

“ i want to live here ”

Community-led Regeneration Document for Easton



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'I want to live here...'

3rd October - 3rd November 2009

The Love Easton Urban Design Task Force worked in partnership with a group studying for the M.Arch at the University of Sheffield to complete an intensive month-long consultation period with the local residents and users of Easton.

A large variety of engagement techniques were used including the opening of the Love Easton cafe on Stapleton Road. This was used as a basis for workshops, meetings and events and as a go-to point for those who wanted to share their thoughts on the area.

This document is the outcome of this month and catalogues the voices of the community to be used as a reference for the future development of the area.





Urban Design Task Group

Objectives

The Love Easton Urban Design Task Group's objective is to work in a small group to find pioneering and innovative ways to encourage the community to have their say and be involved in consultation processes to transform their neighbourhood. The group aims to work with the local community to create a shared vision for Easton.

A dynamic process

This refers to a Top Down Bottom Up vision: at a city level there are strategic (top down) opportunities to be seized by the community, so long as they fit the needs and aspirations identified locally (bottom up). The aim of the strategic document is to bring these two together to form a vision for the area.

New ways of working

We aim to position local people at the centre of a partnership with the Council, other agencies and city wide institutes.

New ways of talking

We aim to use artists and facilitators to open up dialogue between local people and professionals. Games and structured events will be used to generate ideas and collate information.

New ways of mapping

The starting point is to find out what local people think, feel and want from their neighbourhood. New mapping techniques will be used to analyse resident responses, drawing out themes and important information missed by conventional reports. The usage of every pocket of Easton would be mapped with precision for today and future generations to reap the benefits of a well planned neighbourhood.

Creating a shared vision

One of the key objectives of developing a community vision is to start the process of breaking down conflicting interests that have posed barriers to progress. Conflicting ideas have meant that retail units lie empty with no economic growth. There is recognition to build consensus and most importantly for all interested parties to continue working together in one direction; developing the vision further and starting to implement positive action supported by all. The three key areas of priority are seen to be:

- Providing local amenities.
- Reusing existing fabric.
- Ensuring any new development gives back to the community.

Areas within Easton

Easton is split into three areas....

Area One

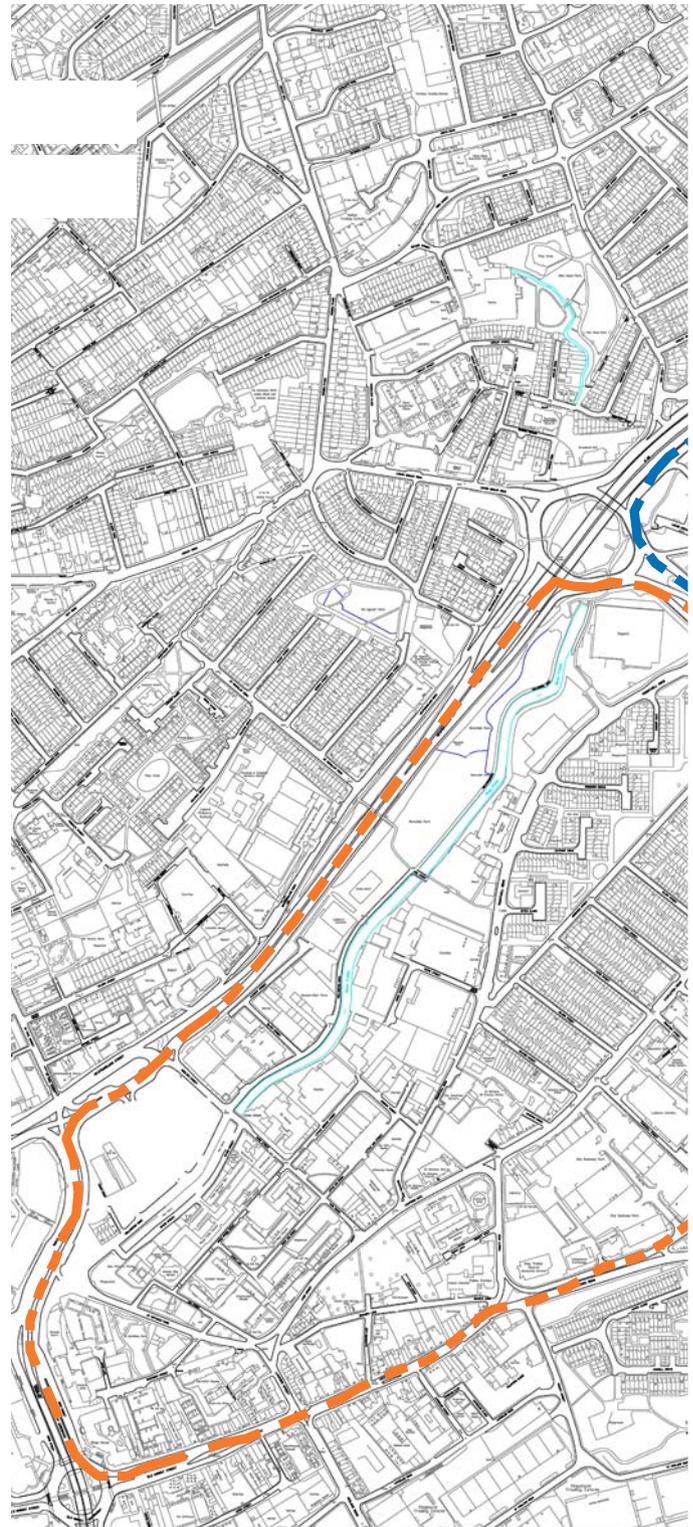
The central residential area is made up of 1900's terraced housing and is surrounded by many empty brownfield sites and larger commercial/industrial units.

This area is rife with development as the city centre presses further into Easton, and there is a tentative 20 year plan currently being considered by Bristol City Council for this. Many of the larger commercial units can feel visually and physically separate from the rest of the area. Imposing brick walls, security measures and the difference in building scale collude to alienate parts of this area from one another.



Part of the 20 year plan may involve buying up one or more of the units to turn into residential properties. Consideration must be given to ensure that any new build considers the existing fabric and scale and potential links from the ward to the city centre.

A large section of Easton's Somali community live in this area with businesses, such as takeaways and internet cafes.





Area Two

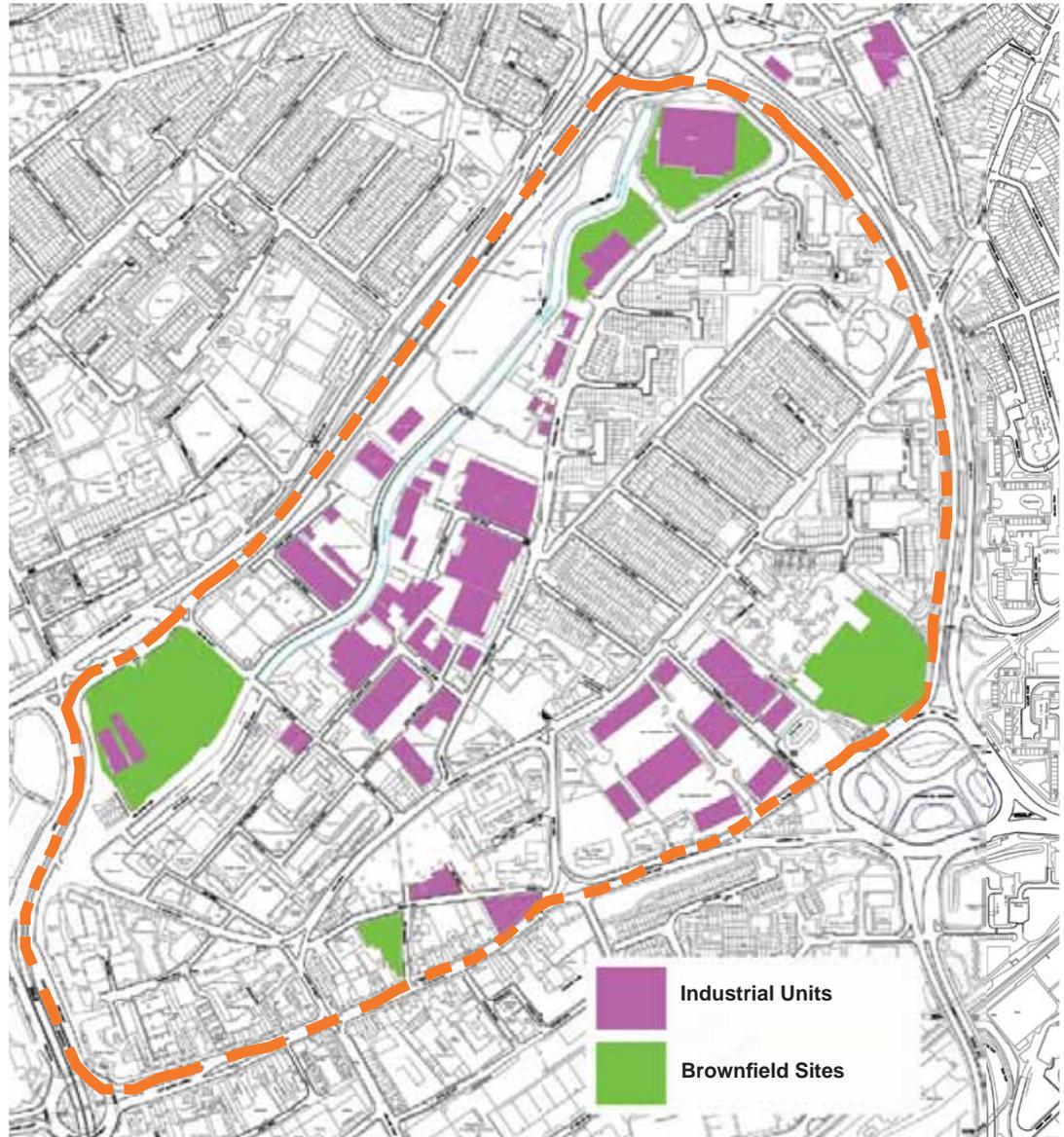
A relatively dense area of residential property, though new development has meant that there is a wide range of property. This includes large semi-detached homes. This section of Stapleton Road contains a large variety of commercial activity, including pubs, a range of restaurants, clothing shops, hairdressers and a car wash.

Area Three

A heavily built-up residential area with very few sites available for future development. This is the home of the current Easton community centre. There are few spaces left available for development, with the Chocolate Factory on Co-operation Road currently under development to create 47 new homes. St. Mark's Road contains many rich and colourful grocers, restaurants and a variety of specialist shops.

Area One - Development

Potential sites for future development as the city centre edges into Easton....



Population make-up of Easton

Ethnic Groups in the ward of Easton

White 75.1% (Nationally: 90.9%)

Black and minority ethnic 24.9% (9.1%)

Mixed 4.3% (1.3%)

Asian or Asian British 10.5% (4.6%)

Black or Black British 9.1% (2.3%)

Chinese or Other 1.0% (0.9%)

Source: 2001 Census, Key Statistics. Crown copyright

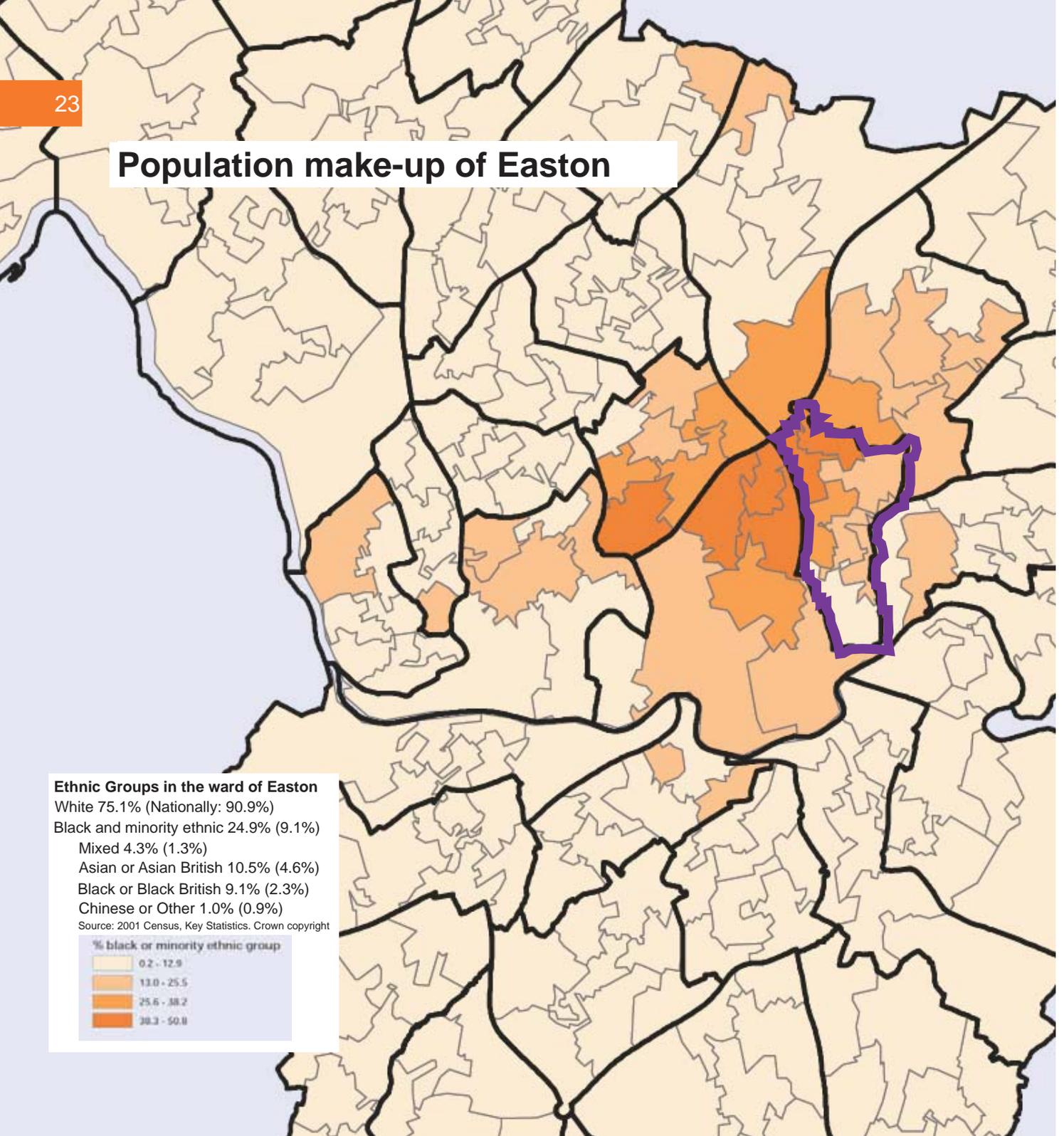
% black or minority ethnic group

0.2 - 12.9

13.0 - 25.5

25.6 - 38.2

38.3 - 50.8



Engaging with Easton's communities

The initial task of the consultation process involved establishing an understanding of the existing partnerships and facilities and social make-up of Easton.

Through this process, it became clear that there are a large number of community initiatives and groups in the ward of Easton both owing to an active community and diverse ethnic make-up as seen opposite. This community spirit is evident in that there were more street parties in Easton than any other ward in Europe.

However, over the course of the engagement period it became clear that these various groups often functioned separately with limited knowledge of other groups with similar aims. By working together there is the opportunity to further strengthen this existing framework.



Food was key tool of the community engagement process, bringing together an array of ethnic groups and allowing residents to *mingle* and be introduced to each other without the need to form close-knit relationships.

South-Asian Females: discussion and workshop

Up to 30 women attended this event. A discussion was held followed by food, and all the attendants donated a dish to the table.

Outcomes

Integration, safety and cleanliness were the main themes to be raised amongst the attendees of the event. Space renting (halls for weddings, theatre groups etc.) was suggested to enhance social integration and access to facilities.

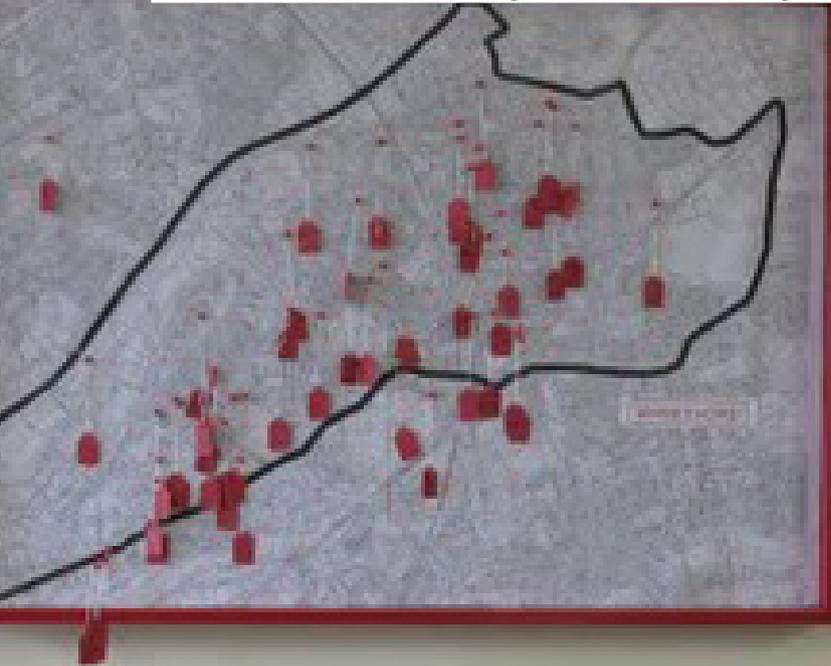


Food Fuddle: a jumble&mish mash of food

Within the cafe the *food fuddle* became a regular and successful event with local residents. The idea was that residents would bring a dish from their cultural background and discuss Easton in an informal setting.



A 'Cafe' in every community



From this the concept of the 'Cafe' was born. This is the idea of one Easton-centric collective acting as an umbrella organisation for local activity and a go-to point for information.

The 'Cafe' acts as a hub with potential to be a venue holding events that would bring members of the community together for discussions alongside the opportunity to drop in, share opinions and keep in touch with developments in the area. This is a new concept within the community and offers alternatives to the normative planning consultation processes.

