

Listening to Waterloo



Listening to Waterloo 2nd July to 30th September 2021

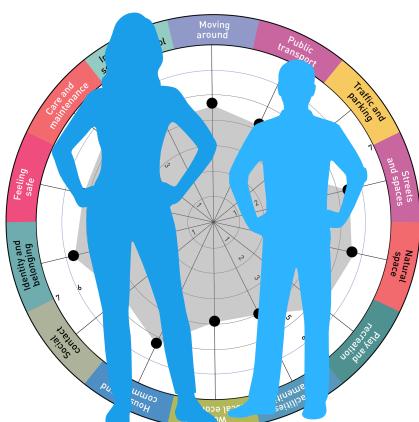
What we did

Dalton ward councillors, supported by Kirklees Council staff, asked local people about life in Waterloo. We used a tool called the “Place Standard”. This is a way of helping to get conversations going about any place (it could be your street, neighbourhood or town), by using some simple questions. The results will be used to create an action plan for Waterloo, which reflects local people’s priorities.

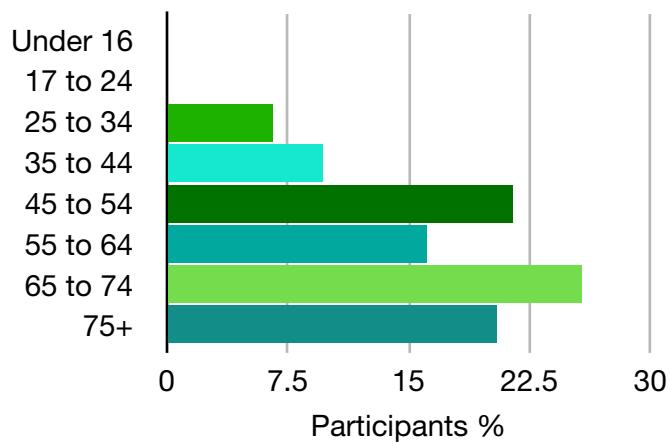
Who Participated?

As we were unable to have face to face conversations with local groups and individuals during this time, we wrote to each household in the area inviting people to take part. Everyone had the opportunity to complete a postal questionnaire or to take part online. To supplement this, two face to face sessions were held on 22nd and 28th September 2021 when restrictions were relaxed. Sessions were attended by two staff members along with Dalton ward councillors. All recipients of the postal questionnaire were invited to the open sessions and 25 participants took advantage of this.

118 citizens took part, completing **93** Place Standard assessments.

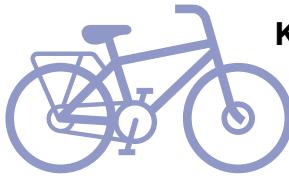


Female 54% Male 26%
Other / unknown 20%



What participants said

Moving around



Key issues: Moving about in cars and buses is impeded by busy arterial roads such as Waterloo Road and the junction in particular causing queueing traffic. The lack of safe cycle routes makes cycling on the highway unattractive and

perilous to walkers on footpaths and pavements. Many people commented that pavement obstructions such as parked cars, bins left out and overgrown vegetation all contribute to making walking difficult and sometimes dangerous. There are some good examples of well-lit walking routes in the area which would benefit from more seating at regular intervals.



Suggestions:

Have more safe road crossing areas. Make more of the woodland and river banks in Waterloo. Direct access to the nature reserve on Dalton Bank Road would be good.

65 people commented on this theme.

“Waterloo has become far too busy. Trying to cross the road or reverse out of my driveway is hazardous.”

“Cycling routes are poor around Waterloo mainly due to parked cars along the main roads.”

“Too much traffic using Waterloo Road especially morning & teatimes when there is often long tail backs up to the traffic lights.”

“Not noticed any seating. Signs for cyclist not available.”

Public transport



Key issues: The issue mentioned by around half the respondents was the good and frequent bus services along Wakefield Road compared to the lack of services on Waterloo Road, causing residents a long

walk to access public transport. However, the congested road leads to clustering of buses and timetable delays. Changes to some services disadvantaged residents and the 262 to Mirfield and Dewsbury was singled out as a service that was particularly missed. The high cost of bus fares was highlighted, particularly when a family group travelled together



Suggestions:

Potential for the bus service to Wakefield to be diverted down Long Lane, onto Albany Road and Waterloo Road, to then re-connect with Wakefield Road. This would provide a better, more useful service taking traffic off a large section of Wakefield Road. To reinstate the 262 Bus service from Huddersfield to Mirfield, Dewsbury.

63 people commented on this theme.

“Public transport is fine for people living on Wakefield Road not Waterloo Road.”

“There are plenty of options for buses in and out of town, linking well with trains. Buses are plentiful to Waterloo, with accessible routes a short walk away.”

Traffic and parking



Key issues: In general it was felt there are just too many cars, making roads too busy to join or cross. Insufficient parking spaces and inconsiderate parking, for example on pavements, was

mentioned in nearly all the comments made. It is clearly a major issue in the area, both in the retail and service areas and the residential streets. The reduction in air quality in the area due to standing traffic and the increased volume of vehicles was noted by at least 10 people, and was linked with noise made by speeding cars often at night.



Suggestions:

There should be a yellow box at the junction coming out of Greenlea Court, so people can safely move out onto the main road. Introduce a filter lane at the traffic lights by Dominos, so people can turn right and pull into the shops if they are travelling in the direction of Huddersfield. Introduce traffic calming along Waterloo Road to prevent cars speeding. Introduce average speed cameras on Wakefield Road by Greenside, as the existing speed cameras do not deter people from speeding.

Waterloo Road would benefit from having a pinch point installed to curb over enthusiastic drivers' speeds. Sequence the traffic lights slightly longer to clear standing traffic quicker during rush hour, which will also reduce standing traffic which creates residential noise and poor air quality.

Parking on pavements - Issue notices or fines as this causes damage to pavements that are not built for the weight of vehicles and cost the council money to repair eventually.

67 people commented on this theme.

"We get cars parking on the pavements outside the shops in Waterloo. There is not enough parking there."

"Too much traffic on Waterloo Road at peak times. Traffic is often stationary for long periods causing pollution."

"Speeding cars late at night. Have to walk in roads, cars on footpath. No traffic calming measures."

Streets and spaces



Key issues: The largest number of comments related to issues which contribute to an overall impression of the area being outdated and uncared for. The highest proportion of these mentioned litter, rubbish and overflowing bins. Some linked this to the large number of takeaway outlets and a disregard for proper disposal of

packaging, by customers and businesses. Overgrown vegetation and weeds add to the general unkempt feel of the place, as do the derelict land and buildings. Street and shop signage and street furniture is tired and in need of renovation in large part. In contrast others felt the area was pleasant, with attractive greenery, and should be kept so.



Suggestions:

Encourage set-up of small independent shops and cafes, parking and decent public transport service that would allow people to visit. Make it a clean and inviting area for people to relax in. Cut back vegetation to allow for better conditions on pavements. Resurface pavements where necessary.

Maintain the beck and stream running round Roundwood, along with the woods and paths which are overgrown. Keep these paths attractive for visitors. Introduce some greenery, cute shops and a café or bar maybe, to make Waterloo look nicer. More street cleaning and better rubbish collection is required. Get together a group of volunteers on a weekly or monthly basis to tidy up different identified areas around Waterloo, on a rotational basis. Give the wider community access to an underutilised council building, such as Cottage Homes room.

61 people commented on this theme.

“Streets and footpaths atrocious condition. Lighting poor.”

“Too much litter and fly tipping.”

“Waterloo is leafy and green even if blighted by traffic.”

“There are too many sites of derelict or vacant land which is privately owned and not cultivated.”

Natural space



Key issues: The natural green spaces in the area which includes woods, rivers and streams, are valued by many, along with footpaths and verges which create a pleasant feel to the area. However, lack of maintenance and blighted by litter and rubbish, including dog fouling, spoil the enjoyment.

Better management of surfaces and vegetation is required, and sensitive lighting schemes could help reduce the fear of crime in less overlooked locations. More regularly emptied litter bins and strategically placed benches would make a welcome addition, as would more informative signage of routes and paths. Comments were made about the road noise and poor air quality experienced in some areas close to the main roads.



Suggestions:

Introduce flower boxes by the main junction lights at Gallagher retail park, placed in the middle islands, to brighten the place up. Turn the plot of land on Waterloo Road, near the bridge, into a wonderful playing area for children, including a community area with seating. More could be made of riverbanks and access to the river and canal on foot or bicycle. Waterloo has lots of woods, rivers and streams it would be good to see these sign posted and joined up with walks. Tree planting in Wakefield Road would help.

56 people commented on this theme.

“It would be great to see a community cafe or something in the empty shop that used to be occupied by subway for local residents and any profits put into waterloo.”

“We had nice places but due to lack of maintenance and vandalism litter and dog excrement these are not places to enjoy anymore.”

Play and recreation



Key issues: Most respondents described limited safe play areas, singling out particularly the lack of play opportunities for older children and teenagers. Parks were thought to be poorly equipped and maintained and some thought unsafe, due to unregulated behaviour issues and larger groups gathering.

Most play equipment was aimed at young children and at least some were usable for younger supervised children. A few mentioned the recreation opportunities afforded by the natural landscape, but with the need for better maintenance and management. A lack of benches for rest and socialising was raised.



Suggestions:

More cycling facilities, such as a pump track for Mountain bikers, would be good. Land on Albany Road, at the end of Waterloo Road, could be turned into a sports or recreational area for football and other activities, instead of being left in a neglected manner. Total Fitness has just closed down and would make an excellent community leisure facility, if Kirklees were to run it. Consider using Jarman's as a recreation area for children. We need a play gym in the area with easy access, as there isn't one in Waterloo. Put school buildings and grounds to better use at evenings and weekends.

58 people commented on this theme.

“Several parks in area, outdoor exercise equipment available. Plenty of room in parks for children to run around and play ball games.”

“Could do with some benches for a rest when walking. To just sit and relax when getting out.”

Facilities and amenities



Key issues: There is a good range of retail opportunities – large and small - and services available but no learning or financial services. A variety of amenities such as health services, hair and beauty, schools, nursery and chemist were highlighted as being handy. Too many takeaway premises were a common complaint, and a similar number of people mentioned the lack of cafes and restaurants for social interaction. The closure of the local gym had significantly reduced access to local fitness opportunities, including swimming and as a space for general social interaction.



Suggestions:

A small library with a community shop or cafe would bring people together. This would be ideally placed on the precinct of shops on Wakefield Road, at Waterloo. It would be ideal to open the old Subway shop as a community café and library and get volunteers to run it.

53 people commented on this theme.

“Too many takeaways in Waterloo area.”

“The access to amenities is good in this area - always room for improvement! No post office, no bank.”

“Plenty of shops with the retail park and some small local shops. Nearby doctors chemists, hairdressers.”

Work and local economy



Key issues: There was a widespread perception that the only opportunities for employment were in the retail or take away food sectors, mainly offering low skilled and low paid work. Transport links to Huddersfield and beyond



offers a wider variety of work opportunities. A lack of training or learning facilities underpins a feeling of a lack of opportunities for young people. It was pointed out that social media is playing a role in sharing local vacancies and business possibilities.

Suggestions:

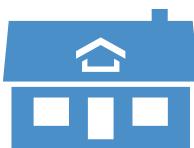
Employment could be created if facilities were available, but council should first maintain scenic areas to attract people to use them. Non-derelict areas should have new facilities to bring possible income back to the area by providing jobs. Use empty shops for new businesses to grow.

48 people commented on this theme.

"I don't think there is a variety of jobs or enough opportunities to access good-quality work locally."

"I think, and especially since having joined a local community social media group, that not only has places like Morison's and the retail park offered constant sources of employment but in the last two years have seen a rise in the area of self-employed individuals."

Housing and community



Key issues: Most people thought that there was a good mix of housing in private ownership in a good location, which people took pride in and cared for. However, some run down residential properties were highlighted, where either properties or gardens need attention. A lack of good quality affordable and secure rental property was mentioned, either Council owned or private. Not enough homes for older residents was highlighted, with Cottage Homes singled out as housing younger people at the expense of older people; this is at odds with the original intention. Flats with multiple occupiers and short-term rentals, leading to a high turnover of occupancy in some cases, has led to a run-down appearance.



Suggestions:

More houses of an appropriate size and cost should be made available for young couples and single parents. There should be more social housing and affordable housing.

48 people commented on this theme

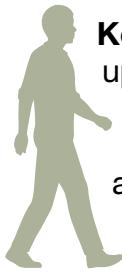
“Plenty of types of housing including sheltered accommodation.”

“Some houses good, some dire. Private and rental properties relatively non-existent unless you are single or a student.”

“Not enough homes for the elderly or disabled.”

“Plenty of homes in the area, always houses available.”

Social contact



Key issues: Very few places were identified where people can meet up, either formally in groups or informally and incidentally. The lack of a community centre was highlighted and what cafes and pubs there are generally felt to be inadequate. Parks and open spaces are close by, but the lack of seating made social meetings less attractive. A small number of people felt the churches offered an opportunity to meet others. Any activities or groups meeting in the area are generally poorly advertised, meaning people don't always know they are happening.



Suggestions:

Could do with more coffee shops to sit in, or more community activities arranged to involve a variety of age ranges and various activities for people to join. Could the piece of land on the junction of Waterloo Road (garages) be used as a social cafe space? A soft play area is needed for the mothers, dads and kids, with easy access to that provision in Waterloo. Through sensitive managements, more should be offered at the housing complex for older people, like dancing, Pilates and other activities to keep their brains active.

51 people commented on this theme

A Community Centre would be an asset. It could provide access to information centre, library, exchange, food bank ideas."

"I wouldn't class Waterloo as a "community" For opportunities to meet others during maternity leave I would go to neighbouring villages, such as Almondbury which runs "community groups" from the Wesley Centre and the Almondbury Surestart centre."

"There's hardly anywhere to meet if the weather is bad except for Morrison café."

Identity and belonging



Key issues: Many residents like the area, feel they belong and think the area is generally well thought of with a positive identity, although a significant minority thought perceptions were better in earlier times. The area is tainted by litter, heavy and disruptive traffic and a poorly maintained street scene, spoiling the look and feel. For many, the history and heritage of the area is not known or celebrated, leading to some feeling that the community is fragmented and the area a forgotten place. Only a couple of people suggested the area is so poor they wish to leave.



Suggestions:

Waterloo does have a positive identity, but additional assets could improve this, such as a community centre, recreational areas, somewhere to sit outside and meet everyone, garden and seating space. Increase in landscaping of the local area. Promote the area on social media and in the local press. Invites for the local community to meetings about what is happening in the area and involvement with decision making.

47 people commented on this theme.

“Waterloo I feel does not have a good identity.”

“Not clearly defined main road and Ward boundaries don’t help.”

“It is mostly known for its horrendous road junction and takeaway food.”

“The area has become a rundown pit, I am looking to get out as soon as possible.”

Feeling safe



Key issues: The most common comment was that people do feel safe, though almost as many people said they felt less so after dark. They take extra

precautions or don't leave the house in the evenings. More and better maintained street lighting in less populated spots would be a reassurance.

Perceptions are that there is little or no police presence on the streets leading to low level ASB, vandalism, drug dealing and taking, and large groups gathering on the streets, which feel intimidating even when well behaved. A particular issue raised is noisy speeding cars, often late at night, causing a hazard and nuisance. Several people mentioned cyclists and the increasingly popular e-scooter craze of riding illegally on pavements, posing a danger to pedestrians.



Suggestions: none

53 people commented on this theme.

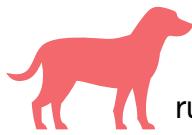
“I used to feel very safe.”

“I hear of drug taking and crime in the Tandem Industrial Estate, but this is hearsay.”

“Never see police or PCSO. Street lighting is poor, and bushes/ hedges overgrown providing hiding places for criminals. I wouldn't want to walk around when it is dark on my own.”

“I feel safe in Waterloo, it's no worse than many other places and often better.”

Care and maintenance



Key issues: Litter was again the key issue both on the streets and retail parks, with many blaming take away rubbish dropped by pedestrians and from cars. Dog fouling also spoiled streets and footpaths. Although the Council and residents did a good job in places to maintain and improve the area, some areas are left looking unkempt, littered and overgrown. This contributes to a general air of needing a good sprucing up. A lack of street bins that are regularly emptied contributes to street litter, but it was also noted that often bins were bypassed, and litter strewn anywhere. A call was made for more and better recycling opportunities locally.



Suggestions:

It would be nice to see some planters put around the area and a few more street cleaners. Lots of places need cleaning and brightening up. Some of the shops need a good clean and paint, as they're getting very run down.

55 people commented on this theme.

"I feel that the parks in the area have massively been neglected in recent years."

"Local shops appear to be well maintained but are let down by the amount of litter usually from takeaways being dropped on pavements or thrown out of car windows."

"Public parks are well maintained. Refuse and recycling leaves much to be desired."

"The roadsides are overgrown and not maintained. Lots of places need cleaning and brightening up."

Influence and sense of control



Key issues: A number of comments reflected the feeling that residents were not being listened to, and when raised views were not acted on or taken into consideration. However, the number of resident

responses show there is interest in offering opinions and getting involved in matters of interest to the community, with others mentioning they had given views on other services, such as health provision in the area. Some felt Councillors were visible and active in the area, including on social media, but others felt they could be seen more and that Council communication could be better.



Suggestions:

Being disabled I think I could put some input on what could be done for people getting around. Create a Facebook page for the Ward - need to highlight Waterloo more prominently, boost posts to engage and involve more people. Have more community activities. Would not know how to contact or meet with a local councillor if I needed advice, or to discuss an issue; would welcome a drop-in centre with fixed times. Invites to the local communities to meetings about what is happening in the area and involvement with decision making.

47 people commented on this theme.

“People do not feel listened to May be this questionnaire is a step in the right direction.”

“I don't think a lot of people feel that they are listened to.”

“People can contribute but the general feel is that this is 'Lip Service' only. Decisions are already made but not finalised on paper.”

“Online services exclude a lot of people - particularly elderly.”

Listening to Waterloo score sheet

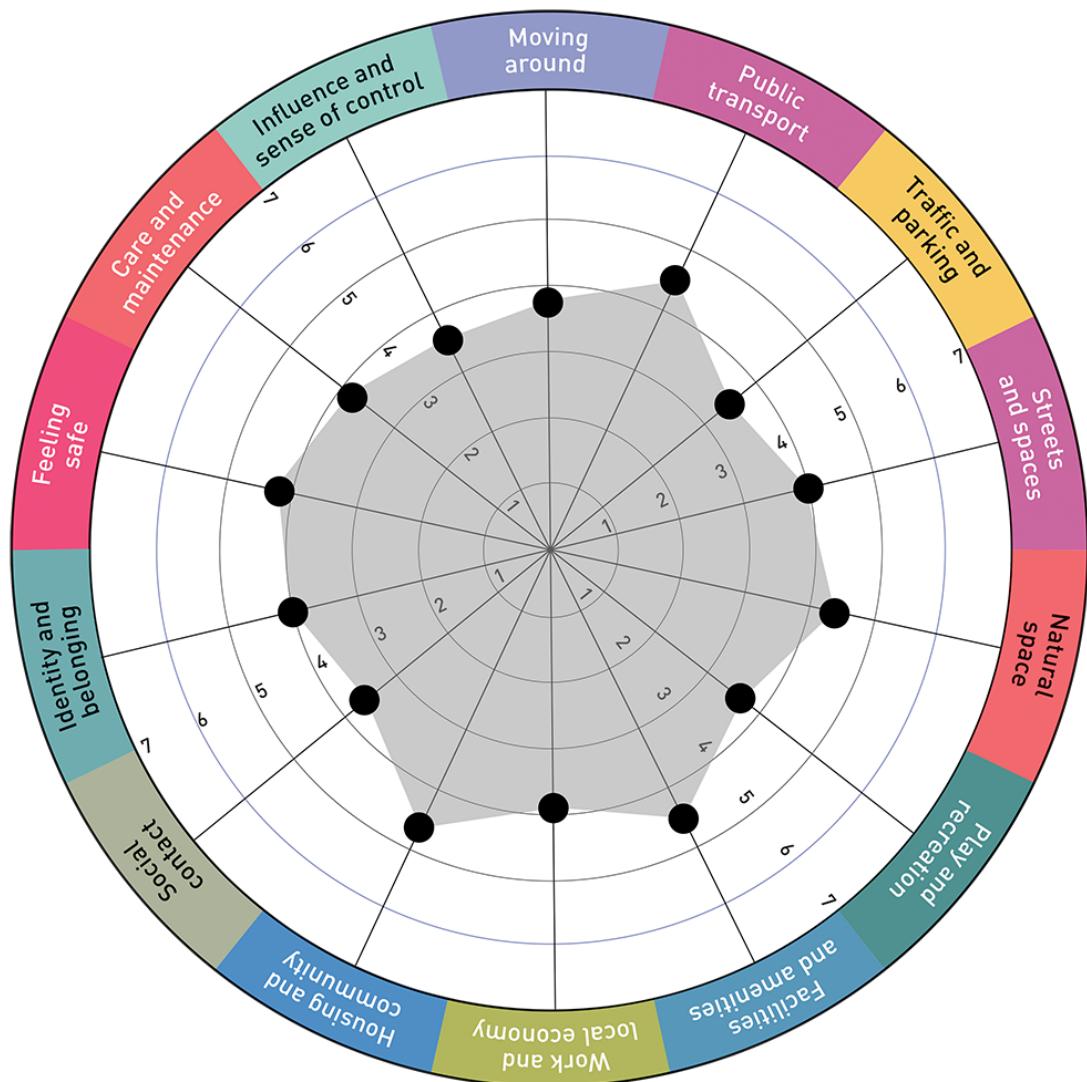
How people in Waterloo scored their place, on a scale of 1 to 7,
whilst talking about 14 different themes:

	Overall	Age 25 to 44	Age 45 to 64	Age 65 to 75+	Male	Female
Moving around	3.9	4	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9
Public transport	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
Traffic and parking	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4
Streets and spaces	4	4	4	4	4	4
Natural space	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
Play and recreation	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
Facilities and amenities	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
Work and local economy	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9
Housing and community	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.8
Social contact	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
Identity and belonging	4	4	4	4	4	4
Feeling safe	4.1	4	4.1	4.1	4	4.1
Care and maintenance	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8
Influence and sense of control	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6

118 people participated in the Waterloo conversations,
completing 93 assessments.

The overall scores are the **Mean average** of the 93 assessments.

Overall scores for Waterloo



Housing and community	4.8
Public transport	4.5
Facilities and amenities	4.5
Natural space	4.3
Feeling safe	4.1
Identity and belonging	4
Streets and spaces	4

Moving around	3.9
Work and local economy	3.9
Care and maintenance	3.8
Play and recreation	3.7
Social contact	3.7
Influence and sense of control	3.6
Traffic and parking	3.3

Full data is available at:
www.HowGoodIsOurPlace.org.uk