Green Infrastructure Strategy

Consultation Report

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Overview

We consulted on the draft Hackney Green Infrastructure Strategy. This strategy brings together the Council's aims and objectives for the borough's green infrastructure to ensure that it is planned, designed and managed to better meet our commitments to addressing the impacts of climate change, poor health and biodiversity loss.

Background

Green infrastructure is integral and essential to the borough's resilience, meeting its future challenges and the delivery of its wider strategies, both at a community and individual level.

The strategy's draft objectives aim to:

- improve health and well being;
- be more resilient to the impacts of climate change;
- reduce deficiency in green open space; and
- increase ecological connectivity.

We invited views on the strategy in order to develop a more integrated approach to protecting and enhancing green infrastructure.

Consultation Approach

The consultation was carried out online using Citizen Space. Seven open text questions were asked. A press release was published on Hackney Council's website on 10 February 2022 to promote the consultation. Promotion was also done on social media.

Response Rate

A total of 65 responses were received. The consultation opened on 10 February 2022 and ran for six weeks until 23 March 2022.

Summary of results

Vision, needs and objectives

Question 1: Do you have any comments on the vision of the strategy?

58 respondents answered this question. The vision was provided as part of the questionnaire:

By 2040 Hackney will be a series of liveable neighbourhoods that are resilient to the effects of climate change, provide a network for wildlife to thrive and support the physical health and mental wellbeing of residents.

Level of support

39 respondents directly answered the question, with 37 expressing support for the vision, although some respondents qualified their support. Words used more than once to describe the vision included 'good' (6), 'great' (5), 'fantastic' (4), with some respondents mentioning 'agree' (3), 'fine' (3), 'support' (3) and excellent (2). The two respondents who expressed dissatisfaction with the vision described the vision as 'myopic' and a waste of taxpayer money.

Suggestions regarding the vision

Seven respondents directly made a suggestion regarding the vision, as opposed to broad suggestions about the Green Infrastructure Strategy, by saying that the vision should include 'the economy and jobs' with another respondent saying that the vision should include 'support enhanced biodiversity'. Another respondent believes the vision should elaborate on the climate change theme:

- "It shouldn't just aim to be resilient to climate change, it should also aim to reduce Hackney's contribution to it."

Four respondents said that the aim should be to realise the vision in 2030, not 2040:

- "2040 seems late and ambition should be higher, but the goal is good."
- "Fantastic to see but could aim for 2030, a lot can change in 8 years."
- "I like the strategy; I would like to aim for 2030"
- "2040 seems a long way off, should aim for 2030"

More detail required

A number of references were made to the plan requiring more detail:

- "Vision is fine, it's how you put into practice."
- "The vision is excellent however the plan needs more detail with aims specified at intervals of two years so that progress can be measured and changes in

management and new projects are not pushed into the future. Resourcing needs to be transparent and public. If leadership is lacking the vision will fail, just like the BAP before it has largely failed."

- "The vision is fine, but there is a lack of real detail as to how this vision will be realised."
- "What resources are realistically in place to help this vision become a reality."
- "This is a great vision, though it would be better if backed up by a policy which sets out targets for parking reduction to allow space for greening."

Liveable neighbourhoods

A number of references were made to the 'liveable neighbourhoods' component of the vision. One respondent expressed the following sentiment:

- "Good idea but needs to add to "liveable" for All residents, not just liveable for a few better off people."

This was echoed by another respondent who expressed a concern that the creation of 'liveable neighbourhoods' would mean that areas outside these neighbourhoods would be 'unliveable'. The respondent is concerned that people on lower incomes would not see the benefits, 'judging by what kind of streets have gotten LTNs' and that it would create barriers for 'disabled, frailer elderly people' to 'access and enjoy all their borough has to offer, never mind all their city has to offer'. The respondent concludes by saying:

- "And for those of them that live IN a "liveable" area it may get ever harder to access essential services such as care at home, especially the ones that rely on unpaid carers such as family and friends."

The following respondent also referenced the recent implementation of low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) across Hackney:

- "The vision is all very well but what does liveable neighbourhoods look like. As it is, it is now getting increasingly difficult to move between different neighbourhoods as buses are stuck in traffic because of all the road closures."

One respondent 'hopes these neighbourhoods are car free' and said 'electric or not they cannot be part of our urban future.'

Another respondent, not directly referencing 'liveable neighbourhoods' echoed the previous contribution:

- "The vision sounds proactive and inspiring. I find it difficult to understand how it can be separated from the need to reduce private cars on our roads. It would be more effective if more road space currently dominated by polluting traffic and private car ownership could be given over to green space for people and wildlife."

Leadership

There were suggestions regarding staffing, including the need for a biodiversity officer:

- "The vision itself is good, and I support it, but I feel it would need somebody to lead it, like a special person appointed by the council who understands green infrastructure and biodiversity"
- "There is nothing about a biodiversity officer, a post which has been empty for many years. How will the council ensure that the environment, biodiversity, etc will be at the heart of everything that the council does without a biodiversity officer involved in all areas?"
- "Hackney Council continues to lack a champion for biodiversity and the Council lacks internal knowledge of the issues that need tackling."
- "Nature and climate change need to be central, not peripheral. A biodiversity officer (long promised) would help ensure this and monitor the vision and plans across the borough."
- "Is there a role for community organisers in helping self organising so that change occurs within communities."

Quotes/general statements

- "The work already seen across the borough in 'greening' has been transformative and should continue."
- "Really love all the ideas and excited for the new green routes!"
- "Looks great! But can we have some car parking replaced on *every road* with greenery (or cycle parking) rather than just a few "20th century streets"?"
- "But also need to consider interaction with social problems, such as safety, gangs/criminal acidity and the littering and dog fouling to enable these spaces to be enjoyed and a community pride in their survival."
- "I just hope that these areas are maintained and well looked after. Have seen a number of small green spaces with planted areas so neglected they end up making the area look very uncared for."
- "Don't we need more trees on all the roads?"
- "We would like to see more specific measures aimed at conserving the rarer butterflies and moths in the borough and also encouraging provision of more larval foodplants for the more widely spread species."
- "The GIS does acknowledge that pressure for further housing development represents a challenge, but the scale and diversity of threats are far greater than either document identifies. If the obstacles to positive change are not even identified, then the chances of success are very slim."
- "Adhere to Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11, 12 and 15. Double the abundance of wildlife by 2040, double tree canopy cover by 2040, aim to have a high quality green space within a 10 minute walk from home, all new developments to achieve high standards of design for wildlife, water and well-being, make sure local businesses take no more from the natural environment than they can replenish with compulsory natural capital accounting."
- "Wholeheartedly agree with the vision but think that the success of the vision must be measured in how well integrated the schemes are with the surrounding boroughs as active travel measures should influence and promote cohesion with the city as a whole. The recent improvements to Ferry Lane connecting Tottenham to Blackhorse Rd are a good example of this."

Question 2: Where do you think more and better green infrastructure is needed?

58 respondents answered this question.

Respondents provided names of wards/areas, roads and identified other specific locations and non-specific locations.

Four respondents mentioned 'everywhere' in terms of where more and better green infrastructure is needed with one respondent similarly stating 'on every street'. One of the respondents who mentioned 'everywhere' warned against 'piecemeal solutions'.

Wards/areas identified

Three wards/areas were mentioned more than once, namely Dalston, Hackney Central and Homerton.

- Dalston (4)
- Hackney Central (2)
- Homerton (2)
- Hoxton
- Shoreditch

Road names identified

Five road names were mentioned more than once, namely Mare Street, Lower Clapton Road, Homerton High Street, Rectory Road and Upper Clapton Road.

- Mare Street (4)
- Lower Clapton Road (3)
- Homerton High Street (2)
- Rectory Road (2)
- Upper Clapton Road (2)
- A10 corridor
- A10, along Rectory Road
- Amhurst Road
- Barnabas Road and Hassett Road junction
- Bouverie Road
- Charnock Road
- City Road
- Downham Road
- Edmeston Close/Swinnerton Street
- Gerron Road
- Graham Road
- Heyworth Road
- Kingsland Road (to Stamford Hill)
- Lea Bridge roundabout
- Morning Lane
- Napoleon Road

- Northwold Road
- Ponsford Road
- Pownall Road
- Queensbridge Road (both sides from the junction of Whiston Road to Hackney Road)
- Richmond Road
- Sandringham Road
- Stoke Newington Church Street (and the junctions of roads north and south from Church Street)

Other specific locations identified

- Lea Valley train line section that links Clapton to Walthamstow Marsh
- Dalston town centre
- Hackney Fashion Walk
- Homerton station area
- Lea Valley railway area, possibly to connect it to Lea Valley
- Ridley Road Market
- South of the borough and particularly the area of Hackney south of Great Eastern Street
- Southwest of the borough

Non-specific locations identified

- Main roads (5)
- High density housing (3)
- Bus stations
- Everywhere that cars are placed and move through the borough
- Railway arches
- Schools
- Train stations

Example interventions identified

- Cycle lanes (3)
- Parking reduction (3)
- Cycle parking (2)
- Community composting
- Do not build on all land
- Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs)
- Ling existing green spaces
- Permeable paving
- Tree and shrub planting

Quote relating to inequality of impact

- "Especially where LTNs have pushed more traffic onto main roads – traffic needs to be actively managed to reduce air pollution for everyone, not just the rich guys in the nice areas."

- "Green infrastructure needs to be more evenly distributed. Over the recent years, some of the healthier and greener neighbourhoods have seen their number of street trees increase, whilst some of the busier (and so less green) roads have seen no improvement at all."

Comments on cycling infrastructure

- "Secure cycle parking is also needed everywhere - every hangar has a long waiting list."
- "Woodberry Downs has no dedicated cycle lanes. Please incorporate them before all the building work is done as you are missing a trick not to have them designed in when everything is being built rather than adapting it afterwards."
- "The Manor House junction is absolutely terrifying for cyclists. Cycle traffic lights could help."
- "More cycle lanes and bike parking please"
- "I would like to see more Amsterdam style green infrastructure with permeable paving, less parking, and more specific bike lanes"

Comments on green corridors and links

- "I do really like your green corridors idea. It would be a great bonus for me, as I already use many of these routes to tie together green spaces while running. I've been wanting that new entrance to Abney Park for ages!"
- "The linkages suggested for new green routes are excellent"
- "Green Links should also be Green Corridors unless there is reason why this is not possible."

Two respondents also suggested community composting initiatives, with another respondent highlighting that tree planting maintenance should be prioritised. Another respondent referred to the importance of taking the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) into account. A respondent also referred to the importance of 'better collaboration and cooperation' between the Council and rail network so that 'rail corridors remain intact'.

Question 3: Do you have any comments on the objectives of the strategy?

45 respondents answered this question. The objectives were provided as part of the questionnaire:

- To improve residents' health and well-being
- To be more resilient to the impacts of climate change
- To reduce deficiency in green open space
- To increase ecological connectivity

Level of support

20 respondents provided direct sentiment in relation to the question, with 19 expressing support for the vision, although some respondents qualified their support. Words used more than once to describe the objectives included 'Agree' (4), which includes one 'Strongly Agree', 'Support' (4), which includes one 'Very supportive', Good (4) and Great (4). The one respondent who expressed dissatisfaction with the objectives described the objectives as a waste of taxpayer money.

Several suggestions were raised insofar the objectives are concerned. Three respondents said that the objectives should include a reference to biodiversity and/or habitats for animals:

- "The strategy should include an additional objective: To protect, conserve, and enhance biodiversity in Hackney."
- "There is no objective to improve biodiversity per se, only to increase connectivity. Connectivity is crucial but improving natural habitats for all native wildlife should be specifically identified as a key objective."
- "Where is the objective to increase biodiversity and to create habitats for insects, animals, etc?"
- "There should be a focus also on specifically engineering habitat for wildlife, including birds and insects."

Another suggestion related to the importance of equality i.e. focusing efforts on where 'air quality and access to greenery is worst'. Another suggested objective was 'the right of the environment to exist'. A respondent also said that the objectives 'need to be more detailed'. Another respondent echoed the need for detail, specifically 'on how to improve well-being and maintain green spaces, as they will always need maintenance to thrive'. A respondent also said that the objectives will only work 'if all the services work together'.

Quotes/general statements

- "All objectives agree with, just the way they will be executed. Having somebody in charge to lead, with background knowledge on how to convert the grey-to-green. Less use of pesticides, way less mowing. New developments (especially new office blocks) to have less bright lighting at night/evening. Focus on canal through Hackney - is the Hackney council working with the C&R trust?"
- "All of this is fantastic but needs to go hand in hand with reduction of car dominance on the roads. As only 70% of Hackney's residents are car owners, it does not make sense to allow so much of the public space to be dominated by polluting, dangerous motorised private vehicles, when this space could be returned to residents and wildlife."
- "As an additional point, I think it's important for local implementations to absorb excess rainwater rather than divert into the drains. This reduces the load on the sewer network and helps mitigate excess runoff into the Thames which can often be polluted during times of heavy rain for this reason."
- "All the roads in the area need more trees, more cycle stalls etc."
- "I don't have any confidence in public accessible roof gardens, no examples are given where they work, who will pay for them and how will they be managed, service charge or general fund"

- "I think active transport and protected cycle lanes are essential to improving residents' health and wellbeing."
- "I would like to see less parking spaces and local spaces being used as play spaces"
- "I would love to see many more trees planted in the area. Especially along Rectory Road."
- "It all sounds good, but how will success be measured? Will some areas get left behind?"
- "Increasing urban suds provision to counter changing weather patterns."
- "It would be great to connect the green space of Hackney Downs all the way to the Stoke Newington Common and Abney Park. Planting trees along Rectory Road would help create a green corridor that can create more active travel on Rectory Road, encouraging more people to walk or cycle there."
- "Not sure how this will improve my well-being. I am not one prone to communing with nature which is why I live in a city."
- "Street and road improvements need to include regular opportunities for pedestrians to sit and stop (i.e. attractive benches, rain/sun shelter and planting) in order to successfully encourage active travel and physical/mental well-being amongst older pedestrians and young families in the borough."
- "There are many practical things which could be done now -- such as banning the parks department from using leaf blowers, which would help residents' health and wellbeing (noise, pollution, blowing around of detrimental particles, etc) as well as stopping the destruction of habitat for overwintering insects. Leaves on the ground are essential for the health of the soil. Also, the high use of vehicles in the parks creates an urban feel in the parks. Park workers driving jeeps from bin to bin, large mowers mowing to a schedule whether the mow is needed or not. Vehicles driving round in the parks is completely counter to the idea of green spaces being places for peace and clean air."
- "To rewild the Hackney, planners need to consider how to enhance ecological connectivity across the borough through new developments. Management of parks and green spaces must challenge public perceptions of 'tidiness' and allow grasslands to flower. Hackney residents can make their gardens havens for wildlife, as these provide important links between the borough's best habitats, but a quarter have been lost to concrete. Local groups and schools can also help to monitor the state of Hackney's wildlife, flora and fauna to drive local action."

Opportunities and Delivery Proposals

Question 4: Do you have any comments on the opportunities which have been identified?

45 respondents answered this question. The opportunities were provided as part of the questionnaire:

- Modifying existing parks and amenity green spaces
- Transforming streets and public realm
- Promoting urban greening

Level of support

17 respondents expressed direct sentiment in relation to the question, with nine expressing support for the opportunities identified in the strategy. Five respondents qualified their support. The word "great" was used twice to describe the objectives. Other statements of agreement included "support/supportive" (2), pro, agree and fantastic (all 1).

Three respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the opportunities. One respondent described the opportunities as a waste of taxpayer money, one respondent viewed the strategy as Hackney jumping on the green bandwagon, and one respondent thought the opportunities were unambitious. Another respondent expressed disappointment with the case studies included in the draft strategy.

Five respondents stated that they agreed with the opportunities but offered more suggestions or thought the opportunities did not go far enough:

- "Green links is good idea, but again please give more attention to main roads - increase in street trees and street planting needed. Also bigger trees - it takes a long time for some species to grow."
- "Again, I am in favour of all these opportunities but the opportunities do not go far enough. So many roads and parking spaces are dominated by the few, not the majority. This is a missed opportunity not to start to reclaim these spaces for green corridors that benefit wildlife and hackneys residents. Look at the transformations planned for Paris, France for example."
- "Fine but what about planning contribution? Why are we not building lots of low carbon homes?"

Respondents offered further comments on the opportunities and suggestions for amendments to the strategy document.

Comments on growing spaces

- "Aim to use all available council owned growing land for community food growing activities. Urban growing can never feed Hackney on its own, yet the produce from Hackney land can be worth thousands of pounds. Visible and inclusive projects help to create a good relationship with food, and within communities. People learn new

(and re-learn) skills together, and connections happen across age groups, ethnicities, and backgrounds. Outdoor activity and good food lead to better health and less loneliness, and enhanced awareness of food, ecology and seasonality."

- "Promoting growing communities for refugees, homeless, people under the poverty line. specific safe spaces for transient population"
- "Promoting urban greening, including urban plots to grow vegetables."

Several respondents offered further suggestions for the strategy and specific comments on the detail of the opportunities, including a focus on wildlife and nature recovery and protection of specific species:

- "Train stations, bus stops/shelters and private housing are also opportunities that should be used to increase green infrastructure e.g. offering to fit water butts"
- "Para 4.14 is ecologically weak and risks more exploitation of greenspace for human benefit rather than wildlife. This, and the focus on Green Links to the exclusion of Green Corridors in the Spatial Framework, betrays the weakness of the whole GIS when it comes to nature recovery. It is all very well having a LNRP but if nature recovery is not core to the GIS then the LNRP will be marginalised. Wildlife is always marginalised because it has no voice. Unless nature recovery is explicitly stated as a core objective throughout the GIS the LNRP will fail…"
- "Again, I am in favour of all these opportunities but the opportunities do not go far enough. So many roads and parking spaces are dominated by the few, not the majority. This is a missed opportunity not to start to reclaim these spaces for green corridors that benefit wildlife and hackneys residents. Look at the transformations planned for Paris, France for example."
- "...You say "encourage Horehound Longhorn moth (Fasciella nemophora), by creating small patches of flower rich habitat containing black horehound (Ballota nigra) will help maintain and expand local populations. This nationally scarce species and species of principle importance has been recorded in the NRA". We wouldnt [sic] discourage this, but please note its name is Nemophora fasciella. Black Horehound is a common weed but moth is rare so there may be more to it than just encouraging the larval food plant. Wed [sic] be happy to work with you to research and deliver on its other habitat requirements. You comment on the harmful effects of artificial light on bats. Note the same is true about moths and recent research has shown that modern LED lights can be more harmful. There are three broad approaches, happy to discuss this further…"

Comments on parks

- "I again see similar issues. Example: Why first green an already pretty green Colvestone Crescent/turn a residential street into a park/play area when very nearby already existing public squares, like Gillespie and the square next to Dalston Lane Tube/train station seriously need some greening and amenities?"
- "Making some part of parks free from dogs, so children can play without risk from infection risk from dog poo and wildlife can be undisturbed (Woodberry Down reservoir is a great example of how nice this can be). More street signage to promote responsible dog ownership. More traffic calming measures to stop excessive

speeding in residential areas. ALot of excessive on road parking in residential areas (e.g. lordship road) - always worried about doors being opened into cyclists.”
- “More emphasis on strategies and actions to tackle ASB, drug dealing and criminality in Hackney's Parks. Stronger messaging that Hackney's Parks are for all residents to use and not exclusively for a young hippest demographic. Develop some quieter/meditative areas in some of the Parks. Offer free tutored exercise classes in the Parks including yoga (Weather permitting).”

Green links and corridors

- “Re: Proposed Green Link 5. I think this could run from Hackney Downs, North along the railway line / Napoleon Road, then north up Nightingale Rd, east along Brooke Rd, crossing over Upper Clapton Road (pelican crossing already exists), and east down Cleveleys Road (which already has lots of mature trees) to Millfields Rec. Let's call this OPTION A. I saw that the current proposal is to try to link Green Link 5 to the Lea Bridge roundabout improvements, in which case the corridor could run up Napoleon Road and then along Kenninghall Rd (thereafter over the roundabout/down Lea Bridge Road and connecting to Millfields Rec that way). Let's call this OPTION B. OPTION C might take you along Downs Road / Cricketfield Rd, towards Clapton Pond, thereafter north to the roundabout, past a small pocket park which isn't currently doing much (could be improved?) and down Lea Bridge Rd to Millfields Rec. Personally I would advocate OPTION A because it is more pedestrian friendly and there is a huge opportunity to create a really attractive piece of public realm on the Nightingale Estate on Napoleon Rd, but I can see value in all three options and it might be sensible to consider creating three green corridors between Hackney Downs and Millfields Rec, with some interventions on each route. I can, incidentally, also see value in Option C because I am also advocating a change to the junction at Clapton Pond/A104 to introduce bus lanes / bus priority measures as well as an improved pedestrian experience / better crossing in that location. I can supply my thoughts on this if you like - just contact me.”
- “The aim to better tie together existing green spaces is awesome. I do hope that the green connectors really are green. i.e. a massive reduction in parking to facilitate loads of new planting and (dare to dream) a non paved surface to create a trail like atmosphere. The link between Mabley Green and Victoria Park is passable, but I believe you should have a bigger goal for the future. The 'think big' solution would be to utilise the two unused spans over the east cross route. Add additional spans to fill in the gaps, essentially putting the east cross in a tunnel. Then add a span up and over the railway, elevated over the small unused triangular green area, over Wick Rd and straight into Victoria Park. Expensive, yes, but definitely feasible (I design bridges for a living). Similarly, a fantastic green corridor between Stoke Newington Common and Hackney downs would deck over the overground (where it is in a cut).”

Suggestions for specific roads where street trees could be planted and green links could be improved. This included four comments regarding Rectory Road, in addition to comments relating to Grayling Road and Bouverie Road:

- "All for it! Especially transforming streets. Rectory Road desperately needs pavements Improved. They are a hazard and need widening in places for the school, trees planted and parking bays to narrow the road to traffic"
- "This is a great initiative: a massive transformational effort is needed for those grey roads, whose unhealthy and hostile environment, needs more investment than others. Residential roads like Rectory Road that are carrying the whole "A10" volume of traffic, are not only built to carry the huge volume of traffic, but they are equally managed by TFL, resulting in not benefitting from the public realm improvements enjoyed by the surrounding residential roads, in the last 50 years or more. This has resulted in lack of green infrastructure, as well as lack of safe footways, with narrow pavements that are not inclusive for wheelchair and buggy users, with too many uneven surfaces and cracked potholes."
- "I am very pro the proposals for Grayling road and the new entrance to Abney park"
- "I think infrastructures around the Green Link 3 needs to be extended to Bouverie Road. The full Bouverie Road should be a priority (not only Grazebrook/Grayling Road), as it is a cycle lane, a road leading to schools with many children using it, and surrounded by 2 beautiful parks (Clissold and Abney). I think more trees should be planted on the full Bouverie Road, and making it a 21st Century Street as well (similarly to the plan for Grazebrook and Grayling Road)"

Prioritising urban greening around Council estates

- "Concreted areas of post war council and housing association housing developments, including the one I live in should be prioritised for greening. These developments were planned with large stark, empty concrete or grass areas, particularly at the base of tower blocks. All these areas could provide space for green-oasis of trees and vegetation that would have a huge impact on the most deprived parts of the borough. The Victorian streets might be an easier option to 'green', with them being council land, but the estates need it. Creative thinking is needed to get around issues with turning these spaces green."
- "Housing estates have huge potential. Street trees would establish better and have a better chance of growing to maturity if planted in groups in bigger spaces - also planted in the road not on the pavement! More native planting is essential."
- "I think the report makes a mistake by separating council estates for different treatment. They have many of the same issues as other properties in the borough, and have the same opportunities. For example on my estate there is an oversupply of car parking and 'green spaces' that are not used by residents or wildlife. We are also right next to the A107 / Urswick Road, and experience very poor air quality and noise pollution. This strategy has nothing to say either about this estate or the impact of the major roads, but it does aim to increase canopy cover on non-council estate streets in the borough. This is unfair!"

Quotes/general statements

- "Add school grounds as an opportunity both for greening and for education on nature and biodiversity. Include a consideration of the role of education in enhancing respect for nature and helping the next generation and local communities develop a relationship with it."

- "Working with Waltham Forest and Neighbouring boroughs so that things like eg the new skating rink, which takes half the footprint more that it did out of a nature reserve, cannot go ahead and blight our, landscapes, take land from them that is meant fo public [sic] use and interfere with local wildlife. Protect green spaces at our borders. WF council have approved 25 storey high rises on Lea Bridge Road which will overshadow Hackney. No-one wants these. Please do something so that our green spaces and borders aren't blighted by other borough's non-environmental building plans."

Question 5: Are there any additional sites or projects that you would like to see identified?

46 respondents answered this question. It was mentioned as part of the questionnaire that the following projects were identified as part of the Green Infrastructure Strategy:

- 21st Century Streets
- Green Estates
- Hackney urban forest
- Greening the Grey

Level of support

Four respondents explicitly agreed with the sites and projects identified in the strategy with two respondents agreeing but qualifying their responses.

Four respondents made critical comments, including criticism of the phrases "Greening the Grey" and "21st Century Streets" and the view that the actions are a waste of taxpayer money. One respondent was critical of the lack of focus on areas with higher deprivation such as Homerton and Clapton:

- "why are Homerton and Clapton always the 'poor' neighbour and lesser thought of these are the areas of high density social housing and higher deprivation. the difference in council approach to these areas is very visible. so much opportunity ignored in favour of the more gentrified areas of hackney. Again it feels like those with the less voice are those that are sidelined in favour of the more vocal and affluent in the borough."

Respondents commented on the sites and projects presented in the strategy document.

21st Century Streets

Two respondents wanted more 21st Century streets and LTNs and the removal of parking from more roads. Other respondents wanted cycling to be promoted more and for LTN plant boxes to be better maintained

- "Please put so many cycle hangars on every street that there is over capacity. Less cars = less air pollution, less noise, more active travel."

- "As above. More low traffic neighbourhoods. More park let's [sic]. The vision needs to be bolder to get the cars off the roads and free up our public space"
- "..don't know if this is the right box..could the planting area underneath street trees be shared with low maintenance small native plants eg white clover to help connect wildlife corridors?"
- "Depaving and removing parking spaces has to be a key part of the strategy, and represents a useful tool in all of the projects."
- "a policy to remove 2 to 3 parking spaces on either side of the road, every 100m (or otherwise as appropriate), to enable safer crossing while also introducing a rain garden / tree build out or other greening. (This would also support the recently announced goal to reduce traffic in Hackney by 15%, as car-use is related to availability of parking.)"

Green Estates

Respondents suggested sites for green estates in Lower Clapton and around Hackney Downs:

- Nightingale Estate (Lower Clapton/Hackney Downs) - "As mentioned, in another comment, the area of the nightgale [sic - Nightingale] estate where it joins Heyworth, Ferron and Charnock roads could do with some renovation and regreening. A lot of the parking space in the estate is no longer used and the adjoining roads have the old style emergency gates. Additionally, there is a nearby primary school. I think that whole space could be changed, keeping existing access for emergency vehicles but adding greening, play facilities for children and better access for cyclists and pedestrians."
- Lower Clapton & Homerton: "Love "Green Estates" and am pleased to read that Curtain Rd/Hoxton St/Great Eastern will get tree cover. I d love to also see tree cover on Lower Clapton/Urswick/Homerton High as those roads do now take nigh all the daily commute traffic towards the A12."
- Swinnerton St, Hackney Downs: "I live at . Much of the close is an estate but the approach on Swinnerton is a public road. Sadly the tree planting in the local area stopped a good deal before the end of the public road. I would love it if you could re-visit and plant trees along the pavements right up to the end of the public road, as you have in the Victorian terraces. Built in 1990 we need all the help we can get!"
- "Green estates could be extended by focusing current improvement grants for all estates on green and cycling infrastructure."

Hackney Urban Forest

Respondents offered suggestions for Hackney Urban Forest, including comments on creating or strengthening green links along Rectory Road and increasing overall canopy cover in Hackney Central:

- "Yes, paving and widening the pavements along Rectory Road and planting trees. Adding cycle storage and parking bays for deliveries and drop offs"
- "There need to be additional street trees and street planting to combat air pollution all around Hackney Central - not just on Morning Lane site. There are lots of suitable sites - for example additional planting around the station and along Amhurst Rd.

Also additional planters would enhance Narrow Way area - why is it so bare? Why just a few street trees? There would still be room for vehicle access."

Respondents identified additional sites and roads:

- The Jack Dunning Estate, Lower Clapton
- Allen Gardens
- Downham Road
- Blackstock Road
- "Homerton High Street/Ponsford road/Morning lane"
- Lea Valley
- Lower Clapton Road/Dalston Lane
- Pembury Road & Amhurst Road
- "Morry Levy Memorial Garden, Yoakley Road, Stoke Newington."
- "Shepherdess Walk / Micawber St / Taplow St / Strut St."
- Gillett Street car park
- Green corridor between Hackney Downs and Newington Green
- Green corridor through de Beauvoir along the CS1

Additional comments on the Hackney Central plans

- "There need to be additional street trees and street planting to combat air pollution all around Hackney Central - not just on Morning Lane site. There are lots of suitable sites - for example additional planting around the station and along Amhurst Rd. Also additional planters would enhance Narrow Way area - why is it so bare? Why just a few street trees? There would still be room for vehicle access."

Respondents also called for blue spaces and pond and canal based projects:

- "Blue spaces! River Lea, Regents Canal, the sad New River and ponds in parks."
- "... More ponds on estates and parks…"
- "Highlighting and improving the incredible canal network."

Respondents suggested further considerations to add to the strategy:

- "The locations of proposed pocket parks are not clear or are omitted from the project proposals. They should be added to the maps / and the locations made clearer."
- "An urgent project is to deal with the increase in light pollution. Most green spaces are becoming surrounded by high rise developments which light up previously dark areas. The new LED lights are harmful to insects and should be replaced immediately. And the lesson learned for the future not to rush into short term fixes without having enough knowledge about the long term effects."

Question 6: Do you have any comments on the proposed locations of the green links, corridors, areas of change and the emerging interventions that are identified in the spatial framework?

42 respondents answered this question. The strategy explained that the Spatial Framework visually identified locations that should be considered as a priority, in addition to more localised contributions.

Nine respondents explicitly stated that they agreed with the proposed green links, corridors, areas of change and the emerging interventions identified in the spatial framework. Respondents used words and statements including "great" (4), "good" (3), "strongly support," "very excited" and "brilliant" (1).

Four respondents qualified their support for the proposals, stating that the strategy is a good start and would need ongoing action. One respondent criticised the ecological elements of the strategy.

- "The spatial framework of the GIS is probably fine, but it overlaps with the spatial framework proposed in the Local Nature Recovery Plan. There could be conflicts between them and differences of priority, for example over which estates are priorities for greening and whether biodiversity or access to nature are prioritised at locations where they both make proposals. A piece of work needs to be done to reconcile these proposals and priorities. There is no specific Green Infrastructure Plan to deliver the spatial framework. Perhaps these proposals should be presented in a separate plan, rather than being included in the Strategy."

Seven respondents criticised or disagreed with the proposals in the spatial framework. As before, one respondent described the strategy as a waste of taxpayer money. One respondent asked for clearer maps and defined terms to be included in the strategy. One respondent was concerned about the cost of living around Hackney Central for people of retirement age. One respondent stated that the proposed changes would make the area more dangerous for older and less able people. Two respondents commented on the areas chosen with one respondent stating that the strategy prioritised affluent areas of the borough such as Stoke Newington and London Fields. One respondent wanted more consideration of walking conditions and safety for pedestrians and commented that the proposed locations prioritised already improved areas: "the already nicer/greener" gets further improvements, the drab/grey/polluted can wait."

One respondent commented on the need for more new green links:

- "the green links don't seem too have any coherence about them, more a strengthing [sic] of existing links such as the Woodberry Down Walthamstow wetlands, there are few north south links and nothing goes through the middle of the borough north south. you should use the existing Cycle Superhighway 1 north ruth link and strengthen that to make it much greener and more of an attractive walking route."

Respondents commented on the proposals within the Spatial Framework.

Comments on proposed Green Link 2

One respondent called for more protected cycle ways around Green Lanes and the impact of busy roads on children's safety:

- "... There should be a priority pedestrian crossway on albion road between church walk and winston road with raised pavers. We catch the bus to Woodberry wetlands from green lanes as it seems too hard to find a way without crossing loads of traffic. The same for getting down matthias road / accross [sic] the A10 to either hackney downs or millfields. They are close but they feel miles away because there are not protected cycle lanes. Once we get to lea bridge road we can happily go all the way to leyton because of the cycle lanes, it's just getting there is hard and there isn't room for children on the pavements…"

Comments on proposed Green Link 3

Two respondents suggested that Green Link 3 should include Bouverie Road:

- "Green Link 3 seems like a good concept but overcomplicated and expensive given the works currently planned to update and enhance Church Street access to Abney Park. Making the route between the Church Street entrance up the south end of Bouverie Road seems a much more cost effective and less disruptive option vs. attempting to blow a hole in the park boundary further up Bouverie and redirect foot traffic, which a) may affect the congestion on Bouverie itself and may redirect pedestrians from shops and restaurants on Church Street, which rely heavily on foot traffic to and from the parks especially on weekends (and especially in light of recent changes from the LTN)"
- "I think infrastructures around the Green Link 3 needs to be extended to Bouverie Road. The full Bouverie Road should be a priority (not only Grazebrook/Grayling Road), as it is a cycle lane, a road leading to schools with many children using it, and surrounded by 2 beautiful parks (Clissold and Abney). I think more trees should be planted on the full Bouverie Road, and making it a 21st Century Street as well (similarly to the plan for Grazebrook and Grayling Road)"

Four respondents commented on Abney park:

- "Brilliant! New entrance to Abney Park essential to making the links work"
- "I strongly support the proposals affecting Grayling road and Abney park"
- "I am very excited for the green corridors connecting Abney to Hackney Downs to Millfields."
- "I think the green links are a great idea. Especially the one between Clissold Park and Abney Park"

One respondent suggested including Church Street:

- "The link seems pretty arbitrary. Why not along the Church Street? The whole area needs to be green."

Comments on proposed Green Link 4

- Two respondents commented on Rectory Road:
  - "The A10 stretch of Rectory Road between the Brooke Rd junction and the Evering Rd junction would highly benefit from trees. It will help with air quality, absorb noise pollution, and provide a more cool space during summer days. It is important to realise that Rectory Road is full of many converted flats with no access to outside spaces. and during hot summer days residents have to choose between either opening the windows, with the noise and pollution from the traffic, or keeping them closed despite the heat. Trees are a proven and important way to help manage air and noise pollution, and they improve residents physical and mental health. Trees would also provide a traffic calming measure to the A10 traffic, creating a separation between the traffic and pedestrians - especially outside Linden Children Centre - where most families with kids travel to by foot or by bike - and and finally improving what is currently an hostile environment that attracts often anti social behaviour. There is currently a stark contrast between the LTNS and Rectory Rd in terms of Air quality and lack of trees. With the introduction of LTNs in both Stoke Newington and Hackney Downs, we have an increasing number of people walking and cycling, and this green infrastructure intervention will allow locals and residents to also feel more calm and confident, in a healthier Rectory Road."
  - "We strongly agree to the greening along Rectory Road for trees and plantings"

Comments on proposed Green Link 5

- "Quite keen to see how you can link up Green Link 5 with the cycle infrastructure changes in that area."

Comments on proposed Green Link 7

- "Has the Hoxton West LTN been overlooked? Could Green Link No. 7 include this area? The Hackney side of Old Street roundabout is fairly grim and the new tower blocks going up will only increase the density and 'tunnel' effect. More street trees here, please.."

Comments on proposed wider Green Infrastructure Enhancement

- "Add canals"
- "Downham Road"
- Two respondents suggested Mare Street as an additional location:
  - "Green link from London Fields to Victoria Park - maker cycling and walking safer along Mare St and Well St. Well St is particularly hazardous and polluted for pedestrians who need to cross the road as there is a solid stream of traffic heading towards the A12 and few crossing places."
  - "I feel like mare street needs more attention."
- "I think it is important that this strategy recognise the difference between Parks and Green Spaces located in the Public Realm and Green spaces on Council Estates.

Council Estate Green spaces need to remain spaces for residents living on estates who pay for the upkeep, cleaning and developments of these areas. Residents living on Council Estates have a right to some peace and quiet in their homes, without party time for others who don't live on their estate and outside their windows. I hope this is not a land grab for the benefits of those living in private properties?"

- "Please could there also be a green corridor/link between Newington Green and Dalston, with more green in Gillet Square and Ashwin Street"
- "There are large parts of the borough that don't get anything from this strategy. The area between Hackney Downs / Hackney Central and the Lea Valley is not proposed to get any intervention, which seems like a missed opportunity. While I can understand the logic of putting pocket parks in LTN areas, spare a thought for other parts of the borough (i.e. mine) that have neither LTNs or pocket parks."
- "Why isn't there one in Dalston? All of the green corridors seem to be in areas which already have lots of green space."

Additional comments

- Four respondents commented on street tree planting:
  - "Id like to see plans for the opportunity areas or are these just to be left behind? Street trees should be in larger groups in larger pits with underplanting rather than single small squares - eg lower Clapton road could have the trees planted integrated with SUDs all along the stretch creating a barrier from the road. tree planting should be in the road not the pavement which would obviously means a reduction in cars too"
  - "Strategy for enhancing existing green assets seems promising, but more needs to be done to improve general standard of all streets. It doesn't need to be big ticket stuff - just leaving areas with natural planting instead of paving it over."
  - "Street trees should be in groups in larger pits with underplanting rather than single squares"
  - "There should be a higher level of ambition in terms of coverage of the borough with LTNs, and nature positive actions like depaving, tree planting should be integrated into the delivery of LTNs."
- "...The Spatial Framework focuses only on Green Links (for people) rather than Green Corridors (for wildlife). Whilst the two are closely related and that LNRP will focus more specifically on wildlife the exclusive emphasis in the Spatial Framework on Links, without mention of Corridors, is a bias that will have adverse consequences for wildlife if it is not addressed within the GIS. As drafted the Spatial Framework is entirely dedicated to delivery of Links for people, ignoring wildlife. As mentioned above this betrays the ecological weakness of the GIS and the consultants who drafted it. This is not a criticism of the consultants but of the GIS."

Any other comments

Question 7: Do you have any other comments?

45 respondents answered this question. The following themes were identified:

Need for inclusivity

- "It's the details and inclusivity that matter most, both for taking the residents with you and for achieving your aims."
- "Your designs and the principles behind them endanger disabled people and older people, parents with buggies and children. Shared space designs don't work, kerbs are needed by the blind and the intellectually disabled to signify safe pedestrian space."
- "it's not clear why estates should be treated differently to other streets in the borough. My estate has a network of roads and pedestrianised streets and seems to miss out on the trees / SUDS / paving / wayfinding / EV chargers and other positive interventions that non-estate streets get."

Comments on the importance of local knowledge

- "People care a great deal about their green spaces and have lots of knowledge about them and their history."
- Ideas and strategies for local green improvements should be invited at local level from residents who know the area - not just top down.
- "That any Green developments on identified Council Estates will only take place after thorough discussions with residents and resident groups and ideally in co-production. From my experiences, the Council needs to demonstrate that they actually listen to Hackney residents."
- "Initiatives led by local people who are principled and care about a site, who are knowledgeable or supported by other experts, can achieve amazing results with new nature reserves and valuable habitats in even the most deprived areas."

Consultation process and communications

- "Anyone who wants to comment on this needs a lot of time and dedication. It discriminates against people who don't have this - or a particular level of English."
- "Better communication about green projects. I have only just found out about this."
- "I fear that this document will go the way of the Biodiversity Action Plan. It would be better to actually consult people who live in various neighbourhoods. They will know better than consultants, etc what is needed in their neighbourhoods."
- "More time needed for this consultation, accessible formats and in-person events to build trust, shared understanding and support change process"

Comments on tree planting

- "I'm really excited about all of this, I would like to propose more street trees, permeable paving and a play st section for Winston Road, the residents will agree."

- "It annoys me that Hackney does excellent work on tree planting and then half of them die through lack of water. Why not employ more "tree carers" or ask for local people to cooperate in the role?"
- "My second concern has been a few locations where trees are planted on too narrow a pavement. One should be able to walk two abreast. Not single file."
- "...companion planting for street trees"
- Promote native planting!
- Some of the tree planting has really narrowed pavements, do it on the road instead by removing car parking. (same for electric charging posts...)

Comments on Hackney Marshes

- Protect the marshes from development. Create safe spaces for wildlife on the marshes.
- Hackney Marshes - should be more non native tree planting in SNIC areas
- "…the proposed redevelopment of the Spitalfields Market may adversely impact the Hackney Marshes SINC."

Comments relating to the built environment

- "The Green Infrastructure Strategy document only makes a very brief mention of the value of the built environment to wildlife, despite Hackney's importance to red-listed urban species: swifts, house sparrows, starlings, and house martins, as well as bats roosting in buildings."
- "The LNRP should consider the impact on local nature recovery of developments in the areas surrounding the borough."

Comments in support of reducing car ownership

- "I think the vision should be bolder, go bigger, and must radically reduce car ownership and dominance on the roads. / The green infrastructure strategy must go together with a car reduction strategy."
- "No further comments, just general support for a low traffic, car free borough !"

Comments on parking

- "Looks great! But can we have some car parking replaced on *every road* with greenery (or cycle parking) rather than just a few "20th century streets"?"
- "This whole strategy really needs to be explicitly tied into a parking strategy that has specific targets for parking reduction. Initial parking reduction should be focused on junctions. The 2-3 spaces closest to each corner should be removed and replaced with SUDs with low planting to 'daylight' junctions to improve safety. At the moment, parking severely restricts sight lines for pedestrians cyclists and motorists alike, especially if the vehicle closest to the corner is a van or other large vehicle."

Two respondents commented positively on the need for rain gardens, with one responding saying that they all need to be 'equally attended' to.

- "Beside trees, there could be an opportunity for rain gardens; these are sometimes not equally attended to (the rain garden on Downs Road, for example, is usually in great shape and well looked after, whilst some of the ones, south of Rectory Road, aren't and often attract some anti social behaviour, and end up being covered in trash)"
- "The SUDS installed in my street have been a fantastic addition thank you, hope there can be many more installed all over Hackney, prioritising highly paved areas"

Several respondents commented on the need for a biodiversity officer:

- "Hackney needs a biodiversity officer"
- "A biodiversity officer would have been useful for that process as well. The council needs someone who actually understands environmental issues, biodiversity, habitat, etc to help put together a truly viable strategy."
- "A Biodiversity Officer is vital to effectively implement the strategy."
- "The filling of the post of Biodiversity Officer must be the first and primary action of the Nature Recovery Network Plan (NRNP). Without a lead, with sufficient authority over all Hackney departments, including planning, the NRNP is likely to suffer the fate of the Biodiversity Action Plan which had no in-Council champion to oversee and co-ordinate biodiversity policy. Currently biodiversity focussed planning conditions are being missed because there is no oversight in the Council on biodiversity matters."

One respondent did not mention the need for a biodiversity officer per se, but said:

- "I'm not convinced that the Council have the financial and human resources to deliver on this Strategy."

Several respondents reiterated their support for the proposals:

- "I strongly support the proposals"
- I agree with the comments in the Strategy document
- "This is great to see, well done."
- "This looks fantastic"
- "Very supportive"

Additional comments

- "Downham Road needs greening and traffic needs to be reduced to make it safer and less polluted especially because there are two schools and a nursery there, and there is very little green space for residents in Haggerston and south of Downham Road"
- "Please stop using herbicides altogether - it is an unnecessary environmental and health hazard."
- "I'm particularly interested in small-scale actions and how they can have an impact much larger than might seem likely initially."

- "It needs to be more ambitious - more specific plans for Dalston, close Gillett Street car park and turn it into a park. Close Bentley Road car park and turn it into a park."
- "The new science of "happiness" is revolutionizing our ability to measure social progress… This converging body of research indicates that well-being and ecological sustainability, goals sometimes viewed as contradictory, are in fact complementary. Emphasizing social drivers of well-being counters the conventional focus on economic growth and fosters the pro-social attitudes and behaviors necessary to live in better balance with nature."
- "The Delivery section of the GIS should describe and set out the scope and terms of reference for the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, Local Nature Recovery Plan and Urban Forest Plan in order to link those plans in to the strategy which underpins them, and which they deliver."
- "If the GIS does not include a Biodiversity objective then a separate Biodiversity strategy should be developed to underpin the LNRP, UFP and PGSS."
- "Dedicated cycle lanes make cycling so much more possible, otherwise always an element of fear."
- "Waltham Forest has shown excellence in their approach to public realm improvements - can there be some form of cross borough partnership to support and inform best practice in Hackney?"
- "I just want to say again that climate change and nature conservation need to be at the centre of every decision - not on the periphery. This means all council staff need to understand the urgency and importance of this."
- "Enhance Hoxton Square in line with the Connecting Green Spaces Report, considering a new entrance from Old Street. " Have no real objection to this but surprised as I thought the major impact of green corridors was for the benefit of birds/insects/wildlife which don't need gates. More gates to a Square heavily associated with ASB? Please consider the proposal from a security point of view as well."
- "Relaxed mowing on estates especially around trees"
- "Bat and solitary bee bricks should be standard in planning like swift bricks/boxes"
- "Reduce light pollution"
- "Dog ponds to be made to divert dogs from wildlife ponds"
- "Every park to have a woodland walk and inaccessible scrubby copses for wildlife"
- "More long grass, more wild flowers."
- "My main observation of greening is the failure to respect desire lines… I intervened in Wilton Way and the design was changed to respect the desire lines- observe where people walk!"
- "…using a hedgerow as an urban corridor…"
- "The relationship of the proposed Green Infrastructure Forum to the existing Hackney Biodiversity Partnership (HBP) and Hackney Parks Forum should be clarified in the document and it should be clearer what their role will be in future.   With the change in the objectives to add biodiversity then there will be a continuing role for The HBP."
- "There should be a framework for co-ordination of Local Nature Recovery plans between neighbouring boroughs."
- "Air pollution from canal boats burning coal and wet wood can be really bad (especially in the winter) for anyone using the canal path (as well as the boaters themselves), and does not seem to much enforcement of the smoke control zone for them."
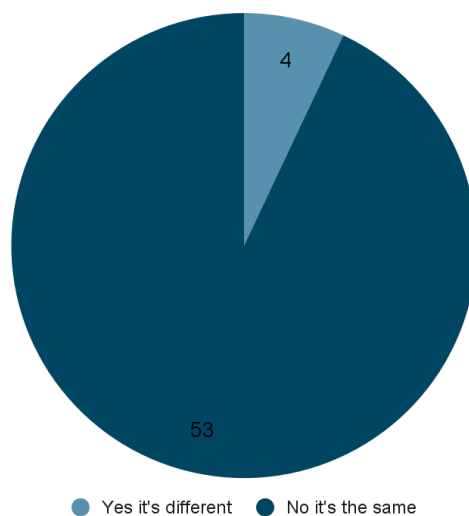
About You

**Gender: Are you… (Base 60)**

● Male ● Female
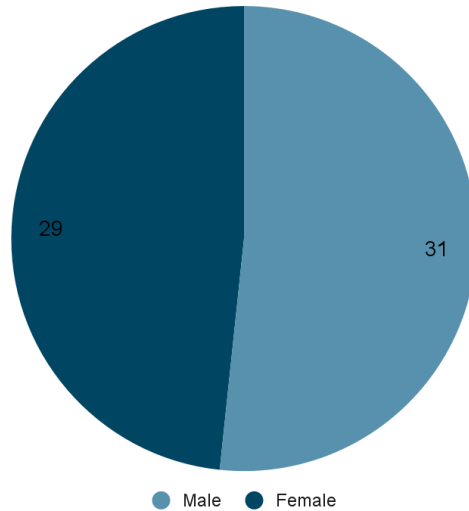
The majority of respondents are male (31), with the remaining 29 female.

Gender: Is your gender identity different to the sex you were assumed to be at birth? (Base 57)


● Yes it's different ● No it's the same

The majority of respondents' sex is the same which was assumed to be at birth (53), compared to 4 which is different.

Age: what is your age group? (Base 57)
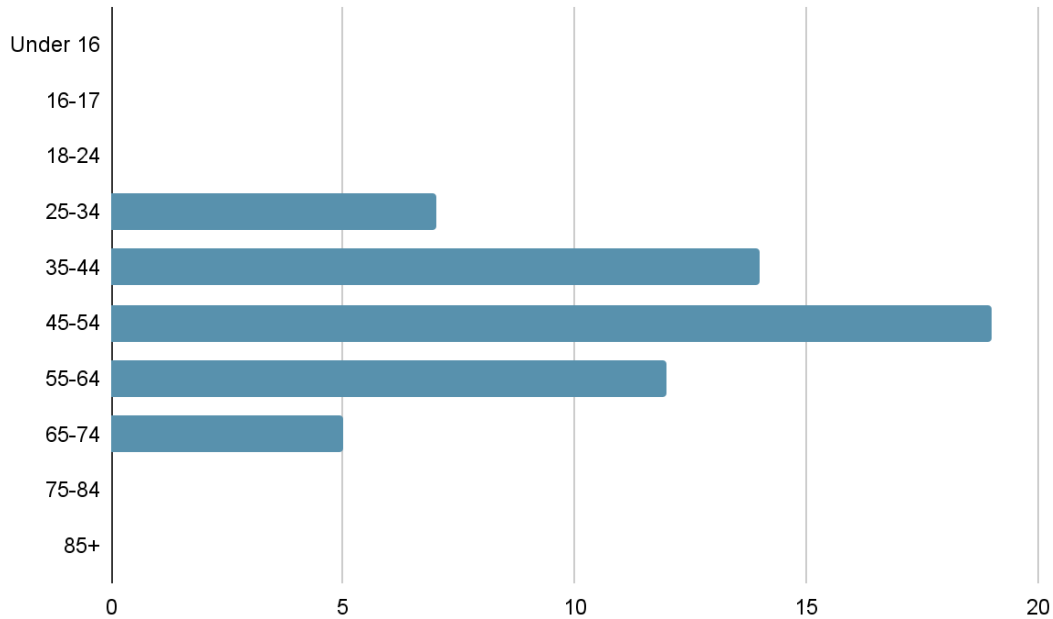
The majority of respondents (19) are in the 45-54 age group, followed by the 35-44 age group (14). 12 respondents are in the 55-64 age group, 7 in the 25-34 and 5 in the 65-74.

Disability: Under the Equality Act you are disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? (Base 59)
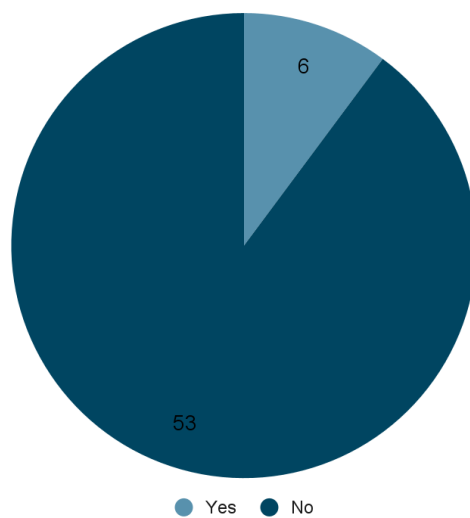

6 respondents consider themselves to have a disability, whilst 53 do not.

Caring responsibilities: A carer is someone who spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a family member, partner or friend who is ill, frail disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. Do you regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone? (Base 58)
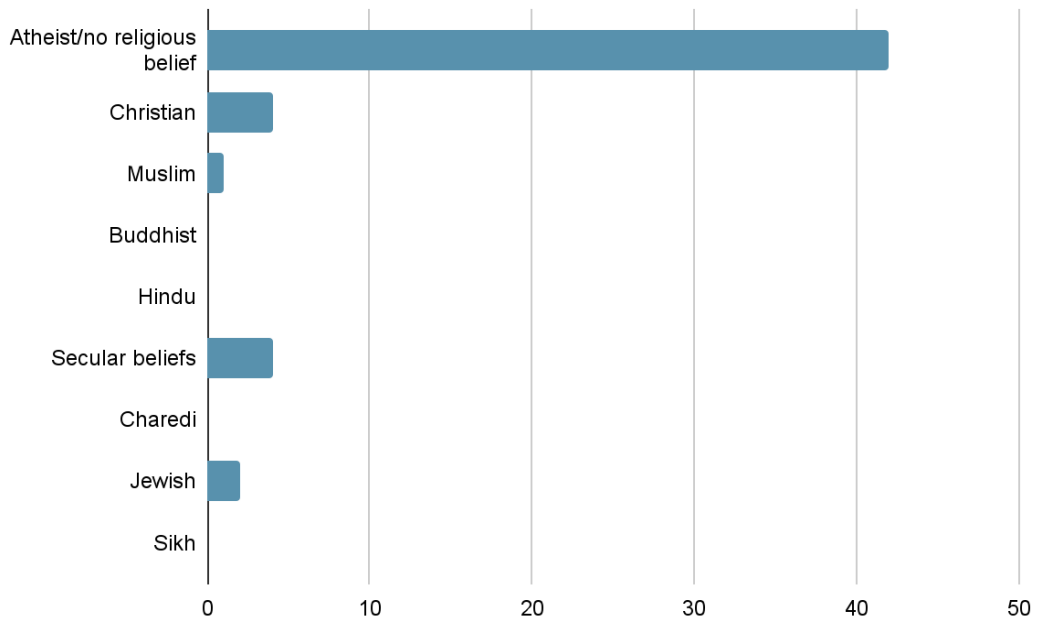

● Yes   ● No
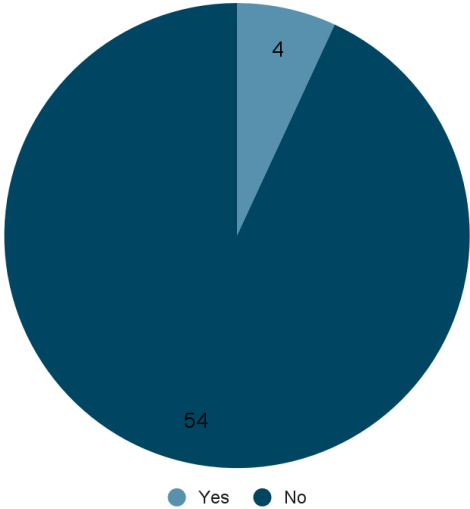
7% respondents regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone, compared to 93% who do not.

Ethnicity: Are you…(Base 57)
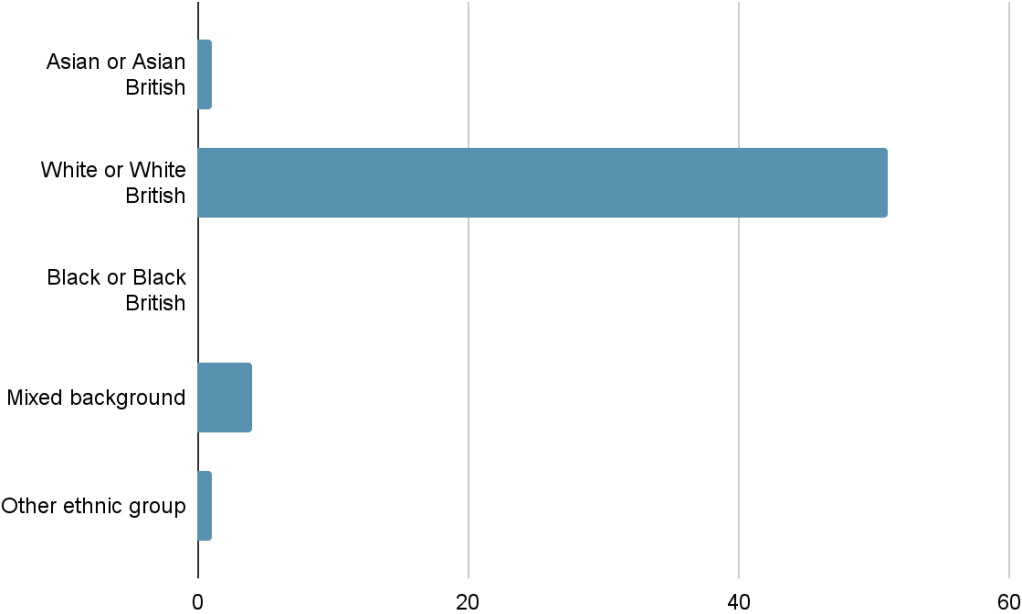
The majority of respondents (51) indicated that their ethnicity is White or White British, followed by Mixed background (4), Asian or Asian British (1) and Other ethnic group (1).

**Religion or belief: Are you or do you have…(Base 53)**

The majority of respondents (42) indicated that they are Atheist or have no religious belief. The remaining religion or beliefs account for a smaller amount.

Sexual orientation: Are you…(Base 57)
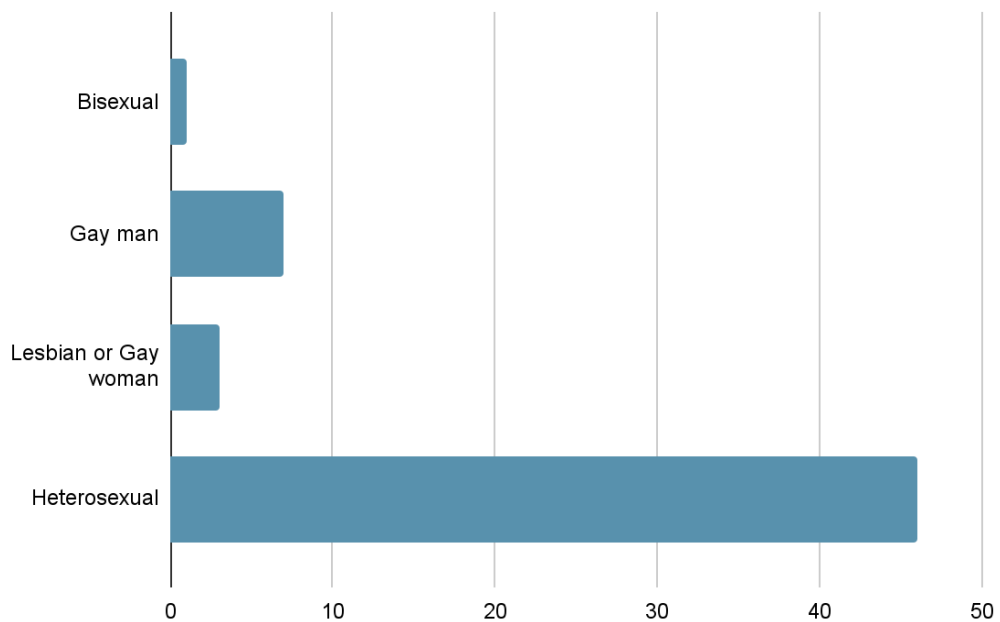
The majority of respondents (46) indicated that they are Heterosexual. All other sexualities accounted for a much smaller amount.

<u>Housing Tenure: Which of the following best describes the ownership of your home? (Base 58)</u>
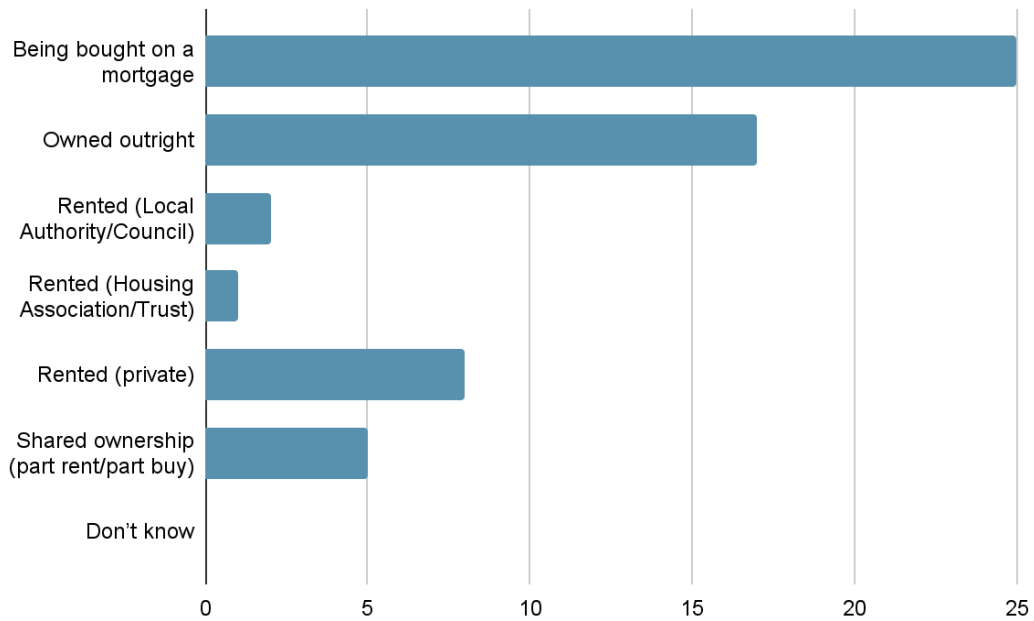
The majority of respondents stated that they bought their home on a mortgage or own it outright (42). 3 respondents rent their property through the Council or Housing Association/Trust. 8 respondents are private renters.