

# Hesket Parish Council

## Armathwaite Play Area Survey Results



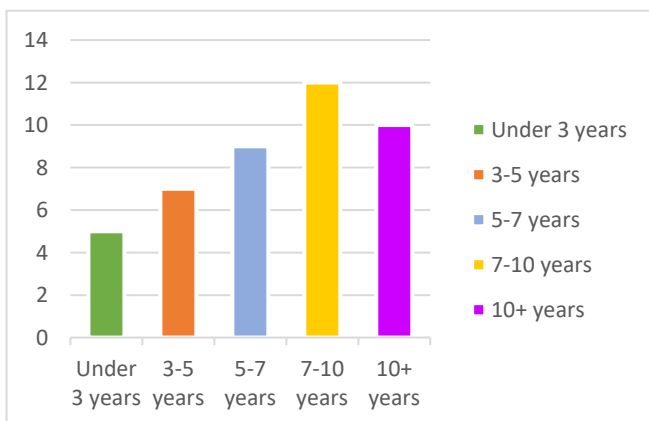
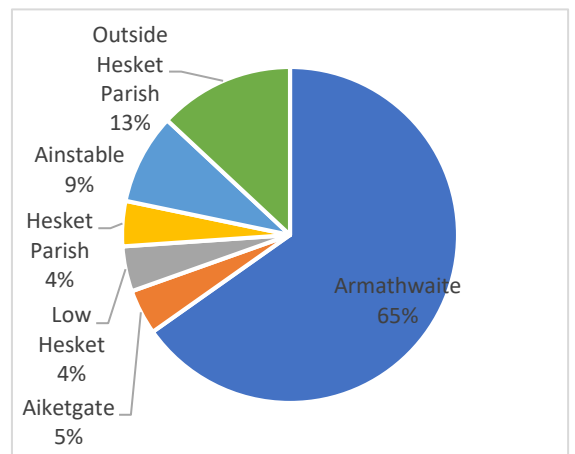
### Background

Armathwaite Play Area is a 1.3 acre site gifted to the Parish Council by Border Engineering Contractor Ltd in 1981 for use as a playground.

### Survey

Following a meeting of the Parish Council a short survey was prepared to garner public opinion on the condition of the Play Area. This survey was made available to residents of Hesket Parish for a period of four weeks, both through village noticeboards and online at the Parish Council’s website. It was also advertised through the Parish Council’s Facebook page and in the Inglewood News and Notes magazine, distributed in the Parish by the Inglewood Group of Churches.

A total of 23 residents responded. Of these, over two thirds were residents of Hesket Parish, with the majority residing within Armathwaite village itself.



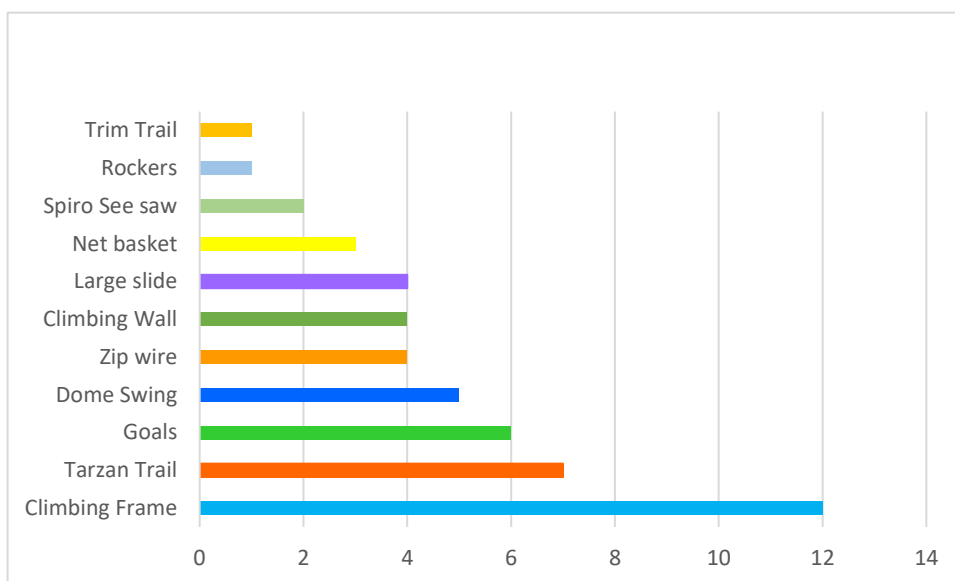
The age range of the respondent’s children using the play area was well spread. The majority of children using the park are over five, and the largest single group are in the seven to ten years age range.

## Play equipment



Several respondents commented that the current play equipment was in need of repair or replacement. A large number requested equipment suitable for a wider age range of children, with particular emphasis on those in the older categories.

Some of the recurring suggestions for play equipment are indicated below.



Comments included:

- *“Children love to climb ...they enjoy the assault course”.*
- *“New play equipment as the play area in Armathwaite is looking very tired now.”*
- *“outdoor play structures for older children”.*
- *“The seesaw paint is flaking. The swing chains often break. The climbing frame is just too small and shabby.”*
- *“The swings are sturdy .. the see-saw is looking a little worse for wear. Maybe a child’s hut incorporated into the climbing frame, a large netted swing.”*
- *“Clamber stack or something similar”*
- *“New exciting equipment would be wonderful. Current equipment unsafe & tired”.*

## Play Area as a whole

With regards to the general condition of the play area as a whole, there were several recurring issues raised.

### Seating

The largest concern raised was a lack of suitable seating. Respondents asked that more seating be available at the park, both benches and picnic benches, to allow parents and families to enjoy the area together. At present there are two seats in the area, one of which is broken, the other of which is on the bank at the rear of the park, accessed by a very overgrown path.



- *“definitely benefit from some picnic tables for families to sit ... where parents can have a seat whilst watching their children play”*
- *“A picnic bench and seating would be great”.*
- *“Benches and picnic area”.*
- *“Picnic benches to encourage families to use it for picnics whilst supervising children”.*
- *“Seats to watch children play and have picnics”.*

### Grass area too uneven

Several respondents commented on the difficulty of accessing the park due both to the steep bank and uneven ground, in particular with regard to those using buggies. Additionally, respondents felt that the condition of the field area was difficult for young child to use, and was not suitable for ball games or bicycles.

- *“Having the field more level would be great for bikes and toys. It’s also hard to push a pushchair on there now.”*
- *“not all that accessible for push chairs”.*
- *“Levelled area for ball games to be played”.*

### Maintenance

A number of comments were made about the lack of maintenance at the area, in particular with regard to the grass, which some felt was not cut regularly. It was also noted that the wood chippings were becoming thin.

- *“The wood chip is also very sparse”*
- *“Grass needs to be cut more frequently as it often past my daughters’ knees”.*
- *“make sure it is maintained on a regular basis to enable people to use it”.*
- *“Needs weeding and more bark laid”*



### Gate

Concerns were raised about the condition of the current gate to the fenced of area. Several respondents noted that the fence and gate were in poor condition, with one concerned that a potential hazard was being caused by the spring back action causing the gate to hit small children in the face.

### Secure Fence

With regard to the bottom end of the play area, a concern was raised about the drop from the field to the path/fence for young children, as illustrated, and a request for more secure fencing made.



### Other concerns

- *“We tend to visit other parks because they are more child friendly than ours in Armathwaite”.*
- *“Rarely visit as there isn’t enough to keep the children entertained”.*
- *“the steep bank to the back of the park which is a safety risk”.*
- *“I’m the only one who empties the bin and changes the bag every now and again, which I don’t mind”.*

### **Other comments and suggestions**

- *“if it would be possible to have it opened up a bit more...the rest of the green is left unused..maybe a few different areas”.*
- *“it could encompass the wild location in the look of the park. It’s a great location and a nice area”.*
- *“Inclusion of feeding point for birds and animals”.*
- *“Info point ... species and varieties of animals found in wooded areas of Eden valley”.*
- *“A big wavy slide built into the hill”.*
- *“Parents are willing to help rake out bark and paint if needed”.*
- *“A sculpture”.*
- *“Some big xylophones and other sound making equipment”.*