West Berkshire
Digital Engagement Survey

Analysis of Open Feedback | May 2022

Appendix 2: DRAFT

FREE TEXT QUESTION: DETAILED ANALYSIS

2,269 survey responses were submitted. The text below highlights the key themes for each free text question, alongside a breakdown into age, location, and gender.

The survey also comprised a series of quantitative/ multiple-choice questions. An analysis of the results for these are recorded in the addendum to this report.

When answering free text questions, respondents often include several points or topics in their response. To accurately understand feedback, we record each individual point as a separate comment related to the theme or topic.

Key themes

If you could change one thing about West Berkshire by 2050, what would it be?

1,655 people answered this question, with 1,825 individual pieces of feedback received. The key overarching themes are detailed below, in order of number of times raised (shown in brackets). Travel/ connectivity was the most popular issue, raised in 21% of comments, whilst the top four themes make up 55% of all individual pieces of feedback.

1. Travel/ connectivity (373)
2. Retail (252)
3. Development principles/ ideas and housing density (208)
4. Cost of living and affordable housing (163)
5. Entertainment, arts/culture, community and leisure (154)
6. Health, education and services (124)
7. Environment and sustainability (98)
8. Social and political issues (125)
9. Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour (61)
10. Green/ open space (59)
11. Look and feel of the town centre and street environments (57)
12. N/A (50)
13. Other (50)
14. Employment (26)
15. Design (13)

663 people answered this question, with 792 individual pieces of feedback. Key overarching themes are listed below (themes/comments are shown in order of frequency with the number of times raised referenced in brackets). Travel/ connectivity was once again the most popular issue, with the top 4 themes (excluding theme 2.) making up 49% of all individual pieces of feedback.

1. Travel/ connectivity (146)
2. Unspecified or N/A (132)
3. Retail and hospitality (115)
4. Development principles/ ideas and housing density (63)
5. Entertainment, arts/culture, community and leisure (62)
6. Environment and sustainability (56)
7. Health, education and services (43)
8. Green/ open space (41)
9. Social and political issues (38)
10. Cost of living and affordable housing (38)
11. Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour (15)
12. Other (12)
13. Look and feel of the town centre and street environments (11)
14. Employment (10)
15. Design (10)

Breakdown by location

Question one

- Out of the 1,655 people who answered this question

    o   807 Newbury residents
    o   562 Thatcham residents
    o   221 wider Berkshire residents
    o   30 Newbury workers
    o   19 Thatcham workers
    o   16 visitors

- Out of the 373 comments on Travel/ connectivity

    o   176 Newbury residents
    o   112 Thatcham residents
    o   70 wider Berkshire residents

- o 7 Newbury workers
- o 8 Thatcham workers
- o 2 visitors

- Travel/ connectivity was an especially common theme amongst wider Berkshire residents, included in 32% of comments. This theme was raised by 21% of both Newbury and Thatcham residents.

- Out of the 252 comments on retail and hospitality

  - o 127 Newbury residents
  - o 83 Thatcham residents
  - o 34 wider West Berkshire residents
  - o 4 Thatcham workers
  - o 3 visitors
  - o 2 Newbury workers

- Newbury residents comprise 52% of all comments on retail and hospitality, with these comments making up 16% of all comments from Newbury residents. Comments on retail and hospitality make up 15% of all comments from Thatcham residents.

- Out of 208 comments on development principles and housing density

  - o 99 Newbury residents
  - o 76 Thatcham residents
  - o 27 wider West Berkshire residents
  - o 4 Newbury workers
  - o 2 visitors

- 13% of Thatcham residents made comments on development principles and housing density, and 12% of Newbury residents.

- Out of 163 comments on cost of living and affordable housing

  - o 92 Newbury residents
  - o 43 Thatcham residents
  - o 21 wider West Berkshire residents
  - o 5 Newbury workers
  - o 2 Thatcham workers

- Out of 155 comments on entertainment, arts/ culture, community, and leisure

  - o 70 Thatcham residents
  - o 67 Newbury residents
  - o 17 wider west Berkshire residents

- o   1 Newbury worker

- Out of the 663 people who answered this question

    - o   319 Newbury residents
    - o   226 Thatcham residents
    - o   91 wider West Berkshire residents
    - o   11 Newbury workers
    - o   10 Thatcham workers
    - o   6 visitors

- Out of the 144 comments on Transport/ connectivity

    - o   64 Newbury residents
    - o   49 Thatcham residents
    - o   26 wider West Berkshire residents
    - o   3 Newbury workers
    - o   1 Thatcham worker
    - o   1 Visitor

- 22% of Thatcham residents and 20% of Newbury residents made comments on transport/ connectivity

- Out of 114 comments on retail and hospitality

    - o   61 Newbury residents
    - o   37 Thatcham residents
    - o   11 wider West Berkshire
    - o   2 Newbury workers
    - o   2 visitors
    - o   1 Thatcham worker

- 54% of comments on retail and hospitality were made by Newbury residents. 19% of Newbury residents in total made comments on retail and hospitality and 16% of Thatcham residents.

Breakdown by age

- Out of the 930 responses which stated the age of the participant

    - o   55-64 (193)
    - o   45-54 (190)

- o 35-44 (158)
- o 65-74 (136)
- o 25-34 (122)
- o 18-24 (86)
- o 75 and over (45)

- Out of 229 comments on Travel/ connectivity

  - o 55-64 (51)
  - o 65-74 (44)
  - o 45-54 (40)
  - o 35-44 (35)
  - o 25-34 (31)
  - o 75 and over (16)
  - o 18-24 (12)

- Out of the 137 comments on retail and hospitality

  - o 55-64 (38)
  - o 45-54 (34)
  - o 35-44 (20)
  - o 18-24 (16)
  - o 65-74 (12)
  - o 25-34 (12)
  - o 75 and over (5)

- Out of 120 comments on development principles and housing density

  - o 45-54 (35)
  - o 65-74 (22)
  - o 55-64 (21)
  - o 25-34 (15)
  - o 35-44 (14)
  - o 18-24 (8)
  - o 75 and over (5)

- Retail and entertainment, arts/culture, community and leisure make up 36% of all comments from 18–24-year-olds.

- Cost of living/ affordable housing was the second most common theme amongst 24-35 year olds, making up 16% of all individual comments, Transport/ connectivity was the most common at 25%.

- Out of 501 responses which stated the age of the participant

    o 55-64 (120)
    o 45-54 (115)
    o 65-74 (83)
    o 35-44 (65)
    o 25-34 (55)
    o 18-24 (35)
    o 75 and over (28)

- Out of 105 comments on Travel/ connectivity

    o 55-64 (26)
    o 65-74 (19)
    o 45-54 (23)
    o 75 and over (11)
    o 35-44 (10)
    o 25-34 (10)
    o 18-24 (6)

- Out of the 91 comments on retail

    o 45-64 (26)
    o 55-64 (22)
    o 65-74 (15)
    o 35-44 (12)
    o 25-34 (8)
    o 75 and over (4)
    o 18-24 (4)

- For both questions one and two, travel/ connectivity was the most common theme amongst 75 and overs.

Thatcham and Newbury residents

Out of 807 Newbury residents

1. Travel/ connectivity (178)
2. Retail (127)
3. Development principles/ ideas and housing density (99)
4. Cost of living and affordable housing (92)
5. Social and political issues (69)
6. Entertainment, arts/culture, community and leisure (63)
7. Health, education and services (63)
8. Environment and sustainability (46)
9. Look and feel of the town centre and street environments (37)
10. Other (29)
11. Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour (25)
12. Green/ open space (20)
13. N/A (21)
14. Employment (10)
15. Design (6)

Out of 562 Thatcham residents

1. Travel/ connectivity (112)
2. Retail (83)
3. Development principles/ ideas and housing density (76)
4. Entertainment, arts/culture, community and leisure (70)
5. Health, education and services (45)
6. Cost of living and affordable housing (43)
7. Social and political issues (35)
8. Environment and sustainability (34)
9. Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour (31)
10. Green/ open space (20)
11. N/A (16)
12. Look and feel of the town centre and street environments (15)
13. Other (15)
14. Employment (10)
15. Design (5)

20% of responses from Newbury residents were concerned about cost of living, affordable housing and other social/ political issues, as opposed to only 14% of Thatcham residents.

Meanwhile, 26% of Thatcham residents made comments about entertainment, arts/culture, leisure, and health/ education services, as opposed to only 16% of Newbury residents.

6% of Thatcham residents raised concerned about crime and anti-social behaviour, as opposed to only 3% of Newbury residents.

5% of Newbury residents made comments about the look and feel of their town centre and street environments, as opposed to only 3% of Thatcham residents.

Out of 319 Newbury residents

1. Travel/ connectivity (69)
2. Retail (61)
3. Unspecified/ N/A e.g. 'no other feedback' (60)
4. Entertainment, arts/culture, community and leisure (35)
5. Development principles/ ideas and housing density (31)
6. Environment and sustainability (25)
7. Social and political issues (24)
8. Cost of living and affordable housing (19)
9. Design (10)
10. Green/ open space (9)
11. Health, education and services (9)
12. Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour (7)
13. Look and feel of the town centre and street environments (6)
14. Employment (6)
15. Other (5)

Out of 226 Thatcham residents

1. Travel/ connectivity (49)
2. Unspecified/ N/A e.g. 'no other feedback' (46)
3. Retail (38)
4. Development principles/ ideas and housing density (24)
5. Health, education and services (23)
6. Green/ open space (21)
7. Environment and sustainability (20)
8. Entertainment, arts/culture, community and leisure (17)
9. Social and political issues (11)
10. Cost of living and affordable housing (11)

11. Design (10)
12. Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour (6)
13. Other (4)
14. Employment (3)
15. Look and feel of the town centre and street environments (2)

For question two, once again a higher proportion of Newbury residents (8%) mentioned social and political issues than Thatcham residents (5%).

Although entertainment, arts/ culture, and leisure was more proportionately represented amongst Newbury residents in question two (11% compared to 8% of Thatcham residents), health, education and public services was only raised in 3% of comments, as opposed to 12% of Thatcham residents.

Detailed breakdown of key themes

Question one

The most common theme, Travel/ connectivity (373 individual pieces of feedback) can also be divided into the following.

- The need to alleviate traffic/ congestion and improve the road network and infrastructure (152)

For this theme, comments generally viewed cars as something to facilitate through supporting infrastructure, rather than remove entirely.

65 comments were from Newbury residents, with 25 referencing traffic.

56 comments were from Thatcham residents, with 17 of these referencing the need for a bridge crossing over Thatcham railway station.

- The need to improve public transportation (97)

This included several mentions of more connections to Basingstoke and oxford, and a more frequent local bus service.

- The need to improve parking infrastructure (66)

The majority of these comments cited the need for 'free parking' in town centres.

- The need to reduce reliance on cars and introduce more pedestrianised streets and cycling infrastructure (58)

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The second most common theme, Retail (252 pieces of individual feedback), can also be divided into the following.

- The general need for more (and more support for) independent businesses (62)
- The general need for an improved 'shopping' experience i.e. clothes, supermarkets, outlets etc (58)
- General/ uncategorisable improvements needed to the retail environment (55)
- Suggestions for different shops and retail choices and the need for a greater variety of options in general (52)

Within these comments, 12 responses referenced the need for less coffee/ tea shops and cafés, with 7 of these Newbury residents.

- The need for an improved hospitality experience i.e. cafes, restaurants, bars etc (25)

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The third most common theme, development principles/ ideas and housing density (208 pieces of individual feedback) can also be divided into the following.

- Comments on amount of housing being delivered (89)

13 of these comments were in favour of more housing, with 76 arguing for less housing. 43 (57%) of these comments were made by Thatcham residents.

- General concerns about overdevelopment (40)

25 (63%) of these comments were made by Newbury residents

- General concerns about development on greenbelt land/ impact of development on green space (34)
- Specific suggestions about certain developments, or types of development that should be removed/ introduced (27)

16 of these comments referenced removing the BT tower, 15 of which were Newbury residents. In total, 21 of these suggestions were from Newbury residents, and only 1 Thatcham resident.

Question two

The most common theme, Travel/ connectivity (146), can also be divided into the following.

- The need to alleviate traffic/ congestion and improve the road network and infrastructure (70)

Several comments here referenced improvements needed to the robin hood roundabout, potholes, and issues around congestion.

- The need to improve public transportation (42)
- The need to reduce reliance on cars and introduce more pedestrianised streets and cycling infrastructure (20)
- The need to improve parking infrastructure (14)