

Appendix B – Old Bethnal Green Road Area Consultation results report

Executive Summary

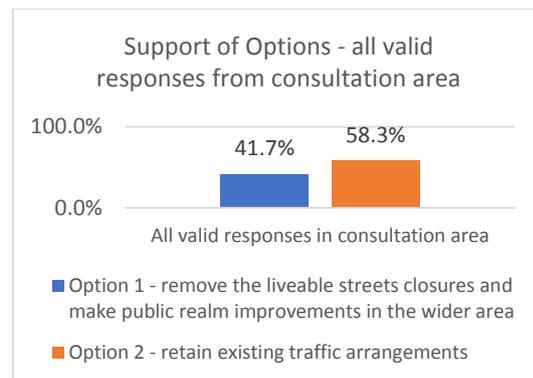
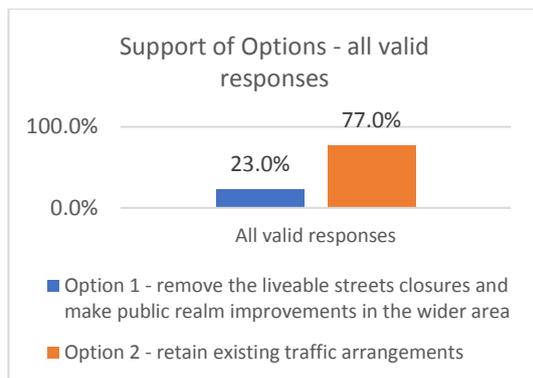
Analysis in this report includes the proportion of respondents who supported the two proposed options, and hereafter called Option 1 and Option 2.

- **I support Option 1 to remove the liveable streets closures and make public realm improvements to the wider area (Option 1)**
- **I support Option 2 to retain the existing traffic arrangements (Option 2)**

Survey responses have been presented in two ways:

- By all Valid respondents and
- By Valid respondents living in the consultation area.

The majority of valid survey responses were in support of Option 2, to retain existing traffic arrangements for both cases.



Background

The public consultation ran 23rd January 2023 and 12th February 2023 and sought view on options which have been developed for residents to consider. This report analyses the responses to the survey.

Responders were asked about their support for two options arising from the evaluation:

- I support Option 1 to remove the Liveable Streets closures and make public realm improvements to the wider area.
- I support Option 2 to retain the existing traffic arrangements

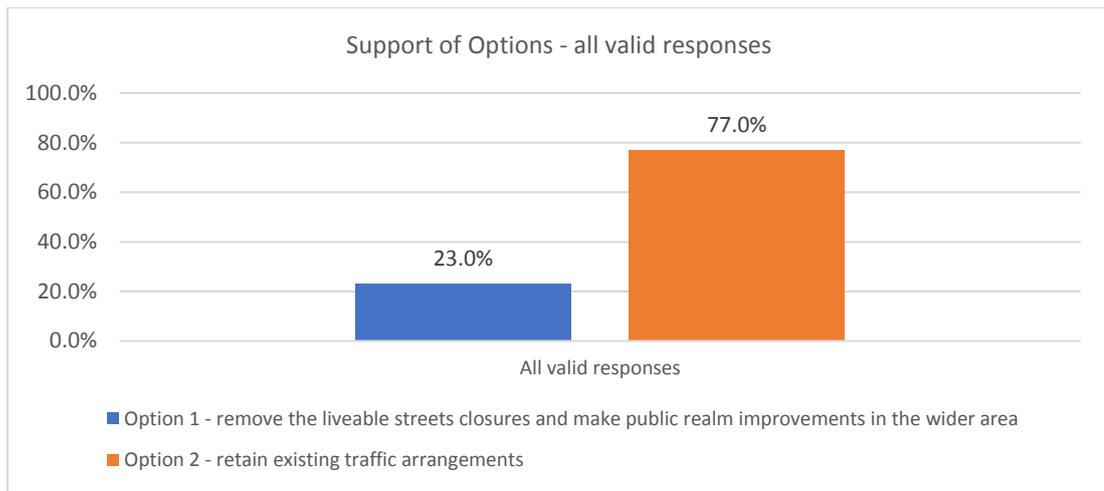
All responses

2,061 valid survey responses were received.

Of those, 1,560 were received online, and 501 were paper surveys.

Overall,

- Option 1 – to remove the liveable streets closures and make public realm improvements in the wider area received support from 473 survey respondents representing 23% of the share, and
- Option 2 – to retain existing traffic arrangements received support from 1,588 survey respondents representing 77% of the share.



Responses from the consultation area

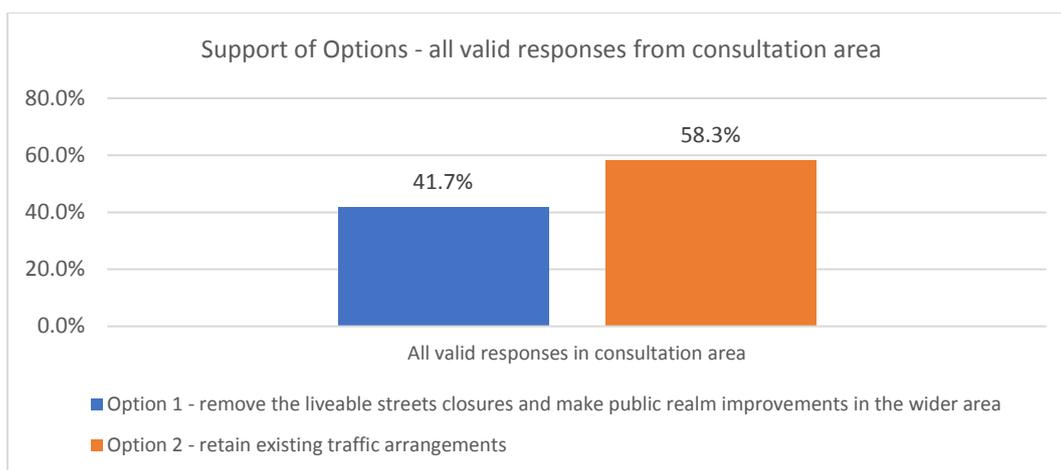
A unique reference number was provided in a letter and sent to all businesses and households within the Liveable Streets scheme area to help distinguish between those responding who may be directly impacted by the proposals.

To further ascertain whether these responses were genuinely received from respondents from within the consultation area, we checked the postcode provided by online survey responders with the postcodes held for the borough. We discounted a small number where the respondent provided a code but provided an address outside of the consultation area. The combination of the use of the resident code and a postcode from within the consultation area is how we have determined which response is from the consultation area.

In total 745 valid survey responses were from responders who used the resident code and provided a postcode that was in the survey area.

Of those,

- 311 supported option 1 – to remove the liveable streets closures and make public realm improvements in the wider area, and
- 434 supported option 2 – to retain existing traffic arrangements.



Analysis

Analysis in this report includes the proportion of respondents who supported the two proposed options, and hereafter called Option 1 and Option 2.

- **I support Option 1 to remove the liveable streets closures and make public realm improvements to the wider area (Option 1)**
- **I support Option 2 to retain the existing traffic arrangements (Option 2)**

Survey respondents were asked which of the following best describes you? (please tick all that apply)

1,866 survey respondents described themselves as a resident and 135 described themselves as a business owner. 40 responses from business owners came from the consultation area. Of those four supported Option 1 and 36 supported Option 2.

Residents were asked, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes set out in Option 1

Most residents disagreed with the proposed changes. The most popular proposal relates to improvements to footways and crossing across the Bethnal green Area including dropped kerbs, continuous crossing and new zebra crossings with 53% of all respondents agreeing with this proposal.

Q5 (To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes set out in option 1:) Removal of closures on Canrobert Street, Punderson's Gardens, Teesdale Street, Clarkson Street and Old Bethnal Green Road.	All valid responses	All valid responses in scheme area
Did not answer	1.9%	3.8%
Agree	22.1%	38.9%
Disagree	74.7%	55.7%
Neutral	1.3%	1.6%

Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%
Q5 (To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes set out in option 1:) Retention of the closures on Pollard Row and Pollard Street and creation of a new public realm in the area with new seating, planting and trees. This is the retention of a closure to northbound traffic on Pollard Row (at the junction of Ivimey Street) and a closure to traffic travelling eastbound on Pollard Street (at the junction with Pollard Row). The plans on page 6 of the consultation document also propose the removal of closures that currently restrict westbound traffic on Pollard Street and southbound traffic on Pollard Row.	All valid responses	All valid responses in scheme area
Did not answer	3.8%	5.9%
Agree	34.8%	34.4%
Disagree	51.1%	49.9%
Neutral	10.2%	9.8%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%
Q5 (To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes set out in option 1:) Conversion of Old Bethnal Green Road to two-way operation to improve access	All valid responses	All valid responses in scheme area
Did not answer	2.5%	4.3%
Agree	22.0%	38.9%
Disagree	72.7%	54.1%
Neutral	2.8%	2.7%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%
Q5 (To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes set out in option 1:) Improvements to footways and crossing across the Bethnal green Area including dropped kerbs, continuous crossing and new zebra crossings	All valid responses	All valid responses in scheme area
Did not answer	3.1%	5.8%
Agree	53.8%	53.0%
Disagree	29.9%	29.3%
Neutral	13.2%	11.9%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%

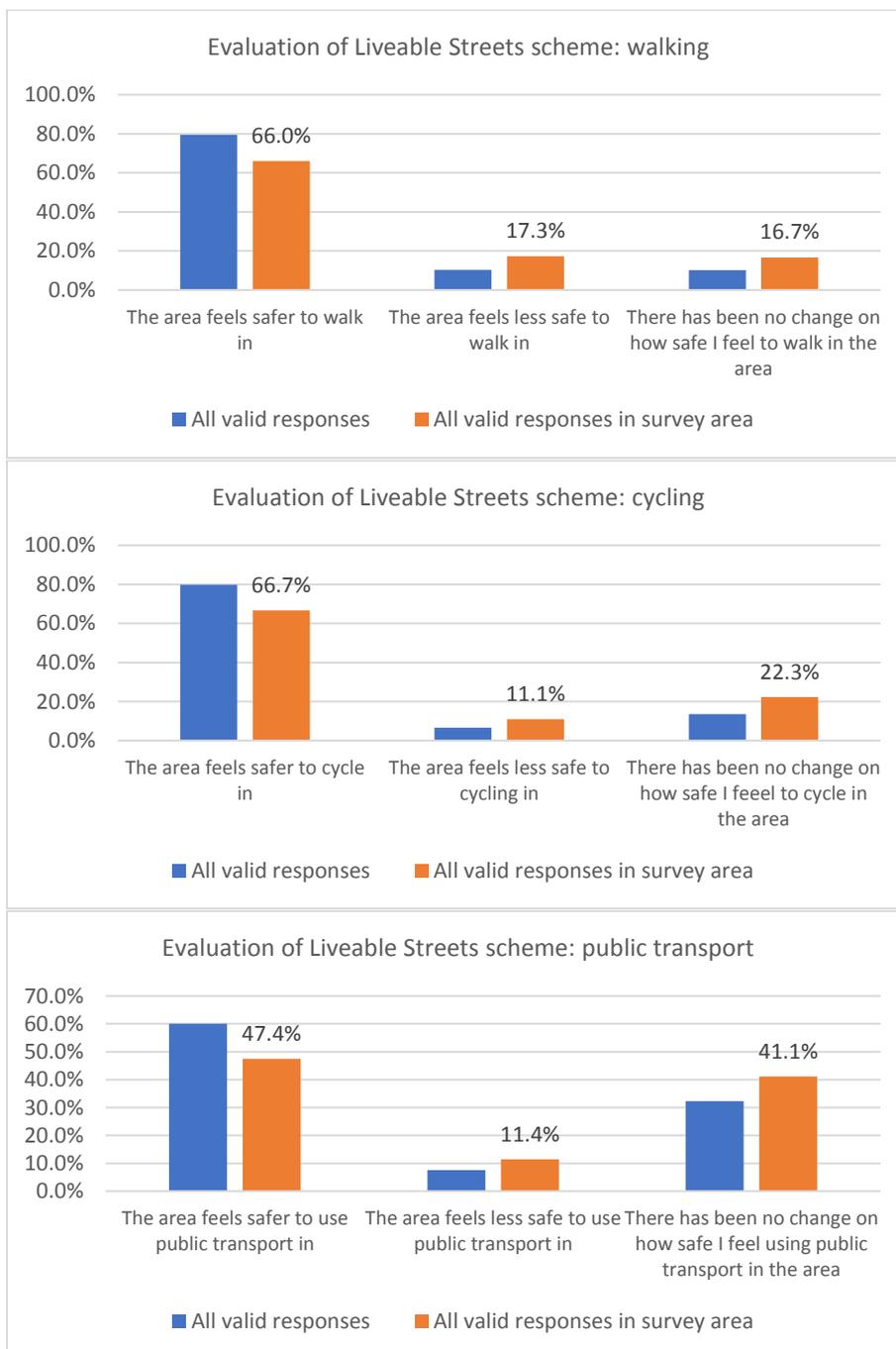
Evaluation of existing scheme

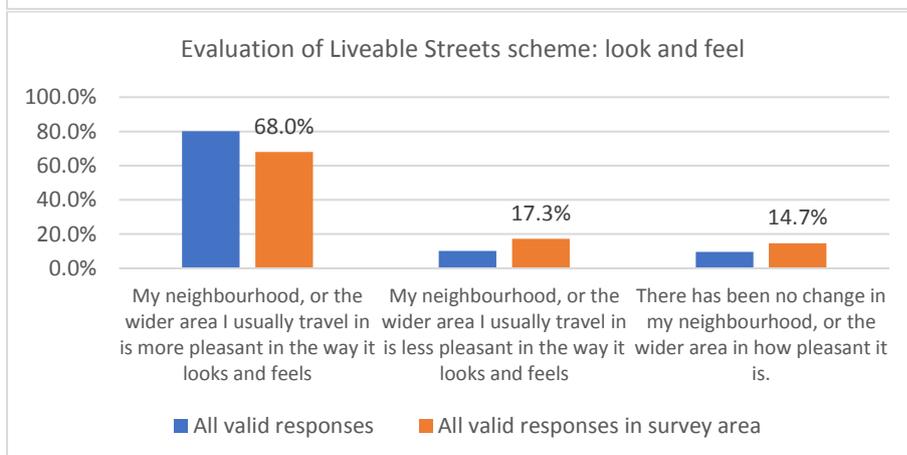
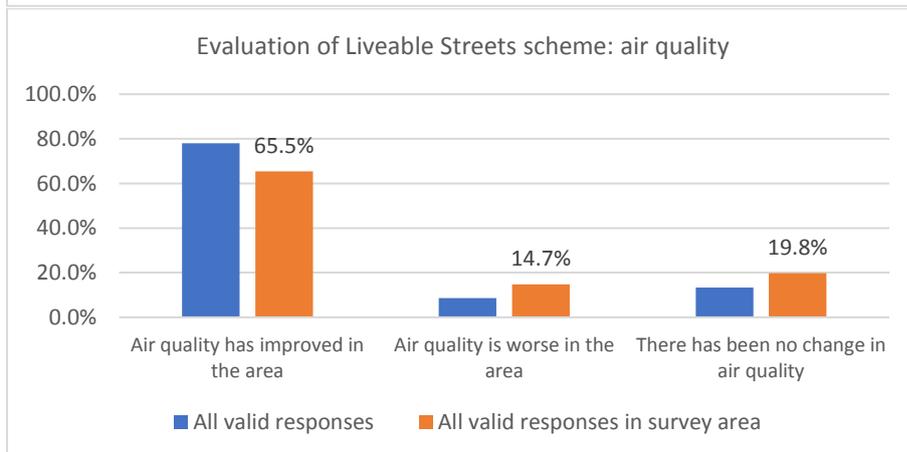
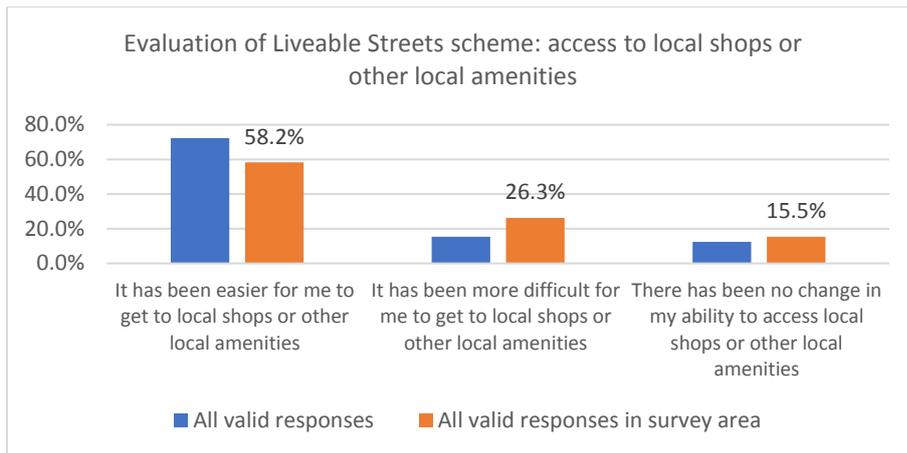
Survey responders were asked to evaluate the existing scheme. Responders were asked their opinion in a range of areas: Since the changes to roads in Bethnal Green were introduced under the Liveable Streets Scheme.

- Walking
- Cycling
- Use of public transport
- Traffic
- Access to shops and local amenities
- Air quality
- Traffic noise
- More pleasant neighbourhood

Overall, the majority of survey respondents reported positive effects since the introduction of liveable streets in all areas.

Most positive was around an improvement in traffic noise with 71.4% of respondents from the scheme area agreeing with this statement. The least positive was around access to local shops or other local amenities where 26.3% of respondents from the scheme area stated that it has been more difficult to get to local shops or other local amenities.

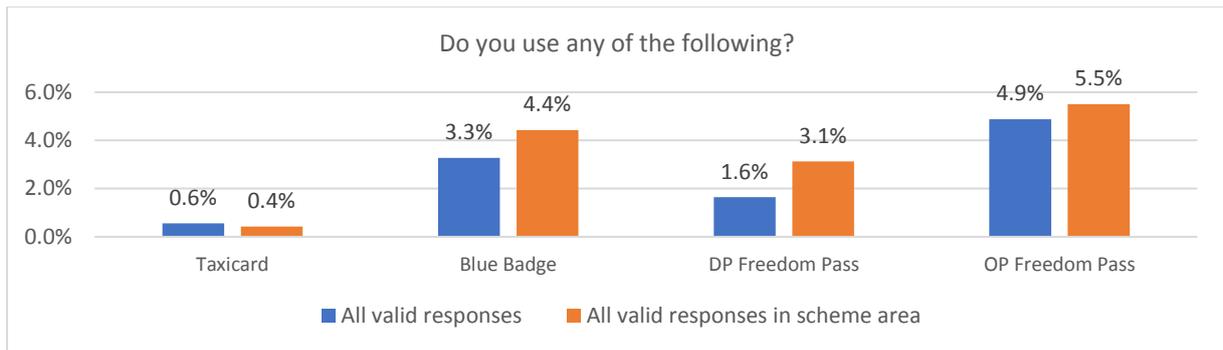




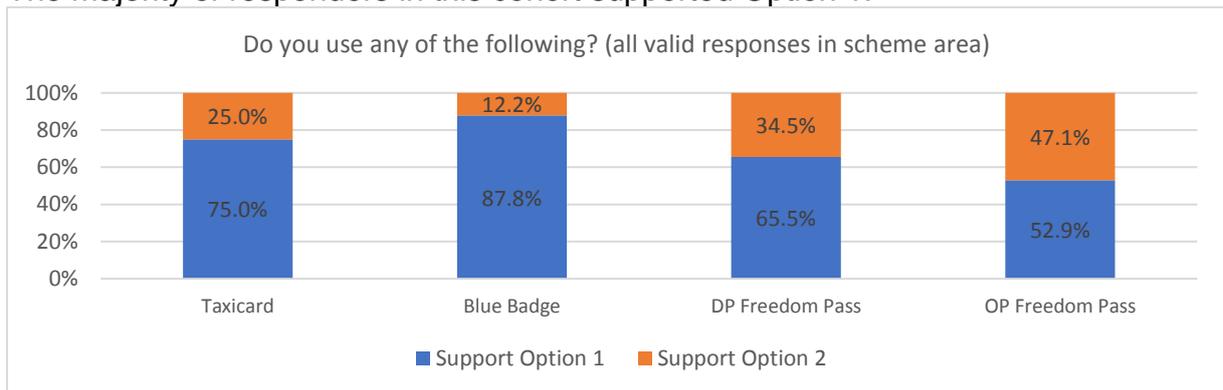
Travel Survey

Survey respondents were asked whether they used any of the following travel schemes?

In total 223 survey responders said that they use one or more of the following travel schemes: Taxicard; Blue badge; DP Freedom Pass; OP Freedom Pass and some responders made use of more than one of these schemes. This represents 10.8% of all survey responders.



The majority of responders in this cohort supported Option 1.



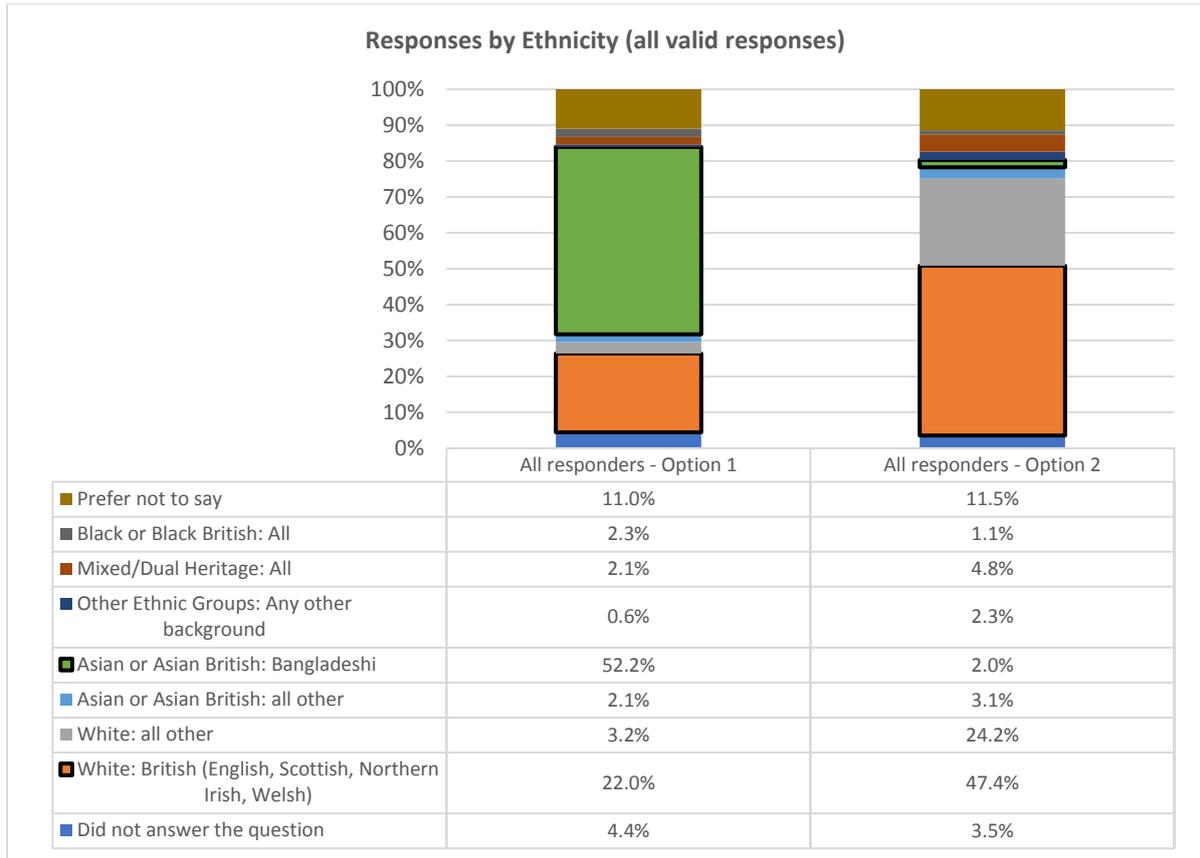
Equalities Analysis

Ethnicity

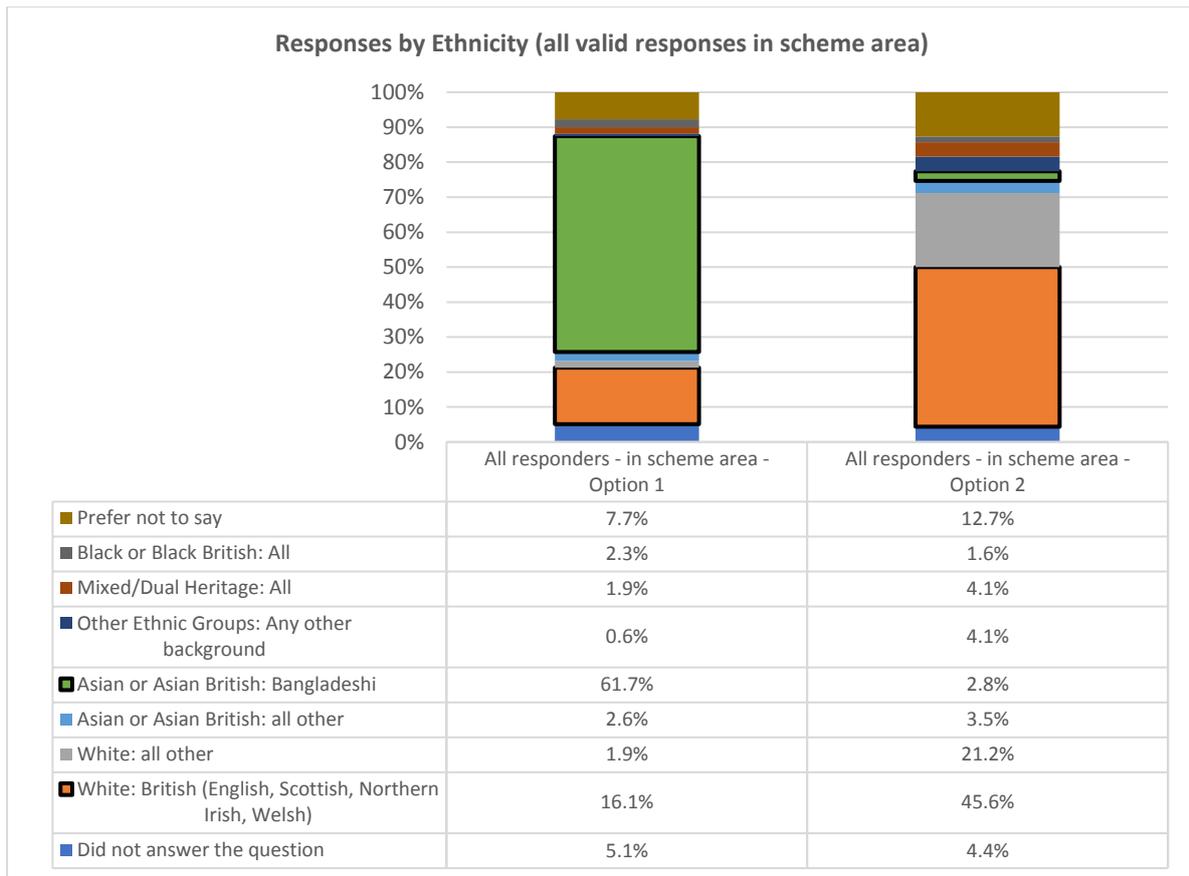
41.5% of all valid responses came from people who described themselves as White British. 12.1% of White British responders voted for Option 1 and 87.8% voted for Option 2. 33.2% of valid responses from within the scheme area were from White British responders and of those 20.1% voted for Option 1 and 79.9% voted for Option 2.

Responders from Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi backgrounds accounted for 13.5% of all valid responses. 88.5% of Bangladeshi responders voted for Option 1 and 11.5% voted for Option 2. 27.3% of valid responses from within the scheme area were from Bangladeshi responders and of those 94.1% voted for Option 1 and 5.9% voted for Option 2.

The table below show the proportion of total valid responses received by ethnicity and support for each option.



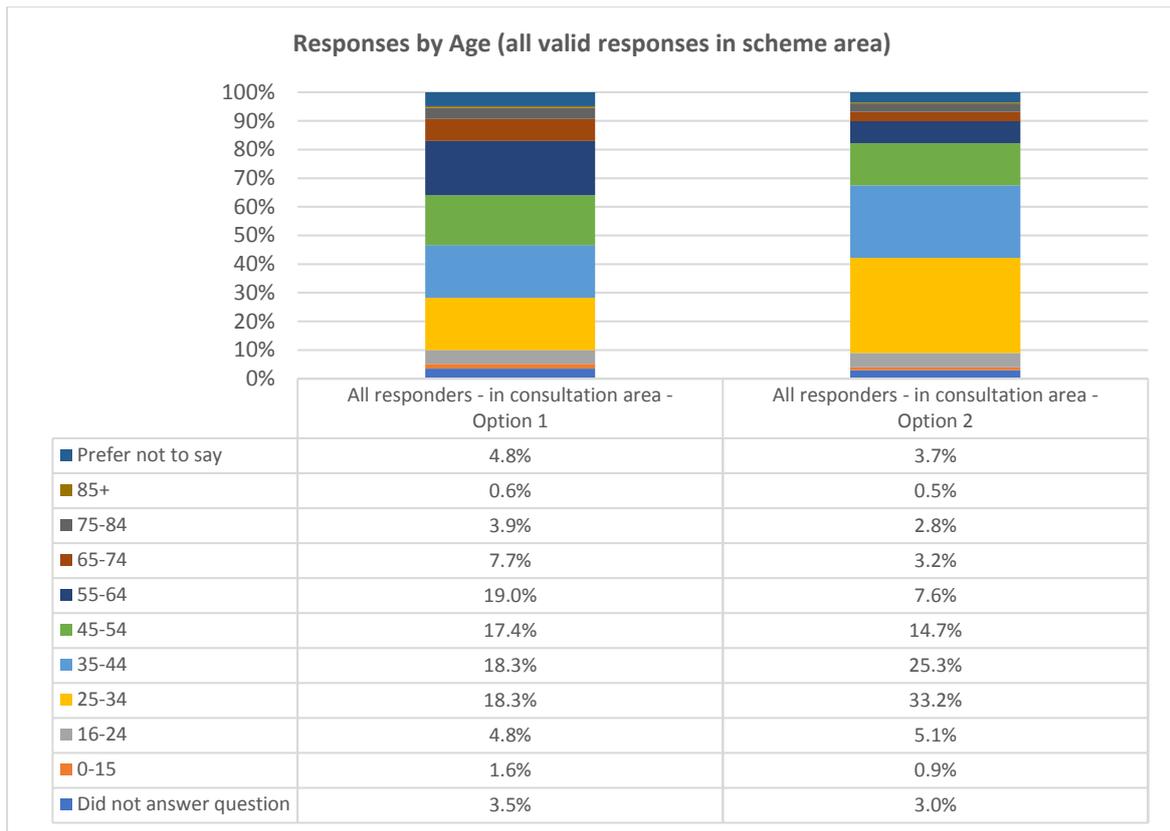
The table below show the proportion of valid responses received from responders living in the scheme area by ethnicity and support for each option.



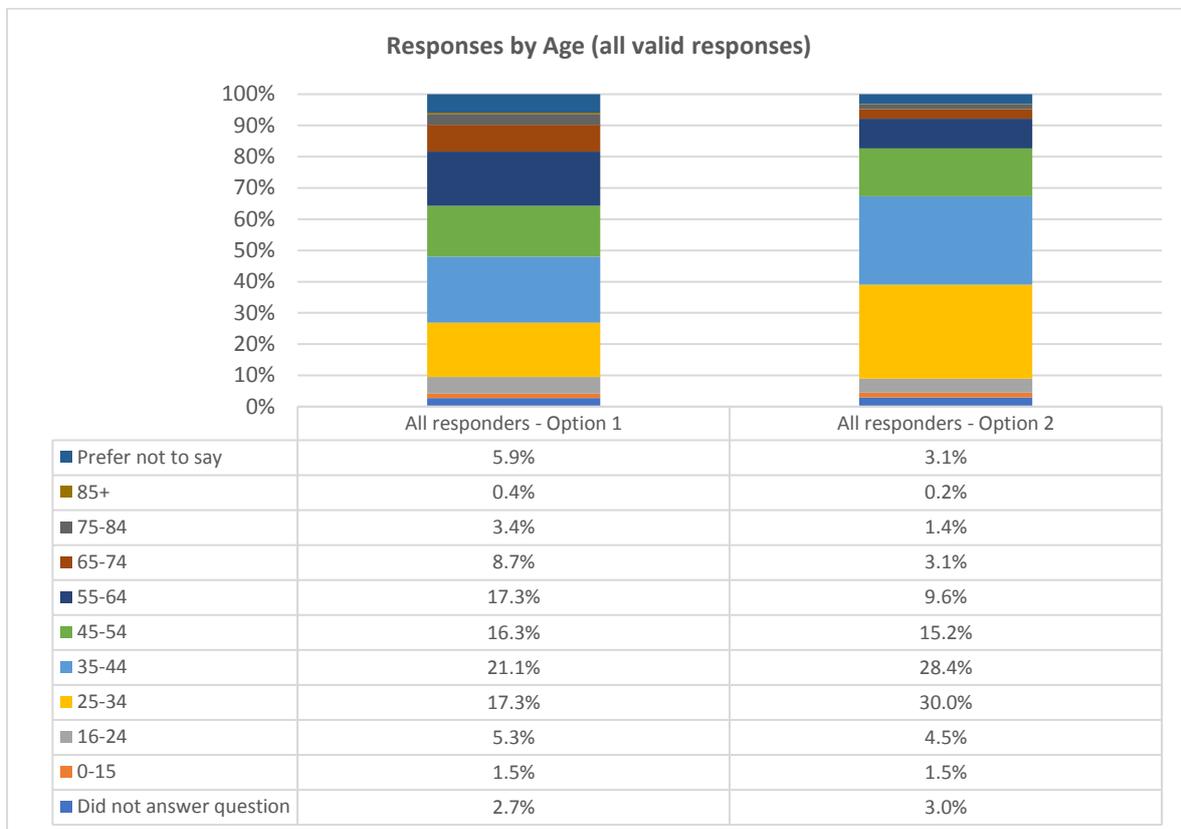
Age

The majority of respondents are of working age. There is a higher proportion of respondents of working age overall and within the consultation area that support Option 2. A higher proportion of older respondents in the consultation area support Option 1. The age ranges with the most respondents are 25-34 and 35-44 years; these age ranges are more likely to be parents than other age groups. Around 18% of respondents are aged 55 and over; this age range is more likely to have a disability or mobility issues than other age ranges.

The table below show the proportion of total valid responses received by age range and support for each option.

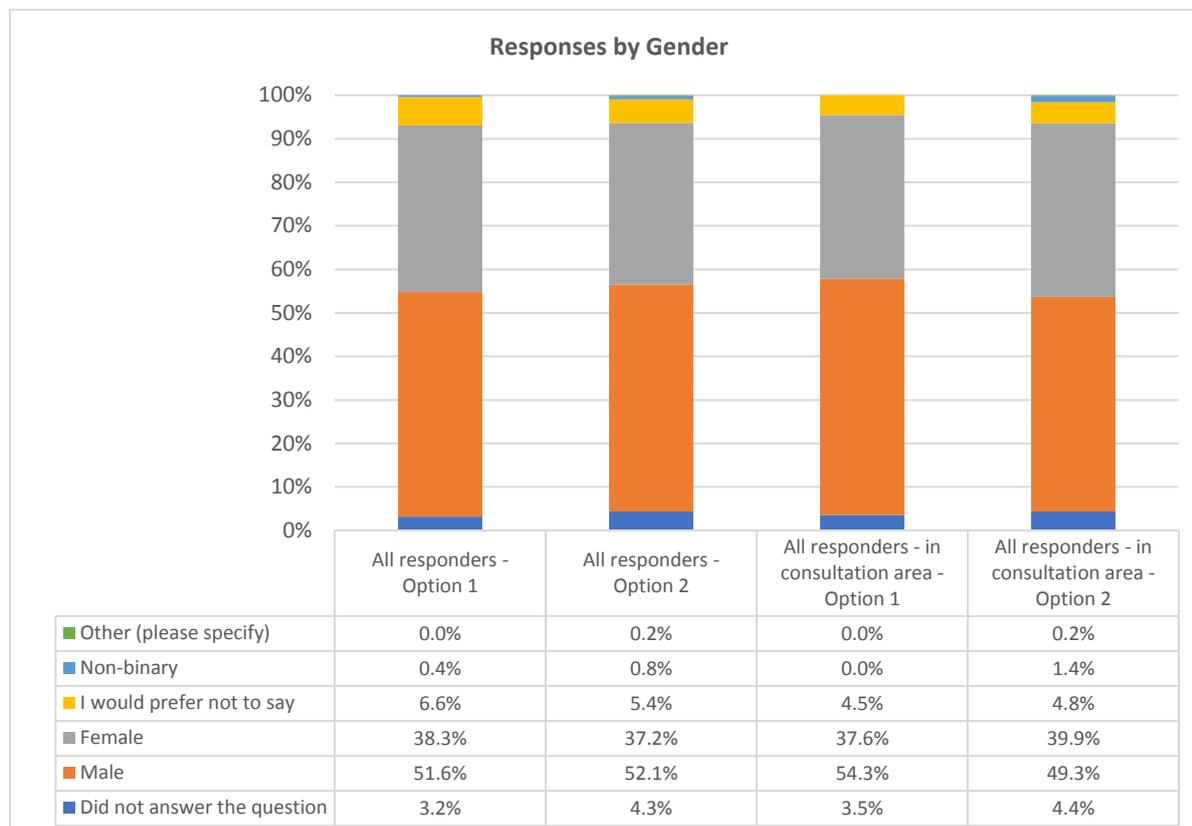


The table below show the proportion of valid responses received from responders living in the scheme area by age range and support for each option.



Gender

Survey respondents were asked which best describes their gender. There were more male survey responders than female (52% compared to 37.5%). The table below show the proportion of valid responses received from responders living in the scheme area by age range and support for each option.



Gender same as registered at birth

99.5% of survey responders who answered this question said that their sex was the same as registered at birth. 12.4% of survey responders either did not answer the question or said they would prefer not to say. For survey respondents in the consultation area, the proportions were slightly lower. Less than 0.5% of survey responders said their sex was not the same as registered at birth; for this group, support for Option 2 was higher than for Option 1.

Sex registered on birth certificate

The responses for this protected characteristic for male and female are comparable to the question about gender. Fewer than 0.5% of survey respondents said they were intersex or described themselves in another way.

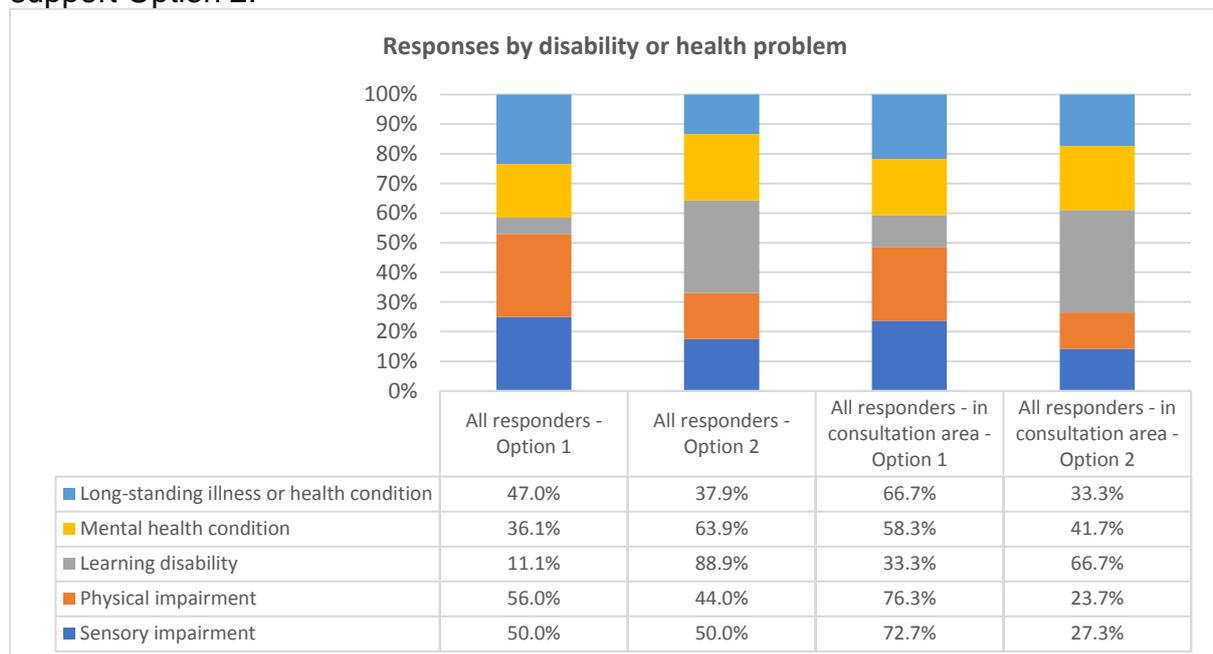
Disability

212 (10.2%) of all respondents and 98 (13.1%) respondents in the consultation area said yes when asked are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health

problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months (include any problems related to age).

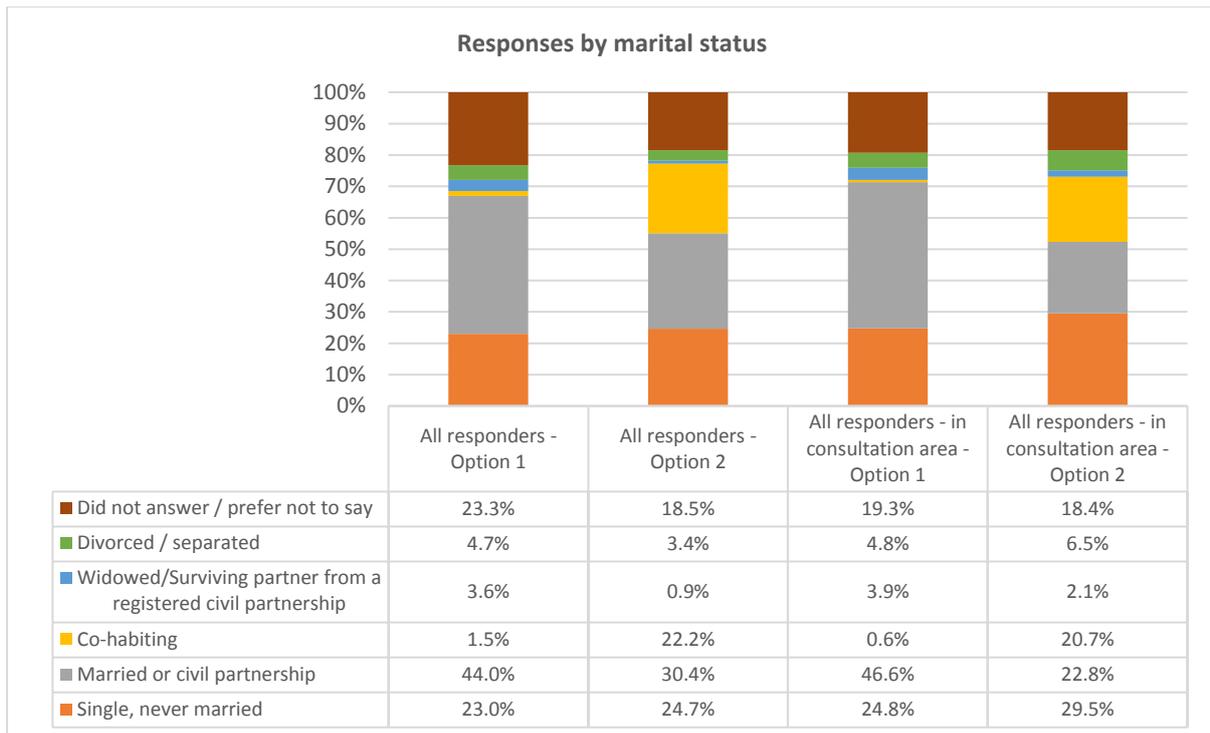
In both cases, the proportion of responses from respondents in this category were more in support of Option 1 than for Option 2. 72.1% of all survey respondents supported Option 1 and 70.4% of respondents in the consultation area supported Option 1.

Respondents were asked to state the type of health problem(s) or disability(y/ies) that applied to them. In general, respondents with a long-standing illness or health condition, a physical or sensory impairment were more likely to support Option 1 and respondents with a mental health condition or learning disability were more likely to support Option 2.



Marital Status

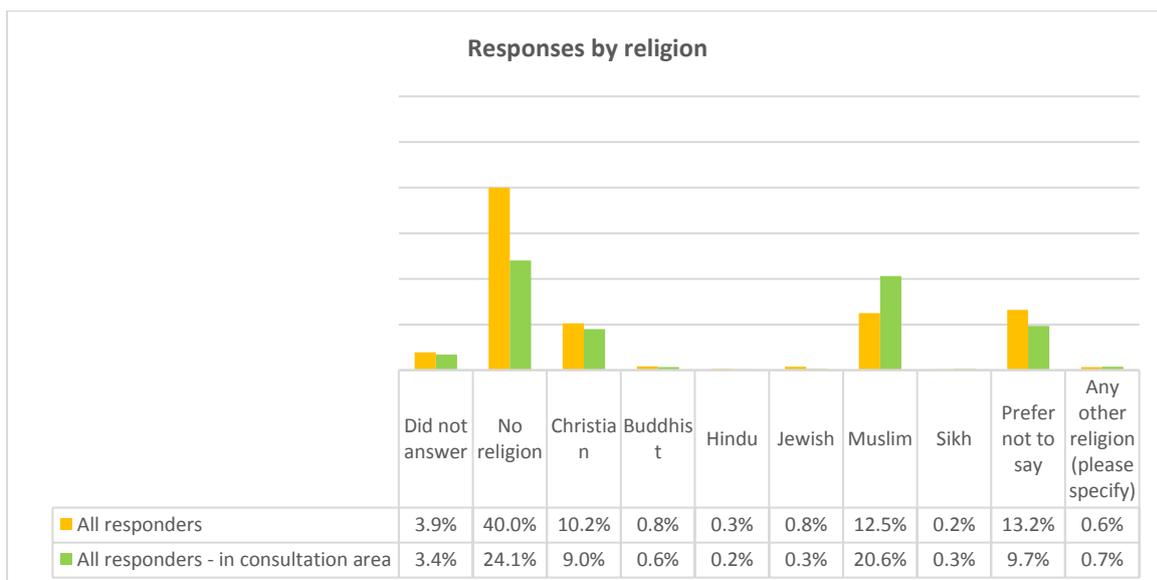
Overall, there was a higher proportion of survey respondents who said they were married or in a civil partnership, or who said they were single supported Option 2. Within the consultation area, married and civil partnership respondents were more supportive of Option 1. Widowed/surviving partners were more supportive of Option 1 however this is a small group of responders representing 1.8% of responders who answered this question. All other groups were more supportive of Option 2.

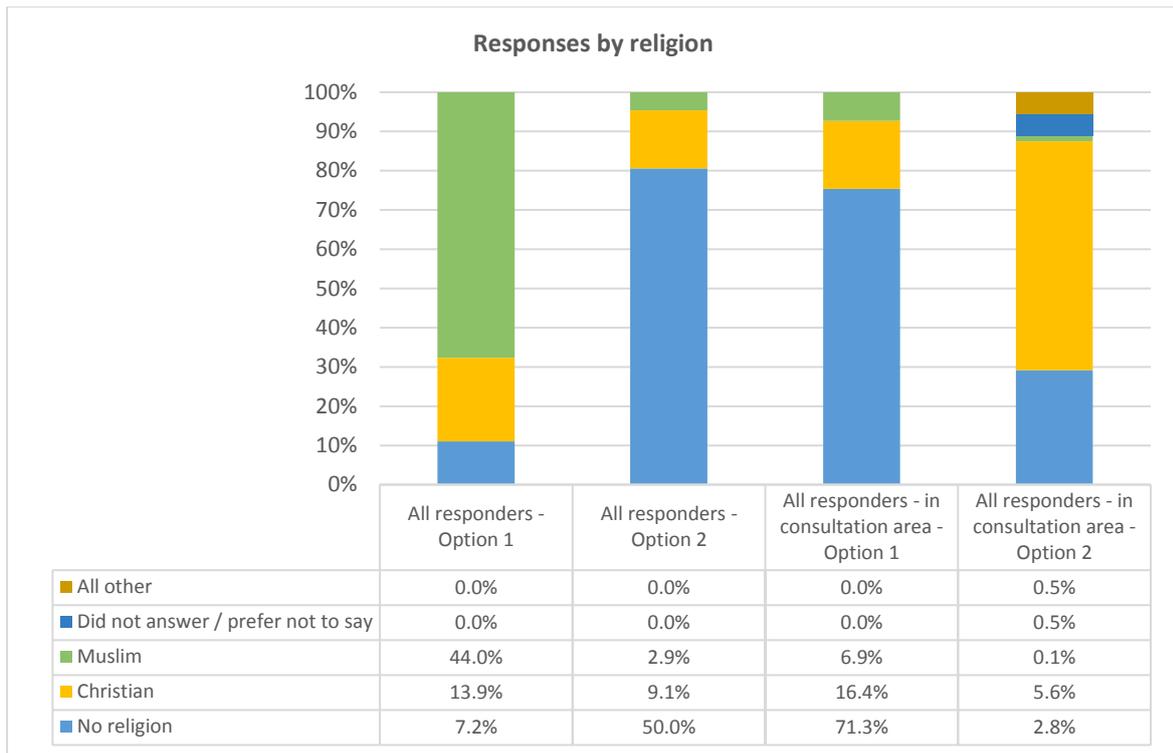


Religion

1,426 respondents stated they had no religion, or preferred not to say, or did not answer this survey question, equating to 57% of all responses received. The majority of these responders supported Option 2.

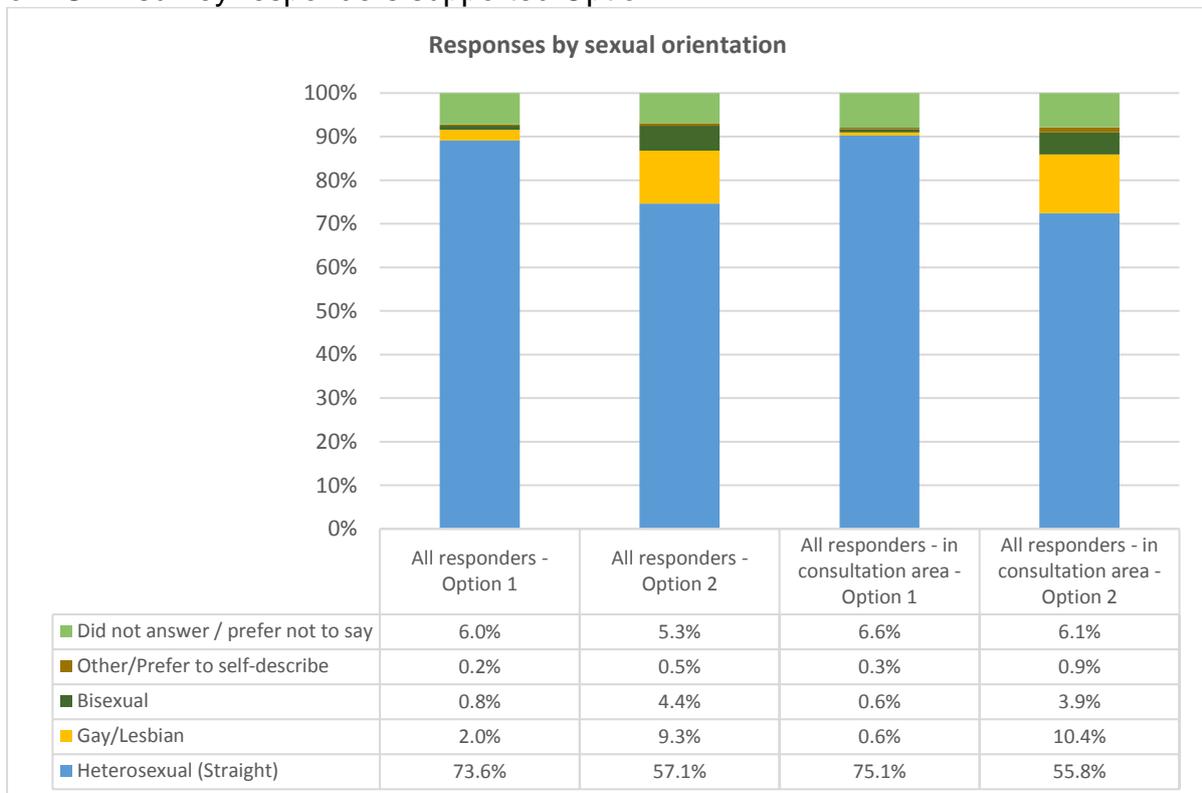
The next highest group was from respondents who said they were Muslim. Muslim respondents were more likely to support Option 1. Respondents who identified as Christian were more likely to support Option 2.





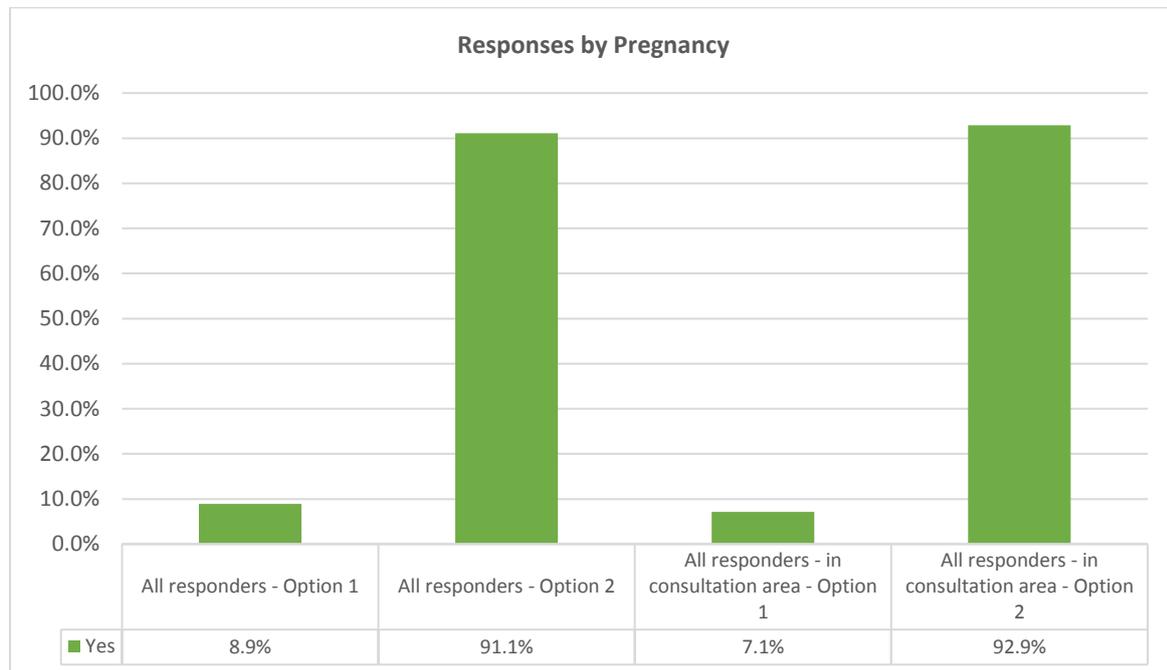
Sexual Orientation

60.9% of all survey respondents identified as heterosexual / straight and that rose slightly to 63.9% of survey respondents in the consultation area. A higher proportion of LGBT survey responders supported Option 2.



Pregnancy and Maternity

45 or 1.8% of overall survey respondents said they were currently pregnant or had been in the past year. Of those the majority were more supportive of Option 2 than Option 1.



Free text comments

Survey responders were given the opportunity to provide detail to supplement their survey responses. 1,102 comments were received – 265 from respondents who supported Option 1 and 837 from respondents who supported Option 2.

Comments from respondents with a disability or long-term health condition

132 comments were provided by survey responders with a disability or long-term health condition.

63 comments were provided by respondents with a disability or long-term health condition who supported Option 1. Their comments referred to the following themes.

- More crime / ASB since scheme was put in place. Easier for criminals to escape on smaller modes of transport. Creates space for young people to hang around.
- More difficult to get to where I want to go. More difficult for people to get to me.
- Created congestion, particularly just outside of the scheme area.
- Costs more in fuel because vehicles have further to travel.
- I / my family need a car but travel is now longer causing more pollution
- Delayed ambulances have seriously affected me
- Near misses between cyclists and pedestrians. The cycle lane is in conflict with pavement.
- Scheme is a waste of time and money

- I'm disabled and cycle lane outside my home makes it more difficult / dangerous to get to my car.
- I would like more dropped kerbs because I use a mobility scooter.

68 comments were provided by respondents with a disability or long-term health condition who supported Option 2. Their comments referred to the following themes:

- Friendlier environment. Being able to sit outside and chat with friends – brings out community spirit. I have made friends as more people are socialising outside.
- Area is more pleasant physical environment to be in
- The area feels safer to travel around
- Less traffic pollution
- Less traffic noise
- Made my mental / physical health better. I have chronic illness and spend a lot of time near my house, the significant reduction in traffic noise has helped both my mental and physical health. My epileptic seizures are better since traffic noise has reduced where I live.
- Much easier to walk around the area
- Much easier to cycle around the area
- Children are enjoying a calm, healthier and safer walk to school.
- Do not waste money changing the scheme.

Comments from business respondents

The consultation asked respondents whether they were responding as a business or owner of a business in the area. 153 of all survey respondents said they are a business owner, representing 7.4% of overall respondents. 55 respondents from the consultation area said they were a business owner (7.3% of all respondents in the consultation area).

Overall, 58% businesses responding to the consultation said the scheme had had a positive impact on their business (rising to 75.1% when including no impact). The percentage of businesses responding from within the consultation area who said that the Liveable Street scheme had had a positive impact on their business was lower at 48% (rising to 67.2% when including no impact).

Business responders who supported Option 1 provided the following comments.

- Many of my customers have no choice but to use a car or van to transport equipment. The harder it is to do that the less they are likely to use my business.
- People are avoiding the area.
- It is slower to get to customers within the area. Therefore, cannot do as many jobs.
- Delays in getting to customers to complete works on their homes. Jobs take longer due to the closures and resulting traffic.
- Much harder to access some areas and some it is not possible.
- As a black cab driver, the scheme has had a serious negative impact on my business.
- Increased time getting to clients and suppliers. As a tradesman I've had to decline work where it isn't possible for me to get to the job site or have deliveries made.
- Increase in travel time, further miles covered & increases in fuel costs is not environmentally friendly nor is it the best use of our precious time.

- There has been no positive effect since the roads have been closed to my business.
- Less people use our shops as they can't be bothered to go round.
- It's harder to find my address when people are having to drive round in silly circles.
- No parking and one way system has made it very hard for my customer to come in the street and on my shop.
- My clients can access my business much more easily via bicycle, public transport, walking, or driving without all of the congestion along Gosset Street.
- My business is much more easily accessed due to the lack of through traffic in the area - my clients simply use their GPS and I have received no complaints. My business has increased due to its accessibility.
- Everyone is happier.
- It feels like a real community neighbourhood again.
- Clients report safer, cleaner and more pleasant journeys to and from my business. Place of work and work environment is improved by being cleaner, safer and with less anti-social behaviour.
- Staff cycle so it is more pleasant for them.
- I am responding as both resident and business owner. The whole area has been transformed for the better, which has encouraged more of our staff to both walk and cycle to work, and also to make more use of local facilities that are more easily accessed and are now in a more pleasant environment. Everyone at work has been very supportive of the Liveable Streets and horrified that any of this improvement could be undone.

Business responders who supported Option 2 provided the following comments.

- The scheme has not had a detrimental effect on our business.
- There is a stronger feeling of connection in our neighbourhood and people are more likely to walk to our café.
- The area and streets are calmer, quieter and the area looks better so our staff and visitors feel more positive about visiting our premises.
- A more pleasant area to bring my clients too, I am proud of the way the neighbourhood looks and feels now, it is a great improvement for Tower Hamlets.
- We look after properties across the Borough. In LTN areas we have seen the desirability and quality of living in those neighbourhoods radically improve. More of our staff cycle or walk to work. More work travel is completed on foot, bike, scooter or public transport.
- Per earlier response, our staff have all commented on an uplift in the local area when commuting to work and are more likely to go out for a walk / to shops at lunch knowing that they'll get some peace & quiet.
- As someone who has a business within E2 it is incredibly useful to have a space where the team can eat lunch, grab a coffee and make use of the extra allocated streets that were once run down by traffic. Making sure the team feels safe, we encourage our staff to walk to work through the areas that have been improved as we believe this is incredible relaxing and improves your mental & physical health. The reduced traffic makes the streets better to walk to work and safer when walking home in the evenings. It also has created areas that the team cherish during lunch breaks and after work. We hope the scheme is retained and we encourage more greener spaces and less roads!
- My team walk, use rail or cycle to get to work. They feel safer and are now more willing to walk. They are reflective of a younger generation hungry to see positive environmental change.
- No impact as my business is predominantly online,
- Clients are more relaxed - find the address easier and aren't intimidated by the traffic.

- The comments about the improvements to our area have all been positive and it is also positive that rather complain about a slightly different route to get to our business, they either find an alternative way, by public transport or walking, or just get on with it. Not one client has said why don't you change it back so all the roads around your business are congested again!
- All my clients visiting say how pleasant the area now is - they don't mind the small element of extra travel - they just accept London traffic.
- as a cyclist and walker, it's made working in the area so much safer!
- We occasionally use a vehicle to move items, but the inconvenience of doing so after the Liveable Streets scheme is nothing on the environmental improvements that the scheme has delivered. Please do not remove this.
- Our clients are Local Authority public sector clients, whom have been inspired by the lovable streets scheme and the area reflects our business values and aspirations for a greener London.
- It is a much more pleasant environment for clients to interact, and to meet with us in the business. The area is now a thriving hub of all kinds of people, not just lots of trucks and vans driving through, destroying the local community spirit.

Other Stakeholder responses

Full response from Oakland Secondary School

Prior to the implementation of traffic filters and one-way systems, Mansford Street and Old Bethnal Green Road were heavily used roads suffering from traffic, noise and air pollution. This local area is essentially residential, and vehicles used these roads predominantly as a cut through. By the council's own estimates, the majority of these vehicles were not local to the area but were rat-running through Bethnal Green. Lorries, vans and cars, frequently guided by GPS, thundered daily and directly past local schools: Elizabeth Selby Infant school, Lawdale Primary School, as well as Oaklands Secondary School and Mulberry Academy, posing dangers to the health and safety of local children. The two-way traffic on Mansford Street was a major safety issue both at that start and end of school. We have 900 young people exiting straight onto Mansford street with a pavement less than a metre wide separating the school boundary and the road.

A study by Kings College suggests that most air pollution comes from vehicle emissions and that, children in Tower Hamlets may have up to 10% less lung capacity than the national average because of exposure to nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter from vehicle emissions. This is a disturbing statistic that poses lifelong public health challenges in one of the most deprived parts of our city.

The implementation of Liveable Streets, has been an overwhelming success in mitigating harms to local children. The drop in traffic volumes has greatly improved quality of life for students. The streets are no longer as dangerous for children to get to school and the reduction in traffic noise provides less distraction for study. The improvement in air quality directly benefits local children suffering with asthma or bronchitis and addresses the damage to lung capacity caused by vehicle exhausts. We are shocked therefore that the council now plans to remove all of these Liveable Streets improvements, and return Old Bethnal Green Road to heavy traffic. Aside from the substantial tax payers money spent on these improvements - £2 million in

Bethnal Green alone - there is no data provided to justify their removal, nor mitigants suggested to ensure that children are not exposed to the increased air pollution that these measures will surely re-introduce. Your consultation mentions, as justification, an alleged increase in traffic on Hackney Road and Bethnal Green Road but we note that there are no schools along these roads which are, unlike Old Bethnal Green Road, large A-roads containing traffic lights and commercial units.

Furthermore, Oaklands School has recently become a split site school to accommodate its expanded roll. The nature of this expansion necessitates frequent movement between the sites for both adults and children. When the development plans are completed, there will be upwards of 600 students a day walking up and down Old Bethnal Green rd. The changes between Mansford Street and Temple Street have already dramatically improved both the safety and, physical and mental wellbeing of these students who go to this school. Reverting back would lose all of the benefits and lose the trust and support of the local community.

Full response from Tower Hamlets Public Health Team

Public Health Tower Hamlets: Consultation Response	
Consultation name:	Liveable Streets
Date	27 February 2023
For	Tower Hamlets, Highways and Transport
From	Katy Scammell, Acting Director of Public Health
Author:	Matthew Quin, Programme Lead for Healthy Environments
CC	Somen Banerjee, Acting Corporate Director of Health, Adults and Community

The Tower Hamlets Public Health team offers this response to the Tower Hamlets Liveable Streets Programme consultation being run on the low-traffic neighbourhood interventions in Bethnal Green, Weavers and Brick Lane.

Public Health recognises the importance of improving the look and feel of public spaces in neighbourhoods across the borough, to make it easier, safer and more convenient to get around by foot, bike and public transport, as well as to take steps to reduce pollution.

The response focusses on the evidence around low-traffic neighbourhood interventions on a) air quality and b) active travel.

Air Quality

Outdoor air pollution is estimated to kill 4.2 million people worldwide every yearⁱ and is the largest environmental risk to public healthⁱⁱ. In common with much of Inner London, Tower Hamlets suffers from poor air quality. An estimated 195 deaths per year are attributed to small particulates (PM 2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in the boroughⁱⁱⁱ.

People's environments have important influences on their physical and mental health. Each year in Tower Hamlets we experience several episodes of elevated air pollution concentrations that cause acute health harms. In addition to this, regular long-term exposure to air pollution at lower concentrations is also of significant public health concern. Air pollution affects people's health throughout their lives, including before birth, in the very young, through to older adults. Exposure to air pollution, indoors and outdoors, over a long period of time reduces people's life expectancy.

There is clear evidence that air pollution contributes to the initiation and development of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and can cause lung cancer. Evidence of links between exposure to air pollution and a wider range of health effects, such as intra-uterine impacts, adverse birth outcomes, poor early life organ development, diabetes, reduced cognitive performance, and increased dementia risk continues to build. Like many London boroughs, Tower Hamlets is exceeding the UK legal limit for NO₂ and PM_{2.5} and we are not meeting the World Health Organisation guidelines for NO₂, PM_{2.5} or PM₁₀. More needs to be done locally to tackle these harmful levels of pollution which are having a negative impact on residents' health.

A significant proportion of outdoor air pollution we experience today, particularly in cities, is associated with road traffic (exhaust emissions, as well as particles from tyre, brakes and road surface wear). In Tower Hamlets over 222 tonnes alone (of the 392 tonnes attributed to road transport) of NO₂ per year is attributed to diesel cars and diesel LGV^{iv}.

We note that data collected from the Brick Lane and Weavers areas between 2019 – 2022 highlights a reduction in NO₂ from within the scheme and boundary roads. These findings are supported by evidence published by Imperial College London that found Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN) not only cut traffic but reduce air pollution without displacing the problem to nearby streets. In one North London scheme, NO₂ fell by 5.7% within the LTNs and by 9% on their boundaries. They also found that traffic dropped by over half inside the LTNs and by 13% at the boundaries^{v1}. Another study by Thomas and Aldred (2023)^{vi} reviewed and analysed data from 46 LTNs in 11 London boroughs between May 2020 and May 2021 to explore changes in motor traffic levels. The results suggest that LTNs have typically resulted in a substantial relative reduction in motor traffic inside the scheme area, with particularly strong reductions

¹ Th research team carried out a more complex statistical analysis to ensure other factors that might affect traffic volumes and air pollution at particular times – such as the COVID restrictions in place, school holidays or weather – could be taken into account (<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/241731/low-traffic-neighbourhoods-reduce-pollution-surrounding-streets/>)

in Inner London. Very little impact was noted to boundary roads (journey length and times).

Although air pollution can be harmful to everyone, some people are more affected because they live in a polluted area and are exposed to higher levels of air pollution in their day-to-day lives or are more susceptible to health problems caused by air pollution. Air pollution affects everyone but there are inequalities in exposure with the greatest impact on the most vulnerable. Areas of high deprivation frequently have higher levels of traffic or industrial activities and tend to be more heavily polluted. People in lower socio-economic groups are more likely to have pre-existing health conditions earlier in life, and the higher exposures to air pollution may add to the greater burden of poor health. Analysis of air pollution in London in 2019 found that communities with higher levels of deprivation, or a higher proportion of people from a non-white ethnic background, were also more likely to be exposed to higher levels of air pollution. Liveable streets was intended to help address these inequalities by reducing at-risk groups' exposure to poor air quality.

In 2021, Tower Hamlets conducted a Healthy Streets Survey Study: 258 school children participated across 4 schools from years 4, 5 and 6. This survey enabled us to better understand under which conditions low traffic neighbourhood interventions (in this case, around schools) can increase active travel to school and improve children's views of the roads around their school and their journey to school. The survey highlighted the importance that children give to their environment, with specific insights gained on the importance of reducing air pollution caused by cars.

We note that a range of different road closure measures have been trialled in Tower Hamlets, such as street festivals, liveable streets and school streets. The evidence suggests that low traffic neighbourhoods cut traffic and air pollution as detailed above. Based on the evidence, these types of interventions are likely to protect vulnerable residents from harm.

Active Travel

Active travel refers to modes of travel that involve a level of activity. The term is often used interchangeably with walking and cycling, but active travel can also include trips made by wheelchair, mobility scooters, adapted cycles, e-cycles, scooters, as well as cycle sharing schemes.

The effectiveness of active transport interventions on health improvement is well documented: there are positive health benefits linked to increasing physical activity and active travel including positive impacts on health outcomes such as obesity, stroke, cancer, diabetes, dementia^{vii} and mental health^{viii}.

Using public transport is also a more sustainable transport option than reliance on cars because it reduces the number of cars on the road. Walking, or cycling can improve health and reduce exposure to health harms such as air pollution^{ix}.

The biggest transport-related impact of urban development on public health in London is the extent to which it impacts on physical activity from walking, cycling and using public transport. Streets make up 80% of London's public spaces - making

them Healthy Streets^x will improve the quality of life for everyone in London. This is particularly important for Tower Hamlets given the high levels of development in the borough.

A shift from car use towards more walking and cycling and other forms of active travel is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing transport emissions and is the only long-term solution to road congestion. Walking and cycling can decrease congestion, air and noise pollution, and both are linked to health and economic benefits.

Physical inactivity is a large challenge in Tower Hamlets^{xi}:

- a. 28% of our adults are physically inactive
- b. Only 23% of children and young people are physically active
- c. Only 7% of adults cycle for travel at least 3 days a week
- d. Only 30% of adults walk for travel at least 3 days a week

The health challenges our residents face follow a social gradient, meaning the less affluent someone is, the more likely they are to fall sick, die sooner, or and/or have a long-term condition, compared to more affluent residents. The greatest benefit is small increases in physical activity by the most sedentary. By increasing active travel, particularly in areas of deprivation with residents that face greater socio-economic challenges we would be taking essential steps towards reducing health inequalities. By making active travel possible for everyone, it will help contribute to efforts to tackle the health crisis and climate change^{xii}.

There are also other co-benefits to increasing active travel, such as the economic impact of walking and cycling. Research shows that when streets and public spaces in London's town centres and high streets are improved, retail rental values increase, more retail space is filled and there is a 93 per cent increase in people walking in the streets, compared to locations that have not been improved^{xiii}. The research has also found that people walking, cycling and using public transport spend the most in their local shops, 40 per cent more each month than car drivers.

ⁱ World Health Organisation. Ambient (outdoor) air pollution. (2022) Available from: [https://www.who.int/newsroom/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-\(outdoor\)-air-quality-and-health](https://www.who.int/newsroom/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-(outdoor)-air-quality-and-health)

ⁱⁱ World Health Organisation. Ambient (outdoor) air pollution. (2022) Available from: [https://www.who.int/newsroom/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-\(outdoor\)-air-quality-and-health](https://www.who.int/newsroom/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-(outdoor)-air-quality-and-health)

ⁱⁱⁱ Walton H, Dajnak D, Beevers S, Williams M, Watkiss P and Hunt A, (2015), Understanding the Health Impacts of

Air Pollution in London, accessed 20-10-2016 at <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/scps/our-departments/institute-ofpharmaceutical-science/aes/analytical-environmental-forensic-sciences> ^{iv} [London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory \(LAEI\) 2019 - London Datastore](#)

^v Evolution. LTNs don't displace traffic and air pollution, research finds. (2022). Available from: [LTNs don't displace traffic and air pollution, research find \(transportxtra.com\)](#)

^{vi} [Changes in motor traffic inside London's LTNs and on boundary roads - Google Docs](#)

^{vii} [Cycling and walking can help reduce physical inactivity and air pollution, save lives and mitigate climate change](#)

[\(who.int\)](#)

^{viii} [Active travel: local authority toolkit - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

^{ix} [How does walking and cycling help to protect the environment? - Sustrans.org.uk](#)

^x Healthy Streets framework will help to inform how decisions makers can support residents to use their cars less and walk, cycle and use public transport more:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/health-andwellbeing/transport-and-health/healthy-streets>

^{xi} PHE Fingertips data from (2020/21 and 2019/20). Available from: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/> ^{xii}
[Walking, cycling and e-biking can help to mitigate climate change - Sustrans.org.uk](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-and-e-biking-can-help-to-mitigate-climate-change)

^{xiii} Economic benefits of walking and cycling (2018). Available from:
<https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-andreports/economic-benefits-of-walking-and-cycling>