

WARWICK AVENUE PUBLIC REALM ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS NOTE

June 2024



CONTEXT
OFFICE

Engagement Findings EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over February and March 2024, the design team led a **targeted stakeholder engagement process prior to designs being developed**, to gain insights and ensure that the concerns and priorities of local people were considered from the project's outset. Comments were focused on the project site's existing conditions. Altogether, four in-person events (a weekend walk, an after-dark walk, an after-school walk and a workshop) and an interactive digital map garnered almost **900 comments from 150+ contributors**, the vast majority of which were residents of the local area.

Many people said they **don't see a need for public realm improvements**, aside from minor changes and 're-arranging the furniture'. Others – particularly **young families and those with mobility and health issues** – highlighted the site's shortcomings in relation to **accessibility, road safety, pedestrian priority, dominance of vehicles and air quality**, and were supportive of bigger changes.

Residents described high volumes of **through-traffic, congestion, dangerous speeding downhill, confusing junctions and problematic crossings**, particularly around the station. Nevertheless, many didn't want to see major reconfigurations of the road layout at Warwick Avenue. Some wanted to see traffic closures elsewhere instead, namely along parts of **Formosa Street and Warrington Crescent**.

Parking was a polarising topic, with some residents calling for the prioritisation of pedestrians over vehicles, and others defending the need for the existing parking provision. Suggestions included **re-balancing residents' and pay-and-display spaces**, and **potential changes to parking zones**.

The **lack of step-free access at the Underground station** was a recurring complaint, along with the station's poor general condition – issues that are outside of this project's scope. The station exits and surroundings were also highlighted as areas where **women reported feeling unsafe after dark**, due to inadequate lighting, limited activity and obstructed sight lines. The need for **better wayfinding and signage to Little Venice and local high streets** was emphasized by many, as well as a desire to **improve the legibility of the area at night**.

There were **varied views about any potential changes to activities** that take place at Warwick Avenue. Many people opposed any new uses while others wanted to see **community-focused uses** such as a book exchange, monthly flower market and neighbourhood notice board. The **Cabmen's shelter** was seen by many as a key asset, with residents hoping to see it **provide a more public, neighbourhood offer in an improved setting**. The existing **waste and recycling facilities** were deemed a convenient, valued resource, but were also a source of complaints due to their **unattractiveness, overspill and associated antisocial behavior**.

The community's desire to **protect Warwick Avenue's calm, residential character** was evident, emphasizing the importance of distinguishing the area from Paddington and avoiding attracting more tourists. Residents especially value the area's **trees, greenery, canal-side location and built heritage**. This protectiveness appeared to be a key driver behind many of the other comments made.

These findings have been **reviewed iteratively** throughout the engagement stage to **inform the design development process** and the **definition of proposals** and priorities.

Ten takeaways from community engagement for the design to address:

1. Protect and enhance Warwick Avenue's residential character and heritage
2. Improve pedestrian crossings and safety at junctions, particularly around the station
3. Enhance accessibility throughout the area
4. Balance the provision of parking and the impact of vehicles on the street
5. Improve and rationalise street furniture and existing facilities (eg. cycle stands, waste facilities, Cabmen's shelter, taxi rank)
6. Create an improved neighbourhood space that is appropriate for the conservation area
7. Improve the appearance of the Underground vent shaft
8. Protect existing trees, introduce more soft planting and improve the quality of materials
9. Provide better signage and wayfinding to Little Venice, the canal and other local destinations
10. Improve lighting quality for enhanced safety, character and legibility at night

"Make a place for the community – a calm resting point which looks like it's been there for 150 years."



Engagement Findings

IMPLEMENTING THE ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The project's engagement fact-finding phase sought to ensure that the concerns, aspirations and priorities of local people were consistently understood and considered throughout the design process, and to provide the design team with an in-depth understanding of the area's use by different groups.

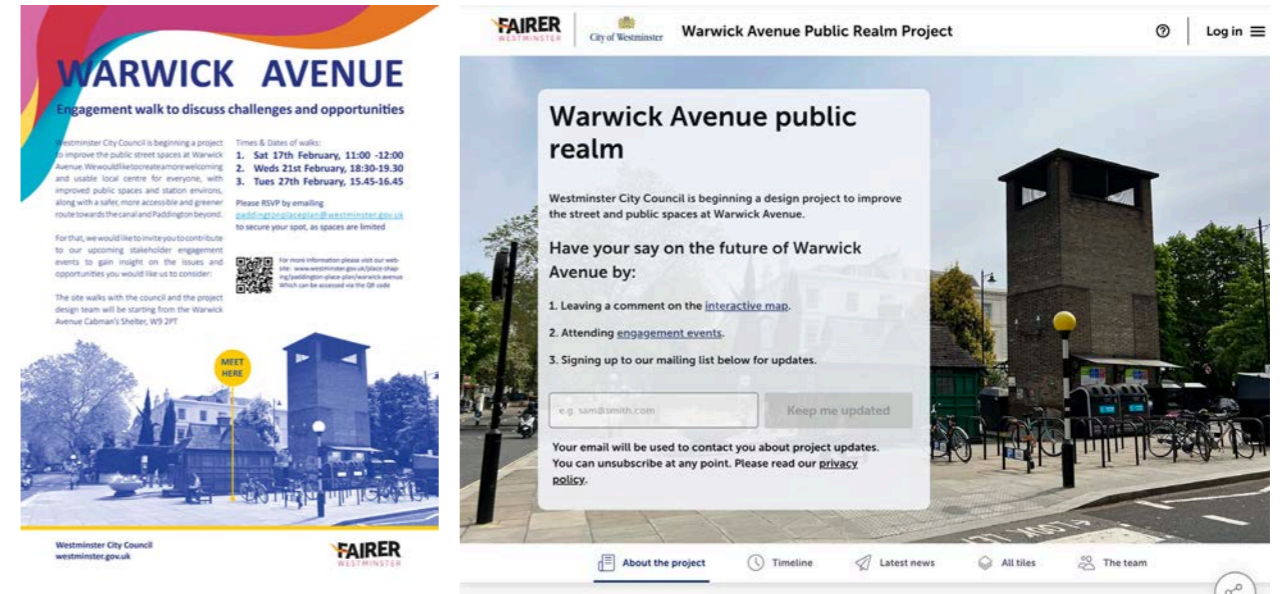
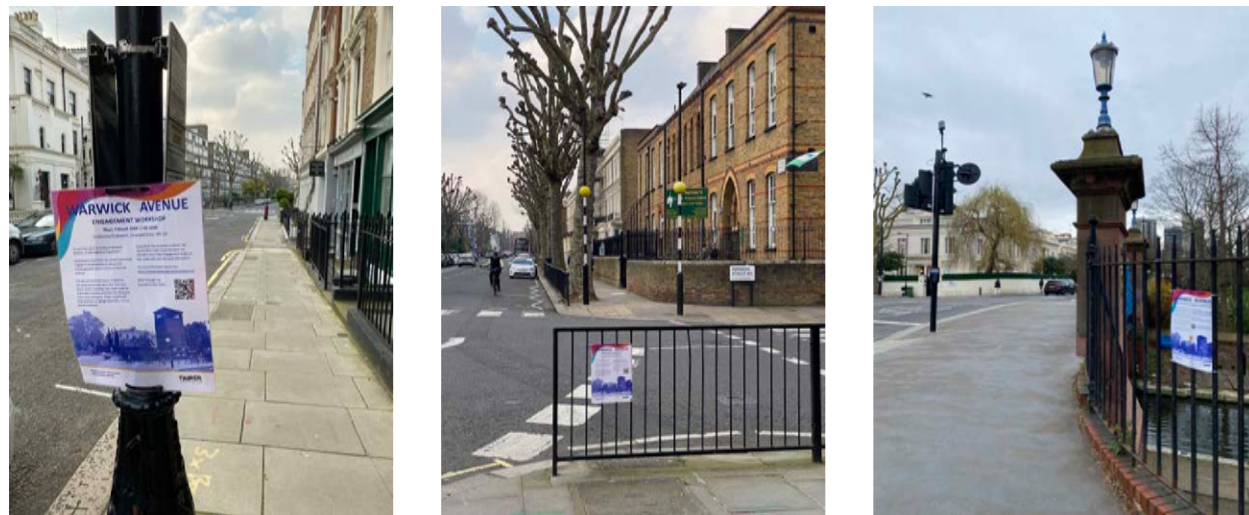
Altogether, the multi-stranded engagement process offered local people formal, informal, analogue and digital means of participation. The timings and format of the events were planned with inclusivity in mind, to suit a range of personalities, preferences, schedules, caring responsibilities and access needs. An online presence was also established through a project website, project email address and interactive map.

The engagement opportunities were primarily targeted at those local to the project site. A stakeholder scoping and mapping process, including early conversations with the Paddington Waterways and Maida Vale Society, helped to identify local representative organisations, businesses and stakeholders. The events and project were subsequently advertised through:

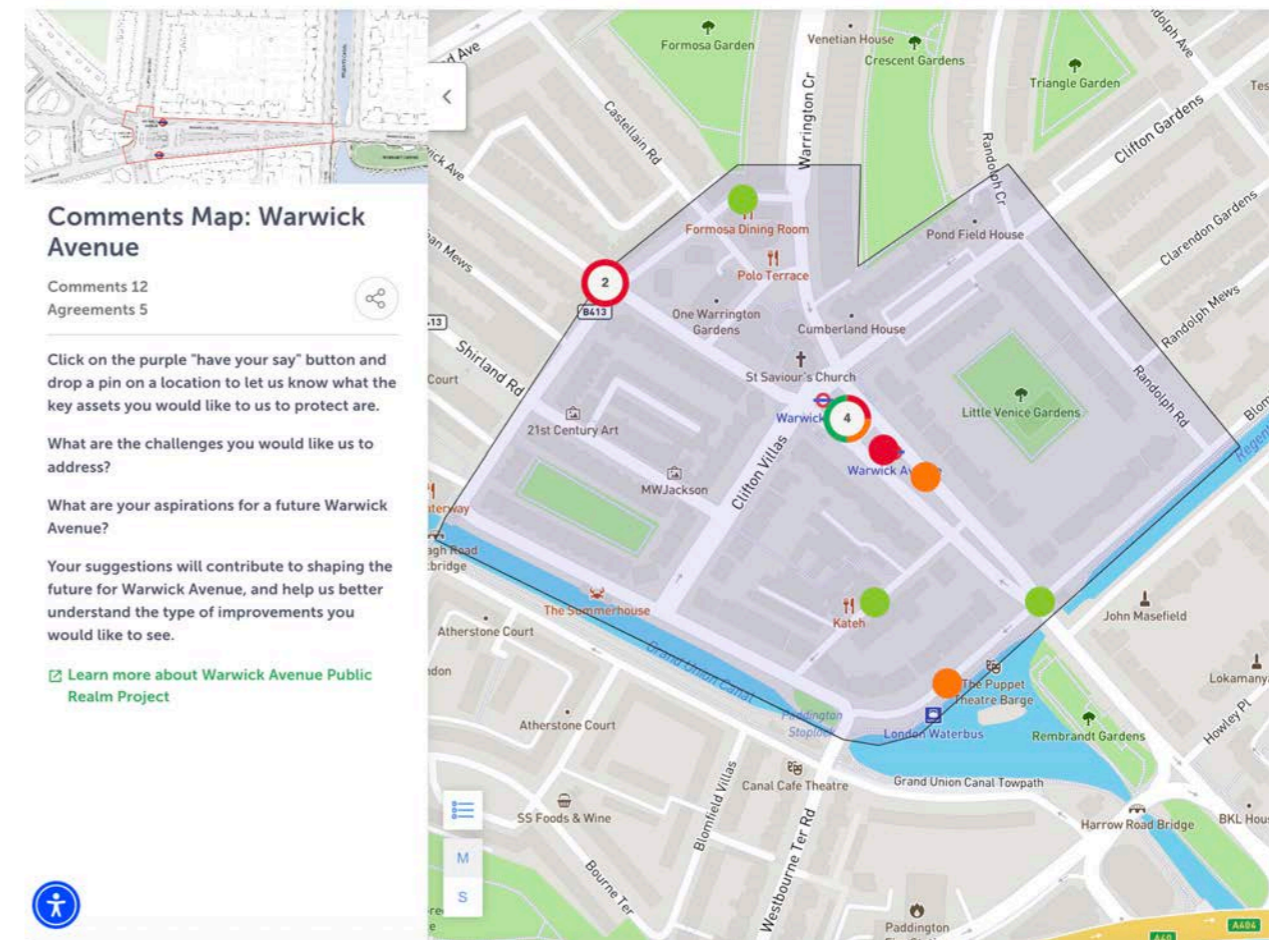
- 45 email invites to stakeholders, businesses and representative groups
- 500 letter-drops to residents around the project site
- 20 posters placed around the project site area

The original engagement plan was deliberately flexible from the outset, and was continually reviewed and updated throughout, to ensure the engagement process was as effective and inclusive as possible. Some of the changes that were made to broaden participation include:

- The evening workshop date was moved forward by a week to allow those who celebrate Ramadan to attend.
- An interactive digital map was created via Commonplace to allow additional comments from those who couldn't attend in-person events, reflecting the level of interest and high attendee numbers at the walks.
- Vouchers were made available for workshop attendees, to incentivise attendance from under-represented groups.



Home Comments Map: Warwick Avenue



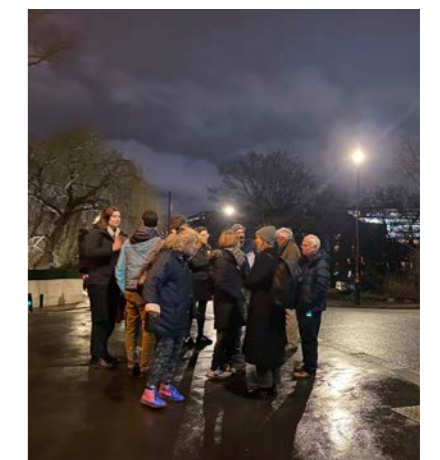
Engagement Findings

EVENTS ATTENDANCE AND RESPONSES RECEIVED

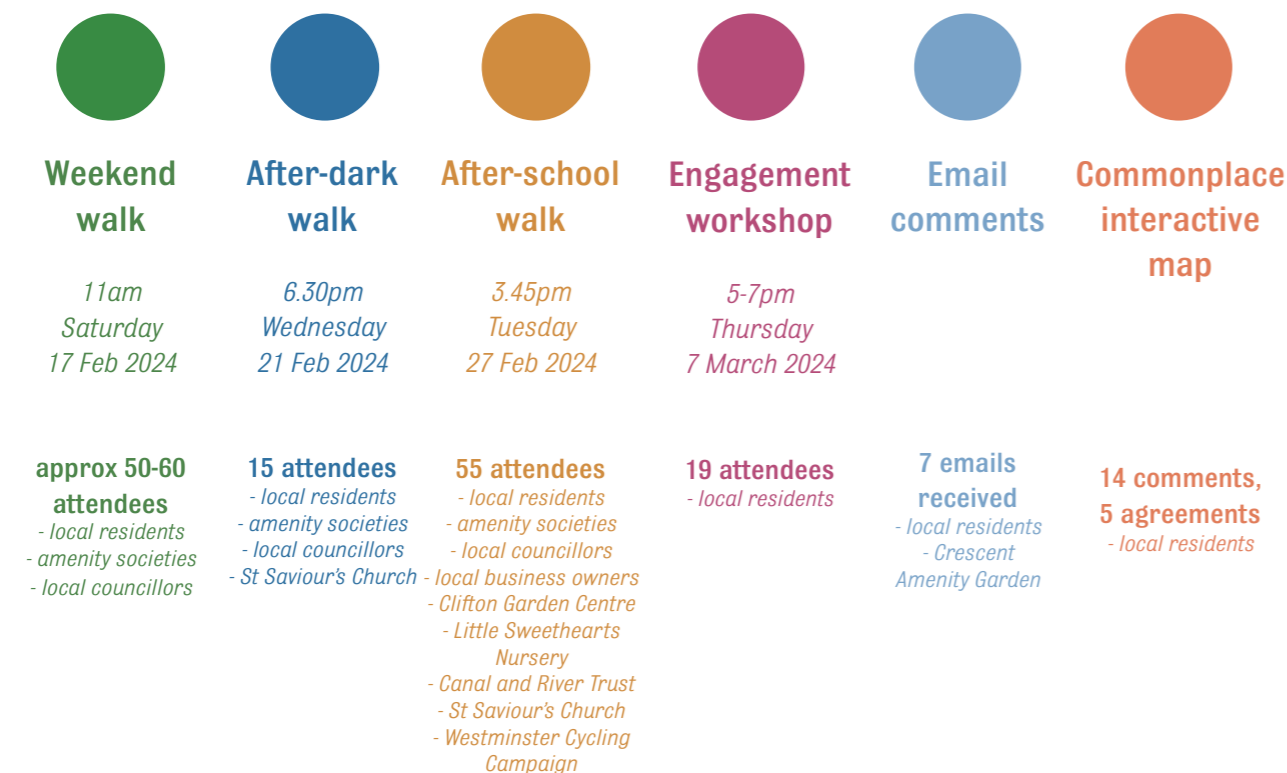
In total, the project's events and digital platforms drew input from approximately 180 participants, including at least 150 individual contributors (some people attended multiple events). The demographic profile and background of the participants was not formally collected, but the vast majority of people who attended introduced themselves as residents of the local area. There was a noticeable presence of families with young children on the weekend walk, but otherwise young people and children did not have a meaningful representation on the walks. The workshop was attended by a seemingly more diverse group of people, with a greater mix of ethnicities and ages present. At least one person said they'd chosen to attend the workshop over the walks due to their access needs.

Alongside individual residents, a broad range of local organisations were invited to contribute to the engagement process. Organisations represented at the events included stakeholders within and around the project site (such as St Saviour's church, Little Sweethearts nursery, the Cabmen's shelter and the Clifton Garden Centre), community and amenity groups (eg. Clifton Gardens, Crescent Amenity, Paddington Waterways and Maida Vale Society), interest-based groups such as Westminster Cycling Campaign, charities such as the Canal and River Trust and several ward councillors.

The high volume of responses and interest received in this early engagement process allowed the design team to gain an in-depth understanding of local issues and priorities ahead of developing designs. However, ahead of the public consultation and future engagement, the project team must find ways to specifically engage younger stakeholders, low income residents and other under-represented groups, to ensure a greater range of voices are part of conversations about the future of Warwick Avenue.



887 comments from 150+ contributors



Engagement Findings

DATA PROCESSING AND METHODOLOGY

In total, **almost 900 comments** were recorded across all engagement strands and events. At engagement events these were documented by note-takers from across the project team, and have subsequently been typed up, compiled, logged, categorised and reviewed according to the following recurring, key themes:

- Activity and use
- Character and heritage
- Traffic
- Pedestrian routes, crossings and accessibility
- Cycling
- Buses
- Parking
- Taxis
- Underground station
- Trees and greenery
- Bins
- Lighting and after-dark experience
- Wayfinding
- Perceived safety
- General/other

These themes/topics and the full list of comments (from across all engagement strands) have been the basis for the findings and quotes detailed in this document.

My lists
Warwick Avenue engagement ☆

☰ Comment ▾ ☑ Topic ▾

As long as the canals are here the tourists will come. And it's good for business! But we need a few signs and pointers so we don't have to tell them where to go.	Wayfinding
This area should be kept residential [in feel/character]. We don't want pop-up restaurants!	Activity and use Character and heritage
I wish cyclists were held to account – they're quite aggressive.	Cycling
Most people aren't going to be driving in the future. You have to give people the opportunity for more active travel. Build it and they will come, as they say! It's the future!	Pedestrian routes, crossings, accessibility Cycling
I think introducing lower-level greening is fundamental.	Trees and greenery
Why would you say it needs more greenery? It's one of the greenest streets in the capital already. You should see it in the summer!	Trees and greenery
This is both zone B and C, it should just be for zone C	Parking
The development at Travis Perkins is a concern, there will be lots and lots of students	Activity and use
Formosa Street should be pedestrianised, where the shops are	Traffic Pedestrian routes, crossings, accessibility Activity and use

☑ Location ▾ ☑ Source ▾ ☑ Stakehol... ▾

Station and exits Canal links and Rembrandt Gardens Walk 1 - Saturday 1 Resident

All of Warwick Avenue Walk 1 - Saturday 1 Resident

All of Warwick Avenue Walk 1 - Saturday 1 Resident

All of Warwick Avenue Walk 1 - Saturday 1 Resident

All of Warwick Avenue Walk 1 - Saturday 1 Resident

All of Warwick Avenue Walk 1 - Saturday 1 Resident

All of Warwick Avenue Walk 3 - Tuesday 2 Resident

Beyond project site Walk 3 - Tuesday 2 Resident

Formosa Street Walk 3 - Tuesday 2 Resident

Engagement Findings

1. OVERALL ATTITUDES TO CHANGE

- A large number of residents engaged said they **don't see a need for public realm improvements** at Warwick Avenue, assuring that the area works well currently. However, often this resistance to change was coupled with a **desire to protect the area's calm, residential character and avoid attracting more people – and specifically more tourists** – to it. Longer conversations with the same individuals often revealed there are some aspects that they would like to see improved, albeit without wanting to see a large-scale transformation.
- While the majority of local residents were very **protective over existing car parking spaces** and the current road function and layout, a significant number of residents were passionate about the **detrimental dominance of vehicles in the area** and saw an urgent need to **prioritise pedestrians** and active travel, improve air quality and reduce the impact of vehicles on the street.
- Often, families with young children or **those with mobility or health issues saw a greater need for change**, as the area doesn't work particularly well for them. Many highlighted the lack of accessibility as a barrier, describing convoluted crossings and inaccessible areas, alongside poor air quality and noise caused by congestion.

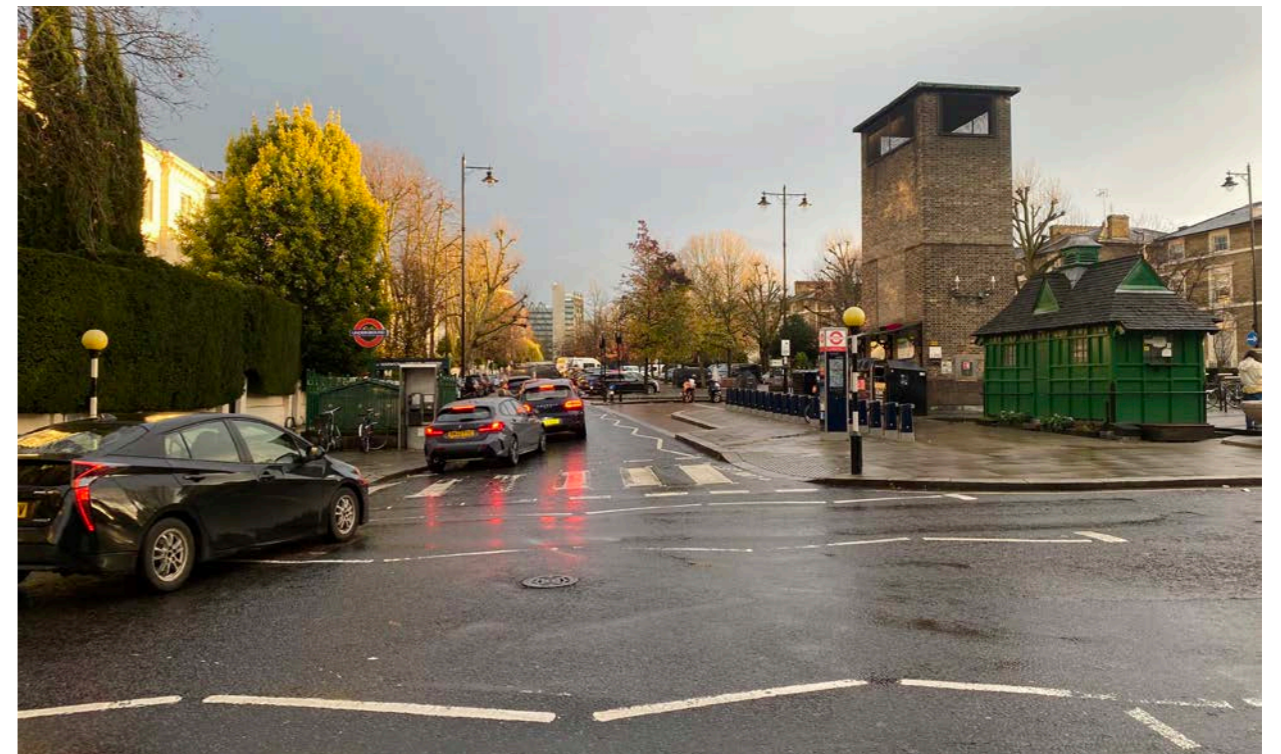


"What is wished for by the residents is more of a cosmetic nature than a complete revamp."

"Doing nothing is an option!"



"If you want to sit, there's Rembrandt Gardens and the canal. A road just doesn't compete with that, I wouldn't ever sit here [on Warwick Avenue]."



"My wife and children have been diagnosed with Asthma [...] since moving to Warrington Crescent. We strongly believe this is a result of increased automobile traffic."

"Why on earth do you want to waste money and ruin something that all the residents on the road enjoy and cherish? We live here and don't want it turned into a tourist attraction. Leave us in peace for God's sake."

"I think we are worried and hesitant about what will happen to the space [through this project]..."



"The space is not oriented towards people walking - it is about cars."



"For families in the area accessibility is very hard."

Engagement Findings

2. ACTIVITY AND USE

- Residents want to **protect the area’s residential character and its distinctiveness** from surrounding areas such as Paddington. There were many comments lamenting the high **volume of tourists in the area** (in the summer especially) and not wanting to attract any more.
- Many spoke of the area as **a place to commute through** rather than as a space to dwell. Some said they’d never sit here with alternatives like the canal and Rembrandt Gardens nearby, while others said they’d welcome a better public space for the neighbourhood.
- Several people highlighted the large size of the space around the station exits/north end of Warwick Avenue, but also said it is **not utilised well and lacks character**.
- Some **anti-social behaviour** was reported, including drinking on the benches after dark, drug-dealing around the canal and homeless people relieving themselves behind the bins.
- The **Cabmen’s shelter** is seen as **a key asset** to the area, with many residents hoping to see it made more of and opened up to provide **a more public, community offer**.
- Overall there was a desire among residents for more seating, and in particular some **tables and chairs around the Cabmen’s shelter** that the local community can use.
- There were **a range of views about the potential introduction of additional activities**. Some residents oppose any and all additional activities, and especially ‘pop-ups’, but many others would like to see **a small coffee kiosk, book exchange, community art, temporary farmers’ market or monthly flower market** in the area. Some noted that there already used to be a flower stall outside the station.
- There was appetite among many residents to **celebrate the area’s history through public art installations or information boards** and the potential to create **a community notice board**.
- Some residents highlighted that the presence of the road would make it **inappropriate to encourage play or create a play space here** – many families go to Rembrandt Gardens or Paddington Recreation grounds to play. Others said they’d like to see **play and playful features introduced in an integrated way** for the children who already use the area’s streets.
- A few comments were made about **replacing a post box** that used to be in the median strip.

“Please can you people leave Warwick Avenue as it is. We do not need more tourists.”

“You could have tables and chairs around the Cabmen’s shelter, create a nice area around it.”



“There is no desire to create a big public space here. You don’t want to encourage people to loiter, it leads to antisocial behaviour.”
Local councillor

“It would be lovely to have a fresco space to sit with the neighbours and have a coffee.”



“Seating around the Cabbies’ shelter would be nice. I often get a bacon sandwich there.”



“I never stop here, I just move through the area.”

“Could you make a Little Venice Square?”

Engagement Findings

3. CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

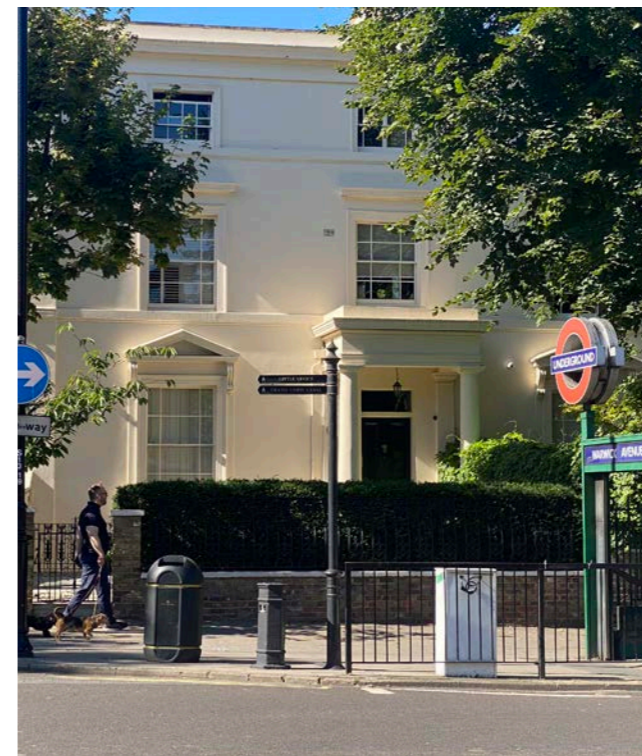
- **People think of the area – including Warwick Avenue – as Little Venice.** Several people suggested the station should be called **Little Venice station**. Warwick Avenue was understood by residents as a **gateway to Little Venice**, both for them and for visitors/tourists.
- The character of the area around Warwick Avenue is (and should remain) **distinct from that of Paddington Basin**. Residents felt it was **vital to protect the area’s heritage and historic character**, and to not design something ‘fashionable’.
- Many referred to the **original vision for a wide boulevard** at Warwick Avenue, which has been somewhat lost due to the dominance of parking.
- The ubiquity of **parking** was seen by many as **detrimental to the area’s heritage and architectural features**.
- The **clutter and lack of distinct character to the spaces around the Cabmen’s shelter** were seen by many to let the wider area down.
- The **Cabmen’s shelter and station exits** are both seen by the community as **characterful but underutilised heritage assets**. Conversely, **St Saviour’s church is widely seen as having a detrimental impact** on the area’s character.
- The Underground **vent shaft is an unpopular feature of the area**. There is great appetite for greening the structure, and some ideas for art or lighting, but always stressing the need for **proposals that are appropriate for its heritage setting**.
- There were numerous calls to **make more of the area’s history in the public realm**, for example through sculptures of celebrated local people such as Alan Turing and Robert Browning.
- There were suggestions to **make water a feature of the public realm**, as a nod to Little Venice, as well as calls to bring the historic water trough (currently used as a planter and located by the Cabmen’s shelter) back to life as a water feature.



“We should change the name of the station from Warwick Avenue to Little Venice.”



“The bridges should be more of a feature and would enhance the feeling of ‘Little Venice.’”



“It’s all very ‘London’ around here - there’s the Tube station, the black cabs and a London feel to the street.”

“My main concern is that we need to protect the heritage and not make it modern like Paddington basin.”



“This is a boulevard road that is unique in London and it is used as a dumping ground.”

“If I’m walking I’m just keeping my head down. They’re nice houses [along Warwick Avenue], but you just don’t see them because of the parked cars.”



“It’s a large area but has absolutely no personality.”



“We’d like to have a space outside that is friendlier for the church and the nursery and the public.”

Engagement Findings

4. TRAFFIC, JUNCTIONS AND PERCEIVED SAFETY

- According to residents, over recent years **traffic has increased significantly** in the area. The ubiquity of satnav, as well as changes to traffic elsewhere (eg lane reduction/cycle lane addition at A40 slip road to Westbourne Terrace), is blamed by many for the increase in **the use of Warwick Avenue as a vehicle through-route**. Some commented that drivers are reportedly trying to avoid Edgware Road, and travelling Edgware Road-Sutherland Avenue-Warrington Crescent-Warwick Avenue-A40 Westway. More traffic filters deemed necessary by many.
- Many described how **traffic backs up on Warrington Crescent and southbound on Warwick Avenue**, especially in the morning rush hour. Concerns were raised many times around congestion, air quality and horns/traffic noise.
- There were some calls to **pedestrianise the southern end of Warrington Crescent**, and/or to make it a designated School Street. There was also a suggestion to close Warwick Place to traffic.
- Residents frequently said **traffic speeds up downhill** (northbound on Warwick Avenue), at times dangerously.
- The **crossings at the junctions** around Warwick Avenue, Clifton Gardens and Clifton Villas was **deemed dangerous** by pedestrians. Many near-misses were reported, in particular at the crossing of Warwick Avenue by Clifton Villas, as vehicles speed downhill.
- The **roundabout at the junction of Warwick Avenue and Clifton Villas** was highlighted as problematic. People find it **unsafe** to cross, 4x4s reportedly drive straight across it and buses struggle to turn.
- The **junction at Warwick Avenue/Blomfield Road**, by the bridge, was deemed confusing, problematic and difficult to cross by many.
- Many **questioned the need for the double taxi turnaround lane**, although some residents reportedly find it useful to park there to use the bins (although this is not technically allowed).
- Some said the access road to Warwick Place is useful as a U-turn in heavy traffic.
- Many pointed out the redundancy of the planted traffic island between the church and the cabmen's shelter.
- The traffic barrier/railing on the pavement by the church is deemed necessary for the nursery, to protect toddlers.
- Despite some calls for ambitious changes and closures to traffic, and aside from the junction safety issues above, the majority of comments were **not supportive of major reconfigurations** of the road layout and function.

Beyond the project extents:

- There is a desire by many to **close Formosa Street to traffic** – it was said to have worked well during Covid-19 restrictions, and petitions have reportedly been launched in the past.
- The **roundabout further north at the Warwick Avenue/Formosa Street** junction was highlighted as a dangerous spot, particularly considering the proximity of St Saviour's school.



"This crossing [Warwick Avenue/Clifton Villas] is dangerous, there are speeding cars and buses."

"The traffic flow must stay as it is. It works. The morning issues with traffic are due to the changes made to the entry to the highway towards Marylebone and Westbourne Terrace."



"The mini roundabout is a nightmare, it's very dangerous. People don't use it as a roundabout, the 4x4s doing the school run just go straight over it."

"The junction with the roundabout is too tight for vehicles, buses struggle to turn and there are bus accidents."

"There is so much traffic and noise. Unless you make substantial changes to how this junction [Warwick Avenue/Warrington Crescent/Clifton Gardens] is used, greening and beautifying won't make a difference."

"Lorries passing over speed bumps set off car alarms through the night, disturbing our children's sleep on a regular basis."



"Formosa Street should be pedestrianised or become one way, it was done in the pandemic and was very successful."



"Dealing with the traffic is key. Downhill they come so fast! The timing of the lights [at the junction with Blomfield Rd] is an issue too."

Engagement Findings

5. CYCLING, TAXIS AND BUSES

- Cycling through the area was deemed unpleasant by many (except perhaps at quiet times such as on a Sunday). There were some calls for **segregated cycle lanes**, and for the **simplification of junctions** around the station for a safer and more pleasant cycling experience.
- There were several requests for a **cycle contraflow on Blomfield Road**.
- Santander **hire bikes are said to be extremely popular**, especially in the summer, when they are all reportedly empty by 10am, and may need **better management or increased numbers**.
- The current **central location of the Santander hire bikes** was an issue for some, taking up 'prime' space by the Cabmen's shelter.
- There is a **high demand locally for cycle parking**, and in particular for bike hangars/safe **overnight storage**. One resident mentioned having been on the wait list for a spot for two years already.
- Some residents felt that **bike hangars in the median strip obstruct access and views**. There were many requests to relocate these to car parking spaces or elsewhere.
- The **cycle stands by the Cabmen's shelter** take up a large area and are reportedly not very well used, and bikes are occasionally abandoned there. Several **suggestions to relocate these** to the pavements by St Saviour's Church.
- There were some requests for **dedicated e-scooter spaces**. Dockless e-bikes were also said to be left on pavements, creating clutter.
- The **taxi rank is seen as an asset to the local community**, and in particular the associated Cabmen's shelter is a valued feature of the area.
- **Taxi spaces** are reportedly very **rarely full**, especially in the evenings. They are not used at the weekend.
- **More rapid electric charging points** are reportedly needed for electric cabs.
- There were a small number of comments on the need to provide a **toilet for taxi drivers/private hire vehicles**, with complaints of bottles of urine thrown into gardens.
- Local buses are used by many local residents.
- Residents lamented that some **bus routes have been reduced** (route no. 6) **or removed** altogether (route no. 414).
- Bus **journey times** are longer than they used to be due to increased congestion.



"I've never seen the taxi spaces full."

"We love the cabbies, it's a real plus to have them here."



"The cycle racks need to be rationalised."

"The cycle stands in the central space are not well used and bikes are left and cannot be removed."

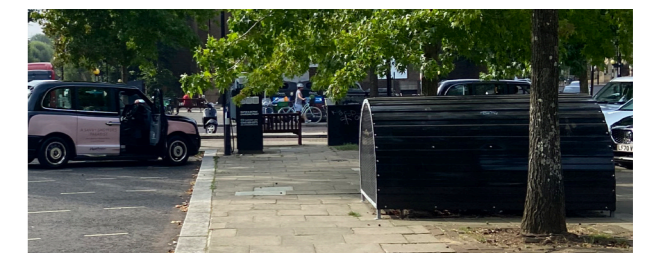
"We need to help make our bicycles more secure to park outside at night as I recently had my bike stolen."

"Cycle hangars should be on the road."



"The Santander bike racks are in very high demand and usually all bicycles are taken by 10am, especially in the summer."

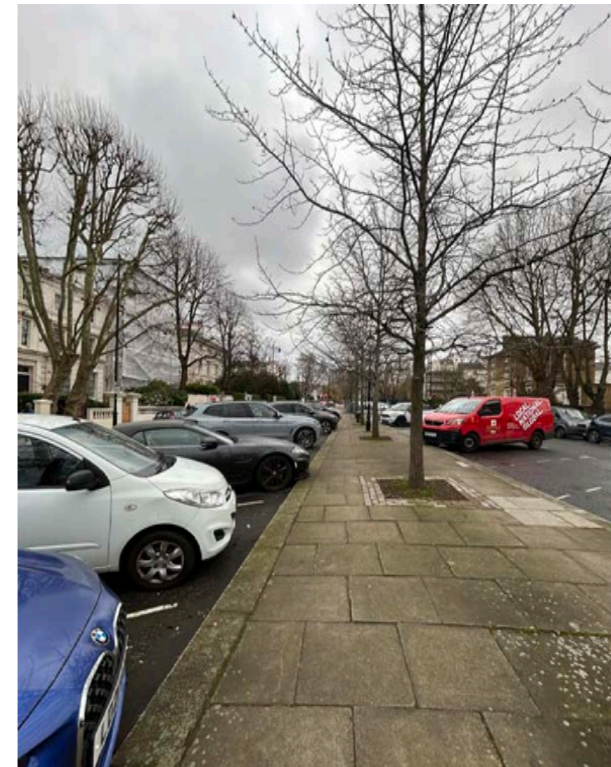
"The Santander bikes occupy prime space."



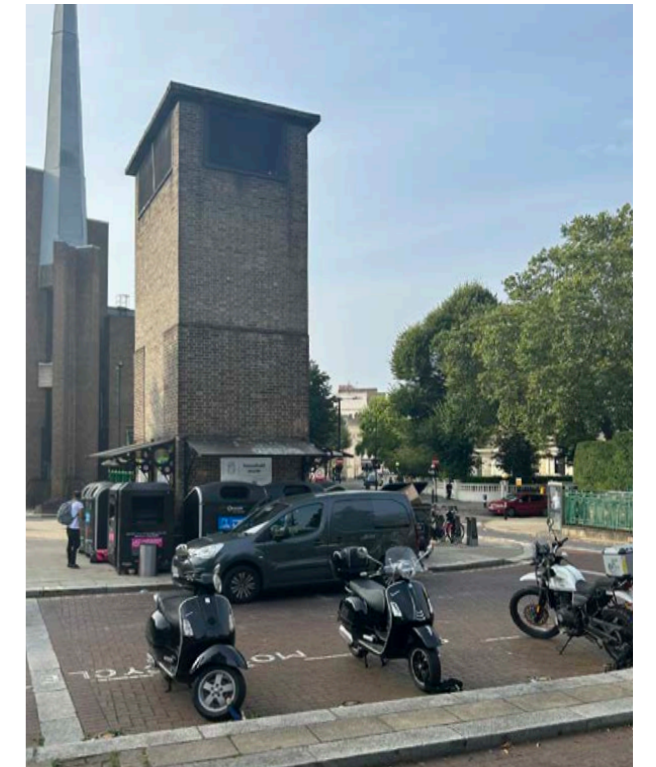
Engagement Findings

6. PARKING

- **Parking was a contentious and polarising subject** with opposing views from local residents. Many felt that Warwick Avenue is essentially a large car park that needs substantial changes to give more priority to pedestrians, while others fiercely defended the need for every existing parking spot.
- Many felt that **the share of residents' spaces and pay-and-display spaces** could be better balanced in favour of residents.
- Warwick Avenue currently accommodates parking zones B and C. Many called for changes to the boundaries, to **make Warwick Avenue zone C**.
- Many anecdotally described that people drive here, **park and then get on the Tube**, particularly in the morning. Some residents described frequently coming back from the school run to discover there are no free parking spaces.
- Some highlighted the **need for pay-by-phone parking, for visitors** and those coming to work in the area – worker vans are reportedly seen parked on the street daily.
- There were numerous requests and suggestions for **additional electric car charging points**.



"We want less parking here. This area is a monument to car parking."



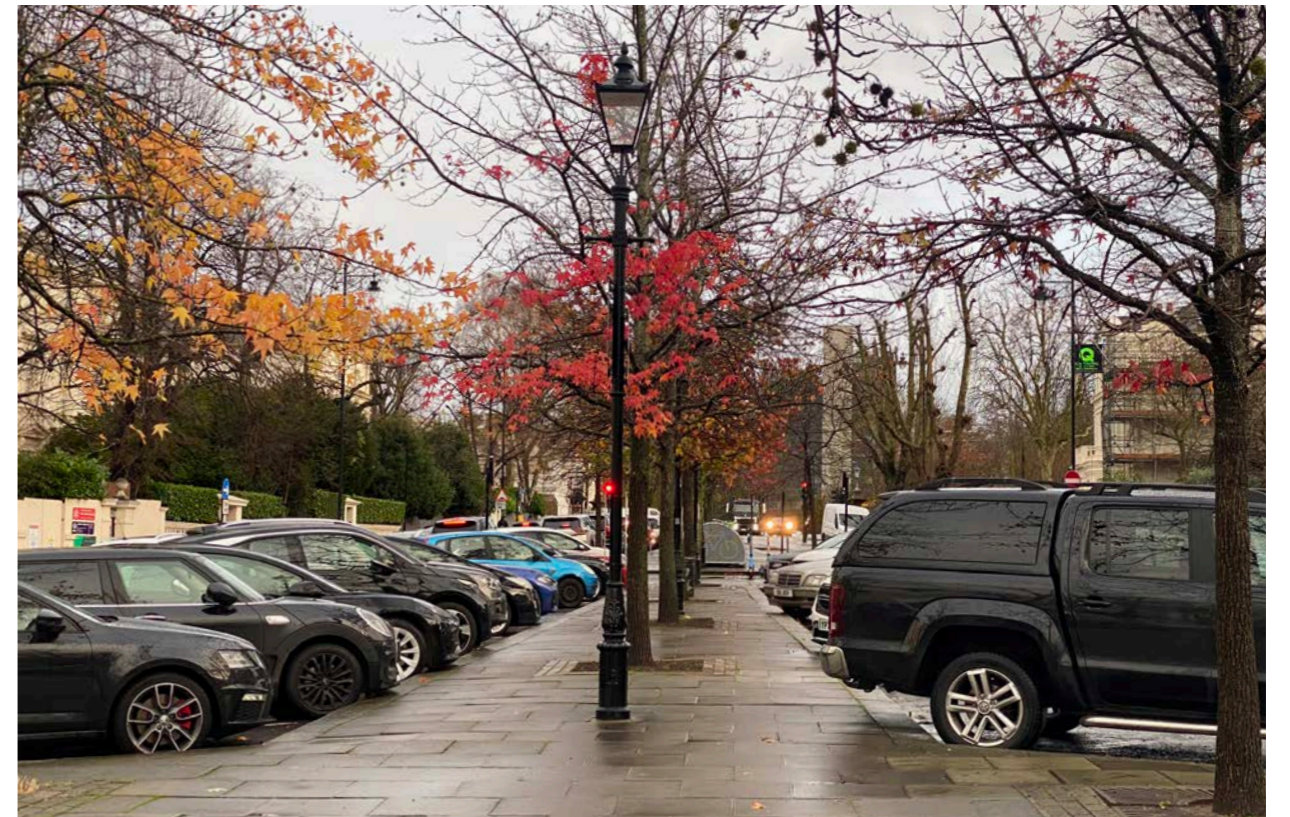
"NOT A SINGLE PARKING SPACE CAN BE LOST. There is already a shortage of parking spaces."



"In a utopia you'd like it all to be green, but the reality is we need parking."



"This was originally an avenue, it wasn't designed for cars, why are they allowed to park here?"



"The strategy has to be in favour of people, not cars."

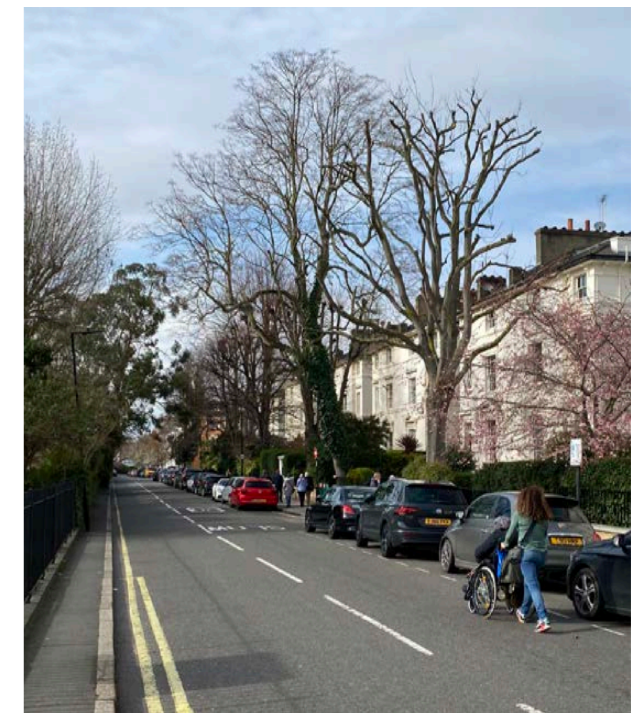
Engagement Findings

7. PEDESTRIAN ROUTES AND ACCESSIBILITY

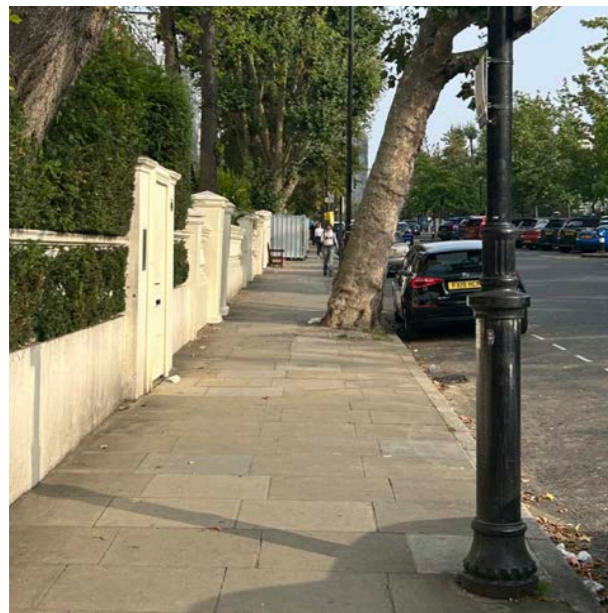
- **Accessibility is an issue** in the area. Many parents of young children in particular highlighted the difficulty of moving around with a pram.
- The **median strip was highlighted as particularly inaccessible**, especially for those with limited mobility or prams. It's difficult to get to at both ends, and leads to dead ends.
- Many residents told us they **choose to walk along the median strip because of the Liquidambar trees**, and because it is calm and quiet. Others said they'd never walk there because there is no reason to.
- **People walk along the eastern side of Warwick Avenue** more than they do on the western side.
- **Uneven pavements** were highlighted as an area-wide issue, they can sometimes be slippery when wet or due to tree droppings, and tree roots cause breakages in the pavement and **trip hazards**.
- The solid hedge within the residential garden on the corner of Clifton Gardens and Warwick Avenue/station exit **constricts the pavement** and creates a blind spot.
- Many residents wanted to see improved and **more visible access to the canal**, in general but in particular from Blomfield Road/the bridge, for example with a set of steps close to the bridge.
- Some residents highlighted the **narrow pavements along the canal on Blomfield Road**, which are impossible to navigate in a wheelchair or with a pram.
- Residents complained about the **lack of accessibility of the Underground station**, and some also said they'd like **step-free access to St Saviour's Church**.



"Having lift access to the Tube would make a huge difference."



"As a mother with a pushchair, I find it very difficult to navigate this area."



"I do drive, but I think the road could be narrowed – the pavements on either side are very narrow. I'm against having to jostle for space on the pavements!"



"I walk along Warrington Crescent and Warwick Avenue every day and I can't see a problem."



"When I used to push my husband in a wheelchair we'd always use the pavements on either side, but when I'm on my own I walk in the middle bit, because I like it."



"If the central strip was better and more accessible we would absolutely use it more!"

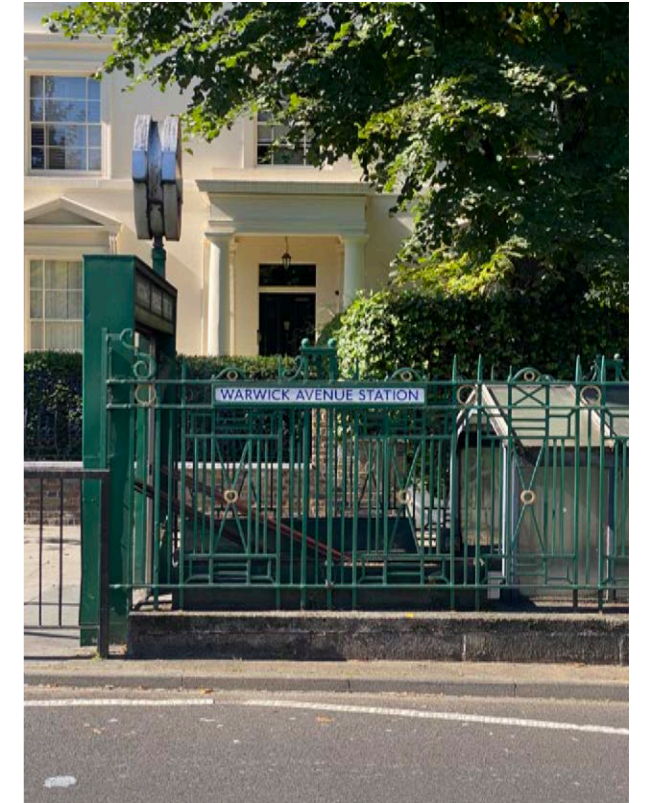
Engagement Findings

6. THE UNDERGROUND STATION

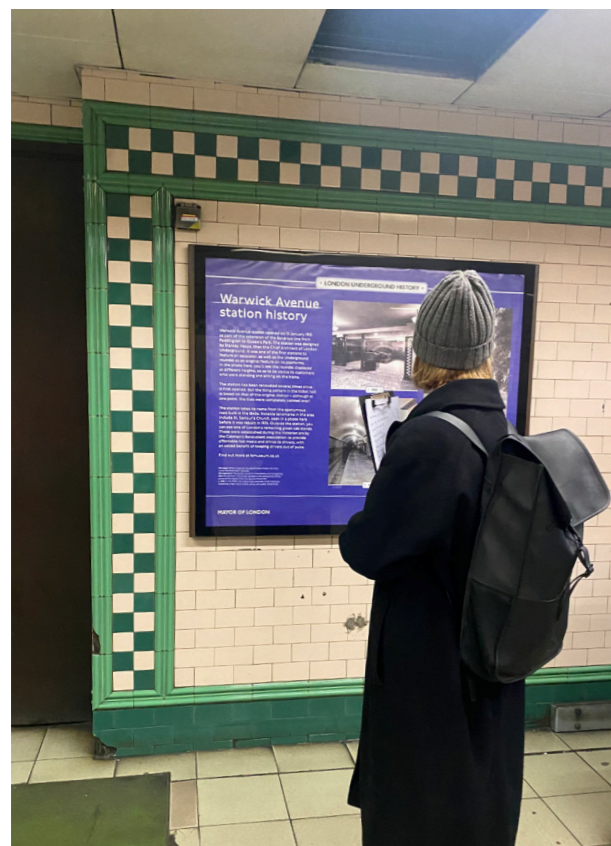
- The Underground station at **Warwick Avenue** does not have **step-free access**, an issue highlighted by many residents and in particular by those with limited mobility and with young children.
- There were many **complaints about the station entrances/exits**, both in terms of the insufficient lighting, its general condition (tiles, railings, paint) and the danger posed by the stairs.
- The station itself was also deemed ‘a mess’ by many, and its poor condition appears to be **in need of investment**.
- The **Underground vent shaft** was highlighted by many as detrimental to the area. Many residents wondered whether it could be changed, covered in greenery, or accommodate a lift to the station.
- Several residents suggested a change of name from Warwick Avenue station to **Little Venice station**, which they felt would be more in line with the area’s identity.



“The station stairs are an accident waiting to happen.”



“It’s a nice station, it doesn’t have a station building so it’s quite subtle.”



“The inside of the station is diabolical. It’s falling apart.”



“The Tube entrance is disgusting. The tiles are broken, the planting isn’t working, it’s dark and it’s like going into a bomb shelter.”



“There is no escalator or lift in the station.”

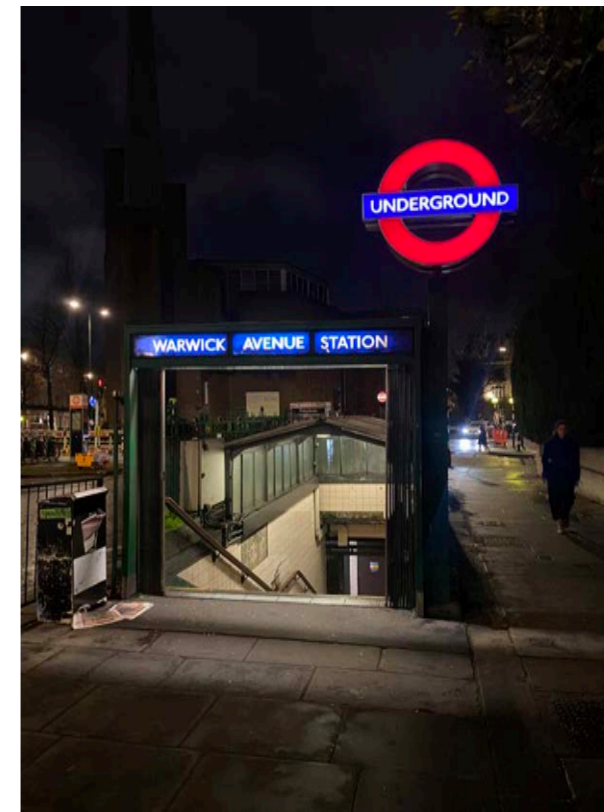


“The glass and railings are beautiful but the light could be brighter inside.”

Engagement Findings

9. LIGHTING AND THE AFTER-DARK EXPERIENCE

- Many **women reported feeling unsafe after dark**, in particular around the station exits. Some avoid walking in the area at night altogether. Reasons included a lack of openness and obstructed sight lines, the presence of homeless people, a lack of activity in the area and inadequate lighting.
- There were many comments made about the **darkness of the station exits**. Better lighting is needed at the station exits and in particular on the stairs from the Underground.
- Many residents reacted positively to conversations about **lighting the church and its spire**, particularly when it was lit using torches during the after-dark engagement walk. There were some concerns from the church warden about lighting the church from within, due to recent break-ins at other churches.
- There were many **positive comments about the lamp posts in the median strip** (especially the interplay of the light with the trees) and on Warwick Place, where lighting is low, soft and warm.
- There are some **well-loved heritage lamps** in the area - in particular those on the bridge across the canal - but **many of these lights are not currently working**.
- The very tall lamp posts along Warwick Avenue cause issues, **shining into neighbouring houses**. Their light is colder, and drew fewer positive comments from residents.
- **Legibility and wayfinding are reportedly especially poor at night**. Wayfinding signs are not visible or lit after dark, and some residents spoke of the canal (and the bridge across it) becoming invisible at night.
- Some highlighted **the importance of darkness for wildlife**, and many were protective over important dark spaces like Rembrandt Gardens.
- Several residents said they **avoid walking along the canal at night**, as they feel unsafe.



"I immediately feel unsafe when exiting the station. The steps are not well illuminated."



"I avoid walking on Warwick Avenue late at night when coming home from nights out."



"I didn't like the church at all during the day but seeing it lit at night has changed my mind."



"The lights on the bridge over the canal are beautiful but aren't working at night - people don't even realise that it is a bridge and that the canal is down there."



"It would be lovely to light the Cabmen's shelter."

"The lamp post shines right into our living room."

Engagement Findings

10. TREES AND GREENERY

- The area's greenery and trees are an important part of what lends Warwick Avenue its character. Many commented on the beauty that **seasonal changes** bring to the area. The street-facing **residents' gardens** are appreciated by the whole community.
- There was a huge deal of **appreciation for the Liquidambar trees in the median strip**, and in particular their foliage colours in the autumn.
- There doesn't seem to be much appetite for additional trees, but a great deal of **support for lower level planting, both in the ground and in planters**. Many want to see **more shrubs, flowers and topiary hedges**, prioritising hardy species and plants that are in the area already such as camelias, magnolias and mimosas.
- **Clifton Nurseries was named repeatedly as a potential partner organisation**. Residents said the plant nursery used to care for planters placed outside the station. Community gardening groups were also referenced as possible custodians.
- There was lots of appetite from residents to **green the Underground vent shaft** – an idea that was suggested repeatedly.
- **Concerns were raised about tree roots** breaking the footways and causing trip hazards, and lime trees causing slippery surfaces.
- Some concerns raised around additional greenery in relation to **maintenance, dogs and accessibility**.



"The trees make the area unique."



"A few homes along the road from Warwick Avenue tube towards the canal have vegetation which compromises much of the pedestrian pavement."

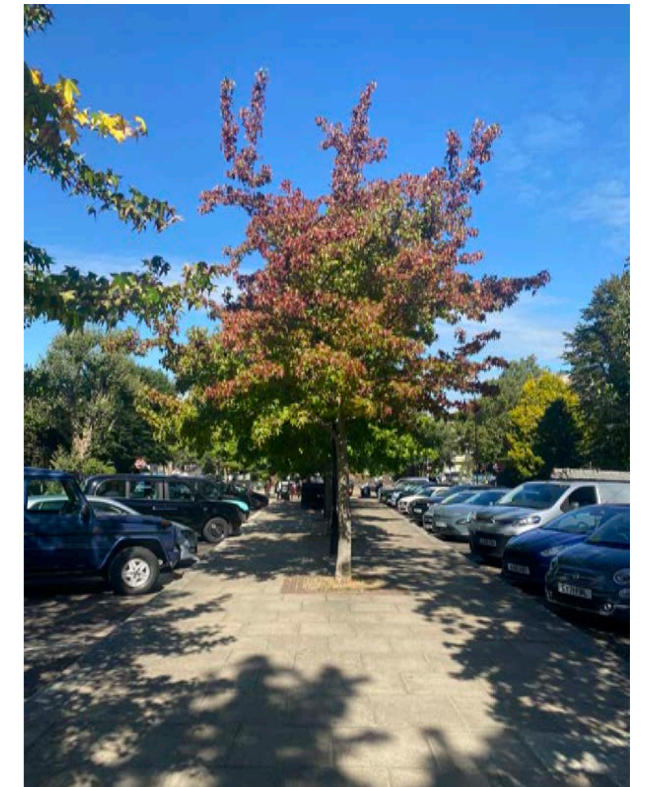


"People's front gardens are very nice here."

"The trees are beautiful here and you see many people stopping to take photos beside them - there is a cherry tree on Warrington Crescent that has a queue of people waiting to take photos next to it in spring."



"[The area needs] no more trees, but shrubs and flowers to make the area nicer in keeping with the more formal design of the area."



"You feel the seasons here because of the trees"

"Greening the space under the trees is a no-brainer. It's good for the trees. It's good for flooding. It's good for bees."



"More flowerbeds!"

Engagement Findings

11. BINS

- The engagement process made it very clear that the recycling bins are **an extremely convenient and valued resource** for local residents.
- A large number of residents complained that the **bins are currently oversubscribed**, singling out the charity collection bins in particular, and many described antisocial behaviour that has arisen as a result. There were reports of all **bins overflowing** and littering the pavement, of **people stealing from the donation bins**, of fly-tipping, and of the backs of bins being used as a toilet.
- Aside from wanting to see improvements to the management of the bins, many residents asked if the bins could be **screened or housed in a more attractive way**.
- Long-time residents highlighted that **the bin area has expanded over recent years** and takes up significantly more pavement space than it used to.
- There were contradicting opinions about the current location of the bins. Most residents acknowledged that the bins are **an eyesore in their current position**, but many simply couldn't conceive a better alternative. Conversely, other residents felt that different locations should be explored in order to create a more pleasant public space and better arrival experience from the Underground.
- A small number of residents highlighted the **usefulness of the taxi turnaround lane** to park and drop off recycling waste (despite the double yellow lines).



"Everybody wants to use the bins but nobody wants to look at them."



"The bins take up valuable real estate!"

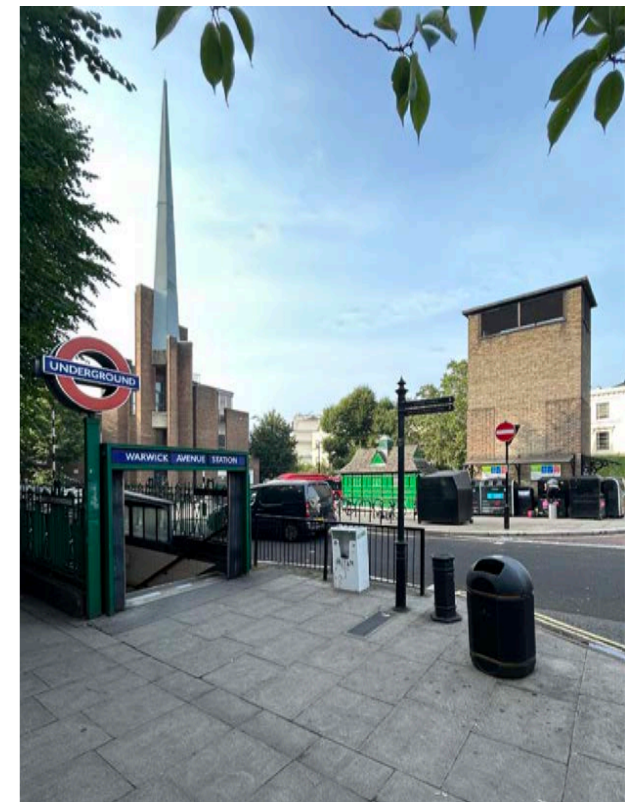
"The bins are needed, they need to go somewhere. Here they are not right next to people's houses, where would you move them to?"



"In the 20 years I've lived here, the bins have encroached around the corner over time."



"I don't like the way the bins are managed. They're needed but they're a mess."



"The first thing you're confronted with as you arrive [out of the Underground station] is the bins. They're an eyesore."

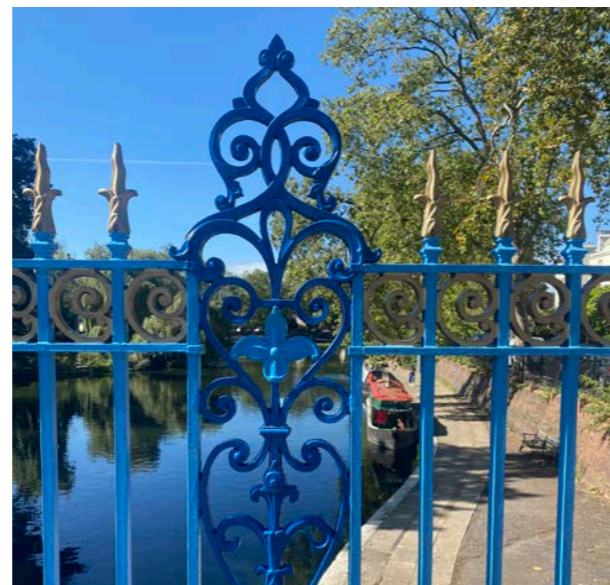
Engagement Findings

12. WAYFINDING

- The engagement process garnered a huge volume of comments about **the need for better wayfinding and signage to Little Venice**. The lack of sight lines and visible landmarks, and the counter-intuitive topography (uphill from Warwick Avenue towards the canal) means visitors are often left to **ask locals for directions**.
- There were numerous reports of lost or **disoriented tourists/visitors** to the area looking at their smartphones outside the Underground station. Some residents pointed out that this behaviour has made them **a target for phone snatchers**.
- Residents also suggested that there is a need for **better signage to local high streets, the taxi rank and places of interest** (such as Formosa Street and Clifton Nurseries), as well as to the public toilets in Rembrandt Gardens.
- Wayfinding at the southern end of Warwick Avenue and **down to the canal** was deemed especially challenging, with conflicting views over whether this is due to a lack of signage or an issue of poor access. Many highlighted that wayfinding along the canal towpaths is also challenging if you don't know your way, as signage is scarce.
- Wayfinding was reportedly **especially challenging after dark**, when important landmarks such as the canal and bridge disappear (particularly as the bridge lights are not currently working).
- Some buildings and features act as **local landmarks within the project area**; the canal (and the bridge across it) and St Saviour's Church were named frequently as having an important role to play in wayfinding.



“There is a lack of signage to small businesses and high street from the station – this means only residents and locals use these rather than visitors.”



“You see the canal, but you don't know how to get down there.”

“You need to know where to get down to the canal, but also where those paths lead.”



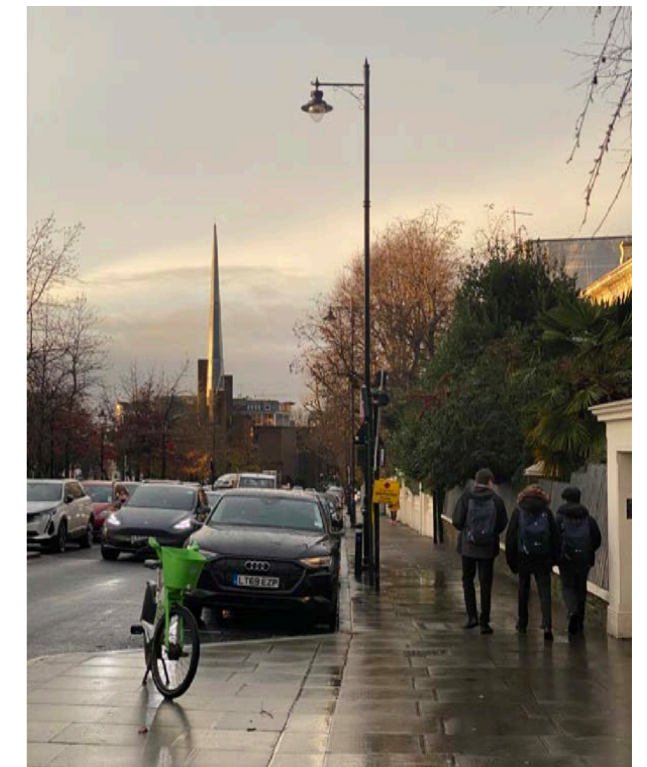
“I must get 20 people a day [coming up to the Cabmen's shelter] asking 'where's, the canal? Where's Little Venice?'”



“On the bridge is when I feel I've reached home.”



“Tourists come out of the Tube and we all have to become unofficial tourist ambassadors.”



“Warwick Avenue begins on the bridge. You get wonderful views to the canal, to the trees and the church at the end.”

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