



## Devauden Playground Redevelopment Progress Report - March 2026



*Richard May (l), Chair of Trustees of Devauden Hall; Catherine Fookes MP Monmouthshire; Michael Dupree, National Lottery Advisor at the official opening of the newly developed Devauden Playground on July 5, 2025.*

### Fêteful day!

It is no exaggeration to say that without two National Lottery grants (People and Places and Awards for All) totalling £64,000, the opening of our magnificent, redeveloped playground in Devauden, Monmouthshire, would still be light years away. The total cost of the project including new equipment and fencing was £93,800. It was a massive mountain to climb for the five strong band of local volunteers who launched their fundraising appeal under the banner of Devauden Playground Action Group at the village fête in September 2023.

It was fitting then that we should choose the occasion of another village fête just two years later on July 5, 2025 for the official opening of the newly redeveloped playground and that our National Lottery Advisor Michael Dupree should join our local MP Catherine Fookes in doing the honours. Other VIPs included Devauden Ward County Cllr Rachel Buckler and the Mayor of Chepstow Cllr Jim MacTaggart.



**July 5, 2025.** What a joyous day that was! The weather was glorious, the hordes of children beyond excited. Pride in an achievement shared with our local community was almost palpable. In her opening remarks Catherine Fookes said: *“I have always envied Devauden’s community spirit which is very special and this amazing playground gives credit to the committee of local volunteers who made it possible.”*

Kind words indeed but credit should also go to all those local people who loyally supported fundraising events at Devauden Hall over the years and most particularly Devauden’s annual music festival which made it possible for the charity to invest a handsome £25,000 in our playground makeover. The remainder of the redevelopment costs came from generous donations from local community groups and individuals as well as some specific fundraising events by the Playground Action Group.

The opening event was covered in our local media including the South Wales Argus:

<https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25297160.new-playground-devauden-monmouthshire-re-opens/>

Free Press:

<https://www.freepressseries.co.uk/news/25297160.new-playground-devauden-monmouthshire-re-opens/>

Monmouthshire Beacon

<https://www.monmouthshirebeacon.co.uk/news/devauden-play-area-gets-ps84k-makeover-809757>

### Why did we need to redevelop our playground?



*Devauden Playground – October 2018*

Our playground desperately needed a makeover because so much of the equipment was 20 years old and no longer fit for purpose. We also knew from anecdotal evidence from Devauden families backed up by two formal consultations with children and parents that the playground was failing to meet the needs of the target audience. It lacked playground mainstays such as swings and slides, there was very little equipment for young children, only the existing basket swing met the needs of disabled children and the remaining equipment lacked a level of challenge to attract older children.

In our application to the National Lottery we also said: *“The playground is regularly used not only by village children but also by those from the surrounding areas of Itton, Kilgwrrwg, Llanvihangel, Wolvesnewton, Chepstow and beyond. In addition to serving the community, the playground is a key asset for the village hall in terms of attracting bookings for events such as children’s parties and Scout, Guide, Brownie and Beaver camps. It is also a contributory factor for families when deciding whether to attend Devauden’s annual, family friendly music festival which has been running for the past 14 years on the hall’s fields. These bookings and events make a vital contribution to the running costs of the hall.”*

## Consultation, consultation, consultation

We began engaging with children and their parents about redeveloping the playground in September 2023 when we launched our first formal, public consultation at the village fête, one of the biggest social and fundraising events in the annual village calendar and attended by hundreds of local people. The aim of the consultation was to elicit views on precisely how the playground could be improved. We also erected a semi-permanent banner at that time on the playground fence publicising the proposed redevelopment, the availability of more information on the village hall website and a QR code for a crowdfunding site through which to make donations to the fundraising appeal. We ran a second, formal consultation exercise in November 2023, again with local children and their parents/care givers. Taken together the results of the two consultations, which returned a response rate equivalent to 40% of the child population (Census 2021), provided a clear indication for the way forward for the project.

We took a stall at the village fête in July 2024 to publicise the decision to appoint a company to provide and install the top four items of equipment indicated by the two consultations along with other popular items of equipment. Visitors to the stall were asked for their comments on the chosen list of equipment and these accorded with the outcome of the consultations.

Information about the progress of the playground campaign was regularly updated and views continuously sought on its proposals on the hall website, included in the village newsletter and reported monthly to the hall trustees at their open committee meetings.

(Minutes of committee meetings are available on the hall website.) A standalone, pop up banner publicising the playground appeal (above), donation methods and ways to feedback on the plans, featured at indoor and outdoor hall events.

## Learning from experience

We started our redevelopment project with bags of enthusiasm and absolutely no idea how to do it! Two years later we were able to crystallise our 'journey' of discovery into a 'how to' guide ([Appendix B](#)) which we made available on the village hall website and also submitted for consideration to the National Lottery Evidence Library.

The scope of our 'Learning from Experience' (LfE) document covers our project through all its phases as follows:

- **concept** - recognising a problem, generating an idea and taking action
- **Initiation** - scoping the project, building a team, early planning and feasibility studies
- **planning and estimating** - working out time, cost and requirements
- **initial supplier engagement** - optioneering and early insight into preferred suppliers
- **fund raising** - securing money through donations, fundraisers, grants and more
- **supplier selection** - how to select responsibly based on your project's or communities' values
- **placing an order**
- **construction** - planning, managing and afterwards
- **project close-down** and ongoing efforts.

**Playground Makeover Appeal**  
MAKING YOUR CHILDREN'S WISHES COME TRUE

ASK CHILDREN OF ALL AGES WHAT THEY LOVE ABOUT DEVAUDEN PLAYGROUND AND THEY'LL TELL YOU- BASKET SWING, GRASSY MOUND, TUNNEL & ZIP WIRE

ASK THEM WHAT'S ON THEIR WISHLIST AND MOST WILL SAY SWINGS, SLIDES, PLAY TOWERS & A TRAMPOLINE

HOW DO WE KNOW? WE ASKED THEM IN 2023 AND NOW WE'RE ASKING YOU -

WILL YOU HELP US MAKE THEIR WISHES COME TRUE?

The cost of transforming the playground into an exciting new play space for toddlers and older children alike is a whopping £85,000

Devauden Hall trustees have kickstarted our appeal with a wonderful £25,000. We're also applying for grants and will be holding fundraising events

**But we still need your help because every penny counts**

**WILL YOU DONATE TODAY?**

PLEASE DONATE AT:  
[WWW.JUSTGIVING.COM/CROWDFUNDING/DEVAUDENPLAYGROUND](http://WWW.JUSTGIVING.COM/CROWDFUNDING/DEVAUDENPLAYGROUND)  
OR  
SCAN THE QR CODE TO ACCESS **JustGiving**

Read all about it at [www.devaudenhall.org/playground](http://www.devaudenhall.org/playground)

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Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to track unique visitors to the hall's website but we know from personal approaches that communities in St Arvans, Redbrook and Abergavenny have used the document to inform their plans to develop their own playgrounds.

A section in our LfE document deals with complaints which we as a group honestly did not see coming. Given the nature of our comprehensive and ongoing consultation for more than 18 months prior to work starting on the project, we were shocked to be made aware of a string of complaints from a single individual once installation work began. In the event, the substantive complaints, which were raised to Monmouthshire County Council, were proved to be unfounded. Nonetheless, we highlight in our LfE document the importance of having a formal mechanism through which members of the community can raise legitimate complaints or concerns and with whom. It would have been helpful had we had such a policy in place when the complaints were raised but at least we can pass that learning on to others.

### What do users say about our redeveloped playground?



*Devauden Playground March 2026: families from Trellech celebrating a child's birthday*

With the exception of the complaints referenced in the previous section from the single individual, the response to our playground makeover has been overwhelmingly positive.

#### *User survey*

We designed a survey form with 10 simple questions asking users' views on everything from accessibility and equipment to frequency of visits and what we could have done better.

We made the survey available to our communities in the following ways:

- QR code
- direct link: <https://forms.gle/Axk7q1k1MrVYWoN8A>
- posters featuring the QR code on the playground fence
- email with QR code to a wide range of people and organisations from scouts to local schools
- link on Devauden Hall's website at: [www.devaudenhall.org](http://www.devaudenhall.org)
- link on Devauden Hall's Facebook page at: Hood Memorial Hall, Devauden.

In addition, we made hard copies of the survey widely available through email and in the hall itself.

#### *Headlines from the survey*

Full results of the online survey are provided at the end of this document ([Appendix A](#)). We also received 7 paper copies, whose numbers are not reflected in the charts at the end of the document, but whose sentiments accord closely with the following summary. The feedback received demonstrates clearly that the redevelopment addresses the concerns and failings that drove the decision to invest in the facilities.

- More than 2/3 of visitors travel from outside Devauden and more than 50% visit at least fortnightly. The majority of children using the park are under 10 years old.
- In our survey, 3 respondents brought children with a disability – something that did not happen before the refurbishment as there was no suitable play equipment.
- When asked which equipment their children liked most, several items were specified but the overriding answer was variety, with safety and a range unavailable elsewhere being mentioned.
- Range, condition and safety were all scored the maximum 'very good' by at least 70% of the visitors. Accessibility received a lower score – 57% very good.
- When asked if anything was missing, most of the answers related to supplementary facilities such as seating and a coffee shop for the adults.
- 100% of respondents would recommend Devauden playground to others and 62.2% have considered hiring the hall for a party or event as a result of the playground's upgrade.

### **Other feedback**

Devauden Hall trustees had this to say in the minutes of their meeting on 18/2/2026 (item 5e):

*“All agreed that the playground is a hugely important and valuable community asset and is well used by local families as well as those who travel to the area specifically for the upgraded facilities. Hall bookings (especially birthday parties) have evidently increased due to the upgraded park facilities, meaning additional income for the Charity. It was noted that the “How To” guide, written by the Playground Action Group following the process for applying for grants for the playpark, has been used by at least two other community halls to assist with their bid-writing. This shared learning and collaboration has strengthened ties with our neighbouring villages. JH advised that the Scouts love using the playpark and feedback from the children and parents is extremely positive.”*

And this from a small home education co-operative drawn from Monmouth and surrounding areas as well as the Forest of Dean:

*“We are basically a group of like minded parents with children ranging from 0-6 years and have an outside nature based ethos.*

*We chose Devauden to host our weekly group as the play area is fantastic for explorative child led play in a safe environment. During the winter months we utilised the hall for nature based learning or crafts before heading outside to the park. The park area is perfectly designed for children to explore safely on their own whilst parents can keep an eye on them. We also try to get outside in all weathers and have found the park a great venue for that, especially this winter when other woodland areas have just been too boggy!*

*We have seen other members of the community use the park whilst we have been there and it's clear it is a fantastic asset to the community.”*

And also this:

*“I'm part of a group that's just been set up called Friends of Union Road Park in Abergavenny. We're at the beginning of things, thinking about how we can improve the park and what might be possible in the future.*

*Your project in Devauden has come up a few times when people talk about great community-led play spaces, and we've been really inspired by what you managed to achieve. It's exactly the sort of ambition we'd love to bring to Union Road Park. We're still figuring out how to organise ourselves and how projects like this actually get off the ground. If you don't mind sharing, I wondered how your group was set up - for example did you become a charity, set up as a CIC, or work under another organisation? We're getting conflicting advice. We're hoping to aim for a similar scale of fundraising*

*eventually, so it would be really helpful to hear what structure worked for you or anything you learned along the way.*

*Any advice would be hugely appreciated. Thanks so much, and well done again on creating such a fantastic space.”*

## **In conclusion**

In our application to the National Lottery we said the following:

*“Evidence that our approach has been successful will ultimately be seen in the additional numbers of children of all ages making use of the more modern and challenging equipment, which has been chosen by them, while still enjoying old favourites such as the zipwire. Greater use of the playground will also have a beneficial knock on effect on the use of the wider facilities on offer at the hall, on its recreational fields and in the nearby Chepstow Park Wood.*

*There is no doubt that refreshed and redeveloped, the playground will give children a more enjoyable, satisfying, rounded and inclusive play experience with all the associated health benefits. Parents and care givers will welcome the enhanced opportunity for their children to enjoy outdoor play on their doorstep and so avoid the financial and environmental cost of having to drive to another location.”*

We are delighted by the results of our survey of local people which clearly indicate we have broadly succeeded in our key aims for Devauden’s redeveloped playground. Of course, there is always more that can be done. For example, the playground is not attracting children in the 14 - 16 age range, as we had hoped, but perhaps we were overly ambitious in that regard. They are at least able to enjoy the opportunities for a wide variety of sports including football on the large field behind the hall while their younger siblings play on the adjacent playground.

And finally, we would like to give heartfelt thanks to the National Lottery for its invaluable support for our stunning playground makeover which is giving so much pleasure to so many families from Devauden and its surrounding communities.

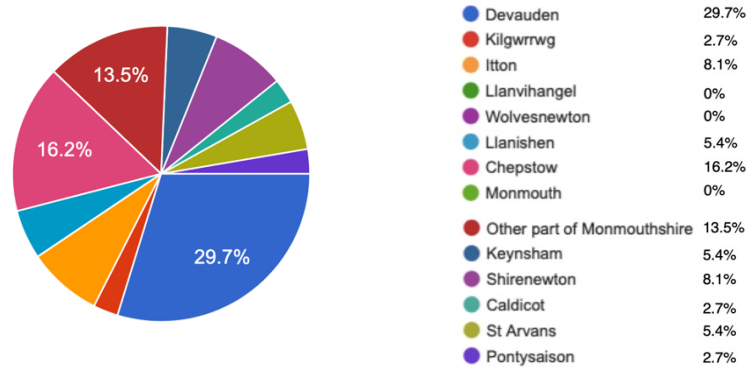
**Lynn May**  
**Devauden Playground Action Group Lead**

## Appendix A

### ONLINE PLAYGROUND SURVEY - 37 RESPONSES TO DATE (23/03/26)

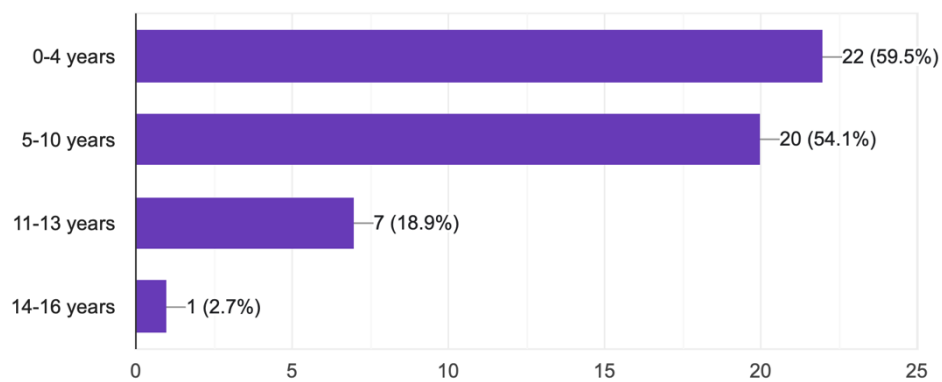
1 - Where have you travelled from today?

37 responses



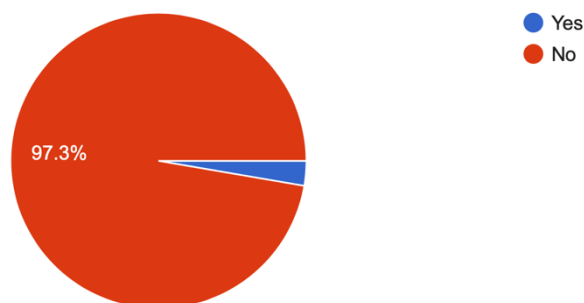
2 - What age group(s) are the children you're visiting with? You can tick more than one age group

37 responses



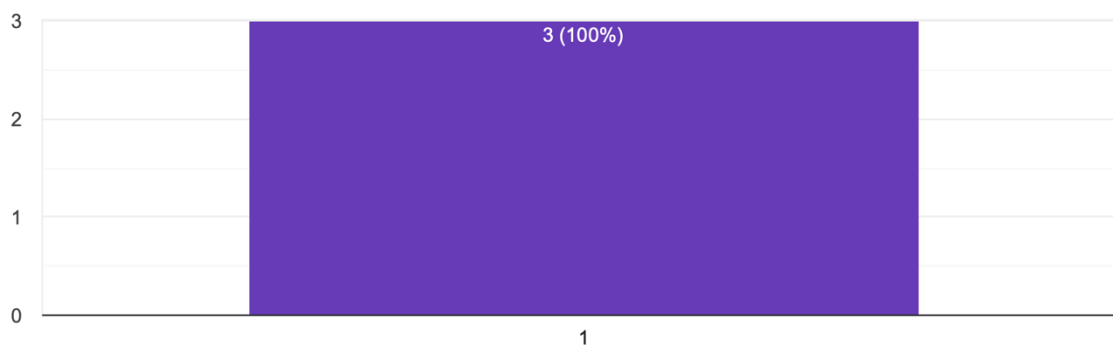
3 - Do any of the children with you have a disability?

37 responses



If yes to previous question, how many children?

3 responses

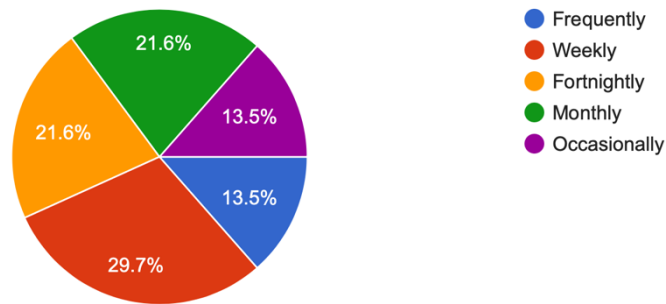


4 - What do your children enjoy most about our playpark?  
(Multiple answers allowed)

Variety	The big tower/climbing frame and the swings.
Safe freedom	Climbing frame
It changes every visit, some days the swings, other days climbing equipment or tunnel	Range of equipment for different ages. Equipment not in some other parks eg zip wire, monkey bars
Zip line	Zip line, slides and climbing
Great range of clean equipment	Jumping pad
The big tower, the swings and the trampoline	Everything
The tunnel/mound and swing	Big swing and monkey bars
Variety of equipment	The variety of equipment
Variety and the change in equipment. The space	Net swing
New clean equipment	The variety
Zip wire and football pitch	The swings, the musical instrument section and the zipwire
The play stuff is amazing! Way better than any of the other parks nearby. Especially love the trampoline and double swing and hanging bars.	Zip wire, climbing frame, trampoline
All the play equipment especially the tunnel	Swings tunnel and climbing frame
Trampoline, Zip wire and basket swing	Zipwire
The big ball in the middle of the climbing frame	They enjoy everything
Varied and safe equipment	Swings climbing frame and trampoline

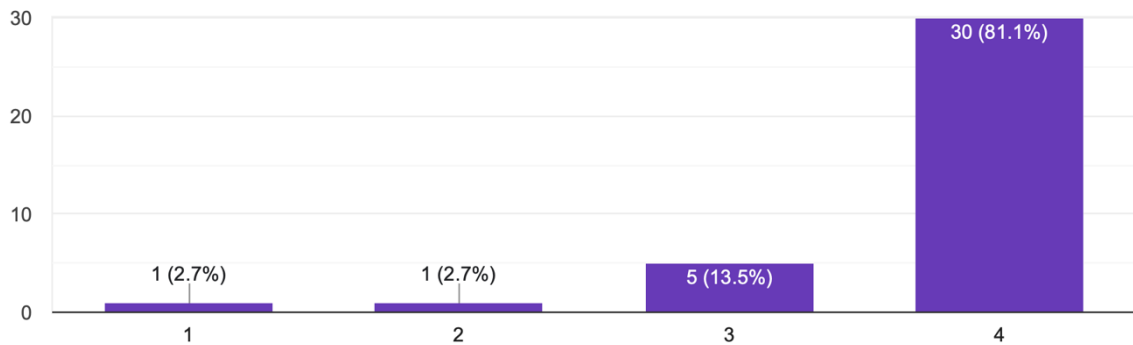
### 5 - How often do you use this playpark?

37 responses



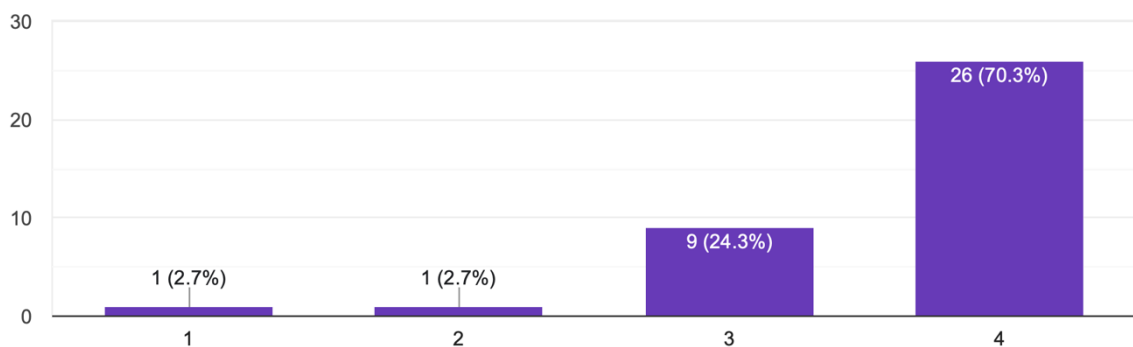
### 6 - Please rate the range of equipment in the playpark: (1 Poor / 2 Fair / 3 Good / 4 Very Good)

37 responses



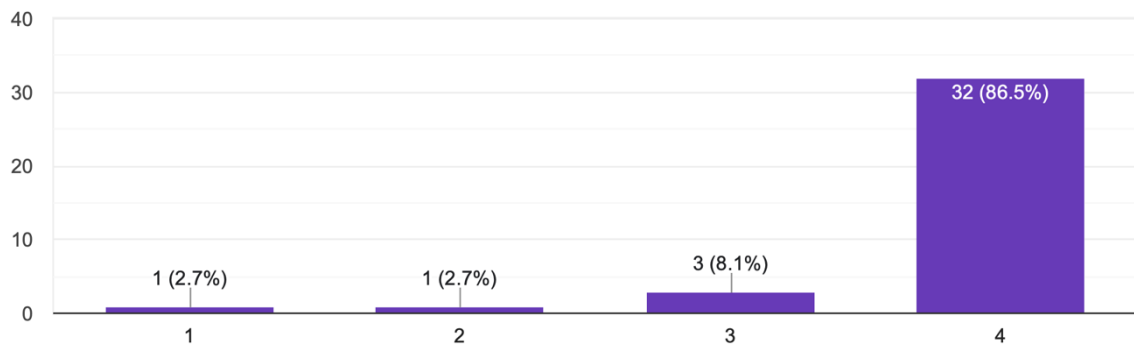
### 7 - Please rate the condition / maintenance of the playpark: (1 Poor / 2 Fair / 3 Good / 4 Very Good)

37 responses



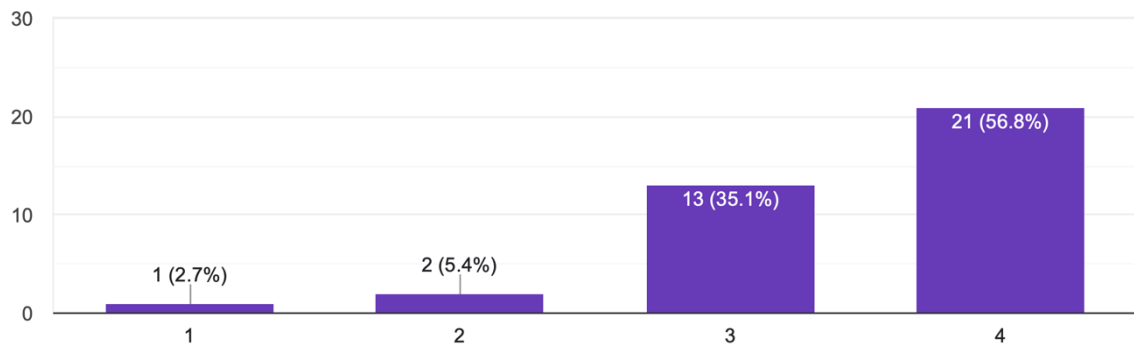
8 - Please rate the safety of the playpark: (1 Poor / 2 Fair / 3 Good / 4 Very Good)

37 responses



9 - Please rate the accessibility of the playpark (eg for pushchairs / wheelchairs: (1 Poor / 2 Fair / 3 Good / 4 Very Good)

37 responses



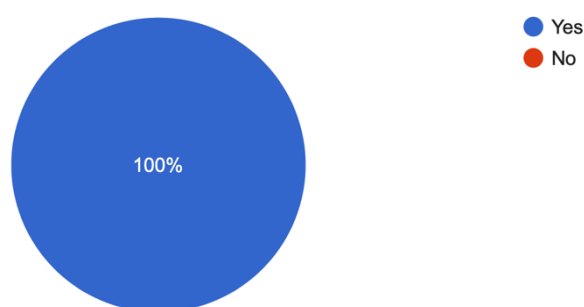
10 - Is there anything you think is missing or could be improved?  
(Multiple answers allowed)

No	Only thing missing is a coffee shop for the adults :)
Some extra trees planted around the edge might be nice for summer shade and for wildlife.	Keep the gates in good order and closed
A solid fence between the dens in woodland and main road. Kids play in park then go in there and are out of site. We move in to supervise but it's dangerously close to the busy road.	The ground should have been levelled properly when they had machinery in to fit all the equipment with a pest proof layer as it's now full of mole hills which are quite a trip hazard
Maybe addition of a flat track for scooters/bikes	Na
More benches	TOILETS!
More play equipment always helps keep kids occupied for longer. If the flying fox needs replaced a different play tower would be good.	Coffee shop for the adults

Nothing	More options for toddlers to climb. Swing for older children.
Play equipment for older children and to go higher up on a climbing frame. Zip wire needs updating. Maybe a trampoline. More parking would also be beneficial.	Playhouse/mud kitchen for imaginative play
No!	No
Nothing	More seating
Bigger trampoline	I think it is a great park for the village and cant see any immediate need for improvements
No, I think it's fantastic	High slide
A bar for the parents :)	Shelter for eating snacks when the weather is bad
A local coffee shop would be wonderful	Paddle court next to it.. or good coffee 😊😊

### 11 - Would you recommend this playpark to other families?

37 responses



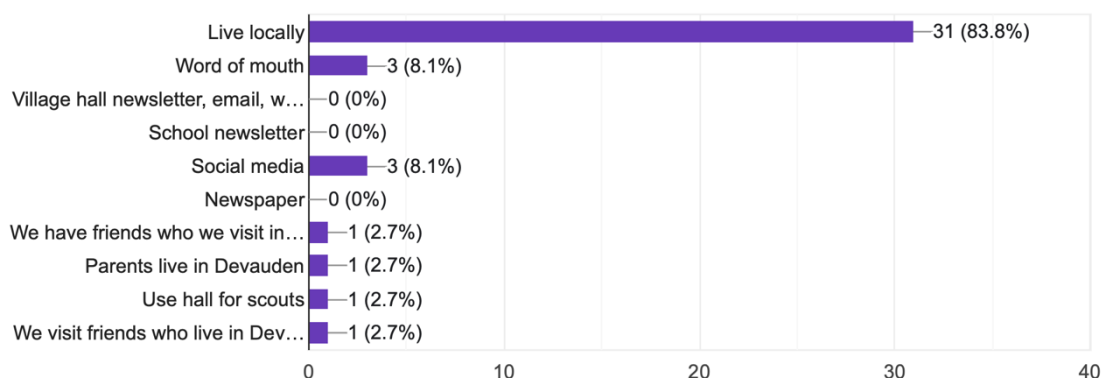
Please tell us why

We love the park here. Great equipment especially since the redevelopment and it's such a beautiful location - we often combine visiting the park with a walk in the woods	Clean, well kept
Great selection	Lots of variety for all ages
Equipment is good quality and has a good variety and it's handy for a family walk in the woods too.	Only one near us good for young children
Great place for Shirenewton primary school kids to meet. We use it with scouts too.	It is a lovely park with a range of great equipment
Good condition equipment and lots of equipment	Nice space for kids to play
A lot for children to do, safe and tidy	Great play space
A good quality playpark, enclosed so kids don't run off	Nice location near the woods and good quality play park equipment.
Good local play area.	It's brilliant
It's safe, clean and a friendly place	I would recommend for families with younger kids as it's a nice spot and plenty of space to run safely

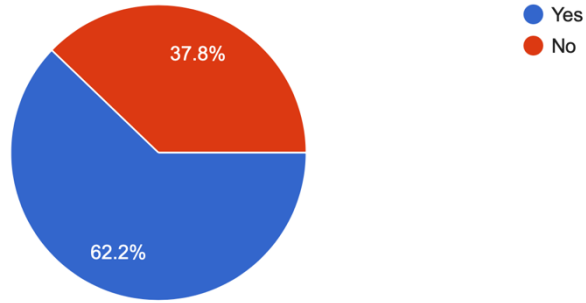
	around in hall field and wander into the woods for a walk.
Parking, well kept, safe!	Variety of equipment is good for a range of ages and the equipment is unusual and innovative
We love it. The space, the outside green space so you get ones can play in park and older ones can play football. The variety of equipment for all ages	Clean, good facilities, accessible
It's clean and safe.	It's safe and has lots of fun activities for children.
Its got a variety of equipment.	Great range of stuff
It is safe, there is parking and there is enough equipment for children of all ages to play and enjoy the facilities. You can see all of the children at any point (no sight blocks). The equipment is well maintained and of excellent quality compared with other parks that are more run down.	Great facilities
Having grown up in Devauden I've seen the impact of this new play equipment compared to what we had as children. It's accessible, well maintained, and plenty of apparatus for the children to play on.	It great good range of equipment for open ended play
Lovely new playground in a rural setting	Good range of equipment for different ages
Something for all age groups. Easy parking	It's different than standard parks and the kids enjoy the variety
Great park.. in a nice village ..no antisocial behaviour there ever..	

## 12 - How did you hear about the playpark? You can select more than one answer

37 responses



13 - Our redeveloped playpark was opened in July 2025. Has the redevelopment encouraged you to consider booking Devauden Hall for an event such as a children's birthday party or other activity?  
37 responses



## Appendix B

### Hood Memorial Hall, Devauden Playground Redevelopment Project – Learning From Experience (LFE) July 2025

#### Aim

This document aims to provide useful information to those seeking to initiate, conduct and deliver projects to build, upgrade or replace playgrounds or playparks. It is based on insights from members of the Playground Action Group (PAG) at Hood Memorial Hall, Devauden, Monmouthshire. It is hoped that these insights assist others in determining the best approaches to solving similar problems and helping them to avoid pitfalls overcome by PAG.

#### Background

PAG initiated a project to redevelop the ageing playground in the grounds of the Hood Memorial Hall in September 2023. The project concluded with a successful opening of the new playground by Catherine Fookes MP on July 5 2025 at the village fête.

The redevelopment was funded by the community (via the village hall charity), National Lottery grants, fundraising events and donations from local individuals and bodies.

The PAG comprised five volunteers, all from the local community, who delivered the project on behalf of village hall trustees, one of whom frequently attended PAG meetings. In turn, a lead member of the PAG attended trustees' monthly meetings to report on progress and answer any questions.

#### Scope

The scope of this document covers the entire project through the following phases:

- Concept – recognising a problem, generating an idea and taking action.
- Initiation – scoping the project, building a team, early planning and feasibility studies.
- Planning and estimating – working out time, cost and requirements.
- Initial supplier engagement – optioneering and early insight into preferred suppliers.
- Fund raising – securing money through donations, fundraisers, grants and more.
- Supplier selection – how to select responsibly based on your projects or communities' values.
- Placing an order.
- Construction – planning, managing and afterwards.
- Project close-down and ongoing efforts.

#### A – Concept and Initiation LFE

#	Concept and Initiation LFE
A1	<b>Consultation! Consultation! Consultation!</b> To deliver the best for your community it is important to collect data from users (children and parents) and other stakeholders at the earliest opportunity. Funding organisations such as the National Lottery place great importance on evidence of community consultation when considering grant applications.
A2	<b>Establish a team.</b> A clear leader is needed to drive the project and make decisions where consensus is elusive. But a small team who can share the workload is very beneficial – our experience suggests 4-6 people is good. Too big and you'll have too many chefs, too small and you'll lack diversity of thought and may be limited by volunteers' time and availability. Expect to be on the journey for approximately 2 years with a team who feel they can commit to that.
A3	<b>Building a diverse team of volunteers is a good idea.</b> We found that a mixture of retirees with more time to commit during working hours (when supplier site visits take place, etc) and working professionals with up to date knowledge, skills and ideas for modern good practice. Similarly, grandparents bring observations and ideas about what makes a good playground which complement those of parents. We were fortunate that our team had a broad range of strengths; knowledge of how local authorities work, environmental impacts and associated regulations and procedures, public relations and

	communications expertise, project management skills and good community contacts on whom to draw for additional knowledge, skills and resources.
A4	<p><b>Communication, communication, communication.</b> Keep it going throughout your project. Use it to receive as well as give information and to build evidence of your activity that grant givers will want to see.</p> <p>Map and use all the tools you have available in your community - newsletters, websites, WhatsApp groups, email lists, posters, leaflets, flyers (distribute in schools, Brownie, Scout and Guide groups etc), local events (your own and any you can piggyback), word of mouth, local media (don't be afraid to get in touch with details of your project making sure you cover the five 'W's that all journalists need - who, what, where, when and why). Take photographs where you can to bring your communication to life (always seek parental consent when taking pictures of children and keep a note of parents' names and contact details for future reference if you need them).</p> <p>If you're redeveloping an existing playground, conduct user surveys to monitor usage. You may be asked by a grant giving body for numbers of children using your existing playground - and how many more children you anticipate will use the redeveloped one.</p>
A5	<p><b>Ensure you have identified who is responsible for the safety of the playground.</b> Suppliers are responsible for meeting your requirements under the contract and installing in accordance with relevant standards and regulations but clients also have responsibilities too.</p>
A6	<p><b>As part of your communication think about how you will deal with complaints.</b> Tell your community how they can raise legitimate complaints or concerns and with whom. Take complaints seriously, approaching them with an open mind and curiosity. You will want to resolve legitimate complaints swiftly for the benefit of the community.</p> <p>Be prepared for unfounded complaints and take those seriously too. Be dispassionate and see them through to their logical conclusion. Complainants must feel they have been listened to and that their complaints have been taken through the proper processes which may include appropriate authorities.</p>

## B – Planning and Estimating LFE

#	Planning and Estimating LFE
B1	<p><b>Consultation is key.</b> Seeking the views of parents and children of varying ages and abilities at the start of your project is essential to making good decisions on what equipment, within your budget, to include in your new playground. You may like brightly coloured equipment with intriguing shapes but it may not suit your target audience.</p>
B2	<p><b>Sequencing activities:</b> we found the best way to plan our activities in this phase was to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. consult</li> <li>2. be guided by the outcome of our consultation, our budget and the available space in determining what equipment to include in our scheme</li> <li>3. estimate costs using online information from at least 3 reputable suppliers</li> <li>4. consider our fund raising target, capacity and whether what we'd ideally like was achievable.</li> </ol>
B3	<p><b>Fall heights</b> – the extent of safety surfacing required beneath an item of play equipment is governed by the height from which a child may fall. The taller the equipment, the deeper the excavation and the more shock absorbing material required. This can be a cost multiplier that isn't always clear until you get formal quotes from suppliers.</p>
B4	<p><b>Having an excel spreadsheet guru</b> in your team is helpful to set up your costs so that you can chop and change according to different equipment options from a range of suppliers and make cost comparisons. This can then be re-used when you get formal quotes.</p>
B5	<p><b>Our project was straightforward and didn't require formal project management</b> with a schedule etc. As a small, agile team, we progressed our project through email, meetings and a WhatsApp group. If you have a complex playground project or are repurposing a site, a more formal approach may be needed, led by someone with professional project management experience.</p>
B6	<p><b>When estimating your budget</b> plan to have some contingency funds to draw on in case something doesn't go to plan.</p>

B7	<b>Establish at the start</b> of your project whether you need planning permission and/or an environmental impact assessment. This will avoid potential disruption and stress later in the project. If you are replacing equipment in an existing playground and within the same footprint, you shouldn't need planning permission and you may not need an environmental impact assessment either – but please, do your own research!
B8	<b>Consider shade provision</b> as part of your project planning/scope in light of climate change and rising temperatures. Tree planting is a good method but not always possible.
B9	<b>Expect to have to pay for site protection</b> (temporary fencing) and workforce welfare (portaloos etc) during the installation phase as well as removal and disposal of old broken play equipment if necessary.

### C – Initial Supplier Engagement LFE

#	Initial Supplier Engagement LFE
C1	<b>Continue with your communication and consultation</b> at this phase – refer to item A4 on this subject.
C2	<b>Set out your principles and priorities</b> for your project so that you (and your community) are clear on how you will deliver the project. Is limiting the environmental impact more important than aesthetics, for example. Do you want to prioritise the use of local suppliers? What materials suit your surroundings and how will they age? Is it important to have vibrant, bright, fun colours or natural colours? Do you want an urban or a rural scheme? Wood or metal and plastic? Do you want to pick suppliers based on their experience and track record?
C3	<b>Have a list, with options, of the types of equipment</b> that you want to include in your park based on the results of your consultations. Form your own ideas about which are the most important and those which you might be willing to trade to save money or space or to substitute for a better suggestion from a supplier. Our experience was that we had to make some iterations of the final list to fit within our budget.
C4	<b>Have a clear understanding of what you can fit into your space</b> including consideration for the required spacing or 'isolation zones' between each item of equipment. Suppliers should be knowledgeable about this but to be a smart customer and save time, you should form your own ideas in preparation.
C5	<b>Do you research.</b> Visit other playgrounds to see examples of equipment and note the suppliers' names from the tags on the equipment. This can also help you see how different suppliers' equipment and ground materials for fall impact absorption look as they age.
C6	<b>Draw up a list of a handful of suppliers/manufacturers</b> including a mixture of well-known national or international companies as well as some local companies. Website catalogues aren't always helpful so ask for hard copy brochures but be aware that few if any include prices.
C7	<b>Shortlist potential suppliers down to 3</b> based on your priorities, principles or selection criteria. Contact them and set up site visits during which they will take measurements, photos etc to inform any subsequent quotes. Some suppliers will generate simple designs with equipment in place which can be really useful in helping to visualise a supplier's suggested scheme.
C8	<b>Secure initial quotes</b> and revise your budget up or down accordingly. Be aware that the cost of safety surfaces that comply with legal requirements on fall heights can be almost as much as the price of equipment.

### D – Fundraising LFE

#	Fundraising LFE
D1	<b>You are likely to need a grant or grants</b> as part of your funding package. Be prepared to make several, smaller applications rather than one big one – and be aware that many grants are 'all or nothing'.
D2	<b>When making smaller applications</b> , apply for a particular item of equipment rather than a generic sum of money. An example for our project was some perimeter fencing. Note that different awarding bodies focus on different themes so make sure your application is appropriately targeted.
D3	<b>Most grant bodies expect</b> to see evidence of fundraising as part of the total financing of the project. A rule of thumb is that for every £1 you raise you might be able to achieve £2 in grants.
D4	<b>Grant applications can be very time consuming.</b> An efficient approach is for a lead writer to draw up an initial draft and seek comments/revisions from others. Diversity of thought from a team with different perspectives and experiences from within your community helps to achieve a rounded application.
D5	<b>Don't be afraid to apply for a National Lottery grant.</b> Talk to those who have already made successful applications and when your time comes, carefully follow advice and

	guidance from the Lottery's own funding advisors who are very helpful and knowledgeable.
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### E – Supplier Selection LFE

#	Supplier Selection LFE
E1	<b>Price is important but should not be the only criterion.</b> To avoid random or emotional decision making which is hard to justify should you be asked to do so, draw up criteria for selection - e.g. compliance with national safety standards, environmental impacts of timber and other materials, equipment guarantees, customer satisfaction ratings, industry awards, business experience etc.
E2	<b>Use a points based system</b> to score your 3 suppliers' quotes against your criteria to avoid any unconscious bias or being swayed by sales patter rather than facts and evidence. Include in your selection criteria issues important to your community based on your consultation with them.
E3	<b>Protect suppliers' commercially sensitive information</b> such as costs. Do not publicise them before signing a contract with your supplier.

### F – Placing an Order

#	Placing an Order LFE
F1	<b>Be aware</b> that there may be a considerable time lag between agreeing a price with a supplier and having the money in place to sign a contract. During that time, the price may have gone up – hence the need to establish a contingency sum at the budgeting and planning phase.
F2	<b>Expect a reasonable lead time</b> between placing an order and installation starting. 3 months is typical but it does vary depending on specific material choices and the suppliers' size and order book.

### G – Construction/Installation LFE

#	Construction/Installation
G1	<b>Expect to do some basic site management.</b> Meet the installation team at the start of the installation, orientate them and ensure they have what they need.
G2	<b>Depending on your arrangements</b> you may have had to supply welfare facilities and fencing yourself or your suppliers may do that as part of the contract.
G3	<b>Make regular visits to the site to check progress</b> – even on simple projects things can get missed or mistakes made. The sooner these are spotted, the quicker and easier it is to fix them. A good supplier will be receptive if you spot something which is not in accordance with your specification and will promptly remedy it. Similarly, if anything gets damaged in the vicinity you will want to act quickly.
G4	<b>Make sure you have an independent inspection</b> of the completed works. Keep the site protection fencing up for safety reasons until the inspection is complete. Leave a 'risk window' before the planned opening of the new park in case any snags are picked up by the inspection which then need to be rectified.

### H – Project Close Down and ongoing efforts

#	Project Close Down and ongoing efforts LFE
H1	<b>A formal opening</b> after all your hard work will give you and your team a chance to celebrate with your local community. We were fortunate that our local MP agreed to do the honours. We were able to time the opening with our village fête which added an extra layer of excitement.
H2	<b>Communicate</b> the successful completion of your project to all your stakeholders and funders. Communities thrive on the efforts of their volunteers so don't be shy about making a fuss. And if you are lucky enough to have had a Lottery grant, you will be expected to publicise it with the appropriate Lottery branding (you will be advised on how to do this). Don't forget to send your local media pictures of your finished project along with a short report including those all important five 'W's (see A4).

H3	<b>Celebrate with your team.</b> Congratulations! You've done so very well. Pop some bubbly and reward yourselves.
H4	<b>Share the knowledge</b> – other communities can benefit from your experience.
H5	<b>Some funders may expect</b> a report some time after the opening of your new playground. They may ask you to conduct monitoring surveys to analyse how well your new playground has met your objectives, what difference it has made to your community and whether there has been an increase in the number of users.

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