

# 24 surrenden neighbourhood

## context



Surrenden essentially lies on the westward facing slope of the main valley running into the city centre. The woodland and large number of street trees, mostly on the lower slopes, afford a good degree of shelter from prevailing winds in the quieter residential streets. The broader main through routes, especially Ditchling Road, and the large open spaces can be very exposed.

The steep slopes frequently afford impressive views, as well as glimpses between houses, across the valley. There is an equally impressive view from the Ditchling Road at the northeastern edge of the neighbourhood south over Brighton to the sea.



## key stages of historic development

Surrenden is a mainly interwar suburb located east of the London Road sustainable transport corridor. It is bounded to the north by Patcham and Hollingbury with Preston to the south and the open space of Hollingbury Golf Course to the east.

The neighbourhood was undeveloped farmland in 1865, behind large villas built along the London Road. New development began in the early 1900s, above Preston Park, with substantial Edwardian dwellings. During the 1920s and 30s the west facing slopes above the road and railway were developed with detached and semi-detached housing, the development eventually stretching back as far as the Ditchling Road by the end of the 1930s and the outbreak of WWII. Although the neighbourhood was largely developed between the two world wars, later infill has occurred on pockets of previously undeveloped land.

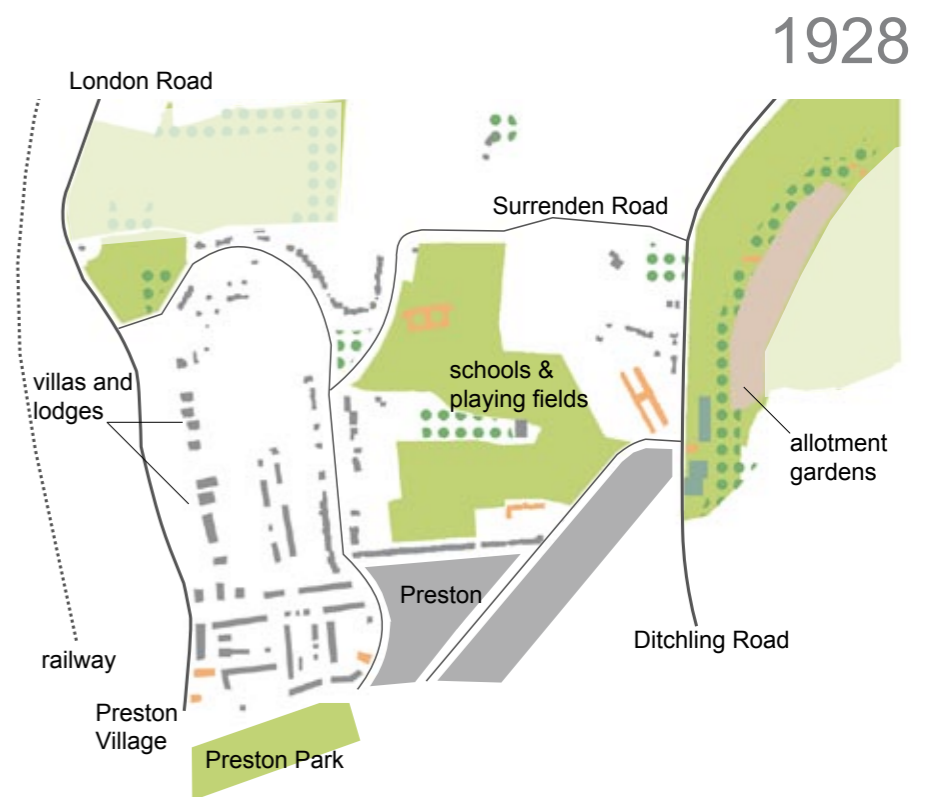
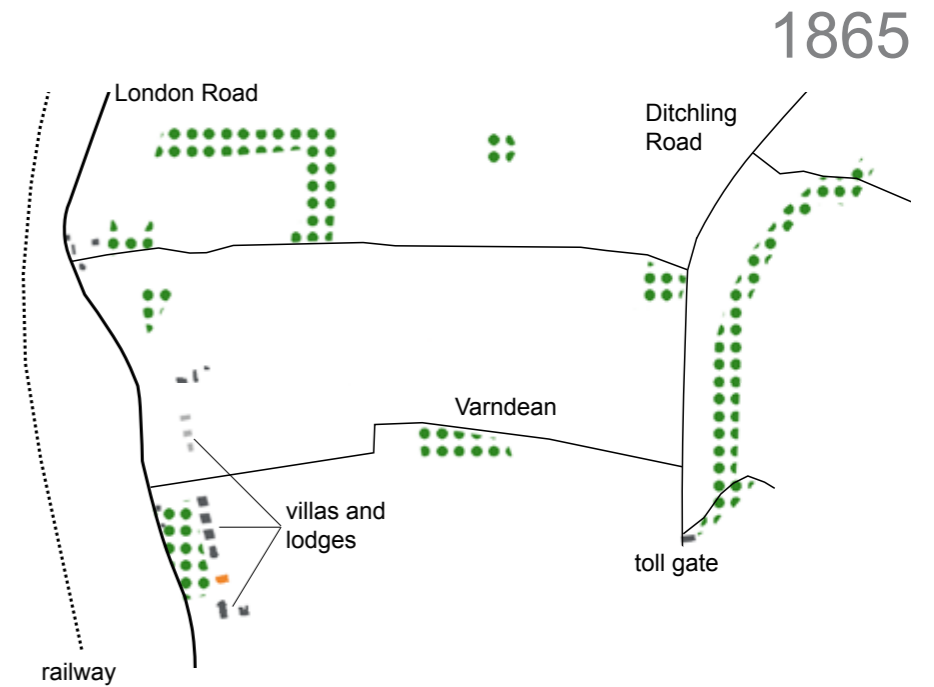
A major feature of the neighbourhood is the location of a number of schools within extensive grounds.

## typology

Surrenden neighbourhood may be classified as suburban downland fringe with a 20th century residential suburb that has evolved over time, enveloping earlier farmsteads. Low rise, low density houses arranged over a typical suburban layout. Weak architectural cohesion but cohesive public realm. Well wooded.

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

## topography & microclimate



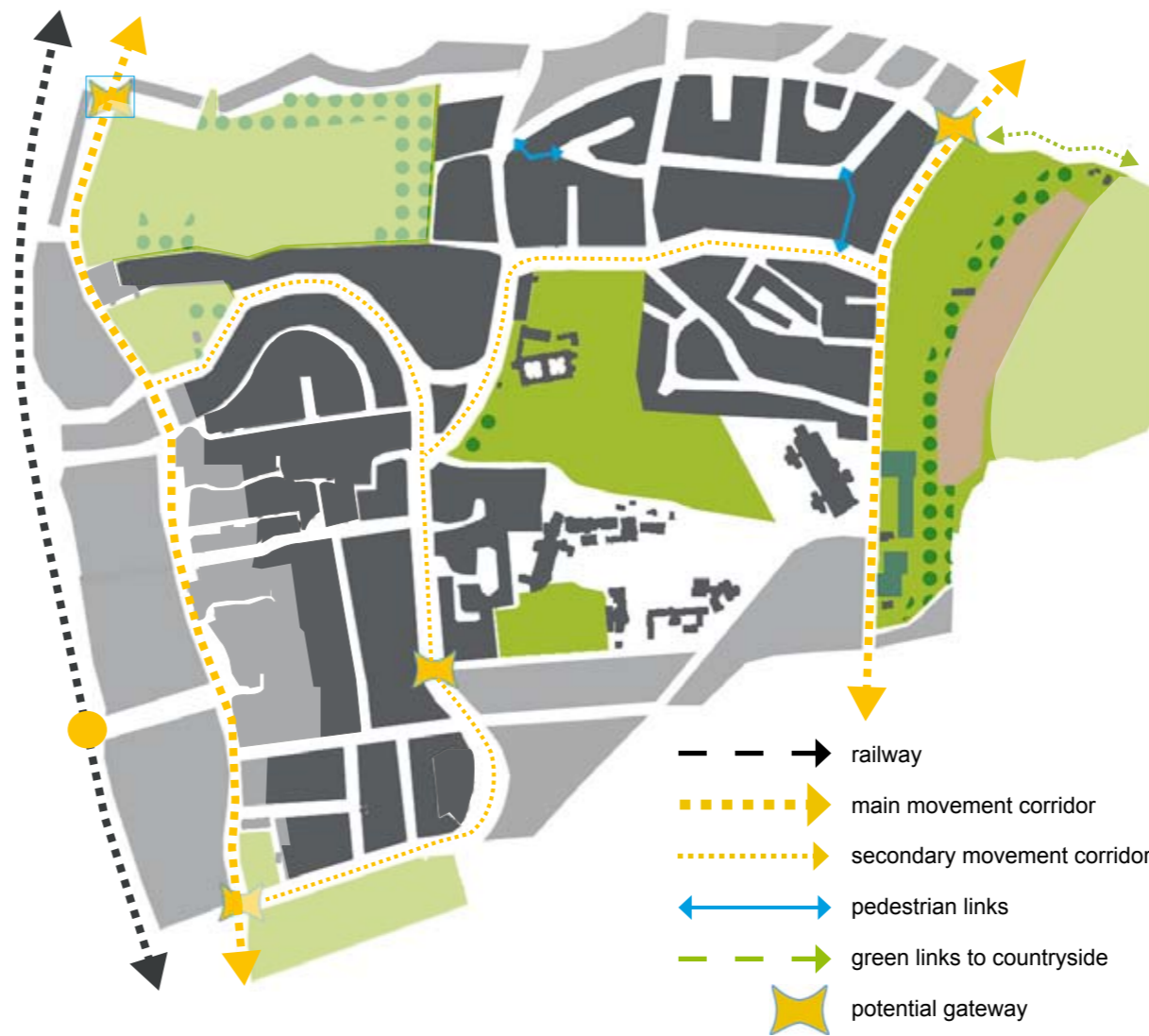
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## key characteristics

### land use



### movement



- **Land use:** The Surrenden neighbourhood is largely housing, with schools and public open space. Of major significance to the east is the large amount of space given over to educational use and open space. There is little in the way of local services, those that do exist being on the fringes of the neighbourhood.

- **Scale and density:** The area is dominated by two storey semi-detached and detached residential development, including many bungalows to the north, giving an overall density of approximately 19 dwellings per hectare.

- **Architecture:** Architecturally this is a very mixed neighbourhood. The early 20th century housing around Harrington Road has Arts and Crafts influence. Much of it is large semi-detached housing typical of the inter-war years in its mixing of details of earlier periods and choice of materials, interspersed with plainer brick post-war housing. There are also some medium rise blocks of flats in brick with balconies. The scale and 'stripped classical' appearance of 1930s Vardean College dominates the centre of the neighbourhood. The roughened stone of the gothic style St. Mary's Catholic Church is a focal point to the south and to the north-west the flint and red brick of the Victorian 116

Withdean Hall is also notable.

- **Movement:** The neighbourhood is located to the east of the London Road sustainable transport corridor. Vehicular movement through the neighbourhood is served by the main through-routes of Surrenden Road and Surrenden Crescent. The car is the most popular mode of transport to access work while the percentage of people using more sustainable forms of transport is very low (see appendix 2). The low traffic volumes during the day have a profound effect on the character of the neighbourhood, creating a quiet suburb with very little activity on the streets.

Pedestrian movement is impeded in the northern part of the neighbourhood by the cul-de-sacs and long block shapes. Some pedestrian accesses are located along the sides of houses creating unfriendly pedestrian routes that are not overlooked. Traffic on the A23 London Road is slower moving with adequate pedestrian crossing provision resulting in little severance from the development on the opposite side of the road. The various landmarks in the west and centre of the neighbourhood create a good sense of legibility, whereas the east of the neighbourhood is more homogenous.



St. Mary's is strong landmark to the south



Landmark historic building converted to residential



Shopping parade to the north of the neighbourhood



Views of the sea and across the city are a feature



Streetscene of green verges and mature trees

# 24 surrenden<sub>neighbourhood</sub>

## open space



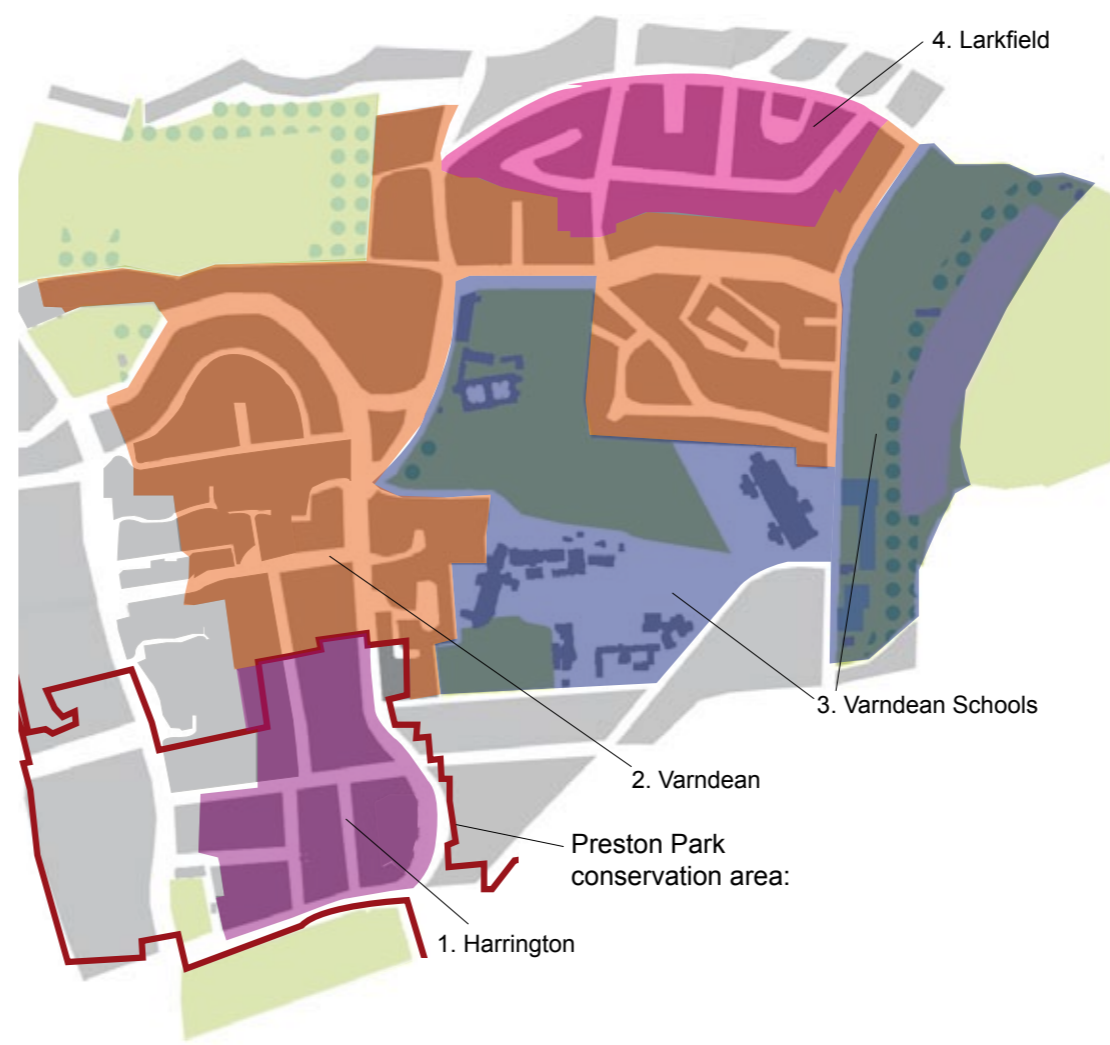
• **Socio-economic characteristics:** Surrenden is a particularly affluent neighbourhood. Over two thirds of the population are mature, older or elderly. Around 81% of the population own their homes (see appendix 3), including 38% who have no mortgage.

• **Open space:** Surrenden can be characterised by wooded slopes giving way to the large open space of the educational uses. Withdean Park and Surrenden Field lies just to the north of the neighbourhood, although pedestrian access is limited from the south. Within the neighbourhood itself there are the school playing fields and substantial grass verges. The current maintenance of regular cutting means that these grassed areas have little to contribute to local biodiversity. However where the maintenance strategy has been reduced chalkland species have started to colonise.

An important townscape feature is the tree-lined dual carriageway running north-south through the neighbourhood.

There is space for formal recreation provided to the east of the neighbourhood in Hollingbury Park including a children's play area (across a busy road), though the

## character areas



west of the neighbourhood is outside of the 10 minute walking distance. A strip of allotments also lies to the east of the neighbourhood.

• **Character areas:** The neighbourhood can be divided into four distinct character areas: the Edwardian suburb north of Preston Park; the low density inter-war development extending north and eastward; the educational use with its large open space; and the later immediate pre- and post-WWII development to the northeast, which has much in common with Hollingbury.

**1. Harrington:** a medium density area of larger Edwardian houses, with mature trees and gardens.

**2. Vardean:** a low density residential area of detached and semi-detached houses, mainly of the inter-war years, in curving tree-lined streets rising up the valley side.

**3. Vardean Schools:** a cluster of schools set in extensive recreational grounds in the heart of the neighbourhood, including the adjacent Hollingbury Park.

**4. Larkfield:** an area of post-war, low rise and low density houses and bungalows.



Hollingbury Park cut off from the schools



Harrington character area



Vardean character area



Vardean Schools character area



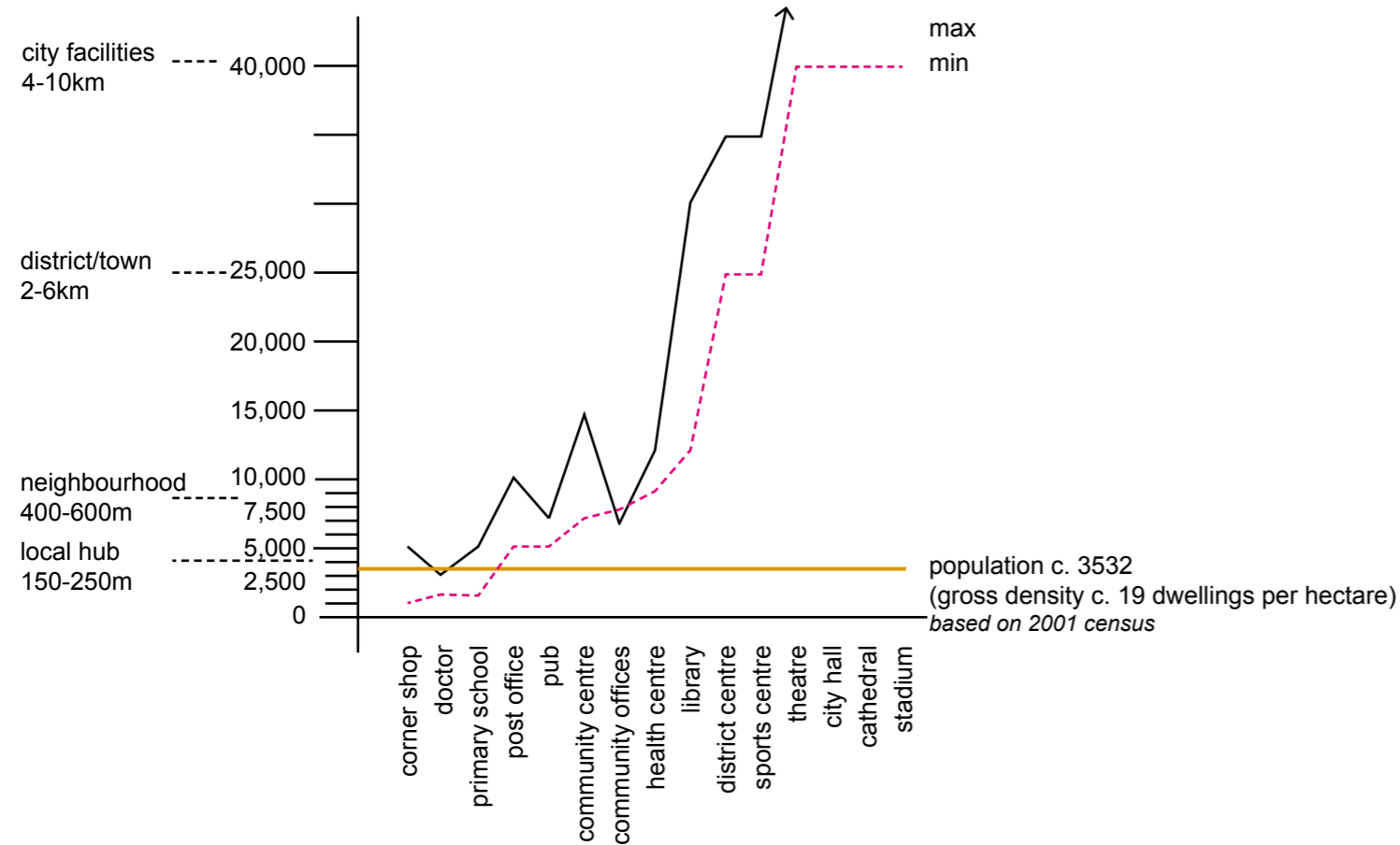
Larkfield character area

# 24 surrenden neighbourhood

## appendix 1: population & density

Population numbers able to support community facilities.

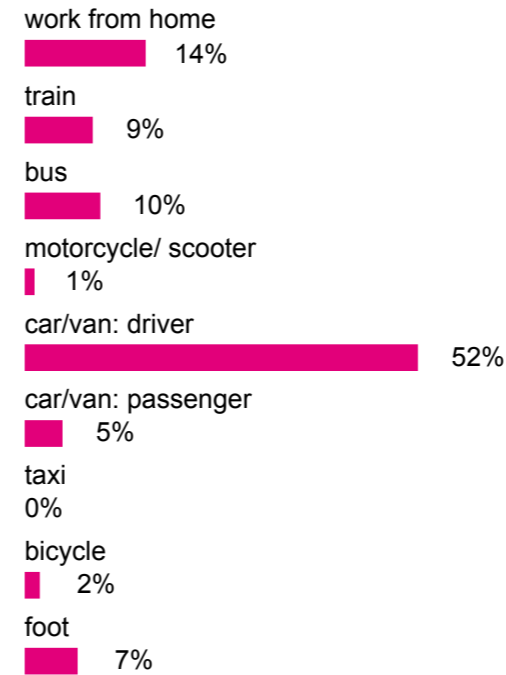
Source: Towards an Urban Renaissance, 2002



## appendix 2: travel to work

Statistics illustrating methods of travel to work.

Source: City Stats, Census 2001

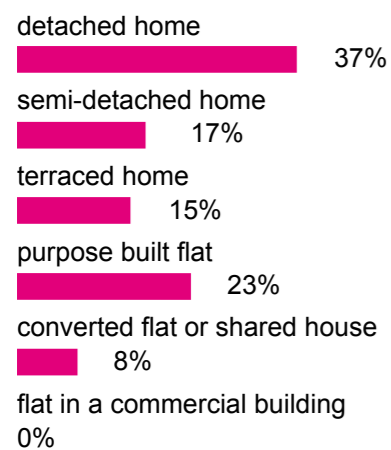


The information from the 2001 census and the Acorn profiles were based on the best fit of the smallest enumeration districts. This was obtained from Citystats website, which is now [www.bhlis.org](http://www.bhlis.org)

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

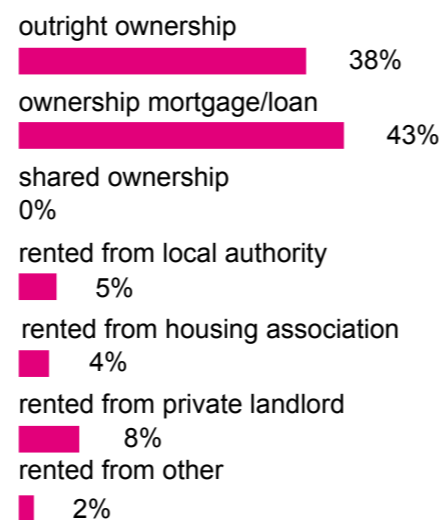
## appendix 3: social mix accommodation types

Source: City Stats, Census 2001



## tenure types

Source: City Stats, Census 2001



## demographic types

Source: City Stats, Acorn data

