



Bowls Nationals Review
Residents' Survey
October 2014
Final Report

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On behalf of Warwick District Council

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Bowls Nationals Review - Residents

1.0 Introduction

For close to forty years, Leamington Spa has played host to the Women's National Bowls Championships. In 2013, Warwick District Council and Bowls England signed an agreement to extend the event to 30 days by including the Men's National Championships from 2014 for 10 years.

A review of the 2014 event was undertaken with the report going to the Warwick District Council Executive in early 2015.

As part of the review, local residents in a defined area that may be affected by the Championships were sent a questionnaire to obtain feedback on the impact of the event.

The following report shows the results of this survey.

2.0 Methodology

642 questionnaires were sent to households in the area surrounding Victoria Park towards the end of September, with a closing date of Monday 20th October 2014. 103 forms were returned in that period, a response rate of 16%. For this sort of survey a response rate between 15 and 20% would be expected. In 2012 a similar survey took place when a 17% response was recorded.

There were two questions in which comparisons could be made with the 2012 survey and these are included in the report.

The area used for the survey was selected by the Council and covered the area to the south of Victoria Park bounded by the railway line and including Park Drive, Ingle Court, Avenue Road, Victoria Street, Archery Road, and Station Approach. The area extended east as far as Lower Avenue at which point the boundary to area turned north to intersect the River Leam above Manor Court before heading back west to encompass Manor House, Manor court, York road and Adelaide Road. Finally the area extended to the north and then west to include Dale Street, Portland Place West, Milverton Hill, Grove Street and Somers Place, before dropping back down to the River heading west until it intersects with the railway line which formed the southern boundary.

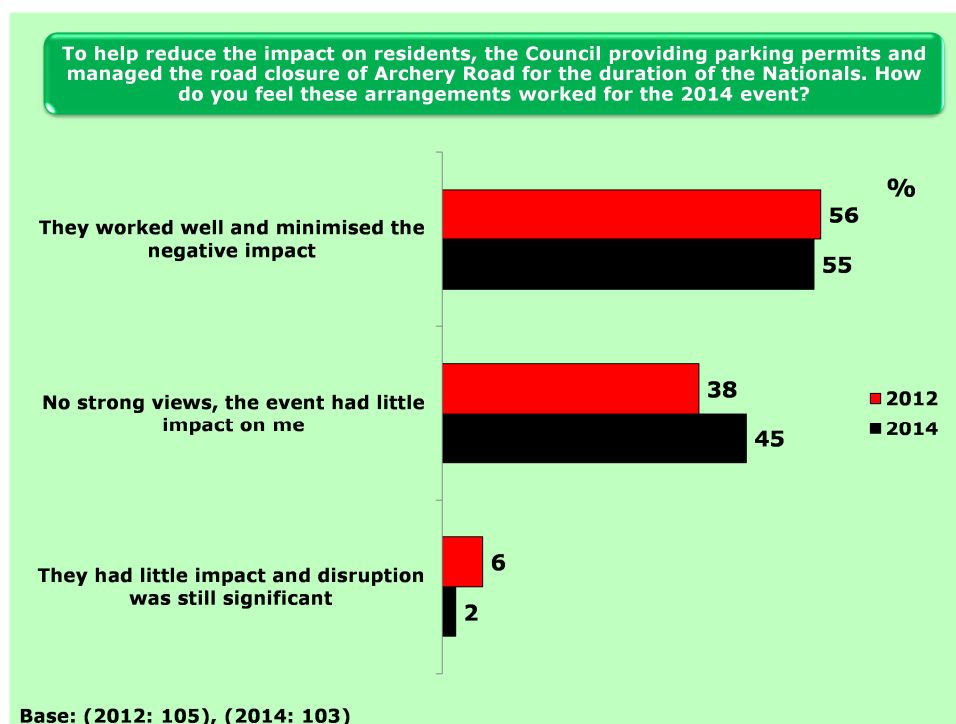
3.0 Analysis

3.1 Arrangements

To help reduce the impact on residents, the Council provided parking permits and managed the road closure of Archery Road for the duration of the Nationals. Residents were asked how they felt the arrangements worked for the 2014 event.

55% of residents felt the arrangements worked well and minimised the negative impact. This result was similar to that achieved in 2012. There was a rise of 7 percentage points for those saying they had no strong view, the event had little impact on them. There was a 4 point drop from 6% to 2% of those saying that they had little impact and disruption was still significant. Overall, residents were more positive about the event than in 2012.

Chart 1:



Residents were asked to suggest how the arrangements could be improved. The full lists of 35 comments are included in the appendix. The main improvement suggested was for no parking in the park by 11 residents.

Table 1:

Please provide any suggestions on how the arrangements could be improved

Comments	Total	%
No improvements	15	43
No parking in the park	11	31
Happy with parking arrangements	4	11
Use more suitable parking	4	11
Parking permits	4	11
Visitors to park (disruption by cars)	3	9
Poor advertising (Event)	2	6
Unhappy with parking arrangements	2	6
Good traffic management	2	6
Noisy	2	6
Other	1	3

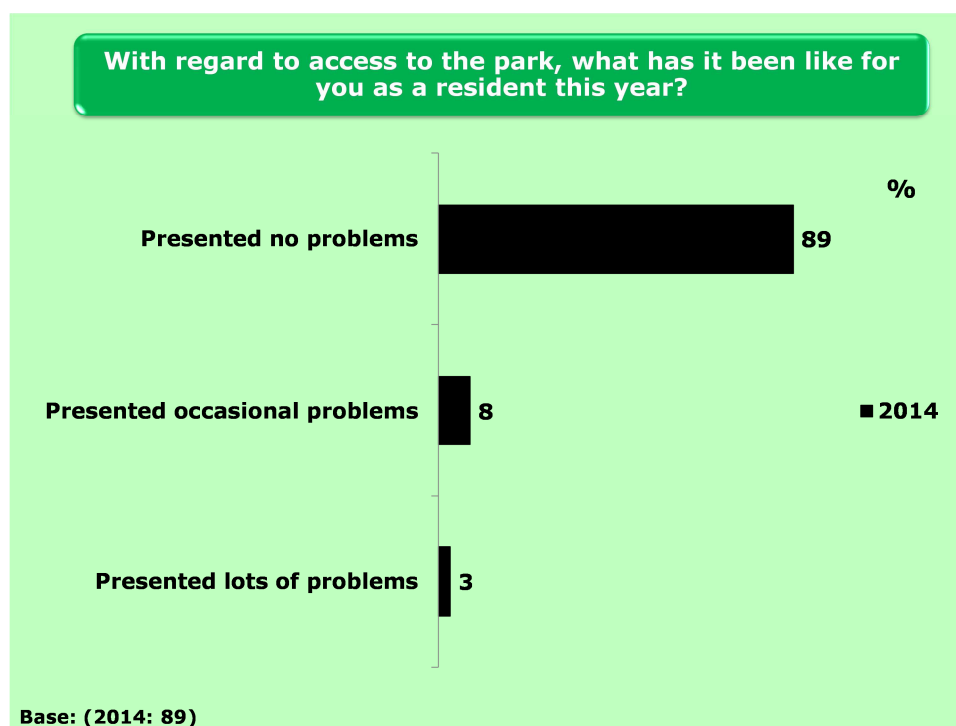
3.2 Access to Park

The 2014 event saw a change in the way that parking in Victoria Park was managed. Cars were allowed in the park for 28 days, with the area used for parking reduced by around 40%. In addition, the parking was managed by a company who specialised in event parking.

Residents were asked about the access to the park and what it had been like for them in 2014. Almost nine out of ten of respondents (89%) felt it had presented no problems, with 8% saying occasional problems and 3% lots of problems.

16 responses were made when asked to comment on this issue and these are included in the appendix.

Chart 2:

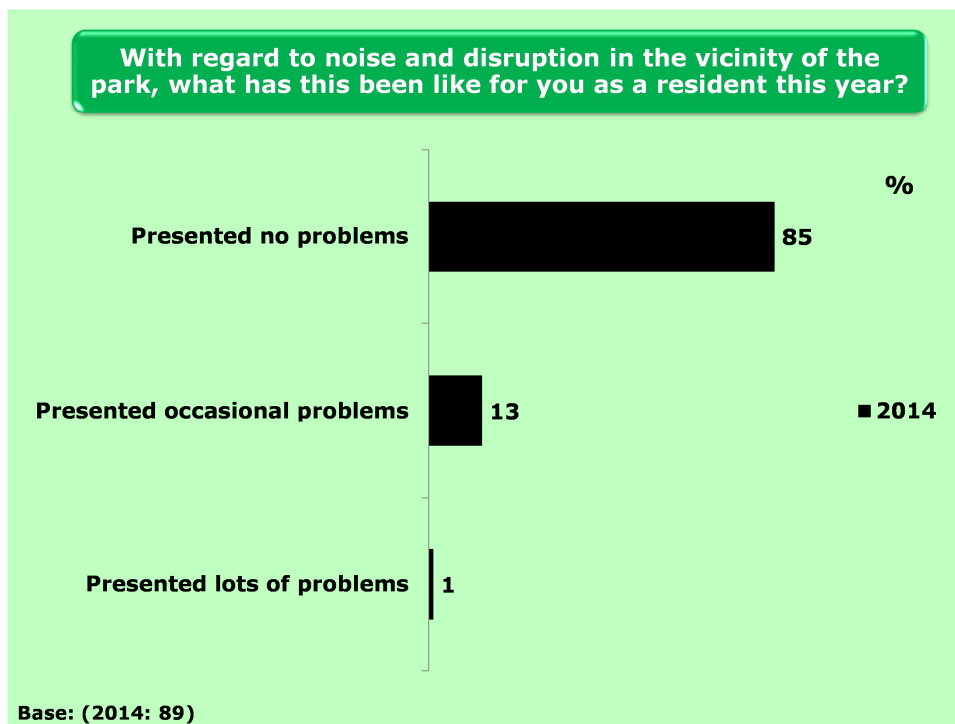


3.3 Noise and Disruption

Residents were asked about the noise and disruption in the vicinity of the park and what it had been like for them in 2014. 85% of residents felt it had presented no problems, with 13% saying occasional problems and 1% lots of problems.

13 responses were made when asked to comment on this issue and these are included in the appendix.

Chart 3:

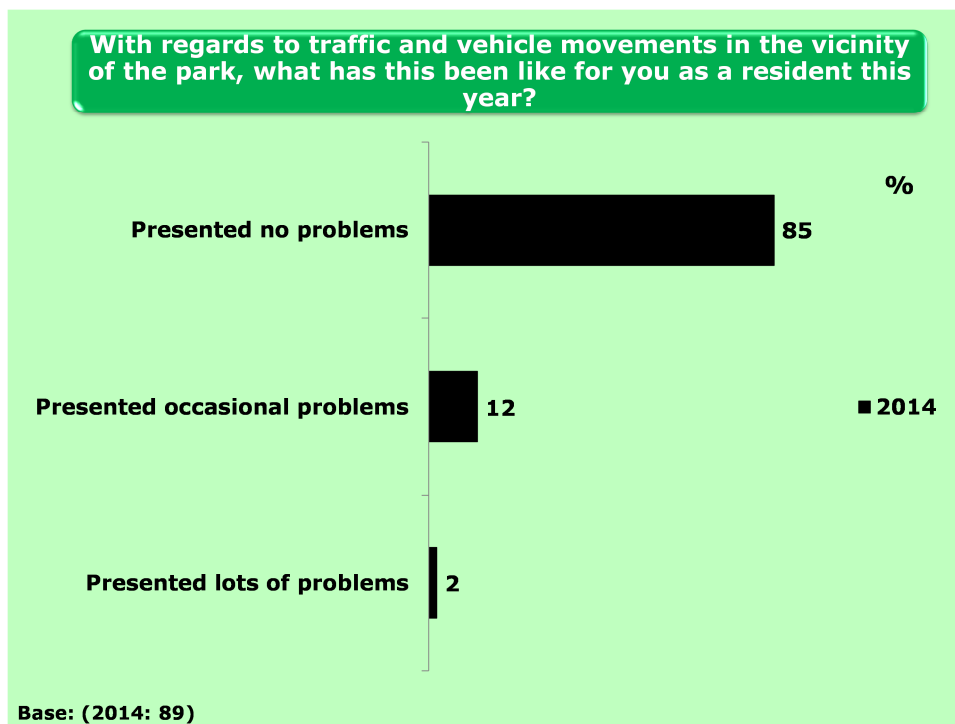


3.4 Traffic and Vehicle Movements

Residents were asked about the traffic and vehicle movements in the vicinity of the park and what it had been like for them in 2014. 85% of residents felt it had presented no problems, with 12% saying occasional problems and 2% lots of problems.

14 responses were made when asked to comment on this issue and these are included in the appendix.

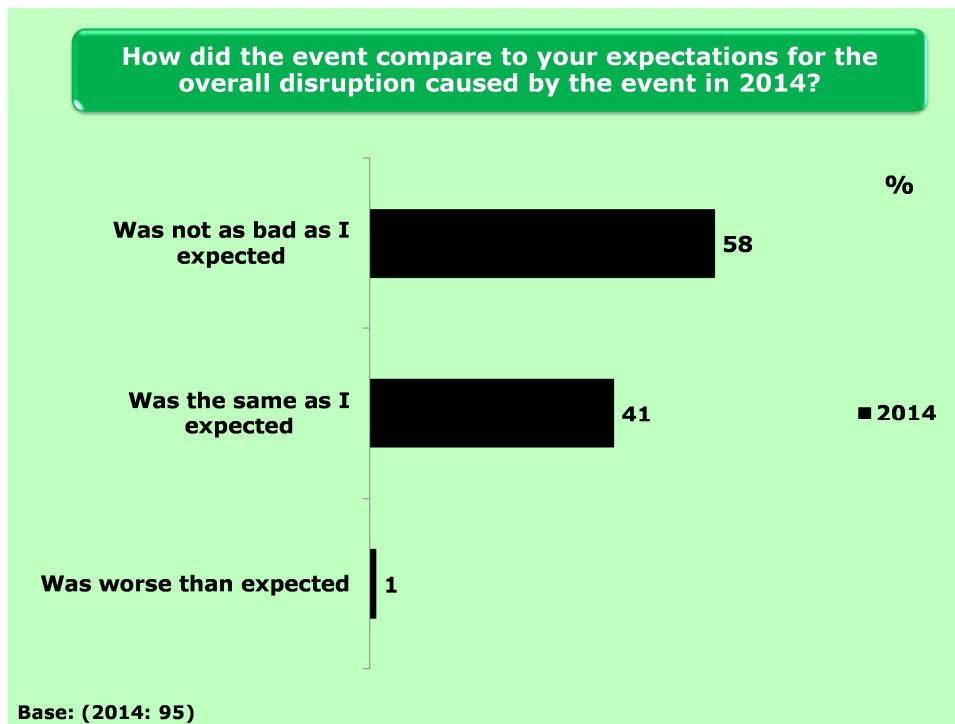
Chart 4:



3.5 Expectations of Overall Disruption

Residents were asked to compare their expectations for the overall disruption caused by the event in 2014. 58% of residents felt it had been not as bad as expected, 41% saying it was the same as they expected and 1% felt it was worse than expected.

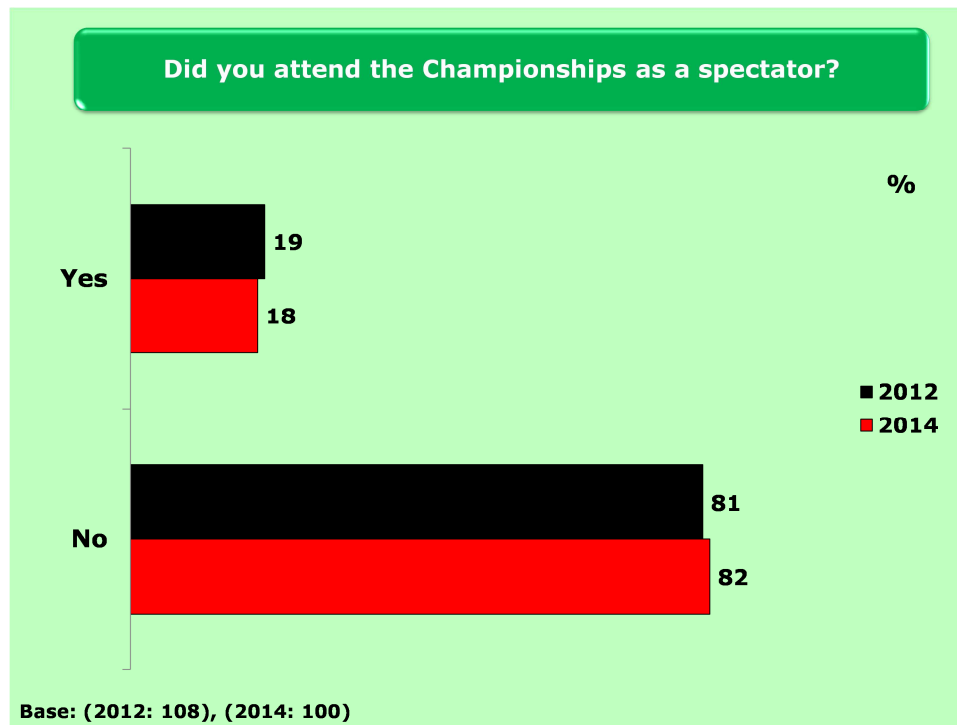
Chart 5:



3.6 Involvement with Event

Residents were asked if they attended the Championships as a spectator. 18% said they did, a figure almost mirroring that in 2012.

Chart 6:

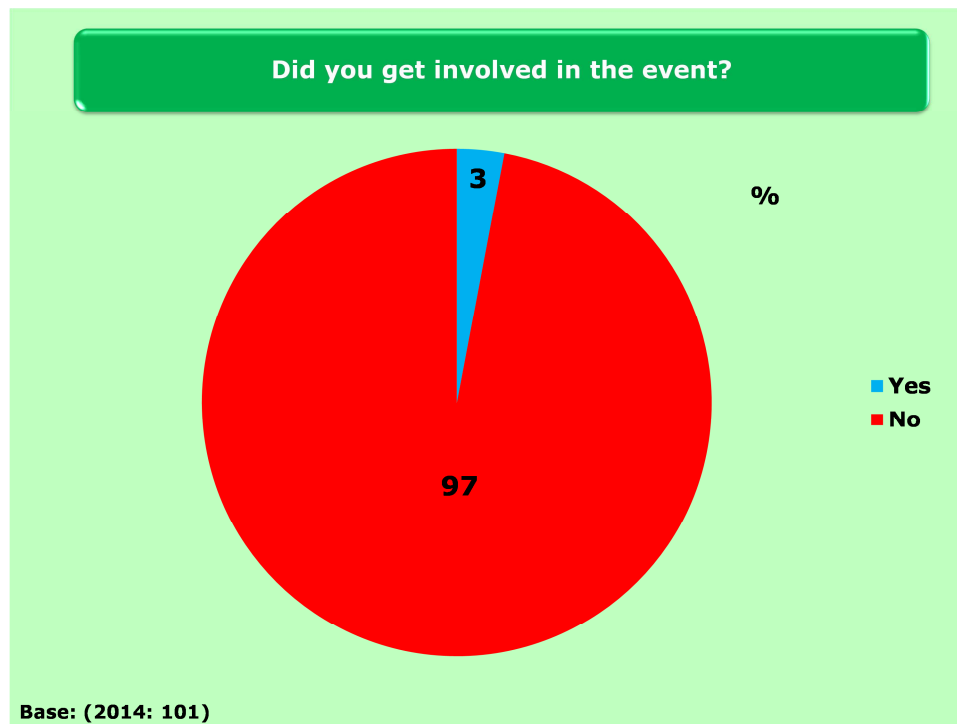


2 residents were involved with the event in some way, as commented;

"My daughter was very glad of the opportunity to work in the café"

"Made occasional cups of tea or coffee for the person on the barrier at the end of Archery Road".

Chart 7:



3.7 Any Other Comments

Residents were asked to make any other comments or suggestions. 33 did so and these are listed in full in the appendix. They have also been summarised and these are listed in the table below. 21 residents felt it was a good event, 13 saying it brought business to the town.

Table 2:

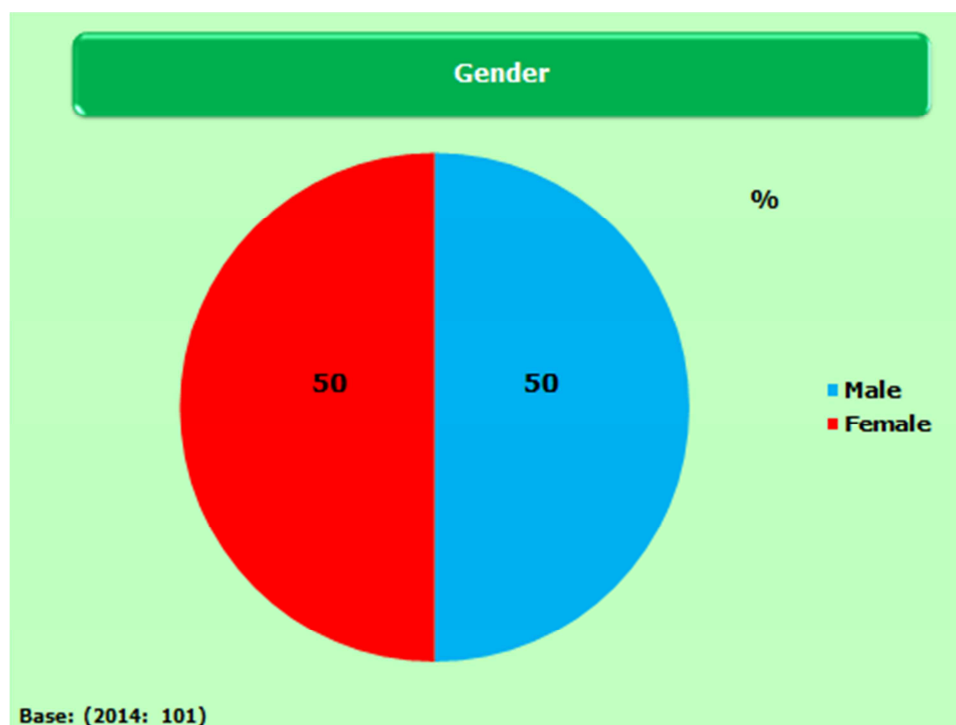
Please make any other comments or suggestions

Comments	Total	%
Good event	21	64
Brings business to town	13	39
Raises towns profile	7	21
Well organised	6	18
Using park for parking	4	12
Parking issues (Archery Road)	2	6
Off-site parking	2	6
Other	5	15

3.8 Profile of Respondent

There was a 50/50 split between male and female respondents.

Chart 8:



The most prominent response age group were those in the 65 to 74 year old age group.

Table 3:

Age Group

Comments	Total	%
17-24	0	0
25-34	8	8
35-44	11	11
45-54	21	21
55-64	14	14
65-74	32	32
75 plus	16	16

APPENDIX

Please provide any suggestions on how the arrangements could be improved in the box below.

35 responses

- I have no objections to the bowls and feel it is an excellent event that can only do Leamington Spa a world of good, please keep the national bowls in Leamington Spa
- Very good as they were
- Grove Street needs to become permit holders only 24/7 - the 2 hour restriction is a joke & abused all the time and heightened when events are on
- It would help to not block the grass areas of the park for several days either side of the 28 days by the fencing (for car parking) Also - the car park at the Princes Drive end of the park had unrestricted parking, so lots of bowlers used it, which blocked it completely for any visiting families visiting the park. You should put a time restriction on it, e.g. 2 hours/4hours
- Other than signs I did not notice the event was even happening
- Well organised
- Parking was not an issue for me because I walk to the park with the dog. I do, however sympathise with dog walkers who travel to the park by car. The car park at the west side of the park quickly filled up with the bowling crowd who wanted to avoid the parking fee in the park. This left no space for people to park who wanted to walk their dogs.
- I enjoy the spectacle and thought it was very well managed. Thank you
- Where I live at Manor Court it has very little disruption to me
- Early reminder to residents that the bowling is happening - 2 weeks before
- Minimal or no local impact to surrounding area at the time of the event. If operational changes are required to benefit the event then this should be determined by those attending the event itself. We live in Dale Street
- A measurement needs to be made and the space required for 30 days
- Very well, congratulations
- Arrangements were good
- I live in 10, York Road and was away quite a lot in August, so the Championships did not present any problem and inconvenience to us
- All seemed to work well
- Traffic management very friendly
- All seems fine I use the park all the time and the cars do not disturb. There are some annoying protestors
- Reserve a number of spaces in a road for the use of residents and prohibited to be general public. The residents has purchased permits and therefore should be guaranteed spaces at all times. The Council have been lucky that the weather during the event has been quite good but should a prolonged period of bad weather could result in damage to grass reminiscent of Silverstone and Glastonbury which would take years to recover

- The road closures worked well but stopping car parking in the park itself would enhance the accessibility and safety for all park users wanting to use the other amenities
- The car parking seemed well organised and we were not directly affected
- Put all cars in St Peters car park, buying a daily-weekly tournament parking ticket. The top fleet of the car park would be fine. Cars should not be at parks
- We like to see the bowlers every year
- Can't the old ford foundry car park be used for bowls parking? To free up more of the park being used for parking during the school holidays
- It is unacceptable for a park only to be open for 11 months of the year. The negative impact could be reduced by: 1. Using a more suitable location for parking e.g. mid Warks College as it is closed in August, as opposed to a PARK WHICH GETS MOST OF ITS USE DURING THE SUMMER SCHOOL HOLIDAYS! 2. Making parking on adjacent streets permit and pay (not just permit) as lots of people were overstaying on Grove Street with no/little enforcement action. 3. Ensuring parking spaces in adjacent streets are marked clearly to stop people taking up excessive space
- Find other parking rather than in the park in summertime
- Just carry on the good job done
- Send out parking passes before the event, not during. I had to make a telephone call, to be told that they had been sent out. However, I did not receive mine until about three days after the beginning of games
- Quite a large number of cars tried to exit via Victoria Street to the main road - Then making 3 point turns to get back to the park exit, noisy and disturbing! A sign, no exit
- Please stop using the park as a car park. Maybe an out of town park & ride service? More use of St Peters & Riverside car parks
- The contractors did a very good job on the park. I was still able for my dog Harry to run around the park and to see the young children still playing, Great
- Permit only parking in Archery road and surrounding roads for the duration of the event. There should be no need to close Archery Road
- No improvements, it worked well
- Road closure of Archery Road seemed to work well and security men were polite and helpful to residents
- It would be very much more helpful if the road remained closed until at least 6.30pm. This year the barrier was taken away sometimes as early as 4.30pm. The road fills up rapidly as bowling continued

Please make any comments here on the accessibility to the park during the Nationals.

16 responses

- This event significantly disrupts and limits use of Victoria Park for a prolonged period and this occurs at a time that the park is used most - i.e. during school summer holidays
- Ok
- Children could not ride their bikes freely
- As there was more space for the children during the holidays I think it worked well
- Access to park was good - not too much taken over by parking on the grass. Plenty of space for everybody
- Access to park not a problem. Parking well controlled
- Accessibility was good and well managed
- The park has been accessible except for the car parking area
- I am disabled, Victoria Street & Archery Road, of the small car park are denied to all as the road is closed
- Friends were unable to visit easily in the first few days and were turned away at the end of the road. This was sorted by talking to the stewards
- Cars parked on the park made it difficult to use the park for people with children and I felt uncomfortable letting them ride their bikes nearby due to the pedestrians and cars
- The majority of the park was accessible and as far as I can tell the use of part of the park for event parking provided no problems and was well managed
- Object to public park being used as a car park
- Friends were unable to visit easily in the first few days and were turned away at the end of the road. This was sorted by talking to the stewards
- The cricket square should be re-instated am still not happy about the park being turned into a car park for the whole of August - the school summer holidays. While it was managed better this year the fact remains that cars are in the park which should be a safe, healthy environment for children and adults. There are other options available for parking.
- Although the parking arrangements appeared to be handled in a friendly and professional way, runners and cyclists in particular faced a potential bottleneck where cars entered/exited the Park.

Please make any comments here on the noise and disruption in the vicinity of the park during the Nationals.

13 responses

- NA
- The noise from night clubbers is far worse
- Not near enough to hear anything
- Very little noise from bowls or parking
- Minimised disruption was caused
- The noise was acceptable but parking in the evening was frequently difficult
- The greens maintenance machines created quite a lot of noise early in the morning which happens all year. Sometimes the sound system was a bit loud
- I have not been affected by any noise pollution or disruption from the event
- As above, reduces the amenity benefit
- Obviously noise levels are increased for me, living opposite the greens during the championships. I don't normally mind this but I must admit that four weeks did seem a long time, early morning mowers, weekend crowds... not too peaceful in my garden!
- It starts too early, particularly at weekends
- Loudspeakers early in the morning

Please make any comments here on the traffic and vehicle movements in the vicinity of the park during the Nationals.

14 responses

- NA
- Reduces traffic flow and contributed to increased delays at an already busy junction
- Heavy volume at certain times meant a slower journey
- The car parking was managed very well. I regularly walk my dog around the park and it was much safer this year with the metal barriers
- Traffic movement not a problem
- Vehicle movement appeared to go smoothly
- As above in the evening was sometimes difficult
- I cannot make easy access to the park and the traffic leaves long delays
- A visitor bumped into my parked car and caused £500 of damage as the parking spaces were not clearly marked
- NA
- No problems, the event parking company controlled the traffic flow well and ensured that park users were given priority to move around and suffer as little disruption as possible
- Parking on Avenue Road
- As above, although better managed this year
- Pedestrians should take priority - not always the case
- Tannoy was sometimes excessively loud.

Please make any other comments or suggestions here in the box below.

33 responses

- Is an excellent advocate for the Leamington Spa district and I think it brings a lot of business to the town
- Carry on!
- There were some ridiculous signs up on Archery Road, ('Parking suspended! Warning!') - This implied NO parking whereas it was simply a different restriction. It would be nice to have a fixtures list like we used to, so we know what is happening when. The security guards at the entrance of Archery Road were nice and helpful
- I cannot think that the event is anything but good for Leamington
- I think that any possible negatives are far outweighed by the economic positives by the events
- This event is an asset to the town and with so many parks, the objections to this event were without foundation, from the outset. I only regret that taxpayers money is being wasted to indulge the whims and nimbys
- I would suggest limiting parking even more and providing off-site parking with shuttle bus transfers to allow use of the park at its most popular time
- These bowling events always seem to be well organised and pleasant events. I live to see the flags up. The events must bring more into the town and I really don't understand why anyone begrudges a little disruption in the park for a short time. Noisy events - Pump room garden far more disruption as are noisy drunk in night
- I think the bowls has to be a good thing for the town - raising it's profile and bringing people in to spend their money in the town and surrounding area
- I am happy to say I have very little spare time, due to the fact I have great difficulty getting about
- The event itself occurs, but we see little advertising of the event in advance, nor any material information about local involvement in the event - i.e. did anyone locally perform well?
- Quite happy for the event to continue. I think it's good and prestigious for the town
- Leamington needs the bowls it brings people and money to the town. It is all well organised, keep up the good work
- You could let people stay in tents or caravan on the green. Charge little for charity or towards the bowls
- The arrangements were well managed and any disruption was kept to a minimum. In my view the company responsible for the arrangements did an excellent job. Most of the park was available for general use. The National Bowls Championships are important to the town and well worth any slight disruption. A good result
- Excellent event for the profile of the town. Long may it continue!
- As I use the park daily to walk my dog I was pleased to see only 40% of the grass used for parking. The company managing the parking ensured walkers, joggers, dogs etc. could cross across the entrance/exit road safely. They were polite and jolly even in the pouring rain!
- The event adds colour and life to the area. The players are very courteous and I find it is well organised, don't give in to NIMBS

- Being a permit holder, it worked very well, with supervision it was nice to drive home to find that the parking spaces hadn't been taken by the general public
- We are very pleased that Leamington has been selected to host these prestigious events, and feel that it is a very positive asset to the town
- WHY, WHY, WHY would anyone in their right mind effectively shut down a park (by having a party etc. on the grassed area) in the school holidays for 4 weeks. Especially when the park has outdoor children's pool which cannot be used for most of the year!
- I think this is a valuable event for Leamington Spa and the arrangements generally work well for me but I do have parking available in the front of my house so I am not so affected as perhaps others in the street
- A good event for the town and businesses
- The major disruption is not from parking with the new arrangements in place, and proper policing. The major disruption for me is the noise of mowers/ blowers/flattening machines starting at 7am and this is throughout the season not just during championships
- I like having the event here, it is good for the area. I experienced no disruption as a result of the event
- As far as I can tell the event was well managed and disruption minimal. That being said I neither drive so cannot comment on traffic issues, nor live directly next to the affected area to pass judgement on day to day disruption
- Walk past every day with the dog and enjoyed to see the flags etc. Do not know if it would have affected parking if I came in car
- We feel that the Bowls Championship is a great asset for the town and although we were not affected by any disruption we do feel that it is unfortunate that Victoria Park should be taken over for the parking of so many vehicles, especially during the whole of August when families with young children on holiday from school wish to spend more time in the park
- Please consider parking in town centre car parks only. It is not so far to walk. Victoria park is a beautiful park and should not be used in this way for a whole month in the middle of summer
- See comments in Q3
- Temporary notices need to be taken down after the championships - the residents took down the ones in Archery Road - there are still four on the Adelaide Road - pedestrian crossing!
- Parking arrangements in the park were much better managed. However the park was under used by local families again due to cars being in the park
- This questionnaire neatly avoids asking for views re the parking of cars in Victoria Park. We suspect that local users of the Park were deterred from visiting it firstly because of the presence of cars and, secondly, because the unrestricted free car park in Princes Drive was filled with Bowls visitors' cars by early morning. This latter situation needs to be remedied.