

Armstrong Street Survey Report
(Draft)



Contents

3. Introduction/Key Findings

4. Question analysis

Introduction

This report will be looking at the comments raised by residents from Armstrong Street and the surrounding area in Bensham, Gateshead.

The report looks at issues involving community safety, crime and the fear of crime in this area. Neighbourhood Wardens who operate in this area collected the information from residents by conducting face-to-face interviews.

Some of the answers to the following questions have been grouped as to allow the analysis to be carried out. A list of all telephone numbers and address can be found at the end of the document.

There were 82 residents able to answer the surveys, 105 properties were empty, 1 resident wasn't interested and 1 property had a tenant but they were rarely at home.

Each question will be calculated through a percentage of frequencies from all the surveys collated.

Key Findings

The most notable theme that runs throughout this document is the inclusion of Armstrong Street within all questions asked.

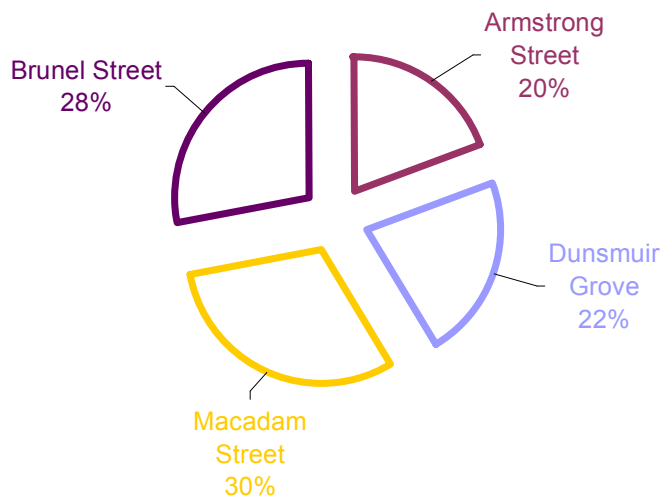
A large part of the responses from residents tells us that Armstrong Street has a mixture of 'troublesome' tenants and many empty properties. This has provoked a mixed reaction from the tenants, as some believe this is the main problem of disorder etc in their area.

A worrying fact found within the document is that just over half of respondents would call the appropriate agency if they needed to or witnessed an incident. This shows the fear some residents do show in matters like this due to the fear of crime in this area.

Youths congregating are also a large part of the answers given to questions throughout this document, as some residents are scared of leaving the house or travelling to certain areas if there are large groups of young people in this area.

Address

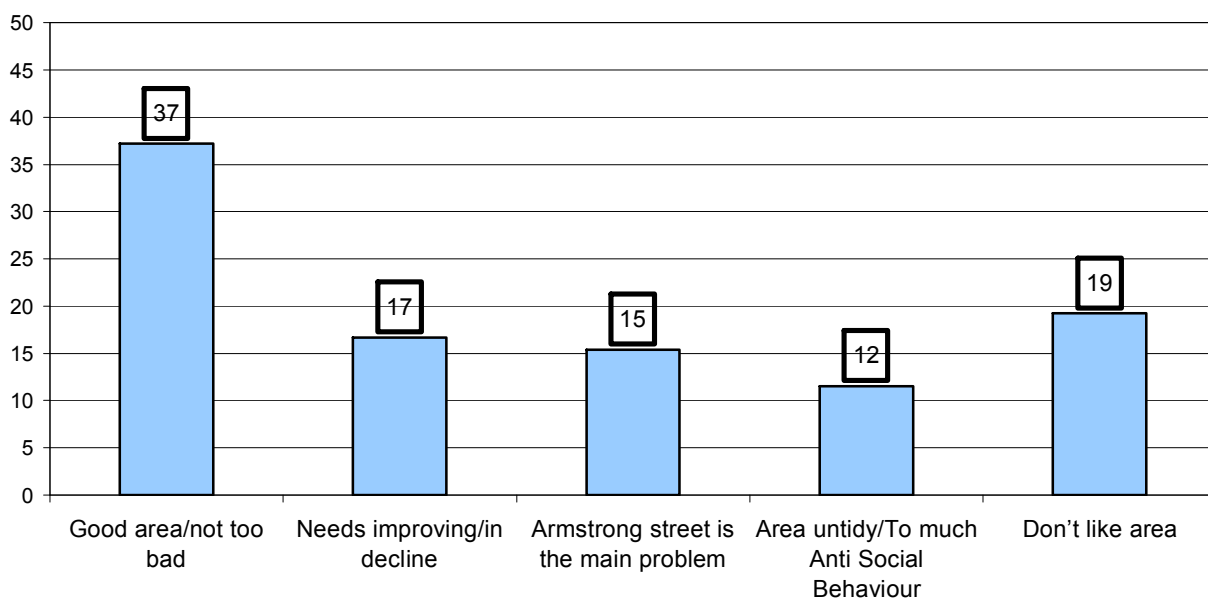
This will show out of the 82 surveys completed the percentage that came from each street involved.



The graph shows that the majority of residents able to give their views on Armstrong Street came from Macadam Street, with 30%. Armstrong Street itself gave the lowest response with only 20%. The figures will be representative of the empty properties in this area also.

What are your views on living in this area?

This question was answered by 81 of the residents surveyed. 1 resident did not answer.



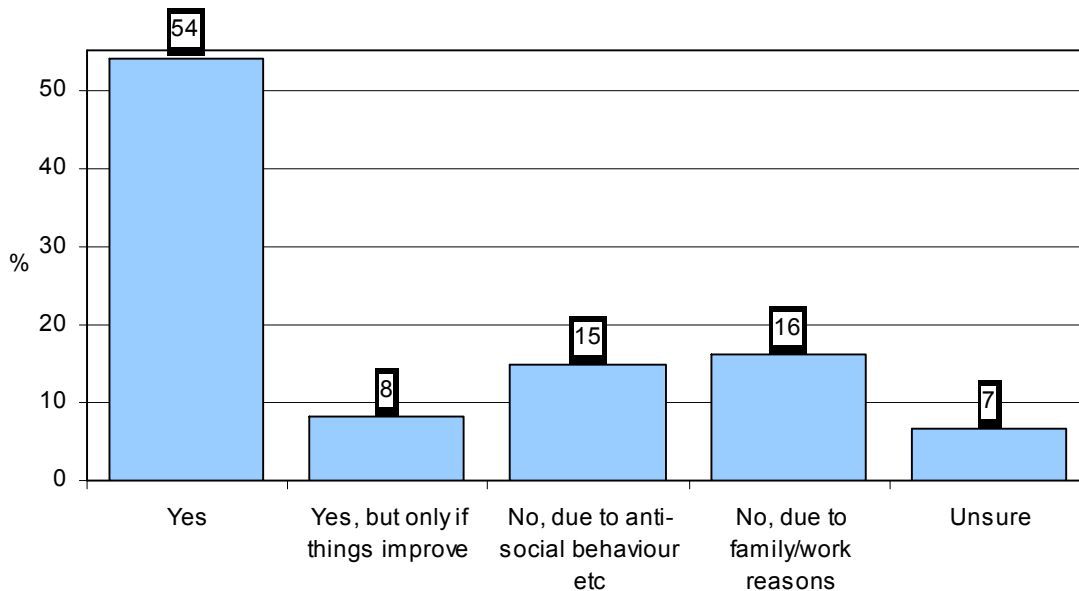
According to the majority of residents, the area as a whole is good/ not too bad, with 37% of respondents saying this. 19% say they don't like the area at all, one quoted saying they 'dislike it immensely'.

Armstrong Street is the only specific area singled out by respondents. Some people mentioned the problem with youths, just in the Armstrong street area also as well as drug users/dealers in this street also.

Overall the views of the area are ok, with Armstrong Street being the main cause for concern due to residents and the demeanour of the street itself.

Are you planning on staying at this residence in the long term?

80 respondents answered this question. Two left this question blank.



54% of the residents surveyed said they will be staying in this area. Some saying they have lived here for over 50 years, with others saying they have no problems with the area.

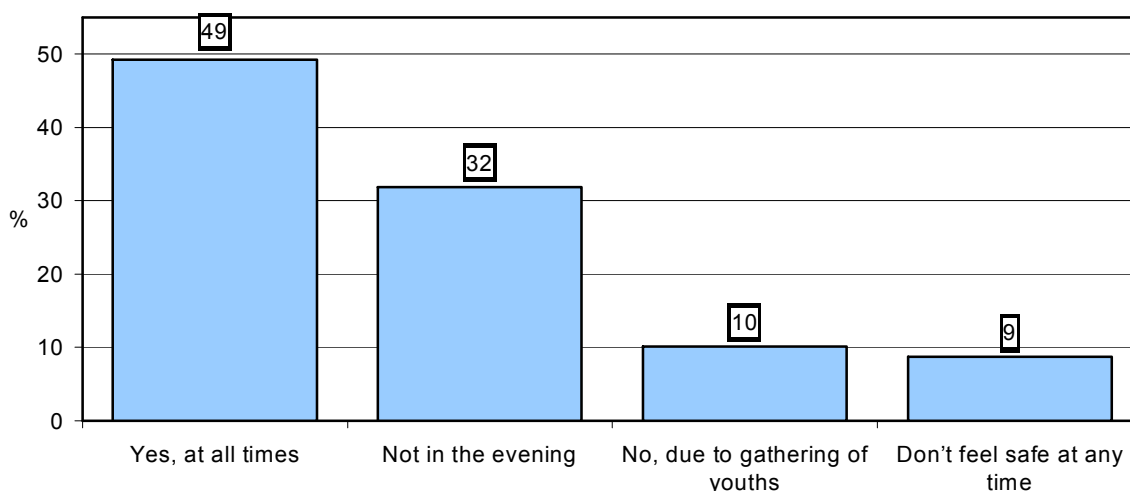
15% of residents surveyed said they would not be staying in the area due to anti-social behaviour. Some explained that it is the behaviour of Armstrong street residents and the street itself which has made some residents decide to move.

8% explained they would only stay if things changed, with some saying they would like to see more policing in the area or that the rear lanes to Armstrong Street and the surrounding areas are cleaned and kept to a good standard.

With reference to the final comment above, many of the comments given were again centred around Armstrong Street.

Do you feel safe using local facilities - during the day, during the early evening, during late evening?

81 respondents answered this question, with only one leaving it blank.



This graph shows 49% of residents surveyed feel safe using local facilities at any time of the day. 32% don't feel safe using them in the evening. 10% gave a specific answer as to why

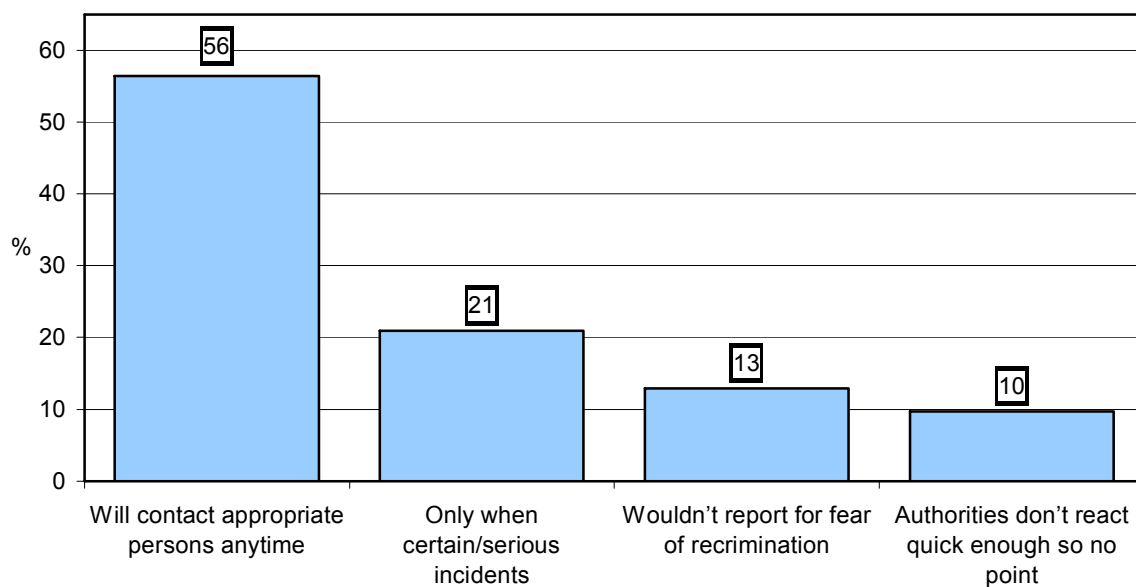
they don't feel safe using local facilities, due to youths congregating around the shops and rear lanes of the neighbourhood.

Once again a number of residents mentioned their concern over Armstrong Street. One resident said they don't feel particularly safe at any time travelling up or down Armstrong Street due to residents and youths who congregate there.

A theme that can already be seen is that all respondents, whether from Armstrong Street or the surrounding area, say that a lot of the trouble and problems in the area are down to this street and the some of the residents.

If you have a problem or witness an incident, do you contact the police/wardens/council or another agency? If yes, what type of problems do you report, if not, why?

Four respondents left this question blank.



Just over half of the 82 people surveyed said they would contact the appropriate agency if they had a problem or witnessed an incident.

21% said they would only contact the police if the incident involved them or if it was a serious incident.

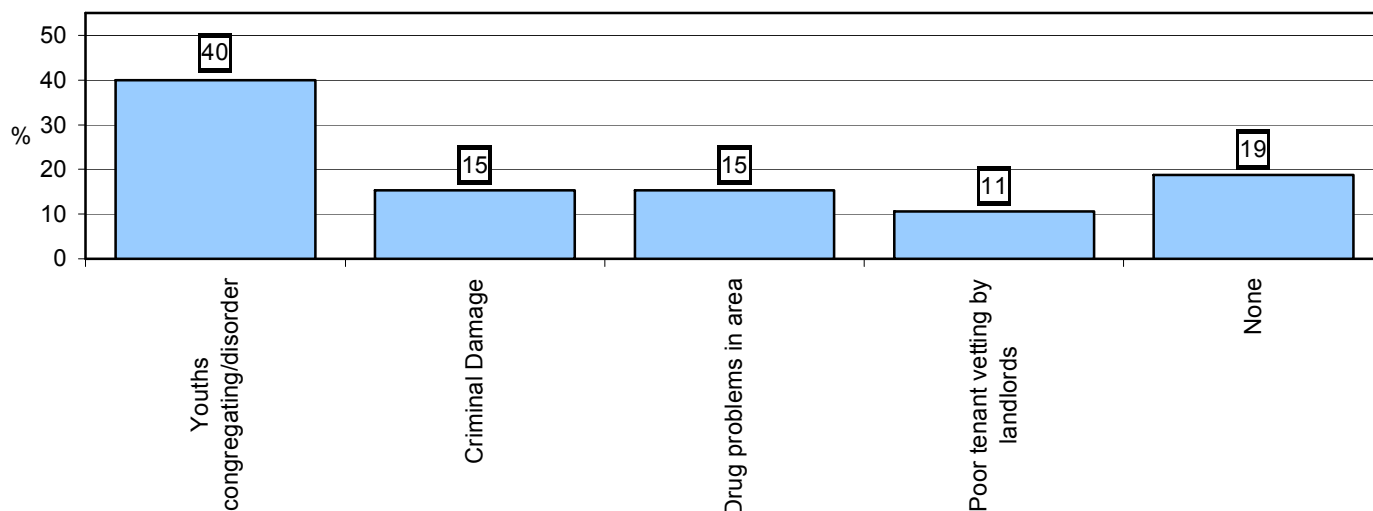
These figures suggest that although the majority of surveyed residents would contact the appropriate authority, there is still a feeling of uncertainty, with some residents feeling there could be cases of recrimination if they were to get involved.

Of the people who said the authorities don't act quickly enough, some residents gave the following views-

- 'I contacted the police over a burglary at my house, they took 11 hours to come out to follow up this incident.'
- 'My young son had a cup of coffee thrown over him, the police told me that if I didn't know who done it there was nothing they could do.'

What concerns do you have about the type of problems in the area?

80 of the 82 residents surveyed answered this question. 2 left this question blank.

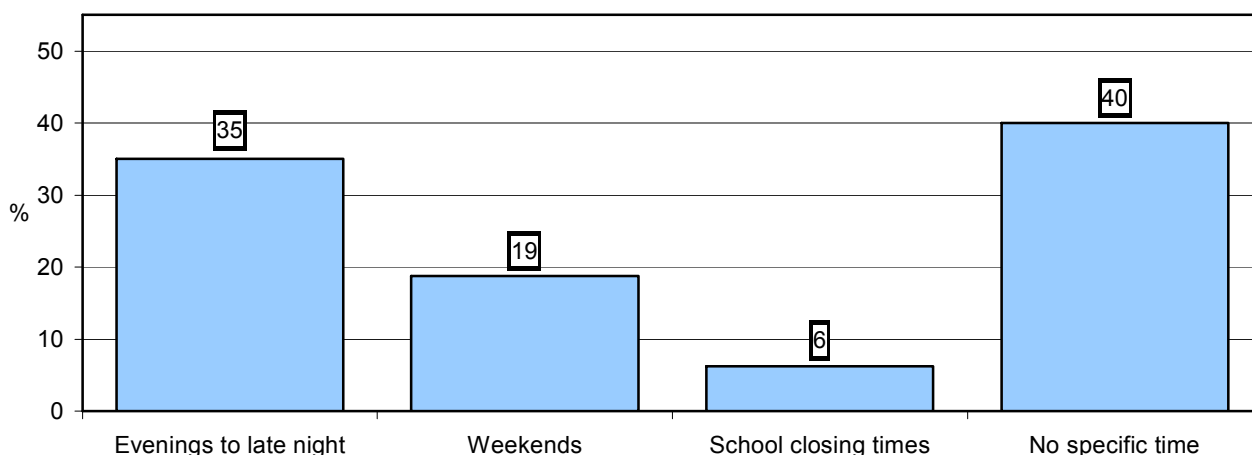


40% of residents feel that youths who congregate or cause anti social behaviour is their main concern in this area. There are certain areas, or 'hot spots' as one residents described them that are particularly problematic with regard to youths congregating. Armstrong Street was mentioned by a number of residents, as well as back lanes to all the streets in the area and what residents describe as 'tunnels at the end of the lanes'.

15% feel the main problem is criminal damage and drug problems in the area. The drug problem comes in two forms, both drug dealers and users. Some of the criminal damage responses linked in with the youth's congregating/disorder category.

11% feel that poor tenant vetting by landlords is a main problem, as described by one resident -

- 'Landlords are just letting anyone move in, some bad people have moved in over the years and the landlords do nothing.'
- These figures were met with the fact 19% of respondents feel there is no problem in the area.
- Are there any specific times of the day/week that you have particular concerns about?
- All 82 respondents surveyed answered this question.



The main outcome from this question is that the majority of residents feel there is no specific time with 40%. Residents expressed this concern with the following comments -

- 'There is no specific time that the problems start or stop with this area, it's all the time.'

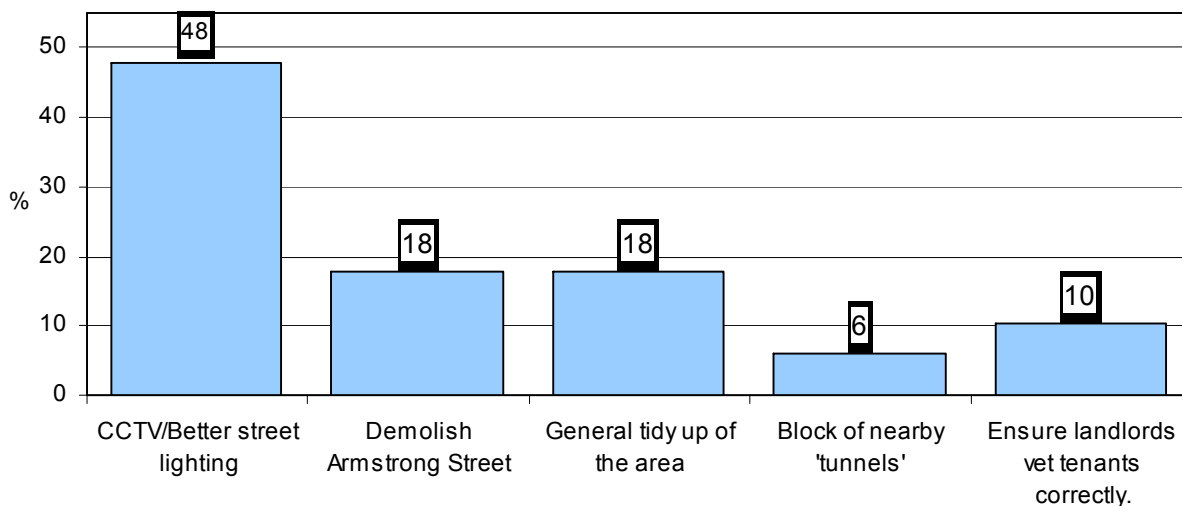
The next time residents had particular concerns about was evenings to late night, with 35%. Some residents left comments on this -

- 'Trouble and noise tends to start around 12 midnight and carry on until 3am in the morning.'
- 'Winter evenings are even worse as it gets dark so much earlier.'

This also linked with the next time respondents were most concerned about, with 19% weekends was mentioned to be a time respondents were concerned about. Though the majority who said this also mentioned that weekend evenings and late nights are the worst.

What improvements would you like to see carried out in the area?

All 82 residents surveyed answered this question.



The vast majority of residents surveyed said they believe CCTV and/or better street lighting in the area would improve the area significantly. This highlights the general safety issues, which has been a common theme throughout the questionnaire.

18% of the residents surveyed said they would like to see Armstrong Street itself demolished. This has carried on the theme throughout on the feelings of Armstrong Street, one resident gave the following comment -

- 'If Armstrong Street was pulled down the area would improve significantly.'

6% of residents mentioned they would like to see nearby 'tunnels' blocked off, as this is where the majority of youth congregation takes place.

Would you be prepared to for someone to contact you at a later date about your concerns (confidentially), or would you be prepared to contact someone yourself?

Only 46 surveyed residents answered this question, the missing answered can be assumed to have said no.

A major majority of 72% of residents surveyed who answered this question said they would be prepared to be contacted at a later date. 28% said no.

A full list of the telephone numbers and addresses can be found at the end of this document.

