

# Developing a masterplan for Christchurch Gardens.

A joint project between Warwick District Council and the Friends of Christchurch Gardens.

Consultation Summary  
Report & Recommendations

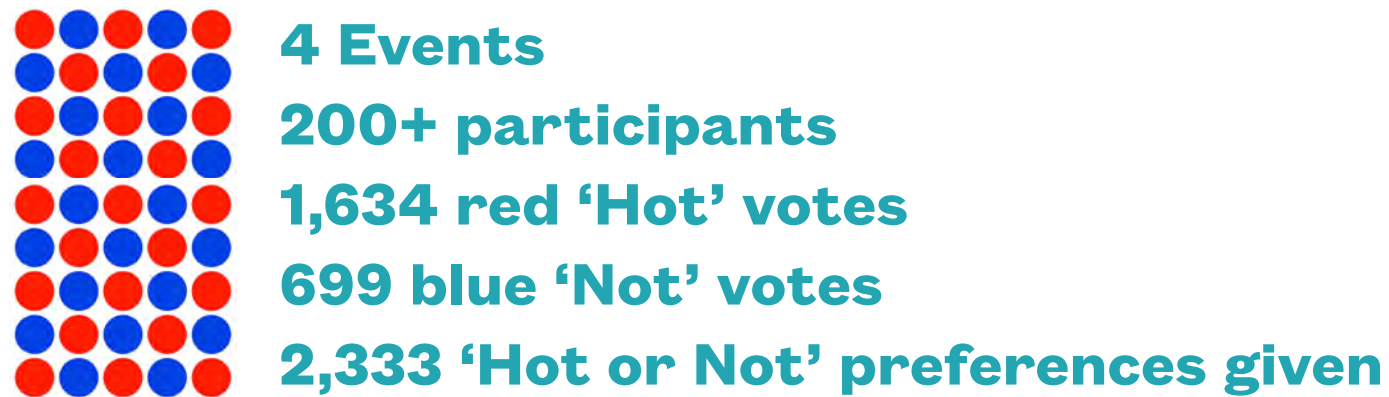


**Christchurch Gardens,**

Leamington Spa



# Summary



The Friends of Christchurch Gardens have been working closely with Warwick District Council to develop a masterplan for this important public open space at the top of the Parade.

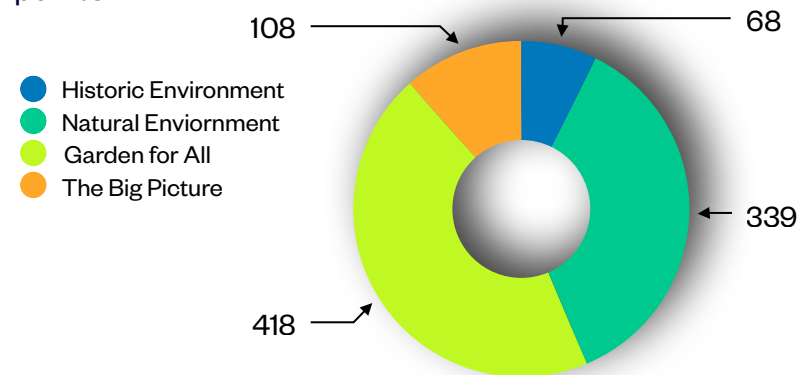
A set of consultation events took place in February to help the Friends know which potential ideas to improve the Gardens were most supported. Visitors to the four events were each given 10-red (Hot) dots and 10-blue (not) dots and voted with their dots on the ideas that they most or least liked. Even though everyone had the same number of 10-red and blue dots, far more hot preferences were given than not. In fact there were 2.33 more red dots than blue with the average number of hot votes per person was 8 to 3.4 not votes. The much higher proportion of hot votes is a good indication that many of the ideas being put forward by the Friends were well-liked.

## What was Hot or Not?

At the consultation we put forward three different approaches:

- \* Making minor tweaks and improvements - **this was a definite Hot idea**
- \* Garden Square with well-defined boundaries - **this was a definite Not idea**
- \* Integrating the Gardens with the Parade - **on balance a slightly Not idea.**

We also proposed four **themes** for improving the Gardens and scored the responses by giving each red dot 1 point and each blue minus one point. This gave us an overall score. The most supported theme was Garden for All with 418 points.



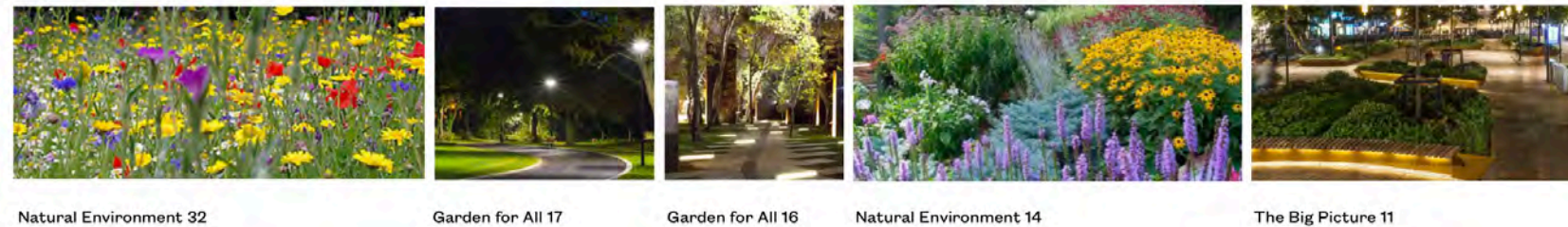
The **10-most** supported statements were:

- Improve the present planting
- Improve the lighting
- Habitat creation
- Community activities
- Reduce anti-social behaviour
- Natural noise buffer to shield vehicular noise
- Programming small scale events
- Access to the courts / sports
- Natural and informal play
- Improved seating

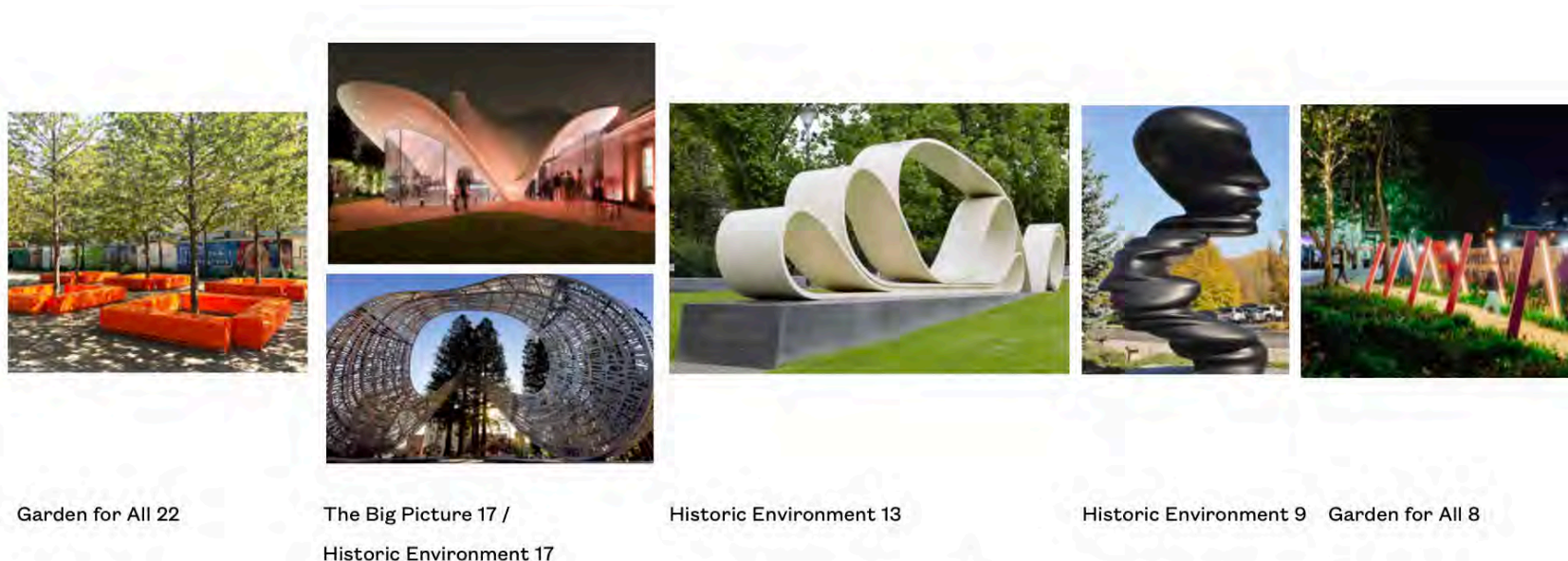
The **10-least** supported statements were:

- New focal point: contemporary arts intervention
- Controlled accessibility
- A cafe
- Increased cycling and pedestrian thoroughfare
- Encourage evening / night time use
- Robust boundary screening
- Functional focal point
- The present planting
- Gateway / corner entrances
- Make the gardens a more formal space, like Fitzroy Square, London

The Hottest images were:



...but these images left more people cold than hot:



# Main Report

This report provides a summary of the consultation process undertaken by the Friends of Christchurch Gardens. The consultation has concluded the information gathering stage of developing a masterplan for the Gardens.

The Friends have been working closely with Warwick District Council to develop a masterplan for Christchurch Gardens. Whilst the Friends are aware of many issues and concerns associated with the Gardens, the group has been keen to ensure that any proposals respond to and are influenced by a broader range of views than just their own. The primary purpose of the consultation undertaken to date has been to gather information from key stakeholders, users and non-users to ensure that the ideas specifically respond to what is being articulated, rather than the Friends making assumptions that they know what needs to happen. Consequently, this first stage has focused on information gathering to help set the brief for the masterplan design. It is hoped that this consultation-led approach will build a greater level of consensus and ownership of the outcomes.

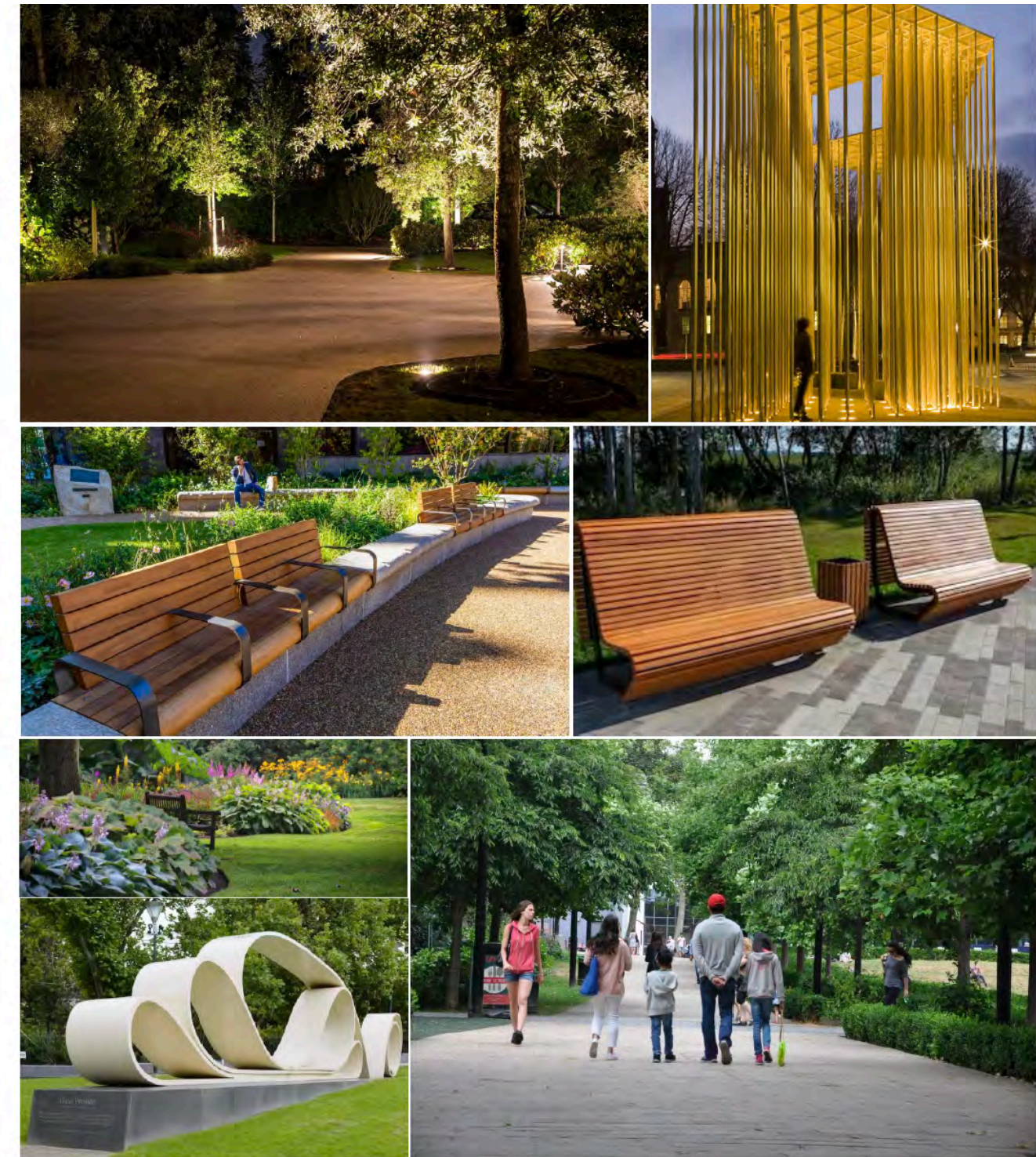
## This first stage has involved three strands of engagement:

- ✿ Contacting nearly 50-key stakeholder groups to take part in a SWOT analysis to help refine the potential issues and ideas for the masterplan. Twenty-one organisations / individuals provided a response. The outcomes of the SWOT analysis are contained in **Appendix A**;
- ✿ From the SWOT it was clear that different approaches could be adopted within the masterplan. A feedback session with a core stakeholder group was undertaken to gather this group's views on the possible options. These explored the ideas of making a range of only minor tweaks (£250 – 400,000), or creating a stronger sense of a Garden Square (£600 – 800,000), or the concept of a more progressive programme of public realm works described as 'New Amsterdam' (£1.8 – 3million). The outline of these options, presented to the core stakeholder group is contained in **Appendix B**;
- ✿ Four consultation events were held over a two week period to test reactions to the three themes identified above. Following the discussion with the core stakeholders, a fourth theme was added, covering the natural environment.

This summary covers the four consultation events held between the 1st and 13th February 2024. In total, an estimated 204 people participated in at least one of the 4-events:

- ✿ Invited stakeholder groups: 1st February, 16 participants
- ✿ Event in the Gardens: 3rd February, 81 participants
- ✿ Royal Priors Shopping Centre: 10th February, 86 participants
- ✿ Leamington History Group: 13th February, 21 participants

The attendance numbers only include those who actively participated, as opposed to all visitors to an event. Numbers of active participants were calculated by recording how many strips of red / blue dots were handed out at each event.



The Friends actively promoted the two public events via flyers distributed to 1,800 addresses surrounding the Gardens and via media press releases and social media posts.

### The Event Format

The Friends were keen to develop a simple consultation activity that would provide four data-sets of opinions and preferences from:

- i) stakeholder groups with an awareness of the Gardens.
- ii) a more local community by undertaking a well-publicised event within the Gardens.
- iii) a broader community perspective, including potential non-users by holding an event in the town's main shopping centre.
- iv) was from members of the Leamington History Society who would represent a more specialist interest perspective.

The intention was to then consider the level of agreement between the views and opinions of these four potentially different cohorts.

The concept of each participant having 10 'hot or not' votes was developed to compare the voting patterns between the 4-cohorts of stakeholders, local community, broader community, and special interest group. Consequently at each event, the participants were given the same number of red (hot) and blue (not) coloured dots to place against a series of statements, questions or images.

The hot or not concept was also selected as it was seen as an inter-generational technique that would appeal to all ages and could be completed quickly without filling in questionnaires. Comment cards were also made available if any participants wished to provide a more detailed response or make a specific point.

The material was presented as 6-A1 sheets printed on paper that could be swapped over without too much disturbance as the dots were filling up. This ensured that previous votes were neither obscuring anything or that voters were being influenced by the build up of previous votes.



Friends of Christchurch Gardens, Leamington Spa  
3 February · 🌐

What a fabulous turn out we had today for our tidy up and public engagement event. So many helpers joined us for litter picking and clearing wind blown debris from the grass and paths. Managed to catch a couple of photos at quieter moments. At one point we had a queue of people wanting to share their views! Thank you everyone who took part. If you didn't make it today, we have another event next Saturday, 11-3.30 in the Royal Priors Shopping Centre. We'd love to hear your views then.



Friends of Christchurch Gardens, Leamington Spa  
1 February · 🌐

Such wonderful hospitality at Forget Me Not Cafe CIC for our key stakeholder event this afternoon.



Friends of Christchurch Gardens, Leamington Spa  
10 February at 16:37 · 🌐

Nearly 100 people took part in our "hot or not" master plan public engagement today, including some of the younger members in our community. We had some great conversations, learned some new things about the history of the Gardens and really enjoyed meeting you all. Thank you all for taking part. We'll get back to you soon with the analysis of your views.



The content of the 6-sheets comprised:

- an introductory panel providing some physical context and explaining the work completed to date;
- a statements and questions sheet that explored the three themes that were derived from the SWOT analysis of minor tweaks, a physically more defined garden square, or a more expansive and permeable public realm linked to the Parade. The questions were divided between four thematic priorities (rather than designs) that could be included within the masterplan approach;
- each of the thematic priorities were then explored in more detail via a theme sheet, including the historic environment, the natural environment, a community garden, and a more integrated green infrastructure approach.

The red and blue votes could be used on any of the sheets, including statements and images.

The boards were not branded in any way with the District Council's logo or colour. This was to ensure that the Friends were asking for opinions and preferences outside of any council likes or dislikes and as such hoped for impartial responses.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF CHRISTCHURCH GARDENS 1

Tell us what you think

### Introduction

#### INTRODUCTION

Located in the heart of Leamington Spa, the 3 acres Christchurch Gardens at the northern end of the Parade forms an important and inclusive green space, providing sports and informal recreation opportunity. Although well-used, Christchurch Gardens are in need of investment and could offer so much more to the town's visitors and community.

The purpose of the consultation is to understand the key influencing factors towards improving and enhancing the gardens over a sustained period of time.



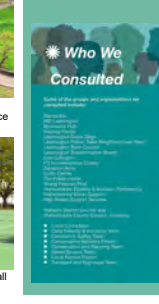
Lack of character at the corner entrance between Beauchamp Avenue and Beauchamp Road. Lack of definition to the planting border next to the tennis courts by Beauchamp Avenue. Uninviting corner entrance between Beauchamp Avenue and Kenilworth Road.



Open views to Clarendon Avenue leading from the entrance at Beauchamp Road. Pedestrian path alongside Kenilworth Road. Southern edge at Clarendon Avenue impacted by the constant rumble of vehicular engines. No variation in the character and surface treatment of paths. Empty views from Clarendon Avenue down to the tennis courts. Empty space overlooking the grand and symmetrical Parade. Three tennis courts and a basketball court at the north of the gardens.



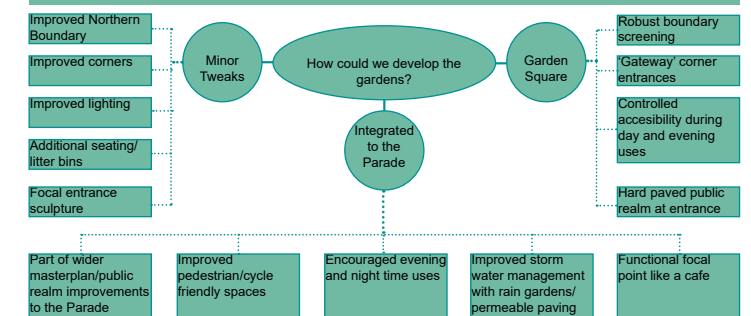
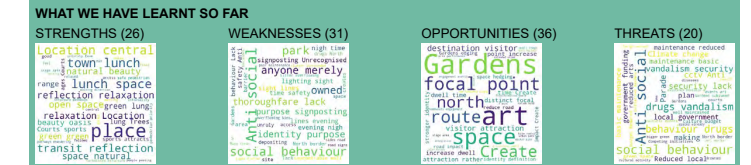
Over the past few months, we contacted a range of 50 community interest groups and organizations and had detailed feedback from 21 of these to identify what they think are the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities** and **Threats** surrounding Christchurch Gardens.



## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF CHRISTCHURCH GARDENS 2

Lead us with your ideas

### What's 'Hot or Not' to You



Theme	Aspirations	Hot	Not
Historic Environment	Garden as a contained space?		
	Garden with well-defined boundaries?		
	Focal point to the Parade?		
Natural Environment	Increased wildlife and biodiversity?		
	Garden as a space for contact with nature?		
	Garden as a space to enjoy seasonal variation?		
Garden for All	Improved and incidental play opportunities for young children?		
	Opportunities for better social interaction?		
	Lighting to create more interest?		
	Encourage evening use of the garden?		
The Big Picture	Eliminate anti-social behaviour?		
	Improved green infrastructure?		
	Improved traffic calming?		
	Increased permeability?		
	Strengthening connections with the Parade?		

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF CHRISTCHURCH GARDENS 3

Past Connections, Present Aspirations

### Historic Environment

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

Christchurch Gardens formed an important feature of the planned Royal Leamington Spa, being the centre of the 'new town' north of the river as commissioned by landowner Edward Willes during 1825 developments. The Gardens, originally known as Beauchamp Square provided the setting for the Christ Church, which stood as a focal point at the northern axis of the Parade.

After proudly looking down the Parade for 134 years, the church was demolished, owing to lack of attendance, and building of several larger churches. Since then, plans to build a housing tower were vehemently opposed, and suggestions to relocate the Hitchman fountain from Jephson Gardens never materialised. The area ironically landscaped as a temporary measure in absence of thoughtful intervention has now organically matured in a valuable open space for Leamington.

**MARKED BY FORMALITY**

The Parade formed a major focus of the original Spa resort and today it is the principal shopping street in the town centre. Laid in a boastful Georgian and early Victorian style, it is characterised by symmetrical design and use of classical elements like embellished contiguous terraces, detailed porticos and architraves.

**A New Focal Point**

Would serve as a historical reminder, a gateway entrance to the park and equally as a culminating visual marker to the Parade's long vista.

**Natural noise buffer**

The enjoyment of this important pocket garden could be further enhanced by the use of buffer planting to shield vehicular noise of surrounding streets.

**Flower rich longer grassland**, vital for bees and butterflies require only yearly cutting and are good for water retention. Care should be given to the better management of **spring and nectar bulbs** in the gardens which offer striking displays and seasonal interest.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF CHRISTCHURCH GARDENS 4

The way forward

### Natural Environment

**CLIMATE PLEDGES**

In 2019, Warwick District Council declared a Climate Emergency with an ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030. With a commitment of offsetting emitted carbon, the council would plant 160,000 trees by the end that period. Christchurch Gardens in the middle of the commercial heart of Leamington offers a valued site for mitigating vehicular emission along with offering green space for natural cooling and food prevention.

In October 2022, Warwick District Council resolved to declare an Ecological Emergency with aims to maximise Biodiversity Net Gain along with improving and enhancing wildlife.

**Christchurch Gardens through the seasons**

**Its present planting**

Lack of definition and variety to the northern planting border by Beauchamp Avenue. Varied mix of species limited to certain borders. Ribes sanguineum adding a splash of colour. Planting predominantly comprising of grassed area with mature trees. Western border by Beauchamp Road, colourful in summer but bare in winter.

**BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS**

The beauty and biodiversity of the current site, which primarily is a grassed area with some large sized mature trees could be enhanced with a varied mix of **native and pollinator friendly** species. Plants and flowers with different colours, scents, shapes, and structures provide an important source of seed and nectar for a range of wildlife. Carbon footprint could be reduced with **sustainable planting** which unlike seasonal beds require less intensive growth and maintenance regimes and better withstand harsh climate changes. **Flower rich longer grassland**, vital for bees and butterflies require only yearly cutting and are good for water retention. Care should be given to the better management of **spring and nectar bulbs** in the gardens which offer striking displays and seasonal interest.

**Habitat Creation**

Allow for bird and bat boxes, bug wall, mini beast hotels to encourage wildlife.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF CHRISTCHURCH GARDENS 5

An inclusive space

### Garden for All

**AN ASSET TO THE COMMUNITY**

Recognised and appreciated as an important green space, Christchurch Gardens offer a place for people to stop, pause and reflect, along with being a handy route to cut through on their way to the Parade. Being predominantly flat, it is accessible to all. While it is very popular for its tennis and basketball courts, it is also enjoyed by young children, families for picnic, working people and students for lunch or chat. Currently it is open 24 hours a day throughout the year.

However, the current experience can be improved by allowing for better social interaction, versatile spaces for all user groups, especially young children, and making the area safer by day and night.

**While it continues to be a place for...**

Telephone booths at Clarendon Avenue used as Art Boxes. Small scale concerts in the gardens. Basketball court. Volunteering events. Three tennis courts. Communal activities.

**outdoor learning**, all ages, contact with nature, leisurely walks and thoroughfare, social gatherings, exercising.

**Play**

Provide more incidental play opportunities for young children that can double up as seating or areas of visual interest.

**Seating**

Provide more social seating for community engagement and interaction.

**Lighting**

Make the garden safer by evening / night, improve lighting for tennis courts, illuminate poorly lit pockets, make the entrance more inviting.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF CHRISTCHURCH GARDENS 6

And the vision expands

### The Big Picture

**INTEGRATING IMPROVEMENTS WITH WIDER MASTERPLAN**

The earlier view of the gardens with the imposing presence of Christ Church at the northern part of the Parade is now somewhat blighted by signs and urban lighting, and has substantial scope for improvements. There are aspirations to pedestrianise the Parade, which itself has undergone remarkable changes over time, like the replacement of some of its classical Georgian architectural elements with wider glass shopfronts and increased traffic. Integrating the improvements for the gardens with the wider public realm masterplan would promote more inclusive, resilient, safer and sustainable development. Unifying the greening and less trafficked environment between the two would boost the character of the area to a vibrant landmark destination.

**Traffic calming**

Rain gardens as planted build-outs are an effective tool for reducing traffic speed and increasing water infiltration from surface run-off. With low level planting, they keep sight lines clear and open to ensure safety.

**Increased cycling and pedestrian thoroughfare**

The user experience of the gardens currently used as a thoroughfare to cut across the Parade, could be enhanced by thoughtful considerations of aesthetically desirable sight lines while retaining valuable mature trees.

**A functional focal point**

From simply a paved area providing opportunities for seating, the forecourt could support market stalls, small scale concerts / exhibition, or even house a cafe / art gallery with statement architecture.

**Reduce anti-social behaviour**

Greater use of corners and edges with more seating and accessibility that are subject to casual supervision, will help to reclaim the neglected pockets from being misused, and eventually contribute to the overall safety of wider area.

# Outcomes

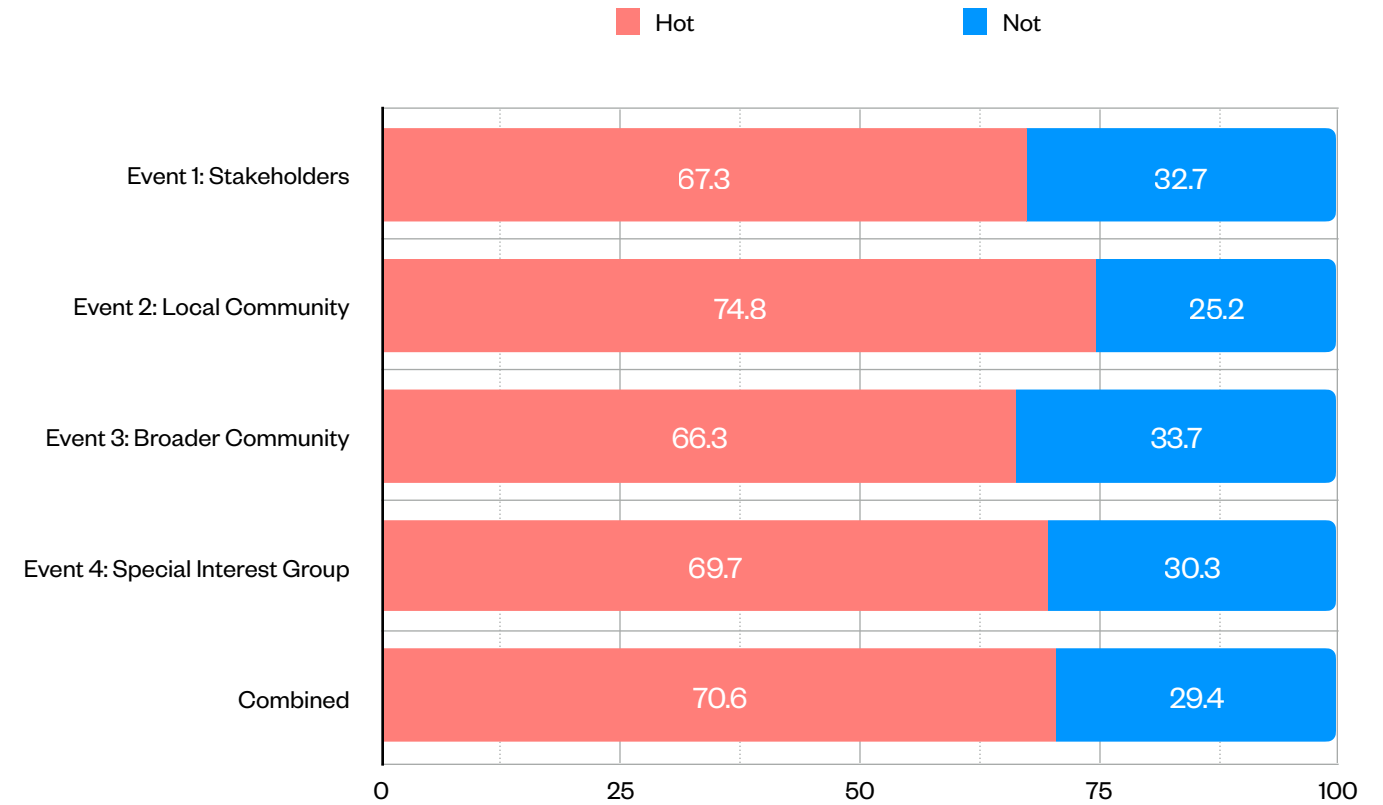
The four data sets has been analysed and the following consultation outcomes has been gained. These have been compared from the individual events and combined. Even though there were the same number of red and blue dots handed out, there were 2.33 times more red dots used than blue. In total, **1,634** red dots and **699** blue dots were used from a maximum of 2,040 each of red and blue dots.

## A Desire for Change

If a greater number of red dots are used than blue, it can indicate that either a level of support for the proposals exists and/or a desire for change to occur. High levels of blue dots conversely indicate either that there is no desire to see change, with the proposals being viewed negatively, and/or that the ideas themselves are inappropriate. The numbers of hot and not votes used at each event is as follows:

Event	Maximum No.	Hot votes	Not votes
Stakeholders	160	144	70
Local Community	810	702	237
Broader Community	860	675	343
Special Interest Group	210	113	49
Combined	2,040	1,634	699

The overall average of all events is 8 red dots to 3.4 blue dots. The disparity in the use of red to blue dots indicates a reluctance to disagree with any of the ideas being put forward. It indicates a high-level of support for change and a good level of endorsement of the proposed thematic ideas being proposed across all consultee cohorts.



Percentage of Hot to Not votes used at each event.

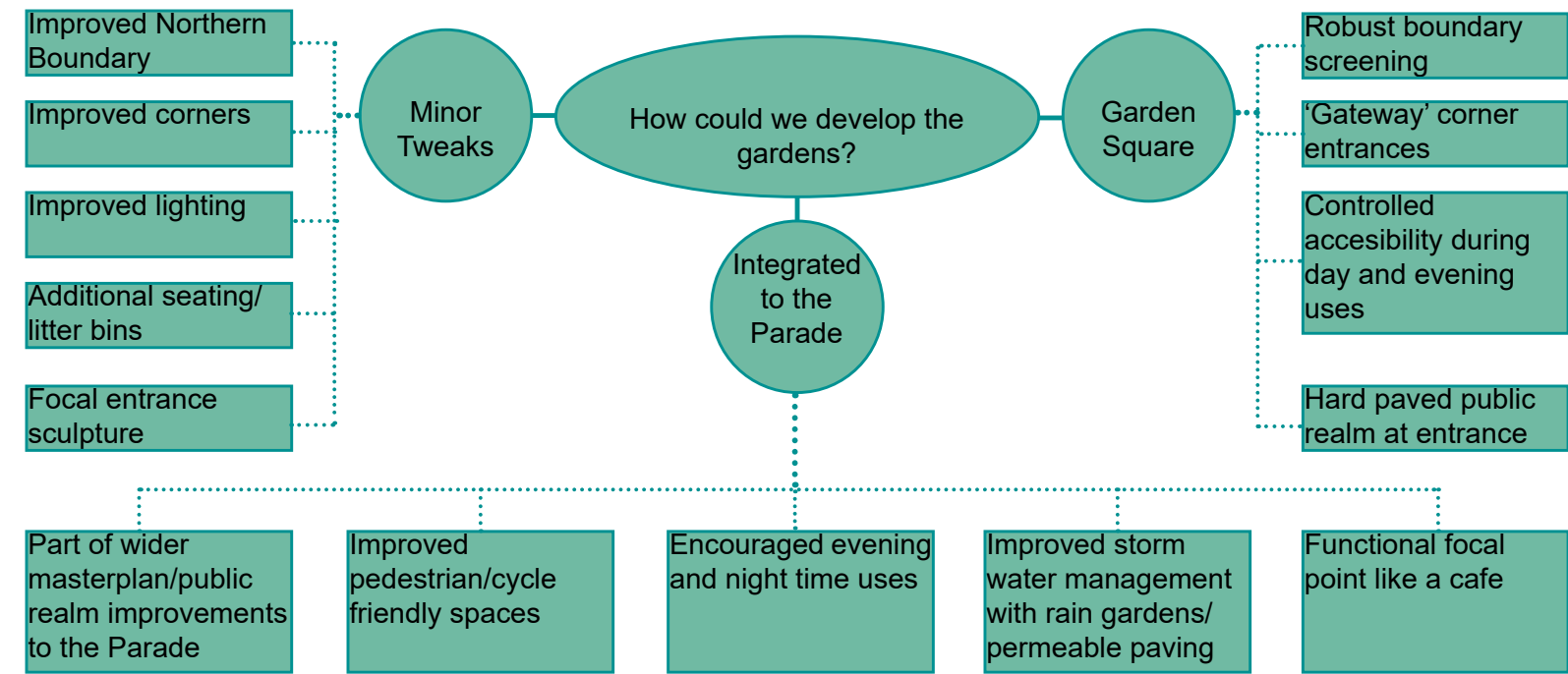
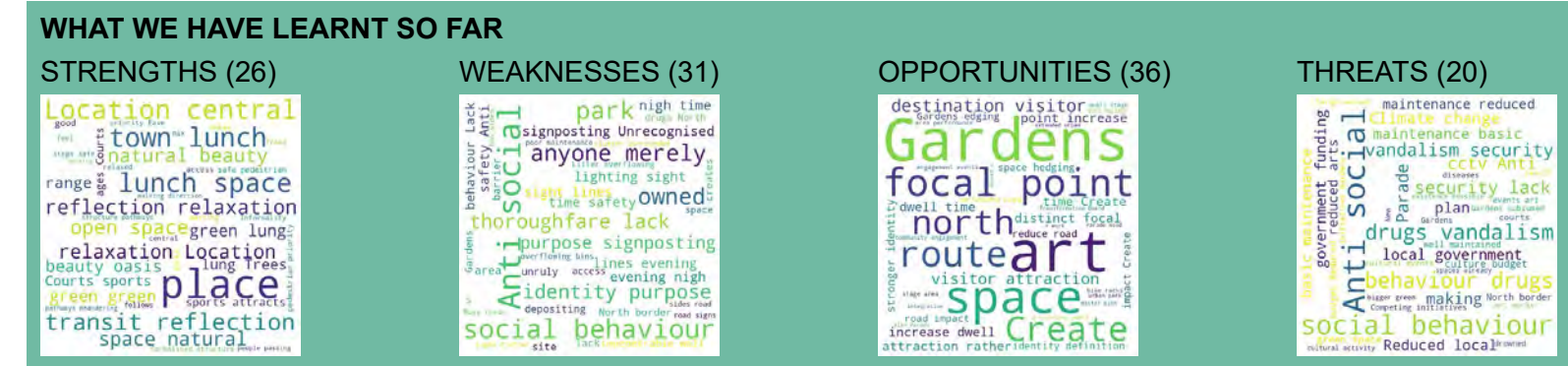
The highest level of support (red votes to blue) was achieved at the event in the Gardens at a little under 75% red dots to 25% blue. This event was seen to best represent the most invested cohort from the local community. Whilst the lowest ratio of support was from the broader community at the Royal Priors, at 66% to 34%.

The relatively close pattern of voting between the four cohorts is also encouraging and indicates that further information gathering at this 'broad brush' level is unlikely to produce any substantially different set of outcomes.

# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF CHRISTCHURCH GARDENS 2

Lead us with your ideas

## What's 'Hot or Not' to You

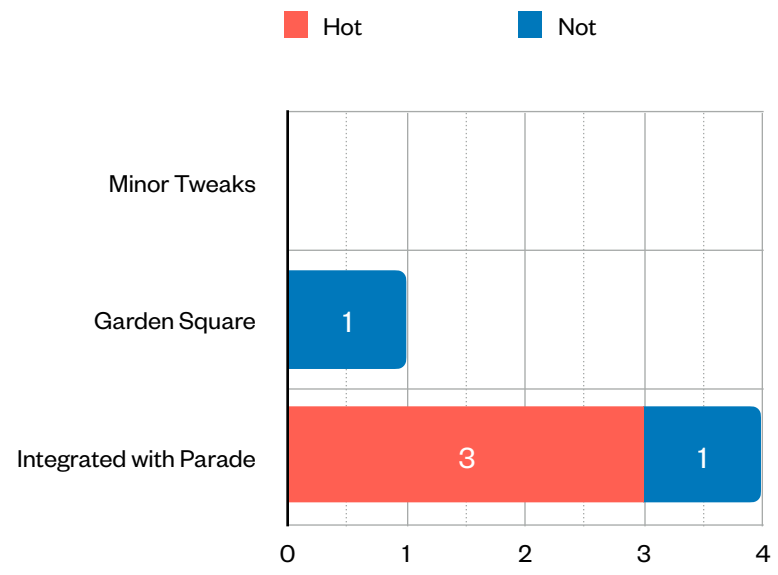


### What's Hot or Not to You

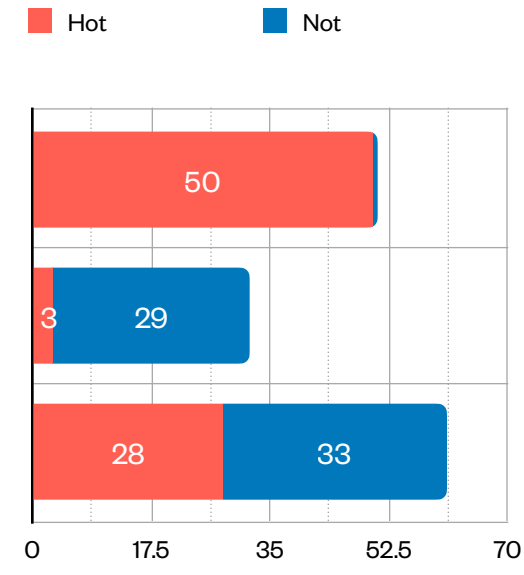
Sheet 2 asks the direct question, *How could we develop the Gardens?* The three options from the SWOT analysis are then provided:

- ✳ Minor Tweaks;
- ✳ Garden Square;
- ✳ Integrated with the Parade.

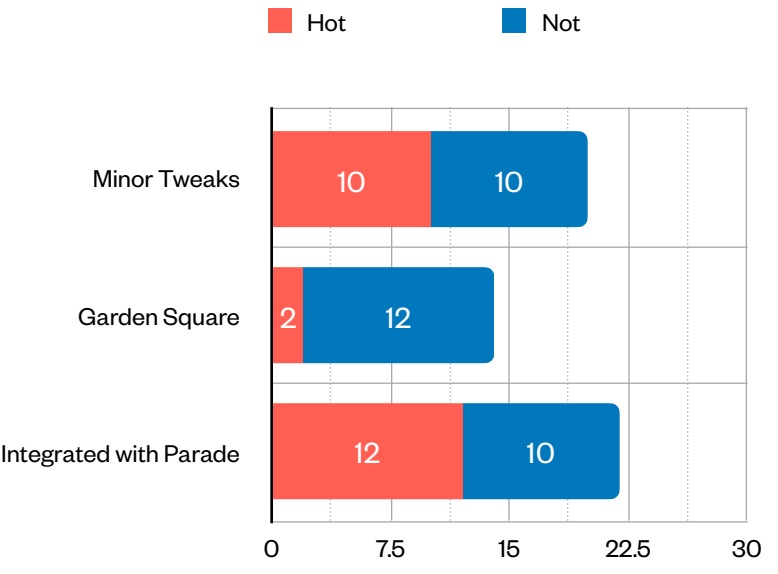
Each of the options were supported by a set of summary statements on what that option might include. The responses to the three options from each event is as follows based on the number of red and blue dots:



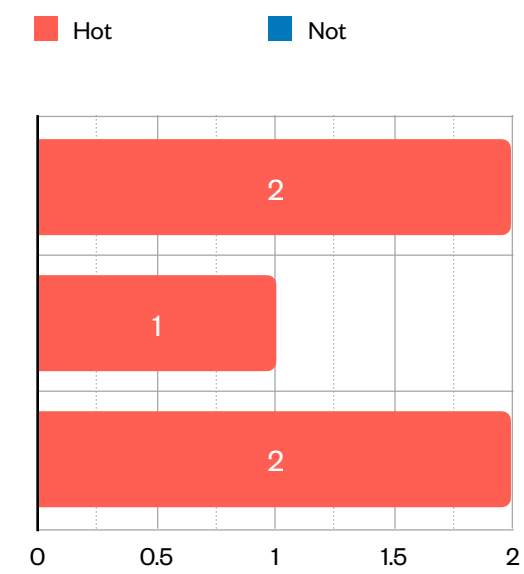
**Event 1: Stakeholders.** A total of 5 dots were used.



**Event 2: Local Community.** A total of 144 dots were used.



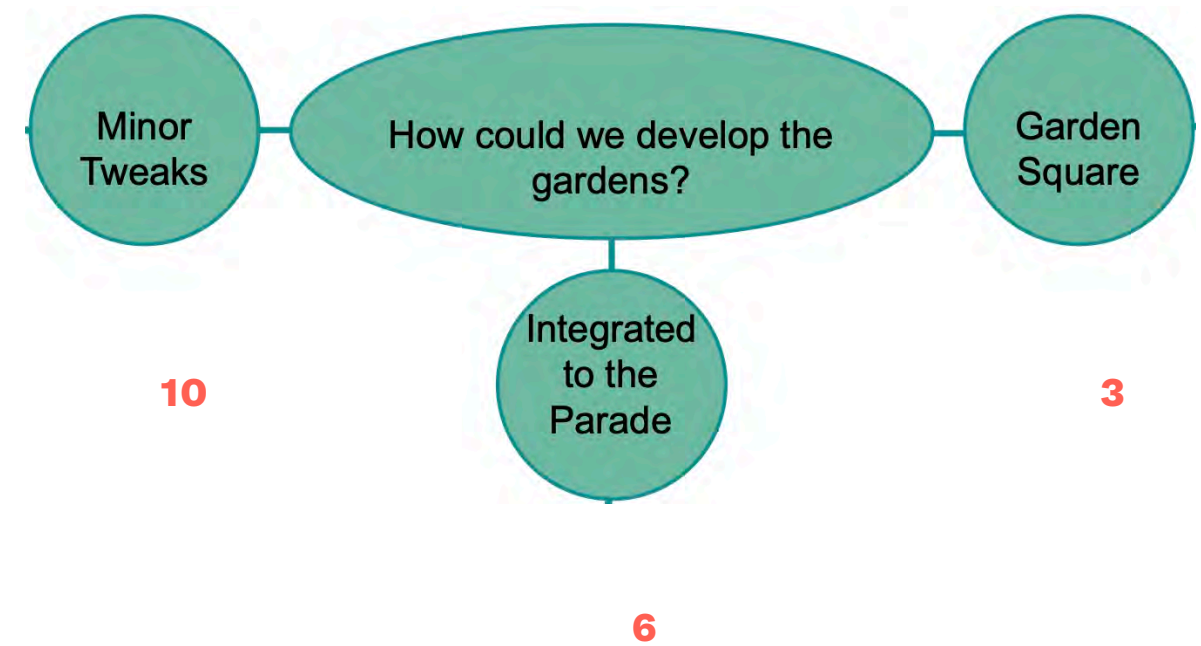
**Event 3: Broader Community.** A total of 56 dots were used.



**Event 4: Special Interest Group.** A total of 5 dots were used.

By applying a scoring system to the pattern of red and blue dots, the relative level of support for each of the three options and the degree of support for the corresponding statements can be made. The scores where a red dot scores 1 plus point and a blue dot scores 1 minus point are as follows:

All Events	Event 1	Event 2	Event 3	Event 4	Totals
<b>Board 2: What's Hot or Not to You</b>					
How could we develop the Gardens?					
Minor Tweaks	0	8	1	1	<b>10</b>
Garden Square	0	2	0	1	<b>3</b>
Integrated to the Parade	0	2	2	2	<b>6</b>



Once all blue dots were subtracted from all red dots, all three options still received a positive score, with Minor Tweaks scoring the highest.



The same scoring system was also applied to the corresponding statements:

All Events		Event 1	Event 2	Event 3	Event 4	Total
<b>Board 2: What's Hot or Not to You</b>						
How could we develop the Gardens?						
Minor Tweaks	Improve northern boundary	0	5	0	0	5
	Improved corners	0	6	3	0	9
	Improved lighting	0	16	1	0	17
	Additional seating and litter bins	0	7	2	0	9
	Focal entrance sculpture	0	7	-7	1	1
		0	41	-1	1	41
Garden Square	Robust boundary screening	0	-7	2	0	-5
	Gateway' corner entrances	0	-3	0	0	-3
	Controlled accessibility during day and evening uses	-1	-14	-10	0	-25
	Hard paved public realm at entrance	0	-4	-2	0	-6
						-39
Integrated to the Parade	Part of wider masterplan / improvements to the Parade	0	7	3	0	10
	Improved pedestrian / cycle friendly spaces	0	-1	0	0	-1
	Encourage evening & nighttime uses	0	-3	-3	0	-6
	Improved storm water management with rain gardens / permeable paving	3	3	3	0	9
	Functional focal point like a café	-1	-13	-3	0	-17
		2	-7	0	0	-5

- The Five most supported statements were:
- ✱ Improved lighting (17)
  - ✱ Part of wider masterplan / Parade (10)
  - ✱ Improve corners (9)
  - ✱ Additional seating & litter bins (9)
  - ✱ Improved storm water management (9)

- The Five least supported statements were:
- ✱ Controlled accessibility (-25)
  - ✱ Functional focal point like a cafe (-17)
  - ✱ Encourage evening / night time use (-6)
  - ✱ Hard paved public realm at entrance (-6)
  - ✱ Robust boundary screening (-5)

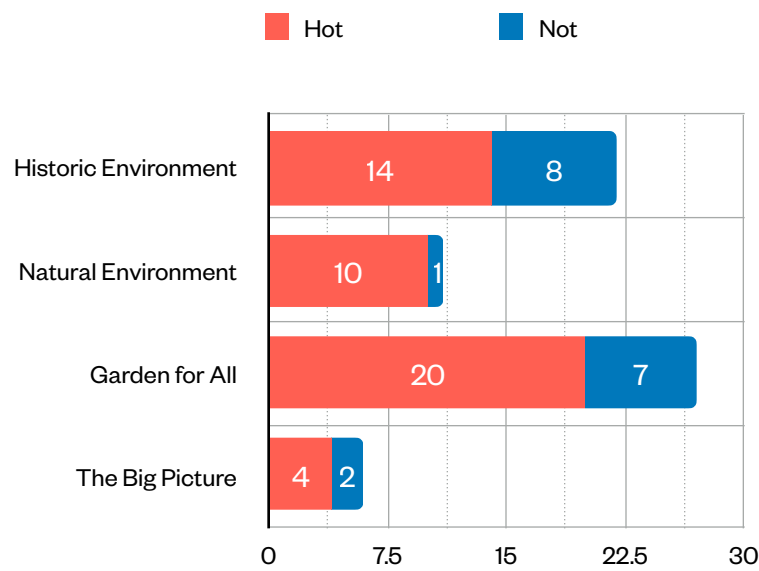
In terms of the statements corresponding to the tree options, only those associated with Minor Tweaks achieved a positive score. Statements associated with the Garden Square scored significantly lower than the other two options.

The second part of sheet 2 began to focus on the three key themes that had emerged from the SWOT analysis and the stakeholder presentation suggestion that the natural environment was added as a separate theme.

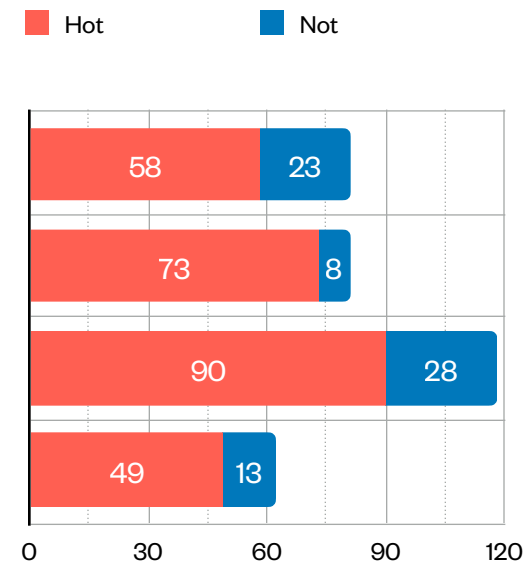
- ✳ Historic Environment;
- ✳ Natural Environment;
- ✳ Garden for All;
- ✳ The Big Picture.

Each of the themes were supported by a set of summary questions within a table to vote hot or not. The responses to the four themes from each event is as follows:

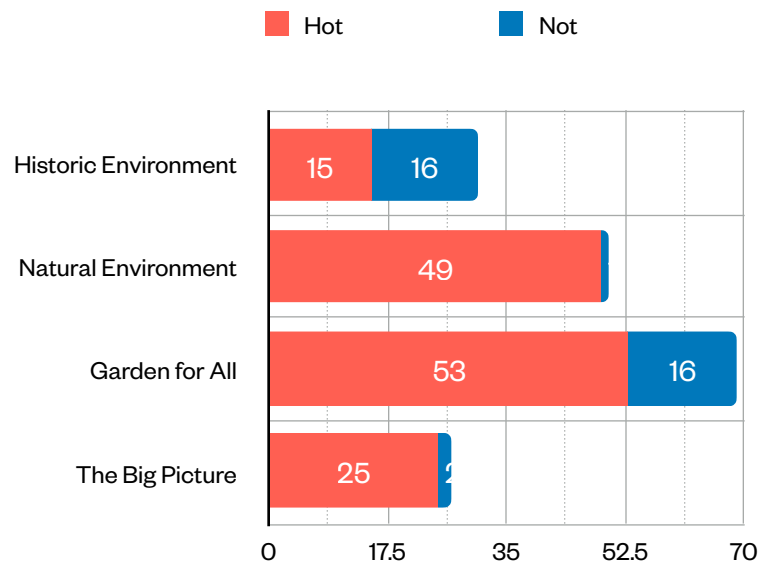
Theme	Aspirations	Hot	Not
Historic Environment	Garden as a contained space?		
	Garden with well-defined boundaries?		
	Focal point to the Parade?		
	Planting as noise Buffer?		
Natural Environment	Increased wildlife and biodiversity?		
	Garden as a space for contact with nature?		
	Garden as a space to enjoy seasonal variation?		
Garden for All	Improved and incidental play opportunities for young children?		
	Opportunities for better social interaction?		
	Lighting to create more interest?		
	Encourage evening use of the garden?		
	Eliminate anti-social behaviour?		
The Big Picture	Improved green infrastructure?		
	Improved traffic calming?		
	Increased permeability?		
	Strengthening connections with the Parade?		



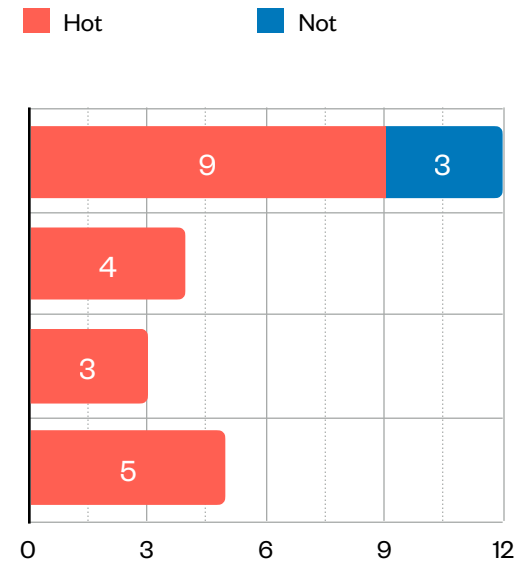
**Event 1:** Stakeholders. 61 dots used.



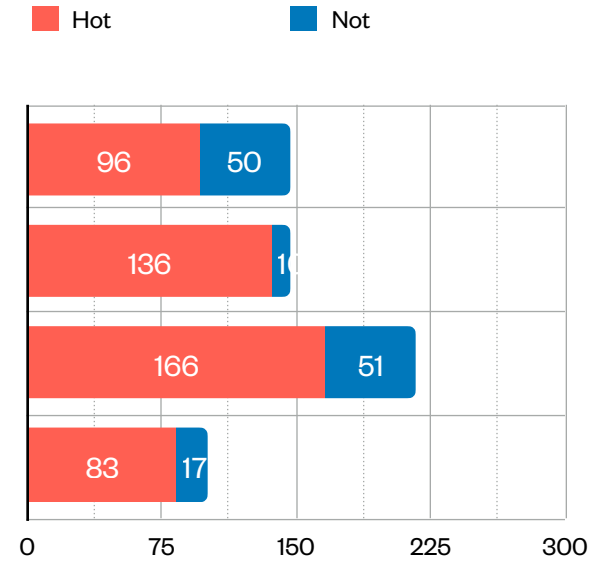
**Event 2:** Local Community. 350 dots were used.



**Event 3:** Broader Community. 150 dots used.



**Event 4:** Special Interest Group. 24 dots used.

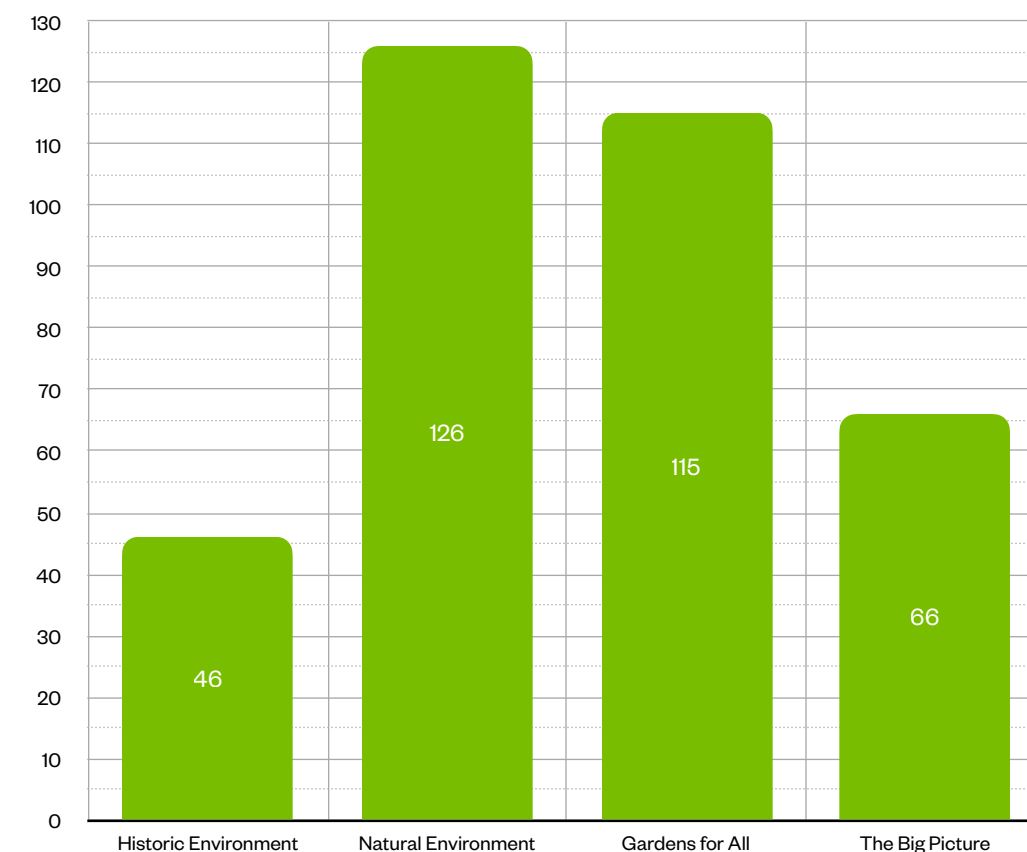


**Combined from all four events.** 585 dots used.

By applying the same scoring system, the relative level of support for each of the four themes and the degree of support for the corresponding questions can be made. Whilst Garden for All received the greatest number of positive red dots, it also received the highest number of negative blue dots. The relative scores of the four options are shown in the graph below.

This indicates that the natural environment theme, based on the questions asked, on sheet 2 was the most popular when all for and against votes were aggregated. The second most popular theme was Garden for All. The scoring from all 4-events is contained in **Appendix C**.

Historic Environment	Garden as a contained space?	-7	12	-8	-3	-6
	Garden with well-defined boundaries?	-1	7	-3	0	3
	Focal point to the Parade?	11	8	1	6	26
	Planting as noise buffer?	3	8	9	3	23
		<b>6</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>46</b>
Natural Environment	Increase wildlife & biodiversity?	4	21	22	1	48
	Gardens as a space for contact with nature?	4	23	14	1	42
	Gardens as a space to enjoy seasonal variation?	1	21	12	2	36
		<b>9</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>126</b>
Garden for All	Improved & incidental play opportunities for young children	0	13	7	0	20
	Opportunities for better social interaction?	0	12	5	1	18
	Lighting to create more interest?	10	14	1	1	26
	Encourage evening use of the gardens?	1	2	8	1	12
	Eliminate anti-social behaviour?	2	21	16	0	39
		<b>13</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>115</b>
The Big Picture	Improved green infrastructure	1	13	7	1	22
	Improved traffic calming?	0	6	3	0	9
	Increased permeability?	-2	1	4	0	3
	Strengthening connections with the Parade?	3	16	9	4	32
		<b>2</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>66</b>



**In order of support from all four events, the top 10 scores are:**

1. Natural Environment - Increase wildlife & biodiversity? (48)
2. Natural Environment - Gardens as space for contact with nature? (42)
3. Garden for All - Eliminate anti-social behaviour? (39)
4. Natural Environment - Gardens to enjoy seasonal variation? (36)
5. The Big Picture - Strengthening connections with the Parade? (32)
6. Historic Environment - Focal point to the Parade? (26)
6. Garden for All - Lighting to create more interest? (26)
7. Historic Environment - Planting as noise barrier? (23)
8. The Big Picture - Improving green infrastructure? (22)
9. Garden for All - Incidental play opportunities? (20)
10. Garden for All - Opportunities for better social interaction? (18)

**The least supported questions were:**

1. Historic environment - Garden as a contained space? (-6)
2. Historic Environment - Garden with well-defined boundaries? (3)
2. The Big Picture - Increased permeability? (3)
3. The Big Picture - Improved traffic calming? (9)
4. Garden for All - Encourage evening use of the gardens? (12)

Historic Environment

The Four Themes:  
Historic Environment

The remaining 4-sheets were intended to explore the preferences expressed through the first table of questions in the Hot or Not section. Each theme was supported with a more detailed set of questions and supporting images.

The following pages apply the same scoring system to the statements and images contained on each of the four thematic sheets.

The Historic Environment theme summary of all events indicates that whilst a new focal point / contemporary arts intervention received the highest number of positive votes at 64, these were outweighed by the 100 negative reactions. This resulted in this aspect of sheet 4 being the least supported overall. The most supported proposal was shielding road noise with natural buffer planting.

Combined			
1.Historic Context	2		2
2. Marked by formality			
3. Christchurch Gardens visible at the northern axis of the grand Georgian Parade	12		12
4. Fitzroy Square as a formal symmetrical green oasis compliments Georgian architecture	-2		-2
5. A new focal point: contemporary arts intervention	64	-100	-36
6. A new focal point: traditional column	10	-6	4
7. Natural noise buffer to shield vehicular noise	50	-8	42
			<b>22</b>

Event 1: Stakeholders	Red	Blue	Score
1.Historic Context	1		1
2. Marked by formality			
3. Christchurch Gardens visible at the northern axis of the grand Georgian Parade	1		1
4. Fitzroy Square as a formal symmetrical green oasis compliments Georgian architecture		2	-2
5. A new focal point: contemporary arts intervention	7		7
6. A new focal point: traditional column	3	2	1
7. Natural noise buffer to shield vehicular noise	7		7
			<b>15</b>
Event 2: Local Community			
1.Historic Context			
2. Marked by formality			
3. Christchurch Gardens visible at the northern axis of the grand Georgian Parade			
4. Fitzroy Square as a formal symmetrical green oasis compliments Georgian architecture			
5. A new focal point: contemporary arts intervention	26	22	4
6. A new focal point: traditional column	1		1
7. Natural noise buffer to shield vehicular noise	15	5	10
			<b>15</b>
Event 3: Broader Community			
1.Historic Context	1		1
2. Marked by formality			
3. Christchurch Gardens visible at the northern axis of the grand Georgian Parade	8		8
4. Fitzroy Square as a formal symmetrical green oasis compliments Georgian architecture			
5. A new focal point: contemporary arts intervention	25	70	-45
6. A new focal point: traditional column	4		4
7. Natural noise buffer to shield vehicular noise	24	3	21
			<b>-11</b>
Event 4: Special Interest Group			
1.Historic Context			
2. Marked by formality			
3. Christchurch Gardens visible at the northern axis of the grand Georgian Parade	3		3
4. Fitzroy Square as a formal symmetrical green oasis compliments Georgian architecture			
5. A new focal point: contemporary arts intervention	6	8	-2
6. A new focal point: traditional column	2	4	-2
7. Natural noise buffer to shield vehicular noise	4		4
			<b>3</b>

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Christchurch Gardens formed an important feature of the planned Royal Leamington Spa, being the centre of the 'new town' north of the river as commissioned by landowner Edward Willes during 1825 developments. The Gardens, originally known as Beauchamp Square provided the setting for the Christ Church, which stood as a focal point at the northern axis of the Parade.

After proudly looking down the Parade for 134 years, the church was demolished, owing to lack of attendance, and building of several larger churches. Since then, plans to build a housing tower were vehemently opposed, and suggestions to relocate the Hitchman fountain from Jephson Gardens never materialised. The area ironically landscaped as a temporary measure in absence of thoughtful intervention has now organically matured in a valuable open space for Leamington.



Christchurch Gardens, 1st Edition OS Map



Christ Church around 1830



View of Christ Church at the northern axis of the Parade

MARKED BY FORMALITY

The Parade formed a major focus of the original Spa resort and today it is the principal shopping street in the town centre. Laid in a boastful Georgian and early Victorian style, it is characterised by symmetrical design and use of classical elements like embellished contiguous terraces, detailed porticos and architraves.



Christchurch Gardens visible at the northern axis of the grand Georgian Parade.



Fitzroy Square, London, laid as a formal and symmetrical central green oasis to compliment the enveloping sophisticated Georgian architecture.

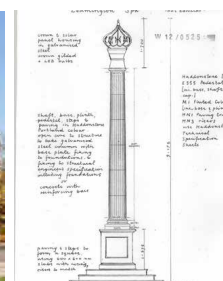
A New Focal Point

Would serve as a historical reminder, a gateway entrance to the park and equally as a culminating visual marker to the Parade's long vista.

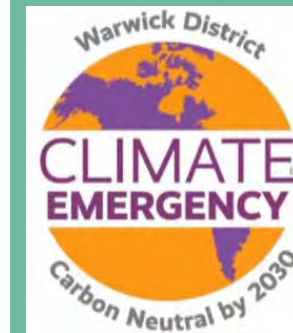


Natural noise buffer

The enjoyment of this important pocket garden could be further enhanced by the use of buffer planting to shield vehicular noise of surrounding streets.



Natural Environment

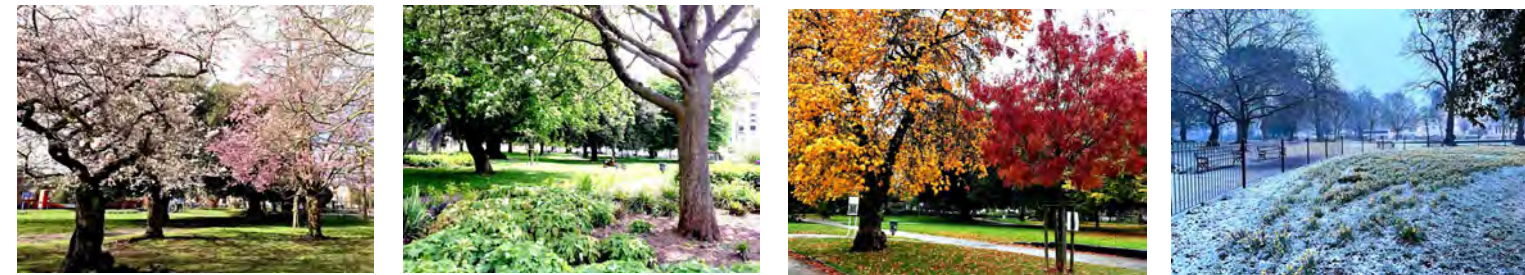


CLIMATE PLEDGES

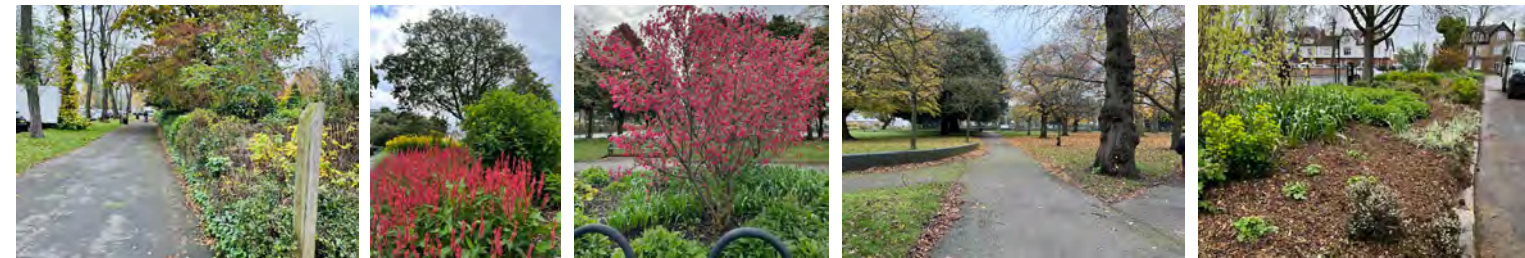
In 2019, Warwick District Council declared a Climate Emergency with an ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030. With a commitment of offsetting emitted carbon, the council would plant 160,000 trees by the end that period. Christchurch Gardens in the middle of the commercial heart of Leamington offers a valued site for mitigating vehicular emission along with offering green space for natural cooling and flood prevention.

In October 2022, Warwick District Council resolved to declare an Ecological Emergency with aims to maximise Biodiversity Net Gain along with improving and enhancing wildlife.

Christchurch Gardens through the seasons



Its present planting



Lack of definition and variety to the northern planting border by Beauchamp Avenue.

Varied mix of species limited to certain borders.

Ribes sanguineum adding a splash of colour.

Planting predominantly comprising of grassed area with mature trees.

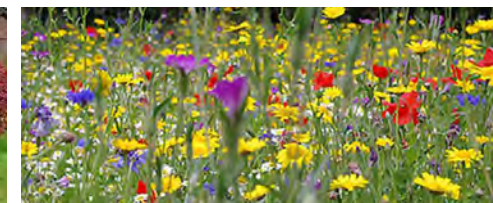
Western border by Beauchamp Road, colourful in summer but bare in winter.

BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS

The beauty and biodiversity of the current site, which primarily is a grassed area with some large sized mature trees could be enhanced with a varied mix of **native and pollinator friendly** species. Plants and flowers with different colours, scents, shapes, and structures provide an important source of seed and nectar for a range of wildlife. Carbon footprint could be reduced with **sustainable planting** which unlike seasonal beds require less intensive growth and maintenance regimes and better withstand harsh climate changes. **Flower rich longer grassland**, vital for bees and butterflies require only yearly cutting and are good for water retention. Care should be given to the better management of **spring and nectar bulbs** in the gardens which offer striking displays and seasonal interest.



Reinforce the planting gaps in the northern edge by introducing native hedge mix.



Replace sections of grassed area with species rich wildflower meadows.



Allow for multi-stemmed and ornamental trees to create interest.



Allow for more gradation in plant groupings.

Habitat Creation

Allow for bird and bat boxes, bug wall, mini beast hotels to encourage wildlife.



The Natural Environment

The natural environment theme was well-supported across events but especially so by the broader community cohort. The ideas to improve the present planting was the most popular feature of this sheet.



Reinforce the planting gaps in the northern edge by introducing native hedge mix.

Replace sections of grassed area with species rich wildflower meadows.

Allow for multi-stemmed and ornamental trees to create interest.

Allow for more gradation in plant groupings.

The combined results from all four events are as follows:

Combined	Red	Blue	Score
1. Climates pledges: climates emergency and carbon neutral by 2030	3		3
2. Christchurch Gardens through the seasons	8		8
3. The present planting	24	-28	-4
4. Ideas to improve the present planting	147	-12	135
5. Biodiversity enhancements	6	-3	3
6. Habitat creation	73	-5	68
			<b>213</b>

Both improving the present planting and habitat creation scored well. The present planting scored the least well.

Board 4: The Natural Environment

Event 1: Stakeholders

	Red	Blue	Score
1. Climates pledges: climates emergency and carbon neutral by 2030			
2. Christchurch Gardens through the seasons			
3. The present planting	4	8	-4
4. Ideas to improve the present planting	7	5	2
5. Biodiversity enhancements	2	3	-1
6. Habitat creation	11		11
			<b>8</b>

Event 2: Local Community

1. Climates pledges: climates emergency and carbon neutral by 2030			
2. Christchurch Gardens through the seasons			
3. The present planting	9	2	7
4. Ideas to improve the present planting	39	4	35
5. Biodiversity enhancements			
6. Habitat creation	24	4	20
			<b>62</b>

Event 3: Broader Community

1. Climates pledges: climates emergency and carbon neutral by 2030	3		3
2. Christchurch Gardens through the seasons	7		7
3. The present planting	8	15	-7
4. Ideas to improve the present planting	87	3	84
5. Biodiversity enhancements	4		4
6. Habitat creation	31	1	30
			<b>121</b>

Event 4: Special Interest Group

1. Climates pledges: climates emergency and carbon neutral by 2030			
2. Christchurch Gardens through the seasons	1		1
3. The present planting	3	3	0
4. Ideas to improve the present planting	14		14
5. Biodiversity enhancements			
6. Habitat creation	7		7
			<b>22</b>

Garden for All

Garden for All

This theme looked at how the Garden might contribute towards community cohesion and connection. It scored well at all events, with only improved seating attracting significantly high numbers of negative responses. This was not because there is no need to improve the seating, but the choice of images to illustrate this idea were not well-liked. It is likely that had there been a more traditional choice of park seating, negative votes would have been given.



The combined results from all four events are as follows:

Combined	Red	Blue	Score
1. An asset to the community.	4		4
2. Programming of small scale events and activities	46	-5	41
3. Access to the tennis courts and basketball for sports	42	-4	38
4. Community activities for outdoor learning, multi-generational experiences, contact with nature and informal recreation	63	-1	62
5. Play opportunities, focusing on natural and informal play	55	-19	36
6. Improved seating	75	-41	34
7. Lighting proposals to improve evening use and safety.	106	-18	88
			<b>303</b>

None of the statements from this theme received a negative score. Very high-levels of support were given for improved lighting, seating, community activities.

With an overall score of 303, this theme attracted the greatest level of support.

BOARD 5: Garden for All  
Event 1: Stakeholders

	Red	Blue	Score
1. An asset to the community.			
2. Programming of small scale events and activities	6	1	5
3. Access to the tennis courts and basketball for sports	2		2
4. Community activities for outdoor learning, multi-generational experiences, contact with nature and informal recreation	6		6
5. Play opportunities, focusing on natural and informal play	5	3	2
6. Improved seating	8	3	5
7. Lighting proposals to improve evening use and safety.	8		8
			<b>28</b>

Event 2: Local Community

1. An asset to the community.			
2. Programming of small scale events and activities	15	2	13
3. Access to the tennis courts and basketball for sports	27	2	25
4. Community activities for outdoor learning, multi-generational experiences, contact with nature and informal recreation	5		5
5. Play opportunities, focusing on natural and informal play	19	3	16
6. Improved seating	39	14	25
7. Lighting proposals to improve evening use and safety.	38	8	30
			<b>114</b>

Event 3: Broader Community

1. An asset to the community.	3		3
2. Programming of small scale events and activities	18	2	16
3. Access to the tennis courts and basketball for sports	13	2	11
4. Community activities for outdoor learning, multi-generational experiences, contact with nature and informal recreation	47	1	46
5. Play opportunities, focusing on natural and informal play	30	13	17
6. Improved seating	19	23	-4
7. Lighting proposals to improve evening use and safety.	54	10	44
			<b>133</b>

Event 4: Special Interest Group

1. An asset to the community.	1		1
2. Programming of small scale events and activities	7		7
3. Access to the tennis courts and basketball for sports			
4. Community activities for outdoor learning, multi-generational experiences, contact with nature and informal recreation	5		5
5. Play opportunities, focusing on natural and informal play	1		1
6. Improved seating	9	1	8
7. Lighting proposals to improve evening use and safety.	6		6
			<b>28</b>



Telephone booths at Clarendon Avenue used as Art Boxes.



Small scale concerts in the gardens.



Basketball court.

AN ASSET TO THE COMMUNITY

Recognised and appreciated as an important green space, Christchurch Gardens offer a place for people to stop, pause and reflect, along with being a handy route to cut through on their way to the Parade. Being predominantly flat, it is accessible to all. While it is very popular for its tennis and basketball courts, it is also enjoyed by young children, families for picnic, working people and students for lunch or chat. Currently it is open 24 hours a day throughout the year.

However, the current experience can be improved by allowing for better social interaction, versatile spaces for all user groups, especially young children, and making the area safer by day and night.



Volunteering events.



Three tennis courts.



Communal activities.

While it continues to be a place for...



outdoor learning.



all ages.



contact with nature.



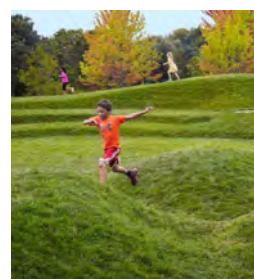
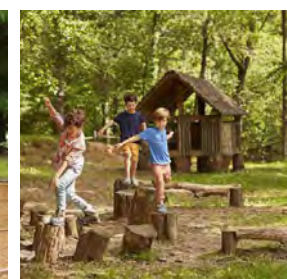
leisurely walks and thoroughfare.



social gatherings.

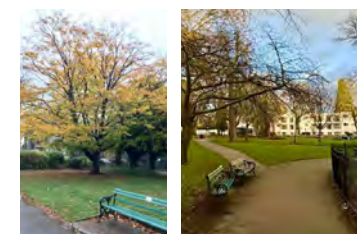


exercising.



Play

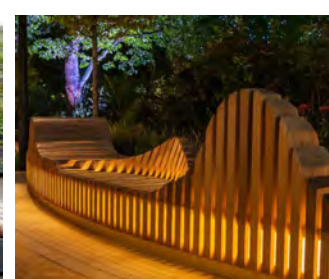
Provide more incidental play opportunities for young children that can double up as seating or areas of visual interest.



Current benches not overlooking the courts or any areas of interest.

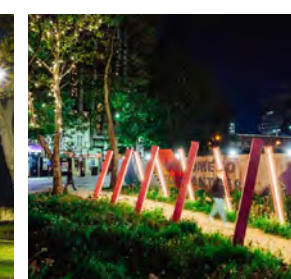
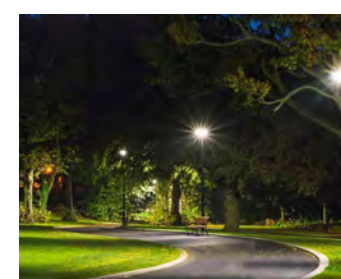
Seating

Provide more social seating for community engagement and interaction.



Lighting

Make the garden safer by evening / night, improve lighting for tennis courts, illuminate poorly lit pockets, make the entrance more inviting.



And the vision expands

### The Big Picture

**INTEGRATING IMPROVEMENTS WITH WIDER MASTERPLAN**

The earlier view of the gardens with the imposing presence of Christ Church at the northern part of the Parade is now somewhat blighted by signs and urban lighting, and has substantial scope for improvements. There are aspirations to pedestrianise the Parade, which itself has undergone remarkable changes over time, like the replacement of some of its classical Georgian architectural elements with wider glass shopfronts and increased traffic. Integrating the improvements for the gardens with the wider public realm masterplan would promote more inclusive, resilient, safer and sustainable development. Unifying the greening and less trafficked environment between the two would boost the character of the area to a vibrant landmark destination.



**Traffic calming**

Rain gardens as planted build-outs are an effective tool for reducing traffic speed and increasing water infiltration from surface run-off. With low level planting, they keep sight lines clear and open to ensure safety.



**Increased cycling and pedestrian thoroughfare**

The user experience of the gardens currently used as a thoroughfare to cut across to the Parade, could be enhanced by thoughtful considerations of aesthetically desirable sight lines while retaining valuable mature trees.

**A functional focal point**

From simply a paved area providing opportunities for seating, the forecourt could support market stalls, small scale concerts / exhibition, or even house a cafe / art gallery with statement architecture.



**Reduce anti-social behaviour**

Greater use of corners and edges with more seating and accessibility that are subject to casual supervision, will help to reclaim the neglected pockets from being misused, and eventually contribute to the overall safety of wider area.

### The Big Picture

The Friends were keen to establish whether there was support for the Gardens being an integral part of the wider masterplanning approach to the Parade. The emphasis was on green infrastructure and public realm.

The combined results from all four events indicates that only tackling anti-social behaviour was well supported:

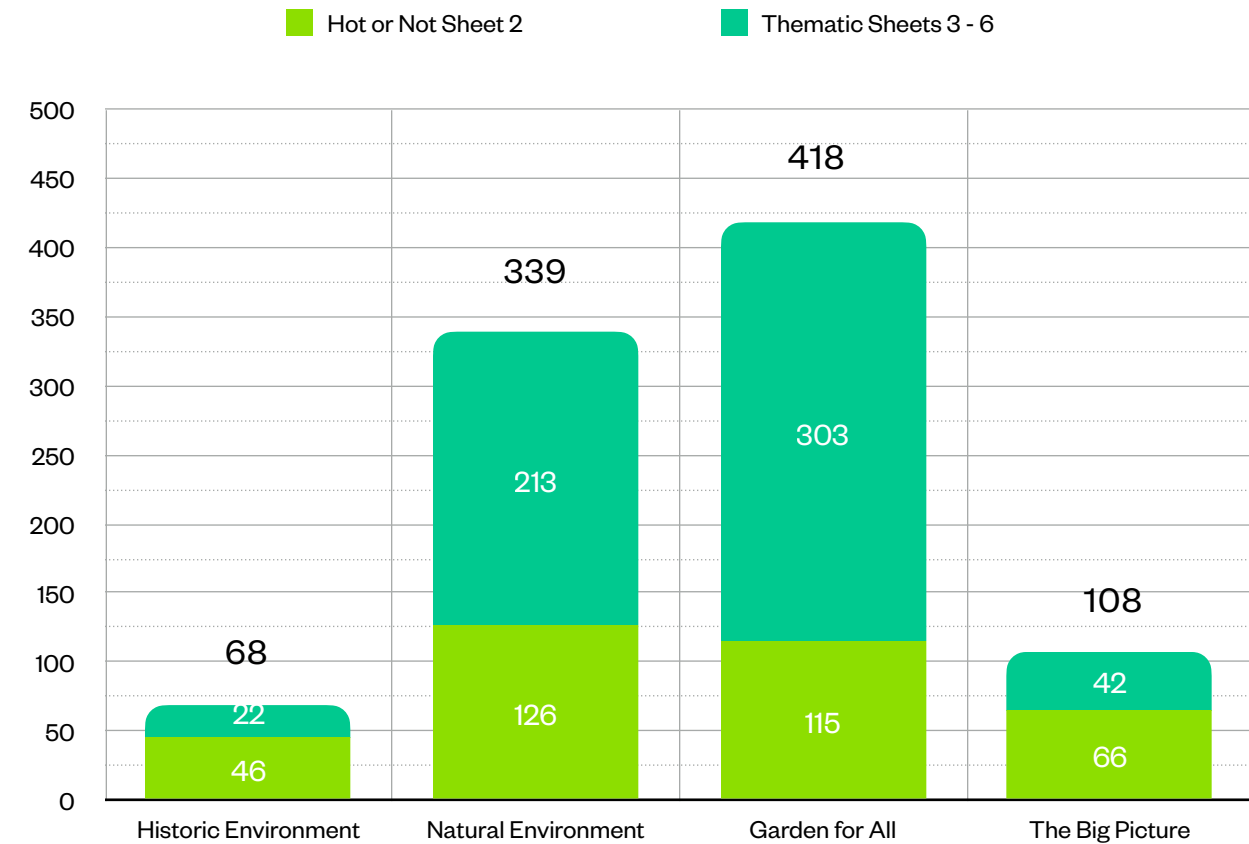
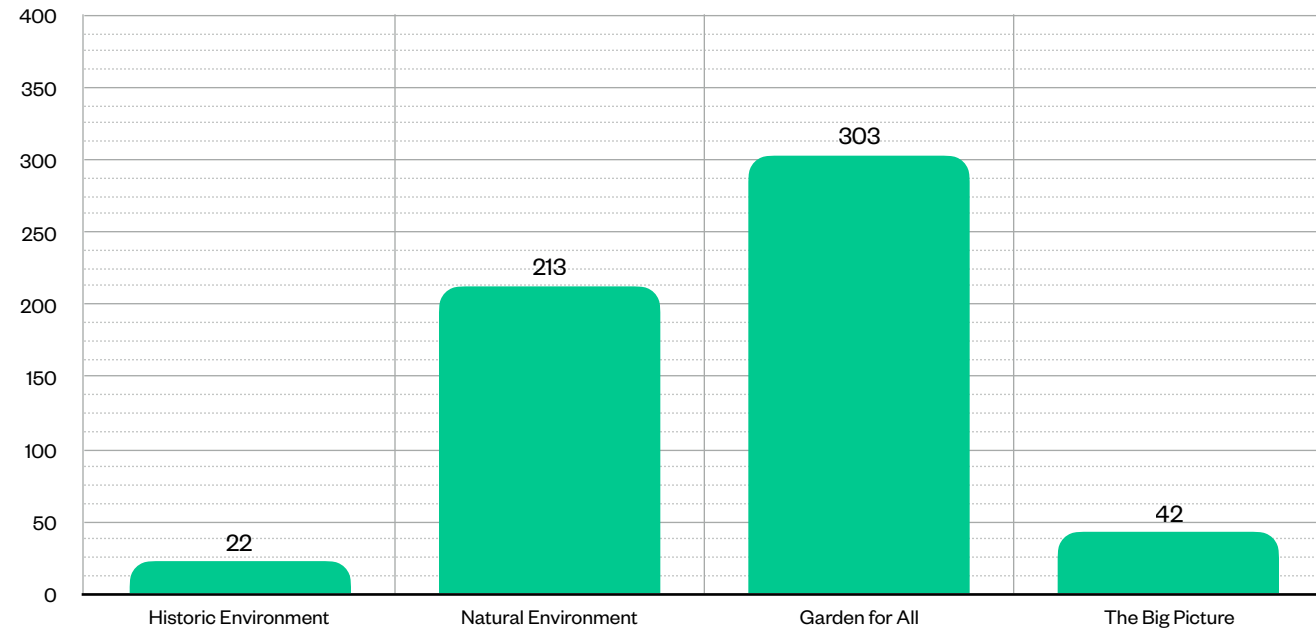
Combined			
1. Integrating improvements with wider masterplan	8	-4	4
2. Traffic Calming	16	-17	-1
3. Increased Cycling and Pedestrian Thoroughfare	35	-46	-11
4. A Functional Focal Point	26	-31	-5
5. Reduce Anti-social Behaviour	63	-8	55
			<b>42</b>

BOARD 6: The Big Picture			
Event 1: Stakeholders			
	Red	Blue	Score
1. Integrating improvements with wider masterplan	1	3	-2
2. Traffic Calming	1	4	-3
3. Increased Cycling and Pedestrian Thoroughfare		7	-7
4. A Functional Focal Point	5	3	2
5. Reduce Anti-social Behaviour	8	2	6
			<b>-4</b>
Event 2: Local Community			
1. Integrating improvements with wider masterplan	2		2
2. Traffic Calming	8	6	2
3. Increased Cycling and Pedestrian Thoroughfare	19	11	8
4. A Functional Focal Point	16	14	2
5. Reduce Anti-social Behaviour	26	2	24
			<b>38</b>
Event 3: Broader Community			
1. Integrating improvements with wider masterplan	4	1	3
2. Traffic Calming	5	7	-2
3. Increased Cycling and Pedestrian Thoroughfare	16	12	4
4. A Functional Focal Point	4	9	-5
5. Reduce Anti-social Behaviour	23	4	19
			<b>19</b>
Event 4: Special Interest Group			
1. Integrating improvements with wider masterplan	1		1
2. Traffic Calming	2		2
3. Increased Cycling and Pedestrian Thoroughfare		16	-16
4. A Functional Focal Point	1	5	-4
5. Reduce Anti-social Behaviour	6		6
			<b>-11</b>

The voting preferences for each of the themes from the 4-events is illustrated below. The summary scores were as follows:

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Garden for All (28)	Historic Environment (15)	Natural Environment (8)	The Big Picture (-4)
<b>Local Community</b>	Garden for All (114)	Natural Environment (62)	The Big Picture (38)	Historic Environment (15)
<b>Broader Community</b>	Garden for All (133)	Natural Environment (121)	The Big Picture (19)	Historic Environment (-11)
<b>Special Interest Group</b>	Garden for All (28)	Natural Environment (22)	Historic Environment (3)	The Big Picture (-11)

The combined scores from all events places the Garden for All proposals showing a significant preference over the other 3-options. When combined with the Hot or Not scores from sheet 2, Garden for All remains the most supported thematic idea, followed by the Natural Environment. Among all four cohorts, Garden for All was the most preferred option.





The five most supported statements from the first section of Hot or Not sheet 2 were:

1. Improved lighting (17)
2. Part of wider masterplan / Parade (10)
3. Improvement to park corners (9)
4. Additional seating & litter bins (9)
5. Improved storm water management (9)

The ten most supported from the second section of Hot or Not sheet 2 were:

1. Natural Environment - Increase wildlife & biodiversity? (48)
2. Natural Environment - Gardens as space for contact with nature? (42)
3. Garden for All - Eliminate anti-social behaviour? (39)
4. Natural Environment - Gardens to enjoy seasonal variation? (36)
5. The Big Picture - Strengthening connections with the Parade? (32)
6. Historic Environment - Focal point to the Parade? (26)
6. Garden for All - Lighting to create more interest? (26)
7. Historic Environment - Planting as noise barrier? (23)
8. The Big Picture - Improving green infrastructure? (22)
9. Garden for All - Incidental play opportunities? (20)
10. Garden for All - Opportunities for better social interaction? (18)

The ten most supported from the four thematic sheets were:

1. Natural Environment - improve the present planting (135)
2. Garden for All - improved lighting (88)
3. Natural Environment - habitat creation (68)
4. Garden for All - community activities (62)
5. The Big Picture - reduce anti-social behaviour (55)
6. Historic Environment - natural noise buffer to shield vehicular noise (42)
7. Garden for All - programming small scale events (41)
8. Garden for All - access to courts / sports (38)
9. Garden for All - natural and informal play (36)
10. Garden for All - improved seating (34)

The five least supported statements from the first section Hot or Not sheet 2 were:

1. Controlled accessibility (-25)
2. Functional focal point like a cafe (-17)
3. Encourage evening / night time use (-6)
4. Robust boundary screening (-5)
5. Gateway / corner entrances (-3)

The five least supported from the second section of Hot or Not sheet 2 were:

1. Historic environment - Garden as a contained space? (-6)
2. Historic Environment - Garden with well-defined boundaries? (3)
2. The Big Picture - Increased permeability? (3)
3. The Big Picture - Improved traffic calming? (9)
4. Garden for All - Encourage evening use of the gardens? (12)

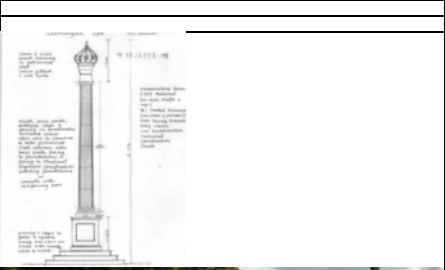


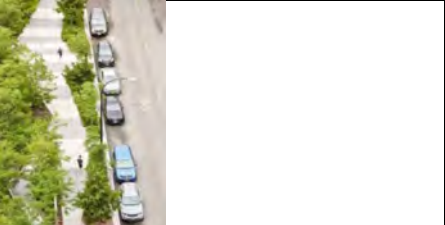

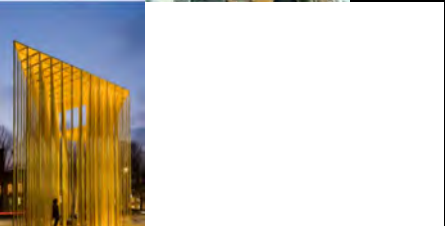



The five least supported from the four thematic sheets were:

1. History Environment - a new focal point: contemporary arts intervention (-36)
2. The Big Picture - increased cycling and pedestrian thoroughfare (-11)
3. The Big Picture - functional focal point (-5)
4. Natural Environment - present planting (-4)
5. Historic Environment - formal space, like Fitzroy Square (-2)

## Image and Style



Each of the four thematic sheets included a range of images illustrating different styles of public parks and public realm. The voting preferences as to whether a particular image is hot or not has also been assessed. These are presented by the aggregate score in order of most to least supported.

## Sheet 03 Historic Environment

	Summary		
	Red	Blue	Score
	10	6	4
	2	0	2
	1	0	1
	2	4	-2
	0	4	-4
	3	10	-7
	12	21	-9
	8	21	-13
	8	25	-17


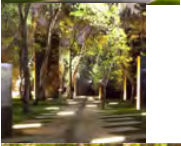



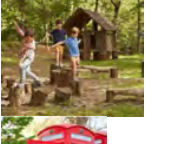

Red	event 1		Score	event 2		Score	event 3		Score	event 4		Score
	Red	Blue		Red	Blue		Red	Blue		Red	Blue	
3	2	1	1	0	1	4	0	4	2	4	-2	
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	-2	0	0	0	
0	2	-2	0	0	0	0	2	-2	0	0	0	
2	0	2	1	1	0	0	7	-7	0	2	-2	
0	0	0	3	3	0	9	16	-7	0	2	-2	
1	0	1	0	5	-5	6	14	-8	1	2	-1	
0	0	0	0	3	-3	8	20	-12	0	2	-2	

Sheet 04 Natural Environment

	Summary		
	Red	Blue	Score
	33	1	32
	14	0	14
	10	0	10
	6	0	6
	7	1	6
	6	0	6
	5	1	4
	2	0	2
	1	0	1
	3	2	1
	2	2	0
	0	2	-2
	0	4	-4

Red	event 1 Blue	Score	Red	event 2 Blue	Score	Red	event 3 Blue	Score	Red	event 4 Blue	Score
3	0	3	3	1	2	23	0	23	4	0	4
1	0	1	2	0	2	11	0	11	0	0	0
1	0	1	4	0	4	5	0	5	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	1	0	1
0	0	0	0	1	-1	5	0	5	2	0	2
0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	6	0	0	0
0	0	0	1	1	0	4	0	4	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	-1	1	0	1	2	1	1
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	-2	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	-1	0	3	-3

Sheet 05 Garden for All


	Summary		
	Ref	Blue	Score
	17	0	17
	17	1	16
	10	0	10
	8	0	8
	7	0	7
	5	0	5
	5	0	5
	6	1	5
	5	1	4
	4	0	4
	6	2	4
	4	1	3
	7	4	3

event 1			event 2			event 3			event 4		
Ref	Blue	Score	Ref	Blue	Score	Ref	Blue	Score	Ref	Blue	Score
0	0	0	2	0	2	15	0	15	0	0	0
1	0	1	1	1	0	9	0	9	6	0	6
0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	9	1	0	1
0	0	0	1	0	1	6	0	6	1	0	1
0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	6	1	0	1
0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	1	0	1
0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	0	0	0
0	1	-1	0	0	0	6	0	6	0	0	0
0	0	0	1	0	1	4	1	3	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	1	0	1
0	0	0	0	1	-1	6	1	5	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	3	0	0	0
0	0	0	1	1	0	6	3	3	0	0	0

	4	2	2
	3	1	2
	2	0	2
	4	2	2
	2	1	1
	3	2	1
	4	3	1
	8	7	1
	0	0	0
	9	13	-4
	0	8	-8
	1	23	-22

0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	2
0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
0	2	-2	0	0	0	3	0	3	1	0	1
0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	-1	0	0	0
0	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
0	1	-1	1	0	1	3	2	1	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	-1	8	6	2	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	3	4	6	-2	2	7	-5	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	-1	0	6	-6	0	1	-1
0	2	-2	0	7	-7	1	13	-12	0	1	-1

Sheet 06 The Big Picture

	Summary		
	Red	Blue	Score
	13	2	11
	10	1	9
	7	3	4
	8	5	3
	4	4	0
	9	10	-1
	4	5	-1
	2	5	-3
	4	9	-5
	2	19	-17

event 1			event 2			event 3			event 4		
Red	Blue	Score	Red	Blue	Score	Red	Blue	Score	Red	Blue	Score
0	0	0	7	2	5	6	0	6	0	0	0
1	1	0	3	0	3	6	0	6	0	0	0
0	0	0	1	0	1	6	2	4	0	1	-1
1	0	1	2	1	1	5	3	2	0	1	-1
0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	0	2	-2
0	0	0	1	0	1	8	10	-2	0	0	0
1	3	-2	1	0	1	2	1	1	0	1	-1
1	0	1	0	2	-2	0	2	-2	1	1	0
1	1	0	0	2	-2	2	5	-3	1	1	0
1	0	1	1	2	-1	0	15	-15	0	2	-2

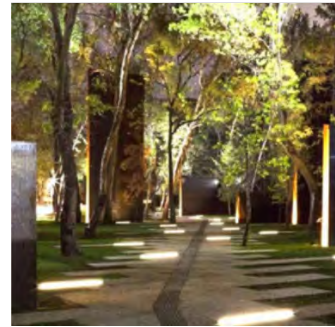
From the voting preferences, the five most supported images were:



Natural Environment 32



Garden for All 17



Garden for All 16



Natural Environment 14



The Big Picture 11

Among the 5-most supported images, 3 are of night time scenes with lighting. When taken collectively, the most preferred image would be well lite paths.

The five least supported images were:



Garden for All 22



The Big Picture 17 /



Historic Environment 17



Historic Environment 13



Historic Environment 9



Garden for All 8

Images of a contemporary nature scored lowest. In particular modern site furniture and arts installations.

---

# Comment Cards

To gather more detailed views and ideas, comment cards were provided at each of the two larger community events. In total, 34-sets of written comments were completed at these two events. A further five sets of comments were received via letter or social media.

The comments, whilst broad in nature, reinforce the outcomes of the Hot or Not process. This includes that, in general, the written statements are more focused upon making minor tweaks to the gardens as the preferred approach. Re-occurring comments centred around:

- \* addressing the 'desire lines' of informally used and eroded paths
- \* lighting and the safe use of the paths at night
- \* more seating and bins
- \* the interface with the Parade and the 'D' shaped space were seen as unresolved areas.

The following pages contain the comments made in full.

## Event 2: In the Gardens Local Community

Please do not charge for the tennis courts or have booking system.  
Please keep gardens / parks – we need to work with nature.

---

Tall railings facing top of Parade are an unwelcome barrier rendering the grassed area between it and the pedestrian crossing a dead space.  
Lighting for parks would encourage their use, especially on winter afternoons when it can be dark by 4.00pm.  
Pedestrians, often older residents reluctant to use the park as 'pitch black'.  
Sometimes the path which goes around the edge past the mini-roundabout is flooded.  
Logs on in front of tree is much used as an informal seat.

---

Wildflower meadow is good idea, but not if it replaces a grassed area. I don't want to see any trees cut down, but would like to see more. Please do **not** spoil this natural space with grotesque modern sculptures or "focal point".  
This is not a children's play park as such – there are plenty of these. It is a place for sitting having lunch, chatting with friends. We don't need any more cafes in Leamington.  
It doesn't need making over, more a bit of TLC.  
Please don't jazz it up – more planting and gap filling. More benches please.

---

Please ensure the grass is cut.  
Do not leave to be unkempt and untidy.

---

Remove the conifers and replace with a "(?)" hedge, hawthorn, field maple, hazel, etc. native species. Logs for beetles.  
Group seating.

---

Sculpture trail?

---

More opportunity for 'play'  
for adolescents – more basketball, more logs for sitting etc.

---

Free and easy access to all courts.  
Better lighting encourages more (?) – so lighting has to be **very** good.  
Focal point at top of the Parade needed.

## Event 3: The Royal Priors Broader Community

Key issues:

- Improved lighting
- Improved seating
- Better planting

- 
1. Absolutely no sculptures. Waste of money and very often look ridiculous or even ugly with current artists taste and aesthetics.
  2. Absolutely no cyclists access. Cyclists do NOT belong on footpaths and cycling infrastructure is already being improved with the southern end of K2L along the western edge of the park.
  3. Stop referring to it as "Top Park" in any way shape or form. The name is Christchurch Gardens.
  4. It is too small for anything like a café.
  5. It is too much of a through fare for a play area to work. Besides nearby play areas already exist at the Dell and Strathern Gardens.
  6. A space needs to be retained for communal events such as the Easter Raising of the Cross.
  7. Traffic calming has pretty universally botched in its design. Avoid more.

---

Encouraging evening use will automatically create anti-social behaviour!

---

Would like to collaborate / help / advise as part of Bee Friendly Leamington.

---

Public toilets – were on, road?

---

Something to honour its name: Jesus Christ is the Truth, the life and the way.

---

Please open up the railings that block entrance from the pedestrian crossing on Kenilworth Road.  
Proper all weather surface for paths that people actually walk – the "desire lines".

## Other feedback

Written responses to the Friends

I haven't time to write in detail but I hope this meeting – very important – establishes some vital points.

I would start by asking, 'What is wrong with Christchurch Gardens?' My answer would be:

- There is nothing specifically wrong, but there could be improvements:
  - greater care and development of the garden / flower bed areas in terms of regular landscape supervision. New planting and seasonal care'
  - recognition of the area as 'part' of Leamington. Fences at the north of the gardens is ugly and unnecessary as is the iron fence facing the Parade,
  - there could be discussion about the need for lighting at night. I would go along with that for safety as long as it is appropriate and gentle, adding to the atmosphere,
- Next, what is right about the gardens?
- The joy, pleasure, community spirit and diversity I witness every day as I walk through,
  - There is something for evryone!
  - Children playing and climbing,
  - Young people meeting and chatting winter and summer,
  - Elderly people resting and observing Parade activity or those around them,
  - Workers having a lunch time break.

---

I was not able to attend. May I However comment. I've often looked at the park over the last 20 years and had to say how very much it's improved in the last five or so. The way that you can now see across, makes it feel safer and much more welcoming. Perhaps lighting it a little at night would make this even better?

---

I specifically visited top park a few times recently to get the feel of the place as I understood there was a quest to find potential enhancements. It occurred to me what might be suitable is a large scale sculpture park. This would be wonderful at the top of the parade, encouraging people to walk into it to admire the pieces. they would need to be, large and appealing, vandal proof and weatherproof, but amongst the many things that could be done, I wonder if that would be a suitable purpose? It would be wonderful to look up the



---

Planting along the north border hides tramps who leave excrement and needles – so take this out.

- 
1. Top Park should be celebrated as a teenagers' meeting point – horseshoe shaped seating would be good.
  2. Don't overplant, have open areas for young children – also good for security, light at night.
  3. Respect pedestrian desire lines, e.g. make small access directly from the Kenilworth Road pedestrian crossing. Facilitate direct lines from NE corner to the pedestrian crossings on Clarendon Avenue.
  4. Consider park fitness equipment.

---

I like the existing informality of the space – especially as it is unlit. The basketball and tennis courts are a real community asset – and until recently were free. We desperately need facilities for adolescents and these courts are an excellent example. Such a shame they are no longer free. Existing desire lines should be turned into paths, especially the diagonal running from alongside the pedestrian lights on Kenilworth Road. It would be a shame to add more paved space or buildings (no café please!)

---

The basketball courts (and tennis courts) are one of the few places where older teenagers can congregate. Small children are often catered for, whilst teenagers / young adults are **not**.

---

Would love to see increased emphasis on biodiversity, too much lighting will be detrimental to that. Can also attract rather than deter anti-social behaviour. Have a young child but not keen on turning it into a playground.

---

Could we strengthen the 'D' shaped fence opposite the Parade, so that it runs parallel and adjacent the road/path...that way we can recover some green space back into the gardens. Lighting, lighting, lighting!! (please!)

- 
1. Newly planted trees need to be cared for. Tree guards and ties are now restricting growth on trees planted last year.
- 

---

The gardens benefit from open space. Café etc will bring litter & noise.

- 
1. No pedestrianisation of the Parade – would kill the current slightly struggling economic vitality & shift car borne shoppers to the Shires.
  2. All garden design to accommodate the existing desire lines. Direct routes will be created whether 'designed' or not.
  3. The conversion of the tennis court paying system from "roll up and play" when space available to "book and pay" has killed the demand. And with the demand the hoped for income stream – short-sighted. I know this is a done deal just wish to register my opposition. Negative impact on obesity and mental health goals also.

---

Functional focal point brilliant idea. More lighting is needed everywhere in town for peoples protection. Like the seating ideas. Habitat creation is needed, with native and pollinator planting. Love the idea of sculptures.

---

Needs a colourful boast, an uplift, more vibrant.

---

Maintain the gardens: more colour, care of shrubs, do not take away the green space as we don't have much of that. Keep the tree trunk!

---

I think a sigh up with the history of Christchurch Gardens and a sign stating that the name is Christchurch Gardens as many people may know it as "Top Park". I've lived here for years but don't know the history of the gardens!

---

Better solution for overflowing bins. Not in favour of more paths but in favour of more attractive paths.

---

parade and see large sculptures at the edge of that park that changed every now, and again, and added a visual focal piece when in town.

---

First of all, I would like to thank The Friends of Christchurch Gardens for all their fantastic work in preserving and maintaining our "top park". Myself, my partners and our little daughter walk through the park pretty much on a daily basis, as we live nearby in the North Leamington area.

One thing I would like to ask is whether you could arrange for **adequate lighting** to be installed across the park please. There is currently no street lights in the park and it gets really dark in the evenings and at night. To be honest, I don't feel safe myself when walking through the park when it is dark, particularly when I'm with my little one or on my own. So what I have to do is avoid the park and walk through the busy adjacent road instead, which is not ideal.

I would really appreciate if you could consider this improvement measure to make this lovely green space that we all have as residents of Leamington Spa a **safer place**.

---

Thank you for your leaflet, we live on Kenilworth Road and were interested to read about the history having moved here in 2020.

We're unfortunately unable to attend the meetings outlined but would like to say that we thoroughly enjoy the space as it is and would love it to remain as green as possible.

As we have young children, what we have in mind was potentially a small area for children's play near the tennis courts where there is a bit of green lawn (on the corner of beauchamp road and beauchamp avenue). Otherwise perhaps a few more flower beds would be nice.

(Ideas - images provided)

- 
2. Border planting needs to be looked after to enhance the plants - no cutting shrubs into cubes.
  3. Lighting (low) for night time pedestrians would be nice – but too much lighting can't be good for wildlife.

---

We really need cycle parking as a key location in Leamington. They should be well-sighted, covered Sheffield stands with space for non-standard bikes such as cargo bikes. Lighting and CCTV would make them safe.

---

I should like the gardens to be a welcoming space for families – safe for children, seats for parents, some natural children's activities and natural boundaries between gardens and traffic. Provide a focal point for the view up the Parade to advertise the park as a destination.  
Rename it Beauchamp Square as the church is no more.

---

CCTV please to discourage drug taking / anti-social behaviour. Better lighting at night on pathways from Parade alongside tennis courts.  
More benches / more bins.

- 
1. This is an area my children walk through and use with friends. They are teenagers and need somewhere to hang out, so **please** don't ignore their needs.
  2. **But** there is a lot of obvious drug dealing and use of drugs in the area. Not their fault – separate young people from the idea of nuisance please.
  3. **But** rubbish! – more bins?

---

The semi-circular grass patch by the Parade and Clarendon Avenue is wasted space! The railings should be repositioned alongside Clarendon Avenue – making the grass a safer space for people to use.

Railings along the perimeter of the park would be attractive and allow the park spaces to be used more safely. This is key! The 'lay line' (short cut) to the east of the tennis courts either needs to be removed by blocking it off or paving it and making it official.

Some more imaginative planting? Nice, so long as little extra maintenance required!

---

---

Can we stop people cutting the corner by the tennis court and turning it to mud.

Better drainage of corner of Clarendon / Kenilworth Road  
Can we ensure that there is CCTV coverage. I was assaulted in the park and the police said there were 3 cameras but none facing the park.

Can we make sure additional lighting does not take away from the tranquillity of the park at night.

---

The brick and turf maze is based on Trevithick's railway locomotive of 1804. Richard Trevithick a Cornishman born in Camborne, was a mining engineer and the inventor of the high pressure steam engine. His 1804 locomotive was the first in the world to run on rails.

Brick maze path at Goswell's Park Windsor.

The maze is made up of a three brick wide path. Rge centre of the maze is a mosaic representing the Round Tower of Windsor Castle. Chess pieces are also represented around the maze. You need to start at the Pawn and travel forwards to reach the castle in the centre. For an added challenge you could see if you can go through each chess piece on the way to the centre.

A magnifying glass seen in a Dumfries Park; (image provided).

- How important is preserving the historic layout of the Gardens and their role within the Conservation Area? **This is not important to me. It is more important to make it a useful, friendly space for the community.**
- Should there be a greater emphasis on the natural environment, including introducing opportunities for wildlife and biodiversity, providing contact for nature? **Yes if at all possible through appropriate planting.**
- How can the Gardens be a great community asset for all, is play, seating, lighting, evening uses important? **A community garden with herbs? Brick path maze? I think after dark evening use is problematical unless for a theatrical experience where lots of people would be around.**
- Is there a bigger picture whereby natural qualities of the Gardens extend beyond their boundaries into traffic calming and urban greening along the Parade? **Yes Parade could certainly do with greening – depends what the Transformation Board comes up with.**

---

# Recommendations

The initial SWOT feedback has helped the Friends identify the key issues surrounding the Gardens. The four data sets gathered from this consultation process have provided the Friends with further feedback to guide the production of a long-term masterplan. Key recommendations that can be extracted from the preferences and comments made include:

Develop the masterplan around the key priorities identified:

- ✳ Lighting improvements - investigate the practicality and environmental issues of lighting key routes through the Gardens
- ✳ Develop a community benefit strategy – inter-generational opportunities, small scale events, improved seating, informal play, and continue access to sports
- ✳ Addressing the quality of footpaths, including formalising desire lines and flooding through storm water management
- ✳ Look at ways of increasing biodiversity / natural habitat enhancement
- ✳ Investigate the quality of the frontage parallel to the Parade and a better integration of the ‘D’ shaped space
- ✳ Addressing the quality of key corners and entrances.

The proposals fit well with the minor tweaks preference expressed through the consultation and are likely to gain general community support.

A programme of further consultation should be held to make sure that feedback on the results of the consultation process has been reached and seek endorsement of the masterplan proposal. Dialogue with the Town Centre Transformation Team would help unite the masterplan with the wider regeneration strategy.

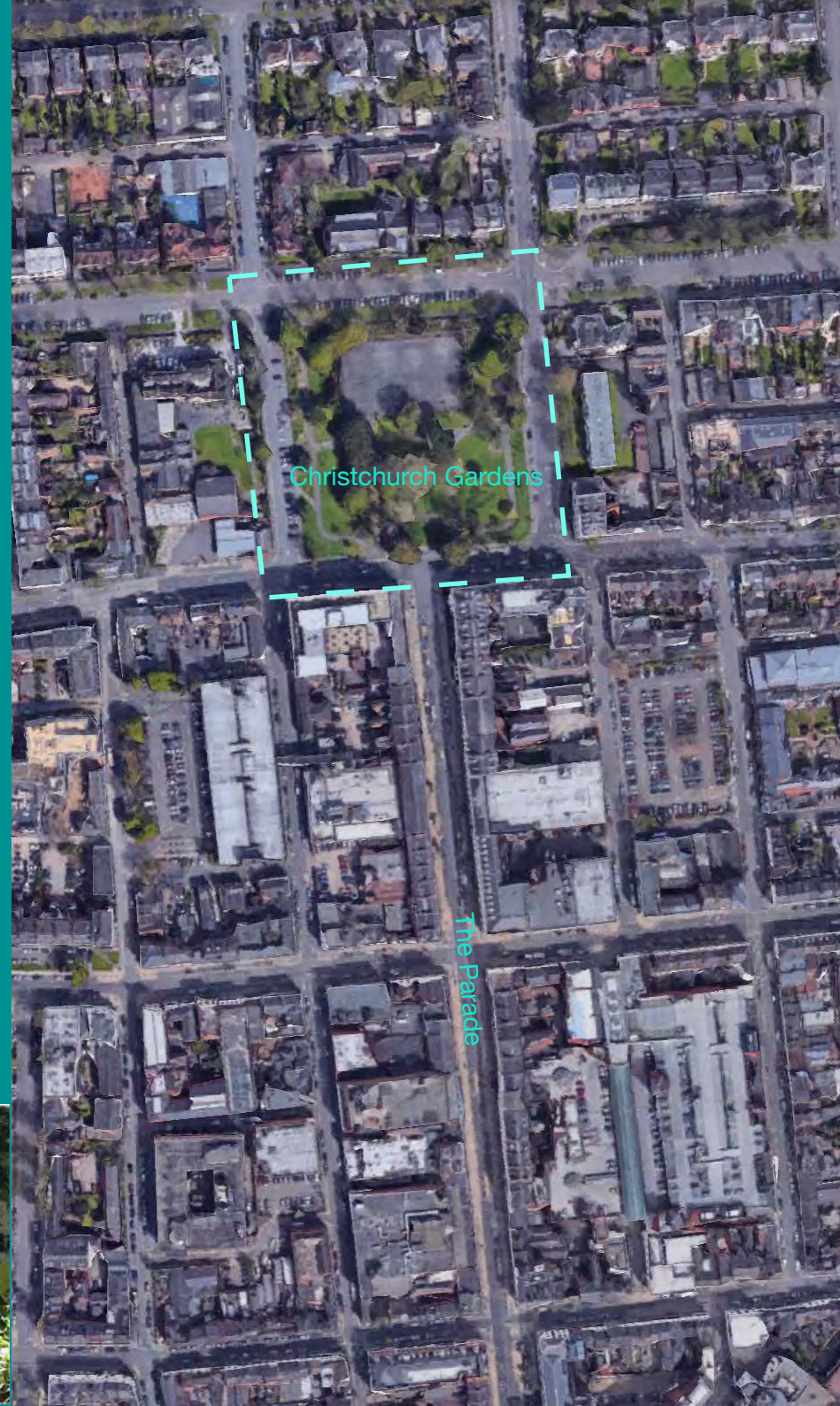
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# Appendix

Appendix A: SWOT Analysis

# Developing a **masterplan** for Christchurch Gardens.

A joint project between Warwick District Council and the Friends of Christchurch Gardens.



## Christchurch Gardens,

Leamington Spa





Over the past few months we've been asking a range of community interest groups and organisations to set out what they think the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats** are surrounding Christchurch Gardens. Nearly 50 groups have been contacted and we've received detailed responses from 21 of these.

***We thought you might like to know what we've learned so far and how you can become involved.***



Some of the groups and organisations we consulted include:

Barnardos  
 BID Leamington  
 Brunswick Hub  
 Helping Hands  
 Leamington Guide Dogs  
 Leamington Police: Safer Neighbourhood Team  
 Leamington Town Council  
 Leamington Transformation Board  
 Love Lillington  
 P3 Homelessness Charity  
 Salvation Army  
 Sydney Centre  
 The Polish centre  
 Young Peoples First  
 Warwickshire Equality & Inclusion Partnership  
 Warwickshire Vision Support  
 Way Ahead Support Services

Warwick District Council and  
 Warwickshire County Council, including:

- \* Local Councillors
- \* Child Friendly & Inclusion Team
- \* Community Safety Team
- \* Conservation Advisory Forum
- \* Conservation and Planning Team
- \* Green Spaces Team
- \* Local Access Forum
- \* Transport and Highways Team.

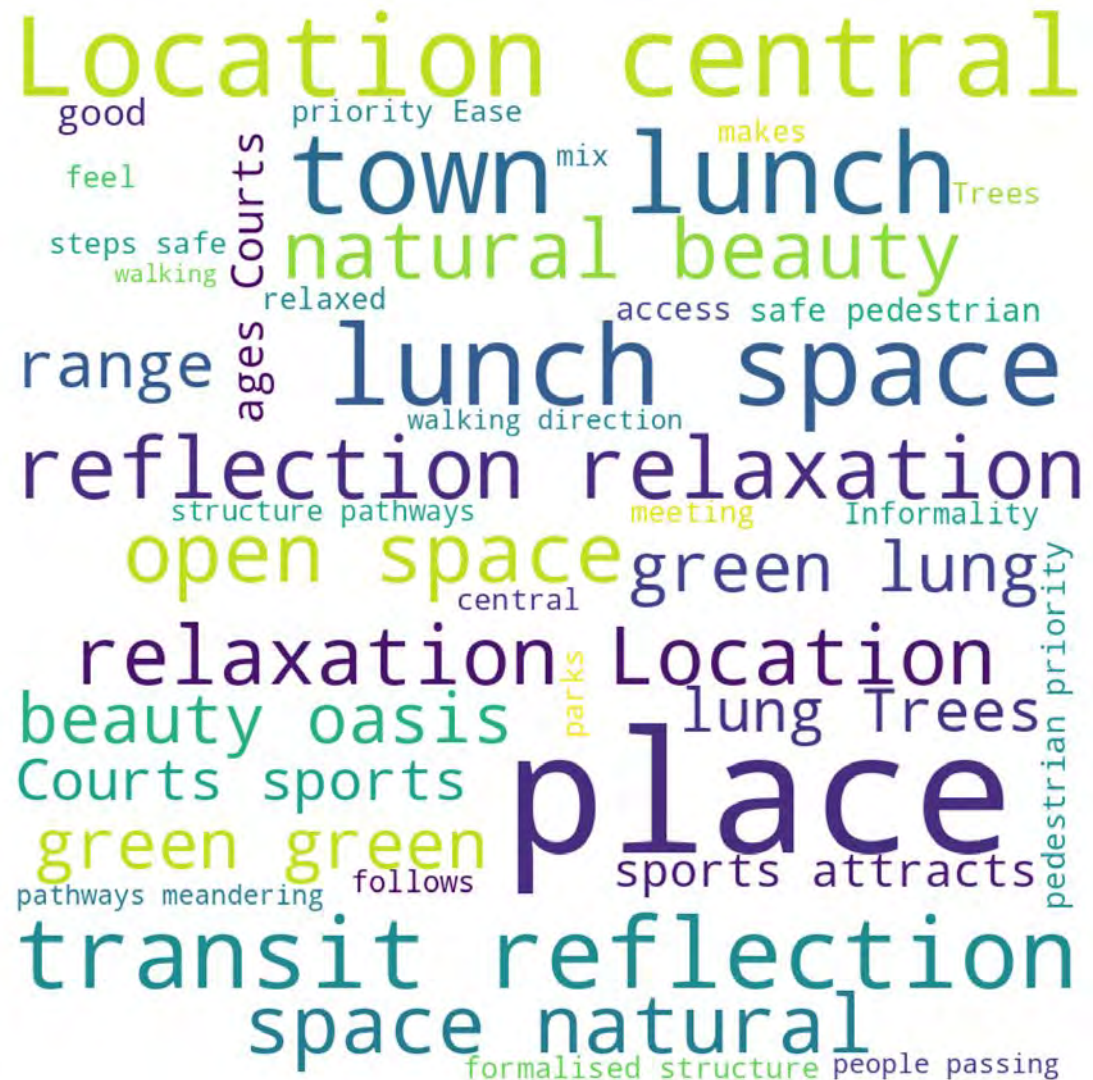
# ☀ What We've Learned



The SWOT analysis identified twenty-six key **strengths** of the Gardens. Of these, the most popular mentioned strengths are:

- \* *Location - central to the town, a great place to eat lunch, a place of transit, a reflection and relaxation space;*
- \* *Natural environment - the many trees and the open space, natural beauty, an oasis of green, a green lung;*
- \* *Active space - the outdoor sports associated with the courts are a great facility and attract a range of ages.*

The forty most popular words from all responses:





There were more **weaknesses** (31) than strengths identified, with the most popular mentioned:

- \* *Identity - unrecognised as a park by some, not 'owned by anyone' - merely a thoroughfare, lack purpose, no clear signposting;*
- \* *Welcoming & Safe - lack of lighting, no evening use, poor-sight lines, evening & night time feels very unsafe, anti-social behaviour;*
- \* *Traffic Impacts - the busy roads, poor air quality, and lack of defined boundaries makes it unsafe for children.*

The forty most popular words from all responses:



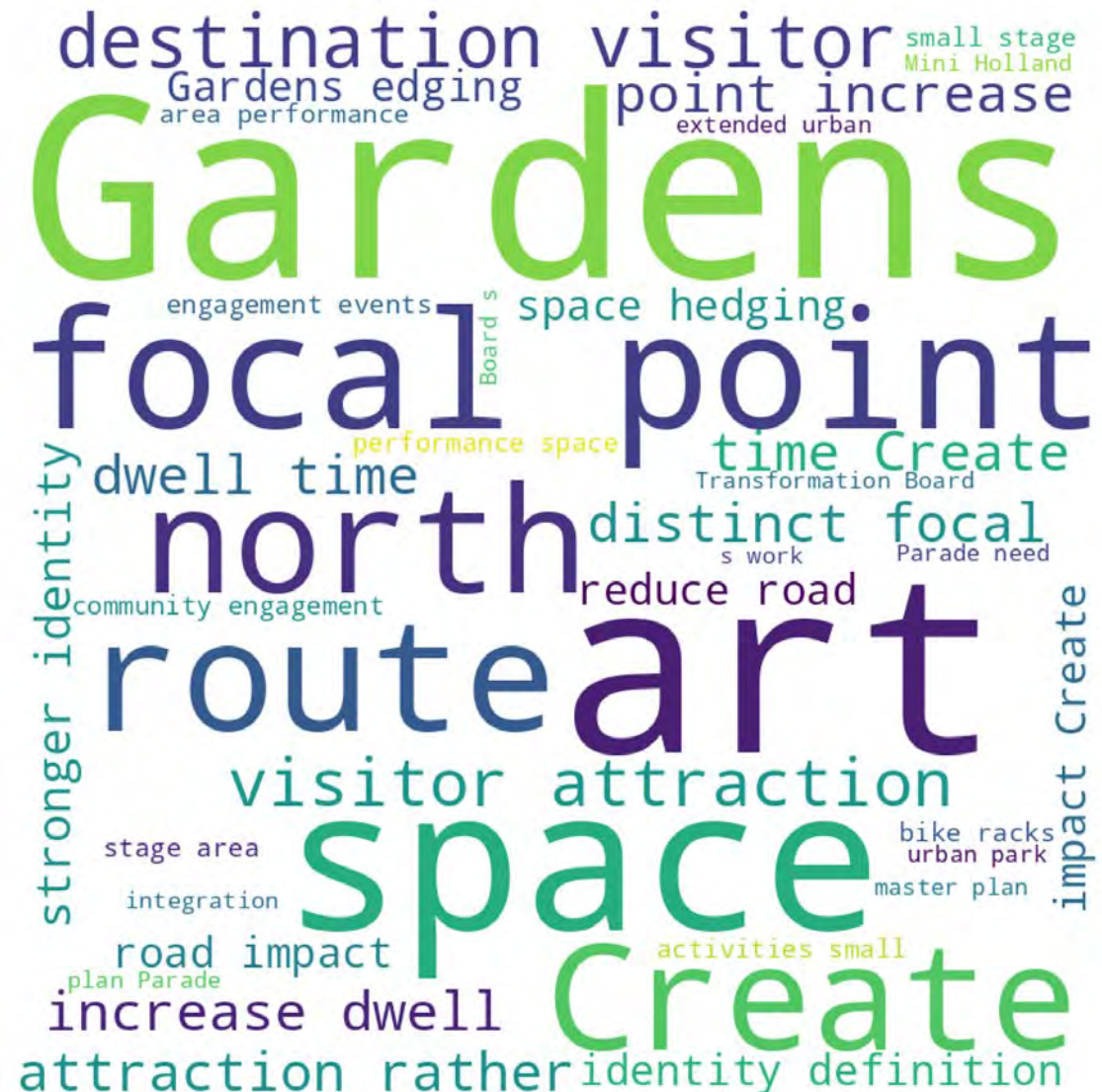




A large number of **opportunities** were raised (36) with the most popular being:

- \* *Destination - create a destination / visitor attraction rather than a route with a distinct focal point, increase dwell time;*
- \* *Identity - define a stronger identity / definition for the Gardens - edging the space with hedging to reduce road impact;*
- \* *Community engagement - events and activities, small stage area / performance space;*
- \* *Wider regeneration - link up with the Parade proposals via Transformation Board.*

The forty most popular words from all responses:





Fewer **threats** (20) than opportunities have been identified, with the most popular being:

- \* *Negative social impacts - anti-social behaviour, drug use, vandalism, lack of security, lack of cctv;*
- \* *Financial - reduced local government funding for maintenance, basic maintenance unaffordable, reduced arts and culture budget;*
- \* *External pressures - lack of focus on needs, subsumed by the Parade project, re-routing of buses and bus waiting;*
- \* *Climate change - new pests and diseases, water conservation, loss of biodiversity, and surface water flooding.*

The forty most popular words from all responses:



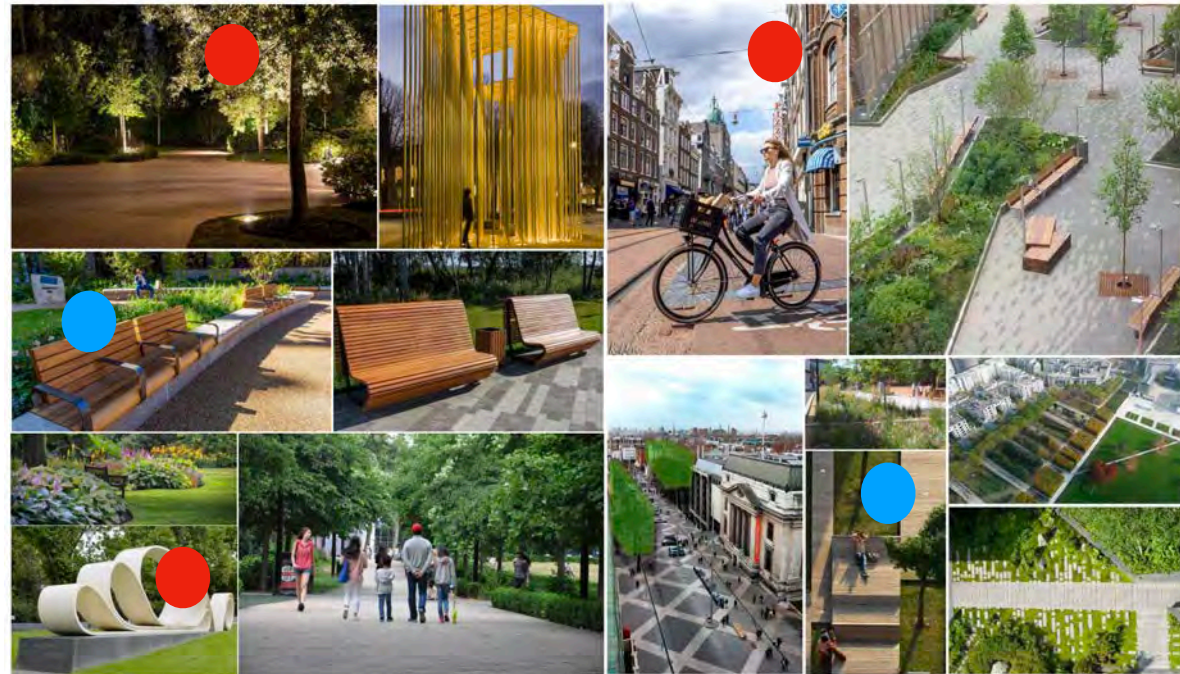
# **Our Next Steps**

There are lots of different ways that we can respond to what we've learned so far. Our next step is to consider how we prioritise the outcomes of the SWOT analysis into a series of themes. The themes explore potential priorities including:

- \* How important is preserving the **historic layout** of the Gardens and their role within the Conservation Area?
- \* Should there be a greater emphasis on the **natural environment**, including introducing opportunities for wildlife and biodiversity, providing contact with nature?
- \* How can the Gardens be a greater **community asset for all**, is play, seating, lighting, evening uses important?
- \* Is there a bigger picture whereby the natural qualities of the Gardens extend beyond their boundaries into traffic calming and **urban greening** along the Parade?



*We'd like to ask you and the wider community what you think is 'Hot or Not' to refine the priorities that we take forward into the masterplan.*



---

# Appendix

Appendix B: Key Stakeholder Presentation

# Developing a masterplan for Christchurch Gardens.

A joint project between Warwick District Council  
and the Friends of Christchurch Gardens.

## Key Stakeholder Workshop\_01

- ☀ Introductions | roles
- ☀ Purpose of the workshop
- ☀ Engagement process
- ☀ Gathering ideas: SWOT
- ☀ SWOT outcomes
- ☀ Options analysis
- ☀ Next steps



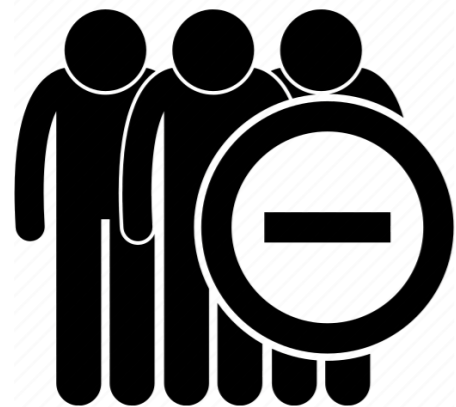
**Christchurch Gardens,**

Leamington Spa



## ☀ Purpose of the workshop

1. Feedback on who we've consulted
2. What we've learnt so far
3. Preliminary masterplan options
4. Outline the next steps
5. **A critical sense check | Have we missed anything?**



*Engaging with stakeholders  
and the wider community  
should inform the process -  
not react to it at the end.*



# Engagement process

## Christchurch Gardens - Masterplan Development

Key Activities	Wk C'ming	06-Nov	13-Nov	20-Nov	27-Nov	04-Dec	11-Dec	18-Dec	25-Dec	01-Jan	08-Jan	15-Jan	22-Jan	29-Jan	05-Feb	12-Feb	19-Feb
1. SWOT Analysis - summary of outcomes	→		↓														
2. Friends Mtg - review outcomes			●														
3. Key Stakeholder Mtg - present outcomes			→		●												
4. Feedback to Respondees						→											
5. Develop Preliminary Ideas											→						
6. Key Stakeholder Mtg - preliminary ideas													●				
7. Consultation event - broader stakeholders														●			
8. Community Engagement Event														●	←	→	●
9. On-line Survey																→	
10. Prepare Summary Statement / Outcomes																	

**16.11.23 Friends Mtg**

Agree the key themes and priorities emerging from the SWOT analysis.

Plincke to prepare a presentation for the key stakeholders for the 30th workshop.

**30.11.23 Key Stakeholders Mtg**

- Main agenda items:
- who we consulted
  - what we've learnt to date
  - preliminary masterplan options
  - outline the next steps.

Plincke to prepare a feedback summary for the Friends to issue out to all consultees with details of consultation event.

Plincke to prepare a set of consultation boards based on "Hot or Not" ideas and options for the Gardens, linking these back to the SWOT outcomes.

Interim presentation to Key Stakeholders, following which issue:

- Newsletter (CAVA)
- Press releases to be confirmed.

**03.02.24 + 10.02.24**  
Weekend consultation events, 03.02.24 in/near the Gardens, 10.02.24 shopping centre.

Joint WDC /FoCGs presentation / discussion with invited range of stakeholders / influencers to introduce the consultation event. Venue: White Horse Bar?



Outline Proposals:

- gathering information
- informing the process



# We'd love to hear your thoughts.

The Friends of Christchurch Gardens are working alongside Warwick District Council to come up with ideas to improve this much loved green space.

The Gardens provide a public park at the northern end of the Parade and are popular for sports and informal recreation. Though well-used, Christchurch Gardens are in need of investment and could offer so much more to the town's visitors and community.



# Take time to make a difference.

We hope you will find time to let us know what you think - it really will make a difference to how we plan the future of the gardens. Things to think about:

**Strengths:** what do you like about the Gardens, what works well for your organisation, do the Gardens make a positive contribution?

**Weaknesses:** what do you think needs improving or repair, is there anything that prevents you from using the Gardens more, how do the Gardens compare with other similar green spaces?

**Opportunities:** how can the Gardens be improved, what would encourage your organisation to use the Gardens more?

**Threats:** what do you see as the problems the Gardens face in the future, will climate change, development, or budget changes have an impact?



## Christchurch Gardens,

Leamington Spa



## Christchurch Gardens,

Leamington Spa

### SWOT away.

Our aim is to prepare a masterplan for the Gardens to help guide how the public space will look, feel, and be used in the future. Our first step is to contact a range of key organisations whose opinions and ideas for the Gardens will help shape the masterplan proposals.

We are asking each organisation to help us understand the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats** affecting Christchurch Gardens by completing a simple SWOT analysis to record your views.



Thinking about Christchurch Gardens

### SWOT ANALYSIS

	← HELPFUL →	← HARMFUL →
Comments box		



## Christchurch Gardens,

Leamington Spa



Agenda Based Interest Groups	Community Interest Groups	Key Influencers / Statutory Groups
Warwickshire Equality and Inclusion Partnership	BID Leamington	Police, Leamington North Safer Neighbourhood Team
WCC Local Access Forum	Town Council - Jill Barker, Clarendon Councillor	WCC Lead Commissioner Regeneration and Place Shaping - Catherine Marks
WDC Conservation Advisory Forum	Town Council - Ruby Turok, Clarendon Councillor	WCC Clarendon Councillor - Sarah Millar
Leamington Guide Dogs	Town Council - Stephen Marks, Clerk	WCC Principal Transport Planner - Dan Morris
Warwickshire Vision Support	Transformation Board - Kevin McGreal, Convenor	WCC Regeneration and Place Programme Manager - Sarah James
The Polish Centre	Transformation Board - Mark Lee, Chair	WCC Child Friendly/Inclusion comments, Aoife O’Gorman
Helping Hands	Alison Chantrey, Friends of Christchurch Gardens	WDC - Mark Brightburn, Programme Co-ordinator, Place, Arts & Economy (Leamington Transformation Board)
Salvation Army	Richard Ward, Friends of Christchurch Gardens	WDC - Tourist Information - Joanne Randall
P3 Homelessness Charity	Pauline Pemberton, Friends of Christchurch Gardens	WDC CEO - Chris Elliott
Love Lillington	Louise Goold, Friends of Christchurch Gardens	WDC Chair - Sidney Syson
Barnardos		WDC Clarendon Councillor - Chris King, Deputy Leader
Young People First		WDC Clarendon Councillor - Jessica Harrison
Sydni Centre		WDC Clarendon Councillor - Katie Hunt
Way Ahead Support Services		WDC Community Safety Officer - Jon Barnett
Brunswick Hub		WDC Conservation Officer - Robert Dawson
		WDC Economic and Regeneration Team - Martin O’Neill
		WDC Green Spaces Team - Dave Anderson
		WDC Green Spaces Team - Jon Holmes
		WDC Green Spaces Team - Simon Richardson
		WDC Leader - Ian Davison
		WDC Sports and Leisure Contracts Manager - Ann Hill
		WDC Councillor, Andrew Day
		WDC Councillor, Dominic Harrison
		WDC Councillor, Ella Billiald Portfolio holder for Arts and Economy (chair of Transformation Board)
15 organisations	10 organisations	24 organisations
0 responses	5 responses	16 responses

#### STRENGTHS

- **Location - central to the town, lunch space, a place of transit, reflection and relaxation (13)**
- **Trees and open space / natural beauty / oasis of green / green lung (12)**
- **Courts / sports - great facility and attract a range of ages (11)**
  
- Ease of access - no steps / safe / pedestrian priority (5)
- Informality of the space / mix of natural green space and formalised *structure* / pathways meandering through, makes it feel more relaxed than other parks and follows the walking direction of people passing through (4)
- A central meeting place (4)
  
- Historically important - a part of the New Town's design / Christchurch formed a visual marker (2)
- A place with shade and shelter (2)
- Having a Friends group to advocate for the space and work with WDC (3)
- Historical interest - soon to arrive history board, use of church stones in hard landscaping
- Spring flowering
- Support of WDC officers and councillors
- Lots of space to sit - benches, walls, grass, tree trunk (2)
- Close to good amenities / parking and walking ease (3)
- Free
- On a bus route
- Community cohesion (2)
- Habitat and nature/ North border is a good haven for wildlife / trees and biodiversity (3)
- Safe open space with good visibility and a boundary feature
- Links to future active travel improvements
- Public space used as garden for apartment living
- A buffer between the top of the Parade and the community
- Part of wider cultural/creative landscape of Leamington which is known and well regarded for its art scene
- Conservation Area provides some protection
- Outdoor relaxation space for local school children

#### WEAKNESSES

- **Unrecognised as a park by some, not 'owned by anyone' - merely a thoroughfare, lack of identity / purpose / signposting (10)**
- **Lack of lighting / sight lines / evening & night time safety / ASB (9)**
  
- North border is unruly and creates an impenetrable wall to the Gardens. It's also a site for anti-social behaviour and the depositing of drug paraphernalia (5)
- Litter /overflowing bins / poor maintenance (4)
  
- The space lacks definition - borders merge with pavements
- No social space / social seating to meet and sit on a bench with more than one person (2)
- Tired benches and bins / old paving and planting (3)
- No sense of history - particularly the church Christ Church
- No benches facing the courts
- Desire lines are untidy
- Old trees coming to the end of their life
- Dark centre with low tree canopy - no go area in the dark/Winter
- Lack of fencing means it's not safe to allow young children to play without close supervision /not enclosed enough for young children (2)
- No focal point or areas of particular interest / no distinct character (3)
- West border is full and colourful in the summer, but has bare spaces in the Winter
- Trees growing close to courts - root damage, leaf and sap drop onto playing surface
- Busy roads on two sides / road signs & clutter / surrounded by roads to that are a barrier to access (4)
- Poor air quality (2)
- No surrounding cycle parking
- Paths liable to puddling
- Paths leading to dead ends
- Pinch points around the park forcing cycling movements through the park
- No lighting for courts
- The walls using the church stones are unstable and need maintaining
- Over-crowding at peak times
- Raised beds and railings are barriers
- Conservation Area could limit new ideas
- Tennis fencing needs replacing
- Limited parking
- Seasonal dependency – limited use in some seasons
- Limited amenities - lack of restroom, play areas could deter families from longer visits

## OPPORTUNITIES

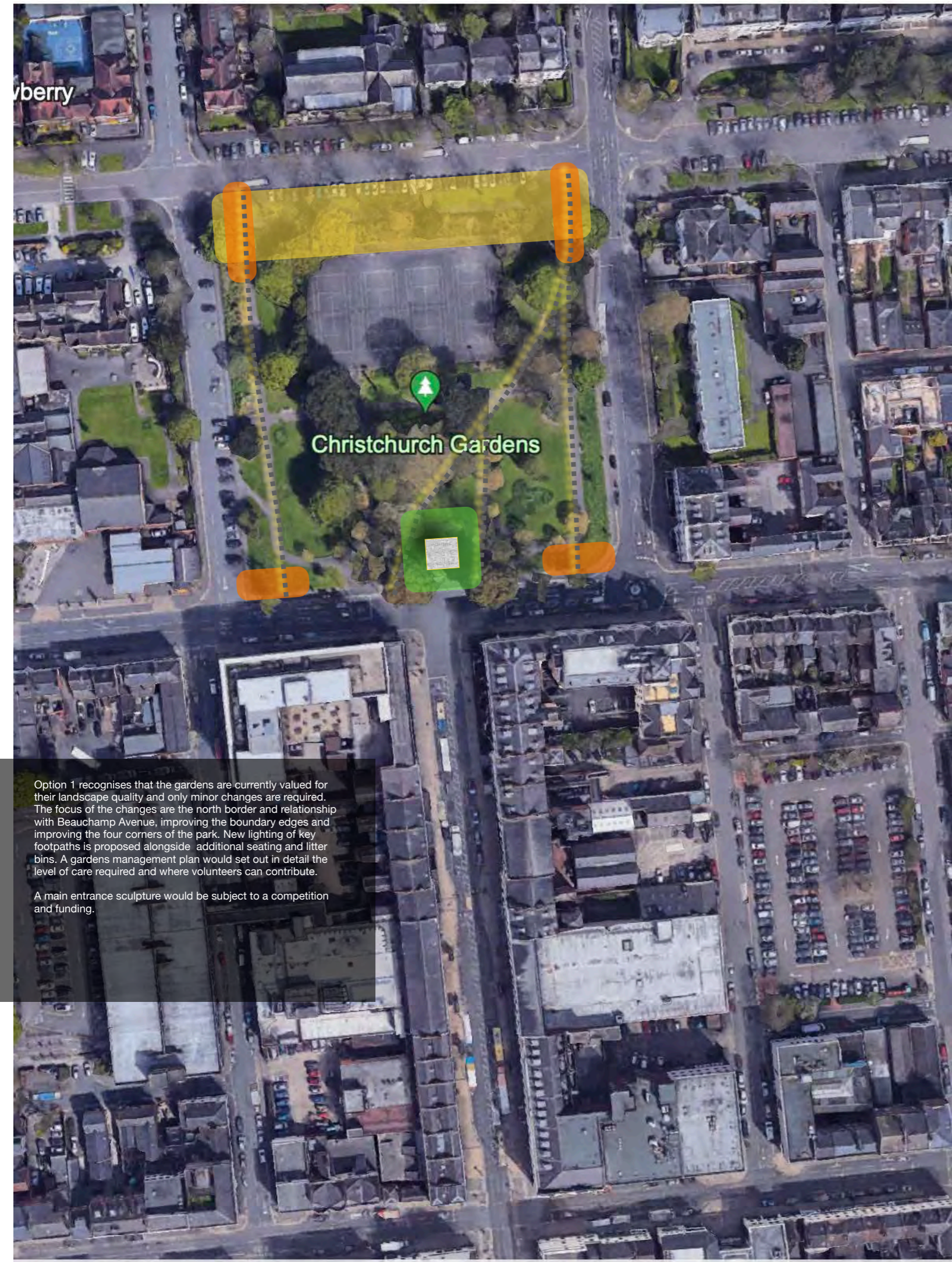
- **Create a destination / visitor attraction rather than a route with a distinct focal point / increase dwell time (8)**
- **Create a stronger identity / definition for the Gardens - edging the space / hedging to reduce road impact (6)**
- **Create more community engagement / events and activities / small stage area / performance space (6)**
- **Transformation Board's work on the Parade - need for integration with master plan / Parade as an extended urban park. The Mini-Holland proposals. Extend the gardens both north and south (5)**
  
- Introduce public art / arts events programming / temporary installations / links to wider arts and cultural strategies and initiatives / environmentally sensitive art (4)
- Share history of Gardens / monument / interpretation / information board (4)
- Develop social spaces within the Gardens / street furniture (3)
- Create greater awareness of the Gardens as a green space (2)
  
- Simple landscaping improvements, like re-defining walkways where necessary but with the emphasis on keeping the gardens a simple, well-maintained, natural space
- Visual marker / central focal point (3)
- Physical and Mental health initiatives
- Kenilworth 2 Leamington cycle route finishes at the South West corner of the Gardens where there are plans for bike racks (Bike racks may also be installed at the North East corner on the pavement) (3)
- Reconsideration of traffic movement and parking on all four sides of the square. What functions do we want these streets to have? How can pedestrians be better served?
- Potential for a formal gateway to the park to provide a welcome/arrival to the space and encourage movement?
- Can the links to Holy Trinity Church be improved? This is a potential venue for community activities, can the space in the Gardens link better to this on the northern edge?
- Spaces for girls and timetabling the courts (2)
- Introduce more nature into the park / improve biodiversity / pollinator planting (3)
- Areas that children can engage with nature
- Develop play opportunities / paths to include markings for fun activities for young people (2)
- Sensory garden / sensory trail
- Improve on maintenance, planting more for colour duration over a longer period.
- Water feature – fountain / Fountain and portable water point (2)
- More shelter from the rain (gazebo or pergola type structure?)
- Seasonal vendors / refreshments / enhanced amenities (3)
- Opportunity to use the multi-use sports area to engage young people
- Christmas lights as a spectacle in the trees
- Opportunity to explore lighting in some form to enhance and extend the usage of the gardens. Opportunity to link in with Lights of Leamington project
- Create a significant planting layout
- Improved lighting / lighting the courts (3)
- Continuity with other Leamington parks
- Collaboration with local organisations and businesses to enhance garden
- External Funding to support maintenance, landscaping and development effects
- Tree continuity plan
- Green Flag Award
- Tennis /Basketball Coaching and taster sessions
- Fitness equipment

## THREATS

- **Anti-social behaviour, drug use / vandalism / security, lack of cctv (10)**
- **Reduced local government funding for maintenance / basic maintenance / reduced arts and culture budget (7)**
  
- Competing initiatives - Gardens subsumed into plans for the Parade / New cultural events/art works in the gardens could be drowned out by the large amount of cultural activity and bigger green spaces already in existence (4)
- Possible relocating of Parade bus stops to Beauchamp Road and Kenilworth Rd and making the Gardens a bus station, as per lockdown (4)
- Climate change /new pests and diseases - as a result of climate change / water conservation (4)
  
- Failing to plan for the future / just remains as is / no 'sense of place' (3)
- WDC developing on or selling the land (2)
- Retirement of existing green space officer / staff changes (2)
- Lack of visibility / North border becoming too high to see over and therefore a less welcoming space - the path by the courts can feel threatening if the North border isn't well maintained. (3)
- Traffic changes making the situation worse (2)
- Weak connection to the Parade, only the two pedestrian crossings to either side
- Making sure that the tennis courts are well maintained and are available to everyone at a reasonable price. How is the time allocated to use by schools and private individuals (2)
- Insufficient bins
- Loss of community support / Friends cease to exist (3)
- Overthinking the design / not responded to local character
- Christmas lights
- Public art can be contentious and challenging to install successfully. We would advise a programme of public/community engagement around any artwork in the space.
- Overuse (2)
- Weather dependent footfall
- Changing Demographics – shifts in local demographics and interested could alter demand for green spaces

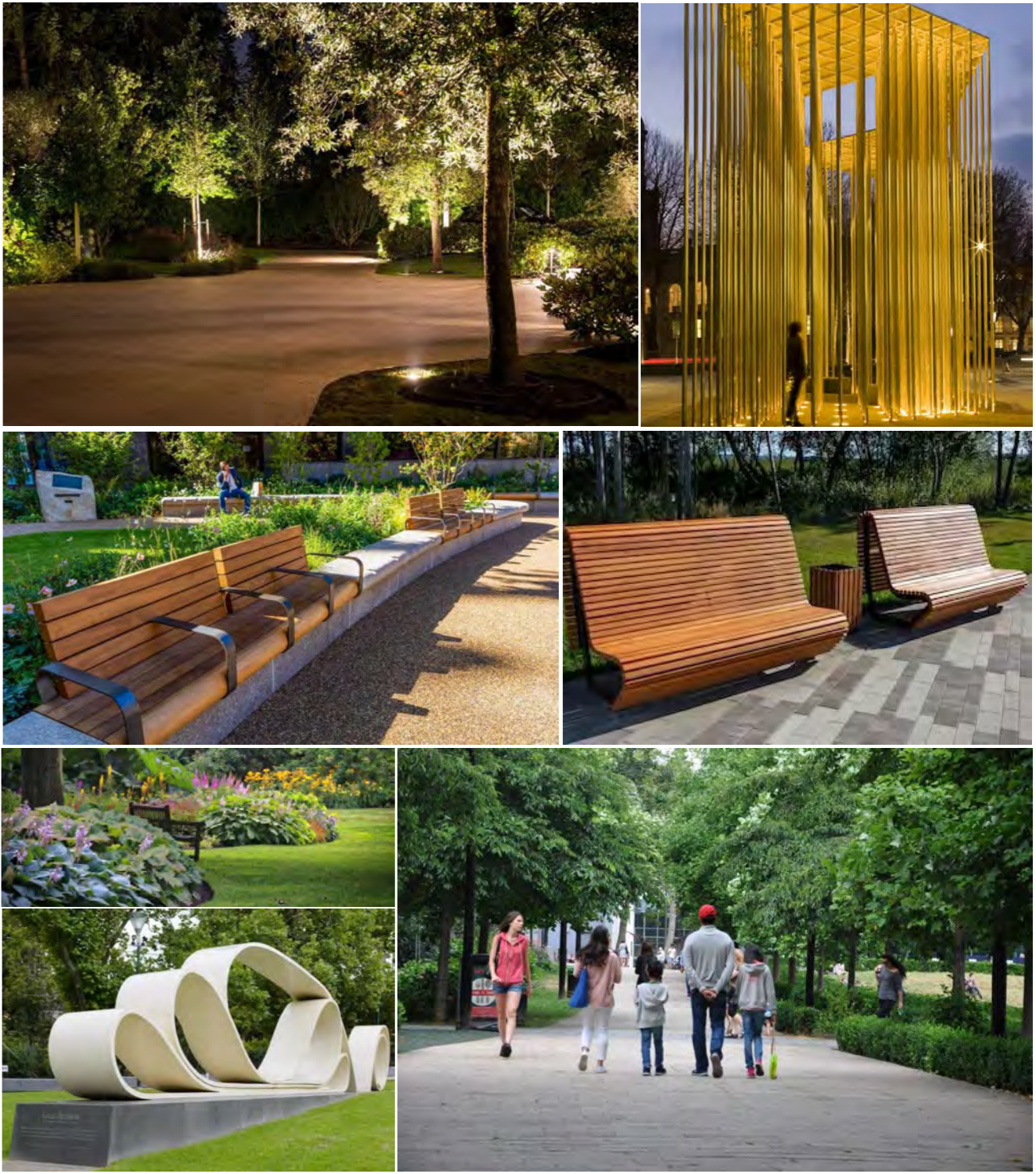
# Christchurch Gardens: Option 1

## Minor Tweaks



Option 1 recognises that the gardens are currently valued for their landscape quality and only minor changes are required. The focus of the changes are the north border and relationship with Beauchamp Avenue, improving the boundary edges and improving the four corners of the park. New lighting of key footpaths is proposed alongside additional seating and litter bins. A gardens management plan would set out in detail the level of care required and where volunteers can contribute.

A main entrance sculpture would be subject to a competition and funding.

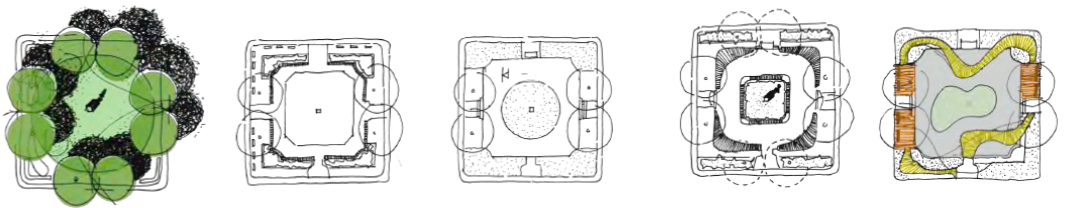
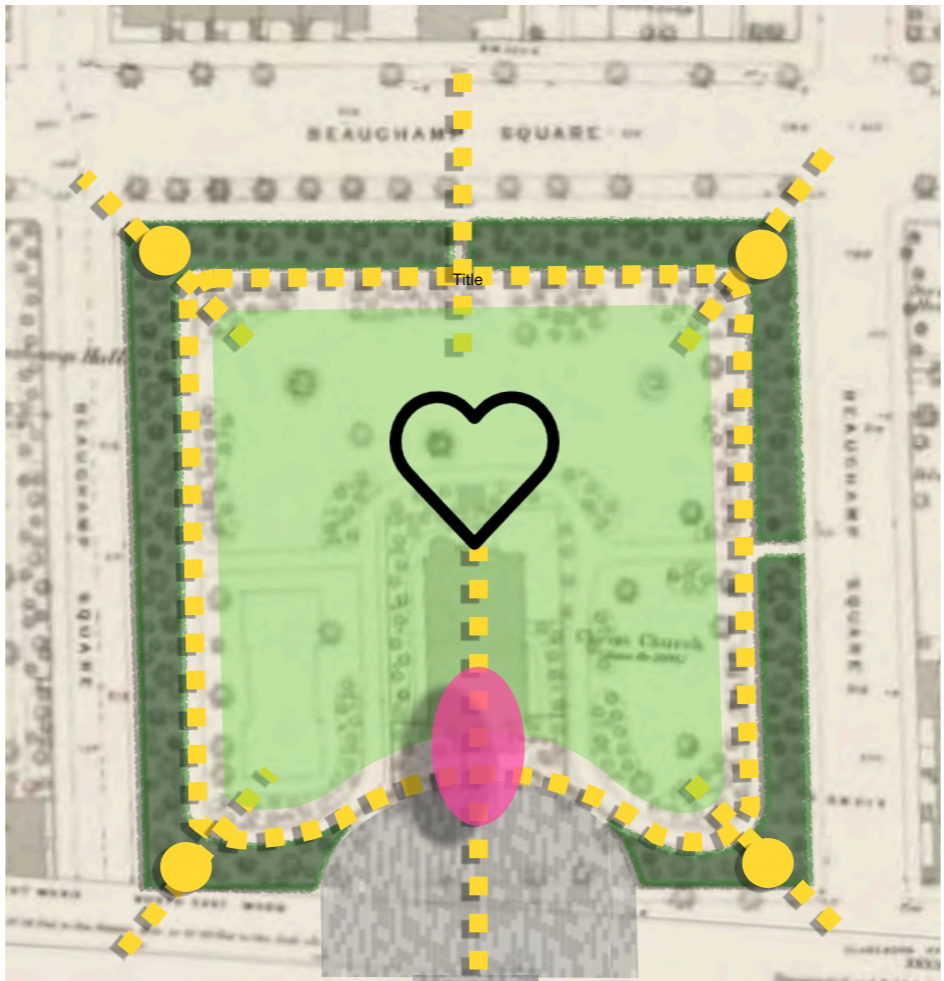


# Christchurch Gardens: Option 2 Garden Square



The re-imagined **Garden Square**: a green oasis that responds to the historical context but adds a contemporary layer of activity for play and recreation. New 'gateway' entrance points at the corners increases permeability but is well-screened from the road and locked at night. Daytime and evening use is encouraged with a new area of hard paved public realm connected to a new focal point terminating the vista from the Parade.

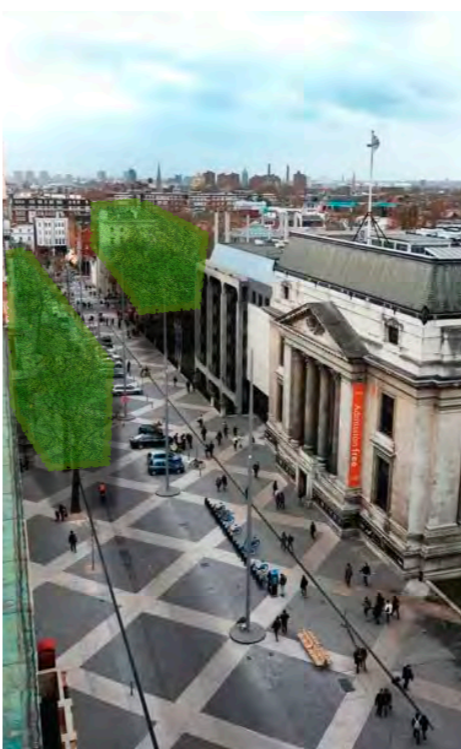
The concept likens the garden square to a jewellery box, with a simple but robust exterior that protects the contents on the inside. Only by entering the box does the full quality and variety of what's inside become fully apparent.



Courtesy of Heart of England newspapers Bill Gibbons copyright.png

# Christchurch Gardens: Option 3

## New Amsterdam



## ☀ Next Steps

- develop the options
- send out a briefing pack and invite to key stakeholders
- joint WDC + FoCG presentation to stakeholders
- community engagement event over two weekends.

# hot or not



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# Appendix

Appendix C: Hot or Not scoring table



