Leeds Parks Fund

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CHARITABLE GIVING TO PARKS AND GREEN SPACES

Public and business opinion in Leeds, UK

Dr Anna Barker and Dr Jose Pina-Sánchez, July 2019

Rethinking Parks

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Disclaimer

The findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are strictly those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the views of our partners or the funders: Leeds City Council, Leeds Community Foundation, the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum, National Lottery Community Fund, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Nesta who take no responsibility for the correctness of the information reported.

Forewords

Councillor Mohammed Rafique

Executive Member for
Environment and Active Lifestyles

Leeds City Council believes that good quality public green spaces provide huge value to residents, visitors and businesses. Parks and green spaces play a vital role in contributing to wider aims the Council has for supporting 'healthy, active lifestyles', creating a 'child-friendly' and an 'age-friendly' city, 'building resilient, thriving communities' and 'developing a sustainable infrastructure'*.

In recent times the Parks and Countryside service in Leeds has successfully applied the Council's model of Civic Enterprise to find new ways to maintain and improve the city's treasured parks in the face of ongoing reductions in funding from central government. The Civic Enterprise model is a blended approach which involves the Council becoming more enterprising, alongside working in partnership with civic-minded organisations in the private and third sectors and the local community. The Parks and Countryside service has developed successful partnerships, for example with communities through volunteer opportunities, and businesses through sponsorship schemes, and has successfully increased income through being more enterprising at our visitor attractions, cafes and shops. This model has enabled us to continue to manage 4,000 hectares of green space, including 70 formal parks, with a dramatically reduced budget - in fact, we've managed to increase the number of community parks achieving Green Flag standard, year on year, since we started assessing them against the standard in 2011.

The Civic Enterprise approach, and seeking to find new, innovative ways to improve our green spaces, led us to launch the Leeds Parks Fund in 2017, in partnership with Leeds Community Foundation and Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum, to facilitate charitable giving to parks and other public green spaces in the city – the first such scheme established in a UK core city.

We are grateful to the team at University of Leeds for the comprehensive research they have undertaken into public and business attitudes towards charitable giving to public green space. The research findings are of great

interest to us – as a partner in the Leeds Parks Fund initiative they will help us maximise the potential of the Fund. And as a council committed to the custodianship of parks and green spaces under a local authority service model, we are pleased that the findings suggest that residents and businesses support our 'blended' approach to managing parks and green spaces. The findings show a willingness from individuals and businesses to make a contribution through donations, sponsorship and volunteering whilst, at the same time, acknowledging that a full, rounded Parks and Countryside service (managing everything from historic estates to local recreation grounds) does come at a cost that must be supported by core funding.

We look forward to continuing to develop our partnerships with the local community, third and private sectors to protect and improve the public parks and green spaces of Leeds for their many benefits to residents, visitors, wildlife and the environment.

*Best Council Plan

Councillor Mohammed Rafique

Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles

Lynda Kitching

Chair, Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum

The Forum welcomes this innovative initiative. It presents the potential for some wonderful opportunities for communities across the city. A well-kept park with facilities for all ages can be at the heart of a community, bringing people together and harbouring a sense of pride in the area.

Many Forum members completed the research survey conducted by Dr Anna Barker and her team at the University of Leeds and contributed comments and ideas during focus groups. The evidence from that thorough research is showing that Leeds citizens care about their parks and green spaces, and that there's a willingness to support them in a variety of ways.

Whilst it is acknowledged by the public that Council budgets are being cut, there is a clear desire for our parks to continue to be kept tidy, safe and well-managed. Part of the Forum's role is to 'spread the word' across the city – that there's an urgency about the need to look after our parks, and we're working with partners to make that message a strong one.

Whilst the Forum as an organisation supports and advocates for Leeds Parks Fund, there is a tension with some 'Friends' groups between the concept of a citywide fund and fundraising for their own sites. I do believe that the two are not incompatible – some individuals have expressed a willingness to donate to Leeds Parks Fund – but I'd be reluctant to lay any expectation on voluntary groups that they should donate to the Leeds Park Fund too. Our volunteers already give their time and their money, through subscriptions and donations. There is scope for the Leeds Parks Fund to further engage and support the work of voluntary groups, as outlined in the recommendations.

The Forum will be represented on the panel assessing projects and choosing where grants will be awarded. I'm looking forward to seeing applications for all types of green space, including parks but also cemeteries, woodlands and perhaps the creation of some new 'corridors' of green to join up two areas, or a community wanting to enhance a neglected area.

Lynda Kitching

Chair, Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum

Kate Hainsworth

Chief Executive
Leeds Community Foundation

Leeds Community Foundation is proud to be a partner of the Leeds Parks Fund. With an estimated 45 million adult visits to our parks each year, we need to ensure that our parks and green spaces are looked after so that everyone can enjoy them.

Leeds has a rich history of philanthropy in supporting its parks and green spaces. The Leeds Parks Fund provides a central vehicle to harness future good will and donations that can ensure the welfare of our parks and enhance the lives of those who use them.

Outdoor spaces are invaluable in supporting our health and wellbeing, providing a free resource where children and families of Leeds can play, learn and exercise.

Through the Leeds Parks Fund we will draw on our knowledge of local community need and expertise in delivering tailored funding programmes to support projects that enhance our parks and green spaces, working with and involving a range of local people from Leeds.

The research conducted by the University of Leeds provides a deeper understanding of the public's opinion surrounding the city's parks and provides us with valuable intelligence to drive the Leeds Parks Fund initiative forward.

We look forward to working with our partners to explore and cement a workable strategy that is not only transparent to donors but provides tangible outcomes to support a variety of parks and green spaces across the city now and in the future.

Kate Hainsworth

Chief Executive, Leeds Community Foundation

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Executive Summary

Public parks are vital features of our cities that provide numerous benefits for people, communities and the environment. Given the scale of ongoing fiscal constraint to public services and at a time when the future of public parks in the UK is at a critical juncture, what role can and should charitable giving play in sustaining and revitalising parks? This research explored public and business attitudes to charitable giving to parks and green spaces in Leeds, UK.

The research was undertaken as part of the national Rethinking Parks programme. The research explored views towards a charitable fund for parks and green spaces - the Leeds Parks Fund - to engage residents and businesses in co-producing improvements to parks. The findings are based on online surveys with 1,434 residents and 141 business leaders and focus groups and interviews with 45 business and civic participants.

The research found that the public and business community have complex views about the role of charitable donations and varying dispositions to donate warranting more thorough consideration by local authorities, Parks Foundations and others as they seek to attract voluntary donations.

Key findings include:

- Charitable giving has an important but limited role in bridging the funding gap and stimulating greater civic engagement.
- Although residents and business leaders support charitable donations to local parks, more are in favour of funding coming from central government, businesses and grant-making bodies.
- Charitable giving can have a role as part of – rather than in place of – the public funding of parks and green spaces. Charitable donations should not be a substitute for local authority funding.
- Despite high levels of support for the principle of voluntary donations to parks, a much lower proportion of residents and business leaders would donate to parks themselves.
- Residents who reported a willingness to donate to parks were more likely to be under age 34, members of a 'Friends' group, or to have an annual income of over £40,000.
- While there were virtues associated with a citywide donation model for parks, this was cited as a barrier to giving due to the lack of choice it provides donors to give to specific projects or to parks that they use.

- Residents and business leaders prefer to give to parks closest to their business/residence, parks in most need and community parks. Large, major parks received comparatively less support.
- Residents and business leaders prefer to give to habitats for wildlife and park cleanliness.
- Charitable initiatives should promote donations of time, goods and skills as well as money. Residents and business leaders may be more able or likely to give to parks in these different ways.

Key recommendations for UK parks include:

- The need for an informed public debate on the funding of parks, including the role of charitable giving and the urgent need for donations.
- The introduction of statutory protection and appropriate government funding to maintain parks to recognised quality standards.
- Blended models of park funding need to uphold important public principles of governance, including open and equal access to parks, universal provision of quality parks and strategic oversight of resources.
- Local authorities should play a leadership role in engaging the involvement of the wider community, businesses, and 'Friends' groups to co-produce improvements to parks and green spaces.
- Local authorities and their partners should develop a clear public message about the role and value derived from voluntary donations, by providing a clear strategy and aims for the use of such donations.
- A dedicated national body to provide leadership, guidance and coordination for the new portfolio of charitable Parks Foundations being set up in partnership with local authorities to support parks.

Key recommendations for the Leeds Parks Fund include:

- Leeds Parks Fund partners should develop a clear, visible and accessible strategy with allied aims and ambitions for charitable donations.
- Marketing and branding materials should clearly and visibly show that the Leeds Parks Fund is a charitable initiative distinct from the Council.
- The model of the Leeds Parks Fund should be developed in ways that balance greater choice to donate to specific projects or parks with its redistributive objective to promote and embed equity in the quality of parks across communities.
- Leeds Parks Fund partners should use the Fund as a catalyst to increase the engagement of the wider community in park governance.
- Leeds Parks Fund partners should investigate ways to make the Fund sustainable in the long term.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Various public-spirited efforts played a role in acquiring and improving parks during the Victorian era, including public donations, philanthropic activity and local authority investment. Given the scale of fiscal constraint on local council budgets and at a time when the future of public parks in the UK is at a critical juncture, what role can and should charitable giving play in sustaining and revitalising parks? This report seeks to engage with this question drawing upon existing literature and empirical research into public and business attitudes towards charitable giving to parks and green spaces in Leeds, UK.

The research was conducted as part of a Rethinking Parks programme of national pilot projects, in which several major cities in the UK are exploring new ways to harness voluntary public donations to improve and sustain parks. This report shares the findings of research into the Leeds Parks Fund initiative. The findings and recommendations have wider implications for similar initiatives being developed in the UK.

1.1 Rethinking Parks programme: harnessing voluntary donations

Rethinking Parks is a national programme that aims to develop promising operational models for parks across the country through investigating their potential in locally-implemented national pilot projects. It is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Nesta. A core theme underpinning past and present projects is the investigation of ways to harness voluntary public donations for the upkeep and improvement of parks.

Between 2013 and 2015, Rethinking Parks sought to assess 11 approaches to raising income for and reducing costs of running public parks (Nesta, 2016). Three of these projects – the Bournemouth Parks Foundation, Heeley Subscription Society and MyParkScotland – tested whether the public would donate to their local parks. The Bournemouth project explored the potential of the parks foundation model, based closely on those that operate in the United States.[1] A core role of a parks foundation is to attract private donations to support the long-term sustainability of parks.[2] The Heeley Subscription Society tested whether residents in a neighbourhood of Sheffield would contribute via regular subscriptions to the upkeep of their local park, Heeley's People's Park.[3] GreenSpace Scotland launched MyParkScotland, a civic crowdfunding platform specifically for Scottish parks and green spaces. Residents can

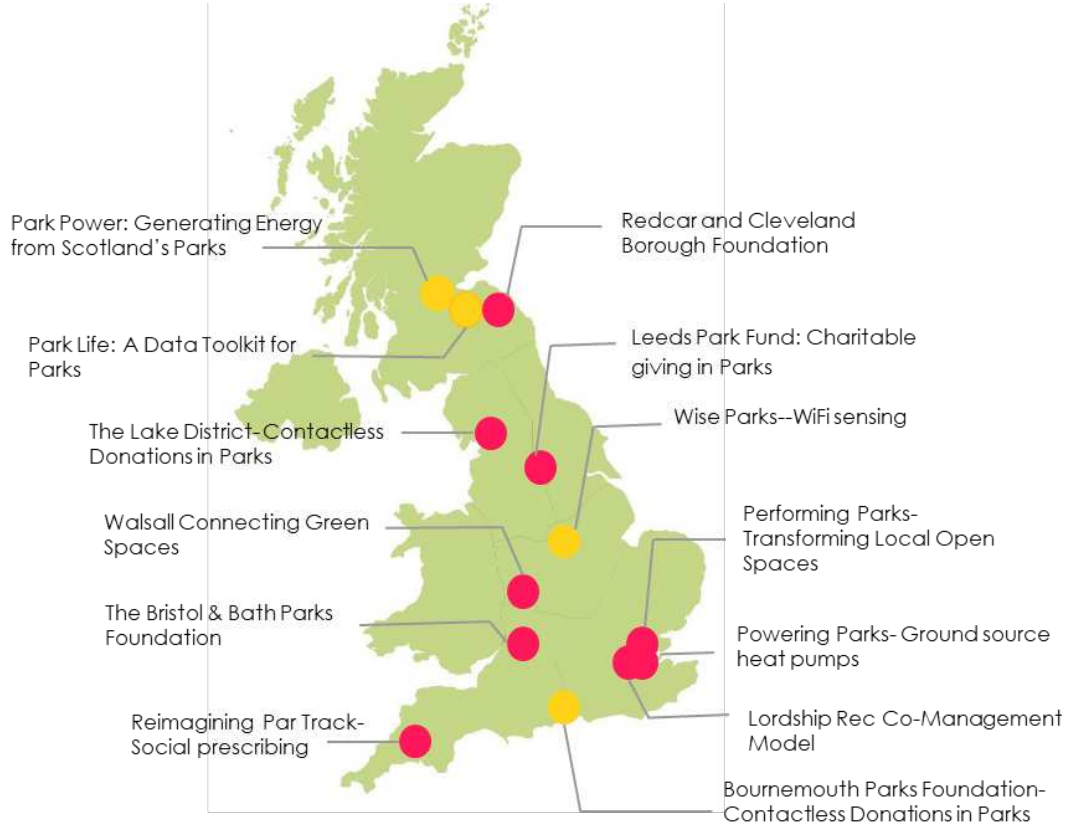
propose a project and, following a review process, use the internet platform to crowdfund for donations.[4]

In 2018, two new Rethinking Park schemes were launched: replication and prototyping (Figure 1-1). Eight replication projects seek to learn from, adapt and build on the most promising approaches to help run parks more sustainably. Three projects – the Leeds Parks Fund, Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation, and Redcar and Cleveland Parks Foundation – replicate aspects of the Bournemouth Parks Foundation model (see Chapter Two).

A further five prototyping awards explore how technology can be harnessed to meet the challenges that parks face, including two projects – Bournemouth Parks Foundation and the Lake District Foundation – that explore the potential to raise charitable donations through installing contactless 'tap to give' technology in parks. Recognising the potential of digital giving technology in museums and art galleries (Bowcock, 2012), Bournemouth Parks Foundation are trialling the use of contactless technology in parks with varied demographics, using messaging techniques and behavioural insights to 'nudge' public donations. The Lake District Foundation is testing different approaches to harness donations in large visitor attractions and more remote areas and exploring the factors that motivate donations from visitors.[5]

These projects are principally concerned with charitable giving in the form of voluntary public donations, although some projects are exploring other aspects of charitable giving, including volunteering, corporate social responsibility and community management.

Figure 1.1 Map of Rethinking Parks replication and prototyping projects



Source: Nesta

1.2 Rethinking Parks: Leeds Parks Fund project

In the past decade, over 90% of local authority park managers across the UK have reported significant cuts to their budgets (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016). Park managers are responding in diverse ways to address current funding challenges. These include drawing upon a wider variety of externally generated income, cutting costs, outsourcing maintenance and the management of park assets, and disposing of parks or parts of them. Subject to the same broad national funding pressures, since 2010 Leeds City Council Parks and Countryside service have experienced a 50% cut to its budget. Committed to the custodianship of parks and green spaces under a local authority service model, it has sought to increase and diversify income by adopting a blended approach to funding parks and green spaces, mitigating to some extent the effects of budget cuts. In order to continue to invest in the quality of parks and green spaces, and to ensure that all community parks are free to access, Leeds City Council is relying on a civic enterprise approach using a combination of income generation from cafes and visitor attractions, events in parks, concession permits, volunteering programmes (approximately 109 full-time equivalent volunteers), community partnership agreements,

business sponsorship (approximately 300k), grants, prudential borrowing, as well as charitable donations from local benefactors. Alongside these developments, Leeds City Council is the first local authority in the country to partner with a Community Foundation to trial charitable donations to parks as a way for local people and businesses to play a role in improving and sustaining public parks for future generations.

In 2017, Leeds Community Foundation, the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum and Leeds City Council set up the Leeds Parks Fund charitable initiative.[6] It offers as way for local people and businesses to donate towards community-led improvements to public parks and green spaces in the city.

In 2018, the Leeds Park Fund partners – alongside researchers at the University of Leeds – were awarded funding and support from the National Lottery Community Fund, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Nesta to explore the potential of this charitable scheme over a two-year period (2018 to 2020) as part of the Rethinking Parks programme of national pilot projects. The project has seven main objectives (Figure 1-2).

Figure 1.2 Leeds Parks Fund project objectives

Leeds Parks Fund project objectives:

- To investigate, through survey and qualitative research, what local people and businesses think about the idea of charitable donations to improve public parks in Leeds.
- To develop a marketing and fundraising plan to promote and harness charitable and philanthropic giving.
- To engage communities and businesses in the development and promotion of the Leeds Parks Fund charitable initiative.
- To trial different methods of charitable donations to parks e.g. text donations and site installations.
- To set up an independent panel to distribute the funds raised.

- To make a difference to the quality of parks and green spaces by funding community-led projects.
- To explore the wider learning and application of the project's findings for other similar initiatives across the UK, including the potential of other UK Community Foundations to host similar funds.

This report shares the findings of the research undertaken for the first project objective.

1.3 The Leeds Parks Fund model

The Leeds Parks Fund is a citywide charitable initiative. It covers all publicly accessible parks and green space in Leeds including, but not limited to, the 4,000 hectares of green space managed by Leeds City Council Parks and Countryside service. Leeds has 7 major parks, 63 community parks, 95 recreation grounds, 156 nature conservation sites and 27 cemeteries and crematoria. There are an estimated 45 million adult visits each year to public parks in the city and, on average, residents visit more than five different parks a year (Barker *et al.*, 2018). The Leeds Parks Fund does not replace the role of the Council in managing and maintaining parks. It aims to:[7]

- improve the quality of publicly accessible parks and green spaces in the city;
- contribute to the key priorities and targets of the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy;[8]
- improve quality of life for residents, particularly those who are vulnerable or in poverty and to create a city of opportunity for all.

Three main features differentiate the Leeds Parks Fund model from other recently established parks foundations. The first and main difference is that the Leeds Parks Fund is not a registered charity. Rather, it is a charitable fund that is administered and managed by Leeds Community Foundation, which provides independence from the Council and enables voluntary giving without the need to set up a charitable body and associated governance arrangements. Once donations have been raised, community groups can apply to the Leeds Parks Fund for a grant to improve the quality of their local park or green space and an independent panel decides how the funds are allocated.

Second, as a charitable fund, it focuses solely on harnessing voluntary public and business donations. Leeds Parks and Countryside service run an individual and corporate volunteering programme, manage business sponsorship and grant funding schemes in Leeds parks. At present, people can donate by cheque, in cash at events or in park's visitor centres like Tropical World, by bank transfer, online through the dedicated Leeds Parks Fund website, or by leaving a legacy.

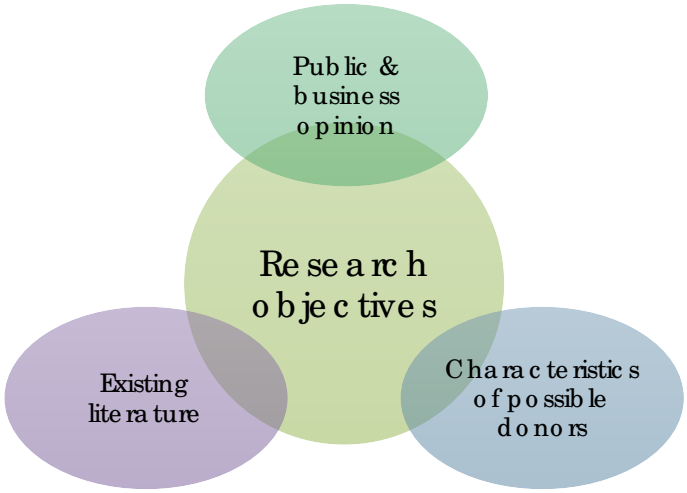
The final main adaptation is the inclusion of the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum as a key partner in the scheme. The Forum, established in 2012, aims to protect, preserve and enhance the parks and green spaces of Leeds for the benefit of people and wildlife. It does this through various means, including engaging more local people in caring for parks and green spaces, supporting voluntary groups that care for green spaces in Leeds, and raising funds for the benefit of parks and green spaces. It is the community voice of the Leeds Parks Fund.

The research

Charitable donations to parks rely on public support, willingness to donate and an acceptance of the idea that voluntary donations have a role and place to play in funding park improvements. Public support and people's willingness to give can be researched in a variety of ways. Social research can discover the range of views and attitudes towards voluntary donations and can reveal self-reported willingness to donate to parks. Such research can inform an understanding of public support and acceptance for the role and place of voluntary donations within the funding of parks and how marketing and fundraising plans might be developed to appeal to the public. As in many fields, here, there are both descriptive (empirical) and normative (ethical) issues at play: what is and what ought to happen, which raise slightly different issues and implications.

Public willingness to give can also be tested through behavioural research, via trialling tangible opportunities for the public to donate and then measuring to what extent they actually do give in the desired ways. Such research applies behavioural insights to develop an understanding of how the public might be best encouraged – or 'nudged' - to donate (see, for instance, Cabinet Office, 2013). There is of course a tangible difference between what people say they will do (i.e. their attitudes) and what they actually do (i.e. their behaviours). We cannot assume that people's attitudes - especially those reported publicly - will translate unproblematically into actions. Over the course of the Leeds Parks Fund project, both methods will be used and reported on.

Figure 1.3 Research objectives



The social research reported herein had three main objectives (Figure 1-3). Using online surveys, focus groups and interviews, the primary objective was to explore the views and attitudes of volunteers, residents and business leaders in the city of Leeds towards charitable donations to parks and green spaces, and the Leeds Parks Fund model of giving. This included developing an understanding of public and business leaders' support for voluntary giving within a range of other means to supplement the funding of parks. We were unable to undertake a survey of the few existing donors to the Leeds Parks Fund as most had requested anonymity.

The second objective was to identify who might be possible donors to parks. This was explored using online surveys, and the statistical modelling of self-reported 'willingness to give' based on demographic and other characteristics provided by residents and business leaders.

The third objective was to review the existing literature on charitable giving, including the current landscape of initiatives seeking to harness voluntary donations to parks, and the barriers and motivators to individual and corporate giving.

1.4 Structure of the report

The report is organised as follows. The second chapter provides a light touch review of the existing literature on charitable giving, including the current landscape of initiatives seeking to harness voluntary donations to parks, and the barriers and motivations to individual and corporate giving. The third and fourth chapters provide the main findings from online surveys of Leeds residents and business leaders conducted to explore their views towards charitable

donations to parks and green spaces. It employs statistical modelling to explore the characteristics of residents and business leaders who self-reported a willingness to donate to an independent charitable fund for parks, controlling for a range of relevant explanatory variables. The fifth chapter presents the findings of focus groups and one-to-one interviews with volunteers, residents and business leaders, to capture in more depth: sentiment towards the concept of a citywide charitable fund for parks and green spaces; the role and place of voluntary public donations and other sources in funding parks; and the appeal of the Leeds Parks Fund model of giving. It also explores the role volunteers and businesses might play, and the challenges and opportunities of harnessing voluntary donations in the contexts of parks. The sixth chapter provides the conclusions of the research. The last chapter makes seven recommendations for UK parks and ten recommendations for the Leeds Parks Fund.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Key points

- Philanthropy and voluntary public donations can have an important but limited role in funding most parks. Voluntary donations do not provide sustainable, long-term financial solutions for parks in most communities.
- In the context of deep cuts to local government funding, new charitable initiatives are being established across the UK in partnership with local authorities to harness voluntary donations to maintain and improve parks. New charitable initiatives take three dominant forms: civic crowdfunding; Parks Foundations; and Community Foundation-managed Funds.
- There are five main drawbacks to relying heavily on philanthropy and voluntary donations to fund public parks. These include: free-riding; uncertainty and variability of voluntary donations; crowding-out of public funding; costs associated with fundraising; and inequities in what gets funded (Walls, 2014).
- Park 'Friends' and user groups generate £50 million and £70 million each year through fundraising and volunteering (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016).
- The UK is ranked sixth in Charities Aid Foundation's 2018 World Giving Index. Some 68% of the nation's charitable giving consists of donating money, and 33% consists of volunteer time.
- Charitable giving in the UK appears to be relatively stable since 2005, at around £10 billion per annum, regardless of economic events.
- A common misconception is that individuals simply give to the neediest causes. However, individuals are motivated to give by a range of factors (e.g. preferences, tastes, backgrounds, charity trust and competence).
- Demographic and social characteristics (e.g. age, marital status, education, income, volunteer etc.) play an important role in the quantity, frequency, and type of donations made by individuals.
- Companies will chiefly engage in charitable giving if it provides positive benefits for the business.

2.2 Introduction

The first half of this chapter provides an overview of trends in UK charitable giving and reviews the existing research literature on the motivations and barriers to individual and corporate giving. The second half of the chapter considers the role of charitable giving to public parks and outlines the current landscape of charitable initiatives seeking to harness voluntary donations to parks in the UK. It considers three main approaches: Parks Foundations; civic crowdfunding; and Community Foundation-managed Funds.

2.3 Data and literature search

Data on trends in charitable giving by individuals in the UK is available from the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), which conducts the largest annual survey of 12,000 people.[9] In addition, the annual Community Life Survey, run by Kantar Public on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, is an online and household self-completion survey of adults aged 16+ in England.[10] It is a key source of evidence on charitable social actions, including volunteering and giving to charity. Survey estimates of charitable giving vary widely and need to be interpreted carefully, with respect to the caveats and confidence intervals reported (McKenzie, 2012). Further, the Sunday Times produces The Giving List in partnership with the CAF, which provides information on giving by the UK's richest individuals (totalling a record £3.75bn).[11]

Corporate giving describes the donations made by corporations and private companies towards charitable causes (CAF, 2018c). There are different methods for estimating the level of corporate donations, which can be in the form of cash or in-kind gifts to a charity or community organisation. Data is available on corporate giving from the Directory of Social Change, which provides an annual Guide to UK Company Giving by 400 companies that collectively contribute around £400 million in cash donations and in-kind support.[12] This is a selective group of donors, based on their giving levels and community profile. In addition, the CAF reports annual corporate giving by the FTSE 100 using data taken from annual reports and/or corporate social responsibility reports. It uses the LGB model to calculate total giving which includes cash donations, in-kind support, the value of time donated through employee volunteering schemes and management costs incurred in implementing community initiatives (CAF, 2018c). There is limited data available on the charitable giving tendencies of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Research studies have also sought to provide an understanding of the

level and extent of corporate charitable giving (see, for example, CGAP, 2012).

Existing studies on motivations and barriers of charitable giving was compiled for review using a variety of sources via searches in a range of databases (e.g. Google Scholar, Web of Science, JSTOR) and specialist peer-reviewed journals (e.g. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly) as well as a general search of relevant newsletters (e.g. non-profit quarterly) and blogs (e.g. The Conversation, CityLab). The Rethinking Parks programme also produced a summary of reflections and learning on voluntary public donation schemes (Nesta, 2016). All literature reviewed was limited to that written in English, and focused primarily on charitable giving in the UK, the US, Canada, and Australia and New Zealand.

Most of the literature reviewed focused on charitable donations by individuals, rather than businesses. Literature that focused on the latter predominantly looked at larger companies and their corporate philanthropy policies. Furthermore, there is a paucity of existing literature on charitable giving in the specific contexts of parks and green spaces. The limited literature on this topic was primarily specific to the US, Australia, or Continental European countries.

2.4 Overview of charitable giving in the UK

The CAF's World Giving Index shares insights into the nature of giving and trends in global generosity. The UK is ranked 6th in the 2018 World Giving Index (CAF, 2018a). Some 68% of the nation's charitable giving consists of donating money, and 33% consists of volunteer time (CAF, 2018a).

CAF provides the largest annual study of individual giving behaviour in the UK, surveying over 12,000 people per year. Charting over a decade of self-reported charitable giving against economic events during that period (2005 – 2015), CAF (2017) found that UK charitable giving appears to be relatively stable, at around £10 billion per annum, regardless of economic events. However, for the past three years fewer people say they are giving money (69% in 2016 to 65% in 2018) (CAF, 2019). Hence, the continued stability of total levels of charitable giving was driven by fewer people giving more (CAF, 2019).

The UK population gives to charity in a variety of ways. In 2018, some 60% had donated money, 56% had given goods, 35% had sponsored someone and 17% had volunteered for a charity (CAF, 2018b). While sponsorship peaks over the summer months, donating money peaks in November and December which is likely to be related to Christmas appeals (CAF, 2018b).

Frequency of giving is associated with social grade, likely due to higher levels of disposable income (CAF, 2018b). The median monthly amount given by a donor in 2017 was £20, while the mean amount given was £44 (CAF, 2018b). Women are more likely than men to give, and the type and method of giving varies by age group (CAF, 2018b). In 2017, over 65s were most likely to give by buying a raffle ticket (45%), direct debit (44%), buying goods (41%) and membership fees (20%) and the least likely to give online via a website or app (13%) (CAF, 2018b). Younger people aged 16-24s were the most likely to give at a fundraising event (27%) and by debit card (21%), while 25-44s were the most likely to give via text (CAF, 2018b).

In 2018, certain causes were most popular with donors: medical research, animal welfare, children or young people, hospitals and hospices and overseas disaster aid (CAF, 2018b). Sports and recreation were the least popular causes. However, popularity of a cause did not always equate with the proportion of total donations to that cause (CAF, 2018b). For instance, despite medical research being the most popular cause for people to have donated to, it received only 8% of the total donations. The categories 'environment and heritage' and 'sports and recreation' (the closest categories to parks and green spaces) received 5% and 2% of total donations respectively (CAF, 2018b). Those in higher social grades were more likely to donate to environment and heritage causes (CAF, 2018b).

Around half the UK population agree that charities are trustworthy, but trust in charities is on the decline (51% in 2016 to 48% in 2018) (CAF, 2019). Demographically, women, younger people (aged 16-24), and those of higher social grade were significantly more likely to consider charities to be trustworthy (CAF, 2018b).

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport *Community Life Survey* of adults aged 16+ in England is a key source of evidence on volunteering and giving to charity. The most recent survey, which ran from August 2017 to March 2018, found that 22% of people volunteered formally at least once in the last year (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2018). Yet, the proportion of people taking part in formal volunteering at least once a month is lower than in 2013-14 when it stood at 27% (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2018). Some 75% said they had given money to charitable causes in the last 4 weeks (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2018). Similarly, the proportion of people giving money to charity is lower than 2013-14 when 82% had given to charitable causes (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2018).

As with the CAF survey, the Community Life Survey found that women were more likely to donate to charity than men (79% compared with 70%); older people were more likely to donate to charity than younger people (83% of over75s donating in the last four weeks compared with 57% of 16-24 year olds); and people living in the most deprived areas were less likely to donate to charity in the past four weeks than those living in the least deprived areas (67% compared with 80%) (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2018).

Furthermore, a review of the existing literature found a strong, positive relationship between volunteering and charitable giving (Hill, 2012). Drawing on research in England, Hill (2012: 2) notes that 8% of the population are responsible for 49% of all volunteering hours and 40% of charitable giving. Yet not all studies support these findings; some suggest that volunteering and charitable giving can be 'substitutes', rather than mutually reinforcing (Hill, 2012). Evidence for a 'substitutability' theory is mixed (Hill, 2012). Further research suggests that the positive relationship between volunteering and donating money is the result of shared motivations or drivers, rather than a causal relationship (Hill, 2012).

Accurately calculating corporate giving is more difficult than measuring individual giving. This is partly because recent reforms to the Companies Act 2006, which came into force in 2013, mean that UK companies no longer have a legal obligation to declare charitable donations, and many companies are choosing not to do so (Reynolds *et al.*, 2017). Some 15 FTSE 100 companies chose not to specify their corporate donations for the 2015/16 financial year (CAF, 2018c). Other difficulties in estimating total corporate giving are that businesses give in a variety of different ways, including donating products and offering services to charities. For example, some companies (i.e. pharmaceuticals) donate large amounts of products, the exact value of which is difficult to calculate (Walker *et al.*, 2012). Also, companies typically report cash giving and in-kind giving figures, but also sometimes include contributions that technically do not come from the company at all, such as employee fundraising, payroll giving, and donations from customers (Walker *et al.*, 2012; CAF, 2018c). Some studies suggest cash giving is the most frequent form of donation making up 67% of corporate donations to charitable organisations (Walker *et al.*, 2012: 6). A study in 2012 estimated that corporate donations to UK charities were around £1.6 billion annually (Walker *et al.*, 2012).

CAF (2018c) found that total donations by the FTSE 100 have continued to fall year on year by 11% (£235 million) since 2014 and 26% (£655 million) since 2013, down to £1.9 Billion in 2016. The number of FSTE 100 companies donating at least 1% of pre-tax profits is down, with only 26 companies having donated at

least this amount in 2016 (CAF, 2018c). Pharmaceutical companies continue to lead charitable giving, with basic materials and health care, accounting for 55% of donations in 2016 (CAF, 2018c).

2.5 Individual giving: motivations and barriers

The CAF (2018b) contend that the UK is in large part a nation of reactive, rather than planned, givers. Charitable giving - reactive or planned - is motivated by an emotional connection (CAF, 2016), and so depends less on the donor's personality and more on the charitable organisation's ability to make direct meaningful contact with an individual, and offer 'organised environments which provide structures for the opportunity to be altruistic and that help create and shape the behaviour' (Adloff, 2009: 1185). The more opportunities to donate that are made available, the more likely people are to give (CAF, 2018b). Charitable giving is typically viewed positively, and so a donor might receive positive approval from their peers (Bekkers and Wiepking, 2011). The impact of this is that face-to-face donation, where money is physically exchanged, is usually more successful than donating online or donating money in an envelope as there is an audience to the donor's altruism (Bekkers and Wiepking, 2011; Alpizar *et al.*, 2008). Also, if the donation earns the donor some sort of recognition (e.g. on a website or on a plaque) then they are more likely to donate (Bekkers and Wiepking, 2011). Indeed, some suggest that a conventional, purely altruistic view of charitable giving should be challenged and replaced with an 'impure altruism' model (Andreoni, 1990).

A common misconception is that people simply give to the neediest causes, where often they are giving to causes which have a personal meaning for them. Breeze (2010; 2013) found that charitable giving is influenced by a number of factors, namely: donor tastes, preferences, and passions; their personal and professional backgrounds; their perceptions of charity competence (i.e. how trustworthy and effective a charity is) which are often based on the quality and quantity of direct mail; and their desire to have a personal impact and to feel as though their contribution has made a difference (and is not just one drop in an ocean of donations).

A donor's demographic and social characteristics (e.g. age, marital status, education, income etc.) play an important role in determining the quantity, frequency, and type of donation that they might choose to give (Adloff, 2009). For example, it was found that when married couples make significant donations, it is the result of consultation between partners. The size of the donation will be larger if both partners support the cause (Adloff, 2009).

Age is quite a significant factor, and donors of different age groups require different marketing approaches. The typical age range of donors is 35-64, with women and people from higher social classes donating more frequently (Burgoyne *et al.*, 2005; CAF, 2018b). Some studies suggest that emphasising the benefits of the charitable cause to everyone in society increases male concern, empathy and willingness to donate (Wille *et al.*, 2015). Philanthropic giving in people under 24 years old was influenced most significantly by education level (Adloff, 2009), but in older age groups other factors were more significant. For example, older people were influenced most highly by the number of friends and religious commitments (Adloff, 2009). Childless high net worth individuals are an important demographic, as they may choose to create their own foundation or leave a legacy to a charity, rather than leaving money for next-of-kin, or spending the money on themselves (Adloff, 2009). Educated individuals (i.e. those possessing an undergraduate degree) gave 8% more than less-educated individuals (Bennett, 2012).

High-income earners donate more to charitable causes than low-income earners, however the latter donate a greater proportion of their income to charity than the former (Bennett, 2012). In a survey of low-income earners, a significant factor dictating charity choice was personal involvement in the cause (Bennett, 2012). For example, if the donor has encountered in the past circumstances that require assistance from a charity, then they are likely to feel more involved with that type of charity (Bennett, 2012).

Beyond socio-demographic attributes, trust in a charity was found to be one of the key factors determining the amount of donations they receive. The Charity Commission for England and Wales (2018: 11) reports that '52% of those whose trust has increased say they donate to charities more as a consequence' and '41% of those whose trust has decreased say they donate to charities less as a consequence'. Trust in a charity also strongly impacts the likelihood of repeat donation (Charity Commission for England and Wales, 2018). Transparency regarding activities of a charity can engender trust. If a charity can demonstrate that the money reaches the intended recipient, 'trust and self-reported propensity to donate increases' (Charity Commission for England and Wales, 2018: 3). Some studies suggest that organisational reputation – of which trust is a part - plays a less significant role in the arts and culture charitable sector (Krawczyk *et al.*, 2017). Yet, transparency in terms of the mission and actions of a non-profit organisation (including how the funds raised will be used) is particularly crucial for engaging millennials, as they typically donate to a cause rather than a specific organisation (Gorczyca and Hartman, 2017). Effective use of social media is also very important for

engaging with millennials (Gorczyca and Hartman, 2017). A side effect of this need for trust and transparency is that individuals tend to support local charities (Knowles and Sullivan, 2017), as donors are more able to see first-hand evidence of the work that the organisation is doing. A feeling of personal involvement is also important, as evidenced by the fact that people who volunteer are more likely to donate money than people who do not volunteer – because they are involved in a personal manner (Adloff, 2009). A more positive experience with a charitable organisation is more likely to lead to a donor committing to repeat donations (Beldad *et al.*, 2014).

The act of giving to charity is interpreted differently by individuals depending on their type of reflexivity (Sanghera, 2016), which may have implications for charities in terms of their marketing and communication strategies. Individuals described as 'communicative reflexives' saw charity as 'an opportunity to do good work with and for others', whereby the act of giving is 'a communal activity that establishes and affirms social connections and norms' (Sanghera, 2016: 46). Individuals described as 'autonomous reflexives' see charities as being 'useful for achieving practical things that matter for their well-being', associated with moral individualism (Sanghera, 2016: 46). Individuals described as 'meta-reflexives' see charity as being 'about making society more humane and fair by addressing social problems and issues' (Sanghera, 2016: 46). Hence, the act of giving is about 'helping to create a different world' (Sanghera, 2016: 46). However, individuals share many elements too, including 'the capacity to sympathize and understand others suffering and misfortunes, mixed sentiments of self-interest, compassion and justice, and moral discourse and rules' (Sanghera, 2016: 46).

Insights from behavioural studies have been applied to charitable giving. There is a growing body of literature exploring the 'science of philanthropy' (Walls, 2014), identifying the best methods for stimulating voluntary donations, and 'nudging' individuals into giving more. This body of research explores the features of charitable giving initiatives that are most appealing or work best to stimulate donations, often using natural field experiments and behavioural trials. One set of behavioural trials was undertaken in the UK by CAF in conjunction with the Cabinet Office (Cabinet Office and CAF, 2013). Key findings suggest that small differences in ways in which people are asked to donate or to increase regular donations can make large differences to the amount of money donated to charity (Cabinet Office and CAF, 2013). For example, a behavioural trial encouraging people to sign up for annual automatic increases in their giving (to prevent inflation eroding the donation value over time) was found to be a highly effective way for a charity to

increase overall value of contributions. A set of natural field experiments focused on eliciting donations to a national park in Costa Rica (Alpizar *et al.*, 2008). They analysed the difference in giving when donations are made in public or private; how the size of other people's donations affects the level of giving; and whether people give more if they receive a small gift. They found that gifts made in public are higher; being told about higher donations increased their donation; and gifts have a small but positive impact on the likeness of giving but it may reduce their contribution.

The literature points to several barriers to charitable giving by individuals. The Barclays (2010) report found that financial security and individual values presented the biggest barriers to charitable giving, with concerns about how charities are run and how much is spent on administration having increased greatly. Some 40% of millionaires (those with investable assets of up to £1 million) give less than £1,000 per year, however multi-millionaires (those with investable assets of more than £3 million) are more likely to donate upwards of £10,000 per year (Barclays, 2010: 3). When the recession hit in 2009, some 23% of the wealthy population are estimated to have decreased their donations (Barclays, 2010: 11). Yet CAF (2017) analysis since 2005 finds that economic events do not appear to have an impact on overall levels of charitable giving in the UK.

Participants in a qualitative study noted a number of deterrents to charitable giving based on their perceptions of the charity and its communication with them, including 'its size, economic efficiency, and political or ideological stance, the way that the charity went about trying to manipulate them into giving, and the need to insulate themselves against what they regarded as an open-ended and impossible demand on their funds' (Burgoyne *et al.*, 2005: 397). Persistent requests for money from the same charity were a deterrent to donations (Burgoyne *et al.*, 2005), as was the charity suggesting a specific figure to donate (Burgoyne *et al.*, 2005). Similarly, if a donor has a difficult or frustrating experience with a charitable organisation, they are less likely to donate in the future (Beldad *et al.*, 2014). Suspicions about where donations end up and how much is actually given to the intended cause (Beldad *et al.*, 2014) and the donation being perceived as not making much of a difference were also found to discourage giving (Bekkers and Wiepking, 2011).

A report on the use of Gift Aid found that 95% of the UK population over 16 had given money to charity in the 12 months prior to being interviewed, totalling £8.91bn (Quadrangle, 2016). Money put into tins/buckets was the most common method of donation, with direct debits being responsible for the largest proportion of money given to charities (Quadrangle, 2016). Gift Aid was

added to 52% of the total value of donations, although 8% of donations had Gift Aid wrongly added by ineligible donors (Quadrangle, 2016). Some 25% of donations did not have Gift Aid added despite the donor being eligible, resulting in £0.56bn of unclaimed Gift Aid (Quadrangle, 2016). The report found that incorrect assumptions regarding eligibility for Gift Aid stem from a lack of understanding of what Gift Aid is, and what constitutes Gift Aid eligibility (Quadrangle, 2016). Only 58% of participants were able to correctly identify their own eligibility (Quadrangle, 2016). Lack of opportunity to opt-in for Gift Aid was also found to have significant responsibility for unclaimed Gift Aid (Quadrangle, 2016). The report also found that online channels were more likely to overestimate Gift Aid, while offline channels were responsible for higher levels of unclaimed Gift Aid (Quadrangle, 2016). Hence, digital methods of donation ensure that charities receive the most value per donation by increasing the revenue available from Gift Aid. Providing further information on Gift Aid eligibility would increase understanding and reduce the chances of Gift Aid being added incorrectly.

2.6 Corporate giving: motivations and barriers

Corporate philanthropy is traditionally viewed as a good way for companies to fulfil their social responsibility to their local communities (Seifert *et al.*, 2003). Yet, many companies will chiefly engage in charitable giving if it provides positive benefits for the business (Mullen, 1997). There needs to be both social and commercial benefits to incentivise business giving (CAF, 2018c). Companies with a long history of philanthropy are more likely to cite altruistic reasons for their engagement, while companies newer to charitable giving are more likely to cite business benefits (Campbell *et al.*, 1999). Yet, some suggest that these motivations exist on a continuum (Gautier and Pache, 2015). At one end, philanthropy is a commitment to the common good whereby philanthropic firms do not expect a direct return for their gifts, which distinguishes philanthropy from business sponsorship (Gautier and Pache, 2015). At the other end, corporate philanthropy is a form of brand marketing – an act from which they can seek public support. In the middle, corporate philanthropy serves the company's interests, but indirectly (Gautier and Pache, 2015). There is substantial evidence in the literature that charitable giving is used by businesses as part of a 'strategic plan to gain a competitive edge' – to reduce research and development costs, enhance consumer name recognition, overcome regulatory obstacles, and improve employee productivity, and so forth (Seifert *et al.*, 2003: 195; CAF, 2018c). Also, if a corporation is generally seen as ethical in the public perception, this might negate some of the impact of negative publicity they may receive (Mullen,

1997). Long-term giving plans were found to be more effective in terms of benefits for a business, requiring 'a strategic vision with clearly defined and agreed upon goals that establish corporate expectations of the financial commitment and any other related activities' (Mullen, 1997: 47). A systematic review of corporate philanthropy suggests that there are motivations and drivers at different levels: individual drivers; company-level drivers; and field-level drivers (Gautier and Pache, 2015).

A further effect of corporate giving is that it can influence the giving behaviour and attitudes of its employees (Smith, 2013). Profession is an intrinsic part of identity, and so working in an organisation that both discusses and contributes to charitable giving strengthens employee attitudes towards donating and can influence their charitable giving behaviour (Smith, 2013). Studies have also found that employees are very supportive of corporate charitable giving, strongly believing that businesses should support community causes (Madden *et al.*, 2006), although this belief does not extend to national or international causes, being reserved primarily for local causes (Madden *et al.*, 2006: 54).

Public opinion regarding corporate charitable giving is positive (CAF, 2018c; Greg Secker Foundation, 2017). In one survey, some 54% of the UK public think that businesses 'should be required to give to charity by law' and 41% think businesses 'should be doing more for charity' (The Greg Secker Foundation, 2017). Moreover, knowing that a business gives 5% of its profits to charity would increase the UK publics' positive perceptions of a company (43%), shape the publics' decisions to use a company over competitors (20%), and lead to company recommendations (17%) (The Grey Secker Foundation, 2017). Aside from money, the UK public also felt that businesses should offer pro-bono services, contributing staff time to volunteer, and 'upskilling' challenged communities (The Greg Secker Foundation, 2017). CAF (2018c : 4) suggests that companies that are transparent about their giving could positively engage consumers as some 56% of the UK public agree that 'I would be more inclined to buy a product or service from a business that donates to charitable causes'.

SMEs take a different approach to charitable giving when compared with the philanthropic endeavours of larger corporations. In a survey, most SMEs stated that they felt they 'should pay significant attention to their social and environmental responsibilities' (Jenkins, 2006: 241), but nevertheless felt that they were already being socially responsible through 'supporting the local economy and community by being profitable and successful companies and employing people' (Jenkins, 2006: 246). If SMEs do engage in charitable giving, they tend to choose beneficiaries based on business relationships or on staff interests (Madden *et al.*, 2006), and the donations tend to be one-off, rather

than repeat donations or complicated partnerships (Madden *et al.*, 2006). Larger SMEs tended to favour donating to a small group of non-profits (of larger donations of time/money), whereas smaller SMEs usually focused on their immediate community, and very local charitable efforts, and very small SMEs were too concerned about their own survival to donate (Madden *et al.*, 2006: 58).

Work for Good (2018) estimate that, on average, UK SMEs donate only 1.8% (of their £1.7m annual turnover). In their survey of 100 SMEs in the UK, Work for Good found that 60% gave to charity. Of these, 40% gave occasionally and only 20% gave regularly (Work for Good, 2018). One of the primary barriers to corporate giving is the difficulties around stimulating senior management and employee interest (Walker *et al.*, 2012). In the above survey, a quarter reported themselves as not being interested in giving to charity, in part because they do not see a benefit to their business in doing so (Work for Good, 2018). However, 66% of those that do donate claim that their charity donations have had a positive effect on profitability (Work for Good, 2018). Those SMEs who gave more than 0.5% of turnover were twice as likely to say that charitable giving enhances reputation (Work for Good, 2018). However, given the lower rates of giving by SMEs, 47% of surveyed charities admitted that they do not target SMEs as part of their fundraising strategy, in part because they do not have the time or resources due to the time it takes to secure a single donation from an SME (Work for Good, 2018).

Other barriers include a lack of resources (particularly with small companies), and a lack of solicitation (Madden *et al.*, 2006). Four deterrents for engagement in charitable giving by SMEs were identified: 'the volume of requests, the lack of a formal process for handling them, a strong sense that business priorities (i.e. a need for survival) must take precedence and concern that the gift might not be used wisely' (Madden *et al.*, 2006: 59). SMEs also expressed concern about over-solicitation, making charitable giving a nuisance (Madden *et al.*, 2006). Particularly with smaller companies, there were worries that a one-off donation would result in further requests and expectations for community engagement (Madden *et al.*, 2006). SMEs were often reluctant to give as they typically did not have the infrastructure in place to manage their community involvement (Madden *et al.*, 2006).

One study found that a charity's communication strategy with companies may be more effective if they can be personalized and adapted to the attitudes of the company's decision maker (Campbell *et al.*, 1999), which requires doing prior research or ensuring that the person making the 'ask' knows them. Companies were more likely to donate if the individual responsible for making

decisions regarding donation had a high personal sense of social consciousness, which strongly suggests that 'internal corporate decisions may be driven by the individual attitudes of those involved in the process' (Campbell *et al.,* 1999: 375). There was an emphasis placed in much of the literature surrounding charitable giving tendencies of businesses that charities should be proactive in securing corporate donations and should 'be willing to adjust their fundraising and marketing strategies to focus on the added value they can bring to a charitable giving relationship' (Mullen, 1997: 42).

2.7 Funding of UK public parks: charitable giving in context

Discussions about the role and place of charitable giving are situated within a broader context and set of debates about the future funding and management of UK public parks. Although a plurality of sources of income have always played a role in funding parks (Layton-Jones, 2016), local authorities have been the core funding source in living memory (Layton-Jones, 2016; Nesta, 2016: 10). The traditional local authority funding model sees parks and green spaces funded from the general revenue budget, which is financed from local taxation and government grants/transfers (CABE Space, 2006). Green space is one of many public services funded from this budget and parks must compete for investment (CABE Space, 2006). Ongoing and significant local government budget reductions mean that within the next few years there will not be enough funds from this budget for non-statutory discretionary public services such as parks. The Local Government Association's 'graph of doom', initially published by Barnet Council in 2012, demonstrates that, if spending projections are accurate and if councils' statutory responsibilities remain the same, by 2020 'statutory services and social care costs will swallow up most local council spending leaving very little for other services to the community such as libraries, parks and leisure centres.'[13] According to a recent survey by the Local Government Association, published in July 2019, councils in England will face an overall funding gap of £3.1bn in 2020/21, rising to £8bn in 2024/25.[14] The implications of this are that a third of England's councils believe they will not have enough funding to provide their legal duties by the 2022/23, and almost two-thirds believe they will not be able to do so a few years later.[15]

A report on the State of UK Public Parks in 2016 found that 92% of park managers have had their budgets reduced in the three-years prior and 95% expect their budgets will continue to fall, although there are large variations in the level of these cuts across the UK (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016: 10). The role that core government funding is playing in parks is declining as park managers increasingly come under pressure to generate external income. Funding from external sources is, on average, anticipated to increase from 22.5% in 2016 to

29% by 2019 (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016: 15), however, some local authority park managers report that external funding already accounts for 100% of their total budget.

The House of Commons major inquiry into the future of public parks concluded that Britain's 27,000 urbans parks are at a 'tipping point' and face threat of decline with 'severe consequences' (2017: 4). Yet, MPs on the inquiry resisted widespread calls for parks to be made a legally protected servic arguing that a statutory duty would not guarantee their preservation, pointing to the case of libraries, and arguing that it contrasted with a broader political ideological shift towards decentralisation (House of Commons, 2017; Barker *et al*, 2017). Instead, park funding and management will be much more varied in the future (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016: 13; National Trust and National Lottery Heritage Fund, 2019).

The changed context has spawned a quest for innovative and sustainable models of funding and governance of parks via the national Rethinking Parks programme (Nesta, 2016) and, more recently, the Future Parks Initiative (National Trust and National Lottery Heritage Fund, 2019). These include: charitable trusts that manage and maintain parks on an extended lease from local authorities; park foundations to facilitate voluntary private donations and grants not available to Councils; Park Improvement Districts where a levy is charged on business rate payers (and possibly residents); commercial income generation activities; transfer of park assets to community ownership; formal partnerships with 'Friends' groups; and volunteering initiatives. Many of these innovations in parks funding have been adapted from historical precedent, some of which have failed previously and as a result returned to a traditional municipally-funded model (Layton-Jones, 2016). Layton-Jones' (2016: 11) review of the history of park funding mechanisms concluded that 'Innovations in funding public green space can be successful, but there are rarely risk-free, simple, cheap, or universally applicable'.

Over the past decade, it has shown that no one source of external funding can replace the need for core public funding (Nesta, 2016). Yet, it has also been acknowledged that a diversification of income is necessary if parks are to remain resilient into the future (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016). Indeed, CABE Space (2006: 10) wrote that 'successful urban green space funding is often underpinned by a strategic approach to funding and management that incorporates a portfolio of different funding sources, mechanisms and partnerships.' In *Paying for Parks,* CABE Space (2006) identified eight funding models that could be used to support urban green space in England based on a review of national and international examples. These included: traditional

local authority funding; multi-agency public sector funding (e.g. health); taxation initiatives; planning and development opportunities; bonds and commercial finance; income generating opportunities; endowments; and voluntary sector involvement. The latter covers voluntary labour, community stewardship of parks and voluntary donations. The degree to which funding from each model could supplement or replace traditional local authority funding varies considerably (CABE Space, 2006).

The role and engagement of the voluntary sector in parks has been increasing. In recent years, there has seen a considerable growth in the number and size of 'Friends' groups. The five years to 2016 saw an estimated 60% rise in 'Friends' groups, such that there are now over 6,000 in the UK, constituting an increasingly powerful grassroots movement overseen by the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces.[16] Indeed, volunteers and community groups have played an important role in mitigating the impact of budget reductions on local parks. The Parks Alliance noted that 'a side effect of this has been to disguise the depth of the crisis facing parks and open spaces' (House of Commons, 2017: 30). Formalising some voluntary arrangements, partnership arrangements have been established in which parks 'Friends' groups to undertake responsibility for specific park (maintenance) functions. Aside from volunteering, a core activity of 'Friends' groups are to fundraise for improvements to their site. According to a State of UK Public Parks 2016 report the value of fundraising and volunteering by park 'Friends' and user groups each year is estimated to exceed £50 million and £70 million respectively; a rise of 20 million and 30 million since 2014 (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016: 10). While local authority budget cuts are a significant contributing factor to the uncertain predicament facing parks, the parks funding crisis has deeper roots. In most cases, public parks – whether acquired by local authorities, obtained through public subscriptions or donated by philanthropists – were not supported by any coherent economic, political and legal strategy to ensure adequate maintenance over the long-term (Layton-Jones, 2016: 2).

2.8 The role of philanthropy and charitable giving to parks

Philanthropy, public subscriptions and land donation as ways to fund public park development is not new. Analysis of park funding models over the past 200 years shows that early park creators relied on philanthropic donations, but often as a strategy of 'last resort' when 'parliamentary commitment to public green space failed to materialise' (Layton-Jones, 2016: 1). The philanthropic actions of past generations are celebrated. Indeed, Conway notes, 'It is certainly the case that many of the largest urban parks would not exist today were it not for the capital sums provided by local benefactors.' She goes on to

say 'Statues and fountains, as well as the names of the parks themselves, testify to the generosity of philanthropic donors' (cited in Layton-Jones, 2016). Gifts by local benefactors continue to support parks to this day. The most evident example of successful modern philanthropy is the case of New York Central Park. Philanthropic funding to green spaces is also made through grants from Foundations and the National Lottery (Miller *et al.*, 2019).

While public subscriptions exist for some gardens (Drayson, 2016), to date there has been little strategic thought in the UK to the idea and potential of charitable giving and public subscriptions as an additional source of funding for public parks. This is changing. There is an increasing trend towards developing more organised structures for philanthropic and charitable giving – often in partnership with local authorities – to harness voluntary donations to parks from the public and businesses via their corporate social responsibility objectives. While Drayson (2014: 61) argues that there is 'considerable capacity for private sector and civil society philanthropy to fund urban green space maintenance' in the future, Layton-Jones (2016: 15) warns that the past gives us reasons for caution, concluding that 'The viability of philanthropic and charitable donation as a reliable and sustainable source for parks funding is doubtful'.

There are five main drawbacks of a heavy reliance on private philanthropic giving and voluntary donations to fund public goods, such as parks. These are: free-riding; uncertainty and variability of voluntary donations; crowding-out of public funding; costs associated with fundraising; and inequities in what gets funded (Walls, 2014) (Figure 2-2). First, as public parks are non-excludable, under a philanthropic model, people can enjoy the benefits of the park without helping to cover its costs, known as 'free-riding', leading almost always to under-funding. There are some exceptions, including New York Central Park, where large private donations cover its costs irrespective of 'free-riders'. New York Central Park Conservancy successfully raises nearly $80 million for its operating budget,[17] but this occurs where there is a greater culture of private funding, a host of local wealthy donors and a longer tradition of tax breaks for donations (Lambert, 2014).

Second, voluntary donations are uncertain and variable, and therefore they are not amenable to long-term planning or operational costs which require sustainable and reliable funding streams. Philanthropy and voluntary charitable giving can provide an important but limited role in funding parks; it is not likely to provide sustainable, long-term financial solutions for parks in most communities (Walls, 2014; Layton-Jones, 2016; Gazley, 2015). A major problem facing public parks is the lack of stable revenue funding for ongoing

maintenance, which charitable giving is not well-placed to solve (Gazley, 2015). Donations tend to be highly variable and donors may be more likely to be attracted to giving to short-term, one-off capital projects rather than ongoing maintenance needs in parks (Gazley, 2015). It is easier to raise funding for new projects than for mundane, but crucial, ongoing maintenance of existing green spaces (Drayson, 2014). This reflects a long-standing neglect of 'place-keeping' in favour of 'place-making' (Dempsey and Burton, 2012). As such, voluntary donations should act as a complement to, and be underpinned by, sustainable tax-based funding for park systems, recognising that parks are cleaner and nicer when non-profit organisations and voluntary giving plays some role. By implication, the role of donations may be most suited to projects that can adapt to variable funding (e.g. for a community event) or for one-off capital improvements, but the latter can leave local authorities responsible for longer-term maintenance costs.

Third, voluntary donation initiatives do not usually intend to fully fund a park, but government funding may fall as private charitable donations rise, known as 'crowding out'. According to Walls (2013: 2014), as private donations rose to support New York Central Park and Prospect Park in the US, local governments scaled back their funding. There has been much research on the relationship between public funding and private charitable giving (both crowding out and crowding in), but the findings are highly dependent on research design (De Wit and Bekkers, 2016).

Fourth, there are significant costs associated with fundraising for donations, including management salaries and marketing campaigns. Walls (2014) provides data to show that the costs of charitable fundraising for parks varies between 5% and 33% in the US. Hence, charitable initiatives need to build in core management costs to be sustainable in the long-term. By implication, there is a need for efficient, low-cost and sustainable methods of fundraising, including civic crowdfunding (Walls, 2014). In addition, some of the behavioural studies above suggest that donations can be more efficiently harnessed by, for example, building in automatic increases for regular donations resulting in more efficient collection of donations at less cost.

Fifth, philanthropy can result in inequities in what gets funded across a parks system, as Gazley (2015) highlights, 'Since neighbourhoods have wealth and income disparities, so will parks and schools under a philanthropic regime'. Inequities can arise across a parks system if donors can select which parks they donate to. Parks are geographically-bound, and most people donate to their local park (Drayson, 2014). Hence, parks in more affluent areas and larger parks may have a 'philanthropic advantage' (Gazley, 2015) as they have a

stronger and/or wider pool of donors and funders to draw on (Drayson, 2014). Indeed, in the US, a number of commentators have expressed 'concerns that a small number of parks that already have significant resources are attracting the vast majority of the philanthropic money because they are in areas where the philanthropists themselves might benefit from them. Meanwhile, parks in more deprived areas of [New York] city are struggling to survive' (Davies, 2018). Significantly large donations to major parks can skew public funding, for example, via tax relief and gift aid (Drayson, 2014). By contrast, it might be argued that donations to major parks free up public funding for other parks (Drayson, 2014).

There are several ways to minimise this inequity in what gets funded by philanthropy. First, donation schemes can build in redistributive strategies. A split donation system could be utilised whereby a proportion of the revenue raised for specific parks or projects is diverted to a pool fund to be used for parks with little or no philanthropic support (Brecher and Wise, 2008; Williams, 2017). This allows the donor a degree of choice, whilst enabling others to benefit from their giving. Such redistributive policies can be controversial as it reduces donor choice, and some argue that they should not be applied in the UK (Drayson, 2014). However, where a donor is willing to concede control over where their donation is spent (or a proportion of it), models of participatory grant making can be used to give local people and communities a role in deciding where philanthropic money is spent (Davies, 2018). Second, fundraising by park user groups could be organised on a collective basis, at the level of a neighbourhood or region, rather than for individual parks. Parks 'Friends' groups tend to operate on an individual site basis, but there is scope for collective park advocacy groups or Parks Forums to conduct joint fundraising (Drayson, 2014). This type of model ensures that 'collective fundraising benefits many sites' (Drayson, 2014: 54). Donation initiatives, too, could be organised at larger scales than individual parks, potentially via place-based giving or for parks on a regionally level (Williams, 2017). Drayson (2014) points to the Wildlife Trust and the National Trust which work on a regional and national level in the UK to the North Brooklyn Parks Alliance in New York as examples of such an approach. Third, there could be limits placed on the purpose or use of donations for basic maintenance or essential facilities. The argument is that if donations fund basic services, it undermines the political pressure on government for public funding for a decent standard of parks across all parks in communities (Brecher and Wise, 2008). This case has been made in relation to services in schools. For example, in the US a parent-teacher association in an affluent area were prohibited from raising private donations to hire an additional teacher for a school to reduce class sizes below the

citywide average (Brecher and Wise, 2008). Hence, there is an argument for the role of donations to be limited to special enhancements or projects that do not constitute core delivery of services. However, deciding what constitutes a basic service and an enhancement can be difficult to judge. Moreover, basic maintenance, rather than 'extras', may be felt to be most needed.

There are also challenges in relation to motivating public support to donate to parks and public spaces. In the UK, public parks are frequently perceived as a public good, and there is a long-standing belief that parks are funded and maintained via national and local taxation. As such, when Heeley's People's Park Subscription Society sought to develop a subscription and donation scheme for a community-run park, they uncovered a range of obstacles and challenges in seeking public donations, notably how to counter the perception that parks are already paid for through taxation. They found that attracting donations was 'much more than an awareness-raising or marketing task' but was 'about challenging the prevailing culture' (Nesta, 2016: 35). The project found that there 'needs a collective shift in mass consciousness about an issue' (Nesta, 2016: 35) to encourage people to start donating significantly to parks. Moreover, there are further challenges in promoting charitable donations to parks at a time when public funding is decreasing. Davies (2018) explains that 'against the backdrop of ongoing challenges for local government finances and wider austerity policies, efforts to promote philanthropy and charitable giving in a local context run the risk of being seen as an attempt to replace public spending or prop up unsustainable austerity policies.' By contrast, others argue that the framing of this debate needs to change so that parks are viewed as everyone's responsibility. In this regard, Drayson (2014: 52) argues '…the public sector alone cannot, is not, and perhaps should not, financially support urban green spaces in isolation. Communities derive important benefits from access to high quality urban green spaces, from improved health to social cohesion. Green spaces also benefit the private sector by helping to create attractive places to visit, live and work in. As a result, both the private sector and civil society share responsibility to support the maintenance and improvement of the green spaces.'

Figure 2.1 Drawbacks of philanthropy for funding public goods (e.g. parks)

2.9 Charitable giving models for parks in the UK

The Leeds Parks Fund is part of a wealth of innovation and experimentation exploring different ways to harness voluntary donations to parks and green spaces in the UK, as illustrated in Figure 2-1. Many of these new charitable initiatives have distinctive features and different legal arrangements but they appear to be taking three dominant forms: Parks Foundations; civic crowdfunding; and Community Foundation-manged Funds.

Parks Foundations and other non-profits

Parks Foundations and other forms of non-profits (e.g. conservancies) have become an integral part of the parks landscape in many cities in the US and are beginning to be established in the UK. The perceived success of the New York Central Park Conservancy has led to numerous efforts to replicate its achievements elsewhere. Recent years have seen a growth in the establishment of new Parks Foundations in the UK which typically involve the Parks Foundation providing philanthropic support for the public authority, whom retain responsibility for and ownership of parkland. Nesta define a Parks Foundation as 'a non-profit organisation that supports a specific park or parks across a wider geographical area such as a city, with time, expertise and privately-raised funds... to support the parks in remaining free, open and accessible to the wider public'. Nesta further state that 'a parks foundation is not restricted to one form, but they are likely to have charitable status and a board incorporating involvement from the local community, parks managers and local businesses.'[18] The creation of new Parks Foundations as ways of organising donors suggest the goal is permanent fundraising infrastructure (Gazley, 2015).

In the US, Parks Foundations have been described as the 'charitable arm' of government agencies (Cohen, 2012). Brecher and Wise (2008) say that they act as 'supplements' because they involve the Parks Foundation providing philanthropic support for the public authority, whom usually retain responsibility for maintenance and ownership. For instance, in the US, the National Park Foundation is tasked with raising philanthropic support for parks owned and operated by the public National Parks Service. Parks Foundations take a variety of forms, and in the US have evolved to take on new functions and responsibilities (Crompton, 1999). Their core roles are to raise voluntary donations and to apply for grants to access funds to which public authorities are ineligible to apply (Crompton, 1999). However, some have called for donations to be given directly to local government, by-passing these intermediaries (Wall, 2014).

Figure 2.2 Recent initiatives to harness voluntary public donations

Bournemouth Parks Foundation

- An independent Foundation based on US models, established in 2014.
- Public can donate to specific projects or to the foundation.
- Trialling contactless 'Tap to Give' technology in parks.

Heeley's People's Park, Sheffield

- Largest community run park paid for by local people and businesses.
- Needs to raise 45k per year in subscriptions and one-off donations.
- Research found community willingness to donate.

MyParkScotland

- A crowdfunding platform specifically for parks in Scotland.
- People can donate to a project or propose a crowdfunding project.
- Aims to use Gift Aid to create an endowment fund.

Spacehive

- UKs dedicated civic crowdfunding platform for places set up in 2012.
- 52% success rate, delivering 616 projects and raising 12.4m.
- Connects project creators with councils, companies & grant-makers.

Leeds Parks Fund

- A citywide parks fund set up to receive voluntary public donations.
- Leeds Community Foundation redistributes funds via grants to projects.
- Partners: Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum and Leeds City Council.

Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation

- A Foundation across two cities with a 'Charitable Incorporated Organisation' legal structure.
- Public giving for community projects, volunteering & partnerships.

Redcar and Cleveland Parks Foundation

- A Foundation, initially managing eight parks, maximising CSR, volunteering & community empowerment.
- Adopts the 'community activity model'.

The Lake District Foundation

- Part of the Lake District National Park Partnership.
- Trialling donation technologies in visitor attractions and remote sites.
- Redistribute funds through grants to local projects.

Our Manchester

- Managed by Manchester City Council and powered by Spacehive.
- A platform for creating and backing crowdfunded projects.
- Local authority match funding.

The Royal Parks

- A charity managing London's Royal Parks, over 5,000 acres.
- Owned by the Crown but managed by the charity's board of trustees.
- Fundraising, education, and management with partner charities.

Research in the US has found a connection between a neighbourhood's affluence and its ability to sustain non-profits, including 'Friends' groups, conservancies and Parks Foundations (Noonan *et al.*, 2014), raising questions about whether they are increasing or closing the gap in park provision and maintenance, particularly in the US. While some studies have found that park non-profits are 'leading the equity movement', for instance, in Los Angeles (Rigolon, 2018: 1), a major study of parks in New York City by Brecher and Wise (2008) found that non-profits contribute positive outcomes but also, unintentionally, widen disparities in park maintenance. In terms of positive outcomes, non-profits are found to result in more resources for parks. In New York City, collective philanthropic effort represents about 9% in resources going into the municipal park system (Brecher and Wise, 2008). They also suggest that non-profits can bring innovations in the management of parks. However, non-profits may also contribute, to some degree, to inequities. Brecher and Wise (2008) found that the quality of parks across NYC was correlated with median household income. Their analysis suggests that over time this pattern of inequity is related to the growth of non-profits for parks. Philanthropic revenues per square foot ranged from more that five dollars at Madison Square Park to 13 cents at Prospect Park as non-profits tend to be funded by residents or businesses located in proximity to the park.

In the UK, several Parks Foundations have been established since the Royal Parks Foundation was set up in 2003 in response to reduced government funding (Drayson, 2014). The Royal Parks charity was created in 2017 and since taken on fundraising from the Royal Parks Foundation.[19] The Royal Parks are owned by the Crown, but they are managed by The Royal Parks' Board of Trustees. As an independent charity, it can claim Gift Aid on one-off and regular donations from the public and private sector; it can also apply for charitable grants. The running costs of the Royal Parks Foundation were covered by the funds raised from an annual half marathon. Donors are also given some choice to give to natural features and wildlife programmes and major donors can specify a project or park.[20] Fundraising programmes have involved schools and high-profile organisations have provided funding for major projects across the parks e.g. restoring water features (Drayson, 2014)

Bournemouth Parks Foundation was established in 2014 as a registered charity. Following some successes, further Parks Foundations have been established in cities across the UK (e.g. Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation, Redcar and Cleveland Foundation). Bournemouth Parks Foundation initially requested donations for a small number of specific projects decided by the Foundation's Board. While starting small, Bournemouth Parks Foundation has successfully

multiplied the amount of resources year-on-year through grants, donations and trading (Rowland cited in Barker, 2019). The Foundation have had more success in fundraising in wealthier neighbourhoods than more deprived neighbourhoods, but conversely have had more success in applying for grants for parks in more deprived areas and therefore in terms of equality of resourcing via charitable giving the funding tends to even out (Rowland cited in Barker, 2019). Bournemouth Parks Foundation is currently fundraising for a new aviary (target £200K) and the restoration of a Victorian cliff top shelter (target £20K). It is currently piloting tap to donate solar powered outdoor donation stations as part of the Rethinking Parks prototyping projects. It has a Memorandum of Understanding with Bournemouth Council which provides it with office and running costs.

The Lake District Foundation is the fundraising partner of Lake District National Park Partnership, a 25-member consortium of public bodies, businesses, NGOs, and community organisations. It was launched towards the end of 2017 and has expanded over the past year. Much of its public fundraising is for projects aimed at repairing paths damaged by the weather and high visitor numbers, though it is now looking to expand into wildlife projects. Its partners contribute towards the running cost of joint projects. Its strapline is 'visit, give, protect'. In December 2018, the partnership undertook visitor giving research with 766 visitors to the Lake District using an online survey sent to 103,000 visitors on a Cumbria Tourism database (Tate, 2018). The survey sought to test visitor appetite to donate and their preference for using technology to do so. Visitors were asked to what extent they would be interested in making donations to the following: the Lake District in general; to the cost of offsetting the environmental impact of visitors; to contribute towards the experience of free visiting; for specific areas/places e.g. Ullswater; for specific species e.g. red squirrels; and to particular projects e.g. Fix the Fells. Larger proportions of people where interested in donating to specific species and particular projects (Tate, 2018). This suggests that donors need to be provided with information about how their donation will be spent to attract giving. Moreover, survey respondents were asked how likely they would be to donate at a contactless card donation point in the Lake District. Some 31% said they were either 'likely' or 'very likely' to donate, but 40% were 'unlikely' or 'very unlikely' to donate in this way (Tate, 2018). It was most popular with younger people, family groups, and pre-family groups.

Two new Parks Foundations have recently been set up as part of the Rethinking Parks programme. Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation was set up in 2019 across two cities with a 'Charitable Incorporated Organisation' legal structure. It

includes public giving for community projects, volunteering, social enterprise and wider partnerships. The fundraising plan will 'begin with a small number of ideas that have the backing of the local community and can capture the imagination of the wider public'.[21] Bristol Parks Forum – an umbrella organisation for community groups with an interest in green spaces – are a key partner in the initiative.[22] Other partners include Bristol City Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, the Natural History Consortium. The Foundation seeks to raise money and support volunteering in parks but does not seek to remove the ownership and maintenance of the parks from the local authorities (Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation, 2018).

Redcar and Cleveland People Power Park Foundation will be initially managing the maintenance of eight parks, but the Council will remain the owner of the parks.[23] The Parks Foundation will also be responsible for future developments and all commercial activity, with a focus on maximising corporate social responsibility, volunteering and community empowerment.[24] The Parks Foundation has a different focus in that it 'aims to create community-led parks, parks that are run by local people and businesses to the benefit of the local community'.[25] The Parks Foundation, which will begin operating in 2020, is built on a partnership with Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council, Groundwork North East and Cumbria, the Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency, and the local voluntary and community sector. It draws inspiration from previous Rethinking Parks projects, including the Bristol Parks Foundation and the model used in Darlington to embed corporate social responsibility.

Civic crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is a way of financing projects through small contributions from many sources (the 'crowd'), rather than large contributions from just a few (Baeck *et al.*, 2012). The crowd concept highlights the importance of social media usage for marketing purposes and to 'facilitate collaboration through virtual communities of practice' (Stiver *et al.*, 2015: 249). A key part of crowdfunding is social media 'due to its ability to foster involvement and collaboration' (Stiver *et al.*, 2015: 261). Social media engagement is a good indicator of success, and correlates positively with funding (Stiver *et al.*, 2015). Crowdfunding as seen extraordinary growth in the last few years in terms of total revenue, global spread, number of platforms, and diversity of applications (Massolution, 2015).

There are two broad models of crowdfunding: the investment model and the donation model (Table 2-1). The investment model of crowdfunding is the

largest UK alternative finance sector by volume (Davies and Cartwright, 2019). It is being promoted as a new form of civic engagement and means of co-production of local public goods, offering a 'blended return' for individuals for their contributions, both in terms of personal wealth creation and social/environmental outcomes, as compared to philanthropy and charitable giving (Davies and Cartwright, 2019). The investment model of crowdfunding takes three forms: equity; loan-based and royalty-based (Table 2-1). By contrast, the donation model of crowdfunding is understood as a form of charitable fundraising and is most frequently associated with donations for social or civic projects (Bone and Baeck, 2016). The donation model can be 'reward-based' – offering perks depending on the size of the donation and the nature of the project – but it is usually purely philanthropic wherein people donate without any objective reward (Charbit, and Desmoulins, 2017). These models of crowdfunding embed 'a broad set of motivations that individuals have for their money, ranging from the philanthropic to the self-interest and from the constructive to the speculative' (Davies and Cartwright, 2019: 15).

Table 2.1 Models of crowdfunding

Crowd-funding model	**Investment model**			**Donation model**	
	Equity	Loan or debt-based	Royalty-based	Reward-based	Donation without objective reward
Funder payoffs	Shares in crowd-funded businesses	Peer-to-peer lending system for specific projects, with interest	Royalties once project generates capital	Perks offered depending on the level donated and nature of the project	No explicit payoff

Adapted from: Charbit, C. and Desmoulins, G. 2017. Civic Crowdfunding: A collective option for local public goods? OECD Regional Development Working Papers 2017/02.

The market trend suggests a move away from the donation model of crowdfunding to the investment model of crowdfunding (Davies and Cartwright, 2019; Zhang *et al.*, 2018). The community and social enterprise sector received the highest funding under the donation model, pointing to the appeal of giving to socially beneficial projects (Davies and Cartwright, 2019). Indeed, there is a growing sector of donation-based civic crowdfunding in the UK facilitated by platforms such as Crowdfund and Spacehive. Civic

crowdfunding is a type of crowdfunding through which citizens, often in collaboration with local government, fund projects providing a community service (Stiver *et al.*, 2015). Civic crowdfunding uses the donation model to stimulate collective public giving and activism, online and offline, to support socially beneficial projects within their community (Davies and Cartwright, 2019). It works on the basis that 'community propels project activity' (Stiver *et al.*, 2015: 262). Both online and offline communities are vital; 'an offline community of backers local to the project often complements online community in civic crowdfunding' (Stiver *et al.*, 2015: 262). Some local authorities support projects initiated by the community with matched funding (see, for example, Our Manchester hosted by Spacehive).

While a strength of crowdfunding is the reduced costs associated with generating contributions and the efficiency of using the internet to solicit and collect donations (Walls, 2014), a criticism is its potential exacerbate inequities, as 'backers' tend to fund projects that directly benefit them (Walls, 2014). As crowdfunding enables active choices, there are concerns that civic crowdfunding risks the creation of a 'social wedge' – whereby projects are disproportionately favoured in 'wealthy, wired neighbourhoods' given their abilities to mobilise both donations and time (Stiver *et al.*, 2015: 263), potentially fostering a two-tier system of parks in a city (Mazelis, 1999). It is estimated that 10% of councils across the UK are now using civic crowdfunding to shape their civic spaces.[26] Crowdfunding is still in its infancy and as such there is limited data on its long-term impact i.e. its social outcomes, beneficiaries, and viability of projects funded. There is also limited data on the motivations of crowdfunders, aside from the more obvious fact that donation models rely on a belief in and support for the cause. However, social projects are more likely to succeed than others (Allison *et al.*, 2015). Some crowdfunding platforms in the US (e.g. Citizinvestor) expressly seek funding for approved local government projects in cities; and hence only government agencies list projects on these sites (Walls, 2014). Others, such as Spacehive and MyParksScotland, allow community groups to identify projects which are approved before going online.

In the UK, MyParkScotland is a crowdfunding platform that has been working since 2002 to improve community greenspaces in Scotland.[27] Thus far some 57 projects have used the crowdfunding platform. Over 1,400 donations have raised £36k for projects and parks, with the total value of projects supported at £857k. Some 60% of donations are gift-aided, raising additional funds towards an endowment (MyParkScotland, 2019). Moreover, working with the City of

Edinburgh Council, MyParkScotland has developed a new approach for donations in lieu of fees and licenses from commercial users of parks.

While MyParkScotland is dedicated to parks, Spacehive is dedicated to places. Spacehive gives local community groups, with specific visions for local parks and green spaces, access to people and groups with the ability to fund such projects, such as local businesses, local people, and funding bodies.[28] The Growing a Greener Britain charity emphasise the running of social media campaigns over the filling in of application forms for grants, with the intention of encouraging a younger generation to be involved. Since it was set up in 2012, it has a 52% success rate, delivering 616 projects and raising 12.4m.

Community Foundations

In the US, there has been a strong tradition of place-based giving and philanthropy. [29] Place-based philanthropy is on the rise in the UK(Walker, 2018) and Community Foundations are a central part of this landscape. The UK government's Civil Society Strategy made 'place' one of its five key themes. There are 46 Community Foundations across the UK dedicated to creating positive change in the communities that need it most by connecting national and local donors to community groups and charities in and around the cities in which they operate.[30] When combined, Community Foundations are the 4th largest grant maker in the UK. Over £1 billion in grants has been given out nationally since Community Foundations began in UK. They often work with high-net worth individuals inspiring them to give locally through bespoke endowed funds for a portfolio of causes that suit a donor, such as the environment or young people (Drayson, 2014). Drayson (2014: 55) suggests therefore that Community Foundations could work with a donor 'to provide funds for several different 'Friends' groups and/or green space charities within a particular neighbourhood'. Community Foundations also have named Funds that they host and manage, which offers the advantage of not having to set up a registered charity as with other Parks Foundations. The Leeds Parks Fund is an example of this approach.[31] Whilst Leeds City Council retains overall responsibility to own and maintain Leeds parks, the partnership with Leeds Community Foundation facilitates 'park users to give to the green spaces that they use and enjoy will facilitate improvements that might not otherwise occur, and contribute to raising the quality of green space provision across the city'. [32]

2.10 Conclusions

In the wider context of reductions in local government budgets, attempts to develop a culture of giving to parks inevitably raise questions over whether the public and businesses are simply to make up the shortfalls in public spending as previously 'untapped' resources (Davies, 2018). Charitable giving initiatives might be most successful if they view the public and businesses as active co-producers of park futures with capabilities, knowledge and resources to be better harnessed through creative modes of engagement and park governance. The literature points to a need to consider how voluntary donations will be used to meet the needs of the community and how to minimise inequities in what gets funded. It also suggests we should temper expectations for what philanthropy and charitable giving can achieve as it is an uncertain and variable source of funding. While there are notable exceptions (e.g. New York Central Park), public donations are often an important but limited aspect of park funding. Hence, there is a need to support parks with sustainable, tax-based revenues to fund core operating costs and for long-term planning. There are five drawbacks of relying upon philanthropy, which include: free-riding; uncertainty of donations; crowding out of public funding; costs of fundraising; and geographic inequities (Walls, 2014).

Over the past decade, there has been a growth in the number and range of charitable initiatives to support parks and green spaces, often developed in partnership with local authorities as land-owners. These initiatives are taking three main forms: Parks Foundations, civic crowdfunding and Community Foundation-manged funds. There is quite a lot of variability across the UK as to the approach to charitable giving that is being adopted and the mechanisms available for people to donate. These new initiatives are promoting different methods of giving to parks, via online platforms, contactless technology, by text, physical installations in parks, and so forth. Some are promoting giving to specific projects or parks, or to a general, all-purpose 'parks fund' distributed to communities in most need via grants. The scale of initiatives also differs – some initiatives are being set up in two cities, some are citywide, some are dedicated to several parks, and there are some examples of individual community run and paid for parks, like Heeley People's Park. Initiatives are also promoting different themes, like sport or health, and emphasising different aspects of giving like corporate social responsibility, voluntary donations and volunteering. These initiatives will come into fruition and provide important insights into giving behaviour and public support over the next few years.

Chapter 3: Residents' Survey

3.1 Key points

- Most residents use their closest park most often (66%) and feel that spending time at their park is very important or essential (69%). Some 45% are high-frequency visitors, using their main park once a week or more.
- Most residents rate the condition of their main park as good or excellent (78%); 87% use a park that meets nationally-recognised quality standards.
- Most residents have given money to charity (93%), but many also give goods (80%) and sponsor people (61%). More residents say they have resources to give money (67%) than time to volunteer for charity (48%).
- Despite innovation in donation methods (e.g. text), most residents prefer to give online (43%), to a collection tin (43%) and by direct debit (36%).
- Most residents prefer to give to local causes (78%) and national causes (68%) than to international causes (40%). The most popular causes were medical research, hospitals and hospices, children and young people, and homeless people.
- Most residents support a variety of ways to supplement public funding for parks, including charitable donations (76%). However, funding from grant-making bodies (94%), central government (89%) and businesses (89%) received the greatest support. Charging for park facilities is opposed (62%).
- While more residents would consider donating to a charitable fund for parks (28%) than would not (21%), most were uncertain (52%). Motivations are strongest to give to parks in the greatest need of improvement, community parks and residents' main park of use.
- Residents who said they would donate to parks are more likely to earn 40,000+, aged under 34 years, and volunteer in parks. By contrast, gender, ethnicity, disability, frequency/duration of visits, employment status and having children were not significant factors affecting willingness to donate.
- Habitats for wildlife and keeping parks clean are the top aspects of parks that residents would prefer to give to.
- More residents support paying higher council taxes for parks (45%) than oppose it (32%), and 23% were unsure.
- Most residents would not consider leaving a legacy for parks (51%).

3.2 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the main findings from an online survey of 1,434 residents conducted to explore their views towards charitable donations to parks and green spaces. The findings are representative of the Leeds population in terms of age and gender.

The following themes were covered in the survey: use of parks and park-user perceptions; charitable giving in the past year; views on funding parks; and views on charitable donations to parks. These themes provide the basis for the structure of this chapter.

The first section describes the survey methodology employed. The second section explores park use and perceptions of parks. The third section outlines self-reported charitable giving behaviour in the past year, including preferences towards donation methods and charitable causes. The fourth section outlines residents' support for a variety of ways to supplement the funding of parks and green spaces. The fifth section considers self-reported willingness to donate to an independent charitable fund for parks, employing statistical modelling to explore the effect of a range of relevant characteristics of residents. National studies and research literature are used to set some of the findings in the wider context.

3.3 Survey methodology

A survey was designed and made available online for residents to complete between the 29 October and the 31 December 2018. The survey was advertised widely on social media, including Twitter and Facebook. The survey also received local media coverage and was circulated in various newsletters. It was sent to all (approximately 3,000) online members of the Leeds Citizens' Panel. [33] The Panel is comprised of a balance of residents of different ages (except under 18s), backgrounds, and from different parts of Leeds. The survey was also sent to all members of the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum.

We received 1,434 responses from residents, 50% of them reported to be members of the Leeds Citizen Panel and 13% were members of park 'Friends' groups. Of the whole sample size, 55% were female and 43% were male, with 2% not reporting their gender. The majority (60%) were aged 45 or over. A full breakdown of the sample is available in Appendix B.

To make our analyses more representative we adjusted for some of these imbalances using probability weights, which were calculated based on the Leeds age and gender distribution as recorded in the 2011 Census (see

Appendix B). These weights have been applied to all the descriptive statistics reported in this chapter. Individual values above 1% are rounded and hence bar charts may not total 100%.

The use of weights helps to adjust for problems of selection bias that could stem from a non-random sampling method. To assess the extent of sampling error (i.e. the uncertainty resulting from the use of a sample of the population) we provide 95% confidence intervals in the responses to some of the key questions reported (Appendix B). The widest 95% confidence interval ranges 5.7 percentage points. Hence, it would be safe to assume margins of error of ±2.9% for the estimates reported herein.

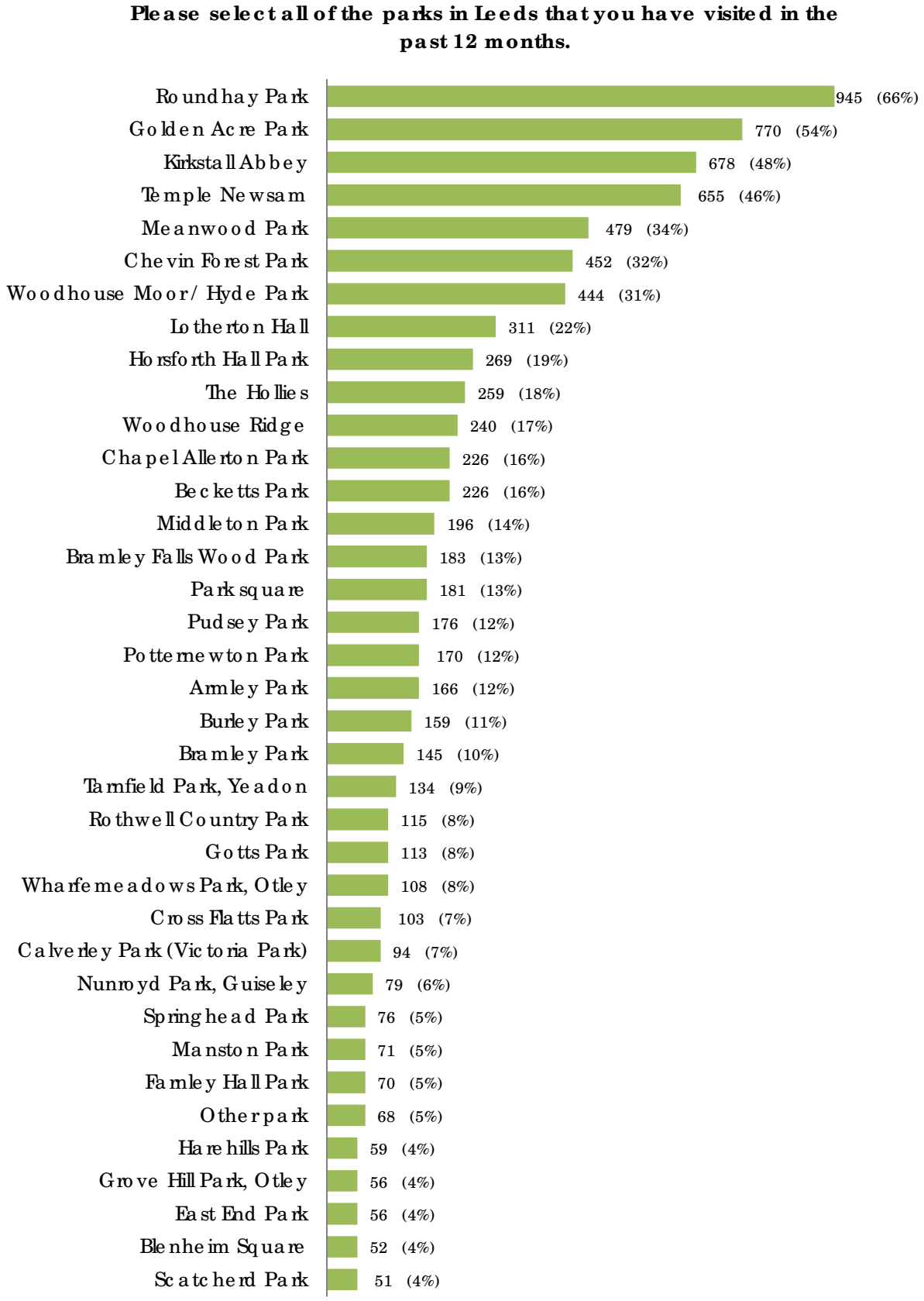
The percentages reflect self-reported willingness to donate and giving in the past year as recalled by individuals, and so is subject to participant reliability, as well as other considerations that apply to all surveys based on a sample of a population.

3.4 Park use and park-users' perceptions

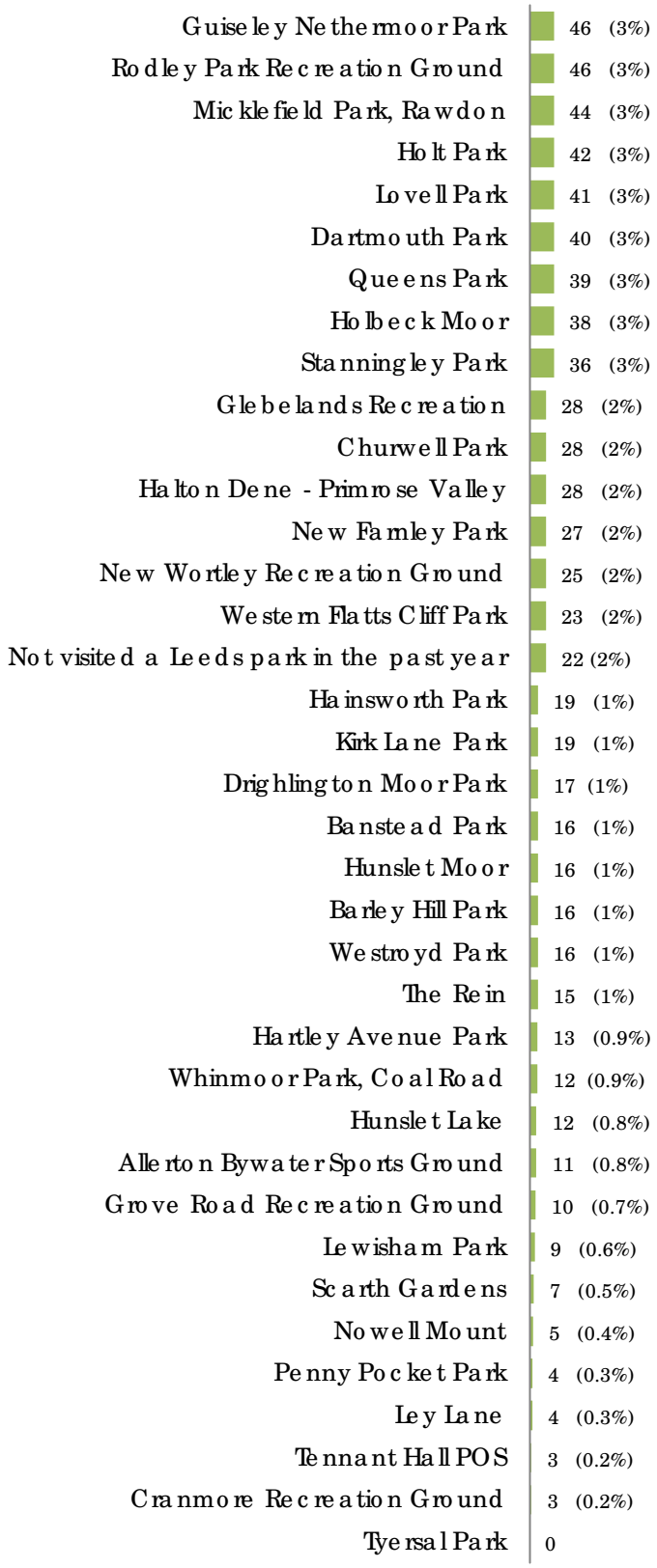
Most visited parks

The survey findings mainly represent the views of residents who are park-users; only 2% of respondents had not visited any park in Leeds in the past year.[34] The survey asked residents to identify all parks that they had visited in the past year (Figure 3-1; Figure 3-2); this shows that major parks, which offer a range of facilities and seek to attract residents from a wide catchment area, are the most widely visited. Some 66% of residents had visited Roundhay Park - the city's largest major park - at least once in the past year. This makes it the most visited park, followed by Golden Acre Park (54%), Kirkstall Abbey (48%) and Temple Newsam (46%). Other major parks, including Chevin Forest (32%) and Lotherton Hall (22%) were visited to a similar extent as some of the more popular community parks, namely Meanwood Park (34%) and Woodhouse Moor Park (31%). Many community parks (39) were visited by 1% to 10% of residents, whereas 12 community parks were each visited by less than 1% of residents. No respondent mentioned having visited Tyersal Park in the last 12 months.[35]

Figure 3.1 Most visited parks in Leeds in the past 12 months



Cont. Please select all of the parks in Leeds that you have visited in the past 12 months.



Unweighted count=1443; Weighted count= 1426

Figure 3.2 Map of most visited parks in Leeds in the past 12 months

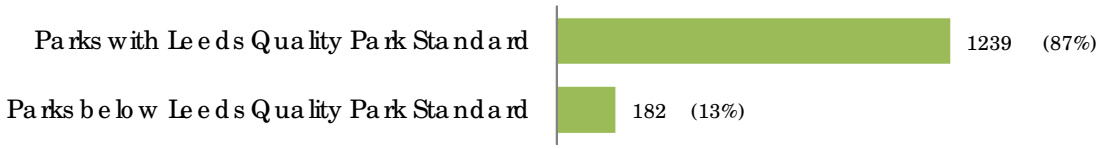
Main park of use

The survey asked residents to identify which park they visited most often; herein referred to as residents' main park. Most residents (66%) selected the park closest to where they live as their main park. However, nearly a third (31%) did not usually use their closest park; instead, they travel beyond their immediate locality to access another park. These findings are similar to a larger-scale study of park use in Leeds in 2016 (Barker *et al.*, 2018)

Just over half of residents (53%) selected a community park, rather than a major park (47%), as their main park. A quarter of residents (25%) selected Roundhay Park as their main park. Temple Newsam was selected by 8%, followed by 6% for Woodhouse Moor Park. Some 21 parks were selected between 1% and 5% of residents as their main park. A further 38 parks were selected by less than 1% of residents as their main park. This suggests that park use is highly dispersed, and some parks in the city are less-well used.

All the city's seven major parks hold Green Flag status and, in 2018, 62% of 63 community parks met an equivalent Leeds Quality Park standard. Most residents selected a park that meets Leeds Quality Park standards (87%), rather than a park below these standards (13%), as their main park (Figure 3-3).

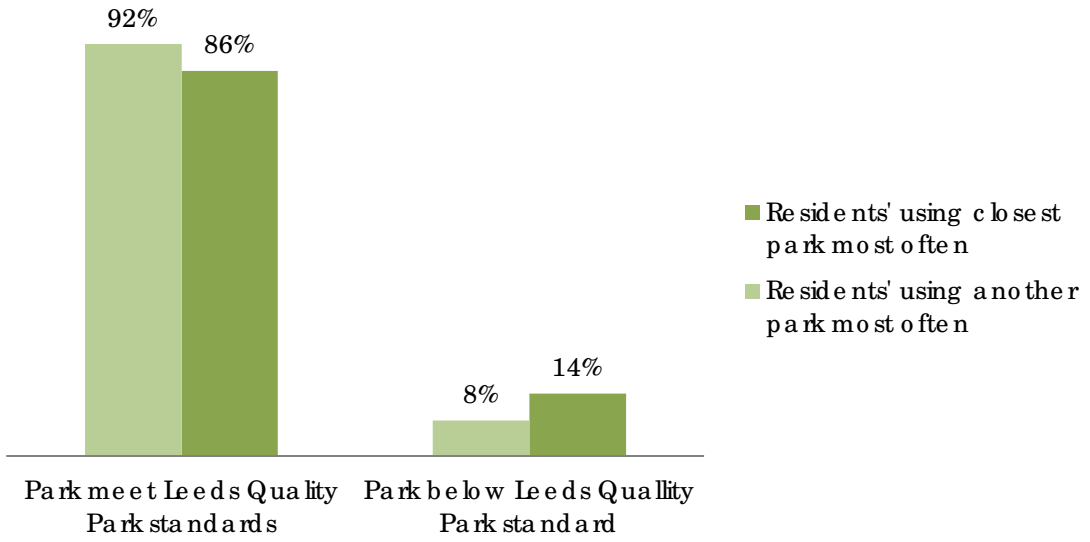
Figure 3.3 Visits to parks that meet Leeds Quality Park standard



Unweighted Count=1430, Weighted count = 1422

Residents who selected their closest park as their main park were slightly less likely to use a park that meets the Leeds Quality Park standard than residents who selected another park (Figure 3-4).

Figure 3.4 Leeds Quality Park standard of main park



Unweighted count =1430, Weighted count = 1422

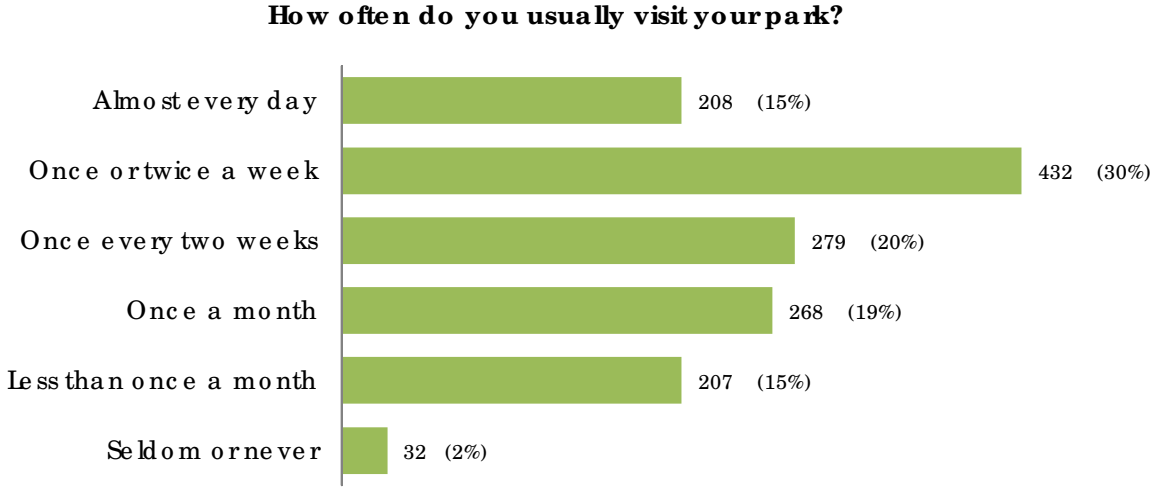
87% OF RESIDENTS **CHOSE A LEEDS QUALITY PARK** AS THEIR MAIN PARK TO USE. ONLY 13% USUALLY VISIT A PARK BELOW THESE STANDARDS.

Frequency of use

Nearly half of residents (45%) constituted high-frequency park-users; visiting their main park once a week or more (Figure 3-5). A similar percentage

(39%) were medium-frequency park-users, visiting their main park at least once a month but no more than once every two weeks. Some 17% were low-frequency park-users, visiting their main park less than once a month. Only 2% of residents seldom or never visited any park.

Figure 3.5 Frequency of park use

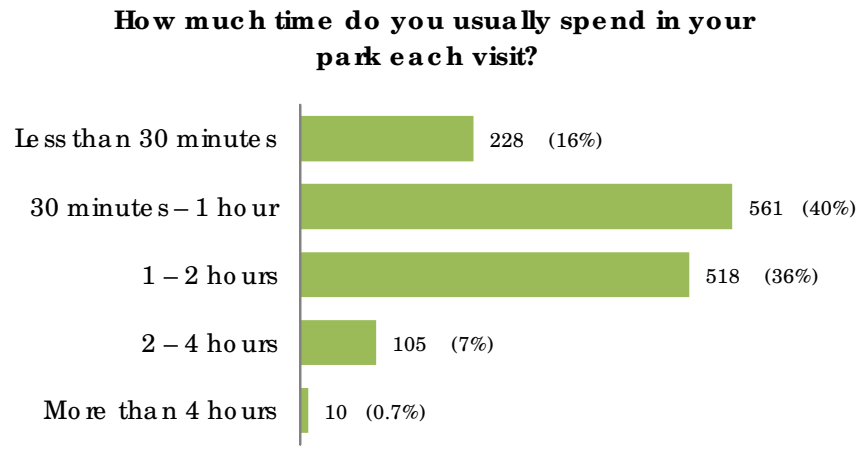


Unweighted count=1432; Weighted count=1425

Duration of park use

Park-users normally spent between 30 minutes and 2 hours in their main park (Figure 3-6). A smaller percentage visited for less than 30 minutes (16%) or over 2 hours (8%).

Figure 3.6 Duration of park use

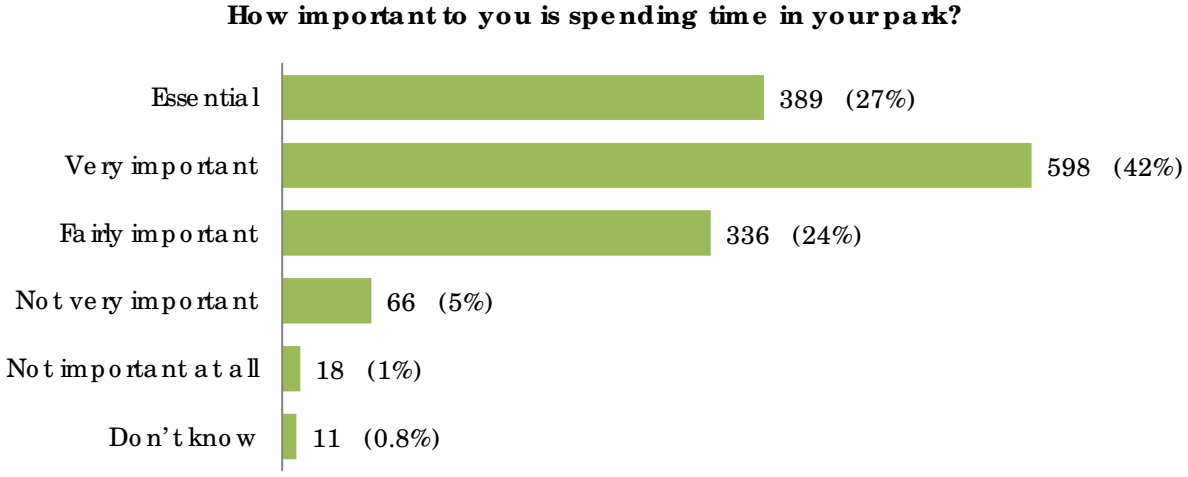


Unweighted count=1428; Weighted count=1422

Importance of park use

Spending time in a park is very important or essential (69%) for most residents (Figure 3-7). A further 24% felt that it was fairly important. Only 1% felt that spending time in a park was not important at all.

Figure 3.7 Perceived importance of park use

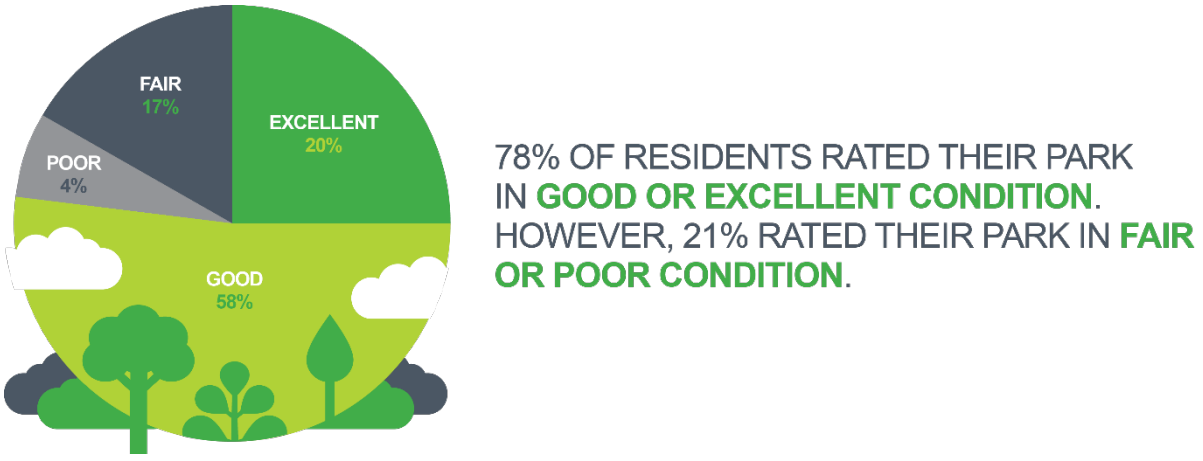


Unweighted count=1427; Weighted count=1419

Perceived condition of main park

Most residents rated the condition of their main park as good (58%) or excellent (20%) (Figure 3-8). Some rated their park in fair condition (17%). Only 4% rated it as poor.

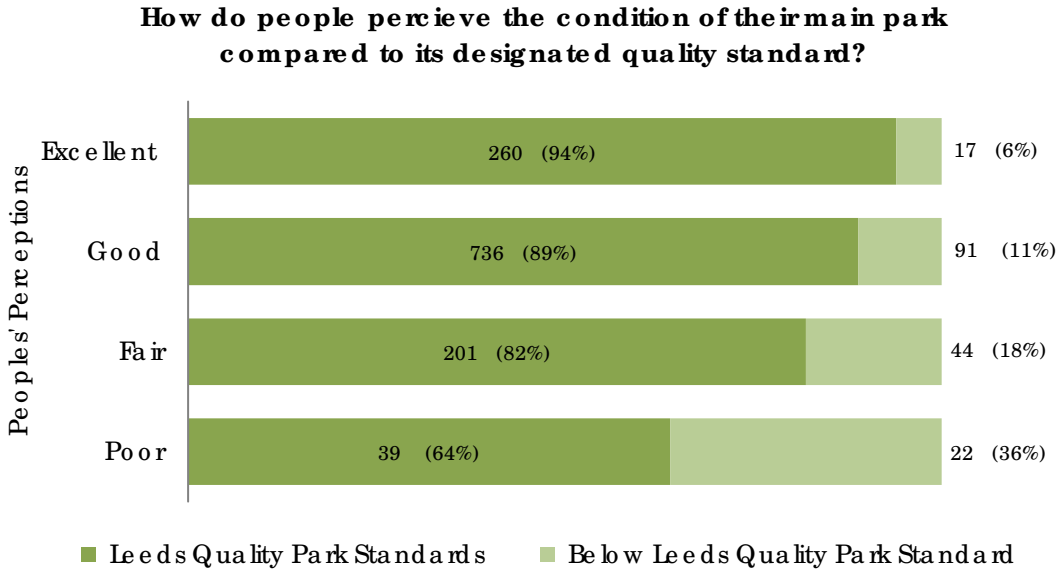
Figure 3.8 Perceived condition of main park



Perceived condition of main park compared to designated quality standard[36]

Park-users' perceptions of park condition broadly aligned with its designated Leeds Quality Park standard, particularly for those who rated their park in good or excellent condition (Figure 3-9). However, the perception gap widened for residents who rated their park in fair or poor condition. That is, 64% of residents who said their park was in poor condition had been judged as meeting the Leeds Quality Park standard.

Figure 3.9 Perceived condition of main park compared to Leeds Quality Park standard



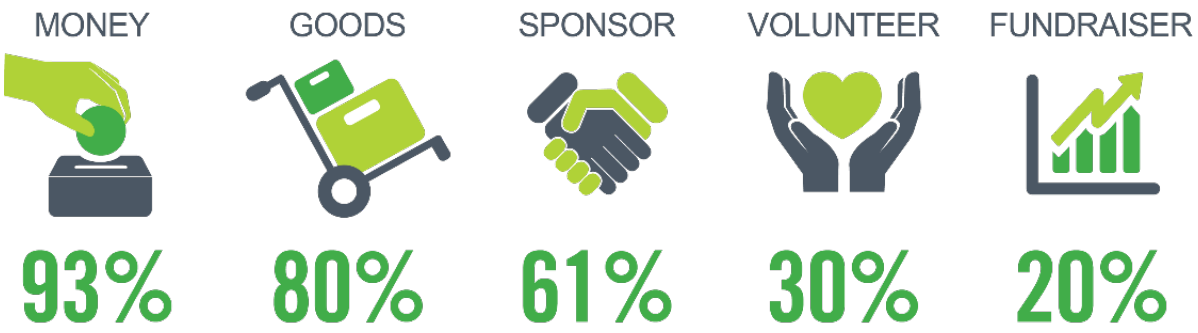
Unweighted count=1428; Weighted count=1421. The category of don't know has not been used.

3.5 Resident charitable giving in the past year

Ways residents gave to charity

Most residents (93%) had given money to a charity in the past year (Figure 3-10). Most residents had also given to charity in other ways: 80% had given goods and 61% had sponsored someone for charity. In addition, nearly a third of residents (30%) had volunteered and a fifth (20%) had fundraised for charity. Only 5% said they had not given to charity in other ways than money.[37]

Figure 3.10 Ways residents gave to charity in the past 12 months

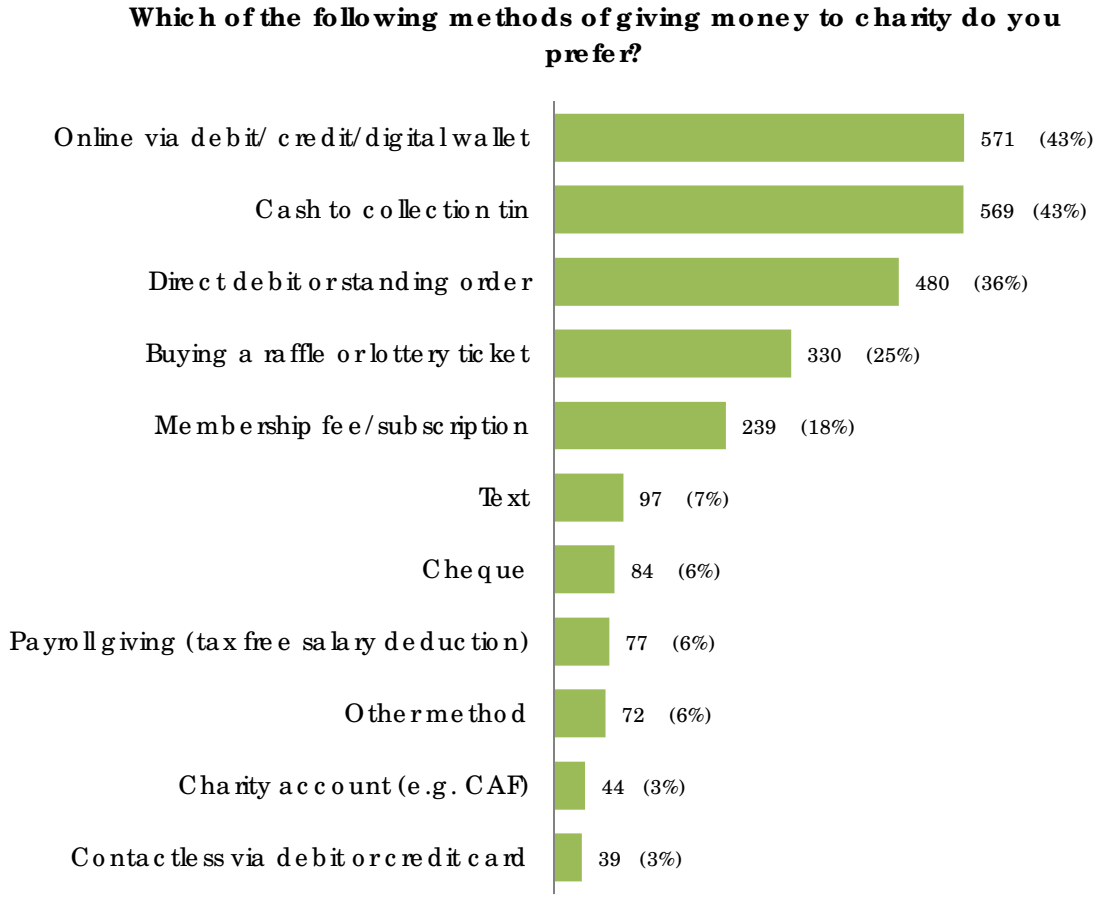


Preferred methods for donating money

Residents were asked what method of giving money to charity they preferred (Figure 3-11). Giving online (43%), giving cash to a collection box (43%) and giving by direct debt/standing order (36%) were the most preferred methods. Buying a raffle or lottery ticket was popular with nearly a quarter of residents (25%), while paying a membership or subscription was preferred by 18% of residents.

By contrast, contactless giving (3%), giving using a charity account (e.g. CAF) (3%), payroll giving (6%) and giving by cheque (6%) were the least preferred methods for donating money to charity. This may reflect that these methods are relatively new or emerging ways of giving and cheques have largely been replaced by other popular methods for consumer payments.

Figure 3.11 Preferred methods of giving money to charity



Unweighted count=1337; Weighted count=1320

Consistent with national research (CAF, 2018c), text donations (7%) were also one of the least preferred methods of donating money to charity (Figure 3-11). The amount donated and regularity of giving is likely to differ depending on the method. Text donations are more popular when combined with high-profile fundraising campaigns (CAF, 2018c) and may be more likely to generate a higher income than other methods (e.g. cash to collection tins). Hence, while giving cash to a collection tin is a preferred method, residents are likely to donate smaller sums of money in this way and there must be collection tins available at multiple points for giving to occur. Those opting for direct debits or standing order are, by implication, choosing to give regularly.

What causes residents gave to

Supporting the literature on charitable giving, there was a stronger preference to give to local causes (78%) and national causes (68%) than to give to international causes (40%).

Medical research (46%), hospitals and hospices (40%), children and young people (37%), homeless people, housing and shelters (33%) were the most popular causes to donate money to in the past year (Figure 3-12).[38] Overseas and disaster relief (30%), and conservation, environment and heritage (30%), were jointly popular. By contrast, the arts (8%), education (8%), and sports and recreation (8%), were the least popular charitable causes to give money.

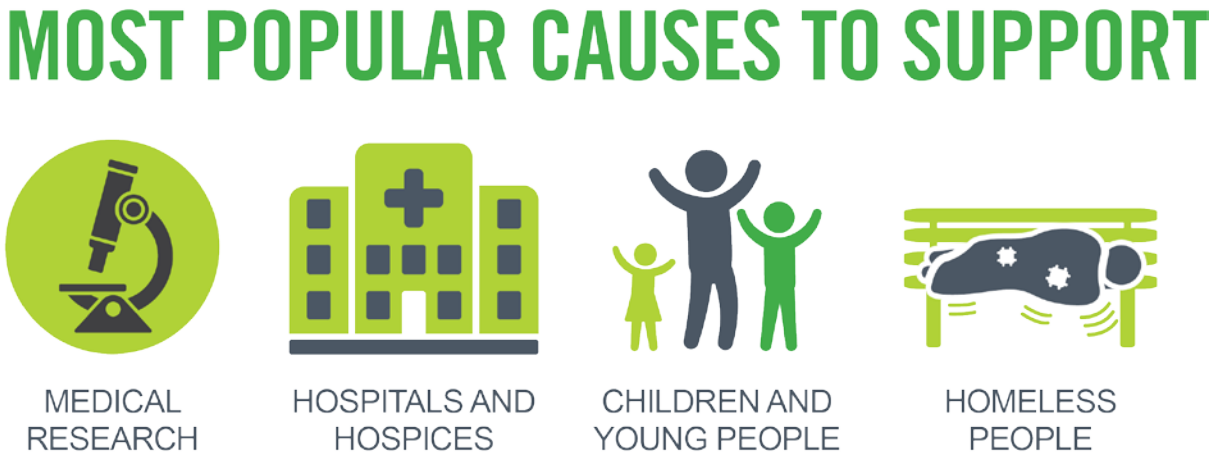
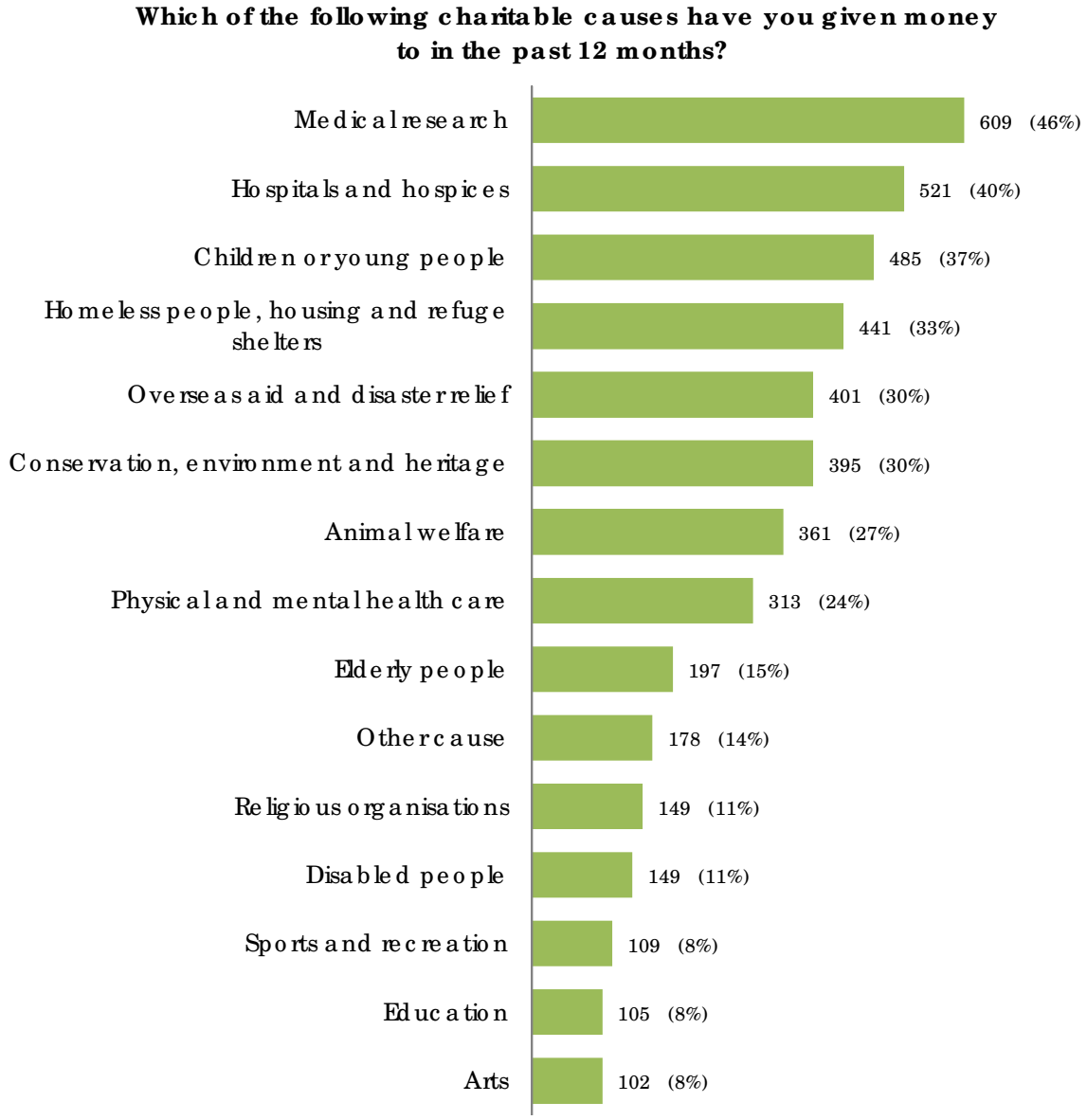


Figure 3.12 Most popular causes to donate money to in the past 12 months

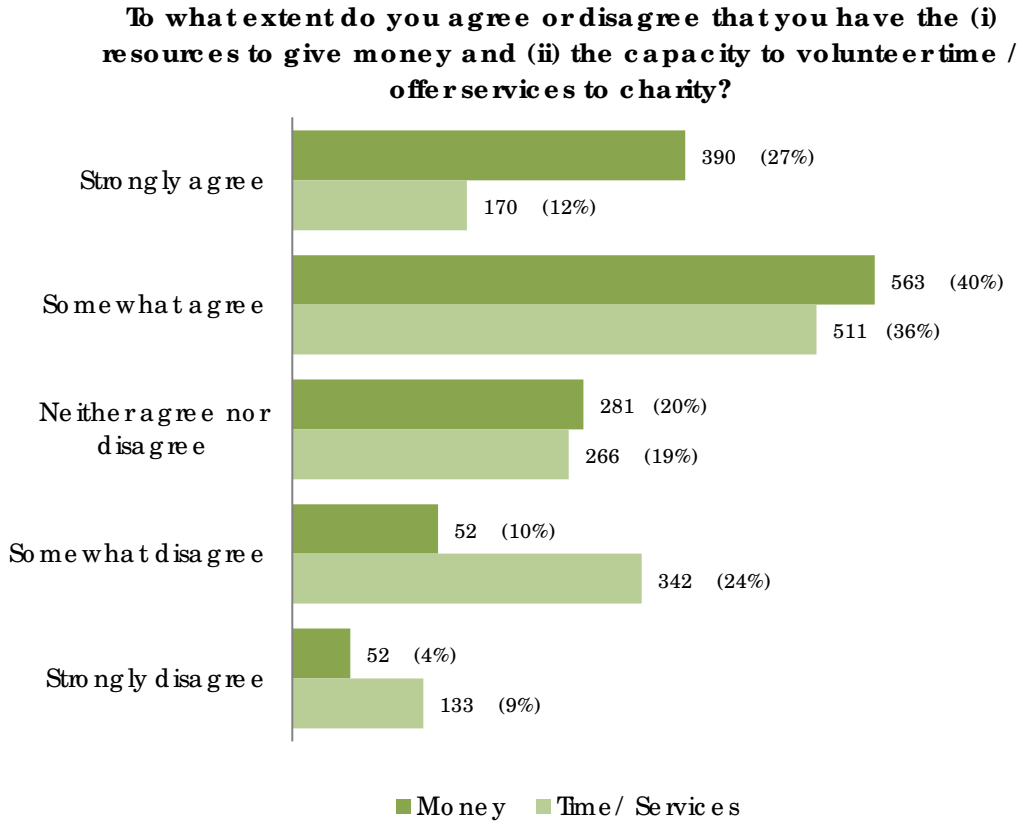


Unweighted count=1337; Weighted count=1320

Resources to give money and time to charity

More residents agreed that they have the resources to give money to charity (67%) than agreed that they have the capacity to volunteer time or offer services to charity (48%) (Figure 3-13).

Figure 3.13 Resources to give money and time to charity



Unweighted count=1429; Weighted count=1422

3.6 Ways to supplement the funding of parks

Support and opposition for different funding sources

The survey sought to contextualise the extent of public support for charitable donations within a variety of external means to supplement public funding of parks and green spaces at a time of reduced local government funding. The survey asked residents to identify to what extent they support or oppose generating income from the following sources: grants (i.e. National Lottery), business sponsorship, central government, charitable donations/local fundraising, property developer planning contributions, paid attractions and activities in parks, food and drink concessions, and charges for using park facilities (Table 3-1).[39] All options listed, except charges for using park facilities, were supported by most residents as a way to supplement public funding. Fees and charges for using park facilities received little support (21%) and was opposed by most residents (62%).

Table 3.1 Ways to supplement the funding of parks

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Net Support
 GRANTS FROM NATIONAL LOTTERY	76%	18%	5%	0.90%	0.50%	**94%**
 BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP	58%	31%	6%	3%	2%	**89%**
 FUNDING FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT	68%	21%	8%	2%	0.80%	**89%**
 CHARITABLE DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING	36%	40%	16%	5%	2%	**76%**
 PROPERTY DEVELOPER PLANNING CONTRIBUTIONS	49%	21%	14%	9%	7%	**70%**
 PAID ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES IN PARKS	24%	42%	17%	12%	5%	**66%**
 FOOD AND DRINK CONCESSIONS	22%	44%	21%	9%	3%	**66%**
 CHARGES FOR USING PARK FACILITIES	5%	16%	16%	30%	32%	**21%**

Overall, in terms of the place of charitable donations within the variety of options provided, voluntary giving is supported above some other sources, including property developer planning contributions (70%), paid attractions and activities (66%) and food and drink concessions (66%). This is reinforced when you examine the response categories for 'strongly support'. However, the greatest support from residents for additional funding is from applications to grant-making bodies e.g. National Lottery (94%), central government (89%) and businesses via sponsorship (89%).

Paying more in council tax for parks

The preference noted above for greater funding from central government for parks provides support to calls from within the parks sector to bring in a statutory duty to monitor and manage parks and green spaces to Green Flag standard, and to ensure adequate public resources and protection for all green spaces.[40]

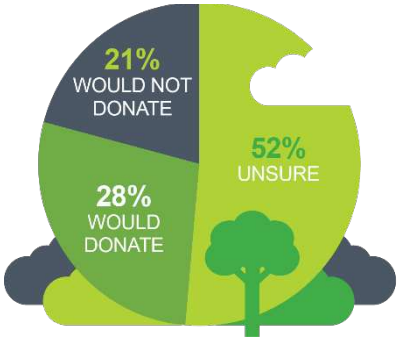
MORE RESIDENTS SUPPORT PAYING **HIGHER COUNCIL TAX FOR PARKS** (45%) THAN OPPOSE IT (32%), AND 23% WERE UNSURE.

Aside from central government, funding could also be raised by local government from residents paying higher council tax ringfenced for parks. The survey shows that this idea received more support (45%) than opposition (32%) by residents. However, nearly a quarter of residents (23%) were unsure.

3.7 Support for charitable donations to parks

Having established that residents support the principle of charitable donations to supplement core public funding of parks, the survey asked if residents would themselves consider giving money to an independent charitable fund for parks and green spaces in Leeds. This section first considers residents' self-reported willingness to donate to a parks charitable fund, and reasons given for why they may or may not donate. Second, it considers what characteristics are associated significantly with a willingness to donate. Third, it considers what types and aspects of parks residents prefer to give to. Fourth, it considers residents' willingness to give in other ways, including volunteering and legacy giving. Lastly, it explores current levels of awareness of the Leeds Parks Fund.

Figure 3.14 Willingness to donate to parks



Willingness to donate to parks

More residents would consider donating money to an independent charitable fund for parks (28%) than would not (21%) (Figure 3-14). However, the majority (52%) said that they may or were unsure about giving.

The large share for those who answered 'may/be unsure' suggests that many residents are equivocal or ambivalent about donating, possibly because of uncertainties as to the implications of giving – like filling a funding shortfall. No doubt also there were socially desirable responses in that saying 'no' outright sounds 'uncharitable'. Overall, while there is a high level of general support for charitable donations to supplement public funding, as shown above, individual willingness to give is more ambiguous.

Multivariate analyses were used to explore the characteristics of residents who said that they would donate money to parks and green spaces, controlling for a range of relevant explanatory variables captured by the survey. A logistical regression model was used to specify the probability of a resident answering *'yes'* to donating as opposed to *'no'* and *'maybe /unsure'*. This approach observes the independent effect of each individual variable while controlling for the effect of all other variables in the model. The model specifies a 'reference category' for each variable to which others will be compared. The 'odds ratio' indicates the strength of the relationship. It can be understood as how much more - or less - likely a participant is to report *'yes'* to donating. Odds ratios smaller than one indicate a lower probability of donating, while odds ratios larger than one indicate a higher probability of donating.

As indicated in Table 3-2, variables that are statistically significant (for a 0.05 significance level) appear in bold. The model finds that residents younger than 34 are more likely to express a willingness to donate than the reference age

category, those aged 65 or older. In addition, the group aged 55 to 59 are especially likely to report *'no'* or *'maybe'* to donating money. Those who are members of a parks' 'Friends' group are more than two times more likely to report a willingness to donate money than non-members. Yet, the strongest effect was found for income. A strong and significant effect in willingness to donate can be detected from incomes at £40,000, with that likelihood increasing as income rises. To own or manage a business also seems to be associated with a higher willingness to donate, however this effect was not statistically significant.

Table 3.2 Results of logistical regression model: probability of donating to parks

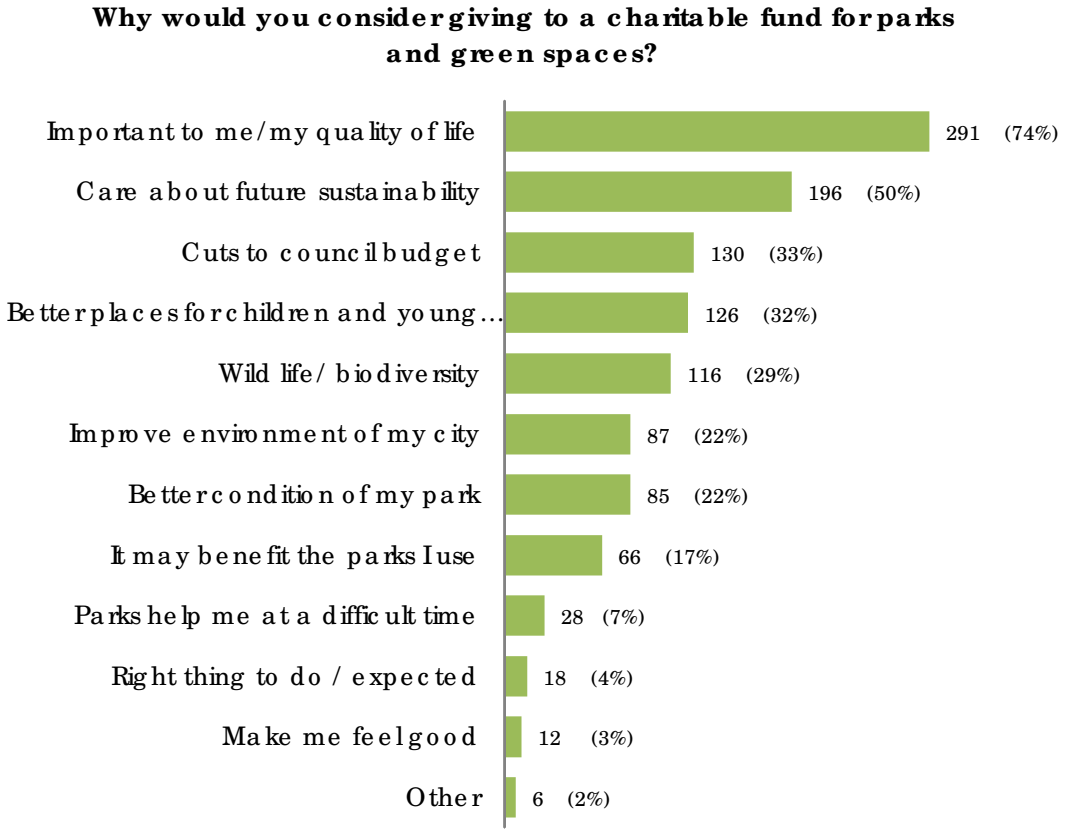
Variable*	Odds ratio	P-value
Constant	**0.22**	**0.00**
Age – reference 65+		
Age (19-24)	**3.10**	**0.02**
Age (25-34)	**1.88**	**0.01**
Age (35-44)	0.88	0.55
Age (45-54)	0.74	0.14
Age (55-59)	**0.46**	**0.01**
Age (60-64)	0.91	0.70
Income – reference < £4,499		
Income (£4,500 - £9,999)	0.93	0.88
Income (£10,000 - £24,999)	1.46	0.34
Income (£25,000 - £39,999)	1.29	0.53
Income (£40,000 - £74,999)	**2.30**	**0.05**
Income (£75,000 - £99,999)	**3.49**	**0.03**
Income (< £100,000)	**3.84**	**0.02**
Own/manage business	1.64	0.05
Member of parks group	**2.14**	**0.00**

The following list of variables were used as potential regressors in earlier stages of the modelling process but showed no significance and were therefore removed from the final model: gender, ethnicity, frequency of park visits, time spent in park during visits, disability, member of Leeds Citizens' Panel, employment status, children in household, and visiting a major park (Roundhay Park) as their main park of use.

Why give to parks?

Residents who said they would donate to parks selected from a list the reasons why they would give (Figure 3-15). Within this group, the main reason was the importance of parks to quality of life (74%). Concerns about the future sustainability of parks and green spaces were also a main reason for half of residents. Other reasons include the need to provide extra support given cuts to council budgets (33%), to create better places to play (32%) and to support wildlife/bio-diversity (29%).

Figure 3.15 Why residents are willing to donate to parks

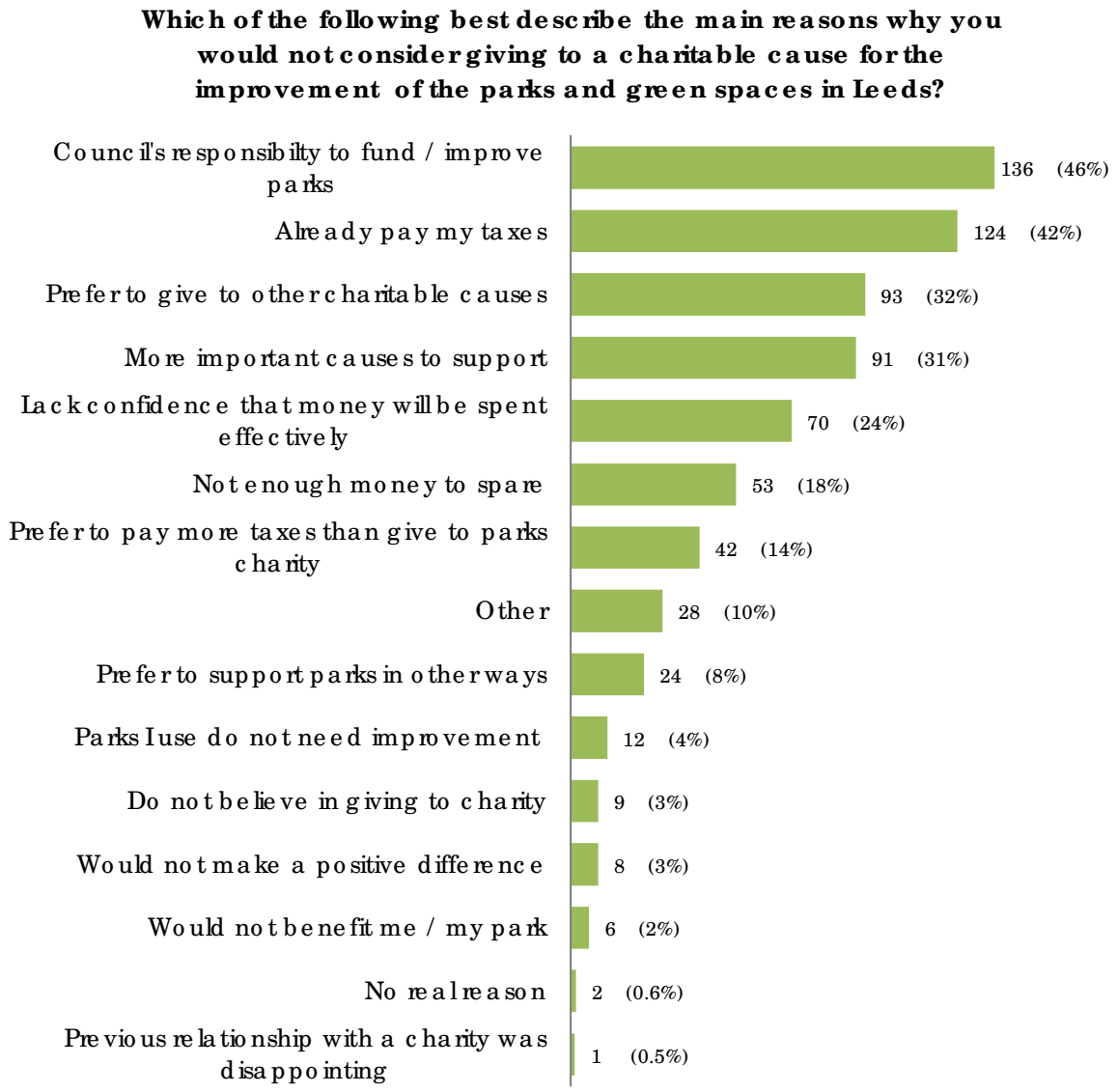


Unweighted count=370; Weighted count=392

Residents who said that they would *not* give to parks selected from a list the reasons why (Figure 3-16). Within this group, the main reason was the perception that it is the Council's responsibility (46%). This was followed closely by the view that residents are already paying taxes (42%). Other reasons, selected by 32% and 31% respectively, were preferences to give to other charitable causes and the belief that there are more important causes to support. Around quarter (24%) were not confident that the money would be spent effectively. Nearly a fifth (18%) felt that they may not have enough

money to spare. Some prefer to pay more in council tax (14%) and provide support in other ways (8%).

Figure 3.16 Why residents are not willing to donate to parks

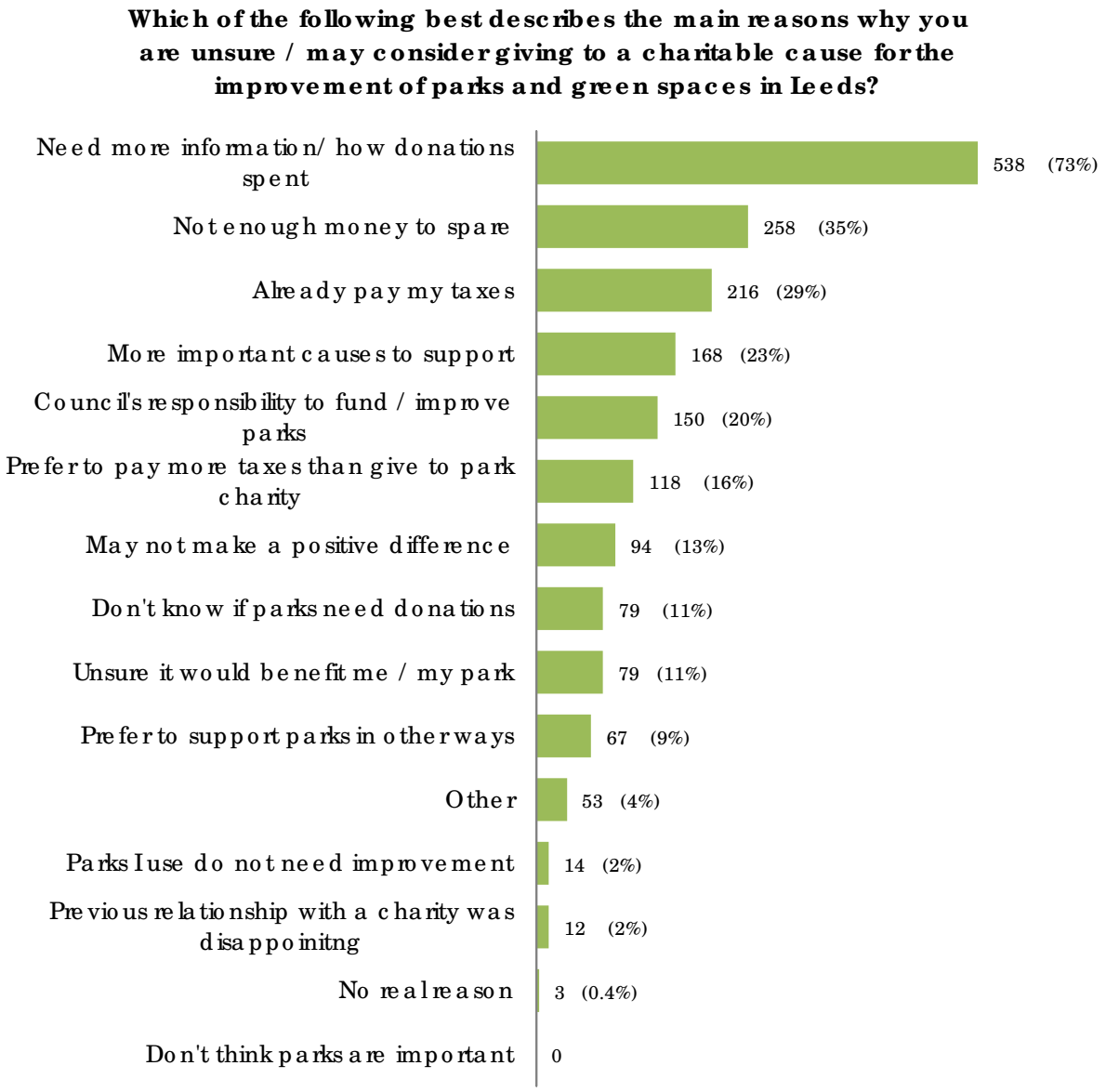


Unweighted count=310; Weighted count=293

However, most residents (52%) said they may or were unsure about giving money to parks. Residents who said they may or were unsure about donating to parks selected from a list the reasons why (Figure 3-17). Within this group, the main reason for being unsure was the need for more information about the cause and how the money would be spent (73%). Other reasons for being unsure were mixed and included not having enough money to spare (35%), already paying taxes (29%), other important charitable causes to support (23%), and the perception that it is the Council's responsibility to fund parks (20%). Some prefer to pay more in council tax (16%). A few were unsure if it would

make a positive difference (13%), if parks need charitable donations (11%) or if it would benefit them (11%).

Figure 3.17 Why residents unsure/may donate to parks



Unweighted count=751; Weighted count=739

These factors might constitute barriers to giving and represent challenges to be addressed by charitable schemes for parks. Overall, the findings suggest that to motivate and persuade residents who have a willingness to donate, a charitable scheme should provide clear information about the cause, its importance and how the money will be spent. The findings also suggest a need to engage with the perception that it is the Council's responsibility to fund and maintain parks, and the view that people should give to charity when they are paying council tax which can be utilised for parks.

WHY DONATE
- QUALITY OF LIFE
- SUSTAINABILITY
- BUDGET CUTS
- PLACES FOR CHILDREN
- WILDLIFE HABITATS.

WHY NOT DONATE
- COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITY
- ALREADY PAY TAXES
- PREFER OTHER CHARITIES
- OTHER CAUSES MORE IMPORTANT
- LACK CONFIDENCE IN SPENDING.

WHY MAY DONATE
- NEED MORE INFORMATION
- NOT ENOUGH MONEY
- ALREADY PAY TAXES
- OTHER CAUSES MORE IMPORTANT
- COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITY.

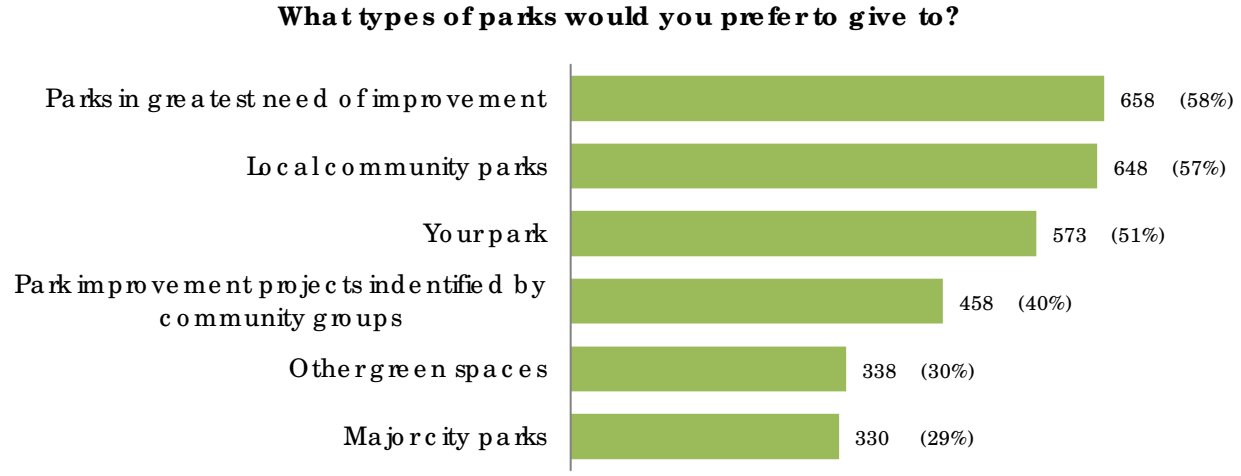
Donating to different types of parks and green spaces

Residents who said that they would give or may consider giving to parks selected from a list what types of parks and green spaces they would prefer to give to (Figure 3-18).

MOST RESIDENTS PREFER TO GIVE TO **PARKS IN THE GREATEST NEED OF IMPROVEMENT** (58%), **COMMUNITY PARKS** (57%) AND **THEIR PARK** (51%).

The top preferences were to give to parks in the greatest need of improvement (58%), local community parks (57%) to give to their main park (51%). Some 40% prefer to give to park improvement projects across the city identified by community groups, 30% prefer to give to other green spaces (e.g. woodlands) and 29% prefer to give to major parks.

Figure 3.18 Preferences to donate to different types of parks



Unweighted count = 1121, Weighted count= 1131

Overall, the findings suggest that a charitable fund would be most appealing to residents if it focused on community parks below the Leeds Quality Park standard. However, the findings also suggest a strong rationale for providing the option for residents to give to their main park. This was a critical factor identified in focus group discussions with residents, reported in Chapter Five. While major parks received the least support (29%), it should be noted that 47% of residents selected a major park as their main park.

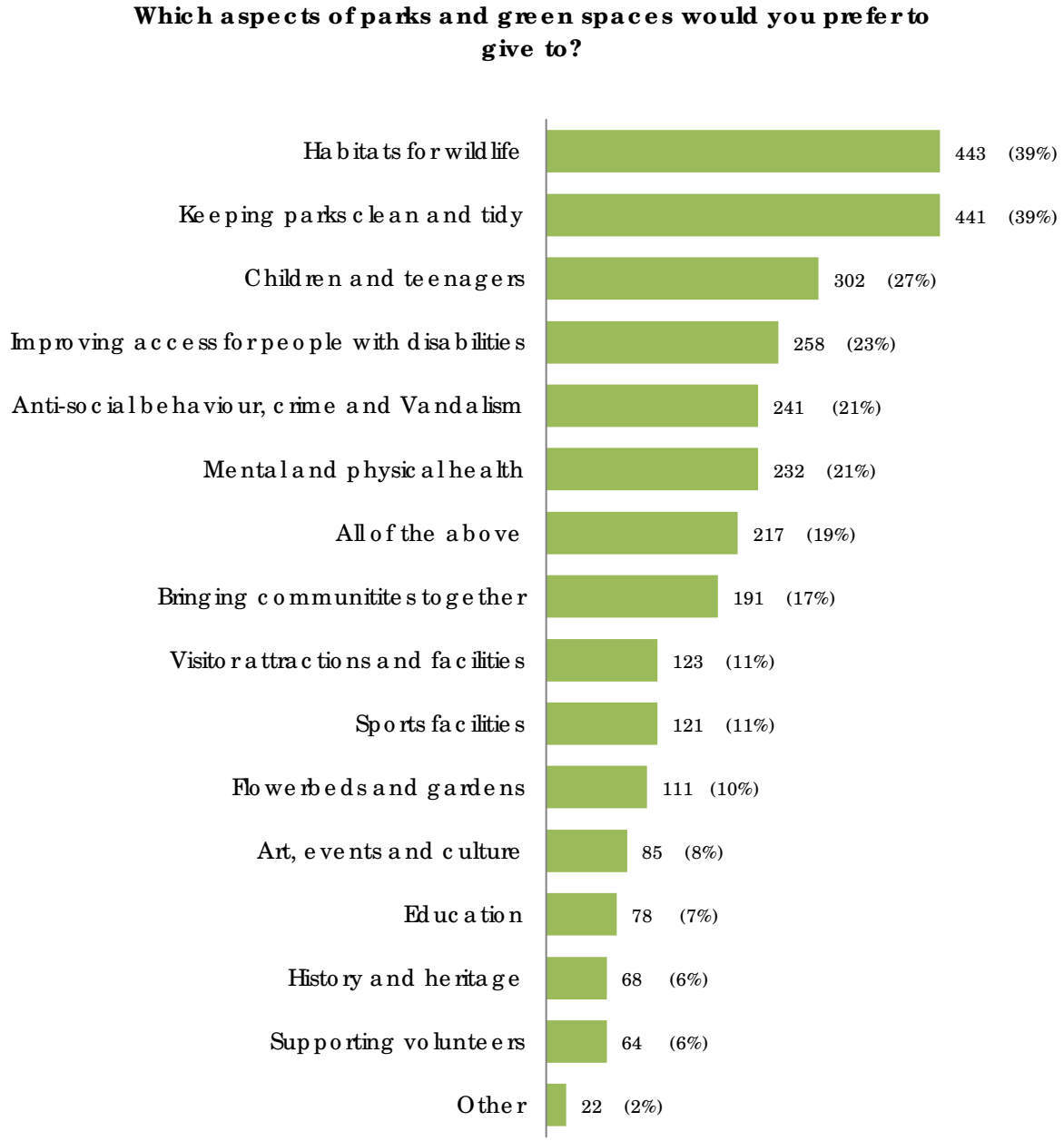
Donating to different aspects of parks and green spaces

Residents who said that they would give or may consider giving money to parks selected from a list what aspects of parks they would prefer to give to (Figure 3-19). Habitats for wildlife (39%) and keeping parks clean (39%) are the top aspects of parks that residents would prefer to give to. Residents also wanted to donate to create better places for children and young people to play (27%), improve access for people with disabilities (23%), tackle anti-social behaviour, crime and vandalism (21%) and improve mental and physical health (21%). Some 19% prefer to support all aspects of parks and green spaces listed.

RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS LEADERS PREFER TO DONATE TO **HABITATS FOR WILDLIFE** AND **KEEPING PARKS CLEAN**.

Overall, the findings suggest that a charitable fund for parks in the city of Leeds (recognising that preferences may be different in other cities) would be most appealing to those residents who expresses a willingness to donate if it focused on initiatives around wildlife, cleanliness, young people, accessibility, mental/physical health and crime.

Figure 3.19 Preferences to donate to different aspects of parks

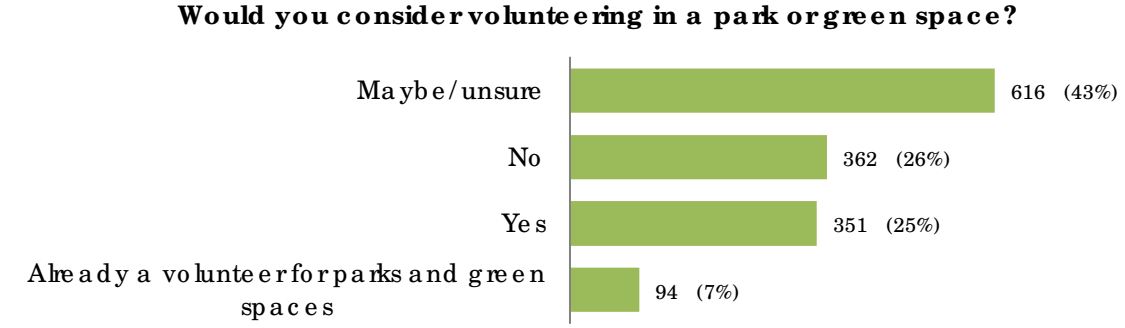


Unweighted count = 1121, Weighted count= 1131

Willingness to volunteer

A quarter of residents (25%) would consider volunteering in a park or green space, yet a similar proportion (26%) would not (Figure 3-20). More commonly, residents said that they may or were unsure about volunteering (43%). Some 7% already volunteer in parks and green spaces.

Figure 3.20 Willingness to volunteer in a park

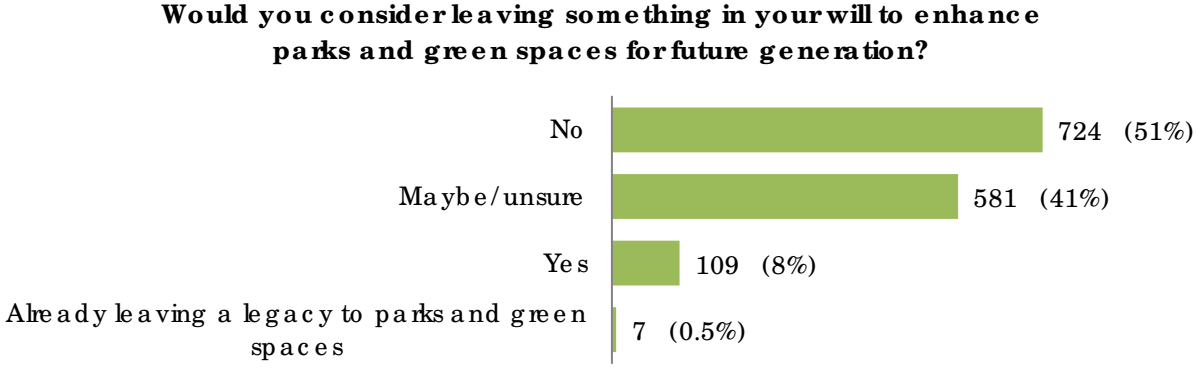


Unweighted count=1428; Weighted count=1422

Willingness to leave a legacy

Only 8% of residents said that they would consider leaving a legacy to enhance parks and green spaces for future generations (Figure 3-21). Most residents (51%) would not consider leaving a legacy. However, a significant minority (41%) might do. There is scope to promote legacy giving whilst recognising that it does not appeal to most residents.

Figure 3.21 Willingness to leave a legacy to a park

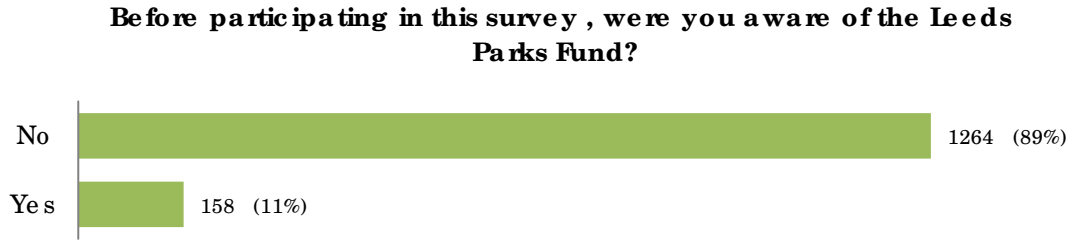


Unweighted count=1429; Weighted count=1422

Awareness of the Leeds Parks Fund

Most residents (89%) were unaware of Leeds Parks Fund (Figure 3-22). This suggests the need for a high-profile campaign to raise awareness of this charitable initiative. Many of the qualitative comments on the survey expressed the need for greater promotion and publicity.

Figure 3.22 Awareness of the Leeds Parks Fund



Unweighted count=1428; Weighted count=1422

3.8 Comments on the Leeds Parks Fund

We asked residents responding to the survey to provide a short comment on the description provided of the Leeds Parks Fund. We received 259 comments, which have been organised into four themes. The first relates to views towards voluntary donations to parks and green spaces. The second relates to residents' priorities for the Leeds Parks Fund. The third relates to feedback on the Leeds Parks Fund model of charitable giving, notably a preference towards targeted giving. The fourth relates to the independence and governance of the Leeds Parks Fund. Selected quotations have been used to provide an overview of each theme.

Theme one: views towards a charitable fund for parks

Charitable donations should not substitute or replace Council funding

- *'The fund should not be seen as an alternative to core funding by councils and government. There should be a statutory duty on local authorities to support parks to a recognised standard.'*
- *'Does this really mean that this will in fact replace existing council spending in this area? What will be next on the list?'*
- *'I support the principle of improving parks and of people providing donations for this. However, the suspicion is that this fund will allow the council to withdraw from maintaining the parks and that they will be privatised. This fear needs to be allayed.'*

- *'I'd want reassuring that the Council wouldn't simply cut funding as soon as the charity took over...it needs to be "extra", not compensating for cuts for "basic" services, such as cleaning /maintenance /etc. A bit like a school PTA does for school extras, like outings and bonus kit, not for teacher salaries and school buildings...'*
- *'I think it is admirable. I worry that the council will respond by lowering investment in parks, so that the net gain is zero.'*
- *'I feel it is only suggested as a way of LCC to stop funding parks altogether to save money. They need to guarantee they will still provide money and paid staff. Otherwise parks in deprived areas will get worse whilst those in more affluent areas will thrive. They need to stop offloading their responsibility. People in poorer areas do not have the money or time to work for free! It will become an uneven picture across Leeds and open to private companies stealing public space. Can we really trust our local authority with this? It is worrying.'*
- *'Sounds like a way for the council to avoid spending money, get the people to donate and then do the work.'*

Need for a sustainable parks policy, statutory duty and appropriate levels of central government funding

- *'The Leeds Parks Fund is a bit of a sticking plaster approach to what is really a failure to fund local government fairly and properly.'*
- *'Parks as public open spaces are far too important to be left to the vagaries of charitable giving and should be a charge on the public purse. If that means increasing taxation, then so be it...'*
- *'It's a way of dealing with the stranglehold the govt. currently has on local authority funding. In principle I disagree with the idea.'*
- *'I am sorry that it is necessary as I think parks and gardens are an essential public health, social and cultural contribution which should be funded and managed through local government.'*
- *'I feel very conflicted about charitable giving even though I do give to some charities. I worry it just means that government can stop funding essential services.'*
- *'It's a pity that the Fund is necessary: I'd rather have parks and open spaces paid for by central and local government as a community resource and benefit for all.'*
- *'It's a sad indictment of our current government and the country we live in that we need a charity fund to sustain /develop the cities' parks.'*

- *'I'm disappointed this is even necessary but understand why it's come about. The only solution in my opinion is a change in government and a return to proper funding for local amenities.'*
- *'I'm not opposed to the Leeds Park Fund and think it could make useful contributions. However, my strong opinion is that local councils should be adequately funded by central government and through council tax to provide top-class parks. I am wary of what should be fully taxpayer funded services being supported by charitable donations.'*
- *'I feel strongly that this should be funded out of taxes from central government. I know that LCC has had its funding drastically reduced due to government cuts and I am quite shocked that the council has to resort to charitable donations to fund what should be funded centrally... I do not blame the council for this but the austerity agenda of the current government.'*
- *'Relying on philanthropy to maintain and improve the parks of Leeds is a huge risk. Central government should provide tax revenue for services that benefit society such as parks. The Leeds Park Fund is not something I can support.'*

Already paying taxes

- *'I think really our taxes should be used for public green spaces but failing that it is a worthwhile cause.'*
- *'I thought I already paid for this in my council tax.'*
- *'I pay far too much on rates has it is do not want to pay anymore.'*
- *'I already pay extra in my council tax to keep the local library open and the village hall. I shouldn't have to, parks are the responsibility of the council and a proven source of health and wellbeing.'*
- *'Parks are one of the few services (including bin collection, street lighting) that I use and benefit from for which I already pay full Council Tax and Income Tax (Govt subsidies to LA's).'*
- *'Parks and green space are too fundamental resources to be supported by charitable donations. They should be fully funded through general taxation.'*

Supporting Leeds as a green city and parks in the context of austerity

- *'I am proud to live in such a green city and want my grandchildren to benefit from visiting open spaces and rich environments where wildlife can flourish so would be very happy to support.'*

- *'This sounds like a worthwhile cause. I already donate quite a bit to charity but would consider donating. I think green spaces for everyone is important.'*
- *'Sounds like a great idea! I think Leeds parks are a huge community asset.'*
- *'I think this sounds good and it is nice to see a proactive plan for the management and improvement of city green spaces.'*
- *'Very supportive of the Leeds Park fund and glad to see there is something already in place.'*
- *'I think that it's a Wonderful Idea and should have been started a long time ago. WELL DONE.'*
- *'I didn't know about Leeds Parks Fund but now that I do I will set up a regular GAYE donation - thank you for raising awareness. Green spaces are hugely important.'*
- *'This is a great idea, as parks and green space is still important, but I understand how stretched Council funds are with Government cuts!'*
- *'Sounds like a good idea in view of council budget cuts.'*
- *'It's a good idea, but it's a shame it's needed – i.e. the council doesn't have enough money to do this anyway.'*
- *'In theory good idea because of the reduced funding available to local council.'*

Commercialisation of Parks

- *'I think it's a disgrace and a part of the general austerity. It's a sneaky way of starting the process for corporations to buy up parkland.'*
- *'My concern with taking parks out of local government control is that this could be the thin end of the wedge to losing the parks altogether or having them commercialised to the point where one has to pay to use them.'*
- *'At the moment most of the parks are fairly free from commercial intervention that makes them very relaxing for parents and generally good for people's mental health as it's stress free and accessible without reminding you of your bank balance!'*
- *'I think there should be more cafes/licensed bars in parks, like they do at Roundhay, which could fund maintenance of parks.'*

Other charitable causes are more important/needy

- *'With the reduction in available funding more and more charities/orgs are in need of personal donations, it is very difficult to prioritise parks,*

which can appear on the surface less important than say homelessness / women's refuges etc.'

- *'Whilst I am in favour of supporting the amenity of parks for the people of Leeds, maybe budget constraints and the reduction of funding mean that there are bigger priorities for the disadvantaged in the City that should be addressed first.'*
- *'It seems like a good idea - but there are so many worth-while charities.'*
- *'It's yet another bit of sticking plaster over the Tory government's austerity programme ... and kinda falls way behind (for my personal priorities) initiatives like food banks, and a multitude of other programmes to support people savagely hit by central government's austerity policies.'*
- *'I don't think they are in such a terrible condition that they need huge investment.'*

Theme two: priorities and focus of the Leeds Parks Fund

More focus on nature, wildlife and woodlands

- *'The fund should be used to benefit all Leeds City Councils Parks and Countryside land, rather than just formal parks.'*
- *'Please think of the local woods too, as well as the parks. The woods are a natural asset that once put right do not need much managing...'*
- *'More trees, please! In the city, in the suburbs, on the edge of town, everywhere.'*
- *'I would like Leeds Parks to be more sustainable, using pollinator friendly planting for bees (not nectar-poor bedding plants), having more wildflowers and making more use of compost, mulches, reduced mowing regimes, less use of chemicals.'*
- *'Most of the money should go towards increasing wildlife habitats, encouraging and supporting wildlife and increasing biodiversity. Every park should have ponds full of native wetland plants, as well as wildflower meadows and forests.'*
- *'I would also like the Fund to support those unadopted areas of land that perform a greenspace function, but which fail to get taken on by the Council...'*

Focus on parks in disadvantaged areas neglected green spaces

- *'It would be nice if this could go towards improving things for everyone and even making new parks in disadvantaged areas (so long as they keep on top of antisocial behaviour).'*

- *'I believe it would be good to focus on the many smaller neglected parks and green spaces. The large parks and open spaces are already very good generally.'*
- *'Small community green spaces... are in dire need of funding.'*
- *'The funding should be targeted at local parks which do not have major attractions.'*
- *'The main problem with Leeds City Council is its blinkered view on which parks should be supported. Parks considered to be more affluent areas do not appear to receive the same level of funding as parks in less affluent areas. This therefore makes me reluctant to support parks with financial contributions when there is little chance of the funds finding their way to local parks on the fringes of the city.'*

Focus on park facilities

- *'Where have all the children's paddling pools gone, and areas where kids can play with model boats in shallow waters? It's very amiss of Leeds not to supply these facilities in public parks in all areas as they are great fun for children in the summertime as well as winter if the frost freezes the shallow water...'*
- *'Improve playgrounds.'*
- *'...please put back standalone public toilets & boats on the lakes & a small funfair!'*
- *'I enjoy the 'crown jewel' parks of the city and am impressed by the layouts, planting and overall appearance of the parks. There are some areas that could be improved, better/more facilities for children in traditional parks, such as playground facilities - for example there are none at Golden Acre.'*

Focus on making parks safer

- *'I wish more importance is given to the safety. Many parks still have people using drugs and needles, when you walk around people offer you drugs, those park needs more security.'*
- *'Vandals are a problem in parks. Is there anything in place to keep the parks from being vandalised so money is not wasted?'*
- *'...Until more funding and time is given to the Police and other agencies to tackle this issue the money and time invested by the Leeds Parks Fund is wasted.'*
- *'Local green spaces near me are fairly well maintained but I would not consider using them as they are mostly used for drinking and drug dealing. Could some funding be allocated to tackling these issues?'*

Focus on accessibility and connectivity

- *'On a more local issue to myself, access to the parks could also be improved.'*
- *'The LPF could perhaps also promote and maintain the spaces that LINK these parks in its plans. The paths, snickets, ginnels, cut-throughs... Families may have a park close by but, because of the lack of walkability, the park may as well be on Mars. Healthy, viable corridors - the shoots, roots and tendrils around parks, so to speak - create vital corridors that can have a massive positive impact.'*
- *'I should like more footpaths and pedestrian ways between the parks and around Leeds.'*

Focus on protection, education and innovation

- *'An important part of the Fund should be to protect our park from builders. Parks should be sacrosanct. LCC should be making a formal and public commitment to never build in a public park... This must not happen, and a central Park Fund could be used to support lobbying against such appalling ideas.'*
- *'In this day and age where more housing is needed to be built it is essential green spaces are preserved and used to educate people about the environment and animal and plant habitats.'*
- *'How can parks support education and environmentally friendly initiatives? E.g. Solar powered parking meters, bike hire etc - let's think new & different ways to make parks work better so people with no cash can see them as a resource too.'*
- *'I would also strongly support some kind of "Park Ranger" or education of young people.'*

Focus on health and well-being

- *'Calverley Park is very well used by the community and has good facilities. However, one obvious omission is a green gym or equivalent, which I think would get some good usage.'*
- *'Like the idea of green gyms this should be fully implemented to reduce the obesity in the city...'*
- *'Any funds will be well spent to improve health and wellbeing.'*

Theme three: Leeds Parks Fund model of charitable giving

Preference for targeted donations

- *'The idea is good but with 600 areas to maintain how would it be ensured that local donations would go towards the parks that the donators wanted them to go to?'*
- *'The Parks Fund ought to be able to ringfence donations for specific parks and usage.'*
- *'I would prefer to know what projects were going to be funded or know which park my donation would go to.'*
- *'I would be interested in knowing which areas are to be helped.'*
- *'I would not want to help fund parks in another part of the city.'*
- *'This could be a good idea for "your park", if the money is ring fenced for your park.'*
- *'I would not contribute to any funding that was not used on local parks.'*
- *'It sounds too generalised... would have more appeal to local people and organisations.'*
- *'There should be the facility to donate small sums regularly. Many people could afford that, but not many can afford to make large donations.'*

Longevity of projects funded

- *'Who would carry out the maintenance work as cash strapped council seems to be cutting costs in all areas. Are volunteer groups going to be expected to take on more and more tasks for free...?'*
- *'I have seen some small volunteer-maintained public spaces in Leeds. Although the initiative is admirable, in my experience it's a lot of backbreaking work for a handful of volunteers who eventually run out of steam and leadership.'*

Park status / title of the Fund

- *'We have some wonderful spaces in Leeds that do not have 'Park' status, how can we change that?'*
- *'I do wonder whether the money has to go to an Official Park or is it any greenspace.'*

Joining-up the Leeds Parks Fund with other initiatives

- *'There are many voluntary groups working for the benefit of our parks & open spaces. It is essential that any citywide initiative such as Leeds Parks Fund is "joined up" with such groups, and doesn't operate in a vacuum, creating disjointed and duplicated effort.'*
- *'Sounds good but how will it affect giving to local groups?'*
- *'The Fund is an excellent initiative. Presumably the Fund confers with voluntary organisations?'*

Need for publicity

- *'Sounds like a great project which should be more widely known about.'*
- *'There should be more publicity about this. I am quite well informed but didn't know about the Parks Fund.'*
- *'Never heard of it.'*
- *'It sounds like a very good idea. Im disappointed not to have heard of it before. I am sure many of my friends and neighbours have not heard about the Leeds Parks Fund. Perhaps it should be better and more widely advertised as if more people knew about it then there is a greater possibility of gaining additional funds and /or volunteers.'*
- *'Get out more publicity about what you do. Put details in every park.'*
- *'I'd suggest upping your profile and generating positive awareness.'*
- *'I work for a large business in Leeds, but this is not something the council appear to have ever contacted businesses about. I feel promotion to larger local businesses such as banks, sky, British gas etc could generate a large and consisten volunteer base across the city to help keep parks clean tidy and well maintained.'*

Approach to acknowledgement and recognition of donations

- *'I want signs to acknowledge who contributed to what.'*
- *'I am not opposed to business sponsorship of parks, if a local business could put a sign advertising itself in return for money then so be.'*
- *'I think that parks should be free of adverts.'*

Theme four: independence and governance of the Leeds Parks Fund

Importance of independence and effective governance and oversight

- *'It is helpful that an independent panel decide funding allocation as this gives local green spaces a chance against the larger spaces that have more potential to be used for events/festivals.'*
- *'I would want an arm's length organisation to control the finance, decide on projects and commission design and implementation work, independent of the Council's Parks & Countryside Service, with maximum engagement of volunteers, where appropriate.'*
- *'A good idea as long as the Charity distances itself from Leeds City Council, a political beast with changing colours.'*
- *'Good idea in principle but I worry about Leeds City Council's ability to use money efficiently - I see a lot of waste so don't trust you.'*
- *'This seems a good idea. Unfortunately, I can see problems with where the money goes and who has a say how the money is spent rich hereas.'*

- *'I hope the cost of administration is kept to a minimum.'*
- *'How will the diverse communities of Leeds be represented on the decision-making panel? Including disabled people, ethnic minorities, LGBT people and women?'*
- *'How do you apply to the fund as interested in doing so?'*
- *'Will the money be spent sensibly, and will we get value for money and how will the success of projects be measured? Will the money be spent on 'nice to do' projects when there are far more serious 'need to do' projects which have no or little funding? I am happy to donate to charities however I am often concerned that money is wasted by charities and the Council.'*
- *'Good idea and I will investigate further to see what things the charity has done that I have seen. Small charities like this worry me as due to the activities of some charities I struggle to trust the money I give is all going to the cause.'*
- *'Needs to be effective oversight.'*
- *'An excellent idea. But some provision should be made to ensure no fraudulent expenditure is made!!'*
- *'LCC has know way of knowing what it spends where, in terms of location, because there is no expenditure coding for location. Hence some areas of the city get more spent on them than others. For example, my area is having loads of expenditure at the moment in leisure facilities and schools - perhaps to the detriment of more needy/deserving areas. It's all an anomalous mess like much else in the UK!!!'*
- *'The LPF has been going for some time now. I have not heard how much money they have raised or what it has been used for.'*
- *'The process should be transparent, and the public should be able to questions how the money spent.'*
- *'This is bad news for the area of Stanningley as they do not have anyone on their behalf to apply for these donations. Therefore, it will be the Roundhay, Calverley parks that get the funding as usual leaving Stanningley to get worse and worse.'*
- *'Donations would need to be spread around fairly & used sensibly.'*
- *'I am always worried how the funds are spent and is the charity being transparent especially when you hear so many stories about trustees mishandling money to suit their pocket.'*
- *'I would like to know more about who is in control of the Fund, where the money comes from, how the money will be spent etc.'*
- *It would be good if the Leeds Parks Fund website could show some examples of volunteer work and some data on how donations are spent.*

Chapter 4: Business Survey

4.1 Key points

- For business leaders, the main benefits of parks are to improve the attractiveness of the area (53%) and to foster employee health and well-being (46%). Fewer business leaders say parks improve customer footfall (9%), increase tourism (12%) and reduce risk of flooding (15%).
- Most businesses do not have a corporate social responsibility policy (59%). However, most businesses have donated money to charity (84%) and 50% have sponsored others.
- Businesses were equally likely to say that they have resources to give money (48%) and time to volunteer for charity (48%).
- Most business leaders prefer to give to local causes (71%) than to national causes (21%) and international causes (14%). Like residents, the most popular causes were medical research, hospitals and hospices, children and young people, and homeless people.
- Business leaders support a variety of ways to supplement public funding for parks, including charitable donations (69%) and business sponsorship (71%). However, funding from grant-making bodies (89%), central government (85%) and paid attractions (80%) received the most support. Charging for using park facilities is opposed (57%).
- More business leaders say they would not consider donating to a charitable fund for parks (33%) than would (19%), although many were unsure (48%). Motivations to give are strongest for parks closest to their business site, parks in the greatest need of improvement and community parks.
- Likewise, more business leaders oppose paying higher business rates for parks (54%) than support it (21%), but 25% were unsure.
- Like residents, habitats for wildlife and keeping parks clean are the top aspects of parks that business leaders would prefer to give to.

4.2 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the main findings from an online survey of 141 business owners, directors and managers based in Leeds, exploring their views towards charitable donations to parks and green spaces. The findings are representative in terms of business size.

The following themes were covered in the survey: benefits of parks and green spaces for businesses; charitable giving in the past year; views on funding parks; views on charitable donations to parks. These themes provide the basis for the structure of this chapter.

The first section describes the survey methodology employed. The second section explores the perceived benefits of parks for businesses. The third section outlines self-reported charitable giving behaviour in the past year, including preferences towards donation methods and charitable causes. The fourth section outlines business leaders' support for a variety of ways to supplement public funding of parks and green spaces. The fifth section considers business leaders' self-reported willingness to donate to an independent charitable fund for parks. It employs statistical modelling to explore the characteristics of businesses who said they would donate, controlling for a range of relevant explanatory variables captured by the survey. National studies and research literature are used to set some of the findings in the wider context.

4.3 Survey methodology

A survey was designed and made available online for business leaders to complete between the 29 October 2018 and the 11 February 2019. The survey was advertised widely on social media, including Twitter and Facebook. The survey also received local media coverage and was circulated in various business newsletters and outlets. In addition, the online survey was sent with a covering letter to all active businesses on the *fame* [41] database of UK companies that were registered in Leeds and had an email address. This was approximately 3,850 businesses after excluding those companies where emails were no longer valid.

We received 141 responses from business owners, directors and managers in Leeds. Of the whole sample size, 55% of businesses reported to be micro companies, 24% small companies, 15% medium companies, and 7% large companies. Most businesses had their head office in Leeds (89%), operated from one site (68%), and reported to be family-owned business (61%). A full breakdown of the sample is available in Appendix C.

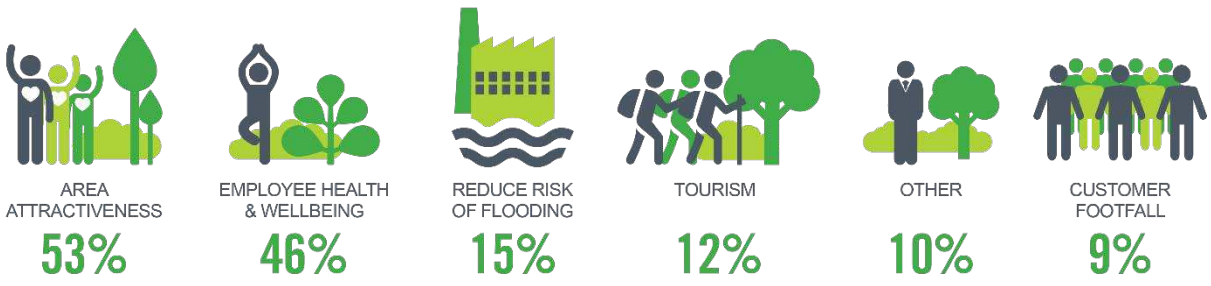
To adjust for some of these imbalances, and make our analyses more representative, probability weights were calculated based on business size as recorded by the Office for National Statistics Inter Departmental Business Register (see Appendix C). These weights have been applied to all descriptive statistics reported in this chapter. Individual values above 1% are rounded and hence bar charts may not total 100%. The use of weights helps to adjust for problems of selection bias that could stem from a non-random sampling method.

To assess the extent of sampling error (i.e. the uncertainty resulting from the use of a sample of the population) we provide 95% confidence intervals in the responses to some of the key questions reported. The widest 95% confidence interval ranges 19.4%. Hence, it would be safe to assume margins of error of ±9.7% for the estimates reported herein.

4.4 Perceived benefits of parks for businesses

We asked business leaders to identify, from a list, the main benefits of parks and green spaces for their businesses (Figure 4-1). The top benefits were improved area attractiveness (53%) and improved employee health and well-being (46%). Some also felt that businesses benefit in other ways from parks such as reduced risk of flooding (15%), increased tourism (12%), and improved customer footfall (9%).

Figure 4.1 Perceived benefits of parks for businesses



Unweighted count=141; Weighted count=141

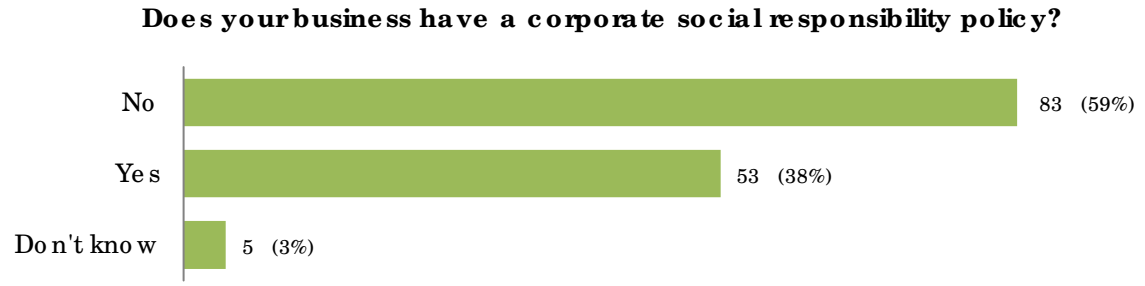
In the 'other' category, businesses commented on the benefits of parks for bio-diversity, mitigating air pollution and economic factors. Some business leaders commented on the lack of benefits, which they attributed to the distance of parks from the city centre. For example, one response said: *'There is no benefit to our business in Leeds as all the parks are too far from the city centre and our office'*.

4.5 Business giving in the past year

Corporate social responsibility

The majority of businesses (59%) do not have a corporate social responsibility policy, either formal or informal (Figure 4-2). However, most business leaders had participated in some form of charitable giving in the past year (Figure 4-3).

Figure 4.2 Corporate social responsibility



Unweighted count=140; Weighted count=140

Ways businesses gave to charity

Most businesses (84%) had given money to a charity in the past year (Figure 4-3). Half of business leaders (50%) had also sponsored someone for charity. Around a third of businesses (34%) had given goods, products or services to charity and a quarter (25%) had volunteered for a charity.

Some business leaders also had a charity partner (15%); fundraised from customers (12%); fundraised from employees/payroll giving (9%); and matched employee giving (2%). Some 14% of businesses had not given to charity in any other way than donating money.

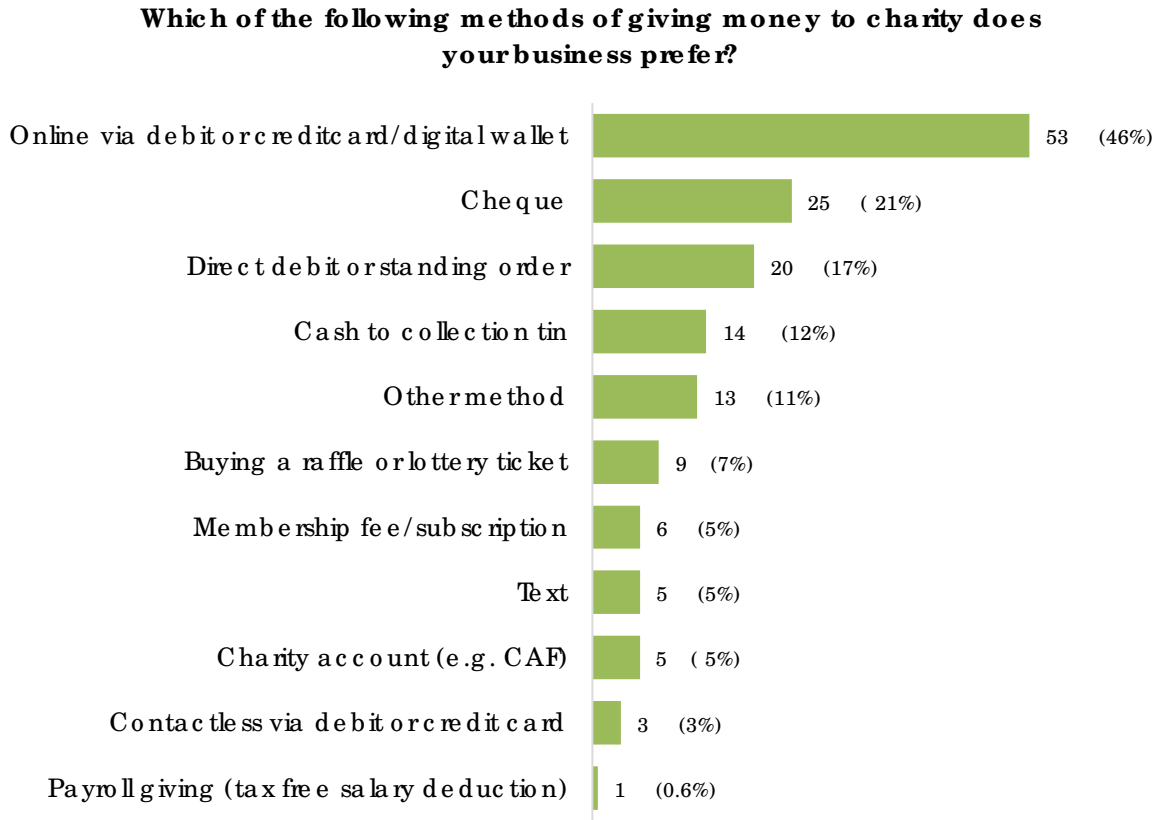
Figure 4.3 Ways businesses gave to charity in the past 12 months

Preferred methods for donating money

Business leaders were asked, from a list, what method of giving they preferred (Figure 4-4). Giving online (46%) was the most preferred method. Giving by cheque (21%), direct debit or standing order (17%) and cash to a collection tin (12%) were also preferred by some businesses.

By contrast, payroll giving (1%), contactless giving (3%), giving using a charity account (e.g. CAF) (5%), and giving by text (5%) were the least preferred methods for donating money to charity. This may reflect that these methods are relatively new or emerging ways of giving.

Figure 4.4 Preferred methods of giving money to charity

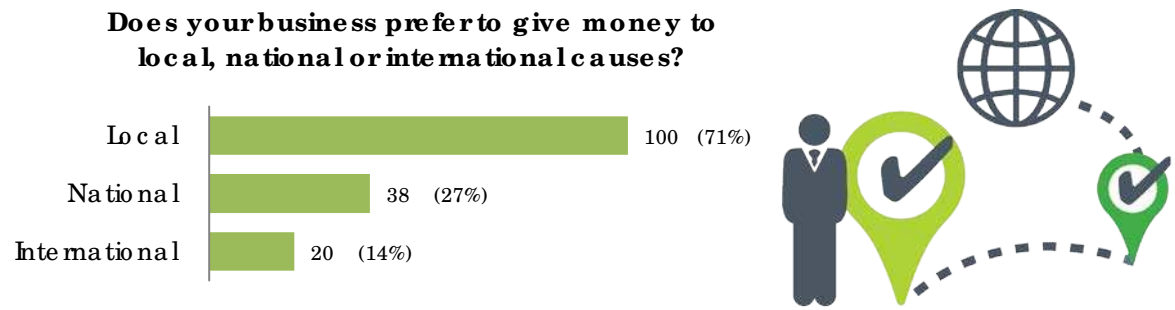


Unweighted count=122; Weighted count=116

What causes businesses gave to

There is a strong local base to business giving. Most business leaders (71%) preferred to give to charity for local causes in Leeds/Yorkshire (Figure 4-5). Conversely, just 27% preferred to give to national causes and 14% preferred to give to international causes.

Figure 4.5 Preference to give to local, national and international causes



Unweighted count=141; Weighted count=141

Children and young people (36%), hospitals and hospices (32%), medical research (31%), homeless people, housing and shelters (22%) were the most popular causes to donate money to in the past year (Figure 4-6). By contrast, education (7%), religious organisations (8%) and the arts (9%) were the least popular charitable causes.

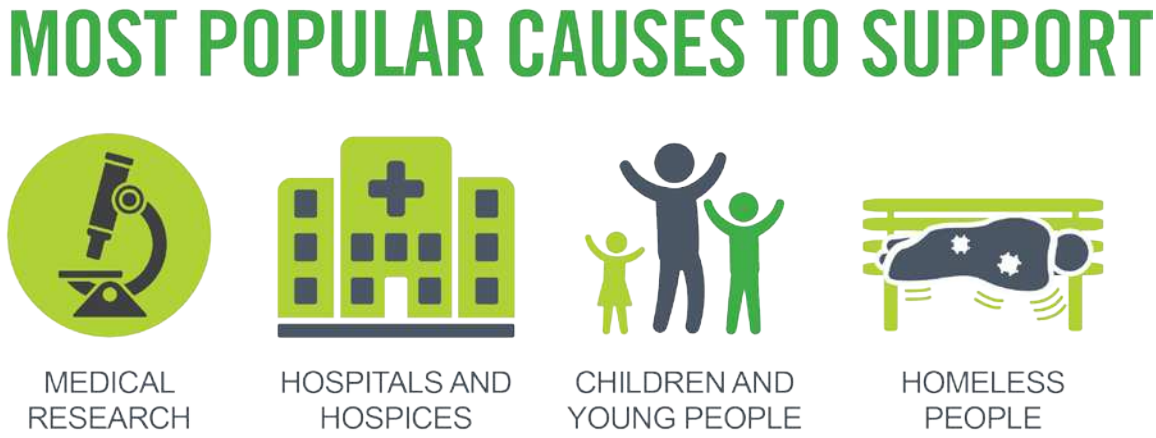
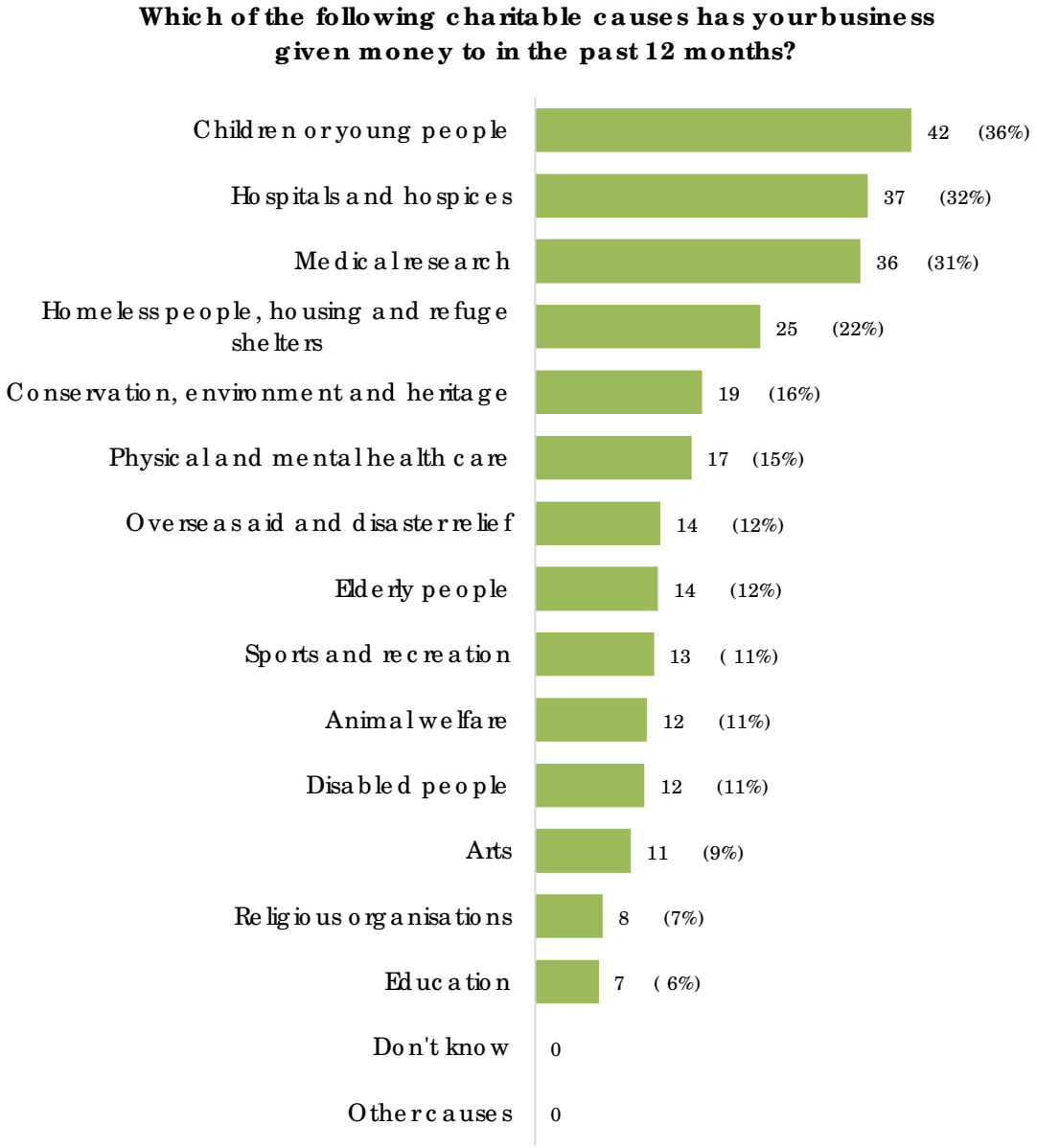


Figure 4.6 Causes businesses gave money to in the past 12 months

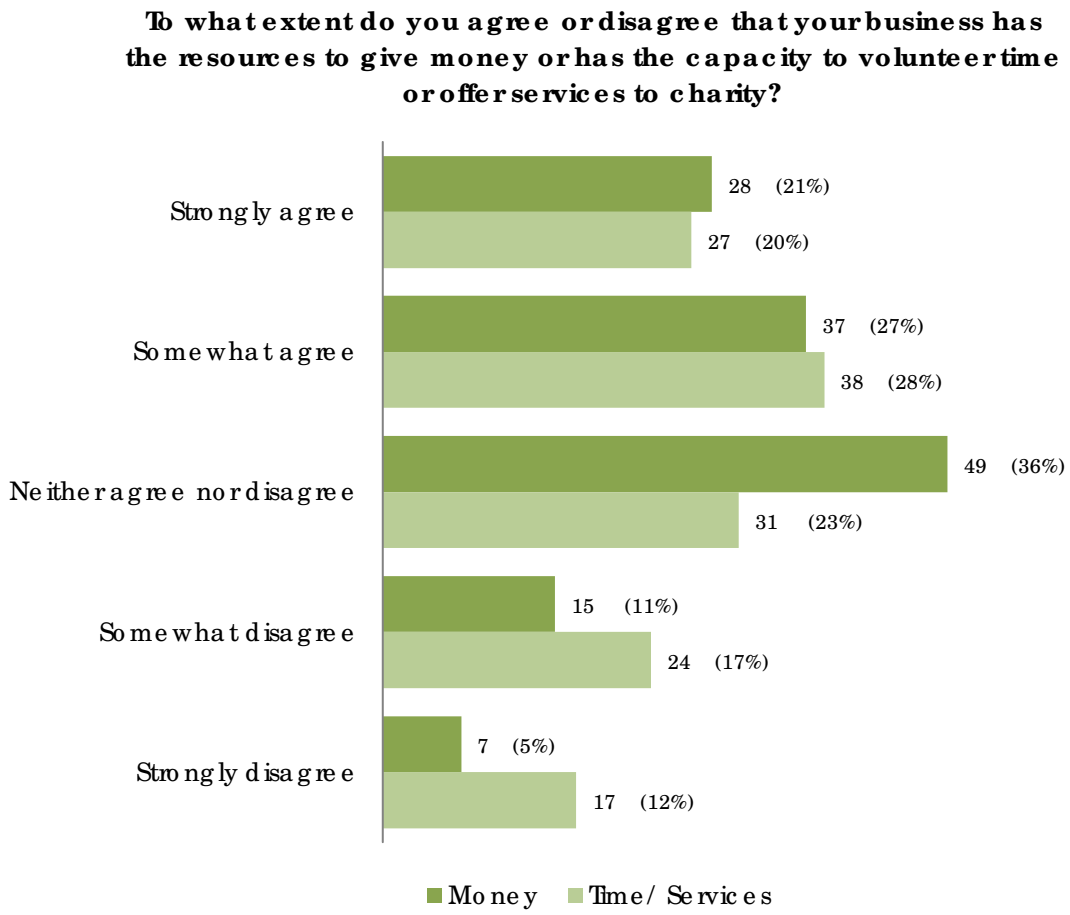


Unweighted count=122; Weighted count=116

Resources to give money and time to charity

Just under half of businesses (48%) strongly agreed or agreed that they have the resources to give money to charity, and the same proportion (48%) strongly agreed or agreed that they have the capacity to volunteer time or offer services to charity (Figure 4-7).

Figure 4.7 Resources to give money and time to charity



Unweighted count=136, 138; Weighted count=136, 138

4.6 Ways to supplement the funding of parks

Support for and opposition to different funding sources

The survey asked business leaders to identify to what extent they support or oppose generating income from the following sources to supplement the funding of parks: grants i.e. National Lottery, business sponsorship, central government, charitable donations/local fundraising, property developer planning contributions, paid attractions and activities in parks, food and drink concessions, and charges for using park facilities (Table 4-1).[42] Like residents, all options listed in the survey, except charges for using park facilities, received a high level of support from business leaders. Fees and charges for using park facilities received comparatively little support (28%) and was opposed by most business leaders (57%).

Overall, in terms of the place of charitable donations within the variety of options provided, there is a stronger place for funding from paid attractions, grant-making bodies (94%) and central government (89%).

Table 4.1 Ways to supplement the funding of parks

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Net Support
 GRANTS FROM NATIONAL LOTTERY	70%	19%	10%	0.4%	0.6%	**89%**
 FUNDING FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT	60%	25%	10%	6%	0.3%	**85%**
 PAID ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES IN PARKS	29%	51%	13%	5%	3%	**80%**
 PROPERTY DEVELOPER PLANNING CONTRIBUTIONS	54%	20%	17%	6%	2%	**74%**
 BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP	40%	31%	22%	4%	4%	**71%**
 CHARITABLE DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING	30%	39%	25%	4%	2%	**69%**
 FOOD AND DRIP CONCESSIONS	26%	43%	19%	10%	2%	**69%**
 CHARGES FOR USING PARK FACILITIES	9%	19%	15%	28%	29%	**28%**

Paying more for parks in business rates

Additional funding for parks and green spaces could be raised by businesses paying more in business rates ringfenced for parks. This idea received greater opposition (54%) than support (21%). However, a quarter of businesses (25%) were unsure.

This suggests that funding parks through higher council taxes is seen as more legitimate by residents (see Chapter Three) than funding parks through higher business rates is seen by business leaders.

4.7 Support for charitable donations to parks

Having established that business leaders support the principle of charitable donations as a way of supplementing council funding of parks and green spaces, the survey asked if their business would consider giving money to an independent charitable fund for parks and green spaces in Leeds. This section first considers self-reported business willingness to donate to parks, and reasons given for why they may or may not donate. Second, it considers what types and aspects of parks business leaders prefer to give to. Third, it considers business leaders' willingness to support employees volunteering in parks. Lastly, it explores current levels of awareness of the Leeds Parks Fund.

Willingness to donate to a charitable fund for parks

More business leaders said that they would not donate to an independent charitable fund for parks (33%) than would (19%). However, like residents, about half (48%) may or were unsure about giving – suggesting a similar sense of being equivocal or ambivalent.

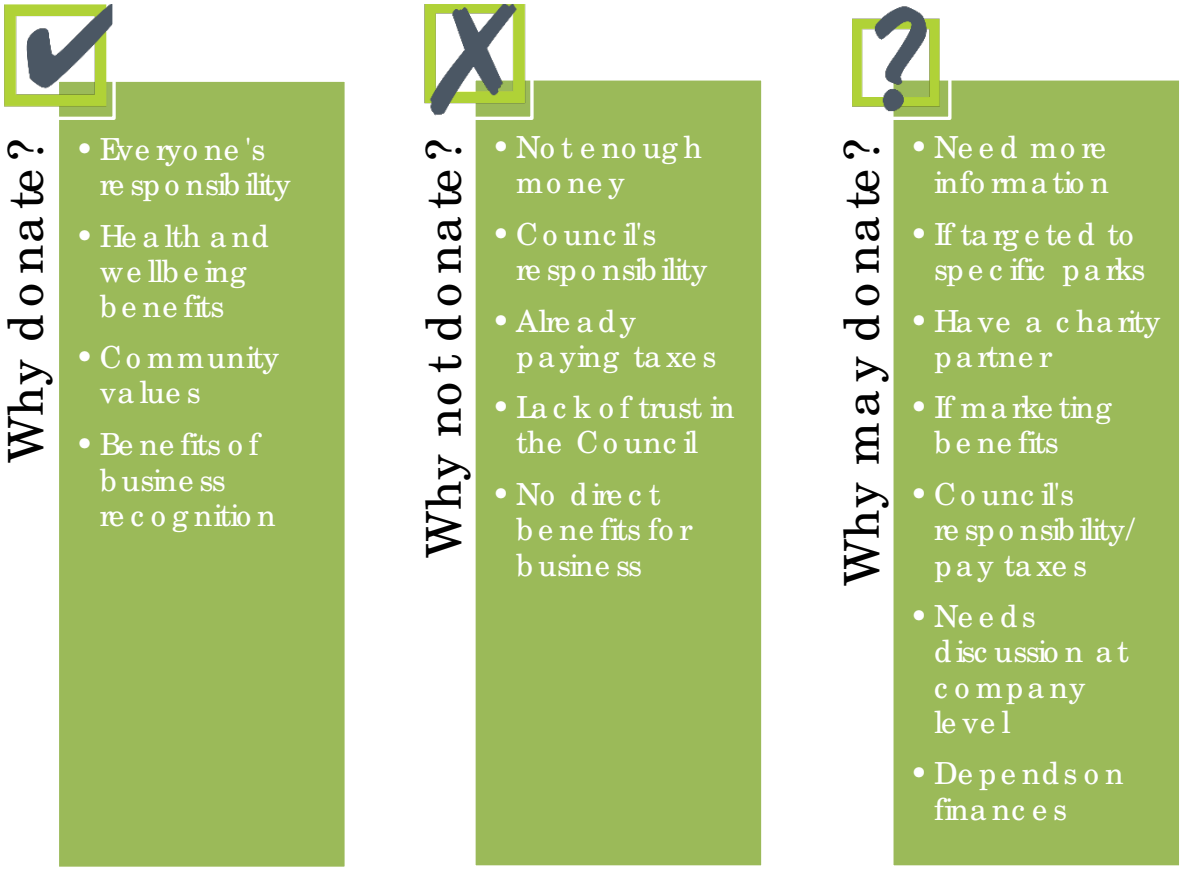
Hence, while there is a high level of support from business leaders for charitable donations and fundraising to supplement public funding of parks, as illustrated above, individual business leaders' willingness to give was much more ambivalent.

Multivariate analyses were used to explore the business characteristics associated with (i) a self-reported willingness to donate to parks and (ii) support

for paying more in business rates for parks, controlling for a range of relevant explanatory variables captured by the survey. Logistical regression models were used to specify the probability of business leaders answering *'yes'* as opposed to *'no'* and *'don't know/maybe/unsure'*. The following list of variables were used as potential explanatory variables: awareness of the Leeds Park Fund, a resident, interested in helping fundraise, a family-owned business, resources available to give money to charity, capacity to volunteer time or offer services to charity, turnover, number of employees, business owner or manager, and having a corporate social responsibility policy. None were found to be statistically significant (for a 0.05 significance level). It is likely that some of the variables explored are having an effect in the probability of participants answering 'yes'. However, the small sample size available limits our capacity to detect such effects.

Why give to parks?

We asked business leaders to outline briefly comment on the main reasons why they would or would not consider donating to a charitable fund for parks. The



following provides an analysis of 91 comments under the three main response categories.

Why donate?

The following four themes emerged from an analysis of the reasons that business leaders gave for why they would consider giving to a charitable fund for parks:

Parks and green spaces are everyone's responsibility, particularly when there is a lack of government funding

- *'We have limited additional funds to give away... but strongly support additional funding for parks.'*
- *'I wouldn't want to be responsible for losing our green spaces due to lack of funding.'*
- *'It's everyone's responsibility to ensure that our parks are maintained.'*
- *'Someone has to support them - the Government doesn't!'*
- *'Although we would support the upkeep of parks and green spaces I feel that this should come from council tax, business rates and income tax already and not be left to the bottom of the list... What a dreadful state of affairs if central and local government don't invest in them directly.'*

Health and well-being benefits of parks

- *'My customers, employees and myself get a lot of use /pleasure from using the parks for dog walking and parkrun etc.'*
- *'Parks are vital for health, well-being and the environment.'*
- *'Outdoor spaces are important for health and wellbeing'*
- *'We walk and cycle to work. We use the park for walks and fresh air. For parkruns. It is a great green space that needs to be looked after and used by all.'*

Community values

- *'Important to be involved in local community.'*
- *'Community is important to us.'*
- *'I think it is important for communities to have green spaces, however as a business we are only small and are unable to fund big amounts, however we would be happy to help where we could.'*

Benefits of business recognition

- *'Would give providing that marketing e.g. signage/branding is demonstrated within the area.'*
- *'If work was happening/needed in our local park and we could support/purchase something that we could promote then we definitely would donate e.g. a park bench, flowers etc.'*

Why not donate?

The following six main themes emerged from an analysis of the reasons that business leaders gave for why they would not consider giving to a charitable fund for parks:

Not enough money

- *'I run a very small business, which barely earns enough money to pay myself month on month.'*
- *'Lack of funds, awareness, expect expensive donations.'*
- *'Businesses are held to pay for a lot of things which reduces their ability to pay for more things that could be beneficial.'*

Council's responsibility

- *'I believe parks should be adequately funded by the rates levied by councils.'*
- *'Councils should be looking after the parks.'*
- *'I believe the local councils should provide the amenities they are responsible for- they appear to do less and less yet ask for more and more.'*
- *'It should come from the council who get the money from the government.'*
- *'I think businesses have too much overheads to add one more to it. Parks are public spaces and I think it the responsibility on government to provide this service.'*

Already paying taxes/business rates

- *'We already pay a huge amount in tax, NI insurance, PAYE tax, business rates, corporation tax, tax on dividends, fuel duty, insurance tax, travel tax, etc! So many stealth taxes, we don't even have our bins collected! Why should you turn us now to look after the parks?... We try to support our community as best we can but asking us to sort another problem is not the answer.'*

- *'We feel our business rates are high enough. We are only a small company.'*
- *'We have serious misgivings about further voluntary funding for services that should be fully funded through the massive amounts of tax us and our employees pay each month...'*
- *'Because we already pay enough.'*

Lack of trust in the Council

- *'LCC has an extremely poor record in looking after its biodiversity duty re its biodiversity action plan.'*
- *'When improvements were planned to [name] park play areas there was an obvious link/benefit to [our business]. We tried to sponsor the playground and buy some of the equipment which would help our awareness too. This was rejected by local councillors and I have no idea why. We then got an inappropriate, dated design, metal playground all funded by the public sector.'*

Other charitable causes more important

- *'We support tree planting in Africa where the carbon benefits are ten times as good as UK.'*
- *'One of a wide range of pulls on charitable donations, and we try to pool our resources on a national basis.'*
- *'Prioritisation of our CSR is important and at the moment this is focused on supporting children related charities.'*

No direct benefit to business

- *'Being based in the heart of central Leeds we do not see a direct benefit to the local parks. Because of this we would be reluctant to allow staff time off to volunteer when we are as busy as we are already without an increase in customer attraction.'*
- *'I am slightly biased because I use the parks to walk my dog. This would most influence me rather than a business justification.'*

Why may donate?

The following six main themes emerged from an analysis of the reasons that business leaders gave for why they may consider or are unsure about giving to a charitable fund for parks:

Need more information

- *'Funds are scarce, and Id want to know how the money was spent.'*

- *'I would want to know exactly what the proposed impact/plan with the money is before deciding.'*
- *'We would be interested in finding more about this.'*
- *'Would need to have sight of what the outputs would be. Can imagine the money being wasted/used badly by Council.'*
- *'There would have to be a clear definition of where, how and when money would be spent.'*
- *'I would like more detailed information about how exactly monies would be spent. Also, would like to see a commitment to integrating isolated, elderly, deprived, mentally ill, disabled and children into such projects to improve their well-being and quality of life.'*
- *'It would completely depend on what the park had to offer. If there enough green space and the park is maintained to a high-quality standard, then yes, we would contribute because it's being looked after. But if after contributing it still looks rough and scrappy then we would not want to contribute.'*
- *'I would give money if I thought the fund was well managed, worked to increase green space and improve access to it. I wouldn't if its focus was on planting bedding plants, focused too much on a select number of large well provisioned parks or was badly run.'*
- *'Unsure of the direct benefit it would achieve.'*
- *'Must be ring-fenced; must be for Leeds; must be in addition to and not instead of existing funding; must be part of a wider initiative to make the wider Leeds public appreciate the incredible open spaces and how important they are.'*

Targeted donations to specific parks, rather than generalised fund

- *'We would consider it - but it would be good to be able to donate to an individual park too.'*
- *'Would it be spent improving the green spaces close to us specifically or in general? I could see some objection that money was going into a pot that would help another part of Leeds that no one in the business would visit.'*

Already have a charity partner/ support other cause

- *'Charitable giving is focused on our charity partner.'*
- *'[Name] is our charity partner with 100% of donations going to them. Would need to consider donating X amount less to them to do this.'*
- *'We already support four local charities that we have strong partnerships with, so we'd have to take a vote in the office as to whether this fund would take precedence over one of them.'*

- *'We prefer to help projects that have no other source of funding… This year we funded the building of an Orphanage in Uganda. Those children have nothing and no means of getting anything other than charitable means. The donation went straight to the point of need and was not watered down in 'administration' costs.'*

If marketing benefits

- *'…if there was promotion of the brand in return for giving money, then this would probably be a yes. We already sponsor roundabout signage and plant pots.'*
- *'Only worthwhile to a business if their donation is acknowledged. I advertise locally.'*

Responsibility of Government and Councils/Already pay taxes

- *'Money should be coming from government and BID, especially as there is published evidence of the benefits of green space on public health, mental health and cities resilience to flooding, climate change and atmospheric pollution.'*
- *'…The Council has the means to maintain and improve its parks and green spaces but decides not to. We pay significant levels of business rates to the Council, they should manage their money better… I would need to be sure the council was working efficiently before I considered giving them a hand out from our hard-earned profit, which, in truth, belongs to the employees.'*

Need discussion at company level

- *'Not something I have given thought to. Need to discuss with my accountant.'*
- *'It would be a board decision.'*
- *'I personally would support this, but we generally let our staff choose what charities the business should support so it is down to a wider consensus of opinion than just me.'*
- *'We have never been asked to consider it and I am not sure what my colleagues would decide.'*

Depends on financial position

- *'It would depend on the cash available in the business at the time. 2019 looks very uncertain - but if things pick up not a problem.'*
- *'It always comes down to the availability of finances and the cause. There is also the financial setup of the charity itself, and the percentage*

of turnover that is dedicated to charitable activities. In other words, zero fat cats and on a case by case basis.'

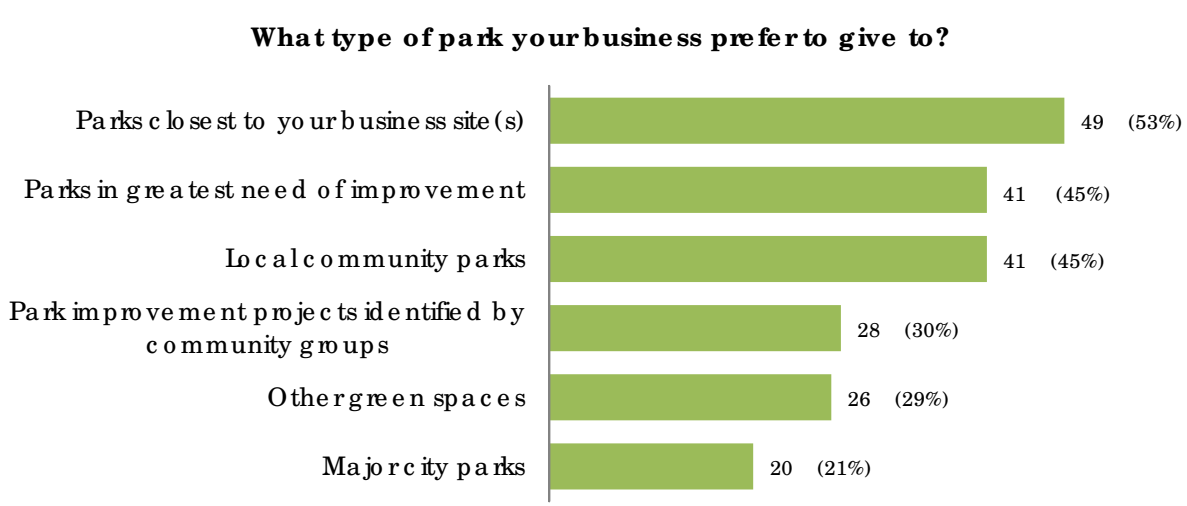
Donating to different types of parks and green spaces

Business leaders who said that they would give or may consider giving to a charitable fund for parks and green spaces selected from a list what types of parks and green spaces they would prefer to give to (Figure 4-8). The top preference was to give to parks closest to their business site (53%). However, many businesses also preferred to support parks in the greatest need of improvement (45%) and local community parks (45%).

BUSINESS LEADERS PREFER TO GIVE TO **PARKS CLOSEST TO THEIR BUSINESS SITE**, **PARKS IN THE GREATEST NEED OF IMPROVEMENT** AND **COMMUNITY PARKS**.

Overall, the findings suggest that a charitable fund would be most appealing to businesses who have a willingness to donate if it gave businesses the option to give to their closest park, focused on parks below quality standards and local community parks.

Figure 4.8 Preferences to donate to different types of parks



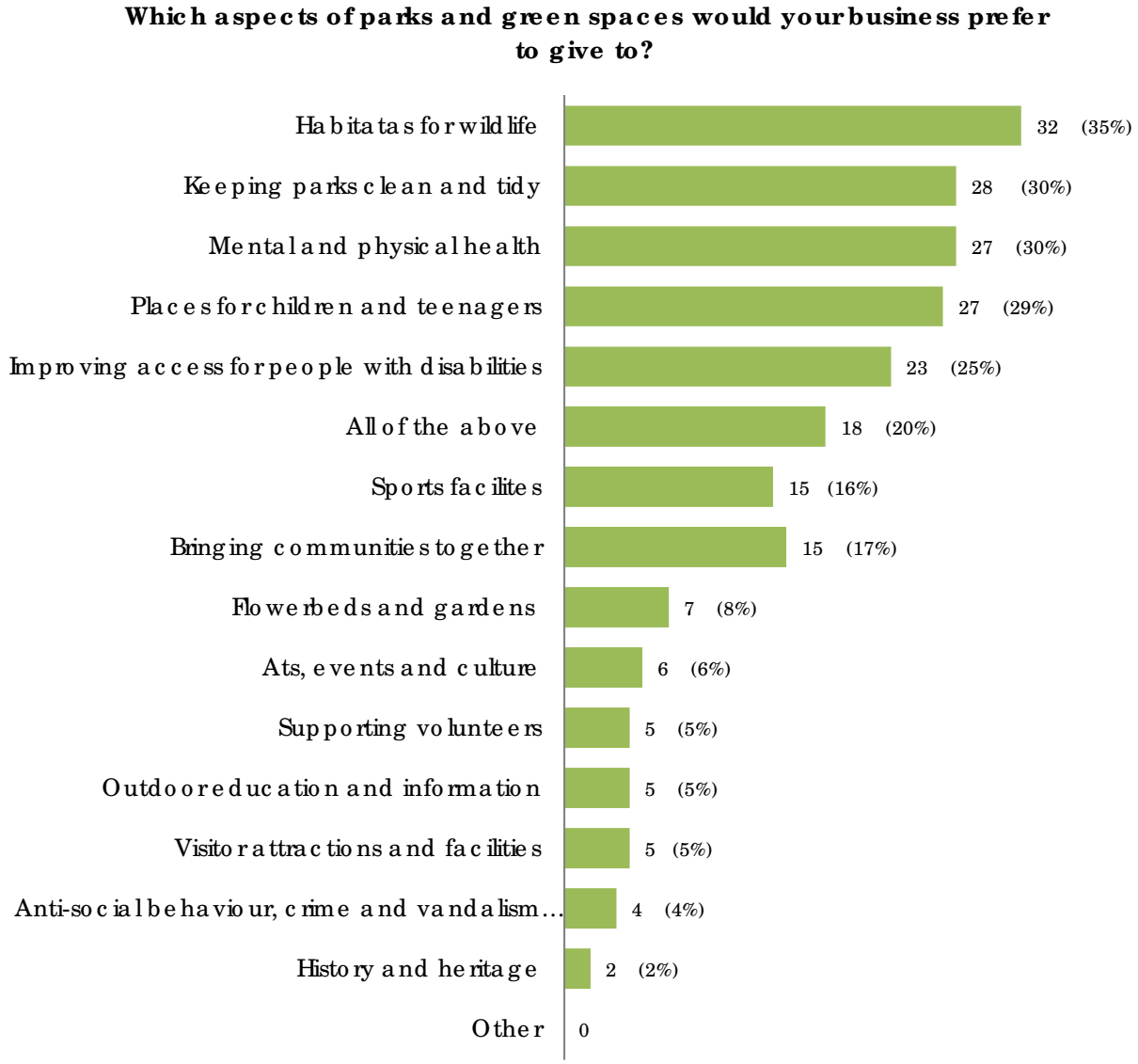
Unweighted count= 100, Weighted Count= 92

Donating to different aspects of parks and green spaces

Business leaders who said that they would give or may consider giving money to parks and green spaces selected from a list what aspects of parks they would prefer to give to (Figure 4-9). The top preferences were habitats for wildlife (35%), keeping parks clean and tidy (30%), mental and physical health (30%) and places for children and teenagers to play (29%), and improving access for people with disabilities (25%).

Overall, the findings suggest that a charitable fund for parks in the city of Leeds (recognising that preferences may be different in other cities) would be more appealing to businesses if it focused initiatives around wildlife habitats, cleanliness, mental/physical health, young people and accessibility.

Figure 4.9 Preferences to donate to different aspects of parks

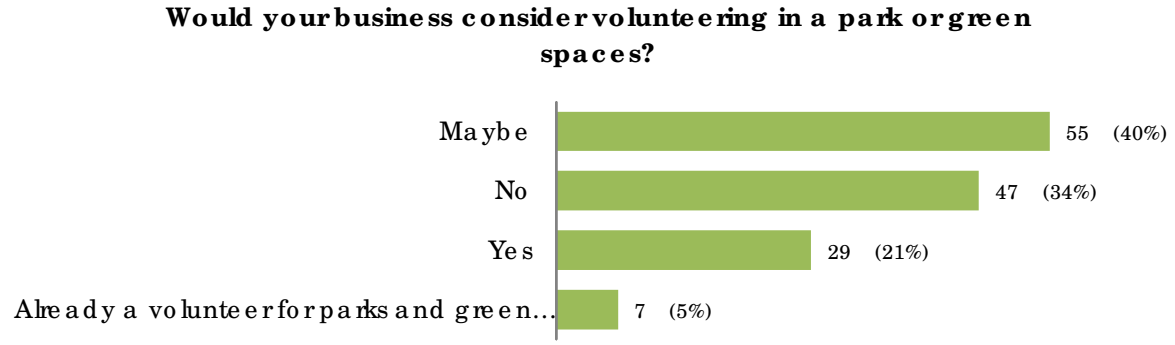


Unweighted count= 100, Weighted Count= 92

Willingness to volunteer

Approximately a fifth of business leaders (21%) would consider corporate volunteering in a park or green space, yet a greater proportion (34%) would not (Figure 4-10). More commonly, business leaders said that they may or were unsure about corporate volunteering in parks (40%). Some 5% said that their business employees already volunteer in parks and green spaces.

Figure 4.10 Willingness to volunteer

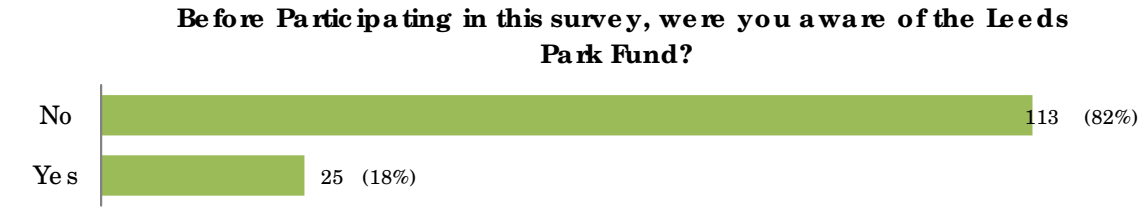


Unweighted count=139; Weighted count=138

Awareness of the Leeds Parks Fund

Most business leaders (82%) were unaware of Leeds Parks Fund (Figure 4-11). This suggests the need for a high-profile campaign to raise awareness of this charitable initiative.

Figure 4.11 Awareness of the Leeds Parks Fund



Unweighted count=138; Weighted count=138

Chapter 5: Qualitative Findings

5.1 Key points

- The establishment of the Leeds Parks Fund and the need for charitable donations to support parks was understood as a response to the financial pressures facing parks as a non-statutory local authority service competing for public funding in the context of austerity.
- There was a widespread belief that charitable donations should not replace or be a substitute for public funding of parks. Some saw charitable giving as a 'sticking plaster' when parks required statutory protection and appropriate public resources allocated for their upkeep. However, it was felt that public donations can have a place within a blended model if it includes a central place for local and central government funding.
- People's opinions and support for charitable donations were often conditional, context-specific and relative. Against the backdrop of ongoing challenges for local government finances, efforts to promote charitable giving were sometimes perceived as an attempt to replace public spending.
- The public are not accustomed to a culture of giving money to fund parks and hold a long-standing perception that parks are funded through taxation. As such, many held the perception that donating is 'paying twice', suggesting the need for sensitive marketing and fundraising.
- It is believed that the role of charitable donations to parks should be to offer 'extras', although general maintenance and provision of basic park facilities is felt to be what is most needed.
- While there were recognised virtues of a citywide charitable fund for parks, targeted giving to specific projects and local parks was preferred so that donors know how and where their donation is being spent.
- Sentiment towards different ways to fund parks is connected to how it is perceived to alter the traditional concept of a public park, reflecting a deeply held belief that parks offer green 'spaces apart' from the city.
- It is important to tap into the personal interests of potential donors, not just in terms of the cause, but in also in terms of the method of giving, which may include time, expertise, skills, products or money.

5.2 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of focus groups and one-to-one interviews with 16 volunteers[43], 21 residents and 8 business leaders conducted between November 2018 and February 2019. A total of 45 participants took part in focus groups and interviews, principally recruited via the online surveys. Two focus groups were held with volunteers drawn from the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum (FG1 & FG2). Three focus groups were held with residents who visit and use parks, some of whom were also volunteers (FG3, FG4 and FG5). One focus group and four one-to-one interviews were held with business leaders (FG6 and Interviewees 1-4).

The first section considers sentiment towards charitable donations to parks and green spaces and the establishment of a charitable fund in the context of austerity. It considers the role and place of charitable donations alongside other means to supplement public funding of parks before turning to consider charitable giving holistically, encompassing both financial and non-financial aspects. The second section explores the perceived virtues and drawbacks of a general citywide charitable parks fund, underscoring a preference for more targeted forms of giving that reflect the personal connections people and businesses have with local and specific parks. The third section provides a summary of views towards the branding, appeal and governance of the Leeds Parks Fund as well as perceived barriers to giving. The fourth section considers the role and engagement of volunteers in the Leeds Parks Fund.

5.3 The role and place of charitable donations to parks

Establishing a charitable parks fund in the context of austerity

The concept of an independent, citywide charitable fund for the improvement of parks and green spaces was generally seen as a 'good idea' by volunteers, residents and businesses, albeit one that was 'necessary' and 'inevitable' (p3, FG2) in the context of sustained cuts to local authority funding. Many participants remarked that public services are having to respond in new ways because of budget cuts - as one participant said, *'we're in that world'* (p1, FG1). Moreover, it was felt that cuts to local authority funding have a particularly adverse impact on non-statutory services, like parks, as they must compete for limited investment with higher-priority public services. Reflecting this, one resident commented, *'if you have to choose between social care or child protection or cutting the grass in the park, well obviously that last one isn't going to have the same priority'* (p4, FG5). A volunteer said, *'I think the reality is that the money isn't there, and they've [Parks and Countryside Service] been*

cut to the bone' (p4, FG1). Business leaders expressed similar sentiments stating that the establishment of the charitable fund appears necessary. One business leader commented, *'central government has yet again fobbed off as much as it possibly can to local authorities and not given them enough money'* (Interview 4). As such, *'with austerity things look really challenging and the danger is unless we find new ways of getting money into parks they are going to get worse'* (Interview 3). Hence, most understood the establishment of a charitable fund in a wider context of fiscal restraint on public services, and the need for charitable donations of money and time to compensate for cuts to park maintenance budgets and staffing levels.

The general sentiment was that charitable donations should not replace or be a substitute for core public funding of parks from national and local taxation. One resident stated, *'what I would hope is that any charitable funding would be the icing on the cake'* (p8, FG4). Hence, reluctant acceptance of the need for a charitable fund for parks was the tone of many of the focus groups: *'I don't think there's any way around it, but I think there are big issues with it'* (p1, FG1); *'...we shouldn't need charity for this sort of thing being done – this is the position we're in, but it irks me to be in this position, but what can we do about it?'* (p1, FG5). These comments were indicative of a widely held belief that the main source of funding for parks should not lie with charities, but with government/the state.

The perception that voluntary donations is 'paying twice'

Although there is no statutory duty on local authorities to provide and maintain parks, there is a long-standing perception that parks are a public good, funded through taxation, and that local authorities are responsible for their maintenance and upkeep. In this context, one of the biggest challenges articulated was the perception that donating is *'paying twice'* (p3, FG1). This perception could act as a barrier to giving, particularly if donations are sought for core provision and basic maintenance. In terms of what donations in parks should fund, there were paradoxes and tensions in the focus groups. It was widely believed that the role of donations should be to offer 'extras', and that people would be happier donating for extras, although they expressed that general maintenance and basic facilities is felt to be most needed and that they would be less happy contributing towards this, as they feel these should come from their taxes: *'...people will perhaps donate to charity for extras, but I'm not sure how happy they will be to donate for what they think they should be getting anyway... you might want to pay for something extra, but are you going to pay for your basics?'* (p1, FG1); *'that's what you pay council tax for so why should we be paying for this?'* (p7, FG5). Business leaders expressed

similar sentiments: *'We pay to the parks anyway through the Council, and businesses pay through corporation tax and infrastructure don't they so they are quite within their rights to say, "we are paying again here aren't we"'* (Interview 2). By contrast, others suggest that 'need to do', rather than 'nice to do' projects should be the focus for donations. Hence, a charitable fund for parks may be more appealing if it clearly offers *'something extra'* (p1, FG1) but, even so, *'changing people's perceptions'* (p7, FG5) is necessary before some volunteers, residents and businesses would consider giving. This paradox appears about concerns that donations should not replace taxation, which should be used to provide good quality parks. The problem is that at the moment there is insufficient public funding for this 'quality provision' and funding is required for 'need to do' maintenance, as well as 'nice to do' extras.

Some saw the establishment of a charitable fund as shifting responsibility for parks from local authorities to volunteers, residents and businesses, in which failure to donate would also shift the blame for any future decline in the condition of parks: *'I mean the wording on the leaflet "donate today to help our parks blossom" suggests if you don't donate today, the parks will not blossom. So, it's therefore your fault if they end up in disrepair or unused or bereft of wildlife'* (p5, FG5). This was, for some, bordering on *'propaganda'* (Interview 3). Others felt that the condition of parks would need to be *'really bad'* before some residents would consider donating to a charitable fund.

The role and place of charitable donations

The House of Commons inquiry into the future of public parks concluded in 2017 that Britain's 27,000 urbans parks are at a 'tipping point' and face threat of decline with 'severe consequences' (House of Commons 2017: 4). While recognising the gravity of the challenges facing parks, the inquiry report argued that statutory protection would not guarantee park preservation (House of Commons, 2017). Instead, it identified 'the potential for local authorities to raise funds to support their parks through a blended model, including local authority funding, commercial income, external grants, fundraising, and social investors' (House of Commons 2017: 53).

Focus group discussions captured opinion on the role and place of charitable donations alongside other means to supplement funding for the improvement of urban green space. As noted above, the starting point for these discussions was unequivocally that charitable donations should not seek to replace or be a substitute for core public funding of parks by the government/state but that charitable donations may have a role within a wider model of funding. Charitable donations, unlike taxation, was seen to be an unreliable and

volatile source of funding, and some questioned the longevity of a charitable fund for parks. Many felt that the answer to the crisis in parks funding should come from central government rather than charity but did not believe that this was a realistic prospect.

Some felt that local authorities should do more to generate income from other means before pursuing charitable donations from residents and volunteers: '*… are the Parks department doing enough to generate income before they mess about with donations, because you've mentioned vans – are they actually doing enough to generate all the income they can do from concessions or from people who run classes in the parks, or dare I say it from dog walkers? I think there's a big scope to generate more income, rather than just expecting people to donate'* (p1, FG1).

By contrast, others saw charitable donations as a preferable source compared to the prospect of generating income from large-scale events and paid attractions in parks. Holding large events, like music concerts and festivals, is perceived by some to *'totally change the nature of the parks and don't necessarily mean that they perform the same function that they have over the years'* (p4, FG1). Another resident said, *'If you have lots and lots of music concerts or lots of commercial enterprises entering into the parks, that will raise the money, but it might not protect the park and the nature of the park could change. Personally, I would like parks to retain their feature as parks, not a venue'* (p3, FG4). It was felt that parks offer 'alternative landscapes' (Layton-Jones, 2016) that are different to the rest of the city, but events would offer people *'more of the same'* (p4, FG1) and, by implication, would not function as green 'spaces apart'. Likewise, there was mixed support for generating income through introducing or extending food and drink concessions because of the pollution caused by food vans and unhealthy items sold, which is unviable if the parks are cited as providing health benefits. These comments resonate with a long-standing Victorian ideal that municipal parks offer 'spaces apart' from the city, largely free from industry, agriculture or commerce (Barker *et al.*, forthcoming). Hence, views on ways to supplement the funding of urban green space is connected to the traditional concept, form and character of a park. Commercial ventures have a long history of supporting park use and enhancing experiences. However, exploitation of commercial opportunities as a way to navigate the current financial constraints needs to remain attentive to their potential to alter the character and form of a park as distinct spaces set apart from the city.

Others perceived funding from private charitable donations in the same category as revenue generated from commercial giving, in that it can lead to

the privatisation of public space: '*Public facilities should be maintained with public money not private donations. Funding through charity and commercial activity could lead to privatisation, loss of public access and the running of parks for profit not public benefit*' (Resident, survey response). Where public parks compete for business sponsorship and charitable donations, there is a danger that this creates a '*patchwork quilt*' (Interview 3) in the quality of public green spaces across a city.

Some residents were open to a wide range of means to generate income and bring investment into their local park, except for charges for using park facilities: '*I wouldn't turn anything away from our park. The only thing I don't like though is charging – you shouldn't charge for parks*' (p2, FG4). This reflects widespread opposition to the introduction or extension of charges to use park facilities, particularly for playground access, general amenity and other previously free uses. Charges are thought to impact negatively park-use and subsequently reduce the health, well-being and social benefits of parks. The idea of being 'priced out' of using a public park was a fear for some. There is some support for charges for some types of concessions, sporting facilities and specific attractions in parks: '*Charges for certain concessions, maybe, but you'd have to be very careful about that. Could you imagine having to pay to use the children's playgrounds?*' (p5, FG2). However, many were open to certain paid attractions in parks that provide places for children and young people in the school holidays. Yet there were divergent views about what facilities should be free and which should be charged:

P8: 'I thought it was disappointing that you had to pay at Temple Newsam to go into the farm, which I thought was a really important part of education for young children, particularly when they don't know what animals look like and where food comes from, so I was disappointed, because that's permanently there, and the thing is it's not just charge, it's about what level do you charge. P2: I think that's a bit of a hard one because they still need to feed and look after the animals, if there's an additional attraction I've never had a problem paying for it.

P10: It depends on what the charge is for, if it's for walking around a park then no that's ridiculous, but if there is something very specific or special, if a company has hired it then it should be charged.' (FG3)

Introducing or extending car parking charges were generally not seen as viable, in that they may cost more to administer and enforce than might be generated in income. Residents also questioned the impact of charging for car parking on certain groups and any negative unintended consequences of

charging, for example, discouraging park use: *'We need to be looking at whether charging in a carpark would actually discourage people'* (p4, FG1). Similar sentiments were expressed by business leaders, although one supported charging for car parking to off-set the carbon footprint.

By contrast, some residents had observed that the removal of charges for certain park facilities was associated with an increase in the use of those facilities: *'It's interesting, at Roundhay they're all free now, the tennis courts. For years they [the Council] charged and no one used them and now they're free and people are always there'* (p4, FG4). Others suggested that *'pay as you feel'* (p3, FG3) for park activities is preferable although recognised that this is not a sustainable and reliable income.

Many residents, albeit far from all, believed that increasing taxation was fairer and *'the least painful'* way to fund *'essential services'* like public parks: *'It would be much nicer wouldn't it if we could just all pay more tax'* (p1, FG1). This also meant that some supported higher business rates and corporation tax: *'It's just a shame that businesses don't pay more corporation taxes rather than messing about with donations'* (p1, FG1). This was not fully supported by the business leaders involved in the focus groups: *'This [charitable giving] is all about voluntary and that [taxation] becomes not voluntary'* (p3, FG6). Overall, there was mixed support for the idea of paying more in taxation for parks and green spaces. Some felt that there were other important public services that could be ring-fenced for extra taxation, and considered if parks were the highest priority: *'If a portion of your business rates is being diverted somewhere else, then it's a competing thing isn't it... is it all being diverted into the Leeds Parks Fund why doesn't it get diverted somewhere else? Like why doesn't it get diverted into filling the potholes in the road?'* (p7, I2). Others felt that they would pay more in tax generally for better public services. Others felt that an option could be to choose to pay additional council tax instead of giving to charity: *'That could be an idea, if you could choose an extra 5% of your council tax going to parks or roads or whatever'* (p1, FG5).

Overall, there was support for a variety of means to generate income for parks recognising that some means might be more appropriate for certain parks. A general sentiment was that prudence and careful judgement was important in that too much of any approach to external non-conventional income could be detrimental for a park: *'It's a question of judiciousness really, all those options out of hand could just make parks absolutely awful'* (p4, FG2). As such, for many, *'the devil's in the detail'* (p7, FG4). Despite varied views, on balance, voluntary donations were one of the preferred means for improving urban green space: *'I think they're [Parks and Countryside Service] between a rock*

and a hard place with a lot of this aren't they, so maybe charitable giving is the one thing we ought to really push and try hard with' (p4, FG1). However, there was widespread acknowledgement that harnessing charitable donations would be a challenging endeavour that needs to engage with the urgency and need for donations and how it would compete with other charities.

Charitable giving as a holistic concept

Giving to charity was viewed holistically, involving financial and non-financial donations. There is a strong desire by residents, volunteers and businesses for charitable schemes, like the Leeds Parks Fund, to embed a broader and more holistic concept of giving that encompasses time and money:

P1: 'Actually, that's a good point, perhaps a donation shouldn't just be about money, it should be about time.
P4: That would be a really good idea to that, you could pay in money or you could pay in time.
P1: Because actually, a lot of the things that they're saying they want to improve can be done just by people helping.' (FG1)

Indeed, volunteers recognised that '*time is money*', and time can be more valuable than money for parks and green spaces as well as produce a wide range of social, health and community benefits, which may not translate to giving money: '*Volunteering generates vast numbers of other benefits, social benefits, and legacy benefits, and all those community links that simply donating some money simply can't tap into'* (p5, FG5).

Business leaders commonly identified non-financial ways that they could give to parks and green spaces, for example, the giving of skills and expertise, equipment and materials, and paid-time off for employees to volunteer. One business leader noted: '*a lot of the large organizations you know will give their staff hours or do a joint session where they take everybody away or a day of two and they are always looking for projects like that*' (Interview 1). Volunteers recognised the valuable contributions from businesses in this regard: '*a lot of businesses volunteer their time, and form a core part of working in parks, which is obviously really valuable'* (p4, FG1). Another business leader felt that it had the expertise and skills to support parks, but required partnership working with the Council to help: '*There are loads of parks around Leeds that are of variable quality and that I think we as a company would be interested in using our expertise and people who work with us to support improvements to them… but [we] don't have any sense of ownership over them so I think trying to bridge that gap is a really interesting challenge for Leeds…'* (p4, FG6).

However, it was recognised that many residents and businesses may not have the capacity to give time. One resident said, '*there are only certain groups often that are time-rich*' (p7, FG3). Nevertheless, some expressed that they would prefer to '*donate time rather than money*' (p4, FG4). Others noted that relying on volunteering had limitations, given its ad hoc nature and suggested that money was important for large or strategic park projects. As one resident noted, '*you can't do big projects... with volunteer groups that come ad-hoc*' (p4, FG3).

Most were keen for a charitable initiative to promote a variety of ways to give, and to recognise non-financial ways of giving. Several residents commented on the Bournemouth Parks Foundation website which, under the 'support us' webpage, features multiple ways to give, including: donating generally to the Foundation, donating to specific projects, volunteering, leaving a legacy, being a fundraiser, purchasing merchandise, and 'give as you live' - a free way of raising money for charity when shopping online. Overall, participants noted a need to make a personal connection with potential donors, not just in terms of the cause but also in terms of the *method* of giving: '*it's just a matter of tapping into the thing that they love to get them to respond – so some may give money, some may give time, some may for example go around and pick litter up. Calling it a "fund" – it's bigger than that, because people might not have money, but they want to do something and that should be captured too*' (p5, FG4).

The idea of '*logging donations of time*' (p3, FG3) was identified as a way of recognising different forms of giving and appealing to a wider audience, such as schoolchildren doing Duke of Edinburgh. However, some felt that requests to log donations of time may also be a burden for volunteers. More broadly, some volunteers said that giving time is often conceived of as physical labour. However, giving time might involve being social and contributing to reducing loneliness: '*...it might be that your contribution is that you go and talk to people in the park, it doesn't have to be shovelling something or other around*' (p4, FG1).

5.4 A citywide charitable parks fund

Charitable fundraising can focus on a specific park or parks across a wider geographical area such as a city. The citywide scale of the Leeds Parks Fund was seen as its greatest quality because it offered the prospect that '*no park or green space would be left behind*' (p2, FG2). If donors can choose to give to a specific park, it was believed that this may produce inequalities in investment, primarily by benefitting parks in more affluent areas of the city:

'you can get an unequal distribution if you're just sectioning it on certain areas' (p1, FG3). As such, a citywide initiative has the capacity to stimulate a collective outlook, as one resident said, *'we need to consider whether we are Leeds, or we are a collection of small communities'* (p8, FG4). The citywide scale was thought to offer a particularly important opportunity for parks and green spaces in deprived, inner city areas which are most in need: *'it [the Leeds Parks Fund] has to be distributed fairly throughout the entire city'* (p5, FG3). Hence, many residents felt that *'there has to be some kind of citywide approach'* (p10, FG3). The prospect of quality green space across all communities and the belief that the initiative could encourage *'more communities to become active'* (p8, FG5) resulting in more *'fantastic parks'* (p6, FG1) were some of the virtues of a citywide initiative.

Despite the virtues of a citywide fund, from a donor perspective there were limitations as it requires donors to concede power and choice over how and where their donation is spent. While there was broad support for charitable donations, *'because I love my parks and want them to be invested in'* (p5, FG2), the citywide model of the Leeds Parks Fund was felt to be *'too vague'* and *'amorphous'* (p1, FG5) because potential donors were not clear which projects, parks, green spaces or areas of the city would benefit from the funds raised. This lack of specificity about the causes to be supported from the outset was perceived as a barrier to giving: *'[I might donate] if you sort of had an idea of where your money was going to end up rather than just a big pot that could end up anywhere. If there was a specific project that highlights this money would go towards this...'* (p3, FG1). It gave rise to scepticism about where donors' money would eventually be spent and a worst-case scenario that *'the money would just disappear down some little muddy riverbank into subsidising the Council'* (p8, FG5). A consistent finding from previous research on charitable giving is that transparency of the mission and actions of non-profit organisations, particularly how the funds are used, is crucial for engaging donors (Gorczyca and Hartman, 2017). Some suggested that a citywide fund could focus on citywide projects or strategic themes common to all parks and green spaces, such as playgrounds, wildlife habitats, bees and pollinators or seek to connect parks and green spaces in a wider green infrastructure that may also encourage people to give beyond their local park. Such an approach may help to shift donor's focus on 'where' donations are going, to 'what' they are supporting, potentially extending willingness to give beyond local projects and parks.

The general sentiment was that an all-purpose, citywide parks fund is not likely to inspire donations because it does not provide donors with the comfort of

knowing where their donation is going and is unable to fulfil donor preferences for giving to particular parks - based on strong connections they have with certain parks. However, knowledge of projects to be funded in advance may extend willingness to give beyond residents' local park: *'I don't think I'd give to a general fund. I'm not that mean that I'd only give money to my local park, but if there was a special project I would want to know where my money was going to go actually, to be perfectly honest'* (p1, FG1). Therefore, most participants suggested that charitable giving needed to be *'anchored'* (p3, FG3) in some way – via specific projects, certain parks or green spaces (e.g. community parks or parks below national quality standards), groups of beneficiaries (e.g. children and young people) or core themes (e.g. wildlife or health) – in order to inspire volunteers, residents and businesses to engage with the initiative, and consider donating to it. Indeed, for those who were keen to support the initiative, providing greater transparency and specificity over the direction of donations may persuade them to give: *'I would definitely donate if I knew where the money was going to'* (p2, FG4). Giving donors control inspires trust and an increased propensity to donate (Charity Commission for England and Wales, 2018).

There was a preference towards giving to specific projects that connect with their personal interests and to their local or main park of use, as one volunteer said: *'I want any money to go into my local park'* (p3, FG1). For volunteers, giving their time allows them to contribute *'in a very personal way to your own personal, private, meaningful park'* (p5, FG5). Indeed, research on charitable giving identifies the importance of personal preferences and seeing the meaningful impact of donations (Breeze, 2010). Others who saw themselves as potential legacy donors wanted to know that their donation would benefit their local area: *'I actually made my will and put Leeds Parks Fund in it but I'd quite like to know somewhere down the line that it's going to benefit our area' (p1, FG2)*. Overall, it was felt that specific projects allow people to *'make their mind up about whether they choose to make that one of their personal priorities'* (p4, FG5). Hence, many participants favoured an approach to voluntary donations that draws on elements of civic crowdfunding, where a specific project is identified and approved in advance and funding for it is raised from many people. This is the approach taken by MyParkScotland, a crowdfunding platform specifically for parks and greenspaces in Scotland, by the Bournemouth Parks Foundation, and Spacehive.

Some residents felt that certain larger businesses may be happy to contribute to a citywide parks fund: *'There are lots of employers in Leeds who ought to be putting money in this and they wouldn't want to give to a specific park, places*

like Asda and the NHS and Lloyds, hopefully they would put money in for the whole project and be perfectly happy to fund those bigger things' (p5, FG2). However, smaller businesses and local people might prefer to contribute to a specific park or project: '*But then you may get smaller businesses that are local to [park name] that would like to support there…*' (p1, FG2).

In the same way that donors prefer local charities to international charities – with research showing local charities tend to be trusted more (Charity Commission for England and Wales, 2018) – businesses, volunteers and residents expressed a desire to be able to donate to their local park or parks that they feel greatest affinity or personal connection. A generalised charitable fund may not tap into the personal connections residents, volunteers and businesses have with specific parks, which may result in fewer donations: '*I think people come along and volunteer because they feel they're doing something that's good for their community, they're doing something that's good for them, but they have this almost ownership feel around this is my local area and I care about it… if they plonked me …somewhere else in Leeds I probably wouldn't feel the same commitment… and Ithink with the charitable giving, Ithink for indwiduals that's going to be quite an issue'* (p4, FG1). Some business leaders identified a tension between the location of their business (in the city centre) and the location of many parks and green spaces (outside of the city centre) which may affect their engagement with green space and, subsequently, their willingness to engage with a charitable initiative: '*it's one of the greenercities in the country and has one of the least green city centres*' (p1, FG6).

Business leaders supported the idea of an initiative that sought more opportunities to improve local green space: '*I think the management and development in green spaces and giving local people the opportunity to a fund that can actually make a difference to their local park, Iam very happy to support that activity*' (Interview 2). They were also keen to support parks that were nearby and cited the benefits of green space for their employees and clients. One business leader was keen to improve the 'greenness' of the city centre as well as accessibility to other parks and green spaces: '*…we are interested in activities - a lot of us go running and want to do things like softball etc. Opportunities are limited close to the office. We have been talking about potentially going to one of the other parks and getting involved with something over there'* (p2, FG6). By contrast, another business leader who purposely selected a location outside of the city centre and near green space spoke of the value of nearby parks to their employees, for instance, '*to walk round the park, have your lunch there, work over there if you want*' (Interview 4); '*I think*

clients who drive out to see us actually like the fact that they are not in Leeds [city] and there's a park' (Interview 4).

A popular suggestion was that a citywide charitable parks fund could have a '*two-pronged approach*' (p1, FG3), offering donors the opportunity to give to parks and green spaces generally or donate to a specific project/local park, or a combination of both: '*You could have the top three things that we would like to try and fundraise, plus if you want to split it across and have a general thing as well... You need something specific*' (p6, FG2). This was supported by some businesses who suggested providing an option of offering to split donations between a general fund and a specific park: '*for every £100 we put in, £80 can go to the park of our choice, so this one, and £20 goes into a wider fund. That that would encourage companies to give*' (Interview 4). A two-pronged approach was felt by some to address the lack of inspiration to donate to a citywide fund, whilst also retain some of its virtues.

A further suggestion to inspire and sustain charitable donations to parks and green spaces was to offer specific items in parks that '*you actually can go and visit and see you've funded*' (p3, FG3). Supporting this idea, a volunteer said: '*You could do more, sort of, sponsor your local park rather than charitable giving, though couldn't you? Like they do with Tropical World or the canal gardens, you go and see your pet spider, you know, which my kids used to love!*' (p4, FG1). According to previous research, one of the main reasons local charities received continued support is because donors had seen evidence of the work being done first-hand (Knowles and Sullivan, 2017). However, others noted that charities identify a specific person or animal, but include a disclaimer which means that they can use the money for a wider cause: '*...when you donate to a charity, often all the charities will say although you think you're donating for [something specific], they can spend their money wherever they want*' (p1, FG1).

5.5 The Leeds Parks Fund model

This section of the report provides a summary of the main findings relating to the branding, appeal and governance of the Leeds Parks Fund model of charitable giving. It considers views on the title of the Fund, aims and objectives, transparency and accountability, distribution of funds, website, and the role of the Council.

Name

Some did not feel that the title of the charitable fund was appealing: '*Leeds Parks Fund doesn't inspire me at all... it doesn't sound interesting, it doesn't sound inviting... LPF sounds more like a bank*' (p10, FG3). While many commented that the title is not the 'wowest' (p1, FG3), others said, '*The name does what it says on the tin*' (p7, FG4). A consistent point was that the title relates only to parks, which does not capture the broad ambition: '*I don't think it [the Leeds Parks Fund title] defines the totality of their estate, it's obviously not just parks, it's forests, woodlands, green spaces, and "parks" is a bit municipal in a way. I prefer a bit of a "green" title*' (p2, FG2). The name therefore is potentially a barrier to engagement.

Strategic aims and objectives

It was felt that the Leeds Parks Fund needs a '*visible strategy*', including clear aims and objectives, a sense of scale and ambition, specific targets/projects for giving, and proposed outcomes in the short and longer term. For instance, one volunteer said: '*I've no idea what sort of size of pot they're hoping to get*' (p4, FG1). Others felt that the Leeds Parks Fund needs to be more ambitious, focusing on large projects that will make a real difference to the city: '*...for me the big problem with this community-funded thing [is] you can't do big projects... Because it's big expenditure, you know, installing a skate park, for example, or improving the playground with rubber mats is very expensive, professional work*' (p4, FG3).

Most wanted to see example projects to envision better the scope, aims and ambitions of the Leeds Parks Fund: '*Even at this early stage, finding a few examples of fundable projects and almost putting them in straight away, almost before the trustees have been established to show goodwill and a kind of pro forma*' (p5, FG2). The list of examples provided on the website of what donations might fund in parks do not appeal to all and could be off-putting: '*I would actually say bulbs aren't particularly important and a concert isn't particularly important in my mind*' (p1, FG1). Some residents would be interested in donating if the examples were more '*imaginative*' (p8, FG5) such as '*Free space for children to play and build dens and people to see wildlife*' (p3, FG5). People's views varied as to what examples might be most appealing, and which are off-putting. This variance was felt to reflect competing and conflicting views about '*what parks are for*' (p4, FG1).

Some identified concerns about the long-term sustainability of projects funded through charitable donations, as one business leader said: '*Another challenge*

is longevity; making sure it's there for the long term' (p3, FG6). Another said, *'Sustainability of what the Fund does has to be the key to it because it is both a question of improving and maintaining and the maintenance is as expensive as the improving bit in the long run'* (p1, FG6).

Others wanted to know how the Leeds Parks Fund connects with the *Parks and Green Spaces Strategy for Leeds* and integrates with other citywide strategies. Some were aware that the criteria for allocating grants includes making a difference to the quality of parks as measured by the Green Flag standard. However, this raised questions about whether applications to improve parks that already meet this standard are ineligible or lower priority: *'If we put in an application are the assessors going to say, "well they met the quality park minimum score; therefore, they're not going to be high up on the priority list"'* (p2, FG2). Some business leaders noted a qualitative difference between raising standards of parks that are currently in poor condition and making parks even better places: *'[bringing] parks and green spaces that are struggling, particularly in more deprived areas up to the standard, right, that's clearly different from making our community spaces even better'* (Interview 3). Overall, to inspire residents and businesses to engage with this initiative the Leeds Parks Fund needs clear strategic objectives, a robust ambition and well-defined aims.

Transparency and accountability

Related, the Leeds Parks Fund website was felt to be much *'too light'* in terms of priorities, content about the eligibility, process and criteria for awarding and allocating grants from the charitable donations raised and in terms of its administrative running costs: *'I thought the website was a little bit light – a lot light in fact, in terms of process, priorities, strategies, how it integrates'* (p7, FG4). Clear information is important to perceptions of transparency and accountability and may remove suspicions about how donations are to be spent. Most wanted *'a clear statement of accountability on the website'* (p7, FG4). It was felt that the lack of detail about *'who's going to make the decisions about where the money goes, and how will they justify it and all that'* (p4, FG5) may affect decisions to donate.

Residents who had visited the Bournemouth Parks Foundation website commented positively on the specificity of charitable donation targets, clarity about how much had been raised, the detail of projects funded/seeking funding and the clarity of aims, ambitions and governance structures: *'I went from Nesta's page to Bournemouth Parks Foundation page and was very impressed by it because it's very much project-based and says how much they want to raise, it's very clear about the structure of the organisation, and how*

it's a charitable trust. I thought it was much more encouraging to donate because you could see exactly where the money was going and there was a hierarchy of expenditure and some ground projects. So, I thought the Leeds Parks Fund is like a bottomless pit, you don't know what's going in, you don't know what's going out' (p4, FG2).

Distribution of funds

The Leeds Parks Fund seeks voluntary donations from local people and businesses, which community groups can later apply to for a grant to improve their local park or green space. There was a concern that this model of allocating charitable funds would predominately benefit (affluent) areas which have established 'Friends' or Community groups who have the time, skills and organisation to apply for grants: *'...the ones [parks] with well-organised "Friends" groups are going to be in a stronger position to benefit... because they'll have the interest and the motivation to make an application, whereas if you're in an area where you can't get people to take an interest you're going to struggle to benefit from the Leeds Parks Fund'* (p4, FG5). Hence, it was suggested that the Leeds Parks Fund has the potential to widen rather than narrow inequalities in park investment across the city, as one business leader said: *'I think instinctively that it is going to reinforce inequalities'* (Interviewee 1). Another said, *'working class areas don't know their way around the Council or the funding opportunities...'* (Interviewee 3).

Considering this, many felt it was important for the Leeds Parks Fund to offer support and mentoring to community groups: *'I'd like to see the Leeds Parks Fund have a role in facilitating or maybe even mentoring local groups, to enable them to apply for funds'* (p7, FG4). Others suggested that the criteria used to allocate funding might mitigate such an effect, as one resident noted: *'That's not always the case [that affluent areas benefit], when you apply for money, I mean the Lottery Fund particularly looks at needy cases... so in many ways deprived areas are the target for funding'* (p3, FG4).

A related concern is how demanding the grant application process will be for community groups, particularly with regards to *'straightforwardness'* and *'ease'*. One volunteer with previous experience of applying for grants said: *'I mean applying for the postcode lottery is actually very easy to apply for. Green Leeds was a nightmare and, if Leeds City Council, if that's the way that the Leeds Parks Fund is going to expect groups to apply for it...'* (p1, FG1). Moreover, some volunteers spoke of the burden on certain communities of grant schemes that rely on community groups applying for and delivering projects: *'...it is hard work [applying for funding], and if you're asking people*

from areas where there is more pressure for them to do all sorts of things and just get through life then you're making a huge demand on them…' (p3, FG1).

Communicating urgency and need of charitable donations to parks

To inspire voluntary donations, most articulated the need to provide an explanation as to why donations are necessary or urgent now. Therefore, it was commonly expressed that the Leeds Parks Fund needs clear targets for donations and the branding needs a clear message about what might happen if people do not donate (as well as what might change if people do give). As one business leader noted, *'I think the brand is pretty good but again yeah it doesn't feel that important to me'* (p4, FG6). Hence, many pointed to the need to underscore the financial challenges facing parks, which may provide the sense of urgency or need required to stimulate giving: *'I still don't think people realise the full extent of the lack of funding there's going to be to maintain parks and I don't think that comes across [on the website]. So, I don't think there's any urgency behind this and there should be… I think there's a reluctance on the part of the City Council to actually say that… And I think that they need to be straight with people, because otherwise you're not going to put enough urgency behind this*' (p4, FG1). The media coverage of political messages about the prospect of austerity ending contributed to this:

'P1: I mean, how urgent is it? That's a very good point.
P4: We know that Parks' budget has been cut quite severely over the last two or three years certainly.
P3: And I assume it'll be cut again for April.
P1: But people have just been told they [the Government] will end austerity now.
P4: That'll be alright then, in fact, we may not need this at all!' (FG1)

This gave rise to calls for greater clarity about how, and in what way, voluntary donations is a response to local authority budget cuts and, should the economic climate improve and austerity politics end, what this will mean for the longevity of the charitable initiative.

Business leaders suggested that a charitable fund for parks needs to stand out, clearly articulating the need for donations, the reasons why the Council cannot make these improvements themselves, the specific benefits for businesses of donating as well as wider societal and environmental benefits.

Competition from other charities

While parks and green spaces were widely acknowledged as essential to cities, for the many benefits they provide – it was recognised that a charitable fund for parks will face *'huge competition'* (p1, FG1) from high profile charities. One business leader stated, *'You need to convince me [my money] should go [to the LPF] rather than to those other organisations'* (p3, FG6). Many questioned *'how is this one [LPF] going to compete in the pool?'* (p4, FG1), particularly in the light of the discussion above.

Hence, business leaders felt that a charitable parks fund needs to be *'high profile'* to attract companies who are deciding where to donate: *'There's a big noise isn't there, so you've got to be the thing that sticks out of that noise'* (p2, FG6). A challenge was that a parks charity generates less of an emotive response in comparison to *'cancer charities, dementia charities all those things which at the moment are very high profile…'* (Interviewee 2). Considering this, some business leaders said that there is greater need for a parks fund to create a *'personal connection and things that you know tick a box with individuals'* (Interviewee 4).

Research suggests that human services charities tend to be the focus for donations, with giving to non-human services charities (e.g. arts, environment, animals, etc.) being favoured by donors with higher education levels (Bennett, 2012). A core challenge for a parks' charity is competition by people-focused charities: *'…there's a lot of competition for people's spare money these days and perhaps parks as opposed to people … people or parks, people might win'* (p3, FG1). Nonetheless, discussions suggest that it is largely the benefits that parks generate for people and wildlife, not the actual spaces in and of themselves, which are important. Hence, rather than a general focus on parks, charitable fundraising may be more appealing if it focuses on the benefits of parks to people: *'…there is a call for lots of charitable donations [so] you've got to demonstrate why it's beneficial to everyone. Everyone understands it's beneficial, but you've got to raise the profile of why a fund will actually benefit people'* (p1, FG6). By making a parks charitable initiative about people, and the possible benefits to people, it may inspire a higher emotional connection and compete more effectively with other charities.

Furthermore, the core message about why people should donate needs to be written from the perspective of a potential donor: *'I think "why donate" is written as if the council have written it, not as if you're going to donate. People do care about obesity and all those things but that's not why they donate, so that's probably written slightly wrong'* (p3, FG3). Hence, the branding of a charitable parks fund needs to have personal appeal, as one resident said: *'It needs to be personal, this isn't personal, it needs to be something that when it*

comes to the door it doesn't just go in the bin, but you look at it and your first impression is that it's personal to you' (p5, FG3). Previous research points to the importance of personal appeal affecting an individual's willingness to give; personal connection with the cause significantly shapes charity choice (Bennett, 2012).

Website and leaflet design

While most liked the look of the website and leaflet, there were divergent views on the use of illustrations. Some expressed a preference for photographic images: '*I would have liked to have seen some photographs of our wonderful woodlands covered in bluebells. That is more likely to make me think, "oh aren't we lucky, we should support it" than a load of cartoons*' (p6, FG2). Others liked the illustrations stating it is '*really well done … attractive … snappy*' and felt that '*the overall thing would make us donate as a business*' (Interview 4).

A second issue was the perception that the branding does not fully capture the diverse types of green spaces in the city: '*I think that the style of illustration and the choice is very "neat", and it does reflect a very nice, neat park with flowers and demarcated areas*' (p8, FG5). Further, some suggested that the illustrations communicate normative ideas about appropriate use of parks and reinforce an image about who belongs in parks: '*Everyone's behaving very well in the pictures! [laughter and resounding agreement] I do get the impression if you are going to use a park, this is the kind of thing you're allowed to use it for… People use parks in maybe ways beyond what's there … you say it's a charitable park concept but it's about what one is allowed to do when you go*' (p5, FG5).

Many suggested that leaflets are becoming obsolete and that the Leeds Park Fund needs a presence on social media: '*We used to produce leaflets a lot, but once Facebook's come up people start coming without even asking and we found we don't need leaflets anymore*' (p3, FG1). Research suggests that effective use of social media can inspire charitable giving, particularly by young people (Gorczyca and Hartman, 2017). Indeed, social media has been credited as being a key component of civic crowdfunding as online engagement tends to encourage further mobilisation and involvement offline (Stiver *et al.*, 2015). Others felt that the Leeds Parks Fund should be advertised via stalls at events in parks across the city, giving local people the opportunity to ask questions about the charitable initiative. Some suggested that a television programme would help to raise the profile of the Leeds Parks Fund: '*I mean the best way of making money is like they do on television isn't it, on*

Children in Need, I mean if Look North could do a program about Leeds parks or something and ask for money that way, that would hit a bigger audience and you might get more money...' (p1, FG1).

Independence and role of the Council

The Leeds Parks Fund was initiated by a partnership, including Leeds Community Foundation, Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum and Leeds City Council. Leeds Community Foundation manage and administer it, providing a degree of independence from the Council. For some, the direct engagement of the Council as a partner is positive but for others this adds to their scepticism about the initiative, leading to calls for greater clarity about the Council's role: *'I think people will be suspicious if the Council does have a lot of involvement... so I think that the fact that the Council are involved needs to be defined just how they're going to be involved'* (p6, FG3). In this context, that Leeds Community Foundation are accountable for the finances is important: *'to have an independent body is essential'* (p4, FG2).

Further, owing to the Council's involvement as a partner, many felt that there is a need for a clear statement on how the Leeds Parks Fund is envisaged to provide *'additionality'* and, by implication, the minimum standard that residents could expect the Council to deliver *without* charitable donations. As one volunteer noted, *'we don't know what their core delivery is'* (p4, FG1). A further tension emerged in that while residents and volunteers felt that a charitable fund should focus on offering *'something extra'*, many primarily wish to see 'the basics' improved: *'often what people want are paths that work, a loo that's functional'* (p4, FG1). Another volunteer said, *'I think loos probably should be a basic thing, I wouldn't be particularly happy to donate for a loo block...'* (p1, FG1).

Greater clarity about the role of the Council is also important to expel scepticism that the Leeds Parks Fund, if successful in generating an income, will not replace or be a substitute for core funding of parks: *'Has there been any commitment from the Council that if this was to go ahead or if this did start raising significant amounts of money that their funding wouldn't drop at all? ... that's my biggest, biggest concern is that they'll see this as a backup fund'* (p10, FG3). This was principally because residents and volunteers valued highly the *'experience'*, *'expertise'* and *'leadership'* (p4 FG1) provided by the Parks and Countryside Service: *'I think they [Parks Department] are absolutely amazing and I think their skill levels and their knowledge of their area and the parks to the minute detail – you can't find that anywhere... and this Fund should not be about replacing that. And if anything, I would actually give the*

money to [the Parks department] and make sure they spend it properly' (p7, FG3). As such, another resident said: *'...it isn't a case of we want the voluntary parks fund that's going to then replace Leeds City Parks department because we want that as the core...'* (p8, FG3).

Recognition for donors

It was unclear how donations to the Leeds Parks Fund will be acknowledged and given recognition: *'it's unclear about what the sort of feedback is, what the reward is for the good deed, how your donation is acknowledged'* (p3, FG2). Some residents perceived a need to differentiate charitable donations from business sponsorship in terms of recognition for donors. Noting the proliferation of signs on roundabouts across Leeds, residents were concerned about physical forms of recognition that might be offered to donors: *'The last thing we want to do is something like with the Leeds roundabouts, where people ostensibly sponsor a roundabout that's just plain grass and a huge sign'* (p2, FG2).

There was a mixed response by businesses to the need for donor recognition. While some businesses noted that they currently donate to charities without receiving recognition for it, others stated that recognition in some form would be something they would expect and expressed a desire for direction as how to maximize the benefit for a business from their donation: *'I think perhaps there is an element in it that perhaps [the LCF] may be able to help and guide the business in how to maximise the benefit for that business from their sponsorship'* (p1, FG6). Some business leaders suggested that recognition does not always need to take the form of a physical sign in a park: *'I don't need our name on top of a local park that we've supported the funds of X, as long as we are seen to be supporting Leeds Park Fund'* (Interview 2). It is possible that donors could be acknowledged through social media. It was suggested that businesses could use their own social media account to increase awareness of their support for a charity. Overall, business leaders articulated a range of factors that shape their decisions to donate to a charity, including employee or business owner connections with a charity or cause; donor recognition and publicity; seeing the benefits and direct impact; need for donations and importance of the cause; and the prominence of the charity.

5.6 Role and engagement of volunteers

Volunteers make a significant contribution to the improvement of parks and green spaces through the practical work and time they give. In Leeds, volunteers provide an equivalent of 109 full-time staff. There are over 100

'Friends' and 'In Bloom' groups and a number of parks have community partnership agreements.

Volunteers held varied views of the Leeds Parks Fund, what role they might play and how they might engage with it, including as possible applicants/beneficiaries of funding, as donors, as fundraisers and as champions for the initiative. The main way that most volunteers perceived their role was to help raise awareness of the Leeds Parks Fund. Most volunteers were happy to *'fly the flag'*, but preferably in ways that would support their work in specific parks and green spaces.

Some volunteers, but not all, saw themselves as potential applicants/beneficiaries of funding: *'...if there's an opportunity to get grants for bigger things that we need then that's the only way we're going to go forward, so I'm pleased to see it'* (p3, FG2). Some volunteers said that their group values the time people give more than money, and that there were already several community grants schemes available to apply to: *'My understanding is that there isn't a shortage of money and grants for local groups to apply for, it's just the bureaucracy of actually applying for them which is hard work'* (p4, FG1). Some felt that they would apply if it meant receiving funding to pay for more park staff who could support them with projects: *'In fact if anything, we'd apply to it to keep the skilled professionals'* (p1, FG1).

Research suggests that there is a relationship between volunteering for a cause and charitable donations to that cause, which the online survey supports (see Chapter Three). However, in the focus group discussions many volunteers felt that they were already donating substantial amounts of time and labour and therefore did not see themselves as potential donors, noting that it was *'asking the same people to do more'* (p3, FG1). Another volunteer said, *'I think honestly, you're asking the wrong group of people because we volunteer our time, so we donate to our local parks quite a considerable amount'* (p4, FG1). Other volunteers said they would consider donating money as well as time if this benefitted their specific park or green space.

Most volunteers said that they were already doing local fundraising for their park and, unless the Leeds Parks Fund could be aligned to their efforts in some way, they did not see themselves as fundraisers for the initiative. One volunteer said, *'I'm not doing fundraising. We could raise funds but if we did it would be for us not for Parks [Department], sorry'* (p1, FG1). One of the implications of a citywide, general fund, is that there is no guarantee that fundraising will benefit a specific volunteer group or park. In such a situation, it may be preferable for

volunteer groups to fundraise for themselves, where they are guaranteed access to the funding, rather than putting effort into raising funds that might then be allocated to another park: *'I wouldn't be so interested to do it and benefit a park in another community because our members will want to benefit our park or at least want to know how our park can get the benefit from it'* (p1, FG2).

There was a general desire for more discussion with the Council about the development of the Leeds Parks Fund, which could lead to more effective ways to support each other's initiatives. As one volunteer noted: *'It would be nice to sit down with some people from Parks [Department] to actually discuss this in this sort of forum actually... because we want to be on the same side but they don't quite understand where we're coming from and our problems, and we don't necessarily understand the pressures and juggling that they're having to do. It would make this more successful and we'd all have more confidence I think if that sort of two-way conversation could happen'* (p4, FG1). Many volunteers commented on the improvement in relations with Parks and Countryside Service but felt that more support could be offered to projects that volunteers want to take forward in parks.

5.7 Conclusions

The focus groups and interviews identified challenges and possible barriers to harnessing charitable donations to parks and green spaces. Some of these apply specifically to the Leeds Parks Fund model of charitable giving, but many have wider resonance and implications for local authorities, community foundations and park foundations engaged in raising voluntary private donations. One of the most salient issues was the need for a charitable initiative to be transparent and offer specificity, in terms of the process for allocating funds, the intended projects, and how the funds might be distributed fairly across the city. Second, fundraising for specific causes or projects rather than a general parks fund is more appealing from a donors' perspective as it provides clarity on the intended use of donations, improves transparency and accountability, and invites support for specific causes that may be of personal interest. Further, the latter provides scope to engage and harness the capacity of volunteers by combining fundraising efforts for specific projects in their local park. Third, a significant barrier to voluntary donations was the perception that donating money for the improvement of parks is 'paying twice', believing that the maintenance of green spaces is the Council's responsibility, paid for by public taxation. This challenge is likely to be faced by others setting up charitable initiatives and requires a collective endeavour to engage with a long-standing and deeply held perception of parks as publicly funded assets,

despite a long history of philanthropic and charitable donations to parks. Fourth, park charitable causes must compete for donations with people-focused charities. Charities, where the direct beneficiaries are people, are likely to be chosen in preference to non-human services charities, such as the arts, environment and animals. A parks charitable fund could benefit from focussing on how it might benefit people, and marketing itself as such.

There are several implications of these findings. First, there is a need to 'anchor' the cause and to build a model of donation and fundraising around that cause. Facilitating a personal, emotional connection to a charitable cause is vital, and so identifying themes common to all green spaces may help to inspire people to donate to projects beyond their local park. The Leeds Parks Fund could offer the option to donate to specific projects or parks whilst maintaining the general citywide fund, through 'split' donations.

A further implication concerns improvement to the marketing and branding of the Leeds Parks Fund, particularly in terms of its social media presence, the title of the charitable fund, and communication about the urgency and need for donations. Greater clarity about the role of the Council, the independence of the initiative and the reasons behind the need for charitable donations were also suggested as important within the branding. Finally, a holistic approach to giving, offering a variety of financial and non-financial ways to engage with the initiative was important from a donor perspective.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Public parks have been quintessential components of our towns and cities since the nineteenth century. They are vital elements of our cultural heritage and provide a wide range of benefits to the health and well-being of diverse communities and individuals throughout their lives. As this research shows, the public recognise and value these benefits, regarding parks and green spaces as important or essential to their quality of life and most use them frequently. Many business leaders recognise that parks contribute to the attractiveness of cities and provide benefits to the well-being of their employees. As the House of Commons (2017) inquiry into the 'future of public parks' acknowledged, the UK's 27,000 public parks are at a critical juncture - at risk of serious decline in the face of the continuation of cuts to local authority budgets. Given the scale of ongoing fiscal constraint, there is growing acknowledgement that park managers need both to diversify their sources of income and to work collaboratively with a plurality of people active in this sphere (Barker *et al.*, forthcoming). Recent years have seen extended opportunities for individuals and corporates to volunteer in parks and charitable initiatives that explore the potential to generate a sustainable income stream for parks from voluntary donations by park-users and businesses who have strong emotional attachments to their parks and derive benefits from them.

There is a long history of philanthropic and charitable donations to parks, which played an important role in park development during the formative Victorian period. Gifts by local benefactors continue to support parks to this day. Today, there is a trend towards developing more organised structures for philanthropic and charitable giving – often in partnership with local authorities – to harness voluntary donations to parks from the public and businesses via their corporate social responsibility objectives. In this context, many local authorities are actively developing partnerships with charitable bodies to harness new forms of civic engagement and tap into a wider set of resources. Although many are still in their infancy, there is a burgeoning wealth of innovation and experimentation, including via the Rethinking Parks programme.

This research aims to contribute to shaping a discourse on the role and place of charitable giving in relation to parks. It seeks to do so in ways that see residents and businesses not simply as sources of 'untapped' resources or as 'passive' users of a service provided by the local authority, but rather as active co-producers of park futures with capabilities, knowledge and resources to be better harnessed through creative modes of engagement. While this research was conducted in Leeds, engaging residents, volunteers and businesses in the

city, many of the insights apply more broadly and have implications for those engaged in setting up and delivering (new) charitable donation-based initiatives.

As highlighted earlier, charitable donations rely on public and business support, willingness to donate and acceptance that donations have a constructive role and place to play in funding park improvements. The public and business community have complex views about the role of donations and varying dispositions to donate – illuminated in this research through surveys, focus groups and interviews – warranting more thorough consideration by the local authority sector, parks foundations and others, as they set up charitable giving initiatives and engage with the public.

The research finds a high level of public and business support for a variety of means to supplement core public funding of parks, from business sponsorship, property developer contributions and paid attractions in parks, to grants and charitable fundraising. The only significant opposition is charging for using park facilities. Although most residents and business leaders support local charitable donations to parks, a higher percentage are in favour of funding coming from central government, businesses and applications to grant-making bodies.

The research suggests that people think too much non-conventional external income generation could be detrimental for a park. Sentiment towards different ways to supplement the funding of urban green space is connected to its potential to alter the traditional concept, form and character of a public park, reflecting a deeply held belief that parks offer green 'spaces apart' from the hustle and bustle of a city. Hence, some saw charitable donations as a preferable source of generating income as compared to large-scale events and paid attractions.

Despite high levels of public and business support for the principle of voluntary donations to parks, a much lower percentage of residents and business leaders reported that they would donate to parks themselves. Most said they may consider it or were unsure - suggesting that many are equivocal or ambivalent about donating, possibly because of uncertainties as to the implications of giving, like filling a shortfall in government funding. Residents who reported a willingness to donate to parks were more likely to be under age 34, members of a park 'Friends' group, or to have an annual income of over £40,000.

People's opinions and support for charitable donations were often conditional, context-specific and relative. Against the backdrop of ongoing challenges for local government finances, efforts to promote charitable giving are sometimes perceived as an attempt to replace public spending. The research revealed

a widespread belief that initiatives set up to support parks through charitable donations should not be a substitute (or replacement) for local authority-led funding but can have a place within a blended model of parks' funding that includes a central place for government funding.

The public are not accustomed to a culture of giving money to fund parks and hold a long-standing perception that parks are and should be a public service, managed by local authorities and funded through taxation. In this context, there was a perception that donating is 'paying twice'. It was widely believed that the role of donations should be to offer 'extras', which elicited clearer support. Hence, many voiced a concern about the lack of statutory protection and baseline resourcing of parks to recognised quality standards. By contrast, others suggested that 'need to do', rather than 'nice to do' projects should be the focus for donations. This paradox appears to relate to concerns that donations should not replace taxation which should be used to provide good quality parks. However, the problem is that there is insufficient public funding for this 'quality provision' and funding is required for 'need to do' maintenance, as well as 'nice to do' extras. Hence, charitable initiatives may be more appealing if they clearly offer added value. Even so, however, changing people's perceptions is necessary before some would consider giving.

Moreover, the research found some significant scepticism about the involvement of local authorities in new charitable initiatives for parks. There was a desire for clarity about their role, the future of the local authority funding, and how charitable donations would be used and allocated. Indeed, many wanted greater clarity as to the minimum standard of delivery that could be expected of local authorities partnering to achieve voluntary donations. Charitable donation-based initiatives need to take seriously and address these perceptions through sensitive marketing and fundraising campaigns, and by providing a clear strategy and aims for donations.

In terms of the specific structure of (different) charitable initiatives, the citywide scale of the Leeds Parks Fund model was viewed as its greatest feature because it offered the prospect that 'no park or green space would be left behind'. Yet, while there are many virtues of a citywide charitable fund it requires donors to concede a degree of control and choice over how and where their donation is spent. If donors could choose to give to a specific park, it was believed that this may produce inequalities in investment, (primarily by) benefitting parks in more affluent areas of the city. The citywide model was also unable to fulfil donor choice and preferences for giving to particular green spaces and/or projects. Many residents and businesses preferred targeted giving to specific projects and local parks, based on a donor choice model in

which donors know how and where their donation is being spent. To counterbalance the potential for inequality that donor choice can produce, most supported a dual approach whereby a proportion of a donation goes to a specific park or project of the donor's choice and the remainder to a citywide fund.

There were similarities between residents and business leaders in their charitable preferences, both in terms of the types of parks they would support and the aspects of parks they would prioritise for donations. In terms of the types of parks, preferences were to donate to the closest parks to their business/residence, parks in most need and community parks. Large, major parks received comparatively less support in part because they were perceived to be already well-resourced. In terms of aspects of parks, both residents and business leaders preferred to give to habitats for wildlife and park cleanliness. As such, some suggested that a citywide fund could focus on strategic themes common to all parks and green spaces, such as wildlife habitats, bees and pollinators or playgrounds that may also encourage people to give beyond their local park. Such an approach may help to shift donor's focus from 'where' donations are going to 'what' they are supporting, potentially extending willingness to give beyond local projects and parks.

Finally, there was wide support for adopting a more holistic concept of charitable giving, to value various types of donation, knowledge and capability including donations of time, goods and skills – as well as money – with the understanding that residents and business leaders may be more able or likely to give in these different ways. Hence, many desired more than simply a charitable 'parks fund' – advocating the development of creative modes of engagement to harness the diverse ways businesses and residents can engage with parks, and thereby help to co-produce their futures in new forms of park management and governance.

Chapter 7: Recommendations

Based on our empirical research, literature review and wider discussion of the findings with a range of relevant organisations via a national workshop held on the 30 April 2019 in Leeds,[44] we make seven recommendations relating to the development of charitable giving to support parks across the UK. We also make ten recommendations for Leeds Parks Fund charitable initiative. The latter may apply to similar initiatives that take a city or region wide approach to charitable giving to parks.

7.1 Recommendations for UK parks

I. **National public debate on the funding of parks, including the role of charitable giving:** There is a need to engender an informed national public debate about the role and place of philanthropic and charitable giving as part of – rather than in place of – the (public) funding of parks and green spaces, the need and urgency of donations, and (added) value that voluntary donations may afford. The Parks Action Group should include this within their agenda for ways to sustain parks for the future.

II. **Core public funding and statutory protection for parks:** There is support for charitable giving as a supplement to - rather than in place of - the (public) funding of parks and green spaces. The research findings add to the growing evidence base that provides public support for the introduction of statutory protection to ensure appropriate government funding and resources to enable the maintenance of parks and green spaces to recognised quality standards, sponsored by the UK Government and Parks Action Group.

III. **Uphold public principles in blended park funding models:** Blended models of park funding need to uphold important public principles of governance, including open and equal access to parks, universal provision of quality parks across a city or area and strategic oversight of resources.

IV. **Local Authority leadership, collaboration and partnership working:** Local Authorities should work closely in partnership with diverse organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to ensure their contribution and role is harnessed in support of good quality urban parks. They should

play a leadership role in engaging and increasing the involvement of the wider community, businesses, and 'Friends' groups in voluntary initiatives to improve parks and green spaces.

V. **Local Authority sector-wide messaging:** Local Authorities should work with their charitable partners to develop a clear public message about the purpose and added value derived from charitable giving initiatives to which they are partners, by providing a clear strategy and aims for the use of such donations.

VI. **Sensitive marketing and fundraising campaigns:** Charitable giving initiatives for parks - in whatever form they take (i.e. parks foundations, 'Friends' groups, Community Foundation funds etc.) - should develop sensitive and tailored marketing and fundraising campaigns that engage with the motivations for and address the barriers to giving as outlined in this report's findings.

VII. **National body for park-supporting charitable giving initiatives:** A dedicated national body is required to provide leadership, guidance and coordination for the growing portfolio of charitable giving initiatives being set up in partnership with local authorities to support parks. This new body may take inspiration from the US-based National Association for Parks Foundations, sharing knowledge and research about charitable giving in the context of parks and green spaces.

7.2 Recommendations for the Leeds Parks Fund (and similar initiatives)

I. **A visible strategy:** The Leeds Parks Fund partners should develop a clear, visible and accessible strategy with allied aims and ambitions for the charitable donations that it seeks to raise. It should offer greater transparency and specificity, through its website, social media profile and branding, about the intended projects, the process for allocating funds raised across the city and the social and environmental benefits derived from the projects delivered.

II. **Independence from the Council:** Leeds Parks Fund marketing and branding materials should clearly and visibly show that the Fund is a charitable initiative distinct from the Council. It should set out the roles and responsibilities of the partners of the Fund and how decisions are made to engender public support.

III. **Clear messaging, reducing barriers to giving:** The Leeds Parks Fund partners should develop clear messaging for the Fund to effectively harness the support of businesses and members of the public. The messaging should convey the need and urgency of donating to the Fund and be rooted in the positive contribution parks and green spaces make to people and wildlife to foster a personal and emotional connection with the cause.

IV. **Focus on added value:** Related to the above, the Leeds Parks Fund partners should consider carefully how to maintain and engender public support if donations are to be used to fund general maintenance rather than enhancements or additionality to parks.

V. **Greater donor choice through targeted giving:** Recognising that donating to an all-purpose citywide parks fund does not inspire most people to give, the model of the Leeds Parks Fund should be developed and adapted to provide donors with greater choice and control to target their donations, for example, towards specific parks or identified projects. In implementing this, the Leeds Parks Fund should draw on best practice and learning from civic crowdfunding projects and research.

VI. **Promote and embed equity across the city:** Related to the above, recognising that pure donor choice can produce inequities in what gets funded, the model of the Leeds Parks Fund should be developed in ways that balance greater donor choice with its redistributive objective to create a city of opportunity for all by supporting improvements to parks in greatest need. For example, the model of the Leeds Parks Fund could be developed to facilitate split donations or top-slicing, where a proportion of a donation goes to a specific park or identified project and a proportion goes to a citywide parks fund that is allocated to parks and green spaces in greatest need. In addition, Gift Aid might be used to support the development of an endowment fund.

VII. **A catalyst for engagement:** The Leeds Parks Fund partners should use the Fund as a catalyst to inspire, engage and increase the involvement of the wider community, volunteers and 'Friends' groups as active co-producers of improvements to parks and green spaces. They should consider how to develop the Leeds Parks Fund to best support the activities of 'Friends' groups and other voluntary groups via its

partnership with the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum. For example, the Forum, which is the community voice of the Fund, could identify some projects for fundraising campaigns thereby better harnessing the capabilities, knowledge, energies and resources of voluntary groups and the wider community.

VIII. **Take a holistic approach:** To appeal to a wider base of park supporters, the Leeds Parks Fund should be marketed, promoted and branded as part of a holistic portfolio of giving opportunities for residents and businesses that include non-financial ways to support parks. Charitable giving cannot be measured in purely financial terms.

IX. **Embed further research, monitoring and evaluation:** The Leeds Parks Fund partners should monitor public and business giving behaviour and data relating to actual donors to utilise this information to inform marketing and fundraising strategies.

X. **Sustainability of the Fund:** The Leeds Parks Fund partners should investigate ways to make the Fund sustainable, which will require developing income streams for core fundraising costs and dedicated staff which can continue to make the case for parks and green spaces and grow donors and donations.

Appendix A: The Leeds Parks Fund Partnership

Leeds Community Foundation is one of 46 community foundations across the UK dedicated to creating positive change in the communities that need it most by connecting national and local donors to community groups and charities in and around the cities in which they operate. We support thousands of charities and voluntary groups across the city, addressing inequalities by working with the private, public and third sector to help create opportunities for those that most need help.

The **Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum** is an independent, umbrella, voluntary organisation with 92 (and growing!) members, consisting of 'Friends' and 'In Bloom' groups, Residents Associations, Parish Councils, Environmental charities and two of our Universities. It represents close to 5,000 volunteer residents who care for the public green spaces of Leeds and work to make them look good and feel safe. The Forum, established in 2012, liaises with Leeds City Council and other bodies to protect, preserve and enhance the City's parks and green spaces for the benefit of people and wildlife, through various means, including engaging more local people to set up groups in their areas; supporting those voluntary groups with advice and information, and raising funds for the benefit of parks and green spaces.

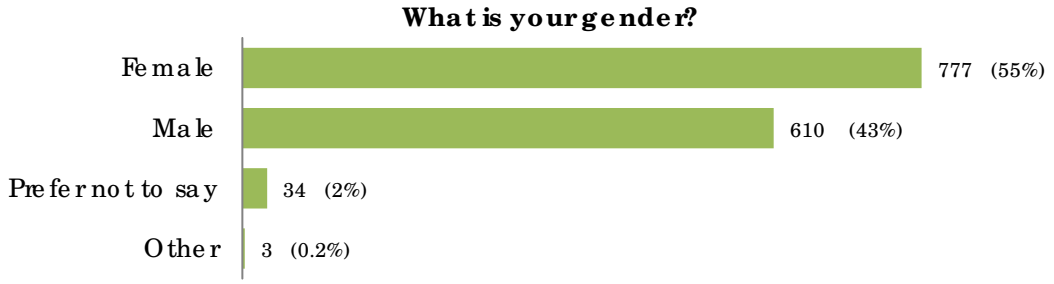
Leeds City Council, Parks and Countryside service manages around 4,000 hectares of land which includes 7 major parks, 63 community parks, 95 recreation grounds, and 155 hectares of local green space. These include 144 playgrounds and 500 sports facilities ranging from outdoor gyms to golf courses. Also included in sites we manage are several cafes and shops, 3 zoos and a farm! Additionally, the service manages a nursery which produces over 4 million bedding plants each year, 96 allotment sites, 812km of public rights of way, and 156 nature conservation sites, as well as 22 cemeteries and 3 crematoria. There are approximately 68 million visits to these locations annually.

Appendix B: Resident's Survey Sample

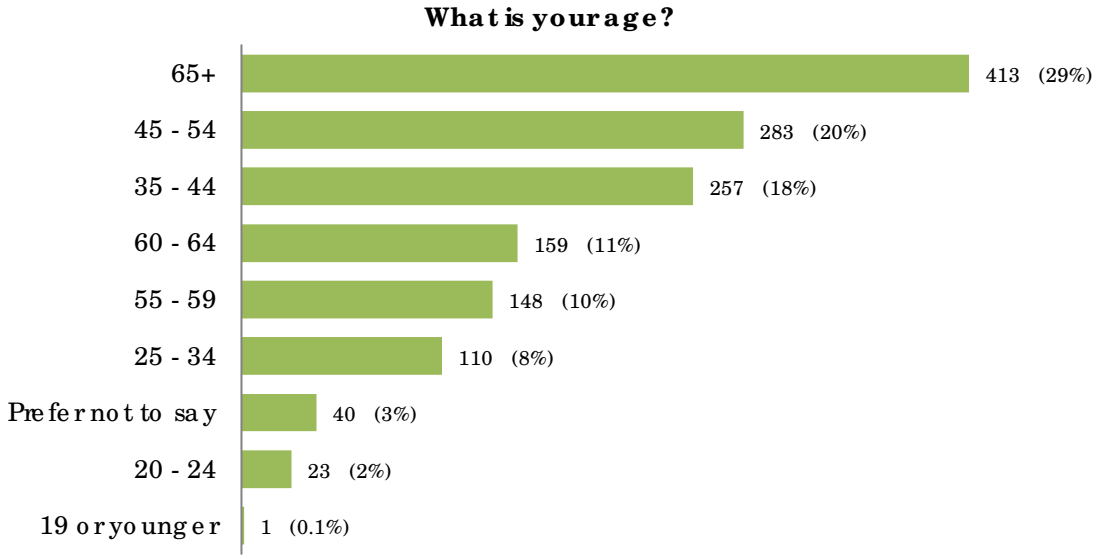
Residents' survey sample

The following provides a breakdown of the residents' survey sample, using unweighted data.

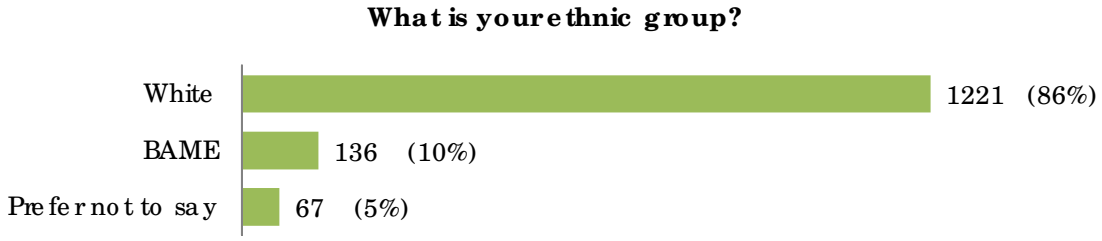
Figures B-1 Residents' survey sample-Gender



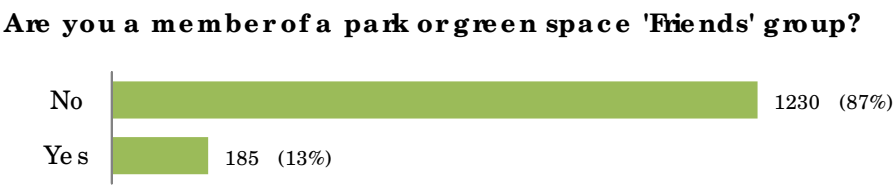
Figures B-2 Residents' survey sample-Age



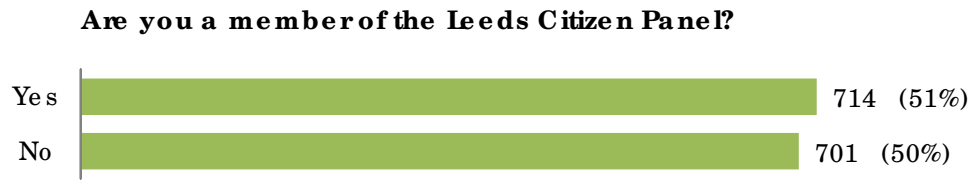
Figures B-3 Residents' survey sample - Ethnicity



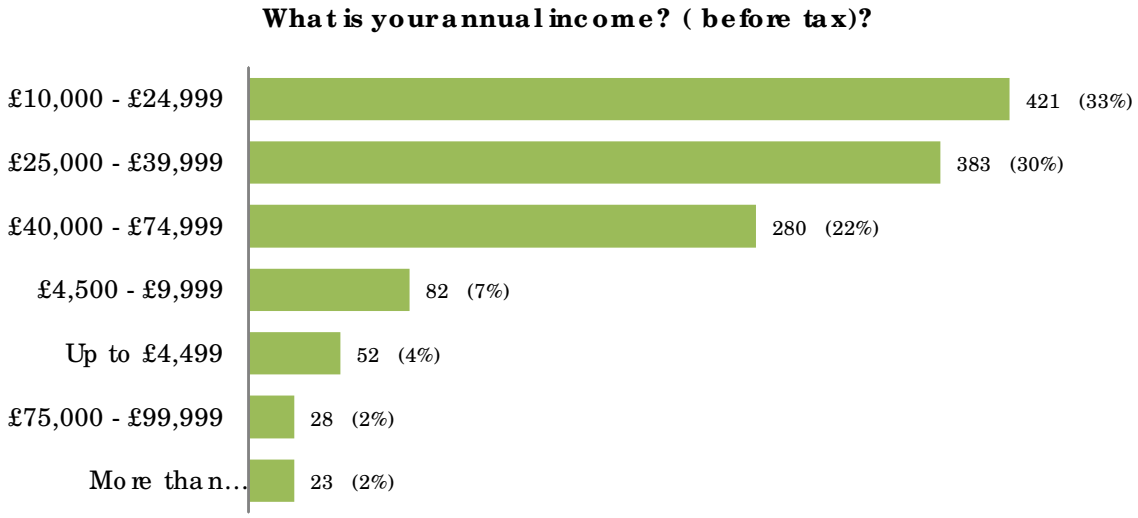
Figures B-4 Residents' survey sample - Member of a park or 'Friends' group



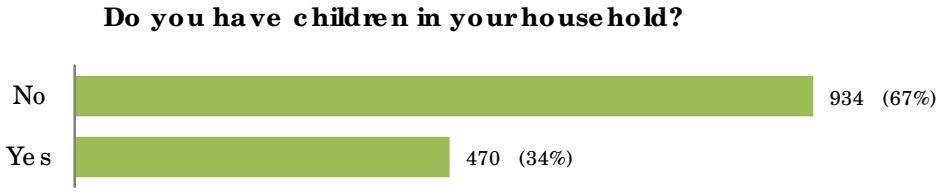
Figures B-5 Residents' survey sample - Member of the Leeds Citizen Panel



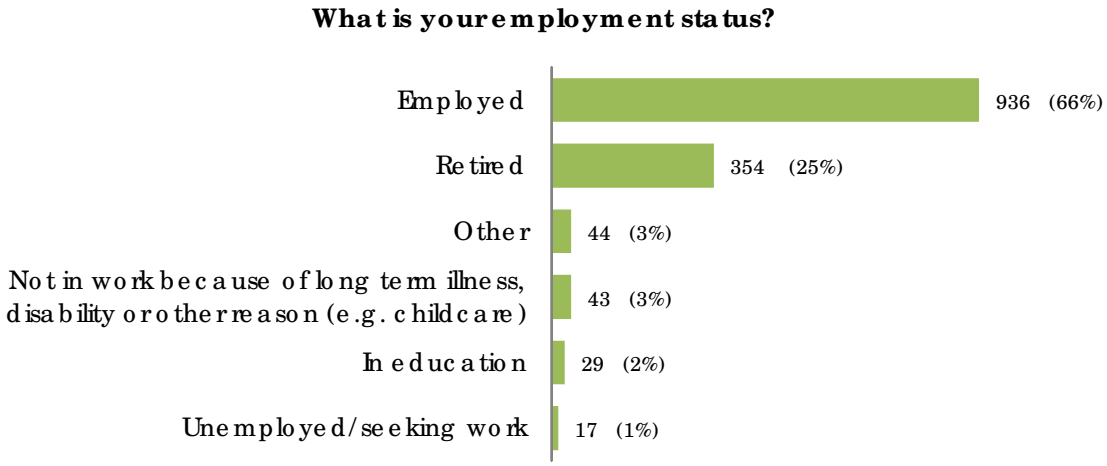
Figures B-6 Residents' survey sample - Annual income



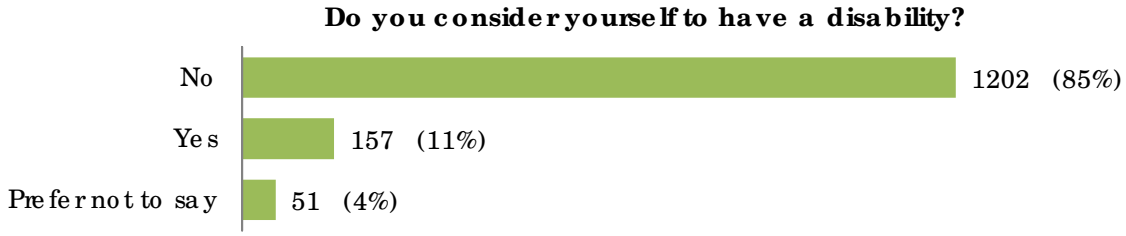
Figures B-7 Residents' survey sample- Children in household



Figures B-8 Residents' survey sample- Employment status



Figures B-9 Residents' survey sample- Disability



Weighting adjustment

To adjust for some imbalances in the sample, and make our analyses more representative, probability weights were calculated based on the city of Leeds age and gender distribution as recorded in the 2011 Census, as follows.

Table B-1 Weighting adjustment for residents' survey sample - Age

Age group	No. Survey responses by age group	% Survey responses by age group	% of Leeds population (2018)	Weighting adjustment
19 or younger	1	0.1%	49.4%	1.76
20-24	23	2%		
25-34	110	8%		
35-44	257	18%		
45-54	283	20%	30.2%	0.71
55-59	148	10%		
60-64	159	11%		
65+	413	29%	20.3%	0.69
Prefer not to say	40	3%		1
Total	**1434**	**100%**	**100%**	

Table B-2 Weighting adjustment for residents' survey sample - Gender

Gender	No. Survey responses by gender	% Survey responses by gender	% of Leeds population (2018)	Weighting adjustment
Female	777	55%	50.9%	0.91
Male	610	43%	49.1%	1.12
In another way	3	0.2%		1
Prefer not to say	34	2.4%		1
Total	**1424**	**100%**	**100%**	

Estimation of 95% Confidence Intervals

To assess the extent of sampling error (i.e. the uncertainty resulting from the use of a sample of the Leeds residents' population) we provide 95% confidence intervals in the responses to some of the key questions reported. The widest 95% confidence interval ranges 5.7 percentage points. Hence, it would be safe to assume margins of error of ±2.9% for the estimates reported.

What do you consider to be the current condition of your park?

Table B-3 Estimation of 95% Confidence Intervals - Condition of park

Age group	Point estimate	95% confidence intervals
Excellent	19.5%	(17.3%, 21.9%)
Good	58.2%	(55.3%, 61%)
Fair	17.2%	(15.2%, 19.5%)
Poor	4.3%	(3.2%, 5.7%)
Do not know	0.8%	(0.5%, 1.4%)
Total	**100%**	

Is the park the closest to where you live?

Table B-4 Estimation of 95% Confidence Intervals - Closest park

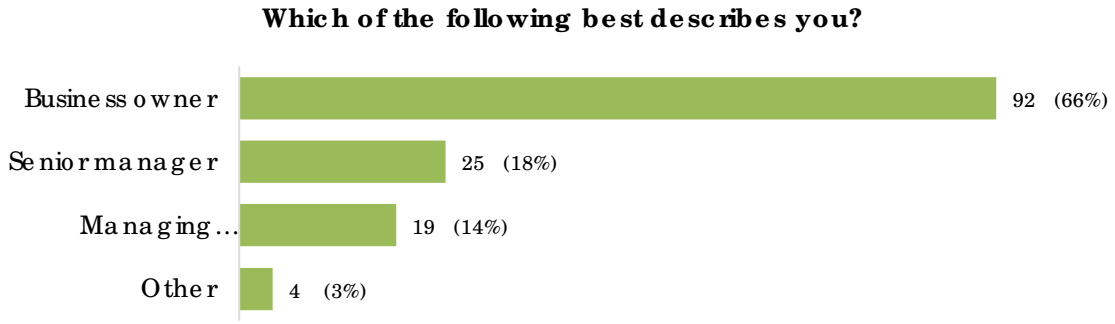
Age group	Point estimate	95% confidence intervals
Yes	66.4%	(63.7%, 69.1%)
No	31.0%	(28.4%, 33.8%)
Don't know	2.5%	(1.8%, 3.6%)
Total	**100%**	

Appendix C: Business Survey Sample

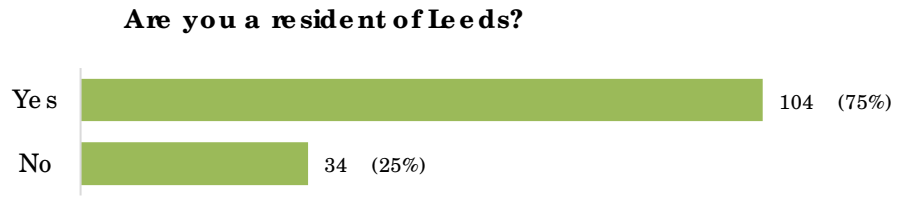
Business survey sample

The following provides a breakdown of the business survey sample, using unweighted data.

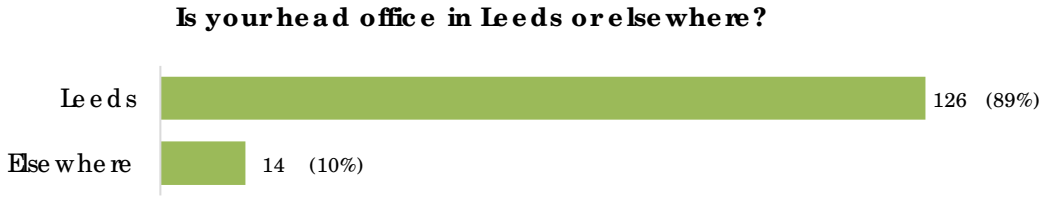
Figures C-1 Business survey sample- Position in Company



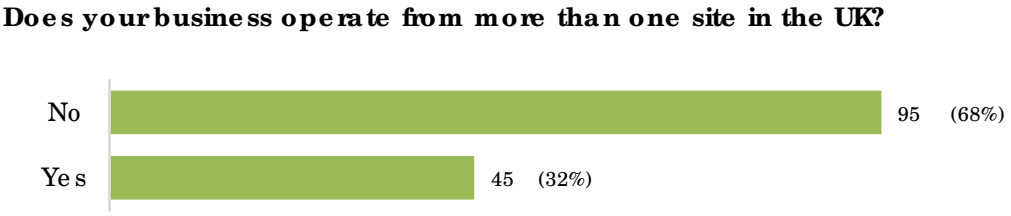
Figures C-2 Business survey sample- Resident of Leeds



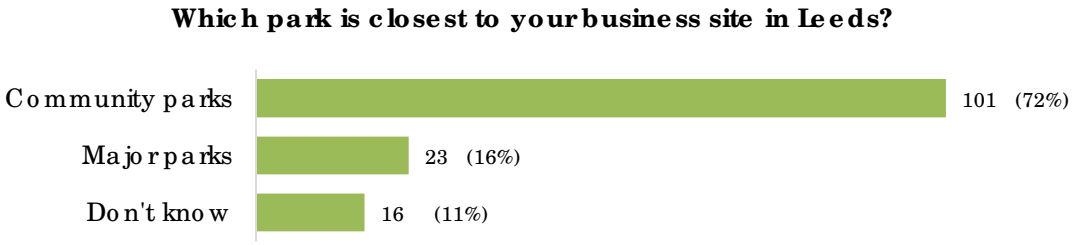
Figures C-3 Business survey sample- Head office location



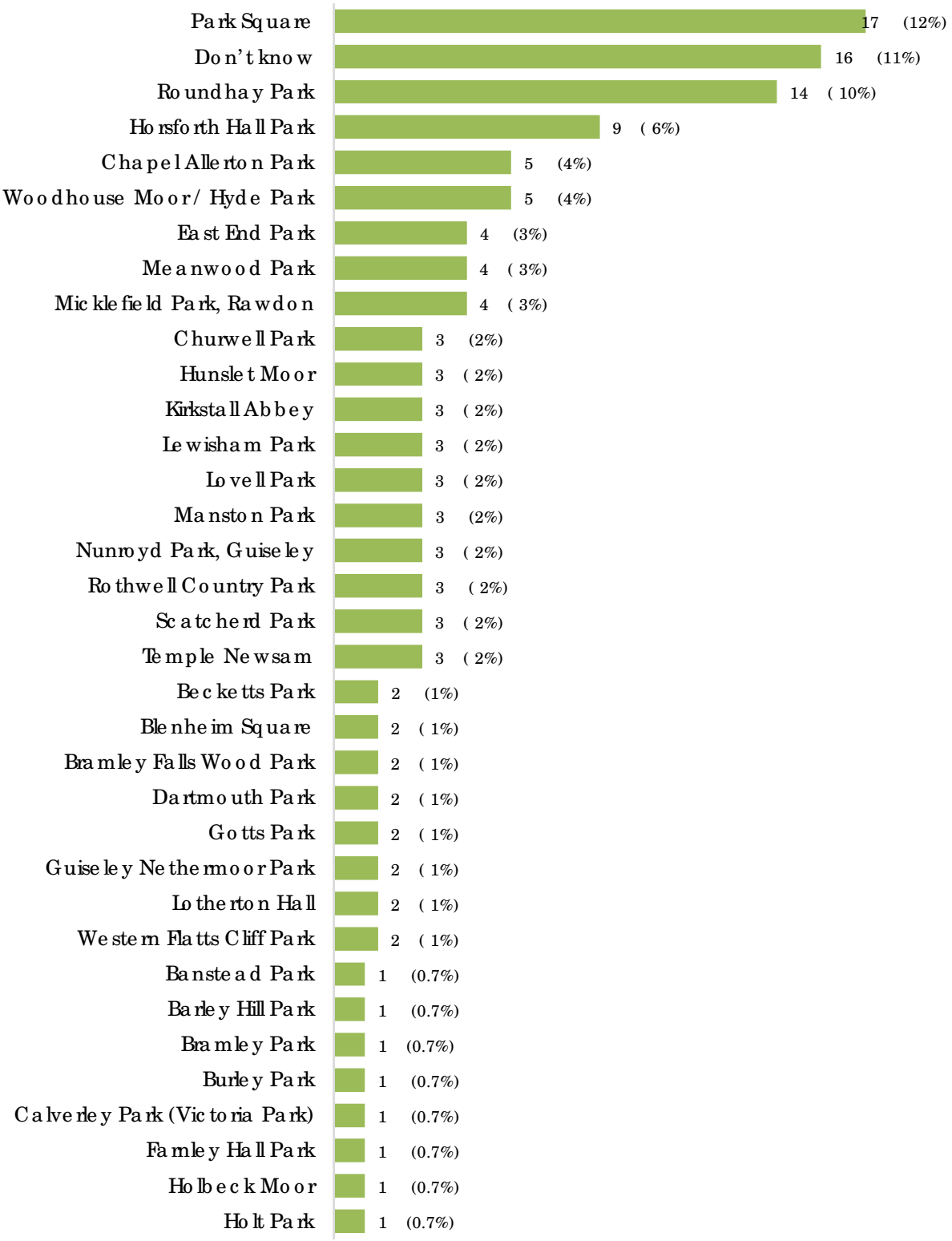
Figures C-4 Business survey sample- Operation sites



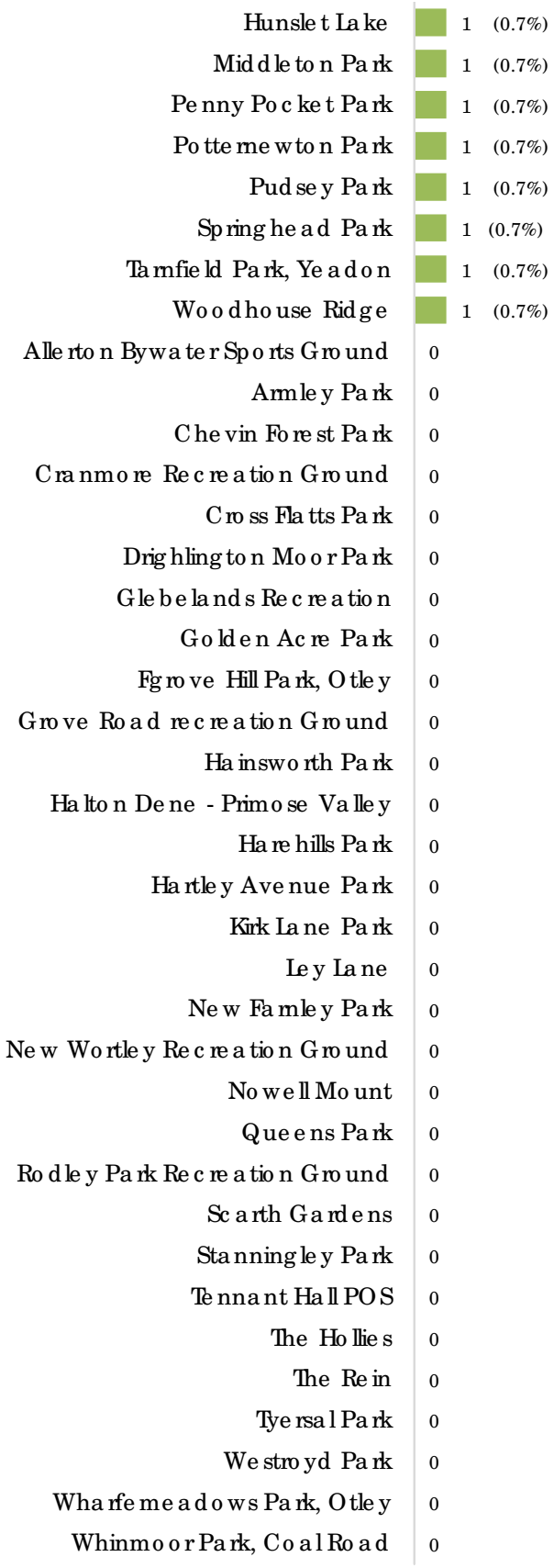
Figures C-5 Business survey sample- Closest park



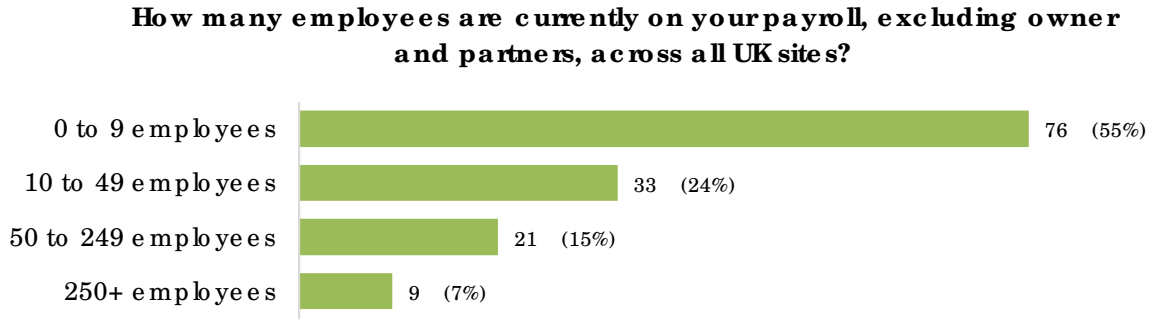
Which park is closest to your business site in Leeds?



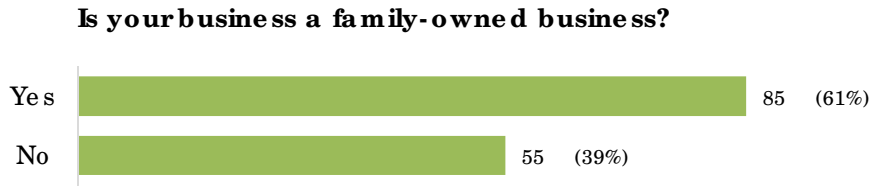
Cont. Which park is closest to your business site in Leeds?



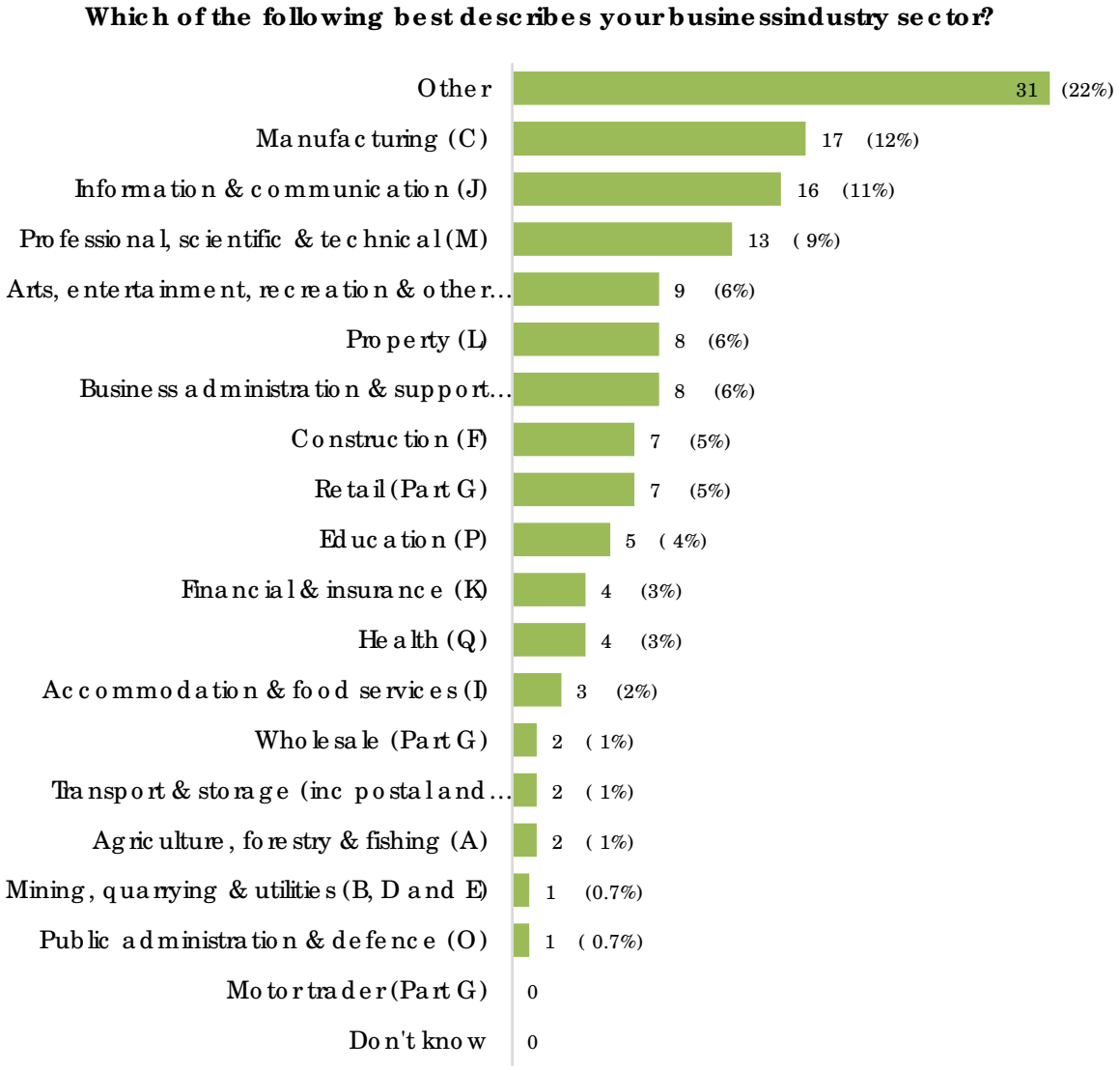
Figures C-6 Business survey sample - Number of employees



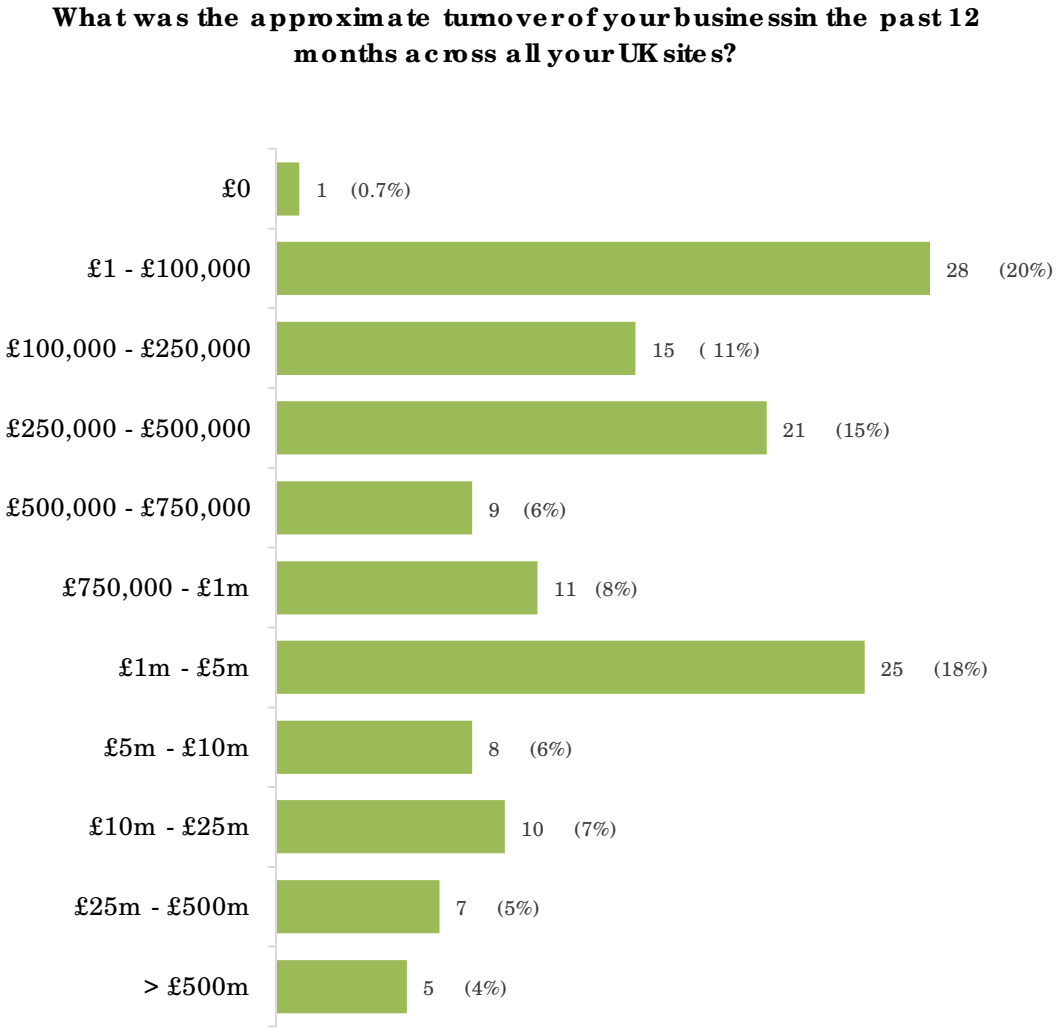
Figures C-7 Business survey sample - Family-owned business



Figures C-8 Business survey sample - Business sector



Figures C-9 Business survey sample - Turnover of business



Figures C-10 Business survey sample- Donations given by businesses in the past 12 months

Weighting adjustment

To adjust for the selection bias that arises from a non-random sampling strategy employed in this survey, responses were weighted according to business size. The specific weights were calculated using the number of companies in the Leeds local authority registered in *Nomis* (the Office for National Statistics Inter Departmental Business Register, see https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/ukbc), on the 26 June 2018.

The distribution of business size in the population and in our sample, together with the resulting weighting factors is presented in the table below.

Table C-1 Weighting adjustment - Business size

Business size	No. Survey responses	% Survey responses	% of Leeds business population	Weighting adjustment
0-9 employees	76	54.7	88.0	1.61
10-49 employees	33	23.7	40.3	0.40
50-249 employees	21	15.1	12.3	0.12
250+ employees	9	6.5	7.9	0.08
Item missing	2	1%	-	1
Total	**139**	**100%**	**100%**	

Estimation of 95% confidence intervals

To assess the extent of sampling error (i.e. the uncertainty resulting from the use of a sample of the Leeds business population) we provide 95% confidence intervals in the responses to some of the key questions reported. Specifically, we measure the uncertainty surrounding question 10 '*Does your business have a corporate social responsibility policy?*' and question 18 '*To what extent do you agree or disagree that your business has the capacity to volunteer time or offer services to charity?*'. Question 10 is a simpler 'yes'/'no'/'do not know' question. Question 18 is a type of Likert question for which responses can range 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The widest 95% confidence interval ranges 19.4 percentage points. Hence, it would be safe to assume margins of error of ±9.7% for the estimates reported.

Does your business have a corporate social responsibility policy?

Table C-2 Estimation of 95% Confidence Interval - Corporate social responsibility policy

Age group	Point estimate	95% confidence intervals
Yes	37.6%	(28.5%, 47.6%)
No	59.1%	(49.1%, 68.5%)
Don't know	3.3%	(1.2%, 8.9%)
Total	**100%**	

To what extent do you agree or disagree that your business has the capacity to volunteer time or offer services to charity?

Table C-3 Estimation of 95% Confidence Interval - Capacity to volunteer time or offer services

Age group	Point estimate	95% confidence intervals
Strongly agree	19.7%	(12.8%, 29.1%)
Somewhat agree	28.2%	(20.1%, 37.9%)
Neither agree nor disagree	22.7%	(15.2%, 32.5%)
Somewhat disagree	17.1%	(10.6%, 26.5%)
Strongly disagree	12.3%	(7.1%, 20.7%)
Total	**100%**	

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Endnotes

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[2] https://www.nesta.org.uk/project/rethinking-parks/what-is-a-park-foundation/
[3] https://heeleypeoplespark.co.uk/
[4] https://www.mypark.scot/
[5] https://www.lakedistrictfoundation.org/rethinking-parks/
[6] Appendix A provides a description of Leeds Parks Fund partners.
[7] Guidance for Leeds Parks Fund Board: Allocating Grants.
[8] http://www.leeds.gov.uk/docs/Small%20PGS%20strategy%5B2%5D.pdf
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[32] https://www.nesta.org.uk/blog/leeds-parks-fund-introduction-project/
[33] For further information on the Leeds Citizens' Panel see: https://www.leeds.gov.uk/your-council/consultations-and-feedback/leeds-citizens-panel
[34] A previous survey of park-use conducted in 2016 found that approximately 91% of Leeds residents use parks (Barker *et al.*, 2018).
[35] This could be due to not having captured a big enough sample size, but also to the fact that some parts of the city might have been under-represented.
[36] While these are different measures, quality standards provide an indicator of condition.
[37] These levels of self-reported charitable giving are higher than found in national surveys such as the annual Charities Aid Foundation survey of UK charitable giving (Chapter Two).
[38] These categories were taken from the CAF annual survey of UK charitable giving.
[39] This question was adapted from a national public opinion survey undertaken for the *State of UK Public Parks 2016* report (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016).
[40] This is advocated by the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces, an umbrella organisation that 'aims to amplify the voices of 'Friends' Groups across the UK (see: https://www.natfedparks.org.uk/).
[41] https://www.bvdinfo.com/en-gb/our-products/data/national/fame

[42] This question was adapted from a national public opinion survey undertaken for the *State of UK Public Parks 2016* report (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016).
[43] The term volunteer refers to those participants who said that they were a member of a park or green space voluntary group, including 'Friends' groups, 'In Bloom' groups and the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum.
[44] Some 46 participants from 31 organisations attended and contributed to discussion at a workshop held on the 30 April 2019 at which this report was first presented, and its findings discussed. A report of the workshop can be found on the project website, at: http://futureofparks.leeds.ac.uk

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