

*ACTIVITY 2*  
*Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>*  
*of November*  
*2020*

**Alton ACTION**



**Results**

# **Analysing the Potential Impact of the Regeneration Scheme on the Lives of Alton Estate Residents**

Topics:

**COMMUNITY &  
SOCIAL SPACES**

**BIODIVERSITY &  
GREEN SPACES**

**MAINTENANCE &  
REPAIR**

**HOUSING &  
TENURE**

# Mapping community and social spaces

Where they are and  
how residents use them;  
what are their needs?

# Results

## Need for further provision of community spaces:

- A lack of playgrounds given the size of the estate: participants identified two derelict playgrounds, which have not been maintained by the Council.
- Lack of activities or facilities for children of any age group, or for teenagers.
- Lack of community spaces with storage facilities.

## Need to make better use of existing buildings:

- Closed down community/youth spaces are abandoned and boarded up.
- Existing buildings, which are planned to be demolished, could be used for social and community facilities.

# Results

## Informal spaces for adults to congregate:

- Adults currently congregate near the shop in Portswood Place. This is the only place where they can congregate and this space could disappear as a result of the regeneration.
- There used to be an area to congregate in front of Allbrook House, however benches were removed and the police no longer allow people to congregate there.

# Results

## Important spaces that provide activities:

- Religious buildings that provide spaces for other (non-religious) activities for the community.
- Library below Allbrook House.
- Community facilities managed by a key holder (see below).

## Management of community facilities:

- Resident key holders that manage the space and their use.
- Local social enterprises that organise activities and manage space.
- However, there is lack of maintenance of these facilities.

# Mapping biodiversity and green spaces

This exercise focused on the residents' experience of biodiversity, mapping wildlife on the estate, and any sites of noise/air pollution.

The estate is divided into two parts: Alton West and Alton East and there are different communities within them.

# Results

## **Natural Green spaces:**

Alton West: access to Richmond Park is only from the far end of Danebury Avenue nearest to the Roehampton Gate entrance. From the Allbrook House end of Danebury, it is a 20-minute walk to get to the park and there is no direct access or entrance point because of the golf course to the south.

There is a summer community fair on Bull Green / Downshire Field. Residents would like to enjoy all the green spaces but feel that their use is severely restricted by Council byelaws and regulations

Alton East: has a small formal garden with three benches - this could be a space for meditation. At the edge of Alton East is a woodland which is wilder and does not have well defined footpaths like Putney Heath. Use of this space is discouraged.

## **Trees:**

A lot of trees are older than the estate - we don't want to lose the trees! Tunworth Crescent (AW) has lovely trees. Amazing avenue of trees along Harbridge, and Danebury, including cherry trees which blossom in spring. There are Giant Redwood Trees (AE) which run along Alton Road.



# Results

## **Play areas**

AW: People from the point blocks in AW play under the trees in the summer. There's a play park but you have to pay to get in.

AE: Whitley Point has a new Multi Use Games Area which encourages people to use outdoor spaces, families and children live up the area

## **Animals**

There are jackdaws, and roosting bats in the Danebury area, badgers and foxes in AW and AE, and tawny owls and parakeets throughout the estate. Jays can be seen in the winter months. This summer, visitors such as the Poplar Hawkmoth, and European hornet have been spotted on Alton East. There is now a newly installed insect hotel by the MUGA (AE)

# Results

## **Artworks:**

The Bronze Bull sculpture by Robert Clatworthy sits by Downshire Field. At the top of Downshire Field is a sculpture by Lynne Chadwick called The Watchers which looks over the estate, though the sculpture has now been fenced off, preventing public access. There is a mural near to shops at Portswood Place, with a paved section in front of it which could be a very nice space even though its concrete, there are benches provided.

## **Negative aspects:**

Flytipping, and abandoned chairs and sofas can be found under many of the blocks - contractors from outside of the estate dump their rubbish here. Littering is fairly general across the area. There is gridlocked traffic on Roehampton Lane and sometimes the estate is used as a rat run; a lot pavement parking preventing access; new Public Space Protection Order which means you can be fined £1000 with possible criminal conviction for activities such as walking dogs on the grass

## **Noise pollution:**

Alton West: very quiet - Danebury Avenue is a quiet lane with bollards at one end. Alton East: Roehampton Lane is constantly busy with traffic and blaring sirens

MAINTENANCE &  
REPAIR

# Tension & synergy canvas

What residents consider to be in good or bad condition; what to preserve and change; urgency & importance of maintenance & repair

# Results

Generally, there are several issues related to bad maintenance and lack of repair intervention. The Council has *'poor control of contractors. There is a poor standard of repairs and no planning'*.

Specifically:

- Electricity is a major problem. The general electric system has not been updated for many years, with several issues related to the lack of emergency services and intermittent power blackouts. A central maintenance system can potentially be an option.
- Residents reported the refuse is not collected on a regular basis, resulting in bad smells and rubbish littering the pavements throughout the estate. During the activity, the suggestion for installing a bin storage emerged.
- Local shops are not well maintained and are poor in design, with structural issues to ceilings. There are no publicly accessible toilets outside the shops.
- There is intermittent maintenance of green spaces.

Moreover, another concern is the lack of communication from the Council:

- In the past, residents reported several issues to the Council, but they are rarely followed up.
- Residents should be informed on Council action related to inspections within the estate.

# Exploring emotions & storytelling

Feelings and emotions of residents related to specific aspects associated with living on the estate

**HOUSING &  
TENURE**

# Results

There is a feeling that the stories and lived experiences of residents are being ignored. The narratives of 'regeneration and change' promoted by the local authority/developers do not tell the whole story - they wilfully silence the voices of members of the Alton Estate community.

- the community is not seen as having value, it's not just that the Council and developers are ignoring it, but that nobody seeks to understand it.
- the value of the homes that people either own or rent is also not understood. Value is derived, not only from the investment in fixtures and fittings, but also the histories of families, the layers of living that have accrued over generations and years
- what is the human and social cost of these proposals? The monetary cost is not the most important consideration.

**HOUSING &  
TENURE**

# Results

- members of the group shared their concerns about the lack of accessibility (in all its senses). Blocks and buildings are difficult to access for all groups with mobility issues from the elderly, to disabled, to young parents with children.
- accessibility is also an issue in terms of capacity for new residents; buses are full and regularly pass through the estate without stopping. What work has been done with TfL about this? If there is a considerable increase in new residents, will the bus services be improved?
- residents feel it is difficult to express views which do not agree with the plans – people are told they are 'getting a good deal' (whether or not this is actually true) and therefore they shouldn't complain.

