

# St Marks Road – Early Engagement Survey

## Summary Report

January 2021



## Summary

Over the summer the council provided more space for walking and cycling on our streets to support social distancing during COVID-19. This included using temporary barriers to widen pavements and to provide protected bike lanes. The council, in partnership with the West of England Combined Authority, has now secured further government funding to extend and strengthen the temporary work already done.

The council has been looking at ways to use this funding to make significant changes to several neighbourhood roads such as St Marks Road. The aim is to improve walking and cycling journeys, minimise rat running and maximise community enjoyment, creating more liveable neighbourhoods free from traffic congestion.

In addition to the Department for Transport (DfT) funding to improve walking and cycling on St Marks Road, the Community Infrastructure Levy funding is also available to improve the general St Marks Road environment. This could cover new CCTV, much needed improvements to road surfaces, signage, greenery, and lighting.

This is an opportunity to combine these funding sources to look at the street and see what is possible and what local businesses, organisations, religious centres, residents, and visitors would like to see happen on St Marks Road. The overall aim of any possible scheme will be to support the much-loved businesses, grow economic benefits, improve air quality with less pollution and make it easier to walk and cycle within the local community.

## Background

Closing the road at one end to make it access-only was an early suggestion, and within the local community there has been many conversations centred around both concerns and support for pedestrianisation of St Marks Road. There was a lot of strength of feeling with different groups having different viewpoints. As a result, online petitions have been drawn up by these different groups asking people to either stop or support pedestrianisation.

Before and during the early engagement survey that ran between Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021, the council has made clear that no plans have been drawn up for pedestrianisation or any other scheme. We are not committed to any one idea, and that we want to deliver a scheme that the community are happy with. The early engagement survey therefore asked open questions to find out from local people what they liked about the street, what they would improve and what would they prioritise. The intention is to work with the local community to co-design a scheme using all the feedback in this engagement.

## How we engaged

To ensure the survey reached as wide an audience as possible in a multi-cultural ward where English is not the first language for 17.5% of the residents the team did the following:

- Paper copies of the community survey with a language template covering 12 languages were posted along with a free post envelope to 3548 local properties
- 50 posters were put up in the local area to raise awareness of the survey
- Online survey was compatible word reader software
- Local stakeholders and community groups were asked to help raise awareness of the survey

- Prior to the survey, Covid-19 compliant face to face meetings with local stakeholders were held
- Promoted the survey via online social media platforms which appeal to different age ranges
- Due to Covid19 restrictions the team offered virtual chats and phone appointments to anyone who didn't want to submit a written response but wanted to ask questions and provide feedback.
- Officers attended a local community meeting to hear feedback from residents, businesses, faith leaders and other local stakeholders

### **Stakeholders**

Over 143 key stakeholders (including emergency services), 167 equality, Voluntary and Community Sector and faith groups and 14 local businesses were engaged. Responses were received from the police and fire service who want to be kept in the loop once proposals emerge to ensure access is retained for emergency vehicles. Responses were received from the following citywide organisations:

- Bristol Muslim Strategic Leadership Group
- Bristol Walking Alliance,
- Bristol Cycle Campaign and
- Bristol Civic Society.

Local Stakeholders - Meetings were held with members of the St Marks Road Community Group who represent local businesses, religious centres and other local community groups and some members submitted suggestions for the road which included:

- Loading bays,
- Increased signage,
- Separate cycle lane,
- Zig zags on Henrietta Street,
- Dedicated bin area for businesses,
- Cycle parking outside the Mosque,
- EV charging point,
- Repair road surface,
- Provide disabled parking,
- Timed parking bays,
- Click and collect space for customers of all businesses.

14 additional representations were made by the public, 11 via email, 2 phone calls and 1 virtual chat. The comments centred around the issue of pedestrianisation and around half opposed and around half supported this idea.

### **Business Operational Survey**

The team also designed a Business Operational Survey for the local businesses to ascertain their operational needs looking at deliveries, waste collection, customers, parking, and anything else they

wanted to comment on. Of the 24 businesses identified and contacted, 14 engaged and the comments range from:

- tidy up the street,
- fix footways and street lighting,
- put in CCTV cameras,
- widening pavements,
- providing loading bays and
- open the National Rail land for car parking.

### **Community survey**

A total of 1115 responses were received from the survey made up of 474 online and 641 paper copies. The headline findings are:

- 81% of respondents are residents and live within one mile
- 80% of respondents walk to the road with 45% riding a bike and 30% driving a car/ van.
- Over 80% of respondents like St Marks Road due to the “local high street economy” and “personality and character of the street”. Over 75% like “supporting local jobs” and nearly 65% liked the “customer service and shopping experience”.
- The most serious and moderate problem identified was that “the street is busy with traffic” (48%) followed by “there is too much pollution/poor air quality” (47%) and “access for disabled people is poor” (45%).
- Over 50% of respondents think “have cleaner air”, “a nicer/safer place to walk and cycle” and “having enough shade and shelter e.g. increased greenery, planters” are essential and high priorities when totalled together.
- In total 1623 ‘other’ comments were received for the four main questions asking about what people like, what the problems might be, what are their priorities and any other comments.
- 511 other comments talked specifically about pedestrianisation and of those 120 supported and 257 objected to the idea of pedestrianising the road. 134 other suggestions were also put forward under this category such as partial closures, limit closures to certain times and resurface the road.
- The largest age group who responded were aged between 35-44yrs with 30% and 50% who responded were female compared to 41% who identified as male.
- 57% of respondents were White British and 12.95% were Asian/Asian British which reflects the ward population.

### **Getting Bristol Moving Map [Bristol COVID-19 transport request form - Bristol - Citizen Space](#)**

This is an online interactive map that was created when COVID19 social distancing measures were brought in back in March 2020. The aim was to provide a platform for people to comment on where they would like to see improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure across the city. It was promoted via a press release and social media posts citywide during the first lockdown. It is a digital tool and anyone without online access can request a paper copy of a form where they can add their comments which can be posted back in and uploaded for them.

For St Marks Road 22 comments were posted on the map. However, it is important to state that this map can be accessed by anyone, so the comments are not necessarily made by local people. The map allows people to leave suggestions of any changes to transport network they felt might improve an area. They can choose from a range of categories such as: Road Closures, One Ways, Cycle Lanes, Pavements, Local Highway Streets and Other. Of the 22 comments:

- 9 comments were left under 'Road Closures' with 316 likes. 5 comments supported road closures and got 242 likes.
- 6 comments were left under 'Pavements' with 176 likes. 5 comments asked for wider pavements and got 142 likes