

## **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Countryside & Greenspace - Residents and Visitor Surveys 2009**

### **Introduction**

During 2009 we undertook various surveys to help us get a better understanding how people use the Borough's parks, countryside and greenspaces, and what changes or improvements they would like to see. This information is vital if we are to plan and manage these spaces in ways which meet the needs of local people and visitors.

This report provides a brief summary of the following surveys and consultations:

1. GreenSTAT Surveys (2009)
2. Children and Young People's Parks and Greenspaces Consultation (2009)
3. 'Your Local Greenspaces' Consultation (2009)

We are extremely grateful to everyone who has taken part in the surveys outlined below. Also would also like to thanks those other organisations who worked with the Council on these various consultations, including Tees Valley Rural Community Council, Environment Agency, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, Groundwork and A4e.

If you want to find out any more information about recent surveys and research please go to our website and follow the link to 'Your Views':

[www.stockton.gov.uk/countrysidegreenspaceyourviews](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/countrysidegreenspaceyourviews)

This will also tell you how you can also give us your views on any Council-owned park or large greenspace in the Borough by completing an on-line GreenSTAT Survey.

## **Why does the Council collect this information and how is it used?**

Stockton Borough Council really values the views of those who use the Borough's parks and greenspaces. Often it is the users of these areas who are best placed to say what is good about these areas, and what could be improved. Visitors make some really helpful observations, such as wildlife sightings or noticing potential problems for other park users.

The Council uses this information in a variety of ways:

- To make informed decisions about the on-going management of parks and greenspaces - to deliver improvements for residents, visitors, and perhaps for wildlife as well.
- To help plan major improvements – such as the provision of new visitor facilities.
- To help shape the overarching strategies and plans for the Borough's Countryside and Greenspaces, including the Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy and annual Action Plan (see the website for more information: [www.stockton.gov.uk/countrysidegreenspaceprojects](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/countrysidegreenspaceprojects))
- To monitor long-term trends; for example, are people becoming more or less satisfied with their parks and greenspaces, and are levels of use increasing or decreasing over time? This kind of information is often requested when the Council applies for project funding.

Obviously it's not always possible to do everything that people want, and not everyone will share the same opinions. But without this kind of feedback we will not be able to deliver the kinds of parks and greenspaces that most people want to see.

## Contacting you in the future?

We would like to be able to contact you in the future to seek your views about the Borough's countryside and greenspaces. We can also send you a copy of our annual newsletter and let you know about other projects and activities are taking place.

If you would like to be included on our 'Countryside and Greenspace' mailing list please get in touch, stating whether you would prefer us to send any information by email or by post:

Please contact us by email: [countrysideandgreenspace@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:countrysideandgreenspace@stockton.gov.uk)

Or by post: Countryside & Greenspace, Stirling House, Thornaby, TS17 9JP

Or by phone: 01642 526871

## **Survey Results**

### **1. GreenSTAT Surveys (2009)**

#### **About the survey**

GreenSTAT is a national on-line survey which gives residents and users of parks and greenspaces the opportunity to comment on the quality of their open spaces and how well they feel they are being managed and maintained.

It is run by an organisation called Greenspace, a national charity dedicated to promoting better planning, design, management and use of the UK's public parks.

Stockton Borough Council, along with many other local authorities across the country, has signed up to use the GreenSTAT system. This provides the public with an easy-to use method of feeding back their views about local parks and greenspaces, and the Council then uses this information to help manage and improve our parks and greenspaces.

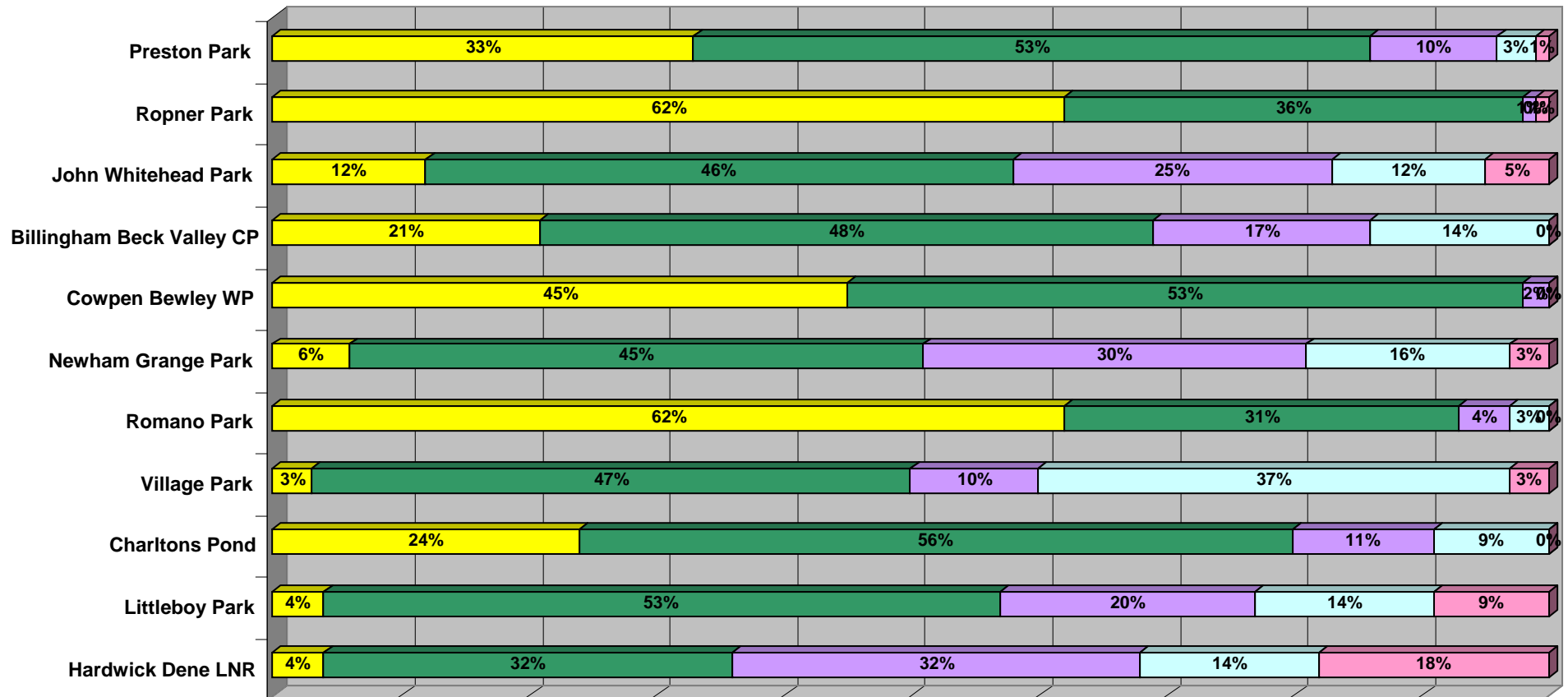
More information is available from the GreenSTAT website:

<http://www.greenstat.org.uk>

#### **Key results**

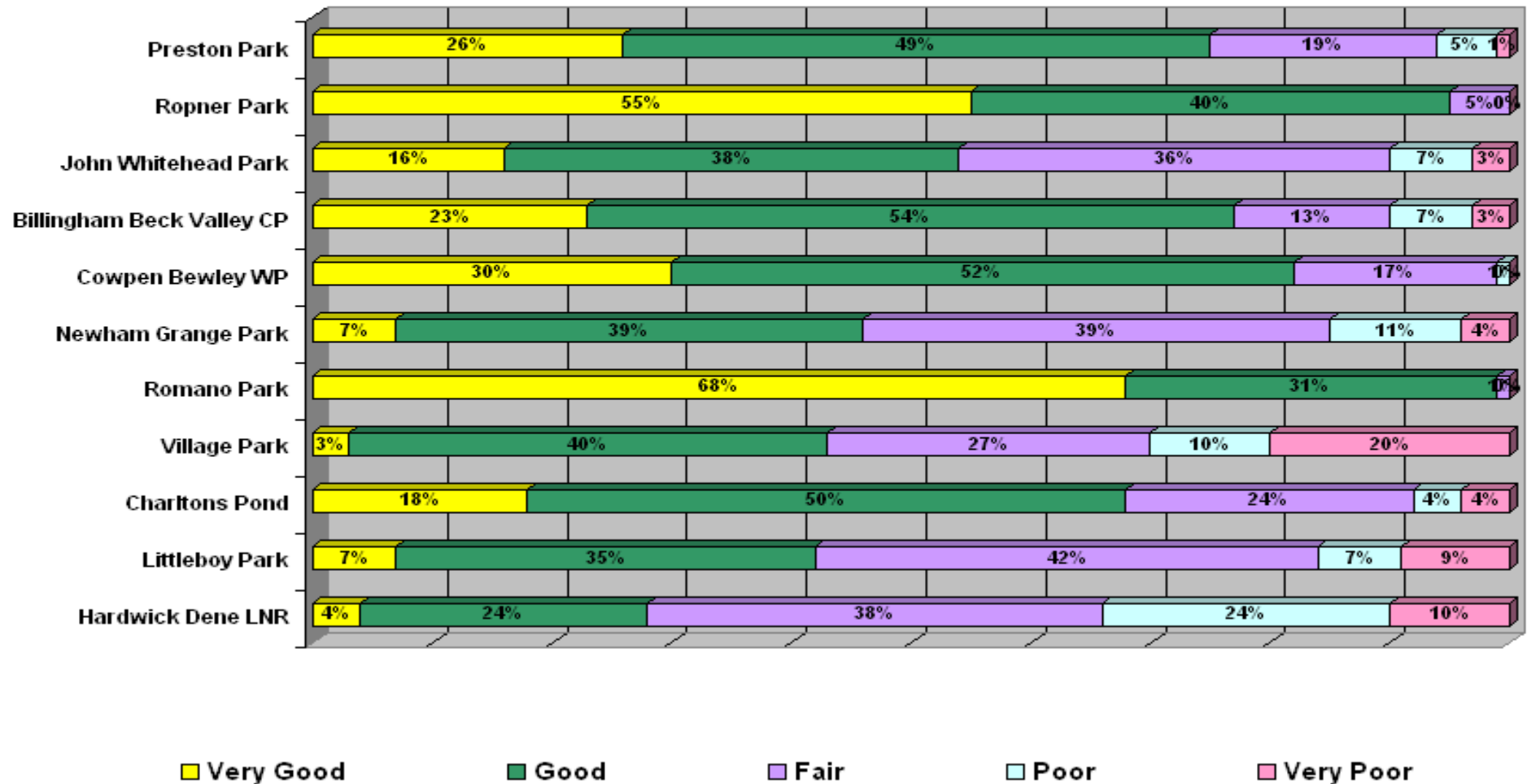
The following graphs summarise just some of the results from the GreenSTAT surveys. However, the questionnaire is quite detailed so we can only present a few of the key findings here. The surveys also provide us with much more in-depth information about our parks and greenspaces, including some really helpful individual comments.

## What is your overall impression of the Park or Open Space?

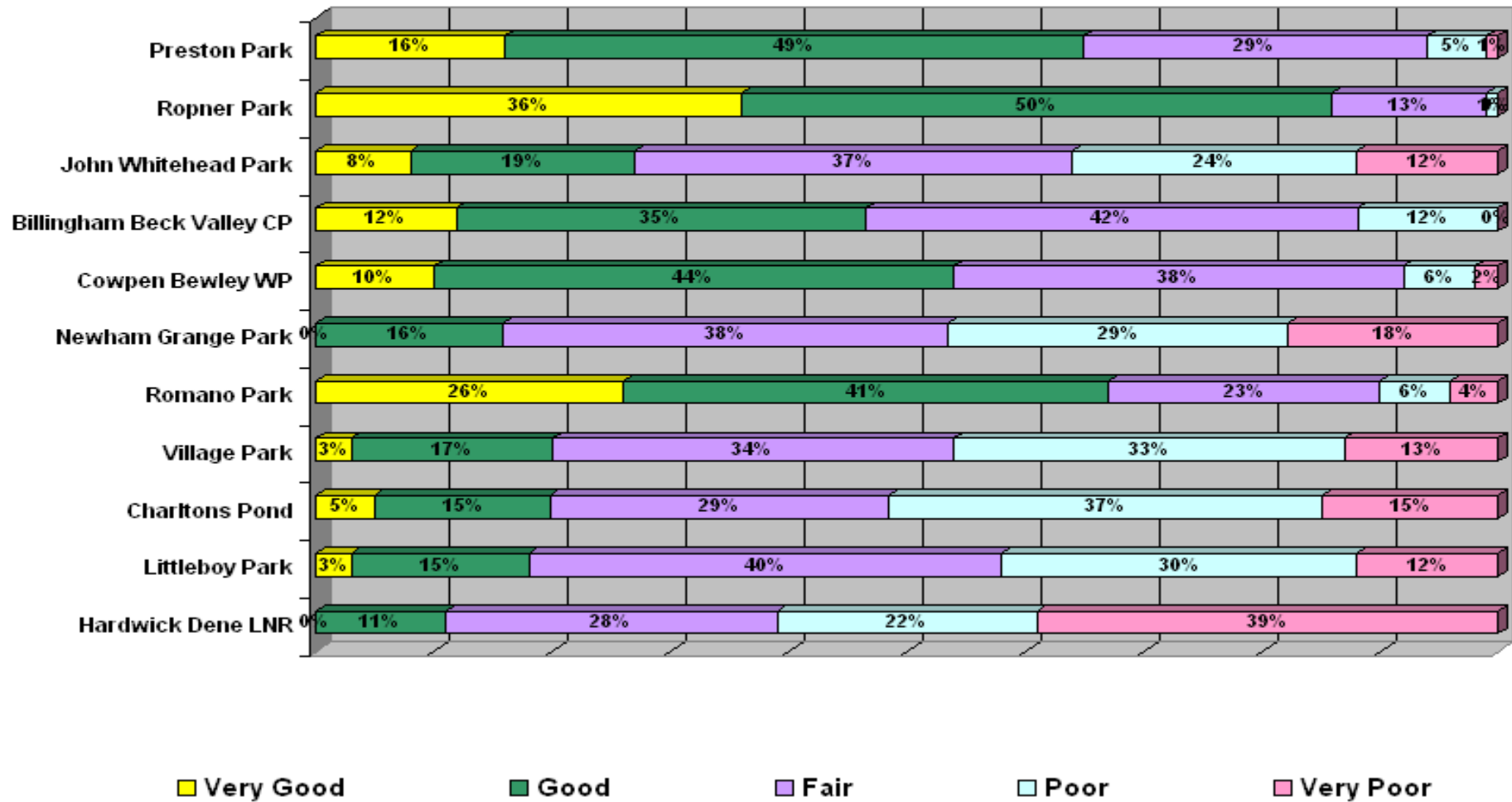


■ Very Satisfied  
 ■ Satisfied  
 ■ Neither Satisfied/Nor Dissatisfied  
 ■ Dissatisfied  
 ■ Very Dissatisfied

## How would you rate the standard of cleanliness and maintainance of the park or open space?



## What do you think about the range of visitor facilities that are available



## **2. Children and Young People's Parks and Greenspaces Consultation (2009)**

### **About the survey**

In spring 2009 we asked consultants A4e to do a series of workshop sessions in some local schools, asking children and young people to give their views about local parks and play areas. A total of 1,391 children and young people were involved in this work and 1087 questionnaires were completed.

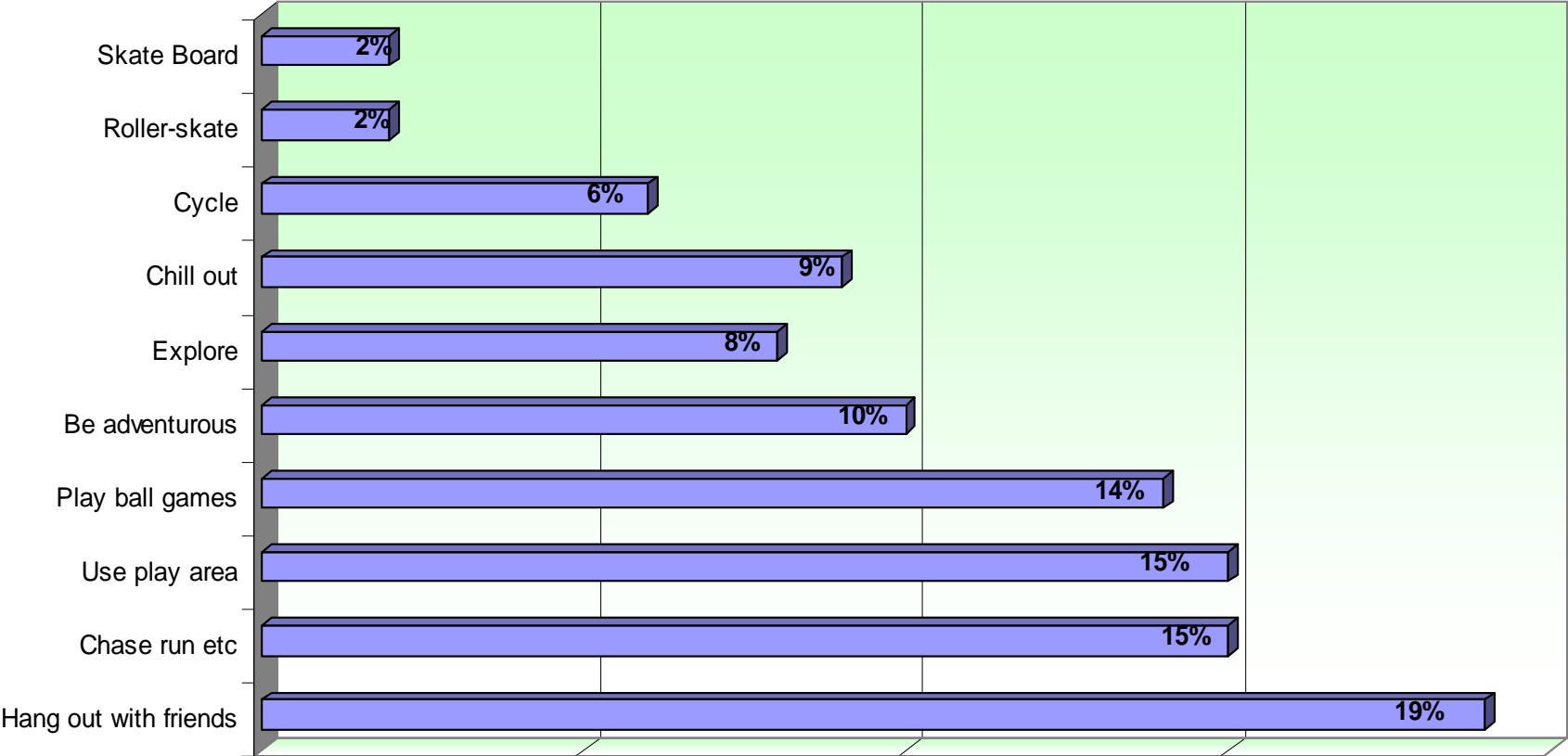
### **Key results**

A copy of the full report can be downloaded from the Council's website:

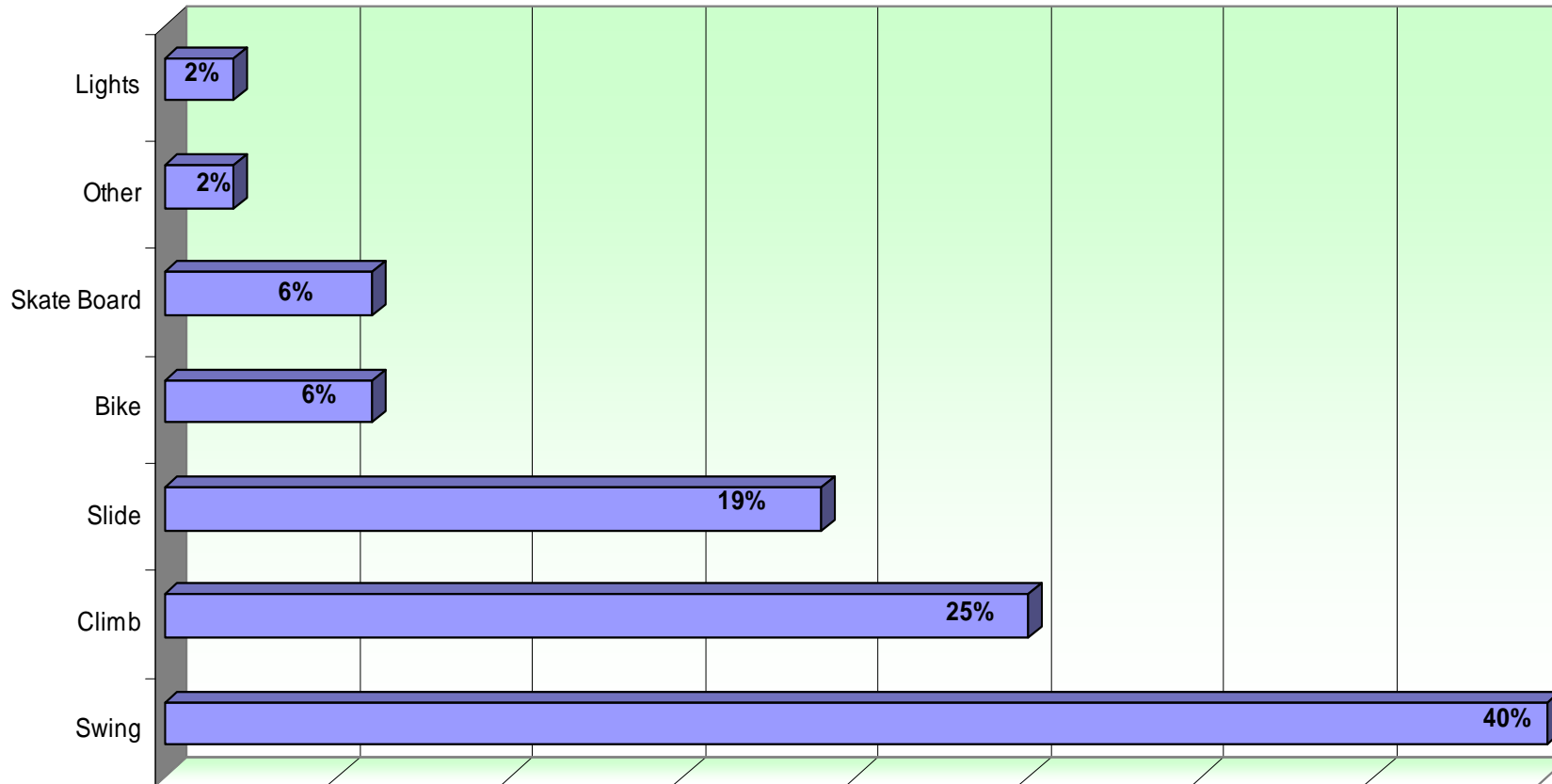
[www.stockton.gov.uk/countrysidegreenspaceyourviews](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/countrysidegreenspaceyourviews)

The following graphs summarise the results of the questionnaire survey. The workshops also provided a great deal of other information about how children and young people use parks and greenspaces and what changes they would like to see. All these results are helping us to provide better play areas and play spaces (the Council currently has £1.1million funding from government to improve the Borough's play spaces). It also helps to ensure we give greater consideration to the views of children and young people when planning our parks and greenspaces.

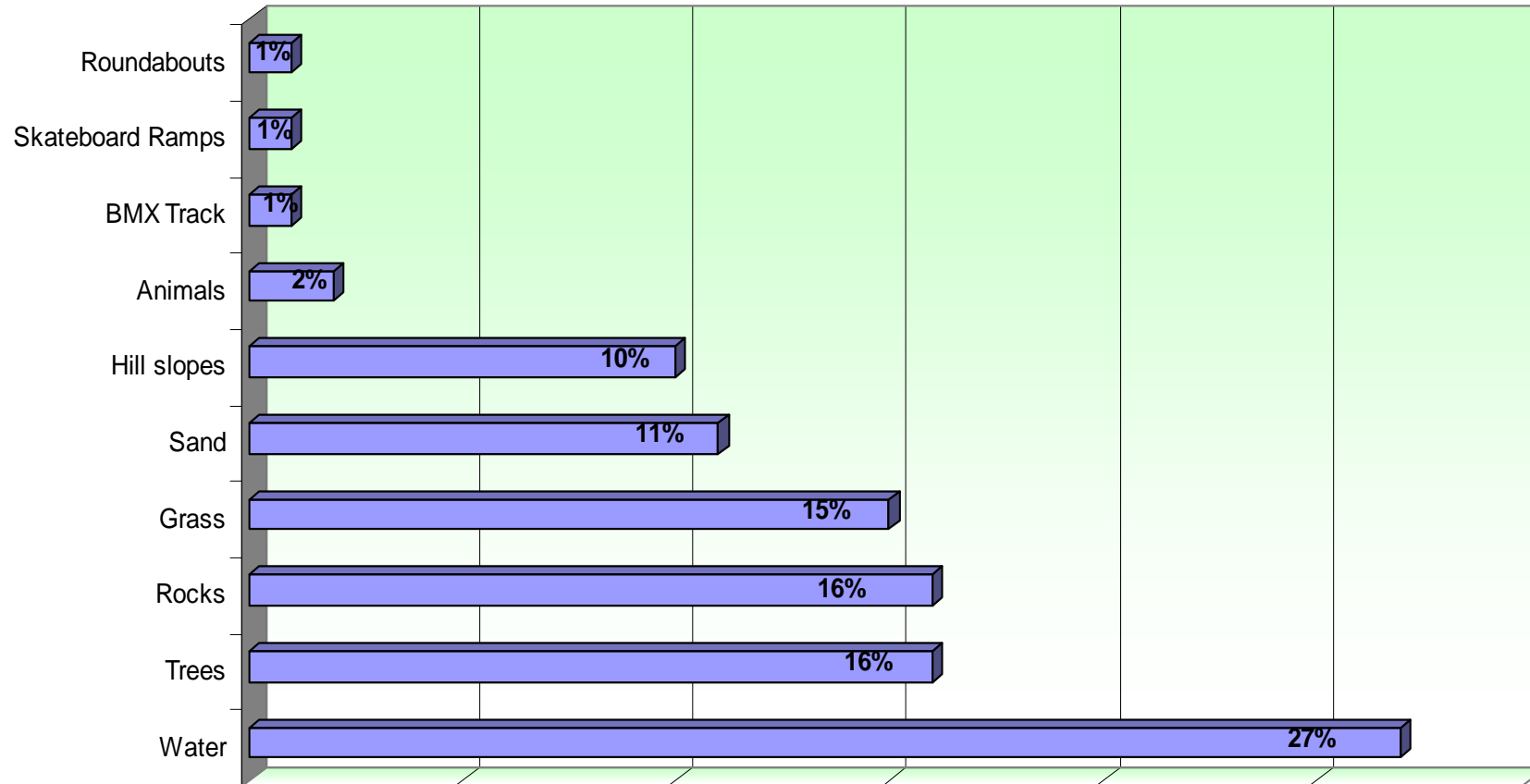
# When you visit parks what do you most like to do?



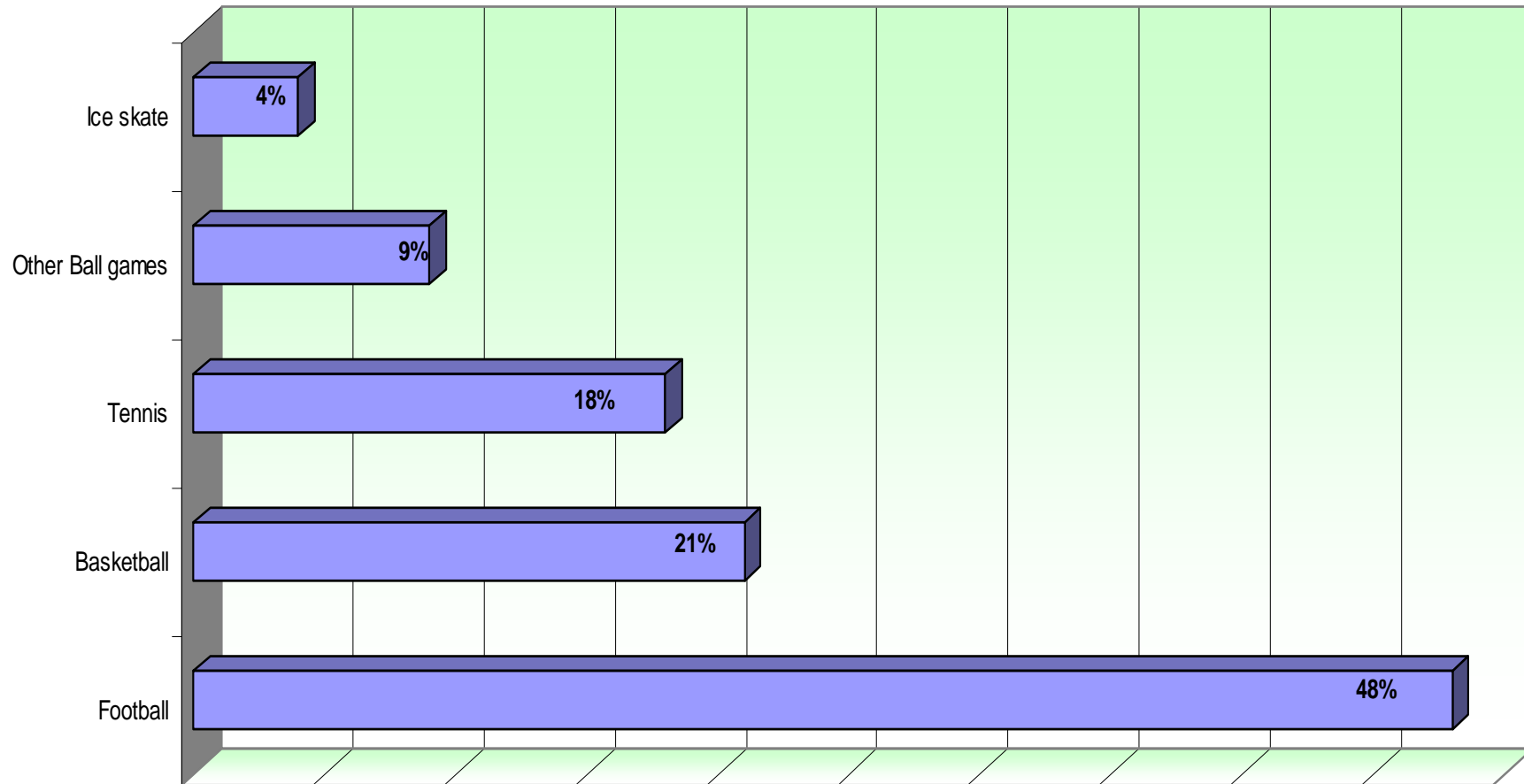
## Thinking about where you already visit what kinds of things would you like?



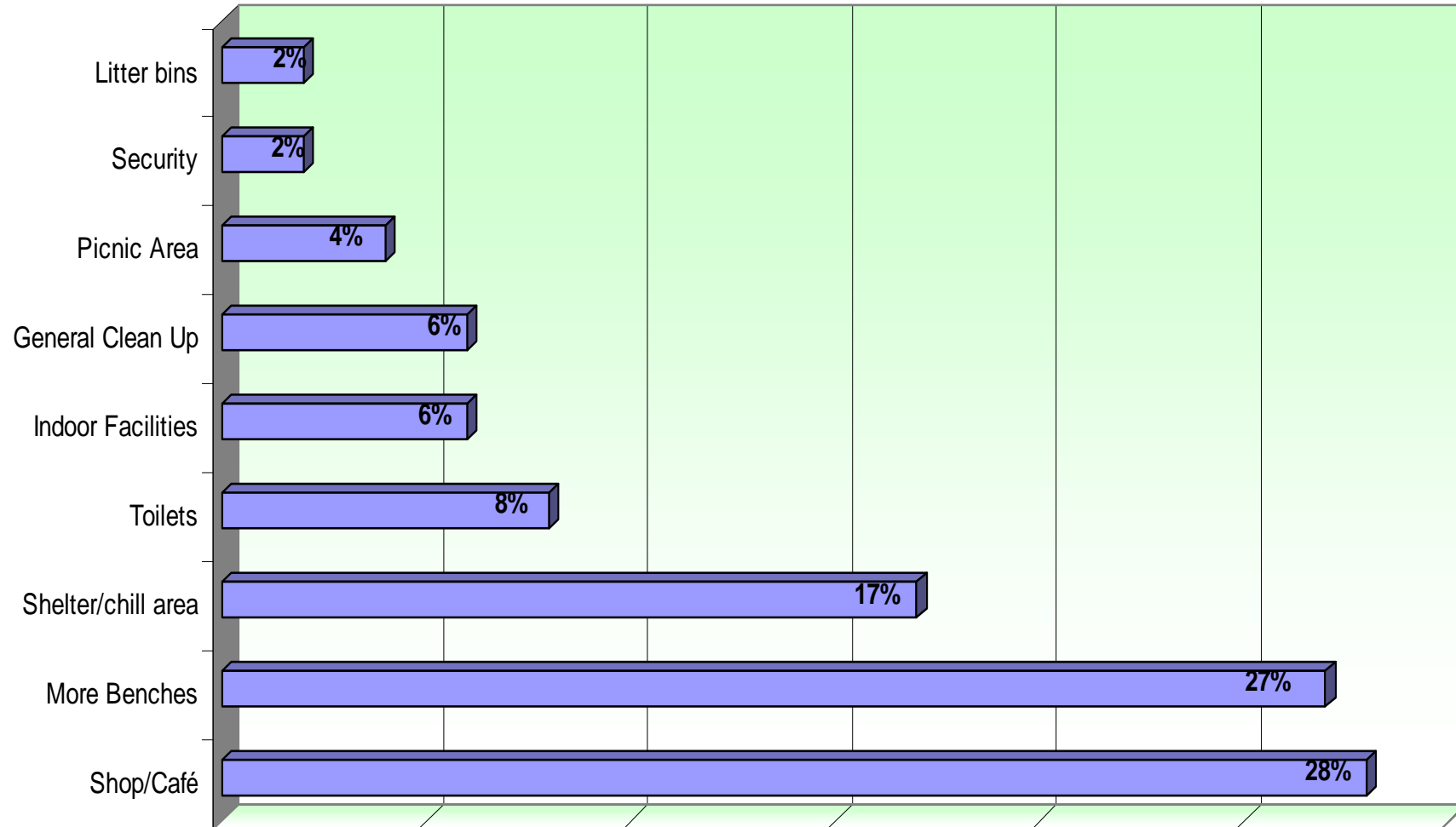
## What new kinds of play equipment would you like?



## What sports / games facilities would you like?



## What else would you like?



### 3. 'Your Local Greenspaces' consultation (2009)

#### About the survey

During April to June 2009 Stockton Council, in partnership with Tees Valley Rural Community Council, the Environment Agency and Groundwork South Tees, organised a Borough-wide consultation exercise to gain an improved understanding of how people view their local green infrastructure - their parks, play spaces, rivers and streams, and so on. More specifically the partners were keen to find out what improvements the public would like to see made to greenspaces and what new features and facilities they want - both locally and within the Borough as a whole. This information is being used to help shape the Borough's new Green Infrastructure Strategy and its associated action plan.

22 drop in-sessions were held across the Borough where people were encouraged to record their views and ideas in three ways:

- a) Questionnaire - asking people to choose three things that need to be improved, and three new features and facilities they would like to see - both in connection with their local greenspaces and across the Borough as a whole.
- b) Area Maps – with people invited to use up coloured stickers to show where they would like to see new features or facilities located.
- c) GreenStat questionnaires

In addition to the drop-in events officers attended meetings of some community groups and the questionnaire was also sent out to other organisations via the Stockton Residents and Community Groups Association, and made available on the Council's website.

#### Key results

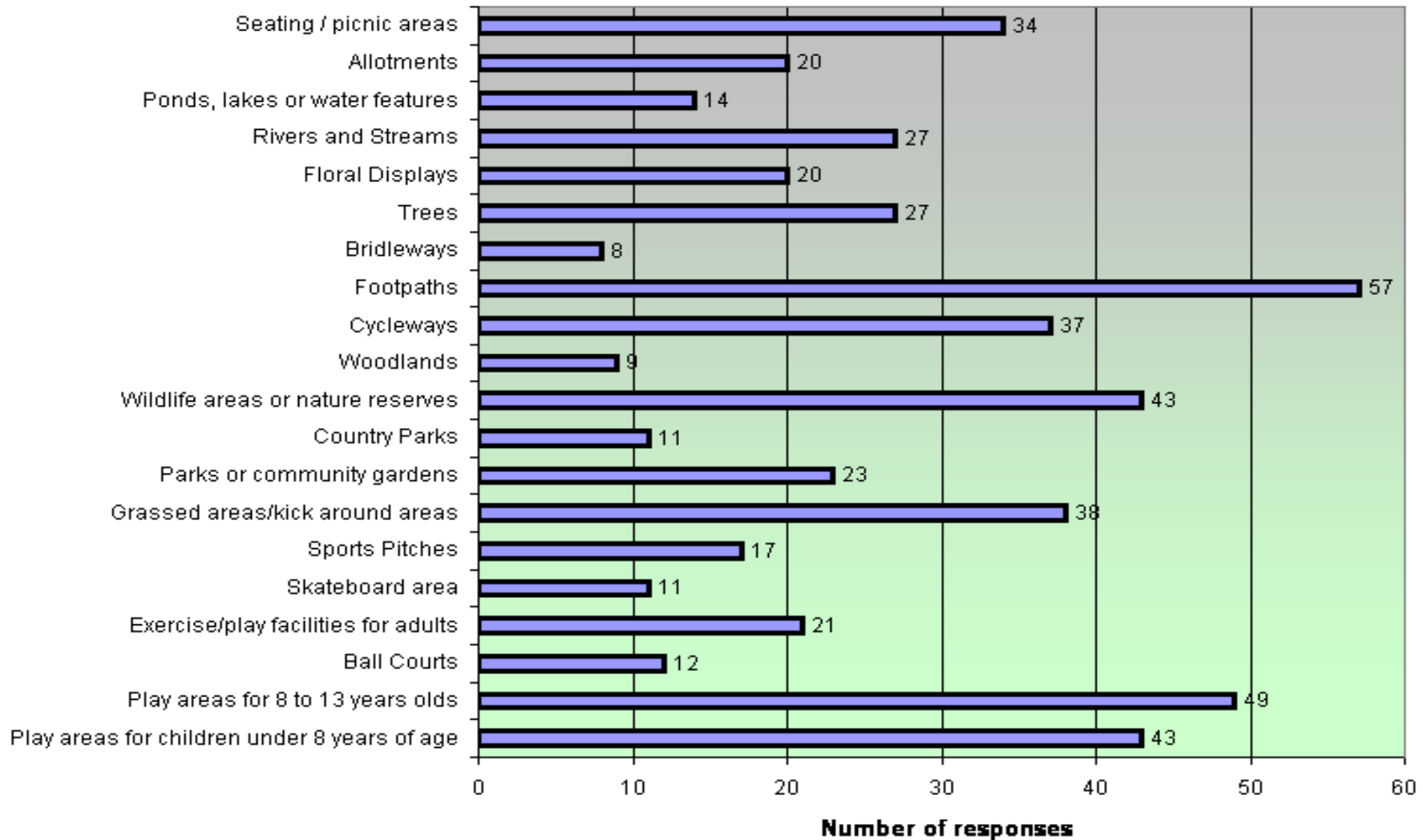
The questionnaire results are summarised on the following graphs, while the Area Maps can be viewed on the Council's website:  
[www.stockton.gov.uk/countrysidegreenspaceyourviews](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/countrysidegreenspaceyourviews)

It is important to emphasise that given the relatively small numbers of people taking part in this consultation these results are not statistically significant. But the feedback received has given the Council and other agencies an indication of some local issues, opportunities and priorities. For example, the ideas that came forward for new allotment sites are currently being used in connection with the development of a new Allotments and Leisure Gardens Strategy.

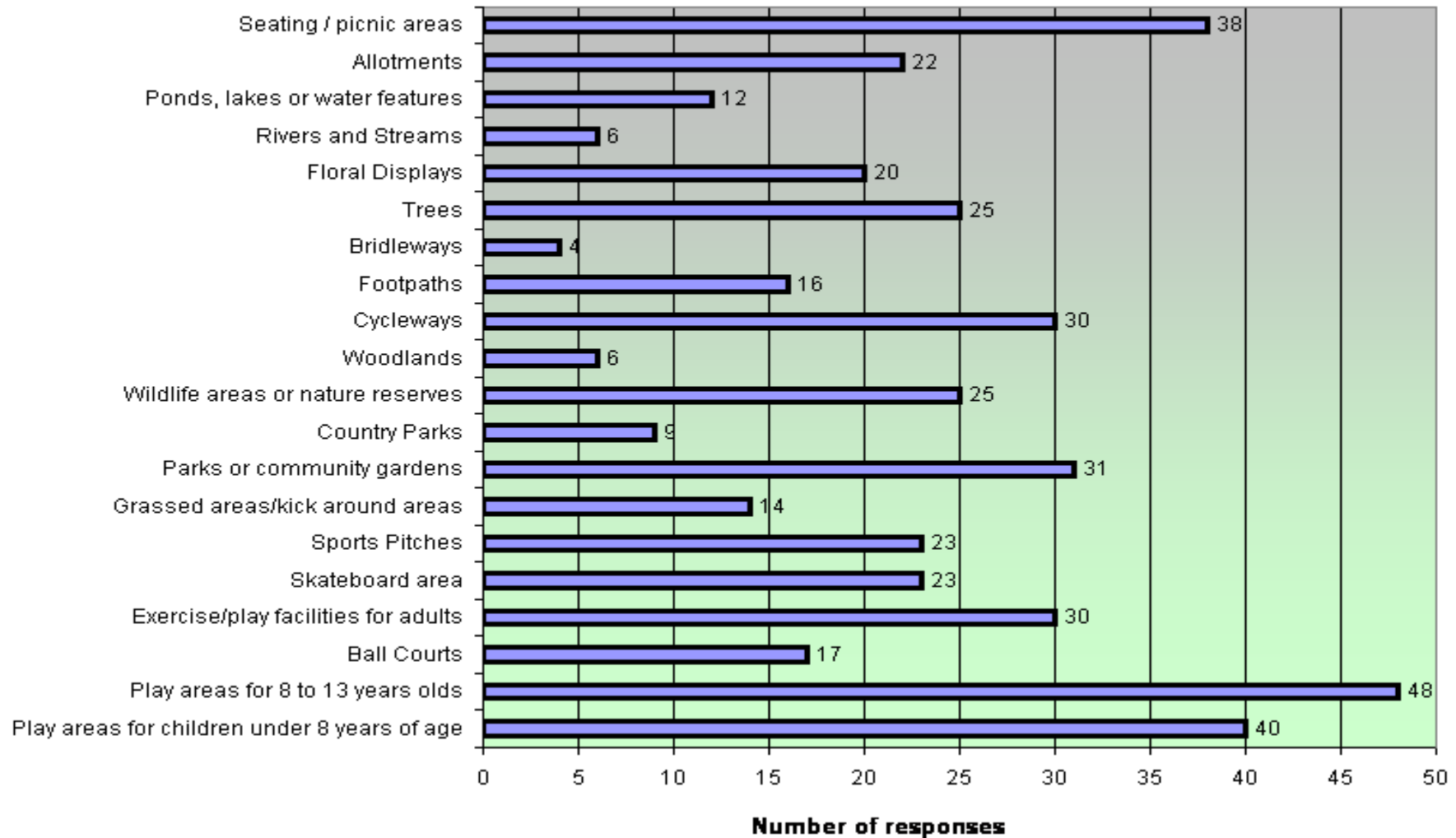
The consultation provides some really useful information to help determine how greenspaces are planned and managed, but would not be used on its own to determine local priorities. Further local consultation will always be carried out before major new projects are undertaken.



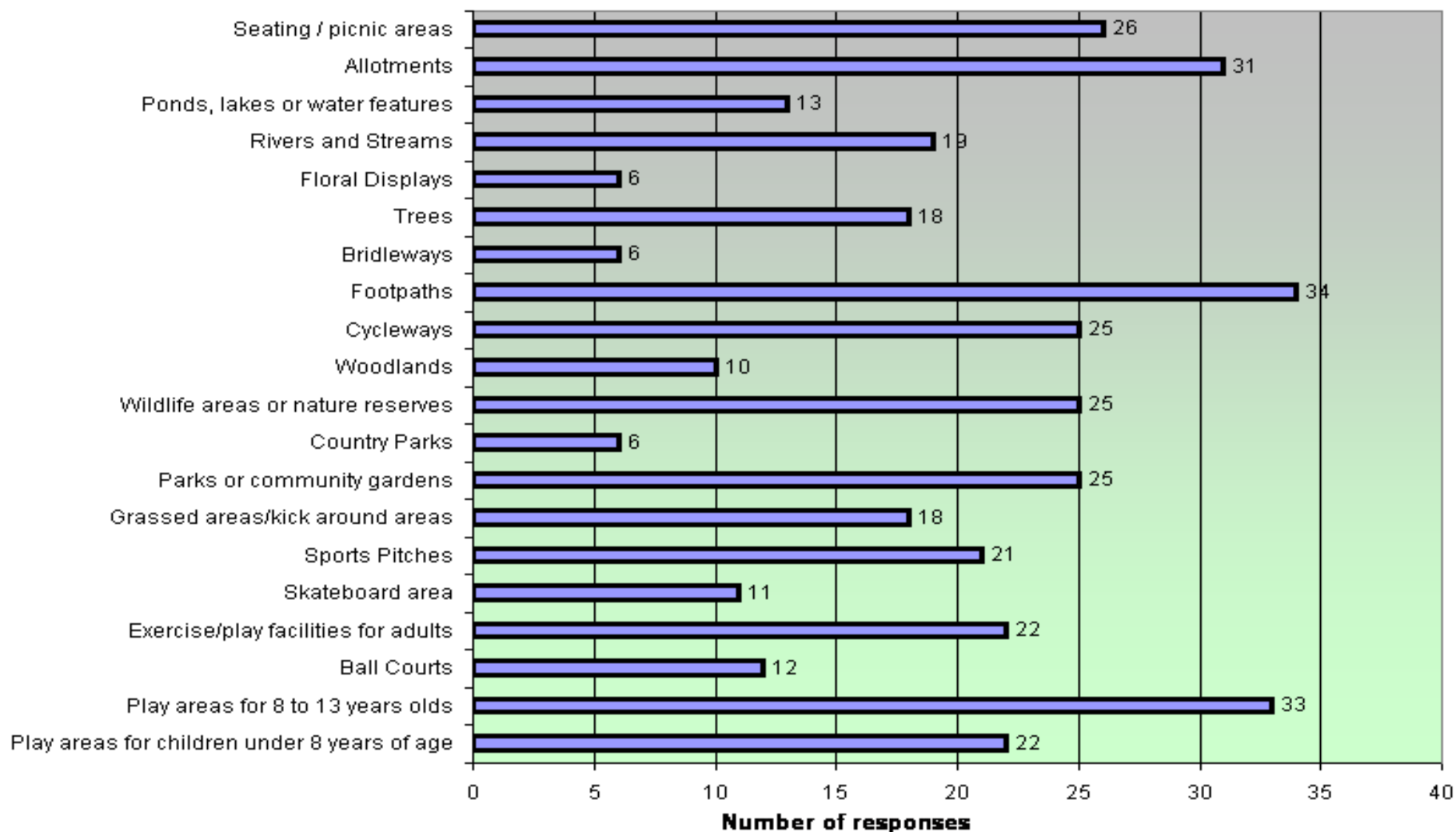
## What needs to be improved in your local area?



## What new features and facilities would you like to see in your local area?



## What needs to be improved in the Borough as a whole?



## What new features and facilities would you like to see in the Borough as a Whole?

