



## 4.1 Introduction

URBED undertook consultation over three months from August to October 2021. The process included:

- A review of the estate and surrounding area for the consultant team to become more familiar with the location;
- A questionnaire used to gather feedback – offered online via Survey Monkey and in printed format delivered by members of believe housing to properties within the study area and immediate surroundings;
- A series of in-person 'diagnosis' and 'dreaming' workshops to engage the community and gather information.

The consultation was open to the entirety of Brandon - not just residents of the estate – to ascertain how residents felt about Brandon as it is now: in particular focusing on the study area introduced within the previous sections.

### **Live learning and adapting the Engagement Process**

Turnout to the first consultation was more limited than initially anticipated, and consideration was therefore given about how to increase awareness of the events and tailoring the format to make it more accessible to the residents of Brandon. Adaptations included:

- Understanding the daily routines and constraints faced by Brandon residents (such as childcare, job seekers and shift workers). This resulted in adaptations to provide more flexibility in the second session. A drop-in style event allowed people to control the length of time they had available to engage in conversation, and this format also captured passers-by.
- A larger area was targeted with leafleting for the second event.
- The local school network used social media to promote the second event.
- Key stakeholders were contacted directly to help spread the word (see list of key stakeholders identified).
- The residents were given additional notice prior to the event.

## 4.2 Workshop Process

### Workshop 1: Walking tours and Diagnosis

The first workshop was held on the 16th September 2021. The planned activities included a morning session consisting of walking tours and an afternoon session of mapping.

#### Walking Tours

The morning session consisted of two walking tours, each an hour and a half. A group of residents and other stakeholders were lead around the estate by an URBED facilitator and believe housing member to a set of twenty pre-selected destinations, with the intention of engaging in guided discussion at each location prompted by the worksheet provided (see appendix for worksheets). Two walking tours were offered to provide residents flexibility and sufficient opportunity to join.

1. 9:30-11am 1st walking tour
2. 11:30-1pm 2nd walking tour



Pictured above: walking tour route taken around the site with stopping points

Whilst the morning sessions received a lower turnout than expected, we were still able to gain valuable insight. The sessions were adapted on site to meet the requirements of the situation. For example, only one walking tour was conducted with members of believe housing, and local Councillors.

Whilst no residents signed up to the walking tours, residents were encountered during the walk and engaged in dialogue. Their thoughts and concerns were noted and are reflected in the analysis.

#### Mapping

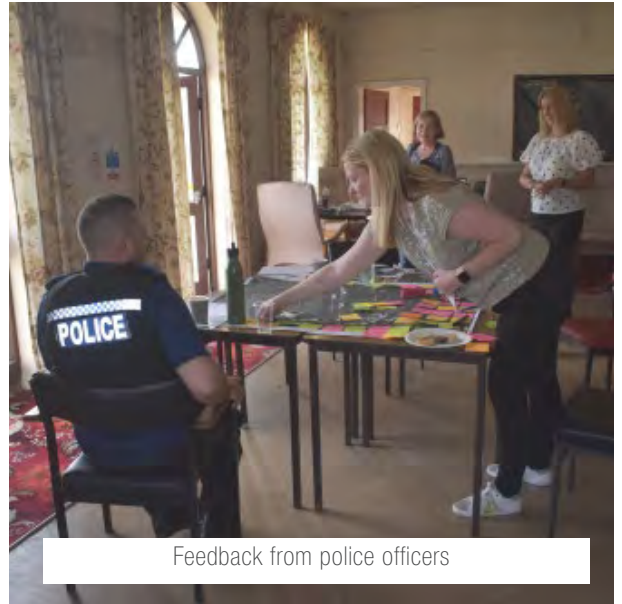
People who attended the walking tours, as well as other residents, could then attend the afternoon mapping session. The mapping exercise further explored observations from the walking tour, spatially representing positive and negative observations and ‘diagnosing’ problems with the estate. A photobook of the estate was created to provide context for people who could only attend the afternoon session and not the walking tour.

The afternoon diagnosis mapping workshop was held from 2-4pm in the Silver Courts Community Room. During the mapping session, discussions continued with the councillor as well as the local police patrols (PCOs – Police Community Officers). There was also drop-in attendance from believe housing tenants.

Detailed one-to-one discussions offered valuable insight into the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the area. Responses are collated and analysed from Pg. 32 onwards.



Walking Tour, Point 3: silver courts



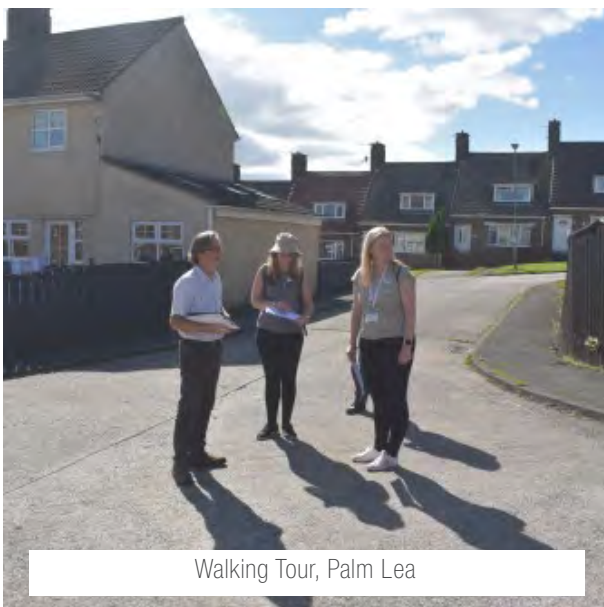
Feedback from police officers



Walking Tour, Point 6: field



Councillor Jonathan Elmer meets a tenant



Walking Tour, Palm Lea



Diagnosis mapping session feedback

## 4.2 Workshop Process

### Workshop 2: Diagnosis and Dreaming

This workshop was conducted as a drop-in session at the Silver Courts Community Room, held between the hours of 2-7pm on Wednesday the 20th of October, and was attended by 28 people in total. Hosting the event between 2-7pm made it accessible to as many people as possible, i.e. parents on their way to or from school pick up, shift workers and job seekers.

Information about the event was posted on the believe housing website in advance and flyers were distributed to residents within the estate and surrounding areas via a leaflet drop. Flyers were posted in and around the communal room at Silver Courts publicising the event, as well as at other community facilities including the library, Brandon community centre, Brandon Primary school, Brandon Lodge care home and Meadowfield leisure centre. Stakeholders in and around the estate were identified and contacted directly by telephone and email inviting them to attend the event. On the day A1 posters advertising the event were displayed outside of Silver Courts and the Brandon Carrside Youth & Community Project.

The ‘Diagnosis’ session was offered again as a smaller part of workshop 2, for those who had been unable to attend the previous session. Participants were asked to identify good and bad features within the area and to plot these occurrences on a map.

The ‘Dreaming’ exercise encouraged participants to consider and share what they would like to see happen in response to the points highlighted in the previous session. A set of precedent studies were displayed covering themes such as new housing, retrofit, density, parking, landscape, and community, to inspire conversations with residents about what they would like to see in the future of Brandon. Participants were asked to draw a tick next to ideas and images that they liked and thought could be successfully implemented within Brandon, and to draw a cross next to ideas which they did not like or would be inappropriate for Brandon.

This event was well attended by people of varying ages. Feedback collected was in line with the other session and online questionnaire, and has been collated and summarised in the following section.



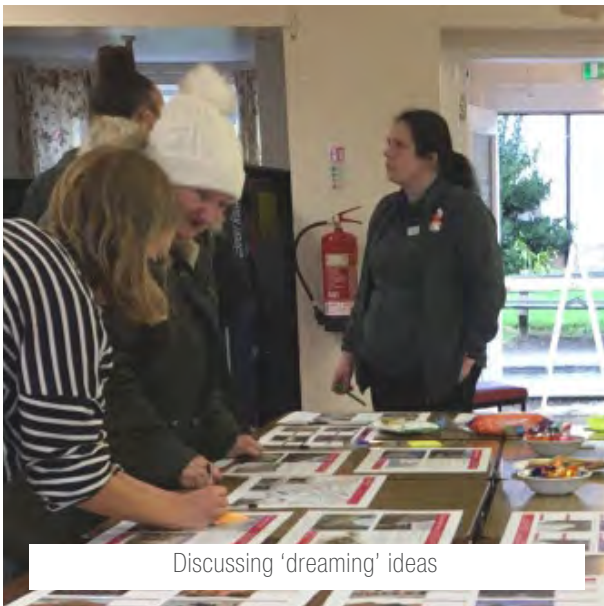
(LEFT) A5 flyer distributed to residents to encourage them to attend the session. (RIGHT) A1 poster hung around the estate on the day of the event



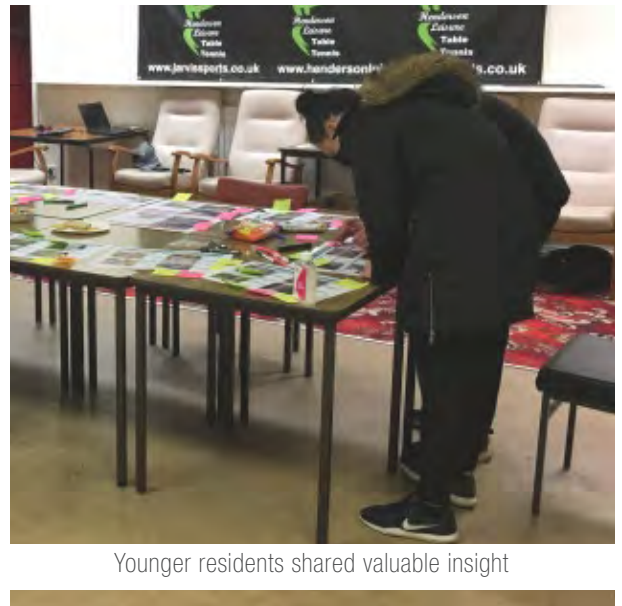
Discussing 'dreaming' ideas



Further diagnosis of issues in estate



Discussing 'dreaming' ideas



Younger residents shared valuable insight



Hopes and Ideas



Diagnosis mapping

# 4 CONSULTATION

## 4.3 Consultation Results: Workshops

### Overview

Throughout the workshops there were discussions around these 5 key themes:

- Safety and security
- Housing
- Green spaces
- Facilities
- Movement and connections

Feedback from the workshop has been analysed and translated into a visual format to enable persons to easily understand. The main points have been summarised over the next few pages.

The maps adopt a traffic light system to represent positive and negative comments:

- Green = Positive attributes in Brandon
- Red = Negative attributes in Brandon
- Amber = Ideas for how to improve the neighbourhood

Much of the conversation focussed on the sports field and shopping precinct areas, whilst problems with housing, crime and accessibility were the most regularly discussed topics.



(ABOVE): map recording comments made at Workshop 1



(ABOVE): map recording comments made at Workshop 2

### ICON KEY

|                         |                      |                |                          |                  |                              |                  |                   |             |                      |               |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------|
|                         |                      |                |                          |                  |                              |                  |                   |             |                      |               |
| Gym equipment           | Goal posts           | Play provision | Quality landscape        | Flowers          | Trees                        | Wildlife/Habitat | Seating           | Dog fouling | Cleanliness/Tidiness | Maintenance   |
|                         |                      |                |                          |                  |                              |                  |                   |             |                      |               |
| Layout and Road network | Parking / Traffic    | Walking routes | Cycling routes & Storage | Public transport | Quad bikes                   | Terrain          | Slippery when icy | Drainage    | Wayfinding           | Accessibility |
|                         |                      |                |                          |                  |                              |                  |                   |             |                      |               |
| Poor quality Housing    | Good quality Housing | Facilities     | Boundaries/Thresholds    | Community        | Crime/ Anti-social behaviour | Safety           | Views             | Lighting    | Drugs                | Noise         |

### 4.3 Consultation Results: Workshops

#### Safety and Security

##### Positives

- Many people mentioned that they had lived in Brandon their whole lives and stated that a positive was the friendships and sense of community that they have developed whilst living in Brandon

##### Concerns

- Throughout the consultation period there were many comments on crime, such as theft, vandalism, drug dealing and drug use and alcoholism. Even people who stated that they felt safe in Brandon mentioned antisocial behaviour – particularly around the Co-Op shop.
- Use of drugs out in the open and drug deals also came up a lot in conversations. People mentioned finding syringes in the children's areas and many people coming and going from dealers' houses, as well as people knocking on the wrong doors in search of sellers.

- Many people are intimidated and harassed by some younger residents and feel that a lack of facilities and activities for young people in the area contribute to the antisocial behaviour.
- Many people mentioned street lighting in association with the feeling of safety, stating that there needed to be more of it or that they felt safer when the lights were brighter.
- A few people stated that there needed to be more police patrol or neighbourhood watches to help control the antisocial behaviour.
- Members of staff at the co-op precinct are joining together to form a community group to protect staff members as this is deemed to be a hot-spot for anti-social behaviour. Staff commented that they do not feel safe working there alone at night.
- Some people commented that the vast number of footpaths made it easy for criminals to escape the police, whilst overgrown hedges made good hiding spots.





## 4.3 Consultation Results: Workshops

### Movement and connections

#### Positives

- Some people thought that buses were regular and easy to access. Perceptions about public transport appeared to vary depending on where people lived within the area.

#### Concerns

- There are several people with mobility impairments on the estate who find moving around difficult. People have mentioned the poor condition of the pathways, that are overgrown with weeds and slippery, particularly in the Winter.
- More dropped kerbs would assist wheelchair and pram users
- Not many people on the estate cycle due to health and mobility impairments and to feeling unsafe on the roads. The topography of the site has also been mentioned as a barrier against cycling.

People have mentioned that they walk and cycle along the old railway as a form of leisure.

- There were many comments surrounding roads and parking on the estate. People commented on the widths of the road stating that they were too narrow, especially in the 'Lea Road' courts where there is on street parking. There has been a mix of comment around the Northeast of the site near Lime Park and Holly Park, people drive their cars onto the road to park nearer to their houses. Better parking solutions required.
- There has been a mixture of comments regarding the quality of the bus services on the site. Some people think that the bus network is fantastic – frequent and well connected to Durham - whilst other think that it has deteriorated (possibly due to Covid) and needs to be improved with more consistent services and better connections to surrounding areas.



## 4.3 Consultation Results: Workshops

### Green space

#### Positives

- Many residents love the green infrastructure on the estate with positive comments being made about the trees, grass areas and the flowers outside Silver Courts. Most people generally agree that they are well maintained, however some feel that they are lifeless.
- People commented that they would like the green spaces to remain but with a more diverse range of habitats to improve the ecology throughout the site including hedge planting, flower beds, wildflower meadows and sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS).
- However, there was worry among the residents that these elements of landscape would contribute to antisocial behaviour, for example one person commented that a SUDS precedent would be filled with litter and have the plants stolen. The cost of time and maintenance of these areas would need to be factored in.

#### Concerns

- Quad bikes on grass was perceived as a negative, antisocial behaviour.
- There appears to be confusion about ownership of the green spaces which possibly contributes to under use. Note by URBED: The green spaces are owned by the council.
- Some people commented that despite there being bins around and availability of free dog waste bags from the library there is often dog fouling found on the sports field and in the alleyway.



## 4.3 Consultation Results: Workshops

### Facilities

#### Positives

- Facilities that were mentioned in the consultation included the Brandon and Carrside youth centre and the library, which was praised for its access to computers

#### Concerns

- Whilst some people appreciate the Co-op precinct, it was commonly described as expensive, small and a hub for antisocial behaviour. For people with mobility issues or who don't drive, there appears to be limited options for shopping. The comment was made a few times that there needs to be more shops to compete with the Co-op
- No facilities for teenagers/young people
- More doctors, shops etc. would be needed to cope with additional residents if there was more housing built in the area - this should be checked against statistics, as it is often a skewed perception by existing residents who are worried by change.



## 4.3 Consultation Results: Workshops

### Housing

#### Positives

- Some people made positive comments about their garden and views of green space, and commented that they did not want to leave their home.

#### Concerns

- Housing that was most observed to be not-fit-for-purpose or in a state of disrepair was on Silver Courts, Vicarage Flats and Redwood Flats, however only a few housing related comments related to specific areas. People generally felt that much of the housing would be improved with modernisation.
- Whilst the bungalows seemed very popular with many of the residents, lots of people commented that accessibility is poor, that the bungalows are very small, and the layout is somewhat inefficient.

- People seemed to take issue with the fact that young people have been put into the bungalows rather than the elderly for accessibility reasons. Additionally, they believed this to be a safety concern for the elderly due to the antisocial behaviour on the estate.
- Many people commented that there needs to be more action by believe housing in the form of additional inspections and a more thorough screening process for people entering the housing. It was also suggested that they liaise with the council on issues such as parking and the green spaces.
- When asked what type of housing the estate needed people suggested a mixture of typologies including bungalows for the elderly, flats for young people and a mix of family homes.



## 4.3 Consultation Results: Workshops

### Housing

This section of the workshop introduced attendees to examples of other developments in order to discuss ideas that were popular and unpopular for Brandon.

New housing is quite popular in Brandon, with houses preferred over flats. Here are some of the comments noted about housing examples, whilst the page opposite displays some of the most popular ideas.

General Comments, as quoted directly:

- Modern housing would smarten up the area. Like mixed materials palettes
- Don't want high density but accept that it is more affordable.

#### 1. Chapel Rise, Peterlee

- I like this idea of having your own driveway, especially if you are disabled.
- I like the fences of chapel rise for defining ownership and the contrasting palette.

#### 2. Suffolk Close Bungalows, Bristol City Council

- Accessible and attractive. Appropriate for the area.
- Ideal for elderly and would be easy to access.

#### 3. Lenton Green, Nottingham City Council and Nottingham City Homes

- Like larger windows
- Solar panels - yes please! Like the materials and shapes

#### 4. Rochestown House, Dublin

- Balconies offer opportunities for passive surveillance.
- Ventilation needed in homes

#### 5. Marmalade Lane, Cambridge

- Positive response and comments generated by idea of play streets. People should be the priority and cars need to be the guests.
- Some thought that the lack of fence/hard boundary around the houses is a safety and privacy issue.
- Like the use of loft spaces with a dormer window

#### 6. Derwenthorpe, York

- Houses need visual connection to cars for feeling of safety. we need sufficient parking but the streets should be designed so that cars do not dominate - so plenty of traffic calming measures.
- Overlooked communal car parks are ideal for Brandon
- Love the informal planting - mix of housing, trees



1. Chapel Rise, Peterlee

*Image Reference: m!ne (believe housing)*



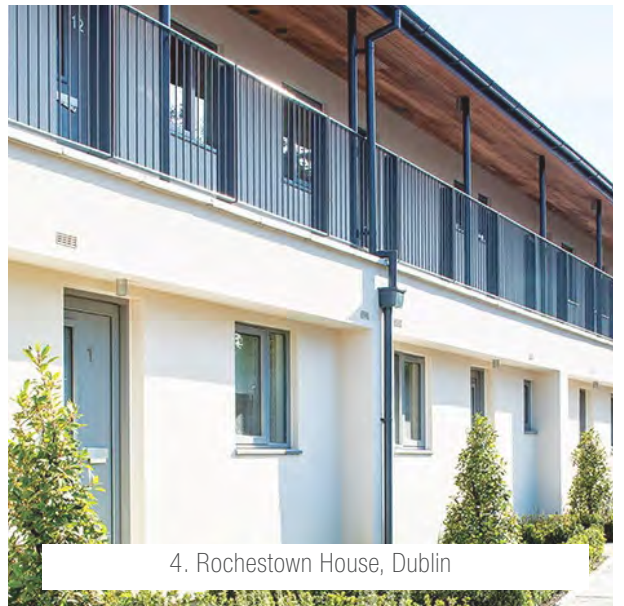
2. Suffolk Close bungalows, Bristol

*Design: Emmett Russell  
Image Reference: Craig Auckland Fotohaus*



3. Lenton Green, Nottingham

*Design + Image Reference: JTP Architects*



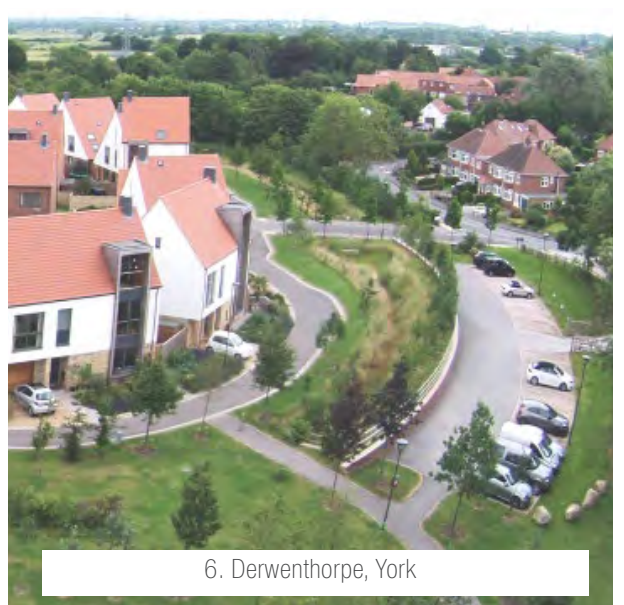
4. Rochestown House, Dublin

*Design: Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council  
Image Reference: Donal Murphy*



5. Marmalade Lane, Cambridge

*Design: Mole Architects/ Image Reference: TOWN*



6. Derwenthorpe, York

*Image Reference: Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust*

## 4.3 Consultation Results: Workshops

### Community and Landscape

Participants were also given the opportunity to discuss ideas for the land surrounding the houses, and to consider landscape and community features which may contribute the health and wellbeing of residents, and the overall attractiveness of Brandon.

The most popular idea was for a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to accommodate multiple activities and age groups. Age-friendly 'play' equipment was popular in addition to equipment for younger people.

Whilst people generally like the idea of more planting, trees and benches, concerns were raised about potential vandalism. Timber furniture was deemed unsuitable due to potential arson and vandalism, whilst planting would have to be robust and easy to maintain. There were mixed feelings about a community garden, with some residents unsure who would maintain it.

On the right here we have collated some of the comments, as quoted directly from the consultees:

#### 1. Age Friendly Interactive Sports

- Outdoor exercise behind the community centre. it's important

#### 2. Waterplay, Meadowhall Sheffield

- Opportunities for all ages to engage.
- Would need to be robust to prevent vandalism

#### 3. Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), Box Hill Gardens

- We need this, but it needs to be accessible, cleanable and repairable - with such maintenance factored in.
- Ideal for children. Great area for them to play

#### 4. Sensory Planting, Tameside

- Like the disability friendly planters and sensory planting.
- Seating and planting would be nice but need to consider vandalism
- We so need space for a community garden

#### 5. Swales and Mounds

- Like natural play - lots of people think there has to be a swing or roundabout but they are less educational.

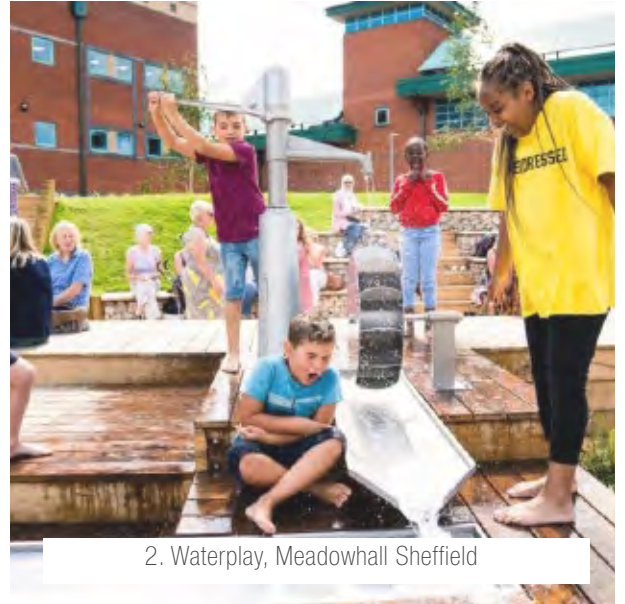
#### 6. Wildflowers and Orchards

- I think it is so important that nature is taken care of.
- Mature trees needed! - or young people will knock them down.
- I am in love with these images - but we must ensure that maintenance can be conducted in the future



1. Age Friendly Interactive Sports

*Image Reference: Snake Beam by Lappset Group*



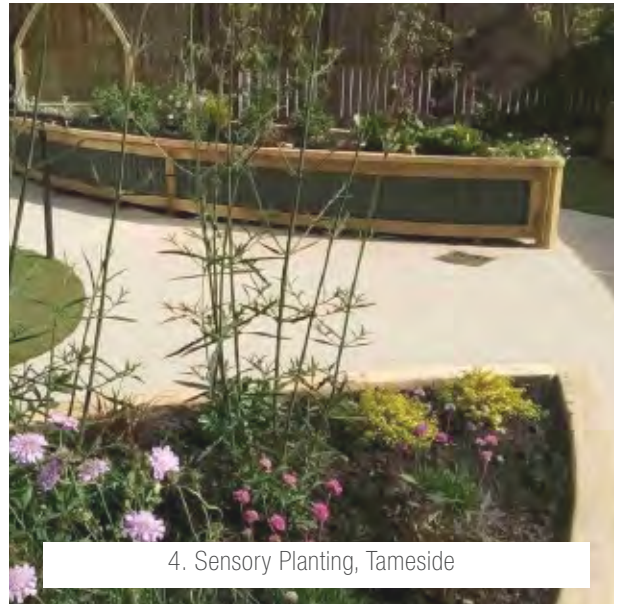
2. Waterplay, Meadowhall Sheffield

*Image Reference: Timberplay*



3. Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)

*Design: Aspect Studios and NMBW Architecture Studio  
Image Reference: architectureau*



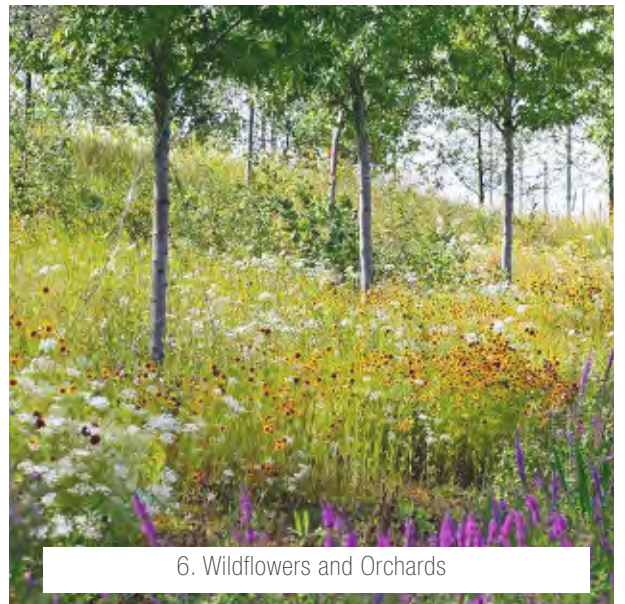
4. Sensory Planting, Tameside

*Image Reference: Groundwork*



5. Swales and Mounds

*Image Reference: Sensomoto*



6. Wildflowers and Orchards

*Image Reference: Stratford Olympic Park*



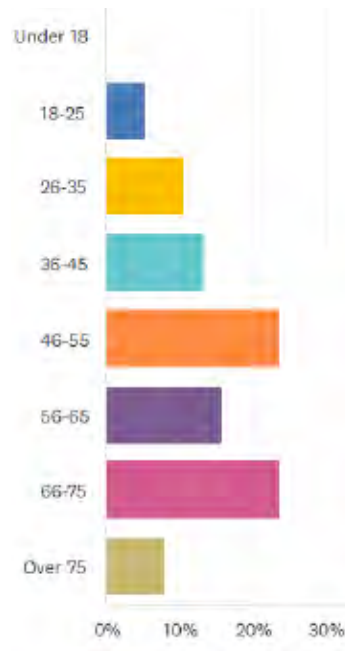
## 4.4 Consultation Results: Questionnaire

### Surveys

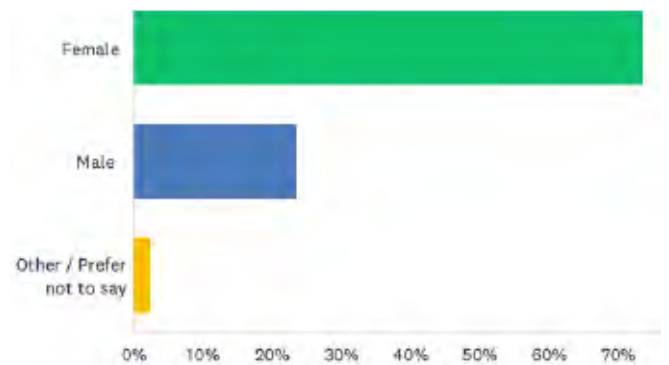
38 questionnaires were completed either online or in a printed format. Responses were compiled to generate graphs representing data trends, whilst comments were analysed to identify recurring priorities.

Response volumes were monitored throughout, and advertising methods amended to increase the response rate and target specific groups. For example, the original closing date for the surveys was the 20th of September, however, due to the low return rate (17 questionnaires returned by this date) the decision was made to keep the questionnaire open until the end of the consultation period (end of October) to provide more opportunities for people to respond.

Additionally, questionnaires were made available at each engagement event for people who needed them and a larger portion of the housing around the estate was targeted in a second leaflet drop, which included peripheral areas.

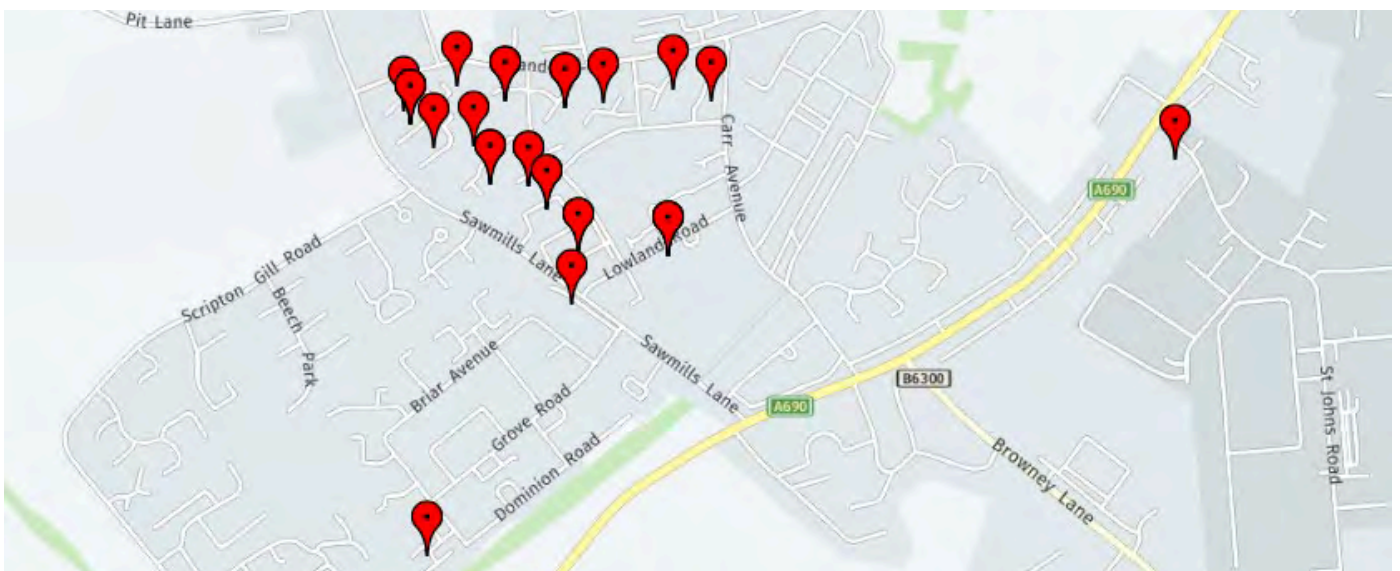


(LEFT): Response rate per age group. people aged between 46 and 75 make up over 60% of responses.



(BELOW): over 70% of responses were from female participants.

(BELOW): MAP plotting postcodes of respondents to survey. This shows a good distribution from around the study area, and well as a few people who live beyond the study area boundary



## 4.4 Consultation Results: Questionnaire

### Responses: General

#### What do you like about living in Brandon?

- Most popular themes included the friendly neighbours and the sense of peace and quiet.
- People who have lived in Brandon a long time were more positive about the place and the people who live there. Several people cited that they have lived in Brandon all their life, and would never wish to leave
- Others noted that the green space, local shops and bus links were good, and enjoy the local walks and easy connections into Durham.

#### What do you dislike about living in Brandon? How could this be improved?

- Anti-social behaviour and drug problems were rooted out as the main issues in Brandon, with one third of people mentioning drug problems within their response.
- Several people commented that they felt unsafe due to high crime levels in the area, whilst poor street lighting was also identified as contributing to this feeling.
- Many stated that the young people caused issues on the estate as they had little to keep them occupied and entertained.
- Poor maintenance of houses, gardens and pathways was also regularly cited as a negative quality of the area, making it feel run-down. Litter and dog fouling contribute to this sense of neglect.



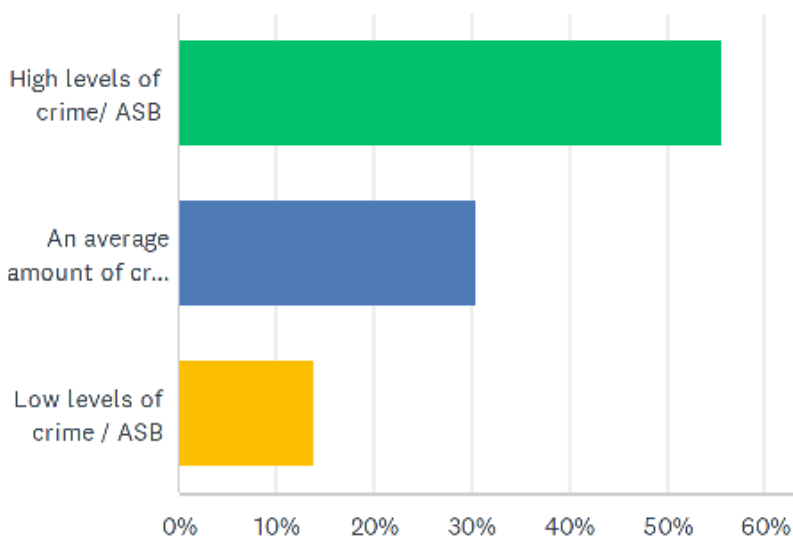
# 4 CONSULTATION

## 4.4 Consultation Results: Questionnaire

### Responses: Safety & Security

#### How do you feel about levels of crime or anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Brandon? How could this be improved?

56% of respondents identified a high level of crime and/ or anti-social behaviour in Brandon. Less than 14% of respondents thought that crime rates were low. This reflects crime statistics outlined on Pg.5 of the baseline information. Generally people thought that serious crime was less common, but that low level ASB was a bigger issue. People would like a greater police presence or a warden, and more CCTV.

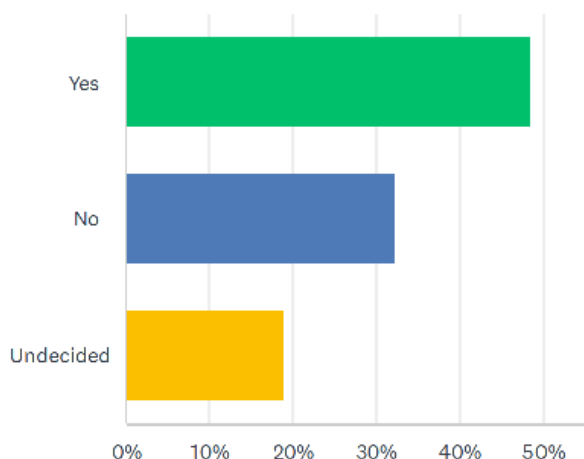


#### Identified crimes included:

- Vandalism of houses and cars
- Drug dealing
- Littering
- Verbal abuse
- Graffiti
- Arson in parks and next to properties
- Anti-social behaviour of teens

#### Do you feel safe in Brandon? Why do you feel like this and what would improve safety?

- Less than 50% of people feel safe living in Brandon, with correlates with the high levels of crime and ASB identified in the previous question.
- Generally people felt more safe in the daytime, but make sure that doors and gates are locked and several would not venture out at night.
- Some said that the area around the library and shops is targeted by gangs.



#### What would improve safety?

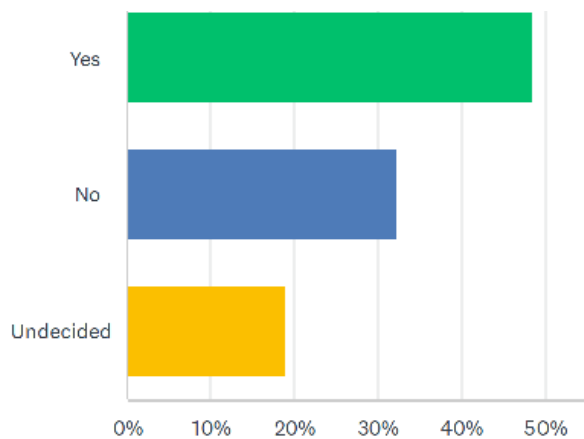
- Sufficient street lighting
- Police presence with more regular patrols
- Alterations to the demographics of the neighbourhood. Re-house some problem tenants elsewhere. It was generally felt that a better vetting process for housing people on the estate may help to limit troublemakers, and that there were too many drug dealers being housed within the estate, making it unsafe for other residents.
- One person commented that Redwood Flats and Silver Courts have a particularly high number of disruptive families.

## 4.4 Consultation Results: Questionnaire

### Responses: Accessibility & Movement

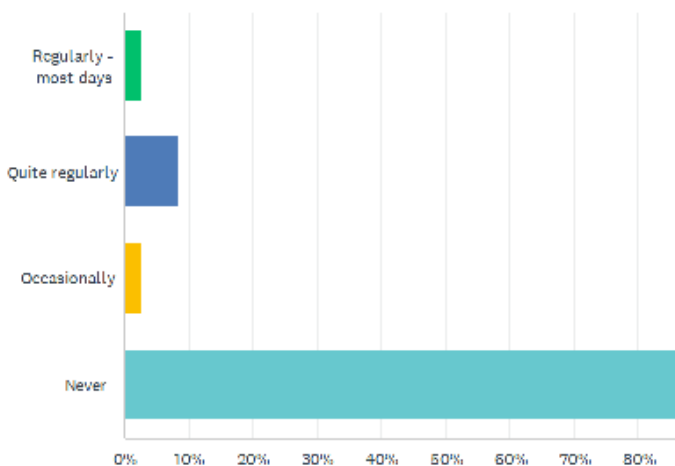
#### Do you find it convenient to walk across the estate? How could this be improved?

- Shortcuts make walking around estate easier, but overgrown footpaths and steep terrain are a challenge



#### Do you cycle, and if not, what is preventing you and what would encourage you to do so?

- Very few residents cycle in Brandon, with 86% of respondents stating that they never cycle.
- Some cited health, age, disability and anxiety as deterrents
- The steep terrain makes cycling challenging
- One person mentioned a lack of secure bike storage

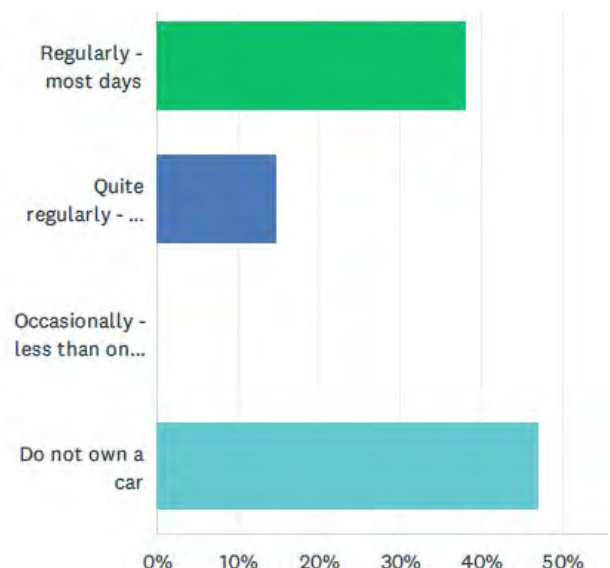


#### What do you feel about public transport provision to and from, and within Brandon?

- Opinions varied about the reliability and quality of bus services in Brandon. Most people thought the bus service was good, whilst others thought the service was inadequate.
- Generally people identified Sunday travel to be very challenging as there is only one bus an hour, and the running hours are limited. This is difficult for those who work in Durham on Sundays.
- Sometimes the buses do not arrive on time or not at all, so reliability is not great
- Some residents with mobility issues worry that they will not get a seat on the bus

#### Do you own a car? If so, how often do you use it and how do you feel about parking provisions?

- Need more parking - convert grass areas into marked bays. On-street parking leads to congestion and navigation issues
- Although car ownership is quite low on the estate, there is not enough space for visitor parking



## 4 CONSULTATION

### 4.4 Consultation Results: Questionnaire

#### Responses: Green Space

**Respondents were asked to identify positives and negatives about the green spaces in Brandon. Is there a particular green space that you enjoy using? How could spaces be improved?**

- Many residents commented that they enjoyed views of green space from their properties, and think that they increase the attractiveness of Brandon.
- However, poor maintenance of green space, littering, fly tipping and dog fouling create a less pleasant environment.
- Vandalism is also seen as a problem.
- Some people commented that there was nothing to engage with within the green spaces. More amenities, seats, planters, flower beds and bins would help
- More designated play features for children and teenagers. Not just grass.
- The wild meadows and fields near Brambledown were noted as a pleasant and safe space for walking a dog
- Some are happy with the amount of green space, whilst others believe there is too much and some could be used for off-road parking or new homes and longer residential gardens
- Some would like to see low fences or bollards around designated green spaces to deter parking and quad bikes on the grass

#### Responses: Facilities

**What are your views about the facilities for children to play and young people to socialise? What, if any, improvements would you like to see?**

- Several people thought they are inadequate facilities for youths hence the antisocial behaviour, and suggested that there should be more organised outdoor activities rather than just fields. The boxing club and youth club seem to be popular
- There are parks and play areas, but not many places for young people to socialise.
- Teenagers etc. spoil the parks for the younger children by destroying things or smashing bottles etc. The play areas have people using needles left where the kids play
- CCTV and patrols required at parks

**What are your views about the current general facilities in Brandon such as shops/ community/ health facilities? What improvements, if any, would you like to see?**

- Some think that one supermarket (co-op) is not enough. Some people rely on this as they do not drive and have mobility problems. A competing store on Grove Road where the Sainsbury's local used to be would be popular.
- Doctors is difficult to get an appointment
- Lowland road shopping precinct should be rebuilt to improve appearance. More variety such as a bakery and butchers would be good.
- More activities at the community centre would be lovely.

## 4.4 Consultation Results: Questionnaire

### Responses: Housing

#### What do you like about the homes in Brandon?

- Well spaced out
- Good mixture of house types
- Most are very nice and well cared for. Well built, but need a refurbishment. Also a lot of properties need bringing up to standard with new kitchens, bathrooms and rewiring.
- The houses are a good size, with garden, but no allocated parking
- Bungalows are generally popular but also need upgrading

#### What do you dislike about the homes in Brandon?

- Social housing needs to be better maintained
- Old and outdated. Lintels falling apart in places. New roofs would be good on the houses.
- I think the houses and flats are badly designed especially for older people. For example, there are steps everywhere the toilet is on the other side of the flat than the bedrooms and the walkway is too tight.

#### What type of homes do you think the village needs?

- The village needs a mixture of housing to satisfy the community
- More two-bedroom houses for gentrification, low cost young professional housing
- Good quality modern family homes with gardens and parking
- Homes and bungalows as opposed to flats. Bungalows should be used for older people or less able bodied, not for young people.
- Smarter looking homes. Gardens that look nice and are usable