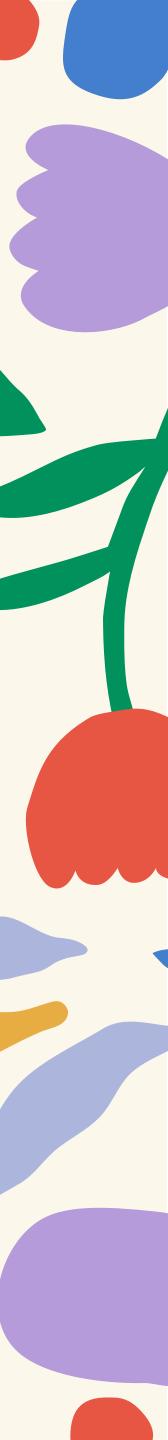


# IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025

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# INTRODUCTION

Gores Marsh park, BS3, is a much-loved, medium-sized park with a fenced play area, many established trees as well as open green spaces divided by paths. The previous Friends Group thoughtfully designed the play area using natural wooden structures and we have some wonderful bespoke carved benches and table. We also have a brilliant mosaic, that children from local schools designed and created. These natural and artistic features give GMP a unique character - one that must be continued and preserved!

The new Friends Group was formed at the beginning of last year and has a vision to improve the park for people and wildlife. In 2024 we hosted a summer picnic, a number of litter-picking sessions and have distributed a community survey which has helped us understand what is important to those using this special green space. We have used Avon Wildlife Trust's brilliant ecology service to gain a better understanding of what we can do to improve biodiversity.

Despite BS3 being home to many great parks including the much larger Greville Smyth, GMP's location means it has a wide-reaching visitor catchment. It is used regularly by families, dog walkers as well as staff from surrounding businesses during their lunch breaks. It's the nearest park to the residents of Ashton Vale and once the development of Ashton Gate Stadium has taken place, the park will inevitably be visited by more people, often tourists or visitors who will form an impression of the city by walking through or visiting our park. It might be small, but this park has the potential to leave a huge impact on the lives of the wildlife and people that spend time in it.









COMMUNITY EVENTS



# **IMPROVEMENTS SUMMARY LIST**

The group have settled on the list of park improvements below, that, once approved we will be able to fundraise for.

1) Complete missing hedge in the NW corner 2) Plant a few more trees in the NW corner 3) Increase the size of the small wildflower meadow 4) Sow wildflower into the new wood area 5) Plant climbing honeysuckle along the play park fence 6) Create a large, feature bug hotel 7) Install bat and bird boxes 8) Create a small fenced pond area 9) Install a climbing frame 10) Install mini trampolines 11) Install a large wooden slug 12) Wooden 'Photo Points' for a citizen science project

# **FUNDRAISING AVENUES**

- CIL
- Approach imperial brands opposite the park (historically, they have donated £40,000)
- Approach AG stadium
- Other relevant grants
- Community events



# 

# LOCATIONS

HEDGE

Fix hedge in NW corner

# TREES

Create a second area of trees towards the north-western corner of the park.

# WILDFLOWERS

Extend the existing small wildflower area.

Sow wildflower beneath the young woodland.

Plant climbing honeysuckle along the fences around the play park perimeter

# HOMES

Install bat and bird boxes Create a large feature community-built Bug Hotel (location tbc)

# WILDLIFE POND

A small, wild fenced pond area

# PLAY EQUIPMENT

A climbing frame, mini trampolines, large wooden slug

# CITIZEN SCIENCE

Wooden 'photo points' could be 'BRC TreeLogs' or similar

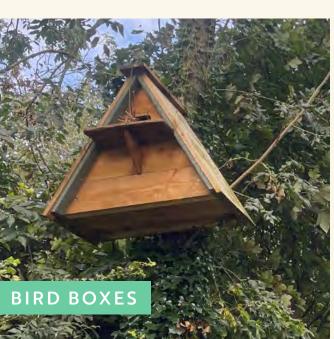
























# MORE DETAIL

#### HEDGE

There is a section of hedge on the NW side of the park along Winterstoke Road that is missing and would help to conceal traffic and provide further habitat.

#### TREES

We'd like to create a second area of trees towards the northwestern corner of the park. This will help to block out the sounds and views of traffic of Winterstoke Road and make good use of a fairly unused space. These will be the same trees that are doing well in the young woodland on the other side of the park.

#### WILDFLOWER

We'd like to increase the small wildflower meadow by sowing seed for acidic soil. We will bring in a log to mark the area so that it isn't mown by mistake and we can also gradually increase the area year on year. We could create some handmade fun and educational signs.

The fences around the play park perimeter will be improved for wildlife by planting climbing honeysuckle and flowering jasmine. These will provide food and shelter for diurnal and nocturnal animals alike.

#### HOMES

We know we have 5 species of bat and many birds. We will provide the right home for the species we have.

We would love to invite the community to create a huge bug hotel. This will provide excellent habitat for many insects, especially solitary bees and wood-boring beetles and centipedes.

# CITIZEN SCIENCE

Installing 2 wooden 'photo points', much like the 'BRC TreeLogs' would be great way to both engage the community in their park and nature, but would also provide valuable data about how the park is changing over time.







# WILDLIFE POND

According to the Wildlife Trusts:

# "A wetland feature, no matter how big or small, is one of the best things you can do for wildlife in your community greenspace"

We are proposing a small (3m x 2m), shallow (less that 1m) fenced pond be introduced to the park. The pond will have sloping sides which are safer for animals but also provide the right conditions for species that need shallow water for breeding. Careful introduction of native, managable water plants will be considered.

We would appoint a facilitator (BCC, Your Park, etc - need advice on this) but it would be built by the community, offering a great opportunity to get involved with a local project.

Low maintenance wild plants would be chosen and we would hold maintenance days much like we do with litter picks to keep on top of it's care. You can see the proposed location on the map. This spot was identified by the AWT ecologist adviser as it would have shade but also not collect too much leaf-litter from the trees above.

Luckwell school could bring classes to the pond for pond-dipping sessions and help monitor the species found. We believe a pond VS a scrape would be more beneficial as it would provide consistent and reliable habitat for wildlife, especially during hot weather.



# PLAY EQUIPMENT

#### **CLIMBING FRAME**

Wood feels in-keeping with the aesthetic of the park. A climber that a wide range of ages can enjoy in a free, rather than linear fashion so lots of kids can use it at once.

# MINI TRAMPOLINES

Individual ground trampolines next to each other so kids can have fun bouncing together without bashing heads! Newer designs need less maintenance and no longer collect litter or water beneath them.

# LARGE WOODEN SLUG

2.5m x 1m (approx) This will be a great feature item for little kids and adults alike and one that helps build on our park's unique artistic, natural character. We've talked with Ellie Freeman about the future potential for having carved wildlife sculptures dotted across all BS3 parks to form a fun and educational 'trail' connecting our green spaces.









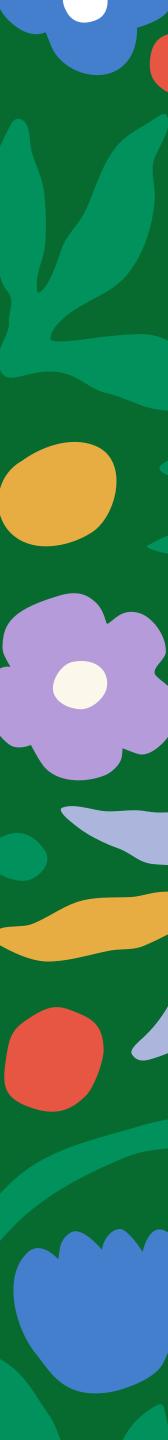
# **COSTS & CONSIDERATIONS**

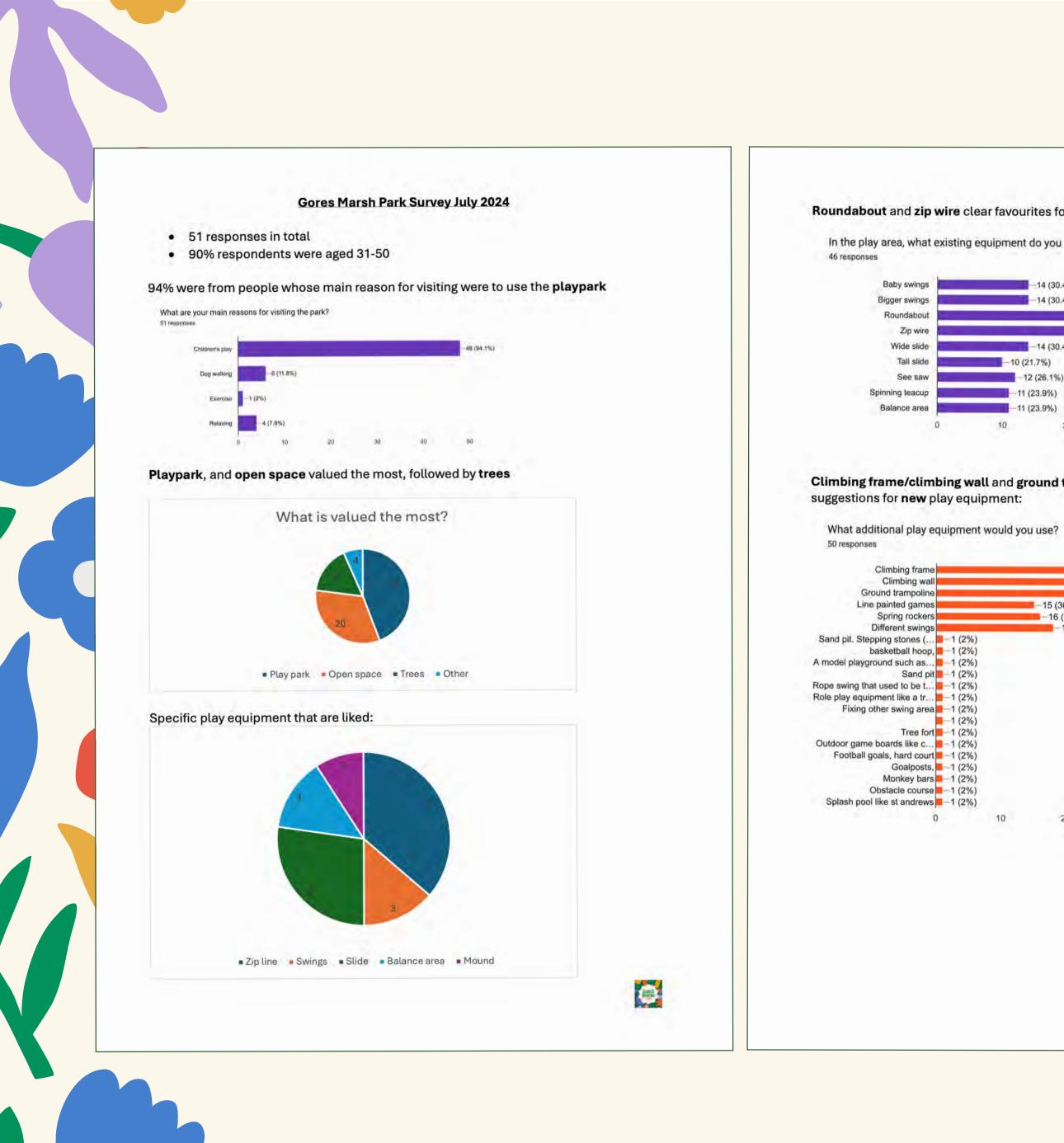
TASK	BENEFIT	CONSIDERATIONS	COST
1) Complete missing hedge in the NW corner	Blocks sounds and views of traffic on Winterstoke rd. Provides habitat for wildlife.	In keeping with the hedge the other side of the park.	ТВС
2) Plant a few more trees in the NW corner	Blocks sounds and views of traffic on Winterstoke rd. Provides habitat for wildlife.	Could look at free tree initiatives to supply. Community planting if possible?	ТВС
3) Increase the small wildflower meadow	Provides vital food sources and habitat for pollinators. Colour and beauty for community to admire	Need to acquire a local log to mark out the north edge. Stick with varieties that are doing well already.	TBC
4) Sow wildflower into the new wood area	Provides vital food sources and habitat for pollinators. Colour and beauty for community to admire	Community planting if possible?	TBC
5) Plant climbing honeysuckle (Play area fence)	Provides vital food sources and habitat for pollinators. Colour, scent and beauty to admire	Community planting if possible?	ТВС
6) Create a large, feature bug hotel	Provides vital habitat for invertebrates which, in turn provides food for birds and mammals Opportunity for community engagement project.	Community built. Could tie-in with a talk about the importance of insects for kids and adults.	ТВС
7) Install bat and bird boxes	Provides safe nesting habitat for bats and birds.	Need advice on the most suitable ones. Perhaps with camera? Share images and videos on SM. BCC to install? North side of trees to avoid overheating.	ТВС
8) Create a small fenced wildlife pond	Provides vital habitat that will encourage new species into the park. Opportunity for community engagement project.	Community built. Would be wild and low maintenance. Run tidy-up sessions with volunteers.	TBC
9) Install a climbing frame	The park is missing a climber that many kids can use at once this. Improving the appeal to a wide range of ages.	How can we make it as accessible as possible?	TBC
10) Install mini trampolines	Something fun for younger kids. Great exercise and as we will have more than one it will be a social activity.	How can we make it as accessible as possible?	ТВС
11) Install a large wooden slug	Fun and unique - enhancing the creative and natural character of the park for all ages.	Could we find the artist who carved the benches and table? Varnish and protection sessions necessary?	TBC
12) Wooden 'Photo Points'	Great way to engage community, adults and kids, with nature and the park and collect valuable data.	Could they be part of the BRC scheme? Could roll out into other parks if successful.	TBC

TOTAL: £TBC



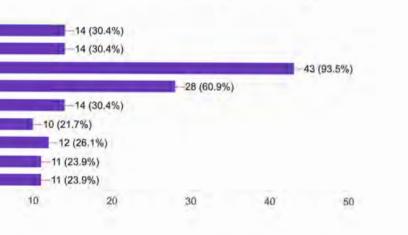
APPENDIX: PARK SURVEY 2024





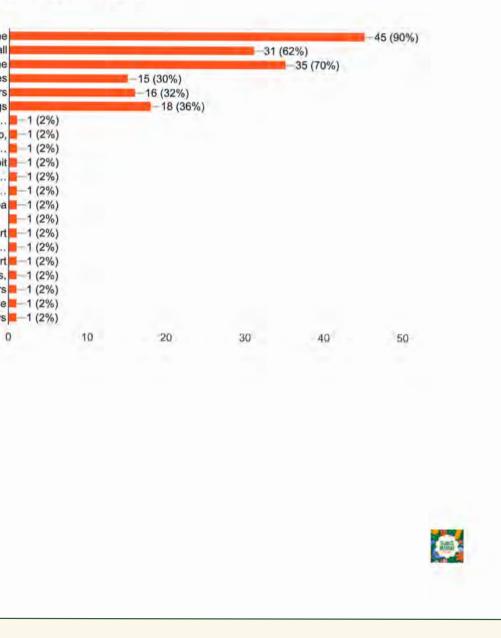
#### Roundabout and zip wire clear favourites for requiring updating:

In the play area, what existing equipment do you think needs updating or improving?



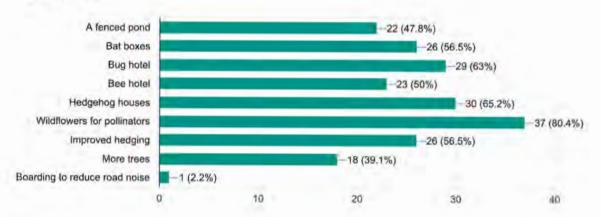
# Climbing frame/climbing wall and ground trampoline were the most popular

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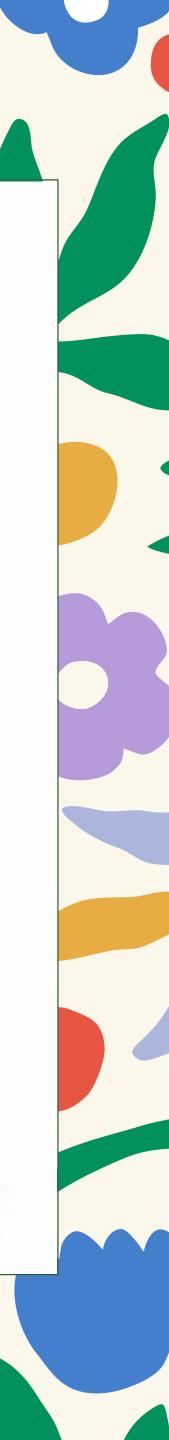
All the wildlife improvement suggestions were popular, with the wildflowers for pollinators having the most votes:

Would you like to improve the park for wildlife by providing: 46 responses

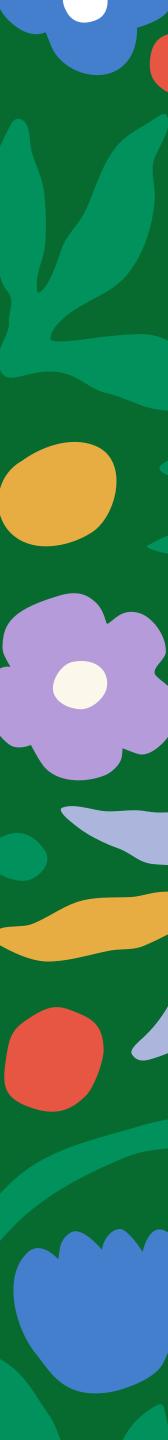


Other suggestions for improving the park:

More dog poo bins More litter bins More frequent grass cutting Better underlay around play equipment Toilets Getting rid of stile gate (hard to see that a child has escaped as it is behind the mound) More seating Better control of litter Play equipment to cover more ages Water fountain Football goals



**APPENDIX:** WILDLIFE REPORT 2024



# WILDLIFE REPORT 2024

# FLORA

We have numerous Lime Trees as well as Oak, Rowan, Plane, Maples, a Willow, Chestnut and a young Ginkgo tree.

Lots of Creeping Thistle, Horseweed, Rosebay Willowherb, and Nettles around the perimeter of the kids play area. Ox-eyed Daisies, Buttercup and Red Clover on the small wildflower meadow.

# INSECTS

We see many butterflies, beetles, ladybirds, dragonflies and bees generally. We have plans to record these more formally next year (see following page).

We have a good understanding of the moths that visit GMP as one of the group members has been recording them in their garden, which backs on to the park. Despite the numerous wet nights, there have been 153 different moth species recorded at BS3 2LN between the moths of April and Sept 2024 and a total of around 600 individual moths.

# MAMMALS

Squirrels, rats, hedgehogs and foxes have all been spotted in the park or the gardens that directly connect to the park. We have carried out a bat survey and five bat species were recorded which is one more than most in the BS3 area. The species are: Serotine, Leisler's Bat, Noctule, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle.

# BIRDS

Magpie, Dunnocks, Sparrows, Blue Tits, Goldfinches, Long-









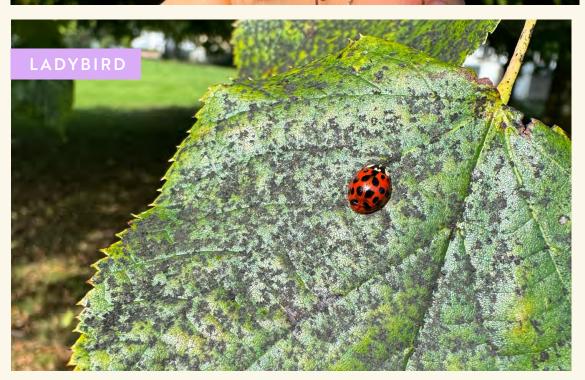


















tailed tits, Jackdaws, Pigeons and Buzzards have all been spotted in the park or the gardens that directly connect to the park.

#### MONITORING

To determine whether our improvement plans are improving the biodiversity, we need to get a more detailed understanding of the wildlife is living in the park.

1. We plan to call for members of the community to volunteer as a 'Species Lead', committing to a fortnightly(ish) walk around the park, recording the relevant species they find. Recording will be via photographs and we will have a group on Obsidentify/ inaturalist that will keep a record of the cumulative findings. This will give us a much better idea of what species we have in our park throughout the year. It will also provide content for our social media which will hopefully engage the local community to care more about their wildlife.

2. We also plan to run some Wildlife recording events for adults and kids alike - BioBlitz style!

3. We will carry out a tree and plant survey so we know exactly what is where and what animals might use these habitats.



# WILDLIFE HABITATS: EXISTING

#### WILDFLOWER

We have a small wildflower area currently containing Ox-eye Daisies, Red Clover and Buttercups near the centre of the park which supports a number of beetles, bees, butterflies and moths including the Clover Casebearer moth.

The wild flowers around the play park perimeter also provide much needed habitat and food plants for numerous insects. For example, Nettles are the food plant of small tortoiseshell and Peacock caterpillars and the Elephant Hawk moth feeds on Rosebay Willowherb.

#### TREES

A small, young woodland containing Oak, Hazel, Hawthorn, Rowan and other native trees is doing really well according to our ecology report. It will provide wonderful habitat for birds once mature but is already providing vital protection and habitat for overwintering insects and small mammals.

The numerous mature trees provide shelter, habitats for birds, bats squirrels and insects.

#### GRASS

The lawn areas beneath the trees are not cut short. Leaving these areas to grow creates shelter and vital habitat for lots of wildlife especially insects that are overwintering.



SMALL WILDFLOWER MEADOW

WILD FLOWER PERIMETER

YOUNG WOODLAND







# FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS

**FriendsOfGoresMarshPark** 

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT CHARLIE TALLIS: GoresMarshPark@mail.com

