

BEAUFORT PARK

London NW9

LIVING AT BEAUFORT PARK

COMMISSIONED BY ST GEORGE PLC



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Foreword

This work has been commissioned to understand what life is like for residents of Beaufort Park, a new development in Colindale, in the London Borough of Barnet. The purpose of the research has been to understand how new residents are settling in the new community, and what can be done, by the developer St George, the local authority, local voluntary organisations, and residents themselves, to support residents' quality of life.

The project makes use of an innovative new framework that has been created to measure social sustainability in new housing developments. The framework uses the concept of social sustainability to bring together and measure a wide range of factors that influence local quality of life and the strength of a community. It is based on what is known about creating and supporting thriving communities from academic research, policy and practical experience.

For St George, as part of The Berkeley Group, “social sustainability is about people’s quality of life, now and in the future. It describes the extent to which a neighbourhood supports individual and collective wellbeing. Social sustainability combines design of the physical environment with a focus on how the people who live in and use a space relate to each other and function as a community. It is enhanced by development, which provides the right infrastructure to support a strong social and cultural life, opportunities for people to get involved, and scope for the place and the community to evolve.”^{iv}

The term social sustainability is not yet widely used by housing developers or public agencies in the UK, although it has been an object of academic research for over a decade. We believe it should become central to the way that everyone involved in the process of building new housing settlements – from government, central and local, to architects, communities and developers - understands sustainability in the years ahead.



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About this report

This report describes the findings of a research project exploring community strength and quality of life at Beaufort Park in Colindale. Beaufort Park is a new, 25-acre mixed-use community. By November 2012, one third of the planned homes had been built. St George, the developer of Beaufort Park, commissioned this work to understand what life is like for new residents and to explore the strengths of the emerging community.

The research involved a resident survey carried out by an independent market research agency ComRes, independent statistical analysis of the survey data carried out by Dr John Brown of Social Life, a site survey carried out by an independent assessor Mae Architects LLP, and a number of in-depth interviews with residents carried out by Social Life. The work was carried out in October and November 2012.

The project uses a framework for measuring the social sustainability of new housing and mixed-use developments. This framework was developed for The Berkeley Group by Social Life and Professor Tim Dixon of Reading University and published in September 2012 as Creating Strong Communities:

This report contains the summary findings of the project. A technical appendix has been written to accompany the summary, containing a detailed description of the research method, statistical analysis and data files.

The report was written by Nicola Bacon and Saffron Woodcraft. The survey design and statistical analysis was carried out by Dr John Brown.

About St George

St George, part of the Berkeley Group, is London's leading mixed use developer who regenerate brownfield sites to create thriving new communities in attractive landscaped environments. In 2002 St George was the first developer to be awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise, Sustainable Development. Between 2000 and 2010 St George delivered 6,500 homes, a third of which were affordable, 750,000 ft² of commercial floorspace and 19 acres of open space. 22,700 people were employed in building the developments and 2,600 now work on them.

About Social Life

Social Life is a new social enterprise created by the Young Foundation in 2012. Social Life's Founding Directors are Nicola Bacon and Saffron Woodcraft, who set up and led the Young Foundation's work on communities from 2005 to 2012. Social Life's mission is to reconnect placemaking with people's everyday experience and the way that communities work. Our expertise is in the social dimensions of placemaking and sustainability, in understanding how to accelerate local social innovation, and in knowing how to translate these insights into practice and policy.

Social Life is working in the UK and internationally. For more information go to www.social-life.co

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Zoe Spiliopoulou for contributions to the fieldwork, to James Halsall and Alex Ely from Mae Architects LLP, and to Coralie Pring and Pru Shelton from ComRes for their work on the residents survey.



Executive summary

This project has explored how people living at Beaufort Park are settling in the new community, and what can be done, by the developer St George, the local authority, local voluntary organisations, and residents themselves, to support residents' quality of life.

The work has been carried out when only a third of the development has been completed, and this report describes a community that is forming and evolving.

330 Beaufort Park residents were surveyed in October and November 2012:

- 35% have lived in the area for more than five years
- The majority are in their thirties
- Over a third of residents had lived elsewhere in Barnet before moving to Beaufort Park
- The population is ethnically diverse
- Only 20% had previously been owner occupiers
- 49% are in paid employment, 4.2% work at home, 15% are students and only 3% are retired
- 40% of households include three or more people, 19% are single person households
- Over 60% walk, cycle or take some form of public transport to work
- 39% have children
- Unemployment is on a par with Barnet and lower than in Colindale



What they feel about **Beaufort Park**

The research demonstrates that residents think Beaufort Park is clean, tidy, peaceful, safe and secure with good quality shops, open spaces and homes. Residents described high feelings of safety in Beaufort Park during the day but concerns about safety in the wider area, especially at night.

Beaufort Park residents report higher levels of intending to remain resident in the neighbourhood for a number of years, higher levels of belonging, and strong feelings that where they live contributes to a sense of who they are, when benchmarked against comparable areas. They feel that Beaufort Park has a strong local identity and levels of interaction between neighbours are in line with what would be expected in an established community, which is a positive finding.

Residents were asked what contributed most to their quality of life on Beaufort Park. The most popular responses were the cleanliness, tidiness and peacefulness of the development; safety and security; shopping facilities; the open spaces and the style and quality of the housing.

The survey reported levels of interaction with neighbours that are in line with other similar areas. This is a positive result for Beaufort Park, as levels of neighbourliness are already similar to those of an established community. However, the research identified that more could be done in the future to provide the opportunities for residents who want to socialise to make local connections. Residents have clear ideas about how life at Beaufort Park could be improved.



What they feel about Colindale

The work identified that some residents have concerns about safety in the wider area. They would like to see a pedestrian crossing on Aerodrome Road, more local bus services, and another GP practice or health centre in the area.

Where they go and what they do

- Almost 70% of Beaufort Park residents are registered with a local GP
- The average journey time to work for residents is 34 minutes, almost identical to the Barnet average of 35 minutes
- 12% of respondents had a journey time to work of less than 10 minutes
- Brent Cross is the destination residents will visit most frequently for recreational shopping, followed by central London
- 27% of residents do their regular household shopping and 80% of their convenience shopping at the neighbourhood store, which is most likely to be the small Tesco at Beaufort Park





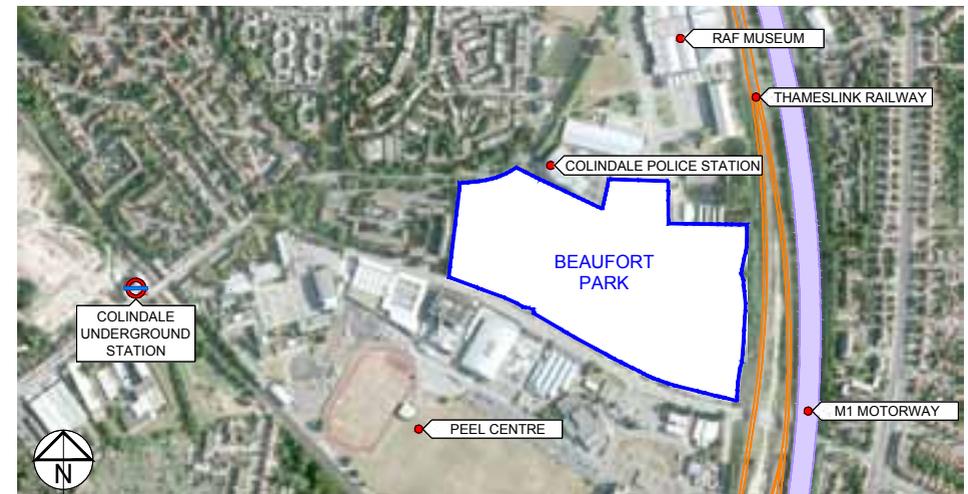
An introduction to **Beaufort Park**

Beaufort Park is a 25-acre mixed-use development in Colindale, in north west London, in the London Borough of Barnet (LB Barnet). Outline planning permission for the development was granted in 2005 for 2,800 homes and commercial properties. Detailed planning permission was granted in 2009 for a further 190 homes and commercial floorspace when the Grade II Listed Watchtower Building was relocated to the nearby RAF museum. By the end of October 2012, 1,150 homes had been built.

The site was derelict before development. Before the First World War, it was part of the Claude Grahame-White factory and airfield, one of the leading aviation facilities in the country. From 1927, the site was occupied by the RAF; in 1987 the Hendon Aerodrome officially closed and the site fell into disuse. St George purchased the site in 2003.

The immediate surrounding neighbourhood has little residential housing, apart from Grahame Park, a social housing estate that has been the subject of on-going regeneration for the last decade. To the East of Beaufort Park is a railway and the M1; the police station and the RAF museum are to the North; and the Metropolitan Police training centre, the Peel Centre, is to the South. There is student housing to the West of the site.

Colindale is identified in the Mayor's London Plan 2011 as an Opportunity Area.^v The 2010 Colindale Area Action Plan^{vi} sets out how this will be delivered, announcing an objective to build 10,000 new homes in the area - making this one of the largest concentrations of new housing in north west London. Beaufort Park is the largest single area of new housing listed in the Action Plan.



Aerial map of Beaufort Park

It is one of the first housing developments listed in the Action Plan to begin construction, and, alongside the on-going regeneration of the Grahame Park estate, is intended as a catalyst to drive the wider regeneration of the area.

Beaufort Park was designed, from its initial conception, to provide a very different model of housing and amenities to the surrounding area. The development is made up of apartment blocks, far denser than the adjacent low rise housing, and includes retail space that is intended to serve the needs of residents of Beaufort Park and the surrounding communities.



Site plan of Beaufort Park

Beaufort Park is described by St George as “a ‘new London Quarter’, offering an elegant ‘Mediterranean-style’ boulevard of cafes, restaurants and retail units”.^{vi} The development is marketed as offering high quality design and landscaped parks, as a new kind of community for Colindale.

Planning permission has been granted for 2,990 homes, of which 30% will be affordable. Almost half of the affordable housing will be for rent, with shared ownership making up slightly less than a quarter.

The affordable housing provided to date is managed by Catalyst Housing and Genesis Housing Association. The balance is “Discount Market Sale housing (DMS). 257 DMS homes are available for sale at a discount of 20% on the open market value. The London Borough of Barnet will hold a covenant on these homes to ensure that they are sold at 80% of open market value in perpetuity. These homes are prioritised for people who live and work in Barnet, and whose income is not more than 45% of the discounted price.

356 homes are studios, designated as “Entry Point Workers Studios” (EPWS), targeted at first time buyers because of the lower cost. These are not subsidised by public funds. They are not considered to be “affordable housing” by LB Barnet.

A third of the planned homes will be studio or one-bedroom flats. A sixth of new homes will have more than two bedrooms.

St George estimates that 90% of homes within recent phases conform to Lifetime Homes standards; 10% of homes are designed to be wheelchair accessible.

The commercial space is currently occupied by a range of businesses and agencies, including Tesco Express, the Bright Horizons Nursery, Middlesex University, the Driving Standards Agency, an estate agent, a hair salon, Italian and Chinese restaurants and two pubs.

The development includes two play areas for younger children, and a park. These are accessible to residents using a key fob. There is a gym for the private residents who pay for it through their service charges. Management of the housing and the wider area is provided by Consort Property Management, who provide services for all of St George, and some of the housing associations’ residents. St George hosts an annual concert and Christmas Carols.

Beaufort Park accommodation mix within current planning consents

Type	Private	Entry Point Workers Studios	Discount Market Sale	Shared Ownership	Registered Social Landlord	Total
Studio	210	356	77	0	0	643
1 Bed	243	0	77	53	0	373
2 Bed	1,012	0	103	107	213	1,435
3 Bed	271	0	0	54	214	539
Total	1,736	356	257	214	427	2,990
%	58%	12%	9%	7%	14%	100%

Our approach

In early 2012, Social Life, working with Professor Tim Dixon from Reading University, was commissioned to devise and test a social sustainability measurement framework for the Berkeley Group. This innovative project set out to understand and measure people's quality of life and the strength of community on new housing developments, and the impact of new housing developments on the surrounding neighbourhoods over time. The concept of social sustainability was used as a way to bring together and measure a wide range of factors that influence local quality of life and the strength of a community now and in the future.

The framework was tested on four Berkeley Group developments: two in inner London; one in the South London suburbs, and one in a semi-rural area near Portsmouth. This research was published by the Berkeley Group in the report *Creating Strong Communities: A measurement framework for assessing quality of life and community strength in new housing developments*.^{viii}

Social Life has now been commissioned by St George to carry out a social sustainability assessment of the Beaufort Park development. The aim of this research is to explore and understand how residents feel about living in Beaufort Park and how it is developing as a new community. This is a snapshot of an evolving community, taken at the point when a third of the planned homes have been completed.

The same social sustainability measurement framework has been used, with several minor amendments designed to improve its effectiveness following a review after the initial test. Within the framework, particular attention is paid to how residents described their quality of life, feelings of safety, satisfaction with local amenities like shops and public transport, and their views on the strength of the community.

A detailed description of how the framework has been developed is in the technical report to "Creating Strong Communities Part 2: developing the framework".^{ix}

This study included a resident survey carried out by an independent market research agency ComRes, independent statistical analysis of the survey data carried out by Dr John Brown of Social Life, a site survey carried out by an independent assessor Mae Architects LLP, and a number of in-depth interviews with residents carried out by Social Life. The work was carried out in October and November 2012.

This report summarises the findings and the approach used in this project. Further detail about the research methods can be found in the Appendices, including information about the questions used in the research framework, the sampling methods and quotas, statistical testing and data files.





What is **social sustainability**?

There is increasing global interest in social sustainability, amongst policy makers, academics, governments and the various agencies involved in the process of house building, planning and urban regeneration. The term originates from the ‘three pillars’ of sustainable development – environmental, economic, social – which date from the 1987 Brundtland Commission to the United Nations. The former Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, defined sustainable development as development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.^x

Between 2010 and 2011, the Social Life team (then at the Young Foundation) carried out a review of available evidence about what makes communities flourish, in particular, large-scale new developments and settlements. This work was commissioned by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and was an attempt to consolidate the available, but disparate, evidence to make the case for investment in community infrastructure. The evidence gathered in the review is published on www.futurecommunities.net. This body of work was the starting point for developing a practical measurement framework for the Berkeley Group.

The Berkeley Group framework is grounded in academic research about social sustainability and its relationship to the built environment, and evidence from national surveys carried out by government and research councils about what is known to boost quality of life and wellbeing in a local area. The factors that underpin local quality of life can be categorised as physical and non-physical.^{xi}

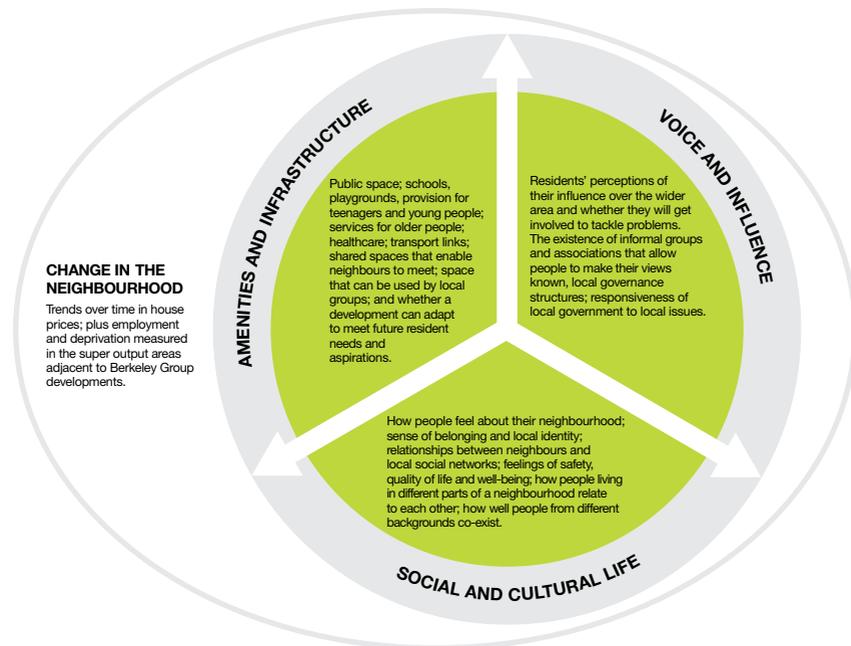
- ‘Physical factors’ include decent and affordable housing, access to opportunities, high quality public services, good quality and sustainable public realm, good transport connections.
- ‘Non-physical factors’ encompass safety, local social networks, social inclusion and spatial integration, cultural heritage, a sense of belonging and identity, and wellbeing.

The measurement framework organises these factors into four core dimensions: social and cultural life; voice and influence; amenities and infrastructure; and change in the neighbourhood.

Measuring quality of life and community strength

The Berkeley Group and St George define social sustainability as being “about people’s quality of life, now and in the future. Social sustainability describes the extent to which a neighbourhood supports individual and collective wellbeing. It combines design of the physical environment with a focus on how the people who live in and use a space relate to each other and function as a community. It is enhanced by development which provides the right infrastructure to support a strong social and cultural life, opportunities for people to get involved, and scope for the place and the community to evolve”.^{xii}

The four core dimensions of social sustainability



Source: The Berkeley Group, 2012

The indicators

Thirteen different indicators have been created to measure the three dimensions of the framework: social and cultural life, voice and influence, and amenities and infrastructure. The 13 indicators are constructed from the results of 45 different questions, which are incorporated in two different surveys.

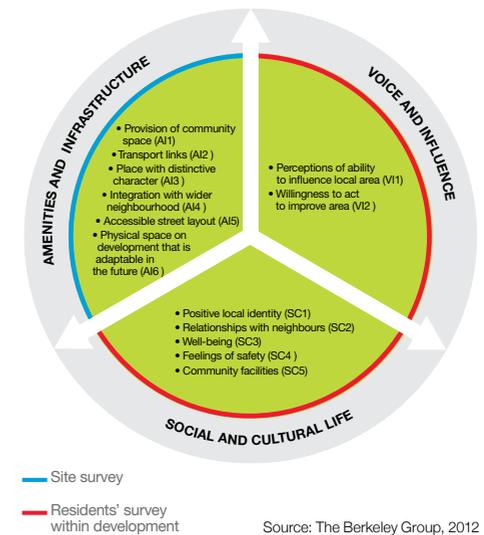
Full details about the indicators used in the assessment process can be found in the Appendices to this report, including a list of the indicators and the survey questions that underpin them, and a description of the process used to select the indicators.

The indicators in the framework were selected because they report on issues that are known to be important to local communities, such as quality of life, community involvement in local decision-making, wellbeing, and perceptions of safety. The indicators for the social and cultural life and voice and influence dimensions were created by selecting questions from large-scale national datasets: the Understanding Society Survey, the Taking Part Survey, the Crime Survey for England and Wales, and the Citizenship Survey). A number of questions were created for the social and cultural life dimension where appropriate questions did not already exist.

The indicators from the amenities and infrastructure dimension of the framework were taken from CABI’s Building for Life assessment tool. Additionally, a number of questions were created for this dimension where appropriate questions did not already exist.

The rationale for incorporating pre-existing questions was twofold: first, they have already been tested and validated; and second, they enable comparisons between the experience of residents of a particular area and other similar areas.

The 13 indicators



Analysing the results

The results of the resident survey are benchmarked against the geo-demographic classifications for the area in which the development is situated. The Office of National Statistics Output Area Classification (OAC) is used to benchmark questions taken from Understanding Society and Taking Part surveys, and the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for the Crime Survey for England and Wales and the Citizenship survey. This enables comparison of responses of people living in one area to the averages that would be expected for people from comparable social groups in comparable areas.

The differences between the actual and expected scores are subjected to statistical testing. These results were then used to populate the 'voice and influence' and 'social and cultural life' dimensions of the framework.

These benchmarks are referred to as the "benchmarks for comparable places" (see Appendix for more detail).

A small number of questions underpinning the social and cultural life dimension have been created specifically for the framework. These filled gaps where there were no questions from national surveys. In these cases, it is not possible to benchmark the results, so a score has been generated by comparing the results with the four sites the framework has already been tested in.

The 'amenities and infrastructure' dimension of the framework is based on the site survey, which follows the structure and scoring system of the original Building for Life survey.



A RAG (red-amber-green) rating system has been created to provide a simple graphic representation of the results. The RAG Rating system was adopted for two reasons: to present the results in a form that is practical and meaningful for different audiences; and secondly to enable presentation of a range of responses rather than a single social sustainability 'score'. More detail about the approach to scoring the different data sources is in the Appendix.

RAG Ratings were constructed to reflect the results from different data sources, where green indicates a positive result, higher or better than would be expected; amber a satisfactory result in line with comparable areas, and red a negative response, lower than would be expected.

- For questions in the residents' survey that reflect national datasets, RAG Ratings were based on the statistical significance testing of the difference between actual and expected results. Red = statistically significant responses below the benchmark for comparable areas; amber = responses the same as or similar to the benchmark for comparable areas or where the response was not statistically significant; and green = statistically significant responses above the benchmark for comparable areas
- For the residents survey responses to questions created for the framework where no benchmark exists, green = better response than average of the four developments, amber = average response, red = poorer than average response
- The site survey data was RAG rated on a similar basis, using responses expected in a Building for Life survey to similar questions



Applying this approach to Beaufort Park

A survey of 330 residents was commissioned from ComRes using a quota sampling method based on housing tenure. The interviews were carried out in the last two weeks of October 2012. To ensure that the views of residents living in different parts of the development (representing different phases of construction) were interviewed the researchers visited different floors of apartment buildings, different sides of the buildings, and different areas within the development.

The results were then benchmarked against the results of the four national surveys, based on the Office for National Statistics' Output Area Classification (OAC) and Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) classification of the area that Beaufort Park sits within.

The OAC for the output areas that includes Beaufort Park is City Living (2a2), which is representative of a new build developing area as Beaufort Park. It is distinct from the areas around, which are all classified as multi-cultural communities.

The site survey was carried out by Mae Architects LLP.

Contextual interviews with organisations and businesses that use Beaufort Park, individuals who work in the area, or others with good knowledge of the area, were carried out in the last half of October and first half of November 2012. These half-hour to hour-long semi-structured discussions explored perceptions of the development and how it is functioning as a community. The aim was to gain a range of perspectives and build local understanding to help interpret the findings of the survey work. Interviews took place with LB Barnet, the affordable housing providers (Catalyst Housing and Genesis Housing Association), the management company, the local nursery, one of the residents associations, and other organisations based in the commercial space.

Four in-depth case studies to explore how these households had come to live on Beaufort Park were also arranged. The aim was to speak to people who could be described as typical of the range of people living on the development: individuals and families that own their flats, that are in employment, and on average incomes; a family who had bought their home with subsidy (either shared ownership or DMS); and an individual or family housed as homeless in social rented housing.



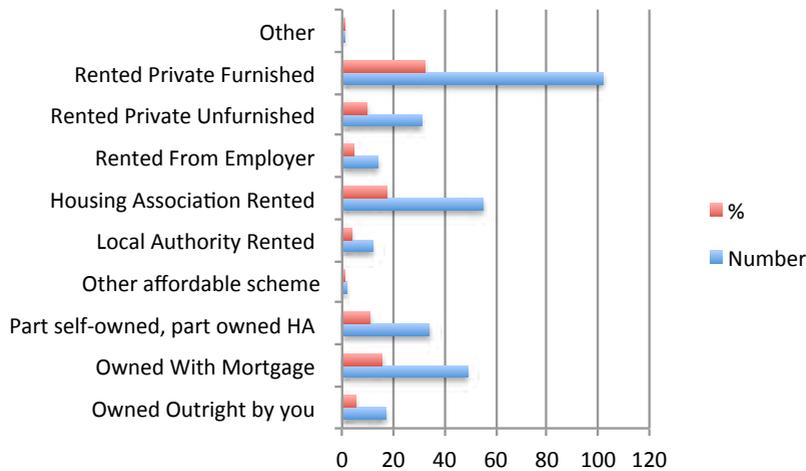
Living at Beaufort Park

Respondents' profile

The resident survey captured the views of 330 residents. 121 of these – 37% – lived in different forms of social housing, 63% lived in privately owned or rented housing. Of these:

- 21% were owner occupiers and 46% private renters
- 21% were affordable home owners, 11% were social renters

Respondents by tenure



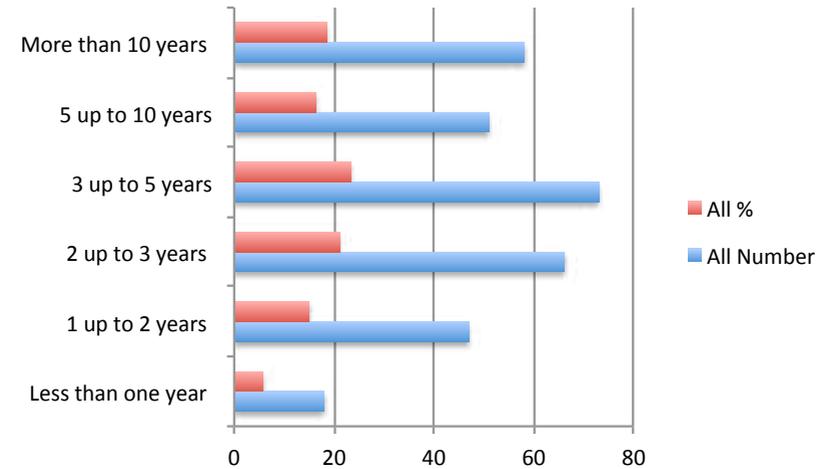
Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Less than six% of households surveyed had lived in the area (defined broadly as Colindale) for less than a year. 15% had lived in the area for one to two years, 44% for two to five years, and 35% over five years. The proportions were very similar for residents in affordable homes and residents in private housing.

Over a third of residents had lived elsewhere in Barnet before moving to Beaufort Park. 11% had come from abroad.

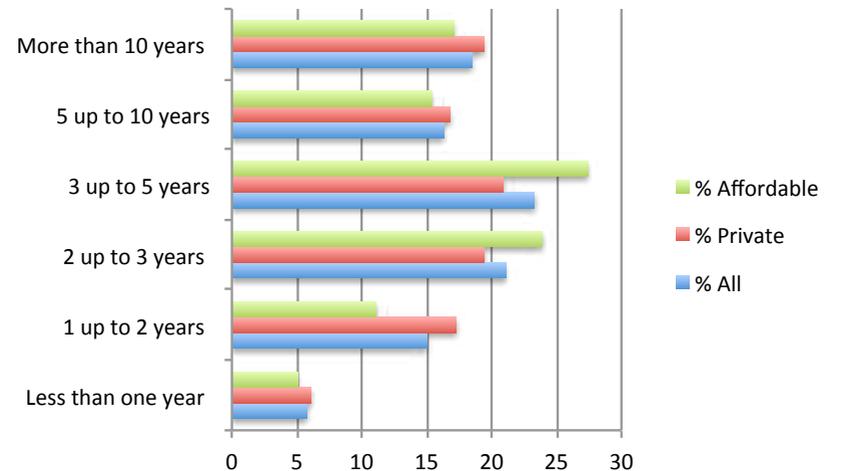
In their former home, before moving to Beaufort Park, 20% of residents had been owner occupiers, two% had been living in affordable home ownership properties, 16% had been living in social rented housing and 58% had been private tenants. Private and affordable housing residents were all most likely to have been living in private rented accommodation before moving to Beaufort park; affordable housing residents were more likely than private residents to have been living in affordable housing before moving.

Length of residence in the Colindale area – all respondents



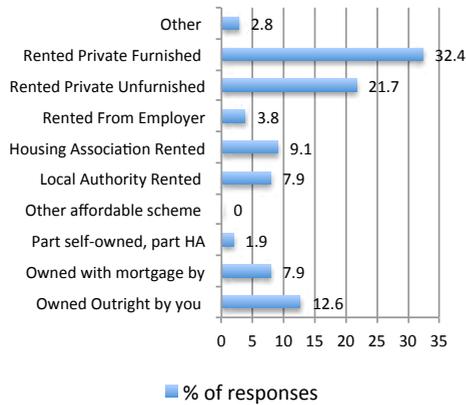
Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Length of residence in the Colindale area by tenure (% of responses)



Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Respondents – tenure of former home



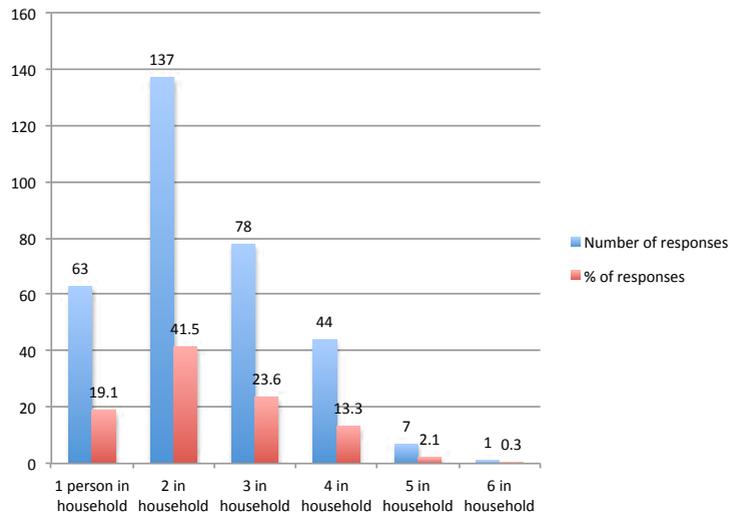
19% of households included one person, 42% two people, 24% three people and 16% over three.

Of those surveyed, 61% had no children, 39% had children. The 330 households surveyed included 97 children under 5, 72 children aged between 5 and 11 and 19 children aged 12 to 15. Most families with children surveyed had one or two children, only 7% had more than two children.

The majority of residents surveyed were in their thirties.

Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Number of people resident in the household

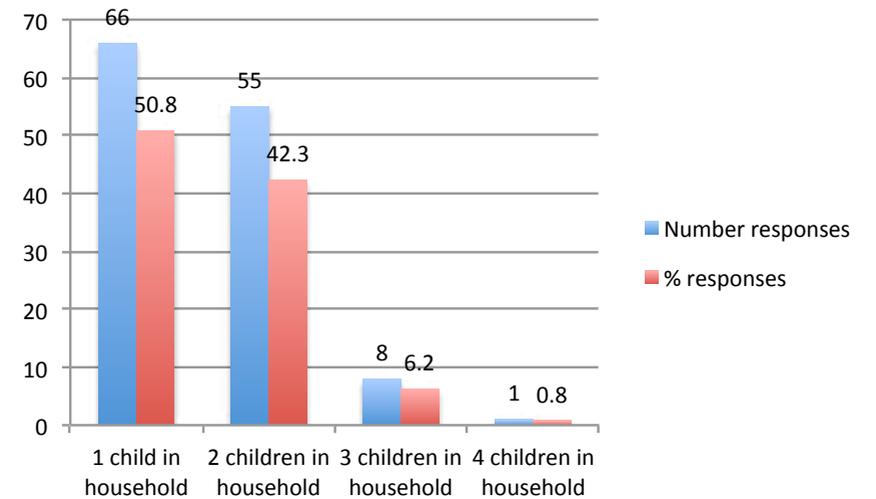


Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

49% of residents surveyed were in paid employment (including two% on maternity leave). The comparable rate for people in paid employment in Barnet overall is 69%. 4.2% work at home and 15% of those surveyed were full time students.

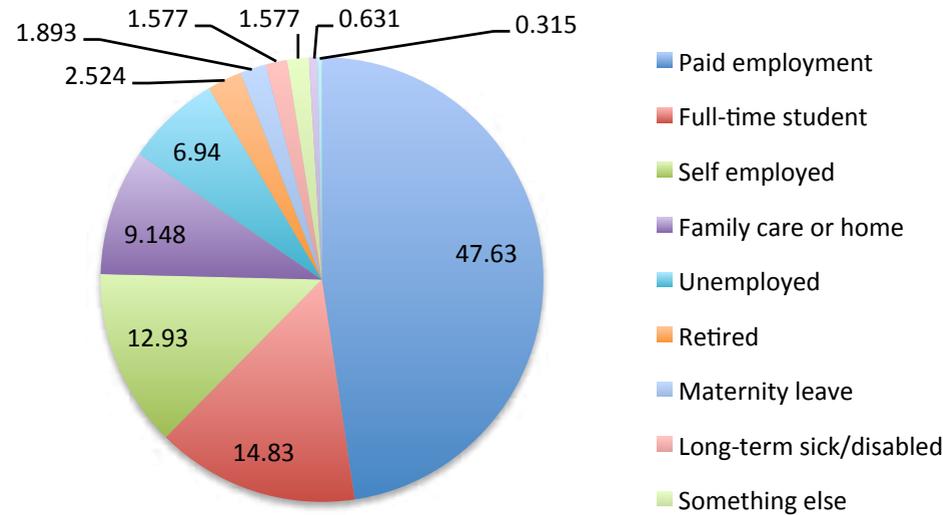
6.9% of the Beaufort Park residents surveyed were unemployed, which is slightly less than the Barnet rate of 7.4%. This is likely to be less than across the Colindale ward. Although accurately comparative figures are not available, Colindale ward is considered by LB Barnet to be an unemployment hotspot, with 14% of the working age population claiming out of work benefits, compared to the Barnet average of 10%.^{xiii}

Number of children in the household



Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Beaufort Park Resident Survey – Employment status

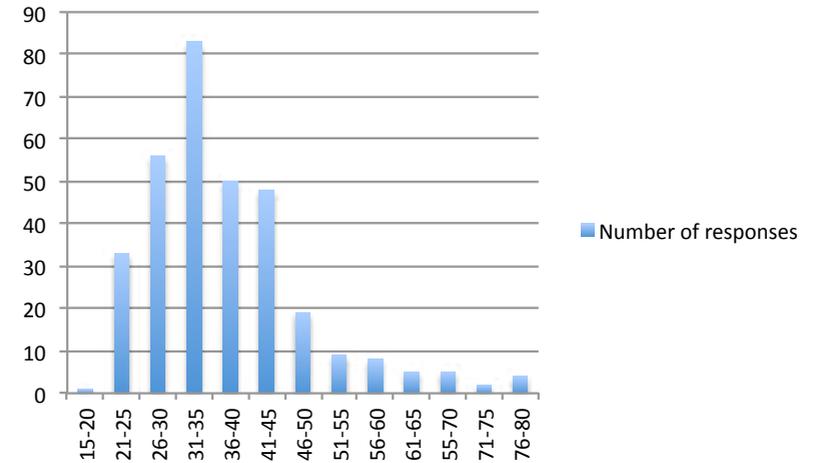


Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Nearly 3% of respondents were retired, lower than the Barnet average of over 4%, and 15% were full time students, higher than the Barnet average of 9%.^{xiv}

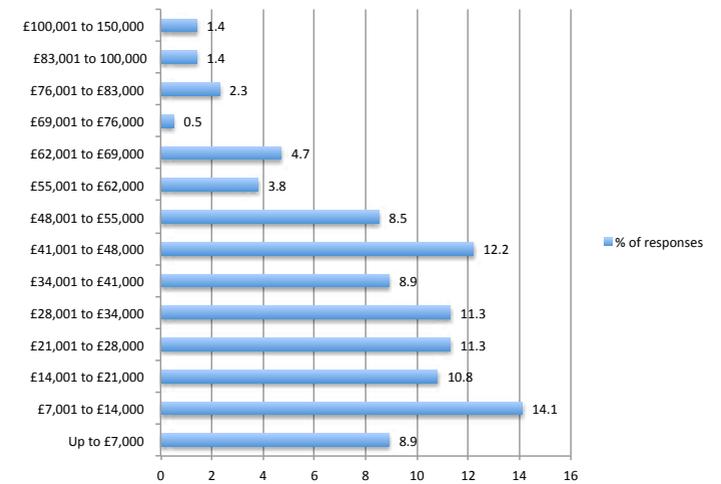
The incomes of households surveyed ranged from under £7,000 a year to over £100,000. The median income for households surveyed was between £28,001 and £34,000 a year. Although this is lower than the median Barnet income, at £36,215, it is comparable to the equivalent figure for the Colindale ward, £29,153.

Respondents by age



Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Beaufort Park Resident Survey – Combined household income

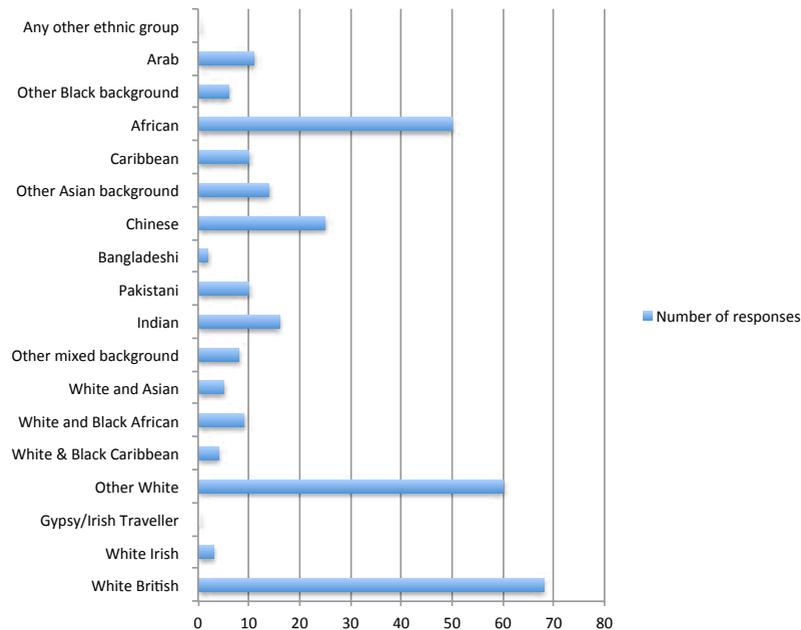


Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012



The households surveyed were ethnically diverse, with 21% considering themselves to be white British and 19% from other white backgrounds (anecdotal evidence suggests a large proportion of these people will be from Eastern Europe). The largest non-white group is Africans (15% of the households surveyed). This differs from Barnet's borough averages; overall 60% of Barnet's population is white British, and black and minority ethnic groups account for only 27% of the borough's population.^{xv}

Beaufort Park Resident Survey – Ethnicity



Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

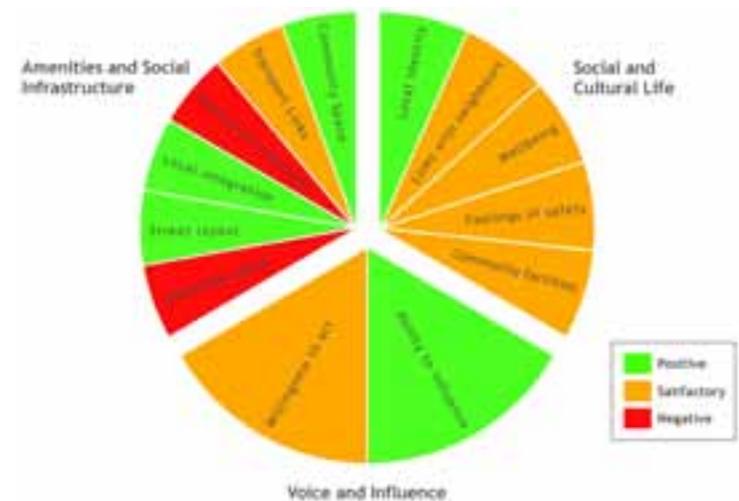
RAG Rating

Overall, Beaufort Park residents agree that the development has a strong local identity. They report higher levels of intending to remain resident in the neighbourhood for a number of years, higher levels of belonging, and strong feelings that where they live contributes to a sense of who they are, when compared to the comparable area benchmarks. The survey shows that residents also report higher levels of feeling they can influence local decision-making, and feeling that this ability is important to them.

Residents responses to questions about their links with neighbours, wellbeing, feelings of safety, and satisfaction with community facilities, are no different to the comparable area benchmark. This means they are no better or no worse than would be expected from an area like Beaufort Park.

Three of the six indicators assessed using the site survey are positive, which means a higher level of provision than the Building for Life standard. These relate to the appropriate and timely provision of community facilities, how well integrated the development is in relation to the wider neighbourhood, and the design and quality of the street layout. The transport links indicator is amber which means transport connections are satisfactory. The distinctive character and adaptable space indicators are red, which means they have been assessed as below industry standards.

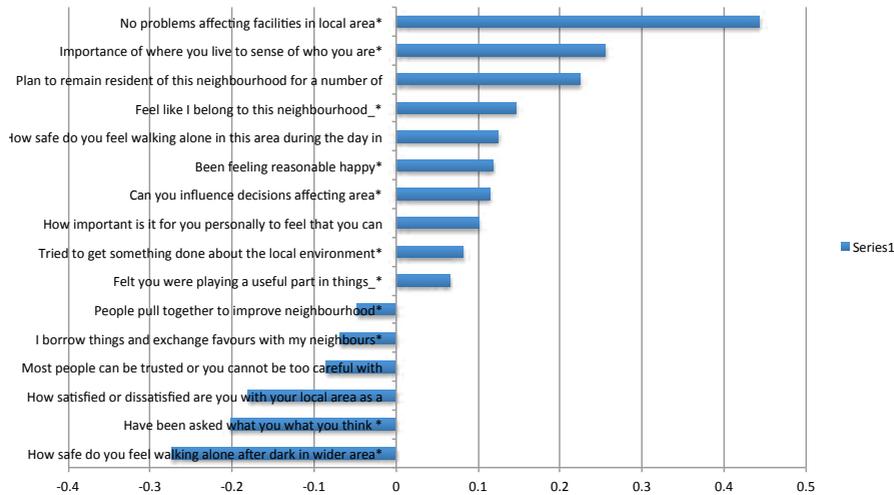
Social sustainability assessment for Beaufort Park



Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

RAG Rating: Social and Cultural Life

Resident survey benchmarked questions



Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012



The indicators in the “Voice and Influence” and the “Social and Cultural Life” dimensions are based on questions in the residents survey, benchmarked against comparable areas, and then tested for statistical significance. The table below shows the results of the statistically significant questions.

Note: Two questions “have you been asked what you think about...?” and “Have you tried to get something done about the local environment” are based on a combination of sub-questions. The full questions are listed in the Appendix.

Local Identity

The local identity indicator combines three questions:

- Plan to remain resident of this neighbourhood for a number of years
- Feel like I belong to this neighbourhood
- Importance of where you live to sense of who you are

This indicator is designed to explore the impact of local identity through questions that investigate individual feelings about the importance of place and belonging. Much research about communities explores the role of local identity in creating a sense of place and making people feel like they belong to an area. This identifies that a number of physical and social factors can contribute to positive local identity including distinctive architecture or landscape, community history, and local social events like street parties.

Residents of Beaufort Park reported higher rates of feeling that where they live is important to their sense of who they are, higher levels of intention to remain resident in the neighbourhood, and higher rates of feeling they belong to the neighbourhood than the benchmark for comparable areas. These responses suggest that a significant proportion of Beaufort Park residents feel comfortable in making an emotional investment in the new community even though it is in its infancy.



Links with neighbours

Social ties at neighbourhood level are acknowledged to make a positive contribution to individual wellbeing and community resilience. Work by CAGE and others has demonstrated that well-designed and high quality public spaces, street layouts that connect and integrate different neighbourhoods, and shared facilities like shops and parks, can encourage informal daily interaction between people of different backgrounds. This kind of daily social interaction between people living and working in a neighbourhood has been demonstrated to build trust and over time, to encourage the type of weak social ties that are often described as ‘latent neighbourliness’ or ‘collective efficacy’.

In the residents survey, responses to questions about seeking advice from neighbours, regularly talking to people in the neighbourhood, the importance of local friendships, and feeling that people from different backgrounds get along well, were the same or similar to the benchmark. This means that the experience of residents at Beaufort Park is in line with what would be expected for people from a similar social group, living in a similar neighbourhood.

This is a positive result for Beaufort Park, as levels of neighbourliness are already similar to those of an established community. More could be done in the future to provide the opportunities for residents who want to socialise to make local connections. Several residents described how a community space for a playgroup or social groups to meet would help to bring people together.

Responses to questions about borrowing and exchanging favours with neighbours and perceptions of whether local people can be trusted were slightly lower than the comparable area benchmark.

A number of in-depth interviews were carried out with people living and working at Beaufort Park in addition to the household survey. In these interviews several people described it as a friendly neighbourhood where people smile and say hello on the street or in local shops, and where residents with young children talk to each other in the parks.

Questions in the links with neighbours indicator:

- If I needed advice I could go to someone in my neighbourhood
- I borrow things and exchange favours with my neighbours
- I regularly stop and talk with people in my neighbourhood
- Friendships in my neighbourhood mean a lot to me
- Most people can be trusted or you cannot be too careful with people
- People from different backgrounds get on well



Wellbeing

ONS is putting considerable focus on the measurement of the nation's wellbeing following a policy direction set out by the Prime Minister after the 2010 election. ONS uses four questions to explore different aspects of wellbeing: 'overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?', 'overall, to what extent do you think the things you do in your life are worthwhile?', 'overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?', and 'overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?'.^{xvi}

When this framework was designed, the commissioner and project team shared anxieties about the prospect of interviewees, working on behalf of a property developer, asking such a personal set of questions. In addition, the national survey data used to benchmark findings pre-dated the ONS's wellbeing reports and did not contain this set of questions. An alternative set of questions has therefore been used, made up of the well-established life satisfaction question^{xvii} and three others that complemented the other residents' survey questions.

Questions in the wellbeing indicator:

- Have you recently felt that you were playing a useful part in things?
- Have you been feeling reasonably happy?
- How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with life overall?
- Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

Overall, residents of Beaufort Park report levels of wellbeing that are the same as the comparable area benchmark. If the four questions in the indicator are taken individually, Beaufort Park residents report higher levels of feeling they were playing a useful part in things and feeling reasonably happy than the benchmark. They report lower levels of satisfaction with the overall area (defined as 15-20 minute walk from home) as a place to live, and the same levels of satisfaction with life overall as the comparable area benchmark.

Feelings of safety

The Beaufort Park survey asked residents how safe they feel walking alone in the area during the day and during the night. In the survey, the area was defined as being 15-20 minutes walk from home. The responses show that people report higher than expected feelings of safety during the day but significantly lower than average feelings of safety after dark. Residents reported perceptions of crime levels in line with the benchmark for comparable areas.

Contextual interviews with people living and working at Beaufort Park suggest that people feel safe and secure overall in the development but have some concerns about safety in the wider area, especially at night. Some residents also described instances of anti-social behaviour and vandalism that are taking place within the development, such as noise from young people, entry phone systems being broken in some affordable housing apartment blocks, and youths hanging around inside blocks, which could be contributing to these concerns.

Others described how police cars from the neighbouring police station are driven through Beaufort Park at night with their sirens on, which also creates a heightened awareness of police activity in the wider area.

Questions in the feelings of safety indicator:

- How safe do you feel walking alone in this area during the day?
- How safe do you feel walking alone in this area after dark?
- Compared to the country as a whole do you think the level of crime in your local area is...



Community facilities

This indicator includes six questions about resident satisfaction with the availability and quality of community facilities in the development, with a particular focus on provision for young children of different ages, and spaces for people to socialise.

These questions were created for this framework because it is important to capture residents' perspectives about the availability and quality of community facilities, alongside the professional opinion of an independent site surveyor. These questions cannot be benchmarked against national datasets, which is a limitation. Instead, the results have been compared to the resident survey responses captured while the assessment framework was being tested on four other Berkeley Group developments.

Beaufort Park residents rated the quality of play, sporting, health and social facilities as satisfactory.

Questions in the community facilities indicator:

- Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the:
 - Quality of facilities for children and young people (0-4 years)?
 - Quality of facilities for children and young people (5-11 years)?
 - Quality of facilities for children and young people (12-15 years)?
 - Quality of health facilities?
 - Quality of sport and leisure facilities?
 - Quality of facilities where you socialise with friends and family?



RAG Rating: **Voice and Influence**

Willingness to act

Beaufort Park residents' responses to the three questions in this indicator show a mixed picture. Residents reported average rates of attempting to get something done about the local environment, in particular, attending a neighbourhood forum or group, or attending a campaign group meeting. Contextual interviews reported that a small group of active and committed residents are supporting the residents' associations, with some successes in campaigning around improvements to the development.

Responses to the question about willingness to work together with others were no different to the comparable area benchmark, while most respondents did not agree that people in the neighbourhood pulled together to make improvements.

The contextual interviews indicate there is already a small group of active residents who are working to address problems and improve the development. Some interviewees felt that once initial 'teething problems' had been addressed then residents would turn to organising more social activities and events at Beaufort Park.

Questions in the willingness to act indicator:

- I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood
- In the last 12 months, have you taken any of the following actions to try to get something done about the quality of your local environment?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree that people in this neighbourhood pull together to improve this neighbourhood?



Ability to influence

The residents survey indicates that Beaufort Park residents feel positive about their ability to influence local decision making. Residents reported higher than average responses to the questions about their ability to influence decisions about the local area and the importance to them of being able to do so. They report average rates of being consulted about local cultural facilities, and slightly lower than average rates of being consulted about local sports and environmental facilities.

If these responses are analysed alongside the questions in the 'willingness to act' indicator they suggest that Beaufort Park includes a group of residents that are active, engaged and potentially willing to do more to improve the community.

Questions in the ability to influence to act indicator:

- In the last 12 months, has any organisation asked you what you think about (*sporting facilities, cultural facilities, environmental facilities*)
- Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting you local area?
- How important is it for you personally to feel that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?



RAG Rating: Amenities and Social Infrastructure

The RAG Rating for the 'amenities and social infrastructure' dimension of the framework is based on an independent site survey, which has been adapted from Building for Life.

Beaufort Park site survey – using Building for Life scoring system

Framework component	Indicator sub-group	Score
Amenities & Infrastructure	Provision of community Space	2.5/3
	Transport links	1/1
	Place with distinctive character	0/1
	Integration with wider neighbourhood	2.5/3
	Accessible and safe street layout	4.5/5
	Physical space in development that is adaptable in the future	0/1

Source: Social Life, Beaufort Park Site Survey, 2012

Community space

This indicator includes three questions about the appropriate and timely provision of community facilities in the development. It captures information about the type, adequacy and timing of provision of facilities, with a particular focus on provision for young children of different ages, and spaces for people to socialise.

Overall, Beaufort Park received a positive rating for the provision of facilities. A variety of retail and commercial spaces have been provided including a small supermarket, café, restaurants, nursery, driving school and commercial business spaces. A community facility has been provided at the management office but is more appropriate for meetings than group activities.

Play space is provided for young children. However, the site survey identified a lack of play provision for 8-18 year olds, and more specifically for 8-12 year olds on the development, although there is provision nearby. St George made a £250,000 contribution to the Green Tops play centre on Grahame Park, which provides after school and holiday childcare. The site survey noted that a lack of appropriate play space might affect how residents feel about being part of the community as their children grow up.

Questions in the community space indicator:

- Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as a school, parks, play areas, shops, pubs or cafés? (What kind? Are the facilities appropriate for the whole community?)
- Have the community facilities been appropriately provided?
- Is public space well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?

Play space provision was also raised by residents in the contextual interviews, in particular, worries that more children will be moving to Beaufort Park and there will be limited scope for adapting play areas in the future.

The site survey identifies good investment in formal landscape features, in particular, a large park in the style of a traditional 'London Square', which appears to be well managed.

Transport Links

Beaufort Park received a satisfactory assessment for its transport links. The development has bus links and is approximately 10 minutes walk from Colindale tube station.

Question in the transport links indicator:

- Does the development have easy access to public transport?



Distinctive Character

Beaufort Park received a less than satisfactory assessment for this indicator. The site survey described the development's eclectic architecture and generic layout as compromising a sense of distinctive character. However, some residents who took part in contextual interviews liked the fact that Beaufort Park was distinct from the neighbouring residential areas.

Question in the distinctive character indicator:

- Does the scheme feel like a place with distinctive character?

Local Integration

Beaufort Park received a positive rating for the local integration indicator, which investigates considerations about social and spatial integration in the development and its connections to the wider area.

The site survey describes how the main retail amenities are located on Beaufort Park's high street, with easy pedestrian and vehicle access, which helps to activate the street. Contextual interviews suggest the high street shops and the nursery are used by residents from Beaufort Park and the neighbouring Grahame Park estate. The main public spaces, such as play areas and the park, are open to all residents. A key fob is needed to gain access so these spaces are not available to people living in the wider area.

Smaller semi public outdoor spaces (podiums) within blocks in some cases encourage social interaction between neighbours from different tenures, however, in some cases housing association tenants do not have access to these areas.

Access to the gym is a source of tension for many residents. Social housing residents are not able to use the gym, which is only accessible by private residents, who pay for the facility out of their service charge.

Questions in the local integration indicator:

- Is there an accommodation mix that reflects the needs and aspirations of the local community?
- Does the design of the site encourage people from different backgrounds and social groups to interact on a day-to-day basis (*eg public spaces that are open to all, amenities situated for everyone to use, amenities accessible to all without entrance barriers?*)
- Does the design of the site enable people from different backgrounds and social groups to share community, shopping, social and leisure facilities like parks and restaurants?

Street layout

Beaufort Park received a positive assessment for the street layout indicator. The site survey describes how the pattern of blocks with clear streets makes it generally easy to find your way around. The perimeter block arrangement with shops at ground floor provides good natural surveillance.

Opportunities to integrate the development with surrounding streets and paths have been taken where these are available for the street layout, although the site survey describes how the overall site context does not often allow for this.

The site survey notes how good quality landscaping has been used to make the streets pedestrian and cycle friendly. In particular, the development is well defined by buildings and the balance of car parking in the street/ undercroft contributes to the street environment. It also reports shared surface treatments in some areas which mean the overall public realm is accessible, and shared surface landscape is provided in some areas, with drop kerbs where there are pavements. The public spaces as well as the courtyards within blocks are wheelchair accessible. Lift access is provided to upper floors from the plinth car parks.

Questions in the street layout indicator:

- Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?
- Does the scheme integrate with existing streets, paths and surrounding development?
- Are the streets pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly?
- Does the design of the local environment adequately support the needs of people with limited physical mobility?
- Are public spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?



Adaptable space

The adaptable space indicator includes an assessment of the flexibility and adaptability of external spaces in the development. Academic and applied research about social sustainability has repeatedly identified the importance of adaptability and flexibility to the long-term success of communities. In practical terms, the idea of adaptability can be interpreted as: public spaces that can be adapted for different uses as the community changes, for example, play spaces that can evolve if the average age of children in a community changes; flexible land use planning that leaves space for residents to influence the design and use of public spaces in a development; scope and flexibility within governance and decision-making structures for residents to shape decisions that affect the area.

Question in the adaptable space indicator:

- Do external spaces and layout allow for adaptation, conversion or extension?

Beaufort Park receives a negative rating for the adaptable space indicator. The site survey described the formal design of public and semi-public spaces as limiting future adaptation.



Residents views of quality of life

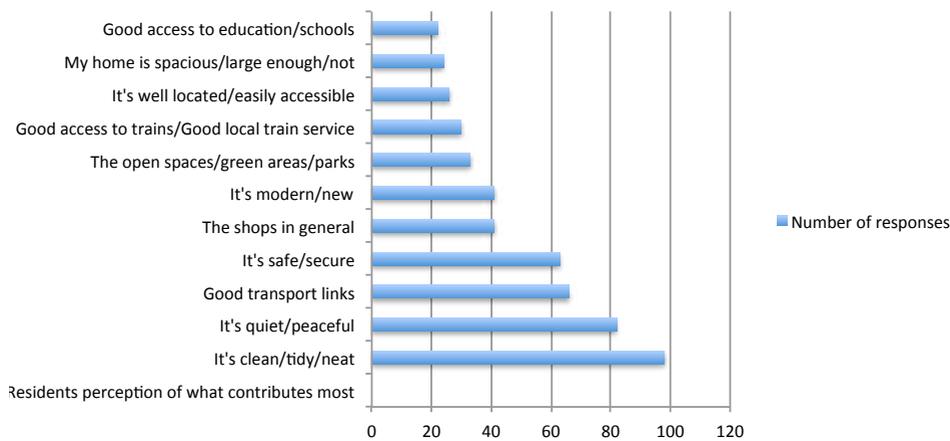
The survey included questions about residents' perceptions of what contributed most to their quality of life on Beaufort Park. They were allowed to give up to five responses.

The most popular responses were the cleanliness, tidiness and peacefulness of the development; safety and security; shopping facilities; the open spaces; and the style and quality of the housing.

Residents were also asked what facilities or amenities they would like to see in the neighbourhood in the future. They were able to give up to five options. The most popular suggestions were: more shops in general; a gym/fitness centre; more local buses; a swimming pool; and a local GP.

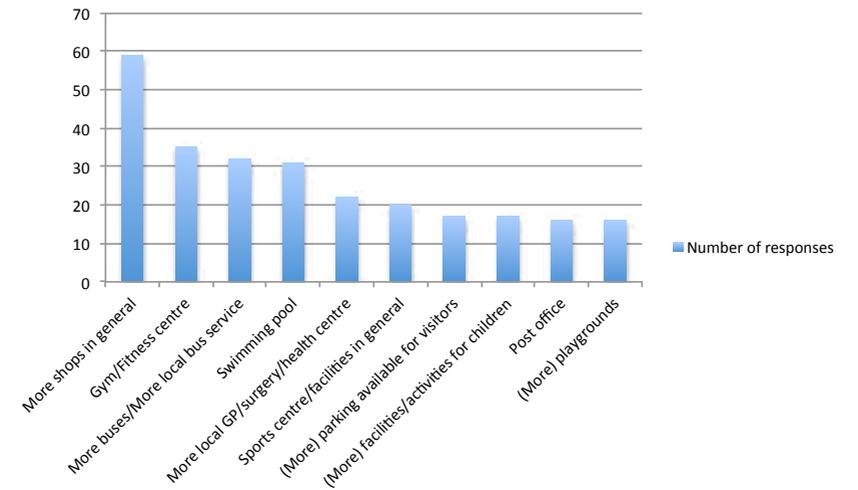


Residents perceptions about what contributes to quality of life at Beaufort Park – top 10 responses



Source: Social Life/ComRes Beaufort Park Residents Survey, 2012

Facilities Beaufort Park residents would like to see in the future – top 10 responses



Source: Social Life/ComRes Beaufort Park Residents Survey, 2012



Analysis by tenure

A series of questions about resident satisfaction, belonging, local networks and social integration were analysed by tenure to investigate whether there are significant differences in experience between private owners and rental tenants and social housing tenants and leaseholders. Overall, there are not significant differences of opinion between private and affordable residents.

Private residents reported marginally higher feelings of belonging (73% agree or strongly agree versus 70%) and to feel that people from different backgrounds get along together (92% agree or strongly agree versus 88%) than residents in affordable housing. They are also more likely to feel satisfied with the area as a place to live than residents in affordable housing (87% versus 82%).

Affordable housing tenants and leaseholders were more likely to agree or strongly agree that friendships in the neighbourhood are important to them than residents in private housing (60% versus 55%).



I plan to remain a resident for a number of years

	Private		Affordable	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	58	29.3	41	35.7
Agree	95	48.0	48	41.7
Neither agree/disagree	26	13.1	19	16.5
Disagree	9	4.5	6	5.2
Strongly disagree	10	5.1	1	0.9
N	198	100.0	115	100.0

Source: Social Life/ComRes Beaufort Park Residents Survey, 2012

How satisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

	Private		Affordable	
	Number	%	Number	%
Very satisfied	73	35.8	28	23.5
Fairly satisfied	105	51.5	69	58.0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17	8.3	15	12.6
Fairly dissatisfied	9	4.4	7	5.9
Very dissatisfied	0	0.0	0	0.0
N	204	100.0	119	100.0

Source: Social Life/ComRes Beaufort Park Residents Survey, 2012

Do people in the neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood?

	Private		Affordable	
	Number	%	Number	%
Definitely agree	30	21.4	15	15.2
Tend to agree	82	58.6	62	62.6
Tend to disagree	17	12.1	13	13.1
Definitely disagree	11	7.9	9	9.1
Don't know	0	0.0	0	0.0
N	140	100.0	99	100.0

Source: Social Life/ComRes Beaufort Park Residents Survey, 2012

The friendships in the area mean a lot to me

	Private		Affordable	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	17	8.9	14	12.1
Agree	89	46.6	56	48.3
Neither agree/disagree	54	28.3	31	26.7
Disagree	31	16.2	15	12.9
Strongly disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0
N	191	100.0	116	100.0

Source: Social Life/ComRes Beaufort Park Residents Survey, 2012

I would be willing to work together with others to improve the neighbourhood

	Private		Affordable	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	41	21.0	30	26.1
Agree	107	54.9	58	50.4
Neither agree/disagree	35	17.9	22	19.1
Disagree	12	6.2	5	4.3
Strongly disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0
N	195	100.0	115	100.0

Source: Social Life/ComRes Beaufort Park Residents Survey, 2012

I feel like I belong

	Private		Affordable	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	39	19.4	25	21.4
Agree	108	53.7	57	48.7
Neither agree/disagree	40	19.9	26	22.2
Dissagree	14	7.0	9	7.7
Strongly disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0
N	201	100.0	117	100.0

Source: Social Life/ComRes Beaufort Park Residents Survey, 2012

Do you agree that this is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well

	Private		Affordable	
	Number	%	Number	%
Definitely agree	57	32.0	32	28.1
Tend to agree	106	59.6	68	59.6
Tend to disagree	10	5.6	13	11.4
Definitely disagree	5	2.8	1	0.9
N	178	100.0	114	100.0

Source: Social Life/ComRes Beaufort Park Residents Survey, 2012



Contextual interviews

Contextual interviews were carried out with representatives from LB Barnet, Catalyst Housing, the management company Consort, Residents Associations, as well as a number of businesses and organisations that occupy the commercial property. Following is a summary of the main themes emerging from these interviews.

Social groups

The perception of all stakeholders interviewed is that residents are from a wide social mix in terms of nationality, ethnicity, and social class. People described friendly relationships between residents, “people smile at you in Tesco even though you don’t know them”, and gave examples of people making friends with others with shared interests in the park. The nursery gave the example of the number of families who use their facilities because they were recommended by other residents.

Several people interviewed raised issues about the differential provision for private residents (both tenants and owner occupiers) and affordable housing residents (both social rented tenants and subsidised home owners). Examples given included limitations on access to the podium gardens in the middle of blocks for some housing association tenants and leaseholders, restriction of access for all affordable housing residents to the gym and perceptions that the public realm is better maintained in the areas that the private residents use.



There are three separate Residents Associations: for the two housing associations, and one for the private residents, and the rationale for this was queried by several respondents. Two of the Residents Associations spoke of their efforts to petition the council for a crossing on Aerodrome Rd, without any effective cooperation between the associations.

There was a feeling among interviewees that development functions harmoniously without tensions between different groups. However, several people commented that the levels of diversity (including students, short term tenants, as well as longer term tenants and residents) mean that residents do not pull together as a community. People also described how a lot of potential tensions between neighbours, including disputes about noise, are brokered by the management company.

Local identity

Residents come to live in Beaufort Park for a number of reasons: some are attracted by the idea of a quiet area, others for convenience or for the social life, for some it is the single offer of accommodation they can expect from the local authority. These expectations shape how people perceive the identity of the place.

Those who moved expecting a peaceful environment voiced some concerns about the number of children and the amount of traffic; there was a frequently voiced concern about facilities for children, especially as the development grows. Those who came for “the buzz”, the social and shopping facilities, wanted more of these. The need to pay for parking was cited as a disincentive for people to visit Beaufort Park to socialise. At the moment, in its partially completed state, the development did not clearly deliver against the expectations of any of these groups.

There was a general appreciation of how the existence of the development, and how it had been marketed, has changed the perceptions of the wider Colindale areas. However, there were some criticisms of the overall design and distinctiveness of the development.

Shared space and activities

The perception that there are not enough facilities for children, especially older children, was often voiced, and were some perceptions of anti social behaviour by older children. There was nervousness about the impact of more families moving into the area, which also spread to concern about pressure on GPs and other local facilities, such as schools, dentists, post offices and shops generally.

The lack of shared spaces and reasons to congregate was mentioned. The only accessible space on the development for residents’ activities are rooms in the management office which can be hired by any resident, at a cost of around £15 an hour. However this space is bland and more appropriate for meetings. Instead of using this space, one Residents Association had used a venue in Grahame Park for their Christmas party in 2011.

Restrictions on access to the gym are an issue for affordable housing residents who would like to use the facilities and would be happy to pay. Conversely, some private residents are resentful of having to pay for the gym and claim they were not told this would be a cost on service charge when they move in.

The coffee shop and one of the pubs well used. The Chinese restaurant is said to attract people from far away. Whilst some liked the park, others reported it was poorly used, and the wish for a wider range of shops was mentioned, the local supermarket was seen to be crowded and expensive.

Although most people interviewed said the development feels safe, some living in affordable housing voiced specific concerns about vandalism, including the entry phones on the blocks and the parks and playgrounds.

There were queries from both affordable and private residents about what service charges are used for – and whether they represented value for money.

Connections with the wider neighbourhood

There is a common perception that the development is very different from the surrounding area. The Grahame Park estate was cited as being very separate from Beaufort Park. There was a general perception that Grahame Park residents did not come onto the area, and some people believed that young people from Grahame Park were responsible for vandalism. However, specific examples were also given of people from Grahame Park using the Beaufort Park nursery, pubs and shops.

Additional survey questions

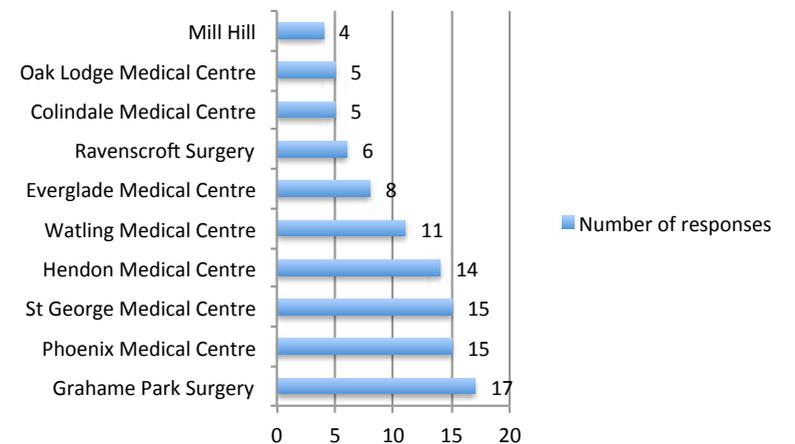


Beaufort Park residents were also asked a series of questions about how they make use of facilities in the wider neighbourhood.

Local health facilities

Almost 70% of Beaufort Park residents are registered with a local GP. The most commonly used surgeries were the Grahame Park Surgery, the Phoenix Medical Centre, St George's Medical Centre and the Hendon Medical Centre.

Most commonly used GP surgeries for Beaufort Park residents



Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

All GP surgeries used by Beaufort Park residents

Grahame Park Surgery	17	Colindale Plain	2	Golden Square	1
Phoenix Medical Centre	15	Colindale Surgery	2	Green Park	1
St George Medical Centre	15	Milway Surgery	2	Grovemead Medical Centre	1
Hendon Medical Centre	14	Oakfield	2	Hillview Clinic	1
Watling Medical Centre	11	Watford Health Clinic	2	Holborn	1
Everglade Medical Centre	8	Bacon Lane Surgery	1	King George Medical Centre	1
Ravenscroft Surgery	6	Boulevard Park	1	King's Edge Medical Centre	1
Colindale Medical Centre	5	Colindale Hospital	1	Middlesex Hospital	1
Oak Lodge Medical Centre	5	Colindeep Lane	1	Middlesex Medical Centre	1
Mill Hill	4	Cricklewood	1	Stanmore Medical Centre	1
Burnt Oak	3	Edgware HR Centre	1	Stoke Newington	1
Golders Green Clinic	3	Elbowbrook Lane Clinic	1	Jai Medical Centre	0
Middlesex University	3	Ellis Surgery	1	Queensbury	0
Watford Way	3	Finchley	1	Richmond	0
Boyne Medical Centre	2	Fortune's Green Centre	1		

Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

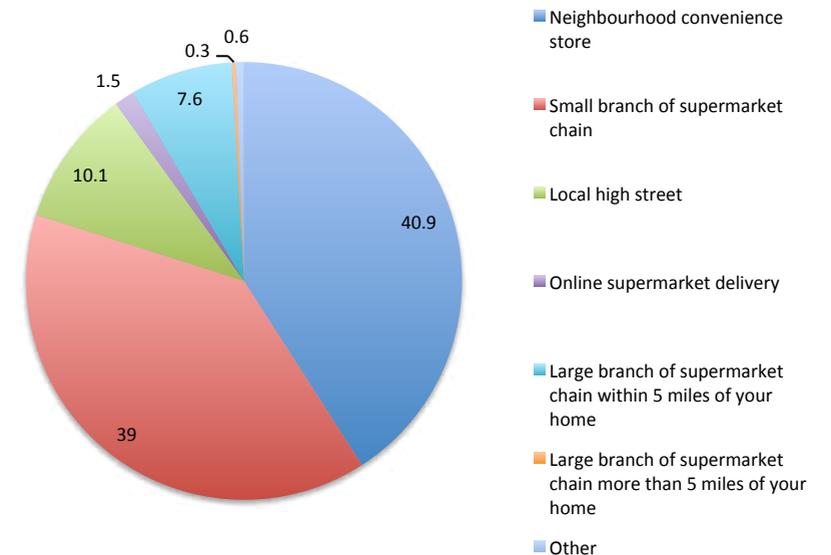


Shopping habits

Residents were asked three questions about their shopping patterns for convenience, groceries and recreation. The small Tesco in Beaufort Park, which was not specifically named in the survey, is clearly an important facility for local residents: 27% of residents do their regular household shopping at the “neighbourhood convenience store” or “a small branch of a supermarket chain”, both these answers are likely in practice to be the local Tesco. 80% of residents do their convenience shopping, buying items they need in a hurry, from these sources.

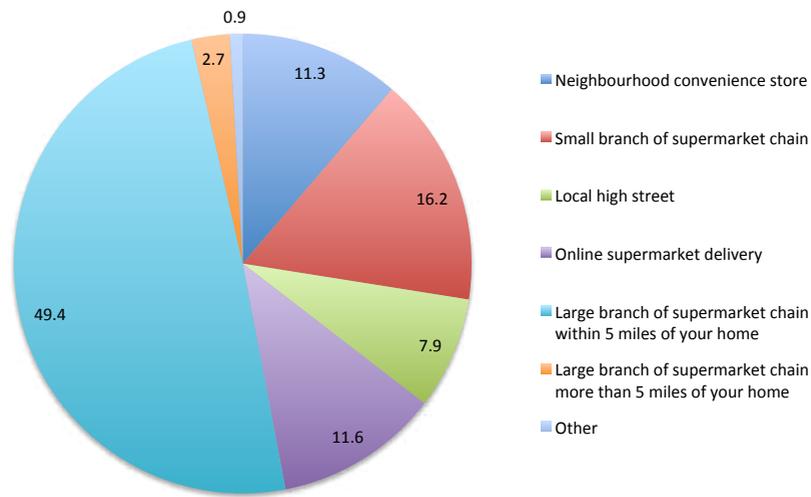


Convenience shopping patterns (% of responses)



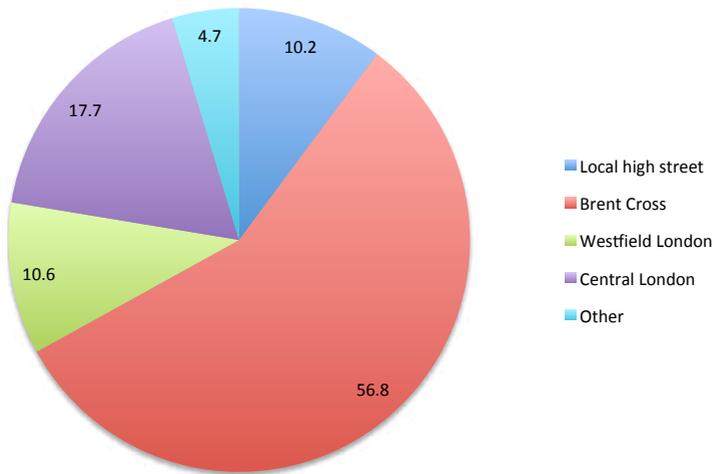
Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Household / grocery shopping patterns (% of responses)



Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Leisure / recreational shopping patterns (% of responses)



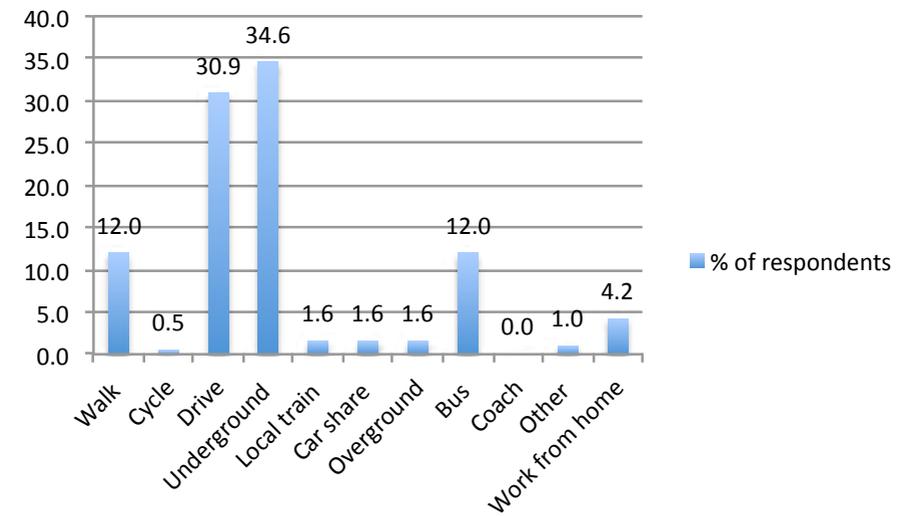
Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012

Travelling to work

Of the residents surveyed the average journey time to work was 34 minutes. For Barnet as a whole, the average travel to work time is 35 minutes.^{xviii}

12% of respondents had a journey time to work of less than 10 minutes, the same proportion travelled for over an hour to get to work. 4.2% of respondents work at home, which is higher than the national average of 3.5%.^{xix} The majority of residents drive or take the underground to work.

How residents travel to work



Source: Social Life / ComRes Beaufort Park Resident Survey, 2012



Case studies

Anton and Julia: First time buyers at Beaufort Park

Anton and Julia moved to Beaufort Park three years ago when their daughter was born. They currently rent an apartment from a private landlord and are in the process of buying their first home, an apartment at Beaufort Park, through the Discount Market Sale scheme.

Anton and Julia moved from Romania to the UK 15 years ago, and have embraced life in Britain. They now have full British citizenship and describe London as their home. Anton works in North London and Julia stays at home to care for their daughter.

They lived in a rented studio flat in South London before moving to Colindale. The main reason for moving was to be closer to Anton's place of work because he works long hours. They also wanted to have more space for their daughter.

The couple did a fair bit of research about Barnet as an area before moving. They like the overall area because it was quieter and more family friendly than their previous home in South London. They chose to move to Beaufort Park because of the high quality and modern feel of the apartments. They feel the space and price represent good value and are delighted with the design and comfort. Anton in particular, loves the design of the apartments.

They both say: *"We like the luxury of it... the flats look like a hotel... and they are so warm".*

Julia admits she would like a house with a garden but is looking forward to being able to use the internal garden in the apartment block they are moving to.

Anton and Julia felt it was easy to settle in the neighbourhood. They are an outgoing couple and describe themselves as self sufficient and friendly. However, Julia said it has not been easy to meet people even though there are lots of families with young children. She feels the play areas don't have enough to offer the many small children – *"they need more to do – slides, climbing frames"* - and would like a community centre or some kind of space for informal social gatherings.

Julia says: *"I am friendly but it's not easy to get to know other people... we really need a playgroup for the mums and young kids to get together. A community centre would really help".*

Anton made a number of enquiries about St George as a developer, before deciding to buy an apartment at Beaufort Park. They are planning to live at Beaufort Park for a number of years, but also see their new home as an investment. They describe how the Discount Market Sale scheme has helped them a lot with buying their first home. Anton says: *"We are banking on a price rise over the next 6 years".*

They describe Beaufort Park as a *"mixed and cosmopolitan"* neighbourhood but not really a community yet. Anton said: *"I don't think it is built as a place for people to live long-term. There are lots of rich buyers who don't live here."* However, he feels strongly that it is residents who should come together to improve things: *"we make the development, don't we".*

Julia describes Beaufort Park as feeling very safe and secure. They both feel it is very distinct and different from the surrounding neighbourhoods but they do use facilities in other parts of the wider area, including a nursery and GP.

Above all, Julia feels the neighbourhood needs another supermarket and a pharmacy. Neither of them drive so they need to take a bus to the nearest pharmacy, which is two miles away. Julia describes the Tesco supermarket at Beaufort Park as small, crowded and offering only a limited selection of products. She would like to see another supermarket as the resident population grows.



Tatiana: Living in a housing association flat at Beaufort Park

Tatiana and her daughter, Daniella, moved to a two-bedroom flat at Beaufort Park in 2011. She is a single parent who works part-time and her mother helps with childcare. Originally from Lithuania, Tatiana has lived in the UK for a number of years. Tatiana and Daniella were homeless and staying in temporary accommodation before moving to Beaufort Park. Since moving out of temporary accommodation she has been promoted at work, and is planning on going to college.

Tatiana describes how she was delighted and excited to be offered a flat at Beaufort Park: *“I was in seventh heaven!”*

Overall, she is happy at Beaufort Park but she is very conscious of the differences between the private and the affordable housing. In some ways she feels like a second-class citizen because her flat is noticeably different from the homes of her friends who own their own flats at Beaufort Park. She appreciates that developers must provide a certain number of flats for housing association tenants, but feels they shouldn't be of a much lower standard. She describes a number of problems including lack of storage and a broken door that are making her flat very difficult to keep warm. Tatiana would like repairs to be done more quickly.

Before moving, Tatiana knew nothing about Colindale. She likes the area now, describing it as quiet, safe and friendly. She says: *“People smile even if you don't know them”.*

She is sociable and active in the community and would like to see others also getting involved in addressing problems but also organising social activities. Although the residents associations have had some successes she doesn't feel Beaufort Park is a community yet. She says:

“A community would be where you invite 200 people to a meeting and 100 come.”

Tatiana would like to see more facilities for older children, and worries about the number of children there will be in the area when Beaufort Park is complete.

Gloria: owner occupier for a number of years

Gloria moved to Beaufort Park at the very beginning of development. She owns a studio flat where she lives alone. She is originally from South America and moved to London 15 years ago to study. She works in central London and she is very happy with her life in the UK and is not thinking of moving back to her country of origin.

Before moving to the area, Gloria lived in a rented apartment in North London. She did detailed research about properties all over London before deciding to buy in Beaufort Park after a friend's recommendation. Gloria was very careful about buying her home and waited for a year to find the flat that best suited her needs and taste. She preferred Beaufort Park because it offered what she perceived describes as 'the whole package':

“The place is nice and affordable, new and modern, near public transportation”.

Gloria did not find moving to Beaufort Park straightforward. She encountered various difficulties because the construction was not completed yet. For the first two years she says 'it was kind of hard' for her get help from the management company and says even nowadays, there are sometimes delays.

She describes her feelings of safety in the neighbourhood as *“7 out of 10”*. She uses Colindale tube station on a daily basis, because she does not drive.

She feels comfortable walking between the development and the station because *“there are always people in the street”*.

However, she feels that extra effort is needed in order to make sure the entrance to her block is locked and she thinks it would be easy for strangers to find their way into the neighbourhood. Giving the example of a damaged roof, she voices concerns about the management company's attitude to safety.



Gloria thinks there is not a feeling of a community within Beaufort Park residents. She reports that a *“mix of people”* live in the development, and thinks most of them are renting. She finds that the turnover of rental tenants does not enhance the feeling of community. She remembers some events arranged by the pub, such as poker nights or cooking lessons, however she guesses they are not going on anymore. She feels her neighbours are not very interested in socialising locally.

Gloria recognises that Beaufort Park has helped to regenerate the wider area and that *“the place is nice”*. However, she also feels that more attention to what residents need and how they feel – what she describes as *“a more human approach”* – would have created a better place.

Gloria enjoys the facilities for residents at Beaufort Park. She uses the gym and the park regularly, and visits the restaurants and the pub often. These activities have given her the chance to meet people from the neighbourhood.

She mentions that she has *“met a lady at the gym and more people in the park”*. Recently some of her friends have moved to a flat in her building on Gloria’s recommendation. Gloria visits other places in London to meet her friends to have a change of scene.

Charles and April: Owner occupiers

Charles and April moved to Beaufort Park from elsewhere in Barnet. They wanted a secure and quiet place to live and a flat that was easier for them to manage. Overall they are pleased to have bought into the development. They describe their flat as *“fantastic”* and think Beaufort Park feels safe and secure.

Charles and April want to live at Beaufort Park long term but they do have some worries about how the development is managed.

Charles says: *“We are worried that if niggling problems aren’t sorted out then the place will go downhill.”* Their concerns include the number of buy-to-let tenants and students who Charles says: *“treat Beaufort Park as an extension of the student residences”*; and the increasing number of flats that are being built at every new stage of the development: *“... the latest block has increased from 16 to 20 storeys with no residents consultation.”*

Their other worry is the service charge, which they say increases every year with very little explanation or information about why. Charles and April give the example of the new spa and how they are happy about it but other leaseholders can’t afford the extra service charges being proposed.

They are active in the community and have been involved with the Residents Associations. Charles doesn’t see the need to have three separate Residents Associations and thinks they would be able to get more done if there were only one, or if they worked together. He thinks Aerodrome Road is busy and needs a pedestrian crossing.

Charles describes how the general layout of Beaufort Park is good for the wider community, but less friendly to residents because traffic cuts through the development making it busy and noisy. They find the supermarket delivery trucks very noisy, especially at the weekend.

Charles says: *“There is no reason to feel unsafe here but sometimes I do feel uneasy, late at night when there are kids hovering around outside the flats and getting into the car parks ... there has been some vandalism and stolen bikes.”*

Charles says it is irritating that visitors have to pay to park and would really like there to be some kind of voucher scheme for guests. He thinks the parking situation is having a negative effect on some of the local businesses in particular, the restaurants. *“Why pay to park when you could go to Mill Hill for good food and park for nothing?”*

Charles also thinks residents should be consulted more and he describes how a new play area was created without talking to residents about where it should go. He says: *“Now there are problems with noise coming from the play area ... young kids shouting, older kids climbing over railings and hanging out at night”*.

Charles and April don’t feel that Beaufort Park is a very cohesive community yet. They describe how it feels like there are many different groups of people living in the development: *“students, short-term tenants, owners who live abroad...”* but in spite of this they feel that people at Beaufort Park get along. Charles says: *“There is no racial tension or different groups acting only on their own issues.”* They feel that the high number of people renting their homes means there is less interest from residents in building a community.

Overall, Charles and April think Beaufort Park would benefit from a community space and they would like to see more shops and a café.

Conclusions

Overall, residents at Beaufort Park seem satisfied with the development, which is seen as safe, quiet and offering good facilities for residents. The research has identified that Beaufort Park residents feel a stronger sense of belonging and report a stronger intention to remain living in the neighbourhood when compared to the comparable area benchmark.

The project has also identified a number of concerns and problems experienced by residents, specifically, dissatisfaction with the parking scheme; demand for a multi-purpose community room or centre; frustrations about noise and anti-social behaviour.

However, the research has revealed a willingness among the residents associations and individual residents to work with St George and Consort Property Management to address these problems. Although many people feel Beaufort Park *“isn't a community yet”* the research suggests there is already a group of residents who are actively organising to improve things and once initial teething troubles have been resolved will focus their attention on the social life and social needs of the community.



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