

Harper Road

Width restriction consultation (2018)

January 2019 v1.0

Background

Since 2016 Harper Road has tended to experience a relatively high proportion of large vehicles, up to 18% of all traffic on some sections, compared to similar streets in the borough. The high proportion of HGVs and other large vehicles has been central to community concerns and is a particular safety issue. Harper Road is part of an upcoming cycle route and the high proportion of large vehicles together with the lack of space to accommodate a continuous cycle lane means the street fails one of the criteria of the Healthy Streets check. The Dickens Square Park refurbishment and residential developments will also bring more people into the area and there are many vulnerable pedestrians accessing schools and the mosque.

After careful analysis of a number of possible interventions, the council considered that, on balance, implementing A width restriction on a trial basis was the most appropriate and practical measure. Width restrictions of 6'6" (2.0m) were therefore proposed at Harper Road between Bath Terrace and Rockingham Street and at Bath Terrace. A period of informal consultation with the local community and key stakeholders was carried out in November and December 2017 and showed overall support (refer to the Harper Road consultation summary document "Summary of early engagement June 2017-Jan 2018" at <https://consultations.southwark.gov.uk/environment-leisure/harperroadimprovements/>). The width restriction was implemented under an experimental traffic order The London Borough of Southwark (Width restriction) (Harper Road and Bath Terrace) (No. 1) Experimental Traffic Order 2018.

The trial has been in place since 29 March 2018, with reinforcement in June following vandalism - this length has allowed traffic to adjust to the changes so that we can assess how successful the width restrictions are and whether we need to take any further mitigation measures. Results will be made available towards the end of October 2018. Objections were able to be submitted via a formal process within six months of implementation. If further measures are subsequently implemented under the order, this would re-start the six month objection period (see more information on objections (pdf, 186kb)). We designed a draft monitoring plan (version 3) (pdf, 431kb) so that we can assess the impacts of the width restrictions using traffic and video surveys and air pollution monitoring. Residents and stakeholders were able to submit their feedback using the online feedback questionnaire.

The monitoring of the trial width restriction, and any objections received during the monitoring period, helped

us to identify if the width restrictions are working and help us assess whether any further measures may be required. We were aware of the concerns raised by some residents and the emergency services regarding access. We worked with stakeholders to address any such concerns and minimise any adverse effects of the trial.

Due to tampering with blocks at the trial width restriction at Harper Road we installed an improved self-enforcing trial width restriction in week of 11 June 2018 which consisted of extending the existing traffic islands between Bath Terrace and Rockingham Street and adding bollards. An island with bollards was also added at Bath Terrace. The distance from kerb to kerb is 2.15m following the TSRGD manual best-practice guidelines. The width restrictions are still a trial measure and are subject to redesign at the end of the trial period, should the trial be successful, to fit in with street improvements in the area.

The target timeframes of the width restriction trial were not been affected: monitoring took place, as initially planned, in autumn taking into account a three-month bedding-in 16 October 2018 period and school holidays; formal consultation of a final traffic order is still planned for Winter 2018/19 and decision making for spring 2019.

(The information in this document was available on the Harper Road website <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/regeneration/elephant-and-castle?chapter=19> until 17/10/2018, slightly edited here for past tense)

Healthy Streets Survey

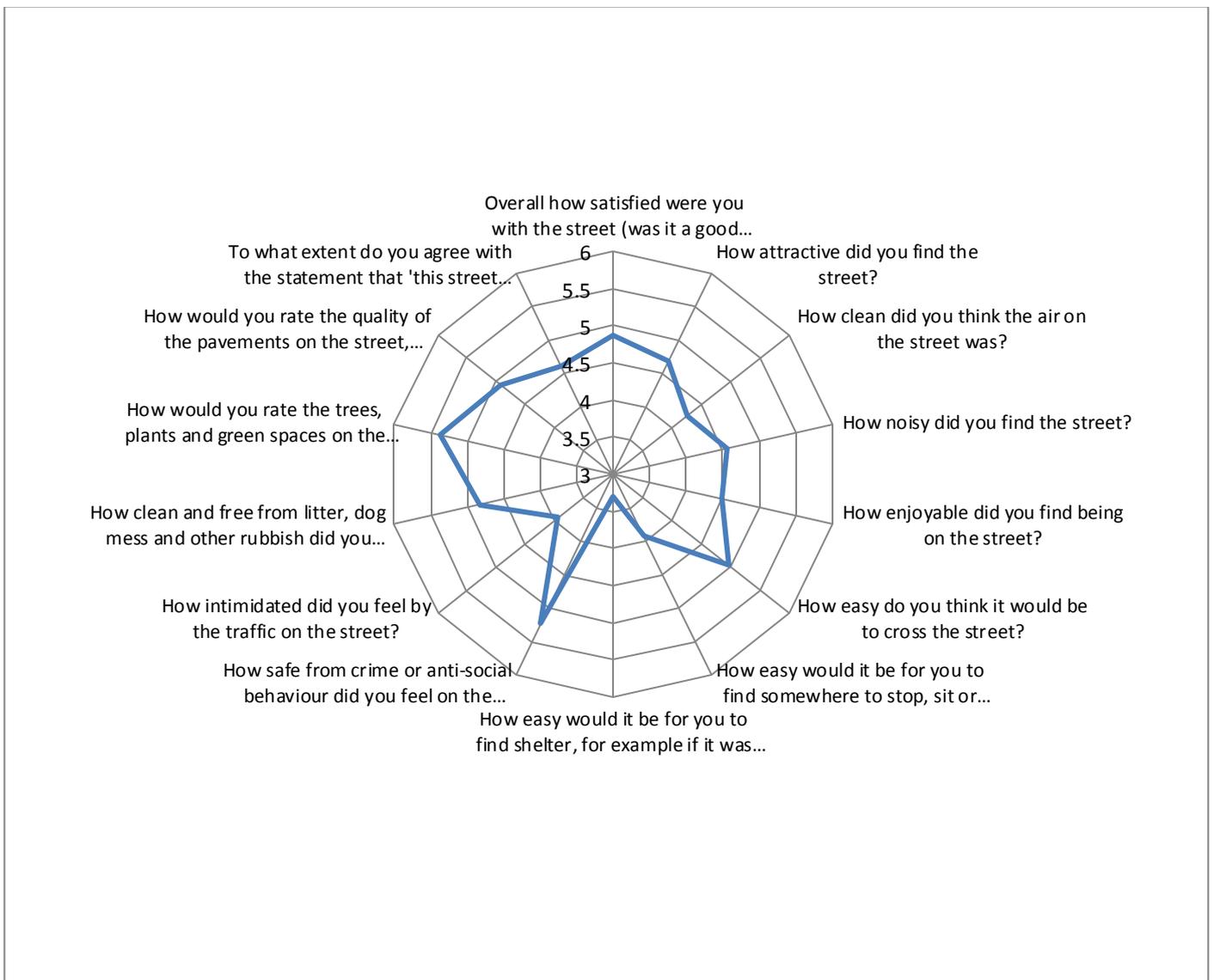
We conducted a Healthy Streets Perception Survey of residents in the Harper Road area in July and August 2018.

This included an online survey available from 11 July to 3 August, and street surveys conducted on the afternoon of Friday 20 July. We received 132 responses in total.

The purpose of this survey was to gain a snapshot of perceptions of how the street works for local people, to help inform future street improvement works, as well as a snapshot of the impact of the ongoing trial width restrictions on Harper Road and Bath Terrace. The results are summarised on the following pages.

Overall Healthy Streets scores

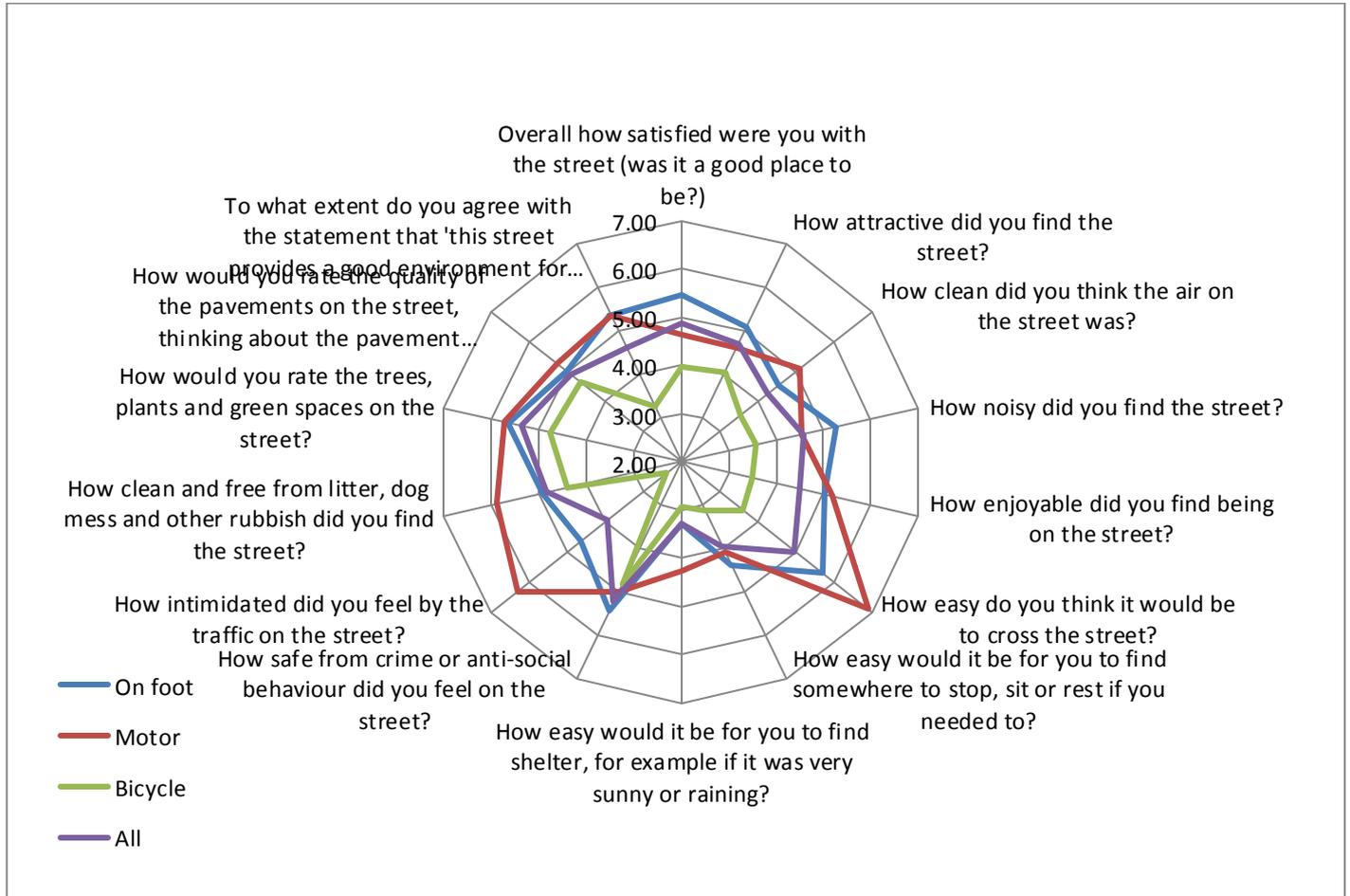
These are a series of 14 questions about different aspects of the street, scored from 0 to 10, with 10 always being the highest level of satisfaction. The chart below presents the mean score for all those who responded to the survey.



As this indicates, overall the greatest concerns (shown by low average scores) were around traffic levels and the lack of places to rest or find shelter. There was a relatively high level of satisfaction with the green spaces and safety from antisocial behaviour in the area.

Healthy Street scores split by mode of travel

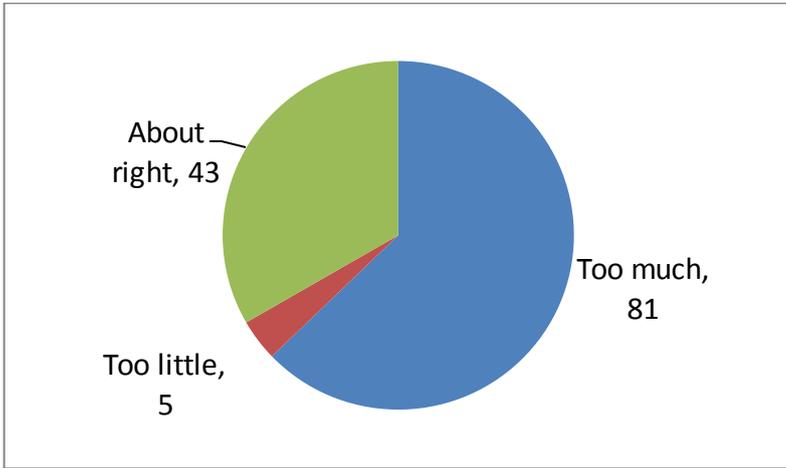
We asked people about their mode of travel on the day that they answered the survey, so this could be cross-referenced with their survey answers.



As this indicates, concern about traffic was greatest amongst cyclists, and least high with motorists. The average score for pedestrians was also below 5.

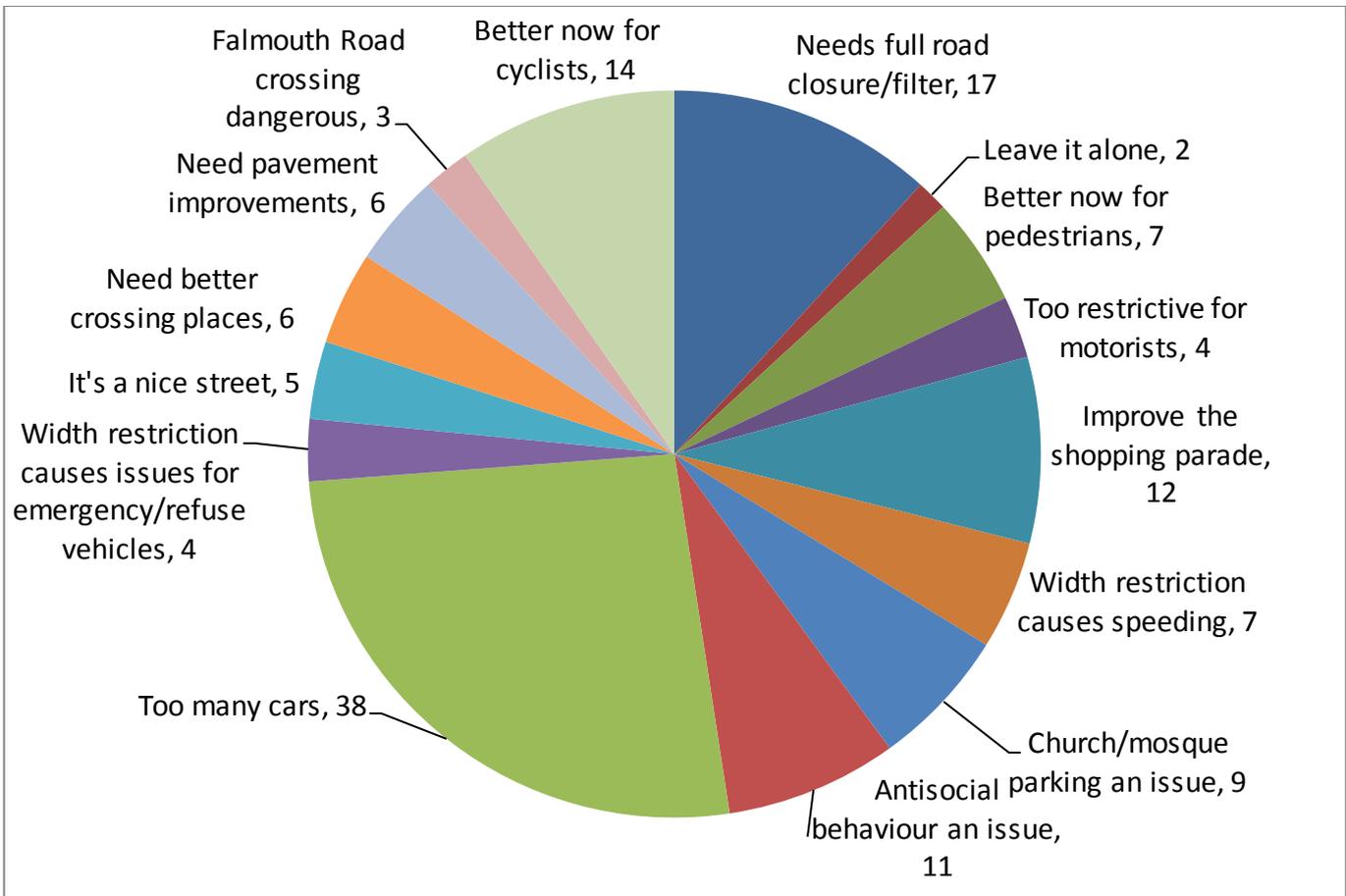
Level of motor traffic

We also asked respondents a straightforward question: 'As a pedestrian on Harper Road, would you feel the level of motor vehicle traffic is about right, too much or too little?'



Free text question

We asked people to tell us anything else they would like to say about their experience of Harper Road – this was a completely open question. This received a wide range of responses, but the chart below indicates the broad themes.



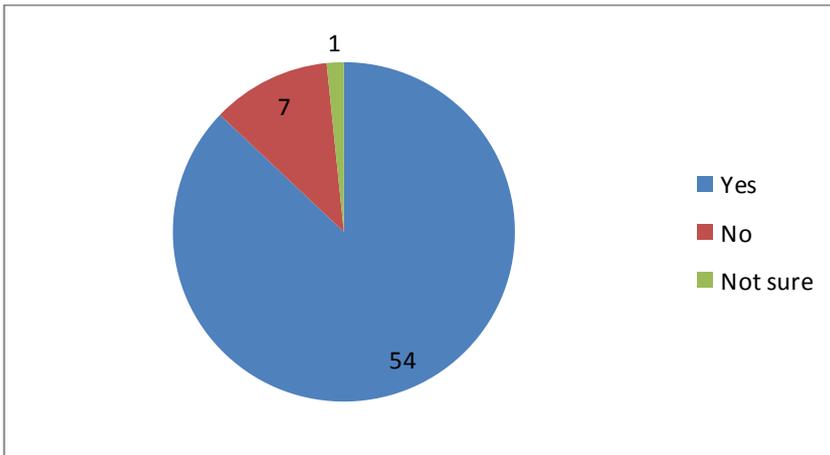
As these responses indicate, the large numbers of comments reflected either the view that there were too many cars on Harper Road, or advocated a full road closure to motor traffic. These do not reflect a majority of responses, but can be taken as indicative alongside the previous question.

Street Improvements Consultation

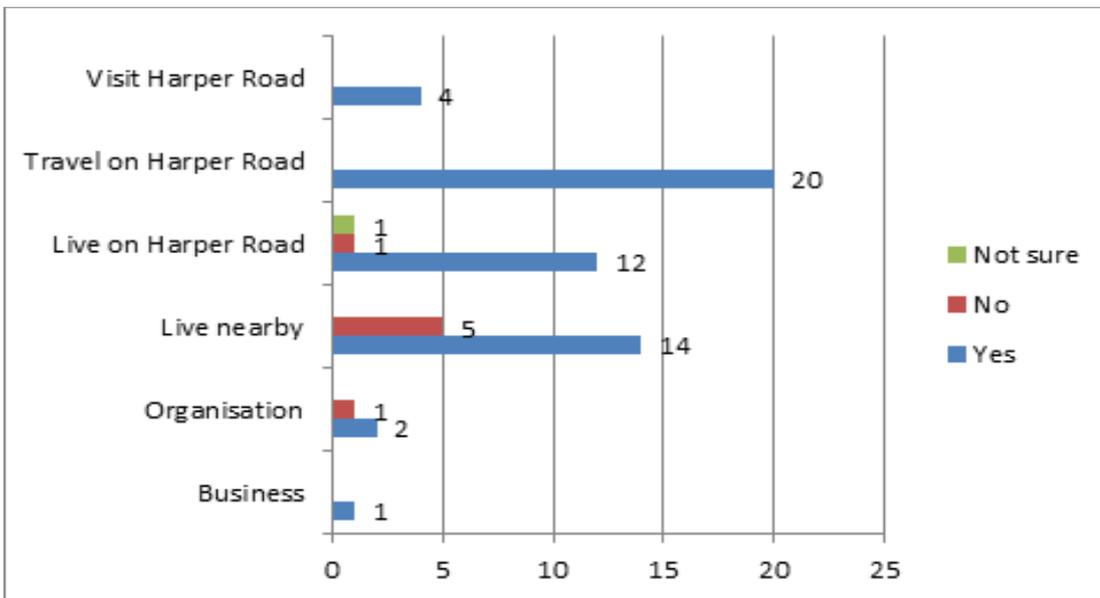
We conducted a public consultation between October and December 2018, running at the same time as the related consultation on the development of Dickens Square Park. This received 62 responses. Our aim was to confirm whether local people wished to see the width restriction made permanent, and also receive their comments on a number of other proposed street improvements.

Width restriction

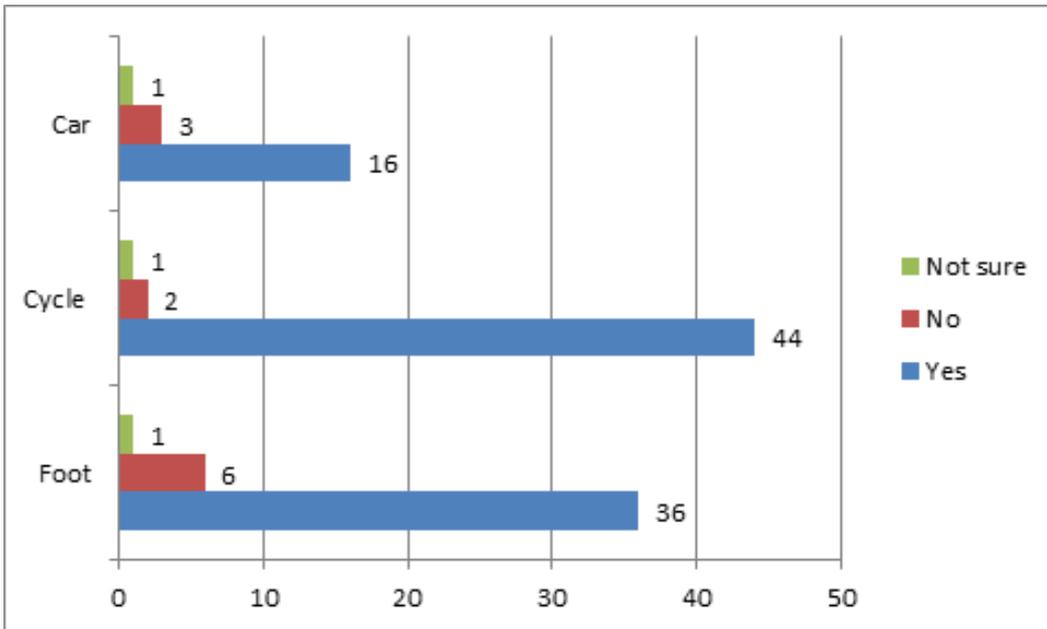
We asked people 'Do you agree that we should keep the width restrictions on Harper Road and Bath Terrace as a permanent feature?' The response was as follows:



As this indicates, there was overwhelming support for retaining some kind of traffic restriction on Harper Road. Furthermore, this view was shared by respondents whether they lived on Harper Road or travelled through it, and whatever their usual transport mode – as the following charts indicate.



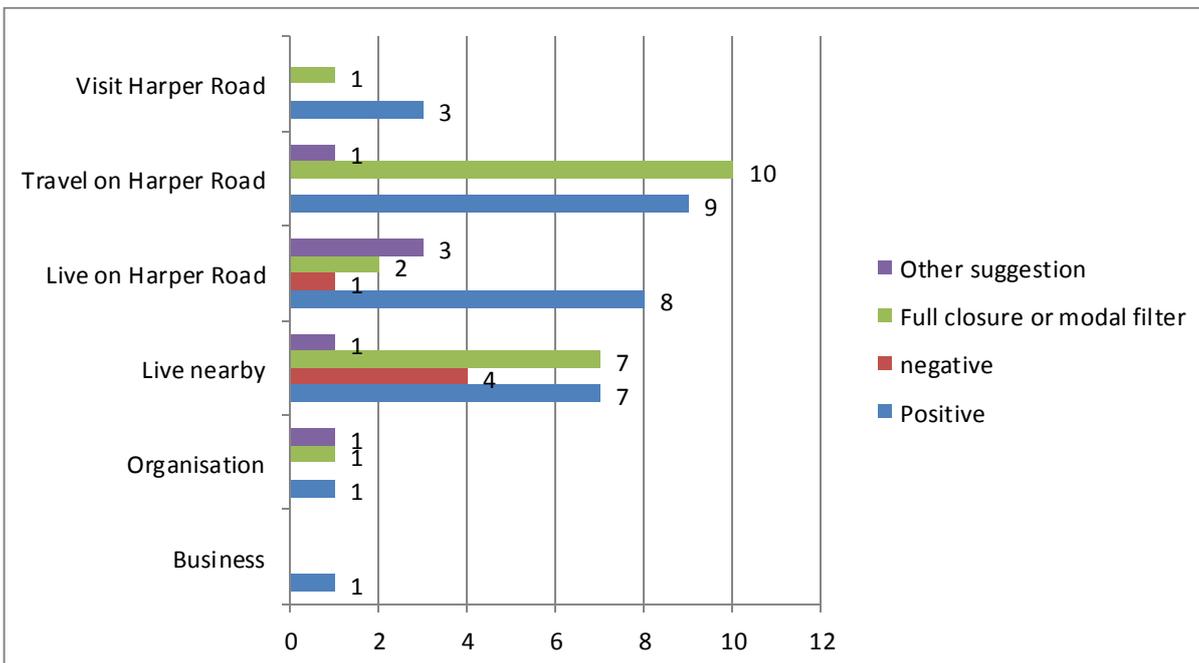
'Should we keep the width restrictions' cross-referenced with type of respondent.



'Should we keep the width restrictions' cross-referenced with mode of travel (respondents could indicate more than one mode of travel, which is why numbers add to more than 62)

Comments about the width restriction

We invited free text comments about the width restriction. As indicated below, the majority of responses to this question could be categorised either as showing support for the current width restriction, or advocating a more complete form of road closure.



Some of the comments are summarised in the table below:

Comments

Advocating full closure/modal filter:

- The results of the width restriction trial suggest that the more substantial improvements of a full closure to motorised through traffic should be trialled. The width restriction has reduced Harper Road HGV traffic by 86%, general traffic by 23%, and only 3% of that traffic has been displaced to other residential roads in the nearby area.
- The increased number of cycle trips in the section calmed - of around a quarter – and of a 76% increase in the sections on the Quietway 7, shows that cyclists are using and so benefiting from the changes, that improvements seem to be increasing the number of cycling trips, and that there may be a particularly strong potential to increase cycle numbers when improvements are part of a larger scheme and network.
- A broad base of residents' and travellers' support for substantial improvements can be seen in the Healthy Streets survey.
- Furthermore, this highlights that residents, pedestrians and cyclists should not be seen as separate groups with opposing interests: many local residents are cyclists, and many local residents and pedestrians support improvements that will support cycling.
- The area needs to have modal filtering to reduce rat running. These measures will only be marginal whilst traffic continues to dominate the area and use it as a cut through between main roads.
- Full closures to motor traffic, apart from emergency vehicles and refuse collection, would be better for everybody except those using Harper Road as a 'rat run'.
- Fewer motor vehicles still. Better air quality. Less intimidating environment. More sustainable transport.
- The bottom line is to stop the through traffic and return the street to its residential only status, a Low Traffic Neighbourhood, to make it a Liveable Neighbourhood. The whole main-road Triangle, (that within the A2, A3, and A201), is worthy of being designated a Strategic Cultural Area in its own right. Bring on a Mini Holland!
- Residents have called for the road to be closed due to rat running. A road closure would be cheaper and achieve a reduction in road danger and pollution and an increase in active travel more effectively than these expensive features.
- Just get on with a proper road closure. Way too much rat running going on even with the width restrictions

Negative views on the width restriction:

- I feel it would be better to have either a raised zebra crossing of some sort. It will slow down traffic and allow for safer crossing at that junction.
- Why can't we use video CCTV to control access and restrict for HGV's. This would be cheaper and reduce visual clutter and make flow smoother
- A road sign prohibiting HGVs or a GPS redirect for truck drivers would probably do a similar effect to the width restriction. Vans can easily cross this barrier anyway, and the real problem is that drivers of HGVs still see Harper Road as their preferred route according to GPS.

Other suggestions:

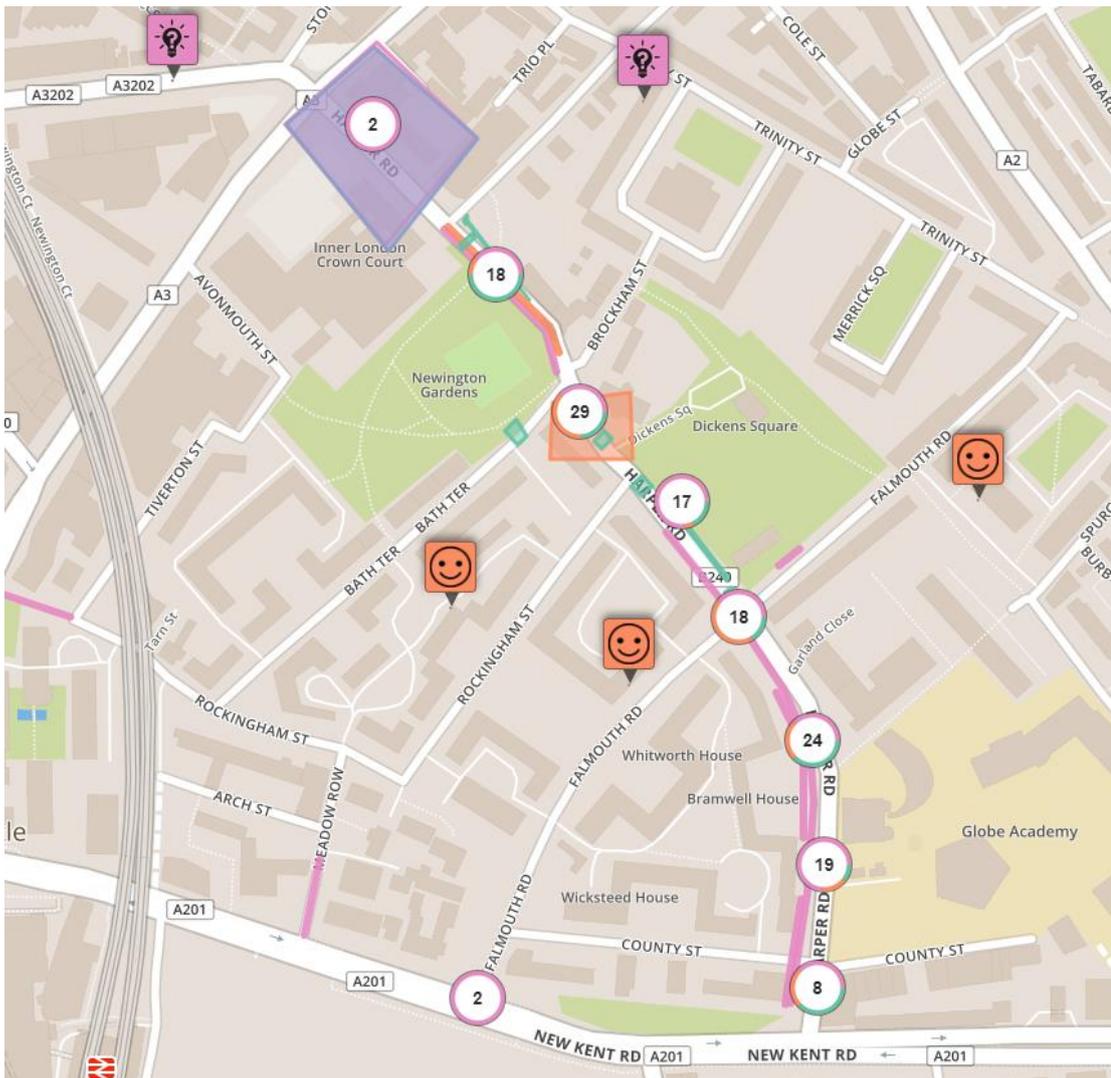
- Given the persistent vandalism to the trial restriction in Harper Rd, the permanent feature needs to be very robust and any vandalism needs to be punished.
- Due to the major vandalism of the temporary width restriction there should be a substantial permanent width restriction including imposing the width restriction at a 1 m level to prevent large vehicles mounting the width restriction
- its great as its stopped heavy goods vehicles coming down the road, however it has not reduced speed of traffic once they are passed the restriction so other steps also need to be taken
- I would like the width restriction to look nicer though. As it is it looks temporary & I would like it to look a little more deliberate, substantial & even aesthetically pleasing if possible!
- I live on Bath Terrace and unfortunately in front of my house has become a U-Turn spot for loud and large

vehicles when they realise they can no longer fit through, they also nosily reverse down the street. I guess this must be a signage issue. I agree with the width restrictions but therefore really hope it is signed better to reduce these issues.

- Please make sure that the new installations are vandalism-proof. Also how can people get away with damaging public installation as we have witnessed over the past months? Aren't there any CCTV??
- Bollards would be more preferable.

Map exercise

At the same time as the online consultation, we invited people to submit comments using an online map system which we are trialling as part of the EU WeGovNow project. Respondents were able to express approval or disapproval of the width restrictions and other proposed changes, and also to mark their own suggestions on the map. This was promoted via social media and a flyer posted to all addresses in the Harper Road area.



Harper Road map after resident comments.

We also held a street stall event on Harper Road on 30 November, where we spoke to dozens of members of the public and invited them to comment both on electronic and on paper maps. The aim of both these approaches was to try to reach a wider section of the local population and ensure that our proposals were in tune with local needs.

Many of the comments received related to pedestrian crossings or to aesthetic/quality of life features such as planting and seating, but other comments related to the width restriction and traffic volumes, and these are shown below:

Comments

Concerns about the width restriction:

- Width restriction / traffic calming obstructs Tesco delivery vans
- Cyclist - bollards don't impede movement. Narrowed roads mean cyclists are too close to car users.
- Concerned it will restrict ambulance fire brigade
- Bypass [of Bath Terrace width restriction] narrow for cargo bike - Does not feel safe in primary position
- Zebra crossing instead of width restriction. Concerned about emergency vehicle access.

Other measures to reduce traffic:

- I believe that there should be a second question asked about the barrier, that is, "Would you prefer a full-width gated barrier similar to the one installed in Trinity Street which would, in due course, restrict the total volume of traffic to local traffic only?"
- Reduce the amount of traffic on the road especially at school start and finish.
- Stop the traffic being diverted down harper road. Get trapped on bollard in new Kent road.
- Proposed one way - I approve
- So many children with mosque and school
- Whilst agreeing that the trial width restriction barrier has made a significant impact on road safety by removing all HGVs from using the street, other than this small proportion of the original traffic rat-running along Harper Road, it has made only a relatively small reduction in the remaining volume of traffic, the size of the large vans, and the speeds with which it travels down the street. As in Trinity Street, this barrier should become a gated barrier as is being proposed for Bath Terrace, with an electronic control for the Emergency Vehicles to use in extremis and ANPR cameras to control motor-cycle and scooter riders from passing through the cyclist lanes. In effect, along with other measures, (allowing traffic to make RHT off NKR into Falmouth Road, making the end section of Meadow Row one-way flow into the area from the NKR only, making the southerly end of Falmouth Road north of Harper Road also one-way traffic, installing other traffic calming/slowing measures in Bath Terrace and Rockingham Street), would then reduce the vast majority of traffic to residential.
- Maintain traffic levels - no buses or extra traffic or tourist buses
- CPZ for this area. Single yellow lines. Parking after 6 PM
- Buses for school trips block traffic. Assign an area that is designated coach waiting to collect students for trips
- Zebra crossing doesn't feel safe. High speeds and volume. Prefer to be driven or get bus if there is no lollypop lady.
- For traffic calming - make Brockham Street open only to residents, with a gate or barrier at the Harper Rd end, in order to discourage short cuts through Trinity Square and Brockham St.
- I would like to propose that the section of Harper Road in the main from Falmouth Road to the New Kent Road is designated as a "School Street"; (I have included the section in front of the parade of shops in order to prevent the afternoon/evening rush-hours rat-run traffic turning into Falmouth Road). Such a move would

mean that the road is closed to all traffic between the hours when children from the various parts of the Globe Academy end their day and leave by the school gates, (taking into account extra-curricular activities, this would probably run from circa 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm).

- Make this section of Falmouth Road/Quietway 7 "one-way" in the direction of Trinity Street in order to prevent traffic re-routing through Swan St., (East), Cole Street, Trinity Street etc. and endangering cyclist traffic utilising the Quietway and other routes.
- Need to have a proper raised cobbled crossing at the traffic lights at the junction with the A3. This should be accompanied by the speed limit being painted on the road as is generally seen at such points across the borough.
- Alternatively, incorporate a system similar to that seen in Hanover Street central London whereby a cycle lane is delineated next to the pavement and parking is moved out into the road. The resultant narrowing of the road will greatly reduce traffic speed possibly also volume. As this would largely involve changes to the road markings it would be relatively inexpensive.

Positive comments about the width restriction:

- Less lorries although really narrow when driving.
- Have noticed reduction in lorries and buses

Suggestions to improve the width restriction:

- The traffic calming width restrictions must be clearer and more visible, and strong enough to stop disobedient trucks .
- Extending the island in order to increase cycle path
- Need to dramatically improve signage at this point to identify whatever type of barrier is finalised in order to prevent large vehicles assuming that they can still pass through Harper Road.

