

# Woolwich town centre improvement programme

March 2022 consultation summary



# Introduction

Woolwich is benefitting from a multi-million pound makeover that will make the town centre a more vibrant, attractive and accessible place to shop, work and live. As part of this transformation, the Royal Borough of Greenwich has been gathering the views of local people about what improvements they would like to see made to Beresford Square and Powis Street. This report summarises the feedback received from residents, businesses and community groups in March 2022. It forms part of a wide reaching consultation exercise on Royal Greenwich's ambitious improvement programme for Woolwich town centre, to ensure the final designs are reflective of the local community's views.

## Background

The £21 million funding secured from the government's Future High Streets Fund and Historic England, supported by funding from the Council, will help us to create a more attractive town centre that works for the community and celebrates Woolwich's fascinating history.

## Next steps

Feedback from local people has been and will continue to be at the heart of this improvement process. All the comments received so far have been considered in the preparation of design proposals for Beresford Square and Powis Street. Feedback received during further consultation in June and July (phase 2) will also be considered before a planning application is submitted in late July.

## Phase 1 – March 2022

In March 2022, Royal Greenwich invited the local community to share their ideas and views on how Beresford Square and Powis Street could be improved. Methods of reaching out to gather people's views included the following:

- an online platform hosted on the Council's website, a dedicated email address and a digital survey that received 303 responses
- outdoor pop-up events on 10, 16 and 21 March with over 250 members of the public spoken to and 116 comments received
- a night-walk on 17 March about safety and lighting attended by 13 participants
- an online workshop on 19 March attended by eight participants.

Analysis of feedback identified three main themes:

- General support for improvements to Woolwich town centre. Common descriptions of the town centre, as it currently stands, were unsafe, depressing and tired.
- Strong views were expressed for more seating, lighting, green spaces, improved paving and the need for a safe environment. Popular suggestions included seating near food places, decorative planting and community events.
- Requests for a cleaner, regularly maintained town centre.

# Woolwich town centre: March 2022 consultation overview

## Participation

303 online responses

116 comments at pop-ups

## Engagement methodology

Online survey, five questions

- Two close-ended questions (CE)
- Three open-ended questions (OE)

Pop-up sessions on-site

- Capturing comments on post-it notes

## Recurring themes

- Need for additional seating, trees, planting and improved paving
- Improved quality of shops
- Concerns for safety
- Need improved lighting

## Online survey: summary of 303 responses

Q1) How do you feel when you visit Woolwich town centre? (OE)

Unsafe

89 mentions



Depressing

75 mentions



“Rundown”

48 mentions



Q2) What improvements to Beresford Square would encourage you to visit more often? (CE)

New seats, trees and planting

238 mentions



Improved lighting

147 mentions



Waste & recycling

118 mentions



Q3) What improvements to Powis Street would encourage you to visit more often? (CE)

New seats, trees and planting

196 mentions



Other comments

140 mentions



Improved paving

138 mentions



Q4) Ideas to improve Woolwich (OE)

Quality of shops

78 mentions



Independent café

47 mentions



Bars & nightlife

40 mentions



Q5) What have you seen in other towns and high streets that could work in Woolwich? (OE)

Flowers & greenery

42 mentions



Better shops

34 mentions



Bars & nightlife

30 mentions



# Woolwich town centre: March 2022 consultation overview

## Pop-up events: summary of 116 responses

Improved quality of shops

20 mentions

Example:

“Shop turnaround is too high, would like to see more variety of independent shops and mainstream shops”



Improvements to the market square

16 mentions

Example:

“Market to be extended - more fruit & veg. Artisan greengrocers. More independent produce.”



Improvements to street lighting

11 mentions

Example:

“Better lights (energy efficient), improved lighting technology, declutter street space (similar to Brixton), get rid of hiding spaces for criminal activity.”



Concerns for safety

9 mentions

Example:

“Lots of drinkers. Feels unsafe. Lots of begging. Not enough Police. Train fares are too expensive. Arsenal cafes are expensive.”

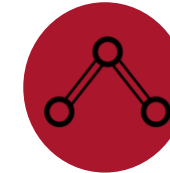


Integration / access to Royal Arsenal Riverside

9 mentions

Example:

“More access and social connections between Woolwich and Royal Arsenal Riverside.”



## Other activities

### Night walk sessions

- 13 residents attended.
- Discussions around security, lack of a night-time economy and poor retail offer.
- Feedback on lighting to be built into the design process.

### Online workshops

- 8 participants attended the community workshop on Saturday 19 March.
- Strong support for more greenery, more activity and a recognition of the heritage of Woolwich.

