



Westco



Southwark Park Consultation
Phase One: February-March 2015

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1. Introduction

1.1: History of Southwark Park

Opened to the public in 1869, Southwark Park is one of the oldest parks in London and is a grade two listed amenity. The park covers 25 hectares, and attracts visitors both from Southwark itself and from other nearby boroughs. It has won annual Green Flag awards since 2006, and includes features such as a boating lake, art gallery, bowling green, rose garden, London's first memorial to a working class individual, and wide open spaces for walks, picnics and ball games.

In 2001, the park underwent a significant remodelling using a £2.5 million donation from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Renovations included the replacement of the existing replica of the 1833 bandstand, the construction of a new children's play area and the restoration of the lake to its pre-World War II size.

The park can be easily reached by bus, tube or overground train from central, east and south London, and can be easily accessed by residents across Southwark. It is expected that the park's role as a green public space will be increasingly important in future, given the predicted population increase on the Rotherhithe peninsula.

In January 2015, Southwark Council began the first phase of consultation with residents and stakeholders on several proposed improvements to the park. It is intended that these improvements will help deliver the council's Fairer Future promises and Cleaner, Greener, Safer initiative, as well as rendering the park unrivalled by any other equivalent green space in the capital.

1.2: Objectives of the Consultation

It was intended that the consultation process would engage as many local people as possible in the shaping of Southwark Council's plans for the park. Stakeholders such as the Friends of Southwark Park, local schools and residents living in the vicinity of the park were presented with the proposed options for the redevelopment of certain areas, and were given the opportunity to express their opinions of these plans and to suggest any alternatives. The consultation focused on three key areas:

- The proposed location of the new café, toilets and park office. Three options were put forward:
 - The current location of the café at the entrance of Gomm Road
 - A site adjacent to the wildlife area
 - Integrated within or adjacent to the Café Gallery (by the lake and play area).
- Facilities at the athletics track:
 - The provision of external toilets
 - Refreshments and changing room facilities.

- Landscaping of the nursery site. Three options were put forward:
 - The creation of formal gardens with the option for a new park entrance
 - The creation of informal gardens with the option for a new park entrance
 - The creation of an area that would be reserved for use by schools and community groups.

The results of the consultation will then feed into the final process of deciding what the renovations to take place in Southwark Park are to encompass.

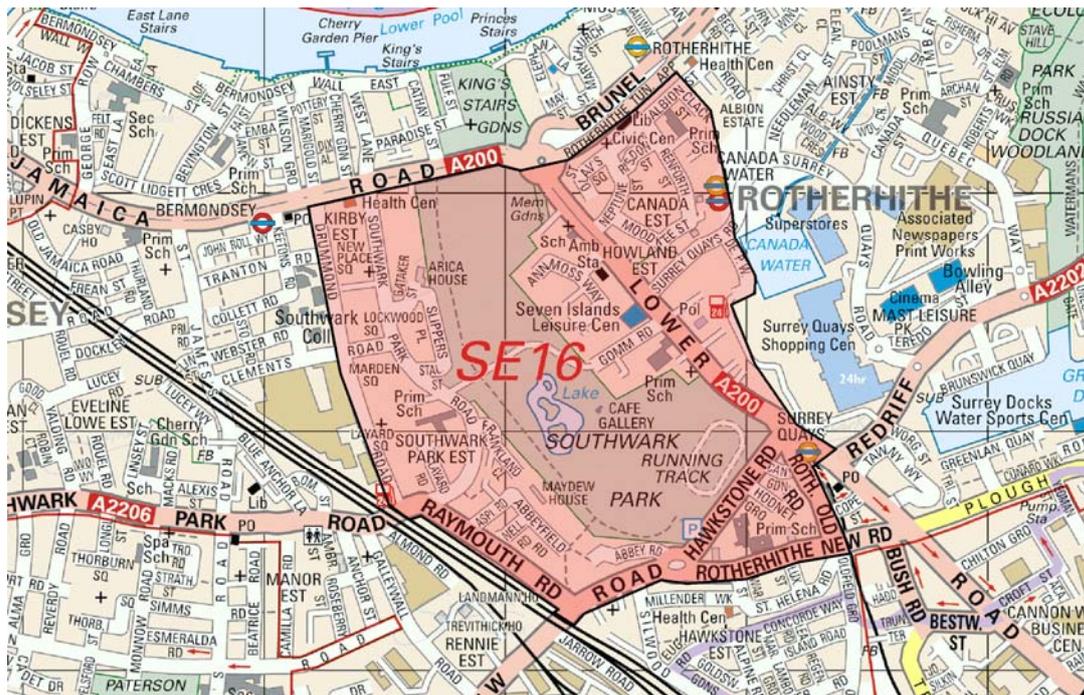
1.3: Elements of the Consultation

The first phase of the Southwark Park consultation consisted of four elements: a survey, a public exhibition of the plans, a stakeholder event and an event for residents living in Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way, both of which have been identified as being particularly affected by any redevelopments as a result of their proximity to the park.

Survey

In order to gather feedback from as wide a range of individuals as possible, a questionnaire was designed which gave park users the opportunity to express their opinions on the proposed redevelopment and to put forward any alternatives. This was advertised through a wide range of channels, including via the council website and Twitter account, on posters displayed across the park, in emails and letters sent to stakeholders, and in leaflets distributed to approximately 6,000 households in the vicinity of the park. The majority of advertisements carried a link to an online version of the survey, while hard copies were available at the park exhibition and at the public and stakeholder meetings that were held.

A total of 216 individuals completed the survey during the consultation period, which ran from 16 February to 13 March. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the majority of these respondents (70%) lived in the SE16 postcode area: the streets that are incorporated within this area are shown in the diagram below.



Since respondents were able to choose whether or not to complete the survey, it is unlikely that the respondent profile completely mirrors the demographic mix in the areas surrounding Southwark Park.

Exhibition

During the consultation period, display boards illustrating the architects' vision of how the changes would look were installed near the play area at the Gomm Road entrance. The exhibition was advertised on the council website, on posters within the park (see appendix C) and via the council's Twitter account. It was open daily from 10am until 2pm during the February half term holiday (16 – 20 February), and during the same time window at weekends from 21 February until the closure of the consultation.

Stakeholder Event (2 February)

This provided organisations with a key interest in the park with an opportunity to discuss the plans with Southwark Council staff. After the plans had been outlined to the group, a question and answer session was held, and attendees were encouraged to fill in the online survey. Groups in attendance included:

- Friends of Southwark Park
- Southwark Park Café management
- Parks staff
- Mayflower Tenants and Residents Association
- Cavendish School
- Compass School
- Bermondsey Artists
- London City Athletics Club
- Rotherhithe ward councillors.

Residents' Event for those living in Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way (5 March)

This was attended by 13 residents, of whom seven lived in Gomm Road and six in Ann Moss Way. Attendees provided feedback on the plans during a twenty-minute question and answer session with Southwark staff.

2. Executive Summary

Respondents were broadly supportive of the proposed plans for the redevelopment of Southwark Park.

The majority of survey respondents were in favour of the proposed redevelopments. The number of respondents stating that they would prefer an improvement other than those put forward in the consultation stood at just 4% with regard to the nursery site and 2% in the case of the café, toilets and park office. The majority of respondents were also in favour of the proposed installation of new toilets and changing facilities at the athletics track: when asked to comment on the plans, almost two thirds (64%) of respondents specifically stated that they were a good idea, while most of the remainder made positive comments. The most common suggestions for additional improvements included a greater number of toilets and the inclusion of a community meeting space within any new buildings.

Almost half of respondents felt that the new café, toilets and park office should be integrated within or adjacent to the existing Café Gallery. This was also the most popular option among residents of Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way.

When presented with a list of possible locations for the new café, toilets and park office, respondents were most likely to state that these facilities should be located in or near the current Café Gallery: 47% of respondents felt this way, compared to 33% who felt that these facilities should be located near the park's Gomm Road entrance and just 12% who felt that they should be built near the wildlife area. When asked to provide the reasons behind their views, attendees at the Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way resident consultation event stated that to integrate the new facilities with the existing Café Gallery would enhance the visibility of the toilets and maximise the use of the current gallery building.

Of the three options put forward for the redevelopment of the nursery site, respondents were most likely to prefer the idea of an access-only area for school or community use. This was also by far the most popular choice among residents of Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way.

When asked to cite their preferred option for the redevelopment of the nursery site, 44% of survey respondents selected the access-only option, while 22% mentioned formal gardens and 20% preferred the idea of informal gardens. The vast majority of residents of Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way preferred the idea of an access-only site: attendees at the consultation meeting raised concerns about safety and security issues, and felt that the proposed buffer planting would not be sufficient to allay their concerns about park users getting too close to their homes and gardens.

The majority of respondents to the consultation visit the park at least once a week, and are most likely to do so in order to go on walks or walk their dog.

Three quarters (75%) of respondents visit the park at least once a week, with more than a quarter (27%) visiting on a daily basis. Walking with or without a dog was by far the most commonly cited reason for visiting the park: 45% of respondents stated that this was the main reason they did so, while the next most commonly cited reason was for their children or grandchildren to use the playground (16%). Respondents were most likely to access the park via the Southwark Park Road or Gomm Road entrances (30% and 26% respectively).

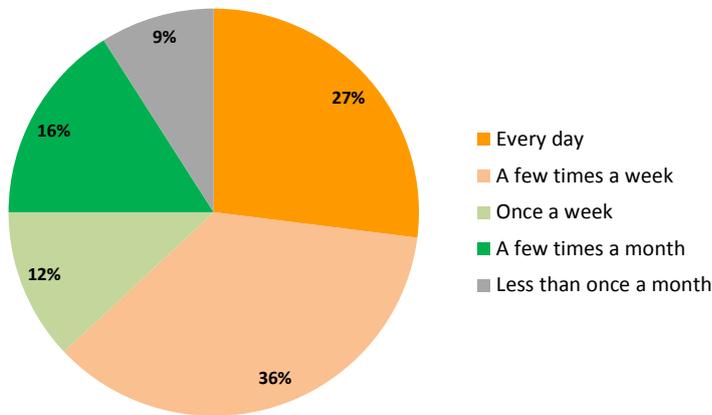
Respondents to the consultation were most likely to be female (56%), aged 25-44 (38%) and living in the SE16 postcode area (70%).

3. Findings

3.1: Use of Southwark Park

Three quarters (75%) of survey respondents stated that they visit Southwark Park at least once a week, while more than a quarter (27%) do so on a daily basis. These figures are illustrated in the chart below.

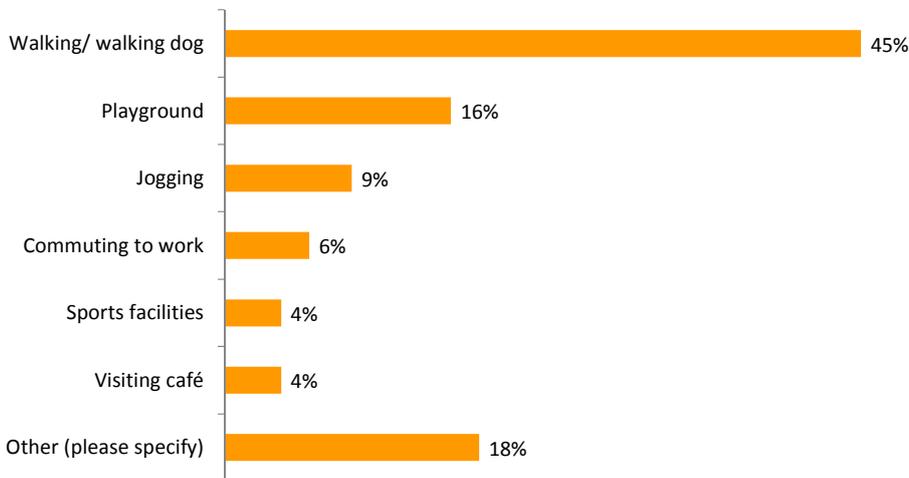
Figure 3.1.1: How often do you visit Southwark Park?



Base: 201 respondents

Respondents were most likely to state that their primary reason for visiting the park was either to go on walks or to walk their dog: almost half of respondents (45%) selected this option. A further 16% stated that their main reason for visiting the park was to use the children’s playground, while 9% predominantly used the park for jogging.

Figure 3.1.2: What is the main reason that you use the park?



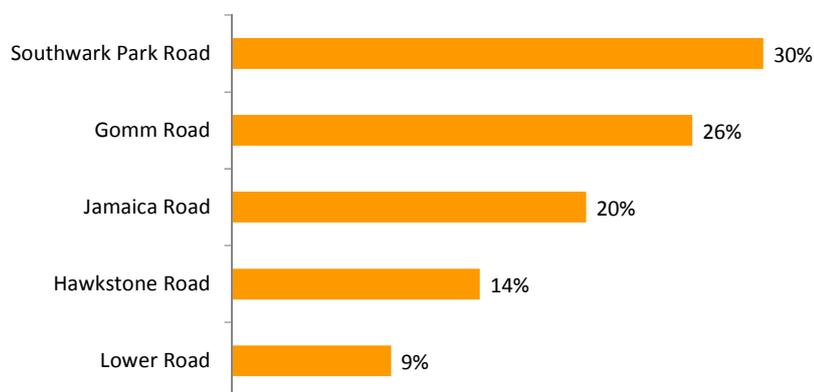
Base: 198 respondents

Thirty-six individuals (18% of the total respondent pool) stated that their primary reason for using the park was not one of the options stated in the questionnaire. The reasons given by each of these respondents are listed in the table below.

Reason	Number of Respondents	Proportion of Total Respondent Pool
Member of park staff	4	2%
Feeding the ducks	2	1%
ParkRun	2	1%
Photography	2	1%
RSPB work	2	1%
Other (each reason in this category was cited by just one respondent)	24	12%

When asked to state which entrance they tended to use to access the park, respondents were most likely to cite the Southwark Park Road and Gomm Road entrances (30% and 26% respectively). They were least likely to mention the Lower Road entrance: just 9% of respondents stated that this was the route by which they tended to enter the park. These figures are illustrated in the chart below.

Figure 3.1.3: Which entrance do you use most often to access the park?

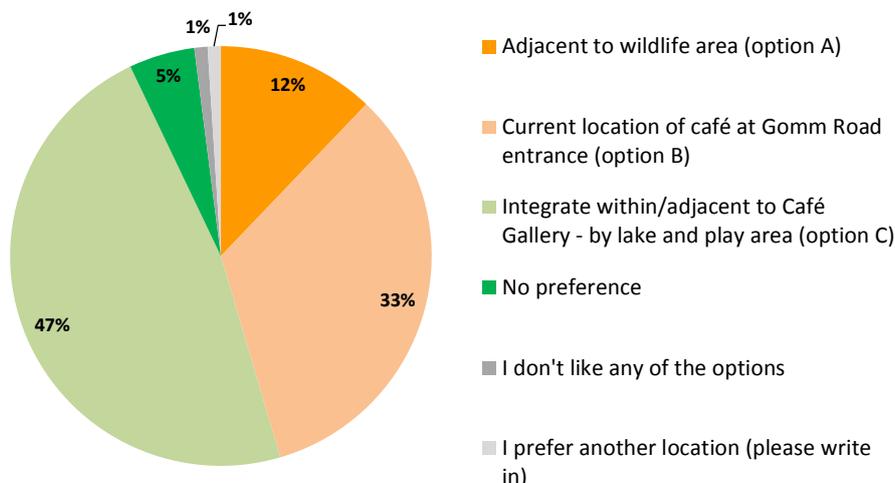


Base: 181 respondents

3.2: Café, Toilets and Park Office

As part of the consultation process, residents were shown a map on which three potential locations for the new café building, toilets and park office were marked. When asked which of these was their preferred location, almost half (47%) of survey respondents stated that they would like these facilities to be integrated within the existing Café Gallery (option C), while a further third (33%) felt that they should remain within the café at the Gomm Road entrance (option B). Just 2% of respondents stated that they did not like any of the proposed options or would prefer a different location.

Figure 3.2.1: Preferred Locations for Café, Toilets and Park Office



Base: 173 respondents

During the consultation process, meetings were held with stakeholders and with residents of Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way in order to discuss the plans. The majority of attendees at the residents’ meeting felt that the new facilities should be integrated within or adjacent to the existing Café Gallery (option C): residents ascribed particular importance to the idea that any new toilet facilities should not be “out of sight”, and felt that option C would be the most likely to deliver this, as well as being most likely to maximise use of the existing Café Gallery. Attendees also made several enquiries about the proposed plans, asking for information about the relative cost of each of the options and for clarification of whether the toilets would be accessible out of hours, whether they would be monitored by staff during opening hours and whether or not the current toilet building is listed. Attendees also stated that they would like a meeting room or children’s education room to be included within the new building, wherever it is eventually located: this suggestion was echoed among attendees at the stakeholder consultation event.

Attendees at the stakeholder meeting did not give a clear indication of their preferred location for the new café, toilets and park office. However, a range of questions were put forward in relation to the plans. Attendees asked for clarification with regard to whether the busy entrance created in option C would cause the gallery to lose its current ambience, whether courtyards would be expanded in order to allow the mothers and babies’ gardening club to continue operating, whether the Friends of Southwark Park would be able to use the new café area to display archive material relating to the history of the park, and whether or not the staff at the Café Gallery would be given the opportunity to offer their comments on the plans.

3.3: Athletics Track Building

Survey respondents were asked to offer their comments on proposals to build external toilets at the athletics track and to provide refreshments and changing room facilities for park users. These plans were largely very well received: of the 120 respondents who provided an answer to this question, seventy-seven (64%) specifically stated that they supported the plans, while numerous others implied that these were positive changes, but gave

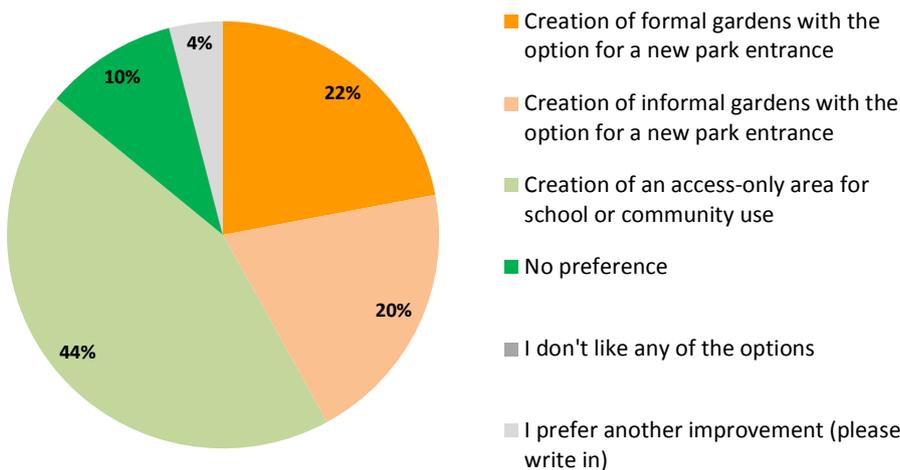
suggestions of what they would like to see included in any renovation of the athletics track area. Of these suggestions, the most common was that a community meeting room or children’s education room should be included in the plans: this was mentioned by thirteen respondents (11%). Several respondents also commented on how the toilets could best be operated: five (4%) stated that any new toilets should be accessible even when the changing area was closed, while three (3%) mentioned that the toilets should be kept clean at all times and two (2%) thought that any new toilet facilities would need to be staffed. Five respondents (4%) mentioned that the new facilities should not be too expensive to use and should not be monopolised by sports clubs, and three (3%) felt that the athletics track itself should be refurbished.

Feedback from the consultation event with residents of Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way was extremely positive, with no points of concern raised. The primary questions arising from the stakeholder event related not to the details of the plans themselves but to their execution: attendees asked about the proposed timescale for the work and whether the existing service suppliers would be retained or whether these contracts would be put out to tender.

3.4: Nursery Site

When asked how they would prefer the existing nursery site to be landscaped, survey respondents were most likely to be in favour of the creation of an access-only area for school or community use: 44% cited this as their preferred option. A further 22% felt that the construction of formal gardens would be the most appropriate for the area, while 20% felt this way about informal gardens. No respondents stated that they did not like any of the options put forward, and there were no consistent themes among the six respondents who stated that they would prefer a different improvement.

Figure 3.4.1: Preferred Improvements to the Nursery Site



Base: 157 respondents

Among the residents of Gomm Road and Ann Moss Way who attended the consultation event, the vast majority were in favour of the controlled use of the nursery site. Primary concerns about the open access options related to safety and security: residents did not feel comfortable with the idea of park users being able to get so close to their

homes and back gardens. The proposed buffer planting to shield homes from park users was not sufficient to allay resident concerns: several stated that they had seen such planting introduced in other areas, and that contractors had been “too heavy-handed” and had “ripped out plants and trees.” Residents were also concerned that if either of the open access options were chosen, the nursery site would effectively become a new entrance to the park as all park users would be able to wander in and out as they pleased. Moreover, it was felt that the controlled access option would offer something different for park users, since formal or informal landscaping would resemble existing areas of the park.

Residents also put forward a range of questions with regard to the plans. These included issues relating to the relative cost of each of the options, the effects that any renovations would have on the plants in the park, and issues relating to the landscaping of various areas, such as whether a water feature could be placed at the Gomm Road entrance rather than in the new nursery site and whether any form of landscaping could take place on the site of the old playground.

The plans for the nursery site elicited few questions at the stakeholder engagement event: after the pros and cons of each option for both the nursery site and the café, toilets and park office had been set out by the designer, attendees were invited to ask questions relating to the plans. However, the vast majority of questions from stakeholders related to the café, toilets and park office, suggesting a degree of ambivalence with regard to the plans for the nursery site.

3.5: Improvements Suggested by Park Users

Towards the end of the survey, respondents were asked to suggest any further improvements that could be made to Southwark Park. The most common themes emerging from these suggestions are set out below.

Improvements to the Café

Respondents had a range of criticisms of the current café. Thirteen (10%) felt that the café should serve healthier food, while eight (6%) felt that prices were too high. A further seven (6%) accused the current café manager of rudeness, and suggested that a different service provider should be found. A further four respondents (3%) stated that the café area was too small, while an additional four respondents felt that the café should be improved but gave no indication of how this could be achieved.

Improvements to the Children’s Playground

Thirteen of the 126 respondents (10%) felt that the children’s playground should be improved, and suggested parks on which any improvements could be modelled included Goose Green and Danson Park. Five respondents (4%) felt that the existing playground should be enlarged, and three respondents (2%) expressed a desire for the water playground to function properly in the summer. A further three respondents (2%) suggested that an adventure area for older children and adults could be introduced, offering activities such as zip wires and a climbing wall.

Issues Relating to Dogs

Comments relating to the presence of dogs in the park revealed mixed views. While four respondents (3%) felt that an agility centre or obstacle course for dogs should be built in the park, two (2%) felt that there should be a dog-friendly area within the café and one (1%) felt that the park should offer a dog grooming service, others requested a

dog-free area (3%) and a campaign to reduce dog fouling (3%). While one respondent felt that it was inconvenient that dogs were not allowed at the children's playgroup, another commented on the importance of not allowing dogs into the children's playground.

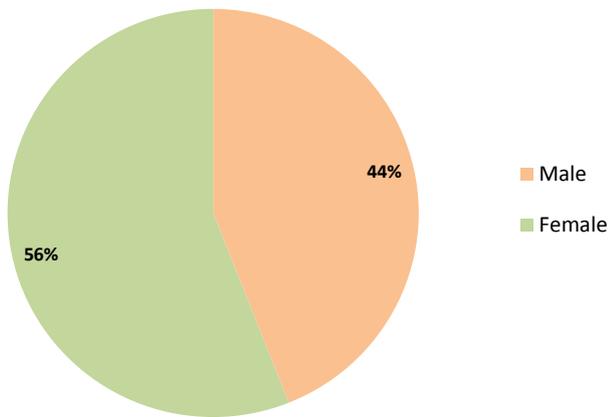
Other Park Facilities

Respondents suggested a range of potential improvements to the existing park facilities. The most frequent of these suggestions included:

- The inclusion of a community meeting space in any new building work (mentioned by 6% of respondents)
- The construction of additional toilet facilities (mentioned by 6% of respondents)
- The reinstatement of the old Southwark Park lido (mentioned by 6% of respondents)
- The improvement of the lighting in the park, especially near the main paths (mentioned by 3% of respondents)
- The resurfacing of the pathways in the park (mentioned by 3% of respondents)
- The increased use of the bandstand, with performances by local groups or in aid of charity (mentioned by 3% of respondents)
- The construction of a larger number of fountains and water features in the park (mentioned by 3% of respondents).
- The installation of additional outdoor fitness equipment, and the oiling of the existing equipment in order to reduce noise to local residents (each mentioned by 2% of respondents).

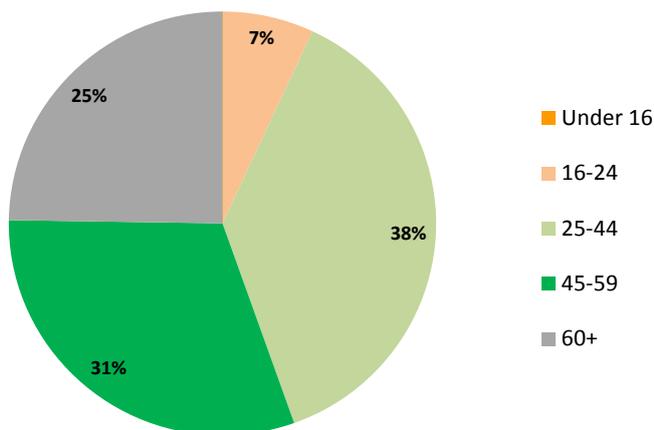
Appendix A: Survey Demographics

Gender



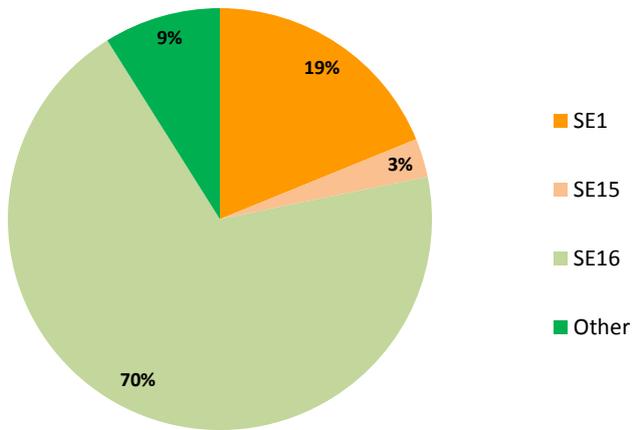
Base: 165 respondents

Age



Base: 167 respondents

Postcode



Base: 150 respondents

Appendix B: Questionnaire



Southwark Park Survey

Thank you for helping to shape the future of Southwark Park. This survey should take no more than five minutes to complete. All responses will remain anonymous. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact parks@southwark.gov.uk.

Please return this survey to the Freepost address below, or alternatively, fill in the survey online at bit.ly/SouthwarkPark.

FREEPOST LON 17563
19th Floor
64 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6QP.

This survey will close at 5pm on 13 March.

1. How often do you visit Southwark Park? Please tick one answer only.

- Every day
- A few times a week
- Once a week
- A few times a month
- Less than once a month

2. What is the main reason that you use the park? Please tick one answer only.

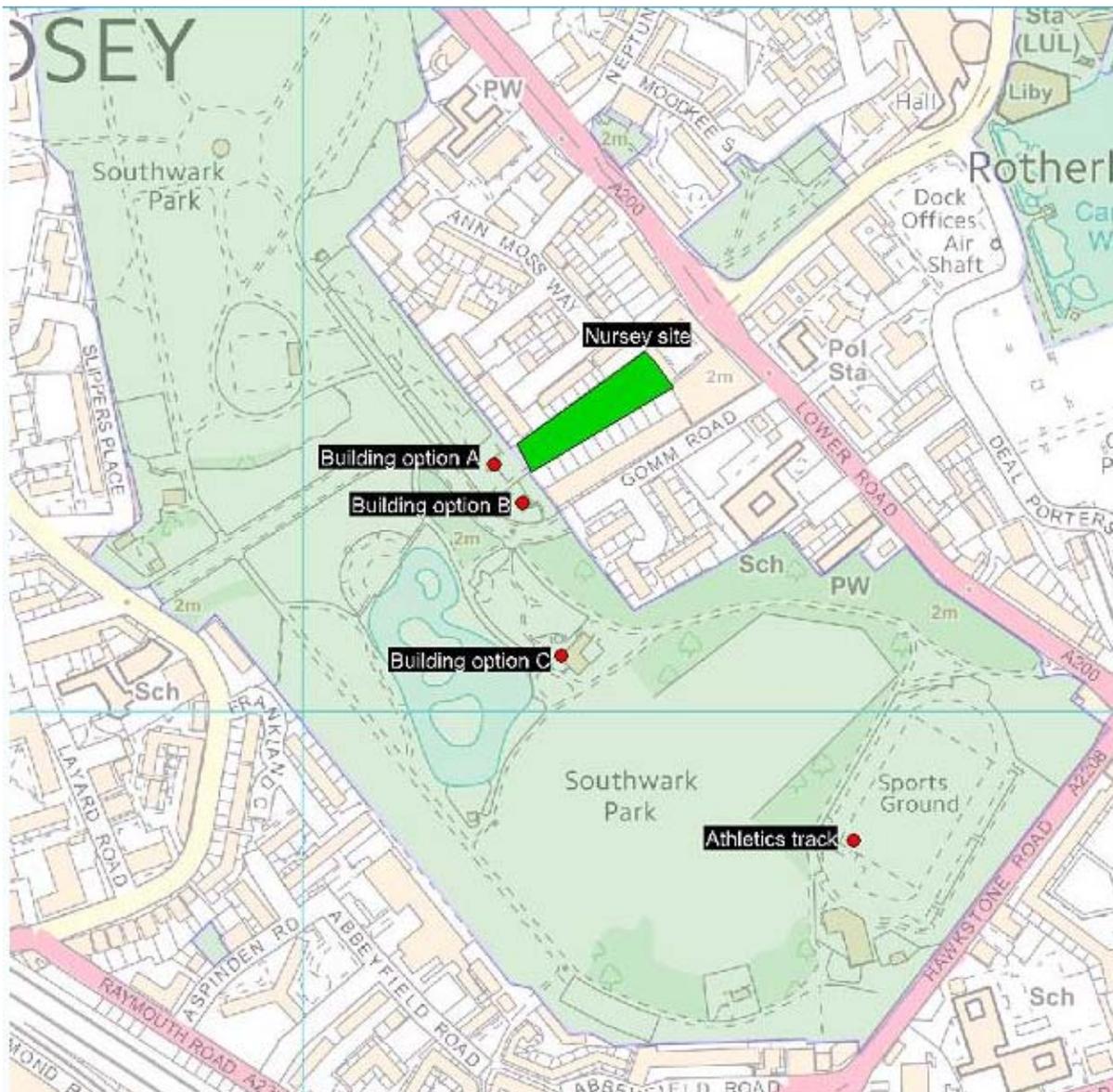
- Commuting to work
- Walking/ walking dog
- Jogging
- Sports facilities
- Visiting café
- Playground
- Other (please specify): _____

3. Which entrance do you use most often to access the park? Please tick one answer only.

- Gomm Road
- Hawkstone Road
- Jamaica Road
- Lower Road
- Southwark Park Road

Where and what can we improve?

This map shows the three areas to be consulted on. Please refer to this map when answering the questions overleaf.



4. Café Building, Toilets and Park Office

We are consulting on three options for the location of these areas. Please consult the map on page 2 for the location of these.

Please select your preferred option. Please tick one answer only.

- Site adjacent to wildlife area (building option A)
 - Site in current location of café at the entrance of Gomm Road (building option B)
 - Integrate within/adjacent to Café Gallery – by lake and play area (building option C)
 - No preference
 - I don't like any option
 - I prefer another location (write in): _____
-

5. Athletics Track Building

We are consulting on two areas for the improvement of this facility. Please consult the map on page 2 for the location of this.

The two improvements include:

1. Provision of external toilets
2. Refreshments and changing room facilities for park users.

What are your views on these proposed improvements? What do you like or dislike? Do you have any further suggested improvements for the athletics track building?

6. Nursery Site

We are consulting on three options for the landscaping of the nursery site. Please consult the map on page 2 for the location of this area.

Please select your preferred option. Please tick one answer only.

- Creation of formal gardens with the option for a new park entrance
- Creation of informal gardens with the option for a new park entrance
- Creation of an access only area for school or community use
- No preference
- I don't like any of the options
- I would prefer another improvement (write in): _____

7. Ideas for the Future of the Park

We would love to hear any other ideas you have about how to improve Southwark Park. Please tell us:

- Where in the park you would like to see the improvement
- How you would like this area to be improved
- Why you believe this improvement should be prioritised.

About You

8. Are you:

Male

Female

9. Which age bracket do you fall into?

Male

Female

10. What is your postcode?

Updates

11. Would you be interested in receiving updates about future works in Southwark Park?

Yes

No

If yes, please leave your email address: _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Appendix C: Consultation Leaflet and Poster

Leaflet

Fairer future
Building a better Southwark

Southwark Council

Let's talk about... THE FUTURE OF SOUTHWARK PARK

We'd love to know what you think about your local park.
How could it be improved?
What do you think of our proposals?

Join our **COMMUNITY CONVERSATION**

Get involved and tell us what you think...

www.southwark.gov.uk/southwarkpark

Fairer future
Building a better Southwark

Southwark Council

Let's talk about... THE FUTURE OF SOUTHWARK PARK

Cafe, toilets and Park Office
We have three options regarding the location of the cafe, toilets and park office:

1. Stay in the current location of the café – at the entrance of Gomm Road
2. Move to a site adjacent to the wildlife area
3. Or integrate the toilets and the park office with the current Café Gallery (by the lake and play area)

Landscaping of the nursery site
We have three options for the landscaping of the nursery site:

1. Creation of formal gardens with option for a new park entrance
2. Creation of informal gardens with option for a new park entrance
3. Creation of an access only area for school or community use

Athletics Track building
We have two areas we want to hear from you about:

1. The provision of external toilets
2. Refreshments and changing rooms facilities for park users

If you would like to see what these options will look like in the park, please come along to our exhibition being held next to the play area. The exhibition will be open daily from **10am to 2pm** during half term week (**16 to 20 Feb**) and at weekends from **10am to 2pm** until the consultation closes on the **13 March**.

Further information is available on Southwark Council's website: www.southwark.gov.uk/southwarkpark. You will also find a survey on this webpage where you can tell us which are your preferred options and offer other ideas you might have.

www.southwark.gov.uk/southwarkpark

Poster



Let's talk about...

THE FUTURE OF SOUTHWARK PARK

We'd love to know what you think about your local park.

How could it be improved? What do you think of our proposals?

If you would like to see what these options will look like in the park, please come along to our exhibition being held next to the play area. The exhibition will be open daily from 10am to 2pm during half term week (16 to 20 Feb) and at weekends from 10am to 2pm until the consultation closes on the 13 March.



Get involved and tell us what you think.
For more information visit
www.southwark.gov.uk/southwarkpark

www.southwark.gov.uk/southwarkpark



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