

Executive Summary: Jubilee Gardens Consultation



This document is the executive summary of the Jubilee Gardens design team community consultation.

- Section A profiles the sample and includes key demographics.
 - Section B looks at the frequency of visits to Jubilee Gardens & other parks.
 - Section C details the consultation with a summary in each subsection.
 - Section D provides an overall summary of the whole consultation.
 - Section E places the consultation in context.
 - Section F describes the consultation process.
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A. Profile

1. Sample

- A good response rate was achieved.
- Vision 21 recorded the views and experiences of 279 people.
- A conservative estimate of 400 people engaged with the design teams' material.
- Over 200 people attended the community celebration event with 104 questionnaires completed.
- Phases 2, 3 and 4 averaged 25 participants per day.
- The manned exhibitions yielded more completed questionnaires than the unmanned, as Vision 21 was on hand to assist participants with questions regarding the consultation and the feedback form.

2. Demographics

- The majority of people were aged between 25 to 44 years (which is in line with the borough demographics) although significant numbers of younger and older people also took part in the project.
 - The sample was 54% male and 46% female.
 - The majority of people who took part in the survey were from SE1 (54%) with 18% from other south London postcodes (6% with a north London postcode, 5% had a west and 7% had an east London postcode).
 - The remaining 10% lived in postcodes outside London (either from the UK or Europe).
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B. Usage of Jubilee Gardens and parks in general

Participants were asked to comment on how regularly they visit Jubilee Gardens and other parks in general.

- Most participants were regular visitors to Jubilee Gardens, with the majority of people visiting them on a weekly (26%) or monthly basis (28%) with fewer people visiting less than monthly (21%). A tiny minority of 4.5% claimed they never visit parks on a regular basis.
 - Jubilee Gardens is a place that people are as likely to visit alone as with others (41%) while friends and partners were favoured company for visiting the gardens (40% and 30% of people respectively).
 - A significant minority of people visit the Gardens with their children (15%) suggesting that the park is used for a variety of activities by a broad range of groups.
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C. Analysis of findings

The consultation questionnaire was organised into three distinct sections, namely design aims, draft design brief and design team interaction.

1. Design Aims

Addressing the design aims was best met by West 8, with EDAW in second place. Thomas Heatherwick was ranked third and Gross Max fourth.

Establishing a world class garden:

- A large majority of people favoured West 8, followed by EDAW (2nd) then Thomas Heatherwick (3rd). Gross Max (4th) fared worst out of all the teams.
- Thomas Heatherwick and EDAW were favoured by people aged 65 plus, who generally disliked Gross Max. Gross Max was only liked by younger people aged 25 – 34.
- Thomas Heatherwick was favoured by local workers in this context but not by visitors. While residents and visitors put most confidence in West 8 to deliver a world class garden.

Creating a space that is ‘as soft and green as is sustainable’:

- All of the design teams other than Gross Max scored well under this criteria.
- West 8 were favoured just above EDAW (2nd) and Thomas Heatherwick (3rd) who scored well across a broad spectrum of ages (except those aged 34 – 44). Gross Max (4th) fared badly with almost all participants with the exception of young people aged 16 – 24.
- West 8 were the residents favourite, Thomas Heatherwick was preferred by local workers and EDAW the visitors choice.

Creating a balance between different users:

- Again all of the design teams bar Gross Max scored well under this criteria.
- EDAW was thought to create the best balance, scoring well with participants of all ages.
- Thomas Heatherwick (3rd) fared best with younger people in this context.
- West 8 (2nd) received favourable feedback from those who live and work in Waterloo while visitors and local worker preferred EDAW. Gross Max (4th) was approved of by a small minority of visitors, but received negative feedback from all other users.

2. Draft Design Brief

Addressing the draft design brief was best met by EDAW followed by West 8 (2nd). Thomas Heatherwick (3rd) and Gross Max (4th) scored noticeably less than EDAW and West 8.

Participants were asked to rate how well the teams had met the various priorities set out in the draft design brief (drawn from the user research commissioned in autumn 2004):

Incorporation of trees:

- West 8 was rated well above the three other design teams at incorporating trees into its design. EDAW (2nd) was the next best team with Thomas Heatherwick (3rd) close behind. Unfortunately Gross Max (4th) failed to convince any age group that they could incorporate trees into the design.
- West 8 incorporated trees better than any other team with all three user groups preferring this design team.

Incorporation of grassed areas:

- West 8 achieved the most positive feedback (especially from residents) for its grassed areas.
- Thomas Heatherwick (2nd) found more favour with local workers.
- EDAW (3rd) was liked by participants of all ages, but was less popular with the young or older people's groups.
- Gross Max (4th) was also liked by those who work in Waterloo and visitors, but scored negatively amongst local residents.

Flowerbeds:

- EDAW received the best rating for incorporating flowerbeds into its design, and was also popular with people of all ages in this category (with the exception of those aged 55 – 64).
- This was Gross Max's (2nd) strongest design aim given the attention to horticulture in the design concept.
- West 8 (3rd) was liked by residents and workers although the team did not find favour with visitors.
- Thomas Heatherwick (4th) scored well amongst the 16 -24 year olds, and was rated well with those who live and work in Waterloo

Park furniture and seating:

- West 8 was again the most popular team as the local residents and workers favourite.
- EDAW (2nd) especially appealed to 25 - 34 year olds.
- Thomas Heatherwick (4th) did well amongst residents and workers, but was scored negatively by visitors who liked Gross Max's (3rd) seating concepts.

Children's play areas:

- EDAW was by far the favourite, scoring well amongst all participants with the exception of the over 65's.
- West 8 (2nd) was generally liked by all user groups as the second favoured design team.
- Interestingly, younger respondents aged 16 – 24 rated Thomas Heatherwick's (3rd) design highly in this regard, although all other age groups scored it negatively.
- In contrast, Gross Max (4th) was rated negatively by almost all groups with the exception of visitors and people aged 16 – 34.

Café:

- West 8 and EDAW (2nd) were rated most highly,
- Local residents liked the café facilities presented by Thomas Heatherwick (3rd) scoring it well above other teams. Visitors however, did not share residents' enthusiasm rating it negatively as not meeting the brief.
- Gross Max (4th) did not impress anyone with its café ideas (all groups scoring the team negatively) with local workers taking the greatest dislike to its café ideas.
- Local workers and visitors liked West 8's café concept the most.

Hosting Events:

- EDAW was rated the best at holding events.
- West 8's (4th) concept was thought unable to host events given the many paths, mounds and trees in the design.
- Local workers liked Thomas Heatherwick's (2nd) approach to holding events along with people under 34yrs and those over 55.
- Gross Max (3rd) was favoured by young people aged 16-24 while older respondents did not think Gross Max's plans would be able to hold events well.

3. Team Interaction and Presentations at the Community Celebration Event

Team interaction and presentations at the public event saw Thomas Heatherwick convincingly impress the audience. West 8 (2nd), EDAW (3rd) and Gross Max (4th) all scored similarly in this section.

- Thomas Heatherwick was rated the best team on all criteria; **explaining their ideas, answering questions, listening to others'** opinions and **holding attention**. They were also described as the most '*passionate*' team in the comment section of the questionnaire and scored noticeably higher than the other design teams.
- There was little difference in the overall feedback for Gross Max (2nd), EDAW (3rd) and West 8 (4th) with all design teams receiving positive feedback on their interaction and praise for their work and preparation.

Each design team gave a short **presentation at the event** outlining their vision for Jubilee Gardens.

- Again Thomas Heatherwick (2nd) impressed the audience but it was West 8's presentation that was liked the most with EDAW (3rd) and Gross Max (4th) also scoring highly.
- All the presentations were **easy to understand**.

D. Overall Summary

- It is important to note that these results are based on one question although it is a good representation of the consultation as a whole.
- West 8 was thought more appealing than EDAW (2nd) by a small margin. Thomas Heatherwick (3rd) was the third team with Gross Max (4th) was generally thought to be unappealing.

In conclusion, different design team appealed to different groups:

Thomas Heatherwick:

- Preferred by those who work in the Waterloo area.
- Mainly liked by the youngest respondents and the oldest although 35-55 year olds did not have a strong opinion about Thomas Heatherwick.

Thomas Heatherwick was commended for producing an **imaginative** and **flexible** design idea as well as giving a **passionate presentation** at the event. However they were criticised for producing a design concept that was **uninspiring** and overly **simple**. Looking in more detail the design team was praised for the use of **trees and open space** although the **height** of the mounds did concern some people. People likened the design to that of '**Bernie Spain Gardens**' opposite the southern end of Gabriel's Wharf and they were **not convinced** that the plans of Thomas Heatherwick would change Jubilee Gardens dramatically.

EDAW:

- Appealing to visitors.
- Rated favourably by all ages and notably the favourite of those aged 34-45.
- The local residents' least appealing team.

EDAW offered many different ideas in its display boards which were thought **creative** and **contemporary**. **Different areas** were made to **accommodate** different users with added attention to the **children's play area** which received a lot of praise. **Maintenance** of EDAW's ideas was something that was highlighted as a concern, especially with the use of **technology** in this **complicated** design. It was recognised that EDAW **involved the river** more than the other teams and worked with the idea of the **beach** (which pleased most people). **Lighting** was also identified as a strength for this team while worries about the **lack of grass** were raised.

West 8:

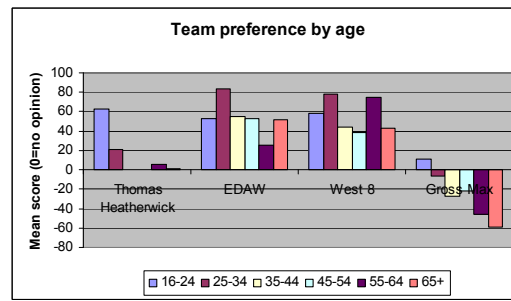
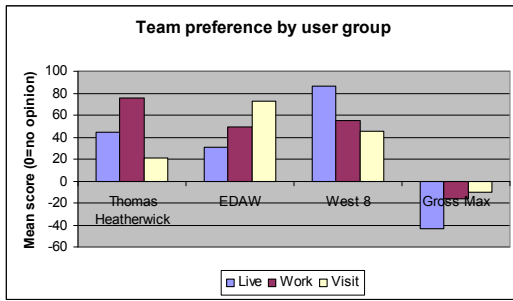
- Overall the most appealing team.
- Preferred by those who live in Waterloo.
- Impressed people under 34 and those between 55 years.

West 8's design concepts were **easy to understand**. The design boards were not overcrowded with ideas and were very **visually distinctive**. Central to this design were the paths which received a mixed response. Generally the **paths** were welcomed as part of the **clear design** although definite concerns were raised about the threat of **skateboarders** who congregate further along the South Bank. The **hillocks** were liked as they provided a raised vista which integrated the Thames although the paths and hills were also cited as **problematic to holding events**. On a positive note, the **concealed café** was praised for its interesting design while the **trees** were described as very appealing and colourful.

Gross Max:

- Rated appealing by young people (16-24) although they were the only age group to do so.
- Gross Max was deemed only slightly unappealing by visitors.
- Local workers and especially local residents found the design team more unappealing.

Gross Max approached Jubilee Gardens in a very different way, dividing the space into **two areas** (one grassed, one flowered). Although this was a unique stance, it was criticised for being **too linear, formal, flat and bland**. The display boards were thought to be **difficult to understand** and the approach **too modern**. However, a dedicated area to **horticulture** was commended and the integration of Jubilee Gardens from **Belvedere Road** seen as a positive and necessary step.



E. Background to the consultation

Jubilee Gardens is a green area located in the heart of London's South Bank. The Gardens has been the focus of several initiatives and consultations over the years, which have had limited success due to diversity of organisations and individuals with vested interests in the Garden's development. The creation of the Jubilee Garden Steering Group in 2003 established agreement to preserve the Gardens as a green open space and focussed the agenda for regeneration.

F. The consultation and engagement process

Vision 21 carried out a four-phase consultation to assess public response to each of the four short-listed design teams and their concepts. Events were organised and publicised as a celebration of the Jubilee Gardens project to date. The various events and the way they were promoted were designed to attract a large and diverse sample of participants.

In order to access a balanced and representative sample of the local community, workers and visitors alike, Vision 21 and South Bank Employers Group (SBEG) engaged in a series of awareness-raising activities and publicity drives including the distribution of posters and leaflets, mail outs sent to local residents and sent home with children from local schools, telephone calls were made to residents as well positive interaction with local community and voluntary groups. South Bank Employers' Group also undertook a high profile press campaign along with website coverage. These steps succeeded in attracting a broad sample of people to participate in the consultation.

Phase 1 involved a *public event* billed as a community celebration of the regeneration of Jubilee Gardens, the aim of which was to encourage a positive atmosphere around the regeneration of the Gardens. Over 200 people from diverse backgrounds attended the event on May 9th, which involved allowing people the opportunity to digest the four designs and interact with the teams who made presentations on their visions. This event represented an important opportunity for all of those interested in the Garden's fortunes to approach the teams and gain insight into the impact of each of the designs. An *exhibition tour* was undertaken as **Phase 2** of the project, and involved manned displays of each of the design teams in a variety of locations, including the Royal Festival Hall, the Millennium Green and the Waterloo Action Centre, a local community development organisation. Basing the exhibition in different locations proved to be a key factor in capturing the opinions of a diverse sample such as residents, visitors and tourists, local workers, groups at risk of poverty and social exclusion (via the community and voluntary group) and local families (especially children). **Phase 3** took the form of an *unmanned exhibition* at the Royal Festival Hall, giving people the opportunity to give their opinions on paper or via the Jubilee Gardens *website* (**Phase 4**). Phases 3 and 4 were on-going processes designed to attract a 'catch-all' sample of participants.

A questionnaire was developed to capture the attitudes and experiences of the target groups involved in the consultation. It was important that the questionnaire remained simple and accessible for people, while gathering all the important information to help the steering group finalise the design brief and inform the decision about which team should regenerate Jubilee Gardens. The questionnaire covered a number of key issues, including people's personal experiences of the Gardens, how the four design teams met the criteria set out in the design brief, as well as a section gathering important demographic information such as age, gender and ethnicity. In addition, participants attending the community celebration event were given the opportunity to comment on the design teams' presentations and interaction with their audience.