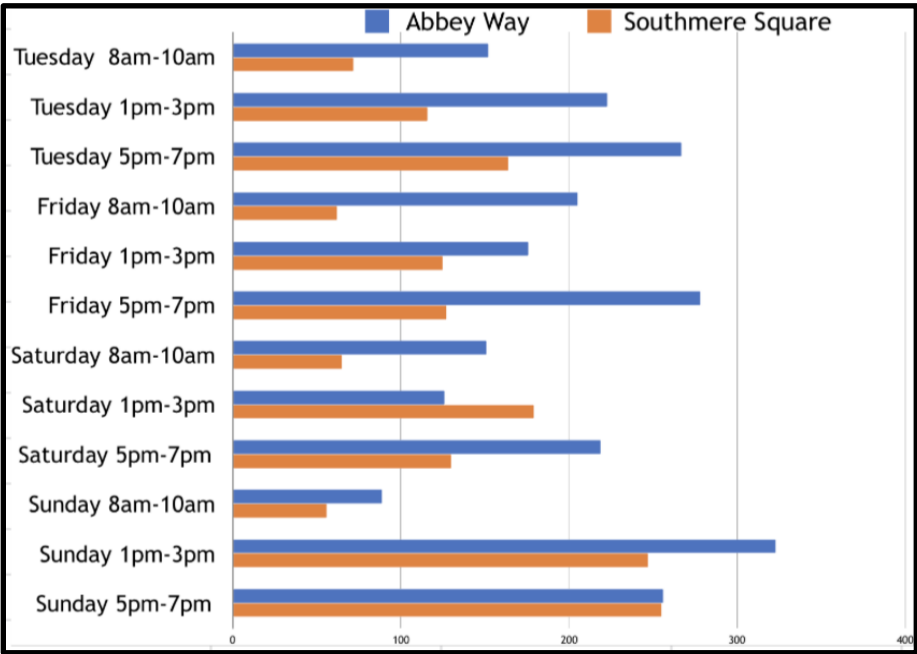


# Clever Cities: Greenspace Observation Data

Over the course of the week of the 31<sup>st</sup> of August to the 5<sup>th</sup> of September 2021, the Clever Cities team was able to collect data based on the observations of the intensity and type of use in two open spaces in Thamesmead, South East London: Abbey Way and Southmere Square. Observations were made of both of these places at three different times during the day. While collecting data, the team made note of each person that entered the space, how old they were, their gender, whether they were in a group or by themselves, what they were doing within the space, and how long they stayed. These observations occurred during a morning and in two afternoon time slots on each of the following days: Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup>, Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>, Saturday 4<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>. From these observations, a number of conclusions were drawn about how the space is being used. These observations essentially confirmed our understanding of how these spaces function given their relative locations, the equipment and infrastructure present.

## Total Number of People Utilising the Spaces

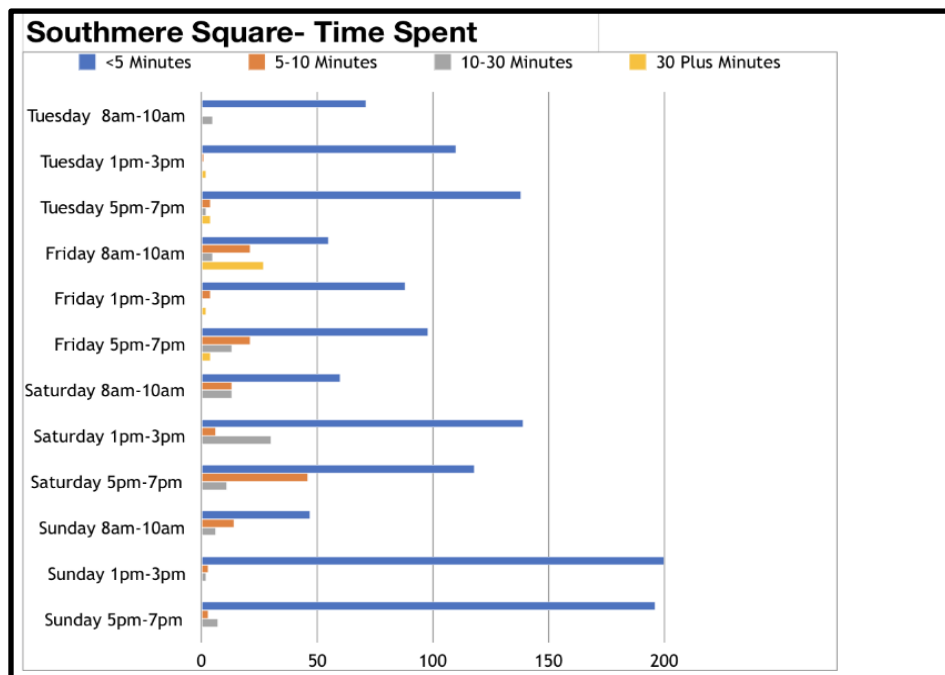
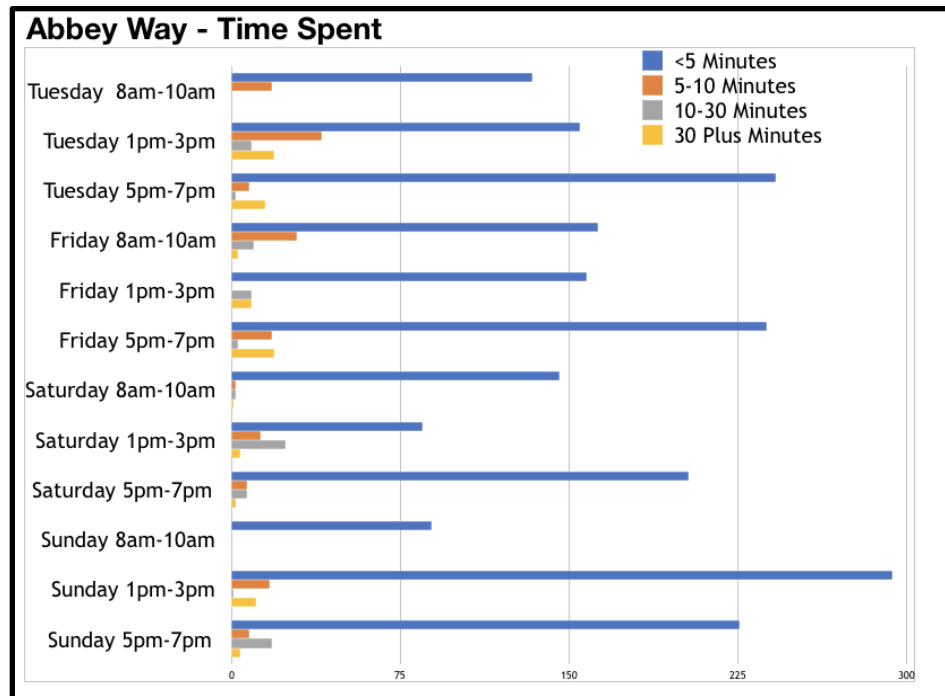


To begin, it is important to note how many people are engaging with the spaces. Based on the data, we can see that more people are using the Abbey Way space by almost 900 people. We can assume this is because Abbey Way is an important connecting space within South Thamesmead. Abbey Way functions as passage for people moving north-south to reach Southmere Lake, Southmere Estate, Abbey Wood and East-West leading from homes toward Sainsbury's, Abbey Wood Station and work, school, or other homes throughout the week. In contrast, Southmere Square acts as an entrance for people accessing the green area mostly to the east of Southmere Lake but also the Ridgeway and other resources just to the north. Although there are pedestrian connections all the way to the city centre in North Thamesmead, these

involve quite lengthy walk times and it has been observed that most people entering the green space during these times did return back on their way out (note these were not counted as two uses of the Southmere Square if people returned back with 10min).

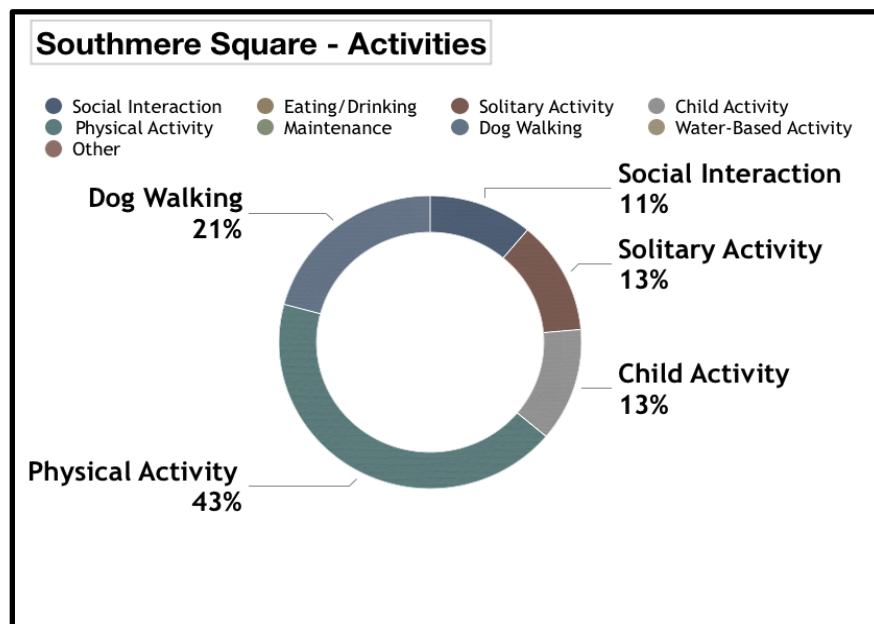
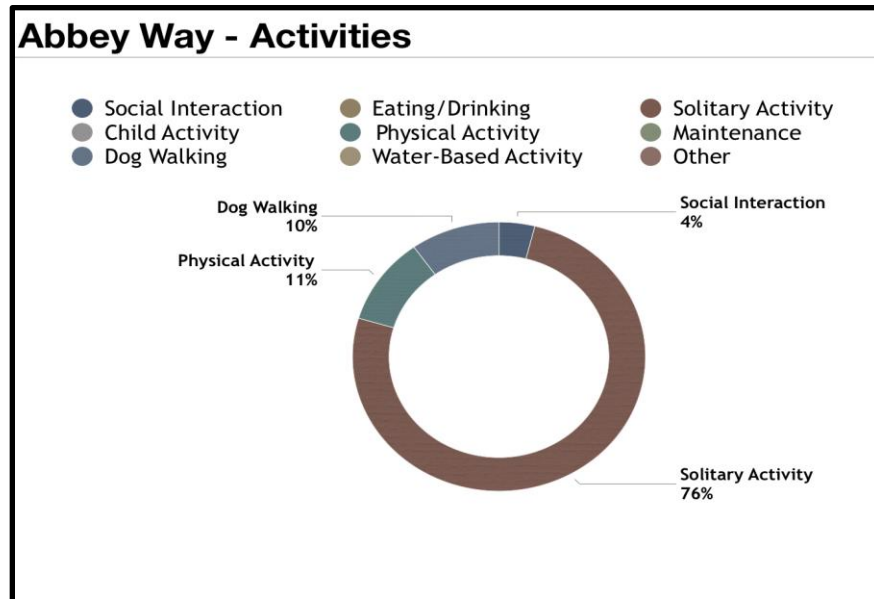
Time Slots	Tuesday 8am-10am	Tuesday 1pm-3pm	Tuesday 5pm-7pm	Friday 8am-10am	Friday 1pm-3pm	Friday 5pm-7pm	Saturday 8am-10am	Saturday 1pm-3pm	Saturday 5pm-7pm	Sunday 8am-10am	Sunday 1pm-3pm	Sunday 5pm-7pm	Totals
Abbey Way	152	223	267	205	176	278	151	126	219	89	323	256	2465
Southmere Square	72	116	164	62	125	127	65	179	130	56	247	255	1598

### Time Spent Within the Spaces



Both the time and the activities observed within both spaces confirmed the hypothesis that Abbey Wood functions essentially as a transitional space, with the exception of the children’s area and Southmere Square operates as an entrance way to the park, mostly for walking and other types of exercise. Southmere Square is utilised to a small degree as a place to rest and contemplate the lake and the nature therein. As neither space tends to capture users as a place to undertake activities, the first thing we can confirm from the data above is that in both spaces, the majority of people are staying in the space for less than five minutes. This demonstrates that people are generally not engaging with equipment or lack thereof in either space but mostly passing through them.

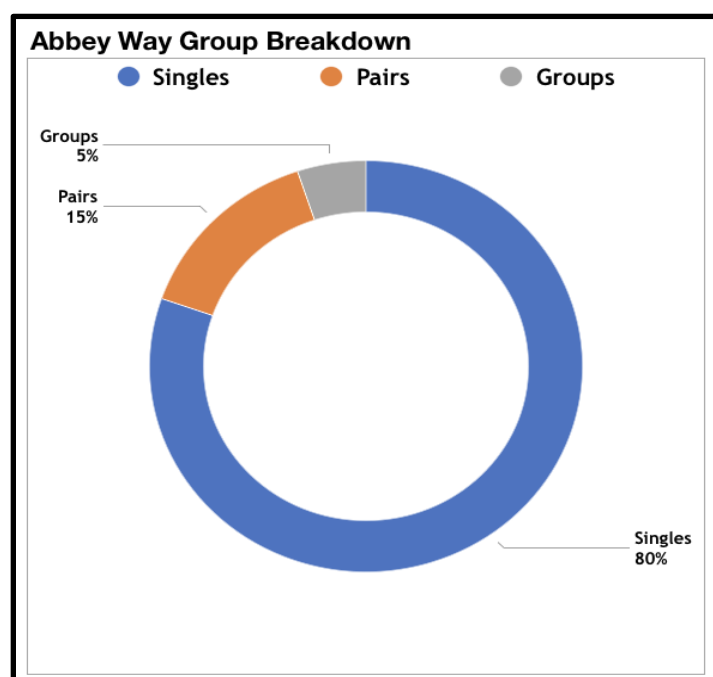
## Activities

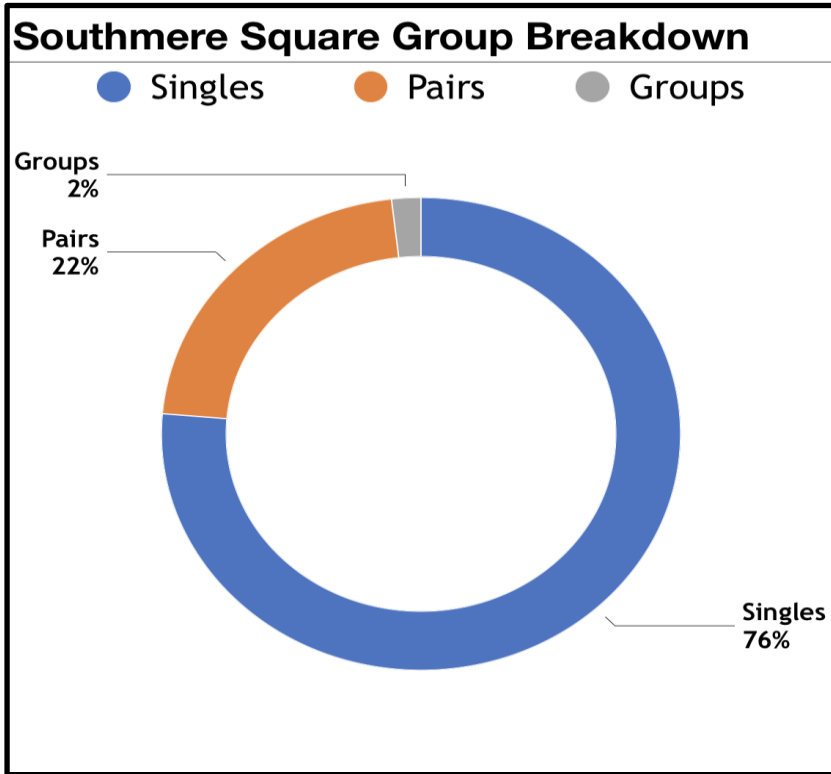


The activities data above reinforces the predominance of some type of movement through these places. Most people were seen doing either walking alone or in pairs through the space, doing physical activity like jogging or in many cases, dog walking. With few exceptions, the people observed tend to quickly pass through the space. However, it is possible to note some differences between the two spaces. Southmere is predominantly a destination for activities like jogging (physical activity 43%) and dog walking (21%) which together represents a significant portion of the users of that space. Abbey Way includes a much higher percentage of people simply traversing the space towards another destination mostly on their own but sometimes conversing and walking (registered as a social interaction). In fact, 76% of the people passed through Abbey Way on their own, giving further support to the idea that these were people on their way to work, school, or back home.

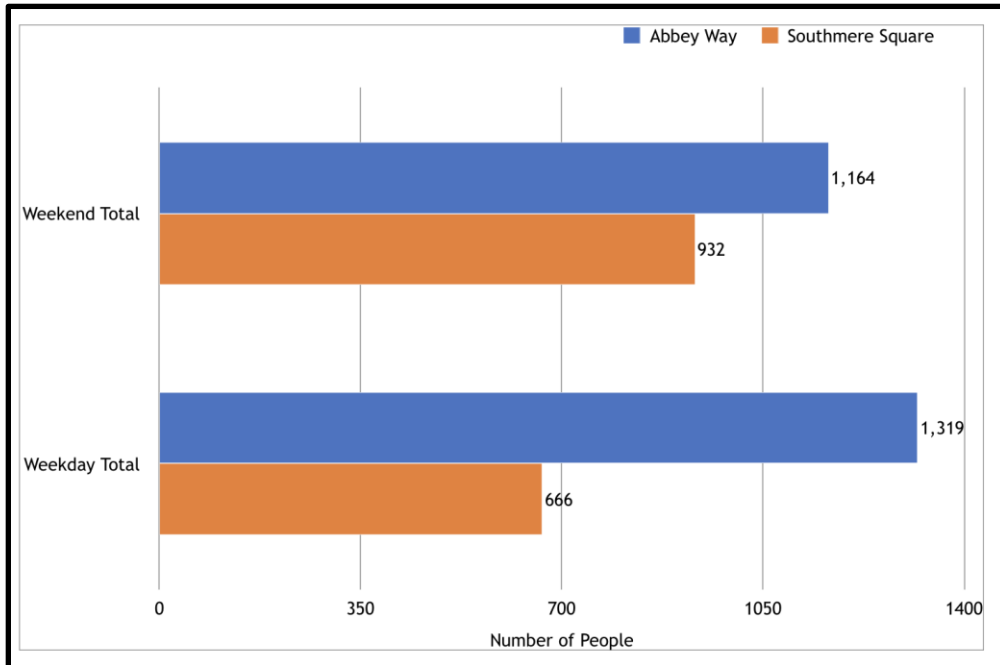
## Group Breakdowns

In the data below there were only slight differences in the group breakdowns in the two spaces. In both, it is clear that most people using the area are by themselves. In Southmere Square, these individual users were clearly more focused on health either by jogging or walking into the green area. There are slightly more people coming in pairs to Southmere Square who again were often observed doing physical activities together or walking dogs. The larger percentage of the people using Abbey Way in groups can quite clearly be attributed to the size and type of play structures within the space where people bring younger children and sometimes sit together as family groups. The strong predominance of solitary users once again confirms that people are mostly just passing through the space in order to access the green space for sports or a walk in the case of Southmere and for many diverse destinies in the case of Abbey Way.





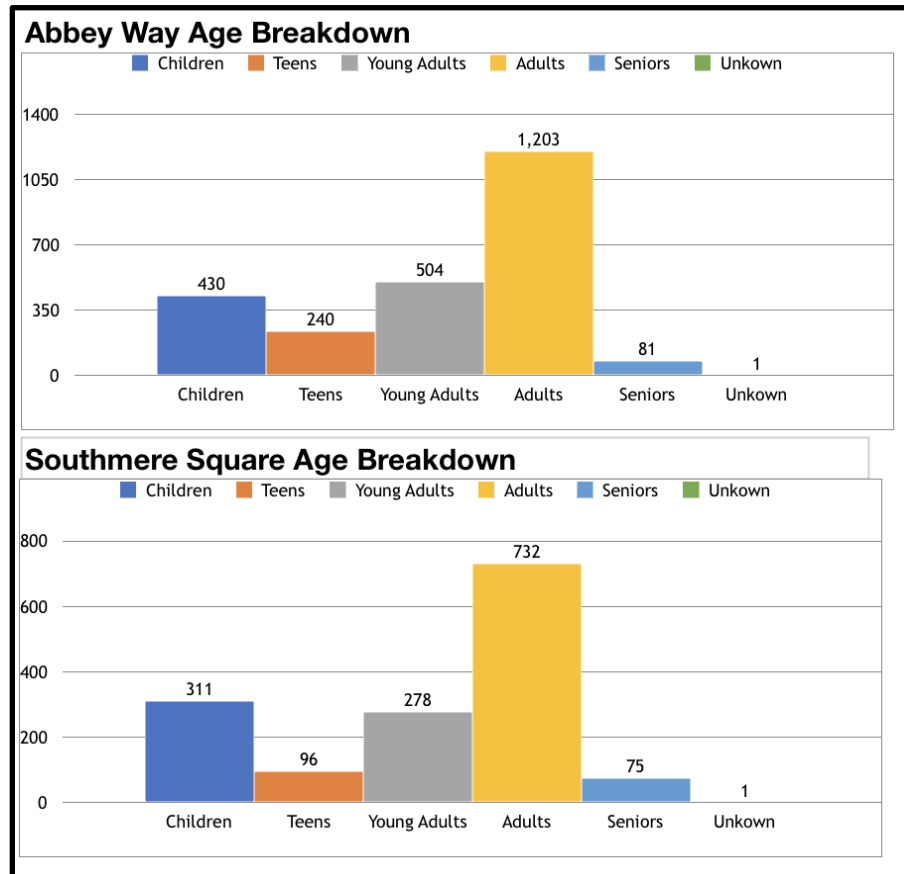
### Weekend vs Weekday Engagement



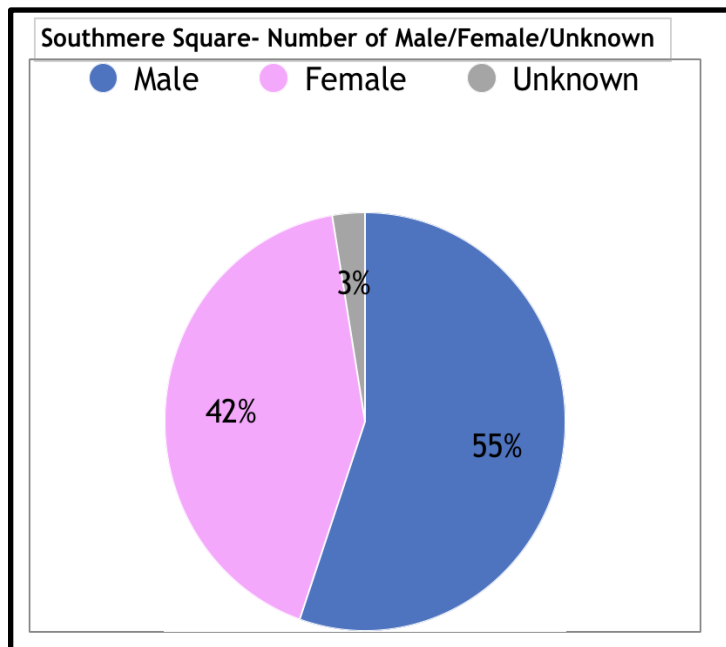
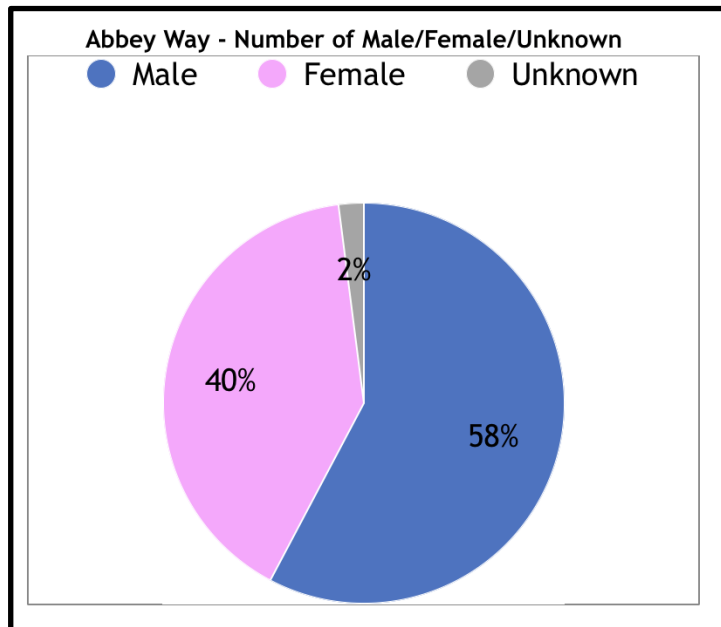
From the comparison of people engaging with the spaces on weekdays versus weekends there is a notable trend in Southmere Square where we clearly see more people using the spaces on the weekends rather than the weekdays. This again confirms its current function as a space for leisure/sport activities. In fact, Southmere typically had markedly less use Sundays at 8am as people will tend to sleep in but this is made up for at later time slots as people go on Sunday walks. In Abbey Way we see more consistent use of the space as people need to move through this space for both work and for leisure. There is a slight reduction in weekend use most likely due to the reduction in work travel.

## Age of People

We can see through the data, that adults are using both spaces the most. It is important to note that adult category was also the largest qualifying age gap (from 25-65 years old). That being said, children and young adults are the next most predominant age ranges. Children were observed mostly joining their parents to moving through the spaces. The higher number of children observed in Abbey Way is attributed to the play structures present and the overall higher flux of people through this space. The significantly higher number of young adults (18-25) using Abbey Way also reflects its transitional nature. Neither space was significantly attractive to teens (13-18) an age group that in general does less jogging, dog walking etc. The more than double the number of teens observed in Abbey Way were frequently observed using bicycles, scooters and other forms of mobility equipment. Compared to overall use rates, the walks in the green areas of Southmere were a strong attraction for seniors (65+).



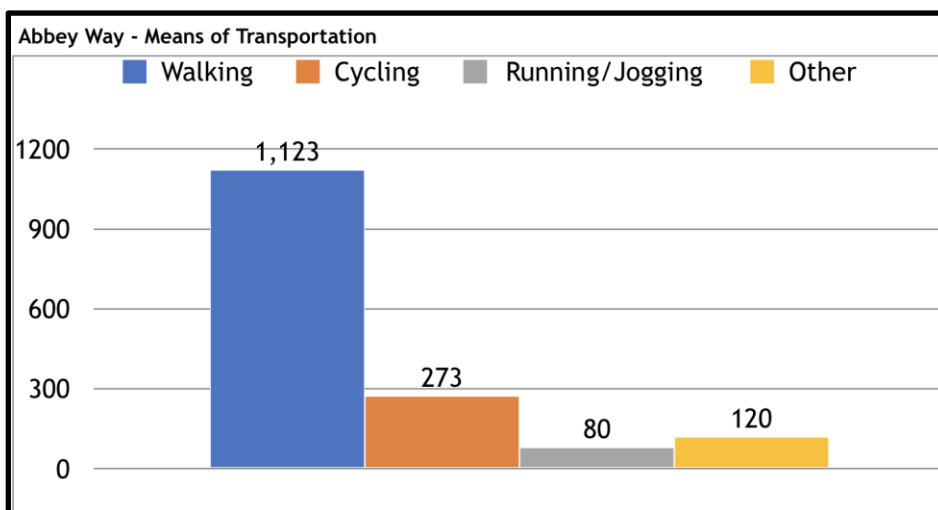
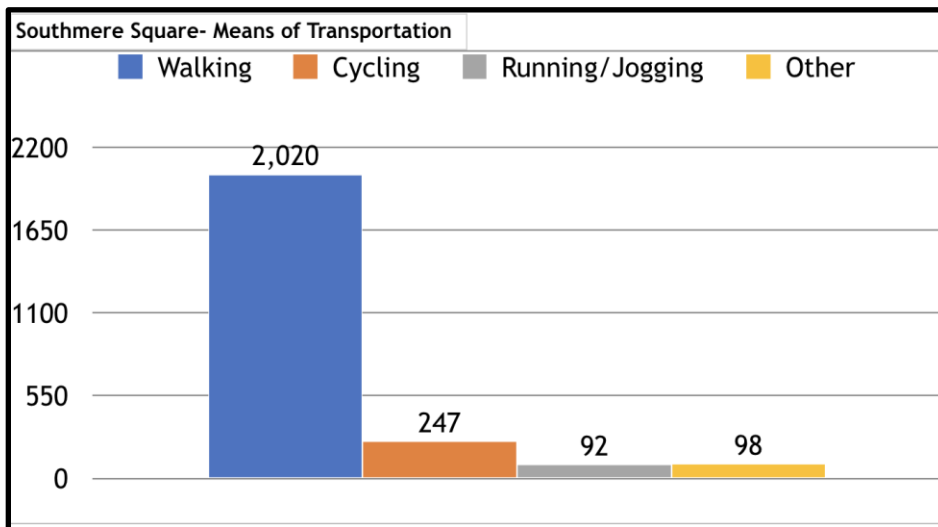
## Gender Trends



The overall split of people observed based on gender was about 60/40 in favour of men. The difference in use by gender at Abbey Way and Southmere Square was not considered significant enough to draw any conclusions as to preference.

## Mobility - Means of Transportation

The mobility data demonstrates that these are spaces mostly accessed by people on foot though cycling is substantially present as well. We can clearly assume that these are people who live locally and are taking care of errands or moving towards larger transport networks. Cycling for both sport, fun and transport was observed and this was related to a range of ages and different times of the day. Other means of mobility are starting to become more common and some of these are recorded in the Additional Observations section below. It is interesting to note there seems to be some conflict in these means of locomotion. The major conflict is due to motorbikes which according to comments from pedestrians, leaves people feeling unsafe and bothered by the loud noise. This conflict with motorbike users is a long standing issue for South Thamesmead. Less known is that electric scooters and other energy assisted bikes are also starting to impact negatively on the feeling of safety of pedestrians, though apparently to a lesser degree. With the high speeds these new and diverse types of equipment, there is a positive increase in interest in sustainable mobility but an accompanying conflict with people who enjoy walking slowly through the space.





## Additional Observations

<p><b>Extra Notes Abbey Way</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday 8-10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mobility scooter and skateboard driving past</li> </ul> <p><b>Tuesday 1-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 people using electric scooter</li> <li>● Mother and child looking at wildflowers</li> <li>● Photos of flowers</li> <li>● Kids coming to join friends on play equipment</li> </ul> <p><b>Tuesday 5-7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 5 boys playing football</li> <li>● 4 girls watching people</li> <li>● Scooter and e-bikes</li> <li>● Electric bikes</li> <li>● 3 Children playing on concrete</li> <li>● Skateboarding</li> <li>● Electric scooter</li> </ul> <p><b>Friday 8-10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Picking Flowers</li> <li>● Electric Scootering</li> <li>● Staff cutting grass</li> </ul> <p><b>Friday 1-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scootering</li> <li>● Walking with dog in a pushchair</li> <li>● Collecting kids from school</li> </ul> <p><b>Friday 5-7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Young boys playing football</li> <li>● Young girls and women chatting together</li> <li>● Electric scootering</li> <li>● Taking pictures</li> <li>● Parents collecting kids from playground</li> <li>● Scootering</li> </ul> <p><b>Saturday 8-10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Play boxing</li> <li>● Rollerblading</li> <li>● Power Walking</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extra Notes Southmere Square</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday 8-10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 people skateboarding</li> <li>● 1 electric scooter</li> </ul> <p><b>Tuesday 1-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Electric skateboarding</li> </ul> <p><b>Tuesday 5-7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scootering</li> </ul> <p><b>Friday 8-10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Electric scooter</li> <li>● Electric wheelchair</li> </ul> <p><b>Friday 1-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Child and parent playing football</li> <li>● Kids playing on scooters</li> </ul> <p><b>Friday 5-7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kids playing football</li> <li>● Roller skating</li> <li>● Electric scootering</li> <li>● Playing on swings</li> <li>● Family playing with child in a play car</li> </ul> <p><b>Saturday 8-10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● People riding bikes, scooters, and sitting on benches</li> </ul> <p><b>Saturday 1-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Friends talking and walking</li> <li>● Riding motorbikes through square</li> </ul> <p><b>Saturday 5-7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pizza delivery man came through</li> <li>● Scootering and skateboarding</li> <li>● Man on Mobility scooter</li> </ul> <p><b>Sunday - 8-10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Young guy started doing wheelies on Motorbike in</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Photographing flowers</li> <li>● Scootering</li> </ul> <p><b>Saturday 1-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul> <p><b>Saturday 5-7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scootering</li> <li>● Playing football</li> <li>● Delivering food</li> <li>● Motorbike</li> <li>● Scootering</li> <li>● Skateboarding</li> </ul> <p><b>Sunday - 8-10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Group meeting up to chat</li> <li>● Two people on motorbikes</li> </ul> <p><b>Sunday 1-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scootering</li> <li>● Motorbikes</li> <li>● 2 people bicycling and scootering</li> <li>● People sitting on playground</li> </ul> <p><b>Sunday 5-7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Man with beer on playground</li> <li>● Electric scooters and skateboards</li> <li>● Teens on roller-skates</li> <li>● Young adult and child with basketball</li> </ul>	<p>the square</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Young guy came through Southmere Square and sold moped to another guy and let each other take turns riding it</li> </ul> <p><b>Sunday 1-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bike racing</li> <li>● Rollerblades</li> <li>● Child on motorbike</li> <li>● Man on mobility scooter</li> <li>● Electric scootering</li> <li>● Kids on motorbikes</li> <li>● Kids Playing on play equipment</li> <li>● Racing mopeds</li> <li>● Man cycling with his dog in a trailer</li> <li>● People taking photos</li> </ul> <p><b>Sunday 5-7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Electric scooter</li> <li>● Couple on electric scooter</li> <li>● Kids riding their motorbikes, electric scooters, and mopeds</li> <li>● 2 young girls on roller-skates</li> <li>● Skateboarding</li> <li>● Scootering</li> <li>● Wheelies on motorcycles</li> </ul>
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These additional observations are notes that data collectors took while in both of the greenspaces. It is important to note that the most common thing that was stated was the observation that people are frequently using the pedestrian paths in the space to ride their motorbikes, electric scooters and bicycles (which was registered directly). The path is reasonably well dimensioned so no imminent collisions were observed but people took the time to complain to the observers on a number of occasions.

These observations also demonstrate some of the diversity of uses including some photography, limited socialising and different types of play. There was some notable interest in the wildflower plantings installed earlier in season. However, clearly in conjunction with transitory nature of the spaces, most observations were focused on the diversity of mobility.

## Summary

In sum, both Abbey Way and Southmere Square currently function as transitional spaces though in slightly distinct manners. While Abbey Way functions a passageway to many important nodes like the supermarket, the train station, Abbey Wood etc, Southmere Square is the gateway to the natural resources of Southmere Lake. People who pass through Southmere Square will typically have made the predetermined decision to visit the lake for a jog or a walk and the lake area as whole acts a destination mostly for physical activities or strolls. The Square itself does not tend to hold people in the space as they move into the green areas beyond. The Abbey Way play area is currently the only element that leads to significant permanence in the space and as can be seen by the overwhelming number of stays of less than 5 minutes.

Design solutions that encourage people to stay in the space will be important to change the dynamic and allow the spaces to be used for both movement and permanence. Sitting spaces, new urban equipment, shade and observation spots can all help encourage people of all ages to stay longer. Bringing food, drink and other programming into the space will also be important.

With respect to mobility, the arising conflict of faster movement versus walking and strolling will have to be addressed, most likely creating separated paths for these functions so that people are not put-off by the sheer number of bikes and scooters that can decrease their sense of safety. Strengthening play infrastructure and making sure both environments are safe space for children and people with animals would also be recommended.

**Unused Graph:**

