

Report on Ilmington playground survey

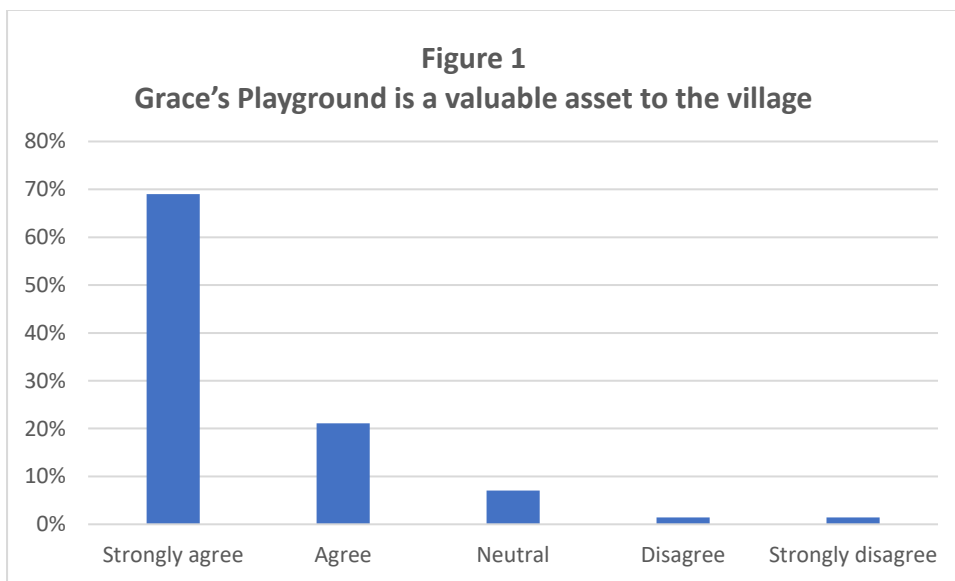
Martin Underwood 15/04/23

In December 2022 the Parish Council surveyed the village about the playground and its future funding.

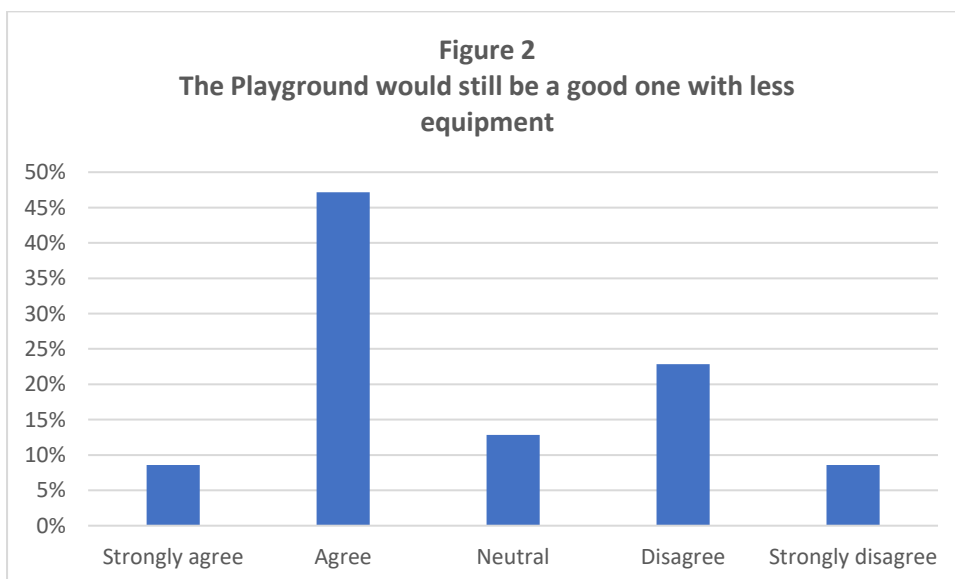
A paper questionnaire was delivered to 384 households in the Parish. We also let people know about the survey through the 20:20 e-mail newsletter and the Parish Council website. Residents completed this either on-line or on paper.

Valid responses were received from around one in five households (71 responses).

An important finding was that the playground is highly valued. Two thirds of respondents strongly agreed, and four out of five at least agreed that it is a valuable asset (Figure 1).

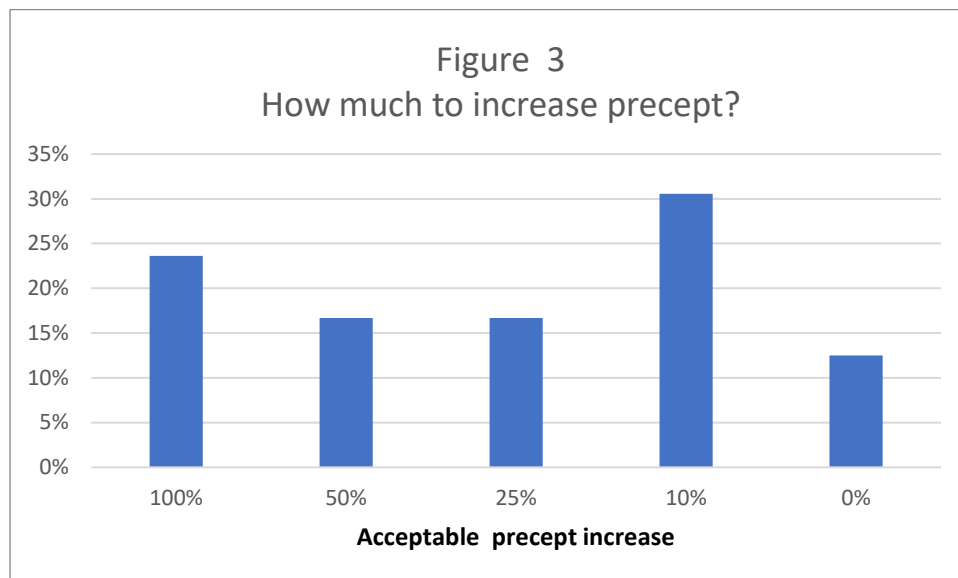


Although just over half of respondents thought it would still be a good playground with less equipment. (Figure 2).



Ilmington Playground Survey 2023

The Parish Council's main source of income is the precept; which is the Parish Council's share of the Council Tax. We asked how much people would be happy to pay to help maintain the playground. One third of respondents were in favour of increasing the precept by 10%, in line with inflation. A further one in seven respondents did not want any increase. Nevertheless, more than half of respondents would be prepared to pay 25% or more precept to fund the playground with a quarter prepared to pay double (Figure 3).



We received 48 responses to the open ended question 'Please use this box to tell us about anything else you would like to say about the playground, or about the Council's plans for the playground'. Some key themes emerged from these responses.

A valued village resource

Almost universally the playground was seen as an asset to the village. It is much loved by families living in the village and the extended families of others living in the village

Nevertheless, some respondents questioned the value of the playground to the village.

Use by people from outside the village

Respondents noted that as well as being used by people with links to the village that people from neighbouring areas also used the playground.

Concerns were raised that Ilmington residents were being asked to support a facility which is extensively used by families from outside the village. Although, it was noted that this might bring some extra income into the village.

Equipment quality

Some respondents were disappointed with the short life of recent equipment purchases.

Choice of equipment

Consulting with the school about the choice of equipment was welcomed. It was suggested that some observation of which equipment was used might be helpful. Also the needs of younger or older children needed addressing. Particular pieces of equipment, past and present, were identified as particularly valued.

Ilmington Playground Survey 2023

The Parish Council

Several views were expressed critical of the Parish Council and their approach to maintaining the playground. Only one respondent gave any support for the Parish Council's approach.

Future funding of the playground

Although there was some support for increasing the precept this was far from universal. Strong views were expressed that the Parish Council should be more proactive in seeking external grant funding. There were mixed on views on whether further fundraising should be led by the Parish Council or by a separate group within the village. Respondents identified multiple potential external funding resources. Several respondents suggested approaching neighbouring parish councils and Stratford District Council.

Rest of playing field area

Several comments were received relating to enhancement of the rest of the playing field area. These included improvements to the dog exercise area, a perimeter path either bark covered or suitable for cycling, and enhancement of wildlife.