



Our Future Dewsbury

Young Persons Engagement Update

28th November 2024

Additional engagement

- Commissioned by Board following review of responses
- Engaged with around 100 younger people in person
- Included a wide range of ages
 - Primary school
 - Secondary school
 - Post-16
 - Younger professionals
- Targeted Social Media campaign
- Engagement now paused until new Long-term Plan prospectus issued by Government

Board Commission: Additional Engagement

Kirklees College

Eastborough Academy

Thornhill Community
Academy

University of
Huddersfield



- Range of ages between 16-21
- Group of around 16
- Young people with differing needs & backgrounds
- Feedback:
 - Safety & Security
 - Look & feel of the centre
 - Not enough things to do for young people
 - Passionate about public transport & improvements



- Session on Place in Dewsbury with creative students
- Engaged with 23 post-graduate discussing Dewsbury & Long-term Plan (LTP)
- Ages mainly under 25
- Students now working on Dewsbury as a Case-Study as part of their post-graduate development
- Feedback supported working group priorities
>>

Opportunity
Dewsbury to
be a creative

Increasing
Evening
economy

Increase
Housing
in Town

Using empty
buildings for
creative spaces

Restaurants
open in an
evening

Things to
do on an
evening

- Session with years 7, 8 & 9 – Centred around regeneration in Dewsbury Town Centre
- Talked to them about our projects in Dewsbury, and LTP
- Generated lot of interest about their town centre / thinking about their futures in Dewsbury
- Common themes emerging about Dewsbury and the improvements needed >>

Games
Arcades

Skatepark

Do
something
with empty
buildings

Make the
centre less
scruffy

More
places to
eat

More
things for
families in
town

Less vape
shops

Town can
feel
dangerous in
places

Eastborough Academy 16th October

- Session with Year 6 and Year 5
- Spoke and listened to around 60 students in total
- Children were very excited about projects happening in the town
- Passionate about improving their town
- Very honest about improvements they wanted
- Engaged through drawing exercises to think about future of Dewsbury & what it could look like



Wanted to see more homes in the centre that people could afford to live in

Slow down traffic in the centre

Tidy up rubbish and litter

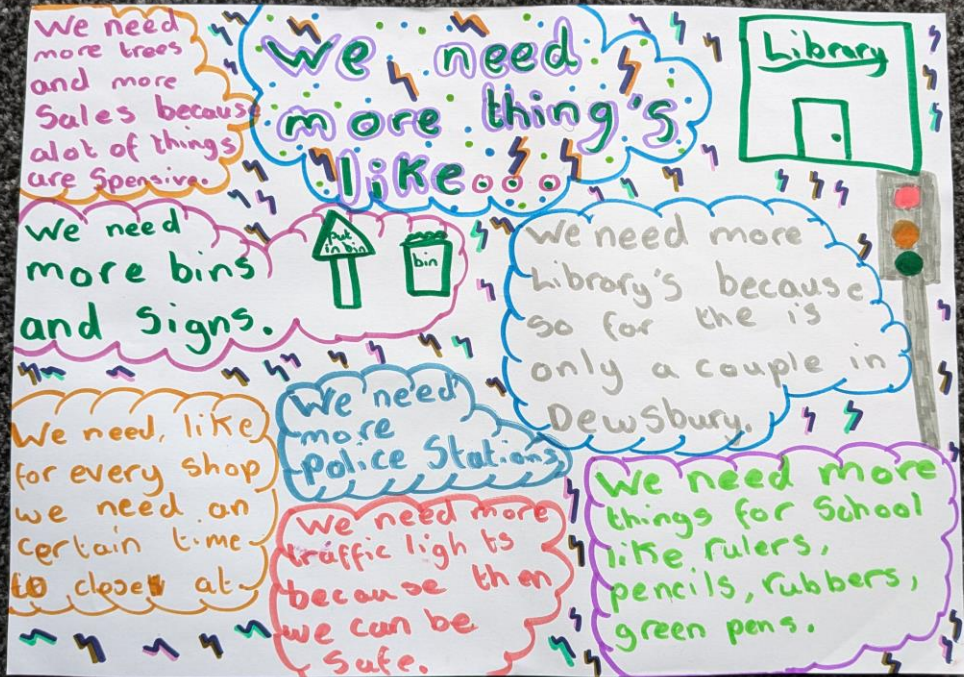
Would like a variety of shops, not just the same ones like Vape shops

Don't want to see people taking drugs and doing bad things in the town centre

Don't always feel safe

Helping homeless people in the town centre to get a home

Would like arts centre



Summary

- The additional engagement has supported earlier findings, highlighting the priorities needed to improve Dewsbury Town Centre
- Generated interest with younger people about the future of their town centre and its potential
- Some new ideas from younger people in terms of what they would like for the future
- 100 younger persons voices contributing to the additional engagement with wealth of feedback



Our Future Dewsbury

Engagement Summary from previous board

3rd October 2024

Key engagement stats *(as of 1st October)*

650+ Responses
(381 online + c.270+ paper)
(1% of Dews pop)
(2.5% of 20min neighbourhood)

575 “starts” of online form
(64.5% completion rate)

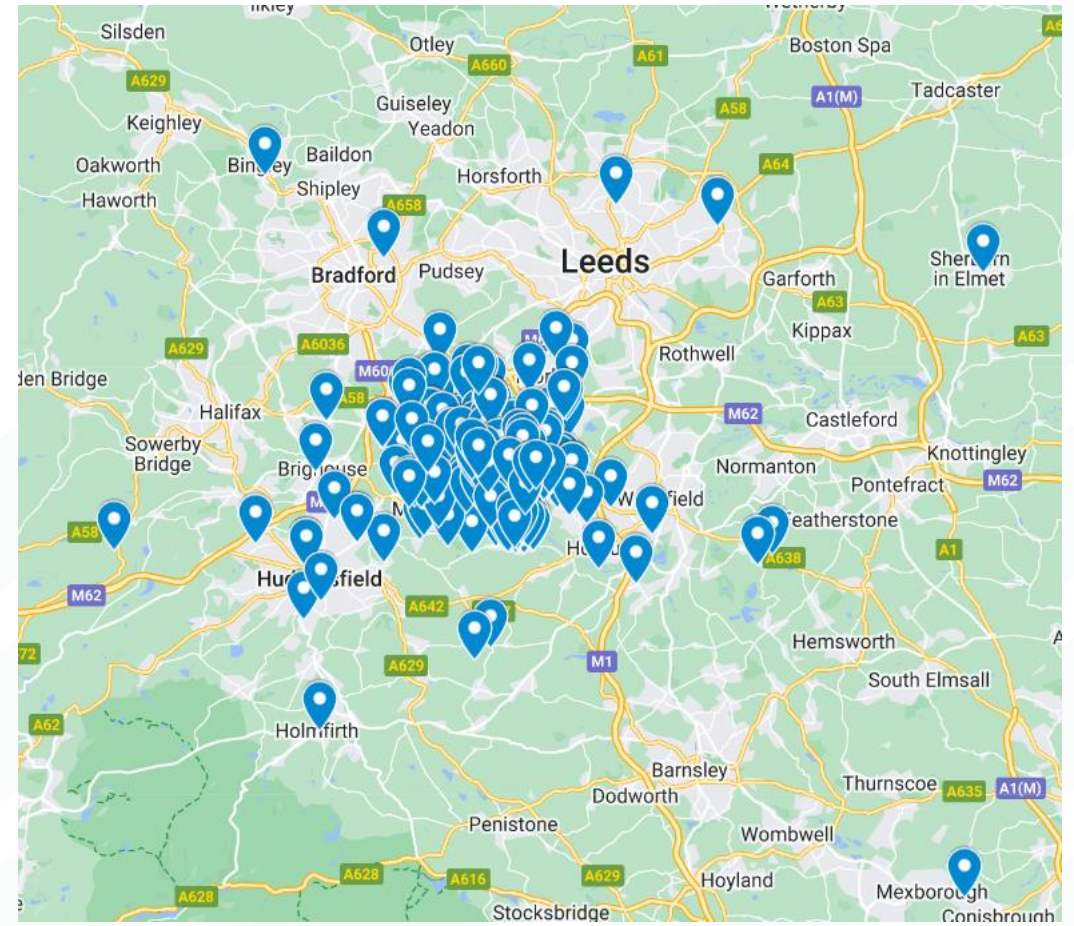
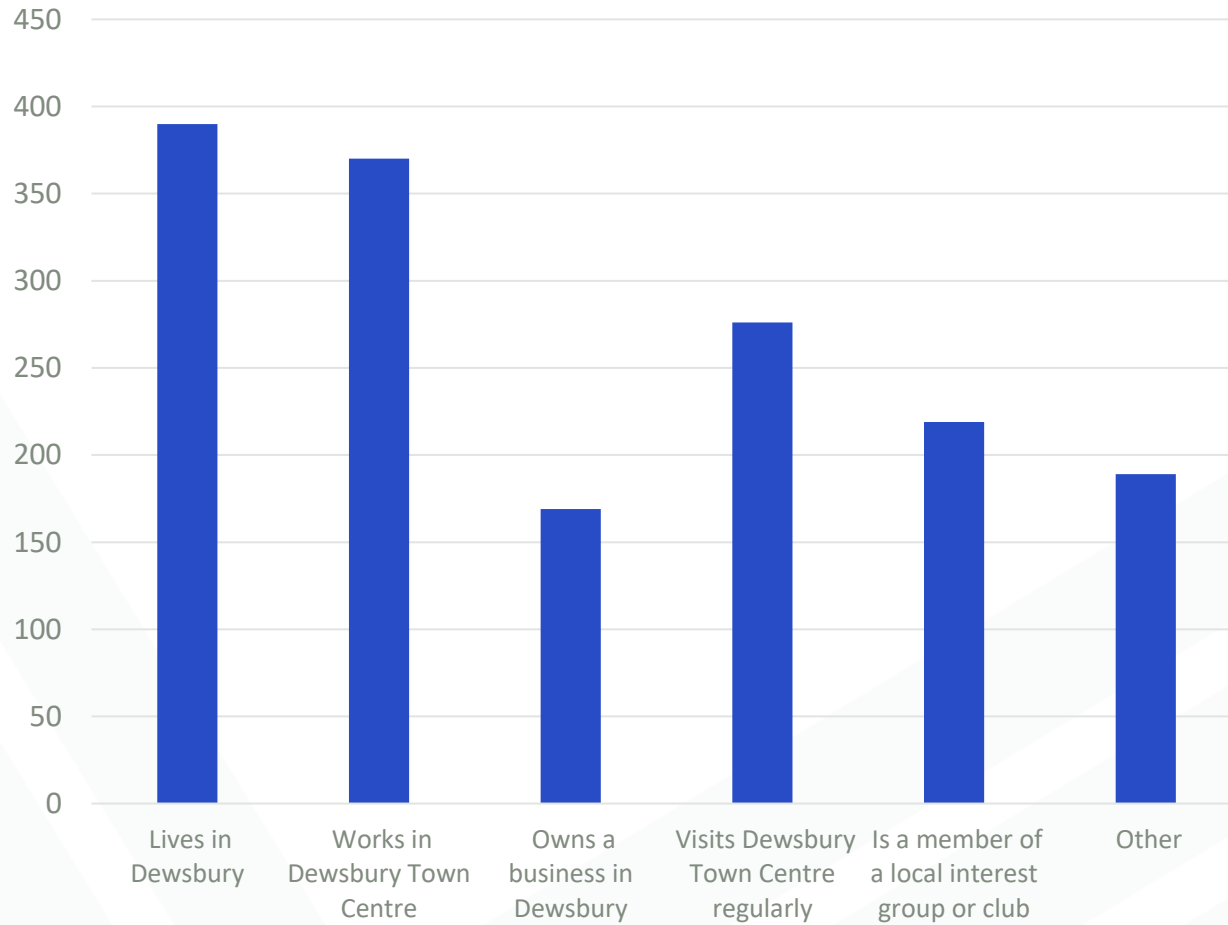
2,828 TB web visits
1,526 visits to the ‘Get
Involved’ Page

55% women
41% men
4% prefer not to say

22% Black, Asian or Mixed
72% White British
3% White other

15% Under 35
62% 35–64
22% Over 65

Respondents' Relationship to Dewsbury




Most respondents either live or work in Dewsbury

What has been done to raise awareness?

- 6 x in-person events
- 3x in-person workshops
- Press releases with local media
- Paid social media campaigns
- Social Media Platform Posts
- Posters
- Pop-up banners
- Targeted mailshots to businesses
- Large banner outside train station
- Project Team & Community Engagement Team sharing on platforms/networks
- Kirklees College promoting on social media platforms and internal networks
- Informing local Councillors, Town Board and MP to encourage sharing

Social media activities


- Facebook has been the main traffic source for Dewsbury Town Board website.
- 42,000 total Facebook impressions
 - 1.6k link clicks
 - 1.2k interactions (likes, comments, shares)
- Followers are predominantly aged 35-64 and live in Dewsbury or Batley.
- Facebook seen as a good platform for continued promotion of the Town Board.
- Instagram has been launched and we will begin posting there in October.

 Dewsbury Town Board
Published by Carl Marinara
· 26 July ·

We've had a fantastic response to Our Future Dewsbury over the last 3 weeks, and we've heard from hundreds of you about your ideas to improve the town!

To make sure everyone gets the chance to contribute, we're now extending the deadline for feedback until the end of September.

We'll be back out and about in Dewsbury in August, so watch this space for details of upcoming events, and in the meantime, be sure to have your say at www.dewsburytownboard.co.uk/get-involved



Dewsbury Town Board

Confidence in the data

- Attracting a wide audience to public engagement is a challenge. Those that do respond are disproportionately people who are *already* interested in the subject.
- As such, engagement data can help us understand trends and interests, but it is not a census or a referendum.
- Timing, local context, trust and history also influence levels of engagement.
- Engagement examples locally :
 - Place Standard & Masterplans across Kirklees – 0.25% to 9% response rates
 - Our Town Dewsbury for TIP (2020) – c.500 responses
 - Huddersfield Our Cultural Heart (2022) – c.450 responses
 - Bradford City Village (2023-24) – c.400 responses
 - Stainforth Town Deal (2020-21) – c.200 responses

How are we seeking to strengthen our understanding

Diversity

- Distributed engagement information and links in local WhatsApp groups
- Events at local mosques and in Savile Town
- Urdu-speaking local engagement team at events and town centre conversations

Businesses

- Targeted letters sent to c.600 businesses with social media promotion
- Engagement event on 1st October both in Town Hall & going out to businesses

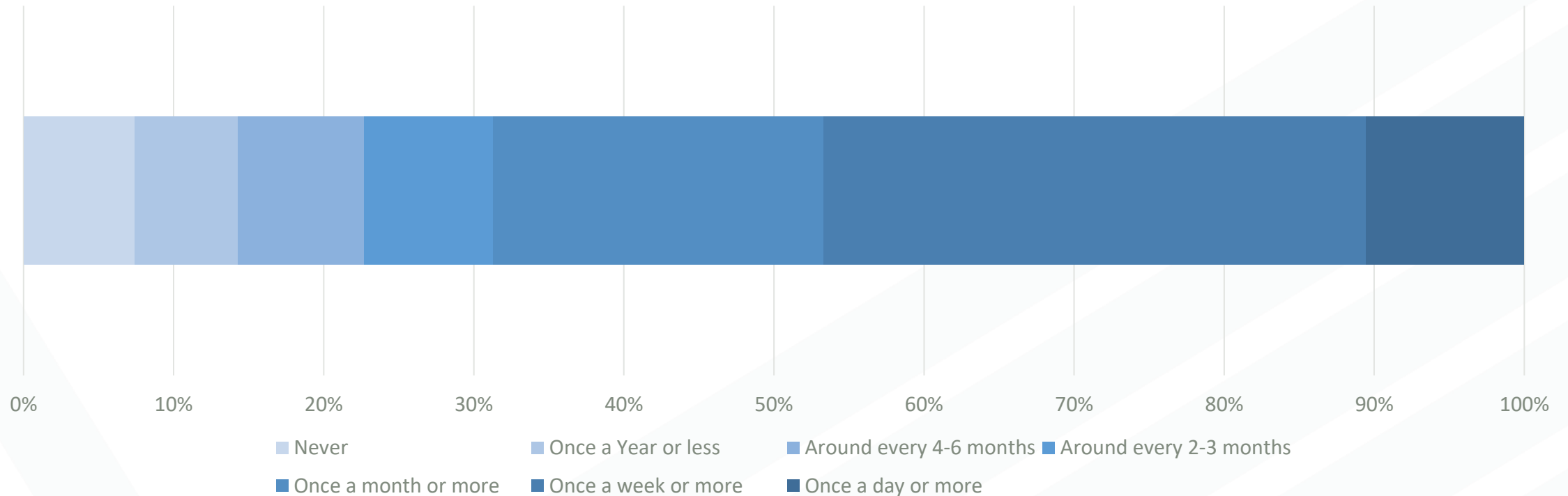
Young people

- Workshops being planned with Kirklees college students
- Session with University of Huddersfield
- Social media targeted at younger users
- Schools – Eastborough Primary School (with years 5 & 6) and Thornhill Academy



Perceptions

How often do people visit the town centre?

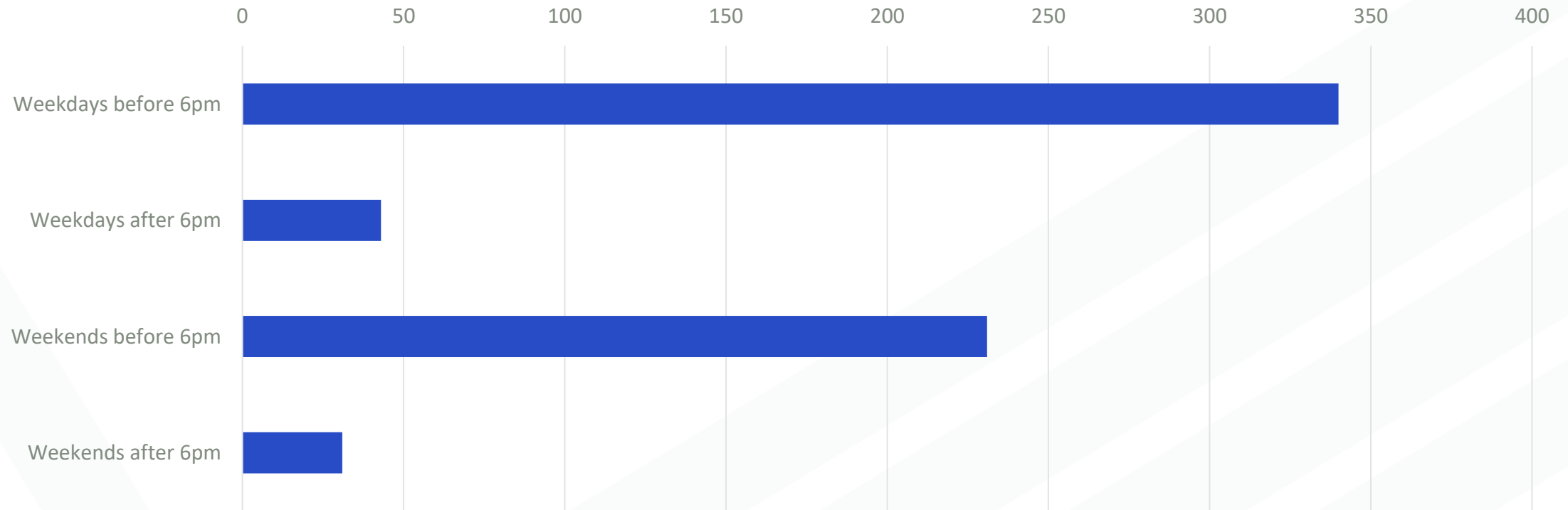


More than 65% visit the town centre at least once a month
Nearly half, 46%, visit the town centre weekly or more



When asked why they normally visit the town centre, most reported that they usually visit for “errand” type reasons – e.g. shopping, banking and visiting the post office.

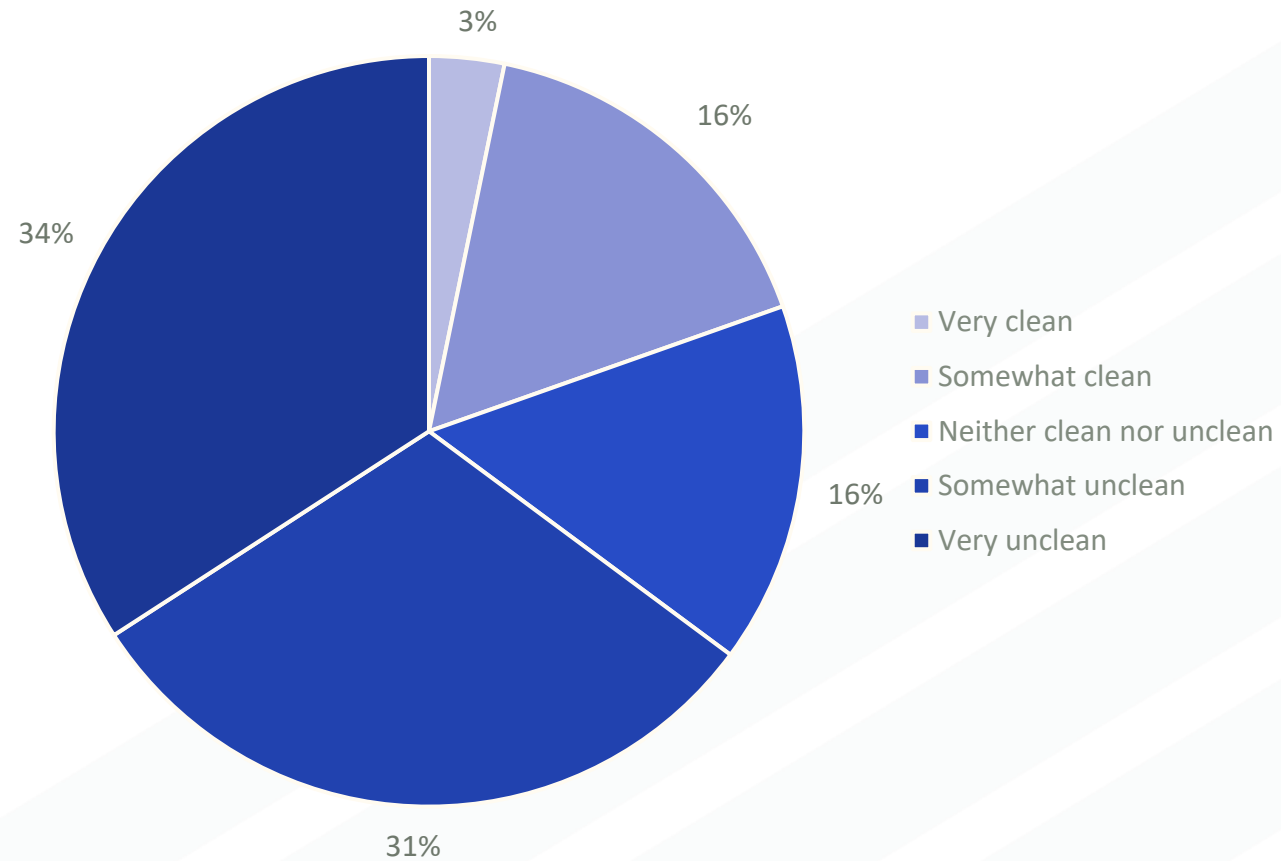
What times do people normally visit?



Most people do not visit the town centre after 6pm

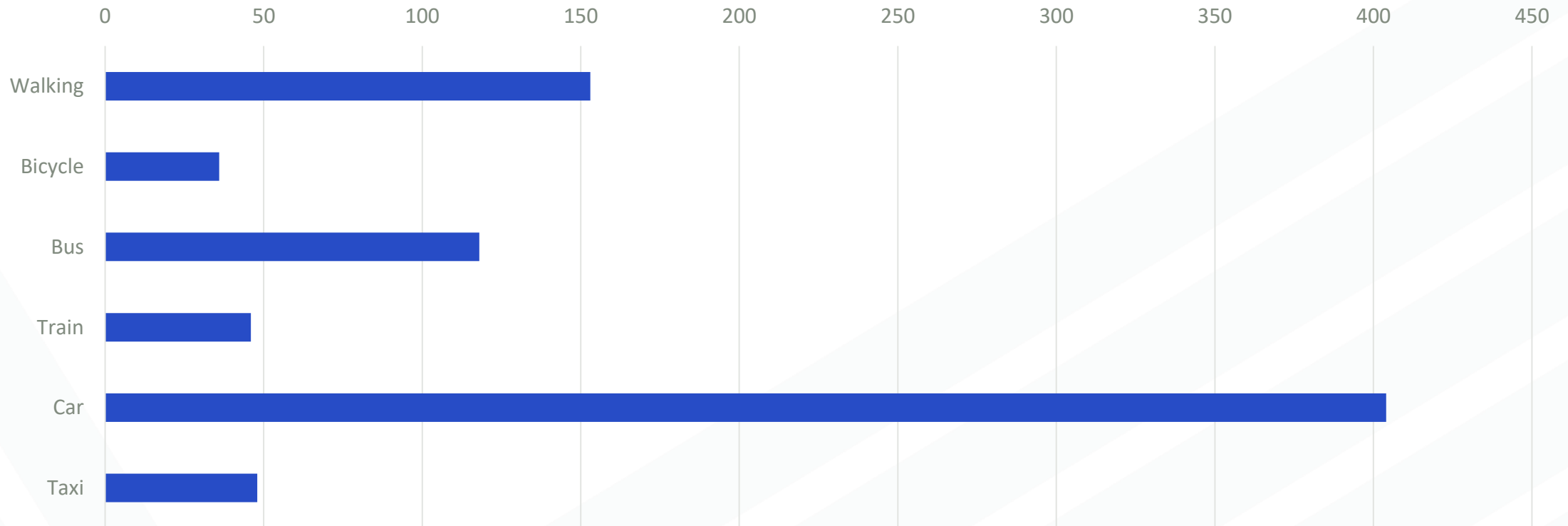
Common reasons given for this in the following question include lack of leisure options and feeling unsafe.

How clean do people find the town?



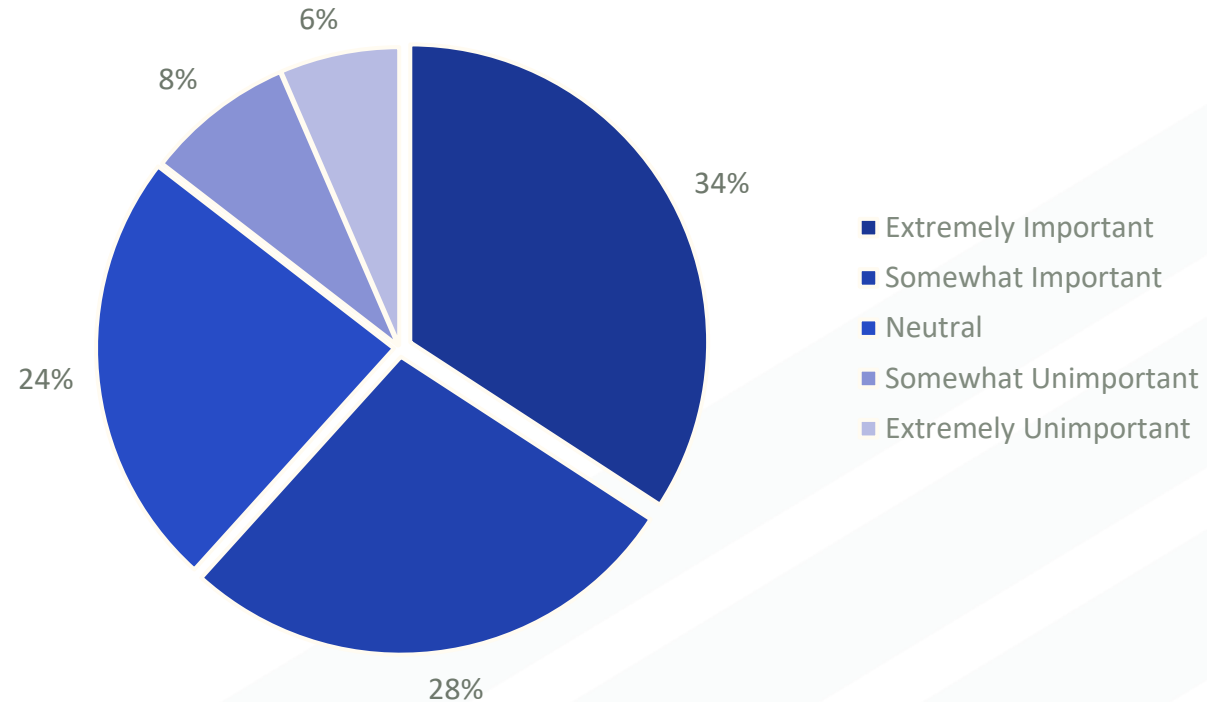
Almost two thirds (65%) report finding the town centre somewhat or very unclear.

How do people normally travel to/from the town?



Many people reported that more reliable bus services would make it easier to travel to and from town. Many also asked for free or cheaper car parking.

How important are Events and Activities to you?

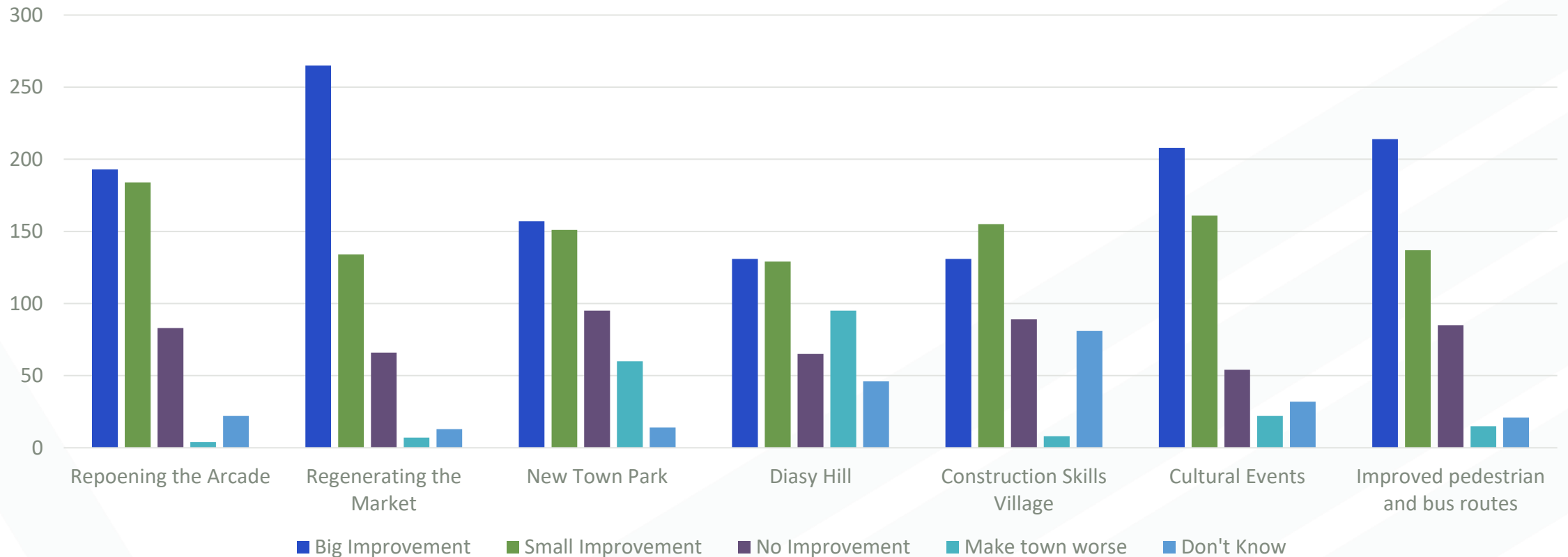


62% said events and activities were somewhat or very important to them



When asked what kind of events they would like to see more of, the most common response was activities for children and young people

How much of a change will these make?



Regenerating the market is seen as a big improvement
Followed by The Arcade, Cultural events and better walk & bus routes

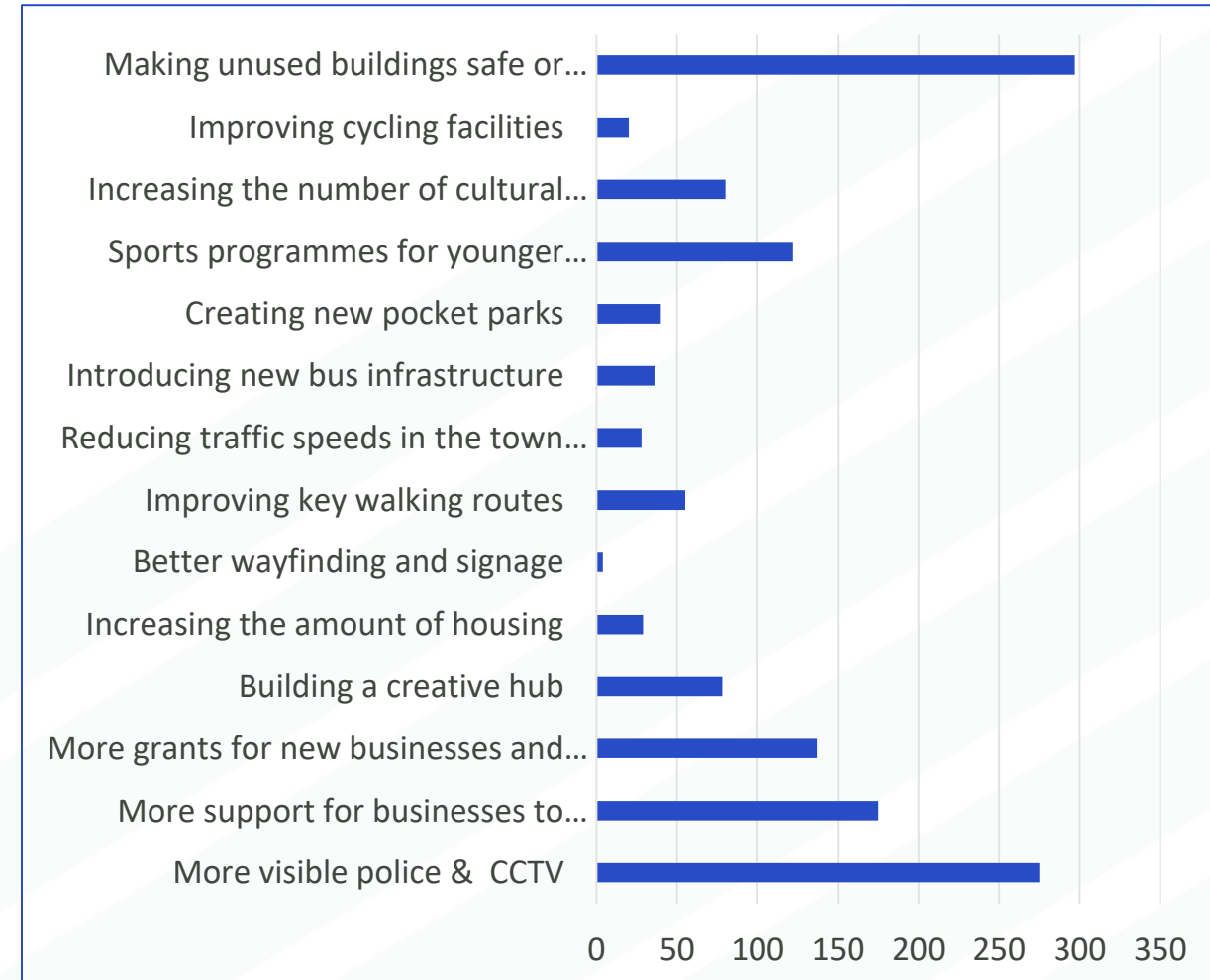
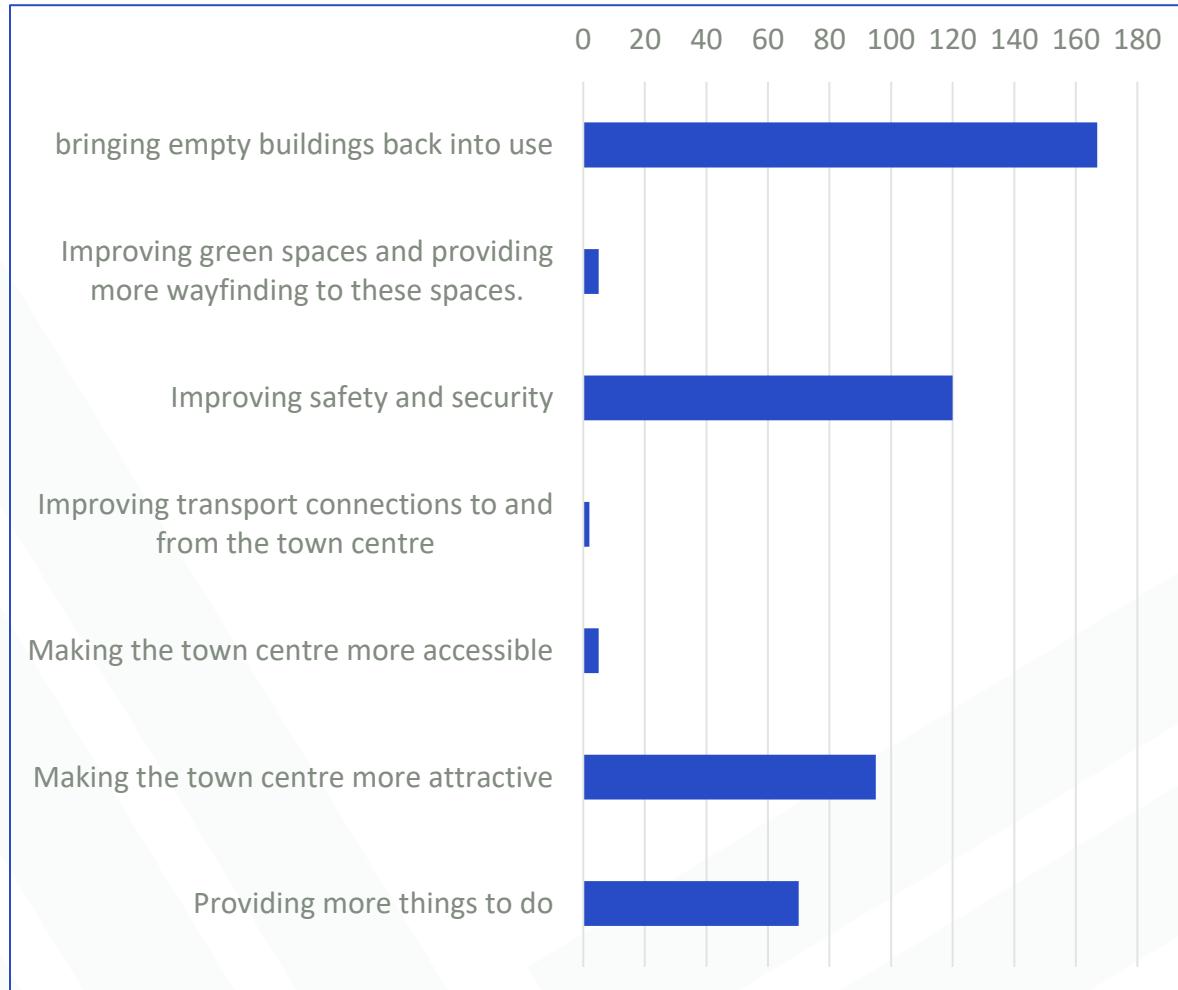


When prompted for suggestions to improve the town, common responses included lower rents, more seating and toilets, reducing litter on the streets, and improving perceptions of safety.



Priorities for the Future

What is important & needs investment?



Quotes & ideas...



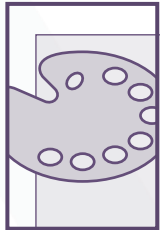
"I'd like to see more celebration of the Town's past. I recently read a book of local history and there's lots of interesting stories about how Dewsbury has changed over the years. I think a project that helped to visualise this and showed that the town can be more than it currently is (because it was once thriving) it may offer more hope for the future of the town."



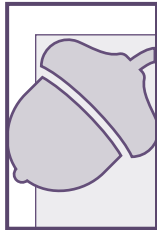
"I think that bringing homes into the town centre would be great, which would increase footfall and spending in the town centre."



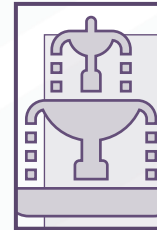
"I want the town to be cleaner and more secure for residents."



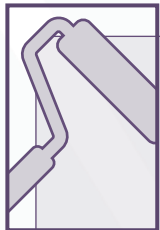
"Craft courses for adults, a museum celebrating Dewsbury's past in the textile industry."



"I'd just like a happy vibrant town showcasing the best of western Yorkshire."



"A museum, an outdoor park with fountain for families to come and sit and relax."



"Local community garage sale, Skills swap, Repair café"



"Restaurants and Bars more places for ppl to take their families out to eat"



"More events aimed at younger people"

So, what does this all mean

- We should be confident in the data
- Provides good insight which will be strengthened following engagement with younger people
- Has helped create platforms for ongoing and continuous engagement
- Feedback from community engagement aligns with the priorities that came from 'LTP working groups'
- Identifies clear priorities which will help shape the Long-Term Plan
 - Bringing empty buildings and derelict spaces back into use e.g new homes
 - Improving safety & security to tackle current issues and enable longer-term prevention
 - Making the town more attractive
 - Supporting businesses
 - Providing more things to do including events, cultural programmes and sports for younger people
- What else can the Board do:
 - Continue to help promote and share via own channels
 - Share to Facebook groups with large number of members e.g. Dewsbury Matters (which has 33k members) and similar Facebook Groups only accept posts from individuals – Board members could share to these groups