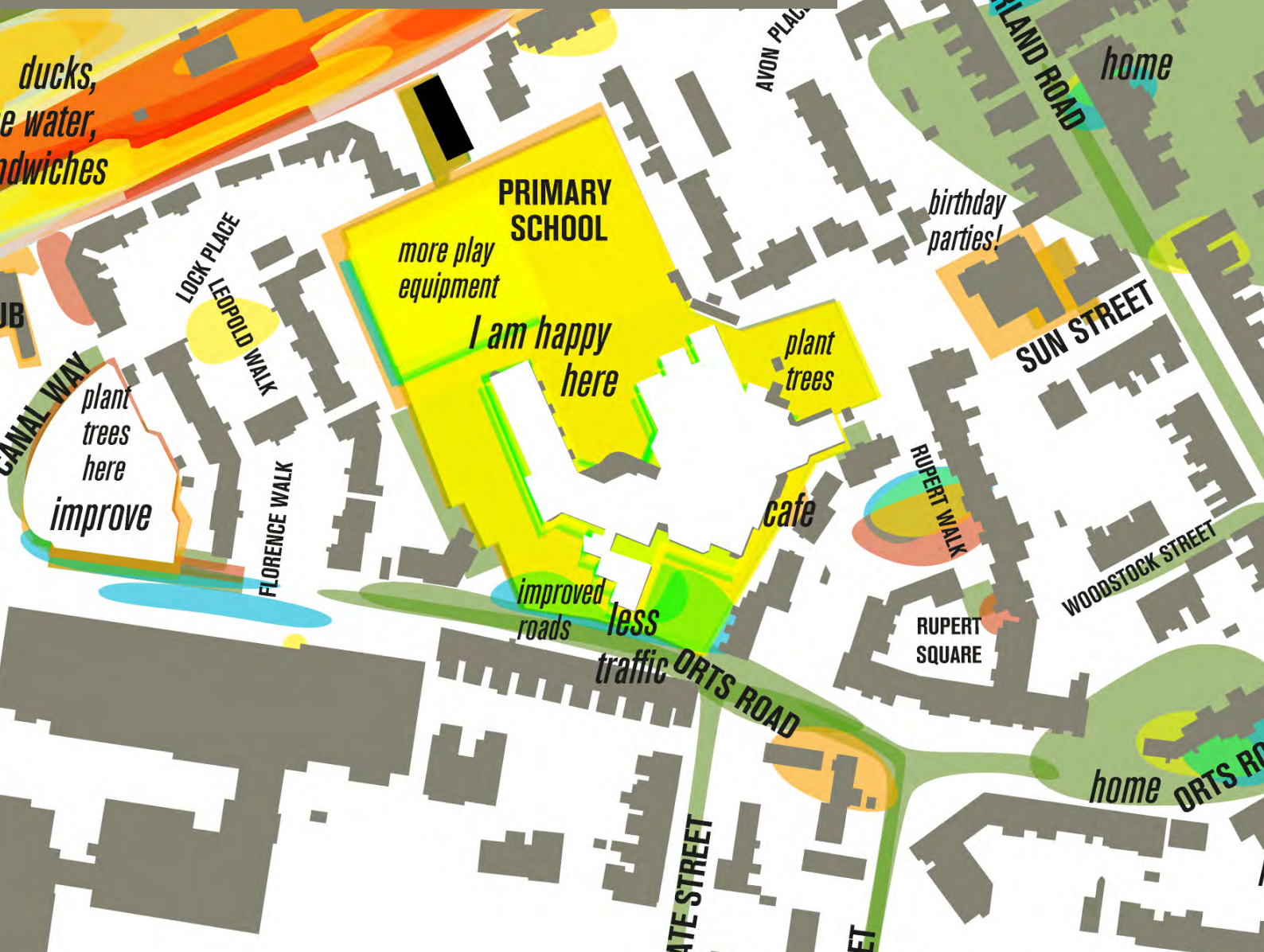


MAPPING ECO SOCIAL ASSETS



REPORT: PROMOTING ECO-SOCIAL VALUE AT ORTS ROAD & NEWTOWN, READING

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KEY POINTS

Over the summer/autumn, 2019, mapping workshops were staged across Orts Road and Newtown. In total around 200 people were involved with mapmaking activities, including a large number of children. The maps reveal local interpretations and locations of social value.

Key points raised through the research are as follows:

- **Social value can be enhanced through well maintained and accessible public spaces which provide places to spend time together.**
- **Social value, monetised through social return on investment, should be taken into account in decision making about the sale of assets and the value of land.**
- **Local activities and events can support greater social cohesion.**
- **There is a local desire for a more environmentally friendly neighbourhood to support both current and future generations.**
- **The research demonstrated that Orts Road and Newtown share a number of key assets and may be thought of as a single neighbourhood, rather than two distinct areas.**
- **There are opportunities to think of the social value of streets and make improvements accordingly, such as by traffic calming, pedestrianisation and the introduction of pocket parks.**
- **Currently, there is a perceived lack of local recreational facilities, exacerbated by the closure of Arthur Hill Pool, which is impacting on the neighbourhood's health and wellbeing. Accessible local multigenerational sports and recreation facilities would be much appreciated and generate social value locally.**
- **There is a very strong attachment to adjoining waterways and parks, which provide both a sense of identity and social value locally. These areas could benefit from both preservation and improved accessibility and lighting.**

Overall people were happy and proud to live in Orts Road and Newtown. The area benefits from the presence of two primary schools that act as local hubs which generate much social value. Religious buildings in and around the site also provide a great deal of social value by supporting multicultural social networks and providing activities and events. Those who took part in the workshops were generally positive about the future of their neighbourhood and enjoyed sharing what they valued most locally.



KIDS KEEP THE BEAUTY OF READING

THEY MADE A BOXING KID HAPPEN,

FIVE KIDS CHANGE KIDS LIVES FOREVER

CRIME WAVE A RESULT OF FACULTIES

CONNECTION

- ↳ BENCH to chair
- # swimming pool
- ↳ - skate park
- gym
- riding bike
- safer roads / + Active

HAPPY

- ⊕ no litter
- Speed & up
- temporary outdoor

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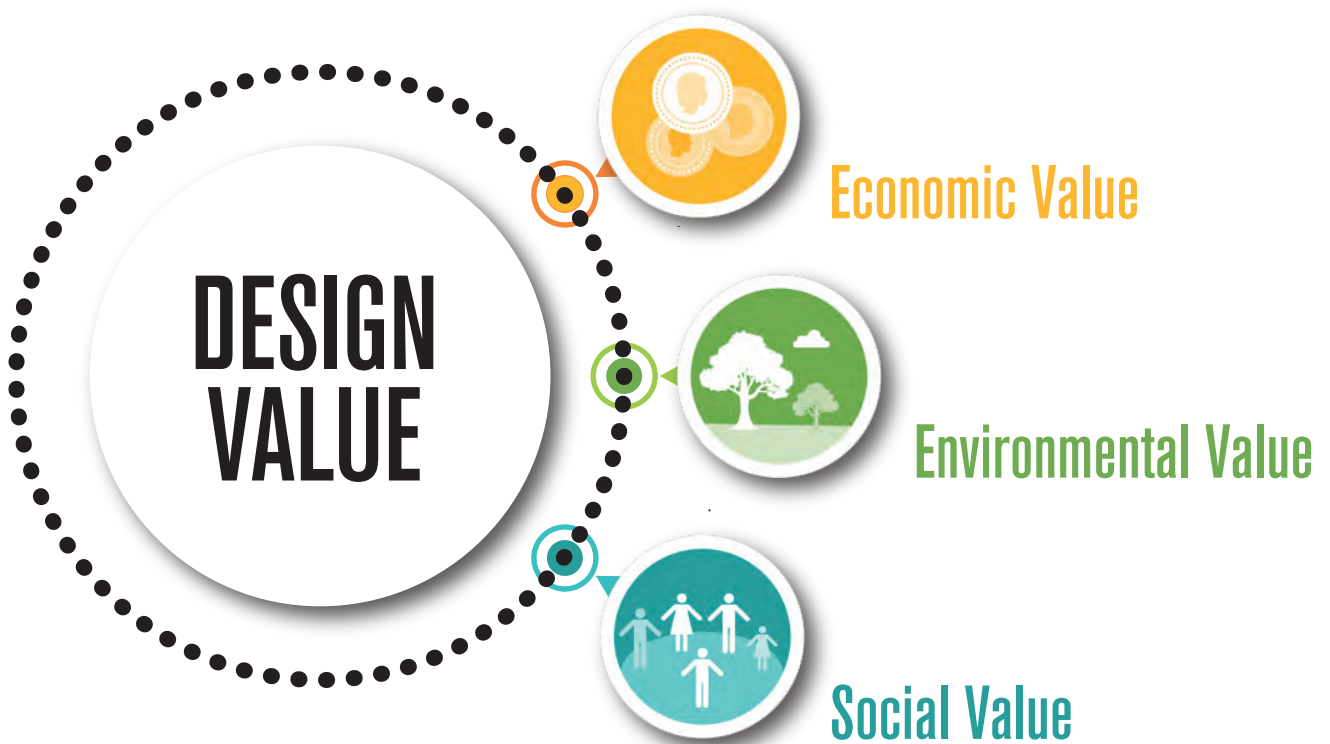


Figure 1.
Diagram showing the link between design value and the triple bottom line of sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Over the summer of 2019, the Mapping Eco Social Assets project (2018-2020)¹ spoke with people in and around Orts Road and Newtown asking them what they valued most locally. The project aimed to gather and record social and environmental values in an accessible way, so that they could help to inform the future development of the area. In the UK, government organisations are supposed to make planning and spending decisions with regard to environmental, social and economic values, the triple bottom line of sustainability (Fig. 1), that form the foundation of the *Treasury Green Book*.² However, it is often difficult to know which social and environmental values are most important to a neighbourhood. There is also a lack of consensus on ways of measuring social and environmental value which means that decision-making typically focuses on economic value.³

Without sufficient methods to discuss and promote alternate forms of value in the built environment, the current market driven approach, which many agree is not fit for purpose⁴, will simply continue. Working closely with the local residents and the local authority the MESA team developed multi-layered maps which explore social values across Orts Road and Newtown. The maps reveal locations and combinations of different sites of perceived social value and have the potential to inform strategic land management for better places and more holistic forms of land valuation.

The MESA maps evolved as a result of collaborative activities, which explored how co-produced research activities could support discussions about social value and better decision-making processes. The project draws on the Social Value Toolkit for Architecture, a bottom up initiative by architectural practices in London with the aim of demonstrating the social value of design.

‘Social Value’ is a fairly recent and ill-defined term. It is often used to explore how limited resources can be put to best use, by examining the collective benefit, beyond cost savings, that allocation of public money can have.⁵ In the UK, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires local governments take economic, environmental and social benefits into consideration when buying services. Investment decisions requiring government funding have to work within the guidance of the Treasury Green Book and updates to the Green Book, bringing it in line with the Social Value Act, now require recognition of economic, environmental and social values in building procurement and other projects using government money.

1 [University of Reading, 2020. MESA.](#)

2 [HM Treasury, 2018. The Green Book.](#)

3 Serin, B., Kenny, T., White, J., Samuel, F., 2018. *Design Value at Neighbourhood Scale*. Glasgow: CACHE.

4 [Carmona, M., Alwarea, A., Giordano, V., Olaleye, F. 2020, A Housing Design Audit for England.](#)

5 [Social Enterprise UK, 2012. The Social Value Guide: Implementing the Public Services \(Social Value\) Act.](#)

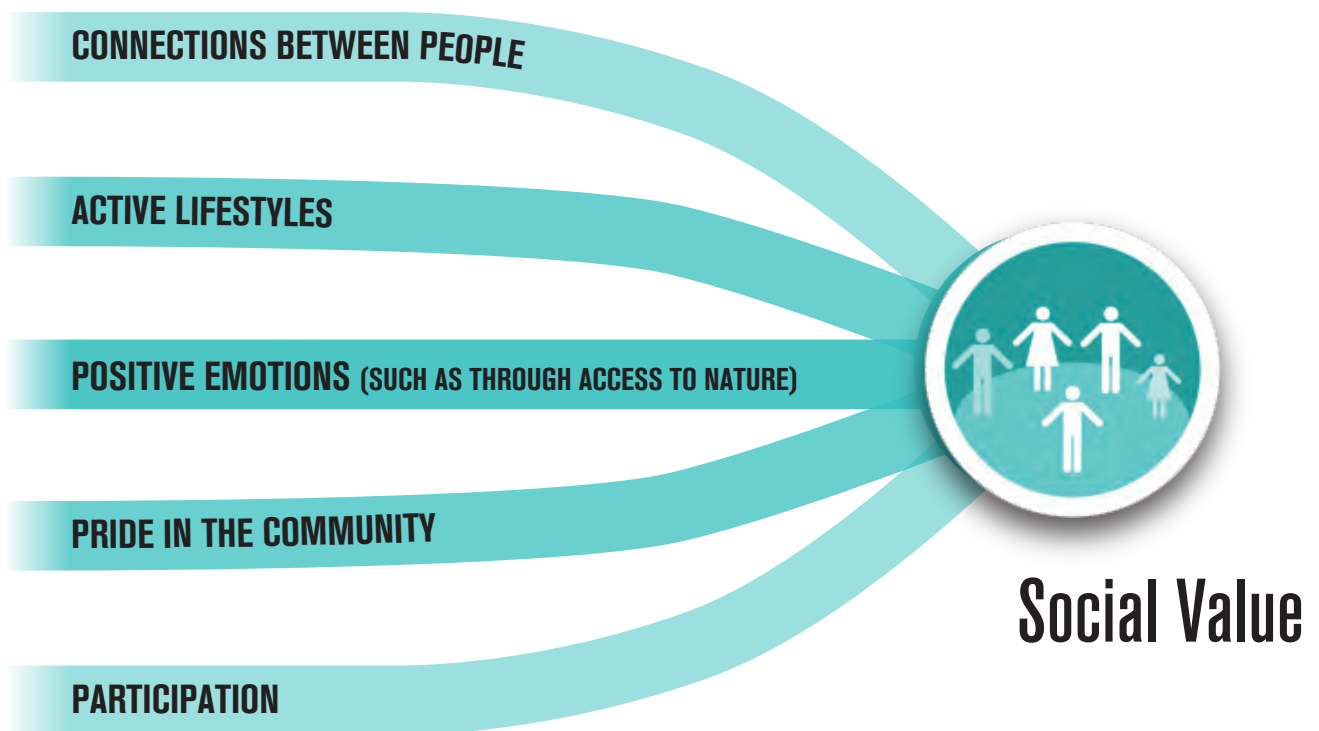


Figure 2.
Diagram showing the elements, or strands, of social value
that the Mapping Eco Social Assets project focused on.

Whilst legislation is in place, barriers to uptake of the Social Value Act include lack of awareness of its potential, a lack of agreed measurements.⁶

Social value can be found across our towns and cities. It may be created through well connected and informed communities as well as through supporting people to have greater access to jobs, services and education. Whilst social value covers a very broad range of activities, MESA focused on how public spaces and buildings can support and generate social value. As such the project looked at how the streets, parks and facilities at Orts Road and Newtown currently support: connections between people; active lifestyles; positive emotions; pride; and participation (Fig 2). The project also looked to the future and asked everyone who took part what they would like to improve locally.

Through asking people to map the places that they valued most, MESA was able to generate a map of key neighbourhood assets, resources and places. This map shows specific locations where future investment or design interventions might have maximum social impact, leading to improved wellbeing. The map includes input from both children and adults and shows where values combined across generations.

MESA developed methods to collaboratively map and analyse social value across Orts Road and Newtown. The MESA maps supported broad discussion about values and assets. These included different perspectives and interpretations. Whilst the maps did not actively seek to quantify values locally, they highlighted areas of interest and potential. These areas could benefit from future development and/or investment. The project demonstrated the agency of mapping methods which can generate co-produced urban knowledge, develop capacity and make arguments for value-responsive improvements and development.

Overall those who took part were positive about their local neighbourhood and there was a strong sense of pride. However, the mapping workshops did reveal a lack of recreational facilities and a desire for healthier, less polluted and more accessible public spaces and amenities. Given the opportunity to speak about their neighbourhood, people had lots to say and typically any improvements that were suggested could be achieved without too much difficulty. Many participants, however, either did not feel part, or were not aware, of larger planning discussions affecting them locally. As such, the mapping workshops provided a neutral space to discuss some of these concerns. Ideally, the capacity that has been built through MESA will continue into more conversations about social value in the environment at Orts Road and beyond.

6 [Cabinet Office, \(2015\). *Social Value Act Review*.](#)



1. ORTS ROAD & NEWTOWN

The research studied eco social values in context at Orts Road and Newtown. The area can be summarised by the following points:

- **A mix of two different architectural styles, period and modern housing.**
- **High density flats towards the city centre and Kings Road.**
- **Lower density terraced housing to the centre and east of the site.**
- **Red brick throughout.**
- **Community hubs provided by two primary schools.**
- **Multicultural neighbourhood with religious buildings representing different faiths.**
- **A Sikh Gurdwara and College encourage visitors from beyond the neighbourhood.**
- **Riverside pathway acts as a multi-use green corridor, providing recreation and a cycle route.**
- **Good access to nature with mature local trees and connections to the riverside and Thames.**
- **Busy roads and crossings to the south (Cemetery Junction, London Road and Kings Road).**

The Orts Road estate faces the River Kennet and sits next to Reading College. To the east lies New Town which is comprised of long streets and blocks of nineteenth century housing. Previously, to the north of the site, on the other side of the canal, the Huntley and Palmers biscuit factory was so large that it had its own rail network and housing for workers where Orts Road and Newtown lie today. Since the housing at Orts Road did not meet regulations, the site was earmarked, post-war, for regeneration. Similar housing stock in Newtown was not subject to clearance and remains in its original form today. Newtown is typified by its long streets/blocks, which are a direct contrast to Orts Road's many cul-de-sacs.

The red brick estate at Orts Road comprises of terraced housing and three- and four-storey flats set in blocks, which face away from the canal and towards internal courtyards. The site is fairly self-contained with few people passing through. Whilst the two areas have quite different housing stock, they are both multicultural and share amenities, such as religious buildings (including the Gurdwara), schools, community centres and shops. They also share access to green/blue spaces such as: Riverside and the Kennet and Avon Canal, the Thames Path and nature reserve and Palmer Park.

Orts Road and Newtown share key amenities. They are, however, divided in economy and demographics. Orts Road has a mix of providers of social housing, ranging from the local authority to housing associations. In Newtown, housing is largely privately owned or rented. Newtown is home to a broader demographic, with younger families in their first homes and older owner-occupiers. To compound the divide, a political ward boundary runs down the middle of the site, separating Orts Road estate from Newtown.

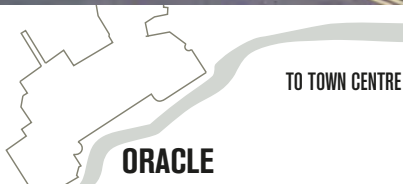
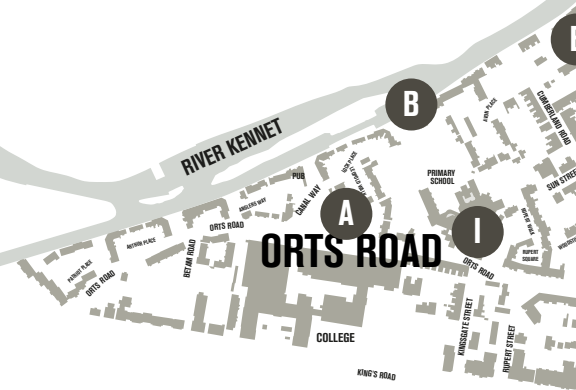
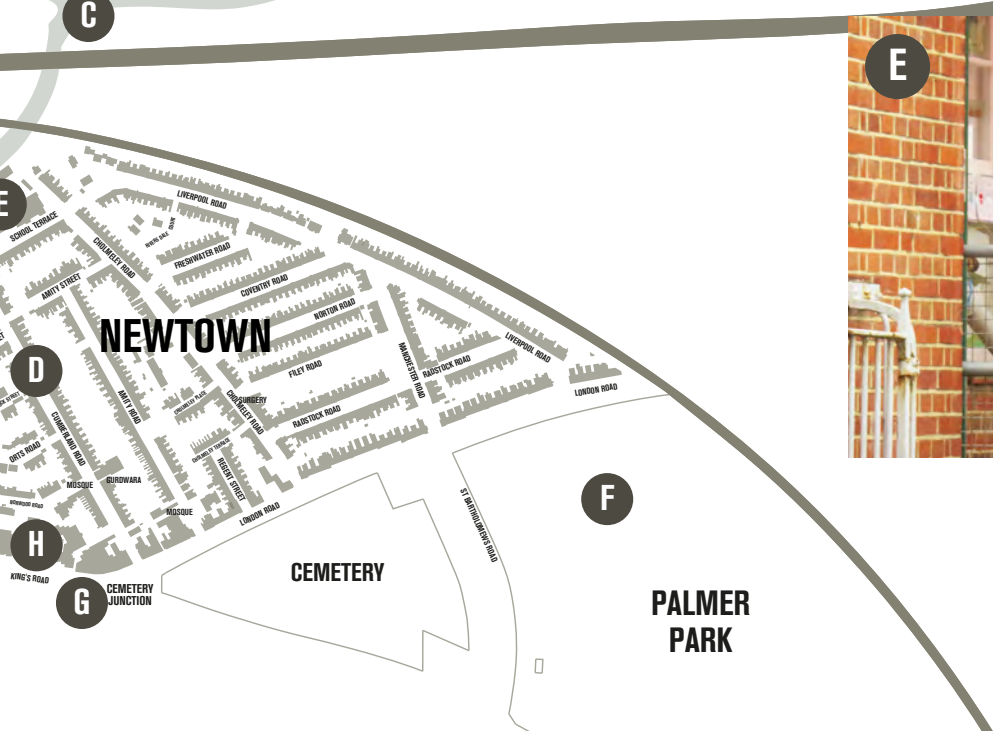


Figure 3.
Map with accompanying views from across
Ors Road and Newtown.



RIVER THAMES



The MESA Mapping Prompts (*in italics*) and
equivalent HACT Social Value Proxies
(potential costs/savings per person per year)

Connection

“I talk to neighbours regularly” - Currently valued at £4,511 by the HACT Social Value Bank

*Is there anywhere that you find you tend to stop and speak to people regularly?
Can you mark onto the map any areas that you feel responsible for?*

Active Lifestyles

“I am able to take frequent mild exercise” - Currently valued at £3,537 by the HACT Social Value Bank

*Where are your local amenities, such as shops, community centres, church, pub?
Do you have any places you go for recreational activities and hobbies?*

Positive Emotions

“I feel relief from depression/anxiety” - Currently valued at £36,766 by the HACT Social Value Bank

*Is there anywhere locally that you are proud of?
Can you show where you feel happiest locally?*

Taking Notice

“I feel a sense of belonging in my neighbourhood” - Currently valued at £3,753 by the HACT Social Value Bank

*Is there somewhere in the area that you think is beautiful?
Is there somewhere you can connect with nature?*

Flexibility and freedom

“I feel in control of my life” - Currently valued at £15, 894 by the HACT Social Value Bank

*What support structures are there locally? Charities, Council, Church?
Where would you speak to if you wanted to make changes to your environment?*

2. MEASURING SOCIAL VALUE

The mapping activities at Orts Road and Newtown link to a larger UK initiative looking at social value in the built environment and the development of the Social Value Toolkit for Architecture.¹ The Social Value Toolkit for Architecture has been developed to make it easy to demonstrate and evaluate the impact of design on people and communities. It seeks to define and capture the social value of good design. Whilst others in the built environment generally place emphasis on the process, the creation of jobs and apprenticeships, the toolkit places emphasis on the social value of buildings and places, on the design and format of buildings and places and their intangible impacts on people.

There are different methods for measuring social value ranging from: cost benefit analysis (as employed by the Green Book), social accounting, outcome appraisals, sustainability reporting and social return on investment (SROI). Of these, SROI is recommended by the Cabinet Office for its ability to, 'help third sector organisations to communicate better their impact to customers, government and the public, through measuring social and environmental value with confidence, in a standardised way that is easy for all to understand.'²

The Social Value Toolkit uses SROI proxies taken from the HACT Social Value Bank³ to estimate the monetary value of certain aspects of social value in the environment. SROI provides financial proxies which relate to activities or processes that are not normally assigned costs, such as the value of reduced social isolation and decreased stigmatisation of people with mental health problems. In order to determine financial proxies, or valuations, datasets on the population are subject to statistical analysis and then financial values are assigned to proxies which take into account people's income to find the equivalent amount of money that has the same impact on life satisfaction.

In order to make maps of Orts Road and Newtown, questions from the toolkit were adapted to suit a workshop environment. MESA's workshop prompts explored places and processes that could be mapped at a neighbourhood scale. The proxies in the toolkit monetise preferred outcomes, such as 'I talk to my neighbours regularly' and 'I am able to take frequent mild exercise'. In response to these, the mapmaking sought to reveal areas where these outcomes were already found, by finding out where, for example, people spoke with neighbours and what recreational facilities they used. Mapping workshops were designed around ten prompts which related to five themes, taken from the Toolkit. These themes were: connection, active lifestyles, positive emotions, taking notice and freedom and flexibility (autonomy). (See 'The MESA Mapping Prompts' on facing page.)

1 [RIBA, 2020. Social Value Toolkit for Architecture.](#)

2 [Nicholls et al., 2009, *The Guide to Social Return on Investment*. p.3](#)

3 [HACT, 2019. Social Value Bank.](#)

3. NEIGHBOURHOOD MAPPING

Through MESA, mapping was explored as a visual method to support collaborative discussions about social and environmental interactions at a neighbourhood scale across Orts Road and Newtown. MESA workshops took place at venues ranging from schools, to a Scout hall, sheltered housing and outdoor community events. Participants ranged from primary school classes, to teachers, parents and other engaged local residents. The events were facilitated by the Local Authority.

As an introduction to each workshop, participants were advised that the aim was to make a map, which would be used, not only, to discover local assets and resources, but also to assist in generating a more joined-up view of values across the area. Participants were then asked to engage with a large format map of their neighbourhood. They were asked if they knew what the map represented and if they could locate some local landmarks and places. Following this introduction, participants were issued with pens and stickers and asked to mark their responses to the workshop prompts onto the map. Since there were multiple people working on each map during the workshops, each theme was colour coded. This colour coding aided subsequent analysis of workshop data. At each event the group was directed to respond to one prompt at a time and work around the table to ensure that everyone got an opportunity not only to make additions to the map, but also to hear and see how others had responded to the prompts. Towards the end of the mapping part of the workshop, group analysis of the map took place, whereby collective reflections were made upon why certain areas of the map were of interest.

Once responses to all of the prompts had been mapped, workshop activities moved onto discussions about values and aspirations. Participants were asked to imagine the area in two years' time, having become a better place to live, and then to think about what practical steps or measures would need to be taken now to achieve that vision. They were then asked complete the sentences:

We would be a better-connected community if there were...

We would be a more active community if there were...

We would be a happier community if there were...

There would be greater wellbeing locally if there were...

And, I would like the power to...

To conclude each workshop on a reflective note, participants were asked to think of a newspaper, or website, headline about what the area would be famous for in ten years' time. Throughout the mapping workshops participants often reflected upon the loss of local facilities, such as a recently closed public swimming pool and learnt from each other about cafes and events at community centres. Each of the workshop prompts elicited dynamic and thoughtful responses.



KEY ECO-SOCIAL ASSETS

Eco Social Assets in Orts Road/Newtown
as defined by community members in the workshops

Connection

Social and responsible

*Community centres, religious buildings, primary schools,
bus stops, and streets.*

Active Lifestyles

Hobbies and free time

*Schools, Orts Road Green, Arthur Hill Pool, Reading College,
the ice cream shop, and local pubs.*

Positive Emotions

Happy and proud

Home, sheltered housing, religious buildings, schools, play areas, and parks.

Taking Notice

Beautiful and natural

*The River Kennet, Kennet and Avon Canal and Thames, Blake's Lock,
the gas holder and cemetery.*

Flexibility and freedom

Room for improvement

Streets and crossings

Shopping provision

Sports and recreation options

Play facilities

Lighting

Waste and recycling

Orts Road and Newtown also benefit from close proximity to:
Thames Valley Nature Reserve, the town centre, superstore, and Palmer Park.

LOCAL MEASURES OF SUCCESS

In order to think about how the neighbourhood could succeed into the future, as part of each workshop, participants were asked what they thought success would look like in 2 years' time. The following measures give an indication of how eco-social assets could be enhanced towards a better neighbourhood from the perspective of those living at Orts Road and Newtown.

Connection

We would be a better connected community if there were...

- More places for play
- Places to do homework
- Free access to the internet
- More benches to sit and chat
- Annual get togethers
- Newsletters featuring local news and housing news
- Fun events and get togethers

Active Lifestyles

We would be a more active community if there were...

- More activities at school out of hours and free activities for children
- Pedestrianized streets so that there are fewer cars and more places to play
- Cheap and free places to spend time in the day and evening for all generations
- Diverse neighbourhood recreational activities available such as: swimming, rugby, table tennis, tennis, football and athletics.

Positive emotions

We would be a happier community if there were..

- Fewer cars and less pollution and noise
- Accessible places for everyone
- Less crime and better enforcement
- Street parties and food events
- More places to play and more play equipment

Taking notice

There would be greater wellbeing locally if there were...

- More environmentally friendly and healthy spaces
- Better maintenance, such as grass cutting and gardening initiatives
- More trees, parks and green spaces
- Encourage biodiversity, such as birds, like the kites
- Litter was reduced
- Photography Competition – ‘Beautiful Orts Road’
- Public art

Freedom and Flexibility

I would like the power to...

- Reopen Arthur Hill Pool as a community asset
- Fix the potholes in the roads, to make bike riding safer
- Open more local shops and cafes
- Make the streets wider and less busy
- Get better lighting, to make it nicer at night
- Make ‘play streets’
- Have a local marathon
- Make Orts Road famous for its successful sportspeople and facilities
- Organize events to pick up litter

The long-term vision for the area was summarized by participants in the following imagined newspaper headlines for ten years’ time:

BEST HOUSING ESTATE IN READING

PRIMARY KIDS CHANGED THE FUTURE

IF WE CAN CHANGE A PARK, WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

KIDS KEEP THE BEAUTY OF READING

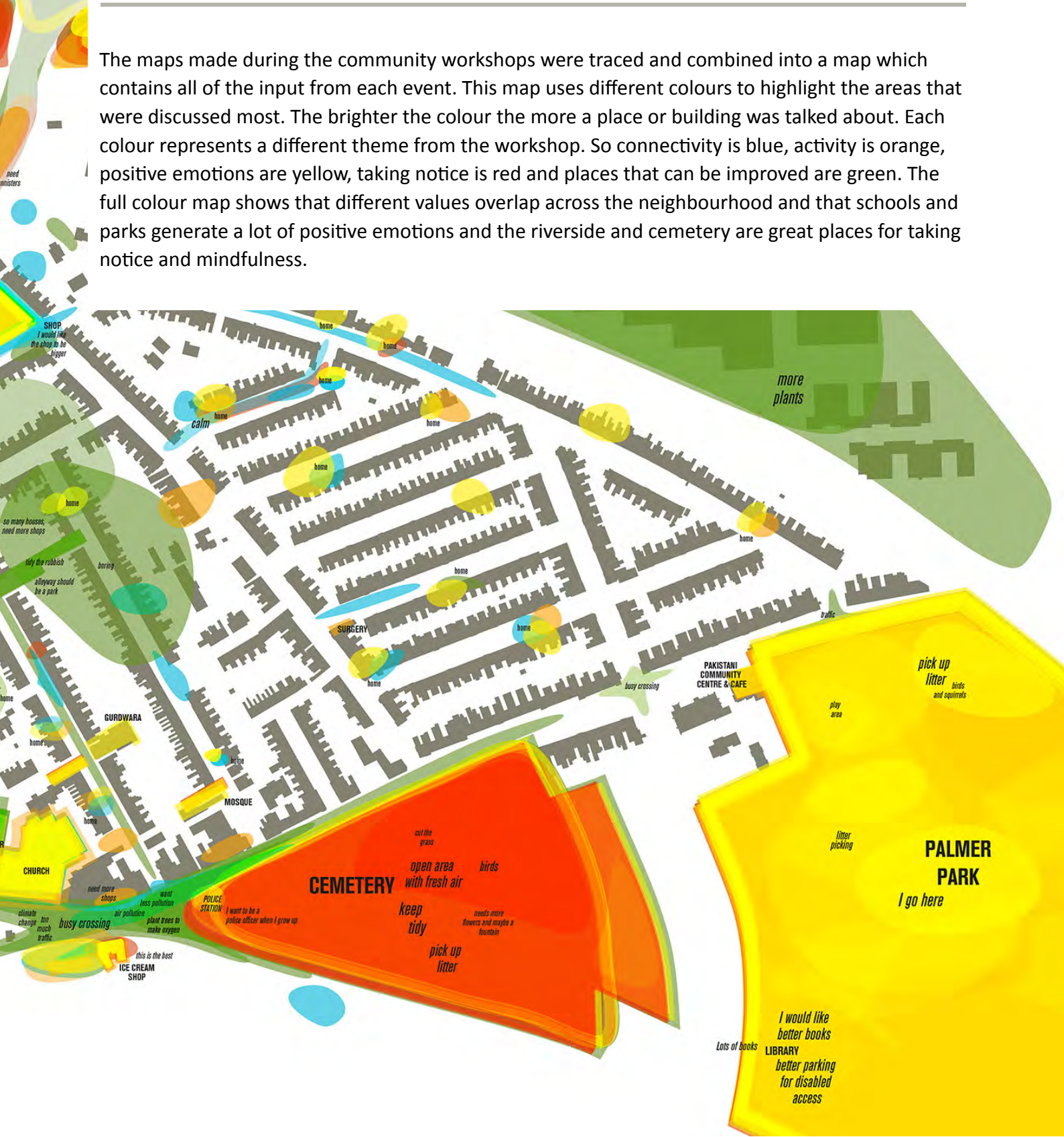
CRIMEWAVE AS A RESULT OF A LACK OF FACILITIES AT ORTS ROAD

OUR SPORTING CHAMPS COME FROM ORTS ROAD

dog walking
and exercise

RIVER 4. SOCIAL VALUE MAPPINGS

The maps made during the community workshops were traced and combined into a map which contains all of the input from each event. This map uses different colours to highlight the areas that were discussed most. The brighter the colour the more a place or building was talked about. Each colour represents a different theme from the workshop. So connectivity is blue, activity is orange, positive emotions are yellow, taking notice is red and places that can be improved are green. The full colour map shows that different values overlap across the neighbourhood and that schools and parks generate a lot of positive emotions and the riverside and cemetery are great places for taking notice and mindfulness.





CONNECTION

“I talk to neighbours regularly” - Currently valued at £4,511 by the HACT Social Value Bank

The connection map shows all of the spaces and buildings that were discussed and mapped during the workshops in response to the questions:

Is there anywhere that you find you tend to stop and speak to people regularly?

And, can you mark onto the map any areas that you feel responsible for?

The areas marked in blue show where there are existing connections that could be enhanced. They reveal locations where investment or design interventions might have maximum impact improving values relating to connections.

The map shows that social connections are located at schools, religious buildings and community centres, as well as along streets and paths and at stopping points such as bus stops. It highlights the value of public spaces/buildings and streets.

Through looking at the map it is clear that the spaces between buildings are critical for social interactions. Streets such as Orts Road, School Terrace, Freshwater Road and Cemetery Junction are all places where people can stop to have a chat.

Areas that people felt responsible for include schools and religious buildings and their own homes. Activities, led by the schools, such as litter picking meant that some people also mapped that they felt responsible for keeping waterways and green spaces tidy, so that they can be enjoyed by everyone.

The map also highlights in blue community assets that are no longer open to the public, such as Arthur Hill Pool and the East Reading Adventure Playground in Palmer Park.



ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

“I am able to take frequent mild exercise” - Currently valued at £3,537 by the HACT Social Value Bank

The active lifestyles map shows all of the spaces and buildings that were discussed and mapped during the workshops in response to the questions:

Where are your local amenities, such as shops, community centres, church?

Do you have any places you go for recreational activities and hobbies?

The areas marked in orange show where those who took part in the mapping workshops spend their free time. It highlights assets within the neighbourhood such as local shops, community centres, religious buildings, and schools. It also reveals the significance of assets around the site, such as shops, pubs, a superstore and green spaces such as Eldon Square Gardens, Palmer Park and the riverside and nature reserve.

Within the neighbourhood, many participants mentioned that opportunities for recreation and leisure are currently limited and, as such, home was often named as the only place for hobbies and activities.

The workshops revealed that there is a strong local demand for more recreational facilities and activities across all age ranges. The map shows that there could be benefits to thinking about improved access to activities locally. If people are able to take frequent mild exercise, whether light exercise such as a walk to the shops or pub, or more intense exercise such as sports, then that could result in a healthier and happier community.



POSITIVE EMOTIONS & MINDFULNESS

“I feel relief from depression/anxiety”

Currently valued at £36,766 by the HACT Social Value Bank

“I feel a sense of belonging in my neighbourhood”

Currently valued at £3,753 by the HACT Social Value Bank

Through the mapping workshops it became clear that the themes of positive emotions (yellow) and mindfulness (red) are closely related and overlap. The map highlights responses to the following questions:

Is there anywhere locally that you are proud of?

Can you show where you feel happiest locally?

Is there somewhere in the area that you think is beautiful?

Is there somewhere you can connect with nature?

Again schools, churches and community centres are highlighted as social assets that benefit positive emotions and mindfulness. Workshops with primary school children revealed that overall they associate school with positive emotions and a sense of belonging, which is a great credit to the staff of these institutions.

The red, yellows and oranges of the rivers, canal and local green spaces highlight a great appreciation for the value that these natural and biodiverse spaces give. It can be suggested that these spaces provide a vital resource to the local community by providing mental health benefits and supporting reflection and a sense of belonging. As such they are worth preserving and enhancing wherever possible.



FLEXIBILITY AND FREEDOM

“I feel in control of my life”

Currently valued at £15, 894 by the HACT Social Value Bank

The final map shows the spaces and buildings that participants felt could benefit from change or improvement. It reveals where people felt they would like action to be taken or to have the ability to take control themselves. With reference to the proxy ‘I feel in control of my life’ this map depicts areas where changes or improvements would have most impact.

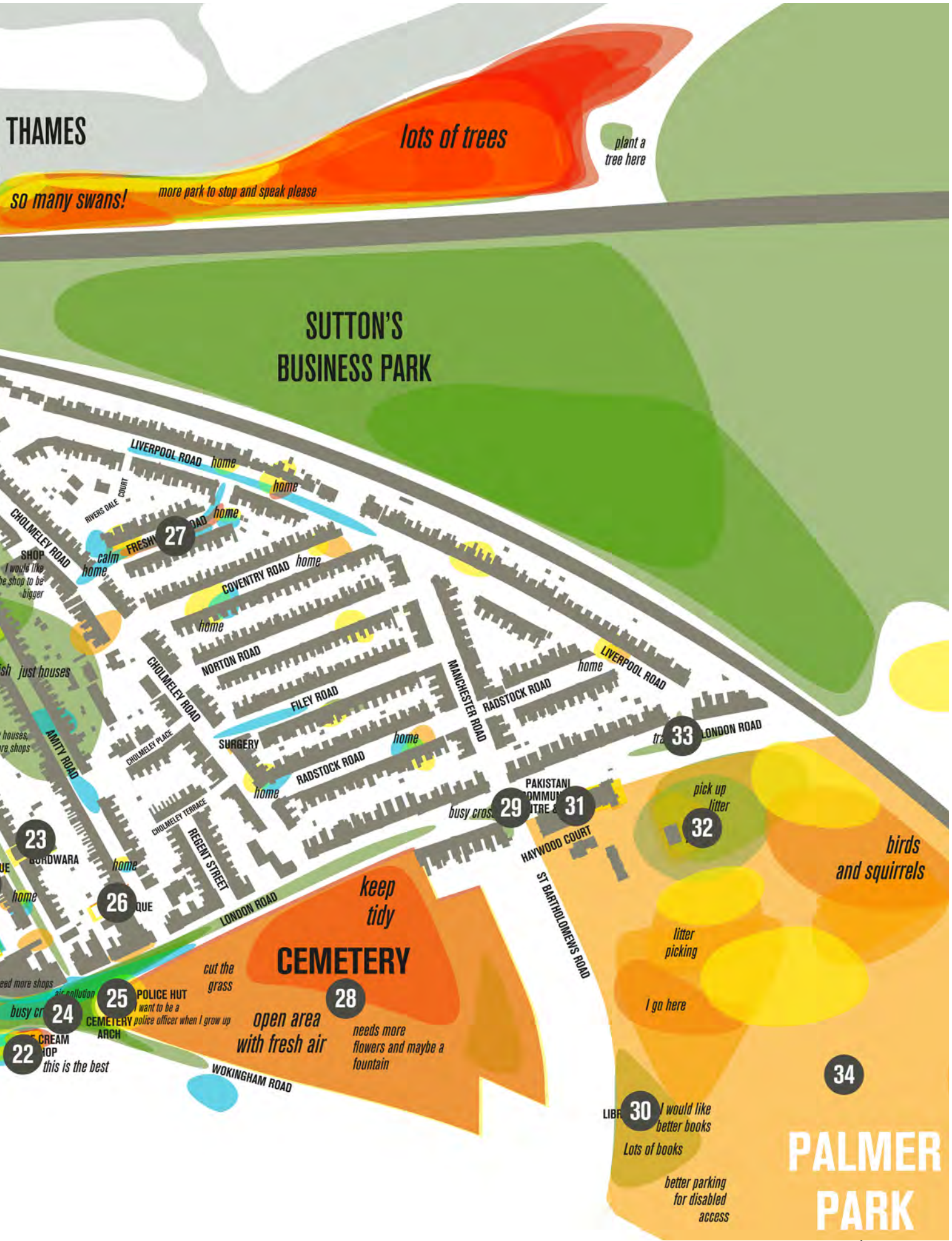
The map highlights that keeping the river and riverside clean and well lit was a local priority. As too was improving access to the Thames and surrounding green spaces. Participants also mentioned that there was currently limited interaction between the neighbourhood and adjoining business parks, which could provide local skills and jobs.

Within the neighbourhood, improvements were suggested to school facilities, such as through more equipment and access to playing fields out of hours.

The 'Green' at Orts Road was also mapped as a site that could be greatly improved and used for multi-generational free time activities and a patch of land connecting Cumberland Road to Amity Road was highlighted as a prime location for a small 'pocket' park.

The map reveals the significance of streets and crossings and a desire for pedestrianised areas, improved air quality and reduced traffic along Orts Road, Cumberland Road, Rupert Street and Cemetery Junction. It also highlights a will for safer crossing points to reach Palmer Park.

Arthur Hill Pool was highlighted by both adults and children as a much missed local asset. Throughout the workshops there were repeated calls amongst participants for more local recreational facilities, to improve health and wellbeing, and in light of these discussions the pool was sorely missed.



THAMES
so many swans!

more park to stop and speak please

lots of trees

plant a tree here

SUTTON'S BUSINESS PARK

LIVERPOOL ROAD home
 RIVERS DALE COURT
 CHOLMELEY ROAD
 FRESHWATER ROAD home
 27
 COVENTRY ROAD home
 home
 NORTON ROAD
 CHOLMELEY ROAD
 FILEY ROAD
 SURGERY
 RADSTOCK ROAD home
 MANCHESTER ROAD
 RADSTOCK ROAD home
 LIVERPOOL ROAD
 33
 LONDON ROAD
 23
 GORDWARA home
 26
 QUE
 CHOLMELEY PLACE
 CHOLMELEY TERRACE
 REGENT STREET
 LONDON ROAD
 25
 POLICE HUT
 I want to be a police officer when I grow up
 24
 CEMETERY ARCH
 22
 CREAM SHOP
 this is the best
 WOKINGHAM ROAD

CEMETERY

keep tidy
 28
 open area with fresh air
 needs more flowers and maybe a fountain
 cut the grass
 busy cr
 need more shops
 air pollution
 25
 24
 22

pick up litter
 32
 litter picking
 I go here
 34
 LIBR
 30
 I would like better books
 Lots of books
 better parking for disabled access
 birds and squirrels

PALMER PARK

SOCIAL VALUE HOTSPOTS

1. Orts Road
2. Blakes Weir
3. Weirside Court
4. Reading College
5. Superstore
6. Orts Road Green
7. River Kennet
8. St John's CE Primary School and St John & St Stephen's Church
9. Junction between Kingsgate Street and Orts Road
10. Gas Holder
11. Junction between Rupert Street and King's Road
12. Riverside
13. Newtown Primary School and Nursery
14. Arthur Hill Swimming Pool
15. River Thames
16. Railway Bridges
17. Junction between School Terrace and Cholmeley Road
18. Land between Cumberland Road and Amity Road
19. Cumberland Road
20. Cumberland Road Masjid

- 21. Wycliffe Baptist Church and the Warehouse**
- 22. Ice Cream Shop**
- 23. Sri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara Reading**
- 24. Cemetery Junction**
- 25. Cemetery Arch**
- 26. Reading Islamic Centre**
- 27. Freshwater Road**
- 28. Cemetery**
- 29. Junction between Manchester Road and London Road**
- 30. Library**
- 31. Pakistani Community Centre**
- 32. East Reading Adventure Playground**
- 33. Junction between Liverpool Road and London Road**
- 34. Palmer Park**



5. CONCLUSION

The Mapping Eco Social Assets project developed methods to collaboratively map and analyse social value across Orts Road and Newtown. The project supported broad discussions about values and assets which included different perspectives and interpretations. Whilst the maps did not actively seek to quantify values locally, they highlighted areas of interest and potential. These areas could benefit from future development and/or investment.

In order to understand social value in a complex and rich environment, MESA took its starting point quite simply in asking people what they valued most locally. Conversations were structured around the planning and making of eco-social value maps of the area. The process placed emphasis on positive, existing assets and promoted discussions about what is currently appreciated most locally.

The maps spatially represent workshop data in a visual and accessible way. They have supported debate and discussions about social value. The planning system in the UK has been long criticised for being too reactive. In turn, public consultations often happen too late in the development process for meaningful engagement. MESA has demonstrated that collaboratively locating social assets and values amongst communities, can not only help local authorities make informed choices based on social and environmental as well as economic value, but also provide new opportunities for them to understand the communities that they serve better.

The MESA approach has many potential future applications for example:

- **The accurate definition of electoral boundaries based on community self-perception.**
- **Ongoing participation in the co-creation of local development plans, city models that account for social value.**
- **Building procurement based on social value outcomes, as well as the use of social value in planning.**
- **Most importantly social value can be used to help make an evidence based case for resisting developments that are destructive to communities and people drawing on SROI financial proxies as necessary.**

With regards to the future, from the point of view of the Neighbourhood Initiatives Officer who helped to facilitate the process, *'Ideally, the project [will] genuinely affect planning decisions. There are more and more pressures on development, but people need more than just homes, they also need places to live with happy and rewarding connections to their community.'*¹

1 Ebony George, Neighbourhood Initiatives Officer, Reading Borough Council. In interview at the Council's Civic Offices on 11 November 2019.



MAPPING ECO-SOCIAL ASSETS (MESA)

You are being asked to take part in a research project called Mapping Eco-Social Assets (MESA) at the University of Reading. The project will help us to understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.

What is the project?

This is a project to map the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area. The project will help us to understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.

What will we need to do and what will happen if I take part?

You will be asked to provide information about the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area. You will also be asked to provide information about the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.

How will the data be used?

The data will be used to help us understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area. The data will also be used to help us understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.

What will happen with the data?

The data will be used to help us understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area. The data will also be used to help us understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.

- To help us understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.
- To help us understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.
- To help us understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.
- To help us understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.

Your name or any other information which identifies you will not be made available to anyone else. The data will be used to help us understand the value of the assets in your area and how they can be used to improve the quality of life in your area.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact the project team at the University of Reading. We will be happy to help you.

University of Reading

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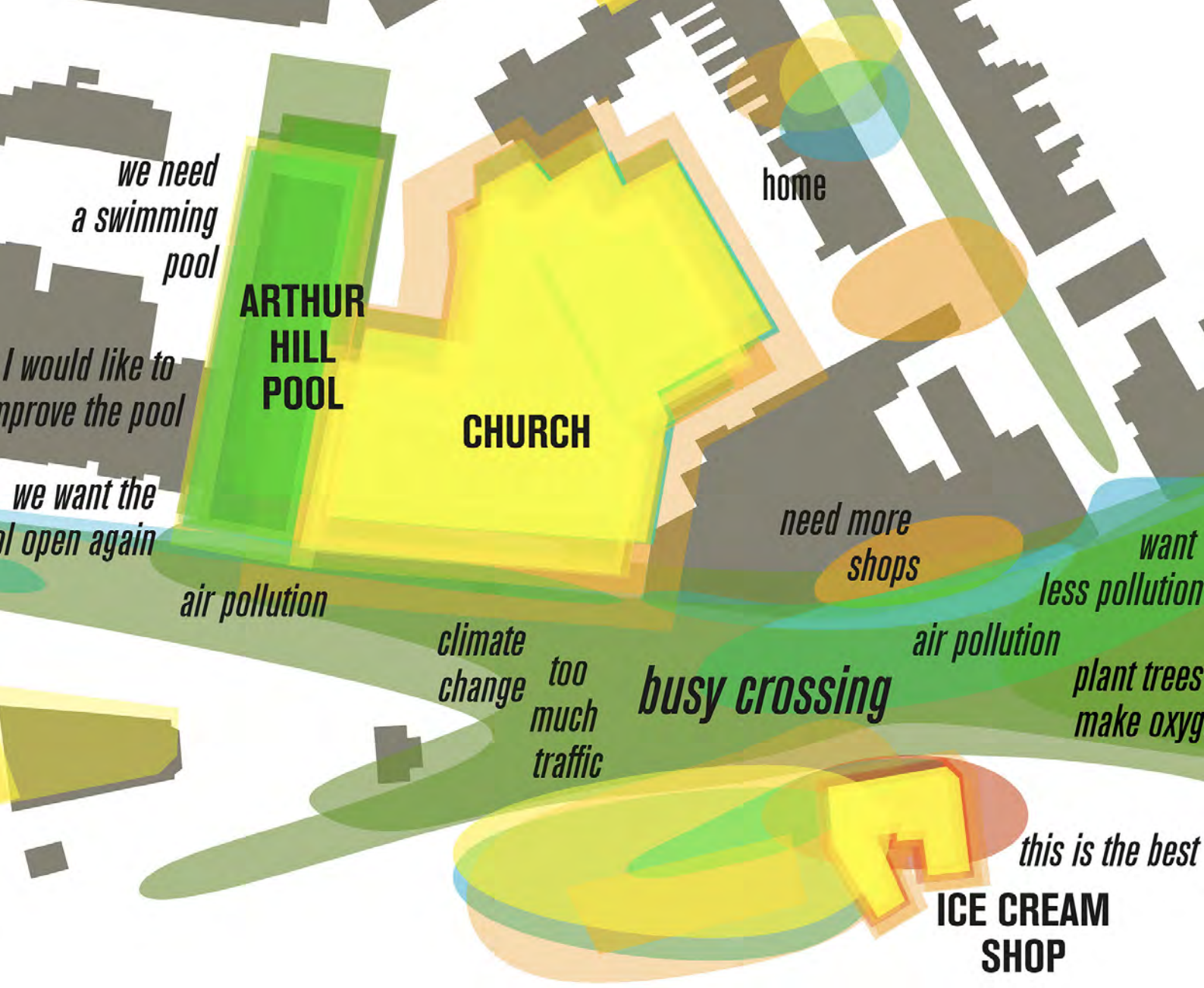
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we need a swimming pool

ARTHUR HILL POOL

home

CHURCH

need more shops

I would like to improve the pool

we want the pool open again

air pollution

want less pollution

*climate change
too much traffic*

busy crossing

air pollution

plant trees make oxygen

this is the best

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