

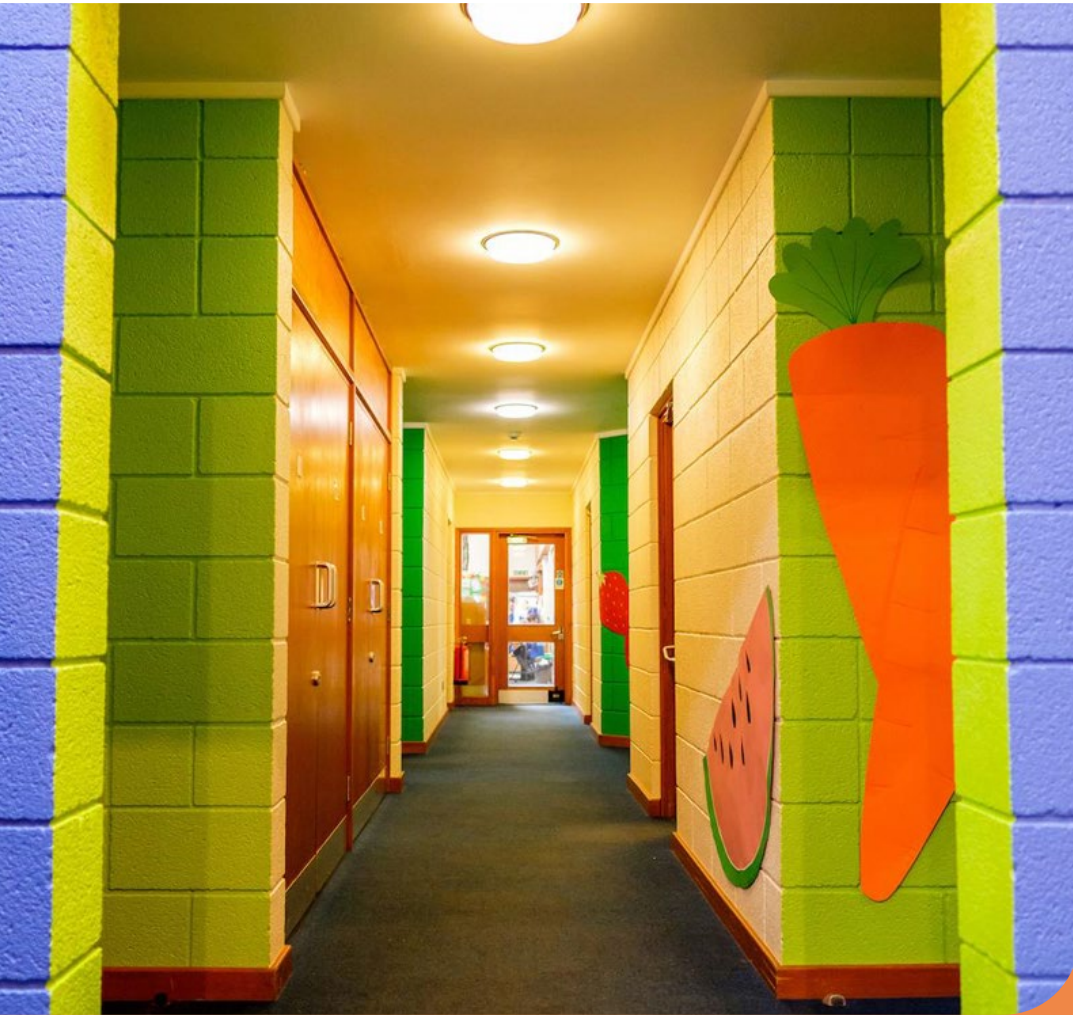


SSAT SUMMARY

THE SMARTER SPACES PROJECT



# THE SSAT AND DULUX SMARTER SPACES PROJECT



This project explored how ‘smarter spaces’ could promote the positive engagement of students and teachers, and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Participating schools aimed to create a ‘smarter space’ that had a positive impact on:

- Teachers’ engagement with the learning environment
- Learner engagement in both design and application of the learning environment
- Teaching and learning through planning, delivery and progress across the school.

Prior to the project, many of the rooms before treatment were unloved, not cared for and generally ‘someone else’s problem.’ The treatment focused attention on each room, drove ownership of the issues and solutions and ensured that every space was fully utilised.



## KEY FINDINGS

**The learning environment is a powerful driver for cultural change in both teachers and learners, if it is treated with the same consideration and passion as other teaching tools.**

This cultural change takes time and requires ‘drivers’ – learners and staff, to both co-design and co-implement.

Co-design by schools with experts, as in this project with Dulux designers, provides the stimulation to make relatively easy changes and the inspiration to explore creative ways of improving the learning environment.

Support frameworks such as the Dulux design principles provide a footprint for success, outlining the potential benefits that each school can achieve; while SSAT’s lead practitioner accreditation provides valuable guidance to pre-empt and resolve possible roadblocks.

Impact measures should be wide ranging, capturing the nuanced effects of the new space on all stakeholders. In this study we provide examples and evidence of these effects.

Schools taking part in this project have seen positive benefits of their ‘smarter spaces’ ranging from greater utilisation of the room by a wider range of subjects, to reintegration of vulnerable learners into mainstream classes. There is little doubt that the new spaces have achieved the best fit for the schools’ needs and in the process has provided staff and students a valuable insight into the impact of learning environment design.



# DULUX EDUCATION DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Smarter Spaces can become another tool for teachers to deliver better learning. When colour is specified with thoughtful consideration, a room becomes a powerful instrument that schools can use to improve learning outcomes.

Smarter Spaces physically support different teaching methods and learning approaches as well as having a positive emotional effect on pupils and teachers.

The 2010 Schools Environments Survey showed school environments have an impact on pupil behaviour and wellbeing in addition to the teachers' ability to teach effectively:

**95.8%**

of the teachers agreed that the school environment had an influence on pupil behaviour.

## HOW CAN ROOMS ENHANCE TEACHING & LEARNING?

Using the Ofsted criteria as a starting point, Dulux Smarter Spaces identified five areas of focus where the design of the environment can support teachers and learners.

These are environments that:

- Enhance the teaching & learning environment
- Inspire engagement
- Encourage positive attitude and behaviour
- Promote personal development and wellbeing
- Help improve building function



“We know a lot about designing a room for minimum heat loss, but very little on how we design a room to prevent learning loss.”

**Professor Stephen Heppell**



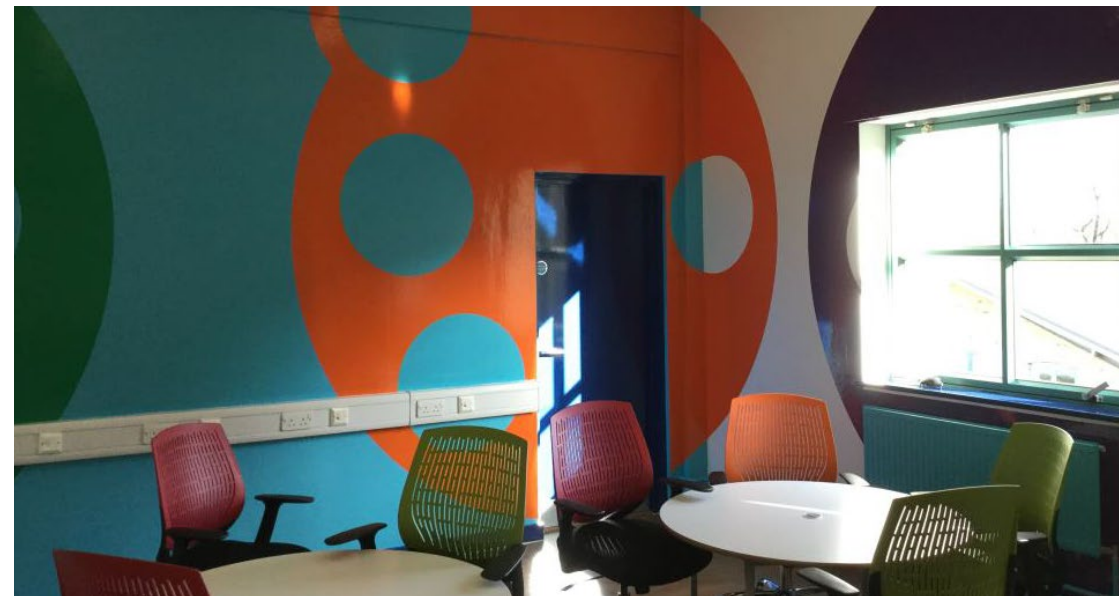
# ACTION RESEARCH

**Dulux Smarter Spaces and SSAT developed research projects in nine different schools, focusing on the learning environment and its impact on teaching and learning.**

Four primary and five secondary schools in England were chosen to ensure a representative sample across the country. They also included a good mix of types of learning spaces, from classrooms and halls to corridors, to help demonstrate that learning can take place in all areas of the school buildings.

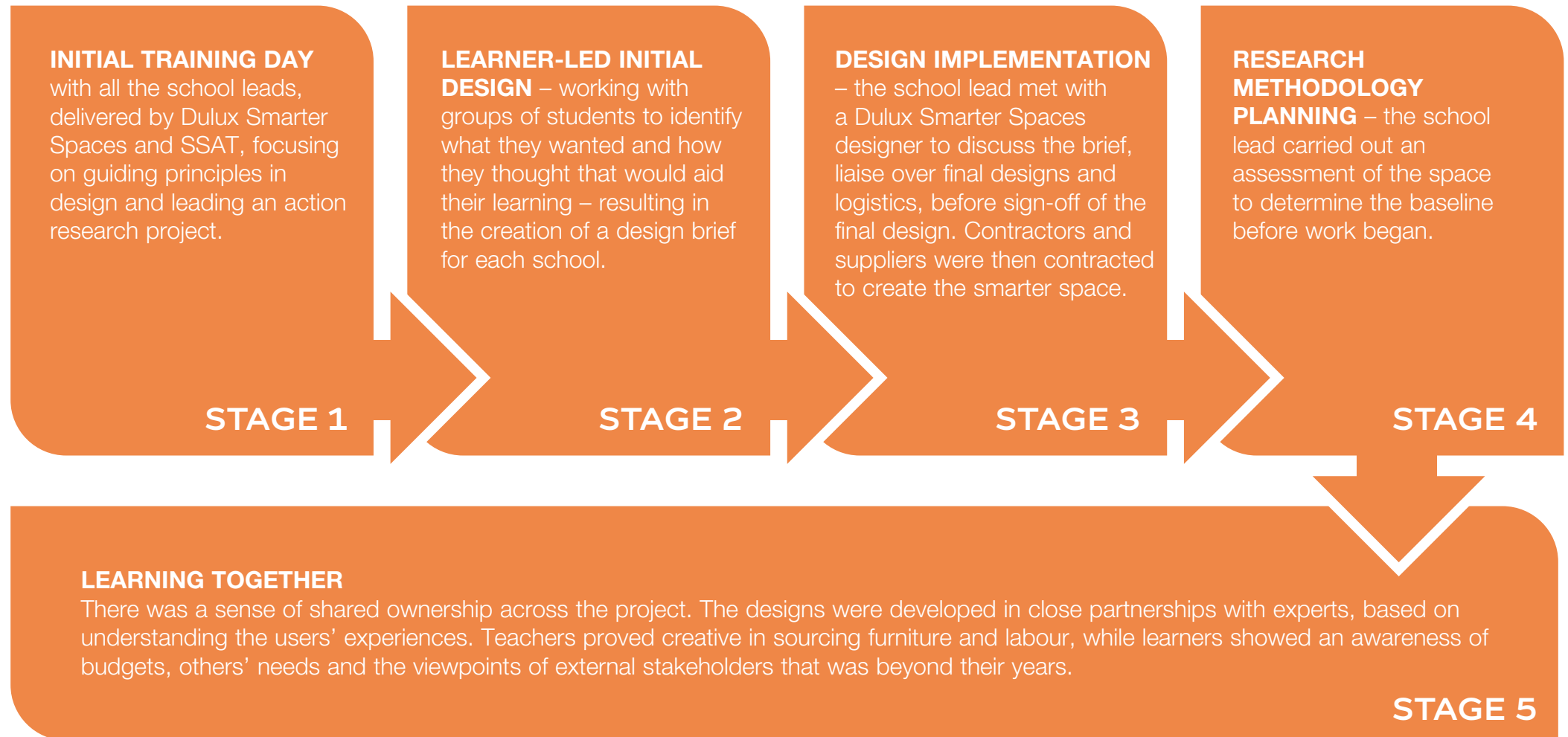
The spaces were:

- A classroom at Central Foundation School in London
- A communal space at Cuddington Croft Primary School in Surrey
- Two collaborative learning classrooms at Freebrough Academy in Saltburn-by-sea
- A design technology classroom at Lordswood Girls' School in West Midlands
- The small hall at St Mildred's Primary Infant School in Kent
- An IT suite at Tranmere Park School in Leeds
- A digital classroom space at Upton-by-Chester High School
- A STEM classroom at Wellacre Academy in Manchester
- A nurture room at Windrush Primary School in London.



# THE PROCESS

The approach was broken down into the following key stages:



## UNDERSTANDING HOW LEARNERS EXPERIENCE SCHOOL

Learners were asked how their classrooms made them feel, to gauge their response to the learning environment and help identify opportunities for improvement.

“I don’t like the classroom. I feel trapped and it’s difficult to learn.”

Student

“It is so busy. I feel happy a lot of the time but sometimes I feel lost.”

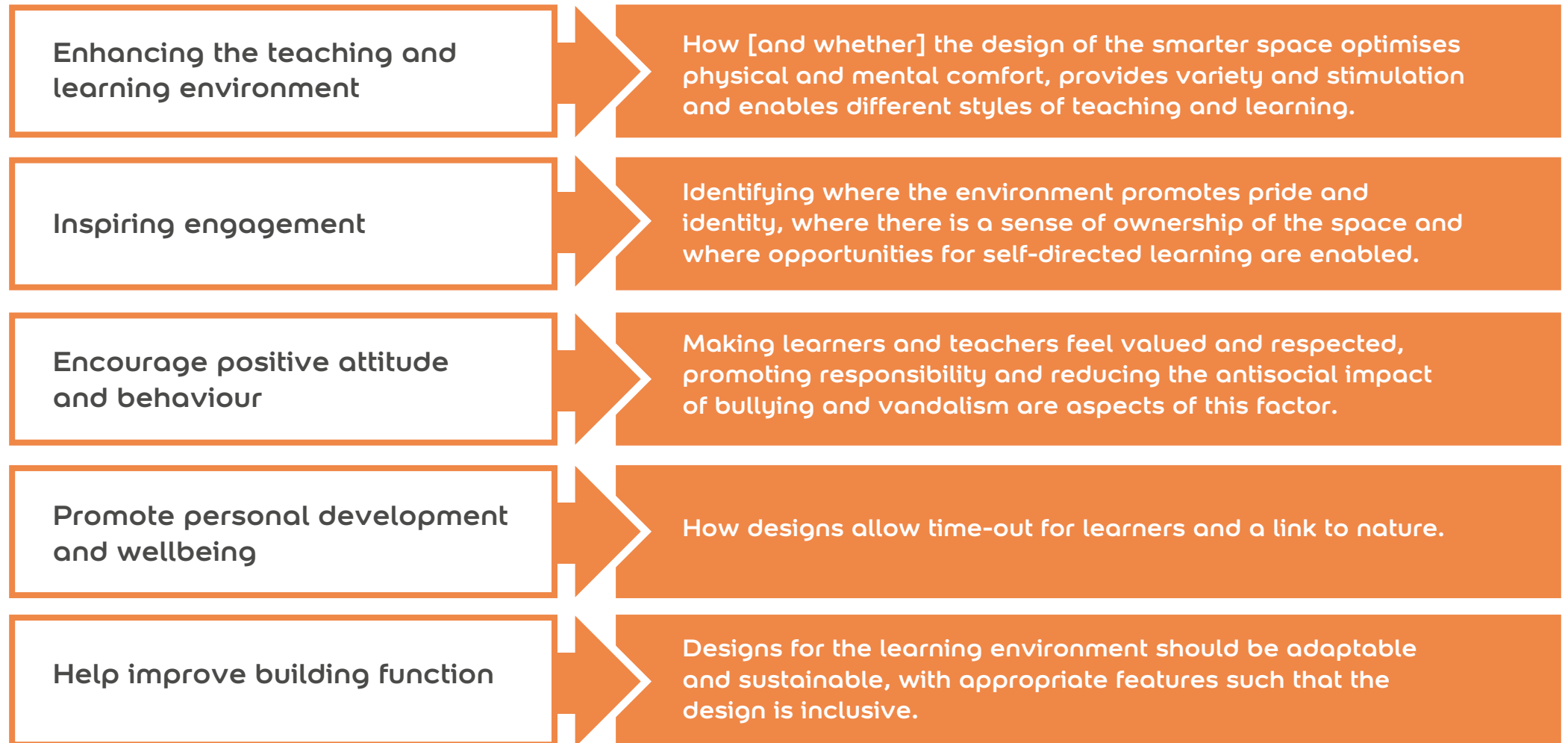
Student

“I need space to think, there are lots of things to work out when I’m working. I need to be on my own.”

Student

# PROJECT OUTCOMES

Schools saw gains in the teaching and learning experience for all users of the new learning space, with a greater sense of ownership, as a direct result of the project implementation. All schools were asked to report on the impact of creating their smarter space, focusing in particular on to what extent the following were achieved:







# PROGRESS IN ACHIEVEMENT

## Is there any data that can prove student learning improved?

There has been a **2%** improvement in attendance in 2016/17. The classes taught in C14 since it has been redeveloped with an average of **92%** compared with an average of **90%**. The table below shows that Year 7 groups who use this room, highlighted in orange, are making greater progress than those groups who do not.

Name	Total grades	Average points	Target average points	Difference
7x/Gg4 JKE	31	2.45	2.03	0.42
7y/Gg4 JKE	25	2.24	2	0.24
7x/Gg5 JKE	17	1.76	1.59	0.17
7y/Gg5 JKE	11	1.91	1.82	0.09
7x/Gg2 JWA	33	3.03	2.97	0.06
7x/Gg3 MCA	29	2.83	2.79	0.04
7x/Gg1 JWA	33	3.33	3.33	0
7y/Gg1 MCA	30	3.3	3.3	0
7y/Gg2 MCA	30	3	3.03	-0.03
7y/Gg3 MCA	29	2.52	2.55	-0.03

## Significant increase in usage at Wellacre Academy

### WELLACRE ACADEMY

The STEM room was redesigned as part of the smarter spaces project and usage increased not only for STEM subjects such as technology but by other subjects. Note also that this became the base for STEM club which also brought in local primary schools (**10% usage**) to experience the transition projects within STEM subjects.

	Use before the STEM room	Use after the STEM room
Bookable space by Technology	20%	30%
Timetabled space	20%	40%
Weekly STEM base	0%	100%
Other	0%	10%

## WANT MORE INFORMATION?

These results are just a snapshot. For a comprehensive review of the project, including the methodology, and qualitative and quantitative data, check out the 'Exploring Smarter Spaces' report [here](#).

