

Orwell Court and Welshpool Street Development Proposal Summary report

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Background

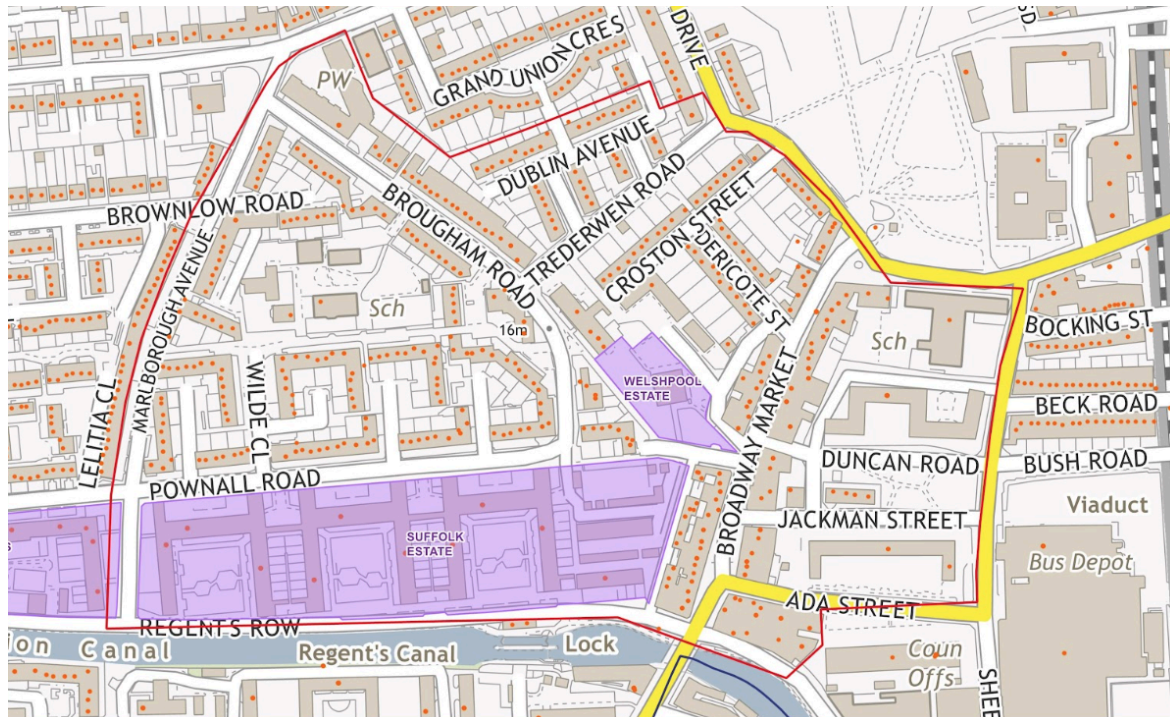
This report summarises the engagement methods and feedback received during the first phase of the New Homes Programme. This stage of consultation was a targeted site-specific discussion with neighbours and local residents around the development of new homes being built on the Regents Estate. This engagement took the form of 2 site-specific events and an online survey that ran for 2 weeks, from Saturday 20 July 2024 to Sunday 4 August 2024.

Purpose of this report

This report provides an objective account of the engagement that took place and the feedback received. The scope of the first stage of engagement was to gain an understanding of resident's views and ideas regarding the early design work for the new homes. As a result, it would allow the Council to better understand how to develop the designs for residents' use and interact with the areas around them.

Distribution

- 1350 letters were sent to the surrounding area.



Engagement

- An online survey was hosted on Hackney Council's consultation hub between Saturday 20 July 2024 and Sunday 4 August 2024.
- Two events were held on Saturday 20 July and Tuesday 23 July in the open space adjacent to the garages.

- Contact details were provided in the letter sent to residents who wished to ask any questions.

Responses

- 15 responses were received from the online survey, including 73 comments received at the events.
- Around 90 people attended the two public engagement events

Feedback

General feedback

Overall the proposals generated a mix of opinions from those that were positive to those that feared the change would be bad for local people.

“(I am) Against the project as it will make life worse for everyone”

“The area is changing for the good. We need homes especially for local people and families”

The feedback from the online questionnaire and public engagement suggests that the top concern for many people is the current problems with access routes in the area and whether the plans proposed to address these work or cause more problems. A range of other pre-existing issues with the Suffolk Estate are mentioned and these need to be addressed as part of the plans for the new homes. These include cleanliness and maintenance, rubbish bins and associated vermin.

“This is so nice. Increasing public spaces is good”
post it note from public engagement event

Broadway Market raises a mix of views, from those that think it's great to those that don't have a problem with it to those that are greatly concerned with the encroachment of the market and its users into the Estate and surrounding streets and concerns that the proposed plans may encourage further intrusion and conflicts.

Providing market storage and potentially other commercial space was generally thought as positive, so long as any commercial use is not linked to the Market and/or involves food and drink.

The re-provision of the Tenants Management office next to a newly provided (and smaller) sports pitch was generally supported, although there are concerns that the pitch is managed properly, is closed on time and anti-social behaviour controlled. People would like to see a youth space provided along with free WiFi, other sports and a water fountain.

The exhibition described design development for where to build the new homes (both market and social) and create open spaces, including the retention of the sports pitch. **Respondents were asked to comment on two options presented for the Orwell garages site and what they liked and disliked about them, rather than**

to choose an option. A range of views were expressed including site specific responses from immediate neighbours (see below - specific issues).

One scheme and layout was presented for Welshpool as the optimum option, providing market housing. Generally this was felt to be sympathetic to the context conservation area, with some site specific issues described in the next section. This includes the new access route for emergency and servicing vehicles from Trederwen Road.

Whilst some people remain opposed to any development, or wanting a much lower density, due to lack of resources and the engagement revealed that others were more positive albeit certain issues need to be resolved.

A separate garages survey was carried out of the current occupiers of the 86 existing garages of which 19 responded. Overall, the survey results highlight the diverse needs and preferences of the residents in relation to garage usage, with a strong preference for retaining full garage spaces and the current level of access among most respondents.

Specific issues raised

Access and movement was one of the most talked about issues, with requests for further detail and information and the need to address specific issues raised around:

- New access route from Trederwen Road and how to stop this becoming a rat run.
- Access for vehicles along Broadway Market.
- Access from Dericote Street.
- Access along Broadway Market Mews and how this will be contained to deliveries and servicing.
- Link to Regents Row by Little Orwell and Broadway Market Mews to address safety issues.
- Segregation of cyclists from pedestrians, especially adjacent to Broadway market mews and access to Regents Row.
- Re-provision of lost garages and parking spaces (Welshpool House and Benjamin Close).
- How to avoid creating a shortcut / desire line (for pedestrians) from the south west corner of Orwell garages site to Broadway Market through the newly created shared garden?
- Danger that construction vehicles will use local historic streets that are not designed for these loads.

“Croston and Dericot are already at capacity. Often blocked and this caused access problems to existing homes, services, and emergency response”.

Residents noted the need to address access issues in the wider context of restricted movement, the result of the LTN, bus gates and market servicing.

Some residents on Croston Street oppose a new pedestrian link from Croston Street to Welshpool Street.

Public realm and landscape

Increased green space and more biodiversity are welcomed, as long as they do not attract market users and the cleanliness and anti-social behaviour with that. Residents want to know how the market will be contained and are not yet sure how the design of the new ‘community square’ achieves this, or the barriers between market and estate.

Sport pitch - Re-provision and the TMO

There is strong support for keeping the football pitch and for improving facilities for young people. There is a need to be clear who the pitch is for and this will direct its location and design.

Overall, people were understanding about the proposal to reduce the size of the football pitch but there was concern from people, especially parents with children that used the pitch, that the reduction in the pitch would reduce play space for younger people

Concerns were also voiced about current issues with the pitch - the noise, the frequent balls being overshot, that it is not locked at night and the anti-social behaviour and security issues that affect neighbours. A strategy is required for how the new pitch will be managed and how the design can address other issues.

Commercial uses

Residents would welcome more community space / uses / opportunities for locals to find affordable workspace or for young people to hang out. They are concerned about how the use of any commercial space will be controlled to restrict the expansion of market type uses - e.g. cafes, bars and shops.

Orwell Court garages

The existing garages are used for a variety of functions from vehicle parking, to personal home storage, cycle parking, to business / market storage. Garages and open spaces play a critical role in residents' lives, with strong calls for careful consideration of **social housing** policies and the **economic and social impact** of the

proposed changes. Young people play here, learn to ride a bike and explore imaginative play, safely.

About the options (1 & 2) for Orwell Garages

Issues in connection with both options:

- Height and proximity to some of the surrounding estate buildings and houses - (especially Little Orwell eastern end) Orwell Court (in particular opposition to the wall of development (Option1) and to more localised (option 2) blocking light and views and impacting entrances. Also the overbearing of the taller buildings along Benjamin Close.
- Need to integrate bin stores into the new development and address existing bins that attract rats and block movement routes.

Welshpool Street proposal

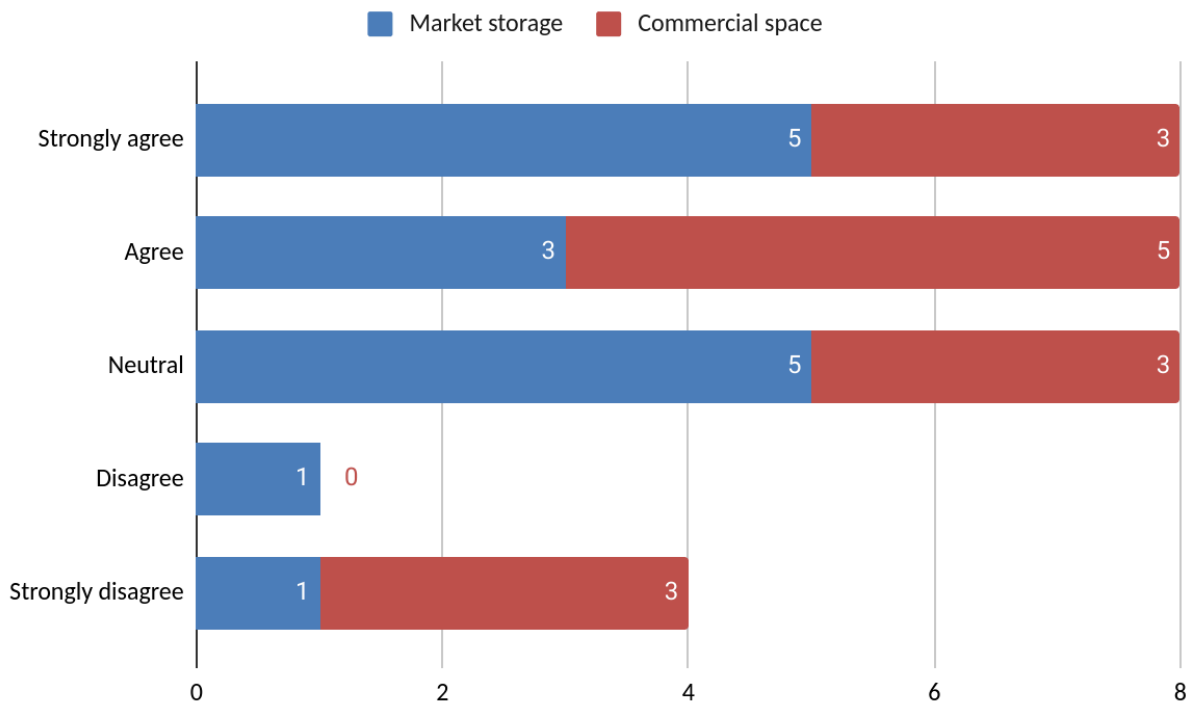
- Residents on Dericote Street are concerned about the overlooking of their south facing gardens and the height of the 4 storey corner block. That could shadow their gardens.
- Residents of Croston Street oppose a pedestrian link from the current culdesac and Welshpool Street.
- Some would like to see more architectural articulation of the roofscape to mirror the historic streets.

Overview of results

A mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions were asked concerning five main topics, including a summary of the brief, the character of the estate, green spaces and play, access and movement and the presentation of design development of options for the new homes on Orwell garages and Welshpool Street. The aim of which was to give participants an opportunity to tell us their views and ideas and allow the Council to better understand how residents use and interact with the areas around them. The feedback to each of these questions is summarised below:

Summary of the brief- Board 2

Question 4a. There is potential to provide some commercial and / or market storage on the Orwell Court garages site. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this idea:



	Market storage	Commercial space
Strongly agree	5	3
Agree	3	5
Neutral	5	3
Disagree	1	0
Strongly disagree	1	3

Over 50% respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the provision of market storage and some commercial space. With a third being neutral. Those who strongly disagreed (3) with the provision of commercial space feared the expansion of the market with cafes and bars.

Question 4b. If you have any additional comments, please write here:

Two respondents stressed the importance of market storage.

Others noted the importance of defining what commercial space would look like in this area before the idea is supported, particularly regarding alcohol licensing.

A further **two** respondents suggested that spaces should be developed for the community, rather than commercial or market. For example as shared workshop spaces.

Character of the Suffolk Estate – Board 3

Question 5. What are the things you most love about the neighbourhood around Orwell Court and Welshpool Street sites?

When asked about what they love about the neighbourhood, **two** respondents spoke about Broadway Market, and four spoke about the love of the green spaces and the neighbourhood feel, especially Welshpool House Gardens and how the green spaces in front of the estates act as gathering spaces.

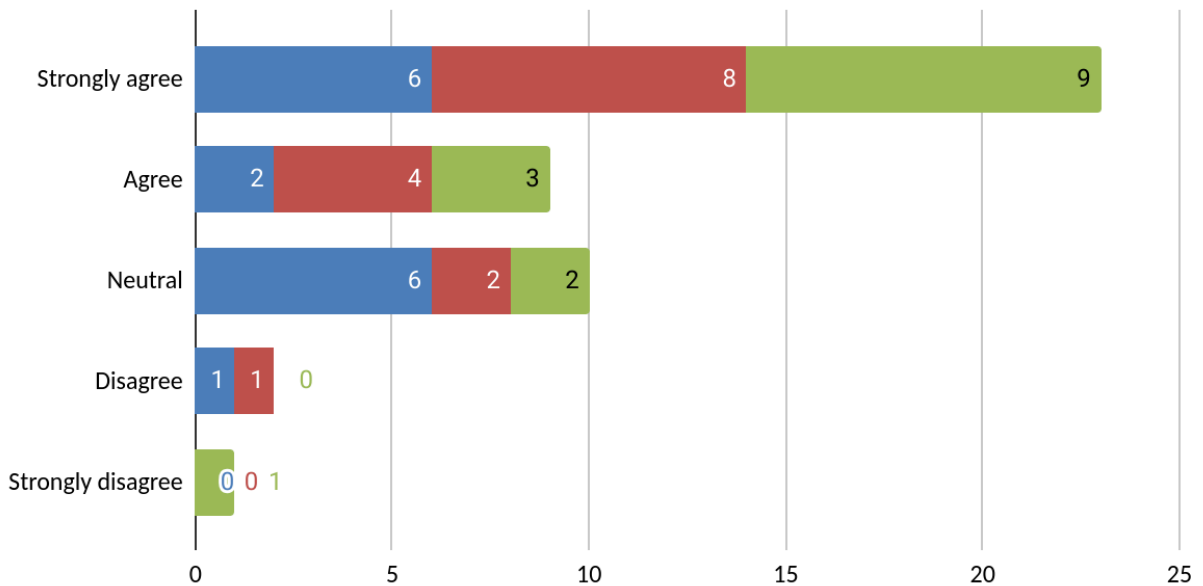
Two residents also spoke about the garages, and how this quiet area enabled their children to play freely, learning to ride their bikes there for example.

In the additional comments sections, five responses spoke about the importance of ensuring the new designs don't lead to further overspill of market activity into the residential areas.

Three respondents spoke about the importance of access and routes in the area, with one resident stressing the current situation, where residents disabled pavement access is blocked and double parked vehicles.

Question 6a. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Shared Design Principles described below:

- New buildings should feel in keeping with the existing neighbourhood (in terms of height, materials etc.).
- New buildings should respect the character of the conservation area.
- Contain market activity and minimise impacts on the residential parts of the neighbourhood.



	New buildings should feel in keeping with the existing neighbourhood (in terms of height, materials etc.).	New buildings should respect the character of the conservation area.	Contain market activity and minimise impacts on the residential parts of the neighbourhood .
Strongly agree	6	8	9
Agree	2	4	3
Neutral	6	2	2
Disagree	1	1	0
Strongly disagree	0	0	1

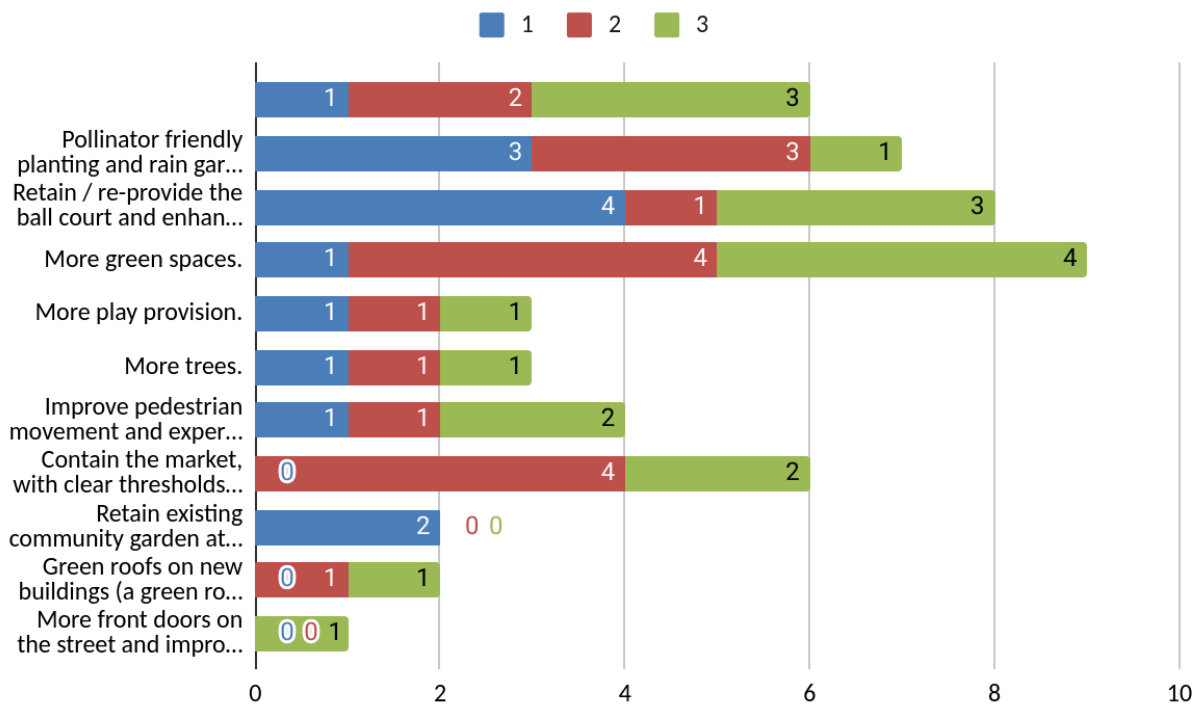
The majority of respondents (**12**) strongly agreed or agreed that new buildings should respect the character of the conservation area, and that market activity should be contained in order to minimise impacts on the residential parts of the neighbourhood.

Question 6b. If you have any additional comments, please write here:

In the additional comments sections, **5** responses spoke about the importance of ensuring the new designs don't lead to further overspill of market activity into the residential areas.

Green spaces and play – Board 4

Question 7. Of the design principles listed below, please choose your top three priorities (other than housing) for improvements to the landscape and outdoor areas in and around Suffolk Estate (please number your options 1 to 3, number 1 being the highest priority).



Preference 1-3	Pollinator friendly planting and rain gardens.	Retain / re-provide the ball court and enhance the provision.	More green spaces.	More play provision.	More trees.	Improve pedestrian movement and experience.	Contain the market, with clear thresholds with a flexible approach during the week.	Retain existing community garden at Welshpool House.	Green roofs on new buildings (a green roof is a roof of a building that is partially or completely covered with vegetation/planting).	More front doors on the street and improved visibility.
1	3	4	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	0
2	3	1	4	1	1	1	4	0	1	0
3	1	3	4	1	1	2	2	0	1	1

Other than housing, the top priority of respondents to the online questionnaire was the retention or re-provision of the ball court, with four people selecting this as their first choice.

9 respondents would like to see more green spaces and the next top priority being pollinator friendly planting and rain gardens. Containing the market received 6 selections and was the top second priority with green spaces.

Question 7b. Other:

Generally, when asked about more improvements, **three** respondents to the online questionnaire spoke about the desire to have more greenery in the area.

Three respondents spoke about the need for a community space, commenting on the loss of historic community and youth facilities on Brougham Road, now converted into a Montessori School.

Residents of 'Little Orwell' requested a front garden (defensible space) to create a threshold between the new community courtyard and their front doors.

Question 8. In order to provide new homes for social rent, the plans are to reduce the size of the football pitch by a third. There is a potential to improve the facilities. What improvements would you like to see?

When asked about reducing the football pitch by a third and the potential this could bring in terms of improving facilities, **three** responders spoke about the opportunity to improve the management of the pitch and maintain a higher level of cleanliness.

Question 9. Generally, are there other improvements or changes you would like to see in these areas to better meet your needs and preferences?

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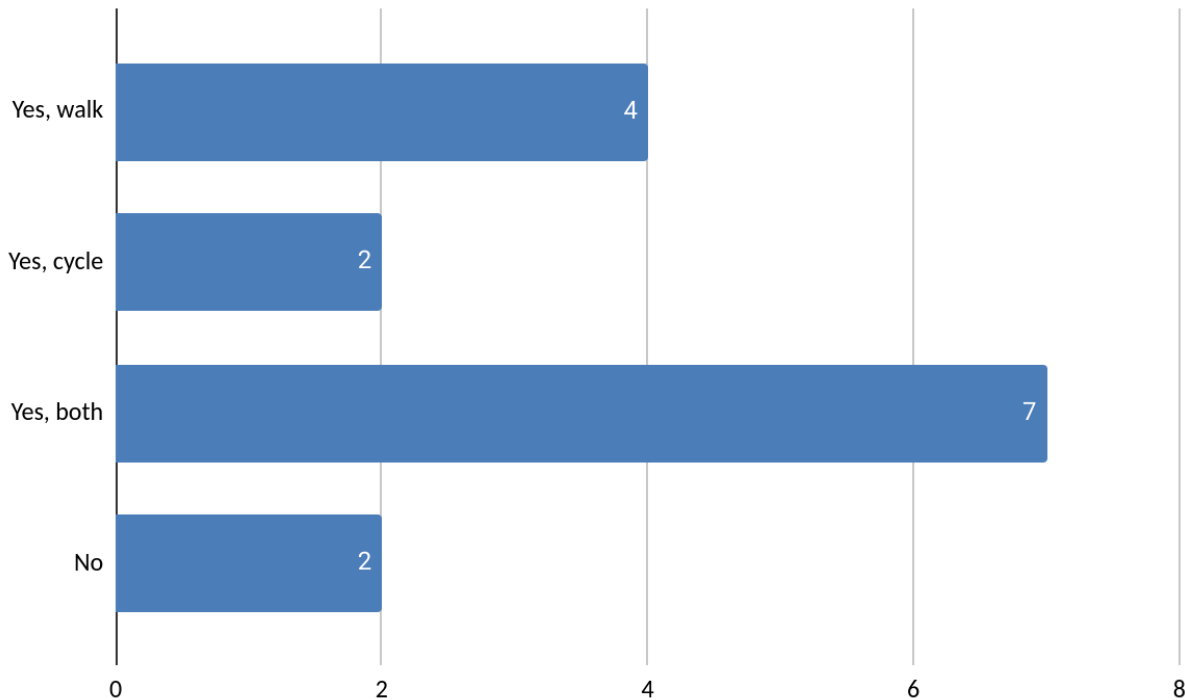
The three issues that people would like to see improved are around the provision of community facilities including green spaces and play; improved management of the market and football pitch; and addressing of access issues.

There are calls for community growing and social enterprise such as bike workshops and maker spaces, as well as a preference for more secluded and smaller green spaces for sitting that are clearly for residents, rather than large grassed areas that attract tourists and market users.

On access, concerns are around Dericote Street and Croston streets as vehicular / pedestrian through routes. Also calls for a cycle lane on Broadway Market rather than on the estate, where there are conflicts at the junction with Regent's Row. Generally better lighting and clearer routes for pedestrians ensure priority.

Access, movement and servicing – Board 5

Question 10a. Do you walk or cycle through and around Regent’s Court estate regularly?



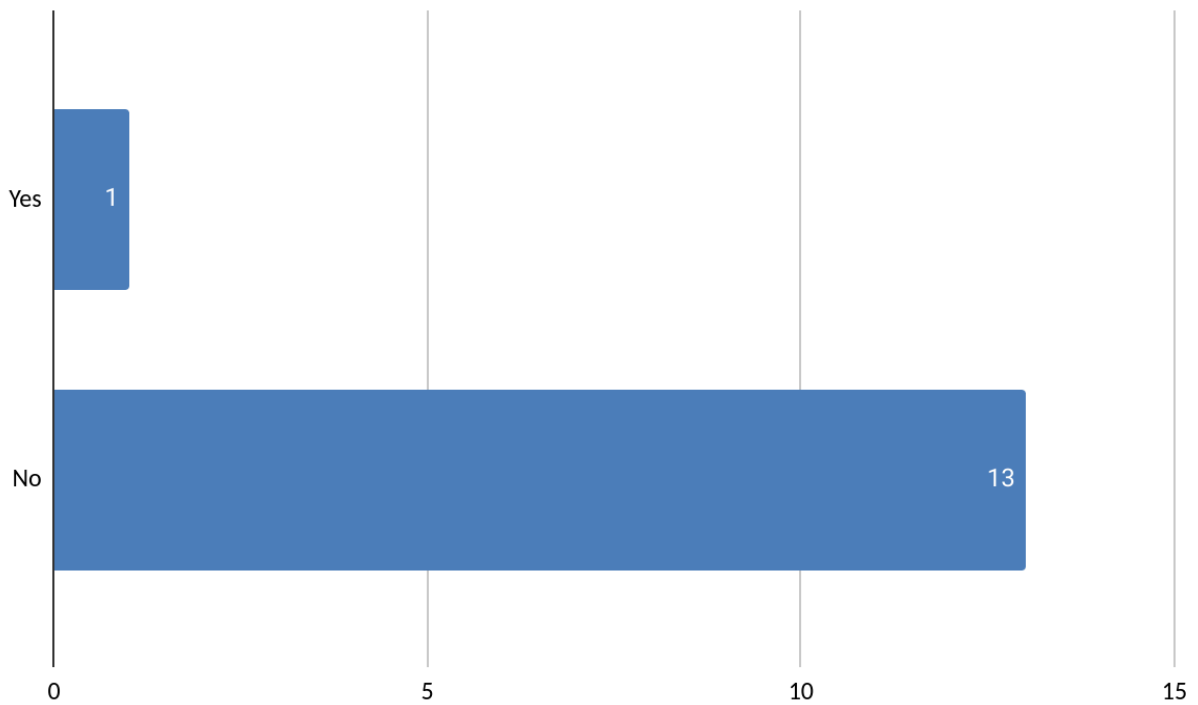
Yes, walk	4
Yes, cycle	2
Yes, both	7
No	2

Question 10b. If yes, what improvements or changes would make walking and cycling more enjoyable and safer for you?

There were comments received around the need to create safe and dedicated cycle routes and to improve connections between Trederwen Road, Dericote Street and the canal and Broadway market without creating vehicular rat runs.

It was also suggested that safe crossings are needed on Broadway Market for children, due to the speed of cyclists. Another top topic was the need for good cycle storage facilities.

Question 11a. Do you have a mobility issue that affects your ability to get around the area?

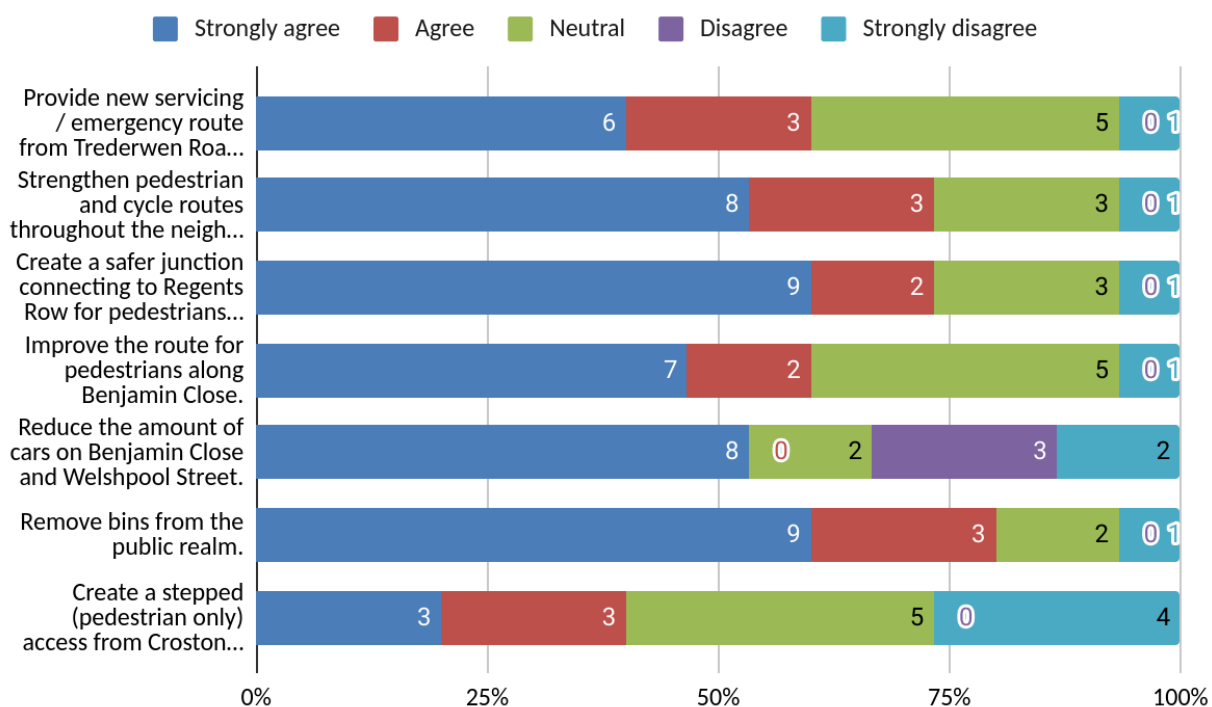


Yes	1
No	13

Question 11b. If yes, what improvements or changes would make getting around the estate easier and safer for you?

Respondent suggests having dropped kerbs and to deter market stalls from being placed on the pavements to Welshpool House., to assist wheelchair users.

Question 12a. Do you agree or disagree with the below proposed Shared Design Principles?



	Provide new servicing / emergency route from Trederwen Road to Welshpool Street that cannot be affected by the market.	Strengthen pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the neighbourhood.	Create a safer junction connecting to Regents Row for pedestrians and cycles.	Improve the route for pedestrians along Benjamin Close.	Reduce the amount of cars on Benjamin Close and Welshpool Street.	Remove bins from the public realm.	Create a stepped (pedestrian only) access from Croston Street to Welshpool Street.
Strongly agree	6	8	9	7	8	9	3
Agree	3	3	2	2	0	3	3
Neutral	5	3	3	5	2	2	5
Disagree	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Strongly disagree	1	1	1	1	2	1	4

The majority of online respondents agree or strongly agree with the first 6 proposed shared design principles.

However, there were mixed views about the creation of a stepped pedestrian access from Croston Street to Welshpool Street, with four people strongly disagreeing with this and 5 being neutral.

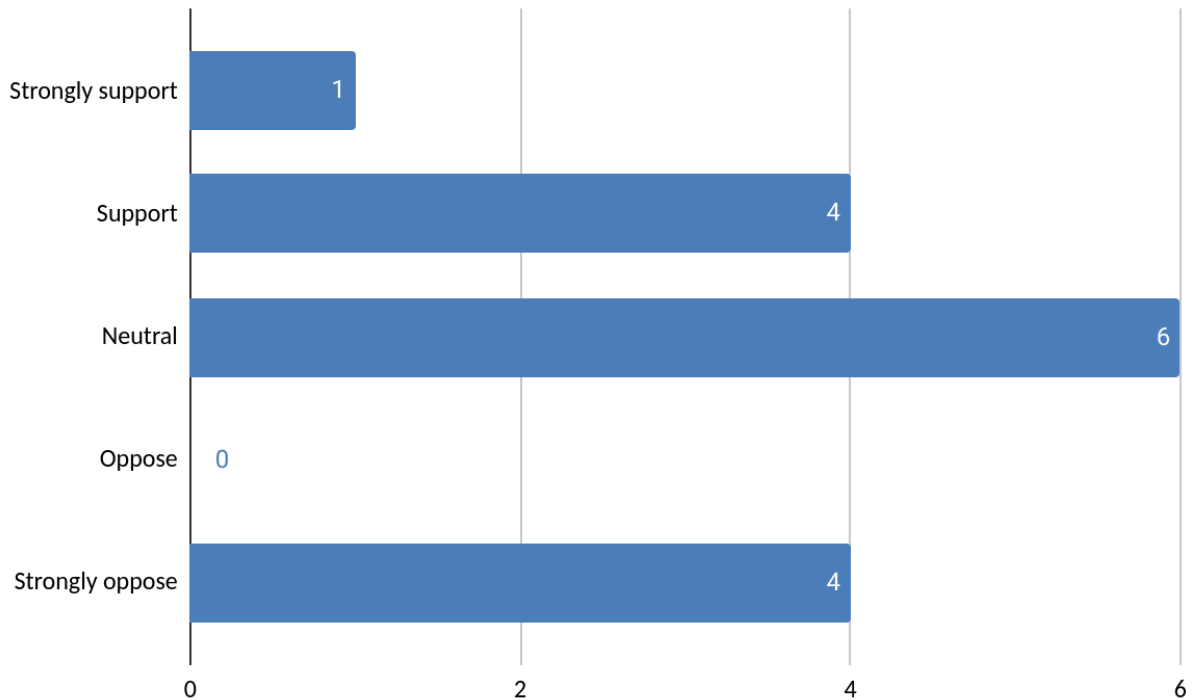
Question 12b. If you have any additional comments, please write here:

Residents on Croston Street feel that creating a stepped access from Croston Street to Welshpool Street is not a good idea. In their feedback they suggested it would encourage people to use this as a short cut and would attract anti-social-behaviour, noise and bring security issues.

A resident of Welshpool House noted that some residents need their cars for work (NHS) and need to ensure that vehicular movement is not restricted and would benefit from the access to Trederwen Road.

With regards to refuse collection, one resident commented that the external bins attract vermin (rats) and that the new proposals should provide bin stores that are enclosed and for existing as well as the new homes. This was reflected in many of the conversations at the public engagement. In particular the bins at the south east corner of Orwell garages for Little Orwell are notorious.

Question 13a. Do you support or oppose the idea of creating a stepped (pedestrian only) access from Croston Street to Welshpool Street?



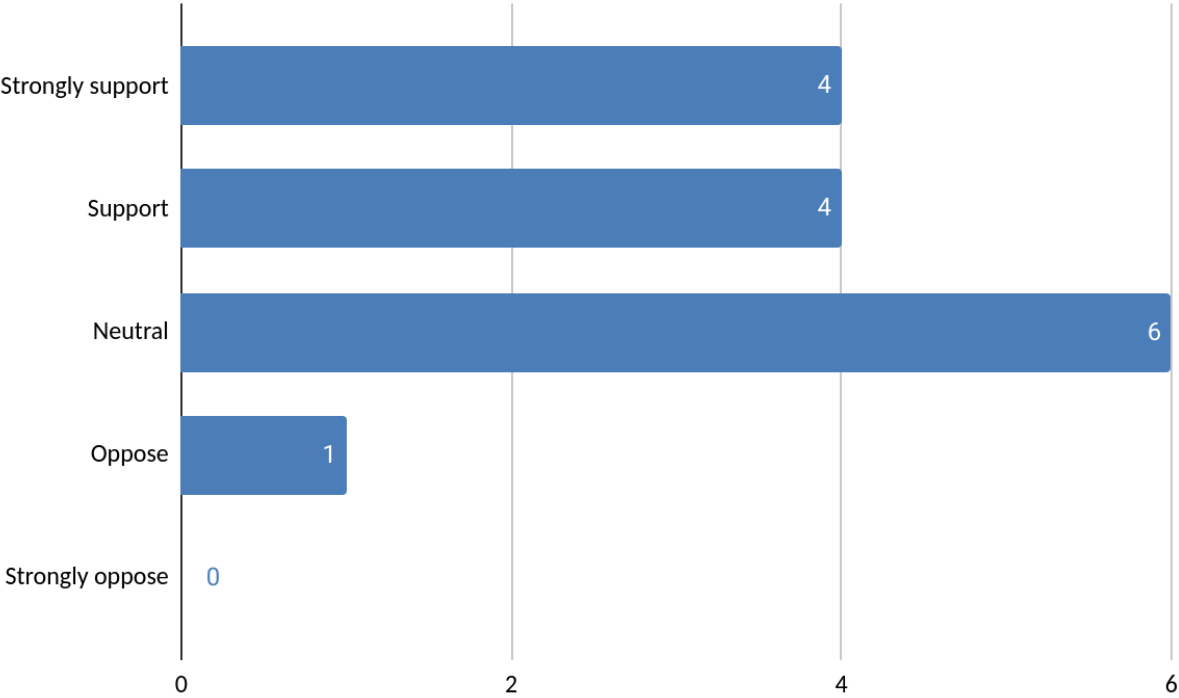
Strongly support	1
Support	4
Neutral	6
Oppose	0
Strongly oppose	4

The views here are polarised between those that live on Croston Street and those that don't and would find the connection useful, improving connectivity. The majority of people were neutral on this.

Question 13b. If you have any additional comments, please write here:

As before, respondents raised concerns that making a connection will disturb residents of these quiet streets, attract loitering and affect security.

Question 14. Do you support or oppose a new vehicular servicing route from Trederwen Road to Welshpool Street? The route would provide an additional emergency access route to Welshpool House that cannot be affected by the market.

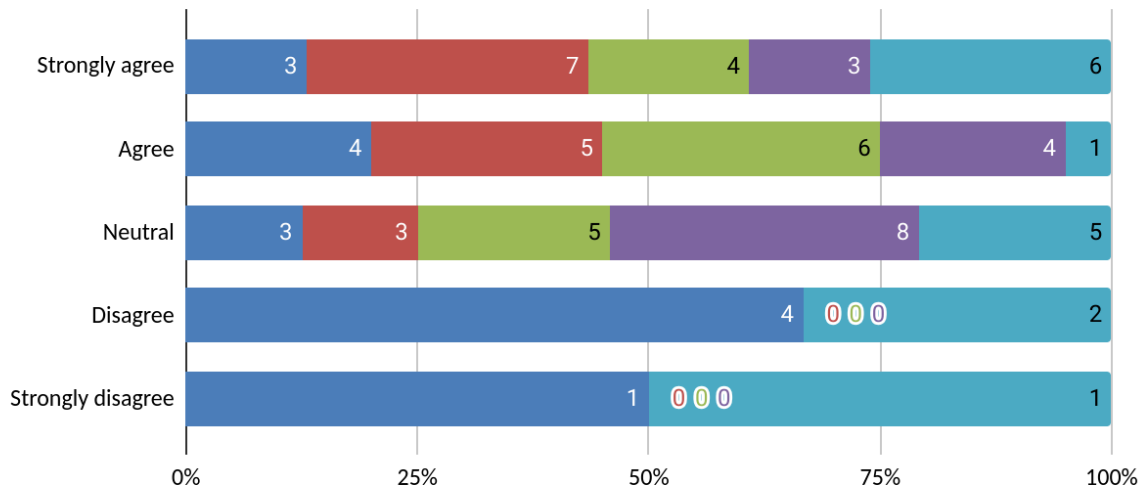


Strongly support	4
Support	4
Neutral	6
Oppose	1
Strongly oppose	0

Design approach / shared design principles – Boards 6

Question 15 a. Do you agree or disagree with the Shared Design Principles listed below:

- Opportunity for height on the corner of Benjamin Close, maximum 6 stories (under 18m) where it will have le...
- Designed in a way to maintain as much daylight & sunlight to the existing homes.
- Design of buildings to be tenure blind and all shared external amenity areas and play spaces to be shared bet...
- A new home for the Suffolk Estate TMO office, with better facilities and connection to the Suffolk Estate.
- Re-provision of storage for market traders integrated on site.



	Opportunity for height on the corner of Benjamin Close, maximum 6 stories (under 18m) where it will have least overshadowing impact on neighbours.	Designed in a way to maintain as much daylight & sunlight to the existing homes.	Design of buildings to be tenure blind and all shared external amenity areas and play spaces to be shared between tenures.	A new home for the Suffolk Estate TMO office, with better facilities and connection to the Suffolk Estate.	Re-provision of storage for market traders integrated on site.
Strongly agree	3	7	4	3	6
Agree	4	5	6	4	1
Neutral	3	3	5	8	5
Disagree	4	0	0	0	2
Strongly disagree	1	0	0	0	1

Broadly speaking respondents to the online questionnaire were supportive of the proposed shared design principles.

There were however mixed views around the principle 'Opportunity for height on the corner of Benjamin Close, maximum 6 stories (under 18m) where it will have least overshadowing impact on neighbours' with **five** respondents either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this principle, **three** being neutral versus **seven** either strongly agreeing or agreeing.

Question 15b. If you have any additional comments, please write here:

Most comments referred to the proposed 6 storey building on Benjamin Close and its impact on the existing homes on Benjamin Close.

A resident of Orwell Court raised concerns about the impact on their daylight and sunlight as a result of the block proposed, and how their existing light qualities can be maintained.

It was also highlighted that the current Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) does not function as it should and this needs to be addressed.

Orwell Court site strategies – Board 7

Question 16. Option 1- Three buildings around a central courtyard garden. What do you like about this option?

There were five out of seven positive comments about Option 1 - commenting that the plan looks 'visible' and 'navigable' with 'defensible space'. Creating a 'pleasant green space'

Question 16. Option 1- Three buildings around a central courtyard garden. What don't you like about this option?

There were concerns raised about the green space attracting market users rather than residents and that the space between buildings could become a youth hangout area.

A resident of Orwell Court raised concerns about the block creating a wall to Orwell Court blocking light and views and access to open space where kids play.

Another resident noted that the tallest element is located adjacent to three story homes.

Question 17. Option 2- Three buildings and three courtyard and amenity spaces. What do you like about this option?

There were only five comments on the online survey with those mentioning their likes of Option 2 being that it provides a better outlook for Broadway Market Mews residents and the layout provides less of a back to the existing buildings. (Orwell Court)

Question 17. Option 2- Three buildings and three courtyard and amenity spaces.

What don't you like about this option?

A resident of Orwell Court would prefer to have the communal green space adjacent to Orwell Court thereby not blocking light and views.

Some thought the garden space was too small.

Question 18. If you have any additional comments, please write here:

There was a suggestion to explore other options and consider reducing the number of homes to reflect the lack of infrastructure and also to consider providing community space and not to reduce access to green space to improve social cohesion.

Welshpool Street site strategies – Board 8

Question 19. What do you think about the strategy for Welshpool Street?

Whilst most agreed with the terraced option there were some concerns about height and the overlooking the back gardens of Dericote Street and the 4 storey corner building shadowing the back gardens of Dericote Street. Specific questions were raised concerning the potential for roof terraces and Juliette balconies.

One resident raised the concern about the loss of car parking for Welshpool House and whether these would be reallocated to surrounding streets?

Another respondent suggested that the roof line of the proposed housing should be more in keeping with the pitch roofs of Croston and Dericote streets and use inhabited mansard roofs to keep the bulk down.

History & Identity – Board 9

Question 20. Please share your memories and anecdotes about living on the Suffolk Estate.

Whilst some chose not to answer this question others did around the sense of community and the market.

One respondent has fond memories of gardening together with residents many years ago; and of birthday parties and picnics on the grass in the internal courtyards

They also remember using the garages as ‘private wastelands’ to run wild which was a joy. Kids have learnt to ride their bikes in this space and older teenagers run around in their little gangs on the rooftops, exploring a sense of risk and freedom. It is very good for development, confidence and social skills.

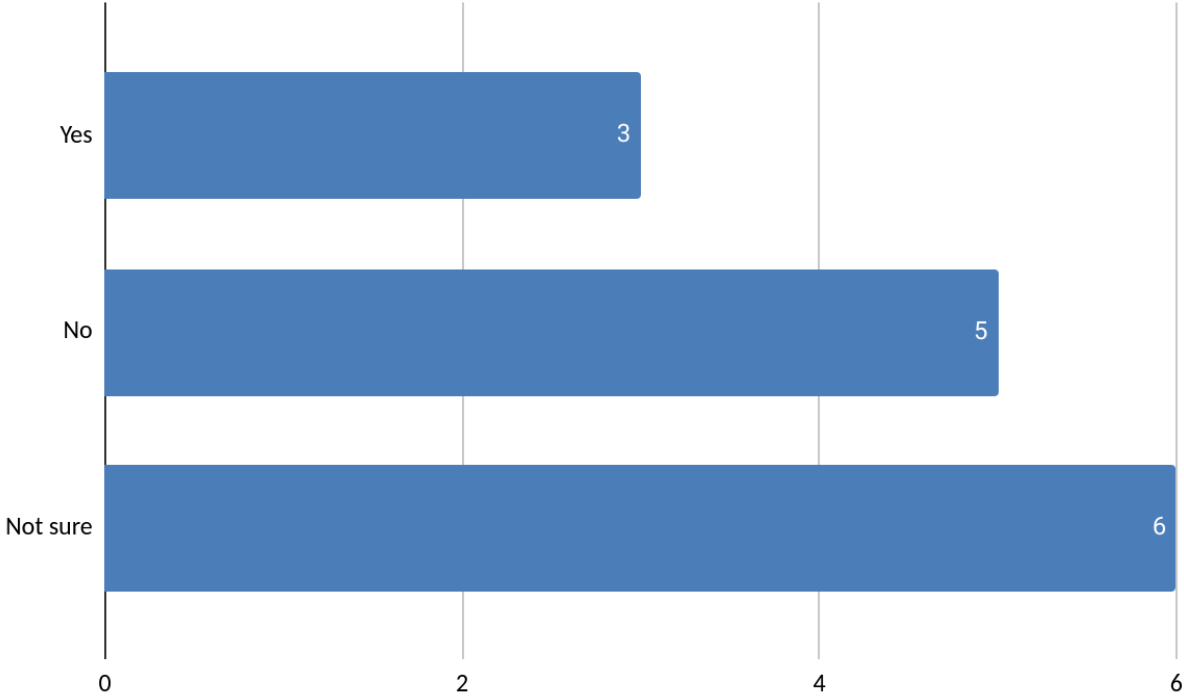
One resident ran a community fanzine from 2002-2008 where many local histories have been recorded.

Question 21. Who is your local hero?

Local heroes included, the local MP and London Fields User Group, who saved the Lido; an individual who has been prominent in restarting the market and a local resident who actively cleans the green areas every morning.

Mention of Stuart Goodwin, who photographed the market in the 1980's.
(www.stuartgoodman.co.uk)

Question 22. The various buildings on the Suffolk Estate are named after places in Suffolk. Laxfield and Debenham are both villages, whilst the river Orwell flows through Suffolk from Ipswich to Felixstowe. Do you think the new building names should be in keeping with the Suffolk theme?



Yes	3
No	5
Not sure	6

Question 23. Do you have any suggestions of names for the new buildings?

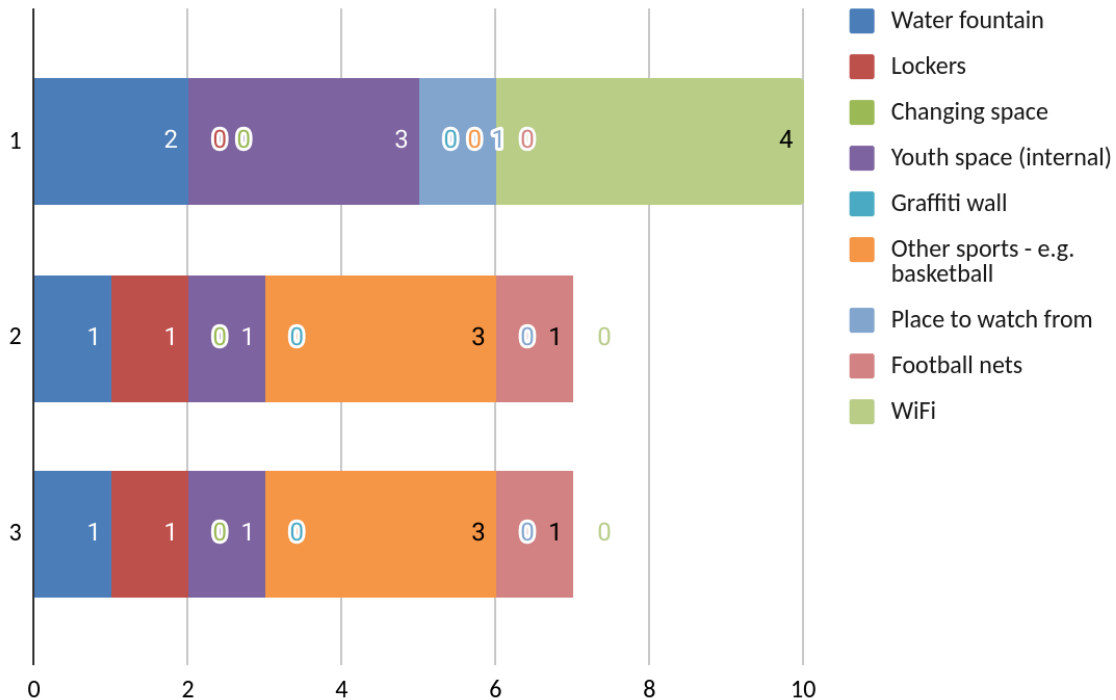
Do you have any suggestions of names for the new buildings?

Suggestions include individuals, local music legends to the *'lads who died from the streets here in the first world war'*

One respondent felt that Little Orwell should be formally re-named so that it can be better located.

Youth engagement – Board 10

Question 24a. What additional amenities should be included? Tick your top 3 priorities from the list below:



	Water fountain	Lockers	Changing space	Youth space (internal)	Graffiti wall	Other sports - e.g. basketball	Place to watch from	Football nets	WiFi
1	2	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	4
2	1	1	0	1	0	3	0	1	0
3	1	1	0	1	0	3	0	1	0

Weighting scores where first choice = 3 points, second choice = 2 points and third choice = 1 point the following are the top 3 priorities:

Joint priority 1 > Youth space = 12 points

Joint priority 1 > WiFi = 12 points

Joint Priority 3 > Other sports = 9 points

Joint Priority 3 > Water fountain = 9 points

Question 24b. Other:

People would like to see:

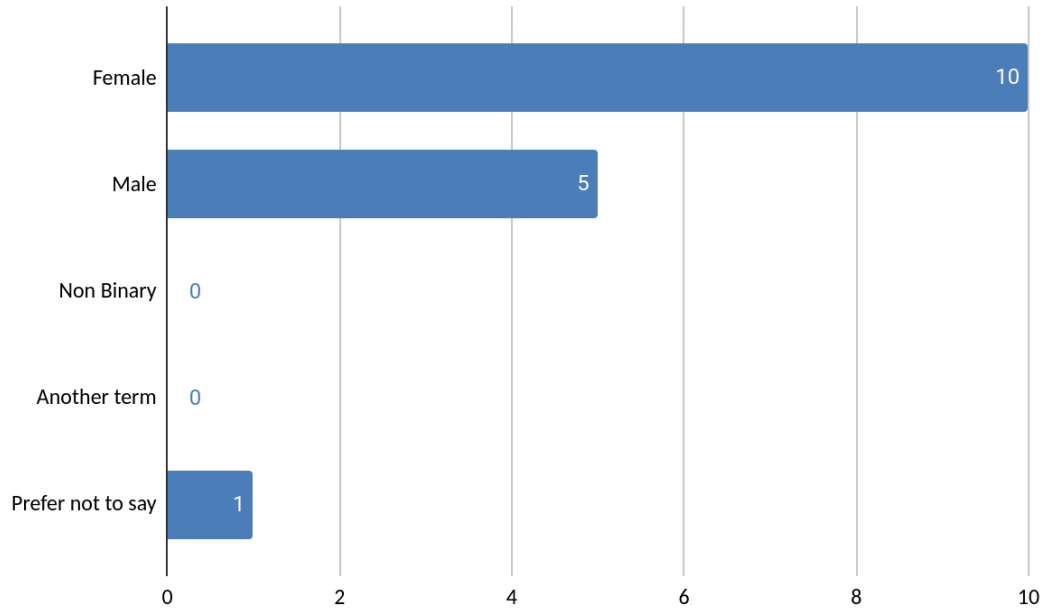
- Children's activities and benches
- Retain the sports pitch at its current size
- <https://www.makespaceforgirls.co.uk/>
- A maker space/workshop/hackspace for kids to hang out and learn new skills
- A space that is accessible to the whole community (not an internal courtyard)

A suggestion to keep reaching out to other teens and young people on the estate.

It was noted that there is a need for the ball court to be managed and monitored better than currently to avoid after hour use, ASB and littering.

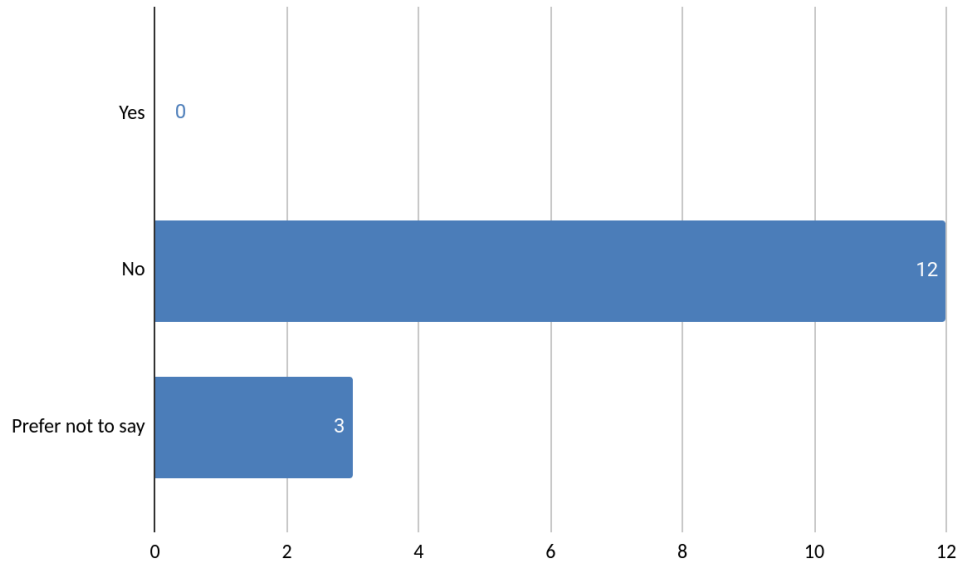
About You

Gender: Are you...



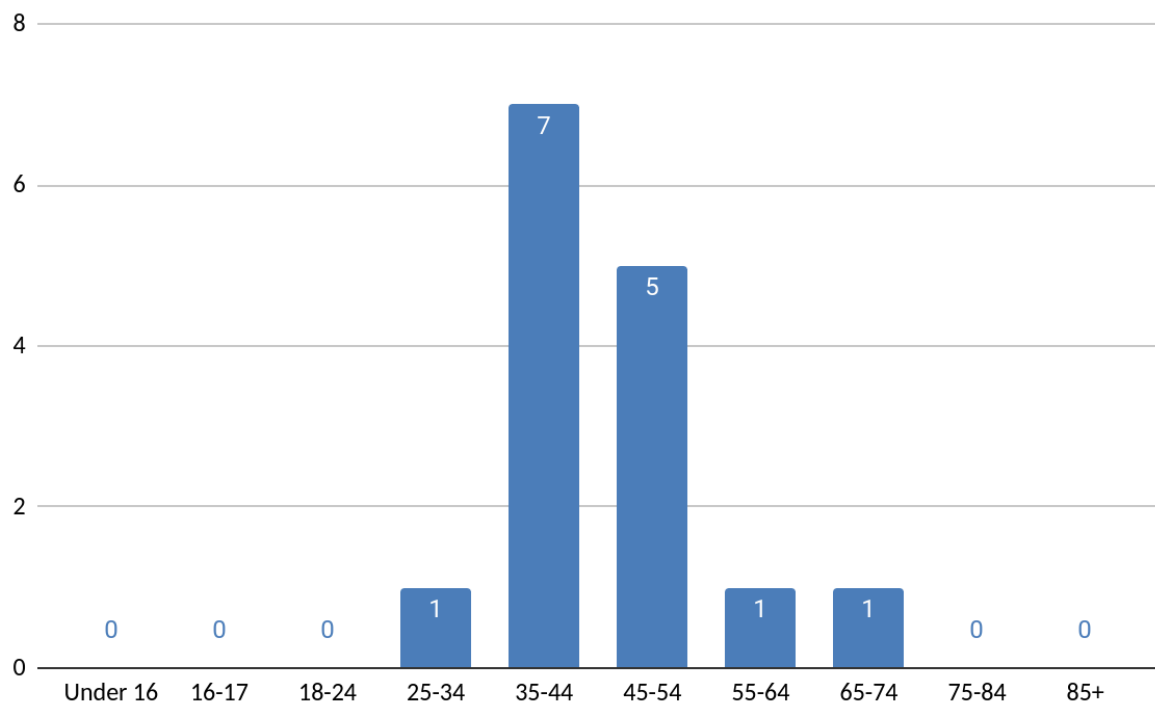
Female	10
Male	5
Non Binary	0
Another term	0
Prefer not to say	1

Are you transgender or do you have a history of being transgender?



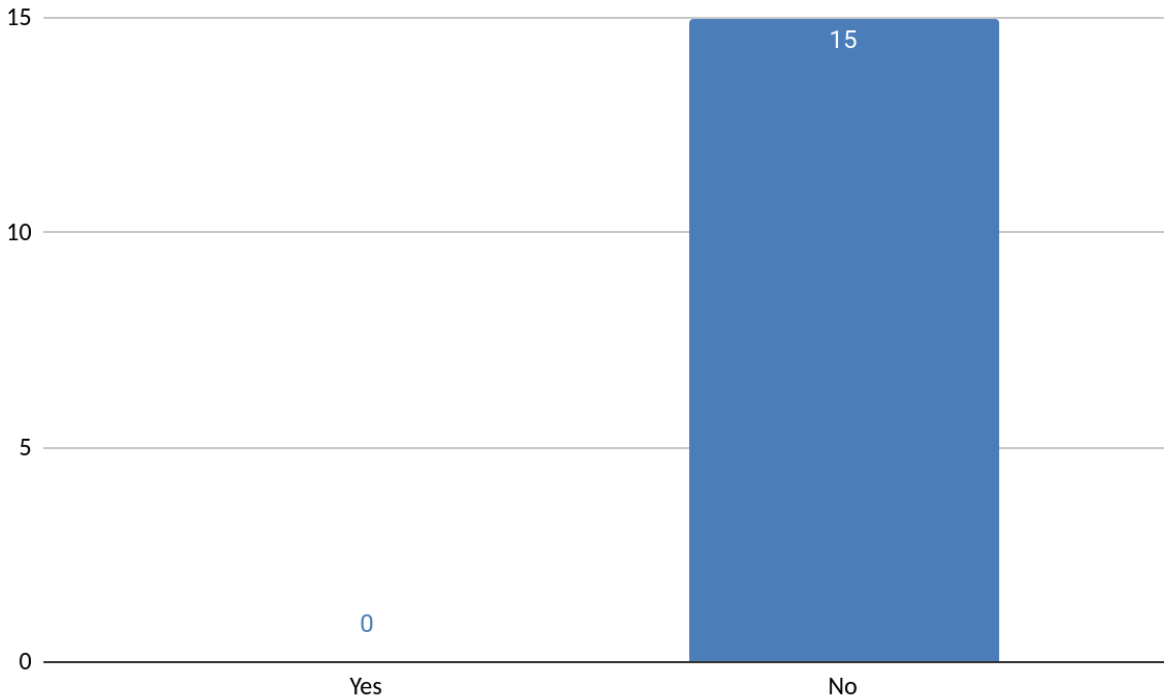
Yes	0
No	12
Prefer not to say	3

Age: what is your age group?



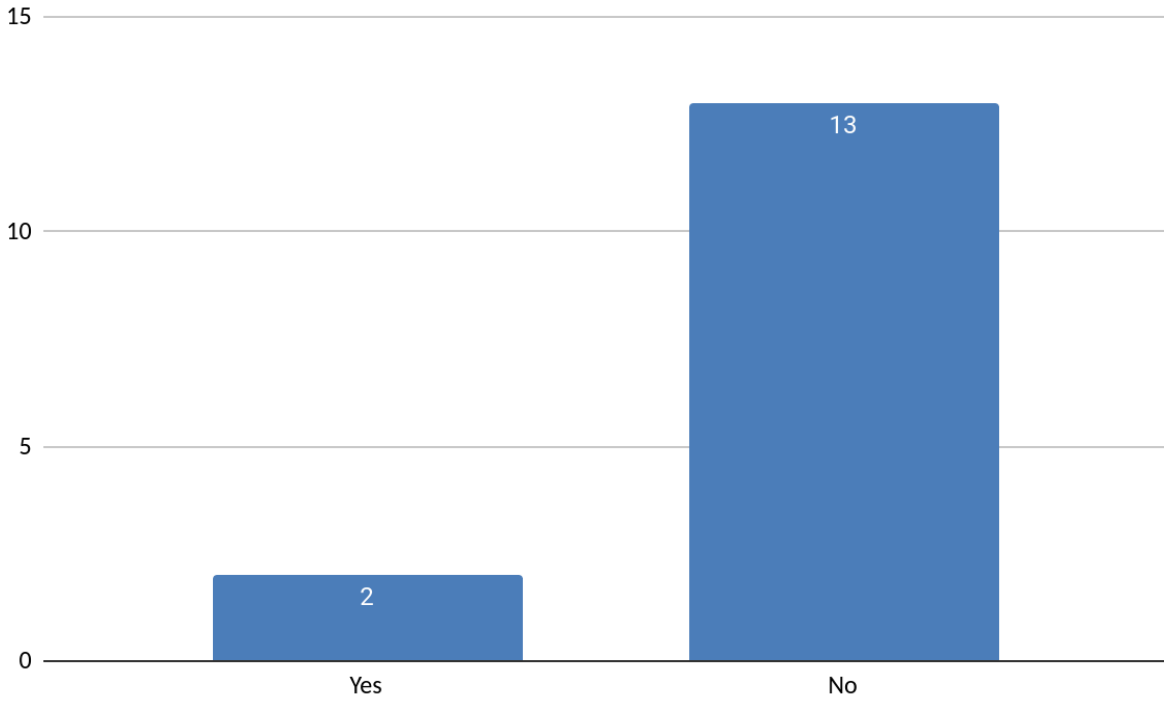
Under 16	0
16-17	0
18-24	0
25-34	1
35-44	7
45-54	5
55-64	1
65-74	1
75-84	0
85+	0

Disability



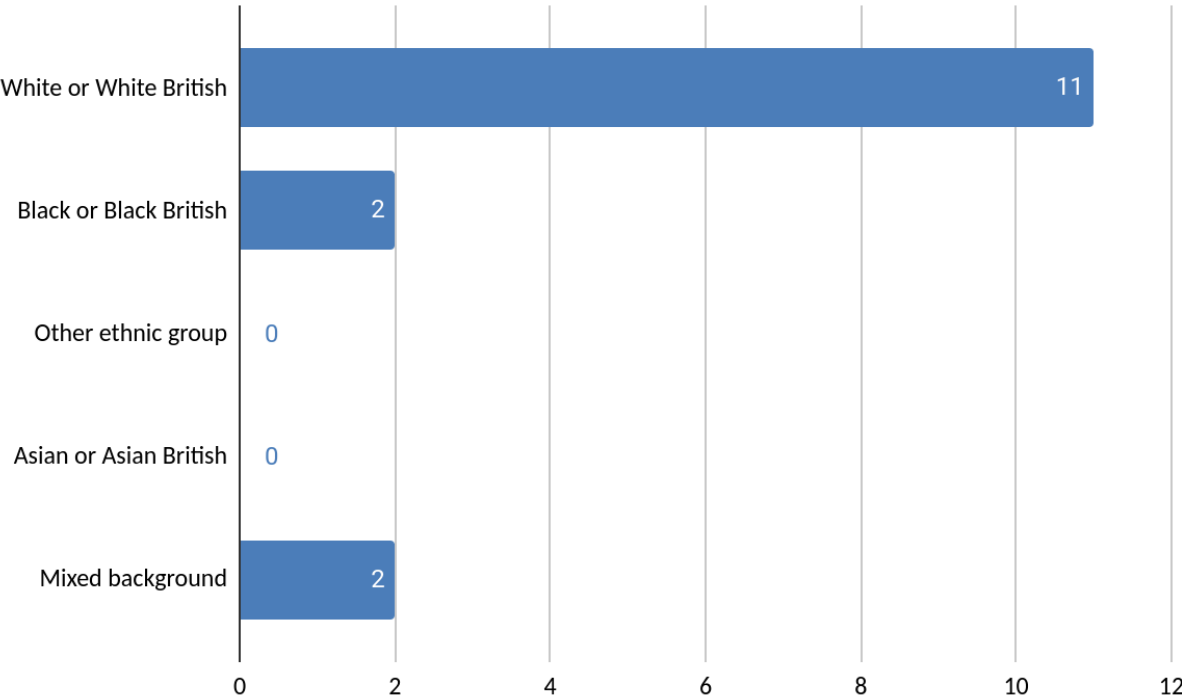
Yes	0
No	15

Caring responsibilities



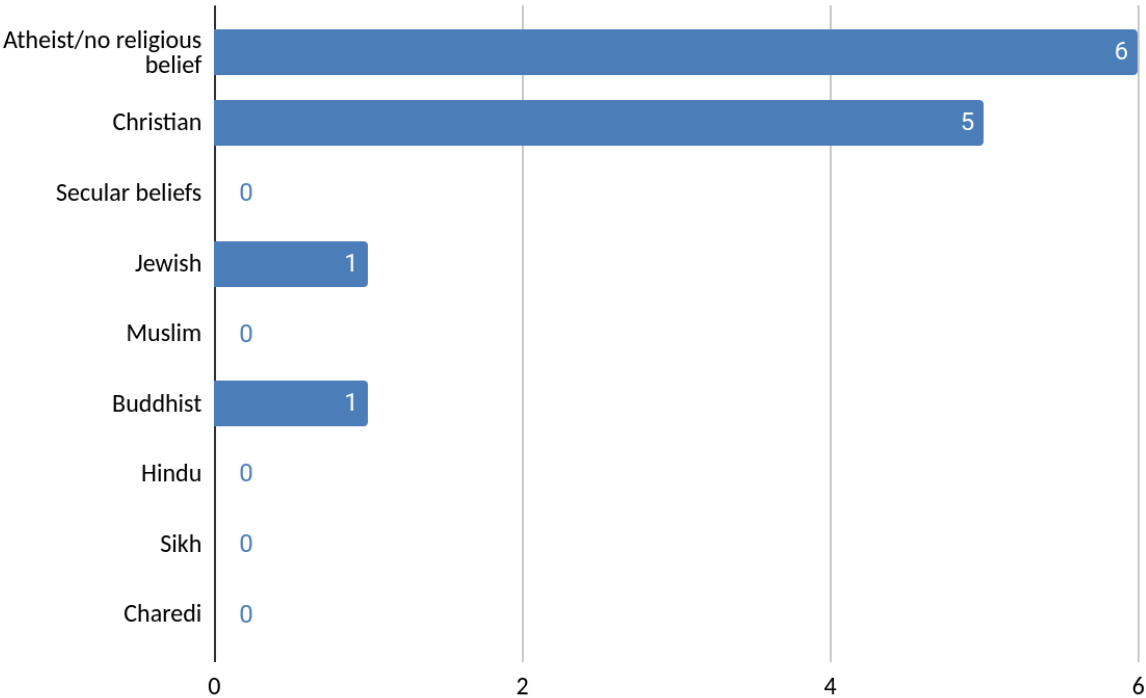
Yes	2
No	13

Ethnicity: Are you...



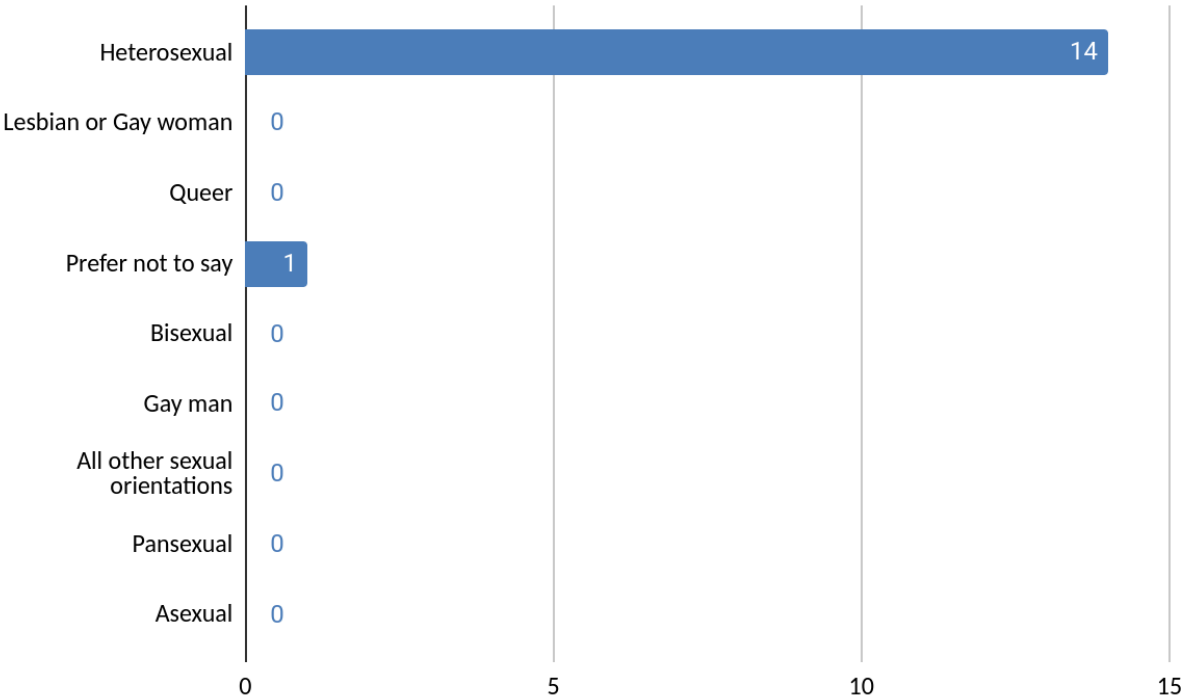
White or White British	11
Black or Black British	2
Other ethnic group	0
Asian or Asian British	0
Mixed background	2

Religion or belief: Are you or do you have...



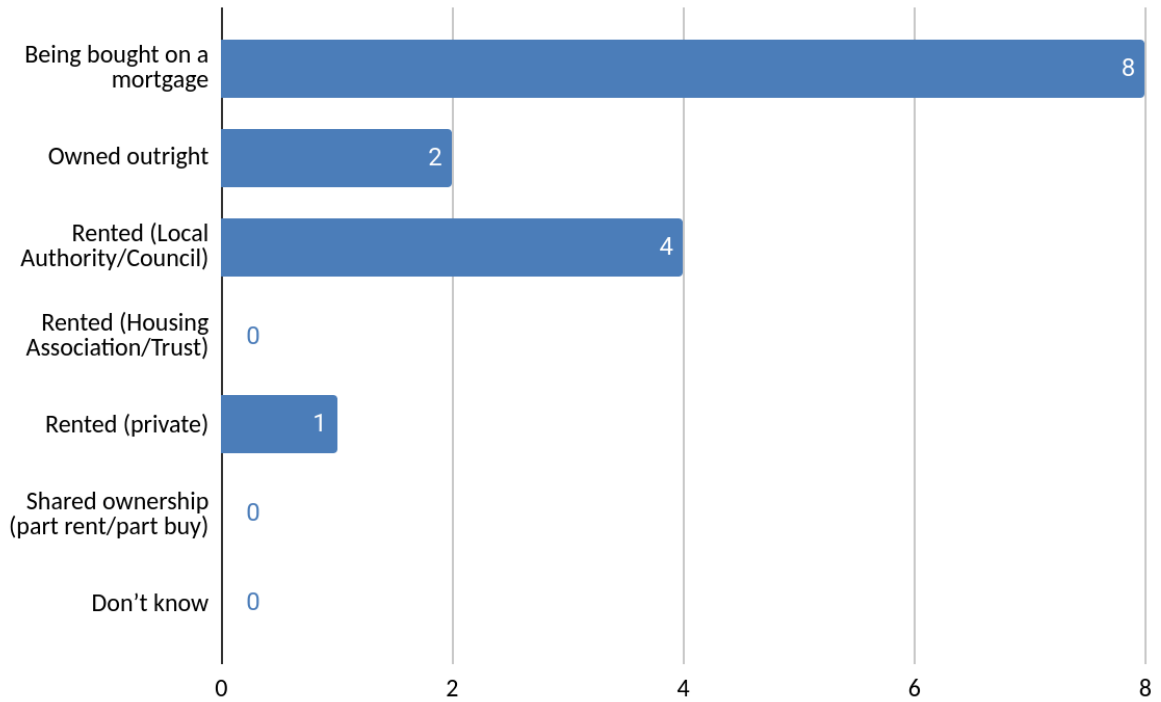
Atheist/no religious belief	6
Christian	5
Secular beliefs	0
Jewish	1
Muslim	0
Buddhist	1
Hindu	0
Sikh	0
Charedi	0

Sexual orientation: Are you...



Heterosexual	14
Lesbian or Gay woman	0
Queer	0
Prefer not to say	1
Bisexual	0
Gay man	0
All other sexual orientations	0
Pansexual	0
Asexual	0

Housing Tenure:



Being bought on a mortgage	8
Owned outright	2
Rented (Local Authority/Council)	4
Rented (Housing Association/Trust)	0
Rented (private)	1
Shared ownership (part rent/part buy)	0
Don't know	0

Next steps

The project and design team will review the feedback from this Stage 1 engagement as part of an assessment of the Stage 1 work, to inform the next stage of design development and the selection of a preferred option to carry forward. The feedback from residents will sit alongside that of Hackney Planning officers, and a viability assessment carried out by Exigere cost consultants.

The next public consultation on the preferred strategy and options will take place at the end of RIBA Stage 2 likely to be in the new year (2025). Meetings with the Resident Steering Group (RSG) and engagement with key stakeholders and targeted groups will continue to take place between public consultation events. Minutes of RSG meetings are kept and available on request.

In the summer of 2025 a planning application is anticipated and a public exhibition will inform residents of the final designs to be submitted and the process of the planning application, at which point a statutory consultation will take place managed by Hackney planning department. Residents and stakeholders and the public can register their formal support or objection at this stage and before a final decision is made to grant or not grant the scheme planning approval.

This process of engagement will be captured in a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which will be submitted with the planning application documents.