APPENDIX 5 - FUTURE WASTE COLLECTIONS AND STREET CLEANSING SERVICES: CONSULTATION FINDINGS REPORT

1.0 Purpose

1.1 This report provides a summary of the public consultation on future waste collections and street cleansing services that took place from 11 July to 21 August 2022.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 16 August 2021, as part of the Redefining Local Services report, Cabinet approved inviting tenders for the Integrated Street Cleansing, Waste Collections and Winter Maintenance Services Contract ("Integrated Contract"), with the new contract due to commence on 1 April 2023.
- 2.2 The Integrated Contract procurement followed the Competitive Dialogue Procedure, and following dialogue with bidders as part of the Invitation to Submit Detailed Solutions stage, the Council identified its preferred specification for the services ("the Preferred Service").
- 2.3 The Preferred Service includes the following proposed service changes that would directly impact the existing level of service received by residents in Brent:
 - A shift from weekly, commingled (single stream) dry recycling collections to alternate weekly, twin-stream dry recycling collections (whereby containers are collected one week and fibre – i.e. mixed paper and card – are collected the next)
 - A shift from a frequency based to an intelligence-led approach to street cleansing
- 2.4 The Preferred Service can be delivered within contract budget, with significant benefits to the climate emergency agenda, and in accordance with the National Resource and Waste Strategy that provides the future direction of related services and which focusses on reduced waste and promoting recycling and the circular economy.
- 2.5 It was necessary to consult with the general public on the Preferred Service while the proposals were at the formative stage. The consultation therefore needed to take place prior to the Council issuing its Invitation to Submit Final Tenders ("ISFT"), thus enabling officers to consider consultation responses and incorporate the feedback within the ISFT documentation where appropriate.
- 2.6 On 8 July 2022, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, approved the proposed consultation process and content set out in the Cabinet Member Decision report titled 'Consultation on future waste collections and street cleansing services'.
- 2.7 This consultation forms part of the Council's ongoing engagement with the public regarding the future delivery of environmental services, which started with the summer 2021 consultation on the Local Neighbourhood Services Delivery Model and was followed by the winter 2021/22 Let's Talk Climate, Waste and Green Space engagement.

2.8 The Council has since carried out a trial of the proposed recycling collections service from 3 October to 25 November 2022. The findings of the trial are being considered in conjunction with the consultation results summarised in this report.

3.0 Consultation Process and Engagement

Timing

- 3.1 The consultation ran for a period of six weeks from Monday 11 July to Sunday 21 August 2022.
- 3.2 The Council consulted at the earliest opportunity once the Preferred Service became known through dialogue, and for the maximum period while allowing time for responses to be considered and feedback incorporated within the ISFT documentation (where appropriate) for the Integrated Contract procurement.

Method

- 3.3 Consultation and engagement on the Preferred Service took place in three main ways:
 - Online survey administered via the Council's 'Citizens Lab' engagement portal, accessible to registered users
 - Public roadshows in targeted locations throughout the borough delivered by the Council's Neighbourhood Managers
 - Paper questionnaires delivered to the households of residents known to be in receipt of an Assisted Collections service.
- 3.4 The consultation was promoted via the following channels:
 - Full information provided on the Council's website and engagement portal
 - Full page advert in the summer edition of the Brent magazine, which is issued to all households
 - Emails to Brent Residents Associations, Brent-based fora (including the Disabilities Forum and Multi-Faith Forum), and other community groups
 - Letters delivered to households of residents known to receive an Assisted Collections service
 - Communications via the Council's core channels e.g. press release, social media accounts, and members' bulletin – including communications promoting the public roadshows.
- 3.5 An information document was made available to download from the Council's engagement portal which contained relevant detail on the Preferred Service and its anticipated benefits. This included alternative delivery options that were considered less favourable on affordability and environmental grounds.

- 3.6 The document was also delivered to Assisted Collections householders with their paper questionnaire, and Neighbourhood Managers were briefed on the content so they could inform those residents they engaged with through the roadshows.
- 3.7 A Council email address and telephone number was included with all communications allowing residents to contact the Council to ask questions about the Preferred Service, or to request further support with providing their feedback.

Online Consultation

- 3.8 The Brent website and 'Citizens Lab' engagement portal were used to inform the community about the consultation and how to get involved. The website included a link to the consultation page on the engagement portal, where stakeholders could download the information document and provide their feedback via the survey tool.
- 3.9 The online survey was made accessible only to registered users of the Council's engagement portal to prevent duplication of survey inputs. Registration to the engagement portal is free and easy to complete, requiring an email address for verification.

Public Roadshows

- 3.10 The Council's Neighbourhood Managers delivered fourteen (14) in-person roadshows to help reach residents who otherwise may not have engaged via online means. The roadshows also gave residents the opportunity to view an example of the proposed sacks for recycling paper and card, and to ask questions about the Preferred Service.
- 3.11 The roadshows were delivered at targeted public locations within each Brent Connect Area in order to encourage the involvement of a broad demographic cross-section of the borough's residents, including those who might not normally engage with Council consultations. A list of the roadshows undertaken, including dates and locations, is included at **Annex A**.
- 3.12 Residents attending the roadshows were invited to provide their feedback on a paper questionnaire available at each event, or to access the online survey via the engagement portal.

Assisted Collections Customers

- 3.13 Letters, paper questionnaires and a postage-paid envelope were delivered to those households recorded as being in receipt of an assisted waste collections service, on the basis that these households will include elderly and / or disabled residents who are less likely to use online means or be in a position to attend a roadshow to participate in the consultation.
- 3.14 It is also important from an equalities perspective for the council to capture the views of this group of residents due to the nature of the proposed changes to recycling collections which necessitate additional input from residents to separate their recyclable material at source.

4.0 Consultation Feedback – Summary and Approach

- 4.1 In total, the Council received 1,414 responses to the consultation via the three main sources described above, broken down as follows: 1,072 responses received via the Online Survey; 191 responses received from assisted collections households; and 151 responses received from the roadshows (completed paper questionnaires and those directed online combined).
- 4.2 Responses notably differed across the three sources, perhaps reflecting the style of engagement carried out in each. For example, online respondents were predominantly not in favour of the proposed changes to services, whereas roadshow and assisted collections respondents who, respectively, had the opportunity to view the sacks in person and received printed copies of the information document were generally more supportive of the Council's proposals.
- 4.3 Responses also differed markedly in terms of demographic representation across the three sources. In particular, in terms of ethnicity, a disproportionately high number of online and assisted collections respondents identified as White British (accounting for 43% and 45.5% of all respondents, respectively), while roadshow respondents were more evenly distributed in a way that reflects the borough's ethnic diversity
- 4.4 It has therefore been important when reviewing the quantitative data to consider both the combined and separate responses from each consultation source. The following section of this report will, therefore, present a separate breakdown of the responses to each question based on consultation source and an overall combined response.
- 4.5 The content of written responses was extensive and a broad range of views were expressed across all sources. Some common themes were prevalent regardless of source and these primarily related to the proposed method of recycling collections, the proposed sack for segregating paper and cardboard, and the level of resource applied to street cleansing. The following section of this report does not include the details of every written comment received, but will summarise the most common themes, accompanied by a brief commentary.

5.0 Consultation Feedback – Detailed Breakdown

Main Survey Questions

Q: How do you currently put out your recycling?

5.1 Respondents from all sources were predominantly from households whose waste is collected at the kerbside. This is understandable given the housing stock in the borough, and due to the fact that the proposed changes to recycling services will mainly apply to kerbside collections, rather than communal or flats above shops.

How do you currently put out your recycling?	Roadshow	Assisted Collection	Online	Combined
A - I put my recycling in a blue-topped bin,				
which I leave at the kerbside on my collection day	86.1%	94.8%	89.3%	89.6%
B - I put my recycling in a shared				
(communal) bin, which is located in the bin				
store area of my property	12.6%	4.0%	9.8%	9.4%
C - I put my recycling in a branded sack or				
bag, which I leave out on the kerbside in				
front of my property	1.3%	1.2%	0.9%	1.0%
Number of Responses	151	173	1072	1396

Q: Do you currently receive assistance from the council or its contractor with putting out your waste?

5.2 A smaller proportion of respondents overall stated that they currently receive an assisted collections service, which is reasonable given the number of residents known to be in receipt of this service. A notable percentage of assisted collections respondents stated that they do not receive assistance with their waste collections – this may be due to changes in circumstances at these households, such as new occupants. The Council is currently undertaking a review of its records with a view to updating them.

Do you currently receive assistance from the council or its contractor		Assisted		
with putting out your waste?	Roadshow	Collection	Online	Combined
A - Yes	13.3%	58.0%	3.6%	11.9%
B - No	86.7%	37.8%	95.2%	86.7%
C - Prefer not to say	0.0%	4.3%	1.1%	1.4%
Number of Responses	150	188	1072	1410

Q: Do you agree with the Council's Preferred Service for recycling collections?

5.3 As described at paragraph 4.2, responses to this question differed notably across the three sources. Generally, respondents who were able to view the sacks in person, and those who received printed copies of the information material – i.e. roadshow and assisted collections respondents, respectively – were more favourable towards proposed service than those who engaged online.

Do you agree with the council's				
'Preferred Service' for recycling		Assisted		
collections?	Roadshow	Collection	Online	Combined
A - Agree	68.7%	44.0%	18.3%	26.9%
B - Disagree	20.4%	37.5%	72.2%	62.2%
C - I neither agree nor disagree	7.5%	13.6%	7.3%	8.1%
D - I don't know	3.4%	4.9%	2.2%	2.7%
Number of Responses	147	184	1072	1403

Q: If you didn't agree with the Council's Preferred Service in the previous question, is there an alternative option that you prefer for recycling collections?

5.4 Of those respondents who answered this question, assisted collections and online respondents predominantly favoured maintaining the current weekly commingled recycling collection service, while roadshow respondents favoured the principle of twin-stream recycling collections, but preferred it to be maintained at a weekly rather than alternate weekly collection frequency. It should be noted that a small proportion of respondents who agreed with the Council's Preferred Service in the previous question, also went on to answer this question.

If you didn't agree with the council's 'Preferred Service' in the previous question, is there an alternative option that you prefer		Assisted		
for recycling collections?	Roadshow	Collection	Online	Combined
A - Maintain the service specification in the current Public				
Realm contract	29.6%	62.6%	59.0%	57.9%
B - Introduce fortnightly single stream (commingled) recycling collections	14.8%	5.2%	8.0%	8.1%
C - Introduce fortnightly twin- stream recycling collections	3.7%	4.3%	3.6%	3.7%
D - Introduce weekly twin stream recycling collections	37.0%	15.7%	19.8%	20.3%
E - Move to three weekly residual waste collections	0.0%	2.6%	0.9%	1.0%
F - Other (including a variation or combination of the above options)	14.8%	9.6%	8.7%	9.1%
Number of Responses	54	115	922	1091

Q: If you answered 'Other' to the previous question, please provide further detail on your preferred option for recycling collections.

5.5 The majority of respondents to this question did not propose an alternative or variant collection methodology to those listed A – F in the previous response. Most respondents used this section to qualify their previous selection, and to raise concerns regarding the proposed service (the content of which will be covered in the next paragraph). Where alternative collections methods were suggested, the most common proposal was to continue with the proposed twin-stream methodology, while using an additional bin rather than a sack to segregate paper and cardboard.

Q: Do you have any other suggestions to make on how your waste and recycling is collected?

5.6 The overall sentiment of written responses was predominantly negative towards the proposed recycling collections methodology. While some residents agreed with the principle of seeking to encourage more and better recycling, a range of concerns were raised. The most common themes are recorded in the table below, along with a brief commentary from the Council:

Theme	Council Response
Maintain the existing weekly commingled recycling collections service	This option does not achieve the stated benefits of the proposed service in relation to the environment and cost
Introduce the twin-stream recycling collections, but collect both material streams weekly rather than alternate weekly	This option would cost the council circa. £1.4m per year more than the alternate weekly service, and the additional costs are prohibitive without greatly impacting the likely return from the material income or improving recycling rates compared to the suggested service
Complexity of the new collections service may cause people to recycle less	A substantial and prolonged education and communication campaign will be delivered before and during the rollout of the new service, ensuring residents are fully aware of the changes and feel supported to recycle effectively
Concern regarding the capacity of the sack / reduced overall capacity for recycling leading to increased fly-tipping	The Council is carrying out a trial of the proposed service which will closely monitor the capacity of the sacks, the level of participation from residents, and the impact on recycling volumes and contamination rates. The analysis of these results will help us to determine whether any amendment to the approach will be required.

Concern regarding the availability of space within smaller households to store the sack and paper and cardboard	The sacks are designed to be durable and weatherproof. They can be stored inside (folding when not in use) or outside alongside other household waste bins.
Concern regarding the weight of the sack for those with mobility issues	Residents that receive an assisted collections service will continue to do so under the new service, and residents that feel they may need additional assistance will be able to request this from the Council who will assess need on a case by case basis.
Concern regarding the sacks being opened by wildlife	The trial of the proposed service will help us to understand how commonly this occurs. We do not envisage a widespread issue given that the main contents of the sack (i.e. paper and cardboard) should not be contaminated by food residues which attract wildlife.
Education and communication is needed to encourage and support residents to recycle more and correctly	The new contract will see the Education, Communication and Outreach function brought in- house, giving the Council much greater control around how this service is delivered in a way that best suits our communities.
Introduce communal, on-street recycling spaces to encourage further recycling	The Council currently offers community skip days in each Brent Connect Area, which allow residents to donate their bulky items for re-use by others. The council will also be trialling localised 'pop up' reuse hubs.

Do you have any other suggestions to make on how your waste and recycling is collected?	Roadshow	Assisted Collection	Online	Combined
Number of Responses	63	75	587	725

Q: Do you agree with the Council's Preferred Service for street cleaning?

5.7 Overall, respondents were slightly in favour of the council's proposals for street cleansing. However, as with recycling collections, responses to this question differed across the three sources, with roadshow and assisted collections respondents more supportive of the council's proposals than those who engaged online.

Do you agree with the council's 'Preferred Service' for street		Assisted		
cleansing?	Roadshow	Collection	Online	Combined
A - Agree	80.5%	60.8%	33.7%	42.1%
B - Disagree	7.4%	18.2%	45.7%	38.2%
C - I neither agree nor disagree	8.1%	13.6%	15.7%	14.6%
D - I don't know	4.0%	7.4%	4.9%	5.2%
Number of Responses	149	176	1072	1397

Q: Do you have any other suggestions to make in relation to how Brent's streets are kept clean?

5.8 Written responses demonstrated a mixed attitude towards both proposed and existing street cleansing services. Those who agreed with the Council's proposed service also generally advocated an enhancement of existing provisions – through additional sweeping resource, more on-street litter bins, enhanced education and enforcement, and improved reporting. Those who disagreed generally showed more scepticism towards the proposed intelligence-led approach, pointing to perceived failures in existing service standards and raising doubts about how the proposed changes would tackle these issues. The most common themes are recorded in the table below, along with a brief commentary from the Council:

Theme	Council Response
Concern regarding the current level of street cleanliness / deterioration of street cleanliness as a result of the proposals	The proposed approach will allow the Council to use cleansing resource more efficiently, in a way that provides better value for money.
	All roads will continue to be cleansed, including a regular sweep at the current frequencies in the busiest areas. Improved data capture and analysis capabilities, together with flexibility built into the contract - including the six rapid response teams tasked directly by the Council - will ensure the Council is better equipped to consider and respond to emergent issues.
Maintain the existing street sweeping regime	Existing street sweeping frequencies have not been comprehensively reviewed since the current contract was procured in 2014. As demand has changed over time, this has resulted in our limited resource being inefficiently allocated in certain parts of the borough. The proposed service will help remedy this by allocating cleansing resource efficiently and flexibly, and in a way that provides better value for money.
Increase street cleansing frequencies to tackle poor levels of street cleanliness	This option would require additional resource that would make the cost of the new service unaffordable.

Increase street cleansing resource and visibility on the ground	As above, increasing street cleansing resource would result in an unaffordable new service cost. However, a key principle of the proposed rapid response teams is a neighbourhood approach based on the five Brent Connects areas. This will ensure these staff are allocated to an area, allowing them to build up a stronger connection to their 'patch' and to be more visible to their communities.
Enhance resident reporting capabilities and improve awareness of these tools	We are working to improve our reporting tools for residents in readiness for the new contract, regardless of the final service delivery option that is chosen. Please keep an eye on future Council communications for further information in the coming months.
Enhance enforcement against those who fly-tip and litter	Our in-house waste enforcement team will continue to tackle the most serious offenders, ensuring they are held accountable for their actions. The new contract includes a requirement for the Contractor to assist the Council's enforcement activities through the checking of fly-tipped waste for identifiable information before collection and sharing this with our enforcement team for action.
Increase the number of on-street litter bins	While we have retained on-street litter bins for our high-streets and highest footfall areas, this service was previously withdrawn from residential streets as it was found not to provide value for money. It should be considered that on-street litter bins also attract flytipping, which lessens the benefits they have in respect of helping to alleviate littering.

Do you have any other suggestions to make in relation to how Brent's streets are kept clean?	Roadshow	Assisted Collection	Online	Combined
Number of Responses	68	87	678	833

Q: Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

5.9 Written responses in this section echoed the prevalent themes of the previous written questions. A number of residents expressed dissatisfaction with a perceived reduction in proposed service levels as part of the Preferred Service, while noting that their council tax bills are increasing. A small proportion of residents felt that recycling and street cleanliness should be a joint responsibility of both the council and its residents.

Response Locations

5.10 The maps at **Annex B** illustrate the spatial distribution of the 1,203 respondents who provided their postcode when completing the questionnaire. Interestingly, despite engagement regarding the consultation occurring borough-wide, the majority of respondents can be found clustered in the southern, more densely populated and urban parts of the borough. This perhaps suggests a greater level of engagement from residents living in south of the borough where properties are typically smaller and more likely to be impacted by the introduction of an additional waste container, and where roads are more heavily utilised and therefore likely to be impacted by changes to street cleansing regimes.

Equalities Monitoring

Q: What is your ethnicity?

5.11 Almost two thirds of Brent's population (64%) are from BAME (Black, Asian, and minority ethnic) groups. A further 19% of residents are from White minority groups (White Other and White Irish). The remaining 16% of residents are White British. Therefore, as described at paragraph 4.9, a disproportionately high number of online and assisted collections respondents identified as White British, while roadshow responses were more reflective of the borough's ethnic diversity.

		Assisted		
What is your ethnicity?	Roadshow	Collection	Online	Combined
A - Arab	3.6%	1.2%	1.3%	1.6%
B - Asian: Other groups	5.1%	1.2%	4.0%	3.7%
C - Bangladeshi	0.7%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%
D - Black African	9.5%	4.2%	1.6%	2.9%
E - Black Caribbean	11.7%	8.5%	3.0%	4.9%
F - Black: Other groups	3.6%	0.6%	0.6%	1.0%
G - Chinese	1.5%	1.2%	0.4%	0.6%
H - Indian	16.1%	14.5%	13.9%	14.2%
I - Mixed: other groups	2.9%	4.2%	2.4%	2.7%
J - Other Ethnic Group	1.5%	3.6%	3.4%	3.2%
K - Pakistani	3.6%	3.0%	1.9%	2.3%
L - White British	22.6%	45.5%	43.0%	40.9%
M - White Irish	4.4%	5.5%	5.9%	5.7%
N - White & Asian	2.2%	0.0%	1.3%	1.2%
O - White & Black African	1.5%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
P - White & Black Caribbean	1.5%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%
Q - White: Other groups	8.0%	6.7%	16.0%	13.7%
Number of Responses	137	165	830	1132

Q: What is your gender?

5.12 The gender split in Brent is 51% male and 49% female, with women making up a higher proportion of the borough's elderly population. There was a higher proportion of female respondents from all sources.

What is your gender?	Roadshow	Assisted Collection	Online	Combined
A Mala	47.50/	27.00/	24.00/	24.50/
A - Male	47.5%	27.0%	34.0%	34.5%
B - Female	51.8%	68.4%	53.5%	55.3%
C - Other	0.7%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%
D - Prefer not to say	0.0%	4.6%	12.1%	9.8%
Number of Responses	141	174	963	1278

Q: What is your age group?

5.13 There is generally a good spread of responses from across the 35 and over age groups, which is reasonable given an element of the subject matter relates to recycling collections and would be of most interest to homeowners and heads of households. There was a low response rate from younger people, however this is understandable given that the consultation did not target this group specifically, and younger residents do not tend to be responsible for putting out their household waste and recycling. There is a predominantly older response from assisted collections households, which is again understandable given the demographic.

What is your age group?	Roadshow	Assisted Collection	Online	Combined
, , , ,				
A - 0 - 15	1.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.4%
B - 16 - 24	9.2%	0.6%	0.9%	1.8%
C - 25 - 34	12.7%	1.2%	8.8%	8.2%
D - 35 - 44	23.2%	7.2%	21.7%	20.0%
E - 45 - 54	22.5%	7.2%	24.3%	21.8%
F - 55 - 64	15.5%	12.0%	20.5%	18.8%
G - 65+	15.5%	71.1%	23.6%	29.0%
Number of Responses	142	166	935	1243

Q: Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

5.14 The majority of respondents did not consider themselves to be disabled, with a greater proportion of those with disability being from assisted collections respondents. It should be noted that disability in this context could refer to either or both mental and physical disabilities. Around one in seven Brent residents have a long-term health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day activities in some way, and in this context the overall response is broadly reflective of the borough's demographics.

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?	Roadshow	Assisted Collection	Online	Combined
Y - Yes	9.2%	68.6%	11.4%	19.0%
N - No	90.8%	31.4%	88.6%	81.0%
Number of Responses	131	172	952	1255

Annex A – Consultation Roadshow Locations and Dates

Date	Ward	Location	Start Time	Finish Time
3 rd August 2022	Wembley	Brent Civic Centre	10:00	13:00
4 th August 2022	Sudbury	Vale Farm Sports Centre	13:00	15:00
4 th August 2022	Barnhill	ASDA	17:00	19:00
5 th August 2022	Alperton	Ealing Road Library	12:00	14:00
5 th August 2022	Willesden	Willesden Green Library	13:00	15:00
6 th August 2022	Kingsbury	Roe Green Park	10:00	12:00
9 th August 2022	Queensbury	Morrisons	13:00	15:00
		Gladstone Park, next to the Veolia		
9 th August 2022	Willesden	Depot, close to Kendall Road	10:30	12:30
10 th August 2022	Roundwood	Roundwood Park	13:00	15:00
11 th August 2022	Queens Park	Kilburn Library	12:00	14:00
15 th August 2022	Kilburn	Kilburn Square	10:00	12:00
15 th August 2022	Harlesden	Harlesden Library	14:00	16:00
17 th August 2022	Stonebridge	Hillside o/s Tesco	10:00	12:00
17 th August 2022	Willesden	Willesden Library	13:00	15:00

Annex B – Spatial Distribution of Consultation Responses

Fig 1: Consultation Responses - Online

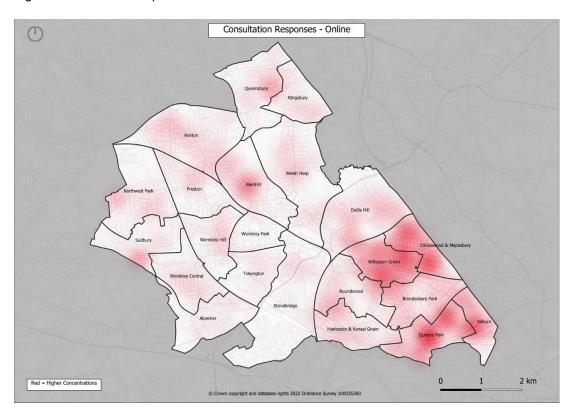


Fig 2: Consultation Responses – Assisted Collections

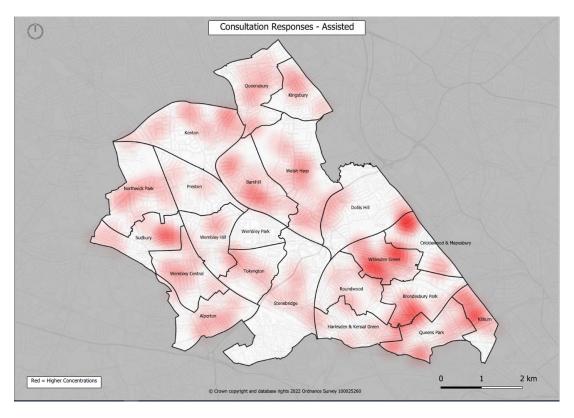


Fig 3: Consultation Responses – Roadshows

