

Lanthorn Park, Dedridge, Livingston



Community Consultation Survey Report



Lanthorn Park, Dedridge – Community Consultation Survey Results

SUMMARY

Introduction

A consultation was held in June 2024, in order to gain feedback on what the community thought about Lanthorn Park, Livingston. Suggestions were also sought from the community for proposals that would enhance the park. This is part of Community Choices, the council's participatory budgeting tool to assist focussed investment as part of the Open Space capital investment programme in parks. The survey was conducted on-line. Feedback was sought via a simple questionnaire. Thirty responses were received by the deadline of 23 June 2024.

What people call the park

Half of the respondents call it Lanthorn Park. Some call it the park or Lanthorn. Others use the Lani or The Lanny, Dedridge Park, Lanthorn Green, Big park or my greenspace.

What people like about the park

The green, open and big space is liked along with the play areas, pond area and the park's location.

What people don't like about the park

Some features within the play areas, overgrown/weedy areas, lack of particular services and the closure of the viewing platform are dislikes.

Proposals

A number of proposals have been drawn up following the community consultation.

Next Steps

A quote for the proposed works will be obtained. If the cost of the proposals is within budget the works will be undertaken with completion expected by 31 March 2025.



Introduction

An online consultation was held to gain feedback on the community's likes and dislikes about Lanthorn Park in Dedridge with suggestions also sought to enhance the park. The consultation was available on the council's website from the 6th to the 23rd of June 2024.

This exercise forms part of the council's Community Choices process. West Lothian Community Choices is West Lothian Council's version of Participatory Budgeting - a democratic process which empowers people and communities to have a greater say in how public money is spent. West Lothian Community Choices empowers everyone from community groups to individual service users to get involved in local decision making via a democratic Participatory Budgeting process. This consultation is being used by Open Space to focus spend as part of the capital investment programme in West Lothian's public parks.

Lanthorn Park is a public park owned and maintained by the council. The park is approximately 1.9 hectares in size and is located in the southern part of Livingston, within the residential area of Dedridge. It is regarded as a Neighbourhood Park by the council. The site is designated as *Land Safeguarded for Open Space* in the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan, 2018.

The park is bordered by residential properties to its north and south. St. Ninians RC Primary School lies near the park's eastern boundary and the Lanthorn Pond separates the park from the Lanthorn Centre on its western edge. There are a number of formal pedestrian routes into the park but approximately half of the park has no boundary restraints and access can be easily gained over amenity grassland. There are two bridged points over the Dedridge Burn leading to the park from the west. There is no formal vehicle access into the park although this can be gained by authorised maintenance and inspection vehicles from different directions. Parking around the Lanthorn Centre can be used by park visitors with a short walk then required to the park's western edge.

About half of the park is amenity grassland. There are some raised, landscaped features within the grassed areas with trees planted on, and around them, to create structure and interest. The central area of the park contains an equipped play area, surfaced multi-use games area (MUGA) and a number of seats and picnic tables. Two small sustainable urban drainage systems are centrally located in the park. The western portion of the park has denser woodland and scrub areas which edge the eastern edge of the Dedridge Burn. The Burn flows from the Dedridge Pond and then down into the Lanthorn Pond before narrowing and heading north towards the River Almond. A viewing platform sits on the western edge of the Lanthorn Pond but access onto this is closed off in anticipation of its removal due to its condition.

A number of sealed paths criss-cross or bound the park with additional paths created from slabs set into the grass. The sealed paths are lit. A number of bins are located throughout the park along with park signage. This includes the park name and contact details for reporting issues and some Health Walk interpretation boards showing measured routes around the park with additional yellow or red banded wooden posts marking these on site.

Information gathering

An on-line survey was used to gather comments and feedback from local stakeholders. This was posted on the Council's website and available for completion between the 6th and 23rd of June 2024. Emails were sent to the local ward members, Dedridge Community Council and a number of council officers advising of the park survey and encouraging their completion and/or sharing. Posters were put up in and around the park which included a link along with a QR code connecting you directly to the survey.

There were 30 surveys completed by the closing date.

Feedback

Full responses to the survey are available in **Appendix 1**. A summary of answers to each question is as follows:

What people call the park

Half of respondents call the park Lanthorn Park or just Lanthorn or The park. The Lani or The Lanny is also used as is Dedridge Park, Lanthorn Green, Big park and my greenspace.

What people like about the park

The green space as well as the fact that it is a big and open space is liked. There are a number of specific elements of the play areas that are popular. The park's location in relation to nearby homes and the community centre as well as its lack of traffic and visibility from adjacent homes are all positive aspects. The views of the water, ripples in the pond and the swans are also liked.

What people don't like about the park

There were negative comments about some aspects of the play areas and specific pieces of play equipment. The overgrown areas within the park and the closed viewing platform area are not liked. Dog fouling and the number of dogs were commented on. Elements of park maintenance or lack of certain features like benches, toilets or a dog park are also disliked.

Suggestions to enhance the park

A number of suggestions were made by the community to enhance the park or improve the enjoyment of park users. These and any relevant comments relating to them or other feedback are as follows –

Play area and features –

There were a number of comments suggesting various new pieces of play equipment or extending the play area along with other play assets such as a bike/ scooter/BMX track or outdoor gym equipment.

Park enhancements and new/updated play equipment/assets are funded from different budgets. The current budget allocation is for park enhancements which excludes play equipment and assets. Comments relating to play will be kept on file and if any play area budget becomes available in the future for play assets in Lanthorn Park then these, and any future consultation feedback, will be used to inform those proposals.

More bins –

There are five bins within the park. These are mixed litter and dog waste bins. The Cleaner Communities team within the council determines the number of bins within the county. This number of bins is considered sufficient for Lanthorn Park.

The park is regularly litter picked and the bins emptied. If you would like to report an overflowing bin or litter on site please use the council's on-line form at

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/32091/Report-Litter>

If you want to report dog fouling that needs cleaned up, want to report a damaged dog waste bin or have an existing one emptied, please use the council's online form at

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/32095/Report-a-Dog-Fouling-Issue>

Fenced area for dogs/dog exercise area –

The council has considered fenced off areas for dogs before and will not be implementing such areas in parks. This is mainly due to the high level of dog fouling likely to be generated in one area and the health issues associated with this and its management. There would be a loss of active open space that is available to the public if a dog facility was provided which

would not be supported by Open Space. The budget that is available is also limited and needs to be focussed on enhancing the amenity of human park users rather than their pets.

Lighting and CCTV –

The sealed paths within the park have lighting along them. The council does not have a policy to install lighting around play areas. Due to the capital cost of installing new lights and the revenue resources needed to maintain them there are insufficient resources now available to the council to install new recreational lighting.

The council does not install CCTV in parks. Some buildings in parks may have CCTV or security cameras installed in them but this is in association with particular properties e.g. Xcite gyms. The costs of installation and maintenance would also be above available budgets.

More seating/new picnic tables –

There were suggestions for more seats within the park. There are seventeen seating options and five picnic tables situated within the park. The condition or positioning of some of these is not ideal.

Two seats near the Lanthorn Centre are in a poor condition and do not have an attractive outlook. Three benches have warped seats or the surfacing under them allows weeds to grow up through them. The surfacing under some of the picnic tables is uneven and damaged, again allowing weeds to grow under them.

Removing, replacing or providing new seats and repairing some surfacing would improve the seating options in the park.

Viewing platform –

The viewing platform and the boardwalk leading to it are now in a very poor state and have been closed off for health and safety reasons. A number of wooden features including the viewing platform at the Dedridge Pond, wooden sleeper steps and perching posts were removed last year. The viewing platform and boardwalk at Lanthorn Pond was also identified for removal but this was delayed due to funding.

The boardwalk and viewing platform will now be removed as part of this park project. The viewing platform or boardwalk will not be replaced due to budget availability.

Pond area –

The Lanthorn Pond is surrounded by a vegetated edge of trees, shrubs, wetland plants and amenity grassland. Some areas have become overgrown or encroached into the pond. Wildlife needs some shaded areas and also vegetation to shelter in or feed off but too much vegetation will alter the flow or quality of the pond. Limited clearance of vegetation is likely to benefit the pond but any work would only be carried out after taking expert advice from water environment specialists.

Toilets and café –

Lanthorn Park is designated as a Neighbourhood Park and is not expected to have facilities such as a toilet or café. The limited budget would also not be sufficient to provide new facilities like these.

Maintenance –

Lanthorn Park has a schedule of grounds maintenance carried out in it which includes grass cutting, shrub/hedge cutting and spraying. The park receives the service level standards set out for parks managed by the council.

Many parks now have areas that are not cut and/or are managed for biodiversity. The majority of these areas do not affect the amenity of park users. Following comments about the encroachment of thistles and nettles in the natural play area these have been cut back from the main access route over the play mound.

Some areas within the park also require additional “one-off” works undertaken in order to improve legibility of signs or remove broken and redundant items. This includes cleaning park signage, removing broken fencing along the southern path edge within the hedge-line and removing redundant posts and wire around trees in the south-western corner of the park. There are also some dead or remains of damaged/vandalised trees which need to be removed.

Park proposals

Based on the community suggestions (excluding the play area and play asset suggestions) that can be implemented within the park (and likely to be within budget) a number of proposals have been drawn up:

Improved seating and surfacing –

A number of seating changes are proposed as follows –

1. Remove the two wooden seats that are on the northern edge of the park, along the boundary with the Lanthorn Centre. These would not be replaced.
2. Install one new metal seat on a Bitmac surface along the path edge that runs north-south through the path.
3. Install one new metal seat on a Bitmac surface off the path along the southern side of the play area.
4. Remove the bench on the edge of the path running from Waverley Path to the Pond. Replace with a metal seat mounted on a Bitmac surface.
5. Remove 2no. existing recycled plastic and metal benches on the southern side of the play area. Install 2no. new metal benches on new Bitmac surfacing.
6. Remove the two metal picnic tables on the northern side of the play area. Remove the rubber crumb path leading to the northern edge of the play area. Create a new Bitmac path to the play area. Create a new Bitmac surface and path section and re-install the 2no. metal picnic tables onto the new surfacing.

Improved park signage –

Some signage works are proposed as follows –

1. The park sign on the eastern boundary is an old-style sign. This will be removed and replaced with a new park sign which provides details on how to report issues to the council.
2. The other 2 park signs and 3 Health Walk signs will be cleaned of dirt and graffiti.

Maintenance –

Work is proposed as follows –

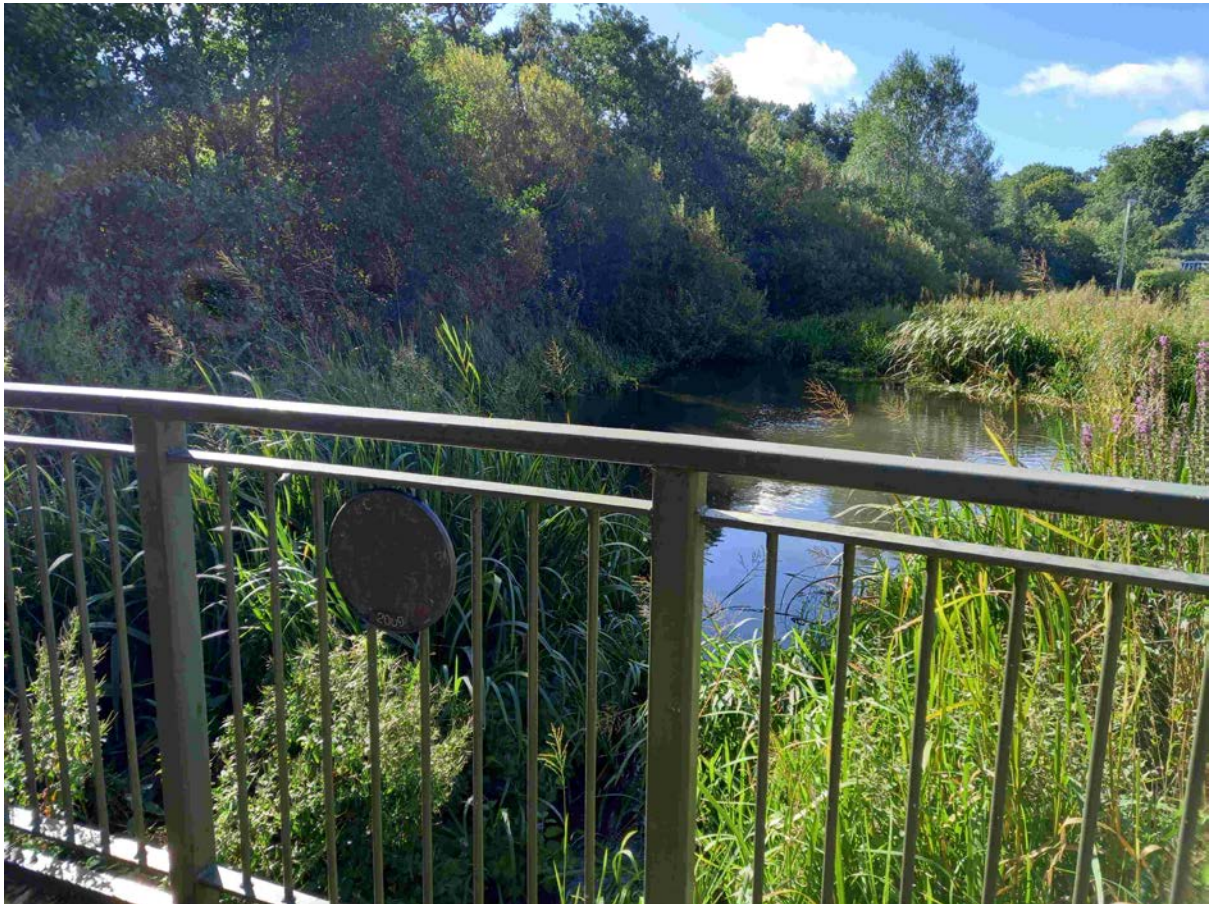
1. A section of broken fencing will be removed from the hedge-line on the south-western boundary.
2. The posts and wire fencing around the trees in the south-western area of the park will be removed.
3. 2no. dead trees and 2no. tree stumps will be removed from the park.

Viewing platform –

The wooden boardwalk and viewing platform will be removed. They will not be replaced.

Pond area –

Advice will be sought from water environment specialists to determine if/what vegetation can be removed from within the pond and around the pond edge. Depending on that advice further works may be implemented to improve the pond quality and surrounding habitat.



A layout plan showing the above proposals is shown below.

Additional enhancements –

Livingston Rotary Club has volunteered to plant Crocus bulbs along with local Scouts within the park. This will be in the grass “triangle” area in the east of the park. This is expected to be in October or November 2024.

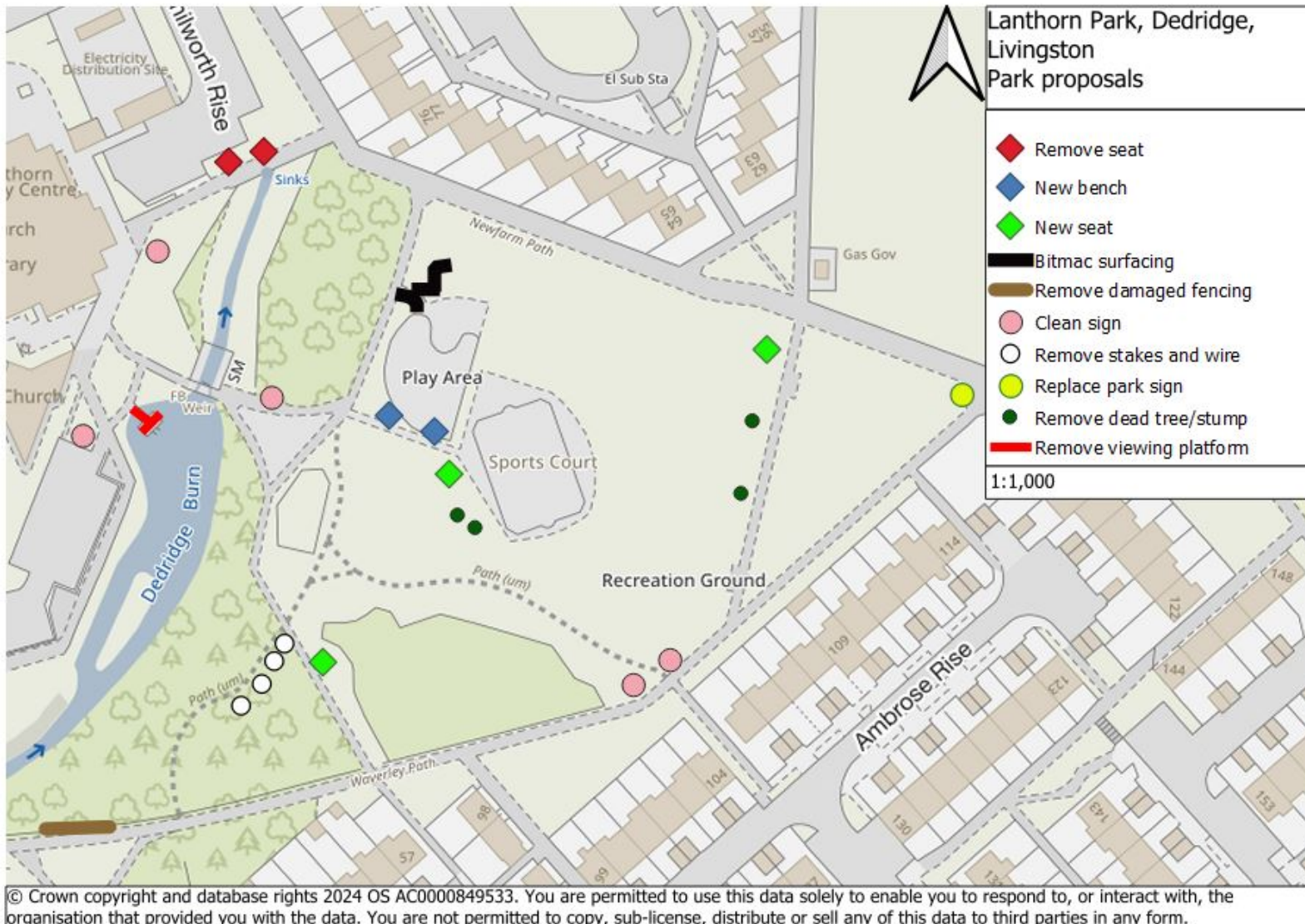
Next Steps

This report will be made available on the Council’s webpage at <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/parkinfo> under **Reports**.

The implementation of any of the above proposals depends on their costs being within the park budget. A quote for the above proposals will now be sought. If the cost of this is within the park budget then the work will be implemented. It is hoped that all work can be implemented by the end of March 2025.

The 19 respondents who requested to join the park email list will be kept updated about the park improvements. Anyone else who would like to join the list can request to do so by emailing Carol.Campbell@westlothian.gov.uk

Park proposals plan



Appendix 1 - All survey results (as returned in surveys).

1. What do you call this park?

Lanthorn Park
Lanthorn
The Lanthorn Park
Lanthorn Park
my green place
The lani
The Lany
Lanthorn park
Lanthorn Park
Lanthorn Park
Lanthorn park
Lanthorn Parj
Lanthorn
Dedridge park
Lanthorn park
Lantern park
Lanthorn
Lanthorn park
Lanthorn Park
Lanthorn park
Lanthorn Park
Lanthorn Park
Lanthorn green
The Park
Lanthorn park
Lanthorn park
The park
The park
Big park

2. What do you like best about this park?

-I really like the tree mounds & wild grasses
-The viewing point into the water, this park has been here since I was young and I always loved the hedge between the car park and the water the little walk way. It felt like you where somewhere different, quite private but also lots of wildlife to spot (mainly the swans and their nest)
I prefer the wooden parts of the park I feel when it is plastic it gets damaged quicker by youths and it looks really dirty and sometimes dangerous for example if they melt parts it becomes severely jaggy
-Swings
-The swings
-The area for football
-Like to walk around with my dogs. Relax above the burn. Like green spaces, view of trees and bushes. The ripple of the stream is calming.
-The ring swing, swings, kick pitch, benches, open space.
-The basketball court
-Close to my home for my young daughter.
-Great for kids and lovely for us to look out at from our house.

- Playground
- Play park
- Ideal location
- It is a really big space but has limited things to do for the younger children.
- Plenty space, variety of stuff
- That it is close to the community centre. It's away from main roads, cars and traffic.
- The swans at the pond
- Enough to play on
- Kept clean
- Checked regularly
- The play area for kids is really nice and I like the greenery
- The court for basketball/football, nice green area
- The green grass space, the variation of different trees planted which are beautiful. The various benches are great too
- It's close to home
- The play park for my daughter
- That there is space for kids to play
- Its locality and variety
- It's the local family park that myself & other family members used as children now we all have our own.
- The swings, astroturf, and basketball court
- A lovely green space you can escape to.
- Playground
- The swings my nieces love

3. Is there anything you don't like?

- Small slide
 - Lack of bins, Stains on ground
 - There is so much green space that could be used more for the children. No big slide anymore and no climbing frame for the older children. A bigger spiders web would be ideal.
 - Too big, long bushes and branches of tree covering a pond.
 - The pole slide as it hurts arms, don't like the climbing frame
 - i think there should be more playing equipment for younger kids.
 - The new area with walk bridge and metal poles aren't young child friendly and just seems to be a waste of area.
 - The amount of overgrown areas and weeds. This includes weeds growing through park benches and rounds the play areas.
 - The large mounds where trees are planted and where old slide used to be being unkempt. I understand the theory of not cutting areas to allow flowering plants to grow but these areas are dominated by gasses, thistles and nettles with very few flowering plants. Suggest replanting these areas with wildflowers to improve biodiversity.
 - Lack of seating
 - do not like anything. There isn't very much for the kids considering the size of ground.
 - The playpark could be slightly bigger.
 - Not well connected to the duck pond feels disconnected and kind of forgotten. Duck feeding/watching platforms been shut
 - Some areas are overgrown with weeds, overhanging trees and bushes. Paths not cleared of fallen leaves and sludgy mud especially in the winter. The area feels like it has been neglected. Especially since the lanthorn building closed. The grass areas can get flooded and marshy when it rains heavy. The pond area has lost the viewing platform to feed ducks and watch wildlife. Lighting could be better in the winter especially in the divide between the two grass areas. Sometimes don't feel safe walking the dog in the winter in the dark.
 - Rats at the pond
- Safety at the park & the surrounding areas - security cameras not linked up

No toilet facilities due to the lantern being closed

-Should have kept park enclosed. Too many dogs in park now.

Should have kept chute over by the slight hill.

Not kept clear of jaggy nettles in this area either it's an absolute disgrace. My 2 year old grandson will not play there now as he's been jagged with the nettles.

Football area should still have higher fences. Been hit a few times with football. Higher fences prevented this. Not exactly safe for anyone in park.

-Owners don't always pick up after pets, a lot of the informational signs aren't readable anymore.

-The play park could do with some improvement - the "slide" replacement put in recently is not great for the kids to be honest and I don't see it being used much. A proper "normal" slide would have been better plus it gets so overgrown at that bridge part of it.

-The horrendous weeds that have grown up around all the planted trees, around the perimeter of the park. The flower bed behind the Derek Moore memorial bench that is now bare and full of weeds

-No benches and overgrown in parts

-No

-Attempted to play rounders it's not really flat enough

-Not fully inclusive

-The MISSING PROPER SLIDE

-The tire swing, the lack of food vans available near the park, needs flowers and weeds cleared

-The boarded up viewing platform and removing the boardwalk and small viewing platform. Childrens play areas overrun with weeds. Not having a covered social area for adults.

-No dog park

-Dog poo

4. Please suggest things that could enhance the park or improve your enjoyment of it.

-Boardwalk & deck could do with some improvements

-I think there needs to be something to amuse young adults/teens maybe a wooden obstacle course. Something they could exercise on but also compete with their friends. Would maybe stop them from damaging the younger children's areas or even from being in that section.

A park near Armadale Xcite has a small gravel path/track for use of bikes and scooters. It is not perfect but loads of kids and young people use this and seems to keep them amused.

Might also be beneficial to have a dog obstacle course something small a few logs erected for dogs to wind in and out, some jumps, some beams for them to balance walk along ect again might encourage young people to get their dogs out a walk and get some exercise.

I work in WLC and I speak with families with children with disabilities and mental health. A big issue is a variety of things to get the kids out the house in the first instance. So just trying to think of new ideas to influence outdoor activity.

-Make a massive climbing thing or a gazebo or a zipline.

-Flying Fox, Trampoline, Monkey Bars, Fitness area, Giant Rope Climbing Pyramid, Basket Swing, Slides

-Bringing back the Tunnel

-Cut the branches above a pond. Shorten bushes. Fix the platform, which is cut out.

-Different types of climbing frames maybe larger, monkey bars, exercise circuit, toilets, cafe.

-renovating equipment (replacing and cleaning).

fixing the basketball court (smooth the concrete, add metal nets to the rims, repaint the lines and markings, change the height to 8ft, and get rid of the football goals under the hoop)

also, build a seperate football pitch

-A small pump track to encourage children to get out on their bikes and scooters. I believe this would not only encourage children in an attempt to gain fitness but be a huge help for mental health of young and older age children. There are a few of these pump tracks throughout West Lothian but I believe these are targeted for older youths. After such a

successful world cycling championships were held throughout Scotland last year I think a pump track would continue the enthusiasm for cycling within the community of West Lothian and benefit the local economy through our bike shops.

- Regular upkeep of all areas and more seating areas for families.

- Suggest replanting the mounds areas with wildflowers to improve biodiversity.

Replace rock climbing type instillation in the playground. Used very rarely and very difficult for children to climb.

- Bmx track or outdoor gym

- A slide, climbing frame proper swings, flying fox. Such an amazing area wasted

- A larger playpark with a separate part for smaller children. Some lighting for at night or the winter evenings as the paths leading to the park can get very dark.

- More equipment for are capabilities, something suitable for older children.

- Regular maintenance of pathways and the grass. More benches to sit and view especially around the pond areas. Perhaps a climbing frame with large slide similar to the one at the bankton mains park (at the ashy/bankton bowling club). Perhaps a small gated area/field for dogs to be let off a lead safely.

- The park itself is great - more litter bins

Trees cut back to make you feel safer when walking there

- Reintroduce High fence at football area

Keep all areas of park cut and strummed (get rid of nettles

- More interactive things or things to get the community together and involved

- Better equipment on the play park including items suitable for kids with ASN. Perhaps outdoor gym equipment for all to use, better area for families to picnic during the summer

- Additional dog waste bins.

The weeds around the planted trees and park perimeter, including the wet ground on one side, under the picnic benches, all need strimmed and weeds dealt with.

- Tables, seats, extra bins to encourage people to dispose of rubbish responsibly,

- Cctv camera, more swings, more benches

- Trim track for family use

- Enclosed dog field for owners to make use of the green space near by. Avoids dogs going into the kids area and keep both kids and dogs safe. Also more bins/poo bins

- A PROPER SLIDE

accessible equipment

Sheltered area

Generally updated

- Exercise area, more slides,

- A padel court

Get rid of the weeds from play areas (especially the jaggies)

Reinstate boardwalk/viewing platforms

Sort the silted pond

Also get the Lanthorn open. Dedridge residents have suffered greatly from it's closure with only those with transport able to use alternative facilities. The park is fine in good weather but people need an indoor social space

- If there was a dog park

- Another bin and another dog poo binn