

Cambridge City Council

CCQ Engagement

Cambridge Civic Quarter Liaison Group Meeting 9 October 2024



Agenda

1. Welcome – Cllr Rosy Moore
2. Community Engagement Outcomes Feedback – ECF
3. Next Steps



Key Figures

The engagement ran from 17th June - 28th July.

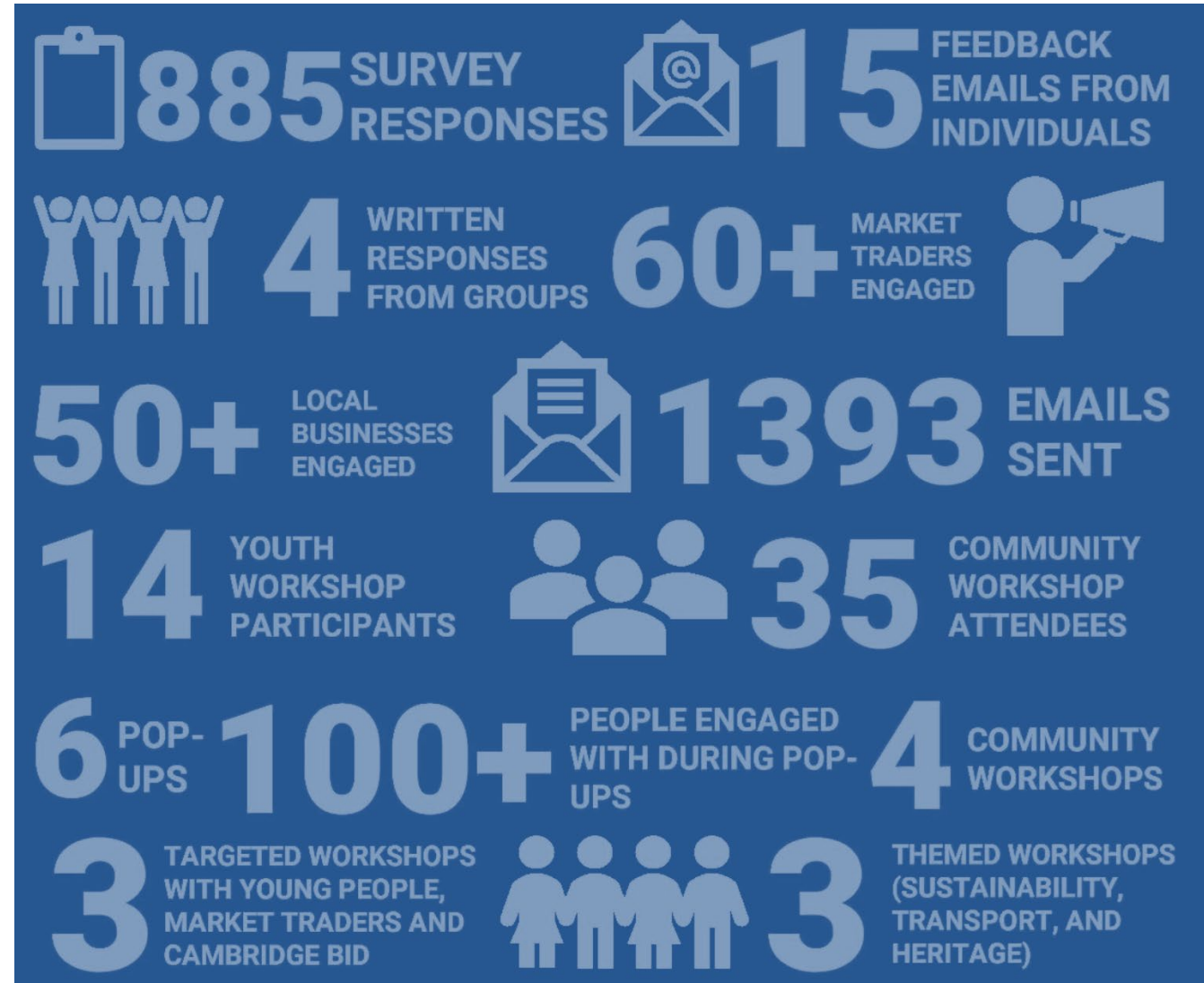
The engagement programme was promoted in the following ways:

- **2** press releases issued and article in CCC's resident magazine Cambridge Matters.
- Updates and boosted posts on CCC's socials.
- Banners displayed at the Guildhall, poster boards in the marketplace, display boards and postcards at Mandela House, Corn Exchange and the Guildhall, and artwork displayed on digital screens at Mandela House and Corn Exchange.
- **1393 email** notifications to existing subscribers on CCC's consultation platform.
- **5,000** postcards distributed.
- **50+** local businesses and market traders given posters and postcards.
- Staff updates and members briefing.



Key Figures

- **Highest (885)** number of survey responses ever received on the Council's online consultation platform (GoVocal), despite engagement period falling during summer holiday.
- **863** survey responses from individuals and **22** responses from representatives of organisations.
- **15** feedback emails received from individuals.
- **5** formal written responses from groups.
- **60+** market traders engaged through a roadshow, dedicated workshop, webinar, surveying and online engagement.
- **6** pop-ups organised across Cambridge, and **100+** people engaged.
- **1** youth workshop organised, and 14 young people engaged.
- **1** BID workshop organised.
- **4** community workshops.
- **3** themed workshops organised (Sustainability, Transport and Heritage).



Diversity

To maximise inclusivity and diversity in feedback, the following measures were taken place:

- Pop-ups were conducted across Cambridge with a special focus on deprived areas.
- Emails were sent to stakeholders with physical and learning accessibility requirements such as Eddies, Camsight etc.
- A youth workshop was conducted.
- Ethnic minority organisations such as the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum were contacted.

Demographic Data

- The age groups with the largest number of respondents were people aged between **65-74 (21%)** and people aged between **45-54 (21%)**.
- **53%** of the respondents were female, **42%** were male and **5%** preferred not to say.
- **74%** respondents did not have physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more while **17%** had them
- **74.2%** of the survey respondents identified as 'White: English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British'
- The household income groups with the largest number of respondents were '**more than £100,000**' (**16%**) and '**£30,000 to £39,000**' (**10%**). **27%** of respondents preferred not to disclose their household income.

MARKET SQUARE FEEDBACK

The survey contained one quantitative question and one qualitative question regarding the Market Square. Additionally, targeted market trader surveying, leafletting, and a market traders' workshop and webinar were conducted. Feedback from all these activities is summarised below:

Security & Anti-Social Behaviour

Security is a significant concern, particularly at night. Suggestions include:

- CCTV installation
- Increased lighting
- Addressing the issues of anti-social behaviour and drug dealing in the area.

Accessibility Challenges

Accessibility remains a critical issue, for those who are disabled people, pedestrians and traders. Concerns include:

- Cobbled surface is problematic for wheelchair users and better paving is required for all.
- Improvements are needed to make the area more accessible, but consideration would need to be given to the historical character of the area.
- Traders highlighted challenges with vehicular access when loading/unloading their stalls.

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Permanent Structure and Demountable Stalls

- While some participants could see benefit in permanent structure for accessible toilets, storage and bins, some are against as it could create street clutter.
- A need for the structure to fit in with heritage has also been expressed.
- There have been mixed reactions to demountable stalls, but benefit could be seen to give more flexibility for use of the Square given they are the right design to withstand weather conditions.
- The need for permanent stalls and 7-day week market emphasised with consideration given to the different needs of different traders i.e., food and non-food.

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Biodiversity and Sustainability

More trees and biodiversity was the top choice to improve public spaces. Suggestions to make the project more sustainable included:

- Incorporation of moss roofs
- Solar panels
- Green spaces to sit and eat
- Greenery and trees to provide shade
- Other sustainable design elements that align with CCC's net zero goals.

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Impact on traders during works

Concerns have been expressed over the potential impacts of the implementation phase. These include:

- Time period for implementation
- Potential for a phased approach
- Relocation of traders
- Worries over losing customers

CORN EXCHANGE FEEDBACK

One qualitative question about the Corn Exchange was asked as a part of the survey. Additionally, the Corn Exchange was discussed in all workshops. The findings have been summarised from all the feedback collected.

Accessibility

- Criticism of inaccessible and uncomfortable seating, and request for ground-floor toilets and better access for those with a disability. Overall, the venue needs to be revamped to be more user-friendly.

Acoustics

- Need for better acoustics for speaking and music events as the venue requires top sound quality. There is a perception that acts are deterred from performing due to acoustics and venue size.

Atmosphere and entrance

- The entrance has been described as dark and unwelcoming. There have been suggestions of a more transparent entrance design to make it feel more inviting. There is a sentiment to modernise but retain character.

OVERALL ACCESSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

COMMUNITY ACCESSIBILITY

Advocacy for enhanced pedestrian facilities and universally accessible spaces. Other suggestions include better accessibility for cyclists by providing cycling infrastructure and signage.

SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS

Strong calls for integrating sustainable and environmentally friendly features across the Civic Quarter to align with the city's carbon reduction goals. Introduction of features such as greenery and reuse of materials has also been popular.

PUBLIC REALM

The survey consisted of 1 qualitative question about the public realm and 1 question about travel and transport. Additionally, it was discussed across other engagement activities.

TRAFFIC & PARKING REDUCTION

Feedback identified a desire for an overarching transport strategy and a consolidated approach to delivery/commercial vehicles. Pedestrianisation with limited vehicular access in public areas, including bicycles and delivery mopeds, was mentioned.

CYCLING

Most of the survey respondents' cycle into the Civic Quarter area. There were suggestions that the cycle route around the Corn Exchange be improved. Other suggestions include cycling infrastructure such as bike parking, a new cycle hub, improved roads, and restrictions on mopeds were mentioned.

GUILDHALL FEEDBACK

The survey consisted of 4 qualitative questions about the Guildhall. Additionally, this topic was discussed across other activities.

SPACE UTILISATION

- Feedback highlights that the Guildhall needs to be a more open-plan design with better visibility from the outside, less formal interiors and more comfortable seating.
- Other suggestions include amenities like a café, restaurant, and children's play area.
- The use of modern and sustainable features such as solar panels has been a recurring theme.
- CCC staff expressed concerns about working in the basement due to lack of natural light.

COMMUNITY USE

There were several suggestions to encourage community use such as:

- Libraries and cafes/community run cafes.
- Toilets and baby-changing facilities
- Free seating areas.
- Flexible and multi-use spaces.
- Availability of affordable, accessible hireable spaces for non-profit and community groups

GUILDHALL FEEDBACK

HOTEL PROPOSAL

- Mixed feedback regarding the hotel proposal has been received (260 comments in support; 232 comments against; 48 indifferent).
- 75 comments supported aspects such as a rooftop pavilion, especially if it was open to all and not just hotel guests.

Concerns included:

- It not being for locals
- Impacts on traffic
- Existing presence of hotels in the centre

Other suggestions included:

- Residential accommodation
- Food court
- Community space etc
- Co-working space/business centre

Cambridge BID suggested that a hotel could potentially do well but are worried that it would negatively impact occupancy rates and profitability for other hotels, and that locally based businesses could lose trade due to noise complaints.

Conclusions

- Key themes that emerged from feedback on the Market Square included **improved security** and **detering anti-social behaviour**, **enhance biodiversity** and **sustainability**, addition of a **permanent structure** and **demountable stalls**, and **responding to accessibility challenges**.
- Conflicting interests were clear from the feedback gathered on the Market Square. For example, heritage groups and some traders preferred to retain the cobble stones, other traders raised concerns over **cleaning of the cobbles** and accessibility. Wheelchair users highlighted the **accessibility issues** created by cobble stones in the market.
- Regarding the Corn Exchange, the key themes included **improving acoustics**, **accessibility**, and the **atmosphere** and **entrance**.
- Key themes that emerged regarding the Guildhall included **making it an open and inviting space** and the **inclusion of community uses** as part of its programme.
- The proposal for a hotel in the Guildhall received **mixed feedback**, with a lot of support but also a lot of opposition.



Next Steps

- **11 November:** A report that sets out the concept design proposals for the Corn Exchange, Guildhall, Market Square and surrounding public spaces will be published ahead of the council's Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in November.
- **11 November:** Civic Quarter Liaison Group Meeting - Guildhall 4pm-5.30pm
- **21 November:** Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting
- If approved, further development work would progress in 2025, beyond the concept design stage, with detailed design work and further community engagement.



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