

Cantelowes Gardens padel and landscape plans

Engagement update October 2025

Over the last year we have been working on a proposal to introduce a Padel court to Cantelowes Gardens (NW5 2AU). Padel is a fast growing, fun and inclusive new sport in the UK.

We understand and appreciate the concerns raised by residents regarding the proposed padel court. In response to feedback, we worked with a landscape architect to explore how a padel court could be introduced whilst ensuring the re-provision of the sandpit and improving play areas and social seating.

Key community concerns:

- Loss of the sandpit
- Loss of picnic benches
- Introduction of a fee-based facility

To address these concerns, indicative landscape plans were developed and shared via public engagement during September/October 2025 to demonstrate that Camden's commitment to re-providing existing park features are deliverable. These re-provided features include:

- A new play area and sandpit will be delivered.
- Picnic benches and social seating will remain part of the park environment.
- All new amenities would be completed before or at the same time as the padel court to preserve park enjoyment for local families.

Padel - inclusive access and community benefits:

- Affordable pricing: £25/hour standard rate; £15/hour concession rate. The average cost of a padel court bookings in London is around £45 per hour.
- For a group of 4 with one concession player (e.g., under 16, over 60, or disabled), this equates to just £3.75 per person.
- Commitment to 10 hours of free weekly access for local community groups.

How did we engage?

- An online survey was hosted on the We are Camden website from 30 September - 21 October 2025 [Cantelowes Gardens playground, sandpit and padel court proposals - We Are Camden - Citizen Space](#)
- Two pop-up engagement sessions were held in the park on 9 October 1-4.30pm and Saturday 11 October 10.30am -1.30pm to meet people, allow them to try out padel on the sports pitch and talk through the landscape plans.

We asked:

How do you feel about:

- proposed new sandpit and the under 12s play area?
- proposed junior play area?
- youth social space proposed?
- proposed picnic benches/social seating proposed?
- How do you feel about the proposed pricing of the padel court and programmed free community use suggested?
- Do you have any further comments on the draft landscape plans attached?
- We are planning some essential improvements to the pavilion building, which could also include looking to provide a small cafe serving hot drinks etc, improved public facing toilet/s and possibly reconfiguring a changing room to provide a bookable meeting room. Would you support these ideas?

You said:

Survey results from the online and pop-up session responses (80 in total) were:

	Sandpit and under 12s area	Junior play area	Youth space	Picnic tables
Excellent	29%	31%	32%	36%
Very good	17%	10%	12%	10%
Good	23%	27%	18%	28%
Fair	8%	8%	9%	3%
Poor	23%	21%	23%	22%

Planned improvements to Pavillion building:

Provide a small café	Improve toilet	Changing room to bookable meeting room
41%	48%	10%

Pricing of the padel court and programmed free community use suggested

Comments have been categorised and summarised as:

Category	Percentage
Positive / Supportive of Pricing	34%
Neutral / Mixed Views	23%
Negative / Opposed to Pricing	38%
Non-Responses / N/A	6%
Strong Objection to Padel Court (not price-related)	28%

Example comments:

Strong objection to Padel Court (irrespective of price)

"I don't agree with the Padel court at all - it's an elitist sport..."
"We don't need or want a padel court — it will be noisy and intrusive."
"The gardens should be open spaces and available free to all people."
"I strongly object to the Padel court plans..."
"Rubbish"
"Expensive and unnecessary in Cantelowes..."

Positive / Supportive of Pricing

"Amazing"
"Love it"
"Good pricing for the community"
"Excellent. low price"
"It's very reasonable"
"Good value"
"Appropriate"

Further comments on landscape plans:

Category	Percentage
Supportive of the Proposal	13%
Neutral / Constructive Suggestions	20%
Opposed to the Padel Court	30%
Strong Objections / Negative Toward Consultation Process	26%
Neutral / Other / Not Applicable	11%

Supportive/constructive/further comments on proposal

"I support the proposal as no padel court in London to play for me and my kids."
"A padel court would be great for the community. The positives far outweigh any concerns."
"Yes padel is amazing. As a Camden resident I travel really far to play padel."
"Excellent plan."
"I strongly support the proposal and consider the amendments... balanced answer to local concerns."
"Community benefit – every little bit helps."
"Separate toilet for younger kids."
"More picnic benches north of the playground."
"Better lighting in the skatepark."
"Please provide a cafe that is dog friendly."
"Resurface and expand the skatepark."
"Grateful for all the lovely works being done."

Opposed to the Padel Court/consultation process

"No need for a padel court, we need the skatepark improved."

"We do not want a padel court. People who want one can go to Islington."

"Poor location for a padel court."

"Also why take more green space."

"This consultation feels biased. It assumes residents support the padel court instead of asking if we want it at all."

"The new proposals surround the padel court, sandpit and play areas are wrong and should not go ahead."

"It's noisy, enclosed, and visually intrusive."

"I believe the suggested site for the padel court is the wrong location."

"Padel courts are noisy and will disturb as well as being intrusive."

What next:

We will make some revisions to the planning application - 2025/1301/P, following which there will be a 21-day consultation period. The revisions include, removing the 'out of court' areas of the padel court and entrance on west side of the court. This reduces the footprint of the court and is more sympathetic to the indicative plans for a junior play area with landscaping nearby. Following engagement, we have also revised the alternative locations for picnic benches.