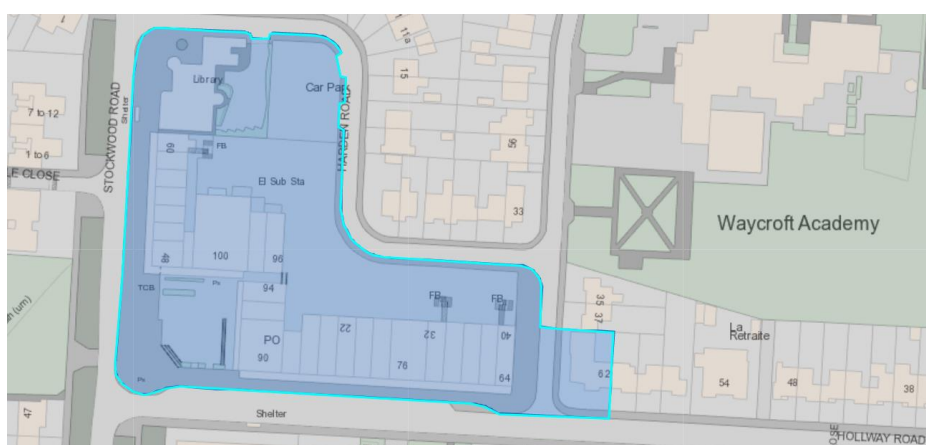


## Stockwood Appendix

### Area overview

Stockwood Road/Hollway Road comprises a shopping precinct, a large carpark to the rear, a library, a paved square to the front, a doctor, dentist, school and care home. The ground floor of the precinct contains retail units with single-storey residential above on one side (Hollway Road). There is a reasonable range of retail and service outlets, including a supermarket, a convenience store, a café and a barber, although people said they would still like to see a wider range of both shops and services on offer.

The area is generally seen as tired and dilapidated but has the advantage of both a car park and a large open area, which has potential to host events and for additional seating. In both cases, however, there are issues with uneven paving due to tree roots in the square, unsafe car park surface to the rear of the shops (which is in private ownership) and some complaints about anti-social behaviour.



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### Public Engagement

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 on-street engagement, on-line focus groups and on-line surveys with a paper alternative.

Businesses generally reported a decline in footfall over the last year and fewer than half feel confident about the next 12 months. They would like to see more seating, as well as improvements to the public space and to the car park.

Most people come to the high street on foot (53%) or by car (37%) and do so several times a week, underlining the street's role as a local centre.

Businesses and community alike would like to see additional shops and services like a bakery, butchers, bank, a gym, clothing, greengrocers, craft/haberdashery, fishmongers, vets, discount stores, bar and opticians, as well as community/learning facilities.

The area was described as tired and dilapidated yet sociable with a good variety of retail. In most conversations about Stockwood, we consistently hear that the pavements need repaving due to trees uprooting, which makes this area difficult to use, particularly for people with mobility issues. Concerns about the carpark are also common and issues there are complicated by the fact that the car park in question is privately owned.

The most popular options for improvements were:

- Culture & events, the community is very keen for more activities and events to happen in the area, especially a market making use of the square. People would also like to see more provision for children's and youth activities and for events that will bring the community together and increase the sense of pride and belonging in the area.
- More greenery, while there are already trees, people would like to see additional colourful planting to make the area seem more attractive
- Litter, issues were largely seen as due to a lack of bins and there were also concerns about dog fouling

### **On-Street Creative Engagement (Play Disrupt)**

There was good energy from community members, but local residents often spoke about the square itself being inaccessible re disability, and looking run down. There was a strong sense that the ground and facades of the shopping area require attention before cultural and creative projects can take place. Stockwood is seen as a good place for older people with a good number of activities going on locally. There was a clear appetite from the young people for safe and interesting places to hang out in Stockwood. Physical and sporting activities were also popular. Music concert/ music/dance events were suggested by Triangle Lunch Club, and interestingly a musical creation project was also suggested by BS14 Youth Club. There is perhaps an opportunity for an intergenerational music project.

People also talked about the square being used as a market space, to bring in local makers and produce. Making improvements to the floor of the paved square outside the Coop, to improve accessibility and make it easier to run events was called for and the installation of electricity points and water access so that it could be used for a range of activities in the future. The square is cited as being dingy when dark and feeling unsafe which could lead to an opportunity to make a visual impact with creative lighting solutions utilising the trees which surround the square. An art/light project to create character and charm that could extend to the 1st floor walls surrounding, that projection/lighting could have impact upon.

Another idea for an artistic intervention/improvement into the space was to create a cover over the square so that it could be to be used for various events whatever the weather.

There is a strong community network that could be called on for a community day of clearing, painting and planting, linking in with local artists to design street art and murals.

There is a clear appetite for musical activities, showing local bands and attractive to older people and families and that could link with a youth music project which could perform at events. A consideration of further youth provision, consulting again on what exactly it could be, where, and how it is managed could be a productive way forward.

There was a desire for market activity for the square, linking with local organisations and music activity. There was concern to ensure local providers are celebrated and not overrun by competition. A more diverse food offer however would be welcome.

Square activity could provide a rolling programme, targeting different communities. Talks on gardening (there are many keen gardeners in the area and space); home safety; local history plus film screenings and Jubilee tea parties were all good ideas. It will need consideration with regard access, timings, promotion and a team shouldn't be put off by slow attendance at first. These things can take time to gather momentum.