

**Consultation on proposed changes and
investment into West Norwood Cemetery
(Phase 2 consultation)**

Consultation Report

June 2018

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

West Norwood Cemetery was established by Act of Parliament in 1836 and designed by Sir William Tite. It was laid out, in what was then open countryside, close to the Great North Wood to relieve the over-full churchyards of the growing city of London.

In recent years the Gothic Revival-style cemetery, which contains 69 Listed Grade II* and II memorials and structures, has faced an increasing threat to its future and long-term sustainability. With local residents and our partners we hope to address this through a National Lottery-funded project.

With Heritage Lottery funding (HLF) and Lambeth's match funding we have a budget of £441,000 to develop proposals for the Cemetery over an 18-month period, up to August 2018. If we successfully secure a HLF grant to protect and improve the cemetery, we expect work will be carried out over five years between 2019 and 2024.

1.2 Our proposals

'West Norwood Cemetery: A New Beginning' is a HLF-funded project that proposes conservation of the cemetery's significant landscape and built structures and increased community use. It includes ideas for the conservation of monuments along with a new visitor centre to tell the cemetery's history. By enhancing visitor amenities - and accessibility - we want to encourage greater use by local people, in a densely populated area, where there is a lack of open space.

We aim to deliver an activities programme to support volunteering and learning as well as design digital and interpretation materials. This will provide an opportunity to learn about the heritage of the cemetery and explore the stories of those associated with it such as Mrs Isabella Beeton, Sir Henry Doulton, Baron Julius Reuters and Sir Henry Tate, who remain household names today.

Development of our proposals is likely to take up to two years because we want to consult widely with local residents and the wider community, along with our project partners, the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery, in order to secure funding from the National Lottery to deliver the final vision.

2 The consultation

2.1 Consultation objectives

The aim of the consultation was to gather the views of local people on:

- The Conservation Plan;
- Proposals for an additional pedestrian entrance;

- Conservation of 'Heritage at Risk' monuments;
- Proposals for St Stephen's Chapel (within the Greek Enclosure);
- A new visitor centre;
- An Activities and Volunteering programme.

2.2 Who we consulted

- Local people
- Voluntary groups
- Cemetery users
- Disability groups
- Young people
- Faith groups
- Local businesses
- Specialist-interest stakeholders
- Community Police Officers

2.3 When we consulted

The online consultation ran between 22nd March and 29th April 2018.

Local public engagement sessions ran between 22nd March and 9 May 2018.

A special-interest stakeholder event was held on Tuesday 12 June 2018.

2.4 How we consulted

2.4.1 Press activity

There was no specific press activity, however the consultation was mentioned during a BBC London programme which was focused on the West Norwood vicinity.

2.4.2 Digital activity

The online survey and public drop-in sessions were promoted at the start of the consultation period via the project's website, the Lambeth website, stakeholder emails, via local on-line networks and social media posts.

Consultation materials were available digitally on the Lambeth Consultations webpage for the period 22nd March and 29th April 2018. In addition, the project's proposals were, and still are, available on the project's webpage (<https://westnorwoodcemetery.org>).

2.4.3 Print activity

A consultation poster and leaflet were designed and distributed, promoting the consultation and inviting participation.

Consultation posters were erected on the cemetery's perimeter railings, available in the cemetery lodge office and distributed to local businesses.

A consultation leaflet drop was issued to 200 homes surrounding the cemetery inviting them to participate in the consultation activity.

Hard copies of the consultation materials and return questionnaire were available from the cemetery lodge, as well as taken to a selection of local organisations.

2.4.4 Event activity

A series of public drop-in sessions were scheduled. Over 200 people locally were engaged with and provided feedback and views on the project's proposals.

Project team members were present at the following advertised public drop-in events:

Public Drop-in Volcano Café, Martell Road	27/03/2018
Public Drop-in WN Cemetery - FEAST	01/04/2018
Public Drop-in The Lodge, West Norwood Cemetery	05/04/2018
Public Drop-in WN Cemetery (Working Party Group)	14/04/2018
Public Drop-in WN Leisure Centre	17/04/2018

A series of outreach engagement sessions were also scheduled and delivered by the Project team:

Engagement Session: 'Our Streets' consultation	24/03/2018
Engagement Session: Community Shop	27/03/2018
Engagement Session: Cheviot Gardens	06/04/2018
Engagement Session: WN Library Pensioner's Group	17/04/2018
Engagement Session: WNC Leisure Centre Health Walking Group	18/04/2018
Engagement Session: Norwood Park	18/04/2018
Engagement Session: Brockwell Park Walking Group	23/04/2018
Engagement Session: Volunteer Session	23/04/2018
Engagement Session: Community Shop	09/05/2018
Specialist Stakeholder Conservation Plan event	12/06/2018

2.5 The cost of consultation

The total cost of the consultation was £1,800. This covered costs for print design, delivery and distribution.

3 Responses from members of the public

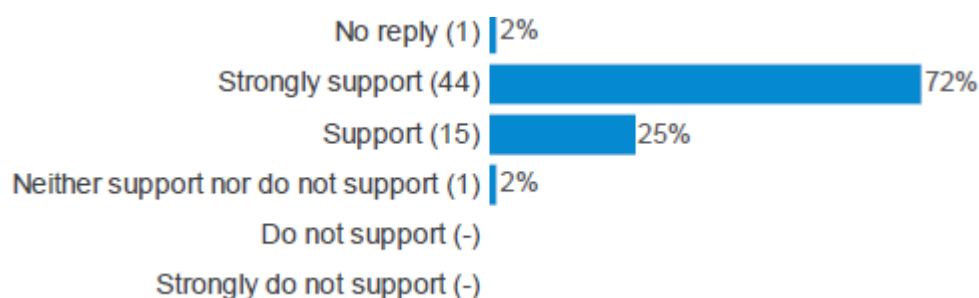
Responses from members of the public were captured in various forms:

- Online consultation questionnaire responses
- Outreach engagement and feedback sessions
- Emails and enquiries submitted to the project.

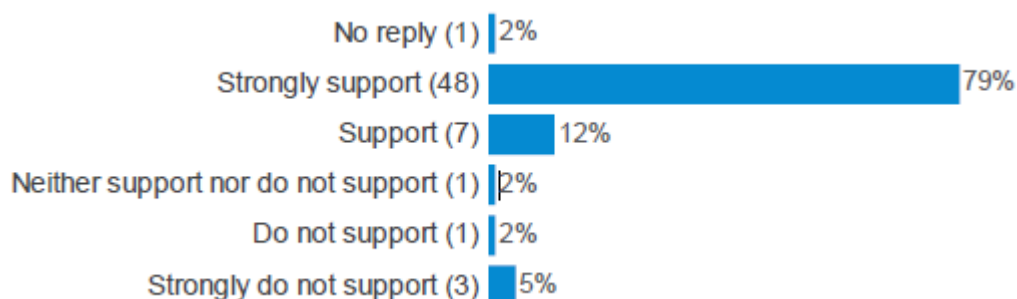
3.1 Summary of On-Line Consultation Questionnaire results

There were 61 questionnaires completed on-line. A summary of these responses are set out below.

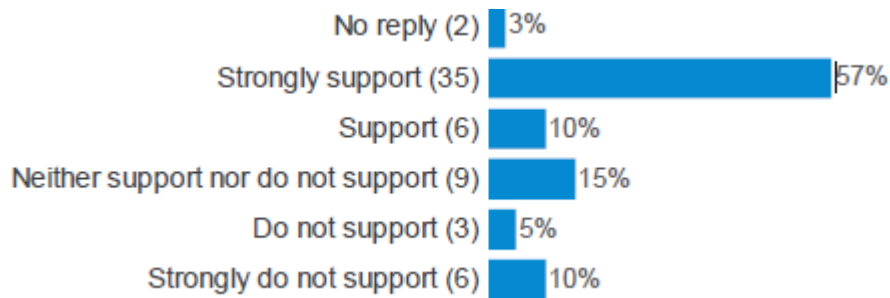
To what extent do you support or do not support the Conservation Plan's objectives for West Norwood Cemetery?



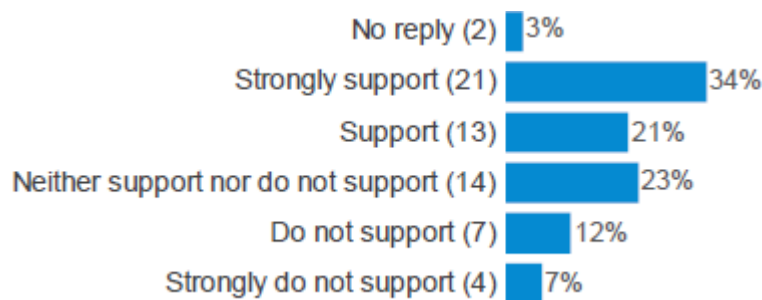
To what extent do you support or do not support a new pedestrian entrance to West Norwood Cemetery?



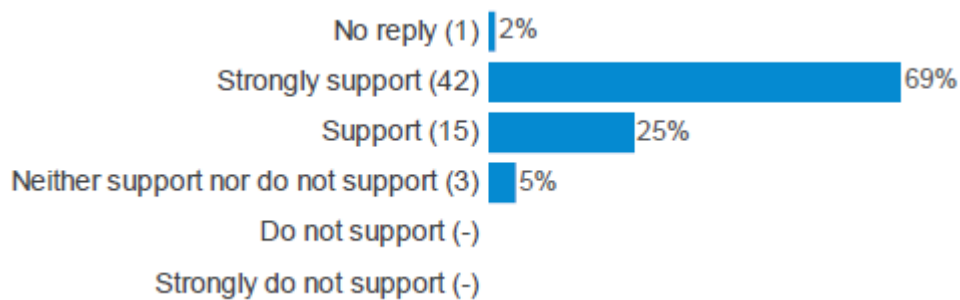
Referring to the Hubbard Road design, to what extent do you support or do not support this option?



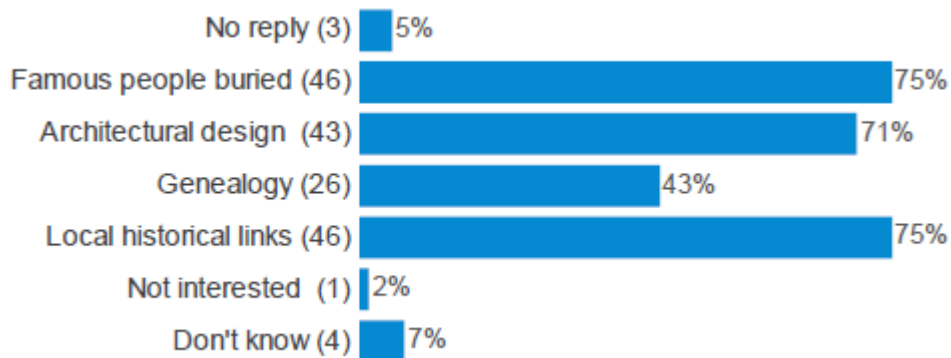
Referring to the Robson Road design, to what extent do you support or do not support this option?



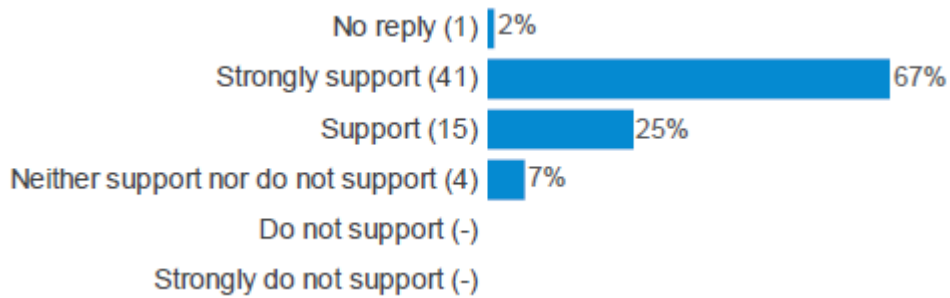
To what extent do you support or do not support the conservation of the monuments?



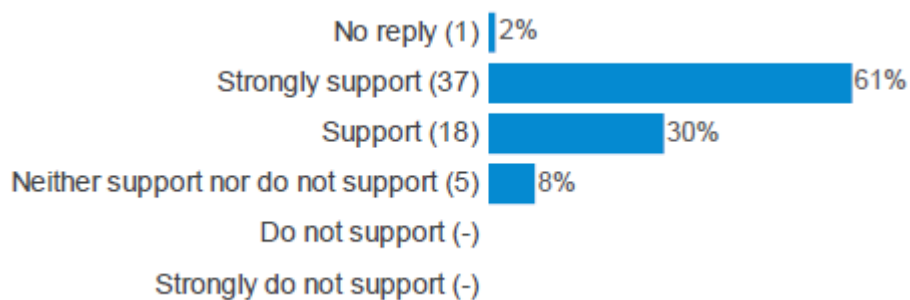
Which aspects of the cemetery's monuments would you be interested in learning more about? *SELECT ANY THAT APPLY*



To what extent do you support or do not support the proposal to restore and conserve St Stephen's chapel?



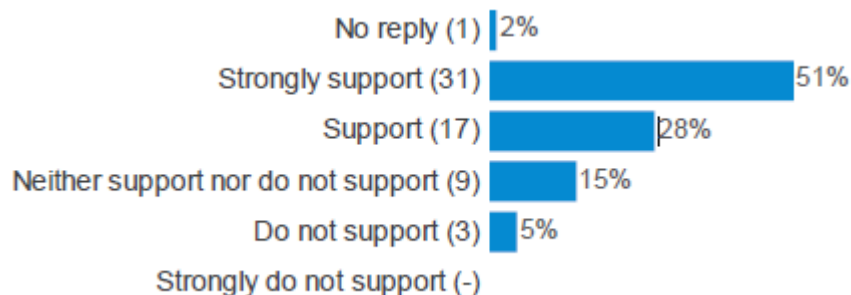
To what extent do you support or do not support the proposal to increase public access to the chapel?



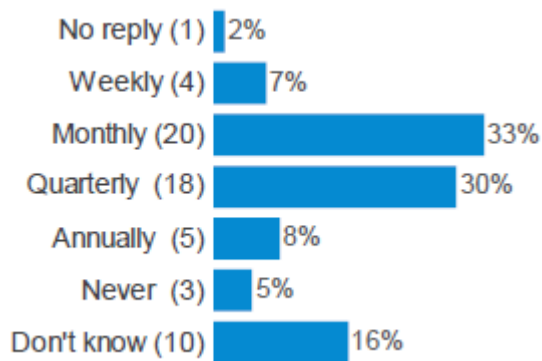
To what extent do you support or do not support or do not support the proposal to increase future and varied use, including private hire?



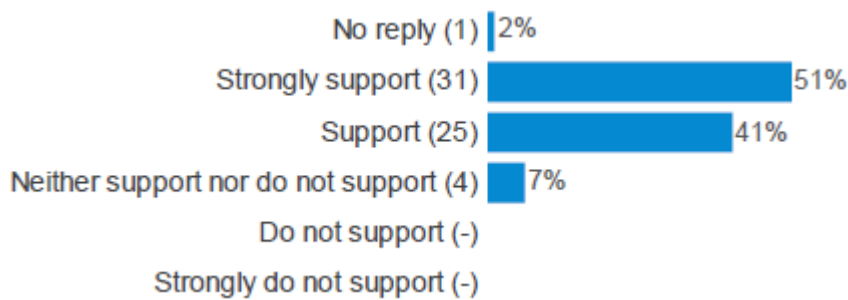
To what extent do you support or do not support the visitor centre design?



How regularly would you visit the visitor centre?



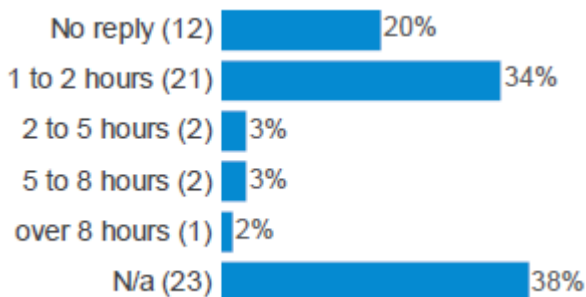
To what extent do you support or do not support the objectives of the proposed activities programme?



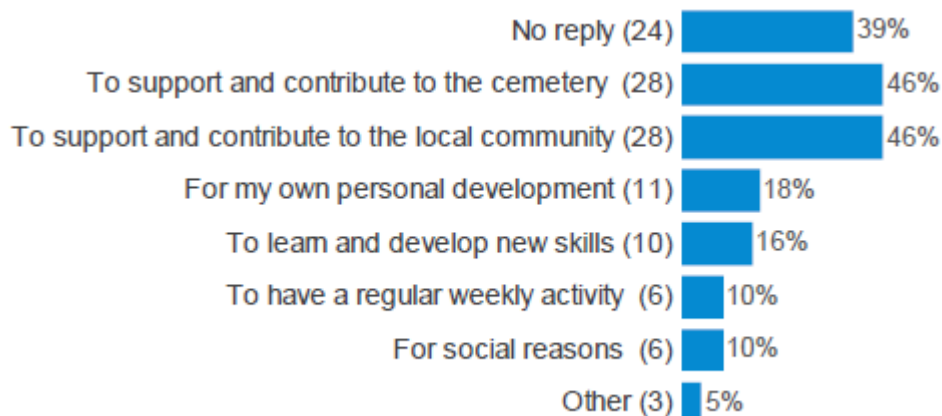
Which of these following roles might you like to volunteer for at the cemetery?

Visitor Centre Champion	15%
Gardening Guru	10%
Tour Teller	16%
Activities Ambassador	12%
Nature Warden/Guardian	8%
Researcher	21%
None of the above	34%

How many hours a week might you be able to dedicate as a volunteer?



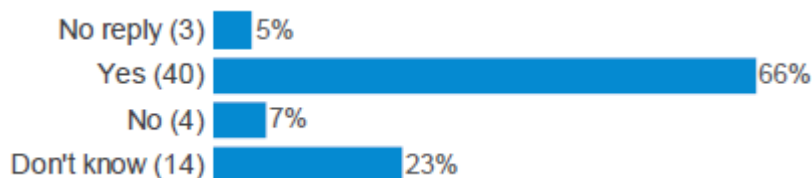
Please tell us why volunteering at the cemetery might appeal to you? Tick all that might apply



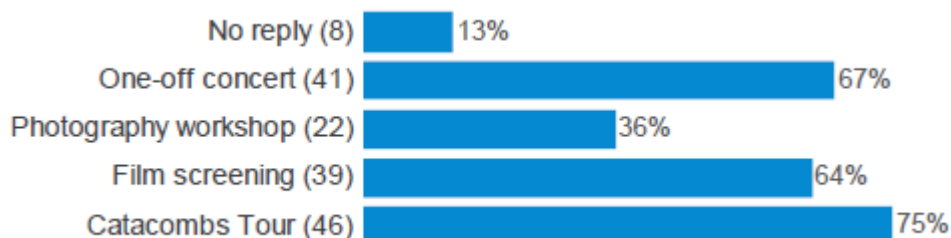
Which of the following activity ideas might you want to take part in? (Tick as many as appropriate)



Would you come to the cemetery to regularly take part in a programmed activity?



Would you pay to take part in or attend any of the following activities?



3.2 Summary of Outreach and Engagement Feedback sessions

A series of outreach and engagement sessions were held where feedback and views were collated.

A summary of the key themes, topics and responses captured during these sessions are listed here:

Conservation Management:

- Maintaining the cemetery's tranquillity was of key importance.
- Respect for the cemetery as a place for burials was of key importance.
- Grave owners requested improved site facilities, including additional water points and water containers.
- Grave owners requested improved communications, including understanding how the cemetery was managed, including mowing regimes and responsibility for memorials.
- The cemetery's biodiversity was important to local residents.

New Entrances:

- Overall, there was support for new pedestrian access into the cemetery.
- The benefits and opportunities that new entrances would bring to local residents and visitors to the cemetery was understood and supported.
- Concern from Hubbard Road residents was voiced on a proposed entrance located there. The main concerns were anti-social behaviour, increased pressure on parking in the surrounding roads and the impact on graves and grave-owners at the entrance's locality.
- Questions were raised about the process for obtaining the appropriate and required permissions from affected grave owners.
- A Robson Road entrance was seen as an opportunity to enjoy the cemetery's environment and access its rich heritage.
- Proposals should set out the ways in which the entrances would be managed and monitored.

Activities Programme:

- More things to see, do and learn about at the cemetery are welcomed.
- Some concerns were raised over ensuring the appropriate behaviour of new visitors and showing respect for the cemetery.
- Skills-based activities appealed to many local people.
- A 'Young-People's' activities programme is needed in the area.
- Free or low-cost activities was an important consideration.
- Volunteering opportunities were supported, particularly in a well-structured project where volunteers felt valued.
- Running a programme that appealed to a wider community was important.
- It should be acknowledged that some individuals will never be attracted to the cemetery to participate, because it would always be viewed as a place for burials, and nothing more than this.
- The activity plan should aim to accommodate visitors with mobility issues.

Visitor Centre:

- Toilet and community facilities were welcomed.
- Out of hours access for community use and hire was welcomed.
- Facilities for hosting funeral 'receptions' was supported.
- Some concern was raised over large school groups and bereaved families sharing the same space within the visitor centre.
- Support for more learning opportunities and space to do this within the cemetery was supported.
- The visitor centre was seen as a 'first-step' into the cemetery's surroundings.

Conservation of Heritage At Risk Monuments:

- The social history of those buried and remembered within the cemetery was an interesting aspect of this investment.
- Conserving important monuments was supported.
- Questions were raised over the other monuments across the cemetery falling into disrepair.
- More information made available on interesting and significant people buried in the cemetery was requested.
- Finding out more about local connections with the cemetery was well received.
- A demand for and interest in catacomb tours was noted.

Proposals for St Stephen's Chapel (within the Greek Enclosure):

- Overall, increased public access to the Chapel was welcomed.
- Overall, the Chapel as a venue to host a variety of small-scale events and available for private hire was welcomed.
- The chapel's proposed future-use was seen as an exciting opportunity for visitors, artists and interpretation.

Some quotes collected during these engagement activities include:

'The cemetery is my special place and I don't want that to be ruined'.

'This sounds like a fantastic project'.

'I think the proposals are amazing'.

'It's a cemetery, so not a place I would take my children'.

'When I told my family I walk around a cemetery they were amazed, but I really love coming here'.

'I come to enjoy the tranquillity and have my time'

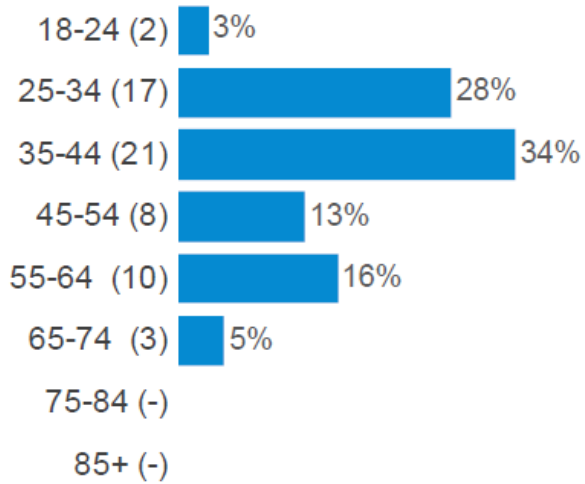
'Local kids have no youth clubs or places to go – a Youth Programme would be good'.

3.3 Summary of demographics

Which age group applies to you?

No reply (-)

Under 18 (-)



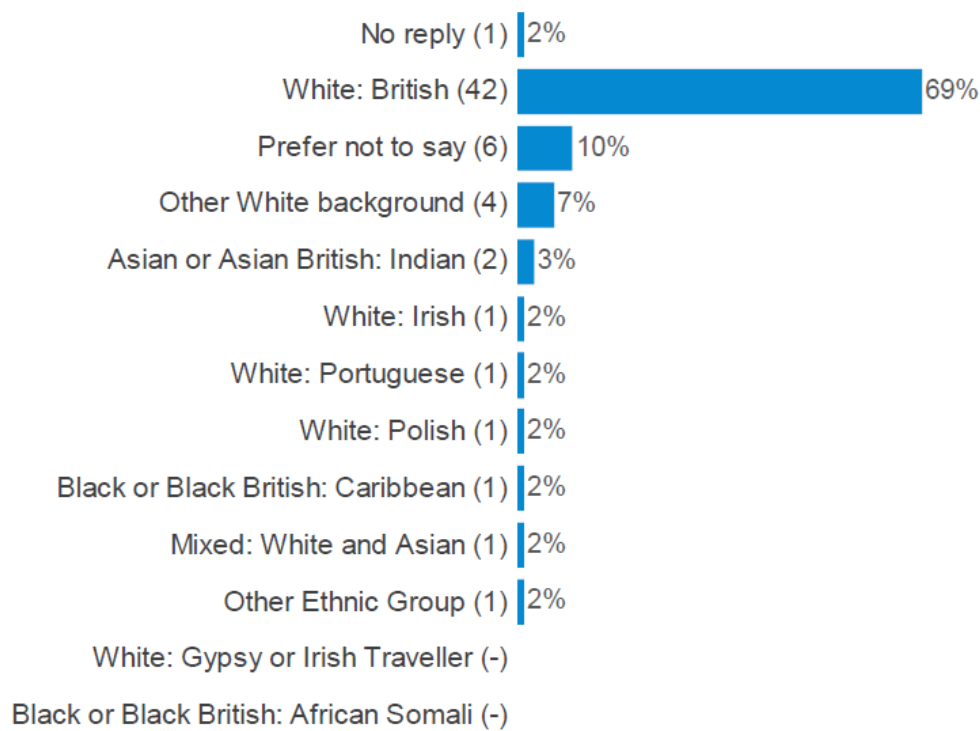
Do you have a disability?

No reply (1) 2%

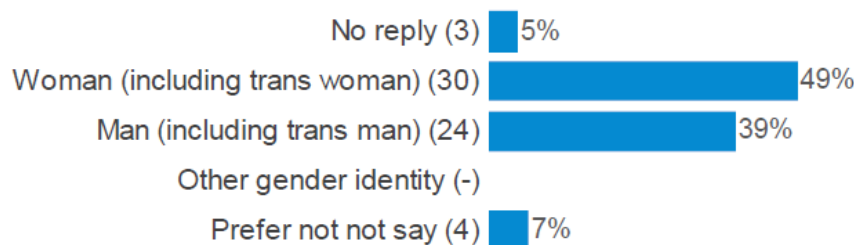
Yes (3) 5%

No (57) 93%

How would you describe your ethnicity?



What is your gender identity?



3.4 Additional comments

Many respondents used the opportunity of the online questionnaire to write substantial comments, which are grouped around a number of key themes. The most significant of these are:

Additional cemetery entrance

‘I think the proposed new entrance at Hubbard Road is too far “off the beaten track” to generate much pedestrian visits to the cemetery.’

‘My concerns with the proposed entrance on Robson Road relate to the potential risk of structural damage to the cemetery wall in the course of cutting through the wall to install an entrance.’

'If there is a choice, Hubbard Road is the most important, providing an improved link from the area to the top of Auckland hill, and a green route from the town centre to Norwood Park'

'Opening multiple entrances should be encouraged'

'I think an entrance on Robson Road would be better for the cemetery in terms of visibility.'

Balancing natural aspects of the existing cemetery with possible improvements

'While the monuments do need more care, it's also important that the wilderness feeling is not overly tidied up'

'We welcome improvements and better access but hope the essential nature of a calm reflective green environment will not be altered'

'It is important to retain the wildlife aspect of the cemetery and the peace and quiet - all so rare in London.'

Sensitivities around possible private hire

'Private hire at times, not to the detriment of public access'

'I just worry if we start letting people use it for private use, there are always some irresponsible individuals who have bad attitude and behaviour tend to vandalise anything'

'I am also concerned that if it is hired out for weddings etc things will have to be done to it that will ruin its historic character'

Additional comments were received from members of the public and included some of the following responses:

'I really hope your efforts can bring some more 'life' to the Cemetery and its surrounds especially at the East side, which is much needed.'

'.. West Norwood Cemetery - no dog walkers and very few people, very peaceful and being on a hill makes it more interesting - so I hope it doesn't become too busy after the changes come in. Having another entrance may encourage people to use it as a thoroughfare - cyclists and joggers which would destroy the peace. And cycling would cause accidents.'

'I'd like to see nest boxes for birds ... and also more wild flower meadow areas.'

'... having a gate to the Cemetery in the wall on Robson Road near to the Park Hall estate would further help to open it up.'

4 Responses from statutory bodies and other stakeholders

The Project Team, in partnership with the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery (FoWNC), has been working closely with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Historic England, Lambeth

Bereavement Services and Lambeth Conservation team, in developing and reviewing the project's proposals for the historic cemetery. Stakeholder feedback, advice and input has been sought and reviewed throughout the Development Phase project.

In addition to this, specialist-interest stakeholders were invited to attend and respond to the Cemetery's Draft Conservation Plan by Tuesday 12 June. Stakeholders included the London Wildlife Trust, Natural England, The Victorian Society and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Attendees were invited to feedback on the following key questions:

Is the approach to the Conservation Plan and its scope appropriate?

Is the Conservation Plan striking the right balance overall?

What could be added/included within the Conservation Plan (and Management and Maintenance Plan) to improve management?

Responses received in advance and during the 12 June event are summarised as follows:

- The planned improvements for and investment into the cemetery are welcomed. (Summary of feedback from 12 June).
- West Norwood Cemetery is a major green infrastructure asset for the area as well as being historically significant and providing a current service. (Natural England).
- Cemeteries are great places for biodiversity and management and maintenance of the site should consider biodiversity and allow more natural areas enabling wild flowers to bloom and provide habitat for invertebrates. (Natural England).
- There are opportunities to provide health and well-being benefits for the local community and visitors through access to nature and quiet recreation. (Natural England)
- The 'scaffold hat' above the catacombs, on the site of the demolished Episcopal Chapel requires attention and improving as it is currently an eyesore. (Norwood Forum).
- A sound management and maintenance plan will be required to deliver the aims of the Conservation plan. (Summary of feedback from 12 June).
- The Conservation Plan's aims are well balanced and aim to address the current challenges. (Summary of feedback from 12 June).
- The Activities and Interpretation Plan should showcase the cemetery's rich and layered history and raise its profile. (Summary of feedback from 12 June).

- Re-investment back into the cemetery should be clearly set-out. (National Federation of Cemetery Friends).
- Specific factors which can have a significant impact on bats, and therefore should be considered as part of the proposals include: lighting, the removal of surrounding vegetation, noise, and the changing of internal temperature. (Bat Conservation Trust).

The following comments were received from Norwood Forum:

1. The project team has worked hard to ensure a proper balance between the competing demands for use of the Cemetery, rightly keeping the main priority as its original purpose: burials. The management plan should ensure other objectives are achieved: peace and tranquillity, nature conservation, grass and wildflower management, and cultural and other activities. A proper balanced approach has been prepared through the extensive and commended work by Harrison design – development.
2. An understanding about Council income and expenditure for the Cemetery would be welcomed. The possibility of ring fencing or raised fees creating further income for Cemetery conservation should be considered.
3. Ideally, both pedestrian entrances should be provided.
4. The focus on St. Stephen’s Chapel and the 16 significant listed monuments (on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk register) for conservation is welcomed.
5. The proposed volunteer and activities programme is welcomed, especially with the Council’s commitment to provide an Activities Co-ordinator and volunteer accommodation.
6. The proposed visitor’s centre is supported, and the advice received from the HLF that the more ambitious original proposals would not receive support is noted. The Forum’s regret over the reduced ambition of the proposal would be mitigated if there was a direct link between the new library and the extension at the back of the proposed new visitor’s centre.

5 What happens next

The project team, with the agreement of the Project Steering Group, will continue to hold engagement and outreach sessions up to the bid’s submission in August 2018. This will ensure that existing partnerships are maintained and local input into the bid continues.

Planned activities will continue to raise the profile of the proposed investment, and the benefits that this will bring.

More direct engagement with those less well represented in the two rounds of consultation will be a priority, which include older people, BAME groups and those with disabilities.

The next phase of consultation and engagement will include the following activities, and more information can be found on the project's website:

- West Norwood Cemetery Open Day: Sunday 1 July 2018
- Further planned consultation locally on the proposed new entrances: July – August 2018
- FESTNorwood: 3-12: August 2018
- Community Shop Fun Day: 10 August 2018

In addition plans are in place to continue to deliver the following activities and events.

- FEAST –related
- Remembrance event
- Volunteering opportunities
- Cemetery tours and trails
- Outreach activity programme
- Marketing and Communications
- Monitoring and Evaluation

The project website (<https://westnorwoodcemetery.org>) will continue to post updates on the bid's progress, planned activities and opportunities.

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document is also available online.

<https://westnorwoodcemetery.org/faqs>

An on-line Cemetery Visitor questionnaire is available on line to submit feedback and comments at any time. This can be found at:

<http://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=152085296255>

Appendix A – Consultation communications



**WEST NORWOOD CEMETERY
A NEW BEGINNING**

**Interested in
Volunteering?**

Learn more about how you can help at westnorwoodcemetery.org, or simply pop into one of our sessions.

Have your say

Our team will be hosting feedback sessions across SE27 from **22 March - 22 April 2018**.

Visit westnorwoodcemetery.org for details.

Access the public consultation questionnaire at lambeth.gov.uk/consultations

Pick up a printed copy from the West Norwood Cemetery Lodge.

Appendix B – List of stakeholder consulted during Phase 2

Police and health authorities	
Metropolitan Police	Local Community Police Officers
Voluntary and community sector groups	
Community Groups	Community Shop Myatts Field Park FEAST Volunteers
Residents Group	Robson Road Residents Association
Health and Wellbeing Groups	Aspire Wellbeing West Norwood Leisure Centre Health Walks Brockwell Park Health Walks
Disability groups	L'Arche
Faith groups	Chatsworth Baptist Church
Older people groups	Cheviot Gardens West Norwood Pensioner's Group
Children's groups	Picture House Community and Education Team
Carers groups	South London Cares
Other stakeholder or partners	
	Friends of West Norwood Cemetery
	Heritage Lottery
	Historic England
	Norwood Forum
	Scheme of Management Committee
	Lambeth Bereavement Services
	Lambeth Parks and Open Spaces
	Project Steering Group Committee
	National Federation of Cemetery Friends
	South London Botanical Institute
	Highgate Cemetery
	Brompton Cemetery
	British Lichen Society
	London Wildlife Trust
	Woodland Trust
	Commonwealth War Graves Commission
	South London Botanical Institute
	Great North Wood HLF Project
	Bat Conservation Trust
	Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe (ASCE)
	South London Theatre
	Park Hall Business Estate
	West Norwood local businesses