



Take me to the river project 2025-2026

Community Consultation
April 2025-March 2026

Let's Go Outside and Learn CIC
April 2026



**London Borough
of Hounslow**



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Take Me To The River Project

The “Take Me To The River” project (2024 to 2026) aimed to help people discover the magic of the River Crane in Hounslow. Events and activities over the two year period aimed to engage residents and visitors to the river corridor and the associated green spaces and improve habitats for wildlife.

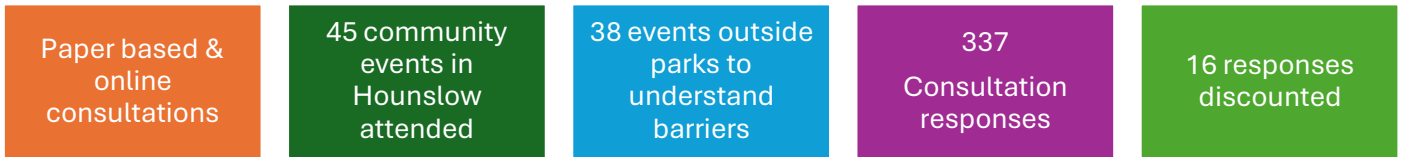
The Project was funded by Hounslow Council’s Thriving Communities Fund and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) fund. It was delivered as a partnership project between Hounslow Council’s Parks Team, Habitats and Heritage (H&H) and Let’s Go Outside and Learn (LGOAL).

What we did and consultation aims

One of the tasks that LGOAL undertook was to lead a consultation with local people to understand their views of the river corridor and access to the linked green spaces. The consultation took place between April 2025- March 2026.

The aim of the consultation was to learn more and to understand what local residents know about the river corridor, how it is used, what they like about it, and what they would like to see changed. We were also interested in barriers to use of greenspaces along the river corridor and the impact of these.

How we did it



Let's Go Outside and Learn attended 45 different community events in Hounslow. A total of 321 consultation responses were used in the analysis for this report. Around 16 responses were discounted as they were:

- Incomplete with only a limited number of questions answered.
- Illegible.
- Hands up consultations of more than 10 people so that we can't be sure that the views of all participants were given accurately.

Some of the consultation events were held outside the Crane river corridor. We did not ask for an address or postcode so cannot be sure that all responses were from Hounslow residents, however we know that the river corridor has visitors from outside Hounslow. It was considered important to receive views from people who may not use the parks or green spaces so only seven of the events attended were linked to park-based activities. The remaining 38 were held at community events or events based in schools.

The consultation was in two formats:

1. A paper-based consultation that was completed at an event or activity and handed to a staff member.
2. An online consultation promoted at events through a link to a QR code or using social media or other newsletters etc.

Participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire which was divided into different sections:

- Whether participants have visited the green spaces along the river and how often they visit.
- A section exploring how we can make the green spaces more accessible.
- Another section which explored activities that might encourage more frequent engagement.
- Suggested improvements to walking/cycling links between green spaces.
- Disability and how this impacts engagement.

In general, questions were yes-no with sections for further discussion and information if appropriate. We were aware that there were some barriers to engaging with the consultation:

- A reasonable level of English was required to take part. The hands up consultation was one way around this, but was discounted as not everyone taking part was able to share their opinions.
- We attended events at five schools across the different sections of the path to capture the views of young people, however in general the consultation engaged with adults rather than young people.
- We did not specifically target people who were disabled or had mobility issues, but were seeking the views of people who should be able to make use of the river corridor as we did not want to skew the results. There are some views of, for example, people who are disabled (12.5%) included and these are people who were independent enough to get to the community event where the consultation was being held.

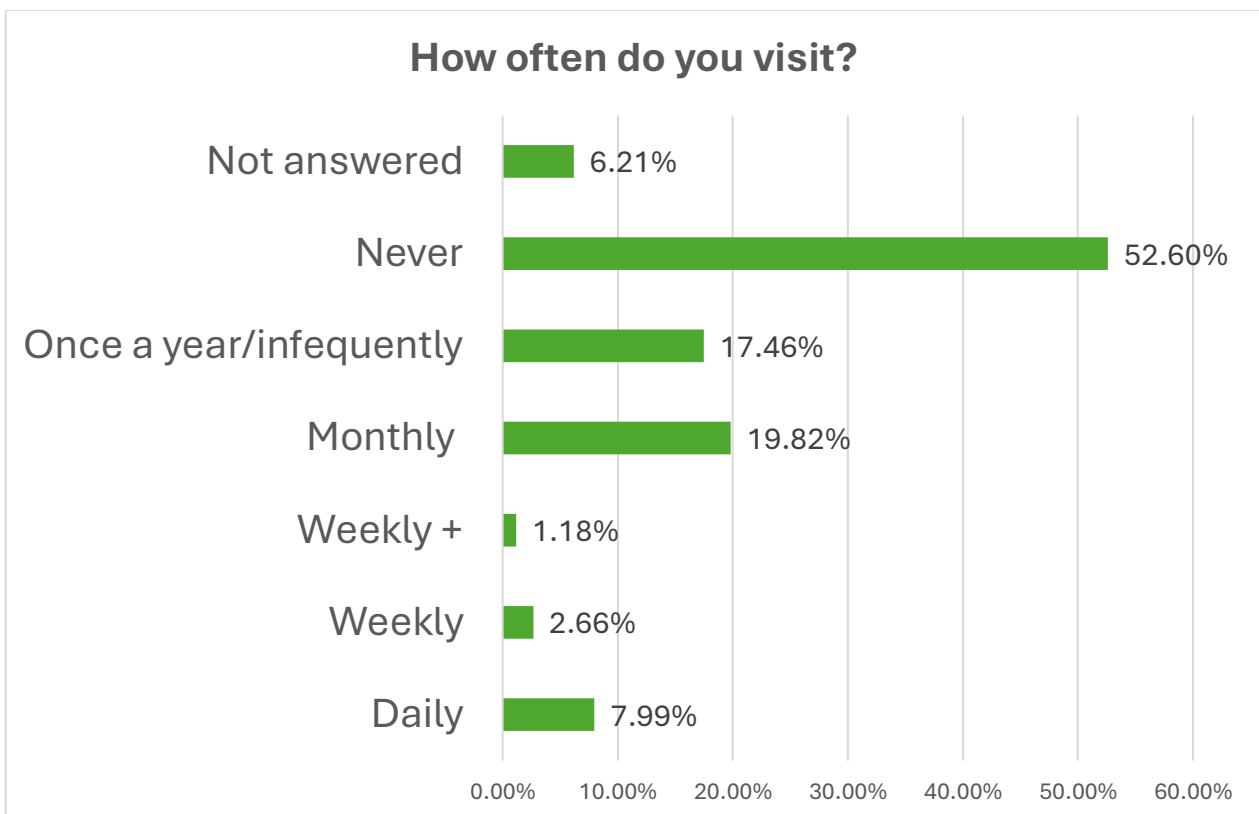
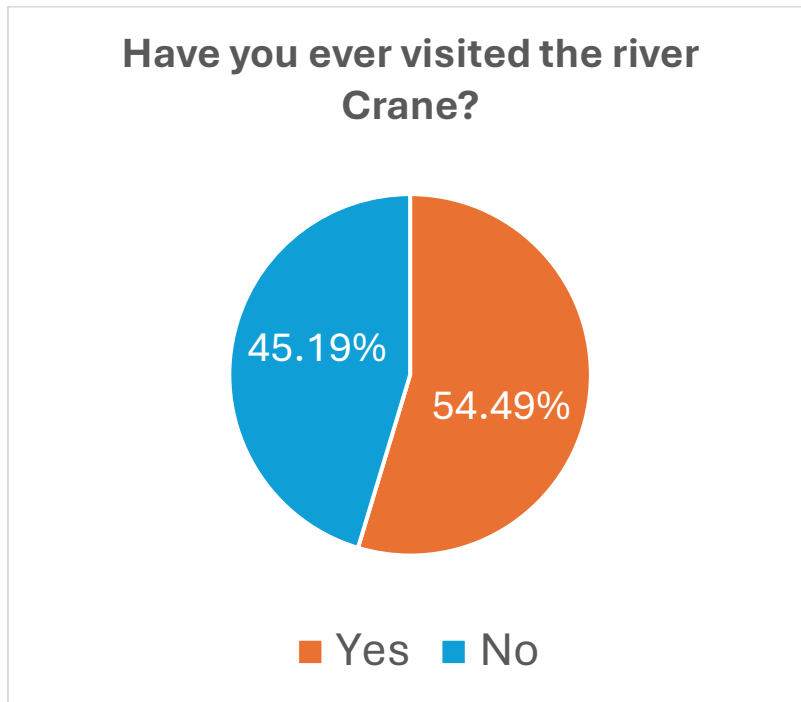
What did we learn?

This section of the report gives an overview of what the participants told us.

The initial question asked how frequently participants visit the green spaces along the River Crane path and if they had ever visited the River Crane. There were maps available for participants if they asked where the river Crane was in Hounslow.

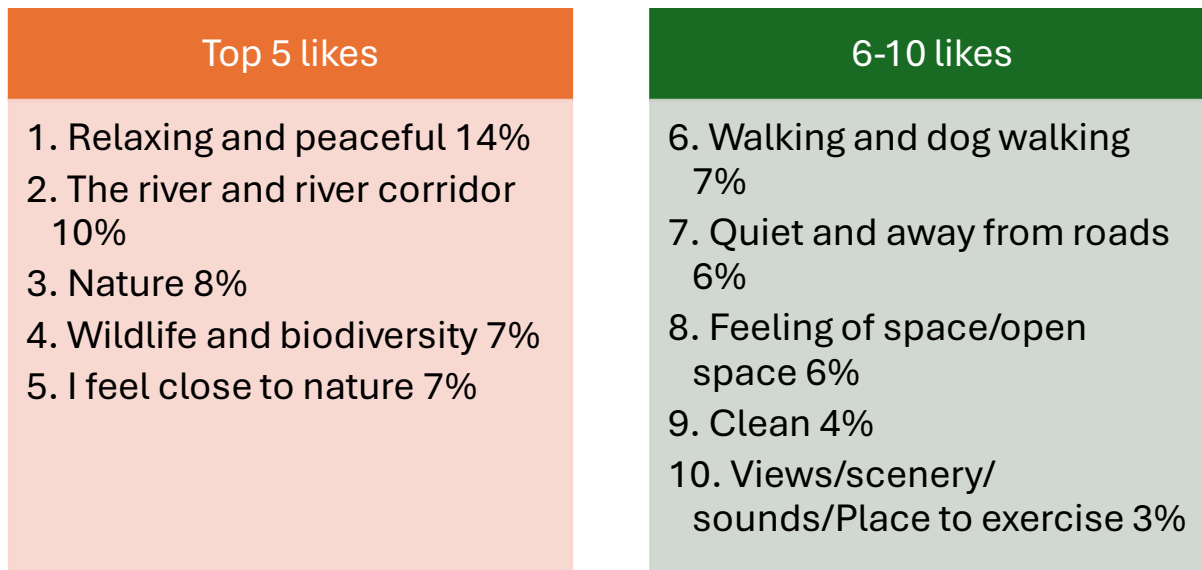
The question showed that nearly half of the participants (45%) had never visited the river Crane and that most do not make regular visits to the green spaces or never visit. Most people who visit regularly, make a monthly visit (20.5%). There is a small group of participants who visit daily (8%).

Visits to the River Crane and the green spaces



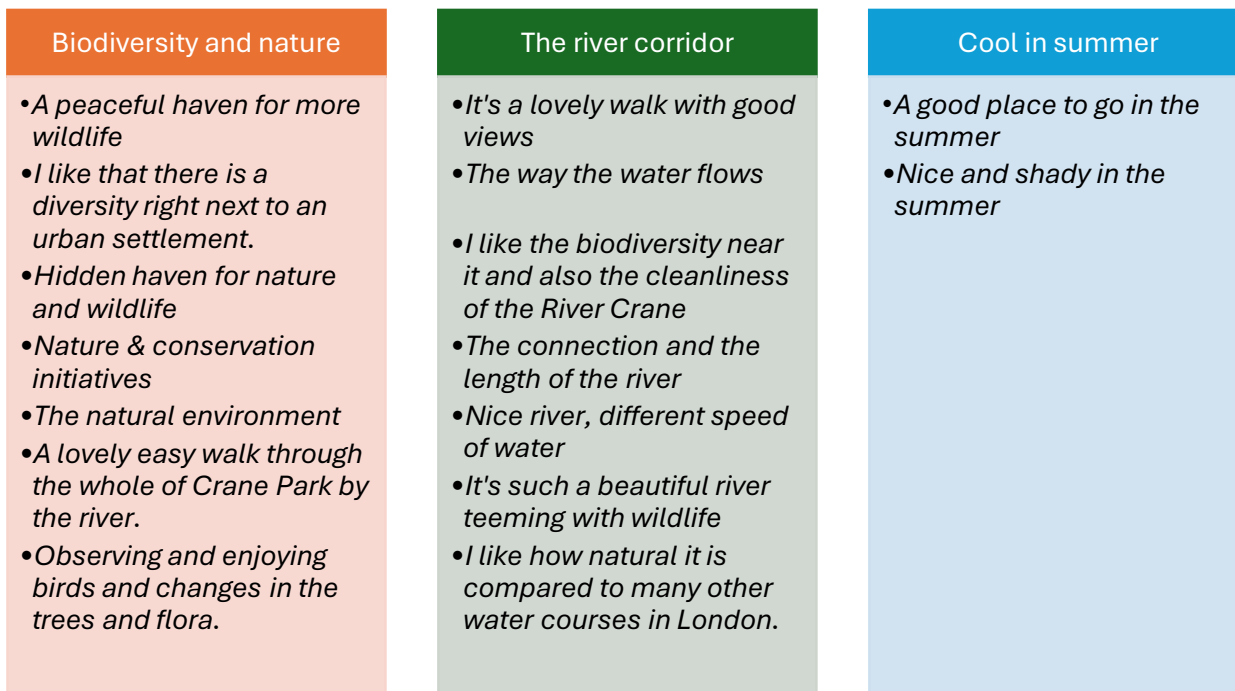
What do you like about it?

This was an open question that allowed participants to respond in their own words. There were 229 different answers to this question (some participants contributed multiple answers). To understand these answers, we picked out key words from the responses to rank the themes. The top themes are shown here:



The most popular answer was that it was a peaceful and relaxing place to be (14%), they liked the river corridor and the river (10%), nature (8%) and the wildlife and biodiversity (7%). Specifically mentioned were the trees (2%), birds (2%) and fresh air (3%). Volunteering was mentioned by 2% of participants.

Some people (3%) commented on how cool the parks were in the summer. The results given here are illustrated by the comments made by the participants.



Participants told us that they liked the fact that the parks and river were quiet and away from roads (5%). They liked the views (3%) and open spaces (6%), the sounds (3%) and feeling close to nature (7%) or being outside (1%). Some participants (2%) also said that they enjoyed the open spaces because they lived close by.

Participants (4%) said that they liked how clean the river and green spaces were. Some participants told us that they liked the park for walking (6%), dog walking (1%), cycling (2%) and exercise/running (3%).

Quiet	Close by	Clean	Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peaceful walk away from the hustle & bustle. • Natural world within London 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's close by and green • I live really close/nature • Its local, on our doorstep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its respected and kept clean • Nice walks. Clean. Wildlife and plants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nice river and trail • Pathways along the river connecting different open spaces important to nature • Walks and nature, possible walks and talks with guide • Nice long walk then there a cafe at the end • The footpaths are great. Love the river and wildlife • It is green and peaceful to cycle down • Lovely for walking the dog, calming, and being at peace with nature

Some people told us that they liked the spaces because of opportunities to socialise (2%), organised activities (1%), and family spaces (1%). Other participants talked about how they enjoyed the history of the spaces (1%).

Some participants made negative comments.

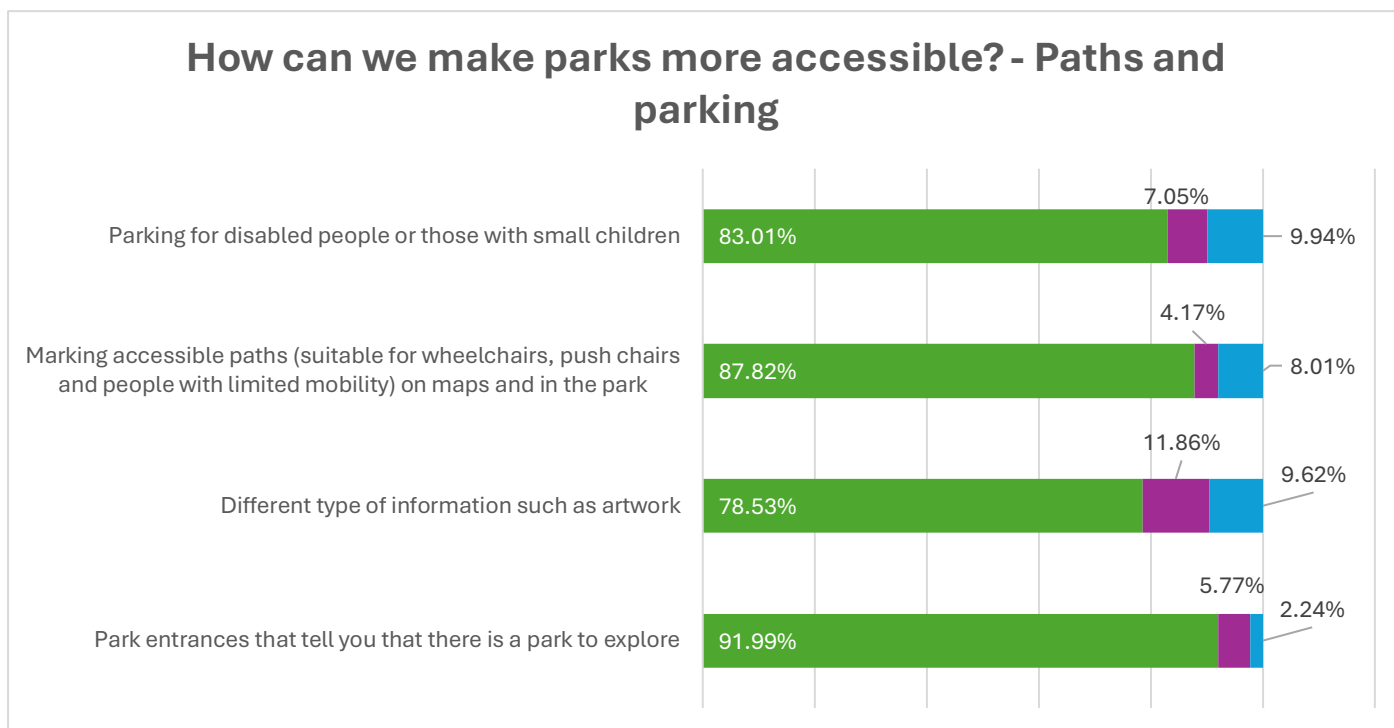
Community	Negative comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like that it encourages activities • The greenery and community spirit • Community spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing - it's empty - nothing to do • I've heard the name many times, so it must be popular for some reason. • Not enough information of events • Feel unsafe • It's getting nicer • Not accessible or publicised locally • Never knew such a place existed • There is a nice river near by, I don't know about until now.

How can we make the park more accessible?

Paths and parking

The next section of the consultation concentrated on how the green spaces and river corridor could be more accessible for visitors.

We used tick boxes which asked for a yes or no answer. There was space for comments.



Most participants (92%) felt that there should be information at park entrances to indicate that there is a green space open to the public that can be explored. This often exists, but is inside the park, so not obvious from the road– Avenue Park entrance on High Street is an example of this. Most participants (88%) also thought that including accessible paths on maps and within the park was important. Currently, accessible paths are not marked on the path network.

A large proportion responding (83%) thought that the provision of parking for disabled people or those with children was important to making parks accessible. Very few parks have parking close to the park. Including a disabled parking space adjacent to park entrances is one way of addressing the situation for disabled people at least. Provision for people who are not registered disabled is more problematic.

Signage

The next section of the consultation focused on signage.

Eighty eight percent of participants said that there should be signs to help you find your way to the park from community spaces and 82% of participants thought that there should be signs showing the way in the park (wayfinding) and information about what to do in the park e.g. showing walking routes. There was some appetite for signage showing history and nature walks (87.5%), signs giving information about wildlife and nature (88.5%) and signs about activities in the park (80%). There was less interest in apps and online guides (75%) that show walking routes and giving information. In the comments section there was some resistance (7%) to the use of apps and online guides to guide park users.

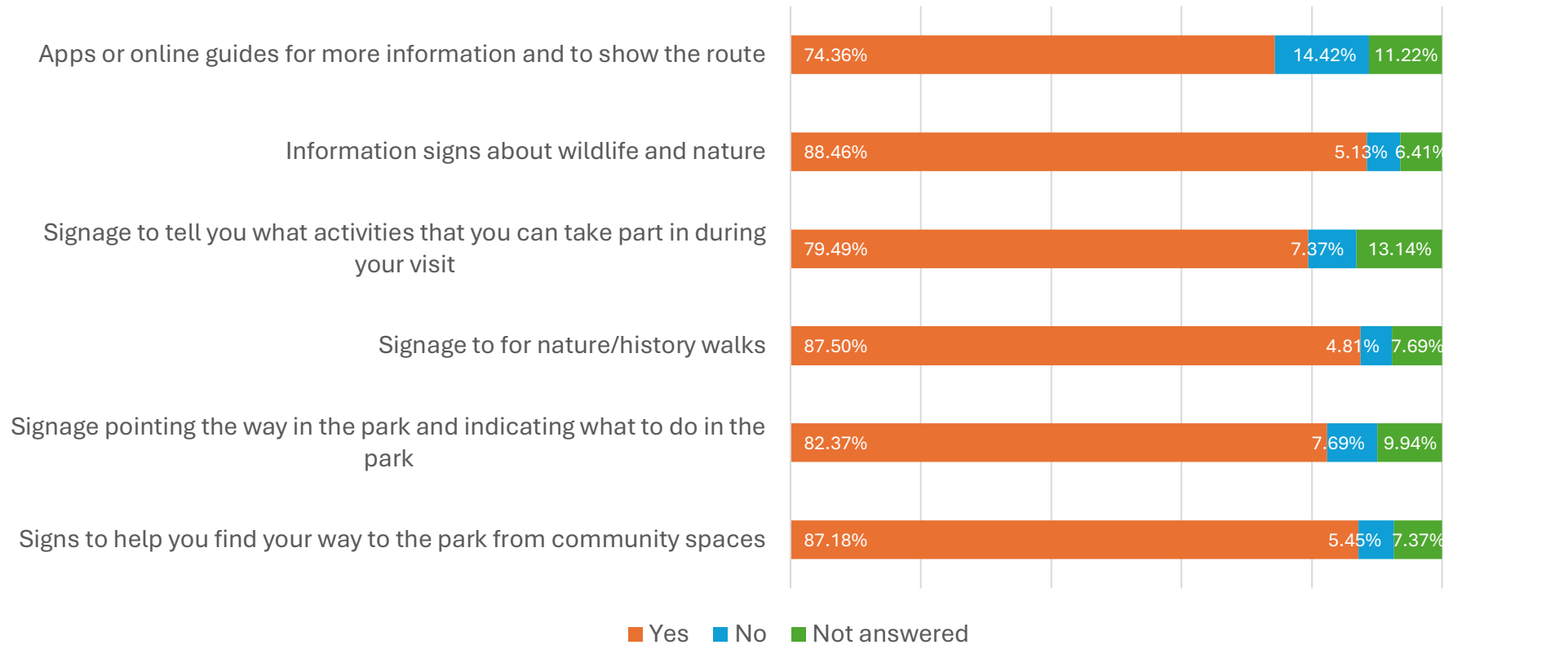
“Having to download an app might be problematic.”

“Please mark key features on google maps and gates which are open to public.”

One respondent wanted to use an app to limit access to the park:

"I would like to bring to your notice, is to have to pay a small fare before entering or have an app and scan your ticket to enter (which has your name and personal details) so that we don't have mishaps at the park and delve more peacefully and meaningfully."

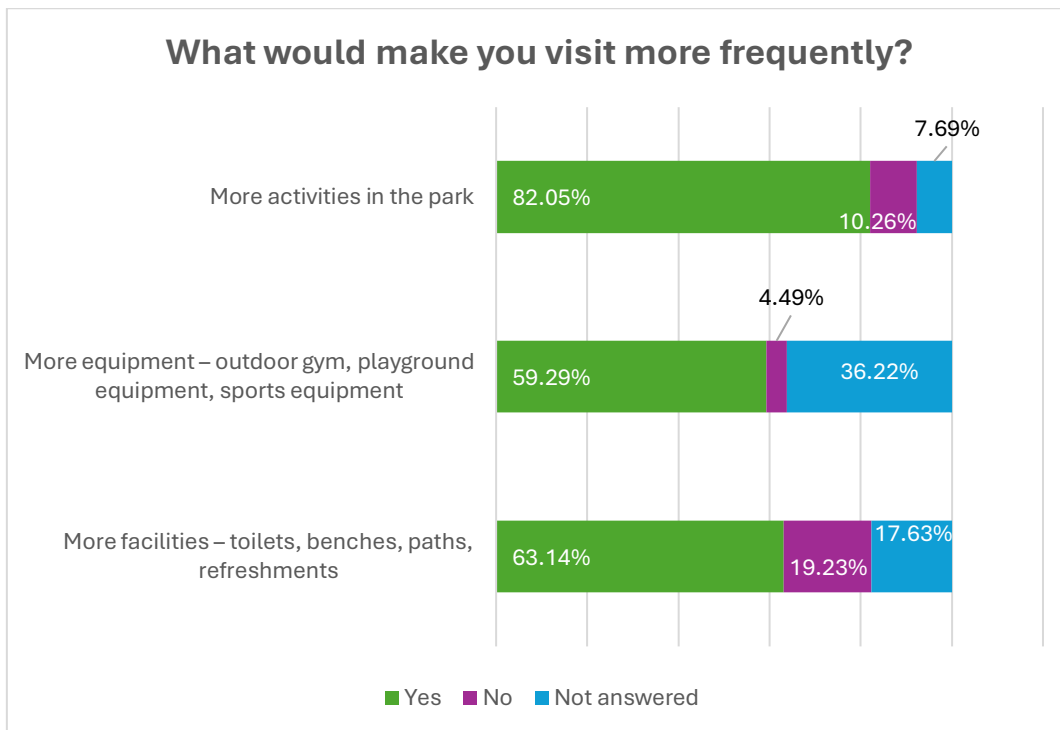
How can we make parks more accessible? Signs and information



Facilities in parks

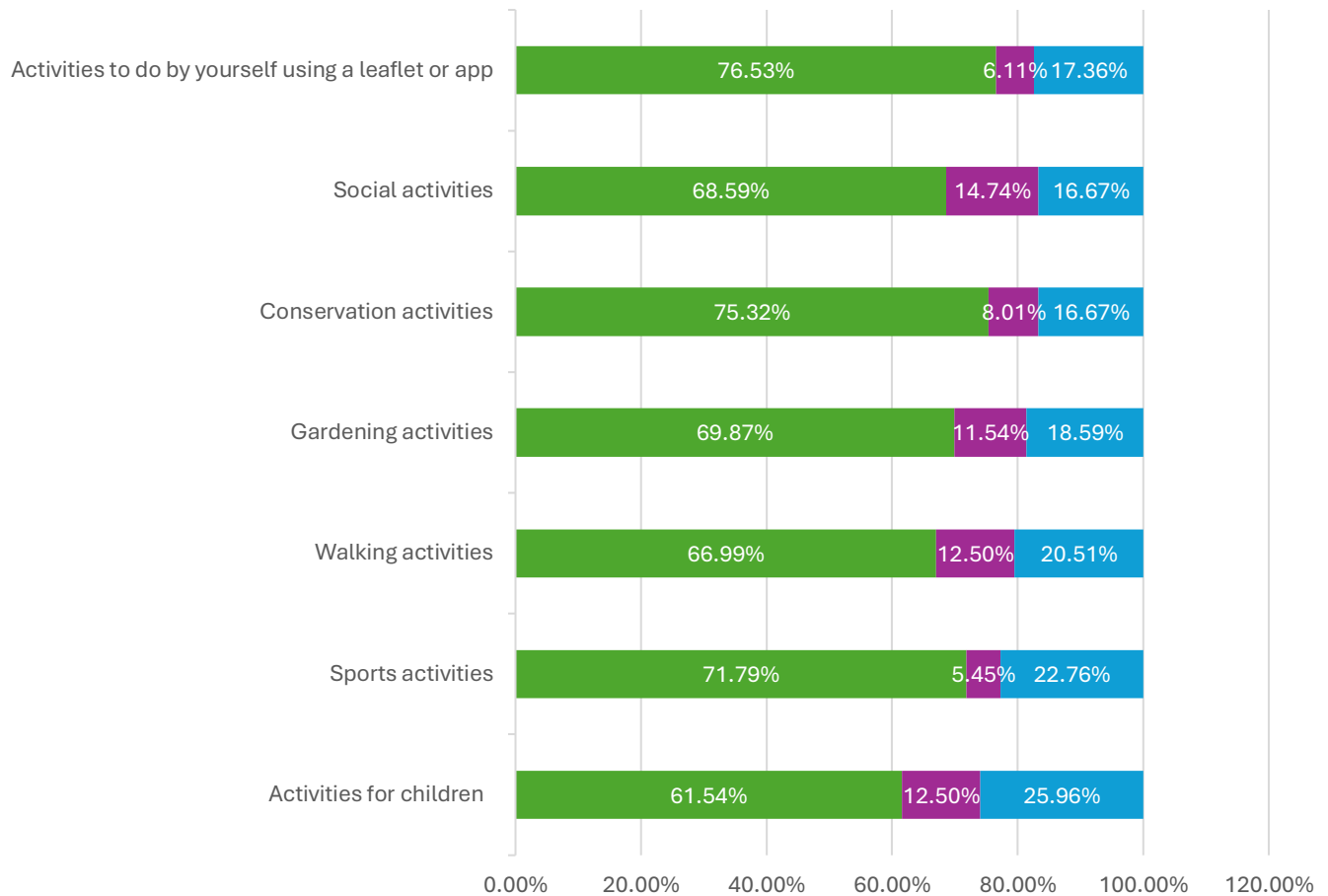
The next set of questions asked *What would make you visit more often?*

The consultation suggested more facilities (63% agreed), more equipment (59% agreed) and more activities in the park (82% agreed).



The next questions focused on the type of activities and the audience that could be offered. Activities to do by yourself using a leaflet or app was the most popular option (76.5%), followed by conservation volunteering (75.3%) and gardening (69.8%). There was interest in sports activities (71%) and walking activities (67%). Social activities (68.6%) and activities for children (61.5%) scored lower than all other options.

Activities to make the parks more accessible



Links between green spaces

We asked participants in the consultation “How could we make better walking/cycling links between green spaces?” There were a total of 150 comments which we have divided into different categories.

Top 6 suggestions

- Improved path network (16.7%)
- Improved signage (14.7%)
- Improved cycle route (12.0%)
- Dual use cycling/ walking route (10.0%)
- Information and wayfinding (9.3%)
- Improved access (7.3%)

6-13

- More organised activities (6.0%)
- Improved infrastructure e.g. benches, toilets (6.0%)
- Route improvements (4.7%)
- Vegetation management (4.7%)
- Improved safety (4.0%)
- Suggested route improvements (4.0%)
- Improved road crossings (4.0%)

14-17

- Cleaner and litter free (2.0%)
- Bike hire (1.3%)
- Lighting (1.3%)
- No change (1.3%)

Most comments suggested a need for improved pathways that were accessible all year, clear of vegetation and safe to use. Some participants said that there was a need for dual use paths that separated pedestrians and cyclists, others highlighted the need for improved road crossings. There were also suggestions for new sections of paths. These themes are explored in more detail.

Improved paths

- *Separate paths for safety*
- *Better "all weather" paths, better lighting, maintained information boards, They are often old and faded.*
- *Keep the paths passable.*
- *Less muddy paths.*
- *Safe paths for walkers*

Cycle lanes

- *Cycle routes to be maintained well*
- *Cycling and skating lanes*
- *Cycling lanes so children can join*
- *Quiet cycle lanes*
- *You can make a cycling path through or in between the green space*

Dual use paths

- *Cycling lanes to avoid cyclists cycling into people walking.*
- *Dedicated cycling lanes and footpaths*
- *Different path for walking and cycling*
- *Having clear plans and boundaries,- a narrow cycle path for cyclists and a wider path for pedestrians.*
- *Make it safe, check health and safety, cycle only lanes*
- *No cycling*
- *Private parts for cycling space only*
- *Safer walking routes with cycle lanes*

Road crossings and new routes

- *Improve the stretch between Staines Road and Causeway*
- *Open a route along the river from Waye Avenue Open Space to the A4 providing a means to cross the Great Southwest Road and the Causeway.*
- *Area of Cranford that is closed to the public should be opened asap so that you have a continuous walk/cycle from beginning to end.*
- *Improve all road crossings*
- *Lights should be proper, some time there are lights hidden by trees.*

Signage and information

- *Adding fingerpost direction signs within the park would be good.*
- *Better signage and more walking events*
- *Better signage point the way.*
- *Clear, accessible easy to walk on paths with signs, average distance/walk time for those with mobility problems.*
- *Making people aware of links providing info about available walks.*
- *More information boards and signage. I was in Pevensey Road Park & didn't realise the river was there*
- *Provide proper signposting within Pevensey Nature Reserve. People walking along the Crane frequently ask which path they should take to get to Cavalry Tunnel and Hounslow Heath and there is desperate need for signposting. Also signposting to the bridge to cross the Crane to get to Little Park is needed.*
- *Signage of off-road routes*

Vegetation maintenance

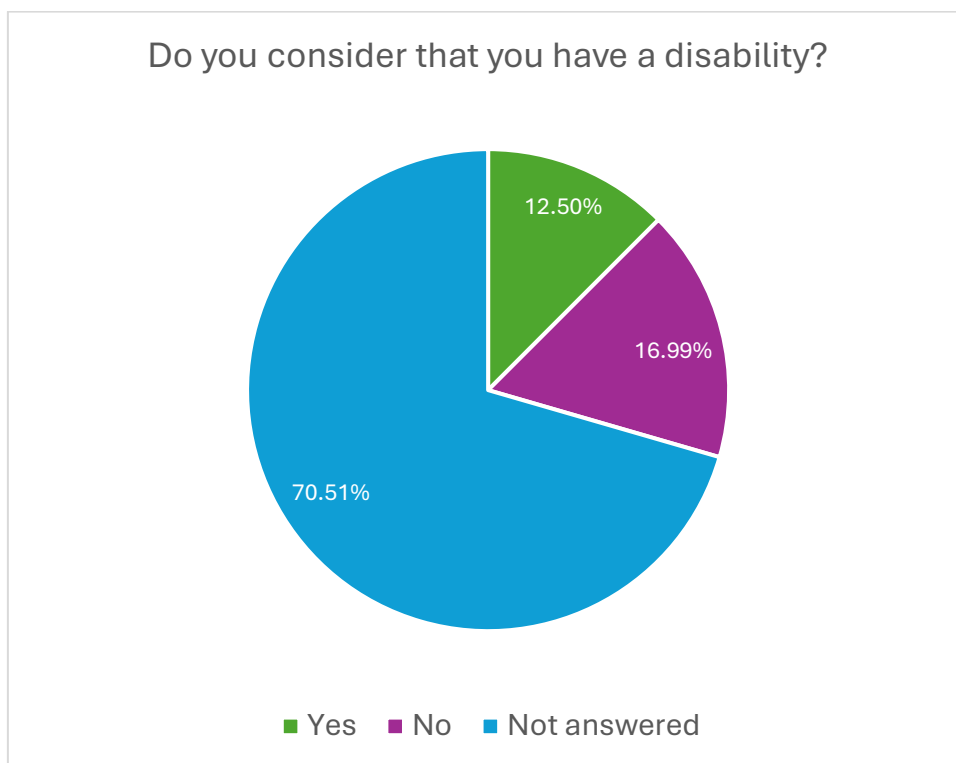
- *Clear paths and information*
- *Clear pathways*
- *Having the routes but then keeping up the maintenance.*
- *Overgrown vegetation and rubbish is off putting. Also to be well lit.*

Activities

- *Activities for mums and children, walking or cycling with them.*
- *Community group activities*
- *Encourage walking from Cranford to Isleworth.*
- *Group walks or group activities or group running to encourage use. More of communal areas in case of cold weather/raining*
- *Make it into a game/competition*
- *Meet centrally to travel to location with others*
- *More activity for family specially when raining or bad weather.*

Do you consider that you have a disability?

The final questions asked if the participants considered themselves to be disabled and whether this hindered their access to parks.



We learnt that 28% of people with disabilities faced no barriers to their access to green spaces.

“It doesn't, I am dyslexic”

“Hearing loss so not at all”

“No limit, but time is a limit”

“It does not limit my access to green spaces.”

Others told us that their access was limited by their disability:

“Limits the amount of time I am outside”

“Arthritis in lower back limits how far I can walk”

“Weather aversions like windy, stormy etc so can only visit in good weather”

Others told us that they had found a way around the barriers to access that their disability caused:

“Can't go alone, will only go with a group”

“Sight impairment, prefer to meet up to get to destination”

“(Mental health), limits certain areas and activities”

“I use Osterley Park, where I can hire a wheelchair”

Some told us that their disability means that they can't make use of open spaces and parks at all:

“Mental Health which makes me not go out.”

“Fear of open spaces keeps me inside”

“Mobility at times/ pain levels stop me”

“I can't walk.”

People with disabilities told us that there were several factors that acted as barriers to accessing parks and open spaces:

1. There were several comments about the need for accessible paths.
2. There were comments about the lack of facilities which directly impacted people with disabilities.
3. Lack of appropriate transport and parking was mentioned by some people with disabilities.
4. There was some concern for personal safety recorded from people with disabilities.

Need for accessible paths	Lack of facilities	Transport and parking	Personal safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I need flatter ground to walk on." • "The paths are not easy to walk on." • "It's difficult walking on uneven ground and there are no benches." • "My son uses walking aid, pathway isn't friendly." • "Need even walkways everywhere." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I need seating to be able to walk, and the park only has 1 bench." • "Not enough to do there - Need benches to sit, clear signage, cafe, flat paths." • "Not enough facilities, eg. toilets, café, • there are no toilets or conservatory." • "Lack of structured paths/routes or poorly documented." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Transport doesn't always go to the park." • "Not enough parking." • "Getting to the park with young children with disabilities is a challenge." • "We can't go because it takes so long to get there." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm worried about safety to go out. More police patrolling can help.

Community hopes and goals

The consultation shows that the river corridor and green spaces are valued by residents and visitors as a peaceful and relaxing place to be. They particularly value the river corridor/the river, nature, wildlife and biodiversity. The spaces are used for leisure and to support health and wellbeing.

Some community hopes and goals can be identified from the consultation.

1. Most participants felt that there should be information at park entrances to indicate that there is a green space open to the public that can be explored. This often exists, but is inside the park, so not obvious from the road– Avenue Park entrance on High Street is an example of this. A programme of park badging on the highway or beside park entrances could be explored.
2. Most participants thought that including accessible paths on maps and within the park was important. Currently accessible paths are not marked on the path network maps.
3. A large proportion of responders thought that the provision of parking for disabled people or those with children was important to making parks accessible. Very few parks have parking close to the park. Including a disabled parking space adjacent to park entrances is one way of addressing the situation for disabled people at least. Provision for people who are not registered disabled is more problematic.
4. In answer to the "What would make you visit more often?" question there was limited interest in additional equipment or facilities in parks but there was interest in more activities. Popular suggestions were: activities to do by yourself using a leaflet or app was the most popular option, conservation volunteering and gardening. There was interest in sports activities and walking activities. Social activities and activities for children scored lower than all other options. Some people might have answered this question as they felt that there were already enough activities for children available rather than activities for children not being as important as other activities suggested.
5. The consultation explored "How could we make better walking/cycling links between green spaces?" Comments suggested a need for improved pathways that were accessible all year, clear of vegetation and safe to use. Some participants said that there was a need for dual use paths that separated

pedestrians and cyclists, others highlighted the need for improved road crossings. There were also suggestions for new sections of paths.

6. There is evidence of the need to deal with the barriers to engagement for people with disabilities. This includes the need for accessible path network, more facilities such as benches, toilets and signage. The lack of appropriate transport and parking was mentioned by some people with disabilities.
7. There was some concern for personal safety recorded by people with disabilities. More people in the parks will go a long way to make people with disabilities and other park users feel safer and more comfortable in the green spaces. Keeping vegetation clear along paths and sightlines will also support this concern. This is a role that is suitable for volunteers.

What next?

The next steps include continuing to work with Hounslow Council to explore the possibility of addressing some of the community’s hopes and goals. The table below indicates next steps for each of these items:

Hopes and goals

Next step

Longer term

Hopes and goals	Next step	Longer term
Information at park entrances	Assess each park entrance to understand which park entrances are badged and have information about where this is located.	Trial the impact of including park signage outside a park so that it is visible to passersby.
Include accessible paths on maps	Indicate accessible paths on new signage and in printed leaflets.	Make use of services such as Accessible to include information about accessibility on a trusted national website. Currently Leitrim Park is the only park in Hounslow along the Crane Corridor that has a listing: https://www.accessable.co.uk/london-borough-of-hounslow/access-guides/leitrim-park
Parking for disabled people and other groups e.g. parents with children	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess options for disabled parking bays at each entrance to parks along the river corridor and trial the impact in a selection of sites. 2. Promote the use of blue badges when visiting parks. They allow the holder to park in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cashless parking bays. • Resident permit holder bays. • Disabled bays. • On single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours, so long as no obstruction is caused, and a return clock is displayed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the possibility of including disabled and priority parking bays in the streets close to parks in the green spaces along the river. Hounslow’s Parking Strategy has an action to “D3: Implement and maintain a reactive approach to customer feedback and requests for additional disabled parking bays.” 2. Explore the possibility of including priority bays close to parks. “Council-run car parks do not provide priority parking for users except Blue Badge holders. There are specific groups for whom safety and security concerns can arise when parking, including women travelling alone and parking users with children. There are several examples across the United Kingdom and Europe of car parks providing bays marked for use as Parent & Child or Women-Only bays.”

Develop activities in parks	Work with Hounslow Council, Friends groups and other organisations to create walking routes that are waymarked or available on an app so that there are plenty of options and choice. Promote opportunities for conservation volunteering and community gardens, and activities that bring people together. See also the suggestion of path warden volunteering outlined below.	Develop signposting that lists all available activities in one place. This should be accessible and easy to use. There should be different formats suitable for different communities.
Develop walking and cycling links between green spaces	Explore the possibility of volunteer path wardens who would have a role inspecting the route, reporting problems, maintaining the route and engaging with visitors.	Explore the need for and install as appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dual use paths, • the identified new routes, • improved road crossings.
Improved facilities for disabled people	Increase the length of accessible path and include facilities such as benches and signage	Explore the options for increasing facilities such as toilets and refreshments at parks that act as a node or hub for the trail.
Personal safety	Encourage greater use of the river path and green spaces in order to have natural surveillance in the green spaces. Keep vegetation clear along paths and sightlines. This is a role that is suitable for volunteers.	

Proposal for a Path Warden Scheme

One respondent mentioned that there is a role for volunteer wardens along the route of the river corridor. In Hounslow, volunteer path wardens could act as "eyes and ears" for the Crane River Path, performing routine checks, minor maintenance, and reporting hazards to local authorities or managers and working alongside the council contractor to rectify them. Similar opportunities exist with organisations like the National Trails, Woodland Trust, and local councils. Examples from other routes suggest that they typically walk assigned sections 3-4 times a year to clear vegetation, check signs, and manage vegetation.

Key Responsibilities of Volunteer Wardens on the North Downs Way include:

- Inspections: Walking specific trail sections to check for damaged gates, broken stiles, or broken signs.
- Maintenance: Carrying out light tasks such as removing overhanging brambles, cleaning signs, and litter picking.
- Reporting: Logging maintenance issues via apps or maps to inform managers.
- Visitor Engagement: Providing a friendly, visible presence to advise users on routes and safety

North Downs Way: https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/trails/north-downs-way/volunteering/

This model could be developed in Hounslow and scaled up to the remaining boroughs along the route if successful.

Appendix 1: Consultation questions

Please answer these questions.		Please tick as appropriate		
The River Crane in Hounslow				
Have you visited the River Crane?			Yes	No
How often do you visit?	Daily	Monthly	Once a year	Never
What do you like about it?				

How can we make the park more accessible?		
1. Park entrances that tell you that there is a park to explore	Yes	No
2. Different type of information such as art work	Yes	No
3. Marking paths suitable for wheelchairs, push chairs and people with limited mobility on maps and in the park	Yes	No
4. Signs to help you find your way to the park from community spaces,	Yes	No
5. Signs showing you the way into the park entrance and what to do in it	Yes	No
6. Sign about nature/history walks	Yes	No
7. Signs showing you to the park entrance and what to do in it	Yes	No
8. Information signs about wildlife and nature.	Yes	No
9. Apps or online guides for more information and to show the route	Yes	No
10. Parking for disabled people or those with small children	Yes	No

What would make you visit more frequently?		
1. More facilities – toilets, benches, paths, refreshments	Yes	No
2. More equipment – outdoor gym, playground equipment, sports equipment	Yes	No
3. More activities in the park	Yes	No
• Activities for children	Yes	No

• Sports activities,	Yes	No
• Walking activities,	Yes	No
• Gardening activities,	Yes	No
• Conservation activities,	Yes	No
• Social activities	Yes	No
• Activities to do by yourself using a leaflet or app	Yes	No
• Activities to do in a group e.g. walking or wellbeing activities	Yes	No
4. Other activities in parks that you would like to take part in		

1. How could we make better walking/cycling links between green spaces?		
2. Do you consider that you have a disability?	Yes	No
3. How does this limit your access to green spaces?		
We will share anonymized results of this survey with project partners but we'd love to keep in touch with you.		
4. Would you like to keep in touch with us?	Yes	No
Name:		
Email:		
Telephone:		
Can we share your details with project partners?	Yes	No