

Cohesion projects for new build developments

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 'Cohesion projects for new build developments' is part of the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market renewal 'Cohesion Counts' research and aims to understand how new build schemes in Oldham and Rochdale can become integrated and cohesive communities as part of existing communities. The project has considered what type of activity is most likely to bring people together in a particular location, working with the partner RSL to deliver the project and then providing evaluation of the impact of the project in terms of developing community cohesion.
- 1.2 arc⁴ was appointed in January 2009 to implement a project to support cohesion in new build developments for the Oldham/Rochdale Pathfinder. The project focused on three developments, Nelson Place in Rochdale, The Astoria in Oldham Town Centre and Brooklands on Bowlee (Langley Estate) in Rochdale.
- 1.3 The Astoria and Nelson Place developments were originally designed to reflect mixed communities with a range of tenure options but the economic climate and difficulties in the housing market has meant that there has been a large reduction in owner occupied tenure options. In the case of the Astoria this has created a revised tenure mix within developments and provided the research with valuable learning in terms of alternative approaches to creating mixed communities.
- 1.4 The objectives for the project have been to:
 - Initiate an incremental growth in social networks and connections between residents in new build schemes where it does not exist.
 - Develop activities that foster and encourage social networks and interaction between residents in new build housing to improve community cohesion.
 - Develop activities that foster and encourage social networks and interaction between residents in new build housing and established residents to improve community cohesion.
 - Encourage residents of different ages, incomes and property types to come together through social activities to improve community cohesion.
 - Encourage residents in new build homes to engage with establish facilities and amenities within their neighbourhoods to improve their perception of the wider neighbourhood outside their development.
- 1.5 This report documents the main findings from the research and reports on the activities and their outcomes for each of the three developments. The findings of the research are presented as:

- **Section 2** Successful cohesion elsewhere using case studies and learning for this research.
- **Section 3-6** Explanation and background of the individual developments and the activities undertaken.
- **Section 7** Learning, conclusions and recommendations.

2. Successful cohesion elsewhere

- 2.1 Getting along with each other and fitting in with our community is something we tend to take for granted. It sometimes seems that the only times we give any thought to whether the various parts of our society are getting on is as a reaction to a problem, rather than as a proactive strategy.
- 2.2 Cohesion is far wider than ethnic difference. Social, economic and age differences will also impact on perceptions and behaviour toward others and whilst the importance that mixing incomes and tenure can make to achieving balanced and sustainable communities is recognised, there can also be tensions.

Lessons learnt

- 2.3 Whilst there are extensive projects across the country designed to improve cohesion in schemes based on race, age, tenure etc, there is limited written work on cohesion within new build developments. However, arc⁴ has been able to identify a number of recently designed projects that deals with cohesion and new build.
- 2.4 The detailed examples of projects undertaken elsewhere are included in appendix 1. A number of 'lessons' can be learnt and observations made from those projects which include:
 - Very few of the projects tried to identify any formal evaluation or learning to measure success. In the few cases where evaluation is planned, the indicators have tended to concentrate on traditional housing management measures such as turnover, number of voids, house prices and the length of the waiting list (assuming this indicates popularity).
 - It is difficult to measure the impact that an activity has had on the community. There are often a number of other activities being undertaken as part of the regeneration process and identifying which had the most positive impact is difficult.
 - Integration is likely to be a gradual process that one single project will not complete. However, there are a number of activities that seem to have worked well including activities and face to face introductions to the community through community workers, welcome packs and resident ambassadors.
 - A 'speedy' process to establish the new community seems to be required rather than allowing new properties to stand empty and the new community to move in over a lengthy time frame. This is particularly relevant in the current economic climate.
 - The use of a specific community development worker to provide welcome packs is a consistent theme across many projects. The face to face integration and one to one approach seems to be the preferred option for many projects.

- Formal events such as establishing community meetings and residents associations tends not to work as well as informal activities projects that impact on social activities.

Implications for this project

- 2.5 There are a range of options and useful lessons learnt that may assist in establishing projects in new build developments. However, it is difficult to consider which projects proved successful given the lack of monitoring and evaluation and which may be replicable in Oldham and Rochdale.
- 2.6 A different approach will need to be taken in each scheme. For example, in Nelson Place we are dealing with a well established and supported community, whilst in the Astoria the community will be relatively new and the process may be about introducing residents to existing facilities.
- 2.7 In considering projects we should prioritise:
- Informal events that form part of every day life rather than one of specific community activities.
 - Events publicised through face to face contact.
 - Links to existing community project workers.
 - Projects that can promote ongoing networks and social interaction between residents.

3. The case study developments

- 3.1 The project concentrated on three neighbourhoods where new build schemes had been recently built as part of the Pathfinder investment programme.

Nelson Place

- 3.2 Nelson Place is located in the Wardleworth neighbourhood in East Central Rochdale, a popular well occupied area of terraced housing but one of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. Nelson Place was built following demolition of 'two-up two-down' terraced houses that were unsuitable for the needs of modern families and in poor structural repair. The neighbourhood is an area predominantly occupied by Asian families and Nelson Place consists of large 4-bed houses that sit back-to back with smaller 3-bed houses with a plan arrangement that allows them to be easily linked to accommodate larger families. A high proportion of the existing community was engaged in some way with the consultation and design process.
- 3.3 Nelson Place consists of 25 units. Originally, the scheme consisted of 5 social rented homes, 8 shared ownership and 12 outright sales. However, in the current economic climate the 8 shared ownership units have been converted to social rent. The social rented units (13) are 100% Asian occupied, by residents whose properties have been affected by the demolition in the area. At the time of writing only 3 of the 12 outright sale units had sold.

- 3.4 When the scheme was completed there were concerns that there may be cohesion issues between existing/new residents, social renting /owner occupiers and different national groups

The Astoria

- 3.5 The Astoria is a 48 (2 bedroom) unit apartment scheme developed by Great Places that offers town centre living in Oldham. It is in an excellent location for Oldham train station and the proposed Metro Station with links to Manchester and could be an ideal location for commuters.
- 3.6 The Astoria is designed for modern urban living and originally offered mixed tenure options with 50% of apartments for social rent and 50% for sale. However, in the current economic climate the scheme was converted to 100% social rent, which removed the potential to create a mixed tenure community. Great Places and the Council remain committed to creating a successful mixed community in the Astoria in terms of age and income by attracting both economically active households and households in housing need, at different stages in their life cycle, through an innovative approach to lettings and marketing. The potential to integrate these households is the key to creating a successful mixed community.

Brooklands (Bowlee)

- 3.7 Brooklands development is a new build sale scheme at Bowlee Park (Langley) in Rochdale. The scheme consists of around 200 properties in total, all privately owned, and with some rented out by their owners. Brooklands is an excellent example where the design has achieved successful physical integration with existing social rented properties but the development can be accessed without traveling through the rest of the estate and there is concern that there is little interaction between the new residents and the rest of the estate and its facilities. For example, a well equipped and modern leisure facility.
- 3.8 In each of the developments the priority was to focus on the type of intervention which might be put in place to encourage interaction and cohesion between residents. That activity (ies) has been undertaken and then evaluated. The specific areas explored were the extent to which the activity:
- Led towards people having positive attitudes about differences between them and others?
 - Led to residents feeling a greater sense of commitment to the area;
 - Led to them feeling like they belong to the local community.

4. Nelson Place

- 4.1 arc⁴ undertook a door-knocking exercise in and around the Trafalgar St and Buckingham St area of Wardleworth, Rochdale, residents were encouraged to provide their views on community life and specifically to respond to the indicators about cohesion. Two focus groups were also held which were gender specific at the Bangladesh Association & Community Project (BACP) based in Ramsay St at the heart of the Nelson Place redevelopment.
- 4.2 The Bangladesh Association and Community Project is a well established charitable organisation providing support and services to the local Wardleworth community and in particular the Bangladeshi community. There are many groups that operate from the centre.
- 4.3 The main findings are outlined below and detailed findings in appendix 2.

Main findings

- 4.4 The initial consultation with residents would suggest that a lack of community cohesion is not a particular issue in this neighbourhood. There is a very well established Bangladeshi and Pakistani community in the area served by two mosques and the Bangladesh Association & Community Project.
- 4.5 The issues that residents did want to talk to us about were based around the installation of gas hobs in the kitchens and general niggles with the new properties such as cracks in the walls and poorly designed outdoor space.
- 4.6 The community around Nelson Place is based predominantly on family networks from Bangladesh and Pakistan, so issues such as not feeling comfortable in the neighbourhood is not identified. People love the area; the people and the location.
- 4.7 We were able to establish that the community are currently working together in an informal capacity. The Mosques are central to the community and so too is the Bangladesh Association & Community Project which houses a number of projects for both the men and women in the community. This facility has not been involved in any work that has been carried out so far and would really like to get involved.
- 4.8 This research has identified that Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage communities that are so often treated as 'problems' to be solved, in this circumstance work well and are thriving.
- 4.9 It was agreed not to include this development in the project any further as it would be difficult to measure the impact of any intervention.

5. Brooklands

- 5.1 Brooklands was used as an example in the 'Cohesion Counts' projects to evaluate the impact of design on cohesion. This work was undertaken by Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit. This established that there was no meaningful engagement or relationships between any resident (new or established), with a number of people being merely on 'nodding' terms with their neighbours. This is not unusual in new build schemes and particularly in regeneration areas where residents may want to think of their development as being separate to the established community.
- 5.2 arc⁴ focused on which activities may lead to improved community cohesion between privately owned properties and the surrounding properties (generally social rented) and within the new build development.
- 5.3 As the development had recently been involved in a similar piece of research through a door knocking exercise there was concern about consultation fatigue. arc⁴ considered alternative ways to engage households and introduced an on-line survey. This method has provided good response rates before using similar options.
- 5.4 The online survey was called (<http://www.enjoyyourneighbourhood.info>) and 16 people responded. The main findings are outlined below and detailed findings in appendix 2.

Main findings

- 5.5 Our research found that the people in Brooklands tend not to engage across the neighbourhood. However, we did find that more neighbours communicate with each other than previous research had suggested.
- 5.6 In answer to the indicators for cohesion the following results were found:
- I feel I belong to my street – **63% (10) Agree**; 19% (3) Strongly agree.
 - I feel like I belong to my neighbourhood – **56% (9) Agree**; 25% (4) Neither agree or disagree.
 - I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood – **50% (8) Agree; 25% Strongly agree**; 19% (3) Disagree.
 - Overall I am satisfied with my neighbourhood as a place to live – **69% (11) Agree**; 13% (2) Neither agree or disagree; 13% Disagree.
 - I believe my neighbours would help me in an emergency - **56% (9) Agree; 25% Strongly agree**.
 - I borrow things from my neighbours – **31% (5) Disagree**; 25% (4) Agree.
 - I think of myself as similar to other people in my neighbourhood – **75% (12) Agree**.
 - Living in my neighbourhood gives me a sense of community – **44% (7) Agree**; 19% (3) Strongly agree; 19% (3) Disagree
 - I have friends who are also neighbours – **62% (10) Agree**; 19% Strongly agree.

- Having a mix of people makes the neighbourhood a more enjoyable place to live – **56% (9) Agree**; 19% (3) Strongly agree.
- 5.7 The survey also highlighted that the community has detached itself from Langley and better associates itself with Brooklands as an area/name. People have an overall perception that the area they live in is a good area, yet do not use the local community for retail or leisure purposes, choosing to drive to facilities outside of their immediate neighbourhood. Residents appear to have created their own identity and are a happy community who do consider neighbours to be important and are communicating with each other.
- 5.8 As this is a relatively new community, the activities have been designed to introduce people to the local facilities and environment. The neighbourhood has an excellent sports facility, green space and primary school. Activities offer opportunities to foster and encourage social networks to be developed and have focused on creating social links. In particular we were keen to support families with children who have a common interest around young people activities. Three activities have been held:
- The first was an invitation to induction days and a tour of Bowlee Park Sports Centre. The event was targeted at Brooklands residents and residents were given a tour of the Centre and a free induction pack.
 - The second event was an invitation to join a 'Walking Group' encouraging Brooklands residents to be more aware of the public spaces and facilities available to them and to give them the opportunity to meet their neighbours.
 - The final event was to invite residents to get involved with the local primary school in a voluntary capacity e.g. reading with young people.

Outcomes

- 5.9 The gym induction day was attended by four residents, with a further two residents contacting arc⁴ to enquire about further information and 12 people from the Brooklands neighbourhood have joined the gym in the period after the inductions. The event aimed to highlight the Sports Centre and neighbouring facilities to people from the Brooklands development who may not ordinarily use them. Residents were targeted following the event to discuss the impact the event had had in terms of an improved appreciation of facilities and potential new links made with neighbours.
- 5.10 Four detailed interviews were held; two with participants who attended the induction day and two with people who joined the gym.
- 5.11 Two of the respondents were aware of the Sports Centre but thought that it was linked to the primary school and as such wasn't somewhere they would have considered going to.

"It's set back from the road so not very noticeable, you see the sign but assume it's linked with the school and not for general use."

"I knew it was there but hadn't really thought it was somewhere I'd go to, I thought it would be too small and tatty."

- 5.12 All respondents agreed that the Sports Centre is a very good facility, small, but clean and well equipped with a good atmosphere and friendly staff. They all agreed that the Centre was much better than they had anticipated.

“It’s close to home with parking and all the gym equipment I need and great value for money, it’s far better than I was expecting.”

“I really like the atmosphere there, it’s not all gym bunnies and body builders, we are normal people just trying to keep fit and that’s what I like about it and wasn’t expecting.”

“It’s a small gym but that’s what’s good about it too, it’s not intimidating and it’s very clean and the staff are really friendly and helpful too.”

- 5.13 Everyone agreed that they will continue to use the Sports Centre and are actively looking to participate in other fitness classes and to register their children with the SHOKK gym designed for children and young people.

“I will definitely continue with my membership, it has been the best £10 I have spent in a long time, I am getting fitter and more importantly thinner and meeting new people.”

“Yes of course, I really enjoy going and now with the New Year I will hopefully be going more regularly and it is great value, much better than the other gyms I have looked at and closer.”

- 5.14 Most people said that they has encouraged family member to join and were especially impressed with the SHOKK gym for young people and some have enrolled their children.

“I have told my family about the gym and they have said they are interested in joining, I think they might soon.”

“I have enrolled my son in the SHOKK gym, it’s such a good thing for kids to be doing and he loves it.”

- 5.15 All of the respondents said that they had not used the library as yet but had become aware of it and may in the future use it for children’s books and for information.

“I know the library is there now, I haven’t been but if I need to I definitely will, I just haven’t had reason to so far.”

“I have small children and will use the library for books in the future but haven’t as yet.”

- 5.16 We asked whether using the sports centre had changed their views of the local area but respondents weren’t too sure how to respond to this question, but there was a feeling that views had changed and that people as a result of using the Sports Centre now are less inclined to view the area as ‘rough’ and are more likely to see the area as being welcoming and valuable with one exception.

“I don’t know really... I suppose I thought it was a rough area, but it’s not and the people I’ve met have been really friendly and welcoming.”

“I don’t think I had particularly thought about the area before so I don’t think my opinions have changed, I am just aware of the Sports Centre now and like it.”

“It hasn’t changed my views of the area, I still think it is a bit run-down, but I have changed my views about the Sports Centre, it’s a really nice place to go to which I wasn’t expecting.”

- 5.17 Most people said that they had met new people but in a less social way and more an informal ‘hello’ when walking into the Centre. However, there was a promising response which suggested that with time friendships will develop.

“I haven’t met people really, I do say hello to the staff and to one lady who is often there when I am, that’s it really, but that’s how I like it too.”

“Yes I’ve chatted with the staff now and again, but haven’t made friends with anyone in particular.”

“I have chatted a few times to one other woman who uses the gym in the week, and am regular to the staff now. Me and Jill have mentioned joining one of the classes together which we will do, it’s easier when it’s two of you.”

- 5.18 We asked whether people may be more or less likely to become involved with local events/ facilities now that they have joined the sports club. There was a hesitance in the responses to this question; however, the general consensus was that people would be more aware of events as a result of joining the gym, but that would not necessarily mean that they would participate.

“I have seen notices at the Centre for clubs and events, I suppose I wouldn’t generally have seen them, but I don’t think they are things I would get involved in.”

“I don’t think so, I like coming to the gym, but I don’t think community events are my thing.”

“If there is something going on for the kids I’d think about coming along to something.”

- 5.19 As a result of a meeting with residents (mothers and toddlers), from Brooklands, at the Surestart Centre, to establish a walking group, it was decided that Surestart would develop, over the coming months, a series of walks around the local area and the wider area including Heaton Park etc. This would not only act as an activity to promote community cohesion, but would support the aims of Surestart to promote healthy lifestyles. The group will continue to take this forward with Surestart leading and have enjoyed meeting up and taking action as a small group of Mums.

Conclusions

- 5.20 This project has demonstrated that community cohesion, in the main, is identified in subtle ways. This exercise has shown that although small numbers attended the Sports Centre Induction, the result has been to highlight a local facility that is at the heart of the community. Attendance by Brooklands residents has increased since the activities which can only demonstrate a greater involvement with the wider community.
- 5.21 This research would also suggest that with other similar approaches residents living in Brooklands may be more willing to interact with the wider community.

6. The Astoria

- 6.1 The Astoria is a new build scheme that will provide homes for residents that have not previously lived in the same building and who will not know their neighbours; a new community is being created.
- 6.2 Great Places is working to create a balanced and mixed income community by targeting the economically active market and those in housing need. It has achieved this by allocating a proportion of properties through the usual waiting list process and marketing other apartments through Plumlife (their sales arm), employers within Oldham, Urban Life publication, NHS and local colleges.
- 6.3 Great Places has identified a preferred household makeup for each of the 6 floors at the Astoria and is letting apartments based on this model. As part of the moving in process a drop-in event is being held in one of the apartments to introduce residents to the scheme and their neighbours and offer a welcome pack. A series of social activities and opportunities for residents to meet and visit local amenities is being planned over the first 12 months. The first of these has been a 'meet and greet' social event in a local restaurant and this will be followed by an event on the roof top terrace, an accompanied trip to the local theatre with back stage pass and tour and a social event in a local coffee shop/bar. In addition, a range of incentives are being offered to new residents which include a free pass for two weeks free gym membership, a prize draw for white goods for their new home, prize draws for cash for residents maintaining the terms for their tenancy agreement and a prize draw for one tenant to receive a rent free period for 6 months. A face book site was also established promoting social interaction and discussion between residents.
- 6.4 The success of the Astoria will be to attract and retain economically active households into a social rented scheme and integrate the community. To do this Great Places need to create a different approach to letting social housing to make the Astoria a residence of choice and the activities and incentives underpin this.
- 6.5 arc⁴ will be evaluating the outcomes of this work and in particular:
- Identifying the success, or otherwise, of creating a cohesive mixed income community through this approach.
 - The extent to which the 'new community' integrates together and with adjacent communities. There are local communities but geographically they are not within close proximity to the Astoria.
 - Which activities/strategies have the greatest impact on integration?
 - The potential to transfer lessons from this approach to other schemes.
 - The extent to which this impacts on duration of tenancies and satisfaction with homes.

Allocations & Marketing

- 6.6 Great Places identified a preferred household makeup for each of the 6 floors at The Astoria and have let apartments based on this model below:

Ground Floor
Allocate to applicants over 50 years
• Apartments 1 – 6
First Floor
Allocate to applicants over 30 years
• Apartments 7 – 15
Second Floor
Allocate to applicants over 25 years
• Apartments 16 – 23
Third Floor
Allocate to applicants over 25 years
• Apartments 24 – 31
Fourth Floor
Allocate to applicants over 25 years
• Apartments 32 – 39
Fifth Floor
Allocate to applicants over 25 years
• Apartments 40 – 45
Sixth Floor
Allocate to applicants over 25 years
• Apartments 46 - 49

6.7 Great Places 'Letting Objectives' for The Astoria are as follows:

- Stable scheme which contributes to the sustainability of the wider community and local environment.
- Attract economically active people into town centre living.
- Meeting housing need.
- Flagship to wider regeneration activity.

6.8 The 'Lettings Criteria' for The Astoria was set as follows:

When reviewing each individual application the Neighbourhood Coordinator or Neighbourhood Officer will take into consideration the following lettings criteria while appreciating that potential residents might only be able to demonstrate an ability to meet one of them: -

1. A maximum of **24 apartments** be allocated to those who are recipients of state benefits.
2. Target applicants who want to move to the area to be near work commitments, family or friends.
3. Target applicants who can demonstrate a commitment to wanting to live in the area and who can contribute to the sustainability of the existing community and the regeneration process.
4. Applicants must have a minimum of 2 satisfactory references from previous/current landlords and or employers if applicant has not rented before. MMHA reserves the right to seek additional appropriate references.
5. All applicants will be required to attend a formal interview.
6. Properties will only be allocated to applicants and those who wish to live with them who are a minimum of 25 years of age.
7. No pets are allowed.
8. All properties will be subject to 100% nominations to the local authorities re-housing waiting list which is managed by first Choice Homes Oldham.
9. All apartments will be let using a Date Order system plus a Banding System.
10. The allocation of tenancies will be completed by the MMHA Neighbour Officer or Neighbourhood Coordinator using the SX3 system managed by First Choice Homes Oldham.

If satisfactory references are received by MMHA then the applicant will be invited to view a void or tenanted apartment. Following a successful viewing the prospective tenant is formally offered the property in writing and is then asked to sign an Assured Shorthold tenancy.

Main findings

- 6.9 In order to gather as much detail about the success of the marketing activities and the allocations policy adopted by Great Places, an on-line survey was distributed to tenants before moving in to The Astoria. 19 surveys were completed. The main findings are included as appendix 4. In summary:
- The survey results show a clear willingness on the part of tenants to work together to make their living environment a positive one. There was also a keenness to achieve this through shared activities and through Facebook or a similar social networking site. Respondents also demonstrated a degree of pride in where they live by responding positively to how attracted to the area they are.
 - The attitude that people had towards the administrative processes and how responsive the Great Places team were to queries etc was very positive.
 - The demographic profile of The Astoria suggests a varied mix of people from different ethnic backgrounds. However, the survey forms reflect a less mixed

community profile. Ensuring engagement from all groups of people living at the Astoria will be important.

Facebook

- 6.10 As part of the engagement of tenants, and as an information source and communication point, a Facebook page was developed. This has only recently been developed and there are currently 4 Facebook members who have joined and who are sharing information. This is a positive step and highlights a willingness of Great Places to take an alternative approach to communication with their tenants. Discussion boards were added in order to inform people of contact details and policies for maintenance call outs etc. and also to capture people's opinions as to how best tenants can work together. The site also details events that are taking place and any offers tenants may be entitled to.
- 6.11 The Facebook page will continue to be managed by Great Places and over time is likely to attract greater number of tenants and is hope to be a strong link between tenants and Great Places. The Facebook site is shown below:



'Meet and Greet' event

- 6.12 On 11th February 2010 a 'Meet and Greet' event was hosted at The Astoria by Great Places and arc⁴ with the aim of encouraging tenants to meet each other and to meet the Great Places staff.
- 6.13 As an incentive to attend the event a welcome pack containing household products such as cleaning products and a Boots voucher were offered to each household together with refreshments and a local gym membership offer.
- 6.14 The event attracted **24 households** and created a buzz around the building. The apartment used to host the event was a hub of conversation, people chatting to each other and introducing themselves; people talking and generally showing a positive attitude towards their neighbours.
- 6.15 Anecdotal accounts from the events demonstrate that the event has made inroads into creating a cohesive community where people know each other and

take a pride in where they live; where people are willing to help each other and to work together to tackle problems. Such behaviour can be seen by the conversations that took place documented below:

“Is the guy from apartment XX here? He gave me his sofa, I wanted to have a chat with him, he seems a nice bloke, I’ve said I’ll buy him a few pints when I see him.”

“When will the roof garden be open, it’ll be nice for people to meet up there when the weather is better, maybe have a barbeque together.”

“I’ve seen you about, I’ve been meaning to say hello, you’re from apartment XX aren’t you?”

“We need to all make sure that this place doesn’t turn into the Victory flats, that place is awful, I have friends who live there and it’s full of drunks and druggies.”

“It would be good to have regular meet ups, it feels safer when you know people who live around you.”

- 6.16 A number of tenants, particularly a group of women who previously hadn’t met, stayed for well over an hour chatting with each other discussing their apartments and laughing and joking with each other about who had the better view etc.
- 6.17 The event was used as an opportunity to highlight the social event which was taking place the following week. A number of people signed up to come along to the social having felt relaxed and comfortable with other tenants. One lady stated:

“oh go on then, I’ll go if you’re going.”

- 6.18 The ‘meet and greet’ was a success in terms of numbers attending, but more so, it was a success in terms of creating a venue where people could meet and get to know one another.

Social Event

- 6.19 As a follow-on from the ‘Meet and Greet’ detailed above, there was a social event hosted by Great Places at Mario’s an Italian restaurant near to the development where food and drinks were laid on and Great Places staff and the local staff were available to chat with tenants, but more importantly this event was an opportunity for tenants to meet each other and to chat informally and to get to know each other. 14 people attended the event, again demonstrating a strong desire for residents to get involved, with a number of people actively apologising for not being able to attend and asking that they are informed of the next event.
- 6.20 This event was a great opportunity to socialise with other tenants in a relaxed and inviting environment. The evening built upon the idea that when people know each other in a social capacity, that they will work better together in a community. This event was a success in terms of numbers who attended.
- 6.21 The event was also attended by various members of Great Places team who were able to assist tenants with any issues they. The attendance by the various

specialist Great Places staff is a positive move to show tenants that they are important and that Great Places are available to help with any issues tenants have which actively contributes to a feeling of wellbeing.

- 6.22 The event was a success demonstrating commitment from people to become involved in future activities such as attendance at a resident Health and Safety course being run by Great Places and future social activities. One tenant also expressed a strong interest in setting up a residents association.

Outcomes

- 6.23 The events were followed up by contacting people who attended asking a series of questions based on the post project indicators below:

Post Project Indicators

I feel involved in this community
I feel like I belong to this community
I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my community
Overall I am very attracted to living in this building
I believe my neighbours would help me in an emergency.
I borrow things from my neighbours
I think of myself as similar to other people in this building.
Living in this building gives me a sense of community.
I am very satisfied with my community
I have many friends who are also neighbours
Having a mix of people makes the neighbourhood a more enjoyable place to live

- 6.24 When discussing the post project indicators it was clear that all the people contacted were very satisfied with where they live and expressed a high level of pride in the apartments. The overriding response was one of an eagerness to get involved in activities that mean that people know each other and as such help each other out.
- 6.25 Given the mix of backgrounds both ethnically and economically there was a strong feeling that people feel that they are similar to other people who live in The Astoria. There was however a lack of consensus over whether a mix of people make a neighbourhood a more enjoyable place to live, with one tenant stating that:

“People who don’t work can bring places down”

- 6.26 Tenants were very happy with where they live and felt that should they be in position where if they needed help from a neighbour they would ask, however, at this stage did not believe that neighbours were also friends. This is not surprising given the short amount of time tenants have lived in the building.
- 6.27 There was praise from residents toward Great Places staff for their hard work in making sure that people are involved and are given the opportunity to create an environment which suits everyone. There was a unanimous positive response to whether people felt involved in their community.

Conclusions

- 6.28 Creating new communities is a challenge and one that needs to be dealt with in a very sensitive manner. The allocation of apartments at The Astoria has on the face of it stepped up to the challenge under a considerable amount of disruption as a result of the economic down-turn and the changes in allocations as a result of this.
- 6.29 The activities that have taken place at The Astoria have been very successful with a very good turn-out. This demonstrates a willingness on the part of the tenants to be part of a new community where people take pride in where they live and look out for one another.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

- 7.1 The three communities involved in this research have been very different and have demonstrated similar outcomes about successful opportunities to build cohesive communities. The down turn has had a major impact in how the project has been managed and the restricted timeframes in which the evaluations have taken place but in doing so have highlighted the immediate impact that events can have that are based around social activities that can be repeated and create friendships rather than one off events where individuals attend and then leave without interacting with one another, such as a fun day.
- 7.2 The projects have begun to lead us into some potential recommendations which are summarised below:
- One off events may not have enabled as many people to be involved. For example, the invitation to the gym event in Brooklands had a relatively low attendance but following the initial event over the next 6 weeks, 12 people joined the gym, visiting it in their own time. Events should be designed to offer engagement over a longer and flexible time period.
 - Approaches that focus on tangible and real life issues seem to work best, particularly if those activities can be continued without further intervention such as the walking group or mother and toddler group.
 - Activities have worked well following on after events were held. This has resulted in more participants joining groups after hearing about it through word of mouth. This will help the project to be sustained on a long-term basis.
 - Formal engagement through surveys does not lead to high response rates but face to face discussions encouraged more people to be involved and face book social networking is proving popular. For example in Brooklands, initial on-line survey responses were very low and following door to door discussions with residents, response rates increased.
 - Offering a different range of activities enables different groups to be involved. One off activities may not encourage some households if there is limited interest in the outcome. For example, different people attended the walk and gym event on Brooklands.

Appendix 1 Examples of projects elsewhere

Coalville, Compendium

The site is a mix of old properties, predominantly occupied by ex-miners, who are unemployed or suffering ill health, and new properties occupied by decanted tenants and new householders. There was a need to get the community integrated as younger households were moving in and the demographics of the area would change.

In order to integrate the new communities, households were specifically pepper potted throughout the development to ensure a mix of differing households. A significant number of members of the Residents' Association were re-housed leading to a mix of tenants spanning all areas on the board.

Newsletters were distributed to all residents informing them of all the community activities, such as bingo, coffee mornings, youth clubs and play areas. Welcome information was also provided by the Residents' Association and a trip to Southport organised for the older residents.

The 2 phases on the site are physically split by an open area. Residents in both phases are involved in developing a plan for a new park, encouraging cohesion between the 2 sides.

An open evening was organised to encourage people to meet one another and also consult with them, but due to low interest it was cancelled and felt that it was not worth considering again. Similarly measuring the success of community cohesion has proved difficult, but was felt to be a gradual process.

North Huyton, Knowsley Housing Trust

KHT has been looking at how to integrate new owner occupiers with decanted tenants, in new homes being built in cleared areas in North Huyton. The slowdown in the housing market has meant that a Community Development Officer has yet to be employed, but there are plans for this to be rectified once the market picks up.

Community cohesion is dependent on how quickly residents move into the area. On the first phase, KHT has purchased empty properties to move more residents into delayed phases, so as to increase the density of householders in the area and form a better community.

Each new household receives a visit from a member of KHT or a support officer to welcome them to the area and provide them with information on activities and clubs. Residents from all areas in North Huyton are encouraged to join the Residents' Association so that there is a representation from every group.

Two new community centres have been built to support the existing facility and KHT has ensured that the existing clubs have remained running during the development so that they can easily be built upon once residents move back to the area. Similarly new residents have been encouraged to join these and the plan is for new groups to be set up in the future, with the support of the Community Officer.

The new school which is being built, in anticipation of 2,500 new children in to the area has also had community rooms attached for new activities to be established.

Once the development has been completed KHT is, possibly, going to measure success of new community by turnover of properties, number of voids and length of waiting lists (i.e. longer the list for the area the more popular it is perceived). House prices may also be reviewed as currently property prices in New Huyton are below average but as community becomes established and popular prices should increase.

South City Centre, North Staffordshire

Sanctuary Housing are working in a pathfinder area in North Staffordshire (RENEW). The City Centre South area is undergoing major intervention, including large scale demolition and rebuilding, which has impacted greatly on what was a very strong community, dispersing the residents. There has been a large amount of new development; however some of the schemes have not attracted existing affected residents either because of the price or the design. This has resulted in quite a number of new residents moving into the area.

With the support of RENEW funding, a local community room was established and community worker was funded, whose role is to be the bridge between the community and RENEW, ensuring residents are informed of what is happening in their area and also to look at integrating the new community into the existing community.

One of the major difficulties was the physical separation of the old and new communities by a road. Invitations to residents' meetings were proving unsuccessful, so along with newsletters providing information on activities and events, the Neighbourhood worker went to households, personally, and informed residents of community activities.

The more successful community activities have been the special events organised by the community workers, such as a Festival Fun Day and Christmas parade, which began in the new area. A launch day was also organised which took all residents around the whole of the development.

It was generally found that consultation meetings were ineffective and not well attended and, similarly, residents were reluctant to complete feedback forms so that it became difficult to evaluate success of mixing the communities. Formal meetings alienated residents and they were reluctant to attend if they had to complete paperwork or were spoken at. The best feedback was obtained by talking to people at informal events and receiving quotes.

Although there was no direct measure of success the general feel that things were working were based on increased turn out to the events organised.

Bradford Tenants' and Residents' Community Cohesion Project

The project, funded by a CLG Innovation into Action grant, enabled the tenants' organisation to appoint community cohesion workers on four estates. In each area the workers encouraged and helped create neighbourhood-based events and groups, focused on improving interaction between different communities in the areas. Their experiences led to an overall Area-Based Community Cohesion Plan, produced by tenants rather than by the social landlord. The story of the project was written up by residents as *How to Make a Community Cohesion Cake*.

(<http://www.innovationintoaction.org/downloads/042BradfordCommunityCohesionCake.pdf>)

They set out a one year programme which included local surveys, team building, youth exchanges, dispute resolutions, community videos, fun day and other activities aimed at facilitating integration of newcomers on the estates. They also developed a welcome package with information of what's on in the area, services, groups, activities plus arranged a visit from tenant involvement officer.

Gunwharf, Devonport

The original site consisted of 150 Plymouth City homes ranging from bedsits to five bedroom properties, but in the late 1990's the area went into decline, the major problems attributed to crime, drugs and increasing void properties.

The Residents Association members were slowly decreasing due to people moving on and the remaining residents acted by contacting the local Council and voicing their concern. After 6 months of working in partnership with them, trying to solve issues, there was little difference.

A solution was to develop a mixed tenure scheme of 99 homes. The objective of the cohesion scheme was ensure the smooth return of decanted residents to Devonport; integrating owner-occupiers, shared owners & tenants and integrating whole scheme into a community.

A dedicated Community Development Worker from Devon and Cornwall Housing Association (DCHA) was brought in to work with the residents through a successful community training & enabling grant, and a further post for a resident worker.

Residents were in the driving seat throughout the entire project, from sitting on the interview panel for architects and contractors, to the design of the interior and the external spaces.

Residents were able to employ their own landscape Architect through the CTE funding with the help of DCHA. They met on a monthly basis and talked through what they would like to see on the scheme to complement what was being built.

Young people went out on visits with local artists, taking their own cameras to photograph things that were of interest to them. A successful bid to DRCP for artwork and street furniture allowed them to have the artwork the residents wanted.

During the whole build process residents were exploring resident management and eventually set up the North Corner Management Company. The board consisted of four representatives from each of the three different tenures, a local Councillor and a Regional Housing Manager from DCHA.

Residents attended training sessions and were given funding to enable residents to visit schemes around the country where resident management was already in place. DCHA also funded the legal work and gave the residents access to any member of staff for advice.

Some of the Management Company's aims were to:

- Look after the outside spaces
- Employ their own caretaker/cleaner
- Deliver some services in the future
- Convert two garages given over to the residents by DCHA into a meeting/community/signposting base.
- Support other areas in the regeneration process, through offering support

- Keep the community spirit strong, and the area sustainable.

Befriending Service - RENEW North Staffordshire and Age Concern

RENEW North Staffs HMRI Pathfinder worked with Age Concern to develop a Befriending Service to support older people who had moved to new areas as a result of clearance. Moving households were linked up with a "buddy" in their new neighbourhood. The buddy's role was to tell them about everyday amenities and facilities within the community such as where the paper shop was, how to register at the doctors, where the bus stop is etc. Also the volunteer would take them to various day centres and activities within the area, encouraging them to meet new people.

The project went further and considered social events such as dancing and u3a meetings. Also, since the majority of the new residents had moved to the area to be nearer family, events were organised to encourage not just the new residents but their family, so creating a greater community.

Feedback forms are completed every 6 months on the Befriending Service and comments are reviewed. Age Concern has tried previously to measure performance, in the form of statistics, but has been, generally, unsuccessful.

Street Ambassadors, Frontis Housing Association

Frontis Housing Association (part of the Harvest Group) are creating Street Ambassadors on new developments as points of contact for local authorities, police, health visitors etc to help new residents settle into the new area.

They collate a Welcome Pack with local information and include basic household items (cleaning cloths, sprays, tea bags etc) and distribute it to new residents. An existing resident makes contact on their first day and they become the point of contact for further local information such as nearest cinema, coal merchant, doctor and so on.

Appendix 2 Nelson Place Focus group findings

The summary of the focus group findings are outlined below

How would you describe the area to someone who does not live here?

The area is known to local people as Wardleworth. The general feeling from both the men and the women was that the area was a good area to live and that there is a good community who look after each other.

How have your views about the area changed over the years in which you have lived here?

The new homes that have been built on Trafalgar St and Buckingham St have caused a great deal of controversy amongst the local community. There is strong feeling that the houses are poor quality, badly designed and not appropriate for the local community. This is further considered below

Do you intend to stay in the area or would you like to move out somewhere else, if so why?

This is a very close knit community where people are happy to live. There is a history attached to the area for people. This is an area where people feel safe and are happy to live and where people know each other. The Mosque is a very important part of people's lives and as such is a major reason why people would like to stay in the area.

Do you think your community is mixed?

Residents feel that the community is mixed but the community is very much Bangladesh and Pakistani biased although, Polish and Italian households are recognised and very few white British.

How often do you interact with your neighbours? Do you know whether they are homeowners or do they rent from the council or a housing association?

The community is very close; neighbours interact on a daily basis through the Mosque, The Bangladesh Association & Community Project and through informal visits to each other's homes. The Mosque provides educational assistance for local children and young people and conducts a variety of fundraising activities for the relief of poverty and hardship. The Mosque is of major importance to the community. Residents knew the tenure mix of some members of the community but did not feel that it was significant although consistent with many BME communities, homeownership was the preferred tenure.

Do you interact with other types of people or are they quite similar to you? Where and when does this happen?

There is a tendency for the Bangladesh and Pakistani community to interact together due to the importance the Mosque plays in daily life. The area is predominantly Bangladeshi and as such any other interaction with other people is minimal purely because the community does not allow for such contact. The BACP is a very well used facility offering gender specific social groups; a gym; gender specific day centre for Asian elders; after school club and an information and advice centre.

Do feel people get on well together?

The community is extremely strong. People know one another and will help each other when necessary. As stated previously, the BACP is a resource used heavily by the local community that brings people together.

Do you feel people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together?

No one identified that mixing with other people from different ethnic backgrounds was an issue. The community is very inviting and would welcome anyone who demonstrates respect and who looks after the area and their property. This was clearly the case for arc⁴ consultants who were welcomed with a meal and very well looked after whilst visiting the area.

Pre and Post Project Indicators

arc⁴ approved a series of indicators that we used within the focus groups and through the door knocking exercise. We also have additional indicators to specifically try to test the impact of the proposed project.

Given the feedback below on the initial indicators, we need to discuss in more detail how we measure the impact of this project, as a basket of indicators are unlikely to provide any useful conclusions from such a positive starting point.

I feel involved in this neighbourhood	100% agreed
I feel like I belong to this neighbourhood.	100% agreed
I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood.	100% agreed
Overall I am very attracted to living in this neighbourhood.	100% agreed
I believe my neighbours would help me in an emergency.	100% agreed
I borrow things from my neighbours.	100% agreed
I think of myself as similar to other people in this neighbourhood.	100% agreed
Living in this neighbourhood gives me a sense of community.	100% agreed
I am very satisfied with my neighbourhood	100% agreed
I have many friends who are also neighbours	100% agreed
Having a mix of people makes the neighbourhood a more enjoyable place to live	100% agreed

Appendix 3 Survey findings Brooklands

What do you call the neighbourhood that you live in?

In order to gather a clear understanding of where residents identify themselves in terms of the name of the immediate area they live in, we asked the above question. Respondents clearly consider the area they live in to be called Brooklands with 75% stating this.

75% (12) of the survey respondents identified with the area “Brooklands”.

19% (3) identified with the area “Langley”

6% (1) identified with the area “Bowlee Park”

Accommodation type

Of those people who completed the survey, all but one owned their own property. We did ask a number of residents living in social rented housing but did not receive responses.

38% (6) - Own outright

56% (9) – Own with a mortgage

6% (1) – Rent from a Housing Association

Do residents use local facilities?

In order to measure the cohesiveness of a community, the amount of time spent using local facilities is a clear indication of how a community operates. The survey clearly identified that local facilities are very underused, with parks being the most used but still not on a frequent basis.

- Community Centres – **50% (8) Never**; 19% (3) Rarely; 19% (3) About once in the last year.
- Local Shops – 25% (4) At least once a week; 25% (4) About once or twice a month; 25% (4) About once in the last year.
- Schools – **75% (12) Never**; 12% (2) Almost every day.
- Parks – 12% (2) Almost every day; 12% (2) At least once a week; **25% (4) About once or twice a month**; 19% (3) About once in the last 6 months; 12% (2) Rarely; 12% (2) Never.
- Play areas – 12% (2) At least once a week; **19% (3) Rarely**; **38% (6) Never**.
- Pubs - 12% (2) At least once a week; 19% (3) About once or twice a month; **50% (8) Never**.
- Social Clubs – **88% (14) Never**.
- Leisure Centres – **88% (14) Never**.

Do you feel that where you live means that you mix with a range of people from different backgrounds?

People surveyed do consider that they mix with people from different backgrounds as a consequence of where they live, supporting the view that people who live in the Brooklands area do mix with people, moreover, they consider the people they mix with to be from different backgrounds to their own.

- **75% (12) – Yes**
- 25% (4) – No

Pre-Project Indicators

A series of pre-project indicators were asked to residents in order to gauge the degree with which people feel part of their community. These indicators will be asked again after the project is complete. Overwhelmingly respondents indicated that they agreed with statements that demonstrated a strong sense of satisfaction with their local neighbourhood and their neighbours. Respondents found the statement concerning borrowing from neighbours a more difficult concept. Not all respondents answered these questions.

- I feel I belong to my street – **63% (10) Agree**; 19% (3) Strongly Agree.
- I feel like I belong to my neighbourhood – **56% (9) Agree**; 25% (4) Neither agree or disagree.
- I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood – **50% (8) Agree; 25% Strongly Agree**; 19% (3) Disagree.
- Overall I am satisfied with my neighbourhood as a place to live – **69% (11) Agree**; 13% (2) Neither agree or disagree; 13% Disagree.
- I believe my neighbours would help me in an emergency - **56% (9) Agree; 25% Strongly Agree.**
- I borrow things from my neighbours – **31% (5) Disagree**; 25% (4) Agree.
- I think of myself as similar to other people in my neighbourhood – **75% (12) Agree.**
- Living in my neighbourhood gives me a sense of community – **44% (7) Agree**; 19% (3) Strongly Agree; 19% (3) Disagree
- I have friends who are also neighbours – **62% (10) Agree**; 19% Strongly Agree.
- Having a mix of people makes the neighbourhood a more enjoyable place to live – **56% (9) Agree**; 19% (3) Strongly Agree.

What are the things you like most about the neighbourhood you live in?

From the question above respondents were given the opportunity to detail why they liked living where they do. The quotes below are a sample of the views people expressed, with nearly all respondents stating that good neighbours were a reason why they liked living in the Brooklands area.

- “I live in a private area of Middleton called Brooklands. My neighbours all own their homes and take pride in their appearance and upkeep. My neighbours all have jobs and they are all honest decent people. You could not hand pick better neighbours. To an extent I feel safe here. I am proud of my home and the street where I live.”
- “The house and good neighbours. It's very quiet.”
- “Sense of community.”
- “My neighbours.”

What are the things you least like about the neighbourhood you live in?

Respondents were given the opportunity to detail why they disliked living where they do, if at all. The quotes below are a sample of the views people expressed with a vast majority of people commenting upon traffic as an issue.

- “People who drive too fast on the road at the back of my house - they do not slow down for the traffic bumps. Three houses including mine have had damage to their fences with drivers losing control and smashing the fences. I have been in touch with my local Council but they are not interested.”
- “Brooklands is not closed off from Langley. A number of undesirables will cut through Brooklands often leaving rubbish and a trail of destruction... upon the completion of Brooklands a number of trees were planted on Martindale/Loweswater drive, only a few remain as local yobs from Langley decided it would be a good idea to snap them before they had a chance to grow... There's also beer cans/bottles, graffiti etc... This can't be a coincidence as the only part of Brooklands that is affected is the very same street that is used to cut through - Martindale/Loweswater drive. I pay band b council tax. I don't believe the council do enough for the extra tax I have to pay.”
- “Martingdale Crescent is being used as a shortcut to Langley Lane. Drivers ignore the 20mph speed limit...”
- “People who steal items out of our garden, it's been 3 times this year I'm not happy.”
- “We sometimes get fast cars driving through the estate.”

What would improve the neighbourhood you live in?

When asked what improvements could be made to their neighbourhood, respondents stated that open space and traffic calming measures would improve the area, one person also stated having a community 'get together' would improve the neighbourhood.

- "The council should do more to tidy up Martindale/Loweswater Drive. Upon completion of Brooklands there was some lovely gardens planted on Martindale/Loweswater Drive, unfortunately the council never maintained them. They are now just a mass of weeds..."
- "open spaces"
- "Restrict [traffic] access to Martingdale Crescent."
- "More speed bumps and 20 mph signs."
- "If we all have a get together."

Do you think living in a neighbourhood with a mix of ownership is a good idea?

When asked about whether a mix or home ownership is a good idea, 50% felt that it was a bad idea, believing that people who own their own home make better neighbours.

- Yes – 25% (4)
- **No – 50% (8)**
- Don't know – 25% (4)
- "In my experience I have found that home owners make much better neighbours especially in private home areas."
- "Everyone deserves to live in a nice house."
- "People who have mortgages usually work."

Ethnic background

- White British – 94% (15)
- White Irish – 6% (1)

Appendix 4 Main findings Astoria Survey

- Why did you choose to rent and apartment at The Astoria?

“I saw the advert and liked the look and the location”

“...a young lady was giving leaflets out in the town centre and they looked really good.”

“Because The Astoria is new and looks very nice.”

“Affordable rent; spacious and a new property. It’s close for work and I like living in town centre.”

“I wanted to live in a more secure place.”

“Because it has 2 bedrooms; it’s new and fresh; it is also very close to my place of work and no more taxis after a night out.”

“I’ve lived in a 30 year old house for 17 years and wanted to have a new clean place to live high up, I’ve never liked houses.”

“The apartment came up at the right time. Once I saw how nice it was, it was an easy choice.”

- Now that you have moved into your apartment what do like most about them?

“How big they are for a new build.”

“Inside they are very modern and good quality.”

“All of the flats look good and I love the rooms, it’s got 2 bedrooms.”

“The size of the apartments, there is lots of space and the kitchen and bathroom are a good specification.”

“Living in a brand new apartment.”

“The power shower, the lay out and the amount of electrical sockets is very good.”

“Very modern interiors, size of rooms, great bathroom, views over Oldham to Hills.”

“Space and privacy. Quiet area yet in Town Centre.”

“Great accommodation and parking.”

“Well built, nicely maintained.”

“It’s spacious and welcoming.”

“Space in the rooms; view; everyone seems to take pride in the area; friendly staff/neighbours.”

- Is there anything you don’t like about The Astoria?

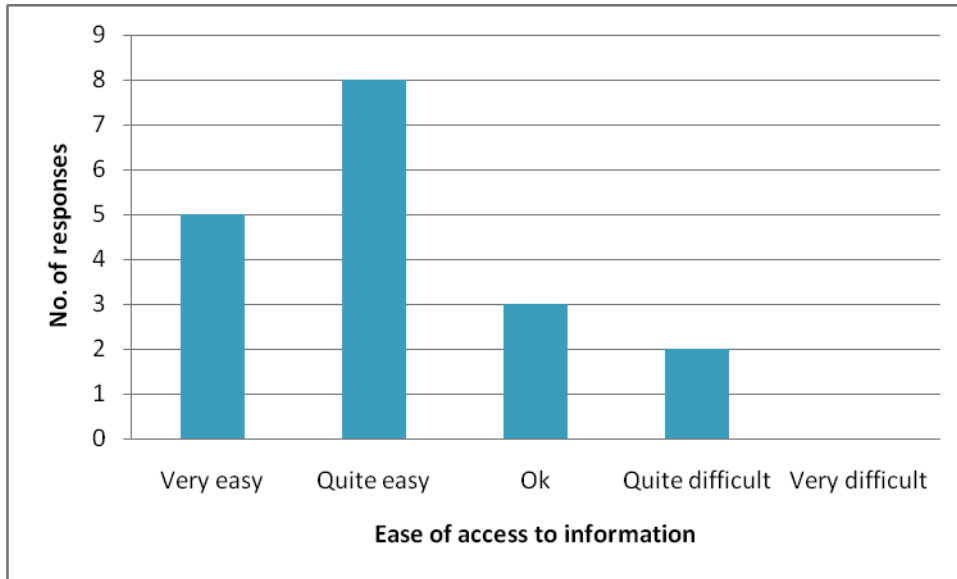
“That there’s no service lift, the main lift isn’t big enough for large items of furniture.”

“The incomplete building next to The Astoria.”

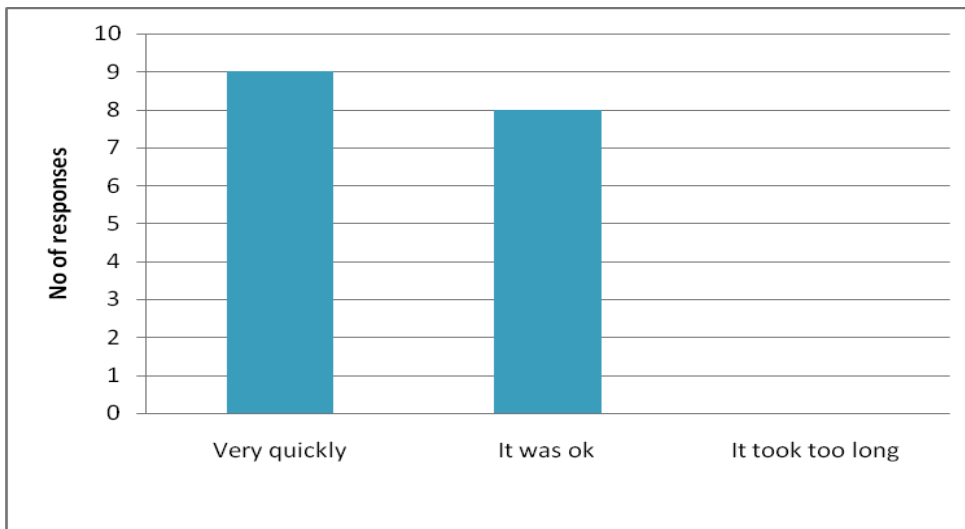
“There’s very little storage room for everyday items i.e. Hoover, ironing board etc. The storage that is available will get taken up by the washing machine, leaving little room for anything else.”

“Standard washer won’t fit in the designated space; no light switch next to bathroom; gaps under doors in apartments and in corridors, can be cold.”

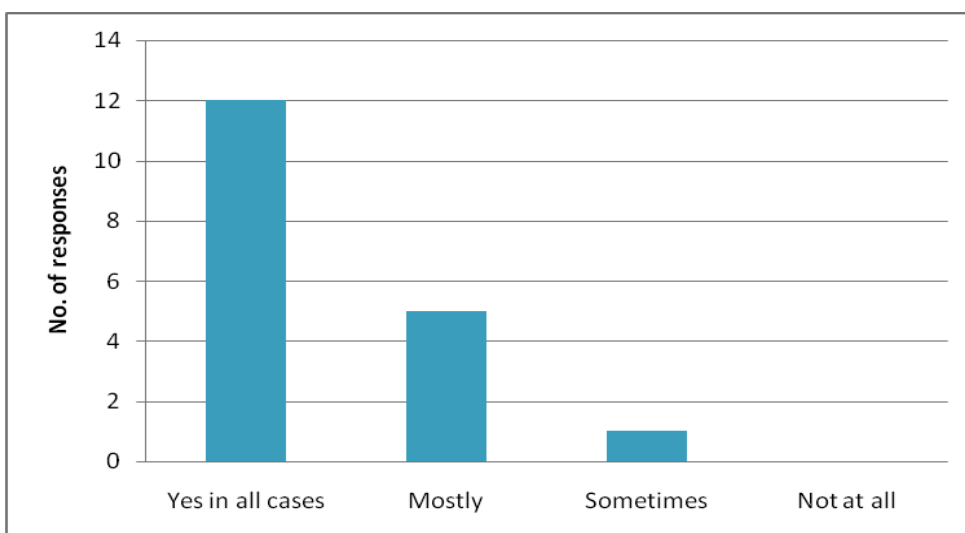
- How easy was it to find information about The Astoria?



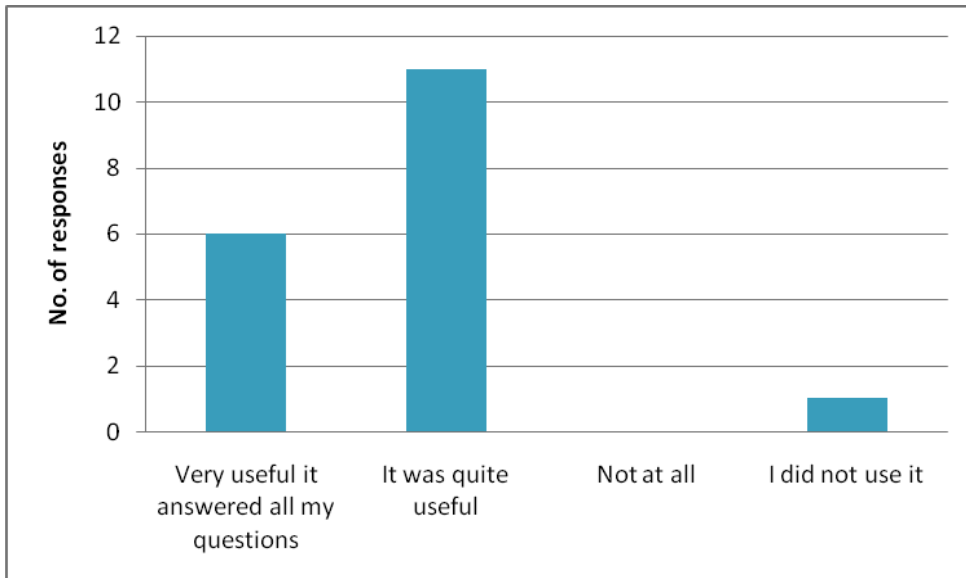
- When you applied/enquired, how was your request dealt with?



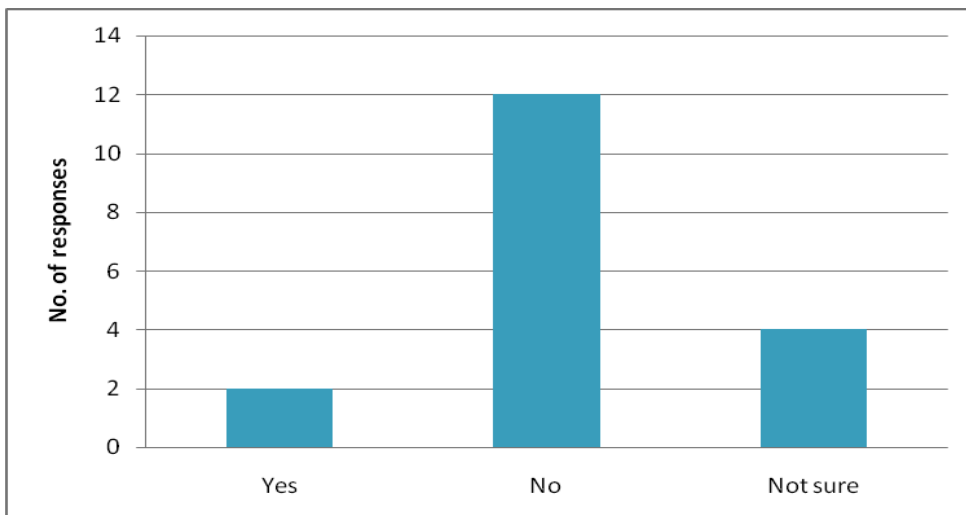
- Were staff able to answer your questions?



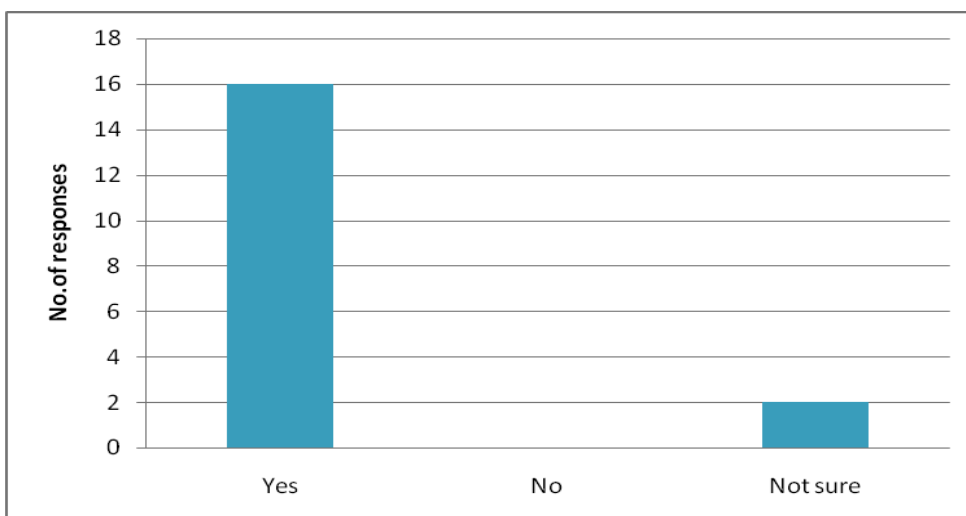
- How useful has the information been that was provided to you?



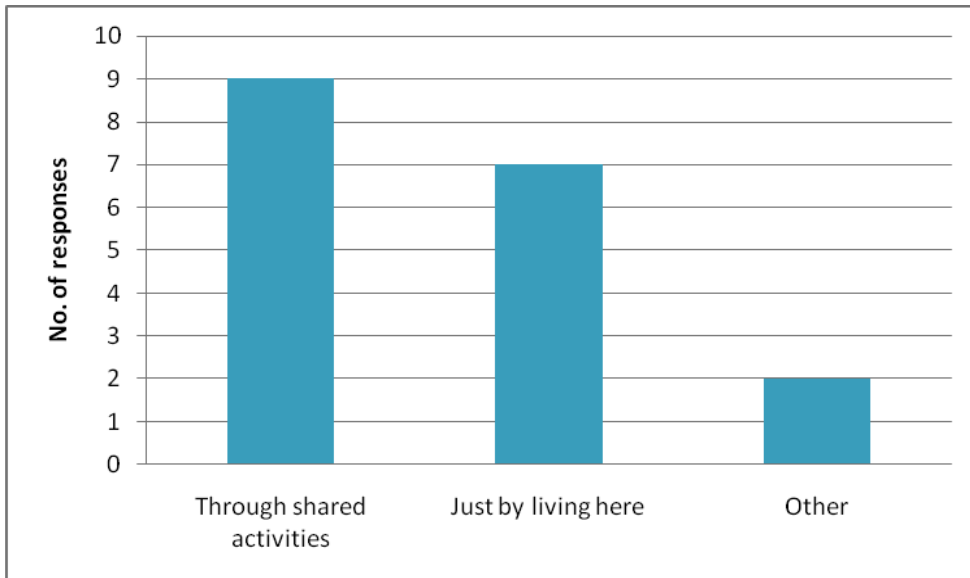
- Do you know anyone else who is moving into The Astoria?



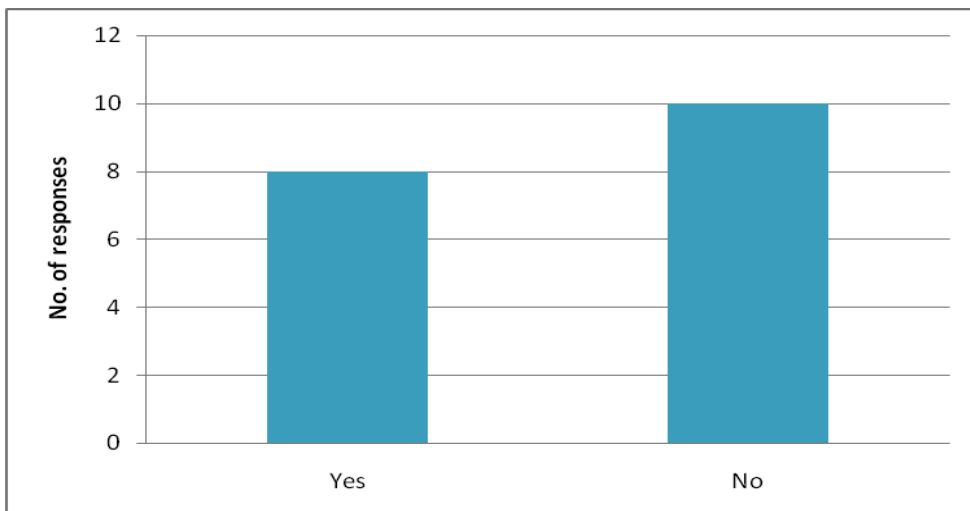
- Would you be willing to work together with your neighbours on something to improve The Astoria?



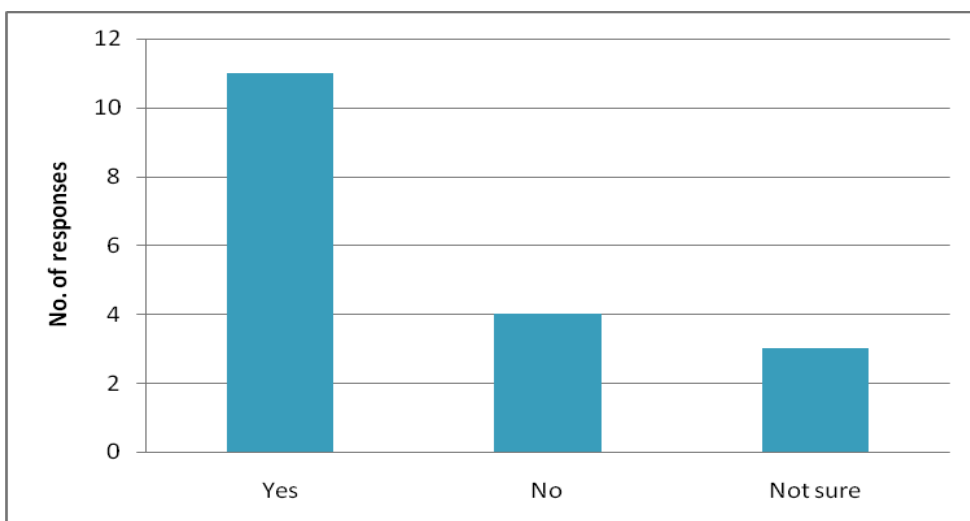
- When you move in how would you like to get to know your neighbours?



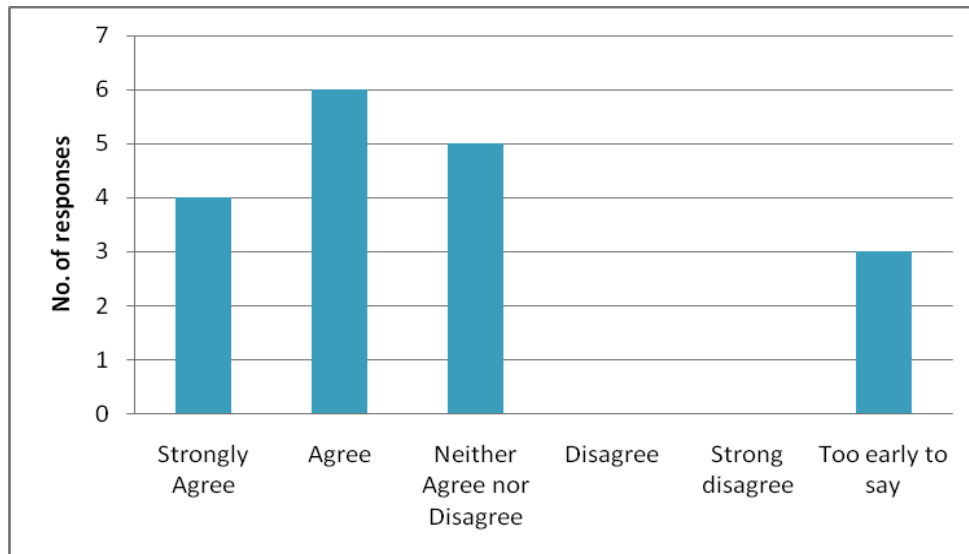
- Do you use Facebook or other social networking sites?



- We are planning to develop a social network site at The Astoria, do you think you may use it?



- Overall I am very attracted to living in this neighbourhood/area



- From previous experiences living elsewhere what has been good and what has been bad?

“Maybe a B.B.Q to get to know each other, and a monthly meeting to iron out any problems that might arise, and maybe socialise afterward.”

“GOOD: notice boards, residents group, regular inspection and speedy repairs.
BAD: communal areas not cleaned or maintained, anti-social behaviour.”

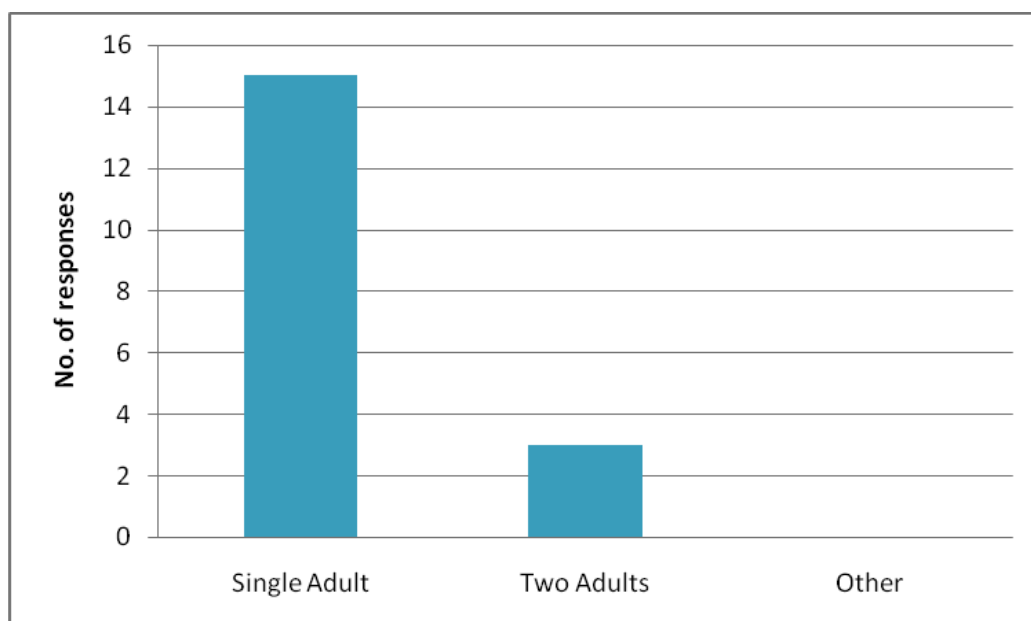
“Newsletters.”

“Home watch activities; neighbourhood involvement; local schools and shopping facilities available. There are no areas for the children to play. Parking can be dangerous and quite often congested.”

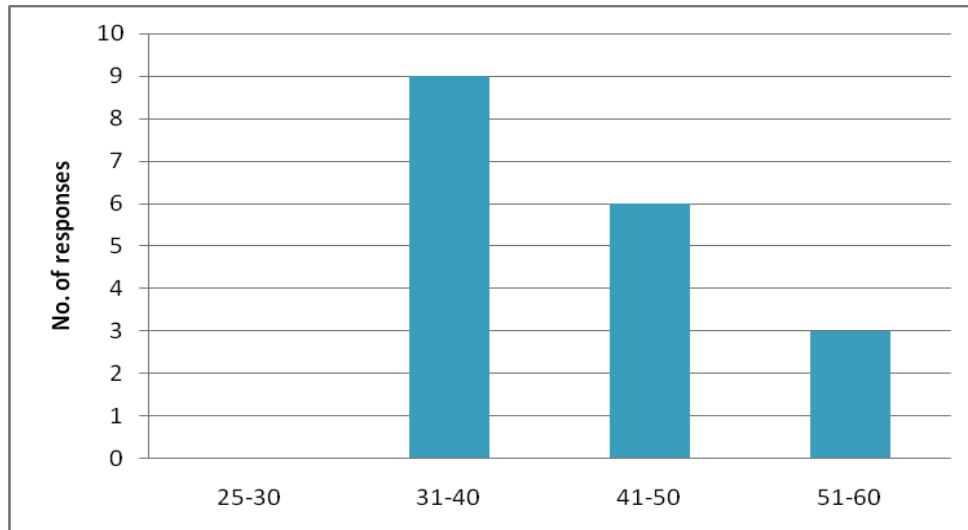
“Communal gardens don't usually work as they cause arguments.”

“Just nuisance/nosey neighbours at previous flat.”

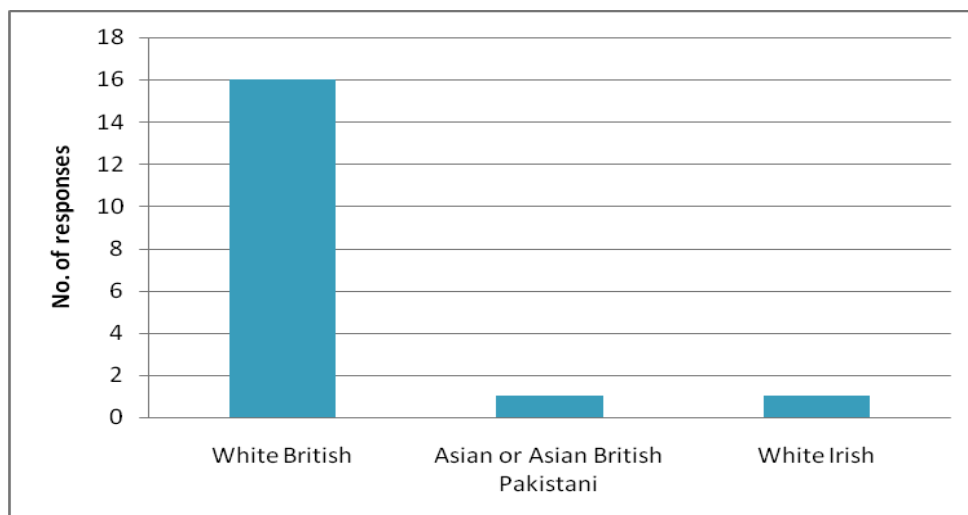
- How would you describe your household?



- Age of head of household



- How would you describe your ethnic background?



- 7.3 The survey results show a clear willingness on the part of tenants to work together to make their living environment a good one. There was also a keenness to achieve this through shared activities and through Facebook or a similar social networking site. Respondents also showed a degree of pride in where they live by responding positively to how attracted to the area they are.
- 7.4 The attitude that people had towards the administrative processes and how responsive the Great Places team were to queries etc was very positive with very few being critical. This should especially be noted given the many delays that people encountered.
- 7.5 The survey reflects a less mixed community profile than expected with a high number of single adult, white British responses. The demographic profile of The Astoria states a much more varied mix of people with different ethnic backgrounds. The results should be taken with caution in this respect as it is a clear community cohesion priority to break down barriers and bring together diverse communities which might otherwise lead parallel lives.