



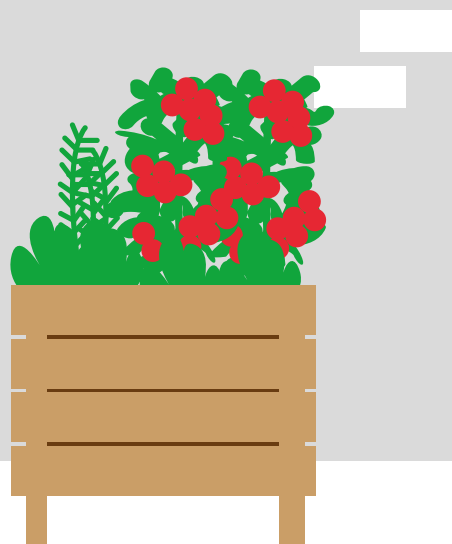
STREETS FOR PEOPLE

LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

Consultation report 2024

Contents

Executive summary.....	3
Background to the consultation.....	3
Key findings	4
Next steps	6
Introduction to the consultation	7
Background	7
Our approach	7
Consultation activities.....	7
Communication.....	9
Respondent profile	10
Children and young people	11
Findings	12
Survey and street engagement findings	12
Youth survey findings	15
Primary school workshop findings.....	17



Executive summary

Background to the consultation

In July 2023, we agreed our Streets for People strategy, outlining a bold vision to improve residents' quality of life and take action on climate change by changing how we travel and use streets in our borough.

We promised that by 2030, every street will be cleaner, greener, and safer, with improvements chosen by residents. In August 2023 we launched our largest public consultation to date. To ensure everyone had a say, we reached out to people from all backgrounds, across every ward and street, giving them the opportunity to help shape these changes.

We used online surveys, door-to-door interviews, social media, targeted emails, public events, focus groups and an extensive programme of school visits. We worked with our partners and stakeholders to further spread the word about the consultation.

Over eight months, we received over 9000 responses. Tens of thousands more have read our flyers, seen our social media posts and read articles in Southwark Life magazine. The depth and detail of this input will guide Southwark's street improvements for years to come.



Key findings

These are the main changes to neighbourhoods and streets respondents would like to see:

Climate and air quality concerns

73%

of Southwark residents are worried about the effects climate change

72%

are concerned about the impact of poor air quality on children.

Respondents widely recognise the challenges of climate change and poor air quality, and understand the need for collective action.



Children's environmental concerns

Children in Southwark are particularly concerned about the environment. They want cleaner streets, better air quality, and less noise pollution.



Active and eco-friendly travel

Most respondents are keen to take up more active and environmentally-friendly forms of travel or are already doing so.



Traffic is the main barrier to cycling

21%

say this as an issue



Desire to cycle to school

21%

of young respondents want to cycle to school but feel they can't due to factors like too much traffic, fear of bike theft, and concerns about road safety.



Improving walking for young people

To make walking more enjoyable, young people emphasised the need for:

44% feeling safe from crime

37% better lighting on roads and paths

30% more greenery



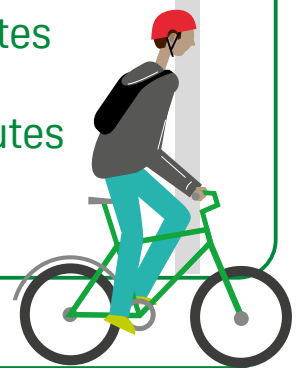
Improving cycling for young people

Young respondents prioritised the following improvements for cycling:

43% more cycle lanes

33% quieter routes

33% greener routes



Support for a greener Southwark

Respondents support the goal of **making Southwark the greenest borough in central London**, with more tree planting and green spaces to improve climate resilience and create more pleasant streets. Green and welcoming outdoor spaces that nurture both wildlife and community are especially important to children.



Street safety and accessibility

Respondents want to see improvements on our streets to make them **safer and more accessible for everyone**.



Safe play spaces

Children want spaces where they can **play**, regardless of age, without them or their parents worrying about their safety. They want things to do and places to go nearby.



Next steps

The detailed and localised data collected in the consultation holds significant value. Through the online surveying we have been able to find out for example that people on street X would like to have more trees or somewhere to sit, or where they are worried about collisions or the state of the pavements. This information has been considered and reflected in the ward maps which form our Streets for People Delivery Plan.

Future engagement

As we examine each street and develop design ideas that align with residents' aspirations, there will be additional opportunities for the community to get involved in shaping these changes.

All future engagement opportunities can be found online at:

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/streets-for-people-get-involved>



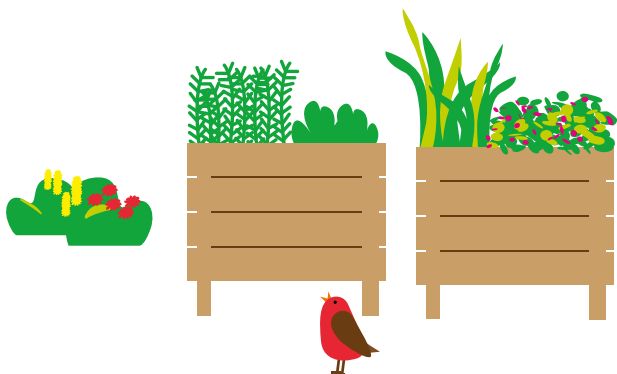
Introduction to the consultation

Background

We published the Streets for People strategy in July 2023. It sets out a bold vision and a firm commitment to improve our residents' quality of life and take action on climate change, by changing how we all travel and use streets in our borough. Streets for People supports:

- cleaner air
- safer and quieter streets with less traffic and fewer collisions
- healthy travel options like walking, cycling or wheeling
- greener, and more pleasant spaces for our communities to connect and socialise
- a better place for all who live, work, study and visit

We promised that by 2030 your street will have improvements to make it cleaner, greener and safer, chosen by you. To achieve this, we sought to understand and map what changes residents want on their streets, and in August 2023 we launched our consultation. The results and insights from feedback has shaped our Streets for People Delivery Plan.



Our approach

Over 9,000 people shared their views as part of our Streets for People consultation, making this the largest engagement exercise the council has ever conducted. Running from August 2023 to March 2024, our goal was to hear from as many residents as possible, from every background, in every ward, and on every street. We aimed to give everyone the opportunity to help shape the changes we will be introducing.

Consultation activities

We used a wide range of consultation activities to reach as many people in Southwark as possible. Throughout the process, we used an iterative approach, testing and refining our methods to improve engagement. By learning from these trials, we were able to scale up our efforts and reach the maximum number of people.

Online survey

In August 2023 we launched the online survey; this included questions about people's overall attitudes and travel behaviours, followed by detailed questions about what they would like to see in their neighbourhood. Residents were able to pinpoint locations for seating, cycle hangars and more, and tell us where the safety hotspots are. They could also indicate their preferred walking and cycling routes. The survey was designed so that people could provide as little or as much information as they liked.

Door-knocking

We know from past experience that many people don't respond to flyers and other forms of communication – and this can lead to surveys being weighted towards certain parts of the population. We set out to correct this with a massive campaign of door-knocking, focusing on those areas of the borough where we anticipated a lower response. Between September and March teams of interviewers visited neighbourhood after neighbourhood, attempting to get feedback from as many streets as possible. We knocked on over 20,000 doors and spoke to well over 2,000 residents – for thousands of people this was the first time getting involved in engagement with the council. We used a short form of the online survey to get all the core information without taking too much of people's time.

Focus meetings

We held a number of focus meetings covering walking, cycling, people with disabilities, and parents/carers. This was an opportunity for people to look in more detail at the Streets for People strategy and our Walking and Cycling Plans that relate to it. These were open to people who had already expressed an interest through the survey. The 'Walking and disability' focus meetings were well attended and particularly fruitful – with rich feedback leading to a number of changes being made to our Walking and Cycling plans.

Community events

We attended a number of community events around the borough, publicising the Streets for People strategy and carrying out one-to-one surveys with the same short-form survey we used when door-knocking. Particularly well attended events included the Peckham Rye Fete, the Veolia Wonder Day and the International Day for Older People event in Peckham Square.

Workshops with primary school children

We engaged children and young people to learn about the changes they would like to see in their streets and neighbourhoods. We conducted workshops in schools with students from Year 5 to Year 6, focusing on what they love and dislike about their streets, and what they wish for in their area. Together, the class created bunting to illustrate what they would like to see changed in their own streets and neighbourhoods.

We ran 25 workshops at 14 different schools, reaching over 600 children in 11 different wards. Findings from these workshops provide a rich understanding of a child's experience of living in Southwark. They reveal what children value and appreciate about their area, what brings them joy, and what negatively impacts their lives. They also identify barriers to being active and healthy and suggest meaningful changes to their environments.

Following an initial analysis of the findings from these workshops, we returned to two schools to run playback sessions. In these sessions, we presented the findings and key insights gathered. The students' role was to review the findings and engage in discussions. This process helped us further refine our understanding and define the improvements they want to see in their streets and neighbourhoods.

Youth survey

Together with workshops held in primary schools the youth survey formed part of the youth engagement work. The survey ran December 2023 to March 2024 and reached over 250 young people in Southwark. It sought to understand the existing experience of walking and cycling in Southwark and what prevents young people from active travel. It further asked what changes young people would like to see to make walking and cycling easier, and to improve streets.

Southwark Youth Parliament

We engaged the Southwark Youth Parliament in Streets for People through presentation, discussion, and encourage them to respond to the survey and share it with their peers.



Communication

Reaching people in Southwark

Running this consultation for an extended period enabled us to try out a variety of communication approaches.

We used existing council mailing lists to contact people who had previously expressed an interest in this work. We also used the council's residents' e-newsletter and Southwark Life magazine, which goes to every household in the borough.

Social media campaigns reached around 200,000 people, reaching people who would not have seen the survey any other way, including a higher proportion of private renters, who are often among our seldom heard groups. We also encouraged key stakeholder partners – including members of our Active Travel Group – to promote the survey with their own networks.

We asked respondents to the main survey to tell us how they found out about the survey. The largest group – 35% had found out about it via the council e-newsletter or other council emails. But almost 32% found out through our door-knocking work. A further 13% learned about the survey through our social media campaign.

Reaching children and young people in Southwark

All secondary schools were contacted and asked to share the youth survey with their students. Additionally, youth organisations and partners were asked to share it through their networks. 73% of respondents reported that they learned about it from their school.

Every year 5 and 6 (children aged nine to 11) in Southwark was offered a workshop at their school, delivered by council staff. Schools were contacted via their School Travel Plan coordinators in collaboration with the council's School Travel team. Participating schools earned points towards their Transport for London Travel for Life scheme, which inspires young Londoners to travel to school sustainably, actively, responsibly and safely by championing walking, scooting and cycling.

Social media campaigns reached around

200,000
people

Respondent found out about the survey

40%

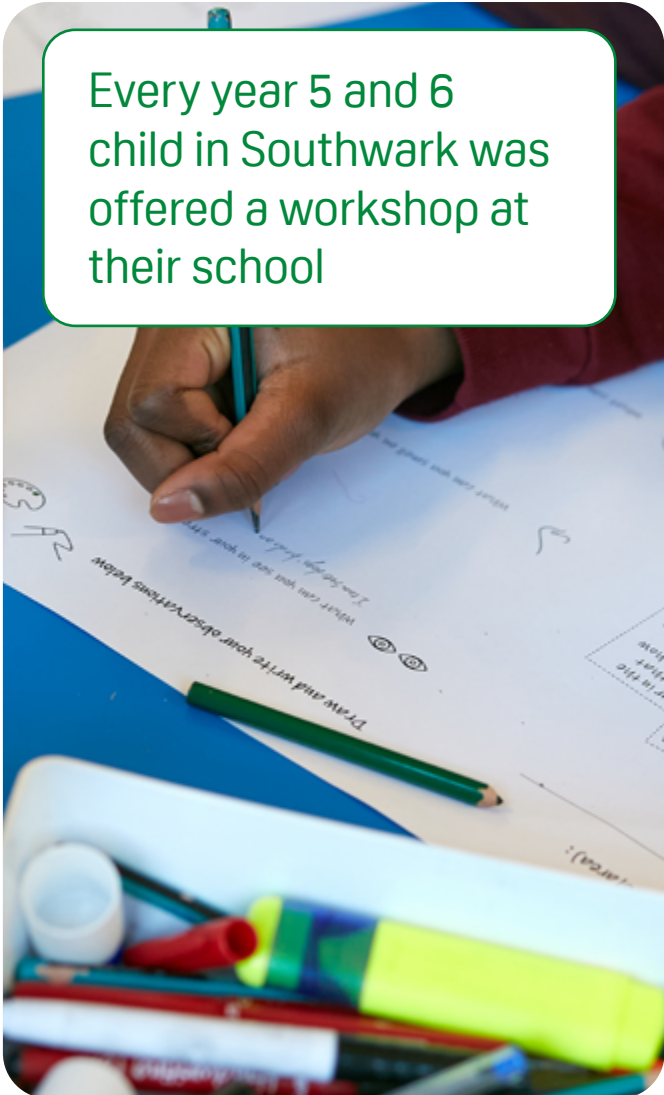
via the council e-newsletter

32%

through our door-knocking work

13%

through our social media campaign.



Every year 5 and 6 child in Southwark was offered a workshop at their school

Respondent profile

The main Streets for People survey – including online respondents and the people we spoke to on their doorstep – received 5,560 responses. We also received thousands of responses to Streets for People questions included in other surveys throughout 2023 (including those asking about proposed controlled parking zones and local Streetspace measures).

We heard from people in every ward area in Southwark, and from

65%

of all streets in the borough

76% of our respondents were from **White ethnic backgrounds**, compared with just **51%** of the borough population



44% of respondents were **between 25 and 44 years of age**


Overall, our consultees skewed somewhat older than the average for Southwark’s population, but we achieved healthy representation for all adult age groups.

This is a long-term challenge for our engagement approaches – but it is worth noting that the street survey work had a much better balance of ethnic backgrounds


63% White backgrounds

20% Black backgrounds

9% Asian backgrounds





14% of respondents who answered the question described themselves as **disabled**



54% of our respondents are **female**

44% are **male**

94% of respondents live in Southwark,

17% work in Southwark and

10% are parents/carers of children studying in Southwark

Children and young people



Through our primary school workshops, we reached over

600

children aged nine to eleven across

14

different schools in

11

wards, covering all parts of the borough

The majority of respondents,

55%

were between 12 and 13 years old

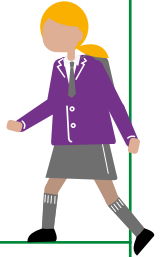
17%

were between 10 and 11 years old

In terms of gender,

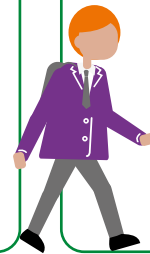
52%

were female, and



39%

were male



4%
Other ethnic backgrounds

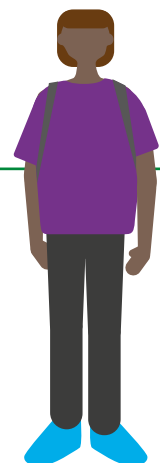
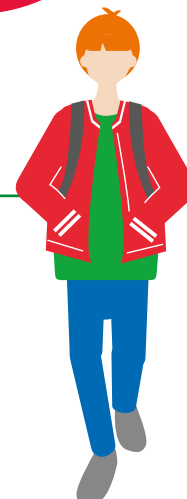
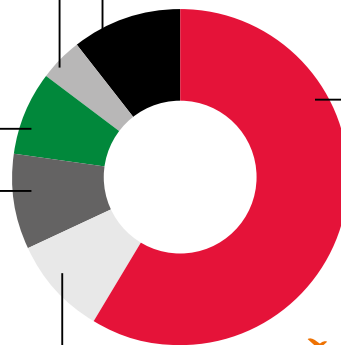
10%
chose not to disclose their ethnicity

8%
Black backgrounds

9%
Mixed ethnic backgrounds

10%
Asian backgrounds

59%
White backgrounds



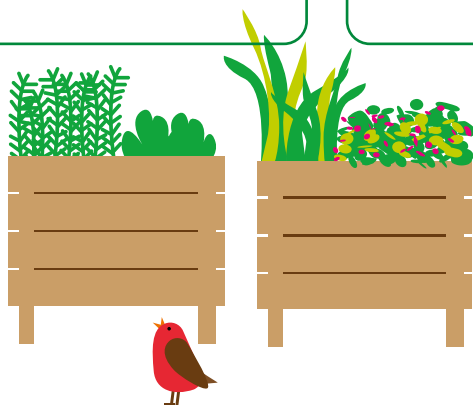
Of the respondents to the youth survey,

64%

study in Southwark, and

50%

also live in the area.



Findings

Survey and street engagement findings

It is important to emphasise at this stage that the main focus of the survey and street engagement was on finding out what people would like to see in their neighbourhoods and on the streets they live in. These findings have played an essential role in informing our Streets for People Delivery Plan.

There are some overall themes and stories to tell about people's views and attitudes at the borough-wide level, but these do not supersede the local perspective.

Behavioural insight

We presented survey respondents with a series of statements, which they could choose to agree with or not. This was designed to test some of our basic assumptions about the opportunities to encourage more active or more environmentally friendly forms of travel.

These are the overall responses to these statements:

I cycle/scoot or walk as my main form of transport

57%



I am considering buying an electric car or van

18%



I would walk more if the streets were quieter or less polluted

45%



I am worried about the effects of climate change

73%



I would be interested in trying cycling (or cycling more)

41%



I am worried about the impact of poor air quality on children

72%



I would take buses more if they were more reliable

47%



We also cross-referenced these statements with some of the other questions, to draw a more nuanced view of how people saw these issues:

- **Parents/carers** were more likely than the average to be interested in cycling (58%), considering buying an electric car (35%), and concerned about climate change or air quality (88% and 89% respectively)



- **People of Black ethnic backgrounds** are less concerned than people of other ethnic backgrounds about the impacts of climate change and air quality. 55% are worried about the effects of climate change compared to 73% overall. 60% are worried about the impact of poor air quality on children compared to 72% overall.



- Interest in many of these statements scales with **age** – for example 59% of 25-34 year-olds were interested in cycling, as opposed to 31% of 55-64 year-olds. Concern about climate change peaks at 81% in 35-44 year-olds, whereas only 57% of 75-84 year-olds share this concern.

- Agreement with the statements also scales with **income** – for example, 64% of those with a household income of £90,000+ per year are interested in trying cycling, as against 43% of those earning £15-29,999 per year.



How do people travel?

Around

42%

of respondents reported using a car

Only around **29%** use their car once a week or more. This compares with the 2021 census that shows that over **60%** of Southwark households do not own a car.

Almost

90%

of respondents walk at least occasionally – this includes wheelchair-users.

A little over

40%

have and use their own cycle or scooter.

Use of public transport was also predictably very high – around

60%

of respondents using buses at least once a week.

Barriers to cycling

People who said that they were interested in trying cycling or cycling more, received further questions about what was stopping them.

61%

of those who responded said **dangerous driving** was seen as a significant obstacle.

Lack of protected cycle lanes (56%) and **volume of motor traffic (55%)** were also seen as significant obstacles.

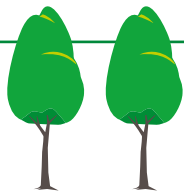
Lack of places to store their bike at home was seen as an obstacle by over **58%** of respondents, whereas most respondents did not see the affordability of bikes, cycling confidence or their own fitness as obstacles.

Street improvements

We presented all respondents with a long list of possible measures they might like to see on their street. The responses have been used to guide the street and ward-level responses in the form of illustrative maps which can be found in **appendix 2b - Resident feedback by ward**.

Some broad trends for the whole borough also came through:

46%
of respondents wanted to see **new trees** on their street.



44%
would like to see **new green spaces**, such as planters or rain gardens.



These were consistently favoured choices across the borough, though especially in some of the more built-up areas to the north.

44%
of respondents wanted to see **pavement improvements** (wider and smoother surfaces)



39%
wanted to see **pavement decluttering**



As we discovered, this can mean different things in different places – these can be found in **appendix 2b - Resident feedback by ward**.

At borough level

34%
of respondents want to see **less traffic**.



This number was **45%** or more in wards such as Camberwell Green, London Bridge & West Bermondsey, and Nunhead & Queens Road, reflecting some very busy roads.

All other choices were much less consistent across the borough.



Youth survey findings

Cycling habits

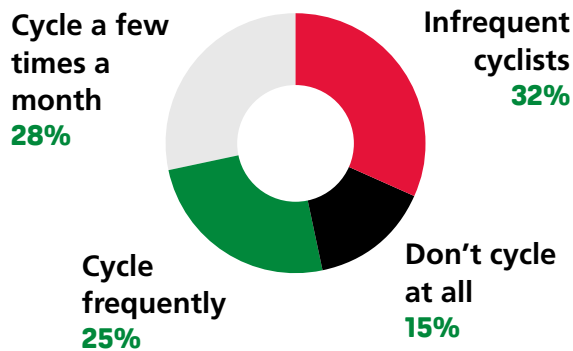
66%

of respondents to our survey **consider themselves confident cyclists**, and

47%

feel they **see people like themselves cycling** in Southwark.

Cycling frequency amongst respondents:



Amongst all who said they cycle, going to the park or going for a ride are the most common destinations. However, amongst the frequent cyclists the most common destination is cycling to school.

Barriers to cycling

The primary barriers to cycling identified were that it was:

- **too far to cycle (21%)**
- **too much traffic (21%)**
- **fear of getting your bike stolen** due to lack of appropriate storage facilities **(20%)**
- **not feeling safe from accidents (19%)**

For those who don't currently cycle, the main reasons are:

- **a lack of interest (4%)**
- **feeling unsafe from accidents (40%)**
- **not having enough storage space** at home for a bike **(26%)**

Motivation to cycling

The primary motivations for cycling include

- **improving fitness and health (44.9%)**
- **faster transport (40%)**
- **helping the environment (31%)**

Additionally, **21%** of respondents expressed a desire to cycle to school.

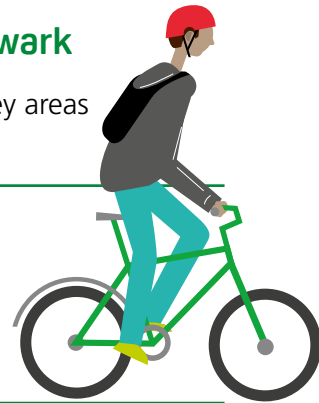
Improving cycling in Southwark

Respondents highlighted several key areas for improvement.

43% wanted **more cycle lanes**

33% wanted **quieter routes**

33% wanted **greener routes**



31% also said they would like not to have to worry about bike theft. Improved road behaviours from all users, including cyclists, were important to **31%** of respondents, particularly to create a more welcoming environment for young cyclists.

Other significant suggestions included reducing traffic **(29%)** and ensuring safety from accidents **(27%)**.



Walking habits

Survey respondents most frequently walk to:

- **shops (72%)**
- **parks (71%)**
- **friends' houses (69%)**

The top reasons for choosing to walk include

- **finding it enjoyable (37%)**
- **seeing it as a social activity (36%)**
- **using it to improve fitness (33%)**

While most respondents felt they already walk enough, **16% expressed a desire to walk to school.**

Barriers to walking

The main barriers to walking include

- **distance (30%)**
- **time (21%)**
- **having too much to carry (21%)**

Additionally, **concerns about crime** prevent some from walking more **(18%)**

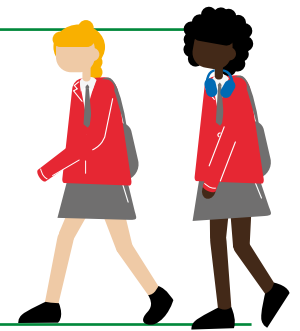
Improving walking in Southwark

Respondents identified several ways to improve the walking experience in Southwark.

44% said they want to **feel safe from crime**

37% want to see **improved lighting** on roads and paths

30% want **more greenery**



Other improvements include **widening pavements (29%)** and **making crossing streets easier (29%)**.





Primary school workshop findings

We ran workshops with Year 5 and Year 6 students from all parts of the borough. We learned what they value and appreciate about their area, and what negatively impacts their lives. Additionally, they suggested meaningful changes to their environments. Here we provide an insight to the changes they would like to see. The three most desired changes are; to see their environmental concerns addressed, for more and accessible amenities and activities, and more outdoor spaces and nature.

Environmental concerns: cleaner, quieter and healthier environments

Children in Southwark have strong environmental concerns. They want to see changes that lead to cleaner, quieter, and healthier environments. Children want to live in places that are cared for. They are deeply concerned about different types of pollution in their areas. Issues like littering and dog waste were frequently mentioned during our workshops. They also express concerns about invisible pollutants, including car emissions, smoking, and vaping. They want to live in neighbourhoods that are peaceful and quiet. Children told us how noisy neighbours and loud street noises disrupts their sleep.

Amenities and activities: more child-friendly spaces

Children desire more opportunities and spaces to play and engage in activities within their local area. Children told us they want to have spaces to play and be active in, suitable for children of all ages. Additionally, they wish for the freedom to go out and play without them or their parents worrying about their safety.

Children seek spaces where they can enjoy, socialise, and develop their independence. They want amenities like parks, shops, and leisure centres to be conveniently close by.

Outdoor and nature: green and welcoming outdoor spaces that nurture wildlife and community

Growing up in densely populated urban areas, the spaces outside and near their homes become increasingly important. These areas serve as vital places for social interaction, connection, play, and growth. Our research with children shows that nearby green spaces and nature are the most appreciated aspects of neighbourhoods. Ultimately, children want green and welcoming outdoor spaces that nurture both wildlife and community.

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