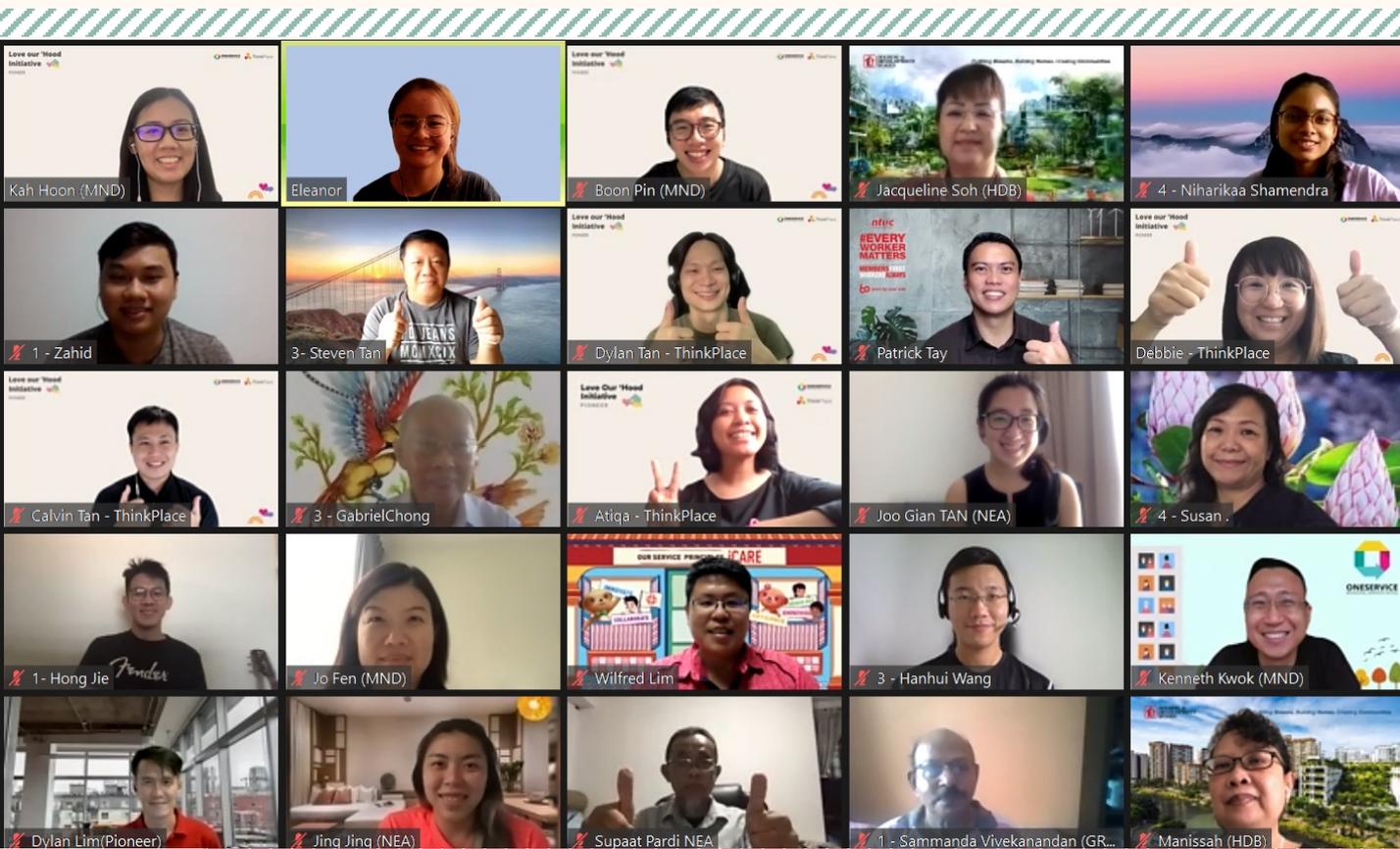


# Love Our 'Hood Initiative @ Pioneer

A report on the Love Our 'Hood Initiative @ Pioneer,  
organised by the Municipal Services Office (MSO) and  
facilitated by ThinkPlace.



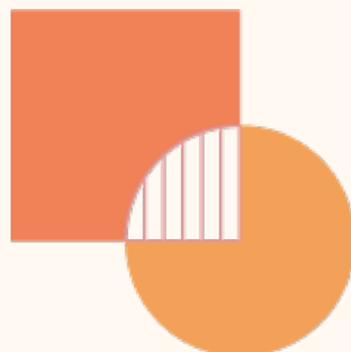
## Final report



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# Introduction

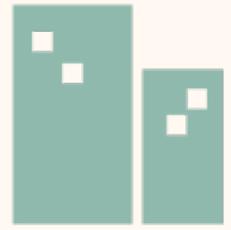
## Introduction

The Love Our 'Hood Initiative @ Pioneer is organised by the Municipal Services Office (MSO), in partnership with Pioneer Grassroots Organisations, and with the support of relevant government agencies and community partners. The initiative took place from Aug 2021 to Oct 2021 and invited ground-up participation from residents and grassroots leaders.

The goal of the workgroup is for participants to develop community norms, i.e. informal rules and expectations on how people should behave, to guide positive social actions that can help address municipal issues in the Pioneer neighbourhood. A total of 24 participants joined the initiative and formed 3 teams to tackle the municipal issues of noise from neighbours and secondhand smoke from residential units.



# What are community norms?

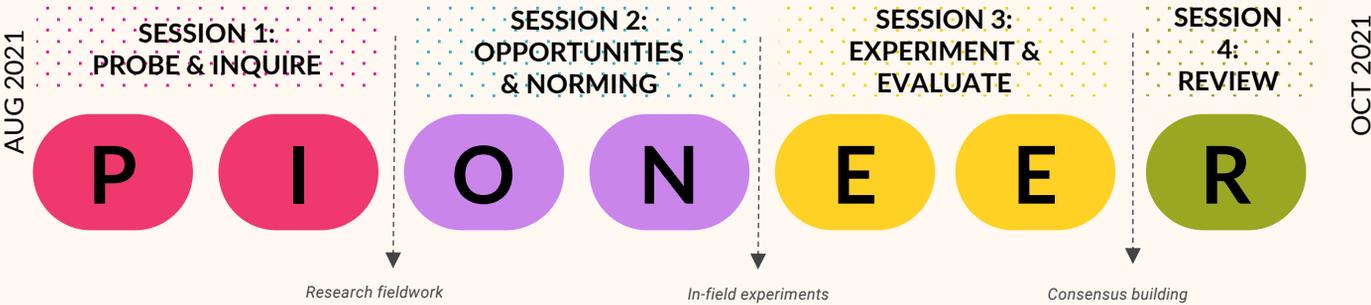


Community norms are defined as the rules of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that are considered acceptable in a particular social group or culture. Norms provide us with an expected idea of how to behave.

For Love Our 'Hood @ Pioneer, residents developed a set of community norms around the issues of noise from neighbours and secondhand smoke. These norms are created to facilitate behaviour change on the ground.



# Process overview



## Developing community norms

Participants of the Love Our 'Hood Initiative @ Pioneer underwent a community norm development process over 4 workshops as well as participated in field activities (as showed above). Taking a ground-up and needs-based approach, teams first sought to get to the crux of the issues through understanding experiences of the residents. This is done by conducting simple surveys and interviews with residents.

The teams' discovery process led them to identify gaps and unique opportunities in the community to tackle these issues. Teams prototyped new written norms and sought the views and consensus from other residents in the community. The teams then presented their proposed norms and results of the consensus-building activities to Adviser Patrick Tay, MSO and other government agencies at the final session.

# Community norms methodology

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## 1. Probe & Inquire



Living in a harmonious society and community requires neighbours, friends and family to understand one another's perspectives. The first phase begins with exploring the different issues from various perspectives before aligning on the desired goals and outcomes as a workgroup.

## 2. Opportunities & Norming



Let's get creative with developing new ways of solving municipal issues with the opportunities identified. It is about creating new community norms or developing tangible ways to change existing situations. It starts with imagining how we do things differently.

## 3. Experiment & Evaluate



Consensus building requires the agreement from the people affected by the new norms to concur and take those feasible actions. Before we implement the solutions in the community, one more step is to test and get some consensus on the new norms.

## 4. Review



As a workgroup, we review the proposed norms and the targets set for consensus-building. Identifying some next steps helps to establish further success in refining the new norms when they are implemented in the community.



TOPIC 1

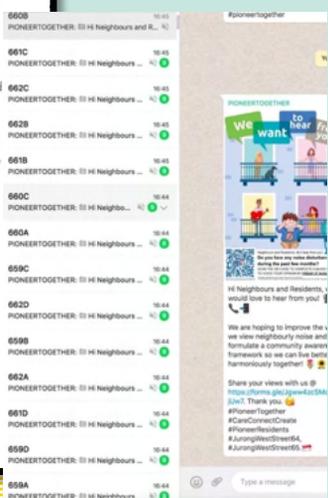
# NOISE FROM NEIGHBOURS

DO NOT SIT  
HERE



We are volunteers and Pioneer Residents too, working together with the Municipal Services Office (MSO) to create a better and vibrant Pioneer.

We are suggesting desirable behaviour for our neighbours and residents staying together in this block. Tell us what you think by scanning the QR coded survey below.



# TOPIC 1 Noise from Neighbours



## Team 1 members

- Dawn Lim
- Daniel Lim
- Liu Xiaowei
- Lim Hong Jie
- Rong Runjie
- Shawn Yue
- Sammanda Vivekanandan
- Shamshenesa binte Shahabuddin
- Theresa Teoh
- Zahid Salam

## Background

Noise from neighbours refers to noise from residential homes. The noise may arise from situations such as renovation works by contractors, simple DIY works by owners, or home gatherings and dragging of furniture. The types of noise from neighbour feedback received by MSO can be broadly categorised into noise from renovation, noise from activities and noise from movement/items.



# Probe and enquire

## Problem:

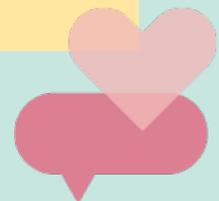
Noise from neighbours is often transient and it is challenging to pinpoint the source. As more people work and study from home due to the COVID-19 situation, the number of feedback on noise from neighbours has also increased. While contractors carrying out renovations are regulated by HDB, DIY renovations by owners are not. This translated to the growing feedback on noise from neighbours.

Team 1 conducted a survey and spoke to several neighbours to hear more about the neighbours' experiences. They found that most neighbours surveyed were willing to reduce noise levels; however, neighbours preferred to communicate with other neighbours in a non-confrontational and indirect manner. Interestingly, those who made noise were unaware that they affected others. Others felt that they were entitled to "make" noise at home.



Three types of noise from neighbours:

1. Daily activities
2. Leisure activities
3. Renovation



# Opportunity

**How might we, as a community, develop and seek consensus on community norms to address noise from neighbours that we can uphold together?**

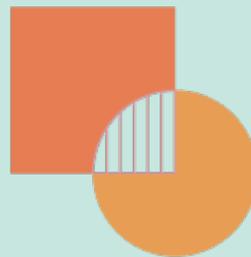


Based on the earlier survey and interview findings, Team 1 developed and tested an initial draft of a general set of community norms and found that people are generally willing to reduce noise from daily and leisure activities. Most of them were also willing to inform neighbours about renovation activities by indicating them on a monthly calendar.

However, it was unclear from the testing whether neighbours were willing to talk to one another directly if they were affected by their neighbours' noise. Moreover, neighbours who are hosting events may not step out of their house to check if the noise level is acceptable to others. In addition, there were no consensus on the quiet hours where noise level should be kept down.



# Design considerations



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Key considerations in designing community norms to prevent noise from neighbours:

**1** Improving neighbour-to-neighbour communications when one is experiencing noise, without causing conflicts.

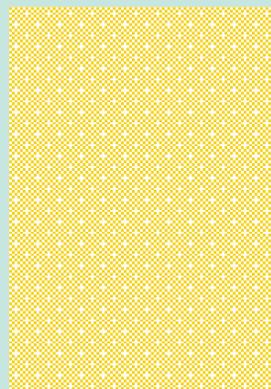
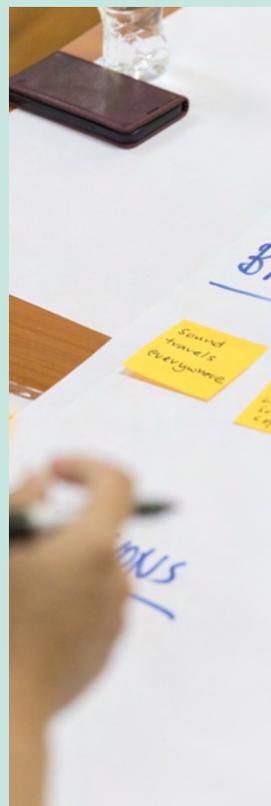
**2** Increase awareness of potential noise-generating activities in advance so residents can make alternative plans (e.g. work from office) in a timely and prominent manner.

# Norming and experiments

Using insights from the research and testing, Team 1 refined the community norms for noise from neighbours. They then reached out to residents of an identified block through surveys to gauge the support and consensus for these norms.

The norms are categorised into 5 main aspects:

1. Norms to reduce noise from daily activities
2. Norms to reduce noise from leisure activities
3. Norms to reduce impact of noise from renovations
4. Desirable quiet hours
5. Testing demand for a physical calendar for renovation noise



# PROPOSED NORMS

## FOR NOISE FROM DAILY ACTIVITIES

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1

I will reduce noise from my furniture, such as by using carpeting or furniture pads, or by lifting my furniture instead of dragging them.

90% consensus

2

I will reduce noise from my household chores, by only doing heavy chores such as moving or vacuuming before quiet hours.

90% consensus

3

I would like to be informed by my neighbours if they experience noise from my daily activities many times, as I might not be aware.

85% consensus

4

I will gently inform my neighbours if I experience noise from their daily activities many times, as they might not be aware, and seek their understanding to reduce the noise.

80% consensus

\*Consensus is achieved when a majority of the community voted for agree and above on the team's 4-point scale.

# PROPOSED NORMS

## FOR NOISE FROM LEISURE ACTIVITIES



1	2	3	4
I will close my doors and windows when I play music or sing karaoke, so that my neighbours are not disturbed by the noise. If not, I will minimise the volume.	I will limit the hours where I conduct activities that may generate loud noise (e.g. Karaoke, house parties, playing loud music) to a maximum of 4 hours a day.	I will inform my immediate neighbours on my left and right, prior to hosting events that may generate noise and assure them that we will strive to minimise our volume.	I will step out of the house at least once to check if the noise generated is reasonable for my neighbours (e.g. during birthday celebrations, house parties, singing of karaoke).

**90%** consensus

**85%** consensus

**70%** consensus

**65%** consensus

\* Consensus is achieved when a majority of the community voted for agree and above on the team's 4-point scale.

# PROPOSED NORMS

## FOR NOISE FROM RENOVATIONS



1	2	3	4
I am able to accept some DIY renovation works that might produce noise during weekends.	I can accept DIY renovation noise on Saturday, 8am to 6pm.	I will inform my neighbours when I perform approved contractor renovation that might generate noise.	I will inform my neighbours when I perform DIY renovation that will exceed 1 hour and might generate noise.

**75%** consensus

**80%** consensus

**55%** consensus

**80%** consensus

\* Consensus is achieved when a majority of the community voted for agree and above on the team's 4-point scale.

# PROPOSED NORMS

## FOR DESIRABLE QUIET HOURS



1	2	3	4
Quiet hours to start at an earlier time between 930pm and 10pm during weekdays.	Quiet hours to start between 930pm and 11pm during weekends.	Quiet hours to end at 9am for weekdays.	Quiet hours to end at 9am on weekends.

70% consensus

No consensus on timing

60% consensus

80% consensus

\* Consensus is achieved when a majority of the community voted for agree and above on the team's 4-point scale.

# PROPOSED NORMS

## FOR CALENDAR

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1

It would be helpful to have a monthly calendar displayed at the lift lobby showing upcoming renovations so that I am aware of them.

 75% consensus

2

I will update it when my unit is undergoing approved contractor renovation, to keep my neighbours informed.

 80% consensus

3

I will update it when my unit is undergoing approved DIY renovation, to keep my neighbours informed.

 65% consensus

\* Consensus is achieved when a majority of the community voted for agree and above on the team's 4-point scale.

# Consensus



Results showed that most of the proposed norms received strong consensus, though there were some norms that involve residents reaching out to neighbours that received slightly lower consensus.

One possible solution is to provide a platform for communication, such as the monthly calendar. Based on the consensus-building activity, residents welcome the idea of the calendar and informing others when they are having renovations. Success of the calendar is dependent on residents filling in renovation details and minimising potential tampering. The long-term sustainability on updating and maintaining the calendar is another area to be considered.

Team 1 hopes to work with the Pioneer Constituency Office and MSO to develop education materials to inform residents about the new norms. More research needs to be taken to understand some of the differing views, e.g., the reasons for a lower willingness to step outside of the house to check on the acceptable noise levels.





TOPIC 2

# SECONDHAND SMOKE FROM RESIDENTIAL HOMES

# LET'S HEAR FROM YOU



LE  
COMPLETE A  
CTIONS BY  
1ST 2021  
(responses)

## TOPIC 2

# Secondhand smoke from residential units

### Team 2 members

Gabriel Chong  
Koh Shu Hua  
Ms Khaing  
Steve Lau  
Steven Tan  
Wang Han Hui

### Team 3 members

Audrey Tan  
Niharikaa Shamendra  
Salim Bin Ali  
Shamendra Shivanna  
Suresh Santhanakrishnan  
Susan Lim  
Zarina Ann Binte Muhammad

## Background

Smoking is prohibited in public areas such as common corridors, lift lobbies, staircase landings, covered walkways and playgrounds. However, smoking within homes is not illegal, and when done inconsiderately, can lead to an issue of secondhand smoke affecting neighbours. As more residents work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an uptick in smoking-related complaints in residential estates.





# Probe and enquire

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**Problem:**

*"As a non-smoker, I don't want to approach a smoker and ask them to smoke elsewhere."*

*"I smoke here because it is convenient & close to my home. I also want to protect my family members from my cigarette smoke."*

These were stories heard when participants conducted research and spoke to neighbours in the community.

There are different considerations in tackling this issue. On one hand, smokers asked to respect their rights to smoke in their homes. On the other hand, non-smokers also have the rights to enjoy a smoke-free living environment in their homes. Possible regulations pertaining to smoking within homes may come across as an infringement of the homeowner's rights. Moreover, attempts to capture evidence of smoking within homes could lead to concerns over privacy.

*"I smoke here because it is convenient & close to my home. I also want to protect my family members from my cigarette smoke."*



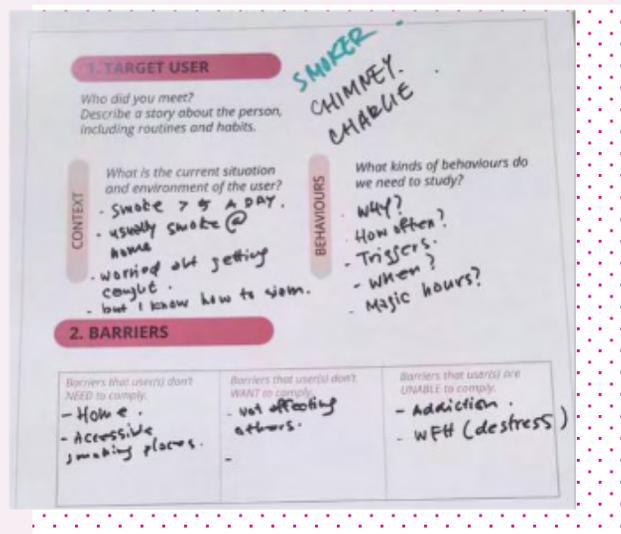
# Opportunity

## How might we find a middle ground between smokers and non-smokers?

This is a divisive issue, with challenges in obtaining mutual understanding between smokers and non-smokers. In trying to protect their families, smokers may smoke near their windows, which inadvertently affect their neighbours.

Non-smokers have lamented “I’ll have to shut my door and windows, endure and wait for it to pass.” Smokers, however, have pointed out that smoking at home is not against the rules, and some feel discriminated against when smoking in an outdoor area. As such, how might we find a middle ground between smokers and non-smokers to overcome issues on secondhand smoke drifting in neighbouring homes?

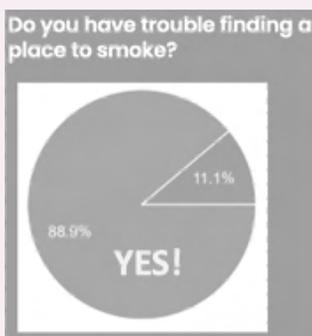
“Where I smoke is my choice and if I smoke at home, I will not close the windows, etc. Who on earth would close their windows....rather not affect my own home”



# Opportunity

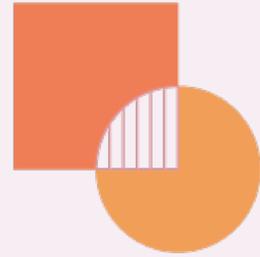
Two teams tackled this wicked problem with a set of community norms that could facilitate smokers and non-smokers in reaching a midpoint. Both teams found that one of the key barriers is identifying an alternative smoking area, that is legal and convenient for smokers to smoke outside of their homes, where it would not affect the neighbours. On the other hand, smokers said that they felt discriminated against when smoking in any outdoor spots.

Therefore, identifying smoking locations or suitable spots for smokers was critical in the development of the community norms to address this issue. These spots were not the same as the designated smoking points being piloted at some parts of Singapore, requiring new infrastructure such as sheltered pavilions. These areas could be suitable as an alternative to smoking at home, which could perhaps help to alleviate the tension between neighbours.



*"I do not have an alternative space to smoke. I cannot quit smoking. Working from home makes me more stressed, and I want to smoke."*

# Design considerations



Key considerations in designing the community norms for overcoming secondhand smoke issues:

**1** Balancing needs of smokers and non-smokers, including the health of all.

**2** Be unbiased and non-judgmental towards smokers.

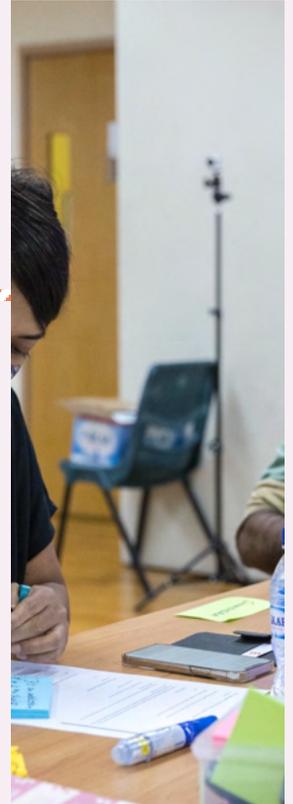
**3** Encourage smokers and non-smokers to understand each other's situation.

**4** Locations for smoking areas must be within existing rules and regulations.

# Norming and experiments

Teams 2 and 3 developing the community norms, testing and seeking consensus with their residents.

Both teams also identified their targeted areas and reached out to residents through surveys to get a sense of support for their norms and ideas.



# PROPOSED NORMS

## FOR SECONDHAND SMOKE (TEAM 2)

### NORMING

## PROTOTYPE

### Smokers version

**LOVE OUR 'HOOD @ PIONEER BULLETIN**

Dear neighbours who smoke,

We understand you have tried to smoke away from the public

Smoke may still drift into your neighbour's house despite smoking within your house or along the corridor

Exposure to second-hand smoke may have detrimental effects on your family, friends & neighbours, including an increased risk of cancer

Let's protect our loved ones!

Close all windows and doors before you smoke: identify an area in your house where the second-hand smoke will not affect anyone.

Try this!  
If you're informed by your neighbour of your smoke drift, work with them on a solution to meet both your needs.

We have also handpicked some locations in your neighbourhood, or look for our stickers!



### Non-smokers version

**LOVE OUR 'HOOD @ PIONEER BULLETIN**

Dear neighbours,

We understand that smoke may still drift into your house despite your best effort to close your door or windows

Most smokers have been smoking away from the public to protect everyone's health

If you are still affected by it, try to speak with your neighbours! Communicating our concerns may meet the needs of both parties

Try this!  
Ask your neighbour to inform you to close your door before their smoke.

We have also handpicked some locations in your neighbourhood to share with them!



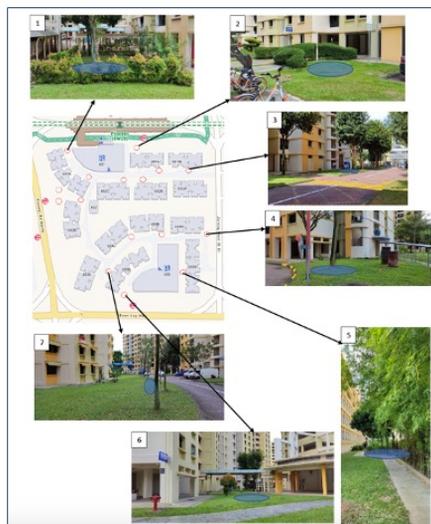
Let's protect our loved ones!



### NORMING

## PROTOTYPE

Provision of recommended sites in the neighbourhood for residents to smoke as an alternative





## Smoking Area

*Protect your families.  
Protect your neighbours.*



Keep the neighbourhood clean.  
Bin the butt.

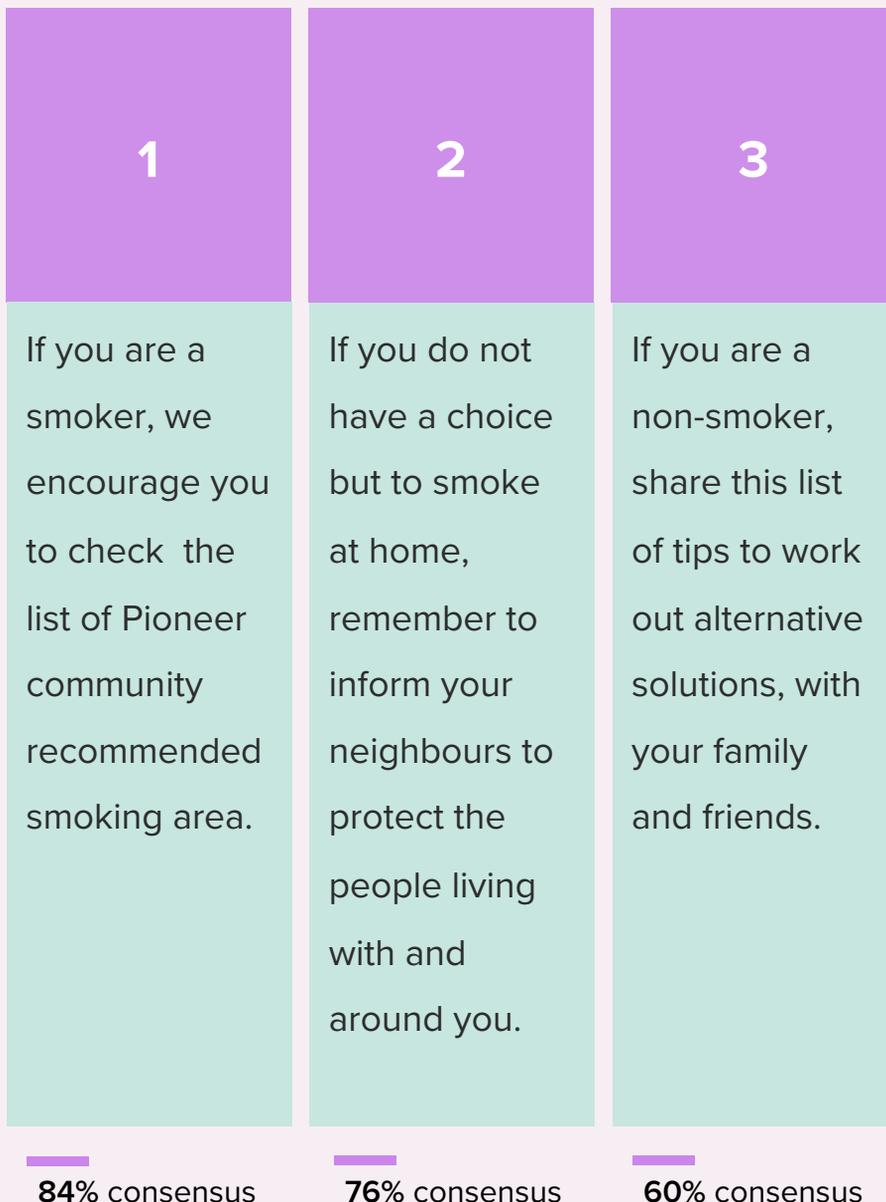
\* This is a pilot run by Love Our 'Hood Initiative

Reduce barrier to find an appropriate space for smokers

# PROPOSED NORMS

## FOR SECONDHAND SMOKE (TEAM 2)

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\*Consensus is achieved when a majority of the community voted for neutral and above on the team's 3-point scale.

# PROPOSED NORMS FOR SECONDHAND SMOKE (TEAM 3)

Based on interviews with smokers on the messages and norms, we revised the norms further:



- For smokers:
  - I will use the 'community designated smoking spot' near Blk 601-602 so that I can protect my family from second-hand smoke. My neighbours will also be appreciated of my efforts.
- For non-smokers
  - I will encourage my neighbours who smoke to use the 'community designated smoking spot' near Blk 601-602. I will thank my neighbours for making the effort.
  - I will close my windows/doors to prevent second-hand smoke from drifting into my home.
- For both:
  - I will support the idea of the 'community designated smoking spot'.

\*The norms will encourage smokers to smoke at a recommended smoking area, identified by team.



- 200 flyers were distributed door-to-door @ Blocks 601 + 602
- Posters placed in lifts

- Seeking consensus & feedback on proposed 'Designated Smoking Spots' (DSS)
- included an online survey (#2)

# PROPOSED NORMS

## FOR SECONDHAND SMOKE (TEAM 3)

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1	2	3	4
I will use the community designated smoking spot to protect my family from secondhand smoke.	I will encourage neighbours to smoke at the community designated smoking spot and thank them for making the effort.	I will close my windows and/or doors to prevent secondhand smoke to enter my home.	I support the idea of community designated smoking spot.

Inconclusive, as most respondents are non-smokers

79% consensus

No consensus

76% consensus

\*Consensus is achieved when a majority of the community voted for neutral and above on the team's 5-point scale.

# Consensus

Key results from the consensus-building exercises by both teams showed that residents generally welcome the idea of having community-identified smoking spots in the neighbourhood.

However, care needs to be put in place to ensure that these locations are away from heavy human traffic and far from young children and seniors. On the other hand, these spots should ideally be at a convenient place for smokers and weather proof.

To encourage smokers to use the spot, there were suggestions that the messages to smokers could emphasis family relationships and include thanking the smokers for making the effort to use the spot instead of smoking at home.

We also found that the message for non-smokers to close their windows and/or doors to prevent secondhand smoke from drifting into their homes was not well-received. Both smokers and non-smokers do not want to close their windows and/or doors for various reasons. Smokers wanted to protect their own families from their own secondhand smoke while

non-smokers felt that they should not be the one to close the windows as they did not generate the secondhand smoke. Communication between the parties to reach a middle ground continues to be a challenge.

Both teams hope to take in the feedback received and improve on the idea of the community-identified smoking spots, before testing out the spots as a possible solution to address the issue of secondhand smoke drifting into residents' homes.



Thank you to the following groups and individuals for making Love Our 'Hood Initiative @ Pioneer possible.

Mr Patrick Tay, Adviser to Pioneer GROs  
Housing & Development Board  
National Environment Agency  
Singapore Kindness Movement  
West Coast Town Council

