



June 2026

Statement of Community Involvement – Addendum

Land east of Pirton | On behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd

THE *QUIET* YES – LISTENING BEYOND THE LOUDEST VOICES

LAND EAST OF PIRTON



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THE MISSION

- Alongside traditional engagement activities, we wanted to build a better understanding of local needs.
- Traditional consultations miss younger people, busy families & workers.
- We set out to reach beyond the individuals who typically participate in formal planning processes.
- All residents, workers, and future residents deserve to be made aware and have their voices heard.
- Mission: widen awareness and participation, build real understanding.

POLICY & BEST PRACTICE

The adopted North Herts Statement of Community Involvement (2023) promotes **inclusive engagement**, ensuring local communities have opportunities to participate in planning decisions and help shape future development.

Build There delivers this by **widening participation** beyond the usual voices, ensuring **younger people, workers, and seldom-heard groups** are informed and given the **opportunity to engage**.

This **aligns with national initiatives**, like the MHCLG Digital Planning Programme, where the government is encouraging digital engagement to broaden participation and **improve the quality of community voices**.

Through digitally enabled methods, **Build There shows how inclusive consultation can work in practice**.

TRADITIONAL FOUNDATIONS

A series of traditional engagement activities were carried out to ensure early and accessible dialogue as detailed in the SCI dated June 2025:

Stakeholder Consultation – 6 May 2025

Consultation letters issued to the local MP, ward councillors and Pirton Parish Council outlining the proposals and inviting feedback.

Public Consultation Website – May 2025

Dedicated project website launched featuring consultation boards, development proposals and an online feedback form for residents and stakeholders.

Community Feedback Review – May/June 2025

Comments received from residents and stakeholders were reviewed and considered in the evolution of the scheme prior to planning submission.



DIGITAL PROGRESS



How we reached a wider cross-section of the local population:

- Targeted awareness campaign on Facebook and Instagram for 3 weeks in May 2026 – 100,082 people reached within 10 miles of Pirton.
- Click-through to interactive and informative mobile friendly survey with images & details of proposed plans.
- Responses gathered from residents and local workers.
- Quantitative responses and personal stories captured.

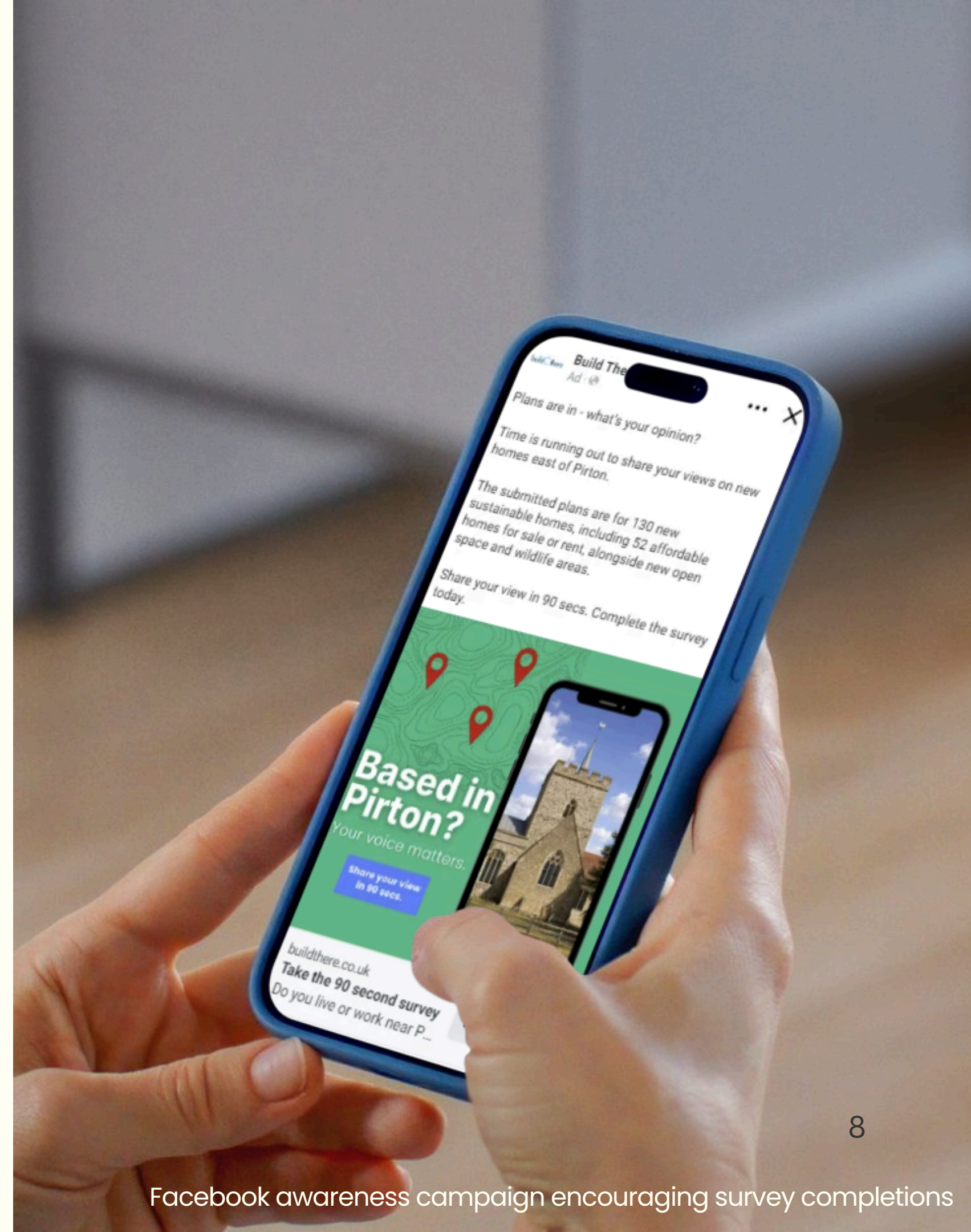
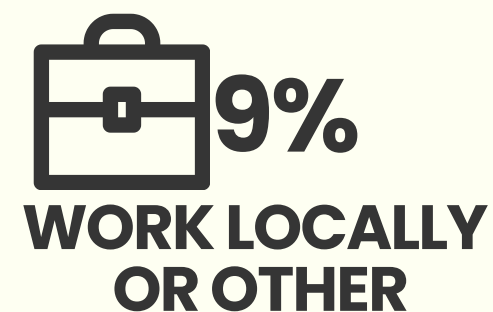
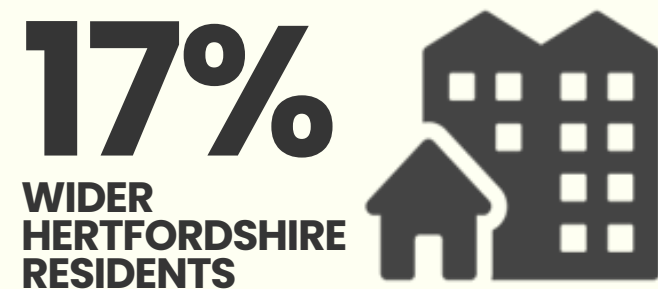
100,082 PEOPLE REACHED
WITHIN 10 MILES
OF PIRTON

WHO WE HEARD FROM

The campaign generated 56 full survey completions and intentionally engaged both Pirton residents and those with a connection to the village, including local workers, neighbouring communities and people seeking housing opportunities within the area. A cross-section of local people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.



LIVE IN A NEIGHBOURING
TOWN OR VILLAGE



A NEW AUDIENCE

60%

OF PARTICIPANTS LEARNT
ABOUT THE PROPOSALS FOR
FIRST TIME THROUGH OUR
AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

HAD HEARD
A LITTLE
ABOUT IT

15%



WHEN ASKED: "IF YOU
SUPPORT THE PLANS, WOULD
YOU USUALLY SUBMIT A
COMMENT ON THE
COUNCIL'S WEBSITE?"

28% WERE UNSURE
HOW TO
COMMENT AT ALL

The campaign successfully engaged a broader audience, including individuals who may not typically engage in planning consultations.

WHAT PEOPLE TOLD US

Responding to: What's most important to you when new homes are built in this area?

“**Affordable** for people who work locally”

“**Existing infrastructure** is taken into **consideration**”

“**Medium price range** for **younger people**”

“That they have **personality**”

“**Parking spaces**”

“The constructed houses **look like they fit in**”

“That the **infrastructure** is in place. **Schools, GP, dentists, buses, shops** etc”

“That they are intended for **local families**”

“**Good architectural destination blend** in with **local styles** of houses”



LOCAL PRIORITIES

Here's who people thought would **benefit** from the proposed homes.

43%

SEE CLEAR ADVANTAGES FOR **YOUNG FAMILIES**

30%

RECOGNISE THE BENEFIT FOR **LOCAL WORKERS**

28%

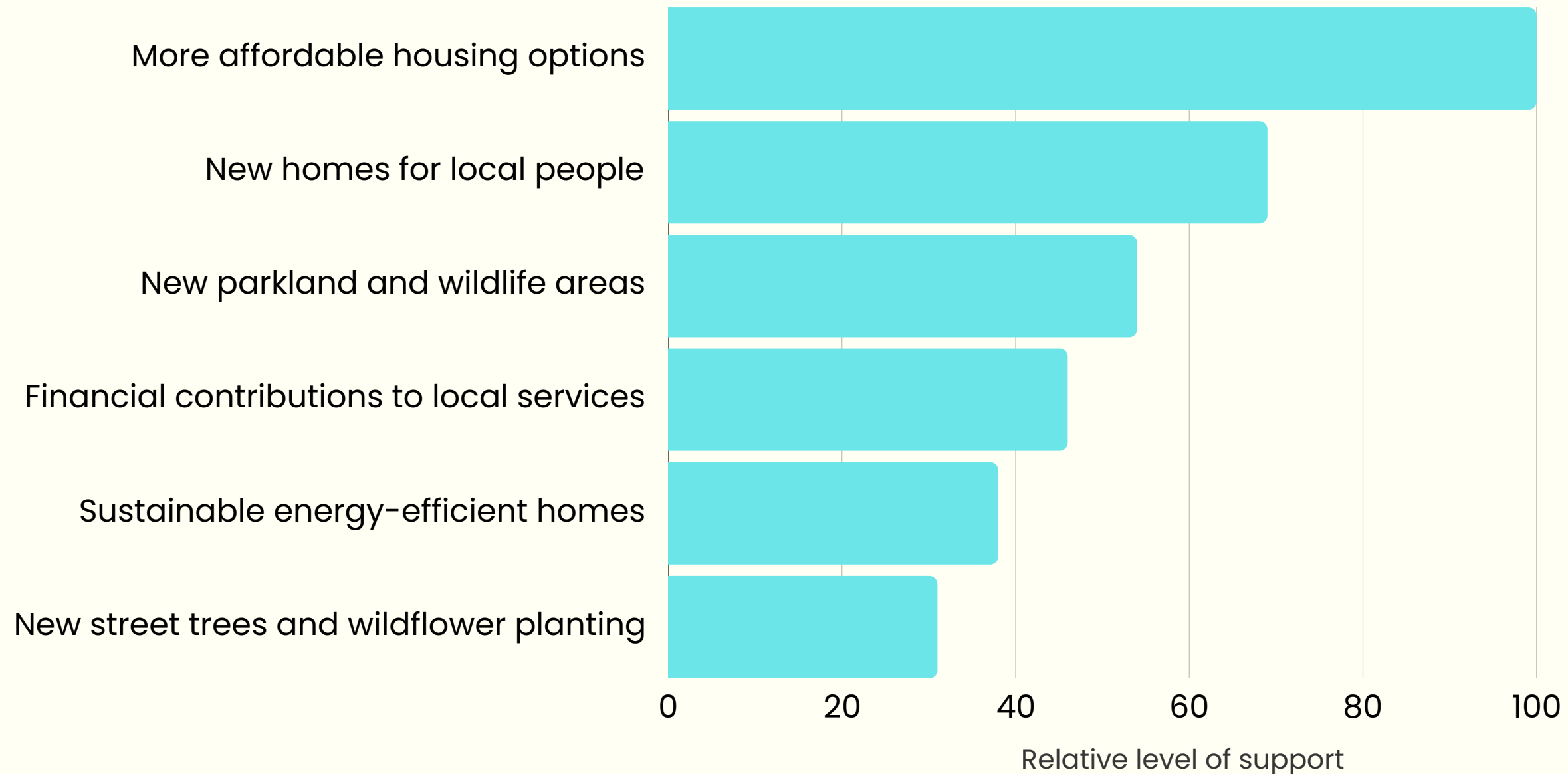
SEE OPPORTUNITIES FOR **DOWNSIZERS**

23%

THOUGHT **FIRST TIME BUYERS** WOULD BENEFIT

WHAT RESPONDENTS VALUE MOST

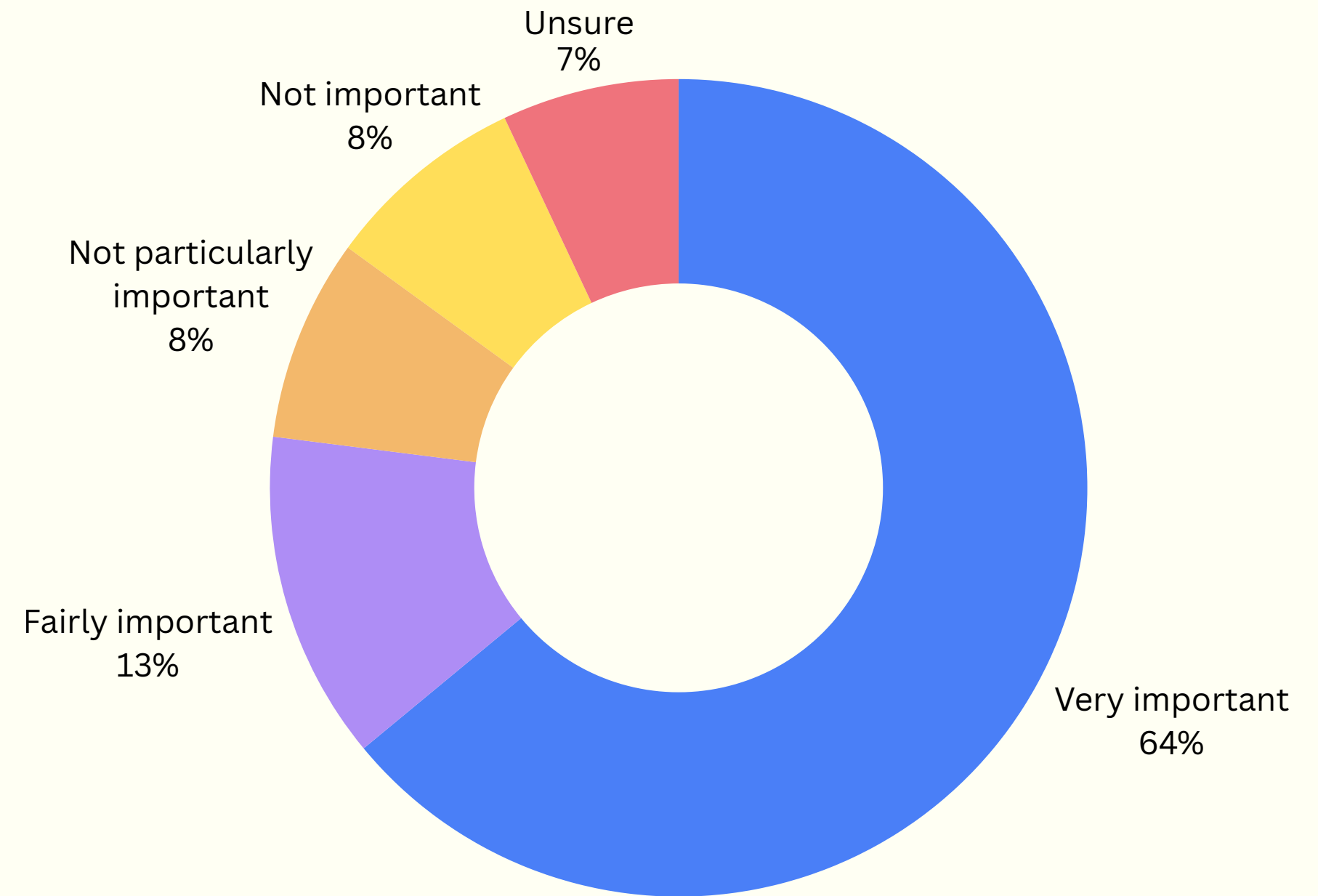
Here are the aspects of the proposed development that **appealed most** to people.



HOMES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

When asked: How important do you think it is that local housing provides opportunities for younger generations to remain in the area?

The response reflects a broader understanding within the community of the **challenges facing younger generations** and the **role new housing can play** in addressing them.



COMMUNITY REFLECTIONS



Responding to “If you have any further feedback, please share”:

“ I work in Hitchin and it **costs so much to rent** round here. **More homes with affordable options** sounds like **a good thing**, especially if it gives people like me **an opportunity to have a home of my own** ”

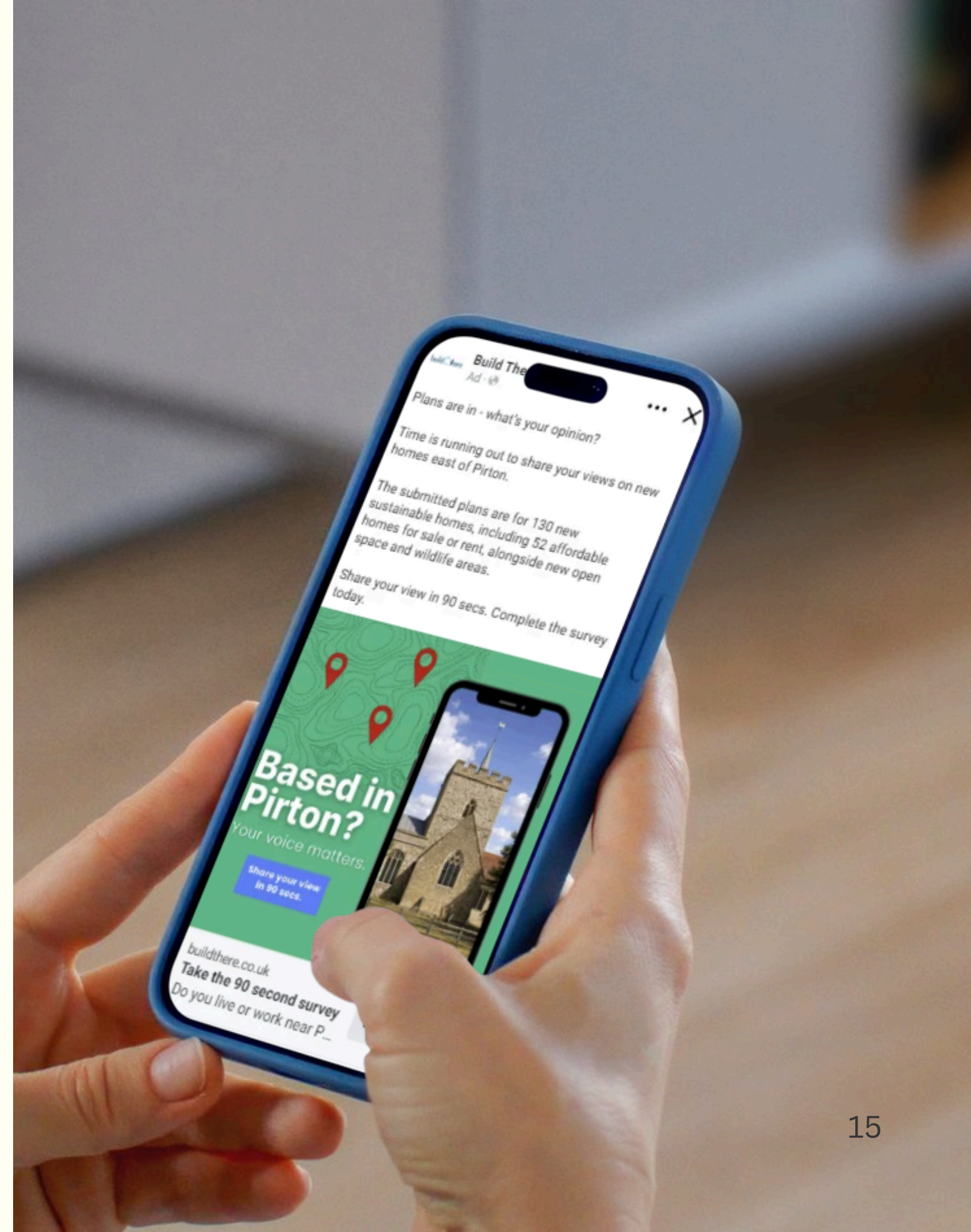
“ Make nicer looking houses with interesting facades. Make smaller cheaper houses for **first time buyers or young couples** ”

“ **Young families cannot afford houses** in affluent villages ”

“ Should be **freehold only**. Large gardens so **families have private space plus off street parking** with driveways so less cars parked along the estate roads. Detached 2 bed bungalows needed for **downsizers** as so many in Pirton have been extended and now in high price range ”

THEMES THAT EMERGED

- This is an area that **cares deeply about village identity** but also **recognises the challenges facing rural communities**, particularly the need for homes that local people can actually afford and access.
- Many respondents emphasised the importance of getting the fundamentals right, ensuring that infrastructure keeps pace with growth and that everyday matters like **local services, roads and parking are well managed**.
- **Affordable housing** emerged as one of the most valued aspects of the proposals, alongside opportunities to provide homes for local people and **support future generations** wishing to remain within the community.
- The findings highlight both the need and opportunity to **deliver new homes supported by appropriate investment in community infrastructure** and high quality design – issues which the proposals are well placed to address.



THE IMPACT

Turning feedback into action. Community insights available to help further shape the plans as matters progress:

- **Affordable homes** at the heart of proposals and reinforced as a key priority.
- **Green infrastructure** woven into the design.
- **Infrastructure-led approach embedded.** Infrastructure must keep pace with growth. The development will deliver financial contributions to support local infrastructure, alongside new public open space and a play area.
- A strong mix of housing for **families, workers & first-time buyers.**





A WIDER CONVERSATION

What this engagement has shown

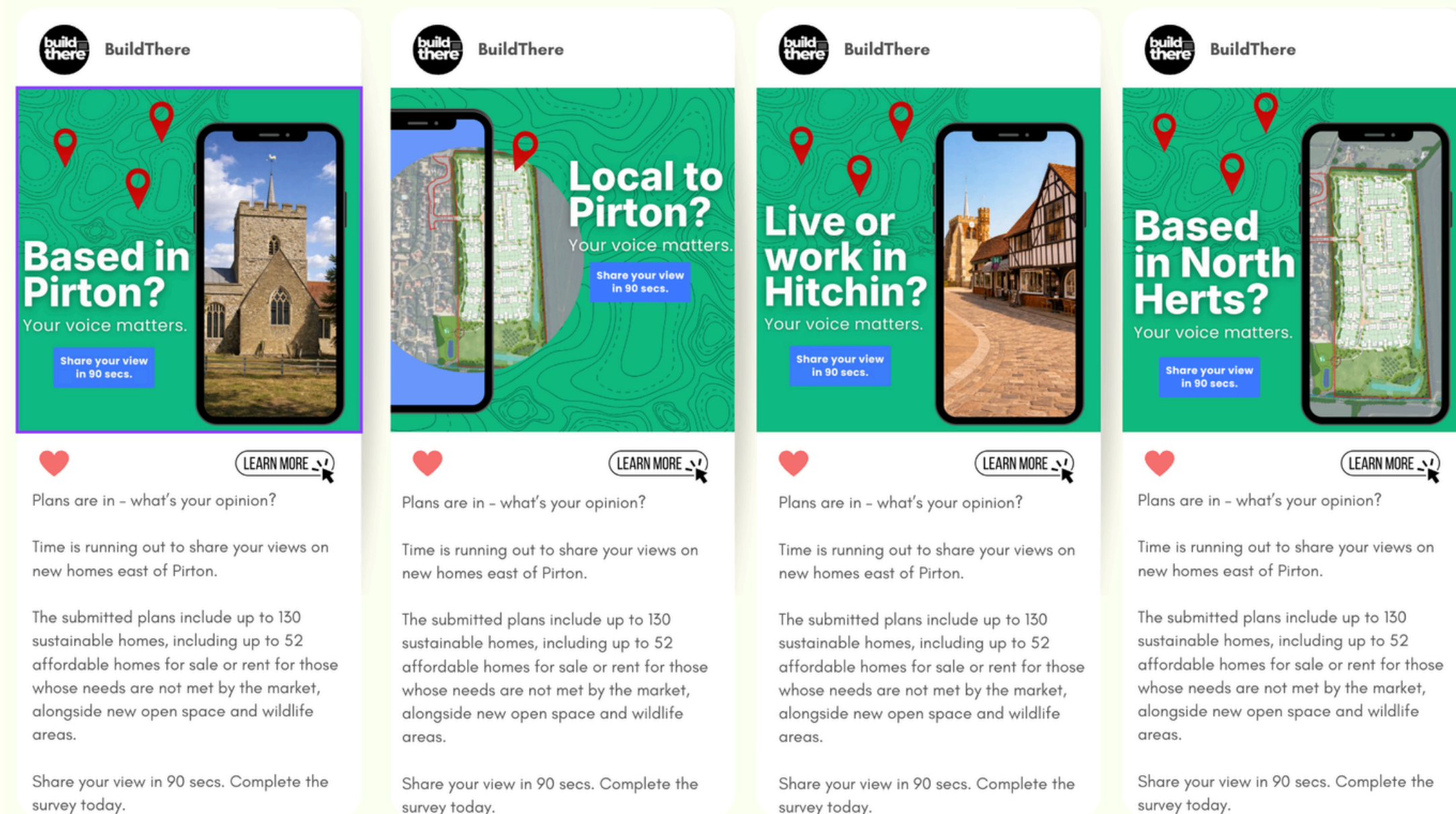
- Information about the proposals reached more than 100,000 people within 10 miles of Pirton, extending awareness beyond traditional planning audiences.
- The engagement reached a broader cross-section of residents, workers and people with local connections, including groups that do not typically participate in planning consultations.
- Through reaching people who are often absent from traditional planning consultations, the engagement highlighted the importance of housing choice, affordability and opportunities for future generations and those looking to live in Pirton.

Key Takeaway

Housing affordability, opportunities for younger generations and homes for local people emerged as key priorities, reflecting wider concerns about access to housing within rural communities. The proposals include 40% affordable housing to help address these challenges.

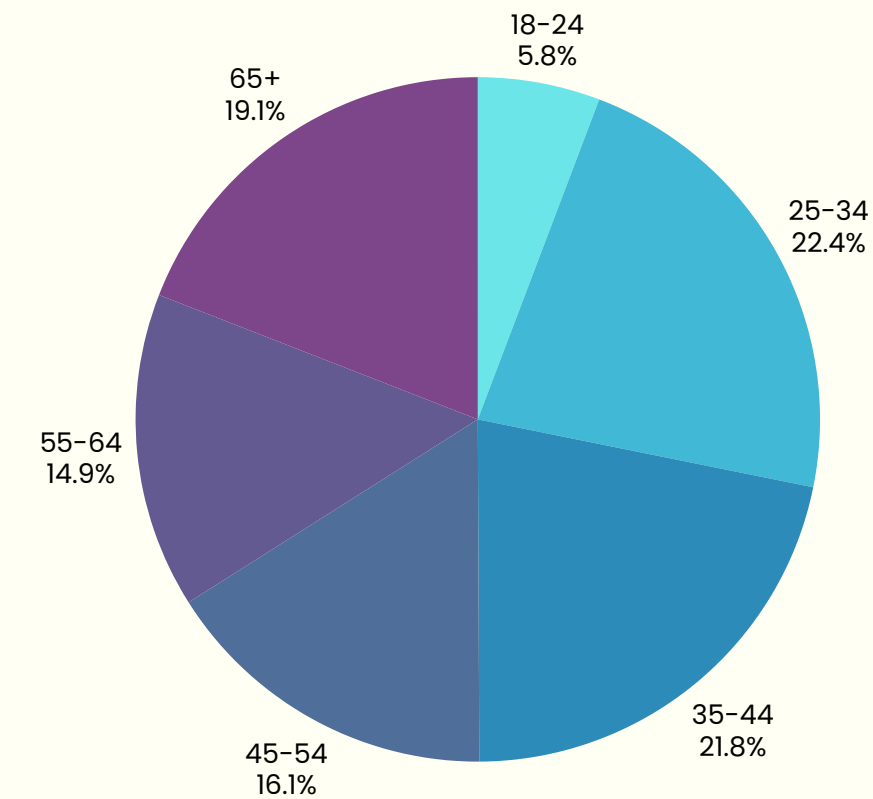
APPENDICES

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN



The adverts shown were placed across Facebook and Instagram for 3 weeks in May 2026. They were geographically targeted within a 10 mile radius of Pirton.

Age groups reached

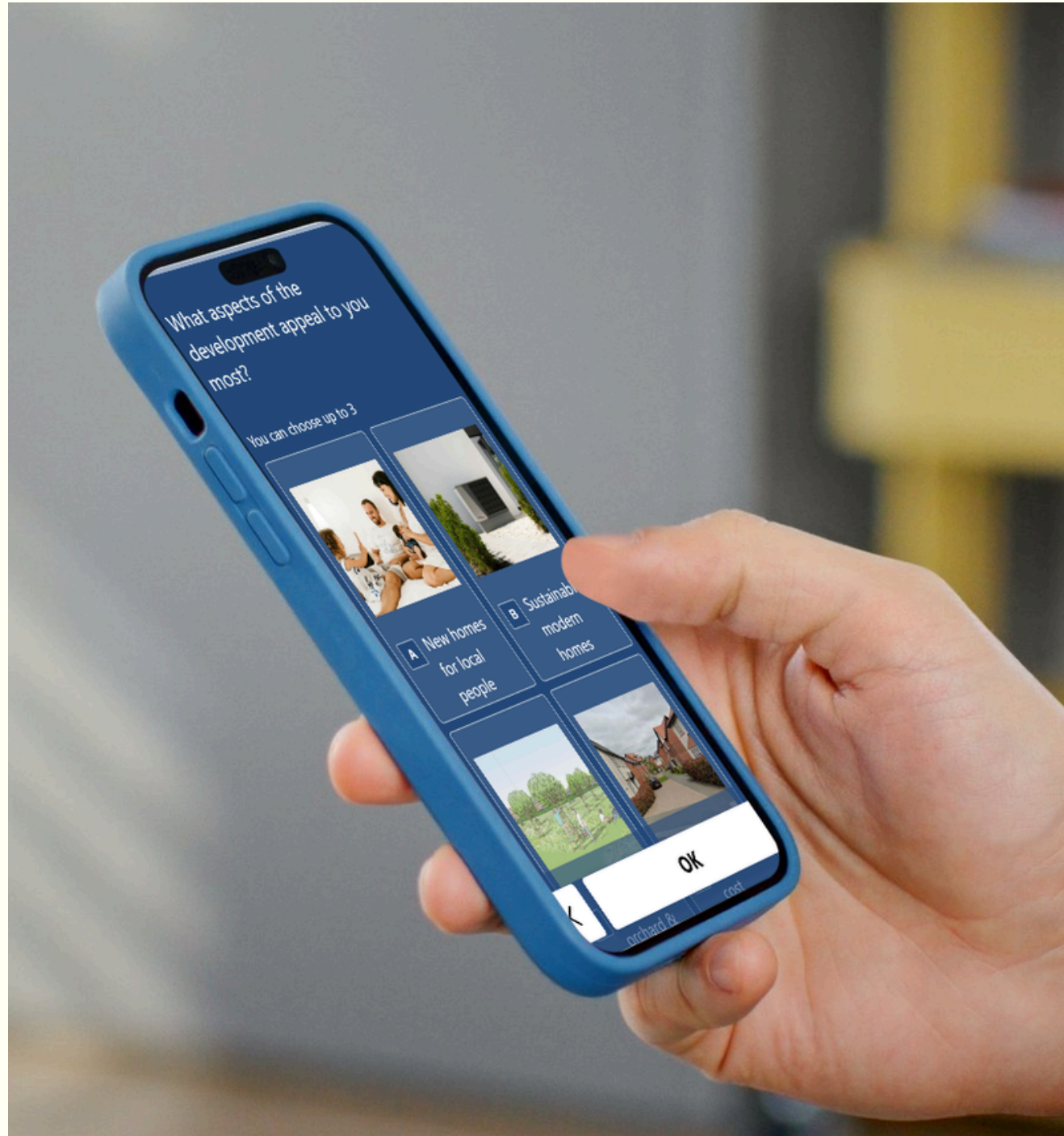


100,082 people saw the adverts

557,976 impressions (the number of times the adverts were on screen)

4,122 click throughs

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY – OUR QUESTIONS



1) What is your relationship to the Pirton area??

Context break showing masterplan: Up to 130 homes are proposed at the east of Pirton. The site will provide family homes with new children's play areas and wildlife areas for a biodiversity net gain.

2) Were you aware of the proposed plans for the land at Pirton before today?

3) What aspects of the development appeal to you most?

4) What's most important to you when new homes are built in this area?

5) If you support the plans, would you normally submit a comment on the Council's planning website?

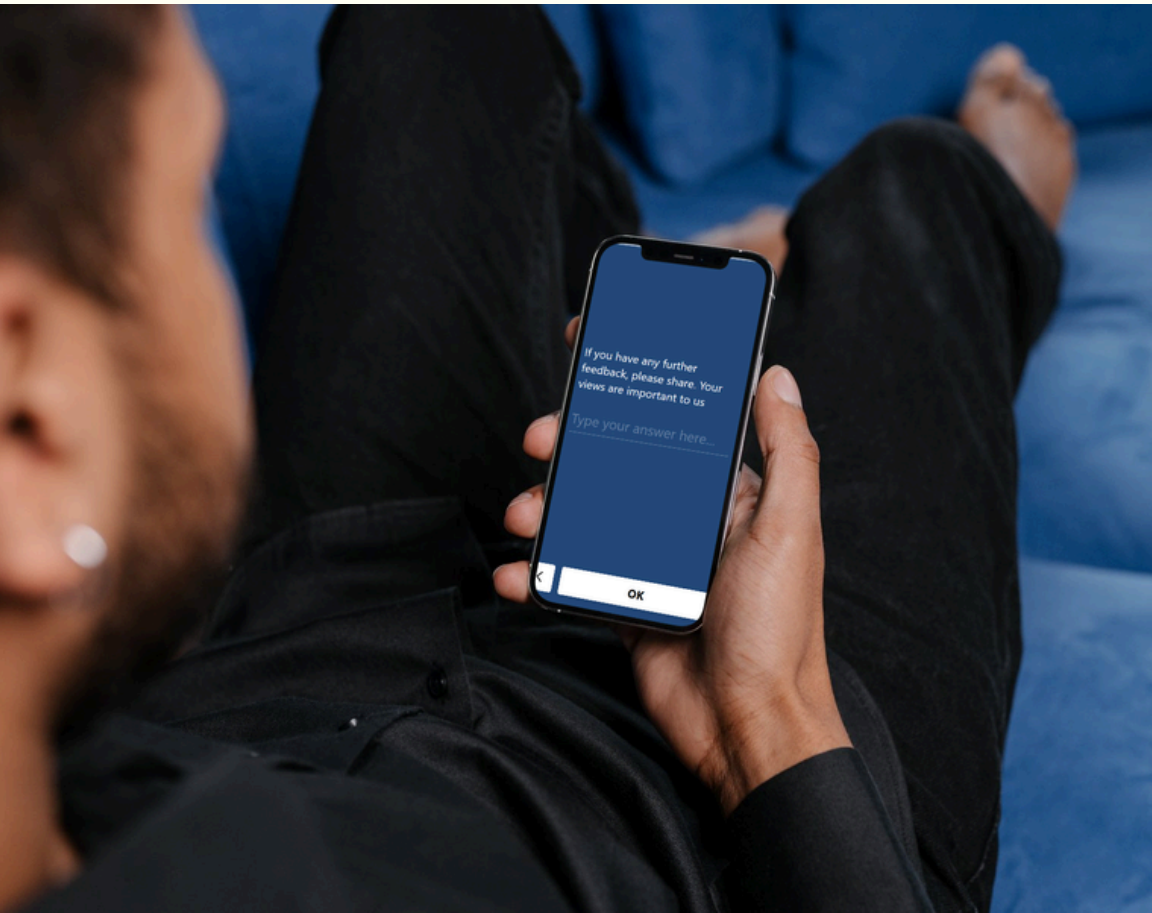
Context break: Did you know – The proposed homes are only an 8 minute walk from Pirton Primary School

6) Which local groups do you think will benefit most from these homes?

7) How important do you think it is that local housing provides opportunities for younger generations to remain in the area?

8) If you have any further feedback, please share. Your views are important to us.

ABOUT BUILD THERE



Build There is a community engagement partner focused on improving the quality, accessibility, and representativeness of public participation in the planning process.

Traditional consultation methods can often rely on a self-selecting audience, which may not fully reflect the wider community. **Build There**'s approach is designed to support decision-makers by providing a broader and more balanced understanding of local views.

This is achieved by:

- Using accessible, digital-first engagement methods to meet people where they are
- Widening participation beyond those who typically engage
- Reaching younger people, working residents, and underrepresented groups

The “Quiet Yes”

A consistent finding across **Build There**'s work is the presence of a “quiet yes.”

When communities are proactively informed and given a clear opportunity to engage:

- Many people are neutral or broadly accepting of development
- There is clear recognition of the need for new homes and infrastructure
- A significant number express constructive, conditional support, particularly where proposals respond to local priorities

This helps provide a more complete picture of community sentiment, complementing the views typically expressed through traditional consultation channels.

Supporting Better Decisions

By broadening participation and improving the quality of feedback, **Build There** enables a more representative and constructive evidence base, supporting informed and balanced decision-making.

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