



Final Community Action Plan for Newport Ward, Middlesbrough

February 12, 2016

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Introduction

The Newport Ward in Middlesbrough consists predominantly of terraced houses built circa 1900. The vast majority of residents in the Ward are not actively involved in any community activities in their area. It is well established that this is due to a general lack of self-confidence amongst residents, a feeling that they don't have the ability, knowledge or suitable mechanisms to engage and a fear of being seen to 'stand out', with the concomitant risk of retribution. A frequent response from residents is that they feel that 'things happen to them' rather than them having a positive involvement in issues that affect them and an ability to influence outcomes.

The area has a very high proportion of BME residents. There is little racial tension in the area but as elsewhere it has proved very difficult to bring together people from different cultures on a medium or long term basis. Hence the challenge of building and maintaining robust and self-sustaining community cohesion is high on our agenda. This is seen as a key in developing sustainable community engagement of the BME residents across cultural lines.

There have been several projects and plans for the area in the past that have sought to address and improve this issue but there has been very limited buy-in from the community.

It is now some years since a comprehensive survey of residents' views has been carried out.

We therefore wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to engage residents in the development and improvement of their neighbourhood.

We feel it is vital that residents take ownership of this plan and feel that they have made a valued and recognised contribution to its development. It is also important that they believe that Partners responsible for delivery of the plans objectives are fully committed to it and will be held to account if actions and targets are delayed or fail to be achieved.

An important aspect underpinning this is that whilst all partner agencies may be aware that there is a lot happening to improve and develop the area there are currently few if any ways of making residents aware of the work being carried out and the progress being made that residents view as effective, concise and credible.

Hence residents are (or feel that they are) faced with at least a threefold barrier to community engagement: a) lack of confidence/ability to engage, b) a feeling that even if they do engage little will be achieved and c) perceived/actual poor feedback and reporting to the community. This and the associated concerns results in residents being very reticent to report issues in their area. We have noted a general attitude of 'what's is the point?' This is particularly the case if an issues doesn't directly affect them or they are afraid of the possibility of retribution.

Streets Ahead deals with many residents every day and have developed a clear and detailed perception of the issues which they are facing. It was important none the less to try to gather their views, ideas and aspirations for their area in a more formalised, concerted and structured way in order to evaluate and test our understanding of resident issues and to assess how these might be changing.

Previous experience has shown that it is a very difficult task to gather detailed information from residents. However, our view is that by showing our continuing commitment to information gathering processes and demonstrating to residents that involvement in these processes has real and identifiable benefits we will help breakdown many of the barriers to long term community engagement by all sectors of the community.

A Snap-Shot of the Area

In 2004 a commitment was made to area regeneration. This plan included the demolition of 1700 houses. This was later reduced to 750 properties. This process is now in the closing stages with the final stage of demolition having started in November 2015. This has resulted in a transient population and a general deterioration in the appearance of the area.

The creation of the regeneration zone had an impact on the number of owner occupiers in the area in 2011. 32.5% of homes were owner occupied, 17.8% owned by Social Housing organisations and 49.4% were in the private rented sector. It is known that during the past four years the proportion of owner-occupier accommodation has reduced with an increase in the private rented sector. This has resulted in a more transient population. Property values have dropped and the low cost of rental properties in the area make it a very popular with landlords.

The area is a resettlement zone for the Home Office for people seeking asylum. In addition, the low property rental costs make this a very popular area for people who have moved from other parts of Europe and are on low wages.

The area suffers from high levels of anti-social behaviour. This can be result from, for example, addiction habits, noisy neighbours and fighting in the streets.

Over the past five years there has been one only occasion when the area has not been top of the Police's hot-spot list, this means that the area receives lots of attention (this is not the perception amongst residents).

Statistical Data for the Area

According to the English Indices of Deprivation 2015 Statistical Release of the most deprived local authority districts according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, and the 2010 Index in which local authorities are ranked on the proportion of neighbourhood in the most deprived 10% nationally, Middlesbrough declined from being number 2 on the IMD in 2010 to number 1 on the IMD in 2015.

Issue	Newport Ward	Middlesbrough	North East	National
People unemployed (Sept 2015)	7.8%	4.1%	2.6%	1.6%
Unemployed over 1 year	2.2%	1.2%	0.8%	0.4%

Source: Tees Valley Unlimited, November 2015

Crime

The crime analysis for Newport ward from Nov 2014 – Oct 2015 shows that the top four crimes were:

1. Theft - 567 (shop theft 231)
2. Violence - 491
3. Damage - 265
4. Burglary - 214 (access via door 109 of that 37 were walk ins, the remainder by force; ground floor rear window smashed 13; 49 insecure entries; 37 via front door; 16 rear ground floor window.

Source: Cleveland Police, November 2015

A full demographic and socio-economic make-up of the Newport Ward is attached in Appendix 1

Source: Middlesbrough Council website, neighbourhood statistics (ward profiles)

What We Did

We developed a task group to help develop and deliver the programme. We used the Communities First Panel as a starting point and invited new people to join the group to ensure a balance was achieved and that we covered the whole of the geographical area.

We invited as wide a variety of people as possible to become members of the panel. Those who actually attended included: 6 residents, staff from Middlesbrough Council, a Ward Councillor, Cleveland Police, Lifeline, 13 Group and local business representatives. Representatives of the panel met to develop a community questionnaire (attached as Appendix 2)

We had planned to launch the survey at a community gala in which we are involved but due to slippage in grant approval we were not able to take advantage of this opportunity. However, we identified another later open-community event at which we decided it would be suitable to launch the survey process. We attended this event to enable people to complete the survey form and to promote the survey to those who attended the event.

A prize draw was offered as an incentive for people to get involved. The survey asked (on a voluntary basis) for responders to give their address. Hence we have been able to analyse the survey results to identify any area hot spots or trends which would help in future planning.

Together with partner agencies we have taken every opportunity to issue questionnaires and to encourage residents to respond to the survey. Over 300 survey forms were issued with an initial response of 36 completed forms. Our experience is that although this seems a low number it was better than achieved by other previous community surveys.

It was noted that most of the replies were from owner occupiers, aged over 55 and from a white British background. As before it was clear that several sectors of the community had not responded in significant numbers. To address the response profile issues and to increase the number of responses the panel decided to put a flyer through every letter box in the area (ca 5000 in total) asking residents to come to a well-known local community centre to help us with the survey. Again a prize draw was offered.

We timed the event at 3pm - 6pm to allow people who are working during the day to attend.

The turnout was disappointing re-enforcing the reality of a low level of community interest and engagement.

Survey Response Data and Conclusions (summary)

The responses we received to the survey questions contained a number of themes that were of concern to the many of the respondents. These are listed below. A verbatim report of responses received is attached in Appendix 3.

Main themes included: -

- Feeling unsafe going outside after dark
- The need for more cultural integration
- The need to improve cleaning in the area and improve the environment
- A fear of becoming a victim of crime
- Speeding traffic along the main roads
- The perception that many residents do not care about the area they live in
- Private landlords who are not taking care of either their properties or their tenants

Changes that residents thought should be made to help the local area included:

- Better street lighting
- More visible policing
- The regulation of landlords
- Imposition of fines for environmental crimes
- Better street cleaning

Local Volunteers Audit

The survey questionnaire asked people if they would like to become involved in community activities and asked them to list the skills that could contribute.

Seven people stated that they were already involved in volunteering activities, and ten people stated that they would be interested in getting involved in community activities.

Specific skills and interests and the responders said they would be willing to contribute to their community included:

- Carpentry
- Working with youths
- Street cleaning
- Caretaker services

In-Kind Resources

The following local resources and community services have been offered for use for community projects, either free or discounted.

- Streets Ahead for Information – community-led residents’ information and resource centre
- Ayresome Community Enterprise – community building attached to a primary school
- Newport Hub – local authority community and resource centre

Composition of the Network

The Network was composed of representatives from the following.

- Resident representatives
- Streets Ahead for Information (community led voluntary organisation)
- Middlesbrough Council
- De Paul Foundation (specialises in supporting people who are homeless or are vulnerable from all sectors of the neighbourhood)
- 13 Group (Social Housing)
- Lifeline (works with people who are or have been alcohol or drug dependant)
- Cleveland Police

What the Neighbourhood Plan Group Want to Do Next

Having developed the Community Action Plan, the group is regard it as key that they maintain its momentum; breaking the trend of plans which in the past have been developed, placed on a shelf and never refereed to again.

To ensure that the plan is a viable working document the group have agreed to continue meeting to review progress. The plan manager will be attending a local Joint Action Group where all the statutory and voluntary groups who work in the area meet on a monthly basis to address issues. The Community Action Plan will form a part of their planning and will be actions taken will be reviewed and amended /updated as necessary.

The local authority will be developing a strategy document for the area in early 2016 and it is envisaged that this document will form the cornerstone of that development.

Newport Community Action Plan

Community Action Plan Priorities

As mentioned earlier there are several specific issues which have become the focus of residents' concerns. The Community Action Plan will aim to address these concerns in the ways shown on the following chart.

Community Involvement

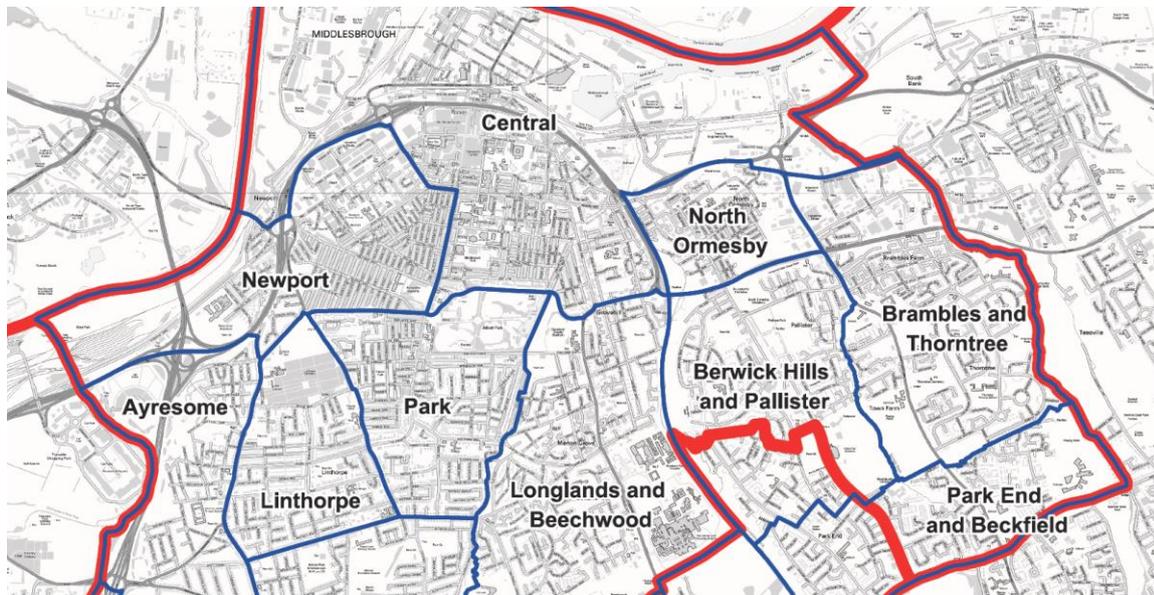
Priority Number	Issue	Action point	Responsible	Review details
Priority 1	Community involvement in planning	Group to be established between residents and partner organisations to meet to agree the final action plan and review progress	Streets Ahead for Information	The first meeting will take place in January 2016
Priority 2	The need to give residents a voice in local planning and developments	Involve more residents and businesses in Community Council Meetings	Newport Community Council Executive	Review March 2016
		Community Council Executive to investigate how to publicise the meetings more actively	Newport Community Council Executive	Review March 2016
		Follow-up residents who have expressed an interest in volunteering in the area	Streets Ahead for Information	Follow up - February 2016
Priority 3	The need for landlord registration and controls	A pilot project is operating in another ward in the town, the project team, will be invited to a community council meeting next year	Newport Community Council	Review Sept 2016

Environmental Issues				
Priority 4	Environmental issues - the need to improve the appearance of the area	Recruit more residents onto the Street Champions Programme	Middlesbrough Council to take the lead with other partner agencies to promote and maintain this initiative	Review July 2016
		Examine the provision of guidance leaflets re refuse and recycling in various languages	Newport Community Council, Middlesbrough Council, Streets Ahead for Information	Review July 2016
Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour				
Priority 5	A fear of crime and residents not feeling safe to go out after dark	There is a need to encourage and support residents to report incidents	Streets Ahead for Information to take lead on publicising and encouraging residents to make reports to their centre to direct to partner agencies	Review – February 2016
		Publicise the target hardening project run by Streets Ahead for Information	Streets Ahead for Information, Police, Street Wardens, Middlesbrough Safety Partnership	February 2016
		Issue of street lighting to be raised with the local authority to assess how this can be improved	Middlesbrough Council	February 2016
Community Cohesion				
Priority 6	The development of multicultural awareness	A group will be developed involving key stake holders in looking at possible cross culture activities and possible sources of funding. Examine linking into Gresham Community event in 2016	Streets Ahead for Information and Panel	Review Sept 2016

Appendix 1 – Newport 2015 Election Ward Statistics

This section provides a summary of information on the demographic and socio-economic make-up of the Newport 2015 election Ward within Middlesbrough. It looks at the population structure and provides information on the economic, housing and educational achievement of the Ward.

Newport is one of the 20 2015 election Wards of Middlesbrough. It has an area of 229 hectares which represents 4.25% of the total area of Middlesbrough

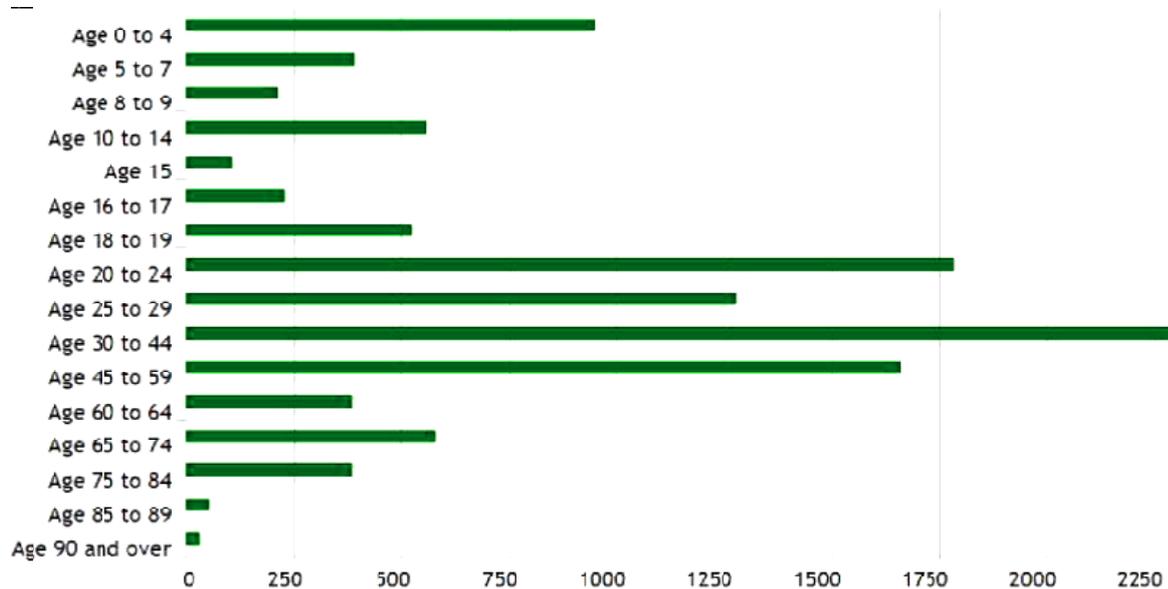


Residents – number and age distribution

Newport has a resident population of 11,440 which represents 8.27% of the total Middlesbrough resident population of 138,412. Newport’s population is 47.3% female and 52.7% male.

The mean age of the Newport 2015 election Ward population is 33 years compared to a mean age of 38 years for residents in the whole of Middlesbrough. The predominant age band in Newport 2015 election Ward is Age 30 to 44 which represents 20.11% of the population.

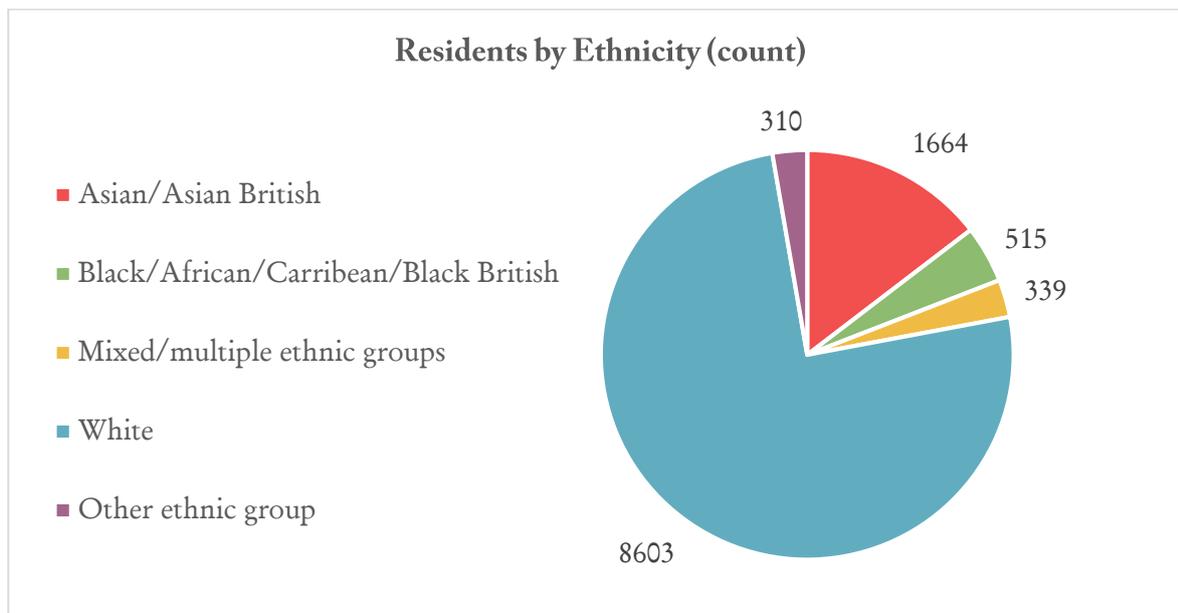
Age distribution



Ethnicity

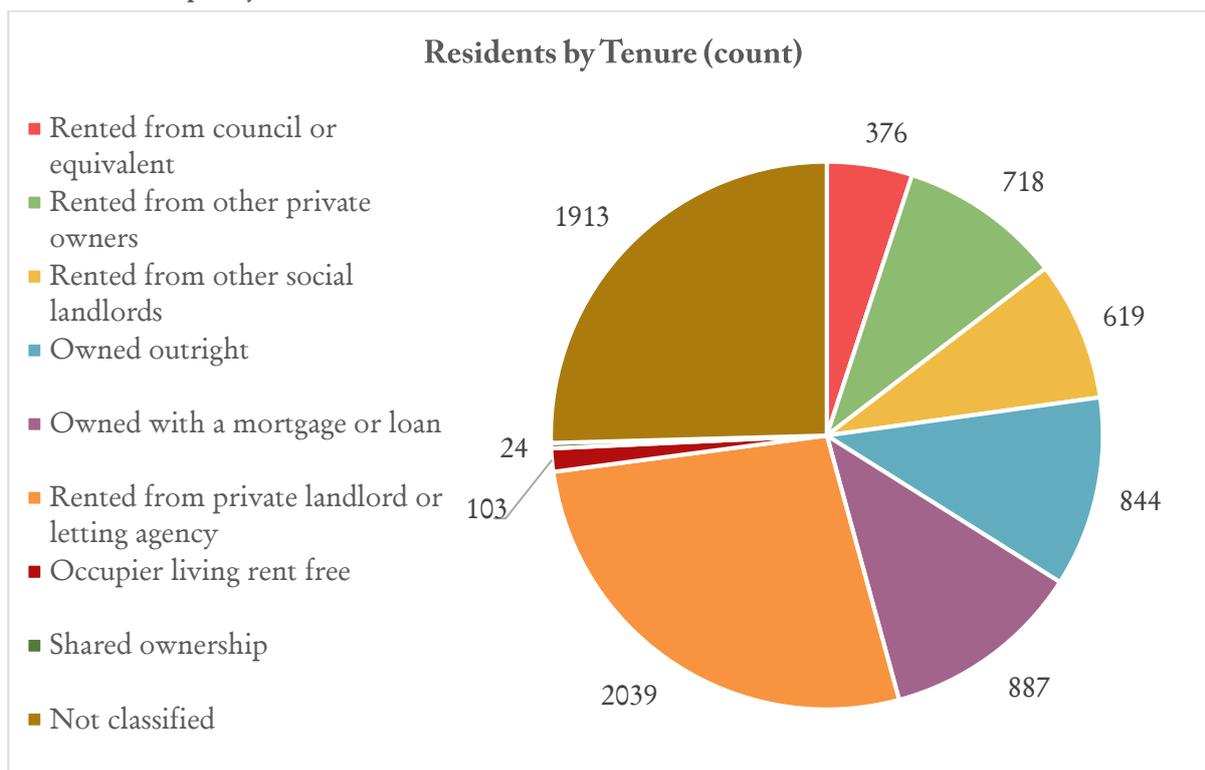
The largest ethnic group is 'Number of usual residents who are White' with 75.2% of the 2015 election Ward's population. That compares with a figure of 88.2% for Middlesbrough as a whole, 95.3% for the North East Region and 85.4% for all of England.

The second largest ethnic group is 'Number of usual residents who are Asian/Asian British' with 14.5% of the 2015 election Ward's population. That compares with 7.8% for Middlesbrough as a whole, 2.9% for the North East Region and 7.8% for all of England.



Households

Newport's 2015 election Ward has 5006 households, representing 8.75% of Middlesbrough's 57203 households. The household split by tenure is shown below.



The largest number of households lives in 'Number of all households - Private rented or Private landlord or letting agency' accommodation with 40.7% of the 2015 election Ward's households. That compares with 15.1% for Middlesbrough as a whole, 23.7% for North East Region and 13.6% for the whole of England.

The second largest number of households lives in 'Percentage of all households - Owned outright' accommodation with 17.7% of the 2015 election Ward's households. That compares with 30.6% for Middlesbrough as a whole, 27.1% for North East Region and 34.5% for the whole of England.

The 2015 election Ward has 740 households with dependent children aged 0 to 4. That represents 14.78% of the 2015 election Ward's households.

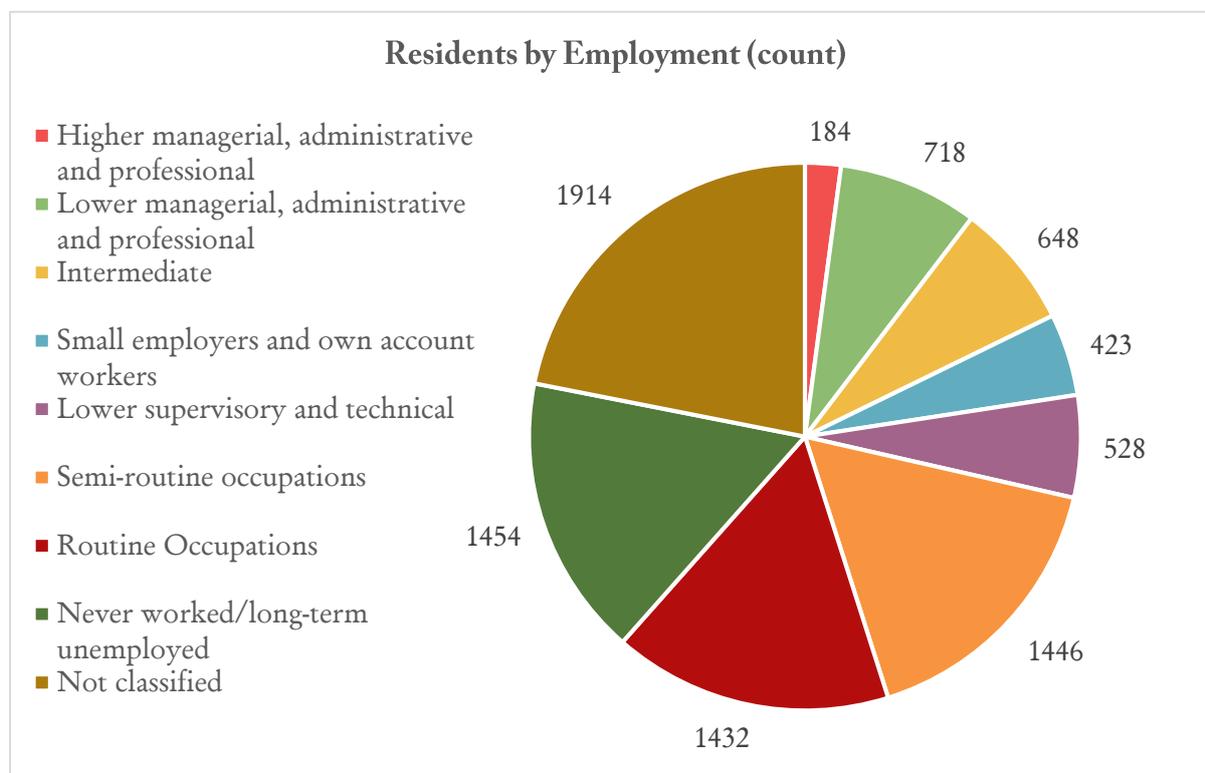
1,418 households in the 2015 election Ward have 'Dependent children in household: All ages'. That represents 28.33% of the 2015 election Ward's households.

Employment

The following chart provides a breakdown of the Newport 2015 election Ward by socio-economic classification for all residents aged 16 – 74.

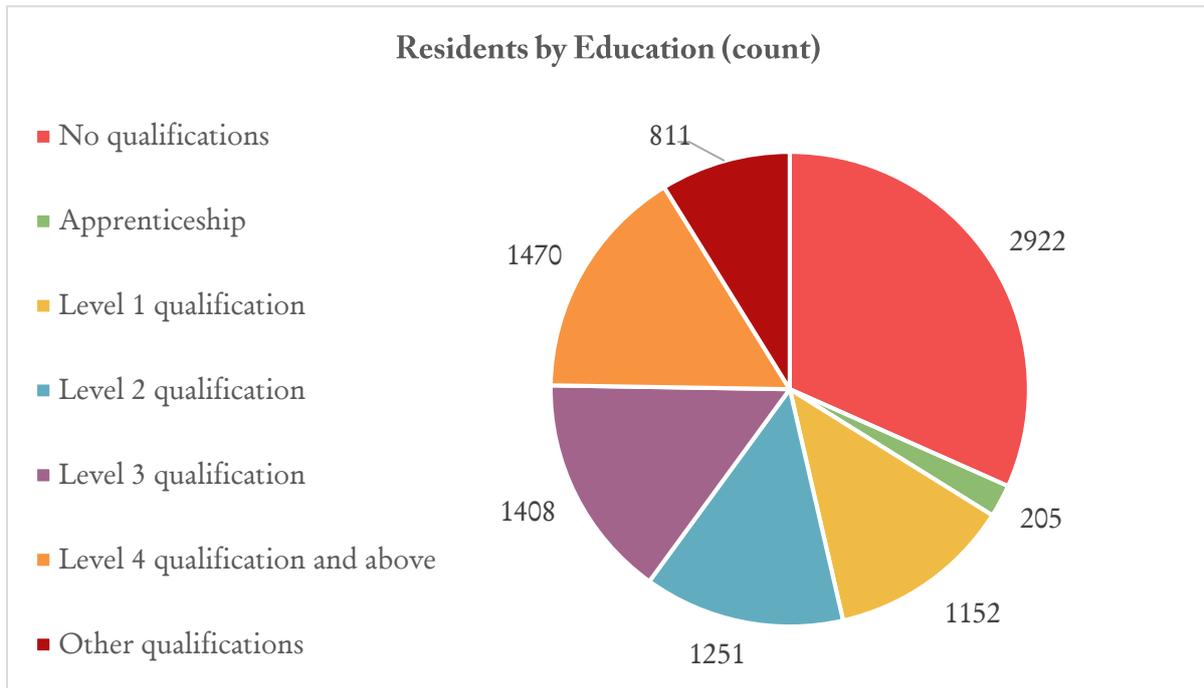
The National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) provides an indication of socio-economic position based on occupation. It is an Office for National Statistics standard classification. To assign a person aged 16 to 74 to an NS-SEC category their occupation title is combined with information about their employment status, whether they are employed or self-employed, and whether or not they supervise other employees. Full-time students are recorded in the 'full-time students' category regardless of whether they are economically active or not.

The largest group is 'Not Classified' representing 16.73% of the Wards population.



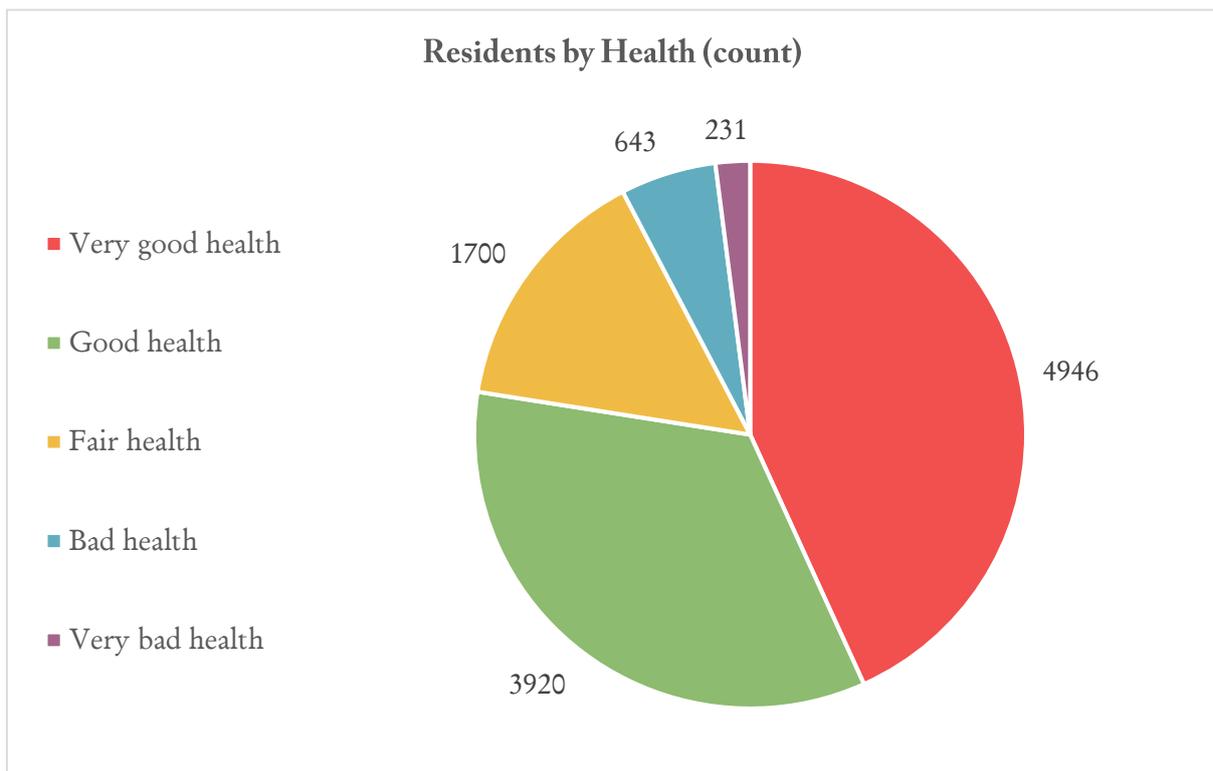
Education

12.85% of Newport 's residents have achieved level 4 qualifications and above compared to 27.40% in England as a whole and 25.54% of Newport 's residents have no qualifications compared to 22.50% in England.



Health

Newport has 643 (5.6%) residents that report being in bad health and 231 (2.0%) residents that report being in very bad health. Its ranking for the number of residents in very bad health is 14 (out of 20 2015 election Wards) within Middlesbrough.



Appendix 2 - Residents Survey Questionnaire

The 2-page survey document reproduced below was used as part of the survey of the Newport (Gresham) area of Middlesbrough. As described above the flyer was put through every letter box in the area (ca 5000 in total) asking residents to come to a well-known local community centre to help us with the survey.

We are carrying out a community survey to update our information on how residents feel about the area they live in. We would also like to know what you would like to see happening in the future. Everyone who participates will be entered into a prize draw to win shopping vouchers of the value of £50, £30 or £20.

1. How long have you been living in the Newport (Gresham) area?
_____ years

2. I feel very comfortable living in the Newport (Gresham) area?



Strongly agree	agree	neither agree or disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
Any comments:				

3. I feel safe living in the area?



Strongly agree	agree	neither agree or disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
Any comments:				

4. Are there any issues in the area that you would like raise?

Yes No

Problem: _____

Location: _____

Ideas for improvement: _____

Problem: _____

Location: _____

Ideas for improvement: _____

5. Would you like to get involved as a volunteer in community activities in your area?

Yes No

If yes what volunteering work would you like to do?

YOUR DETAILS – please provide details for entry into the prize draw

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email/mobile: _____

Age: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Completed forms can be left at Streets Ahead, 109-111 Parliament Road, Middlesbrough or Newport Community Hub, St Pauls Road, Middlesbrough.

Thank you very much for taking part in the survey.



Appendix 3 – Neighbourhood Questionnaire Replies

The questionnaire replies shown below are a verbatim report of the replies to the neighbourhood questionnaire that were received during the survey period.

How many years have you lived in the area?	I feel very comfortable living in the area (1 = strongly agree 5 = strongly disagree)	I feel safe living in the area 1 = strongly agree 5 = strongly disagree	Issues raises	Ideas for improvement
56	3	3	Young men hanging on the corners of Parliament Road Cars speeding down the parliament road hard to cross the road	More Police or streets wardens, they need moving on as they are very intimidating More speed ramps
28	1	4	I like my area but it is going downhill fast. Too many bad landlords putting people that don't care about anything or anyone, unkempt houses Never see a street warden or Police walking the streets and talk to people and to see what goes on street by street. I will not walk on Parliament Road after 3pm any day Not stopping at red lights near top of Longford street (Ayresome Street traffic lights) Speeding cars day and night (Ayresome Street)	Put cameras on. Start taking number plates down and give a fine of £1000 before a child gets killed, it's the only way to stop it. 3.30pm – 6.30 pm it very bad week days. More speed limit signs and enforce them with big fines
52	4	4	We have lost the community spirit Along with a lot of other people I don't feel safe.	People being made responsible and making landlords responsible for their tenants

			Bins – people not understanding what to do, litter everywhere along with cigarette end and bottles just thrown down	
31	4	4	<p>Too many ethnic people around, always hanging around the corners, produce all over the road that makes you uneasy, plus my car is bashed in through parking.</p> <p>Looking like a slum (Parliament Road).</p> <p>There are about 8 people just standing in Parliament Road and the streets.</p>	<p>Stopping selling cars on streets and road. Too many shops on Parliament Road, stop the people in groups hanging around the streets and roads.</p> <p>Get the Police or Wardens to sort things out.</p>
47	4	4	<p>I feel I have to watch where I walk because of the spit that is on the broken footpath also broken glass bottles.</p> <p>I feel intimidated and I don't feel safe walking on an evening.</p> <p>Foot path where they are uneven and the rubbish in the back alleys (Gresham Road)</p> <p>Private Landlords</p>	<p>Clean the streets, put fines out for people leaving rubbish in parks</p> <p>Make them clean and fix their homes</p>
40	5	5	<p>I feel very intimidated now; the area has really gone downhill. Rubbish everywhere, glass bottles smashed, I pick a lot up myself. No-one respects the area.</p> <p>I would love to move but we would get nothing for our house. Ayresome Park is used like a toilet and rubbish tip. Our alley has gone downhill, people do not put bags in bins and they cut the bags open and rubbish is everywhere.</p>	

			<p>Everything I wouldn't know where to start. Private landlords need to be addressed, we are getting all the worst people here and the houses are left to wrack and ruin. Ayresome Park needs watching - things in the park getting wrecked</p>	
47	5	5	<p>Too much crime and fighting</p> <p>Don't feel safe</p> <p>Fires in the back alleys (Harford Street/Essex Street). Had to call the fire brigade out twice.</p>	Cameras
76	4	4	<p>The area has deteriorated terribly in the last 10 years. landlords are getting the wrong people in to rent their homes. All they want is the rent. No pride is shown in their homes. If I was in a position to move, I wouldn't hesitate</p> <p>Don't know who is living in the street now, only four of the long term neighbours living in the street., the rest have move due to deterioration of the area.</p> <p>Fly tipping in back alley (surrey/Kildare street)</p>	
40			<p>Men playing football across the street amongst cars. Still like living in my house. We stay indoors after dark - it's not safe.</p>	
75	2	2	<p>Constantly annoyed about children kicking ball over my back wall.</p>	
68	3	3		

57	1	2	Have always loved living in Gresham all my family were brought up here. It has got much better over the past two years.	
48	1	1		
34	2	2	Drugs in Carlow Street.	More Wardens/Police on streets
4	1	2	I love my house and have lived here all my life. Yes, I feel safe here, however I don't go out alone at night.	
69	1	3		
28	3	3		
15	4	4	Too many immigrants. Feel intimidated. Feel lost in my own country. No Police to be seen. Gangs of immigrant youths. Drug dealers in Kildare Street.	Police raids, need moving on
41	2	3	Middlesbrough Council.	Cleaning of area.
50	2	2		
31	2	2		
3	2	2		
52	4	4	The area is totally changed would not go out in the dark.	
18	4	4		
55	4	4	Do not go out after dark.	
15	4	4	Lots of ethnic people standing in groups on Parliament Road, makes you feel intimidated.	

			Shops selling cigarettes under the counters. Drug dealers in Kildare Street.	Raid the houses. Get more Police
41	2	3	Middlesbrough Council.	Clean the area.
5	3	3	Problems in the street always none stop.	It needs to be done now not later.
15	3	4	Some residents are annoying and they disregard others, throwing refuse in alleys and entrances. Used to feel safe - not now.	
60	3	2	Sometimes noise but not at the moment.	
3	2	2	No where kids can play.	New play area in west lane area.
22	3	3	Rubbish and empty properties.	Remove rubbish and check condition of empty properties.
8	2	2		
16	5	5	Unoccupied houses on Union Street.	
3	1	2		
9	2	2		
5	2	4		
11	4	4	On an evening foreign nationals stand on the corners and I don't feel safe on my own front. Walking to local amenities feels as though I am watched or followed.	
25	1	2	Will feel less safe when the houses behind my house are demolished and there is no sealed alley way.	Stop the demolition.

30	1	1	Lights have been dimmed so it is dangerous to go out at nights. Cars parking in Union Street and Diamond Street most taking up pavement. Leaves and rubbish in street need cleaning up	Put street lights back to full power. Clean the place up (Wentworth Street) and put tickets on cars that shouldn't be there.
67	2	2		
18mth	1	2	Good people, Quiet area	
1	1	1	Good area	