

Govan Voices

A community consultation
on the future of Govan's
historic dry docks





 **Danger**
 **Keep out**

Govan Voices

Starting in October 2018 Govan Docks Regeneration Trust conducted a year-long community consultation project, Govan Voices, aiming to engage the community in shaping a vision for the future of Govan's derelict A-listed Victorian dry docks – Govan Graving Docks.

Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, with match contribution from our delivery partners, the project was built around a major outreach programme to find out and document how local people see the future of one of the most significant maritime heritage sites in Europe.

This is a condensed version of the full Govan Voices Project Report, which is available on request in PDF format.

Funded By:

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1. Executive Summary

The Consultation

The project aimed to engage the community in shaping a vision for the future of Govan's historic A-listed graving (dry) docks. Derelict for over 30 years since closing down as a working dry dock facility, there have been several proposals for commercial and heritage based developments of the site, including Glasgow's unsuccessful bid for the Royal Yacht Britannia in the late 1990s. Most recently a housing-led proposal for 700 flats was refused planning consent by Glasgow City Council in 2018. Port Glasgow based Ferguson Marine had announced a proposal at the end of 2017 to bring the graving dock site back into use as a working dry dock facility. However that company has since entered administration and was subsequently nationalised by the Scottish Government.

The iconic Victorian dry dock site has been a focus for artistic intervention and film production during the time it has been derelict. Despite not officially being open to the public it is popular with dog walkers and urban explorers.

We aimed to engage the community in shaping a vision for the future of the site in a way that had not been done before. To this end we undertook a year-long outreach programme starting in October 2018.

Questionnaires were distributed to find out what people know about the graving docks and how they see the future of this site. While the responses to the questionnaires form the evidence basis of our conclusions, the project was so much more than that. Our team set up information stalls; filmed vox-pops; worked with artists, visited local organisations, community councils and community groups; spoke to local elected representatives; attended third party events and workshops to promote our consultation. We also ran a series of guided walks from Water Row near Govan Cross to the graving docks, to talk to groups about the significance of the docks and also about the context of Govan's industrial, post-industrial and pre-industrial history.

Findings and Conclusions

We were able to engage the local community in Govan as well as Greater Glasgow and a wider community of interest in the docks. Almost half of survey respondents were resident in the Govan area with more than 80% from Greater Glasgow overall.

What we found locally was a strong sense of community and value placed on the industrial heritage of the area. There is little support for housing development on the graving docks, while community space, access to the waterfront and the heritage of the site are seen as important. Although there was scepticism about return of the site to industrial use, we nevertheless found a strong level of in-principle support for the idea.

We found that campaigns (against housing proposals) in particular were the most common way that people were made aware of the plight of the docks.

Our key conclusions are that:

- Regeneration of the site should not be housing-led
- Creation of sustainable jobs for local people is important
- Any development of the site must respect and enhance the heritage
- Local amenity and access to the waterfront needs to be created
- A maritime museum would be a popular feature of regenerating the docks

Next Steps

It is our intention to produce a draft Strategic Development Plan informed and supported by the findings of the consultation.

The Strategic Development Plan will not put forward any spatial or design concepts for development of the site, nor will it attempt to dictate specific uses for the site. The purpose will be to create a guiding framework for the future of the docks that, with the Govan Voices consultation and this report, we will be able to demonstrate is grounded in community and stakeholder engagement.

This will establish the basis and credibility of Govan Docks Regeneration Trust's engagement with other organisations and stakeholders in our aim to be a lead body in shaping the long-term future the graving docks.





2. Introduction

Project Aims

Govan Voices aimed to engage the community in creating a vision for the future of the graving docks that will both respect the heritage and address the social and economic needs of the surrounding area. While the views of local people have been prominent in the consultation process, we have also been able to engage the wider City of Glasgow and a broader community of interest in maritime and heritage protection. What we now have is a documented range of views that we expect will have a significant bearing on the future of Govan Graving Docks.

About Govan Graving Docks

The dry docks at Govan – Govan Graving Docks – were completed in the late 19th century with the last one to be built, the large dock nearest to Govan Road, opening on 27th April 1898.

Commissioned by James Deas, the Chief Engineer of the Clyde Navigation Trust, No. 1 dry dock and No. 3 dry dock at Govan were the deepest dry docks in Britain when opened and could accommodate the largest ships in the world of the time. They pre-date the former burgh of Govan being incorporated into the City of Glasgow.

They have been described by Historic Scotland as “an outstanding graving dock complex without parallel in Scotland”. The docks were used to repair and refit hundreds of ships and were in active use until 1987. Since closing down the site has lain derelict.

The walls of the dry docks are built from grey granite (some of which is hand carved) and they are category A-listed: the highest category of protection for a listed building in Scotland. A significant piece of Glasgow’s shipbuilding and maritime heritage, these are the only major historic docks on the upper Clyde that have not been filled in or significantly altered to make way for modern redevelopments. The only remaining building on the site is the A-listed sandstone pump house for no.1 and no. 2 dry docks. It is in poor condition with only the walls and a few roof beams remaining.

The graving dock complex also encompasses the previously separate tidal basin, which had been the fitting-out basin for the adjacent Harland and Wolff shipyard.



3. The Loss of an Industry

Industrial Decline on the Clyde

A microcosm of the growth and decline of heavy industry on the River Clyde and wider West of Scotland, the dry docks were an exemplar of cutting edge marine civil engineering. When Clyde shipbuilding went into decline, so too did the use of dry dock facilities along the river. While many docks have been filled in for redevelopment, Govan Graving Docks stands as one of few monuments to the pioneers of a world-leading industry in the West of Scotland.

It is believed that at the peak of Clyde shipbuilding, more than a fifth of the world's ships were built on the river. The name "Clydebuilt" was synonymous with elite skill, craftsmanship and engineering expertise recognised all over the world. Glasgow was recognised as the engine room of the British Empire and was dubbed Second City of the Empire.

The rapid decline of industry in the second half of the twentieth century brought social problems, poverty and broken communities. Govan was once a burgh separate from the City of Glasgow and retains a strong local identity. Impressive Victorian architecture from the Govan Town Hall towards the Eastern end of Govan Road, to the renovated offices of the former Fairfield Shipyard to the West, reflects the shipbuilding wealth that transformed a small village into a thriving, bustling industrial town. The ancient history of Govan documents one of the most important locations for the Kingdom of Strathclyde, defending Viking invasion and prehistoric burial sites.





Post-Industrial Govan

The Govan shipyard at Fairfield in many ways reflects the mixed fortunes of post-industrial Govan. In spite of poverty and youth unemployment locally, the Govan yard contributed much of the work constructing the Royal Navy's state of the art Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers. French aerospace company Thales, also having operations in Govan, was involved in the aircraft carrier project consortium as well.

The Harland and Wolff shipyard at Govan closed in 1963 and the site is now occupied by a former council housing estate. The fitting out basin of that yard is now part of the Govan Graving Docks site. From a study of aerial photographs of Govan prior to the 1960s it is easy to see how much industry has now disappeared.

Buildings such as the Pearce Institute (1906) and Govan Town Hall (1901) were built with philanthropy from shipbuilding wealth when Govan was a separate burgh from the City of Glasgow. Elder Park was gifted to the people of Govan by Isabella Elder, in honour of her late husband, shipbuilding magnate John Elder.

No longer a hub of industry, Govan is now a district where residents, if they are in work, are primarily in retail and service sector jobs commuting to work elsewhere.

While much of Glasgow has seen investment and regeneration in recent decades, relatively little of that has focused on Govan. In many ways it became a

forgotten district – associated nationally with the Rab C. Nesbitt stereotype. This stereotype does not reflect either the people or the place, where the importance of heritage and pride in memories of its industrial past are paramount. There is a great sense of community locally despite social and economic challenges and the impact of austerity.

Greater Govan has also become home to a sizeable ethnic and immigrant population (including the travelling Showpeople at Water Row) and their positive contribution to the community is well recognised. The Community Councils and community centres in the wider area (for example the Kinning Park Complex) do a great deal to promote diversity/inclusion, to welcome/support refugees and to raise awareness of hate crime.

Recent Developments

The future of Govan Graving Docks has been strongly contested in recent years. In 2018 Glasgow City Council refused planning consent, for a controversial major residential development proposed for the docks that would have permanently altered the character of the historic site. The planning decision followed campaigns against the housing developer's plans. Subsequent artist residencies and dialogue with diverse partners have facilitated the emergence of alternative, maritime-based proposals for the site: including a proposal for restoration as a ship repair and maintenance facility.



Background to the CDPI campaign for Govan Graving Docks

Our founding organisation, the Clyde Docks Preservation Initiative (CDPI), is a social enterprise concerned with the protection and promotion of maritime heritage on the River Clyde. CDPI is primarily concerned with addressing maritime heritage in an evolving context: particularly how it is connected to modern maritime industry, new technology/innovation, shipping, culture, leisure, environmental issues, waterfront regeneration and sustainable development.

For several years, CDPI led a campaign; lobbied, researched; made academic, cultural, European and worldwide links; advocated for the Govan Graving Docks to be restored as a maritime heritage park and challenged the plans for a major housing development on the site as proposed by the current owners, property developers New City Vision Group (NCV Ltd).

In 2016 CDPI produced a detailed report on the history of planning and development proposals for Govan Graving Docks since the dry dock facility closed down in 1987. This report identified a number of shortcomings, in relation to application of local government strategy for waterfront development, in the way Govan Graving Docks has been dealt with since industrial operation of the site ended. Other important aspects of the campaign included the preparation of a detailed dossier of grounds for objecting to the planning application for housing development on the docks. CDPI also published a

guidance template for individuals to submit their own objections to Glasgow City Council; commissioned a documentary film to tell the story and provided both support for and promotion of artist residencies celebrating the site. An online petition supporting a maritime heritage park and opposing plans for housing development on Govan Graving Docks attracted more than 12,000 signatures.

The NCV Ltd planning application was refused consent by Glasgow City Council planning officers in August 2018. There were many objections to the proposal including from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) – based on a number of factors and particularly flood risk. Objections were lodged too by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and the West of Scotland Archaeology Service - both concerned about the lack of sensitivity to the heritage. Glasgow City Council's roads department expressed concerns about the impact of the proposal on transport infrastructure.

Artistic Interventions

Throughout the process, artists led by Fablevision and academics from the University of the West of Scotland (Professor Katarzyna Kosmala and Graham Jeffery) have animated the space and engaged with the community through film, art walks, installations and exhibitions.

4. Looking to the Future

While CDPI emerged from a campaign for restoration of Govan Graving Docks and most of that organisation's early work was focused on the dry dock site, as the organisation's work expanded to look more widely at the maritime heritage throughout the Clyde region it became clear that addressing the future of the Govan docks required a dedicated local body with charitable status. For this reason Govan Docks Regeneration Trust (GDRT) was established as a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) in 2016. With aims to fully engage stakeholders and communities (local community and broader community of interest) in developing a vision for the future of the derelict dry dock site, GDRT has positioned itself as the body best placed to drive that vision forward.

Inspiration for the Govan Voices Project

The first GDRT project following the success of the CDPI campaign to save the docks from inappropriate housing development, emerged as Govan Voices. As well as engaging the community in broad consultation, Govan Voices also aimed to raise awareness of the importance of the docks and document peoples' views about what should be done with the future of the A-listed dry dock site.

Without leading or attempting to excessively influence the conversation, we aimed to find out what people already know about the docks (the campaign, artist residencies/interventions, development proposals, etc.), whilst simultaneously gathering a diverse range of views on potential futures. All of this information will be vital to support next stages: the creation of a strategic development plan – an overall strategy to shape the future of the docks – grounded in stakeholder and community engagement.

Redevelopment of Glasgow Waterfront

Glasgow waterfront has seen significant change with the rapid decline of the docks and shipyards. From booming and thriving industry, to land dereliction, then regeneration. Public footpaths now exist where at one time mighty ships were built and cargo loaded/offloaded.

With the exception of the King George V (KGV) dock, the cargo docks in Glasgow have all been filled in and redeveloped for housing, leisure, hotels and commercial units. The Scottish Event Campus (SEC) now sits on the former Queens Dock on the North bank while opposite the former Glasgow Garden Festival and residential and commercial developments that emerged after it have transformed the site of what was once Princes Dock. The headquarters of BBC Scotland and Scottish Television are now located there. Now only a part of the Princes Dock canting basin remains, adjoining the site of the Glasgow Science Centre which includes Scotland's tallest building (an observation tower – the Glasgow Tower).

Previous Proposals for the Govan Graving Docks

Since 1989 there have been several proposals for the graving docks: none of which have progressed beyond the planning application stage. These have included proposals for housing/commercial, cultural and heritage-based developments.

1989: Windex Ltd proposal for a housing and commercial redevelopment with two of the dry docks filled in and landscaped.

1989: Clyde Ships Trust proposal for a maritime heritage centre with restored sailing ships on display in the dry docks.

1997: Proposal for a maritime heritage centre incorporated into Glasgow's unsuccessful bid to host the Royal Yacht Britannia.

2002-2004: City Canal Ltd (Windex / Bishop Loch Developments Ltd partnership) proposal for housing and commercial development.

2017: New City Vision Ltd proposal for housing-led development.

2017: Ferguson Marine proposal for a ship repair yard and maritime museum.

“The ships are yet to build, my boys! To match those built on Clyde.”

(Iron Shipbuilding on the Clyde, Bass Kennedy)



Glasgow City Council Strategy

Glasgow City Council's *River Clyde 2050 Strategic Development Framework*, published in November 2018, states the following about Govan Graving Docks:

"The Graving Docks are an important Grade A listed structure, both for their architectural quality and historic resonance with the area. Future development should acknowledge its heritage and enhance its prominent setting on this pivotal part of the River Corridor. The Graving Docks are within the functional floodplain of the River Corridor and therefore new uses for the site will need to be responsive, adaptive and resilient to these environmental conditions. In addition, future development will also have to carefully consider [how] it interfaces harmoniously with its surrounding low-rise residential urban form and views along the Clyde."

Glasgow City Region Deal

There is allocation within the City Deal budget for a pedestrian bridge linking Govan Graving Docks to Pacific Quay, which would contribute to improved pedestrian access along the waterfront (across the entrance to the canting basin). However this will depend on regeneration of the graving dock site to open up the waterfront to public access, creating a much-improved pedestrian and cycling route along the South bank of the river to central Govan.





Need for Development of Govan Graving Docks

While regeneration has gathered pace elsewhere in post-industrial Glasgow and on the Clyde, the Govan graving dock site remains derelict. The reasons include impact of economic cycles as well as financial and technical challenges inherent in developing an A-listed historic site on a tidal river. Land banking by property developers, also faced with market uncertainty and trading challenges, has been a major factor. With increasing pressures on its budget, the site has not been a priority for a local government that has many development and regeneration challenges to address.

Our consultation has concluded that continued dereliction of the graving docks is not an option and that regeneration of the site is necessary given:

- ❑ Heritage concerns (listed buildings / historic importance)
- ❑ Public safety (hazardous site)
- ❑ Lack of amenity
- ❑ Community pride
- ❑ Needs of the local economy (e.g. job creation)

5. About the Consultation

Need for The Govan Voices Consultation

It was apparent that developing a sympathetic strategy for regeneration of the graving docks needed to engage the local community, community of interest and stakeholders in shaping the vision.

It was important to understand and document:

- ❑ The relationship that local people have with the industrial heritage of their area
- ❑ How people in the community see the future of their area
- ❑ Priorities of people in the area
- ❑ What local people would like to see done with the graving docks
- ❑ How the future of the graving docks needs to contribute to and enhance the local area
- ❑ How the graving docks need to relate to other key heritage attractions on the Clyde
- ❑ How the graving docks need to relate to developments on the waterfront in Glasgow

The views of the community must guide (even if not entirely dictate, since expert input is also required) formation of the core strategy that will be used to develop a future vision for the graving docks. This inclusive approach is particularly important in relatively disadvantaged communities that do not always have opportunities for their voices to be heard.

Key Objectives of the Consultation
Find out what local people, the broader communities (Greater Glasgow as well as heritage interest community) and stakeholders aspire to for the graving docks
Quantify levels of support for identified options for regeneration of the graving docks
Identify new opportunities and/or ideas for the future of the graving docks

What We Aimed to Identify
Ways for the graving docks to contribute to developing a stronger and more connected community
Ways for the graving docks to create a desirable space that is beneficial to Govan and Glasgow
Sense of local importance placed on the history and heritage of the docks (and shipbuilding in Govan)
Ways the graving docks can be a driver and/or catalyst for sustainable skilled job creation

What the Project Specifically Did Not Address

The following are critical issues that will need to be addressed with stakeholders in due course. However they are not able to be assessed at this stage and were not part of the scope of the Govan Voices project.

- ❑ Site ownership issues
- ❑ Technical feasibility of identified options for the graving docks
- ❑ Financial and/or economic viability of identified options for the graving docks
- ❑ Specifics of compliance with the implications of the A-listed status
- ❑ Implications of flood risk and other environmental factors associated with developing the docks

Consultation Process

The aim of the consultation was to gather public opinion, increase awareness and engage potential stakeholders.

The consultation approach used a variety of methods so as to reach a diversity of people, while maintaining focus on Govan residents, stakeholders and community organisations. This was adapted based on feedback.

The consultation included:

- ❑ Questionnaires
- ❑ Interviews
- ❑ Exhibitions
- ❑ Student architecture competition
- ❑ Workshops
- ❑ Guided walks
- ❑ Social media engagement
- ❑ Artists engagement
- ❑ Networking activity
- ❑ Vox pops and filming
- ❑ Shopping centre stalls

Those consulted included:

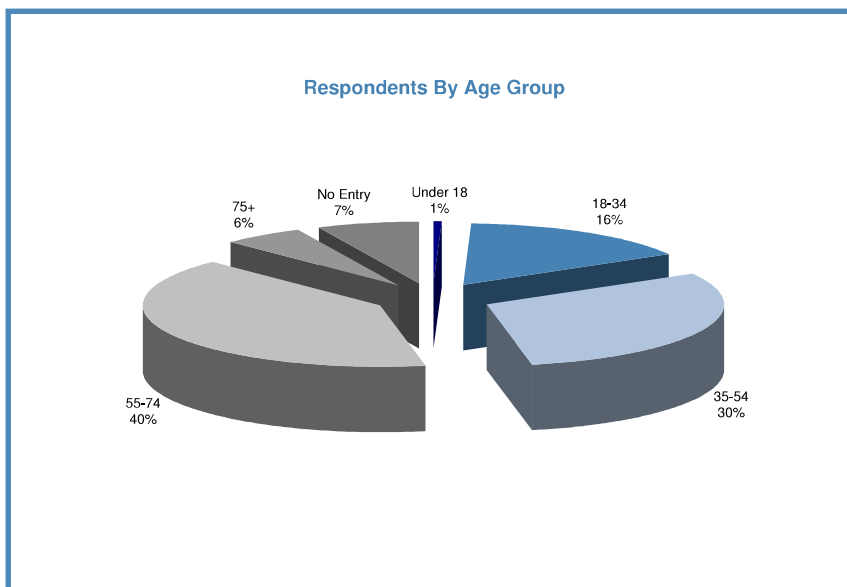
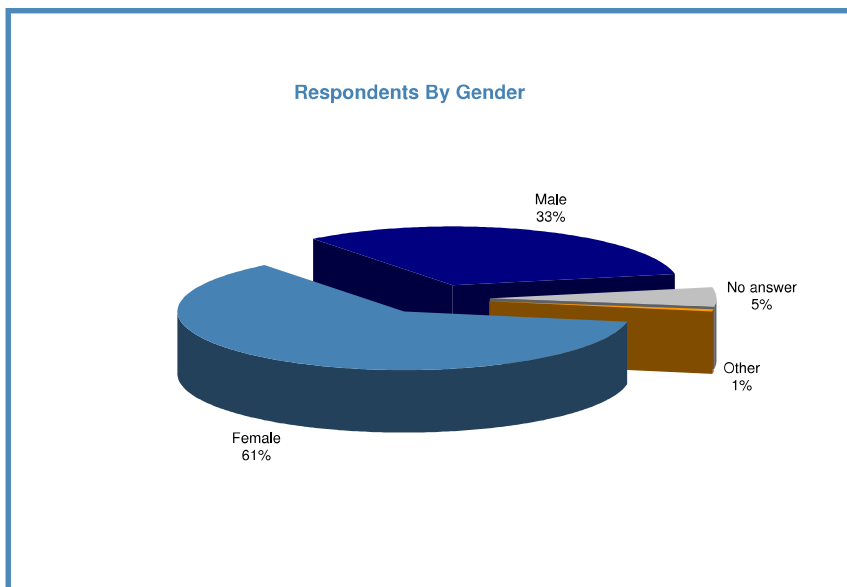
- ❑ Individuals
- ❑ Businesses
- ❑ Charities
- ❑ Social enterprises
- ❑ Academic institutions
- ❑ Community leaders
- ❑ Local politicians
- ❑ Artists and activists
- ❑ Other organisations
(e.g. leisure clubs, museums)

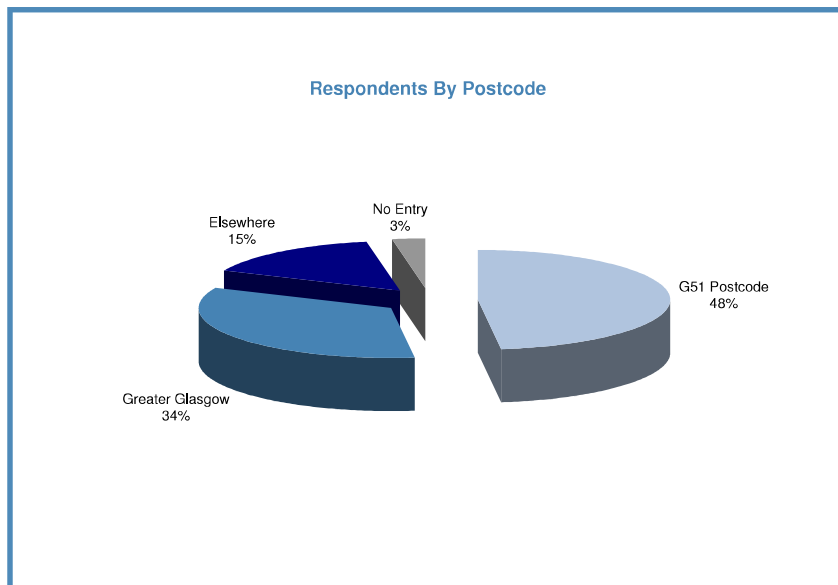


6. Questionnaire Responses

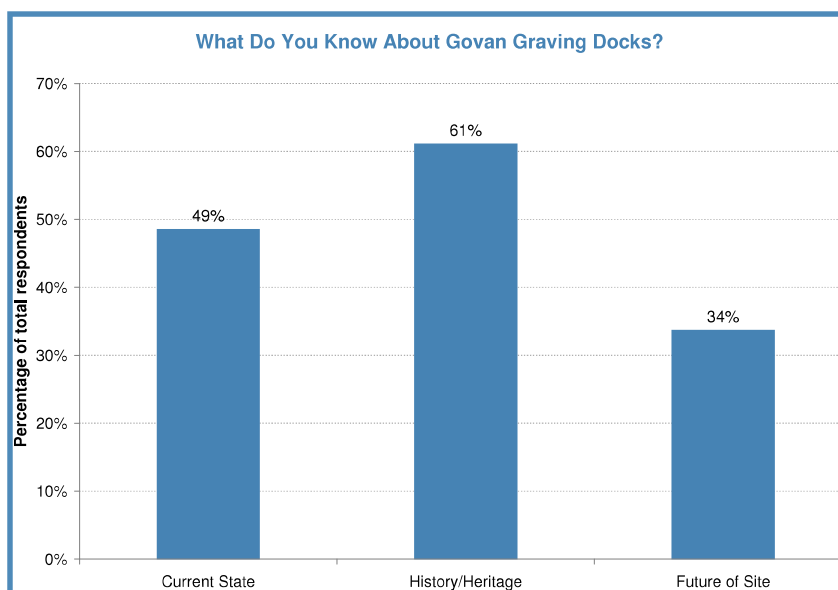
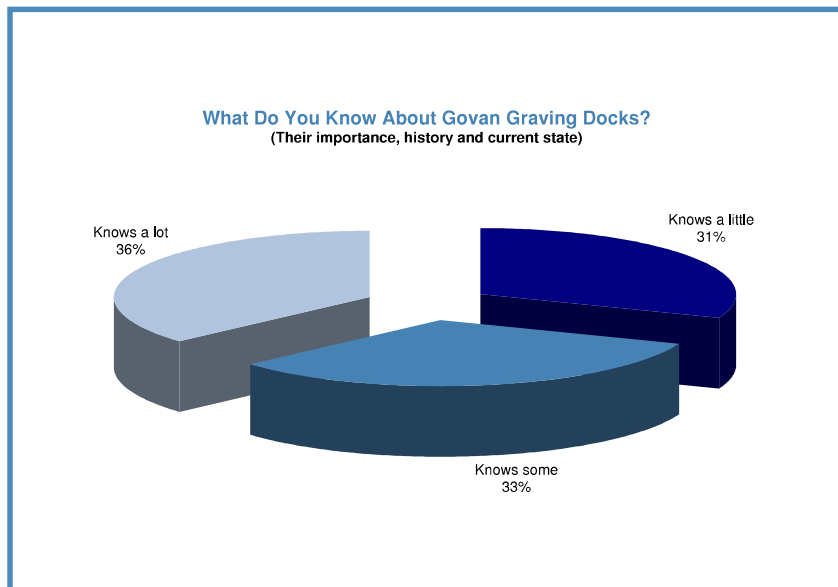
Questionnaires were handed out at guided walks, workshops, visits to organisations/community groups and other activities our team had been involved in. There was also an online version of the questionnaire.

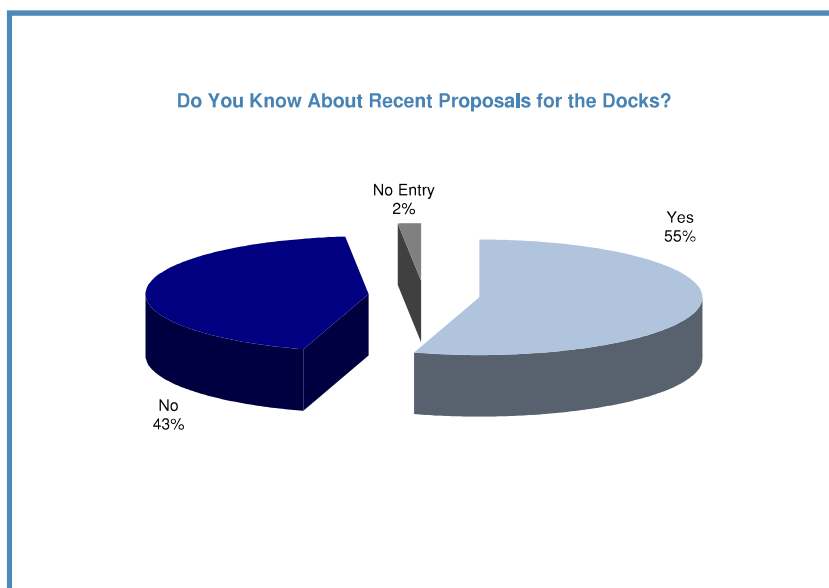
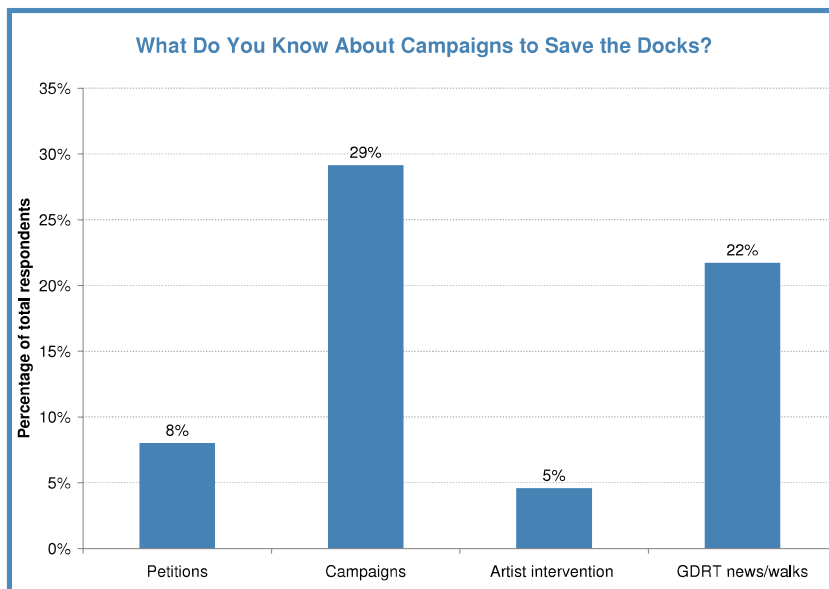
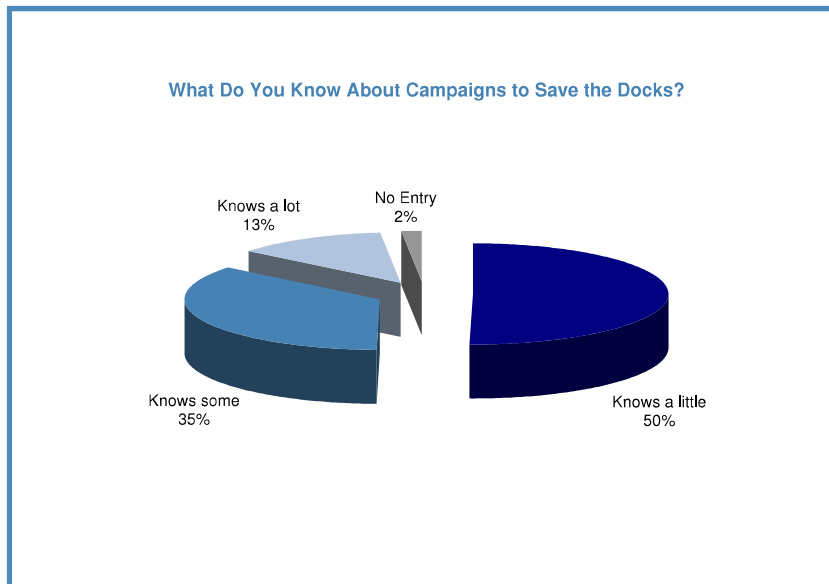
A total of 175 completed questionnaires were returned. The following charts present the results of the questionnaire survey.

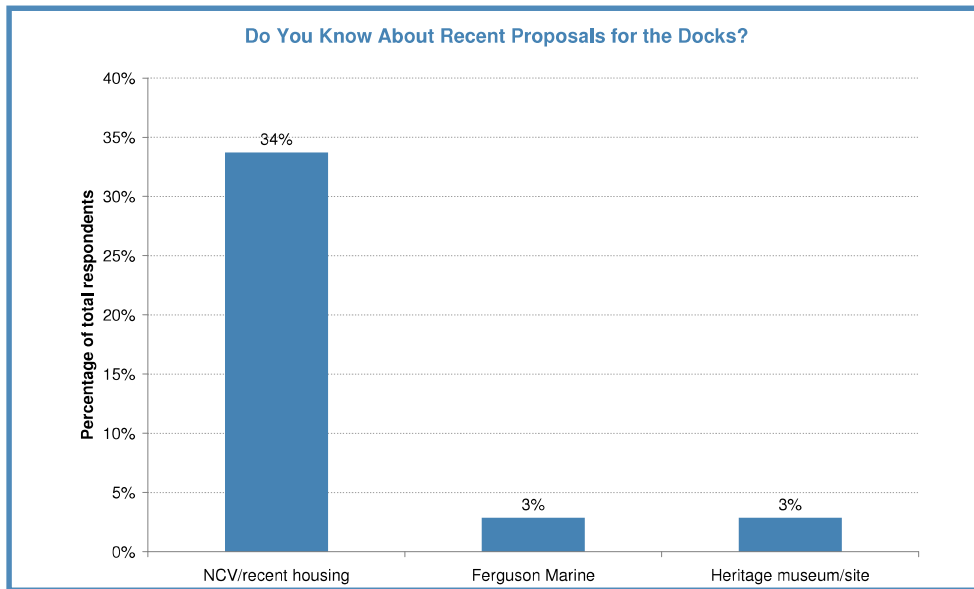




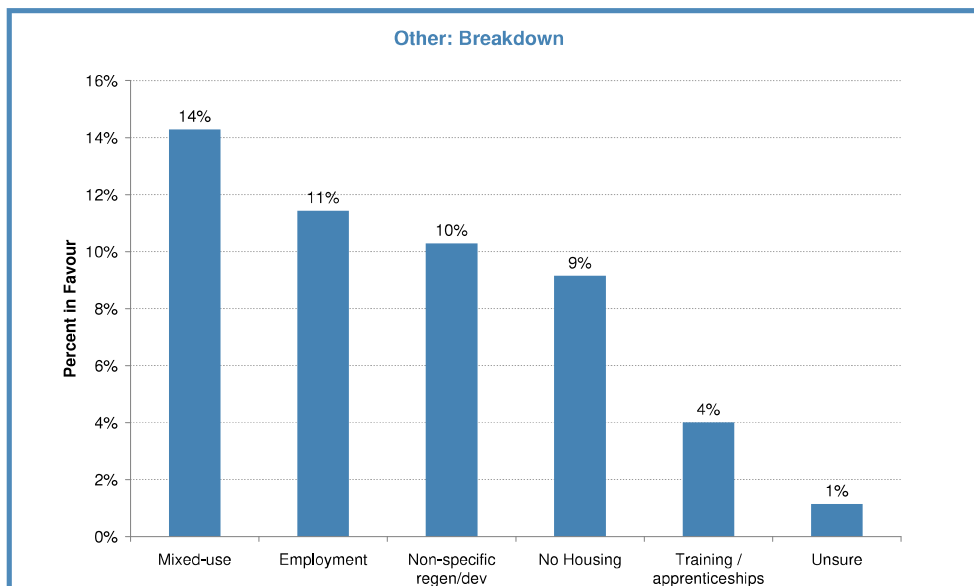
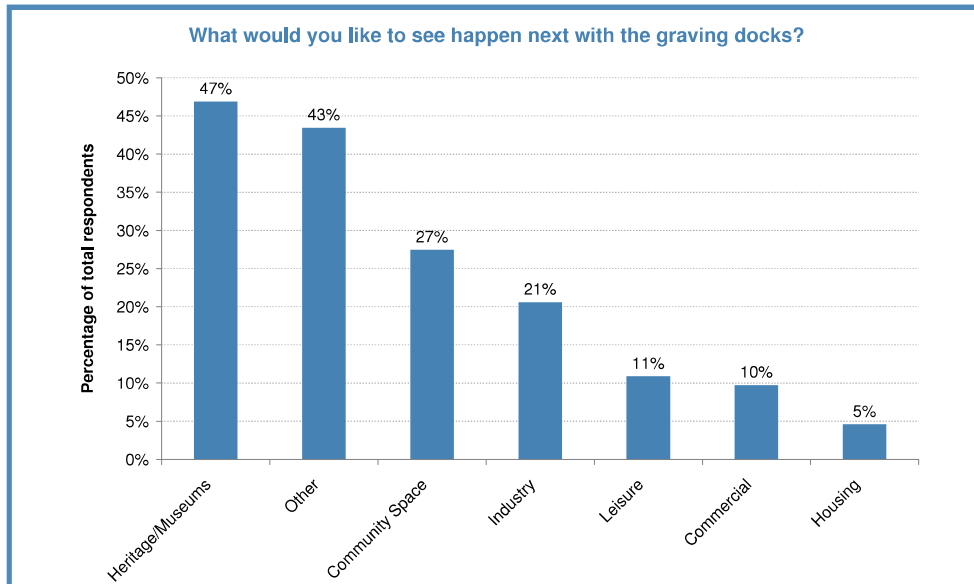
48% of those who returned questionnaires live in the G51 (Govan) postcode area, with 82% overall from the Greater Glasgow area (including Govan).







Significantly more of those who returned questionnaires had been aware of the housing development plans than had been aware of other proposals for the site.



7. Consultation Findings and Outcomes

Conclusions

We have drawn the following main conclusions from the findings of the consultation:

Housing development on the site is not popular

Housing development would struggle to comply with flood risk and listed building restrictions

Return of industry is popular and well received although there is some scepticism about feasibility and impact (e.g. noise, pollution, etc)

Heritage is the most important factor and respecting this must be at the core of any regeneration

A maritime museum is a popular option as well as community/recreational space

The regeneration needs to benefit and provide amenity for the community

Regeneration needs to provide jobs and opportunities for people in the area

Regeneration needs to provide some public access to the site

In terms of reaching people: the campaigning was the most effective as almost everyone consulted was aware of the campaign. The GDRT newsletters and walks had a good reach, followed with a little less impact, by the petitioning

Very few people were consciously aware of the artistic interventions although on wider questioning, they knew of or recalled Lee Ivett's rope sculpture, t s Beall's women's history walks and Nic Green's Turn project. It seems that artistic interventions work in a subliminal way, complementing the campaigns and other approaches without us necessarily being aware of their impact.



We invite you to look at the findings for yourself and share your own conclusions with us

info@govandocks.com
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Next Steps

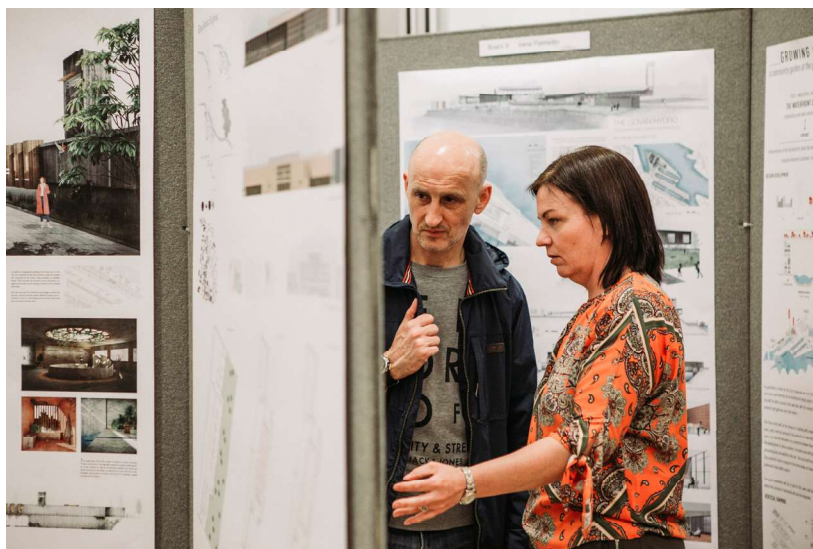
As an outcome of the project and informed by this report, it is our intention to produce a draft Strategic Development Plan for the future of Govan Graving Docks.

The Strategic Development Plan will not put forward any spatial or design concepts for development of the site, nor will it attempt to dictate specific uses for the site.

The purpose will be to create a guiding framework for the future of the docks that, with the Govan Voices consultation and report, we will be able to demonstrate is grounded in community and stakeholder engagement. This will need to demonstrably engage the local community as well as broader communities (geographic and communities of interest) and we can see from responses to the consultation this has already been achieved. The development plan will need to reflect this.

The development plan will serve to inform the development of more specific plans for the site that will also involve:

- ❑ Pre-feasibility studies
- ❑ Feasibility studies
- ❑ Input from expert consultants
- ❑ Business plans
- ❑ Design briefs



It will also dovetail with other research and development activity we and our partner organisations have undertaken (e.g. the architecture competition, artistic interventions) and may involve working with third party joint venture partners in developing plans for the future of the site. This is notwithstanding issues of ownership that would need to be addressed.

Moving forward from the development plan it will be necessary to research in advance; options, uses, types of buildings, etc that will be sustainable and stand a good chance of being granted planning consent without undue difficulty.

Clarifying Next Steps

The next steps for Govan Docks Regeneration Trust in driving the future of the graving docks, will need to be laid out in the above-mentioned draft Strategic Development Plan.

- ❑ Strategic Development Plan (SDP) draft
- ❑ Wider review of the SDP
- ❑ Engagement with key stakeholders (supported by the SDP and this report)
- ❑ Funding applications supported by the SDP and this report
- ❑ Identifying venture partners
- ❑ Research into community ownership potential

Stakeholder Engagement

A plan will be developed for broader stakeholder engagement.

Moving forward it will be important for Govan Docks Regeneration Trust to be recognised as a key stakeholder/driver by relevant bodies and other stakeholders (Glasgow City Council, SEPA, community councils, funding bodies, etc). Govan Docks Regeneration Trust needs to be seen as the “flag bearer” for the docks and the Govan Voices project has done a great deal to position the organisation in that role through comprehensive engagement with the community.

We can reasonably assert that the views of the community have been well documented by the project in a professional way that (in the level of consultation detail) is unprecedented for Govan Graving Docks. This report and the Strategic Development Plan will put forward the collective view of the communities as a key influence or driver in guiding the future of the site.

This will establish the basis and credibility of Govan Docks Regeneration Trust's engagement with other organisations in relation to the graving docks. This will be particularly important for our engagement with funders, planning authorities, statutory consultees and other public, private and third sector stakeholders.

Community Benefits

We anticipate that benefits to the community from regeneration of Govan Graving Docks have the potential to be significant locally and wide-ranging.

Through the Govan Voices consultation, the community have had the opportunity to express their views about the future of the graving docks. It is implicit that what people have said they would like to see done, they would also consider beneficial for the area.

Possible Regeneration Benefits

From the responses received about what people would like to see in the future, we can conclude that benefits might include the following:

- More skilled employment locally
- Reduced crime
- Community pride
- Wider (positive) recognition of the area
- Educational benefits
- Improved amenity
- Improved health and well being
- A more visually appealing locale
- Encouragement of new investment in the area
- Boost for businesses in the area





