

## Maidstone Play Area Strategy Consultation Results – based on 177 online responses and 18 other responses (email, letter, etc)

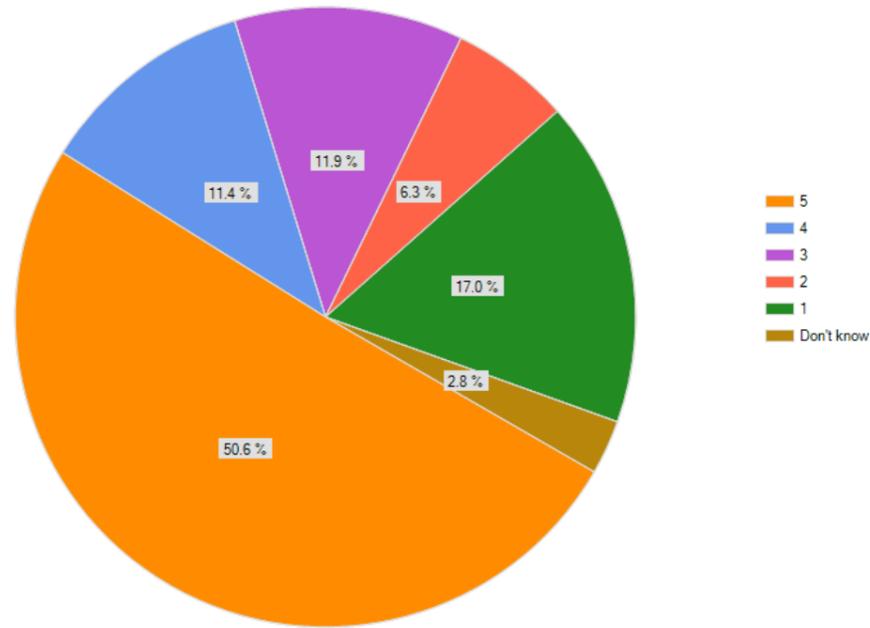
### Summary of results

- Two petitions received, both with over one hundred signatures, for Peverel Drive and Freshland Road.
- More comments received from several respondents concerning Peverel Drive, Freshland Road, Keswick Drive, Roseholme, The Harbour at Sutton Valence, Bedgebury Close, Shepherds Gate Drive, The Cockpit at Marden, Somerset Road Play Area and Shaw Close.
- Further suggestions include the formation of a rural play areas consortium to develop further rural play area policies that are suitable for rural areas.

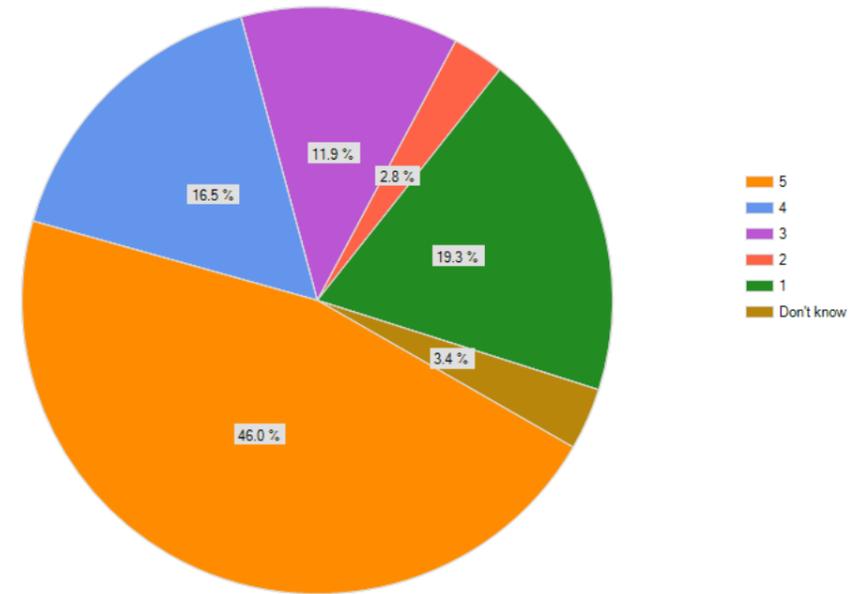
### Suggested actions

- Peverel Drive – that the play area be kept on and improved using the S106 development contribution from the Kent Frozen Foods development on Ware Street before being handed over to Thurnham Parish Council (for discussion with the Parish Council and/or residents)
- Freshland Road – that the play area be retained as non-strategic with the current equipment being maintained. Other organisations or groups will still be able to come forward to look at taking on the site. Once the equipment fails through health and safety inspections, the status of the play area will be reviewed for consideration again through the yearly review of the Play Strategy.
- Keswick Drive – on further consideration of the walking distances with the gradient of the hill taken into account that the play area be retained as non-strategic with the current equipment being maintained. Other organisations or groups will still be able to come forward to look at taking on the site. Once the equipment fails through health and safety inspections, the status of the play area will be reviewed for consideration again through the yearly review of the Play Strategy.
- Roseholme – as Claire Park, with its excellent facilities for all age groups is only 270m from Roseholme games court, and the area suffers with antisocial behaviour, this facility will be made available to other organisations and groups to take on before the facility is removed. Two groups have come forward expressing an interest in this site.
- The Harbour at Sutton Valence – this area cannot be removed as it belongs to the Parish Council. A discussion will be had with the Parish Council regarding strategic sites.
- Bedgebury Close - The next nearest play area is 300m from Bedgebury Close at the large open space on Ashurst Close, which is due to be upgraded as part of the £1.8M improvement plans detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document. This will provide much needed play provision at the heart of the Vinters Park estate to meet the needs of many households within walking distance. Bedgebury Close will remain on the strategy document as non-strategic to be taken on or removed.
- Shepherds Gate Drive - the play area to be retained as non-strategic with the current equipment being maintained. Other organisations or groups will still be able to come forward to look at taking on the site. Once the equipment fails through health and safety inspections, the status of the play area would be reviewed for consideration again through the yearly review of the Play Strategy.
- The Cockpit at Marden – As Marden Playing Fields is only 300m away from the Cockpit this play area will remain on the strategy document as non-strategic to be taken on or removed. There are plans to refurbish the play area at Marden Playing Fields.
- Somerset Road Play Area – as Shepway Green Play area is 790m away and Somerset Road through its poor location suffers with antisocial behaviour and safety issues in the evenings, this play area will remain on the strategy document as non-strategic to be taken on or removed.
- Shaw Close – As Penenden Heath Play Area, as a main district play area providing play equipment for all age groups, is 540m away, that Shaw Close play area will remain on the strategy document as non-strategic to be taken on or removed.
- Fountain Park (Lacock Gardens) – As South Park Play area, as a main district play area providing play equipment for all age groups, is 460m away, that Fountain Park will remain on the strategy document as non-strategic to be transferred to a third party or removed.
- Juniper Close – further investigation shows this that although officially the developer still owns this play area, the developer went into administration and is no longer in existence. The council has been inspecting the play equipment to ensure its safe for the public to use. Will carry on with inspections and basic maintenance work as required. Will look to see if MBC can take ownership of the land.
- That a rural play areas consortium could be formed, lead by Headcorn Parish Council and other rural organisations, and supported by MBC, to formulate future rural play area policies to feed into the play area strategy. This can be added to the Play Strategy at a further review date should the rural community wish to further pursue this direction.

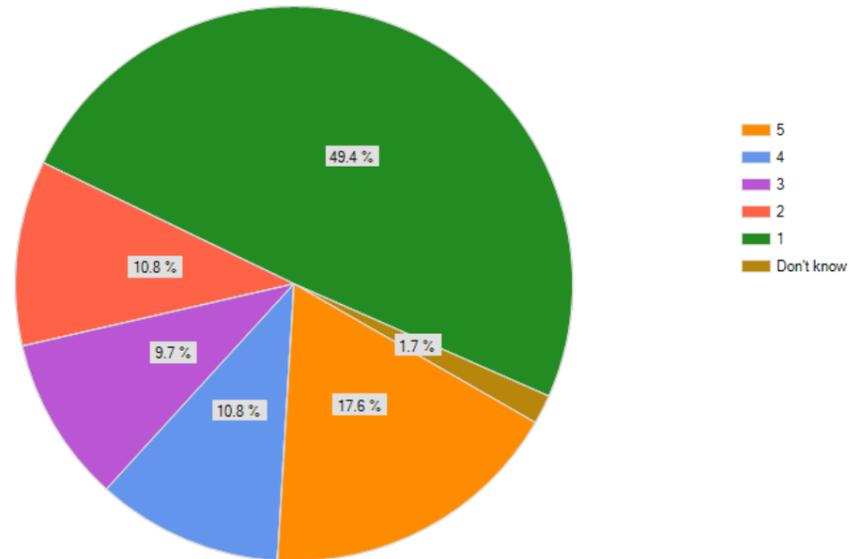
Do you support the setting of a local standard that the majority of households will be no more than 12 minutes walking distance from a good play area? (5 - strongly support, to 1 - do not support at all)



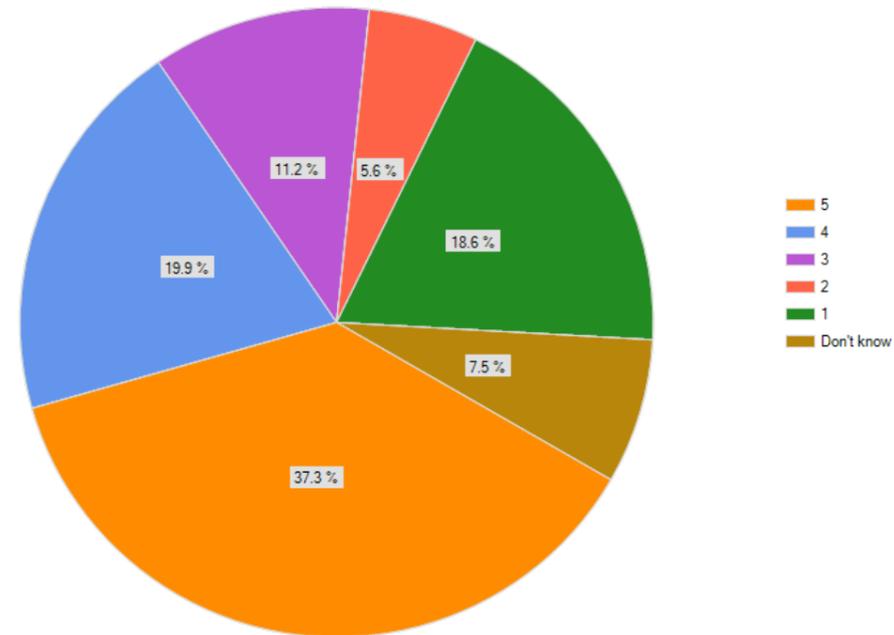
The council plans to target spending at a network of strategically important play areas to fulfil this standard. This will involve upgrading many play areas in the borough that are currently below this 'good' standard. Do you support this approach? (5 - strongly support, to 1 - do not support at all)



In order to make the best use of funds to upgrade the strategic network of play areas, 20 non-strategically important play areas will be offered to the community to be managed. If the community does not want to take over the management, equipment will be removed and the area kept as open space for residents to enjoy. Residents close to these areas will still be no more than 12 minutes walk from a 'good' play area. Do you agree that this is an appropriate way to make the best use of the available funds? (5 - strongly agree, to 1 - strongly disagree)



Do you agree to the allocation of funding to support a grant scheme that allows Parish Councils to improve any strategically important play areas that they are responsible for? (5 - strongly agree, to 1 - strongly disagree)



Open ended questions and answers

Form No	If you currently use one of the 20 play areas identified as 'non-strategically important':		Do you have any other comments about the strategy?	
	Do you know where your nearest alternative play area is?	Do you have concerns about the plans for the play area you currently use?	Comments	Council Response
2	n/a	Yes, its been used by Drug Addicts (needles left) and under aged drinkers (Queen Elizabeth Square)	The playground on Queen Elizabeth square (which currently has had over half of the play structures remove I assume for safety reasons) needs to be monitored for the above reasons. Most residents refuse to allow their children to use if (I for one) due to the risk from dis guarded needles and broken grass for under aged drinkers. I'd rather travel to Cobtree park where I know my children can play safely	We receive anti-social behaviour reports for this area which are passed on to our Community Safety team and the Police. We do also encourage residents to directly contact the police with reports, as this builds a body of evidence which allows the police to consider possible action plans in hot spot areas. There is a covenant on Queen Elizabeth Square that the Council must provide and maintain an equipped play area on the open space. For this reason, and given the amount of damage the play area has received through vandalism, we are currently considering the possible facility options for this area.
3			The bedgebury close play area is used all day long.....! Should not be removed!	The next nearest play area is 300m from Bedgebury Close at the large open space on Ashurst Close, which is due to be upgraded as part of the £1.8M improvement plans detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document.  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.
5	Coxheath Village Hall	Concerned no one will take it over and that it will get sold off for housing. Going to email Parish Council to see if they have any thoughts/plans.	Understand this is part of the cost cutting everyone is going through but this is directly opposite my house so please understand the potential impact.	Comments about Whitebeam Drive Play Area in Coxheath.  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)
11			This is a non-essential service and should not receive this level of investment. Some good play areas are important. But this presents a silly guarantee including sparsely populated areas.	Comment noted.
13			I would be wanting to clarify if the maintenance figure is just for the play area or the whole park in which it is found, our local play area is designated green but we still encounter maintenance issues.	Comment noted. The maintenance figures referred to are for the play areas and not the rest of the open spaces.

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15	Popular Grove (Giddyhorn Lane)	yes, poplar grove is more than 12 mins away	What assistance does the council offer if the play area in Keswick Drive is taken over by the community? This play area is used by many families in this vicinity.	<p>As detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document the council will offer non-financial support and assistance to those community groups interested in taking on a play area. We will be producing an information pack that will give advice on all aspects of running a play facility, from inspections, risk assessments and maintenance through to applying for funding and how to manage volunteers. This will allow interest parties to consider all aspects before taking on a commitment. There will be a 12 month period to enable groups to look at this properly and the play area would not be closed during this time.</p> <p>On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance, gradient of the hill and relative locations of households to the play areas will take place before a final decision is made.</p>
16	Woolley Road Senacre	Not kept very well. But needs to remain !	Should distribute the money to all play areas NOT remove any of the 20	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels.</p> <p>Senacre Square play area on Reculver Walk by the primary school is identified as a strategically important play area and will receive funding for improvements as per the strategy's action plan.</p>
17			My child uses Mote Park but there is NOWHERE for pedestrians to cross Mote Av/Willow Way safely	Comment noted and passed onto KCC Highways for information.
18	Vinters Park	No	Please include inclusive play equipment so that disabled children can play alongside siblings and peers. This is vitally important and sadly lacking in Maidstone	The inclusion of inclusive play equipment will form part of the improvement plans when we come to the design stage.

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20	No	No	I think this is a good strategy as the improvement of play areas within the borough is very important, not only to provide the local residents with good / safe play facilities but also to encourage visitors from other neighbouring boroughs. The improvement work for example that has been completed at Mote Park and Cobtree in recent years has been a credit to the Council and encourages visitors from all areas of Kent.	Comment noted, thank you for your response.
23			how is 12 minutes walk measured? By adult walking speed or by a small child's? If by an adult it could be too far for a small child to walk to, play and walk back.	As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure.  Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.
24	No	It comes under Amber and says it was improved in 2008 but it is currently closed due to safety issues	Whilst this is all well and good, is it over kill for the amount of play area's in the borough?	Comment noted.
27	Yes	No		

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29			The strategy seems to be covering a cut in public amenities and funding by showing that you are spending elsewhere - robbing peter to pay paul. The strategy needs to be posted outside of every play area affected and needs to be clearer on which sites are affected. Furthermore, the survey questions in this survey are very confusing and leading - and will result in a biased response. Whoever wrote this survey has no idea how to write a survey without biasing it. Question number 4 leads me to agree with the question by using the word 'agree' in it! And if I 'strongly agree' does it make it a double negative? Who knows. It would help if you put a link to the 20 play areas identified in question 5 too. What a terrible terrible survey maidstone borough council.	The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure. (23)
32	Yes	No		
33	Park Wood Green	No		
35	Yes	No	The play area I use with my grandchildren at Vinters Park is a bit secluded by trees, which is nice but it is often vandalised. It is often littered with food waste, cans of beer and cigarettes. Do any of the parks have cctv ? the people who live nearby can't find it pleasant and probably wish it wasn't there.	The large open space on Ashurst Close is due to be upgraded as part of the £1.8M improvement plans detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document. If more people use the area to play and enjoy the outdoors then the less undesirable activity will take place.
39	N/A		Have you tried walking a 2 year old for 12 mins? it takes 20! (Not a moan as walking is good for kids:-)	Comment noted, thank you for your response.
41	Marden Playing Field	Cockpits Play Area	The Cockpit play area is an important play area ideally positioned to support many families with young children. This is a cynical political move to reduce on-going maintenance costs to the Borough who own the Cockpit and transfer greater costs to local residents as the Playing field is owned and maintained by the Parish. This is yet another example for double taxation for rural residents. I sincerely trust Marden's Borough Councillors will be objecting to this in the strongest possible terms.	The next nearest play area is Marden Playing Fields, a distance of 300m via quiet footpaths from The Cockpit. A total of £31,000 in S106 developer funds have been ring-fenced for the Parish owned play area at Marden Playing Fields for which the Parish Council is currently planning improvements.  Currently there are no opportunities for the Parishes to apply for funding from the Borough Council. The Strategy will enable the Parish Council to make applications for funding to the Borough Council in the future. It will also allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure within the village.

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44	Midley Close Play Area	Adisham Drive Play Area	I think that the 12 minute walk is not really a good measure. This represents more than half a mile and takes no account of topography, which in some instances involves steep hilly landscape. This survey asks questions which are not relevant to me. I would suggest that play areas will affect mainly those with young children and perhaps grandparents. I am the local councillor for Allington. This, together with the whole of central Maidstone is unparished, therefore there is no organisation similar to a Parish Council to whom one may turn to 'take over' play areas to which you are looking for alternative 'ownership'.	<p>Adisham Drive is identified as a strategically important play area and will benefit from improvements on adoption of the Play Area Strategy.</p> <p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure.</p> <p>Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.</p>
45	Poplar Grove (Giddyhorn Lane)	Yes	I live at Shearwater ME160DW. Poplar grove (bottom park) is the nearest strategically important park suitable for a toddler and children under 15., and is more than double your 12 minute walk away, walking at adult pace, let alone taking into account the walking speed of a young child, pushing a buggy, or the hill to climb back home. Very unhappy at the proposal.	On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance, gradient of the hill and relative locations of households to the play areas will take place before a final decision is made.

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46	No	No	No	
47	Yes	Yes. If we do have to run it as a community I'm unclear as to how we go about getting funding. I take it as it's not 'strategically important' we wouldn't have access to the same budgets as the others?	I'm not so sure about your plans for how communities will be supported by you to run, maintain and upgrade any non-strategic facilities. It feels a bit like you're saying either take them on yourselves or we'll get rid of them. If a community takes on a playground then I believe that community should, at the very least, be given the funds that you would have spent returning the playground to an open space.	As detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document the council will offer non-financial support and assistance to those community groups interested in taking on a play area. We will be producing an information pack that will give advice on all aspects of running a play facility, from inspections, risk assessments and maintenance through to applying for funding from other sources and how to manage volunteers. This will allow interest parties to consider all aspects before taking on a commitment. There will be a 12 month period to enable groups to look at this properly and the play area would not be closed during this time. (15)
48	Yes, however, this area and other 5 playgrounds in Grove Green identified are already well used by children in the area. Reducing the playgrounds available will mean that the one is Grovewood Drive North will be even busier than now. At tweak times there is insufficient equipment to support the numbers now let alone extra caused by the possible closure of areas such as Shepherd's Gate Drive which is also very popular.	Yes, Shepherd's Gate Drive has a good range of equipment and is popular with children and parents, who often picnic and pay. In the summer holidays and after school in the spring/summer/early autumn it is well used. The only council playground left under the plans won't be sufficient for the needs of local residents. Why should we loose play areas to support the rest of Maidstone when our areas are already not sufficient to support our local needs? Many children in Grove Green go to the Pre Schools and local primary school and most mums walk them so the play areas get used regularly. None are in the bad state identified in your report and that's because they are used and loved. By reducing the availability to residents you are reducing the prospects for play for future children -and why .....so that other children may or not have the opportunity to play like ours already do.	Have you actually looked at the usage of these playgrounds in Grove Green or is it just that as an affluent area you think that we can survive on just 1. The reason we have another 5 areas is because they were scattered so that children could use them. Whilst I agree that 5 may be too many I do not think that the site at Shepherd's Gate Drive should be removed from funding. After all it currently has more modern equipment than Grovewood Drive and is just as popular.	As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)  Officers visited the site and walking time for an adult between Harrow Way (road next the play area) and Grovewood Drive is 7 minutes. Also Weaving Heath kick about area is less than 4 mins walk from Harrow way. As part of the improvements it is planned to increase the footprint of Grovewood Drive play area and improve the play equipment.

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50	No	We moved to Juniper Close partly because of the play area, which is perfect for our very young child. I am dismayed at this proposal.	The play area in Juniper Close is used frequently as the area has many young children. It would be most inconvenient to have to travel to a further play are when there is a perfectly good one already there. It is also a small area, which is perfect for very young children. I also question the term 'non-strategically important'. Surely Maidstone Borough Council's strategy involves encouraging as many children as possible to play outside. Consequently, these areas should remain available on an ongoing basis.	We have carried out further investigations regarding Juniper Close Play Area for further information. The play area was never transferred to the council as the developer went into administration before this took place. As no one was maintaining this play area we have been carrying out monthly inspections for the last four and a half years to make sure that it is still safe. It wouldn't be part of our strategic network but we would not be able to remove it until a time when it came over to us, if indeed we then could. Going forward we will amend it in the strategy to non strategic and under private ownership.
51	Yes	Yes	My nearest play area (The Cockpit in Marden ) is in desperate need of updating, over it were handed over to an voluntary group with no additional funding, there would be no means available to update it. Then the powers that be (MBC? ) could deem the equipment as poore & force the closure of the play area.	<p>The next nearest play area is Marden Playing Fields, a distance of 300m via quiet footpaths from The Cockpit. A total of £31,000 in S106 developer funds have been ring-fenced for the Parish owned play area at Marden Playing Fields for which the Parish Council is currently planning improvements. (41)</p> <p>As detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document the council will offer non-financial support and assistance to those community groups interested in taking on a play area. We will be producing an information pack that will give advice on all aspects of running a play facility, from inspections, risk assessments and maintenance through to applying for funding from other sources and how to manage volunteers. This will allow interest parties to consider all aspects before taking on a commitment. There will be a 12 month period to enable groups to look at this properly and the play area would not be closed during this time. (15)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p>
52	No	Yes	I'm concerned our nearest play area will be removed and land used for housing – Somerset Road.	Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)

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53	Yes	MBC must work with the local communities to make best use of these spaces, and not just abandon them to the weeds.	Why was this consultation timed to proceed after the draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy closed? The two exercises should have been run in parallel so that all inter-related matters could be considered by those wishing to respond. Sadly, this is so typical of the disjointed and dysfunctional way that the borough council operates.	<p>The draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy is a planning document developed to support the Local Plan to evidence the types and amount of public amenity green areas across the borough. As any play area closed will remain as open space this will not change the amount of public amenity green areas available to the community.</p> <p>The Green and Blue infrastructure only look at play area in size whereas the Play Strategy goes into more detail and looks at whether play areas are in the correct place and whether they are of adequate quality.</p> <p>The documents complement each other and will refer to each other in the final documents</p>
54	No	Yes	<p>The strategy is false, all the ones marked for closure are in political areas, run by Liberals, Labour or Indi Councillors, all the money is to be given to Parish Councils even though this is PUBLIC MONEY. Roseholme is an example the Tory Councillor got in on saving this site, and now is to close it. No one has money to run the open spaces let along a Play Area, so Developers will move in and buy up the sites, in the case of Roseholme this is the main entrance to the Fant Nature Reserve, and this could be shut down by an owner blocking the entrance. Other parks could also be closed by rouge owners, in time all 20 sites will be closed down. Most in poor areas or areas the Tories dont want to look after. The Strategy is Politically motivated by a Tory Council on its last legs.</p>	<p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure.</p> <p>Roseholme is a Multi Use Games Court that is rarely to never used for the purpose it was intended. It is poorly sited down a bank which allows for anti-social behaviour to take place, we receive many reports from the next door neighbour about drinking and smashed bottles being left. Clare Park which has much better facilities including a children's play area, multi use games court and tennis courts is a 270m walk away from the Roseholme site.</p>

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55	No	Yes	I understand and accept the reasoning for MBC not wanting to provide ongoing financial support for non-strategic play areas and I am excited by the prospect of my local community being offered the opportunity to assume responsibility for managing our non-strategic play area. However, MBC must commit to handing over these spaces in a condition fit for purpose. The site I refer to being the Freshland Road play area, which has not been maintained since it was first installed in 2003. The cost to refurbish the site is likely to be prohibitive for the local community to fund and therefore the play area is doomed to failure from the start. Thus, please hand over a non-strategic play area that does not require a huge investment in terms of time and money.	As detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document the council will offer non-financial support and assistance to those community groups interested in taking on a play area. We will be producing an information pack that will give advice on all aspects of running a play facility, from inspections, risk assessments and maintenance through to applying for funding from other sources and how to manage volunteers. This will allow interest parties to consider all aspects before taking on a commitment. There will be a 12 month period to enable groups to look at this properly and the play area would not be closed during this time.(15)  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)
56	Yes	Yes	The play area in Keswick Drive is ideal for small children. Whilst Giddyhorn Lane play area is excellent, it is very busy and can be a little intimidating in its size for small children plus as it is used by older children it is often noisy - it is also quite some way from Keswick Drive and the top end of Poplar Grove	On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance and gradient of the hill will take place before a final decision is made. (45)
58	No	I hope the area will be kept the same and repaired/maintained, the skateboard bowl area could be expanded	The council should be explaining its 'strategy' in basic English as the areas which I use at South Park is not one that the people who(or their children more importantly) use are likely to read the plan in full, they just need bullet point details'. Without the play area and bowl' the children around would be hanging around the streets as they did prior and will get up to mischief, the area I use is kept very well and I feel safe and along with the other dog walkers and tennis players, it is a peaceful park for adults, the other 2 areas cater for children and sportspeople, a very good mix.	Both the play area and skate park at South Park are identified as strategic play areas and as such will be retained and maintained as required.

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59			Still feel that twelve minute walk would be quite a distance for a toddler. I feel there should always be play areas as near to housing as possible how can we encourage independence of our youngsters if they have to walk almost a mile to the play area. I think parents would not allow them to be that far from home	<p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. (23)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)</p> <p>Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.</p>
60	Grove Green	Yes, Provender way is used a lot and needs to stay. Already lost Coulters Close play area sadly missed.		As open spaces, and not play areas, the strategy isn't related to these areas.
61	bedgebury close vinters Park	I strongly disagree on the closing of this facility , it is used by many with small children even though it has been left to get shabbier and shabbier over the years and many of the play rides have been taken away so that only a couple of swings and a roundabout is left it is a shame!	The nearest play area to Bedgebury close is quite a walk away, this is a little play area ideal for young children but could have been updated over the years! the council has just let it decline!	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>The next nearest play area is 300m from Bedgebury Close at the large open space on Ashurst Close, which is due to be upgraded as part of the £1.8M improvement plans detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)</p>

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62	Yes	Yes, you are planning to remove 3 play areas nearest to me, this is not an appropriate thing to do if you are trying to encourage youngsters to safely play out in the fresh air. How did you identify all 3 play areas on grove green as non strategic?!?!		<p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. (23)</p> <p>Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)</p>
64	no,not within 12 minutes walk. which are the play areas you talk about? i just got a link for a survey sent!	Yes can we have improvements at the senacre playground. The small slide always catches the rain water. The ground by the swings is just too boggy to use.	The posh areas like downswood and bearsted have parish councils that look after them, and have christmas lights etc. i live in senacre, i dont even know if there is a parish council. The playground will be taken away in a years time, because there is noone to organise and run it here and we will have nothing to play on. We always get left out because we vote for someone in Faversham, rather than having a maidstone councillor.	Senacre Square play area on Reculver Walk by the primary school is identified as a strategically important play area and will receive funding for improvements as per the strategy's action plan.
66	Yes	yes, it's not very good, broken glass, drinking, drug use and graffiti- (it's in Ashford though )		
67	Yes	We use the Keswick drive park and would be upset if the play equipment was removed. Although there is a park at giddy horn lane, Keswick drive park is smaller and more suitable for younger children without being overcrowded and gives them the opportunity to run around safely.		On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance, gradient of the hill and relative locations of households to the play areas will take place before a final decision is made. (45)

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68	Yes	yes, it is an area that serves a neighbourhood where many families live in flats and it is a nearby and safe area for them to play. (James Park – 431m, Foley Park 487m)	In an urban area, the walking distance for families to reach a park should not be more than 5 minutes. If we are lucky enough to have these small pocket play area's, it would be madness to let them go. Many children that are allowed to visit these areas without their parents or guardians, would not be allowed to walk to a further away park. Parents with young children may give up going to a park if travel to and from will start to add up to almost half an hour. I understand you can't always make all the investments you want but the least would be to maintain the area's until they can get some funding and keep them tidy with adequate seating areas etc. Think of those people without gardens, those young parents that have maybe just half an hour to go out with young children and those of us that are encouraging our children to go outdoors and meet up with their friends at the park, knowing they are just minutes away.	<p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. (23)</p> <p>Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)</p> <p>Foley Park (at the bottom of Recreation Close) a strategically important play area within a walking distance of 490m of your road.</p>
69			The parish council would only agree to Shepherd's Gate Drive play area being closed if it receives assurances that Grovewood Drive North will be developed to an excellent standard and Shepherd's Gate Drive will only be shut after the work has been completed. The parish council considers that the 12 minute walk, which it gathers was a paper exercise, is unrealistic in time for a mother with a buggy and a walking child. Whilst understanding the limitations of a paper exercise the parish council considers that MBC should have a caveat somewhere in its documents for an 'appeal' against closure of an existing play area should the 12 minute rule be proved to be inaccurate. Boxley Village and Walderslade area have not been included in the areas highlighted as lacking in provisions. The parish council requests that these are	<p>All comments noted and thank you for taking the time to provide a full response.</p> <p>Officers visited the Shepherds Gate site and walking time for an adult between Harrow Way (road next the play area) and Grovewood Drive is 7 minutes. Also Weaving Heath kick about area is less than 4 mins walk from Harrow way.</p> <p>As part of the improvements it is planned to increase the footprint of Grovewood Drive play area and improve the play equipment. We understand this play area is very well used, especially after school hours.</p>

added to the list. Sandling Village has been identified as being within 12 minutes' walk of the play area at Brookbank however this is incorrect and needs to be rectified with Sandling Village being added to the list of areas lacking in improvements. MBC appears to be shirking its responsibility to the communities that it identifies as lacking in facilities. Parish and Neighbourhood Development Plans are voluntary and NDP are only applicable if a community is pro-development. MBC appears not to be willing to fulfil its own strategy or meeting the needs of its community. Areas that are lacking in provision are often rural and away from other facilities which many urban areas take for granted. It is not clear from the statement concerning Parish and Neighbourhood Plans whether MBC would take on an area provided by development or even whether it would actively support a parish council or community in obtaining section 106 monies. It is surmised that the cost of developing future parks to meet the lack of provision will fall on parish councils and have to be paid from by the precept resulting once again in double taxation. Provision for youth is non-existent in the North Ward of the parish. The parish council applauds the Parks & Leisure Department stance on trying to improve play areas to an excellent standard however the department has no real control over section 106 funding or other funding hence the caveats within the document "That S106 off-site developer contributions will be recommended for the improvement of SIPAs where available". It also applauds "Working alongside Planning colleagues we will embed the principles of the SIPA network into new development plans additional to the application of the NPFA standard. This in turn will determine the scope of on-site and off-site S106 contribution requests". However Parks & Leisure cannot guarantee that any funding will be available when other priorities e.g. affordable housing has been adopted by MBC. It appears from the document that MBC will require other organisations, notably Parish Councils, to provide play areas where it identifies the need. Parish Councils are not involved in pre consultation discussions between planning and developers and by the time planning applications have been produced the section 106's are generally already agreed and not up for discussion. MBC has refused to be proactive in adopting a Community Infrastructure Levy and with the cutbacks it has undertaken and proposed this parish council feels that any reference to the Parish Services Scheme funding or section 106 funding is overly optimistic. MBC in decommissioning play grounds should undertake to protect the open spaces being sold off for development

We will add Boxley Village and Sandling Village to the list of areas lacking play facilities. Walderslade has Timber Tops play area on one estate to the east and is serviced to the west by the Tunbury Wood play area just over the MBC boundary line. Sandling village is close to the new play area at Cobtree Manor Park but still a car ride away. There will probably be difficulties in identifying potential areas of land in these areas for play areas with MBC having no land ownership. If the Parish Council can clarify if there are any other potential areas of land we can keep a list of these. For instance would the Church at Boxley be open to the idea of a play area on their land to service the local community?

The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure. (23) This is an area we are now much closer to and can influence outcomes from planning new development in specific areas. In areas where there is public open space within a one mile radius of a development we will be advising on the open space requirements in the locality.

Any play area closed will be kept as open space for perpetuity as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)

The entire document is about play areas for all age groups and doesn't discriminate between age groups. This allows us to assess each area individually for equipment across all age groups taking into account provision in other nearby areas. This is covered by Priority Two – improving the quality of play and outdoor activity facilities for all age groups.

			by submitting them for voluntary village green status. The parish council is disappointed at the lack of identified priorities for the provision of outdoor activities for youth and adults.	
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70	Yes	Yes (Gatland Lane)	It is absolutely disgraceful that with current levels of child obesity the council is even considering reducing facilities in which children can get exercise and burn off excess calories. Prevention is always better than cure, so, if anything, the council should be expanding play areas rather than reducing them.	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)</p> <p>Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.</p>
73			The strategy should make clear that MBC would be responsible for future maintenance of strategic sites i.e. would pay for maintenance that would be spread fairly across the Borough. It should also make clear that MBC would provide the regular inspection regime and would be responsible for, and would pay for, remedial works. Needs to be stated what "rights" MBC would wish to assume for strategic sites, including those in and/or owned by Parishes. Finally, Parishes having to grant-match for strategic sites they own is not fair – that would mean that Parishioners would, in effect, have to contribute to match-funding, whereas there would be no such requirement in non-parished areas.	<p>The focus of the draft Play Area Strategy is to look at the 'big picture', taking into account available play provision across the whole borough and setting a local standard to rationalise areas of under and over provision. The purpose of a Strategy is to set the direction and capacity of the organisation over the long term in the broader sense, rather than setting out the finer detail. Responsibility for maintenance and inspections of any play area is via the party running the service, either the land owner or leaseholder.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p>

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74	Yes	MBC wish to close Roseholme and turn the area into empty wasteground wiht no community value.	<p>This strategy is designed to remove valuable community facilities from residents. I abhor the threat by MBC that if the playareas, deemed (unfairly) not strategically important, are not taken over by community groups, the equipment will be removed. This will turn important open recreational spaces into derelict eyesores which in the long run will be more costly to keep safe. I note that planning officers in their report to Cabinet on 13 March concerning new housing prioritises open spaces as third in a long list of infrastructure requirements for both residential and business development. The report also outlines the reasons for prioritising infastructure is based on lack of past investment. It wouold appear MBC wish to continue to under invest in play areas. Roseholme play area is situated in an area of highe density family housing. Many of the homes have gardesn that are of minimal space and the playarea which is connected to the wildlfe area is vital to the well-being of the community. If MBC wish to make savings then they should not be wasting money on the drab town centre paving that is currently being installed.</p>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)</p> <p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure.</p> <p>Roseholme is a Multi Use Games Court that is rarely to never used for the purpose it was intended. It is poorly sited down a bank which allows for anti-social behaviour to take place, we receive many reports from the next door neighbour about drinking and smashed bottles being left. Clare Park which has much better facilities including a children's play area, multi use games court and tennis courts is a 270m walk away from the Roseholme site. (54)</p>

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75	Yes	Will a community group or the parish council take on the area?	Where will the funding come from in future years to maintain these play areas? Will the borough council continue to have funds available to support Parish councils and voluntary groups to maintain areas? If not, this is a huge amount of money to spend on a very valuable asset which if not maintained properly and protected from misuse and vandalism, will not be available for children to play on safely.	By reducing the number of MBC play areas from 74 to 54 this allows us to maintain the play areas to a better standard with our current maintenance budget. Just to clarify there are two budgets for play areas, one for maintenance and one for refurbishment and renewal. The current maintenance budget allows us to cover around two thirds of identified maintenance items in a year, with any health & safety issues prioritised first. The budget for refurbishment and renewal had reduced to the point where we needed to roll over funds over a two year period just to cover the costs of refurbishment and renewal for one play area.
76			Older youths may break the new equipment	From our own experience we find that when we improve play facilities they naturally attract a larger number of users. This in turn tends to self police the area and stop anti-social behaviour. It is very rare that new equipment gets vandalised after installation. We also look at equipment for young adults when planning new facilities which gives them something to be involved in.
77	Yes	Yes	The Harbour in Sutton Valence has been classified as non-strategically important because there is another play area within Sutton Valence supposedly within a 12 minute walk. It is not possible to walk to the strategically important play area in 30 minutes from The Harbour where the other play area is let alone 12 minutes and The Harbour is where the majority of the Parishioners live. It is a shame that the Parish Councils who know their area better than anyone were not asked for information prior to this consultation going out.	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council.</p>

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80	Sutton Valence Village Hall	The Harbour, Lower Sutton Valence, needs improving as it is at least 20 minutes walk (by an adult) from the alternative play area at the Village Hall	The strategy is a good one, but will fail if the measurements between play areas are not done correctly - account needs to be taken of road crossings and terrain (steep hills are difficult for push chairs, for instance)	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
81	Yes	YES - the Harbour area in Sutton Valence is far more than 12 minutes from the Memorial area - it is more like 25-30 minutes walk away and, for children, even longer. The Harbour at Sutton Valence is in the area of densest population of Sutton Valence	I can quite understand the reasoning behind this but, as ever, nobody has troubled to see how long it actually takes, with young children and a pushchair, to reach the nearest alternative. In the case of Sutton Valence, to cease supporting the Harbour play area will mean that parents and children will be deprived of a play area - the route to the alternative is seriously uphill with no continuous footpaths and traffic hazards. I recommend whoever is running this should try it for themselves - they would then see how ridiculous the assumptions made, are	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>

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82	Yes	Yes	The harbour play area Sutton Valence should be classed as strategically important. It serves the most densely populated and largest residential section of Sutton Valence Parish. The next nearest play area is more than 12 minutes away and uphill!	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
83		To far away (nearest play area is Sutton Valence village hall 650m away)	Children need a good clean and safe area to play in.	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
84		Marden Playing Fields	I think the approach is valid, as long as there is a guarantee that any play areas that are not strategically important and have play equipment removed as a result of a lack of available funding from the local area are left as green spaces and are not sold off for housing or other development.	Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)

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85	Yes	Yes	The strategy is fundamentally flawed in respect of the distances stated in the report. The play area in Sutton Valence detailed as non strategic is considerably more than 12 minutes walk from the other area. I have walked this and can report that it takes in excess of 20 minutes for a fit adult to walk the distance. Much longer for a mother and child.	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
86			Sutton Valence Harbour Play Area - this site absolutely must be considered strategic. It serves an area of great social need; and to consider it within 12 minutes walk of SV Village Hall Play Area takes no note of (1) steep hill (2) dangerous roads (3) hardly usable by children. Rethink, please!	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>

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87	Yes	Yes	In Sutton Valence it is not a good policy to say that everyone must use the village hall playground as it is a significant distance for people to get there. It is all up hill and you have to go through the centre of the village and along a main road to get to it. Most kids are driven there. There are significant dangers involved and I would not be confident in letting kids go up there on their own.	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
88	Yes, but the quality of the alternative is nowhere near as good as the wrongly assessed 'non-strategic' area.	Yes (Keswick Drive)	Yes, the policy is either non-strategic or deeply flawed. The assessment as to whether a play area is strategic should be based on demographics, utilisation and the potential for increased utilisation. The targeting of play areas in areas where there is a high density of young families as 'non-strategic', whilst identifying play areas adjacent to high value housing as 'strategic' is contrary to the stated inclusivity aims of the policy. This is amplified by the fact that the council has targeted communities who are least able to organise and self-fund with the 'opportunity' to self-fund whilst the wealthier communities will have their play areas funded by the council.	On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance, gradient of the hill and relative locations of households to the play areas will take place before a final decision is made. (45)
89	Yes	Yes	We have been identified as being within 12 minutes walk of an alternative this is crazy, google maps calculates a 24 minute walk from the 'non strategically' important Harbour playing fields in Sutton Valence to the nearest alternative, so twice the 12 minutes and in fact the route takes in an extremely steep hill plus we need to assume a far slower pace for small children my estimate of the journey is closer to 35 minutes and that's with two fit and healthy children who are very used to walking this terrain. I may support your policy in principal but please can you ensure the accuracy of your calculations. I assume that that routes have been accurately measured taking into account the fact that the A road is a completely inappropriate route to walk.	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>

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90	Yes	Huge concerns (Keswick Drive)		On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance, gradient of the hill and relative locations of households to the play areas will take place before a final decision is made. (45)
91	Yes	Yes The Harbour play area in Sutton Valence is very important for residents.	I'd like to request that The Harbour play area in Sutton Valence receive funding and becomes a strategically important play area.	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
92	Roseholme	Yes it's been neglected and it's more than just the play area it's the surrounding areas to the park is a mess and dangerous		Roseholme is a Multi Use Games Court that is rarely to never used for the purpose it was intended. It is poorly sited down a bank which allows for anti-social behaviour to take place, we receive many reports from the next door neighbour about drinking and smashed bottles being left. Clare Park which has much better facilities including a children's play area, multi use games court and tennis courts is a 270m walk away from the Roseholme site. (54)

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94	Yes	Yes, The Harbour Play area is in the most populaed area of the Parish. it is a 20 minute walk, 30 minutes witha small child to the Village Hall Play area	Officers and members need to liaise with the local people and walk the distances quoted in this survey. Play areas in highly densley populated areas need to be maintained by the Borough.	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
95	Yes	Yes – Shaw Close		<p>The play area at Penenden Heath is currently being upgraded with safety surfacing being laid and the all the swing seats being replaced.</p> <p>Penenden Heath Play Area is up to 690m walking distance via the footpath running through the woodland at the back of the estate, or 715m via Penenden Heath Road.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p>
96	Yes	Yes	I am concerned about the subjective "good/bad" standard and would argue that no managed outside space is bad	As shown in the draft play strategy the standard for play areas is objectively assessed through a series of criteria based on Quality, Accessibility and Usage.

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97	Yes	Yes – The Harbour	children need to play , all play areas should be maintained not removed	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
98	Yes	Yes - I am not sure which 'community group' would run the play areas	I think the investment should be spread over all play areas including the non-strategically important play areas - understanding that the 'good' play areas won't therefore be so enhanced as is planned, but I think it will be a big shame to lose smaller facilities that are more local (3 in Grove Green) that are absolutely fine and serve my kids well as they are. What 'community groups' are likely to take these on?	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>It would be unfeasible to stretch the proposed improvements budget across all the play areas taking into account the amount of work that's required. 32 play areas will be improved through the adoption of this strategy including Grovewood Drive.</p>
99	Yes	Yes - very concerned that 'smaller' play areas near where my family lives will be closed.	As a family with young children living on grove green, we make very regular use of all of the nearby play areas - 3 of these are deemed by your strategy as less important and yet are very well used by local residents e.g. Shepherds Gate Drive and Franklin drive. It would be a great shame to focus all funding on a few 'super parks' to the degradation of the smaller ones which are more local, less busy and highly valued by local families. The problem with large strategic areas such as mote part is that they are always so busy. We have highly valued the local play areas which are a couple of minutes walk away and would be extremely upset if these were eventually closed due to no-one being able to run them.	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>It would be unfeasible to stretch the proposed improvements budget across all the play areas taking into account the amount of work that's required. 32 play areas will be improved through the adoption of this strategy including Grovewood Drive. (98)</p>

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100	Yes	Yes	It will take considerably more than the stated 12 minutes to walk from the South Lane/Harbour Play Area to the Play Area at the Village Hall in Sutton Valence	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
101	Yes	Yes. The Harbour Sutton Valence. If it is left unmaintained and the equipment is dismantled then it would be extremely difficult for me to walk my children to the Village hall.	My wife and I are foster carers and look after 2 children aged 8 and 10 who have learning difficulties and global developmental delay we also have a baby who has just started walking. I would like to see members of MBC come and walk from my house to the Village Hall in 12 minutes on their own let alone with the help of the children we look after. I also do not feel they have taken into account pregnant mothers or pushing a baby in a pram or a wheelchair up the hill.	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
102	No	Yes, James Street is very easy to access and conveniently situated on the way to/from the shops, my 2 year old loves it		<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (3)</p> <p>From your postcode there is a play area that is much closer to your household than James Street. Arundel Street Play Area is 290m away and will be kept as strategically important.</p>

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103	Yes	Keswick Drive Alington play area serves a large residential area and is part of a larger open space which includes Palace Wood. It can be used by all age groups together. It would take longer than 12 minutes to walk to Giddyhorn Lane play area for a parent with small children and a buggy to push.	Please retain the Keswick Drive play area	On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance, gradient of the hill and relative locations of households to the play areas will take place before a final decision is made. (45)
104	yes but it is in an area where parents do not supervise their children and I would not go there	Yes - Somerset Road play area should be improved. We have used this for years, it is lovely but has never been upgraded	Before choosing which play areas to close - you should be asking residents their views. If some play areas are over run by unsupervised children, then this is not an option for many families. The play area behind Somerset Road has not been invested in, but is a good choice for many. There should be more play areas in this play one for young children and one aimed at older children. I think it is appalling that this decision has been made without consulting the people who live there in an open upfront way. Lots of hard to reach families live around this area, who would not have access to this survey. MBC has a duty to consult the residents before deciding on a strategy this makes sense. A mail out to the local houses, would capture their views and then you would have an informed choice from the residents. Not happy with the way this has been carried out at all	As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. It will not be sold for housing.(5)  Shepway Green Play Area, which has recently been upgraded, is 790m away from Somerset Road Play Area which is an 8 min walk through quiet roads and footpaths.  Somerset Road Play Area also suffers from antisocial behaviour (drinking, smashed glass, etc) because it is poorly located at the back of households and young people will use this as a hangout area in the evenings.

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105	Yes but would not go there	Yes	<p>Somerset rd play area has not been looked after at all. Ask the residents what they want, do not presume what they think. This area is primarily used by dog walkers and people with young children, what about the teens, young adults and adults????? Why not put in equipment to help us get our teens out and getting fit. Gym is too expensive but if you invested in outside equip aimed at this age group it would be immensely popular as it is private and accessible. We currently drive 20 miles to go to such an area. Mote park is always too busy so this would be a great opportunity. There are lots of play parks aimed at young toddlers, now think about the older children who are sitting at home gaming and lots are very unfit and obese.</p>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. It will not be sold for housing.(5)</p> <p>Shepway Green Play Area, which has recently been upgraded, is 790m away from Somerset Road Play Area which is an 8 min walk through quiet roads and footpaths.</p> <p>Somerset Road Play Area also suffers from antisocial behaviour (drinking, smashed glass, etc) because it is poorly located at the back of households and young people will use this as a hangout area in the evenings.</p> <p>Currently in the planning stage is the development of a new parkour (free running) area to be installed at Shepway Green on the area next to where the new basket swing with canopy has been installed. This is an area primarily aimed at the older age range for the whole of Shepway, giving young people the chance to exercise, hang out and socialise in a well over looked area.</p>
106	Yes	I would like to retain the facility at the Cockpit in Marden, as the village is now of a substantial size and requires alternatives		<p>The next nearest play area is Marden Playing Fields, a distance of 300m via quiet footpaths from The Cockpit. A total of £31,000 in S106 developer funds have been ring-fenced for the Parish owned play area at Marden Playing Fields for which the Parish Council is currently planning improvements. (41)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p>
108			<p>What about disabled who may not be able to walk 12 mims and may have no transport? Are these play areas accessible by bus?</p>	<p>A good number of play areas are accessible by bus across the borough. If you require further specific details the Parks department can be contacted to provide information specific to your needs.</p>

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109	No	Yes - closing Whitebeam Drive and Fairhurst Drive - what provision is there for children in Coxheath and the southern part of East Farleigh?	I don't think this consultation has been well advertised - I only found out about it today (1/3) and don't think any of my friends had heard about it.	The consultation was advertised through the following channels, press releases to the local media, the Mote Park and Maidstone Borough Council facebook pages, Twitter, our Website, all Ward Councillors, all Parish Councils and all partner organisations.
110	Yes	Yes	MBC have failed to maintain current play areas and now claim they can close many down because they are underused. Chicken and egg moment here don't you think? Our nearest play area is Bedgebury Close. I cannot walk to any others in 12-min. Or am I supposed to drive? Come on MBC sort it out.	The next nearest play area is 300m from Bedgebury Close at the large open space on Ashurst Close, which is due to be upgraded as part of the £1.8M improvement plans detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document. This will provide much needed play provision at the heart of the Vinters Park estate to meet the needs of many households within walking distance.  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.
112	yes right outside my front door queen elizabeth square	i hope it gets up graded for the children round this area	there is a fair few children that use this park in queen elizabeth square maidstone it be nice to see it get revamped as there is a lot of kids that play in this park and mums and dads bring there children here from the whole of the estate	Comments noted, thank you for your input.
113	yes but there is not a lot for toddlers, last week there was only one swing out of 4	yes i live in shaw and use the play area at least three times a week	To be honest i am very disappointed with the council. We brought our home in Shaw close as it was a great family home with local play area and good schools. Now thanks to the council i have car parking all around my house as there is not enough on Eclipse park and I know when Next opens it will only get much much worse. Let be honest the whole land on the Galiger site will be a retail park not really what I wanted when I brought the house. Now to add insult to injury you want to remove the play area, so it's no long somewhere perfect for a young family! .....Sorry can you remind me why i have always voted since i was 18? I know my views will not make a jot of difference, hell look at the planning permission for Next, no one wanted it but you still passed. I guess it will be the same for J7, it already take me about 30 mins just to leave my house get to the round about and all the way back to the Sittingbourne road.	The play area at Penenden Heath is currently being upgraded with safety surfacing being laid and the all the swing seats being replaced.  Penenden Heath Play Area is up to 690m walking distance via the footpath running through the woodland at the back of the estate, or 715m via Penenden Heath Road.  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)

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114			<p>You are treating Parish Council's as second class citizen - they pay for the urban improvements while they pay again for their own play AREA, Double taxation. Most Parish Councils acquired their pay areas before 1974 - there were no 106 agreements. Very few parishes have benefitted from 106 money since. It is pointless keep stating the Borough when you mean urban Maidstone or the old Maidstone Borough Council's responsible area. How do Parishes acquire youth facilities as identified where does that money come from. Why is your plan a ten year plan with a five year financial look only. Working on your statement every play area need renewing between 7 and 25 years where is the plan to address this going forward.</p>	<p>The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p>
115	Yes	Yes it will be closing - Roseholme	<p>I'm concerned for young children in the Roseholme area for whom it would be totally unsuitable for them to walk to Claire Park. The impact of this decision will have a negative and lasting impact on those children's lives. I would urge the council not to deny these children somewhere to play in their intimidate area which is both safe and fun for them.</p>	<p>Roseholme is a Multi Use Games Court that is rarely to never used for the purpose it was intended. It is poorly sited down a bank which allows for anti-social behaviour to take place, we receive many reports from the next door neighbour about drinking and smashed bottles being left. Clare Park, which has much better facilities including a children's play area, multi use games court and tennis courts, is a 270m walk away from the Roseholme site. (54)</p>
117	Yes	improvement would be beneficial but closure is not.	<p>Well equipped local local play areas are an importenat part of 'growing up' and should be suported by the council. To withdraw the facilities is not the correct strategic reaction o a financail issue . 12 minutes can be along way with a pram !!!!!</p>	<p>No contact details left – post code in Yorkshire</p>

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118	Yes	I have significant concerns about the play area nearest to me in Freshland Road.	Yes, I strongly disagree with the closure of any play areas. The obesity issue is increasing among young children which will only become even worse if we deprive small children and parents a reasonable opportunity to access these facilities. Fresh air is also important and the opportunity for families to participate in social engagement during these walks and playtimes. I do not subscribe to the fact that the remaining parks will be within a 12 minute walk for everyone. This will not be the case everywhere, and even if it is you will not find every family walking that far to a play area, particularly if there is not a reasonable pavement or footpath to access the area.	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone.</p> <p>Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.</p>
119	Yes		Whitebean Dr, Coxheath - Remove it, make it open space and improve the one by the village hall.	Thank you for your comments. Coxheath Parish Council have made contact about Whitebeam Drive with a view to taking it on.
121	Yes	Yes	I think it is a shame that the council is determining which parks are not 'worth the effort' in spite of the fact they are much loved but children in the area. We bought our house as it was perfect for our 1 year old with a park a few minutes away (we live in Keswick drive) meaning after nursery we would be able to take him to the park for 30 mins but now this will be nearly an hours trip with the added walk time. Whilst it may be 12 mins for an adult that is 25 mins for a toddler.	On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance, gradient of the hill and relative locations of households to the play areas will take place before a final decision is made. (45)

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122	Yes	The plans to close the play area in Peverel Drive I oppose as it is well used and it an ideal location for local residents	The Peverel Drive play area should be maintained for the local community and it would be strongly opposed if closure was seriously considered.	<p>If local residents and Thurnham Parish Council want the play area at Peverel Drive to be kept then a solution would be that the £59,275 S106 Developer Contribution, from the development of Kent Frozen Foods, be used to improve the play area at Peverel Drive and that the site then be adopted by the Parish Council. This would enable the play area to not only remain open but will result in improved equipment for local residents.</p> <p>These improvements could either be managed and implemented by the Parish Council or done by MBC before the play area is handed to the parish.</p> <p>The site would remain a non strategic play area that is not managed by Maidstone Borough Council.</p> <p>As with all adopted play areas MBC will help with information regarding inspection, equipment providers and potential future funding sources.</p>
126	Yes	Yes	The park is used by the close,ideal for small children not overwhelmed by older children (Shaw Close)	<p>The play area at Penenden Heath is currently being upgraded with safety surfacing being laid and the all the swing seats being replaced.</p> <p>Penenden Heath Play Area is up to 690m walking distance via the footpath running through the woodland at the back of the estate, or 715m via Penenden Heath Road.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p>

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127			<p>Re: Sutton Valence, Village Hall play area and Harbour play area. If the blue circles on the maps represent supposed 12 minute walk radius, I think the size of these circles is too large, especially considering the steep hill between the two play areas in Sutton Valence. It would take a fit person much longer to walk up from one area to the other, longer with small children and pushchairs. The advantages of the harbour site are its pleasant location with adjoining field and it is nearby and safe for children to visit from their homes in this part of the village, unaccompanied by adults. There is also youth provision on your list for the Harbour but not at the village hall site. I believe considerable efforts have been made by the parish council to enhance the Harbour play area for residents in this part of Sutton Valence and I strongly feel this area should continue to be maintained and definitely not removed. It is somewhere for the children to meet and play safely.</p>	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>
128	Yes	Yes	<p>Our play area is a small play area which does not intimidate the younger children, they can play there in the knowledge that they are not going to be pushed over by older, bigger, fast running children, they are not going to have to wait ages for a go on the equipment and they can feel safe in the environment that they are in because it's only two steps from their front door. It is never overcrowded and it brings together the families on our estate as a community. (Shaw Close)</p>	<p>The play area at Penenden Heath is currently being upgraded with safety surfacing being laid and the all the swing seats being replaced.</p> <p>Penenden Heath Play Area is up to 690m walking distance via the footpath running through the woodland at the back of the estate, or 715m via Penenden Heath Road.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p>

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130	Yes	Yes	I live in Farington Close with my partner and our 18 month old daughter. The play area on Freshland Road was one of the considerations we made when looking for somewhere to live. We regularly use the play area as do many other residents with children and I find it unacceptable and highly disappointing that the play area could close. Funding should be split between any play areas that need improvement rather than just the ones that the council deem as being 'important'.	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.(5)</p>
131	Yes	the council should spend the money equally between all play areas to make sure they are ALL a good standard.	Whilst I am glad that the council is allocating more money to play areas I feel that all play existing areas should be maintained. The idea that parish councils would be able to maintain those identified as 'non strategically important' is not a practical solution. Not all of the play areas belong to a parish council. Maintaining the play areas in the long run would be costly and I feel that the Parish Councils /Community groups would be able to maintain them in the long run sadly leading to their eventual closure.	<p>Many of the Parish Council's in the rural areas already own and maintain a good proportion of publicly accessible play areas separate from Maidstone Borough Council owned play areas.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p>

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132	Yes	I have concerns that a large proportion of allington based parks will be removed in particular Keswick Drive and Freshlands. Freshland is used by many children on way home from school and en rout to shops	1. The opportunity for small ad hoc park trips will reduce; especially where Freshlands is used en route to /from school and shops. Over all park use will reduce as a result of this. 2 . calcualtion of most people over all will be within 12 minutes walk of a park is unfair. it does not take into account gradient, child/ toddler walking speed, and disability/ health related limitations. 3. Most people in allington will be MORE than a 12 minute walk from a paly park- the statitics should be calcaulted by sub area and not overall. I would much prefer a number of small parks with simple equipment that develop a number of physical skills increaseing incedence of use than a small number of large all sing & dancing parks that are farther away.	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.(5)</p> <p>The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.</p>
133	Yes	Yes	I think that all parks in the arrea are used frequently even if it is considered to be run down!	Comment noted

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134	Yes	Yes	I note that the development plans for new executive housing at Fant Farm includes a new park area. How nice for the people who will be able to afford these high price homes. At the same time, the Council is taking away a play area at Roseholme where families are generally on lower incomes and live in smaller houses with limited garden space. This is outright discrimination. Surely the planned developments in Fant and Barming areas should contribute to existing local services so that all residents in the area affected by the new housing can benefit from the impact this will bring to existing communities.	The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure. Roseholme is a Multi Use Games Court that is rarely to never used for the purpose it was intended. It is poorly sited down a bank which allows for anti-social behaviour to take place, we receive many reports from the next door neighbour about drinking and smashed bottles being left. Clare Park, which has much better facilities including a children's play area, multi use games court and tennis courts, is a 270m walk away from the Roseholme site. (54)
136			The Freshlands Road play area is not only an asset which is much valued and used by local families. It is adjacent to Maidstone Hospital and is REGULARLY USED by visitors with young children. The Freshlands Road play area SHOULD BE RETAINED	As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16) The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.(5) The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.

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137	No	Yes	<p>As I understand, my local play area in Freshland Road, is a "non strategically important " play area. This play area brings great pleasure to children on both the Freshland Road estate and the Oakwood park estate, I know of parents that also travel to use it. During warmer weather, my children have used this play area on a daily basis. Even in the winter it is well used and a welcome place to go for some fresh air. Modern estates have smaller gardens so less potential to have larger swings and slides in gardens. Also, my children have met many friends at the play area that live on the estate. It is a life saver for me, to be able to nip out to a play area a minute's walk away where I could socialise with other mothers and my children could get fresh air and exercise. I am appalled that you plan to close these smaller play areas, implying there are ones 12 minutes walk away that people can use instead. There is a growing obesity crisis in this country, children are getting less exercise. If you had basic Public Health education then you would be aware that "healthy choices have to be easy choices". And by 12 minutes walk is that adult pace or toddler pace?? People are far more likely to use a park on their doorstep more regularly. It would also result in already overcrowded larger parks becoming more crowded in the school holidays, more chance of accidents. Also, your questionnaire. We are not stupid. It is very biased towards people saying they agree so you get the results you want. Your picture of 1 rusty piece of equipment in an empty grassland is not representative of the majority of these parks. I am actually insulted by it.</p>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.(5)</p> <p>The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.</p>
138	Yes	I am concerned you are getting rid of freshland road park because it is a park that we all enjoy using very much. I know how much the children enjoy it		<p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.(5)</p> <p>The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.</p>
139	Yes	No (Crownfields)		Comment noted

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140	Yes Giddyhorn .Not easily accessible with a buggy from this area	Yes Freshland Rd ideal for parents with pre-school children in buggies	I agree some of the play areas need improvements. However consider those parents who just need a quick escape from indoors for fresh air with a young child and do not have time to commit a long walk .The most direct route from this area of town is not easily undertaken with a buggy the alternative takes considerably longer. This is fine for an long period of play but not on a daily basis.	Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.(5)  The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.
141	Freshland Road	Why spend money removing it instead of maintaining it	I like the idea, but maintenance of our local play area is key, removing this play area (Freshland road's park) seems daft, my suggestion is bring it up to a high standard then hand it over to the local community with a small budget to maintain ourselves, this being said only if the council decide not to do it themselves	As detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document the council will offer non-financial support and assistance to those community groups interested in taking on a play area. We will be producing an information pack that will give advice on all aspects of running a play facility, from inspections, risk assessments and maintenance through to applying for funding and how to manage volunteers. This will allow interest parties to consider all aspects before taking on a commitment. There will be a 12 month period to enable groups to look at this properly and the play area would not be closed during this time.  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.(5)  The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.
142	yes, but it is a good 20 minute walk away	Yes	I use the Freshland Road play area with my grandchildren. The only other area I know of is at the bottom of Poplar Grove and a good 20/25 minute walk away. It is too far for little legs especially coming back up hill and I would have to use my car. The Freshland Road play area is used by a lot of people and there are many young families in that area. I do not see why the residents should have to pay for the upkeep of this.	The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.

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143	No	Yes freshlands road play area, although it could be bigger with more equipment it's a really nice plus to have on our development along with the apparatus on the walk area		The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.
144	Yes		It is essential that the Parish are supported in this work, after all they are closest to their communities. Further factors may be appropriate for the decision about location of play areas, such as not needing to cross a main road to access the play area. These areas are not in isolation and it is clear that MBC must not trivialise criteria nor make them too simple - the sole criteria of distance is not appropriate for families and children. Additionally, if anything the amount being offered for parishes should be raised to enable them to further improve the facilities. £20K of funds will not be sufficient to revamp / improve some of these play areas.	As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure.  Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.

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145	No	Yes	I do not think that this has been thought through properly in terms of 'non strategic' play areas - if these are currently used, why would they be any less important than others. Children do not play out enough these days as it is and I would want to encourage my young daughter to play out ONLY if the area was very near to out home, not a 12 minute walk away, especially if there is already a play area nearby. The risk of play equipment being removed is unacceptable. If this means less money available for hoers then this should be considered.	As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)  As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone.
146	Yes – Poplar Grove (Giddyhorn)	yes, Keswick is currently used by the older kids, with no anti social behvaiour. Where will these kids go if this area was to go		On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance, gradient of the hill and relative locations of households to the play areas will take place before a final decision is made. (45)
147	For my nearest alternative to be 12 minutes walk away, I would have to use a footpath that is not wide enough for a buggy and in unkempt	The play area in Freshlands Road, is used by many children, even those from other estates and the local Nurseries take their small children there. It is accessible from footpaths designed for pushchairs and has very small equipment for the youngest children, not mixed in with ages up to 10	Whilst I support the Councils objective of upgrading play areas for all. The play area in Freshlands Road is not in a 'bad' state and is frequently used	The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.

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149	Yes - and it isn't a 12 minute walk away with a 2 year old	It does need some upgrading in the future but otherwise is a perfectly positioned and safe play area	Yes. I have sent a petition signed by 120 residents to Councillor Wilson about the proposed closure of the Peverel Drive play area. This is an absolute disgrace and we strongly oppose the plan.	If local residents and Thurnham Parish Council want the play area at Peverel Drive to be kept then a solution would be that the £59,275 S106 Developer Contribution, from the development of Kent Frozen Foods, be used to improve the play area at Peverel Drive and that the site then be adopted by the Parish Council. This would enable the play area to not only remain open but will result in improved equipment for local residents. These improvements could either be managed and implemented by the Parish Council or done by MBC before the play area is handed to the parish. The site would remain a non strategic play area that is not managed by Maidstone Borough Council. As with all adopted play areas MBC will help with information regarding inspection, equipment providers and potential future funding sources.
150			Hi. I have 4 children aged 6 and under. My nearest park is Whatman park, although it takes longer than 12 mins to walk therewith young given there is no footpath and the play park is buried within Whatman park. So I would count myself as one of the key users of such facilities. I think it is a great thing that the council is planning to spend such a large amount of money on such necessary facilities. However, I'm not sure whether the strategy has really taken into account how such facilities are used by families, not just individual children - after all it is families that go to parks not just children. For example, at Whatman park, the facilities for younger children and older children are so far apart that if you have more than one child, invariably you struggle to keep them all happy/occupied at the same. This is one of the main reasons why I tend not to use this park, and why I think it is an under utilised resource. This potentially also results in older children hanging around an menacing younger children in the toddler area and toddlers hanging around in the bigger children's areas and spoiling their fun. The play facilities are so far into the park, it must take nearly 12 mins once in the park to get to them, let alone 12 mins from the nearest homes (of which I am one, I live on Buckland Hill). With the play areas being so far from toilet facilities and other amenities it makes it really very difficult to take young children there.	The landscape design of Whatman Park, including the location of all the facilities, was put together for the Millennium by a landscape architect on behalf of the Council. There is merit in having two separate areas allowing pre-school children a place to play in without the presence of larger children and teenagers. If the Strategy is adopted there is some funding in the pot for refurbishing the play equipment at Whatman Park.

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151	Yes	it would be a shame for any play area to fall into disrepair. more houses means more play areas	I am lucky where I currently live. I have a choice. Some of the more remote locations don't unless they drive	Comment noted.
152	giddyhorn lane	yes the removal of the Freshlands Road play area	The play areas already in place are important to the community. Although some may not be to the 'required standard' they are of great value to the children and parents. Having them where they are means that parents can give more freedom to their children rather than letting them wander 12 minutes down the road where they are not in earshot/eyeshot and where there would be strangers. Also these play areas are built to a high standard already and are capable of a long life without expensive maintenance. The one in Hildenborough Crescent has been there over 45 years and has barely changed and the only expense has probably been unnecessary fencing, paintwork and signage. The small areas such as Freshlands Road are only used by very local children and removal would be totally unnecessary - a 'not to standard' play area is better than not one at all and removal would be a great loss to the community.	As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone.  The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.
153	Yes	Yes	We have recently moved to 56 Shaw Close, PENENDEN Heath. One of the key factors of moving here was the play area right outside for our family to use. If you take our park away are you going to build house put a road in front of our house, devaluing our house. Children from our close use the park all the time & it's safe for parents to know that they are here and not walking a busy road to play in the other park, there is not even a path or safe crossing for families to do this! We strongly feel that if you take our park away investors will take the land and build on it. Please reconsider.	The play area at Penenden Heath is currently being upgraded with safety surfacing being laid and the all the swing seats being replaced.  Penenden Heath Play Area is up to 690m walking distance via the footpath running through the woodland at the back of the estate, or 715m via Penenden Heath Road.  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)
157	Yes (Giddyhorn is closer than Freshlands)	It will be taken away. Not good enough	Invest more into all play areas just keep the standards up!	As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)
159		Freshlands Road Play Area should be retained.	The play area in Freshlands Road is essential, especially for the smaller children in the area. Parents should not be expected to have to walk long distances to play areas and this one caters for an area with a lot of families. For the small children going a distance is not acceptable.	The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.

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162	yes, much more than 12 minutes away especially with a baby & toddler	its perfect for my family we use it on aversge 5 days out of 7 and there is nothing wrong with it. I am absolutely disgusted that it may cease to exist. (Freshland Road)	Its ridiculous. Basic play areas for very young children are vital. Consolidating them so that there are fewer play areas but of a higher standard cannot be right. A couple of swings and something to climb over is more than enough for young kids if it is maintained. The money should be distributed widely, not concentrated on fewer play areas which will get used less because its further away. This plan will result in less healthy outdoor activity for kids and is shameful. We pay extortionate council tax and a small play area is not much to ask. The local woods are going to be destroyed to make way for a new estate, so no walks or bike rides any more either. I expect they will get a nice new play area as part of the planning approval so how is that fair?	As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)  The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.
163	Yes	Concerned that play area will become fly-tipping site, allowed to become overgrown and unsightly or used by the travelling community. (Juniper Close)		We have carried out further investigations regarding Juniper Close Play Area for further information. The play area was never transferred to the council as the developer went into administration before this took place. As no one was maintaining this play area we have been carrying out monthly inspections for the last four and a half years to make sure that it is still safe. It wouldn't be part of our strategic network but we would not be able to remove it until a time when it came over to us, if indeed we then could. Going forward we will amend it in the strategy to non strategic and under private ownership.
164	Yes	Yes	We have very many concerns about removing equipment from Non Startegically important areas. Surely leaving these as open space will encourage fly tipping, be attractive areas for travellers to set up and will create all manner of problems going forward for residents? Have the council not thought about this at all? The playground in Juniper Close is well used and well loved. We would be very dissappointed to see it go. Residents of the road would rather the council sell this site off for houses to be built, rather than allow it to become a dumping ground. We will definitely look into establishing a management committe if it is the only way it can be kept for our children.	We have carried out further investigations regarding Juniper Close Play Area for further information. The play area was never transferred to the council as the developer went into administration before this took place. As no one was maintaining this play area we have been carrying out monthly inspections for the last four and a half years to make sure that it is still safe. It wouldn't be part of our strategic network but we would not be able to remove it until a time when it came over to us, if indeed we then could.  Going forward we will amend it in the strategy to non strategic and under private ownership.

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165		MIne is currently in Red, I would hope this means they will improve this asap.	I would love to see my children's play area improved, it's quite sad that at 6 & 9 they feel they are too old for it, it is really aimed at toddlers and has nothing apart from the swings that they are able to use. I am near Gallants Lane, identified as Coxheath but is actually East Farleigh!!	Gallants Lane has been identified as a strategically important play area and is earmarked for improvement through the Strategy plan.
166	Yes	The play area at Freshland Road is a very popular play area. Most of the nearby residents do not have large gardens so it is a great place to bring the children to burn off their energy. The two nearest alternative play areas which are less than 12 minutes walk away are not easy walks. Giddyhorn play park is excellent but to get there we have to used Giddyhorn Lane path which is impassable after bad weather and often littered with dog mess. To get to the playarea near Beechwood Hall involves more roads to cross and there are no designated pathways for part of the walk near the hospital so we have to walk in the road. I cannot believe that a nearby wood is about to be torn down for housing which will probably be full of family homes and yet a small playground cannot be retained on our estate. It is no wonder children are becoming obese when any outside space which encourages exercise is being taken away.	I believe my comments regarding the Freshland Drive play area apply to a lot of people who live in other areas of the town whose play areas are under threat.	As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16) The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.  Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.
167	Yes, Poplar Grove (Corben Close is closer)	My children play at the park in Juniper Close. Removing this will stop them enjoying this park which is close enough for them to walk to.		The next nearest play area is on Corben Close, 382m from Juniper Close which is due to be upgraded as part of the £1.8M improvement plans detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document.
168	Giddyhorn	Yes, childminder in road uses it and its local to let the children go there on their own from the house		Comment noted

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170	Yes, but it's a 15min walk plus with small toddlers!	Yes, if they get rid of the play area what will happen to the land? Don't need more houses or fly tipping!	They should be looking to increase the play areas not take some away. If they take some away then the remaining play areas will become overrun and too busy - which will result in some children not wanting to go anymore and have a negative impact on their enjoyment of the outdoors. Have people actually surveyed who uses the 20 non strategic parks to see how much they are used? And the council should have sent letters to all residents in the vicinity of the parks rather than rely on Internet as some people don't have access to the Internet at work! Also what is going to happen to the land if they do get rid of the parks - will it be sold off to a developer? There is enough houses in the area without increasing them more.	As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)  Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)
172	No	Not sure	Apart from stop building houses!! Oh and stop putting in climbing frames without slides! Useless to little people	Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)
174	Yes, but it's not suitable for my children's ages	Yes, as you wish to close it	I think you have not though about the effects this is going to have to our local estate. The park is popular and perfect for small children. Just what our estate needs. It's also a low maintenance park, so there is really no need to close as perfectly places and designed area.	The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.
175	I live near Peverel Drive play area. There are no alternative play areas within safe walking distance for my daughter and I to use if you go ahead with your proposal to close this play area.	I have significant concerns about these plans for the Peverel Drive play area which I use with my daughter and I strongly oppose this proposal. This play area is well used and popular among local residents and is essential for children in Peverel Drive and neighbouring streets to play and exercise in a safe environment.	Whilst I support the investment in play areas I disagree entirely with this proposed strategy. I do not agree that certain play areas should be sacrificed in order to renovate other play areas which have been identified as so-called more 'strategically important'. With the increasing birth rate I would be expecting my council to be increasing funding for play areas, not closing them. I will be submitting a petition together with one of my neighbours to oppose this proposal. We have collected over 120 signatures from local residents who support our campaign to keep Peverel Drive play area open for the children in our area. I am very angry and upset by these plans as I believe they will have an extremely negative impact on many children and young people, not just in our local area but throughout Maidstone. I do not believe that this public consultation has been sufficiently advertised among residents in Maidstone, The vast majority of local residents who I spoke to when collecting signatures for the Peverel Drive petition were unaware of these plans. There has been a complete lack of transparency about this public consultation. Taking this	If local residents and Thurnham Parish Council want the play area at Peverel Drive to be kept then a solution would be that the £59,275 S106 Developer Contribution, from the development of Kent Frozen Foods, be used to improve the play area at Peverel Drive and that the site then be adopted by the Parish Council. This would enable the play area to not only remain open but will result in improved equipment for local residents.  These improvements could either be managed and implemented by the Parish Council or done by MBC before the play area is handed to the parish.  The site would remain a non strategic play area that is not managed by Maidstone Borough

			<p>into account I would like to comment that this consultation should be extended and publicised much more widely in order to give residents the opportunity to have their say. What plans are there to take into account public opinion following this public consultation? I would also like to comment that you have not made clear what criteria you used in order to identify play areas as 'non strategic'. In the case of Peverel Drive play area this is well loved and well used by the local community and is also very safe being situated on a cul de sac. I take it that these factors were not taken into account when you defined this play area as 'non strategic'. Furthermore I do not agree that a play area has to be 'strategic'. Rather it is there to serve a need for the local community, to provide a safe place for children to play and exercise safely. If it fulfils these criteria, as in the case of Peverel Drive, then I see no reason for its closure. I also do not agree with your proposal for the local community to take on these play areas. The community cannot and should not be expected to take on the financial responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of their local play area in order to keep it open. This is one of the reasons that we pay council tax, in order for the council to provide such play areas. In the case of Peverel Drive the equipment has not been replaced for many years and whilst it provides a safe place to play it has not been maintained by the council to the standard that I would expect. I also strongly disagree with your argument that the closure of these play areas will still provide children with a play area within 12 minutes walk. In the case of Peverel Drive play area, if this is indeed closed, taking into account the fact that the nearest alternative play areas in Grove Green are also under threat of closure, this will certainly not leave a play area within safe walking distance for our children. The nearest play area will be in Bearsted Green which involves crossing busy roads and is very dangerous for children in Bearsted Park to walk to. This is not within 12 minutes walk with a 2 year old. If you close this play area you will force children who live in our street and neighbouring roads to play on the pavements and in the street which will significantly increase the risk of a child being involved in a serious road accident. Peverel Drive play area also provides a vital sense of community in the local area and is a place for children and their parents to meet. This is something that I would ordinarily expect my council to actively promote. However this will be lost if you go ahead with these plans. I ask that you take my above comments into consideration and that you respond to the strong public feeling which is made clear from our petition which we will be submitting and do not close Peverel Drive play area.</p>	<p>Council.</p> <p>As with all adopted play areas MBC will help with information regarding inspection, equipment providers and potential future funding sources.</p>
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176	Claire Park & Barming Heath (Tarragon Road and others are closer)	I am concerned that the play park in Freshland Road will be either be the responsibility of the parish Council or removed	I object to my local walk off road with the removal of the Freshland Road being tampered with. It was installed with the original planning and should remain without calling on local residents to uphold the facility.	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p> <p>The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.</p>
177			<p>Definition of 12 minutes is too generic and uses "as the crow flies" rather than actual journey time. Taking Harrietsham for instance the village is divided by the railway line so houses to the west have to make a much longer journey. so they are beyond the 12 minutes. Residents living in a Parished area are disadvantaged by this policy. Not only do they pay for it through their Parish rate they pay for it through the MBC rate. This is deliberate double taxation and penalises those in the predominately rural areas where provision by its nature is weaker.</p>	<p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p>

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Facebook message			How about some equipment for seniors/adults to exercise in the fresh air as part of these plans?	Comment noted. There are outdoor gym areas at Mote Park; Mallards Way, Downswood; Kingswood Recreation Ground and School Villas at Nettlestead. There are also outdoor gyms planned for Park Wood Recreation Ground and South Park. For the individual plans for each site we will be looking at leisure and play facilities for teens and adults which might include outdoor gym equipment in suitable locations subject to funding and consultation.
email		Woolley Road, Senacre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the community would take over and how it would work (this can be very general i.e. we'll let people know the process and what it would entail by putting up posters/advertising somewhere/etc)</li> <li>• The issue of the busy road</li> <li>• How it was designated non strategically important when it's next to a school</li> </ul>	<p>Senacre Square play area on Reculver Walk by the primary school is identified as a strategically important play area and will receive funding for improvements as per the strategy's action plan.</p> <p>Woolley Road Play Area is the area behind housing at the top end of Woolley Road overlooking Downswood which is in very poor condition and requires removal.</p>
Email		The Harbour, Sutton Valence	I understand the play area at the harbour is to be designated "non strategic" and will have funding withdrawn because the play area at the village hall is only 12 minutes away. This is nonsense for several reasons 1. Play areas should be close to children and there are many children in the Harbour. 2. If you can get small children from the harbour to the village hall in 12 minutes then you should apply for the British Olympic team - it is realistically much longer than that; consider a parent with a pushchair for example. 3. If the play area is close then the level of supervision is easier and older siblings can do it - not possible with a remote location 4. The houses with larger gardens for children to play in are closer to the village hall. The gardens in the harbour are smaller - quite the wrong way round. Overall this is a bad plan. Better to have more play areas with modest facilities than a small number of expensively equipped ones. This is not the way forward.	<p>We will be discussing the results of the consultation with Sutton Valence Parish Council further, as the designation of Strategic vs Non Strategic affects the ability of the Parish Council to apply for a grant from MBC.</p> <p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>The closure of non-strategic play areas will affect MBC play areas and <u>not</u> Parish owned areas. The Harbour Play Area will not be closing down as it belongs to the Parish Council. (77)</p>

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Telephone message		Somerset Road Play Area	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Residents are not happy about the closure of the play area</li> <li>2. Children shouldn't have to walk 12 minutes to get to a play area</li> <li>3. The roads are too busy</li> <li>4. How can mothers allow their child out to play if the play area is closed?</li> <li>5. Given there is antisocial behaviour at the site MBC should be providing outreach work with the teenagers using the site.</li> </ol>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. It will not be sold for housing.(5)</p> <p>Shepway Green Play Area, which has recently been upgraded, is 790m away from Somerset Road Play Area which is an 8 min walk through quiet roads and footpaths.</p> <p>Somerset Road Play Area also suffers from antisocial behaviour (drinking, smashed glass, etc) because it is poorly located at the back of households and young people will use this as a hangout area in the evenings.</p> <p>Currently in the planning stage is the development of a new parkour (free running) area to be installed at Shepway Green on the area next to where the new basket swing with canopy has been installed. This is an area primarily aimed at the older age range for the whole of Shepway, giving young people the chance to exercise, hang out and socialise in a well over looked area.</p>

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Email		Shaw Close	<p>I believe that Shaw Close children's Park should be preserved and remain available for recreation purposes. This is a well-loved park that is regularly used by the residents of the Close with small families. It helps create a sense of community amongst the neighbours whilst knowing that the children are enjoying being outside in natural surroundings, in a small area which is not overpowering surrounded by older children. A playground should allow children to develop gradually and test their skills by providing a series of graduated challenges. The challenges presented should be appropriate for age related abilities and should be ones that children can perceive and choose to undertake. Toddlers, preschool and school age use this park because it meets their needs under the supervision of an adult.</p> <p>With the increasing development occurring on the Eclipse site which has changed dramatically over the last ten years, bringing extra traffic, parking issues, vehicles speeding, litter, homeless living in tents on scrub land, Keeping the park for the next generation is a small request in comparison!</p>	<p>The play area at Penenden Heath is currently being upgraded with safety surfacing being laid and the all the swing seats being replaced.</p> <p>Penenden Heath Play Area is up to 690m walking distance via the footpath running through the woodland at the back of the estate, or 715m via Penenden Heath Road. This play area caters for all age groups from toddlers up to 14 years old.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p>
Email			<p>I live in Allington, and consider it be heavily affected by the volume of 'non strategic' parks that the council is suggesting are removed.</p> <p>Firstly, I consider myself to live further than 12 minutes from the nearest strategic play park suitable for a toddler or young child, and if Keswick Drive, Freshlands, Corben Close and Juniper close play parks were to be removed, as per the proposal, I would expect that the majority of West Allington (Place Wood) and Oakwood Park would be also. I would be very interested as to how the proposal calculates the majority of Urban people would be within a 12 minute walk from a strategic park.</p> <p>I would also like to draw attention to the fact that Allington is built on a hill, and therefore a 12 minute walk cannot be calculate from plotting routes on a map, without taking into account gradient. I would also like to ask you to consider whether you have calculated a 12 minute walk based upon an adults speed, or that of a young child, highlighting again, that they would be required to walk up hill.</p> <p>Secondly, housing estates are being graded planning permission with increasingly smaller garden space, giving both the council and contractor value for money. In</p>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels.</p> <p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed. Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone.</p> <p>On receiving comments on the distance between Keswick Drive and Giddyhorn Lane officers have been out to site to look at the route. Downhill from Keswick to Giddyhorn (for an adult) took 8.57 mins, and uphill took 11.1 mins. Further discussions on the distance, gradient of the hill and relative locations of</p>

			<p>return residents should be able to expect that in exchange for a sacrifice in garden size, localised play areas are provided. It seems that there is a double edge sword here, and I don't feel the council should be able to maximise council tax income, through maximising housing quantities, <b>and</b> reduce spending on providing facilities that compensate for housing short falls.</p> <p>The government are encouraging society to lead a balanced lifestyle, to take the small opportunities to be more active, and yet the council's plans to remove local parks means that what could be a quick 20 minutes play outside in the local park would now take most people in Allington and Oakwood easily an hour. By removing the ability for families to pop over to the swings for 10 minutes, the use of parks will reduce significantly, and is also likely to increase the use of cars to get to what facilities are available, also concurrent with central governments campaigns.</p> <p>I fully understand the need to reduce expenditure; however I believe that Allington has been very hard hit by this proposal and request that the council reconsider its plans.</p>	<p>households to the play areas will take place before a final decision is made.</p> <p>Corben Close is down as a strategically important play area and will be kept.</p> <p>We have carried out further investigations regarding Juniper Close Play Area for further information. The play area was never transferred to the council as the developer went into administration before this took place. As no one was maintaining this play area we have been carrying out monthly inspections for the last four and a half years to make sure that it is still safe. It wouldn't be part of our strategic network but we would not be able to remove it until a time when it came over to us, if indeed we then could.</p> <p>Going forward we will amend it in the strategy to non strategic and under private ownership.</p> <p>Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.</p>
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Email		Freshlands Road	<p>Petition of 100 plus signatures against the closure of Freshland Road. This well used park was likely funded and part of the offer this estate development (I guess by section 106 money) is cherished and well used . During the petition signing I have regular comments from council tax payers that this "facility is part of our estate and why I bought my house ".</p> <p>It is used by Residents and the many young children/grandchildren that live here .</p> <p>Local nursery</p> <p>And as well being tool for the nearby hospital visitors .</p> <p>It seems nearest a play parks of Giddyhawn lane and next to Beechwood community hall may be in 12 minute of some houses but are certainly not accessible by wheel chair and pram friendly footpaths.</p>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p> <p>The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.</p>
Email			<p>1. The Maidstone Borough Council Draft Play Strategy 'Targets' Parish Councils and creates double taxation for all those living in parished areas. The 74 MBC play areas will have a spend of £2.953.700 including £2127.700 on maintenance over the first five year period with a 'windfall' spend of £1.337. 000 to pump prime the upgrades in the first 18 months. This is met from Council Tax paid by everyone in the borough. The 31 Parish Council Play Areas show a spend of £40.000 per year for five years (£200.000) as a match funded grant open to parish councils. The match funding is a HUGE burden of additional council tax on those living in parishes and clearly a double taxation. They are already funding their play areas including maintenance since the Borough Council have progressively removed funding from parishes.</p> <p>The Strategy tells us that it takes up to £80.000 to renew a play area all of which will require refurbishment or renewal every 7 to 25 years. This equates to some £2.280.000 to be found from parish rates in that time unless the Borough Council rethinks it strategy.</p>	<p>Just to clarify the position that there are currently <u>no</u> funds available from MBC for Parish Council play areas. The adoption of the Strategy will mean that Parish Councils will be able to apply for a match-funded grant for those play areas deemed strategic.</p> <p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed (964m in 12 minutes). Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in</p>

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Is it realistic to make a twelve minute walk a criteria for where play areas are sited? This may represent a mile at a fast average walking pace but how can you relate parents and carers with buggies and Grandma and Grandad or people with disability. Play area have grown up in response to need and planning requirements, if that need has changed through demolition or regeneration fine but why else would we need closures.</li> <li>3. This plan is highlighted as a ten year plan but at the most reflects five years funding. There is no indication of the number of play areas in additional to those identified that will require upgrading during the 10 year period bearing in mind you say they need renewing from seven years upwards.</li> <li>4. How will you ensure those play areas operated by Trusts or Housing Associations are ever brought up to the required standard? Or how will additional youth or older peoples faculties' be funded</li> <li>5. Where is sustainability addressed?</li> <li>6. I am seriously concerned that the document highlight information like the 12 minutes was proposed to scrutiny as if that justifies an 'all party support' for the proposals.</li> <li>7. It is also a Strategy until 2024 which states the Council has identified three priorities and seven outcome for the next four years all which are shown as outcomes by 2015</li> <li>8. It states all upgrades are expected to be completed by summer 2015- so what is the strategy for 2015 – 2014? What are the plans/priorities for the next 9 years of this strategy??</li> <li>9. The Parished areas of course have 5 years and no hope of meeting the standard even if they raise match funding through a double taxation because the funding pool is just not enough.</li> </ol>	<p>determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure.</p> <p>Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.</p> <p>As highlighted in the monitoring and review arrangements the action plan from the strategy will be reviewed on a yearly basis and updated as required. The strategy is a fluid, evolving document that requires flexibility as the resulting environment changes, as such the plans and priorities going forward in future years will be addressed as required.</p>
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Email			<p>I have been asked by Marden Parish Councillors to register the fact that they deplore the recommended closure of the Cockpit Play Area</p> <p>This play area is used by a considerable number of children from that locality and it will be an important loss of a facility for Marden.</p> <p>I, therefore, ask that Maidstone Borough Council reconsider this proposal.</p>	<p>The next nearest play area is Marden Playing Fields, a distance of 300m via quiet footpaths from The Cockpit. A total of £31,000 in S106 developer funds have been ring-fenced for the Parish owned play area at Marden Playing Fields for which the Parish Council is currently planning improvements. As Marden Playing Fields is considered to be the strategically important play area for Marden the Parish Council will be able to apply for further funding from the Parish Grant Scheme.</p> <p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p>
Letter			<p>Letter from Headcorn Parish Council</p> <p>Summarised points:</p> <p>The Parish Council is supportive of the proposals and is hopeful that Headcorn can be a beneficiary of maximising the funding opportunities available.</p> <p>Headcorn has a lack of youth facilities and is developing a Neighbourhood plan to bridge this gap at the preferred location of Hoggs Bridge Green.</p> <p>Headcorn would like to see more recognition of the needs of rural areas within the strategy and a need to enable better access to better facilities in rural areas. The 12 minute walking time is too ambitious in rural areas and instead there should be Rural Service Centre (RSC) policy written into the strategy that reflects the rural dimension.</p> <p>To match the key point 'residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live' would like to see if a rural partnership or consortia, alongside a strong partnership with the Borough Council, could be formed to work</p>	<p>The Parks department thanks Headcorn Parish Council for their letter and the points mooted. We are very pleased that the Parish is making ground in moving forwards especially for youth provision.</p> <p>The strategy is a fluid, evolving document that requires flexibility as the resulting environment changes, as such the plans and priorities going forward in future years will be addressed as required through a yearly review. To this end we believe that forming a rural play consortium, to work towards forming rural play area policies that are fit for purpose and developing potential opportunities for rural destination play areas will result in a positive benefit across all age groups and a diverse population. This turn can inform and link in with the borough's play areas strategy and action plans moving forwards plus other rural Neighbourhood Plans in future years. This should be lead by, and shaped by the rural communities with our assistance and advice as required.</p> <p>If Headcorn PC is happy to lead to bring about</p>

			<p>towards developing one or two 'destination play areas' akin to Cobtree and Mote Park, in the RSCs, to support the rural community and also attract new visitors to the area. Further funding from other quarters would be needed. The £10,000 match funding would be a long way short of achieving this main aim in the near future.</p> <p>Headcorn, as a well centrally located RSC, has ambitions as a dynamic parish and wants to work towards providing a better service that meets the needs of a growing and more diverse population.</p>	<p>this partnership we will provide support and advice once it is set up. If there is the appetite from other rural groups/parish councils to get involved then we can add this on as an action on the play area strategy document at a future review date.</p> <p>Many thanks again for your response.</p>
Email		Fountain Park Play Area	<p>I have spoken with local residents and would now consider that this play area should remain on the strategic list and not offered to the community. As you are aware this area is non-parished and after speaking with the North Loose Residents Association I understand they will probably not be in a position to further maintain the space. I also have doubts if other community groups or even housing associations would pick this up.</p> <p>I also have reservations regarding toddler play, because the majority of young children who use this area live close by, where the majority of the housing is located. These very young children would need to travel a considerable distance under this proposal down to South Park. I would also suggest that they would be put in the a car and driven round the block.</p> <p>The play area in South Park which would probably be the alternative is very busy due to the recent massive increase in population at Armstrong Road. The enclosed play area is now very busy and heavily used over long periods. If the council do consider South Park as being the alternative to this space then the 12 minute rule would disadvantage young children living in Laccock Gardens the Broadoak estate and further south of Fountain Park.</p>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed (964m in 12 minutes). Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone.</p> <p>The play area at South Park is 680m from the furthest point on Lacock Gardens which would take around 8.5 – 9mins to walk.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p>

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Email			<p>Further to MBC's announcement that the play area at Shaw Close has been classified as being non-strategically important I would very much appreciate if your department might consider a stay of execution on this particular site. My reasons being;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) That the area that it presently serves (Shaw Close) it is marginally within the 12 minute walking distance to an alternative site (Penenden Heath) and most definitely exceeds that time if one is pushing a child's buggy and possibly have an additional child in tow.</li> <li>2) The only viable way to walk to the alternative site from Shaw Close is along the Penenden Heath Road and therefore exposing children to unnecessary traffic danger.</li> <li>3) As part of the Council's development plans, 35 new houses are planned to be built in the field parallel to the Old Sittingbourne Road and to the North of the existing play area. This development will definitely be outside the 12 minute walk to Penenden Heath.</li> </ol> <p>The present recreational area allows for older children to play football and more active games and yet is physically separate from the younger children's play area which is cordoned with a fence thus preventing otherwise inevitable clashes. This gives additional security to the parents of the younger children.</p>	<p>The play area at Penenden Heath is currently being upgraded with safety surfacing being laid and the all the swing seats being replaced.</p> <p>As detailed in the Draft Play Strategy document the measurement was made based on average human walking speed (964m in 12 minutes). Physical barriers were also mapped out such as main roads, the river and the railway. The purpose of the standard is to rationalise what has become an unregulated spread of provision, especially very small 'handkerchief' play areas built by developers, shoehorned into gaps, that provide very little in the way of play value, and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all residents in Maidstone. The adoption of the new standard will allow the Parks department to be further involved in advising at the planning stages for new developments in determining requirements for off-site and on-site S106 contributions. In effect there will be a more considered approach to ensuring funding from new developments is directed to improving open space and play area infrastructure. When the plans for the new 35 new properties come to us for advising on open space and play infrastructure, we will advise on those requirements we will expect to see in place, including play provision not more than 12 minutes walking time from those properties.</p> <p>Penenden Heath Play Area is up to 690m walking distance via the footpath running through the woodland at the back of the estate, or 715m via Penenden Heath Road.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p>

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Email			<p>I am emailing to inform you that Thurnham Parish Council is opposed to the proposed closure of Peverel Drive play area. We are aware that residents have submitted a petition opposing this and we support their views.</p> <p>We do not feel that the play area should be closed as this is a well used local provision that benefits the local community within Thurnham.</p> <p>Thurnham Parish Council meets on 17 March and this matter is on our agenda for discussion. We do not feel that the consultation by the Borough Council has been publicised sufficiently to enable the local residents to be informed of these proposals.</p> <p>We feel that this play area should be retained as it is an essential provision for the local community within Thurnham.</p>	<p>If local residents and Thurnham Parish Council want the play area at Peverel Drive to be kept then a solution would be that the £59,275 S106 Developer Contribution, from the development of Kent Frozen Foods, be used to improve the play area at Peverel Drive and that the site then be adopted by the Parish Council. This would enable the play area to not only remain open but will result in improved equipment for local residents.</p> <p>These improvements could either be managed and implemented by the Parish Council or done by MBC before the play area is handed to the parish.</p> <p>The site would remain a non strategic play area that is not managed by Maidstone Borough Council.</p> <p>As with all adopted play areas MBC will help with information regarding inspection, equipment providers and potential future funding sources.</p>
Email			<p>My wife and I were early to Freshland Road in August 2003 and do not want to lose the Park that was so much part of the general feeling of the area being family orientated.</p> <p>Whenever we have visitors with children we walk round in the nice weather so the park has always greatly added to our enjoyment of the area.</p> <p>My wife works at Busy Bees Nursery Maidstone Hospital and they often take small groups of children to play as the area is so 'safe'.</p> <p>Both of us try to keep fit so as not to strain the NHS budgets, we don't get in trouble with the police or fire service so all the council do for us is empty bins every 2 weeks so keep the park open and we will be happy with our £1800 per year council tax.</p>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p> <p>The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.</p>

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Email		Bedgebury Close	<p>I'm shocked and upset to read that this park is to be closed, although it has been left for ruin in it's current state! It saddens me that Maidstone council would take away what little area young children have to feel as if it's their own to enjoy.</p> <p>The council may feel as if it's not a viable project, but my 3 &amp; 5 year feel extremely different.</p> <p>I'd like to know what the council does have planned for this space?</p>	<p>The next nearest play area is 300m from Bedgebury Close at the large open space on Ashurst Close, which is due to be upgraded as part of the £1.8M improvement plans detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document. This will provide much needed play provision at the heart of the Vinters Park estate to meet the needs of many households within walking distance.</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces.</p>
Email			<p>Its come to light recently that the council are looking to close the small play park area on Freshlands Road.</p> <p>My family have signed a petition to voice our concerns over this as we use the park very regularly (when the weather is nice) as there is nowhere else close to our home. Beechwood Hall &amp; Giddy Horn Lane play area's are just too far to travel, plus the Giddy Horn Path is terribly maintained and cannot be easily accessed. We often take our two kids to the play area as its nice and peaceful around that side of the estate and we don't need to cross any busy roads.</p> <p>Hopefully someone on the council will see sense and not action this closure (well if that had kids they might).</p>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Any play area closed will be kept as open space as detailed in the Draft Play Area Strategy document, and children and young people will still be able to play in these spaces. (5)</p> <p>The opportunity to visit a play area whilst on the way to the shops from the Freshland Road area is still available via the play area on Tarragon Road, which sits behind Beechwood Hall Community Centre and is 585m from Freshland Road Play Area.</p>

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Letter		Peverel Drive	Concerns over the closure of Peverel Drive play area	<p>If local residents and Thurnham Parish Council want the play area at Peverel Drive to be kept then a solution would be that the £59,275 S106 Developer Contribution, from the development of Kent Frozen Foods, be used to improve the play area at Peverel Drive and that the site then be adopted by the Parish Council. This would enable the play area to not only remain open but will result in improved equipment for local residents.</p> <p>These improvements could either be managed and implemented by the Parish Council or done by MBC before the play area is handed to the parish.</p> <p>The site would remain a non strategic play area that is not managed by Maidstone Borough Council.</p> <p>As with all adopted play areas MBC will help with information regarding inspection, equipment providers and potential future funding sources.</p>
Email			<p>I was stunned to read in the downs mail that in this age of increasing obesity, you are going to close the play areas! This is what we pay our council tax for! Don't close them!</p>	<p>As shown in the draft play strategy there would be an extra cost of £1,418,700 required over a five year period to improve standards across all current play areas. This is unsustainable within current budget levels. (16)</p> <p>Walking further to get to the nearest play area will help children and parents to be more active on a daily basis. Current NHS advice recommends that under 5's that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day, and 5 – 18 year olds should undertake moderate intensity activity for an hour everyday. Walking to and from the play area can be included as part of the required physical activity to stay healthy.</p>