

# Tulse Hill Voices: A Listening Campaign for Smaller Estates

High Trees Community Action

Introduction ..... 1

Tulse Hill Voices Listening Campaign.....2

Summary Findings.....2

Neighbourhood by Neighbourhood..... 7

Our Approach & Next Steps..... 17

## Introduction

We are community organisers from High Trees Community Development Trust’s, Community Action team. During 2023, the team were out and about listening to residents living in the smaller pockets of social housing across Tulse Hill in areas we haven’t worked in previously. This listening report shares the insights of residents living in these differing pockets of housing, highlighting the specific challenges in each area and the things that they want to see change.

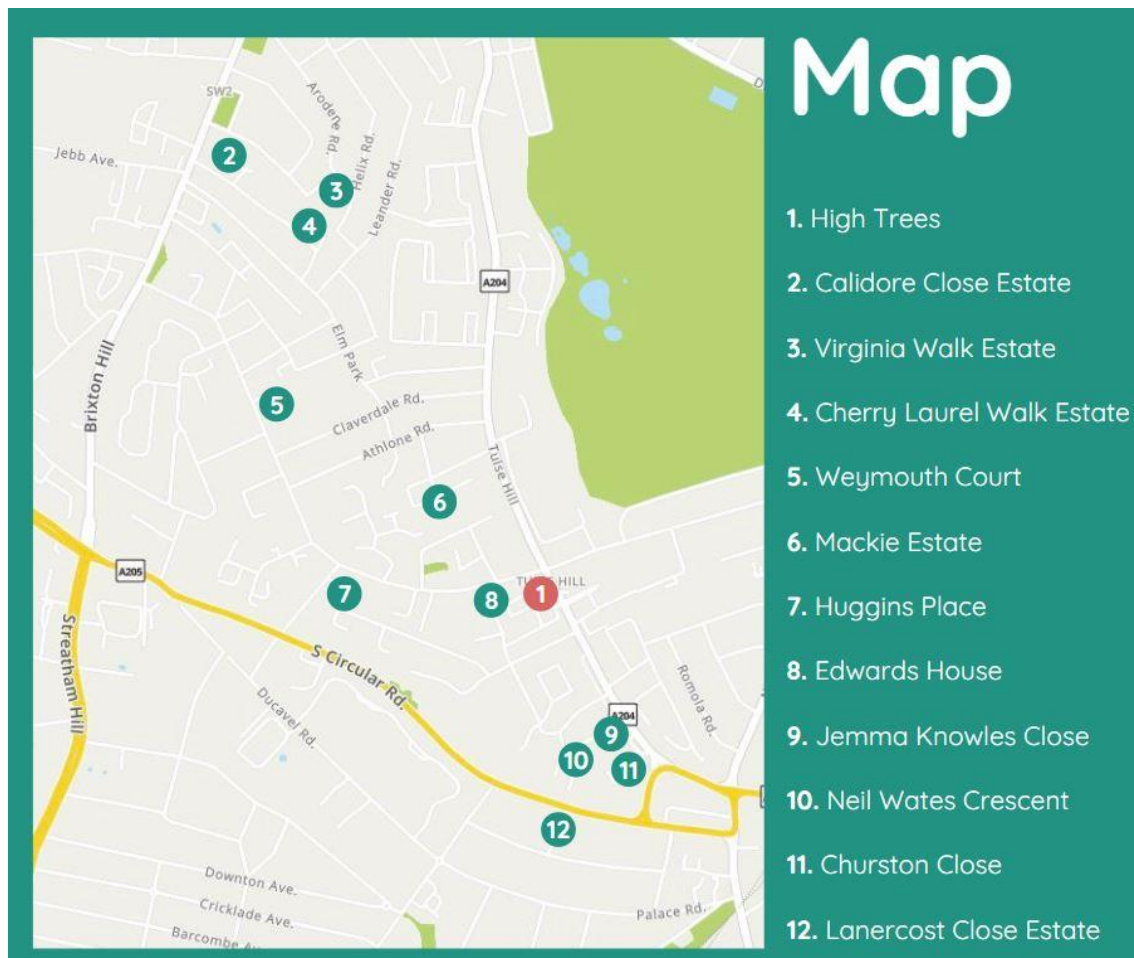


Figure 1 - Map of neighbourhoods covered

## High Trees

High Trees was set up 26 years ago, through collective community action to save the old library based in Tulse Hill, turning it into a Community Development Trust. Today, High Trees provides a range of services to connect people and communities to strengthen skills and build stronger voices.

We do this through 5 areas of support which provide services in: Education & Training, Employment & Careers, Children, Young People & Family Services, Research and Development and Community Action. We are the Community Action team.

**Link:** <https://www.high-trees.org/>

For more information about how we approach Community Organising please see the end of this report.

## Tulse Hill Voices

The Tulse Hill Voices listening campaign has focused on small social housing estates across the area that are often overlooked due to being surrounded by much larger estates and street properties. The aim of our listening report is to bring together the views of seldom-heard residents and amplify their voices to help them to push for change.

We compiled this report after completing three rounds of door-knocking in each area involved in the campaign to summarise what we've heard so far. We have now knocked on all 333 doors across the different areas at various times of the day to ensure comprehensive coverage. Through these sessions, we have listened to 131 individuals residing in these estates.

**Disclaimer:** This summary reflects the outcomes of our conversations, recognising that it may not capture the experiences of every resident. The tables and charts in this report present the frequency with which themes were mentioned by residents. As residents often shared multiple perspectives within each conversation, the total counts exceed the number of individuals engaged in discussions.

## What people love about their neighbourhood

Of the 131 conversations we had, the table below shows what was mentioned most frequently when residents spoke about what they loved about their areas:

Loves	Count
Neighbours & Community	55
Transport	43
Peace & Quiet	37
Brockwell Park & Green Spaces	27

Figure 2 - Most frequently mentioned things people loved about their area

1. The most often mentioned thing people loved about the area was their neighbours and the sense of community, which were frequently mentioned with strong feeling. The depth of relationships with neighbours varied from person to person, from simple greetings in the hallway to pet-sitting and establishing a Tenants and Residents Association (TRA).

2. The second most frequently mentioned aspect that people loved about their area was the breadth of transport links available. Residents appreciated the range of bus and train routes providing easy access to local shops, amenities, and areas across London.
3. The next most frequently mentioned love for residents was the sense of living in a peaceful and quiet area, away from the hustle and bustle of neighbouring areas, though the proximity to livelier areas was often highlighted as a significant advantage. This feeling was particularly prominent among residents of smaller, more secluded estates.
4. Many residents also expressed appreciation for the quality and proximity of green spaces in and around the area, with Brockwell Park being the most frequently mentioned.

### Issues and concerns

Of the 131 listening's, the table below shows what was mentioned the most when discussing issues and concerns around the estates:

Issue Category/Theme	Count
Repairs & maintenance	42
Refuse & cleanliness	33
Local authority service	33
Mould & damp	29
Anti-social behaviour	24
Landlord service	23
Green space	22
Safety	19
Leaks & plumbing	15
Neighbour or community	13
Community events & infrastructure	13

Figure 3 - Most frequently mentioned issues and concerns

To develop these points a bit further, we found it useful to group the issues into the following broad themes:

No.	Theme	Issues	Count
1	<b>Wellbeing &amp; Safety</b>	Noise, Safety, Anti-Social Behaviour, Drugs, Prostitution, Crime, Lack of community infrastructure e.g. youth provision, community spaces	110
2	<b>Structural Issues</b>	Damp/Mould, Repairs, Maintenance, Plumbing, Drains, Leaks, Cladding, Accessibility	92
3	<b>Communal spaces</b>	Bins, Green Space, Cleanliness, Dog Fouling, Parking, Litter	60
4	<b>Landlord Service</b>	Local authority service, landlord service	56
5	<b>Traffic &amp; Parking</b>	Traffic, Parking, Road quality, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods	23

6	Other	Rent, costs, overcrowding, local businesses, gentrification	25
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Figure 4 - Most mentioned issues and concerns by theme

It is important to note that these themes overlap a bit with each other, so they are not mutually exclusive and cover a wide variety of quality and intensity of the issue or concerns spoken about.

### 1. Wellbeing & Safety [110]

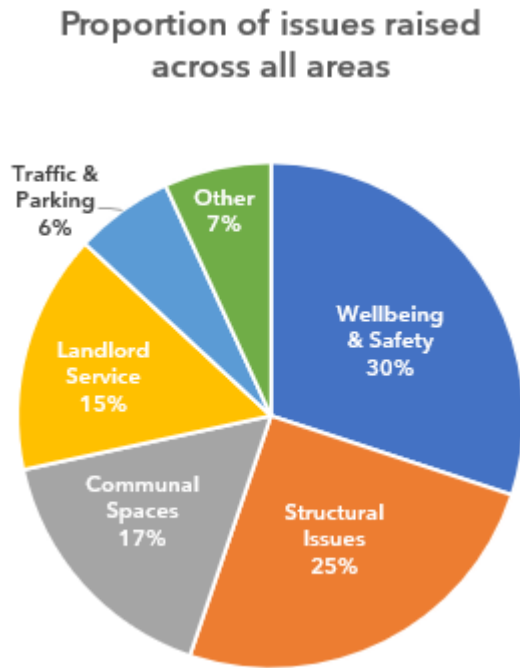


Figure 5 - Frequency of all issues raised

Residents frequently mentioned concerns around wellbeing and safety. Some noted the area's reputation for violence affecting young people, referencing both recent and past incidents of violent crime. Additionally, there was a perceived increase in anti-social behaviour in and around their estates. Some residents reported seeing people from outside the area loitering in communal spaces, which contributed to a perception that criminal activity might be occurring near their homes.

The closure of community centres was also highlighted as a concern. Residents we spoke to felt this has reduced safe spaces for young people to develop in a supportive environment and limited the opportunities for elderly residents to maintain their social lives and support networks. Concerns were also raised by a couple of residents about the safety of young people traveling home due to the risk of encountering negative influences and

groups that sometimes cause trouble.

External factors were also mentioned. Overgrown weeds and inadequate maintenance in communal spaces were said to contribute to insect infestations, littering, and unsanitary conditions. Some residents felt this lack of care encouraged anti-social behaviour, and in some cases, residents have taken it upon themselves to maintain green spaces independently.

Recurring concerns were noted about the lack of security and the lack of action on anti-social behaviour when reported. Instances of parcel theft, drug use, and disruptive behaviour were mentioned as negatively impacting residents' well-being and were perceived as being left unaddressed. One resident described safety issues just outside their block, mentioning the constant presence of individuals engaging in drug use, playing loud music, and leaving rubbish. Reporting such incidents was said to pose a dilemma for residents due to fear of repercussions.

Overall, there was a common perception among residents that their concerns about crime, anti-social behaviour, and lack of security are being ignored by their landlord and local authority. The poor maintenance of communal spaces contributed to a sense that littering and anti-social behaviour are acceptable, further adding to residents' concerns.

## 2. Structural Issues [92]

The next most frequently mentioned concern from residents relates to a broad range of ongoing structural issues, including leaks and blocked drainage, some of which have been left unresolved for months despite residents having made complaints and having been assured the issues would be resolved. Damp and mould problems have been ongoing for over a decade in some cases, leading to deteriorating living conditions, ruined belongings, and potential health hazards. Mackie House, Virginia Walk, and Lanercost Close were particularly impacted by damp. Residents shared that complaints to their landlord about structural issues and leaks have faced ongoing delays, with issues often being raised multiple times before they are resolved, if at all.

One resident of Mackie House, facing this problem for 12 years, had widespread black mould, visibly cracked and wet walls which led to damaged possessions, including their daughter's expensive university books that were ruined by the damp. Another resident, dealing with mould for six years, shared that their landlord's approach was to repeatedly paint over the issue with damp wash.

At Edwards House, two residents reported concerns about the cladding on their block following a recent letter from their landlord about it not meeting EU regulations, presenting a potential fire hazard. These residents were concerned that their landlord would take a long time to address the issue and worried about the disruption and costs that would result from the work.

Some residents have resorted to working with lawyers to secure improvements but have still faced challenges in securing long-term fixes to ongoing issues. Other concerns about the built environment included slippery floors in communal spaces, overgrown grass, and road damage, impacting both mobility and safety for some residents. Inefficient repairs, delays in addressing the root causes of structural issues, and poor maintenance have led to a deep sense of frustration and dissatisfaction among many residents we spoke to.

## 3. Communal spaces [60]

Residents reported various issues in the communal spaces, particularly concerning bins, green spaces, and related services. One common concern is the irregular and inefficient collection of bins, leading to overflowing rubbish and attracting rats and mice on several estates. Some residents noted the inconvenience of not having access to appropriate recycling facilities, causing confusion and contributing to the mismanagement of waste.

The lack of proper maintenance in communal areas, especially green spaces, is also a recurring issue. Residents shared experiences of overgrown weeds, uncut grass, and untidy conditions on several estates, leading to infestations and potential health hazards in some cases. Residents expressed dissatisfaction with their landlords for not addressing these concerns promptly.

Overall, the issues raised about communal spaces by residents highlight the need for improved waste management, green space maintenance, and transparent communication between residents, housing associations, and Lambeth Council. Residents feel that addressing these issues could contribute to a healthier and more liveable community environment.

## 4. Landlord Service [56]

While some residents were broadly satisfied with the service they received from their landlord, a significant number of people shared negative experiences with communication and general

service. This seemed to be a common issue regardless of whether the block was owned by Lambeth Council, a Housing Association, or managed by a private property management company.

Residents with concerns in this area reported feeling that their landlord was indifferent, uncaring, and unresponsive to their issues. They described difficulties with housing officers, including cancelled appointments and a constant turnover of staff, which affected communication and left problems unresolved.

These residents also expressed frustration with the perceived lack of communication, transparency, and accountability from property management agencies, making them feel unheard and unsafe in their own homes. Additionally, some residents mentioned a lack of transparency in the allocation of service charges and dissatisfaction with the high costs involved.

Overall, the stories shared by residents indicate widespread dissatisfaction with the level of service and management practices across various housing providers, leaving many dealing with unresolved issues long term.

## 5. Traffic & Parking [23]

Some residents we spoke to also had varied concerns about Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs). The impact on emergency response times was a concern for some. Other residents said they have negatively impacted neighbours with disabilities and caring responsibilities, as well as those running small businesses. These residents feel that they are being unfairly penalised by the implementation of LTNs as they see having their own transport as an essential and not a luxury. A few others said that LTNs had made their area much quieter, and had encouraged them to cycle, which was appreciated. Overall, LTNs receive mixed reviews, with some residents unhappy due to inconveniences and feeling as though their concerns hadn't been considered by decision makers prior to implementation.

Some residents also pointed out issues with blocked garages, unauthorised use of parking spaces, inefficient traffic systems, and the lack of disabled parking spaces. Potholes, road blockages and damage to parked cars were also of concern for some road users.

## 6. Other [25]

Some of the private tenants' we spoke to expressed concerns with rent increases, feeling that the costs are disproportionate to their property sizes. One resident, living in a one-bedroom property, considers the rent excessive, comparing it to what one might pay for a larger three-bedroom home. A freelancer, despite earning well currently, deems her £1500 rent extremely expensive, worrying about affording it if her circumstances change, such as starting a family. The fear of rent hikes was a common concern among the private renters we spoke to, with residents worried about the potential impact on their financial stability and ability to remain in their homes.

Residents under pressure from the cost-of-living feel concerned about rising service charges, highlighting a lack of transparency and questionable spending by property management companies. One resident questioned the purpose of their £2500 service charge, compared to the £1500 they paid in a previous place, feeling there is a lack of visible benefits. Some residents shared that the lack of transparency around their service charges has fed a sense that money is being wasted, leading to a couple of residents considering moving.

## How to use this document

Throughout the rest of this report, we take a deeper look at the local situation in each neighbourhood. You may choose to read the whole report or simply focus on the area you're most interested in. There are many similarities between places, which should be clear from the summary above. Wherever applicable, we've attempted to highlight the unique challenges presented to each through the listening analysis.

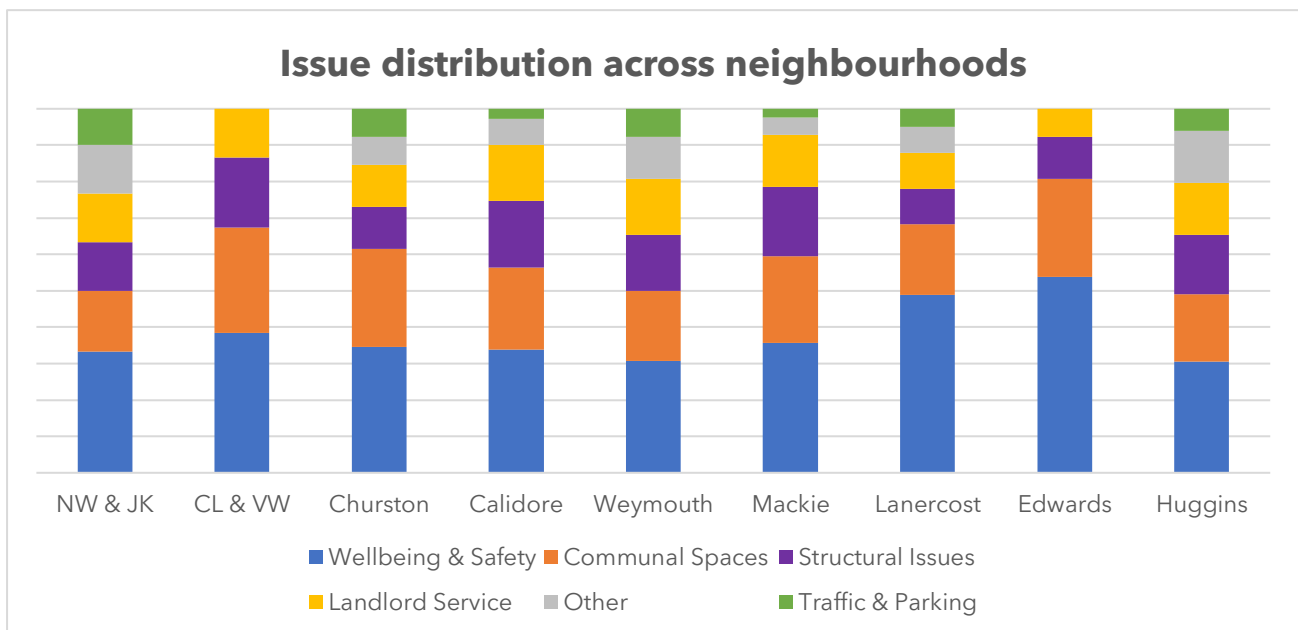


Figure 6 - Frequency of issues mentioned by area

## Calidore Close

Calidore Close is a large block of 56 flats located along Rush Common on Brixton Hill. The vast majority of residents are long-term Council tenants, with a small proportion of private renters and leaseholders. We spoke to 26 residents of Calidore Close to gather their opinions on living in the area.

### What people love

When asking people what they liked most about Calidore Close, residents most frequently spoke about the great transport links locally. One mentioned that the parking facilities on the estate were particularly good. Others noted that their neighbours keep to themselves but that there is a sense of community for the most part, with friendly interactions between neighbours. Many people we spoke to also said that the area is peaceful, with minimal noise from the busy nearby road or surrounding areas.

Five of the people we spoke to mentioned that Lambeth Council completed repairs quickly and efficiently, highlighting new lifts and a ventilation system that they feel have alleviated damp and



mould for many. One person also mentioned the recently refurbished stairwells positively, and a few residents shared their appreciation of the upkeep and maintenance of communal spaces and the new doors being installed.

### Issues and concerns

The most frequently mentioned concern for residents on Calidore Close related to wellbeing and safety, a concern mentioned by thirteen of the people we spoke to. Four residents spoke about historic issues with prostitution and drug dealing on the estate, issues that have reduced but left a legacy of concern. Some residents feel there is a need for more security measures, with one person raising concerns about outsiders being let into the estate and knocking on doors, and another mentioning a lack of security cameras.

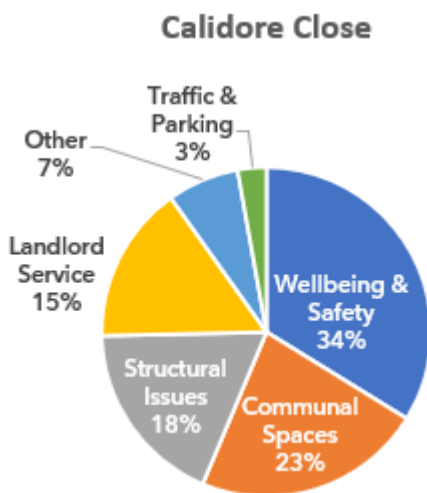


Figure 7 - Frequency of issues on Calidore Close

Residents also spoke of a lack of cohesion, problems with anti-social behaviour, and difficulties in fostering a sense of community. Three residents raised concerns about dog owners allowing pets to roam freely, disturbing communal spaces. Another resident spoke about a sense of isolation and a desire for a stronger connection with neighbours. One resident highlighted that they had three bikes stolen from the bike shed over the past few years, with the council ignoring concerns and issuing warning letters when they attempted to store a new bike near their property.

The next most frequently mentioned concern was the state and upkeep of common areas. While a couple of residents saw this as a positive aspect of the area, ten others highlighted issues with Lambeth Council not maintaining green spaces at all. The responsibility for maintaining these spaces has fallen on a couple of residents who have committed to their upkeep, which is appreciated by their neighbours. Several residents also raised concerns about litter being left in communal spaces or not disposed of correctly, attracting wildlife and contributing to a sense of uncleanliness.

Structural issues were raised less frequently than in other areas but were still a concern, with eight people mentioning various issues that took the council a long time to address or have remained unresolved. Three people spoke about persistent leaks from neighbouring flats which took a long time to resolve. A resident who is a wheelchair user mentioned the lack of disabled parking.

While many residents were happy with the upgrades to the lifts, two leaseholders raised concerns about the £10,000 bill each of them needed to pay, with one resident expressing concern about the lack of transparency regarding how their service charge was being spent. All these concerns contribute to a sense of frustration that elements of the estate's management aren't being handled effectively.

## Cherry Laurel Walk & Virginia Walk

Situated between Brixton Hill and Tulse Hill, Cherry Laurel Walk and Virginia Walk Estates are two rows each of low rise flats, each comprising 18 properties. The majority of residents are Council tenants, with a minority being leaseholders or private renters. We spoke to residents from 15 of the properties on this small estate.

### What people love

Residents of Cherry Laurel and Virginia Walk most frequently shared their appreciation of the peace and quiet of the area and the strong sense of community. Almost every person we spoke to mentioned their neighbours positively, with several noting it was the first time they had felt a true sense of community in London. Neighbours actively assist in maintaining shared spaces, take care of parcels, and look out for Spartacus, the neighbourhood cat. Additionally, residents have a local WhatsApp group, established during the Covid lockdown, for communication and assistance. Many residents also expressed their appreciation for Brockwell Park, which provides opportunities for walking, cycling, and access to festivals and events.



### Issues and concerns

Eight of the residents we spoke to reported issues with leaks, mould, and dampness resulting from flat roofs and other structural problems that require attention. Some residents shared ongoing efforts with Lambeth Council to resolve these issues, including legal action where the council was found at fault, yet long-term solutions have not been fully implemented. These conditions have impacted living environments and, in some cases, affected residents' health and wellbeing.

#### Cherry Laurel Walk & Virginia Walk

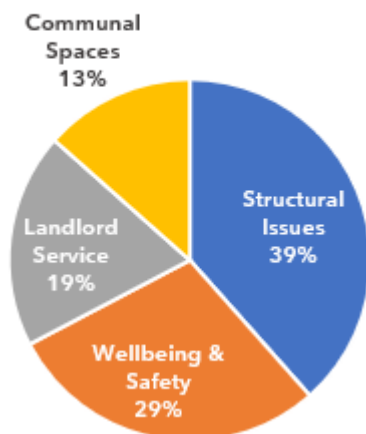


Figure 8 - Frequency of issues on Cherry Laurel & Virginia Walk

Wellbeing and safety concerns were also highlighted, with five residents mentioning experiences related to drug-related activities and prostitution on the estate. Additionally, residents noted that green spaces, previously well-maintained by the council, are now experiencing overgrowth, hazardous trees, increased fly-tipping, and occasional criminal activities, contributing to a sense that the area was neglected by their landlord.

Lastly, several residents mentioned issues with landlord services, including slow response times, poor quality repairs, and minimal upkeep of common areas. These challenges have left some residents feeling overlooked and powerless.

## Weymouth Court

Weymouth Court Estate is located on Upper Tulse Hill near Holy Trinity CE Primary School. It comprises two blocks of 12 flats, managed by HML Group Residential Property Management. We spoke to 9 residents across this Estate.

### What people love

Residents love the excellent transport links around the estate, with easy access to Brixton and the Victoria Line. They appreciate the peacefulness of Weymouth Court compared to other busy areas they've lived in, which adds to the residential feel while keeping vibrant central Brixton within reach. Many note the sense of community fostered through the area's WhatsApp group and occasional gatherings in communal spaces. Brixton's diversity, amenities like coffee shops, bars, and the appeal of places like Brockwell Park and yoga studios enhance residents' appreciation of the area.

### Issues and concerns

The most frequently mentioned concerns for residents revolve around wellbeing and safety, with incidents like car damage in the parking area, safety concerns for friends, and issues with drug dealing and prostitution in communal spaces. Several residents raised concerns about non-residents frequently using the estate for smoking and potential drug-related activities.

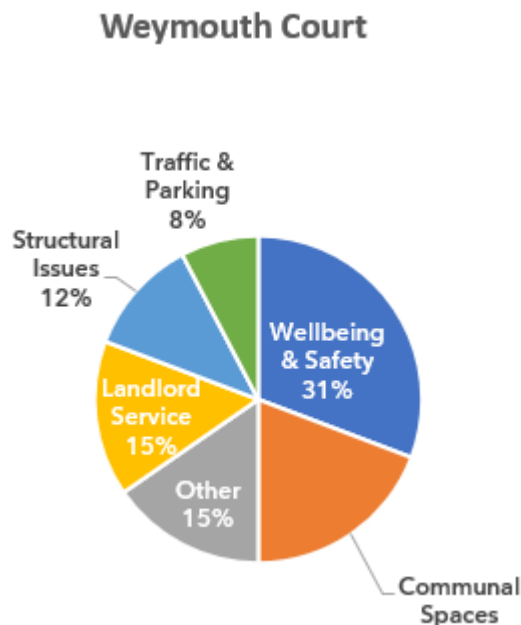


Figure 8 - Frequency of issues on Weymouth Court

The next most frequently mentioned concerns centre on the poor maintenance of communal spaces. Residents highlighted issues such as a broken fire alarm, a water tank installation creating mess, and squirrels in the roof that have persisted without resolution despite complaints. One resident also raised concerns about hall lights being left on overnight, causing needless waste and not being environmentally conscious. Issues with fly-tipping, difficulties with parking, and poor waste management were also raised, impacting daily life and negatively affecting the estate's appearance. Frustrations and dissatisfaction with the management agency's responsiveness and costs have led one resident to consider moving.

Complaints about poor landlord service were the next most frequently raised concern, with three people highlighting specific issues about HML's high service charges and the lack of transparency regarding how this money is being spent. These residents expressed a strong feeling that there's no apparent benefit for the £2500 annual fees, feeding into broader concerns about the quality of landlord service.



## Mackie House

Mackie House is a block of 24 flats close to Brockwell Park. There is a long, narrow communal green space that extends the length of the block. The vast majority of residents are Council tenants, with only a small proportion being private tenants or leaseholders. We spoke to 13 residents at Mackie House.



of

### What people love

Residents of Mackie House appreciate the good transport links, enabling them to easily get to work and around London, as well as their proximity to Brockwell Park and the peaceful surroundings. Over half of the residents, we spoke to said that the estate's sense of community is a real strength, with established residents having long-standing friendships and connections with their neighbours. Some residents also noted that the area has become quieter over time, and they appreciate the clean environment maintained by themselves and their neighbours.

### Issues and concerns

Half of the residents we spoke to in Mackie House expressed concerns about longstanding structural issues with damp and mould that have impacted their homes for years. One resident, who has been dealing with damp and mould for 12 years, described having four different surveyors check his flat recently without a resolution. Despite numerous reports and complaints to Lambeth Council, many feel ignored, with only delayed or temporary fixes being implemented. These concerns about poor complaint handling by Lambeth Council extend beyond mould and dampness to various other maintenance-related issues.

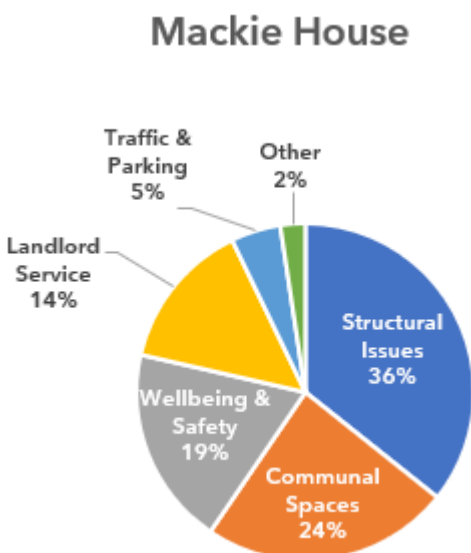


Figure 9 - Frequency of issues on Mackie House

Communal space was the next most frequently mentioned issue for residents. While several residents had positive things to say about the green spaces, almost half of the people we spoke to had concerns. Several residents raised issues about the green spaces on the estate not being properly maintained by Lambeth Council. One resident was told, when complaining to Lambeth, that this was due to "No Mow May." Another resident explained that the overgrown weeds had encouraged people to urinate in them, creating a breeding ground for insects and preventing them from opening their windows on warm days, due to hygiene concerns. Residents report that Lambeth Council appears unresponsive to their complaints, and they perceive a decline in the usage of communal areas, once well maintained and used spaces. Several residents also highlighted problems with infrastructure like malfunctioning door access systems and unresolved repairs to communal storage units.

Additionally, residents mentioned well-being and safety as longstanding concerns, with several sharing worries about anti-social behaviour and a historical perception of crime on the estate.

One resident also noted a degree of separation between newer and more established residents as a concern.

## Huggins Place

Huggins Place is a mixture of terraced houses and blocks of flats totalling 36 properties, located on the corner of Upper Tulse Hill and Roupell Road. The properties are owned by L&Q Housing Association. We spoke to 16 residents of Huggins Place.



### What people love

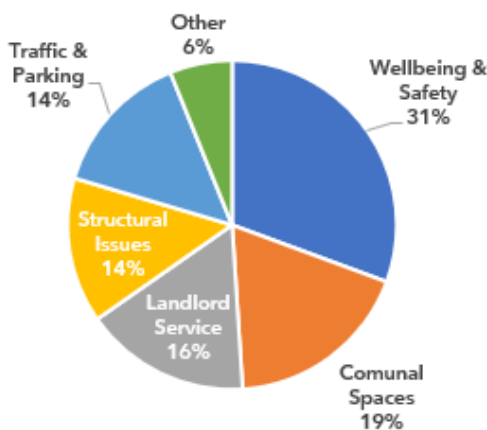
Residents of Huggins Place appreciate the area's peacefulness, transport links, and strong sense of community that's been fostered over the years. Many value Brockwell Park, with one resident describing it as "their sanctuary." Another resident was happy with the Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) on their street, stating that it had significantly reduced traffic noise. Two residents praised the area's safety, and three people shared positive experiences with their landlord, L&Q, noting swift repairs. Transport links were also highlighted positively. One person expressed pride in the increasing presence of Black-owned businesses locally, emphasising a growing community and cultural diversity.

### Issues and concerns

While a couple of residents praised the area for its safety, six expressed deep concerns about it, particularly around the block entrances. Some residents shared worries about non-residents loitering, discarding rubbish, drinking, and drug use. One resident described the stress of returning to the estate and navigating these groups, while another raised concern about outsiders smoking near exposed gas equipment at the entrance of a block, fearing a potential explosion. Some residents distressed by anti-social behaviour feel hesitant to report it due to potential repercussions. Several residents highlighted the lack of recreational facilities for young people locally, emphasising the need for more positive activities and opportunities. A couple of residents also flagged concerns about loud music from surrounding areas disrupting the peace at times.

Huggins Place

Figure 10 - Frequency of issues on Huggins Place



Issues in the communal areas also negatively impact the estate for some, with seven residents raising concerns. These ranged from unaddressed dog fouling to dirty hallways and neglected green areas. Among these complaints, five residents spoke about infrequent bin collections, a bin system that's not fit for purpose, an untidy, unclean communal bin area, and fly-tipping, which was attracting vermin and creating both unhygienic and unsightly living conditions.

While some residents were happy with L&Q's response to repairs and maintenance, seven others expressed concerns, about the level of landlord service and unaddressed structural issues. Residents shared

various worries with one pointing out a fire alarm hanging by its cables in the hallway, and others sharing experiences of fences not being repaired, doors not being replaced, and malfunctioning central heating systems. For these residents, complaints have led to slow and sometimes ineffective fixes, leaving them without clear solutions for months or even years at a time.

## Edwards House

Edwards House is located close to High Trees, at the end of a small parade of shops. A block of 19 flats, we spoke to 9 residents there, all of which were tenants of Wandle Housing Association.

### What people love

Residents appreciate that the area is accessible to other parts of London due to the nearby bus and train services. Some mentioned the recent painting and decoration in the block as a real positive. Despite people generally keeping to themselves, they find the neighbourhood good-natured and friendly. Many residents have settled here for several years, or even since the estate first opened, expressing happiness with their homes. A couple of residents stated that they were pleased with Wandle Housing Association's repairs and upkeep.



### Issues and concerns

The most frequently mentioned and deeply felt concern for residents of Edwards House was related to anti-social behaviour, an issue raised by almost every person we spoke to. Residents shared concerns about non-residents gathering around and inside the block and nearby shops, raising safety fears, particularly for parents worried about their children's well-being. Instances of anti-social behaviour, from graffiti and smoking in the block stairwell to missing parcels, raise security concerns as uninvited individuals access the block and pose risks to residents.

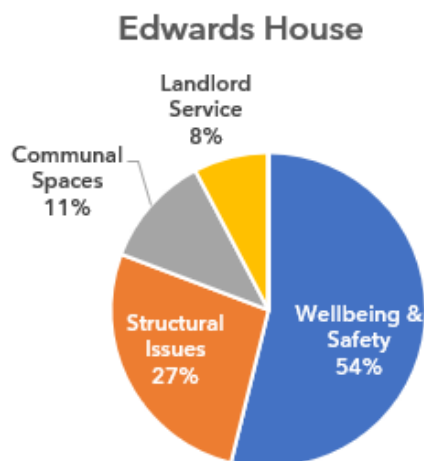


Figure 11 - Frequency of issues on Edwards House

In terms of structural issues, the most concerning for residents was the cladding. Several residents mentioned that it was not fire-safe, that the landlord knows this, and has promised to act, but at the time of this listening campaign, no solution had materialised. Two residents also expressed concerns over persistent damp and mould in their homes despite the building being relatively new. These residents' complaints to the housing association have yet to lead to lasting repairs.

Three residents also shared concerns about the lift, which has broken down on several occasions, with one resident recounting being stuck in the lift with the emergency button not working.

Additionally, three residents were concerned about the bin collections, sharing that one of the block's large general waste bins had been removed a while ago, leading to insufficient capacity and rubbish ending up everywhere. This issue was later

resolved with the bin being re-introduced but concerns around the decision making around its removal remained.

## Jemma Knowles Close and Neil Wates Crescent/Close

Located in Upper Tulse Hill and facing the busy A204, Neil Wates Crescent, Neil Wates Close, and Jemma Knowles Close make up a cluster of social housing built in the 1990s, a combination of terraced houses and residential blocks. The landlord for the housing stock in Jemma Knowles and Neil Wates Close is Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing, with the landlord for Neil Wates Crescent being Notting Hill Genesis. We spoke to 10 residents across this area.



### What people love

People generally describe the area as quiet and peaceful, with residents appreciating their friendly neighbours. They value the excellent local transport links, including good bus routes, overground and underground train options, and access to the Victoria line. Four tenants of Metropolitan Housing praised their landlord's prompt responses to certain types of complaints, noting that they "get things done for the most part."

### Issues and concerns

Residents voiced a range of concerns, with wellbeing and safety being the most frequently shared. Several residents were unhappy with the closure of local spaces that had provided opportunities for both young and older residents, feeling that more should be done to support them. One parent, struggling with the lack of play spaces near their block, worries about their children's safety when playing on the streets. Their door has remained broken for a year after a break-in, with the landlord failing to address the issue. Another resident raised concerns about nearby garages being used by a mechanic as places of business, obstructing their use, and noted that complaints go unaddressed.

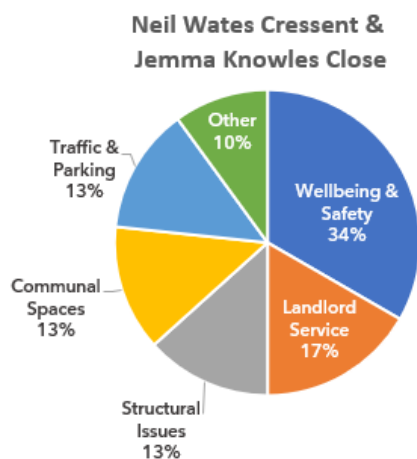


Figure 12 - Frequency of issues on Neil Wates Crescent & Jemma Knowles Close

Landlord service was also a significant concern for some residents from both Notting Hill and Metropolitan. One resident expressed frustration with their landlord's delays in repairs, unclean environment, and inadequate lighting, emphasising the association's failure to address non-emergency issues. Another resident from Neil Wates shared challenges in getting issues with their boiler addressed. While some problems like damp and mould were swiftly resolved by Metropolitan and Notting Hill Genesis, residents with concerns in this area feel overlooked and unheard in their requests for essential repairs and improvements.

Others mentioned issues with communal spaces and safety hazards like pothole-filled roads, overhanging trees among the terraced houses, and unrepaired walls, echoing the slow response from their landlords to address concerns. Another resident felt

that their housing association seemed to prioritise residents in the terraced housing over those in the blocks.

## Churston Close

Located on Lower Tulse Hill on the corner of the busy A204 and A205, Churston Close is a low rise two-storey block of privately rented and leasehold owned flats surrounding a communal garden. There are roughly sixty homes here, managed by Grainger PLC. A significant number were relatively new tenants, having moved in the past 2 years. We spoke to 15 residents at this block.



### What people love

Residents describe the area as nice, quiet, and well-maintained, with trustworthy neighbours and communal parties where newcomers are warmly welcomed. They appreciate various aspects of the area, highlighting the strong transport links enabling easy access across London, quick response times to their concerns from the estate management company, proximity to Brockwell Park, and excellent schools.

### Issues and concerns

The top concern for residents was safety and wellbeing. Some mentioned recent and historic incidents of shootings and stabbings around Tulse Hill, noting that they hear police and ambulance sirens at night. One person felt there was a lack of support for people with mental health issues after encountering aggressive behaviour on the local high street.

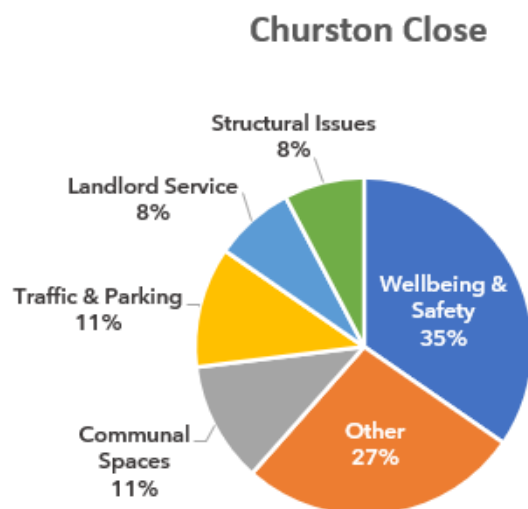


Figure 13 - Frequency of issues on Churston Close

A few residents shared concerns about landlord policies, such as restrictions on planters outside their properties, while a few others highlighted issues with housing conditions, like mould and unaddressed window replacements.

Communal spaces and issues with traffic and parking were also core concerns. A few residents also shared concerns about a lack of road safety presented by the nearby Tulse Hill gyratory, leading to accidents

involving pedestrians and cyclists.

## Lanercost Close

Lanercost Close is a large block of 28 flats on Lower Tulse Hill, opposite the Yellow Qube youth centre. We spoke to 16 residents here, the majority of which were Council tenants.

### What people love

Half of the residents we spoke to on Lanercost Close have lived there for over 10 years, expressing a deep-rooted affection for the estate and their homes. Many appreciate the sense of community and refer to safety improvements over the years. Several spoke positively about the size and layout of their properties. The location's convenience and accessibility to Brockwell Park are also appreciated. There is an active Tenants and Residents Association (TRA) on the estate, running community gardening projects and securing various improvements, efforts that received praise from their neighbours. Residents also value the area's peacefulness, transport links, and play spaces for children on the estate. A real sense of safety and a proactive community spirit came through in our conversations with residents.

### Issues and concerns

Half of the residents we spoke to shared experiences with long-term and persistent issues with damp and mould. Problems like a leaking roof, damp walls, and blocked drainage have been

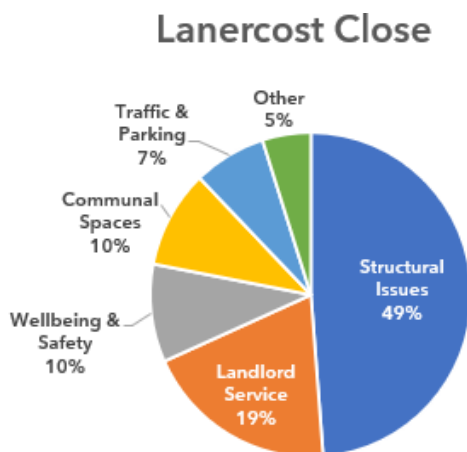


Figure 14 - Frequency of issues on Lanercost Close

ongoing for years, leading to health concerns for some, including asthma in children and worries for residents with pre-existing health conditions. One mother has been dealing with damp for six years, with her daughter being diagnosed with asthma at the age of two. Residents who shared negative experiences with damp and mould say that Lambeth Council's response often involves temporary solutions, like painting over the mould, but the underlying structural issues go unaddressed. Despite the widespread nature of this problem, many residents seem unaware that their neighbours are dealing with the same issue.

Concerns about landlord service were the next most frequently mentioned issue, with nine residents sharing their difficulties in getting work done. Delays in repair appointments, cancelled visits, and unaddressed complaints contributing to a sense from residents that the Council lacks care. The consistent recurrence of unresolved issues has left some feeling disheartened, sceptical, and disengaged from formal avenues of resolution, like the Tenants and Residents Association or making direct repair complaints to Lambeth Council. For one resident we spoke to, the lack of action from Lambeth has led to them involving solicitors to secure necessary repairs.

A few residents also shared concerns about communal areas, including limited access to the large underground car park on the estate, misplaced rubbish attracting foxes and for a couple of people there were also concerns about anti-social behaviour, but these issues were said to be minor.

## Our Approach & Next Steps

### Community Organising

Community organising is the work of bringing people together to take action around their common concerns and overcome social injustice. We typically practice Community Organising using the following framework:

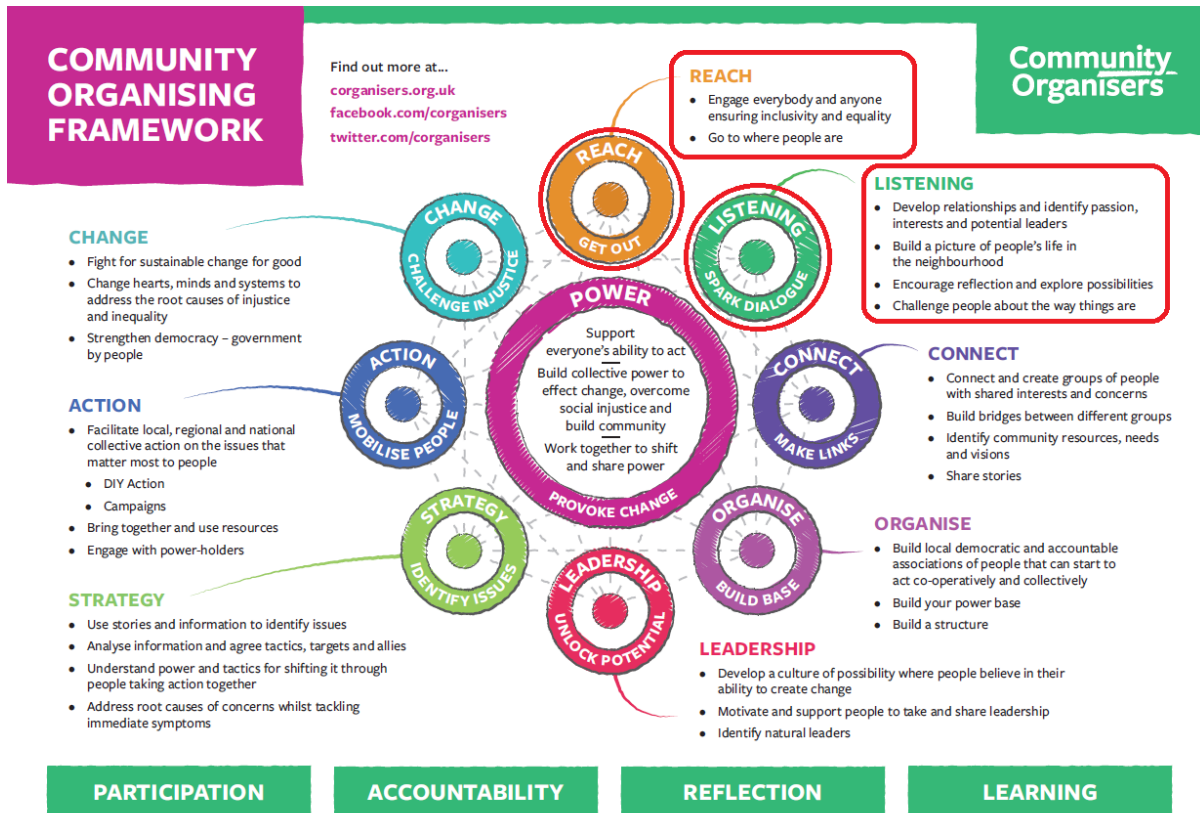


Figure 2- Community Organising Framework

This report focuses on our initial work under the 'Reach' and 'Listen' parts of the framework. The principle 'Go to where people are' means we knock on people's doors to have conversations (or 'listening' as we call it because the main point of each conversation is to listen to residents!) and invite them to join with their neighbours in taking collective action on issues that matter to them. We call this a 'listening campaign'.

### Questions

Our conversations are quite wide ranging in terms of the content depending on what comes up for people as most urgent and relevant for their lives, but we roughly cover the following:

- Basic information e.g., how long they've lived on the estate.
- What do you love about the area?
- Do you have any issues or concerns?
- What's your vision for the future of the area?
- Are there enough opportunities in the area?

This is not a comprehensive list of questions, nor does it mean these same questions are asked in every conversation or in the same way, being a relational conversation rather than a survey.

## Calling Cards

Where we don't speak to someone, we leave a calling card in their letterbox like the one shown below:

Hi,

I'm listening to people in the area to find out what they love about it and what they want to change - and then support them to make it happen. I'm a community organiser with High Trees Community Development Trust. We're looking for people who want things to be different.

If you're interested, I'd love to meet you.

**Name**

High Trees Community Action Team

**Email:** [action@high-trees.org](mailto:action@high-trees.org)

**Phone:** 0208 671 3132

Point your phone's camera at this to  
add me as a contact →



Community Development Trust

220 Upper Tulse Hill, London SW2 2NS

020 8671 3132

[www.hightrees.org](http://www.hightrees.org)

Charity No. 1079581  
Company No. 3573630

Figure 3 - High Trees Community Organiser Calling Card

## Community Organising FAQs

Please read our 'High Trees Community Organising FAQs' for more details on what community organising is and how we work at High Trees. We hope this is a useful document and will help to answer a lot of questions you may have.

## Take action!

For residents in the areas covered by this report, please use it to support the actions you're taking locally. If you need guidance on developing a plan to address any issues raised, please do reach out—we're here to help. We believe that when communities unite to build collective power and address important issues, they can create real, positive change. We have the tools to support you, so please get in touch to learn more.

## Accessibility

If you or someone you know need this document in large print for visual impairment, please let us know at [action@high-trees.org](mailto:action@high-trees.org)

## Contact Us

If something isn't clear to you at all or you're interested in taking action for change in your community, please get in touch with us, we'd love to meet you.

### High Trees Community Action team

**Phone:** 0208 671 3132

**Email:** [action@high-trees.org](mailto:action@high-trees.org)

**Address:** Community Action  
High Trees  
220 Upper Tulse Hill