

Appendix 1 BID Consultation

June 2023

What do you like about the busking in the town centre?

- Nice background noise, if at an appropriate volume
- some of them can't sign, and they are too loud.
- It's nice to have some life in the town centre! (Some music!)
- It makes people smile, adds some atmosphere and showcases local talent.
- It adds vibrancy and entertainment.
- Nice to have something to listen to or experience as you walk around. Great to give a platform to artists. Puts people in a good mood.
- Acts all around the world busk. This is how some musicians started out. Ed Sheeran would busk, look how big an act he is now!
- It cheers you up and supports the artists
- Brings joy, happiness, keeps the town centre alive, showcases talent.
- I like music so it's nice to hear.
- It can sometimes bring a good atmosphere and drive additional footfall. We like the buskers that play instruments and more upbeat music to drive an atmosphere.
- when the performer is decent it can bring a real buzz to the high-street
- not much
- Talented and creative performers adding art and culture to the town centre.
- not a lot
- On a sunny day depending on who is playing it can create a nice atmosphere
- Nothing
- the music livens up the street.
- Creates a good atmosphere.
- too loud, depressing music, that goes on for too long, 90% of the busking is annoying.
- Music is good and attracts the crowd. If it's the right people i.e. good!
- it brightens up the day, Reading can be pretty drab.
- The variety and quality of the performers
- Its uplifting and they are usually all really good.
- It is good when the singers create atmosphere for our customers and, make the experience enjoyable.
- Music
- Some people have huge talent.
- Not much to be honest
- I love that it brings the centre to life with some very talented and often young people.
- gives a good atmosphere.
- It provides a bit of entertainment and some of them are quite good.
- Positive atmosphere it creates.
- Nice to hear different variety of music.
- It creates a pleasant atmosphere.
- atmosphere it creates.
- Entertainment and makes you smile.
- when they sing/play well
- Nice vibe, enjoyable
- Nothing
- Brings a vibrancy and encourages gatherings, providing a community feel.
- It entertains crowds and people linger who may have just passed through.

What do you dislike about the busking in the town centre?

- When it's too loud which it frequently is. There are also a lot of religious fanatics (sic) with loudspeakers who are also too loud and imposing.
- they are too loud.
- Too big of a gap in between - as long as they're not pleading.
- too loud, whiny songs, annoying, too repetitive, should be for shorter periods of time and not all day.
- consistency - there are great buskers and not so great.
- If they can't sing very well!
- Sometimes a lot of the same thing.
- Some are not that talented, however I've only recently heard 1 busker that was not good.
- Volume is too high.
- Nothing - leave them be! Reading town centre is dying. Do not try to get rid of the remaining light.
- I feel sorry for the shop workers having to listen to it all day.
- Not enough variety between the buskers at different spots, the songs and people we see can be repetitive. A lot of the music is repeated and not upbeat. If there's more than 1 busker singing, it can feel like they're competing to be louder which in turn makes it hard to hear either.
- some performers are not very good, some are very loud so you can hear it throughout most of my shop, also when there are 2/3 different performers on one day it turns into just not very nice noise.
- competing buskers, too noisy, iffy standard
- Poor coordination of performers when there are too many buskers too close together, so you get a mismatched clash of sound. Might be caused by approved and unapproved performers. Sometimes equipment lets down performers due to quality.
- it's often too loud to talk/hear.
- Certain Buskers are way too loud, and the music is very depressing.
- It's too loud and the quality of busking is often quite poor.
- Sometimes the demand for money can make me feel uncomfortable.
- sometimes too loud, creates accessibility issues when large crowds gather.
- the two dudes singing depressing songs outside John Lewis all day every day they play music so loud I can't even hear the music I am playing in the shop where I work.
- Varying quality of busker
- Nothing
- Too loud sometimes and I worry it's distracting for people when pickpockets are around.
- Nothing
- When it is too loud, and you have more than one singing at the same time.
- Charity workers - feel like you can't walk downtown now without being bothered. It puts me off walking past some shops.
- Some people need to accept this is not their calling.
- It's always too loud and out of tune.
- Nothing
- sometimes very loud
- Sometimes there are too many too close together. And some are not very good.
- n/a
- N/A
- Nothing
- nothing

- Nothing
- not being in time/tune
- nothing
- Ruins ability to hear customers (they use amps /mics), I am hard of hearing and being polite asking them to adapt yields no positive response. Customers constantly complain, we even had letter sent recently to ourselves and John Lewis from one upset gentleman.
- Sometimes (rarely) if a large crowd assembles it can become a choke point on movement through the town centre.
- n/a

What other comments do you have about busking in the town centre?

- n/a
- get actually talented people.
- I don't mind it! :)
- I think it's fine as long as it is regulated.
- Maybe there are already but would be good to have designated busking spots. I also don't know if it's that obvious to other people how to apply to busk in the town centre. I much prefer buskers to other vendors/salespeople etc approaching you in the street!
- People like to stand and watch, mostly in the summer. Children enjoy it.
- Limiting the volume would be a great idea as when it's too loud it can become inconvenient.
- It's pleasant as long as nothing offensive and not too loud.
- Our customers will also comment on the loudness coming from the street.
- feels like it could be a beneficial thing to have but requires planning in advance, so we always have someone, but they are good and also the volume and how many there are on any given day is monitored.
- I'd have a formal stage or space for buskers to rent professionally. Like on underground in London.
- Very happy if they would just turn it down. I can't imagine they get much ££ now - I and most I know, don't carry cash.
- I feel it can be positive but needs to be controlled so not too loud.
- We regularly receive complaints from our customers about the volume and quality of busking in the town centre.
- Most people don't carry cash anymore, so I don't know what buskers get out of it anymore.
- please make the two loud dudes stop... have limitations on volume and length of time allowed to play, and it should not be the same 10 songs over and over again.
- Maybe having set locations in the town centre for these buskers
- Love it!
- love the busking, hate the people trying to get you to sign up to things!
- It can be good and atmospheric. It would be good if it was controlled to one area so that there is not too many at the same time.
- It does get a very same all the time in the Broad Street. You need to make sure that the volume of the singers is turned right down. It's too much when you're working in a retail shop.
- None about busking in town, I love it... I do have a problem with religious groups pounding their wares, however.
- I think it's positive and gives reading a little something extra
- I prefer people busking to people just begging.
- Having buskers in more locations than just along the Broad Street. E.g. outside the station/ Market Place Square

- Busking is great, the issue I have is the charity and people that stop you to try and get you to sign up. When saying no, they keep following or shouting
- It should continue.
- I think it's a good thing.
- There is a fine line between busking and people causing a nuisance, such as religious preachers and beggars. Only genuine buskers should be allowed.
- would be good if they could sing.
- none
- Urgently needs accountability mics/amps should be barred. Ruins quality of life for retailers trying to add value to our town.
- n/a

