

Shaping the Westmill neighbourhood - residents' feedback



"Would like to see a wider range of groups and activities, outside of working hours to suit mixed groups of residents of all ages."

We recently ran a series of drop-in sessions to gather views and ideas on areas in need of investment across the Westmill neighbourhood. This followed a survey we ran last October which also asked for residents to give their feedback on what you'd like to see improved to help make a difference to the lives of everyone living there.

In this update, we share the main feedback from those sessions and tell you about proposals for next steps on ways we can work together to improve the Westmill neighbourhood.

What you told us...

The top three priorities we heard during the drop-in sessions were similar to those that came out of the survey. Through conversations - we were able to dig further into these concerns.

Top 3 priorities where you want to see improvements



Speeding & Parking

Concerns:

Lack of parking, double-parking, parking on grass verges, parking on pavements, noise from speeding, danger for residents.

Suggested Solutions:

Deepen laybys, allocated parking space per home, more signs and lines, speedbumps, zebra crossings.



Safety

Concerns:

Lights being turned off at night and not bright enough, drug and alcohol use, nuisance noise.

Suggested Solutions:

Lighting on all night and brighter, CCTV.



Neighbourhood Appearance

Concerns:

Litter and fly-tipping a big problem, untidy gardens and alleyways, dog fouling.

Suggested Solutions:

Clean-up days, scrap collection, more recycling and dog bins, more wildflowers, resident policing and pavement clean up.



Further Improvements



Sense of community

Residents had ideas on ways to increase a sense of belonging in the community:

- Better use and promotion of the Westmill Community Centre
- More activities around the neighbourhood
- Activities specifically for the youth. Involve children in community projects
- Create more community spaces.



Redhill Path You said: We're listening

We heard Redhill Path was a concern for residents and potential solutions were suggested to help improve the area during the drop-in sessions.

Most residents suggested CCTV, lighting and better maintenance would help. We organised a clean-up day for Redhill Path in March which was also supported by local partners.

This included - contractor, Branched Out to clear overgrowth along the alleyway, North Herts Council, local police and the neighbourhood watch team, along with volunteers from the local church - who helped with litter collection and recycling.

Residents were asked for their feedback on how the alleyway is being used and for suggestions on what more they would like to see done going forward. The main response was to have better maintenance and lighting. Some residents also mentioned they would like to see it closed off permanently.



"Need a wider range of groups and activities, outside of working hours for residents of all ages."

Other ideas for the wider neighbourhood

Enclosed bin areas, litter bins and more dog bins
More benches, especially at bus stops Accessible paths
Additional charging points throughout the neighbourhood
Help to improve wildlife by protecting trees and less pruning
Bike shelters and secure storage for block of flats
Better communal gardens and more trees
Additional facilities for recycling for charities

Learning about the community

During the drop-in sessions, we also asked you more about where the issues were occurring and more about the places, groups or people who were assets in the neighbourhood.

This insight will help us to build a picture of how we can better support and work collaboratively within the Westmill neighbourhood.



We can't do this without your help
See overleaf...



Community fun day!

We're inviting you to a free family fun day at the Westmill Community Centre on **Saturday 25th June 2022**, from **12pm to 4pm**.

The community event is an opportunity for us to share our new neighbourhood model, which will outline ways we want to work more collaboratively with you and partners to create **#basicallybrilliant** neighbourhood services and a thriving place where you are proud to live.

There'll be something for everyone. Storyboards setting out our plans for the next phases of the redevelopment of John Barker Place, Westmill Road and Westmill Lawns and we will also share more ways you can help shape the broader regeneration of the neighbourhood. There's an opportunity to hear our plans and have your say whilst enjoying a fun day with all the community - with activities for all ages, a bouncy castle and food vans.

We're especially keen to hear from younger people on what living in Westmill is like for them and what we could do to create a neighbourhood that better meets their needs and gives them a good choice of things to do. They don't even have to talk to us! Instead, they will have the opportunity to use a video booth and graffiti wall to share their ideas.

There will be settle colleagues available to answer your questions and listen to your ideas. We can't wait to see you there!



"Involve groups, particularly younger people in the 'real' world. Give them opportunities to get work experience and qualifications through this work."

Ways to get involved

We are planning to hold 'incubator workshops' that will take a deeper look into the main priorities for investment over the next 6-12 months.

We're delighted that a number of residents have volunteered to take part in these sessions, which will bring residents, settle colleagues and partners together to work on solutions to the priorities identified by the residents for improvement.

If you'd like to volunteer - we will give you all the tools to make your experience a success. You will learn new skills that will help encourage other residents to get involved and work on shared concerns.



Send us an email to Andy or Celia on westmillinvestment@settlegroup.org.uk or call **0330 343 0016** for more information.

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