

HOUNSLOW TOWN CENTRE VISIONS

Commonplace Consultation summary

February 2021

Introduction

Why are these projects happening?

We want our town centres to evolve, thrive and innovate in order to meet current and future challenges, but we must strive for more. A modern town centre can play its part in mitigating climate change, economic inequality and even social injustice. All the while, we must never lose sight of existing town centre communities and adapting to welcoming new ones. We want to support grassroots community projects and strong public-private partnerships, attracting investment and funding.

We believe our town centres can offer an excellent range of goods and services for visitors, a thriving trading environment for businesses and provide a good quality of life for their residents. We want a sustainable mix of uses, a well-connected transport network and an environment which promotes biodiversity and healthy living.

Why are we creating these vision documents?

By creating these documents, we can build a plan, based on all the stakeholders' ambitions, and support the right kinds of developments in the town centres. The visions will also ensure that we are better placed to attract investment and funding to make the plans happen.

The visions will be for Hounslow, Feltham, Brentford and Chiswick town centres.

What did we ask you?

We asked residents to share their knowledge and ideas. This included identifying and mapping the key threats and opportunities for each town centre, and what a vision for their long-term future might be.

When did we ask for comments?

3rd September - 8th November 2020

What is in this document?

A Commonplace map and survey was used to collect comments. This document provides a summary of the comments and ideas collected. Some questions were multiple-choice whilst others prompted a descriptive written response. These have all been read, recorded and summarised.

How many people responded?

Hounslow	177
Feltham	102
Brentford	167
Chiswick	1435

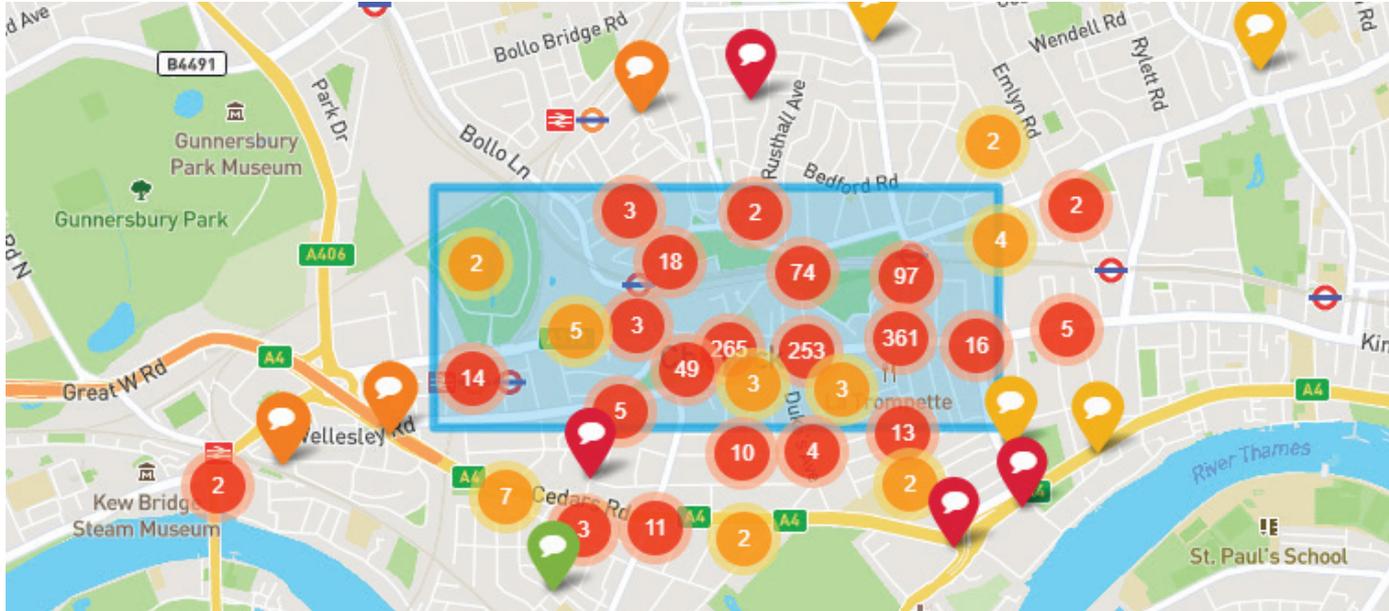
What happens next?

We have been using your comments to develop a vision for each town centre. We would now like your views on these emerging ideas. A survey will go live on Citizenspace and we are running public workshops for each town centre to discuss these ideas. The Vision documents will be published later in the Spring after feedback has been taken into account on the emerging ideas.

Chiswick town centre

Chiswick

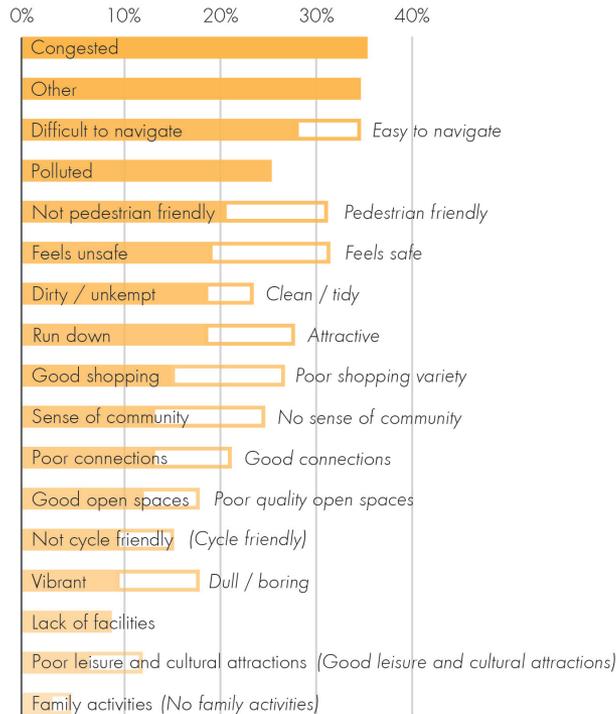
Mapped Responses



1435 Total comments

Chiswick

How do you feel about the town centre?



Most popular responses...

Least popular responses...

Congested

35%

Difficult to navigate

28%

Polluted

25%

Lack of facilities

8%

Poor leisure/culture offer
(Good leisure/culture also 6%)

6%

No family activities
(Good family activities also 2%)

2%

Chiswick

Describe the ideal future town centre

Comments related to movement and connectivity...

85%

example quotes...

"One in which car traffic moves freely, is **cycle friendly but not at the expense of pedestrians**. The new cycle lanes will make life much more difficult for walking and getting about generally, **particularly for the disabled**."

"I am a cyclist but even I am mystified/angry about the recent street closures and the cycle lane... **Traffic congestion is worse** resulting in more pollution not less."

Comments related to shopping...

14%

"Thriving town centre with **independent shops to lend distinctiveness** for local community..."

"**The Flower Market gave a real boost**. Make it a permanent fixture and also expand it along the High Road."

Comments related to a sense of community...

14%

"Children **playing in the street**, less pollution, no danger, communities watching out for each other, **staying more local, shopping more local, working more local**"

Shopping **12%**

Leisure / culture **4%**

Better consultation **5%**

Greenery **3%**

Restuarants and bars **5%**

Safety **3%**

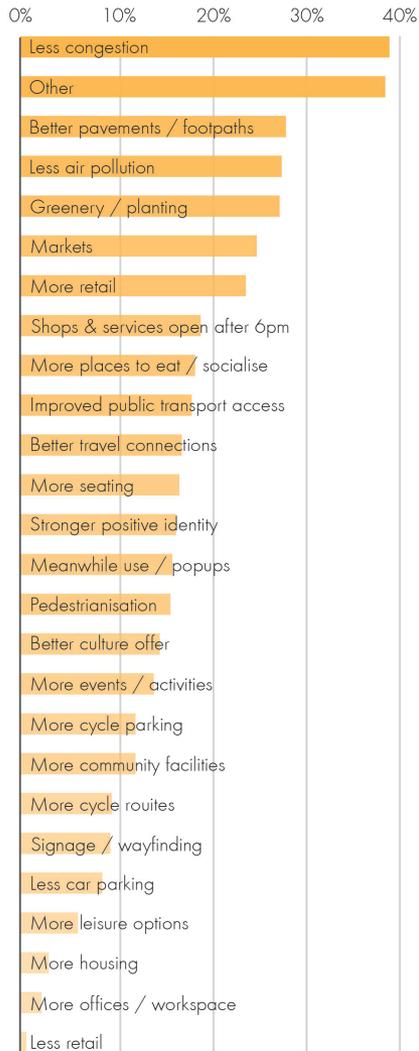
The town should have better...

Quality of public realm **4%**

Quality of buildings **3%**

Chiswick

How could we make it better?



Most popular responses...

Least popular responses...

Less congestion

39%

Better pavements / footpaths

28%

Less air pollution

28%

More housing

3%

More offices / workspace

2%

Less retail

1%

Chiswick

Other comments

Related to movement...

83%

example quotes...

"Chiswick is being ruined by the **LTN scheme**, traffic constantly, pollution everywhere, road rage between cyclists and vehicles, a very hostile place to be, **ambulances stuck in the traffic** unable to move, its a disgrace!"

"As a cyclist I find the new cycle highway poorly executed and frankly **dangerous to use**. There is too much at stake for relatively little gain from these traffic measures."

"...you have **cut off** south and north Chiswick..."

Related to a need for better consultation...

15%

"Listen to residents and have **proper consultation** - this isn't it!"

"You need to start **listening and understanding**, not imposing ideas that have no relevance to the local situation."

Related to shopping...

12%

"Many **empty retail spots** along the high street and independent retailers on TGT are not being supported"

"Stop trying to make it conform to other towns across Europe. **It's unique**. We love it."

Sense of community **10%**

Restaurants and bars **1%**

Road safety **2%**

Quality of buildings **1%**

Quality of public realm **2%**

Greenery **1%**

Leisure / culture **2%**

Employment **1%**

Comments related to...

Chiswick

Example comments



"Our high street WAS VIBRANT these **LTN infrastructures** are destroying our old amazing spaces."

"The library should be developed and publicised more and become **a hub for educational, cultural and leisure activities**"

"(The closing of roads) has had a negative impact on all roads around, causing build up of **extreme traffic, pollution** & added **stress** for all Chiswick residents"

"Better use of our green space, **an annual fair on the High Road** beside the church a bit like they do in Barnes would be fab"

"**Mixed housing developments of modern standards** that are affordable to first-time buyers from a variety of income brackets should be a priority"

"I would like to see the high street a place that offers **something for all ages** so that our **teenagers and elderly** can be seen having fun and engaging in social life. Currently the high street caters to yummy mummies"

"I am actually pro-cycling, but putting cycle lanes in has to be done in a **consented, proportionate and sensible way** - not imposed like this. Turnham Green Terrace has become an **empty, under utilised eyesore**"

"I am a cyclist who now **feels unwelcome** on the high road super highway... I don't want to cycle alongside **commuters who speed along** I want to potter north and south of the high road..."

Example comments



“**Pedestrianise Turnham Green Terrace totally at weekends** and put it back to how it was during weekdays. Turnham Green Terrace is busiest at weekends...”

“It’s been bumpy, but a good start so far. **Take Chiswick back from the cars and give it to the people.**”

“I love Chiswick. It is now a **ghost town**. Support our independent businesses.”

“**Lower business rates** to attract more independent retailers.”

“Remove car parking spaces and **allocate space for cafes, more green spaces, markets.**”

“Mixed use areas for **small trader and local businesses to set up quickly and cheaply**”

“Current proposals seem to be trying to discourage the use of cars altogether. **Not everyone can take to bicycles, I am 87.** Chiswick High Road is our main shopping street...”

“The **pavements are all cracked** and can be quite a hazard... Remove huge amounts of **unnecessary signage**... **Playground furniture needs fixing.**”

Transport & Movement comments

most common themes:

'Stop fixing what isn't broken'

No to the changes (both the LTNs and the Cycleway 9)

No to the Turnham Green LTN changes

Better consultation and engagement needed

Poor bus reliability as a result of Cycleway 9

**Constant traffic congestion / poor air quality
particularly as Hammersmith Bridge is closed as well**

Disabled access a problem

Transport & Movement comments

Collated comments

Wider Collaboration: number of respondents felt that there was a need to think wider than Chiswick, with greater collaboration with Ealing Council with regards to potential road changes

Better and more meaningful engagement and consultation: a number of respondents felt that there should have been and should be better engagement and consultation going forward. Many felt put upon by recent changes. A number of respondents felt that the council should listen and work with the community in a more meaningful and collaborative way

No to changes: The overriding response was that the measures had made the local area worse, with a number of respondent comments concerned that the recent Cycleway 9 and LTN schemes had created a problem rather than fixed one. This was particularly concerning as the changes were in addition to the ongoing Hammersmith bridge closure, having an even larger impact on the local network

A more balanced approach: Several respondents felt a more balanced approach to change was required. They felt there were too many haphazard projects occurring particularly whilst Hammersmith bridge is closed

Piccadilly Line: Some respondents commented that they would like the Piccadilly line to stop at Turnham Green more regularly

Parking: Some respondents felt there was insufficient parking to access the town centre, particularly for those who are unable to use public transport

Public realm: Some respondents felt that area outside the Police station needed improvement, as well as general footway improvements and street clutter removal.

Transport & Movement comments

Low Transport Neighbourhoods (LTNs)

Turnham Green LTN: The vast majority of respondent comments were not in favour of the Turnham Green / Fisher Lane LTNs, which have subsequently been removed. Many felt it had too wider impact on the surrounding network and local businesses. Some respondents commented that rather than permanently close Turnham Green, it could be closed for restricted times, potentially at the weekends or for special events.

Devonshire Road LTN: there was mixed comments on the introduction of a LTN on Devonshire Road. Some liked the quieter nature of the street, whilst others felt it impacted too negatively on local businesses and access

Cycleway 9

Traffic congestion and air quality: A number of respondents sighted the significant impact on traffic congestion and a reduction in air quality as the reason they were not in support of the trial Cycleway 9 scheme

Road Safety: a number of comments were concerned about the safety of the cycle scheme, particularly at junctions and next to the bus island

Commuter Cycling: A number of respondents felt the scheme was too heavily about commuter cycling rather than local access, movement and enjoyment of the space

Vulnerable Road Users: A number of respondents commented that they were concerned that insufficient thought was given to vulnerable road users in the design and implementation of the Cycleway 9

Buses: A number of respondents felt the Cycleway 9 scheme had too greater impact on bus accessibility and reliability. A number of respondents felt the bus island was very poor, particularly for vulnerable users.

Key summary

Hounslow

Many residents of Hounslow believe improvements to public realm and the quality of shopping will help to restore some **positive identity** in the town.

Driving is a key issue. Many feel they are being forced out of their own town by a lack of parking, and by tight permit restrictions.

Many residents commented that there is a need to identify what makes Hounslow a **destination**. Residents felt Hounslow needs investment in public realm, leisure and community activities in order to build pride in their centre and a sense of identity and community.

residents wanted...

better shops

better public realm

a positive identity

Feltham

Residents of Feltham think the size of the High Street causes a **disconnect** in their town centre.

Many think the road is **unsafe** but are also concerned the physical barrier this creates is causing levels of anti-social behaviour and general uncleanness in key areas such as **Feltham Green**. The pond area is a particular highlight for residents, and they do not want it abandoned.

It is felt that local centres of creativity such as **Feltham Arts** and the library could be better connected to the community and town centre.

residents wanted...

safety

a sense of place

investment in green spaces

Brentford

Residents of Brentford were concerned about the **lack of services**, such as banks, post offices and pharmacists, in relation to the large number of **new developments** in the town centre. A number of residents were supportive of the major schemes and simply wanted to see them completed.

Brentford's strong **historical connections** are at the forefront of the public conscience. People want to celebrate Brentford, and feel this can be done by supporting local arts (**Watermans** is a point of pride) and promoting stronger physical links in the town to support this.

residents wanted...

local amenities

less flats

riverside connections

Chiswick

In Chiswick there is a strong sense of **pride for local business**. Residents feel the council need to **understand the community** better and do more to support these businesses.

Residents of Chiswick are concerned about the **congestion, fast cycle speeds and pollution** caused as a result of the imposed traffic restrictions and cycle interventions.

An **engaged local community full of innovative ideas** to support Chiswick as a vibrant town centre. They want to see **events and markets on the High Road and green spaces**.

residents wanted...

less traffic

support for local businesses

better engagement from the Council