



Northumberland
County Council

Alnwick – Borderlands Place Programme Consultation Review

April 2022

www.northumberland.gov.uk

Programme

- Declarations of Interests
- Public Consultation Report
- Review of Vision
- Review of Strategic Objectives
- Next steps

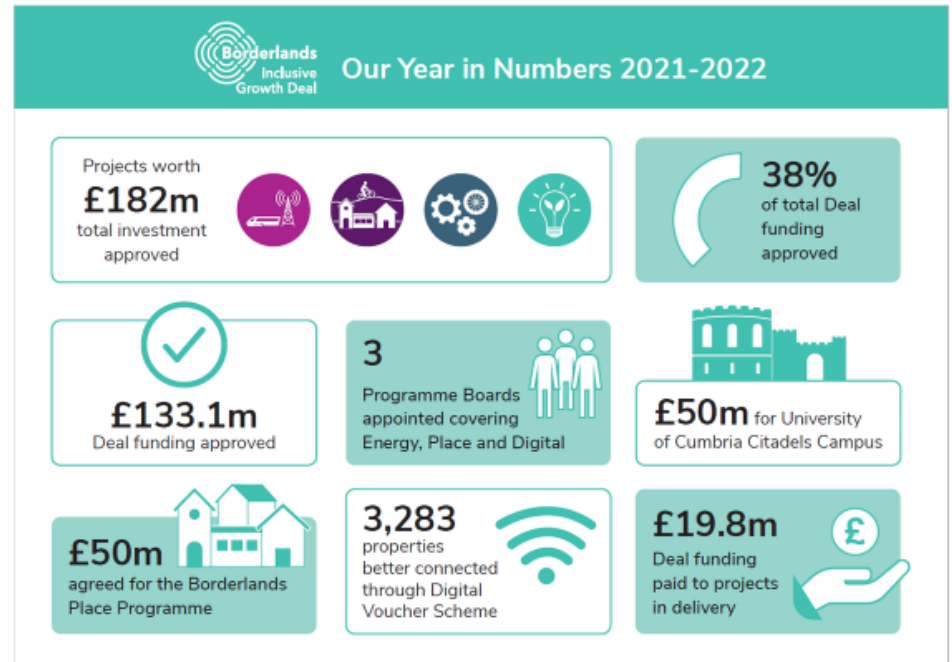




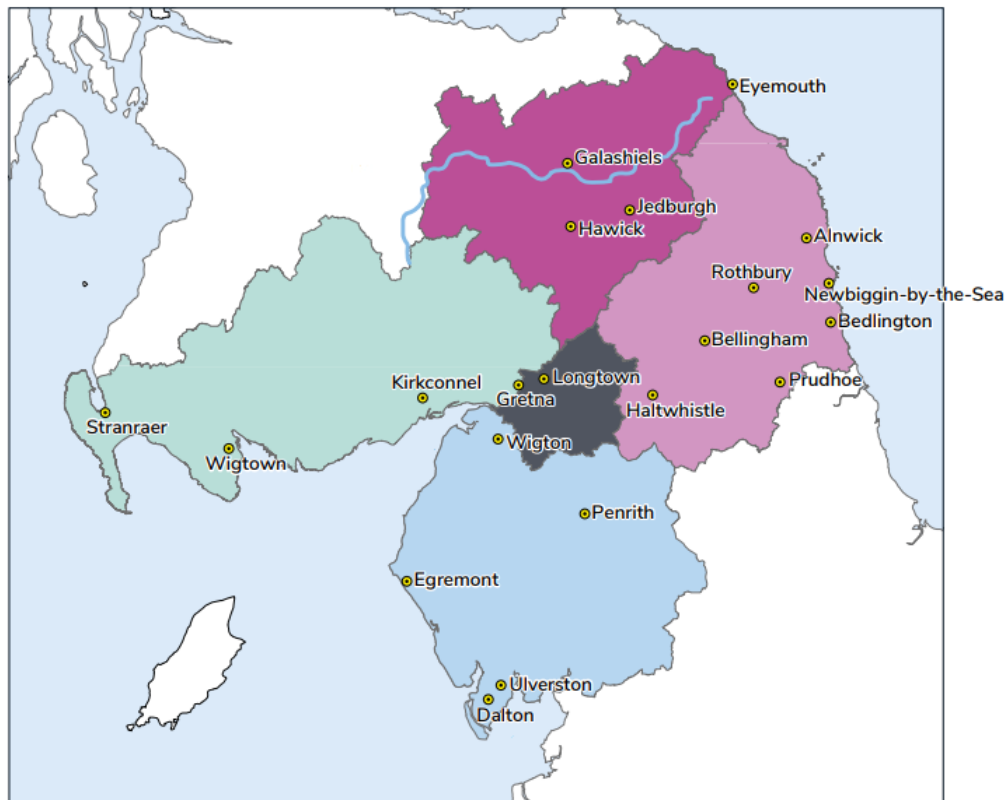
One Year on from Deal signing

The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal was signed on the 18th of March with the Scottish and UK Governments. Since then, we have made significant progress in bringing the Deal to life.

<https://www.borderlands-growth.com/BorderlandsNewsletterMarch2022final160322.pdf>



Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal Place Programme Towns



www.borderlandsgrowth.com

Projects in delivery

Over £30m of advanced funding was released prior to the Deal signing for five approved projects. These have continued to deliver strong progress during 2021/22.

- Borderlands Energy Masterplan
- Lilidorei at The Alnwick Gardens
- Ad Gefrin Visitor Experience and Distillery
- Carlisle Station Gateway
- Digital voucher top up scheme

Alnwick 2022 Consultation

Alnwick Borderlands Place Programme

The consultation sought your views on:

- Our BPP Vision for Alnwick
- Our BPP Objectives for Alnwick
- Best things about Alnwick
- Worst things about Alnwick
- Three things you'd like to change about Alnwick



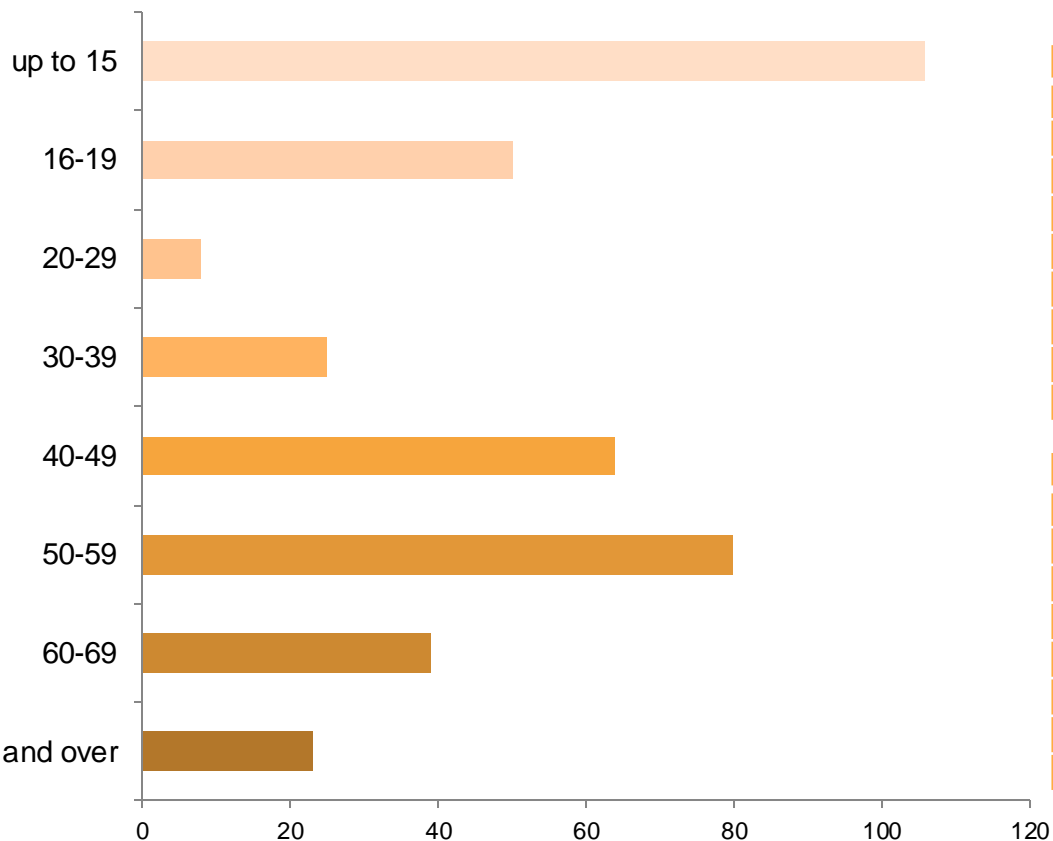
We have received a total of 395 responses to the survey

We would like to thank the community of Alnwick for your valuable feedback; we have read all of your comments.

What follows is a summary of the important messages you gave us.

The following demonstrates some of the demographics of the respondents, to the survey, important so that we can be sure that we are not missing a representative group. We will always strive to seek the views of everyone in the community.

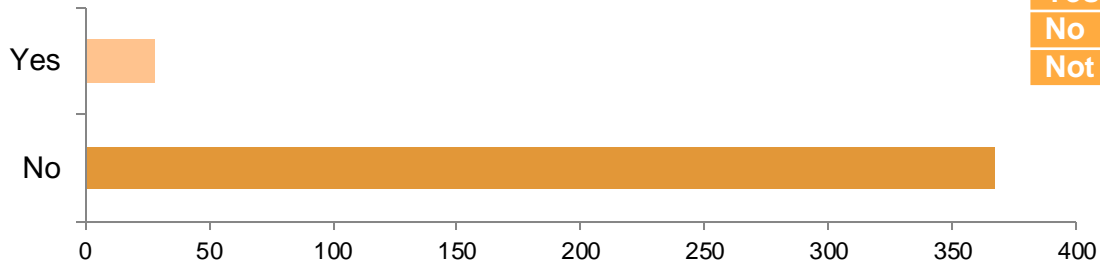
What is your age?



Option (survey)	Total	Percent
up to 15	106	26.84%
16-19	50	12.66%
20-29	8	2.03%
30-39	25	6.33%
40-49	64	16.20%
50-59	80	20.25%
60-69	39	9.87%
70 and over	23	5.82%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

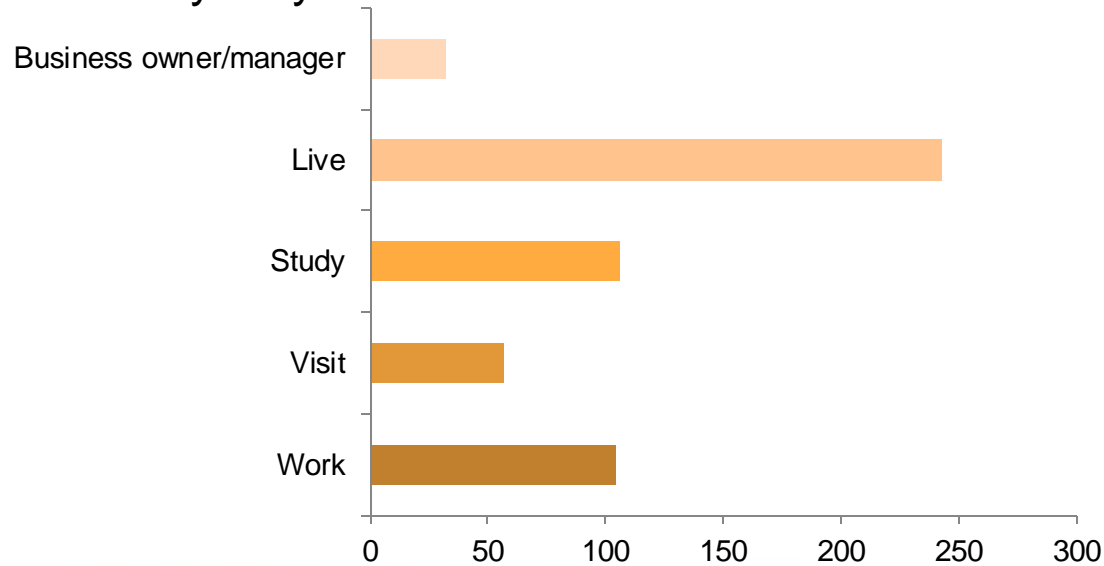
(ONS – 2020 POP.10,141)	Total	Percent
up to 19	1780	17.55%
20-29	859	8.47%
30-39	974	9.6%
40-49	1112	10.96%
50-59	1624	16.01%
60-69	1609	16%
70-79	1368	13.49%
80 and over	850	8.38%

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	28	7.09%
No	367	92.91%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

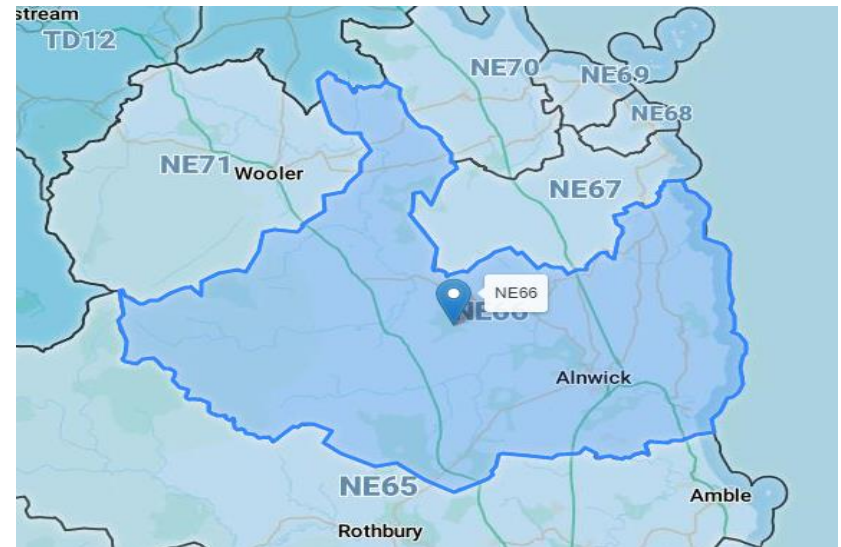
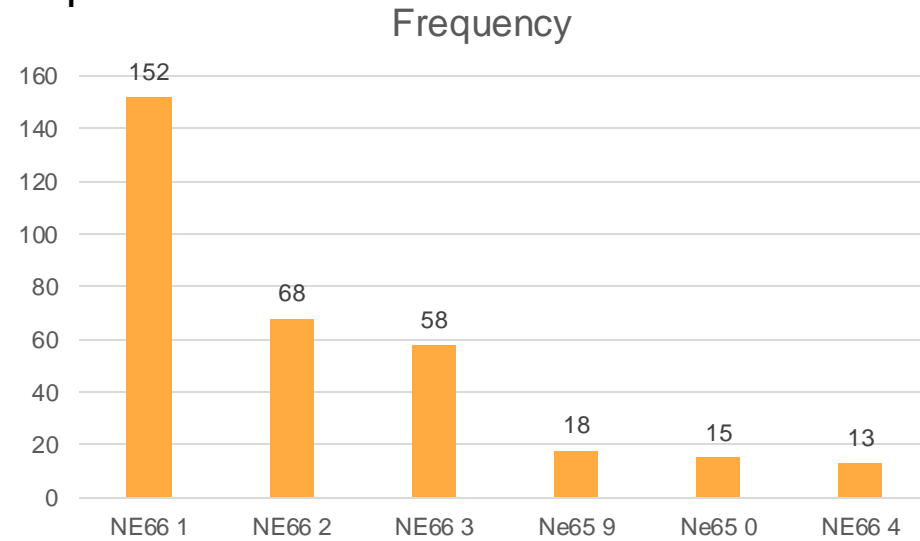
Why do you come to Alnwick?



Option	Total	Percent
Business owner/manager	32	8.10%
Live	243	61.52%
Study	106	26.84%
Visit	57	14.43%
Work	104	26.33%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Postcodes of respondents

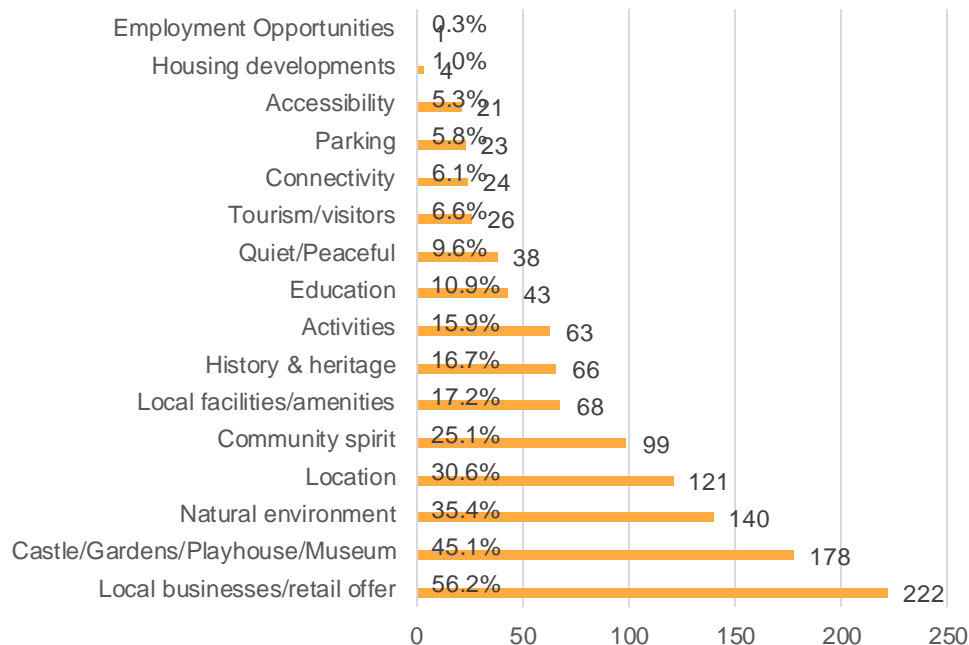
Postcode	Frequency
NE66 1	152
NE66 2	68
NE66 3	58
NE65 9	18
NE65 0	15
NE66 4	13
NE71 6	9
NE659	8
NE66	8
NE65 8	6
Other	6
NE65 O	5
NE70	4
TD15	4
NE61	3
NE66 5	3
NE63 0	2
NE65 7	2
NE67 5	2
NE68	2
TD12 4	2
NE65 1	1
TOTAL	395



Currently what are the BEST things about Alnwick as a place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?

There were 395 (100%) responses to this part of the question.

BEST things about Alnwick as a place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business



Topic	Frequency	%
Local businesses/retail offer	222	56.2%
Castle/Gardens/Playhouse/Museum	178	45.1%
Natural environment	140	35.4%
Location	121	30.6%
Community spirit	99	25.1%
Local facilities/amenities	68	17.2%
History & heritage	66	16.7%
Activities	63	15.9%
Education	43	10.9%
Quiet/Peaceful	38	9.6%
Tourism/visitors	26	6.6%
Connectivity	24	6.1%
Parking	23	5.8%
Accessibility	21	5.3%
Housing developments	4	1.0%

Currently what are the BEST things about Alnwick as a place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?

Local Business/Retail – 222 respondents

“There is an eclectic range of independent businesses that provide a wide variety of goods and services which benefit the local economy directly”

“Alnwick Market is thriving once again and as a small business holder this is an invaluable centre for me to make sales direct to the public”

“Distinctive and unspoilt character. Preponderance of locally owned shops and businesses, and relatively small number of chain/big brands”

“The people are what is best in Alnwick, they have a great community spirit”

“There is lots of big shops not far from where I live and after school you can go out with your friends to eat or shop, walk etc”

“Good selection of shops available, especially the shopping outlets as regular visitor to Turnbells & M&S's. Could do with more though to save travelling further afield. A good shoe shop would be helpful”

Castle/Gardens/Playhouse/Museum

– 178 respondents

“Major tourism attractions at Barter Books, the Castle and Garden attract people and the recent rejuvenation of the town market is a definite plus”

“The Alnwick Garden is great for tourists, but also excellent for residents to enjoy year-round”

“Art centre and Playhouse, both well run and serving as cultural centres”

“The Playhouse theatre, cafe, cinema and library. The library is brilliant; all 4 of us in our family use it. My son attends the children's theatre club at the Playhouse; it is brilliant”

Natural environment – 140 respondents

“The ability to walk very few paces before you are in a field or the countryside. The fact that you can be walking down the street and a deer may appear ahead of you”

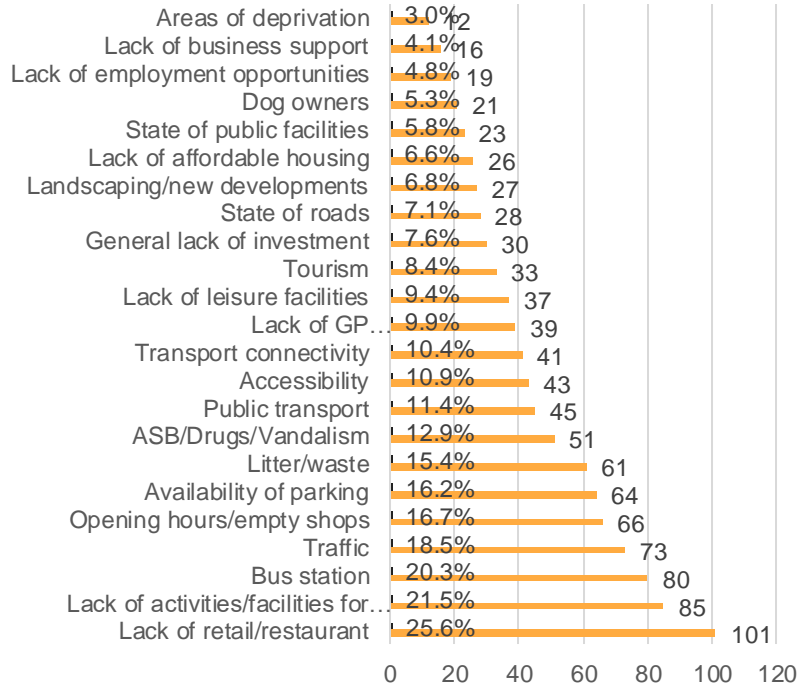
“It has beautiful scenery and there are lots of places to go on walks. Everybody knows everybody around here which makes it nice”

“Beautiful place to live, enjoy and to share”

Currently what are the WORST things about Alnwick as a place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?

There were 395 (100%) responses.

WORST things about Alnwick as a place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business



Topic	Frequency	%
Lack of retail/restaurant	101	25.6%
Lack of activities/facilities for young people	85	21.5%
Bus station	80	20.3%
Traffic	73	18.5%
Opening hours/empty shops	66	16.7%
Availability of parking	64	16.2%
Litter/waste	61	15.4%
ASB/Drugs/Vandalism	51	12.9%
Public transport	45	11.4%
Accessibility	43	10.9%
Transport connectivity	41	10.4%
Lack of GP appointments/access to medical care	39	9.9%
Lack of leisure facilities	37	9.4%
Tourism	33	8.4%
General lack of investment	30	7.6%
State of roads	28	7.1%
Landscaping/new developments	27	6.8%
Lack of affordable housing	26	6.6%
State of public facilities	23	5.8%
Dog owners	21	5.3%
Lack of employment opportunities	19	4.8%
Lack of business support	16	4.1%
Areas of deprivation	12	3.0%

Currently what are the WORST things about Alnwick as a place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?

Lack of retail/restaurant – 101 respondents

“Old fashioned shops, no place to buy shoes, clothing for bigger ladies. No affordable clothing or footwear for ladies, men or children!”

“The town is a bit run down. It could be really distinctive with the number of independent makers and creatives in the region. Instead, it's mainly charity shops”

“There are a lot of empty shops, a lot of charity shops and it always has a 'dour' feel about it”

“There's not much variety for shopping for things such as clothes. I have to go to Morpeth or Newcastle to buy my children decent shoes and clothes”

“Places to eat out for evening meals, or nice out of town eateries - literally nowhere to go between Whittingham and Alnwick - local pubs are awful”

“There is literally NOTHING to do for families. We have no cinema, Clip and climb, sports shops, no big shops like Halfords or Next, so if you need anything you have to go out of town”

Lack of activities/facilities for young people – 85 responses

“Nothing here for children. Not a good play place. Nothing for teenagers. Teenagers sit in the parks for something to do and leave litter”

“Nothing to do for kids so they hang around the streets been the same for years. The bus station is the main place to go they need youth clubs or bowling alleys”

“There is very little for our young people to do in town. The community centre and the @NE66 team work hard but are under-funded. Gallery Youth Project also needs more funding”

Bus station – 80 responses

“The bus station is that bad I won't let my eldest son use it. The station itself is run down, youths hang around there causing anti social behaviour!”

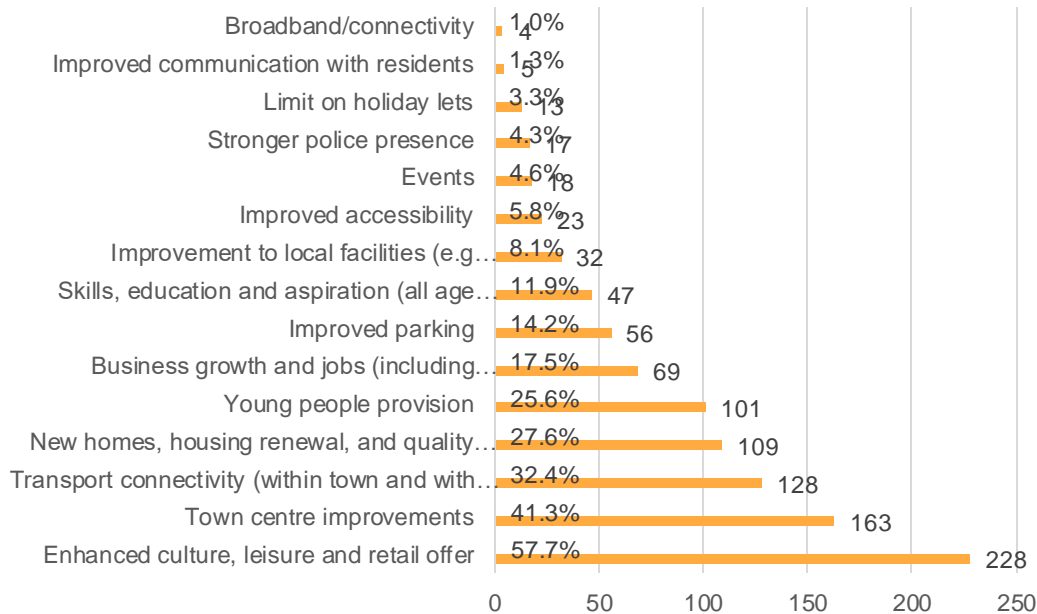
“The bus station is disgusting and not welcoming at all”

“The bus station is an embarrassment”

What are the THREE most important changes that would make Alnwick a better place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?

There were 395 (100%) responses to this part of the question.

What are the THREE most important changes that would make Alnwick a better place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?



Topic	Freq.	%
Enhanced culture, leisure and retail offer	228	57.7%
Town centre improvements	163	41.3%
Transport connectivity (within town and with wider region)	128	32.4%
New homes, housing renewal, and quality of place improvements	109	27.6%
Young people provision	101	25.6%
Business growth and jobs (including established local firms)	69	17.5%
Improved parking	56	14.2%
Skills, education and aspiration (all age groups and skill levels)	47	11.9%
Improvement to local facilities (e.g. bins/toilets)	32	8.1%
Improved accessibility	23	5.8%
Events	18	4.6%
Stronger police presence	17	4.3%
Limit on holiday lets	13	3.3%
Improved communication with residents	5	1.3%
Broadband/connectivity	4	1.0%

What are the THREE most important changes that would make Alnwick a better place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?

Enhanced culture, leisure & retail offer – 228 responses

“Better shops being encouraged to open e.g delicatessens, upmarket clothes shops, independent fruit/veg shops etc, rather than charity shops and coffee shops”

“More exciting things to do in Alnwick (eg escape room), wider variety of shops instead of lots of restaurants”

“A rationalisation of the shopping provision. Have a strategy ad to why you would shop in Alnwick, I'd it's independent shops, good outlet, books (like Hay on Wye) etc”

“I would add something fun for younger people to do, maybe something like a bowling alley, so there is less antisocial behaviour in the town”

“More exciting things to do in Alnwick (eg escape room), wider variety of shops instead of lots of restaurants”

“Better shops being encouraged to open e.g delicatessens, upmarket clothes shops, independent fruit/veg shops etc, rather than charity shops and coffee shops. The type of thing that would suit residents or residents of nearby villages who wish to do a weekly shop as well as encouraging day tourists to want to wander around and spend time there”

Town centre improvements – 163 respondents

“Town centre paths and aesthetics improved so first impression of the town is better. Compulsory purchase empty or derelict buildings and find better uses or space for independent start ups”

“A good deep clean and new pavements spend some money in the town centre”

“Employ "look up, look down, look all around" principle. Where the vision of the outlook of the town is maintained. Everything is kept in keeping with the town not just the oldest bits maintained but have a vision for the whole place

Transport connectivity (within town and with wider region) – 128 respondents

“Better cycling routes, cheaper public transport, particularly for children”

“Better public transport, especially bus links to Alnmouth Station”

“Create more cycle and pedestrian friendly routes. A safe route to the coast”

Best things – 0-19 age range

Local business/traders – 52%

“The small businesses and the accessibility”

“greggs is good, morrisons, turnbulls is great really good meat, the gardens, the playhouse, Mcdonalds”

“It is a historical town (that has a lot of businesses). Certain parts are very nice as there is a mix between buildings and landscape”

“There’s is lots of big shops not far from where I live and after school you can go out with your friends to eat or shop, walk etc”

“The feel of community throughout the whole town. The small businesses and the accessibility”

“its good to live in a way for the fields and places to walk. the food is very good and has nice takeaways. most people are friendly”

“Lots of history, lots of tourist destinations, lots of good supermarkets and good local businesses as well creating a healthy mix”

Activities – 24%

“There is a lot of tourist attractions. There is a community high school and there are a lot of sporting places”

“There are a lot of sporting places”

“It has beautiful scenery and there are lots of places to go on walk”

Natural environment – 23%

“I like the walks, and the scenic routes around town, especially the river Aln”

“The town itself is pretty as there are quite a few older buildings. Also, most people are very friendly and say hello so you never really feel like an outsider. There are some areas of green space which the area feel natural and not very industrial”

“Alnwick is a nice place, surrounded by countryside but also is quite a calm, beautiful town. the history in Alnwick should be appreciated”

Worst things – 0-19 age range

Lack of activities/facilities for young people – 26%

“Not much for younger people. Could be more for locals, not any amazing or exciting job opportunities”

“Not much to do for the youth (many turn to drugs and alcohol because of this). Never much on (not really any good community events)”

“There are not many things for younger people to do easily or cheaply so many people my age hang around at the bus stop, which prevents other people using the buses”

“the lack of things there for young people to do, or the places they can go, after being here for a few days there’s nothing left to see or do”

“there is nothing for teenagers to do apart from sit at the column and go to mcdonalds”

“There is nothing really in Alnwick for the younger young adults (aged 14-19) such as places to hang out after school or at the weekend which make it quite a boring place to live in, especially when the closest place to go to for this sort of thing is at Newcastle which is an hour away by car”

Bus station – 17.3%

“the bus station, the alleyways, the debris and litter”

“bus station (kids are terrorising)”

“Morrisons bus stop, chavs, lack of things to do and places to hang out”

Lack of retail/restaurant – 15.9%

“theres nowhere to buy men’s clothes, lack of retail, not much for teenagers to do, lack of wetherspoons”

“Restaurants - wetherspoons (I truly believe this could be very very popular within alnwick), nandos. I believe if we had a franchise Restaurant in alnwick it would be very popular and be used quite a lot by locals & tourists”

“Almost all of the entertainment and leisure activities and services in Alnwick are aimed at tourists and cost a lot of money, excluding the local people and residents, especially those on low or no income”

Changes – 0-19 age range

Enhanced culture, leisure & retail offer – 66%

- “I would add something fun for younger people to do, maybe something like a bowling alley, so there is less antisocial behaviour in the town”
- “More shops in retail park and attractions catered specifically to teenagers”
- “Have a transport museum, increase the amount of films being shown for the age groups and increase the range of activities that are available outside of sports teams and gyms”
- “More clothing shops e.g JD, more fast food restaurants e.g KFC”
- “More exciting things to do in Alnwick (eg escape room), wider variety of shops instead of lots of restaurants”
- “support groups and things for youth to attend/do with little to no charge”
- “Primark, more shops and more activities”
- “more clothes shops, more activities and different things children-teenagers can do”

Young people provision – 41.5%

- “introducing more activities for the youth, more outdoor activities to take advantage of the countryside”
- “More sporting facilities indoor facilities for summer sports (e.g. cricket nets)”
- “better parks for kids with measures taken to prevent graffiti”
- “Make Alnwick more accommodable to children, specifically young adults”
- “More teen areas with more sheltered benches”

Town centre improvements – 37.2%

- “Even more greenery, modern places to eat/drink etc”
- “Pedestrianise more of the streets, as a walk around the market is amazing and Alnwick would be improved with the removal or reduction of cars”
- “the bus station, either get rid of it, or sort it out properly with the potholes in the roads”

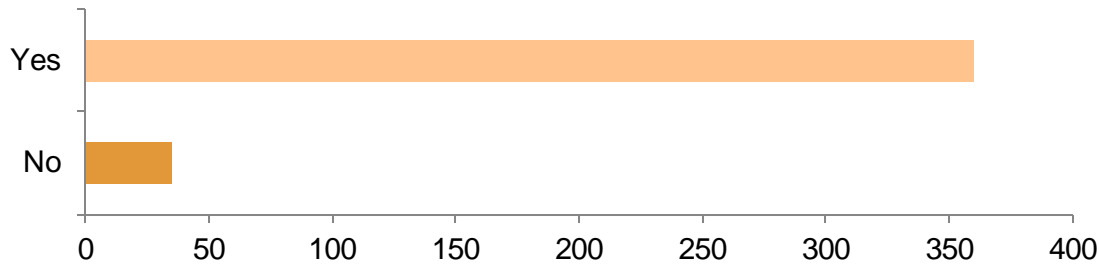
Overall Summary

- Over 39% of respondents were aged below 20. 17.5% of the total population are aged below 20
- Only 15.5% of respondents were aged over 60 – 38% of Alnwick’s population is aged 60+
- 56% of people felt that Alnwick’s greatest asset was its local traders, businesses and retail/leisure offer. 45% loved the main attractions with 35% enjoying the setting and natural environment
- 25.6 % felt that Alnwick’s worst aspect was the lack of larger retail stores and restaurants. 21.5% felt that there needed to be more activities and facilities for young people while 20.3% felt there was a need to improve the bus station
- The majority of respondents would like to see an **enhanced culture, leisure and retail offer** (58%), followed by **town centre improvements** (41%) and **improved transport connectivity** (32%)
- The majority of additional comments were focused on three things – creating improved facilities for young people, ensuring infrastructure is in place for not only visitors but residents, and making sure that the bus station is developed and improved
- Young people also felt that they needed improved provision, with more space to ‘hang out’ for free with friends. However the majority wanted larger retail and franchises such as KFC
- 91% of respondents broadly agreed with the Vision but wanted to ensure that the Place Plan benefitted residents as well as visitors
- 93% of respondents agreed with the Strategic Objectives generally, but wanted to ensure that the heritage and history of the town was not lost. Additionally, the need was identified for specific and measurable improvements to improve the environment and contribute to net zero commitment

Vision

“Enhancing Alnwick's long-term future as an outstanding place to live, work and visit.”

Summary – Vision. Have we got it right?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	360	91.14%
No	35	8.86%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

91% of respondents agreed broadly with the Board’s Vision.

“Enhancing Alnwick's long-term future as an outstanding place to live, work and visit.”

Comments

“To make it a good serviceable home town, as much as an exciting tourist centre”

“Yes, keep it outstanding but don't ruin the character. It's a lovely place so please be careful”

“While protecting the future for our young people”

“We’ve got to improve the town if we want to say it’s an “outstanding” place. It’s ok at the moment but only ok nothing more so we have to stop pretending it’s the lovely little pretty market town we think - it needs to be better a lot better”

“For locals! At present local families are being forced out due to house prices and it appears the community is shifting significantly”

“Enhance the town but protect the heritage. Look after your residents - not everything should be geared towards tourism”

Summary – Vision. Have we got it right?

Although 91% agreed broadly with the vision, there were many additional comments around areas of concern. The majority were focused on a perceived emphasis on tourism and ensuring that young people were included in provision.

“From a funding perspective, I would argue that you cannot enhance something which is already being billed as outstanding. You are perhaps ensuring the continued success of the town, or more probably making such ‘outstanding’-ness applicable and accessible to all residents and not just those on a higher income and/or retired. Rewording the vision will more accurately reflect what you are perhaps trying to do”

“Just that I think Alnwick desperately needs investment. The Alnwick Garden obviously does bring a lot of visitors to the town but unfortunately I don't feel they all spend time in the town centre after their visit. They need some encouragement”

“Too much emphasis on visiting and enjoying we need jobs!”

“I do hope you actually take the responses into consideration and actually focus more on making Alnwick a good place to live. Visitors already have everything they need”

“Not sure about a place to work - what opportunities are there for school leavers who do not wish to go to University? More apprenticeships or on the job training required. Investment in larger firms making a base in Alnwick so that there are other job opportunities available”

“*Ensuring* Alnwick remains an outstanding place to live and work and enhancing its long term future as a great place to visit”

“Unless you improve cycle paths and reduce car use Alnwick cannot cope with more people and won't be an outstanding place to live, work and visit”

Vision

“Enhancing Alnwick's long-term future as an outstanding place to live, work and visit.”

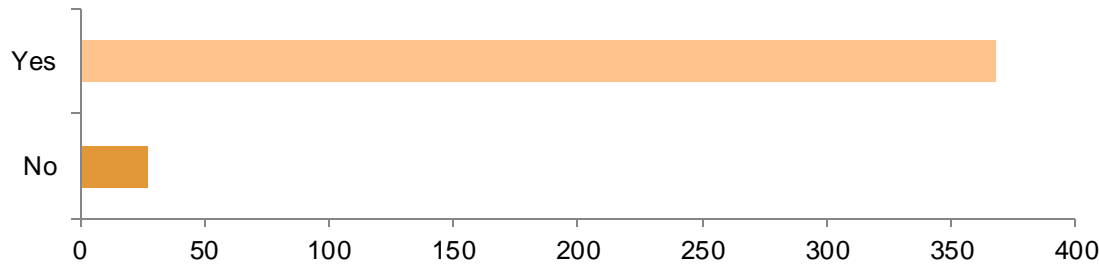
Strategic Objectives

- 1. Sustaining Alnwick's existing employment, creating new jobs and opportunities, embracing innovation as a driver for growth*
- 2. Improve the economic prosperity of Alnwick by increasing the sustainability of the visitor economy.*
- 3. Create a sustainable future for young people in Alnwick.*
- 4. Maintain and raise the quality of the built environment in Alnwick town centre*

Our objectives will be underpinned throughout by the priorities of:

- Fostering collaboration across the town*
- Contributing to net zero 2030*
- Capitalising on opportunities in technology*

Summary – Strategic Objectives. Have we got them right?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	368	93.16%
No	27	6.84%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Over 93% of respondents agreed with the Strategic Objectives.

1. Sustaining Alnwick’s existing employment, creating new jobs and opportunities, embracing innovation as a driver for growth
2. Improve the economic prosperity of Alnwick by increasing the sustainability of the visitor economy.
3. Create a sustainable future for young people in Alnwick.
4. Maintain and raise the quality of the built environment in Alnwick town centre.

Comments

- “Sounds exciting and I am looking forward to seeing what happens”
- “Improvements to built environment must be matched and supported by improvements to the green environment. Essential to understand that improvement does not mean growth“
- “It would be nice to create green spaces and talk more about the environment in the objectives”
- “Alnwick should still keep the visitor part of its economy, however shouldn't focus on that and should focus on other things as this will make it much less dependent on external factors”
- “Use this push for net zero to get a pride in the town from youngsters ,that they are pushing this change rather than them being spotlighted when stuff gets damaged”

Summary – Strategic Objectives. Have we got them right?

Similar to the Vision, the majority of comments agreeing broadly with the objectives focused on perceived improvements that could be made to infrastructure, facilities for residents and opportunities for young people.

"It sounds a bit too tourism focused. I like the ambition but I would prefer to hear more about how these objectives will be achieved"

"It's all well and good encouraging visitors, but without the necessary improvements to the road network it just makes the peak times unbearable for residents. I plan to move house to get away from it. I hate the summer in this part of the world, sorry but it's overwhelming, it's like an invasion"

"What retail and leisure does this refer to?"

"Sustainable objectives for visitors economyhence tourism! We need to invest in the locals and be independent. We need multinational groups to base here... look at success of quotient Science. That is self grown and using local talent. Not tourism"

"'Sustainable' is a buzz word that gets banded about a lot. How on earth do you "create a sustainable future for young people"? That sentence is so vague as to be almost meaningless"

"Green credentials are important in a rural county with superb country and coast for residents, workers and visitors alike"

Strategic Objectives

- 1. Sustaining Alnwick's existing employment, creating new jobs and opportunities, embracing innovation as a driver for growth*
- 2. Improve the economic prosperity of Alnwick by increasing the sustainability of the visitor economy.*
- 3. Create a sustainable future for young people in Alnwick.*
- 4. Maintain and raise the quality of the built environment in Alnwick town centre*

Our objectives will be underpinned throughout by the priorities of:

- Fostering collaboration across the town*
- Contributing to net zero 2030*
- Capitalising on opportunities in technology*

We will use your feedback to inform the development of the Alnwick Borderlands Place Plan.

Thank you for your continued participation.

Get in touch at growth@northumberland.gov.uk if you have anything you'd like to add.

Next Steps

Alnwick Borderlands Place Programme

- Board to review consultation report – final responses by 2nd May 2022
- Publish consultation report w/c 9th May 2022
- Place Plan Development
- Next Meeting – Place Plan format –?