



PLAY.

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An overview of the
results of the Vale of
Glamorgan online Play
Survey 2018



Survey completed by children and young people



The document is available in Welsh.
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg.

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1 Background

By identifying their aim of ‘creating a play friendly Wales’, the Welsh Government has recognised the importance of play for children and young people. To assist them in achieving this aim they have asked local authorities, their partners and other stakeholders to also work towards this aim.

To facilitate this, the Welsh Government have included the Play Sufficiency Duty within the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010. This requires local authorities to assess and secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their area. This comes as part of the Welsh Government’s anti-poverty agenda which recognises that children can have a poverty of experience, opportunity and aspiration, and that this kind of poverty can affect children from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds across Wales.

To comply with their new duties each local authority in Wales submitted their first Play Sufficiency Assessment and Play Action Plan to Welsh Government Ministers in March 2013, with a subsequent Assessment and Action plan submitted in 2016. In March 2019, local authorities will be required to complete and submit their third Play Sufficiency Assessment and Play Action Plan for the following year.

It is essential that children have the opportunity to input into the play sufficiency assessment process and that their views are used to help shape future actions. Therefore consultation opportunities have been taking place. One such consultation method has been the opportunity for children to complete the ‘Vale’s Big Play Survey 2018’. These have been completed in paper format at various events, as well as through an online consultation survey. This report relates to the results found from the online consultation survey.



Methodology

The 'Vale's Big Play Survey' was created to enable children to identify where they like to play, how they like to play, what they think of the play opportunities available, and whether there were any barriers to them playing as they would like.

In relation to this report, the survey was undertaken as an online survey which was promoted through a variety of avenues including through the Vale of Glamorgan Council social media outlets, the internal Staffnet, through the Council's consultation e-mail distribution list and through internal and external partners including the Cardiff & Vale Public Health team, the Youth Service and schools. It was acknowledged that due to capacity issues and the fact that they were already involved in a number of other surveys, the schools would not necessarily be able to facilitate the completion of the survey within school time, so they were asked if they could distribute the survey links to parents.

The questions used in the survey were those recommended by Play Wales. These questions were also used by many other local authorities so will enable a Wales wide analysis to take place.

In the introduction to the survey the respondents were told: *"By filling in the survey below you will help us to build a picture of what it's like for children playing in the Vale of Glamorgan. We will then use the information to find ways of protecting and improving the time and space children have for playing or hanging out"*. It was acknowledged that an online survey does have limitations, especially in that some of the younger children would need support to complete it. Where a parent, guardian or other adult assisted with the completion, it was stressed that the responses sought were those of the child and not of the adult.

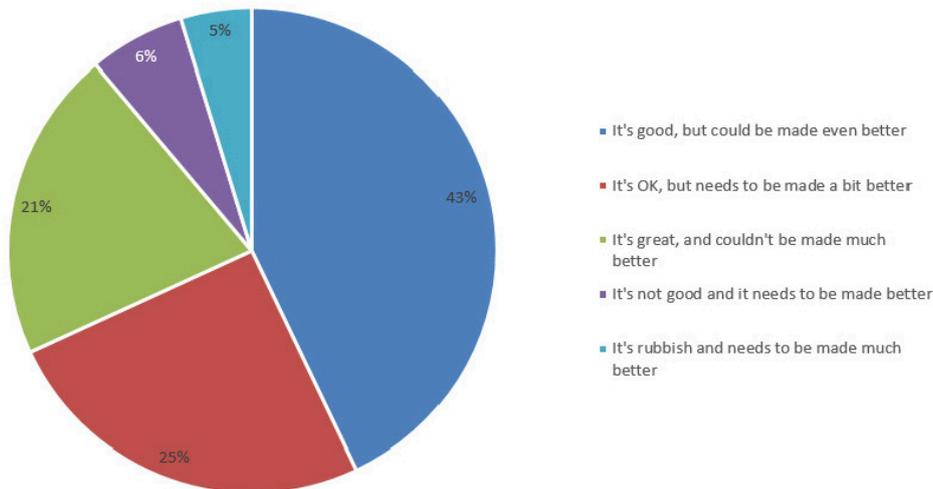
A total of 302 people completed the online survey.

3 Results

3.1. Satisfaction with Play Opportunities Available

There was positive feedback in relation to satisfaction with the play opportunities available. 64% of children and young people felt the opportunities to play or hang out in the Vale of Glamorgan were either 'great, and couldn't be much better' (21%), or 'good, but could be made better' (43%). 25% felt they were 'OK, but needs to be made better'. However 11% felt the opportunities were 'not good, and needs to be made better' (6%) or were 'rubbish and needs to be made much better' (5%).

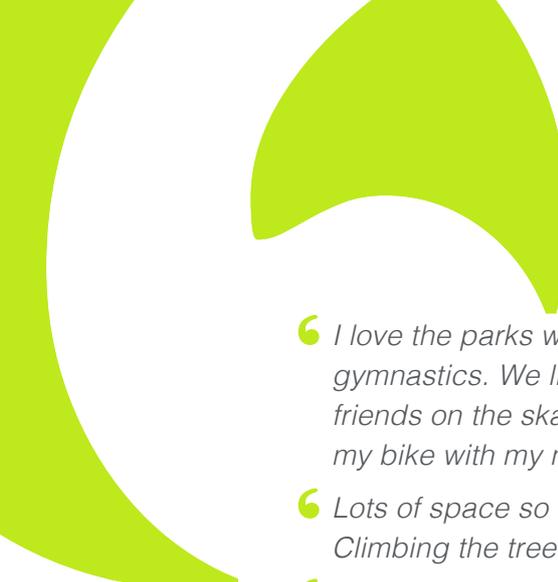
Overall, how good are your opportunities for playing and hanging out?



3.2. What is Good about Playing or Hanging Out in the Vale?

When asked what was good about playing or hanging out in the Vale of Glamorgan, 48% of the answers related to the fantastic outdoor environment that the Vale have, including the availability of lots of greenery/local parks (28%), open spaces (15%), coastline (4%) and the fresh air available (1%). Below are some of the comments made relating to the outdoor environment:

- 🍷 *We have lots of parks and fields. This makes me feel safe and they are amazing!*
- 🍷 *Fresh air loads of space.*
- 🍷 *Good mix of lake, grass, woodlands & cliff top.*
- 🍷 *The field is good because we can play football.*

- 
- 6 *I love the parks with climbing frames as I like to hang upside down and do gymnastics. We like bug hunting too in Victoria Park. I love playing with my friends on the skate ramps at Pencoedre Park. I can play in the street on my bike with my neighbour.*
 - 6 *Lots of space so I can run. The swings are fun. Rope swings on the river. Climbing the tree.*
 - 6 *Some of the playgrounds are new around Penarth - Cliff Top is very good. There's also plenty of green space around it. Places like Cosmeston are brilliant. Alexander Park is really good for playing, but the little playground is a bit limited.*
 - 6 *I like fields and the woods.*

The survey results highlighted the importance of outdoor space for children, young people and families to play and also highlighted the range of outdoor places where children play (see 'Where Children Play' section). Further analysis of the results indicated that this satisfaction was obviously dependent on where children live and their ability to access outdoor spaces for play.

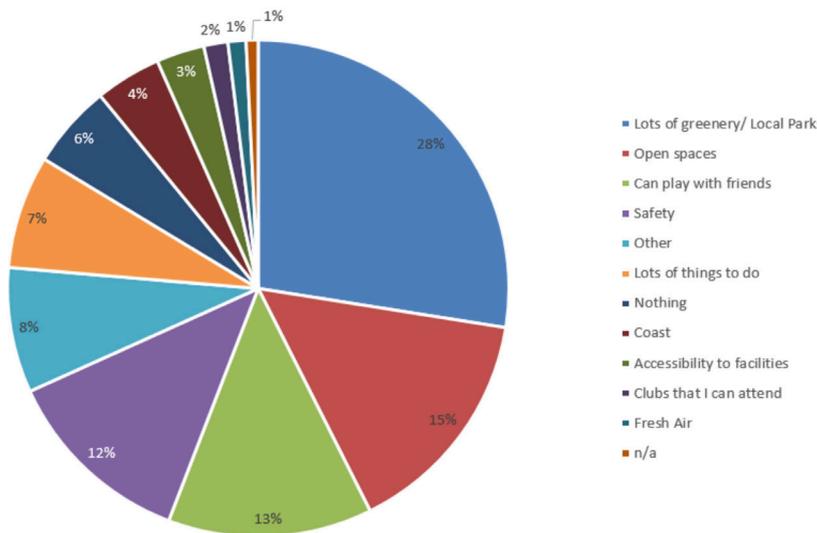
13% of respondents highlighted the opportunity to play with their friends as a positive thing about playing in the Vale and something they found important, as highlighted by the comments below. Negative comments were received from those who did not have their friends living nearby or whose friends were not allowed to play out with them.

- 6 *Everything, lots of things to do and loads of people to play with.*
- 6 *There are lots of different places to hang out with friends.*
- 6 *I can be with my friends and enjoy playing games with them.*
- 6 *Me and my friend go to the skate park every Saturday we get there by bike or we walk. The skate park is an open area were we go and talk or just mess around.*
- 6 *Good open spaces with opportunities to enjoy time with friends and areas to do near enough what we want.*
- 6 *Not many of my friends live in the same area and there aren't many youth clubs nearby apart from cadets.*

'Feeling safe' when playing was another factor that children and young people liked about playing and hanging out in the Vale. This will be reviewed later in this report in the section 'Feeling Safe when Playing'.



What's good about your area for playing and hanging out?

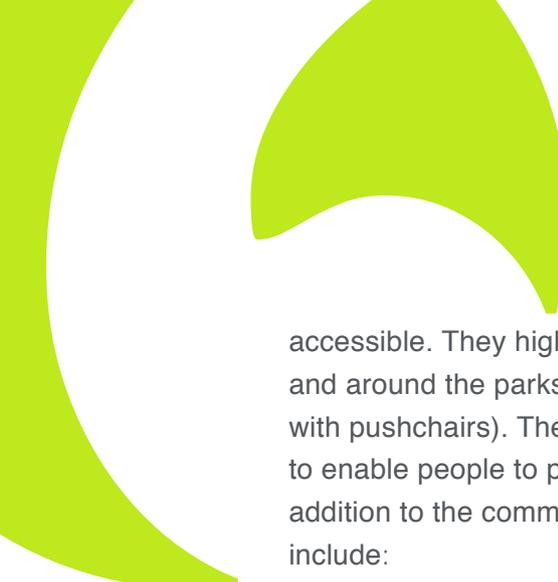


3.3. What is Not Good about Playing or Hanging Out in the Vale?

Positive comments were received about the availability of local parks as highlighted above. However, when asked what was not good about their area for playing or hanging out, the main response was the quality of the play and park facilities available. The responses given in relation to parks did differ based on the area where the child lived e.g. whether it was in an area where there was a recently refurbished park and the type of equipment available. Outdated and old equipment was highlighted as an issue, as well as the range of play opportunities / equipment available.

A high number of young people aged 12+ completed this survey and they identified that there is limited equipment for older children and young people in parks, with the equipment aimed at younger children. They would like to see parks with more opportunities for them to play / hang out as they grow older with equipment such as zip wires, adventure play areas and larger climbing structures. Feedback from a parent also highlighted this issue, with the parent stating she has to visit different parks to cater for the different age ranges in her family as one park does not suit all of their needs. The young people did also highlight that the parks close early so there are limited places for them to go in the evening to play and hang out where they feel safe.

A respondent to the survey whose child has a disability asked that more thought is given when designing play areas to ensure the needs of disabled children are taken into account and that the play area and the equipment is



accessible. They highlighted the importance of maintaining the pathways to and around the parks to make it accessible for wheelchairs (and also those with pushchairs). There were also suggestions that different surfaces are used to enable people to play and access the facilities regardless of the weather. In addition to the comments highlighted above, other feedback relating to parks include:

- 6 *Need more open playing space. Some parks are a bit broken. Some parks are too grown up or too babyish. Want somewhere safe to ride my bike. Nowhere to play with water.*
- 6 *I have the beach and Maslin Park close by. I also have lots of friends and we go over each other's houses. Adventure Island and Coconuts if weather's bad. Romilly Park and Porthkerry are my favourite places because I can take my dog to play too.*
- 6 *I want a park with water and sand like outside.*
- 6 *There's loads for young children parks, swings, play centres but there's not anything for teenagers being 14. I don't want to play on a slide or go to Jungle Jacks, I would like high rope courses or an older kids park.*
- 6 *We go to a little park between the houses to play football, that is better than playing football in our garden.*
- 6 *The play area is old and bad made for 1-5yr olds nothing for older kids. There's no tennis court or any basketball court nothing to meet friends we have to go in car to go somewhere good which is sad.*
- 6 *We don't have any play things to climb on.*
- 6 *I just go on the street there is no trees to climb or park to get to safe without mums and dads. The good parks we have to go in the car to and I don't get to play with my friends because they don't go there.*
- 6 *Not many areas for older children, skate park and parks are all basic. No area to play football in play areas. Also a lack of play schemes/activities to do in Rhoose during school holidays.*
- 6 *There's a lot of litter on the floor and glass.*
- 6 *There's dog poo.*
- 6 *Parks are rubbish in Llantwit Major. Equipment needs updating - areas need to allow for different age groups (I have to visit two play areas as nowhere suitable for my 4 year old and 8 year old together. Football pitch in one park - rugby another, both full of dog poo. Nowhere to safely ride bikes off road. Travel to Barry for their parks - why have they had all investments in their open areas?!?!? (Comment made by a parent).*

The comment made above by the parent, and other comments made on social media recently, appears to highlight a lack of understanding as to how the refurbishment of parks are being funded in the Vale of Glamorgan. A large amount of funding has been secured via S106 funding to upgrade parks, which has been beneficial in the areas where this funding has been available. However, this has caused some negative comments from residents in other areas of the Vale where S106 funding has not been available to upgrade park and play facilities.

A number of comments have been made about safety or perceived lack of safety preventing children from playing out. These will be looked at further in this document in the section 'Feeling Safe when Playing'. Other areas that have been highlighted as not good about playing in the Vale includes:

- Busy roads/fast traffic – traffic on streets where they would like to play; cars driving too fast in the streets where they are playing; the need for more safe places to cross to get to where they want to play; in areas where there is not much traffic, when there are cars they travel fast.
- The lack of things to do indoors when it is raining, and the cost of indoor activities.
- Young people would like more places to hang out, places where it is acknowledged that they can hang out and not be judged by others when they are hanging out.
- Litter.
- Dog poo.
- Lack of opportunities close to where children live - would like access to alleyways, grassy spaces etc to play.

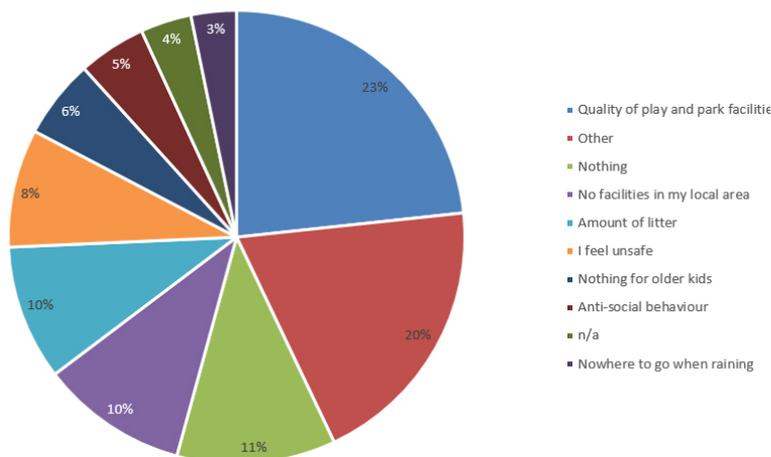
The following are examples of comments that reflect the areas identified above:

- 6 *Nowhere to go if it rains no shelter.*
- 6 *Lots of roads so it's dangerous.*
- 6 *Too many bushes.*
- 6 *Everything is a long walk for me. No park, football pitch or playground is near my house. I can't play football on the grass area near my house as it is full of dog poo.*

- 6 There are not many areas or exciting things for teenagers to do apart from chat on benches. If you're not allowed to go far or have to travel there is nowhere to go.
- 6 Perhaps, the amount of litter, there are a small amount of elderly people who don't like children because we are 'too loud' or 'don't appreciate our surroundings' or simply because 'we don't wear what they'd like us to wear' even though in my group of friends, we try our best to be respectful to everyone around us and keep the volume down.
- 6 Quite busy roads, not many safe crossings.

Some of the comments above, particularly around the lack of open spaces and facilities contradict the comments made in the section 'what is good about playing / hanging out in the Vale'. When analysing the results further it is apparent that the area in which a child lives has a major impact on whether they have access to a positive play experience due to the availability of things such as open spaces, local parks and the proximity of their friends to them.

What's not good about your area for playing and hanging out?

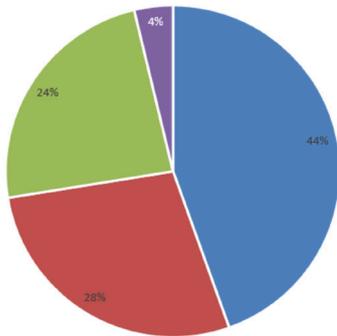


3.4. The Amount of Time for Play

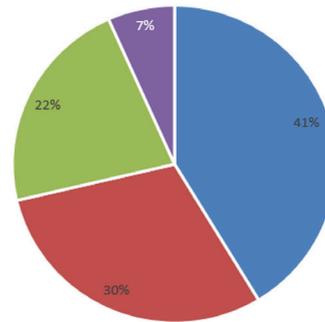
The results of the survey were quite positive in relation to the amount of time children in the Vale have for playing. 68% of the respondents felt that they had 'loads' or 'just about enough' time to play or hang out with friends, however 28% felt they would like a 'bit more' time. 4% felt they needed 'a lot more' time to play or hang out with friends.

32% of young people of secondary school age felt they would like a 'bit more' or 'a lot more' time to play or hang out, whilst 30% of primary pupils who responded felt the same.

Do you have enough time for playing or hanging out with friends?



How often to you go out to play or hang out with friends?



■ Yes, it's just about enough ■ No, I would like to have a bit more ■ Yes, I have loads ■ No, I need a lot more ■ A few days each week ■ Most days ■ Hardly ever ■ I don't play or hang out with friends outside

30% of respondents went out to play or hang out with friends most days of the week, with the majority (41%) being able to play out a few days each week. Unfortunately 22% indicated that they hardly ever played outside with friends, whilst 7% said they did not play outside at all with friends.

3.5. Where Children Play and How Good are the Places where they Play

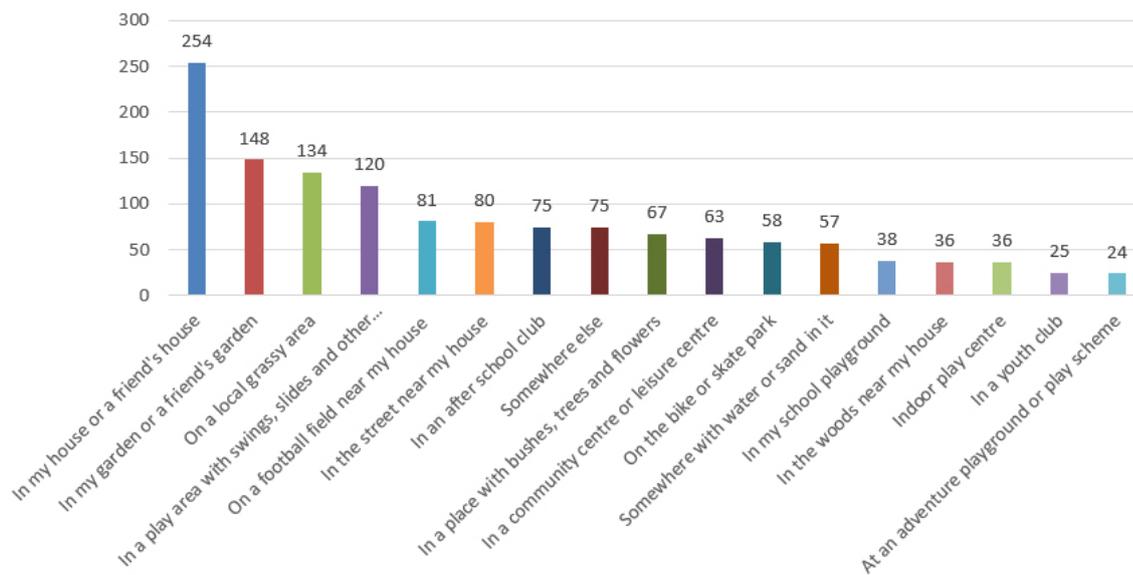
The children and young people were asked where they played or hung out when they were not in school. 31 different places were identified by the respondents and included outdoor spaces such as grassy hills, parks, local town centre, local streets, brick yard, rugby fields, parks, beaches, back alleys, sports courts and tree houses. Indoor spaces included their own house, a family members' house, cinema, ice rink, local sports club venues, local groups such as theatre groups and uniformed group such as scouts and guides organisations.

They were given the opportunity to identify all of the places they played and were not just limited to their main place of play. 84% of the respondents highlighted their house or their friends' house as a place where they play. 49% of them highlighted their garden or their friends' garden as the next most used setting. Only 8% indicated that they attended a youth club or adventure playground / playscheme setting. This result correlates to the low

level of playscheme and youth club provision currently available in the Vale of Glamorgan.

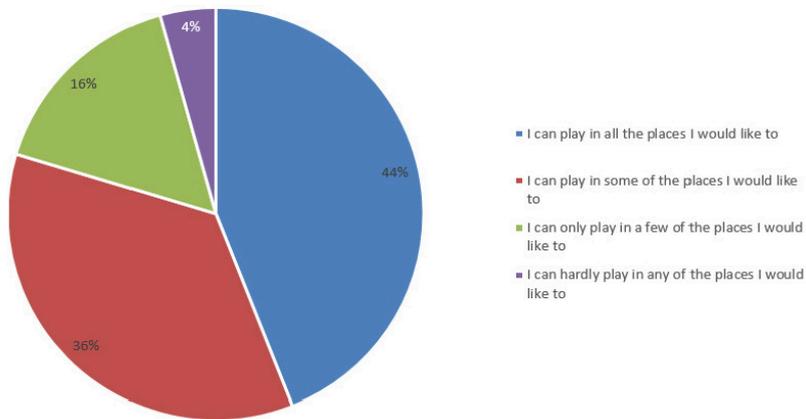
11 children indicated they did not play outdoors. Of these, only 3 indicated that they are able to play in all of the places they would like to, implying that the other 8 would like to play outdoors if they had the opportunity. 1 of these respondents indicated they were unable to play outdoors as the play areas and leisure facilities were not designed to meet the needs of their disability and they find it difficult to walk on the walk ways to areas. Other reasons for not playing outdoors included play areas being unsuitable for older age groups and more targeted at toddlers, nothing to do in their village and too many cars driving too fast for them to feel safe outdoors.

When you're not in school, what types of places do you play or hang out?



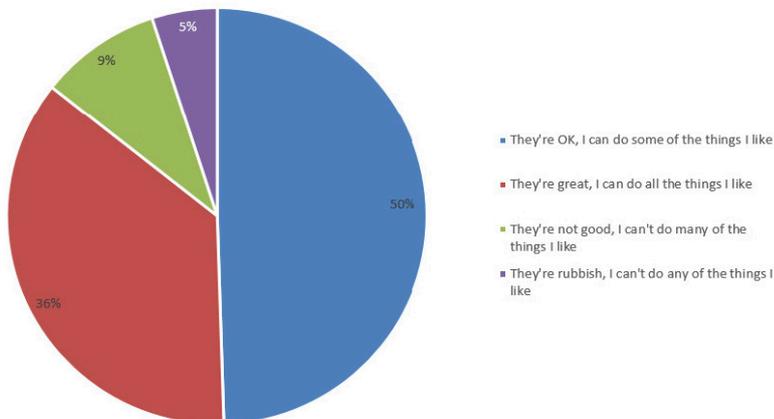
44% of the respondents indicated that they were able to play in all of the places they would like to, whilst 36% said they could in some of the places they would like to play. 16% highlighted that they were only able to play in a few places they would like whilst 4% indicated they hardly play in any of the places they would like to.

Can you play in all of the places you would like to?



86% of children have rated the places where they play as ‘OK - I can do some of the things I like (50%)’ or ‘great - I can do all the things I like (36%)’. 9% of children think the places are not good, stating they are not able to do many of the things they would like, whilst 5% think they are rubbish and they cannot do any of the things they would like.

How good are the places you play in?

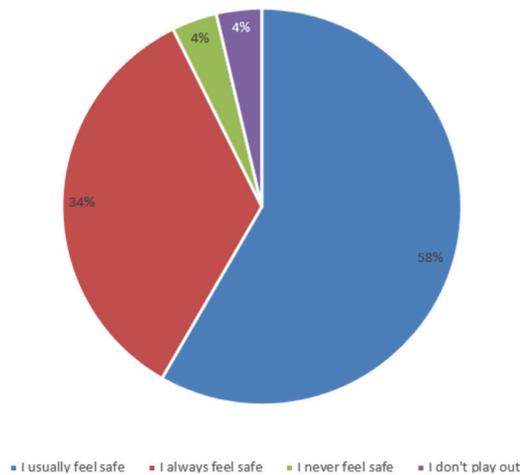


3.6. Feeling Safe When Playing and Travelling to Places to Play

There is often a perceived safety issue with children playing outside, especially when playing out without an adult present. Many adults are worried about ‘stranger danger’ and the busy roads and traffic faced when travelling to play spaces. This can often impinge on a child’s access to play opportunities. However the survey highlighted that 81% of the respondents were allowed

to play out on their own, whilst 19% said they could not. The survey also highlighted that only 4% of children never feel safe when playing or hanging out. 58% indicated that they usually feel safe, whilst 34% stated that they always feel safe.

How safe do you feel when playing or hanging out?



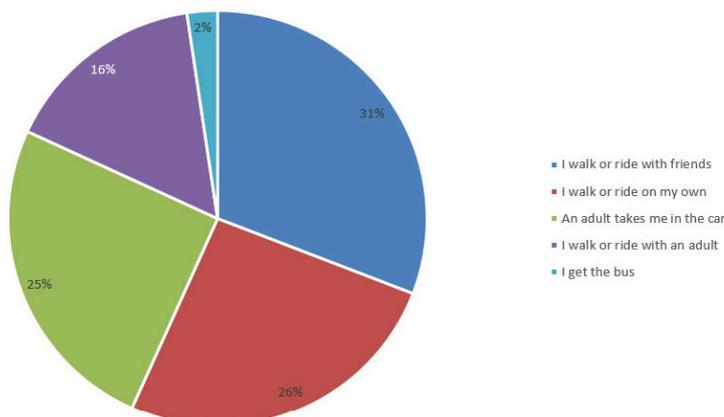
Of those that commented about safety concerns, these included areas such as busy traffic, unknown adults being in the areas they want to play and inappropriate behaviour by others in areas where children want to play such as drinking, smoking, taking drugs and swearing (by both adults and children/young people). Comments received include:

- 6 *Lots of older teenagers in gangs in park, drinking smoking and swearing so my mum makes me go in coz I have been hurt by them twice.*
- 6 *Litter, foul language, older kids smoking weed and the smell of it around Barry in general.*
- 6 *Some places aren't very well lit when it gets dark.*
- 6 *Parents feel that its unsafe for kids to wonder out alone.*
- 6 *The children smoke and I think they do drugs or drink and swear. It makes me feel unsafe and I can't enjoy it. I don't go out on my own with friends because of them. If I go out it is usually with my parents. There is often broken glass, litter and cigarette butts in the skate park. Other than the skate park and football park there isn't a lot for children of my age to do. There is a Youth Club, but I would never go to that because I don't feel comfortable around children of my age who swear and smoke. I would like to feel safer when I am out. I think that I would like the idea of more sports in the area, and more activities for children my age.*
- 6 *There is a lot of rubbish and you can get some scary people around.*

- 6 *Me and my little brother are the only ones allowed to play outside on our own. All my friends need an adult to go with them, there is no-one playing outside on the streets. There is no football pitch or nice playground where we can just go to. The playground (Golden Gate Park, Wordsworth Avenue) at the park where we go to play football is rubbish, very old and worn down. The park is mostly used by people walking their dogs (and not cleaning up afterwards). We sometimes go to Victoria Park after school but most children are only allowed to play there for half an hour and then they have to go home with their parents, so there is not much fun for us to stay there.*
- 6 *I feel like cars and other vehicles driving around the area should be aware that there are often young children playing in the roads (as not many cars pass through), a lot of drivers speed through the area without looking for obstructions.*
- 6 *Quite busy roads, not many safe crossings.*
- 6 *The park is near a pub and sometimes there's people drinking in the park, so we leave. Sometimes there are some strange people around so if we feel unsafe we run home.*

When considering how they usually travel to where they play, 57% walk or ride either on their own or with their friends without an adult. 41% travel with an adult either in the car (25%), or walk, ride or scoot (16%) whilst 2% go on a bus. When comparing the above against how children travel to school, a similar number walk or ride with friends (30%) and travel in a car with adults (25%). However less children walk or ride on their own to school when compared to their play space (21%), whilst more children travel to school on a bus (13%) than walk, ride or scoot with their parents (16%). Many of the young people who responded are able to travel on their own, however they would like to see cheaper / free transport and better public transport to assist this. They have also suggested that timetables at all bus stops would be useful so they can plan when they can travel to and from their play / hang out space.

How do you usually get to places where you play?

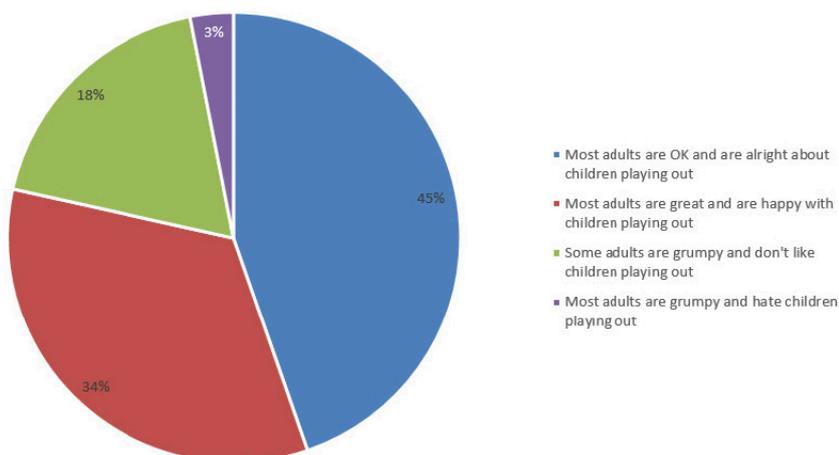


3.7. Permission to Play & Perceptions of Children and Young People Playing

Many of the children and young people indicated that they were allowed to play/hang out, and they were encouraged to do so by their parents. When they did, 34% indicated that 'most adults are great and are happy with children playing out', and 45% said 'most adults were OK and are alright with children playing out'. However some of the respondents, especially those in the older age bracket, experience some negative feedback when they are playing or hanging out with their friends. 18% indicated that 'some adults are grumpy and don't like children playing out' whilst 3% said that 'most adults are grumpy and hate children playing out'. Below are some comments provided by the respondents in relation to this experience:

- 6 *There are a small amount of elderly people who don't like children because we are 'too loud' or 'don't appreciate our surroundings' or simply because 'we don't wear what they'd like us to wear' even though in my group of friends, we try our best to be respectful to everyone around us and keep the volume down.*
- 6 *The green by Cosmeston Drive now has a sign up saying 'no football, skateboarding and cycling in this area' and me and my friends used to play out there a lot.*
- 6 *Adults not happy.*
- 6 *Sometimes, I feel judged by adults when going out in a large group of friends, as I think they feel uncomfortable around a lot of us, perhaps intimidated.*
- 6 *Many areas are very close to houses nearby which means noise complaints are a big issue.*
- 6 *Some people are not happy with us hanging out on the streets.*

What are grown ups like when you're playing or hanging out?



3.8. Demographics of Respondents

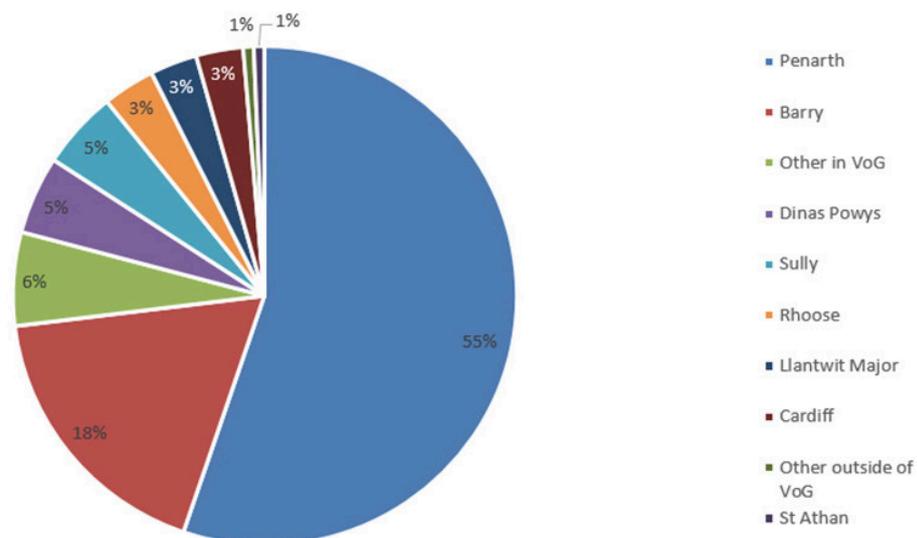
298 of the respondents were aged 3 - 18 years, whilst 4 were aged 19+. 216 were aged 12+, with only 84 being aged 11 and under. 46% of the respondents were in primary school whilst 54% of the respondents were in secondary school. The definition of 'play' is obviously different for each individual. These differences are even more evident between different age groups so it is important to consider the ages of those who completed the survey when analysing the results.

The respondents were asked which language they preferred to speak. 94% indicated they preferred to speak English, 3% Welsh and 3% identified other languages including Cantonese (1 person), Xhosa (1), Ugandan (1), French (2), Maori (1), Mongolian (1) and the Picture Exchange Communication System (1). 1 person identified that they were bilingual so liked to speak in both languages.

6.1% of the respondents indicated that they had a disability.

One factor that will need to be taken into account when considering the results is the area in which the respondents live. The play opportunities available to children can be impacted upon by a number of factors including the area in which they live, whether that is a rural area or within a town, their proximity to parks, open spaces, beaches, woodlands etc. The majority of the respondents lived in Penarth (55%) so the responses given could reflect the play opportunities available in that area and therefore may impact upon the results.

What is your postcode at home? (Or in which area do you live?)



4 Summary

The survey has provided useful feedback from the children and young people regarding their experience of and access to play opportunities in the Vale of Glamorgan. The survey has highlighted that:

- **64% would rate their opportunities for playing as great or good.**
- **71% go out to play or hang out at least a few times a week, but 7% never play outside.**
- **32% would like more time to play or hang out with friends.**
- **21.5% think that some or most adults are grumpy and do not like children playing out.**
- **93% always or usually feel safe when playing or hanging out**
- **14% feel that the places they play in are not good and they cannot do all they would like to.**
- **Children and young people play in more than 30 different types of places in the Vale, which is dependent on what is local to them, where they can safely travel and where they feel safe to play.**
- **The fantastic natural environment in the Vale is a positive contributor to children and families accessing local play opportunities.**
- **Whilst many children feel they have access to good play opportunities, this is very much dependent on where they live, whether they are allowed to play in the places they want to and what type of play they like.**
- **Things that are not good about playing in the Vale include unsuitable/worn fixed play equipment, traffic, accessing local play opportunities and spaces in identified areas, having places to play when it is raining, feeling safe playing out in the evenings and feedback that some adults do not want children to play in the places they do.**

Moving forward, the information gleaned from the survey will be used to inform future planning as part of the Play Sufficiency Assessment process. However, it is recognised that due to the sample size, further consultation is required. It

is also recognised that play experiences can vary greatly based on a number of factors including where a child lives and the opportunities available locally to them. Therefore where possible, further localised consultation will take place to enable more localised actions to be considered where appropriate.

The results and data from the survey will be shared with internal Council departments who may directly or indirectly have an impact on play including the Healthy Living team, Parks & Open Spaces team, Planning, Transport section and the Youth Service and any other relevant department. The results will also be shared more widely to external organisations who may also directly or indirectly currently impact on play or who may be able to in the future. These include Town and Community Councils, local Public Health Team and voluntary organisations.



Survey Report 2019

PLAY

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your
say



Vale of Glamorgan Council
Healthy Living Visible Services

