



# HAVING

## CHARACTERISATION STUDY

### *SURVEY FEEDBACK RESULTS*

ALLIES AND MORRISON URBAN FLOW  
URBAN PRACTITIONERS

# Introduction

The Havering Character Study has been informed throughout by local stakeholders. A series of stakeholder workshops, public pop-up events and an online survey have been invaluable in shaping and informing the character study and the team are hugely grateful to all who gave their time to input. This report provides a summary of the inputs from the online survey. The online survey invited residents to provide comments on the character of places in the borough. The comments were made by people living, working or studying in a particular area but their comments may relate to other parts of the borough.

## 4 pop up events

**Purpose:** Understanding what is important in terms of its **existing character**, what could be improved and what future development should look like. These pop up events also provided a deeper understanding of the **identities of Havering's neighbourhoods**.

Friday 17th March 2023 | 9:30am - 12:30pm at Romford Market

Friday 17th March 2023 | 2pm - 5pm at Rainham Tesco Extra

Saturday 18th March 2023 | 9:30am - 12:30pm at Harold Hill Library

Saturday 18th March 2023 | 2pm - 5pm at Hornchurch Sainsbury's

## 2 community workshops

**Purpose:** To have more **in-depth discussions**. The core objective was to give groups such as neighbourhood forums and civic societies an opportunity to feed into the project.

Tuesday 21st March 2023 | 5:30pm - 7:30pm at Havering Town Hall

Wednesday 21st June 2023 | 5:30pm - 7:30pm at Havering Town Hall

## 1 online survey

**Purpose:** To allow a **wider group of the community** to input into the study

28 March - 19 May 2023 (7 weeks) 91 people responded with 713 comments



# Place-based feedback: Romford

## Strengths:

- Green space - Many residents commented on their appreciation of the green space they have in Romford. Some commented positively on the planting, flowers and shrubs. The regular maintenance of open green spaces was commended multiple times. Many said they enjoy spending time in the local parks. Parks- Cottons, Marshalls and Raphels.
- Many respondents noted how the availability of public transport is a huge benefit to the area.
- The efficient transport links into London. The Elizabeth line has been an excellent addition to the area.
- A good variety of shops and facilities in the town centre.
- Many residents said they value Romfords heritage.
- Romfords peaceful surroundings are important to its residents.

## Issues:

- Some residents feel there has been a loss of community spirit in recent years.
- Anti-social behaviour is a worry for many residents in the area. Many expressed that they feel unsafe in the centre of Romford.
- Over-development. Residents are worried about the regulation of building heights in the area as new developments are introduced.
- The dilapidation of Romford town centre.
- Residents were not happy with the current conditions of the roads in Romford.

## Considerations moving forward:

- Residents would like to see an increase policing of the area.
- More community amenities.
- Improvement to the conditions.
- Residents would like there to be more greenery added to the area.
- The maintenance of existing buildings.
- Improved cycling routes.
- Cleaner streets- adding more bins and giving more care/ maintenance to the towns centre

*Very respectful, polite, and engaging community here. Marketing on Saturday and Sunday gives a refreshing insight that how diversity is recognised here.*

*Impressive indeed! Tube or Bus, easy to access and connected with entire London. Planners are doing a great job.*

*I love the community feel about the town be that businesses, residents or those who work or visit. The demographic has changed over the years but I think it is important that people still feel this is a place for community.*

*I like its variety and the friendliness of the residents. The people are independent and opinionated but wonderful neighbours.*

# Place-based feedback: Collier Row

## Strengths:

- Residents appreciate their accessibility to green spaces.
- Many residents commended the public transport in Collier Row.
- Local amenities such as the library, churches and shops were listed as a strength of the town by residents.
- The ease of access to the countryside.
- Many praised their neighbours and their wider community.

## Issues:

- A few residents noted how some green spaces in Collier Row have fallen into disrepair.
- Some residents feel that the historic character of the area is being lost.
- Residents highlighted that the local area feels unsafe. In recent years there has been a surge in knife crime and issues with drugs in the area.

## Considerations moving forward:

- Many residents said they would like to see the refurbishment of buildings.
- Residents would like to have more done in terms of crime prevention.
- Residents would like to see more to be done to preserve the sense of community in the area.
- Improvements to the façades of local shops. Some residents said that shops in the area can be.
- Some residents would like to a wider variety of shops and amenities be, e.g. a gym.
- Residents would like consideration to be made

*I have lived in Havering since 1974 and have no desire to live anywhere else.*

*Easy access to countryside & country parks & to central London.*

*I really value the Green open spaces in Collier Row. Having Green fields helps to give us cleaner air and also cooler air in the Summer.*

*I like living in Collier Row. I really like the open Green Spaces. The High Street has some nice shops and there are quite a few places where people can meet and socialise.*

*Lots of open space, good local shops, easy access to Romford Town Centre*

# Place-based feedback: Gidea Park

## Strengths:

- Many residents said they value the green space they have in their area.
- Good local shops are of value to locals.
- Many residents said how they like how most local amenities such as churches, banks leisure facilities and post offices are within walking distance.

## Issues:

- Litter in the streets.
- Decreased maintenance of park facilities.
- Social infrastructure such as doctors' surgeries are under strain, with residents complaining that they are unable to get an appointment.
- Lack of bicycle infrastructure.
- Residents feel that anti-social behaviour is a big problem in the centre, and that not enough is done to resolve these issues. Generally, people don't feel comfortable walking around the centre at night.

## Considerations moving forward:

- Increased transport options on the weekend.
- Residents would like to see more public seating being made available.
- It was suggested that the open spaces in the area are carefully maintained.
- Residents would like the Elizabeth line to be open till later hours.
- Residents would like improvements to be made to road and footpath surfaces in the area.

*The Gidea Park Conservation Area developed in the Arts and Crafts style plus open spaces provides an attractive oasis, for all, complemented by the low rise area surrounding previously protected by the Gidea Park Special Character Area.*

*Parks close by and walking distance to Romford shopping centre and market.*

*Further away the extensive green belt areas provide further attractive open space the Borough being on the very fringe of London - semi rural in character very attractive which must be maintained for benefit of future generations.*

*There is everything in a 10 in minute distance like shops, restaurants, cafes, gyms and a cinema*

# Place-based feedback: Hornchurch

## Strengths:

- Some older residents said how they value the peace and quiet they get from the area.
- The multiple green spaces in the area are seen as a strength for many residents. Queens Green was mentioned by multiple residents in their feedback.
- Many residents commented how they believe Queens Theatre is at the forefront of the town identity is an asset to Hornchurch and the wider community.
- Local people feel Hornchurch is a great location, with great connections.
- Local green spaces and parks were frequently mentioned as being key assets that people love and feel make a large contribution to the character.

## Issues:

- There seems to be apprehension from residents in regards to high rise buildings being built in the area.
- One resident felt that too many new houses are being built and that the wrong types are going up, displacing long term residents.
- Residents highlighted that litter in Rainham can be distracting and is ruining the public realm.
- There was a general concern that there was too much development taking place and that the area was getting "over-populated". Many were also concerned that the nature of housing development was in the form of flats rather than houses.

## Considerations moving forward:

- Residents expressed that they would like to see better maintenance of greenery in Hornchurch.
- Care for the maintenance of Hornchurch's look and feel is extremely important to residents. Some residents feel that new developments going up and being proposed in Hornchurch are not in keeping with the character.
- Residents fear Hornchurch is losing its historic feel.
- Residents suggested that they would like more opportunities for community gatherings. One resident said Hornchurch would benefit by having more youth club.

*I value that there are green areas, that there are trees and parks that my family and I can use. I value the fact that we live on the edge of London close to rural areas. I also value the small green patches of land and open areas around properties.*

*I think Hornchurch is great for transport generally. There are plenty of buses going all over Havering and railway connections too if people wish to visit London or Southend.*

*There seem to be a lot of pubs and restaurants and enough supermarkets. I like that the green near the Queen's Theatre is used for community events and acts as a village green. The library is a valuable resource.*

*The green spaces are the main thing that make havering a nice place to live. They should not be built on!*

# Place-based feedback: South Hornchurch

## Strengths:

- The residents of South Hornchurch value the accessibility they have to public transport. They especially appreciate the opening of the Elizabeth line as it makes the commute to London a lot quicker.
- Public parks and green spaces are greatly appreciated by the residents of South Hornchurch. Hylands Park and its facilities was mentioned by one resident.
- The independent and local businesses.
- Many residents mentioned how the heritage of South Hornchurch is one of its greatest strengths.

## Issues:

- It was said by one resident that they feel like the sense of community has been lost in South Hornchurch.
- A general sense of safety seems to be missing and residents have expressed how they do not feel safe walking around the area once it is dark.
- One respondent is unhappy with potential development on local green spaces.
- One resident is frustrated by the lack of transport into stations (Elm Park / Rainham)
- Residents fear that anti-social behaviour in the area is getting worse. They are particularly worried about it when using the local part at night.
- Some residents fear that there is too much development happening without the consideration of increasing social infrastructures such as medical and police services.

## Considerations moving forward:

- One resident suggested that speed limits should be reduced in residential areas.
- Local people would like a safe road crossing to be considered along Brentwood road and Park Lane as they currently find them very unsafe.
- Residents would like to see more housing developed into the area while also maintaining green space.
- Residents would like there to be consideration given to what buildings are being taken down. They have suggested that they would like to see more refurbishment of older buildings taking place. The

*I value my garden and the nearby Hornchurch Country Park with Essex Wildlife centre.*

*I am glad there are still other parks and green spaces within and on the Essex edge of Havering.*

*It is great to have both mainline trains and Underground services in the borough. The bus routes are helpful too.*

*I value the moderately-sized shopping centre in Hornchurch and the Queens Theatre.*

*The Romford shopping precincts can be useful and I like an occasional cinema visit to Romford.*

*The area is predominantly Victorian villas and the conservation of these should be prioritised potentially as a conservation area.*

## Place-based feedback: South Hornchurch

keeping of South Hornchurch's character through preservation of buildings is important to residents.

- Local respondents would like developers to focus on making sure that high quality green space is provided as intensive development occurs.
- One respondent would like consideration to be made regarding a conservation zone protecting parts of George Street, Victoria Road, Albert Road, Richmond Road, Malvern Road and Brentwood Road, especially where victorian character is being lost or diminished.
- Residents would like to have more tubes to upminster outside of peak times.



# Place-based feedback: Upminster

## Strengths:

- Residents said they value the range of shops available to them in Upminster,
- Many residents value the accessibility of public transport in and out of London.
- There are a variety of building types in the area which residents say are well kept.
- One resident said they value the frequency of buses in Upminster. They mentioned the 248 and the 346 in particular.
- One resident said they like the variety and the friendliness of the residents. They said the people are independent and opinionated but wonderful neighbours.
- Upminster windmill was mentioned by one resident. They said it looks 'fantastic' since its restoration.
- Available amenities such as the local library is seen as a benefit to the community.

## Issues:

- Many residents expressed that there is not enough green space in the area and that the green space that they do have is not taken care of. Some residents also expressed their concerns that green spaces are being sold off as development sites.
- Residents of Upminster feel disheartened with the area. They feel much of the boroughs character has been lost.
- Some residents expressed that they feel that the sense of community has been lost.
- Road surfaces are in need of maintenance according to some residents.
- One resident said that the general feel in the community is that the area is becoming less safe. They suggested that there needs to be a centre where younger people in the community can spend their time as they currently find themselves with very little to do.
- Anti-social behaviour has become an issue in Upminster with car theft and shoplifting in need of attention.

*That there are trees along most local roads and that I can walk to a number of green spaces to walk in, which make me feel that I am in the countryside.*

*The town centre has nearly everything I need in terms of shops, restaurants and entertainment.*

*I love that there is a place that I can hang out with my friends, and a place that I can play around in because my garden is small.*

*There's lots of bus and train options within walking distance of my house*

# Place-based feedback: Upminster

## Considerations moving forward:

- Residents would like greater police patrolling.
- Some residents would like greater consideration to be made when approving planning permission for new builds.
- A resident would like to have a connection up to the Elizabeth line.
- Residents would like a greater enforcement of parking restrictions in the area.
- Buses to each local town centre would be a benefit to residents.
- Footpaths in need of maintenance.
- Some explained that Upminster felt too built up for them, they feel there should be more homes built instead of flats.
- Residents would like new buildings to retain Upminster existing character.
- Residents would like more green space in the borough.
- Residents would like increased cycling infrastructure.

# Place-based feedback: Harold Hill

## Strengths:

- The green spaces provide a green escape from the relatively urban Harold Hill. Residents said they value having the space to use with their children.
- Those with young children expressed that the local play spaces are of good quality.
- The local buildings are valued in Harold Hill with Langtons being mentioned specifically. One resident also mentioned the character of the buildings.
- Residents value the transport links available to them for commuting to and from work.
- One resident mentioned the presence of local deer on streets.

## Issues:

- Residents highlighted that the local area feels uncared for with no sense of maintenance or upkeep. Many said the place was dirtier and more littered than in past decades. Residents feel litter ruins the atmosphere and is contributing to the areas loss of character.
- A lack of resources was mentioned as an issue for some residents, particularly health services.
- Residents expressed that there are poor links around the borough.

## Considerations moving forward:

- Generally residents would like less development to be taking place. They believe the area is becoming dominated by concrete buildings and that it is impacting the quality of the air in the area. They would like to see more planting to offset the lower air quality.
- One resident expressed that they would like ULEZ to be stopped as they believe if it goes ahead it will have a negative impact on the community and on town centres.
- Residents would like more bus availability at peak hours.
- One resident highlighted that they would like to see more being done with the market.
- Many suggested that the pavements need better maintenance as they have fallen into disrepair in recent years.
- Safety is a concern for local residents, they would like increased patrolling of the local area.
- A resident said they would like to see new businesses and shops being encouraged to move into the area.

*There are a few parks close to home and also the manor which is a beautiful area to walk in and play with my children. We enjoy looking at the lake and ducks and enjoying the forest.*

*The building I work in has lots of character as well as historical significance.*

*Value bus routes, important link to the stations and the rest of the borough.*

*I value the green space, in particular The Manor/ Dagnam Park and Langtons Gardens.*

# Place-based feedback: Emerson Park

## Strengths:

- One resident expressed their love for the green and open spaces they have in Emerson Park. They said 'We are privileged to have beautiful green fields, a river and forest on our doorstep. Wild meadowland, paddocks, farmers fields and woodland all with public footpaths that enable all to enjoy the fresh air and relaxation being in nature provides.' This is a lovely representation of the love residents have for the area they live in.
- Emerson Parks historic heritage, represented through their buildings is extremely important to the local people. They wish to ensure this is maintained in future development plans.
- One resident said they value the safety they feel in their area.
- Residents value the local bus service and appreciate the 30 minutes of free parking they can avail of for shopping.

## Issues:

- One resident feels that Elm Park is losing its historic identity due to the increased development in recent years. They also feel this loss of identity is amplified by the types of shops that are being set up in the area such as betting facilities, bars, takeaways and salons.
- Anti-social behaviour is an issue in Emerson Park which a resident feels is taking away from the comfort spending time in the area during both the day and night.
- A resident said that they struggle with the lack of public transport available to them. The highlighted that they would like to have a service that travelled to Upminster.

## Considerations moving forward:

- Protect and preserve and improve all green spaces in the area. Ensure litter and fly tipping is cleared to protect it and wildlife.
- Protect and preserve historic buildings. Ensure new buildings are in line with the areas character.
- Residents would like road surfaces to be maintained.
- Some residents said they would like to have more bus services made available to them.

*We are privileged to have beautiful green fields, a river and forest on our doorstep. Wild meadowland, paddocks, farmers fields and woodland. All with public footpaths that enable all to enjoy the fresh air and relaxation being in nature provides.*

*Havering has a rich history and still has some historic buildings remaining, many of which are free for all to enjoy. Our heritage that grew from basically a farming community should be preserved.*

*We are amongst Londons greenest boroughs , and still enjoying the benefit of green belt land. We must all fight hard to preserve this land.*

*Good local bus service to all areas free 30 mins parking for shopping*

# Place-based feedback: Harold Wood

## Strengths:

- The addition of the Elizabeth line to Harold Wood is a valued asset to its residents.
- Many people mentioned that the green spaces and local parks are valued by many members of the community as they are an excellent tool for getting people outside in nature. Painesbrook Park was mentioned in particular by one resident.
- Some respondents expressed that the local schools and play spaces are of good quality.

## Issues:

- Residents feel too many green spaces are being replaced by parking.
- One resident feels that there are not enough climate resilient features in the area. They say that the public realm is dominated by car infrastructure.
- Too many derelict sites in Harold Hill.

## Considerations moving forward:

- Residents noted that although the Elizabeth line has been a large asset to Harold Wood, they would appreciate if its timings could be more reliable.
- Residents fear that too much development is taking up green space. Some residents feel their needs are being overlooked in order to build more homes.
- One resident feels that a reduction in car parking by the shopping parade should be considered. They believe that by reducing the space for parking it could allow for the enhancement of the public realm.
- Multiple residents would like more walking and cycling infrastructure. They would like better traffic management to create quieter streets, they mentioned Hackney and Waltham Forest as an example.

*The shopping parades along the Colchester Road, Harold Court Road and the shop on Church road are locally important, as well as Harold Court School for local education.*

*The Harold Wood Elizabeth Line station and our local buses are a valuable local service.*

*Harold Wood Library is a really interesting building which should be recognised as locally important.*

*I value communities and decent travel links that give alternatives to cars such as cycling.*

# Place-based feedback: Rainham

## Strengths:

- Public transport is well used by residents of Rainham and was generally perceived in a positive light. One resident expressed that the routes are good, but the buses could be more spread out.
- The Romford shopping centre is a strong asset to Rainham residents.
- The green spaces and county parks are valued by residents.

*Transport is really great!*

## Issues

- One resident expressed that there is not enough green space in their local vicinity.
- There was a general concern that there was too much development taking place and that the increased amount of building has changed the character of the area.
- One resident fears that there is too much development without an amount of medical services.
- Safety is a concern in Rainham village.

*I value Romford shopping Centre.*

## Considerations moving forward:

- One resident said they would like to see more police men on foot in Rainham.
- One resident feels that there is over development taking place in Rainham and they have suggested that planning applications are given deeper consideration before approval.
- Local shops and smaller trades are becoming fewer due to high renting costs for trading spaces in Romford. One resident would like action to be taken in regards to this to encourage shops market traders back into the area.
- Residents highlighted the problem of increased littering in Bretons Park in particular but also in the general area. Footpaths have been let to overgrow and the general surfacing is in need of maintenance.

*I value the parks and open spaces.*

*I value green spaces - county parks - transport links.*

# Place-based feedback: Elm Park

## Strengths:

- Residents expressed that they really enjoy having the convenience of city life but can get to what feels like the countryside very quickly. One respondent said 'Where I can feel a sense of openness and tranquillity'.
- The accessibility that local people have to green spaces when living in Elm Park was greatly valued by residents. Parks and green spaces included Harrow Lodge Park, Langtons Gardens, RSPB and Breton's Farm lake.
- Many residents appreciated the local shops.
- Services and amenities including the library, the Elm church community hall and the local churches are frequently used for events by local residents which they say is key for building a sense of community in the area.
- The transport links to and from Elm Park are a key asset to local residents.

## Issues:

- One resident noted that drains and roads are cleaned enough and they believe that residents should be encouraged by the council to clean outside of their own homes on a regular basis.
- Anti-social behaviour is a worry for one resident.
- A resident said that the area has become tired and neglected looking.
- A resident says that the car park next to Savers has become too expensive as it is run by a private entity.

## Considerations moving forward:

- Generally resident would like to see Romford market have more promotion.
- Residents feel like the general area of Elm Park in need of repair and better maintenance. It has been suggested by one resident that each home must take responsibility for the debris outside their own home.
- Many residents want the green spaces in the area to be maintained and for investments to be made into the available facilities in the open parks and green areas.

*I love the fact that I have the convenience of city life but can get to what feels like the countryside very quickly. Where I can feel a sense of openness and tranquillity.*

*I really like the friendliness of the shops at Elm Park, the community spirit during special events like Christmas, queen's jubilee and the support residents provide over social media pages.*

*We are blessed with an attractive train station and parades of shops which date from the 1930s.*

*Although the way people interact with one another has changed dramatically over the last few decades... people who live in Elm Park manage to sustain a sense of community in many different ways.*

## *Place-based feedback: Elm Park*

- Some residents have expressed their concerns regarding the ULEZ expansion. One resident would like the wider community opinion on the expansion voiced in the political arena.
- The visual identity of Elm Park is important to its residents. They would like for the streets to be cleaner and better looked after, including street furniture and signage.
- Safety is a concern for some residents. One resident suggested it could benefit the area to have a neighbourhood watch set up.



## *Place-based feedback: Beam Park*

- There were no comments made on Beam Park

# Place-based feedback: Green belt villages

## Strengths:

- Residents said how they enjoy the green open environment, the neighbourhoods tree lined streets and greened verges.
- One resident said they like how the buildings in the area low rise with limited industrial premises.
- The independent and local shops is something the local people love about the area.
- The quality of the heritage buildings such as the windmill, the gold club club house and the historic houses and the attractive churches appreciated by the local residents.
- Residents noted how they like having multiple independent cafés and restaurants at this disposal.

## Issues:

- Residents noted that there is not an adequate number of bus services in the area.
- Respondent highlighted that they find it difficult not having a bank or a police station in the local vicinity.

## Considerations moving forward:

- Multiple respondents said they would like consideration to be made regarding the development of buildings near the green spaces.
- Respondents would like to see the restoration of local offices in the town centre.
- Residents would like the new building designs to be in keeping with the current character of the area.
- Respondents would like to ensure that there will be no diminishing encroachment on existing facilities i.e. libraries, school premises and open air leisure facilities.
- Respondents would like there to be careful consideration made regarding traffic flow and the control of road works.
- Improvement have been suggested for the local bus services. One respondent specified Corbets tey road, a major road, that only has the 370 service which results in the need for continual changing to alternate buses to travel to other local areas. Another respondent said that the 499 service is also in need of improvement.

*I value the quantity of heritage buildings, ( Windmill; golf club club house - historic house): historic and attractive churches; the centrally placed park with leisure and sporting facilities.*

*This is a predominantly residential area with some shopping in well-defined areas and other community facilities such as schools. The community is well integrated.*

*Green open environment; tree lined streets; greened verges. Attractive housing stock.*

*The mix of architecture - 21 Century new build and mid-20 Century municipal, with older properties nearby - makes for an interesting environment. There are few high-rise blocks to mar the landscape.*