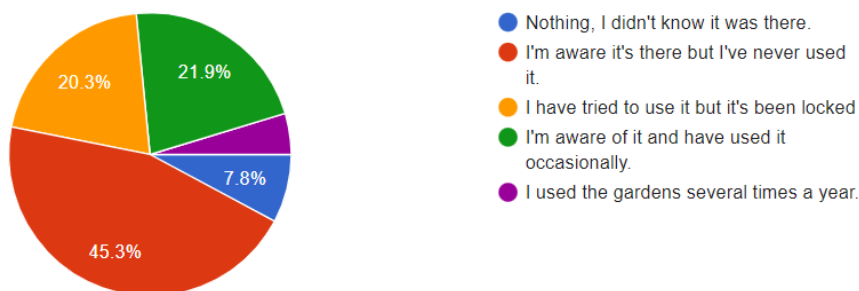


Chorlton Community Garden: Summary survey responses

Chorlton residents shared with us their experiences of using the community garden and their wishes for its future development through a survey conducted in November 2021. The survey was available online (65 responses), on paper at the library and through engaging with our stall at the November Makers Market.

1. Awareness of garden's existence

Nearly half respondents were aware of the garden but had not used it. Others had tried to access it when locked and a similar number had used it occasionally. Only a minority used it regularly, and a small number did not know it existed.



How has the garden previously been used? People have used it in the past for socialising, a place of calm and rest; visiting to admire the plants or to take fruit; doing gardening and maintenance and plant swaps; displaying art; attending community events; and appreciating its content through locked gates as they walk past.

What functions or facilities might a renovated garden have?

There were many suggestions of functions and facilities, together with concerns to make the garden safe from misuse and protected from vandalism.

Desired facilities

- garden furniture: benches, table with benches, covered seating for poor weather
- plants and associated wildlife for attractiveness and biodiversity
- bird boxes, bird baths
- fruit, vegetables and herbs
- performance or work-out space
- art display space
- wheelchair accessibility, lighting for evening time, litter bins, access to toilets, refreshment stall
- open access, clear information on who's responsible for the garden to get in touch with ideas, problems and offers to help.

Desired functions of the space

- to offer a spot to relax in busy urban area, on one's own or with friends or family
- a green hub: informing, sharing, experimenting, learning about and swapping ornamental and edible plants as well as showcasing environmental good practices (eg biodiverse planting, insect hotels, labelled plants, valuing beneficial weeds)
- formal or informal meetings of groups and as space to engage with the public eg for open days
- meeting space for local groups
- running and/or attending workshops, classes and other activities for all ages
- performances, such as theatre, singing, Chorlton soapbox, busking
- somewhere to meet new people

Values

The garden should be clearly open to the public with access for all informing the landscaping, planting, signage and information boards. As a very small space, about 10 m², it cannot be everything to everybody, or grow food to serve foodbanks, but it can be a small haven of tranquillity in a busy suburb, offering inspiration for creating wildlife-friendly spaces, and growing ornamentals and edibles.

How people can help

Nearly half the respondents would contribute to a crowdfunding, help with litter picking and offer gardening knowledge or labour. There were also offers to sponsor an item and share hard-landscaping knowledge and labour. Most people gave their emails for further involvement.

December 2021