

Filwood Broadway Appendix

Area overview

Filwood Broadway located in Filwood, an area of South Bristol that is currently undergoing major changes with new developments planned. It comprises a small green and a two-way road with ground floor retail units and residential units above on both sides. A number of units appear vacant but are being used for storage. There is a library, an active Community Centre hosting various events and groups, and a popular monthly market (first Saturday) that has been running since September 2019.

The high street has an overall feeling of being run down and this is reflected in the large number of comments from both businesses and residents about the generally tired and run-down appearance and issues with anti-social behaviour.

There is an active community with a positive and creative spirit in Filwood. The Council is working with the Filwood Broadway Working Group, a partnership that includes a range of local organisations - Knowle West resident representation, Knowle West Regeneration Residents Planning Group members, Knowle West Alliance members, local Councillors and stakeholders concerned with the future development on and around Filwood Broadway. A large amount of development is planned for Filwood in the coming years, which will present both opportunities and issues. Any action to reinvigorate the high street should be aligned with and complement other projects and initiatives.



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Engagement Feedback

We engaged with businesses and members of the public in two phases: first in late 2021 to identify issues and priorities and then again at the start of 2022 to gather more in-depth ideas and suggestions relating to these. This was done through a combination of face-to-face engagement, on-line focus groups and on-line surveys with a paper alternative.

Businesses were overwhelmingly dissatisfied with Filwood Broadway and half of those surveyed recorded a decrease in footfall over the past 12 months. Confidence about the next 12 months was also limited, with several businesses expecting a fall in sales. Comments from residents reflected the businesses' concerns, saying that the retail offer is limited, the area looks and feels derelict and depressing and feels unsafe. Residents also feel intimidated by anti-social behaviour from young people. There are strong feelings that the area is forgotten and only seen as an opportunity for new housing. Concerns have been raised that the cinema site will be demolished, and the new developments will not provide enough services and amenities for existing and new residents.

There is a sense that the first priority is to widen the retail offer if more people are to be drawn to the high street, with the top three suggestions being a greengrocer's, a butcher's and a supermarket/convenience store (although this would need to consider the existing offer). Other suggestions included a café, co-working/hot-desking facilities, activities for young people, and uses that would increase activity in evenings/night-time. People want to see more of the units currently being used as storage opened as retail units to create a better shopper experience.

When asked about what would most improve the high street, responses from both businesses and residents were similar:

- In terms of events, there is real interest in seeing the already successful monthly market expanded, and people would also like to see a range of community events and family fun days that would bring people out of their houses and improve community cohesion. Frequent suggestions included events based around major festivals and also ones focused on particular skills and activities such as cooking and food.
- Improving the children's play area, adding greenery, and bringing more events into the area and there were many suggestions as to how this could be done.
- Improving the general appearance of the area included refreshing the shop fronts and shutters through a public art project so that the area becomes fresher and more colourful.
- In terms of greenery options, the most popular were street trees and hanging baskets, although there was concern about how to protect these from vandalism. Tackling anti-social behaviour was a major concern and this was linked to the provision of activities for young people.
- Litter was also another concern and there was a call for more bins and recycling facilities.

People see a lot of potential in the area but feel that it has been neglected with a lack of investment. There is an opportunity for the various initiatives and developments planned for the area to be linked up better and take account of the interests of the existing community, who should be involved in the planning and implementation of any changes.

On-Street Creative Engagement (Play Disrupt)

Filwood Broadway and the surrounding area have strong community led organisations and are extremely active. Filwood Broadway already has the organisational infrastructure, and their own consultation activities to understand the aims and needs of the local community.

During the Filwood Community Market event, members of Knowle West Alliance and Filwood Broadway Working Group were represented and gave their time to conversations with Play:Disrupt. In conversation with Filwood Fantastic and Creative Director at Filwood Community Centre it was confirmed that the themes that came through in BCC engagement were the type of programming they were aware the community wanted to have in the area and expanded on this. There is a desire for community led/build dwelling spaces. Something that is modular and can have multiple uses (seating, market space, theatre, performance space etc) along with electricity points outside to give flexibility and options of use.

The feeling is that the green/park space at the north end with the road around it doesn't feel safe. The community wishes to test the idea of closing streets and trying alternative layouts, semi-permanent to start, possibly using giant planters

Residents want to be able to have cultural experiences locally, with the opportunity to participate and lead, with activities on Filwood Broadway reflecting local people but bringing something new and presenting an opportunity to build something for South Bristol.

The community have suggested a desire for local events such as Knowle West Carnival, Knowle West Fest, and a Winter Lantern Parade (working with local schools and artists). People would like to see seasonal themed events (e.g., Halloween/Christmas) with get-togethers around big festivals. There is an idea of a big tree which would be lit up to celebrate multiple cultural events, from Diwali to Chinese New Year. Inclusivity and celebration of cultural moments is important.

Youth provision and activities were mentioned by many people. Streetspace and a Knowle West Alliance member emphasised the need for detached youth work and a current lack of funding. The need for new housing infrastructure to always feature recreational space, and not to lose infrastructure that is already there. Improvement to existing spaces was also felt to be needed.

A creative idea suggested through local workshops is to create a large arch which welcomes people to the street at the bottom of Filwood Broadway, to give the feeling of arrival and encouragement to go up the street.

The community would like to see pop-up activities such as film screenings, play space with a test & learn methodology, and to use local knowledge already there. People would also like to see an expansion of the existing monthly market which could connect to the modular structures and green space outdoors.

It is felt that there is potential and space on Filwood Broadway for more dwell space in the day and evenings and ways to encourage evening hospitality outlets with seating and canopies on the street.