

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE FINDINGS^[T1]

1. This is a summary of the key findings from Totnes Neighbourhood Plan public consultation data in relation to public open spaces. It draws data from Workshop 1, Workshop 2, the Housing Needs Survey and the KEVICC workshop. Both the KEVICC workshop and Workshop 2 articulated a Vision for the public open space in Totnes.

2.1 KEVICC's Young peoples' vision for public open space was as follows:

- Better facilities for young adults.
- More social areas, places to go, and activities for young adults.

2.2 Workshop 2: Emerging Vision for public open space

A caring, compassionate, resilient, welcoming community. We have a sustainable local economy, a vibrant community centre. We know and respect each other, we share information and we offer each other support. We have inspiring facilities and we engage and inspire each other. We know how to talk with each other, challenge each other and heal ourselves when things are difficult. We have a strategy for the future but we can adapt to local needs and changing contexts. Totnes

*Please note the vision written up as part of the public open spaces engagement (above) is a broader vision for the full plan as opposed to one that specifically relates to public open space.

3. KEY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

3.1: Workshop 1: This workshop was attended by 150 people on July 20th, 2015 at the Mansion.

Analysis - Public open space	
Summary of comment types	Number of comments for each type
<i>Sports & leisure</i>	13
<i>green space/public space</i>	29
<i>Camping</i>	2
<i>Sustainability</i>	13
<i>Greenways-footpaths, cycle ways, by ways</i>	13
<i>Churchyards and cemeteries</i>	2
<i>Community</i>	1
Total number of comments	73

5: Totnes Neighbourhood Plan Workshop 2:

Our public workshop, held at the Totnes Civic Hall on November 28th 2015 was attended by 65 people. These represented a wide variety of organisations across the community. The following activities took place and comments were recorded:

3:2 What do we need more of? Question and post it note flipchart:

14 post-it notes were placed onto this flipchart covering the issues of Sport/Recreation and Community / Space.

3:3 Sport / Recreation: There were requests for “fit for purpose” sporting facilities; an all-weather pitch; tennis courts that are maintained and a new Club House; a modern Leisure Centre including steam and sauna; a skate park; a swimming pool benefitting from green filtrations and sterilisation and underfloor heating around edge and in the changing rooms; and more cycle paths and footpaths inside hedges, like the Dartington stretch.

3:4 Community / Space: there were requests that Clubs and young people be enabled to access spaces formally and informally; more open green spaces for youngsters and families (not all flat); “village greens”; a proper Community Centre; green space and walking areas needed; and more art.

3:5 Mapping activity:

Supporting the flipchart activity, participants visiting this Theme table also had the opportunity, through using blank flags which on the one side had the wording “Think about” (this space) and on the reverse “Improve by” as well as blank “Your Idea” flags, to provide **feedback / views about the public open spaces in and around Totnes.**

3:6 Locations onto which the greatest number of flags were placed, were:

- The River / riverside
- KEVICC including the all-weather pitch
- Borough Park and Leisure Centre
- Vire Island

Other locations onto which fewer flags were placed included: caravan park, Castle Meadow, the Town in general, Colwell Wood, Leechwell Gardens, Rotherfold, Baltic Wharf, Follaton Arboretum, and Weston Lane, Bridgetown.

3:7: The River / Riverside: Participants highlighted that this area was a great asset, was critical for wildlife, and provided a useful space for outdoor events. Another participant commented that there was “too much luxury housing”, whilst another identified the need for “allotments”. In terms of how this area could be improved, comments included the need for protection including from waterlogging and the consolidation of wild area boundaries and river banks; that the river path be upgraded for bikes and disabled access, like the path to Cider Press; the existing campsite to be made into a proper campsite for tents and non-caravan people; and by providing space for allotments. Please also see comments below recorded for KEVICC.

3:8 KEVICC including all weather pitch: participants thought it was an area that should be kept green / open space with no buildings or development on it; that the new hockey pitch is good and should be kept on the all-weather pitch; and that it was wonderful to see it being used by kayakers, swimmers, families and wildlife. The comments about how it could be improved included replacing the out of date Sports Hall; providing a new state of the art Secondary School; ensuring that the all-weather pitch is kept clean and safe for all; improving the sports pitches by correcting lack of drainage; and a canoe facility (upstream from the weir) to encourage recreational water activities.

3:9 Borough Park and Leisure Centre: participants thought that this area should be kept as open space for children; that it was a wonderful sporting facility but in need of a facelift including renewing the tennis courts and the need for a new Skate Park as the present one is “falling apart”; and that the Pavilions Centre lacks sauna / steam facilities. In terms of how this area and facility could be improved suggestions included replacement of the Skate Park as “they (young people) have been let down time and time again”; and a modern Leisure Centre properly cleaned and managed with sauna and steam facilities.

4: Vire Island: one participant thought that Vire Island was a “magical and much loved space” whilst another thought it was “a bit bland”. Another comment highlighted the need to negotiate access for events on the river. Suggestions about how this area could be improved included clarifying legality of moorings; planting fruit and nut trees; and development and use of Bowl Pitch including fencing it apart from dogs.

4:1 Caravan Park: in terms of what participants thought about this facility comments included the view that it was important to cater for green tourism with no more vehicles; and that being in the centre of town was good for tourists. Improvements suggested were to have a barn or building for tent tourism (cyclists and walkers) which could shelter homeless out of season and to allow tents to cater for younger people including poorer and greener.

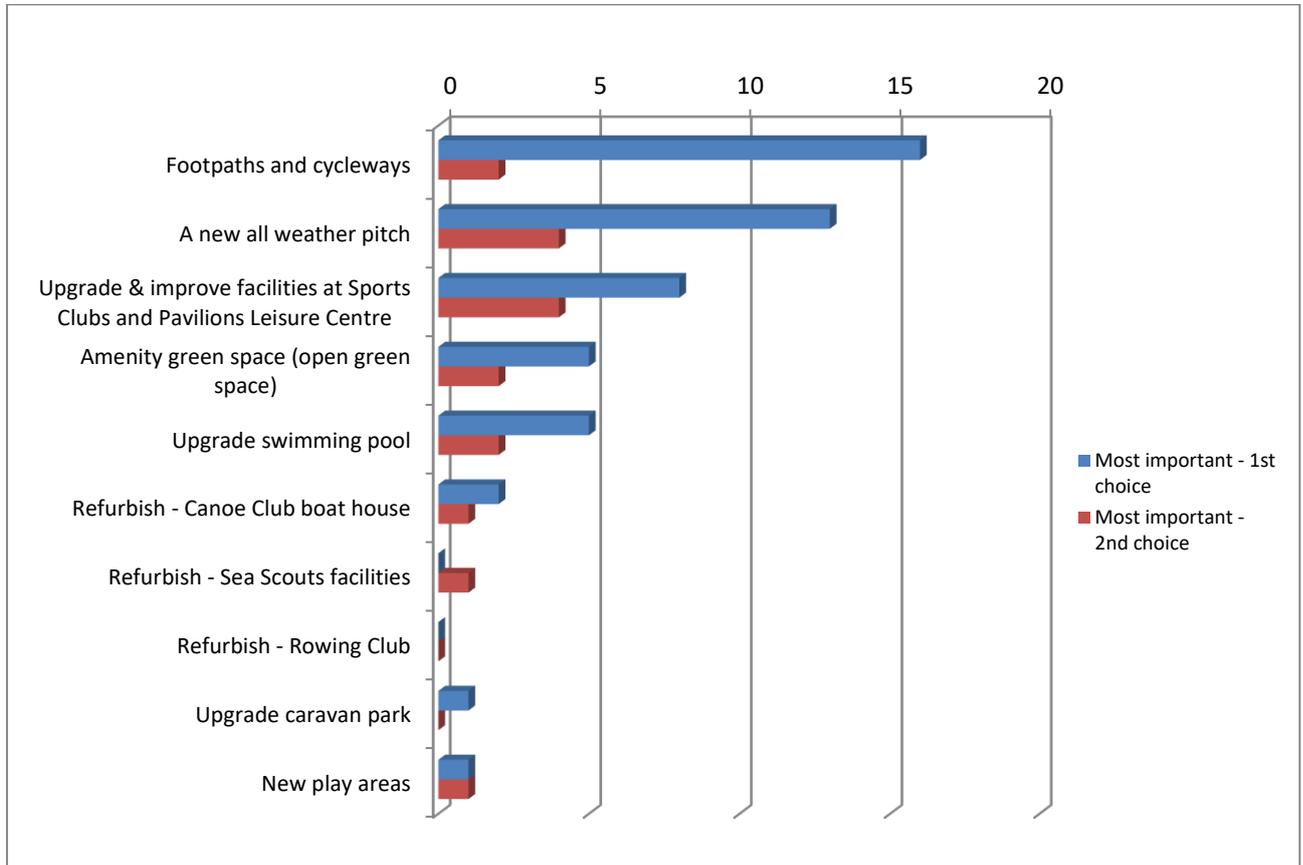
4:2 Castle Meadow: thoughts about this location included that it should be a free public space used for community events and that access for the town and populace needs to be negotiated. It was felt it could be improved by being run as a community events space and developed as a community venue; and that there needed to be a re-assessment of capacity and a renegotiation of the access deal.

5: Section 106 Money – Prioritisation Activity:

Participants were provided with background information about what Section 106 money is and given examples of how it can be used. They were also informed that £424,537 of Section 106 money, from recent major developments, is to be made available from South Hams for public open spaces, sport and recreation in Totnes. The Public Open Space Task Group put forward a list of possible facilities that the Section 106 money could be spent on and asked participants to indicate their 1st and 2nd choices in terms of importance. The following table shows that the 3 most important facilities were:

- Footpaths and cycle ways
- A new all-weather pitch
- The upgrade and improvement of facilities at existing Sports Clubs and at the Pavilions Sports Centre.

5:1 Graph



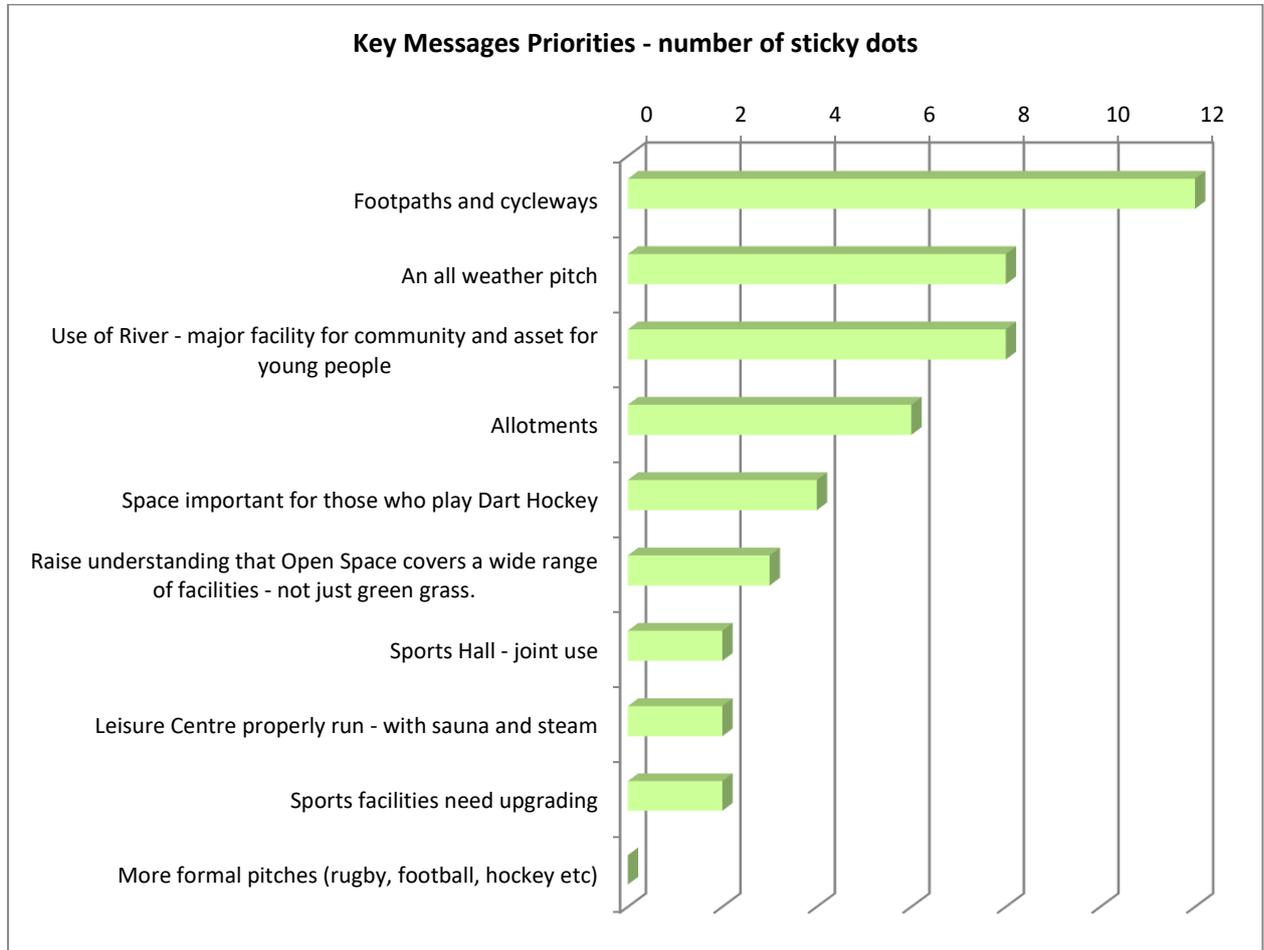
6 KEY MESSAGES AND PARTICIPANTS PRIORITIES:

From a list of key messages drawn from the responses to questions and the Open Spaces Task Group's list participants identified the following as their top priorities:

- Footpaths and cycle ways
- All weather pitch
- Use of River – major facility for community and important asset for young people.
- Allotments

Please see graph below for a complete set of responses.

6:1: Graph



7 KEVICC Workshop

7:1 Some of the strengths listed by KEVICC students related to public open spaces and sports and leisure:

- The range of facilities available including the local Schools; the Leisure Centre; the market; the skate park; rugby and football fields;
- The natural environment: the river; scenic local area; open spaces; parks; very natural; wildlife.
- Transport links and accessibility including foot and cycle paths.

7:2 Public open spaces were also linked to a number of weaknesses in the town:

- The lack of places to go and activities to do for young people
- The condition of the River Dart and weir – pollution and rubbish
- The lack of open spaces / parks where young people can “chill out”

- Poor quality of environment e.g. litter and rubbish; areas used by dog walkers; and the astro-turf

7:3 Existing Facilities:

A number of existing facilities came in for criticism by the students. These included:

- the Skate Park which they felt needed to be refurbished and needed lighting;
- the astro turf which needed to be improved because it is dangerous;
- the parks which presently are focussed on younger children and do not offer much for young adults;
- the Leisure Centre/swimming pool which they identified as not being very popular especially the pool. Their view was that this facility needed updating and to offer something new and affordable for teenagers (clubs and games).
- Vire Island – the river area and island needed to be made safer, with less rubbish, and for the existing benches to be fixed and more provided.

A suggestion put forward was to employ people to care for the Sports Field.

7:4 Future provision:

- In addition to their comments about existing facilities, students identified the need for the creation of more open spaces and parks which were clean and safe; better designed; with better facilities to meet the needs of a wider age range. One suggestion was that there should be something like Dartington Gardens in Totnes.
- The need for more places for young people to meet and hang out was identified and a suggestion put forward that a donation fund be started for the purchase of a new field for teenagers. Leechwell Gardens was put forward as a location for a youth shelter.
- The Dairy Crest site was seen as an opportunity for provide an area for shops for young and old alike, and a new community space for everyone.
- Another suggestion put forward was that the Elmhurst site (after the Grove leave) should be used to provide leisure provision for young people.

7:5 General:

The need for more litters bins; more dog parks; more benches and indoor seating areas; and the creation of more community space were all identified by students.

7:6 Flags placed on large map of Totnes:

- Band practice space: Bridgetown area – Christina Park
- Create open space for informal play: Bridgetown area; Borough Park
- Improve general parks / open spaces: Borough Park
- Improved leisure facilities: Borough Park
- Link up foot / cycle paths to get to parks: Totnes general
- More activities for our young people: Western side of Totnes in open space; Dairycrest site; Bridgetown area
- More areas for young adults – update parks as they are all for younger children: Bridgetown area.
- More bins: Borough Park; Bridgetown area; High Street.
- More open spaces: Lower Collapark
- More outdoor shelter / seating: open space between KEVICC and Barracks Hill; Westonfields.
- Places to hang out: Totnes general
- Skate park: Borough Park; Bridgetown area.

Bridgetown Open Space Survey - Key Findings Paper

In October 2015 we conducted a survey with parents from the Bridgetown Community at a family fun-day held at the Daisy Centre (Totnes Children’s Centre, Bridgetown.) 23 respondents filled out our survey about Bridgetown Open Spaces. The results are below:

The profile of respondents

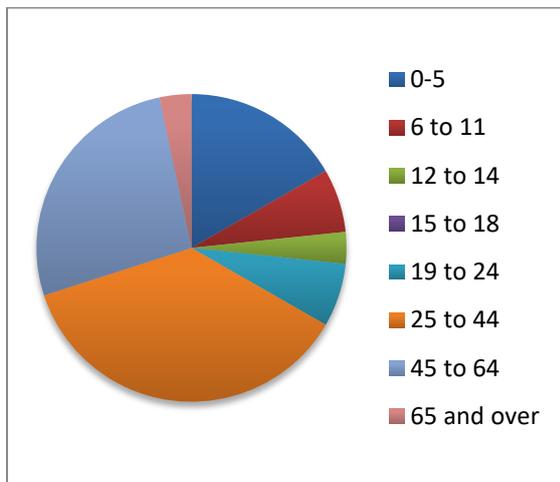
There was a relatively low response rate for this survey however the results below shown that the distribution of responses cover most of the residential areas.

Location of Respondents:

Culverdale	4
Chapel lane	2
Weston Road	2
Katherines Way	1
Westonfields	1
Antrim Terrace	1
Broad Oak crescent	1
Plymouth Road	1
Rush Way	2
Adams Road	1
Higher Weston Fields	2

Lansdowne Park	2
Hillbrook Road	2
Parkfields	1
total	23

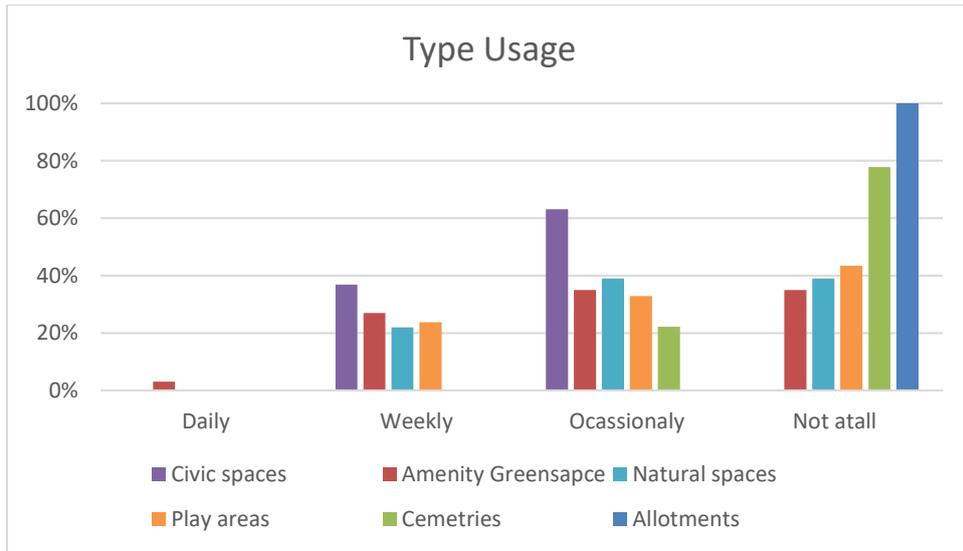
Age profile of Respondents :



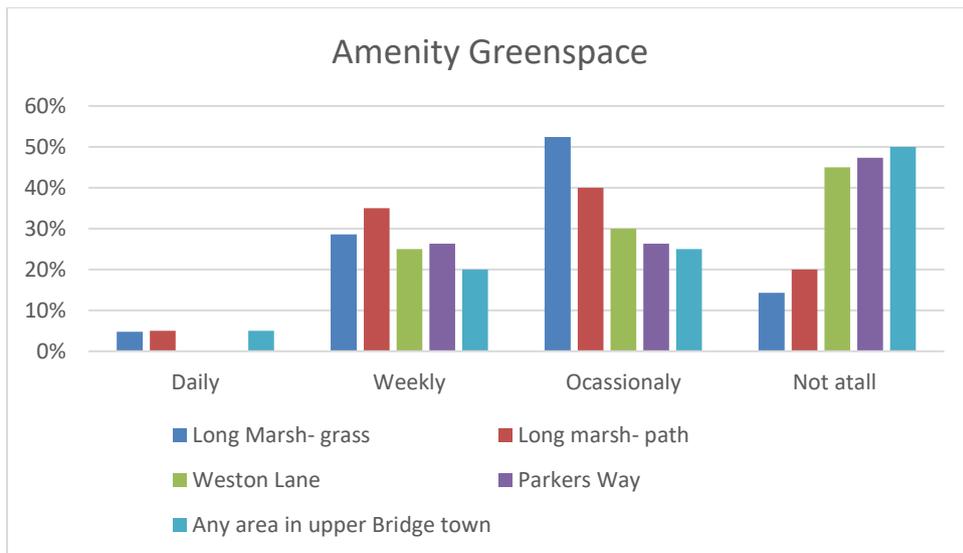
In terms of the profile of respondents it would appear that a significant proportion of the respondents were adults with young children between 0-11 years this compares to the census information for the area and reflects a similar demographic (Figure 1). The teenage and young adult populations were less well represented as were the older residents (over 65). In terms of representation the distribution of responses reflect the 2011 census statistics and can be considered to be satisfactorily representative of the area.

Residents' use of open spaces:

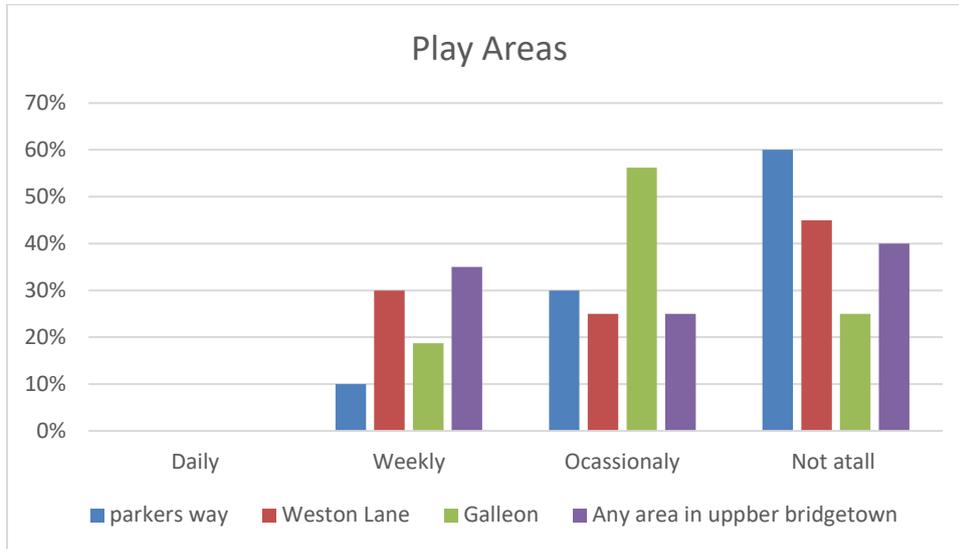
The responses were then converted to percentages to demonstrate the trends of usage across the sites:



Every respondent, if answering the question, reported use of the civic spaces. The cemeteries and allotments were most unused spaces this was supported by suggestions to tidy up and provide benches in the cemeteries and the question regarding where allotments were located suggests a lack of awareness.



This chart shows different patterns of use for the various amenity greenspaces mentioned. Parkers Way seems to have the most variable use, which may relate to the mention of flooding in the suggestions.



The Galleon play area seems to have the most occasional use which maybe related to a lack of range of opportunities to attract regular use.

The feedback regarding the perceptions of quality was less well answered making quantitative analysis more difficult due to small response rates. However some forms included short comments which were analysed below:

	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4
Allotments	Location?	Bridgetown needs own allotments	More and smaller	Important
Greenspace	Need bench PW	Public fire places More bins	3 x something like Leechwell gardens	Parking for access
Cemeteries	Overgrown			
Civic Spaces	Beautify civic hall	Community events		
Natural Spaces	Clear brambles PW	Chicken run stream x 3	Linear greenway	Benches
Play areas	Flooding PW X4 Swings used a football goals	Teenagers area	Improve riverside galleon for younger children x2	PW and CR play areas improved x2

Summary of Comments and Suggestions:

The survey has identified the following:

1. Cemeteries were seen to poorly maintained and therefore unattractive for use.
2. There was an interest in allotments but low levels of awareness of existing provision.
3. Improvements were desired for the greenspaces and the play areas.
4. Flooding is a concern, which reduces use.
5. Community events and improvements for civic spaces was required.

8 Housing needs survey

4.1 A Housing Needs Survey (HNS) was undertaken in summer 2015. Questionnaires were delivered to every household in the town with a total of over 620 responses received representing a response rate of around 16%.

- The second priority was improvements to foot-paths and cycle-paths **61.52%** (331 people.) This is an issue to be considered by both the transport and public open spaces task groups

9 Business Survey links

- **9:3:** The natural 'setting' of Totnes is an advantage to businesses (i.e. making it an attractive place to visit.) This is an issue for both the Culture and Heritage and the Public Open Spaces Task Groups.

10 Culture & Heritage links

Using open spaces for cultural public events, including town festivals, fetes, markets and public art was the top priority for workshop one participants in terms of culture and heritage. See Culture and Heritage paper 2:2

11 Environmental links

There was a clear desire amongst Workshop 1 participants to protect, enhance and create green space and wild spaces for wild-life. **See Environment paper 3:2**

The need for communal outdoor spaces for community owned and led facilities waste and energy was also a key finding. **See Environment paper 3:3**

11 Summary of Key Findings Emerging from Public Consultation Data

Emerging priorities:

- **Improvement/upgrade/new cycle paths and footpaths** (links to transport/environment)

- **The upgrade and improvement of facilities** at existing Sports Clubs and at the Pavilions Sports Centre.
- Build a new **all-weather pitch**
- **The upgrade and improvement** of the skate park
- **More/improved age appropriate public open spaces**, both for children and young people (including clean/litter free, shelters, seating, picnic tables and play-equipment for different age groups) Vire Island is one example of a place that would benefit from this.
- **Make better use of River** – major facility for community and important asset for young people.
- Ensure there is a better spread of high quality **public open spaces across the town** (i.e. Bridgetown/Follaton)
- **There is a need for more green/open spaces that accommodate ‘community events’** acting like ‘village greens’ where festivals, celebrations, family activities could take place.
- There is a need for communal public open space for **community facilities for waste and energy** (*links to environment*)
- Green spaces for wildlife need to be protected/enhanced/established (*links to environment*)
- **Protect/enhance the natural setting of the town** (*links to culture and heritage*)

Next steps and discussion points



February 2016

1. Next steps and discussion points