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# **Community Perspectives On Regeneration:** Lessons For Land & Consent

Understanding trust, wellbeing and the lived experience of change in Greater Manchester.

CONTENTS


01. Executive Summary 04
Key Findings At A Glance 07

02. Introduction 08
Regeneration At A Turning Point 09
Why Public Perspectives Matter 10
Why Greater Manchester? 10
About This Research 11

03. Methodology 12
Survey Questions & Research Themes 15
Limitations & Interpretation Of Findings 17
Survey Participants 18

04. Results 20
Broad Support For Regeneration 21
Fairness, Affordability & Community Benefit 24
Trust, Transparency & Community Voice 26
Human & Wellbeing Impacts Of Change 30

05. Discussion 34
A Mandate For Regeneration, But Not For Regeneration At Any Cost 35

Trust, Transparency & Community Voice Are Becoming As Important As Delivery 36

Affordability, Displacement & Community Identity Remain The Defining Social Concerns 36

Regeneration Has A Significant Emotional & Wellbeing Dimension 37

Regeneration Is Viewed Positively When Results Are Tangible & Visible 38

Differences By Gender 38

Differences By Age 39

Differences By Borough 40

**06. Conclusions 44**

**07. Recommendations 46**

Treat Engagement As An Ongoing Relationship, Not A Project Milestone 47

Design Communication Around Clarity, Transparency & Accessibility 47

Use Digital Tools As Part Of A Wider Engagement Ecosystem 47

Build Wellbeing Considerations Into Project Planning From The Outset 48

Demonstrate How Existing Communities Will Benefit 48

Tailor Approaches To Local Context & Community Profile 49

Measure Trust, Not Just Participation 49

# 01

# Executive Summary

# Executive Summary

This report, produced by Ardent with expert input from Town Legal, explores how people across Greater Manchester perceive regeneration and what they believe successful regeneration should look like. Based on independent polling of 1,500 residents, it examines attitudes towards regeneration, trust in those delivering it, perceptions of fairness and community benefit, and the human and wellbeing impacts of change.

The findings come at a significant moment for the regeneration sector. Across the UK, ambitious programmes for housing, infrastructure and placemaking are gathering pace, while industry debate is increasingly focused on creating places that are not only economically successful but socially sustainable. Alongside this, there is growing recognition that regeneration affects more than the built environment. It also affects people's confidence, wellbeing, sense of belonging, and trust in the organisations delivering change.

This wider context is particularly relevant in Greater Manchester, where regeneration is closely connected to the delivery of new homes, infrastructure, transport and inclusive economic growth. The scale of the opportunity is significant, but so too is the challenge: communities are being asked to navigate substantial change at a time when pressures on housing availability, affordability and public services remain acute.

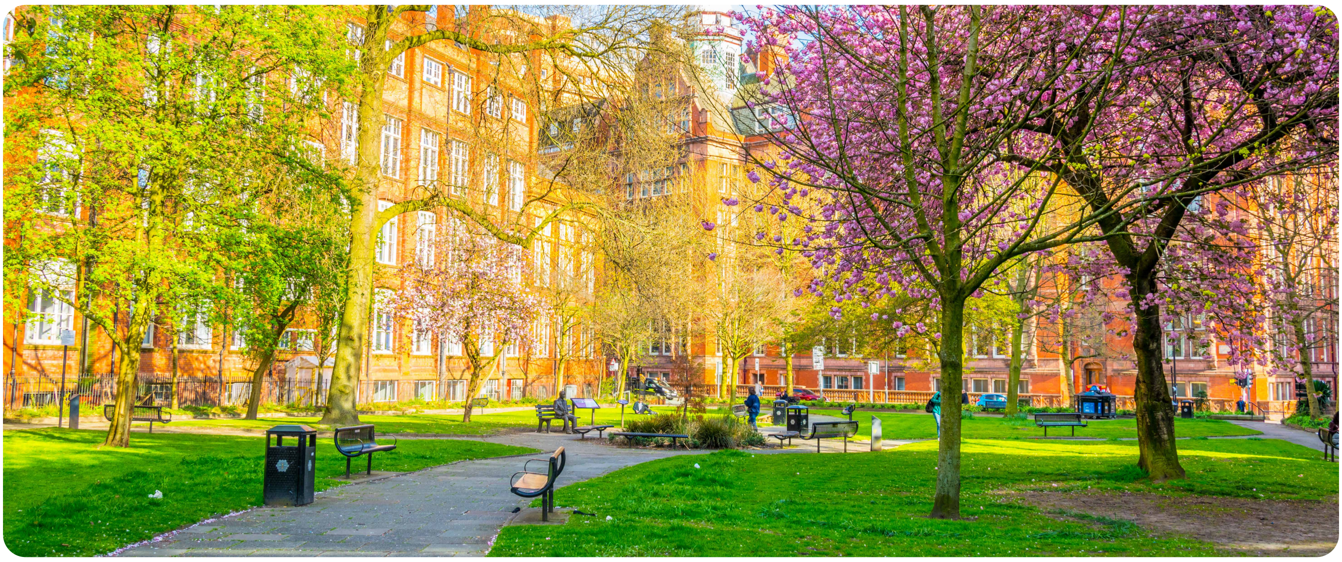
Against this backdrop, understanding how people perceive regeneration, what builds confidence and where concerns remain is critical to ensuring future programmes are both ambitious and responsive to the communities they are intended to serve.

The research is organised around four key themes.

The first is broad support for regeneration. Public attitudes were overwhelmingly positive, with 77% of respondents viewing regeneration positively.

Respondents associated regeneration with improved public spaces, economic growth, new housing, stronger local services and better transport. They also identified housing, environmental improvements and community services as the highest priorities for future investment. Collectively, these findings demonstrate strong public support for regeneration in principle.

The second theme concerns fairness, affordability and community benefit. While respondents recognised the potential benefits of regeneration, they also expressed concerns about rising living costs, affordable housing, disruption during construction and ensuring existing communities benefit from investment. Good regeneration was consistently described as development that improves quality of life, protects local identity and delivers tangible benefits for current residents rather than simply creating economic value.



The third theme focuses on trust, transparency and community voice. Although local councils were the most trusted organisations involved in regeneration, trust in developers and central government was lower. Half of respondents felt they had little or no influence over regeneration decisions, and confidence in how projects are communicated was evenly split. These findings reinforce the importance of meaningful engagement, transparency and giving communities genuine opportunities to shape proposals before decisions are made.

The final theme explores the human and wellbeing impacts of change. While half of respondents believed regeneration would have a positive impact on their wellbeing, many also associated it with uncertainty, anxiety and stress. Respondents identified clear communication, financial advice, relocation support, legal guidance and community engagement as important forms of support. Most significantly, 87% believed mental health support should be available to people affected by regeneration, while 75% said they would be more likely to trust a regeneration project if wellbeing support were provided from the outset. These findings suggest that wellbeing support is no longer a peripheral consideration but an important component of responsible regeneration.

Taken together, the findings point towards a clear direction for the sector. Communities are not rejecting regeneration; they are asking for it to be delivered differently. They want earlier engagement, greater transparency, meaningful opportunities to influence decisions, and confidence that regeneration will improve the places they live while supporting the people who experience change.

The report concludes by setting out practical recommendations for public bodies, developers and delivery partners. These include embedding the Gunning Principles throughout the project lifecycle, investing in early and continuous engagement, using a combination of digital and face-to-face engagement to meet people where they are, adopting technologies such as AI chatbots and virtual consultation platforms to improve accessibility, and integrating wellbeing support into regeneration programmes from the outset. Together, these measures can help build trust, strengthen relationships with communities and deliver regeneration that is not only successful in physical and economic terms, but also supports the people at its heart.

## Key Findings At A Glance

This section draws out the strongest findings from the research and links them to the practical recommendations set out later in this report. Together, they show that communities are broadly supportive of regeneration, but expect it to be delivered with greater transparency, stronger engagement, visible local benefit, and better support for those affected.

> Regeneration has strong public support, but that support is conditional. **77% of respondents felt positive about regeneration**, but concerns around rising living costs, disruption, displacement, and lack of local input show that support depends on how change is delivered. Recommendation: treat engagement as an ongoing relationship, not a project milestone.
>
> Wellbeing is now a core regeneration issue. **87% said mental health support should be offered to people affected by regeneration**, and **75% said they would be more likely to trust a project if wellbeing support was provided from the start**. Recommendation: build wellbeing considerations into project planning from the outset.
>
> Clear communication is the most important form of support. **57% said clear and regular communication should be provided** to people affected by regeneration. Recommendation: design communication around clarity, transparency, and accessibility.
>
> Trust and influence remain significant challenges. **50% said they had very little or no influence over regeneration decisions**, and **47% were not confident that developers communicate clearly and transparently**. Recommendation: measure trust, confidence, understanding, and perceived influence, not just participation.
>
> Affordability and community benefit are central concerns. **Rising living costs were the top concern at 47%**, **followed by lack of affordable housing at 36%**. Recommendation: demonstrate clearly how existing communities will benefit from regeneration.
>
> People want practical, visible improvements. **Respondents associated regeneration with improved public spaces, economic growth, new housing, community facilities, jobs, and transport.** Recommendation: link disruption in the short term to tangible long-term benefits.

One approach will not work everywhere. Findings varied by age, gender, and borough, showing that communities experience regeneration differently. Recommendation: tailor engagement and support to local context and community profile.

02

# Introduction

# Introduction

## Regeneration At A Turning Point

Across the UK, regeneration is reshaping towns, cities, and communities at an unprecedented scale. Government ambitions for housing delivery, infrastructure investment, economic growth, and the development of new towns are creating significant opportunities to transform places and support long-term prosperity.

At the same time, expectations of regeneration are changing. Increasingly, success is no longer judged solely by the number of homes delivered, commercial floorspace created, or investment secured. Across the public and private sectors, there is growing recognition that successful regeneration should create places that are economically successful, socially sustainable, and capable of improving quality of life for the people who live there.

This broader understanding of success has influenced both policy and industry practice, with consideration given to long-term stewardship, the need for patient capital, public-private partnerships, social value, and community participation. Regeneration is increasingly being viewed not simply as a process of physical development, but as a long-term exercise in placemaking that shapes how people live, work, travel, and connect with one another.

# Why Public Perspectives Matters

Despite the scale of regeneration activity taking place across the UK, much of the discussion surrounding regeneration continues to focus on planning policy, funding, viability, land assembly, and delivery mechanisms, failing to capture how regeneration is experienced by the people living through it.

For residents, regeneration can bring opportunities through new homes, improved services, investment, and enhanced public spaces. It can also bring uncertainty, disruption, and change. The way communities experience regeneration can influence levels of trust, confidence, participation, and ultimately the long-term success of projects.

Understanding public attitudes is therefore becoming increasingly important. As regeneration programmes become larger, more complex, and longer in duration, there is growing value in understanding how communities perceive regeneration, what they expect from it, what concerns them, and what they believe successful regeneration should deliver.

# Why Greater Manchester?

Greater Manchester provides a particularly valuable context in which to explore these questions. As one of the UK's most active regeneration markets, the city-region is experiencing significant investment in housing, transport, infrastructure, town centre renewal, and major placemaking initiatives. At the same time, Greater Manchester has established a national reputation for promoting inclusive growth, social value, and place-based policy through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Good Growth agenda[1].

The city-region therefore offers an opportunity to explore public attitudes towards regeneration within an area where large-scale change is already shaping communities in many ways.

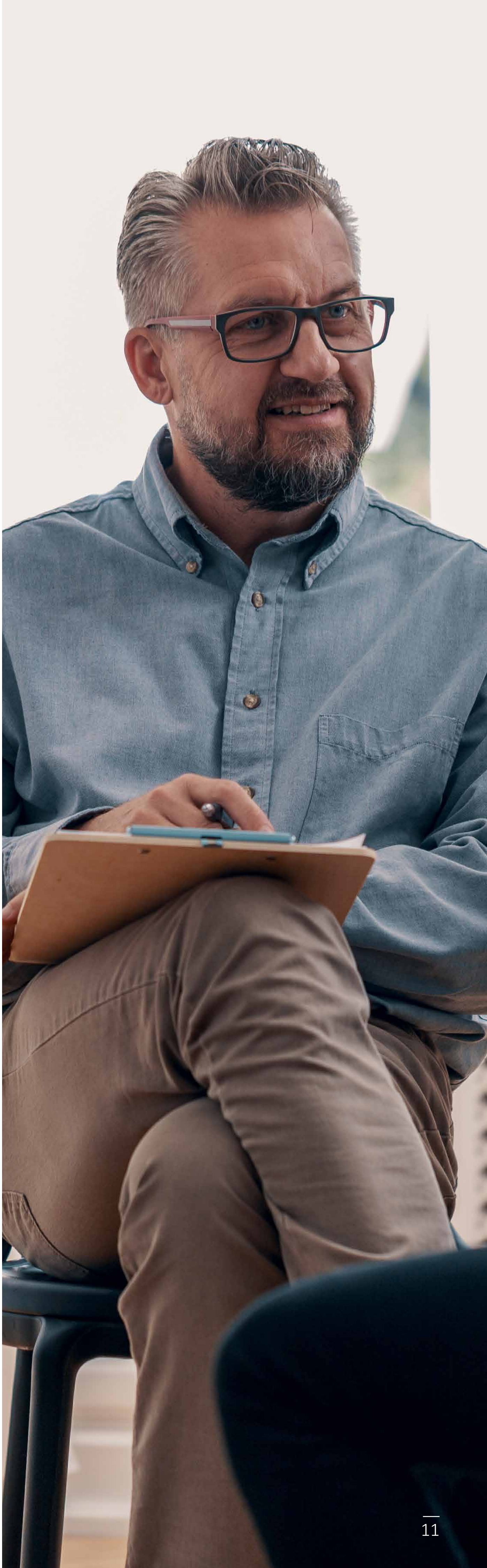
# About This Research

This report presents the findings of original public opinion research commissioned by Ardent and undertaken by independent research agency 3Gem Research & Insights. With special thanks to Town Legal who also provided expert contributions during the development of this report.

The research explores how residents across Greater Manchester perceive regeneration and development, their priorities for future investment, their levels of trust in organisations responsible for delivering change, and their views on engagement, communication, wellbeing, and community influence.

By examining both the practical and human dimensions of regeneration, the report seeks to contribute to a broader conversation about how places can be transformed in ways that deliver lasting benefits for communities as well as economies.

At a time when regeneration is playing an increasingly important role in shaping the future of towns, cities, and neighbourhoods across the UK, understanding how people experience and respond to change has never been more important.



03

# Methodology

# Methodology

This report is based on original public opinion research commissioned by Ardent and conducted by independent research agency 3Gem Research & Insights. The polling explored public attitudes towards regeneration, development, community change, stakeholder experience, and wellbeing across Greater Manchester.

The research was carried out using 3Gem's established online research panel, which includes active respondents who regularly participate in surveys and public opinion studies. The survey was targeted at the general population of Greater Manchester aged 18 and over. In total, 1,500 people were surveyed between 30th April and 19th May 2026. A full copy of the results is available upon request.

3Gem is a UK-based market research and insights company specialising in quantitative and qualitative research, consumer insight, and public perception polling. The company operates national and international respondent panels to support evidence-led research across a range of sectors.

The survey questions were developed collaboratively between Ardent and 3Gem to ensure the research explored both practical and emotional dimensions of regeneration. The intention was not simply to measure whether people support development in principle, but to better understand how regeneration is experienced by communities, what drives confidence or concern, and what residents believe responsible regeneration should involve.

The questions were designed around several core themes:

- perceptions of regeneration and local change;
- trust in developers, councils and delivery bodies;
- perceived benefits and risks associated with regeneration;
- concerns relating to affordability, displacement, identity, and community cohesion;
- awareness of compulsory acquisition;
- the importance of engagement, communication, and being listened to during development processes;
- the emotional and wellbeing impacts associated with uncertainty and change; and
- priorities for future regeneration investment.

This approach was informed by wider industry and policy discussions, including the findings of the CPA Mental Health Report 2025[2], which highlighted the psychological strain associated with major development and compulsory purchase processes, and the New Towns Taskforce's emphasis on meaningful engagement, stewardship, and community-centred development.

Particular attention was given to framing questions in a balanced and accessible way. The survey was designed to capture nuance rather than binary positions for or against development. Respondents were encouraged to reflect on trade-offs, lived experience, and priorities for the future of their communities.

By combining quantitative polling with wider industry context, the research aims to provide a rounded understanding of how regeneration is perceived by the public at a time when communities across the UK are undergoing significant and often rapid change.

## Survey Questions & Research Themes

The survey was structured to move from broad perceptions of regeneration through to more specific questions about trust, influence, communication, wellbeing, support needs, and priorities for future investment. Each question was designed to test a particular aspect of public attitudes and to build a rounded picture of how residents understand and experience regeneration.

| Survey Question | Intended Research Theme |
|---|---|
| Q1. When you hear the word "regeneration", how do you feel? | Overall sentiment towards regeneration and initial emotional response. |
| Q2. What benefits do you most associate with regeneration? | Perceived positive outcomes, including housing, public spaces, infrastructure, community facilities, jobs, and economic growth. |
| Q3. Who do you think benefits most from regeneration projects? | Perceptions of who gains from regeneration and whether benefits are seen as community-led, public sector-led, or developer-led. |
| Q4. What concerns you most about regeneration? | Key perceived risks, including affordability, displacement, disruption, communication, local input, safety, and loss of community identity. |
| Q5. How much do you trust the following groups of people to act in the best interests of local communities? | Levels of trust in the organisations responsible for shaping and delivering regeneration, including councils, developers, and central government. |
| Q6. Before today, how familiar were you with compulsory acquisition (also known as compulsory purchase)? | Public awareness and understanding of compulsory acquisition as a process that can be associated with major regeneration schemes. |
| Q7. If you lived in an area affected by regeneration, how do you think it would impact your wellbeing? | Perceived wellbeing impacts of regeneration and whether respondents associate local change with positive, negative, or neutral personal effects. |
| Q8. If you lived in an area affected by regeneration, which of the following feelings would you most likely experience? | Emotional responses to regeneration, including optimism, uncertainty, excitement, anxiety, powerlessness, stress, and indifference. |

| Survey Question | Intended Research Theme |
|---|---|
| Q9. To what extent do you feel people like you can influence regeneration decisions in your area? | Perceived community influence, agency, and ability to shape decisions about regeneration. |
| Q10. How confident are you that regeneration projects are communicated from developers to members of the public clearly and transparently? | Confidence in developer communication, transparency, and public understanding of regeneration proposals. |
| Q11. Do you believe that regeneration projects across the whole Greater Manchester region have a positive impact on all members of the public? | Perceptions of fairness, inclusion, and whether regeneration benefits are experienced equally across the wider public. |
| Q12. What types of support should be provided to people affected by regeneration? | Support needs for affected residents, including communication, financial advice, relocation support, community engagement, mental health support, and legal guidance. |
| Q13. Do you think mental health support should be offered to people affected by regeneration? | Public expectations around wellbeing provision and whether mental health support should form part of responsible regeneration delivery. |
| Q14. Would you be more or less likely to trust a regeneration project if wellbeing support was provided from the start? | The relationship between wellbeing support and trust in regeneration projects. |
| Q15. Please rank the top three areas where you think regeneration investment should be prioritised. | Public priorities for future regeneration investment, including housing, public spaces, transport, local businesses, community services, and environmental improvements. |
| Q16. In your own words, what would "good regeneration" look like to you? | Open-ended perceptions of good regeneration, allowing respondents to describe priorities, concerns, and desired outcomes in their own words. |

Taken together, the questions were intended to explore not only whether residents support regeneration in principle, but also how they understand its benefits, risks, processes, and personal impacts. This allowed the research to identify the relationship between practical outcomes, such as housing and infrastructure, and more experiential factors, such as trust, confidence, wellbeing, communication, and perceived influence.

# Limitations & Interpretation Of Findings

As with all public opinion research, the findings should be interpreted in light of the survey methodology and sample profile. The research was conducted using an online panel of Greater Manchester residents aged 18 and over. Online panel research provides a robust and efficient way to capture views from many respondents, but it may underrepresent people who are less digitally engaged or less likely to participate in online surveys.

The sample was designed to include respondents from across Greater Manchester and to reflect a broad range of demographic characteristics, including age, gender, and local authority area. However, the achieved sample should not be read as a perfect mirror of the Greater Manchester population. Half of respondents lived in Manchester, meaning that views from the city itself have a stronger influence on the overall results than views from some surrounding boroughs.

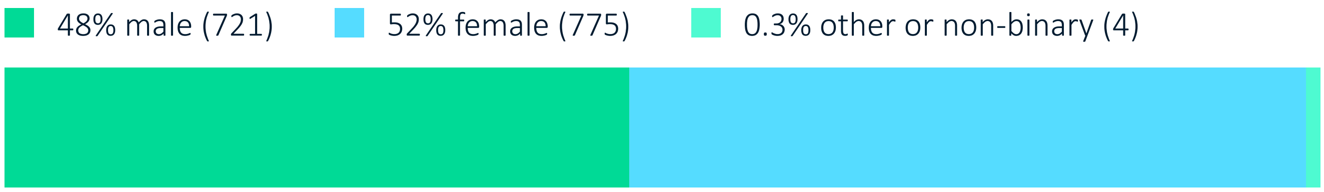
Quotas and panel controls were used to support a balanced sample, but the results are not presented as a fully weighted statistical representation of the Greater Manchester population unless stated otherwise. For this reason, the findings should be understood as a credible snapshot of public attitudes among surveyed residents, rather than as a precise population estimate.

Subgroup findings by gender, age, and borough provide useful insight into patterns and differences within the sample, but they should be interpreted with appropriate caution. Some subgroup base sizes are smaller than the overall sample, particularly at borough level and among older age groups, which means that differences between groups should be treated as indicative rather than definitive.

These limitations do not reduce the value of the research. Rather, they clarify the basis on which the findings should be used. The strength of the survey lies in the scale of response, the breadth of topics covered, and the ability to identify clear themes around trust, communication, wellbeing, affordability, and community influence. The findings should therefore be used to inform discussion, engagement strategy, and future research, while recognising that further qualitative work or locally targeted polling may be needed to explore specific communities or boroughs in greater depth.

## Survey **Participants**

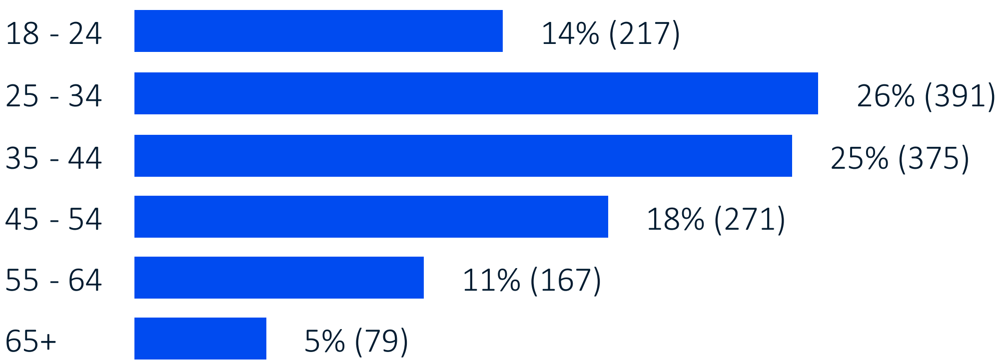
Of the 1,500 respondents surveyed, 48% (721) identified as male, 52% (775) identified as female, and 0.3% (4) identified as other or non-binary.




Respondents represented a range of age groups: 14% (217) were aged 18-24, 26% (391) were aged 25-34, 25% (375) were aged 35-44, 18% (271) were aged 45-54, 11% (167) were aged 55-64, and 5% (79) were aged 65 and over. The mean age of respondents was 40. The mean age was 41 for men and 38 for women.

The gender split across age groups was broadly even. The main exceptions were the 18-24 age group, where women made up 63% (136) of respondents compared with 37% (80) men, and the 55-64 age group, where men made up 59% (99) of respondents compared with 41% (68) women.

Age Distribution

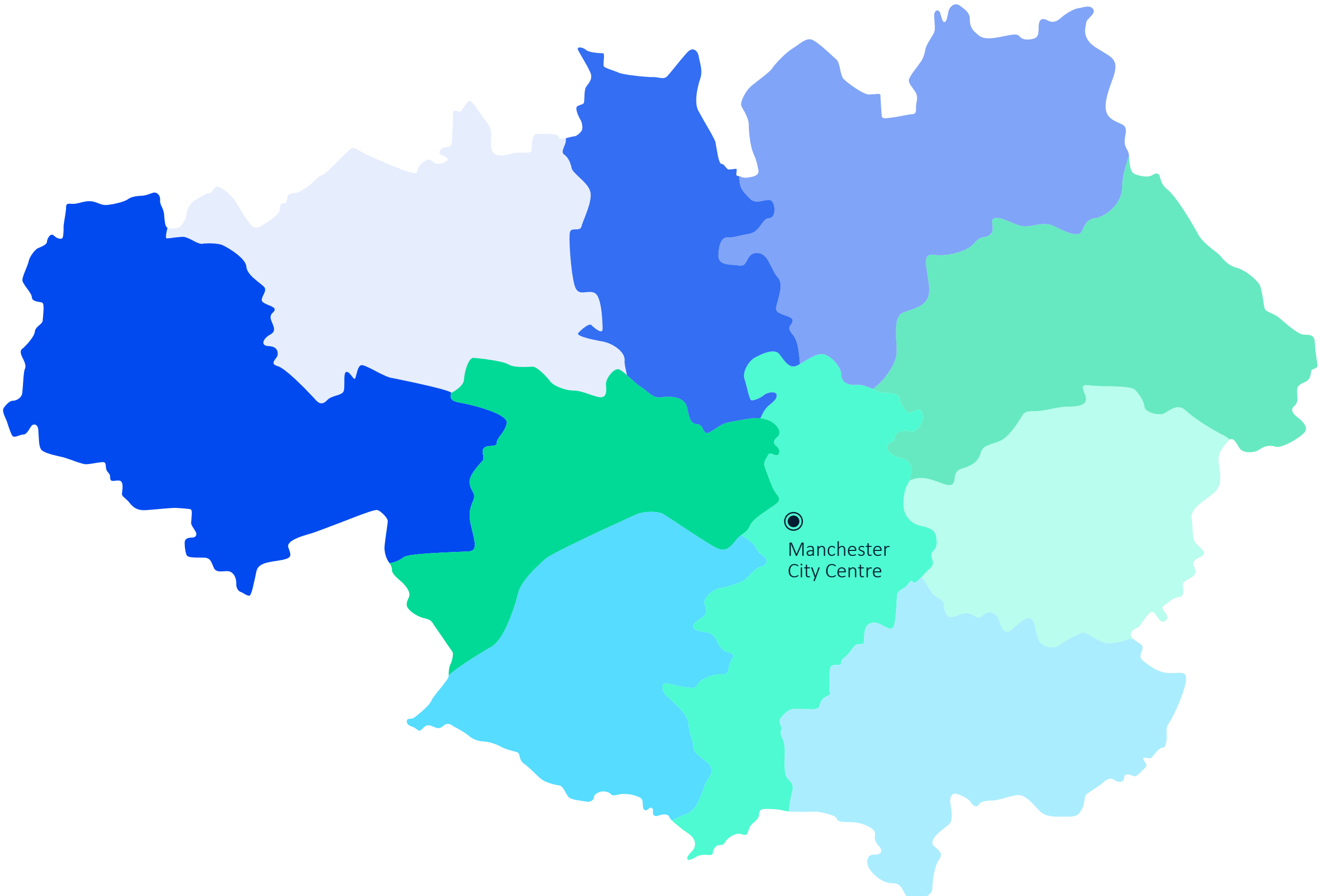



Respondents were also asked about household bill responsibility. Overall, 66% (987) said they were responsible for paying household bills, 30% (443) said they were partly responsible, and 5% (70) said they were not responsible for paying household bills.

The survey gathered responses from residents across all ten Greater Manchester local authority areas. The borough breakdown was as follows:

The gender split within each borough was broadly even. The main exception was Manchester, where men made up 54% (402) of respondents and women made up 46% (347).

The age profile also varied between Manchester and the wider Greater Manchester area. Among respondents aged 18-24, 59% (127) lived in Manchester. This increased to 67% (263) among respondents aged 25-34 and was 57% (213) among respondents aged 35-44. Among older age groups, the majority lived outside Manchester. This included 66% (179) of respondents aged 45-54, 74% (123) of those aged 55-64, and 86% (68) of those aged 65 and over.




Bolton: 8% (117)

Bury: 5% (74)

Rochdale: 5% (79)

Tameside: 5% (78)

Manchester: 50% (750)

Salford: 7% (99)

Trafford: 3% (51)

Oldham: 5% (70)

Stockport: 7% (100)

Wigan: 5% (82)

Half of the responses came from residents living within Manchester itself. This reflects both the concentration of regeneration activity within the urban core and the higher population density of the city compared with some surrounding boroughs. However, the survey also included responses from all nine other Greater Manchester boroughs, allowing for a broader city-region perspective on regeneration and community change.

# 04

## Results

# Results

This section presents the findings from the public opinion research undertaken across Greater Manchester. To improve readability, the results are organised around four overarching themes: broad support for regeneration; fairness, affordability and community benefit; trust, transparency and community voice; and the human and wellbeing impacts of change.

The survey explored perceptions of regeneration and development, including awareness and understanding of regeneration, attitudes towards its benefits and impacts, levels of trust in organisations delivering change, views on community influence and engagement, perceptions of compulsory purchase, wellbeing impacts, communication preferences, and the types of support people believe should be available to those affected by regeneration projects.

The findings set out the views expressed by respondents and form the evidence base for the discussion and conclusions presented later in this report.

## Broad Support For Regeneration

### Public Attitudes Towards Regeneration

Overall, respondents held positive perceptions of regeneration. 77% (1,160) selected either “very positive” or “somewhat positive”, compared with just 2% (37) who felt negatively. The most common response was “somewhat positive” at 49% (728), while 29% (432) selected “very positive”. 20% (303) of respondents held a neutral view.

Positive attitudes were evident across all demographic groups. Men were more likely to express positive views than women, with 83% (596) selecting either “very positive” or “somewhat positive”, compared with 72% (564) of women. Negative responses remained low across groups. Positive perceptions were recorded across every age group, with no age category returning a net negative view of regeneration. Similarly, every Greater Manchester borough recorded a majority of positive responses. Trafford recorded the highest level of positivity at 82% (42), followed closely by Manchester at 81% (610). Wigan recorded the lowest proportion of positive responses at 66% (54), although this still represented a clear majority.

## What People See As The Benefits Of Regeneration

Respondents most commonly associated regeneration with improved public spaces (47%, 698), economic growth (46%, 691), and new housing (45%, 679). Community facilities such as schools and healthcare services were selected by 39% (588) of respondents, followed by job creation (37%, 560) and better transport links (27%, 408). Only 3% (47) said they did not associate regeneration with any clear benefits, while 2% (24) selected “I don’t know”.

The small number of respondents selecting “other” most frequently referred to improved roads and transport infrastructure, better community facilities, housing improvements, increased property values, and ensuring that investment is accompanied by sufficient schools, healthcare, and other local services.

Responses were broadly consistent across demographic groups. Women were more likely to associate regeneration with community facilities (43%, 334 compared with 35%, 253 of men), while men more frequently identified job creation (40%, 285 compared with 35%, 274 of women). Differences by age and borough were generally modest, although respondents aged 25-34 were more likely to associate regeneration with economic growth (51%, 199), respondents aged 55 and over were more likely to identify housing as a benefit, Manchester respondents more frequently associated regeneration with economic growth (49%, 364), and Trafford respondents were more likely to identify better transport links (39%, 20) than the Greater Manchester average.


## Where Investment Should Be Prioritised

When asked to rank priorities for regeneration investment, housing emerged as the clear first priority. 35% (528) ranked housing first, followed by environmental improvements (mean ranking 1.99), public spaces (2.06), community services (2.09), transport (2.16), and local businesses (2.23).

The small number of respondents selecting “something else” most commonly referred to education and healthcare, mental health support, social housing, facilities for children and young people, protecting wildlife, and ensuring existing residents directly benefit from regeneration.

Housing was the highest-ranked priority across all demographic groups. Results were broadly consistent between men and women, with 35% (254) of men and 35% (271) of women ranking housing first. Younger respondents were more likely to prioritise public spaces and environmental improvements, while housing became an increasingly prominent priority with age, reaching 47% (79) among those aged 55-64 and 43% (34) among those aged 65 and over. Housing was also the highest-ranked priority in every Greater Manchester borough, peaking at 53% (37) in Oldham.

## What Good Regeneration Looks Like

When asked, in their own words, what "good regeneration" would look like, respondents most frequently described regeneration that improves quality of life for existing residents through affordable housing, better local services, improved infrastructure, and stronger communities.

> Affordable housing was by far the most common theme, appearing in around one-third of responses, often alongside references to social housing, housing affordability for younger people, and ensuring local people are not priced out of their communities.
>
> Environmental improvements were another prominent theme, mentioned in around one-quarter of responses. Respondents frequently referred to protecting and enhancing green spaces, improving cleanliness, increasing biodiversity, preserving wildlife habitats, reducing pollution, and creating greener, more sustainable neighbourhoods. Many specifically highlighted the importance of developing brownfield rather than greenfield land.
>
> Community benefits and public facilities were also commonly raised, appearing in around 1 in 5 responses. Respondents described good regeneration as creating stronger communities through improved public spaces, parks, youth facilities, community centres, leisure opportunities, healthcare provision, schools, and other local amenities that benefit residents of all ages.
>
> Transport and infrastructure featured heavily throughout the responses, with around 1 in 5 respondents referring to improved public transport, better roads, enhanced connectivity, additional school and healthcare capacity, and infrastructure improvements to support population growth. Many stressed that housing development should be accompanied by investment in supporting services.
>
> Economic growth and local employment opportunities were mentioned in around 1 in 6 responses. Respondents highlighted the importance of creating jobs, supporting local businesses, revitalising high streets, attracting investment, and ensuring that economic benefits are felt by local communities rather than external developers.
>
> Community involvement, communication, and transparency were also recurring themes, appearing in around 1 in 7 responses. Many respondents emphasised the importance of consulting residents, involving local people in decision-making, clearly communicating plans, and ensuring those affected by regeneration receive appropriate support, compensation, and wellbeing assistance.
>
> A further theme running through many responses was the desire for regeneration to benefit existing residents without displacing communities or eroding local identity. Respondents frequently referred to preserving local character and heritage, avoiding gentrification, retaining community cohesion, and ensuring that current residents directly benefit from investment and improvements.

# Fairness, Affordability & Community Benefit

## Who People Believe Benefits From Regeneration

Respondents were most likely to identify local residents as the primary beneficiaries of regeneration projects, selected by 56% (840). This was followed by businesses and investors (47%, 704), developers (42%, 630), local councils (40%, 602), and new residents moving into the area (38%, 571). Only 3% (39) selected “I don’t know”.

Results were broadly similar across men and women. Men were slightly more likely to identify developers as beneficiaries of regeneration projects (44%, 319 compared with 40%, 309 of women). Men were also more likely to identify new residents moving into an area as beneficiaries (41%, 296 compared with 35%, 209 of women).

Views varied across the age groups. Respondents aged 18-24 were less likely than average to identify businesses and investors (38%, 83), developers (27%, 58), and local councils (35%, 75) as beneficiaries. Respondents aged 25-34 were more likely to identify new residents moving into an area as beneficiaries (43%, 168). Those aged 45-54 and 55-64 were more likely to identify developers as beneficiaries (49%, 132 and 52%, 87 respectively), while respondents aged 65 and over recorded higher percentages across all categories, including local residents (59%, 47), businesses and investors (62%, 49), developers (59%, 47), local councils (49%, 39), and new residents (42%, 33).

Results also varied across the Greater Manchester boroughs. Respondents in Tameside (62%, 48) and Wigan (61%, 50) were most likely to identify local residents as beneficiaries. Businesses and investors were most commonly identified in Rochdale (56%, 44), while developers were selected more frequently in Trafford (55%, 28), Stockport (51%, 51), Bolton (50%, 58), and Oldham (50%, 35). Respondents in Bolton (50%, 59) and Oldham (50%, 35) were also more likely to identify local councils as beneficiaries, while respondents in Bury were less likely than average to identify businesses and investors (30%, 22) and developers (35%, 26).

## Concerns About Regeneration

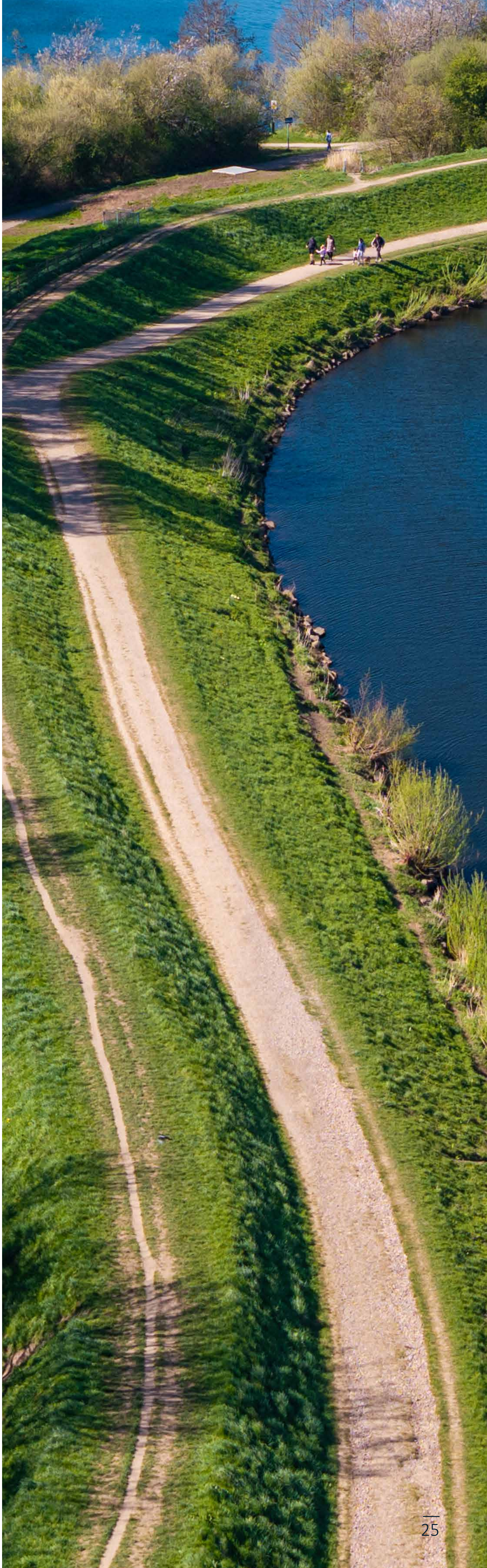
Rising living costs were the most commonly selected concern associated with regeneration, identified by 47% (707) of respondents. This was followed by a lack of affordable housing (36%, 539), disruption during regeneration (32%, 479), displacement of residents (26%, 391), and a lack of local input into decision-making (25%, 377). Loss of community identity (22%, 337), poor communication (19%, 290), and safety concerns (19%, 290) were selected less frequently. Only 3% (46) said that nothing concerned them about regeneration.

The small number of respondents selecting “other” most commonly referenced environmental concerns, including the loss of green space, impacts on wildlife, damage to the natural environment, and pressure on green belt land. Other responses included gentrification, increased traffic and congestion, pressure on local services, and the loss of historic features and local character.

Responses differed between men and women. Women were more likely to identify rising living costs (51%, 392 compared with 43%, 312 of men) and a lack of affordable housing (39%, 306 compared with 32%, 231 of men). Men were more likely to identify loss of community identity as a concern (26%, 185 compared with 20%, 152 of women).

Concerns also varied by age. Respondents aged 18-24 were more likely to identify rising living costs (50%, 108), a lack of affordable housing (42%, 92), and safety concerns (22%, 42), while being less likely to identify disruption during regeneration (27%, 58), a lack of local input (18%, 39), and loss of community identity (19%, 42). Respondents aged 25-34 were more likely to identify safety concerns (26%, 102), while those aged 55-64 were more likely to identify a lack of affordable housing (43%, 71), lack of local input (28%, 46), and loss of community identity (27%, 45). Respondents aged 65 and over were more likely to identify disruption during regeneration (51%, 40), displacement of residents (39%, 31), lack of local input (33%, 26), and loss of community identity (27%, 21), but less likely to identify rising living costs (33%, 26) or a lack of affordable housing (23%, 18).

Across the boroughs, rising living costs were identified most frequently in Rochdale (58%, 46), Stockport (54%, 54), and Oldham (53%, 37). A lack of affordable housing was highest in Stockport (49%, 49), while disruption during regeneration was selected most often in Wigan (44%, 36) and Bury (39%, 29). Respondents in Manchester were more likely to identify displacement of residents (29%, 218) and safety concerns (25%, 187) than the Greater Manchester averages. A lack of local input was highest in Tameside (50%, 39), poor communication in Bolton (27%, 32), and loss of community identity in Tameside (31%, 24) and Wigan (26%, 21).



## Whether Regeneration Suits Everyone

Respondents were also asked whether they believed regeneration projects across Greater Manchester have a positive impact on all members of the public. Overall, 57% (851) selected "yes", while 25% (373) selected "no". A further 18% (276) selected "I don't know".

Responses differed by gender. Overall, 64% (459) of men selected "yes", compared with 50% (390) of women. 22% (161) of men selected "no", compared with 27% (211) of women. Men were also less likely to select "I don't know" (14%, 101) than women (22%, 174).

The proportion selecting "yes" generally decreased with age, from 69% (268) among respondents aged 25-34 to 28% (22) among those aged 65 and over. Respondents aged 65 and over were also more likely to select "I don't know", with 28% (22) choosing this response.

Results varied across the boroughs. Manchester respondents were most likely to believe regeneration has a positive impact on all members of the public, with 70% (523) selecting "yes", compared with the Greater Manchester average of 57% (851). Lower proportions selecting "yes" were recorded in Stockport (39%, 39), Wigan (40%, 33), Tameside (41%, 32), Bury (43%, 32), Rochdale (43%, 34), Trafford (45%, 23), Bolton (46%, 54), Oldham (47%, 33), and Salford (48%, 48). Stockport recorded the highest proportion selecting "no" (40%, 40), while Manchester recorded the lowest (16%, 123). Wigan recorded the highest proportion selecting "I don't know" (29%, 24), compared with 14% (104) in Manchester.

# Trust, Transparency & Community Voice

## Trust In Organisations Delivering Regeneration

The survey explored levels of trust in organisations responsible for delivering regeneration, including local councils, developers, and central government.

Local councils were the most trusted organisations, with 14% (216) stating that they completely trusted local councils and 36% (536) stating that they somewhat trusted them. A further 25% (378) selected a neutral response, while 17% (254) said they did not really trust local councils and 8% (116) said they did not trust them at all.

Trust in developers was lower. Overall, 15% (222) completely trusted developers and 24% (361) somewhat trusted them. 30% (452) selected a neutral response, while 21% (313) said they did not really trust developers and 10% (152) said they did not trust them at all.

Views on central government were more evenly divided. Overall, 12% (187) completely trusted central government and 26% (386) somewhat trusted it. 24% (362) selected a neutral response, while 23% (351) said they did not really trust central government and 14% (214) said they did not trust it at all.

Trust levels varied by gender across all three organisations. Men were more likely than women to trust local councils (55%, 399 compared with 46%, 353), developers (43%, 308 compared with 35%, 275), and central government (45%, 328 compared with 32%, 245). Levels of distrust were broadly similar for local councils and developers, although women were more likely to distrust central government (40%, 311) than men (35%, 250).

Trust also varied considerably by age. For local councils, trust was highest among respondents aged 25-34 (59%, 229), followed by those aged 35-44 (56%, 211) and 18-24 (51%, 111). Trust declined among respondents aged 45-54 (42%, 113), 55-64 (36%, 60), and 65 and over (35%, 28). Respondents aged 55-64 were the only age group more likely to distrust local councils (41%, 68) than trust them (36%, 60).

A similar pattern was seen for developers. Trust was highest among respondents aged 25-34 (51%, 198), followed by those aged 35-44 (45%, 167) and 18-24 (41%, 88). Respondents aged 45-54, 55-64, and 65 and over were more likely to distrust developers than trust them. Among respondents aged 55-64, 48% (80) distrusted developers compared with 20% (33) who trusted them, while among those aged 65 and over 46% (36) distrusted developers compared with 20% (16) who trusted them.

Trust in central government also declined with age. Respondents aged 25-34 recorded the highest levels of trust (50%, 195), followed by those aged 35-44 (44%, 165) and 18-24 (39%, 85). Trust fell to 28% (77) among respondents aged 45-54, 22% (37) among those aged 55-64, and 18% (14) among those aged 65 and over. Distrust was highest among respondents aged 55-64 (59%, 98) and those aged 65 and over (54%, 43).

Across the boroughs, Manchester consistently recorded the highest levels of trust in all three organisations. 62% (467) trusted local councils, 54% (403) trusted developers, and 56% (417) trusted central government, compared with Greater Manchester averages of 50% (752), 39% (583), and 38% (573) respectively. Tameside recorded the highest levels of distrust in local councils (46%, 36) and central government (63%, 49), while Trafford recorded the highest levels of distrust in developers (51%, 26).

## Familiarity With Compulsory Acquisition

Respondents were asked how familiar they were with compulsory acquisition, also known as compulsory purchase. Overall, 19% (282) stated that they were very familiar and 38% (568) said they were somewhat familiar. 23% (352) had heard of compulsory acquisition but did not understand it, while 20% (298) were not aware of it. Overall, 57% (850) selected either "very familiar" or "somewhat familiar".

> Familiarity varied significantly by gender. Overall, 66% (479) of men selected either "very familiar" or "somewhat familiar", compared with 48% (369) of women.
>
> Familiarity generally increased with age. Respondents aged 18-24 recorded the lowest levels of familiarity (43%, 93), rising to 58% (225) among those aged 25-34 and 59% (223) among those aged 35-44. Familiarity was 54% (146) among respondents aged 45-54 and reached 61% (102) among those aged 55-64 and 61% (48) among respondents aged 65 and over.
>
> Across the boroughs, Manchester recorded the highest levels of familiarity, with 63% (471) selecting either "very familiar" or "somewhat familiar", followed by Trafford (59%, 30), Stockport (57%, 57), and Bolton (56%, 65). Lower levels of familiarity were recorded in Wigan (50%, 41), Rochdale (48%, 38), Salford (45%, 45), Bury (45%, 33), and Oldham (40%, 28). Manchester also recorded the highest proportion of respondents stating they were very familiar with compulsory acquisition (26%, 192), while Bury recorded the lowest (5%, 4).

## Community Influence Over Regeneration

Respondents were also asked whether they felt local people are given meaningful opportunities to influence regeneration decisions. Overall, 16% (233) said they had "a great deal" of influence and 31% (468) said they had "some influence". In comparison, 33% (492) said they had "very little influence" and 17% (260) said they had "no influence at all". Overall, 47% (701) felt they had at least some influence, compared with 50% (752) who felt they had very little or no influence.

Men were more likely than women to feel they had influence over regeneration decisions, with 52% (377) selecting either "a great deal" or "some influence", compared with 42% (323) of women. Conversely, 54% (417) of women felt they had very little or no influence, compared with 46% (332) of men.

Perceived influence also differed by age. Respondents aged 18-24 (53%, 116), 25-34 (62%, 242), and 35-44 (51%, 192) were more likely to feel they had at least some influence. This reversed among older respondents, with 62% (169) of those aged 45-54, 73% (122) of those aged 55-64, and 80% (63) of those aged 65 and over reporting very little or no influence.

Manchester respondents were most likely to feel they had influence over regeneration decisions, with 63% (469) selecting either "a great deal" or "some influence", compared with the Greater Manchester average of 47% (701). Lower levels of perceived influence were recorded in Wigan (22%, 18), Rochdale (25%, 20), and Stockport (25%, 25). Rochdale (72%, 57), Stockport (71%, 71), Wigan (71%, 58), Salford (66%, 65), Bury (66%, 49), Tameside (65%, 51), and Trafford (63%, 32) all recorded higher proportions of respondents reporting very little or no influence.

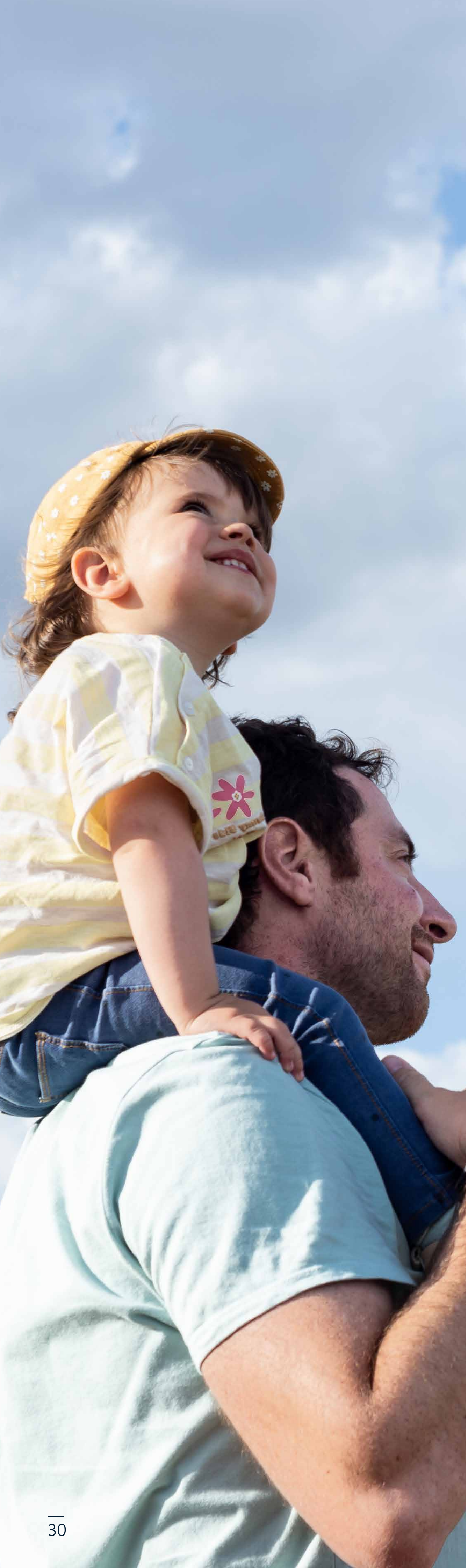
## Confidence In Communication From Developers

Respondents were asked how confident they were that regeneration projects are communicated by developers clearly and transparently. Overall, 13% (197) said they were very confident and 35% (521) somewhat confident. In comparison, 34% (509) said they were not very confident and 14% (203) said they were not at all confident. A further 5% (70) selected “I don’t know”. Overall, 48% (718) were confident, while 47% (712) were not confident.

Men were more likely than women to express confidence in communications from developers, with 53% (384) selecting either “very confident” or “somewhat confident”, compared with 43% (334) of women. Conversely, 51% (397) of women were not confident, compared with 43% (311) of men.

Confidence also differed by age. Respondents aged 18-24 (51%, 110), 25-34 (61%, 239), and 35-44 (55%, 206) were more likely to express confidence. This reversed among older respondents, with 57% (155) of those aged 45-54, 66% (111) of those aged 55-64, and 70% (55) of those aged 65 and over reporting that they were not confident.

Manchester again recorded the highest levels of confidence, with 63% (474) selecting either “very confident” or “somewhat confident”, compared with the Greater Manchester average of 48% (718). Lower levels of confidence were recorded in Wigan (24%, 20), Bury (27%, 20), Tameside (28%, 22), Salford (30%, 30), Rochdale (34%, 27), Trafford (35%, 18), and Stockport (35%, 35). Tameside recorded the highest proportion of respondents who were not confident (71%, 55), followed by Bury (69%, 51), Salford (67%, 66), Wigan (65%, 53), Rochdale (61%, 48), Stockport (59%, 59), Bolton (58%, 68), and Trafford (57%, 29). Manchester recorded the lowest level of low confidence at 33% (247).



# Human & Wellbeing Impacts of Change

## Impact On Wellbeing

The survey explored the emotional and personal impacts associated with regeneration and major development. Overall, 11% (166) of respondents said regeneration would impact their wellbeing very positively and 39% (591) said it would impact their wellbeing somewhat positively. A further 22% (329) said it would have no impact, while 15% (227) said it would impact their wellbeing somewhat negatively and 3% (51) said it would impact their wellbeing very negatively. Overall, 50% (757) selected either “very positively” or “somewhat positively”, compared with 19% (278) who selected either “very negatively” or “somewhat negatively”.

Responses differed by gender. Men were more likely to select one of the positive options, with 56% (407) doing so compared with 45% (348) of women. Women were more likely to select one of the negative options, with 21% (165) doing so compared with 16% (112) of men.

Responses also varied by age. Respondents aged 25-34 and 35-44 were more likely than average to say regeneration would positively impact their wellbeing, with 60% (235) and 57% (214) respectively selecting one of the positive responses. Positive responses decreased among older age groups, with 44% (118) of those aged 45-54, 35% (58) of those aged 55-64, and 30% (24) of those aged 65 and over selecting either “very positively” or “somewhat positively”.

Across the boroughs, Manchester recorded the highest proportion of positive wellbeing responses, with 61% (459) selecting either “very positively” or “somewhat positively”, compared with the Greater Manchester average of 50% (757). Lower positive responses were recorded in Wigan (34%, 28), Bury (36%, 27), Stockport (37%, 37), Trafford (37%, 19), Oldham (40%, 28), Salford (40%, 40), and Tameside (41%, 32). Negative wellbeing impacts were highest in Trafford (29%, 15), Stockport (28%, 28), and Wigan (28%, 23), while Manchester recorded the lowest proportion selecting either negative response at 13% (96).

## Feelings Associated With Regeneration

Respondents were asked which emotions they would be most likely to experience if they lived in an area affected by regeneration. Optimism was the most commonly selected response at 38% (566), closely followed by uncertainty at 37% (552). Excitement was selected by 28% (424), anxiety by 23% (347), powerlessness by 19% (281), stress by 19% (279), and indifference by 13% (195). A further 6% (84) selected “I don’t know”.

> The small number of respondents who selected “something else” most commonly referenced feelings of frustration, anger, sadness, anxiety about uncertainty, and concerns about disruption. Several responses also indicated that feelings would depend on the nature of the regeneration project and the extent to which communities were involved in decision-making.
>
> Results differed by gender. Men were more likely than women to select optimism (42%, 301 compared with 34%, 265), excitement (35%, 251 compared with 22%, 172), powerlessness (21%, 150 compared with 17%, 130), and indifference (15%, 108 compared with 11%, 87). Women were more likely than men to select uncertainty (40%, 310 compared with 33%, 239) and anxiety (25%, 193 compared with 21%, 151).
>
> Results also varied across age groups. Respondents aged 25-34 were more likely than average to select excitement (39%, 152), while respondents aged 45-54 were less likely to select excitement (21%, 56). Respondents aged 55-64 were more likely than average to select uncertainty (46%, 76) and powerlessness (26%, 44), while only 18% (30) selected excitement. A similar pattern was recorded among respondents aged 65 and over, with 49% (39) selecting uncertainty, 25% (20) selecting powerlessness, and 19% (15) selecting excitement.
>
> Across the boroughs, optimism was most commonly selected in Rochdale and Tameside (both 41%, 32), followed by Manchester (39%, 291), Stockport (39%, 39), Trafford (39%, 20), and Bolton (39%, 46). Uncertainty was highest in Oldham (51%, 36), Rochdale (49%, 39), and Trafford (49%, 25). Excitement was highest in Manchester (35%, 260), while anxiety was highest in Stockport (30%, 30), Oldham (29%, 20), and Tameside (27%, 21). Stress was most commonly selected in Stockport (25%, 25), Salford (23%, 23), Trafford (20%, 10), and Bury (20%, 15).

## Support For People Affected By Regeneration

Respondents were asked what types of support should be available to people affected by regeneration. Clear and regular communication was the most commonly selected response at 57% (859), followed by financial advice or compensation support at 52% (782). Relocation support and community engagement opportunities were each selected by 42% of respondents (633 and 626 respectively), while 38% (568) selected mental health support and 31% (470) selected legal guidance. Very few respondents selected “none of the above” (1%, 11) or “I don’t know” (3%, 45).

The small number of respondents who selected “other support” referenced a range of additional needs, including financial support, employment support, environmental considerations, and reassurance that local people would benefit from regeneration outcomes. Some respondents also expressed scepticism about the extent to which additional support would influence decisions they believed had already been made.

Responses varied by gender. Women were more likely to select clear and regular communication, with 59% (461) selecting this option compared with 55% (395) of men. Men were more likely to select relocation support (44%, 320 compared with 40%, 309), community engagement opportunities (44%, 314 compared with 40%, 310), and legal guidance (34%, 242 compared with 29%, 227).

Responses also varied by age. The proportion selecting clear and regular communication increased with age, from 44% (96) among respondents aged 18-24 to 76% (60) among those aged 65 and over. Relocation support and legal guidance were also selected by a greater proportion of older respondents, with 58% (46) of those aged 65 and over selecting relocation support and 44% (35) selecting legal guidance. Mental health support was more commonly selected by younger respondents, peaking at 42% (156) among those aged 35-44, compared with 25% (20) among those aged 65 and over.

Across the boroughs, clear and regular communication was the most commonly selected support option in every borough, ranging from 50% (377) in Manchester to 75% (38) in Trafford. Financial advice or compensation support was most commonly selected in Rochdale (63%, 50), Trafford (61%, 31), and Stockport (59%, 59). Relocation support was selected by more than half of respondents in Tameside (55%, 43), Rochdale (53%, 42), Bolton (52%, 61), and Salford (51%, 50). Mental health support was most commonly selected in Bolton (44%, 51), Rochdale (43%, 34), and Manchester (41%, 310), while legal guidance was most commonly selected in Bolton (44%, 51) and Trafford (41%, 21).

## Mental Health Support & Trust

Respondents were asked whether mental health support should be offered to people affected by regeneration. Overall, 40% (600) selected “yes, definitely” and 47% (700) selected “yes, in some cases”. A total of 7% (110) selected “no” and 6% (90) selected “not sure”. Overall, 87% (1,300) selected either “yes, definitely” or “yes, in some cases”.

Responses were broadly consistent across men and women. By age, support was highest among respondents aged 18-24, with 91% (198) selecting either “yes, definitely” or “yes, in some cases”. This was followed by respondents aged 35-44 at 90% (339), 25-34 at 88% (345), and 45-54 at 86% (234). Support was lower among older respondents, with 80% (134) of those aged 55-64 and 63% (50) of those aged 65 and over selecting one of the two positive responses.

Support for providing mental health support was high across all boroughs. The highest levels were recorded in Bolton and Manchester, where 90% (105 and 675 respectively) selected either “yes, definitely” or “yes, in some cases”. High levels of support were also recorded in Rochdale (86%, 68), Salford (85%, 84), Trafford (84%, 43), Wigan (83%, 68), and Bury (82%, 61). Lower levels were recorded in Stockport and Tameside, where 81% (81 and 63 respectively) selected either positive response, and in Oldham, where 74% (52) selected either “yes, definitely” or “yes, in some cases”.

Respondents were also asked whether they would be more or less likely to trust a regeneration project if wellbeing support was provided from the outset. Overall, 25% (378) said they would be much more likely to trust a regeneration project and 50% (749) said they would be somewhat more likely to trust it. A further 23% (349) said it would make no difference, while 1% (17) said they would be somewhat less likely to trust a project and less than 1% (7) said they would be much less likely. Overall, 75% (1,127) selected either “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely”.

Responses were broadly consistent across men and women. By age, the proportion selecting either “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” decreased from 82% (179) among respondents aged 18-24 and 82% (320) among those aged 25-34, to 78% (291) among those aged 35-44, 73% (198) among those aged 45-54, 59% (98) among those aged 55-64, and 52% (41) among those aged 65 and over. Older respondents were more likely to say wellbeing support would make no difference, rising from 25% (68) among those aged 45-54 to 40% (66) among those aged 55-64 and 47% (37) among those aged 65 and over.

Across the boroughs, Manchester respondents were most likely to say they would be more likely to trust a regeneration project if wellbeing support was provided from the start, with 84% (633) selecting either “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely”, compared with the Greater Manchester average of 75% (1,127). Similar levels were recorded in Bolton (75%, 88), Stockport (70%, 70), Rochdale (68%, 54), Salford (66%, 65), Tameside (65%, 51), and Oldham (64%, 45). Lower proportions were recorded in Trafford (59%, 30), Wigan (59%, 48), and Bury (58%, 43). Very few respondents in any borough selected either “somewhat less likely” or “much less likely”, with the combined total remaining at 4% or below across all boroughs.

# 05

# Discussion

# Discussion

## A Mandate For Regeneration, But Not For Regeneration At Any Cost

The polling presents a clear but nuanced message: people across Greater Manchester broadly support regeneration, but that support depends on how change is delivered. Overall, 77% of respondents felt positive about regeneration, while only 2% felt negative, showing that opposition to development is not simply resistance to change.

Respondents also recognise the value of investment: 47% associated regeneration with improved public spaces, 46% with economic growth, 45% with new housing, and 39% with community facilities such as schools and healthcare. The central issue is therefore not whether regeneration should happen, but whether communities believe it is fair, transparent, and genuinely beneficial to existing residents.

This matters because residents increasingly judge regeneration through lived experience as well as physical outcomes. Rising living costs were identified as a concern by 47% of respondents, followed by a lack of affordable housing at 36%, disruption during regeneration at 32%, displacement of residents at 26%, and lack of local input at 25%. These findings show that successful regeneration is now expected to manage change responsibly, not simply deliver development efficiently.

## Trust, Transparency & Community Voice Are Becoming As Important As Delivery

Trust is one of the strongest themes in the research. While 50% of respondents said they trusted local councils to act in the best interests of communities, trust was lower for developers at 39% and central government at 38%. This suggests that respondents can see the potential benefits of regeneration, but many are less confident in the organisations and processes used to deliver it.

> This trust gap is reinforced by views on influence and communication. Half of respondents said they had very little or no influence over regeneration decisions, while 47% were not confident that developers communicate projects clearly and transparently. Issues such as disruption, affordability, and displacement are harder for communities to accept when people feel uninformed or excluded; conversely, difficult decisions are more likely to be understood where the process is open, fair, and responsive.
>
> The findings suggest that consultation can no longer be treated as a one-off statutory exercise. As regeneration programmes often unfold over many years, residents expect ongoing dialogue, clear updates, and evidence that their feedback has shaped decisions. This is reflected in the support respondents said they would need if affected by regeneration: clear and regular communication was selected by 57% of respondents, while 42% selected community engagement opportunities.
>
> Qualitative responses reinforce this point, with many describing good regeneration as involving local people from the outset, listening to concerns, providing regular updates, and enabling residents to shape decisions rather than simply respond to them. Trust, therefore, is becoming a strategic asset. It cannot be built through communications alone; it depends on visible responsiveness, consistent follow-through, and delivery against commitments made to communities.

## Affordability, Displacement & Community Identity Remain The Defining Social Concerns

Affordability is one of the clearest social concerns in the research. Rising living costs were the most commonly selected concern, identified by 47% of respondents, while 36% highlighted a lack of affordable housing and 26% identified displacement of residents. Loss of community identity was also selected by 22% of respondents overall, rising to 31% in Tameside and 26% in Wigan. Together, these findings show that many residents assess regeneration through the combined lenses of economic security, belonging, and continuity.

The concern is not only physical displacement. Respondents also point to social and cultural displacement, where rising costs, changing local businesses, altered demographics, or loss of familiar places can make an area feel less accessible to long-standing communities. This came through clearly in the qualitative responses, where many described good regeneration as preserving local character, protecting heritage, supporting local businesses, and ensuring long-standing residents are not pushed out of the areas they call home.

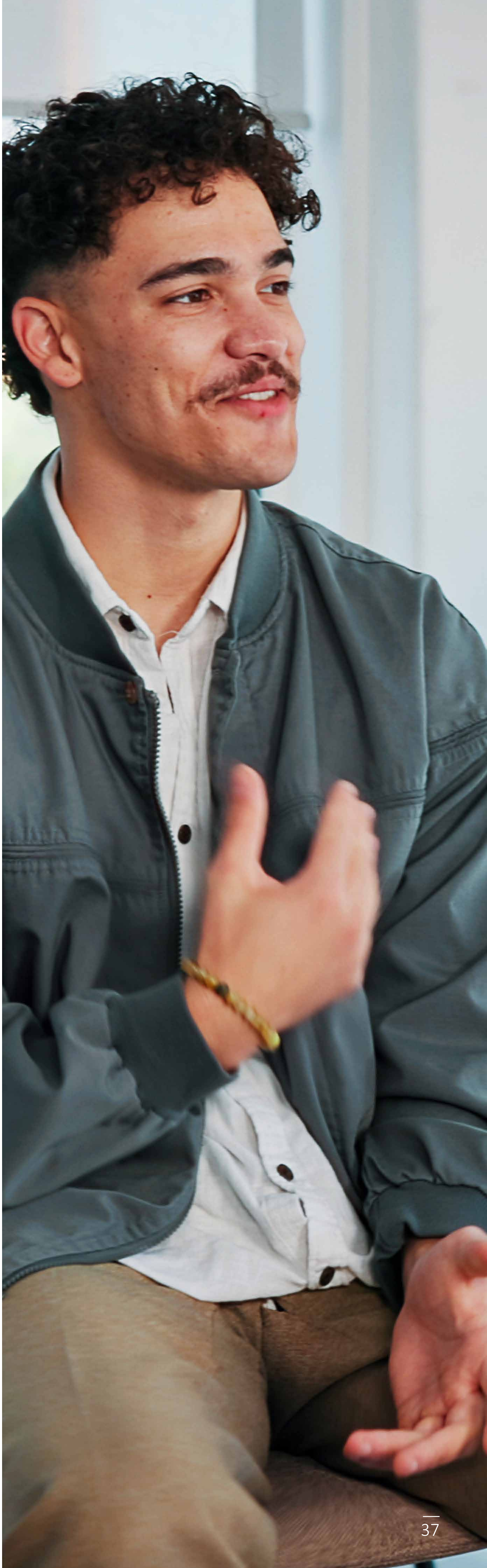
The implication is that regeneration must demonstrate who benefits, not only what is built. Public confidence depends on showing that existing residents share in the value created by investment, and that change strengthens rather than erodes the relationships, memories, services, and identities that make places feel like communities.

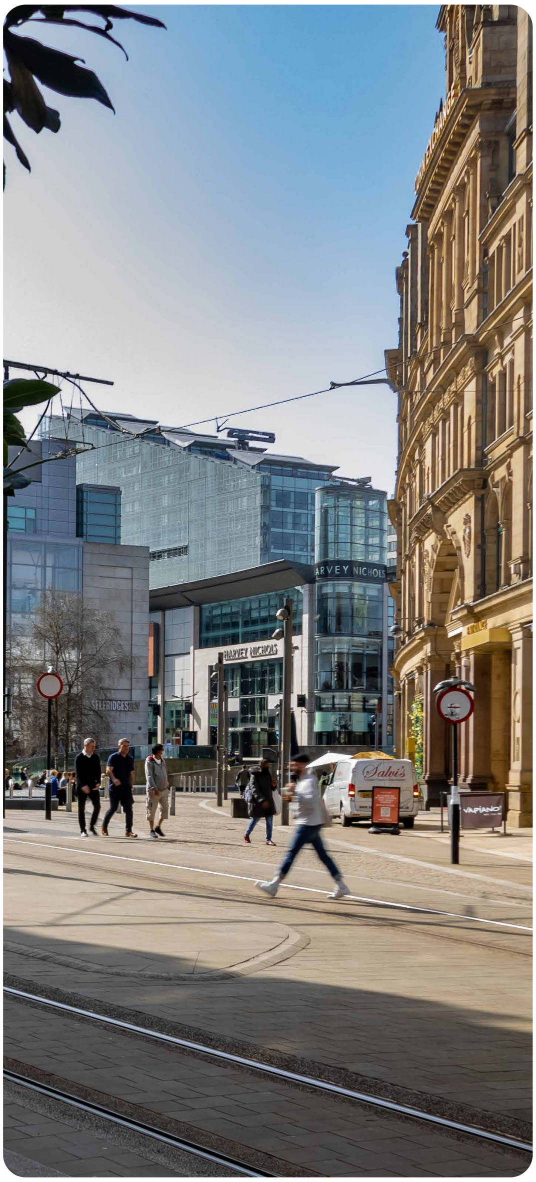
## Regeneration Has A Significant Emotional & Wellbeing Dimension

A distinctive finding from the research is the strength of the wellbeing dimension. Overall, 50% of respondents said regeneration would affect their wellbeing positively, but 19% expected a negative impact and a further 9% were unsure. The emotional responses also show the complexity of public attitudes: optimism was selected by 38%, but uncertainty was almost as high at 37%, followed by anxiety at 23%, and powerlessness and stress at 19% each.

The level of support for wellbeing provision is especially striking: 87% of respondents said mental health or wellbeing support should be available to people affected by regeneration, while 75% said they would be more likely to trust a project if wellbeing support was provided from the start. That level of consensus suggests wellbeing is no longer a peripheral issue, but an expected part of responsible delivery.

Importantly, respondents are not asking for regeneration to stop. They are asking for better support while change takes place, so that communities can navigate disruption, uncertainty, and personal impacts more effectively.





## Regeneration Is Viewed Positively When Benefits Are Tangible & Visible

The concerns identified in the research should not obscure the overall positivity towards regeneration. Alongside the 77% who felt positive about regeneration overall, respondents consistently recognised practical benefits, including improved public spaces (47%), economic growth (46%), new housing (45%), community facilities (39%), job creation (37%), and better transport links (27%).

The responses to the investment priorities question reinforce this point. Housing emerged as the highest priority, with 35% ranking it first, followed by environmental improvements, public spaces, community services, transport, and local businesses. Support is strongest where regeneration delivers practical, visible improvements that enhance everyday life.

In short, residents do not appear to oppose development itself. They support regeneration when its benefits are tangible, accessible, and shared fairly.

## Differences By Gender

The gender analysis reveals important variations in how regeneration is experienced and prioritised. Female respondents consistently demonstrate greater concern regarding community impacts, affordability, disruption, and wellbeing. They are more likely to identify potential risks associated with regeneration and place greater emphasis on support mechanisms, communication, and community engagement.

Male respondents generally remain supportive of regeneration but tend to focus more heavily on economic benefits, infrastructure improvements, and investment opportunities.

These differences should not be interpreted as opposing views. Rather, they suggest that women may be more attuned to the social consequences of regeneration, while men may place relatively greater emphasis on economic outcomes. The findings reinforce the importance of recognising that regeneration affects different groups in different ways. Effective engagement strategies therefore need to move beyond generic messaging and consider the varied concerns held by different audiences.

# Differences By Age

Age represents one of the strongest differentiators within the research. Younger respondents generally demonstrate greater optimism towards regeneration and appear more likely to prioritise housing delivery, employment opportunities, and investment. This is understandable given the housing challenges facing younger generations. For many younger residents, regeneration may represent an opportunity to access housing, employment, and improved local amenities.

Older respondents, by contrast, appear more cautious about regeneration, placing greater emphasis on stability, community identity, and the preservation of local character. This should be understood in the context of the survey's socio-demographic profile. A greater proportion of older respondents lived outside Manchester, where regeneration activity may be less visible or experienced differently: 66% of those aged 45-54, 74% of those aged 55-64, and 86% of those aged 65 and over lived in boroughs outside Manchester. This helps explain why older respondents were more likely to focus on disruption, loss of influence, and whether regeneration will benefit existing residents, even though the wider survey shows that the benefits of regeneration are generally recognised.

These differences highlight the extent to which attitudes towards regeneration are shaped by people's relationship with place. Those who have spent decades within a community may experience change differently from those seeking opportunities within a changing housing market.

Importantly, neither perspective is inherently more supportive or more resistant to regeneration. Rather, they reflect different lived experiences and priorities.

# Differences By Borough

While borough-level variations should be interpreted cautiously, they nevertheless provide valuable insight into how local context shapes attitudes. Residents do not experience regeneration in the abstract. Their views are heavily influenced by local history, recent investment patterns, housing pressures, economic conditions, and previous experiences of development.

In boroughs where regeneration has delivered visible improvements, respondents often demonstrate greater confidence in potential benefits. In areas where investment has been slower, residents may be more focused on future opportunities or more sceptical about delivery.

The findings therefore reinforce the importance of place-specific approaches. Public attitudes are not uniform across Greater Manchester and should not be treated as such. What constitutes successful regeneration in one borough may not align perfectly with local priorities elsewhere.

Understanding these local differences will become increasingly important as Greater Manchester continues to pursue its Good Growth agenda, which emphasises inclusive development, social value, and community benefit alongside economic performance.

## Manchester

Manchester consistently recorded the most positive attitudes towards regeneration across the survey. Residents were among the most likely to view regeneration positively, trust local councils, developers, and government, feel able to influence decisions, and express confidence in communication and consultation processes. Respondents were also the most likely to believe regeneration benefits all members of the public and to report that regeneration would have a positive impact on their wellbeing.

This confidence is likely influenced by Manchester's highly visible regeneration activity over recent decades. Residents appear to have direct experience of regeneration delivering economic growth, new development, and investment. However, concerns around displacement and safety were higher than average, suggesting that while support for regeneration remains strong, residents are also aware of the social pressures that rapid growth can create.

## Bolton

Bolton presents a more cautious picture. Respondents were more likely than average to identify developers and local councils as key beneficiaries of regeneration, and concerns about poor communication were comparatively high. At the same time, there was strong support for mental health support, legal guidance, and relocation assistance for those affected by regeneration.

The results suggest a population that broadly accepts the need for regeneration but places significant importance on fairness, transparency, and support for affected communities. Housing, community services, and wellbeing appear to be particularly important local priorities.

## Bury

Respondents in Bury recorded relatively low levels of trust in local councils, developers, and central government. They were also less likely to associate regeneration with economic growth and were among the least likely to feel able to influence regeneration decisions.

The findings suggest a degree of scepticism about whether regeneration delivers benefits fairly or whether local communities have a meaningful voice in decision-making. Residents appear less concerned with economic growth narratives and more focused on communication, accountability, and ensuring local people are properly involved.

## Oldham

Oldham presents a mixed picture. Residents were among the most likely to prioritise housing investment and to associate regeneration with new housing. However, uncertainty about regeneration was high, as were concerns around living costs.

Oldham respondents were also among the least familiar with compulsory acquisition, with many reporting that they had heard of it but did not understand it. This suggests that communication, education, and engagement could be particularly important in supporting public understanding of future regeneration projects.

## Rochdale

Rochdale respondents strongly associated regeneration with business investment and economic growth but also expressed significant concerns about rising living costs. Uncertainty about regeneration was among the highest of any borough, and residents were less likely than average to feel able to influence regeneration decisions.

The results suggest that residents recognise the economic potential of regeneration but remain uncertain about whether the benefits will be shared fairly. Financial support, communication, and meaningful engagement may therefore be particularly important in building confidence.

## Salford

Salford residents demonstrated relatively moderate views throughout the survey. While respondents generally supported regeneration, they were less likely than average to trust central government or feel that they had influence over local decisions. Confidence in developer communication was also comparatively low.

Many respondents anticipated little impact on their wellbeing from regeneration, which may reflect a degree of familiarity with ongoing development and change. The findings suggest a population that is accustomed to regeneration activity but remains cautious about how decisions are made and communicated.

## Stockport

Stockport recorded some of the most challenging results in the survey. Residents were among the least likely to believe regeneration benefits everyone, among the most likely to report negative wellbeing impacts, and among the least likely to feel able to influence decisions.

Concerns around affordability were particularly strong, with Stockport recording the highest levels of concern regarding affordable housing. Anxiety and stress associated with regeneration were also above average. These findings suggest that residents are concerned not only about development itself, but about who benefits from it and whether existing communities can remain part of future growth.

## Tameside

Tameside stands out for concerns around participation and local voice. Respondents were far more likely than average to identify a lack of local input as a concern and were among the least confident in communication from developers. Trust in local councils and central government was also comparatively low.

At the same time, residents strongly believed that local communities should benefit from regeneration, with many identifying local residents as the primary beneficiaries. The findings suggest that support for regeneration may be closely linked to whether residents feel genuinely involved in shaping outcomes.

## Trafford

Trafford recorded some of the highest levels of positivity towards regeneration, yet also some of the highest levels of distrust towards developers. Respondents were more likely than average to identify transport improvements as a benefit and strongly prioritised communication and financial support for affected communities.

This combination suggests that residents are supportive of development and investment in principle but place considerable emphasis on transparency and accountability from those delivering projects.

## Wigan

Wigan presents one of the more cautious borough profiles. Residents were less likely to report positive wellbeing impacts from regeneration and were among the least likely to feel able to influence decisions. Disruption, loss of community identity, and uncertainty featured more prominently than in many other boroughs.

At the same time, respondents strongly believed that local residents should be the primary beneficiaries of regeneration. The results suggest that community identity and local character remain particularly important considerations in Wigan, and that future regeneration programmes may need to demonstrate clearly how existing communities will benefit.

> Taken together, these borough-level findings reinforce that attitudes towards regeneration are shaped as much by local experience and context as by regeneration itself. They suggest that a single Greater Manchester-wide narrative is unlikely to resonate equally across all communities. Successful regeneration will therefore require approaches that respond to local priorities, local concerns, and differing levels of trust and confidence in the organisations responsible for delivering change.

06

# Conclusions

# Conclusions

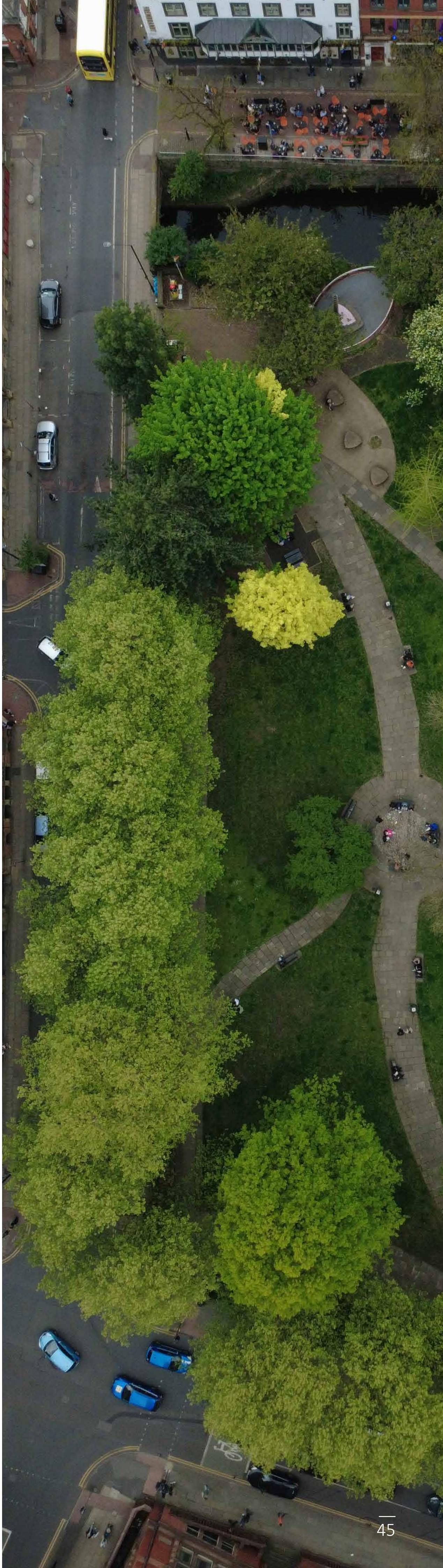
The findings of this research present a clear challenge, but also a significant opportunity, for everyone involved in regeneration. Across Greater Manchester, respondents were broadly positive about regeneration and recognised the benefits that investment can bring through new housing, improved public spaces, better infrastructure, community facilities, and economic growth. However, the research also demonstrates that public support for regeneration cannot be separated from the way it is delivered.

Throughout the survey, respondents consistently highlighted concerns around uncertainty, disruption, affordability, displacement, communication, and whether local people are genuinely able to influence decisions. While many people associate regeneration with positive outcomes, they also recognise that major change can create stress, anxiety, and a sense of powerlessness for those directly affected.

These findings suggest that wellbeing should no longer be viewed as a secondary consideration within regeneration programmes. Instead, it should be recognised as part of responsible project delivery and as one of the ways in which organisations can acknowledge the human impact of change.

For developers, local authorities, and public sector organisations, this means thinking beyond the physical outcomes of regeneration and considering the lived experience of the people affected by it. Successful regeneration is not simply about delivering homes, infrastructure, commercial space, or public realm improvements. It is also about supporting communities through periods of change, managing uncertainty, and ensuring that residents feel informed, listened to, and supported throughout the process.

The central conclusion is that regeneration is most likely to command public confidence when it is treated as a social process as well as a physical one. Communities do not simply want to see places changed; they want to understand why change is happening, how decisions are being made, who will benefit, and what support will be available to those most affected.



# 07

# Recommendations

# Recommendations

The recommendations that follow are not intended to prescribe a single model or present any one tool as the answer. Regeneration projects differ significantly in scale, context, community profile, delivery timescale, and level of impact. The response therefore needs to be proportionate, flexible, and designed around the communities affected.

## 1. Treat Engagement As An Ongoing Relationship, Not A Project Milestone

01

Engagement should begin early enough to influence proposals and continue throughout the lifecycle of a scheme. This means moving beyond one-off consultation events and creating regular opportunities for communities to understand emerging plans, ask questions, raise concerns, and see how feedback has been considered. The aim should be to build trust over time, not simply to demonstrate that consultation has taken place.

## 2. Design Communication Around Clarity, Transparency & Accessibility

02

Communications should explain not only what is being proposed, but what it could mean for different groups of people. Residents need clear information about timescales, disruption, housing implications, compensation or support routes, decision-making processes, and opportunities to influence outcomes. This information should be provided in formats that are easy to understand, easy to access, and appropriate for different levels of digital confidence.

## 3. Use Digital Tools As Part Of A Wider Engagement Ecosystem

03

Digital engagement can play an important role, particularly where communities need access to information outside traditional consultation hours or where projects evolve over long periods. Virtual consultation rooms, online engagement platforms, and carefully governed project information tools can help widen access and provide consistency. However, they should complement, not replace, face-to-face engagement, community outreach, local partnerships, and direct support for those most affected.

## 4. Build Wellbeing Considerations Into Project Planning From The Outset

Wellbeing support should be considered early, particularly for projects involving uncertainty, relocation, compulsory acquisition, prolonged disruption, or significant change to community identity. This does not mean applying the same intervention to every scheme. It means assessing likely impacts, identifying who may be most affected, signposting appropriate support, and ensuring project teams have a clear process for responding to distress, anxiety, or vulnerability where it arises.

## 5. Demonstrate How Existing Communities Will Benefit

Projects should be explicit about how benefits will be shared with existing residents. This includes affordable housing, local services, public space, employment opportunities, transport, community facilities, environmental improvements, and support for local businesses. Where trade-offs are unavoidable, they should be acknowledged openly. Public confidence is more likely to grow when communities can see a credible link between disruption in the short term and tangible benefits in the long term.

## 6. Tailor Approaches To Local Context & Community Profile

The research shows that attitudes vary by age, gender, borough, and lived experience. A single engagement narrative is unlikely to work across all communities. Project teams should use socio-demographic insight, local knowledge, and community mapping to understand who may be affected, who may be underrepresented, and which concerns are likely to matter most in each place.

## 7. Measure Trust, Not Just Participation

Attendance numbers, consultation responses, and website visits are useful, but they do not fully capture whether communities feel informed, listened to, or supported. Regeneration projects should consider how trust, confidence, understanding, and perceived influence can be monitored over time. These measures can help identify emerging issues early and support more responsive delivery.

> Taken together, these recommendations point towards a more human-centred model of regeneration: one that recognises the importance of delivery, but also the importance of trust, wellbeing, fairness, and local voice. The practical tools used to support this will vary from project to project. What matters most is that engagement and support are designed around people, not process.

# About Ardent

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We provide clients with an integrated service, combining land, consent, and project expertise to efficiently take transport infrastructure projects from concept to completion. Our extensive experience allows us to develop advanced, practical solutions that reduce costs, mitigate risk, and ensure certainty throughout the promotion and construction phases.

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Ardent

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