



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

# BRADFORD ACCESS TO PARKS AND GREEN SPACES REPORT

## - 2026 -

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and Jennie Gray



*City of*  
**BRADFORD**  
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



Economic  
and Social  
Research Council

# FOREWORD

Bradford District welcomes the opportunity to continue to build upon the legacy we have enjoyed with our partners at the University of Leeds, in identifying and delivering initiatives and innovative improvements designed to make our parks and greenspaces better and safer places to visit and enjoy. Collaborating with and learning from our colleagues working in Leeds Parks and Greenspaces is of great benefit to Bradford.



We would like to thank all the people across our District who shared their insights when they completed the survey last year. Having these lived experiences inform how we and our partners can improve our parks and greenspaces, will create genuine, more meaningful opportunities for us all to be able to look forward to working together, to deliver improvements for the benefit of everyone.

**CLLR IAN WALKER**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES  
CITY OF BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL**





Lister Park. Photo by City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This report was authored by Dr Vikki Houlden, Dr Anna Barker, and Dr Jennie Gray, as part of an Economic and Social Research Council funded research project: 'Green AWARE: Greenspace Access, Wellbeing, and Resident Equality', University of Leeds [ES/Y003268/1], 2024–2026. The collection of the survey data, focus group discussions, and production of the findings on which this report is based has been supported by many people at the University of Leeds and City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council. The survey sampling strategy was facilitated by the Electoral service and supported by Bradford South Ward Officer, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council. We would like to thank officers working in the Parks and Green Spaces Technical and Development Service and their colleagues in Stronger Communities and Regulatory Services who assisted with the survey distribution. We also extend our thanks to Sonia Fayyaz, who was instrumental in the design and delivery of the focus group discussions, as well as all members of the project's Advisory Board for consulting on the research development. We would like to thank all of the members of the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council who contributed ideas to a workshop in March 2026 at which the findings and recommendations for report were first presented and discussed. We would like to thank all the people, parks groups, and other community organisations who gave their time to promote and complete the survey and take part in the focus groups.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Everyone should have access to quality parks and green spaces near to where they live: it's important for our health, happiness, and environment. But not everyone has the same opportunities, and even what "access" means can differ from person to person and place to place. Through a survey and discussion groups, this research explores how to make Bradford's parks and green spaces as welcoming, safe, and accessible as possible.



805 Bradford residents responded to the survey. **70%** visited at least once a week and stayed for up to an hour each time. Some people visited more frequently than others.



**Women** were around one third more likely than **men** to visit every day.

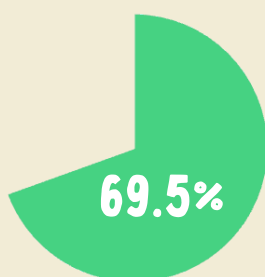
**South Asian** people were around **one third** more likely than **White British** people to stay for **over 30mins**.



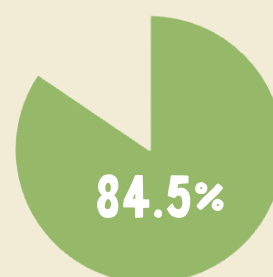
Most people had lots of positive things to say about the green space they visited most often (what we call "their park"). For example:



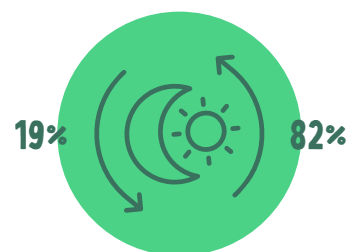
VISIT AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK



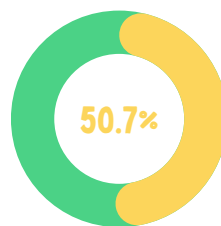
ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR PARK



ARE HAPPY WITH THEIR PARK CONDITION



Although most people felt safe using their park during the day, many people avoided using their park after dark, when just 19% of people felt safe (compared to over 80% during the day).



Over half (50.7%) avoided their park at certain times of the day or week. **Women, people under 50, and those with financial struggles** were most likely to avoid their park

at some point, often after dark or at busy times when there is competition for park assets like playgrounds. Avoidance was often due to either overcrowding or safety concerns relating to fear of crime, antisocial behaviour, and the presence of motor vehicles.

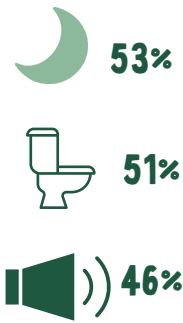
Some people who responded were "infrequent visitors" (15.6%) who visited less than once a month. Students and disabled people were the most common infrequent visitors.

In fact, **disabled people were four times more likely to never visit** than non-disabled people.



Perceptions of safety, accessibility, and lack of time were the main barriers to using parks and green spaces, though nearly all those who visited infrequently (91%) said they would like to visit more often.

Over half (53%) of respondents did not feel safe after dark, 5% reported lack of access to toilets, and 46% were concerned about crime or antisocial behaviour. Issues with dogs off leash were also reported by many.



According to respondents, their **top priorities** for improving green spaces in Bradford were:

### #1 KEEP PARKS CLEAN AND MAINTAINED



### #2 MORE NATURE AND WILDLIFE



### #3 BETTER DOG CONTROL



### #4 BETTER PERSONAL SAFETY



### #5 MORE CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES



The most-visited green spaces in Bradford were **Roberts Park, Lister Park, and Myrtle Park.**



The green spaces with the highest satisfaction tended to be in more rural and affluent areas, smaller than average, and have a range of natural and more landscaped features that cater for all ages, including playgrounds, picnic areas, and walking routes.

The **main challenges** to improving green spaces were identified as '**wicked problems**': inherently complex issues due to competing priorities, resource constraints, and practical challenges with implementation. These were:

- Providing and maintaining public, and accessible, toilets
- Managing dogs, dog mess, and encouraging responsible ownership
- Ensuring entrances are accessible (such as for pushchairs and mobility aids) while restricting off-road vehicles
- Improving safety and usability (often suggested through lighting) after dark without compromising nature.



In our recommendations section, we identify 7 strategic priorities to increase equality in access to green spaces across Bradford. These focus on removing the barriers that lead to avoidance or infrequent visits, and considering how accessibility extends beyond traditional physical needs, to make green spaces as accommodating as possible to the diverse local communities. For the full list of recommendations please see Section 6.

# 1. THE GREEN AWARE PROJECT

The **Green AWARE** (which stands for Access, Wellbeing, and Resident Equality) project was led by Dr Vikki Houlden, Dr Anna Barker, and Dr Jennie Gray at the University of Leeds, UK, and supported by funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), between 2024 and 2026. Working closely with Leeds and Bradford councils, the project was designed to understand how different people experience their local parks and green spaces, to help us make green spaces as welcoming, safe, and accessible as possible to everyone, wherever they live and whatever their background.

**A note on terminology:** Throughout this report, we will be referring to both 'parks' and 'green spaces'.

By 'green spaces', we mean any public green area where there is grass, trees, flowers, or other vegetation. This does not include private gardens but can include recreation grounds, woodland, green corridors and nature reserves, as well as more formal spaces such as parks, allotments, cemeteries? and sports pitches.

'Parks' are more specific and tend to be formally designated as a public area for recreation, often (but not always) featuring facilities such as paths, benches, and perhaps play areas for children.

In this report, we may use these terms interchangeably but will mostly use the term 'green space', to be as inclusive as possible of the types of spaces people use, recognising that these can take many forms.



Peel Park. Photo by City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

## 1A. MEET THE TEAM



**DR VIKKI HOULDEN**  
School of Geography,  
University of Leeds

**Principle Investigator**

Vikki is an urban data scientist, with a passion for understanding why some people and places are healthier than others. She led the project, bringing her interest in how green spaces can support our health and wellbeing.



**DR ANNA BARKER**  
School of Law,  
University of Leeds

**Co-Investigator**

Having led previous parks surveys, Anna supported the development of the survey, focus groups, and turning the findings into practical and impactful recommendations. She also leads a programme of research on Safer Parks: Improving Access for Women and Girls.



**DR JENNIE GRAY**  
School of Geography,  
University of Leeds

**Research Fellow**

Jennie is an expert in mapping and inequalities, who is fascinated by people and their neighbourhoods. She was responsible for much of the background understanding of access to green spaces and led much of the survey data analysis.

## 1B. WHY WE DID THIS PROJECT

The Green AWARE project brings together background research, a public survey, focus groups with residents, workshops with (landowners) City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, and data analysis to improve access to the city's public green spaces. We sought to understand what works well and where improvements are needed by listening to local communities, including those who use green spaces less or not at all, to identify barriers and opportunities for change.



Green spaces play a vital role in supporting physical and mental health, fostering social connections and community cohesion, and benefiting the environment by providing wildlife habitats and reducing risks such as flooding, pollution, and urban heat. However, access and experience are not equal. For example, research across the UK shows that women are more likely to feel unsafe, disabled people may face physical barriers, and those in deprived or minority communities often have less access to high-quality green space near to where they live.

The project therefore aims to understand how people in Bradford experience green spaces and, working with the Council, develop practical recommendations to make them more inclusive and accessible for everyone.

## **1C. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

We set out to answer three key questions:

1. How does living near green spaces affect whether people feel able to use them, across different places and groups
2. What features of green spaces help people feel welcome, included, and supported in their wellbeing?
3. What can be done to make green spaces easier for everyone to use, especially for those who face the biggest barriers?





## 2. INTRODUCTION TO THE SURVEY

### 2A. PARKS AND GREEN SPACES IN BRADFORD

Bradford District Parks, part of the council's Department of Environment, manage 37 public parks, which cover an area of over 270 hectares, as well as 620 hectares of publicly accessible woodland, and 120 recreation grounds. Six of the largest parks are also recognised by Green Flag Award Status, meaning they are recognised for high standards of horticulture, cleanliness, safety, and community involvement.



37

public parks



270 HA

of parks



6

Green Flag  
Awards



620 HA

of woodland



120

recreation  
grounds

### 2B. THE BRADFORD ACCESS TO PARKS AND GREEN SPACES SURVEY

The Survey was conducted between April and June 2025, with residents able to complete either an online or a printed questionnaire. The opening questions asked residents for their post code and how often they visited green spaces within Bradford. This information was used to group respondents into 'frequent' and 'infrequent' users, as follows:

**Frequent Users:** Respondents who visited green spaces at least once a month were asked about the green space they visited most often (their "main park"). They reported how often they visited, their satisfaction with the space and its condition, and rated different aspects of accessibility.

**Infrequent Users:** Those visiting less than once a month were asked about their awareness of local green spaces, whether they wanted to visit more often, and where they spent their free time.

**All Respondents:** everyone was asked about any barriers that make it more difficult to use green spaces, and their priorities for improving them across their neighbourhood (not just their "main park"). They also provided demographic information and self-reported health to understand different experiences. The full questionnaire is in [Appendix A](#).

The survey was advertised in several ways. A random sample of 3,000 non-vacant private home addresses (i.e. excluding care homes or other residential institutions) were selected via Bradford council. These addresses were sent a postcard advertising the survey and inviting residents to complete it. A further 1,000 non-vacant private home addresses were randomly sampled from within the 20% most deprived local areas within Bradford, as classified by the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation, and were sent a paper version. This was to account for anticipated lower response rate, and potential barriers to accessing the online survey (such as internet access and digital literacy) in more deprived areas of the city. All residents could also request a paper version. All respondents were invited to opt in to a prize draw, where they could win £100 of high street vouchers, to encourage participation.

The survey was further publicised via local media (including the BBC website, BBC Radio Leeds, and local newspapers), the council's website, and social media channels (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram), and targeted online adverts, particularly aimed at underrepresented groups such as younger adults, men, ethnic minorities, and residents in more deprived areas. The survey link was also shared universities, community groups, and 'Friends Of' groups, and the Broadway Shopping Centre.

## **2C. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

Survey respondents could opt-in to be contacted for follow-up discussions, to allow for deeper conversation around experiences of using (or not using) green spaces. Forty respondents identified as 'infrequent users' were invited to a discussion group in September 2025. Of these, 11 joined one of three focus groups, while a further 7, who had not responded to the survey, were invited based on local connections in the Manningham area of the city, to enhance the diversity of views heard. Attendees were given a £30 shopping voucher as a 'thank you' for their time and travel expenses.

The focus group discussions comprised two parts: First, participants drew or wrote about their 'usual journey' to a park or green space within their local area, using coloured stickers to highlight different 'barriers' (things that made it more difficult to get to parks, which might be things related to the environment, personal feelings, or circumstances) and 'enablers' (things that made it easier or more convenient to get to parks). These prompted each participant to discuss their experience of accessibility to their park.

Second, participants discussed a selection of photographs of different green space features (where possible, using examples from the Bradford district parks), such as seating, planting, play equipment, paved routes, and layouts. These prompted participants to discuss which features met their needs and helped them feel safe, welcome, and included. The discussions highlighted what they already enjoyed in Bradford, and what they would like to see in the future.

## 2D. DATA JOINING

Collecting respondents' postcode and their 'main park' (most visited green space) allowed us to link additional data sets to the survey. Using the Office for National Statistics NSPL post code locations[1], we mapped each respondents' location to the centre of their postcode. Green space size and locations were obtained from several sources, due to the diversity of the types of parks green spaces reported: Ordnance Survey's Open Green Space Map[2], Open Street Map[3], and the National Forest Inventory[4]. We then used Ordnance Survey's routing network[5] to calculate the distance travelled to each respondent's main park, and its size. Finally, linking postcodes to Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) enabled us to include local deprivation levels using the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation[6] (IMD).

[1] ONS NSPL Online Latest Centroids, Available at: <https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/datasets/ons::nspl-online-latest-centroids-1/about>

[2] Ordnance Survey OS Open Greenspace, Available at: <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/products/os-open-greenspace>

[3] Open Street Map, Available at: <https://www.openstreetmap.org/>

[4] Forestry Commission National Forest Inventory GB 2024, Available at: [https://data-forestry.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/5a3efa283e81431b911b5c9872527ca5\\_0/about](https://data-forestry.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/5a3efa283e81431b911b5c9872527ca5_0/about)

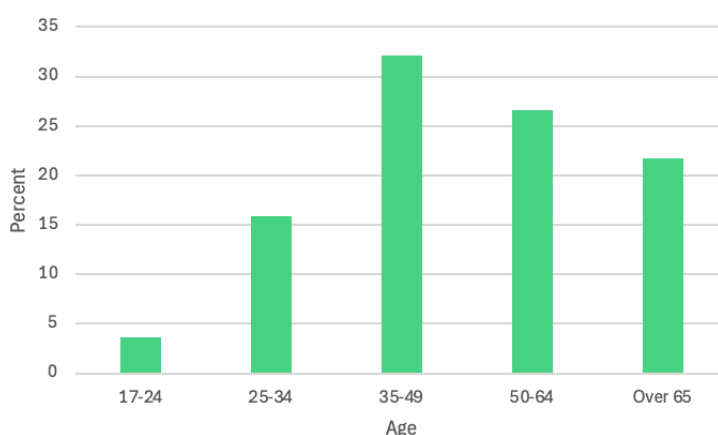
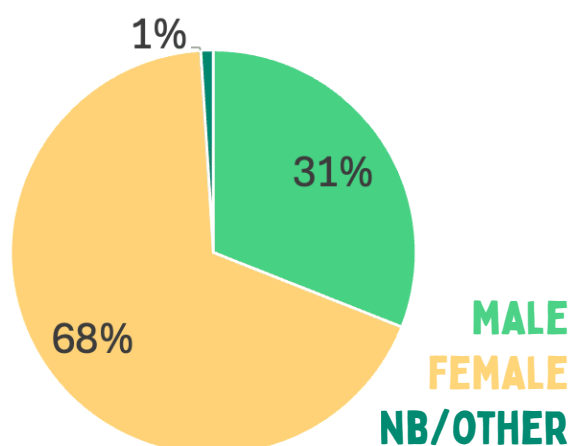
[5] Ordnance Survey OS Multi-modal Routing Network, Available at: <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/products/os-multi-modal-routing-network>

[6] UK Government English Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2025, Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2025>

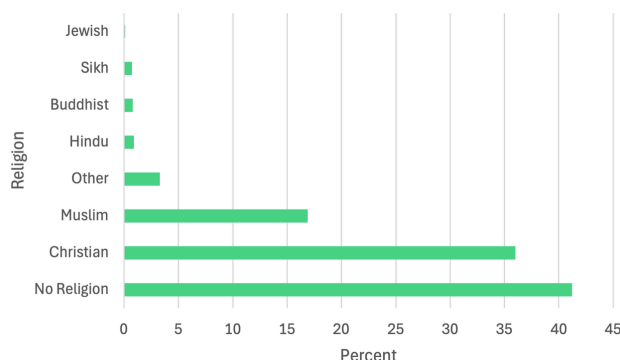
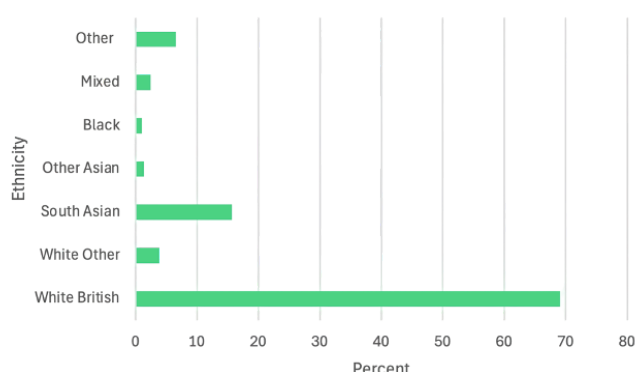
# 3. PARKS AND GREEN SPACE USE IN BRADFORD

## 3A. WHO COMPLETED THE SURVEY?

Valid responses were received from 805 people in Bradford. In terms of sex, significantly more females (250, 68.6%) than males (232, 30.6%) responded, but many declined to answer the demographic questions. When asked about gender, 64% identified as male, 33% as female, and 3% as non-binary or another gender. Around a third were aged 35–49 (32.1%), which was followed by a quarter of 50–64-year-olds (26.6%), and 21.7% aged over 65. The smallest group was those aged under 25, at just 3.6%.



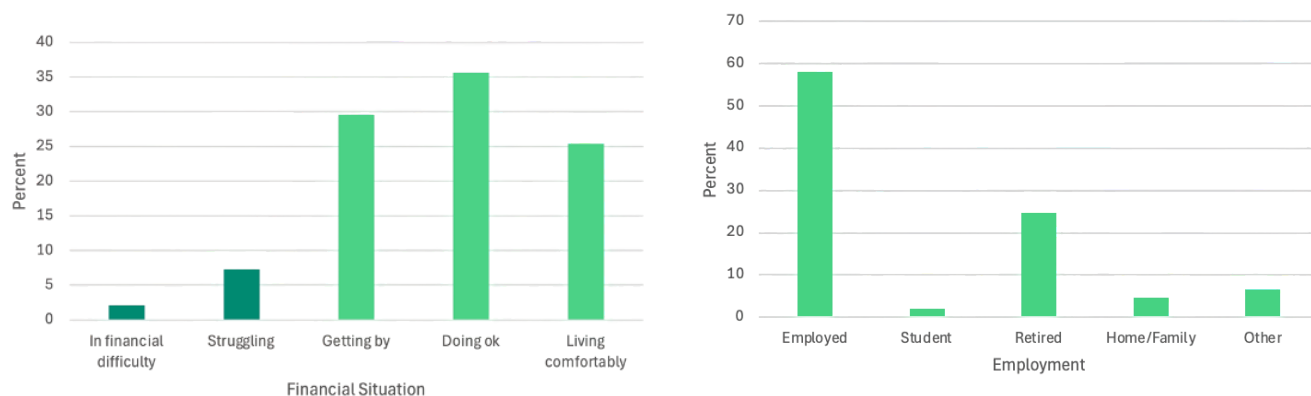
Over two thirds (69.1%) identified as White British, South Asian people made up 15.7% of the sample, with 12.8% of the sample being Pakistani. There were also small numbers of other ethnicities, including Chinese (0.75%), Other White (3.4%), and Mixed (2.5%). Just 1% of respondents identified as Black, and 6.6% identified as an Other Ethnicity. Almost half reported that they were of no religion (41.2%), with the most reported religion being Christian (36.0%), followed by Muslim (16.9%).



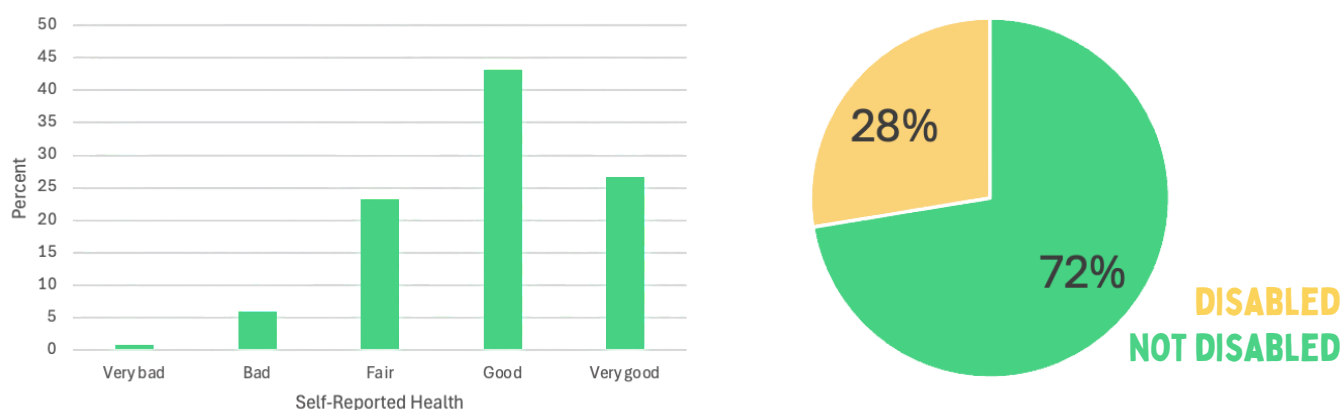
Over half were employed (58.0%), a quarter retired (24.6%), while 2.1% were students. Similar numbers were either seeking employment (4.0%) or looking after home or family (4.6%).



When asked how well respondents and their households were managing financially, most reported that they were “doing ok” (35.6%), with around a quarter “living comfortably” (25.4%). However, over a third reported some level of financial strain, either just about “getting by” (29.6) or a few either “struggling” (7.3%) or “in financial difficulty” (2.1%). A high majority of people had a private or shared garden (85.6%).

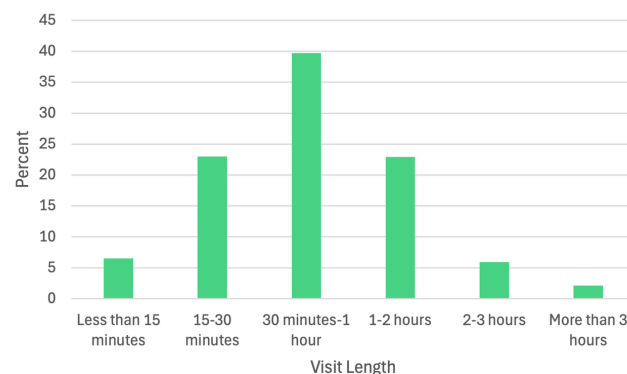
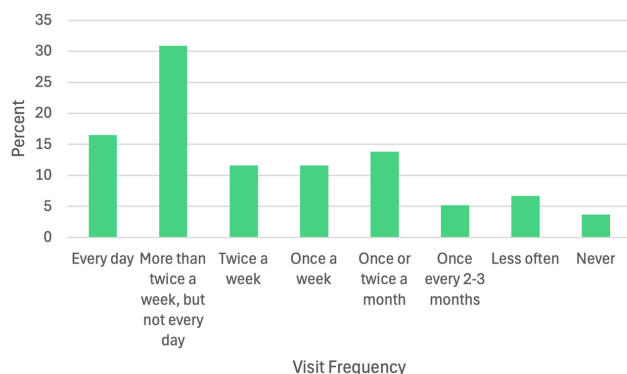


Almost a third (32.3%) reported that they had a physical or mental health condition lasting over 12 months. For 27.6%, this affected their ability to carry out day-to-day activities, impacting 21.0% “a little” and a further 6.6% “a lot”. In total, this led to us classifying 28% as ‘disabled’. Women, older people, retired residents, and those identifying at White ethnicity were overrepresented in the sample, compared to the Census.

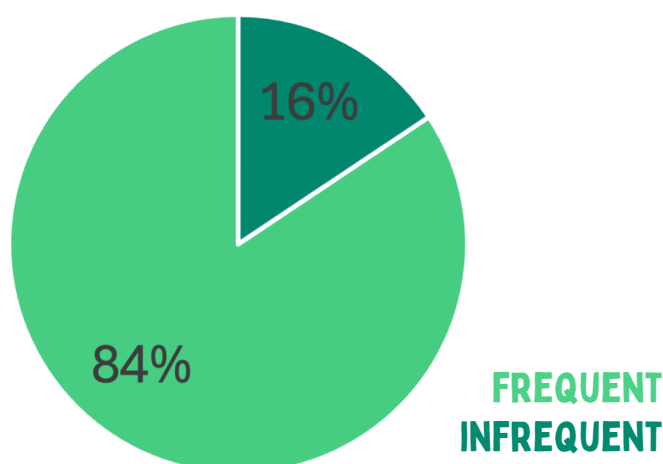


### 3B. GREEN SPACE VISITING PATTERNS

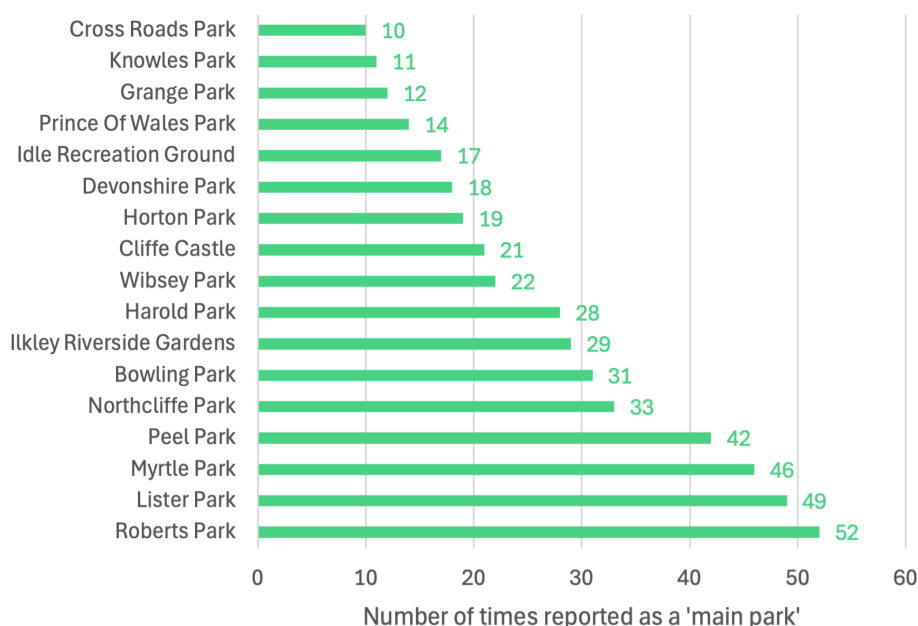
Most people (70.6%) visited green spaces in Bradford at least once a week. Some 30.9% visited more than twice a week, but not every day (30.9%) while 16.5% visited every day, and similar amounts visited between twice a week and one a month (11.6% and 13.8%, respectively). Respondents were ‘infrequent’ visitors (dark green) if they went to a park or green space less than every month; 15.6% (126) fitted this description, with 3.7% of people saying they never visited a green space in Bradford, while the remaining 679 were our ‘frequent’ visitors. As such, most infrequent visitors still visited occasionally, but less than 4–6 times a year.



The remainder of this section refers to frequent users only, describing their experiences of their 'main park' (most-used green space).



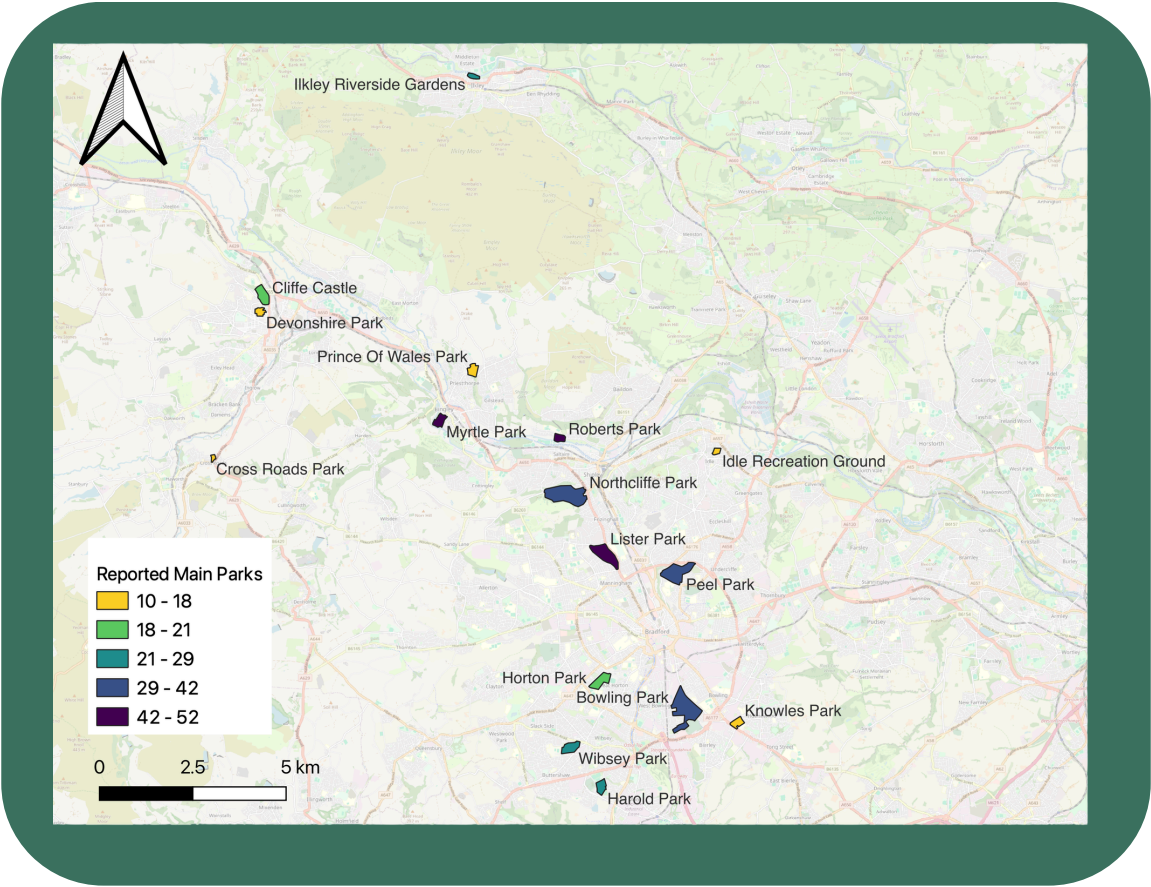
There were 112 different green spaces reported as a 'main park' across the Bradford District. The most popular main parks chosen by survey respondents were Roberts Park (52), Lister Park (49), Myrtle Park (46), and Peel Park (42). When visiting their main park, most people spent at least 30 minutes there. A third spent between 30 minutes and one hour (33.4%), with similar amounts spending 1-2 hours (19.3%) or 15-30 minutes (19.4%) there.



Respondents were more likely to visit more frequently in the spring and summer months when the weather is generally good, especially every day (around a fifth of visitors) or more than twice a week (just over a third).

| Visit Frequency | Every day | More than twice a week | Twice a week | Once a week | Every two weeks | Once a month | Less often |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| Summer          | 20.8%     | 36.8%                  | 13.2%        | 14.8%       | 3.3%            | 0.6%         | 10.5%      |
| Winter          | 11.7%     | 28.4%                  | 13.2%        | 17.0%       | 13.2%           | 7.1%         | 9.3%       |

The map below shows the location of all green spaces in Bradford reported as a “main park” by at least 10 respondents.



© OpenStreetMap

### 3C. WHY DO PEOPLE IN BRADFORD VISIT GREEN SPACES?

Respondents could select up to 5 main reasons they visited their main park. Over half (53.8%) said this was for a walk; for some this was as a route to somewhere else (16.3%), or to walk their dog (19.3%). Being in the natural environment was a common reason: over 40% (42.7%) said they went for the fresh air, while others visited to enjoy nature (31.8%), or to relax (26.6%).



53.8% of green space users visited for a **walk**



42.7% of green space users went for the **fresh air**



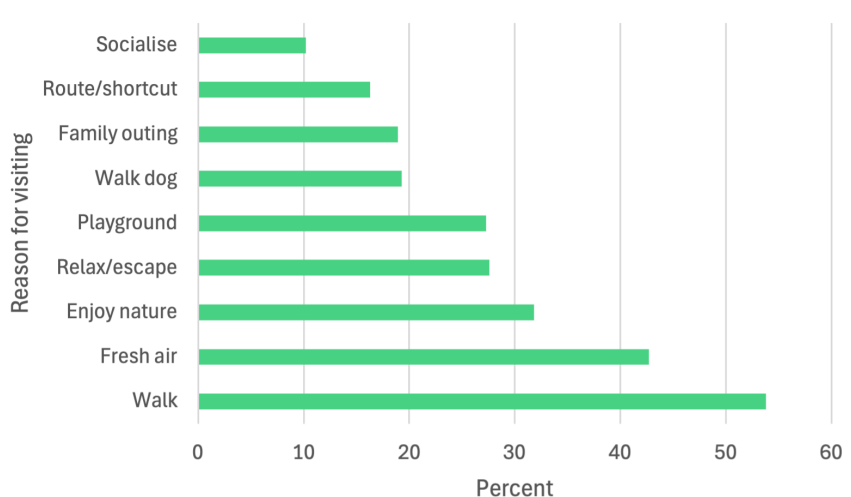
31.8% of green space users **enjoyed nature**

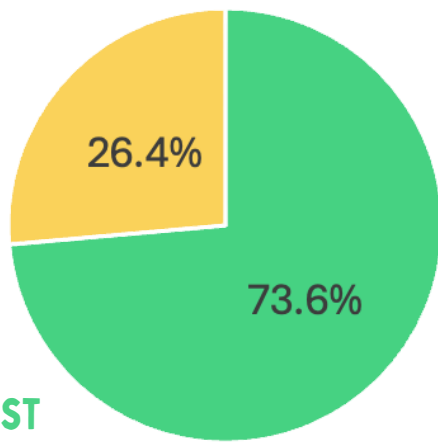


26.6% of green space uses visited to **relax or escape**

Social reasons included to socialise (10.2%), spending time on a family outing (18.9%), or for a social group (5.1%). Exercise was a common motivator; in addition to walking, running (7.3%), cycling (6.8%), outdoor gyms (1.9%), and attending group exercise (3.9%) or sports games (8.7%) were selected.

Facilities in parks encouraged visits, with over a quarter (27.3%) using the playground, and others going to cafés in the park (8.2%); historical features (4.7%), allotments (1.0%), and paid activities (2.7%) or events (7.0%) also attracted residents.





**NEAREST**  
**NOT NEAREST**

For nearly three quarters of respondents (73.6%), their most-used park was the closest park or green space to their home, while the remainder mostly visited a park further away. When asked why they frequented their park rather than one closer to home, the following **push** and **pull factors** emerged.

**Park Quality:** Many respondents avoid their nearest park because it is perceived as more run-down, dirty, vandalised, or poorly maintained, especially compared to the park they choose to visit most often.

*"The one near our house is very run down and always has glass or litter or loud teenagers."*

*"Facilities – the one closest to home has a lot of broken equipment."*

**Safety and Antisocial Behaviour:** relating to aggressive behaviour (often from teenagers), uncontrolled or aggressive dogs, poor lighting, and feeling unsafe especially when alone or with children.

*"I hear too many stories about aggressive dogs and teenagers so I'm scared to use it."*

*"Feel unsafe due to uncontrolled dogs... dark and a bit creepy."*

**Size and Space:** Many respondents say they travel further because the park they use is bigger, more spacious, or more diverse, providing opportunities for walking, running, avoiding crowds, or exploring.

*"Larger, more beautiful, quieter, wilder."*

*"I use my park for long walks and parks nearer my home are too small for that."*

**Facilities for all Ages:** People often choose parks with more to do, especially when visiting with children or grandchildren. Preferred facilities include playgrounds, cafés, toilets, bowling greens and sports pitches, and cultural elements.

*"Lister Park playground is huge and has venues with toilets etc inside."*

*"Has better greenery and landscape, has a cafe and an art gallery."*



**Accessibility and Routines:** Many people choose parks that fit naturally into daily routines, or are on the way to other destinations, such as school or work. Others commented on accessibility features such as better and flatter surfaces than are more easily navigable from prams, wheelchairs, and walkers.

*"Because it's on the pedestrian route to post office, supermarket & shops."*

*"Near my work."*

*"Paths are wide and level enough for my wheeled walker."*

**Nature and Landscape:** Parks that feel beautiful, calm, or natural, which include woodland, wildlife, flowers, or water elements, provided a sense of escape for many.

*"Has a lake to walk round and wildlife to enjoy."*

*"Gives a sense of being away from home surroundings, is calming and uplifts my well being."*

**Cultural and Emotional Attachment:** some parks were chosen due to personal ties.

*"It's the park I grew up in and now take my kids to."*

*"Historically it's always been the central social hub."*

**Activities and Clubs:** Certain parks attract regular users because they host specific organised activities, such as Parkrun, bowling, cycling, and volunteering opportunities.

*"It hosts my closest parkrun."*

*"I volunteer there every week."*

Certain green spaces were highlighted several times for having particularly strong pull factors, and are often larger, destination parks that draw visitors from a wider area:

**Lister Park:** repeatedly cited for its size and facilities, including playgrounds, cafés, toilets, galleries.



Lister Park. Photo by Bradford Council

**Roberts Park:** often mentioned for its walking routes, social connections, and activities such as Parkrun.



Roberts Park. Photo by Bradford Council

**Northcliffe Park:** attractive for bowling, dog walking, walking routes



Northcliffe Park. Photo by Bradford Council

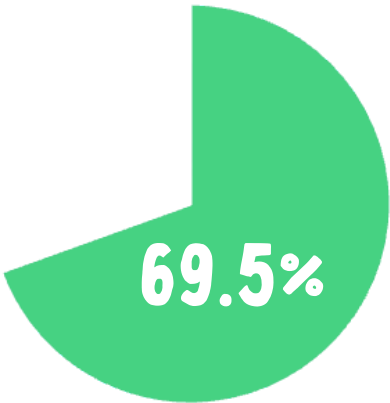
**Cliffe Castle:** recognised for its size, good maintenance, and availability of children’s play areas



Cliffe Castle. Photo by Bradford Council

Geographically, some of parks may draw visitors thanks to nearby features, such as Lisrer park being located in a densely populated area, and Roberts Park being adjacent to Saltaire model village, a popular tourist attraction.

**3D. WHAT DO BRADFORD RESIDENTS THINK OF THEIR GREEN SPACES?**



Over two thirds of frequent visitors are **satisfied** with their main park. A total of 43% said they agreed with the statement “I am satisfied with my park”, while 26.5% strongly agreed.

**84.5%** of visitors in Bradford are **happy with the condition** of their main park. This comprises 22.8% rating their park as “acceptable”, 35.4% as “good”, and **26.8%** as “**very good**”



## Green Space Accessibility

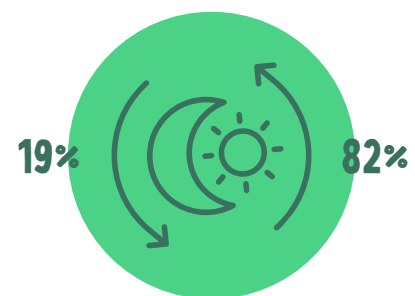
Access to green space is more than just how easy it is to get to and move around, and research [1] suggests there are up to 6 dimensions which give a more holistic overview of accessibility and better consider the diverse needs of residents. We applied this 6As of Accessibility framework to obtain a detailed picture of green space accessibility in Bradford. The 6 dimensions are:

- **Availability:** Are green spaces available in sufficient size and quantity?
- **Accessibility:** Are green spaces easily reachable and navigable?
- **Accommodation:** Do green spaces meet diverse user needs?
- **Affordability:** Are green spaces temporally and financially affordable?
- **Acceptability:** Are green spaces safe, and socially and culturally acceptable?
- **Awareness:** Are residents aware of green spaces and their benefits, and feeling confident to use them?

All except “awareness” were measured in the Frequent User section of the survey. For infrequent users, we asked whether they knew about the parks and green spaces available for them (see [Section 2b](#)). We also consider this when measuring potential barriers to green space in [Section 4c](#), as well as temporal constraints which limit affordability, such as being too busy at home or work to visit green spaces.

Overall, Availability scored highest, followed by Accessibility (what we often traditionally think of as ‘access’, for parks to be easily reachable and navigable), both averaging over 80% agreement. The other ‘As’ have more scope for improvement, especially in terms of Accommodating diverse needs and ensuring activities are Affordable, both of which averaged closer to 50% agreement, although nearly three quarters of respondents reported favourable views of appealing nature and wildlife in their green spaces.

One striking difference was between perceptions of safety in the daytime vs after dark, with agreement falling from 82% to just 19%.



[1] Gray, J., Houlden, V., and Barker, A., 2025. Beyond Proximity: a conceptual framework and rapid evidence review of barriers and inequities in urban greenspace access. [Preprint]. SocArXiv. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/cmt46\\_v1](https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/cmt46_v1)

| A of Accessibility                                                                                | Percent Agreement |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Availability</i>                                                                               |                   |
| My park is big enough                                                                             | 83.3              |
| <i>Accessibility</i>                                                                              |                   |
| My park is within easy walking or wheeling distance                                               | 81.6              |
| The paths and layout of my park make it easy to get around                                        | 81.8              |
| <i>Accommodation</i>                                                                              |                   |
| My park has nature and wildlife that appeal to me                                                 | 70.4              |
| My park has facilities that meet most of my needs (e.g. car parks, playgrounds, benches, toilets) | 47.3              |
| There are events in my park that appeal to me                                                     | 44.4              |
| <i>Affordability</i>                                                                              |                   |
| Activities and events in my park are affordable                                                   | 52.1              |
| <i>Acceptability</i>                                                                              |                   |
| My park is clean and well-maintained                                                              | 65.9              |
| My park feels safe during the day time                                                            | 82.1              |
| My park feels safe after dark                                                                     | 19.0              |
| My park feels welcoming                                                                           | 74.7              |
| Overall, I am satisfied with my park                                                              | 69.5              |

## Green Space Improvements

Frequent visitors were asked one main thing in their park they would like to improve. The key themes that emerged, accompanied by illustrative examples from the free-text responses were:

**Children's Play Areas:** focussing on the need to repair, expand or modernise children's play spaces.

*"The children's playground needs a new surface and new equipment"*

*"Improve the play facilities of the children's play area in comparison to other parks they are poorly maintained & there is a poor selection for younger children"*

**Maintenance and Cleanliness:** comprising presence and frequency of emptying of bins, reducing litter and fly tipping, repairing deteriorating walls and paths.

*"The walls have fallen down, and the bushes have grown on to the paths, the swings in the playground were removed in 2023 and still haven't been replaced, the majority of the benches have been removed, and also the majority of the bins have been removed, the big climbing frame, 6 person seesaw and big slide for the teens which historically over the past 30 plus years were the most used and loved facility in the park have been removed"*

*"The dumping of stolen burnt out bikes in the nature wood, the fly tipping on the football pitch"*

**Safety and Antisocial Behaviour:** including increase of security such as park wardens and CCTV cameras, improving visibility and dog control, and tackling antisocial behaviour, which may include reducing loitering (especially of youths), fireworks, drugs, and motorised vehicles.

*"Make the park safe from broken walls and dog poo, and drug dealers"*

*"That users don't leave litter, kids don't set off fireworks, and youths don't ride motorbikes in it"*

**Lighting:** especially along paths, playgrounds, and during the (early) evening, to extend useable hours.

*"More lighting on the paths"*

**Toilets and Facilities:** including baby changing and accessible toilet facilities, and increasing availability of cafés, benches, and parking spaces for the park or green space.

*"There are no toilets in the park so it is so much good to build some toilets and baby room in the park so we can change our baby's diaper"*

*"Bring it back to [life], with a small café, seating area. Historic features cleaned up"*



**Nature and Climate:** increasing flowers and natural areas, but balancing these with the need for mown lawns, cleaning and maintaining ponds and waterways

*"A clean lake and boats on the lake"*

*"More welcoming, there used to be greenhouses and flowers everywhere much missed"*

**Activities and Events:** offering more family-friendly and community events, and widening promotion of activities and events.

*"Hold events there"*

*"Perhaps leafleting the local area about the walking groups, activities. Not everyone uses social media"*

**Sports and Recreation:** including restoring, maintaining, and better marking out of football, tennis, and basketball facilities, providing outdoor gyms, and increasing equipment for teenagers to play and hang out.

*"The lack of posts and markings on the football pitch"*

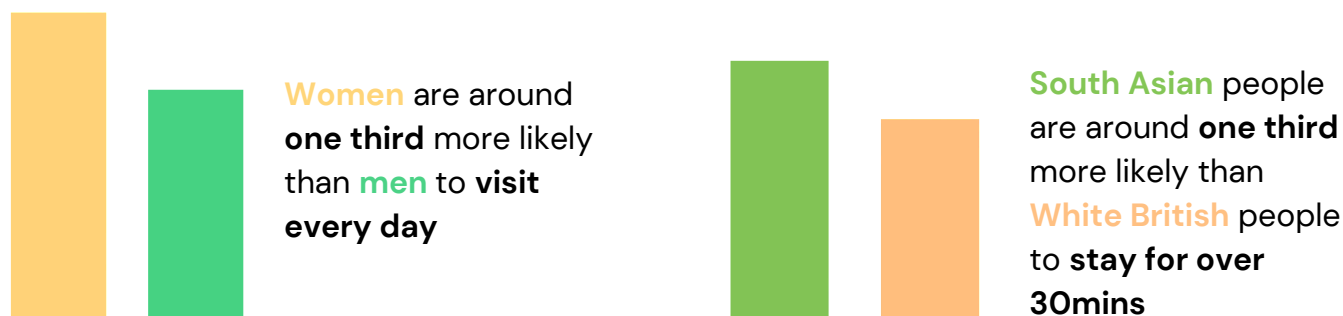
*"There are no equipment in the tennis court, and the basketball court etc so I would suggest to introduce them there"*

### 3E. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR GREEN SPACE USE IN BRADFORD

- 805 residents provided valid responses
- Women, older people, retired residents, and those identifying at White ethnicity were slightly overrepresented in the sample
- The vast majority visited parks and green spaces at least weekly
- Most people were very satisfied with their park and its condition
- Nearly three quarters of respondents visited their nearest green space more than any other
- The most common reasons for visiting were related to exercise and spending time outdoors for fresh air, relaxation, or visiting nature
- Residents felt much safer in their green spaces during the day than after dark
- Green spaces were generally felt to be available and accessible, but accommodation of user needs and the acceptability of the state of the green space may have most room for improvement
- Suggested improvements centred on facilities including children's play areas, toilets, and lighting, as well as safety elements such as maintenance, cleanliness, and tackling antisocial behaviour

## 4. PARK USERS: HOW DO DIFFERENT PEOPLE EXPERIENCE GREEN SPACES?

Most people using green spaces in Bradford visit at least once a week (70.6%) and stay for at least 30 minutes (70.5%); around two thirds regularly stay for up to an hour. Few statistical differences were observed between social and demographic groups, though two key patterns emerged:



### 4A. WHO IS HAPPY WITH THEIR PARK?

Respondents were asked how they would rate the current condition of their main park, on a scale of “very good” to “very poor”. Certain groups were more likely to rate their park’s condition as “good” or “very good”: people who were very healthy, older or retired, female, non-binary, White, and those who are more financially comfortable. Those identifying as Christian tended to be happier with their park’s condition compared to others, including those of No Religion. Certain groups were more likely to rate their park’s condition as “poor” or “very poor”, including younger adults, males, South Asian people and some religious groups.



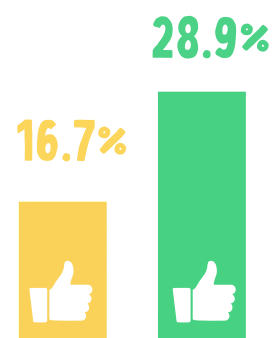
### 4B. WHO IS SATISFIED WITH THEIR PARK?

Related to park condition is respondents’ general satisfaction with their park, measured via strength of agreement with the statement “Overall, I am satisfied with my park” on a scale of “strongly agree” to “strong disagree”. As expected, patterns here were very similar to those observed for park condition.

**Under-25s** were less likely to be satisfied, being around **half** as likely as the **average** respondent to “strongly agree” that they were satisfied with their park.

Women were slightly more likely than men to report satisfaction with their park. Healthier people, and those who were more comfortable financially, were generally more satisfied with their park.

Just 50% of South Asian people were satisfied, compared to an average of 70%; some of these differences between ethnicities were also reflected among some religious groups.



#### 4C. WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF VISITING GREEN SPACES?

Respondents were asked whether a variety of factors made it more difficult for them to visit green spaces in Bradford. They could select as many as they liked. We termed these “barriers”, and they cover several themes: accessibility and transportation, facilities and maintenance, safety and comfort, social and environmental factors, activities and events, and personal barriers.

Safety was a major concern. Over half (53.3%) of respondents reported not feeling safe after dark, while nearly as many (46.0%) were concerned about crime or antisocial behaviour. Over a quarter (27.5) were concerned about dogs being off leash, while a similar amount reported poor lighting (23.7%). Others cited fear of harassment (17.4%), feeling unsafe during the day (9.3%), and worries of getting lost (1.5%) as barriers.

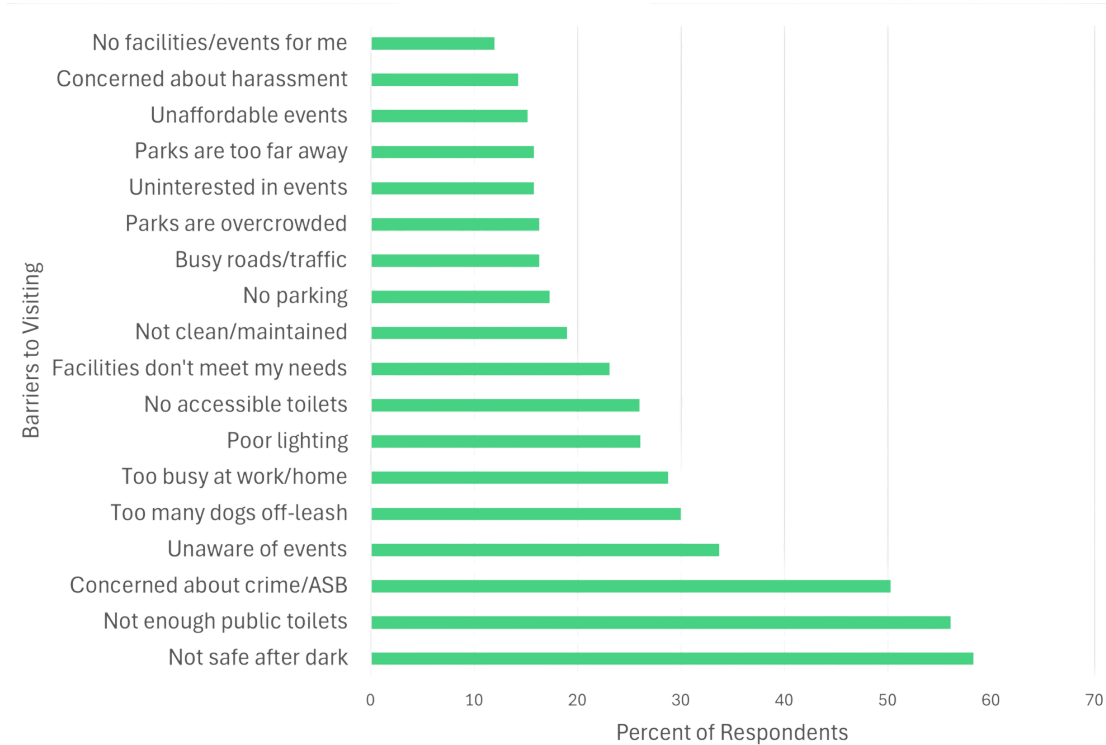
Facilities were limited by a lack of public toilets for half of respondents (51.3%), with a lack of accessible toilets especially concerning 23.8%. Almost a third reported parks not being adequately clean or maintained (30.8%), while others said that facilities did not meet their individual needs (14.9%).



In terms of accessibility, similar numbers were limited by lack of parking (13.9%) or busy roads enroute (14.4%). Within the parks, 10.9% found paths and layouts too difficult to use (e.g. steps, slopes, uneven surfaces). Green spaces were perceived as overcrowded by 9.6% of respondents, while, conversely, slightly more (13.0%) reported they felt empty or isolated.

Facilities and events within green spaces were contentious. Some people were not interested in events (14.4%), felt that the events weren’t “for them” (15.8%) or were activities they would not enjoy (14.9%). For some, events were a barrier because they were unaffordable (4.3%). However, over a quarter (26.3%) were unaware of events or activities in the spaces.

Some of the barriers were personal. A fifth (21.1%) were too busy with responsibilities at home or work to visit as often as they'd like, with 6.1% of people limited by their caring responsibilities. Physical and mental health challenges restricted 7.8% and 4.0% of residents, respectively.



**Barriers also differed between groups. The number of reported barriers was significantly higher for under 25s, women, South Asian people, and disabled people, compared to over 65s, men, White British people, and non-disabled people.**

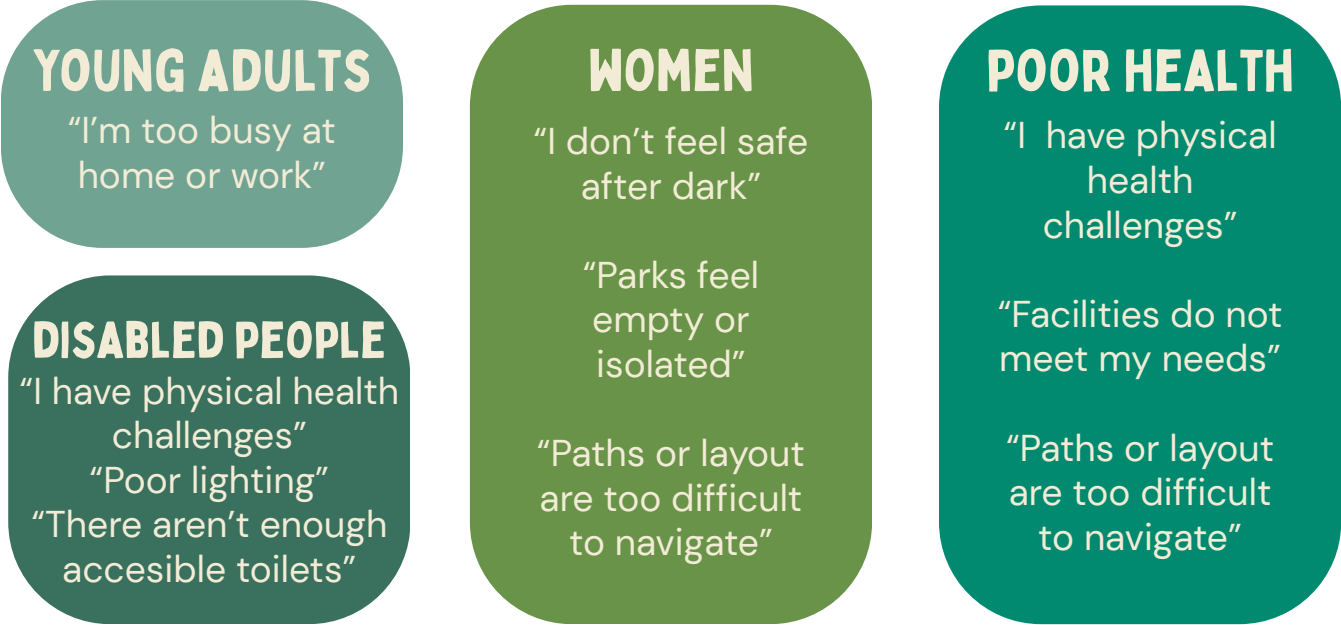
The types of barriers were important. Those reporting that their health affected their day-to-day activities a lot were much more likely to report that their physical health and limited availability of accessible toilets were key barriers to accessing green spaces than the general local population. More broadly, those classified as disabled highlighted their physical challenges alongside lack of facilities including lighting and accessible toilets as restricting their visits.

There was considerable overlap between older adults (over 50s), those in poorer health, and disabled people. Potentially exacerbating their physical challenges, respondents describing that their health was “poor” or “very poor” more frequently reported that facilities available within the green space, such as car parks, play areas, and benches, did not meet their needs. Paths and layouts were also more difficult to navigate for this group. This might include physical obstacles such as steps, slopes, and uneven surfaces.

Similarly, women were more likely to report challenges in navigability of paths than other genders, potentially due to an overlap with caregiving responsibilities and taking pushchairs to green spaces. Women were also most likely to report safety-related barriers, specifically not feeling safe after dark, and feeling green spaces are too empty or isolated, which can lead to feelings of vulnerability.

Some of the barriers were personal. A fifth (21.1%) were too busy with responsibilities at home or work to visit as often as they'd like, with 6.1% of people limited by their caring responsibilities. Physical and mental health challenges restricted 7.8% and 4.0% of residents, respectively.

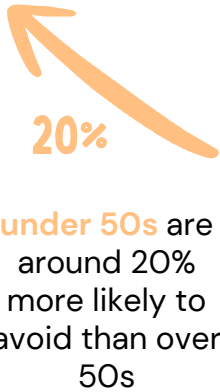
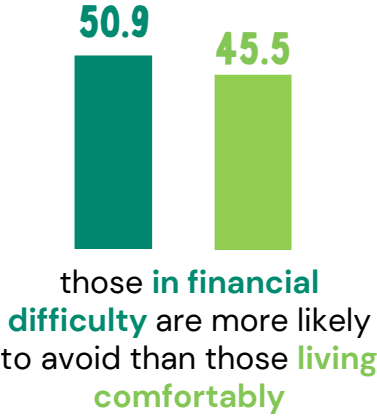
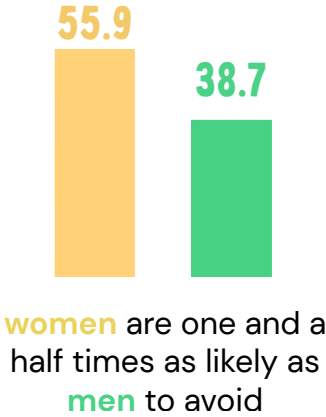
Younger adults (those aged under 34) reported time pressures of being "too busy at home or work" more commonly than any other age group.



**Avoiding Green Spaces**

The survey asked if visitors avoided their main park at certain times of the day or week. Over half (50.7%) of respondents avoided their green space at certain times. This is often linked to feelings of being unsafe, unwelcome, or unaccommodated within the space.

Several demographic groups were identified as being significantly more likely to avoid their park at certain times:





Some other groups were also slightly more likely than average to report some level of avoidance, though this was less pronounced:

**Religion:** being Muslim or Hindu

**Ethnicity:** identifying as Mixed Ethnicity

**Health:** being in “poor” or “very poor” health

**Ability:** reporting being disabled

We asked respondents to tell us why and when they avoid any part of their main park. Both after dark and busy periods were avoided, often due poorer perceived safety and comfort. A lack of lighting was an exacerbating factor for feeling unsafe. At busy times, such as during Parkrun or when the playground is full, lack of space became an issue. Some men reported that they felt others may be wary of them as a lone visitor during periods dominated by families, such as weekend mornings, which deterred their visits. Busy times also cause accessibility challenges such as lack of parking or busy traffic making it hard to reach green spaces on foot.

More broadly, the actions of others in green spaces affected feelings of safety. Antisocial behaviour, particularly people vandalising property, swearing, and riding e-bikes or motorised vehicles within the space were frequent concerns. Some stated that this especially deterred them from visiting with children, as they didn’t want their children exposed to certain language or safety issues.

## AFTER DARK

safety concerns, poor lighting, fear of crime

*“After dark I don’t use the lower section because it’s unlit and feels unsafe. I want to be seen by people”*

## BUSY TIMES

overcrowded, space “not for me”, rush hour traffic, parking

*“On a nice day it’s really busy which is nice but the children complain because they can’t get to use much”*

## SAFETY

ASB, loitering youths, swearing, motor vehicles, drugs, vandalism, maintenance, cleanliness

*“There are youths hanging around and people driving round on motorbikes... and antisocial behaviour”*

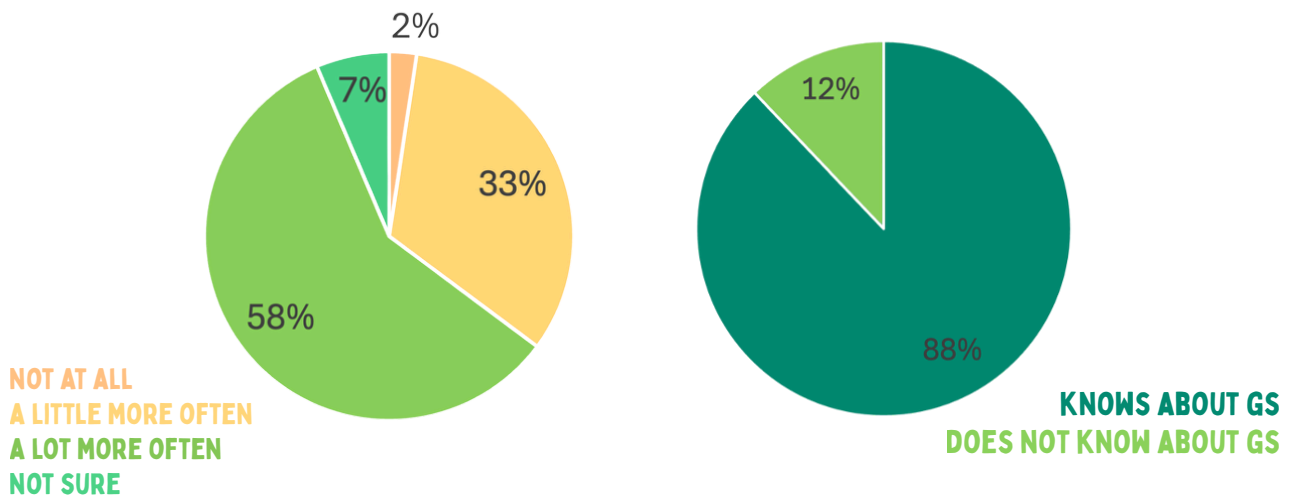
### 4D. INFREQUENT VISITORS

#### What do Infrequent Visitors Have in Common?

Sixteen percent of respondents were infrequent users, meaning they visited Bradford’s green spaces less than once a month.

**Most infrequent users still visited green spaces in Bradford a few times a year, but less than once every 2–3 months; just 4% never visited.**

The vast majority (88%) said they knew about the green spaces available, responding positively to the question, “Do you feel have enough information about where your nearest parks are to where you live?”. An even larger percentage (91%) would like to visit more often, with 58% wanting to visit “a lot more often” and 33% wanting to visit a little more often. A small minority, just 2%, did not want to visit more often.



### Who visits less frequently?

People visiting green space less than once a month were more likely to be younger, and twice as likely to be as a student than unemployed or retired; almost a third (25.9%) of students were classed as infrequent visitors. Coinciding with this, infrequent users were the least likely to be occupied looking after home or family, who constitute just 5.7% of this group. This suggests complex lifestyle factors, as well as physical constraints, limiting access.

Infrequent visitors were also slightly more likely to be male, of an ethnicity other than White and, perhaps overlapping with this, identify as either Hindu (28.6%) or Muslim (20.5%).

Infrequent users tended to live in slightly more deprived areas of Bradford and were around 60% more likely to report being in “financial difficulty” (25%) than “living comfortably” (14.1%). This may be due to an overlap between physical health, disability and economic struggles, compounding the ability to visit more frequently for those in this intersectional group. Those who reported being in “Bad” general health were twice as likely as the average to be an infrequent user, and twice as likely to be disabled than non-disabled.

Infrequent were also twice as likely as frequent users to not have access to a private or shared garden at home. This could have several explanations. Some infrequent users may either place less value on outside space in general, be less financially able to choose to live in a home with a garden or be too busy with work or family commitments to visit green spaces as often as they would like.

31.3%



15.4%



**Students** are twice as likely as **average** to be infrequent visitors



A third (32.3%) of people **without access to a garden** are infrequent users, compared to 14.1% of people with a private garden

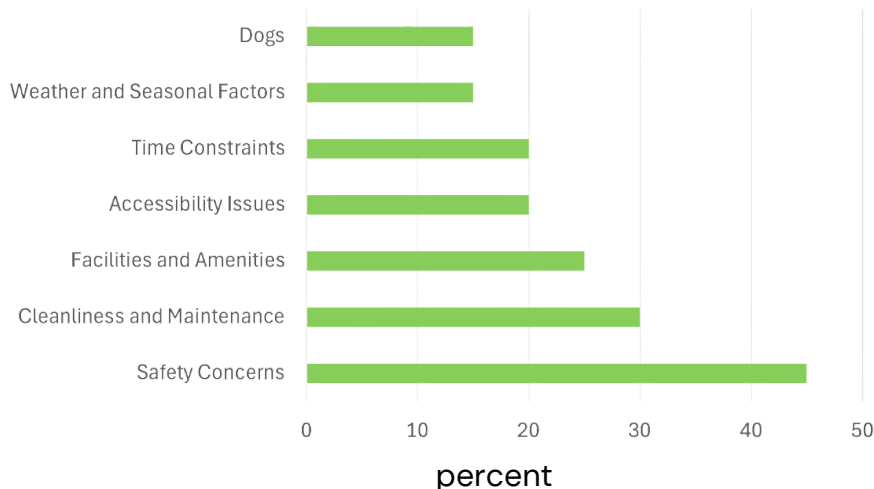


22.5% of **disabled people** are infrequent visitors, compared to 13.0% of **non-disabled people**.

### Why do infrequent users not visit more often?

Infrequent users were asked the main reason they did not use green spaces more often. Several themes were identified, the most prevalent of which were safety and maintenance of the park, implying that infrequent users did not feel comfortable in the spaces. With 20% of infrequent users reporting physical accessibility concerns, this aligns with the statistics showing that those in poorer health or with a disability were much more likely than average to be an infrequent user.

Reasons People in Bradford Do Not Visit More



The main reasons aligned with the experiences shared during the Focus Groups, which add deeper explanations to these themes, and provide the illustrative quotes as follows:

#### 1. Safety Concerns

- Fear of anti-social behaviour, gangs, drug use, and vandalism.
- Feeling unsafe alone, especially for women and parents with children.
- Poor lighting and lack of security measures.

Safety was a large concern and even prevented some residents using their local green spaces at all. For example, one resident wanted to use his local park to walk his dog but felt he was forced to drive to a safer, further away park, due to persistent antisocial behaviour including dog dirt, litter, and frequent fireworks in the evening which cause a lot of noise, distress, and debris. Safety is often perceived as a spectrum, from more minor 'inconvenience' to feeling 'endangered'[1]. One person never visited green spaces due to safety concerns, and a few would never visit alone, even during the day. One described not feeling "scared", but not safe, comfortable or confident. Some only avoided certain areas of their park, such as the wooded parts. Several felt lack of lighting felt unsafe and discouraged use of the green space.

Some antisocial behaviour included people loitering in groups. Quadbike users were seen to evade access restrictions and cause threat and nuisance.

Several participants felt that lack of lighting was an issue in their park, and darkness stopped them from using the parks, especially in the winter months. A couple of participants were mindful of balancing this with the need for biodiversity and wildlife.

*"I would like to have more lighting, especially we are now coming close to winter and the dark nights. I still want to use the outside space as much as possible. I think the lighting would help also the other problem we have had is the anti-social behaviour, gangs, groups just hanging around, which can be kind of concerning, especially when you have young children, teenage children, and you don't want them to be going out and mixing them up with the wrong group."*

## 2. Cleanliness and Maintenance

- Litter, dog fouling, graffiti, and broken equipment.
- Parks described as neglected, unkempt, and in need of revamp.

Play parks were a key concern, with several reporting they were common targets for vandalism.

Several people cited issues related to upkeep and maintenance. Dog mess, lack of bins for litter, graffiti, and damaged play equipment, were cited as regular deterrents to use. While open walks, nature, and water features were described by participants as "lovely", the lake in Peel park was described as becoming "disgusting" at times. Suggested solutions included increased staffing, a community policing presence, and CCTV.

*"From my house to my park, it's a very short walk... but my main problem is the park itself. Unfortunately, we have drug addicts go there in the evening...leave their syringes everywhere. We've got other people that go there, do not clear after their dogs. And, you know, other people who knows what that's like. And firework We have a lot of fireworks where I live. Go off at night, around about the 9 o'clock, 10 o'clock, mark. And you look out the window and... Oh, yes, they're coming from the park. And you've got dead fireworks all the time. My main beef is I would love to go there. I'd love to walk my dog round there. But I can't because of these issues."*

[1] World Bank. 2013. Inclusion Matters : The Foundation for Shared Prosperity. New Frontiers of Social Policy;. © World Bank. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/16195> License: [CC BY 3.0 IGO](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/).

### 3. Facilities and Activities

- Few amenities like toilets, cafés, or seating.
- Limited play areas and things to do for different age groups.
- No sports facilities (e.g., netball).
- Limited parking

Most participants highlighted toilet facilities (or lack thereof) as a key concern. In one of the discussions, all participants agreed that they would never use a public toilet in a park, even if they were available. They didn't like the look of them, and one said they looked scary. They all planned to use the toilet before they went, or planned in visits to nearby cafés.

In another group, several participants said that well-maintained and available toilets would be an enabler to park use. One described a friend with a disabled child, who could not visit the park due a lack of any accessible toilet provision (in Lister Park). Some parks, such a Lister Park, were claimed to have toilets which always appeared to be locked . Some toilets had been vandalised.

For those driving to their green space, parking was a key concern. Some residents could only visit at certain times, due to parking restrictions or congestion (such as avoiding rush hour or school start/end when roadside parking was limited). Lack of accessible parking was highlighted, with some car parks having no disabled parking spaces, despite introducing parking charges (mostly in Leeds).

Accessible routes and paths through parks, good lighting, play equipment, notice boards, and community spaces, were all repeatedly highlighted as enabling features. Accessing walking routes were attractive to many of the participants. One green space has recently introduced a walking track with trees and benches, accommodating older people and those with accessibility needs, as well as 'mums walking groups' after school drop-off.

Multiple participants enjoyed 'risky play' areas that are less structured, and others such as bigger swings where parents and children could play together in a less structured way. A variety of options was preferred, including a mix of more adventurous areas, wooden/natural structures, and traditional equipment.

Notice boards were felt by several participants to aid navigation, remembering a space, and community feel. They also raised awareness, as one participant felt that "no one knows about the events" in green spaces. For similar community reasons, cafés were felt by many to be a strong attraction. They also provide an attraction and shelter during bad weather. One participant said they were happy to pay slightly higher prices to support local businesses. They also often provide toilets and help people socialise, especially older people and those newer to the area.

One participant described the ban on feeding ducks in several of the parks as disappointing, as she had fond childhood memories, she was unable to recreate with her young son. One park used to have a boating lake, and there was general agreement that this closure was a shame, as it was an enticing part of the park and brought back memories.

*"Over the years, I have used quite a lot of this green space since the council have been so nice to put a walking track around this green space. And that, as I see everyday, it's used by elderly, the young, basically everyone. And it's recently revamped... some benches around the walking track, which is really good, because again, it's uphill and it can be quite steep walking up. It can be tiring as well. So, it's good to have that, just to have a couple of minutes rest. And they've put in some green trees in as well."*

#### 4. Accessibility Issues

- Challenges for disabled individuals and those with mobility problems.
- Green spaces not disability-friendly for children.
- Difficulties with transport and distance from home.

Many respondents reported barriers in getting to their park. Busy main roads with steep slopes made it more difficult to get from home to their nearest green space. This was particularly challenging for older or less mobile people, and some reported that it wasn't safe for children to cycle. People riding e-scooters and the threat of criminal activity and antisocial behaviour made the route feel unsafe. Traffic calming measures have been helpful in some areas.

For some residents, these factors led to them driving to their green space, either for safety or to preserve energy for a longer walk when they got there. Public transport was felt, by some, to not be a practical alternative, due to a need to take multiple busses, for example. Some reported not wanting to have to drive, as they were aware of the environmental impact, but this was necessary due to a lack of nearby green spaces or those perceived as safe enough.

For a couple of residents, lack of awareness of available green spaces and facilities was a barrier to access.

*"I have some neighbours. They're disabled. And they don't want to go [to the park]. They don't find the disabled parking [sufficient] enough. There's no disabled parking. So it's only one space I think or two. And there was a big, big car park. But no disabled parking."*

#### 5. Time and Financial Constraints

- Work commitments, caring responsibilities, and busy schedules.
- Limited free time to visit green spaces.

Paid-for activities in the green space were divisive. On the one hand, they were described as educational, important for children, and supportive of community spirit, and on the other, several participants highlighted the costs of these activities as a barrier.

One participant reported that they had to walk around their streets to get fresh air as there were no green spaces close enough to home to access around working hours.



*"[My visit] usually is in between something, I've only got like, you know, like 10-15 minutes before I meet my son after school. So I'll go for a quick wander around before picking up, things like that."*

Several people reported trip-chaining, whereby multiple errands were combined with their trip to the park. This included, for example, women going to the park with a friend after dropping children at school. This demonstrates how green space visits are often embedded within other patterns of daily life for certain groups, and how accessibility relates not just to travelling directly from home.

## 6. Weather and Seasonal Factors

- Cold, dark evenings and British weather discourage visits.
- Preference for indoor alternatives like gyms during bad weather.

Several people commented on longer daylight hours and better weather in the summer months being much more conducive to visiting green spaces. Family gatherings were harder in winter, as it was more difficult to play outside or have a picnic when the weather was cold or wet.

*"In fact, when it's darker nights, it's like you feel like you've got less time to go because you've got to go [home] straight after you go. And then if you don't go before tea, then there's no lighting round, so it's not like it's like accessible length, so you've got less time and need to dare to do it."*

## 7. Dogs

- Dogs off leash and behaving aggressively
- Lack of space to exercise dogs freely
- Dog fouling

Dogs were a divisive issue. Some people used the green spaces to walk their dogs, while others were concerned about dog control. In one group, all four participants were afraid of dogs and some would change their direction or route in green spaces when they encounter them. Many were concerned about dogs off-leash, and 'dog zones' were suggested as a solution, though it was agreed that this may be challenging to enforce.

Responsible dog ownership varied:

*"If [dog owners] see that you're walking up, they will leave the dogs off lead. But if they see you approaching they'll straight away put them on lead to help you to get past them. And that without even asking any questions. And...I really appreciated that."*

*"I was enjoying the view and I've turned as a woman with four big black dogs approached. So the dogs all came and jumped on me. And I just like, I had an out of body experience. And like I just said, I'm, I'm petrified of dogs."*

## 4E. PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE OF GREEN SPACES

Finally, respondents were asked to select up to 3 key priorities for green spaces in their neighbourhood of Bradford. There was considerable overlap with the barriers people said they faced. Many people had reported that events were a barrier, but 19.9% recommended that they'd like to see more events and activities for their local community.

Green spaces being kept clean and maintained (e.g. free of litter, weeds, dog poo) was the top priority, selected by over half of respondents (55.5%). Specific facilities, such as children's activities (e.g. play parks, 22.1%), sports facilities (8.7%), and places to buy food and drink (12.8%) were also important.

### #1 KEEP PARKS CLEAN AND MAINTAINED



### #2 MORE NATURE AND WILDLIFE



### #3 BETTER DOG CONTROL



### #4 BETTER PERSONAL SAFETY



### #5 MORE CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES



Other practical priorities were larger green spaces (13.2%), accessible car parking (7.5%), and better accessibility within the spaces, including level pathways, wider gates, stair rails, and seating (10.7%). Nature and wildlife were very important (notably the second top priority at 29.7%), and 10% (9.9%) felt that climate friendliness was crucial.

Priorities also differed for different people. Disabled people and those in poorer health were more likely than average to prioritise personal safety, while those in poorer health and women prioritised larger green spaces. Women also prioritised children's activities more highly, as did younger and middle-aged adults, ethnic minorities, and those more financially comfortable. Muslims were more likely to prioritise events and activities than other religions. We also asked respondents to justify why they had chosen these priorities:

*"Consult the locals what interests them, and then plan and hold events accordingly"*

*"People are less likely to go to a park that is not maintained. It affects their feeling of being in the space, their confidence in using the space"*

*"Very few parks have toilet facilities"*

*"Having visible staff makes you feel safer knowing you have someone to go to if an incident were to happen"*

*"Urban biodiversity. Improving space for nature is good for wildlife in its own right, as well as for our enjoyment."*

*"I want to feel safe, from dogs and antisocial behaviour, and in an attractive tranquil environment. I would stay longer if I could get a cuppa or an ice cream. The Lodge Cafe at Bowling Park is just what is needed"*

A focus on safety, staffing, and community feel was also a strong theme that emerged from the focus groups, notably as a solution to some of the challenges experienced by infrequent green space users. There was frequently a nostalgia for 'how things use to be', and a feeling that community spirit may have deteriorated in recent years.

One participant described Skipton as a good example of community. The groundskeepers in the park there are known faces within the community, who greet everyone. The green spaces there have several different areas that meet the needs of the local residents. Everyone agreed that having trusted community members can create a sense of security and care for the space, thus reducing antisocial behaviour. "Claiming back spaces" and feeling a sense of ownership was unanimously felt to be a remedy to many of the issues experienced in park access. Terms such as "sense of community", "community spirit", and "community pride" were common.

It was agreed by Focus Group participants that attractions, such as cafés, boating lakes, and events that draw people of all ages and newcomers to the area enhanced community spirit, and communities need to get involved to bring back this cohesion. Cafés allow people to do social activities such as 'coffee and walk' with a friend or family. For similar reasons, spaces for picnics, or 'the Hut' at Bowling Park were appreciated. Community libraries were suggested to build trust, bring people together, and help reduce educational inequalities among the most disadvantaged, though they do need people to maintain them.

Peel Park was described by a couple of participants as feeling socially segregated with a 'top half' and a 'bottom half' as two very different areas. They were concerned about children picking up on this, as they felt everyone should be mixing. Ways to bring everyone together to enjoy the park safely and socially were proposed as a potential solution.

### THE PARKS ACCESSIBILITY INDEX

We have developed the Parks Accessibility Index for Bradford as a practical tool to help understand how accessible parks are to the residents who use them. The Index is calculated based on our green space Accessibility questions (see **Section 3d**) and barriers to use (see **Section 4c**) and provides a score for each of the 'main parks' in Bradford. There is a total Index score, out of 6, as well as scores for each of the As. The Index can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses for each park, to inform planning and service improvement.

The index, user guide, and technical support, are available at:  
<https://doi.org/10.48785/100/488>

The 6 As of Accessibility [1]:

**- AVAILABILITY – ACCESSIBILITY – ACCOMMODATION – AFFORDABILITY –  
ACCEPTABILITY - AWARENESS -**

[1] Gray, J., Houlden, V., and Barker, A., 2025. Beyond Proximity: a conceptual framework and rapid evidence review of barriers and inequities in urban greenspace access. [Preprint]. SocArXiv. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/cmt46\\_v1](https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/cmt46_v1)



#### 4F. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR DIFFERENT GREEN SPACE EXPERIENCES IN BRADFORD

Findings reveal different experiences of Bradford's green spaces for certain social groups:

- South Asian people may stay longer, but rate their parks in poorer condition. They are more likely to prioritise activities for children
- Disabled people and those in poorer health are the group most likely to avoid or never visit green spaces in Bradford. They tend to rate their parks as poorer condition, potentially due to accessibility and facility barriers
- Younger people often rate their parks in poorer condition and face time constraints to visiting, making them more likely to visit infrequently.
- Women visit more often than men and tend to rate their parks in better condition. However, they also are more susceptible to facing accessibility and safety concerns, leading them to avoid visiting at certain times. They also prioritise activities for children.

Infrequent visitors would usually like to visit a lot more often, but identified barriers around their own safety, as well as physical features of their local green spaces such as cleanliness, maintenance, facilities, and accessibility. Time constraints also limited the frequency of their visits.

In addition to addressing these barriers, restored sense of community was suggested to improve visit frequency, comfort, and enjoyment.

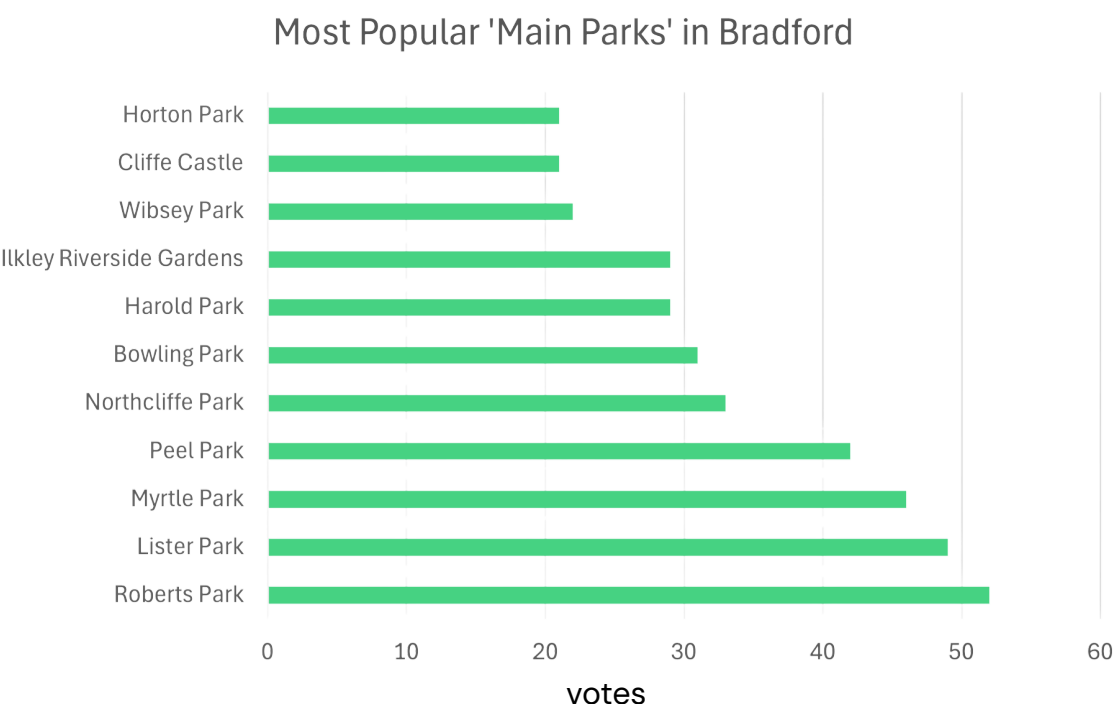


# 5. PARK PROFILES: WHAT MAKES A GREAT GREEN SPACE IN BRADFORD?

To gain a deeper understanding of what works, and where there is most scope for improvement, across Bradford’s green spaces, we explored commonalities across the most popular ‘main’ parks, as well as those with the highest and lowest subjective satisfaction ratings. These insights are based on a combination of scores provided by frequent green space visitors and objective data on the characteristics of each space.

## 5A. MOST POPULAR GREEN SPACES IN BRADFORD

The ten green spaces most commonly identified as a ‘main park’ (most visited green space) are shown below, each identified at least 20 times in the data. The most visited park was Roberts Park, in the heritage village of Saltaire just outside of Bradford city to the North, with 52 votes, or 7.7% of frequent users. This was closely followed by two parks within Bradford city, Lister Park and Peel Park, with 49 and 42 votes, and Myrtle Park in the small town of Bingley, just West of Saltaire, identified 46 times. The remaining most popular green spaces were identified between 21 and 33 times (3.1–4.9%).

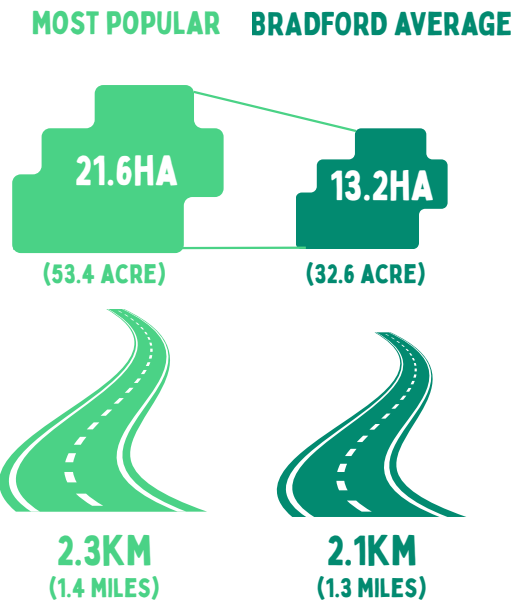


Being located in popular tourist towns of Saltaire and Ilkley may increase visits to Roberts Park and Riverside Gardens.

Each of the four highest used parks are notable for their wealth of facilities and landscaping, and three are recognised with Green Flag Award status (Roberts Park, Lister Park, and Peel Park).



These four parks each feature a café, children’s play area, sports facilities such as cricket pitches or tennis courts, heritage features, and a mixture of planting, trees, and open green areas. All also contain water features, including lakes/ponds (Peel Park, Lister Park) or access to a river (Roberts Park, Myrtle Park). Peel Park is especially known for its football pitches and BMX track, while Roberts Parks features a band stand often used as a location for fitness classes, and community events including the Annual Saltaire Festival in the Park.



Among all 10 ‘most popular’ green spaces, the average space is 60% larger than the average size of all ‘main green spaces’ identified across Bradford, with three of the five most popular spaces being larger than average.

We calculated the travel distance along the street network between each frequent visitor’s postcode and the nearest access point to their main park. The most popular green spaces required an average trip of 2.3km (1.4 miles) compared to 2.1km (1.3 miles) across the whole sample. .

Visitors to the most popular green spaces were more likely to visit for an hour or more, compared to the Bradford average, with three quarters (73.4%) spending between 30 minutes and 2 hours per visit, compared to 62.5% across Bradford; just 19% visited for under 30 minutes, compared to 29.5% on average.

Combined, these factors suggest strong ‘pull factors’, including size and facilities, which encourage more visits and those from further afield.



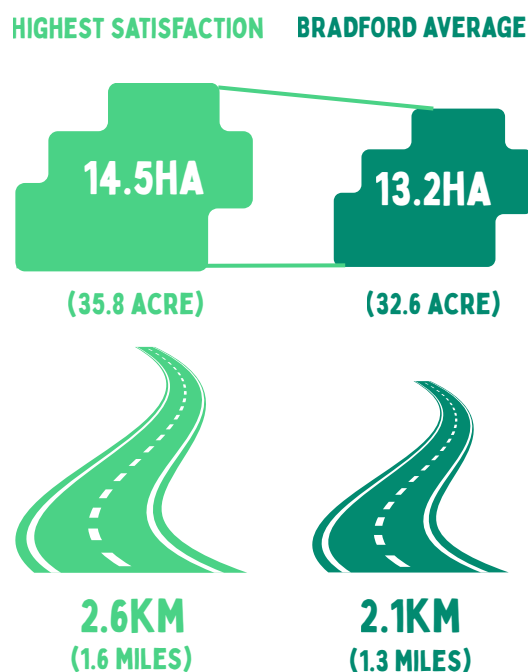
**5B. MOST SATISFACTORY GREEN SPACES IN BRADFORD**

Around 70% of respondents in Bradford reported being satisfied with their most-used green space. To identify the highest-rated sites, we calculated the share of people who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “Overall, I am satisfied with my park.” To ensure results were reliable, we only included green spaces named at least 10 times as a “most-used” park. These were then ranked by satisfaction levels, with the top five identified as the most highly-rated satisfactory green spaces in Bradford.

There was overlap between most used and most highly rated green spaces, with Roberts Park and Northcliffe Park appearing in the top 5 for both. All of the highest-rated parks were also among the 10 most used.

Percent Satisfied

The highest-rated green spaces scored above average by several measures.



On average, they were around 10% larger (14.5 hectares compared to 13.2 hectares) and located about half a kilometre further from visitors' homes.

However, this is influenced by the size of Northcliffe Park (43.5 hectares); excluding it, the other top-rated spaces are smaller than the average.

Visitors spent a similar amount of time in these parks as they did across Bradford overall. This suggests they are intensively used spaces relative to their size, that need to be managed to cater for high demand.

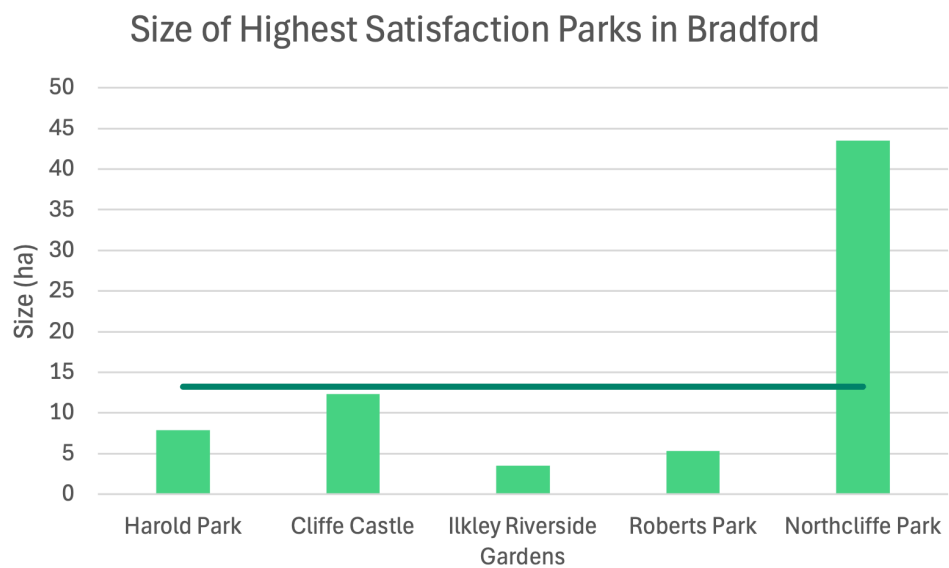
As expected, perceptions of quality were also higher for these spaces. While an average of 84.5% of respondents said their most-used green space was in good condition, this rose to 96.7% for the highest-rated parks.

#### PARKS IN GOOD CONDITION

All of these parks are located outside of Bradford city itself, suggesting they are valued by and meet the needs of their local communities. However, they also share features that attract visitors from further afield as 'destination parks', which may account for residents travelling further to spend time in these spaces.

Each includes a children’s play area, picnic space, walking routes, heritage features, and a mix of landscapes including as grass, trees, planting, and water features such as ponds, lakes, riversides, or streams; 4 also have wildflower areas. Most offer sports or activity facilities (e.g. bowling, tennis, skating). Some of these parks, such as Harold Park, also benefit from active ‘Friends Of’ groups, who run facilities and activities, which may increase satisfaction with the space.

All of these parks are located outside of Bradford city itself, suggesting they are valued by and meet the needs of their local communities. However, they also share features that attract visitors from further afield as ‘destination parks’, which may account for residents travelling further to spend time in these spaces.



5C. HOW CAN WE IMPROVE SATISFACTION IN BRADFORD?

At the other end of the scale were the green spaces with the highest levels of dissatisfaction. To ensure reliable results, we again included only spaces named at least 10 times as a ‘main park’. We calculated the proportion of respondents who ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’ that they were satisfied and examined the five lowest-rated green spaces.

These spaces shared some positive features. On average, they were slightly larger than typical green spaces in Bradford (14 hectares) and located closer to visitors’ homes (around one third of the average distance). They also scored above average for being “within easy walking or wheeling distance” (see [Section 3d](#)). This suggests convenience supports their usability, as they may be:

- ✓ **CLOSER TO HOME**
- ✓ **EASIER TO GET TO**
- ✓ **LARGER THAN AVERAGE**

However, these spaces were more likely to be perceived as being in poorer condition. While 68.2% of respondents still rated them as in good condition, this is notably lower than the Bradford average of over 80%.

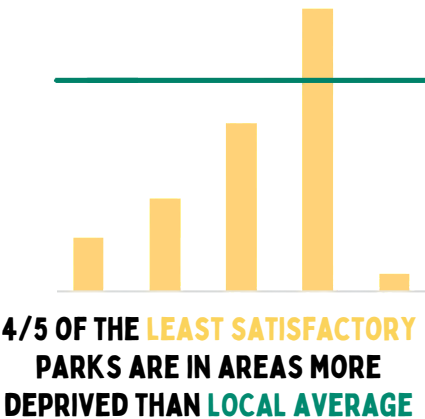
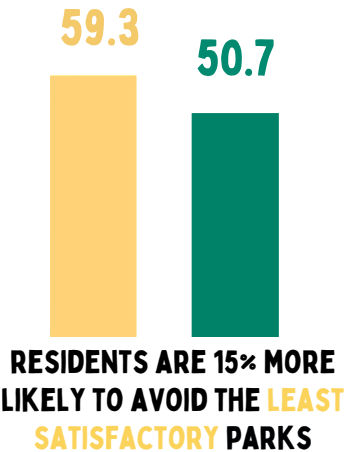
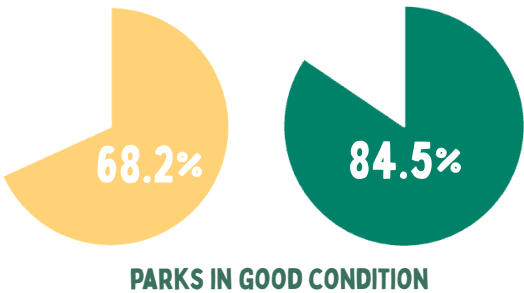
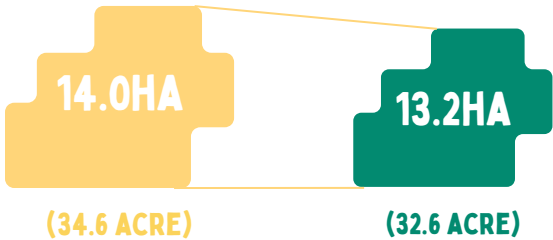
Despite this, a clear majority viewed them positively, suggesting they may remain valued local spaces, particularly due to their "Accessibility".

Visit patterns were also similar to the city-wide average. Around two-thirds of visitors stayed for up to an hour (66.3% in the least satisfactory parks compared to 69.2% across Bradford), with most visits lasting between 15 minutes and 1 hour (61.2%).

Four of the five lowest-rated parks were located in areas of Bradford with higher levels of deprivation than average. We then examined other access measures to better understand lower satisfaction. Compared with the Bradford average, these spaces scored lower on how well they met people's needs in terms of "Accommodation", "Affordability", and "Acceptability".

In particular, based on subjective accessibility questions, these spaces were less likely to be perceived as clean, safe, or welcoming, and were seen as offering fewer opportunities to experience nature and wildlife. They were also less likely to provide facilities, events, and activities that meet visitors' needs or feel affordable or appealing. Reflecting this, people were significantly more likely to report avoiding these parks.

HIGHEST DISSATISFACTION    BRADFORD AVERAGE



## THE LEAST SATISFACTORY PARKS ARE LESS LIKELY TO...

**BE IN GOOD CONDITION**

**BE CLEAN AND MAINTAINED**

**HAVE NATURE + WILDLIFE**

**FEEL SAFE + WELCOMING**

**HAVE EVENTS THAT APPEAL**

**HAVE AFFORDABLE ACTIVITIES**

**HAVE FACILITIES THAT MEET VISITORS' NEEDS**

Overall, these findings suggest that these green spaces are valued local assets: they are generally perceived to be in good condition, sufficiently sized, and conveniently located for nearby residents. However, there is an opportunity to improve the range of facilities and affordable activities to better meet local needs, alongside strengthening maintenance and cleanliness and maintenance to enhance perceptions of safety, inclusion, and overall satisfaction.

### 5D. SUMMARY OF WHAT MAKES A GREAT GREEN SPACE IN BRADFORD

- Residents travel further to visit the highest-rated and their most-used parks. These spaces tend to be larger and attract longer visits, potentially due to their quality and wealth of facilities available, making them appeal as 'destination parks'.
- The most satisfactory green spaces were sometimes smaller than average but perceived to be in very good condition, often located outside of Bradford city itself. Their facilities and abundance of nature may hold both community value and attraction as a 'destination park'.
- Residents may visit local parks they are less satisfied with due to convenience (size, proximity). The lowest-rated parks tend to be in more deprived areas, and the condition and facilities available within the park may limit satisfaction.

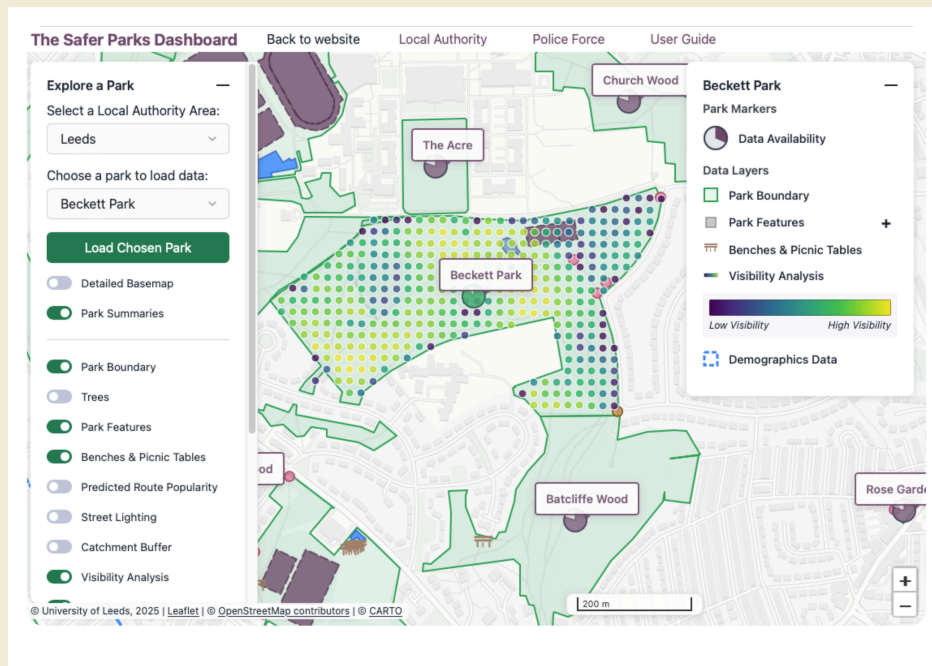




## The Safer Parks Dashboard

This research has informed the development of the Safer Parks Dashboard. This new interactive tool, co-designed by the University of Leeds, uses open spatial data to help increase accessibility and inclusion in parks, particularly for women and girls. Originally developed as a case study in West Yorkshire, the dashboard is now extending across the country, to support implementation of the Safer Parks Guidance. It brings together information on:

- Visibility across the park
- Predicted route popularity
- Park features (entrances, benches, facilities)
- Trees
- Park catchment population demographics (15 min walk)
- Lighting



It can be combined with the survey findings on experiences using Bradford's parks and the Parks Accessibility Index. It can be used by local authorities, police, and community groups to visualise safety-related features, highlight quick-win improvements, and suggest priorities for investment.

**THE DASHBOARD IS AVAILABLE AT: [HTTPS://SAFER-PARKS.GITHUB.IO/](https://safer-parks.github.io/)**



# 6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GREEN SPACES IN BRADFORD

## 6A. SUMMARY AND CONTEXT

The findings of the Bradford Access to Parks and Green Spaces Survey and Focus Groups 2025 reveal huge appreciation for Bradford's green spaces, with 70% of the 805 respondents stating that they are satisfied with their most used park, and 85% rating their park to be in favourable condition. Nearly three quarters visit at least once a week. Of the minority (16%) who visit parks infrequently (less than once per month), over 90% would like to visit more often.

The results also reveal differences of experience for the diverse residents of Bradford, especially along gender, age, ethnic, economic, and (dis)ability lines. Concerns about safety after dark, a lack of public toilets, fear of crime, cleanliness, and feeling unwelcome are the main barriers which prevent people visiting more often, and highlight key areas that could be addressed to increase accessibility and reduce avoidance.

The Bradford research ran in tandem to the Leeds Access to Parks and Green Spaces Survey, which revealed similar findings, especially around the challenges facing green space provision and users in the local area. Findings from the Leeds survey are reported separately, in order to target statistics and recommendations more locally.

It is important to note that the findings across both cities do not exist in isolation, and many of the challenges, especially around safety after dark, dog management, and access to toilets, reflect national obstacles in providing accessible public spaces that cater to all.

As such, we hope that the statistical findings, insights into individual experiences, and recommendations for Bradford's green spaces can be applied beyond the local area. These findings may be used and adapted to help parks and green spaces in different local authorities nationally be made as welcoming, safe, and accessible as possible.

Based upon these findings, we now present key themes and strategic recommendations to develop green space planning, policy, and practice in Bradford, prioritising access for all.

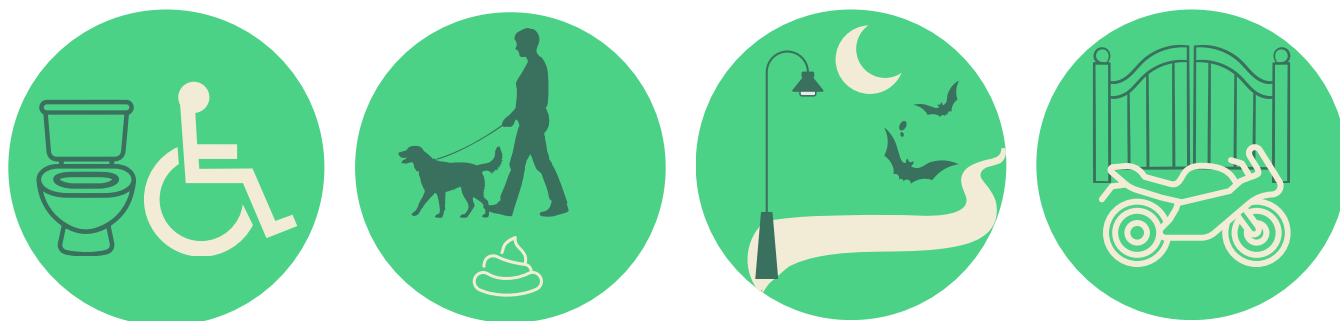
Based on our research, we identified several **key themes** for supporting the accessibility and frequency of use of parks and green spaces in Bradford, especially for those reporting higher barriers or avoidance, including women, disabled people, younger adults, those in financial difficulty or living in more deprived areas. While these themes are based on the data collected in Bradford, many of these reflect national challenges in parks accessibility:

- Keep parks clean and well-maintained.
- Tackle antisocial-behaviour, especially in the evening, including presence of motorised vehicles (i.e. mopeds, quadbikes) and dogs off-leash.
- Remove barriers to physical access such as poor paths, lack of benches and narrow entrances that exclude wheelchairs, focussing on the needs of disabled people, older people, and families.
- Ensure parks have engaging and well-maintained facilities and activities for children and young people.
- Facilitate access to toilets.
- Enhance opportunities for nature and wildlife to flourish.
- Manage activities and design facilities in the park (especially playgrounds) so there's room for everyone.
- Undertake further research to identify what the specific barriers are for the following groups; South Asian people, those struggling financially, and less healthy or disabled residents.

## 6A. WICKED PROBLEMS

Several 'wicked problems' were identified through survey responses and discussions, and again reflect national challenges for parks. While widely reported by respondents, these issues are challenging to tackle, as confirmed in our workshop with the Council, and are already the focus on ongoing efforts within Bradford:

### WICKED PROBLEMS IN BRADFORD'S GREEN SPACES



- Providing and maintaining accessible public toilets. While Councils support this principle, public toilets are very expensive to maintain and tend to attract anti-social behaviour.
- Managing dogs, dog mess, and encouraging responsible ownership. One of the most popular activities in green spaces is dog walking, but at the same time, fear of dogs of leash can put others off visiting parks altogether, especially older people. It is difficult for park managers to balance the needs of both groups and manage irresponsible dog owners with limited resources.
- Ensuring entrances are accessible for people using disability scooters, wheelchairs and prams while stopping dangerous and illegal off-road vehicles such as motorbikes and quad bikes accessing sites.
- Providing lighting to improve access to parks after dark within budget and without compromising nocturnal wildlife. This may require collaboration and agreement of outside agencies, such as the police.

With these in mind, we make the following recommendations for developing parks and green spaces policy and practice in Bradford and similar cities in line with the UK's commitment to the **United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 11.7** which requires that all nation states will '*by 2030 provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities*'. Allied to this, we have created a Park Accessibility Index for Bradford, to help identify targeted quick wins and longer-term actions specific to each park, where resources and capacity allow.

## 6B. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BRADFORD

### PRIORITY 1: ESTABLISH A STRATEGIC, EVIDENCE-LED APPROACH

#### 1. Make accessibility a core strategic priority

Embed accessibility and inclusion at the heart of Bradford's emerging Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, recognising their role in reducing inequalities in health and wellbeing.

#### 2. Target investment using data and evidence

Use tools such as the Park Accessibility Index, Safer Parks Dashboard, and public consultations to prioritise improvements, particularly in deprived areas and parks with lower satisfaction.

#### 3. Address inequalities in park experience

Set clear city-wide targets to reduce disparities in quality, safety, and inclusion across different communities and user groups.

## **PRIORITY 2: RAISE QUALITY STANDARDS ACROSS ALL PARKS**

### **1. Commit to a consistent standard of quality city-wide**

Prioritise investment to ensure all parks, especially local parks, meet recognised quality benchmarks (e.g. Green Flag Award or a local “Bradford Quality Parks” standard).

### **2. Introduce annual park assessments**

Assess all parks against quality and accessibility standards, using findings to guide improvements and track progress over time.

### **3. Prioritise parks in deprived areas**

Target resources on maintenance, cleanliness, biodiversity, and community activity in areas with the greatest need. Continue to focus activity programmes, including free access to play and events, in more deprived locations.

## **PRIORITY 3: DEVELOP CLEAR PLANS AND GOVERNANCE**

### **1. Create a ‘plan on a page’ for each park**

Develop simple, site-specific plans setting out vision, priorities, and actions, co-designed with local communities and partners, and can be used to attract funding.

### **2. Strengthen cross-council and cross-sectoral working**

Improve coordination between departments, as well as other sectors including educational, third, private, and voluntary sectors, to address access, facilities, and programming more holistically.



## **PRIORITY 4: IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION**

### **1. Undertake a city-wide accessibility audit**

Review physical access, transport, facilities, and inclusive design across all parks, with particular focus on disabled users, women, ethnic minorities, parents with children, and older people.

### **2. Develop an inclusive access action plan**

Build on audit findings to deliver practical improvements, including accessible entrances, paths, seating, toilets, and play provision.

### **3. Better understand barriers to use**

Engage with underserved groups (e.g. disabled people, infrequent users, ethnic minorities) to identify and address personal and social barriers.

### **4. Consider transport and parking**

Reflect different travel needs in planning, including accessible parking, public transport links, and safe walking and cycling routes.

## **PRIORITY 5: IMPROVE SAFETY AND PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY**

### **1. Address safety and perceptions of safety**

Use the Safer Parks guidance to improve design and management of parks, particularly for women, families, and vulnerable users.

### **2. Create welcoming and inclusive environments**

Improve entrances, signage, and park design to ensure all users feel welcome and able to navigate spaces easily.

### **3. Early-evening lighting\***

In conversations with communities, consider commuter-time lighting of main paths and active travel routes in winter to improve safety and usability in the early evenings.

### **4. Implement dog control**

Review dog control, including both dog on-lead zones and secure dog off-lead areas, alongside emphasising community responsibility, to improve safety and comfort of all park users.

**\*A note on lighting:** Lighting should be applied selectively and strategically. Decisions should balance likely use, safety needs, active travel, and ecological impacts. Lower-level, evenly distributed lighting can improve comfort and visibility while avoiding excessive brightness, glare, and deep shadows.



## **PRIORITY 6: PROVIDE A RANGE OF GOOD QUALITY FACILITIES**

### **1. Increase and diversify facilities**

Invest in play areas, youth spaces, sports facilities, and outdoor gyms to meet a wider range of needs specific to local communities, through co-design. Consider multiple or pop-up play spaces in high-demand areas to reduce crowding.

### **2. Expand access to toilets**

Explore partnerships (e.g. with local businesses and community buildings) to increase availability of accessible public toilets near parks where it is not possible to install them in the park.

### **3. Improve park entrances**

Explore options to provide open, permeable park entrances to support accessibility, inclusion, and everyday use, balancing safety with equitable access. Restrictive barriers to deter misuse (e.g. off-road vehicle access) may exclude legitimate uses, such as mobility aids and active travel. Holistic, community approaches such as policing and management should be prioritised to tackle antisocial behaviour.

### **4. Restore closed amenities**

Explore opportunities to reopen or repurpose closed facilities such as cafés and boating lakes where viable.

## **PRIORITY 7: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND USE**

### **1. Work with local communities and partners**

Collaborate with Friends groups, community organisations, and local residents to co-design improvements and activities.

### **2. Increase affordable and inclusive activities**

Support events and programming that reflect local needs and encourage wider use.

### **3. Improve communication and promotion**

Use a mix of channels (including non-digital) and community networks to ensure all groups are aware of opportunities, , providing translated information where necessary



# **APPENDIX A: THE BRADFORD ACCESS TO PARKS AND GREEN SPACES SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

## **Bradford Access to Parks and Green Spaces Survey**

**Guidance:** Questions marked \* are compulsory

### **Section I: Introduction**

1. What is your full post code? (e.g. BD1 1AG) \*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

2. In the past 12 months, how often on average have you used parks in Bradford? \*

#### **Instruction:**

By 'parks', we mean a public park or other green space where there is grass, trees, flowers, or other vegetation. This does not include your own garden.

By 'used', we mean visited as a destination or passed through on the way to another place.

|                                           |  |                                   |
|-------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Every day                                 |  | <b>Please go to<br/>section A</b> |
| More than twice a week, but not every day |  |                                   |
| Twice a week                              |  |                                   |
| Once a week                               |  |                                   |
| Once or twice a month                     |  |                                   |
| Once every 2-3 months                     |  | <b>Please go to<br/>section B</b> |
| Less often                                |  |                                   |
| Never                                     |  |                                   |

### **Section A: YOUR PARK OR GREEN SPACE**

3. What is the name of the park you use most often? From now on, we will refer to this as **YOUR PARK**.\*

If you don't know the name of the park, please write the name of the road it is on.

*Name of park or the road it is on*

4a. Is **YOUR PARK** the park nearest to your home?

|                                                                                            |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Yes, I use the park nearest to my home most often – <b>go to Question 5</b>                |  |
| No, the park I use most often is not the one nearest to my home – <b>go to Question 4b</b> |  |

**4b.** Why do use **YOUR PARK** more often, rather than others that are nearer your home?

*Comments*

**5.** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about **YOUR PARK**?

| Need                                                                                              | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| My park is big enough                                                                             |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| My park is within easy walking or wheeling distance                                               |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Roads are safe for walking, running, or wheeling to my park                                       |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| The paths and layout of my park make it easy to get around                                        |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| My park has nature and wildlife that appeal to me                                                 |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| My park has facilities that meet most of my needs (e.g. car parks, playgrounds, benches, toilets) |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| There are events in my park that appeal to me                                                     |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Activities and events in my park are affordable                                                   |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| My park is clean and well-maintained                                                              |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| My park feels safe during the daytime                                                             |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| My park feels safe after dark                                                                     |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| My park feels welcoming                                                                           |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Overall, I am satisfied with my park                                                              |                |       |                            |          |                   |

**6. How often do you usually use YOUR PARK?**

| <b>Autumn/Winter</b><br>(when the weather is generally colder/wetter) | Every Day | More than twice a week, but not every day | Twice a week | Once a week | Once every two weeks | Once a month | Less often |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------|------------|
|                                                                       |           |                                           |              |             |                      |              |            |
| <b>Spring/Summer</b><br>(when the weather is generally good)          | Every Day | More than twice a week, but not every day | Twice a week | Once a week | Once every two weeks | Once a month | Less often |
|                                                                       |           |                                           |              |             |                      |              |            |

**7. How long do you usually stay at YOUR PARK?**

| Less than 15 minutes | 15- 30 minutes | 30 minutes- 1 hour | 1-2 hours | 2-3 hours | More than 3 hours |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
|                      |                |                    |           |           |                   |

**8a. Are there any times of the day or week in which you AVOID using any part of YOUR PARK?**

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| No – go to Question 9         |  |
| Don't know – go to Question 9 |  |
| Yes – go to Question 8b       |  |

**8b. Please tell us more about why and when you avoid any part of YOUR PARK:**

*Comments*

**9. What are your main reasons for using YOUR PARK? (please tick up to 5 answers)**

|                                          |  |                                                   |  |                                                 |  |
|------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------------------|--|
| Relax/escape                             |  | Enjoy nature (plants, animals, seasons)           |  | Enjoy historical features                       |  |
| Get fresh air                            |  | For a walk                                        |  | Walk the dog                                    |  |
| Ride a bike                              |  | For a run                                         |  | Go skateboarding                                |  |
| Play sports/games                        |  | Watch sports/games                                |  | Attend a group exercise activity (e.g. Parkrun) |  |
| Using outdoor gym                        |  | Family outing                                     |  | Socialise                                       |  |
| Picnic                                   |  | Barbecue                                          |  | Have lunch                                      |  |
| Visit café/restaurant                    |  | Visit playground                                  |  | Meet a community/social group                   |  |
| Use allotments                           |  | Non-leisure activities (e.g. activism, volunteer) |  | Attend events                                   |  |
| Paid activities (funfair, market, music) |  | As a route/shortcut from one place to another     |  |                                                 |  |

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Other (please write) |  |
|----------------------|--|

**10. How do you rate the current condition of **YOUR PARK**?**

|           |  |      |  |            |  |      |  |           |  |
|-----------|--|------|--|------------|--|------|--|-----------|--|
| Very good |  | Good |  | Acceptable |  | Poor |  | Very poor |  |
|-----------|--|------|--|------------|--|------|--|-----------|--|

**11. If you could improve one thing about **YOUR PARK**, what would it be?**

*Comments*

→ Please go to Section C (don't complete Section B)

**Section B: Your Park Use**

**12. Would you like to use parks more often?**

|            |  |          |  |            |  |          |  |
|------------|--|----------|--|------------|--|----------|--|
| Not at all |  | A little |  | Definitely |  | Not sure |  |
|------------|--|----------|--|------------|--|----------|--|

**13. What is the main reason you do not use parks more often?**

*Comments*

**14. Do you have enough information about where your nearest parks are to where you live?**

|                             |  |                              |  |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| Yes, I know about the parks |  | I don't know where parks are |  |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|

**15. Where do you spend free time? (please tick all that apply)**

|                      |  |                         |  |                            |  |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| High street shops    |  | Cafes/restaurants       |  | Friends' houses            |  |
| Places of worship    |  | Board/video game places |  | The coast/rivers           |  |
| The cinema           |  | The theatre             |  | Music concerts             |  |
| Museums/galleries    |  | Historic buildings      |  | Pubs/bars/social clubs     |  |
| Night clubs          |  | Group organisations     |  | The library                |  |
| My garden            |  | Community centres       |  | Sports and leisure centres |  |
| The countryside      |  | The seaside             |  | At home                    |  |
| Other (please write) |  |                         |  |                            |  |

### Section C: Your Access to Parks

**16.** What challenges make it more difficult for you to use parks in Bradford?

**Instruction:** This question is about parks generally, not specifically your park. Please tick all that apply.

|                                                    |  |                                                                                      |  |                                                                                   |  |
|----------------------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Accessibility and Transportation</b>            |  |                                                                                      |  |                                                                                   |  |
| Parks are too far away                             |  | Busy roads/traffic make it hard to get to parks                                      |  | Paths or layouts are too difficult to use (e.g. steps, slopes, uneven surfaces)   |  |
| I don't have access to transport                   |  | Parks are difficult to find                                                          |  | I have nowhere to park my car                                                     |  |
| <b>Facilities and Maintenance</b>                  |  |                                                                                      |  |                                                                                   |  |
| Parks are too small                                |  | Parks are not clean or maintained enough                                             |  | There aren't enough public toilets                                                |  |
| There aren't enough accessible toilets             |  | Facilities do not meet my needs (e.g. car parks, playgrounds, benches)               |  | There aren't enough facilities/activities for me                                  |  |
| <b>Safety and Comfort</b>                          |  |                                                                                      |  |                                                                                   |  |
| Lighting is poor                                   |  | I'm concerned about crime/antisocial behaviour                                       |  | I don't feel safe during the day                                                  |  |
| I don't feel safe after dark                       |  | I feel unwelcome because of my gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, or sexuality |  | I feel unsafe because of my gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, or sexuality |  |
| I'm worried about getting lost                     |  | I'm afraid of becoming ill while visiting                                            |  | I feel judged because of my appearance                                            |  |
| I'm concerned about harassment                     |  | There are too many dogs off-leash                                                    |  |                                                                                   |  |
| <b>Social and Environmental Factors</b>            |  |                                                                                      |  |                                                                                   |  |
| Parks are overcrowded                              |  | Parks feel empty or isolated                                                         |  | I don't see other people like me in parks                                         |  |
| Parks are too noisy                                |  |                                                                                      |  |                                                                                   |  |
| <b>Activities and Events</b>                       |  |                                                                                      |  |                                                                                   |  |
| Activities or events in the park don't interest me |  | Activities or events in the park are too expensive                                   |  | There aren't activities I enjoy                                                   |  |



|                                                              |  |                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I don't know of any activities or events held in the park    |  |                                                                  |
| <b>Personal Barriers</b>                                     |  |                                                                  |
| I'm too busy with responsibilities at home or work           |  | I have mental health challenges                                  |
|                                                              |  | I have physical health challenges                                |
| I have sensory challenges (e.g. sensitivity to noise/crowds) |  | I don't have the right clothing for different weather conditions |
|                                                              |  | I don't have anyone to go with                                   |
| I have caring responsibilities                               |  |                                                                  |

**17. Do you have any other comments about things that prevent you using parks?**

*Comments*

### Section D: Your Priorities for Parks

**18. What do you consider to be the key priorities for parks in your neighbourhood?**  
Please tick up to 3 answers.

|                                                                                          |  |                                                                        |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| More events/ activities for the local community                                          |  | More or larger green spaces                                            |  |
| Improved physical accessibility (e.g. level pathways, wider gates, stair rails, seating) |  | More nature and wildlife                                               |  |
| Better personal safety (e.g. visibility, staffing, first aid)                            |  | More accessible parking near park entrances                            |  |
| Activities for children and young people (e.g. play areas, skate ramps)                  |  | Support more people of different cultures and backgrounds to use parks |  |
| Sports facilities (e.g. courts and pitches)                                              |  | Keep parks clean and maintained (e.g. free of litter, weeds, dog poo)  |  |
| Online information (e.g. park maps, events, facilities)                                  |  | Better dog control (e.g. fenced walking areas, leash policies)         |  |
| More opportunities to buy food and drink                                                 |  | Making spaces climate-friendly                                         |  |
| Other (please specify)                                                                   |  |                                                                        |  |

**19. Please tell us why you chose these priorities**

*Comments*

**Section E: Your Health and Wellbeing**

**20. How is your health in general?**

|           |  |      |  |      |  |     |  |          |  |
|-----------|--|------|--|------|--|-----|--|----------|--|
| Very good |  | Good |  | Fair |  | Bad |  | Very Bad |  |
|-----------|--|------|--|------|--|-----|--|----------|--|

**21. Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks:**

| Statement                                          | None of the time | Rarely | Some of the time | Often | All of the time |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------|------------------|-------|-----------------|
| I've been feeling optimistic about the future      |                  |        |                  |       |                 |
| I've been feeling useful                           |                  |        |                  |       |                 |
| I've been feeling relaxed                          |                  |        |                  |       |                 |
| I've been dealing with problems well               |                  |        |                  |       |                 |
| I've been thinking clearly                         |                  |        |                  |       |                 |
| I've been feeling close to other people            |                  |        |                  |       |                 |
| I've been able to make up my own mind about things |                  |        |                  |       |                 |

**22a. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more**

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Yes – go to 22b      |  |
| No – go to Section F |  |

**22b. Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?**

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Yes, a lot    |  |
| Yes, a little |  |
| Not at all    |  |

**Section F: About You**

We will now ask for information about you. Your responses will remain confidential, and will be anonymised to protect your identity. This information will help us understand the needs and experiences of different people for accessing parks. It helps to ensure that our findings reflect diverse perspectives

**23. What is your age?**

|       |  |       |  |       |  |       |  |         |  |
|-------|--|-------|--|-------|--|-------|--|---------|--|
| 18-24 |  | 25-34 |  | 35-49 |  | 50-64 |  | Over 65 |  |
|-------|--|-------|--|-------|--|-------|--|---------|--|

**24. What is your sex?**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Male   |  |
| Female |  |

**25. Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex?**

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Yes                               |  |
| No (please write gender identity) |  |

**26. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?**

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Straight/heterosexual |  |
| Gay or lesbian        |  |
| Bisexual              |  |
| Other (please write)  |  |

**27. What is your ethnic group?**

| WHITE                                               |  |       |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British |  | Irish |  |
| Gypsy or Irish Traveller                            |  | Roma  |  |
| Any other White background (please write)           |  |       |  |

| ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH                    |  |           |  |
|-------------------------------------------|--|-----------|--|
| Indian                                    |  | Pakistani |  |
| Bangladeshi                               |  | Chinese   |  |
| Any other Asian Background (please write) |  |           |  |

| MIXED OR MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS           |  |                         |  |
|-------------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| White and Black Caribbean                 |  | White and Black African |  |
| White and Asian                           |  |                         |  |
| Any other Mixed background (please write) |  |                         |  |

| BLACK, BLACK BRITISH, CARIBBEAN, OR AFRICAN |  |         |  |
|---------------------------------------------|--|---------|--|
| Caribbean                                   |  | African |  |
| Other black background (please write)       |  |         |  |

| OTHER ETHNIC GROUP |  |                                       |  |
|--------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Arab               |  | Any other ethnic group (please write) |  |

**28. What is your religion?**

|             |  |                                     |  |          |  |
|-------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|----------|--|
| No Religion |  | Christian                           |  | Buddhist |  |
| Hindu       |  | Jewish                              |  | Muslim   |  |
| Sikh        |  | Any other religion (please specify) |  |          |  |

**29. In the last week, were you employed?**

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Yes                            |  |
| No, but I was looking for work |  |
| No, I'm a student              |  |
| No, I'm retired                |  |
| No, other                      |  |

**30. How well are you and your household managing financially?**

|                         |  |            |  |            |  |          |  |                    |  |
|-------------------------|--|------------|--|------------|--|----------|--|--------------------|--|
| In Financial Difficulty |  | Struggling |  | Getting by |  | Doing Ok |  | Living comfortably |  |
|-------------------------|--|------------|--|------------|--|----------|--|--------------------|--|

**31. Do you have access to a garden?**

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Yes – a private garden |  |
| Yes – a shared garden  |  |
| No                     |  |

**END OF SURVEY**