

# Shustoke Parish Council

## Survey regarding the future of the recreation ground area on Wilkinson Way

Survey Date: July 2021

Report written: September 2021

Written by: Councillor L. Dupree

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## **Introduction**

At the beginning of 2020 the Parish council took the hard decision to remove the children's play area from the parish recreation ground as it had become too dangerous due to deterioration and had become costly to maintain. The council had already performed a survey of the parish in spring of 2019 seeking opinions of what should replace the play area and how residents would prefer to use the area. Unfortunately only 29 people responded to the survey, however it did show that most of the people who responded agreed money should be spent on the area, with the overwhelming majority wanting children's play equipment followed by adult gym equipment. The survey results can be viewed in the appendix.

Progress on the planning of new equipment was delayed by the out-break of covid-19 and therefore in May 2021 the council decided to conduct a second survey of residents to seek opinions about how the recreation ground will be used moving forward and what sorts of equipment residents of the parish would like to see installed. The survey was written and distributed by councilor L Dupree at the beginning of July 2021. The survey closed at the end of July with 175 responses. The survey was open to residents and non residents. Most households within the parish received a paper copy through their door, with the option to also fill out the survey online. The online survey was advertised on local social media pages. The survey can be viewed in the appendix.

It is hoped that these results will be used direct the parish council on the parishioners wishes for the future of the area and aid the council produce evidence of needs when applying for funding and grants for the area.

# Results

Figure 1

## Do you live in Shustoke?

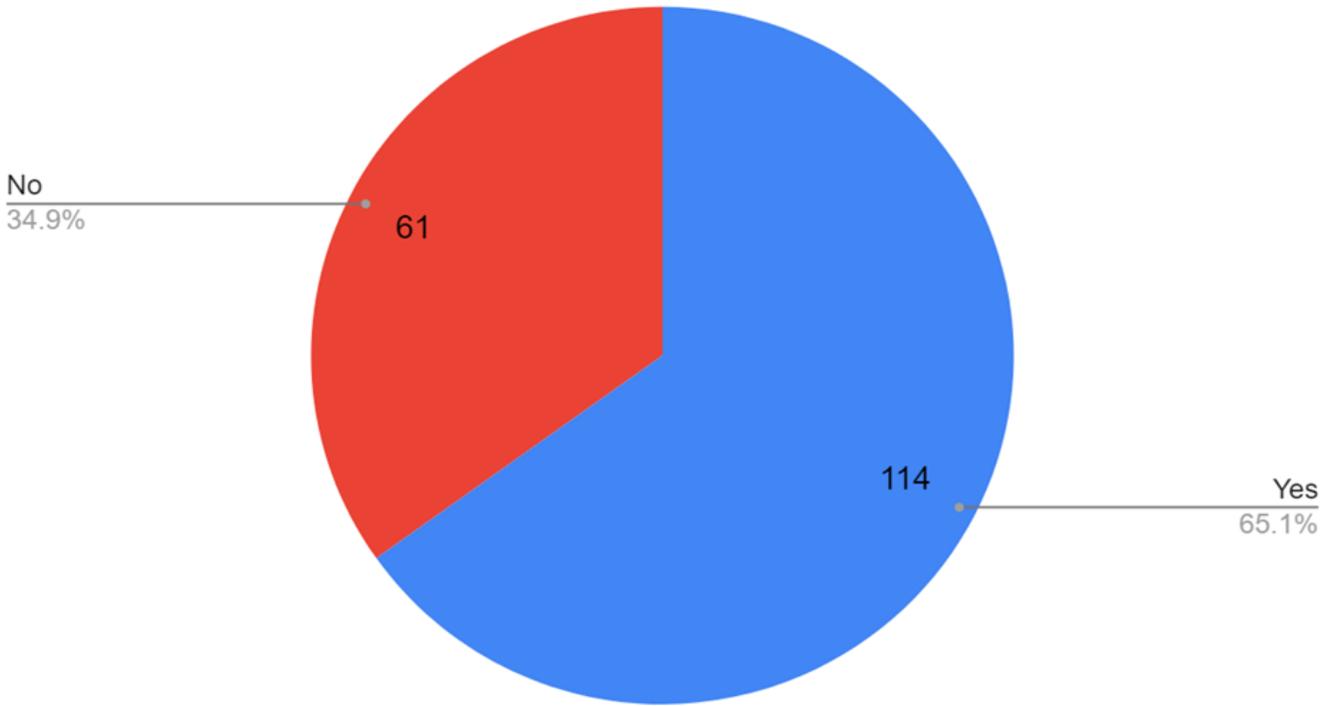


Figure 2

## Age Range of All Households

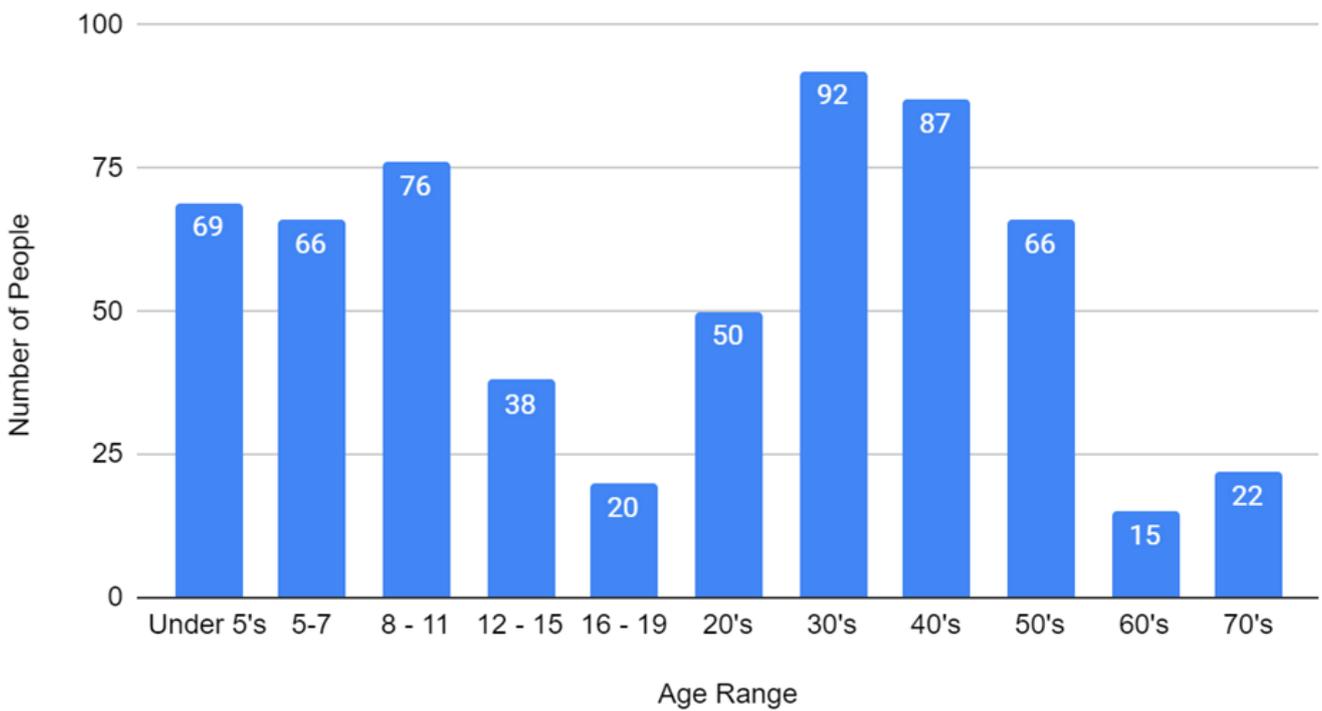


Figure 3

**All Responses - Has Children Under 15?**

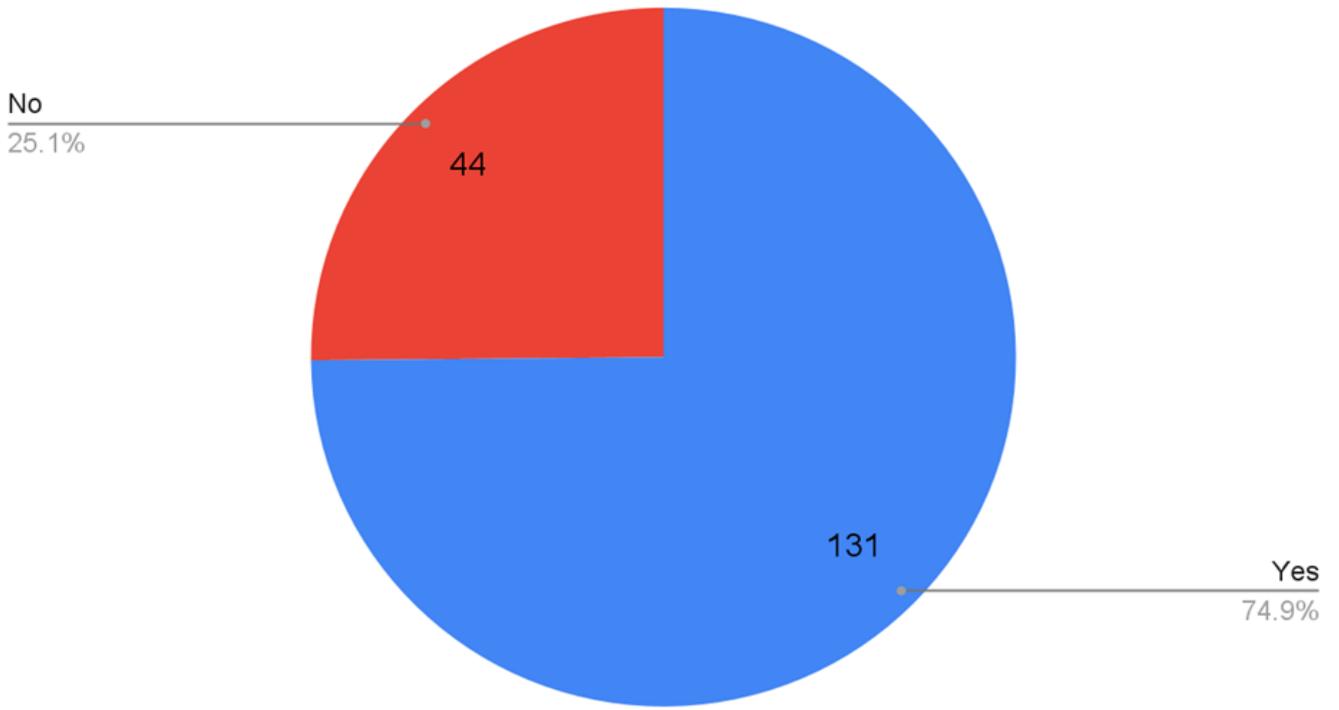


Figure 4

**Shustoke Residents - Has Children Under 15?**

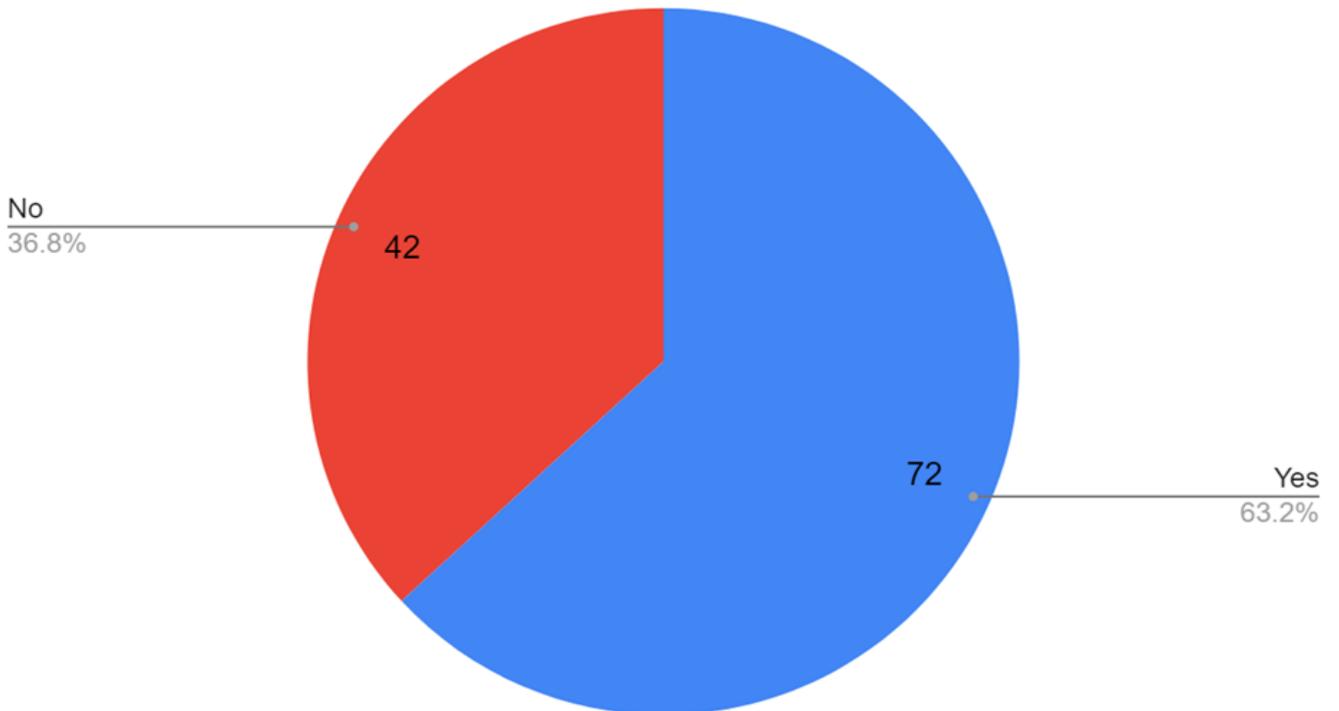


Figure 5

### How often does your household CURRENTLY use the playing fields area?

- Daily
- Few times a week
- More than once a day
- Never
- Occasionally
- Very rarely

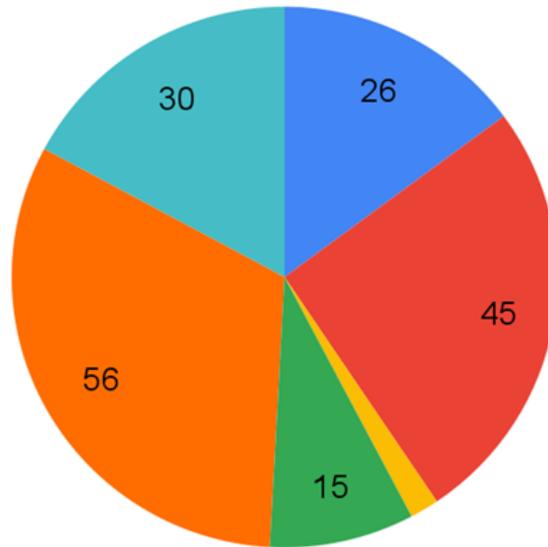


Figure 6

### How often WOULD your household use the playing fields area if it were improved with your desired changes?

- Daily
- More than once a day
- Occasionally
- Very rarely
- Few times a week

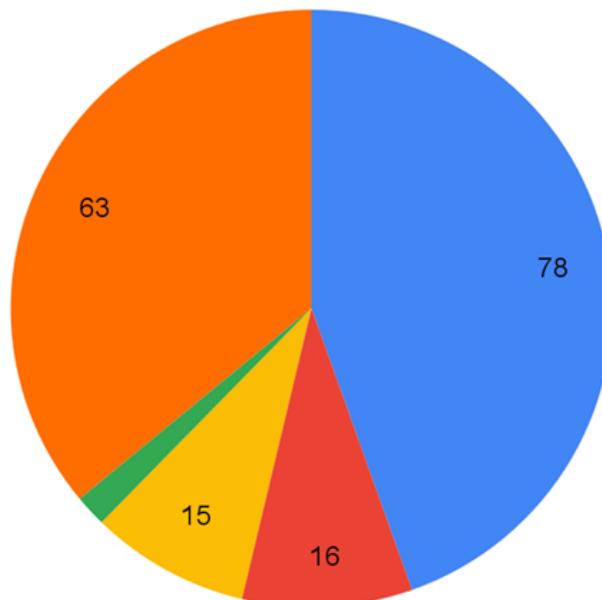


Figure 7

### Comparison of current usage & predicted usage

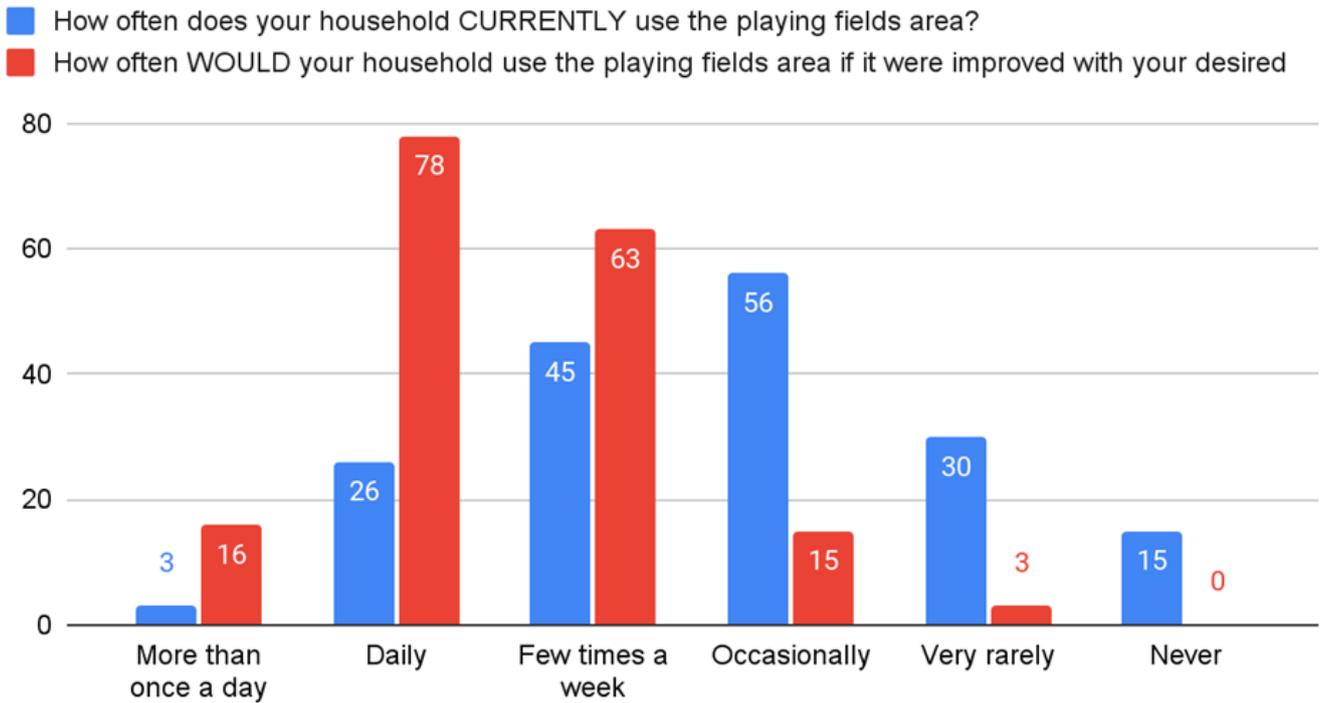


Figure 8

### Comparison of Shustoke residents current usage & predicted usage

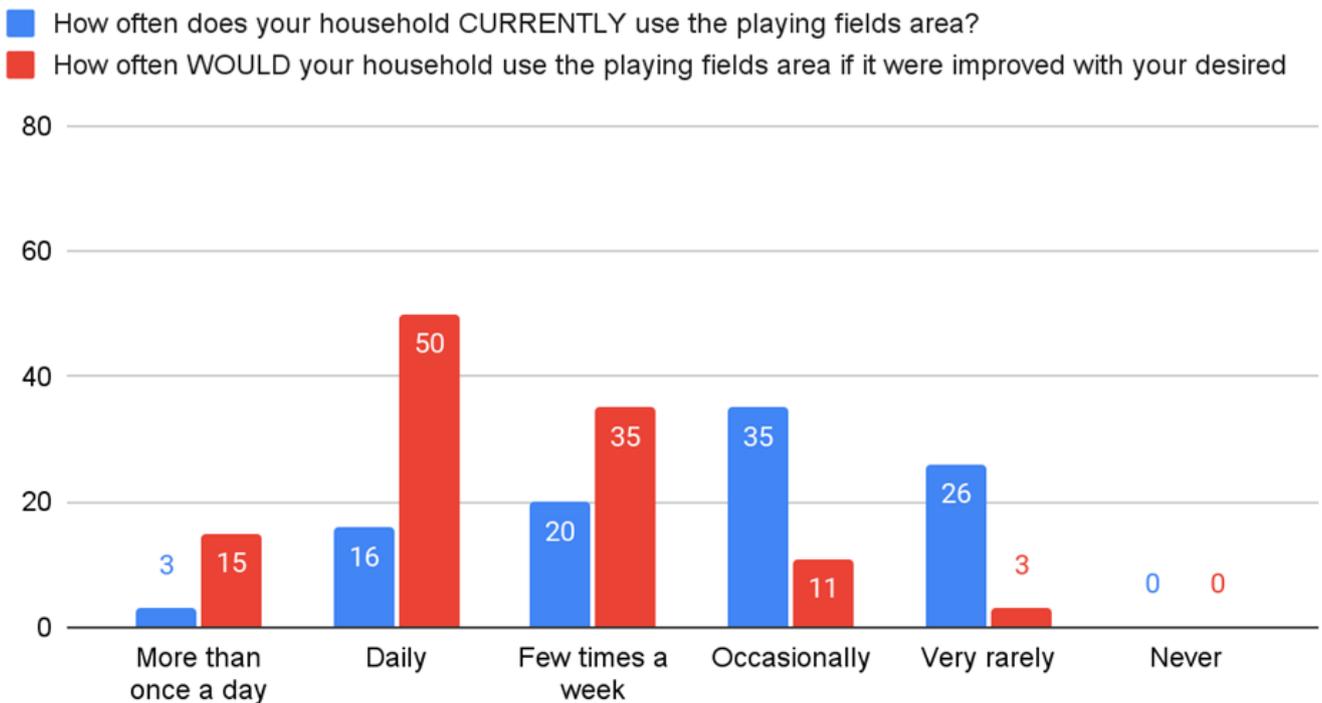


Figure 9

### What factors currently prevent you from using the playing fields? (Please select all that apply)

- Nothing there I'd be interested in visiting
- Poor parking provision
- Flooding of area
- Anti social behaviours and dog waste
- No time to visit green spaces
- Other

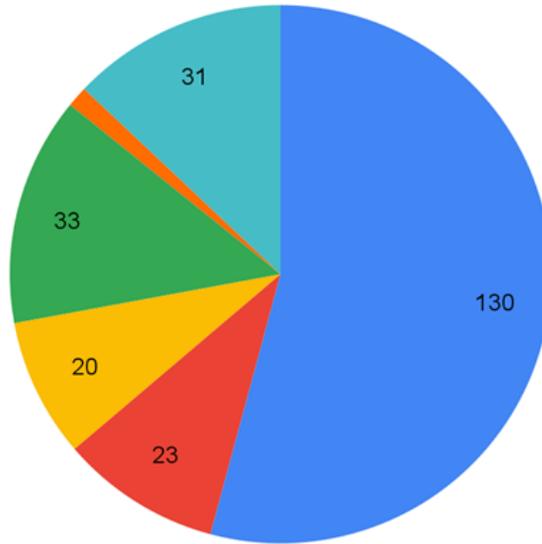
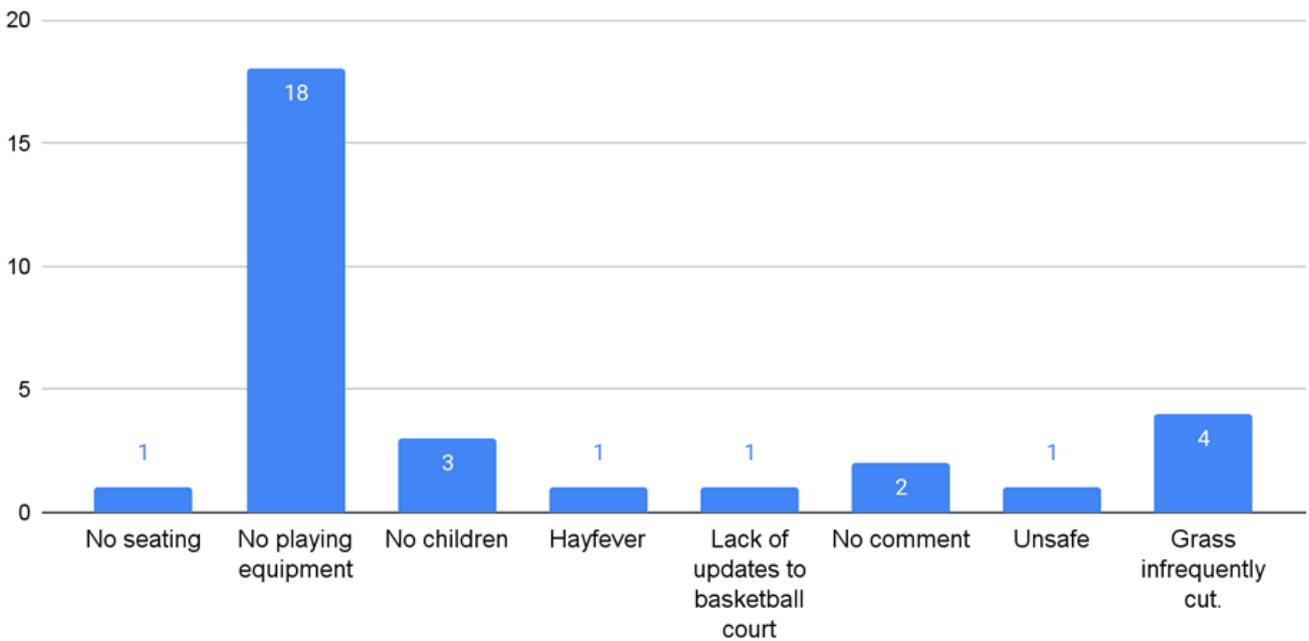


Figure 10

### What factors currently prevent you from using the playing fields? (Other)



What factors currently prevent you from using the playing fields? (Other)

Figure 11

### What would you like to see added to the space for adults? (Please select all that apply)

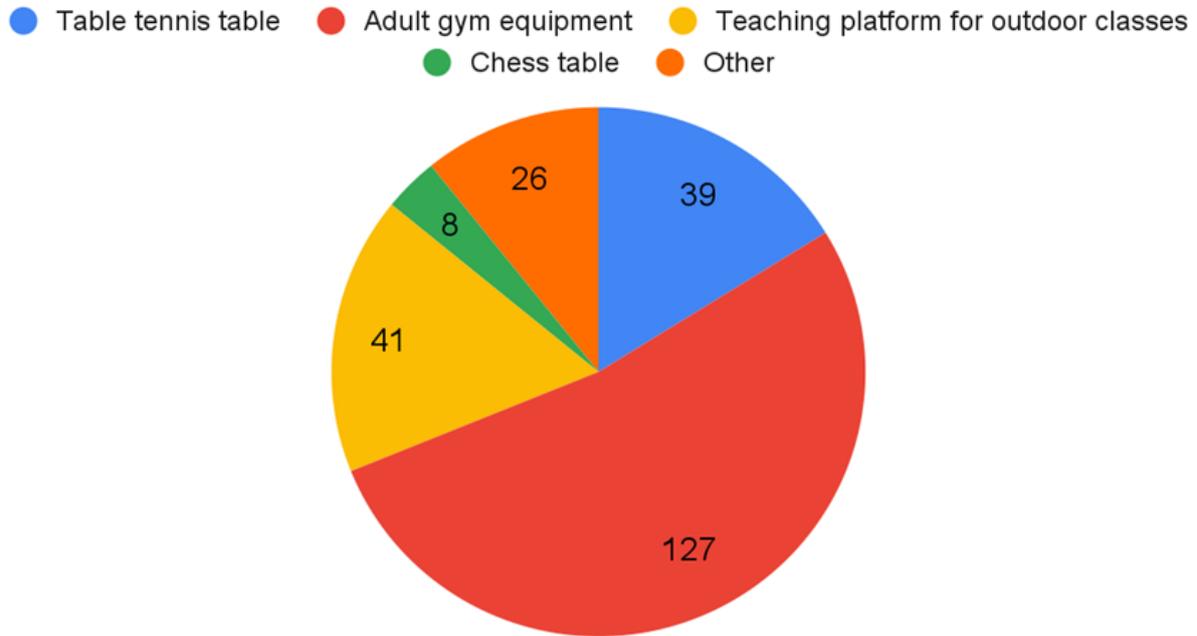


Figure 12

### What would you like to see added to the space for adults? (Other)

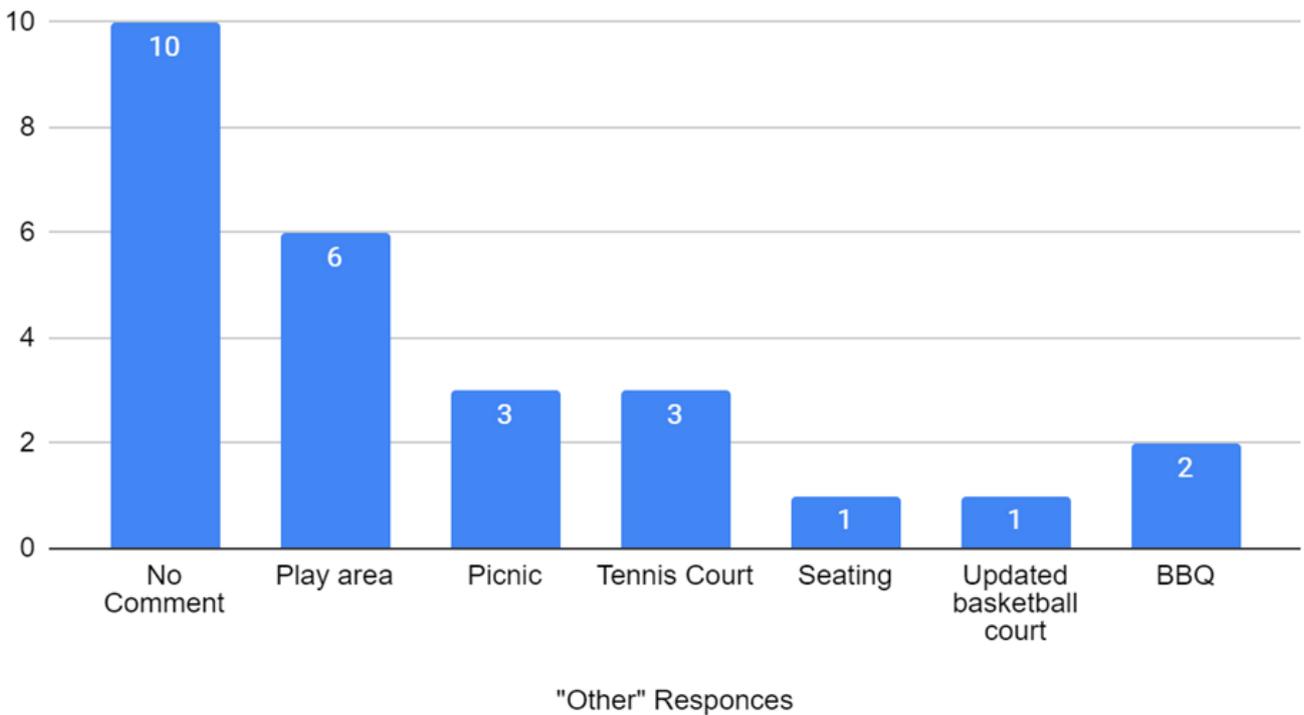


Figure 13

### What would you like to see added to the space for adults? [Households with members 60+]

- Adult gym equipment
- Picnic areas
- Table tennis table
- Other - No comment
- Chess table
- Teaching platform for outdoor classes

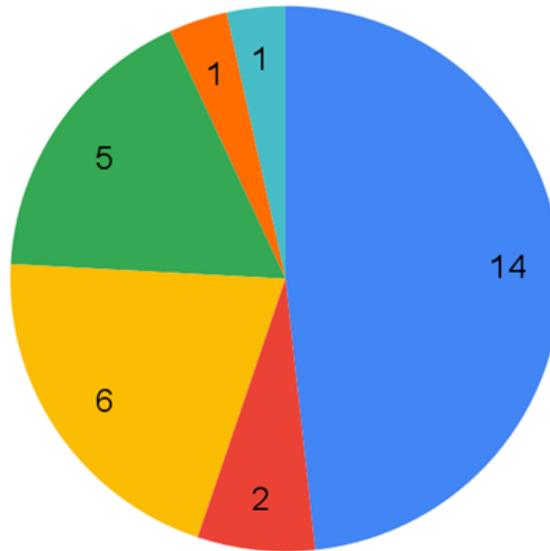


Figure 14

### What would you like to see added to the space for children? (Please select all that apply)

- Children's play equipment (combined ages)
- Other
- Multi-use games court
- Nature trail
- Children's gym equipment
- Skate and bike park
- Equipment for children with additional needs

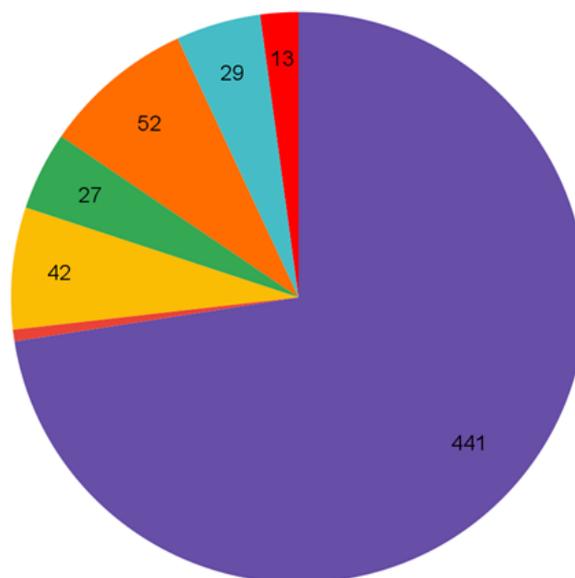


Figure 15

### Breakdown of "Children's play equipment" responses

- Play equipment for under 5's
- Play equipment for 8-11 year olds
- Play equipment for 5-7 year olds
- Play equipment for 12-16 year olds

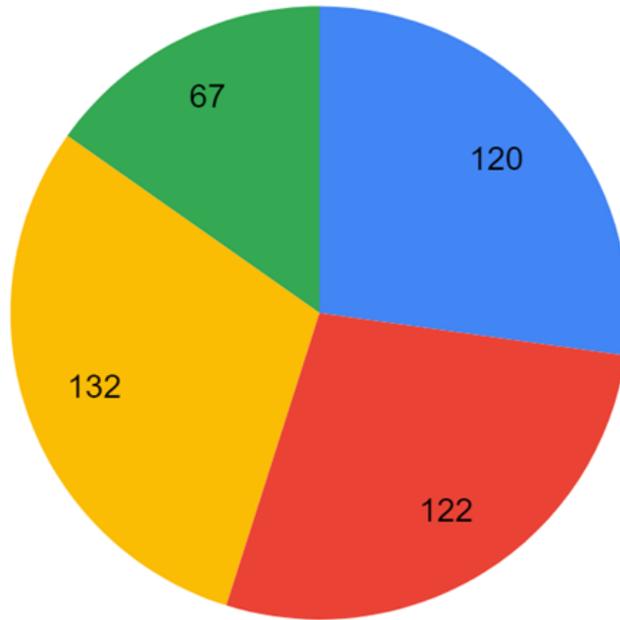


Figure 16

### What would you like to see added to the space for children? (Other)

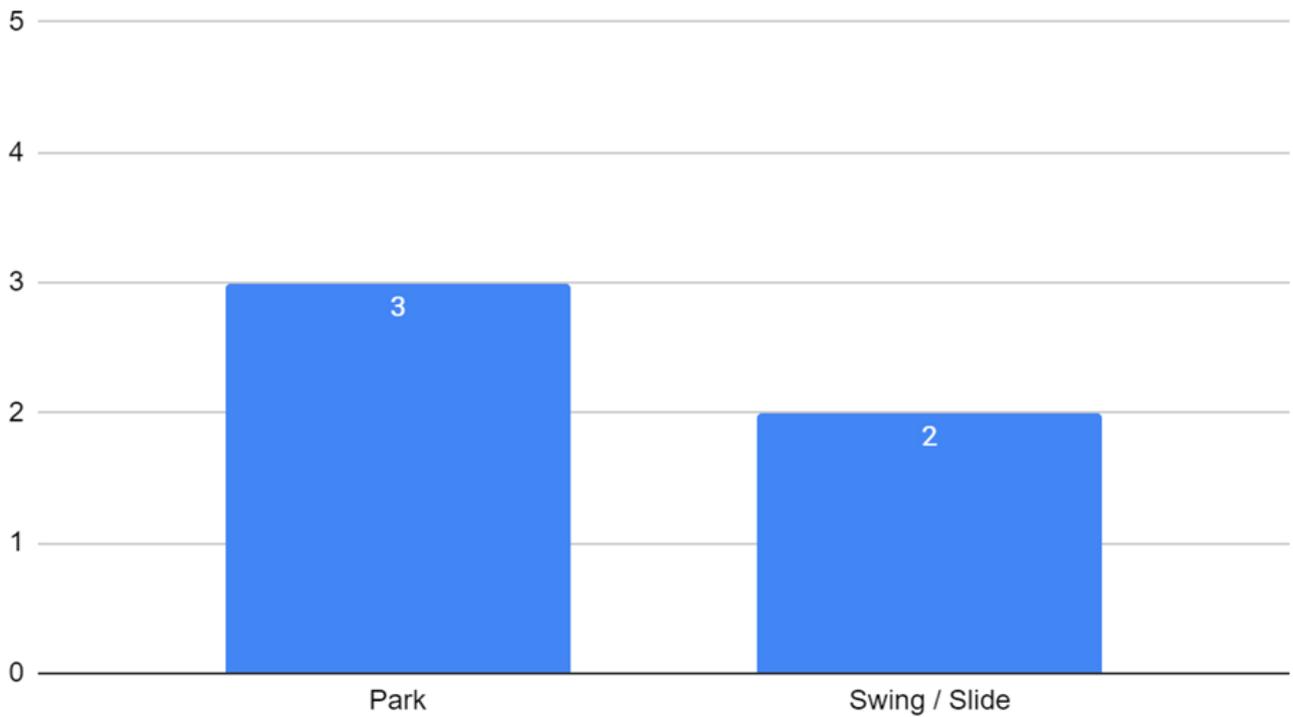


Figure 17

### What would you like to see added to the space for children? [Households with members 60+]

- Children's play equipment (combined ages)
- Multi-use games court
- Nature trail
- Children's gym equipment
- Other - No comment
- Equipment for children with additional needs
- Skate and bike park

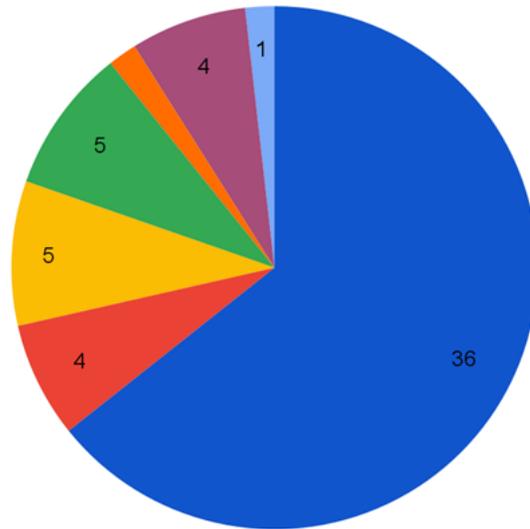


Figure 18

### What would you like to see added to the space in general? (Please select all that apply)

- Benches
- Bins
- Picnic benches
- Dog waste bins
- Planters
- Other
- Signage

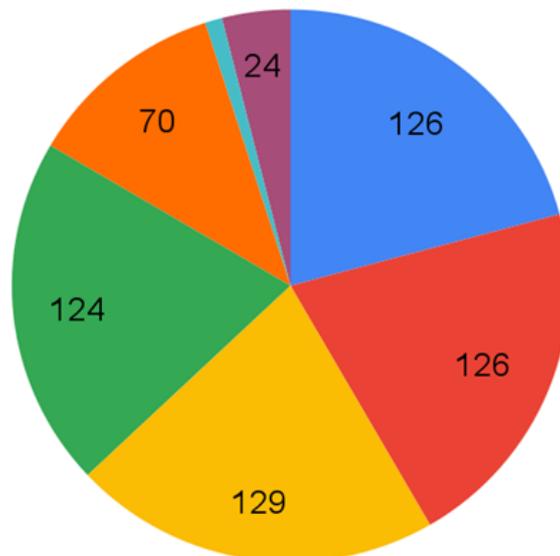


Figure 19

### What would you like to see added to the space in general? (Other)

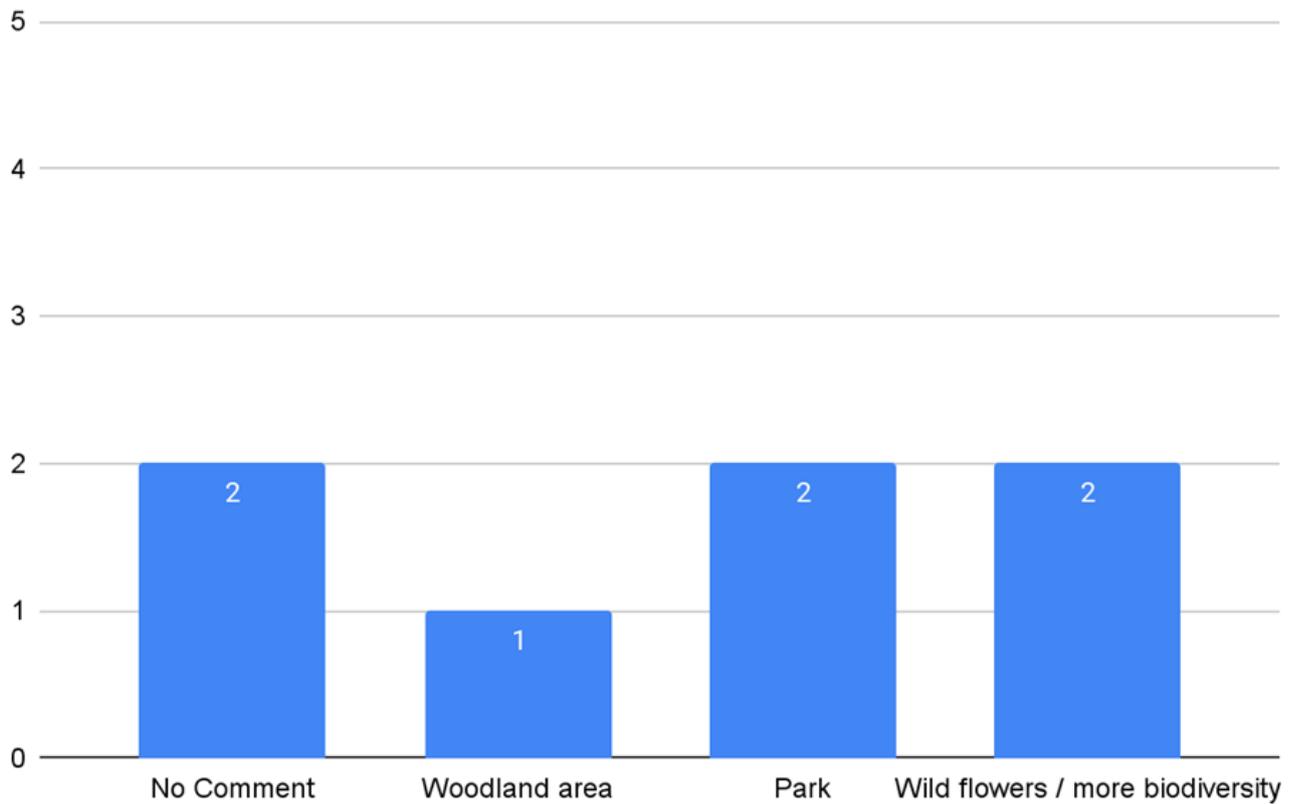


Figure 20

### What would you like to see added to the space in general? [Households with members 60+]

- Benches
- Picnic benches
- Dog waste bins
- Bins
- Other - No comment
- Planters
- Signage

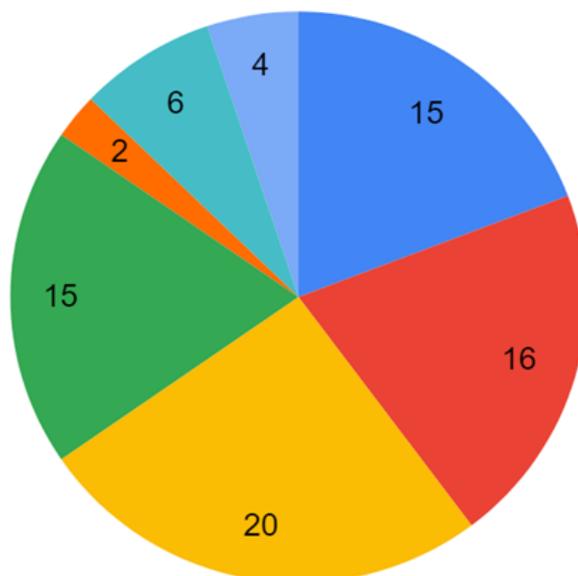


Figure 21

**Would anyone in your household like to be involved in the efforts by Shustoke Parish Council to improve the area?**

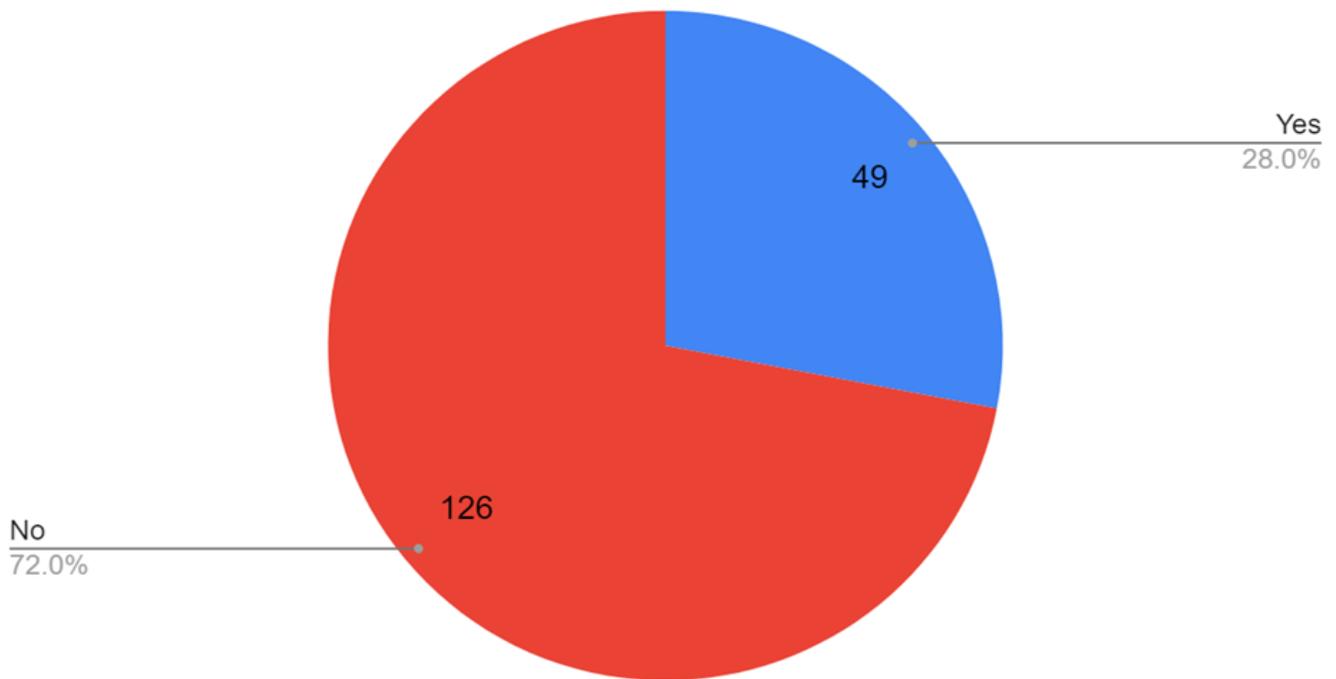


Figure 22

Summary of comments made by participants at the end of the survey:	
Comments about:	Number of people mentioning:
Frustrations about not having a play area and hopes for a new one	36
Concerns about the length the grass is cut to	5
Hoping for some sort of games court	4
Concerns about dog faeces	3
Hopes for a skate park	2
Concerns about a skate park	2
Wanting benches of some description installed	6
Hoping for an adult gym/exercise equipment	9
Wanting new gates to area	1
Hoping for improved parking facilities	2
Wanting a wild flower area	1
Suggesting a place for businesses to advertise	1
Hoping for a track around the perimeter	1
Concerns about the safety of the perimeter fence	1

## Analysis

The survey received 175 responses, this is 6 times the response rate of the previous survey and I believe that is due to peoples frustrations growing. It has been extremely inconvenient to not have a play area within walking distance for those with children especially during lockdowns. The pandemic made everyone more aware of the importance of outdoor spaces as well as leisure, recreation and opportunities to exercise, it is understandable that many residents are now enthusiastically seeking to aid the installation of equipment to extend those opportunities within the village.

Figure 1 shows that 114 of the 175 responses to the survey were from households within the parish. As there is 214 households in the parish, the results seem to suggest that over half of the households within the parish completed the survey.

When asked about the age ranges of people within the household, figure 2 shows us that the majority of responses came from families with children of primary school age or younger. The survey was not completed by as many of the senior residents as I had hoped, with only 37 responses coming from residents 60 or over.

Figure 5 and figure 6 show how often people currently use the recreation ground and how often they would, should their desired changes be made. For ease of comparison I have merged this information into one graph figure 7 which shows that the majority of people who responded expect they would use the area more if it were to be improved. 101 responses answered that they currently use the area occasionally or less frequently, with that figure reducing to 18 if changes were made. A massive 90% of responses expect that they would use the area a few times a week or more once improvements are made. Figure 8 provides the same comparison for Shustoke residents only and shows that no parish resident stated that they never use the area currently.

Figure 9 shows that over 50% of people stated the reason for not currently using the area is there being nothing there that they'd be interested in using or visiting. 13% of people were concerned about antisocial behaviours, and since the survey has been completed the council have cleared some of the trees and bramble from the area leading in to the recreation ground to try to prevent some of the antisocial behaviours occurring, as well as creating a safe way through the car park to the school gate. Only a tiny 1% stated they had no time to visit green spaces. The car park having many pot holes as well as the winter flooding of the area also put people off from visiting the area. 18 people made a point of opting for 'other' to state that they do not visit specifically due to lack of play equipment.

Figure 11 shows that when asked what they wanted installed for adults, over half of the responses asked for adult gym equipment. With other popular suggestions being a teaching platform for outdoor classes and a table tennis table. Figure 13 shows that these choices are reflected within the senior community.

Figure 14 shows that when asked what they would like to see installed for children, an overwhelming 72% of responses stated a play area. Figure 15 shows 76% of those who would like a play area would like it to be for children aged 7 and under. Only a tiny 4.5% hoped for playthings for teenaged children. The second most popular suggestion for improvements for children was gym equipment followed by a multiuse games court. Figure 17 suggests the senior residents may be wary of a skate park being installed, with many who delivered paper copies of the survey by hand choosing to cross skate park off the list of options or comment about their worries of antisocial behaviours caused by having a skate park.

When asked what else people wanted to see added to the area, figure 18 shows us people asked for benches, picnic benches, bins and dog waste bins. Figure 20 shows us senior residents agree. Having spoken to some senior residents first hand, I believe many feel a safe outdoor space with seating for

potential socialising to be very important moving forward, many fearing further lockdowns and isolation.

Figure 21 shows that 49 households are interested in helping towards the project moving forward, however I was only sent contact details for a few of those. It would seem to suggest that future volunteering opportunities for the project, if advertised, would be well received. This will be useful for community fundraising attempts.

There were 65 people who chose to leave comments at the end of the survey. Figure 22 shows how many of those mentioned similar points. All comments can be read in Appendix 2.

## **Conclusions**

Having performed this survey it is my recommendation that the parish council seeks to replace the play equipment, with a focus on pre-school and primary aged children, as a high priority. It may be helpful to consider the ground irrigation issues and placement of the play area first. I strongly advise that community fund raising should begin while residents are keen to help move the project forward and efforts for funding and grants should be accelerated. I advise the working group should be expanded to include as many interested parties as possible as spreading the work load will help to make progress more rapid.

I suggest the following priorities in descending order (understanding this is a long term, ongoing project):

1. Survey the land to assess what can be done about the flooding and mole hill issues and action of that survey. I would hope this would also improve the cutting of the grass to suitable length.
2. Expansion of the working group and roles within which to be clearly defined. The priorities within the group should be raising funds, assessing viability of previous quotes for play equipment and contacting providers of play equipment.
3. Installation of a play areas for preschool and primary aged children and plan for continued inspections and maintenance made.
4. Installation of adult gym equipment
5. Installation of benches and bins
6. Removal of old skate park and basketball court
7. Installation of children's gym equipment
8. Installation of multiuse games court for adults and children
9. Installation of a teaching platform and advertising the rental to create revenue
10. Consideration of the gates to the area being replaced as well as new signage, potential for an advertising board again creating revenue (as footfall is expected to dramatically increase) as well as security being assessed.
11. Resurfacing of the car park and potential painting of lines
12. Installation of a table tennis table
13. Partnership working with Shustoke CoE Primary school as well as Littlies and Biggies Homebased childcare in order for the children to design and create a nature area in the area surrounding the new path.
14. Considerations of the biodiversity of the area, as residents expressed concerns after trees were removed for security reasons. Wild flower areas and planters added.
15. Considerations of further improvements including, but not limited to, a chess table, skate park, updating goal posts, new signage for allotment area.

## Appendix 1– Survey

# *Shustoke Playing Fields*

Dear Residents of Shustoke,

I'm sure that most of you are already aware that there is currently no play area on the village playing fields. It was deemed that the old playground had become too unsafe and was therefore removed. The Parish Council have been developing plans to replace the play area and we realise that it is disappointing and frustrating that nothing, has yet, come of these plans. We aim to rectify this situation as our top priority.

There is some money previously raised and available now, but nowhere near enough for what we'd all hope to see installed at the playing fields. The council is looking into fund raising ideas and is putting a bid to match funding on September 15th. This will need to be supported by additional bids and fundraising.

The village was previously surveyed on the subject, and there was a very poor response rate of only 29 people. If we can come together to produce overwhelming evidence that we are unhappy with the situation, then we can use that evidence in our bid and to drum up attention for any future fund raising attempts.

A good response this time is key to our efforts moving forward, please help us to create a space for everyone in the village for now and for the future.

Please return this survey to 17 Forge Road, or the village hall letter box by the end of July. Or if you'd prefer the survey can be completed online here <https://rotf.lolly5b5sk2h> or by scanning the below QR code. Or to arrange collection call Lisa on the number below.

With thanks,

Lisa Dupree, Shustoke Parish Council

07478215841



**Please clearly mark the box or boxes that apply**

Do you live in Shustoke?			
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tell us how many people in each of these age brackets live in your household?	
Under 5's	<input type="checkbox"/>
5-7 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
8-11 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
12-15 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
16-19 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
20's	<input type="checkbox"/>
30's	<input type="checkbox"/>
40's	<input type="checkbox"/>
50's	<input type="checkbox"/>
60's	<input type="checkbox"/>
70's and above	<input type="checkbox"/>

How often does your household CURRENTLY use the playing fields area?	
More than once a day	<input type="checkbox"/>
Daily	<input type="checkbox"/>
Few times a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occasionally	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

What factors currently prevent you from using the playing fields?	
Nothing there I'd be interested in visiting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anti social behaviours and dog waste	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor parking provision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flooding of area	<input type="checkbox"/>
No time to visit green spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please detail over)	<input type="checkbox"/>



## **Appendix 2– Comments made in the comment sections**

**(all personal details have been removed for data protection reasons)**

Play equipment

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We would love a park which includes swings, slides etc.... A 5 a side football court would be amazing

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Robust children's play equipment with a skate park and zip wire, CCTV signage to help prevent vandalism and the grass cut to a level where children can play on it as currently it's way to high even after being cut and finally new fields gates with clear signage and a walkway into the field as currently people have to walk in and out on the same road as cars going in and out plus it's on a bend / blind spot , major accident waiting to happen especially at school run times, 3 near misses noticed last week and if a H&S risk assessment was done it would show all red and advise immediate closer of this entrance exit point.

---

We're the only village that seems to have nothing for our children. Please consider them and future generations.

---

In general it would be nice if it was better maintained, a real space for all families to use. The dog mess is a real problem, so action for those who don't pick up after their dog. I'm sure we must have someone in the village who could develop a plan of how it could be mapped out, ask the children in the village what do they want?

---

Play equipment for kids would mean the kids after school could use a park rather than playing in the bushes

---

As a mother to 4 young children (2 of which have additional needs) we desperately need some kind of play area for children. It's a desperate waste of space and could be incredible. A small park would be incredible.

---

The kids need something to do in this area other than sitting in front of TVs. Socialising and playing would be good for them

---

Somewhere children can play before and after school collection

---

When there was a playground in shustoke park we used it most days after school. We would like to be able to do so again.

---

Gym, children's activities, benches and bins.

The car park is dreadful so many pot holes!

---

I hope shustoke village can have a decent park for children to play / exercise. Thank you for this opportunity

---

I've only lived here for just over 12 months but feel there should be more use of the outdoor space for the village community

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Planting of wild flowers in replacement of grass verges

---

We used to use the park on a regular basis, the children were so upset when they saw it had been taken down. Even though there wasn't much there it was something to do in an otherwise very quiet village. There is no other park or place for children to use within walking distance which is a real pain with young children. We would love a new play area for the children and feel it would be very beneficial for the whole village.

---

Toddler swings, Den building area - with recycled branches as material, improved football field area and play things with a learning focus

---

A track around the perimeter for joggers, exercise bikes, some kind of weights to lift. Could the village benefit from selling advertising to local business displayed at the park?

---

It would be amazing to see the children's play area

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Just some equipment

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The field is often used by school children after school, the children at the school come from a wide geographical area, all of whom would benefit from improved facilities there. Thank you

---

I hope the school and church are aware of fundraising issues

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The kids in the village need something to play on

---

Children have very little in the local area. This space is a place to meet up but there is nothing there for them. Some gym equipment, games areas for football, rounder's, etc would encourage them to play. Bins for their rubbish so they don't leave a mess behind. Plus somewhere to sit rather than soggy ground when they take picnics.

---

Bikes weights and cardio equip

---

You currently have to drive to a local play area for children now the old one has been taken away. Kids need to be outside!

---

Skate park

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Just cut the grass shorter so kids can kick a ball, cycle and dog walkers can see and pick up their dogs mess easily

---

We have 2 under fives who would love a local play area for us to take them to. Shustoke has beautiful walks but sometimes kids need a little extra fun. Even swings, roundabout and a climbing frame and slide would be a start.

---

Would use the keep fit equipment

---

I regularly use the basketball court, usually once a day if the weather isn't bad and the litter, glass and other things sometimes make it hard to play on. On behalf of me and a lot of my friends, we would like to suggest a newer, more improved basketball court, or even a multi sport area to bring more popularity and sociality to the park specifically for younger people to play.

---

We moved to this area nearly 3 years ago and a massive factor for us was the park area. However with two children living directly across the road from this area it has become very frustrating not being able to use this park. We really need to get things moving towards a greater play area for our children. The school children would also benefit massively in using this space. We as a community should come together to help raise funds needed. Please include our household in any help needed.

---

We loved this area when it was a park and would use it frequently with the children. if it was to be back then this would be amazing and we would again use the area

---

We have recently moved to Shustoke we love it here however one thing that is needed is a good play area for kids to play. We would love our children to have somewhere nice to play. Thanks.

---

Years ago the park was a great place to go after school, and before tea, always full of children, its sad that it got in a bad way, needs some life put back in the village and the children have lost out for many years. And its time the council helped to get the children motivated once again

---

I would love it if the council put a speed camera in church road near green road coming towards the village hall! The vehicles pass this area at a very high speed, which is extremely dangerous for kids and parents crossing the road from and to school.

I have grandchildren, when my own children were young there was a play area (not brilliant but at least swings and slide)

---

There is a desperate need for a play area and has been the case for years now. I'm sick of going to Coleshill with my grandchildren to take them to the nearest park. Shustoke needs a play area again. It is ridiculous that it hasn't had one for so long

---

Having a skate and bike park is asking for gangs of teens cycling up

---

When my children were at Shustoke school the children's play area was such an important safe space to play in after school and a social place for parents. It is such a shame other generations cannot enjoy what we did.

---

Car parking area is lethal

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Access to main road and what the children call 'the farmer's field' where there is an area of standing water both need fencing off

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The current grass cutting is very poor, too frequent with the cuttings being left all over the field, which is bad when left too long before the cut. There's nothing to do there. Dog mess is being left with no repercussion for offenders. The village need somewhere to go which is nicely maintained with play areas for children and clean areas for picnics ect. The gates need to be locked at night to keep it safe. We don't feel a skate park is a good idea

---

We have a plot at the allotment so do visit several times a week but have to take our own equipment to keep the children happy. We really need at least a basic park and benches. Gym equipment for both adults and children, a path, climbing frames etc would be amazing too.

---

Play equipment for children under 12 most definitely

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Picnic benches maybe

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Would love our park replacing

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Overall I'd love our park returning

---

Equipment to entertain/exercise children & adults.

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Older people may use the area if benches suitably sited - dog owners/walkers use the many local footpaths, which is perhaps a good thing

---

We moved to Shustoke in Feb 2020 and visited the park with our daughter a few times per week. It has since been removed so we visit less. We miss having a park in the village.

---

My Daughter attends primary school and plays in the field after school with the other children this would be so much better if the equipment was back!

---

Lockdown has shown us how important having access to quality open space is for is all

---

Good luck Lisa, hope the village gets behind you. We have a lot more children in the village they need somewhere to play. Would be nice to see a football team back in the village

---

Shustoke really needs a play park. There are many children and families who would use it

---

We would use it daily if there was a gym or a tennis court. Also if the grass was cut to a short length I would use the field for running c25k or cycling but it's very rough and the edges are never trimmed. Thank you

---

I would use the kids under 5 play ground and kids 5-7 playground on a daily basis as I have two young one that would love to go to the park and to enjoy our village, not to drive out to another one.

---

The gym equipment for adults would be very beneficial to the village as a way for people to keep fit and motivated people in the village in these hard times. "

---

It would be amazing for my 2 year old and all of the other children in the village to have a safe and fun place to play in.

---

Would like to see the park reinstated for the children to have somewhere to play other than a field full of dog mess

---

I used to take my older grandchildren to the park every week but there is so little incentive to take the younger ones there at the moment. We used to play regularly on the old equipment and enjoy our time there. Replacement of the play equipment would be brilliant for the village children.

My children have grown up essential when they were younger, ensure money is available for ongoing upkeep and regular maintenance.

---

Something for old and young to bring community together.

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Hopes for the area

- replace grass verges with wild flowers
  - leave hedgerows to grow then lay them instead of cutting
  - plant more trees
  - new and improved play area in the park for local children to enjoy
  - clamp down on speeding vehicles through the village
  - no HGVs using country lanes
- 

A SAFE place to take our grandchildren when they visit

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Grass isn't cut short enough to run on nor is it rolled flat to play cricket or on bikes.

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Benches and planters would just get trashed

# Appendix 3– Previous Survey

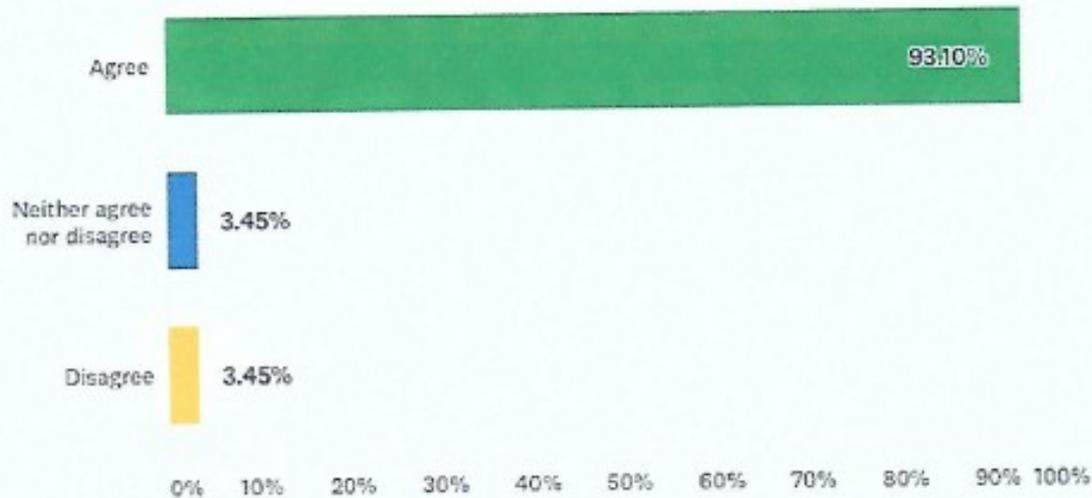
## Shustoke Play Equipment Survey Results

Survey Open: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019 – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Respondents: 29

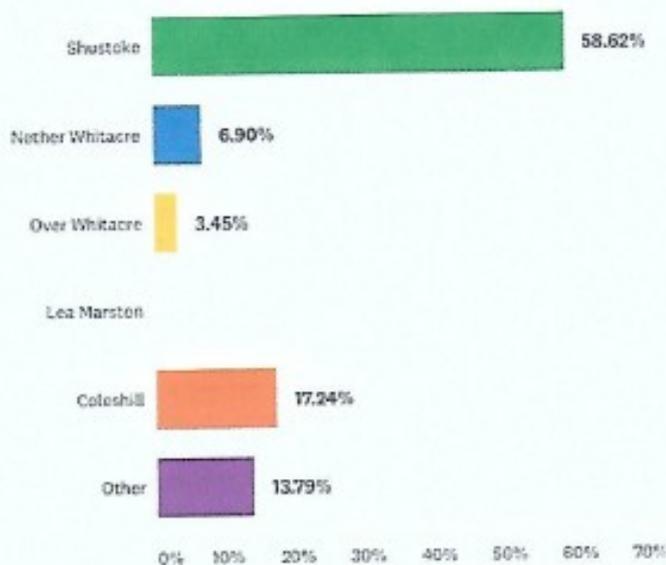
### Question 1:

**Do you agree/disagree with the Parish Councils plan to spend money on the Play Equipment?**



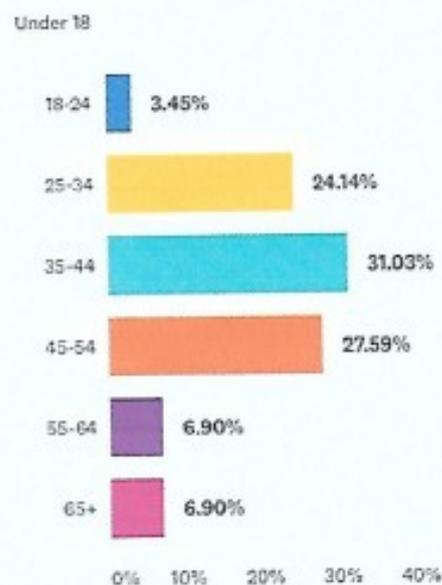
### Question 2:

**Where do you live?**



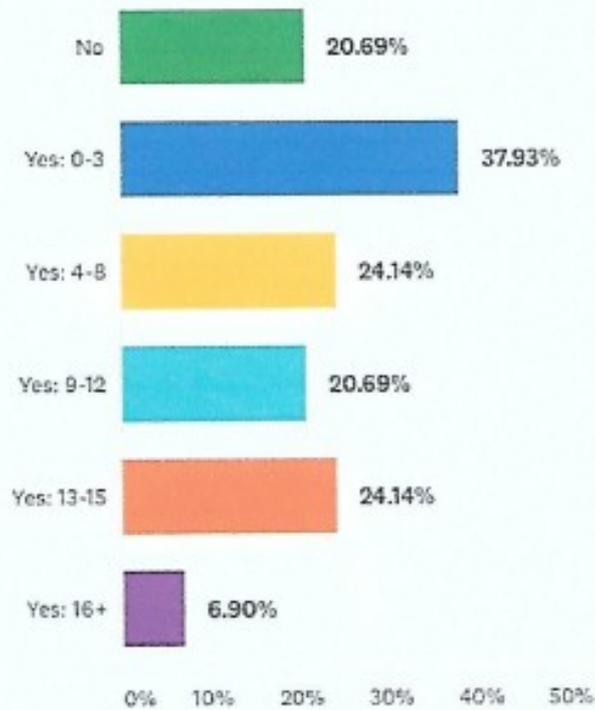
### Question 3:

**How old are you?**



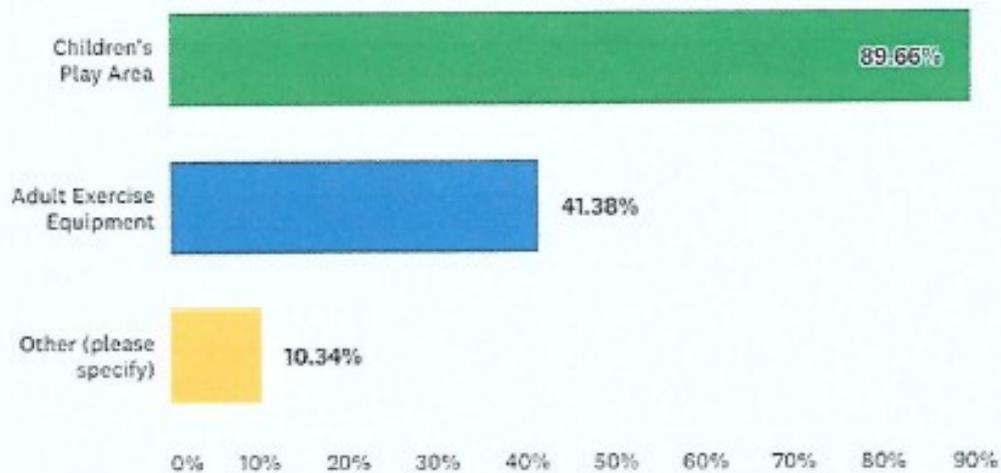
**Question 4:**

**Do you have, or regularly care for Children? If yes, how old are the children?**



**Question 5:**

**What would you like to see available? (Please select all that apply)**



**Question 6:**

**If you have further ideas or comments about how the play area can be improved please use the comment box below:**

--

The whole play area needs a refurb. Different play equipment to suit different age groups would be great. New swings and slides are needed. Areas where children can learn through play and sensory areas.

--

The play area is not safe and needs fencing off as there is often dog poo in there! I would also like to see something for babies such a baby swing.

--

I grew up in Shawbury and have just moved into Shustoke with my young family. When visiting the play area we were really disappointed to see that the ground was extremely uneven and that some of the equipment was broken. The play area hasn't changed since I last visited it 20 years ago when I was a pupil of the school. It looks very tired and really needs a revamp but more importantly is totally unsafe. My little boy has fallen countless times whilst playing there and I think its only a matter of time before someone breaks an ankle! (I have previously emailed councillors about the conditon of the play equipment/ground, a grant that could have been applied for at the time and approaching local business).

--

would like to see a toilet and maybe hot & cold food & drink facility

--

Stop dogs from going in and fouling in their (sign), grass cut regular, have a age limit for use,(sign), try and make the equipment vandal proof like Coleshill park play equipment with a sign stating vandals or their parents will / may be prosecuted, maybe have a number ( sign ) to report vandalism, put fence and gate back up.

--

Grass cutting more often and more benches and litter and dog bins please

--

I have tried to get the parish council to renovate the park since giving birth to my two children who are now 16 & 12 so I no longer need it I would prefer dog facilities

--

Although I no longer live in shustoke, I did for many years and still have connections. The children need somewhere safe to go to play

## **Acknowledgements:**

Councillor L Dupree wishes to thank;

Chris Kelso for producing the online survey, creating graphs for this report and for delivering survey copies to residents.

Councillor G Dupree for printing the 220 copies of the survey for free, saving the council any expense performing this survey.

Everyone who took the time to complete the survey and to those who shared it on social media or with friends and family.

**I also wish to personally acknowledge all the hard work and efforts made towards the improvements of the recreation grounds by former parish councillor Rachael Gough. Without her I wouldn't have been inspired to try to help make improvements. Thank you for your service to our community Rachael.**