

RESIDENTS' SATISFACTION SURVEY 2005

MAIN FINDINGS

1.1 Responses Received

569 questionnaires have been received in total. This equates to a satisfactory overall response rate of 31%. The response rate received from each of the five residential areas are shown in Table 1 below. Furthermore, the responses provide a very good representative sample with 93% coverage, as residents from 67 streets responded out of the 74 streets surveyed.

Table 1

Residential Area	Questionnaire Delivered	Overall Returns	Response Rate
Bexley Park	466	141	30%
Braeburn Park	274	92	34%
Ingress Park	498	139	28%
Waterstone Park	190	48	25%
Worcester Park	427	149	35%
Total	1855	569	

1.2 Analysis of Results

Each of the questions from the questionnaire will be considered below. The main findings related to each question are shown in boxes, followed by a more detailed commentary and then a summary bar chart. Due to the different amount of houses in each residential area and the different amount of questionnaires delivered to each of those areas, the majority of the bar charts below are shown in percentages so that a comparison can be made between the five residential areas.

Question 1 How long have you lived in your home?

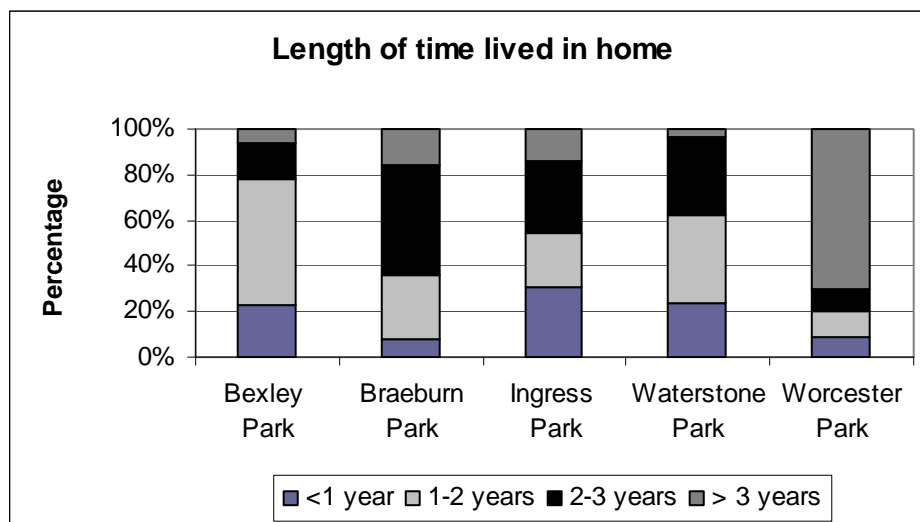
1.1 Although the residential areas are relatively new compared to the Borough's housing stock in general, the respondents have had some time living in them - enough time for the respondents to get an overall impression of the area and to be able to answer the questionnaire in a knowledgeable manner.

Taking each residential area in turn, the majority of respondents for:

- Bexley Park (55%) have lived there for 1-2 years;
- Braeburn Park (48%) have lived there for 2-3 years;
- Ingress Park (32%) have lived there for 2-3 years;
- Waterstone Park (35%) have lived there for 1-2 years; and
- Worcester Park (70%) have lived there for more than 3 years – this will be because Worcester Park is the oldest of the 5 residential areas.

When looked at as a whole, Chart 1 shows that most respondents have lived in their residential area for 1-2 years. This is followed by slightly less respondents living there for 2-3 years and slightly less again living there for more than 3 years. The least amount of respondents have lived there for less than 1 year.

Chart 1



Question 2 How many people live in your household?

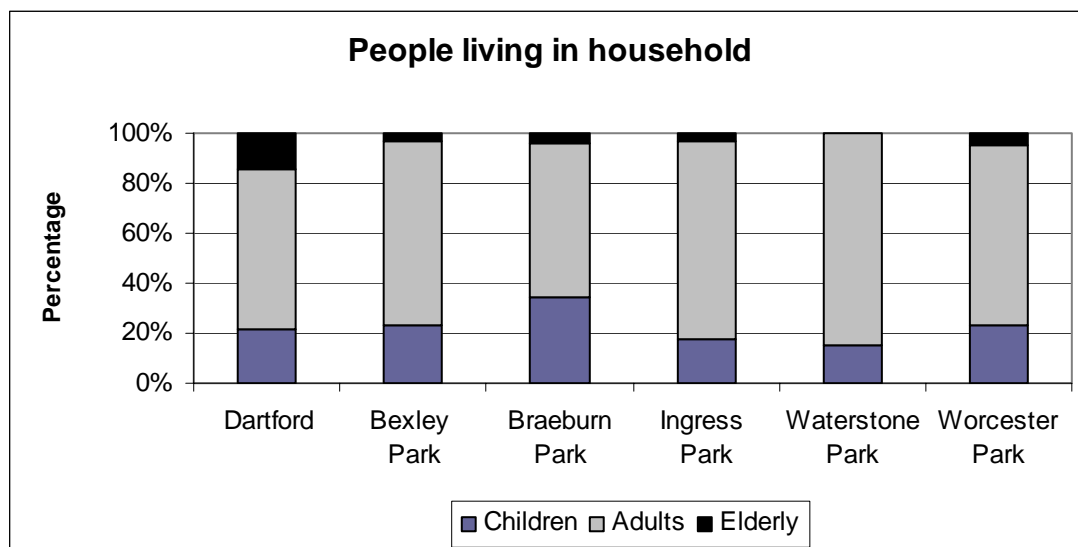
- 2.1 According to the 2001 Census, 64% of the Dartford Borough's population are adults, 21% are children and 14% are elderly.
- 2.2 These results highlight that there are proportionally fewer elderly people in the 5 residential areas.

From the respondents answers, Chart 2 clearly shows that the population profile in the five residential areas reflects the Borough's population in general. However, there are proportionately fewer elderly people living in these residential areas compared to the Borough as a whole, particularly so in Waterstone. To a lesser extent there are proportionately fewer children living in Ingress Park and Waterstone Park, whilst Braeburn Park has proportionately more children than the Borough's average figures.

Taking each residential area in turn:

- Bexley Park has 74% adults, compared with 23% children and 3% elderly;
- Braeburn Park has the least proportion of adults (61%) and the highest proportion of children (34%) but only 3% elderly;
- Ingress Park has 80% adults, compared with 18% children and 3% elderly;
- Waterstone Park has the highest proportion of adults (85%) and the least amount of children (15%) and no elderly (0%) at all; and
- Worcester Park has 72% adults, compared with 23% children and the highest proportion of elderly (5%).

Chart 2



Question 3 What type of accommodation do you live in?

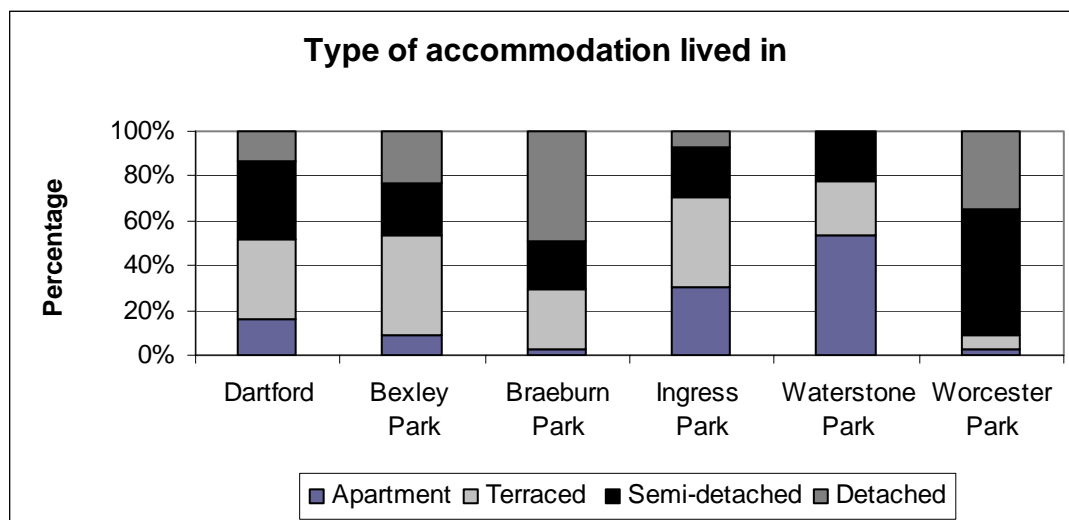
- 3.1 The 2001 Census shows that within the Borough of Dartford 35% live in terraced houses, 33% live in semi-detached houses, 13% of the population live in detached houses and 15% live in apartments.
- 3.2 The 5 residential areas provide a range of accommodation, with more modern developments providing a greater mix of properties.

Chart 3 shows that there is a general mix of types of accommodation in the 5 residential areas. Overall there are slightly more respondents living in semi-detached houses with less living in terraced houses and detached houses. The lowest proportion of respondents live in apartments and flats. Compared with the Borough's average figures Bexley Park, Braeburn Park and Worcester Park have proportionately less apartments whilst Ingress Park and Waterstone Park have more apartments than the borough's average of 15%. Worcester Park has proportionately fewer terraced housing. Worcester Park also has significantly more semi-detached properties than the 33% Borough average. Braeburn Park has predominantly detached houses, more than the 13% Borough average whilst Ingress Park and Waterstone Park have limited detached housing.

Specifically, the findings show that:

- Bexley Park has the highest overall proportion (45%) of respondents living in terraced houses;
- Braeburn Park and Worcester Park have the joint least proportion (3%) of respondents living in flats;
- Ingress Park has more (40%) terraced housing compared to other accommodation types;
- Braeburn Park has a high proportion (50%) living in detached houses;
- Waterstone Park has the highest overall proportion living in flats (53%); and
- Worcester Park has the overall highest proportion (56%) living in semi-detached properties and overall the lowest proportion (6%) living in terraced houses.

Chart 3



Respondents also identified a few other types of accommodation that they lived in, including end houses, town houses, link detached and maisonettes.

Question 4 How many bedrooms does your home have?

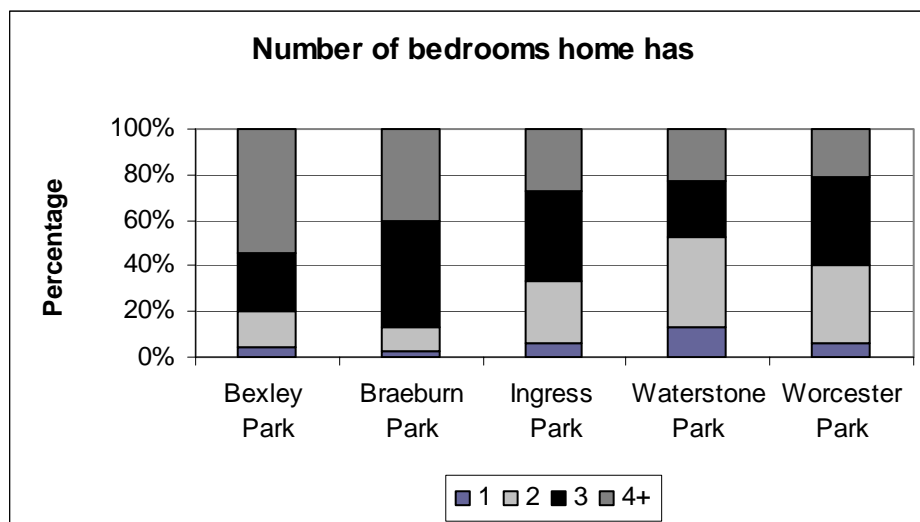
- 4.1 The Borough of Dartford has a typical average household population of 2.4 people according to the 2001 Census.
- 4.2 The 5 residential areas provide a range of accommodation sizes, although they do tend to have proportionally more large properties than elsewhere in the Borough in general.

The residential areas contain housing of various sizes. Chart 4 shows that overall, there are more houses with 3 and 4 bedrooms than property with only 1 and 2 bedrooms and none of the respondents live in bed-sits. 1 bedrooms are more prevalent at Waterstone Park than elsewhere whereas Bexley park and Braeburn Park contain the largest properties as the majority of the housing are 3 or 4+ bedrooms.

On a residential area basis:

- Bexley Park has the highest proportion (55%) of all the residential areas of 4+ bedroom houses. This is followed by 26% respondents having 3 bedrooms and 16% having 2 bedrooms. Only 4% have one bedroom;
- Braeburn Park respondents have proportionally more (47%) 3 bedrooms, followed by 40% 4+ bedrooms and 10% 2 bedrooms. It also has the least amount (3%) of 1 bedrooms out of all 5 residential areas;
- Ingress Park has more (40%) 3 bedrooms with 27% of both 4 bedrooms and 2 bedrooms. Once again, 1 bedrooms make up the smallest percentage (6%);
- Waterstone Park contains more (40%) 2 bedrooms than other house sizes with 25% 3 bedrooms and 23% 4+ bedrooms. However, one bedrooms are more common (13%) compared to the other 4 residential areas; and
- Worcester Park has 39% 3 bedrooms and 34% 2 bedrooms. At 21% Worcester Park has the lowest proportion of 4+ bedrooms than the other residential areas, and only has 6% 1 bedrooms.

Chart 4



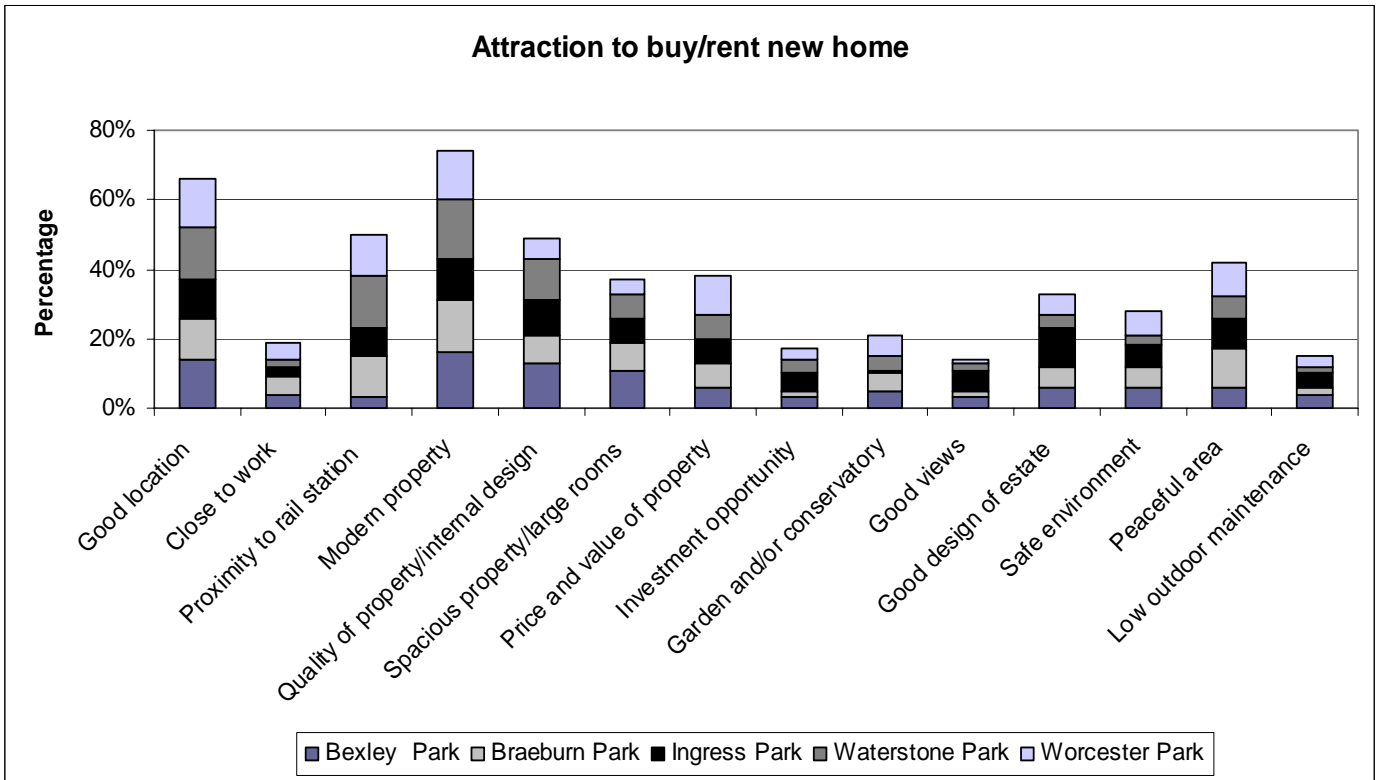
Question 5 What attracted you to buy/rent your home?

- 5.1 All 5 residential areas offer a range of factors that attract people to move there.
- 5.2 Location and individual property considerations are the most important factors that respondents have taken into account when moving into their home.
- 5.3 The surrounding area/estate, the quality/safety of the environment and financial factors have less of a pull on respondents when moving into a new home.

There are many factors that attract new homebuyers/renters to move into a property. Respondents were asked to choose from a variety of factors and they are listed below in order of importance, with the factor that received the most responses listed first. Chart 5 shows this in a visual way:

- Modern property;
- Good location;
- Proximity to rail station;
- Quality of property and internal design;
- Peaceful area;
- Price and value of property;
- Spacious property and large rooms;
- Good design of estate;
- Safe environment;
- Garden/conservatory;
- Investment opportunity;
- Close to work;
- Good views.

Chart 5

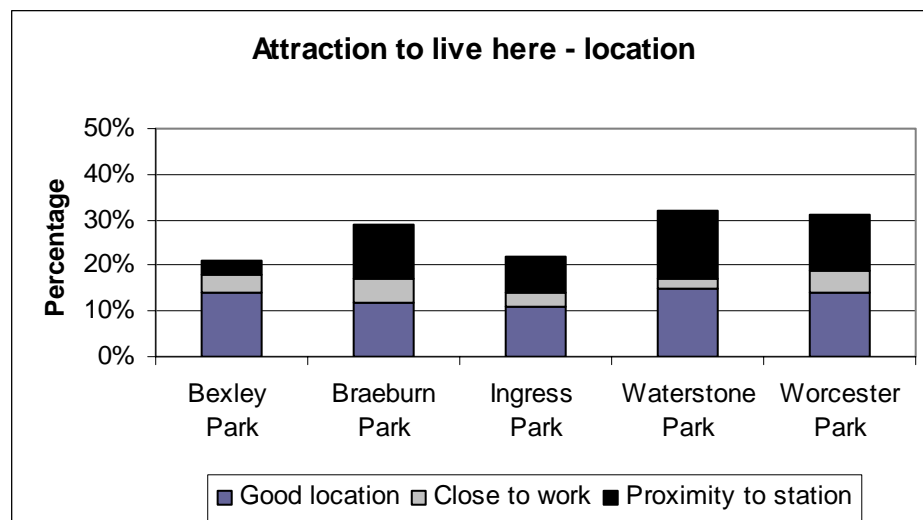


To assess further, these factors have been grouped and are considered in turn below.

One of the more important ones is location, as can be seen from Chart 6. Respondents stated good location as the second most important factor, followed closely by proximity to the rail station as the third most important factor. Close to work on the other hand is much less an attraction factor and people are willing to travel considerable distances to work.

All 5 of the residential areas have similar responses regarding location. Bexley Park however rates proximity to the rail station less than the other residential areas, due to the fact that the other 4 residential areas are located within 1km of their nearest station as opposed to Bexley Park which is 1.5km away.

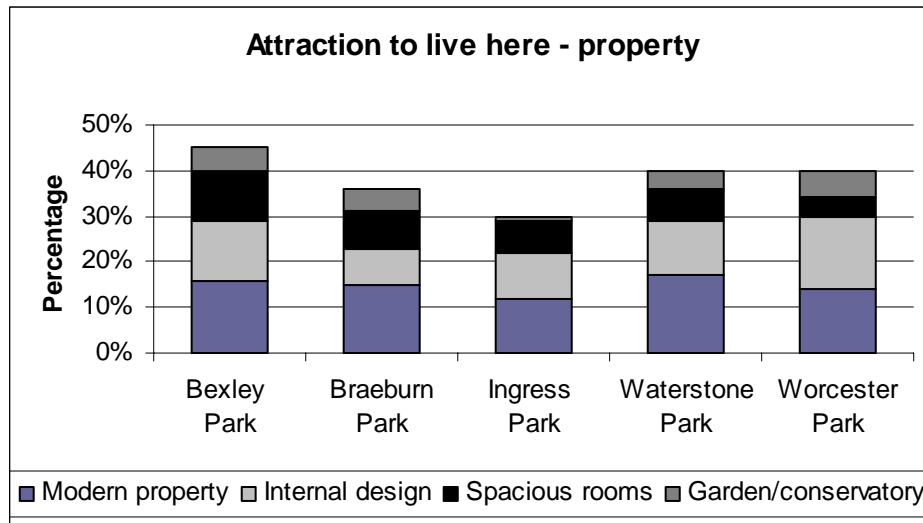
Chart 6



Individual properties are also rated highly, as shown in Chart 7. Modern property is identified as the main factor that attracted respondents to move in to the area with an average response for each of the residential areas being 14%. Internal design and spacious rooms were considered important compared

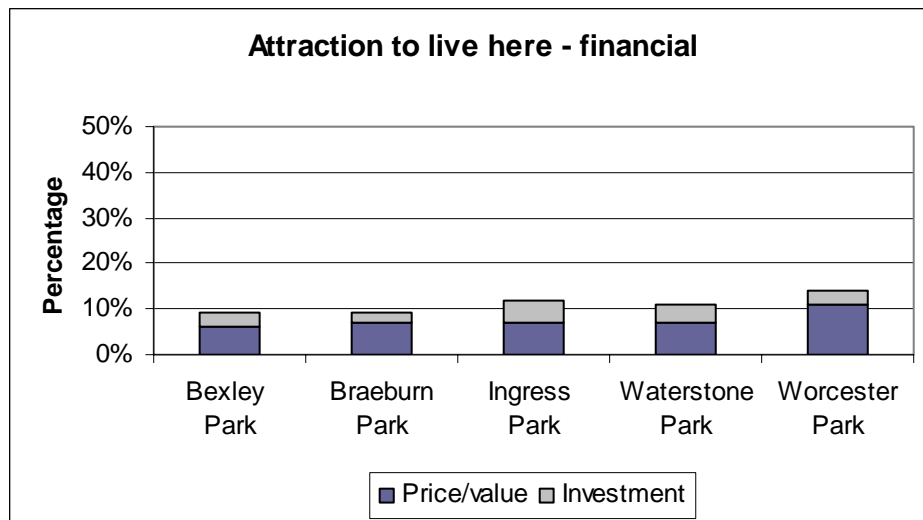
to garden/conservatory which came further down people's list of priorities. This is particularly so in Ingress Park.

Chart 7



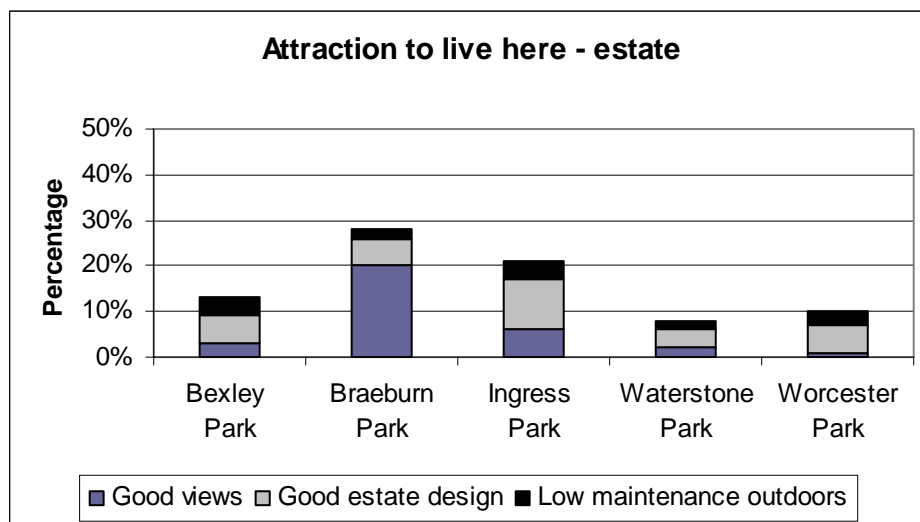
It is surprising to see from Chart 8 that financial matters are less important to respondents. Worcester Park received proportionally more (11%) responses for price and value of property than the other residential areas. Investment opportunity is of limited importance as it only received an average of 3% from each of the residential areas.

Chart 8



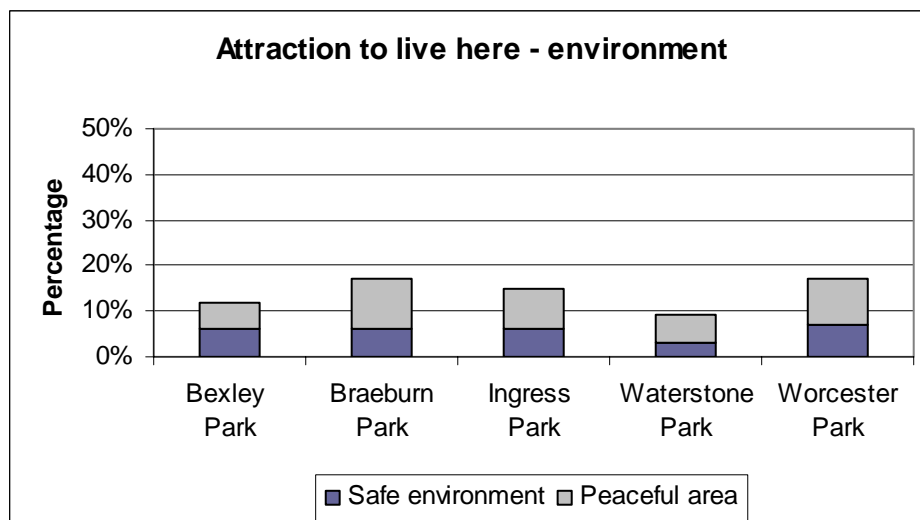
The surrounding residential area does not rate too highly when respondents are looking for a new home, according to Chart 9. However, Ingress Park respondents felt that the good views (6%) and the good estate design (11%) were more important than in other residential areas. Good views were less important to Worcester Park respondents (1%) than the other residential areas.

Chart 9



The surrounding environmental quality was considered to be relatively important when choosing a new home. In Chart 10, Waterstone Park respondents found these two factors to be less important than other residential areas, with 6% response for peaceful area and 3% response for a safe environment.

Chart 10



Other factors that respondents mentioned that encouraged them to move into their homes include:

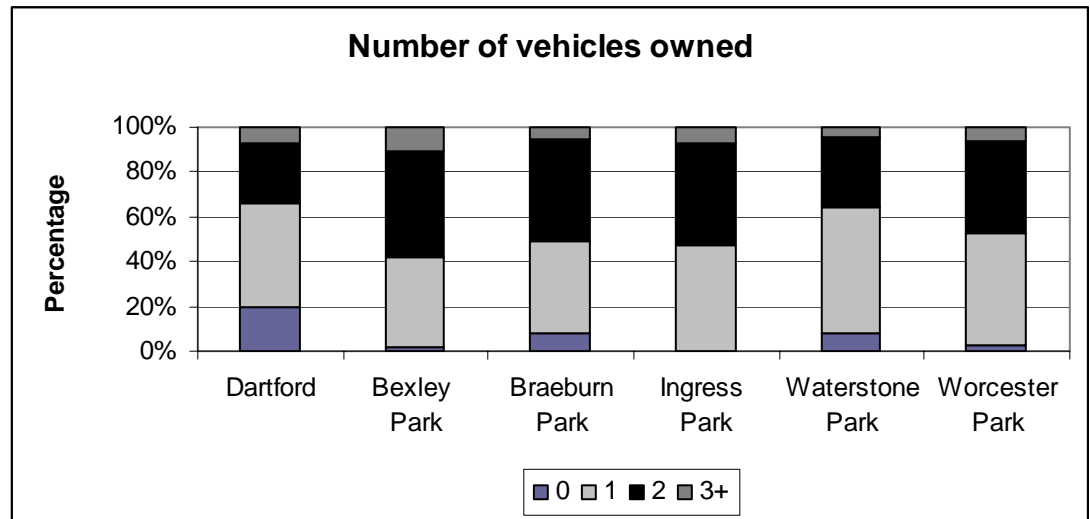
- Location - proximity to London; Bluewater, Asda, amenities, schools, playgrounds and future Ebbsfleet station, M25 and A2;
- Local area – proximity to relatives, presence of bus service, wanted to stay in area, close to previous home, presence of the manor house, Wildlife Trust interest;
- Property specification – off street parking and garages, need for disabled access, security, unique development with history, lived in smaller accommodation before, roof terrace; and
- Property sales - first time buyer, rehoused by Council/housing association, part buy/part rent option, 10 year warranty, speedy availability of property, part exchange, only option offered, accepted the first offer, misled by sales staff.

Question 6 How many vehicles do you own?

- 6.1 From the 2001 Census, Dartford Borough's population has 20% with no cars, 46% with 1 car, 27% with 2 cars and 7% with 3 or more cars.
- 6.2 From the results, there are proportionally fewer respondents with no cars and proportionally more respondents with 2 cars compared to the Borough's average figures.

Chart 11 shows that very few respondents, with only 8% from both Braeburn Park and Waterstone Park, do not have a car. A small proportion of respondents have 3 or more cars, including 11% from Bexley Park. They also have a larger proportion (47%) of 2 cars than other residential areas. The majority of respondents have an almost equal proportion of 1 or 2 cars with the highest amount (56%) of respondents with 1 car coming from Waterstone Park. Overall, there is proportionately more multiple car ownership in Waterstone Park, Bexley Park and Worcester Park.

Chart 11

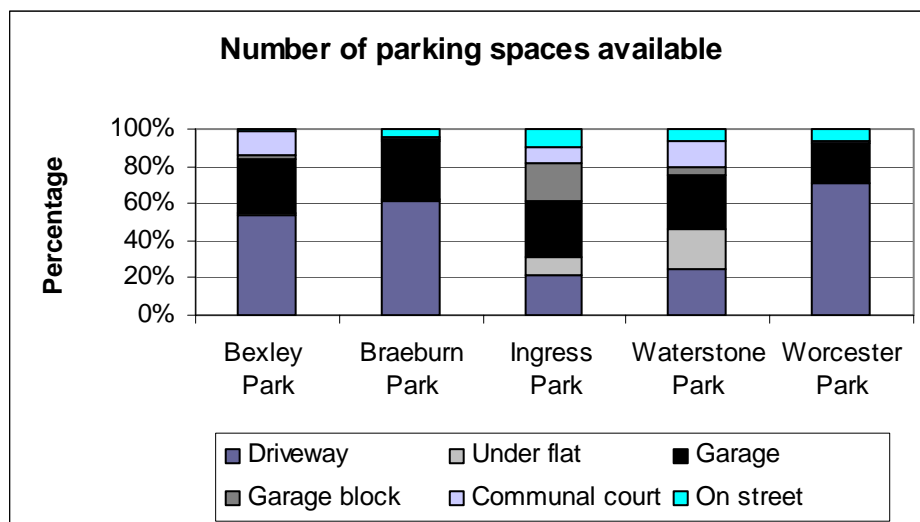


Question 7 How many parking spaces are available to you?

- 7.1 A range of parking options are available to residents, the most popular being parking on driveways or in garages attached to properties.

The majority of people park their cars on their drives, then in their garages attached to their properties. Chart 12 shows that the other types of car parking spaces are much less common and are used much less. Worcester Park has proportionally more (70%) parking on driveways than other residential areas and also has no parking under apartments blocks and no parking in garage blocks. Bexley Park and Braeburn Park use predominantly driveway and garage parking. Ingress Park and Waterstone Park have a greater range of types of parking spaces but have proportionately less (23%) parking on driveways compared to the other residential areas. In many instances, respondents for all 5 residential areas quoted 5 or more parking spaces being available to them.

Chart 12

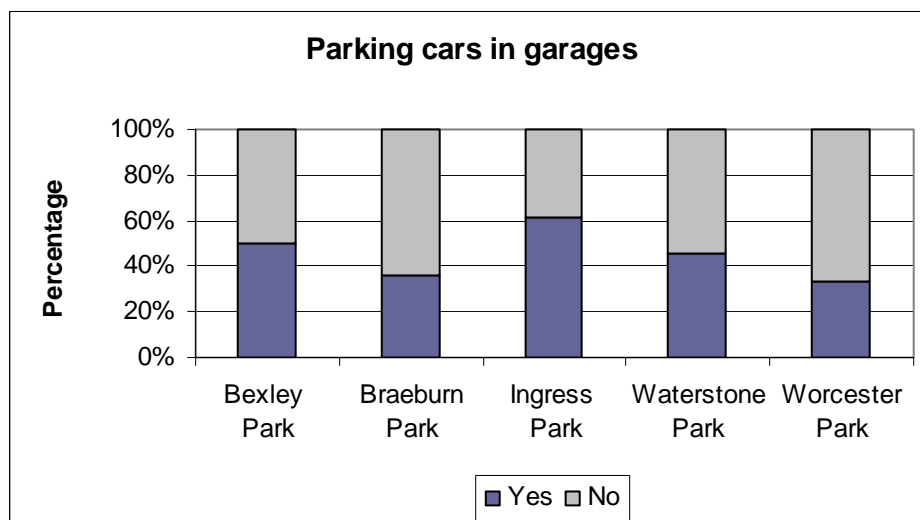


Question 8 If you have a garage, do you use it for parking your car?

8.1 More than half of the garages are not used for parking a car.

In Chart 13, for those respondents who have a garage, roughly 55% of them do not use their garages to park their car. Worcester Park seems to be the residential area that has the least proportion (67%) of respondents parking their cars in their garages whilst 67% of Ingress Park respondents use their garage to park their car. Some of the respondents specifically mentioned that some of the garages are not large enough to accommodate a parked car, and that even if you can drive a car into a garage, they would not be able to open their car doors to get out of the car.

Chart 13



Question 9 If you have a garage, do you use it for other functions?

9.1 Garages are used for a variety of other functions than parking a car, the most common of which is storage.

Question 8 above highlighted that 55% of respondents do not use their garage to park their car. This suggests that garages are being used for other functions instead. Chart 14 shows that the primary use is for storage, especially at Ingress Park, Worcester Park and Waterstone Park who have the largest proportions (approx 90%). Bexley Park and Braeburn Park tend to use their garages differently - 45% for storage and 50% for extra kitchen space. Utility rooms are less frequent.

Chart 14

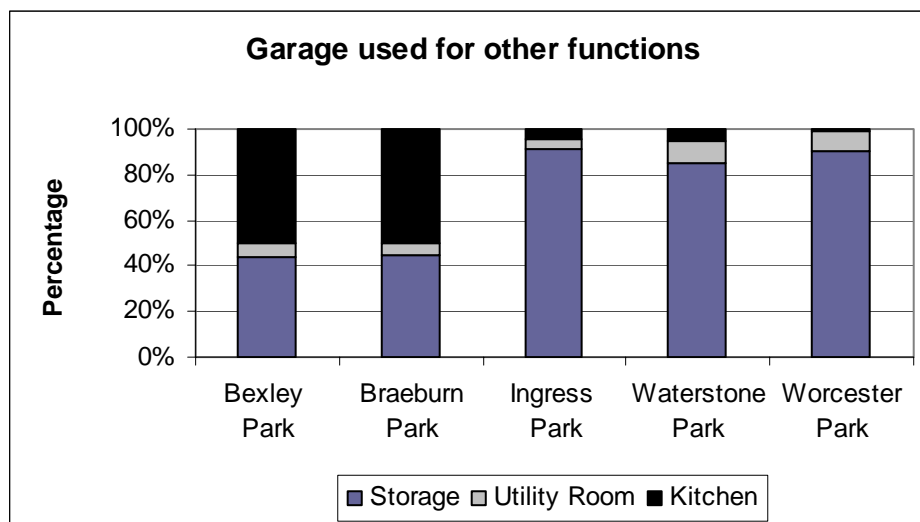
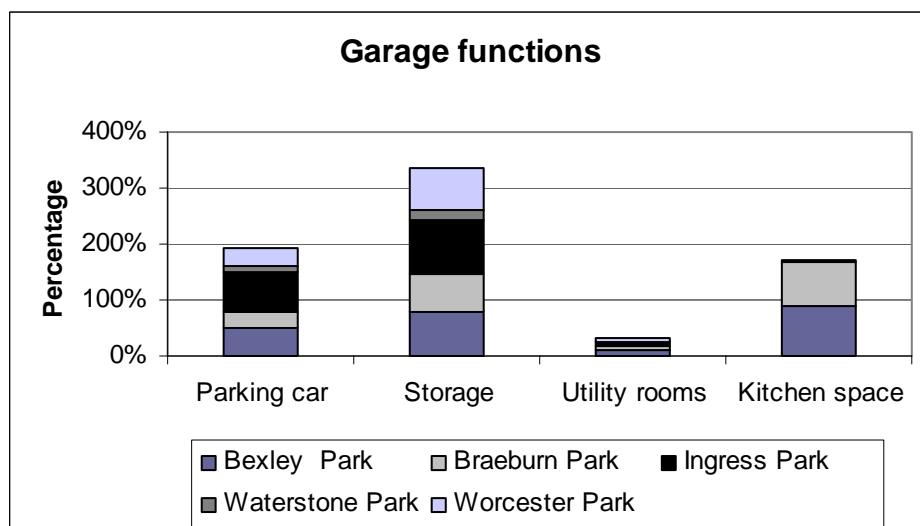


Chart 15 shows the same data in a different way and clearly identifies that storage is the most common function taking place in respondents' garages.

Chart 15



Other uses were specified from the respondents and include:

- Gym, weights, exercise room, sauna;
- Workshop;
- Trailer, motorbike and bicycle storage;
- Converted to new room; and
- Storage of garden equipment.

Question 10 Do you experience any particular problems in parking your car?

- 10.1 Problems of car parking are experienced in all 5 residential areas.
 10.2 The most common problems are too few parking spaces for visitors and lack of residents' car parking.

Chart 16 shows that the main problem regarding car parking in the 5 residential areas is that there are too few car parking spaces for visitors, with an average of 42% of respondents commenting on this issue. This problem seems slightly worse in Braeburn Park as 48% of the respondents commented on the lack of visitor parking spaces. Visitor parking for the sports and social club at Bexley Park and commuter parking at Worcester Park are adding to the car parking problems in these residential areas.

Not enough parking spaces came out as the next most problematic area. Approximately 24% of the respondents from 4 of the residential areas mentioned this as a problem. The situation in Worcester Park seems slightly better as only 13% of the respondents mentioned lack of car parking. The majority of respondents from Ingress Park and Waterstone Park commented about the problems of residential car parking when asked about their dislikes.

The other types of parking were seen as less of a problem, including lack of space to manoeuvre, parking spaces being too tight and drives being too narrow or short. 13% of Ingress Park respondents felt that car parking spaces are too tight whilst lack of space to manoeuvre is more prevalent in Worcester Park with 24%.

Chart 16

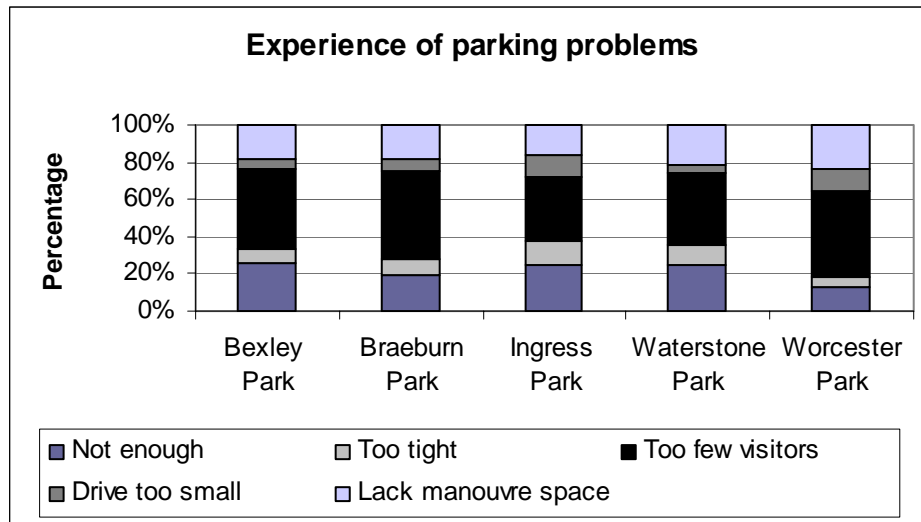
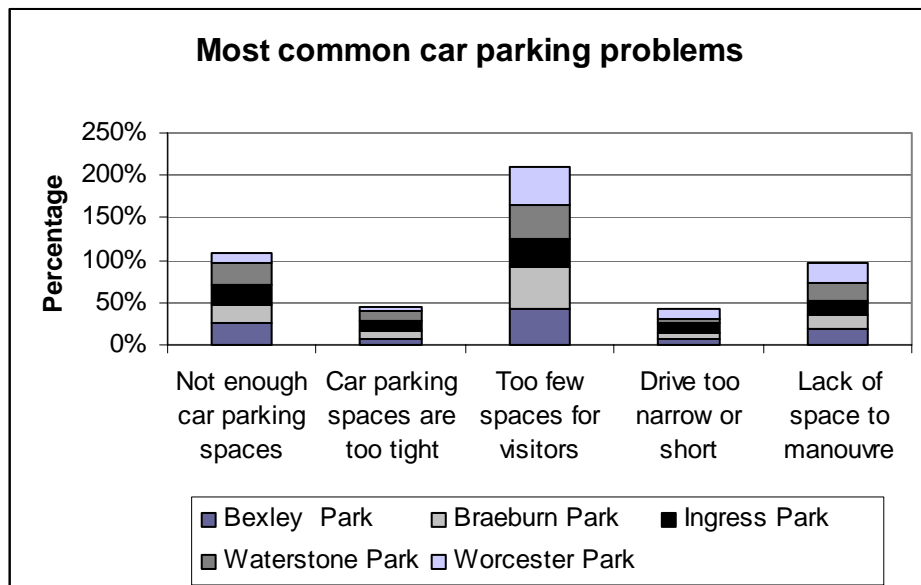


Chart 17 shows the same data in a different way, to make it clear that too few spaces for visitors is the most common problem.

Chart 17



Respondents also mentioned the following as problems that they experience in relation to parking:

- Roads are too narrow;
- Pavement parking;
- Emergency vehicles cannot get through;
- Sharing a drive with neighbours;
- Inconsiderate parking by others blocks people in;

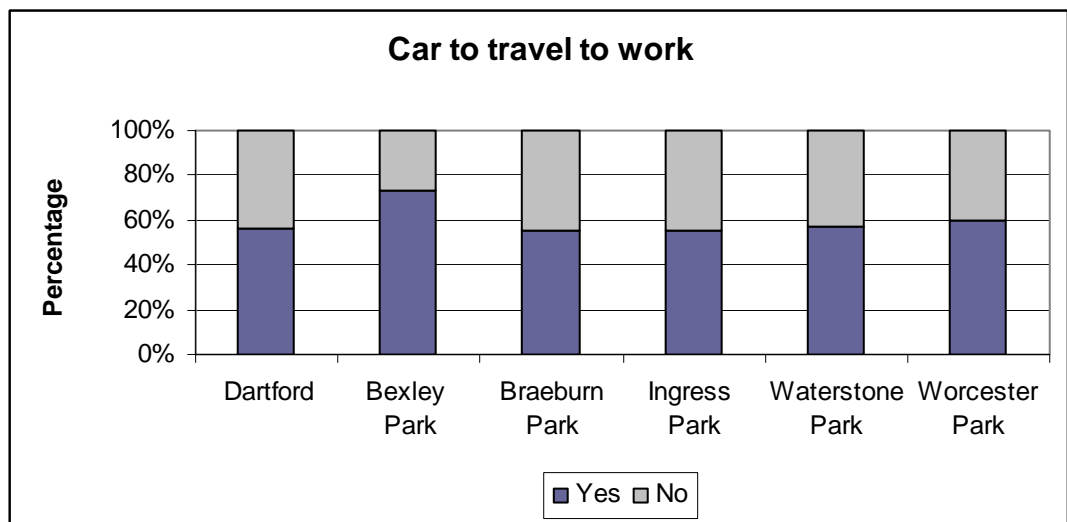
- Parking by those attending sports club and fishing in nearby lake;
- Too many builder's vans;
- No space for delivery vans;
- Other people park in your allocated space;
- Receiving parking tickets for parking in own allocated bay; and
- Need to enforce parking restrictions.

Question 11 Do you use your car to travel to work?

11.1 The 2001 Census identifies that 56% of the population in the Borough of Dartford travels by car/van to work compared to 14% that travels by rail and 4% by bus.
 11.2 The respondents travelling to work by car reflects the Borough's travel to work pattern in general.

Chart 18 shows that there is almost an equal split of 55% and 45% between those respondents who travel to work by car and those who don't. Bexley Park has marginally more respondents (73%) travelling by car.

Chart 18



Respondents also mentioned the lack of bus services in the evenings, no bus service on a Sunday and the lack of bus transfers to the rail station as being particularly discouraging.

Question 12 If not, how do you rate your chosen method of travel?

12.1 A range of scores were generated for different local travel services.
 12.2 None of the services were found to be very poor, but nor were they found to be very good.
 12.3 The proximity to the rail station scored the highest mean average of 9.

Respondents were asked to score a range of travel services from good with a score of 10 to poor with a score of 1. To compare the responses across the 5 residential areas, the mean average responses have been identified and can be found in Chart 19.

The services that received a weakest scores include Ingress Park respondents whose mean average for quality of the rail station is 3 and Bexley Park respondents with a mean average of 3 for frequency of bus services.

Proximity to the rail station scored highly for all residential areas but Braeburn Park, Waterstone Park and Worcester Park all gave it a mean average of 9. In addition, the frequency of the rail service for Braeburn Park and Waterstone Park respondents, the proximity of the bus stops for Waterstone Park

respondents, the safe/accessible pedestrian routes for Ingress Park and the direct route to destination for Braeburn Park and Waterstone Park were all scored with a mean average of 7.

When the mean average scores are totalled for each residential area, Bexley Park (53) and Ingress Park (59) were slightly less satisfied with the local travel services than Worcester Park (62), Braeburn Park (66) and Waterstone Park (67).

Chart 19

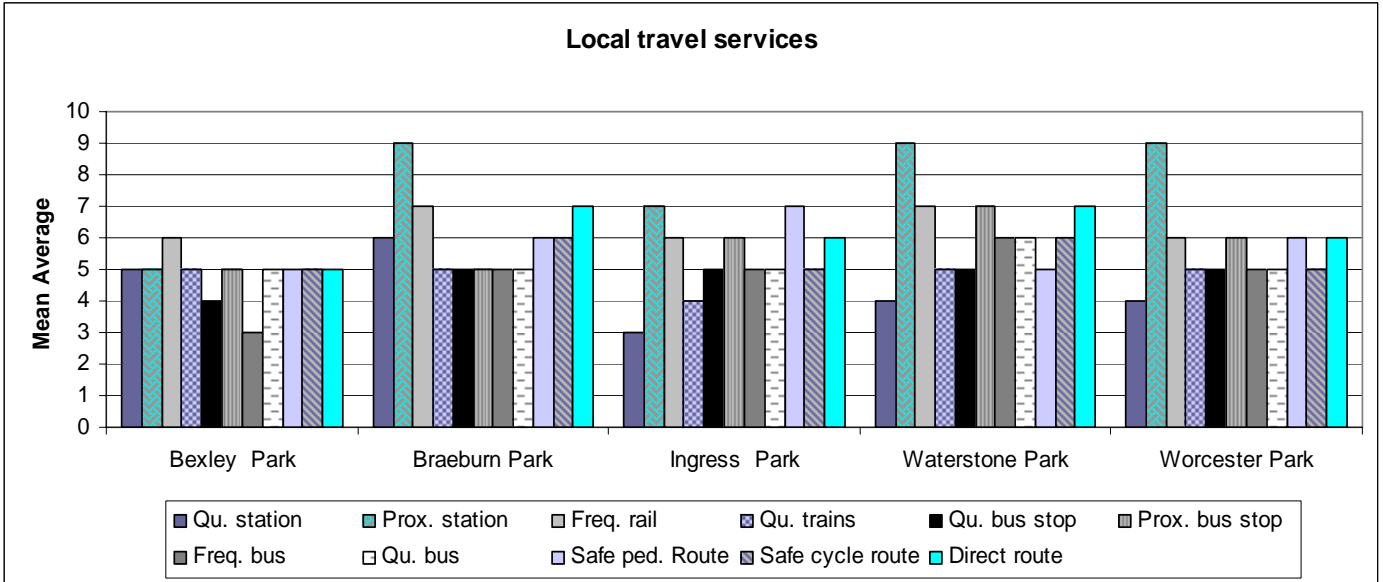
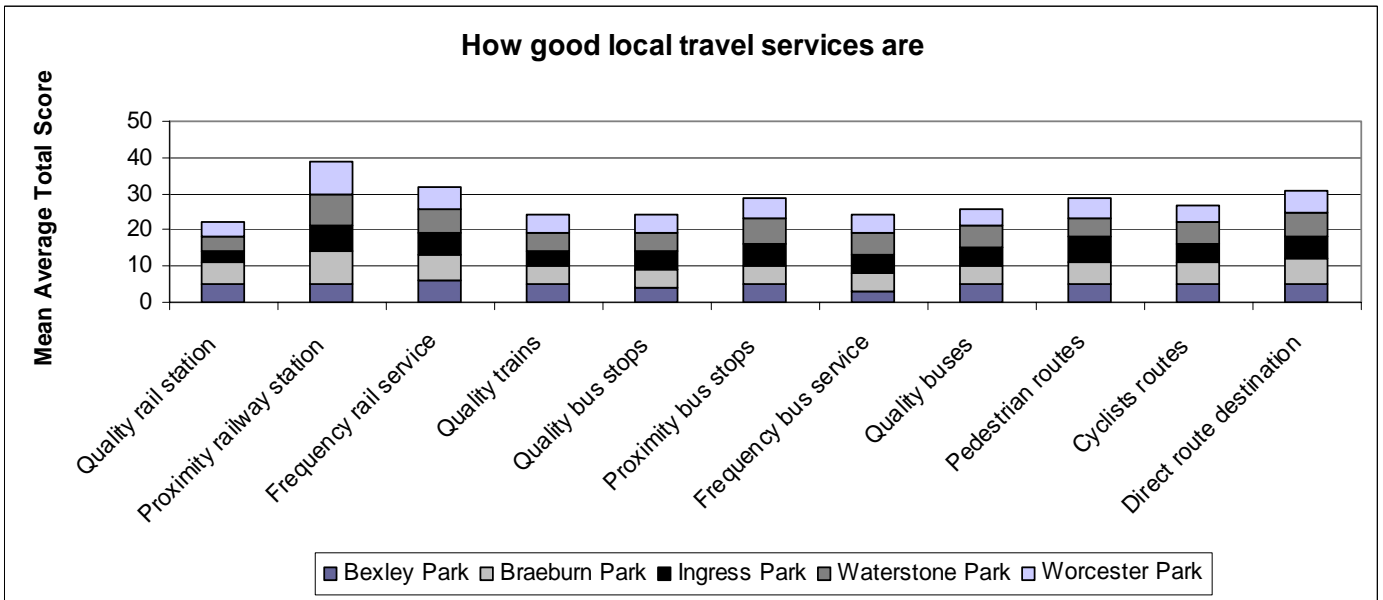


Chart 20 provides a visual representation of the travel services as the taller the bar, the better they are.

Chart 20



Question 13 Do you experience any of the following problems?

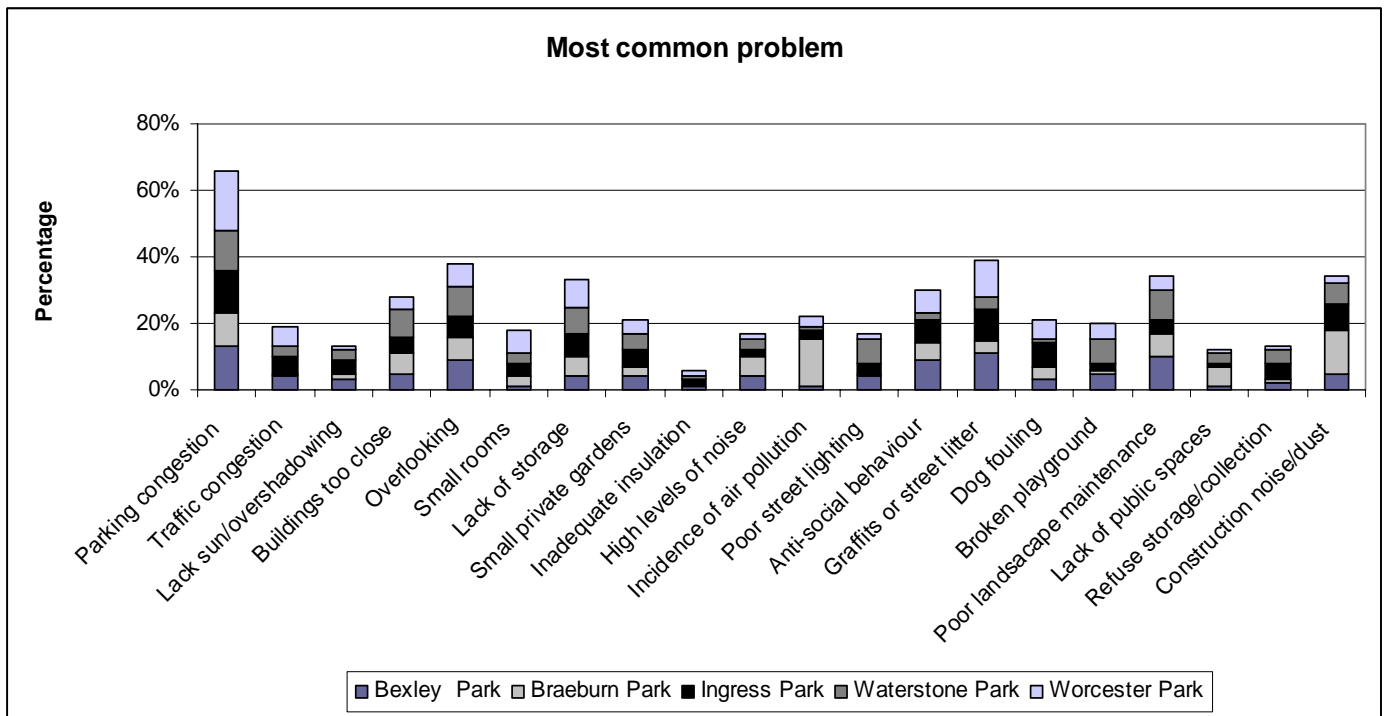
- 13.1 Numerous problems can be encountered living in the residential areas.
- 13.2 Car parking, pollution (at Braeburn Park) and buildings seem to be particular concerns.

There are numerous problems that respondents experience living in the 5 residential areas. Respondents were asked to choose from a variety of factors and they are shown in Chart 21 below and also in order of the most frequently sited problem listed first:

- Parking congestion on estate roads;

- Graffiti and street litter;
- Overlooking from nearby properties;
- Poor landscape maintenance;
- Construction noise/dust;
- Lack of storage;
- Fear of crime/anti-social behaviour;
- Buildings are too close;
- Small private gardens;
- Dog fouling;
- Incidence of air pollution;
- Traffic congestion on estate roads;
- Small rooms;
- High levels of noise;
- Poor street lighting;
- Lack of sunlight and overshadowing;
- Refuse storage and collection;
- Lack of public spaces and play spaces; and
- Inadequate insulation.

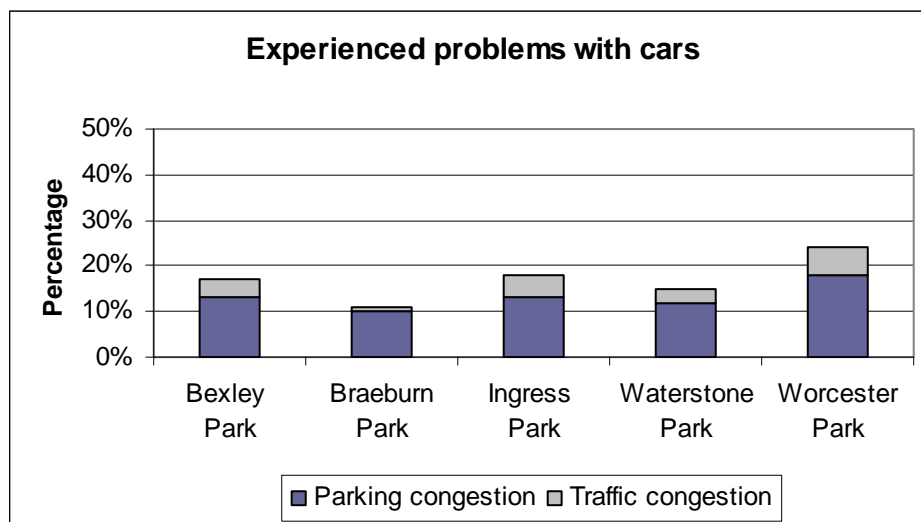
Chart 21



To assess further, these problems have been grouped and are considered in turn below.

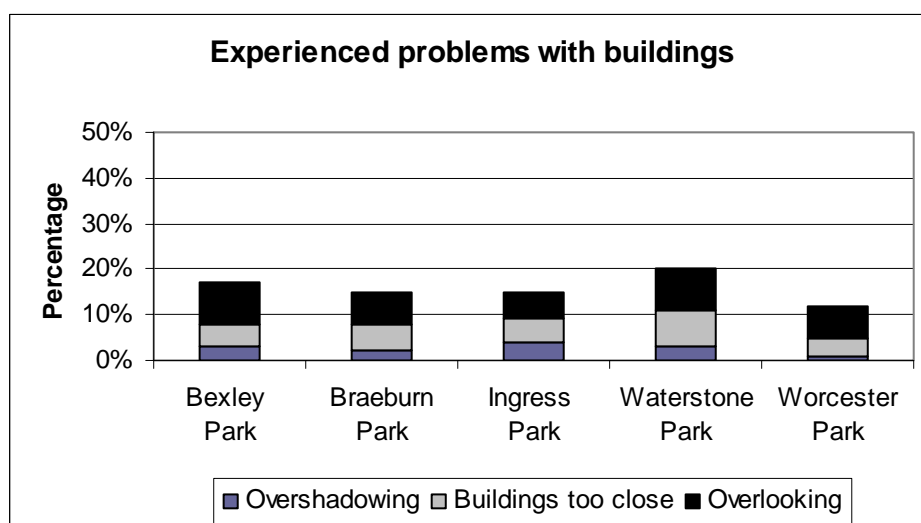
Chart 22 shows car related problems. Parking congestion is the worst problem for all of the residential areas, with Worcester Park being proportionately worse (18%) in this regard and Braeburn Park experiencing proportionately less car parking problems (10%). Traffic congestion on the other hand is much less of a problem.

Chart 22



In terms of building layout and density issues, Chart 23 shows that overlooking is a problem, particularly in Bexley Park and Waterstone Park at 9%. Worcester Park seems to have slightly less problems regarding buildings being too close (4%) than the other residential areas and for the residential area that seems to suffer the least from overshadowing is Worcester Park with only 1%.

Chart 23



In terms of space, Worcester Park seems to have proportionately more problems (7%) than the other residential areas, especially in relation to small rooms. Chart 24 also shows that lack of storage and small private gardens are experienced throughout all 5 of the residential areas.

Chart 24

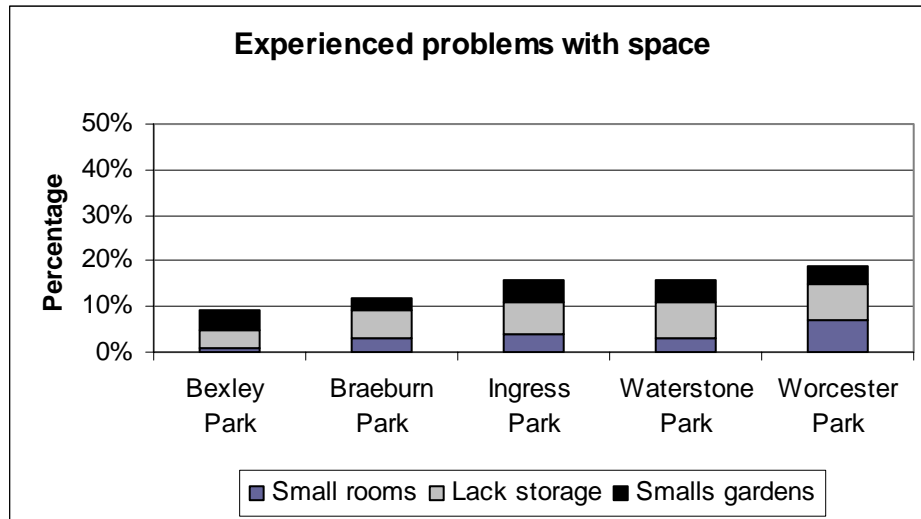
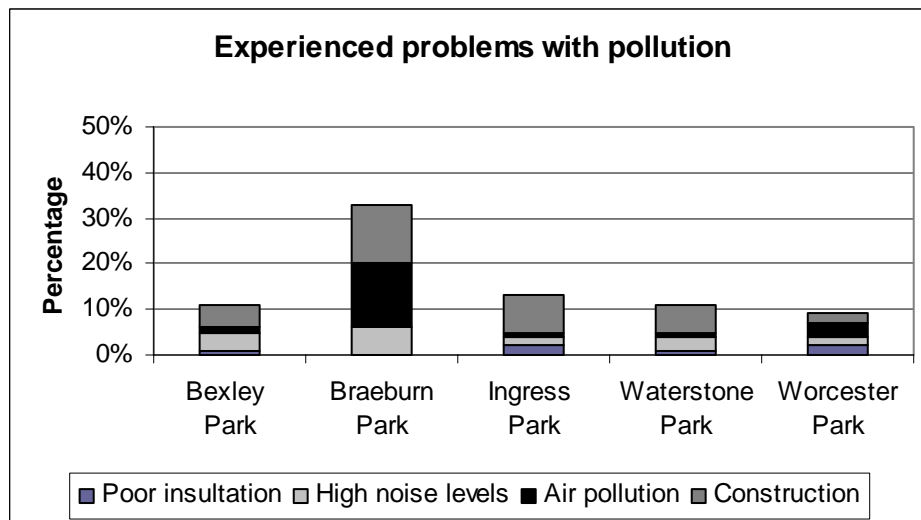


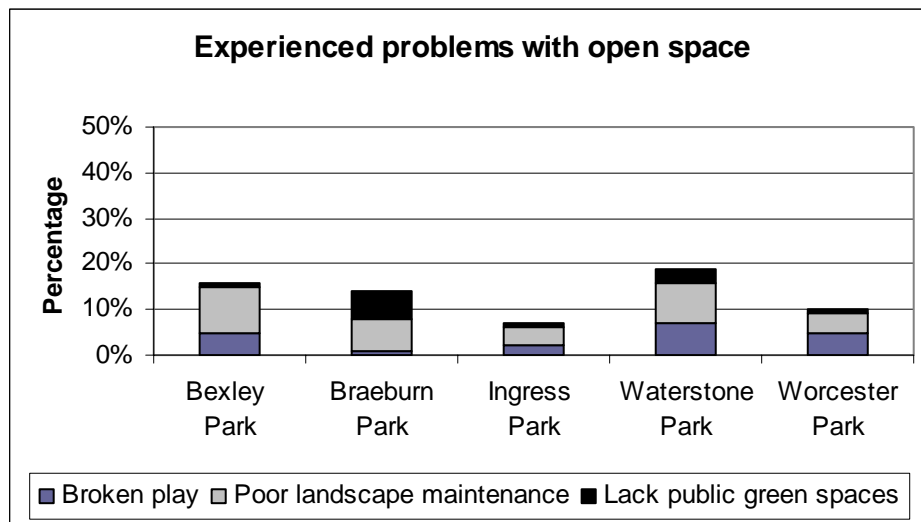
Chart 25 depicts respondents perception against pollution. It is easy to see that Braeburn Park experiences higher amounts of noise (6%), air pollution (14%) and construction noise/dust (13%).. Construction noise and dirt is also experienced in the other residential areas, especially Ingress Park (8%) and Waterstone Park (6%) as these areas have not yet reached completion and building works are still taking place. Respondents from Bexley Park also commented on this issue when asked about their dislikes.

Chart 25



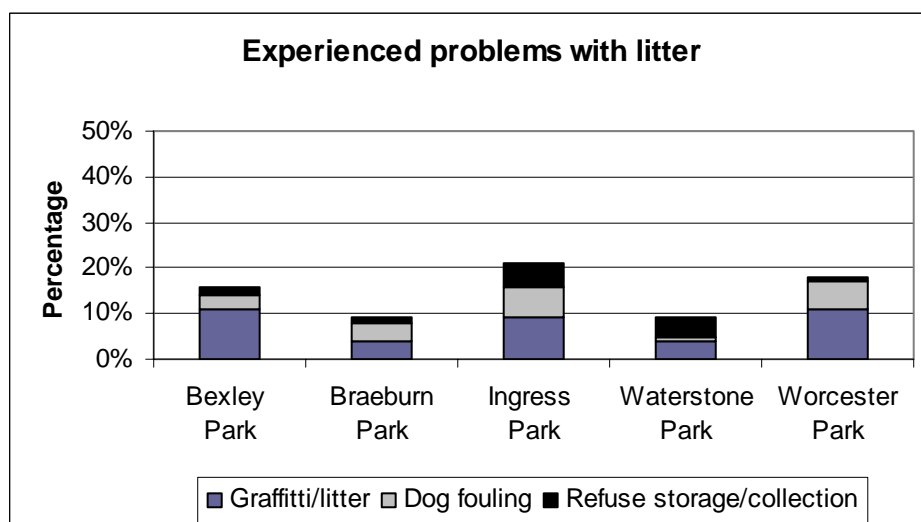
According to Chart 26, Waterstone Park has the worst problems relating to open space, particularly the broken play equipment with 7% a response. Poor landscape maintenance seems to be a problem particularly for Bexley Park (10%) and Waterstone Park (9%). Lack of green spaces seems to be less of a problem throughout the residential areas.

Chart 26



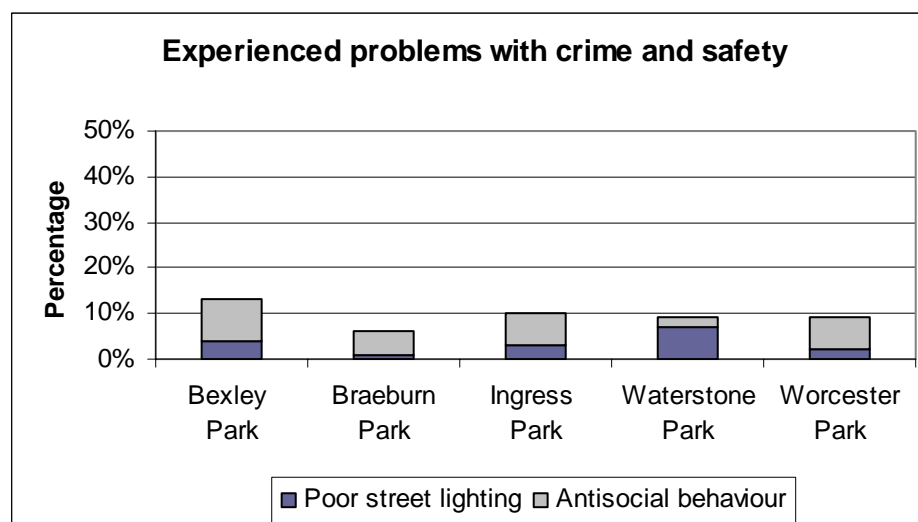
Graffiti and litter are a large problem, although to a lesser extent in Braeburn Park and Waterstone Park than the other residential areas, as can be seen in Chart 27. Bexley Park and Worcester Park both received 11% responses. Dog fouling seems to be less of a problem in Waterstone Park and it is a small issue anyway whilst Ingress Park and Waterstone Park have more of a problem relating to refuse storage at 5% and 4% respectively.

Chart 27



For the last category, Waterstone Park has significantly more (7%) of a problem with street lighting than other residential areas. Chart 28 also shows that there is an element of anti-social behaviour within the residential areas and that Bexley Park seems to be the worst (9%) in this regard.

Chart 28



Other concerns that were raised by respondents include:

- Traffic – driving too fast, traffic calming does not work, no road signs, only one entrance/exit to the estate;
- Maintenance – over priced maintenance charges, flickering and broken lights, poor quality entrances to estate;
- Refuse – no recycling facilities, no dustbins provided, no road sweeping, fly tipping, wheelie bins left out as eyesores;
- Construction – damage to property and gardens by builders, unfinished builders' work, construction noise at weekends;
- Amenities – unfriendly to wheelchair and pushchair users, lack of local shops, no post boxes, no newspaper deliveries; and
- Nuisance - off road bikes and mopeds, vandalism, burglary, drugs and drink youth culture, housing association tenants.

Question 14 What do you think about the type and quality of local community facilities and services accessible to you?

- 14.1 There are a range of mean average scores for different types of community facilities.
 14.2 Those that scored highest include food supermarket, trains and chemists.
 14.3 Those that scored lowest include elderly centres and youth centres.

For this question, respondents scored a range of types of local community facilities (in terms of their quality and availability) from 1 to 10. The higher the score, the better quality the facility. To compare the results for each of the residential areas, mean averages have been determined.

Chart 29 shows that the respondents rated the following types of local community facilities and services in the following order starting with the highest first:

- Food supermarket;
- Public transport – trains and local chemist;
- Communal green spaces and pleasant local walks;
- Public transport – buses;
- Local shops and places of worship;
- Local play areas;
- Health care and services, primary school and indoor sports centre;
- Secondary school and nurseries;
- Libraries;
- Community halls and adult education centres;
- Outdoor sports facilities;
- Elderly centres; and
- Youth centres.

Chart 29

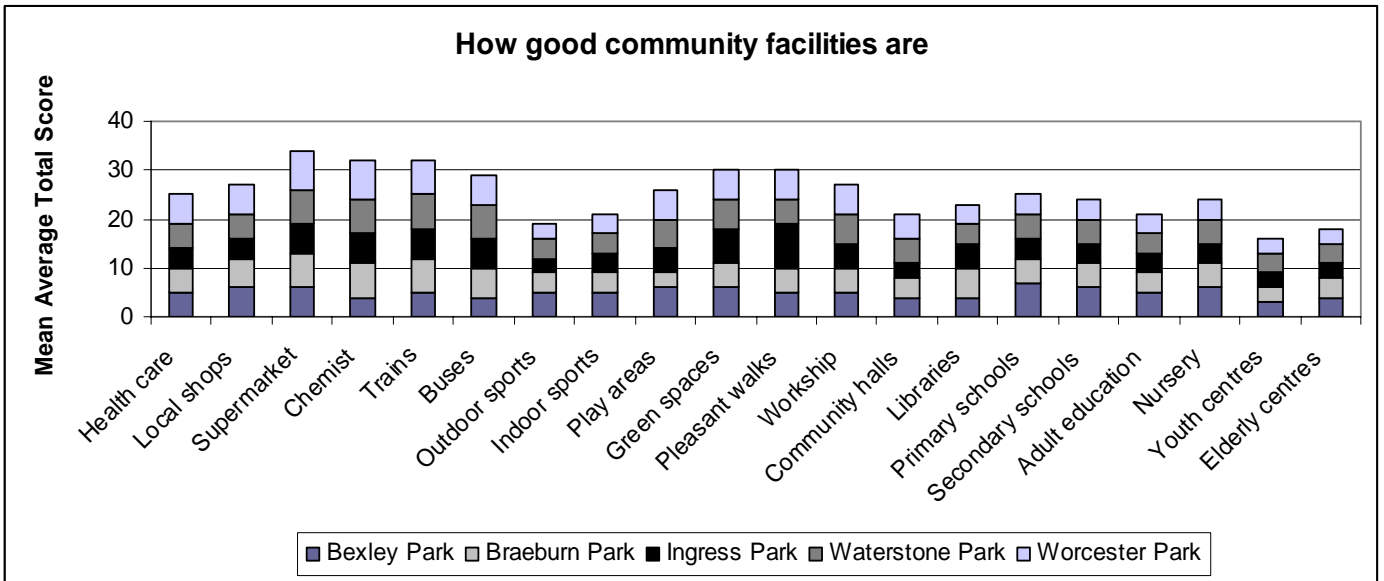


Chart 30 relates to Bexley Park. Primary schools rate the highest with a mean average of 7 compared to youth centres which are shown as a mean average of 3.

Chart 30

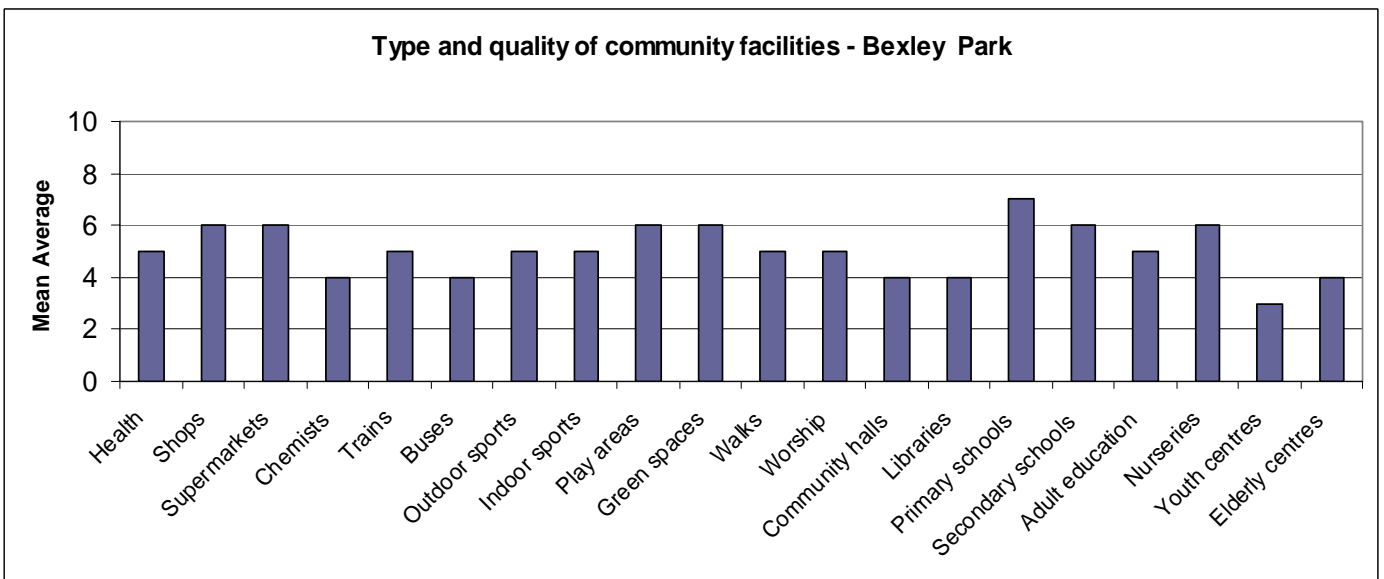
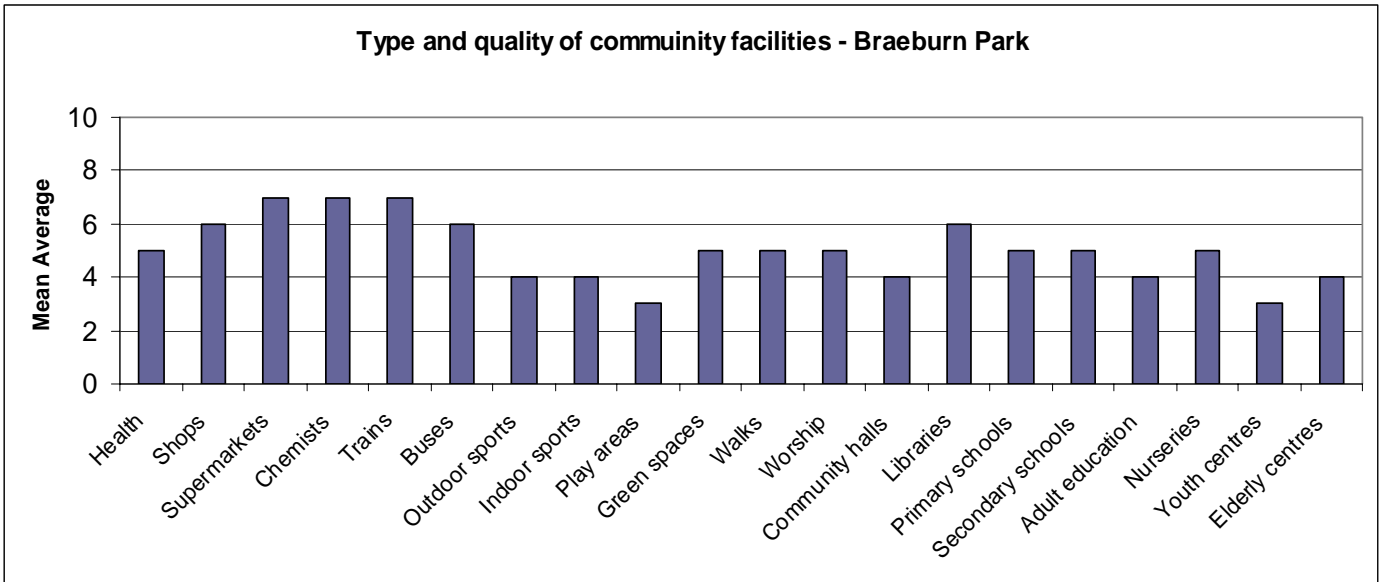


Chart 31 shows supermarkets, chemists and trains as reaching a mean average of 7 whilst play areas and youth centres only score a mean average of 3 for Braeburn Park.

Chart 31



Ingress Park facilities are shown in Chart 32, where local walks receive a very high mean average of 9 and communal green space is rated highly too at a mean average of 7. However, this compares with low mean averages of 3 for outdoor sports, community halls, youth centres and elderly centres.

Chart 32

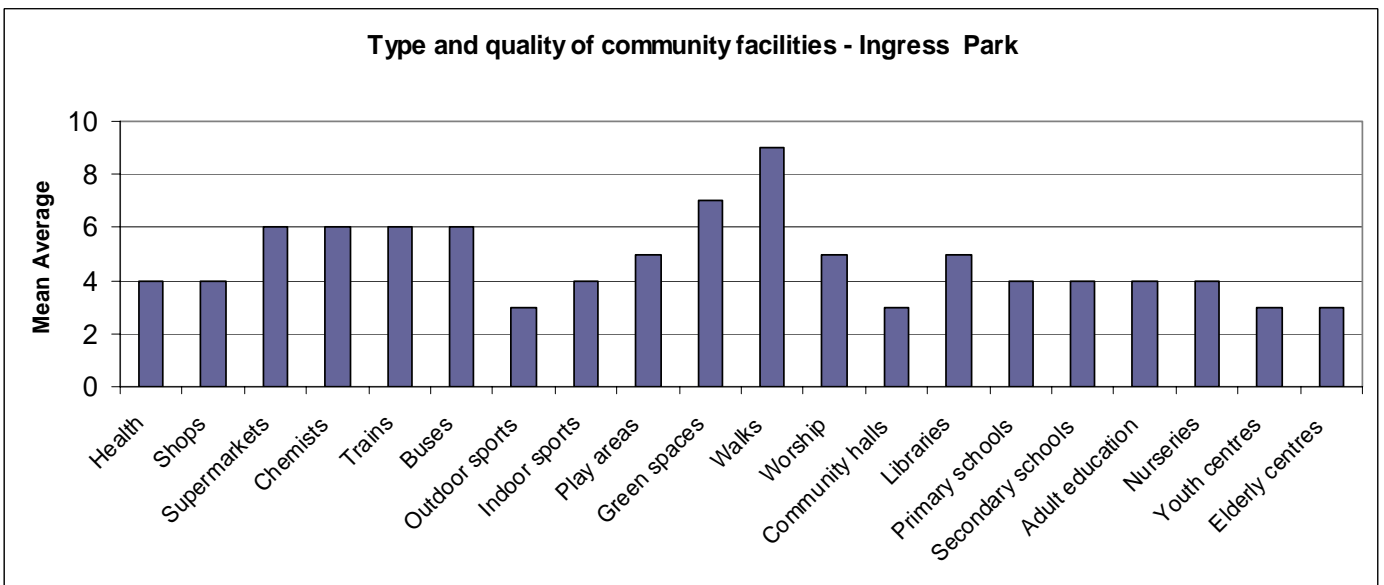
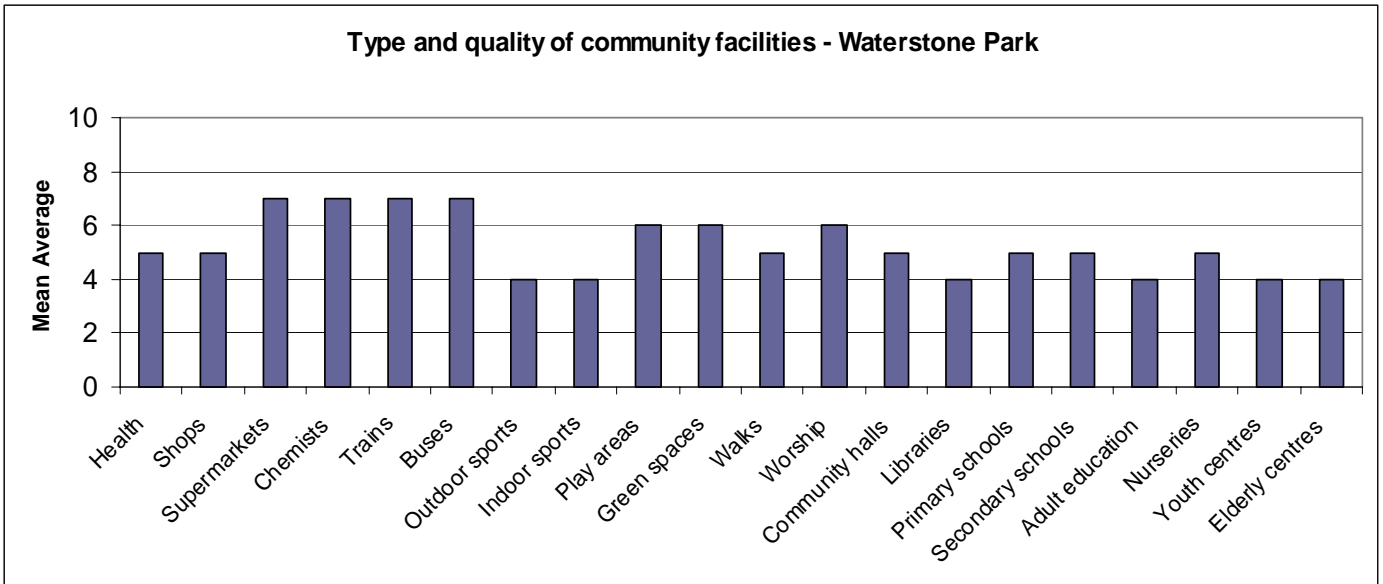


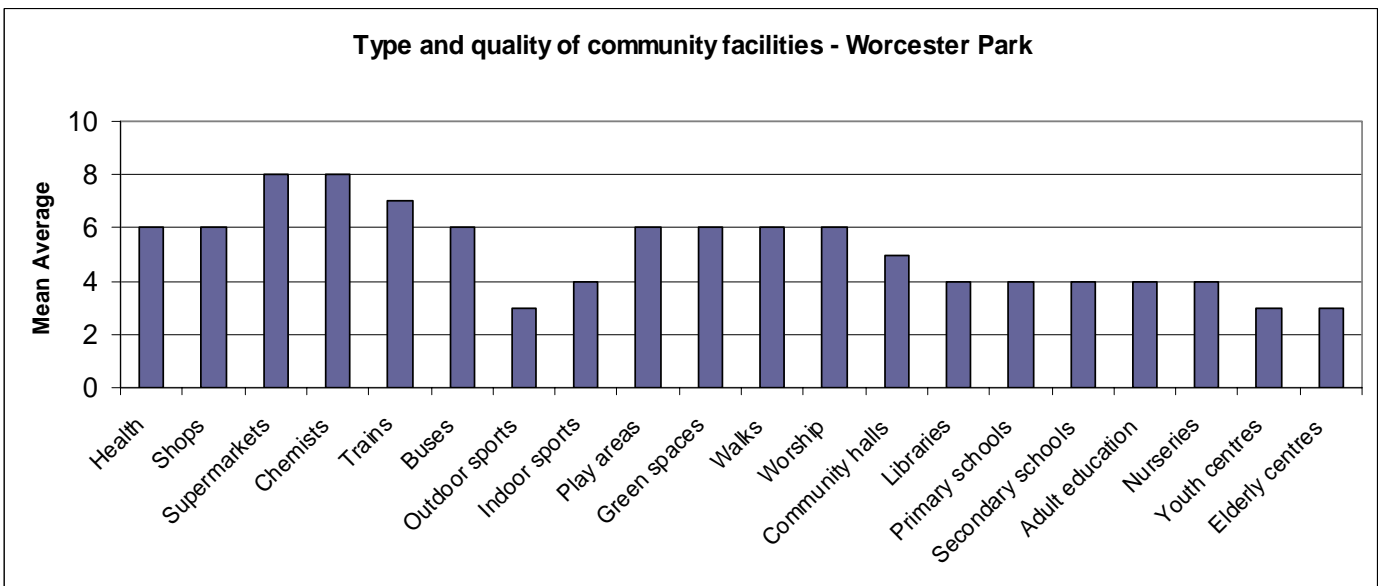
Chart 33 shows that the highest mean averages of 7 for Waterstone Park relate to supermarket, chemists, trains and buses and there are no mean average scores of below 4 for the rest of the community facilities.

Chart 33



Lastly Chart 34 shows Worcester Park, where both supermarket and chemists received a high mean average score of 8 and trains had a high mean average of 7. Outdoor sports, youth centres and elderly centres were scored with a mean average of 3.

Chart 34



When the mean average scores are totalled for each residential area, Ingress Park (95) seems slightly less satisfied with local community facilities than Braeburn Park (100), Bexley Park (101), Worcester Park (103) and Waterstone Park (105).

From the written comments received, some respondents are concerned that there are no spaces in local schools, making their children travel further to school. Other respondents felt that there should be more doctors surgeries and that more local walks should be provided.

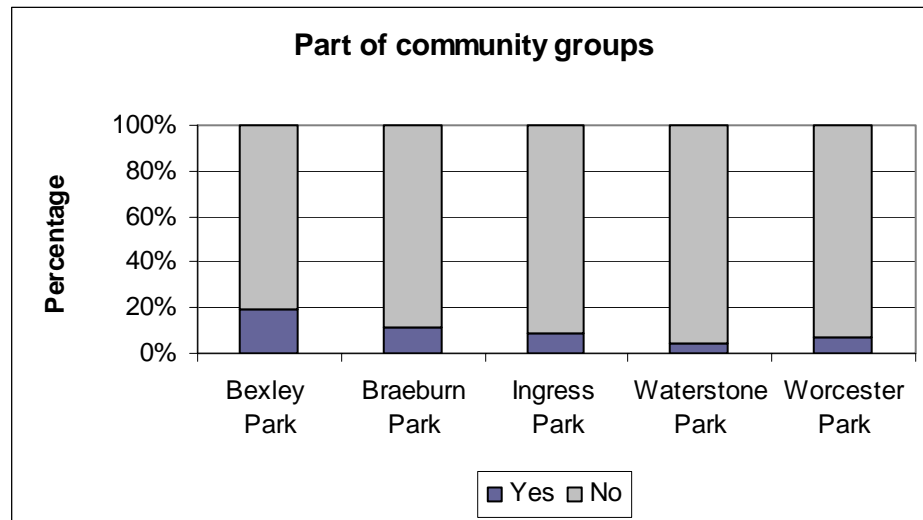
Question 15 Are you or your family part of any local community groups? If so, which ones and where do they meet?

- 15.1 Only a limited proportion of respondents are part of local community groups - the majority of respondents do not participate.
- 15.2 However, there are a range of local community groups that the minority participate in.

Overall, there is a lack of participation in community groups and all of the residential areas have over 80% of respondents who answered 'no' to this question.

It is evident from Chart 35 that Bexley Park has proportionally more (19%) respondents who are part of community groups.

Chart 35



Respondents mentioned that they are part of the following types of community groups:

- Neighbourhood groups - Neighbourhood watch, residents association, local churches e.g. Baptist, Catholic, St. Mary's at Stone, Samaritans, community hall, parent Governor of school, community and business forum, weightwatchers and citizen fellowship;
- Sports clubs - social club, badminton club, gym, judo club; golf society; football club; rugby club, bowls club, lawn tennis club, Next Generation club, sports centre; and
- Childrens' clubs - brownies, guides, beavers, rangers, youth centre, baby music group, Rainbow centre, childbirth trust, playgroup.

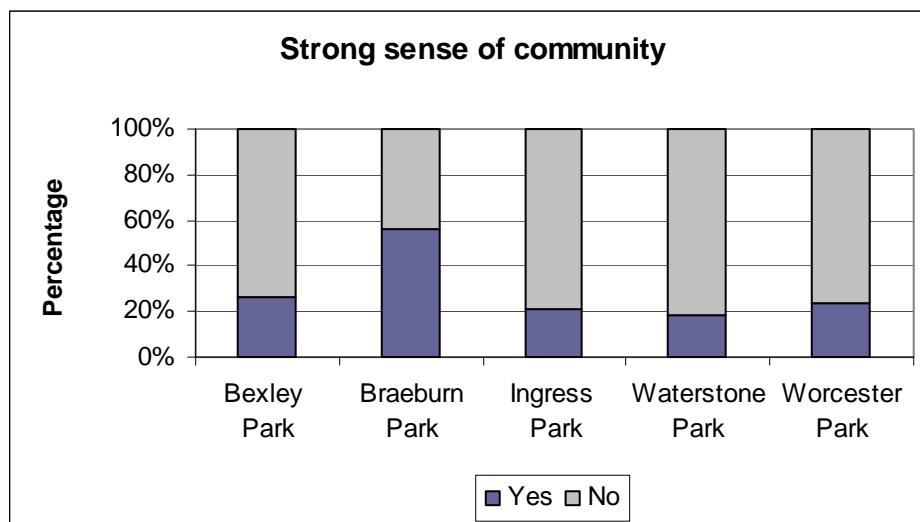
Question 16 Do you feel there is a strong sense of community?

16.1 The majority of respondents perceive there to be a general lack of community spirit in these relatively new residential areas.

A sense of community is a difficult thing to measure. Chart 36 identifies that the majority of respondents perceive there to be a general lack of community spirit with Bexley Park, Ingress Park, Waterstone Park and Worcester Park, all having a similar response of around 75%-80%.

Braeburn Park stands out from the rest of the residential areas as having a more pronounced sense of community at 56%.

Chart 36



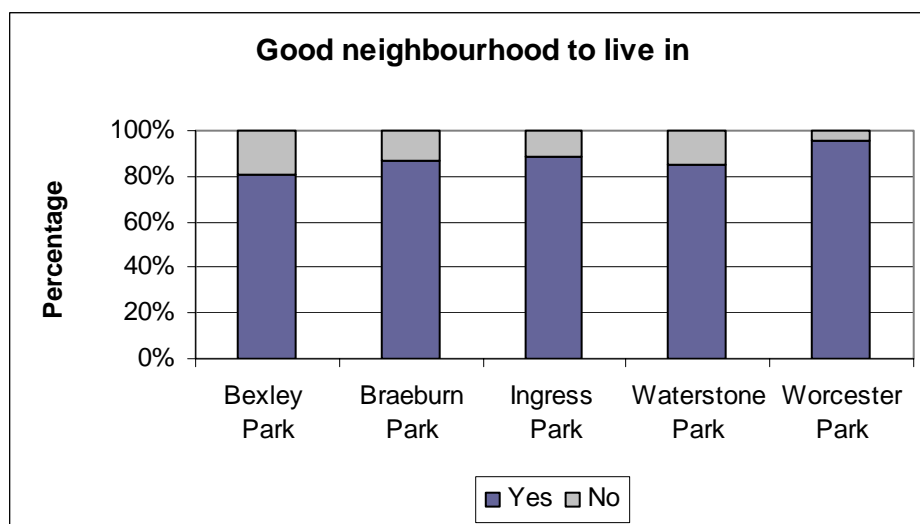
Question 17 Do you think it is a good neighbourhood to live in?

17.1 Overall, respondents feel that their residential area is a good neighbourhood to live in.

When asked if their residential area is a good neighbourhood to live in, the vast majority of the respondents said yes. This is despite the lower proportion of respondents who felt that there is a strong sense of community.

Chart 37 shows clearly that only a minority felt it was a bad neighbourhood and Bexley Park respondents were more of this opinion with 19% saying 'no' than the other residential areas. Worcester Park came out as being the residential area where the least amount of respondents said 'no' with only 4%.

Chart 37



Question 18 What are the three main things that you like?

18.1 There is an array of reasons why respondents like to live in these residential areas.

Respondents were asked what they most liked about their residential area and they responded with many different answers. Some of the most common ones include:

- Location – close to London, A2, M25, Bluewater, rail station, proximity to amenities and local shops, good access for work;

- Good environment – quiet, peaceful area, good neighbours, views, waterfront, pleasant surrounding environment, space between buildings, safe for children, new area, cleanliness and mature trees; and
- Property specification – individuality of homes, conservatory, garden, affordability, spacious property, park easily, modern houses.

Question 19 What are the three main things that you dislike?

19.1 There are many reasons why respondents do not like living in these residential areas.

Respondents raised a variety of concerns about living in these residential areas. Although there are too many to report here, a number of common themes came across in the returned questionnaires and these are listed below:

- Parking – general lack of car parking spaces throughout all residential areas, car parking along Steele Road in Worcester Park by commuters using Greenhithe rail station, car parking on estate roads by members of Bexley’s sports and social club;
- Surrounding environment – air pollution, noise and construction issues in Braburn Park as well as the incidence of graffiti and litter throughout all of the residential areas;
- Maintenance – inadequate upkeep of landscaped areas by maintenance companies and this is apparent for all residential areas except Worcester Park, poor building maintenance service provided by property and management companies, and this seems most apparent for Waterstone Park and Bexley Park;
- Construction – problems with construction refuse especially at Waterstone Park and Bexley Park, not receiving the facilities that were promised, e.g. the playground at Waterstone Park, the playground and the wildlife reserve at Braeburn Park; primary school at Ingress Park; and
- Nuisance - problems with anti-social behaviour and although present in all areas, this seems to be worst in Bexley Park, mix of affordable housing verses private properties at Bexley Park and Braeburn Park.

Question 20 Do you see yourself still living in the community in future years?

20.1 The general opinion is that respondents will stay in their residential areas about 2-5 years before thinking of moving on elsewhere.

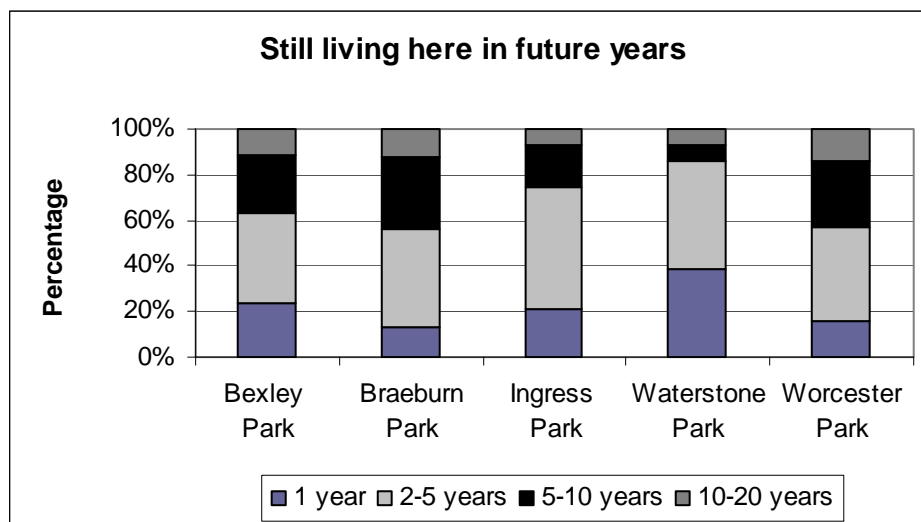
20.2 There may be a high turnaround in some of the residential areas.

The majority of respondents still see themselves living in the residential area for the next 2-5 years. Chart 38 shows that there is far fewer people willing to stay for 10-20 years.

Some significant findings include:

- Ingress Park has the highest proportion (54%) of respondents willing to stay for 2-5 years and the joint lowest amount (7%) of respondents willing to stay for 10-20 years;
- Waterstone Park has the largest proportion of respondents (39%) only willing to stay for 1 year but the majority (48%) of respondents from this residential area will prefer to stay 2-5 years; and
- Worcester Park, Bexley Park and Braeburn Park have an average range of respondents, all of which would prefer to be living in their residential area in the following order – 2-5 years, 5-10 years, 10-20 years and 1 year.

Chart 38



A few of the respondents are concerned that they will not be able to sell their properties, especially those living in Braeburn Park due to pollution.

Question 21 Would you recommend it as a place to live for others?

21.1 Despite the issues raised by the respondents throughout the questionnaire, a high percentage of respondents are satisfied living in their residential area, and would recommend others to live there too.

It is clear from Chart 39 that respondents are satisfied enough living in their residential areas to recommend it to others. Worcester Park has the highest rate of 93% whilst Waterstone Park and Bexley Park would least recommend other people to live there with 26% and 27% respectively. Given these figures it seems that the benefits of living in these residential areas outweighs the problems encountered.

Chart 39

