

Play Sufficiency Leeds

New Wortley

Play Pamphlet
New Wortley (2)
Through the
lens of the
adult

New Wortley - adult lens

Focus groups were conducted involving representatives from parents and carers, 3rd sector organisations, youth services, and schools who all knew the area well, and could share insights about living in or working across the Inner West area, including New Wortley.

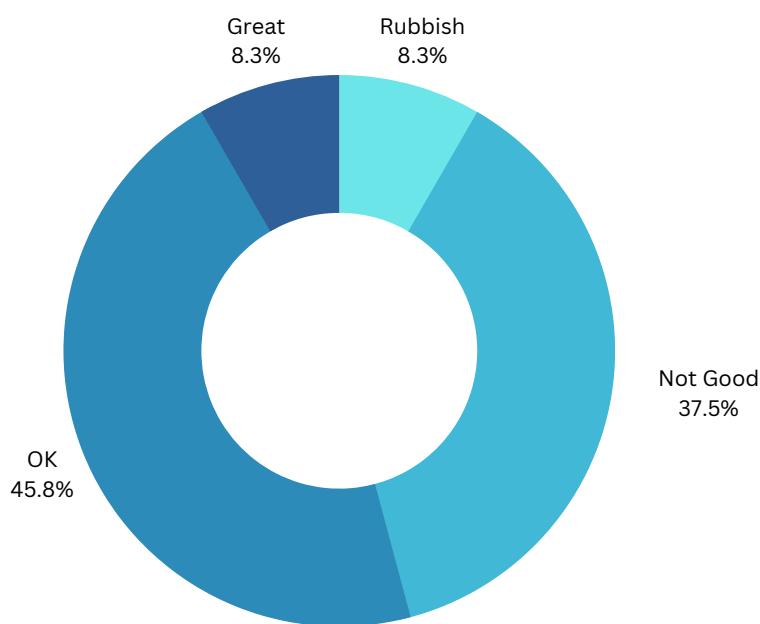
Work during the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted a higher number of families than previously thought were living in flats or high multi-occupancy homes. Some of these are the high rises, but some look like they're houses split into flats with many families living on the 2nd floors with no direct outdoor access to street, yards or gardens.

The lack of quality spaces for children's play was a common theme in the focus group 'there's pockets of green space but no quality green space, feels like there's nothing for them'; 'There's Western Park (Known locally as Reccy Park), but the playground surface is poor'; 'There is some usage of the patch of grass on Holdsworths where the old shop used to be, but it's not very attractive'. As well as a lack of quality space for play, participants also told us that many people within New Wortley have dogs for protection, and that this inevitably meant more dog mess. It was also felt there was a high amount of litter and fly tipping contributing to spaces feeling unattractive. The range of spaces, the quality of space and the maintenance of available space and the ability to access these spaces are identified as factors influencing the sufficiency of opportunity for play. These findings are echoed in the views of many parents who responded to our play satisfaction survey.

50 parents with children of all ages from the LS12 area completed a parent/carer survey regarding their thoughts on play. Only 8% of parents reported that the places their children get to play were great with a further 42% reporting the places their children played were OK. Nearly 1/2 the parents/carers that responded to the survey felt that the places their children played were not good or rubbish and didn't allow their children to do many of the things they liked to do.

In contrast, the quality of the available spaces for play was rarely an issue for the children who took part in the research however there was an overwhelming number who felt they couldn't play in the number of different places that they would like to. For children the amount/variety of playful spaces seems to be more important than their quality.

How good are the places they play in?



50 parent/carer LS12 responses
Play Sufficiency Survey

New Wortley Play Pamphlet (2) Through the lens of the adult

Lack of recognisable playgrounds in walkable distance for New Wortley families came up often from children, parents and front line workers. However it was also felt that in other green spaces in Inner West where there was equipment it wasn't the equipment children and young people would ask for themselves. It was felt that new equipment installed wasn't as strong or robust as older equipment therefore breaking quicker and being in disrepair.

"Children want things where they have something that challenges them, that they have to practice and can spend lots of time on. You don't see things like these now"



"Even swings now seem to be replaced so less sociable. You used to get set of 4 swings for example so friends could sit next to each other, but what you often see now is one swing ,or one swing and a baby swing/disability swing which means 2 or 3 friends can't sit on the swings together in a sociable way"
Youth worker

The traffic free layout of Holdsworths meant that some children were seen playing out, utilising the small squares for play as well as seeing some older children out on bikes and scooters. However it was felt that the numbers seen did not reflect the numbers that lived in the area. The older young people tended to hang around the shops *"it's well-lit and they can get a bit of free wifi"*, although sometimes their hanging out there was deemed as ASB.

Access to equipment may be a factor *"when we pull up with the youth service bus and get some balls out the kids take them and use them. It seems often the kids don't have their own, or those they do are old and broken"*.

Where children were accessing spaces for play there were reports of feeling unsafe *'often there's older kids offering joints'*; *'There is a bit of a gang culture which makes parents cautious'*; *'Jaily Fields feels quite exposed and not overlooked like parks in other parts of the city'*.

It was recognised that the busier a space was the safer it felt, however in New Wortley it was felt the spaces lacked reasons for children and young people to come hang out and use them.

