



Portland Road and Clarendon



Community Needs Analysis

Full report of findings- February 2008

Data collected between June and December 2007

This report was compiled by the CNA community research team, University of Brighton:

Peter Day & Clair Farenden

Community partner

Jo Martindale

Volunteer and student research teams:

Rosemary Eltom

Sali Abdi

Hanne Eis

Maxine Leddy

Bilbo Gibbons

Cathryn Lindley

Katie Marsh

Philippa Henderson

Matthew Warne

Laura Packham

Denise Day

Constantinos Pantelides

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Introduction

This report is structured in the following way. A summary of research findings is presented first in a top 10 table. The main findings are in sections representing issues drawn from the research. This is followed by five themed reports that represent the views of ‘communities within the community’. Participant demographics are then presented followed by our recommendations and a brief discussion of how the research might affect the area in the future.

The purpose of this research was to assess the needs and perceptions of the Portland Road and Clarendon Neighbourhood Renewal area as articulated by local residents. The research, which forms part of the CNA project’s community research partnership activities in the area, was funded by the Brighton and Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange (BSCKE), a research programme at the University of Brighton.

Portland Road and Clarendon comprises 5518 households (source: 2001 census) and after discussions with our community partners, a survey of 10% of the population was agreed as a good working sample upon which to represent the views of the community. 525 people subsequently took part in the survey, representing a sample of 9.5%.

In order to represent the ‘local voice’ and establish which issues were of most importance to local people, we decided to avoid issue specific and focused questions. Data collection was conducted by attending community groups, activities and events, as well as visiting local meeting places such as Stoneham Park, coffee shops and community groups. In addition some 3500 questionnaires were delivered to local homes, school parents, dental surgeries, shops and cafes.

The questionnaire asked 3 open questions:

- What are the 3 best things about the West Hove area?
- What are the 3 worst things?
- What improvements would you make to the area?

A grounded theory approach was used to analyse the comments and create a set of qualitative values under which a quantitative or ‘number of votes’ assessment could be made. 12 sections emerged from observing common themes in the data. These are:

Community Activity Community Safety Education Health Housing Local shops & businesses Parking Parks & green spaces Public Transport Refuse & Recycling Street environment Traffic

The summary on page 5 shows the ‘top 10’ results- identified by observing common issues within the sections and counting the number of associated comment(s).

In each section following, comments about what is best, worst and what should be improved are listed alongside the numbers of people making statements about them and the % this represents of people who took part in the survey.

All sections provide residents’ quotes and where needed, an explanation of what the figures represent or “the story behind the numbers” (Shultz, 2002)¹

¹ Shultz, J., 2002. *The Democracy Owner’s Manual*. London: Rutgers University Press. p40

Following these sections, we present the findings in themed reports concerning a range of different categories of people. To address the information needs of the various agencies in the area, we have analysed the results for: Older residents aged 60+, young people under 19 and people from 3 neighbourhoods within the area:- Clarendon and Ellen estate, Ingram Crescent estate and Poet's Corner.

To see where differences in need occur, the themed sections compare percentages of comments made with figures across the complete surveyed population.

A table of profiling data is included at the end, containing details of who we spoke to alongside Portland Road and Clarendon census information for comparison.(Source: 2001 census)² The recommendations page provides a brief commentary on what the summary figures illustrate and the 'What Next?' section includes details of our commitment to disseminating the results.

Linking themes with Neighbourhood Renewal (NR)

The research team observed from their conversations with people in the area that issues of importance are not expressed separately or in neatly defined categories. Sections of the report cross over and what is expressed as a concern does not always lead directly to suggested improvements. In addition, a small number of comments are counted twice for clarity, as they could not be removed from one or other section, e.g. Improve Portland Rd appears under 'Local Shops and Businesses' *and* 'Street Environment' because comments collectively referred to the shops, pavements and dirtiness of Portland Road.

We did produce an interim report under the NR headings to assist the purposes of the Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) for Portland Road and Clarendon, but the categories presented here as report headings emerged as a result of the grounded theory approach mentioned earlier.

However, some of the categories are similar and can be observed in the following way:

Grounded Headings	Neighbourhood Renewal Headings³
Community Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities and Involving People
Community Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing Crime and Improving Community Safety • Strengthening Communities and Involving People
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Enterprise and Learning
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Health and Well-being
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Housing and Housing Affordability
Local shops and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Enterprise and Learning • Promoting resource efficiency/enhancing the Environment
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting resource efficiency/enhancing the Environment
Parks and green spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Health and Well-being • Promoting resource efficiency/enhancing the Environment
Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting resource efficiency/enhancing the Environment
Refuse & Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting resource efficiency/enhancing the Environment
Street environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting resource efficiency/enhancing the Environment
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting resource efficiency/enhancing the Environment

² Source: 2001 Census. Portland Road and Clarendon data published by <http://www.BHLIS.org>

³ Source: 2008. Brighton & Hove City Council, policy dept.

Results Summary

In general, we found a willingness to help others and a sense of being part of the community. Some people made suggestions for change that would not affect them directly, but would have a positive impact on friends and neighbours in the community.

The majority of people we spoke to believe the area to be a good place to live, yet significantly high numbers of residents also make complaints about various services and issues. There is clearly room for improvement.

Top 10 results for each question	Numbers of people	% of people
Best things		
1. Parks	326	62%
2. Local shops and businesses	310	59%
3. Transport links	243	46%
4. Community groups, activities & events	224	43%
5. Community Spirit	210	40.5%
6. Quality/proximity of seafront	117	23%
7. Feel safe	81	16%
8. Good, central location	80	15.5%
9. Good schools	61	11.5%
10. Quieter than Brighton	54	10%
Worst things		
1. Parking	260	49.5%
2. Lack of community safety	256	49%
3. Street litter and refuse collections	196	37%
4. Traffic	172	33%
5. Lack of community activity and space	149	28%
6. Lacking choice of amenities	109	21%
7. Poor housing & living conditions	99	19%
8. Street disrepair	68	13%
9. Lack of parks, trees & greening	57	11%
10. Lack of health services	26	5%
Improvements/priorities for change		
1. More community spaces and activities	241	46 %
2. Support for small businesses	145	27.5%
3. Improve street greening & parks	137	26%
4. Traffic calming measures	124	23.5%
5. Improve collections of litter, refuse & recycling	106	20%
6. Improve and maintain street environment	88	16.5%
7. Improve parking solutions	81	15.5%
8. Police/Council to tackle anti-social behaviour	74	14%
9. Improve housing & living conditions	64	12%
10. Improve health services	31	6%

Community Activity

Best things

	<u>Number</u> <u>of people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
Community Spirit	210	40.6%
Groups, activities & events generally	82	15.9%
Activities for children	52	10.1%
YMCA	44	8.5%
Festival	18	3.5%
Talkshop	17	3.3%
West Hove News	4	0.8%
PCCS	3	0.6%
Vallance centre	2	0.4%
Activities for older people	1	0.2%
Activities for young people	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	434	84.0%

There were a plethora of comments about neighbourliness and feeling welcome: “The neighbours on my street are all very friendly...we talk and help each other out”
In general, we found a sense of openness, willingness to share information and resources. Residents feel this friendliness is unique to the neighbourhood compared with other areas across the City.

Worst things

	<u>Number</u> <u>of people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
Lack of sports & leisure facilities	32	6.4%
Lack of facilities/activities for young people	27	5.4%
Lack of social activities	25	5.0%
Lack of action from residents	14	2.8%
Lack of community venues	10	2.0%
Lack of services/activities for OP	10	2.0%
Lack of publicity	10	2.0%
Not enough for young people to do evenings & weekends	8	1.6%
YMCA	4	0.8%
Lack of networking between community organisations and groups	3	0.6%
Lack of funding for community activities	3	0.6%
Lack of holiday/play schemes	2	0.4%
Not enough for young people in holidays	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	149	28%

Under *lack of social activities*, there were a few comments made about arts and drama facilities, but many of these comments suggest a lack of opportunity to meet and socialise outside pubs. Within this category, there were some comments about the lack of integration by Black and Minority Ethnic groups “there are lots of Muslims in the area but not much contact”.

The comments on *lack of community venues* were about the small size of existing spaces “the ones available are too small or dark” Parents noted there is not enough room for buggies. There were a number of comments about the lack of non-religious spaces.

Concerns about the *lack of sports and leisure facilities* were about the poor quality of the King Alfred Leisure Centre and the fact it is closing down. Families are unhappy about travelling to the already busy Prince Regent complex or to Shoreham. Other comments were about the lack of sports activities for girls “All the YMCA groups are for boys”.

Comments about the *lack of action* suggested that some residents are more willing to complain than to take part in possible solutions for change, yet other residents said they would not want to be involved with certain community groups, as they are unwelcoming and “cliquey”. One person told us that she tried to volunteer for the festival committee, but no one got back to her. Other comments were from older people who are worried that neighbours “don’t keep an eye out” for each other.

Lack of facilities/activities for young people; there is a perception that although YMCA is a welcome resource, its activities attract a minority of young or older people. Young people in the area think there is “nothing to do and nowhere to go”.

Whilst there were many positive comments made about YMCA, there were also complaints about the types of activities on offer. Young people stated that they did not want to take part in organised activities and groups, whilst older people said either they did not want so many targeted groups that are for older people only, or that they were not interested in the activities on offer. To quote an 86 year old woman who has lived in the area for many years “I don’t want to have lunch with a load of old people- it’s boring!” She went on to suggest that she would rather be defined by her interests than by her age.

Two of the comments about *lack of networking* were from volunteers or community leaders who recognise how this can lead to duplication and lacking community cohesion. One resident suggested PCCS “think they run the place”.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
More sports and leisure facilities	43	8.9%
More for young people to do	33	6.8%
Social activities including arts/culture	28	5.8%
More available community spaces	20	4.1%
Use old bingo hall as community centre	19	3.9%
More community activity	15	3.1%
Better publicity	15	3.1%
More for young people to do evenings/weekends	11	2.3%
More groups & activities for older people	10	2.1%
More available funding and support	9	1.9%
More Playscheme/ after school places	9	1.9%
Re-think community infrastructure	5	1.0%
Places to go in winter/rainy days	5	1.0%
More regular children's groups	3	0.6%
More groups/activities for children	3	0.6%
Better access to childcare	3	0.6%
More activities/sports for girls	3	0.6%
Cheaper activities	2	0.4%
More for young people in holidays	2	0.4%
Better community support for children with special educational needs	2	0.4%
Better ways to engage older people	1	0.2%
Total	241	46%

The King Alfred Leisure Centre is closing to the public, which residents believe will create a major gap in affordable *sport and leisure facilities* in the area. It appears that most residents we spoke to do not know about plans to build an improved public sports centre with swimming pool. At the time this report was written, Brighton and Hove Council have yet to make suggestions about who will manage the centre, but their publicly available plans make it clear that a new centre will be open for all in 2012/13 and prices are only set to increase in line with inflation.⁴ Other comments were about sports clubs and activities for adults. Children and young people made up over a quarter of the comments made.

Several suggestions were made about using the *Bingo Hall* as a neutral space for community activity and social events. A few children from West Hove Junior School suggested it should be a swimming pool, but most comments suggested it should be a large enough space to host events and activities.

Suggestions about *more community activity* were alongside complaints about the lack of accessible neighbourhood spaces, in particular the Vallance centre, which is “not open enough”. There were some suggestions about a volunteer matching scheme that could “help maintain scruffy gardens” in the area or support elderly and disabled people that need help maintaining their homes and gardens.

Solutions about *more for young people to do* include employing a sustainable youth work team and more spaces to “keep teenagers off the streets”.

⁴ See planning and design section: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1001273#subtitle6>

Most of the suggestions concerning young people on *evenings and weekends* were about having a local alcohol-free nightclub or dance event for under 18's on a Friday or Saturday night. In addition, there were suggestions about a local drop in venue for young people that is not required to involve organised youth activities. One resident commented that local pubs offer safe, supervised places that could hold events for young people. According to one resident, the Portland Pub has demonstrated some success in the past.

Suggestions about *re-thinking community infrastructure* were mostly from people who are frequently involved with organising community activities. It is suggested that better networking is a solution to lacking involvement, leading to more inclusive development of services and activities in the most socially deprived areas of the neighbourhood. One resident commented "I'm not sure the managers of the Talkshop and Vallance Centre really understand community development- there is a lack of involvement, and they seem scared to go out and door knock isolated residents" Better networking. There were also several comments about the need to "integrate more with Black and Minority Ethnic residents in social community events".

Residents who are unaware of what goes on in the area suggested *better publicity* could be provided if there were more public notice boards and wider door to door distribution of the West Hove News (to include more door to door deliveries and local shops) with the inclusion of a regular events and activities timetable. The new community website was mentioned as a welcome solution to the lack of publicity, but should not replace notice boards and information on paper, especially where the elderly are concerned (many of whom do not have or want access to the internet).

Community Safety

Best things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Feel safe	44	8.4%
Good place for families	30	5.7%
Police presence	7	1.3%
<u>Total</u>	81	15.5%

The Community Police Support Officers received a few positive comments. Residents stated that the Clarendon & Ellen estate in particular has seen a reduction in anti-social behaviour owing to their presence.

Worst things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Anti-social behaviour	26	5.2%
Young people's anti-social behaviour	25	5.0%
Noise in streets at night	25	5.0%
Gangs of young people	17	3.4%
Disruptive neighbours	16	3.2%
Young people's anti-social behaviour in Stoneham Park	15	3.0%
Vandalism	14	2.8%
Feel unsafe	13	2.6%
Drug use/dealing in Stoneham Park	13	2.6%
Graffiti	12	2.4%
Lack of Police on streets	12	2.4%
Drug use/dealing in the general area	12	2.4%
Underage drinking in Stoneham Park	10	2.0%
Car break in/damage	9	1.8%
Feel unsafe at Aldrington Station	9	1.8%
Street drinking	8	1.6%
Feel unsafe at Stoneham Park at night	7	1.4%
Drug use/dealing on Clarendon estate	6	1.2%
Underage drinking in Clarendon	3	0.6%
Prejudice against young people	2	0.4%
Drug use/dealing in Skate park	1	0.2%
Portland pub	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	256	49%

Most of the comments made about anti-social behaviours suggested concerns about young people. How often the threat is actual or perceived is unclear, yet there is clearly concern about gangs of young people, observed instances of anti-social behaviour in Stoneham Park and drug or alcohol use.

(see also: solutions in Community Activity section)

There is an increase in *noise in the streets at night* since extended licences were granted to pubs in residential areas . "This is a residential area, so late licensing simply spreads city centre

leisure across the city and stretches Police resources beyond capacity- underage drinking, drink-driving and vandalism goes on unobserved”

The majority of complaints about *disruptive neighbours* are from residents of the Clarendon & Ellen estate and particularly residents of Conway Court, who have complained to the local authorities without response. Other comments are about the regular noise outside Westows, which is affecting the quality of life for residents that live nearby.

Comments from those who *feel unsafe* are alongside complaints about poor street lighting and the condition of pavements, anti-social behaviour, gangs of young people and the open drug use/dealing in the area.

There were some curious comments about a local woman who puts rubbish through the West Hove school fence and scares the children with anti-social behaviour. She is believed to be unwell, but no more information was given.

For other safety concerns, see also: worst things (on *pavements in disrepair*) in Street Environment section.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
More Police tackling anti-social behaviour	52	10.8%
Educate young people to be more responsible	6	1.2%
Deal with noisy neighbours	6	1.2%
Improve Neighbourhood Watch	4	0.8%
Deal with noise/anti-social behaviour at pub closing times	4	0.8%
Community service for anti-social behaviour	2	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	74	14%

A specific comment under *deal with noise/anti-social behaviour at pub closing times* suggested “Either increase community police presence or get rid of late opening of pubs on residential streets. People don’t want to make formal complaints since this is recorded against their address and nothing gets done anyway!”

Solutions for tackling anti-social behaviour do not neatly sit under suggested improvements in this category. Many of the residents we spoke to who identified community safety as a concern went on to suggest that solutions should include more community activity and social events. These suggestions are listed under ‘Community Activity’. The comments showed a considered response amongst residents, who clearly try to observe the causes of anti-social behaviour and make suggestions accordingly. Some people recognize that safety is not the sole duty of the Police, but is the responsibility of everyone, including all the services that are accountable to the community.

For other safety solutions, see also: Parks & Green Spaces and Street Environment sections (*improve pavements and street lighting*)

Education

Best things

	<u>Number</u> <u>of people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>residents</u>
Good schools	34	6.6%
West Hove Infants & Junior schools	27	5.2%
<u>Total</u>	61	12%

Many of the comments about the primary schools in the area suggested the standard of education is very good with teachers demonstrating a high level of care and consideration for the children.

Worst things

	<u>Number</u> <u>of people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>residents</u>
Lack of local school places	17	3.4%
West Hove school	11	2.2%
Lack of state nurseries	3	0.6%
Lack of adult education opportunities	2	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	33	6.5%

Most of the comments about *West Hove School* were made by local parents and children concerned with the lack of greening, slippery playground, bullies and not being able to concentrate because “infants are screaming in the playground while the juniors are working”.

The 2 complaints about the lack of adult education opportunities were from older people who cannot afford to pay full price for adult education activities. The removal of the pensioner’s discount at the Connaught centre makes their classes prohibitively expensive.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number</u> <u>of people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>residents</u>
More local school places	11	2.3%
Better access to adult education	6	1.2%
Better employment training/opportunities	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	18	4.0%

There are not many comments suggesting improvements to education in the area, though some parents are clearly concerned about what one called “the local school lottery”. The recent changes to the allocation system are not popular, especially for those parents on low incomes that have to travel outside the area every day. We recognize this is a national debate, but it clearly affects the quality of life for families at a local level.

For other education suggestions, see also: Community Safety section (*educate young people to be more responsible*), Health section (*more health education classes*), Refuse & Recycling (*litter education scheme*) and Housing and Living conditions (*increase services with expanding population*).

Health

Best things

	<u>Number of</u> <u>people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
Good health services	10	1.9%
<u>Total</u>	10	2%

These comments were somewhat general in nature, but the absence of them suggests that health services are not regarded as especially good in the area.

Worst things

	<u>Number of</u> <u>people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
Lack of GPs	7	1.4%
Lack of NHS dentists	7	1.4%
Difficulty booking timely GP appointment	6	1.2%
Lack of local health services	4	0.8%
Difficulty booking timely dentist appointment	1	0.2%
Home Care services	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	26	5%

Considering previous research and development work we have been involved with in the area, it is surprising to see so few comments about the lack of GPs. Recent conversations with local residents highlighted this is a particular concern. It will be interesting to observe the results of the MORI study being carried out at present. We know that in a survey asking open questions, specific issues are more likely to emerge if a person has recently experienced difficulty. Considering GP and dental visits are sporadic, the lack of access to health care professionals in the area may not have been a particular concern for most people at the time this survey was completed.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of</u> <u>people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
More GPs in the area	8	1.7%
A local health centre	7	1.4%
Better access to NHS dentist	5	1.0%
More/better services for housebound	5	1.0%
Health education classes	3	0.6%
Improve health outreach services	1	0.2%
Speed up appointment times to see a GP	1	0.2%
NHS access to complementary medicine	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	31	6.5%

Comments about *health education classes* suggested that residents would like information about healthy eating, parenting and drugs education.

See other suggestions in: Housing and living conditions (*increase services with expanding population*).

Housing and living conditions

Best things

	<u>Number of</u> <u>people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
Cheaper than Brighton	2	0.4%
Inside properties at Ingram Crescent	2	0.4%
Council housing maintenance	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	5	1%

We let the figures speak for themselves here.

Worst things

	<u>Number of</u> <u>people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
House prices/rents too high	22	4.4%
Overcrowding	19	3.8%
Services don't keep up with expanding population	10	2.0%
Cost of living	10	2.0%
Clarendon & Ellen problems	8	1.6%
Lack of cleaning/caretaking at Clarendon & Ellen	7	1.4%
Ingram Crescent problems	6	1.2%
Lack of housing for elderly	4	0.8%
Empty/unmaintained homes	4	0.8%
Slow repairs	3	0.6%
Cost of council tax	3	0.6%
Gala Bingo Hall plans	2	0.4%
Unaffordable housing being built	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	99	20.0%

“London prices, Brighton wages” was a comment that echoes many others made on the issue of *house prices and rents* (being) *too high*. This is especially affecting the expendable income and quality of life for local residents and families who rent privately. Under *cost of living*, residents made comments about “the rich/poor divide” and the “socially deprived” or “economically poor” areas within the neighbourhood.

Overcrowding and *services not keeping up with expanding population* refers to the growing addition of flats in the neighbourhood vicinity without, it seems, adequately matching services to meet increased need. This affects the quality of life for residents and causes a strain on existing resources. Examples given are; an increase in traffic and parking congestion, scarcity of local school places, strain on health care resources, more rubbish and increased anti-social behaviour. An increase in population affects all other concerns identified in this report.

Residents are also concerned that not enough *effective* action is being taken to combat the rich/poor divide; the comment “too many community groups, little outcome” suggests that whilst there is a high level of community activity in the area, services and groups are not targeting residents with the greatest need.

Comments about *Ingram Crescent* are mostly concerned with its decline since the caretaker left.

Similarly, *Clarendon and Ellen* residents perceive the area to have declined since its caretaker was made redundant. There were also complaints about the poor street lighting at night and to poor signage on streets and blocks, which is causing difficulty for visitors and delivery drivers. *See also: comments on disruptive neighbours* (in Community Safety section)

Comments on the *cost of council tax* suggest, “it’s not good value- the Council waste our money on pointless projects”

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number</u> <u>of people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
Better/more genuinely affordable housing	18	3.7%
Improve accommodation at Clarendon & Ellen	14	2.9%
Regenerate Old Bingo Hall	11	2.3%
More/better services for housebound	5	1.0%
Increase services with expanding population	5	1.0%
Stop allowing over development	4	0.8%
Deal with empty/unmaintained homes	3	0.6%
Cheaper council tax	2	0.4%
Bring back caretakers/area wardens	2	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	64	13.0%

Better and more genuinely affordable housing is the most frequent suggestion, which highlights the need for affordability in real terms.

Improve accommodation at Clarendon & Ellen suggestions are concerned with greening and taking more care of the area, as well as working with isolated residents, the elderly and people that cannot easily leave their homes. Many of the comments about isolation came from neighbours of elderly residents known to be housebound or experiencing fear of leaving their homes. This demonstrates a genuine neighbourliness: a concern and awareness of issues affecting other residents on the estate.

See other comments in: Parks and green spaces section (*Clarendon & Ellen greening*).

Local shops and businesses

Best things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Variety of local shops	200	38.7%
Variety of cafes & restaurants	40	7.7%
Presence of small businesses	33	6.4%
Pubs	19	3.7%
Shops on Portland Road	18	3.5%
<u>Total</u>	310	60%

Under *variety of local shops*, residents commented that most of what they need is available locally and they benefit from the range of services and products offered by local *small businesses*. The organic shop 'Nature's way' was referred to specifically on several occasions.

Worst things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Portland Road is run down	42	8.4%
Lack of local shop variety	25	5.0%
Lack of decent pubs	10	2.0%
Portland Road is too industrial	8	1.6%
Lack of family friendly cafes/restaurants	7	1.4%
Lack of free cash points	7	1.4%
Too many charity/second hand shops	5	1.0%
No cinema	5	1.0%
<u>Total</u>	109	22%

Statements about the *lack of local shop variety* focussed on the lacking neighbourhood and family oriented amenities. Residents and business owners suggested there has been a decline in sales for some of the small businesses in the area since the new Tesco arrived whilst others commented that some of the larger shops are more suited to an industrial area than to a local neighbourhood community. Comments about *Portland Road 'being run down'* referred to the dirtiness of pavements, empty shops and poorly maintained shop fronts. A quarter of these comments made were about the Gala Bingo Hall "eyesore", but the rest focussed on the lack of available funds from small businesses to "do the place up".

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Improve Portland Road	41	8.5%
Encourage/ support small businesses	39	8.1%
Cinema	18	3.7%
Improve Cafe in the Park	10	2.1%
More cafes/restaurants	10	2.1%
More cash points	9	1.9%
A bakery	4	0.8%
More child friendly pubs/places to eat	4	0.8%
More public toilets	4	0.8%
A butcher	3	0.6%
Improve Cafe at Lagoon	2	0.4%
Healthier places to eat	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	145	30.0%

A variety of ideas were put forward to *improve Portland Road* including “support businesses to invest in the area and improve cleanliness/their shop fronts”. Cleaning and repairing the pavements along Portland Rd was a priority along with street greening and dealing with noise from pubs.

See worst things and suggestions in: Street environment section

One quote echoes some of the others on *encouraging/supporting small businesses*: “Business rates should be reduced in the area to encourage new businesses to sign longer leases. In the last two months, 5 businesses have closed along Portland Rd. This is an economically depressed area, but we pay the same business rates as the Laines”

Parking

Best things

	<u>Number of</u> <u>people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
Parking permit scheme	5	1.0%
Free off road parking where we live	5	1.0%
<u>Total</u>	10	2%

Unsurprisingly, those who have free resident parking spaces near their homes are happy about it. The 5 comments about the parking scheme being good are from people who live in and around Poet's Corner (from Cowper Street to Milthorpe Road).

Worst things

	<u>Number of</u> <u>people</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>people</u>
Parking permit scheme	65	13.0%
Parking congestion/double parking	63	12.6%
Parking generally	34	6.8%
Cost of residents permits	33	6.6%
Cost for visitors	15	3.0%
Parking scheme is an extra tax	13	2.6%
Hours for visitors permission	11	2.2%
Gradual introduction of scheme	10	2.0%
Lorries parked in residential areas	10	2.0%
Lack of disabled parking	4	0.8%
Cost of workers permits	2	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	260	52.0%

Residents express significant anger towards the *parking permit scheme*. One participant called it "the Draconian parking measures" whilst others referred to it as "council bullying" because it is impossible to park near their homes without paying the whole fee. There is the sense that parking permits are somewhat needed for certain roads, but overall the scheme does not work. Comments on *parking congestion/double parking* often appeared alongside complaints about the parking permit scheme, so it is clear that residents feel it has been unsuccessful in alleviating parking congestion. Add the high costs of permits and the expense for visitors and local people perceive the scheme to be unjustified.

It is worth noting that a parking review was brought forward in the Poet's Corner area, following complaints from Marmion Road and surrounding areas that the Area R scheme, south of Portland Road, was causing parking displacement and congestion in their neighbourhood. A consultation letter sent out by Brighton and Hove City Council in 2006 offered two options, a full and 'light touch' schemes. A 'No change' option made it clear that if residents were to choose this, a further review could not be scheduled for several years. Considering the responses, the Area R scheme was extended to the parts of Poet's Corner that requested it, whilst a new Area W 'light touch' scheme was introduced on other streets that wanted an alternative to a full scheme.

We recognises the consultation was extensive and took into consideration the views of local residents, but considering the anger felt post-implementation, we suggest the consultation process was problematic and that residents were not aware of the full impact the scheme would have once in place. It is true that some of the complaints may have been from residents that

voted 'No change', but this cannot account for the high number of people suggesting parking to be the 'worst thing' about the area. The planned review recommends the same process in future -a quantitative survey with closed choices along with a few neighbourhood meetings- and is unlikely to present solutions that accurately reflect residents' needs⁵

Lorries parked in residential areas are causing inconvenience for people living on Portland Rd and the Clarendon & Ellen estate, where lorries delivering to office blocks and business appear inconsiderate of the fact that residents live there. Some residents also stated that lorries reverse too quickly and too close to their windows, which is frightening for their children.

People who drive 4X4's are regarded as particularly selfish because they take up much needed space, especially on the school run. Comments suggest that owning such vehicles in an urban area is unnecessary.

Residents and business owners said it is unreasonable to charge more than a nominal administration fee for *workers permits*. *Cost for visitors* was also noted as being unfair, resulting in restricted and costly parking for employees (many of whom work in shops on minimum wage) and family / friends of local residents. Of particular concern is the high proportion of comments made about visitors parking costs and restrictions by elderly residents who do not own a car. This would appear to suggest an increased sense of isolation, with family and friends visiting less often to areas with problematic parking.

Residents believe the parking scheme is more of "a revenue generator" than a genuine service to meet their needs; hence the number of comments suggesting *the parking scheme is an extra tax*.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Get rid of permit scheme	19	3.9%
Cost of parking permits included in council tax	14	2.9%
More available parking spaces	14	2.9%
Expand/speed up permit scheme	13	2.7%
Prevent Double Parking	8	1.7%
Prevent lorries parking in res. areas	5	1.0%
Change permit scheme	2	0.4%
Free parking for small business owners/workers	2	0.4%
Free visitors badges	2	0.4%
More disabled parking spaces	2	0.4%
Total	81	16.5%

Residents recognised the need for *some* parking restrictions, but consider the current scheme to be ineffective. A specific idea was to "allocate one space per home".

A one-off charge was suggested as a reasonable way to recover costs for initiating the scheme, but considering the high cost of council tax for the area, yearly fees should be removed; "I support the idea in principle as it stops people who don't live here taking up our spaces, but the permits shouldn't be so expensive". Considering enforcement is felt to be too "heavy handed", it is suggested that this should instead focus on double parking and "selfish parking".

⁵ Parking review plans can be viewed at: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1163788#subtitle4>

It is interesting to note the lack of suggested improvements considering parking is the number one 'worst thing' in the area. When questioned about suggestions for change, we note a common response by residents; "nothing will change anyway, so there's no point coming up with ideas". This despondency suggests that residents are feeling disempowered to offer solutions to problems they face. Local involvement and collaboration could be improved.

It is fair to assume that all residents who complained about the permit scheme and congestion need a better solution. Defining what this should entail would require further investigation.

Parks & Green Spaces

Best things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Stoneham Park	162	31.3%
Parks & green spaces generally	88	17.0%
Lagoon	25	4.8%
Cafe in the park	24	4.6%
Hove Park	14	2.7%
Wish Park	13	2.5%
<u>Total</u>	326	63%

There were many comments welcoming the recent transformation of *Stoneham Park*. The perception is that the park has changed from being “a no-go area” to a “very family centred place that’s becoming the heart of the community”. The enclosed play area and toilets in the park were frequently mentioned as a welcome addition, especially amongst parents who believe the park to be a welcoming place now. One local parent stated, “Stoneham Park is like my back garden...residents’ gardens are very small round here, so we use the park a lot”

A third of the comments about the *Lagoon* were in praise of the new Skate Park, suggesting it is welcomed by some as a good resource for the community.

Worst things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Lack of trees/greening	30	6.0%
Lack of parks and green spaces	19	3.8%
Lagoon	6	1%
Lack of disabled access to Stoneham Park	2	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	57	11%

Trees and greenery are an important consideration for the quality of life in an urban environment. Residents who have lived in the area for a long time spoke about the decline of greenery. Trees have been removed and not been replaced and there is a feeling that parks alone are not enough to combat the grey atmosphere of heavily built up areas- especially along Portland Road- the main artery of the area. In addition, several comments about lacking maintenance of existing greenery in the area were made.

Alongside complaints about the *lack of parks and green spaces* were a few comments about the sun and wind exposure in existing parks. Disabled residents commented that the drop kerbs outside the main gate of Stoneham Park mean they have to travel all the way around the park to gain access from the top gate.

Comments about Hove *Lagoon* suggested inadequate cleaning during winter, which makes the playground and surrounding area less appealing. One person stated “younger kids can’t get to use the skate park because older ones won’t let them” and 2 people said it is “too close to the toddlers area”. The café at the Lagoon also received some complaints. Parents say the quality of the food is poor and prices are overly high. This is deemed inappropriate and unjust in an

area that attracts many children. There is a lack of competition along the West Hove seafront and “they have a monopoly”.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Street greening	62	12.8%
Improve Stoneham Park	28	5.8%
More green spaces/playgrounds	23	4.8%
Improve/better maintain parks	18	3.7%
Clarendon & Ellen greening	6	1.2%
<u>Total</u>	137	26%

Improve Stoneham Park was either about doing more with the space that is there or dealing with anti-social behaviour after dark. “A water fountain” and a paddling pool in the summer were frequently mentioned along with a larger indoor space to meet during rainy or winter days. Several children commented that they should replace the “uncomfortable swings”, and parents of young children suggested a latch on the gate of the new toddler’s area is needed.

Some residents said they would like to see the park utilised more frequently for activities and events, especially sports. Others said the park should be closed or adequately lit at night to combat anti-social behaviour.

Residents of the *Clarendon & Ellen estate* -who highlight the need for a children’s play area children in the vicinity- frequently suggested more green spaces. Others commented that more parks should be a priority, as the area is very built up and there are not enough green spaces available locally. Some residents on the estate appeared not know about Stoneham Park.

Improve/better maintain parks is about having more protection from the weather and more frequent maintenance, as well as more seating in parks for the elderly.

Public Transport

Best things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Frequent and reliable bus service	110	21.3%
Good transport links generally	94	18.2%
Train stations/service	39	7.5%
<u>Total</u>	243	46%

Residents are happy to live in an area that is well served by public transport. This is especially important to elderly residents and people who do not have cars, considering the neighbourhood is some distance from main town areas.

Worst things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Lack of convenient bus routes	15	3.0%
Buses are unaffordable	11	2.2%
Poor bus service on Sundays	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	27	5%

Concerns about the *lack of convenient bus routes* were mostly about the lack of services running along New Church Rd and the seafront.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Improve bus service	17	3.5%
Digital signs at more bus stops	2	0.4%
Cheaper buses	2	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	21	4%

Some people suggested that services could run more frequently along New Church Road and Portland Road later into the night, especially during weekends.

Refuse & Recycling

Best things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Clean area	19	3.7%
Recycling	2	.4%
<u>Total</u>	21	4%

The few comments about the area being clean suggested this in comparison with other areas, especially Brighton town centre.

Worst things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Street litter/dirt/leaves	102	20.4%
Dog mess	28	5.6%
rubbish collection too infrequent	21	4.2%
recycling too infrequent	12	2.4%
wheelie bins get in the way	10	2.0%
Rubbish chutes at Clarendon & Ellen	9	1.8%
Recycling is too partial	7	1.4%
Lack of cleaning/caretaking	7	1.4%
<u>Total</u>	196	37%

Street litter complaints were mostly about rubbish being strewn on the streets after refuse collections (sometimes owing to seagulls and sometimes to the lack of care taken by refuse collectors) Other comments made were concerned with the dirtiness of Portland Rd, fly tipping on the Clarendon & Ellen estate and litter in Stoneham Park.

9 of the 10 comments about wheelie bins were from people over the age of 60, suggesting they are a hazard to those with reduced mobility.

Most of the comments about *dog mess* recognise that it should not be the council's job to clear it up, but is the responsibility of local dog owners to stop leaving it on the streets. Wish park, commonly known as "Poo Park" by some residents appears as a particular concern, along with Portland Rd and some of the side streets in Poet's Corner.

Rubbish chutes at Clarendon & Ellen are being blocked on a regular basis and new plans for refuse and recycling collection are not welcomed. See Clarendon and Ellen section (p31) for more information.

Recycling being too partial is about not having the facility to recycle tetra-paks or plastic pots.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Employ more street cleaners	42	8.7%
Recycle more types of material	13	2.7%
Recycle more frequently	10	2.1%
Bins on street corners	8	1.7%
More wheelie bins	8	1.7%
Improve refuse collection	7	1.4%
Enforce fines for littering/dog fouling	5	1.0%
Get rid of wheelie bins	5	1.0%
Litter education scheme	4	0.8%
More dog litter bins	4	0.8%
<u>Total</u>	106	20%

Many of these suggestions were about co-ordinating *street cleaners* to come after refuse collections and to employ extra people so that more frequent visits are possible.

Included in suggestions about more frequent recycling collection were requests for workers to take more care and “put the boxes back properly, don’t just throw them onto the pavement”.

More available *bins on street corners* are seen as the solution to having rubbish thrown down. Some people suggested that small bins could be put on lampposts.

Street Environment

Best things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Wide streets	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	1	0.2%

The lack of 'best things' comments in this section compared with the number of complaints and solutions for change suggest that street in the area need to be improved.

Worst things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Portland road is run down	42	8.4%
Pavements in disrepair	22	4.4%
Poor street lighting	2	0.4%
Poor drains on Shirley St	1	0.2%
Railings on Coleman avenue	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	68	13%

Pavements in disrepair are concerns primarily affecting elderly and disabled residents. One disabled resident said that "the so called drop-curbs are too steep- they are not done properly" Areas around Stoneham Park and Portland Road were most frequently mentioned.

Comments about Portland Road also appear in the 'Local Shops and Businesses section' and are concerned with the disrepair of shops and general dirtiness of this street.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Improve Portland Rd	41	8.5%
Improve & maintain pavements	16	3.3%
Improve street lighting	10	2.1%
Improve Aldrington St.	7	1.4%
Lighting in Stoneham park at night	5	1.0%
Efficient clean air policy	3	0.6%
Improve disabled access	2	0.4%
Bring back caretakers/area wardens	2	0.4%
Improve drainage	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	88	16.7%

Residents suggested that *Portland Road* needs to be maintained more effectively; the pavements need repairing, street cleaners are required more often and small businesses that cannot afford to have their shop fronts maintained need some support in improving the look and feel of the street and attracting more business.

To Improve and maintain pavements is more of a priority for older people and for those with reduced mobility.

See also: comments in Older People section below

Traffic

Best things

There were no positive comments about traffic.

Worst things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Too much traffic	45	9.0%
Speeding traffic	30	6.0%
Traffic congestion on Portland Rd	23	4.6%
Speeding/volume of traffic make it unsafe for children and the elderly	22	4.4%
Difficulty crossing roads	20	4.0%
Pavement cyclists	9	1.8%
Pollution from traffic	7	1.4%
Not enough cycle lanes	6	1.2%
Traffic congestion on Sackville Rd	6	1.2%
Buses competing, causing congestion	2	0.4%
Speeding/volume of traffic makes it unsafe for cyclists	1	0.2%
Not enough bike racks	1	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	172	33%

Traffic congestion on Portland Rd appears mainly due to the amount of buses and heavy goods vehicles that use it. Some residents made comments about road works being too slow, whilst others suggested that they have *difficulty crossing roads*. This is more of a concern for young people and parents with small children.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Traffic calming generally	56	11.6%
More pedestrian crossings	25	5.2%
More cycle paths	20	4.1%
Make a pedestrian area	12	2.5%
Cycle 'wardens'	6	1.2%
Bike racks	3	0.6%
School run car share scheme/ school bus	2	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	124	23%

Most of these suggestions about *traffic calming* were concerned with Sackville Rd and areas surrounding the Clarendon & Ellen estate, with some comments about Portland Rd. Clarendon Rd, which is reportedly "being used as a race track" by post office vans and lorries needs particular attention.

Most of the comments about *pedestrian crossings* were solutions to the difficulty of crossing at the Sackville/Portland Rd traffic lights, especially for the elderly and parents of young children. New Church Rd and school road were also mentioned.

More cycle paths- A comment by one resident echoes many of the other suggestions “I would use my bike more often if it was safer- as an alternative to other forms of transport”.

The idea to have ‘*cycle wardens*’ derives from observing cyclists’ regular use of pavements. However, this is something of a ‘Catch 22’ situation. Riding along busy roads with no cycle paths is dangerous for cyclists, but the alternative for cyclists causes danger to pedestrians. The obvious solution is *more cycle paths* as has been suggested.

Other comments

Best things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Quality/proximity of seafront	117	22.6%
Good, central location	80	15.5%
Quieter than Brighton	54	10.4%
Multi-cultural	23	4.4%
"Up & coming" area	9	1.7%
<u>Total</u>	283	54%

Comments about *good, central location* suggested that “most amenities are within walking distance”. A few comments were made about the style of the area’s architecture and housing being pleasant, whilst *quieter than Brighton* is regarded as a plus point.

The *multi-cultural* feel of the neighbourhood is regarded as a positive development, with foods from around the world and local enterprise serving the community.

Worst things

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Council does not understand/listen to local issues	9	1.8%
Amalgamation with Brighton	5	1.0%
Immigrants	2	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	16	3.2%

Complaints that the *council does not understand or listen to local issues* were predominantly made alongside comments about the parking permit scheme.

Elderly residents in particular regard the amalgamation with Brighton as causing the demise of Hove, suggesting a loss of local identity in Hove.

The 2 comments about *immigrants* demonstrates low level minority resentment of non-British residents being offered council accommodation and benefits. However, so few comments suggest that this is not a key concern.

Suggested improvements

	<u>Number of people</u>	<u>% of people</u>
Improve access to authorities	5	1.0%
Council should listen to residents	2	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	7	1.4%

Very few suggestion were made here, but improved access to counsellors, elected leaders and the Police were mooted.

Clarendon & Ellen estate

Results for each question	Numbers of people	% of people from C&E area	Whole survey %
Best things			
1. Transport links	46	75%	46%
2. Local shops and businesses	35	57%	59%
3. Quality/proximity of seafront	20	33%	23%
4. Parks	19	31%	62%
5. Community spirit	16	26%	40.5%
6. Good, central location	15	24.5%	16%
7. Community groups, activities & events	11	18%	43%
8. Feel safe	8	13%	15.5%
9. Quieter than Brighton	3	5%	10%
10. Good health services	3	5%	1.9%
Worst things			
1. Street litter and refuse collections	49	80%	37%
2. Lack of community safety	40	65.5%	49%
3. Traffic	28	46%	33%
4. Parking	21	34%	49.5%
5. Lack of community activity and spaces	20	33%	28%
6. Poor housing and living conditions	17	28%	19%
7. Lacking choice of amenities	9	15%	21%
8. Lack of trees greening	6	10.5%	11%
9. Amalgamation with Brighton	5	8%	1%
10. Council does not listen to residents	4	6.5%	1.8%
Improvements/priorities for change			
1. Traffic calming measures	22	36%	23.5%
2. Improve collections of litter, refuse & recycling	19	31%	20%
3. More Police to tackle anti-social behaviour	18	29.5%	14%
4. Improve housing and living conditions	17	28%	12%
5. More community spaces and activity	15	24.5%	46%
6. Improve parks and greening	13	21%	26%
7. Improve parking solutions	9	15%	15.5%
8. Support for small businesses	6	10.5%	27.5%
9. Better access to counselors/Police	3	5%	1%
10. Better access to adult education	2	3.5%	1.2%

80% of people who live on the Clarendon and Ellen estate reported that they experience problems with street litter and refuse collection, which is more than double the figure across the whole Portland Road and Clarendon area. This issue represents the highest percentage of all responses to the question about worst things in the survey. For this magnitude of response to appear in a survey that asks open questions suggests that refuse and cleaning services are significantly poor on the estate.

Over 20 residents attended a meeting about rubbish chutes and refuse collection in September 2007. Since then, signs have been posted warning of fines, which has resulted in some improvement. However, there is a continuing problem with rubbish smells in the blocks. Residents asked for this to be resolved by sealing off the ground floor chute openings to stop

the flow of bad air entering corridors and flats. Brighton and Hove City Council disagree with residents on this, stating that increased recycling will improve matters. Residents believe the council are “missing the point” because most of the waste causing the offensive smells are of a perishable nature.

There are increased numbers of bins outside some of the blocks which is causing a further problem; their location increases the amount of rubbish found on residents doorsteps and makes the estate appear uncared for. If the frequency of rubbish collection is reduced – as has been suggested – it is likely to cause further decline and result in a poorer quality of life for estate residents.

Poor housing and living conditions are also significantly higher on the estate. Considering a large proportion of estate residents are council tenants, this suggests that estate and housing services in the area are under-funded and/or poorly managed.

Anti-social behaviour and a lack of safety are experienced by over two thirds of the population compared with just under half across the whole area, which would appear to suggest a need for increased Policing and/or community work in the area.

Traffic is a much larger problem for the neighbourhood owing to its location – with an industrial area just behind the estate and a main road next to it – the location appears less than ideal for young families and the elderly.

On a positive note, parking and a lack of choice of amenities are less important to estate residents than others across the whole area, due in part to the off road parking available for some residents and George Street and Blatchington Road shops nearby.

We also found a sense of ‘neighbourliness’ and concern for others amongst residents, who regularly referred to their worries for elderly and housebound neighbours when expressing their views. This suggests a willingness to share ideas and help others. If greater organisational support was given to the resident’s association, people from the estate could be empowered to work together and take action. At present a limited number of committed but overworked volunteers carries out the work of Clarendon and Ellen Residents Association. This is unsustainable in the long term unless increased organisational assistance is offered.

Ingram Crescent estate

We spoke to 17 households in the Ingram Crescent area. The top results are as follows. Under worst things and improvements there were less than 10 types of comment made, which is why the table stops short of 'top 10' comments in these categories.

Results for each question	Number of responses	% of people from Ingram	Whole survey %
Best things			
1. Transport links	15	88%	46%
2. Parks	7	41%	62%
3. Local shops and businesses	7	41%	59%
4. Community spirit	6	35%	40.5%
5. Good, central location	5	29%	16%
6. Quieter than Brighton	5	29%	10%
7. Quality/proximity of seafront	2	12%	23%
8. Talkshop	2	12%	3.3%
9. Clean area	1	6%	3.7%
10. Good place for families	1	6%	5.8%
Worst things			
1. Parking	9	53%	49.5%
2. Lack of community safety	8	47%	49%
3. Street litter and refuse collections	7	41%	37%
4. Lack of community activity and spaces	6	35%	28%
5. Poor housing and living conditions	6	35%	19%
6. Lack of health services	4	23.5%	5%
7. Traffic	4	23.5%	33%
8. Lack of trees greening	1	6%	11%
Improvements/priorities for change			
1. More community spaces and activity	9	53%	46%
2. Support for small businesses	4	23.5%	27.5%
3. Traffic calming	4	23.5%	23.5%
4. Improve housing and living conditions	3	17.5%	12%
5. Improve parking solutions	3	17.5%	15.5%
6. Improve parks and greening	3	17.5%	26%
7. More Police to tackle anti-social behaviour	2	12%	14%

This relatively small sample is not statistically significant enough to compare percentages in the grey column, especially for priorities appearing lower down the list. However, a few comments stood out as requiring further analysis.

The parking permit scheme is regarded as the worst thing about the area. This is a curious response considering Ingram Crescent residents have free off-road parking facilities. The majority of complaints were about the parking permit scheme, which suggests that residents are against the scheme in principle and may be finding it difficult to park in other parts of the city.

In the whole area survey, the presence of community groups, activities and events appeared fourth in the top ten 'best things' about the area. In Ingram Crescent, these comments do not appear at all. Community spaces and activities are the number 1 priority for this neighbourhood with around half the residents who responded suggesting it. In particular, suggestions were made about social activities, sports and leisure facilities and more groups for older people.

Poet's Corner

In the Poets Corner area, we spoke to 168 households. The top ten results are as follows:

Results for each question	Numbers of people	% of older people	Whole survey %
Best things			
1. Local shops and businesses	115	68.5%	59%
2. Parks and green spaces	106	63%	62%
3. Community groups, activities & events	79	47%	43%
4. Transport links	76	45%	46%
5. Community spirit	75	44.5%	40.5%
6. Quality/proximity of seafront	24	14%	23%
7. Schools	22	13%	11.5%
8. Good, central location	22	13%	16%
9. Quieter than Brighton	18	10.5%	10%
10. Feel safe	18	10.5%	15.5%
Worst things			
1. Parking	93	55%	49.5%
2. Lack of community safety	72	43%	49%
3. Street litter and refuse collections	55	32.5%	37%
4. Lack of community activity and spaces	50	30%	28%
5. Traffic	44	26%	33%
6. Street disrepair	35	21%	13%
7. Lack of trees/greening	26	15.5%	11%
8. Poor housing and living conditions	21	12.5%	19%
9. Lacking choice of amenities	14	8%	21%
10. Poor health services	12	7%	5%
Improvements/priorities for change			
1. More community spaces and activity	86	51%	46%
2. Improve parks and greening	53	30.5%	26%
3. Improve collections of litter, refuse & recycling	40	24%	20%
4. Improve and maintain street environment	32	19%	16.5%
5. Improve parking solutions	26	15.5%	15.5%
6. Traffic calming measures	26	15.5%	23.5%
7. More Police to tackle anti-social behaviour	24	14%	14%
8. Support for small businesses	18	10.5%	27.5%
9. Improve housing and living conditions	14	8%	12%
10. Improve health services	9	5%	6%

Responses to what is best in the area differ only slightly from that of the whole area's population; the percentage results are similar.

Responses to what is worst are also similar, but lack of trees and greening are higher up the list with a greater percentage of people expressing this as a concern. These were mainly comments concerning Portland Road.

Almost half of Poet's Corner residents think there are plenty of groups, activities and events going on in the area, but just over half think there should be more. This conflicting result suggests that alternative activities would be welcomed. In particular, more sports and leisure facilities, social activities during the evenings and weekends and more for young people to do are noted as key priorities.

Supporting small businesses and increasing the variety of amenities was a much lower priority here than for people across the whole Portland Road and Clarendon area, as too was traffic calming. This suggests that although these are still issues of concern in Poet's Corner, they are less of a priority than for Clarendon and Ellen residents.

Street disrepair is the main result that stands out as being a much higher concern specifically for residents of this neighbourhood. A fifth of residents from Poet's Corner made such comments compared with 13% across the whole survey. The cracked and dirty pavements on Portland Road were mentioned most often. This is a particular worry for elderly residents of the area.

Older people

116 people aged 60+

Results for each question	Numbers of people	% of older people	Whole survey %
Best things			
1. Transport links	87	75%	46%
2. Local shops and businesses	66	57%	59%
3. Community groups, activities & events	47	40.5%	43%
4. Community spirit	46	39.5%	40.5%
5. Parks	37	32%	62%
6. Good, central location	25	21.5%	16%
7. Quality/proximity of seafront	23	20%	23%
8. Quieter than Brighton	16	13.5%	10%
9. Multi-cultural	6	5%	4.4%
10. Feel safe	6	5%	15.5%
Worst things			
1. Street litter and refuse collections	69	59%	37%
2. Parking	54	46.5%	49.5%
3. Lack of community safety	52	45%	49%
4. Lack of community activity and spaces	31	27%	28%
5. Traffic	30	26%	33%
6. Street disrepair	20	17%	13%
7. Poor housing and living conditions	19	16%	19%
8. Lack of trees greening	10	8.5%	11%
9. Lacking choice of amenities	8	7%	21%
10. Poor health services	6	5%	5%
Improvements/priorities for change			
1. More community spaces and activity	44	38%	46%
2. Improve collections of litter, refuse & recycling	29	25%	20%
3. Improve parks and greening	27	23%	26%
4. Traffic calming measures	25	21.5%	23.5%
5. Improve parking solutions	19	16%	15.5%
6. More Police to tackle anti-social behaviour	18	15.5%	14%
7. Improve and maintain street environment	17	14.5%	16.5%
8. Improve housing and living conditions	16	13.5%	12%
9. Support for small businesses	10	8.5%	27.5%
10. Improve health services	6	5%	6%

In general, we found that older people tended to make more positive comments about the area than negative ones or suggested improvements for change. Many we spoke to have lived in the area for over 20 years and stay here out of choice.

Being able to get around easily and living in a central location are far more important to older people than other issues arising from the survey.

Street litter and disrepair are of greater concern than in other age groups we surveyed. Many comments were about the fear for personal safety this causes and the greater likelihood of falling over on poorly maintained pavements.

Young people

66 people aged 19 or under

Results for each question	Numbers of people	% of young people	Whole survey %
Best things			
1. Parks	57	86%	62%
2. Community groups, activities & events	37	56%	43%
3. Local shops and businesses	28	42%	59%
4. Community spirit	15	22.5%	40.5%
5. West Hove school	8	12%	5.5%
6. Feel safe	5	7.5%	15.5%
7. Good, central location	3	4.5%	16%
8. Quieter than Brighton	3	4.5%	10%
9. Transport links	2	3%	46%
10. Good place for families	2	3%	5.7%
Worst things			
1. Lack of community safety	34	51%	49%
2. Lack of things to do	29	44%	28%
3. Traffic	29	44%	33%
4. Street litter and refuse collections	10	15%	37%
5. West Hove school	8	12%	2.2%
6. Street disrepair	7	10.5%	13%
7. Parking	6	9%	49.5%
8. Lack of parks, trees and greening	5	7.5%	11%
9. Poor housing and living conditions	4	6%	19%
10. Buses	2	3%	5.7%
Improvements/priorities for change			
1. More places for young people to go	37	56%	6.8%
2. Improve parks and greening	33	50%	26%
3. Improve the streets	10	15%	16.5%
4. Traffic calming measures	7	10.5%	23.5%
5. Improve collections of litter and refuse	6	9%	20%
6. More Police to tackle anti-social behaviour	3	4.5%	14%
7. A local health centre	3	4.5%	1.4%
8. Support for small businesses	2	3%	27.5%
9. Improve parking solutions	2	3%	15.5%
10. More local school places	1	1.5%	2.3%

It is clear that young people experience a higher level of anti-social behaviour and have less to do than other age groups. Although community groups and activities were highlighted as the second best thing for young people, these comments were mainly from younger, primary aged children, whilst teenagers made the majority of comments about lacking resources. Concern was expressed that young people are more likely to hang around in groups and cause trouble at times when there are not enough places that make them feel welcome.

However, young people themselves are more often the victims of anti-social behaviour and petty crime. It is commonly understood that a minority causes the prejudice against the majority of teenagers, many of whom gather in groups on the street and in parks as a way of being sociable. The majority are clearly not causing trouble, but the perception amongst the community suggests that young people should not have to gather on the streets and when they do, it can be intimidating to others.

It is clear that more services and activities need to be available to young people within their neighbourhood. Brighton Youth Centre on Edward Street was mentioned as a favourable place, though too far away to be a popular choice. An under 18's club night with music and dancing was seen as the best way to keep young people off the streets on the weekend. This was also mentioned by adults who took part in the survey. Regular youth work, whilst favoured amongst adults, was not seen as a suitable solution by young people, many of whom would not take part in structured activities outside school.

Traffic was also of particular concern, with a much higher percentage of young people noting this as an issue.

Profiling data – Who we spoke to

Group	No. of participants	% of participants	Census info in %
<u>No. of residents</u>	525	100%	9.5% of households
<u>Gender</u>			
Female	340	64.8%	53.2%
Male	185	35.2%	46.8%
<u>Status</u>			Not applicable
Resident	491	93.5%	
Employee	51	9.5%	
Business Owner	32	6%	
Community worker	28	5%	
Public sector worker	14	2.5%	
<u>Age group</u>			
Under 16	59	11%	15.5%
16-19	7	1.5%	2.9%
20-29	46	8.5%	16.8%
30-59	297	56.5%	42.6%
60-74	82	15.5%	12%
75+	34	6.5%	10.2%
<u>Employment</u>			
Employed	260	49.5%	63.1%
Full time parent	56	10.5%	Unknown
Retired	111	21%	10.8%
Student	78	15%	6%
Unemployed	16	3%	3.9%
Volunteer/carer	62	12%	8.1%
Long term sick or disabled	36	7%	6.9%
<u>Type of Housing</u>			
Council rented	52	10%	11.2%
Private rented	108	20.8%	28.8%
Private owned	340	65%	56%
Housing assoc./res' home	21	4%	4%
No fixed abode	1	0.2%	Unknown
<u>Length of time living/working in area</u>			Not applicable
Under 1 year	47	9%	
1-4 years	120	23%	
5- 9 years	108	20.5%	
10-19 years	127	24%	
20-29 years	41	8%	
Over 30 years	68	13%	
<u>Ethnicity</u>			
White British/White Other	464	88%	92%
BME	61	12%	8%
<u>Parents</u>			
Participants who are parents	211	40%	20.3%
Lone parents	52	10%	6.7%

Notes

Residents could identify more than one type of status or employment, so total numbers in these 2 categories exceed the number of people surveyed.

112 (21%) participants did not answer the question about length of time they have lived in the area.

Recommendations

Parking emerged as the top issue in the area. The majority view is that the parking permit scheme is a revenue generator for the council and is largely an inconvenience. We recommend that the scheme be re-worked to meet residents' needs more effectively, and that the charge per year should be no more than a nominal admin fee to cover running costs. We are aware that consultation was carried out prior to the implementation of the scheme, yet the high number of complaints suggests that alternative ways of involving and collaborating with residents are needed.

For the **Clarendon and Ellen estate**, rubbish chutes in the flats and **refuse collection methods** in general were identified as an area needing immediate attention. It would benefit residents greatly if a caretaker was employed in the area to deal with day-to-day complaints. This would **reduce waiting times** for minor repairs and maintenance of the estate.

Street litter is an issue for the whole Portland Road and Clarendon area. Collecting household waste causes litter to spill on the streets. The most popular suggestion for improvement is to co-ordinate street cleaning with refuse collection so that the streets are swept directly *after* collection rather than before, as appears to be current practice.

Young people reported a need for more places to go, especially during the evenings and at weekends. There appears to be a collective view that **anti-social behaviour** in the area – actual and perceived – will be reduced not only by offering activities, but also by attending to the social needs of young people.

The junction at Sackville/Portland Road south side is particularly difficult for crossing pedestrians and cyclists. Improvements to crossing facilities and/or traffic light sequencing are required.

Traffic calming in the Clarendon and Ellen area is also requested, where speeding lorries and cars are a problem, especially on Clarendon Road and Ellen Street.

More trees and **street greening** would improve **quality of life** in an urban area, especially for neighbourhoods that have an 'industrial atmosphere', as with Portland Road and the north side of Clarendon & Ellen estate.

Community groups that operate in the more affluent areas of the neighbourhood could benefit the whole community by **networking** more effectively and extending their **services and activities** towards those on lower incomes. Most activities on offer are focussed around the Stoneham Park area. The estates either side feel they receive inadequate attention.

It is suggested that **community activities** focus too much on specific targeted groups. There are few all-inclusive **social activities** outside summer festival dates. Social venues and activities received the highest number of requests from a wide cross-section of residents. **Sports activities for all ages** were also a priority.

Residents suggested that **Portland Road** needs to be maintained more effectively; the pavements need repairing, street cleaners are required more often and small businesses that cannot afford to have their shop fronts maintained need some support in improving the look and feel of the street and attracting more business.

Affordable housing is an issue for residents on varying incomes, not only for low income households. More **genuinely affordable housing** is now a significant need, *especially* for people in rental and council accommodation.

What next?

The results of this survey are included in the Neighbourhood Action Plan for the area, which is reviewed regularly by the Portland Road and Clarendon Forum, a partnership group of local service providers, councillors and representatives of community organisations.

This report is intended for use as a working document that can inform the development and improvement of services, provide information for community groups and evidence funding bids.

In addition, the results will be disseminated to local residents' homes via the West Hove News, at local community venues, shops and cafes and will be available to download from the West Hove Communities website.

The CNA team also writes academic papers and articles discussing participatory design, social capital, collaborative working and involving methods and will continue to use information and communications technology as a tool to support local community networks.

The research team will continue its work in the area by providing a platform for debate amongst local residents, groups and networks via the community communication space launched on 18th April 2008 at:

www.westhovecommunities.net