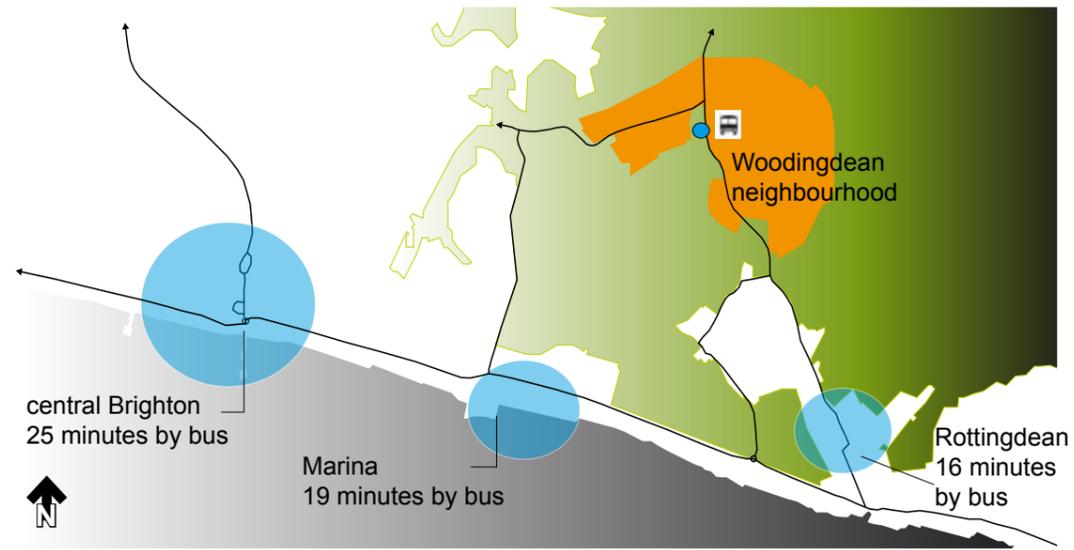


32 woodingdean neighbourhood

context

key stages of historic development



topography and microclimate

Development of Woodingdean extends from the bottom of the valley up along the north and east ridgelines. These high areas of housing are visible from long distances and especially sensitive view points within the Downs, such as Telscombe Tye to the east and Highdole Hill. However its location does allow for views out of the settlement across farmland towards the coast and key city wide landmarks such as Rottingdean Windmill.

The uncomfortable setting of Woodingdean is further emphasised by the lack of mature tree planting within and around the settlement creating hard edges between development and surrounding downland. The lack of surrounding woodland and street trees also has a profound effect on the settlement's microclimate. At the bottom of the valley, development is sheltered. On the valley sides it becomes more exposed to south westerly winds, while development on the ridgeline is exposed to bitter north easterly winds. With little tree planting the ridgelines are a harsh exposed environment compared to the tree lined valley floor.



Woodingdean is a rural suburb of Brighton and Hove located on the upper slopes of a dry valley within surrounding downland, with only three connections into the neighbourhood.

Until the 1920s very little existed apart from Warren and Wick Farm as well as the Warren Farm Industrial School built for the education of workhouse children. From the time that the main routes into Woodingdean were first paved there has always been a small collection of shops and services along these two main routes.

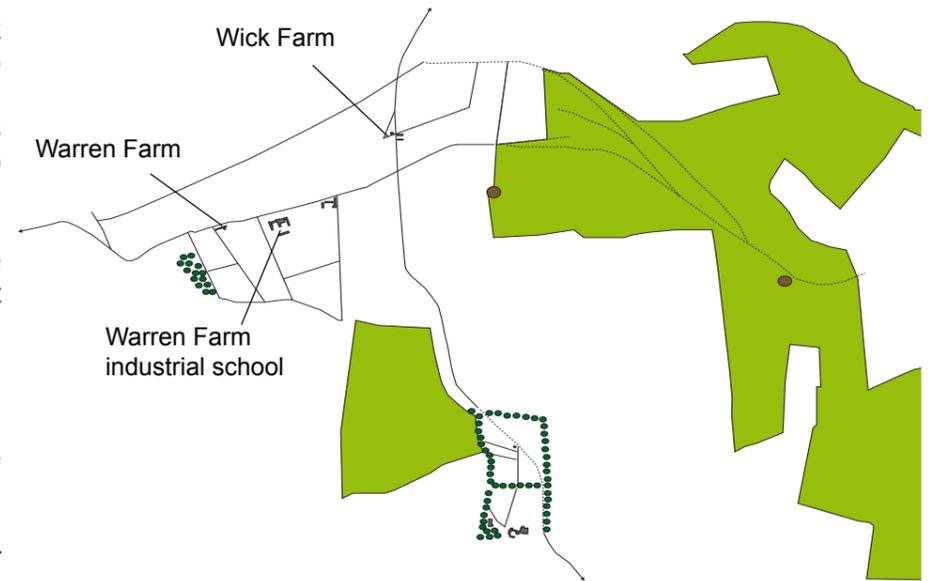
From the 1920s, plots were sold off by the Brighton Downs Estate company in a piecemeal fashion resulting in ribbon development along Warren Road. It was not until 1928, when Woodingdean became part of Brighton, that services improved along with planning regulation which in turn saw a rapid increase in development. Woodingdean continued to develop in a piecemeal fashion east of the Falmer Road right up into the 1980s. In the 1950s there was further land acquisition by Brighton Council. This resulted in three large estates being built to the north and south of the neighbourhood, and the redevelopment of former pre-fabs around the central park.

typology

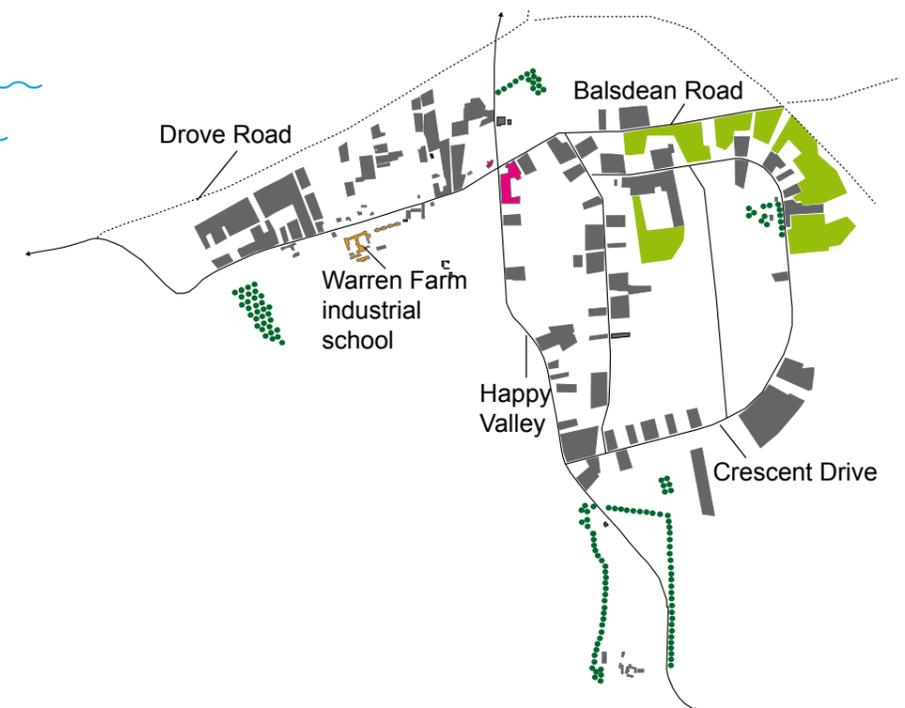
Woodingdean neighbourhood may be classified as a downland settlement with 20th century residential suburb. Predominantly low rise, low density housing with mixed building styles lacking unifying features and with limited local services.

Refer to the introduction and summary for more information on landscape character types.

1865-75



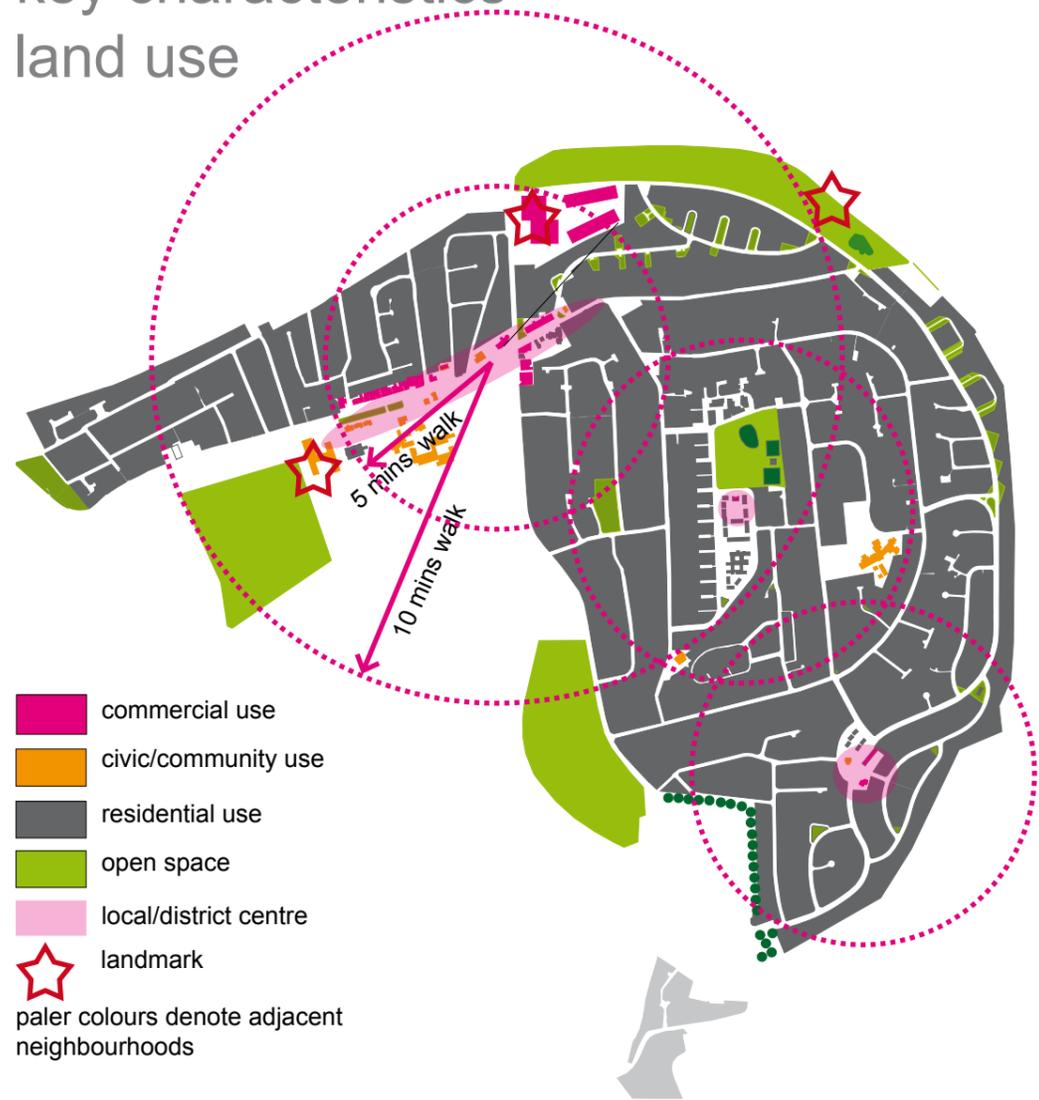
1928-33



32 woodingdean_{neighbourhood}

key characteristics

land use



movement



Shopping parade on Warren Road



Views out to the countryside



Typical bungalow development



Local authority apartment blocks



Local authority terraces

• **Land use:** The major land use in Woodingdean neighbourhood is housing, with associated commercial and retail uses. There are also community uses including a school and private hospital. A separate industrial zone lies to the north of the village. The former Sunblest bakery is now being redeveloped with industrial and office units.

• **Scale and density:** Woodingdean is a very low density rural settlement with an average of 15 dwellings per hectare and a population only just enough to support a small group of shops and services, (see appendix 1). As a result sparse community and commercial uses have sprung up along the primary movement corridor but there is no clearly defined local centre.

The scale is predominately low rise however the settlement does have a dominant visual impact on the surrounding downland as it is located along the rise and ridge of rolling hills to command the best views over the Downs and sea.

• **Architecture:** The neighbourhood is characterised by one to two storey detached and semi-detached homes dating from the 1920s to 1950s. There has been some later infill development during the 1970s and 80s. The land ownership has greatly influenced the plot

sizes and orientation. Those that are privately owned tend to have larger plots orientated for the best views and tend to be better maintained.

• **Movement:** Woodingdean's location outside of the city limits and its low population, which can only support two bus services, means that it is poorly connected to the city centre, making the car the most popular form of transport by far (see appendix 2).

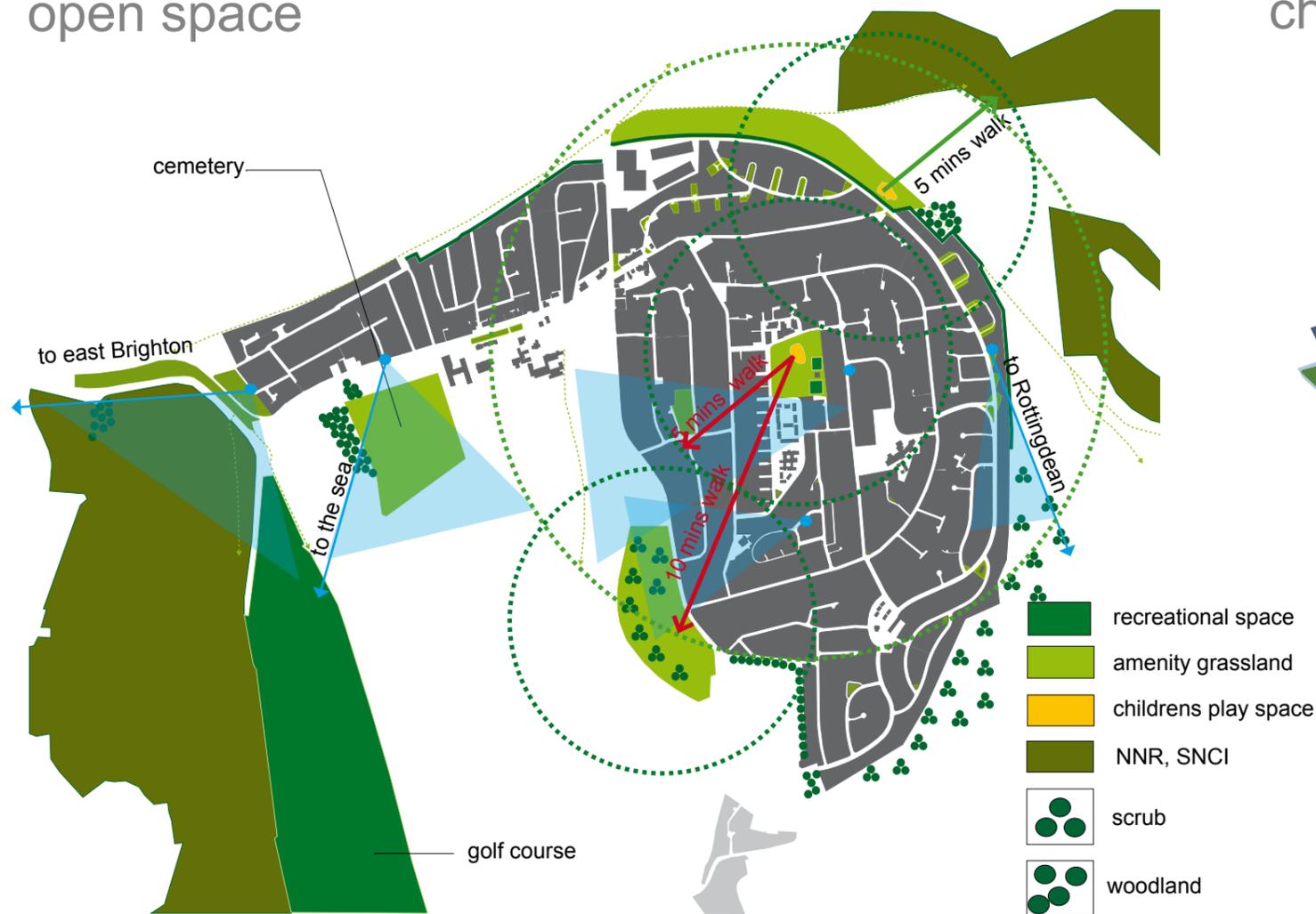
The restricted number of routes into Woodingdean are congested during peak hours. Once away from these primary routes there is no further street hierarchy or points of reference within the settlement. It is therefore easy to become disorientated once inside Woodingdean. Choice of routes for pedestrians is reduced due to large block sizes and cul-de-sac development creating poor pedestrian permeability and creating a car dependant neighbourhood.

The location of Woodingdean does provide good links to surrounding countryside including some of the best chalk grassland within Brighton and Hove.

• **Socio-economic characteristics:** Due to its history of slow piecemeal private development

32 woodingdean neighbourhood

open space



character area



and later more rapid local authority development in the 1950s, the local population is divided between those who are well off, and have come to Woodingdean to retire, and those who are on much lower incomes (see appendix 3). This is illustrated in the quality and types of buildings within the neighbourhood. It is possible to move from streets with well-kept detached homes into the next with run-down terraces.

• **Open space:** The neighbourhood's location offers good panoramic views across the Downs towards the sea. However the development itself does not sit comfortably within its surroundings. The neighbourhood sits above the ridgeline and there is no greenery along its edges to help soften the development.

The neighbourhood is within walking distance of a National Nature Reserve, (NNR) and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, (SNCI), containing some of the best native chalk grassland within Brighton and Hove. However within the neighbourhood itself open space is limited and not of very good quality. Much of the green space appears to serve little function and is planted in amenity grass and therefore low in species diversity. A lack of street tree planting not only exposes the neighbourhood to prevailing winds during the winter months

but also provides no green linkages through the settlement or between different surrounding habitats. There is a very low provision of play space for children within the neighbourhood. One park is located at the edge of the settlement on the other side of a relatively busy road making it difficult for small children to access.

The urban environment is one of suburban streets with grass verges, sporadic tree planting and off road parking.

• **Character area:** Historical development and land ownership has influenced plot orientation, accommodation type, relationship to open space and ongoing maintenance. Because there is a clear edge to the settlement, but no clear boundaries between building types, Woodingdean may be considered as one homogenous character area:

Woodingdean character area: A low density residential suburb surrounded by downland, detached from the city, and prominent in the surrounding landscape. Predominantly bungalows and two storey houses with mixed building styles on a variety of plot sizes and lacking unifying features. Scattered institutional and commercial uses but no clear centre.



Tree-lined avenue



Grass verges alongside public housing



Houses adjacent to farmland



Green in front of terraces houses



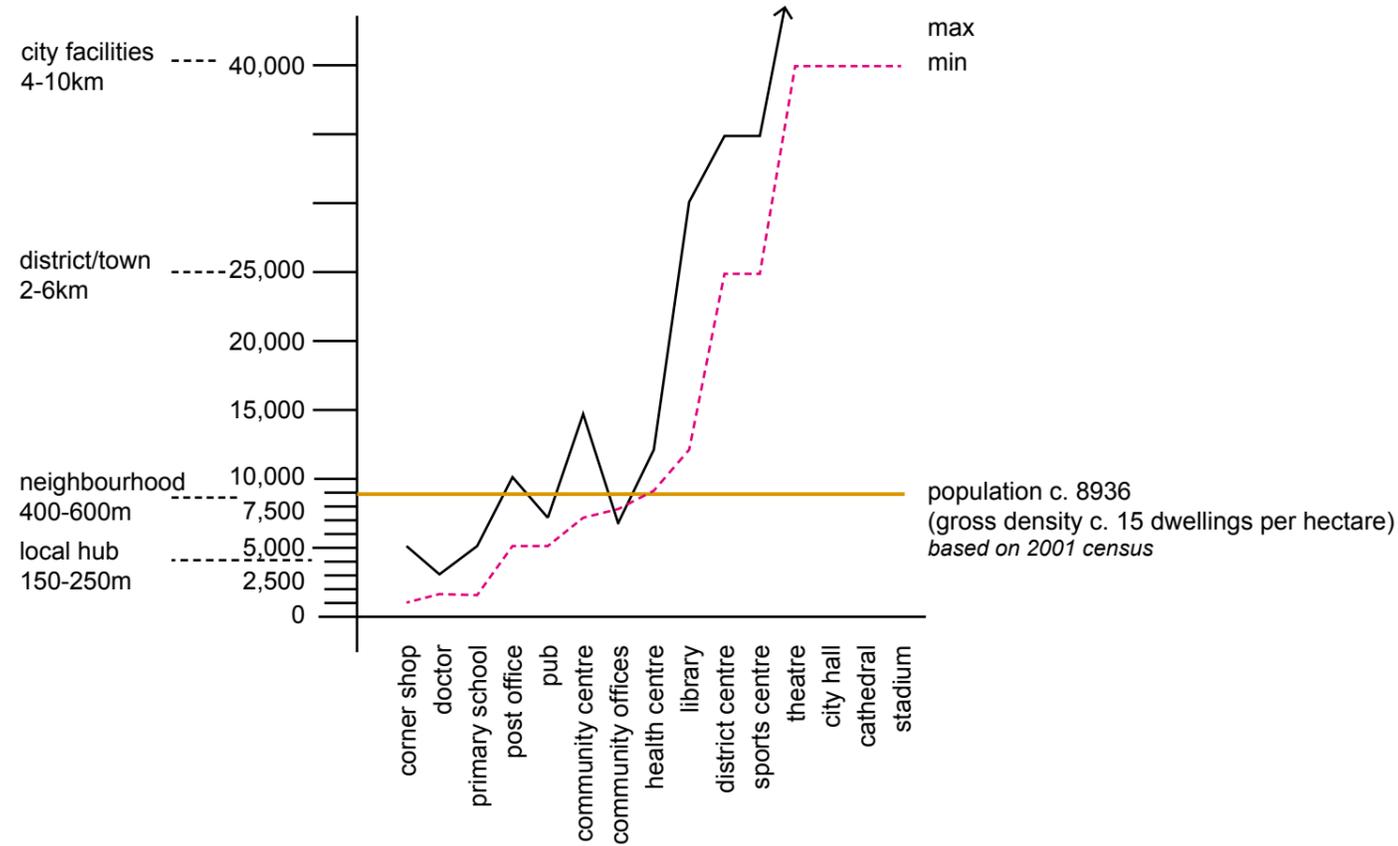
Woodingdean character area

32 woodingdean neighbourhood

appendix 1: population & density

Population numbers able to support community facilities.

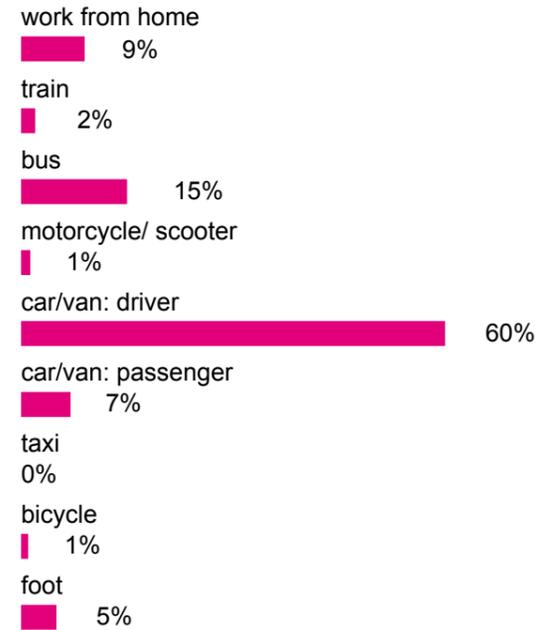
Source: Towards an Urban Renaissance, 2002



appendix 2: travel to work

Statistics illustrating methods of travel to work.

Source: City Stats, Census 2001

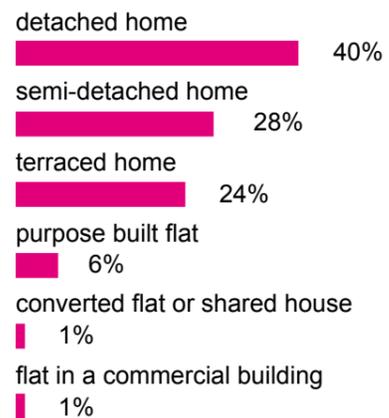


The information from the 2001 census and the Acorn profiles were based on the best fit of the smallest enumeration districts. This was obtained from Citystats website, which is now www.bhlis.org

See pages 8 and 11 for city-wide comparisons and more information

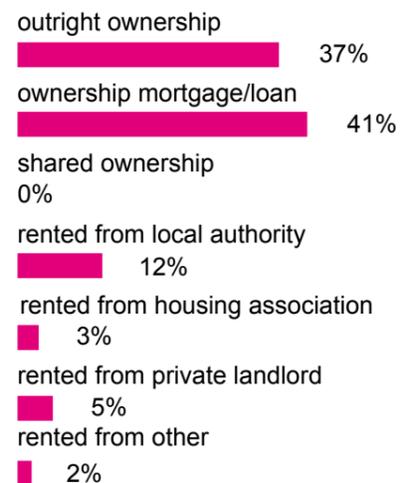
appendix 3: social mix accommodation types

Source: City Stats, Census 2001



tenure types

Source: City Stats, Census 2001



demographic types

Source: City Stats, Acorn data

Clockwise, from the top:

