

For people who live, work
and play in Leyburn



Our Town, Our Plan



2018



CONTENTS

FOREWORD	4
INTRODUCTION	5
MAIN THEMES	7
SURVEY RESPONSE	9
RESIDENTS' & VISITORS' SURVEY	9
YOUNG PEOPLE'S SURVEY	10
BUSINESS SURVEY	10
LEYBURN, OUR PLACE	11
LEYBURN'S HISTORY	11
LEYBURN TODAY	12
WHAT IS MOST LIKED AND MOST DISLIKED ABOUT LIVING IN LEYBURN	14
WHAT ONE THING WOULD HELP TO IMPROVE THE WHOLE COMMUNITY?	16
ESSENTIAL SERVICES	17
TOWN COUNCIL SERVICES	18
TOWN LIBRARY	18
HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS	19
AROUND LEYBURN	20
GETTING ABOUT	22
TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT	22
DISABLED ACCESS AND FACILITIES	22
LOCAL TRANSPORT SERVICES	23
CAR PARKING	24
LEISURE AND RECREATION	25
KEY EVENTS	25
TOURIST INFORMATION	27
SPORTS FACILITIES	28
YOUNG PEOPLE	29
OLDER PEOPLE	33
FAMILIES	35
HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND EMPLOYMENT	36
VOLUNTEERING	38
BUSINESS	39
APPENDIX – ACTION PLANS	42

FOREWORD

It has been my pleasure to work alongside the other volunteers who have made up the Town Plan Steering Group. They have worked tirelessly to formulate, consult and finally bring together this Report of the findings of the Town Surveys that were undertaken last year.

A considerable amount of data was collected and, as with any survey, the responses highlighted contrasting views ranging from 'everything is fine as it is', to 'everything must be changed' across all age ranges and walks of life.

Change is an inevitable part of all our lives and we now have a clearer picture of where the majority of respondents - residents, visitors and local businesses - feel there is need to make both short and long term changes for the benefit of the town as a whole.

Many of your suggestions have been developed into potential Action Plans. These will now be considered by the Town Council and other key partners to determine what can be taken forward.

There are a number of issues that are beyond the Council's control but thanks to your responses the Council will be empowered to speak with more weight when discussing issues such as health, housing and transport with external bodies, regional and national government.

The Steering Group would like to thank everyone who completed survey forms and also those who volunteer for various causes from litter picking to helping organise events in the town. It is this sense of community participation, pride and community spirit that we hope the Town Plan will build on and nurture in future generations.

Ian Pace

Chair

Leyburn Town Plan Steering Group



INTRODUCTION

‘The survey will hopefully highlight the way forward’

Work on the Leyburn Town Plan began in early 2016 when an independent Steering Group was formed by a group of volunteers who freely gave up their time.

After several consultation meetings, including a school debate, and discussions with a wide cross-section of people, three separate surveys – one for residents and visitors, one for young people and one for businesses – were developed to find out what people thought about the town and the challenges it faces both now and in the future.

This report sums up the views of all those people who responded to the surveys sent out during September to December 2017. There was a great response, with a total of 931 responses.

The survey for residents and visitors was distributed locally and was available online; the young people’s survey involved pupils from the Leyburn Community

Primary School and students from the Wensleydale School; and the survey for businesses was distributed on-line.

As the quote from a respondent at the head of this section notes, the results of the survey are intended to chart a way forward for the town. This report summarises the main themes from the survey and proposes a number of actions for consideration by the Town Council and its partner organisations. Each section summaries the relevant objectives and actions proposed by the Steering Group and the complete action plans can be found as an Appendix.

In areas such as housing, transport, health and education, which are beyond the responsibility of the Town Council, the views of people contributing to the survey will strengthen representations made by the town to the bodies responsible for those areas.



Youth debate at Thornborough Hall



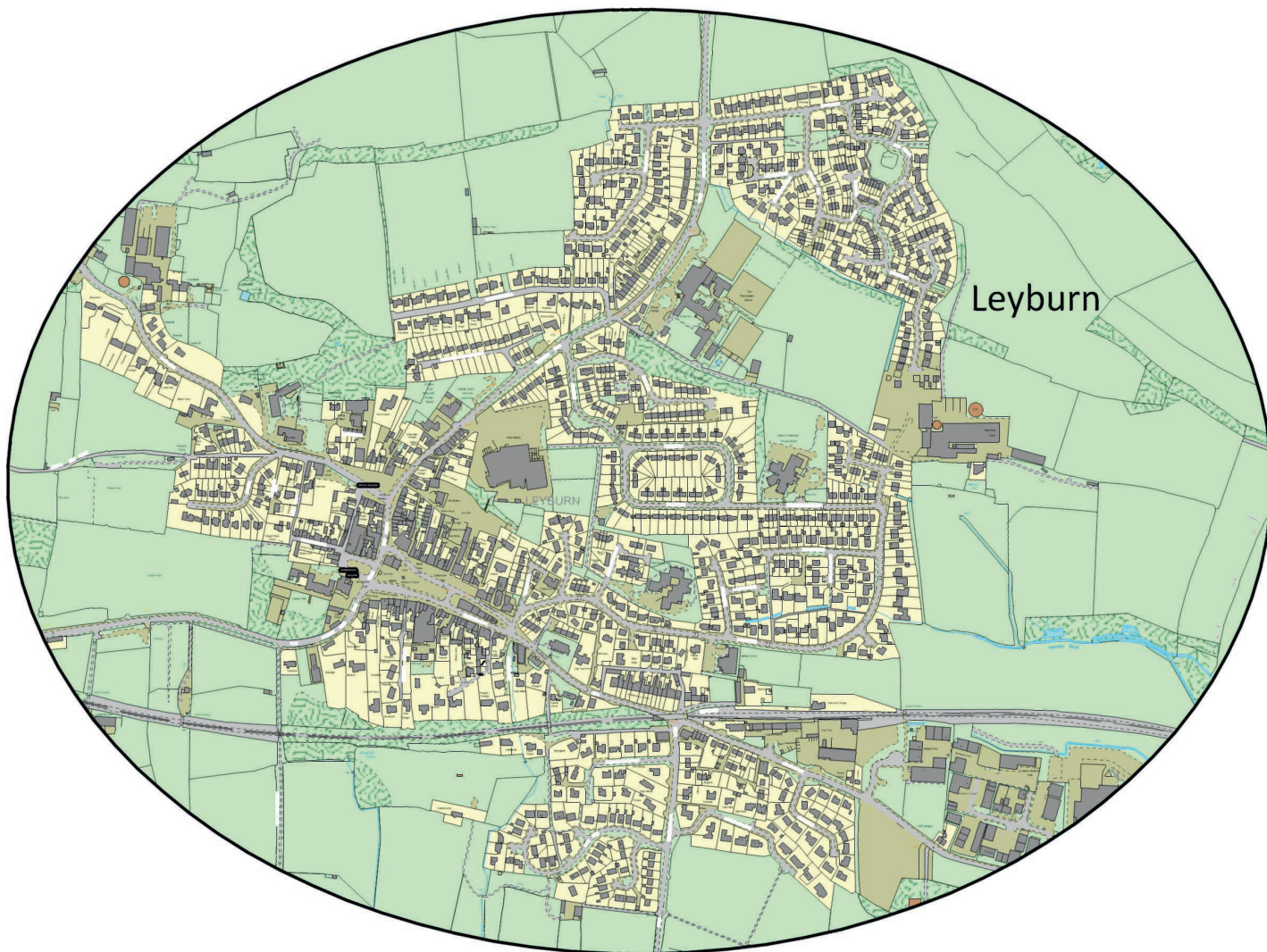
The Steering Group would like to thank everyone who made the survey so successful, including the Wensleydale School and the Leyburn Community Primary School for implementing the young people's survey; Leyburn Town Council, Richmondshire District Council, North Yorkshire County Council and Community First Yorkshire for their advice, help in administering the project and funding; and everyone who filled in the survey. Philip Sedgwick and Joe Willis helped to publicise the survey through articles and photographs. The Steering Group also benefited from the advice of Leah Swain from Community First Yorkshire, Gillian Wall from Stronger Communities (North Yorkshire County Council) and Tina Chamberlain from Rural Action Yorkshire.

One of the great things coming out of the survey was the willingness of many people to get involved with activities in and around the town. We hope to draw on this enthusiasm by bringing on board volunteers to help us achieve the implementation of the actions outlined in this report over the next three years.

Steering Group Members: Sandra Charles, Perry Gardner, Keith Garrard, Chris Grayell, Michael Hepper, Marjorie Iveson, Chris Lawton, Sue Medley, Ian Pace, Phil Reed, Derek Riley, Richard Sanderson, Karin Sedgwick, Charlotte Smith, Trixie Walker, Nigel Watson.

MAIN THEMES

- People like living and working in Leyburn, valuing its independent shops, its situation in some of the country's most beautiful countryside and its small scale and friendliness, but believe many things can be done to improve it
- Car parking provoked the strongest opinions, with a strong majority in favour of action, and a significant preference in favour of free time-limited parking in the central squares

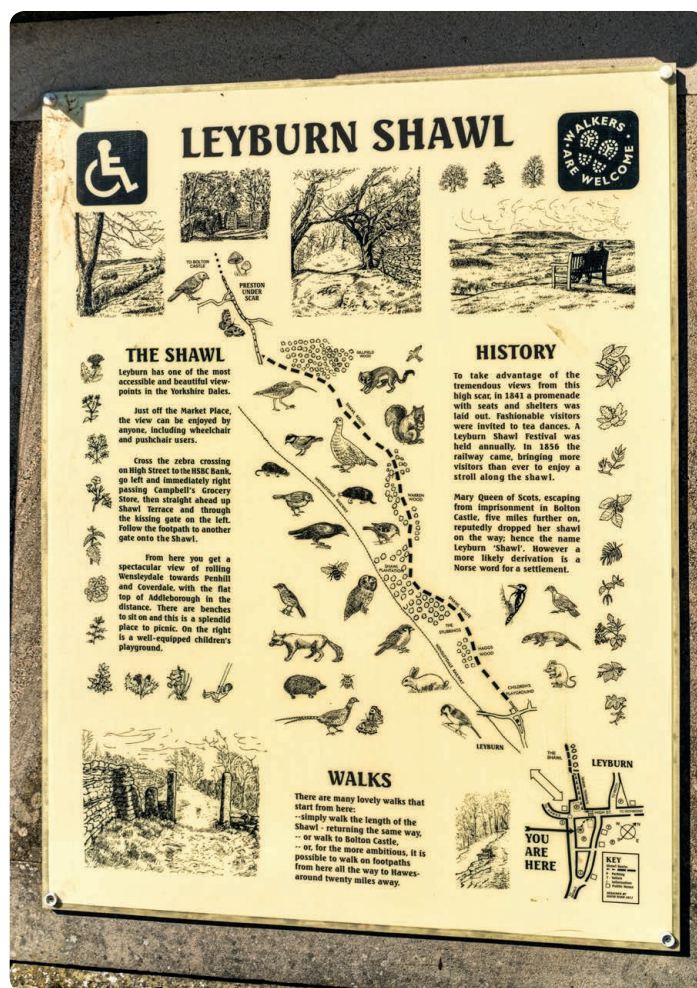


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- A major theme was making more of what we have, by
 - Promoting the facilities offered by the town's library
 - Tidying up and improving the appearance of the town centre and its buildings
 - Using the town centre to host more events
 - Making the town centre more accessible for disabled people
 - Making the surrounding countryside more accessible



- In a town which has half the national average of young people under 16 and twice the national average of older people over 65, another theme was improving facilities for younger and older people
 - Affordable housing
 - Better sporting and recreational facilities
 - Improved healthcare and social care
 - Improved play areas
 - Improved transport links
- This theme was also linked with the view repeated by many respondents that the town's facilities and resources must keep pace with any plans to expand the town's population.



Action: Keep the local community updated on progress of action plans

- Provide updates via the Council website/ Council Minutes/Facebook/local newspapers

SURVEY RESPONSE

‘A welcome opportunity to contribute’

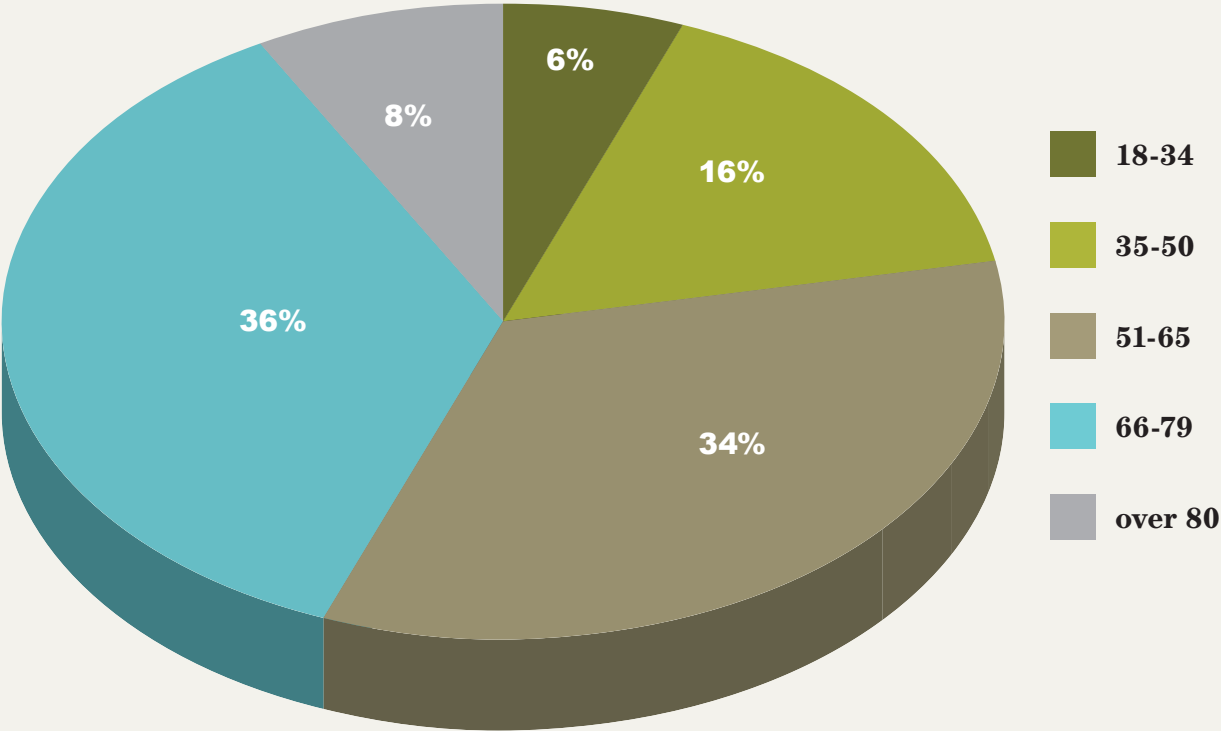
RESIDENTS’ & VISITORS’ SURVEY

Total responses – 742

Of those responding to the survey

- 68 % were aged between 51 and 79 years
- 60 % lived in Leyburn
- 24 % had lived in Leyburn for less than six years
- 44 % had lived in Leyburn for more than 16 years
- 54 % of those living outside Leyburn visited the town three or more times weekly
- 74 % of households had no more than two people
- 48 % were retired and 45 % were employed or self-employed
- 40 % worked in Leyburn and 25 % worked within ten miles of Leyburn

WHAT AGE GROUP ARE YOU IN?



YOUNG PEOPLE'S SURVEY

Total responses – 138

Of those responding to the survey

- Respondents were split almost equally between male and female
- 65 % lived outside Leyburn
- The most popular reason for coming into Leyburn other than attending school was meeting friends (68 %)

BUSINESS SURVEY

Total responses – 51

Of those responding to the survey

- 73% were business owners
- 28 % were involved in retail businesses, 11 % in accommodation, 11 % in restaurants/cafes and 9 % in health and social care
- 49 % had been trading for more than 15 years
- 57 % were trading in the centre of town
- 42 % believed they would be employing more people in the near future
- 22 % believed they were likely to offer apprenticeships in the near future
- 67 % had no difficulty in recruiting people
- 87 % believed they had easy access to any available training which might benefit their businesses



LEYBURN, OUR PLACE

‘Friendly people and good amenities’

LEYBURN’S HISTORY

‘The town of Leyburn consists chiefly of one oblong square of well-built houses. It is pleasantly situated in the midst of scenery beautifully picturesque. On the western side of the town is Leyburn Shawl, a natural terrace, which passes along the edge of a ridge of rocks for the distance of nearly 2 miles, and from which extensive and romantic prospects are obtained. The mineral productions of the vicinity are lead, coal and lime. Friday is market-day: the corn-market is now one of the largest in the north of England. Fairs, chiefly for horned cattle and sheep, are held on the second Fridays in February, May, October and December: a very large quantity of Irish cattle is sold here during the summer.’

The Parliamentary Gazetteer for England & Wales, 1843

The description above is readily recognisable today, highlighting the beauty of the town’s location and its links with the mineral industry (quarrying is still an important local employer) and agriculture (the town’s auction mart, celebrating its centenary in 2018, is one of the most important in the locality).

The town has ancient origins, existing prior to the Domesday Book of 1086. Evidence has been found along the Shawl for human settlement dating back thousands of years. For many years, following the decline of Middleham, it was subservient to Wensley as the most important settlement in the lower Dale, but this changed following outbreaks of plague in the late sixteenth century. Charles II granted the first market charter but it was a further charter granted by James II which established the weekly Friday market in 1686.

Life in the town remained largely unchanging for generations. It was the mining of minerals after the Civil War that had the greatest impact on the town, transforming it from an agricultural village into a

small town with activity concentrated on the bustling Market Place. The biggest change came during the early nineteenth century with the town’s population rising from 446 in 1801 to 1003 in 1831. With the decline in lead mining, the population then shrank, falling to 832 by 1911.

The town hall was built in 1856 and the Quarry Hills workhouse, successor to an earlier building along Moor Road, was completed in 1877. Even so, a parish church was not built until 1868, and the town did not become an ecclesiastical parish in its own right until 1956. Leyburn railway station opened in 1856, with trains to and from the main line at Northallerton. Although the line beyond Redmire was taken up in 1965, the rest of the line eastwards remained in use for quarry traffic and today is still maintained by the volunteers of the Wensleydale Railway Association as a heritage line.

The Wensleydale School began life as the local secondary modern in 1959 and is now the main secondary school for the Dale, while the primary

school, which began life up Moor Road, moved to its present location in 1985. The war memorial was unveiled in 1920.

Leyburn today is still principally a centre for agriculture and tourism. In the town centre it still has a range of independent shops, as well as a number of pubs, cafes and restaurants, while



RAF image taken on 29th September 1959 (By permission of Historic England Archive (RAF Photography))

Tennants Auction House and a well-established business park lie just outside the town. The town's population has steadily increased, latterly rising from 1844 in 2001 to 2183 in 2011, and it is expected to carry on growing with further housing developments.

LEYBURN TODAY

A variety of sources from bodies such as North Yorkshire County Council, Richmondshire District Council and Community First Yorkshire were used to paint a picture of the town today.

These show that

- Leyburn is a thriving market town attractive to visitors with a strong independent retail sector and very low crime levels although few visitors spend more than a couple of hours in the town
- As a place to live and work people rate the area very highly
- The population is generally prosperous and healthy, coming within the most affluent fifth of the national population, with the number of unemployed, those reliant on state support, lone parent households and people with limiting long-term illness all below the national average
- Within the population
 - The number of children under 16 is below the national average
 - The number of people over 65 is twice the national average
- In relation to housing
 - 71% of properties are owner-occupied
 - Housing is less affordable by comparison with the English average, although prices for detached and semi-detached properties are below the average, suggesting the problem is one of low incomes
- In relation to employment
 - The number of self-employed and micro-businesses is above the national average
 - 37 % of the working population are employed in retail, construction and health and social work

- Most of the population (82 %) have access to a car, leaving 18 % reliant on other forms of transport
- Compared with other small market towns
 - There is an imbalance between off-street and on-street car-parking and between short-stay and long-stay car-parking
- The physical environment is rated less highly, scoring just 60% for physical appearance in the last town bench-marking report, compared with the average of 75%
- The variety of retail shops, restaurants and cafes is rated highly but customer service in the last town bench-marking report was rated less highly

The sources used for this section were:

- Community Office Consultation, Richmondshire District Council
- Leyburn 2015 Town Benchmarking Report, March 2016
- Rural community profile for Leyburn (Parish), Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE), Rural Evidence Project, November 2013
- Strategic Economic Plan, 31 Mar 2014, York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Enterprise Partnership
- Richmondshire Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted 9 Dec 2014
- North Yorkshire, Local Transport Plan 2011-16
- Richmondshire District Council, Economic Action Plan, 2016-20



WHAT IS MOST LIKED AND MOST DISLIKED ABOUT LIVING IN LEYBURN

‘A friendly dales town and a safe place to bring up your family’

Most respondents believe that living in Leyburn gave them the best of both worlds.

Firstly, with its range of independent shops, it is possible to obtain most things, but even if it is necessary to travel beyond the town, it is not far to destinations such as Catterick, Darlington and Northallerton for those with their own transport, while railway stations at Darlington and Northallerton, and easy access to the A1, open up opportunities for reaching more distant places.

*‘Everything suits me perfectly, adore it.
Best place to live IN THE WORLD!’*

Secondly, the town is situated in some of the UK’s most beautiful countryside with the Yorkshire Dales National Park on the doorstep.

‘The small scale of the town allows you to get to know people but it is still large enough to support businesses.’

Thirdly, the size of the town is appealing to many people, a friendly town where many people know each other, with lots going on, with a low crime rate and a strong sense of community. This close-knit feeling is something many people don’t want to lose which has implications for long-term planning.

‘Whatever is needed to get us into the 21st Century whilst retaining the rural and historic heritage of the area as best as is sustainable.’

‘Do not change it that much as this is why we moved here.’



By contrast, of the things people dislike most are not unique to Leyburn, and are common to many similar communities, such as inconsiderate dog owners failing to pick up dog dirt, too much litter and untidiness, what some considered to be the poor and unwelcoming appearance of the town centre, problems over parking and, for those without access to cars, the lack of public transport.

‘It’s so bleak ... the pubs are quiet.’

‘Can’t drive but need to get to work, first bus to Bedale is 9.35am, and I can’t get to Richmond or Catterick either.’

The latter issue highlights what some people considered to be the major disadvantage of living in Leyburn, that the very nature of its size and location, which were at the root of its strengths, made it distant from services and facilities available in major towns. This came through not just in comments about public transport, but in concerns expressed by many people about the distance to travel to hospital and in pleas for improved access to sporting and recreational facilities, appeals particularly strongly expressed by younger people.

‘An integrated and frequent bus service linking Leyburn with the Dales, local towns, mainline railway and Friarage and James Cook hospitals is desperately needed.’



This chimed with other comments that there were too few opportunities for younger people to remain in the town, accentuated by what some considered to be the over-provision of houses more suitable for retired people rather than young families. In addition, people commented that sometimes local needs seemed to be given a lower priority than those of visitors.

‘Free parking for local residents. Visitors should pay but if you live here you need to come to town regularly and should not be penalised because you live here.’



WHAT ONE THING WOULD HELP TO IMPROVE THE WHOLE COMMUNITY?

‘Managing parking for workers, residents and visitors would improve the town centre’

Many of the themes expressed by respondents in the previous section fed into their answers, not only to the question of what one thing would help to improve the whole community, but also to other questions throughout the survey. These could be broken down into several key areas:

- More sports and recreational facilities, such as a community sports hall
- Improving the appearance of the town centre
- Improving outdoor spaces, including children’s play areas
- Resolving the parking problem
- Improving local transport and bus services
- Providing more affordable housing to encourage young people to stay
- Making sure any future housing developments were appropriate in scale
- Making sure there was investment in amenities and infrastructure to keep pace with a growing population
- Providing expanded local medical facilities



ESSENTIAL SERVICES

‘I didn’t know we had a Registry Office!’

The survey identified a number of essential services which contribute to Leyburn’s well-being and prosperity. These comprised the library, auction mart, dental practices, medical practice, pharmacy, post office, registry office, weekly Friday market, public toilets and tourist information. For every one of these, an overwhelming majority of respondents rated them as important or very important for the town.

‘The medical practice also needs to expand at the correct rate as people coming into the area’

‘We must maintain the one remaining Bank and this makes the Post Office even more important’

When asked for suggestions of other services residents would use if they were provided, responses included

- NHS dentist
- Young people’s centre
- Community sports hall
- Citizens’ Advice Bureau

Additional facilities for young people and for sport were mentioned repeatedly by many respondents throughout the survey and this is reflected elsewhere in the report.





TOWN COUNCIL SERVICES

Respondents also expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the current services provided by the Town Council and a substantial majority also said they would be happy for the Town Council to undertake additional services as necessary if they were cut back by other authorities.



TOWN LIBRARY

One of the services now managed by the Town Council, and run by volunteers, is the library, one of the town's most important assets. While it is well-used by respondents to the survey, with more than half saying they used it, it is clear that there is a lack of awareness about the resources available and how to make use of them: opening times and disabled access were of particular concern.

Action: Improve accessibility

- Reassess opening times
- Improve parking and signage

Action: Promote library services including Home Library

- Improve community information

HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

Leyburn is an expanding town, and the Richmondshire Local Plan envisages 215 additional homes by 2028, a number of which are already being built. An overwhelming majority of respondents said it was important to make sure that key services - including health and leisure facilities, schools and play areas, green spaces, roads and shops, drainage and sewerage - were improved to keep pace with a growing population. These views were echoed in responses to other questions in the survey.

‘Whenever a Town expands it is important that the facilities and infrastructure can cope or is upgraded at the same time, not after when problems are found.’

‘Why must Leyburn continue to expand. Enough is simply enough!! Parking is now nearly impossible!!!’

As for the type of housing preferred in future, the majority of respondents wanted to see a broad mix of types and tenure, including social housing.

Action: Ask the Town Council to ensure future developers of housing understand the type of housing needed in Leyburn

Action: Discuss the possibility of a community-led housing initiative



AROUND LEYBURN

‘Streets already cluttered with inaccurate signage’

With more houses planned for Leyburn, the overwhelming number of respondents considered new developments should include

- Play areas
- Adequate parking
- Healthy spaces
- Dog waste bins
- Outdoor recreation and leisure spaces

‘At present the problem with dog fouling along Brentwood and footpath behind is distressing.’

When questioned about the town centre, the great majority of respondents believed that the centre could benefit from

- Improving its overall appearance
- Better signage
- More dog waste bins
- More flowers, planting and trees
- More pedestrian areas
- More seating



Similarly, a huge majority of respondents rated as important the contribution made to the town by

- Children’s play areas
- Local pubs
- Local sports clubs and activities
- The provision of cafes and restaurants etc as places to meet friends
- Public rights of way
- The Shawl Fields

The value of sporting and recreational opportunities was another theme. Suggestions included a community sports hall, exercise equipment in open space for adults, access to tennis courts, the creation of cycle paths and the importance of properly maintaining public rights of way. Many people commented on the need for further facilities for children and young people, such as after-school clubs and a youth club.



Action: Improve the overall appearance of the town centre

- Repair pot holes in town squares
- Improve the attractiveness of town squares with more flowers/green areas.
- Review seating.
- Eliminate dog fouling.
- Reduce the amount of litter in pedestrian areas and approaches to town.
- Improve grass cutting.

Action: Improve signage to town facilities.

Action: Improve the visual appearance of approaches to the town

- Ensure grass verges and shrubbery are kept tidy.
- Consider beautification with flower tubs.
- Organise more frequent litter picking.

Action: Improve public and environmental amenities

- Investigate the possibility of electric charging points
- Publicise the availability of free wi-fi in the town centre.
- Investigate the upgrade of free wi-fi.
- Consider the reinstatement of old water fountain/provision of new water fountains.
- Provide free drinking water as part of Plastic Free Town status.

Action: Review nursery provision and after school clubs

- Discuss with schools



GETTING ABOUT

‘Going to Northallerton is a nightmare’

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Situated on the A684, the main artery through the Dale, a constant flow of traffic passes through the town, with the greatest volume generally seen at holiday times or when major local events are being held. While most respondents were not in favour of additional traffic calming measures, such as mini roundabouts and speed bumps, there were majorities in favour of both extended speed limit zones and lower local speed limits. Opinions were equally divided over the need for more pedestrian crossings and there were many comments relating to concerns about specific parts of the town. A major recurrent theme was concern over the number of heavy goods vehicles and agricultural traffic.

‘Moor Road - lorries and farm vehicles are entering and exiting Leyburn at high speeds and making it difficult / dangerous for pedestrians to cross the road.’

‘I’m very concerned about the dangerous junction by the Sandpiper Inn, particularly as traffic is increasing as the new estate grows. Also, trying to cross the road as a pedestrian near the church is very dangerous.’

Action: Improve safety for road users and pedestrians

- Set up a traffic sub-committee to consider survey responses, traffic flow, signage and road layout

DISABLED ACCESS AND FACILITIES

A large number of older people responding to this section expressed concern about poor access and facilities around the town for the disabled. There were a number of individual requests to improve access for the disabled into many of the shops and cafes etc in town as well as the provision of more lowered kerbs. There were also comments about inconsiderate car parking and obstructions from sandwich boards etc.

‘Disabled access to more shops - a lot are accessible only with steps.’

‘More consideration given to disabled people e.g. more car parking spaces, checks made to stop able bodied drivers from using them, better access to chemist’s shop, etc’

‘Shops and pubs could make more effort to be accessible and make visitors with disabilities really welcome, not as an afterthought.’

Action: Improve access for blue badge holders

- Review number and location of disabled parking spaces.
- Consider enforcement to prevent improper use of disabled spaces.

Action: Improve disabled access and mobility

- Discuss disabled access with business owners.
- Consider removing cobbles from town squares to create pathways.
- Remove obstructions on pavements outside shops.

LOCAL TRANSPORT SERVICES

For many respondents, local transport services are an important part of living in the town. Almost half of all respondents considered both the local bus services and local private hire services important or very important. A majority of respondents said they would use local transport services more often if they were improved.

'A through bus service to Northallerton and a better service to Ripon.'

Action: Look at ways to improve transport, such as the use of a car share scheme, digital apps, and discuss the topic with local voluntary and commercial transport organisations



‘All parking in the market place should be two hours’

Car parking is the single most important issue for the town. There was a clear view, from both residents and businesses, in favour of swift action and a strong preference for free time-limited disc parking in the town squares. This reflects general criticism that many cars are left in the town squares all day.

‘Better signage to encourage day trippers (walkers, cyclists) to use the long stay car park - the council website clearly states the town squares are shoppers’ car parks. Encouragement for retailers to provide staff with discounted annual car parking permit - if shoppers can’t get to the shops the shops will close: this is a particular problem for Leyburn where the age demography shows we have twice the national average of retirees.’

An overwhelming majority of respondents answering this section believed it was important that any changes in car parking should take into account the need to (1) encourage visitors (2) relieve congestion and improve the environment and (3) provide all day parking for traders and workers.

‘All residents should be given free car parking badges if there is going to be charging in the town square. Leyburn addresses only for qualification.’

‘Park and ride for special events. Could auction mart car park be advertised for use on non-auction days? Could the ground around Hudspeths/field beyond TOSH be made more accessible to cars, ie tarmacked with painted space lines?’

The challenge in tackling this issue will be to strike a balance between the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. In the end, this will depend on reaching a compromise in the interests of the community as a whole.

In relation to current car parking charges for the Pay & Display (District Council) car park, 60 % of respondents considered they were about right.

Action: Introduce short term parking in the town squares

- Investigate time limited/disc/pay and display parking options
- Consider resident only parking areas where needed
- Consider feasibility of out of town parking for walkers, cyclists, etc
- Improve signage to Pay & Display parking

Action: Improve parking for events

- Consider temporary Park & Ride provision from out of town locations for specific events.



LEISURE AND RECREATION

‘Morris Dancers, Clog Dancers, Street Performers’

KEY EVENTS

The survey asked respondents to comment on the following key events in the town calendar:

- 1940s Weekend
- Bonfire Night and Fireworks
- Christmas Fair
- Food and Drink Festival
- Funfair
- Wensleydale Tournament of Song
- Wensleydale Show
- Wensleydale Wander

With the exception of the Funfair, which a majority of respondents regarded as unimportant, most respondents considered all the other listed events as important for the town.



Most of those answering the survey attended most of these events and brought their friends to them; and most respondents would be happy to see more events held in the town squares. Among the suggestions put forward were

- Live music events
- A heritage arts festival
- Live event screenings
- Open air theatre
- Antique and craft fairs
- A Wensleydale Carnival
- A beer festival
- Classic car events



Live music was strongly favoured. Respondents stressed any additional events should be of high quality and accompanied by adequate parking provision. There was a strong feeling that the market place was a valuable asset for community use, reflecting a sense of local pride in the town. This was linked with other comments about the need to improve the appearance of some aspects of the town centre, to clean up buildings, offer more and better seating and provide better signage. A number of people suggested the idea of creating a local museum outlining the history of the town and the surrounding area.



Action: Consider new events for the town

- Discuss survey responses with the events committee
- Explore collaboration with neighbouring towns
- Explore fund raising events to support key charities

Action: Encourage market town appeal through new and higher quality events

- Explore opportunities for a Sunday market



TOURIST INFORMATION

More than half of respondents expressed no opinion on tourist information, which is unsurprising since most residents would have little need to use it; but of those who did have an opinion, a majority were dissatisfied with the provision of tourist information in the town.

Many individual comments criticised the absence of a prominent and accessible tourist information centre and a number of suggestions were made for alternative locations.

Action: Determine the need for a permanent and viable location for a Tourist Information Centre

- Discuss the benefits and cost implications for the town

Action: Improve information for visitors

- Review and update all town notice boards on a regular basis.



SPORTS FACILITIES

More than 40 % of respondents expressed no opinion, which again is unsurprising given the demographic of the town's population; but more than half of those answering the survey did have a view, and of these, there was an overwhelming majority in favour of additional sports facilities in the town.

'A swimming pool would be a great asset.'

Of individual comments, the most frequently mentioned improvements were a local swimming pool, a community sports hall and combined outdoor facilities for cricket, football and tennis. There was widespread frustration at the recent closure of the Wensleydale School playing fields to the wider public and the lack of access to other sports facilities at the school.

'We need a play area/field for the children to play safely in the Dale Grove, Maythorne area, like the Shawl. With the fencing off of the school fields there is nowhere big enough for them all to play. It is my biggest worry!'

Action: Survey existing facilities and their use

- Review current use of premises
- Consider better use/cooperation between facilities and users
- Consider use of 'round the clock' facilities to provide for all age groups

Action: Improve and extend facilities for children

- Improve playground and open space recreation

Action: Improve and extend facilities for young people and adults

- Investigate accessibility of tennis courts, swimming pool etc
- Review existing evening facilities/youth club and promote to potential users

Action: Improve and extend facilities for older people

- Investigate cost of adult exercise equipment

Action: Provide access to open areas and countryside

- Review public footpaths for accessibility and safety (including disabled access)
- Consider waymarked trails



‘How could you not like Leyburn?’

This section combines the responses from the question concerning young people in the Residents and Users Survey and the Young Peoples Survey. One of the most striking things was the enthusiastic response of young people, their obvious appreciation of the town and their wish to see improvements. Overall, there was a strong appeal in both surveys to provide safe spaces and facilities, sporting and recreational, in the town for young people.

‘More things to do with friends.’

‘A book shop.’

Other than school, most young people came into town either for shopping or to meet friends. Many often went outside the town to take part in activities such as swimming, gymnastics, dance and horse-riding. For many young people the play area on The Shawl was a popular recreational facility. Few young people currently used the Leyburn Arts & Community Centre, but many said they would if

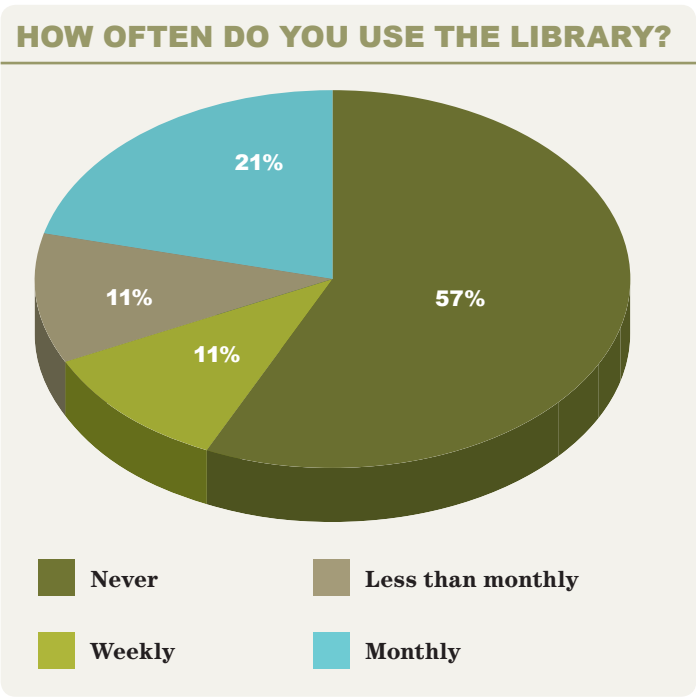
attractive arts and crafts activities were organised. Similarly, more than half of respondents to the young people’s survey didn’t use the library citing many reasons including lack of appropriate reading materials and unsuitable opening hours.

Suggestions ranged from a good youth club, a community sports hall and a safe meeting place to better entertainment provision, including live music events, to a combined cadet force based at the Wensleydale School.

‘A meeting place where young people can enjoy milkshakes, non-alcoholic drinks, burgers, and chat safely instead of hanging around the streets’

‘Many young people travel to Darlington and Teesside for leisure/entertainment.’

Young people were very enthusiastic about taking part in a wider range of activities if they were



available, such as badminton, cycling and martial arts. While deterrents to taking part were the lack of transport and cost, the main one was time, with many young people saying they were already fully committed.

‘I don’t have enough time.’

Nevertheless, around half of those who responded said they would be interested in taking part in organised group activities, particularly camping, canoeing and climbing if they were accessible and affordable. This showed an enthusiasm among young people for making more of the countryside on their doorstep.

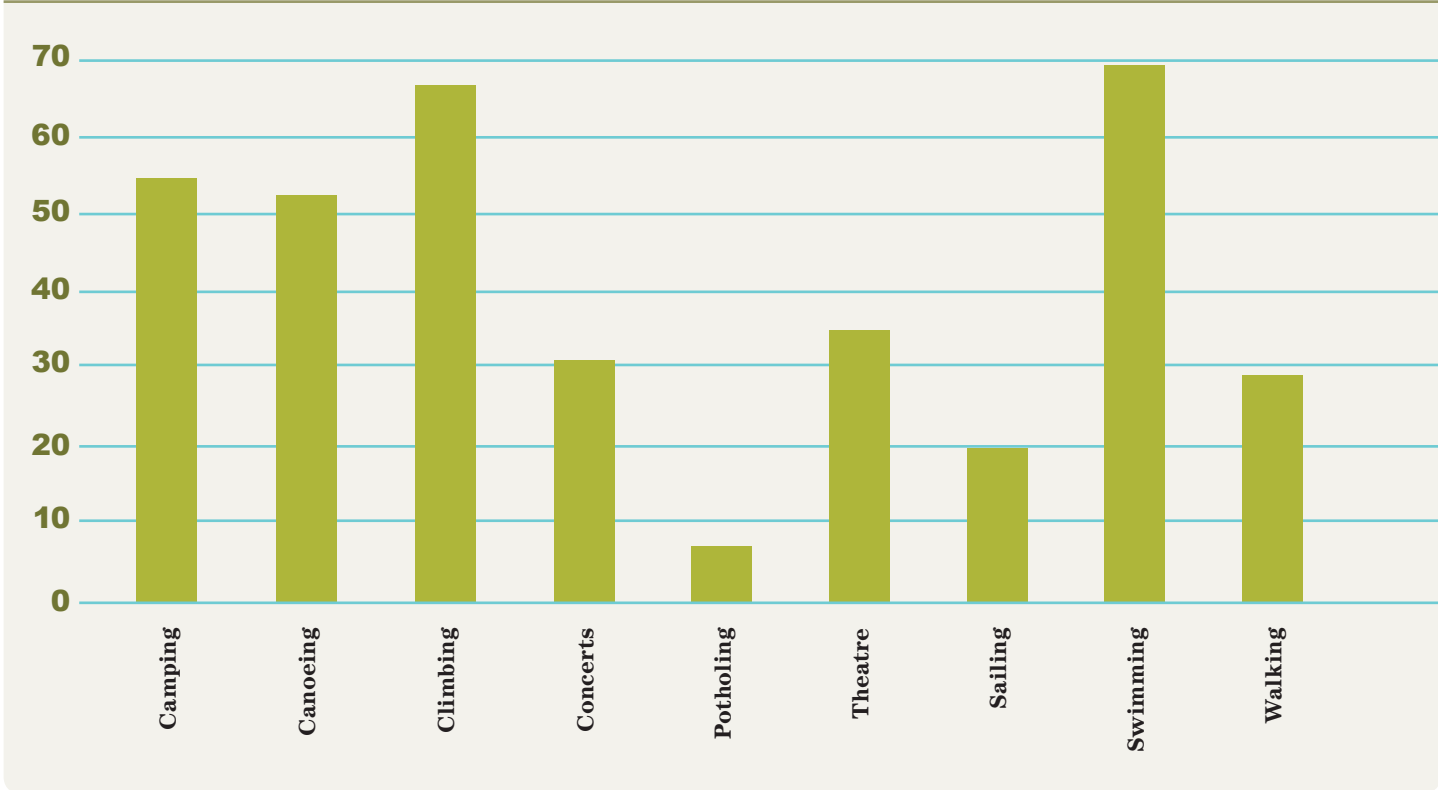
Many of the suggestions made by young people for improving the town echoed other responses in focussing on the appearance of the town centre.

The state of the bus shelter, regularly used by young people waiting for buses to college, was also mentioned. Comments from young people that the shelter should be opened when they are waiting for school and college buses in the mornings have been taken on board and the shelter is now open for them. Similarly, comments about the need for more activities for young people have been adopted by the Leyburn Arts & Community Centre, which has opened a cafe as a meeting place solely for young people aged between 11 and 16. Other suggestions ranged from a water fountain and a book shop to more live entertainment.

‘Clean out the weird bus shelter thing near Wrays.’

Most young people spoke highly of the town for its small size, friendliness and beautiful location.

IF GROUP ACTIVITIES WERE AVAILABLE FOR YOU OUTSIDE LEYBURN, THEY WERE AFFORDABLE AND THERE WAS TRANSPORT AVAILABLE, WHICH WOULD YOU JOIN IN? (120 RESPONSES)



*‘Nothing could be more beautiful than
Leyburn.’*

*‘The people are nice and I feel really
welcome there’*

‘It’s a friendly place’

*‘You can go to the Shawl and see your
friends’*



‘Not too busy, not too quiet’

The things young people disliked about the town were wide-ranging, from ‘dog poo on the paths’, the untidiness of the town centre, too much rubbish and ‘dodgy ones doing drugs and stuff’, to the absence of things to do and the lack of public transport. Many different suggestions were also made about how the town could be improved, from a hockey club for girls, and a board games club to tidying up the area around the Pod and providing a community playing field for team games.

*‘None of the shops are favouring families
or youngsters eg New Look, Costa,
Nero’s. These shops will be stopped
because the older members of Leyburn
don’t want them so young and families
suffer.’*





Action: Open the bus shelter for young people waiting for school and college buses in the mornings

Action: Encourage the provision of a wider range of activities for young people

Other appropriate actions can be found elsewhere in the report.



OLDER PEOPLE

‘Better day care facilities’

Suggestions for older people focussed on

- A wider range of activities for older people
- The difficulties faced by people as they become older, ranging from better local transport for the carless to better medical provision and more assisted living accommodation

‘Dementia activities seem to take place in Richmond and Northallerton but we have quite an elderly population’

‘Perhaps more events at Kirkwood Hall not just for residents’

As well as activities to keep people fit and healthy in body and mind, such as dance and swimming, evening and day classes, suggestions also focussed on bringing older people together to avoid the loneliness and social isolation they sometimes face. These included a drop-in centre, day trips and a lunch club, among many.

‘Somewhere for them to meet and enjoy a lunch at a reasonable price and meet each other without any religious overtones’

‘More provision of assisted living accommodation, worried Thornborough Gardens will close’



‘A small bus that goes round the estates etc in Leyburn so that people can get to shops and help with economy in Leyburn. It would help people who find it too far to walk to the shops. It is a long way to walk for some people!’

‘Friendship lunches organised by pubs for lonely older people – The Durham Ox in Crayke has won awards for doing this’

Many of the suggested activities can already be found within the town. The challenge is to achieve better co-ordination between the various organisations offering these activities; and to communicate their availability more effectively.

Action: Widen the provision of adult education

- Discuss requests from surveys with the Leyburn Arts & Community Centre, schools etc
- Open dialogue with current local providers and education authorities

Action: Improve the dissemination of information to the community

- Consider creation of a managed on-line community notice board, website, Facebook page etc
- Encourage greater co-ordination of activities among the various organisations in the town

Other action points relating to the older generation, such as better access to shops etc, are covered in other sections of the report, and can also be found in the full action plans in the Appendix to the report.



‘Cycle trails and family-friendly footpaths’

Many comments referred to the provision of a community hub, which suggests more could be done to promote the existing activities of Leyburn Arts & Community Centre.



There were also suggestions for more events in the town and the provision of better sporting and recreational facilities, all of which are covered in other sections. It should also be pointed out that plans are also in hand at St Matthew’s Church for the creation of a community-hub.

As mentioned earlier, there is also a need for local organisations to co-ordinate their activities more effectively and for the better dissemination of information about those activities.



Other suggestions included:

- Making more of the countryside, such as specific sign-posted walking routes and the provision of cycle paths
- Discounted activities for local families at local attractions and organised family away-days, which also suggests that there should be better marketing of those currently offering such discounts and organising such trips
- Family areas as an integral part of housing developments to bring together residents of all ages and foster a greater sense of community
- More family events, like food festivals, music festivals
- Indoor play area for children
- Family friendly restaurants and pubs with play area, dedicated children’s centre for mums and babies to meet
- Adult exercise equipment on the Shawl for the whole family
- Family-friendly footpaths to Middleham, Wensley and Bellerby

Actions relating to the above can be found elsewhere in the report, notably in the section on Leisure and Recreation, as well as in the Appendix.

HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND EMPLOYMENT

'I worry about being ill and having to go to James Cook as it is so far away'

After car parking, health generated the greatest number of comments, particularly in relation to the elderly, highlighting the need for effective long-term planning in this area.

'There is no nursing home here for infirm or disabled elderly people. All are forced to live in homes away from their home and spouse and family. Brentwood shouldn't have been closed.'

'We urgently need a residential home for the elderly and dementia care with full care. Good quality sheltered care is not enough. Somewhere with care through to end of life.'

The distance to hospitals was a frequently expressed concern, again reflecting the difficulty faced by people without access to their own transport. The recent provision of two Step-Up, Step-Down beds at Kirkwood Hall for patients requiring short-term care is one initiative intended to alleviate this problem. The absence of an appropriate care home for the severely disabled or those suffering from dementia was also raised. So too was the future of NHS dentistry in Leyburn. There was also support for an expanded medical practice.

'Small community facility providing visiting specialist consulting rooms for both physical and mental health issues and overnight care in, say, 4-6 bed unit, could also include dental suites and dedicated midwife-led birthing unit, as well as a 'home' for emergency services.'



‘Hundreds of retirees arriving purchasing property will require residential care in 10 years’ time.’

‘The NHS dentist is already over-subscribed.’

Many of these concerns are beyond the responsibility of the Town Council, and some, such as transport links to distant hospitals, are commonly raised.

Nevertheless, they show how important it is that representations are made to the appropriate bodies to take into account local health facilities when new housing developments are proposed; and as a strong body of opinion they will add weight to any representations made in support of expanded facilities for all age groups.

An earlier section of the survey revealed strong support for local evening classes, and this was reflected in the specific question under this section. Answered by every respondent, more than 60 % were in favour, and there was a wide variety of suggestions about the classes people would like to attend.

There was strong support from people for local schools and businesses working in partnership to prepare young people for apprenticeships. The Lower Wensleydale Business Network in partnership with the Wensleydale School has already launched a mentoring and internship scheme for post-16 students.

Action: Make representations as necessary to the relevant authorities about the need to make sure the provision of local health facilities keep pace with new housing developments

Action: Explore ways for improving access to distant hospitals for patients who lack their own transport

Action: Promote more widely the work already underway in relation to apprenticeships



VOLUNTEERING

‘I volunteer when I can’

Many people already volunteer for activities ranging from helping organise local events, manning the library to litter picking, as well as activities already taking place at the Leyburn Arts & Community Centre. A remarkable 557 respondents were willing to consider volunteering for the various activities organised in the town and where the respondents gave permission under the relevant data protection legislation their details have been passed on to the relevant organisations.

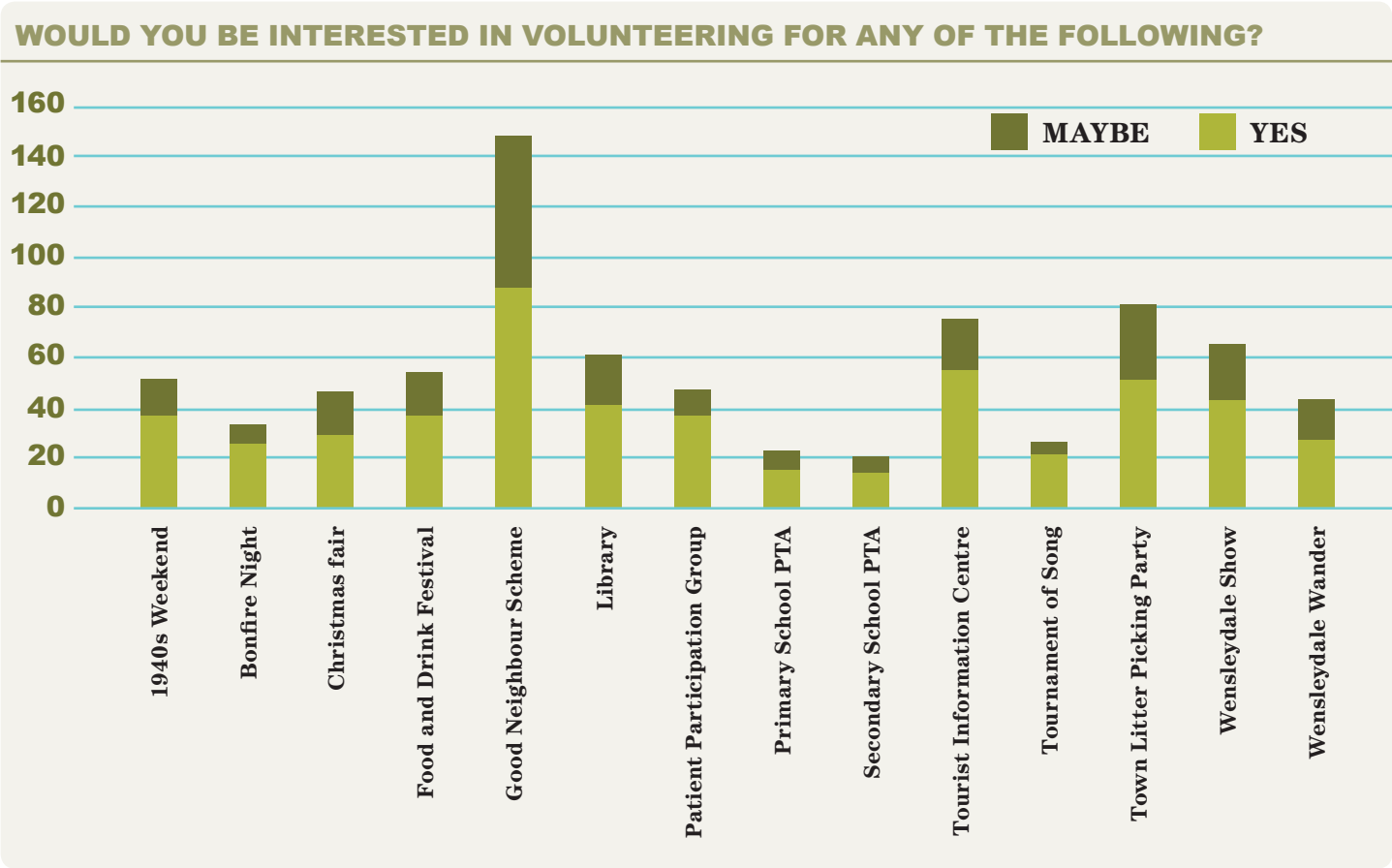
The Good Neighbours Scheme mentioned in the survey, which, among other things, tackles loneliness and helps people to live independently for as long as possible, is already recruiting volunteers and identifying those ‘neighbours’ who would most benefit. Co-ordinated by volunteers, the scheme

offers help in a variety of ways from form-filling and letter writing to help with DIY or gardening or just putting the bin out every week.

If anyone else is interested in volunteering for any activities in the town, and wishes to be put in touch with the relevant organisation, please leave a message at contact@leyburntowncouncil.co.uk.

Action: Encourage community spirit and pride in the town

- Compile and maintain a data base of volunteers and share with organisations/organisers



‘Sort out the parking and stop impeding business’

When asked how the town could attract more customers, respondents to the Business Survey highlighted the importance of resolving the parking problem and the need to make the town centre cleaner, tidier and more visually attractive.

‘People go out of town because it is impossible to park close to the shops and they can’t carry their groceries back to their cars’

‘Parking is a major issue for local businesses as local people are prepared to travel to do their shopping in order to be able to park.’

While enthusiasm from the business community for more events in the town was limited – some respondents said they received no direct benefit or actually lost trade – nevertheless many respondents believed they could benefit the town in the long-term.

‘Our takings are usually down on the day but we rely on the events bringing in visitors during the rest of the year.’

While there was a strong feeling that the number of independent retailers was one of the town’s strengths, there was also a feeling that local shopping would be encouraged by a more competitive grocery store, possibly located on the business park.

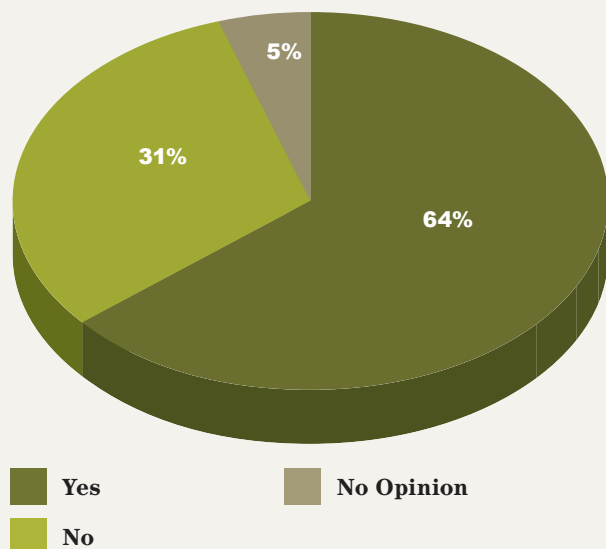
Conversely, it was pointed out that many of the town’s businesses relied on visitors rather than local people.

‘Leyburn has much potential ...it could be a hub for visitors, as there is not enough local trade.’

The relevant authorities, it was felt, could be more ambitious in assisting local businesses, not only by making improvements to make the town



DO YOU FEEL THAT CAR PARKING ON THE THREE MAIN SQUARES IN LEYBURN IS A PROBLEM?



more attractive to visitors, and it was felt that the Town Council could be more positive in making representations on behalf of local businesses to those higher authorities.

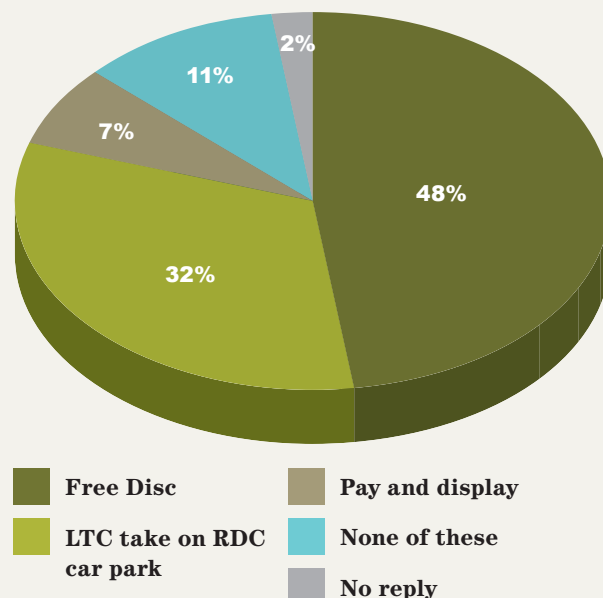
'[The Town Council could] assist in locating suitable larger premises.'

Businesses also expressed dissatisfaction with the level of communication received from the Town Council, the District Council and the County Council, especially in relation to information on grants for business.

Few respondents were members of the Lower Wensleydale Business Network, some because they were unaware it existed, some because they felt it offered little benefit.

'No one has approached us or explained the benefits of being members'

DO YOU THINK ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD HELP TO SOLVE LEYBURN'S CAR PARKING PROBLEMS?

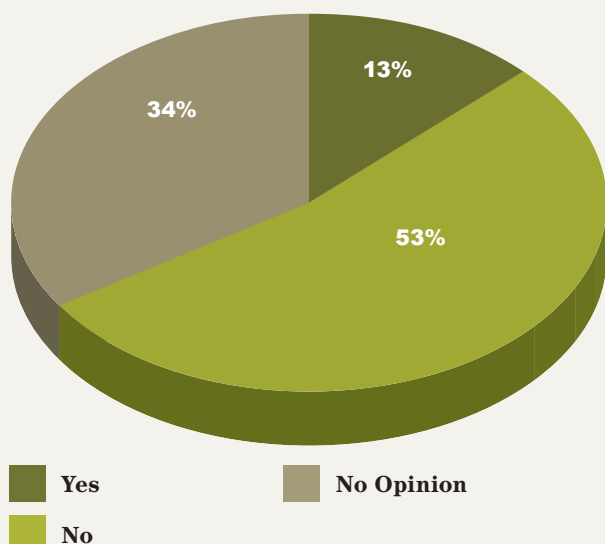


'They don't consider our business, it seems to be more about events and tourists'

Although few businesses were likely to be offering apprenticeships, a significant minority were confident about employing more people in future, and very few had problems recruiting employees. Nevertheless, respondents pointed out that it was not easy getting staff with the right qualifications.

'Lack of appropriately skilled workforce and the area has too much retired/ ageing population, ie not enough employment age people'

IF IT IS POSSIBLE, ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS THE RUNNING COSTS OF A DISC PARKING SYSTEM FOR THE TOWN SQUARES?



As for barriers to growth, the failure to deal with the car parking situation was considered the most serious obstacle. Most respondents favoured time-limited free disc parking in the town centre, combined with discounted annual parking permits

for staff in the long stay car park, but there was little enthusiasm for contributing towards the cost of any disc parking scheme.

As well as concern about rising rents and business rates, the lack of suitable buildings for expansion was also highlighted, suggesting a need for expanding the business park.

‘[One local business] would now love to do something more significant in the Leyburn area but cannot find the right premises. If we could grow, that would mean more jobs etc.’

The appropriate actions covering issues raised by businesses, including car parking, the wider dissemination of information and apprenticeships, are highlighted elsewhere in the report as well as in the Appendix.



APPENDIX – ACTION PLANS

LEISURE & RECREATION					
AREA	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	PRIORITY
Library	Improve accessibility	Reassess opening times	LTC	Thornborough	Year 1
		Improve parking and signage	LTC	Thornborough	Year 1
	Promote library services / Home Library	Improved community information	LTC	NYCC / Social media	Year 1
Organised events	Consider new events for the Town	Discuss responses from Resident Survey with Events Committee	LTC	Events Committee	Year 1
		Explore collaboration with neighbouring towns	LTC	Events committee / local Parish Councils	Year 1
		Explore fund raising events to support key charities (e.g. Air Ambulance)	LTC	Events Committee / Business Association	Year 1
Improved resident and visitor facilities	Encourage market town appeal through new and higher quality events	Explore opportunities for a Sunday market	LTC	Market traders	In progress
	Broaden retail experience	Discuss with landlords and landowners how greater variety may be achieved	LTC	Landlords	Year 2
Tourist Information Centre	Determine the need for a permanent, visible location of a Tourist Information Point	Discuss the benefits of a Tourist Information Point to the Town, cost implications, etc.	LTC	Coop / Bolton Arms	In progress

APPENDIX – ACTION PLANS

LEISURE & RECREATION					
Community Sports and Fitness	Survey existing facilities and their use	Review current use of premises (e.g. Thornborough Hall, Leyburn Arts & Community Centre, School, Rugby pitch, Harmby, etc.)	LTC / neighbouring Parish Councils	Rugby club / Harmby Sports ground / Leyburn Arts & Community Centre / Wensleydale School	Year 1
		Consider better use / cooperation between facilities and users			
		Consider use of “round the clock” facilities to provide for all age groups			
	Improve and extend facilities for children	Improve playground and open space recreation	LTC	RDC / NYCC / local users	In progress
	Review nursery provision and after school clubs	Discuss with schools	LTC	NYCC / Primary Schools	Year 2
	Improve and extend facilities for youth and adults	Investigate accessibility of tennis courts, swimming pool, etc.	LTC	Wensleydale School / Leyburn tennis club	Year 1
		Review existing evening facilities, youth club / promote to potential users	LTC	Wensleydale School / Leyburn Arts & Community Centre	Year 1
	Improve and extend facilities for senior citizens	Investigate the cost of adult exercise equipment	LTC	RDC / NYCC	Year 1
	Provide access to open areas and countryside	Review public footpaths for accessibility and safety (inc disabled access)	LTC	Rotary Club / local businesses	Year 2
		Consider waymarked trails	LTC	YDNPA / RDC	Year 2
Evening Classes / Adult Education	Widen the provision of adult education	Discuss requests from Surveys with Leyburn Arts & Community Centre School etc.	LTC	Leyburn Arts & Community Centre / RDC / Wensleydale School	Year 1
		Open dialogue with current local providers and education authorities	LTC	Leyburn Arts & Community Centre / NYCC / Wensleydale School	Year 1

APPENDIX – ACTION PLANS

COMMUNITY SPIRIT & CIVIC PRIDE					
AREA	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	PRIORITY
Town Centre	Improve overall appearance	Repair pot holes in Squares	LTC	None	Year 1
		Improve attractiveness of squares with more flowers / green areas	Business Association	LTC	Year 2
		Review seating	LTC	None	Year 2
		Encourage landlords to utilize empty premises for “pop up” shops	Business Association	None	Ongoing
		Eliminate dog fouling	RDC	LTC / residents / visitors	Year 1
		Reduce amount of litter in pedestrian areas	RDC	LTC / Volunteers	Ongoing
		Improved grass cutting	LTC	RDC / NYCC	Ongoing
	Improve disabled access and mobility	Discuss disabled access with all business owners	Business Association	Local businesses / RDC	Year 1
		Consider removing some cobbles from town squares to make pedestrian pathways	LTC	None	Year 2
		Remove obstructions on pavements outside shops	LTC	Local businesses	Year 1
	Signage	Review and improve signage to town facilities as required	LTC	None	Year 1
Approaches to Town	Improve visual appearance	Ensure grass verges and shrubbery are kept tidy	LTC	Homeowners / Businesses	Year 1
		Consider beautification with flower tubs	Business Association	Local businesses	Year 1
		Organise more frequent litter picking	LTC	Volunteers / RDC	Ongoing
Public amenities / Environmental	Electric charging points	Investigate possibility of electric car charging point(s)	RDC	LTC	Year 3
	Free Wi-Fi	Publicise the availability of free Wi-Fi in town centre	Local businesses / Business Association	None	Year 1
		Investigate upgrade of free Wi-Fi	Business Partnership	LTC	Year 1
	Provision of free drinking water	Consider reinstatement of old water fountain / new water fountains (on Shawl?)	LTC	None	Year 1
		Free provision as part of Plastic Free Town status	Local businesses	LTC	Year 1

APPENDIX – ACTION PLANS

COMMUNITY SPIRIT & CIVIC PRIDE					
Community information	Improve information for visitors	Review and update all town notice boards on a regular basis	LTC	Business Association / Events Committee	Year 1
	Improve dissemination of information to the community	Consider creation of a managed on-line community notice board, website, Facebook page, etc.	LTC	Business Association / Businesses / Local Clubs	Year 1
Community activities	To encourage community spirit and pride in the town	Compile and maintain a data base of volunteers and share with organisations / organisers	LTC	Business Association / Events Committee	Ongoing

TRAFFIC & PARKING					
AREA	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	PRIORITY
Improve car parking	Introduce short term parking in town squares	Investigate time limited / disc / pay and display parking options	LTC	RDC / Business Association	Year 2
		Consider resident only parking areas where needed (e.g. Brentwood, Grove Square etc.)	LTC	None	Year 2
		Consider feasibility of out of town parking for walkers / cyclists, etc.	LTC	Land owners	Year 2
		Better Signage to Pay & Display	NYCC	None	Year 1
	Improved parking for events	Consider Park & Ride from out of town location	Events Committee	Land owners	Ongoing
	Improve access for blue badge holders	Review number and location of disabled parking spaces	LTC	RDC / NYCC	Year 1
		Consider enforcement to prevent improper use of disabled spaces	Scarborough BC	NYCC	Year 1
Traffic management	Improve safety for road users and pedestrians	Set up a Traffic sub-Committee to consider Survey responses, traffic flow and road layout	LTC	NYCC / sub-committee (to be formed)	Year 2

APPENDIX – ACTION PLANS

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT					
AREA	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	PRIORITY
New Housing	To ensure future developers understand the mix of housing required	Promote the views expressed in the Surveys to developers and planners	LTC	RDC / Developers	As required
	Review opportunities for community-led housing initiatives	Investigate support schemes with RDC	LTC	RDC / Landowners / Developers / Community Groups	Year 1

GETTING ABOUT					
AREA	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	PRIORITY
Improved transportation experience	Widen the provision of “public” transport	Investigate the introduction of a car share scheme	LTC		Year 1
		Discuss opportunities of expansion with local voluntary and commercial transport organisations	LTC	Dales Bus/Little White Bus/Wensleydale Railway	Year 1
	Open the bus shelter for young people waiting for school and college buses in the mornings	LTC to arrange for earlier opening	LTC	None	Complete
	Improving transport to / from distant hospitals	Discuss patient discharge policy with hospitals	CCG	Friarage and James Cook Hospitals	Year 1
		Investigate the introduction of a car share scheme	LTC		Year 1

COMMUNICATING PROGRESS OF PLANS					
AREA	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	PRIORITY
All Action Plans	Maintaining community involvement and updating the community on progress of Action Plans	Establish joint Town Council / Residents Overview Steering Committee to ensure progress of Town Plan	Councillors / Volunteers	As detailed in Action Plans	Meet 3 monthly and report on progress to community
		Provide updates to Community via Council Web site / Council Minutes / Facebook / local newspapers	Overview Steering Committee	As detailed in Action Plans	





The following organisations are supporting the Leyburn Town Plan



Campbell's of Leyburn
Your family run Fine Food and Wine Emporium



The
SANDPIPER
INN

The Steering Group wishes to thank the following for the kind provision of photographs: Suzanne Douthwaite, Simon Eastwood, Sue Medley, Derek Riley, Matthew Riley (www.mdriley.com), Philip Sedgwick, and Charlotte Smith



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