

Report on Stakeholder Consultation 18 September 2008

[Sophie@cookie.org.uk](mailto:Sophie@cookie.org.uk)

My first impression of last night's LBI King's Cross Movement and Public Space Strategy participatory event was surprise at how few local organisations were there, some very big gaps indeed. Seems a great shame to have narrowed the invitation list (if that was the problem) as the event itself was really quite good. The other big drawback was lack of time. I've a feeling the consultants didn't factor in the sheer number of issues that would need to be addressed here. The walkabout had to be cut short therefore missing out on a great deal of information gathering. The participative exercises also had to be cut short because of the large amount of information participants wanted to contribute.

As I understand it, last night was the start of a three-pronged process:

1. Movement analysis (by type eg vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists; looking at where increases are happening)
2. Quality assessment of public spaces
3. Stakeholder input

As a result of last night's event a set of proposals will be drafted. These will be presented back to stakeholders at a second event to take place in a few months' time. Following that proposals will be presented to West and South Area Committees, after which a full public consultation will be carried out before the final strategy is agreed.

Andy Sawyer of the British Transport Police made some excellent contributions including calling for the community to be involved throughout the process. He asked that CYP be consulted specifically; both the organisation and young people themselves.

Caroline Russell of Living Streets also made excellent contributions, particularly about lowering the speed limit throughout King's Cross as part of the 'Twenty is Plenty' campaign.

Several representatives attended from Sense. They've invested a great deal to make their new offices on Pentonville Road accessible, yet are facing huge barriers particularly from TfL in trying to make the surrounding streets accessible for people with a range of disabilities.

There was complete consensus over the need to get rid of the gyratory system and introduce two-way traffic on York Way. TfL were present so it'll be interesting to see their reaction to their representative's experience last night!

The need to use sophisticated means to subtly 'signpost' changes in behaviour via innovative streetscape design came over very strongly.

Amount and speed of traffic flow coupled with the high priority given to vehicles over pedestrians was probably the top issue, followed by the number of heavy goods vehicles passing through.

East/west traffic routes were identified as a potential future problem, Traffic will want to travel into King's Cross Central from all over Islington and this is likely to result in some quite severe local bottlenecks.

Although a great deal of information was taken away by the consultants, so very much was missed because of lack of time. Such a missed opportunity, if only the preparatory work had been done to get the key stakeholder organisations to attend and to provide enough time to run a top notch event rather than an almost adequate one – perhaps doing the walkabout on one evening and the participatory exercises on another would have helped. The consultants were excellent, as were the LBI officers, but their work would have had a much greater impact given the time and participants it needed. I certainly have time to reflect at all and therefore my contributions were nowhere near as helpful as they could have been. As a result, I've a feeling the initial set of proposals will have many obvious gaps. I don't know if the invitation list will be increased for the next meeting, or if enough time will be given but I do hope so.

The consultants are <http://www.cbuchanan.co.uk/>

