

To London Borough of Hackney
From Steer
Date 24th May 2023
Project Downham Road Design Options Assessment

Technical Note

Project No. 24393001

Downham Road Design Options: Summary of Engagement Questionnaire

Background

1. Steer was commissioned by the London Borough of Hackney (LB Hackney) to analyse responses from engagement with local residents on two options for improvements to Downham Road.
2. These options were developed by LB Hackney following concerns raised by parents of pupils at Hackney New Primary School, as well as residents, regarding road safety along Downham Road. In particular, requests were made to explore the provision for wider footways and improved crossing facilities outside the school, as well as measures to prevent vehicles from u-turning and speeding.
3. These two options are summarised below:
 - **Option 1 – Public realm improvements:** The design has sought to implement wider pavements and allow two lanes of traffic. The aim of the design is to prioritise pedestrians over all other modes of road users and improve road safety. The scheme would introduce a chicane and speed table with crossing facilities to reduce vehicle speeds and improve crossing facilities close to the school. To accommodate this scheme, approximately 11 car parking spaces would have to be relocated and/or removed.
 - **Option 2 – Segregated cycle lanes:** This design would provide two running lanes of 3.25m, and 2m wide cycle lanes in each direction. To accommodate this scheme, all 44 existing car parking spaces on Downham Road would have to be relocated and/or removed.
4. This technical note sets out the approach taken to the questionnaire and summarises the findings.

Methodology

5. On the 16th and 23rd of November 2022, residents were invited to attend drop-in events to discuss the proposals for Downham Road. Residents were able to discuss the two options with officers from the Streetscene service between 3-7pm at the Rose Lipman Hall in De Beauvoir Road. Large drawings of the two proposed options were provided which served as the focus point of discussions. 101 residents signed the attendance register over the two days.
6. To promote the drop-in events, approximately 2,000 leaflets were distributed in the local area. Please see **Appendix A** for an example of the leaflet. An email was also sent to the De Beauvoir estate regeneration mailing list to promote the second drop-in event, comprising of approximately 1,600 email addresses.
7. Residents were requested to provide their initial feedback through to completion of a short questionnaire. The questionnaire contained the following questions:
 - What is your postcode?
 - What is your connection to Downham Road?
 - Which mode of transport do you use to move through Downham Road?
 - How do you feel about Downham Road? (free text response)

- What do you think of Option 1: Public realm improvements?
- What do you think of Option 2: Segregated cycle lanes?
- Do you want to be informed of when the consultation starts?
- What is your age group?
- What is your gender?

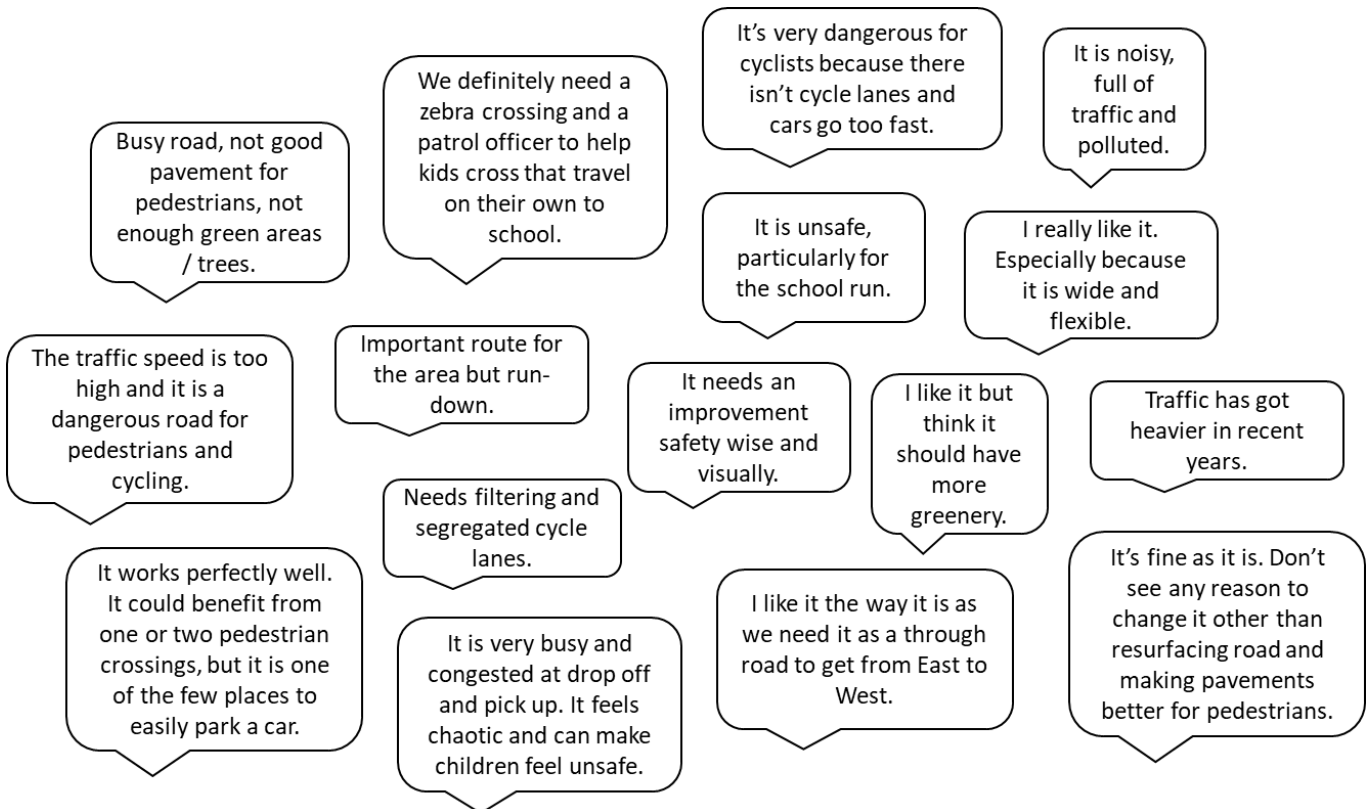
8. A total of 101 responses were received to the questionnaire.

Summary of findings

Overall opinion on Downham Road

9. Respondents were asked, ‘How do you feel about Downham Road?’. Some examples of their responses are presented in **Figure 1**. From thematic analysis, there are a mixture of positive and negative responses. Some respondents are satisfied with Downham Road as it currently is, while others are concerned about the volume of traffic and congestion on Downham Road, particularly due to the presence of Hackney New Primary School.
10. Some respondents expressed safety concerns, namely due to speeding vehicles, but also because of the lack of crossing points and safe cycling provision. Respondents also noted that Downham Road does not have enough greenery and the carriageway and footway surfaces are in poor condition.

Figure 1: “How do you feel about Downham Road?” – selected quotes from respondents



Opinions on Option 1: Public realm improvements

11. Respondents were asked, ‘What do you think of Option 1? (public realm improvements)’. 98 out of 101 respondents answered this question, and each of their responses has been coded and an appropriate theme identified. For the positive responses, 8 key opinions were identified, summarised in **Table 1**:

Table 1: Themes of positive responses to Option 1

Theme	Opinion	Responses	Percentage of respondents who answered the question
Environment	Support the greenery (e.g., trees, plants) of Option 1	27	47%
Traffic	Support Option 1 as it slows traffic	11	19%
Pedestrians	Support the raised crossing	8	14%
Safety	Option 1 will improve safety	4	7%
Traffic	Support the chicanes in Option 1	3	5%
Infrastructure	Support the drainage improvements	2	4%
Parking	Support the lesser reduction of parking in Option 1	1	2%
Environment	Support Option 1 making Downham Road more visually appealing	1	2%
Total		57	100%

12. The most common positive response relates to the proposed greenery, with 28 per cent of respondents to this question stating that they supported its addition to Downham Road. The impact Option 1 could have on slowing motor traffic was also welcomed by respondents, with 11 per cent explicitly stating that they supported traffic calming measures. For the negative responses, 11 key opinions have been identified, summarised in **Table 2**:

Table 2: Themes of negative responses to Option 1

Theme	Opinion	Responses	Percentage of respondents who answered the question
Traffic	Concern about traffic tailbacks (e.g., removing 2 lanes will lead to traffic backing up outside the school as vehicles wait to turn onto the A10)	11	22%
Safety	Feel that Option 1 is unsafe for cyclists and/or pedestrians	11	22%
Traffic	Concern that Option 1 does not reduce / slow down motor vehicle traffic	8	16%
Cycling	Concern that Option 1 limits cycling (i.e. no cycling lane)	7	14%
Traffic	Do not support the chicane because of its implications for traffic	4	8%
Traffic	Concern that Option 1 will limit the free movement of vehicles	2	4%
Parking	Do not support the retention of car parking in Option 1	2	4%
Traffic	Concern about displacement of vehicles	1	2%
Cycling	Concern there is too much emphasis on cyclists compared to other road users	1	2%
Environment	Feel there is too much emphasis on greenery (e.g., trees, plants)	1	2%
Environment	Feel there is not enough greenery (e.g., trees, plants)	1	2%
Total		49	100%

13. The most common concern (11 per cent) among respondents to this question was about potential traffic tailbacks on Downham Road, with six of these respondents noting how this would impact Hackney New

Primary School. 11 per cent of respondents also expressed that they did not feel Option 1 would be safe for cyclists and/or pedestrians. This also relates to the concern that Option 1 limits cycling, due to the absence of a separate cycle lane. Another common negative response was that Option 1 does not do enough to slow down motor vehicle traffic.

Other considerations for Option 1

14. Some additional considerations or suggestions, highlighted by multiple respondents, are listed below:
- Having a separate cycle lane (one respondent suggested a cycleway for children through the greenery)
 - Having a zebra crossing closer to, or outside of, Hackney New Primary School
 - Installing speed cameras to tackle speeding drivers
 - Improving the surfaces of footways and the carriageway

Opinions on Option 2: Segregated cycle lanes

15. Respondents were asked, 'What do you think of Option 2? (segregated cycle lanes)'. 99 out of 101 respondents answered this question, and each of their responses has been coded and an appropriate theme identified. For the positive responses, 5 key opinions have been identified, summarised in **Table 3**:

Table 3: Themes of positive responses to Option 2

Theme	Opinion	Responses	Percentage of respondents who answered the question
Cycling	Support the cycling provision in Option 2	15	44%
Safety	Option 2 will improve safety for cyclists	9	26%
Safety	Option 2 will promote safety	5	15%
Parking	Support the reduction of parking in Option 2	4	12%
Traffic	Support Option 2 as it reduces traffic	1	3%
Total		34	100%

16. The most common positive responses were in relation to the proposed cycling provision and its potential positive implications for cycling safety, with 15 per cent of respondents to this question supporting the segregated cycling lane. A smaller proportion of respondents (4 per cent) support the reduction of parking availability on Downham Road in Option 2.
17. For the negative responses, 15 key opinions have been identified, summarised in **Table 4**:

Table 4: Themes of negative responses to Option 2

Theme	Opinion	Responses	Percentage of respondents who answered the question
Parking	Do not support the reduction of car parking in Option 2	16	24%
Safety	Concern about anti-social cycling behaviour (e.g., speeding, riding on pavements)	8	12%
Cycling	Objection to cycle lane in Option 2	7	10%
Safety	Feel that Option 2 is unsafe for pedestrians (e.g., crossing the road)	7	10%
Cycling	Concern there is too much emphasis on cyclists compared to other road users	5	7%
Environment	Feel that Option 2 is less visually appealing	4	6%
Environment	Feel there is not enough greenery (e.g., trees, plants) in Option 2	4	6%
Parking	Concern Option 2 negatively impacts businesses (loss of parking)	4	6%
Traffic	Concern that Option 2 does not reduce / slow down motor vehicle traffic	3	4%
Traffic	Concern about traffic tailbacks (e.g., removing 2 lanes will lead to traffic backing up outside the school as vehicles wait to turn onto the A10)	3	4%
Safety	Option 2 does not promote safety	2	3%
Safety	Concern that Option 2 will not address problem of speeding vehicles	2	3%
Traffic	Concern about displacement of vehicles	1	1%
Traffic	Concern that Option 2 will limit the free movement of vehicles	1	1%
Cycling	Cycle infrastructure will be underutilised	1	1%
Total		68	100%

18. The most common negative response to Option 2 was the opposition to reduction of car parking, with 16 per cent of respondents to this question expressing a concern. 8 per cent of respondents were also concerned about cyclists speeding and/or riding on pavements. 7 per cent expressed objection to a cycle lane in Option 2, some of whom felt that this would make pedestrians feel unsafe.

Other considerations for Option 2

19. Some additional considerations or suggestions, highlighted by multiple respondents, are listed below:
- Having more greenery (as in Option 1)
 - More zebra crossings to improve safety, particularly near Hackney New Primary School
 - Traffic calming measures such as ramps and chicanes
 - Increased designated car parking spaces on side roads
 - Provision of cycle parking

Overall findings

20. In general, more negative themes emerged from Option 2 and more positive themes emerged from Option 1. Respondents particularly liked the greenery aspects of Option 1. Overlapping suggestions for Options 1 and 2 are to have more pedestrian crossings at convenient locations (such as outside of Hackney New Primary School), and to have more traffic calming measures in place.
21. 32 per cent of respondents who answered the question 'What do you think of Option 1? (public realm improvements)', expressed an explicit preference or support for Option 1, whereas 20 per cent of respondents who answered the question 'What do you think of Option 2? (segregated cycle lanes)', expressed a preference or support for Option 2. Concerns about the maintenance of Option 1 were raised by 5 respondents. 19 respondents who answered the question on Option 2 believed that a segregated cycle lane is unnecessary.
22. Analysis on this, and other general thoughts, are presented in the **Table 5** and **Table 6** below:

Table 5: General thoughts on Option 1

Theme	Opinion	Responses	Percentage of respondents who answered the question
General	Prefer / support Option 1	31	50%
General	Support Option 1 but have concerns	13	21%
General	Do not prefer / support Option 1	7	11%
General	Concern about maintenance of Option 1	5	8%
General	Believe that Option 1 is unnecessary	3	5%
General	Believe that Option 1 is a waste of money	2	3%
General	Believe that Option 1 will encourage active travel	1	2%
Total		62	100%

Table 6: General thoughts on Option 2

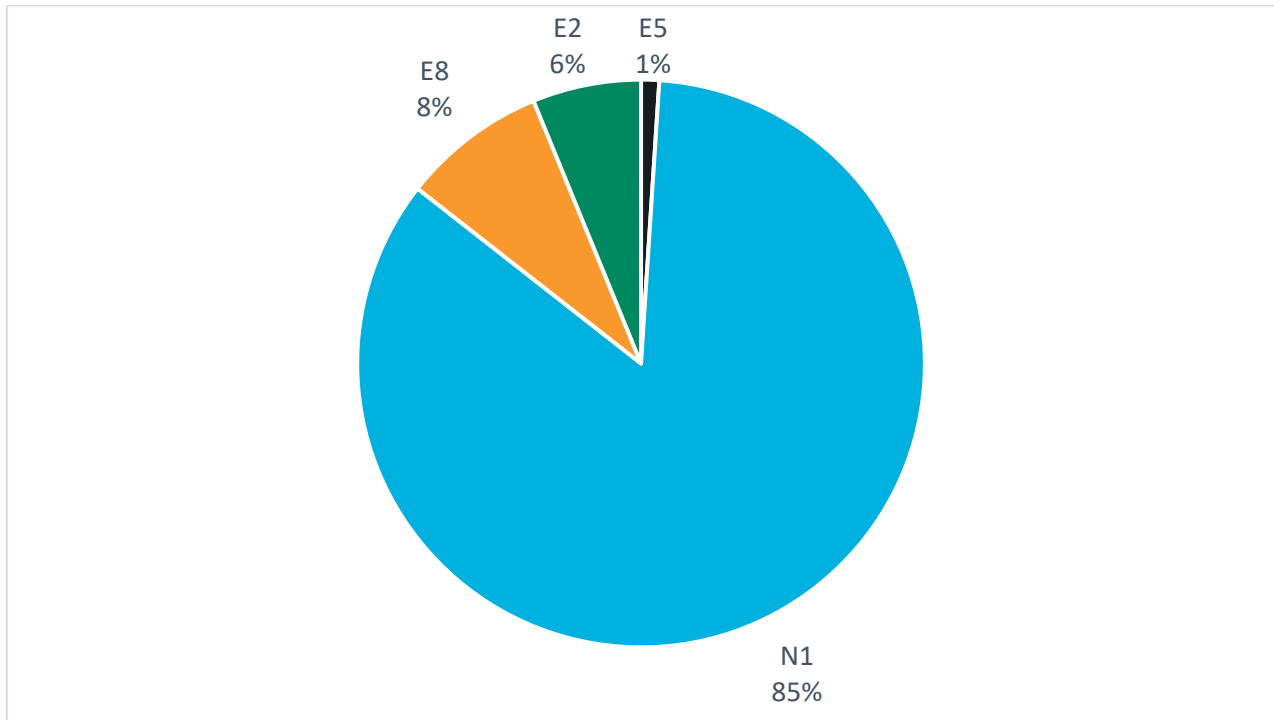
Theme	Opinion	Responses	Percentage of respondents who answered the question
General	Prefer / support Option 2	20	33%
General	Do not prefer / support Option 2	19	31%
General	Believe that segregated cycle lane is unnecessary (there are already nearby cycle lanes)	19	31%
General	Support Option 2 but have concerns	2	3%
General	Believe that Option 2 is a waste of money	1	2%
Total		61	100%

Respondent data

Postcode analysis

23. Respondents were asked to provide their postcode. Out of those who did provide their postcode (97 out of 101 respondents): 85 per cent were in the 'N1' postcode; 8 per cent were in the 'E8' postcode; 6 per cent were in the 'E2' postcode; and 1 per cent were in the 'E5' postcode. This breakdown is presented in **Figure 2**:

Figure 2: Respondents' location by postcode sector

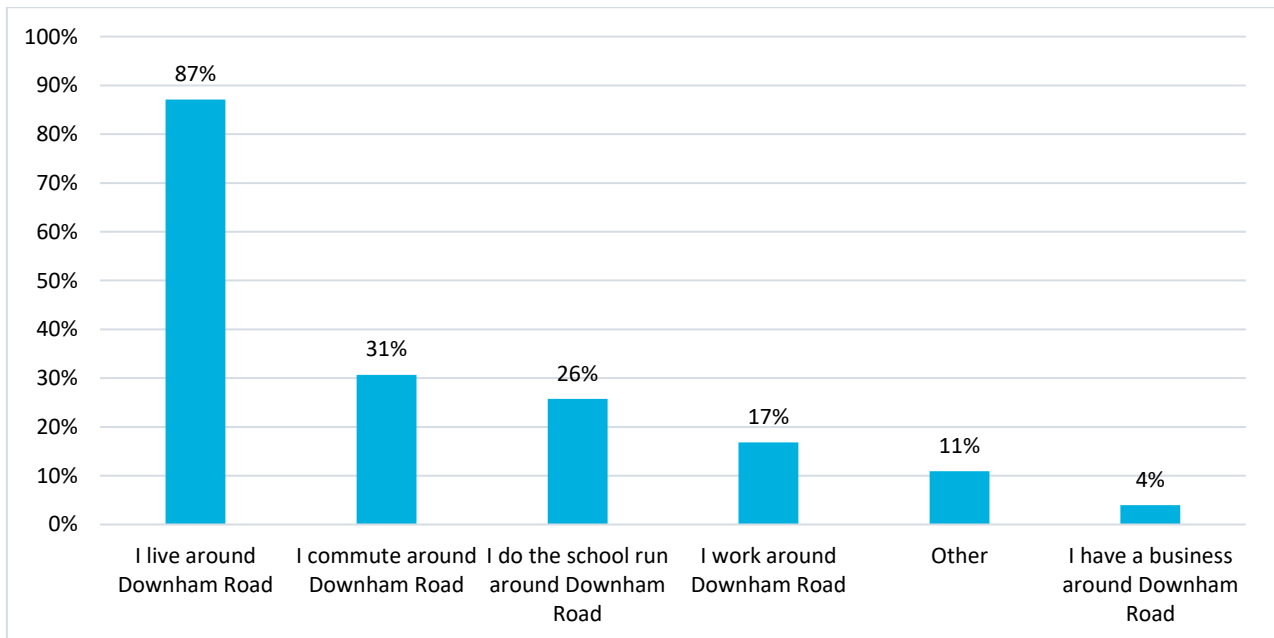


Number of respondents = 97

Connection to the area

- 24. **Figure 3** shows that most respondents (87 per cent) are residents around Downham Road. Nearly a third (31 per cent) commute around Downham Road, and just over a quarter (26 per cent) do the school run. Note that respondents were able to select more than one option to this question, therefore the percentages do not total 100 per cent.

Figure 3: Respondents' connection to the area

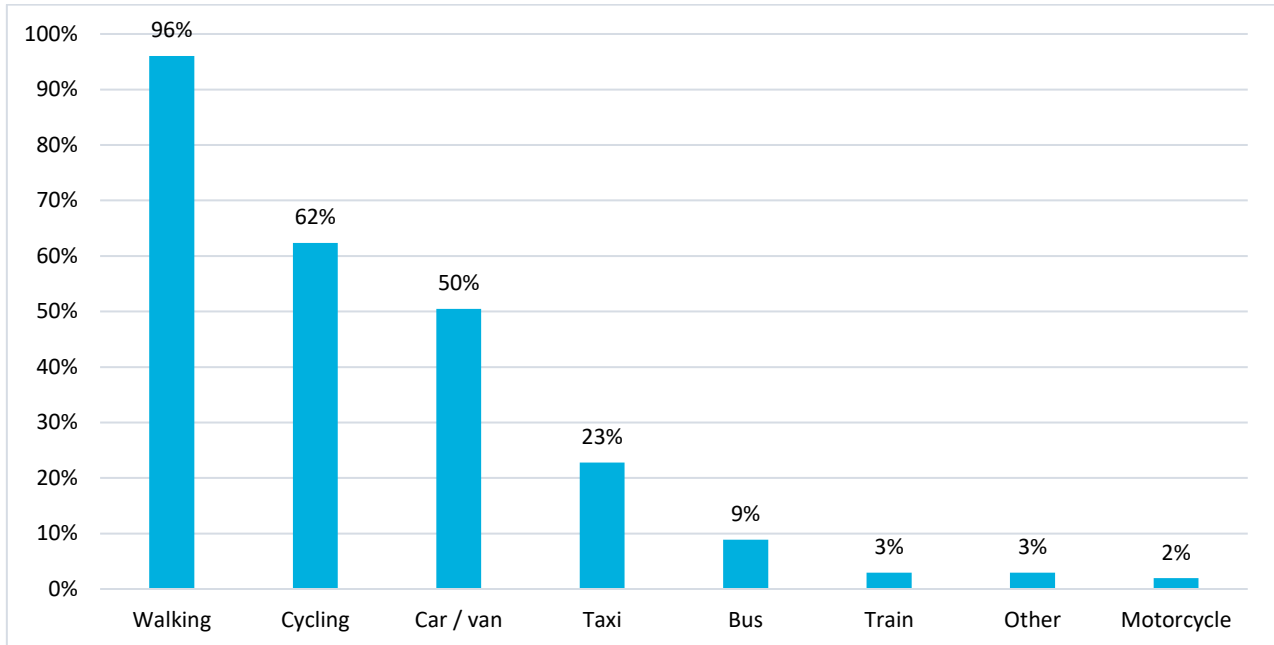


Number of respondents = 101

Mode of transport

25. Respondents provided the mode of transport they used to move through Downham Road. Again, they were able to select more than one mode, therefore percentages do not total 100 per cent.
26. **Figure 4** presents the responses, which show that nearly all (96 per cent) walk on Downham Road, and over three fifths (62 per cent) cycle. Half of users (50 per cent) travel by car or van through Downham Road.

Figure 4: Modes of transport used by respondents

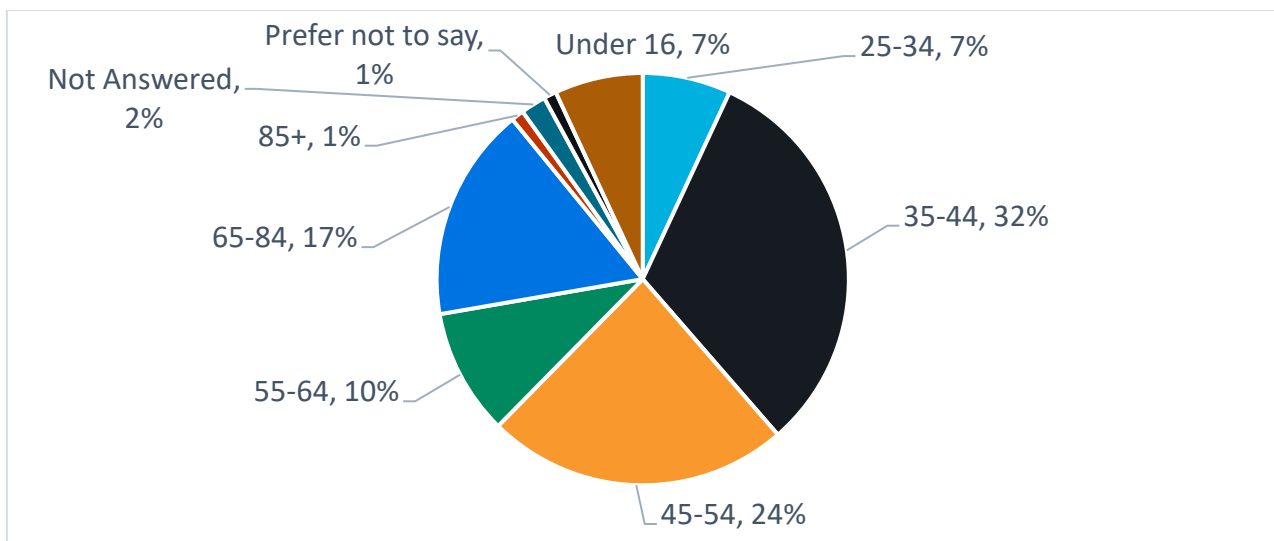


Number of respondents = 100

Demographics

27. Out of the 101 responses to the survey, 98 provided their age group and 1 selected 'Prefer not to say'. The largest proportion of respondents (32 per cent) were in the 35-44 age group, followed by the 24 per cent in the 45-54 age category. **Figure 5** presents this age profile:

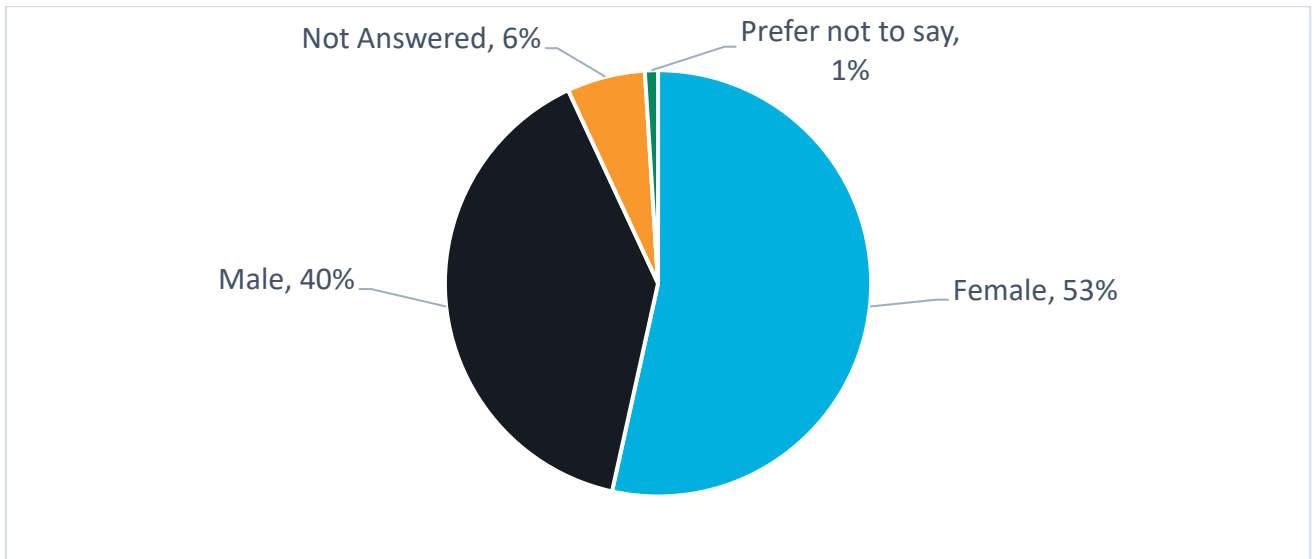
Figure 5: Age profile of survey respondents



Number of respondents = 99

28. Out of the 101 respondents to the survey, 94 identified as either male or female. 1 selected 'Prefer not to say' and the remaining did not answer this question. Overall, the survey had more female respondents than male respondents. This is shown below in **Figure 6**:

Figure 6: Gender profile of survey respondents



Number of respondents = 95

Appendix A: Engagement Leaflet

We are improving Downham Road

As part of our work to encourage more people to walk and cycle locally, we have developed some proposed options to improve Downham Road. These ideas are at an early stage, so we are inviting residents to attend a drop-in event on 16 or 23 November 2022 to discuss them and have your say.

Officers will be at the venue below from 3-7pm on both days to discuss options with residents to make the road safer and improve the public realm. No registration is required. During these events we will gather feedback to improve the proposals to consult on early next year.

Wednesday, 16 and 23 November 2022

Rose Lipman Hall, 43 De Beauvoir Road, London N1 5SQ

