

Pitfield Estate street gym

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Introduction

This report details feedback on the proposal to install a free street gym on the Pitfield Estate, Hoxton, and the health and fitness activities people might want to take part in. The survey ran from 3 February to 3 March 2026.

Background

We have an opportunity to install a 'street gym' (exercise bars) on the Pitfield Estate, Hoxton. This would be a free resource available to all residents and the local community that would help boost everyday health and wellbeing.

The equipment is being donated by [Raza Sana Community Interest Company](#) - a not-for-profit organisation that runs community health and wellbeing projects. In addition to the equipment, they could offer a selection of organised activities for all abilities and ages to encourage people to get active.

We wanted residents to tell us:

- Would they like to have the street gym installed on their estate? And are there any considerations we should know about?
- What free activity sessions might they be interested in?

Consultation & engagement approach

A short online survey was hosted on the Council's engagement platform Citizen Space from 3 February to 3 March 2026.

In addition, a community activity morning was held on the Pitfield Estate on Saturday 7 February. This included showcasing some of the bars and inviting residents to take part in activities and share some free refreshments.

Surveys and conversations were carried out during the event, including doorknocking at flats overlooking the proposed site.

Communications with links to the survey and invitations to the community activity morning were issued via estate-wide text to Council residents, and posters displayed in housing blocks.

As this estate is within the Connecting Hoxton public realm regeneration area, we also shared wider plans for their estate and directed residents to the separate Connecting Hoxton design survey.

Response rate

There were 40 responses in total from an estate of 262 registered addresses: 31 via the online survey, 8 collected in person, and one by telephone.

Executive summary

There was **majority support** (29 out of 40 responses) for the proposal to install exercise bars on the Pitfield Estate, with 26 completely in support and 3 partially. Eight residents did not support the proposal.

Early engagement highlighted issues about the proposed location - the former drying green - being too close to flats in Burtt House and potentially disturbing residents of that block. Conversations at the Estate activity morning on Saturday 7 February also heard suggestions from some residents of locating the exercise bars in a corner of the playground instead.

Based on this feedback from residents, the proposal was updated (from 10 February) to include both location options.

The main **benefits** of the proposals were seen as:

- Boosting health and fitness for all (5 comments)
- Bringing the community together (5 comments)

The main **concerns** raised were:

- That it might attract noise and antisocial behaviour (ASB) (29 comments)
- The former drying green site would disturb residents in Burtt House (8)
- That the playground site would take away space from younger children (6)

Suggestions put forward were:

- Relocation to existing activity areas nearby
- A variety of equipment types

Hedge

Proposals to screen the gym area with a hedge were supported (26 out of 40 responses). There were some concerns that it might make the area more secluded and therefore less safe.

Lighting

The suggestion of installing safety lighting was supported (30 out of 40 responses). There were some concerns about the light disturbing nearby flats.

Activities

The offer of free community activity sessions was welcomed. The most popular were:

- Strength building (20 people showing interest)
- Stretching (16)
- Women-only sessions (15)
- How to use the equipment (14)
- Return to exercise (13)

Additional suggestions from respondents were:

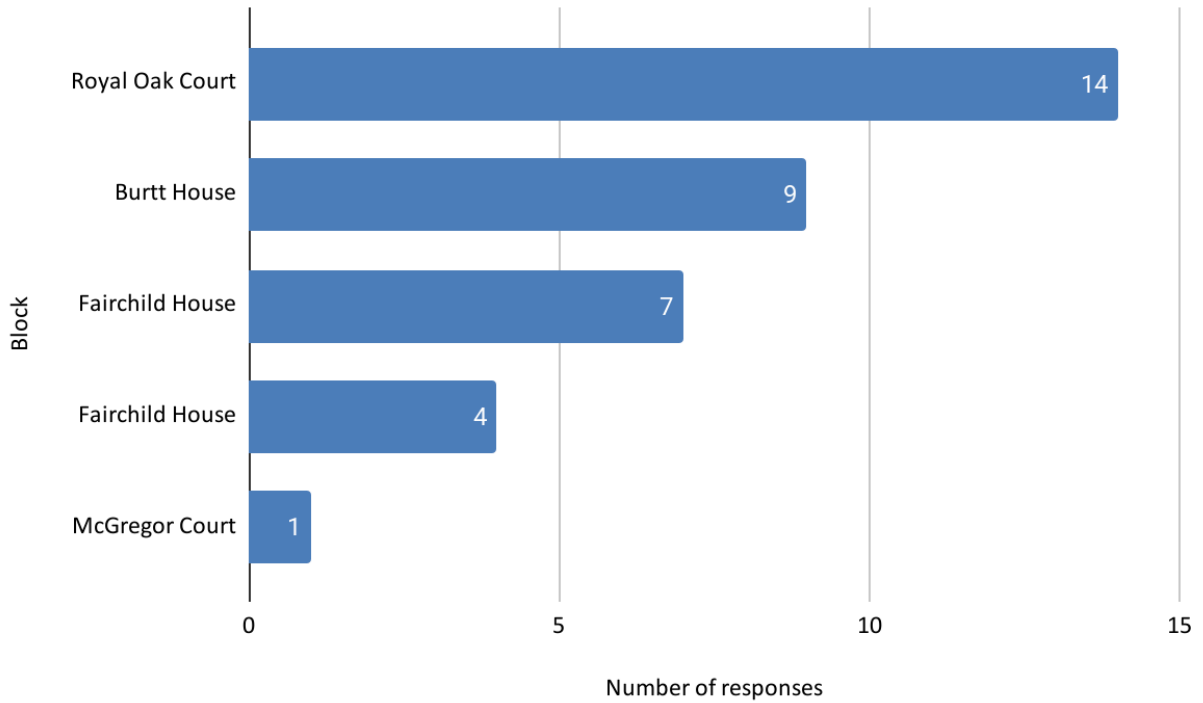
- Fitbox
- Mini trampoline
- Tai Chi
- Skateboarding

Saturdays, particularly mornings (18 respondents) and after 6.30pm on weekdays (16 respondents) were the **most convenient times** for residents to take part in activities.

Overview of results

This section offers a more detailed breakdown of responses to each question.

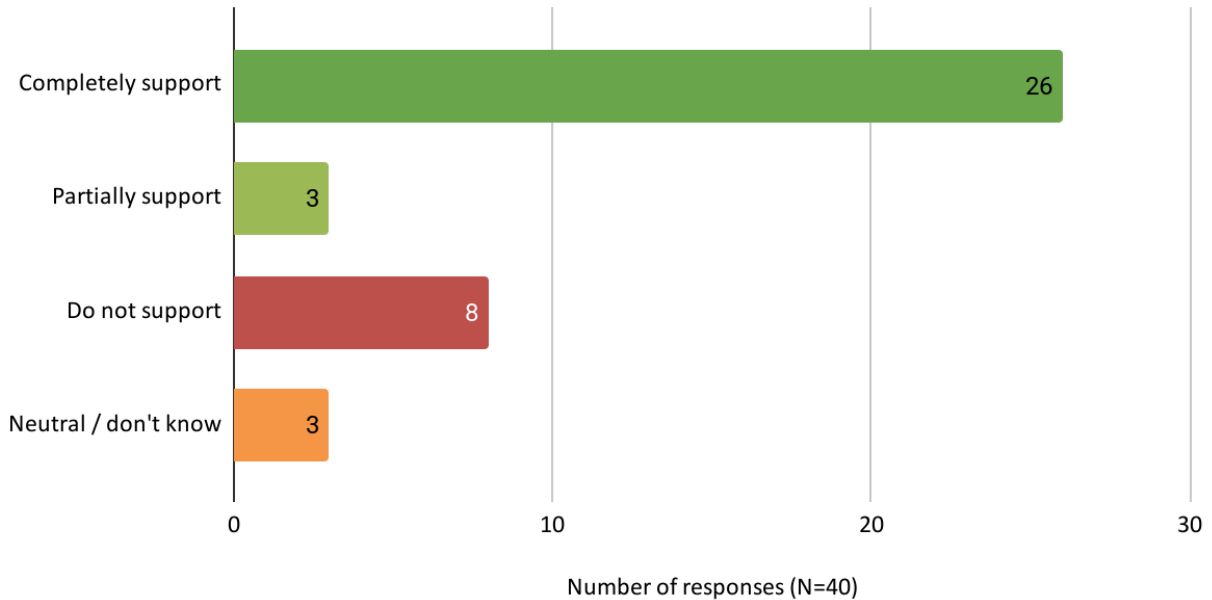
Q1 Which block do you live in?



The majority of respondents (14) were from Royal Oak Court (the largest on the estate) and Burtt House (adjacent to the proposed drying green site).

Burtt House was also the block in which some doorknocking was carried out.

Q2 To what extent do you support the installation of a street gym on the Pitfield Estate, which would be free for all residents to use?



There was overall support (29 out of 40 responses) for the proposal to install exercise bars on the Pitfield estate, with 26 completely in support and 3 partially.

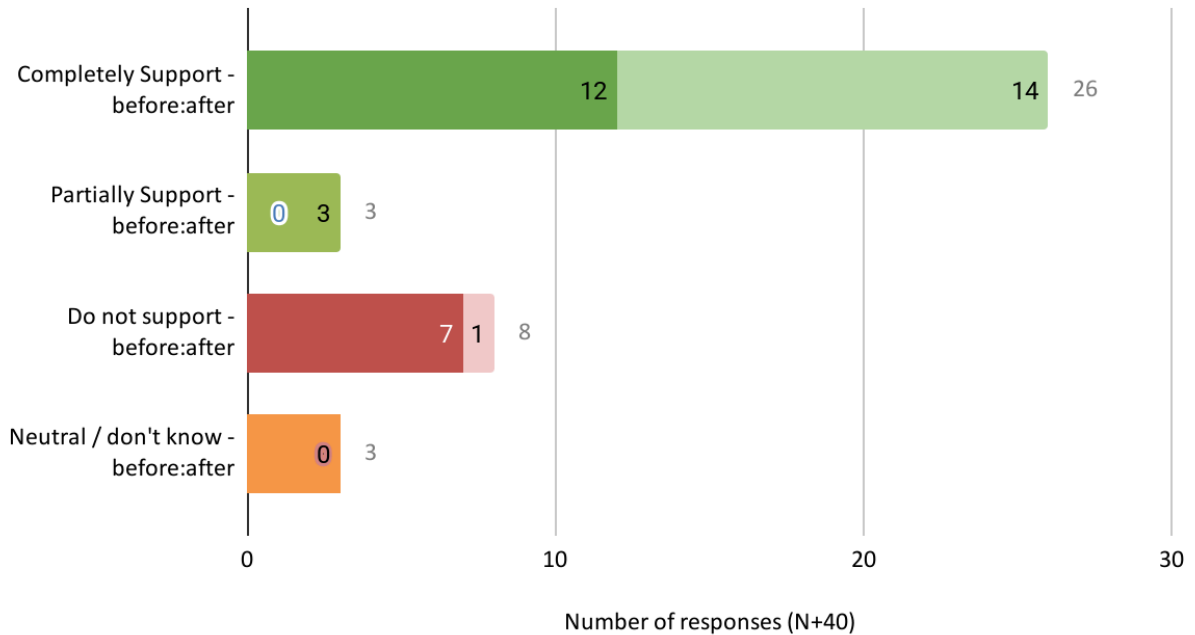
Eight residents did not support the proposal and three were neutral or unsure.

Breakdown before/after revisions to the proposal

Following initial feedback, the online survey was updated from the original proposal of installing the equipment on the former drying green by Burt House, to include the option of installing it in a corner of the existing playground instead. The breakdown of responses before and after the revision can be seen here.

The first portion of the bar is the number of responses received before the revision; the section portion of the bar is the number of responses received after the revision.

Breakdown of responses before:after revision to the proposal



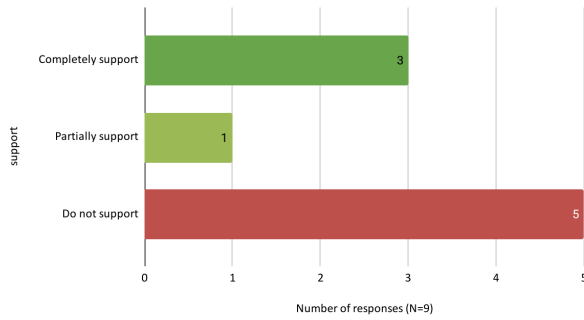
The number of people opposing the scheme (7 before the revision; 1 after) dropped after the additional option of location was included. However, this may reflect the timing of responses rather than a change in opinion, as earlier responses were more likely to come from those with immediate concerns.

From analysis of the IP addresses and demographic data, it does not look like anyone submitted a second response after the revision.

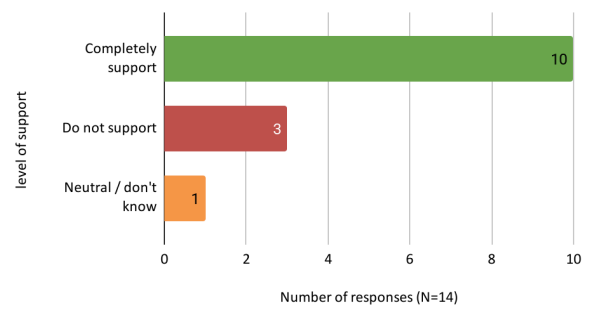
Breakdown by residential block

The most support was from Fairchild House (11 respondents) and the greatest opposition from Burt House (5). The fact that Burt House is directly adjacent to the drying green, and Fairchild House is furthest away, may have contributed to this difference of opinion. After the revision to the proposals, there were no conclusive changes in opinion.

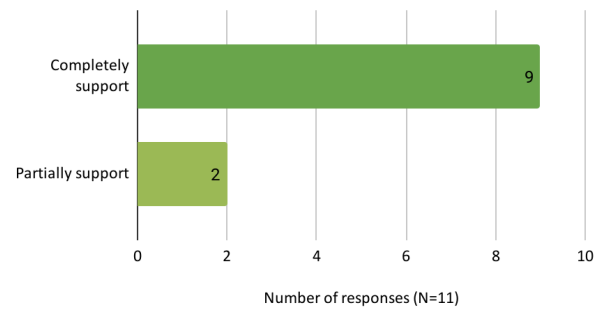
Support: Burt House



Support: Royal Oak Court



Support: Fairchild House



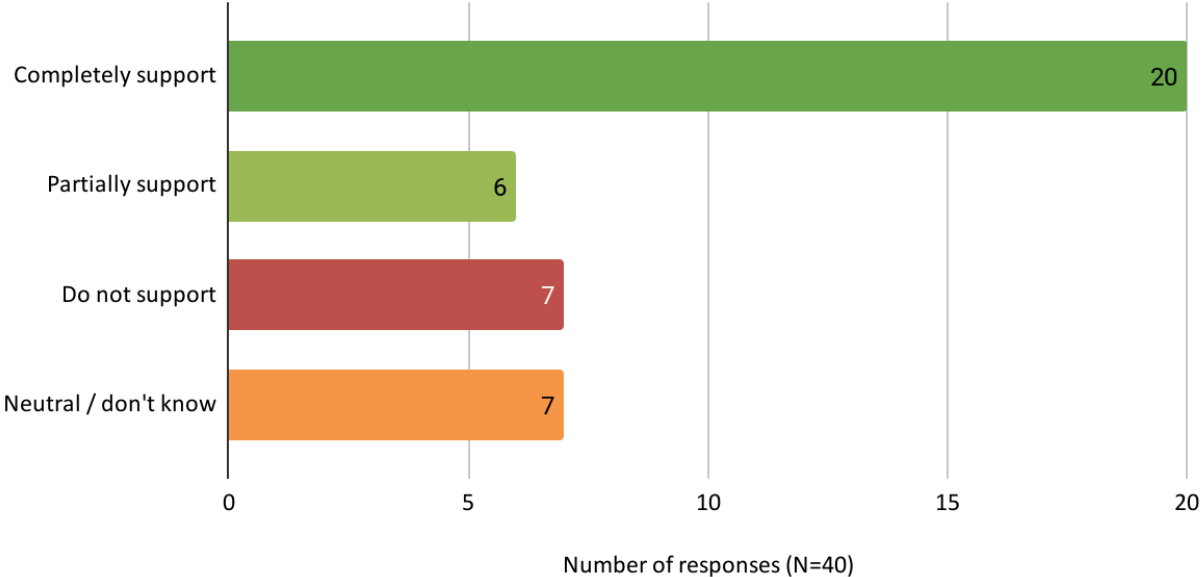
Breakdown by age

The majority of people who did not support the proposal and who shared their age were aged 35-54 (5 respondents) or over 75 (2 respondents).

Responses from disabled residents

Five of the seven respondents who said they had a disability said they completely supported the proposal to install a street gym; two said they did not support it.

Q3 Would you support the planting of a HEDGE behind the gym area to act as a screen?



There was overall support for the installation of a hedge around the gym area (20 completely supported and 6 partially supported). Seven people said they did not support it, and seven were neutral.

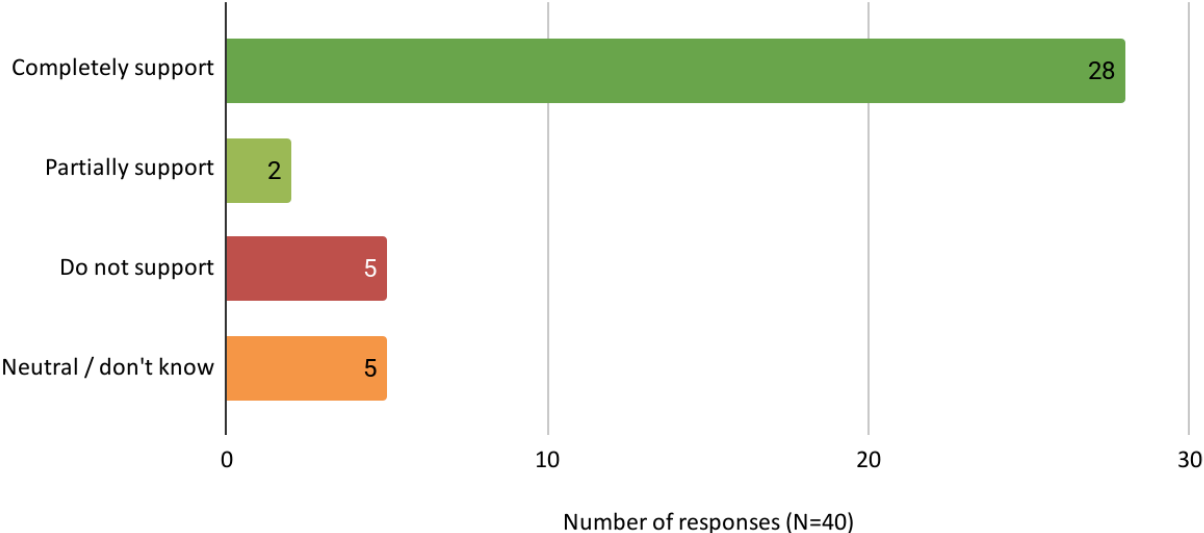
Reservations included the following comments (given in answer to Q5 and Q8):

“I get the idea of putting a hedge for privacy, but it might close it off a bit too much and make it intimidating to walk into the area.” [Fairchild House resident]

“I've seen anti-social behaviour in this area (drug use) because it's a bit hidden away, so I would be in favour of NOT planting hedges around the gym; instead, keep it more open.” [Burt House resident]

“We're also concerned about the low hedge not providing enough privacy for the rooms facing the gym if it is placed in the second option which is outside of the park.” [Burt House resident]

Q4 Would you support the installation of LIGHTING around the gym area as a safety measure?



There was overall support for the installation of lighting for the gym area (28 completely supported and 2 partially supported). Five people said they did not support it and five were neutral.

Sample supportive comment:

“Lighting could be good as it might be a bit scary when it's dark.” [Royal Oak Court resident]

Sample negative comment:

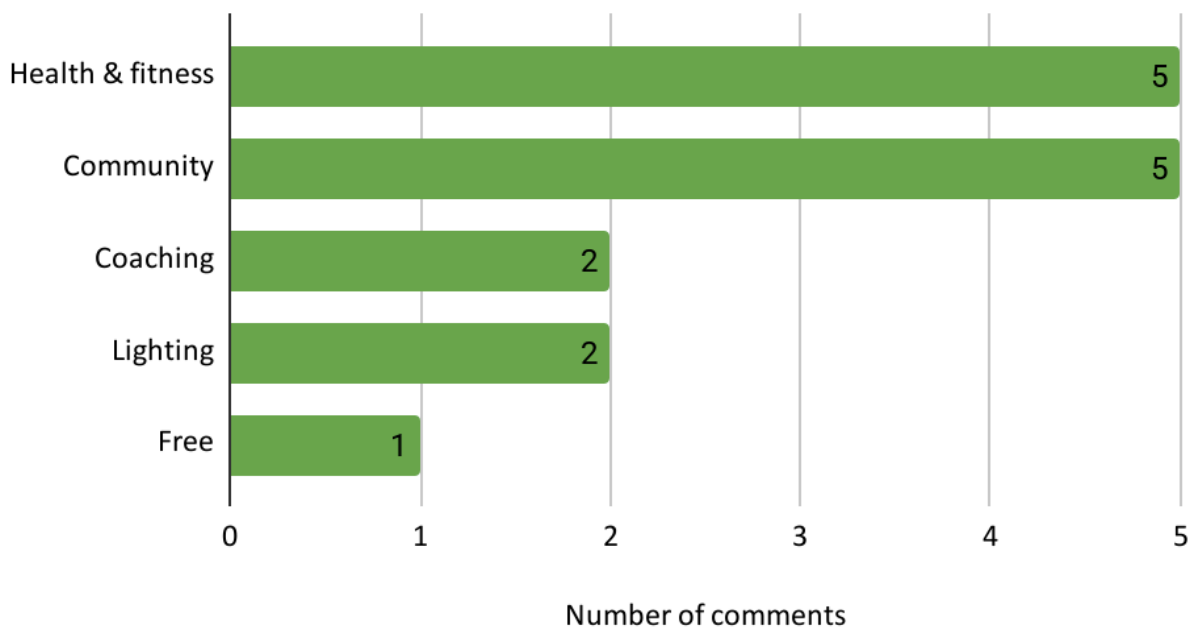
“Lighting will bleed into my flat; I can do without light pollution.” [Burtt House resident]

Q5 Do you have any further comments about the installation of an outdoor gym on the Pitfield Estate? and

Q8 Is there anything else you would like to say about the proposal to install a free street gym on the Pitfield Estate?

Comments received in response to questions 5 and 8 have been amalgamated to give a more streamlined picture of the issues and suggestions raised.

Positive comments



Five people thought the installation of the gym bars would help **boost health and fitness** on the estate, and five thought it could **bring people together**.

"I also feel like it will be a good community builder so the estate can get to know one another and even prevent the kids from getting caught up in the wrong crowd." [Royal Oak Court resident]

"It might get neighbours talking to each other - I hardly ever see my neighbours but people might bump into each other here." [Address not given]

"I feel like this would be a beneficial addition to our estate to give the people of all ages something beneficial to occupy their time with and stay fit." [Royal Oak Court resident]

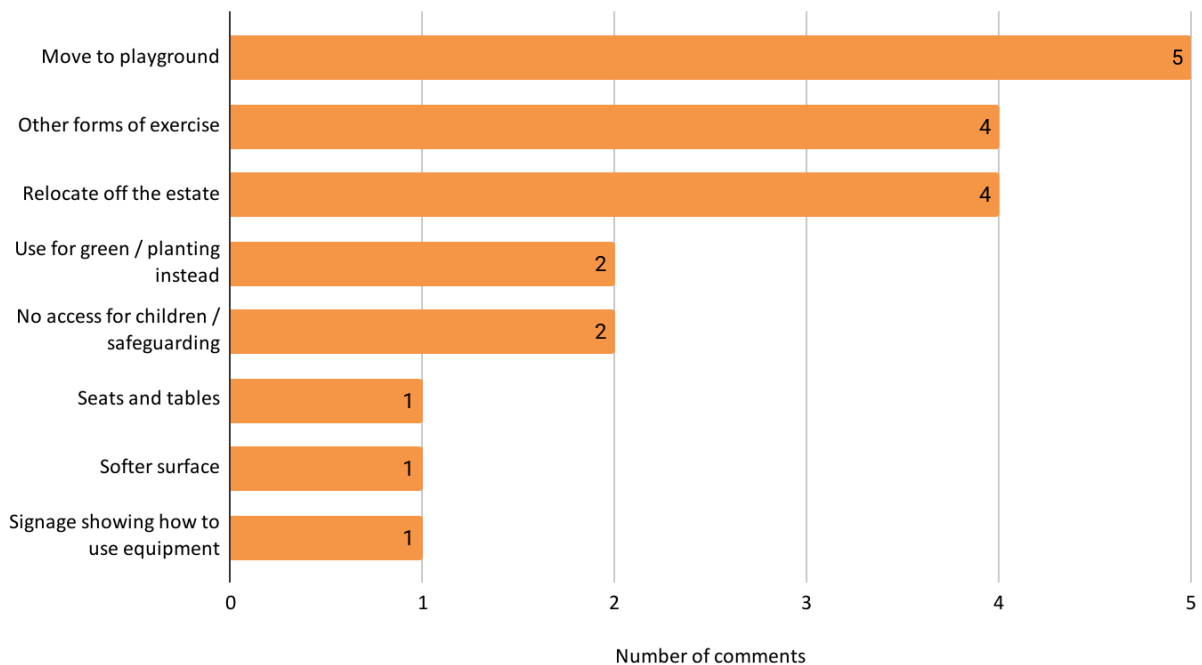
"Anything that helps with people's health and fitness, especially since Covid, is really good." [Address not given]

Coaching (2 comments), **safety lighting** (2 comments) and the fact that it would be free were also met positively.

"With the addition of coaches, people can learn a lot about how to use their bodies and maintain physique, maintain health or reach any other physical goals." [Royal Oak Court resident]

"A thing that would be extremely good would be coaching sessions at the bars for those who want to exercise but do not know how to fully utilise the equipment, and so that nobody uses the equipment incorrectly and harms themselves." [Fairchild House resident]

Suggestions



Prior to the revisions to the proposals, five people suggested **locating the bars on part of the existing playground**, rather than the former drying green, and four

suggested **moving them to a nearby space outside the estate** where there are already basketball courts, such as Aske Street or Joe White Gardens.

“Using the main playground area probably is more convenient instead of the hidden corner. The main playground is most of the day empty and mostly in summer after school tends to be full. The rest of the time is rarely busy, kids play football inside as the surface is regular.” [Fairchild House resident]

Four respondents would like to see **more variety of equipment**. Specific suggestions were:

- A stationary bike
- Skateboarding
- Boxing training
- A circuit

Other suggestions were:

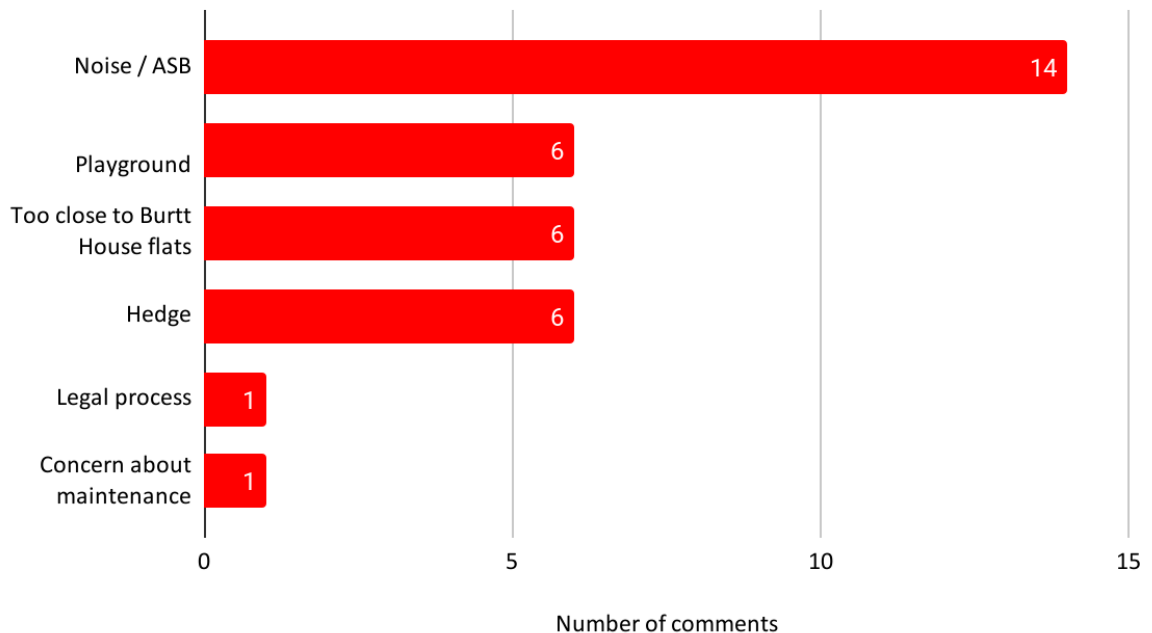
- Using the **drying green for planting** instead (2 comments)
- Ensuring it is **not accessible to young children** for safety (2 comments)
- Installing **seats and tables** for storage and somewhere to sit (1 comment)
- **Signage** showing how to use the equipment (1 comment)

“I have no objections to keeping fit. Would it not be possible to maybe have the gym closer to the children's play park.” [Burt House resident]

“Some signs showing how to use the equipment in a basic manner/guidelines for the equipment would be very beneficial to the area.” [Fairchild House resident]

“In terms of the more disused space also being proposed, why not make this a more green area supporting pollinators and local wildlife similar perhaps to the nearby Khadija's Garden space? Given there's already local tennis courts and basketball courts, why not locate any exercise bars in that area instead?” [Burt House resident]

Negative comments



The possibility of the gym equipment and classes attracting **noise and antisocial behaviour** (ASB) caused the greatest concern (29 comments).

If you put bars on the estate, all people will do is chain their bikes to them!
[Address not given]

"You intend to put this ridiculous idea directly under my flat. IT WILL BE ABUSED, kids will play on it all hours." [Burtt House resident]

"I believe it will encourage gatherings of people (regardless of whether it is lit), that bring with it noise, littering and potential anti-social behaviour. I would much rather the area be made green (grass, shrubbery, plants / flowers, etc.)"
[Royal Oak Court resident]

"The one of the areas proposed for the gym which would place it along the wall of buildings would not be a good idea because it is hidden and unfortunately junkies gather within that area in the evenings. Additionally people take their dogs and use as a toilet area." [Burtt House resident]

There were objections to installing it **too close to Burtt House** (6 comments) and on the **existing playground** (6 comments).

“It would be beneficial to the estate, but not in this location as it might disturb residents of Burt House. You could put it on the other side of Royal Oak Court, by Pitfield Street, as people sit there in the summer. Or the playground could be a possible location.” [Royal Oak Court resident]

“The playground is already used as a public playground and the noise can be unbearable in the summer. It's also noisy when used by children after school. It would be better if it was out at the front, on Pitfield Street, where the noise would be drowned out.” [address not given]

“It would also be a shame for children to have to give up some of their dedicated play space if that option was taken up ... Let the children and their families have a space that feels definitively theirs.” [Burt House resident]

There were also six comments regarding the hedge (see Q4), as well as one concern about maintenance and one about the legality.

Comments relating to Connecting Hoxton

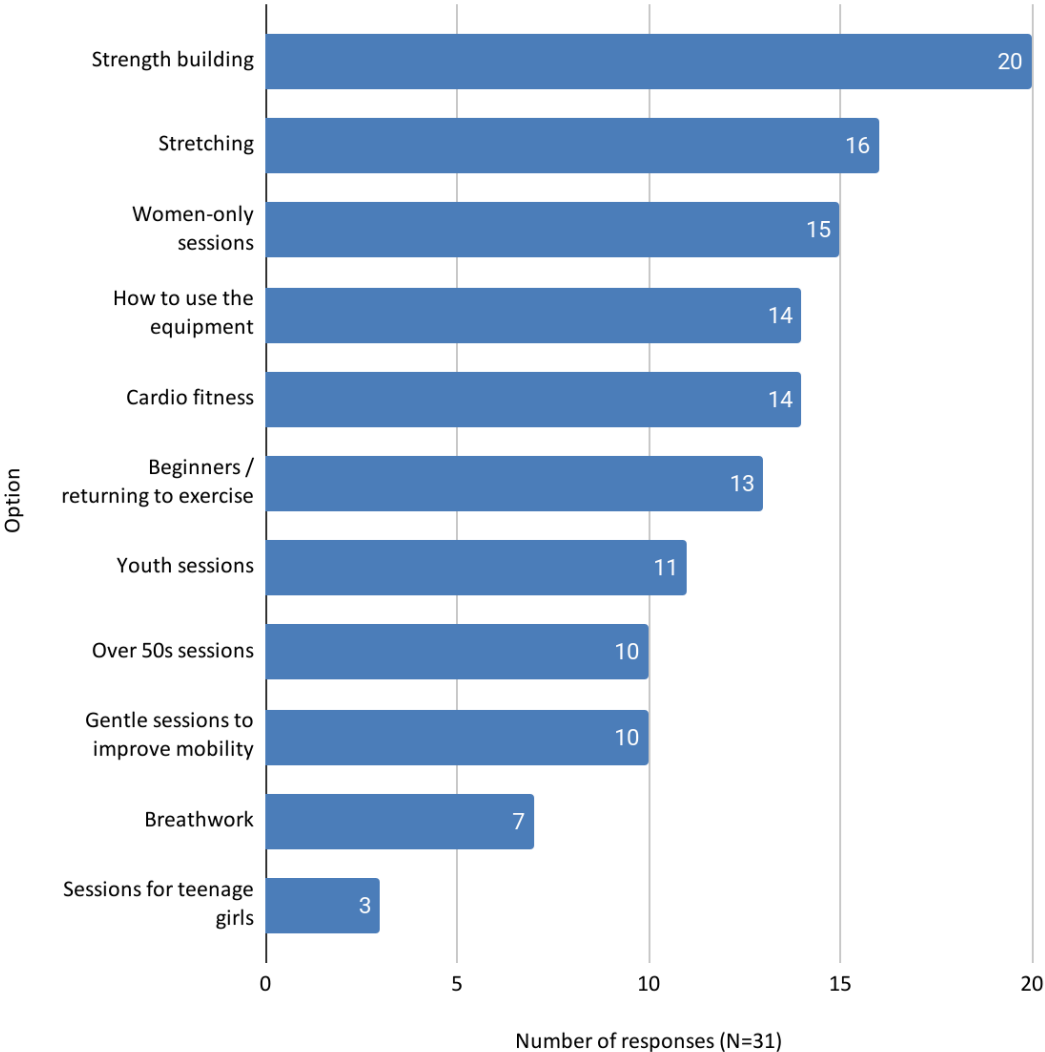
Although this consultation focused on the proposed installation of gym bars on the Pitfield Estate, residents also raised comments relating to wider Connecting Hoxton proposals.

Comments relating to the other Connecting Hoxton proposals were:

“Please do not install a table tennis here. It would be nice to turn it into a community garden instead as there are a lot of elderly people living in the estate who can participate in the relevant activities.” [Burt House resident]

Another resident spoke at length about the distress noise from any exercise equipment and changes to the path layout would have for them due to specific health issues. These comments have been incorporated into the separate [Connecting Hoxton Design Consultation](#) online survey.

Q6 If there were free fitness sessions offered, what would you be interested in taking part in?



Strength building was the most popular activity (20 people showing interest), requested by both men and women, and with respondents from the under-16s age group up to the 55-64 age group.

Also popular with residents who responded to the survey were:

Stretching (16) was more popular with women (9) than men (3) and non-binary (1), and was requested from the 25-34 up to 55-64 age groups.

Women-only sessions (15) were requested by women from age groups 18-24 up to 55-64, and supported by one man.

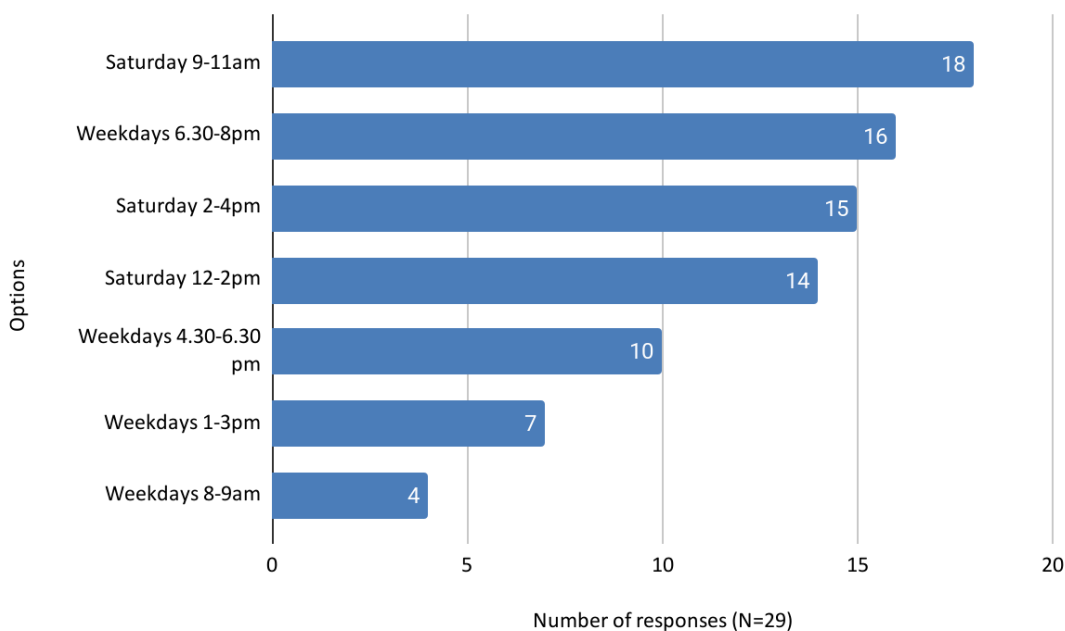
14 people thought advice on **how to use the equipment** would be useful, along with 13 seeking guidance on how to **return to exercise**.

"[I'd like] coaching sessions at the bars for those who want to exercise but do not know how to fully utilise the equipment, and so that nobody uses the equipment incorrectly and harms themselves ... Some signs showing how to use the equipment ... would be very beneficial." [Fairchild House resident]

Other suggestions were:

- Fitbox
- Mini trampoline
- Tai Chi
- Skateboarding

Q7 What times/days would you prefer sessions to take place?



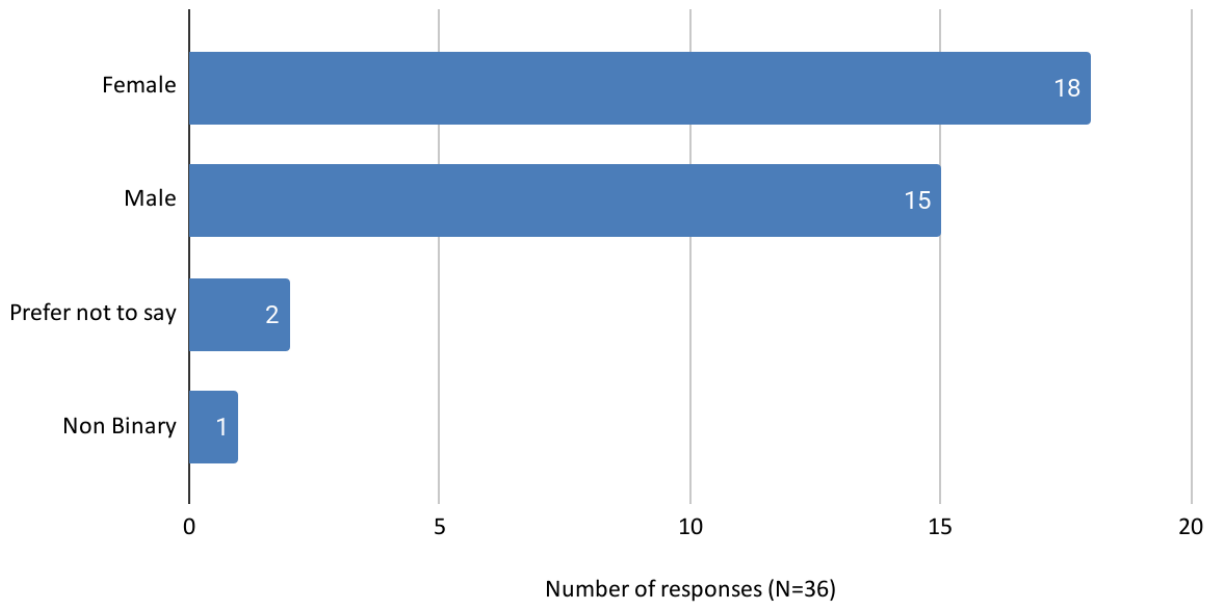
Saturdays, particularly mornings (18 respondents) and **after 6.30pm on weekdays** (16 respondents) were the most convenient times generally.

Groups aged over 45 had slightly more flexibility than younger age groups; some respondents in these groups could also do **4.30-6pm** (6) and **1-3pm** (4) weekdays.

About you

Demographic questions were optional and anonymous.

Q9 Gender

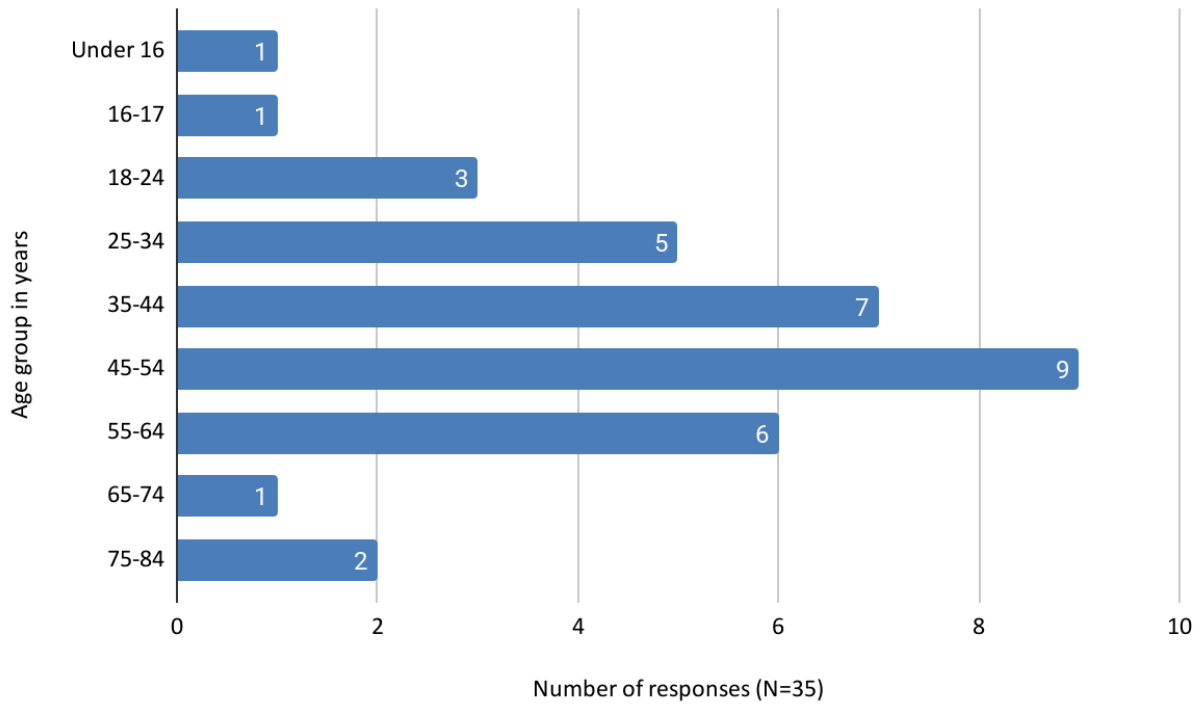


Most respondents were female (18), but with a similar number of male respondents (15). One respondent was non-binary and two preferred not to say.

Q10 Are you transgender?

Most residents (29) responded no to this question, and two preferred not to say.

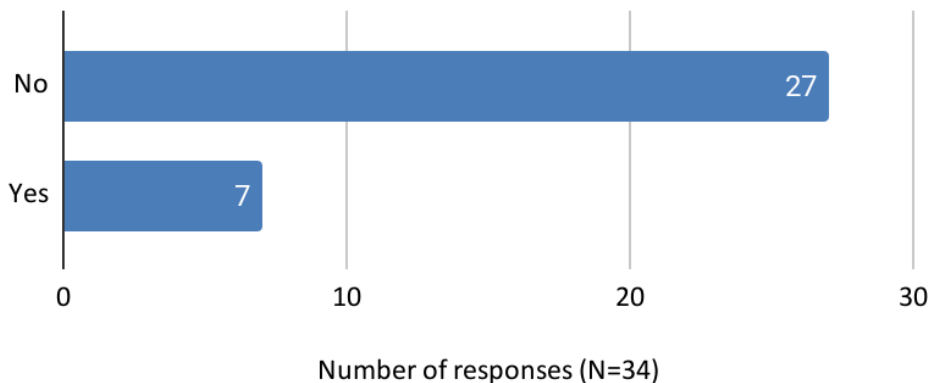
Q11 Age



The bulk of responses were spread across residents aged 25-64: 25-34 (5 responses), 35-44 (7 responses), 45-54 (9 responses), and 55-64 (6 responses).

There were also a total of five responses from young people (residents aged under 25). Three people over 65 responded. No respondents were over the age of 85.

Q12 Do you consider yourself to be disabled?



Seven residents with disabilities responded.

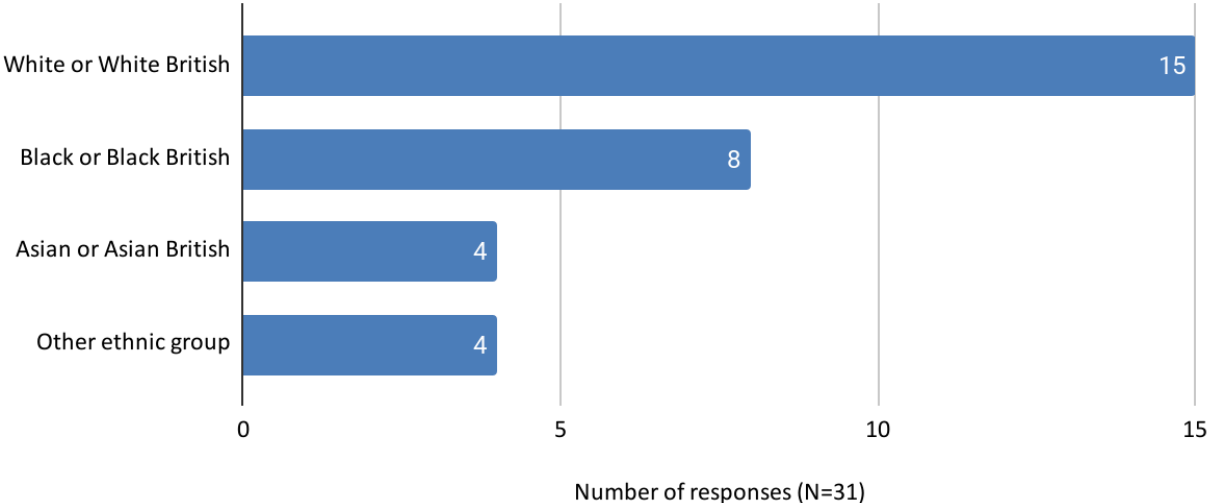
Q13 Do you have caring responsibilities?

Only one respondent (out of 35) had caring responsibilities.

Q14 Are you currently pregnant or on maternity leave?

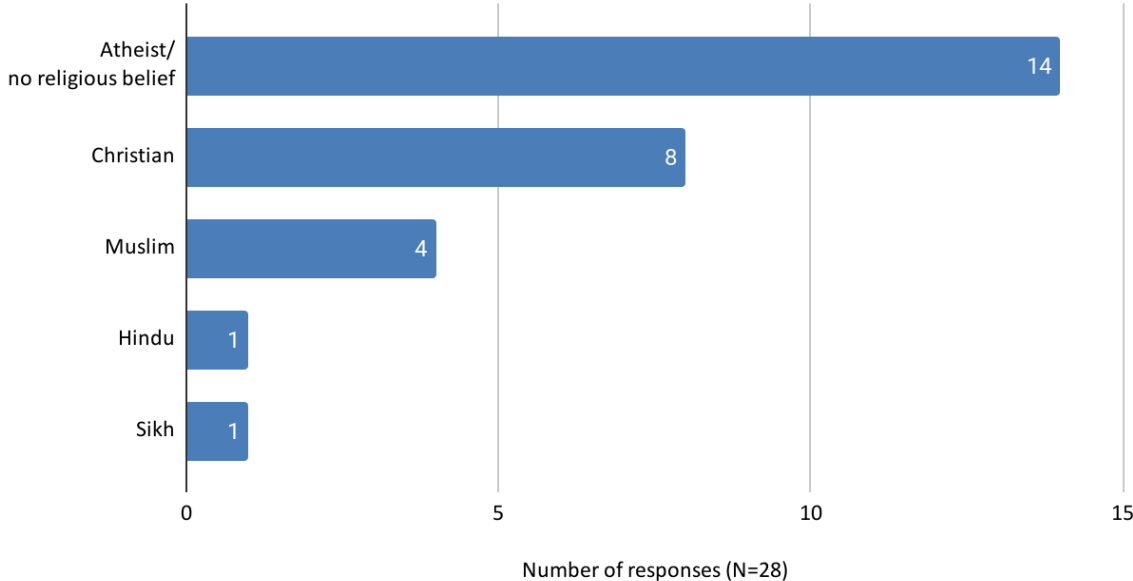
No residents said they fell within this group, with one preferring not to say.

Q15 Ethnicity



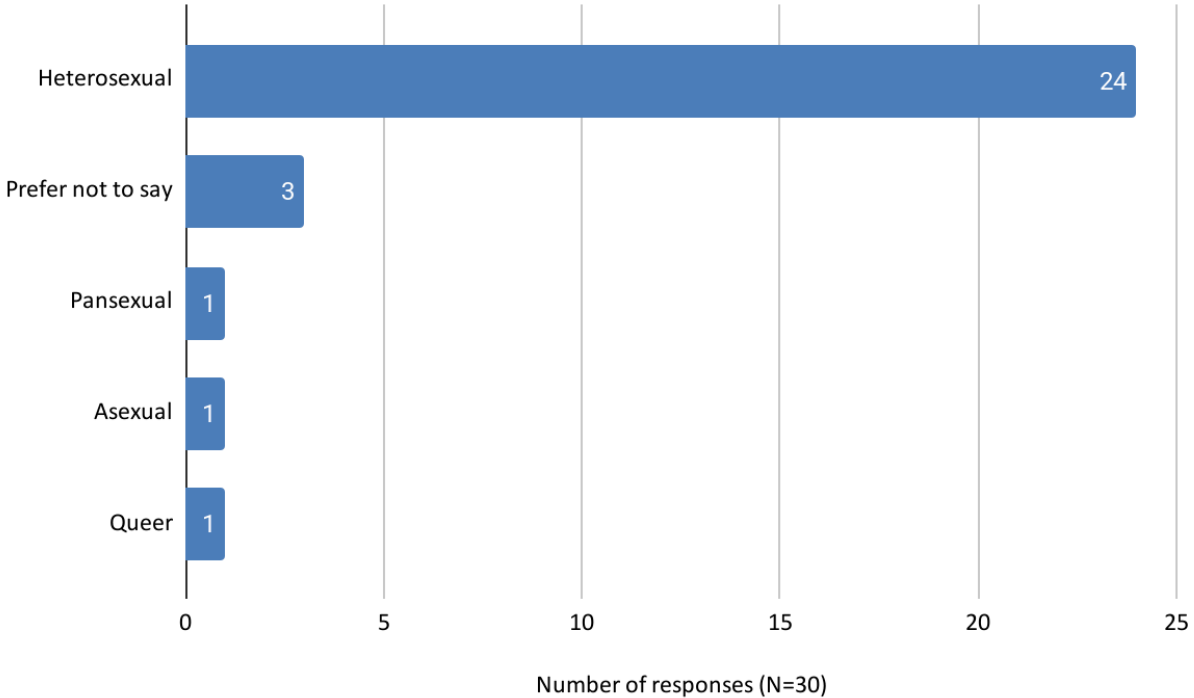
The majority of respondents were White or White British (15), 8 were Black/Black British and 4 Asian or Asian British. Other ethnic groups (4) specified were: White English, and African. No respondents identified themselves as of mixed background.

Q16 Religion or belief



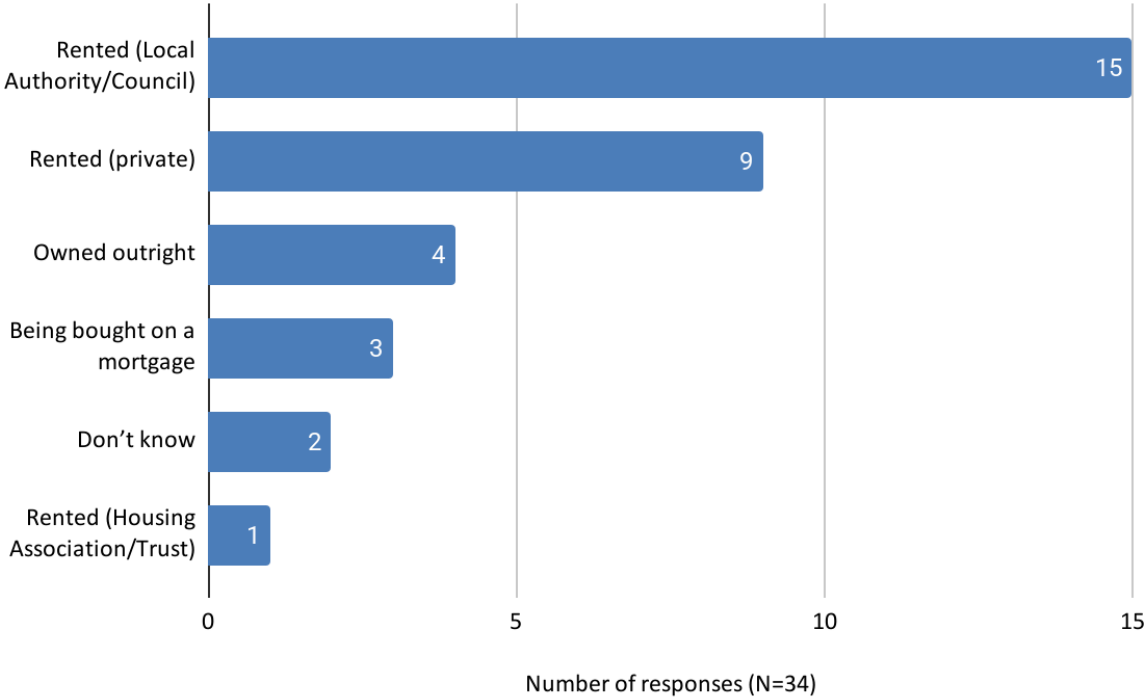
The majority of respondents had no religious belief (14). There were also 8 Christians, 4 Muslims, one Hindu and one Sikh. There were no responses from Buddhists, Charedis or other Jewish faiths or those with secular beliefs.

Q17 Sexual orientation



The majority of respondents were heterosexual (24). There was also one respondent identified as pansexual, one as asexual and one as queer. No respondents identified as a gay man, lesbian or gay woman, bisexual, or other sexual orientations.

Q18 Housing tenure



The majority of respondents were Hackney Council tenants (15). Nine rented privately, four owned outright, three were buying on a mortgage and one rented from a housing association or trust. In addition, two respondents (both aged under 18) said they did not know their tenure. No respondents stated that they had shared ownership, were in temporary accommodation or had no permanent address.

Conclusions

Based on feedback from 40 residents across the Pitfield Estate, it seems that:

- There is general support for the installation of the exercise bars in principle, particularly the possibility of boosting:
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Community integration
- There are issues around placing the bars on the old drying green as this could disturb residents of Burt House, immediately next to the site.
- Placing them in a corner of the playground is an option, but with considerations around safeguarding, safety, noise and ensuring young children still have enough space of their own.
- There are concerns that the exercise bars would attract noise and antisocial behaviour.
- Lighting would make people feel safe, but may disturb residents if too close to homes.
- A hedge screen may provide privacy but could also make some people feel less safe.
- Residents would welcome free activity sessions, and think it would be useful to have guidance on how to use the bars.
- Weekends and weekdays after work are the most suitable times for these.

ENDS