

Your Voice, Your Town

Town forum consultation findings

February 2024

EALING COUNCIL



£ **CREATING**
GOOD JOBS

 **TACKLING**
THE CLIMATE CRISIS

 **FIGHTING**
INEQUALITY

What is Your Voice, Your town?

- Your Voice Your Town aims to bring local people into the decisions that are made about the places where they live. In summer and autumn 2023 Ealing Council asked residents across the borough to share their views about how they would find it easiest to talk to the council about their towns and neighbourhoods.
- A total of 989 people completed a short survey or attended one of 32 in-person events across the borough at community venues, places of worship and schools.
- The council wanted to understand how you are currently active in your community, how you would like to be involved in the future, what would make that possible, and what would you want to change.
- This engagement exercise was carried out to ensure all people could participate, particularly those the council rarely hears from, such as parents and carers, people aged 18-35 and people who do not speak English as a first language.

What did we ask?

- What would make it possible for you to get more involved in conversations about shaping your place?
- What experiences (good and bad) do you have of being involved in conversations focused on improving your local area?
- If there was one thing you could change about the area that you live in, what would that be?
- How would you like to have a conversation with the council on improving your local area in the future?
- Who else should we be speaking to about improving your local area?

What did we focus on?

We wanted to make it easy for all residents to share their opinions, even if traditional ways of getting involved have not been appealing or convenient for them. We designed our research with these principles at the centre:

- Allowing residents to tell us what they think in their own words
- Making sure that we heard from residents who haven't been involved before, by working with partners and in convenient venues
- Being flexible about the best ways to have conversations, including through workshops, drop-ins and informal conversations

Borough-wide highlights

1. Many of the borough's residents (27%) are currently involved in activities to improve their local area, while 56% want to do that in future.
2. A lack of trust (35%) and poor relationships limits engagement with the council. One of the main reasons for why people do not get involved is people (32%) believe that their involvement will not make a difference.
3. Whatever activities are planned, they must be well-run, and that people have a good experience of attending. The top things that residents said would help them get involved are:
 - The right kind of activity
 - Good communication
 - Hosting inclusive conversations
 - Consistent and follow up with actions
 - Clear purpose for people to get involved

Borough-wide highlights

4. The council needs to make sure that different communities know about activities and feel they can take part – this has not always worked well in the past.

5. Residents have very diverse opinions about the kinds of activities that they want to take part in – one size does not fit all. The top ideas were:

- In-person meetings – 21%
- Surveys – 18%
- Community groups – 10%
- Online meetings – 9%
- Making sure there is a mixture - 9%

Borough-wide highlights

6. Reasons for why residents will not take engage with the council included:

- Being busy with other things
- Feeling that not everyone is welcome
- Not having enough information – particularly young people (32%)

7. Residents also have very diverse opinions about what issues matter most to them – we have to help local people to work on a wide range of priorities. Some of the top themes were:

- Area being clean and pleasant to use – 18%
- Feeling safe – 14%
- Appropriate development with enough services – 7%
- The council doing its job well – 7%
- Good jobs and employment opportunities – 7%

About your town – Acton

What you told us

What helps residents in Acton get involved:

- Good communication
- The right kind of activity (more details on the next page)
- Trusting the council
- Activities being well run / having a good experience when you attend

What stops residents in Acton getting involved?

- Not believing that it will make a difference
- Feeling that not everyone is welcome
- Being busy with other things
- Not tackling the issues that matter to me

What you told us

How residents want to get involved

Many residents told us about the kinds of activities they think work well in Acton. There were a lot of different opinions. The top preferences were:

- Surveys and consultations - 23%
- In-person meetings - 20%
- Through community groups - 14%
- Making sure there is a mixture - 9%

What issues residents care about most

Residents shared their top priorities for change in Acton. Many different issues were mentioned but some of the top themes were:

- Area being clean and pleasant to use – 15%
- Supporting community life – 10%
- Feeling safe – 10%
- Appropriate development with enough services – 9%
- Affordable and well-maintained housing – 8%

About your town– Acton

We held engagement events at:

- Acton Carnival
- Acton Youth Association
- Acton Market
- A.P.P.L.E Play
- Acton Town Library
- JE Delve

What you told us, in your own words:

"I feel like people do speak up, but they aren't listened to."

"Lots of advance notice. Times that are varied so that you can try and fit around other commitments. Online opportunities."

"Hear back directly from the council that they have understood the local issues and see that they are taking appropriate action. It can feel like communicating into a black hole."

What you told us

What helps residents in Ealing get involved:

- The right kind of activity (more details on the next page)
- Trusting the council
- Good communication
- Activities being well run / having a good experience when you attend

What stops residents in Ealing getting involved?

- Not believing that it will make a difference
- Not having enough information
- Feeling that not everyone is welcome
- Being busy with other things

What you told us

How residents want to get involved

Many residents told us about the kinds of activities they think work well in Ealing. There were a lot of different opinions. The top preferences were:

- Surveys and consultations - 23%
- In-person meetings - 19%
- Online meetings - 10%
- Making sure there is a mixture - 9%

What issues residents care about most

Residents shared their top priorities for change in Ealing. Many different issues were mentioned but some of the top themes were:

- Feeling safe – 14%
- Area being clean and pleasant to use – 14%
- The council doing its job well – 13%
- Selection of shops, restaurants and cafes – 10%
- Services for specific groups -9%

About your town– Ealing town

We held engagement events at:

- Ealing Broadway ward forum
- Akuba/WAPPY
- NewGen Festival

What you told us, in your own words:

"Direct debate and vote on issues and proposals."

"Please make these conversations as diverse as possible, definitely young people from schools and universities, as they are full of ideas."

"If people are going to give their time to do this, they need to be kept in the loop about how the council is using the information provided, and why some ideas are chosen over others."

What you told us

What helps resident in Greenford get involved:

- The right kind of activity (more details on the next page)
- Good communication
- Trusting the council
- Activities being well run / having a good experience when you attend

What stops residents in getting involved?

- Not believing that it will make a difference
- Feeling that not everyone is welcome
- Being busy with other things
- Not having enough information

What you told us

How residents want to get involved

Many residents told us about the kinds of activities they think work well in Greenford. There were a lot of different opinions. The top preferences were:

- In-person meetings (broad) - 20%
- Surveys and consultations - 15%
- Ward forums (specific) – 10%
- Through community groups - 10%
- Through resident-led ideas – 10%

What you told us

What issues residents care about most

Residents shared their top priorities for change in Greenford. Many different issues were mentioned but some of the top themes were:

- Area being clean and pleasant to use – 14%
- Appropriate development with enough services – 13%
- Feeling safe – 11%
- Local community facilities - 7%
- Supporting community life – 7%

About your town– Greenford

We held engagement events at:

- All Hallows Church
- Global Business School
- Horsenden Farm
- Bilal Mosque

What you told us, in your own words:

"I would like to support those in the community that need a voice."

"I would love to give my views on a lot of important issues in my area that will lead to social and environmental improvements; if there were more meetings and fewer people so everyone could have a chance to talk and give their opinion."

"One approach doesn't suit all. Vary the type of meetings. Face to face e.g. Greenford Hall or local school. Online, daytime meetings and evenings. Maybe smaller meetings could be held in libraries."

What you told us

What helps residents in Hanwell get involved:

- The right kind of activity (more details on the next page)
- Trusting the council
- Good communication
- Activities being well run / having a good experience when you attend

What stops residents in getting involved?

- Not believing that it will make a difference
- Being busy with other things
- Not having enough information
- Inconvenient meeting times

What you told us

How residents want to get involved

Many residents told us about the kinds of activities they think work well in Hanwell. There were a lot of different opinions. The top preferences were:

- In-person meetings - 23%
- Surveys and consultations - 15%
- Online meetings – 15%
- Through community groups - 12%

What issues residents care about most

Residents shared their top priorities for change in Hanwell. Many different issues were mentioned but some of the top themes were:

- Feeling safe – 21%
- Area being clean and pleasant to use – 19%
- The council doing its job well – 12%
- Good jobs and employment opportunities – 11%
- Local community facilities – 9%

About your town– Hanwell

We held engagement events at:

- The Store Cupboard
- Day Adventist Church
- Copley Close community centre

What you told us, in your own words:

"The workshops or meetings not to be in the evenings and for them to be facilitated and managed well, and for there to be feedback on the outcomes of the meetings / workshops."

"Being more connected with neighbours and community centres in the area."

"The council advertising workshops, meetings and forums. I only ever seem to see surveys."

What you told us

What helps residents in Northolt get involved:

- The right kind of activity (more details on the next page)
- Trusting the council
- Good communication
- Activities being well run / having a good experience when you attend

What stops residents in getting involved?

- Not believing that it will make a difference
- Not having enough information
- Being busy with other things
- Feeling that not everyone is welcome

What you told us

How residents want to get involved

Many residents told us about the kinds of activities they think work well in Northolt. There were a lot of different opinions. The top preferences were:

- In-person meetings - 27%
- Surveys and consultations - 18%
- Online meetings - 12%
- Making sure there is a mixture - 10%

What issues residents care about most

Residents shared their top priorities for change in Northolt. Many different issues were mentioned but some of the top themes were:

- Area being clean and pleasant to use – 16%
- Feeling safe – 15%
- Local community facilities – 10%
- Supporting community life – 10%
- The council doing its job well - 9 %

About your town— Northolt

We held engagement events at:

- Educational and Skills Development Group (ESDEG)
- Racecourse estate
- NewGen festival
- Horsenden farm

What you told us, in your own words:

"Actually listening to residents."

"I don't want to just go to a meeting for the sake of it. I want to know what is going to be achieved and how me being there will help."

"Giving people additional options, such as those who are unable to physically attend in person or have difficulty with large group settings. To have the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas, concerns in an alternative way. Because our voices are also important."

About your town— Perivale

What you told us

What helps residents in Perivale get involved:

- The right kind of activity (more details on the next page)
- Good communication
- Convenient location
- Activities being well run / having a good experience when you attend

What stops residents in getting involved?

We also asked what stops you getting involved. The top things you focused on telling us were about:

- Not believing that it will make a difference
- Feeling that not everyone is welcome
- Being busy with other things
- Not having enough information

What you told us

How residents want to get involved

Many residents told us about the kinds of activities they think work well in Perivale. There were a lot of different opinions. The top preferences were:

- Making sure there is a mixture – 35%
- In-person meetings – 18%
- Through community groups - 15%
- Surveys and consultations - 9%

What issues residents care about most

Residents shared their top priorities for change in Perivale. Many different issues were mentioned but some of the top themes were:

- Area being clean and pleasant to use – 26%
- Feeling safe – 14%
- The council doing its job well – 12%
- Good jobs and employment opportunities – 10%
- Local community facilities – 7%

About your town– Perivale

We held engagement events at:

- Perivale Hive
- Perivale knitting club
- Horsenden farm

What you told us, in your own words:

Communication is poor, also feel the council doesn't listen to its local community voice especially from the younger generation."

"I would like more of a presence of the needs of the town being acknowledged. Residents are always willing to help in initiatives that relate to them. There needs to be more openness and community involvement."

Engage with other community in their language or have representation in their culture e.g Polish. Go out into schools, meet with school councils run by children."

What you told us

What helps residents in Southall get involved:

- The right kind of activity (more details on the next page)
- Good communication
- Some extra support to make it possible to participate
- Activities being well run / having a good experience when you attend

What stops residents in getting involved?

- Being busy with other things
- Feeling that not everyone is welcome
- Not believing that it will make a difference
- Not having enough information

What you told us

How residents want to get involved

Many residents told us about the kinds of activities they think work well in Southall. There were a lot of different opinions. The top preferences were:

- Surveys and consultations - 16%
- In-person meetings – 16%
- Through community groups - 11%
- Group workshops – 9%
- Online meetings – 9%
- Making sure there is a mixture - 9%

What you told us

What issues residents care about most

Residents shared their top priorities for change in Southall. Many different issues were mentioned but some of the top themes were:

- Area being clean and pleasant to use – 20%
- Feeling safe – 16%
- Pedestrian access – 10%
- Good jobs and employment opportunities – 8%
- The council doing its job well – 7%

About your town– Southall

We held engagement events at:

- Little Angels mother and toddler group
- Lasting Support Services
- Southall Community Alliance
- Golflinks (housing) popup
- Southall Parkrun
- Southall Parkplay
- Ramgarhia Gurdwara Oswald Road
- Featherstone High School, Villiers High School, and Dormers Wells High School
- The Hope Group

What you told us, in your own words:

“More information in the right places - we never hear about how to change the local area or make improvements.”

Getting others from local community involved to have many voices participating.”

“Shorter surveys, working groups, online meetings, more timing options, recordings of meetings.”

What is next?

- The council will make decisions together with members of the community in each of the borough's seven towns. You can join a series of Your Voice Your Town workshops, in May 2024.
- Using the information gathered through the 'Your Voice, Your Town' engagement, and hearing about what has worked elsewhere, people will work together with neighbours, community leaders and the council, to use their voice to create a vision for the town they live in.
- These events will be attended by residents, voluntary, community and faith groups, local businesses, council officers and some of its partners, and councillors