

Open City Project Briefing

Residential churn and neighbourliness in Hilgrove

About the *Life on Hilgrove: Better Living Together Survey*

This briefing is based on the *Life on Hilgrove: Better Living Together Survey* of 111 Hilgrove residents (representing c. 30% households on the estate) that took place between August and October 2021. The survey investigates people's lived experiences on the Hilgrove Estate, focusing on residential churn and how that intersects with practices of neighbourliness, welcoming and participation both on the estate and beyond.

The survey forms part of the larger Open City project which explores how the city accommodates new forms of urban life through the social configuration of its spaces and places. The project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (grant reference ES/T009454/1), and organised by a team of researchers from the Universities of Warwick, Oxford, West London, and the Open University.

Key findings

Churning Hilgrove

We found moderate levels of residential churn in Hilgrove, where around 20% of residents have moved house in the past year and more than 30% have done so in the past three years. Of those who have moved home in the past 12 months, more than one quarter moved to Hilgrove from elsewhere in Camden, highlighting the importance of micro-geographies of churn on sub-borough levels.

Subgroup analysis reveals the uneven distribution of residential churn in Hilgrove. Younger, private tenants living in shared accommodation are more likely to churn, whereas older social tenants or working age homeowners are less likely to churn (Figure 1).

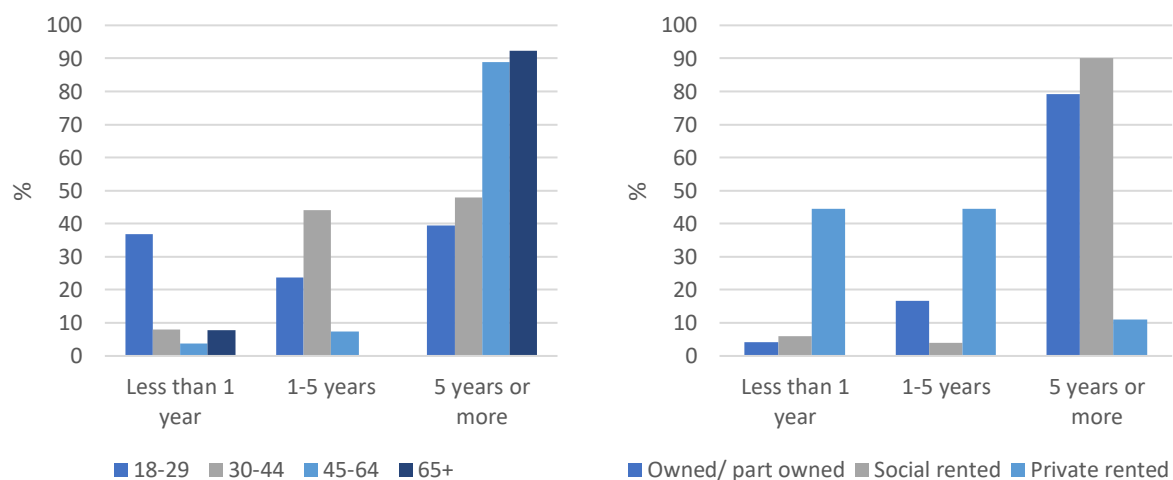


Figure 1 Length of residence by broad age group (left) and tenure status (right)

In comparison, we observed higher levels of perceived residential churn – more than 60% of respondents assumed that at least a few of their neighbours have changed during the past three years. Further analysis suggests that a mismatch exists between residential moves and perceived churn; rapid churning groups are *not* those who experience/perceive higher levels of neighbourhood demographic change. Instead, higher perceptions of churn are more likely to be found among unemployed, securely housed residents who live alone, and lower perceptions of churn are more likely to be among younger, employed, less securely housed residents who live with family members or housemates (Figure 2).

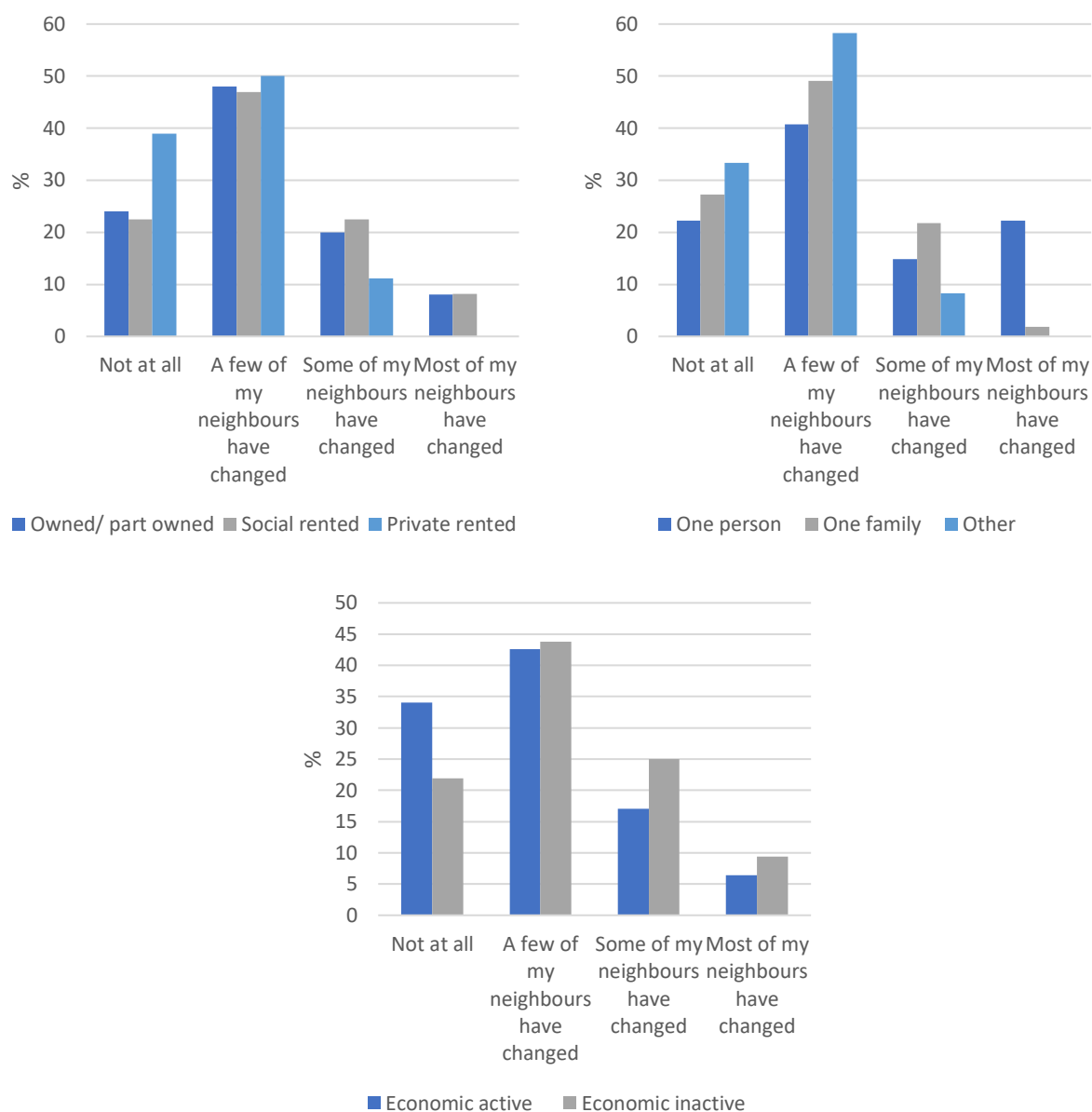


Figure 2 Rates of perceived churn by tenure status (top left), household composition (top right), and employment status (bottom)

Everyday neighbourly practices

The survey shows that people generally like living on the Hilgrove estate. Most respondents used positive words to describe their experiences on the estate, such as 'good', 'nice', 'quiet', 'friendly' and 'peaceful'. More than 70% said the estate has a good reputation and more than 60% agreed that people in this neighbourhood get on well together.

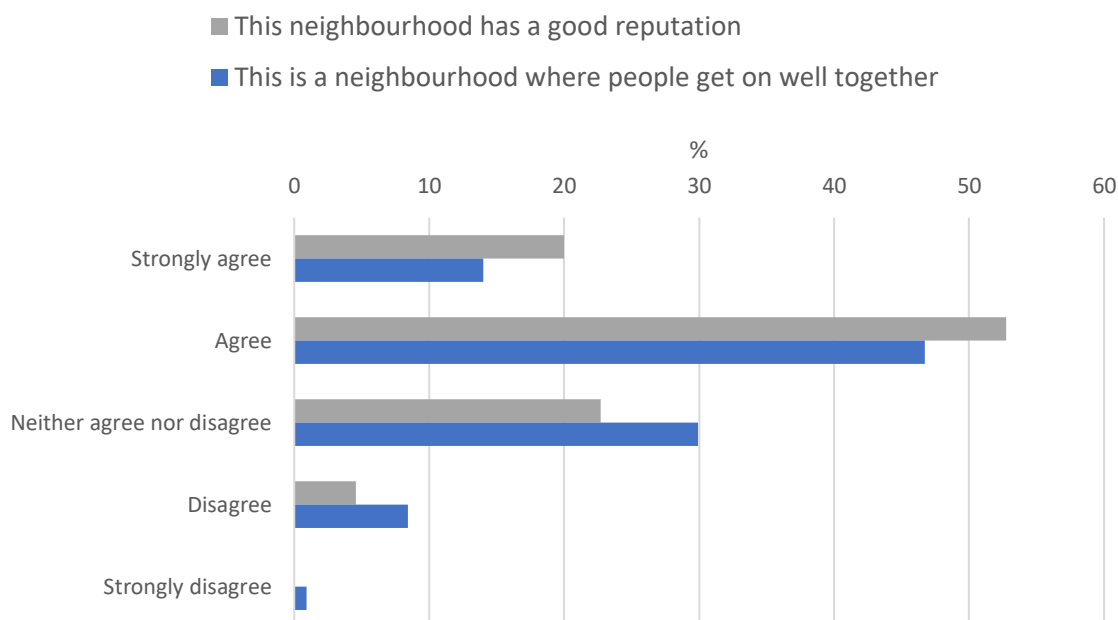


Figure 3 Answers to questions relating to neighbourhood perception

Respondents cross paths with neighbours quite frequently – more than 75% did so at least once a week. When passing their neighbours, more than 70% of our sample said they will sometimes stop for a chat. The respondents also reported moderate to high levels of mutual aid in Hilgrove (76.58%), including a considerable amount of small-scale neighbourly practices such as taking in parcels for neighbours and sweeping walkways.

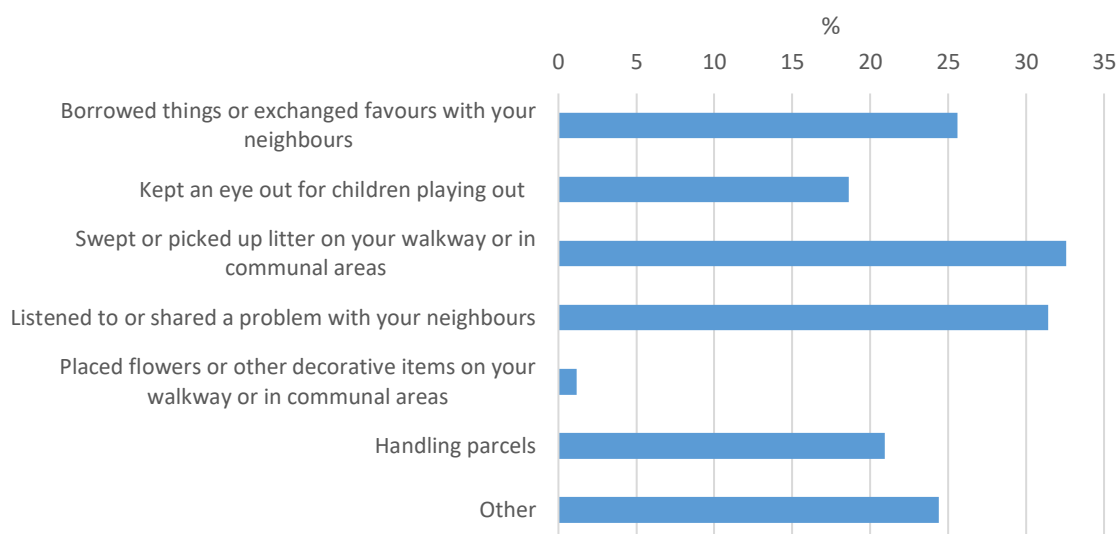


Figure 4 Approaches of neighbourhood help

Further analysis suggests that relatively positive perceptions/experience of the area are more likely to be reported by less mobile groups, especially those who perceive lower levels of churn). On the contrary, relatively negative perceptions of the neighbourhood are found among more mobile residents, especially those who perceive higher levels of churn.

Policy implications

The *Life on Hilgrove* survey provides the most up-to-date information about life on Hilgrove and help local policymakers to gain a better understanding of residents' everyday neighbourhood experiences during the pandemic. This survey also provides valuable information on highly mobile population and insecure tenancies, and how that may affect individual's experience on the estate and quality of life. The survey findings would help policymakers make better decisions in spatial planning, service provision and budget estimates as well as facilitate democratic participation and community engagement.