

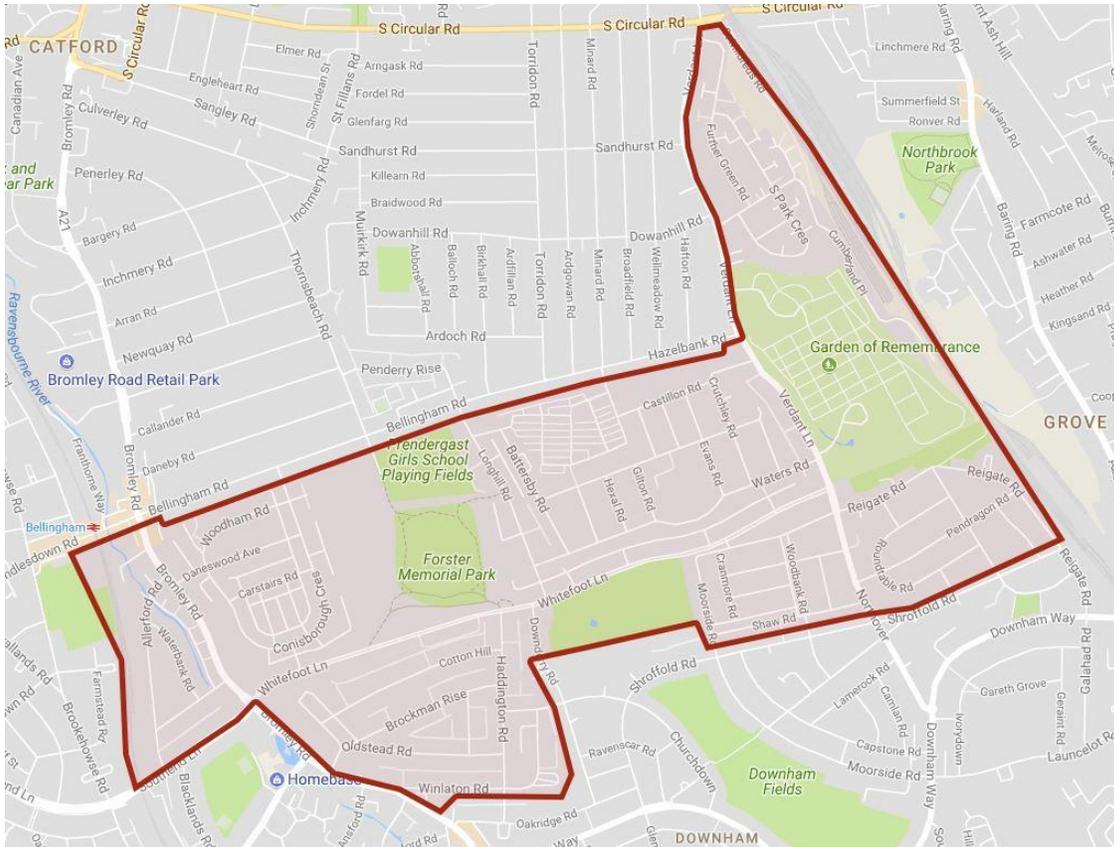


# Community Development in Whitefoot

## LOCAL RESIDENTS' SURVEY RESULTS ON WHITEFOOT WARD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

## Introduction

The Whitefoot Ward Residents' Survey was conducted between May and July 2017 with local residents and those from surrounding wards who use facilities local to Whitefoot. The purpose of the survey was to find out what community members would like to see happen with community development activities in the local area.



## WHERE IS WHITEFOOT?

Whitefoot ward in southeast Lewisham covers the area south of Catford South, north of Downham, east of Bellingham and west of Grove Park wards. To the north, the boundary runs east to west just south of Bellingham and Hazelbank Roads. It then follows along Verdant Lane until just south of the South Circular, cutting slightly to the east along the railway line that joins Hither Green and Grove Park stations. Where Reigate and Shroffold Roads meet it carries on to the east, north of Shroffold Road, along the south side of the playing fields which lie south of Whitefoot Lane, then follows alongside just east of Winlaton Road south then west until Bromley Road. At Bromley

Road it follows north until going west at Southend Lane then running north to the east of Allerford Road, back up to Randlesdown and then Bellingham Roads.

Whitefoot includes Forster Memorial Park, Hither Green Cemetery, a few large community facilities, like Goldsmiths Community Centre and The Green Man, several community groups, schools, churches, a mosque and a few shops. The area is largely residential and lacks a wide range of shops, has few public toilets or free cash points and does not contain any railway stations. The 2011 census reported a population of 14,249.

## HOW WAS THE SURVEY CARRIED OUT?

The survey was launched at The Phoenix Festival in Forster Memorial Park with a team of volunteers conducting the survey face to face with visitors to the event. This is how most of the survey responses were collected, through face to face engagement at events and through local groups. The survey was also emailed to local organisations for wider distribution and promoted via social media, via the Whitefoot and North Downham Community Facebook Group and Goldsmiths Community Centre's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

## WHO DID WE SURVEY?

An impressive 225 people answered the Whitefoot ward survey. To make sure we asked a broad section of local residents we ran the survey at a wide range of local events and community groups, including The Phoenix Festival, Forster Park Family Fun, Downham Celebrates, Forster Park Big Lunch and Clean Up Day, South Lewisham GP Practice, Phoenix Chat and Chips, walking around Forster Park and Longhill Road at school let out time, The Frontroom Club at St. Luke's Church, the Silver Surfers and other groups at Goldsmiths Community Centre, and at The Green Man at Phoenix Community Housing.

In an attempt to ensure that people of all ages and backgrounds were included in the survey we attended a wide variety of events and made sure to ask each and every person passing by within a given time or with smaller venues to ask every person attending to answer the survey. We surveyed organisations working with hard to reach groups to ensure those without mobility or access to the internet were represented. We decided not to ask for equal opportunities information to keep the survey short and so people weren't put off by having to provide personal information.

While the majority of people surveyed are Whitefoot residents (153 out of 225), we didn't exclude our neighbours since we surveyed them while using Whitefoot facilities, like the local park or GP surgery, and we presumed they have an interest in helping to improve our local community.

## The results

The Whitefoot Ward Residents' Survey is made up of the following 6 questions:

1. Do you live in Whitefoot and, if not, then where do you live?
2. What community services, activities, and venues for meeting people do you know of in Whitefoot?
3. What services and activities would you like to see in your local community of Whitefoot?
4. Which groups would you like to see more services and activities for in Whitefoot?
5. What is the most important concern for you in your local area?
6. Is there anything else you'd like to see in your local community (e.g. more disabled access, public loos, playgrounds, other services or facilities)?

Questions 3 and 4 included a list of multiple choice options as well as an 'other' category. The full survey can be viewed at the back of this report.

The responses have been grouped into the following sections:

- ◆ What we already know about our ward
- ◆ What we would like to see more of
- ◆ What concerns we have
- ◆ Who we think needs more services.

Answers for question 6 fall into either concerns or things we would like to see, so have been added to the results to questions 3 or 5, as appropriate.

## WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW ABOUT OUR WARD

About half of respondents answered Question 2 which asked what community services, activities and venues the person already knew about. Interestingly, of those who answered the question 38% said 'none'. This goes to show how little people know about what already exists in the neighbourhood.

Here is the list of community assets given by the one third of respondents who gave examples:

Facility, service or activity	Responses (%)
Goldsmiths Community Centre	28 (25%)
Local churches	19 (17%)
Green Man	14 (12%)
Forster Park	10 (9%)
Downham Health and Leisure Centre	6 (5%)
WDCF+	6 (5%)
Downderry Children's Centre	6 (5%)
Play group	5 (4%)
Phoenix	4 (3.5%)
Bellingham Leisure Centre	3 (3%)
Cubs, Scouts, Brownies	3 (3%)
Shops	3 (3%)
Corbett Library	3 (3%)
Preschool Learning Alliance	2 (2%)
Football at Forster Park	2 (2%)
Children's Centre on Bellingham Road	1 (1%)
Karate	1 (1%)
Gymnastics	1 (1%)
Friends of Forster Park	1 (1%)
Archery at Whitefoot Lane Playing Fields	1 (1%)
Goldsmiths Community Nursery	1 (1%)
Downham Nutrition Partnership	1 (1%)
Phoenix Festival	1 (1%)
Youth Centre	1 (1%)
The Bridge Swimming	1 (1%)
Bellingham Children's Centre	1 (1%)
Brighter Horizons charity for disabled adults	1 (1%)
GP	1 (1%)

Some of the venues listed, such as Bellingham Leisure Centre, are in wards neighbouring Whitefoot, reflecting how people see their neighbourhood outside of ward boundaries and are often not necessarily familiar with which ward they live in or the area it covers.

### WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE OF

The survey gave the following multiple choice options for Question 3 which asked which activities or services residents might like to see developed in Whitefoot.

Suggested Ideas	Responses (%)
Fitness and wellbeing classes	122 (54%)
Sports clubs	95 (42%)
Creative arts projects	90 (40%)
Gardening	83 (37%)
Mental health support services	80 (36%)
Help to lose weight	79 (35%)
Cooking workshops	75 (33%)
Healthy eating / nutrition advice	73 (32%)
Skate park	72 (32%)
Activities celebrating the diversity of our community	72 (32%)
Music activities you can participate in	70 (31%)
Help for older people to get online	70 (31%)
Volunteering opportunities	67 (30%)
Other (please specify)	67 (30%)
Theatre workshops	67 (30%)
Help finding a job	62 (28%)
Advice (e.g. benefits, housing, debt)	62 (28%)
IT classes (e.g. how to use a computer, Word, Excel)	60 (27%)
Counselling and emotional support	60 (27%)
Befriending (meeting people for conversation)	58 (26%)
Book club	53 (24%)
Storytelling workshops	47 (21%)
Coding workshops	37 (16%)
Support groups for particular issues (please list)	37 (16%)

Those who selected 'Support groups for particular issues' gave a wide range of topics that they would like to see support groups for. The top three topics requested were:

- ◆ Mental health (depression, anxiety, stress)
- ◆ Alcohol and drug rehabilitation
- ◆ Families and parenting (e.g. baby parenting classes, dealing with difficult behaviour, special needs)

Other issues residents would like to see support groups for included:

- ◆ Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- ◆ Adults who have experienced abuse as children
- ◆ Elderly
- ◆ Sickle cell disease
- ◆ Long-term illness
- ◆ Postnatal support and perinatal mental illness
- ◆ Gender / transgender issues
- ◆ Bullying
- ◆ Carers

Participants were invited to give examples of what they would like to see in their own words under 'Other' as well as in Question 6 where they were asked whether there is anything else they would like to see. Here are the resulting ideas:

Suggestion	Responses	Detailed examples
Playgrounds	43	Improve and modernise Forster Park, Peter Pan, Reigate Road playground; new one near Goldsmiths, by church, baby play schools, more for under-5's, adventure park
More activities for young people	40	Youth club (at Goldsmiths), youth work, mentoring, arts, more affordable activities, volunteering
Public toilets	32	In park, with baby changing facilities, disabled loos, Forster park loos open longer
Sport and leisure activities	17	Dance classes for adults (e.g. street, hip hop, salsa, ballet), football, tennis, martial arts, gymnastics, table tennis, yoga, knitting group, film club, free classes, weekend/daytime
More activities for children	16	Yoga for children, evening activities
Venues and shops	13	Community café, café at Bromley Road end of Whitefoot that is open at weekends, pub, cinema, food market, laundrette, banks, bookshop, shops
Community engagement	12	Keeping community centres open, welcoming and for the community, community street parties, more public events
Disabled access	12	More disabled access, better paving slopes
Services	11	Improved transport, drop in centres, more care centres, childcare, more local police, social inclusion for housebound, day trips (e.g. to coast)

Outdoor exercise equipment	10	In green by Shroffold Road, in Reigate Road park, in Forster Park
Improved environment	10	More green spaces, street trees, rosebushes in community garden, better lighting at back of Phoenix greens, parkour park, local walking routes, maps of local area, recycling facilities in the street, bike stands, BBQ places, apply for park opposite St. Luke's to be used for fair, repairing
More activities for under-5's	7	Activities during the day, play groups (e.g. Forster park), preschool at lower end of Whitefoot Lane now Peter Pan is closing
Leisure facilities	5	Sporting areas (basketball, athletics, dance, football), swimming pool, steam room, sauna
Education and training	4	Cultural identity, encouraging young people not to litter, wellbeing, ESOL
Basic life skills	3	Budgeting, DIY (for women)
Advice	3	Debt, housing

## WHAT CONCERNS WE HAVE

Nearly 40% of respondents either skipped the Question 5 about what concerns they have or answered 'none'. Of those who responded, the greatest concerns cover crime, anti-social behavior, safety and untidy streets. Detailed examples given are shown below:

Concern	Responses	Detailed examples
Crime, anti-social behaviour and safety	37 (16%)	Knife crime, burglary, begging, theft, people fighting, vandalism, drugs, drug dealing houses in Catford, gangs / young people in parks, children disrespecting elders and each other, water from Bromley Road car wash making pavement icy, roads not well lit, kids playing in areas on the estate where they shouldn't
Littering, fly-tipping, untidy streets	30 (13%)	Fly tipping bottom of Haddington Road, trees hanging into roads, rats, dog fouling, potholes, hanging bushes in people's gardens, uneven pavements (warn people or sort out), dumped cars, lack of litter bins, more bins around green areas, dog bins, graffiti, need for better green waste disposal
Traffic, speeding	15 (7%)	Bromley Road, Verdant Lane, Waters Road, school zones, dangerous crossing on Bromley road by Co-Op, junction at Whitefoot/ Southend/ Bromley Road should have filters on all sets of lights, cameras to prevent drivers using the one way system on Old Bromley Road, driving wrong way and speeding, get rid of road humps (too many 20mph roads), parking, better speed humps on Verdant Lane, better traffic calming measures, safer crossings, too much pollution
Lack of social activities	13 (6%)	Cinema, clubs, child-friendly cafes, not enough publicity of local activities and services, networking, breadth of activities
Park maintenance and improvements	6 (3%)	Forster Park general maintenance, caretaker, lack of facilities (café, dog area, biking, shelters for when it rains), nettles in Beckenham Place Park, broken glass in playgrounds, protect parks and greenspaces, bigger park, more community greenspaces, fix the park at

		Reigate Road, add stuff to play on and ensure older kids don't ruin it, built-in table tennis, outdoor gym equipment, assault course (like at Northbrook Park), park facilities open more often
Equal opportunities	5 (2%)	Celebrating diversity, LGBT, addressing poverty
Health and Wellbeing	3 (1%)	Child obesity, more carers needed
Transport	3 (1%)	More buses, bike-friendly places, consider residents parking permits and removing speed humps
Housing and environment	3 (1%)	Lack of infrastructure to service new flats, noise, better communication from Phoenix
Unemployment	2 (1%)	More local jobs

## WHO WE THINK NEEDS MORE SERVICES

Many respondents suggested that they would like to see more services for everyone, showing what a supportive and sharing community we have in Whitefoot. That said, the question about who might need further support was intended to identify gaps. The results below show that the whole community believes that investing in children and young people should be the focus for community development. Other groups including older people, parents, those with disabilities and women also received a significant show of support. Examples given under 'Other' included everyone, ASD, families, 11+, working people, dads, carers and intergenerational.

Who needs support	Responses
Young people	155 (74.5%)
Children	127 (61%)
Older people	85 (41%)
Parents	82 (39%)
Disabled	75 (36%)
Women	66 (32%)
Long-term ill	64 (31%)
Cultural groups	59 (28%)
Carers	57 (27%)
Unemployed	55 (26%)
Men	37 (18%)
LGBT	36 (17%)
Other	11 (5%)

## Highlights

The Whitefoot Ward Residents' Survey results provide valuable feedback and suggestions for community development in Whitefoot. While further research is needed to better understand the findings, some of the highlights which stand out from the survey responses are listed here:

- ◆ Children and young people are by far the largest group that respondents felt needed more services and activities in the ward. Specific requests were made for youth groups and youth work as well as mentoring, arts and more affordable activities. Other groups which received significant votes included older people, parents and the disabled.
- ◆ Healthy living is a big priority for residents. Fitness, wellbeing and sports were top of the list of requested activities. Help to lose weight, gardening, cooking workshops and healthy eating advice also received significant votes.
- ◆ Creative arts projects came high up the list and several respondents specifically requested creative arts for young people.
- ◆ There is a distinct lack of knowledge amongst residents about what already exists in the ward shown by the 38% of respondents who claimed to not know of any community services or venues, combined with the request for better publicity of local services.
- ◆ The most common support groups requested included mental health, alcohol and drug rehabilitation and parenting support.
- ◆ Parks and playgrounds were mentioned and received a long list of specific suggestions, from maintaining and improving existing ones, to building new playgrounds in particular areas or adding new features, such as outdoor gyms, to parks.
- ◆ Public toilets are lacking in the area with calls for more public loos and for facilities in parks and other venues to be open more often, as well as for better disabled access and baby changing facilities to be added.
- ◆ A significant number of respondents (40%) reported having no concerns about the local area. Of those who did report concerns, most mentioned crime, anti-social behaviour and safety (16%), flytipping and untidy streets (13%) and traffic and speeding (7%).

## Next Steps

The results of this survey will inform an Action Plan for Community Development in Whitefoot Ward which the Whitefoot Ward Community Development Worker, community development workers within local organisations, local charities and Lewisham Council staff may use as a guideline when developing community activities and resources in Whitefoot.