



Donny Park playground refresh survey results

1 July - 22 July 2026



**Hamilton
City Council**
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

Background

- This refresh is a part of our ongoing playground renewals programme; this programme means we look after the play spaces we have, so they will be in a good condition for the community to enjoy for years to come.
- The aim of this consultation was to hear what the community would like to see at Donny playground. We want to make sure their voice is factored into the playground design, within our renewal guidelines.
- We sought out community views via a survey; this was available for all Hamiltonians but included targeted tactics aimed at Donny Park (Chartwell) locals.
 - Targeted tactics: letter drops to local residents, geotargeted social media advertising, signage installed at Donny Park, Antenno notice to Chartwell residents, information drop-in session held at the park.
 - Widespread tactics: survey hosted on Council website, hardcopies made available in libraries and the reception of the Council Municipal building.
- This survey was live from 1 July to 22 July 2026. We received 79 responses in total (78 individuals and 1 organisation).

Processing feedback

- Any emails or hardcopies were entered into our online survey tool
- Duplicate responses were combined when name and email matched
- Any attachments were manually checked
- Counts and percentages were calculated using Microsoft Excel
- Free text comments are provided in full

Background

Census Facts - Chartwell

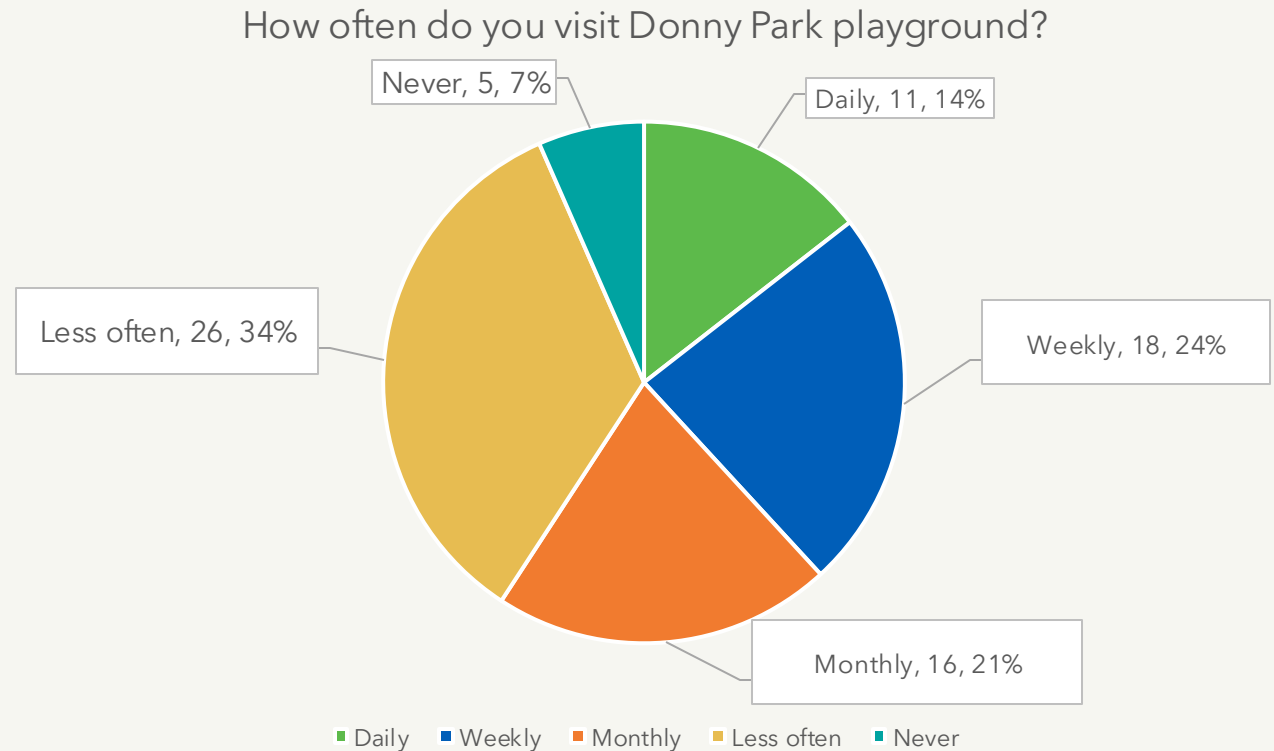
- Donny Park sits in Chartwell, a suburb home to 7,185 Hamiltonians – including 1,137 families*
- About half of these families have at least one dependent child under the age of 18
- Chartwell has a slightly higher incidence of kids aged 5 – 14 than Hamilton's general population.

	Total population size	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years
Hamilton City	174,741 (100%)	12,075 (7%)	11,958 (7%)	12,540 (7%)	12,231 (7%)
Chartwell	7,185 (100%)	528 (7%)	543 (8%)	576 (8%)	522 (7%)

*A family is defined by Census as a couple with or without child(ren), or one parent and their child(ren) whose usual residence is in the same household

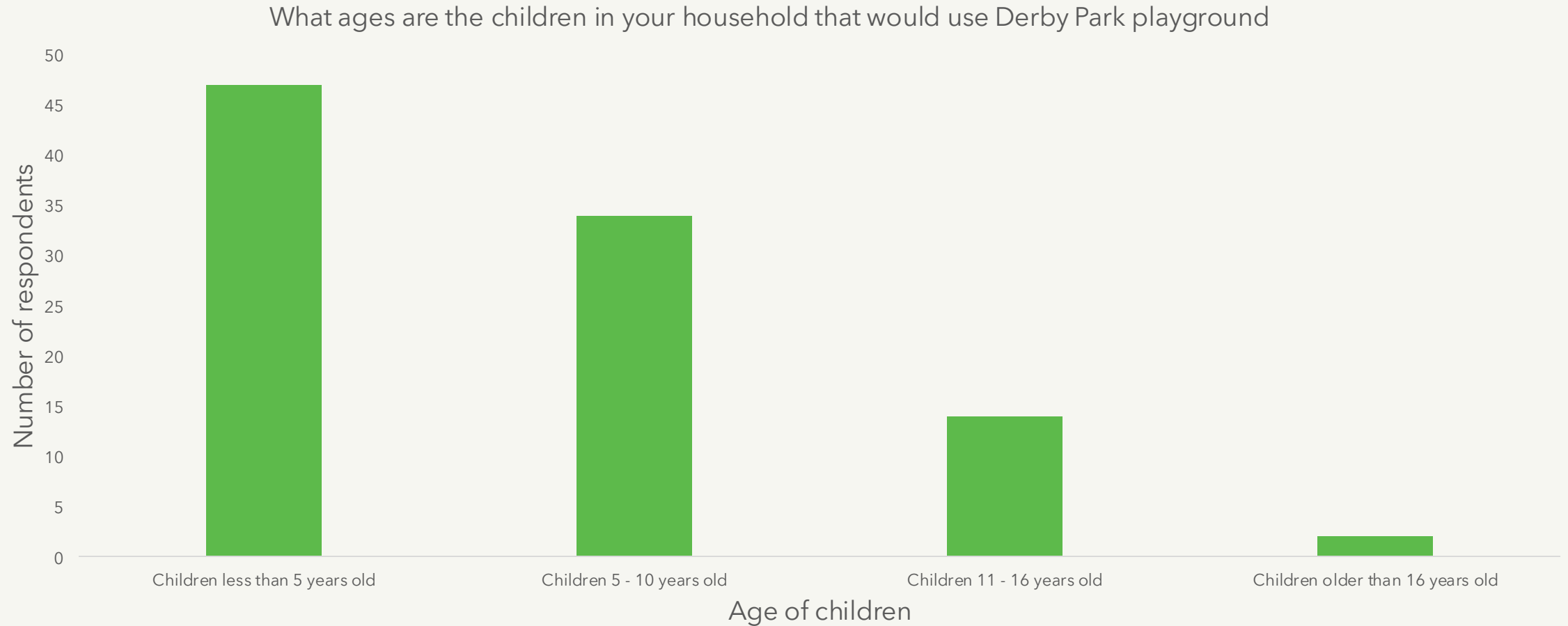
Who did we hear from?

- 79% of respondents (n = 62) live nearby to Donny Park
- About 40% (n=29) of respondents visit Donny Park at least weekly



Who did we hear from?

Age of children



Who did we hear from?

Disability

- Five respondents indicated someone in their household who uses a playground has a disability or special needs.
- Their disability-specific feedback was:

My son has epilepsy, global development delay and autism, I have found with nearby parks in Chartwell hard for my son he loves a playground similar to the toddlers area at the lake playground, easy access to slides i.e., stepping up on platforms and gates

Husband is an above knee amputee. Needs level nonslip surfaces.

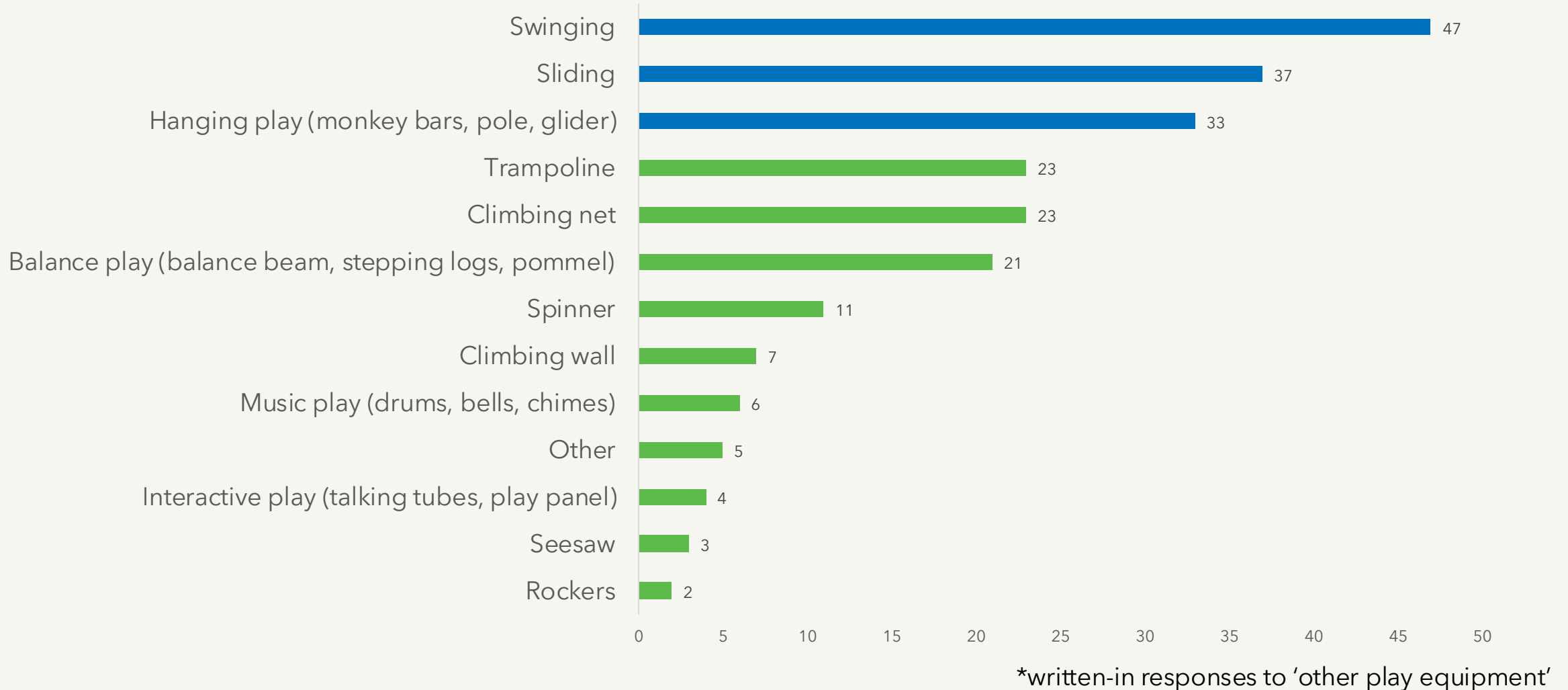
Please keep the fencing, great given Bankwood is such a busy road and our special child is a runner.

Autism

Not much to play my kids find it boring.

Preferred play equipment

Which play activities would you most like to see included at Donny Park playground?



Preferred play equipment

Top three preferences by respondent's child's age



<5 years old

- Swinging (n=30)
- Sliding (n=28)
- Trampoline (n=18)



5 – 10 years old

- Swinging (n=21)
- Sliding (n=19)
- Hanging play (n=18)



11 – 16 years old

- Swinging (n=10)
- Hanging play (n=7)
- Balance play and sliding (both n=6)

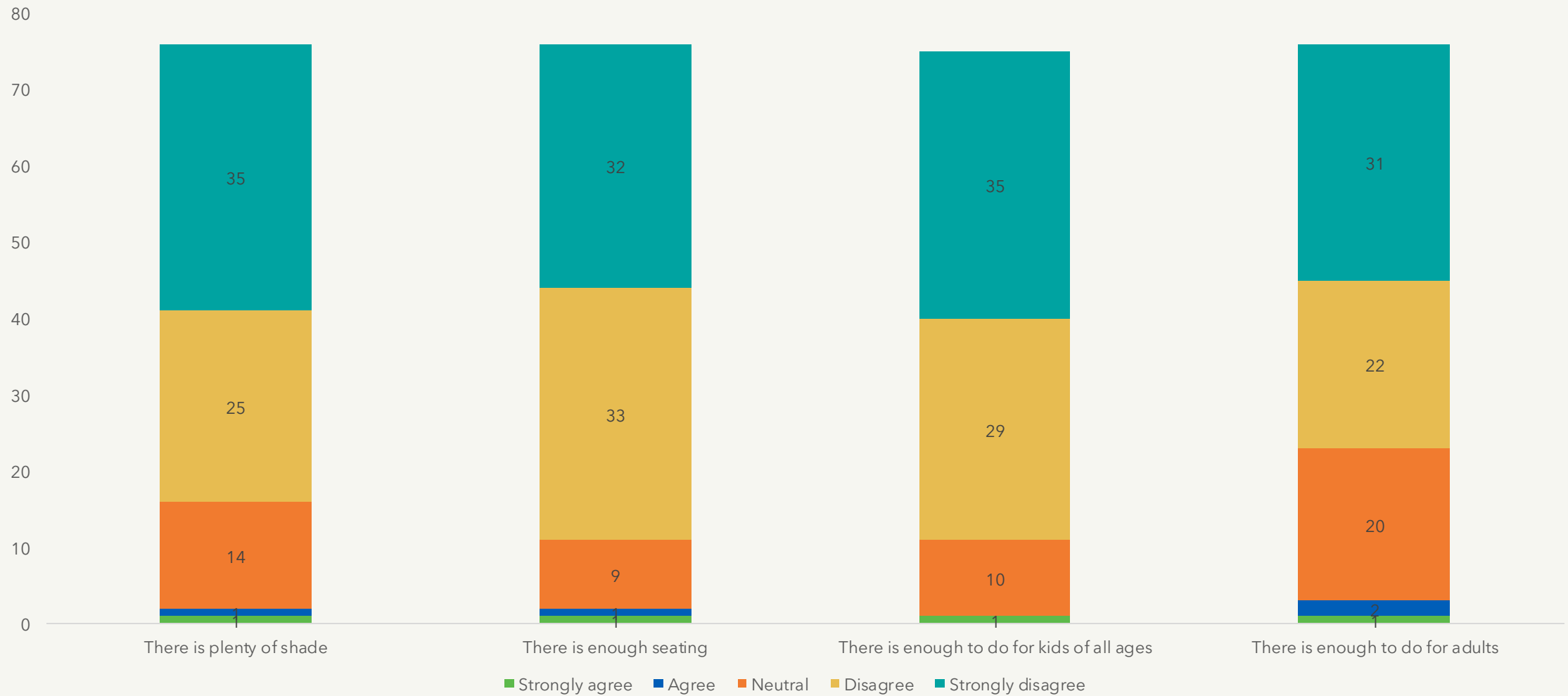


16+ years old

- Swinging (n=2)
- Sliding, hanging play, trampoline and balance play (n=1 each)

Views of current park

How much do you agree with the following statements?



Do you have any other comments about the playground renewal?

All comments

Can we please have more rubbish bins, seating & shady areas that are close to the play ground please?

Want a big tower slide

Want lots of variety and challenge - lots of teenagers hanging out by the playground - maybe could put in some exercise equipment for them to use

Lots of dogs off leash - fence the playground

Scooter track

Donny park is terrible

Bike track for the kids please

The park is in need dire of some tlc. There isn't a lot to do so we don't tend to go there. A lot of the high school kids tend hang out at this park, so it would need to be durable. Would be good to have something for bikes like a mini pump track, seating and shade for summer.

It's been to long . We need an update !!!!

Need something more exciting like the one on Herbert road

Genuinely hoping that after the renovation we'll be able to make use of the park, currently our daughter isn't interested as there are others she likes better (that are further away). A flying fox would be so exciting and fun, I also think playgrounds that incorporate a scooter/bike track are a great thing for the kids as well. Shade and seating is important to make it more of a destination. The most lovely playground I've seen in the Waikato is the Leamington Domain playground in Cambridge- it's beautiful, functional and always crowded with happy families! I highly suggest grabbing some inspiration from that design.

This would be awesome to have an upgrade we don't drive so can't walk to all the cool ones except chartwell

It's very much needed. It's our closest playground and we never go because it's so unfit for purpose. Thanks for doing it

It's a disgrace! All my kids walk past and would use the swinging slide, which was disassembled. It's a sad park with lots of potential! Lots of foot traffic, the grass is always sodden and leaks all over the grass. It would be really cool for a midway park to Clarkin.

Do you have any other comments about the playground renewal?

All comments

We live 2 houses away from this park and are disappointed in the facilities. Its not safe - not fun - very run down. The bark is hazardous like as our moko gets hurt simply trying to get ONTO the hazardous spinning climbing thing. Please please please make it an exciting and fun space that we can visit daily.

This is awesome to redo this park, I'm very appreciative and I do not want to complain, but this park iw extremely neglected and there is basically nothing to do. I must say in the rich neighborhoods you see such nice parks and I do know they take better care of them, but I do believe our park can do better than its current state. We have ample room for mini pump tracks and some water engagement and you name it. We always drive to the better parks.

One last comment, I'm still very grateful and think you do an amazing job in hamilton

Hi there, thanks so much for updating Donny park. We go there daily and would absolutely love to see it. We live super close by. Seating for parents, shade for kids in summer and some new toys for little ones. Maybe some water toys, sandpit. All the normal favorites. Also some bins would be appreciated and a water fountain. Thanks in advance!! Looking forward to see the upgrades!

For parents, it's more about having seating areas for them while their children play, especially if their children are over the age of 7. A lot of older playgrounds don't have this and parents have to stand or sit on the grass.
A few tables could also be used for picnics etc.

One of the challenges with this playground is the lack of safe access. Most of the houses are on the other side of Bankwood Road but there is no pedestrian crossing (or safe place to cross) between Bankwood School and Fairfield College.
My kids also love some of the existing equipment - the spinning climbing frame and the skating platform thing.

Donny Park has a good catchment not only from Farifield but like myself, living in Chartwell (Donny), we would use this playground more if it was in better condition, i.e.: more seating and more to do there.

Yes it would be great to have a playground upgrade where our kids can climb, swing and adventure. The current playground is very rundown and is not very inviting for children. It seems to be more of a gathering place for teenagers who are skipping school. It would be nice to have a park where younger children are safe to explore. As well as having seats for adults to rest in. Thanks!

I would request council to make something similar to Callum brae drive playground. We always have to take our kids to Rototuna or Flagstaff because of better playground facilities.

We need trash bin and some more activities for kids.

Do you have any other comments about the playground renewal?

All comments

It is time the council stopped spending money on projects such as playground revamps. We are in an incredible level of debt and playgrounds are not essential. Children need to learn to occupy themselves, a skill almost lost nowadays. Interestingly there was a small playground in the park next to me which was pulled down. Perhaps a better solution. Teach parents and children to find ways such as walking, making up games, playing together.

This is a great place for a park but it currently is poorly developed no one wants to leave their car out of eyesight in the hood. This area borders a very low social economic area and it doesn't feel safe so to have seats would make it easier to be in the playground rather than up the street keeping an eye on my car and watching my grand children

Need toilets that are fancy with music.
Need grill space for picnic.

I support the renewal of the Donny Park playground and would like to see it include equipment that encourages children of different ages and abilities to be active, build confidence, and play together. A well-designed playground should be safe, durable, and accessible so that families can enjoy it for many years.

My preferred play activities are swinging, sliding, trampolines, and a climbing wall. Climbing ball is my fourth option because they support children's physical, social, and emotional development. Swinging helps develop balance, coordination, and sensory processing while providing a fun and calming activity. Sliding encourages confidence, movement, and turn-taking with other children. Trampolines improve balance, coordination, leg strength, and cardiovascular fitness while making exercise enjoyable. Climbing walls help build strength, agility, problem-solving skills, and perseverance as children learn to overcome challenges.

Including these activities would create a playground that promotes healthy physical development, active outdoor play, and opportunities for children to interact, learn, and grow. Overall, I believe these activities would make Donny Park a welcoming and exciting place for children to play, exercise, develop new skills, and build friendships while supporting healthy growth and development.

Please ensure good shade and rubbish facilities

Skatepark, water feature, basket ball court.

My children feel it's a boring park.
Having a skate path or bowl would be awesome.

Do you have any other comments about the playground renewal?

All comments

- Wasps in summer time along fence line (entry) to park pls be sorted or looked into! So dangerous for ones who are allergic but would love to use the park
- Would LOVE to see a hamster wheel at the playground :)
- More seating/benches/tables available
- Shade
- little wheels track around playground for bikes & scooters
- Better Slide option for older & younger kids
- More than 2 swings
- proper playground to climb and explore

There is no carparking. No shade.

The playground there is only for toddler use. There is nothing else kids can do there. Would be good a splash pad. More area to sit and eat.

There's currently no playground that I'm aware of just a walk and grass. I would love more gated under 5 zones in playgrounds with smaller slide, low swings and tramps or seesaws. The rest of the playground outside of the gated zone can be as exciting as one would like but it is so hard as a solo parent at a playground with multiple young children to safely play without a gated zone and equipment in that zone age appropriate. This would be local to us and would be amazing.

Looks like the forgotten cousin of Hamilton playgrounds. Bankwood road can be quite busy so would recommend a gate. If some parking and signage is added it could be a great gateway into the gully network which has some amazing walks and stuff to do for kids too

I have seen too much threatening behaviour, loitering and roaming dogs that we avoid this area unfortunately. That is something that needs to be addressed to encourage people to use this area.

Why are you spending money on this when the city is broke. Cease non essential spending until the cost of living improves. Ratepayers have had enough.

It would be awesome to have some kind of bike or scooter track for kids to use especially since the park is so close to many primary schools.

I would love to see or have a smaller bit for under 5s and then something for the bigger kids, a range of activities would be excellent.

I would love to use this playground more often but am often put off by the teenagers who just go to hang around and sit.

Gas or electric BBQ would be great

Do you have any other comments about the playground renewal?

All comments

I love visiting Donny Park with my family who lives nearby. Such a great place to spend time with loved ones.

Liked the one that was taken away. Not sure how to describe it

Would love to see some innovative designs or a theme incorporated into the park, such as a pirate ship or dinosaurs, as well as shade sails and picnic benches for the family to gather and spend time together.

The springing swing was damaged and then removed a few months ago. It would be great to see that return as it was a favorite with people who visited donny park. Having playground equipment that produces sound could be annoying for neighbors. A renewal project for donny park is a great idea as (especially without the old swing) it is looking a bit small and sad compared to other parks in hamilton

You asked for our thoughts so hopefully this will assist. The current playground is seen about as much with children using it as it is with teenagers and adults occupying the equipment hanging out or doing drugs bent over with each other in a circle public. When adults are there doing drugs, etc it may not be a safe environment for children. Signs won't work.

Also, the unrestricted access to our park by dirt bike riders who are menacing and dangerous for children who cannot safely use the paths now including the playground equipment. All parks need to be fenced to prevent access to dirt bikes. These problems need to be resolved for the safety of our children before you folks consider upgrading the play facilities.

Would love lots of seating and shaded areas

I think Donny Park should have something for all ages as it is surrounded by schools/daycares ranging from babies through to collage. Also some sun shades, seating & eating areas would be nice.

If monkey bars go in, could these be slightly lower, I'm too short to help my kids reach these in so many playgrounds!
Maybe a big kids and little kids section? So many teens there but also so many preschoolers.

Definitely needs swings and more picnic tables and seating. Currently there is nowhere near enough to do there and find within 10 mins my kids are over it. We live less than 5 minute walk away and look forward to seeing it as more enjoyable and functional playground.

Make it more of a destination not have the same stuff other playgrounds all have just in a different design. Have play spaces for all ages, have it fenced from the road so kids who run cant get out so easily. Have equipment kids and their friends can go on at the same time and have fun together like the seats where they spin in the air when your pushed around, or have a rope swing like karapiro has where you can sit multiple people on.

A slide for toddlers and one for bigger kids.

Do you have any other comments about the playground renewal?

All comments

Would love to see more activities n this park. Many local tamariki need somewhere safe and engsging to play. Be perfect for a scooter/bike path around it like Pukete?

add more easy-care flowers /plants

Pleaseeee don't do rock climbing walls to get to slides, my 2 year old can't climb but can step onto small platforms, the playground at the lake is a perfect example of An accessible playground , also if you could please vamp up chedworth playground, my son loves the sandpit but the platform thing there is so dangerous I've seen many kids fall and hit the face on the metal bowls , plus the sand is always filled with rubbish, the slide isn't accessible for my son as u have to climb up a rock climb wall to get to it and in my opinion all playgrounds should be gated to stop them a. From escaping (my son is an eloper) b. Too stop dogs, so many stray dogs espically at chedworth park and I always see families having to leave the playground because there is an aggressive dog there

It's a sad looking playground at the moment, definitely in need of a refresh.

Natural elements to connect to the gully would be awesome. Please add a rubbish bin, seating and a drinking fountain.

No feeling of security. No areas for families to really sit and have lunch or picnics apart from a picnic table. Toilet facilities would be a bonus. The area is close to schools and dairy. Catering to children of wider age groups would be good, but must also withstand misuse, graffiti, loitering and vandalism from more unfavourable people in the area.

Needs to be robust and indestructible

This would greatly benefit the community

As a nearby resident, I highly support the ecological restoration of the park, but there are three critical gaps preventing me and other neighbours from visiting, which I hope the Council will address in this renovation:

1. Lack of Wayfinding & Dedicated Street Parking: The park is hidden behind residential properties with no visible signage from main roads. Visitors face psychological barriers because there is no designated on-street parking signage at main entrances (like Wymer Terrace or Donny Ave), making people hesitant to park. Please add clear gateway signs and dedicated public parking signs along the streets.
2. Need for Broad-Canopy Shade Trees & Nodes: While the wetland core is well-planted with shrubs, the entrance and transition zones lack mature shade trees. I suggest planting broad-canopy native trees (e.g., Pūriri, Titoki) at the entrances, combined with seating and temporary shade sails, to improve thermal comfort during summer.
3. Incorporating Native Flowering Trees as Highlights: Inspired by the successful cherry blossoms at Jansen Park which attract the community every spring, Council should integrate rows of vibrant native flowering trees such as Kōwhai (yellow) and Kaka Beak (red). This would create stunning seasonal visual focal points for residents while providing vital food sources for native birds like Tūi and Kererū.

Feedback from community drop-ins

One-hour information drop-in session hosted at Donny Park playground

Attendees: Five individuals (one nearby resident with grandchildren, one nearby resident with two kids aged under 5)

Feedback:

- Both attendee groups shared that they were reluctant to bring kids to the playground as it felt unsafe with teenagers hanging around, making them feel intimidated
- Both groups also complained of off-leash dogs frequently running around the playground

Feedback from one organisation

Te Kohao Health

"Make the No Vaping signs more prominent and clearly visible throughout Derby Park. Consider also reinforcing the existing No Smoking and No Vaping policy across all Hamilton City Council-owned properties, parks, and the CBD through consistent, highly visible signage. Enhance the park's cultural identity by incorporating meaningful Māori art and te reo Māori throughout the space.

Consider using pūrākau (traditional historical narratives) from Ngāti Māhanga to celebrate the area's history, strengthen cultural connections, and create a more engaging and educational environment for visitors."

Summary of key findings



Mostly heard from locals with young kids who visit the park at least weekly



Most desired play equipment pieces:
Swinging, sliding and hanging play



Community feedback is that the playground lacks seating and more shade is needed.

Engagement

Tactics + results

Engagement tactics



Love to play?

Have your say!

Donny Park playground refresh

Visit hamilton.govt.nz/haveyoursay by 22 July 2026.



Love to play?

Have your say!

We are planning to refresh the playgrounds at **Derby Park** in Nawton, **Donny Park** in Chartwell and **Ashurst Park** in Pukete, and want to hear your thoughts!

How do you currently use the playgrounds?
What play equipment would you like to see?
Have your say by 22 July 2026.

 **Hamilton City Council**
Te Kaitiaki o Kiriakira



Love to play?

Have your say!

We will soon be refreshing the playground at **Donny Park** in Chartwell and would love to hear what you want included.

Have your say by 22 July 2026:

- online at hamilton.govt.nz/haveyoursay
- at your local library or the Council building on Anglesea Street
- at our drop-in session at Donny Park playground on **Saturday 18 July, 11.30am- 12.30pm**

Or scan me!



 **Hamilton City Council**
Te Kaitiaki o Kiriakira



Love to play?

Have your say!

We will soon be refreshing this playground and would love to hear what you'd want included.



Scan the QR code or visit hamilton.govt.nz/haveyoursay by 22 July 2026.

 **Hamilton City Council**
Te Kaitiaki o Kiriakira

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hamilton.govt.nz/haveyoursay

Engagement results

Reached

Heard about the consultation

- Letter drop to 290 nearby properties
- Signage in park
- Meta advertising targeted to surrounding area
- Antenno message to suburb
- Posters and letters delivered to nearby schools and ECEs
- Posters in libraries

Engaged

Sought more information

- 35,480 impressions and 339 link clicks on Meta ads
- 47 views and 9 link clicks on Antenno message
- 161 views on our consultation page

Heard

- 78 individuals provided feedback
- 1 organisation provided feedback

What's next?

Council will consider this feedback when designing a refreshed playground for Donny Park, within our renewal guidelines.

The final playground design is expected to be confirmed in the first half of 2027, with construction scheduled for the second half of the year.