Walton-on-Thames – Local Street Improvements

Engagement Report – January 2024



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Executive Summary

This report marks the completion of Early Engagement for Walton Local Street Improvements (LSI), with the key objective to building awareness and collecting information towards initial feasibility proposals. The report describes the engagement process and provides an analysis of findings and future recommendations.

In summary, the LSI scheme aims to plan, design and create safer, healthier and more attractive local environments that encourage walking, wheeling and riding to increase opportunities to live and work locally. The Walton LSI is one the pilot schemes considered in Surrey.

The public engagement period was carried out between 23 October and 30 November. Throughout the project timeline, we were able to build awareness with key stakeholders' groups via 24 engagement sessions.

A total of 200-250 visitors were logged for the in-person drops-in events, in addition to 1498 tracked visitors to the Commonplace website. A total of 284 public/organisations responses were collected, where 258 through Commonplace survey, 19 individual submissions at the in-person event and a further 7 individual responses via email.

The engagement events have achieved a satisfactory turnout, reasoned to publicity support from Surrey County Council, Elmbridge Borough Council and local businesses and communities' groups. Our data shows Facebook promotion, events, resident letters mailshot, and poster displays are the 4 most effective promotion methods in the Early Public Engagement period.

75% of respondents have self-reported to live in Walton-on-Thames, where 39% of them walk and 40% uses motor vehicles in the neighbourhood. The relative high percentage of walking compared to Elmbridge Census 2021 average of 10%, indicates a significant demand for active travel improvements based on current travel habits at Walton neighbourhood.

Furthermore, 67% of individuals currently feel mostly negatively/negatively on problematic locations where there are identified transport issues. Options falling into 'Road traffic & Safety' category has been voted the most notable concern at Walton, where Busy Road traffic and High Traffic Speed are the runner-up issues raised. Other notable concerns include quality of pavements, inadequate cycle infrastructures, poor public realm, and the lack of greenery.

The responses have been sorted based on locations and will be contributing towards development of site-specific solutions. Within Walton LSI zone boundary, Manor Road has received the most comments. Some issues raised are not within the scope of this scheme as they either sit outside the zone boundary or fall within the responsibility of Elmbridge Borough Council, these have been recorded and will be passed on accordingly.

Lessons learnt and recommendations have been raised to improve next round of engagement for the programme, including strategies for promotion and communications; engagement with underrepresented stakeholders' groups; accessibility of survey; and events planning considerations.

The Walton LSI Early Engagement has been a hugely rewarding collaborative process, building local relationships, and working closely across Surrey County Council directorates. We were able to talk to a wide range of stakeholders to start envisioning opportunities for improving Walton-on-Thames's local streets. On behalf of Walton LSI Project Team, we appreciate all participating individuals and organisations for their valuable time and input towards the development of the scheme.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the report

The report will provide an overview of the engagement planning process, its implementation and engagement findings with the aim of informing design decisions and refinement of engagement methodologies for future Local Street Improvements (LSI) zones. This is supported by Section 4 analysis of Engagement Findings, Lessons Learnt and Recommendation in Section 6.

1.2 Walton Local Street Improvements (LSI) pilot scheme

Local Street Improvements (LSI) are a key part of Surrey's Local Transport Plan 4, important in helping to deliver the de-carbonisation and 'Planning for Place' policy areas through active travel, personal mobility and infrastructure improvements.

The programme aims to create safer, healthier, and more attractive streets which includes appropriate vehicle speed limits and improved facilities for walking, wheeling, and cycling. This in turn looks to reduce emissions, air quality and noise pollution and create more attractive local environments for residents to take pride in.

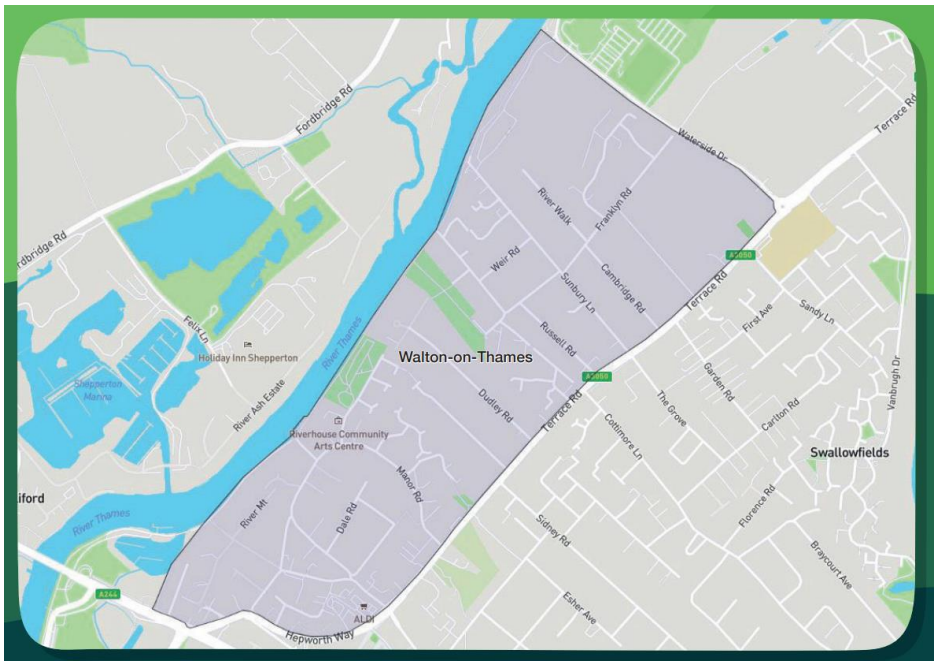


Figure 1. Walton Local Street Improvements (LSI) Zone Boundary.

The Walton Local Street Improvements is one of the pilot schemes supported by the Surrey Infrastructure Plan towards design development funding. A total of seven schemes are put forward in 23/24 across the County. The pilot selection takes into consideration the neighbourhoods' population density, socio-economic data, proximity to schools, proximity to highstreets, linkages to 3rd party projects and evidence of local support.

2. Engagement Planning

2.1 The 3 Stages of Engagement

The LSI Programme has built in 3 stages of engagement throughout the project lifecycle (timeline) to facilitate effective and productive stakeholders' management. This allows for discussions with key stakeholders and opportunities for early identification of key challenges to the scheme.

Figure 1. outlines the following engagement plan and how it is incorporated into the Walton LSI design process:

1. Early engagement - building awareness and collecting information from local stakeholders towards the development of feasibility design.

2. Informal engagement - keeping stakeholders updated while collecting design-focused feedback, leading to internal design review and preliminary design.

3 Formal Public Consultation - at this stage all stakeholders should be fully informed of the design and a realistic expectation about the designs. A detailed construction ready design will be developed taking account of the feedback, cost, and priorities. The final work will be used for upcoming construction funding bids.

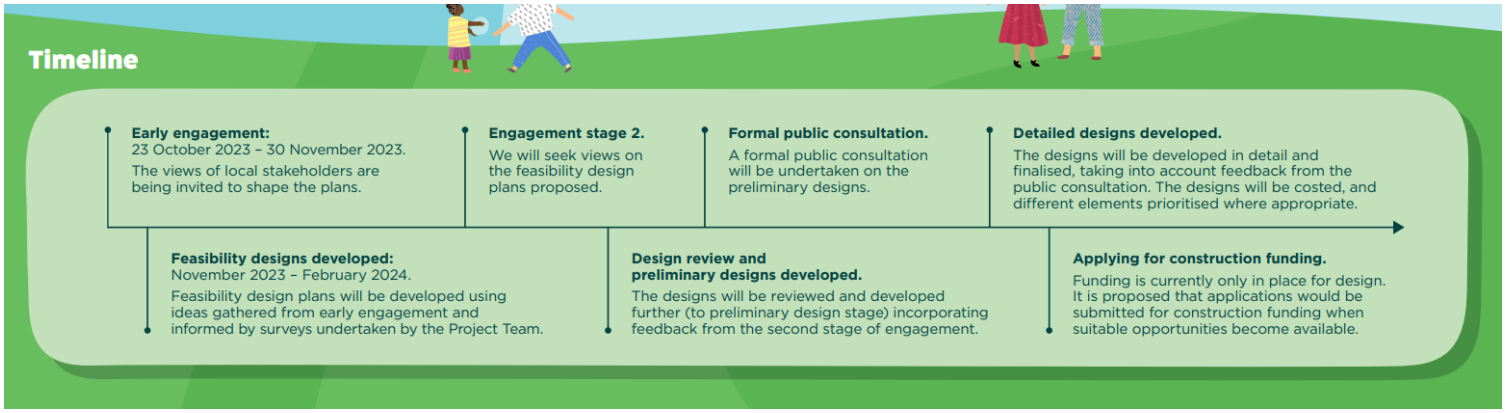


Figure 2. Walton LSI project timeline published in exhibition display boards for the engagement events.

2.2 Stakeholders Management

A LSI Zone Engagement Plan is utilised for stakeholder management and the documentation of progress in order to keep track of engagement activity. It also allows the project team to record stakeholders' levels of support to facilitate the process. Table 1 lists out the number of stakeholder groups engaged for Walton LSI.

Prior to launching the first public engagement, it is essential internal coordination and approval within Surrey County Council Highways directorate are carried out, along with discussions with Elmbridge Brough Council and Councillors.

Our record of stakeholders for the Walton LSI includes information of elected members, internal SCC teams, EBC officers, organisations, emergency services, schools, businesses, residents' associations, local interest groups and the public. Appx. A is an example of how engagement strategies are developed for each of the stakeholder groups.

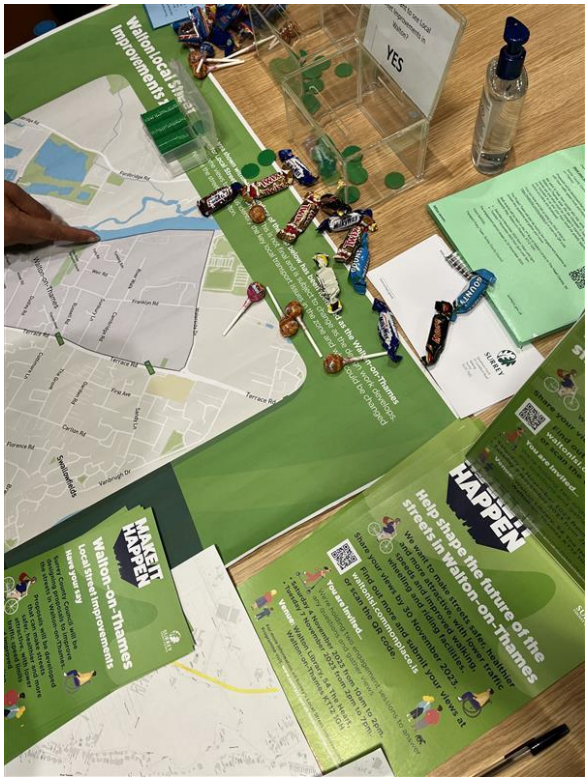


Figure 3. Photo taken from Walton LSI early engagement event (7/11/23) at Walton Library.

Stakeholder groups identified	Count
Borough District Officers	9
Cabinet Members	2
Elected Members	7
Internal SCC Teams	15
Emergency Services	3
Organisations	15
Schools	5
Businesses	81
General Public Groups	14
Local Interest Groups	12
Residents Associations	6

Table 1. Identified stakeholder groups for Walton

2.3 Public Early Engagement

Following the internal engagement process, the project was set to widen the engagement pool to the public using the Commonplace platform to collect views from people who live, work, travel through, study and spend time in Walton-on-Thames. This engagement was particularly important to understand local transport issues and gather suggestions on areas that need change.

On 23 October, the Walton LSI public early engagement session was launched including an online presence via the Commonplace webpage. The outlet set out potential (zone) areas of interest boundary data, details of the programme, potential interventions, FAQs page and an interactive plan which allowed visitors to pin a location to raise attention at specific location with wishes and wants, the webpage also allowed for users to answer survey questions relating the zone.

The survey was active for approximately 6 weeks from 23 October until 30 November, receiving 258 responses. A further 6 responses were received via email from individuals and 3 organisations.

2 in-person exhibition events were held as part of this process. The first at Walton Library on Saturday 4 November between 10.00 and 14.00 and the second at The Walton Library on Tuesday 7 November between 14:00 and 19.00. Five SCC members of staff were on hand at each of the exhibition events to discuss the scheme objectives and gather feedback from attendees. Paper copies of the zone boundary were also on show, and staff members were available to help attendees fill out the Commonplace survey (Appx. B for the Events Engagement Plan).

Responses have been received from local members in the area following focused engagement including a member briefing session.

To advertise the engagement, letters were sent to 1955 households in the proposed zone (Appx. C for the Post Distribution Report, Appx. F for a copy of the letter). Posters were displayed at various points in the area and flyers handed out in the area (Appx. D). Notification of the engagement was also sent via email to various interest groups and businesses, with offers of a separate meeting to several organisations.

To further raise awareness of the engagement, it was also promoted on social media and newsletter pages through local community groups and council forums. Residents who live in the area were targeted via Facebook advertising which directed them to the Commonplace page.



Figure 4. Poster for Walton LSI, out on display at community centres, bus stops and Walton Library.

3. Engagement Milestones

- **July – Sept. 23: Internal SCC teams' engagement**. Including Transport Studies, Passenger Transport, Conservation and Arboriculture, Road Safety, Traffic Commissioning, Placemaking, Transport Development Planning and Major Projects teams. Presentation was hosted by Walton LSI project team to introduce project, coordinate on any 3rd party developments in or near zone boundary and coordination on key engagement dates.

- **Aug. 23: Collaborate with SCC Community Link Officer (CLO) for Elmbridge**. Gaining insight in best strategies of engagement in Walton, establishing connection to local key stakeholders and support on securing engagement venue at Walton Library.

- **Aug. 23: Discussion with Walton Business Improvement District (BID).** Be a part of the discussion on the delivery of transport improvements within the BID area, review Urban Flow transport studies (commissioned by BID) and its action plan.

- **Sept. 23: Initiate work with SCC Communications Team and Commonplace - online citizen engagement platform.** The start of planning, designing and distribution of engagement materials: leaflets, posters, residents' letter, social media engagement and a dedicated commonplace website.

- **Sept. 23: Early engagement with Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC).** Planning Policy and Strategy officer, Economic Development officer, Infrastructure Delivery Co-ordinator and Leisure and Cultural Services Manager were introduced to the Walton LSI and provisional programme for advice and coordination.

- **Sept. 23: Briefing with SCC Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth.** Walton LSI, along with other pilots' zones have gained approval for design development and early public engagement.

- **Sept. - Oct 23: Early engagement with Walton Divisional County Councillor and District Councillors (Walton Central and Walton North)**. Meeting was hosted by team to introduce Walton LSI and provisional programme. Meeting notes and presentations shared with all invited members for review and open invitation to future meetings.

- **Oct.23: Collaboration with EBC Communication Teams and Walton BID.** Seek collaboration with promotion of event through social media, newsletter post and posters distribution in community display boards. Keeping members councillors and officers informed of upcoming engagement dates.

- **23/10/23: Start of public early engagement period.** Residents' letters were distributed to 1955 households within the Walton LSI proposed zone boundary, while emails were sent to schools, businesses, organisations, emergency services and residents associations in the area. Along with the launch of Commonplace site and social media promotion, posters were put up in the neighbourhood with the help of EBC, Walton Library and Walton BID.

- **4/11/23, 7/11/23: Early Engagement Event days.** Over 200 residents and visitors have visited our drop-in booth at Walton Library and talk to our representatives to learn of the project. The Walton LSI exhibition boards were put up in the library between this period.

- **30/11/23: The end of public early engagement period.** Emails were sent to key stakeholders in advance of the deadline.

4. Engagement Findings

4.1. Who Responded to the Engagement?

Our Commonplace website has tracked a total of 1739 unique visitors to the page and recorded 258 individual responses to the Interactive Map survey (Fig. 5). The survey entries (Appx. E) collect details on characteristics of respondents which provides quantitative data for further analysis specific to local transport issues.

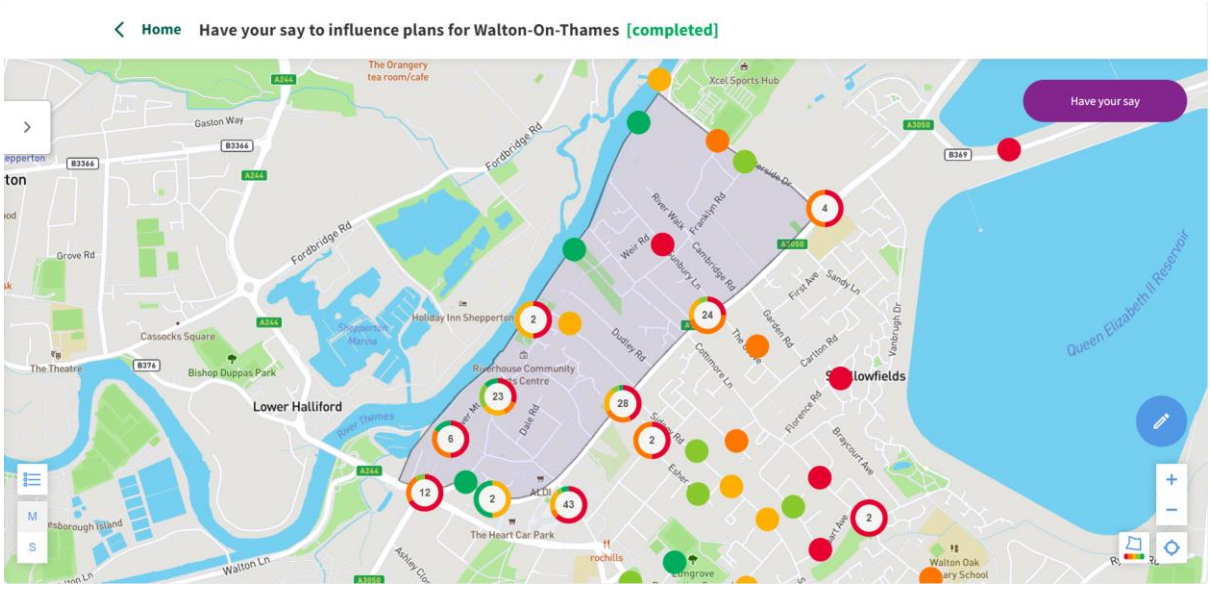


Figure 5. Interactive Map survey on Walton LSI Commonplace page. [1]

The quantification of engagement can also consider the events attendance and collective responses from organisations and groups (Table 2).

Engagement responses metric	Total
Commonplace survey responses	258
Commonplace website visitors	1498
Events attendance	200-250
Emails or other	25
Comments from organisations	3
Elected members	5 Councilors attended engagement events and/or briefing.

Table 2. Engagement counts through various metric.

[1] Walton Local Street Improvements Commonplace (2023) URL



Figure 6. Photo taken from Walton LSI early engagement event (4,7/11/23) at Walton Library. Exhibition display boards and table with maps for discussion.

Age of Respondents

To understand the degree to which the survey respondents are representative of the wider population, key characteristics of respondents are considered and compared with Elmbridge Borough's Census data 2021. According to the latest Census data, 20% of the total borough population resides within Walton-on-Thames[2].

Regarding the age of respondents, of the 96% that disclosed this information, 65% of them are aged between 35-64 (Fig. 7).

This can be compared to the 2021 Census data[3], where 29% of the population is under the age of 25, 43% aged between 35-64 and 9% aged 75 and over. The data suggests a significant underrepresentation of younger age groups in the early engagement.

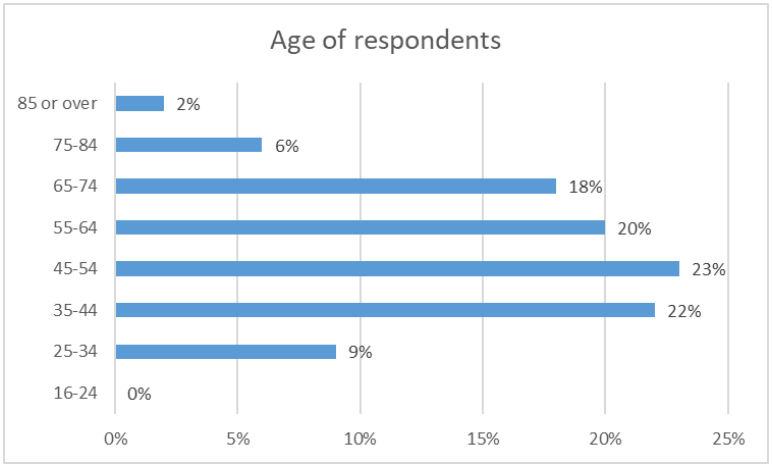


Figure 7. Age of respondents from Walton LSI Commonplace Survey.

We have also found high percentage of visitors over retirement age at weekday's engagement event. To record their feedback, we have tasked officers to assist visitors on the online registration process and fill-in the Interactive Map survey. In instances where the booth has a high volume of visitors, we were limited to passing on the survey QR code.

[2] Census 2021, Office for National Statistics URL
[3] Census 2021, Office for National Statistics URL

This emphasises the need for further engagement methods in the next stages of engagement to reach targeted and under-represented age groups.

Gender

93% of respondents disclosed their gender through the survey, with 51% identified as male, 49% as female and 0% as non-binary (Fig. 8). This record is comparable to the Census 2021 data[4], which records 48% male and 52% female within the Elmbridge population.

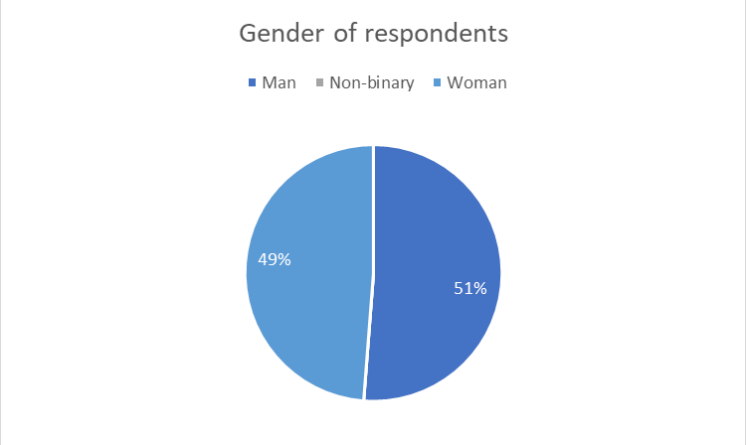


Figure 8. Gender of respondents from Walton LSI Commonplace Survey.

4.2 Connection to Walton-on-Thames

Our record shows 75% of respondents live in the area, along with over 10% who work and 8% who commute through the area (Fig. 9). The data reflects those who would potentially be impacted by the scheme as well as record the type of respondents who are more likely to participate in surveys.

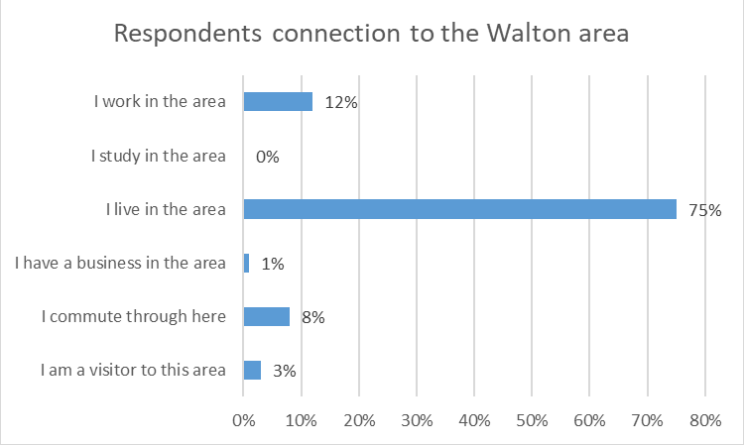


Figure 9. Respondents' connection to Walton from the Walton LSI Commonplace Survey.

Despite the concentration of local businesses on Bridge St, responses recorded are only 1% for the business owner category.

[4] Census 2021, Office for National Statistics URL

Through our discussion with the Walton Business Improvement District (Walton BID), we have found an independent transport consultation has been commissioned by the group as part of delivery of a 5-year business plan involving public realm and transport improvements[5].

To encapsulate some relevant responses from local businesses, recommendations and response submitted independently through Walton BID (Appx. G) will be reviewed along with survey findings.

Another noticeable issue is the lack of responses from students, partly due to the residential natural of the zone. Improvements on widening engagement population groups will be addressed further in Section 5 Lessons Learnt of the report.

4.3 Travel Mode in Walton-on-Thames

The responses show that both motor vehicles and walking are the most popular mode of transport at Walton-on-Thames with 39% opting for walking. Respondents were able to select multiple choices in this survey question (Fig. 10).

The recorded figure for walking in Walton is much higher in comparison to Census 2021 data[6], with 72% of borough population travel in and around using motor vehicles, with only 10% opting for walking and 5% cycling. The findings indicate a level of demand for active travel improvements based on existing travel habits in the neighborhood.

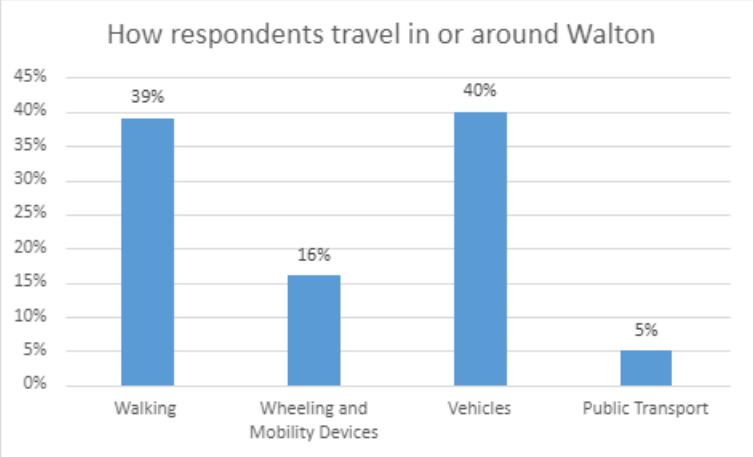


Figure 10. Response to "How do you usually travel in or around the area?" from the Walton LSI Commonplace Survey.

4.4 Issues and Opportunities

The survey asked respondents to 'pin' a location on the interactive map where they have identified key local transport issues and/or ideas for improvements to the streets in Walton. Which then asked how respondents currently feel about the location that they chose. The responses were filtered

[5] Walton BID Business Plan (2020) URL
[6] Census 2021, Office for National Statistics URL

geographically to focus on Walton Central and Walton North in the following analysis (219 responses out of 258).

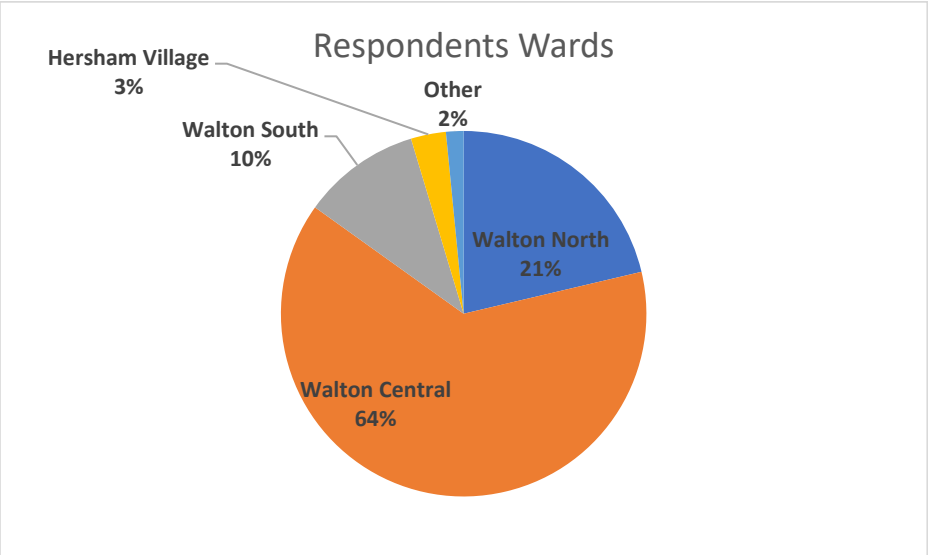


Figure 11. Commonplace Respondent's Wards

Current Feelings Towards the Area

As may be expected given that respondents were requested to identify issues for improvements, there was predominantly a negative sentiment towards the pinned locations. As shown in Figure 12, the most common response to the question was 'negative' (41%), followed by 'mostly negative' (26%) with only 8% stating that they felt 'positive' about the selected location.

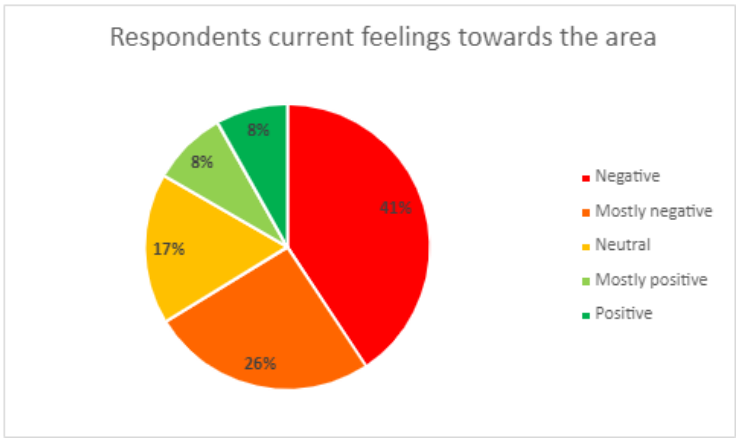


Figure 12. Respondents current feeling towards the area from the Walton LSI Commonplace Survey.

Biggest Issues by Themes

The survey also asked respondents to choose what they feel are the biggest issues in the zone currently which gives an indication of what needs to be addressed within the scope of the scheme. This question allowed respondents to select multiple answers while providing an option to add their own responses.

Figure 13 illustrates that the results from this question were categorised into 3 groupings: **Road traffic & Safety Issues, Footway & Active Travel Issues and Public Realm Issues** (Fig. 13).

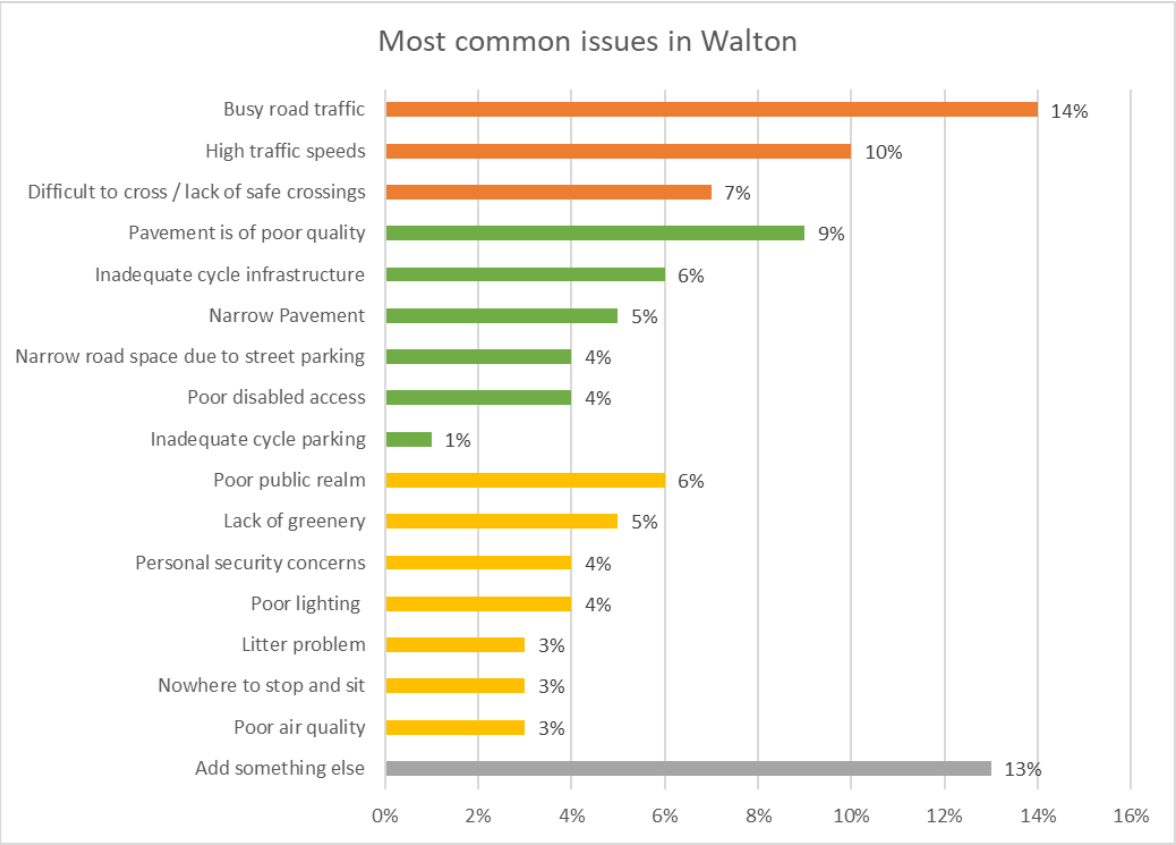


Figure 13. Most common issues in Walton

Most comments were in the **Road traffic & Safety Issues** group (31%), where '**Busy Road Traffic**' accumulated 14% of total comments, proving to be the most common issue in Walton. Issues which fell into **Footway & Active Travel Issues** accumulated 29% of all comments, with '**Pavement is of poor quality**' being the most common issue in this group (9%). **Public Realm Issues** make up 28% of the overall comments, with '**Poor public realm**' being the most common issue (6%).

It is important to note that the multiple-choice options did not cover all potential issues and consequently, 68 respondents added their own comment. These generally fell within the key issues provided and contained more specific details, including poor signage, poor drainage, lack of shelter at bus stops, neglected green spaces, poor visibility at junctions, lack of parking enforcement and neglected shop fronts.

Biggest Issues by Roads

There is a wide spread of comments across many different roads, however, some roads had issues highlighted more frequently than others. Tables 3-5 rank the roads in descending order of transport issues raised in the survey.

Within the zone boundary, Manor Road, Bridge Street and connecting roads had the highest number of comments with standout issues being **high traffic speeds, busy road traffic and varying issues with pavements**.

Roads bordering the zone also received a high number of comments, particularly on Terrace Road. Issues most mentioned are consistent with those brought up within the zone.

As for comments made outside the zone, the High Street received the most with many relevant transport issues. Any issues out of scope for the local street improvements scheme will all be passed on to relevant teams and/or organisations.

Walton BID also offered comments on Bridge St, which can be found in the letter shown in Appx. G. Members of the BID have submitted their comments through the commonplace site and as such are included in the analysis.

Key transport issues within Walton LSI zone boundary		
Road Name	**Count**	**Issue**
Manor Road	14	High traffic speeds, uneven damaged footpath, poor visibility for drivers, lack of available parking, rat running, poor disabled access, narrow road space.
Dudley Road	7	Parking on double yellow lines, cyclists on road and pavement, trees cut down and not replaced, poor quality uneven pavement, poor disabled access.
Bridge Street	7	Narrow pavement, parking on double yellows, poor quality pavement, insufficient public transport, difficult to cross.
Thames Street	5	Poor lighting, poor road surface, High traffic speeds dangerous for pedestrians, dangerous junction with Manor Road, anti-social behaviour by pub.
Russell Road	3	High traffic speed, busy road traffic, pavement obstructed, poor quality pavement, lack of safe crossings.

Table 3. Biggest issues per road within boundary

Key transport issues at boundary roads		
Terrace Road	24	Poor quality pavement, puddles, High traffic speeds, poor visibility, poor cycle infrastructure, lack of safe crossings, poor bus stop facilities, high number of HGVs, potholes, lack of safe crossings, street parking, shared use path dangerous, inadequate cycle parking, poor public realm.
A3050 (Bridge Street/Hepworth Way/Church Street)	20	Poor quality pavement, shared use path dangerous, busy road traffic, inadequate cycle infrastructure, improper signage, poor disabled access, pavement parking, lack of safe crossing, signal timings, high traffic speed.
Waterside Drive	4	High traffic speeds, poor air quality, ineffective calming measures, broken signage, fallen trees.

Table 4. Biggest issues per road on border

Key transport issues outside of zone boundary		
High Street	17	Busy road traffic, poor lighting, poor public realm, narrow road space due to street parking, insufficient parking

		spaces, parking on double yellow, lack of safe crossing, poor road surface, high traffic speed, lack of greenery, no activities for children, delivery vehicles on pavement, poor air quality, poor disabled access.
New Zealand Avenue (A244)	10	Poor quality pavement, poor public realm, inadequate cycle infrastructure, busy road traffic, poor air quality, pavement parking, insufficient disabled parking, high traffic speed, busy road traffic, lack of safe crossing, inadequate cycle infrastructure.
Churchfield Road	8	Lack of safe crossing, poor disabled access, poor quality pavement, poor public realm, puddles on road/pavement, narrow pavement, litter, pavement parking, high traffic speeds, poor disabled access, roadside parking causes issues for both drivers and pedestrians, poor air quality.
Hersham Road (A244/B365)	7	Poor quality pavement, poor disabled access, high traffic speed, narrow pavement, lack of safe crossings, busy road traffic, inadequate cycle infrastructure.

Table 5. Biggest issues per road outside boundary

There were 6 comments received by email and the issues raised were as follows. Concerns with danger of mixed-use cycle paths, lack of safe crossings and insufficient off-street parking. Comments were also made by those attending the events in Walton Library. Key points made from these comments were parking on pavements restricting pedestrian access, lack of parking on Dudley Road, poor road surface, poor quality pavements, lack of cycle parking, poor lighting, poor visibility at Bridge Street junction, lack of buses in area and potholes.

The survey included questions inviting for any other comments on the area and suggestions for how we could make the area better. Below, some of the comments and issues that were raised more commonly have been listed. These will be investigated by the design team as part of the feasibility design work.

How Could We Make It Better

In the survey respondents were asked 'How could we make it better?'. This allowed them to make suggestions regarding how the location could be improved through delivery of the LSI scheme. The suggested improvements generally correlate with the issues identified in the previous section. Table 6 summarises the suggested solutions to key transport issues.

Issues	Suggested solutions
Busy road traffic	Restricted/banned turns, reduced speed limits, speed calming measures, large vehicle restrictions, segregated cycle lanes, improved signage, installing roundabouts, and others.
High traffic speeds	Traffic calming measures, offering improved cycle facilities, clearer signage, pavement buildouts and continuous footways, speed cameras and others.
Poor quality and narrow pavements and lack of safe crossings for pedestrians	Changing timings of traffic lights to enable longer crossing times, new instalments of zebra crossings, widening pavements in areas, continuous footways across junctions,

	adding more greenery, levelling, and resurfacing of pavements, pedestrian bridges and others.
Parking issues	Widening roads to enable more street parking, additional options for off-street parking, parking cameras to restrict illegal parking, more disabled parking spaces, policing of restrictions, more double yellow lines, addressing parked delivery vehicles and other.

Table 6. Summarised suggestions targeted to main transport issues.

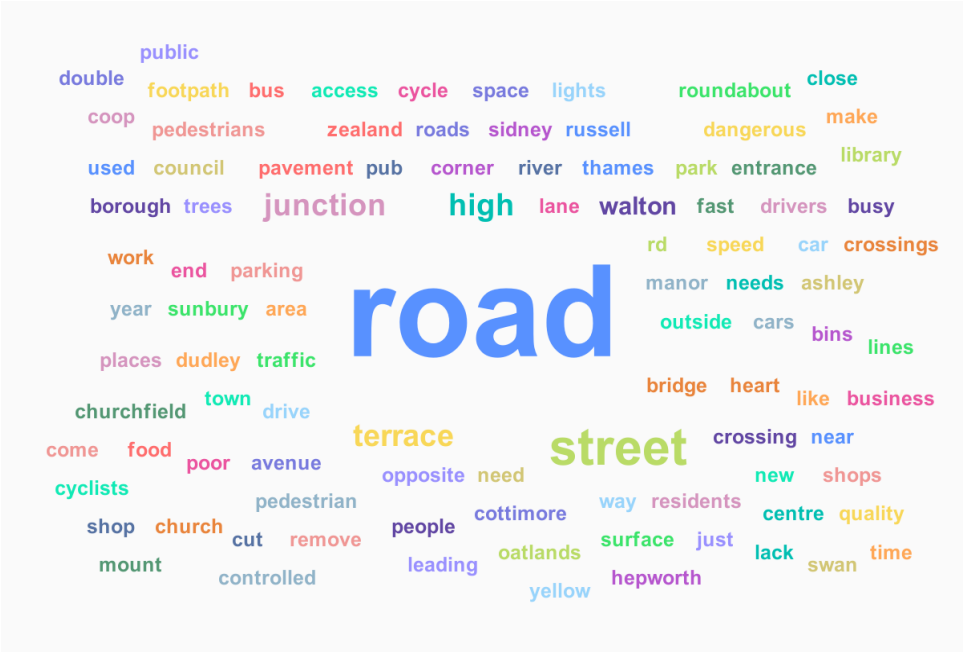


Figure 14. Word cloud from respondents showing the most used words in transport suggestions (Filtered for Walton North and Walton Central Wards).

5. Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

5.1 Representativeness of engagement

As addressed in Section 4.1-2, the next stage of engagement for Walton LSI could consider more targeted engagement activities with the aim to reach stakeholders that are less likely to respond to the online call-to-action. This is exemplified by the fact that the early engagement in-person events were able to significantly increase the participation of above retirement age individuals with assistance to navigating the online forms.

This observation demonstrates the method of engagement can inherently affect the sample population, whist suitable strategy can be influential to mitigating the underrepresentation of students, young adults, and other vulnerable groups.

It is worth noting that engagement with schools, parents-teachers-associations and Facebook communities can also be better utilised. While the school's administration near zone proximity were sent emails and have received in-person calls in advance of engagement deadline, we are unable to track participation from the students themselves. This might be explained by the zone's predominantly residential land use, where only pre-schools are present within the boundaries. To mitigate lack of interest from younger population, it may be worth exploring engagement through gamification workshops to improve interaction and introduce relevance to all road users' groups.

Engagement with Walton BID group has proven to be an effective way in increasing local awareness to the project and bringing potential collaboration opportunities with representatives of local businesses. Future engagement can look to adopt similar targeted engagement strategy to best gain insights in the unique requirements of each zone.

5.2 Communications and Promotions

Along with residents' mailshot, leaflets and posters have been put up at event venue and bus stops during the engagement period. The Walton LSI team collaborated with Elmbridge Borough Council Communications for poster displays at Community Centre and Notice Boards. Engagement with Walton BID group also lead to Walton LSI being featured on popular community newsletters, social media pages and posters in The Heart Shopping Centre.

Our Commonplace page have tracked 563 direct traffic, 544 referral traffic and 352 email traffic out of the total 1498 visits by unique visitors. 72% tracked visitors and 23% survey participates arrive the page via Facebook, exemplifying the strength of social media promotion. These Facebook postings includes:

Walton LSI paid Facebook ads, SCC Socials (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), SCC Community Link Officer Facebook, EBC Facebook page, 'Love Walton' webpage and Facebook page, Walton-on-Thames Trading Alliance November newsletter and Facebook page.

Other noteworthy methods of promotions include events, posters, letter, where 16-19% of survey respondents found out about the engagement through these channels (Fig. 15).

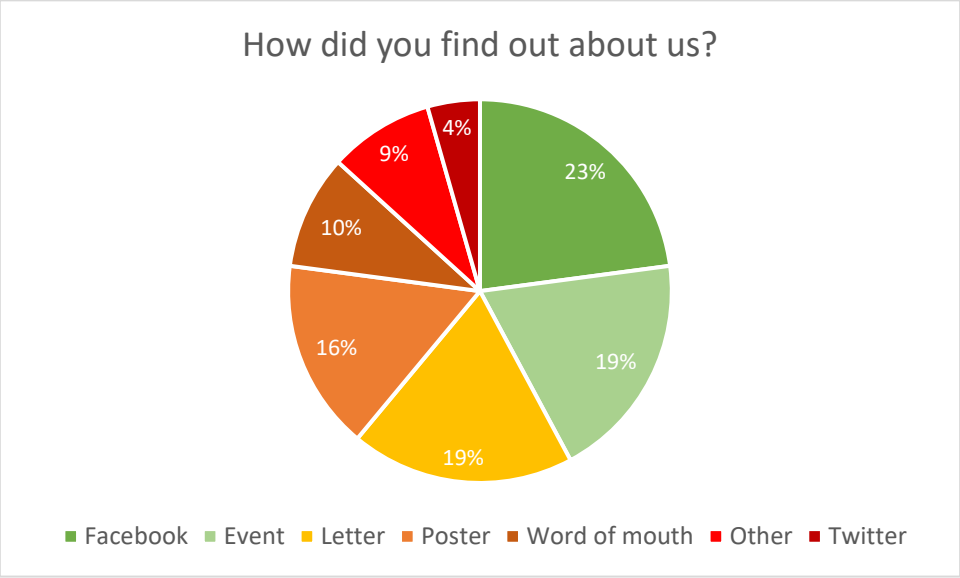


Figure 15. How respondents heard about the survey.

An important lesson learnt is the lead time on production and distribution of promotion materials should not be underestimated, working closely with SCC Communication Team to coordinate engagement launch. Measures to improve consistency across promotion includes the adoption of 'Make It Happen' SCC branding and through rolling out schemes in close succession and coordination with 3rd party projects.

5.3 Events Planning

The 2 largely successful in-person events have achieved a high turnout, tracking a total of 200-250 visitors to the booth. Notably we logged in person participation from a range of key stakeholders, including elected county and borough members, SCC engagement officers, EBC Borough officers, Walton BID manager and the public. Due to high turnout, the project team should consider creating a register sheet for more accurate tracking. The survey respondent's data indicate 19 % of them are from the events, the same percentage of received responses from letters (Fig. 15).

Thoughtful consideration on events location and dates are influential to the success of event. The planning is massively supported by Walton library managers and Love Walton, aided by the introduction from SCC Community Link Officer. Advice on neighbourhood events dates and library functions based on local knowledge are taken on board to maximise potential footfall. Our weekend event took place in the first Saturday of the month due to the monthly Farmers Market and Members Surgery at the library.

Events engagement plan using SCC Events Team template is beneficial at organising logistics of equipment and staffing, full plan can be found in Appx. B. Some key points of consideration when event planning below:

Location

- Accessibility and connectivity.
- Types of events activities, venue layout and storage.
- Cost.

Date and Time

- Good practice to coincide with local events and members surgery if possible.
- Duration of after work hours on weekday.
- Equipment pick-up and set up.

5.4 Survey design

Accessibility

Commonplace has a built-in accessibility tool by UserWay allowing users to set various adjustment to the displayed content. While considering accessibility, we have also presented alternative methods to provide responses through emails or in person drop-ins. Going forward, more consideration should be placed on the design of web content and survey to facilitate the use of screen reader allowing users to access the Interactive Map.

Another consideration is the survey should be designed not only by relying on existing Commonplace template but be reviewed on its accessibility of language. One of the feedback items is peoples' comprehension to the 'Current Feelings Towards the Area' question is not only subjective but also confusing; some voting for a 'Positive' despite wanting to see improvement at the pinned location.

In the next round of engagement, the survey prompt can be improved by setting a clearer analysis model to generate useful data for design.

6. Summary

6.1 Engagement Dashboard

The Engagement Dashboard is a snapshot produced with the Engagement Plan (Section 2.2), providing a summary of stakeholders' information, engagement activities and indicative level of support. Fig. 16 is the Dashboard captured at the end of Walton LSI Early Engagement. The profile will evolve as further engagement activities is conducted across the lifecycle of the project.

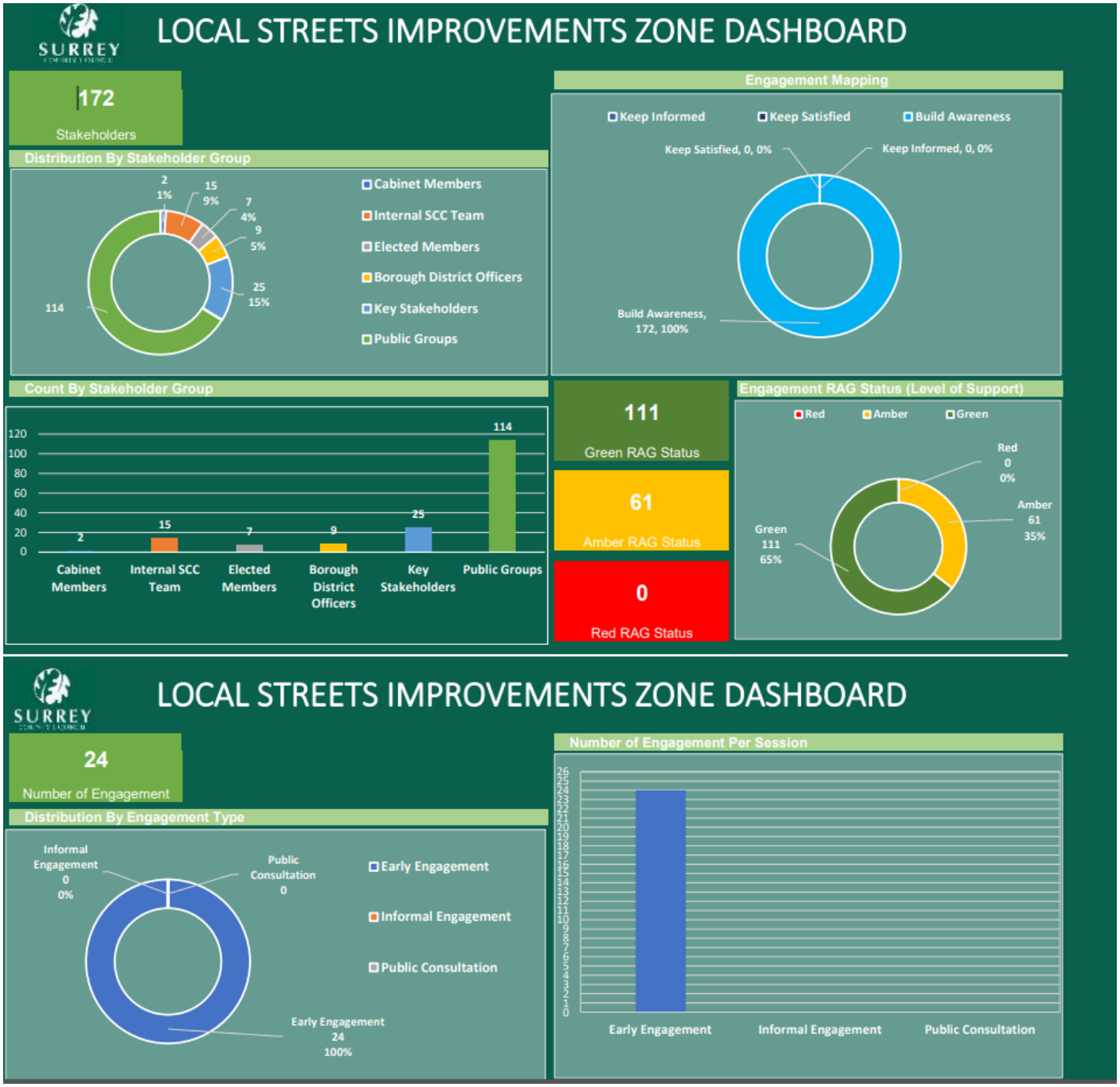


Fig.16. Engagement Dashboard created from Walton LSI Stakeholders Engagement Plan.

Currently there's a record of 172 stakeholders' groups for Walton LSI, with the majority in public groups and local businesses, thus highlighting the importance of public engagement for the programme. Between July 23 and Dec 23, 24 internal and public early engagement sessions have been conducted so far. This process has been able to build awareness for our project for all identified stakeholders' groups.

6.2 Summary

This report marks the completion of Early Engagement for Walton Local Street Improvements (LSI), the first stage within the Engagement Plan with the key objective to building awareness and collecting information. The findings will now be used alongside transport survey data to shape initial feasibility proposals. A further stage of Informal Engagement will be held giving the public the opportunity to feedback on upcoming design work.

The Walton LSI Early Public Engagement period was launched on the 23 October 2023 till 30 November 2023, for the duration of close to 6 weeks. Early preparation work initiated from July 23, of which discussions with internal teams and elected members was organised. Throughout the entire project timeline, we were able to build awareness with 172 identified key stakeholders' groups through 24 engagement sessions.

A total of 200-250 visitors were logged for the in-person drops in events, in addition to 1498 tracked visitors to the Commonplace website. A total of 284 public/organisations responses was collected, where 258 via Commonplace survey, 19 individual submissions at the event, a further 7 individual responses via email.

The engagement events have achieved a satisfactory turnout, reasoned to publicity support from Surrey County Council, Elmbridge Borough Council and local businesses and communities' groups. Our data shows Facebook (posts & ads), events, resident letters and poster displays are the 4 most effective promotion channels in the Early Public Engagement period.

75% of respondents have self-reported to live in Walton-on-Thames, where 39% of them walk and 40% uses motor vehicles in the neighbourhood. The relative high percentage of walking compared to Elmbridge average of 10% (ONS, 2021), indicates a significant demand for active travel improvements based on current travel habits at Walton neighbourhood.

Furthermore, 67% of individuals currently feel mostly negatively/negatively on problematic locations where there are identified transport issues. Options falling into 'Road traffic & Safety' category has been voted the most notable concern at Walton, where Busy Road traffic and High Traffic Speed are the runner-up issues raised. Other notable concerns include quality of pavements, inadequate cycle infrastructures, poor public realm, and the lack of greenery.

The responses have been sorted based on locations and will be contributing towards development of site-specific solutions. Within Walton LSI zone boundary, Manor Road has received the most comments. Some issues raised are not within the scope of this scheme as they either sit outside the zone boundary or fall within the responsibility of Elmbridge Borough Council, these have been recorded and will be passed on accordingly.

Lessons learnt and recommendations have been raised to improve next round of engagement for the programme includes strategies for promotion and communications; engagement with underrepresented stakeholders' groups; accessibility of survey; and events planning considerations.

The Walton LSI Early Engagement has been a hugely rewarding collaborative process, building local relationships, and working closely across Surrey County Council directorates. We were able to talk to a wide range of stakeholders to start envisioning opportunities for improving Walton-on-Thames's local streets. On behalf of Walton LSI Project Team, we appreciate all participating individuals and organisations for their valuable time and input towards the development of the scheme.

7. Appendixes

A. Example of engagement strategies for stakeholders' groups

	Stage 1: Early engagement
Duration	1.5 month
Internal SCC Teams	●Early engagement workshop with all teams to review draft concept. ●Internal meetings, discussions, and emails.
Members	●MS Teams meeting including presentation of Local Transport Policy 4 policy background, benefits of LSI, interventions, and zone boundary map.
Emergency services	●Email to make aware of consultation events and commonplace, opportunity to discuss further.
Organisations	●Email to make aware of consultation events and commonplace, opportunity to discuss further.
Pressure groups	●Email to make aware of consultation events and commonplace, opportunity to collaborate.
Businesses	● Addressed email to groups to raise awareness of project, event, and webpage
General public	● Drop-in event in zone to indicate interest from SCC to run programme. ● Social media, letters to postcodes, posters, press release in SCC/EBC and local groups Facebook and newsletters.
Schools	● Establish contacts.
Elderly, socially isolated and disabled people	● Addressed email to groups to raise awareness of project, event and webpage
Residents Association	● Addressed email to groups to raise awareness of project, event, and webpage

B. Events Engagement Plan

EL6 Walton Liveable Neighbourhood Event Engagement Plan

Event Date	4 November 2023 (Sat)	7 November 2023 (Tue)
Event time	10:00-14:00 (4 hours) Inc. set-up/pack-up: 9:30 – 14:30	14:00-19:00 (6 hours) Inc. set-up/pack-up: 13:00-19:30

Aim and objectives:

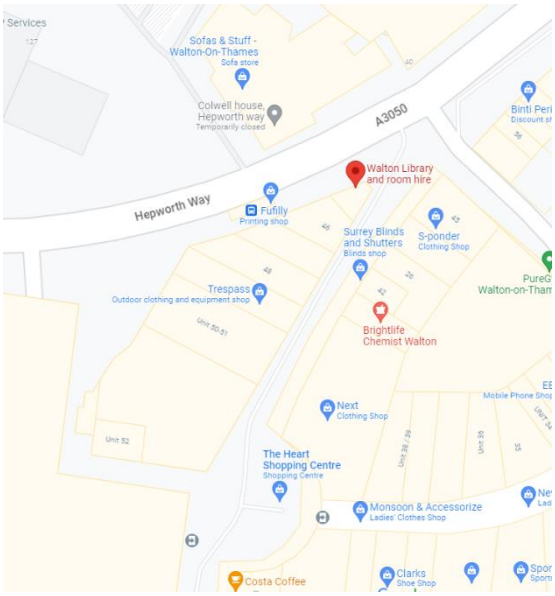
A chance to talk and bring awareness to Walton Local Street Improvements zone and programme. Through the sessions, we aim to assure the local communities we are listening and direct their views and opinions to the right avenue. It will also be a chance to present some evidence base to support the programme.

- Introduce the scope of LSI programme and the zone in Walton
- Explain LTP4 Policy and supporting programme of works
- LSI project benefits specific for the area, what types of interventions can LN includes and what are their benefits
- Discuss with locals and collect and assist with the use of Commonplace Interactive Map [Have Your Say Today - Walton Local Street Improvements - Commonplace]

Audience and invitees: General public, residents, businesses owners, and councillors
Meeting location: Walton Library, the Heart Centre, 54 Hepworth Way, Walton-on-Thames KT12 1GH
Parking: The Heart shopping centre by Sainsbury's

Event activities

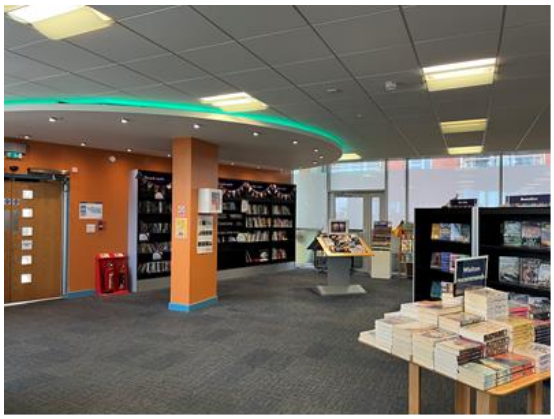
- Welcome stalls and a display board area
- Invitation to Commonplace surveys – sit down area with staff and posters
- Staff handing out leaflets
- Presentation slides running
- Answering inquiries by using note sheets and referrals
- Visual engagement with large neighbourhood map and QR codes
- Children city planning game
- Polls and rewards



Event success

- Conversations, invitation to participate on surveys, leaflets handed out
- Contributions on Commonplace site

- Measuring number of visitors
- Photo records of event, to be promoted on Commonplace



Support and resources

- Zone important information note sheet (context and key risks)
- Zone collision and LSI benefits evidence base
- Highway extent maps
- Copies of Walton LSI residents' letter
- FAQ document with referral information
- LCWIP printed report
- QR codes for LTP4 and LCWIP SCC webpage



Health and Safety

- Staff ID at all times
- Aware of main entrance and avoid blocking the passageway
- Tape down charging cords
- No tolerance to abuse sign
- Photos recording sign
- Health and Safety Risk Assessments

Equipment to bring

- Our own: Equipment box (stationary); leaflets and prints outs; 1 set of display boards, snacks
- Events team equipment: Flag, pull-up poster, drop boxes, A2 stands, games
- Everyone: Laptops and staff ID. Smart casual attire

Communication, promotion, and publicity

- Commonplace webpage.
- Comms Team: leaflets and poster design, display boards, residents letter mailshot, social media posts and targeted ads SCC homepage post, presence on Surrey Says Surrey County Council - Citizen Space (surreysays.co.uk).
- Invitation through local platforms and Community Link Officer.
- Standardised and addressed email to businesses and organisations.
- Posters display and distribution at community hotspots.

C. Residents letter Post Distribution Report

Campaign:
Surrey County Council
Walton Street Improvements Consultation

Areas:
Targeted Map



24/10/23
Start Date

25/10/23
Finish Date

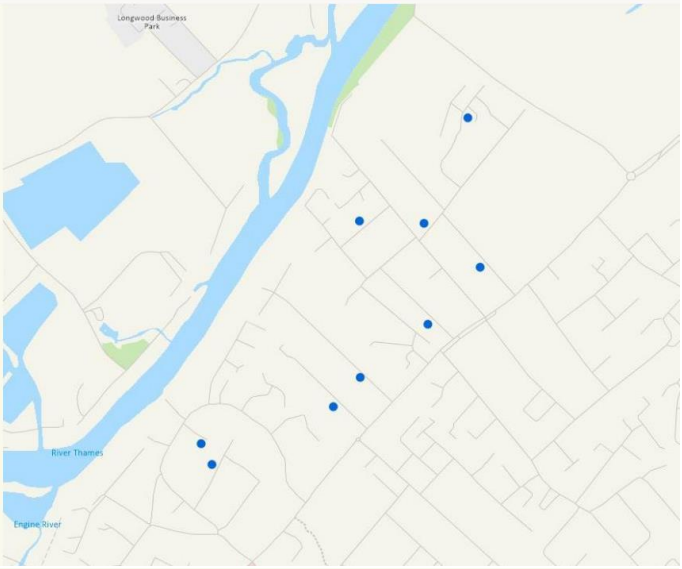
JN14601

1,955
Total Homes

| 1

Walton on Thames

Resident Confirmation:



Resident Confirmation

Quantity of homes delivered to	1,955
Number of checks carried out	36

Street	Sector	Postcode
Cambridge Road	KT12 2	KT12 2DP
Annett Road	KT12 2	KT12 2JR
Dudley Road	KT12 2	KT12 2JT
Russell Road	KT12 2	KT12 2JZ
Weir Road	KT12 2	KT12 2LE
Franklyn Road	KT12 2	KT12 2LG
Dunsmore Road	KT12 2	KT12 2LJ
Berkeley Gardens	KT12 2	KT12 2PQ
Dale Road	KT12 2	KT12 2PY

Report produced by mailshot provider.

D. Engagement leaflets





A5 size printed on both sides.

E. Commonplace Interactive Map survey questions

Part A: Information about respondents

What is your connection to the area?

I live in the area, I commute through here, I work in the area, I have a business in the area, I am a visitor to this area, I study in the area

What is your home postcode?

What is your work postcode?

What is your age group?

13-15, 16-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74, 75-84, 85 and over, Prefer not to say

What is your employment status?

Working full-time, Working part-time, Zero-hour contract, Self-employed, Apprenticeship/training, Student, Retired, Unemployed, Stay at home parent, Carer, Volunteer, Other

How do you usually travel in or around the area?

Walking, Walking with pram/pushchair, Jogging/running, Cycling, Mobility scooter/wheelchair, Motorcycle/Moped, Bus, Taxi or other cab, Car (passenger), Car (driver), Commercial vehicle, Scooter, Other

Part B: Survey questions

Where have you placed your pin? Please describe in brief.

How do you feel about where you have placed your pin?

Positive, Mostly Positive, Neutral, Mostly Negative, Negative

What are the most important issues in this location? Please select from the below.

Busy road traffic, Difficult to cross / lack of safe crossings, High traffic speeds, Inadequate cycle infrastructure, Inadequate cycle parking, Narrow Pavement, Narrow road space due to street parking, Pavement is of poor quality, Poor disabled access, Lack of greenery, Litter problem, Nowhere to stop and sit, Personal security concerns, Poor air quality, Poor lighting , Poor public realm, Add something else

Please provide any further details on the issues in this location.

How could we make it better?

How did you find out about us?

Word of mouth, Twitter, Poster, Letter, Facebook, Event, Other

F. Residents Letter

Tel: 0300 200 1003
Email: localstreetimprovements@surreycc.gov.uk

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

Transport Policy Team
Quadrant Court
35 Guildford Road
Woking
GU22 7QQ

Your ref: Walton Local Street Improvements

23 October 2023

Dear Resident

Have your say – Walton Local Street Improvements

Surrey County Council will be designing proposals to improve the streets in Walton-on-Thames.

Proposals will be developed that can make streets safer, healthier and more attractive, with lower traffic speed limits and improved facilities for walking, wheeling and riding.

We want to hear from people who live, work, travel through and spend time in the Walton-on-Thames area. We are interested in hearing what the key local transport issues are and what could be changed to improve the streets in Walton. Your views are important to us and your input would be greatly appreciated at this early stage before any plans are developed.

Find out more and tell us what you think online at https://waltonlsi.commonplace.is or scan the QR code.

The Project Team will also be hosting two engagement sessions to answer any questions and gather your views.

Both events will be held on the 2nd floor of Walton Library in The Heart Centre, 54 Hepworth Way, Walton-on-Thames, KT12 1GH.

- Saturday 4 November 2023 from 10am until 2pm.
- Tuesday 7 November 2023 from 2pm until 7pm.

The engagement period closes on 30 November 2023.

Yours faithfully,

Transport Policy Team, Surrey County Council

G. Walton BID Response

WALTON-ON-THAMES
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Dear Local Neighbourhoods Team – [redacted]

Walton on Thames – Bridge Street

Thank you all for the time to meet in Walton to look at the situation in Bridge Street most specifically from the businesses perspective. Walton BID, represents over 200 businesses in the town centre, including all in Bridge Street. We submitted some comments on the SCC portal during your recent consultation and we shared the presentation from our consultants, Urban Flow, who visited Bridge Street in June 2022 to hear the views of the businesses about how a change in streetscape and local environment could enhance their business and make this area a wonderful place to shop, eat, meet friends and enjoy the safe movement from High Street to the River Thames.

I promised to put in writing some of the key points made during our various conversations and provide some quotes from businesses that may be appropriate for your report from the consultation.

- The town centre has to co-exist with through traffic, which can be particularly busy at times and impacts on the quality of the local environment.
- On-street parking negatively impacts upon the appearance of the town centre's streets and spaces, pedestrian access, and servicing for businesses.
- There are five bus services that operate on Bridge Street, with a poor-quality bus stop near The Bear Public House.
- Kerbside parking increases perceived vehicle domination and vehicle queuing length is owing to parked vehicles so the current allowance for two lanes is not working as it should. Traffic volume only requires one lane and to allow for much wider pathways.
- The footway very constrained on eastern side and pedestrians often walk in the carriageway.
- The intimate scale of the street means that the limited traffic flows have a disproportionate impact in terms of noise, access for pedestrians and general nuisance.
- The street is dominated by parked cars.
- Business shopfronts are impacted by parked vehicles, preventing the opportunity for outdoor dining / seating and soft landscaping.
- Existing footways are narrow and impacted by street clutter and parking.
- There is a lack of seating and secure cycle parking.
- The Aldi / old Wilko canopy is obtrusive and impacts on the look and feel of the street.
- The existing bus stop waiting facilities are substandard.
- The area feels disconnected from rest of the town centre.

Walton BID Ltd
Registered Office:
The Heart Management Suite,
New Zealand Avenue,
Walton-on-Thames, KT12 1GH

E: hello@waltonbid.co.uk
www.waltonbid.co.uk
VAT no: 378 1578 53
Company registered in England no: 13185845

Comments from Bridge Street Businesses:

"Delivery bikes cause an issue in Bridge Street. They park on the footway and can be seen speeding." – Interskin Tattoo Parlour

"Parking on double yellow lines on Bridge Street impacts on the quality of the environment in Bridge Street." – HairXperts

"Parking on the footway can be an issue, particularly delivery vans blocking pedestrians." – Walton Espresso House

"Would be nicer to not have cars parked outside blocking views of the street. We would love to have a wider pavement for outside dining." – Babucci Indian Restaurant

"Would appreciate more spill out area for tables and chairs. I would then spend money to make it look pretty with planters etc." – Le Petit Café

"Would like some movement on the street as it creates an energy and vibrancy, not just traffic but somewhere people can gather / sit safely." - The George Inn, Pub.

"Can more be done with the canopy / shop windows of Aldi and Wilkos, it's dirty, grey and unsightly." – Country Carpets.

SUMMARY: Creating an Identity for Bridge Street

Bridge Street is a unique asset in Walton-on-Thames with its interesting architecture, great local businesses and connections to the River Thames. It has the potential to be a jewel in Walton-on-Thame's crown.
At present the street environment is impacted by parked vehicles, narrow footways and a building canopy that dwarfs the street. The connections to the wider town centre and the River are also poor. The ambition is to give back space for people to enjoy the street environment. Enabling a flexible space for businesses to operate and reconnects the area to the river and the High Street.

BRIDGE STREET OPPORTUNITIES



Widen footways and create outside seating areas



Improve the shop fronts of Aldi and Wilko including potential shop front artwork, planting and lighting on the canopy



Introduce 'flexible parking' pads that can be used for parking at times and pedestrians / seating at other times





Replace the parking outside the George Inn with a flexible space for seating and planting



Intersperse street trees and sustainable drainage systems with parking



Bridge Street is dominated by parking and narrow footways



There is the opportunity to widen the footways and provide flexible space that could be used for out-door-dining and parking depending on the time of day / week / year