

# Drayton Bassett Village Green

## Introduction

This report summarises findings from a community consultation survey focused on Drayton Bassett Village Green, designed to gather community perspectives on the green's current condition and potential future changes. A total of 41 valid responses were collected for this survey. The questionnaire covered core topics including respondents' familiarity with the Village Green, frequency of encountering the space, proximity of the green to respondents' residences, satisfaction with its current appearance, attitudes toward existing features, appetite for improvements, and priorities for adjustment, while also capturing open-ended feedback on unlisted desired and undesired changes to the public green space.

## Core Findings

**1. Respondent Profile & Representativeness:** Over 95% of survey respondents are very familiar with Drayton Bassett Village Green, more than 80% pass or notice the green daily, and an overwhelming majority are permanent residents of Drayton Bassett [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[12\]](#). This confirms the survey results accurately reflect the views of local residents who interact with the space regularly.

**2. Perceptions of Current Condition:** Most residents hold neutral to positive views on the Village Green's current appearance, with over half rating it as average, only 7% reporting dissatisfaction, and 41% rating it satisfied or very satisfied [\[5\]](#). The most popular existing features are the post and chain boundary (78.05% approval) and the public bench (70.73% approval), while the existing tree feature is the least liked, selected by only 41.46% of respondents [\[6\]](#).

**3. Demand for Change:** More than 70% of respondents support making changes to the Village Green, and fewer than 10% prefer to leave the decorative design completely unchanged [\[4\]](#) [\[7\]](#). Over 73% of respondents prefer minor decorative improvements, while approximately 19.5% support more substantial changes to the site [\[7\]](#).

**4. Preferred Improvement Priorities & Options:** Enhancing overall village appearance is the top-priority change for over 80% of respondents, far outranking all other priorities, followed by maintaining a tidy and safe appearance (selected by 50% of respondents) [\[10\]](#). The most widely supported improvement is adding sessional flowers and low-maintenance

shrubs, backed by over 56% of respondents, followed by adding a historic memorial (supported by 46% of respondents) [8]. Fully slabbed or covering over the entire green is the least supported improvement, with only 2.4% of respondents in favor [8].

## **Summary Conclusions**

The survey captures a highly representative set of views from local Drayton Bassett residents, who hold consistent, clear perspectives on the future of the Village Green. While the current appearance does not prompt widespread strong dissatisfaction, there is broad agreement that targeted improvements are needed to align the space with community needs. Resident preferences are consistently aligned around three core patterns: first, there is clear consensus to retain the green, open natural character of the space, with full hard paving of the entire site firmly rejected. Second, residents consistently prioritise low-maintenance landscape design that avoids long-term overgrowth or neglect, matching concerns about historical maintenance gaps in the area. Third, the top-level goal for any changes is to boost the overall appearance of the village, which aligns with broad support for low-impact native planting options.

## **Detailed Report**

### **1. How familiar are you with the Village Green?**

**An overwhelming majority of respondents are very familiar with the Village Green.**

Over 95 percent of all surveyed participants reported being very familiar, while only 2.44 percent reported being somewhat familiar and another 2.44 percent reported not being familiar at all.

\* This conclusion is based on Q1: "1. How familiar are you with the Village Green?"

### **2. How often do you pass or notice it?**

**An overwhelming majority of respondents pass or notice the target location daily**

Over 80 percent of all surveyed respondents encounter the location daily, less than 20 percent encounter it weekly, and no respondents reported encountering it monthly or never

\* This conclusion is based on Q2: "2. How often do you pass or notice it?"

### **3. Do you live within eyesight of the Village Green?**

\* This conclusion is based on Q3: "3. Do you live within eyesight of the Village Green?"

#### **4. Would you like to see the Village Green changed?**

**The large majority of respondents support changing the Village Green.**

More than 70% of survey participants want changes to the Village Green, while less than 27% prefer no changes to the site.

\* This conclusion is based on Q4: "4. Would you like to see the Village Green changed?"

#### **5. How would you rate its current appearance?**

"conclusion": "Most respondents rate the current appearance as average.",  
"detail": "More than half of all participants chose an average rating, around 41% of respondents rated the appearance as satisfied or very satisfied, and only around 7% of respondents reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.",  
"Most respondents hold neutral to positive views on current appearance."

\* This conclusion is based on Q5: "5. How would you rate its current appearance?"

#### **6. What do you currently like about it?**

Post and chain is the most popular liked feature among survey respondents. This feature obtained the highest response rate at 78.05%, followed by bench with 70.73% of responses. Tree is the least selected liked feature, recording only 41.46% of responses. Post and chain and bench are the most liked current features

\* This conclusion is based on Q6: "6. What do you currently like about it?"

#### **7. Would you like to see decorative improvements?**

**Most respondents want some form of decorative improvements**

Less than 10% of respondents are satisfied with the current decoration and want no changes. Over 73% prefer minor improvements, while around 19.5% want more substantial changes.

\* This conclusion is based on Q7: "7. Would you like to see decorative improvements?"

## **8. Which improvements would you support?**

### **Sessional flowers/low maintenance shrubs are the most supported improvement**

Over 56% of respondents support this option, which is higher than all other improvement options. The second most popular choice is adding a historic memorial, supported by over 46% of respondents. Slabbed or covered over is the least supported improvement, with only around 2.4% of respondents backing it.

\* This conclusion is based on Q8: "8. Which improvements would you support?"

## **9. Are there any features you would not want?**

### Current Status

The village green is a small plot of land situated within a conservation area. Its current layout has ambiguous functional positioning, sending conflicting messages to users: the existing post-and-chain boundary implies the area is not open for walking, while the placed bench indicates it is designed for public use, yet there is no defined path leading to the bench, creating a confusing experience for visitors. The war memorial currently located on church property has low visibility and potential safety hazards, and fails to attract adequate public attendance. Unattractive, poorly maintained landscape features (such as oversized obtrusive bright-colored planters existing elsewhere in the village) have already caused dissatisfaction among local residents, and insufficient long-term maintenance of landscape elements has led to undesirable overgrown conditions in the region historically.

### Proposed Measures

1. Explicitly rule out all unwanted development and design options for the village green, including fully slabbing or covering the green with hard paving, installing large or inappropriate statues, planting large numbers of shrubs prone to overgrowth, building extensive flower beds, retaining harsh man-made features such as spiked chain link fencing and dead trees, developing a wildflower meadow, and excessive tree planting.
2. Adjust the site layout to clarify the functional purpose of the village green, either by adding a simple defined path leading to the existing bench, or re-aligning the layout with the re-confirmed intended use of the space.
3. Relocate the war memorial from church property to the center of the village green to improve its visibility, accessibility and safety, and

encourage more public participation in related activities.  
4. Conduct all planning and construction work in strict compliance with the management requirements of the conservation area, and prioritize simple, low-maintenance design solutions that avoid becoming neglected, unattractive scenery due to insufficient long-term upkeep.  
5. Avoid using obtrusive, high-maintenance elements such as bright oversized planters on the village green.

## Comprehensive Recommendations

The improvement and redevelopment of the village green should first prioritize retaining the natural grassy character that local residents prefer, abandoning any scheme that covers the entire green with hard slabs or paving. All planning work must strictly abide by conservation area management regulations to fit the site's positioning. For the current confusing functional layout, targeted adjustments should be made to add clear access to public facilities such as benches, so as to create a consistent, friendly use experience for residents. When selecting landscape elements, priority should be given to low-maintenance options that match the long-term management capacity of the responsible authority, and all inappropriate, obtrusive or unwanted elements proposed by residents should be excluded. The proposal to relocate the war memorial to the center of the village green aligns with public feedback, as it helps improve public accessibility and respect for the memorial, so its feasibility should be assessed for implementation. Overall, the project should adhere to the principle of simplicity and practicality, match the actual size of the site and local maintenance capacity, and create a public village green space that meets the actual needs of local residents.

### Analysis

This survey reveals clear public preferences and key actionable insights for the improvement of the village green, highlighting the demand for retaining natural character, clarifying functional layout, and prioritizing sustainable low-maintenance design that aligns with conservation area requirements.

### Conclusion

### Word cloud analysis

### Answering Content

\* This conclusion is based on Q9: "9. Are there any features you would not want?"

## **10. What change would be most important to you**

## **Enhancing village appearance is the most frequently selected top-priority change**

Over 80% of respondents chose this option, far outpacing all other options. Tidy and safe appearance is the next most popular choice, selected by just over half of respondents, followed by low maintenance and resilient plants selected by around 41% to 44% of respondents. Only 24.39% of respondents consider no obstruction to visibility as the most important change.

\* This conclusion is based on Q10: "10. What change would be most important to you"

## **11. Are there any other decorative improvements you would like to suggest**

### Analysis Conclusion

Current	Status
<p>The surveyed community green space currently has multiple notable issues affecting public experience. First, it sends conflicting messages about its intended use: the post-and-chain boundary implies the area is not open for walking, while the existing bench signals it is meant for public use, and there is no defined path connecting the bench to the entrance, leaving visitors confused. The existing perimeter chain fencing is also seen as unappealing and potentially dangerous. The loss of the original large trees that previously stood on the green is widely regretted, and current tree and plant selections do not meet community expectations. Existing asymmetrical planters are generally viewed as untidy. Local cobblestone infrastructure has been damaged and replaced multiple times due to careless driving by commercial delivery drivers. The current consultation process only uses online and QR code surveys, which excludes some Drayton residents from participation. There is currently no permanent Christmas tree, and the existing seasonal Christmas tree does not meet community needs. A share of residents are satisfied with the current state of the green but remain open to reasonable improvements.</p>	

Proposed Improvement Measures - Based on collected public suggestions, the proposed improvements are sorted as follows:

1. Landscaping and perimeter adjustment: Remove the existing perimeter chain link fencing, rework the border with coastal pebbles/stone and coastal grasses, and plant lavender behind the stone border to support pollinators. Level the grass on the green, and install fully continuous level kerbstones around the perimeter with an additional second higher kerbstone to protect the space. Remove existing untidy asymmetrical planters and avoid using

artificial plants or trees for decoration. Plant a variety of native plants to add natural colour and attract local wildlife and pollinators; develop a central wildflower meadow in the core of the green. Add multiple appropriately placed trees, including blossom trees, a native mature oak, and a permanent evergreen living Christmas tree that can be decorated for multiple annual events beyond Christmas.

2. Decorative and cultural feature addition: Add a themed public sculpture in the central meadow, similar in style to existing popular local public art. Add local heritage features including statues of key local historical figures, a heritage information board linking the green to other local historic sites, a new low-maintenance village sign in the popular Norfolk style that displays the village name and carved local landmarks/industries, and new flags marking the site as a local heritage spot. Install permanent electricity access to support decorative lighting for events.

3. Functionality and infrastructure improvement: Add a clear defined walking path leading to the existing bench, and add extra benches to encourage public use of the space. Add a dedicated sign to divert commercial vehicles away from Heathly Lane, routing all commercial delivery and collection traffic for Heathley farm to the alternative entrance near Portleys Lane to reduce infrastructure damage. It is also proposed to add a small retail space offering food, fireworks and exotic pets.

4. Consultation improvement: Expand consultation outreach to include all Drayton residents, not just those able to access online or QR code surveys.

### Comprehensive Suggestions

To deliver decorative and functional improvements that align with the actual needs of the Drayton community, we recommend the following prioritized actions:

First, resolve the core issue of unclear space purpose by adjusting the confusing boundary, adding a clear path to existing seating, and removing the off-putting, potentially dangerous chain fencing to clarify that the green is open for public use. Second, implement ecological native landscaping that supports local wildlife and pollinators, while upgrading perimeter infrastructure to reduce future damage to local cobblestones from commercial traffic, and plant a permanent evergreen Christmas tree to meet year-round decoration needs for multiple community events. Third, add low-maintenance cultural and decorative features that highlight local history and community identity, such as the Norfolk-style village sign and heritage information board, to strengthen the green's connection to local context, with the specific choice of sculptures or large statues adjusted

based on available project budget. Fourth, adjust future community consultation processes to add offline participation options to ensure all residents can voice their opinions, and adopt an incremental improvement approach that prioritizes changes with broad public support to meet diverse community needs.

Answering Content

\* This conclusion is based on Q11: "11. Are there any other decorative improvements you would like to suggest"

## **12. Do you live in Drayton Bassett?**

### **An overwhelming majority of respondents live in Drayton Bassett**

Only a very small share of participants do not reside in this area, confirming almost all respondents are local residents

\* This conclusion is based on Q12: "12. Do you live in Drayton Bassett?"