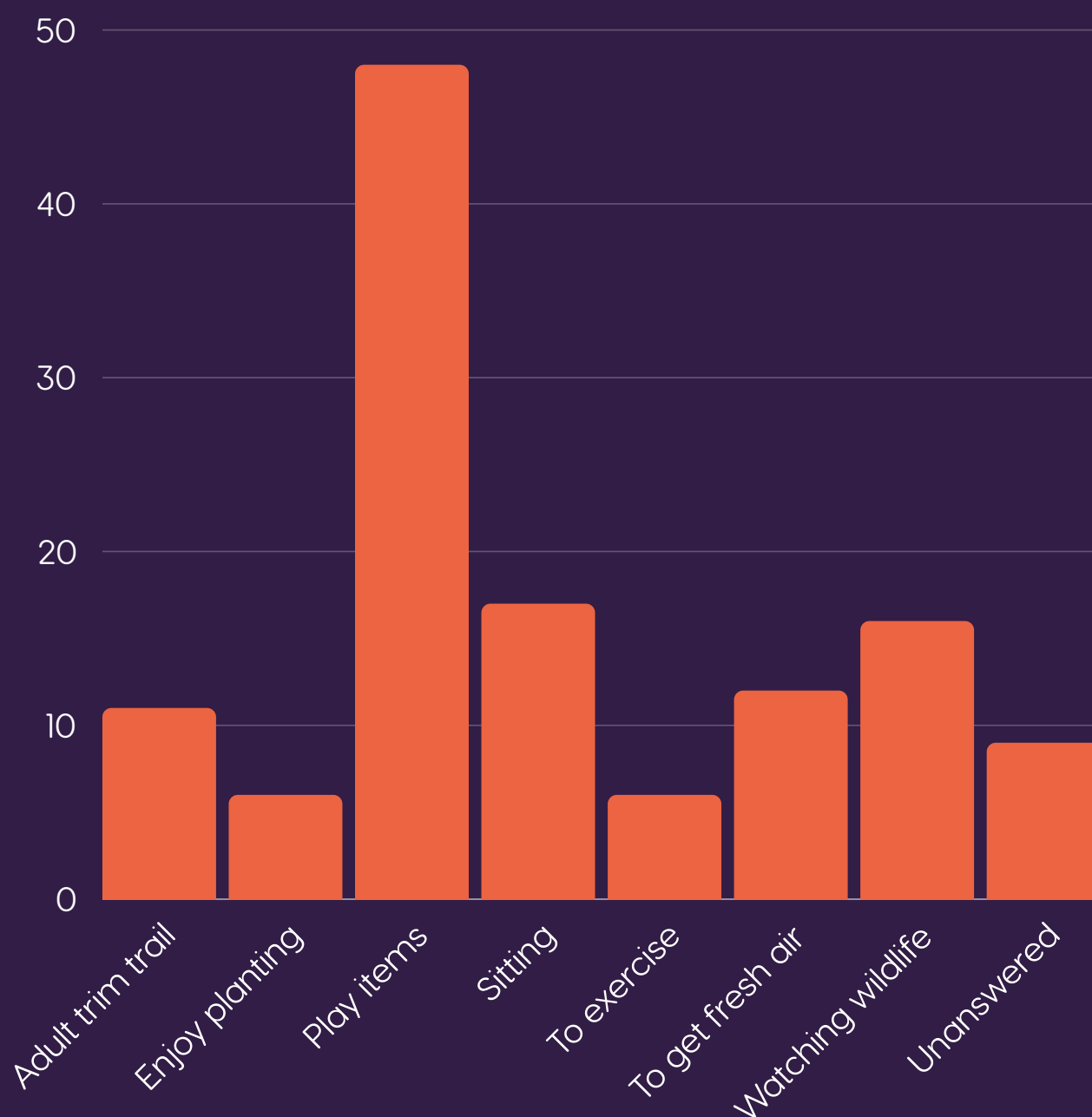


Option B was the overall preferred first option with 33% of people choosing this as their first choice. The diagram opposite shows the breakdown of votes for the first choice preferred option. The white colour represents those respondents who did not answer this question.



# How respondents would use the park

One question within the consultation asked "What would you look forward to doing the most?" This question was designed to find out which equipment/facilities the participants would most utilise and the results (below) show that play items were the most favoured.



# Design options: specifics

**Path options:** 4 path options were offered and the most popular path option was the “sealed / bonded gravel paths.”



**Tree root protection options:** 4 tree root protection options were offered. The most popular tree root protection option was the “Regular applications of natural mulch.”



**Safety surface options:** 5 safety surface options were offered. The most popular safety surface option was the “Naturalistic wetpour.”



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# Design options: specifics

**Railing panel options:** 3 railing panel options were offered and the most popular railing panel option was the “railing panels on top of low brick wall.”



**Seating options:** 5 seating options were offered and the most popular seating option was the “Seating around the edge of raised planters (with back support).”



**Play options:** 6 play options were offered and the most popular play option was the “Junior climbing frame (3-10yrs).” The “Toddler multiplay unit (0-5yrs)” was a close second popular play option.





# Design options: specifics

**Planting options:** 4 planting options were offered and the most popular planting option was the “Sensory planting.”



One question asked respondents “which of the following would you like to see:”

**Adult fitness items/trim trail:** The majority of respondents answered No. (34% yes, 37% no, 18% not sure, 10% unanswered).

**Lighting bollards along the path:** The majority of respondents answered Yes. (67% yes, 9% no, 13% not sure, 11% unanswered).

**Wildflower turf (low growing) to support biodiversity:** The majority of respondents answered Yes. (83% yes, 3% no, 5% not sure, 9% unanswered).

**Features for wildlife such as bee bricks, hibernacula and bird boxes:** The majority of respondents answered Yes. (81% yes, 7% no, 4% not sure, 8% unanswered).

**Cycle parking:** The for and against cycle parking was split. (35% yes, 35% no, 18% not sure, 12% unanswered).

# Questions and concerns

## Planning Permission:

The scheme does not yet have planning permission. Planning permission will be sought when the designs are finalised, and will be essential before any work can begin on site. The application will need to include all the details of the final design and layout, and explain how the proposed Pocket Park is in alignment with local planning policies in the Wandsworth Local Plan. It may be necessary to submit information about the change of use of the site from class Ef (business use - creche, day nursery or day centre) to F2c (local community and learning - areas or places for outdoor sport or recreation (not involving motorized vehicles or firearms)).

## Noise:

While the Pocket Park may introduce some activity-related noise, the proposed designs incorporate measures to minimise disruption. For example mature trees and new planting form a natural sound barrier buffering noise arising from visitors.

## Tree care and maintenance:

Maintenance of the Pocket Park will be managed in line with all the other parks, commons, gardens and greenspaces owned by Wandsworth Council. This will include regular inspections for tree health, daily litter removal, along with safety inspections and any necessary maintenance to play / adult exercise equipment.



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# Questions and concerns

## Will the park be dog-free?

60% of the respondents answered in support of making the Pocket Park dog free.

## Accessibility:

You asked for a mixture of seats/benches with and without back support and arm rests.

You asked for steps to be kept to a minimum, and gate entrances wide enough for easy access for mobility scooters, prams, buggies and the elderly.

You asked to ensure that all the play items are inclusive.

You asked for shade cover as well as providing areas that will be sunny.

You asked for a drinking water fountain.

You asked to ensure that the equipment caters for all ages, with play items for children both young and old, equipment for adults and items for the elderly to enjoy.

## Anti-social behaviour (ASB):

Key concerns were raised about crime and anti-social behaviour such as attracting drug and alcohol users. You asked if the Pocket Park would be locked at night and if CCTV could be implemented as well as regular parks police patrols.

The advice of crime prevention specialists will be sought to understand if any amendments are needed to Option 2 to further design out anti-social behaviour.

The possibility to make site specific byelaws will be explored as this would allow Parks Police to undertake specific enforcement action against those taking part in ASB.



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# Questions and concerns

## Lighting:

You asked if additional lights can be added. Lighting bollards would be subject to the results of a preliminary ecological appraisal as lighting can impact some wildlife species.

## Traffic:

You asked if there could be disabled parking close to the Pocket Park, as currently there are no disabled parking bays close by. You also asked if the Pocket Park would adversely affect residents parking, making it difficult for them to find parking spots. The Pocket Park is intended to provide a "doorstep" facility to be used by people from the immediate locality (400m radius) and as such it is not anticipated that people will travel by car.

You asked if the through traffic from Swaffield Road will be dealt with so that children can cross Swaffield Road safely to get to the pocket park, and to prevent pavement parking. You asked if a zebra crossing can be put in as Swaffield School is close by.

## Child safety:

You raised concerns about children getting safely to and from the pocket park and the risk of younger children easily running out. In line with the relevant British Standards, the gates on the proposed Pocket Park will be "self closers" that open inwards to the park. This is intended to prevent the gates being left open and makes it harder for younger children to open the gate to exit unsupervised. Additional barriers may be installed on the curb immediately opposite any gateways as a further preventative measure to minimise children running straight into the road.

## Bins:

You asked if there would be bins in the Pocket Park and if so, can they be animal proof so that foxes and birds cannot get into them.



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# Next steps:

Design option B will be reviewed and revised to take on board the preferences you told us about (listed on pages 6-8 of this report).

The other concerns you raised will be investigated. Further work may be needed on these issues before the pocket park design can be finalised.

The final design will be shared before a planning application is submitted.

The planning application will be subject to a public consultation period allowing you another opportunity to give your views on the proposal.

You will be kept informed of this progress by Enable and Wandsworth Council in a range of ways including on site signage and social media.

If you have any questions at any time please email the parks development team via [parks@enablelc.org](mailto:parks@enablelc.org)



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