



Social Impact Assessment of the Cambridge Road Estate

July 2025



About this report

This report summarises research carried out in 2025 into the impact of the regeneration of the Cambridge Road Estate. The research was commissioned by the joint venture between Royal Borough Kingston upon Thames and Countryside properties (part of Vistry Group). The aim was to establish a benchmark understanding of how residents from different tenures, backgrounds and areas within the estate have experienced the regeneration to help agencies and development partners improve their plans and services. It also acts as a baseline against which future change can be measured.

The report was written by Simeon Shtebunaev, Lavanya Karthik and Nicola Bacon.

The door-to-door survey was carried by Face Facts. Walking interviews were carried by Jessica Cargill-Thompson.

We want to thank the Community Board for their support and engagement in developing the survey questionnaire and sharing their views of the regeneration with us. We are grateful to the individuals and organisations who took time out of their busy days to support this research, take part in workshops or be interviewed in stakeholder interviews.

About Social Life

Social Life was created by the Young Foundation in 2012, to become a specialist centre of research and innovation about the social life of communities. All our work is about the relationship between people and the places they live and understanding how change, through regeneration, new development or small improvements to public spaces, affects the social fabric, opportunities and wellbeing of local areas. We work in the UK and internationally.

www.social-life.co

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Summary

About the project

In 2024, Social Life was asked by the Royal Borough Kingston upon Thames, and Countryside (part of the Vistry Group) to carry out a first social value assessment of the redevelopment of the Cambridge Road Estate, working closely with residents and organisations that are supporting them. The research explored the impact that the Cambridge Road regeneration programme has on residents living in the area, describing everyday life and the strengths and weaknesses of the local community. The report includes recommendations to the joint venture team to strengthen their future work on the estate.

The research has two key aims. We want to establish how residents are faring, understanding their perceptions of the estate and their daily life, their wellbeing, how they relate to their neighbours and different local communities, and their views and thoughts about the regeneration to date. And secondly, to develop a short set of recommendations to inform the next stage of the regeneration and the spending of the Social Value budget.

- **We worked with the Cambridge Road Estate Community Board** between July 2024 and February 2025 to devise and agree the questionnaire and research design.
- **We interviewed 167 residents (one per household) through a door-to-door survey.** This included residents from different backgrounds and parts of the estate. This sample represents 31% of all households (544) currently on the estate. We spoke to them about their daily lives and experiences of the regeneration process. The interviews took place in March 2025 and were carried out by survey company Face Facts.
- **We offered a version of the survey online,** 11 residents responded to this.
- **We carried out 10 in-depth walking interviews** with current residents or key stakeholders, to give us insights into residents' experiences. The participants were recruited through local organisations and groups.
- **We carried out 14 in-depth interviews with stakeholders** from agencies and the community between July 2024 and June 2025.
- **We carried out a built environment assessment.** The site survey assessed how the places, buildings and spaces in the area support wellbeing and community life.

Our aim was to build a detailed and comprehensive understanding of how residents from different tenures, backgrounds and areas within the estate have experienced the regeneration. This can help agencies and development partners improve their plans and service delivery. It will give residents knowledge and insight that can empower them in their conversations and discussions with agencies, and through this help boost residents' voice and power.

This first assessment of the social impacts of regeneration at Cambridge Road Estate provides a benchmark for measuring change and impact in the future. We recommend the next assessment to take place after the completion and occupation of Phase 1. This work will continue to feed into practical recommendations for the joint venture partners and for other agencies working in the area. We recommend the Joint Venture reports back annually to residents on how their feedback has influenced delivery.

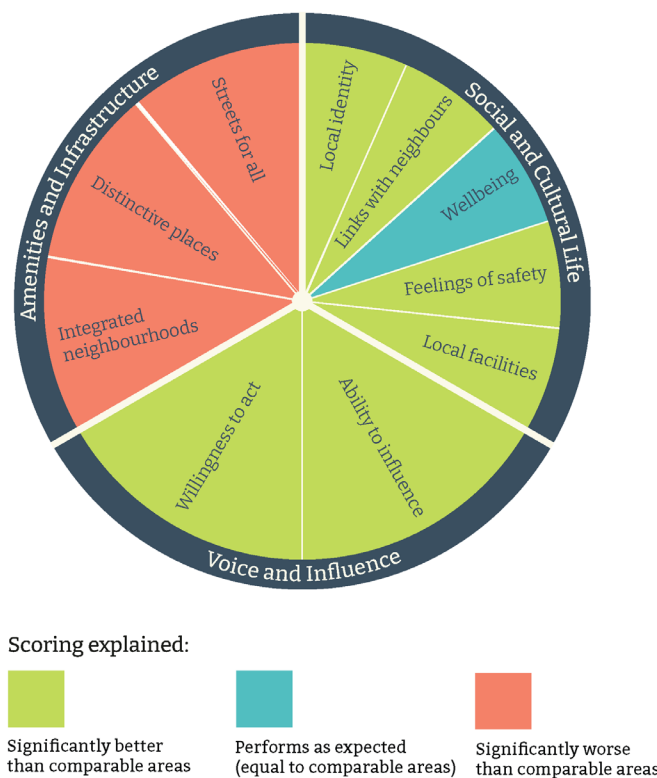


Key findings

Section 1: Key findings

1 The social sustainability assessment

Cambridge Road Estate 2025



The social sustainability assessment identifies the strengths and weaknesses of key dimensions of social and community life. It is structured around three dimensions:

- **Social and cultural life:** In 2025 Cambridge Road Estate is assessed to have strengths in four of the five indicators within this dimension. Residents' perceptions of local identity, links with neighbours, feelings of safety and perceptions of local facilities are all stronger than would be expected. Residents' perceptions are as expected on wellbeing.
- **Voice and influence:** There are strengths in both indicators: residents' perceptions of willingness to act and ability to influence.
- **Amenities and social infrastructure:** There are weaknesses in all three indicators: integrated neighbourhoods, distinctive places and streets for all.

Residents report that this is a place where neighbourly support and a sense of social solidarity have grown from the shared experience of living in the area. However, our research shows that some groups are experiencing more challenges to wellbeing than others. People living in temporary tenancies fare less well in their awareness of the regeneration, feelings of safety, ability to access facilities, quality of life, feeling welcomed and satisfaction with childcare provisions.

12 Views of the regeneration

- 53% of residents interviewed have a generally positive opinion of the regeneration, expressing enthusiasm for improvement in the quality of homes.
- The majority of residents want the regeneration to lead to improvement of their living and housing conditions, better cleanliness, increased safety and better access to services and amenities.
- Residents are concerned that the sense of community is at risk of being eroded and want better places and facilities to socialise.
- The majority of residents (53%) know little or nothing about the regeneration. This sentiment was corroborated by stakeholders and walking interviewees. Private and temporary tenants are least likely to be knowledgeable about the regeneration plans.
- Residents overwhelmingly agree (80%) that feeling that they can influence decisions about the Cambridge Road regeneration project is important to them.
- Residents' quality of life in Cambridge Road is improved by access to local services and good transport connections, access to shops and supermarkets, as well as a strong sense of community. They are negatively impacted by a lack of maintenance and safety measures.
- Stakeholders are concerned about the strain on resources and services when new homes are occupied, as well as potential tensions between existing and new communities.

13 Social and cultural life

- There are very strong feelings of neighbourliness on the estate. These are higher than what would be expected in comparable areas. 97% of respondents indicated that the estate is a place people from different backgrounds get on well together, while 84% think of themselves as similar to the people who live in the neighbourhood.
- Residents want to remain on the estate, with 76% expressing a desire to do so, across tenures. Feelings of belonging are strong: 82% feel they belong to the neighbourhood, and 93% report that the area is important for their sense of who they are.
- While 85% of residents report feeling safe walking at night, which is higher than in comparable areas, there is a significant minority, especially amongst temporary residents, who reported concerns about specific areas and anti-social behaviours which impact their sense of safety. A quarter of all respondents express fear of crime on the estate.
- Residents report generally good health, and 91% are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. Similarly, 81% of respondents are satisfied with their life overall. Both are higher than for comparable areas.
- Residents are generally satisfied with facilities in the local area. Satisfaction with health, retail, leisure and places to socialise is higher than in comparable areas.
- Housing quality satisfaction is low at 47%: this is significantly worse than comparable areas.
- People interviewed who live with children indicate they are broadly (73%) satisfied with childcare provision in the area.

- Almost half of those interviewed - 44% - indicate that their children do not have an outdoor space or facilities where they can play safely. This is a concern.
- The quality of facilities for children and young people across ages is broadly satisfactory, although there is dissatisfaction with facilities serving 5 to 11-year-olds (23%) and 16-18-year-olds (17%).
- Most respondents indicate that the facilities cater to “people like them”: 92% indicate that shops, restaurants, bars and pubs locally cater to people like them. Private tenants are most likely to feel this way, whereas temporary tenants are least likely to, particularly when thinking about sport and exercise facilities.
- People with temporary tenancies report a different experience of the estate to people living in other tenures, consistently indicating higher levels of dissatisfaction with their quality of life, with the area, with childcare provision and feeling welcomed.

14 Voice and influence

- 75% of people interviewed agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, which is higher than in comparable areas. Private tenants are least likely to agree with this (34%).
- The majority - 82% - report that it is important for them to feel that they can influence decisions in the local area, higher than in comparable areas.
- People report a greater willingness to act compared to similar areas. 90% of those interviewed agree that people in the neighbourhood pull together to improve it; 71% indicate they would be willing to work together with others on something to improve their area.
- Only 10% of people interviewed have given any unpaid help or worked as a volunteer for any type of local, national or international organisation or charity.

15 Amenities and social infrastructure

- The estate’s urban realm and built environment are often of poor quality and not well maintained. Wayfinding across the estate is difficult, and there are a lot of uneven surfaces and poor definition between private and public spaces.
- There are numerous alleyways which are not maintained, contributing to concerns about safety. Construction is exacerbating this, blocking off some routes through the site.
- Better provision for active mobility across the estate area is needed, including better cycling (storage and on-street provision) and car park management. Disabled-friendly provisions need to be better signposted, and adaptations introduced.
- Waste management on the estate is impacting ground-level use, bin locations are often obstructing views or the flow of people and contribute to a negative perception.
- There is good social life at street level and the estate, as currently designed, is generally tenure blind. This is already changing as boarded up council flats are shifting perceptions.
- The estate benefits from mature planting in both public and private spaces. It is important to maintain this by designing nature holistically into future plans, to retain the character of the area.
- There is little social infrastructure provision on site, and what is there - benches, play facilities and outdoor gyms - varies in condition. There is no indoor provision on site; however, there is a lot of evidence of past provision, such as community rooms, sports infrastructure and social supermarkets. This contributes to a sense of dilapidation.

- There are no meanwhile uses on site or creative use of hoardings or other temporary interventions. There are many open spaces with unclear functions which have the potential to be better used.

16 Financial wellbeing

- Residents interviewed generally report that they are “doing alright”, however, a sizable minority (31%) are just about getting by and some are finding it quite difficult (5%).
- Private tenants and secure council tenants appear to be struggling the most, both with finances and housing costs. Temporary residents are more likely to be just about getting by.
- People interviewed report that their financial situation has largely stayed the same in the last three years, with a small minority across all tenures (8%) reporting it has worsened.
- Temporary residents are most likely to use foodbanks, with 6% reporting they use a foodbank about once or twice a month.

17 Recommendations

A clear set of recommendations emerges for the joint venture partners:

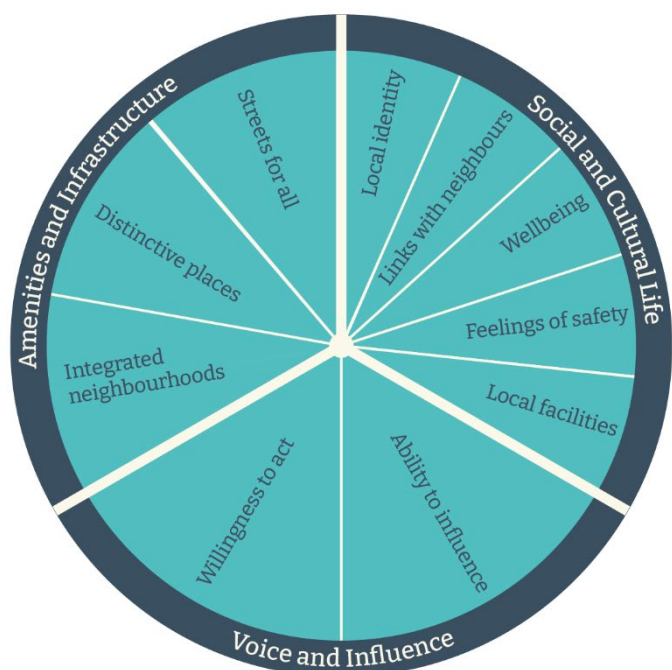
- **Improve communications with diverse groups** of residents about the regeneration, especially private and temporary residents and **establish a clear mechanism for engaging** new arrivals with the existing and wider community. Involve a broader spectrum of residents in the decision-making process to prevent erosion of trust and future tensions. Simplify communication channels, reduce duplication, and use multiple methods of communication.
- **Recognise and celebrate the existing strong community** and oral histories of the estate by introducing estate-wide events and diversifying **activities on the estate to cater for different groups**, especially young and elderly people. Create activities that specifically cater for temporary tenants and that address issues of affordability and access.
- **Encourage the creation of more formal and informal social infrastructure on the estate and meanwhile use** - this includes hard infrastructure (creation of indoor community spaces, improvement of public outdoor spaces, improve quality of spaces for young children and teenagers), and soft infrastructure (understanding community social networks, supporting existing and informal interest groups).
- **Develop and deliver an urban realm and ground plane improvements plan** to improve wayfinding, tackle maintenance, improve lighting and safety provisions and promote an inclusive and accessible environment. The plan could address cycling lane provision, micro-mobility and accessibility, better waste management, and re-activate ground planes. This is particularly important for phases currently undergoing active construction and for later phases of the regeneration.
- **Improve housing quality across the estate**, especially in later phases of the regeneration. Improve repairs and maintenance.
- **Increase opportunities for volunteering on site and proactively promote those** by encouraging and supporting the creation of diverse groups for litter picking, food sharing, gardening, etc. Create opportunities for improving informal and formal skills and support exchange on the estate.

Progress against these recommendations will be assessed through the next round of social impact research recommended to take place after the completion and occupation of Phase 1 of the Cambridge Road Estate development.

Section 2: About the assessment

This benchmark assessment uses the concept of social sustainability as a way to bring together and measure a wide range of factors that are proven to influence local quality of life and the strength of a community now and in the future. It is intended to provide the starting point for future comparison throughout the course of the regeneration.

The research draws on previous work, by Social Life and Professor Tim Dixon in 2012, to devise and test a social sustainability measurement framework for The Berkeley Group.¹ The Berkeley Group framework organises these factors into three dimensions: Social and Cultural Life; Voice and Influence, and Amenities and Social Infrastructure. Thirteen indicators are used to assess social sustainability within this framework. The Amenities and Infrastructure dimensions were updated in 2025 following a revision of the built environment methodology.



The social sustainability framework

2.1 The Cambridge Road Estate

The regeneration of the Cambridge Road Estate in Kingston started in 2020 after a successful ballot². The demolition and rebuilding of the estate is anticipated to take between 12 and 15 years, over five phases. The project will create 2,170 new homes, including 941 affordable homes, of which 871 will be council tenancies. This will increase density significantly. Phase 1 will complete in 2025 with residents moving in shortly afterwards. At the time of our research, no new residents had moved in. The project is being carried out by a joint venture between Countryside (part of Vistry) and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. Kingston will manage the social housing and shared ownership once they are built.

¹ <https://www.social-life.co/publication/creating-strong-communities/>

² <https://www.cambridgeroadestate.com/regeneration/about>

The history of the estate

Owned and managed by Kingston Council, the Cambridge Road Estate was built during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and includes a mix of low-rise, high-rise apartments and houses. A distinctive tower and slab block typology was employed with large podiums and open spaces between blocks. The construction of the estate replaces existing street patterns and low-rise housing in this part of Kingston.



The Cambridge Road Estate in 1960s/70s shortly after construction. Credit: Paul Spickett³

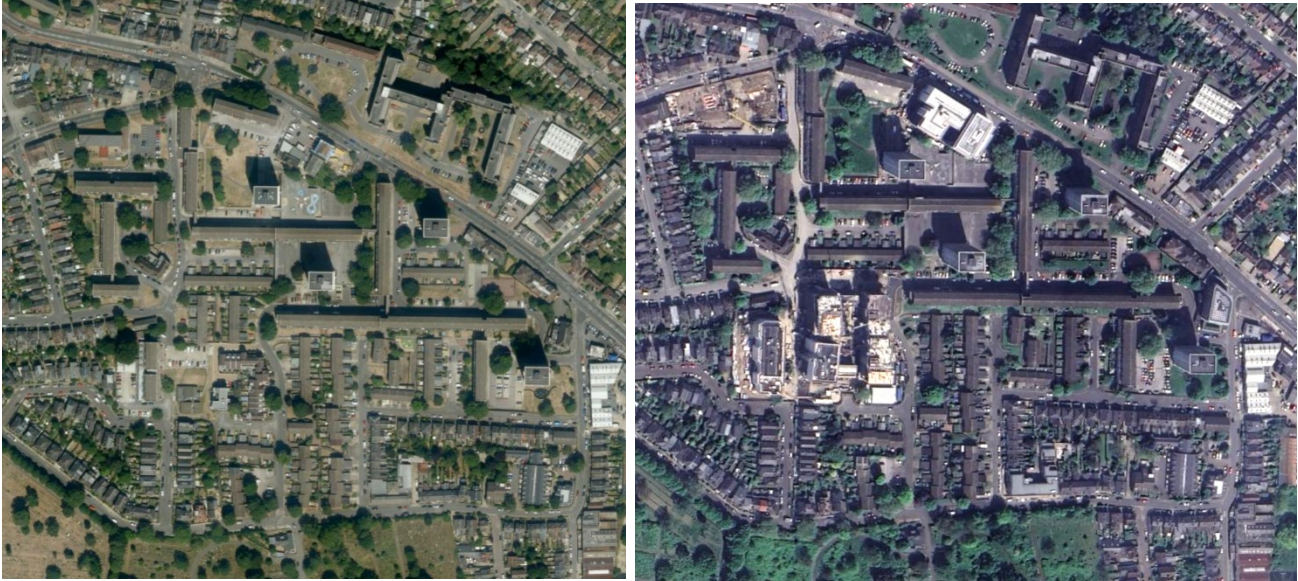


Cambridge Road in 1988, Credit: Miles Glendinning, Wikimedia Commons⁴

³ <https://www.surreycomet.co.uk/news/13892720.photographs-detail-the-birth-of-kingston-estates-due-for-massive-regeneration-overhaul/>

⁴ Image in Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius "Tower Block: Modern Public Housing in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland" (1994) Yale University

Since the early 2010s student and residential developments have been built to the east and north of the estate, alongside Cambridge Road and Hampden Road.



Cambridge Road in 2013 (left) and 2024 (right) Credit: Google Earth

In 2020⁵ the community voted to support the regeneration plans put forward by the council. There was an 86% turnout and 73% 'yes' vote to regenerate the entire estate. Planning permission was granted in 2022, with the first phase of the build starting in 2022.



Cambridge Road in 2025, image taken from the south of the estate looking north

⁵ <https://newmanfrancis.org/cambridge-road-estate/>

The first of five phases of the masterplan facing Cambridge Road will reinstate the original green space and build future community facilities, including the new community centre.

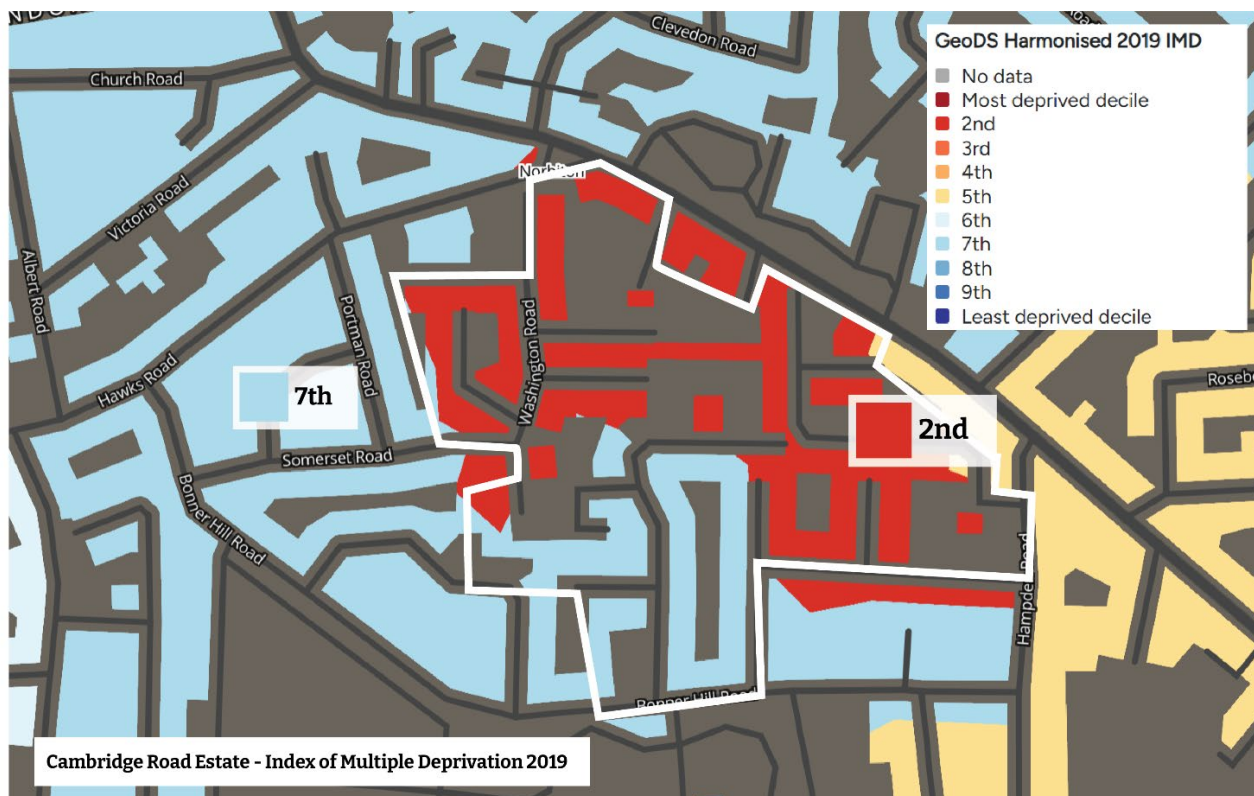


Proposed masterplan Cambridge Road Estate

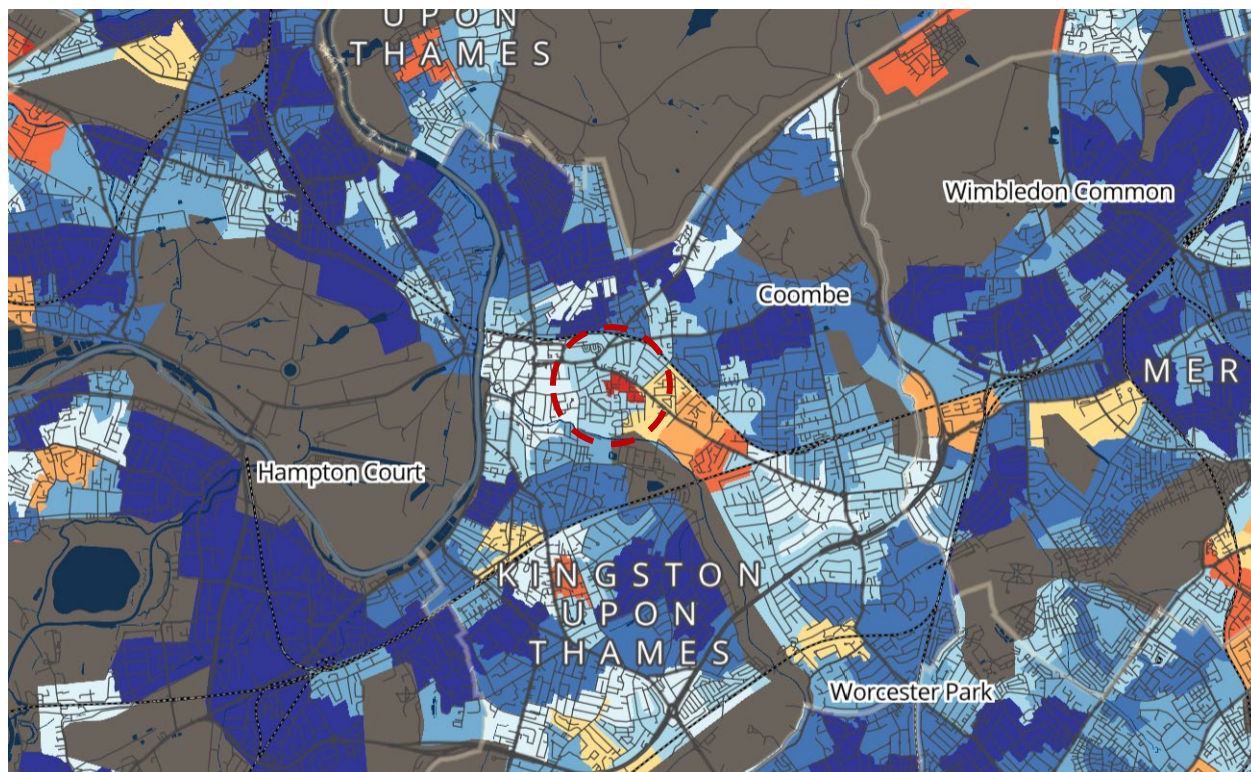
Socio-demographic profile

Cambridge Road Estate is one of the most deprived hyper-local areas, located in one of the least deprived local authorities in England. The statistical area - or Lower Level Super Output Area (LSOA) that includes the majority of the Cambridge Road Estate - Kingston upon Thames 005B - is the most deprived area within Kingston. The LSOA is in the 20% of most deprived areas in England, ranking 4000 out of 32,844 LSOAs in England, where 1 is the most deprived. The south of the estate is less deprived than the north, falling into the 7th decile of IMD levels of deprivation. It also differs in design, and low-rise family houses are the predominant typology

Kingston ranks 270 out of 317 Local Authorities in 2015 and 2019 on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD); parts of neighbouring boroughs Richmond and Merton include some of the most affluent areas in the UK.



Index of multiple deprivation score 2019. Source: GeoDS and MHCLG⁶



⁶ https://dclapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html#

The Cambridge Road LSOA (circled) in 2nd decile IMD contrasted to surrounding areas - Source; GeoDS⁷

There is a diverse mix of people living on the estate. Out of 568 adult residents (all tenures), 199 do not have English as a first language. 9% require a translator. Over 50 different first languages were recorded. The top 10 languages spoken after English were:

1. Tamil
2. Urdu
3. Punjabi
4. Arabic/Portuguese
5. Farsi
6. Polish
7. Somali
8. Albanian
9. Pashto/Russian
10. Bengali

Information was provided by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, based on a household survey conducted on the estate in 2024.

1.2 The assessment method

Cambridge Road Estate assessment

The objective of the assessment was to create a baseline to understand the social impact of the Cambridge Road regeneration programme over time.

Approach

- A door-to-door survey, which was conducted in early 2025 by independent research organisation Face Facts. Respondents received an incentive of £5 per household.
- An online survey replicated the same questions as the door-to-door survey. Responses were encouraged through a newsletter, flyers, and by texting residents through the housing providers; there was a £5 per household incentive for completing the survey.
- Social Life researchers carried out in-depth stakeholders interviews in person and online with local organisations and individuals. People we spoke to included local councillors, church leaders, volunteers of local wellbeing groups, and resident groups.
- Social Life researchers also carried out walking interviews with current residents of the estate. Participants received an incentive of a £20 supermarket voucher.

⁷ <https://mapmaker.geods.ac.uk/#/index-of-multiple-deprivation>

Limitations

The estate is home to 544 households. We interviewed 167 door-to-door. This is 31% of the total households. The small sample, however, makes it difficult to isolate the impact on different groups, for example, by tenure or ethnicity. Although the overall numbers are robust for statistical analysis, subdividing by different categories means that responses are too low to be considered statistically meaningful, particularly for questions that were less well answered.

We used a structured approach to data gathering. The weakness is that this does not allow for the depth of insight which could be collected through more in-depth qualitative approaches. To mitigate this, we incorporated a number of walking ethnographies into our approach. Walking interviews are a strong method for understanding the complexities of everyday life: they give participants freedom to raise issues and opinions that they choose to prioritise and to choose their own walking route to show what they think is most important. (Walking interviews can be carried out in very small areas or from a static viewpoint, for people who are unable to or unwilling to take a walk as part of the process.)

Online survey data has only been included in some part of our analysis. Online surveys are less robust than face-to-face surveys as it is not possible to verify identities, it is difficult to eliminate multiple responses from the same person, and some people may complete questions with little thought in order to receive the incentive. We have used only the open-ended question responses to the online survey in our analysis.

Assessing the social impacts of regeneration at Cambridge Road Estate

Social Life have been asked by Kingston Council and Countryside Properties to carry out research to see how the changes to the Cambridge Road Estate are affecting residents.

Your voice matters! Please take part in our 15 minute survey

- Take part in person: researchers will be carrying out a door-to-door survey in March 2025.
- Take part online: scan the QR code below or use the link to tell us what it is like to live in the area.

<https://bit.ly/CRESocialLife>

All households on Cambridge Road Estate have been invited to take part in the survey.

Each household who takes part in the survey will be given a **£5 voucher**. Vouchers for the online survey will be limited to the first 50 who reply.

The poster features a photograph of the Cambridge Road Estate, a multi-story residential building with a red car parked in front. It includes a QR code and contact information for Social Life.

Please get in touch if you have any questions:

✉ hello@social-life.co ☎ 020 7703 9630

🔗 Explore our work: www.social-life.co



Example of publicity

Location of interviewees

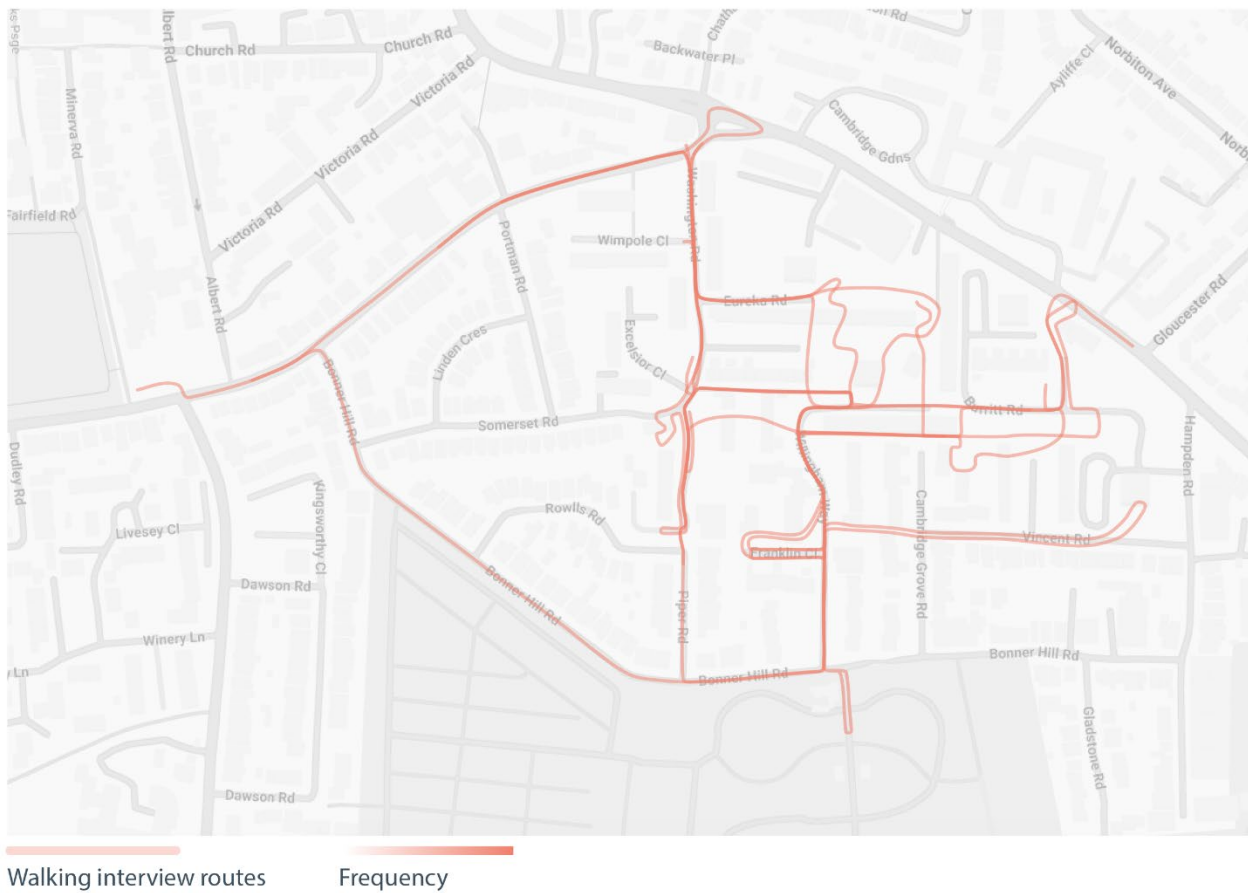


We spoke to people across all four phases of the Cambridge Road regeneration that were occupied at the time of the research. 41% were living in Phase 3 and 31% in Phase 4 with the remainder in Phases 2 and 5. Phase 1 was not yet completed.

Walking interviews

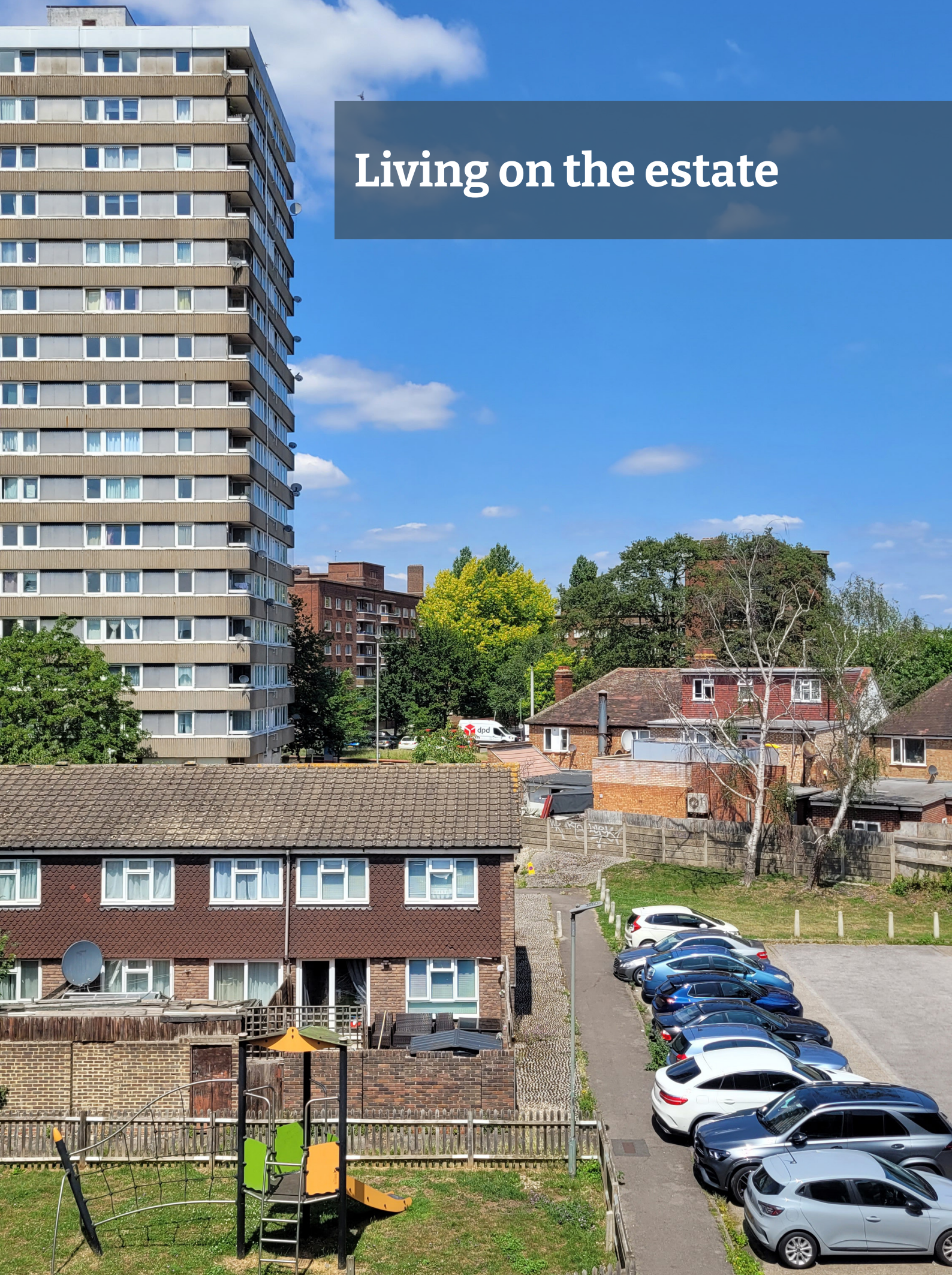
Ten walking interviews were carried out with residents of Cambridge Road Estate. We interviewed people from a range of backgrounds and life experiences, including long-term residents of over 30 years to some who have lived in the area for less than a decade. They live in a mix of tenures, ranging from homeowners, and council tenants, to people in temporary accommodation.

The interviews were resident-led. People chose their own walking routes through the estate, sharing the spaces that were important to them. They discussed their thoughts on key topics, including voice and influence, perception of the regeneration, access to amenities, and social infrastructure.



Walking interviews: thicker lines indicate routes that more people interviewed chose to take

Living on the estate



Section 3: Who lives on Cambridge Road Estate

3.1 Who did we speak to?

We spoke to 167 people at in-person interviews and 11 people submitted responses online.

We captured a mix of people, broadly representing the current ethnic groups of households living on the estate, as reported in the 2021 census data - however, it should be noted that the statistical area captures households on the borders and outside of the estate as well as estate residents, which may skew the data slightly. We spoke to a larger proportion of Black African and other white residents than reported in the census. We potentially did not reach all ethnic groups on the estate, which might be partly due to language barriers.

The people who were interviewed were:

- **Predominantly of working age.** We spoke to more older respondents - 18% overall were over 65 compared to 9% in the census and a lower percentage of younger people between 16 and 24 years old.
- **Mainly in paid employment** (full or part-time). 16% were retired. 13% were looking after home or family and 11% were long-term sick. There were few full-time students. Temporary and secure council tenants are more likely to care for home or family, long-term sick or unemployed.
- **Likely to be working in the wider area** (57%) with 36% working locally in the borough. Only 5% work from home or on a hybrid basis. This is lower than in other comparable London estates where Social Life has worked post-pandemic.
- **Likely to be living in two-person households** (30%), however, there was a small minority living in larger households. The majority of respondents did not have any children under the age of 18 (63%), 10% had three or more children.
- **Likely to have lived on the estate for more than 10 years** (53%), with another 22% living on the estate between 5 and 10 years. Some individuals had lived on the estate for more than 50 years.
- **Likely to have access to mobile internet or home wi-fi connection.** However, over one in ten rely as well on public access points, school or work. Of those who do not use the internet at all (6 respondents in total), the reasons given included that they do not have access to the internet at home, they do not want to use the internet, there is no free internet access near them, or they have a physical disability.

16% of households interviewed include a person with a disability. Secure council tenants are more likely than temporary tenants to report that someone in their household has a disability. No private tenants interviewed reported that someone in their household has a disability.

30% of all respondents reported that a member of their household requires care or support. No private tenants indicated this, however, 40% of people with temporary tenancies report that someone in their household needs care or support.

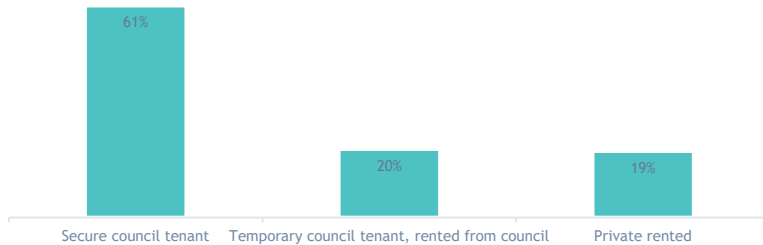
Number of people interviewed

178
TOTAL

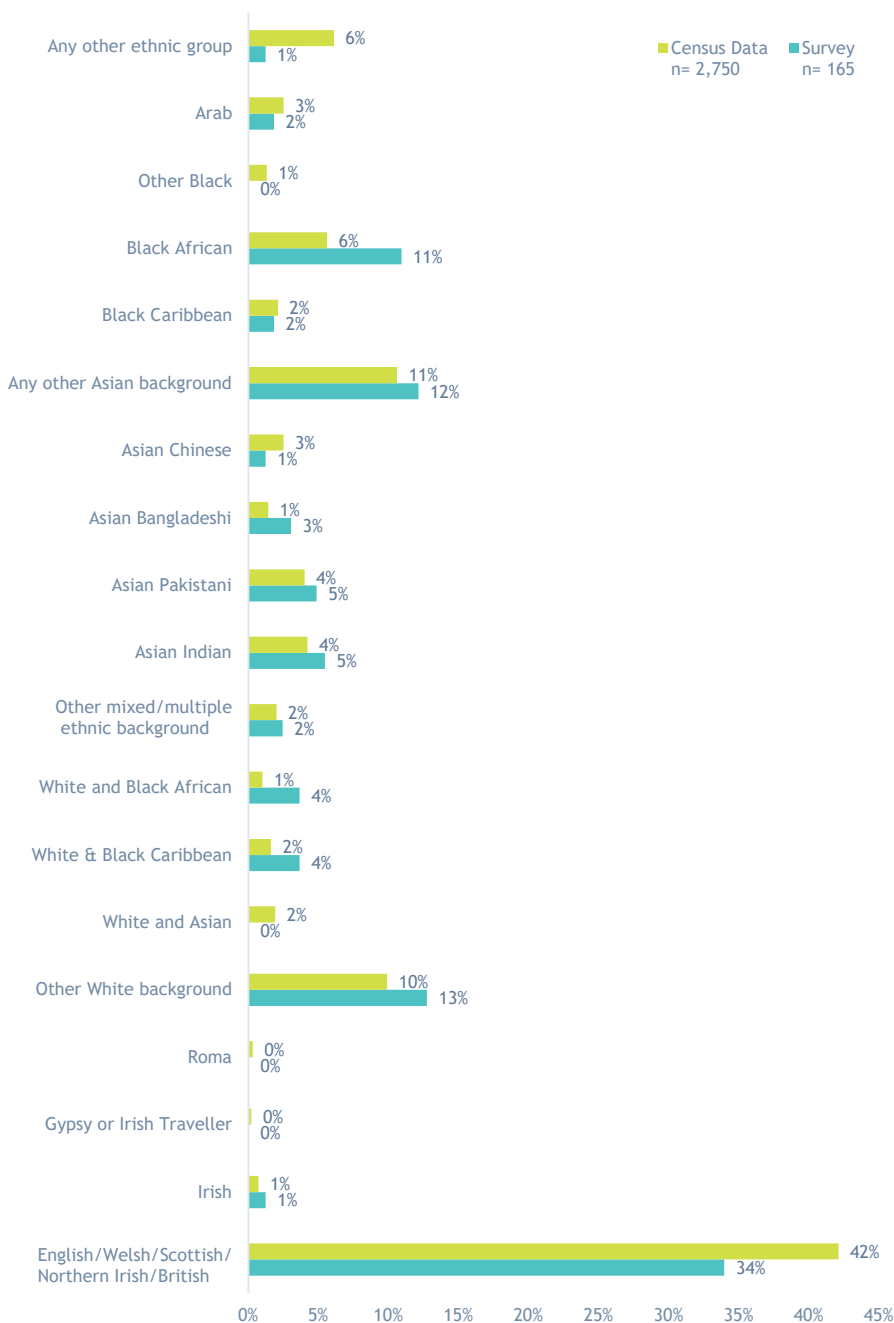
167 door to door*
11 online surveys

**demographic data breakdown based
only on door to door*

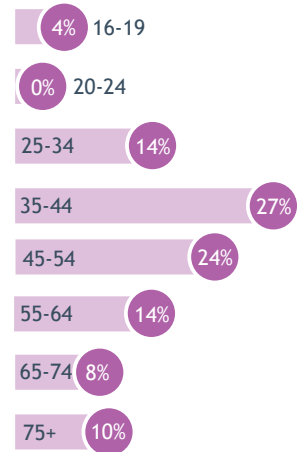
Tenure



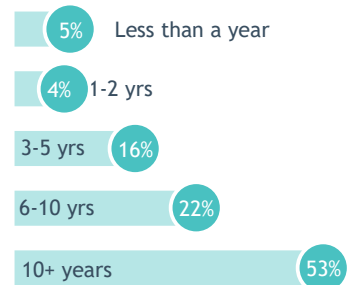
Ethnicity



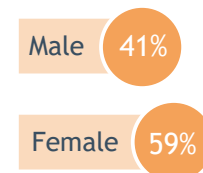
Age



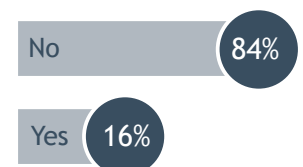
Length of time living in Cambridge Road



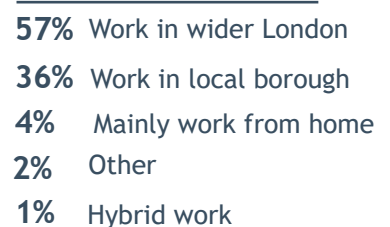
Gender



Disability



Location of employment



The Cambridge Road Estate

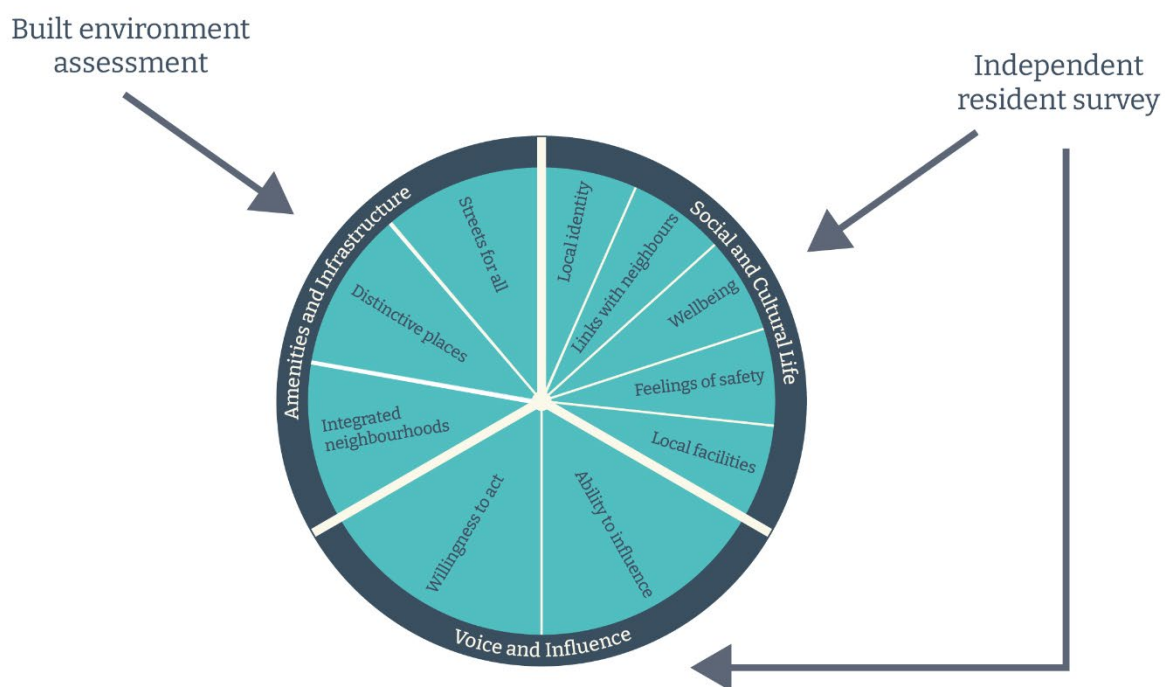


Section 4: How does Cambridge Road compare to other places?

This section describes how the views of residents who took part in the survey compared to people living in similar neighbourhoods, looking at the three dimensions of the social sustainability framework: Social and Cultural Life, Voice and Influence and Amenities and Social Infrastructure.

The framework used was first developed in 2012, drawing on Social Life's social sustainability framework⁸. The approach measures wellbeing and the strength of local communities in local areas.⁹ The Amenities and Infrastructure dimension is based on the updated built environment assessment aligned with the Homes England Building for a Healthy Life 2020 assessment.

The assessment has two elements: first, comparing the results from the survey of households on the Cambridge Road Estate against the results of national surveys that ask the same questions; and secondly, assessing the results of the independent site survey using an adapted version of the Homes England Building for a Healthy Life methodology¹⁰. More about this approach is included in the appendix.



The Social Sustainability framework, methods of assessment

⁸ Design for Social Sustainability, 2012 <https://www.social-life.co/publication/Social-Sustainability/>

⁹ Bacon, N. et al (2012) Creating strong communities: how to measure the social sustainability of new housing developments. London: The Berkeley Group

¹⁰ <https://www.designforhomes.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/BFL-2020-Brochure.pdf>

4.1 Comparable area benchmarks

Working with the Community Board, we selected a set of benchmarkable questions which were included in the household survey. Central to our method is the comparison of survey results to data from two large-scale national surveys: Understanding Society, the UK's largest, longitudinal household panel survey, supported by research councils and government, with 40,000 participating households,¹¹ and Community Life, an annual government survey based on approximately 6,000 face-to-face interviews.¹² National survey data have been matched to responses from the residents survey using the Office for National Statistics Output Area Classifications¹³ (OACs) to identify the responses for areas that share the same OAC profile.

Results of the household survey have been subject to statistical testing. Responses that are significantly more positive than the benchmark are reported in green. Responses that are significantly less positive than the benchmark are reported in red. Responses that are the same as the average, or that show statistically insignificant change, are reported in yellow.

The local facilities indicator is not benchmarked against national survey results because there is no appropriate data for comparison. Instead, it is compared to the results of Social Life's other assessments and to change over time.

4.2 Built environment survey assessments

The results of the site survey use the Building for a Healthy Life scoring method. Each of the questions is given a value of 1, 0.5 or 0:

- 1 = there is sufficient evidence that the design meets the criteria
- 0.5 = a specific part of the design meets the criteria, but others do not
- 0 = there is not enough evidence that the design meets the criteria, or the evidence shows that the design does not meet the criteria.

The scores for each question within an indicator are combined to provide an overall indicator score.

¹¹ www.understandingsociety.ac.uk

¹² www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-life-survey

¹³ for more information on area classifications see <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/geographicalproducts/areaclassifications/2011areaclassifications/abouttheareaclassifications>

4.3. Baseline benchmark

Cambridge Road Estate 2025



Scoring explained:



Significantly better
than comparable areas



Performs as expected
(equal to comparable areas)



Significantly worse
than comparable areas

CRE Social sustainability score in 2025

Social and cultural life

In 2025, Cambridge Road Estate performs significantly better than comparable areas across four indicators: local identity, links with neighbourhoods, feelings of safety and local facilities. The estate performs as expected on the dimension of wellbeing.

This reflects the strong feelings of community and neighbourliness that exist on the estate. People have strong associations with their neighbours, feelings of belonging, and perceptions of safety. Wellbeing indicators are lower, reflecting residents' dissatisfaction with housing quality, use of food banks, and financial and physical health.

Voice and influence

In 2025, Cambridge Road Estate performs significantly better than comparable areas on both wellbeing indicators, willingness to act, and ability to influence.

Amenities and social infrastructure

The Cambridge Road Estate in 2025 performs significantly worse across all three indicators - integrated neighbourhoods, distinctive places and streets for all.

Under “integrated neighbourhoods”, the estate performs poorly because of the lack of natural connections, the state of walking and cycling infrastructure, the provision of social infrastructure, and ability to adapt. The estate performs poorly for “distinctive places” because of the lack of easy wayfinding, well-defined streets and spaces, and memorable character. Finally, under “streets for all”, the estate performs poorly because of inadequate cycle and car parking, the condition of green and blue infrastructure, the lack of definition of back of pavement and front of home, and lack of meanwhile uses.

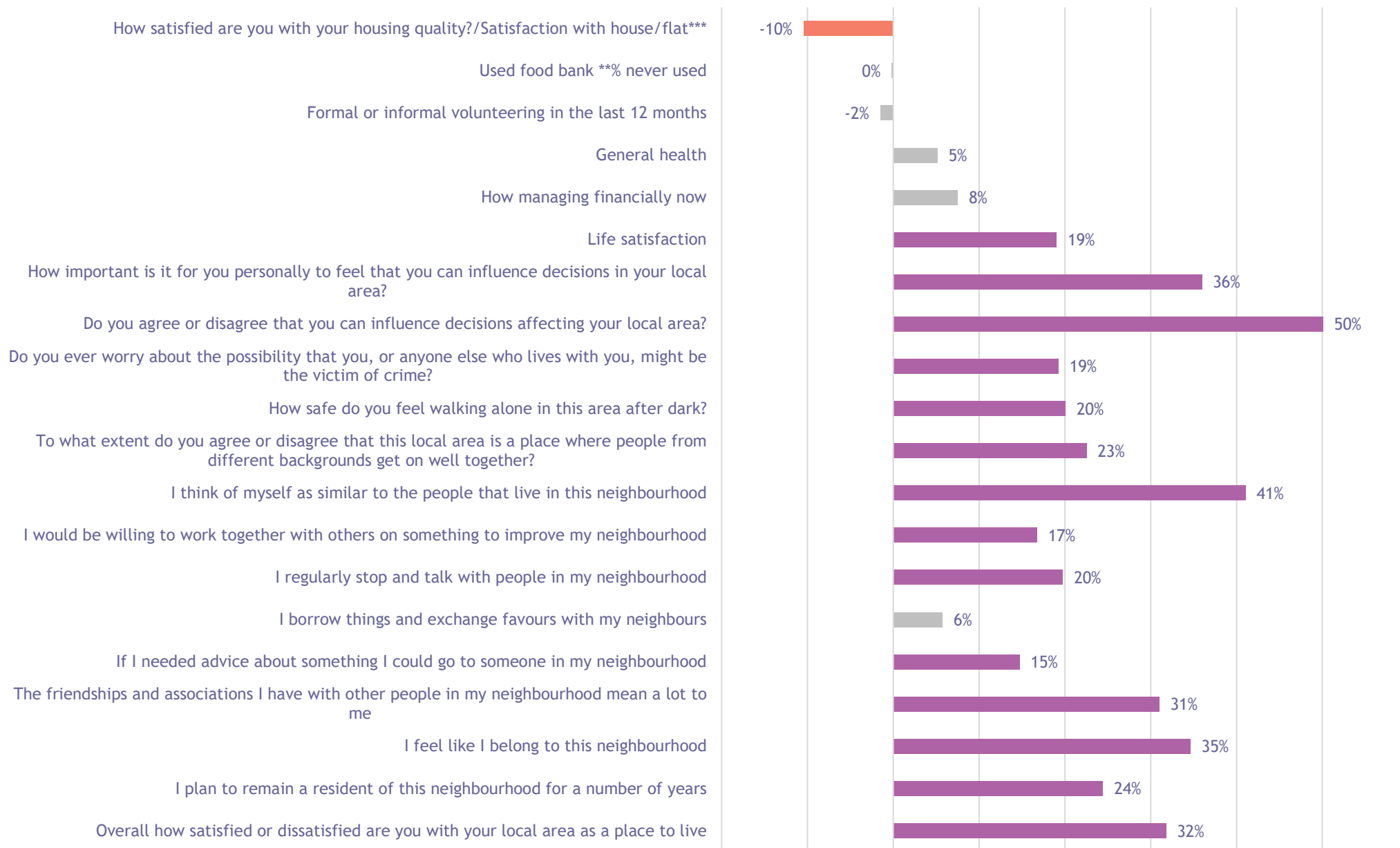
How does the estate compare to areas with similar characteristics?

Residents’ perceptions of life on the Cambridge Road Estate are **stronger** than would be expected on community relationships, neighbourliness, belonging and social integration, safety, voice and influence, and social infrastructure.

Residents’ perceptions of life on the Cambridge Road Estate are **weaker** than would be expected on housing quality.



Cambridge Road Estate



Key questions compared to comparable areas (n=167), grey indicates a result that is not statistically significant



Perceptions of the regeneration

Section 5: Feelings about the regeneration

This section describes how people in Cambridge Road Estate feel about the regeneration programme. People were asked what they know about the scheme and how satisfied they are with it to date.

This section is based on the results of the residents survey. For many questions, data compares the responses of people living on Cambridge Road Estate to national data. Several open-ended questions were also asked about how residents feel about the regeneration plans. Relevant findings from the contextual interviews are also included.

This section includes:

- What do people know, and how much influence do they have?
- How do people feel about the regeneration plans?
- What is contributing to the quality of life, and what do residents want to see?

Key findings

- 53% of residents interviewed who responded have a generally positive opinion of the regeneration, expressing enthusiasm for improvement in the quality of homes.
- The majority of residents want to see the regeneration lead to improvement of their living and housing conditions, better cleanliness, increased safety and better access to services and amenities.
- Residents are concerned that the sense of community is at risk of being eroded and want better places and facilities to socialise.
- A majority of residents (53%) know little or nothing about the regeneration. This sentiment was corroborated by stakeholders and walking interviewees. Private and temporary tenants are least likely to report that they know about the regeneration.
- Residents agree (80%) that feeling that they can influence decisions about the Cambridge Road regeneration project is important to them.
- Residents' quality of life in Cambridge Road is improved by access to local services and good transport connections, access to shops and supermarkets, as well as a strong sense of community. They are negatively impacted by a lack of maintenance and safety measures.
- Stakeholders are concerned about the strain on resources and services when new homes are occupied, as well as potential future tensions between existing and new communities.

5.1 How do people feel about the regeneration plans?

Questions

- From what you know about the regeneration plans, what do you think about them?
- What top three aspects of the regeneration project are most important to you?

Out of all interviewees, 62% of residents voiced an opinion on the regeneration plans, with 23% expressing nuanced, more neutral, views. A significant minority (26%) provided no answer.

The majority (85%) of those who expressed an opinion on the regeneration plans were generally positive about the regeneration, most citing it as a good idea, looking forward to the new homes and stating the project is good for the community.

“I want them to complete this quickly hopefully will be better for residents.” – Resident

“It’s good but not suitable for people like me because no transportation, no shops and no friends around there.” – Resident

“It’s very good step council should develop more housing.” - Resident

A minority (11%), expressed negative feelings about the effect on the residents and the area. Some have noted the slow progress of the phases or perceived that the delivery had not been as promised.

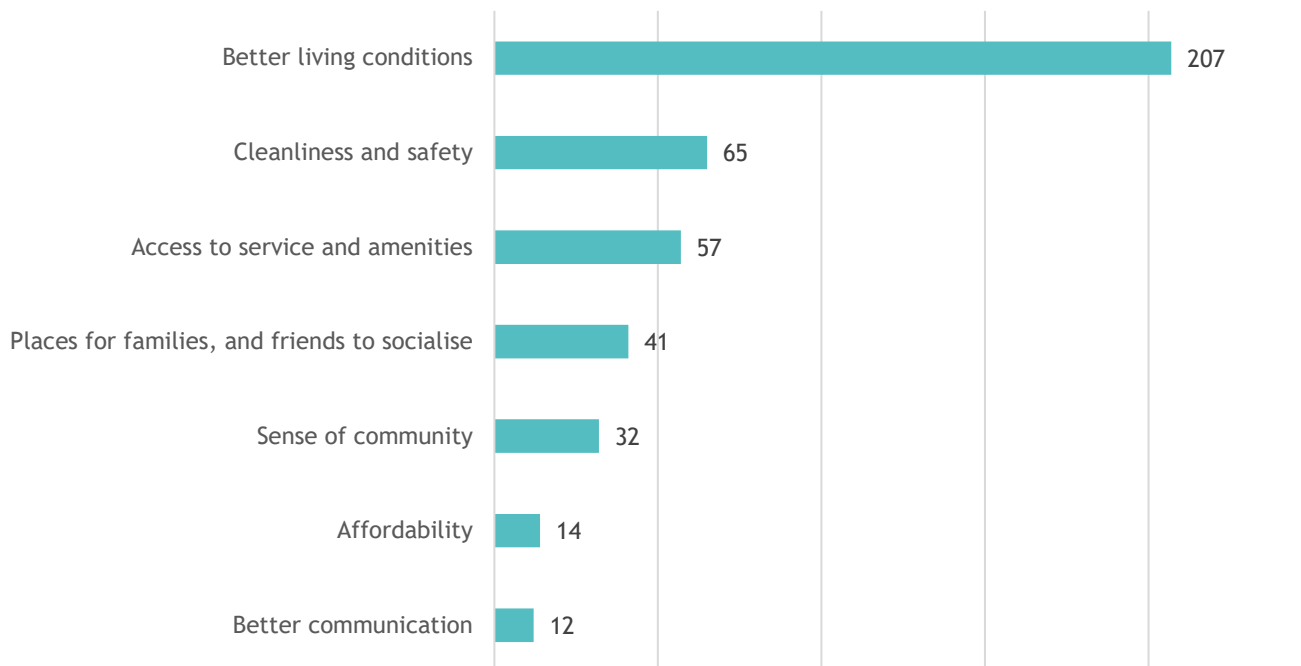
“It’s long way to go . We are in Phase 5. We are helpless because of overcrowding crowding in our house. We are two adults and two kids. We need immediate action. But it is not short-term process. It is long-term process.” - Resident

“Before I agreed but now I disagree with them because they betrayed us. They promised us a new building large space of the same size of our former home but the new is very small spaced and uncomfortable.” – Resident

23% of residents interviewed expressed more nuanced opinions, often describing of the regeneration as being focused on the demolition of the existing estate, the phasing, a completion date of 2027, and notions of work starting soon. Some of the comments indicated that those residents might not be fully aware of the details of the regeneration.

“Old estate being knockdown and take us to another place.” – Resident

“Neighbours told me it’s going to be demolished.” – Resident



Top aspects residents find important as part of the regeneration (n=495). Coded question, number of responses reported

Improvement of living conditions was the top aspect that residents wanted to see as a result of the regeneration. This included better housing, modern living facilities, better accessibility across the estate, better and functional utilities, and a peaceful environment. Affordability of housing and utilities that work (no specific definition of utilities was given by interviewees) were mentioned numerous times.

Cleanliness and safety were the second priority, including residents' desire for more safety measures, addressing existing safety concerns and improving the upkeep of the area. Access to local services and amenities was the third priority, including local shops, access to GPs, schools, job opportunities and advice. Proximity to transport links was an important factor mentioned.

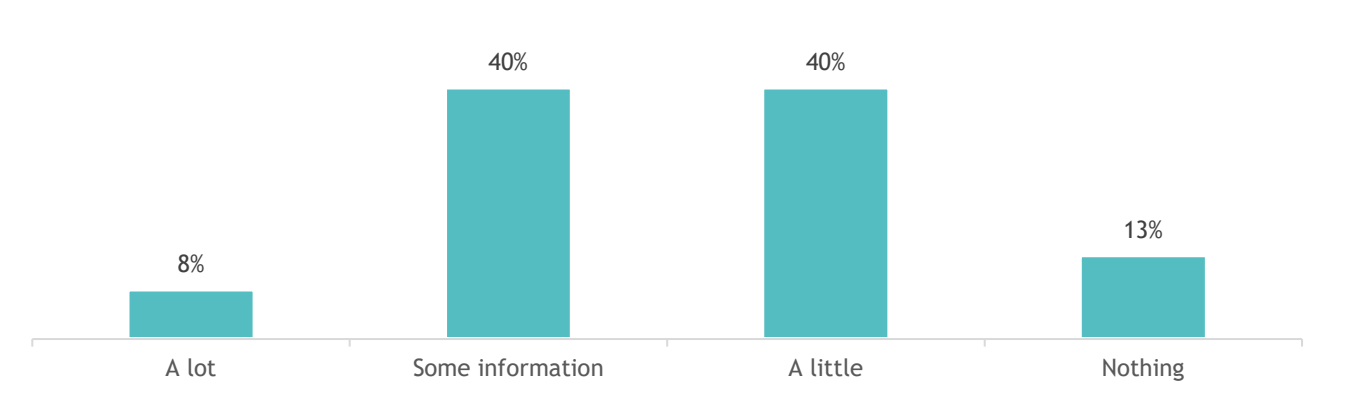
Residents also expressed a desire to have better places for families and friends to socialise, including maintaining and improving play areas for children, providing or re-providing open green spaces and improving the recreational spaces in the area such as the outdoor gyms. The sense of community was seen as suffering; some residents expressed a desire for more spaces for communities to meet. Affordability concerns in the area are largely centred around housing. The final thematic priority included better communication about the ongoing regeneration project, individual initiatives, allocations of homes and timescales.

5.2 Knowledge of the regeneration and sense of influence

Questions asked in the survey

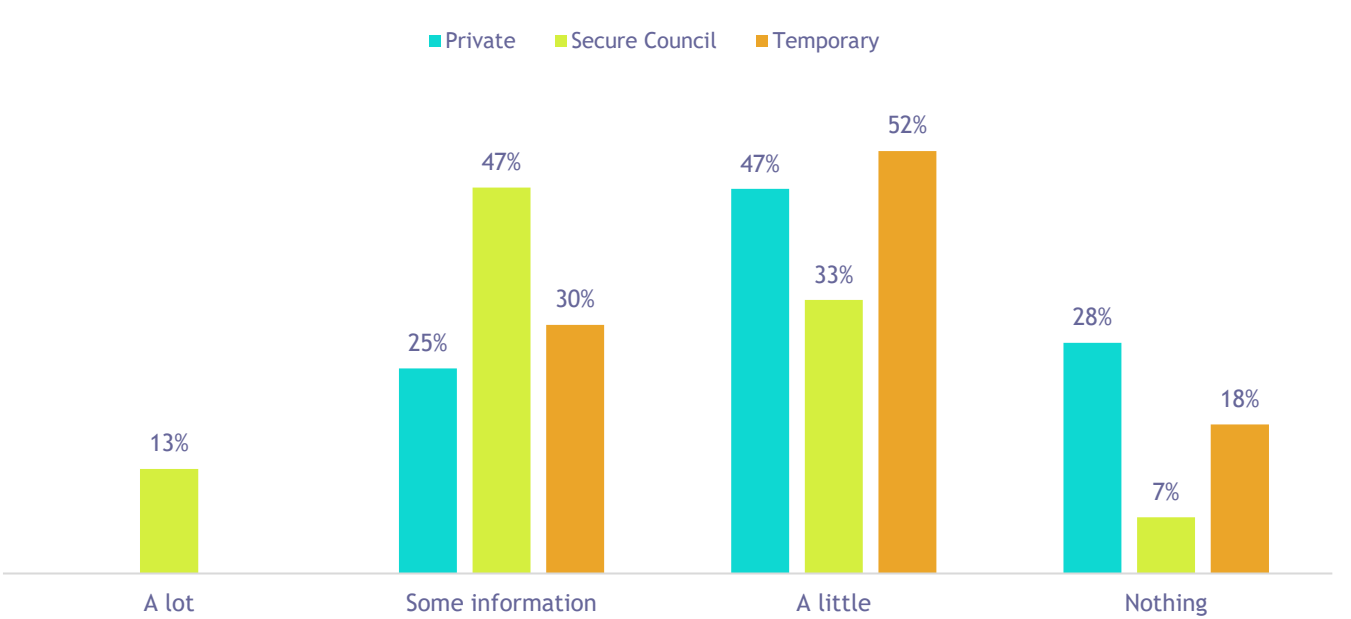
- How much do you know about plans of the Royal Borough of Kingston and Countryside to regenerate the Cambridge Road Estate?
- How important is it for you personally to feel that you can influence decisions about the Cambridge Road regeneration project?

The level of awareness about the Cambridge Road Estate regeneration varies. Around half of the residents interviewed know a lot or have some information (48%), around half know a little or nothing (53%). The majority of residents know a little or some information but do not know the details of the project.



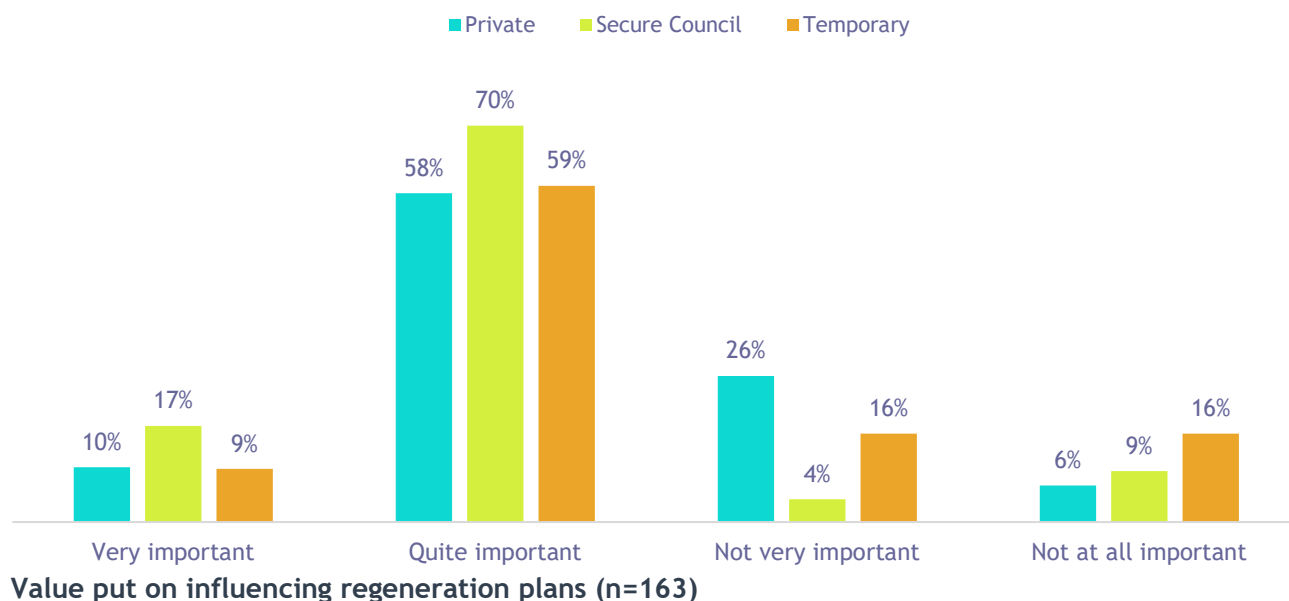
How much do you know about plans to regenerate the Cambridge Road Estate? N=167

When broken down by tenure, secure council tenants interviewed were more likely to know a lot about the regeneration; this group is generally better informed. Temporary council tenants and private tenants are more likely to be less aware.



Knowledge of regeneration plans (n=167)

80% of respondents indicate that influencing decisions about the regeneration is important to them, although only 14% indicated it is very important. 10% stated that this is not at all important to them. When broken down by tenure, there are no major differences; however, secure council tenants give this a slightly stronger feeling of importance than people with temporary tenancies or who are renting privately.

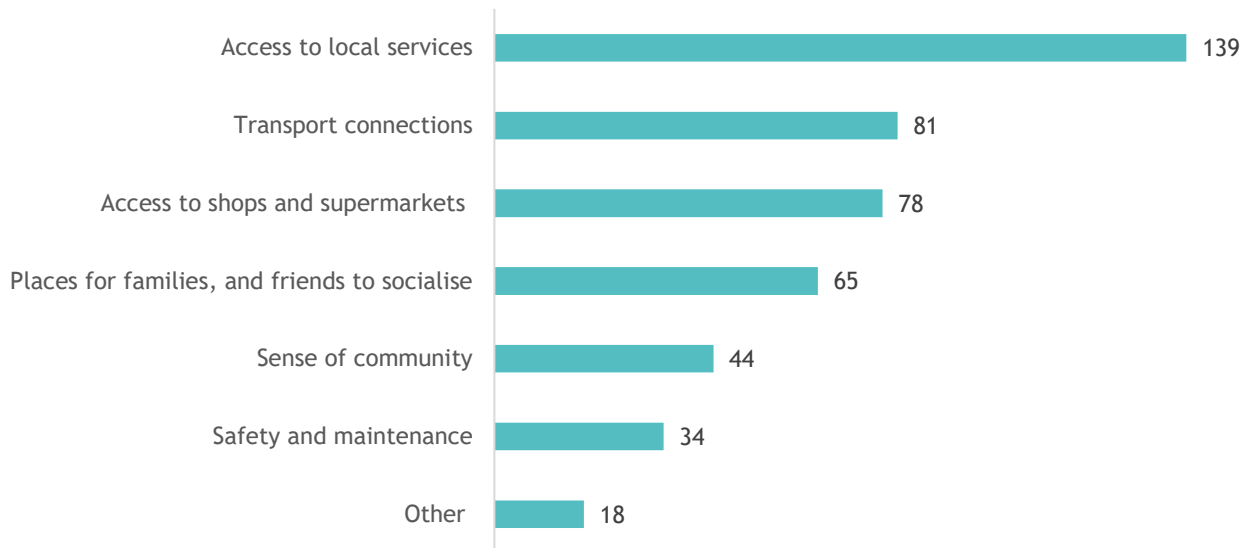


Evidence of community infrastructure and activities - recent past (left) and present (right), 2025

5.3 Factors contributing to quality of life

The most important factors contributing to quality of life for the residents interviewed are the location and easy access to local services, transport connections, and shops and supermarkets. Although there are few amenities on the estate, residents have easy access to a wide range of amenities and services in the wider area. Local services mentioned were medical, public, education, council, and advice. Residents value the proximity of the estate to Norbiton station and other good transport connections. Access to shopping facilities includes Kingston town centre and other local high streets, as well as supermarkets.

The strong community ties also contribute towards residents' quality of life, including access to open green spaces, children's facilities, relationships with neighbours and the sense of community. Conversely, poor safety and maintenance have a negative impact on some people, because of crime and drug issues, as well as a lack of cleanliness and noise from the regeneration.



What three factors contribute to quality of life (n=459) Coded question, number of responses

5.4 Stakeholders: views of regeneration

Stakeholders agreed that the regeneration will have a positive impact on the estate in the long term by providing the estate with amenities such as community space, green space and new landscaping. Some reported resident concerns about whether the community space will be open for all on the estate. The stakeholders interviewed believed the new homes will improve living conditions for current residents. They described how some residents who have been allocated new homes are excited to be part of the design process and to move in. However, many of the stakeholders had concerns that, for many other residents, the new homes will be beyond their reach because of affordability.

“The huge physical change that does feel like something is really happening that hopefully will be a really positive outcome for all the residents.” - Stakeholder

“Residents are coming to the party from a fairly low base, their expectations are not particularly high - they are living in housing that’s deteriorating, old facilities, show them a shiny bathroom and they’ll go wow. They have been involved - residents choosing their finishes - they’ve been choosing the kitchens, carpets - people are really engaged and excited.” - Stakeholder

Stakeholders reported that most residents are confused about the process of moving into a new home and that residents had been given conflicting information on when they could move. Interviewees reported stress among residents during this transition period. The delays in construction were reported to have not been communicated clearly to the residents. Stakeholders identified these experiences as contributing to residents’ lack of trust in the regeneration project.

Some stakeholders were concerned about the strain on the resources in the area when new homes are completed and fully occupied. They were worried that local schools, GPs and pharmacies may become oversubscribed as the regeneration densifies the area. Many stakeholders are also anxious about relationships between the old and the new residents. They believe there could be friction between the two groups, and tensions between council tenants and homeowners.

“It’s been very difficult, in the summer relentless dust as well as noise. If you had a window open you couldn’t hear anything. One of the [residents] was a barrister and had to stop in the middle of court proceedings online.”- Stakeholder

“It’s quite difficult if you look at the prices of the flats being sold and that living next to that you’ll have social rent - will that cause animosity? Discrepancy between private owners and social housing tenants might cause tensions.”- Stakeholder

5.4 Walking interviews: views of the regeneration

The majority of the residents who took part in walking interviews were concerned at the lack of clarity about the regeneration. They felt they were not given clear information about the project, particularly about their opportunity to move into new homes. Residents feel they are being given conflicting information, leaving them dissatisfied with the regeneration team and the council.

“How long we are going to stay here, I don’t know. The latest information I have is end of 29 – beginning of 30. I spoke to my landlord. She has no idea what is going to happen. She is in the dark; I am in the dark. I cannot afford to purchase it, despite the fact that I would like to. I cannot afford. I would have been able to before with less savings, but now too expensive.”- Walking interview 9

Most of the residents expressed their frustrations with the disruption construction works had caused. The hoardings in particular have made the estate less accessible for some residents. The noise caused by the works has disrupted many residents’ day-to-day lives. The dust coming in from construction sites has also caused problems.

“Forklift goes past. It’s a constant beep beep beep. I had an extremely poorly husband last year, the noise, the banging, the lorries coming into our rood... our bedroom overlooks the road. He just could not rest during the day. The only time he could rest was in the hospital.”- Walking interview

There are mixed feelings about the regeneration. Some residents have a positive outlook for the future of the area. Some residents are hopeful about being able to live in a home with improved living conditions and are optimistic about having better housing in their estate. These residents felt they had made a connection to the area, therefore, they would like to remain on the estate. However, they are concerned about the affordability of the new homes.

“I have had a look at the new flats. They look nice, but we cannot buy one. The council says our [3 bed] flat is worth £300-35k but the new flats are £450k for a one bed. My husband is retired and I cannot work because I have cancer. How can we afford it? We will be homeless. Me and my husband, we are stuck. I have no chance of buying something here.”- Walking interview

Some residents are equally hopeful for community spaces and better outside spaces that will be delivered in the later phases. However, a few residents are unclear whether the current residents will have access to these spaces.

“Community centre. Last time he went to a Community Board meeting they were talking about it. It’s huge. But I’m not sure we will be allowed to hire it or use it. I thought it’s for the people who live in the new flats. I want to ask that question. People are confused. Are we part of the community there or not?” - Walking interview

Social and cultural life



Section 6: Social and cultural life

This section outlines how people feel about the social and cultural aspects of the neighbourhood. It looks at local social networks and relationships, the area's local identity, sense of belonging, wellbeing and feelings of safety. It also explores perceptions of different social supports and facilities.

This section is based on the results of the household survey of people living on the Cambridge Road Estate. Relevant findings from the contextual interviews are also included.

This section covers:

6.1 Links with neighbours

6.2 Local identity and belonging

6.3 Feelings of safety

6.4 Wellbeing and satisfaction

6.5 Satisfaction with community facilities and supports

Key findings

- There are strong feelings of neighbourliness on the estate reflecting a strong sense of community, outperforming the national predictive benchmark for comparable areas. 97% of respondents indicated that the estate is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, while 84% think of themselves as similar to the people that live in the neighbourhood.
- Residents want to remain on the estate, with 76% expressing a desire to do so, across tenures.
- Feelings of belonging are strong; 82% feel they belong to the neighbourhood. 93% report that the area is important for their sense of who they are.
- While 85% of residents report feeling safe walking at night, higher than in comparable areas, there is a significant minority, especially amongst residents on temporary tenancies, who feel that there are specific areas, and anti-social behaviours, which impact their sense of safety. A quarter of all respondents express fear of crime on the estate.
- Residents report generally good health and 91% are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. Similarly, 81% of respondents are satisfied with the quality of their lives. These scores are higher than would be expected in comparable areas.
- Residents are generally satisfied with facilities in the local area, reporting high levels of satisfaction with health, retail, leisure and places to socialise, that are higher than would be expected in comparable areas.
- Satisfaction with housing quality is low. 47% of all respondents are satisfied, which is significantly worse than in comparable areas.

- Respondents whose households include children indicate they are broadly (73%) satisfied with childcare provision in the area.
- The quality of facilities for children and young people across all ages is satisfactory overall. However, there are significant levels of dissatisfaction with facilities for 5- to 11-year-olds (23%) and 16-18-year-olds (17%).
- Almost half of respondents - 44% - indicate that their children do not have an outdoor space or facilities where they can play safely.
- Most respondents indicate that facilities cater to “people like them” - 92% report that shops, restaurants, bars and pubs locally cater to people like them. Private tenants are most likely to feel this way, whereas people with temporary tenancies are least likely to express this view.
- People with temporary tenancies report higher levels of dissatisfaction with their lives, with the area, with childcare provision, and in feeling welcomed.

Questions

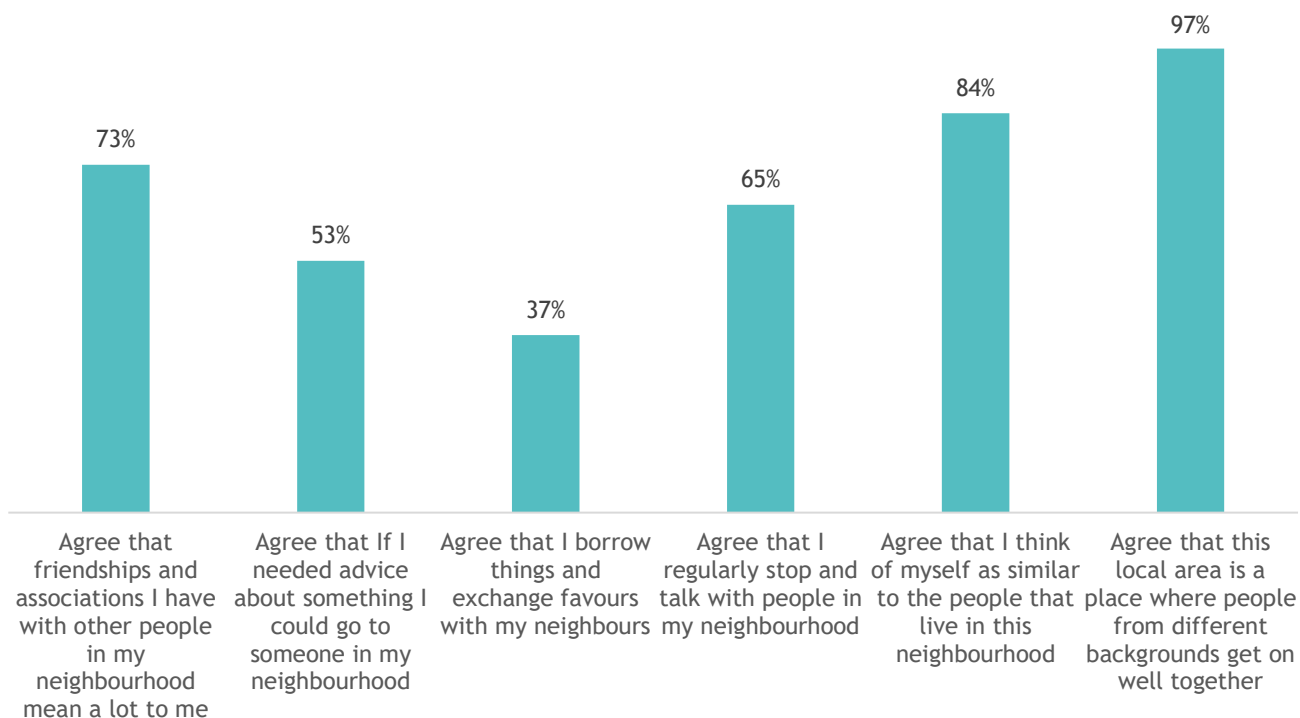
Do you agree with the following statements:

- If I needed advice I could go to someone in my neighbourhood
- I borrow things and exchange favours with my neighbours
- I regularly stop and talk with people in my neighbourhood
- Friendships in my neighbourhood mean a lot to me
- People from different backgrounds get on well
- Do you agree or disagree that you are similar to the people that live in this neighbourhood.

6.1 Links with neighbours

Neighbourliness

Residents interviewed reported strong feelings of neighbourliness. All indicators performed better than would be expected in comparable areas. 97% of all respondents indicate that the area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, and 84% think of themselves as similar to the people that live in the neighbourhood. Although only 37% of people agree that they can borrow and exchange favours with their neighbours, this is still higher than in comparable areas. All of the indicators point to strong social connections across the estate.

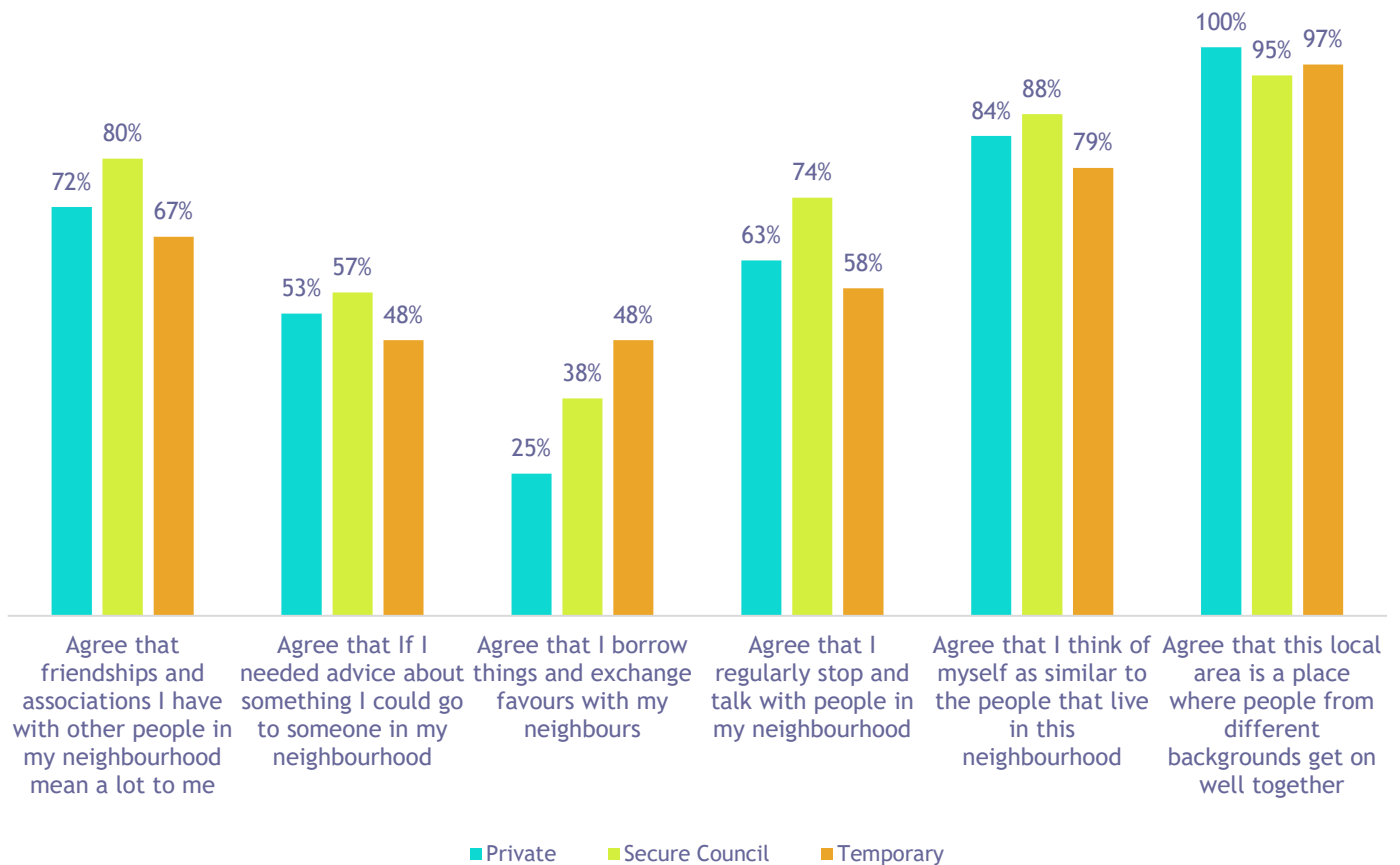


Overall positive sentiment regarding neighbourliness, n=167

When broken down by tenure, there was no major variation across private, temporary and secure council tenants can be observed when the positive sentiments are considered, indicating a close community. Across all questions, Cambridge Road Estate performs better than comparable areas.

Across the individual indicators, when asked if they can borrow and exchange favours with their neighbours, the strongest variations occurred. Temporary tenants are more likely to indicate agreement, and private tenants are less likely to do so, potentially pointing to informal networks of support on the estate.

When asked if they regularly stop and talk to people in the neighbourhood, secure council tenants respond the most positively (strongly agreeing), whereas temporary residents are more likely to say they neither agree or disagree, potentially pointing to slightly different social networks forming on the estate. Private tenants and temporary tenants are also more likely to indicate that they neither agree nor disagree if they think of themselves as similar to people who live in the neighbourhood. Overall, however, Cambridge Road Estate appears to have a strong, close-knit community across tenures.



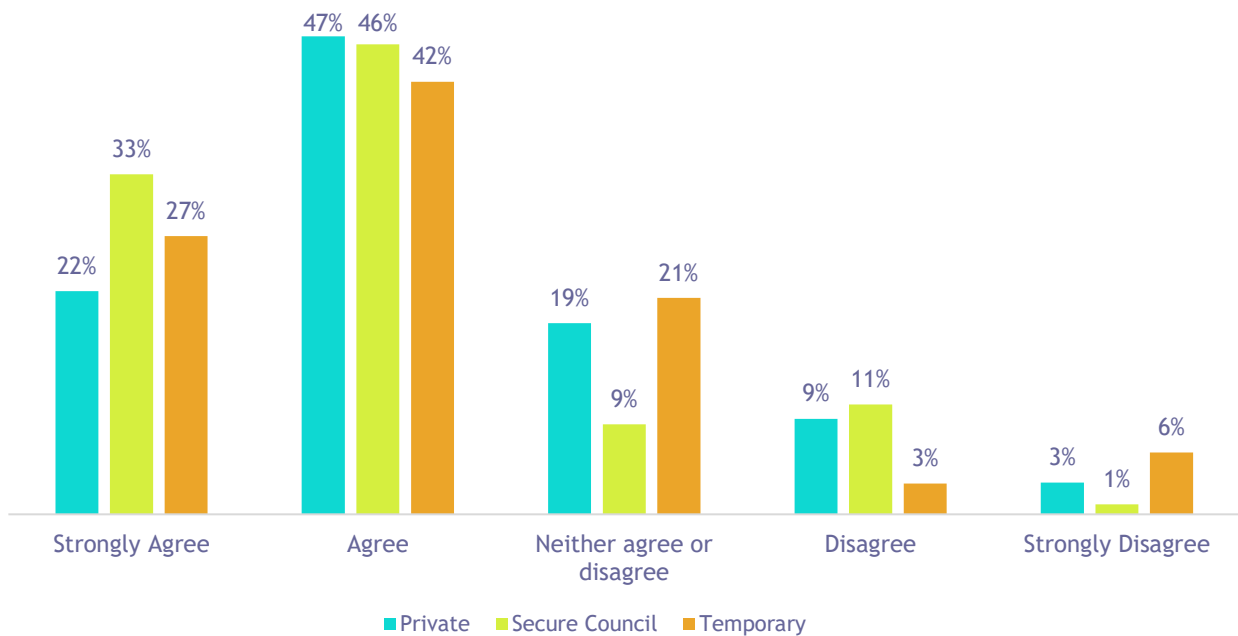
Neighbourliness indicators broken by tenure, n=167

6.2 Local identity and belonging

Questions

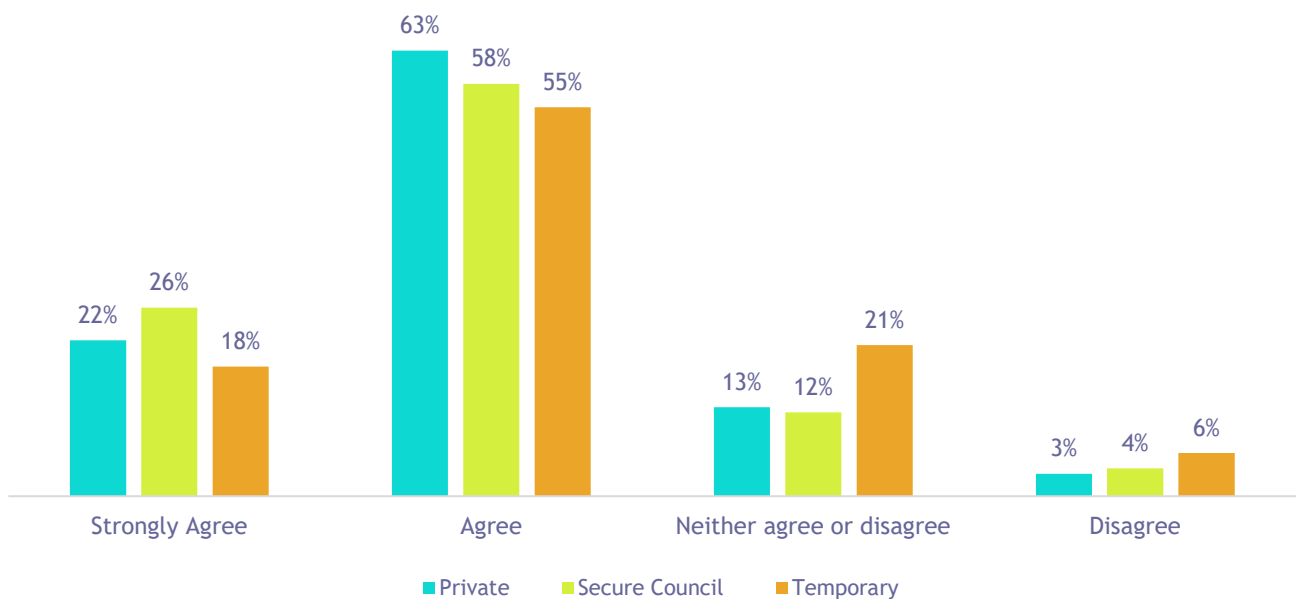
- I plan to remain a resident of this neighbourhood for a number of years
- I feel like I belong to this neighbourhood
- How important or unimportant is where you live to your sense of who you are?

76% of all respondents indicate that they would like to remain on the estate for a number of years. This is significantly better than would be expected in comparable areas. Private and temporary residents are less likely to share this view.



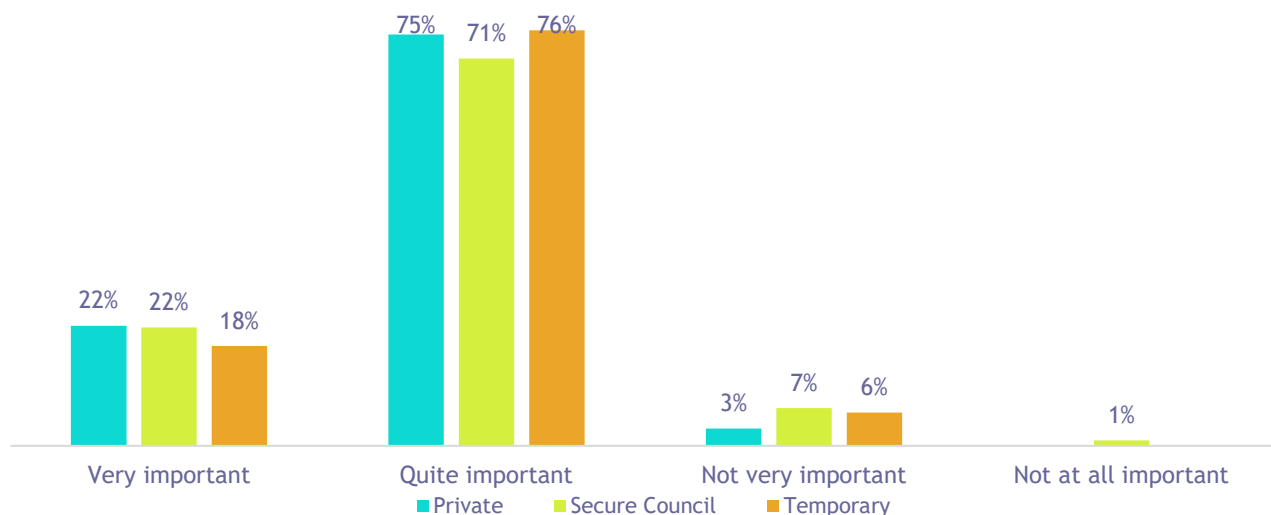
Remain a resident for a number of years, private n=32, secure council n=102, temporary n=33

Residents overall feel they belong to the neighbourhood. 82% of all respondents either agree or strongly agree, with only 4% disagreeing. This is significantly better than would be expected in comparable areas. People with temporary tenancies are more likely to report lower levels of belonging, potentially reflecting their status.



Belong to the neighbourhood, Private n=32, Secure Council n=102, Temporary n=33

93% of respondents indicated that where they live is important or very important for their sense of who they are. There are no major differences between responses from people in different tenures.



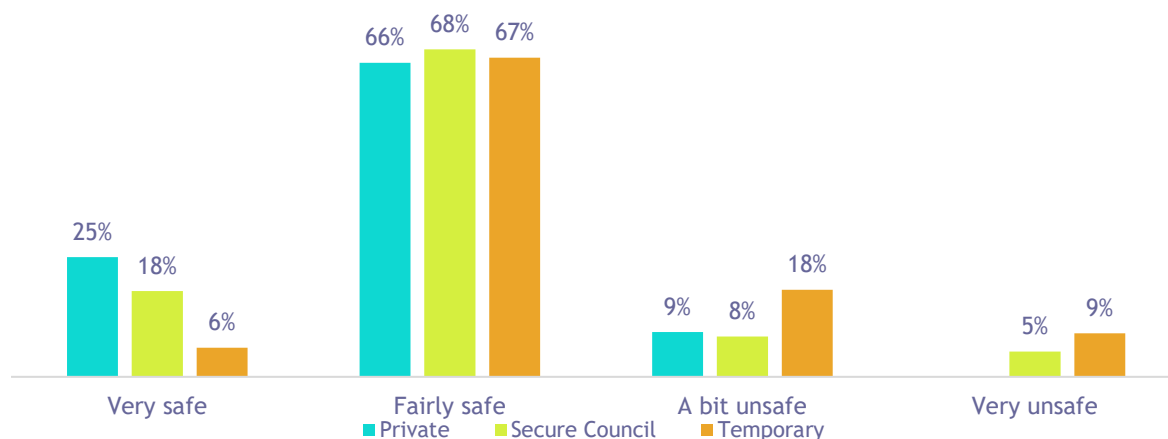
Importance of where you live, Private n=32, Secure Council n=102, Temporary n=33

6.3 Feelings of safety

Questions

- How safe do you feel walking alone in this area after dark?
- Why do you feel unsafe? Are there any particular places on the estate that you feel unsafe?
- Are you worried about you or someone you know being a victim of crime?

Residents generally reported feeling safe walking in the area. 85% reporting feeling fairly or very safe when walking alone after dark. This was higher than in comparable areas. However, 19% reported feeling unsafe. Private tenants feel the safest overall, and people in temporary tenancies feel least safe. Stakeholders and people who took part in walking interviews reported a number of concerns about safety and described what they saw as endemic issues that affect people's perceptions of safety, including the urban design, anti-social behaviour and lack of maintenance.

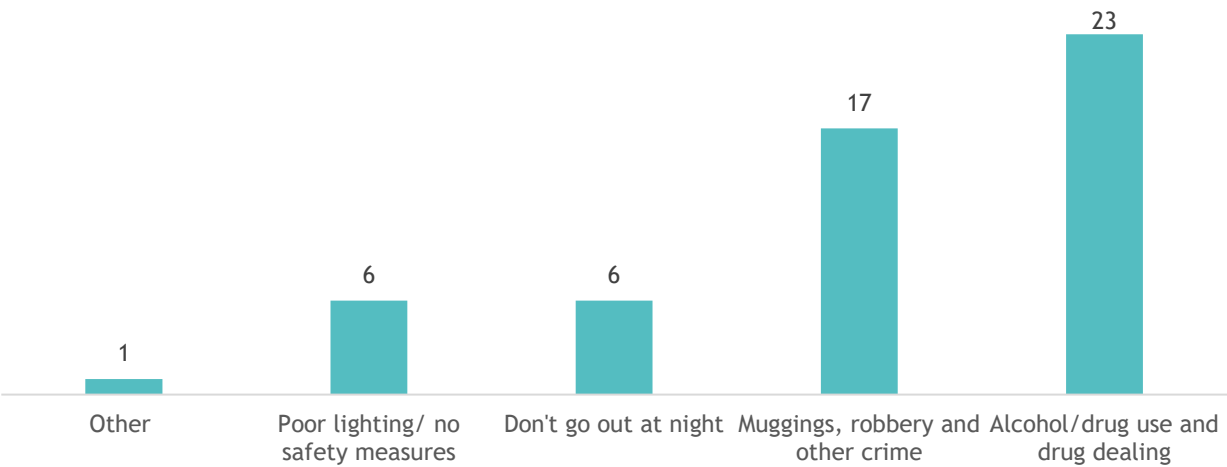


Feeling safe walking after dark, Private n=32, Secure Council n=102, Temporary n=33

When asked to elaborate on why they do not feel safe, residents who felt unsafe cited alcohol and drug use as the main reason, followed by reports of mugging, robbery and other crime. Some residents voiced a need for better safety measures, including improved lighting. Childerley car park, Burritt Road and the Fairfield building were specifically named as locations where people felt unsafe on the estate.

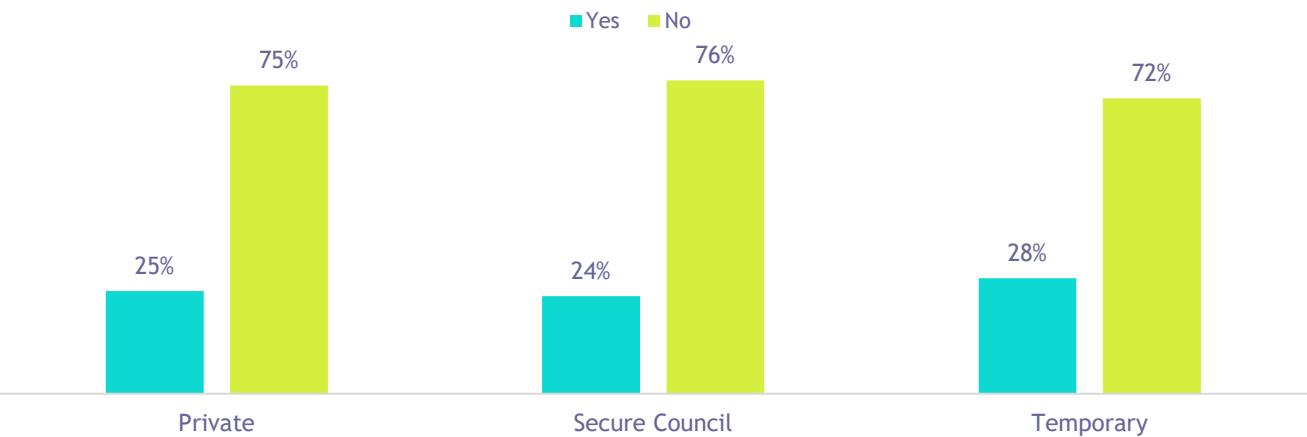
“Drug dealers, drunks and groups of young men hanging on the roads and on the stairs.” – Resident

“Childerley car park is very unsafe place with full of dump cars for many years. Even unknown people coming and parking the car and smoking sitting in the car and staring at people. Really unsafe place in Cambridge Road Estate.”– Resident



Why do you feel unsafe (sample including in-person and online interviews) n= 53 Coded question, number of responses reported

A quarter of all respondents worry that there is a possibility they or people they live with will be the victims of crime. When broken down by tenure, no major differences emerged.

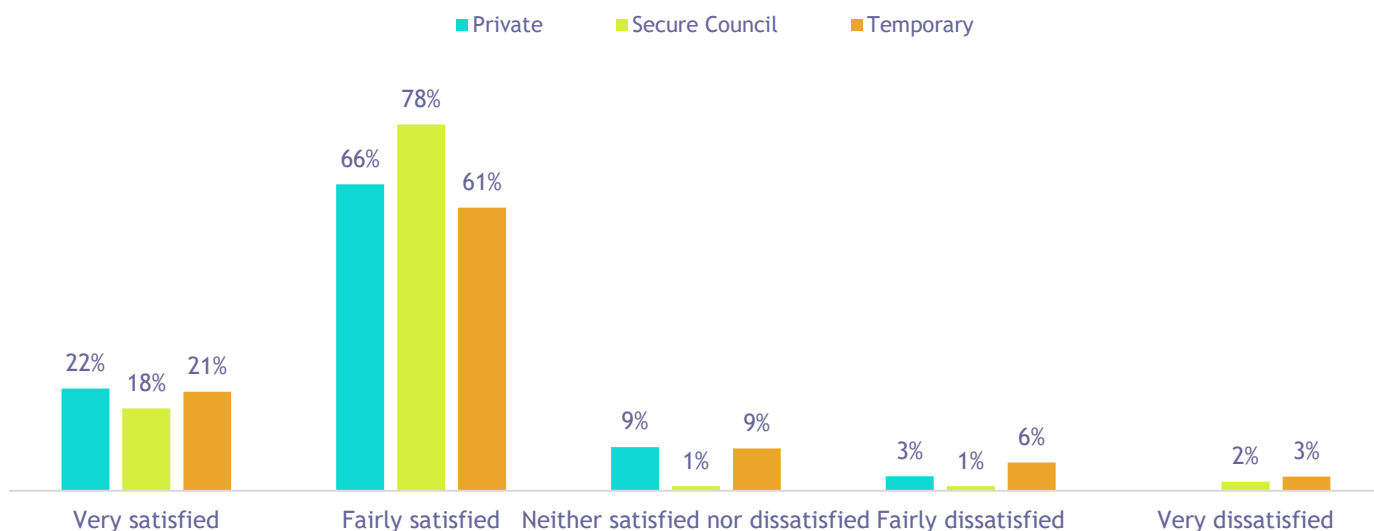


Worry about crime, Private n=32, Secure Council n=102, Temporary n=32

6.4 Wellbeing and satisfaction

Questions

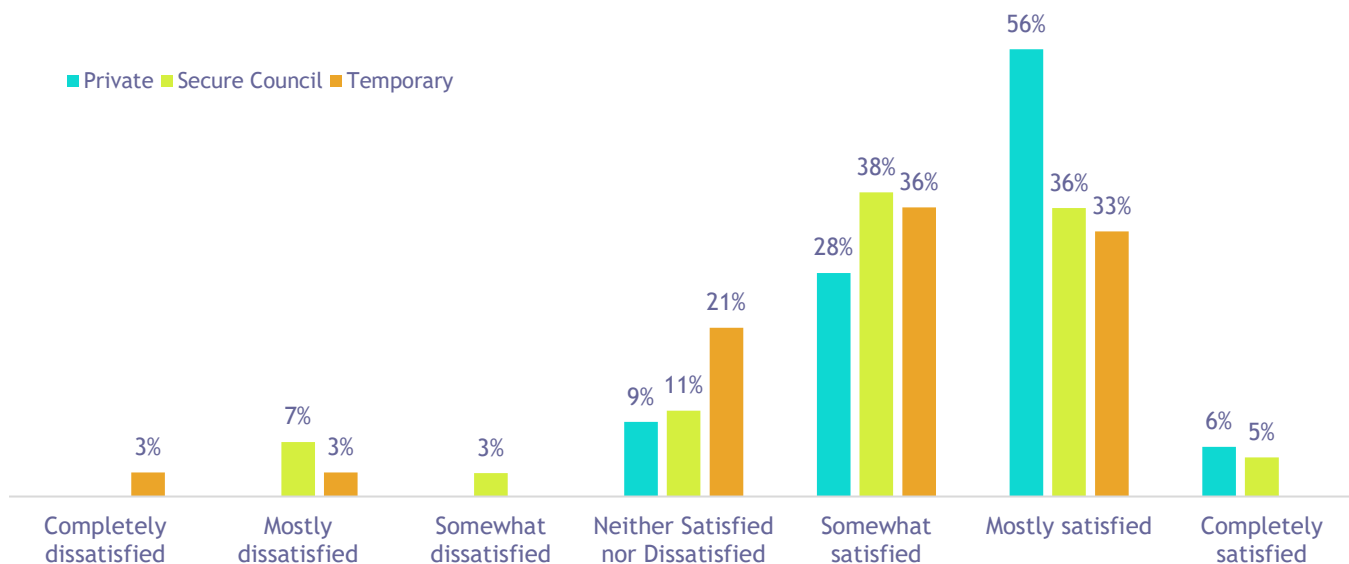
- How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with life overall?
- Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?
- How well would you say you yourself were managing financially these days? Explored separately?
- In general, would you say your health is ..?



Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? n=167

Satisfaction with the local area (by which we mean within a 15-20 minute walk away from home) as a place to live is higher than in comparable areas. Overall, 91% of residents responded that they are satisfied. People living in temporary tenancies are least likely to be satisfied, council tenants are most likely to be. It is important to note that these questions include the wider area around Cambridge Road Estate, which has a different character from the estate itself.

The majority of respondents (81%) indicated that they are satisfied with their life, with 13% reporting neither satisfied or dissatisfied and 8% reporting dissatisfaction. When broken down by tenure, private tenants are most likely to be satisfied with their lives, people living in temporary tenancies (6%) and council tenants (10%) are most likely to report dissatisfaction.



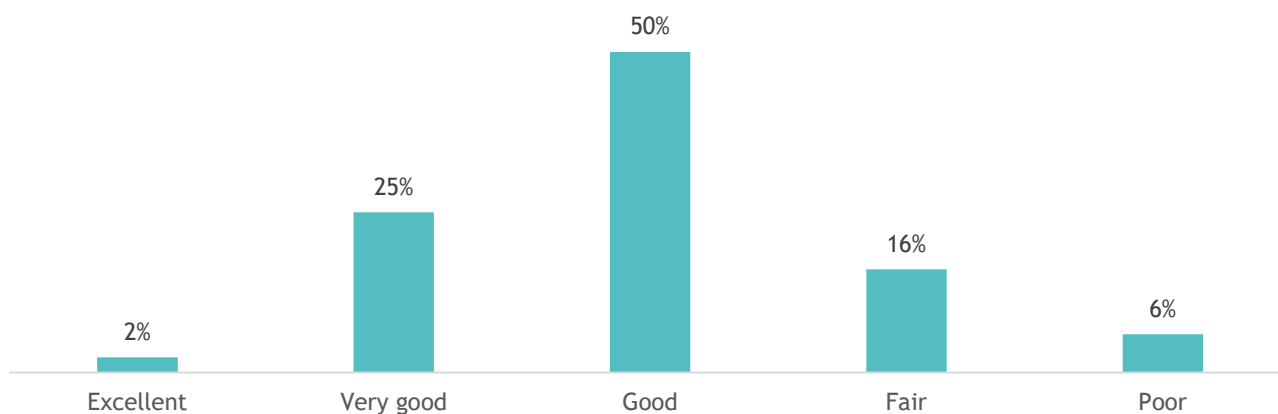
Overall how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? n=167

Residents who reported dissatisfaction were invited to elaborate on the reasons why that is the case. Low quality of life, lack of access to amenities, poor facilities and poor environment were the top reasons given. Lack of an adequate support system, either from family or the local authority, was another reason cited.

“Many things are no functional as before and the areas are noisy.” – Resident

“The council is very slow in taking action.” – Resident

“The whole block is falling apart.” – Resident

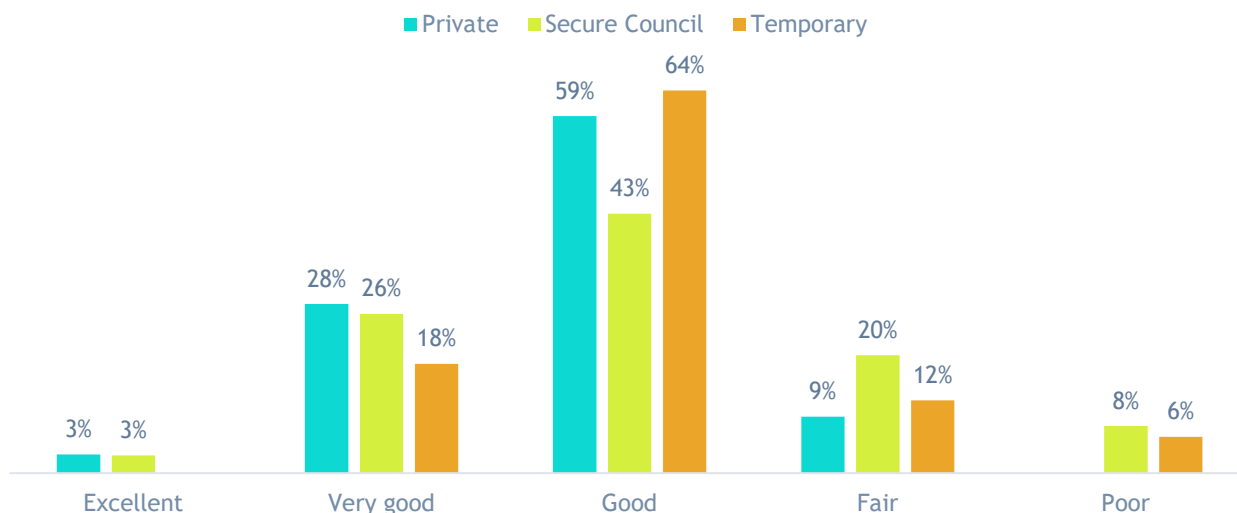


Perceptions of health (n=167)

Residents reported an overall good level of health, with half (50%) overall reporting their health is good. 27% reported excellent or very good health and 22% fair or poor health. In a study conducted in 2021 a similar question was asked.¹⁴ In 2021 75% of residents reported “good” or “fair” health, which possibly indicates some improvement in health over time, although the options presented to residents in 2021

¹⁴ [https://cambridgeroadestate.com/assets/pdf/CRE_HNA_final_\(Nov_2021\).pdf](https://cambridgeroadestate.com/assets/pdf/CRE_HNA_final_(Nov_2021).pdf)

differed from the ones used in this survey, so no clear comparison can be made. Council tenants, both secure and temporary, are more likely to report lower satisfaction with health than private tenants.



Perceptions of health by tenure, Private n=32, Secure Council n=102, Temporary n=33



Outdoor Gym at Childerley in July 2025

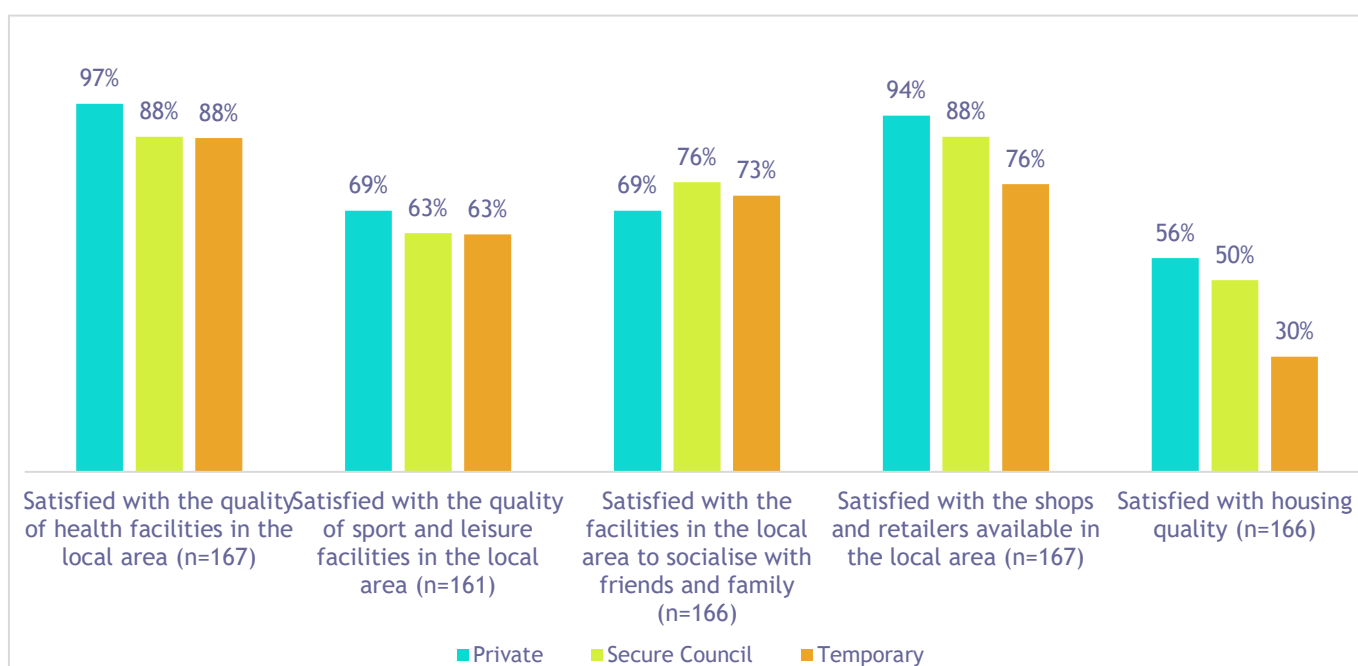
Questions

- How satisfied are you with the quality of health facilities in your local area?
- How satisfied are you with the quality of sport and leisure facilities in your local area?
- How satisfied are you with the shops and retailers available in the local area?
- How satisfied are you with the facilities in your local area to socialise with friends and family?

- How satisfied are you with the quality of housing?
- How satisfied are you with childcare provision?
- Does your child/do your children have an outdoor space or facilities where they can play safely?
- How satisfied are you with the quality of facilities for children and young people in your local area?

6.5 Satisfaction with community facilities and supports

This section focuses on resident satisfaction with local community facilities such as health, housing, social spaces, and sports and leisure facilities. It also looks at provision for children and young people of different ages.



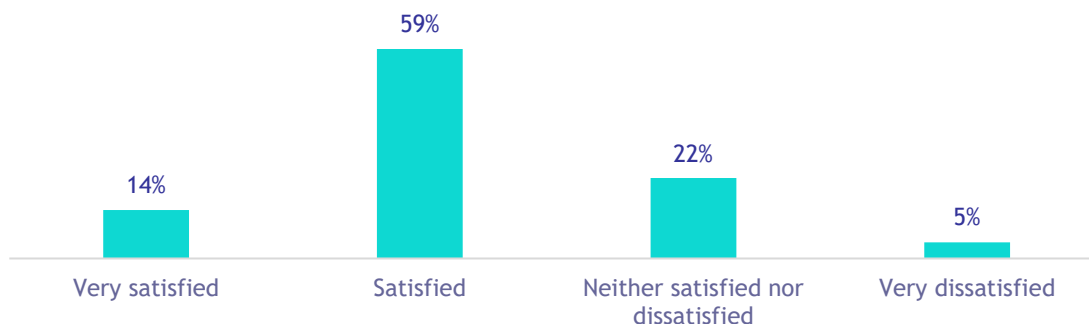
Satisfaction with facilities by tenure

Satisfaction with facilities is generally high: 89% of all respondents report satisfaction with health facilities in the local area, 74% are satisfied with facilities to socialise with friends and families, and 86% are satisfied with the shops and retailers available. This suggests that residents are using facilities in the wider area around the estate, as there is little estate-based provision.

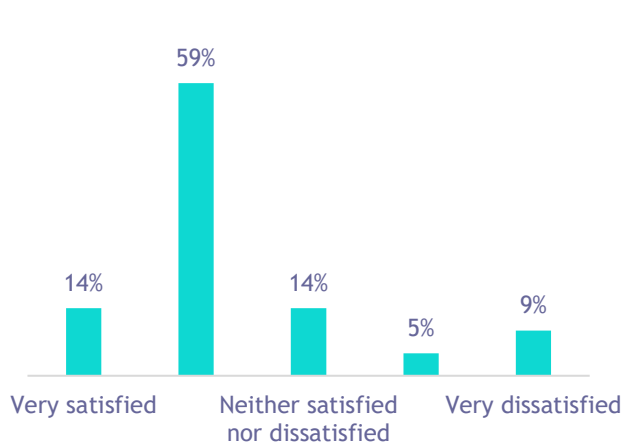
Satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities is slightly lower at 62%. There are several sports facilities in very close proximity to the estate such as Weir Archer Athletics and Fitness Centre, and an outdoor gym near Childerley, and some facilities near the podium at Madingley. Lower levels of satisfaction may therefore reflect problems with access or affordability.

Satisfaction with housing quality is low. 47% of all respondents are satisfied with housing quality and 27% dissatisfied; this is significantly worse than in comparable areas. People in temporary tenancies have the lowest levels of satisfaction with their housing quality, lower than both private and secure council tenants.

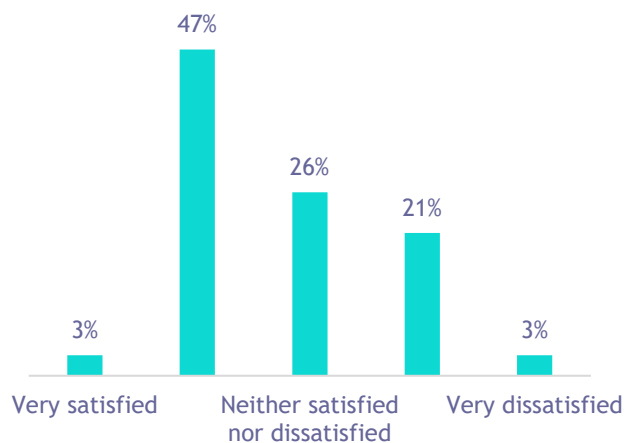
We asked people who live with children in their household to indicate satisfaction with childcare provision and facilities. Residents were presented with different options appropriate to their children's age/s. Overall, 73% of respondents were satisfied with local provision. Temporary residents report the lowest levels of satisfaction.



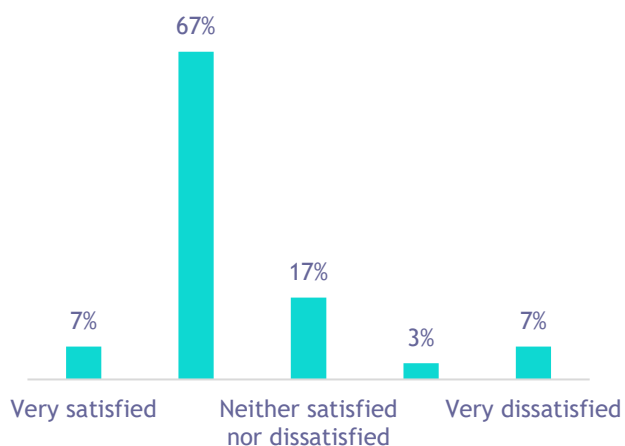
How satisfied are you with childcare provision in the local area? n=22



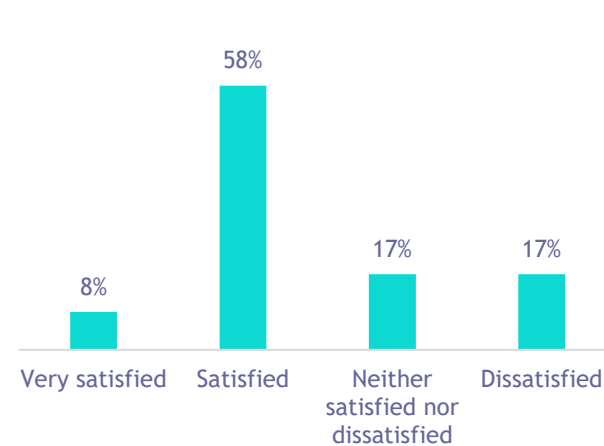
Satisfaction with facilities for children age 0-4 n=34



Satisfaction with facilities for children age 5-11 n=22



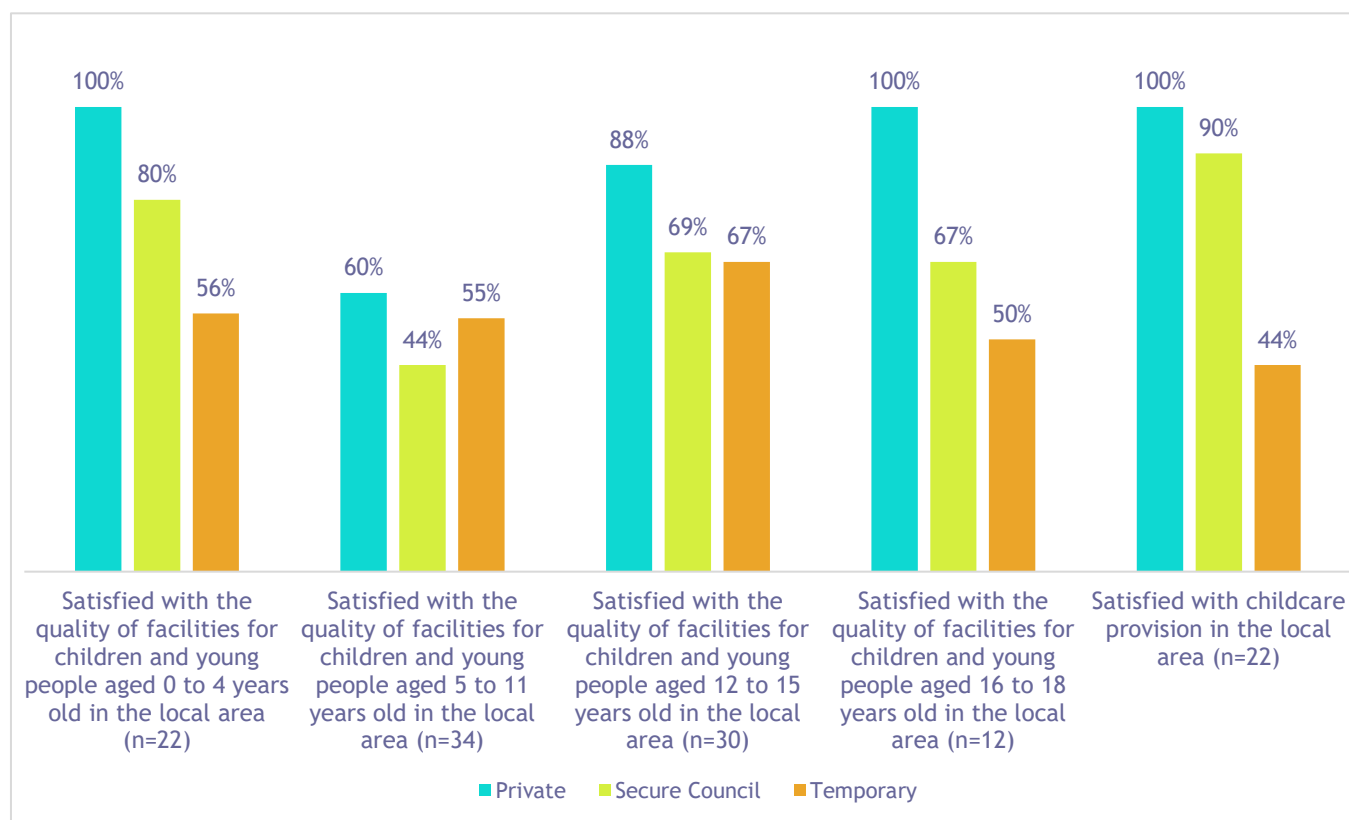
Satisfaction with facilities for children age 12-15 n=30



Satisfaction with facilities for children age 16-18 n=12

Satisfaction with facilities varies across the different age groups. Satisfaction was lowest for children between 5 and 11 years of age. There are several playgrounds, a cage, and other facilities dotted across the estate. This finding raises questions about their suitability and conditions.

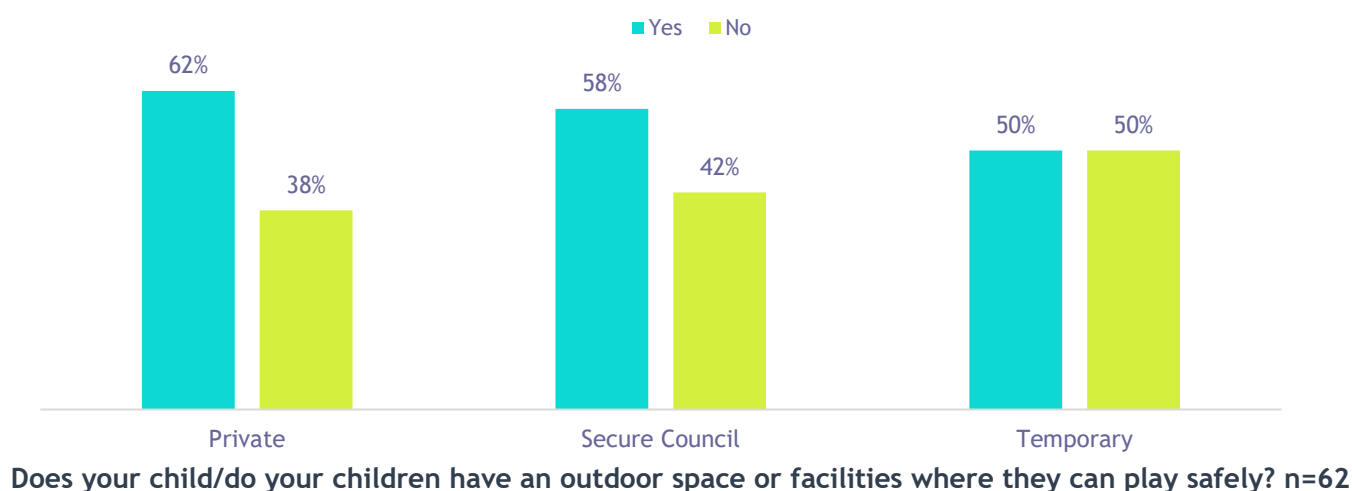
The other group where high levels of dissatisfaction are reported is older adolescents between the ages of 16 and 18 - 17% reported dissatisfaction.



Facilities for children and young people - tenure breakdown

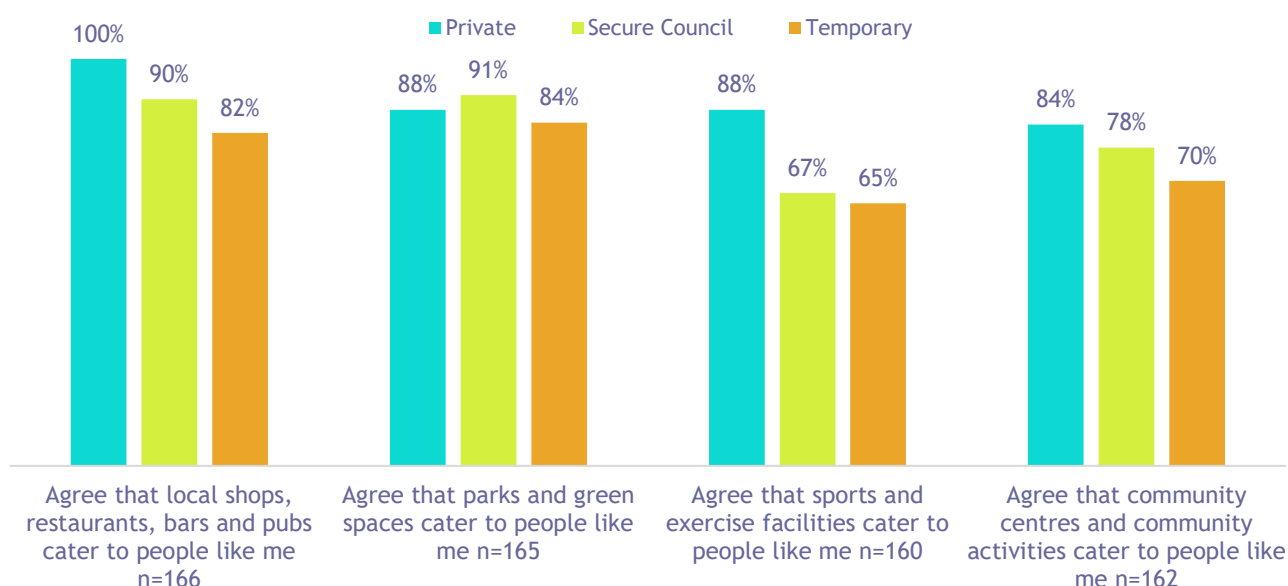
Private tenants are most satisfied with childcare provision and facilities, and temporary tenants are less satisfied overall. Secure council tenants are least satisfied with the provision for children between the ages of 5 and 11.

The majority of people interviewed (56%), responded that there are safe outdoor spaces and facilities for children to play safely, 44% indicated there were not. Half of the temporary residents reported that there are no safe outdoor spaces for children to play.



People were asked to indicate if the facilities they use cater for “people like me”. 92% of people interviewed agree that local shops, restaurants, bars and pubs cater for them. Similarly, 89% agree that green spaces cater for them and 78% agree that community centres cater for them. There are no major differences when broken down by tenure; however, temporary residents are less likely to feel that the different types of facilities cater for them than private and secure council tenants.

71% of all those interviewed report that sports and leisure facilities cater for “people like me”. This answer reflects lower levels of satisfaction in sports and leisure facilities. Private tenants are more likely to feel that sports and leisure facilities cater to them than secure council and temporary tenants.



Feel that facilities cater "for people like me"

6.6. Stakeholder views

Stakeholders reported that Cambridge Road Estate has a “close-knit community”, with residents who get on well with each other, especially in community spaces. They reported that longstanding residents have a deep-rooted connection to the estate. Some stakeholders described residents’ networks that focused on blocks on the estate or cultural groups. Some residents are not always aware of their neighbours. Stakeholders report that many residents are reluctant to move off the estate as they fear they would lose their networks and their familiar environment. A few stakeholders voice their concerns that the regeneration will impact these connections and weaken the sense of community.

“I think the success of the community café is because people are looking for that sense of community.” - Stakeholder

“The community – there’s definitely a sense of community cohesion. Their fear factor is for people who don’t live on the estate. Refers a video a young girl made about the estate and how proud she is of it and how it has shaped who she is.” - Stakeholder

Many of the stakeholders were concerned for the wellbeing of the residents. They have come across residents who they believed were suffering from isolation, specifically elderly residents and single parents. They mentioned the current living conditions of residents were negatively impacting the residents’ mental health. Other environmental factors, such as overcrowding and mould, contributed to the deterioration of residents’ wellbeing. For some residents, the instability of their tenancy and shifting timelines for rehousing were also identified factors impacting wellbeing.

“Loneliness is a problem on the estate. Especially older people. 80s. We knock on the door if passing. Some of them are old and vulnerable and lonely and just need somebody to be around and talk to.” - Stakeholder

For many stakeholders there was a gap between perceived and actual safety on the estate. Some identified past events that may have led to current perceptions, with few stating the estate feels safer than it did many years ago. Other stakeholders agreed that there were many issues when it came to safety on the estate. For them there was a lack of adequate security measures such as working security cameras, lighting and secure building entry.

“There were people squatting in the building where the new community centre’s going to because it was empty. Caused ASB [antisocialbehaviour] problems.” - Stakeholder

6.7 Walking interviews

The residents spoke fondly of the connections they have to the area. Many have built this feeling over the years. Some residents have lived on the estate while their children grew up. Newer residents felt welcomed by existing residents. They felt a sense of belonging and wished to remain a resident on the estate.

“The kids have grown up here, they go to school here, town is here, we have lots of friends, community, I work local.” - Walking interview

“I have the loveliest neighbours. And this is a lovely little close. There’s only 9 houses here. My children were brought up here. They used to play on the street with other children. We all know each other. It’s quite nice really. They are very supportive neighbours.” - Walking interview

Many residents noted neighbours were a key source of their support. Some residents share how their neighbours assisted them with daily tasks, helped during the COVID-19 pandemic and provided emotional support. The residents shared stories of lending their resources such as food, borrowing money and sharing cultural celebrations.

Local community activities held in the Archway, and St Mary Church, were often cited as key spaces for meeting people on the estate. Some attended the sessions for support, such as the food bank, the wellbeing sessions and the local scouts. These events provided a weekly activity to access support and socialise with other people.

“My husband passed away last year and people have been very supportive, giving me leaflets and telling me where I can go to get support. And I’ve got children – they are a great support.” - Walking interview

“We talk with the neighbours and got to know them more during the pandemic...” - Walking interview

“[Community café in the hall] Today there were quite a few people coming. They’re all friendly and that. It’s a nice place to say hello to people, innit.” - Walking interview

“That church, they’ve helped me out a lot. When my husband died, they helped me out a lot with.” - Walking interview

“To be honest I go to church for foodbank every Tuesday. I get support from there.” - Walking interview

Most of the residents had negative feelings about safety on the estate, especially at night. They were concerned about the lack of security measures. They wanted to see more working security cameras and better lighting, especially along alleyways that are frequently used as shortcuts. Many residents claimed they do not go out on the estate at night because of this. The residents were alarmed at the high level of drug use on the estate. Many residents have encountered people using stairwells and boarded up properties for drug and alcohol consumption.

“I feel it’s not safe. I’m sure there is a camera here somewhere, but it’s not facing the right way.” – Walking interview

“And because it’s on a hill, bikes race down here. The teenagers come down at a real high speed.” - Walking interview

“Impington stairwell – the homeless people they come at night and are drinking. They are using it like they live here. People are sitting down here and drinking here and blocking. Some people they let you past, others they ignore you.” - Walking interview

“The stairway is not clean. Lots of Kingston people, drugs people, come and sit on the stairs. We used to find needles in the stairwell – my grandson got one in his shoe and I was scared of HIV – but now it’s ok. A lot of the drug people have been moved on but the stairs always have a wee-wee smell.” - Walking interview

Voice and Influence



Section 7: Voice and influence

This section describes the extent to which people living on Cambridge Road feel they have a say and can influence decisions affecting their local area. Voice and Influence is divided into two indicators: Willingness to Act, and Ability to Influence.

This section is based on the results of the household survey. Relevant findings from the contextual interviews and walking interviews are also included.

This section covers:

7.1 Ability to influence

7.2 Willingness to act

7.3 Stakeholder views

7.4. Walking interviews

Key findings

- 75% of respondents agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, higher than in comparable areas. Private tenants are most likely to disagree with this, only 34% agree with the statement.
- The majority of respondents report that it is important for them to feel that they can influence decisions in the local area, with 82% of respondents agreeing. This is higher than would be expected in comparable areas.
- People report high levels of willingness to act, with 90% of respondents agreeing that people in the neighbourhood pull together to improve it and 71% indicate they will be willing to work together with others on something to improve their area. These are also stronger scores than for comparable areas.
- Only 10% of people interviewed have given any unpaid help or worked as a volunteer for any type of local, national or international organisation or charity.

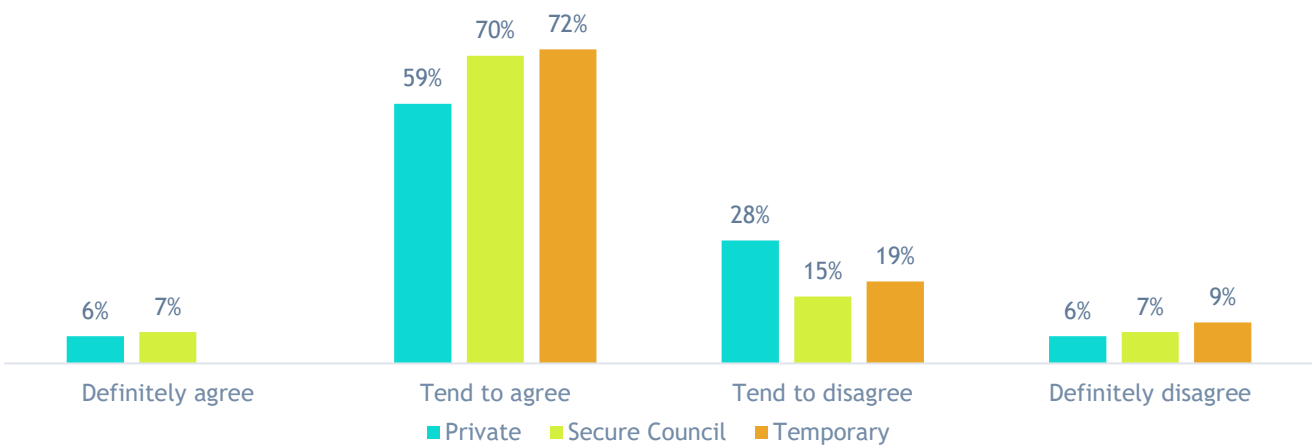
7.1 Ability to influence

Questions

- Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?
- How important is it for you personally to feel that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?

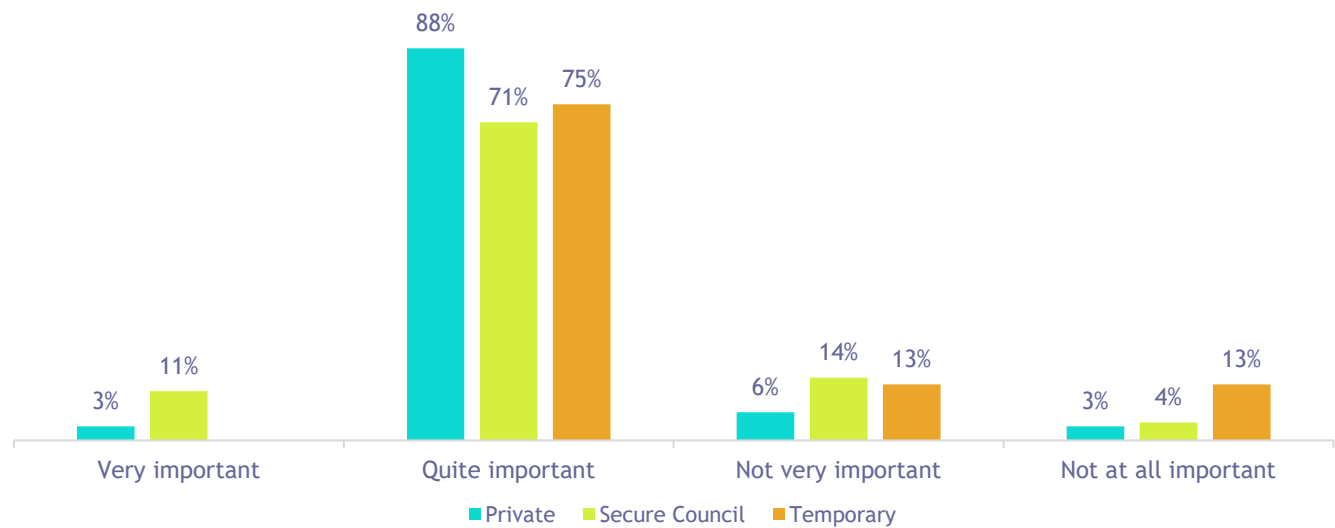
75% of residents reported that they feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area. This is significantly higher than in comparable areas. The close relationships with ward councillors that were

observed could be part of the explanation for this. A higher percentage of private tenants (34%), and people living on temporary tenancies (28%) report feeling they cannot influence local decisions.



Feel can influence decisions affecting local area by tenure n=162

82% of people interviewed report that it is important for them to feel that they can influence decisions in the local area. 91% of private tenants report that this aspect of local life is important, compared to 75% of people with temporary tenancies.



Importance of feeling that can influence decisions in your local area by tenure n=164

7.2 Willingness to act

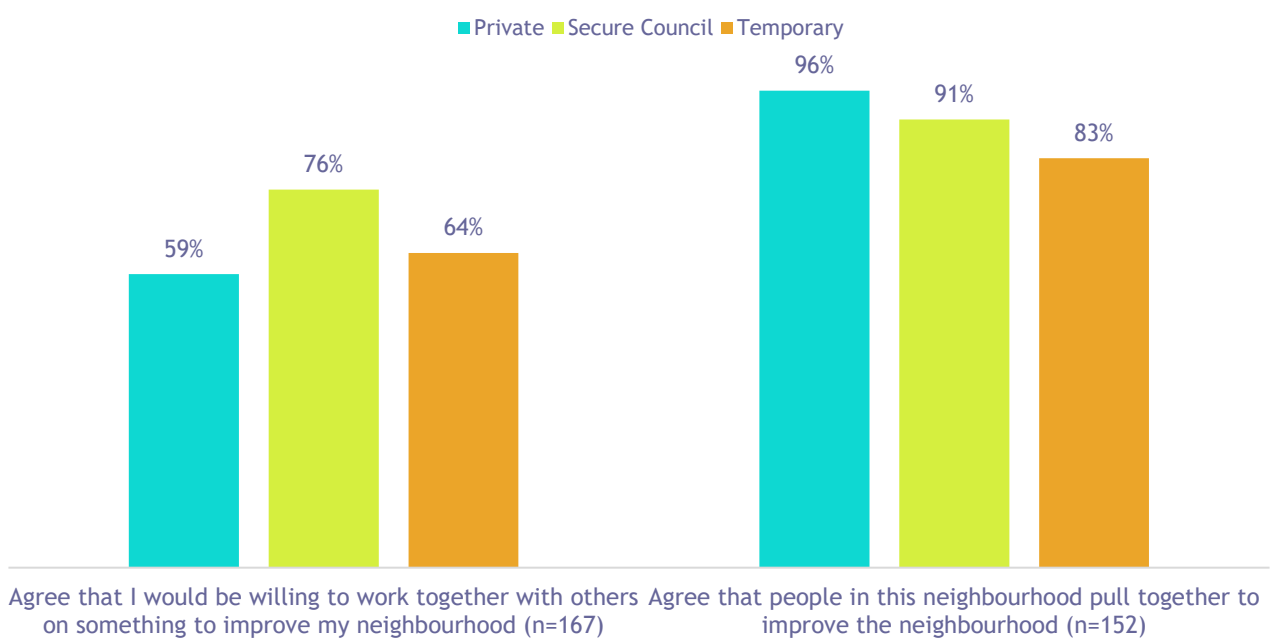
Questions

- I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood
- People in this neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood
- Volunteered in the last 12 months

71% of residents interviewed indicate that they would be willing to work together with others on something to improve the neighbourhood, only 8% disagree. This is higher than in comparable areas. 90%

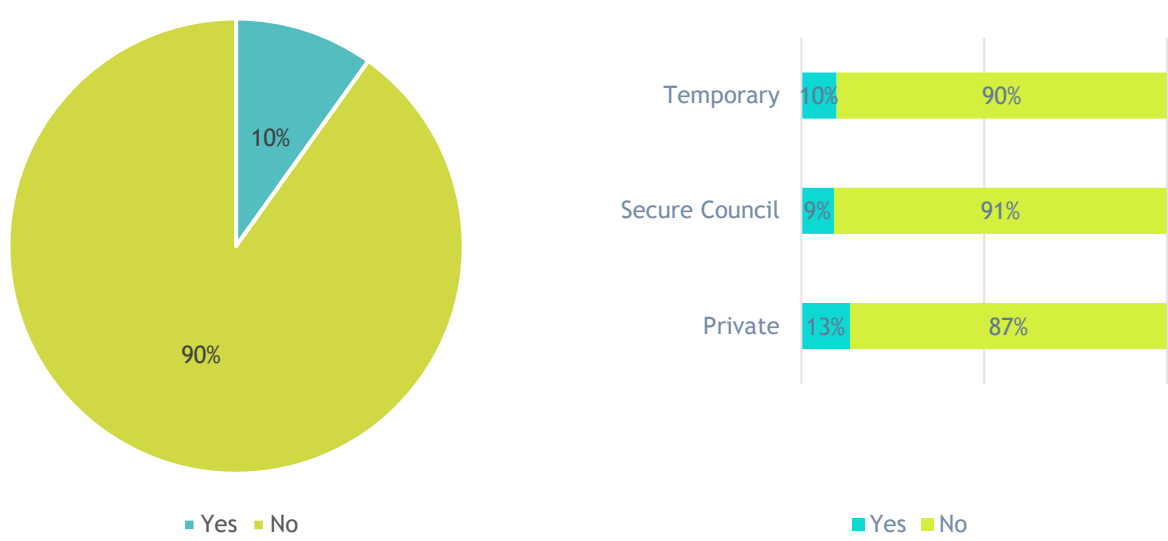
of residents interviewed agree that people in the neighbourhood pull together to improve it, which is higher than in comparable areas.

When broken down by tenure, secure council tenants report the highest levels of willingness to work with others to improve the area. There is a mismatch between individual willingness to act and the perception that people act collectively.



Willingness to act

10% of all respondents indicate that they have volunteered in the last 12 months, which is lower than in comparable areas. There is a potential to increase opportunities for volunteering on the estate and promote those to residents. Private tenants are most likely to have volunteered in the past twelve months.



Do you volunteer (n=162)

Existing groups and activities on the Cambridge Road Estate

Through our engagement on the estate, we encountered a number of organisations which facilitate residents' voices and influence, or provide local activities.

There is a representative committee - the Community Board - which is part of the joint venture's governance structure, introduced to involve residents in the regeneration process. It includes a mix of local residents, councillors, organisational representatives and staff. It is consulted on processes and allocates a dedicated community budget. As part of their Community Chest funding, local organisations have been enabled to deliver services and activities to residents. A number of organisations have benefitted from the Community Chest funding, including Intergenerational Music, Future Rising Foundation (running basketball camps), Full Cycle (non-profit bike project), Achieving for Children, Piper Active Youth Club (drop-in youth club), and Our Parks (exercise group). Most of the activities are currently happening in Queen Mary Hall, the community centre based north of Cambridge Road, within the Cambridge Gardens estate.

There are several active residents' representative organisations and tenants and residents' associations - CReSt and 1Norbiton are based within the estate. Sunflower Street Residents' Association covers an area adjacent to the regeneration but delivers activities locally. St Peter's Church is an important local hub, running a lot of groups on the estate, including a community café and Tiny Tots. Borough-wide organisations such as Kingston Voluntary Action, Kingston Advocacy Group and RBKares, are active on the estate.



The Archway centre, St Peter's Parish Room

7.3 Stakeholder views on voice and influence

Many stakeholders reported that there is a lack of clarity in the information available about the regeneration. Residents were receiving conflicting information, generating mistrust about the regeneration programme. Some stakeholders feel the residents were not informed about the project. Some residents were unclear about their future on the estate. They were in the process of transitioning to a new property, but were anxious as they felt that there was no clear communication about their timeline.

“Not sure why they don’t already know about it as feels there is a lot of different information sources out there and that people are just not engaging.” -

Stakeholders

“Other than networking, how do people find out what’s going on? A lot of people are isolated. How you persuade people to get involved in our community is difficult.” - Stakeholder

Stakeholders agree that a large number of residents are not engaged. Many residents faced barriers, including language. Some stakeholders feel the joint venture partners could do more to reach more residents on the estate, such as taking care not to digitally exclude residents, particularly older people.

These barriers, combined with residents' lack of agency, have created a perception that the community is hard to engage. However, a few stakeholders reported that long-standing residents were present at engagement opportunities for the regeneration, speaking out for the community. In addition, some stakeholders saw young people getting involved in voicing their thoughts on the changes in the area.

“People lose hope when it comes to dealing with RBK. They just get told whatever’s necessary to get rid of them. They don’t believe what the council says. Feel like they just get fobbed off.”- Stakeholder

7.4 Walking interviews

Many of the residents expressed their frustrations at the lack of clear and consistent communication from the council, particularly on home repairs and progress of the regeneration. Many residents felt they were not being given up-to-date information on the project, most importantly their future in the new homes. This has been the source of stress for many residents.

“For me it’s just about: don’t forget there’s residents still here. It feels like there’s getting less and less residents and when you get down to the last few, what voice have you got?” - Walking Interview

Most residents taking part in the walking interviews stated they had no sense of control over the changes taking place in the area because of the regeneration. Some perceive that current residents have been overlooked or erased in the process of regeneration. For some residents, this was represented by the renaming of the area from Cambridge Road Estate to Kingston Grove. Some residents felt neglected by the council as their current home is a later phase of the regeneration process.

“To be honest they don’t trust the council. They think the council are lying to them. They keep postponing when they can move in and they think that the council are making excuses to keep them where they are. Its bittersweet. People are excited. They get positive news that they are moving to new houses, then they are delayed.”- Walking interview



**Amenities and
social infrastructure**

Section 8: Amenities and social infrastructure

This section describes the results of the Amenities and Social Infrastructure assessment. This draws on the contextual interviews and the independent site survey.

This includes three main indicators:

- Integrated neighbourhoods
- Distinctive places
- Streets for all

Indicators are based on the Design for Healthy Homes Assessment 2020, adapted by Social Life.

Key findings

- The estate's urban realm and built environment is of poor quality and badly maintained. Wayfinding across the estate is difficult, and there are a lot of uneven surfaces and poor definition between private and public spaces.
- There are numerous alleyways which are not maintained, contributing to concerns about safety. Construction is exacerbating this by blocking different routes through the site.
- Better provision for active mobility across the estate area is needed, including better cycling (storage and on-street provision) and car park management. Provision for people who are disabled or who have mobility issues need to be better signposted, and adaptations introduced.
- Waste management on the estate is impacting ground-level use, bin locations are often obstructing views or the flow of people and contribute to a negative perception.
- There is good social life at street level, and the estate as currently designed, is generally tenure blind.
- The estate benefits from mature planting in both public and private spaces. Maintaining current trees and greenery and designing nature into future plans in a more holistic manner will retain the character of the area.
- There is little social infrastructure provision to support socialising or exercise on site, and what is there - benches, play facilities and outdoor gyms - varies in condition. There is no indoor provision on site, however, there is a lot of evidence of past social infrastructure such as community rooms, sports infrastructure and social supermarkets, contributing to a sense of dilapidation.
- There are no meanwhile uses on site, or creative use of hoardings, or other temporary interventions, in place because of construction. There are a lot of open spaces with unclear functions which can be better used in the process of regeneration.

8.1 Site survey summary

A walking assessment of the estate was conducted in June 2025, supplemented by design and planning information. The built environment achieved a negative score in all three categories of the assessment - integrated neighbourhoods, distinctive places and streets for all. Below is a summary of our assessment.

The site survey is based on the **Building for Healthy Life 2020** protocol developed by Design for Homes, Homes England and adapted by Social Life to expand the assessment to include a firmer social focus, drawing on our experience of using the predecessor approach - Building for Life 12.

Each of the sub-categories is given a value of 1, 0.5 or 0. Those are then aggregated for the three main categories (Integrated neighbourhoods, Distinctive places, and Streets for all)

1 = there is sufficient evidence that the design meets the criteria

0.5 = a specific part of the design meets the criteria, but another does not

0 = there is not enough evidence that the design meets the criteria, or the evidence shows that the design does not meet the criteria.

The mean of the scores for each question within an indicator were combined to provide an overall mean score for each indicator.

This overall mean score was RAG Rated:

≥0.75 = green

≥0.5 but <0.75 = yellow

<0.5 = red

The main methodology involved a walking assessment of the built environment, supplemented by design and planning information. The assessment walk was conducted on the 9th of June 2025. The assessors were Simeon Shtebunaev, Senior Researcher at Social Life and a trained architectural designer and town planner, and Lavanya Karthik, Researcher and Designer at Social Life, a trained architectural designer.



8.2. Category 1: Integrated neighbourhoods

Overall Score: RAG = 0 (red) (9.5 out of 23 possible)

This dimension examines the way the area is integrated within the wider borough and allows residents to access needed infrastructure. Cambridge Road scored best on homes for everyone in this category and worst on social infrastructure.

Natural connections

RAG = 1.5/4 (Red)

The estate's street pattern is restrictive and not well integrated with surrounding areas. There is a lack of permeability and there is not much traffic going on through the estate. Some streets are blocked off, and there are numerous alleyways. There are mature trees around the estate and good provision of natural habitats, however there is no evidence of holistic design. The management and maintenance appears to be weak, and the local environment is in a poor state of repair. There are no clearly designed connections to the wider community.

Walking, cycling and public transport

RAG = 1/5 (Red)

There is no evidence of a cycle strategy across the estate. There are cycle stores; however, many appear disused. Micro-mobility within the estate is restricted. The new development is well located for main bus lines and has good connections to public transport such as Norbiton station. Pedestrian and cycle routes are in places underlit and not overlooked, lacking passive security. There are a lot of dead ends and corners across the estate. Alleyways are not maintained. The Archway is the main community asset on site which is easily accessible.

Social infrastructure

RAG = 2/5 (Red)

There is no apparent mix of uses or active frontages across the site. The walkways create a mix of vertical levels; there are open front gardens creating opportunities for interaction. There is no co-location of facilities, services or active ground floor uses. People can meet people from other backgrounds across the estate, mainly due to informal social spaces the residents have created. There are no active community facilities on site apart from the Archway. There is a mix of playgrounds and outdoor gyms across the estate, however, accessibility is limited for some. There is no youth social infrastructure. Benches across the estate are in a mixed state of repair.

Homes for everyone

RAG = 4/5 (Green)

The estate seems to be designed in a tenure-blind approach; however, due to poor maintenance, some council properties can be clearly identified. There is a good mix of tenure and affordable housing is spread across the estate. There is a range of typologies on site. There is not much flexibility to meet changing needs within existing flats. There is a good provision of outdoor spaces, private and community amenity space.

Adaptability and resilience

RAG = 1/3 (Red)

There are informal adaptations of front gardens and public space, however, not in a consistent manner. Phase 1 developments offer limited scope for adaptations. There is not much opportunity for residents to

adapt their properties internally. There is no community facility open to residents. There are formal and informal residents' networks but no evidence of community management of spaces.

8.3. Category 2: Distinctive places

Overall Score: RAG = 0 (red) (5 out of 16 possible)

This dimension looks at the identity of the place, its memorable characteristics and distinctiveness.

Making the most of what's there

RAG = 2/5 (Red)

There are natural assets on site, mainly mature trees. Some are retained in the new development. Open space has been lost to the construction process but there are plans to reinstate an open green space in Phase 1. No social infrastructure strategy can be identified. Play areas are retained and in fair condition. There is no sensitive transition between existing and new developments. The estate is disjointed and social spaces are often tucked in and hidden away.

A memorable character

RAG = 2/5 (Red)

Local materials are reflected in the new building design, but not the style of architecture. The existing tower and podium design provides a defined character for the estate. The existing estate provides a memorable character and creates a distinctive skyline approaching the site from Kingston. The new development is named Kingston Grove; no placenames appear to be retained relevant to the history of the estate. There is little evidence of public art or culture across the estate.

Well defined streets and spaces

RAG = 1/3 (Red)

Front and back gardens are open to main through routes, activating and overlooking the main thoroughfares. Parts of the estate, however, have garages at ground level lacking activation. No clear definition between public and private across the old blocks, often due to a lack of fencing. Large numbers of cars parked around the estate blur definitions further. There is some passive security and evidence of washing lines. However, boarded up flats and vacant dwellings create a negative perception.

Easy wayfinding

RAG = 0/3 (Red)

The towers are legible landmarks. There are estate maps on the perimeter but they do not reflect current construction. At ground level the estate is not legible. Accessibility is an issue; there is no clear signage and surfaces are not well-maintained. There are no obvious adaptations catering for different mobilities. Wayfinding is poor across the estate.

8.4. Category 3: Streets for all

Overall Score: RAG = 0 (red) (6.5 out of 17 possible)

This dimension looks at the social life at street level, the negotiation of the ground plane by transport, people and nature.

Healthy social streets

RAG = 3/4 (Green)

There are benches dotted around the estate. The podiums promote street play and there are outdoor gyms. There is generally low traffic across the estate. There is evidence of children playing and people socialising at ground level. Maintenance of playgrounds could be improved. Generally, the estate feels safe to cross and walk through. Some alleyways, however, feel inaccessible and unsafe. Parts of the estate are lined generously with mature trees. The richness of private gardens contributes to the sense of calm. There are, however, uneven surfaces due to overgrowth.

Cycle and car parking

RAG = 0.5/3 (Red)

There are cycle stores across the estate, however, there is evidence of low usage. There is evidence of informal cycle storage on balconies and walkways. Car parking spills over to pedestrian areas and lacks clear distinction. Designated car parking bays for people with limited mobility are not well signposted.

Green and blue social infrastructure

RAG = 1.5/4 (Red)

There are clearly identifiable public spaces - podiums, playgrounds and cages - however, they are not always inclusive of all ages and abilities. There are sports and play facilities across the estate: Fairfields recreation grounds are a short walk away. There are no clearly integrated spaces for nature and wildlife. There are some opportunities for residents to interact with nature and wildlife, but connections are not clearly identified. Green spaces across the estate are at varying levels of maintenance.

Back of pavement, front of home

RAG = 1.5 /4 (Red)

The front of homes is not always tenure blind and front gardens of council-owned properties can be identified. Boundaries of the estate are blurred, especially where construction is taking place. There are a lot of left-over spaces across the estate with no clear functions, at times overtaken by car parking or bins. Balconies across the estate provide passive security. Clusters of large bins are located around the estate, lacking dedicated and designed spaces.

Meanwhile use

RAG = 0/2 (Red)

There is no evidence of meanwhile use spaces. The hoardings have, at places, blocked off alleyways or restricted navigation across the estate.

Scored built environment assessment /BHL20	Score	RAG
Integrated Neighbourhoods	9.5 /23	
Natural connections	1.5	
Walking, cycling and public transport	1	
Social infrastructure	2	
Homes for everyone	4	
Adaptability and resilience	1	
% achieved out of maximum possible score	41.3%	
Distinctive places	5/16	
Making the most of what's there	2	
A memorable character	2	
Well defined streets and spaces	1	
Easy wayfinding	0	
% achieved out of maximum possible score	31.3%	
Streets for all	6.5/17	
Healthy social streets	3	
Cycle and car parking	0.5	
Green and blue social infrastructure	1.5	
Back of pavement, front of home	1.5	
Meanwhile use	0	
% achieved out of maximum possible score	38.2%	

Cambridge Road Estate Built Environment Assessment



— RoCambridge Road Estate boundary

— BE Assessment walking route

Natural Connections



West border to CRE Estate



South borders to CRE



South borders to CRE



Alleys in CRE



Construction hoardings



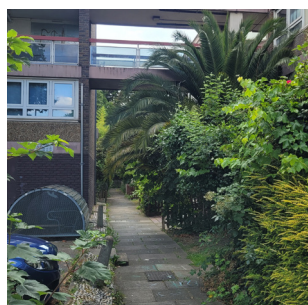
Side alleys in CRE



Internal connections



Front yards across CRE



Greenery in East CRE



Quality of urban realm



Entrance to Madingley

Walking, cycling, and public transport



Accessibility adaptations



Tree planters



Residential parking



Cycle storage



Cycle storage



Abandoned bicycles



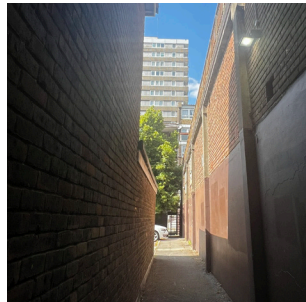
Promotion of new development



Alleys next to construction



Boarded flats on walkways



Pedestrian walkways



Archway

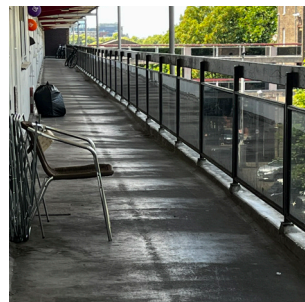
Social Infrastructure



Cambridge Road shops



Cambridge Road shops



Social connections



Walkways as social links



Podiums across estate



Existence of in the past



Community rooms in blocks



Well-used streets



Podium play infrastructure



Outdoor gym



Archway



Maintenance of benches

Homes for everyone



Blocked flats

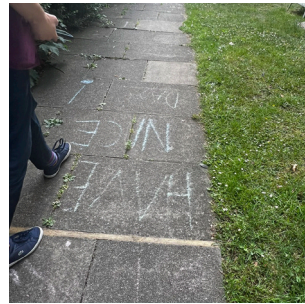


Balcony amenities



Maintenance of fencing

Adaptability and resilience



Children play



Playgrounds



Podium underused

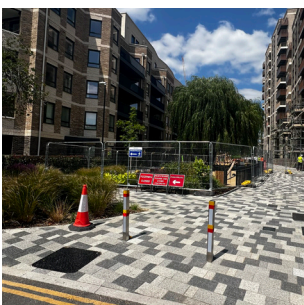


Garages



Memorial

Making the most of what's there



Phase 1 new amenities



Car parking and green space



Outdoor gym



Existing playgrounds



Construction



Private gardens with no fence



Retaining trees

A memorable character



New construction and towers



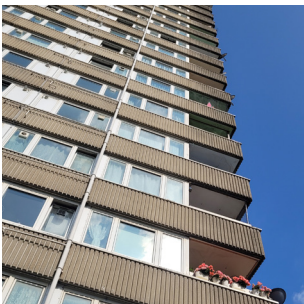
Residential walkways



Residential walkways



Skyline



Tower design language



Name change of estate



Art on hoardings



Front yards



Construction



Front yards



Mature trees



Balconies



Well defined streets and spaces

Easy wayfinding



Approach to estate



Towers as landmarks



Surface



Estate maps



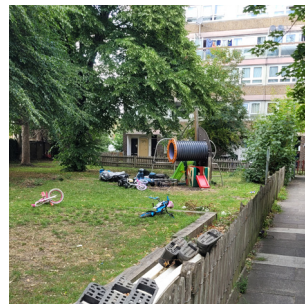
Block signage



Healthy social streets



Car parking and bins



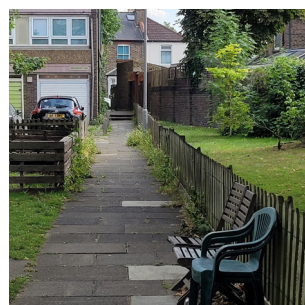
Child play



Playgrounds



Car parking



Appropriated seating



Maintenance



Cycle and car parking



Balcony storage

8.5. Stakeholders' views on amenities and social infrastructure

Stakeholders were frustrated about the lack of maintenance of the estate's amenities. There was visible deterioration of lifts, playgrounds, refuse stores and residents' homes. Many stakeholders agreed there was a perception among residents that the council had neglected the estate over time.

“There must be a bunch of young people, teenagers, who I don’t ever really see. There was some youth provision for a while but I haven’t heard from that recently or whether they’re continuing. I’d love to see more investment in young people’s lives.”- Stakeholder

Regarding the new amenities planned through the regeneration, stakeholders described a sense of distrust amongst the residents. They were not confident that the facilities outlined, such as new green space and community hall, will be delivered to their expectations. Stakeholders believed the delays in the works and inconsistent communication has fuelled this perception.

Despite this distrust, the stakeholders noted that various community events and engagement sessions were well attended by residents. This highlighted the desire for most residents to be active in the community. However, there was concern over the lack of suitable space and activities for young people. While stakeholders acknowledged some open space on the estate was being used for young people, poor maintenance and safety issues limited its use. Stakeholders are hopeful the new community centre will address this obstacle, yet they are unclear whether activities focused on young people would be considered.

“Repairs – doing what you can to the environment. Police survey flagged waste management, lighting, street lighting... just staying on top of that was a big deal for residents. They feel like they break down and then never get fixed. Maybe you help people leave their homes just by making those incremental improvements, showing that someone cares, that there’s someone out there making these things a bit better.”- Stakeholder

“The one thing is that people’s perception of the Council let the estate go to ruin - the Council neglecting the estate - not spending the money on the lift and the community - there is a perception that the Council has not put the effort in.”- Stakeholder

8.6. Walking interviews

Nearly all residents spoke about the poor maintenance of the estate. Common issues included uneven surface of the pavements, potholes and the build-up of litter around large bins and walkways. Many residents see this as an issue the council should be addressing.

There are a few open spaces outside the estate: most residents use them to socialise with friends and family. Fairfield's park was frequently mentioned as a green space that was used by residents and their families. Other residents are aware of the playgrounds and open spaces such as the 'podiums' within the estate, and many use these spaces well. These residents also pointed out the poor maintenance of these open spaces, with some seeing littering and dog waste not being cleaned up by the owners.

Transport links in the area were seen as a positive asset. Some residents use them to travel to nearby areas such as Kingston and Norbiton for shopping and socialising. Some residents felt they do not have access or the breadth of options they otherwise would in the wider area.

"To the station it's 7-10 mins walk. 131 bus and N87. Kingston is walking distance, approx. 10 mins. Richmond Park is 15-20 mins walk. Fairfield to walk the dogs is 5 mins walk. And the cemetery. It's like a forest" - Walking interview

"Post office. Further along you've got a chemist. For me it's so good for the chemist that the chemist will deliver to you so I don't even have to go down for my prescription." - Walking interview

Most of the residents agreed that there are good provisions of amenities nearby, many referring to the line of shops, the café and post office on Hawks Road. Many residents found it useful for essential everyday items. Nearby provision, such as the pharmacy and Kingston Hospital supported residents' health needs.

The majority of the residents use local community spaces for activities. Most residents spoke in support of the Archway as a space that provided residents with weekly events. Such activities had helped the residents grow their support network. Other community spaces and events were also appreciated as places to meet people and socialise.

"The Archway rooms are staying open. Sometimes we go over on a Wednesday and have a cup of tea, meet friends and chat to people." - Walking interview

"Podium – I love this place. My house is so close I can bring my coffee down here and watch the children playing. But I can be back in my house in two minutes too. Quiet during the day." - Walking interview



Financial Wellbeing

1, 2 & 3 bedroom
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Grove**
CAMBRIDGE ROAD



Section 9: Financial wellbeing and cost-of-living

This section explores how residents have been affected by the impact of the cost of living and their general financial conditions. We have pulled these out separately for clarity; however, they have been scored under the Wellbeing dimension of the framework.

Questions

- How well would you say you are managing financially?
- How are you managing your housing costs?
- Has your financial situation changed over the last three years, and if worsened, why?
- Do you use a foodbank?
- Demographic questions relating to financial situation

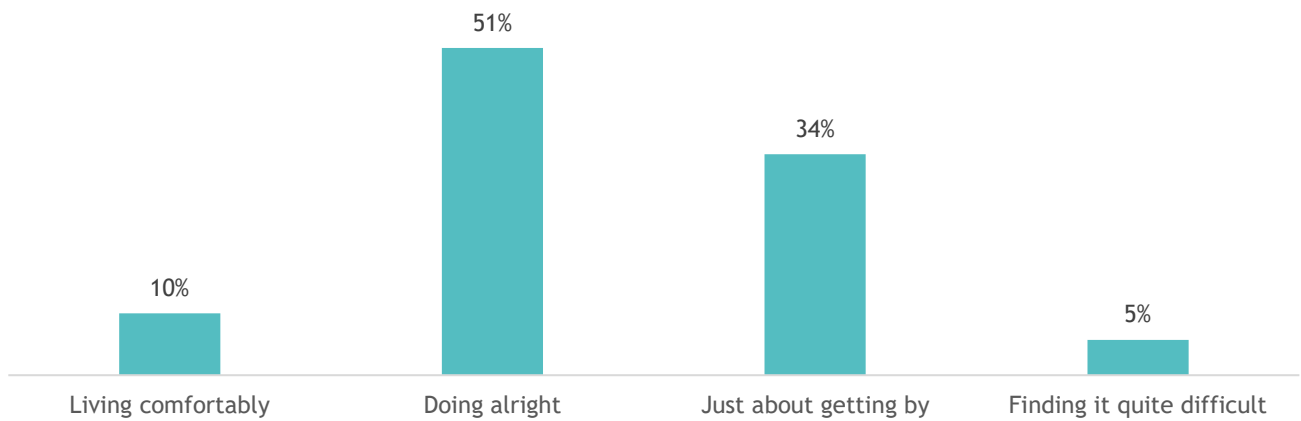
Key findings

- Residents interviewed generally report doing alright; however, a sizable minority (31%) are just about getting by and some are finding it quite difficult to manage financially (5%).
- Private tenants and secure council tenants appear to be struggling the most both with their general finances and housing costs.
- People's financial situations have largely stayed the same in the last three years, with a small 8% of those interviewed across all tenures reporting that it has worsened.
- Temporary residents are the ones largely using foodbanks on the estate, with 6% reporting they use a foodbank about once or twice a month.

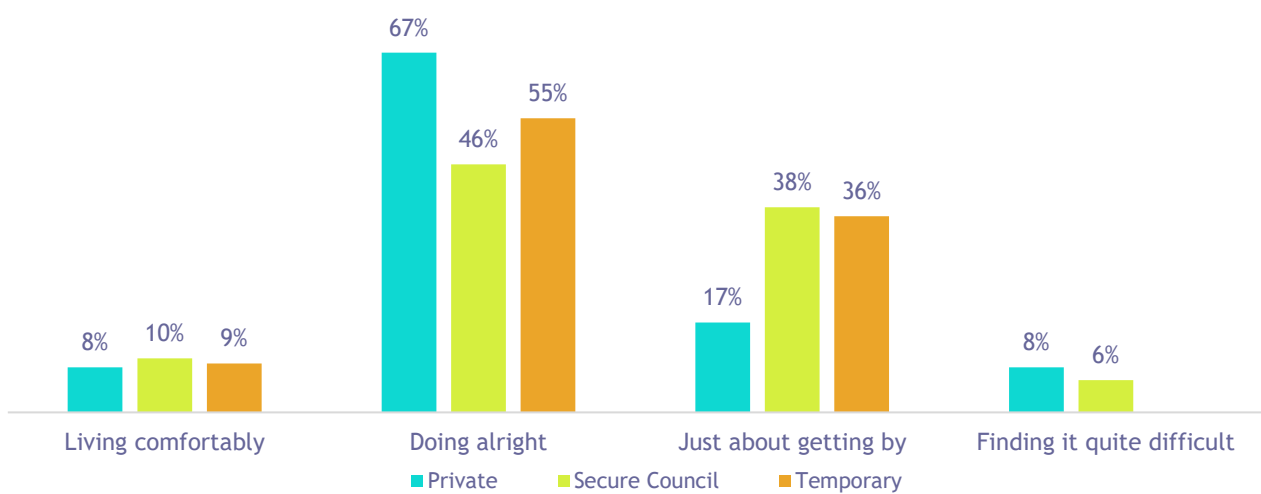
9.1 Financial wellbeing

61% of respondents reported living comfortably or doing alright. 24% were just about getting by and 5% reported that they are finding their financial situation quite difficult. Secure and temporary council tenants are most likely to report just about getting by. Private and council tenants are most likely to report difficulties. No residents reported finding it very difficult.

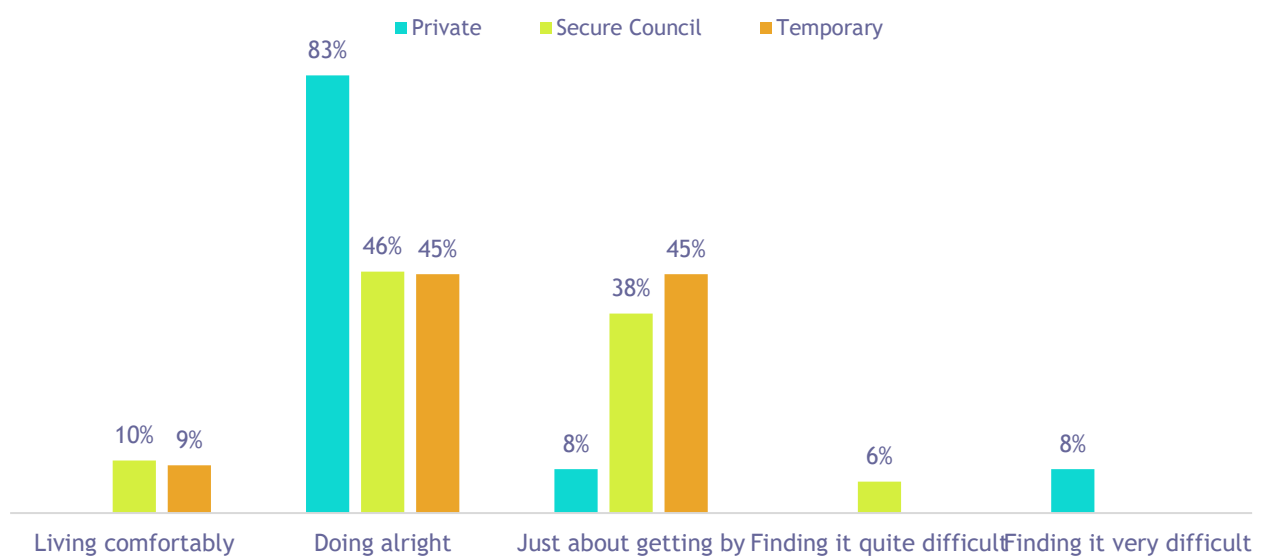
When asked about managing with paying for housing costs overall, 60% of respondents indicate they are either living comfortably or doing alright, 34% are just about getting by and 5% are finding it either quite or very difficult. Secure council tenants and private tenants indicated having the most difficulties. Most people are doing alright, with temporary and council tenants more likely to be just about getting by.



How well would you say you yourself are managing financially these days? n=73

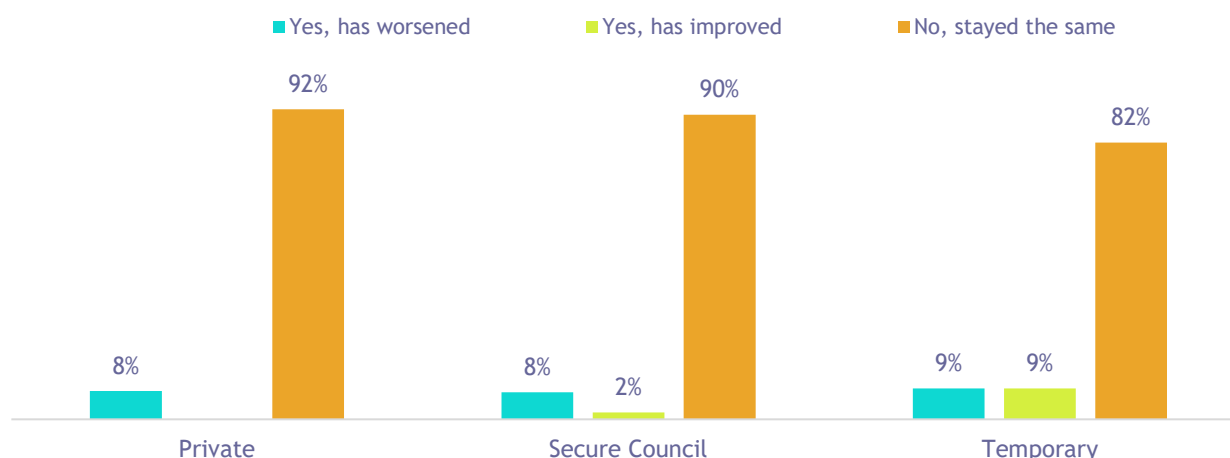


How well would you say you yourself are managing financially these days? (broken by tenure) n=73



How well would you say you yourself are managing with paying for your housing costs these days? n=73

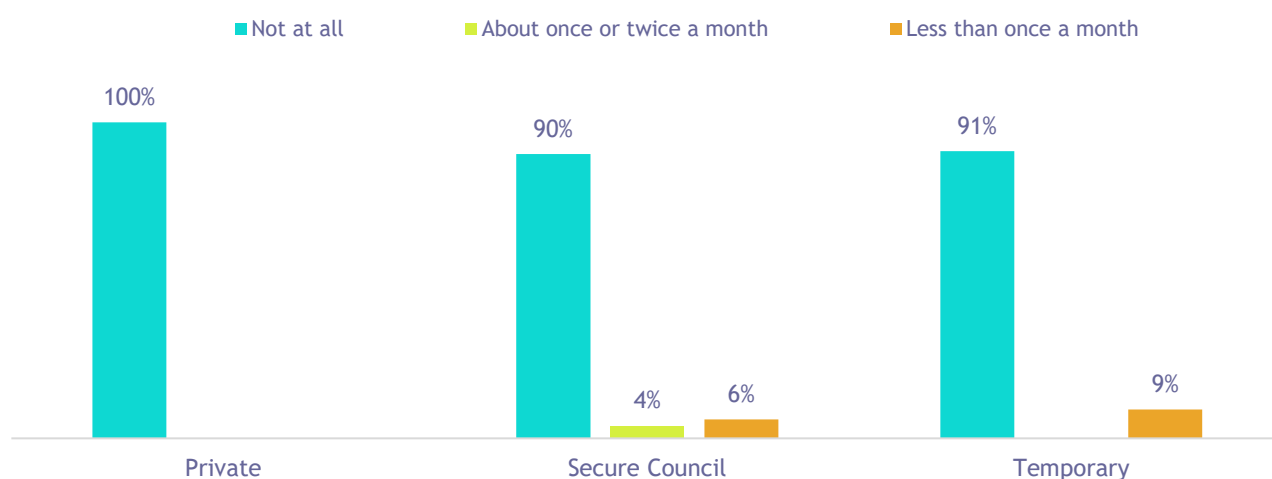
People's financial situations have not changed dramatically in the last three years, with 89% reporting that it has stayed the same. It is important to note that this question captures the period between March 2022 and March 2025, potentially obscuring changes to financial situations which would have happened because of the earlier stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. 3% report that their financial situations has improved, 8% that it has worsened.



Has your financial situation changed in the last three years? n=73

Some households on the estate are using food banks. 92% report having not used a foodbank, which is broadly in line with comparable areas. 5% of respondents use the foodbank less than once a month and 3% about once or twice a month. Foodbank use was reported by temporary tenants and some secure council tenants, not by private tenants.

Kingston foodbank¹⁵ (operating alongside the Trussell trust) provides services across the borough. Throughout the pandemic, CRest ran a foodbank¹⁶ from Piper Hall in 2020 and 2021; they are now running the Tuesday Lunch Club, which provides hot meals and essential food items from Queen Mary Hall. This is well attended.



How often has your household used a food bank, or similar service, in the last 12 months? n=73

¹⁵ <https://kingston.foodbank.org.uk/locations/>

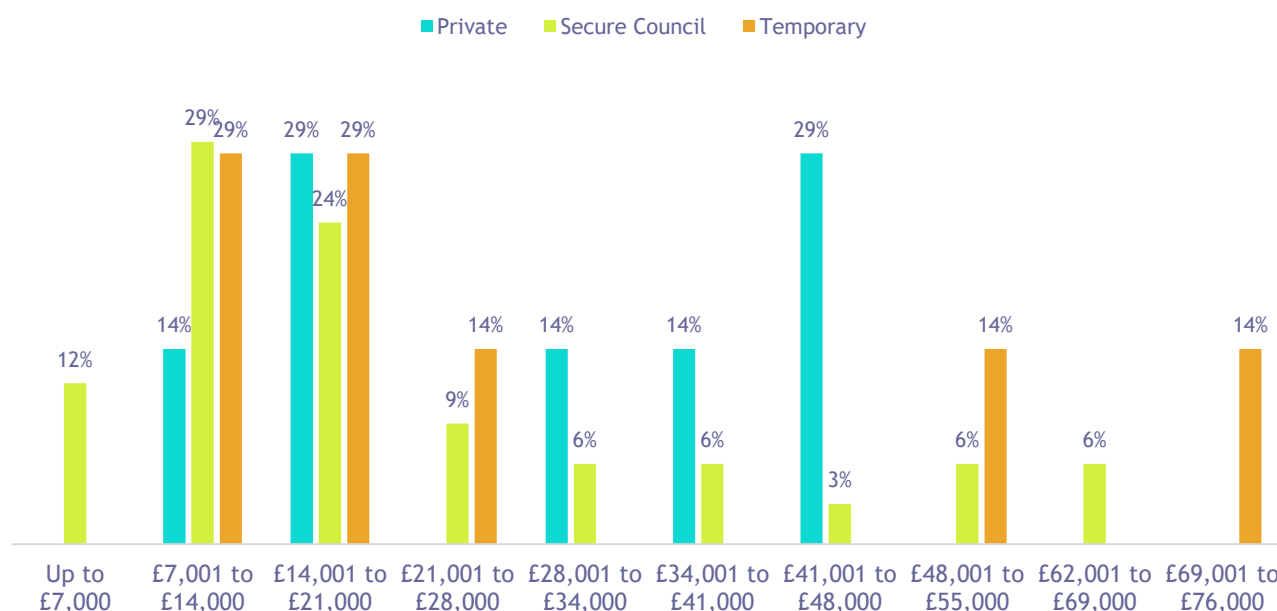
¹⁶ <https://e-voice.org.uk/crest/food-bank/>

We interviewed a mix of households across different income brackets. 74% of respondents indicated a combined household income of less than £34,000 per year. The median household income in Greater London for 2022-23 is reported to be £38,157¹⁷.



What is the combined annual income of your household, prior to tax being deducted? n=48

Private tenants are less likely to have higher incomes but more likely to have household incomes between £28,000 and £48,000 a year. Temporary and secure council tenants are split across the bands, although there is a higher clustering towards the lower end, below an annual income of £21,000.



What is the combined annual income of your household, prior to tax being deducted? (broken by tenure) n=48

¹⁷ <https://ifs.org.uk/data-items/median-household-incomes-region>

9.2. Stakeholder views on costs of living

A few of the stakeholders reported the impact of the cost of living on residents. They encountered residents who were living precariously because of unemployment, low pay or irregular work. Food poverty was seen as another factor affecting residents: stakeholders reported an increase in residents attending the foodbank. The foodbank was seen as an important lifeline for many on the estate.

“Food poverty is probably one of the big defining factors. High [on the estate]. They like that opportunity to have a free meal and not be questioned.” - Stakeholder Interview

“At the youth sessions they often have food and have young people specifically asking what’s on the menu tonight. So, the cost of living is definitely having an impact.” - Stakeholder interview

“There are lots of people on the estate who might be struggling to have jobs at the moment and need things to get out and do, e.g. volunteering.” - Stakeholder interview



Conclusion

Conclusion and recommendations

We found in Cambridge Road Estate a strong, long-standing and well-established community which expressed very positive sentiments about their local identity, links with neighbourhoods, willingness to act and ability to influence the future of their area: at times significantly higher than comparable areas. This is something to be celebrated and protected. However, whereas the social dimensions of the estate appear strong, the physical condition of both buildings and the public realm is poor. Cambridge Road's residents benefit from their location and proximity to facilities and transport links in the wider borough and London. However, they face different challenges to their surrounding areas.

Community research "You Can Kingston"¹⁸, carried out by the Young Foundation and thinkpublic in 2009 on the Cambridge Road Estate summarised the issues at the time as focusing on the top categories of: social infrastructure; community cohesion; better employment opportunities and support for residents; better information from the council; tackling anti-social behaviour and improving health provision.

Although the reputation of the estate seems to have improved, antisocial behaviour and drug misuse have reduced, and perceptions of safety have shifted in a generally positive direction; many of those findings resonate in our data more than 15 years later. In 2025, we found that access to sport and leisure facilities to be poor. Maintenance of common areas and the urban realm needs improvement, as well as better provision of safe facilities for play and socialising for children and older adolescents. We heard that potential erosion of social bonds and community cohesion in the future are at the forefront of residents' minds, with worries about the densification of the estate and the marginalisation of existing communities. Making sure that the existing and new communities have the space and opportunities to interact with one another is key to the long-term sustainability of the regeneration.

Social infrastructure on the estate, however, has been eroded. Piper Hall has been demolished. There is no meanwhile provision of spaces for community members to gather and socialise on site, yet there are defunct and unused community spaces, especially at the ground floors of residential towers. Communication about the regeneration and ongoing activities appears to be reaching only a certain group of residents, and many residents are losing trust because of a lack of awareness.

Cambridge Road Estate's regeneration is not happening in isolation; in the last decade, the surrounding area has seen new developments to the north, east and south of the estate, and another major development is being constructed in immediate proximity to the west of the estate. The cumulative effect of new developments in the area risks overwhelming services, creating tensions between communities and putting a strain on local facilities if not managed and coordinated. Throughout the process of improving the built environment, the regeneration needs to make sure that there are meanwhile provisions which support and enhance existing and future communities.

¹⁸ https://e-voice.org.uk/crest/files/view/CANONBD0241_SCANTODESKTOP_09142009-162647.PDF

Recommendations

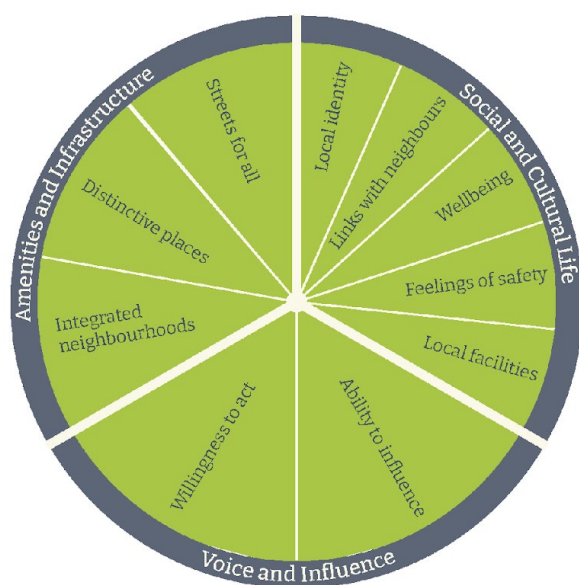
- **Improve communications with diverse groups** of residents about the regeneration, especially private and temporary residents and **establish a clear mechanism for engaging** new arrivals with the existing and wider community. Involve a broader spectrum of residents in the decision-making process to prevent erosion of trust and future tensions. Simplify communication channels, reduce duplication, and use multiple methods of communication.
- **Recognise and celebrate the existing strong community** and oral histories of the estate by introducing estate-wide events and diversifying **activities on the estate to cater for different groups**, especially young and elderly people. Create activities that specifically cater for temporary tenants and that address issues of affordability and access.
- **Encourage the creation of more formal and informal social infrastructure on the estate and meanwhile use** - this includes hard infrastructure (creation of indoor community spaces, improvement of public outdoor spaces, improve quality of spaces for young children and teenagers), and soft infrastructure (understanding community social networks, supporting existing and informal interest groups).
- **Develop and deliver an urban realm and ground plane improvements plan** to improve wayfinding, tackle maintenance, improve lighting and safety provisions and promote an inclusive and accessible environment. The plan could address cycling lane provision, micro-mobility and accessibility, better waste management, and re-activate ground planes. This is particularly important for phases currently undergoing active construction and for later phases of the regeneration.
- **Improve housing quality across the estate**, especially in later phases of the regeneration. Improve repairs and maintenance.
- **Increase opportunities for volunteering on site and proactively promote those** by encouraging and supporting the creation of diverse groups for litter picking, food sharing, gardening, etc. Create opportunities for improving informal and formal skills and support exchange on the estate.

Appendix 1: Method for assessing social sustainability

The research draws on previous work, by Social Life and Professor Tim Dixon (of the University of Reading) in 2012, to devise and test a social sustainability measurement framework for The Berkeley Group¹⁹. This innovative project set out to understand and measure wellbeing and the strength of community in new housing developments.

The Berkeley Group's framework is grounded in academic research and evidence from government surveys about social sustainability and its relationship to the built environment, including both physical and non-physical factors. 'Physical factors' include decent and affordable housing, access to opportunities, high quality public services, a good quality and sustainable public realm, good transport connections. 'Non-physical factors' encompass safety, local social networks, social inclusion and spatial integration, cultural heritage, a sense of belonging and identity, and wellbeing.

The Berkeley Group's framework organises these factors into three core dimensions: Social and Cultural Life; Voice and Influence; and Amenities and Infrastructure. Thirteen indicators, based on 45 questions, are used to measure the impact and outcomes of regeneration and development against the three dimensions.



The social sustainability measurement framework

These questions all replicate questions used in national surveys, so data can be compared to other areas. For the Social and Cultural Life, and Voice and Influence dimensions, questions have been taken from national surveys supported by government and research councils. For the Amenities and Infrastructure dimension, questions have been taken from Design Council CABE's Building for Life survey.

Predicting residents' views of their local neighbourhoods

¹⁹ Nicola Bacon et al (2012) Creating Strong Communities, The Berkeley Group for technical appendices see <http://www.social-life.co/publication/creating-strong-communities-2/>

Social Life has developed a methodology for predicting how residents of local neighbourhoods are likely to feel about key indicators, including their sense of belonging, their fear of crime, trust in their neighbours, and wellbeing.

Using data that is openly available, from government and research councils, we can benchmark what we would expect residents to feel about the neighbourhoods they call home. We can test our predictions against the reality of what residents actually think and feel, with data gathered through a residents survey.

The predictive data we use comes from two national surveys: the Understanding Society Survey (USS)²⁰ and the Community Life Survey²¹. These both ask questions about residents' perceptions of the places they live in. We have selected questions from USS and the Community Life Survey that shed light on the social sustainability of small areas.

The sample sizes of these surveys are not large enough to disaggregate responses directly to small local areas. However, we can match this data to small areas using the ONS (Office for National Statistics) "Area Classifications" categories at "Output Area" level. This enables us to see how residents of small areas are likely to feel. This is predictive data, not a robust portrait of the neighbourhood.

Output area classifications

Area classifications have been developed by ONS to understand social attitudes in local areas²². Area classifications can give powerful insights into local areas, which can help inform and imagine place-based projects and interventions. They are based on a range of socio-demographic data for local neighbourhoods, and were first created using 2001 census data and have been updated with 2011 data.

The 2011 area classifications are based on 60 variables from the 2011 census data. These fall into five categories:

- demographic (age, ethnicity, population density)
- household composition (marital status, children)
- housing (tenure and type)
- socio-economic (HE qualifications, car ownership, health)
- employment (unemployment, full-time/part-time, industry)

Area classifications describe broad groupings of areas - or supergroups - and more detailed subgroups. These can be matched to the smallest statistical units used by ONS, "output areas" (the majority of these include between 110 and 139 households).²³

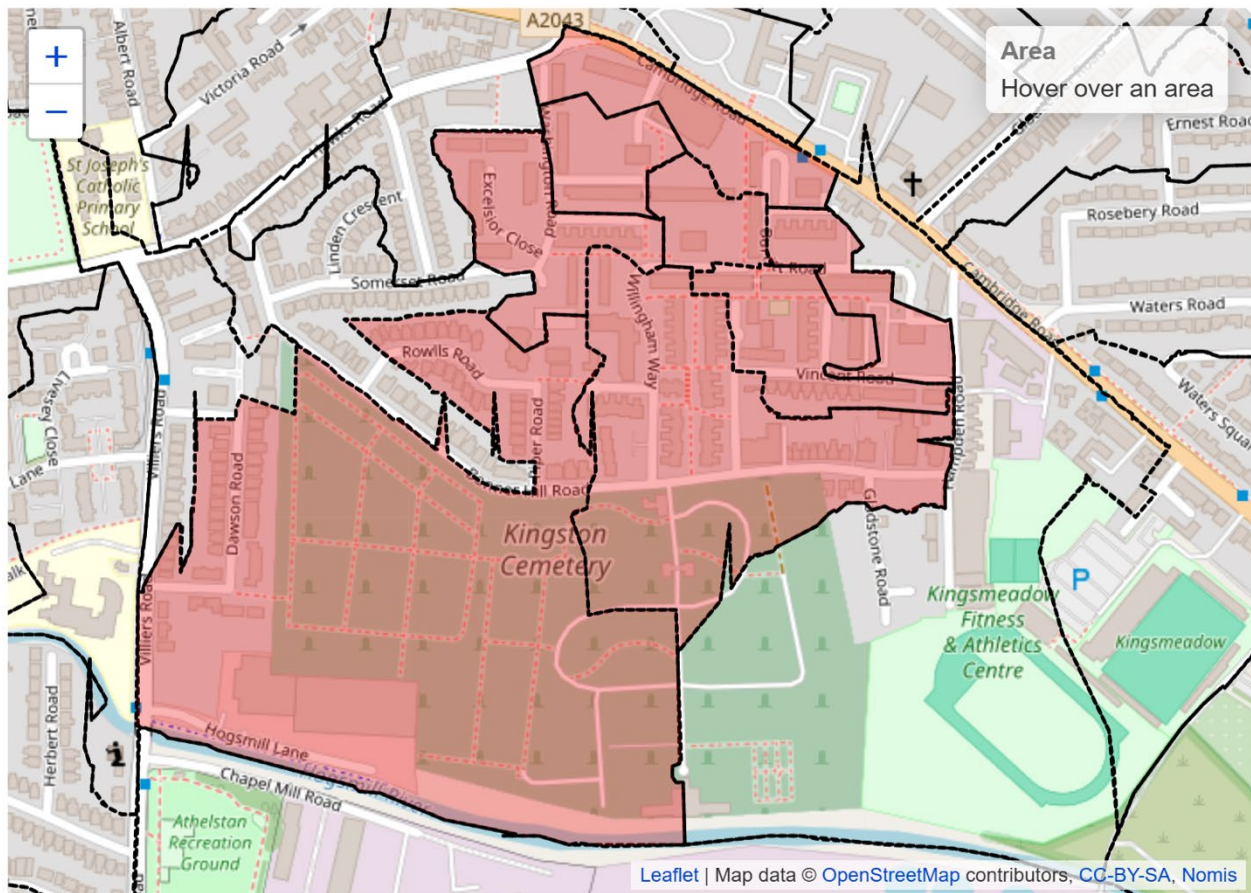
Matching national survey data to small areas OAC classifications enables us to map survey data to output areas (when it is appropriately coded).

²⁰ for more on USS go to www.understandingsociety.ac.uk

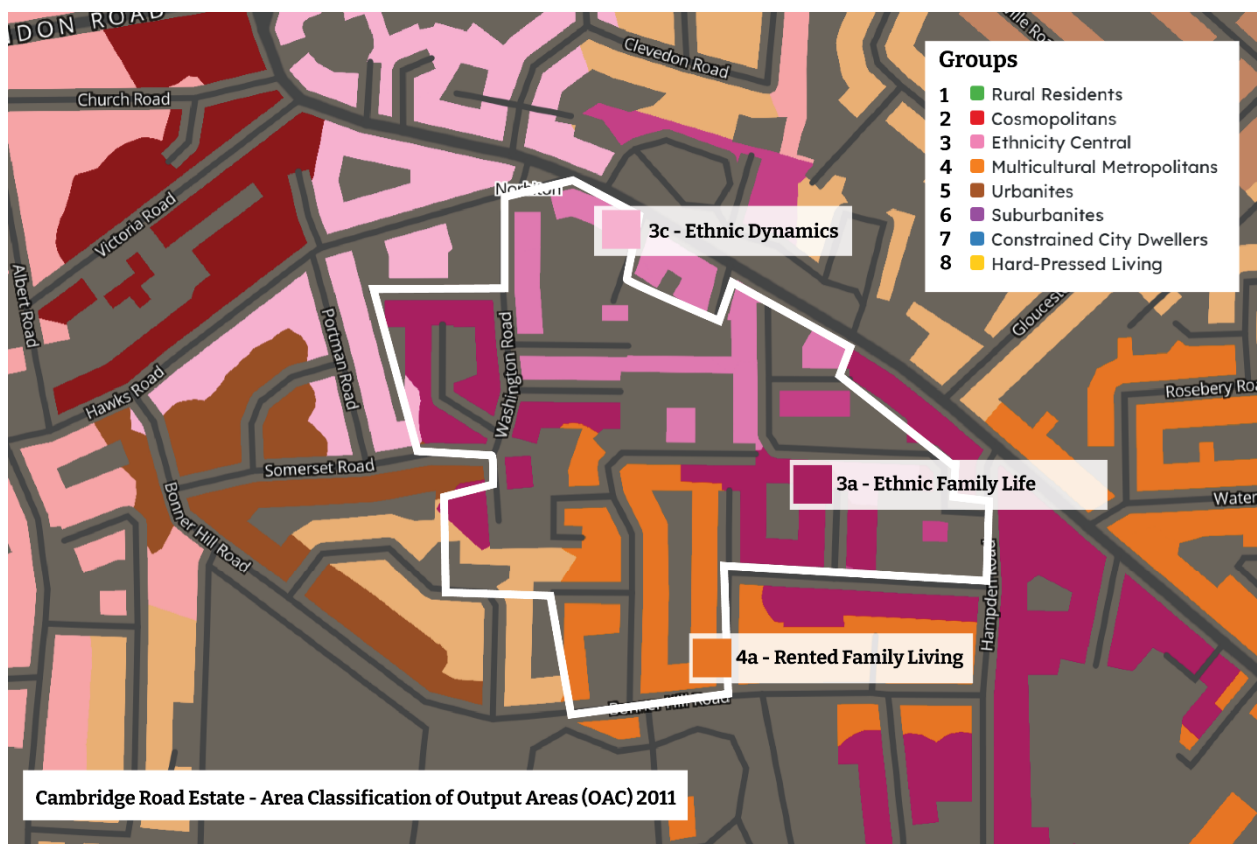
²¹ for more on the Community Life Survey go to www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-life-survey

²² for more on area classifications go to www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/geographicalproducts/areaclassifications/2011areaclassifications

²³ for more on output areas go to www.ons.gov.uk/census/2001censusandearlier/dataandproducts/outputgeography/outputareas



Output Areas covered by Cambridge Road Estate against demographic data are compared. Source: NOMIS



Output Area Classifications for Cambridge Road Estate.

Appendix 2: Benchmarking Cambridge Road Estate

KEY to SCORES:

-1 = WORSE THAN COMPARABLE AREAS (Statistically significant responses below the benchmark = red)

0 = AS EXPECTED (Responses are the same as, or similar to, the benchmark, or they are not statistically significant = yellow)

1= BETTER THAN COMPARABLE AREAS (Statistically significant responses above the benchmark = green)

CRITERIA: LOCAL IDENTITY				
Cambridge Road Estate benchmarks	Total_CRE	Comparable area	Difference to comparable area	1
I plan to remain a resident of this neighbourhood for a number of years	75.4%	51.0%	24.5%	
I feel like I belong to this neighbourhood	82.0%	47.4%	34.6%	
CRITERIA: LINKS WITH NEIGHBOURS				
Cambridge Road Estate benchmarks	total_CRE	Comparable area	Difference to comparable area	1
If I needed advice about something I could go to someone in my neighbourhood	54.5%	39.8%	14.7%	
I borrow things and exchange favours with my neighbours	37.7%	32.0%	5.7%	
I regularly stop and talk with people in my neighbourhood	68.3%	48.5%	19.8%	
The friendships and associations I have with other people in my neighbourhood mean a lot to me	76.0%	45.0%	31.0%	

I think of myself as similar to the people that live in this neighbourhood	85.6%	44.6%	41.1%	
People from different backgrounds get on well	96.4%	73.9%	22.5%	
CRITERIA: WELLBEING				
Cambridge Road Estate benchmarks	total_CRE	Comparable area	Difference to comparable area	0
Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live	91.6%	59.8%	31.8%	
Life satisfaction	80.2%	61.2%	19.0%	
How managing financially now	60.3%	52.8%	7.5%	
General health	77.8%	72.7%	5.2%	
Used food bank **% never used	91.8%	92.0%	-0.2%	
How satisfied are you with your housing quality?/Satisfaction with house/flat***	47.6%	58.0%	-10.4%	
CRITERIA: FEELINGS OF SAFETY				
Cambridge Road Estate benchmarks	total_CRE	Comparable area	Difference to comparable area	1
How safe do you feel walking alone in this area after dark?	84.4%	64.3%	20.1%	
Do you ever worry about the possibility that you, or anyone else who lives with you, might be the victim of crime?	75.2%	55.9%	19.3%	
CRITERIA: WILLINGNESS TO ACT				
Cambridge Road Estate benchmarks	total_CRE	Comparable area	Difference to comparable area	1

I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood	70.7%	53.9%	16.8%	
Formal or informal volunteering in the last 12 months	9.9%	11.4%	-1.5%	
CRITERIA: ABILITY TO INFLUENCE				
Cambridge Road Estate benchmarks	total_CRE	Comparable area	Difference to comparable area	1
Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?	74.1%	24.0%	50.1%	
How important is it for you personally to feel that you can influence decisions in your local area?	82.3%	46.3%	36.0%	

The research

The report was written by Simeon Shtebunaev, Lavanya Karthik and Nicola Bacon.

The door-to-door survey was carried by Face Facts. Walking interviews were carried by Jessica Cargill-Thompson.

Social Life was created by the Young Foundation in 2012, to become a specialist centre of research and innovation about the social life of communities. All our work is about the relationship between people and the places they live and understanding how change, through regeneration, new development or small improvements to public spaces, affects the social fabric, opportunities and wellbeing of local areas. We work in the UK and internationally.

www.social-life.co