resident voice™ index

Neighbourhoods & Communities Report

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Preface

The Resident Voice Index™ initiative was conceived in 2020 and the first survey was delivered in 2021 following a period of planning, sector consultation and stakeholder engagement across the UK social housing sector. To our knowledge, no social housing technology company in the UK has utilised their capabilities for free to amplify resident voices to the sector and beyond. Future surveys will leverage the infrastructure that has been built as part of this first survey to deliver continued useful insights that we hope will be used to improve the lives of social housing residents.

The Resident Voice Index™ is the product of a collaborative piece of work across numerous agencies that it has been a pleasure to work alongside. MRI Software has sponsored the project and it has been a privilege to work with such a smart, collaborative, erudite and hardworking project team. Short biographies for the core members who contributed to the project are given towards the end of this report but it would be remiss not to acknowledge the contributions of many others.

In particular, we would like to single out the many contributions from engaged social housing residents and housing providers who were generous with their time and thoughts in helping us to sculpt this service from the very start. Acknowledging this, this report and the Resident Voice Index™ dashboard are available free, in line with our 'Residents First' approach.

Next came the respondents themselves, almost 4,000 of whom completed the Neighbourhoods & Communities survey, which supplied the data analysts with the material on which to perform the analytical magic. Without those contributions this document would not exist. In the future, we will continue to keep surveys short and snappy in order to promote response levels by removing as many barriers to survey completion as possible.

Data was initially collected using a well-known survey platform but we always knew that the level of data analysis that we aspired to deliver required a unique, sophisticated business intelligence (BI) platform. This was designed during the project and then delivered by MRI's professional and diligent BI team.

The hard work and razor-sharp intelligence of the researchers transformed the information gleaned from the data analysis into cogent stories and actionable insights that, coupled with the wonderfully creative efforts of the graphic and web designers, enabled the production of the outputs.

Turning data into decisions and uncovering hidden gems is no easy task but this was facilitated by the application of MRI's smart BI capability. Some of these tools are available for public use on residentvoiceindex.com where you can 'slice and dice' the data yourself.

We hope that you enjoy reading the results of this ground-breaking project and that it inspires you to become involved with future surveys, whatever your contribution to the social housing landscape. There is more information available on the Resident Voice Index™ website[1].

Doug Sarney,
Solutions Principal, MRI Software
August 2021

Executive Summary

Introduction

MRI Software made the decision to undertake The Resident Voice Index™ project in 2020, in an environment for the housing sector that, even without the pandemic, would have been extraordinary. Organisations faced wide and far-reaching regulatory change, from Universal Credit reform to the necessary fallout following Grenfell. It was also clear that hearing the opinions of residents around how social housing is delivered was becoming not only important, but essential at every step of designing services.

Organisational culture and buy-in has been named by the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence[2] as the most important element for achieving meaningful resident engagement and open communications. Six years of data from large housing associations showed a 'strong and intensified correlation' between involving residents in decision-making and planning and improved financial performance.

The Charter for Social Housing Residents[3] and the Regulator of Social Housing also place more emphasis on the changing role of the housing provider. Responsibility has and continues to evolve beyond that of a house-builder and landlord into aspects of mental health, antisocial behaviour, community investors, facilitators of digital inclusion and as an aid to the UK Government's 'levelling up' agenda[4] - to name only a handful of the myriad of emerging roles.

In embarking upon this journey, which can only succeed with residents as active participants in the decision-making processes, we were lucky enough to start with a direct line to thousands of residents and believed that engaging with them, amplifying their voices and sharing those insights with the sector was a worthwhile initiative.

During sector consultations, it became clear that there was an appetite from residents, housing providers, central government, regulators and ombudsmen to enhance existing methods of surveying the social housing sector.

Residents were optimistic about change but occasionally sceptical on the basis that there appeared to be a lack of personal evidence that historical feedback had been acted upon. They welcomed new and more probing surveying methods if the outputs could be placed in front of the right people who could effect change.

Providers also accepted a need for deeper interrogation, with many already leaning - and indeed shifting - towards more perception-based and qualitative analysis as a way of scratching below the surface of conventional surveying methods.

This survey, on the topic of 'Neighbourhoods & Communities', emerged as the frontrunner for our first study after consultations on the part of all stakeholders indicated that communities that work together can achieve more together.

> *"I get this very strong feeling that only if people want to be part of a community that you will move forward."*

Resident, Resident Voice Index™ workshop

The central parts of this survey explored residents' perceptions and feelings towards neighbourhood belonging and caring, amenities and facilities, and safety. Key parts of the data collection included listing aspects of respondents' neighbourhoods that they liked and what could be done to improve their feelings of belonging and safety, along with their housing providers' contributions.

Highlights of the results and explanation of the research

The insights gained via MRI's sophisticated business intelligence (BI) tools and the information uncovered relating to the wider social housing sector are designed to inform housing providers, policy makers and residents.

Below are some headlines from the Neighbourhoods & Communities survey:

- In terms of facilities and amenities, the most important things for residents were improvements to wellbeing and health

- Levels of neighbourhood belonging were low (around 3 in 10) but we believe there is reason to be hopeful, as the levels of respondents who cared about being involved in their neighbourhood were much higher, almost one half. The right interventions could have great success in involving those in the community who sit within this segment

- 84% of survey respondents didn't believe that their housing provider improves their sense of community and part of the explanation for that is residents not knowing or being informed about what their housing provider does in their communities

- Across most questions, younger survey respondents were reporting more negatively than older respondents and our communities appear to be better suited to older generations. Investment in communities and planning for the communities of the future may benefit from more involvement of the young

- 40% of survey respondents felt safe in their neighbourhood. What's more, analysis of the sense of belonging from those who felt safe and those who did not showed that the former are many times more likely to feel that they belonged to their neighbourhoods. The counter is also true, in that those who 'belonged' to their communities are many times more likely to feel safe. Amongst the people that didn't feel safe, only 12% felt like they belonged, suggesting that improvement of one of these facets will positively impact the other

- The four most common topics that emerged to improve residents' feelings of safety were community policing, drug misuse, lighting and CCTV / cameras

- Feelings and perceptions across the UK for all survey questions were not vastly different, with the exception of those living in Greater London who, statistically, felt safer and enjoyed a higher level of neighbourhood belonging

As part of the data analysis, an 'Index Score' (see page 8) was generated which seeks to draw out what could change for those who are labelled 'Detractors' (score zero) and what is working for those who are labelled 'Exemplars' (score three) and so could be adopted for all communities across the UK. Fundamental human requirements for green and open spaces topped the aspirational bill and many detractors labelled drug misuse and its societal effects as the thing they would most like to change in their neighbourhoods. It was shown that Exemplars appear to be more engaged with their housing provider and more aware of their contributions, with three of their top six contributing interventions involving the word 'community'.

Many of the insights that have been uncovered cannot be addressed or solved by housing providers alone, they are the responsibility of all members of society and as such, will take many services, organisations and citizens to improve.

(The Resident Voice Index™ is) "A holistic project, and for all of this to have benefits to residents it needs some joined up working from all of the elements involved. From where we put houses, to who goes in them. This is bigger than one landlord and even just the government."

Resident, HQN Residents' Network

"Having the residents and the senior staff, board members if you can and frontline staff, if you are all having that conversation together it's a lot more successful than if you take feedback from the residents and then turn that into something for the senior staff and then that gets changed again into something for the board members and then that gets fed back to the frontline staff and it's all translated at each point, but if you are in a room together when it's all being discussed you will get a lot more success."

Housing provider, Resident Voice Index™ workshop

"It's really great stuff seeing residents round a table talking with executive directors, service deliveries, heads of service and actually looking at how those services are designed - it's amazing stuff."

Housing provider, Resident Voice Index™ workshop

What is the Resident Voice Index™?

The Resident Voice Index™ is an independent national survey system from MRI Software that asks a broad spectrum of social housing residents at regular intervals what they think and feel about key topics that directly impact their lives. The project focuses on perceptions rather than conventional satisfaction metrics.

The key objective from the Resident Voice Index™ initiative is to draw out meaningful and actionable insights and present these to stakeholders who are serious about improving the lives of social housing residents.

The Resident Voice Index™ is not a scoring system or benchmarking tool but seeks to be a rich resource of decision support for those in key planning and policy roles, and managers of the delivery of housing and community services. The audience for the outputs of the project, therefore includes key decision makers in social housing, local and national government, ombudsmen, strategy groups, regulators and social housing residents.

Cornerstones

In this project, the central tenets of **Independence, Transparency, Brevity** and **Anonymity** are designed to build trust with residents and service providers alike. MRI Software is not paid by anyone to perform these surveys and the results are published in a transparent fashion to anyone who wants to consume them. Surveys are kept short by focusing on precise objectives or hypotheses and the results are not traceable back to the individual respondents.

The Charter for Social Housing Residents

In his foreword to the Charter for Social Housing Residents[3], the Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government puts emphasis on listening to the voices of social housing residents and acting upon these to raise the standard of social housing. Along with treating those in social housing with dignity and respect, the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP states: "The interests and perspective of residents must be given greater prominence in service delivery" and that "landlords should welcome the views of their tenants as a route to better management."

The Resident Voice Index™ aligns with the sentiment of the Charter for Social Housing Residents by providing a platform for everyone in the social housing sector to access insights and resident perceptions. This report aims to suggest how to use this feedback to improve services and make neighbourhoods and communities better places to live. To this end, the Resident Voice Index™ project is focused across the three key themes of: The Social Housing Audience, Safety and Neighbourhoods, and Responsibility and Accountability.

Why is MRI Software doing this?

At MRI Software, we believe that we are uniquely positioned to deliver an independent and responsive service through the Resident Voice Index™. As a supplier of software and services to around 850 social housing providers, we have a strong and trusted position within the sector. As well as this, we have the largest direct and independent link to social housing residents via our mutual exchange platform, HomeSwapper, which at any one time has around 250,000 users.

MRI Software wants to give something back to the social housing sector beyond conventional Corporate Social Responsibility activities, which is why the Resident Voice Index™ service is provided free. This also has the effect of making it truly independent, which we believe is a powerful message to the sector.

Our partners

This project is a collaborative undertaking and alongside consultation with providers, policy makers and most importantly, residents, MRI Software has teamed up with strategic partners across the sector:

The Housing Associations' Charitable Trust (HACT)[5]
Offering a wealth of experience in resident feedback and also acknowledging the drawbacks of conventional satisfaction mechanisms, they have advised our research team to ensure the Resident Voice Index™ project asks questions that matter – and asks them well.

The Housing Quality Network (HQN)[6]
One of the sector's leading advisory, support and training organisations, they assist the project through the engagement of their established Residents' Network to ensure that resident insights are incorporated into the product design.

us marketing[7]
The project was also supported by 'us marketing', a specialist third party agency working with organisations that deliver social impact. They have assisted with the marketing outputs and report writing, in addition to using their deep research expertise in the shaping of the project.

Inception and consultation

The Resident Voice Index™ project was initiated via a series of workshops held separately with residents, social housing providers (including local authorities, housing associations and ALMOs), and other policy makers. During these consultations, issues and topics that require investigation were uncovered, namely the expectations of residents versus the reality of service provision, and methods of approach, language and acceptable tone for the surveys.

Core findings from these sessions showed that there is an appetite from both residents and providers to change the way that the social housing sector is surveyed and that there is a need for deeper interrogation than has thus far been seen in traditional methods. Providers are already shifting towards more perception-based and qualitative analysis and residents are open to being surveyed in a more detailed way if the outputs can be used by decision makers to make a difference to their lives.

We established that to challenge the conventional, we would need to ask more uncomfortable questions than have traditionally been asked of residents. Our findings showed that residents are prepared to respond to more sensitive subjects if there is an honesty about the purpose of asking and the difference it will make.

"You need to ask uncomfortable questions to get the answers you might not want but you need."

Resident, Resident Voice Index™ workshop

Following this research, we designed the first Neighbourhoods & Communities survey, the in-depth findings of which are presented in this report. This five-minute survey sought to understand residents' perceptions of their local amenities and facilities, their sense of belonging to and caring about their neighbourhoods and communities, and their perceptions of safety. We also asked residents to name positive things about their homes and communities to provide indicators of what the sector is doing well and to understand the qualities of good neighbourhoods through the eyes of those who felt part of it and those who did not.

Summary results are published as 'always on' dashboards on the Resident Voice Index™ website[8] and via more detailed 'Index Insights' briefs in addition to this central report.

For electronic readers, the references quoted in this publication are hyperlinked throughout the text. For those reading a hard copy, please visit residentvoiceindex.com/references for a full reference list.

A residents first approach

We have sought to include residents at every stage of this project, learning what they'd like to be asked, what their limits are as far as topics are concerned and how they want to be communicated with. We ensured that all resident events and consultations protected their anonymity and had no landlords present. This approach of 'residents first' will continue for all future Resident Voice Index™ activity.

"We have a philosophy of 'residents first' because the residents took their time out to complete the survey and engage with the project."

Doug Sarney, Solutions Principal, MRI Software

At our consultations, residents told us that they wanted to be kept informed about how the results were published and how we were going to use their insights. Part of the 'residents first' approach is making all the results publicly available to anyone that wants to consume them. Providing access to the data means the results coming out may not always be favourable but, as one resident said in one of our workshops[9]: "You need to ask uncomfortable questions to get the answers you might not want, but you need."

Residents are assets[10]

Residents sit firmly at the centre of this collaborative approach. One of our Resident Ambassadors put it eloquently; housing providers need to see "residents as an asset base of skills, passion and willingness with local and interpersonal relationships at a community level". When given access to resources and affordable community space, these involved community members can work within social housing neighbourhoods at a positive, grassroots level and help stem larger problems by building stronger social networks and activating more people across communities.

The Resident Voice Index™ score

The Resident Voice Index™ was not designed to be a long-term benchmarking tool. It has instead been created to challenge and broaden traditional measures of satisfaction in the social and affordable housing sectors. Rather than measuring long-term trends, the focus is to present topical surveys that explore perceptions and feelings. These investigations are accompanied by insights to help policy makers, planners and providers deliver changes that drive improvements to residents' lives.

One of the challenges of the project however, is to create a flexible index that can be assessed across each of the surveys that are released as part of this initiative. To achieve this, a simple mathematical scoring system has been created, based around three key 'Index Questions' within each survey.

Respondents accumulate points by answering positively to the key questions (e.g., Strongly Agree or Agree) at the rate of one point per question. If they do not answer positively (e.g., Neither, Disagree or Strongly Disagree), the respondent scores zero for that question. At the end of the survey, respondents fall into four categories ranging from zero to three index points.

Data analysis is performed to suggest interventions that might help shift respondents towards the maximum three index points.

In the Neighbourhoods & Communities survey the three central themes identified were perceptions of: Belonging to communities, Caring about community involvement, and Neighbourhood safety. Therefore, the three 'Index Questions' were selected using these three themes.

Results Scoring System	
+1	Answer: Strongly Agree
+1	Answer: Agree
0	Answer: Neither
0	Answer: Disagree
0	Answer: Strongly Disagree
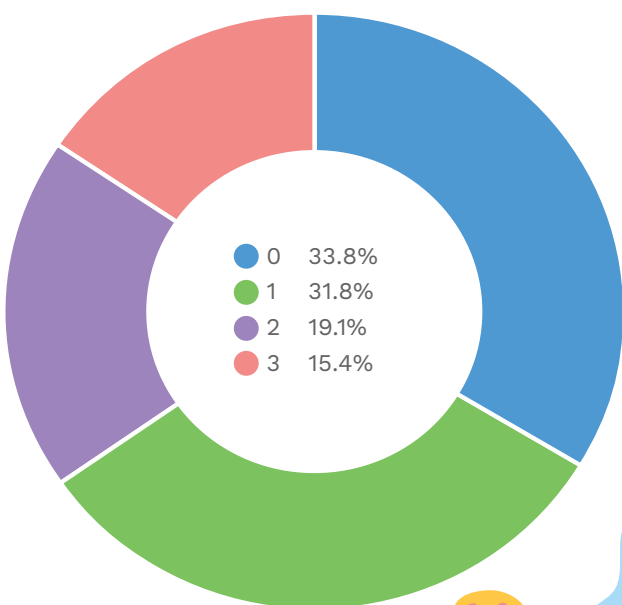
Throughout this report, when using the Index Score as a filter, the focus has been on those that scored three and those that scored zero. These are the subsets that either fully committed to all three 'Index Questions' or were unable to commit to any of them. When stacked against each other therefore, the differences between the two cohorts were more insightful than comparisons with more 'neutral' Index Scores.

Example Scoring

A respondent answers three questions in the following way:

Answer 1: Strongly Agree	+1
Answer 2: Disagree	0
Answer 3: Strongly Disagree	0
Total Score	1

- 0 33.8%
- 1 31.8%
- 2 19.1%
- 3 15.4%

Exemplars

Only 15% of respondents in this survey classified as Exemplars (those scoring three points) by answering positively to all three 'Index Questions' i.e., they feel safe, they feel like they belong and they care about community involvement.

These promoters also provide an indication of what those belonging, caring, and feeling safe like about where they live and therefore may give some clues for actionable insights. The most common things that this subset liked about where they live are shown in the graph below.
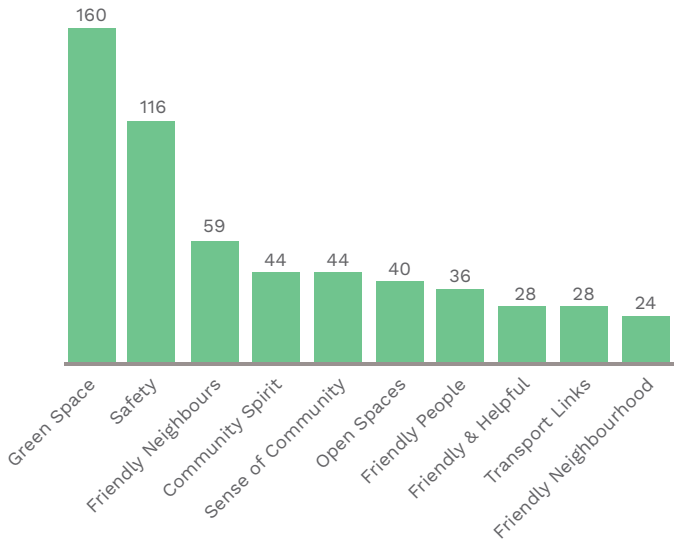

Using the Index Score as a filter also uncovers some other potentially useful information. Those with a maximum Index Score of three (574 respondents) were around 3.5 times more likely than the rest of the survey respondents to feel that the current actions of their housing provider increase their sense of community.

Index Score 3

No 59.4%
Yes 40.6%
574 TOTAL
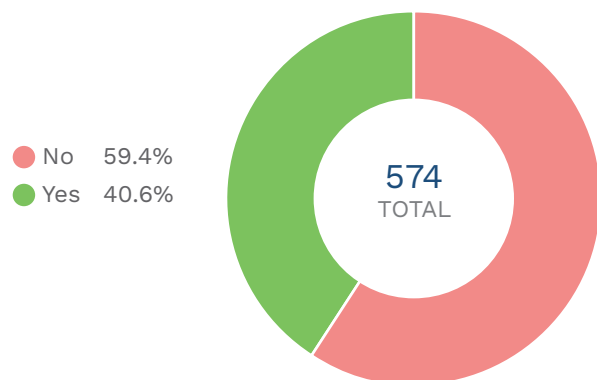
### Index Score 0, 1, 2 combined

No 88.3%
Yes 11.7%
3,194 TOTAL
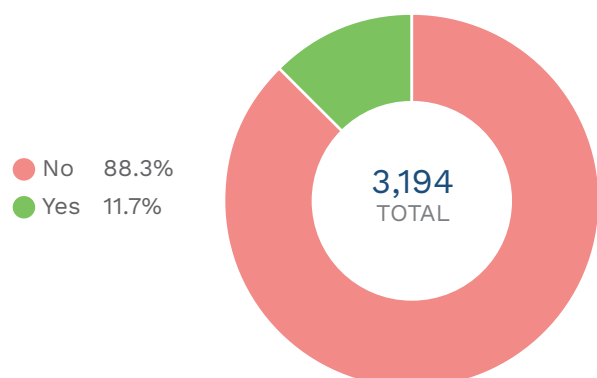
Detractors

Those scoring zero points (total detractors) made up over one third of respondents (1,275 respondents, 34%), all of whom shared the following characteristics:

- Do not feel like they belong to their community, AND;

- Do not care about community involvement, AND;

- Do not feel safe in their neighbourhood

Only 7% of this cohort thought that their housing provider increased their sense of community and common words in their responses about what would make them feel safer are shown below.
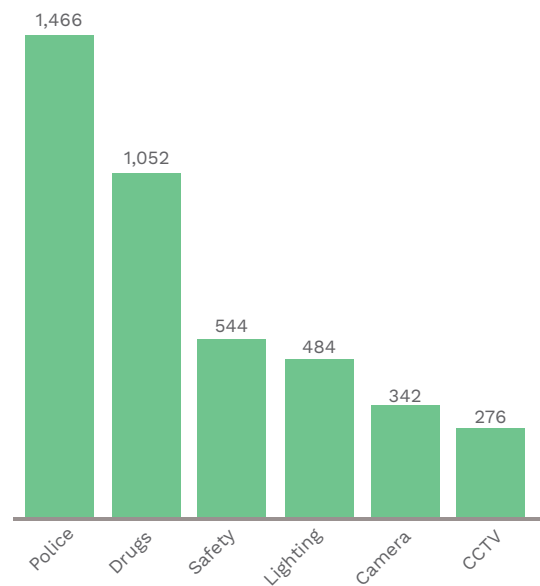
Those unable to respond positively to any of the 'Index Questions' were also more inclined to respond with "Nothing" or "Not aware" when asked for positive community contributions by their housing provider or when queried for the things they like about their neighbourhoods.

These themes are explored in more detail in the relevant sections of this report.

Caring and belonging

What is belonging?

Belonging to one's community has repeatedly been linked to higher levels of individual happiness and wellbeing[11] and more recently[12], even to better physical and mental health.

A feeling of ease and cohesion with where one lives is the amalgamation of interconnected factors; it is a mix of function and convenience combined with a sense of pride and identity. In its Integrated Communities Strategy Action Plan[13], MHCLG recognised that shared spaces and activities develop a sense of community and pride.

Beyond this, however, a feeling of true belonging relates to a person's social connection within their community and is far less tangible, built more around feeling and perception. The Neighbourhoods & Communities survey explored social housing residents' sense of belonging and how it might be influenced.

Survey design

In this section of the survey, social housing residents were asked three questions. These were designed to explore the following:

- Their perception of belonging to their neighbourhood (Q4)

- Their sense of caring about being involved with their neighbourhood (Q5)

- Whether or not the actions of their housing provider increase their sense of community (Q6)

Respondents were also asked to provide open-ended text responses and list:

- Existing positive community contributions by their housing provider (Q7)

- Suggestions for actions that the housing provider could take to positively impact their sense of community (Q8)

- What they liked most about their neighbourhood (Q9)

The free-text questions instructed respondents not to name their housing provider in order to preserve anonymity on all sides. Sentiment analysis was applied to Q7 to differentiate between those who answered positively, negatively, neutrally or with unknown sentiment.

Purpose

The Charter for Social Housing Residents[3] begins its Executive Summary with the following statements:
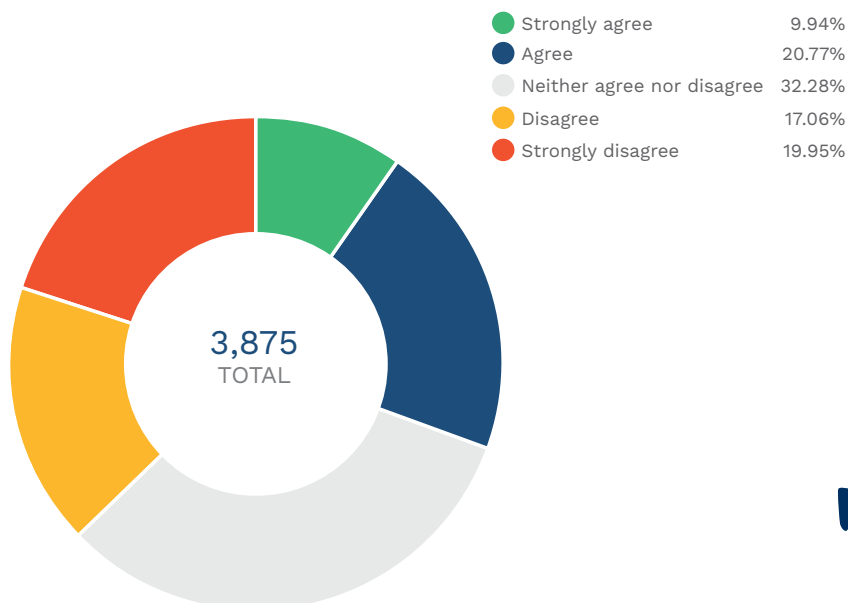
"A home should always be more than just four walls and a roof. A home should provide safety, security, and dignity. An opportunity to put down roots and contribute to our community so we can enjoy social and civic lives."

The Regulator for Social Housing is also looking to set measures on the obligations of social housing providers to deliver quality communities and neighbourhoods beyond mere construction. They will be looking at overall neighbourhood quality and management in terms of safety and quality of living.

The purpose of this section of the survey was to determine levels of belonging and caring and to provide data for a deeper analysis into why the different cohorts of respondents might feel the way they do. The questions were designed to explore the link between a person's feelings about their relationship to their community (belonging and caring) and their view of the qualities that make up a good community. This then leads to an analysis of the interventions that could be made to foster more engaged and included citizens that feel part of a cohesive neighbourhood.

Results and discussion

- ● Strongly agree — 9.94%
- ● Agree — 20.77%
- ● Neither agree nor disagree — 32.28%
- ● Disagree — 17.06%
- ● Strongly disagree — 19.95%

3,875
TOTAL

Belonging

Research from the ONS[14] shows that over the last decade there has been a declining sense of belonging amongst Britons. An ONS Community Life Survey[15] from 2019/20 reported that 63% of respondents felt they belonged to their neighbourhood. These findings found that less than one third of social housing residents in this study feel the same way. This is a cause for some concern and something that policy makers, housing providers and wider society should not ignore. It has been noted that many of the respondents in this study were directed to the survey via HomeSwapper, MRI's mutual exchange platform which may skew the results by over-representation of those that want to move home (and therefore may not feel part of their communities).

It is also feasible that the COVID-19 pandemic could be dragging down the belonging proportions, with people experiencing less social interaction than previously. The social distancing and isolation measures have separated people from their communities like never before, potentially alienating people and negatively impacting levels of belonging. Conversely, reports across the pandemic[16] have also shown an incredible amount of collective action by Britons to support their local communities.

Using safety as a filter

In this survey, respondents were also asked to comment on how safe they feel. Analysis of the sense of belonging from those who felt safe and those who did not showed that the former are almost three times more likely to 'belong' to their neighbourhoods (50% vs 18%). Furthermore, amongst the people that don't feel safe, only 12% feel like they belong, suggesting that perceptions of belonging and a sense of safety often go hand in hand.

31%
said that they feel like they belong to their neighbourhood

37%
actively said that they did not feel like they belong to their neighbourhood

Caring

Despite the low levels of belonging, standing at only three in ten, the percentage of respondents in this survey who care about being involved with their community is significantly higher, approaching one half. This provides a cause for optimism, suggesting that getting people involved with their communities could be a matter of the right intervention.

● Strongly agree 12.72%
● Agree 33.47%
● Neither agree nor disagree 38.94%
● Disagree 7.61%
● Strongly disagree 7.25%

3,875
TOTAL
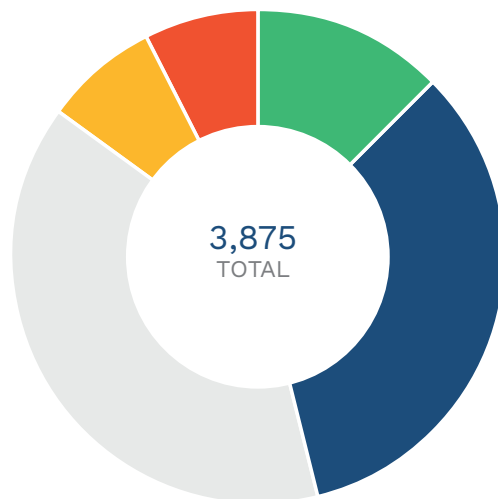
46%
care about being involved with their neighbourhood

15%
do not care about being involved with their neighbourhood

Analysis shows that within this data set, 33% of those who are unable to commit to belonging to their community, care about community involvement. This provides a healthy figure of 23% of respondents who do not currently belong but from whom very little resistance to moving into the 'belonging' category would be expected. If interventions by housing providers, policy makers, estate planners and the other stakeholders who could make a difference can shift this cohort into the 'belonging' category then very quickly, the levels of belonging of less than one third could be converted to well over one half.

Housing provider contributions

These results showed no significant differences by region or by age group, with only around one in six agreeing that the interventions of their landlord increased their sense of community. This opens the door to the debate on the role of the housing provider. As mentioned previously, the recently published Charter for Social Housing Residents[3] affirms that the home is an opportunity to put down roots and contribute to communities. However, as one workshop attendee said:

"We who live in a community create community. So, it's whether you actually want to be part of your community. Some people are really happy to just come and live in their house and they don't want to be involved in anything regarding where they live. The housing provider can try, but they can't make community. The housing provider I am with have community development officers that can do things. They arrange community things, but people don't turn up."

Resident, Resident Voice Index™ workshop

There are limits to asking a yes/no question such as, 'Do you feel that the current actions of your housing provider increase your sense of community?'. This question failed to interrogate whether or not respondents believed it was the role of housing providers to contribute to their sense of community.

16%
feel that the current actions of their housing provider increase their sense of community

84%
do not feel that the current actions of their housing provider increase their sense of community

It was notable in the free-text inputs that, unprompted, around 2% of the responses for Q3 and Q8 mentioned or discussed 'disability'. It was also mentioned in other questions. Residents notice when housing providers do the right thing. One answer given to 'list the positive contributions made by your housing provider' stated that one action that impressed them was to "address the severe ASB of known tenants occupying a disabled person's bungalow." The community can see when a lack of care and attention is given to their neighbours as well as themselves and expect intervention when someone is being treated poorly. In the future, organisations considering accessibility and inclusivity as a pillar of designing services could be positive influences in communities.

Analysis by location

Respondents were asked to pick the first letter(s) of their postcode to enable sorting into UK regions, as defined by ONS[17], without identifying their precise location or landlord.

An analysis of belonging and caring was then performed, segmented by different regions of the UK. Whilst this yielded some minor North – South variations, there was one significant difference that stood out. When compared with the rest of the UK, people living in Greater London were significantly higher in both the belonging and caring stakes.

	Greater London	Rest of the UK
Percentage who belong to their community	36% +/- 2.5%	28% +/- 1.1%
Percentage who care about community involvement	54% +/- 2.5%	43% +/- 1.1%

In a 2019 Survey of Londoners[18], 74% said that they belonged to their local area, higher than the 63% reported UK-wide in the ONS Community Life Survey. Results from the Neighbourhoods & Communities survey appear consistent with that trend.

Heat map indicating the level of respondents in this survey from each region.

Darker regions have higher levels of survey responses.

1 - 83   107 - 177   290 - 335   533 - 759   1,128 +

Positive community contributions

When asked to name positive community contributions by their housing provider in a free-text format, just under 80% of those taking the survey offered a response. 78% of those responses were classified as a negative sentiment by returning answers like, "Nothing", "None", "N/A". 15% returned a positive sentiment by naming a positive community contribution from their landlord (the similarity to the 16% who feel their landlord positively contributes to the sense of community is noted). The remainder were undetected or expressed neutral sentiment. The word cloud below provides some insight into what those who responded positively to this question like about their landlord's community contributions.

tenants association park dont live one people council
provider positive events need housing going
community home training cafes hubs children
help work think Na centre residents

These results also vary by the Index Score which is described in detail on page 8.

Actionable insight: Improve communication

Those that felt they do not belong to their neighbourhood were often unaware of positive contributions by their housing provider. "None know", "None aware", "Can't think" and "Nothing I know" formed four of the top nine responses from those who 'don't belong'. With reference to the Charter for Social Housing Residents[3] and the importance of communicating key messages to residents, there may be opportunities for housing providers to communicate their contributions more effectively and in a more targeted way, in order for the messages to be absorbed by residents and thus help elevate the perception of belonging.

"None and if they are they are not advertised well"

"There are many events around my area in which to take part, there's a monthly newsletter with the list of events and that makes me feel included and part of the community"

"As a tenant of several social housing associations over the years I haven't come across one that gives anything back to the degree that they could"

Survey respondents

Suggestions for positive interventions

In addition to asking what positive contributions were already in place, respondents were invited to suggest additional positive community actions that their housing provider could consider in order to improve their sense of community. Eighty percent offered suggestions and the word cloud of these responses is shown below.

Listen green activities clean neighbours behaviour support communal social centre children work residents clubs housing properties events families community groups spaces street training nothing help building parking drug garden young homes care meetings place youth

Common adjectives such as, "better" and non-specific nouns like, "things" are hidden from this cloud to aid interpretation.

Listen

Listening was a common suggestion that housing providers could take in order to improve community spirit in the eyes of residents. Engaging residents in consultations and scrutiny of development plans, as well as the creation and design of services is a strategy that an increasing number of registered providers are adopting.

"Support our own community here rather than telling us how to be a community. We do it well. Listen to us and genuinely support us"

Survey respondent

What do you like most about your neighbourhood?

Respondents were prompted to describe what they liked most about their neighbourhood in a free-text format; the results have been represented in the word cloud below. This was seen as a way to acquire insight into the perceived positive characteristics of communities and into the potential interventions that might help create a positive direction of travel.

amenities road transport family near centre community links people move friendly open shops access close safe quiet neighbourhood Nothing quite neighbours clean spaces bus green children park work local home walks easy housing everyone school

When filtered by those who feel they belong to their neighbourhood, the most common phrases were "green spaces", "open spaces", "safety", "friendly neighbours", "community spirit" and "transport links". These were the top six answers following the removal of the word "good" which was excluded because it was used in many answers as an adjective.

The same phrases came top when filtered by Index Score three (i.e. those who feel safe, belong and care about neighbourhood involvement). When filtered by Index Score zero, the most widespread response by some margin (more than twice as prevalent as the next most common answer) was "Nothing". Other responses followed a similar pattern of prevalence to the Exemplars with 'green' 'spaces', 'safety' and 'transport links' featuring highly. Very few differences were observed between the under 35s and the over 35s other than an anticipated raising of the profile of children's recreational facilities.

The homes we live in: Tenure blindness and mixed neighbourhoods

Across the Neighbourhoods & Communities survey, a trend emerged within free-text answers where respondents mentioned the pros and cons of mixed-tenure developments. A hot-button urban planning issue, this sees some developments blocking children[19] in social housing from playgrounds, the use of 'poor doors'[20] and facilities segregation[21].

What I like most about my neighbourhood:

"Mixture of social housing in with private renting and home-owners, and a mix of culture and social class. There are no huge estates, there is not just home-owners, it's a mixture."

Survey respondent

"It is a mix of different Housing Associations and private properties. Mix of rich and poor."

Survey respondent

Suggestions for housing providers to positively impact a sense of community:

"Keep their housing stock in better condition so the homes of its social housing tenants don't stand out as much as they do now, against the private homeowners"

Survey respondent

"I live in a gated area containing both private and social housing. There is allocated parking for the private residents only. This contributes to a sense of 'us and them'. To the best of my knowledge we pay a council tax which is applicable to those with allocated parking. We also pay £36 per week on top of our rent for the management and upkeep of the communal areas which I think is an outrage."

Survey respondent

Yet, as some of the responses here imply, where segregation isn't an issue, a mix can be good. In Scotland, policies are being implemented to address social exclusion, concentrated poverty, and stigma in social housing with tenure-blind development. In Helsinki, this approach has been standard since the 1960s and developments can have no visible or access differences, regardless of tenure. In some cases, survey respondents also noted that less mixing would be preferable, for example if a family is placed in a home above someone elderly and feels unfairly accused of making too much noise.

Last word

In summary, suggestions are that the opportunity to increase a sense of community belonging is considerable. A significantly higher proportion of respondents in this study care about community involvement than currently belong to their neighbourhood. The most popular tangible interventions to increase the sense of belonging appear to be community spaces and communal amenities, especially green and open spaces. Those who already 'belong' like green spaces, community events and centres, with transport links and positive relationships with their neighbours also featuring.

When assessing perceptions of belonging through the lens of safety, those who feel safe are three times more likely to feel they belong to their local neighbourhoods. Actionable insights into mechanisms to improve feelings of safety are discussed later in this report.

Are we serving younger residents?

Results from the '15-minute neighbourhood' section of the survey showed that in general, younger (18-35) people needed (or put more importance upon) the services and facilities that they had within a 15-minute journey of their home. They also had fewer facilities near to them.

Additionally, those aged 18-35 were less likely to feel like they belonged to their neighbourhood, were less likely to care about being involved in their neighbourhood and felt less safe in their neighbourhood than all other age groups. All of these attributes increased with age and when compared to the over 55s, the difference was significant.

These results could be related to specific life stages, such as those set out by psychologist Erik Erikson[22] in his theory of psycho-social life stages. These state that success by those in later life leads to the virtue of 'caring', whilst those between 18 and 40 tend to be more concerned with interpersonal relationships. There was a small difference in belonging that followed the same pattern across the age split, also consistent with the findings referenced on page 13 where younger Londoners tended to experience lower levels of belonging than older Londoners.

Brain Drain

This is a common phenomenon[23] whereby the young leave their hometowns, taking away their talent, vibrancy, tenacity and economic activity. In general, these individuals do not return. Investment in communities and access to affordable housing could help plug gaps in neighbourhoods and assist these human assets to establish stable roots.

	Under 35s	36-54	Over 55s
Belong	27%	31%	32%
Care	40%	47%	48%
Safe	27%	40%	42%
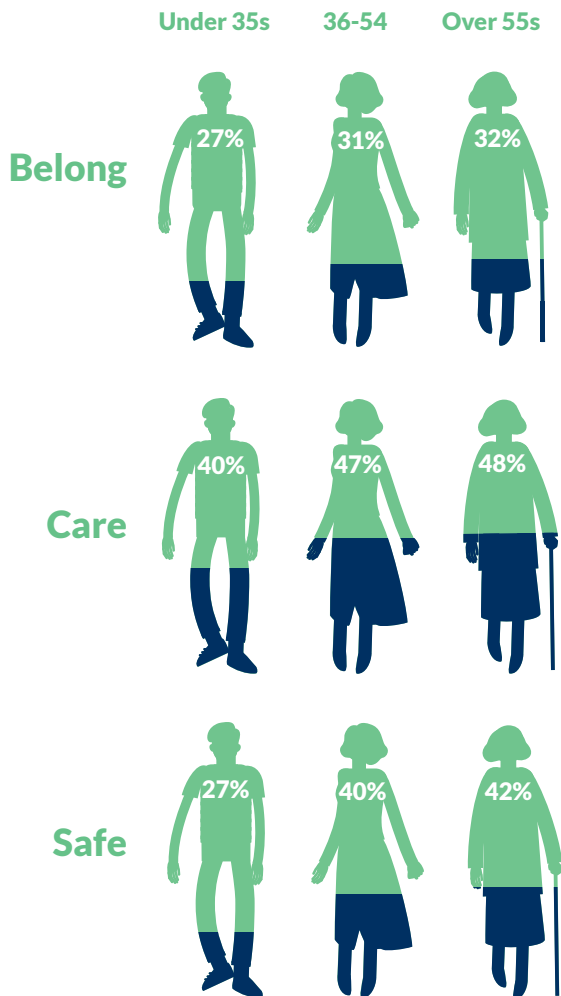
Neighbourhoods and communities

What are neighbourhoods and communities?

In short, 'neighbourhoods' are a physical space and the identity of a place whilst 'communities' are the people that live there and their connections. Housing is a lynchpin of stability, resilience, wealth, health and cohesive communities; the quality and prevalence of the facilities, services and connections around it allows households to exist and thrive beyond their walls and in civic society.

Survey design and purpose

The '15-minute neighbourhood' section of the survey sought to investigate the provision and importance of certain amenities and facilities within a 15-minute journey of respondents' homes. The influence was the '15-minute city'[24] concept, an urban planning approach whereby inhabitants have multiple facilities within a 15-minute walk or cycle from their home in order to have complete, people-centric neighbourhoods that aren't dependent on long commutes. The qualifying factors that make up a '15-minute' city are amenities for living, working, supplying, caring, learning, and enjoying.

For the Resident Voice Index™ initiative, the concept of the '15-minute city' was expanded to be more inclusive of the wide array of communities that social housing residents live in across the UK. As such, the methods of transport for the 15 minutes were expanded from walking and cycling to include public transport and driving, in order to define well provisioned neighbourhoods across the UK.

Developed at the Sorbonne in Paris, the approach is gaining traction in policy globally for how urban spaces are planned and imagined. It is particularly pertinent to local authorities and city councils in the UK, with funding being awarded around this concept to achieve more connected neighbourhoods. In March 2021 for example, Ipswich announced[25] that it wanted to become the UK's first '15-minute town', receiving a £25m grant to achieve this.

The results and what they mean

The results of the Neighbourhoods & Communities survey show that respondents are generally well provisioned, with 90% of people living within 15 minutes of a GP surgery and 89% within 15 minutes of green spaces, which were also rated the most important amenities. The main trend from these results is that people across the board regard facilities and services related to health and wellbeing as the most important.

Within the '15-minute neighbourhood' data there was only one notable outlier in the ranking of the results for importance and prevalence. This was around access to 'healthy, affordable food'; the third most important item to those who answered the question but ranked as the seventh most prevalent.

Prevalence of Facilities
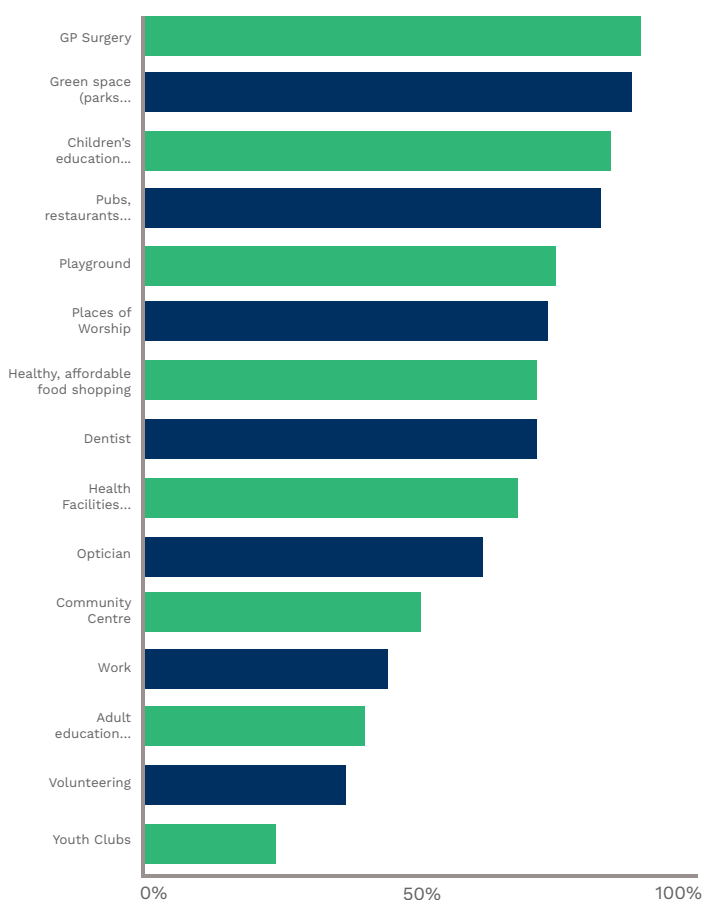
Importance of Facilities
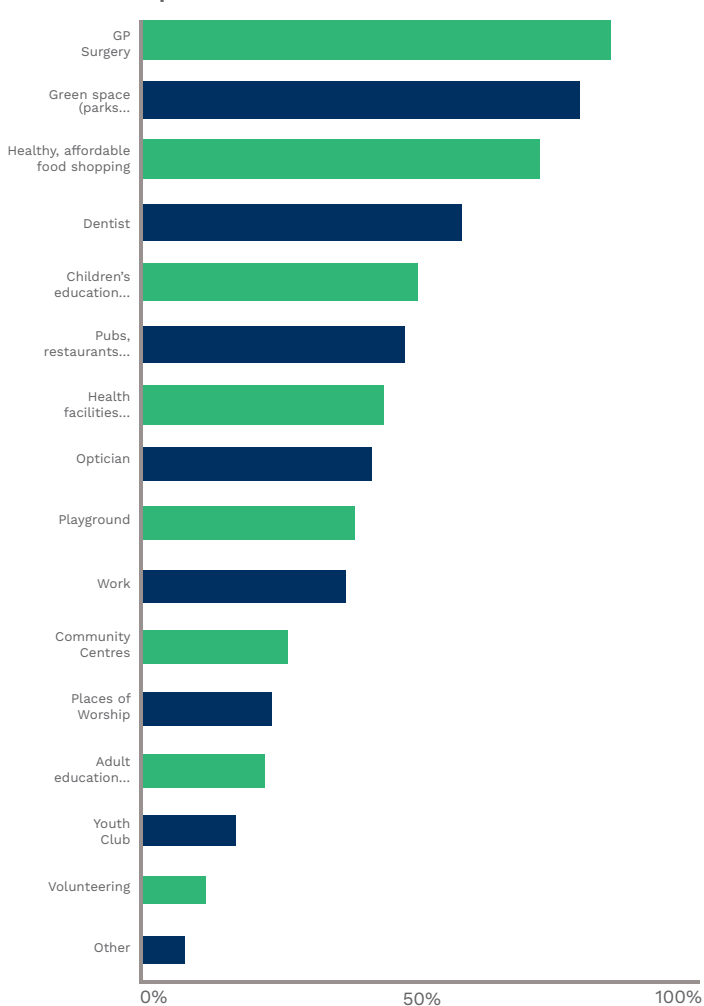
Food Deserts

As of 2018, over 1 million people[26] in the UK were estimated to live in 'food deserts'. These are neighbourhoods of 5,000-15,000 residents with access to two or fewer big supermarkets. These 'food deserts' sit within the wider context of the need for food banks - which has risen 128% in the past 5 years[27], rising obesity[28], and some of the most affluent areas[29] in the UK reporting 1 in 7 people going hungry.

The need for, but lack of access to healthy, affordable food within the UK was supported by the Resident Voice Index™ findings.

Some good news is that housing providers are already part of the solution to the food poverty problem. One respondent listed a positive contribution that their housing provider made in their local area as a, "Local community food shop that is trying to help eradicate food poverty for families forced into the Universal Credit shambles."

For those developing new houses, improvements could be made by considering access to healthy, affordable food. Catalyst Housing's, St Ann's New Neighbourhood[30] for example, makes residents' health central to their proposed plans. This project has adopted a multi-partner approach, recognising that housing providers cannot do this alone.

What else is important?

Via a free-text answer, respondents were asked to name what else was important for them to have access to within 15 minutes of their home. Supermarkets, shops, hospitals and libraries topped those suggestions. Beaches of course, are not within anybody's remit to provide!

Post office Cinema Supermarket bus service Parking Good transport link public transport places Shops Bus stop Hospital Transport Library bus routes family art centre Beach clubs

Generally, it appeared that younger respondents (under 35s) rated facilities with higher importance than older generations. They were also marginally less well provisioned. For housing providers, developers and policy makers that are looking to improve facilities, consultation with younger generations is recommended to ascertain a clear picture of how to provide for future neighbourhoods.

With reference to 'food deserts', when respondents were asked what they like about their neighbourhood, it's worth noting that for those over 35, 'local shops' featured in the top six most mentioned words.

Provisions were similar across regions in the UK, with no notable differences when filtering by other attributes.

"We have moved more towards a locality model. We feel we have lost that sense of really understanding communities. We are really trying to move back to that way again of providing tailored solutions for particular neighbourhoods, very place-based. This is particularly pertinent for us at the moment."

Housing provider, Resident Voice Index™ workshop

Last word

Communities represented in this study are well provisioned, however the feelings of belonging, safety and caring about being involved are low and sentiment is generally negative. This data suggests that the changes and interventions needed across communities to improve the lives of social housing residents should look beyond the delivery of local amenities.

The solutions to these more complex and difficult questions must include residents themselves from the outset.

The provision of community spaces

Actionable insight

Across the Resident Voice Index™ Neighbourhoods & Communities survey, a recurring theme emerged within free-text answers and during consultation work with resident groups and Resident Ambassadors[31]. Namely, the provision of accessible, community spaces.

Further data from this study shows that for those with an Index Score of three, three out of the six top answers for 'positive community contributions made by your housing provider' include interventions that use the word "community" such as, community centres or events.

In comparison, those with an Index Score of zero have only one answer in the top six relating to 'community' Beyond index points, those who reported to care the most about being involved mentioned more 'community' interventions than others.

"Community hubs where groups can rent affordable space for classes or fundraisers or anything."

Survey respondent

"Community spaces are also important so that we could get to know each other better and think about ways to improve life for residents in general."

Survey respondent

Whilst these spaces may incur costs to run, some leaders in the sector evaluate the upfront costs of community interventions and social tenancies in terms of their whole-system longevity impact, as in Hyde Housing's 'Value of a Social Tenancy' approach[32].

"They should make sure that there are facilities for the communities. We have lots of green spaces but it's about somewhere where residents can do things together, and there is nothing."

Survey respondent

Community Stats 2010 – December 2019[33]

859
children's centres and family hubs have been closed

940
youth centres have been lost

22%
More than one in five (22%) libraries have either closed, been privatised or are now staffed by volunteers. This is a decrease of 738 council-run libraries. Over the past decade there has been a tenfold rise in the number run by volunteers, up from 21 to 227

🟢 Strongly agree	11.0%
🔵 Agree	28.5%
⚪ Neither agree nor disagree	26.8%
🟡 Disagree	18.9%
🔴 Strongly disagree	14.9%

3,867
TOTAL
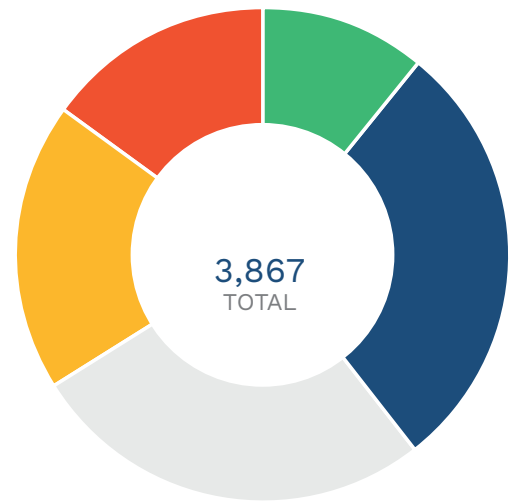
Safety

What is safety?

There is a wealth of recent evidence[34] in the UK that links living in unsafe environments to poor mental and physical health outcomes. Living in unsafe neighbourhoods has been associated with[35] chronic stress and even residents who have never been victims of crime may experience continued and exhausting fear and vigilance. For some, the fear for one's personal safety in the immediate neighbourhood could also result in taking less exercise, which can lead to wider health and societal impacts.

The perception of safety was selected as a topic, with the outlook that; 'if it's felt, it is real.' Existing consensus has shown that subjective as well as objective safety must be considered when planning the built environment. Research from Sheffield Hallam University[36] found that feelings of being unsafe are not always related to an identifiable threat. Instead, a lack of safety signals in an environment can trigger a fear response.

Currently, there is a political will to address crime in communities and its wider ramifications. In July 2021, The Home Office published the 'Beating Crime Plan'[37], that acknowledges the role that neighbourhood safety has in supporting communities to thrive socially, culturally and economically.

"We must give everyone the security and confidence that comes from having a safe street and a safe home."

Boris Johnson, Beating Crime Plan, July 2021[37]

Purpose

Safety is a core theme of the Resident Voice Index™ initiative and will also be explored in further consultation and reports. In regard to housing, safety has been categorised in three themes; safety of the home, safety within the home and community safety.

Antisocial behaviour (ASB) and neighbourhood safety emerged from workshops with residents as a key issue impacting their lives, their communities and directly influencing their sense of safety. Residents expressed worry about poor behaviours not being resolved, which could also lead to instances not being reported to housing providers and the police. Local neighbourhoods suffer in silence as a result, a theory that has been supported with wider sector research into the impact of ASB from Resolve[38].

More than half of people who have been a victim or witnessed antisocial behaviour (ASB) do not report it, while 45% of people say ASB is a problem where they live.

Resolve, July 2021[38]

For housing providers, the same concerns were echoed, namely that neighbourhood safety, resident safety and building safety are the baseline of their provision and needed to be addressed to sustain resident trust.

In the interest of the Resident Voice Index™ project's core value of 'brevity', the Neighbourhoods & Communities survey did not ask questions about demographics beyond age and location. As such, we cannot draw conclusions specific to the experiences of those whose personal safety feels under attack due to their sex, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, ethnicity, or nationality. These are all factors that might produce different results from the below and which may be investigated in future studies.

Results and discussion

The 'safety' section of the Neighbourhoods & Communities survey asked two questions about safety; how much respondents agree with the statement, "I live in a safe neighbourhood" and a request for suggestions as to what could change in their neighbourhood to make it feel safer.

Overall, 40% of respondents felt that they live in a safe neighbourhood, 60% were unable to say that they live in a safe neighbourhood, and 34% actively said that they disagree that their neighbourhood is safe. In this study, respondents' perceptions of safety increased with age, with people under 35 (35.5% +/- 3.3%) feeling significantly less safe than those over 55 (43.2% +/- 2.3%).

There was a high response rate for Q11, which asked for suggestions around what could change to make neighbourhoods feel safer. Even for the 39.5% of respondents who felt safe in their neighbourhoods, improvements could be made around how safe they feel. It is worth noting that 10% reported that nothing needed to change in their neighbourhood to make it feel safer and that when asked what they liked about their neighbourhood, "safe" was a popular answer.

Policing

When asked for suggestions for improving safety, aspects of policing were the most common answer, with more than a quarter of people mentioning police in their response. Many of those responses used "police" in the context of "more police on streets", "bobbies on the beat" and "police presence."

This desire and need for a return to this type of community policing hasn't gone unnoticed. In July 2021 the Home Office's 'Beating Crime Plan'[37] laid out plans for resources to connect citizens to their neighbourhood officers directly, albeit digitally.

It is widely understood that policing is not experienced equally by all communities. For example, young black men are nineteen times[39] more likely to be stopped and searched and during 2020, those from BAME backgrounds were disproportionately[39] fined for COVID-19 restriction infractions. In this environment and the wider global context, it is important to distinguish community policing for all from punitive law and order.

For the police, social housing providers are key partners for taking a public health approach to policing[40]. Such approaches aim to reduce the harms of antisocial behaviours and neighbourhood crime, and address underlying factors such as poverty or instability that may make an individual more susceptible to becoming the victim or perpetrator of abuse.

These agencies can work to support local CrimeStoppers and Neighbourhood Watch groups to bolster grassroots approaches to neighbourhood safety and strengthen community bonds.

"More police officers, local police station. Engagement with the communities they oversee, run coffee mornings and encourage youngsters to gather in safety. A lack of police officers is a massive mistake, detrimental to public health and safety."

Survey respondent

Drugs

Crime and ASB related to the dealing and misuse of drugs was a key concern of respondents, ranked second overall in suggestions for how to make neighbourhoods feel safer. However, mentions of "drugs" drop in rankings when the results were filtered by those who felt safe.

Further analysis uncovered that residents do believe that housing providers have a part to play in addressing the malignant effect that drug-related crime and antisocial behaviour have on communities. For those who felt unsafe, the most prevalent suggestion for changes that housing providers could make to positively impact respondents' sense of community was "drugs" (i.e., dealing with associated ill-effects). In comparison, for those who felt safe, "drugs" did not feature in the top ten suggestions.

The provision of police in local communities, tackling drug dealing and the antisocial behaviour associated with problematic drug misusers fall under macro-policy, government and local government remit. It is worth acknowledging that there is a relationship between policing and dealing with drug misuse and associated crime in neighbourhoods. When respondents' suggestions for safer neighbourhoods were analysed by sentiment, mentions of drugs with positive sentiment were in the context of problems being dealt with. The problem caused by drug dealing and misuse in communities features heavily in the 'Beating Crime Plan', with actions being laid out to curb these behaviours and act as deterrents, including the recognition that for those addicted to drugs "criminality declines rapidly" when they have access to treatment and support.

Many respondents felt strongly however, that dealing with antisocial behaviour was within the remit of housing providers.

"Deal with antisocial behaviour properly and not give out blanket letters to residents hoping this will be enough to deter and eradicate antisocial behaviour."

Survey respondent

In some examples, respondents questioned the placement of individuals with complex needs in neighbourhoods without adequate support.

"Thinking/researching wisely before housing certain people in certain areas. A neighbour who was moved due to previous antisocial behaviour was moved into the very quiet area I live in and has completely ruined the neighbourhood"

Survey respondent

There are clear limits to what housing providers can do, beyond keeping their promises to their residents to provide decent neighbourhoods and following up on reports of ASB and crime in their homes.

Lighting

Of the top four suggestions for improving how safe neighbourhoods feel, improving lighting is one that could be deployed by housing providers. Alongside evidence[41] that appropriate lighting can change perceptions of feeling safe and create other behavioural changes, well-designed installations can have lasting positive impacts, including reducing carbon emissions, assisting local wildlife[42] and reducing light pollution[43] Some responses that specified "lighting" were accompanied by complaints that lights went off after a certain time of night. Public lighting is expensive; Wiltshire Council for example, estimate that costs are over £1.9 million p.a.[44] To combat this, they are installing LED street lighting that can be kept on all night and predict a 69% cut to energy consumption and ultimately, to costs. In Centre for London's report, 'Seeing Clearly'[41] they specifically recommend that housing providers consider upgrading lighting across social housing in the UK and enlist specialists, like lighting designers to partner with them on the journey. Despite the benefits, lighting strategies have not been widely adopted. Currently just 2 out of 33 London local authorities[41], for example have a strategy to guide the use of public and private lighting.

"There is a growing recognition among policymakers that activities taking place during the dark hours need as much consideration and nuance as those happening in daylight. Lighting is increasingly recognised as a core pillar of night-time policy."

Centre for London, Seeing Clearly[41]

Interventions in lighting are, of course, not a catch-all fix, but a tool for managing spaces safely. Improvements in technology can help us achieve this; IoT technology and smart property management software allow organisations to embed adaptable lighting that can change for any occasion and improve neighbourhood safety.

The impact of not feeling safe

Failing to improve the safety of neighbourhoods can have a long and profound impact on individuals[34] that in turn, will serve to make communities less cohesive. Results from the Neighbourhoods & Communities survey found that respondents are four times more likely to feel like they belong to their neighbourhood if they also feel safe.

Experiencing an unsafe neighbourhood and its impacts can lead some people to engage less with their communities and neighbourhoods, increasing isolation and in turn, leaving neighbourhoods less equipped to organise themselves. For under 18s who are victims, witnesses or hear about violence in their communities, there is a risk of poor mental health and long-term behavioural problems. Revealing research in 2021 found that almost half of the English local authorities with the highest crime rates[45] are also counted in the top fifty with the deepest cuts to youth services since 2011.

Like the Social Housing Regulator, Public Health England[46] includes registered providers of social housing as stakeholders to curbing ASB and violent crime in communities, beyond their responsibilities to address domestic abuse in their homes.

"To tackle the root causes of violence and prevent it from happening in the future it is essential that the whole system makes a commitment to creating environments that nurture the protective factors that we know can help to mitigate against perpetration and victimisation of violence."

Public Health England[46]

Last word

Spaces are not fixed as either unsafe or safe; with intervention, dark corners can be filled with community activity. In Palo Alto, California, U.S[47], where serious violent crime is high, sports intervention has been adopted to reduce antisocial behaviour and the effects of crime on society. Using shared public space for communal physical activity can grow residents' ownership over a space. Connectedness to neighbours has also been linked to higher levels of safety[36]. The more residents are able to use their communal areas safely, the less acceptable or congruous neighbourhood crime may become.

Social presence, i.e., the sense of being together with another, has positive effects on perceived safety. Sheffield Hallam researchers discovered that just knowing you had people you could depend on that were close, significantly reduced feelings of vulnerability. This included both close friends and family and less familiar but recognisable people such as local shopkeepers and neighbours that you acknowledge.

"Bringing a community together always improves safety."

Survey respondent

"Safety in public spaces is clearly linked to enjoyment."

Sheffield Hallam University[36]

The safety of communities can be seen as a public asset, whereby its protection and encouragement can improve the physical and mental health of individuals, who in turn may then be better equipped and have more capacity to resist and deter crime and antisocial behaviour in their neighbourhoods.

Conclusion

This research sought to investigate facilities and amenities that are available in neighbourhoods and to explore the complex relationships between residents' perceptions of belonging to and caring about neighbourhood involvement. It also ascertained feelings of neighbourhood safety and potential interventions that could be undertaken to improve them. Answers were cross-analysed to obtain insights into common attributes amongst those who felt unsafe or 'did not belong', with a view to suggesting negative elements that could be addressed and positive aspects that could be promoted to help create safer, more cohesive communities.

The proportion of respondents that cared about community involvement was significantly higher than the percentage who felt that they belonged to their community. This message provides a degree of optimism for all stakeholders and may pave the way for better community engagement.

Only one in seven respondents felt that the current actions of their housing provider increased their sense of community. However, there was a significant lack of awareness regarding positive community contributions by these providers, suggesting that better communication could improve this statistic. More work would be required if we are to define the role of the 21st century social housing provider to help set resident expectations accordingly.

Regarding facilities and amenities, respondents indicated that neighbourhoods are generally well provisioned and in no case was the importance of a facility mentioned by a greater percentage of people than reported its prevalence.

Fifteen percent of respondents in this survey were able to commit positively to all three of the central 'Index Questions' concerning belonging, caring and safety and these people were 3.5 times more likely than the rest of the respondents to view the current actions of their housing provider positively. The three most common aspects that this subset liked about

where they live were green spaces, friendly neighbours, and a community spirit, all of which should be aspirational attributes for good neighbourhoods and communities. Conversely, those with an Index Score of zero overwhelmingly used the words "Drug" and "Police" when asked what would make them feel safer.

Only one in ten respondents reported that nothing needed to change in their neighbourhood to make it feel safer and a correlation was uncovered between neighbourhood belonging and safety. Of the respondents who felt a sense of belonging, there were five times as many who reported feeling safe (64%) than those who did not (13%). Similar statistics were observed when assessing 'belonging' data through the lens of those who felt safe, suggesting that a sense of community correlates with a feeling of safety in a positive and marked way as respondents look to one another as sources of assurance and social connection.

With the sense of community adding to a feeling of safety, providers can become a galvanising force. Social presence, i.e., the sense of being with others, has positive effects on perceived safety, whether it's family and friends or a familiar face. Physically bringing the community together through cause, collaboration or simply to socialise, may go a long way to connecting people.

The team

Many more than the below have had valuable input into the Resident Voice Index™ project. This is a list of the day-to-day core team.

Doug Sarney
Solutions Principal, MRI Software

Doug plays an integral role in the introduction of new products and services to the social housing sector, working closely with industry thought-leaders and housing providers and is the project lead for the Resident Voice Index™. After finishing his post-doctoral research, he was an original member of the team that started the UK arm of a Swedish chemometrics company, working with scientists, statisticians and production engineers to help discover new pharmaceuticals and optimise chemical processes. He then went on to be an original member of the HousingBrixx team and has many years of experience analysing large data sets and developing strategic, mathematical modelling solutions, the last 19 of which have been in social housing.

Naveen Hadagali
BI Architect, MRI Software

With over 15 years of experience in the business intelligence and analytics space, Naveen plays an important role in architecting, designing and implementing analytical solutions in the social housing sector, working closely with product management teams and housing providers. Prior to MRI, Naveen has worked in IBM India, Advanced Business & HealthCare solutions (Now One Advanced) in developing enterprise analytical solutions for clients in the UK and USA.

Stephanie Morphew
Research Lead, us marketing

Stephanie is a qualitative researcher focusing on the built environment and urbanism. For the past 3 years she has been researching and writing about the implications of and applications for technology across the social housing sector. Her work also includes facilitating community consultation across research projects. Previously she has worked with foresight agencies identifying and analysing trends that will impact how we live in the future.

For electronic readers, the references quoted in this publication are hyperlinked throughout the text. For those reading a hard copy, please visit residentvoiceindex.com/references for a full reference list.

![mri REAL ESTATE SOFTWARE]

About MRI Software

MRI Software is a leading provider of web-based solutions for housing associations and local authorities in the UK and Ireland. Through the comprehensive suite of customer-focused products and applications that form our MRI Social Housing offering, we deliver flexibility, choice and scale to more than 850 clients in the region. In total, our team serves more than 3,000 organisations in social, affordable, public and community housing worldwide. With deep domain knowledge, 50 years' experience and world-class innovation as our platform, we believe in our ability to make a difference. We are committed to transforming tenants' lives and experiences, and it's our goal to become the trusted technology partner of choice for the sector.

For more information, please visit mrisoftware.com/uk

You can download a copy of this report at residentvoiceindex.com

"We fundamentally believe in the power of technology to improve the lives and experiences of social housing residents, and the launch of our Resident Voice Index™ project is a perfect demonstration. This initiative captures the perceptions and mood of residents across the UK and helps us to develop a deeper understanding of the factors and trends behind the results – which in turn can be used to elevate service provision."

Dermot Briody
SVP and Executive Managing Director of EMEA
MRI Software

resident voice™
i n d e x

For more information and to join us in shaping future surveys, please visit residentvoiceindex.com