

**Report from Wishes Working Party
After Interim Analysis & Report by Dr Dan Carney**

7th December 2014 7.30pm

Present: Fiona, Jamie & Alan

Apologies: Fabien & Annemarie

(Written submission by Annemarie prior to meeting)



Nine themes were identified in total in the data analysis carried out by Dan Carney on behalf of the Big Local. His full report is available as a separate document. Figure 1 shows how these themes featured *across* all questions. The highest percentage of responses was coded as belonging to the category **Communal Spaces, Facilities & Activities (35%)**. Other significant themes were **Environmental Improvement (16%)**, **Local Business Demography (18%)**, and **Aesthetic Improvement (14%)**. The remaining categories were not as prominent: Safety & Security (8%), Skills Development (4%), Political Engagement & Involvement (3%), Wellbeing & Support (1%) and Accessibility (1%).

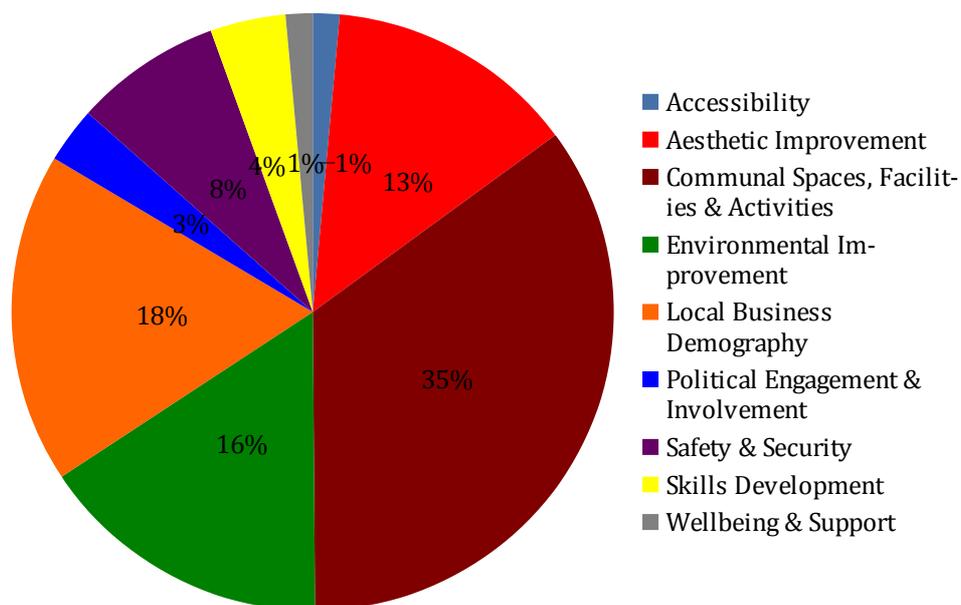


Figure 1 – Ranking of Themes in Public Survey

Figure 2 below shows the main ideas that were expressed within each theme. The two themes identified across all parts of the survey were **Communal Spaces, Facilities & Activities** and **Environmental Improvement**, indicating that these areas are highly important to local residents. The categories **Aesthetic Improvement**, **Local Business Demography**, and **Safety & Security** were all identified in six questions. The other categories were mentioned in at least two questions.

ACCESSIBILITY (APPEARED IN 3 QUESTIONS)

Greater access to Walthamstow Marshes, greater access to public transport, improve cycling routes to marshes.

AESTHETIC IMPROVEMENT (6 QUESTIONS)

Paint/smarten up shop fronts, greater uniformity/cohesiveness between shop fronts, smarten up residential properties, preservation/restoration of older buildings and features, improve shared outdoor space, smarten up public transport terminals, improve look of health centre, public art.

COMMUNITY SPACES, FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES (ALL 7 QUESTIONS)

Funding and support for The Mill, spaces and activities for young people, increase in sports provision, improved facilities in St. James Park, affordable provision, group-specific spaces (e.g. women, elderly), more community events, community centre, inclusivity, outdoor communal seating areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT (ALL 7 QUESTIONS)

Increase green spaces/level of public greenery, address litter and dog fouling, traffic calming, greater cycling provision, maximize use of empty/derelict spaces, promotion of sustainability initiatives e.g. energy-saving, recycling, noise reduction.

LOCAL BUSINESS DEMOGRAPHY (6 QUESTIONS)

Diversity, quality, affordability, encourage independent/local businesses, improved promotion of local businesses and retail area, pop-up shops, extend market, greater nighttime economy e.g. pubs/restaurants.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT & INVOLVEMENT (2 QUESTIONS)

Greater public/Big Local engagement with councilors/MPs/stakeholders, accessibility of Big Local materials, transparency of local politicians and steering group members, improve public voice with regard to local issues (e.g. groups, "town hall"-style events), Big Local youth panel.

SAFETY & SECURITY (6 QUESTIONS)

Increased visibility/surveillance, address public anti-social behavior, improve pedestrian safety, make the area feel safer in general,

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (4 QUESTIONS)

Skills training, employability training, training/mentoring opportunities for young people, free/affordable training opportunities, skills exchange.

WELLBEING & SUPPORT (2 QUESTIONS)

Raise awareness of health issues, support and funding for vulnerable groups (e.g. elderly, low income, volunteer service for "neighbours in need").

Figure 2 – Main Ideas Within the Nine Main Themes

The Wishes Working Party faced a number of difficulties when attempting to develop the data analysis into a credible actions.

The first was that while many people had raised particular themes, there was a distinct lack of practical ideas suggested. In the first instance the sorted, coded list of survey entries stretched to 40+ pages. After removal of repetition that page count reduced by more than half and when similar ideas were grouped and combined there was a list covering about 12 pages of A4. It was a daunting task to sort and consider the responses. It was agreed that where possible ideas which met multiple objectives should be prioritized. It was also felt that proposals should be, as far as possible, 'accessible to all' and that 'single issue' ideas would not be included in the next stage.

Secondly a considerable number of the items raised were outside the remit of Big Local or were proposals for outside the mapped area. For example 8% of responses raised the issue of Safety & Security, but there are relatively few ways in which Big Local can influence these issues. There was also a great deal of crossover with initiatives already in hand by other organisations. It was agreed that Big Local should partner with existing organisations to deliver and/or lobby for local improvements where this was outside the scope and budget of Big Local.

Thirdly many comments related to the range and type of businesses on the High Street and St James Street. The views were numerous and often conflicting. It was decided that the "demography" of the businesses lies outside of the Big Local sphere of influence. However working to support local businesses & business start-ups, and help them improve their offering was considered within the remit of Big Local.

Lastly the category "Wellbeing" did not receive as many responses as other categories even though the Big Local Steering Group consider this to be very important. It was assumed that the paucity of responses in this category was, in part, due to the problems of poor maintenance and litter being much more tangible when respondents were asked for their views without having had time to properly reflect on what would benefit the area at a deeper level. Having had the benefit of more time to reflect on the Big Local process, the Steering Group has chosen to include more ideas than would be initially suggested by the data analysis for the allourideas.org Wikisurvey stage of consultation. This will give the local community the opportunity to reflect on Wellbeing issues and compare these ideas with others on a case by case basis. This will allow a more measured assessment of local people priorities across the themes.

With the 9 identified themes in mind, a list of 30 "good ideas" was identified and sorted by primary theme. These were presented to the Steering Group at their meeting on 8th December 2014. An additional item was added to acknowledge the future work which is expected in relation to diversity to create a long list of 31 sorted by primary theme as follows:

Communal Spaces, Facilities & Activities (35%)

1. Work with the rail operators to improve the accessibility, appearance and lighting of St James Street station.
2. Work to promote links with Walthamstow Marshes – both physical and visual
3. Support the work of The Mill
4. Support Youth work and activities
5. Support Activities for over 65s
6. Work with partners, including Groundwork London, to support “friends of parks” groups and support their community building activities.
7. Small grants programme to support community building activities
8. Larger scale community events eg Jumble Trail, Festival, funfair etc
9. Maintain and store a Street Party Equipment Kit for loan to local residents.

Environmental Improvement (16%)

10. Work with LBWF on the Mini Holland proposals for traffic calming, street planting and cycle facilities
11. Greening of Streets
12. Promote a front gardens initiative (like that in Finsbury Park)
13. Work with partners to promote energy efficiency and investigate the potential for community wide regeneration schemes.
14. Work with the St James Street Health Centre User Group to resolve the lease issues which are blocking improvements to their buildings
15. Promote civic pride through activities and education

Local Business Demography (18%)

16. Support a Community Café with an ethos of access for all and sustainable living (possibly incorporating food recycling from The High Street Market)
17. Work with partners to promote and support business on the High Street and the Market
18. Support for local businesses including promoting of support groups, help to get online and joint promotion of the local area
19. Support for entrepreneurs and business start ups

Aesthetic Improvement (14%)

20. Work with LBWF on the Heritage Lottery Bid to improve the shop fronts and St James Street streetscape
21. Public art

Safety & Security (8%)

22. Work with the community and other partners to improve the safety and security of the area via “soft” methods

Skills Development (4%)

23. Work with partners to promote volunteering, skills sharing and mentoring
24. Big Local Youth Panel

Political Engagement & Involvement (3%)

25. Create information points – through community noticeboards and online resources
26. Promote a strong community voice via a “planning lobby group” or similar?

Wellbeing & Support (1%)

27. Support a programme working with families and local schools to help local children achieve their full potential
28. Work with partners, including the Credit Union, to provide financial education and promote alternatives to expensive High Street lenders.
29. Support and activities for vulnerable elderly people eg. Befriending, shopping service etc.
30. Support for the work of local charity (and key supporter of Big Local) Crest

Accessibility (1%)

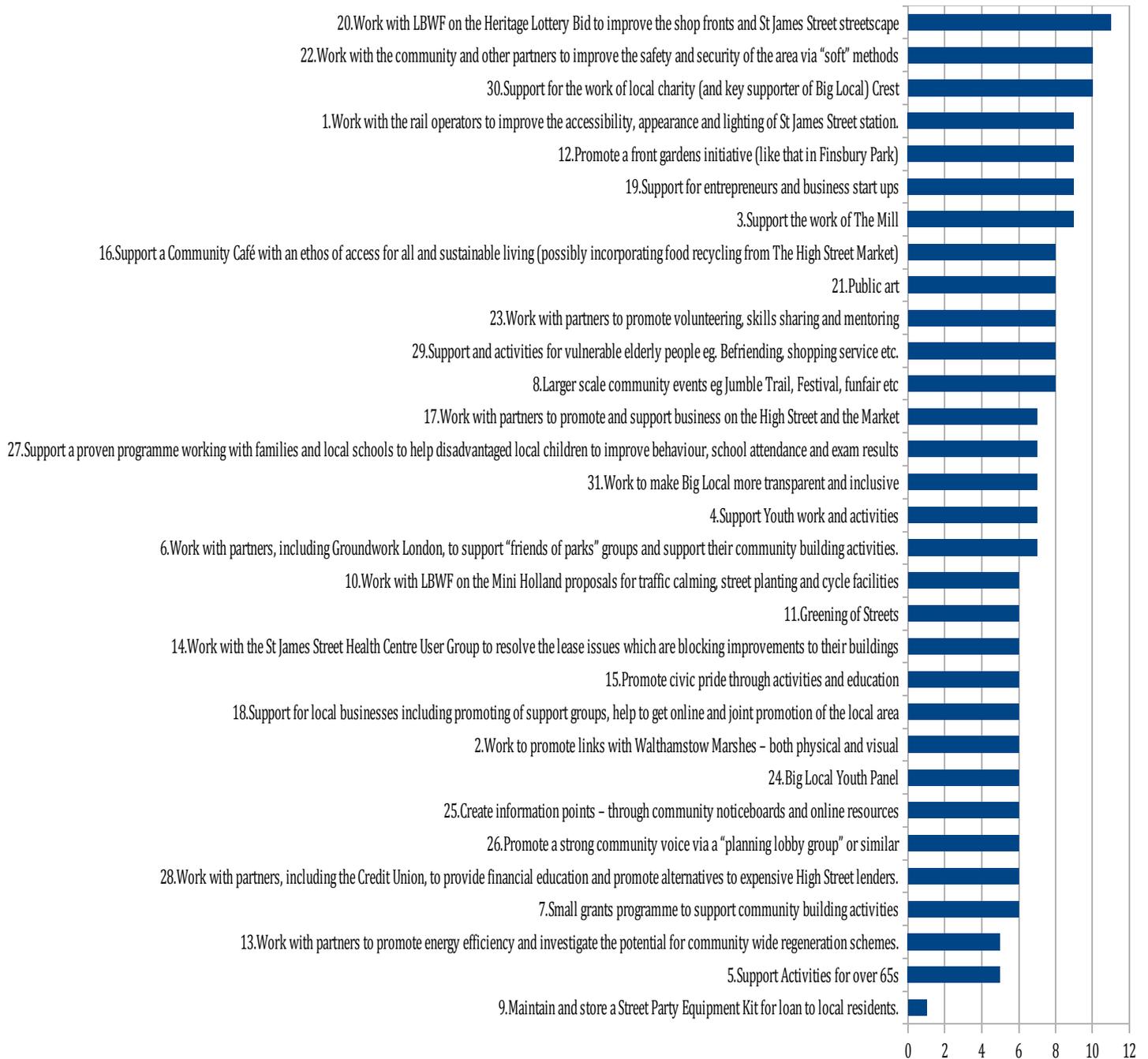
31. Work to make Big Local more transparent and inclusive

Steering Group members were asked to reduce this list of 31 ideas down to about 20 using a vote organized through SurveyMonkey. This survey was also used to capture the demographics of the Steering Group (for benchmarking purposes) and to identify key stakeholders for the planned event in February. 13 Steering Group members (those having attended at least 2 meetings in the last 12 months) 12 gave their votes, with one abstention.

The results of the Steering Group vote are shown in Figure 3 overleaf. The results are difficult to interpret, with a bunching in the middle of the table which does not provide a clear “cut line”. However idea #9 only received 1 vote and seems an easy candidate for omission. In addition, ideas #17 and #18 are very similar and could be combined. This would reduce the list to a total of 29 ideas.

In addition, some of the Steering Group votes were surprising and highlighted the need for the wording of some of the ideas to be enhanced and/or amended.

Figure 3: Ranking of Wishes by Steering Group Vote



Conclusion:

Having reviewed the allourideas.org website in more detail it seems that there is no limit to the number of ideas which can be seeded, and only the suggestion that “at least” 20 are entered. As there is little to divide the list and because all the remaining ideas are worthy of consideration, it is therefore suggested that all of the following 29 ideas are put forward into the Stage ii consultation on the allourideas.org website for local people to get involved in prioritising the results of our Stage i survey work:

Communal Spaces, Facilities & Activities (35%)

- Work with the rail operators to improve the accessibility, appearance and lighting of St James Street station.
- Work to promote links with Walthamstow Marshes – both physical and visual
- Support the work of local volunteer-led community centre: The Mill
- Support Youth work and activities
- Support Activities for over 65s
- Work with partners, including Groundwork London, to support “friends of parks” groups and support their community building activities.
- Community Chest: Small grants programme to support local people run events and community building activities
- Larger scale community events eg Jumble Trail, Festival, funfair etc
- ~~Maintain and store a Street Party Equipment Kit for loan to local residents.~~

Environmental Improvement (16%)

- Work with LBWF on the Mini Holland proposals for traffic calming, street planting and cycle facilities
- Greening of Streets - new trees and planters in the public realm
- Promote a front gardens initiative (like that in Finsbury Park)
- Work with partners to promote energy efficiency and investigate the potential for community wide regeneration schemes.
- Work with the St James Street Health Centre User Group to resolve the lease issues which are blocking improvements to their buildings
- Promote the idea of civic pride through activities and education, to encourage local people to better care for the St James Street area

Local Business Demography (18%)

- Support a Community Café with an ethos of access for all and sustainable living (possibly incorporating food recycling from The High Street Market)
- ~~Work with partners to promote and support business on the High Street and the Market~~
- Work with partners to promote and support local businesses including support groups, help to get online and joint promotion of the local area
- Support for entrepreneurs and business start ups

Aesthetic Improvement (14%)

- Work with LBWF on the Heritage Lottery Bid to improve the shop fronts and St James Street street-scape
- Public art

Safety & Security (8%)

- Work with the community and other partners to improve the safety and security of the area via “soft” methods

Skills Development (4%)

- Work with partners to promote volunteering, skills sharing and mentoring to benefit St James Street residents and businesses.
- Big Local Youth Panel, with a dedicated activity plan and budget, within the larger St James Big Local

Political Engagement & Involvement (3%)

- Create information points – community noticeboards and online resources
- Promote a strong community voice by supporting volunteers to establish a St James Street “community forum”, “planning lobby group” or similar.

Wellbeing & Support (1%)

- Support an established programme working with families and local schools to help disadvantaged children achieve to improve behaviour, school attendance and academic results.
- Work with partners, including the Credit Union, to provide financial education and promote alternatives to expensive High Street lenders.
- Support and activities for vulnerable elderly people eg. Befriending, shopping service etc.
- Support the work of local charity Crest – a key supporter of St James Big Local

Accessibility (1%)

- Work to make Big Local more transparent and inclusive