

Anglia Ruskin University

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The Big Listen: A community engagement consultation project

Actions, findings and reflections

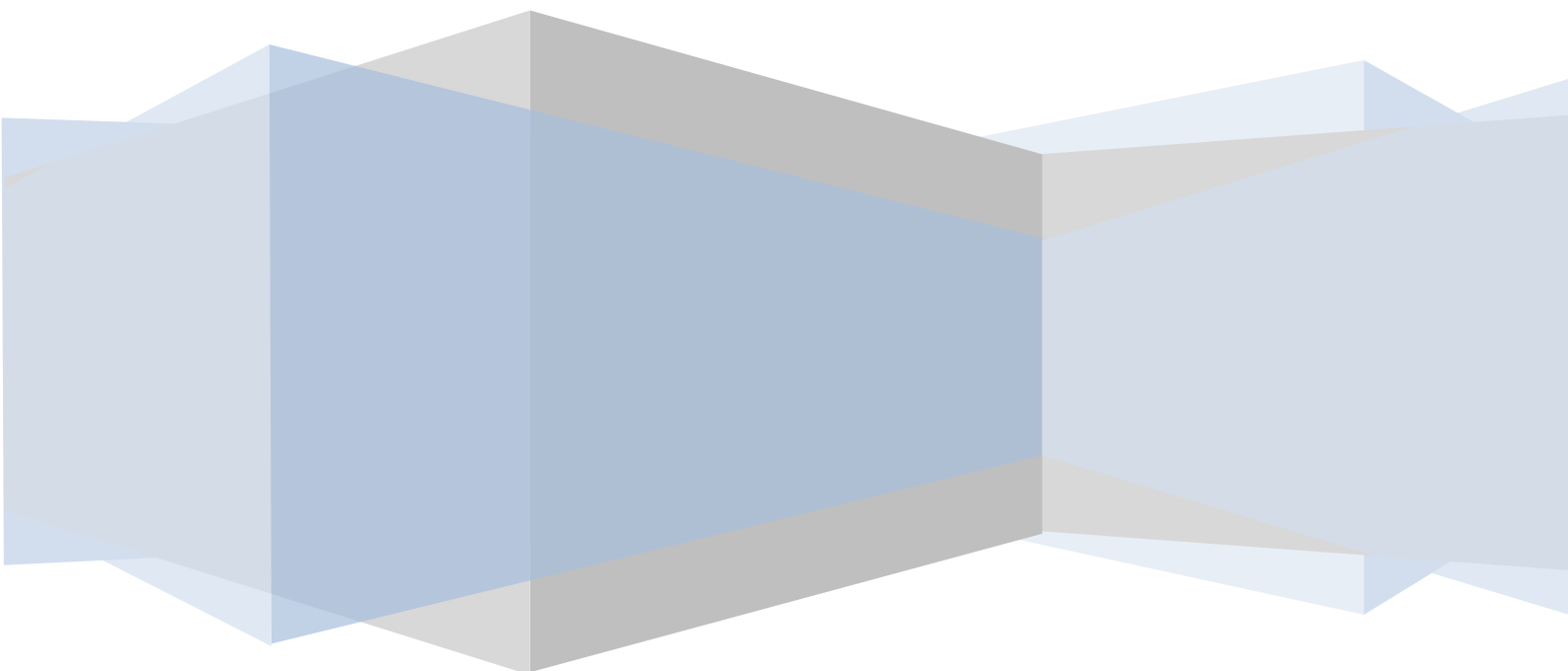
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Abstract

This paper discusses the results of an empirical research project called The Big Listen, which was carried out in the Northern area of Cambridge. It also presents personal reflections upon the execution of the project. My participation in The Big Listen was part of the work placement undertaken as a student of the MSc in Entrepreneurial Management at Anglia Ruskin University. The project was supported by an organisation called Future Business Centre, and the main objective was to find out the most significant social issues that affect the community within Northern Cambridge in order to take further action in the near future. The main vehicle to conduct the research study was questionnaires, which collected data from one hundred and eleven local residents. Coding and grounded theory were used to process the data, and results were presented in a written report. Findings indicate that, despite general agreement on the levels of satisfaction with the neighbourhoods, there are specific issues that need to be addressed such as the disengagement of young people and the feeling of isolation of the elderly, among others. Therefore, The Big Listen should be considered the first step of a long-term process that should keep investigating people's needs, in order to cater to what is currently missing or functioning inefficiently. The current findings may be useful to raise awareness of the situation and involve other stakeholders in the near future. From a personal perspective, The Big Listen has been a challenging journey that has allowed me to question many of my previous prejudices and assumptions on different areas. Moreover, I have gained new knowledge, skills and abilities that have helped me grow both personally and professionally.

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1. Introduction

This paper discusses and reflects upon the ten-week work placement undertaken as part of the MSc in Entrepreneurial Management at Anglia Ruskin University. The project I was involved in was called The Big Listen, and it was supported by the Future Business Centre organisation. Firstly, I will outline the context in which the project operated, the main ideas behind it and the personal reasons for having chosen it. Subsequently, I will explain the work undertaken and present a summary of the results of the project, with the purpose of giving the reader a brief and concise comprehension of The Big Listen. I will then proceed to focus in greater depth on the implementation stage of the project, which will cater to the nuances involved in team-work dynamics, research methodologies and sensemaking processes. Finally, I will present the conclusions of the project, the recommendations made to Future Business Centre and personal reflections.

Throughout the paper, there will be a mix of narrative and reflective content, which accounts for the use of the first person singular on some occasions. The narrative will be juxtaposed with relevant theory and personal experience gained in the course and outside of it. Reflections will be constantly interwoven with the narrative. Therefore, for each section of the report, reflections may be found within the narrative rather than under a specific heading. However, there will still be a separate section containing final reflections, in order to explore specific aspects of the process that were not discussed throughout the paper. The work undertaken will be explored using different perspectives that include psychology, sociology, entrepreneurship and business, all within the enterprise and entrepreneurial management context. In this way, the experience will be analysed from different angles rather than from a single perspective, which will allow for an integrated interpretation of the situation.

The work placement lasted ten weeks, during which I worked with Mild, a fellow student from Thailand, for Future Business Centre. This organisation aims to create a positive impact on the planet and people, and supports businesses and projects with a social and environmental approach. The Big Listen, one of the supported projects, may be summarised as an attempt to listen to the people who live in the Northern area of Cambridge and understand their current needs and concerns that may be preventing them from thriving. It started with five people that got together to form a 'think tank' — hereafter TT — with the objective to tackle the above-mentioned challenge. Our participation in the project involved at first, providing suggestions for the already defined strategy for the completion of the project. We were then in charge of the research stage, which involved field work as well as post-analytical work of the data collected. Finally, we concluded our participation by summarising and presenting the main findings to the TT in a written report (Appendix 1), as well as in an oral presentation.

The Big Listen helped to shed some light on the current situation of the Northern area of Cambridge. The main findings presented in the final report showed that, in general, residents are quite satisfied with the neighbourhood they live in, and acknowledge improvements in comparison to the past decade. However, each area appears to have different particularities, and there are also differences of opinion by age group, and sometimes, by gender. A summary of these outcomes are presented in this paper, along with suggestions for the organisation, and personal reflections upon the process of implementation of the project.

2. The Challenge

The purpose of this section is to outline the characteristics of the challenge presented by Future Business Centre, as well as to briefly introduce the project and the personal reasons for having chosen to work on it.

2.1. The context

As stated earlier, The Big Listen is a project that was carried out in a specific area of Cambridge. According to a report presented by Cambridge City Council (2015), Arbury and Kings Hedges appear among the main deprived areas of Cambridge. The map with the location of these areas may be found in Appendix 2. Particularly, Kings Hedges is second, and Arbury is fifth in the category that refers to *lowest income deprivation affecting children index* (IDACI). Moreover, Kings Hedges appears first in the category *lowest income deprivation affecting older people 60 years old and above* (IDAOP), although it has shown a positive change from 2010 to 2015. Currently, there are two areas in Kings Hedges which fall within the 20% most deprived areas in the country.

This situation, along with a possible reduction of social benefits due to the implementation of the Universal Credit (UC), has brought together five people to form a 'think tank' in order to explore possible alternatives that would help the affected community (Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2016). The TT members, who belong to different backgrounds such as the government, the church, the business environment and the community, recognised that it was time to conduct a research study involving the residents — The Big Listen — that would allow them to understand their current needs and concerns, in order to co-create possible solutions.

2.2. The project

2.2.1. Objectives

The objective of The Big Listen was to understand the issues that concern within Arbury and Kings Hedges through the involvement of the community. By listening to residents' opinions, the TT members aimed to start a conversation with them in order to co-create a thriving future for the community. The main concerns of the TT members were expressed during individual interviews that were carried out at the beginning of the work placement. Each of the members expressed their thoughts — which differed slightly from one another — but may be summarised as the need to perform an analysis of the social problems and service provision in the area. The objective was to encourage people to move from surviving to thriving while tackling the challenge of achieving long-term sustainability of improvements with fewer funds. One of the priorities was to give the community an opportunity to express themselves, and to be more in control of their own future. In order to do this, the TT members proposed a bottom-up approach that would prevent them from making assumptions about the residents' needs, and actually listen to their opinions. In this way, resources could be used more efficiently on the real needs of the community.

2.2.2. Nature of the project

It appears that The Big Listen project may fall into the category of a consultation with community engagement. According to Cambridge City Council (2011), community engagement consultation refers to understanding the needs of the residents in order to take more sensible decisions. It is described as the opportunity for residents to have a voice as individuals within their communities through their active participation and empowerment. For this to happen, meaningful dialogue appears to be essential, which implies listening and learning from the residents (Cambridge City Council, 2011). Consultation, defined as the process by which the information is sought, may include

different methods such as surveys, questionnaires, focus groups or meetings (Cambridge City Council, 2011). In the case of The Big Listen, the main vehicle was questionnaires. However, there may be some limitations to consultation projects, since community engagement tends to require a lot of resources as well as the commitment of the different parts involved (McBride and Korczak, 2007). Moreover, it seems that defining intended outcomes and monitoring the process are key for an effective consultation (McBride and Korczak, 2007). This idea of 'putting citizens first' is not a new one, but it is a difficult one. According to McBride and Korczak (2007), it may require systematically learning about the residents' experience, eliciting feedback and engaging them in the creation of service programs. In order to do this, certain capabilities appear to be vital, such as developing professional empathy, engaging diverse stakeholders, using multiple channels and performing sustained listening (Lindquist, Vincent and Wanna, 2013). It may be that community engagement is not the easiest road to take, but the most effective one for certain cases, such as The Big Listen project (McBride and Korczak, 2007), where the focus is on people's current needs and aspirations. Using a 'human-centred' approach has been a challenge, but at the same, it was one of the main reasons for choosing this project (IDEO, 2014). Due to my background and interests, the idea of working on a project with these characteristics motivated me to work on The Big Listen. In order to explore this idea in greater depth, I will explore the initial decision of seizing this opportunity in the next section.

2.3. Decision-making: why The Big Listen

At this point, and before going into more detail about the project itself, it is important to share that the decision of working with Future Business Centre on The Big Listen was not arbitrary. Going back to the very beginning of this journey, I must reflect upon the moment when I was presented with the three different alternatives that the MSc offered, in

particular, a traditional dissertation, an experience within an entrepreneurial business or a business plan. Opportunity recognition had been a recurrent topic throughout the course, and I was fully aware of the many theories related to the nature of opportunities — whether they are subjective or objective, passive or co-created (Read, Song and Smit, 2009), independent from agents (Grégoire, Barr and Shepherd, 2010) or related to the idea of serendipity (Mitchell et al., 2007). However, when faced with the decision-making moment, I was not comfortable with the uncertainty and imperfect information, and the above-mentioned theories did not shed any light on my dilemma, which caused me anxiety and confusion. Inspired by Sarasvathy's bird in hand principle I asked myself 'who I was, what I knew and whom I knew' with the purpose of finding an answer to my question (Sarasvathy, 2001). It seemed that obtaining more information was needed in order to make an 'informed decision'. Knowing oneself appears to be very important in these tipping moments. With regard to this, I had encountered the concept of locus of control previously in the course, which is defined as the perceived power individuals have over their own behaviour (Gatewood, Shaver, and Gartner, 1995; Christopher, 2012). I had therefore understood that I was an 'internal' person, which means that I tend to believe I have control over the outcomes (Pines and Julian, 1972). According to Pines and Julian (1972), being an 'internal' usually means that the person takes more time than 'externals' in the decision-making processes, due to their need to use prior knowledge and seek all relevant information that may maximise the chances of success. In relation to information seeking, I was also aware of the impossibility of making optimal choices due to our incapacity to properly absorb and process all the relevant information about the various options (Behavioural economics, 2010). The concept of bounded rationality explains how choice-makers stop searching for better options once they are satisfied, since seeking more information adds costs that may be higher than the benefits from this additional search (Socio-Economic Review, 2010). Coming to terms with the fact that 'acting completely

rationally' may be impossible — an idea that took me some time to accept — it seemed that Kahneman's theory of cognitive duality could prove helpful in this decision-making moment (Kahneman, 2012). According to him, in the face of bounded rationality, individuals might tend to select heuristic mechanisms to make judgments in unstable contexts, even if this could lead to mistakes in the decision-making process (Kahneman, Slovic and Tversky, 1982; Mitchell et al., 2007).

It seemed that I was facing a complex situation, however, it only took one comment from my supervisor referring to the need to take decisions under uncertainty for me to react, just in time. As McGrath (2000) argues, sometimes it may be more expensive to be slow than to be wrong. In this case, I interpreted the concept of 'expensive' not from a monetary point of view, but from a gain-loss perspective. According to Mishra and Fiddickled (2012), choice-makers go for decisions that minimise their possibility of loss, while bearing a certain need in mind. A need is defined as the gap between one's present state and one's desired state (Mishra & Lalumiere, 2010 cited in Mishra and Fiddickled, 2012). I asked myself what my desired state was, and what my biggest risk was so I could downsize it with my decision. I came to the conclusion that my biggest risk was not related to a possible loss, but to failing to exploit a future opportunity. With this perspective in mind, I took the decision of working within the entrepreneurial business called Future Business Centre, which was what my gut feeling — or 'system 1' (Kahneman, 2012) — had been telling me from the very beginning.

As I had worked for a similar organisation in the past — Plan Ceibal — and had extremely enjoyed it, I may have been influenced by some cognitive biases when taking my decision. According to Kahneman and Tversky (1973 cited in A'cs and Audretsch, 2011), people tend to make judgments on the basis of particular individual cases, therefore, when faced with uncertainty, I may have based my decision on the available reference cases I had.

Regardless of how I took the decision, my fast choice allowed me additional time to get involved with Future Business Centre early on and find a project like The Big Listen that suited my interests. Therefore, I believe I obtained great benefits from making a fast decision, since I was able to share my expectations for this work placement with the other party, and I also had the opportunity to analyse different projects from which to choose from.

This particular experience has a lot of meaning to me since it represents a moment in which I overcame my need to have everything under control beforehand, and I was able to take a decision within an uncertain context.

2.4. Dealing with uncertainty at the very beginning

After the previous episode, to my relief, everything seemed under control and my perception of risk — failure — was low. However, an unexpected situation coming from the environment questioned my equilibrium. Mild had chosen to work for Future Business Centre too, and she was waiting for my approval. It felt strange thinking that I had some influence over her desire to work with the same organisation as me, and I actually never truly felt it, although the context forced me to be in that uncomfortable position. From an economic perspective of risk and uncertainty, the opportunity cost of acquiring new skills appears to depend on how valuable the old ones are (Gifford, 1998 cited in Ács and Audretsch, 2011). With this idea in mind, it was necessary to reflect upon the possible trade-offs of having Mild joining the project, which would probably add new skills, knowledge and abilities, but would alter my already achieved balance. Even if this discussion seems quite 'cold', it does reflect the reasoning I went through when I had to make the decision.

Giddens (2015) has already expressed that nowadays, one needs to feel comfortable with uncertainty and a changing environment. It was then that I remembered Sarasvathy's concept of leveraging contingencies (Read, Song and Smit, 2009), which refers to the entrepreneur's willingness to change when confronted with new information, and to his or her capacity of leveraging surprises into new opportunities, which is arguably the only way to deal with the unpredictable future. I asked myself 'why not' instead of asking 'why', and I followed the principle of mitigating risks by forming a relationship (Burns, 2012). Moreover, my deterministic view of the world is my most powerful mental tool to alter my perception of risk, because it allows me to believe that if certain conditions can be controlled by an agent, then the desired, predicted outcome should follow (Rutter, 2006). I do acknowledge that there are criticisms of this view, especially related to its inability to genuinely predict the future (Rutter, 2006). Regardless of my awareness of the existence of other philosophies, I consciously choose this one because it is what I need to believe — even if it is not what I truly believe. Sarasvathy's effectual reasoning that claims 'to the extent that we can control the future, we do not need to predict it' (Sarasvathy, 2010) is partly what helps me in these decision-making moments.

Moreover, as Bandura (2001) suggests, one of our most influential mechanisms is one's belief in our capacity to control something of our own functionality and environmental events. Agents seem to have a natural intention of making things happen through actions because the human mind is not just reactive. Individuals appear to have the cognitive ability of intentionality, through which one can predict behaviour and guide interventions. A forethoughtful perspective would allow individuals to guide their actions in order to achieve their projected goals (Bandura, 2001). After all, I was fully determined to believe in this theory.

Therefore, and returning to the decision of incorporating Mild into the project, I once again relied mainly on my 'System 1' and felt comfortable with the idea of welcoming Mild in the team.

3. Results of The Big Listen

This section will present a summary of the results of The Big Listen, in order for the reader to gain a deeper understanding of the scope of the project, the approach used and the main outcomes of it. Moreover, it will discuss the underpinning theory of the methods used for processing the data collected.

3.1. Main findings

In total, one hundred and eleven questionnaires were completed, thirty-seven of those had two extra questions intended specifically for young people (aged 15-24), in order to understand their hopes and aspirations (United Nations, 2013). The Big Listen collected data in seven categories: the current general situation of the neighbourhood, the future general situation of the neighbourhood, human relationships in the neighbourhood, involvement in the neighbourhood, support, personal thriving and youngsters' hopes and aspirations. Below are presented the main conclusions drawn from The Big Listen. Further details on the full report may be found in Appendix 1.

3.1.1. General situation

One of the most interesting and relevant findings was that, in general, residents expressed satisfaction with their neighbourhood and acknowledged that there have been improvements over the last decade. The main reasons that explain this level of satisfaction are related to being surrounded by friendly people, green areas, shops and amenities. Some specific areas within these neighbourhoods appear to be positively affected by the presence of the community centre, although this appreciation comes only from adults and not from the youngsters. As it was discussed with all the TT members, most of the results are not surprising, and in fact, reassure what they previously thought. However, members of the TT recognised the value of getting out and actually talking to people, and more

importantly, of listening to them, in order to avoid making assumptions that may lead to unsuccessful actions and unwanted results. As Feldman (1999) expresses, a conversation may be an important research method in which the sharing of knowledge and exchanging of ideas may lead to a better understanding of the subject matter. Therefore, it seems that The Big Listen was successful in acknowledging the importance of this, and in taking the first step towards better engagement of the community. The process through which the researchers engaged with the community by using questionnaires and carrying out interviews will be discussed in section 4.4.

3.1.2. Main problems and desired improvements

The main problems concerning residents — rubbish and litter, as well as people using or dealing drugs — appear to be present in all areas. However, some people mentioned that the latter had decreased over the years. In addition, young people find noisy neighbours to be a problem, and adults appear to be particularly bothered by dog fouling. With regard to certain sensible topics such as drugs, the TT members discussed the possibility of people having different perceptions that would vary by age group. It would be worth exploring in greater depth why certain answers are more attached to a specific age group or gender, and understand if it is a matter of awareness, relevance or simply differences in interpreting the question, which may be a common pitfall, according to Walliman (2007).

When respondents were asked about what they wanted to improve, they claimed that anti-social behaviour needed to change. Surprisingly for the TT members, mostly youngsters expressed this. Street lighting, paths and paving were also brought up as the main desired improvements but were only mentioned by adult respondents. These kind of outcomes that differentiate answers by age group or any other indicator were possible as a result of the thorough approach used for the data analysis. Responses were entered onto an Excel

spreadsheet, and different functions allowed us to cross-reference relevant data. Decisions had to be made on which indicators were worth considering for each question since not all questions were analysed in the same way. After much discussion with Mild, all the relevant variables for each question were listed, depending on what the topic was. That is to say, for some questions, age and gender might have been important, and for others, the focus might have been on the area of the neighbourhood or the employment situation of the respondents. This allowed us to aggregate and disaggregate data according to the objectives that needed to be met, and to be able to visualise patterns and relationships more clearly.

3.1.3. Positive aspects about the neighbourhoods

People were also asked about the positive aspects of their neighbourhoods, and human relationships was named by nearly half of the respondents. In fact, only seven out of a hundred and seven respondents disagreed with the fact that people treat each other with respect and consideration. Interestingly, youngsters appeared to have a more negative perception of this issue than the rest of the respondents. When people explained the reasons for having a negative perception, most of them attributed it to 'anti-social behaviour'. However, we may not have a comprehensive understanding of what 'anti-social behaviour' means, except for some specific comments expressed by a few respondents. This may illustrate one of Walliman's (2007) ideas that refer to the consequences of using questionnaires. According to him, one can deliver questionnaires in person or by post. We used both methods but possibly did not manage to do as many personal ones as we would have liked to. The advantage of personal delivery seems to be that the interviewer may help the respondent, and that he or she may also check when responses appear strange or incomplete (Walliman, 2007). However, time and geographical location limit the possibility of using personal delivery, and in the case of The

Big Listen, scarcity of human resources resulted in having to do non-personal questionnaires as well as personal ones. Moreover, it is highly possible that in these cases, questionnaires appear incomplete or answered by the 'wrong' person. The response rate may also be low, which may affect the validity of the data collected (Mangione, 1995 cited in Walliman, 2007). In addition to this, there may also be doubts about the precision of the responses. It seems important to understand whether there is alignment between what the researcher intended to ask and what the respondent understood. It would appear natural that different people interpret the same concept in different ways, therefore, it may be necessary to define them in such a way that every person reading them understands the same thing (Walliman, 2007). Even though we piloted the questionnaire, and adjusted the questions on three different occasions, it may be that there was still room for improvement in terms of reducing the ambiguity or vagueness of certain questions. However, this does not appear to be an easy task for this specific type of research, since according to Walliman (2007), human concepts such as respect are very difficult to define accurately since they tend to be based on opinions, emotions or personal experiences. Besides, it would appear difficult to evaluate or measure these concepts because the indicators that make them perceivable may vary from one individual to another (Walliman, 2007). Therefore, what would be relevant to understand is that the concept of respect appears to be affected by 'anti-social behaviour', and that both concepts — respect and anti-social behaviour — may be understood differently by each individual, which could skew results. Being aware of the possible distortion as a consequence of the above-mentioned reasons is important for the researcher. He or she should be humble in the belief of the accuracy of the knowledge, as data may only provide a partial glimpse of reality, and may be misleading if not treated sensibly (Walliman, 2007). As Altheide and Johnson (1994 cited in Woods, 2006) argue, 'the social world is an interpreted world'. It appears inconceivable for a social research

project to be free of subjectivity and interpretation, and one would need to come to terms with the fact that whatever is done, it would always be an approximation of the empirical world (Woods, 2006). This was openly discussed with the TT members during the last meeting, and the decision was not to focus on the objective-subjective discussion, but on the need to move beyond facts and make sense of the data within its context in order to create meaningful constructions that would help the project move forward in a sensible direction (Walliman, 2007).

3.1.4. Involvement of the residents

The Big Listen also intended to understand the levels of involvement of the residents with the neighbourhood and the current activities that are offered. Results showed that twenty-five percent of the respondents are not involved in any activity. With regard to the ones who are, most answers referred to community groups, religious groups and/or sports. There does not seem to be a huge difference by gender, although males appear to be more prone to participate in sports, and females are more involved in community groups. It is interesting to see that all age groups have a high percentage of 'no involvement', except for people over the age of seventy. The elderly appear to be the most active ones, but at the same time, the 'feeling of isolation' appears to be much higher for this age group than for the rest. Most of the people that are not involved in any activity expressed having no particular reasons for this. The respondents who did give some reasons referred mainly to work-life and family. It is worth highlighting that 'having no interest' was very high in young people and much lower for the elderly. This was particularly relevant during the discussion of the results with the TT members, as it would seem that the level of disengagement of the youngsters had already been identified as a concern by other people, for example, within the educational context. It was also discussed that it is highly possible that community centres hardly ever offer activities for this age group. The main reason for this

would seem to be the need for special staff prepared to deal with teenagers. It was acknowledged by the TT that most of the activities target adults and the elderly for this reason, and that it might be worth considering channelling the majority of the resources towards the younger people.

3.2. Data processing theory

As it was stated earlier, the results of The Big Listen helped to shed some light on the main issues that concern the Northern area of Cambridge. In total, one hundred and eleven questionnaires were completed from which data was collected according to seven categories: the current general situation of the neighbourhood, the future general situation of the neighbourhood, human relationships in the neighbourhood, involvement in the neighbourhood, support, personal thriving and youngsters' hopes and aspirations. Each of these categories had subcategories that measured different indicators related to the main theme. The categories arising from qualitative data were created based mainly on grounded theory. Grounded theory may be understood as the tool for conferring meaning to the interaction between the researcher and the research subject, allowing for the discovered reality to 'arise' from this interactive process that may be affected by time, culture and context (Holton, 2008). In trying to avoid theories based on objectivism due to personal preferences — which will be commented on later on — grounded theory appears as an alternative that aims for fit, work and relevance instead of generalised explanations and predictions (Glaser, 1978 cited in Holstein and Gubrium, 2007). This approach seems to be well aligned with the process that had been undertaken, as well as with my personal position. It is based on the coding of qualitative data, which enables the researcher to create categories and ensure that omission of relevant information is minimised. As a result, it allows theory to be built and provides a conceptual overview of the phenomenon under study (Holton, 2008). According to Holton (2008), coding should be done by the

researcher, as it is a process that constantly stimulates ideas. Moreover, in keeping with Woods (2006), categories must be generated from data, and all data should fit somewhere. Besides, categories should be mutually exclusive and on the same level of analysis. When creating the categories, I was not fully aware of this, due to the fact that time constraints obliged us to move forward without much help from appropriate literature. Looking back, I believe it would have proved useful to have read about doing social research before embarking in The Big Listen. Most of my decisions were based on intuition and past experience, although I did complement with theory when I had the opportunity to do so. It would seem that striking a better balance could have helped in perfecting the process. However, if one considers the circumstances under which The Big Listen was carried out, it may be that having done things differently — complying with research guidelines more accurately for example — might not have been that easy due to the limited resources that were available. Moreover, it would appear that the results of The Big Listen still need further analysis and that our work should be continued by the TT members. As Woods (2006) explains, moving from an impenetrable barrier of data into an insight, realisation or breakthrough takes persistence and variability, which means looking at the data from different angles. It would seem that Mild and I only started to do this by the end of the placement period, which means the process is possibly incomplete. It would be essential for the TT members to take the report as a first draft and proceed into looking at the data in more depth in order to gain a better understanding of the situation.

4. The Big Listen in practice

Thus far, the main focus has been on explaining the challenge and the results of the work undertaken. Henceforth, the purpose will be to discuss what was done, how it was done, why, and how it could have been done differently, whilst exploring the main challenges that arose during the implementation of the project. The work placement was an experience that required constant adaptation and learning in different areas, and the following sections intend to illustrate this. The topics that will be touched upon include individual and team-work dynamics, leadership, decision-making, motivation and research methodologies. Anecdotal accounts will be juxtaposed with theory that will enable a critical self-reflection upon the experience.

4.1. Team-work

This section will explore the main issues concerning team-work dynamics that were present throughout the project, which includes mainly aspects related to communication, decision-making and cultural aspects.

4.1.1. Communication and involvement

As it was stated earlier, the work placement lasted ten weeks in which I worked with Mild and Tim — the latter being the leader of the project. A few hours before the starting date, an email was sent to us containing instructions for the following day. Having been informed at such short notice about the duties to be carried out led to a feeling of mistrust and dissatisfaction. It seemed that it was important for communication to be smooth from the beginning, and therefore, this issue needed to be addressed. My thinking was that the importance of being organised in advance was something that I needed to share with Tim. According to Gray (2004), knowing what one is required to achieve beforehand usually leads to better performance. However, if objectives are simply dictated by others and one

needs to fully adopt them, it may be a disincentive (Gray, 2004). Talking with Tim about this issue was possibly the first tipping point that defined how the relationship was going to be throughout the project. Looking back, it would appear that it was the right decision, since communication between us was definitely one of the strengths throughout the work placement, and it certainly led to a good understanding among all parties involved.

The placement itself started in an abrupt way, not only because of the above-mentioned episode, but because the very first task involved carrying out interviews in a community centre. These interviews had to be conducted mainly with mothers who were having lunch with their children. A questionnaire was provided to us as a guideline, and with little preparation, the interviews were done rapidly between the main course and dessert. These questionnaires had been designed without our contribution, and the situation required that we adopted the posture of a social worker — a new concept for me. With regard to this, Hall (1996) expresses the importance of negotiating the project and the research design, which implies understanding what both the organisation and the researcher need, and to decide if he or she requires any special knowledge that is not possessed by the researcher. One of the biggest challenges was having to adapt to a method — the questionnaire — that had been provided to us, without having the possibility of re-thinking the approach. This first day may be considered as the 'pilot' day (Hall, 1996), in which the questionnaire was put into practice and subsequently modified. However, one may wonder how the decision of using this particular method (Bryman, 1984) was reached. Given that one of the main objectives of The Big Listen was to understand how people felt, it appeared that a qualitative perspective would have been more suitable for understanding individuals' perceptions (Bell, 2014). Nonetheless, the questionnaire was sometimes carried out in the form of a conversation or interview, which could be considered as a rather qualitative approach. Choosing the right approach appears to be a common difficulty (Bell, 2014), and having had some participation from the very beginning

might have helped in questioning the method used, and proposing alternative approaches for gathering data, as well as feeling involved on a deeper level with the project.

4.1.2. Initial decisions

The adaptation to a methodology that had already been decided beforehand was certainly a challenge to overcome. However, after the 'pilot' session, some suggestions for improving the questionnaire were shared within the group. The main concern lay in the fact that the design of the questionnaire did not appear to be based on a particular list of objectives or indicators, which made it look confusing. The purpose of each of the questions was not clear, which may have led to problems when processing the data. In connection to this, Bell (2014) claims that researchers should ask themselves what they need to know, and think how each response will contribute to that at the design stage – not afterwards. It also highlights the importance of constantly going back to one's hypothesis when designing the questionnaire, in order to be coherent. However, assuming that one needs to have a hypothesis beforehand places the research under the positivist paradigm, which may not necessarily be the desired one (Walliman, 2007). Therefore, it seems that from the very beginning, numerous aspects of the research can be questioned, which may hinder progress if one challenges every step of the process and considers all variables. Furthermore, the more aware one is of all the research alternatives, the more difficult decisions appear to be in terms of which paradigm, methodology or approach to use. This will be explored in depth later on, as it is a discussion that should not be overlooked. Whether there was a hypothesis to prove, or certain objectives to be met, there was agreement that the design of the questionnaire had to be revisited. It was important to understand that being thorough at this stage would undoubtedly allow for a more efficient analysis (Bell, 2014). Building a data matrix, asking ourselves what the purpose of each

question was, revising the order and the type of questions, the total length and the instructions would certainly contribute to having a more reliable source of data collection (Hall, 1996). The first and final versions of the questionnaires can be found in Appendix 3.

4.1.3. Cultural differences

The previous accounts were certainly not the only challenges that were faced at the beginning. In fact, one may be of the opinion that my lack of understanding of Thai culture led to frustration, especially in the first two meetings with Mild — a conclusion that I only reached afterwards. There were differences in our work pace, and communication was hard. It felt frustrating knowing she had brilliant contributions to make but the language barrier could not be broken. It was also exhausting having to be the leader at all times — a position I was willing to give up but which she did not seem willing to take. Her extremely agreeable attitude caused a feeling of insecurity and loneliness in me. At this point, it seemed worth wondering how the situation could be changed, because it appeared that for some unknown reason, decisions were being taken unilaterally and that was not favourable for the project.

Much had been discussed about 'culture' during the course, but it seems one never truly understands it until they actually experience it. Only after becoming aware of the fact that this discomfort was being caused by cultural differences, was I able to explore this issue in greater depth. It appeared crucial to investigate Thai culture, but also the British and the Uruguayan ones, because after all, there were three of us on the team. However, only the most relevant findings about the Thai one will be commented on. According to Lewis (2006), Thai culture is mainly dictated by Buddhism, whose values lay in simplicity, proper behaviour, respect, moderation and kindness, which were all characteristics easily recognisable in Mild. It would appear that Thai people tend to smile independently of their

feelings, always listen without interruption and work extremely hard (Lewis, 2006). One of the most interesting findings was related to the concept of hierarchy, and the 'superior versus subordinate' concept (Komin, 1990). Thai people seem to have an inclination for hierarchies in all aspects of their lives, and tend to show high respect towards their 'superiors'. Usually, respect is understood as being grateful and uncritical. This may be clearly seen in education, where teachers are highly respected and never questioned (Komin, 1990) — which was a recurrent comment made by the Thai fellow students during the course when they compared the UK educational system with theirs. According to Komin (1990), conflict is avoided, and extreme politeness and constant smiles tend to cover true feelings and relieve tension, as well as preserve harmony. Having had many conversations with Mild, I had already understood that, regardless of my disagreement with her viewpoint, she saw me as her 'superior'. This is being said explicitly not because it is considered to be true, but because it was indeed how she felt and it was probably the main explanation for her behaviour at the beginning. It seemed that this 'cultural shock' had caused stress and fatigue on me due to having to constantly adapt to an unfamiliar situation (Komin, 1990). A key learning from the research on Thai culture is that trust appears to be a central issue for them, along with social relationships and hard work. With regard to this, Gray (2004) suggests that trust is a product of past experience and people are more likely to listen to someone they trust. Therefore, it appeared necessary to work on this issue and gain Mild's trust. Even if it took a big effort, bridging the gap between our cultures seemed necessary.

According to Christopher (2012), a shared characteristic of all leaders regardless of culture is their great capacity to communicate effectively. As a circumstantial leader, I found myself naturally adopting a cooperative leadership style (Christopher, 2012) that allowed me to warmly and openly approach Mild to gain her confidence. Moreover, in keeping with Jackson (2014), it seems that people from different backgrounds are more likely to make

contributions when they are encouraged to express themselves in ways that they feel comfortable with. Furthermore, it is likely for productivity to decrease as a consequence of confusion, frustration or anger derived from language barriers (Jackson, 2014). Since Mild was constantly manifesting her difficulties in expressing herself in English, it is possible that this situation led to her feeling disadvantaged and insecure (Jackson, 2014). It was crucial to work on our relationship in order to build the necessary trust for us to work collaboratively and efficiently. It appears to me that, after some time, I was able to gain Mild's trust by constantly showing her how we were equals, which I did mainly by making explicit how important her insights were for this project to be successful.

Personally, I consider that this was a tipping point in the project; had I not recognised the need for understanding each other better, the consequences would have been different — and the outcome possibly not as positive as it was in the end.

4.2. Motivation and leadership

The experience of working on The Big Listen was an opportunity to recognise the existing interplay and interrelation between motivation, leadership and team dynamics. Throughout history, many theories have been developed around leadership (Kuratcko, 2007; Gibson, 2009; Western, 2013; Hoogh, et al., 2004; Renko, et al., 2015), however, it would seem that only recently, with the growth of knowledge-based workplaces, new insights into social processes and organisation dynamics are arising (Western, 2013). According to Western (2013), theories such as contextual leadership (Fiedler, 1967-1974 cited in Western, 2013, p.42) or discursive and sensemaking leadership (Weick, 1995 cited in Western, 2013) are a response to the previously mentioned shifts within the workplace. Whether leadership may be seen as the capacity to turn a vision into reality (Gibson, 2009) or as the ability to manage the performance of others (Gray, 2004), it would appear that there is no question

that leadership involves relating to other people whilst possibly influencing their behaviour in a specific direction. According to Salaman (2002), any leader's first move should be to foster change and problem resolution within the team, and Tim seemed to naturally fit this role, since he would constantly encourage us to question the plan and methods in practice. In connection to this, what appeared to work particularly well was the balance between promoting action and empowering the followers to take decisions and act — in this case, Mild and I would be considered followers. In relation to this, Forsyth (2006) suggests that individuals enjoy taking ownership and being given responsibilities as it motivates them to perform. The empowerment approach regards workers as a key resource, and places a great deal of responsibility on the individual, who is required not only to get things done, but to do them right (Forsyth, 2006). The autonomy that Tim awarded us — that at some stages felt like abandonment — was nothing other than an empowerment opportunity for Mild and me to take ownership, make decisions and execute the necessary actions. Only after the end of the work placement did I find out that this sensation of 'abandonment' that was sometimes present had been a premeditated behaviour to test our entrepreneurial attitude. Personally, I seem to have responded accordingly and met the team's expectations, partly because of my entrepreneurial mindset, and partly as a result of Tim's leadership skills that allowed for an effective empowerment process. With regard to this, Forsyth (2006) claims that there are some key elements that contribute to making empowerment effective, and that they depend greatly on the leader's capacity to communicate and act accordingly. The project leader would need to interfere as little as possible so that individuals can be self-sufficient and take initiative. Moreover, the leader may need to offer consultation and feedback opportunities for workers to constantly improve their work. All these elements could be easily recognised in Tim's approach, who seems to have offered the ideal conditions for Mild and me to perform at our best (Forsyth, 2006). It should also be highlighted that Tim may have behaved as an agreeable leader

(Van Kleef, et al., 2010), which might have been his natural approach or an adopted style to match our individual characteristics. In keeping with Van Kleef, et al. (2010), it would seem that leaders should diagnose followers' personalities, and it appears that agreeable individuals tend to value harmonious relations and therefore, agreeable leaders. From my perspective, both Mild and I have a high level of agreeableness (Leutner, et al., 2014; Denisi, 2015), and consequently, felt comfortable and inspired by Tim's approach.

Another aspect of the relationship with Tim that appears to have worked successfully is related to the manipulation of achievement motivation. With regard to this, research suggests (Revelle and Humphreys, 1983 cited in Humphreys and Revelle, 1984) that making workers aware of the importance and difficulty of a task, along with making an explicit link between the task and a long-term goal, strongly affects the levels of achievement motivation in a positive manner. Tim would always remind us of the significance of our work, which fuelled our levels of motivation and engagement, and possibly led to an improved performance (Bridger, 2015). He would start each meeting by congratulating us on our work and by telling us how The Big Listen depended on us, which kept our levels of commitment very high.

However, it is interesting to explore a complementary view on motivation and performance that suggests that these are not only related to leadership. According to Deci (2001, cited in Bridger, 2015), it appears that human beings have a natural tendency to go after challenges that give them an opportunity to learn. It would seem that individuals' main drives are autonomy, mastery and purpose. Autonomy refers to the desire to direct our own lives, which may be transferable to the workplace (Deci, 2001 cited in Bridger, 2015). During the work placement, I felt that I had a high degree of autonomy, which allowed me to take ownership of the project and be highly involved with it on a deep level. I also felt the need to perform at my best, which may be related to the second drive, mastery,

defined as the urge one has to get better at something that matters (Pink, 2009 cited in Bridger, 2015). With regard to this, I must say that I chose this project because of how meaningful it was to me on a personal and professional level. Therefore, it would seem only logical that I had the ambition to become better and perform at my best. According to Pink (2009 cited in Bridger, 2015), the third drive, purpose, refers to the desire we have to act upon causes larger than ourselves, which appears to be the case of The Big Listen. This project represented an opportunity to commit to a relevant cause that could, potentially, change people's lives. The idea of having some influence over such a complex but important matter appears to be key from an engagement and motivational perspective, and it may also be related to the consequences of working on an inherently attractive and demanding task. In other words, it would appear that when one works on a problem-solving situation that requires conceptual thinking, external rewards become insignificant in comparison to the influence of intrinsic motivation (Pink, 2009 cited in Bridger, 2015). In the case of the work placement, I cannot think of any valuable external rewards that could have influenced me to perform better. In contrast, I strongly believe that I was mostly mobilised by intrinsic motivation, which, according to Gemmell, Boland and Kolb (2012) may be defined as a consequent state of an individual's reaction to intrinsic characteristics of a task rather than by its extrinsic properties. This does seem logical considering I had the chance to choose which project to work on.

However, job performance may also be influenced by other elements. Hackman & Oldham (1980, cited in Gray 2004, p.26) elaborated on Herzberg's (1959, cited in Gray, 2004, p. 25) idea of 'hygiene factors', and developed five key concepts that have a direct influence on job enrichment and motivation. The first one, task variety, is understood as the requirement of different skills and abilities to perform a job (Gray, 2004). The Big Listen was particularly challenging in this aspect, since it involved a wide range of skills — some of them had to be acquired throughout the process such as data analysis. From

interviewing people to handling raw data, this project seemed to constantly demand the learning and application of various skills in order to meet our objectives. The second and third elements are task identity and task significance, which refer to being involved from the beginning to the end in an activity that is relevant to other people (Gray, 2004). Even if I was not present at the very beginning of the project, I could witness how it went from a simple idea to a tangible product, and having had a lot to do with this achievement was definitely a key factor in my constant levels of motivation. Autonomy and feedback appear as the last elements, and may be summarised as the freedom the worker has to plan and do his or her own work while receiving constructive feedback (Gray, 2004). As it was stated earlier, Tim allowed us to take our own decisions and only intervened when there was some guidance needed. At times, it felt as if I could shape the project according to my own ideas, which was really enjoyable. The influence of culture adds even more complexity to the discussion around achievement and motivation. Achievement does not remain unaffected by cultural issues, since according to Tayeb (1996), the way individuals conceive achievement and ambition varies depending on where they come from. Particularly for Thai people, it would seem that they behave according to the concept of vertical collectivism, whereby they respond to hierarchy, and are willing to sacrifice for the group, because group achievement is preferred over individual achievement (Tayeb, 1996; Christopher, 2012). This behaviour was easily recognisable in Mild, as I was pleasantly impressed by her great generosity and willingness to go the extra mile in order to get something done, in the best possible way. I must admit that I did feel exhausted and overwhelmed at times, especially during the data analysis stage. Mild proved to be organised, responsible and cheerful, which made it easy for me to rely on her. She always finished her tasks ahead of time, and she would always check her work with me, as if I were the one who had the final decision on what was good and what needed improvement. This reflects that, even if our relationship evolved throughout the work

placement, to her I still seemed to remain the leader. I naturally found myself encouraging and praising her work, and boosting her self-confidence when she was unsure about her achievements. I somehow saw myself reflected in her, because she seemed to be in a similar position to where I have been in the past. I could understand her urge to demonstrate what she was capable of, and I believe that having been in that position before helped me manage the situation better and become a suitable circumstantial leader for her (Christopher, 2012).

All in all, as it was stated earlier, it would seem that there was a complex interconnection between leadership, team work and motivation, which worked very effectively within our unique team dynamics.

4.3. The research approach

The purpose of this section is to explore the research methodology that was used for The Big Listen, along with its implications in the process and results.

4.3.1. Paradigms, philosophies, methods, and more

The module on the first trimester of the course about 'research methodologies' has proved extremely useful, as well as particularly complex. From my personal experience, once this door is opened, there is no going back,. At the very beginning and with limited knowledge about research methodologies, it seemed sensible that qualitative research should be done in The Big Listen, using an interpretivist paradigm and an inductive approach (Walliman, 2007). However, as mentioned above, the more one reads around the topic, the more intricate it seems to get. Unfortunately, I cannot guarantee that this first hunch was right or wrong, because, after much reading and internal battling, there is no clarity about what the 'right' answer is — provided there actually is one. According to Walliman

(2007), scientific research may be different from social research, in the sense that humans appear to be unable to take impartial views on other humans, leading to their impossibility to establish 'facts' as fixed eternal truths. If one quickly reads this statement, one might tend to agree. However, I wonder how it is possible to believe that one may have such power of establishing eternal truths while doing scientific research, when human interpretation appears to inevitably stand in the way. The difference that it tries to point out may seem understandable: 'objectivity' is supposed to be attached to the natural world as opposed to 'subjectivity', which would be related to habits, traditions or beliefs. However, it would appear that one may only aim to interpret and understand the world as a whole, and the idea of differentiating 'the two worlds' may be unrealistic. Being aware of my position is important because it means that I may see the world through the lens of interpretivism, which may not be necessarily the same approach Tim or Mild have.

Moreover, according to Bryman (1984), the research method should be dictated by the problem under investigation, which appears to add another level of complexity (Walliman, 2007), as it suggests that we should detach from our own philosophy in order to adapt to what the problem dictates. This level of discussion has caused confusion and internal battling on me, since I struggle to understand if what we did was the best option, or whether we should have done something differently. What seems to be even more confusing is the suggestion that the difference between qualitative and quantitative may be more dogmatic than real (Walliman, 2007), and that the question should no longer be whether one is inherently better than the other, but which one is more useful for the context and problem at hand (Bryman, 1984). It does not seem that the latter question is any easier than the former, though. It may be that the interplay of all these factors poses a great challenge for the researcher, and that one may only attempt to make a sensible decision and come to terms with the fact that there might be more than one right choice. On the bright side, it appears that there is always room for conciliation and that the idea of

a combination of methods is the best solution (Bryman, 1984). Indeed, it has been suggested that it is actually impossible to do just one or the other, because there is always overlapping (Bryman, 1984). The idea of combining both methods will be explored in more depth in the following section.

4.3.2. Quantitative or qualitative

When one tries to simplify the differences between a quantitative and qualitative approach, it appears that the former would be related to deductive, positivist thinking, whilst the latter would use an inductive, interpretivist approach (Walliman, 2007). The objective reality versus the constructivist one appears to be another remarkable difference as well as the use of numerical data and statistics as opposed to language and human involvement (Walliman, 2007). Furthermore, the difference would not only lie in the ways of gathering data, but also in the nature of the information that is collected. According to Bryman (1984), qualitative research would allow for rich, deep data, while quantitative research appears to offer rather superficial evidence that may miss important insights and fail in capturing the underlying phenomena. On the other hand, qualitative research may be too anecdotal and not representative of the vast majority, although more appropriate to deal with the complexities of social aspects (Bryman, 1984), such as the case of The Big Listen project. It is because of the above-mentioned reasons that finding a middle ground appears to be a sensible decision. In the case of The Big Listen, even if the primary source of data collection was the questionnaires, their design included different types of questions that allowed for quantitative and qualitative data to be gathered. According to Bell's (2014) categorisation, the questions that were used ranged from open to lists, categories or scale questions. Moreover, they were all designed to avoid ambiguity and to be as precise and jargon-free as possible (Bell, 2014) (Appendix 3). Another example of the overlap between

the two methods is the fact that some questionnaires were carried out in the form of interviews, which allowed for a deeper engagement between the researcher and the interviewee. This was possible due to our ability to adapt to different contexts and to seize the opportunity for deeper conversations when possible. At first sight, it could be considered that the combination of the two methods was an appropriate decision. However, when analysing it in greater depth, one may be sceptical about the validity of our method, since it appears that, by trying to do both we might have failed in doing either of them correctly. I only understood this after reading extensively about the implications of doing research (Bryman, 1984; Hall, 1996; Woods, 2006; Walliman, 2007; Allen, 2008; Bell, 2014). As Woods (2006) points out, it appears that when doing qualitative research, it is important to be rather close to the target population and to go through a long, sustained immersion. Indeed, the validity of qualitative research appears to depend on certain factors such as the use of unobtrusive sustained methods, respondent validation and triangulation (Woods, 2006). Regarding the observations that were carried out during the process, it does not seem that they could be considered as 'long-term', therefore, we might have failed in complying with the 'sustained method' aspect. However, it seems that we did succeed in complying with other aspects, such as triangulation, since we had three different researchers and did our investigation at varied times and places (Woods, 2006). From the perspective of the quantitative research, the order, instructions and length of the questions appear to be vital (Hall, 1996), and all these aspects were improved after the pilot session. However, the representativeness of the sample appears to be a weak point in the research, as it does not seem to be large enough if one looks at the standards (Hall, 1996; Walliman, 2007).

In conclusion, it appears that a middle ground was a sensible approach in order to capture different types of data. However, I have to question whether the use of a mixed approach increased or decreased the validity of the research, since we were unable to comply with

some of the rules associated with each method. It is also worth wondering if it would have been better to choose exclusively one of the methods and carry out the research in accordance with it, to avoid further questioning of its validity. Nevertheless, it may be that one can never abstain from questioning the method, even if it seems to be faultlessly implemented, considering that simply by looking at the world through a different lens, the validity of a research project maybe indeed challenged. One may then wonder how much all of this truly matters, or if what should really matter is that something is actually being done in order to improve people's lives.

4.4. Interaction with the community: empathy at the heart of everything

Besides being aware of the cultural differences within the team, I also realised I was going to be interviewing socially deprived British people. It seemed critical to wonder how I was going to empathise with them. I asked myself whether we had anything in common and how I was going to make them feel comfortable with me, so that they could share the deep insights we were looking for. It seemed to be another opportunity for complementing theory with practice. According to Hall (1996), people may not be willing to respond to questionnaires if they are too long, have intrusive questions, or if they simply have other priorities or suspect of the questionnaire's motives. Once again, effective communication was going to be the key, and I had to understand as much as possible on how to proceed.

When interviewing people — by interviewing I am referring to the instance of carrying out the questionnaire — a bridge may be formed between the interviewer and the interviewee (Allen, 2008). Messages will cross this bridge with greater or lesser difficulty, depending on the nature of the emotional interaction between the participants. The idea of having emotions involved in the tasks to be carried out was not frightening because it represented one of the reasons why I chose this project. However, dealing with people's emotions is

always a challenge, and the ability to be genuinely involved in the conversation and defer judgment required a lot of energy from my side. According to Allen (2008), some of the desirable skills for interviewers are the awareness of our own values and prejudices, value and recognition of diversity, respect for individuals and the ability to transmit confidence. It appears that it is also important to be reflexive, and understand how our own social identity and values may affect the information that is being gathered (Allen, 2008). I am fully aware of the fact that I was indeed very prejudicial at the beginning and had an internal struggle not to downplay people's problems, because there was a mismatch between what I considered 'real problems' — an idea built from my experience and culture — and what was expressed by some of the respondents. I will elaborate on this later on, when discussing the concept of sensemaking. With regard to the interviewing skills, it seems advisable to design the interview in advance, bearing in mind what needs to be achieved and deciding how to achieve it (Allen, 2008). I believe this was not done on the first instances because of my lack of awareness of it. However, after every practical instance, there was a moment for reflection and complementation with theoretical literature to have a better understanding of the situation, and to better prepare for the following opportunity. According to Allen (2008), engaging with the interviewee may be very important and it could help when dealing with uncomfortable situations. Particularly, I recall one situation in which I was asking the interviewee if she was willing to answer the questionnaire — as we always asked everybody. We would always try to interpret people's reactions to understand if they wanted to answer it by themselves, or if they preferred us to read it and complete it for them. This particular woman immediately answered that she did not know how to read properly and felt embarrassed by it. My reaction was to tell her that she should not worry because I was not a native English speaker so I was going to read it for her, but not in 'very good English'. She seemed pleased with my answer, probably felt more comfortable and proceeded to respond to the questions. My natural reaction probably

reflects one of Lishman's six principles for a helping relationship (Allen, 2008) called responsiveness and sensitivity. It is suggested by Lishman, et al. (2014) that social workers should be aware of the fact that the process of interviewing might be influenced by their own attitudes. Therefore, becoming aware of the 'self' and consciously adapting to the situation appears to be essential (Lishman, et al. 2014). The other five principles that seem important for engaging with the interviewee refer to genuineness, warmth, acceptance, encouragement and approval, and empathy (Allen, 2008). Despite considering that I could perform quite well in these situations as a result of being naturally aware of these principles, engaging with people on a deep level proved to be emotionally and physically exhausting. After hours of interviewing, I was feeling completely worn out. If I were to do this project again, I would probably suggest having shorter working days, as it appears to me that I might have lost some of my capacity and willingness to deeply engage with the respondents after some hours of continuous work. I believe that having had limited resources — specifically human resources — to actually engage in the process of interviewing might have affected the outcome of the process, as it was difficult to keep up the energy and concentration levels throughout long working journeys.

4.5. Action learning

In this section, I will discuss the concept of action learning juxtaposed with the work carried out for the project, in order to critically reflect upon my own learning.

4.5.1. Sensemaking within action learning

As stated earlier, the data collection process lasted approximately one month. In this period, we engaged with different types of people in varied situations and places. Some interviews were carried out in community groups and churches; others were performed in

pubs, and some were even done out in the street. Each situation presented similarities and differences, and it was through a complex process of sensemaking that we managed to reflect upon each experience in order to constantly improve our approach. Only by looking back do I realise the process of action learning that took place (Revans, 2011), a concept I was vaguely aware of at the time, but that I seemed to engage with naturally.

In keeping with Revans (2011), it appears that there can be no learning without action. Although this may be a strong claim that one can agree or disagree with, it is worth highlighting the idea that people constantly need to interpret what they do and reflect upon it within an action learning process, which is what Mild and I did all throughout the work placement period. Driven by the need to do it, and also by Tim's highly engaging meetings, we constantly questioned and reflected upon our decisions and actions.

The Big Listen was a real, complex problem, which seems to be one of the most important premises for action learning to take place (Mumford, 1997). Personally, and as a result of this approach, I was able to repeatedly engage in several learning cycles that allowed me to constantly learn from experience (Honey and Mumford, 1989 cited in Mumford, 1997). On one hand, I gained knowledge related to the practical problem that I was facing. I enhanced my understanding of social deprivation and its implications, and I could draw a comparison with the Uruguayan reality, which helped me see things from a perspective that I would not have had if I had not been involved in The Big Listen. On the other hand, I reflected upon my own learning process and my personal development. I was able to direct my own learning and to set individual goals that will help me in the near future, particularly in relation to the acquisition and application of research skills. Moreover, since action learning happens in 'the real world', the learning and application of those acquired skills occur in the same place, which appears as one of the most highlighted advantages of this method (Mumford, 1997). This is particularly important for me, as it represents one

of the main reasons for choosing this opportunity over doing a traditional dissertation. Therefore, it is gratifying to visualise that the decision I took was what I had expected, and that the learning from it outstripped my expectations. According to Mumford (1997), the purpose of action learning from the perspective of an organisation would lie on the resolution of a real problem or opportunity, and would have the learning as a subsidiary associated product. This might have been the view of Future Business Centre, however, from my perspective, it was probably the other way around: the learning may have been the main objective. Consequently, it is interesting to understand how through the successful application of this approach, the apparently dissimilar objectives of both parts were successfully met due to the effective communication and reliable relationship between them.

The idea that action needs to be present for learning to happen (Revans, 2011) appears aligned with Mumford's (1997) definition of learning as 'changes in behaviour that result from experience'. It seems to become even more complex when one understands that we need to be able to change as individuals, in order to change what happens around us (Revans, 2011). As in many other aspects of life and business itself, everything appears to come down to the individual level. From my point of view, this project has made explicit the complexities involved in any learning process, and the different levels of analysis that may be implicated, from the unique individual to the community, society and finally the global one. Every interviewing instance was an opportunity to face a unique reality that required to quickly make sense of it in order to act accordingly, both at an individual and group level. Ancona (2011) defines sensemaking as the process of structuring the unknown in order to be able to understand it. Even if sensemaking is said to be inherently collective (Ancona, 2011), it inevitably seems to start at the individual level, where one struggles to overcome prejudices and move beyond stereotypes. Strangely enough, for this to happen, the individual would try to interpret reality through his or her unique lens that may be well

defined by his or her own culture — that is to say, prejudices and stereotypes along with other aspects of life (Ancona, 2011). Hence, sensemaking would appear to be the peculiar process of trying to understand something that one is unfamiliar with, while being aware — or not — of how our own biases may affect our interpretation. Along the same lines, Western (2013) points out the importance of locating ourselves to acknowledge differences and become aware of others' experiences. This proved particularly challenging for me, since I can recognise how frustrated I was at a certain stage of the project when listening to some of the respondents' problems. Due to my personal social baggage, at the beginning, I was consciously — and probably unconsciously — making value judgments that prevented me from making sense of the respondents' realities, because these were too dissimilar to my own idea of 'problems', an idea constructed from my individual perspective (Western, 2013).

According to Ancona (2011), for individuals to make sense, it would seem that they develop cognitive maps of the environment, for which sometimes it is necessary to move outside the system in order to see the patterns within. From my understanding, it might have been that I was already 'outside the system' in this case, which may have been an advantage as well as a disadvantage. From a positive perspective, not belonging to the system in question allowed me to make contributions from a unique position that Tim, or any of the other members of the TT could probably not have achieved, because they have been brought up within the system. However, as it was stated before, belonging to a different reality turned out to be challenging and forced me to go through an intricate process of sensemaking that required great amounts of effort and adaptation.

All in all, what seems to matter the most is how we apply our current knowledge and information in order to generate more knowledge (Harrison and Leitch, 2005), which was one of our main goals for The Big Listen, even if personal biases interfere with the

process. In these situations, it would seem one should use the discovered 'partial reality' — what we get to make sense of — to encourage further progress on the subject matter rather than to become stuck while trying to find one right interpretation (Ancona, 2011).

4.5.2. The three elements of action learning

Reviewing and concluding after every practical instance allowed us to plan our next steps and to be better prepared for the next opportunity (Mumford, 1997). For learning to happen, it would appear that the context needs to be supportive and encouraging. Some conditions such as working on a real world challenge, involving collective action and reflection, appear as crucial features for action learning to prosper successfully (Mumford, 1997).

As Mumford (1997) proposes, this approach is based on three main elements that need to function together: the action taker, the focus on action and the action context. The action taker refers to the individual level, that is to say, the learner. From my own experience, being analytical and questioning every decision and every action taken allowed me to be growth-oriented and non-defensive. In other words, it meant admitting my own mistakes and opening to new ways of looking at things. For example, my relationship with Mild improved as the project evolved. I soon realised how responsible and reliable she was, and therefore, I decided — probably unconsciously — that I trusted her. This meant that I felt comfortable with doing some things 'her way' instead of mine, and that I could delegate important tasks (Mumford, 1997), something that at the beginning would have been hard for me to do. I recognise that I tend to be a controlling person, and I feel comfortable having that role in a team. However, the work placement was an opportunity to try and fail in a relatively safe environment, hence, I was determined to make a conscious effort to get out of my comfort zone. Even if it would seem that one can modify one's behaviour

(Revans, 2011; Bandura, 2001), and I did my best to do so, I believe it was only done to a certain extent, because when there was a lot of pressure on us, I could not help taking control and leading the work that needed to be done. Therefore, I am not certain to what extent I am able to adopt and maintain a forced posture when I am under pressure, which could mean that I may always feel the need to be in a dominant role. The second element that is part of the action learning model is the focus on action. It refers to the project itself, and it seems to be vital for it to pose a challenge on the action taker (Mumford, 1997). This challenge would need to be meaningful and real, so that the action taker can engage in an ongoing learning cycle. Regarding The Big Listen, going beyond just 'data collection' and being aware of the significant future implications of our work appears as a crucial factor for the learning potential to be increased (Mumford, 1997). We were able to embrace unexpected events and changes that could have been considered failures if we had not had the right attitude (Mumford, 1997). In order to do this, motivation was key when we were faced with challenges such as not being able to find people to interview, getting lots of rejections or receiving conflicting answers that were misleading and confusing. This appears to be strongly related to the third element of the model, the action context, which refers to the organisational culture (Mumford, 1997). Having worked on a real project in a collaborative manner enabled truthful reflection within the group, and all members were open to sharing their views. Working within a supportive environment was key to being innovative and creative and to trying new approaches when results were not what we were expecting. This collaborative environment was mainly possible due to the exceptional relationship within team members — especially with the closest members, Tim and Mild — and due to Tim's great leadership skills. For instance, when things went wrong, all members seemed comfortable with expressing their opinions, which may have been possible due to Tim's process-oriented leadership style (Mumford, 1997). In this sense, it would seem that the group valued the learning and did not try to avoid the truth regardless

of how unpleasant it could be. For instance, when we came to terms with the fact that we were not going to reach the desired number of questionnaires, we adjusted accordingly to the new situation and kept an open mind in order to find other ways of gathering more data. We constantly did self-examination as a group, as a result of Tim's encouragement to ask ourselves how things were going. We faced many other challenges such as people not showing up for certain appointments, or having to interact with people in uncomfortable contexts – e.g., individuals at pubs who were not sober, or overwhelmed parents at toddler groups. We had to reflect as a group and learn from these instances in order to better plan our next steps. Peer pressure for improvement also had its influence because all of us actively encouraged experimentation and innovation in the process (Mumford, 1997). As part of a group whose members worked hard, I inevitably felt obliged to perform accordingly so as not to let them down.

5. Conclusions and recommendations for the organisation

This paper intended to discuss and reflect upon the ten-week work placement done as part of the MSc Entrepreneurial Management. I was involved in a project called The Big Listen, which was supported by the organisation Future Business Centre. The main people involved in the project at this stage were Tim, who was the project leader, Mild, and I — both students from the MSc. There was also a group of five people with diverse backgrounds, ‘the think tank’ (TT), who were involved in the project at different stages. The purpose of The Big Listen was to gain a deeper understanding of the current situation of Northern Cambridge, particularly Arbury and Kings Hedges. The project involved carrying out empirical research that was mainly conducted through questionnaires designed to be filled by the local residents. In total, one hundred and eleven questionnaires were completed, and thirty-seven of those had two extra questions intended specifically for young people, with the purpose of understanding their hopes and aspirations. In order to process the qualitative data, coding was used to create categories that organised the information. The Big Listen collected data in seven categories: the current general situation of the neighbourhood, the future general situation of the neighbourhood, human relationships in the neighbourhood, involvement in the neighbourhood, support, personal thriving and youngsters’ hopes and aspirations. The main findings were presented in section 3, and the full report can be found in Appendix 1.

In conclusion, it can be seen that there were some commonalities amongst all answers such as good levels of satisfaction with the neighbourhood, or rubbish and drugs as the main general problems. However, if one looks at the data in more detail, some particularities arose that are worth considering. For instance, youngsters and the elderly appear to have different perceptions of the reality, as well as different needs, and it may be sensible to address them differently.

As a first recommendation, a possible next step could be involving different stakeholders that may bring new insights to the current findings. For example, contacting health providers or key actors from the educational context could be a suitable strategy for gaining knowledge over certain areas that The Big Listen failed in analysing in detail. Results showed some emerging insights related to health and psychological issues that some age groups — particularly the elderly — appear to be facing and it would be worth gathering more opinions and data around this topic. It may be possible that a different approach might prove useful, since certain aspects such as feelings and emotions may be hard to measure through the use of questionnaires. The TT members should consider re-thinking the next steps of the project and the research methods in practice in order to succeed in achieving what seems to be missing. However, as it was mentioned earlier, availability of resources may influence the chosen methods. Particularly, in the case of The Big Listen, scarcity of human resources required an adaptation of a methodology that had previously been defined. Many questionnaires were completed in the absence of a researcher, which may have affected the results. Acknowledging that there might be differences between what is intended at the beginning and what actually takes place in practice is a key learning arising from this experience, along with the importance of being versatile in order to adapt to the new conditions.

Apart from health care providers or educators, other stakeholders such as local pubs or key actors within the community — some of which were identified during the interviewing process — may play an important role and could have significant insights to share. During the project, it was concluded that certain pubs like the Jenny Wren or The Ship are the main venues where the community gathered, which represents a great opportunity for getting closer to the residents. Most of the people were enthusiastic about being listened to and this feeling was potentiated in situations where there was a crowd, since it encouraged them to feel important and powerful over their own future. It would be worth

bearing this in mind since it may lead to collaborative relationships with smaller groups of the community that might be interested in getting involved, and promote change.

In general, it would seem that making people feel part of The Big Listen could be a good strategy in order to bring more resources into the project and make further progress. One alternative for involving more people could be delivering some intensive workshops on specific topics that may be relevant for the community, with the purpose of gathering key stakeholders, sharing The Big Listen findings and exchanging ideas. Certain topics such as feeling unskilled at certain areas of life arose within the results, so having people participating in workshops that could improve their aptitudes, while helping them to integrate and relate to others may be a sensible idea.

In the case that a lot of people got involved in The Big Listen, it is recommended to become better organised. For instance, the TT members could propose group works that would focus on different tasks so that the people involved would receive some kind of guidance on what to do, and could also choose from different tasks according to their skills and interests.

In addition to the engagement of more people, it may prove useful to involve the media. Some steps have already been taken in order to get The Big Listen some press, but there is still more to be done and it is suggested that the TT continue to explore this path. Appearing in the media could be helpful for receiving some funds that could facilitate the accomplishment of certain steps of the project. Regarding this issue, the TT members discussed the difficulty in getting funds if the project did not focus on measurable outcomes. This appears to be a complex issue, since there is some tension between what they would truthfully like to focus on, and what they should do in order to get funds. Besides, decisions must be taken regarding what they want to cater for in the future. It would appear that, for instance, serving all age groups equally would not be a realistic

goal. Therefore, deciding where the attention is going to be focused, and acting accordingly, seems crucial.

Finally, it is suggested that the TT members review and study in more depth the data collected, since some questions appear to have arisen, which still remain unanswered. For instance, it would be important to understand more precisely what is meant by 'improvement in the neighbourhoods' in order to keep progressing along those lines. Moreover, it appears relevant to analyse the high levels of disengagement of young people, or the apparent feeling of isolation of the elderly. There seems to be a lot more to investigate, and The Big Listen should only be taken as the first stage of a long-term project.

6. Final reflections

Having to explicitly write about my reflections has allowed me to see with more clarity than ever the great amount of learning that I have gained and the profound experience that I have been through. It might sound like a *cliché*, but I truly feel I have grown personally and professionally. I have always enjoyed questioning myself — and sometimes others. Having had to do this for the past three months has been extremely enjoyable for me. I have been able to prove that, regardless of where I will be in the future, I need to be in a position that allows me to analyse things from a conceptual but at the same time detailed perspective, and to be able to question the subject matter. It feels as though I am a natural 'questioner' and I do not seem to be able to escape this role, so I would possibly need to potentiate it. I have certainly learnt a wide range of skills that include both soft and hard skills, which is particularly important for me. Lately in my career, I have been trying to foster the teaching and learning of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, learning to learn, communication, collaboration, information literacy and ICT literacy (Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2016). As an educator, having been on the side of the learner has been very valuable, since I can now reflect upon my own learning process and think about what I may apply in the future, but from the teaching perspective. This is an extremely valuable experience because throughout the course I have been trying to see things from an educational perspective. Therefore, it seems that I have been successful in switching between the business and educational position. Having one foot in each world is my next goal, which may lead to doing research about the presumptive gap between academia and 'the real world'. In addition, not only have I acquired new skills, but also concrete knowledge about specific topics, such as social deprivation and research methodologies. Moreover, and very importantly, I have also learnt a great deal about myself through reflection, which is possibly something that is pushed into the background in today's fast-pace world. I cannot recall the last time I consciously stopped doing

something in order to start reflecting. I am hopeful that after this experience, I will keep reflecting upon my actions as part of my routine. I have also discovered that, after all, I may feel comfortable with the idea of using my gut feeling when needed, since I have succeeded in taking acceptable decisions — according to the given conditions — by relying mainly on my instinct. This is very important to me, because I have always wondered whether I was any good at using my ‘system 1’ (Kahneman, 2015), given that I have been always been a very rational person. However, I can now be more confident about my ability to switch from ‘system 1’ to ‘system 2’, which has improved my confidence in my decision-making abilities.

This project also allowed me to understand how important collaboration is to me. I was able to work collaboratively on a ten-week project with two people whom I barely knew before. In fact, from a broader perspective, collaboration has been central to the project if one considers that The Big Listen would not have been possible if it had not been for all the individuals who were involved. Within this collaborative environment, I found myself quite comfortable in a leading role. I have been told in the past that I could be a good leader, and I do not believe it is something that I can force myself to do. For me, it seems to come naturally if needed — because I am also comfortable with being led if necessary. Therefore, it is important to be aware that, I might be comfortable with both positions, and that it may depend on the situation and the people involved for me to choose one or the other. I believe, though, that I would rather explore the leading position in the near future, because I find it very rewarding and it may be time for me to experiment with it. Regardless of what position I may have, I have also understood that good communication is essential, which is something that I have always believed. However, I had never been faced with the challenge of ‘cultural shock’ in such an extreme way, possibly because most of my working experience had been in Uruguay, a place that is not particularly known for cultural diversity. However, I believe cultural differences may be one of the most

demanding tests one can take. Having to set prejudices aside, defer judgment and constantly empathise seems to me like a great challenge for any person. Even though in the near future I will go back to a relatively culturally homogenous environment — Uruguay — I can certainly see how the social skills I developed in having to deal with the cultural shock may be transferred to other areas and still be useful in a working environment. As stated earlier, I truly believe that empathy should be at the heart of everything. Having worked with Mild allowed me to catch a glimpse of a completely different culture that places great value on things that I might have always taken for granted. It is always refreshing to see how what one considers natural, others do not. It is again all about questioning, and constantly reflecting upon our decisions and actions. It even makes me wonder about how much my values have been influenced by cultural aspects. I ask myself whether I have taken certain values for granted and never questioned them, because of having been brought up within a certain environment. I then wonder what will happen once I am back into the culture where I used to live in. Will I be the odd one out? Do I want that? Only time will tell.

Word count 15,000.

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8. Appendixes

8.1. Appendix 1 - Full Report

The Big Listen Report

July 27th, 2016
Cambridge, UK

Marina Melani and Mild Tanuthunmakul

** This is an adapted version of the full report — Table of content and appendixes have been removed*

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to share the results of The Big Listen project. This project aimed at understanding the main issues that concern and matter within North Cambridge. In order to do this, three main methodologies were used. The Think Tank members of the team behind this project were interviewed to take their initial thoughts into account. Also, raw data from public reports were analysed to become familiar with statistics about the area. Finally, over a hundred questionnaires were done to the people of the area to empathise with them and get a deeper understanding of the situation. The main issues considered in the research are: general current situation of the neighbourhood, future general situation of the neighbourhood, human relationships in the neighbourhood, involvement in the neighbourhood, support, personal thriving and youngsters' hopes and aspirations.

This report presents what was found in the three above mentioned methodologies, although it mainly focuses on the results from the empirical research. The findings from this research will be part of an ongoing process of change, and will encourage reflection on what needs to be done differently in the future.

The empirical research shows how, in general, residents are quite satisfied with the neighbourhood they live in, and acknowledge improvements in comparison with the past decade. However, each area has different particularities. Moreover, residents differ in their thinking specially by age group, and sometimes by gender. The community centre and faith groups seem to have great impact on people, but this is not so relevant for the younger generations. Youngsters appear to be more disconnected and disengaged than adults and the elderly, sometimes because of lack of opportunities, and others, because of lack of interest.

Throughout the report are presented different indicators that analyse these particularities more in detail. All graphs have a short explanation of what can be drawn from them, and at the end of each section, there is a succinct conclusion that brings together the main issues discussed within the graphs. Moreover, throughout the report, some comments - in form of quotations - will be found. These comments have been made by the respondents and have been added to complement the numeric data with more personal insights.

2. Background information

Before and during the practical research, interviews were done to the think tank members of the team behind The Big Listen project, and statistical reports of the area were analysed.

a. Interviews

Four people were interviewed, and a summary of their comments is presented below in the form of bullet points, and under specific categories.

Goals for the project

- to do: needs analysis of social problems and service provision
- the challenge is the long-term sustainability with less funding
- encourage people to thrive
- be more in control of what we need
- be in charge of our own future
- give the community an opportunity to have a saying
- be more strategic, be more proactive than reactive
- be more financially independent
- work collaboratively
- bottom up approach
- do not make assumptions on their needs > understand them > listen
- objective needs to be getting a sense of what the community needs
- understand what the community needs > use resources more efficiently
- think about where people come together: school gate, community centre, the pub, carnival, doctors surgery, clubs

Assumptions of the current situation

- different kinds of poverty > people can be poor and not know it
- main problems may be drugs / alcohol / domestic violence / massive depression / mental problems / anxiety
- most important problems are mental health, parenting and lack of recognition of opportunities
- opportunities are there but people do not know how to access them
- parenting is needed > they do not realise this
- families do not know they have a problem
- people do not know that there is an alternative reality that might be better
- disengagement of parents that do not have the skills to help their children
- people tend to resent authority

Youngsters

- young people do not have dreams and aspirations > cycle of social deprivation
- young people have lack of ambitions
- youngsters need long-term support for the to get out of their comfort zone
- youngsters quit if things get too tough
- deprived families and emotional difficulties
- need to raise young people's aspirations and build resilience
- disengaged youngsters in unskilled jobs
- get opportunities > they need skills and confidence
- complex family situations

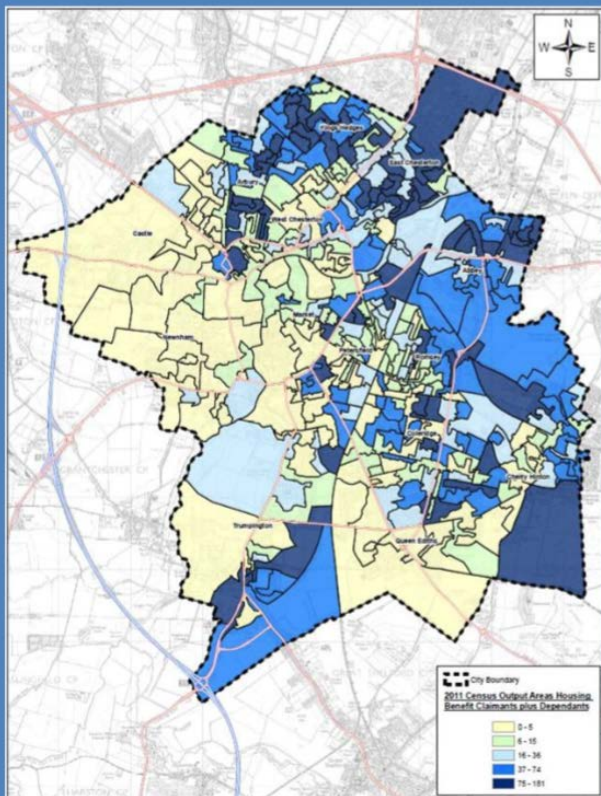
Positive aspects

- the area has improved > this could lead to giving them hope and encouragement
- there is a strong sense of community > people are proud of living here
- there are resources but badly distributed
- concern: good things are happening in the area but they are not coordinated

Others

- less money for 'social causes' > challenges & opportunities > community projects
- Cambridge: two sides of the same coin
- isArbury and Kings Hedges so deprived? How?
- consider lack of aspirations and fear of failure > is this a problem?
- 'we are not Cambridge, we are Arbury'

Figure 1 – Distribution of Housing Benefit claimants in Cambridge by Lower Super Out Area (LSOA)



**b. Reports
Poverty**

Source : Anti-Poverty Strategy

· Two areas within **Kings Hedges** which fall within the 20% most deprived areas in the country. Which brings together seven different individual indices relating to income;

employment; education, skills and training; housing; crime; and living environment.

- Higher than average rates of child poverty in **King's Hedges** wards where more than a quarter of children are living in poverty.
- As Figure 1 below shows, housing benefit claimants and their dependents are concentrated in particular areas within the City, primarily in the North and East of the City. **King's Hedges** (21.4%) and **Arbury**(16.5%) are the wards with the highest levels of housing and/or council tax benefit claimants and their dependents.
- Source : Finding for Cambridge for IMD Index 2015
- Cambridgeshire (highest scoring) all of districts is barriers to housing, which include housing affordability and homelessness. The health and crime domains are the lowest scoring in these categories.
- Kings hedges is most deprived
- Kings hedges is 2nd and Arbury is 5th in the category lowest income deprivation affecting children index aged 0-15 years old.
- Kings hedges is 1st in the category lowest income deprivation affecting older people 60 years old and above (IDAOP) and it shown a positive change from 2010 to 2015.

Below are some news from the past weeks that are related to the topic.

There are many problems regarding transportation by cars and drivers.

21 January 2016

A group of men clashed and then has a car driven on pavement crashed other cars and fence were damaged in Darwin Drive, Arbury.

18 July 2016

One teenage man (20) was clocked speeding in his car up to 100mph in Milton Road, Arbury and he accelerated and drove away from the officers.

11 June 2016

A part of city deals cross city cycling improvements, Arbury road will be reconfigured to make conditions safer for cyclists and pedestrians but there was a 24 vehicles reported for speeding.

12 May 2016

A collision between a car and a cyclist at Lays road, Arbury.

29 January 2016

Some citizen feeling unsafe while cycling in the area. (Mill Road Bridge, Carton Way,Arbury)

Comments regarding violence and drugs.

25 May 2016

Drug lords from London gangs are forcing dealers they send to Cambridge. Near Kingsway flats, Arbury, two suspects had knives and attempted to flee.

25 January 2016

Mass disorder, drug dealing, anti-social behaviour and a gang gathering to use a community centre's wifi on Darwin Drive, Arbury.

References

<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/8203-shocking-scenes-mass-disorder-cambridge/story-28571132-detail/story.html#1>

<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/connor-lloyd-jailed-after-facebook-boast-about-100mph-police-chase-through-cambridge/story-29513796-detail/story.html>

<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/bad-roads-blame-speeding-residents-trap-drivers/story-29386086-detail/story.html>

<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/leys-road-closed-car-collides-bike/story-29263827-detail/story.html>

<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/high-level-meeting-smash-london-gangs-coming/story-29314088-detail/story.html>

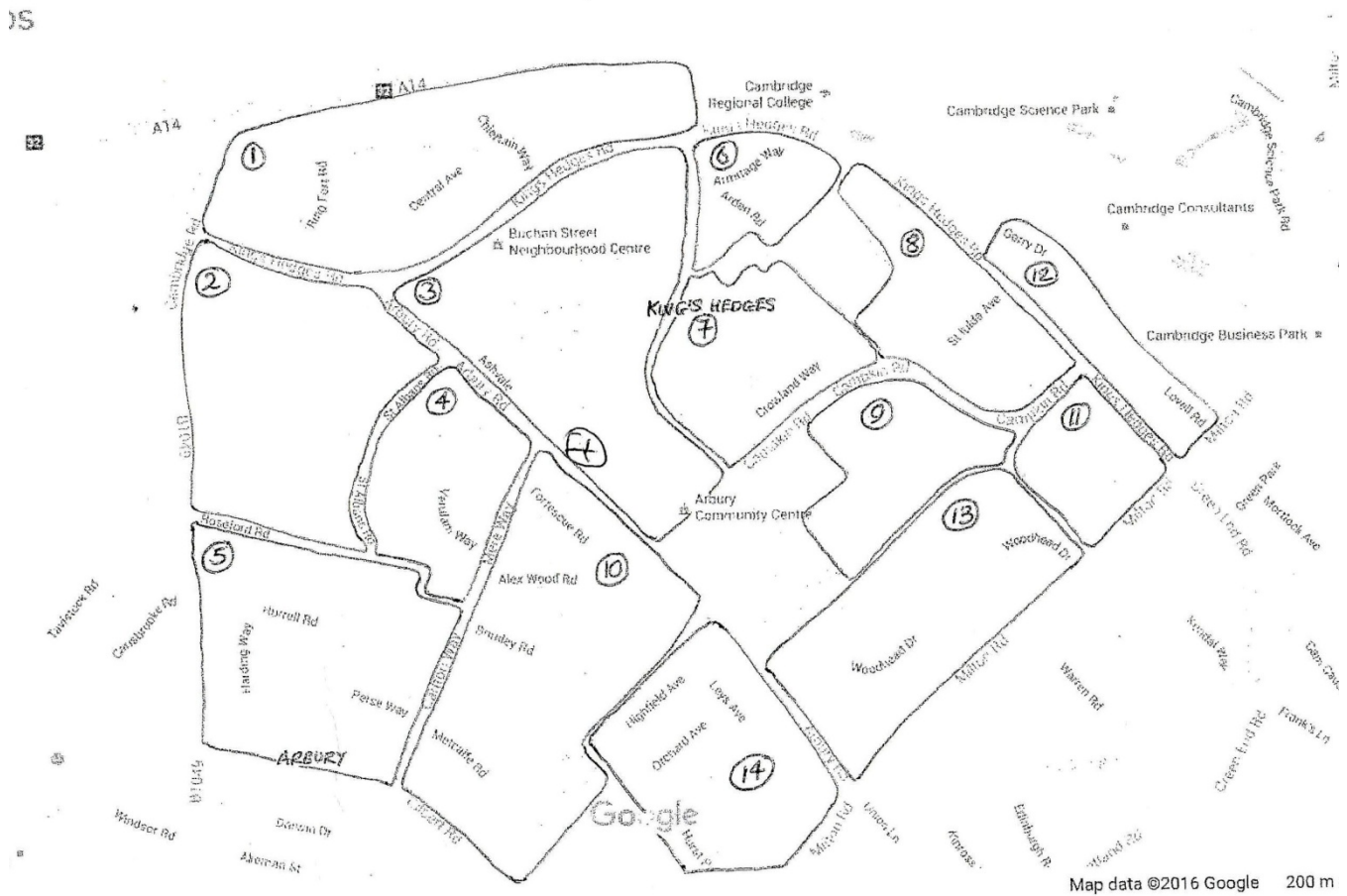
<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/tensions-road-users-come-head-road-bridge-s/story-28626167-detail/story.html>

<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/disorder-drugs-violence-hotspot-cambridge-s/story-28586023-detail/story.html>

<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/city-deal-presses-milton-road-plan-8216/story-29386753-detail/story.html>

3. Practical research

Practical research was carried out in the form of questionnaires - that sometimes were interviews, depending on the situation. One hundred eleven (111) questionnaires were done in fifteen (15) areas shown in the map below. Out of all questionnaires, thirty-seven (37) had two extra questions because they were intended for young people and aimed at finding out specific information about their hopes and aspirations.



a. Goals of the research

The main objective was to collect data on different aspects that were divided as the categories presented below:

- General current situation of the neighbourhood (Level of satisfaction, overall feeling and main problems in the area)
- Future general situation of the neighbourhood (changes needed)

- Human relationships in the neighbourhood (level of respect and consideration and diversity tolerance)
- Involvement with the neighbourhood (main activities, reasons for not being involved, main communication channels)
- Support (perceived received support)
- Personal thriving (current struggles)
- Youngsters' hopes and aspirations (personal projections, possible barriers for succeeding).

The two versions of the used questionnaires can be found in Appendix 1.

b. Methodology

An initial version of the questionnaire was provided to us. A pilot session was carried out to test it, and further adjustments were made according to the conclusions drawn from the pilot session. The older versions of the questionnaires can be found in Appendix 2.

The methodology used can be qualified as practical social research and the systematisation of data used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Particularly for the qualitative data, grounded theory was used in order to create categories out of open-ended questions.

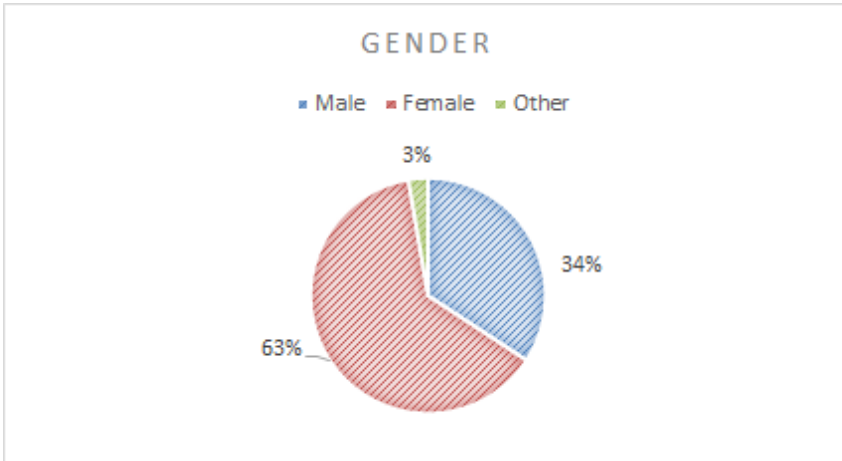
c. Findings

Below are presented the main findings of the practical research, separated by categories. The data collected are available on a spreadsheet upon request, provided there is interest in looking at the raw data or at the way it was processed. Moreover, due to time constraints, not all possible cross-reference data have been made, and only the most relevant indicators are presented in this report. If one intends to analyse the data more in depth, it can be made by using the spreadsheet that is available upon request.

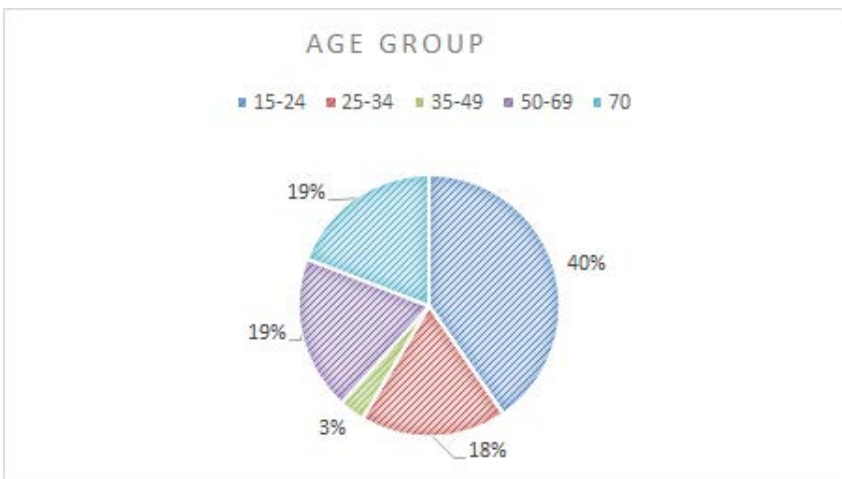
i. Characteristics of the respondents

Total number of questionnaires: 111

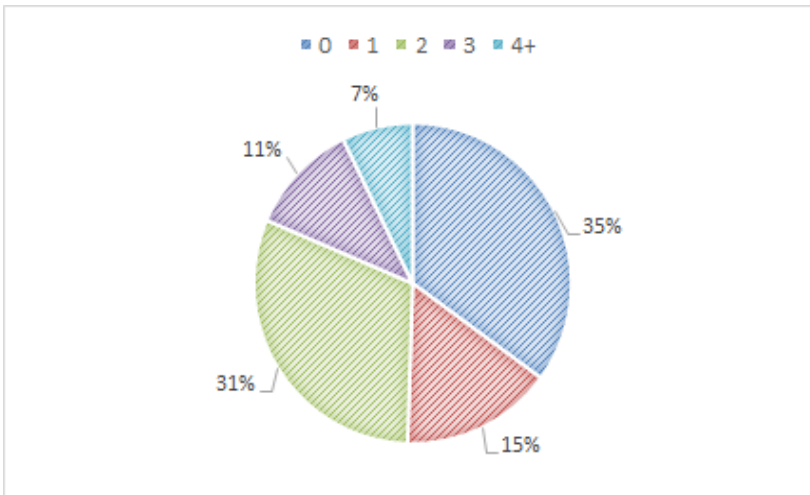
By Gender



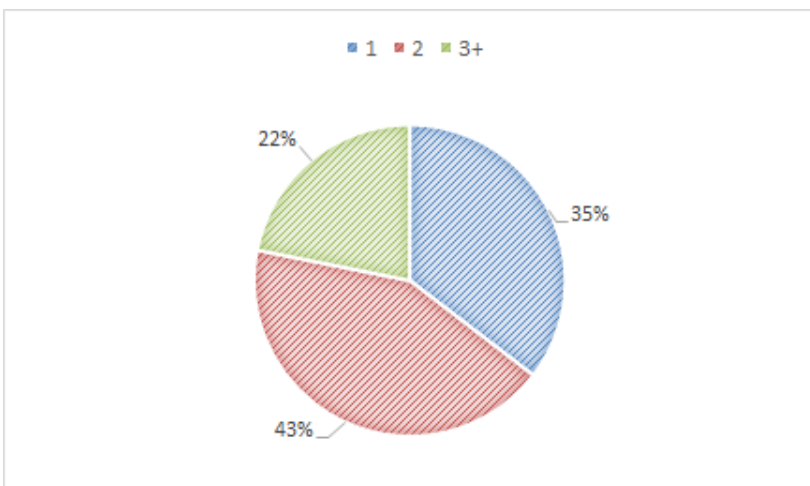
By Age



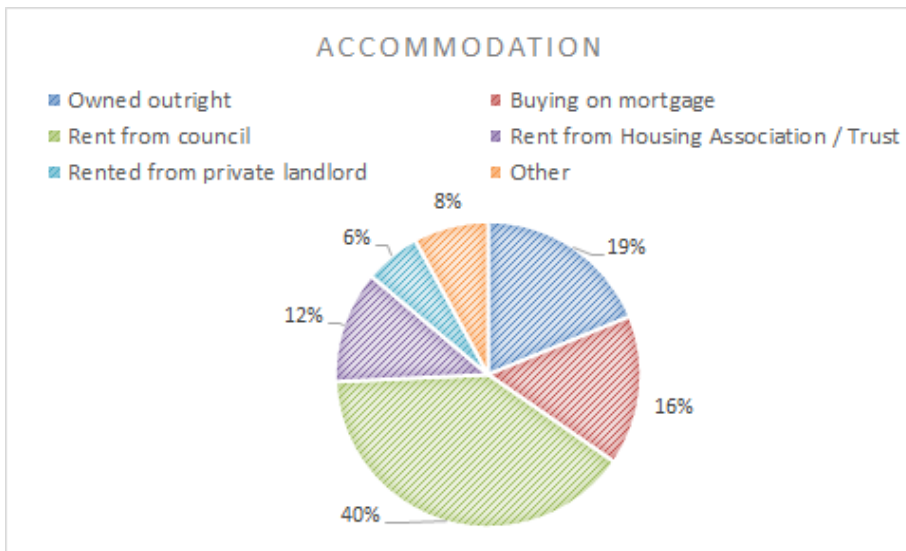
Number of children aged 17 or under, living with the interviewee.



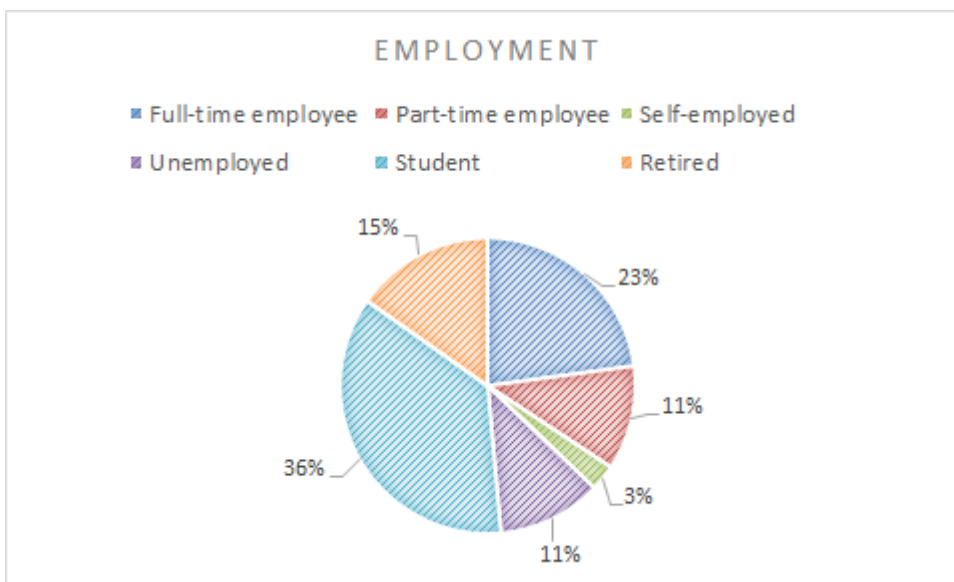
Number of people aged 18 and over, living with the interviewee.



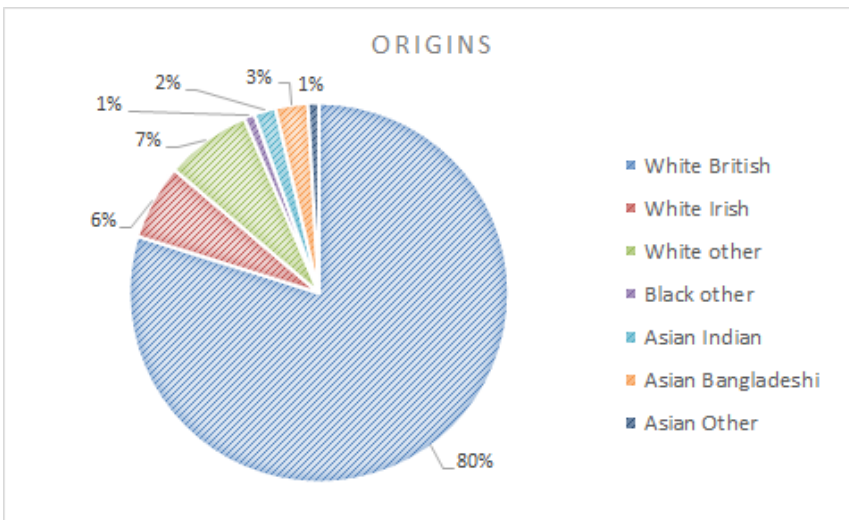
Types of accommodation



Employment



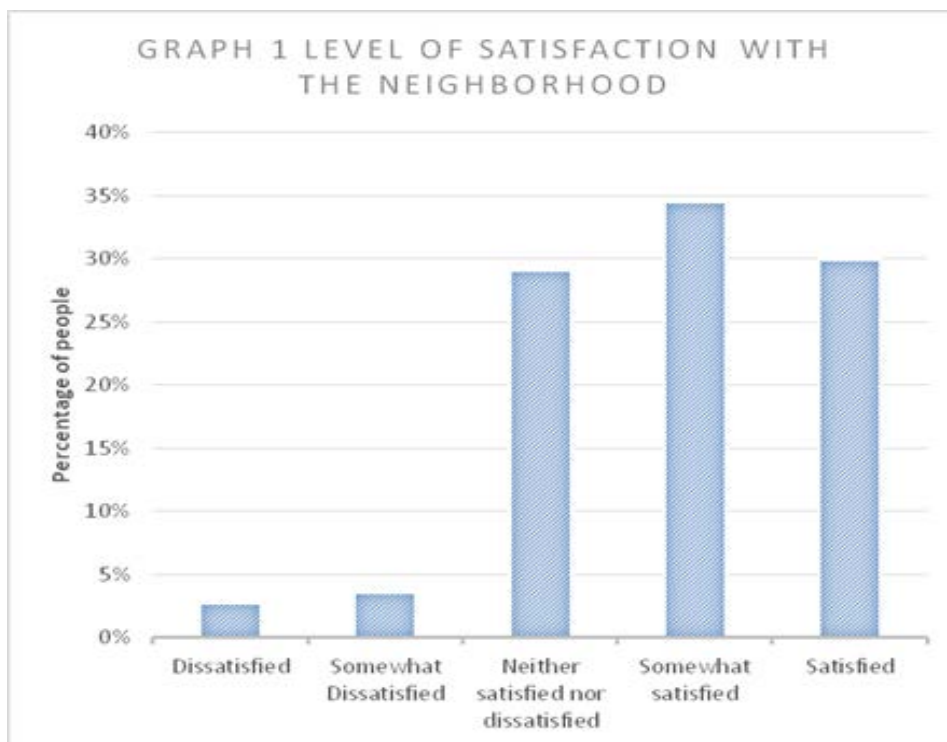
Types of origins



ii. General current situation of the neighbourhood

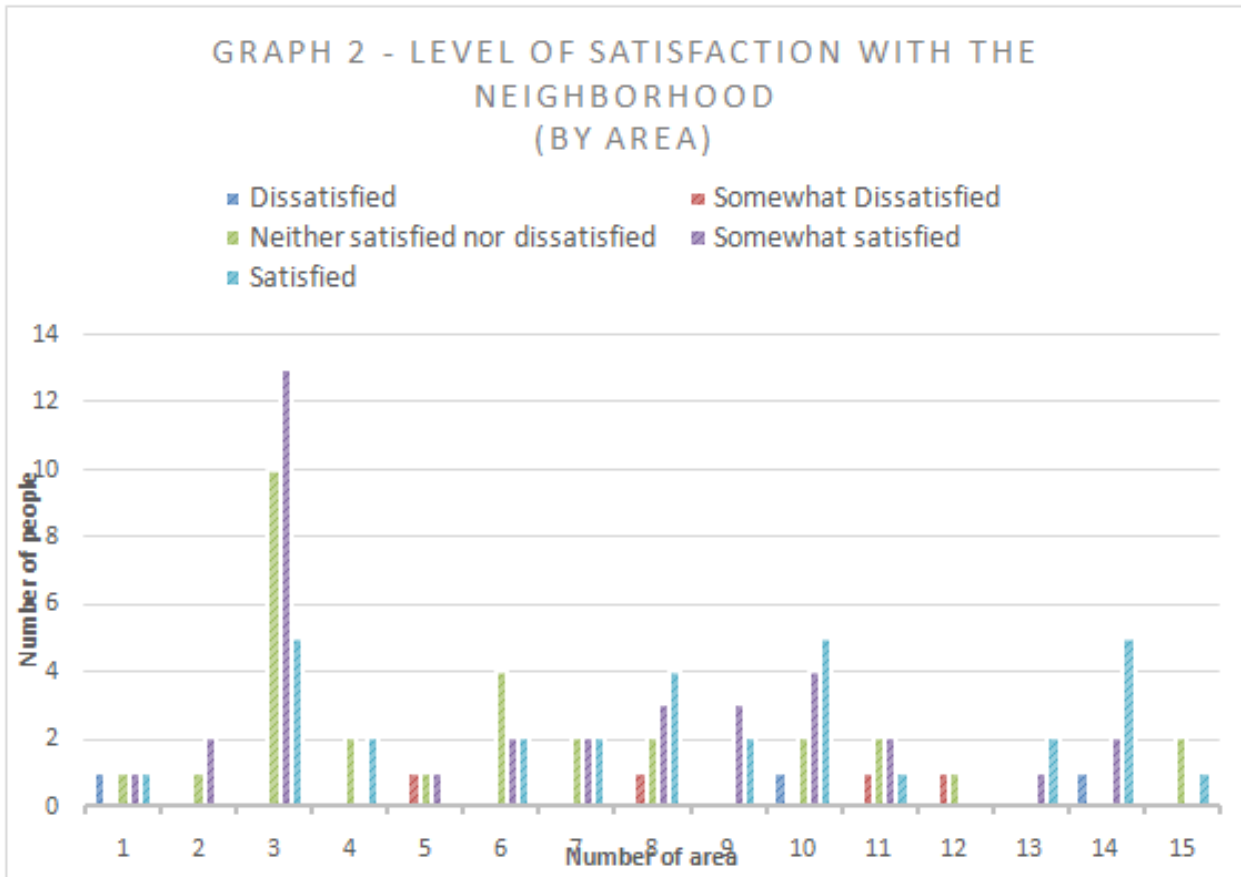
Information about the residents' perceptions of the current situation of their neighbourhood is presented below. The map with the reference areas can be found in appendix 3.

Graph 1 – Level of satisfaction with the neighbourhood | Question 1



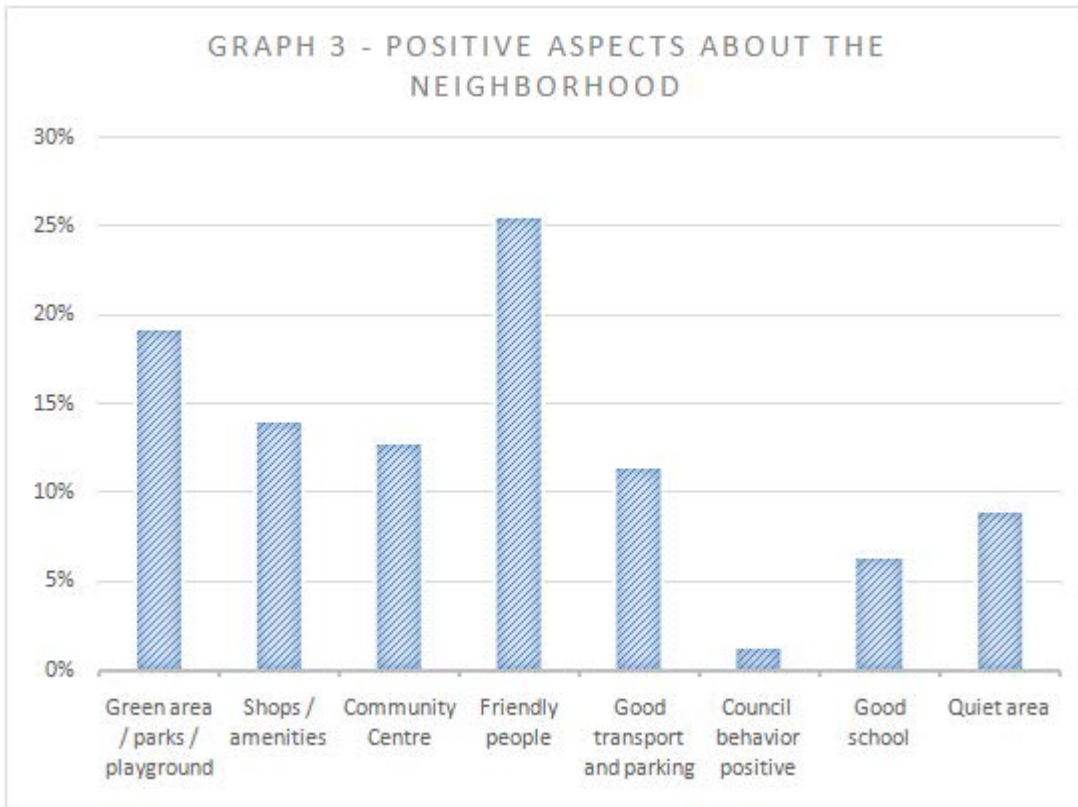
Graph 1 shows how, in general terms, satisfaction with the neighbourhood is average or above average.

Graph 2 – Level of satisfaction with the neighbourhood (by area) | Question 1



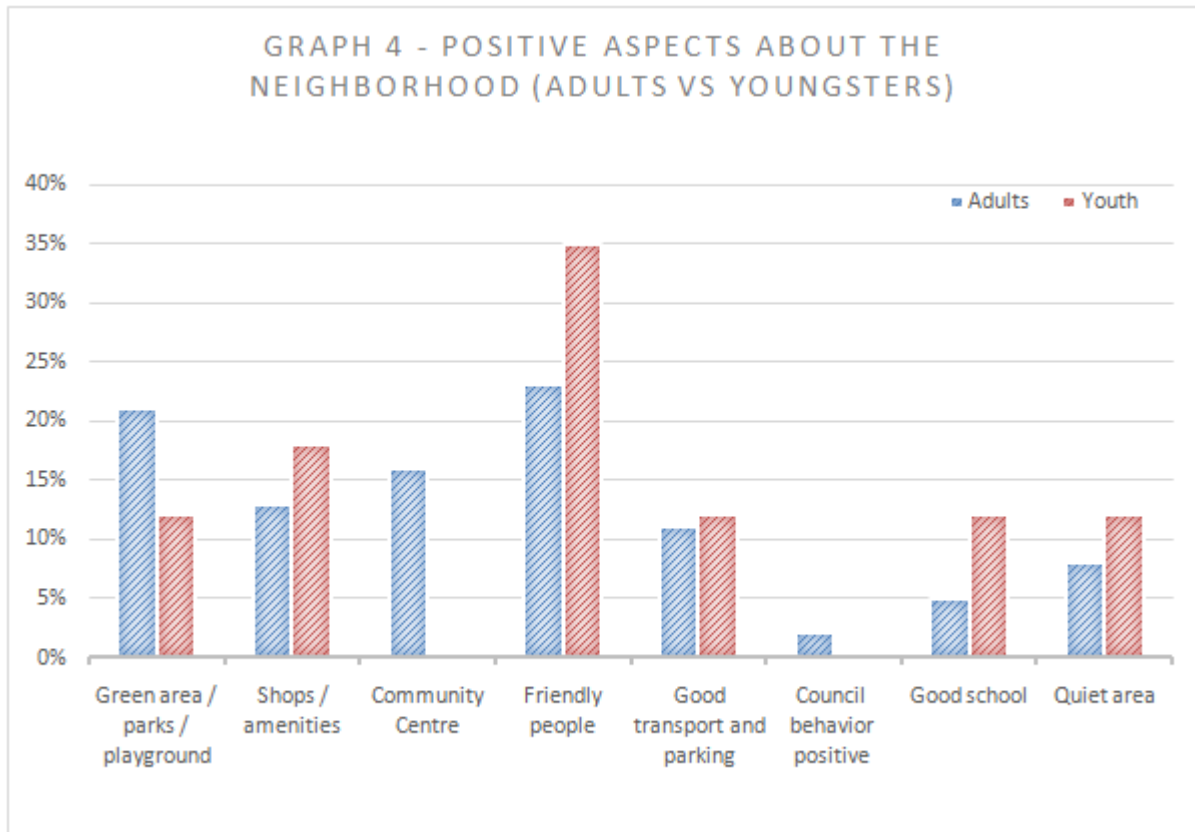
When analysing level of satisfaction by area, it is evident that areas 3, 8, 9, 10 and 14 have highest levels of satisfaction than the average. Out of 110 respondents, only 3 answered to be dissatisfied and 4 to be somewhat dissatisfied. These people belong to different areas, but it was considered that making a direct link between a single answer and a whole area would have not been sensible.

Graph 3 – Positive aspects about the neighbourhood | Source: Question 2 (open question)



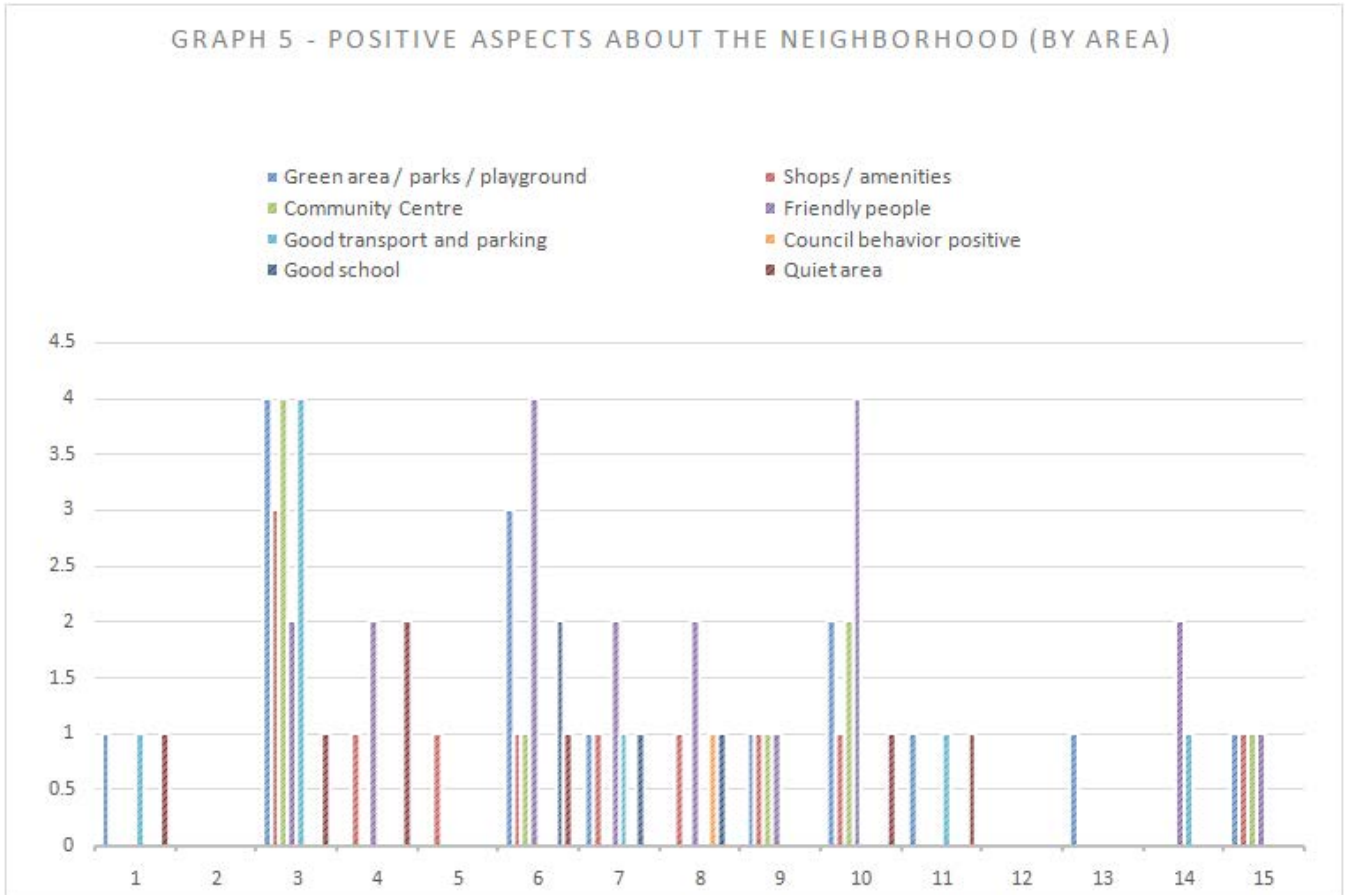
In general terms, what residents value the most about their neighbourhood is the friendliness of people, green areas, access to shops and amenities and the community centre.

Graph 4 - Positive aspects about the neighbourhood (Adults VS Youngsters) | Question 2 (open question)



If one looks at the positive aspects more in depth, the most important conclusion is that none of the **young** people considered the **community centre** in their answers, which may be interpreted as an opportunity for community centres to start targeting young people in their offer, possibly through their parents or grandparents, who seem to be active participants.

Graph 5 - Positive aspects about the neighbourhood (by area) | Question 2 (open question)



When looking at the positive aspects by area, it can be seen that **parks** play a big role in areas 1, 3, 6, 10, 11, 13 and 15. Another conclusion is that the **community centre** seems to be **vital for area 3**, and quite important for areas 9, 10 and 15. In areas 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 14 and 15, **friendliness of people** plays an important role. It may be relevant to highlight that a **positive behaviour from the council** appears only in area 8, and that areas 1 and 4 appear to be particularly **quiet**.

Some comments coming from the respondents:

- *‘Being able to travel around by bike and walking so I can interact with those around me’ Area 14 #59*
- *‘The community centre is great but needs more advertising so more people can use it’ Area 3 #66*

Conclusion of this section

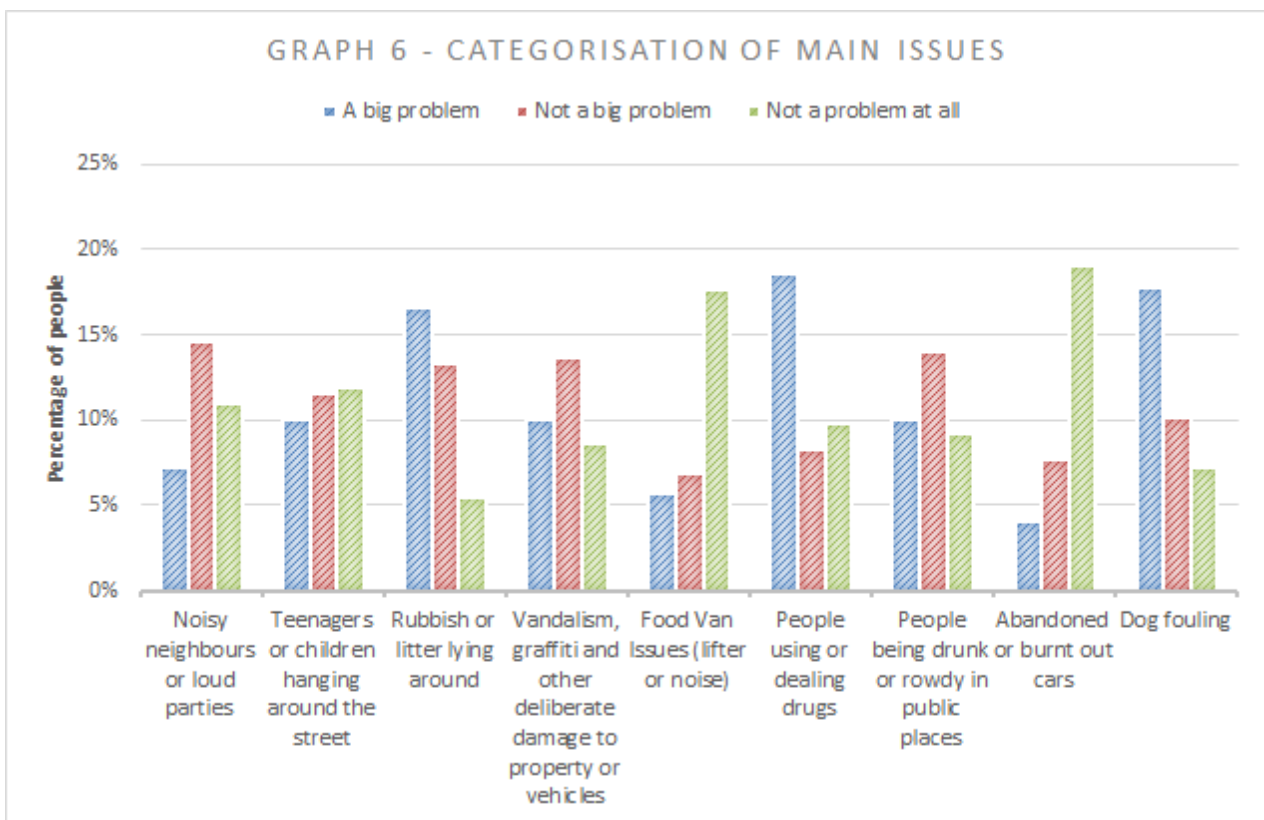
As a conclusion for this section, satisfaction with the neighbourhood appears quite positive. Particularly, areas 3, 8, 9, 10 and 14 have highest levels of satisfaction than the average. What residents value the most is that they are surrounded by friendly people and green areas such as parks and playgrounds. Moreover, they also appreciate having shops and amenities nearby. The community centre is also a big plus, especially for area 3, and also for areas 9, 10 and 15.

However, it was found that the importance of the community centre was only expressed by adults, and was completely ignored by the youngsters.

iii. Main problems in the neighbourhood

This section aims at shedding light on specific issues that appear as problematic for the residents in general, but also in the specific areas within Arbury and Kings Hedges. The map with the reference areas can be found in appendix 3.

Graph 6 – Categorisation of main issues | Question 8



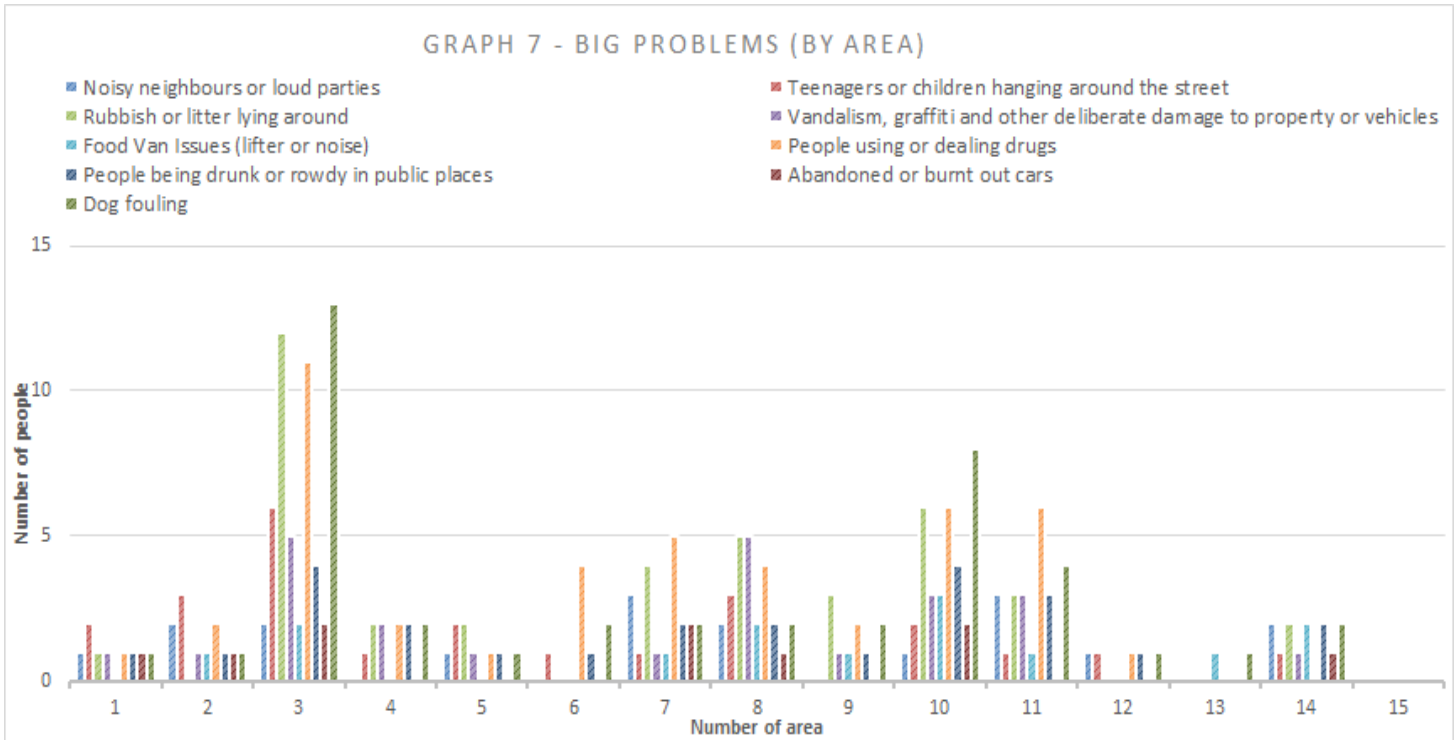
Rubbish and litter, people using or dealing drugs and dog fouling are highlighted as the most problematic issues. Moreover, it seems that **teenagers/children hanging on the streets, vandalism and people being drunk or rowdy** in public places are quite problematic as well. Abandoned or burnt out cars, and food van issues appear to be not a problem at all.

Some comments coming from the respondents:

- *'I don't mind them (teenagers) being around but they need to be engaged' #1*
- *'To engage young people in community building so they act as positive individuals for change' #1*

- *'People using or dealing drugs has decreased. It was a big problem when crack and heroin, big issue' #25*
- *'I just want to be able to walk down the street and not be intimidated' #25*

Graph 7 – Big problems (by area) | Question 8



When looking at the above mentioned problematic issues by area, the following conclusions can be drawn:

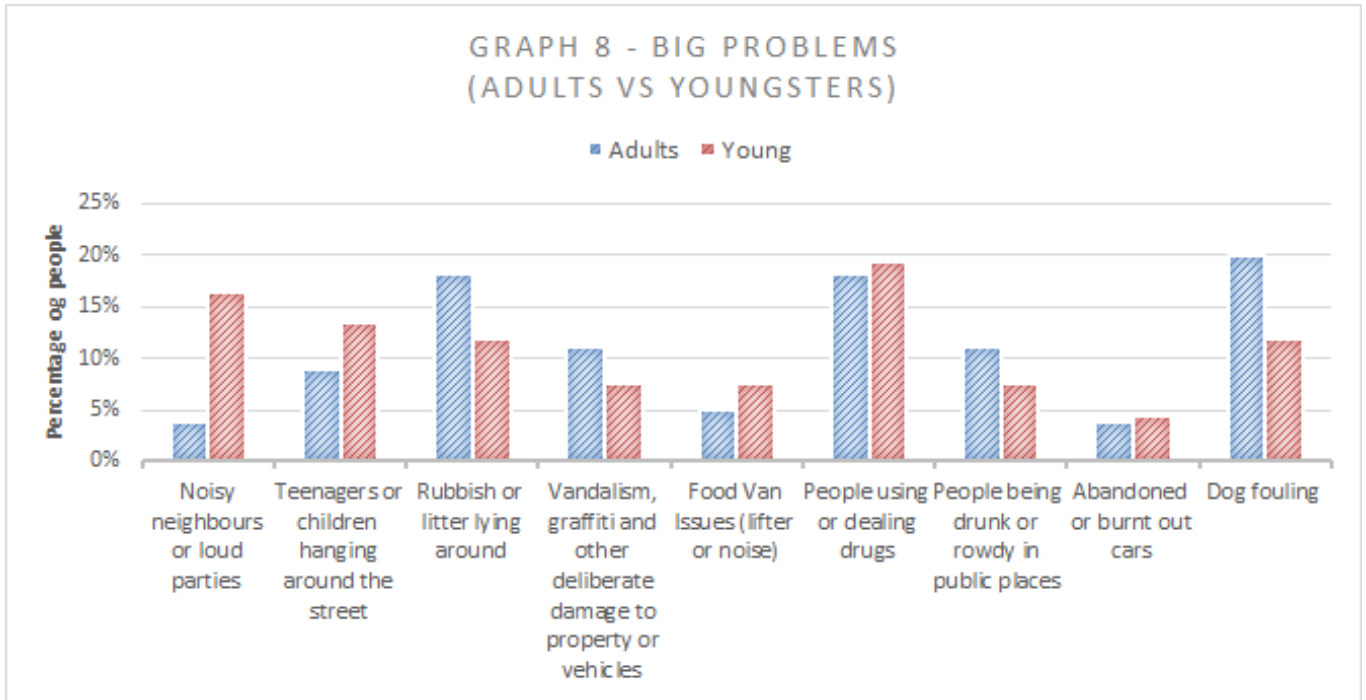
- Dog fouling is specifically problematic in Areas 3, 10 and 11.
- Rubbish or litter is specifically problematic in Areas 3, 8 and 10.
- People using or dealing drugs is present in most of the areas, and it is particularly problematic in Areas 3, 10 and 11.
- Vandalism appears to be quite problematic in Areas 3 and 8.

Some comments coming from the respondents:

- *'Home prices going up. Can't afford rising prices' Area 5 #25*
- *'Area has improved over the years, less drugs or gangs. Police have cleaned up, vandalism has improved, used to be an issue, abandoned cars has improved, drunk people is not as bad as it used to' Area 6 #26*
- *'I don't like the amount of people smoking, taking and dealing drugs' Area 5 #42*
- *'Reducing the speed of cars in residential areas with enforcement' Area 14 #59*

· 'I live in a quiet area but I dislike not being able to take children to the park because of teenagers' Area 3 #11

Graph 8 – Big problems (Adults VS Youngsters) | Question 8



When comparing young people’s perceptions with adults’ ones, there seems to be no huge difference. The only two issues that can be highlighted are noisy neighborhood and loud parties - young people express this as a problem more than adults - and dog fouling - adults seem to be more bothered than youngsters.

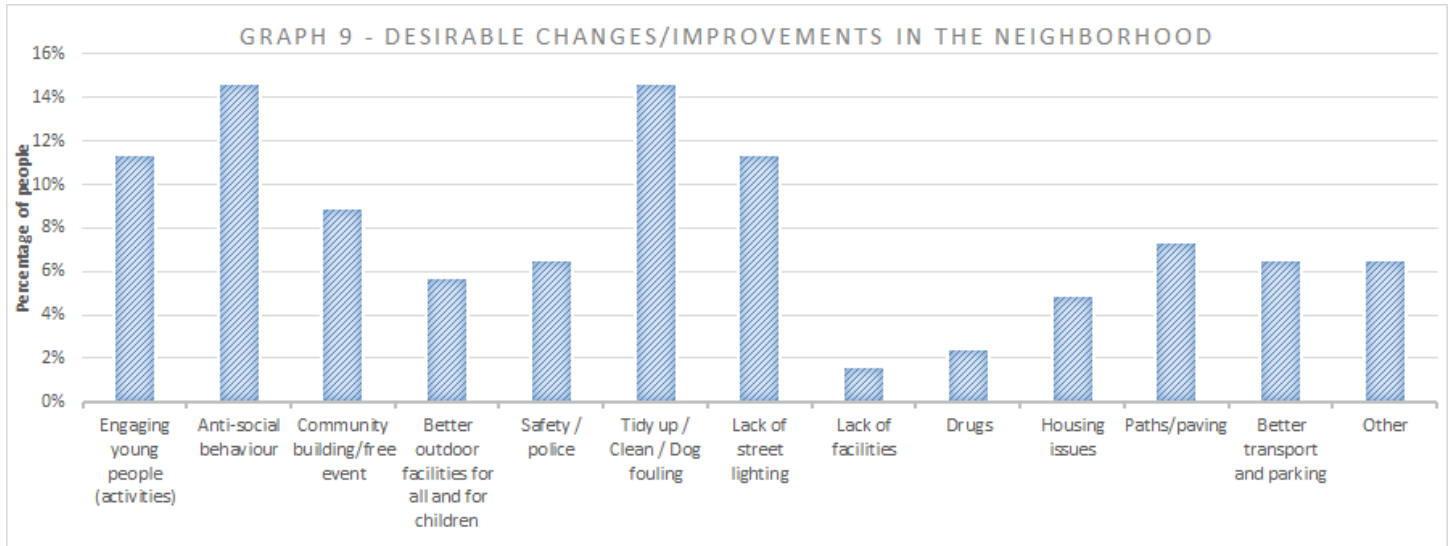
Conclusion of this section

The main problems in the neighborhood are rubbish and litter (stronger in areas 3, 10 and 11), people using or dealing drugs (present in all areas but stronger in 3, 10 and 11) and dog fouling (stronger in areas 3, 10 and 11). Young people seem to highlight the problem of noisy neighbours more than adults, and adults seem to be more bothered by dog fouling than youngsters.

iv. General future situation of the neighborhood

Information about residents' expectations or desires about the future situation of their neighborhood is presented below. The map with the reference areas can be found in appendix 3.

Graph 9 – Desirable changes/improvements in the neighborhood | Question 3

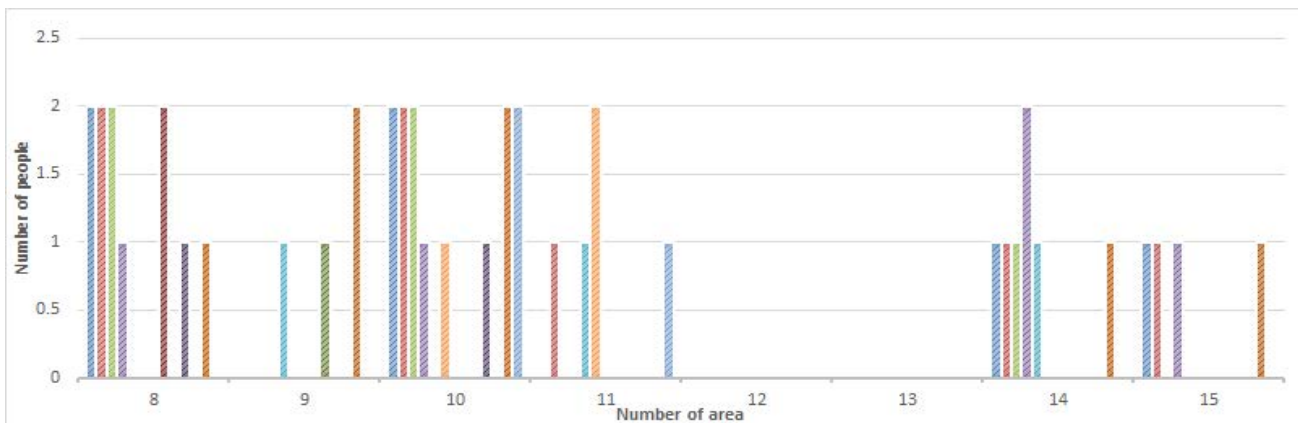
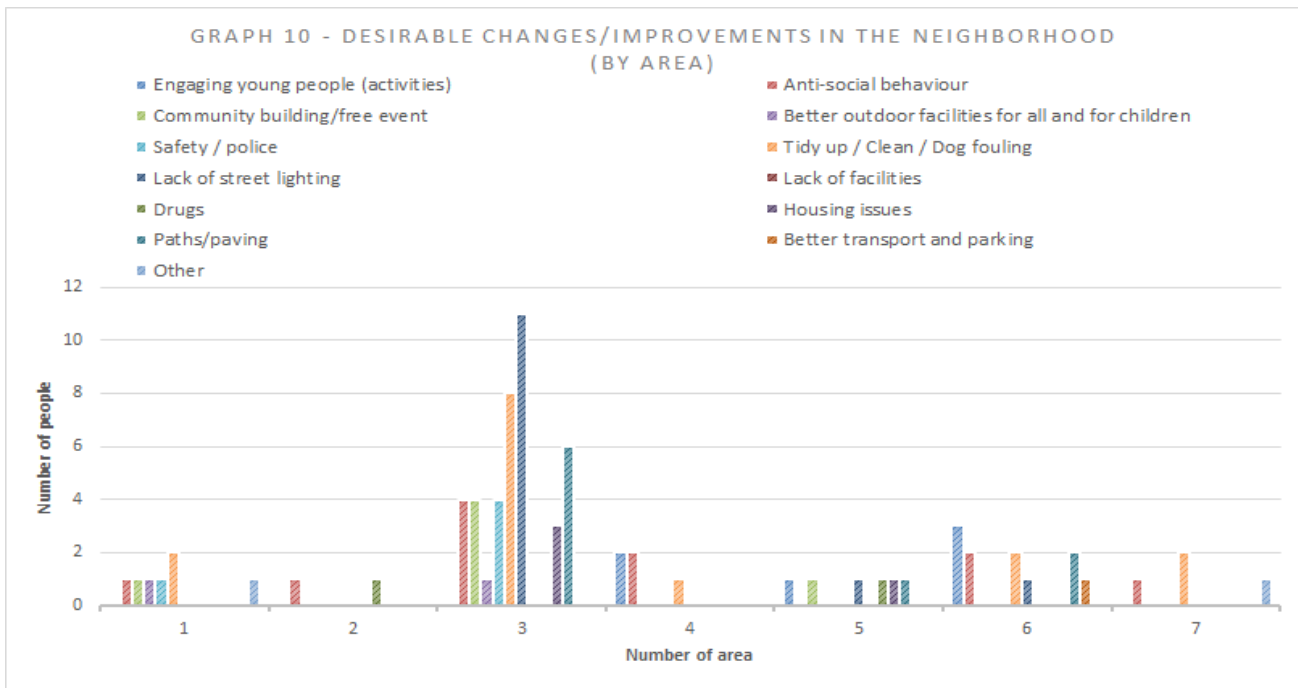


In general terms, the main improvements that people claim are related to **anti-social behaviour and cleaning of the area** - including dog fouling. Residents also expect improvements on **street lighting**, and expect to have more offers that allow young people to be more engaged. The category 'other' includes: authorities behaviour, feeling of alienation, unhealthy people and far from pub & community.

Some comments of the respondents:

- *'Free youth activities to engage young people' #25*
- *'Have the ability to control more local authorities and things like park maintenance. area cleaning, etc' #35*

Graph 10 – Desirable changes/improvements in the neighborhood (by area) | Question 3

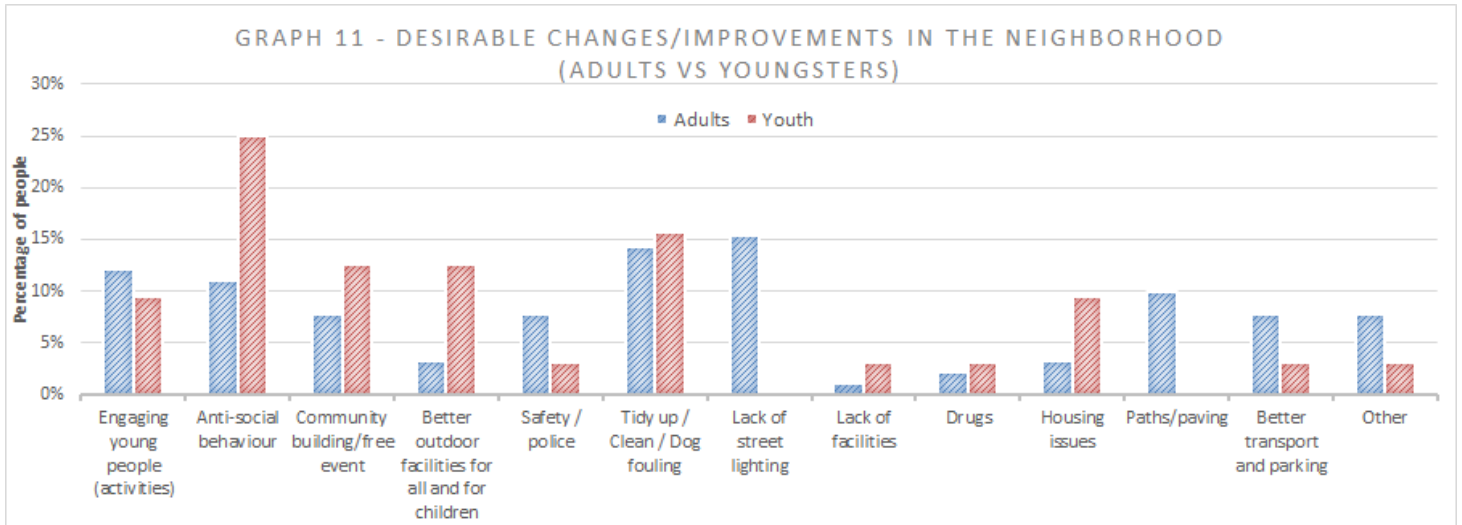


It is interesting to see the particularities of this indicator in **Area 3** . This area has a big problem with **street lighting, cleaning and tidying up and path and paving**. However, residents appear to be satisfied with facilities in general, transport and parking, drug problems and the engagement of young people.

Some comments coming from the respondents:

- *'More amenities for young people'* Area 6 #26
- *'Improve housing quality'* Area 8 #103

Graph 11 – Desirable changes in the neighborhood (Adults VS Youngsters) | Question 3



It was decided to look into this same indicator, but comparing answers given by adults and youngsters. Answers vary depending on the age group. One of the most frequent answers was **anti-social behaviour, which seems to be particularly relevant from the youngsters' perspective. Lack of street lighting and paving repairs were only mentioned by adults.** Moreover, youngsters express the need for better outdoor facilities and housing much more than adults.

The category 'other' includes authorities behaviour, feeling of alienation, unhealthy people and far from pub & community.

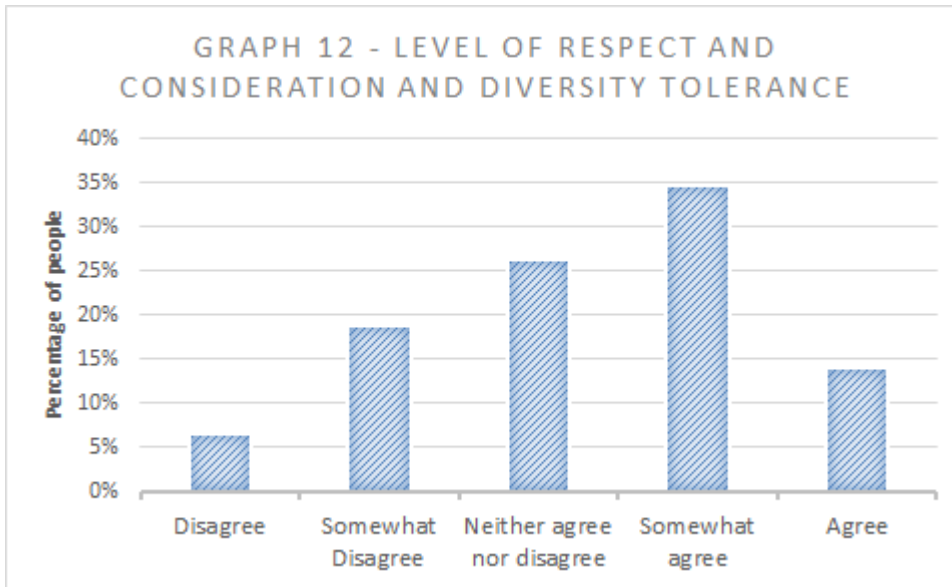
Conclusion for section

Regarding the general future situation of the neighborhood, people -specially youngsters- claim that anti-social behaviour needs to change, and that the area needs a lot of cleaning and tidy up, some caused by dog fouling. Street lighting and paths and paving are also expressed -only by adults- as things that need to improve.

v. Human relationships in the neighborhood

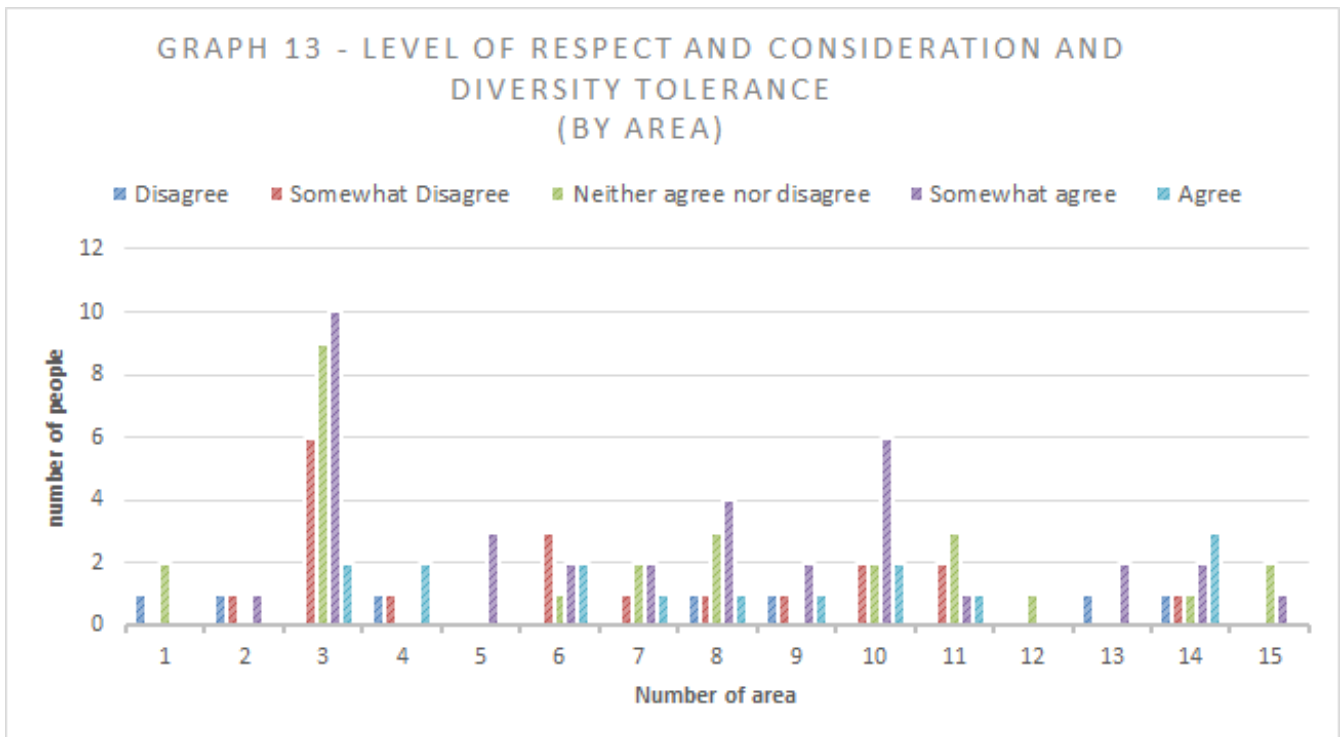
Besides looking into the ‘tangible’ aspects of the neighborhood, the questionnaire intended to understand how the relationship amongst the residents is.

Graph 12 - Level of respect and consideration and diversity tolerance | Question 7 part 1



In general terms, more than half of the respondents expressed to feel ‘neutral’ about the topic, or above neutral (somewhat agree or agree).

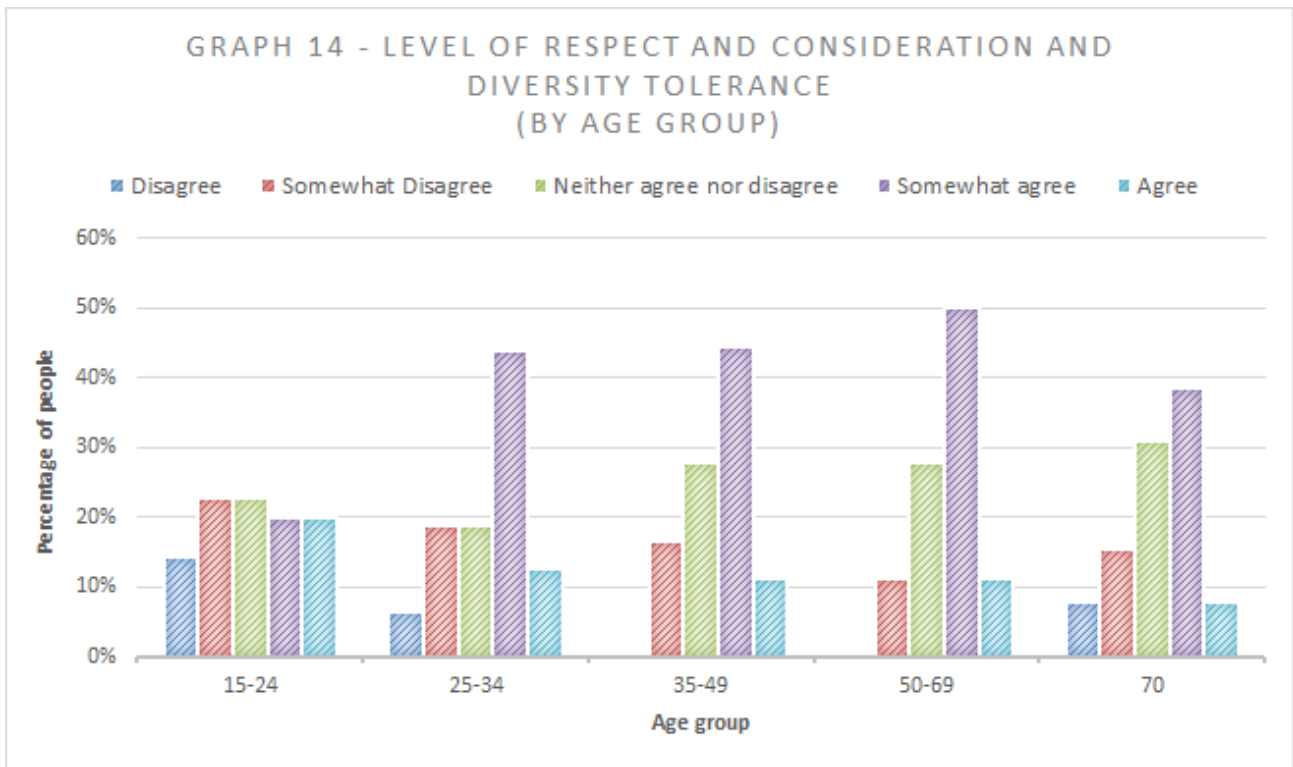
Graph 13 – Level of respect and consideration and diversity tolerance (by area) | Question 7 part 1



If one looks at the same question, from the perspective of the different areas, the main conclusions to be drawn are:

- Area 14 is the only one in which most answers are ‘agree’
- Areas 3, 8 and 10 are quite positive
- Only 7 respondents out of 107 answered ‘disagree’, and all of them are dispersed in different areas.

Graph 14-Level of respect and consideration and diversity tolerance (by age group) | Question 7 part 1



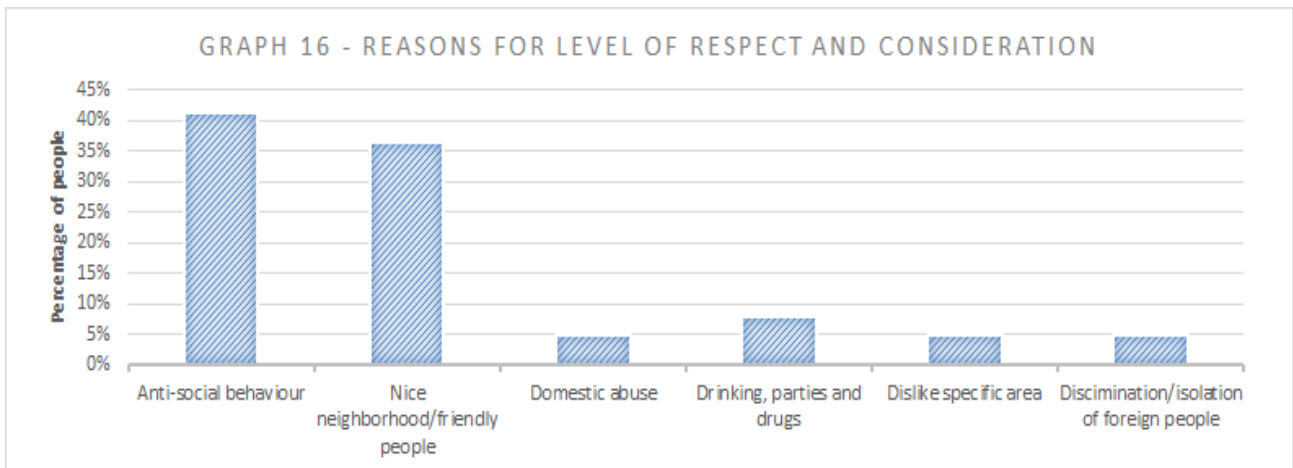
When looking at the respondents' opinions by age group, there is a clear differentiation between young people and the rest. While graphs look quite similar for everybody over 25 years old (with 'somewhat agree') leading on the answers, for young people all answers are almost even, and the most popular answers are 'somewhat disagree' and 'neutral'. Therefore, it seems that **young people have a more negative perception** of this issue than the rest.

Graph 15- Level of respect and consideration and diversity tolerance (by employment situation) | Question 7 part 1



In order to explore this issue more in depth, the answers were also analysed by employment situation, to see if there was any relevant conclusion to be drawn from them. Graphs appear very different for each employment situation, being the student one, the one that has the most even answers. Particularly, answers for **'agree' are more present in the unemployed people and students**, which may lead to the conclusion that some of the disrespect may happen within the workplace. Moreover, **half of the part-time employees expressed to 'somewhat disagree'** with the question. However, more than half of **full-time employees expressed to 'somewhat agree'**. To sum up, it is hard to draw a clear conclusion from these data, and it is one indicator that should be further explored to fully understand the reasons for it. Graph 17 is an attempt to do this, but it is suggested that there should be more work done on this issue.

Graph 16- Reasons for previous answer (level of respect and consideration) | Question 7 part 2

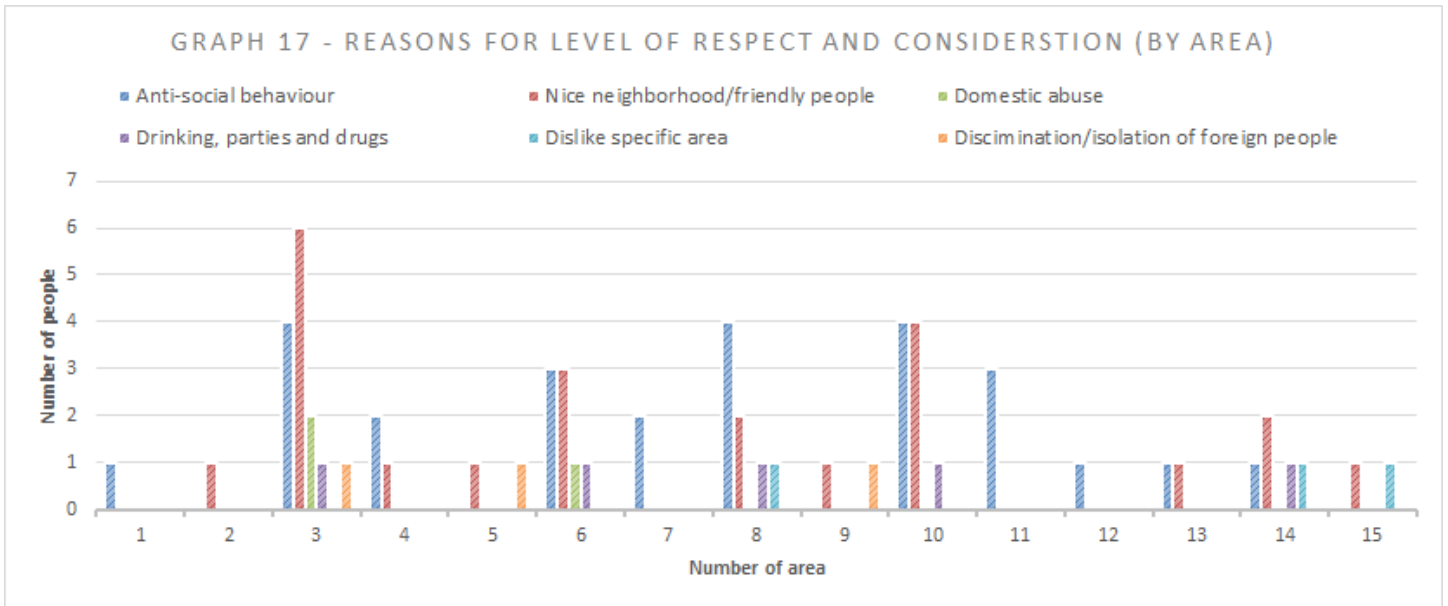


In terms of positive answers, almost half of the people attribute it to the neighborhood being nice and the people friendly. With regard to the negative answers, there is a clear tendency to attribute it to ‘anti-social behaviour’.

Some of the comments from the respondents are:

- *‘Everyone's too selfish’ Area 1 #31*
- *‘People are rude in my ends’ Area 15 #107*
- *‘The people are uneducated’ Area 11 #30*
- *‘There are a lot of lonely people around and some people have very bad manner’ Area 7 #32*
- *‘Some neighbours using drugs and parents shouting at children’ Area 6 #47*
- *‘No English people surrounded’ Area 9 #67*

Graph 17 – Reasons for previous answer (level of respect and consideration) (by area) | Question 7 part 2



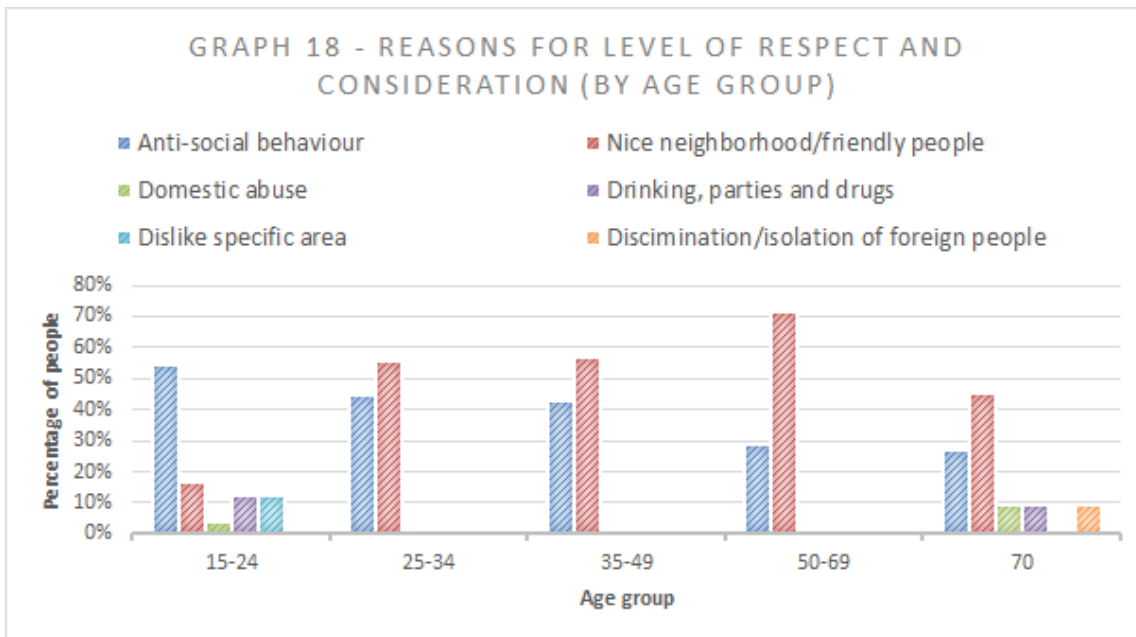
When looking at these answers by area, we can see that certain answers are concentrated on certain areas:

- Most of the areas have a good perception of the neighborhood and the people
- Anti-social behaviour is mentioned in 11 out of 15 areas, and it is particularly high in areas 3, 8 and 10.

Some of the comments from the respondents are:

- *'Domestic abuse, teenagers, cars/loud music' Area 3 #15*
- *'Mostly quite good but there are the odds one drug and drinking all around the corner - drug rehabilitation' Area 10 #39*
- *'I do not want my children to see people yelling at each other or using gestures or bad language' Area 10 #1*

Graph 18 - Reasons for previous answer (level of respect and consideration) (by age group) | Question 7 part 2



Similarly to graph 15, answers from people over 25 are quite similar. However, when looking at answers of the **young people, it can be seen the negative perception** they have, particularly due to anti-social behaviour. Another conclusion that may be drawn is that only in the extremes in terms of age - the youngest ones and the oldest ones - express more specific reasons such as domestic abuse or discrimination.

Conclusion of this section

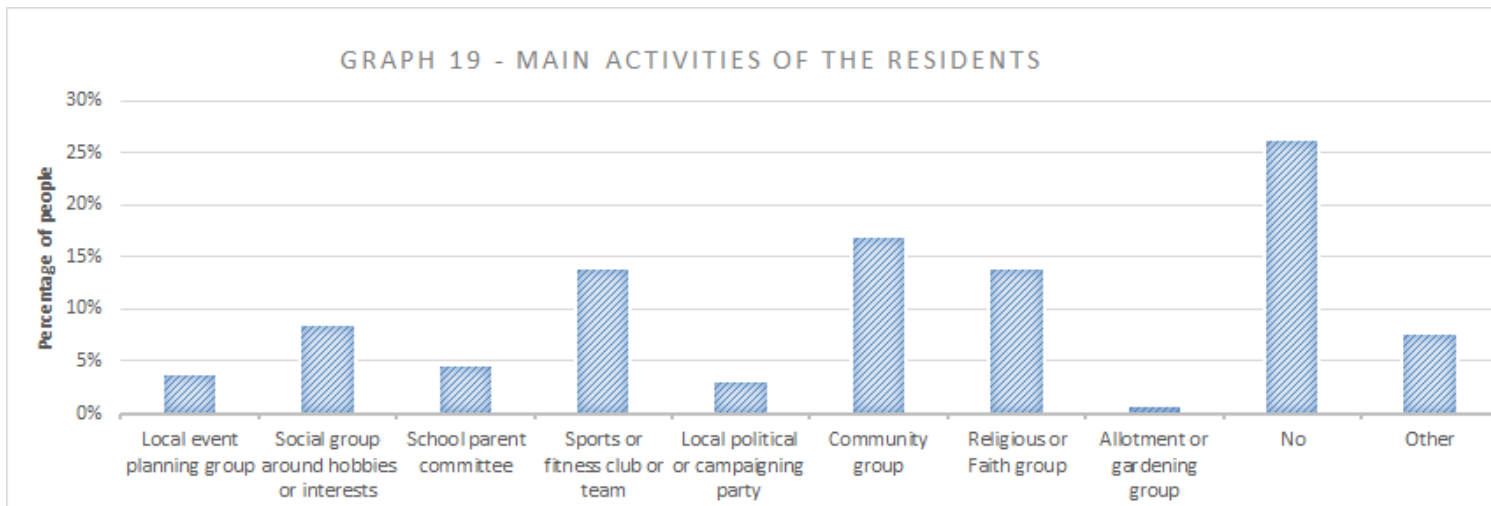
With regard to human relationships in the neighborhood, more than half of the respondents expressed to feel fine or quite positive about this indicator. Areas 3, 8, 10 and 14 appear particularly positive. Moreover, only 7 respondents out of 107 expressed to 'disagree' with the fact that people treat each other with respect and consideration. Interestingly, youngsters have a more negative perception of this issue than the rest of the respondents. Students and unemployed people tend to have a more positive perception than the rest of the respondents, although it is difficult to understand why this happens, since answers by employment situation do not shed any light on this.

In terms of reasons for the above mentioned answers, almost half of the people attribute the positive aspects to the neighborhood being nice and the people friendly. With regard to the negative answers, there is a clear tendency to attribute it to 'anti-social behaviour'. In general terms, most areas have a good perception of the neighborhood and the people, and anti-social behaviour is mentioned in 11 out of 15 areas, and it is particularly high in areas 3, 8 and 10.

vi. Level of involvement with the neighborhood

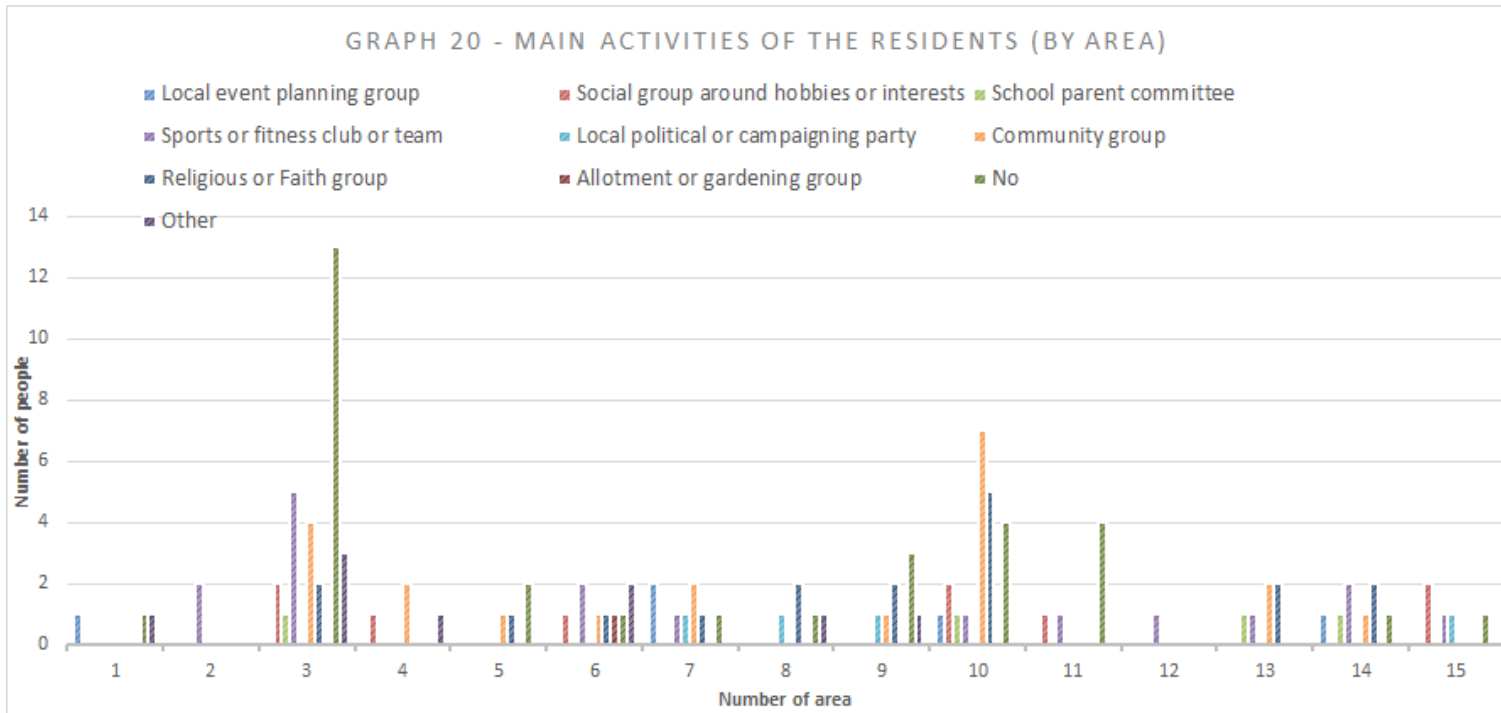
This section aims at understanding what the residents’ main activities are and how deep their involvement with the neighborhood is.

Graph 19 – Main activities of the residents | Question 5



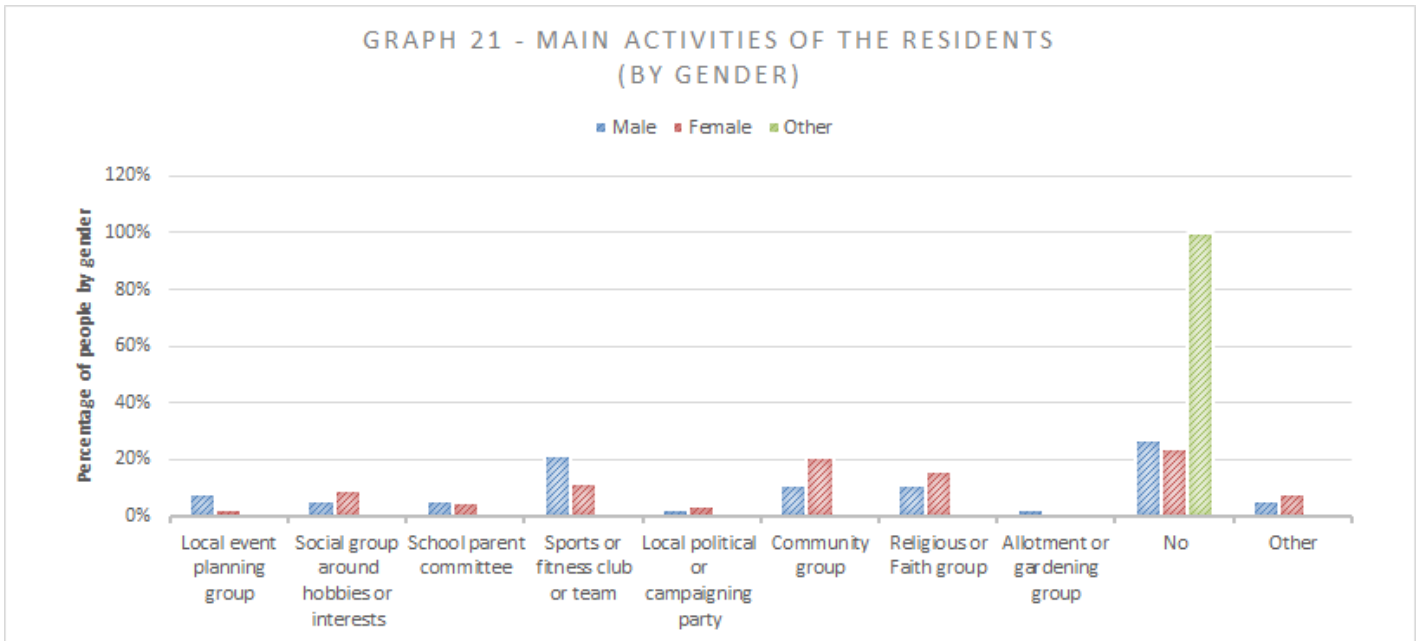
Close to 25% of the respondents expressed not being involved with any activity. From the ones that are involved, most of them belong to a community group. Religious groups and sports seem to play a big role as well.

Graph 20- Main activities of the residents (by area) | Question 5



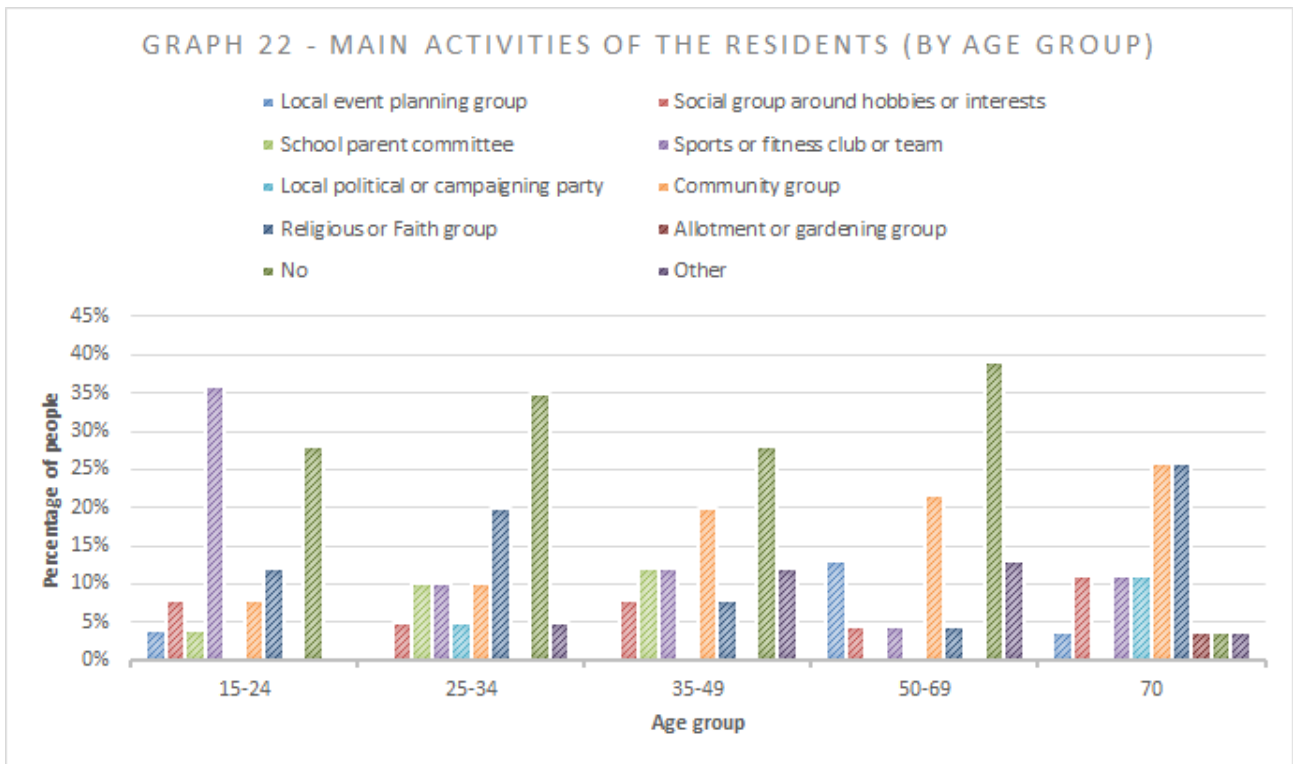
In order to understand if there is any relationship between the activities and the areas where they live, the answers were analysed by area. Graph 21 shows how the majority of people that are **not involved in anything belong to Areas 3, 10 or 11. Community group appears very strong in Area 10**, and quite strong in area 3 and religious group is very strong in area 10. Sports and fitness is present in 9 areas, and it is quite high for area 3.

Graph 21- Main activities of the residents (by gender) | Question 5



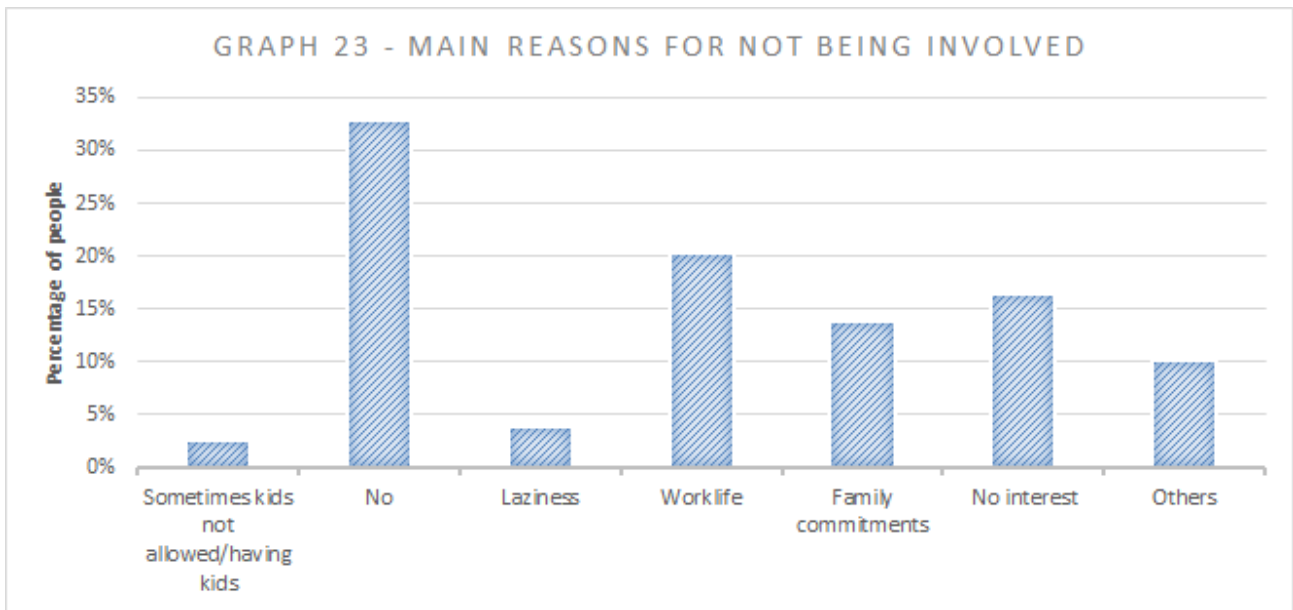
To further understand the level of involvement, graph 22 shows answers by gender. Answers appear quite even in terms of gender. Males appear to be more prone to participate in sports, and females are more involved in community groups.

Graph 22 - Main activities of the residents (by age group) | Question 5



Graph 23 shows the answers related to the level of involvement by age group. It is interesting to see that all age groups have a high percentage of 'No' answers, except for people over 70. Moreover, sports are particularly high within young people. **Involvement with community group is present in all age groups, but appears to grow as people get older.**

Graph 23 – Main reasons for not being involved | Question 6

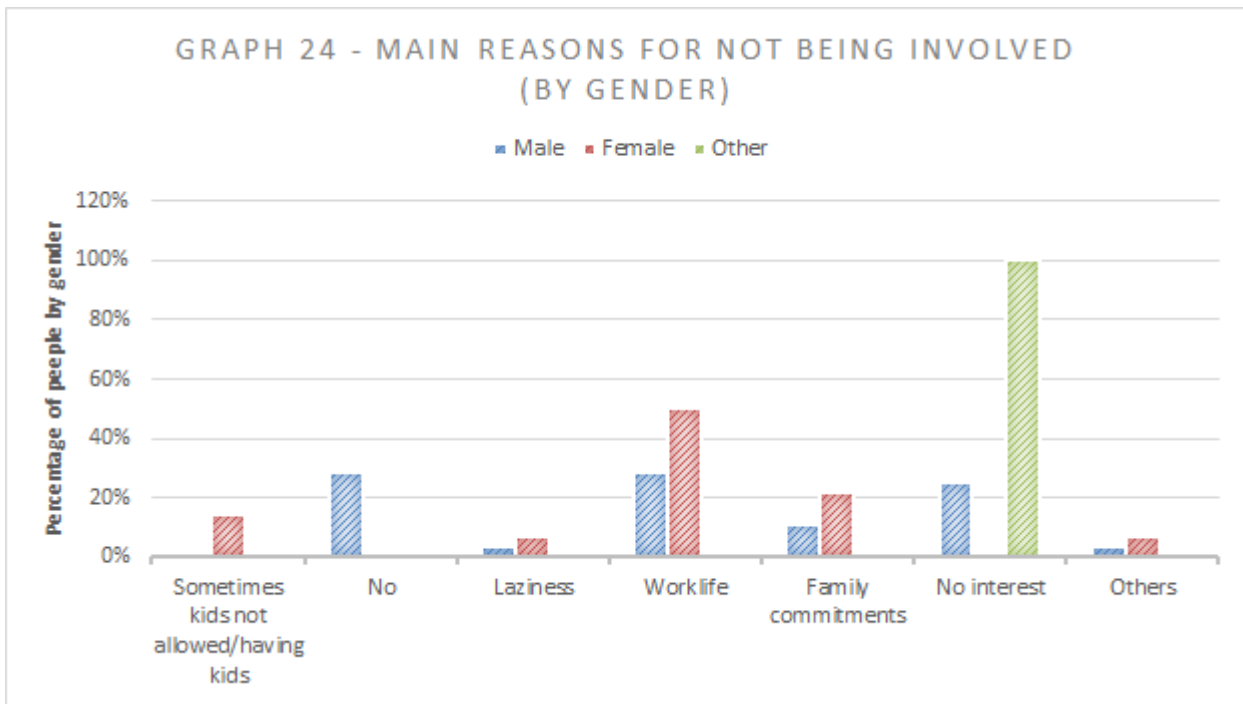


When recognising that there was a high percentage of people not involved in any activity, they were asked about their reasons for this. The majority answered there was no particular reason. Other relevant answers refer to **work life, having no interest and family commitments**. The category ‘Other’ includes health issues, money issues, transport, lack of confidence or lack of awareness.

Some comments of the respondents:

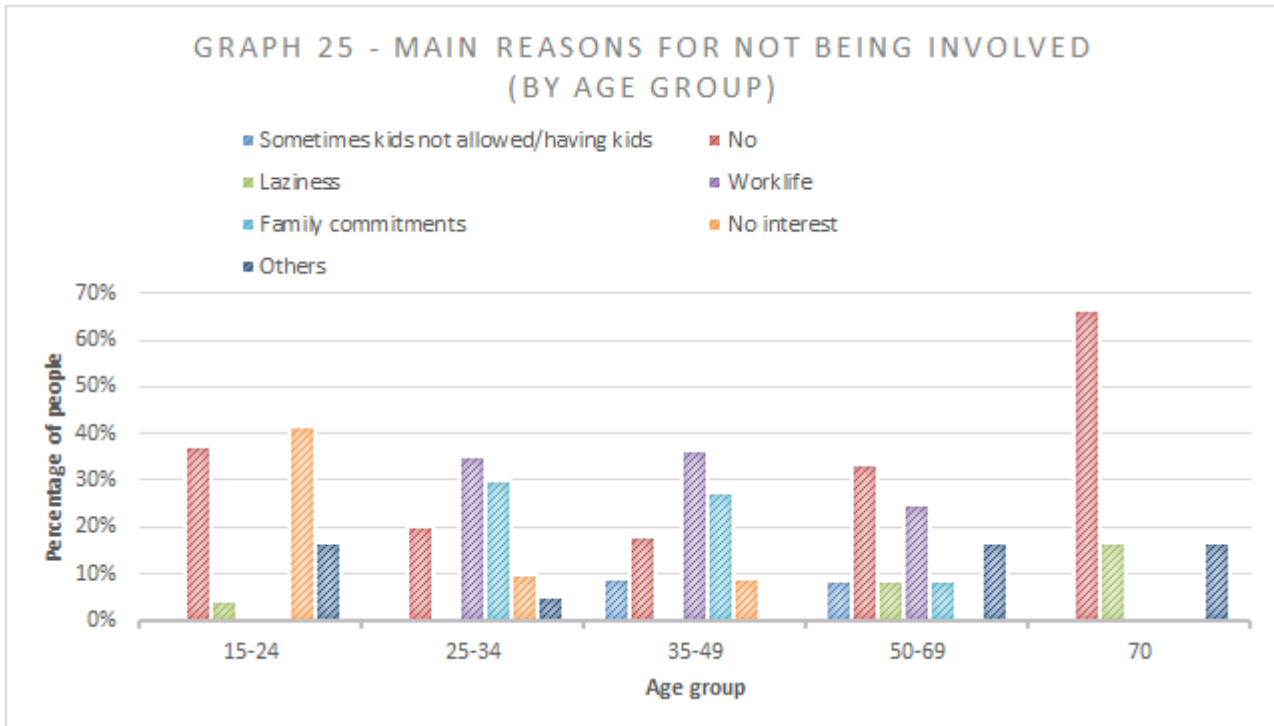
- *‘It worries me that the more pressure people are under, the more they withdraw, the less they support others’ #1*
- *‘We need to convince people that they can do things, so that they don’t lose confidence and then become isolated and disconnected’ #1*

Graph 24 – Main reasons for not being involved (by gender) | Question 6



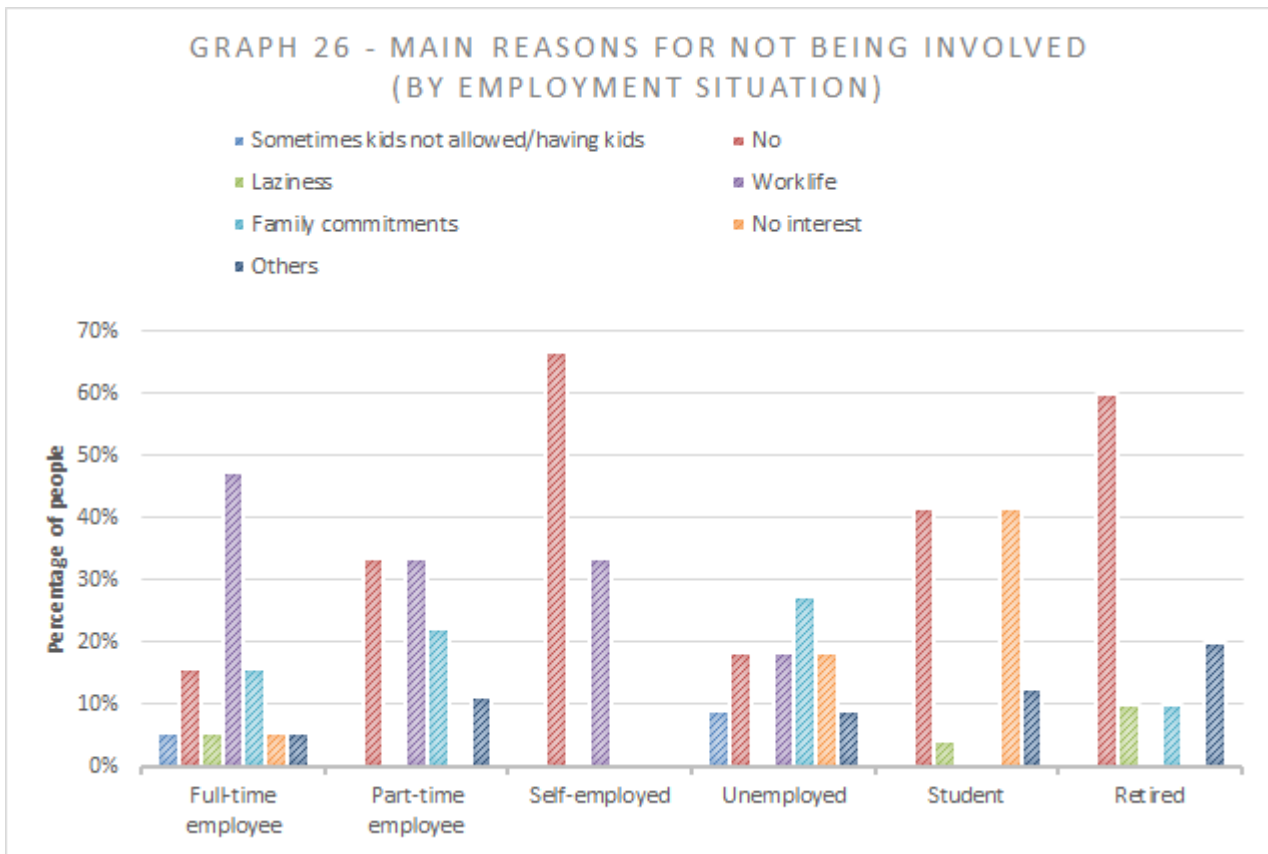
When looking at the reasons by gender, it can be seen that all the ones that answered 'No' are men. Also, **work life and family commitments appear higher for women than men**, and 'No interest' does not apply to any of the women interviewed.

Graph 25 – Main reasons for not being involved (by age group) | Question 6



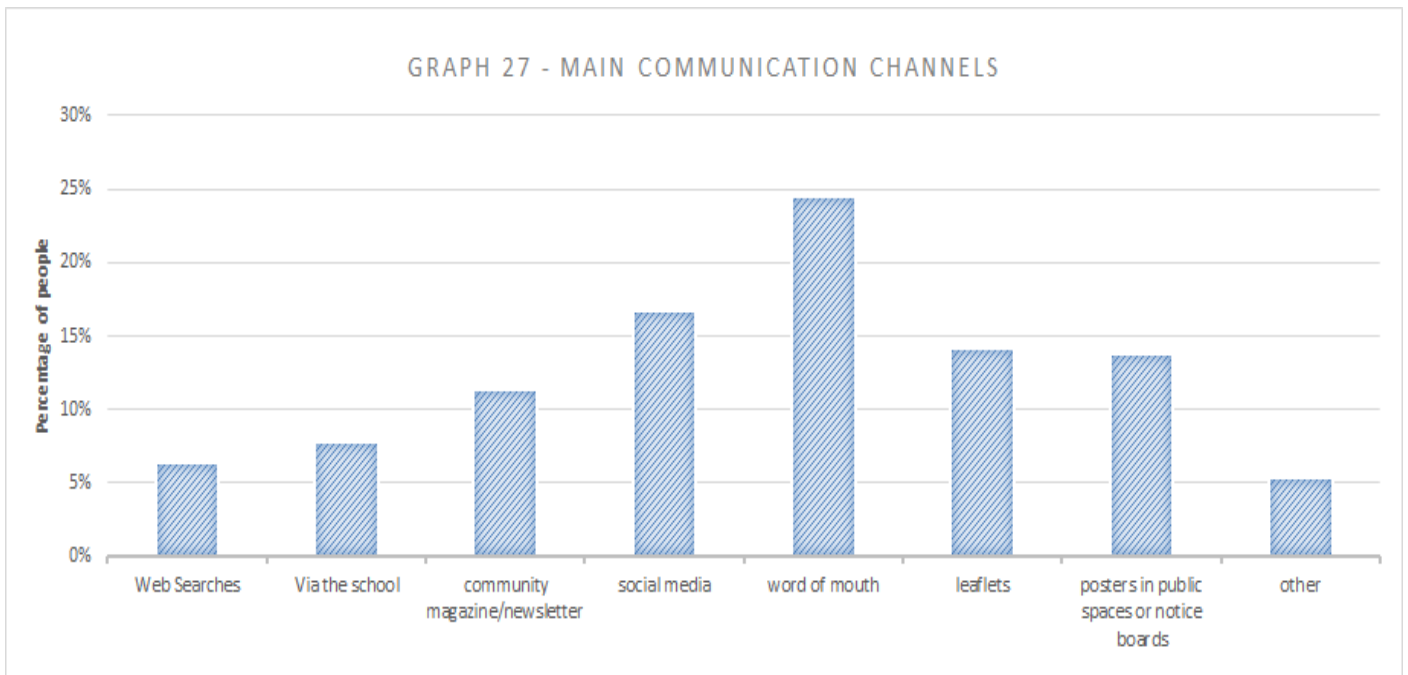
When the reasons are analysed by age group, it can be seen that **‘No interest’ is very high in young people**, and tends to decrease as people get older, which could be read as a disengagement of young people that is somehow balanced with a higher engagement of the elderly. Work life appears predictably high between 25 to 69 years old, similarly to family commitments.

Graph 26 – Main reasons for not being involved (by employment situation) | Question 6



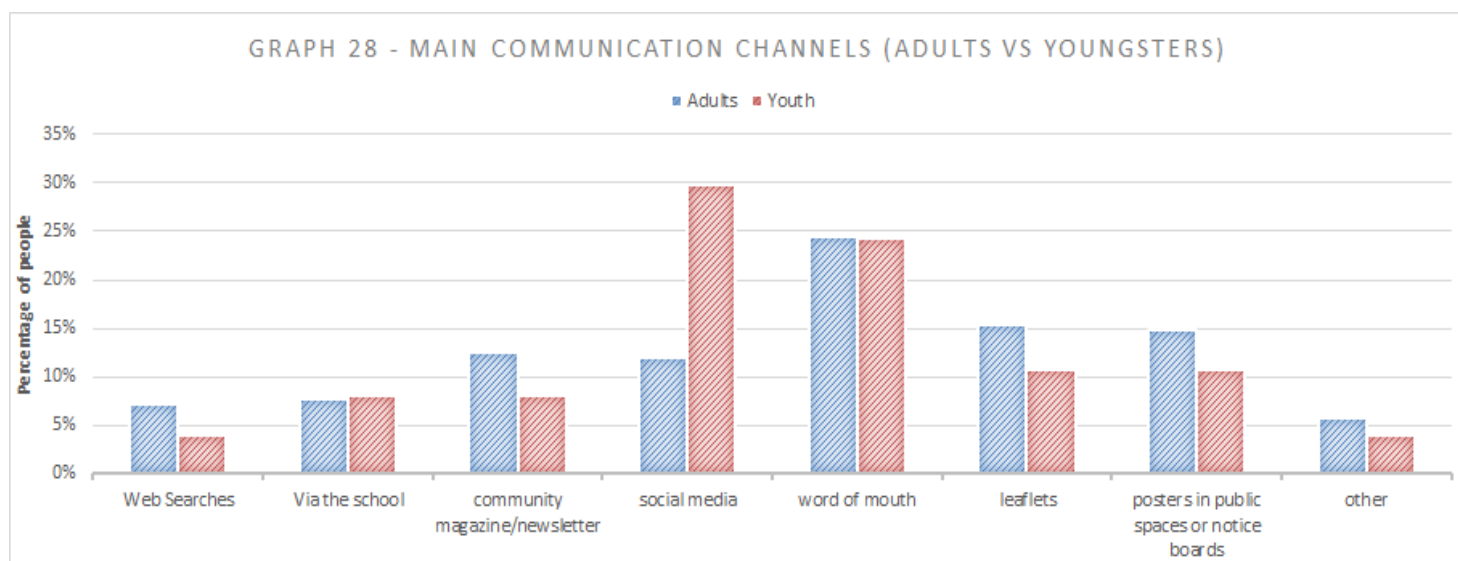
Graph 27 shows answers for reasons for not being involved by employment situations. Work life appears high for all active workers, but also for the unemployed people. A sensible reason for this could be the fact that the interviewee was unemployed when completing the questionnaire but this is not his/her permanent situation, or that the concept of ‘work life’ for certain people means more than ‘formal work’. Having ‘No interest’ is particularly high for students - which matches mainly young people. Therefore, the less ‘active’ people seem to be more disengaged or uninterested than the more ‘active’ ones.

Graph 27 – Main communication channels | Question 4



In general terms, most people seem to hear about activities by word of mouth. Social media appears in second place -with Facebook as the main channel- and leaflets, posters and community magazine seem quite effective too.

Graph 28 – Main communication channels (Adults VS Youngsters) | Question 4



Communication channels appear to be almost the same for youngsters - 15 to 24 - and adults. The only remarkable difference appears in social media, where youngsters double the answers. However, this indicator must be looked at with caution. From the answers obtained by most of the young people, it may be concluded that they did not really engage properly with the question and interpreted it more as ‘what communication channels they use in their daily lives’.

Conclusion of this section

Close to 25% of the respondents expressed not being involved with any activity. From the ones that are involved, most of them belong to a community group, religious group and/or sports. Community group appears very strong in Area 10, sports and fitness appear in 9 areas and religious group is very strong in area 10. Answers appear quite even in terms of gender. Males are more prone to participate in sports, and females are more involved in community groups. It is interesting to see that all age groups have a high percentage of ‘no involvement’, except for people over 70.

When exploring the reasons for not being involved, the majority answered there was no particular reason -all the respondents that said this, were men. Others respondents mentioned mainly worklife, having no interest and family commitments. Worklife and family commitments appear higher for women than for men, and having ‘No interest’ does not apply to any of the women interviewed.

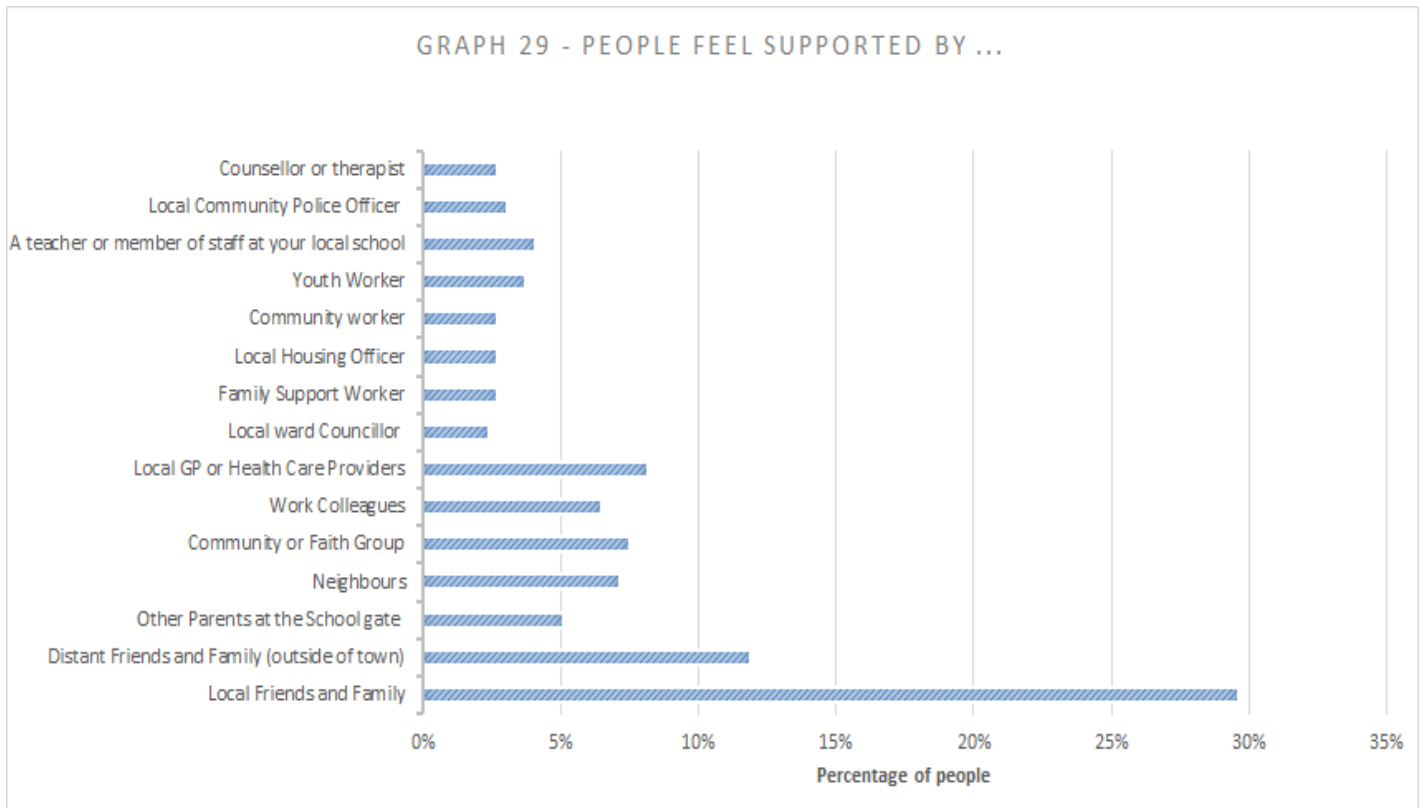
When the reasons are analysed by age group, it can be seen that having ‘No interest’ is very high in young people, and tends to decrease as people get older. Worklife appears as a recurrent answer for all active workers, and having ‘No interest’ is particularly high for students - which

matches mainly young people. Therefore, it could be concluded that the less 'active' people seem to be more disengaged or uninterested than the more 'active' ones.

vii. Perceived received support

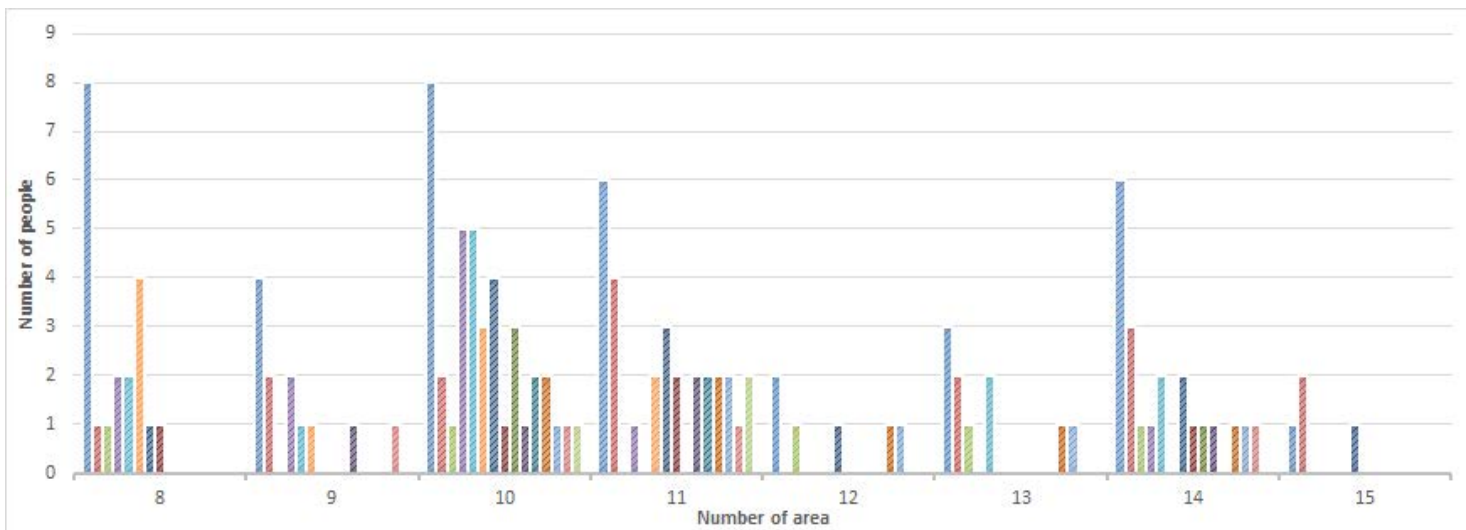
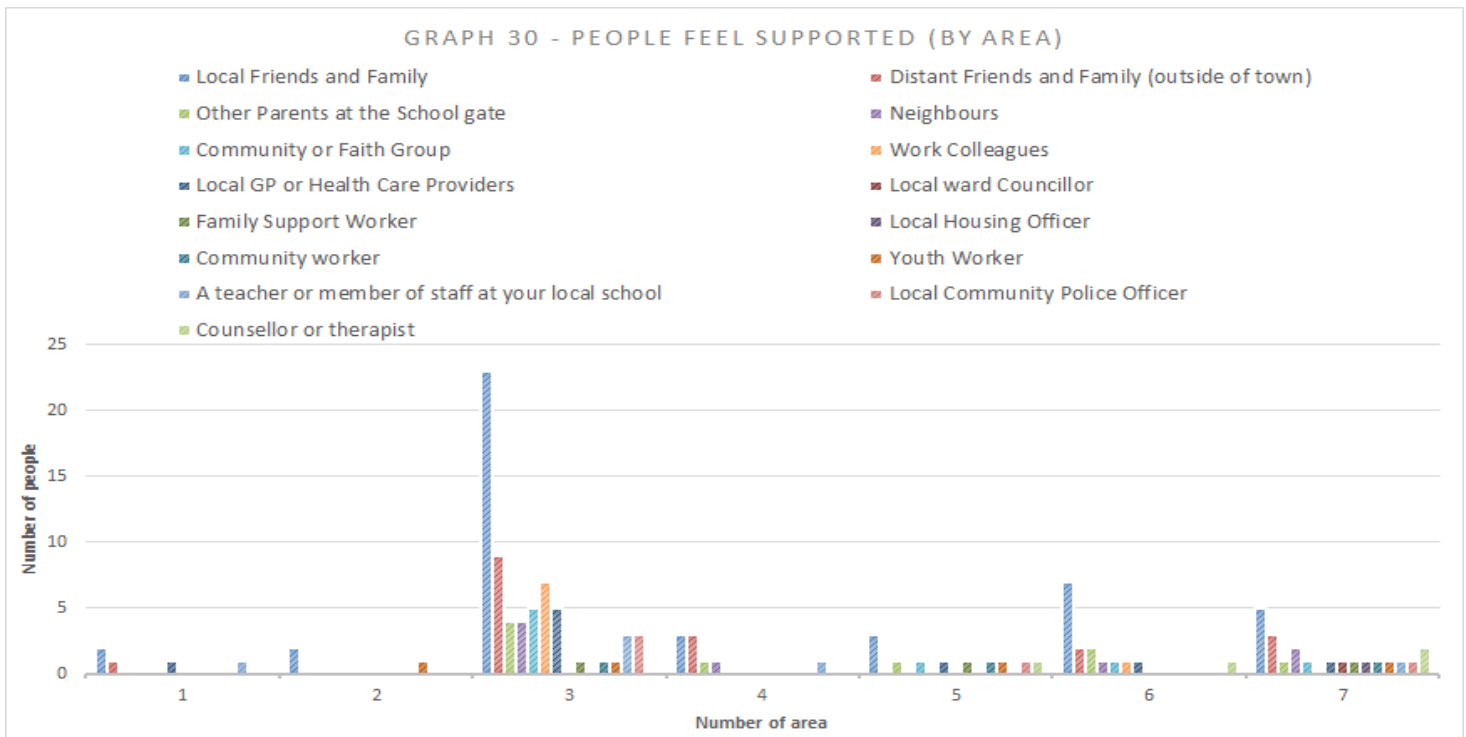
This section aims at exploring how people feel in terms of support. It is important to understand who they go to when they need somebody, and who they trust.

Graph 29 – People feel supported by... | Question 9



In general terms, people appear to feel supported mainly by family and friends, local GP or health care providers, neighbors, community and faith groups, and work colleagues.

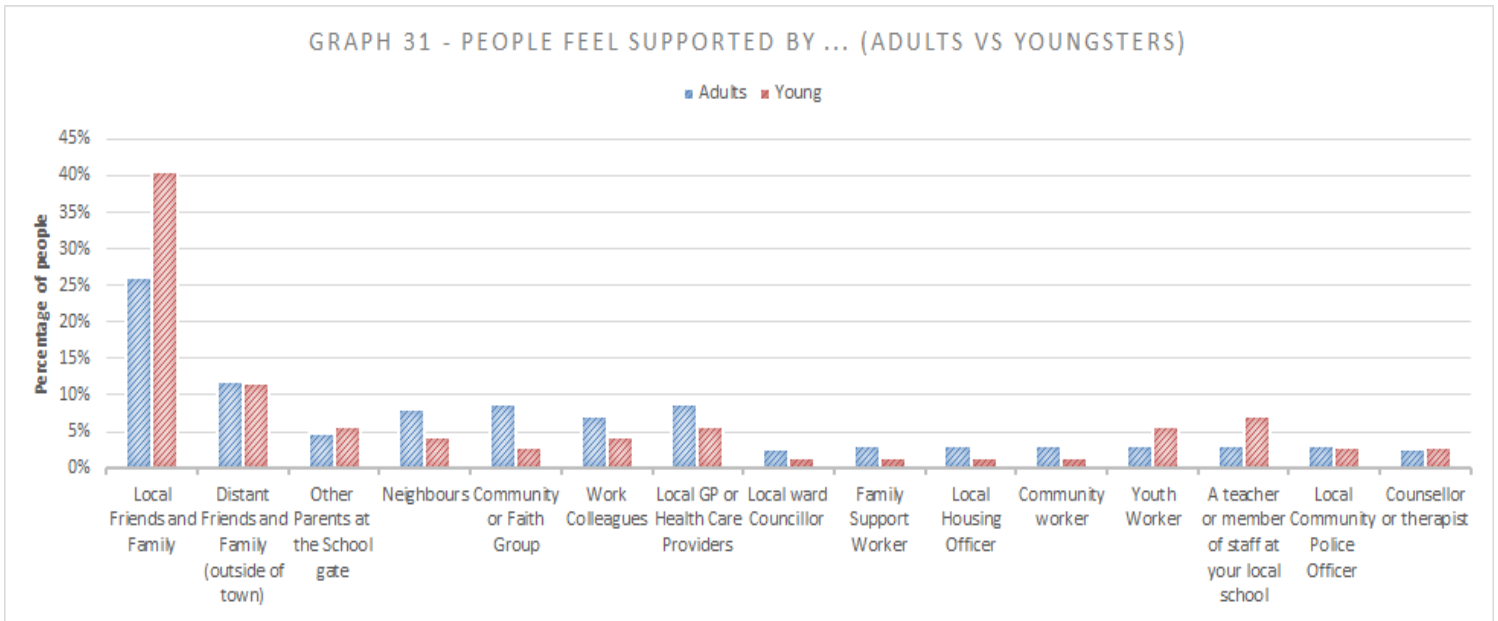
Graph 30 – People feel supported by... (by area) | Question 9



When looking at the answers by area, the most important conclusions are:

- community and faith group appear high in Areas 3 and 10 - which coincides with graph 20
- local GP and health care providers appear quite high in Areas 3, 10 and 11
- neighbors appears quite high in area 10
- local community police officer appears to be relevant in area 3.

Graph 31 – people feel supported by... (Adults VS Youngsters) | Question 9



Graph 31 looks at the perceived support by youngsters and adults. Answers appear quite predictable, and probably the only issue worth highlighting is that for community or faith group, adults seem to feel much more support than youngsters - which may be also related to the level of involvement previously discussed.

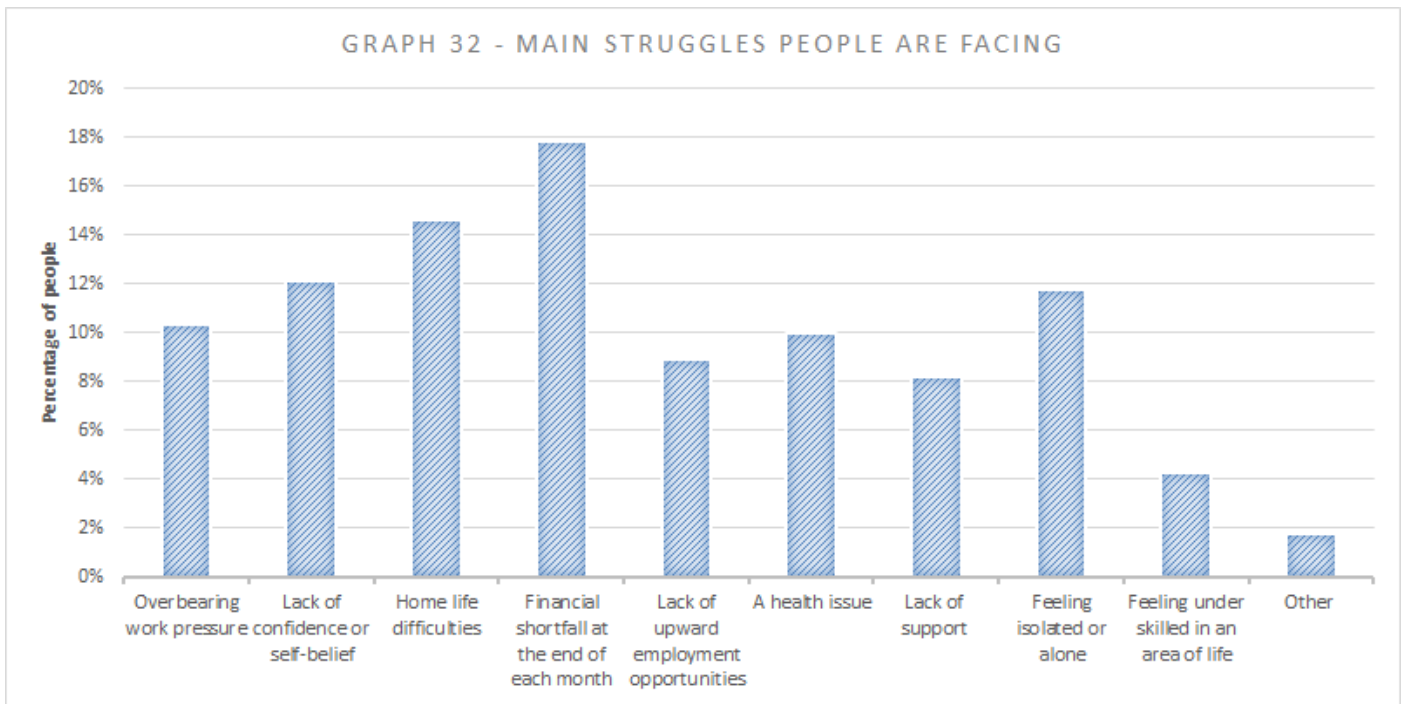
Conclusion of this section

Family and friends are the most common answer for the majority of the respondents. It is worth highlighting the particularities of certain areas. For instance, area 3 is very strong in community centre and faith group, and quite strong for local GP and health care providers. Area 10 is also very strong in community centre and faith group, and quite positive on neighbors and local GP and health care providers. Adults appear to feel more support coming from community of faith groups than youngsters.

viii. Personal thriving

This section of the report aims at understanding how people feel on a personal level, and what may be preventing them from moving from surviving to thriving.

Graph 32 – Main struggles people are facing | Question 10

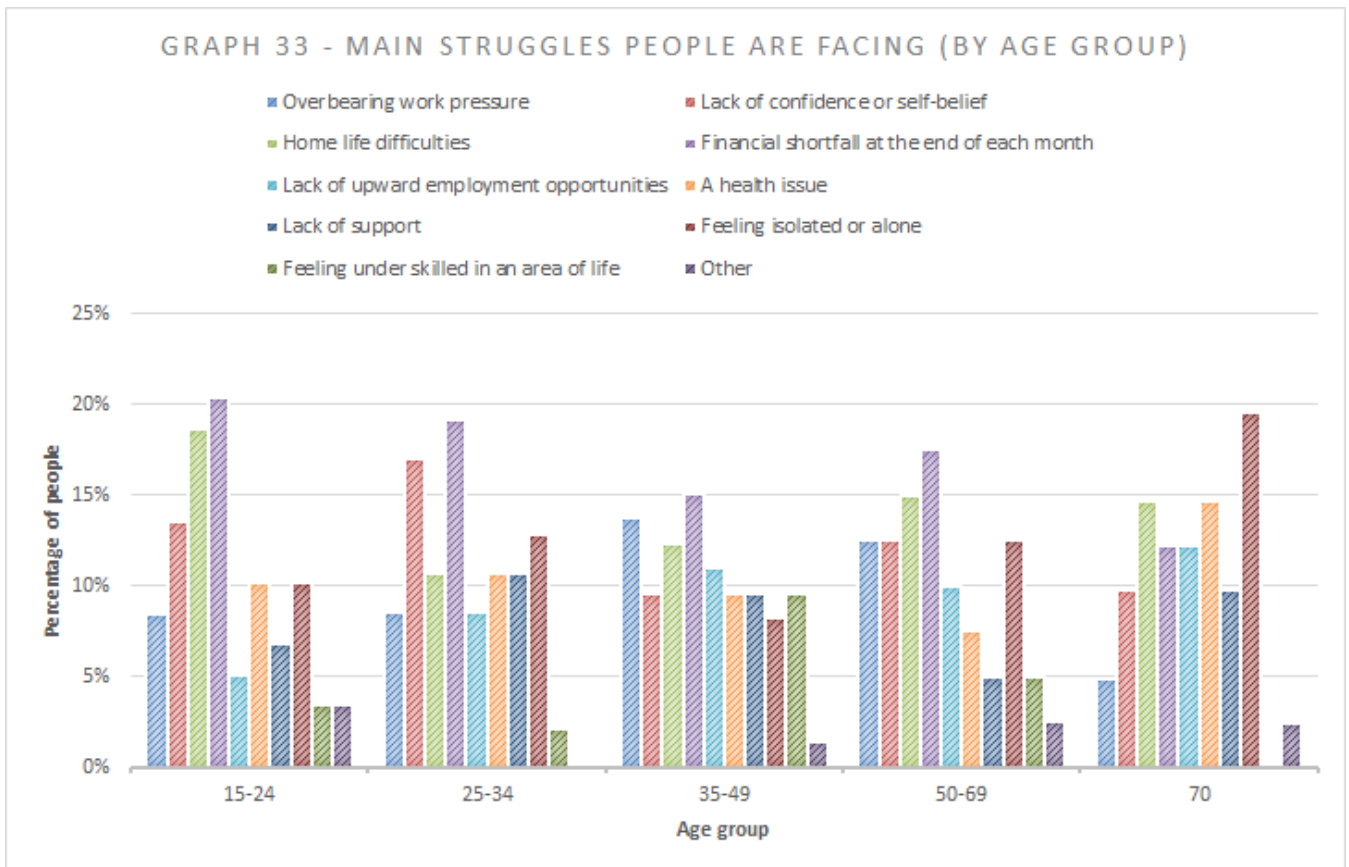


In general terms, the most important struggle is related to financial issues. The ones that follow are home life difficulties, lack of confidence or self-belief and feeling isolated or alone. It can be concluded then that, financial problems seem to be the most important problem, followed by issues associated with coexistence, and then problems on a more personal level.

Some comments from the respondents:

- *'Having a family now makes a difference to feel more motivated' #105*

Graph 33 – Main struggles people are facing (by age group) | Question 10



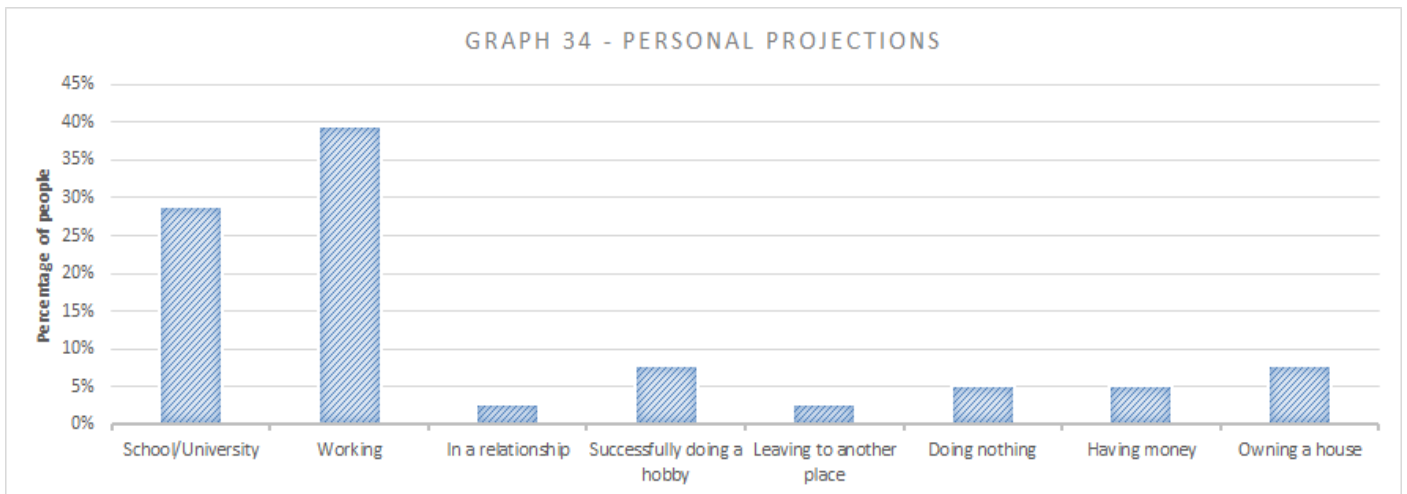
It is interesting to see how graph 33 shows that **financial problems affect all age groups**, and it is the highest indicator in all age groups except for **people over 70**. In that case, **feeling of isolation appears as the highest one**. In general terms, the rest of the answers appear quite even among all age groups. There are some particularities, like health issue being higher for people over 70, and lack of support and feeling underskilled being low and zero respectively also for people over 70.

The category 'Other' includes drugs, housing issues and job opportunities.

Conclusion of this section

Financial problems affect all age groups strongly, except for people over 70, whose main struggle is the feeling of isolation. Other particularities worth mentioning are that people over 70 are highly affected health issues, but do not feel at all that there is lack of support or that they are underskilled.

Graph 34 – Personal projections | Question 11 (youth version)

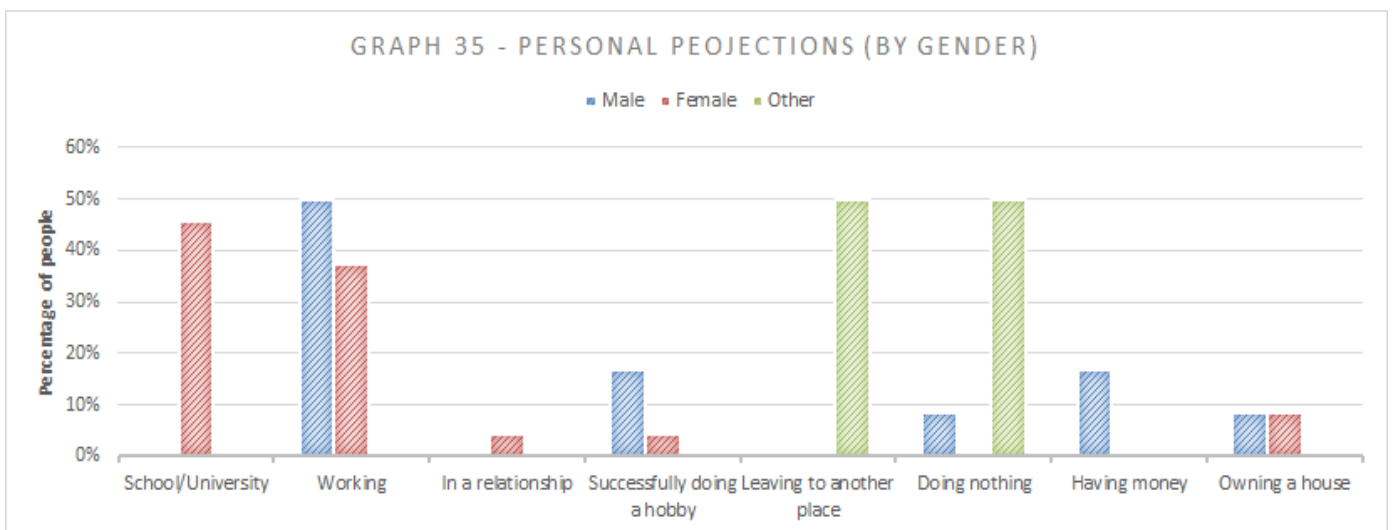


When asking young people where they saw themselves in five years time, the most popular answer was working, and the second most popular was studying.

Some comments from the respondents:

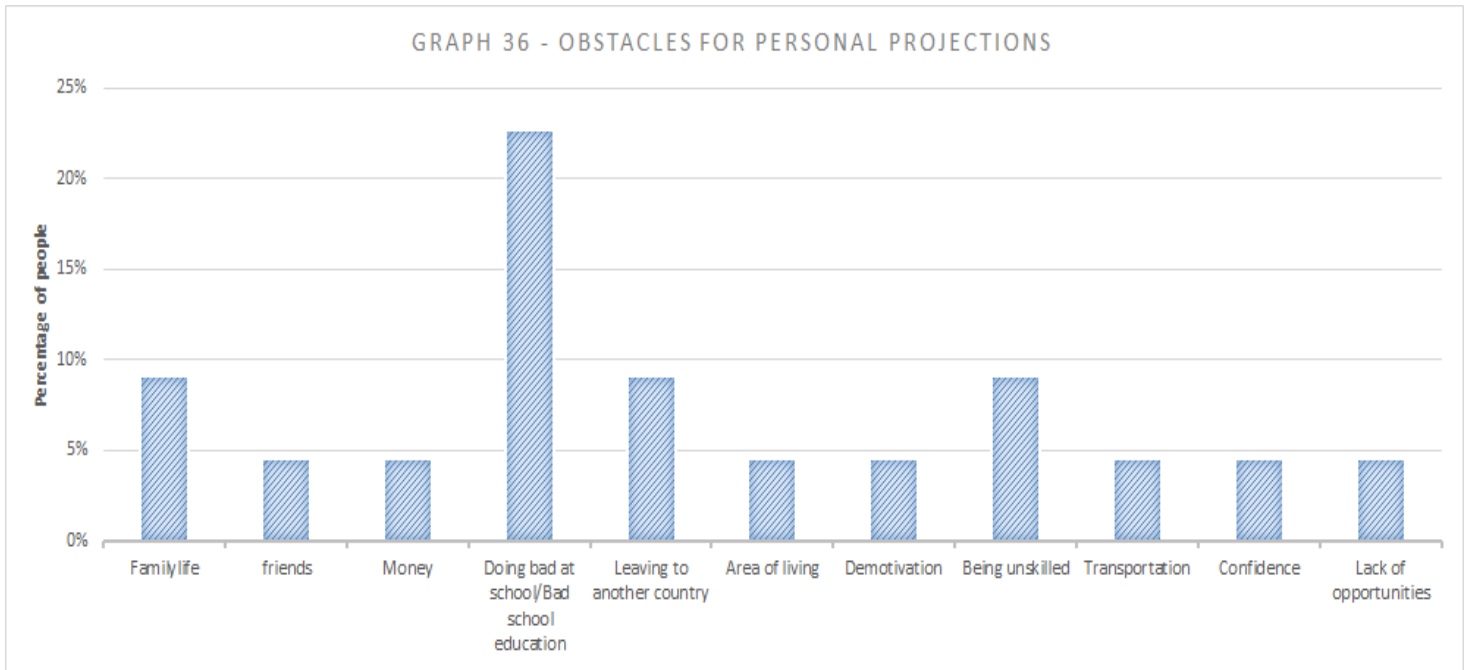
- *'We keep discriminating youngsters and then, they are excluded' #1*

Graph 35 – personal projections (by gender) | Question 11 (youth version)



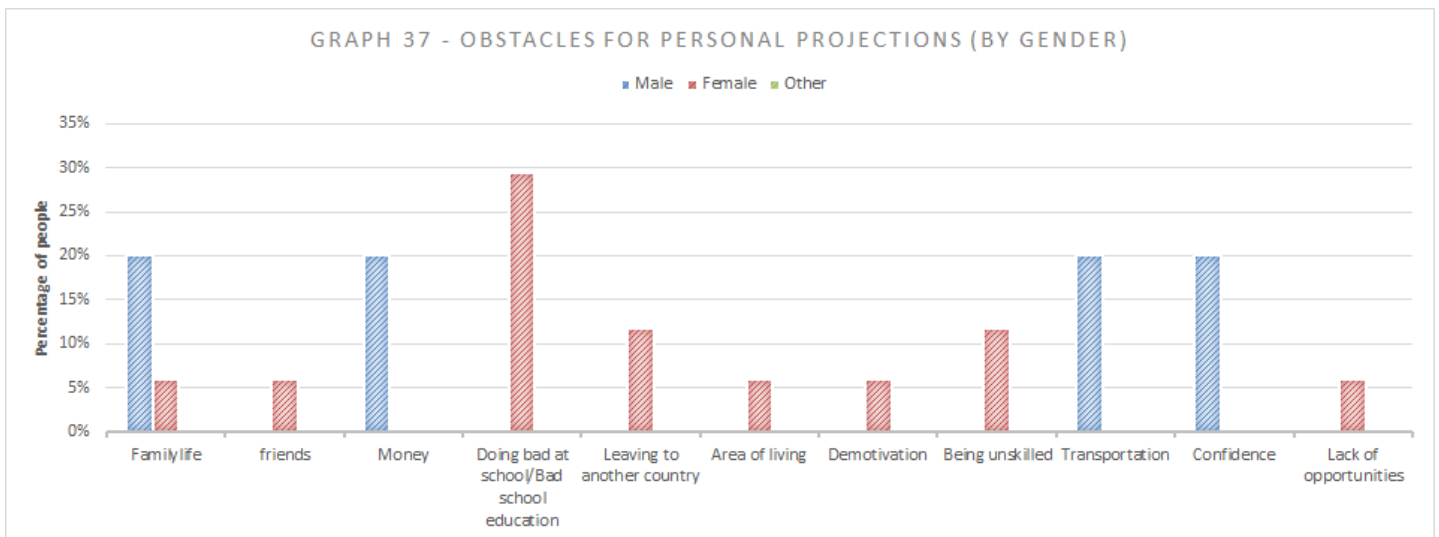
If one looks at the answers by gender, it is worth highlighting that **all the answers referring to 'studying' were provided by females, and all the answers referring to 'having money' were provided by males.**

Graph 36 – obstacles for personal projections | Question 12 (youth version)



Graph 36 shows that youngsters seem to understand that doing bad at school may prevent them from succeeding in the future. Other reasons they express are being unskilled, family life and having to leave the country.

Graph 37 – obstacles for personal projections (by gender) | Question 12 (youth version)



When analysing these reasons by gender, it is very interesting to see the huge difference in their answers. Females are certainly more worried about doing bad at school and being unskilled, while males are more affected by family life and confidence, and other 'external' reasons such as money or transportation.

Conclusion of this section

Working and going to school or university are the main purposes that youngsters expressed when answering where they saw themselves in five years' time. Female are more concerned about studying while men focus more on working. The perceived obstacles that could prevent them from achieving their objectives is mainly doing bad at school. They also express that family life or having to leave the country could be an obstacle for them.

ix. Additional comments

The last question of the questionnaires was an open question that allow the respondent to comment on something else. Below are the main answers obtained.

- *'This questionnaire should get posted to local houses' #42*
- *'They have always been very supportive in the community centre' Area 3 #66*
- *'This form seems to be targeted towards younger families. More should be done for the elderly and disabled' Area 3 #43*
- *'The government needs to sort themselves out' #28*
- *'Housing association / police don't sort anything going on in the streets unlike 10 years ago. Makes it get ad name for the area' Area 8 #7*
- *'No groups around for children with autism' Area 3 #11*

4. Conclusion

This report presents the conclusions of The Big Listen, an empirical research carried out in Kings Hedges and Arbury. It also presents some data from external statistical reports and the outcomes of interviews carried out to the think tank members of the project. In total, one hundred eleven questionnaires were done, and thirty seven of those had two extra questions intended for specifically for young people, in order to understand their hopes and aspirations.

Statistical reports show that one of the main problems of Kings Hedges and Arbury is related to housing, especially in terms of affordability. Health and crime issues are the lowest indicators. People over 60 years old appear particularly affected in Kings Hedges, ranking first in the category of lowest income deprivation.

'The Big Listen' collected data in seven categories: general current situation of the neighbourhood, future general situation of the neighbourhood, human relationships in the neighbourhood, involvement in the neighbourhood, support, personal thriving and youngsters' hopes and aspirations. Each of these categories has subcategories that measure different indicators related to the main theme. Conclusions for each category can be found at the end of each section, nevertheless, the main, general conclusions drawn from the report are presented below.

In general, residents express to be quite satisfied with their neighbourhoods. Areas with the highest level of satisfaction are 3, 8, 9, 10 and 14. The main reasons for expressing this is being surrounded by friendly people, green areas, and shops and amenities. Areas 3, 9, 10 and 15 are highly positively affected by the community centre, although this appreciation comes only from adults and not from the youngsters.

The main problems concerning people are rubbish and litter - which is particularly high for areas 3, 10 and 11, and people using or dealing drugs which is something present in all areas but that seems more concerning in 3, 10 and 11. However, some people have mentioned that the latter has decreased over the years. Young people find noisy neighbours to be a problem and adults appear to be particularly bothered by dog fouling.

When respondents were asked about what they would like to improve, they claimed that anti-social behaviour needs to change - mostly youngsters said this - and that the area needs a lot of cleaning and tidy up, some caused by dog fouling. Street lighting and paths and paving also need improvement, but these were only mentioned by adult respondents.

Human relationships have been identified as positive by more than half of the respondents. Only 7 out of 107 respondents expressed to disagree with the fact that people treat each other with respect and consideration. Interestingly, youngsters have a more negative perception of this issue than the rest of the respondents.

When people explain the reasons for having a negative perception, most of them attribute it to 'anti-social behaviour'. In general terms, most areas have a good perception of the neighbourhood and the people, and anti-social behaviour is mentioned in 11 out of 15 areas, and it is particularly high in areas 3, 8 and 10.

Regarding the involvement of people in different activities, 25% of them are not involved in any activity. The most popular activities are community group, religious group and/or sports. Community group and religious group appear very strong in Area 10. There is not a huge difference by gender, although males appear to be more prone to participate in sports, and females are more involved in community groups. It is interesting to see that all age groups have a high percentage of 'no involvement', except for people over 70.

Most of the people that are not involved, also expressed having no reasons for this. The rest made reference to worklife and family commitments - higher in women than men - and having no interest - only men and 'other' answered this. Having 'No interest' is very high in young people, and tends to decrease as they get older.

When asking people about who they feel supported by, family and friends are the most common answers for the majority of the respondents, followed by GP and community or faith groups. Particularly, adults appear to feel more support coming from community of faith groups than youngsters.

In terms of the struggles people are facing, financial problems affect all age groups strongly, except for people over 70, whose main struggle is the feeling of isolation. Moreover, they do not feel at all that there is lack of support or that they are underskilled, like other age groups do.

All in all, it can be seen that there are some commonalities amongst all answers, but when one looks at the data more in detail, some particularities are highlighted, that are worth considering. Youngsters and the elderly appear to have different perceptions as well as different needs, and it would be necessary to address them differently. It is suggested that the conclusions from the data collected are analysed in depth in order to take further actions that will enhance the community.

8.2. Appendix 2- Map of the area



8.3. Appendix 3

8.3.1. Original version of the questionnaire

The Big Listen

Dear local resident,

We're writing to you to ask for your views.

A number of us have come together to think about the future of our community. In this thinking we'd like you to be involved.

We would like to know what you think about what it's like to live in your neighbourhood so that we can be certain we understand the issues that concern and matter within North Cambridge. We also share a desire to see our community thrive, being a place where everyone is doing well. For you to be part of this we would like to listen to your ideas and aspirations for what you might see a thriving future of North Cambridge looking like and what you would like to see changed.

This questionnaire asks for your opinions about aspects of the quality of life in our local neighbourhood (such as community safety, local services etc) which we know are important to local people. By your local neighbourhood, we mean the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home. The findings from this research will be part of an ongoing process and conversation for seeing change and to decide what needs doing differently in the future.

Please take this opportunity to have your say, even if you've only just moved into the area. It's important that we hear everybody's views.

To ensure the information you provide is secure, all of your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be stored securely. As the questionnaire itself does *not* request your personal information, if separately you would like to stay in touch and become part of this conversation please register your interest by contacting us at thebiglisten@gmail.com. Responses to the survey will only be used by ourselves and trusted public service organisations.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey please do not hesitate to contact one of the survey organisers named below who will be very happy to help you.

We hope you will be able to take part and thank you very much for your help in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Binnie Pickard – City Council Community Team

David Maher – Church of the Good Shepherd

Alan Soer – Arbury Community Centre

Tim Anderson – Lifeworks

Neil Prem - Future Business

Helpful hints for completing this questionnaire

Please read each question carefully and tick a box to indicate your answer.

In most cases you will only have to tick one box but please read the questions carefully as sometimes you will need to tick more than one box.

Answer the next question unless asked otherwise.

Some questions include an 'other' option. If you would like to include an answer other than one of those listed within the question, please tick the 'other' box and write in your answer in the space provided.

Once you have finished please take a minute to check you have answered all the questions that you should have answered.

This questionnaire consists of 11 pages and should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Section 1: About your local area

Throughout the questionnaire we ask you to think about ‘your local area’. When answering, please consider your local area to be the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home.

Q1 Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a thriving place to live? **PLEASE TICK ✓ UP TO FIVE BOXES ONLY IN THE LEFT HAND COLUMN BELOW**

Q2 And thinking about your local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving to help us become a thriving community?**PLEASE TICK ✓ UP TO FIVE BOXES ONLY IN THE RIGHT HAND COLUMN BELOW**

	Q1 Most important in making somewhere a good place to live	Q2 Most needs improving in this local area
Access to nature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities for teenagers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Affordable decent housing.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean streets.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural facilities (e.g. libraries, museums)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education provision.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities for young children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Health services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job prospects.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The level of crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The level of pollution.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The level of traffic congestion.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks and open spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public transport.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race relations.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road and pavement repairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports and leisure facilities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wage levels and local cost of living.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q1 - Other (PLEASE TICK BOX AND WRITE IN BELOW).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	
.....		
Q2 - Other (PLEASE TICK BOX AND WRITE IN BELOW).....		<input type="checkbox"/>
.....		

- None of these
- Don't know

Q3 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

With 5 being very satisfied and 0 being very dissatisfied PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX

0	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In particular what contributes to you either liking or disliking living in your area?

How would you sum up your overall feeling towards your area? Do you feel...

Proud	<input type="checkbox"/>
Happy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indifferent	<input type="checkbox"/>

Frustrated



Q4 If you could add or change anything to make a positive difference in your area what would it be?

1.

2.

3.

Q5 How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?

With 5 being very strongly and 0 being not at all PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

0

1

2

3

4

5



What experiences or factors have played a part in you feeling this way?



Section 2: Information

Q6 How well informed do you feel about each of the following?

With 5 being very well informed and 0 being not at all

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT

	0	1	2	3	4	5
How and where to register to vote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How you can get involved in local decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local community events and groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, how well informed do you feel about local public services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q7 How do you most effectively stay in touch with what is happening in your area?

With 5 being very effectively and 0 being not at all

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Facebook.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Via the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community magazine/newsletter.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Word of mouth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leaflets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Banners or Posters in public spaces or notice boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 3: Local decision-making

As with previous questions, when answering, please consider your local area to be the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home.

Q8 Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Definitely	Tend to	Tend to	Definitely	Don't
agree	agree	disagree	disagree	know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q9 Generally speaking, would you like to be more involved in the decisions that affect your local area?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Yes	No	Depends on the issue	Don't
			know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 4: Helping out

We are interested to know about the voluntary help people give.

Q10 Overall, about how often over the last 12 months have you given unpaid help to any group(s), club (s) or organisation(s) or cause(s)?

Please only include work that is unpaid and not for your family.

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

- At least once a week.....

- Less than once a week but at least once a month.....

- Less often.....

- I give unpaid help as an individual only and not through groups(s), club(s) or organisation(s).....

- I have not given any unpaid help at all over the last 12 months.....

- Don't know.....

Q11 Overall, about how often over the last 12 months have you given unpaid help to individuals in need due to age, isolation or long term illness? This could include a close family member or neighbours for example.

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

At least once a week.....

Less than once a week but
at least once a month.....

Less often.....

I give unpaid help as an
individual only and not
through groups(s), club(s)
or organisation(s).....

I have not given any unpaid
help at all over the last 12
months.....

Don't know.....

Q12 **What motivated or inspired you to get involved or help?**



Section 5: Getting involved

Q13 **Are you involved with any of the following kind of groups (you can tick more than one box)**

	Yes	No
Local event planning group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social group around hobbies or interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Parent Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports or fitness club or team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Political or campaigning party	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Community group | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Religious or Faith group | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Allotment or gardening group | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | | |
-

Q14 Are there any reasons that prevent you from being part of a local group or getting involved?

1.

2.

Section 6: Respect and consideration

Q15 To what extent do you agree or disagree that in your local area, parents take enough responsibility for the behaviour of their children?

With 5 being definitely agree and 0 being not at all PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

0 1 2 3 4 5 Don't

know

Q16 To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?

With 5 being definitely agree and 0 being not at all PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

0	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q17 In your local area, how much of a problem do you think there is with people not treating each other with respect and consideration?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

A very big problem	A fairly big problem	Not a very big problem	Not a problem at all	Don't know/No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q18 In the last year would you say that you have been treated with respect and consideration by your local public services.....

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	Don't know/no opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q19 In your experience, are older people in your local area able to get the services and support they need to continue to live at home for as long as they want to? (This could include help or support from public, private or voluntary services or from family, friends and the wider community).

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Yes	No	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q20 Who do you feel locally supported by? (please tick any number of options)

All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarel y	Never	Don't know/no opinion
-----------------------	------------------------	---------------------	------------	-------	-----------------------------

Local Friends and Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distant Friends and Family (outside of town)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Parents at the School gate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neighbours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community or Faith Group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work Colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local GP or Health Care Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People from a different age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local ward Councillor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family Support Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Housing Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A teacher or member of staff at your local school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Community Police Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counsellor or therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't feel support by anyone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please state)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

.....

Section 7: Community safety

Q21 How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY IN THE LEFT HAND COLUMN BELOW

Q22 How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY IN THE RIGHT HAND COLUMN BELOW

	Q23	Q24
	After dark	During the day
Very safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairly safe.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither safe nor unsafe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairly unsafe.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very unsafe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Don't know

Q23 Thinking about this local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are...

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT

	A very big problem	A fairly big problem	Not a very big problem	Not a problem at all	No opinion
Noisy neighbours or loud parties.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teenagers or young children hanging around the streets....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rubbish or litter lying around.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food Van Issues (lifter or noise)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

People using or dealing
drugs.....

People being drunk or rowdy in
public
places.....
.....

Abandoned or burnt out
cars.....

Dog
fouling.....
.....

Other (please state)

.....
.....

Section 8: Personal Thriving

Q24 Either personally or from your experience in your area, what are some of the struggles people are facing at the moment?

tick which of the following would be relevant.

	Yes	Not really
Overbearing Work Pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of confidence or self-belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home life difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial shortfall at the end of each month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of upward employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A health issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling isolated or alone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling under skilled in an area of life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (PLEASE TICK BOX AND WRITE IN BELOW)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....

Section 9: About yourself

Please complete these questions which will help us to see if there are differences between the views of different residents. All the information you give will be kept completely confidential.

Q25 Are you male or female?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Male.....

Female

Q26 What was your age on your last birthday?

PLEASE WRITE IN BOX BELOW

	Years
--	-------

Q27 How is your health in general? Would you say it is.....

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Very good

Good

Fair

Bad

Very bad

Q28 In which of these ways does your household occupy your current accommodation?

PLEASE TICK ✓ONE BOX ONLY

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Owned outright..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rent from Housing Association/
Trust | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Buying on mortgage | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rented from private landlord | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rent from council | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (✓ AND WRITE IN
BELOW) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q29 How many children aged 17 or under are living here?

PLEASE TICK ✓ONE BOX ONLY

- | | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| None | <input type="checkbox"/> | Three | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| One | <input type="checkbox"/> | Four | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Two | <input type="checkbox"/> | More than four(✓ AND WRITE
IN BELOW)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q30 And how many adults aged 18 or over are living here?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Three	<input type="checkbox"/>
One	<input type="checkbox"/>	Four	<input type="checkbox"/>
Two	<input type="checkbox"/>	More than four(✓ AND WRITE IN BELOW).....	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q33 Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Employee in full-time job (30 hours plus per wk)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed and available for work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee in part-time job (under 30 hours per week)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Permanently sick/disabled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self employed full or part-time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wholly retired from work	<input type="checkbox"/>
On a government supported training programme (e.g. Modern Apprenticeship/ Training for Work)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Looking after the home	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full-time education at school, college or university	<input type="checkbox"/>	Doing something else (PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW)...	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q34 Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? (long-standing means anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time) PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Yes (PLEASE CONTINUE TO Q35)

No (PLEASE GO TO Q36)

Q35 Does this illness or disability limit your activities in any way? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Yes

No

Q36 To which of these groups do you consider you belong to? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

White

British

Irish

Any other White background
(✓ AND WRITE IN BELOW)

Mixed

White & Black Caribbean

White & Black African

Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Any other Black background
(✓ AND WRITE IN BELOW)

Asian or Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

White & Asian

Bangladeshi

Any other Mixed background

Any other Asian background

(✓ AND WRITE IN BELOW)

(✓ AND WRITE IN BELOW)

Chinese and Other ethnic groups

Chinese

Other ethnic group

(✓ AND WRITE IN BELOW)

Q37 Is there anything else you would like to add?

PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

**Thank you very much for
taking part in this survey.**

8.3.2. Updated version of the questionnaire

Interviewer's Full name

Interviewer's email address and/or mobile

Place/Event and date

Interviewee area reference number (see map)

Years the person has been living there.....

The Big Listen

Dear local resident,

We're writing to you to ask for your views.

A number of us have come together to think about the future of our community. In this thinking we'd like you to be involved.

We would like to know what you think about what it's like to live in your neighbourhood (the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home) so that we can be certain we understand the issues that concern and matter within North Cambridge. We also share a desire to see our community thrive, being a place where everyone is doing well. For you to be part of this we would like to listen to your ideas and aspirations for what you might see a thriving future of North Cambridge looking like and what you would like to see changed.

The findings from this research will be part of an ongoing process and conversation for seeing change and to decide what needs doing differently in the future.

To ensure the information you provide is secure, all of your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be stored securely. As the questionnaire itself does *not* request your personal information, if separately you would like to stay in touch and become part of this conversation please register your interest by contacting us at thenorthcambridgebiglisten@gmail.com. Responses to the survey will only be used by ourselves and trusted public service organisations.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey please do not hesitate to contact one of the survey organisers named below who will be very happy to help you.

We hope you will be able to take part and thank you very much for your help in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Binnie Pickard – City Council Community Team

David Maher – Church of the Good Shepherd

Alan Soer – Arbury Community Centre

Tim Anderson – Lifeworks

Neil Prem - Future Business

Helpful hints for completing this questionnaire

- Read each question carefully
- Check if you need to tick only one box or more than one (depends on the question)
- Questions that include an 'other' option allow you to add an answer of your own
- Once you have finished please take a minute to check you have answered all the questions
- This questionnaire consists of 3 pages and should take no longer than 6 minutes to complete.

1. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

With 5 being very satisfied and 0 being very dissatisfied. Please tick ✓one box.

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2. In particular what contributes to you either liking or disliking living in your area?

3. If you could change anything to make a positive difference in your area, what would it be?

4. How do you usually stay in touch with what is happening in your area?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Web searches | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Via the school | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community magazine / Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Posters in public spaces or notice boards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social media please specify _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify _____ | |

5. Are you involved with any of the following kind of groups?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local event planning group | <input type="checkbox"/> Community group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social group around hobbies or interests | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious or Faith group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School parent committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Allotment or gardening group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports or fitness club or team | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local political or campaigning party | |

6. Are there any reasons that prevent you from being getting involved with any of the above?

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that in your local area people treat each other with respect and consideration?

With 5 being very definitely agree and 0 being not at all. Please tick ✓one box.

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Could you briefly explain why?

8. Thinking about your local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are...

	Not a problem at all	Not a big problem	A big problem
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teenagers or children hanging around the street	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rubbish or litter lying around	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food Van Issues (lifter or noise)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People using or dealing drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abandoned or burnt out cars	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dog fouling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Who do you feel supported by?

	Always	Some of the time	Never	N/A
Local Friends and Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distant Friends and Family (outside of town)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Parents at the School gate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neighbours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community or Faith Group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work Colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local GP or Health Care Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local ward Councillor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family Support Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Housing Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A teacher or member of staff at your local school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Community Police Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counsellor or therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't feel support by anyone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Either personally or from your experience in your area, what are some of the struggles people are facing at the moment?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overbearing work pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> A health issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of confidence or self-belief | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home life difficulties | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling isolated or alone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial shortfall at the end of each month | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling under skilled in an area of life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of upward employment opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) _____ |

11. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

About yourself

Please complete these questions which will help us to see if there are differences between the views of different residents. All the information you give will be kept completely confidential.

Gender Male Female Other

Age _____

In which of these ways does your household occupy your current accommodation?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Owned outright | <input type="checkbox"/> Rent from Housing Association / Trust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buying on mortgage | <input type="checkbox"/> Rented from private landlord |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rent from council | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

How many children aged 17 or under are living here? _____

How many people aged 18 or over are living here? (please include yourself) _____

Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present?

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time employee | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time employee | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | |

To which of these groups do you consider you belong to?

White

- British
 Irish
 Other

Black or Black British

- Caribbean
 African
 Other

Mixed

- White & Black Caribbean
 White & Black African
 White & Asian
 Other

Asian or Asian British

- Chinese
 Indian
 Pakistani
 Bangladeshi
 Other

Thank you for taking part.

FINAL GRADE

80 / 100

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

Dear Lester,

Just a quick note to say how much we appreciated recently having Marina and Mild on placement with us as part of our North Cambridge Think Tank Big Listen project. They are exceptional individuals both of whom contributed way more than we expected or required. They are both an exceptional credit to Anglia Ruskin University. We particularly appreciated the deep analytical thinking that they brought to our data collection and the shrewd insights that they provided. We have adopted both of their key recommendations and are proceeding to develop projects around them.

Please would you pass on your thanks to both of them

With regards,

Neil Prem

Head of Enterprise Engagement

The feedback above is a great testament to the excellent work undertaken during your time with Future Business. It is clear that you created significant value added through your placement and this is reflected in the comments from Neil Prem, Head of Enterprise Development there.

I am very happy to see that you have successfully translated this excellent work into a first class submission. This is very well structured and from the outset it is very well written, clear, concise and well thought through.

Two things stand out. First the high level of self-analysis and reflection. From your consideration of the complexities of working with Mild from Thailand through to your own learning and personality at the conclusion, this is very well executed. Second, the excellent linking of theory and practice with your own reflections and learning underpinned with academic theories and concepts. Again, this is treated very well.

Overall, this is a very impressive submission, particularly given that English is not your first language. You did an excellent job at Future Business and you have translated that into a first class written submission.

Congratulations on an excellent job all round.

Introduction 8/10

Analysis 17/20

Literature 30/40

Conclusions and recommendations 8/10

Reflections 9/10

Presentation 8/10

Total mark 80%

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