

East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood Co-develop Engagement Report February 2022

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1. Executive summary

Between 12 September and 31 October 2022 Bristol City Council conducted the co-develop stage of the East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood pilot. This early engagement included online briefings and in-person workshops to help people decide where design solutions should be placed across the project area, which covers Barton Hill, and parts of Redfield and St George. People used a design toolkit of options for providing better access to green and play space, better connections to local shops, schools and health services using public transport, walking and cycling routes, and more social and community activity space. For example, design solutions could include safer crossings and junctions, school streets, bus gates, cycle parking, street lighting and street trees, which could be used in liveable neighbourhoods across the city.

The design toolkit, an interactive tool (AB street), online interactive maps, and in-person workshops showed people the types of solution that could be introduced and the impacts this might have on streets nearby. Solutions included being able to test out the impact of a modal filter (a road design that restricts certain types of vehicles), one-way traffic, or a bus gate on local traffic and gain greater understanding of how motor vehicles can move through an area with certain traffic restrictions. Design suggestions made at in-person workshops were added to the online maps.

Over 370 key local stakeholders, emergency services, citywide equality, community, and faith groups, plus 6,340 households and local businesses were engaged through stakeholder communications.

At the 33 community and school events 615 people were given project information, 217 contributed to the online and offline maps and 81 participated in a school classroom activity.

In addition, a further 44 comments and enquiries about the project were received through emails and phone calls and there were 4,255 unique visitors to the project website during this stage of engagement.

On the main roads and local streets and community asset interactive maps, 1,695 points suggesting locations for specific design solutions were mapped (358 online and 1,337 in-person).

2. Background

Liveable Neighbourhoods are areas in a city where the council in partnership with the local community design street improvements to achieve a better balance between how streets are used for vehicles and people.

Liveable Neighbourhoods have been controversial in some areas of the country where they have been introduced rapidly, without a sufficient level of community engagement. Therefore, it is vital for this project to be community-led, with meaningful engagement at every stage in the process.

In Bristol the project area covers parts of five wards of Bristol: Lawrence Hill, Easton, St George West, St George Central and St George Troopers Hill, south of Church Road and north of the River Avon. Rolling out two Liveable Neighbourhood pilot projects are Mayoral priorities for Bristol, and East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood is the first scheme to be piloted in the city.

In East Bristol the Wesley Way, a potential strategic walking and cycling route, was identified along Beaufort Road through St George, Redfield and Barton Hill (Bristol/South Gloucestershire Route 3) in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Rather than provide funding to improve this single linear walking and cycling route, the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) has supported Bristol City Council with funding to develop a design for a Low Traffic Neighbourhood (Liveable Neighbourhood) that makes improvements across the whole area.

3. Project vision, aims and objectives

Our vision for the Liveable Neighbourhood programme is to empower the local community to transform their neighbourhood into a place which provides better access to green and play space, better connections to local shops, schools and health services using public transport, walking and cycling routes, and more social and community activity space.

Objectives of the Liveable Neighbourhood programme are to:

- Improve local and citywide air quality and contribute to meeting Bristol's climate and ecological emergency.
- Improve residents' physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Improve levels of physical and perceived safety in our communities.
- Contribute to reducing inequality and opening opportunities for everyone in our communities.
- Improve accessibility and connectivity to shops, schools, services, and other amenities for everyone to move around safely and sustainably.
- Transform our neighbourhoods to places where people want to spend time, can interact with neighbours, and enjoy their unique identities.
- Reflect the needs and characteristics of the local community and increase the sense of pride and belonging.
- Increase community resilience and support the economy to recover after COVID-19 by improving local centres and high streets and improving access to jobs, skills, and training.

Objectives of the behaviour change engagement approach

The behaviour change engagement programme for the project is designed to be an iterative process with the previous stage informing and shaping the next. It involves reaching out, sharing information and involving people who live and spend time in the area.

The objectives of the overall behaviour change strategy are:

- To explain the scope and objectives of the wider liveable neighbourhood policy.
- To create a good understanding of the project and its benefits among stakeholders, local businesses and people to seek views from key stakeholders.
- To seek views from local people living, working, travelling through, and visiting these areas.
- To seek views from local businesses and community groups in these local areas.
- To seek views of seldom heard groups (children and young people, people with disabilities and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic).
- To create a constructive dialogue and environment where people can be involved throughout the process of design and implementation.
- To provide opportunities for members of the community to change travel behaviour.
- To demonstrate the council is prioritising sustainable transport options to help Bristol become a sustainable city with a low impact on our planet and a healthy environment for all.

The objectives of the stage 2 co-develop early engagement were to:

- Continue to encourage people to get involved.
- Find out more about the issues (to liveability) and the opportunities.
- Find out more about the constraints that impact that location.
- Develop trial design solutions that could solve the issues identified in specific locations.
- Encourage uptake of behaviour change measures and support.

Key messages

To achieve these objectives, the team agreed upon key messages for the Liveable Neighbourhood engagement and behaviour change:

- Bristol is committed to working with local people and partners to improve sustainable transport, tree planting and community spaces in local residential areas.
- This project will focus on the longer-term to provide an improved environment in terms of active travel and the urban realm.

The project team talked to businesses, visitors and people living, working and travelling through the area and showed them the measures that could be introduced, such as pocket parks, trees, bike hangars and more. People were asked to think about local issues in more detail as well as the opportunities that could come out of possible solutions, and then design their ideal liveable neighbourhood using the Bristol design toolkit.

Stakeholders

Key stakeholders

- Cabinet members, ward members, Members of Parliament, and community champions (such as paid professionals, community animators and connectors from local organisations as well as active residents)
- Bristol One City Transport Board such as Sustrans and Bristol Walking Alliance
- Accessibility and equality groups such as Bristol Physical Access Chain or Older Peoples' Forum, Green and Black Ambassadors and Black Seeds Environmental Social Justice Network
- Internal stakeholders/project teams

Local stakeholders

- Local people who live in the area
- Local people who live on the boundary or just outside the area
- Local people who travel to or through the area
- Seldom heard groups
- Local campaign and community groups
- Local businesses, shops and local services such as waste collection
- Schools and other educational establishments

4. Engagement methodology

Design principles

At engagement events officers encouraged people commenting on the interactive maps to use the following design principles when deciding where certain design measures should go.

- Keep costs down by using the fewest measures to have the biggest impact.
- Make car journeys simple for residents by placing solutions towards the centre of the neighbourhood, so they can drive to their closest boundary road, maintaining access for all residential and commercial properties in the area.
- Diagonal filters can be used to create loops which reduce the need for three-point turns or reversing, especially by larger vehicles.
- Modal filters should be located where they can create the most community value. Wherever possible, single filters should be upgraded to pocket parks, particularly next to schools, community centres or other areas of high footfall.

Design toolkit

A [design toolkit](#) was produced in the style of 'top trump' cards outlining 16 possible measures to the issues raised during the stage one co-discover phase of engagement. When combined these measures can help balance how streets are used for people and traffic. They were categorised in the following three themes:

- Main roads
- Local streets
- Community assets

Each theme had a set of cards showing the design measures. These provided information on what the measures were, how they could help, what the drawbacks may be, and whether they could be trialled to understand how they would work. These cards also provided an 'at a glance' rating of how well the design tool would perform in terms of road safety, walking and cycling, and community value, to enable respondents to compare different options with each other.

These cards were available on the website to view or download and printed for use in the in-person workshops.

Interactive tool

We partnered with the [Alan Turing Institute](#) who developed an online tool, called 'AB Street', to help plan where to place measures, such as a modal filter or one-way. The tool shows how access may change in the pilot area when such measures are in place.

Before using the AB Street tool respondents were offered video tutorials on how to use it. This tool was also introduced in briefings and workshops.

The tool works across the whole project area but has been split into two sections: Barton Hill and Redfield, and St George.

- [Barton Hill and Redfield area online tool](#)
- [St George area online tool](#)

Online interactive maps

Two interactive maps were hosted on the project website where anyone could drop a point on the map to add design solutions from the design toolkit.

- [Main roads and local streets map](#)
- [Community assets map](#)

Website visitors were directed to the [main landing page](#) where they can see a page icon to access the maps.

Respondents could drop a point on the map and were then asked:

1. How what they were commenting on made them feel (sentiment measured from negative, mostly negative, neutral, mostly positive or positive) by clicking a coloured smiley face.
2. What their comment related to by choosing a design option to address the issue - for example on the main roads and local streets map, there were nine design options ranging from a modal filter, bus gate and school streets, and seven design options on the community assets map including cycle hangars, street lighting and parklets.

3. For additional comments relating to this point in a free text comment box, to the question 'What other suggestions do you have?'. They also had the option to record a voice note which the website would transcribe.

Respondents were then asked for their email to verify that all contributions were genuine (by clicking a link sent to their email address) and for their consent to give optional further demographic information, including a home postcode. If respondents had taken part in previous engagements their demographic data that had previously been recorded was automatically used and they were not asked again.

Events

The team organised events to be inclusive and appeal to as wide an audience as possible. The events were intended to raise awareness of the project and inform how people could have their say and talk to people about what changes they would make to the neighbourhood using the options in the design toolkit. We also collected other comments people wanted to make. The events included:

- Online stakeholder briefings
- Drop-in sessions at community centres
- Pop-up information stalls with active travel support in local parks
- Dr Bike sessions
- School assemblies
- School classroom sessions

Mapping exercise at events

Attendees to the workshops and pop-up events were given a quick recap of the project, what a liveable neighbourhood hopes to achieve, the results from the co-discover phase, and the design toolkit. They were then asked how they would redesign the area and asked to place the physical tokens with icons for each of the 16 design measures at the locations they would like to see them. Staff also made notes of any other comments or solutions offered by participants before taking photographs of their design for the area to be added to the online maps on the website.

5. How we engaged

Before the co-develop workshops were launched the design toolkit was introduced so people could start thinking about what they would like to see in the area, and active travel roadshows were organised across the project area offering incentives to support residents to choose walking, cycling and public transport.

Inclusive engagement

The team made sure everyone could have their say by:

- Organising both online and in-person sessions
- Put up 35 bollard and lamppost sleeves with results from the early co-discover engagement and detailing the next steps and how to get involved

The council engaged with key stakeholders, such as internal colleagues, ward members, the local MP and community groups, and asked about how best to engage with groups of the community and for opportunities to work together. Project officers spoke with ward members to discuss the engagement approach and asked for local contacts for groups who the officers could approach.

Ward members were also given opportunities to suggest solutions using the design toolkit options which would address known issues that their constituents have previously raised with them.

The team therefore put together a few different elements of the engagement process, which included:

- Stakeholder meetings (virtual meetings or by phone)
- Emails to local organisations and groups
- 16 in-person workshops and pop-up stalls
- 10 online briefings

Supporting communications

The team created a social media plan, which included images and text for use on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Nextdoor. A post was boosted on Facebook throughout the engagement to increase exposure. The team also created a press release and copy for newsletters that were used for local organisations, such as the Bristol City Council business e-newsletter. News updates were also posted on the website and were emailed to respondents who signed up to the mailing list via the project website.

Project launch

An email went to stakeholders and an e-newsletter was sent to the mailing list on the day the design toolkit was launched and later when the interactive map went live. The email and e-news outlined the co-develop phase of the project with links to more information, the design toolkit and promoted the workshops and active travel incentives. In the first week the interactive map went live, communications (e-news, social media, stakeholder emails and postcards) promoted dates for workshops and community events. It also offered opportunities to speak to the project team asking for their input via online briefings. The press release announced the launch of the co-develop phase.

Reminder emails were sent halfway through the engagement period to local businesses, schools and community organisations.

The Facebook boosted post targeted the geographical demographics of the project area. The social media posts were also promoted by Better By Bike, St George Active Travel Group, Liveable Neighbourhoods for Bristol and other transport social media accounts.

Including all voices

Traditionally younger people, ethnic minority groups, and people living in the most deprived wards are under-represented and may be less likely to engage with the council.

To make sure those groups living in the project area were aware of the engagement process, the team sent out 6,340 letters to all the properties in the local area and repeated this with a reminder postcard to the same address list. Social media posts also targeted this area and encouraged them to respond. The stakeholders contacted at the beginning and during this engagement also represented many groups within the community and were asked to help encourage and engage members to have a say.

The team worked with Bristol City Council's Community Development team to coordinate Community Champions, hosted by local organisations, who were also briefed about the project and worked at events to help overcome language and cultural barriers.

For young people, we invited five local schools to get involved, offering assemblies, classroom sessions, asking them to share the information in the school's communications with families. We also offered online briefing sessions to parents, staff and school governors.

The team held pop-up in-person events (roadshow stalls) in local parks to give information about the project and ask people to get involved by adding design solutions to the map.

The team was aware that not everyone has access to online resources, so they put up lamppost sleeves across the project area to advertise the engagement and provide contact details in different forms. Partial translations in two other main languages spoken in the area were also displayed where possible.

On all the paper and online copies of the engagement outputs the team provided a language template so that people could get the information in a different language or in a different format. The materials also had a phone number where people could call and leave a message, ask a question or leave a comment and someone would get back to them. An email address was provided along with a postal address, so people had a choice of how they wished to communicate. The team also offered phone surgeries and virtual meetings to allow people to speak to the team if they had any questions and queries.

Accessibility of the online engagement platform is managed by Commonplace, which uses a UserWay plug-in menu to adapt the on-screen content. The website has an icon that visitors can use to access the menu to create a view that suits their needs, such as changing the contrast, enlarging text and spacing, highlighting hyperlinks etc. An additional development was the ability to record a voice note to make comments on the online maps, which were transcribed by the website. Stakeholders were made aware of this function through demonstrations at online briefings.

6. Results

At the 33 community and school events 615 people were given project information, 81 participated in a school classroom activity, 193 contributed suggested locations for where design solutions should be and 24 more people responding by showing their support by 'agreeing' with these suggestions on the online map but did not contribute their own.

In addition, a further 44 comments and enquiries about the project were received through emails and phone calls and there were 4,255 unique visitors to the project website during this stage of engagement.

Results from both in-person workshops and online commonplace mapping were combined to give the project team an understanding of what measures from the design toolkit people would like to see in their local community and in which locations.

As such, the numbers for different measures may vary and do not necessarily reflect a preference or a metric for or against different measures.

Crowd sourcing ideas for design solutions from the community has provided the design team with the information required to develop a trial scheme that can be implemented with temporary materials.

On the main roads and local streets and community asset interactive maps, 1,695 points suggesting locations for specific design measures were mapped (358 online and 1,337 in-person). Most of these points were within the project boundaries, though a small number were placed in adjacent

neighbourhoods. A further 701 agreements were made to suggested measures that have been placed on the maps (139 on the community assets map and 562 on the main roads and local streets map).

A total of 217 people made suggestions of where measures should be placed. Of these respondents, 93 people contributed suggested locations for measures using the online interactive maps, 100 people contributed at in-person events, and 24 people added their support to existing suggestions without contributing their own.

The table below shows the number of suggestions made for each design measure in the toolkit:

Main roads	
Measure	Number of suggestions received
Protected cycle track	212
Safe crossings and junction	232
Side road treatment	142
Local streets	
Measure	Number of suggestions received
Bus gate	28
Diagonal filter	11
Modal filter	124
One-way and banned turn	80
Pocket park	71
School street	45
Community assets	
Measure	Number of suggestions received
Cycle/e-scooter parking	80
Cycle hangar	112
EV charge point	43
Parklet	113
Street art	98
Street lighting	113
Street trees and planting	191
Total number of suggestions received	1,695

7. What happens next

The project team has been carrying out a technical review of the responses from the second round of engagement, to understand how the different suggestions could be developed into a scheme that will meet the project objectives. Other design considerations that will be considered include the results of the first round of engagement and the baseline traffic, walking and cycling data, which clearly show where there are issues in the area.

Once an area-wide scheme has been developed an Outline Business Case (OBC) will be completed to seek further funding from the West of England Combined Authority. This will outline the holistic design for the neighbourhood, detailing what elements will be trialled with temporary materials. Traffic modelling will also be carried out to help understand how the scheme may perform in terms of modal shift and economics. The council will look to set up a trial to understand how the scheme

works in practice before further engagement on how permanent solutions could help to balance how streets are used for people and traffic.

The engagement feedback shows that people in the area would like a range of active travel support to help them shift to more sustainable ways of travelling. We will continue to run our outreach and behaviour change programme which offers bike loans, personalised journeys and cycle training and bike maintenance courses.

The project team will share the area-wide plans and take people through the designs and timeline for the trial scheme. This will lead onto more community engagement before the permanent scheme is agreed.