

# HIGH RISE HOPE

The social implications  
of energy efficiency  
retrofit in large multi-storey  
tower blocks

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CASE REPORT 75

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## LSE HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

LSE Housing and Communities is a research and consultancy group within the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) at the London School of Economics and Political Science led by Professor Anne Power. The group conducts policy and practice-related research in disadvantaged neighbourhoods; develops models of housing and neighbourhood management, community engagement and control; explores and uncovers the support needs of low-income communities and residents engaged in self-help action, especially in social housing areas; and informs the debate around government policy. Our work investigates the impact of poor neighbourhood and area conditions on families, children and residents; we document the roles local people play in regenerating and improving their communities, as well as understanding why these efforts sometimes fail. LSE Housing and Communities is also associated with the School's Department of Social Policy.

## NOTES

This document is a report to Rockwool, who funded this study into the social effects of energy efficiency measures in large multi-dwelling occupancies, using the Edward Woods Estate in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham as a case study. Rockwool is the insulation provider to the £16.13 million low carbon refurbishment of the estate, working alongside ECD Architects, and The Breyer Group (the main contractor).

All names in this report have been changed to ensure anonymity of the respondents. Photographs are included with permission from ECD Architects unless otherwise indicated.

# FOREWORD

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Rockwool UK



At a time of energy insecurity and with fuel prices rising, the rationale for a more energy efficient housing stock is compelling. According to Ofgem, UK households now pay an average £1,345 a year for their energy, with the average dual-fuel energy bill increasing by 65 per cent since 2009\*. Buildings currently account for 40 per cent of British energy consumption and 36 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions, so making our homes more energy efficient has a significant impact on householder finances and carbon footprints.

However the benefits of improving energy efficiency are more than financial, and can help make our homes warmer, more comfortable and with the right insulation, quieter and safer. The total impact of energy efficiency on householders has yet to be measured in detail and the benefits of improving insulation levels in homes can impact some sections of society more significantly than others. Around 3.5 million households\*\* are classified as living in fuel poverty, and this group has more to gain than most from energy efficiency schemes.

It is for this reason that Rockwool is supporting the London School of Economics' study into the social impact of the energy efficiency retrofit at the Edward Woods estate in West London.

It is estimated that there are 3,500 residential tower blocks (similar to the three main towers at the Edward Woods Estate) in the UK that are taller than ten storeys, and these high-rise buildings offer some of the best candidates for an energy efficient upgrade. With many built in the 1960's and 1970's at a time when energy was relatively cheap, they can be draughty, expensive, cold and damp places to live. With one freeholder, the local authority, these issues can be mitigated using a whole building approach, providing economies of scale that are harder to achieve (although not impossible) in owner occupied properties.

The tower blocks at the Edward Woods Estate offer a useful model for this new approach. The current refurbishment work has seen the blocks receive high grade external wall insulation, cavity wall insulation, roof insulation, coloured facades and integrated photovoltaic solar panels. This tailored combination of measures should lead to more cheaper and comfortable homes for the residents.

The aesthetic and energy efficiency impact of the refurbishment are plain to see, but the social impact is less obvious but equally valuable – and that is what this study, High Rise Hope, sets out to measure and study. This is the first stage of the research and analyses the social effects before and during the works. The long term implications will be measured when we return for the second stage of the research in 2013 and the study will aim to understand how residents' lives have changed with the new measures installed. This initial stage of the report offers useful insight into how the large scale retrofit of residential buildings can be designed to promote social as well as the energy saving benefits.

The Green Deal and other energy efficiency schemes have provided the funding and impetus for refurbishing tower blocks to boost energy efficiency, but the potential for these refurbishments to act as a tool for the regeneration of communities adds an additional element to help create a lasting legacy.

\* [www.telegraph.co.uk/financialservices/utilities/compare-gas-andelectricity-pri/9104386/The-spiralling-costof-household-energy.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/financialservices/utilities/compare-gas-andelectricity-pri/9104386/The-spiralling-costof-household-energy.html)

\*\* [www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/11/stats/fuel-poverty/5270-annual-report-fuel-poverty-stats-2012.pdf](http://www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/11/stats/fuel-poverty/5270-annual-report-fuel-poverty-stats-2012.pdf)

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Architect's drawing of  
new front entrance



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LSE researchers interviewed residents at the Edward Woods Estate in west London during renovation works which included a **major energy efficiency upgrade**. This scheme is an exemplar case study for how the Green Deal 'whole building' approach can apply to high-rise buildings and socially-rented estates.

There are **high levels of deprivation on the estate** and prior to the works, many residents were in, or at risk of, **fuel poverty**. The flats within the tower-blocks showed extreme variations in thermal efficiency and energy bills and the report shows that there are multiple benefits to energy efficiency retrofit in social housing.

Residents are **positive about the estate and their homes and feel safe living there**. Years of upgrading and close management have made residents feel good about where they live. The current regeneration works fit into this virtuous cycle.

**The works were tolerated and most residents were positive about the final outcome**. The impact of the works on residents, including two years of scaffolding and sheeting blocking daylight, ranges from mild inconvenience caused by noise and dust for most, to health problems for a smaller group.

**Many residents thought the regeneration works improved the appearance of the estate, but did not know about the underlying energy efficiency purpose of the investment**. The full value of the works, the energy and cost savings, will only be realised if residents 'buy into' this radical opportunity. The impact of the retrofit on residents' energy bills and views of high rise living should be measured in a year's time, after residents have experienced the full impact of energy saving measures.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This research project analyses energy efficiency measures and their social impacts on low-income areas. New government policies on climate change target low-income areas specifically, but many neighbourhood renewal and area-targeted social programmes are in decline. Consequently, energy efficiency interventions may become the new vehicle for regeneration and could offer great potential social benefits.

The research was based at Edward Woods, which is a large estate in the Shepherd's Bush Green ward in the north of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The estate contains three high-rise blocks, where a landmark regeneration scheme has been underway since 2009. The scheme has multiple regeneration objectives, the major one of which is to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings.

## 2. THE EDWARD WOODS ESTATE

The estate falls within the 12 per cent of most deprived areas in the country (according to the most recent Index of Multiple Deprivation). The number of people on the estate who claim income benefits is double the national average and there are higher than average levels of unemployment.

Edward Woods was identified in a 1981 Department of Environment survey as a "priority estate" and its problems were addressed through local funding and upgrading. It has also been subject to significant further investment and upgrading over recent years.

Despite careful management, many risks associated with fuel poverty were present on the Edward Woods Estate before refurbishment works began. These included poor levels of thermal efficiency, an over-representation of energy-vulnerable groups such as older people, and less cost-efficient energy payment systems such as pre-payment meters. A survey in 2007 found

that two-thirds of residents on the Edward Woods Estate suffered from excessive cold and damp in winter, and that many were worried about rising energy bills.

## 3. THE IMPORTANCE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY WORKS IN SOCIAL HOUSING

From a more general environmental perspective, there are important reasons for making buildings energy efficient: buildings account for nearly 40 per cent of final energy consumption and 36 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions. These works extend the useful life of buildings, and more carbon is saved by refurbishing rather than building anew. It is also far cheaper.

Concrete tower-blocks are particularly good candidates for energy efficiency interventions, because of their structural vulnerability to cold and damp. As there is usually a single freeholder, works can be done as part of a comprehensive programme, rather than in a more costly, disruptive, piecemeal fashion. The finished result can be made visually coherent and attractive, adding to the other regeneration benefits.

There are also social reasons for doing these works. There are strong and well-documented links between damp, cold housing and deprivation. The Marmot Review team found impacts on physical and mental health, in addition to negative impacts on children's educational attainment, emotional wellbeing and resilience.

Energy efficiency works, especially exterior insulation, create warmer homes that are cheaper to heat. This is very important from the perspective of fuel poverty. Energy efficiency measures may also provide community benefits, through upgrading social amenities, presenting a much more attractive image of the neighbourhood, and better sound-proofing.

## 4. THE CURRENT REGENERATION PROJECT

The £16.13 million regeneration project is being led by the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, who commissioned ECD Architects and the building contractors, Breyer. Rockwool are the insulation provider.

The Council's project objectives at the outset were to:

- transform the visual impact of Edward Woods at both estate and wider neighbourhood scale;
- address the problems of unsatisfactory stock conditions and an unattractive environment caused by deficient design and historic underinvestment;
- deliver reductions in energy consumption and costs, and hence CO<sub>2</sub> emissions;
- create a flagship renewable energy project within the Borough by providing solar cells to generate electricity.

The project was ambitious and complex, covering many critical building elements. Much remedial work was required on the building before the cladding of the blocks could begin. The energy saving and generation potential is considerable: the exterior insulation improves the insulating value of the building by nine times, and each block has received solar panels, which will provide around 82,000 kWh of electricity annually. This electricity will be used to power lifts and lighting in the communal areas.

In addition to these building elements, the regeneration project also includes:

- refurbishing the communal areas
- the construction of 12 penthouses for private sale
- new lighting and refurbishment of main electrical systems
- double glazing to windows in stairwells
- installation of gas central heating to bedsits
- conversion of ground floor space to provide seven offices for voluntary organisations



This flagship regeneration project can be regarded as an interesting case study for the Green Deal “whole building” approach in the context of residential tower blocks, and could provide a model and valuable lessons for the retrofit of tower blocks.

## 5. METHOD AND APPROACH

We interviewed 48 residents in their homes from September to December 2011, and regularly met and spoke to staff based at the estate and at the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Council. Our sample was largely representative of the residents on the estate. Using a semi-structured questionnaire we asked people how they felt about their home, the estate, their sense of security, their energy costs, levels of social interaction and community participation on the estate, and about their experiences of the regeneration work to date. We intend to re-interview after the works are completed to find out how conditions have changed, in 2013.

## 6. MAIN FINDINGS

### Home:

- There was a high level of overall satisfaction among residents with their homes: 68 per cent of respondents described their home as good or excellent – mainly because of privacy, feeling safe and the generous size of the homes.
- There were concerns about changes on the estate with new people moving in, and some younger residents said they do not like the fact that it is a council estate. Some people said their homes are cold or damp. In addition, some dissatisfaction with homes is temporary, relating to the building works (dust, noise).

### The estate:

- Half of the respondents said they are proud to live on the estate for reasons including the concierge service, the way it is maintained, having green space, the location, and being near to Westfield.
- There is a strong sense of ownership over the estate. Older residents who have lived on the estate for a long time are prouder than younger residents. Long-term residents talked about how the estate has vastly improved over a period of decades.
- Two thirds of respondents described their quality of life on the estate as good or excellent, and 85 per cent said they are satisfied or very satisfied with the area. Respondents described the estate as well-maintained and well-managed (with particular regard to the concierge service), quiet and safe, having good facilities and a community atmosphere.
- Concerns about the estate include the lack of facilities for young people, management, and problems with alcoholism and drug-taking. Many of the problems are being addressed through the regeneration programme (eg, lighting, maintenance).
- However, some residents are unhappy about the seemingly relentless improvement works to homes and the estate over the last decade. Among other upgrades, this includes replacing kitchens and bathrooms to meet the Decent Homes standard, the construction of new flats on the estate by Notting Hill Housing Trust and the creation of a new public park on the estate.

### Community:

- The self-reported levels of community engagement are quite low, but most respondents know some neighbours even if on a casual basis.
- Nearly a third said they have close contact with neighbours, friends or family in the area.
- Few interviewees said they use the Edward Woods Community Centre, and there is some resentment that residents do not receive a discount to hire it.

“Contrary to general opinion, concrete tower-blocks are particularly good candidates for energy efficiency interventions.”

Shops located on the estate are popular and the local café seems to serve as an alternative community hub.

- Most interviewees are not involved in formal residents’ meetings, and among some people there is even a dislike of them. However, some residents are keen on social events organised by the Tenants’ and Residents’ Association.

### Security:

- Almost all respondents feel safe in their homes and on the estate. Reasons for feeling safe include knowing people around the estate, the concierge service and CCTV cameras. Residents are worried about cuts being made to the concierge service.
- Half of the residents surveyed feel that the regeneration work has not affected their sense of security despite the increased risk generated by having scaffolding round the building.

### Energy usage:

- Residents have considerably different energy bills and many pay a significant portion of their income on heating: we estimated that some residents pay more than £40 per week for gas and electricity.
- Energy bills appear to vary because of 1) variations in the thermal efficiency of different flat types (eg, studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom) within the same blocks, and 2) how residents use energy.

“Nearly all tenants were tolerant of the disruption due to the regeneration works.”

- Nearly half think their energy bills are unreasonable, and most think that the cost of energy will rise. There is concern for those on low incomes, particularly those relying only on state benefits – particularly pensions.
- A third of respondents described using energy saving measures, some of which have been implemented by the council (eg, draught reducers). Almost 40 per cent said they cannot save more than they already do, are already careful with energy usage, or think the best way to save energy is simply not to use it. A quarter are not inclined to change their usage. Only a few interviewees mentioned the insulation works as a potential source of energy saving.

#### Regeneration works:

- Nearly all tenants were tolerant of the disruption due to the regeneration works, but some were becoming impatient and frustrated as the project end date continued to slip. 72 per cent rated their experience of the works as neither good nor bad, good or excellent.
- The works affected different people disproportionately: some people said the works had caused them little inconvenience, while a few said they had a severe impact. People that have regular working hours were less affected, while those who are housebound or work night shifts suffered more from the noise. Parents with young children or ill residents worried about the effect of the dust on their health. There were frequent mentions of excessive noise and dust, but many regarded this as inevitable.
- Residents were generally positive about the building contractor, Breyer, and their Resident Liaison Officer was usually mentioned as very helpful. 86 per cent feel that they have been adequately kept up to date with progress.
- Respondents think the work was motivated primarily by the need to improve the appearance of the estate. Only a third of respondents said their

flat will feel warmer or have less damp problems following the works.

## 7. OVERVIEW

- Most residents rank their quality of life as good, feel safe and like their homes and estate. For its residents, the estate has shed its previous reputation as a “no-go” area through upgrading and management. The concierge service is a big asset for the estate, contributing to people feeling safe and having a point of contact.
- Residents had a tolerant and accepting attitude to more than two years of disruption caused by the work, though sometimes this toleration is based on resignation to the inevitability of the works and disruption. For most residents, the daytime working hours of the builders (from 9am to 4pm) were reasonable and made the process less disruptive. Some residents, particularly those with children, housebound or in ill-health or those working night shifts who need a quiet place to sleep during the day, reported more problems as a result of the works.
- The delivery of the thermal insulation objectives of the project may be undermined by the fact that only a minority of residents are aware of these works to improve to the thermal insulate of their flats. Residents need consistent and reiterated information about why the work is being done, and their part in exploiting the opportunities that follow.
- The biggest benefits of the project, particularly in terms of delivering the intended energy and financial savings will only be realised if residents participate fully by changing their behaviour in the use of energy and observing the good practice guidance around how windows, ventilation, and heating are used efficiently. Being more aware of some energy saving measures primes people to think of other energy efficiency measures, creating a multiplier effect. If information is delivered effectively about the energy-saving merits of this scheme, it may not

only reduce energy consumption from space heating, but from other appliances.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

This report suggests that a large-scale estate retrofit programme delivers benefits in terms of modernising and upgrading homes, and energy saving. It also suggests that there are wider benefits from building relationships with residents and communities as a means of delivering effective rehabilitation works of this kind.

### Lessons to learn for future schemes:

- Improving communication with residents before, during and after works, for example:
  - explaining to those with disabilities / illnesses how they will be affected;
  - explaining effectively the purpose of the works and potential benefits to residents;
  - keeping residents better informed of delays and the reasons behind this.
- Consider offering to move some of the most vulnerable residents (young families, ill or elderly) for the duration of the works. Provide better relief facilities for in-situ residents that are located near the estate, but with enough distance from builders and noise.
- Find better ways to engage residents in the reasons behind the work – for example, energy efficiency advice and usage tips should be given throughout the process. This would help to remove suspicions about why the work is happening (some believed it was purely cosmetic / for the benefit of Westfield) and help residents to understand the importance of changing wasteful energy behaviour.
- Use social events and residents' appetites for fun as a means of getting people together, producing an alternative to poorly attended formal meetings.

With estate wide energy efficiency works of this type, the social impact cannot be ignored in terms of the need for resident buy-in and input, as well as recognising the impacts – both positive and negative. It is too early to measure the social benefits of energy efficiency measures in this estate (due to the works not being completed), but the gains from these works are expected to be considerable due to:

- the regenerative elements of the works;
- improvement to the building fabric and consequently the overall standard of accommodation;
- reduced energy costs for users.

The impact of the retrofit needs measuring in a year's time after residents have experienced the full impact of energy saving measures.



“With estate wide energy works of this type, the social impact cannot be ignored.”

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO EDWARD WOODS

Edward Woods is a large high-rise estate in the Shepherd's Bush Green ward in the north of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (Figure 1). The estate is made up of 854 Council-owned homes within three tower blocks (528 units) and four walk-up blocks (226 units). The estate was built between 1966 and 1971. Also contained within the estate are relatively new developments owned and managed by Notting Hill Housing Group and Copthorn Homes (a subsidiary of Countryside Properties) built in 2003. The estate was managed by an ALMO (Hammersmith and Fulham Homes) between 2003 and 2010 but estate management was brought back in-house to the Council in 2010.

The three tower blocks are comprised of reinforced concrete frames, solid brickwork flank walls, concrete private balconies and PVCu double glazed windows (installed in 1991 in Poynter House and in 1992 in Norland and Stebbing Houses), all under flat

roofs. The windows and the roof coverings are scheduled for renewal in 2020. Each of the three tower blocks consists of 176 homes over 22 floors (each block has 24 storeys) comprising 44 studios, 88 one-bedroom and 44 two-bedroom flats. There are two types of one-bedroom flats: one type has only one externally facing wall; the second type has two-and-a-half external walls. The two-bedroom flats have two-and-a-half external walls, while studios have two external walls. This makes a significant difference to thermal ratings. The layout on each floor of the tower blocks is identical, with eight flats per floor (Figure 2).

Green space within the estate includes gardens and play spaces. There is a community centre and a number of local shops such as a chemist and a cafe. The estate is well located for access to public transport and larger shopping and other recreational facilities, including the Westfield shopping centre which is opposite, across the main road.

## 1.1 SOCIAL COMPOSITION

According to the latest Index of Multiple Deprivation (2010), the LSOA (the small area measured within the deprivation indices) covering Edward Woods<sup>1</sup> improved in recent years, from the fourth most deprived LSOA in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in 2007 to the tenth most deprived (out of 111 LSOAs) in 2010. Despite this improvement, it remains very deprived compared to the rest of England, the estate falls within the 12 per cent of most deprived areas in the country (ranking 3,934 out of 32,482 with 1 being the most deprived, so amongst the 12 per cent most deprived). This is evident from the number of people in the estate who claim income related and disability benefits, which is double that of the local, city-wide and national average. As Figure 3 shows, in 2010 9 per cent of all working age adults were claiming Jobseekers' Allowance (compared with a national average of 4 per cent), and almost double the national average were claiming incapacity benefits. The rates of those seeking support as Lone Parents was triple the national average. Unemployment, incapacity and lone parenthood are all risk factors for deprivation.

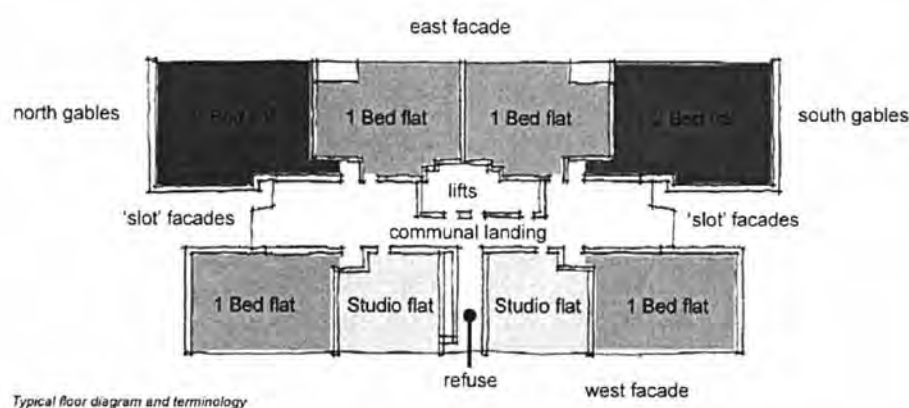
Figure 1: Edward Woods Estate before renovation works commenced (2008)

Source: LSE Housing and Communities



Figure 2: Floor diagram of the Edward Woods Estate

Source: ECD Architects



Typical floor diagram and terminology

Figure 3: People of working age claiming a key benefit, 2010 (%)

	Edward Woods	LBHF	London	England
Total working age claiming a key benefit	30	15	15	15
Job Seekers	9	4	4	4
Incapacity Benefits	12	7	6	7
Lone Parent	6	2	2	2

Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics

Furthermore, levels of economic activity on the estate are low compared to the national average. Unemployment rates are almost four times the national average, and those deemed to be economically inactive are also high compared to the rest of the borough and country. This is partly due to high numbers of people who cannot work due to reasons such as incapacity, working as unpaid carers, or looking after the family (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Whether people are in work, unemployed or economically inactive (%)

	Edward Woods	LBHF	London	England
People aged 16-74: In employment (includes economically active students)	49	64	63	64
People aged 16-74: Unemployed	11	5	4	3
People aged 16-74: Economically inactive*	40	31	32	33

Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics, ONS Census 2001

\*Economically inactivity includes those retired, those looking after home / family, economically inactive students or permanently sick or disabled.

The majority ethnic group on the estate is White British (38 per cent), although there is a significant concentration of residents from Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds (32 per cent) (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Ethnic composition (%)

	Edward Woods	LBHF	London	England
White British	38	58	60	87
White Irish	5	5	3	1
White Other	11	15	8	3
Mixed	6	4	3	1
Asian or Asian British	6	4	12	5
Black or Black British	32	11	11	2
Chinese	2	3	3	1

Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics, ONS Census 2001

According to the latest figures available from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (2009) the estate is home to 1,405 residents with a high predominance of lone-person households (56 per cent), particularly single male households. There are not many children living on the estate, in comparison with the average national household composition. Two-thirds of families on the estate are lone-parent families (Figure 6). The housing stock on the estate is characterised by one- and two-bedroom units, with 17 per cent of properties (excluding the newer Notting Hill and Copthorn developments) purchased by leaseholders. Half of all council tenants have been on the estate

for over ten years and just less than a quarter of all households (23 per cent) would like to move away from the estate.

The estate has a significant number of single residents, a total of 55 per cent of the total population (Figure 6). Since this data is based on the 2001 Census, the number of elderly residents on the estate is likely to be higher due to turnover on the estate being quite low. Therefore many people in the 45-59 category will appear in the 60-74 category in the 2011 census, as we expect they would have remained on the estate (Figure 7).

Figure 6: Household composition (%)

	Edward Woods	LBHF	London	England
Couple with dependent children	6	11	18	21
Couple with no dependent children	9	16	19	24
Lone parent with dependent children	12	7	8	6
Lone parent with no dependent children	5	3	4	3
Elderly couple	2	3	5	9
Single adult	41	27	22	16
Single elderly	14	13	13	14
Other households with dependent children	2	4		2
Other households, shared	7	16	9	4

Source: London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (2009) Edward Woods Estate Profile, November 2009. (ONS Census 2001). Figures may not add to 100 due to rounding

Figure 7: Age composition (%)

Age of residents (years)	Edward Woods	LBHF	London	England
0-20	23	20	25	25
20-24	6	9	7	6
25-44	38	43	35	29
45-59	16	14	16	19
60-74	12	9	10	13
75+	5	5	6	8

Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics, ONS Census 2001

“the estate is located in an area of considerable deprivation, with high unemployment and welfare benefits claims.”



Sheltered housing is provided within the estate with approximately fifty scattered sheltered flats, predominantly situated on the lower floors of three tower blocks (Stebbing, Norland and Poynter Houses). Most of the flats are one bedroom but there are also a few studios. Sheltered tenants, as well as other older residents of the estate, have the use of a communal meeting place, the Evergreen Club, which is where the sheltered housing manager's office is located.

In summary, the estate:

- is located in an area of considerable deprivation;
- has higher than average levels of unemployment and working age people claiming welfare benefits;
- has an ethnic composition which is majority white, but with significant levels of ethnic mix;
- contains many more lone households than the national average, and few families with children;
- has a sheltered housing facility.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND TO REGENERATION WORKS

The Edward Woods Estate was one of the first estates in the UK to receive direct local management. It was identified in a 1981 Department of Environment survey as a "Priority Estate" and was successfully transformed through local funding and upgrading. However the estate was never fundamentally changed in the way that other priority estates such as Broadwater Farm were.

The Edward Woods Estate has been subject to significant investment and upgrading over recent years and works already undertaken in the estate include:

- a block of 58 homes (Saunders House) and two garage podiums were demolished in order to allow the Notting Hill Housing Trust development of 122 new homes for rent and sale;
- landscaping works to create a new public park into the estate (Norland North);

- the construction of a new pedestrian ramp bringing direct access to the Chelsfield White City development;
- external redecoration works and renewal of roofs to a number of blocks;
- a scheme which replaced kitchens and bathrooms in the tower blocks;
- landscaping works to Stebbing House podium deck;
- external repairs to Mortimer House;
- regeneration and extension of the Community Centre with European Funding;
- an on-going programme of improvement to the estate's external areas and the facilities within them.

The overall effect of these works has been to rejuvenate the estate and provide a safer, greener and more pleasant living environment.

All Council dwellings on the estate have undergone improvements works carried out between 2003 and 2010 to bring them up to the Decent Homes Standard. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were reduced by 39 per cent through the Decent Homes programme, with the implementation of efficient combination boilers and double-glazed windows.

During 2011, Breyer was responsible for the installation of central heating systems to the 132 studios in the three tower blocks on the Estate, as part of the current regeneration scheme. According to the latest figures available from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham:

- 97 central heating installations have been carried out or are in progress;
- 71 boilers have been handed over;
- 35 properties did not have central heating installed for a variety of reasons including refusals, lack of access, and where a few already had gas central heating.

## 1.3 ENERGY WASTAGE AND FUEL POVERTY

Fuel Poverty affects those "living on a lower income in a home that cannot be kept warm at a reasonable cost"<sup>2</sup>. It is a widespread problem in the UK: according to the fuel poverty definition of the 2001 UK Fuel Poverty Strategy, in 2009 4.5 million vulnerable households were fuel poor<sup>3</sup>. Fuel poverty is a serious problem affecting poverty, health and wellbeing, and carbon emissions. The primary drivers of fuel poverty are low incomes and high fuel costs. Energy needs differ at the domestic level, depending on factors such as the thermal efficiency of the building; household characteristics (for example, pensioners, disabled and unemployed people spending more time at home require more energy for heating); household behaviour; and the different prices that households pay for energy<sup>4</sup>.

Before refurbishment works commenced, many risks associated with fuel poverty were present on the Edward Woods Estate: poor levels of thermal efficiency; an over-representation of energy-vulnerable groups such as pensioners, ill, disabled or unemployed people (Figure 3); and less cost-efficient energy payment systems.

An initial survey in 2007 by ECD Architects<sup>5</sup> found that two-thirds of residents on the Edward Woods Estate suffer from excessive cold and damp in winter, and that others are worried about rising energy bills. There were complaints about the poorly heated areas adjacent to communal landings, such as bathrooms and hallways. Communal areas also suffer from damp, pigeons and such strong draughts that some residents were having problems opening their front doors.

Building surveys on the estate revealed a combination of problems which were responsible for very poor SAP ratings (Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings) for some flats in the tower blocks. These included chipping and fragmentation (spalling) of concrete, previous failed repairs, damp penetration and interior condensation.

### Thermal efficiency in flats:

There are three different types of flats within the blocks: studios, one-bedroom and two-bedroom flats. The studios have the worst thermal rating, as they are west-facing and are exposed on two sides because of rubbish chutes that run between them. The two bedroom flats, and one bedroom flats (with two-and-a-half external walls), also have a poor rating due to being located on the corners of the blocks. The one bedroom flats (with only one external wall) have the best thermal rating, due to being east facing and only having one exposed wall.

### Household characteristics and energy usage:

The amounts people pay for their energy varies enormously (see Figure 18) and there is a clear distinction in costs and usage between the different types of accommodation within the blocks. During the research period, we observed that some residents keep their entire flat very warm, others concentrate on heating only the rooms they most frequently use, while

others were very conscious of the cost of energy and choose to wrap up and use extra blankets.

### Energy payment systems:

There are a variety of energy payment arrangements in the flats, with many residents using pre-pay meters rather than making quarterly or monthly payments. Following a campaign led by the National Housing Federation, in April 2010, British Gas, EDF, Scottish and Southern Energy and the other three suppliers permanently removed their premiums for gas and electricity on pre-payment meters. Nonetheless, the best tariffs for gas and electricity are available for customers who pay by direct debit, which can be very difficult for low-income households who may not have bank accounts or steady streams of income.

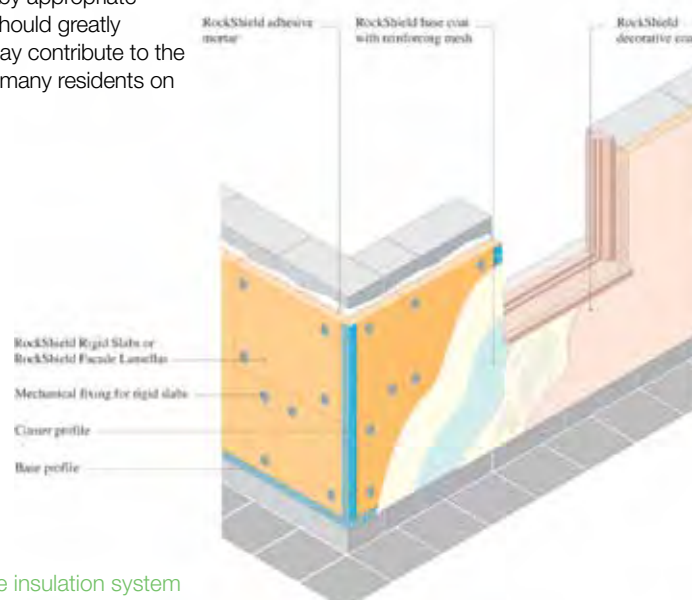
The expected energy efficiency improvements that will be achieved by the refurbishment works are significant. The SAP ratings for the worst insulated flats are anticipated to improve from 46 (Band E) to 89 (Band B), and the predicted average SAP for all flats is 87 (Band B). A 72 per cent reduction in fuel bills for studio flats is expected. This is a significant change that, when accompanied by appropriate energy-using behaviour, should greatly reduce energy bills and may contribute to the alleviating fuel poverty for many residents on the estate.

## 1.4 THE CURRENT FLAGSHIP REGENERATION PROJECT

This £16.13 million regeneration project is being led by the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham working alongside ECD Architects and the building contractors Breyer. Rockwool are the insulation provider.

The Council's project objectives at the outset were to:

- transform the visual impact of Edward Woods at both estate and wider neighbourhood scale;
- address the problems of unsatisfactory stock condition and an unattractive environment caused by deficient design and historic underinvestment;
- deliver reductions in energy consumption and costs, and hence CO<sub>2</sub> emissions;
- create a flagship renewable energy project within the Borough.



The insulation system



View from Norland tower across the Edward Woods Estate



The overall ambition of this complex project was high, covering many critical building elements:

- The existing facing bricks on the gable ends were stripped away due to deterioration and replaced with a lightweight steel frame filled with 100mm insulation panels between studs, and 50mm insulation behind in the original cavity. A cement particle board braced the frame to create an even substrate, on which a 90mm thick external wall system will be applied to achieve a U-value (overall heat transfer coefficient) of 0.18 W/m<sup>2</sup>K. This will be nine times better than the existing make-up;
- The principal south-facing gable of each tower block have received a 318-panel photovoltaic rainscreen system, which is a large expanse of solar panels from the 4th to the 22nd floors, providing around 82,000 kWh of solar generated electricity annually;
- The east and west elevations, which include a 110mm cavity in the window panels, were provided with cavity wall insulation and then externally clad with Rainscreen cladding panels;

Installed insulation panels



Cavity wall insulation being installed at Edward Woods Estate



Poynter House with penthouse in construction

- On top of the 24-storey blocks, new build penthouse flats have been constructed, incorporating lightweight steel frames with 300mm insulation panels, faced with wood finish cladding to achieve a U-value of around 0.15 W/m<sup>2</sup>K;
- Rockwool flat-roof insulation has been included in the roof of these penthouses providing a U-value of 0.15W/(m<sup>2</sup>K). This will also improve the acoustic performance of the building, reducing noise by 29 Db.

In addition to these building elements, the regeneration project also includes:

- refurbishing the communal areas
- new lighting and refurbishment of main electrical systems, since these had reached the end of their design life
- double glazing to windows in stairwells
- installation of gas central heating to studio flats (detailed above)
- conversion of ground floor space to provide seven offices for voluntary organisations

In February 2007 ECD Architects produced an initial appraisal report<sup>6</sup> for the project, which detailed the current condition of the blocks and identified various issues involved in the work, as well as an estimated budget. The original project plan had included the provision of renewable energy through wind turbines, but these were later scrapped for health and safety reasons. However, solar panels have been installed on the south-facing facades of the blocks to generate energy for communal areas on the estate. The original document<sup>7</sup> stated:

*The central theme for the project involves over-cladding the three blocks in order to transform their exterior appearance and provide insulation gains. As part of this project it is also proposed to introduce renewable energy sources, such as wind or solar power, in order to generate electricity for landlord's lighting on the estate.*

*It is also proposed to carry out works to address other issues as part of the project, such as reducing wind turbulence at the base of the blocks, making better use of the under-utilised void area at the ground level and roof level on the blocks and improving the appearance of refuse/recycling bin areas.*

Work to over-clad the external elevations of the three tower blocks, in order to improve their thermal efficiency and physical appearance, began in late 2009. Delays due to the complex nature of the works involved have meant the final completion date has now slipped by over 12 months. There have been huge logistical challenges in delivery. The causes of the delays (some of which were identified very early on) are multiple; for example, the repairs to the structural concrete frame were more extensive than first recognised, due to faults and gaps between slabs. Meanwhile, in the initial report, stripping all the brickwork facing away (and disposing of it safely) was only a possibility, but in reality turned into a long and labour intensive process (Figure 8).



Architect's rendering of the Edward Wood's Estate  
Source: ECD Architects



Figure 8: Brickwork in a state of disrepair and exposed concrete  
Source: Rockwool

Funding for the scheme included various sources:

- GLA Targeted Funding for energy saving £5.24m
- CESP Funding for energy saving £0.60m
- S106 (from previous regeneration scheme) £1.67m
- HRA Capital £3.52m
- Capital Receipts £5.10m
- TOTAL – £16.13m

It is hoped that the 12 penthouse apartments being built on the top floors of the tower blocks will be sold on the open market for up to £500,000, although the council is considering alternative options for the use of the apartments should sales prove difficult to achieve.

## 1.5 WHY ENERGY EFFICIENCY WORKS ARE IMPORTANT IN TOWER BLOCKS / SOCIAL HOUSING ESTATES

### Environmental

Energy efficiency retrofitting of housing can be a major plank of environmental policy, given that buildings account for nearly 40 per cent of final energy consumption and 36 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>8</sup> Space heating accounts for over 50 per cent of energy use in homes.<sup>9</sup> These works also extend the life of the affected buildings: more carbon is saved by refurbishing rather than building anew, and it is also cheaper.

Exterior wall insulation is therefore a major tool in reducing carbon emissions, although tackling concrete housing blocks can be particularly problematic because of

### The Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation

The Green Deal policy is set to start in October 2012, and is enshrined in the Energy Act 2011. It is intended to “revolutionise the energy efficiency of British properties” by encouraging and supporting homeowners and housing providers to improve the energy efficiency of their properties. The cornerstone of the policy is a financial mechanism that eliminates the need to pay upfront for energy efficiency measures, instead shifting the capital costs to the energy providers and recouping the costs through the electricity bill. Customers take on loans provided by Green Deal Providers, which so far include some of the “Big Six” energy companies and some high street stores. These debts are passed onto new occupiers when they take over the payment of the bills, should the upgraded property be sold. A specially trained Green Deal Advisor performs an inspection of the property to provide a report on advised energy improvement measures. The funding for these measures is then issued by the Green Deal Provider and a Green Deal Installer will then carry out the works.

A new Energy Company Obligation (ECO) will integrate with the Green Deal, combining supplier subsidy and Green Deal Finance. The key focus of the new energy company obligation will be on those householders who cannot achieve significant energy savings without an additional or different measure of support. For example, this includes vulnerable and low-income households and those living in harder to treat properties, such as solid walled properties.

Source: [decc.gov.uk](http://decc.gov.uk)

issues such as deterioration of cladding and concrete structural frames, which have produced cracks in concrete, damp penetration, and cold bridges. Moreover, in the UK, many tower blocks have been subjected to historic under-investment which exacerbates these problems.

### Financial

As social housing estates usually have a single freeholder, insulating housing estates involves economies of scale, in terms of erecting scaffolds, having one responsible contractor on site, the acquisition of building materials and labour, and other related benefits. An added advantage of the freeholder being in charge of these works is that the end result will be visually attractive, using the same building materials, which is also better for the integrity of the building itself. This has been a problem in some new EU member states

which have instigated insulation policies: ineffective residents’ associations and poor policy design have led to some buildings being only partially insulated from the outside, which is detrimental to the building fabric.

Social housing estates are home to many people on low incomes, who are especially vulnerable to high energy bills. Energy efficiency works, especially exterior insulation, can significantly reduce problems of damp and mould, whilst also making homes much warmer and cheaper to run. People on low incomes are also much more likely to suffer from fuel poverty. When people have to spend a lot of their income on heating their homes, they may cut back on food and other essentials: some may be forced to make “eat or heat” decisions<sup>10</sup>. Reducing energy costs allows money to be spent on other essential goods.

Fuel poverty exacerbates other hardships faced by those on low incomes; it has serious health impacts, contributing to deaths every winter; and it acts as a block to efforts to cut carbon emissions. The recent report on fuel poverty by John Hills from CASE shows that interventions that improve the energy efficiency of homes occupied by those on low incomes can make a substantial difference, bringing large benefits to society as a whole<sup>11</sup>.

### Medical impacts

The recent report<sup>12</sup> from the Marmot Review team found that excessively cold and damp housing causes excess winter deaths, has impacts on mental health, and contributes to many illnesses such as asthma, bronchitis, heart and respiratory diseases. They also found social effects, such as impacts on children's educational attainment, and emotional wellbeing and resilience. There is a strong and well-documented link between damp, cold housing and deprivation, which is much more likely to affect people on low incomes. As an extreme illustration, Shelter highlights the issue of "buggy babies": infants who develop deformed skulls, as parents do not want to let young children play in damp or mouldy conditions, instead keeping them in a lying position in their prams.<sup>13</sup>

### Community impacts

Community benefits can be won through energy efficiency measures, and are especially important, even crucial, on social housing estates which may suffer from poor perceptions and cycles of decline. Energy efficiency works offer the added benefit of concurrent regeneration works, which can improve social amenities and the image of estates for residents. For example, neglected community spaces can be transformed into places that residents want

to use, while the knowledge that estates are not abandoned nor forgotten is vital for residents who may be especially vulnerable. It creates pride in places that have a poor image and where residents may find themselves stigmatised for living there.

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) found that community-led energy projects galvanised local communities into action to pursue common goals, and improved community cohesion in some cases<sup>14</sup>. Though projects evaluated were community-led, rather than top-down, (as in complex cases of retrofitting), the research suggests that there can be value in projects which involve community and resident partnership with the other involved parties such as local authorities or other freeholders, architects and building contractors.

The wide range of groups involved in delivering energy-saving improvements can also provide opportunities for additional assistance for residents. This could include benefit entitlement checks, health advice, and community action on the environment. An evaluation of the Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) found that these opportunities are often missed due to a lack of involvement with wider groups, such as social enterprises and community groups<sup>15</sup>. This underlines the importance of resident buy-in and getting local community groups involved from the outset. The upcoming Green Deal and ECO presents another good opportunity for these added benefits to be realised.

Improvements, such as solid wall insulation, can also bring significant noise-reduction benefits to communities. With so many households living together, noise can be a major problem that can create friction between neighbours. By adding sound insulation this noise problem can be significantly reduced, to everyone's benefit.

Energy efficiency measures can help extend the life of the buildings for the future, and long-established communities that have a secure place to live tend to thrive. The disruption caused by demolition can often

have a very negative impact on households who are separated from their previously established community. Energy efficiency projects may also encourage communities of mixed ownership as people want to buy into places that are innovative, forward-thinking and energy efficient. A locally based continuing building management service, and well-managed regeneration, have positive effects on the local community, and energy efficiency measures are becoming the new vehicle for this, with the recent policy drive to reduce carbon emissions.

Improving the quality of housing leads to greater satisfaction and pride, and more residents will want to stay, contributing to the stability of the local community. Instead of this type of housing contributing to a vicious cycle of entrenched deprivation, energy efficiency measures on tower blocks and social housing estates could create a virtuous cycle of pride, better facilities, healthier places to live, as well as greater awareness among residents about the benefits of being more energy conscious.

### Similar projects

The benefit of these works is evidenced through a small number of similar projects that have recently come to fruition, eg, the Ethelred Estate in Lambeth, City West Housing Trust refurbishment of Barton Village in Greater Manchester and the Colne and Mersea Low-Carbon Refurbishment Project at the Harts Lane Estate in Barking. The energy efficient retrofitting of the Edward Woods Estate is a key addition to this list, not least because it incorporates the largest building-integrated renewable energy array in London.

IPPR's evaluation of the Green Streets project<sup>16</sup> also showed that community energy-saving and microgen projects

catalyse an engagement with energy issues among local populations: installations of measures such as solar panels "can reach deep into communities and have pronounced impacts on attitudes towards installing energy efficiency measures and microgen". Surveys of households within 1.25 km of community energy projects found that 46 per cent of households aware of the Green Streets project have been inspired to take action on energy efficiency and renewable energy.<sup>17</sup>

Each tower block in the Edward Woods Estate now has solar panels, which given their size and height, are very visible in the local vicinity. In future, these tower blocks might become beacons of energy efficiency that inspire changing attitudes towards energy-saving in residents and the local population, as opposed to unattractive and outdated features of the local landscape.

# CHAPTER TWO: LSE HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES RESEARCH

Our research project aims to analyse the links between energy efficiency measures and social impacts. New government policies on climate change target low-income areas specifically, but funding for many neighbourhood renewal and area-targeted social programmes has recently been cut. There is great potential social benefit in energy saving intervention (eg, the Community Energy Saving Programme). Our research on the Edward Woods estate in 2011/2012 is set within this context.

## 2.1 METHODS AND PLANNED TIMESCALE

The research was originally split into a two-stage process based around the expected duration of the works, which was initially scheduled to begin in November 2009 and finish in July 2011. The aim of the first stage was to interview residents during the refurbishment process. The aim of the second stage was to carry out follow-up interviews with the same residents after the first winter following the completion of the refurbishment works. This would have been in early 2012 had the building works run to schedule.

The first round of interviews was postponed because of delays to the building works. Between September to December 2011 we carried out semi-structured interviews with 48 residents within the three tower blocks on the estate, in addition to local staff and key stakeholders.

It was not possible to carry out the second round of interviews as the building works had not been completed. Research into the effects of these energy efficiency measures will be undertaken in a year's time.

From September 2011 to December 2011, the research team made regular visits to the Edward Woods Estate and during that time became familiar faces. We used many local places and points of contact, including the local community centre, local café, daycentre for elderly people, in addition to knocking on residents' doors and posting letters explaining the purpose of our work.

The vast majority of interviews were gained through door-knocking.

We made a point of getting to know the concierges, who are the unofficial eyes and ears of the estate, and developed a working relationship with housing officers and managers at the council and the council-run community centre.

Where possible, we made an effort to interview members of the Tenants' and Residents' Association (TRA) because they had been involved with the planning of the works for a long time, and in some cases this facilitated interviews with other residents they know.

Interviews were semi-structured, lasted about twenty minutes and were fully transcribed if the interviewee agreed to the interview being recorded. We asked people how they felt about their home, the estate, their sense of security, energy costs, levels of social interaction and community participation in the estate, and finally about their experiences of the regeneration work to date. (See Appendix 1 for the full interview schedule).

Following the end of on-site interviews in December 2011, we prioritised transcription of interviews, analysis of data and keeping in touch with all involved partners (LBHF, Rockwool, Breyer, residents), including attending Resident Working Party Meetings on the estate once a month.

## 2.2 BREAKDOWN OF INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS

We spoke to a wide variety of people reflecting the mixed composition of the estate itself.

Twenty interviewees were aged between 60 and 79, with a further 14 residents aged 40-59. We interviewed four 20-25 year olds, and seven aged 26-39. The remaining three interviewees were over 80 years. The predominance of pensioners in our survey is due to the fact that interviews were generally conducted during the daytime, so employed residents of working age were

“We made a point of getting to know the concierges, who are the unofficial eyes and ears of the estate.”

less likely to be present (Figure 9). We spoke to double the number of men (32) to women (16), which also reflects the make-up of the estate with its predominance of single older men. Also women may have been less keen on answering their door to strangers, hence a lower response rate. Many women who we spoke to on the estate were caring for young children and did not have the time to do the survey (Figure 10). Over half of the respondents were White (27 out of 48), 13 respondents were Black and four each described themselves as Asian or Other (Iranian, Other Middle Eastern and North African) (Figure 11). Our sample reflected the ethnic composition of the estate area.

Figure 9: Age of interviewees

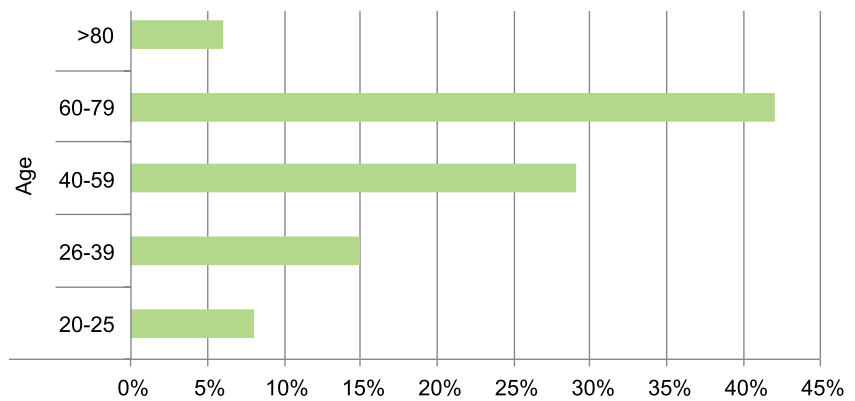


Figure 10: Gender of interviewees

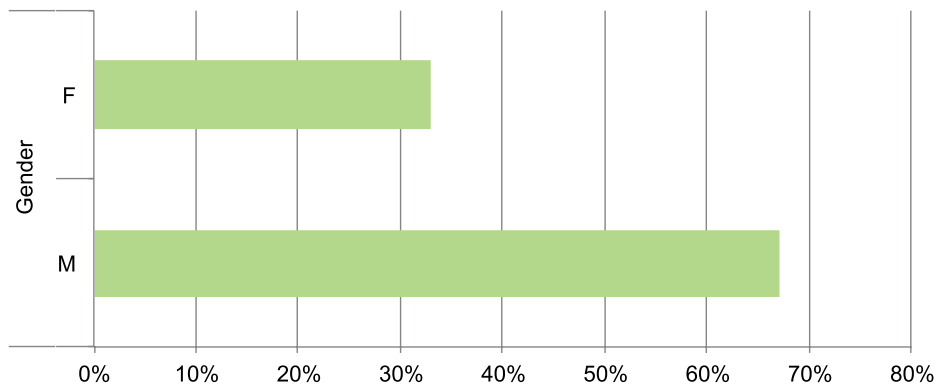
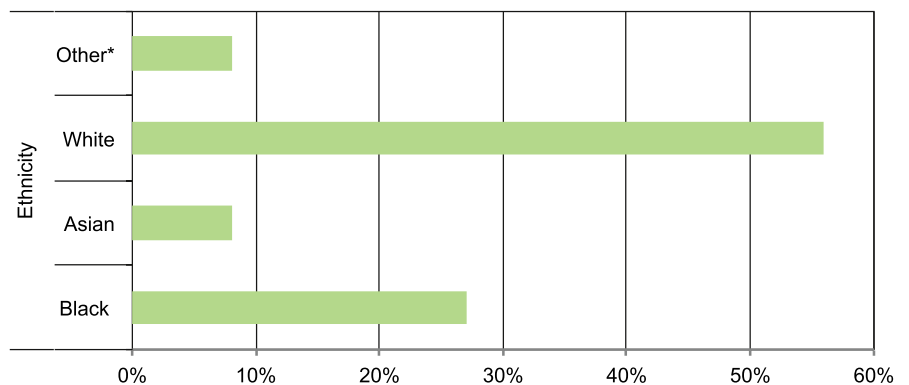


Figure 11: Ethnicity of interviewees



\* Other includes Iranian, Other Middle Eastern and North African



The vast majority of those interviewed lived alone (32 of 48) with a further seven living with a partner and nine with their family (Figure 12). 30 of the 48 respondents had lived in the estate for more than ten years; 11 had lived there for between two and ten years, and there were seven newcomers (living on the estate for two years or less). This reflects the low turnover on the estate, and results in part from the fact that a lot of our interviewees were pensioners, and therefore more likely to have lived on the estate for a longer period of time. 18 had lived there for over 20 years, ten for over 30 years and two since the estate was built in 1971.

Almost all respondents were tenants of Hammersmith and Fulham Council, two were leaseholders and two were renting privately (Figure 14). Respondents were spread evenly across the three tower blocks, with 17 living in Norland House, 15 in Poynter House and 16 in Stebbing House. Most interviewees lived in one bedroom flats (29 out of 48) with 12 living in two bedroom flats and the remaining seven respondents living in studios.

Figure 12: Household type

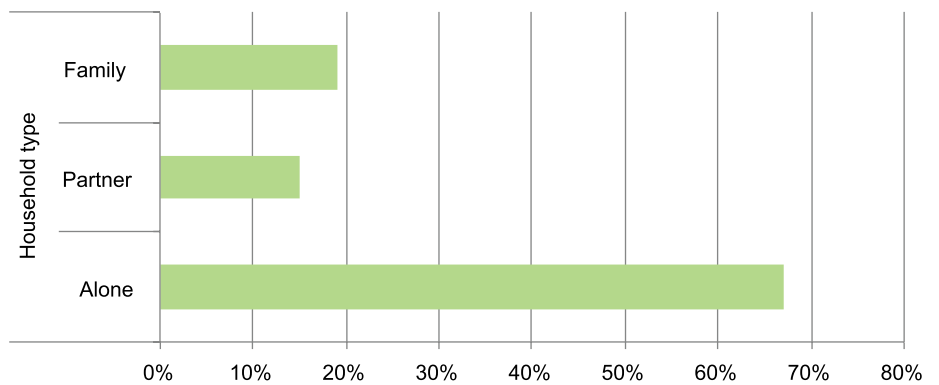


Figure 13: Length of time in property

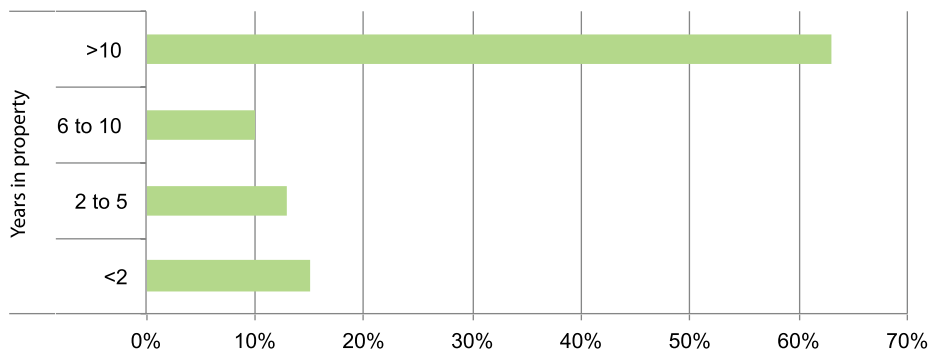
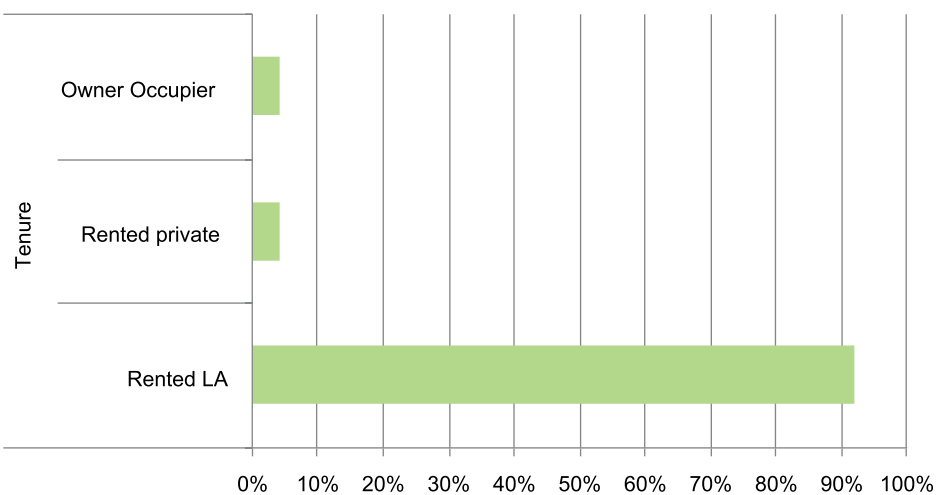


Figure 14: Tenure



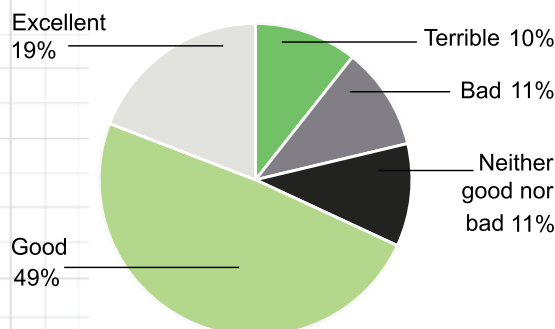
# CHAPTER THREE: FINDINGS

This section highlights the key findings from the qualitative semi-structured questionnaire.

## 3.1 HOME

We asked residents to rate the quality of life in their homes. Overall they are mostly satisfied. The majority said it is either good (49 per cent) or excellent (19 per cent) and the remaining residents were fairly evenly split between those who feel their quality of life at home is neither bad nor good (11 per cent), bad (11 per cent) and terrible (10 per cent) (Figure 15).

Figure 15: How residents rate the quality of life in their homes



### 3.1a How do you feel about your home / flat?

Interview respondents were asked to describe how they felt about their home conditions. There were a variety of answers, with some residents able to disconnect their overall experience of home from the regeneration works underway, whilst others find this difficult. Several times people mentioned that they **like their homes** because of:

- safety and security
- location
- space

“People are proud to live on the estate because of the concierge service, the way it is maintained and having green space.”

### SATISFACTION WITH HOMES:

*I feel nice and safe in here (Elya)*

*I like it here, it's quite nice here. It's sheltered accommodation (Eika)*

*Yeah I do like living here, it's local for me – transport, shops, it's near to work, it's fine – it'd be nice if we had a nice view [referring to scaffolding] but hopefully soon. (Sel)*

*I like it, it's spacious (Lisa)*

When people are **less satisfied** with their home the main reasons are:

- specific damage / impacts of the regeneration works underway;
- darkness / lack of light;
- the overall standard of accommodation.

A frequent sentiment is that residents like their homes very much, but the on-going building works have affected how they can interact with their environment. Delays to completion lead to feelings of despondency. Nevertheless, residents are supportive of the scheme and show remarkable levels of tolerance towards the works:

*Well I was quite satisfied with it prior to the building works but it follows doesn't it?...And of course, we should be pleased that they're actually doing it in a way, so we've got to be tolerant. I've been trying to be tolerant with them – but eventually it gets past a joke, it's been going on for so, so long. It seems to be a never ending thing. (Michael)*

Some residents feel the quality of their homes has been compromised by the building works, leading to health concerns for some with young families:

*It's dark, there's no light, no fresh air, no garden... (Asad)*

*Before the work it was better, much better, but now it is too much noise and the breathing for the kids is very bad and they cough a lot. For me, it's ok but for little ones it's very bad. (Saheed)*

A further complaint relates to the thermal inefficiency of the home:

*I'm not happy with it at all, it's too warm*

*in the summer and it's very cold in the winter. It costs me about £30 a week just to keep the heating on in this room only. (Ryan)*

### 3.1b What are the best things?

We also asked people to identify the best things about their home. There were similar responses to the previous question with location, space and size / comfort of flats, and privacy being the most common answers:

- location (9)
- space, size, comfort (9)
- privacy (9)
- the view (4)
- knowing people/nobody bothering you (3)
- quiet (2)
- the role of security/concierge (2)

#### PRIVACY:

*You come in, close the door, and that's it. (Ciara)*

#### COMMUNITY:

*I don't know what it is, I know most people in the building, it's like having your family there in a sense. And they're nice large rooms. (Brian)*

#### LOCATION:

*As I said, it's central to everything, everything is local, not far for transport, tube stations, shopping malls, Westfield across the road. (Sel)*

*It's quite central, the transport's great because it's easy to get to any location in London, and we've got Westfield right next to us, so it's very convenient. (Oliver)*

#### SIZE:

*It's nice and light and airy, and spacious. (Maggie)*

*There are no best things in a sense, but it's the perfect size for a single person (Mr Brennan)*

#### QUIET AND SAFE:

*Well it's very quiet up until this job started, and it's very convenient if you want to get to the shops, the big shops, you can get a bus just around the corner and all that. (Mr Cope)*

*It's quite secure, quiet, so I'm one of the lucky ones. (Michael)*

#### MANY ADVANTAGES:

*The size, for a one bedroom flat, and the proximity to transport, Westfield, so the connection is quite good. Everything is within walking distance, so that's another advantage. Assuming the insulation work is done to a good standard, the cost of the heating will be less. The regeneration work itself – I think it's a good thing. (Matthew)*

Seven out of the 48 respondents have a negative view on this and said there is nothing good / nothing they can describe as best about it:

*Nothing, I'm actually looking for a transfer (Mark)*

### 3.1c What things about your home and your surroundings do you feel proud of?

Responses were split between answers about their own homes given by around 11 respondents, the estate (6) and the wider area (5). When talking about their homes people most commonly mention things they feel they can control themselves including:

- keeping own home clean and tidy
- making the most of it;
- being in control and deciding who to let in;
- the sense of personal space.

#### HOME-PROUD:

*Keeping it the way I want to keep it, clean and tidy (Ken)*

*How I keep it clean (Liz)*

*Nothing I don't feel proud of really – it's what you make of it as well. Again, I'm not very proud of the really wealthy on one side and really poor on the other side – just the class difference makes me sick. But apart from that I can't say that I'm not proud of where I live, or how I live, it's all comfortable, could be a lot worse. (Charlotte)*

People were proud to live on the estate itself for a number of reasons, including the concierge service, the way it was maintained, and having green space. People were also proud of living in West London, in a “posh” area, and near to Westfield.

#### VIEWS:

*The view – once the netting's gone it'll be even better but it's fantastic from here, especially at night time. The location is excellent too. (Jason)*

*I can't think about any good points, the only good thing I used to have was a beautiful view of London, and obviously that's been gone for the last two years. (Theo)*

#### GREEN:

*It's a nice area, we've got a park as well, we've got the trees and the hedgerows, and the landscape. I like the balcony, like my own porch, you can relax like you're in the park. (Gary)*

#### LOCATION:

*The area, it's a nice area, it's a good area. I've been around here for a long time now, it's reasonable. There's not as many lunatics as there used to be. (John)*

*I like the location, I like the area, it's nice, safe and everything. (Lisa)*

**CLEAN AND TIDY:**

*It's a nice compact estate, it's well-kept, it's kept clean and everybody seems to get on alright. There's no trouble on this wee estate. I don't go out at night because of my age so I couldn't tell you about night-time. (Chris)*

*The cleaning, at least the cleaners make the effort of making the lifts clean and the communal areas quite tidy. There's a small green area outside the flat which is quite neat, well-kept. The concierge – it would have been ideal if they were open 'til later – past 1,2,3 in the morning, that could be improved. But you know, it's not a bad area. (Matthew)*

**UPMARKET LIVING:**

*Just being close to Westfield... Everyone thinks you live in a posh area – it's not really – but you've got Westfield, it's not too far from Notting Hill Gate, Holland Park round there...yeah, but it's not very nice right here, so...but living here is quite nice. (Sel)*

*That I live in one of the most expensive parts of London, like Holland Park, and that's about it really. And I live on the west side of London, which I reckon is the best side. (Oliver)*

*I'm proud of living in West London, I'm proud of living in front of Westfield (Joseph)*

But seven people have nothing they can feel proud of:

*I don't feel proud of it at all, because I feel trapped at the moment. (Theo)*

*I've got nothing really. I can't think of anything I could be proud of, to be honest. (Michael)*

**3.1d What are the worst things about your home?**

When asked about the worst things about their home, people gave a range of responses as follows:

- Dust / noise / people on the scaffolding / damp and leaks caused by the regeneration work (8)
- Draughty windows / doors and being cold both in flats and communal areas (6)
- Noise (internal from neighbours and external from local roads) (6)
- Lack of space (3)
- Lifts not working (2)
- Feeling unsafe / insecure (1)

Many of the problems seem to be caused, or should be remedied, by the regeneration works. The responses are in keeping with respondent's high level of satisfaction with their homes.

**NOISE:**

*The noise pollution. (Joseph)*

*Just the noise...work, motorway, because we're close to the A40 just here, Friday and Saturdays are the worst particularly late nights, cars zooming up and down, you hear them from a mile away. (Sel)*

*That you can hear everything else, you can hear your neighbours when they play their loud music, or they're doing work or so on. (Gloria)*

**WEATHER:**

*Used to have draughty windows and doors, but since these have been repaired it's a lot better. (Adam)*

*In the winter it's draughty (Andrew)*

*The howling gales we get in the winter, down the landings. But that's going to be fixed with this work that's going on – hopefully. We're praying it's going to be sorted with the work that's going on, because sometimes you can't even open the front door. (Maggie)*

*It gets a bit cold and mouldy in the winter. (Lisa)*

**THE WORKS:**

*It's only the noise from the works (Ken)*

*People on the scaffolding...people come out on to their balconies and take people in and have parties and go on to the scaffolding, and that's been going on for quite some time. (Sarah)*

*Well like I said it's just the dust, and I can't lock that door [balcony door] there – and I don't like the thought that they could get in here through that...net curtain. (Richard)*

*Obviously the dust, the noise now has slowed down but before it was too much. We can stand the noise but we can't stand too much dust. (Saheed)*

*Damp...it got a lot more worse since the building work began, because we're finding cracks and everything around the house, because we're finding water is leaking through. (Shafeeq)*

**3.1e What things make you feel bad about where you live?**

A third of all respondents said that nothing makes them feel bad about where they live. However, of the remaining interviewees the biggest issues identified are:

- Concerns about security and change on the estate, with new people moving in and gangs (7)
- Problems related to the regeneration works (6)
- The local surroundings and the fact that it is a council estate (4)
- Concerns about local facilities or accommodation (3)
- The constant cycle of regeneration on the estate (1)

**THE WORKS:**

*Well, at the moment – yeah – it’s about all this work. The council have spent a hell of a lot of money on this estate but as a result, it looks good up to a point. But with all the work it just goes on and on...I appreciate they’re spending lots of money on the estate, and of course you can see the improvements – eventually. But you don’t get the advantage of the improvements, because the moment they finish one thing, they just put masses of scaffolding up somewhere else. The estate is never without builders and work people wandering about all the time. It’s like out the front where they built the park – that looks nice but of course nobody can see it anymore because of all this scaffold being up and stuff like that. And that’s how it’s going on, and it gets to you in the end. (Michael)*

*To be very honest, nothing except the construction work going on. The flat’s aspect used to be one of the very best for me, but hopefully when they finish it comes back to the way it used to be – nice, quiet, safe, with friendly people. (Joseph)*

**GANGS:**

*I supposed the so-called gangs (Mr Brennan)*

**OUTSIDERS:**

*Only the people coming in that isn’t supposed to be in there. (Patrick)*

**SAFETY:**

*Only this safety thing, the shouting and all this. Otherwise everything is ok. (Matin)*

**LACK OF OPEN SPACE:**

*Not having a garden and not having a balcony (Frank)*

**MANAGEMENT:**

*The stress and the noise and the lack of vision of the people running the place. (Tyree)*

**BEING A COUNCIL ESTATE:**

*Yeah, living on an estate, a council estate... yeah, because there’s lots of flats, 22 floors, there’s quite a lot of people in and out, you don’t know who lives and where, so...I’ve got a son as well, so... (Sel)*

*The surroundings – living in the council environment (Emily)*

**3.2 ESTATE**

Similarly to how residents rate the quality of life in their homes, the majority of residents are positive about their quality of life on the estate, with 57 per cent describing it as good and a further 11 per cent rating it as excellent. 15 per cent feel the estate offers them a quality of life that is neither good nor bad and 13 per cent of respondents describe their quality of life as bad, with a further four per cent believing it to be terrible (Figure 16).

Satisfaction with homes and the wider area is clearly seen in Figure 17. 85 per cent of respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with their area and the wider environment. Nine per cent are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and just six per cent express clear dissatisfaction.

Figure 16: How residents described their quality of life on the estate

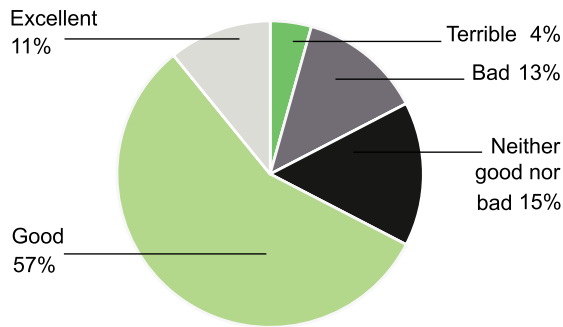
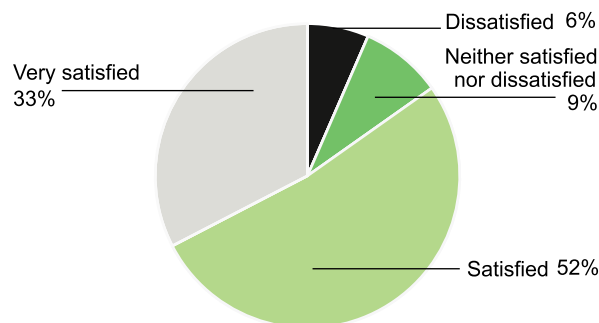


Figure 17: How satisfied residents are with their area and the wider environment



### 3.2a How do you feel about the estate?

There were a wide variety of responses to this question, with some residents unable to disconnect any views about the estate from the regeneration work currently underway. Most people are positive (only eight respondents had negative views) about the estate. Reasons for positive views include:

- Well-kept / maintained, clean and tidy – people looking after it doing a good job
- Estate has improved a lot in recent years
- Nice people – a good community spirit
- Quietness
- Safety

#### GOOD MAINTENANCE:

*The estate is lovely, got no graffiti or anything like that, it's quite a nice estate I can tell you that. And when they take down the scaffolding it will be a beauty to look at I tell you. (Li)*

*It's not too bad, it's quiet. The staff look after the place well, they keep it clean, as clean as they can with all the building works going on. (John)*

#### COMMUNITY:

*I'm quite happy with the estate. Quite happy and settled here, and there's a nice community spirit here amongst most people. (Maggie)*

*Yeah, it's good. Very good people here. Because I've lived here a very long time, the people know me, everybody knows me. It's all ok. I have friends, neighbours, everyone knows where I am. (Minh)*

#### IMPROVEMENT:

*I'm proud to live on the estate. They've done a lot of work on it, tidied it up – there used to be a lot of rubbish around, fridges lying around etc. The porters are very responsive. (Adam)*

*It is good, quite good, since I came here, they have been doing a lot of improvements. The garden out back, we cannot use it now with this job, and the garden in the front, and they are doing a lot of other things. They have alarms here, if anything ever happened, if I got ill I can get the police or the ambulance very quickly. (Mr Cope)*

*It's not too bad, it's improved an awful lot. It was ever so bad when we moved here quite a few years ago, people doing wheelies on their bikes and all that, the Community Police just walked through there and it's good to see them about. (Sarah)*

#### SAFETY:

*It's a good estate. It used to be one of the most notorious estates in London... So they put parks in, a lot of security cameras, and now, seriously you can wander around, I walk around at 2-3 in the morning and I don't worry about it, but many years ago you wouldn't be able to do that. Yeah, it's good, they've done an awful lot with it. (Mark)*

#### ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR:

*I hate it. I just don't like towers. And secondly from people that I've met here they just tell me bad things about it – there's so many drunk people around. For example, I don't take the lift, I take the stairs, there's always piss everywhere, smokers they just chuck everything there, spit on the stairs handle, and the lift, I just don't trust it. (Shafeeq)*

*The estate could be a lot better...more like patrol watches in the night time. (Liz)*

*It's not very nice...well I have a child and you don't know who lives where, people are in and out, people have friends over but they can't be accountable for their friends – people make a lot of noise at night-time while my son's trying to sleep. That's the only thing really. (Sel)*

### 3.2b What are the best things about the estate?

The aspects of the estate that people identified as being the best are:

- People – community spirit – atmosphere (10)
- Management – concierge and security (9)
- Facilities (6)
- Location (4)
- Cleanliness / tidy estate (3)

The two most important aspects are the sense of community and the management of conditions.

#### FACILITIES:

*Well the community's quite strong and everyone knows each other, and we have a nice local butchers, bakery, shops, dry cleaners. It's convenient for everyone. (Oliver)*

*It's handy for the shops and if you're going to Shepherds Bush you've got a bus right outside your door. For an old age pensioner, it's better. (Chris)*

#### CLEANLINESS:

*It's clean and tidy (Adam)*

*It's very clean, the foyer and security are good, now you need a key fob for the front door to the building. Though at the moment there's mess because of the building work. (Andrew)*

#### LOCATION:

*I think the location really, and I think the location makes the estate a nice place to live. If you would have this estate for example in Zone 5, or outside of London, it would probably be a nightmare, it would probably be hell on earth – but because of its location, there's more wealth coming in and coming through, and that's why it's doable. I don't believe in estates whatsoever – it's just that this one is relaxed because of where it is. (Charlotte)*

**COMMUNITY:**

*Everybody gets on, everybody's friendly. (Ken)*

*Well, the people in it, we've got some nice people in it. A lot of the people are old and they have to get by as well isn't it. I get them papers and things, and then again they get their shopping delivered, they have been here a long time, longer than me. (Patrick)*

*Nice community (Lisa)*

*Good neighbours, there are nice people (Karim)*

**MANAGEMENT:**

*[Safety] is the best thing about the estate. (Gloria)*

*People feel quite safe – you know we're quite well covered with cameras and stuff, we very rarely get any bother or trouble at all. The only thing we do have is the alcoholics, as usual. (Maggie)*

*The good thing is the concierge (Liz)*

*Security, and it is kept very clean. The concierge are very good, very friendly, always there to help you. (Mark)*

*I cannot say any bad things so far, everything is ok... Good things are the reception, and other people from the council, always very polite and kind. (Matin)*

*It's very well maintained and the staff working here are extremely helpful, they are angels... The concierge are lovely, genuinely helping people. Never too much trouble for anything, and I've never seen them angry, upset, narky or anything – they're always happy – so they are a true asset. (Jason)*

**3.2c What are the worst things about the estate?**

The most commonly raised issues on the estate are:

- Lack of facilities for young people and others – young people hanging around the estate and associated problems of drink and drugs (9)
- Problems relating to regeneration works or relentless nature of regeneration on the estate (5)
- Dirty / poor maintenance / lack of cleanliness (4)
- Lack of security – open access nature of estate – lack of ownership over its facilities (3)
- Poor lighting (2)

**MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY:**

*The worst thing is that it's very open, so everybody wanders through, and when they do they also bring their rubbish, they also bring their dogs that poo everywhere and I think they need to gate it off. I don't know if you've seen the play area on the estate, everybody thinks it's a public park, but it belongs to the estate – and everybody uses it... so you never feel like it's actually yours. (Gloria)*

*These days the security guards are not as attendant as they used to be – if you have an emergency or something it is quite hard to operate. A few days ago water was leaking from the ceiling, so I went to Poynter House – he was supposed to be attending but he was absent, somehow. It's just one person usually. Economically that probably sounds sound, but security-wise I'm not so sure. (Mr Myojin)*

*The landlord, and that is the council – I don't know if it's wilful blindness or sheer incompetence – no one seems to be in charge of things, things just got all over the place, lack of structure in management, especially to tenants' concerns and needs. It seems that tenants are no big deal to them – that's the feeling I get. (Matthew)*

**ON-GOING WORKS:**

*Well the works going on at the moment, because it keeps dragging on and on and on, and it's been going for almost two years now I think, and before it was Westfield that they were building, and you just think that you're always sitting in works. (Charlotte)*

*It's just relentless work (Michael)*

**LIGHTING:**

*The lighting, it's not well lit at night time. It's quite dark. (Sel)*

**DIRTINESS:**

*It's a bit dirty but now it's going to be done up so it'll all be painted, the lifts and the floors are all going to be done, they let it go a bit. But all that will be done so we can't complain. (Sarah)*

*In my opinion, it is not that bad, I think more attention should be paid to cleaning the windows, making it a little more sprucey, I would like to see the place look great, no more bad painting, reasonable painting, make it look as though people want to live there. It's not the estate – it's what people do to the estate. (Deron)*

Many of the problems are being addressed through the regeneration programme (lighting, maintenance). However, some, such as a "lack of facilities for young people" are a response to recent declines in public spending.

**LOSS OF FACILITIES:**

*Well the one thing I was quite upset about was the fact that the community centre stopped doing activities for the youth, because they used to do quite a lot of activities before, I don't know if it's just the council have stopped funding (28)*

A third of residents we interviewed said there is nothing / no worse things about the estate:

*I can't say anything bad about this estate because I've not experienced anything bad happening to me personally. So I can't talk for others but only for myself, I'm very happy. (12)*

### 3.2d Does living in Edward Woods give you a sense of pride?

The answers from residents are split equally between those who feel proud of living on the estate (38 per cent) and those who do not (38 per cent).

PROUD		NOT PROUD	
<b>Sense of ownership</b>	<i>Yeah, I'm proud of this estate, proud of the area. If I see anyone stepping out of line I tell them. This is my home, if people don't like it that's too bloody bad. (John)</i>	<b>Living in a tower block</b>	<i>No, it doesn't give me a sense of pride...I said I'd never live in a tower block. Ever. I said that but...yeah, I'm not embarrassed. I may be on an estate but once you get into the flat it's totally different. (Liz)</i>
<b>People are friendly, sense of community</b>	<i>I do feel proud of it. I was down there yesterday, sweeping and clearing up the leaves and everything. (Anna)</i>	<b>Living in a council estate</b>	<i>Well generally living on an estate is not something people say they are proud of! But I would say, there is absolutely nothing wrong with it, there are certain stereotypes that are applied to the estate, but it's not necessarily like that, particularly in our building, let's not forget that we have plenty of leaseholders. (Nadia)</i>
<b>Well-maintained grounds</b>	<i>It does yeah because of the park, and the hedgerows, and the landscape. And I got my own balcony as well which is essential. You lose everything with the scaffolding at the moment but that can't be helped. (Gary)</i>	<b>Impact of the building works</b>	<i>No. I feel like I'm living on a building site, everyone's unhappy. Half the residents keep going to the pub over the road to get away from the building. (Theo)</i>

Seven respondents were ambivalent expressing the view that the estate was more just a place to live.

*Not really. No reason – it's just somewhere to live. (Frank)*

*Pride, I'm not sure – because most people don't like council estates – but I personally don't, I'm indifferent, I don't care either way because I'm comfortable where I am. (Matthew)*

*Not exactly, I mean I'm happy with where I live and I'm actually quite proud, but it's not something I reckon I would boast about to everyone, I'm never here nor there with that. (Oliver)*

There is a strong sense of ownership over the estate. Feelings of pride are often linked to the visible improvements and careful management of the estate, and are more commonly expressed by older residents who have lived on the estate for a lengthy amount of time. One resident even comments that the security operation on the estate had protected Westfield during the riots and disturbances that occurred in August 2011:

*I lived in so many places, and one thing I really appreciate about this estate is the security always doing well. Take, for example, during the London riots, if not for the concierge in this estate, they would have destroyed Westfield. Because the boys were in this estate, and*



they [conciierge] called the police station – so I really rate the security. There’s a link from Shepherd’s Bush station to the security office on this estate. So they can see what’s happening on this estate. So if it was not for this estate, Westfield would have been destroyed. So security-wise, this estate is perfect. I’ve lived in so many places – I tell you, wow. (Joseph)

On the whole, younger residents more frequently express negative attitudes towards the fact that it is a “council environment”.

### 3.3 SECURITY

More than half (56 per cent) of the residents we spoke to feel very safe in their own homes with a further 38 per cent feeling somewhat safe. A tiny minority of residents (two per cent in each case) describe their feelings as neither safe nor unsafe, somewhat unsafe or not at all safe (Figure 18). In terms of safety and security on the wider estate, all residents questioned feel either very safe (33 per cent) or somewhat safe (67 per cent) (Figure 19).

### 3.3a Why do you feel safe / why don't you feel safe?

As can be seen from figure 16, most people generally feel safe in their homes. Nobody reported feeling unsafe on the estate, which stands out as being quite remarkable.

In response to other questions, a large number of respondents commented on how much they appreciate the concierge – for being a friendly, known face and point of contact, for making the estate feel more secure, and for keeping the estate in order.

#### FAMILIARITY WITH THE ESTATE AND OTHER RESIDENTS / QUIET / AREA IS FINE:

*It’s safe enough – it’s a familiar environment. (Emily)*

*Pretty safe – I think it’s because I was brought up here so I know everyone, so I don’t feel no threat at all... Well yeah, it’s like any human being, if you’re in surroundings you don’t know or you’re not familiar with, you’re obviously going to feel insecure, but if you’re familiar with it, you should be fine, or you just adapt. (Oliver)*

Figure 18: How safe and secure residents feel in their homes

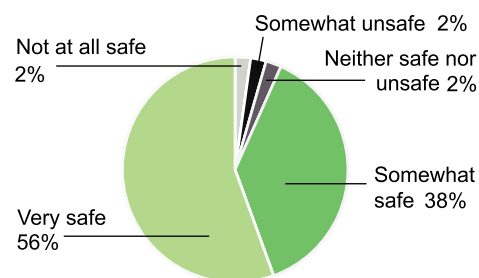
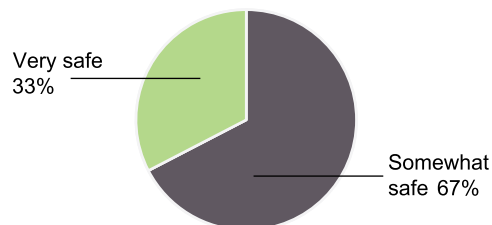


Figure 19: How safe and secure residents feel in the estate



### David and Graham<sup>1</sup>: Young upwardly mobile couple

David and Graham moved into their flat only a month before the interview took place, so the majority of heavy building work was finished by then and they had not been bothered much by the noise. They are both self-employed freelancers and tend to work from home. They were swayed to buy the property because of the regeneration works, and because it was a trailblazer in this regard – with solar panels and the planned wind turbines – saying that it showed the estate was moving into the next century. It would be a good investment for them, bolstered by the great location and their ability to refurbish their flat (with, for example, a new bathroom). They feel that some of the low-rise buildings, however, are being left behind because there are no visible improvements to them. David is conscious of the commonly held stereotypes of council estates, but their experience of the estate is very positive, largely because of the on-going regeneration works (although David mentioned a few “unsavoury” characters): they spoke especially positively of the neat gardens, the good levels of maintenance and the concierge staff. Likewise, they are very happy about the upcoming improvements to the foyer.

<sup>1</sup> All names have been changed to protect anonymity

**CONCIERGE:**

*The porters / concierge do a great job. It's nice to know there's someone there. The cameras help too. (Adam)*

**SECURITY CAMERAS:**

*Compared to years ago, I'd say the estate feels more safe – to a certain extent... All the security cameras, if they're all working. (Mr Brennan)*

**COMMUNITY POLICING:**

*Well I have a very close association with the police, I attend a lot of their meetings and I do know that it is a lot safer in Hammersmith and Fulham than other boroughs. They've spent a lot of money on making it safe. So up to a point I feel quite safe. (Michael)*

*Safer now than I was because they got more involved now with the community police and everything so a bit better than it was. (Sarah)*

Other respondents commented that the estate feel safer because there are not many young people around:

*Quite safe. Because the one advantage of this estate is that there are not a lot of children here, not a lot of young people that come and go to make trouble, there are very few people that have young children here but when it comes to teenagers we haven't got a lot of teenagers here. The whole estate is just like older people so it's quite alright, everyone tries to look after each other. (Li)*

However, a small number of residents reported that they do not feel safe in their homes and have concerns about strangers coming into the building, and a lack of vigilance to stop this happening (six per cent). Specific problems relate to the regeneration works, eg, people accessing flats via the scaffolding (four per cent).

**LACK OF VIGILANCE:**

*So far, thanks to God, nothing's happened but I told you, some voices in the night; some shouting, some drunk people going up, down in the lift. And especially no one in the reception sees them at midnight (Matin)*

**IMPACT OF BUILDING WORKS:**

*Yeah I feel pretty safe – I mean you do occasionally, since they've put these building works up, see people running past and that's a bit scary but you always get some nutters, there's always more on the outside than in. (Kate)*

*Not secure at all, you get people climbing up the scaffolding trying to break into flats, I had a guy come to my door a couple of years ago...there was this guy with a knife, he'd gone crazy on crack – if I hadn't stood back my whole face would have been torn open...He was the friend of some junkie that lives [here] (Theo)*

**3.3b What would help with feeling safer? What makes it worse?**

The overwhelming response on what would make the estate feel more secure was to have more of a security presence in the estate – through either increased concierge service, security patrols at night or increased community policing (26 per cent of responses). At the time of writing, the concierge service was being reduced, so that there was a constant presence at Poynter House, with a sporadic presence at the other two reception areas of the tower blocks. Prior to this, there had usually been a concierge at each reception area. Many people commented on this decrease in service and the issue have been raised by tenant representatives at Working Group Meetings during the time we attended them.

**REDUCTION IN CONCIERGE SERVICE:**

*Well, I'd say if they had upped the security people but I suppose that costs a lot of money, if they upped the patrols there at night, but I think they used to do patrols with the caretakers, then if they see any vandalism or anything like that, there was a lot of that that used to happen. (Mr Cope)*

*If we had the concierge on 24 hours (Ken)*

*We have the concierge service, its picked up now but there are times when there's no one there just due to staff cuts, they're not there so often as when I first moved in. (Sel)*

Though CCTV cameras are mentioned as beneficial for security, there is a wide preference towards having a visible concierge presence:

*Like there's cameras everywhere but that doesn't make it any different, because if there is an incident they don't check anything. So it would be actually better to have more estate wardens out – so they see that there's activity really. (Charlotte)*

*If they had a proper concierge service, because it's only 20 per cent...it's got better because we had an argument with the concierge manager. It's got a wee bit better since. But there's about 20-30 per cent service on the concierge, when there should be someone there from seven or eight in the morning til one the following morning. The manager tried to say – well I can see everything on CCTV throughout Fulham – well that doesn't help us, we want someone there. (Theo)*

Other responses include the role that the Evergreen Club (a club for elderly and sheltered residents) and the sheltered housing provide for elderly and vulnerable tenants (four per cent of responses), as well as improved lighting on the estate (two per cent of responses):

*Well, there's that wee club down there, so I go to that and phone me up every week to make sure I'm ok. They look after old people very well I think. (Chris)*

### 3.3c Has the regeneration work affected your sense of security while it has been going on? If so, in what way?

Half of the residents surveyed do not feel that the regeneration work has affected their sense of security while it has been going on. People do talk about keeping their windows closed and locked whilst the scaffolding is up, but there is a remarkable level of acceptance towards this and few people view it as a privation.

#### SECURITY NOT AFFECTED BY REGENERATION WORKS:

*It's not affected it – it's a necessity. I always keep the windows locked now – but it's to be expected. (Adam)*

*No, I make sure the windows are closed, the cap shut on them. As I say, I like to leave them open, but you can't do that with the scaffold up. (Frank)*

*No, I thought with the scaffolding that there'd be a lot of break-ins, but I haven't heard anything. I'm not saying it's not going on, but I've never heard anybody on the scaffolding. People get worried about it, we're getting letters about people being on the scaffolding at the weekends but I haven't seen anyone on it at weekends or night-time. (Chris)*

*No...the windows are locked but we had them open during the warmer weather, like the kitchen window slightly open, but even though there is scaffolding and reports of people being on there, we don't actually feel any security issues. (Jason)*

However, just over a third of residents did suggest that the regeneration work, and the scaffolding in particular, have affected their sense of security at home:

#### SECURITY AFFECTED BY REGENERATION WORKS:

*Yes, because the kids get up onto the scaffolding. (Ken)*

*Yeah – obviously having the scaffold up*

*is a bit of a worry. Kids playing on the scaffold – I know they're just kids having fun but you just wonder if they're going to be a bit more malicious. (Lisa)*

*Only the scaffolding because there has been quite a few people roaming around on the scaffolding at night times so you've got to be a bit more...I used to leave my windows open but now I don't, so in that sense...We've had the police around here so many times, people have been roaming around on the scaffold late at night. As I say, I used to leave my kitchen windows open all the time, keys there, phone and now I'm just a bit more aware. So yeah, I can't wait for the scaffolding to come down to be honest. (Liz)*

*It has yeah. I had the door open and there was a bloke trying to get in the window. And he didn't have one of those badges on him that they wear. I said "what do you want?" and he said "sorry, wrong flat". (Ryan)*

*Yep, absolutely, the scaffolding's been really bad because I'm on the ground floor and it's easier for them to climb up. If I was on the tenth floor they wouldn't bother climbing all the way up there, so in that sense definitely. (Charlotte)*

*Yeah, because I caught one guy walking along one day, peering in, to probably see what was available to steal. And I reported it to the concierge – it was a weekend. But I think they've alarmed it now. Breyer, they're quite responsive. So I called the police and reported it. (Tyree)*

*Sometimes I heard footsteps outside, somebody walking around. There is meant to be an alarm on the scaffold – but shouldn't it be going off if someone is on there? We've had letters twice telling us that if you see someone unauthorised on the scaffold, to report it. (Elya)*

The reasonably strong feelings of security during the building works can be linked to either the concierge presence, or the fact that the building contractors have a dedicated Resident Liaison Officer, who residents can contact at any time.

Considering that the scaffold have been up for almost two years at the point when interviews were done, it is notable that only a minority have any security concerns.

## 3.4 ENERGY BILLS

We asked people how much they spend on gas and electricity every month, quarter or year. Some people were unsure of total costs for the year so we extrapolated from the data they could give us to obtain estimates. We applied the same method to all the calculations to make them comparable. Figure 20 lists the energy bills of our interview respondents, using this method.

#### Methodology used to calculate energy bills

- Costs were converted to annualised amounts.
- Some interviewees told us how much they paid in the summer and winter. Winter costs were calculated for 6 months of the year (October – March), while summer costs were calculated for the other 6 months of the year (April – September).
- If an interviewee only told us what they were paying at that point, we counted that as a "winter cost", as the interviews were predominantly conducted in October and November (unless they quoted their most recent quarterly bill, which was counted as a summer cost since it would have been over the summer months). To calculate "summer costs" we halved the amount quoted; and doubled the amount to calculate a "winter cost", if the bill was from the months spanning the summer.

Figure 20: Estimated annual energy bills for interview respondents

Flat type	Gas bill	Electricity bill	Total annual energy bill
studio	£168	£168	£336
studio*	n/a	£480	£480
studio	£360	£360	£720
studio	£520	£520	£1,040
studio	£1,320	£240	£1,560
studio	£1,560	£520	£2,080
studio	£1,560	£520	£2,080
1 bed / 1 wall	£104	£156	£260
1 bed / 1 wall	£270	£300	£570
1 bed / 1 wall	£315	£360	£675
1 bed / 1 wall	£264	£520	£784
1 bed / 1 wall	£324	£462	£786
1 bed / 1 wall	£432	£360	£792
1 bed / 1 wall	£500	£300	£800
1 bed / 1 wall	£528	£360	£888
1 bed / 1 wall	£480	£480	£960
1 bed / 1 wall	£390	£624	£1,014
1 bed / 1 wall	£520	£520	£1,040
1 bed / 1 wall	£348	£756	£1,104
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£192	£210	£402
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£56	£480	£536
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£400	£240	£640
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£390	£390	£780
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£480	£300	£780
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£400	£400	£800
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£480	£480	£960
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£260	£780	£1,040
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£520	£520	£1,040
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£715	£360	£1,075
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£585	£585	£1,170
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£1,040	£455	£1,495
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£780	£780	£1,560
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£1,066	£624	£1,690
2 bedrooms	£288	£156	£444
2 bedrooms	£200	£520	£720
2 bedrooms	£400	£400	£800

“for the same type of flat, annual energy bills ranged from £444 to £2,470, depending on people’s energy behaviour.”

2 bedrooms	£570	£270	£840
2 bedrooms	£390	£520	£910
2 bedrooms	£390	£520	£910
2 bedrooms	£585	£390	£975
2 bedrooms	£780	£360	£1,140
2 bedrooms	£840	£540	£1,380
2 bedrooms	£900	£780	£1,680
2 bedrooms	£1,170	£1,170	£2,340
2 bedrooms	£1,430	£1,040	£2,470

\* This interviewee had their gas bill paid by their employer.

Figure 21 shows that the bills vary considerably – both up and down – compared to the average (mean). This indicates two things. First, within a single building, there are very different energy consumption patterns among households, shown by the fact that households in identical flat types (which have a similar thermal efficiency rating) spend vastly different amounts of money in their flats. For example, the lowest annual energy bill in a two-bedroom flat was £444, while the highest was over £2,000 more than this.

Second, within a single building, there are different thermal efficiency ratings, and

this changes how much people spend on heating their flats. This is most evident from the gas bills (everyone interviewed had gas central heating, though some people used additional heating devices that use electricity such as fan heaters). Figure 21 demonstrates that on average, people in the studios spend more money heating their homes, which is unsurprising as these have the lowest thermal efficiency ratings. One bedroom apartments have the highest thermal efficiency rating, and the least amount of money is spent heating these, according to our estimates.

Figure 21: Average, lowest and highest energy bills by flat type

Flat type	Average annual bill	Lowest total annual bill	Highest total annual bill
All flats	£1,034	-	-
Studio	£1,303	£336	£2,080
1 bed / 1 wall	£806	£260	£1,104
1 bed / 2.5 walls	£998	£402	£1,560
2 bedrooms	£1,217	£444	£2,470

All interviewees who live in studios had gas central heating when we interviewed them, replacing their storage heating. This is often mentioned as being important in significantly reducing energy bills. These studios consist of one room, a bathroom and a kitchen. Many interviewees do not have their radiators turned on in the bathrooms and kitchens, so in effect some people are spending over £1,500 a year on heating only one room (with gas) – despite the newly installed heating. Interviewees in the most thermally efficient one-bedroom apartments (with only one exposed wall) consistently spend less on gas bills than their counterparts in studios or two-bedroom apartments (Figure 26). It is notable that there is less variation in the heating (gas) bills for this type of flat (Figure 23), compared to the studio flats (Figure 22), one-bedroom flats with two-and-a-half exposed walls (Figure 24), and two-bedroom flats (Figure 25).

The ability to heat oneself adequately has been recognised as a vital aspect of healthy housing conditions. Though only indicative, this data suggests that even within a single building, there are very large disparities in residents' ability to do this.

Figure 22: Studio gas bills (per annum)

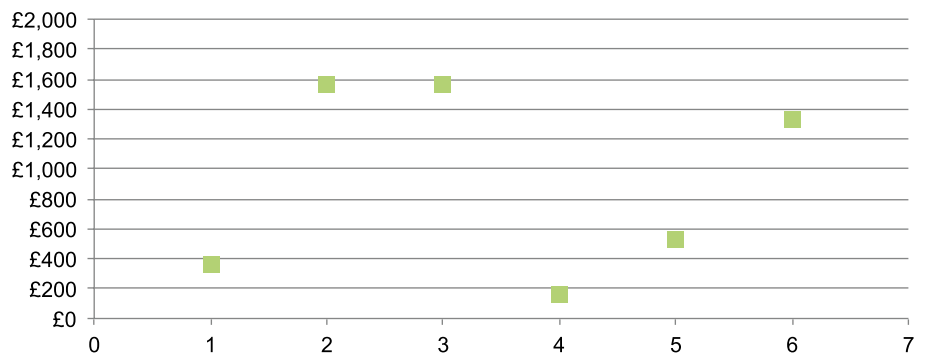


Figure 23: 1-bedroom/ 1 wall gas bills (per annum)

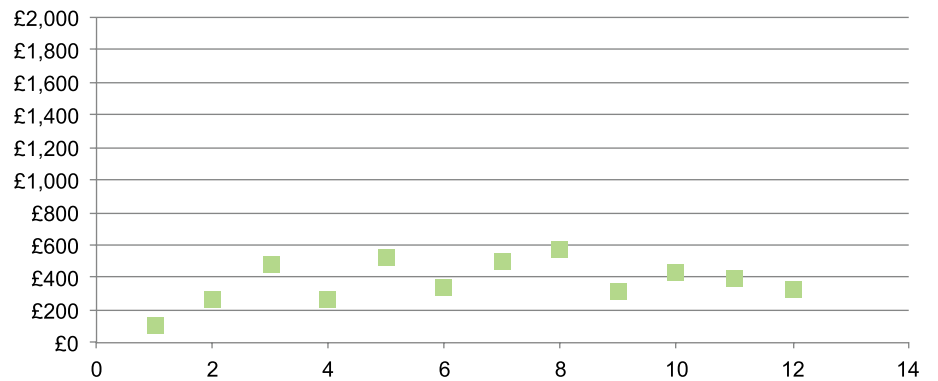


Figure 24: 1-bedroom/2.5 wall gas bills (per annum)

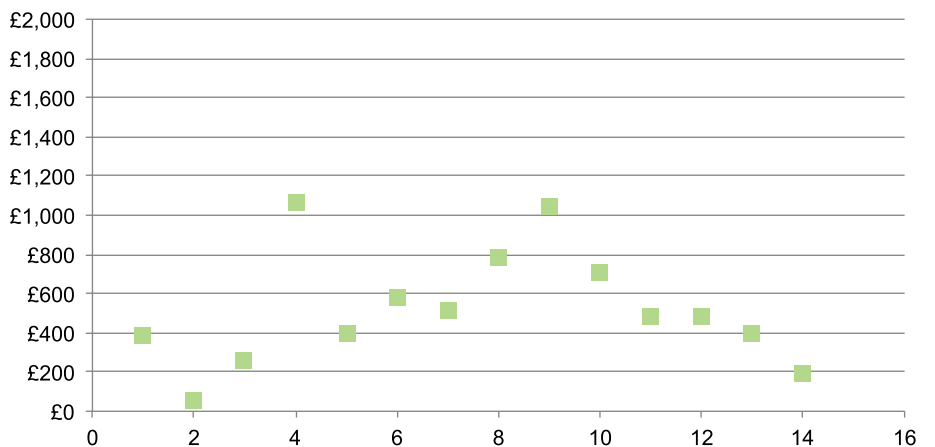


Figure 25: 2-bedroom energy bills (per annum)

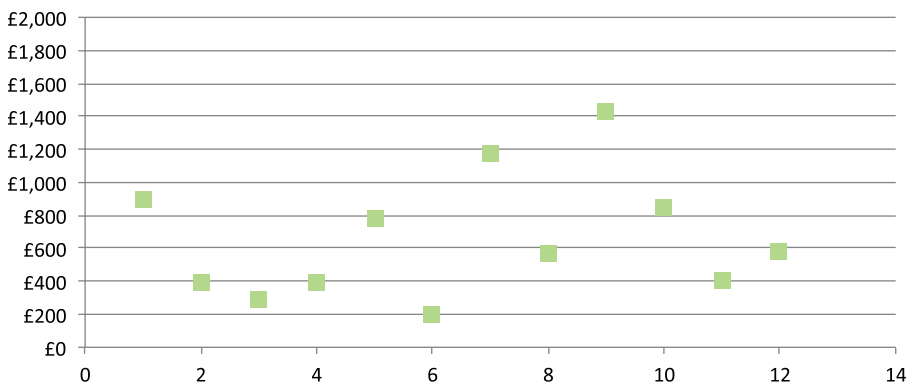
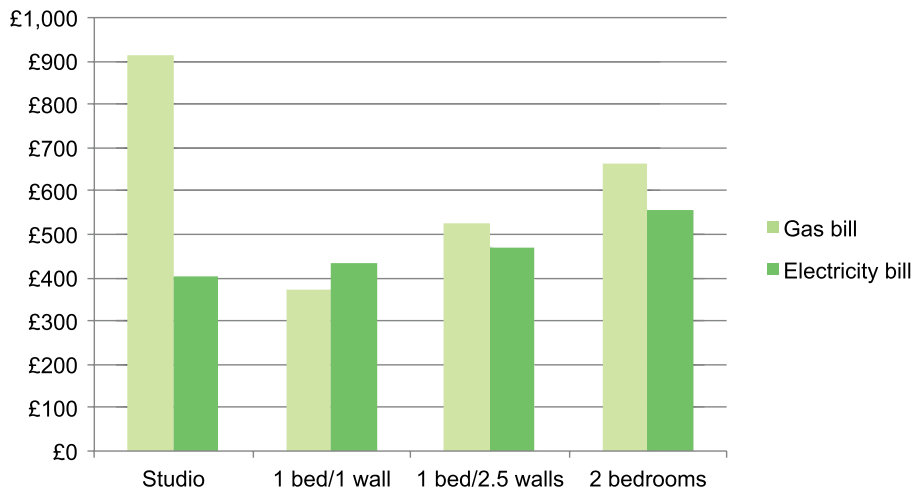


Figure 26: Mean average of annual energy bills based on estimates, by type of flat



### 3.4a Do you think the amount you pay for energy is reasonable? How does it compare with other places you have lived?

Responses are split relatively evenly between those who feel their energy bills are reasonable (18) and those who do not (21). In some cases, respondents' answers are based on the thermal efficiency of their flat.

*Yeah, because the flat's quite warm. I'm lucky, I've got a balcony flat which is in the middle, so you're sandwiched. The ones in the corner have it much cooler, I'm lucky. The only outside wall I've got is the windows – that's all I've got on the outside. (Maggie)*

Among some residents there is a sense that it does not matter whether they feel the bills are reasonable or not – they will have to pay regardless.

*I have no idea what is a reasonable amount because with energy prices, it's like there's no competition – it's not like one is cheaper than another. It's not like other items that you buy, where you know what might be reasonable and what is not. Especially with prices changing all the time, they change a few times a year. So to take the whole year, you have no idea what might be better. (Nadia)*

*It's not going to come down is it? Everyone has to pay that, their gas, their bills, it's not as if you can't have the heating on... (Patrick)*

Other respondents are able to manage their energy bills because they use a key / pre-payment system, rather than paying larger bills on a quarterly or direct debit system. However, it is argued that pre-payment systems are less cost effective than direct debit or shopping around for online tariffs<sup>18</sup>.

*Not too bad, well I don't have the bills every three months it's better for me. I can do it that way, pay every fortnight. It's easier for me because three months you can get big bills, £150, and I couldn't manage that you know. (Patrick)*

Those who feel their energy bills are reasonable commented on decent customer service, or comparisons with costs from previous homes:

*Yeah...this is reasonable compared to other places. (Liz)*

*Yeah, I'm with British Gas, compared to other ones it's quite good, it's ok... That's why they make this building work isn't it, to use less, but we don't know – they haven't finished it. We find out probably this year, with this winter coming. (Saheed)*

One interviewee thinks they are getting an excellent deal on their energy prices:

*...while everyone else's bills are going up, mine are going down! I'm not going to complain! It's dual fuel. I think that's bloody marvellous – when I hear people at work saying they've got a £72 gas bill! (Kate)*

Generally, those who describe their energy bills as “reasonable” do this with a measure of ambivalence. Those who did not think their energy bills are reasonable are worried or outspoken on this point:

#### **ENERGY BILLS UNREASONABLE:**

*It's a lot, I think it's quite high actually. And they say it's going to get worse. (Joy)*  
*£80 a month – it's very very expensive!... To be honest its more expensive [than other places lived], because everywhere I've lived it used to be £50-£60 a month, but this place has been a minimum of £70 a month. Although during summer times, it goes down to about £30-£40 but definitely at least £70 in winter. That's if I really minimise. (Joseph)*

*Oh no, it's rocketed recently. I just got back from holiday – I haven't been here and it was still using a hell of a lot – £20 when I wasn't here. (Theo)*

*Oh no, it's obviously robbery – I don't know anything about, I phoned them up a while ago and I got speaking to one of the girls, and I wasn't sure about the meter because it seemed very expensive – and when I asked her, she worked it out on kilojoules or something, she reset the meter and then told me to boil a kettle, and she was actually surprised at how much it costs to constantly boil a kettle. So that's when I got a bit of a picture of how much it is. But we all know they're robbing you, absolutely robbing you. It's wrong, absolutely wrong. (Mark)*

*Well I can never say it's reasonable – but I mean, I could always do with it better I suppose, but I just survive, luckily. (Michael)*

### **3.4b What do you think will happen to the cost of energy now and in the future? What impact will this have?**

There is a general consensus among most residents (30 out of 48) that costs will increase, although how worried people were about this varied enormously. Some anticipate huge impacts on their own ability to pay whilst others feel that the changes will be more minimal. There is clear concern for those on fixed incomes; for example pensioners, unemployed people, and large families.

#### **IMPACT ON FIXED INCOMES:**

*Well I hope they don't [keep going up] because people won't be able to pay them, and then what's going to happen, they are going to get turned off and they are going to die. I saw the figures the other day, on the radio, 29,000 people died of cold in England, which is terrible, it shouldn't even be one. It isn't as cold as Norway and those countries and there isn't as many people die there at all, because they insulate whole houses, [here] they are not properly heated. There is a lot of people in my position who won't, they will either eat or [not] get cold, they can't do both. (Mr Cope)*

*Well, they'll just keep rising! It's going to get difficult on older people, and people on low incomes with big families. (Chris)*

*No idea – but they will keep rising. It will have an impact as people's salaries don't rise at the same time / rate. (Emily)*

Other respondents feel that increasing energy prices are a political issue:

*They'll put the prices up – they're tricky. The government is not doing anything about it – the energy companies actively rob you. (Andrew)*

*I think it's going to...well it depends what happens, we're at the stage in life where anything can go anywhere, but I think if capitalism survives, and corporations, then it'll go up...Well I think everybody will be forced to use less. Everybody who spends under a certain amount will be forced to use less. (Charlotte)*

Some respondents plan to continue with their current energy usage, while others plan to use less as prices rise:

*It will go up. Of course it will have an impact on how much I use. (Elya)*

*I can't see it coming down anyhow. [Will it have an impact on how you use energy in your flat?] Not really no, you have to do the same thing, you have to keep warm. (Niall)*

There is some optimism that the insulation and regeneration works will have an impact on their energy usage and bills but only from a minority of respondents:

*Well they say they're developing around this building, so I hope it will get better. (Shafeeq)*

*I think it'll go down [with the insulation]. Definitely. We won't use gas as much as we used to. (Saheed)*

*With all these things they are putting in there I don't think we'll need an awful lot of heating, because there's a lot of things going in there. With this damp stuff, they are putting in three layers on each side of the block and under the windows and everything, there's a lot of work there, but they have to do their job, that's what I said*



*before. So that will help a bit, but as you know you will still need a bit of heating on through the winter. (Sarah)*

### 3.4c What do you know about how you can save energy?

Around a third (17) of respondents are aware of basic energy saving measures including energy saving light bulbs, turning down thermostats, switching things off when not in use, wearing extra layers at home rather than turning heating on / up.

#### WRAPPING UP:

*If it's not too cold I have the kids wear their jumpers as opposed to keeping the heating on, but apart from that, not really. (Lisa)*

#### SWITCHING OFF:

*I'm more of an energy saver than my partner, like I won't have all the lights on in all the rooms, I'll make a conscious effort to turn that all off; I have a thing about turning off the plugs at power points if they're not being used, I can't stand that – it's the little things like that essentially. (Jason)*

#### ENERGY SAVING TECHNOLOGY:

*Switching off lights where it's not needed. That's about it really... If I need anything I don't hesitate – if I've got to cook, I'll cook as much as I need, if I need lighting on, I'll leave it as long as I want. Apart from the energy saving lightbulbs, and hopefully when they do the insulation, I don't see another way I can purposely make my bills come down. (Matthew)*

Almost 40 per cent said they cannot save more than they already do, are already careful with energy usage or think the best way to save energy is simply not to use it. A quarter are not inclined to change their usage. Only a few interviewees mentioned

the insulation works as a potential source of energy saving.

#### CAN'T SAVE:

*Absolutely not! No way, well in a studio you can't save it really can you? (Mark)*

#### WON'T USE:

*Well yeah by just not using it! (Theo)*

*Well, we've got tips but the only way I can see to save energy is not to put it on. Well, to have no draughts and anything else, that kind of thing. (Mr Cope)*

#### SEVERELY ALTER LIFESTYLE:

*I just don't use much at all, especially if I'm running out of money – I don't cook, I go to Morrison's and buy a ready meal, make a tea or coffee and go to bed! (Elya)*

Two residents mentioned physical measures that had already been undertaken by the Council, including double glazing and draught proofing.

#### COUNCIL MEASURES:

*Not really, I think the council did it all really, with double glazing (Brian)*

*The council have put in things around the doors and windows to stop draughts. (Chris)*

Three respondents explained how they will prioritise heating and energy over some other things when dealing with a limited budget.

#### HEATING A PRIORITY:

*I've always been fairly that way inclined anyway – I don't waste stuff. But I don't make a conscious effort. If I need the heating on, it's on – and things like that. I couldn't be one of these people who are penny-pinching over the heating. Because that is the biggest thing – an awful lot of people do that. They deprive themselves of the heat, because they think it's going*

*to cost themselves too much. (Maggie)*

*And if I'm cold I just put the heating on. I put that as priority number one – that's the first thing I pay every week because I'd hate to be sitting here in the dark shivering. A lot of people spend their money on alcohol and things like that, I choose to live within my means basically, well I try to anyway. (Scott)*

## 3.5 LEVELS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

### 3.5a How would you describe your role in the local community?

Only ten respondents describe themselves as being active in the local community, (both on the estate itself and in the wider community); although nine mention the TRA and the Evergreen Centre, as well as social activities organised by both; or are informally engaged with others (eg, helping out neighbours, knowing lots of people in the block / on the estate). However, the majority of residents (26) describe themselves as not being involved at all in the local community.

#### ACTIVE, FORMALLY INVOLVED:

*Too active! I've got to slow down! I'm so verbal, that I'm very popular and they're short of volunteers, everyone's scattering and making excuses not to attend because of all the problems mentioned in this interview... (Tyree)*

*I think I'm active, I'm bloody active, I'm always flying around. Yeah, resident's meetings, sheltered housing meetings, the TRA, I've got three meetings on Thursday – it doesn't often happen that way but I've had it before – you get three in one day and it becomes a bit much. (Michael)*

*Well I've worked at the local community centre, I was teaching at the homework club for the traveller community on the Westway, I did that so in that sense that was pretty good, but again it was not on the estate itself – it's a little bit further, it's the community of Notting Dale really. (Charlotte)*

#### **LINKED IN VIA NEIGHBOURS, KNOWING PEOPLE AROUND THE ESTATE:**

*Everybody knows me – I pick up newspapers for elderly friends. (Adam)*

*Active. We all play a part. I've got friends who come and see me, we socialise, they come to my place to eat. (Andrew)*

*There's a lot of friendly people around here and I've got quite a lot of good friends and when I say good, I mean very good friends around here. And I think I feel part of the community because of a football team I play for every Saturday – which is organised by a guy who lives in this block as well. (Joseph)*

#### **NOT ACTIVE:**

*I don't really get involved with anything, I tend to meet people for just general chit-chat or maybe tell them a joke. I don't go to the tenants meetings and all that, in other words leave me be sort of thing. (Brian)*

*To be honest with you I don't really get that involved with the local community – I know the people I need to know and that's about it. I'm just in and out, working, just living my life. I do have conversations with the concierge but other than that I don't really get involved with any charity work or fundraising or anything like that. (Oliver)*

*I'm not as active as I should be. I should get more involved than at the moment. (Frank)*

*I'm not active at all in the community. I just keep to myself. (Chris)*

*I keep myself to myself. (Karim)*

### **3.5b How many neighbours do you know? How many could you call on in an emergency?**

Eighteen people answered this question by saying they know others in their block and on the estate as a whole, but mainly just to say hello to in passing. Some have close contact with neighbours, good friends and family (14) but six feel there is nobody for them to contact.

#### **CLOSE CONTACT WITH NEIGHBOURS, FRIENDS AND / OR FAMILY:**

*All of them I think, at the end of the day not just neighbours but in the different buildings on the estate, I know them too. I mean you can't live somewhere 30 years and not know people. I don't know all their names but they all seem to know mine! (Brian)*

*I know a lot but may not speak to them. My best friend lives locally (Emily)*

*I know a lot in here, in all the different floors, even if we don't visit one another because when we need we can talk, in Stebbing House I know a lot of people, there are quite a lot of people over there who phone to find out how I am keeping and I do the same too. (Li)*

*I know a lot by face, to say "hi, how you doing?" – lots and lots of neighbours and I know quite a lot because we're talking about football – Arsenal won today, Chelsea wins tomorrow...I know quite a few neighbours. Yeah, I could call on people in an emergency, I could call on my best friend who lives in [the block]. There's a good man living opposite me, he was very helpful when I first moved in here – he was the one who told me to do everything, who to call for the gas company and complain. (Joseph)*

*I know people visually to talk to, there are some neighbours who I would talk to, and I do have friends on the estate – by friend I don't mean someone who you would talk to, someone who you would go out with as well. (Nadia)*

*I know most of my neighbours. I know all the people on my floor – and quite a lot of people in the block. Out of 176 flats that's quite an achievement!...And I think if you put yourself into the community you get to know the people – because the fun-days, the children's parties, and all these things I used to do when I was fit – you get to know everybody. (Maggie)*

#### **CASUAL CONTACT – SAY HELLO IN PASSING:**

*I just know neighbours to see, say hello to and talk to them. I've never had to call neighbours in an emergency but I'm sure I could. (Ciara)*

*I know the lady next door, the gentleman...I don't know their names actually, so I can't really say I know them that well, but I'm on speaking terms with all of them. Most of them I know yeah, on my floor and several others. There are characters on this estate who talk to everybody. (Scott)*

#### **NOBODY TO CONTACT:**

*None! I used to know the man next door but he moved to Manchester, but it's all foreigners now. They're not interested in me and I'm not interested in them. (Chris)*

Three people specifically mentioned the role of the sheltered scheme and the Evergreen Centre as a place to contact in an emergency:

*Well, there's Peter at Evergreen, but he's only 9-5. But he calls me every week... (Frank)*

### Adam: A local character

Adam has lived on the estate since the end of the 1960s and is a fixture at the local café, handing out copies of the Evening Standard to his neighbours, which he collects in his trolley from Shepherd's Bush underground station and wheels back to the estate. He is embedded in the local community, especially with the other long-term residents, telling stories about how he used to take his neighbours' dogs on holiday to Cornwall. Adam says he loves his flat and is very proud to live on the estate because of all the work that has been put into it over the years to tidy it up. He mentioned this several times. He was given the flat because he was a council employee, and this seems to be part of his loyalty to it. Though Adam reports feeling secure, because of the concierge and the cameras, he nonetheless doesn't go out after dark. He has had good experiences with Breyer's RLOs and thinks his flat will be warmer with the new insulation. As a pensioner on a fixed income, he is worried about the rising costs of energy and doesn't believe enough is done for pensioners. During the building works, he has maintained his everyday routine of leaving his flat at nine in the morning and going back later in the afternoon, so has not been affected much by the works.

### 3.5c Do you attend local groups eg, residents meetings?

There is not a huge enthusiasm for attending local residents meetings with only 12 per cent of people saying they are involved with these types of events. There are a variety of reasons for not attending, including lack of time, "laziness", forgetting, not being interested, thinking they are a waste of time / pointless as important people (eg, LBHF staff) do not attend.

#### USUALLY ATTENDS MEETINGS:

*Yes...it's when this [regeneration works] started that I went along to them. (Theo)*

*No, I wanted to go to the last one but I forgot to. (Frank)*

#### NEVER ATTENDS MEETINGS:

*No, I don't...I just let them get on with it. In a way, I know this sounds funny but it doesn't really affect me, in a sense. Whatever goes on I accept what goes on if you know what I'm saying. But like I was saying earlier, I like it here anyway, obviously if something changes...but I don't think it could get much better. (Brian)*

*No – I'm just too lazy! (Chris)*

*No. I just let them carry on. Why they have meetings we get a newsletter anyway. (Mr Brennan)*

*No because I have too much to say and it won't be done probably, so I just don't bother going...I have too much negative things to say, I just don't think all those things will be able to...the needs won't be met, so I just don't bother going. (Sel)*

*No – I don't want to, I haven't got any problems so it would be a waste of time. (Karim)*

*The people that matter – do they attend it? Again, it's a disconnect between us and them, that's what I was debating really. If someone at a level of decision making would attend it, it would probably make a big difference. You're going to speak to people who in theory should represent us, but if they have the muscle to do that, or even deliver I – I'm not too sure. (Matthew)*

#### SOMETIMES OR USED TO ATTEND MEETINGS:

*Sometimes I go down for meetings, sometimes not. (Minh)*

*I used to go to all of the meetings down there but I haven't been for quite a while...Because of my health and they*

*have been held at night most of the time and it is very cold to come out from a hot flat. (Mr Cope)*

*I used to but now I don't. They're a bit boring I think – don't know what to say – I don't know. (Clara)*

*Not really no, they're in the evening usually when I'm busy, and I think it's pointless, like everything with the council. Maybe there's a point for leaseholders to go there, maybe it works for them, but as a council tenant, if you want to get something from the council you really have to squeeze them and I don't think meetings are going to solve anything – just a waste of time. (Nadia)*

Three residents expressed a dislike for being involved in formal structures such as the Tenants' and Residents' Association because they feel it is unrepresentative or ineffectual:

*I'm not at all – there isn't one [community]. I try to get involved with the neighbourhood people – but it's the pink rinse brigade – forget it. They're all dithering old doddies who have got nothing better to do – they miss all the obvious things. I mean, there'll be a cigarette butt on the pavement and they'll all get excited about it, and yet half the doors on the entrances to the blocks will be falling off and people will be dead on the floor and they'll just walk past it – they haven't got a clue! (Mark)*

*Well no because nothing ever gets done. I've been to one, and they usually know what they want to say – it's all for face really. They want to make out that "we've talked to the residents, we've all agreed so and so" – but in reality they've already agreed what they want to do and that's the end of it really. (Gloria)*

However, although there is ambivalence or dislike of formally organised TRA meetings, more people said they attend social events organised by the TRA – eg, Christmas Parties or a Summer Social Evening. This highlights the importance of special events such as these to bring different people together:

*Oh yes, in the Community Centre and when they have Christmas parties and all that, like in the summer they had things like August Bank Holiday they have a social evening in there and I always go. The Christmas party was beautiful in there. They serve everything yes, lovely lunch. It was lovely. (Li)*

The local community centre runs a weekly schedule of classes, but a member of staff commented that these are poorly attended by those living on the estate (only one interviewee commented that they used the parents' groups at the community centre). Despite this, the larger one-off events do seem to be more popular with residents and are an opportunity for people to get involved where they might not be inclined to otherwise.

While doing the interviews with residents, we spent a lot of time around the estate. We noticed a tangible sense of community existing in alternative places, such as around the café on the estate or at the local pubs. Another interviewee commented that having

local shops and services, that catered to the needs of local people, allows people to get to know each other:

*On a Saturday I run down to the newsagents, you see people in their pyjamas coming back! I go to church across the road; I go out on a Saturday, get my papers and can come back and sit down, get my pastries from up the road and be content. But those areas [i.e. Chelsea Wharf] are isolated – there's no life to them, they're just blocks of flats. You can't live like that. Like everybody here knows each other and you know the newsagents, they're really sweet and take care of the old people, at Christmas time they'll sit down and write all their cards for them – they'll do their post and sort out their bills for them, that's what we do, we take care of each other. But in these areas [Chelsea Wharf], which have lots of people with lots of money, if you want to go to the sweet shop it's miles away – we have an Ethiopian shop downstairs, he's open til nine o'clock or whenever he can be bothered to close. (Gloria)*

### 3.6 REGENERATION WORKS

The current regeneration work has involved several stages. When the research was conducted, the work had been going on for almost two years, and there had been a scaffold around each block for most of this time. The scaffold was covered with a green netting, which reduced levels of light entering residents' flats. Some flats were doubly affected in this regard because there was a heavier screen of scaffold.

The initial phase of the work involved removing brickwork from the exterior façade of the block, which required heavy drilling. When the interviews were conducted, the cladding was being fixed to the exterior facades so there was considerably less drilling. The building contractor had instructed their workers that they should only drill between 9am and 4pm, and not at weekends, in order to mitigate the problem of excessive noise. Some households suffered more from noise disturbance than others; for example, as the penthouses were being built, flats on higher storeys bore the brunt of this.

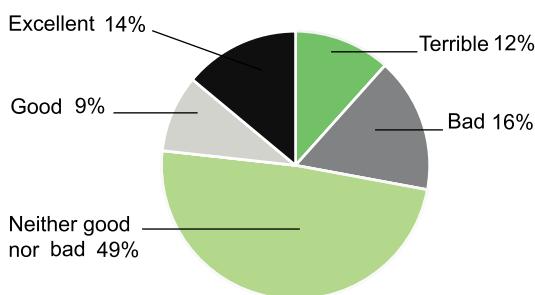
There were some major problems caused by the building works that affected some households, such as leaks. We observed communal areas in the buildings (staircases and landings) badly affected by the dust created by the building works. For long stretches of time, lifts in some of the blocks were out of order, so more residents had to use the dusty stairwells. Otherwise, mobility and access around the estate was not affected during the time we were around.

We asked residents to rate their experience of the building works from one to five. The overall experience of the works for nearly half of the Edward Woods residents we surveyed was neither good nor bad. 23 per cent had a good or excellent experience whilst slightly more, 28 per cent, rated their personal experience of the regeneration works as either bad or terrible (Figure 27).

#### Michael: Longstanding TRA member

Michael is involved with the Tenants' and Residents' Associations as well as the Working Group Committee and gets involved with many other local activities and community meetings. He is a pillar of the community on the estate. Michael appreciates the value of the insulation work, because he is a pensioner and "just survives" with his current energy bills but is worried about how much his gas will cost in the near future. Yet Michael currently describes Edward Woods as the "estate from hell" because of the never ending works on the buildings, despite acknowledging that they should be tolerant about the work and grateful that the council is spending this money. In this sense, he referred to how long the insulation work has taken, the slippage in the timetable and the fact that drilling was still happening when it should have been finished months before. However, he is also referring to the on-going interventions on the estate, saying it has been like a building site for the last decade and that despite all the money invested, people couldn't appreciate it because there is always scaffold up or builders around. On a personal level, he says that his flat is just a place to sleep and that he tries to be out as much as possible, especially as his flat is located on a lower floor where there is a double layer of scaffold that blocks out most light. Though he is able to leave his flat, he worries about less mobile people who are subjected to endless days of loud noise and disruption. Michael thinks that Breyer are doing their job as well as is possible, but thinks that the council needs to shower the estate with less largesse, and more consideration for how relentless building works affect people.

Figure 27: How residents rated their personal experience of the works



### 3.6a How has the regeneration work affected your daily life? And the scaffolding?

There are a range of answers, from the works causing little inconvenience, to them having a severe impact. Complaints of excessive noise (33) are the most frequently cited problem with the works. However many residents do say that the noise issue has abated, while others mention it but regard it as inevitable.

#### NOISE – BAD BUT INEVITABLE:

*The drilling outside the windows, the noise but then again they don't start until about eight o'clock in the morning and you go then and let them carry on until about five or whatever, they have to do the work, there's a lot of drilling, they are putting new things in. (Sarah)*

*When they were doing the major drilling, getting rid of the granite and things, it was hell. But you can't really drill these walls with a rubber drill can you? So we had to put up with the noise... (Maggie)*

#### NOISE LEVELS HAVE IMPROVED:

*We have got used to it now. It's not really affected quality of life. It was mostly noise from drilling and dust before – the drilling could disturb you whilst on the phone to my family back home – I had to tell them to be quiet! (Eika)*

#### NOISE CAUSING OTHER PROBLEMS:

*Well in a way it has, because you get the noise especially in the morning – when you go outside you can see what's going on. I think it has affected us – it affected the television – it affected our life – we can't watch the telly now. You get no cable channels at all. It'll go on for a little while and then it'll go off again. It's very annoying. (Deron)*

The issue was more acute for those working night shifts (3) who were unable to sleep during the day:

*I work night shifts as a security guard and most times I come home, and there's big noise and I have to go to my friend's to enable me to go to sleep – it's really affecting life a lot. (Joseph)*

*Yes [it has affected me], in everything. Waking up early because of the noise when I would like to relax. I work nightshifts. (Karim)*

Two respondents believe that the housebound and unemployed are disproportionately affected by the noise:

*The banging has gone on too long. Two-three years ago the brickwork was falling off. We'll probably benefit in the long run. But it's really been a problem for old people, they come out of here shaking. We went through hell – the drilling and banging goes right through... They should've moved people. The people that don't work are suffering most. (Andrew)*

Some interviewees feel anxious about not knowing exactly when there would be drilling and other noisy works (4):

*Well it's the stress factor basically because you never know when they're going to be drilling – they say they're going to do things, it's 50-50, everything's uncertain, no one's relaxed and the vibes you pick up from people are awful. (Theo)*

*You're constantly waiting for it as well – is it going to stop, is it going to start? And then if you're working nights, you try to sleep during the day, OK it's not their fault but when they're jumping all over the place, you think right, I'll get the place sorted, I'll order the carpets, I'll order this, and all of a sudden it starts again, and it's just bad. (Mark)*

A second major complaint related to dust and dirt caused by the work (21). During the interviewing period this became more acute because of lifts breaking down in Poynter House for at least two weeks; more residents had to use the stairs which are especially dusty. Five people expressed concerns relating to their health or that of their children.

#### DUST-RELATED PROBLEMS:

*Oh it has yes, and any residents that are ill, I am not the only one I am sure of that... because it's been of no benefit to any resident as far as I can see, I might be wrong but I can't see it being of any benefit to residents, it is only for show, to make it look nice from outside, so they reckon. (Mr Cope)*

*It did before, in the beginning, because Charlotte was born just as all the work was starting, so she had to be sleeping... so we used to go out. I used to phone Linda, the resident person, and she said there was a portacabin I could go sit in, Charlotte was only a few weeks old, it really was a nightmare in the beginning. She just wouldn't sleep because all the drilling and dust. So in the beginning it was a pain. (Liz)*

*The curtains are closed all the time. The dust and the filth is disgusting, it's horrible but other than that, that's it...No, I just put up with it. (Lisa)*

A related health issue is loss of light due to the scaffold and green netting (6) with some interviewees getting higher than usual electricity bills for the additional lighting they were forced to use:

*We are on the lower floors, on floor two, which is directly above the entrance. Now across our windows there's a massive amount of scaffolding. And of course we have to have the lights on 24 hours if we want to do anything, want to read or anything like that, it's all too dark. And as a result my electricity bill has gone up – last year it was breaking even at winter time or I had a bit of credit to cover the winter, but now it's about a £100 in the red – that's where I've been using the extra electricity to compensate for it. You just can't see through the windows, you have to turn on the lights straight away. (Michael)*

*It's very depressing. I organise myself from home, so you're just not relaxed. Constantly having this green shroud, it's unhealthy psychologically. (Theo)*

There are also complaints about specific damage caused to people's homes during the works, particularly leaks:

*I think everyone's experience has been pretty terrible – there's been lots of leaks... (Charlotte)*

*Many neighbours had floods but they were telling me nothing was done because they were told to wait, but they don't see any work done yet. The floods were thought to be a result of contractor's work. They had a major leak in the roof area... (Nadia)*

Though there were widespread complaints or mentions of noise disturbances, 21 responses are quite balanced, suggesting that not much disruption has been caused and accepting of the fact that the work needs to be done:

*Not greatly actually, less than I would expect. For a little they did a lot of hammering and drilling and stuff like that, but considering they've been here for over a year it's not been bad, not too bad. (Joy)*

*No, I get a wee bit fed up with the jackhammers, but it needs to be done so you just need to grin and bear it. (Chris)*

*No, not at the moment, I was quite concerned when they said they were going to shut down the lifts – that would have affected my life. But they haven't – they've managed to stop one at a time, and have the other one running. I've arrived late to work because of it, but 5-10 minutes ain't that bad. (Oliver)*

*Well they've got to do what they've got to do. That's the way I look at it. They've got a job to do and they've just got to get on with it. (Gary)*

*Not much, just minimal...the noise, yeah, the noise is there, but even if you renovated Buckingham Palace you'd still have the noise. So realistically I expected it – and you can't make it any less. (Matthew)*

### **Maggie: Stoical towards works**

Maggie has lived on the estate for nearly twenty years and is very involved in the local community, in addition to belonging to local groups and organising events and trips for local residents. She thinks there is a good community spirit, though would like to see more people join in with activities. Recently she's been very ill but many of her neighbours have supported her. In fact, she claims to know every single person living in her block! She finds her flat spacious and comfortable, and thinks the estate is very safe apart from a few alcoholics. As she's on the working group, she has a good understanding of many aspects of the work. She says Breyer and Hammersmith and Fulham council have been quite good through the works – helpful, and have made an effort to keep people informed about what is happening. She puts hiccups in the insulation work down to original faults with the building and unexpected problems. She is aware that her flat will not benefit quite as much as others since it already has a higher thermal rating, but she is pleased to see the blocks improved for everybody. Maggie is also looking forward to the corridors being less windy, since this is a major problem for her at the moment – some days she cannot open her front door. Though she says it was hell when the major drilling work was being done, she has a stoical attitude towards the work: "there's no such thing as a rubber drill".

### 3.6b Have you had contact with staff from the Council / Breyer? How have you found them?

Generally interviewees are quite positive about Breyer and their Resident Liaison Officers (RLOS):

*I do from Breyer yes. They are all polite. They are definitely not unhelpful, they are helpful. They are approachable. (Brian)*

*[Breyer] are excellent, they're really good – approachable, helpful, knowledgeable. (Gloria)*

*No. One or two reasons I called the lady, Linda, she's very kind, very good and considerate, deals quickly with things. (Matin)*

*Yeah – with the main lady Linda, I think her name is. If I had any problems I'd always go to Linda, it was whatever she could do to help, definitely helpful. If they couldn't help me they'd always put me in the right direction. (Sel)*

While interviewees find the renovation work to be disruptive, most recognise that Breyer themselves were not culpable and some mentioned that they are better contractors than those employed for the Decent Homes programme (Kennedys). There is a general understanding among many residents that it was a difficult project and that Breyer are doing a relatively good job in the circumstances:

*Well I've never had any problems with them [Breyer] and I've just gone to the RLO with anything that has occurred, and they've sorted it... They've been pretty helpful, yeah. But I haven't had much at all – but a lot of people had some bad experiences... Well it's not so much Breyer, it's the work that's being done – things go wrong, they come across difficulties they didn't anticipate and that sort of thing. I don't blame the company, it's the work – because these buildings are old and they weren't very well... the background to them is not very good... (Maggie)*

However, a frequent comment is that the work has taken a very long time, and that there has been considerable slippage in the timetable of works (14). Some interviewees had a specific incident with Breyer staff (6) where work has not been done properly in the apartment, or their apartment had been damaged in some way, for example cracks and damage appearing following heavy drilling.

Some residents differentiate between the service offered by the building contractors and the council. For example, while some residents find the council responsive, others feel that it is the council's ultimate responsibility to look out for them during the building works, rather than the responsibility of the building contractors, and feel they are failing in this regard.

#### BREYER AT FAULT:

*No the council are pretty good, they will listen to your complaints but with Breyer, I told them that when they put the radiator in my bathroom, when they took the side panel off, they didn't put the sealant round the bath and because I wash my hair in the bath all the water is running back behind the board. And it was last September I told them about it – will you put that white stuff around it – “yea yea yea,” Linda said, “I'll come back and do it”, but it's a year later and she still hasn't done it. In the end I got fed up and I thought I'd leave it. (Kate)*

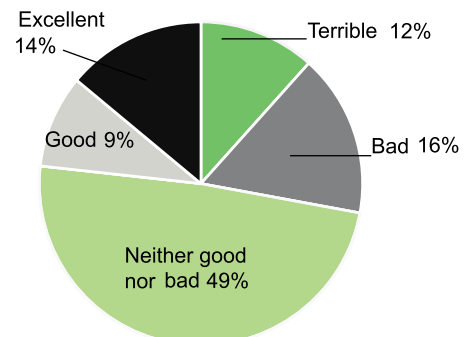
#### COUNCIL AT FAULT:

*At the end of the day, anybody has got to do this job, they've got a job to do, so I wouldn't really blame Breyer. They've got a contract and they've got to execute it. They're doing their job. They've taken people's lives into consideration by working from nine-five, but they've only taken people that work day shifts into consideration. My case is different – I just came from work now – 30 minutes ago. They've got to take my life into consideration, because I don't work during the daytime, I'm meant to be sleeping during the daytime to work*

*at the night-time. I think the blame is for the council, not for Breyer... (Joseph)*

We asked Edward Woods Estate residents about how well they feel they were kept updated and informed about the progress of the regeneration works under way between 2009 and 2012. The vast majority of answers range from ok to very well. However, seven residents do feel they are badly informed and updated about how works are progressing (Figure 28).

Figure 28: How well residents felt they were kept up to date with progress of the regeneration works



Most contact from the Council is through letters and newsletters – not personal contact – but again is generally positive. People largely feel they have been kept informed and up to date:

*Not much – they've put newsletters through which have been very useful, telling us how much longer we have to put up with them and stuff like that. (Joy)*

*Yes [the Council] always update you, send you newsletter to tell you what was going on, and apologise for any inconvenience towards the works but at the end of it, the work has to go on. They send you a newsletter so we don't come face to face, always a letter through the door. (Li)*

*The Council are always sending notes – they are quite good about things. (Eika)*

### 3.6c How do you expect your home and your block to look and feel after the work?

The most common answer for how people expect their home to look and feel is related to it looking nicer. People think the work was motivated primarily by the need to improve the appearance of the estate. Interestingly, only a quarter of respondents answered that the block and their flat will feel warmer, or be more energy efficient following the works. Upon prompting some people did agree that their flat might feel warmer.

- Improvement (20)
- Warmer (13)
- No benefit, little difference (11)
- Won't benefit as much as others / the flat is already warm enough (4)
- General improvement (3)
- Sort out mould or damp problems (2)
- Energy saving (1)
- Noise improvement (1)
- May cause structural problems (1)

The lack of **information and knowledge** surrounding the works is an issue. Many interviewees do not seem particularly aware that the principal reason for the building works is to insulate and to improve energy efficiency. Many seem to think that it is about **cosmetic improvement**:

*I think it'll be a lot nicer, I'll be glad when all the scaffolding goes, it will look nice. (Brian)*

*I'm hoping after all this time that it'll look better – but I've got little idea about the final finish. (Adam)*

*Oh I think it will be gorgeous, will be something that can entertain you. When this place is finished I know it will be lovely. (Li)*

*When all the scaffolding's down it should be like high society! New tiles, all the landings painted, new tiles put down. The outside will be very nice as well. It'll be a nice place to live in, to blend in. (Gary)*

*No, it won't be any warmer. The outside will look nice – it depends on what people keep their flats like. I try to keep this clean and tidy, I've got asthma and bronchitis, so the heating doesn't help too much... They're putting insulation in? First thing I've heard of it. (Ryan)*

However, some interviewees are aware of improvements to thermal efficiency, soundproofing or helping with damp and mould problems:

*I need to wait 'til it finishes to say, but they say it'll be warmer and more soundproof. (Andrew)*

*Well obviously we are hoping for a big improvement! For a beautiful looking reception area, because we have some photographs with samples of materials, and so you can picture it. I'm hoping the insulation will work, maybe we will have less damp corners. That would really make a difference [difference]. It's supposed to be [warmer] with the insulation so hopefully. (Nadia)*

*Oh I hope it's going to be spruced up and looking magnificent again in the light of day! In the darkness of the autumn we*

#### What is external solid wall insulation?

Solid walls let through twice as much heat as cavity walls on average. Cavity walls are made of two layers with a small gap or 'cavity' between them which provides an insulating space of air which impedes the escape of heat out or cold in. Solid walls have no such gap, so they let more heat through. Solid walls can be insulated – either on the inside or from the outside. The tower blocks at the Edward Woods Estate were insulated on the outside. External wall insulation involves fixing a layer of insulation material to the wall, then covering it with a special type of render (plasterwork) or cladding. The finish can be smooth, textured, painted, tiled, panelled, pebble-dashed, or finished with brick slips. The advantages of external solid wall insulation are:

- can be applied without disruption to the household
- does not reduce the floor area of the home
- renews the appearance of outer walls
- improves weatherproofing and sound resistance
- fills cracks and gaps in the brickwork, which reduces draughts
- increases the life of the walls by protecting the brickwork
- reduces condensation on internal walls and can help prevent damp (but will not solve rising or penetration damp)

Source: Energy Saving Trust



can see it gleaming! Hopefully, with all that insulation it's going to be warmer. They had to insulate, we had a terrible draught coming from that chute, it makes a difference. (Tyree)

Well they say I won't benefit as much as the others, they did all the thermal ratings and our flats won't benefit anywhere near as much as the corner ones, because they're the worst. Their heating bills will halve – well that's an exaggeration – but ours will only be a quarter. There's quite a substantial difference because our thermal ratings are much much better than the corner flats. (Maggie)

I'm just hoping that the insulation will sort out the mould – that's what the last surveyor said when he came round – “once they're done with this you should feel a big improvement” – so that's what I'm hoping for. (Lisa)

Several interviewees offer the opinion that the work was paid for or at least **motivated by the owners of the Westfield shopping centre**, to improve the attractiveness of the surrounding environment. This suggests that residents are unaware of the actual sources of funding:

*The people that own the shopping centre over there, Westfield, they have given so much money towards it, so it must be in their interest for it to look nice more than our interests. But overall it hasn't been very nice for us at all with all the noise, and then you are afraid that someone is going to break in. (Mr Cope)*

*They got a lot of money from Westfield. It's a prime site, and when you come off this main road you've got a beautiful looking, magical shopping centre precinct, and then you look to your left, and you've got these massive great dirty tower skyscraper things – so a lot of money to make that place look good, that's what it's about. Every angle you look at, at the moment, it looks really grotty and horrible, but if you can imagine what it's going to look like when it's done – that [Edward Woods estate] will blend into that [Westfield].*

*So yeah, there's a lot of motive on that. (Mark)*

Also, five interviewees are **sceptical that the insulation will work as intended**:

*“How can you insulate? It's solid concrete – I mean solid. Small as this flat is, I've had a lot of people in here, screaming and shouting, and I've gone to knock on my neighbour's to apologise for the noise, but they've said “what noise?”. It's SO well insulated – I mean the walls are so thick – the external wall is only that one there – how's that going to make a difference?” (Mark)*

“Some interviewees are aware of improvements to thermal efficiency, soundproofing or helping with damp and mould problems.”

# CHAPTER FOUR: WHAT THE RESEARCH TELLS US

## 4.1 SOCIAL CONDITIONS

We were surprised how positive the feedback from residents was on social conditions on the estate. For example, 68 per cent of people rank their quality of life on the estate and in their homes as good or excellent, while very high numbers of people said they feel safe around the estate and in their homes. For an estate which gained local notoriety for being a “no-go” area in bygone decades, today it can be described as popular.

We can also offer personal observations on this point: during three months we visited the estate, there seemed to be a good atmosphere. Even as nights drew in faster in the winter it always felt like a safe place to work. During a separate research project, interviewees living in the local area had warned the research team that the estate was “dodgy” and a site of criminality. Perhaps the estate has not shaken off its local reputation, but this does not seem to prejudice the residents’ experience of living on the estate.

Many respondents do not describe themselves as active in the local community when asked to describe their role. However, when this is cross-referenced to other questions, community does appear to be relatively robust. Knowing neighbours, knowing local faces, knowing the local newsagent: these are all bywords for community, and illustrative of the role of informal contact. There are low levels of engagement with formal structures for tenants (such as residents’ meetings, even the on-site community centre), but other local places are akin to being community hubs. For example, the local café seems to function as something of a gathering point for residents, a place for news and information to be passed on.

Some respondents have a strong sense of loyalty and belonging to the estate. Others appreciate the management work which has been put into maintaining the surrounding environment. A lot are positive about the wider area and seemingly unfazed by the changes that have gripped Shepherd’s Bush in the last decade.

With its good management and safe environment, the Edward Woods Estate seems to offer its residents a secure place to get on with their lives. For some people, this is represented by having a landlord / council that they feel is responsive to them. For others, knowing that there are people on site that can help them (eg, concierges, sheltered housing) is vital. For others still, having local shops and facilities which cater to them makes the area feel like home.

Though facilities and management seem to be satisfactory for a lot of residents and contribute to positive social conditions, others take issue with the demographic change in the estate over recent years. From the perspective of long-established residents, the estate is changing due to newcomers and a perception that more people from ethnic minorities are moving in. Some residents commented that some minorities are not as willing to get involved in community activities, though we found there was low involvement amongst all ethnicities.

The concierge service is a big asset for the estate. Primarily, it helps residents feel safe. Also, many respondents explicitly commented on how much they personally like the concierges who work in their blocks. For all sorts of issues – perhaps even ones beyond their remit – the concierge act as a point of contact for residents. Given its social benefit, the decision to reduce the concierge service seems unfortunate.

“It is not enough to upgrade the energy efficiency of homes technically. It is essential to engage with residents about how to alter their energy usage too.”

## 4.2 IMPACT OF REGENERATION WORKS

We were also surprised by the residents' stoical attitude to more than two years of disruption caused by the work, though sometimes this patience resulted from the inevitability of the works and disruption.

Yet there were some residents who had suffered as a result of the works, particularly those with children, those housebound or in ill-health, or those working nightshifts who need a quiet place to sleep during the day. Though decanting residents is impossible due to costs and lack of alternative local accommodation, more support and consideration for these vulnerable residents would not go amiss (for example, relief accommodation for the daytime), especially if the work is complicated or liable to drag on. There was a portacabin for residents to rest in, but some complained that this was degrading, and in any case it was onsite so would be barely spared from the noise of building works.

However, for most other residents, the daytime working hours of the builders (from 9am to 4pm) are beneficial and make the process less disruptive. There are a few mentions of the builders breaching this rule, which undermines trust in the building company. Some residents feel that they have put up with a lot of disruption during the last decade on the estate, expressing a kind of "works fatigue". Yet there was generally quite strong support for the work and acceptance of associated difficulties. In fact, it might even be this recent history of intervention and improvement that make such a massive project palatable for residents.

Given the background of intermittent improvement works, followed by the current lengthy and intensive regeneration works, it is vital for trust between all the involved parties to be maintained. At Working Group Meetings, attended by council representatives, Breyer representatives and residents, cooperation between the three parties made the process more efficient, for example resident representatives drew attention to issues that the building firm

may not have been aware of so quickly. This means a good relationship must be maintained between residents, their resident representatives, the local authority and the building company and its contractors. Having a good, energetic and trusted Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) throughout the works was certainly helpful in this respect.

The RLO is also a source of information for residents who sometimes seem unaware of how processes work, (eg, reporting a housing complaint). For example, some residents would call the RLO for a problem that was the council's responsibility. Similarly, the concierge service performs this role. It's very important to have the same faces around – people want faces, not numbers to ring or websites to look at.

Breyer's newsletters keep residents well informed about the progress of the renovation works. But at the point of interview, some residents were anxious about why the work has taken so long, and at the point of writing there had been a further seven months of scaffolding and building works.

In our view, residents need frequently reiterated information about why the work is being done, and their part in it. The benefits of the project, particularly in terms of delivering the energy and financial savings which are intended, will be most fully realised when residents change their behaviour in the use of energy and observe good practice guidance around how windows, ventilation, and heating are used efficiently.

Lots of people think the purpose of the works is only to improve the appearance of the Edward Woods Estate. This suggests that residents are not sufficiently aware of the principal driver behind the renovation works – to improve the energy efficiency of the building – and therefore may be less likely to alter their behaviour around energy usage. It is not enough to upgrade the energy efficiency of homes technically; it is essential to engage with residents about how to alter their energy usage too. The public generally are a long way behind in understanding the benefits of energy efficiency. Residents need a lot more help and communication from

their landlord on this subject; about how energy efficiency measures can help and why it is important.

A significant number of interviewees thought the renovation works were paid for or prompted by Westfield who according to interviewees, did not want an uncomely council estate on their doorstep. In these circumstances, it is important for residents to know how much individual benefit the work can bring, that the renovation work is for the benefit of residents rather than outsiders. This may offset some of the annoyance and inconvenience caused to residents as a result of the building works.

# CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This report shows what we have learnt from our 48 interviews on the Edward Woods Estate carried out between September and December 2011, and from visits before and after these dates. This large-scale estate retrofit programme shows the value of:

- a) modernising and upgrading;
- b) energy saving;
- c) keeping community on side and building a relationship of trust with residents;
- d) local neighbourhood management.

## **What we have learnt about the resident experience of major scale regeneration / retrofit of tower blocks so far:**

- Always going to be a difficult process – unforeseen building problems cause delays to an already difficult and ambitious building project.
- In-situ residents – process that needs to be managed sensitively and effectively by all parties (including landlord, contractor, staff on site).
- Important link between residents and other stakeholders in the Working Party Meetings – valuable source of information exchange and the building of trust between different parties involved. Also valuable as a forum for resident-influenced decision making, eg, paint and tile choices for blocks.

## **Community relations on the estate – what people feel about their homes and the estate and how they interact with neighbours / others:**

- Generally positive messages from majority of Edward Woods Estate residents about their homes and the estate in terms of quality of life, safety and security.
- Lots of interaction between residents although few participate formally in the tenants' and residents' association, few have many neighbours they feel they could call on in an emergency.
- Concierge service plays a hugely important role in assuring people of safety and security – important message for LBHF in current economic climate – the role of a staff member in the blocks is valued by residents and a source of comfort and security to many.
- Few residents seem to use / are interested in / can afford to use the community centre on site.

## **What could have been done better:**

- Management of the timetable and associated delays to the project – communication with residents is vital here to ensure residents do not feel left behind / abandoned in difficult circumstances.
- Better advance preparation before the works began would have been useful – particularly of vulnerable residents (young families, ill or elderly) – some could be offered the opportunity to move if they have health concerns?
- Communication of the nature of the project and its energy saving potential (not just aesthetic improvement) – linked in with post-regeneration work, energy advice and support for residents.
- Resident fatigue at incessant regeneration works to the estate – coupled with huge delays – created feelings of despondency that it would never end.

## **Lessons to learn for future schemes:**

- Improved communication with residents before, during and after works, eg, explaining to those with disabilities / illnesses how they will be affected; communicating effectively the purpose of the works and potential benefits to residents; keeping residents more informed of delays and reasons behind etc.
- Necessary to find a way to engage residents in the reasons behind the work. Energy efficiency advice and usage tips done throughout the process, remove the suspicion of why the work is happening (purely cosmetic).

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APPENDIX 1: Breakdown of interview respondents

## ROCKWOOL INTERVIEWS PROFILES

Int#	Age	Gender	Ethnicity			Household type			Length of tenancy			Tenancy		Block			Flat type					
			Black	Asian	White	Other	Alone	Partner	Family	<2	2 to 5	6 to 10	>10	Rented LA	Rented private	Owner Occupier	Norland	Poynter	Stebbing	bedsit	1 bed	2 bed
1	X	X			X		X				X	X					X					X
2		X			X		X				X	X					X					X
3		X			X		X				X	X					X					X
4	X		X	X			X		X		X	X					X					X
5		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
6		X			X		X		X		X	X				X						X
7		X	X	X		X		X			X	X					X					X
8		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
9		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
10		X			X		X		X		X	X				X						X
11		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
12		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
13		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
14		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
15		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
16		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
17		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
18		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
19		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
20		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
21		X	X	X		X		X			X	X					X					X
22		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
23	X		X		X		X		X		X	X					X					X
24		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
25		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
26		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
27		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
28	X		X		X		X		X		X	X					X					X
29		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X
30		X			X		X		X		X	X					X					X

Int#	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Household type	Length of tenancy	Tenancy	Block	Flat type
31	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
32	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
33	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
34	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
35	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
36	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
37	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
38	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
39	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
40	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
41	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
42	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
43	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
44	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
45	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
46	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
47	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
48	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
TOTAL	4 7 14 20 3 32 16 13 4 27 4 32 7 9 7 6 5 30 44 2 2 17 15 16 7 13 28							

## APPENDIX 2: Interview schedule: STAGE ONE – DURING WORKS

### 1. Home

- How do you feel about your home / flat?
- What are the best things?
- What are the worst things?
- What would you change if you could?
- How comfortable is your home at the moment?
- Do you feel that external noise (eg, traffic, aeroplane, music etc.) affects your comfort at home?
- What things about your home and your surroundings do you feel proud of?
- What things make you feel bad about where you live?
- Please rate your quality of life in your home now (1 is terrible and 5 is excellent)

1. Terrible	2. Bad	3. Neither good nor bad	4. Good	5. Excellent

### 2. Estate

- How do you feel about the estate?
- What are the best things about the estate?
- What are the worst things about the estate?
- What would you change if you could?
- Does living in Edward Woods give you a sense of pride?
  - If so why?
  - If not, why not?
- How would you describe your quality of life on the estate (1 is terrible; 5 is excellent)

1. Terrible	2. Bad	3. Neither good nor bad	4. Good	5. Excellent

- Can you give us an idea of how satisfied you are with your area and the wider environment (1 is dissatisfied; 5 is very satisfied)

1. Dissatisfied	2. Slightly satisfied	3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4. Satisfied	5. Very satisfied



### 3. Security

- a) Do you feel safe and secure in your home / on the estate? Please rate from 1 to 5 how safe you feel (1 is very unsafe; 5 is very safe)

HOME

1. Not at all safe	2. Slightly unsafe	3. Neither safe nor unsafe	4. Slightly safe	5. Very safe

ESTATE

1. Not at all safe	2. Slightly unsafe	3. Neither safe nor unsafe	4. Slightly safe	5. Very safe

- b) Why / why not?  
 c) What would help this? What makes this worse?  
 d) Has the regeneration work affected your sense of security while it has been going on? If so, in what way?

### 4. Current energy bills

- a) About how much do you spend on electricity every month / quarter / year?  
 b) About how much do you spend on gas every month / quarter / year?  
 c) Do you think the amount is reasonable? How does it compare with other places you have lived?  
 d) Have your bills gone up or down in the last few months?  
 e) What do you think will happen to the cost of energy now and in the future? What impact will this have?  
 f) What do you know about how you can save energy?  
 g) What are the most useful ideas / methods / tips?

### 5. Levels of social interaction or community participation;

- a) How would you describe your role in the local community?  
*Prompts: Active / not active / not involved at all*
- b) How many neighbours do you know? How many could you call on in an emergency?
- c) Do you ever attend local groups eg, residents' association meetings?
- If yes, when was the last one?
  - If not, why not?

## 6. Regeneration works

- a) How has the work affected your daily life? And the scaffolding?  
 b) Have you had contact with the staff from the council / Breyer? How have you found them?

Please circle those that apply:

LBHF

- Approachable
- Helpful
- Knowledgeable
- Unhelpful
- Unapproachable
- Ill-informed
- Other – please specify

BREYER on site

- Approachable
- Helpful
- Knowledgeable
- Unhelpful
- Unapproachable
- Ill-informed
- Other – please specify

- a) How well do you think you were kept up to date with progress?

1. Very badly	2. Badly	3. OK	4. Well	5. Very well

- b) How do you expect your home and your block to look and feel after the work?  
 c) Please rate your personal experience of the works from 1 to 5 (1 terrible and 5 excellent)?

1. Terrible	2. Bad	3. Neither good nor bad	4. Good	5. Excellent

**Please tell us anything that you would like to add**

*Finally, would you be happy for us to follow up with you once the work is complete?*

Contact details (address and telephone number)

# ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The Lower Super Output Area (E01001944/ Hammersmith and Fulham 004B) is a very close approximation of the area covered by the Edward Woods Estate. All tables that henceforth refer to Edward Woods Estate refer to this LSOA.
- <sup>2</sup> UK Parliament (2000) *Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000*. London: Houses of Parliament
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