



## **Bedlington Place Programme – Consultation 1**

<https://haveyoursay.northumberland.gov.uk/economy-regeneration/bedlington-bpp-consultation>

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**Responses to this survey: 382**

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# Bedlington Borderlands Place Programme Consultation



## Bedlington Borderlands Place Programme Consultation

### Overview

Through the [Borderlands Place Programme](#), Northumberland County Council intend to target investment in places that will help boost economic activity across the region. Recognising the importance of our smaller rural market and coastal towns to the local economy, the Place Programme will support a range of capital interventions targeted at enhancing the economic infrastructure needed to ensure the sustainability and growth of our towns. Each town, including Bedlington, will be developing an investment plan to secure up to £3m of Borderlands Place Programme funding.

A series of Place Plans will be developed for both Bedlington and Northumberland's other priority towns. Towns will only enter the Place Programme should their Place Plan contain projects eligible for Borderlands investment.

**Closes 8 Mar 2022**

Opened 14 Feb 2022

**Contact**

[growth@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:growth@northumberland.gov.uk)

### Section 1 - Demographic Questions

A series of questions were presented to respondents to capture demographics. They were:

- **What is your age?**
- **Do you consider yourself to have a disability?**
- **Why do you come to Ashington?**
- **Please could you give us the first five alpha numeric characters of your home postcode**

### Section 2 – The best and the worst things about Bedlington

- Currently what are the BEST things about Bedlington as a place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?
- Currently what are the WORST things about Bedlington as a place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?
- What are the THREE most important changes that would make Bedlington a better place to live, work, study, visit, or run a business?

### Section 3 – Vision

*This is the Borderlands Place Programme vision for Bedlington:*

***"Bedlington will continue to be a cohesive and thriving centre for residents, businesses and learners.***

***Providing quality jobs supported by outstanding skills and education opportunities for young people and adults alike, Bedlington will continue to be a growing town with services to meet the local need.***

***Bedlington will find innovative ways to celebrate the town's industrial heritage, whilst delivering a new and vibrant leisure, cultural and low carbon offer for all ages. Bedlington will attract residents and visitors alike, promoting itself as both a destination and an attractive town to live, work and learn in."***

***Do you agree with the vision? (yes/no)***

One open question then followed with text boxes:

**Is there anything else you would like to say about the vision?**

### Section 4 – Strategic Objectives

We have four strategic objectives:

**1 - Increase the number of visitors to Bedlington accessing its retail, leisure and culture offers**

**2 - Collaborate with local residents and the business community to imagine and then realise a long-term prosperous future for Bedlington**

**3 - Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation for residents of Bedlington**

**4 - Raise the quality of the physical environment in Bedlington**

***Taken as a whole do you agree with these objectives? (yes/no)***

One open question then followed with text boxes:

**Is there anything else you would like to say about the objectives?**

### Section 5 – Future Surveys

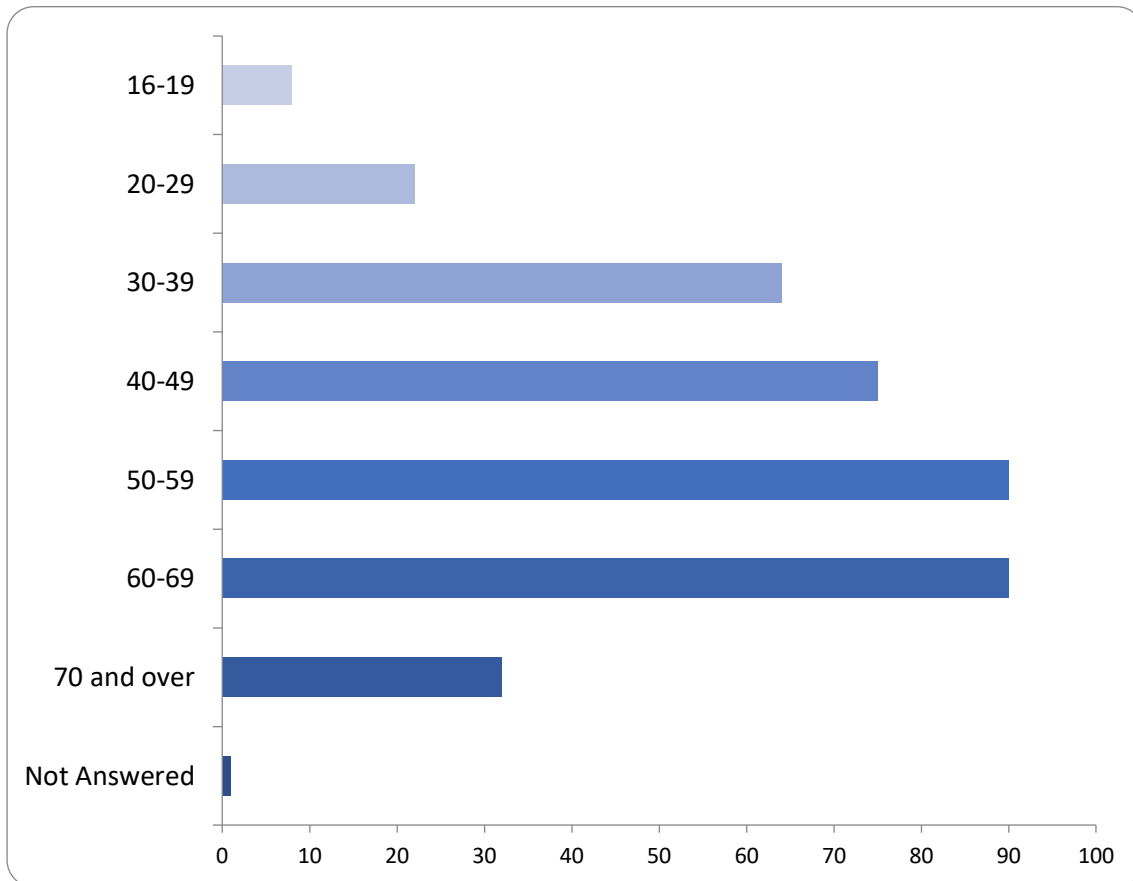
*If you would like to be kept informed about future surveys then please give us your email address.*

*This is optional. If you do provide your details we will only use it to contact you about future consultations related to the Bedlington Town Investment Plan. This information will not be shared with anyone outside the Council. You can contact us if you no longer wish to be included on the list. Entries will be removed after two years.*

## Demographic Questions

### Age

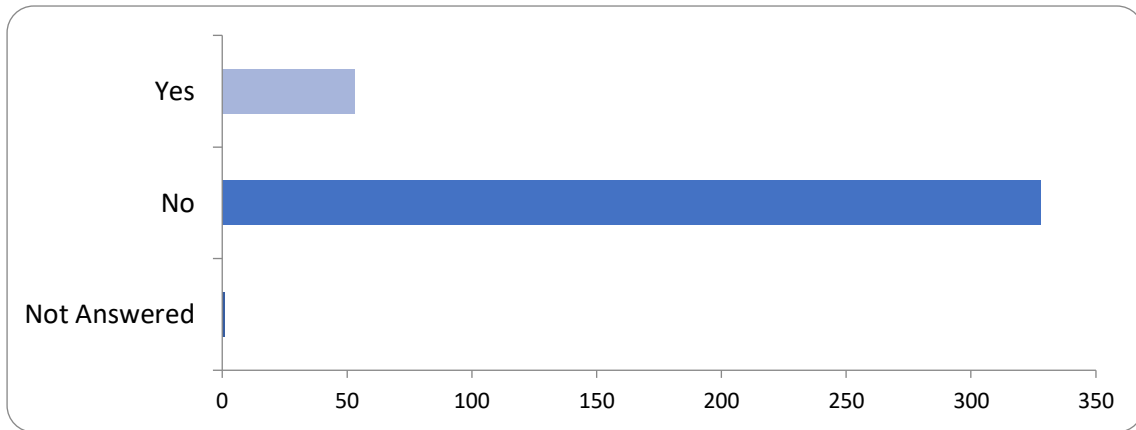
There were 381 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
up to 15	0	0.00%
16-19	8	2.09%
20-29	22	5.76%
30-39	64	16.75%
40-49	75	19.63%
50-59	90	23.56%
60-69	90	23.56%
70 and over	32	8.38%
Not Answered	1	0.26%

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

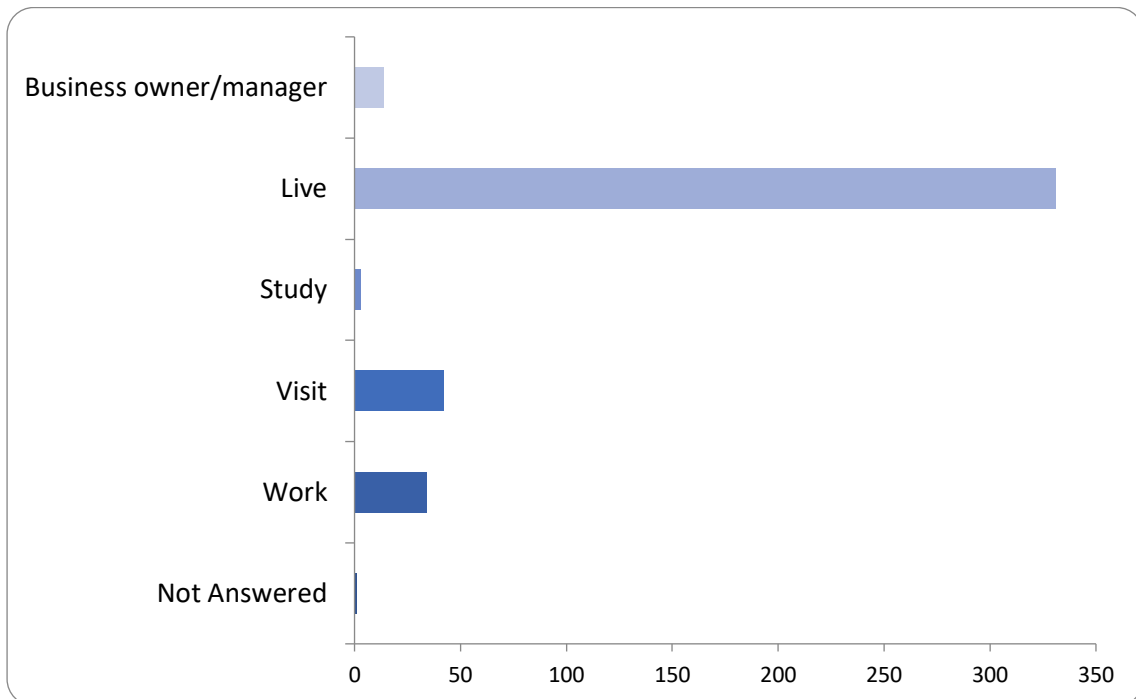
There were 381 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	53	13.87%
No	328	85.86%
Not Answered	1	0.26%

### Why do you come to Bedlington?

There were 381 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Business owner/manager	14	3.66%
Live	331	86.65%
Study	3	0.79%
Visit	42	10.99%
Work	34	8.90%
Not Answered	1	0.26%

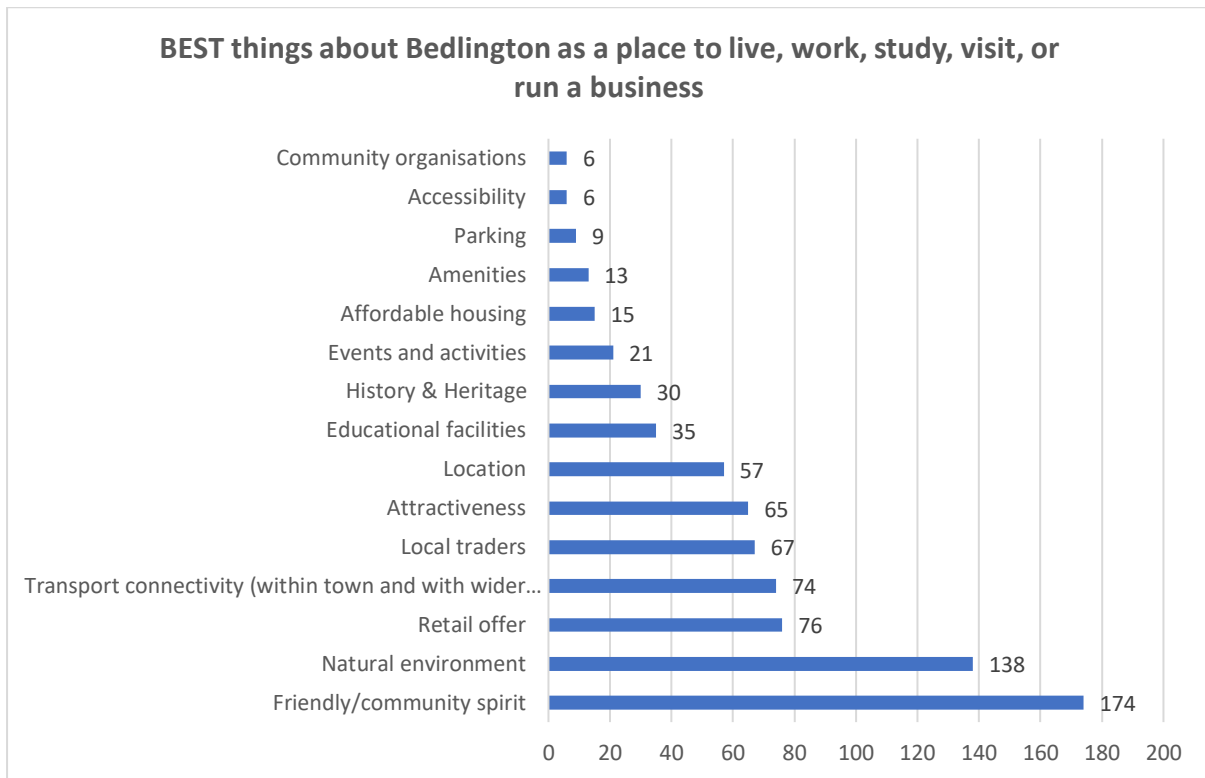
## Postcode areas of respondents

Postcode	Frequency
NE22 6	144
NE22 5	140
NE22 7	37
NE62 5	21
NE22	11
NE62	7
NE24 4	3
NE63	3
NE24 2	2
Ne 22 5	1
NE 22 7	1
NE12 8	1
NE23 1	1
NE23 2	1
NE23 3	1
NE23 6	1
Ne24 1	1
NE24 3	1
NE26 3	1
NE3	1
NE61 2	1
NE64	1
TOTAL	381





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



Topic	Frequency	%
Friendly/community spirit	174	45.7%
Natural environment	138	36.2%
Retail offer	76	19.9%
Transport connectivity (within town and with wider region)	74	19.4%
Local traders	67	17.6%
Attractiveness	65	17.1%
Location	57	15.0%
Educational facilities	35	9.2%
History & Heritage	30	7.9%
Events and activities	21	5.5%
Affordable housing	15	3.9%
Amenities	13	3.4%
Parking	9	2.4%
Accessibility	6	1.6%
Community organisations	6	1.6%

## Friendly, Community Spirit – 174 respondents

“I have lived in Bedlington for 62 years. I went to school here and even worked in my local bank for 10 years. Bedlington is a friendly town with a wonderful quaint front Street. It is quiet with not a lot of anti social behaviour”

“Close community and nice areas to live.”

“The best thing about living in Bedlington is the people that live here, we are all friendly and help each other when we can”

“I have lived in Bedlington all my life and have many friends and family love the place”

“The people here are so friendly!

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

“It’s a lovely place to live both in the friendly community and in a great looking town”

“Friendly people who don't ask for much which is why as a town we have been overlooked by NCC over the past 40 + years”

“Friendly place with good community. Most people would help anyone”

“I haven’t lived in Bedlington that long only since July 2020 and it’s a lovely place to live relatively quiet street where I live a variety of local shops and lovely places not too far away to walk your dogs. I love the Christmas lights and Christmas trees we have here in Bedlington and it has a lovely community atmosphere”

“I love where I live - it’s quiet and I have really lovely neighbours (for the most part)”

“Community. When Bedlington folk come together there is nowhere better for passion or atmosphere - unfortunately other than the summer fair and picnic there isn't much to bring us out”

“The strength of community shows we all want the town to be a better space and that's a nice thing to have”

“Bedlington is a safe place to live. The community spirit is fab, everyone is friendly”

“The people. We don’t have much here but we have hidden history of great value and a wealth of mining history which created a people who learned to look out for each other”

“Community spirit for example our little town doesn't have a lot but we are proud of it and people go out of their way to make it nice (the ladies who plant the plants) and keep it nice (the gentleman who regularly picks litter).Our passion to make Bedlington the town it once was, I feel everyone who lives in Bedlington tries to support the local businesses as much as possible as we want our towns businesses to be successful in order to attract more.

## Natural environment – 138 respondents

“I always think it could be a place for people to come to if it was more like Yarm on Tees. Love all the easy access to parks and wooded walks”

“The flower beds are always well kept and pretty. The local woods and river parks with walks are very good”

“Historically lots to offer such as riverside walks, woodland walks, open fields. Although maintenance and protection of these has eroded over the years the potential to reinvest to reinstate to their former glory still remains”

“We have beautiful walks in all directions of Bedlington. Not far to the beach either.”

“Beautiful town, unspoilt and retains its historical look. Lots of green spaces to enjoy”

“Friendly people, family live here beautiful walks down the woods. Lovely outdoor spaces new park my little boy loves”

“Green spaces, easy access to Gallagher, Plessey and Humford”

“We love we have the coast view one way and the countryside the other”

“A very pleasant and attractive Main Street, the number of country parks within easy access for walking, the history of the town, and the friendliness of the people”

“The town has fantastic heritage which we should be maximising from the iron ore works to the railway and St Cuthbert’s church. At the heart of the town is the fantastic Gallagher park providing a place for recreation and some great nature for all”

“Rural with lots of open fields and places to walk nearby. Lovely walks along river which are well kept”

“The Woodland nature reserve along the river Blyth is beautiful as is Gallagher Park”

“It has green space, such as large fields and woodland. The nature aspect and opportunity to be close to nature while still living in a place with amenities in walking distance is what attracted me to living here”

“The location, being semi-rural but also quick to get into city or airport, coast and countryside. I like the country parks and the free parking in the town”

## Retail offer/local traders – 76/67 respondents

“Friendly, well supplied with supermarkets. Attractive Front Street. Reasonable range of restaurants, Lairds House. Ashianna and La Torre. The redevelopment of the Market Tavern. More than enough takeaways”

“Of late shops such as Lidl, Morrison’s and Aldi. At least three good restaurants and some pleasant pubs., while managing to get care facilities for my 95 year mother”

“Recent quality of eating and drinking in the town has improved with Laird's House, the Boxwood Tap, Ashianna, La Torre.”

“Close to surrounding towns, food stores on your doorstep, family are close, takeaways and close to work”

“Aldi (I now shop local which I have never done and I have lived here all my life!)”

“Plenty of supermarkets, which offer a great selection”

“I like the fact the town is small with no big chain stores such as McDonald's, Odeon, Asda, and among others. The Town for my family has just enough local business to make it feel quite rural yet has good transport links to bigger towns and city's such as Cramlington, Morpeth and Newcastle”

“I live here and it's handy to have 3 supermarkets, local bars and restaurants where you don't have far to travel but also good transport links outside of the town and to the city if ever you want to get anywhere”

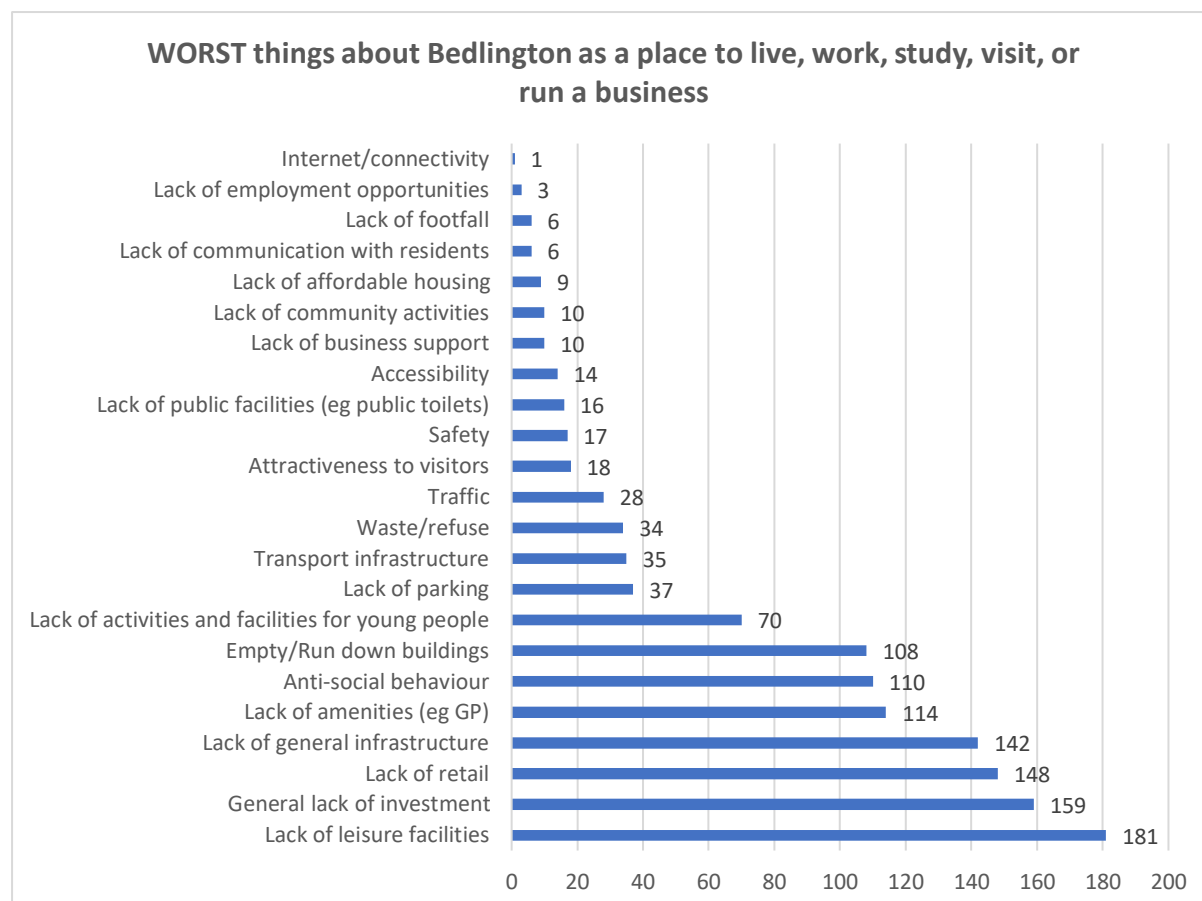
“I visit Bedlington to do my weekly food shopping, as well as ‘top up’ food shops throughout the week. Living at Guide Post , I used to use Lidl or Aldi in Ashington. However, since the Lidl shop opened at Bedlington, I have never been back to Ashington. The Lidl and Morrison’s, as well as the new Aldi are a real asset to the town. My daughter lives in Ashington, but prefers to shop at the cleaner spacious Lidl & Aldi in Bedlington”

“Range of shops and essential services in one location, requiring little travel between places. I.e the library, grocery shops, and chemist within minutes (or less) of one another”

“It has been handy having the Aldi open up so can go between Lidl and Aldi not having to trail into Blyth just for baby wipes”

“Shopping and there seems to be a comeback for the local pubs with people visiting. Bedlington should be marketed as a good place to visit and stay with its local history”

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



Topic	Frequency	%
Lack of leisure facilities	181	47.5%
General lack of investment	159	41.7%
Lack of retail	148	38.8%
Lack of general infrastructure	142	37.3%
Lack of amenities (eg GP)	114	29.9%
Anti-social behaviour	110	28.9%
Empty/Run down buildings	108	28.3%
Lack of activities and facilities for young people	70	18.4%
Lack of parking	37	9.7%
Transport infrastructure	35	9.2%
Waste/refuse	34	8.9%
Traffic	28	7.3%
Attractiveness to visitors	18	4.7%
Safety	17	4.5%
Lack of public facilities (eg public toilets)	16	4.2%
Accessibility	14	3.7%

Lack of business support	10	2.6%
Lack of community activities	10	2.6%
Lack of affordable housing	9	2.4%
Lack of communication with residents	6	1.6%
Lack of footfall	6	1.6%
Lack of employment opportunities	3	0.8%
Internet/connectivity	1	0.3%

## Lack of leisure facilities – 181 respondents

“There are no leisure facilities, our children have to travel to other towns for their swimming lessons!”

“We are the forgotten town of Northumberland, everything goes elsewhere. Why are other towns getting replacement sports centres when we’ve never had one.”

“The town should have a centrally located community sports and wellbeing centre. Having to drive to Blyth, Morpeth or Ashington is inconvenient and not accessible to people who can't afford to do that”

“There are no facilities other than a library. When the weather is bad, there is nowhere to exercise or go to see a film”

“No council supported sports facilities. Promises of improvements that take MANY years to come to fruition. A growing populace but little by way of facilities (as above) to support/encourage younger members. Getting a bus to Ashington is not always possible for younger kids”

“Promised the earth got nothing. Morpeth Cramlington Berwick Ashington Blyth have leisure facilities to use and we have nothing. No I don't want to travel to the others as I can't drive and bus fares are too expensive why has bedlington got nothing pay poll tax the same as the others”

“No sports centre, swimming pool, it is like the town forgot in Northumberland”

“It’s the place you go through to get to other places. Ashington Morpeth Blyth & Cramlington all offer better towns with more variety in shops. All have leisure centres”

“No leisure/sports centre - despite being promised this a few years ago now, because there is nothing for the teenagers to do - they get into antisocial behaviour more easily”

“Lack of activities for youths - A leisure centre would be ideal, would give the kids somewhere to go on an evening and engage in sport activities”

“Half finished developments, over developed green fields. Lack of leisure facilities, continued development of leisure services in other towns where provision already exists”

“There is nothing here. We no longer have a swimming pool. We no longer have cinemas. We are experiencing unwarranted residential expansion without the resources to maintain this and yet have expensive housing, more so than surrounding areas which offer little incentive to visit, eg: parking restrictions offer little in the way of parking due to restrictions such that swimming, shopping, cinema can mean you can run into parking fines. Also housing restrictions in surrounding areas make parking and use of leisure facilities very restrictive. Our front street has become a pizza street. Parking is a disgrace and our parks are not manned is troublesome. GP and dental surgeries cannot cope yet where are the jobs you mention. What has our town become? We have to travel everywhere for everything. Its an absolute disaster for people living here - nothing for youngsters to do”

## General lack of investment – 159 responses

“Cheap shops with unsightly signage. Areas/ buildings behind the main Street that look very run down and derelict”

“I still after 40+ years like living in Bedlington but get frustrated in cuts to clearing paths and grass cutting, makes it look messy. I, like a lot of my neighbours pick up rubbish to help maintain the area. I live on Beaufront Park and until recently walk through the woods to get to Gallagher Park, but due to trees down you can't get through”

“Lack of investment from NCC. Nowhere to buy anything other than food”

“Everything the paths the roads they can't even clean the streets there is nothing at all good here”

“Unmanaged paths/ walks in humford woods. Looks like some paths/ walking routes where put in many years ago and trees have since fallen on them and become overgrown. Path along river from humford woods to alter park has also eroded badly in a section close to the river. Plessy woods seems to be well kept for tourists but our local woods left to deteriorate and going to plessy is too busy. Paths outside of red lion are a right mess and the zebra crossing/road is terrible.”

“Humford woods and park aren't given any investment and the paths are dangerous, car park is full of potholes, no toilet facilities or catering outlets, such as coffee van, it could be so much better and an attraction for visitors. A park run would be excellent for the area”

“Lack of facilities. There have been promises of investment but this has not been delivered. The constant building of houses and no investment in facilities. In fact, I believe the money made from the recent development on Choppington Road is actually being use for a hospital in Morpeth - no good for Bedlington!”

“A market place with promised plans that have not come to fruition. Although some changes have been made to the market place it is still a mess, development is very slow. The people of Bedlington are very disheartened by the lack of interest by the council to improve the town”

“There doesn't seem to be enough money invested in it to regenerate compared to the likes of Morpeth, Cramlington or Blyth”

“Lack of investment, town is looking tired and neglected, eyesores on the high street (old Tesco building), no sports facilities, lack of well lit running or walking routes”

“We are fed up of being left behind with everything whilst surrounding towns get new amenities”

“The abandoned feeling to the town, it is run down and tired looking, there are no leisure facilities that aren't pubs and restaurants, the kids have nowhere to go so they roam the streets and cause damage making the over all oppressed feeling even worse. Bedlington and its people have been forgotten about and neglected continuously over the past 20 years”



## Lack of retail/general infrastructure – 148/142 responses

“There is nothing here. We no longer have a swimming pool. We no longer have cinemas. We are experiencing unwarranted residential expansion without the resources to maintain this and yet have expensive housing, more so than surrounding areas which offer little incentive to visit, eg: parking restrictions offer little in the way of parking due to restrictions such that swimming, shopping, cinema can mean you can run into parking fines. Also housing restrictions in surrounding areas make parking and use of leisure facilities very restrictive. Our front street has become a pizza street. Parking is a disgrace and our parks are not manned is troublesome. GP and dental surgeries cannot cope yet where are the jobs you mention. What has our town become? We have to travel everywhere for everything. Its an absolute disaster for people living here - nothing for youngsters to do”

“Promises of improvements that take MANY years to come to fruition. A growing populace but little by way of facilities (as above) to support/encourage younger members”

“Tonnes of new houses and no new doctors, schools or dentists”

“Too many houses being built in the town with no increase in schools, doctors etc”

“There’s a real need for better care facilities for the people of the town, the dentists are full the doctors is busy the library is run down. I say get rid of what you have build a new Community Hub behind front street. Doctors, Dentist, swimming pool, library, etc all under one roof. Look at Hebburn Hub in south Tyneside for example.”

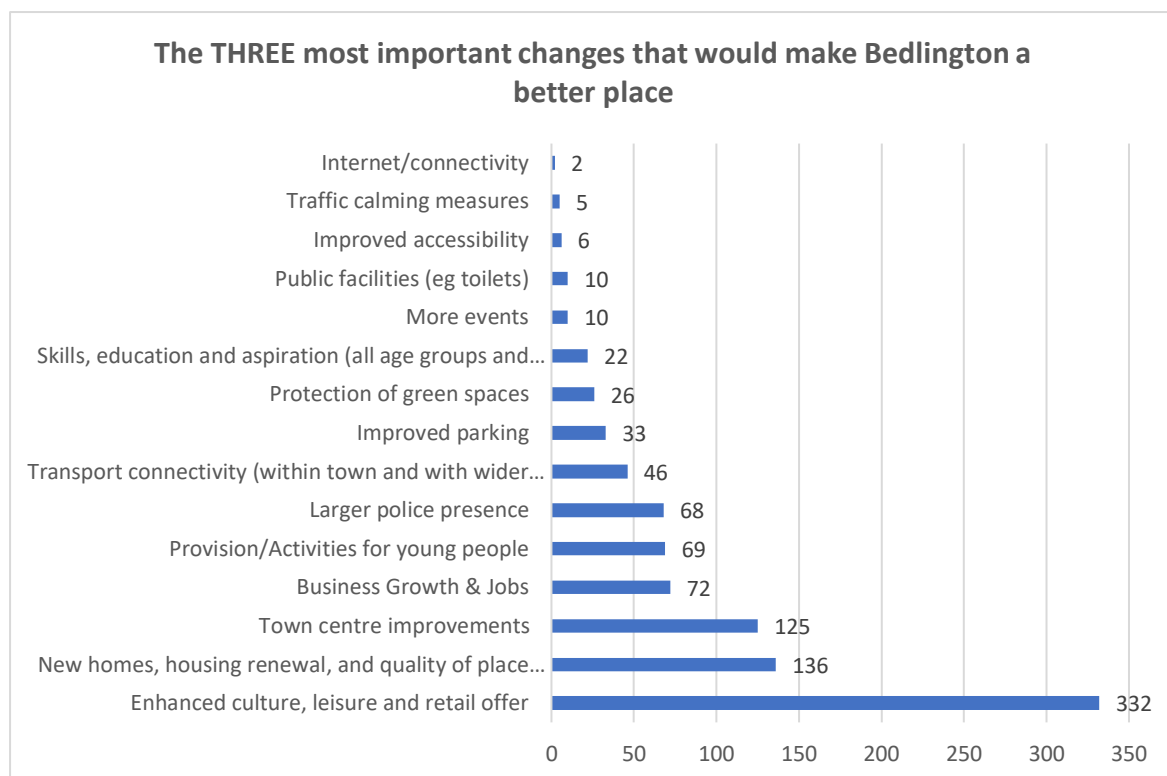
“Every spare piece of land that there used to be on the outskirts of Bedlington now has houses built on it. But there are no new schools, health centres to support the increasing population”

“You can't get a doctors appointment for love nor money, it's ridiculous, by the time you can see a GP you're either hospitalised or have suffered through the worst”

“The handling of the Market Place redevelopment by the council and Arch/Advance Northumberland has been nothing short of a disgrace. For residents of Bedlington to have to wait seven years for a new supermarket and the stop-start demolition of a handful of mostly vacant retail units - while the main car park was fenced off for much of that time - is completely unacceptable - especially as exciting multi-million-pound projects are regularly being delivered in other towns”

“The current plans for the market place redevelopment were slipped out quietly, without any public consultation or explanation, and are a cheap, watered-down version of the original. A non-committal phased approach is not what people were promised (where has the money gone? Was it even there in the first place?) but could be more palatable if some detail was given, along with a timeframe for the completion of the work”

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



Topic	Frequency	%
Enhanced culture, leisure and retail offer	332	87.1%
New homes, housing renewal, and quality of place improvements	136	35.7%
Town centre improvements	125	32.8%
Business Growth & Jobs	72	18.9%
Provision/Activities for young people	69	18.1%
Larger police presence	68	17.8%
Transport connectivity (within town and with wider region)	46	12.1%
Improved parking	33	8.7%
Protection of green spaces	26	6.8%
Skills, education and aspiration (all age groups and skill levels)	22	5.8%
More events	10	2.6%
Public facilities (eg toilets)	10	2.6%
Improved accessibility	6	1.6%
Traffic calming measures	5	1.3%
Internet/connectivity	2	0.5%

## Enhanced culture, leisure & retail offer – 332 responses

“Let’s get some leisure facilities, develop walk and cycle paths. Get the town centre finished it’s been dragging on 8 years and finally let’s encourage new business into Bedlington reduce the rates as an incentive”

“A community hub that’s attractive, sports and IT friendly and a focus for all age groups; not sure of its name but a sports, IT, Centre. There’s certainly an increasing concern of adolescence children wandering the streets who need some form of distraction therapy!”

“A leisure centre would be advantageous. It would keep peoples travel costs down”

“Some leisure facilities. Currently there are no leisure centres or places to play tennis/badminton or squash”

“Some sort of leisure centre. Facilities for young people. More diverse shops”

“Opportunities for socialising (cafes, groups, sports centre)...timely council intervention (we just want to know someone cares)”

“Equivalent leisure facilities to neighbouring towns. Always seem to be last in line for an funding. An explosion of new housing estates but no investment for GP surgeries schools etc shame on NCC for no planning for these essential services”

“Robust town development plans seen through to completion in stated timeframe. Investment in infrastructure and maintenance. Equal investment footing with our neighbouring towns.... Look at their amenities, compare to ours and close the gap”

“Complete the market place with a range of shops and other services. Give bedlington a sports facility to equal those in blyth, morpeth or Ashington. Invest in facilities for younger people to help keep them off the streets”

“To push for land beside Courts/ Aldi to be used. If no business are interested build tennis court, park or something similar so it doesn't remain empty for another 30+years”

“More local and bigger business coming into the area e.g clothes shop or a shop similar to Wilkinson’s”

“Give Bedlington something other towns don’t have to get the footfall into the town. Then little shops will benefit from the footfall. Give us some sort of leisure. Bowling ice skating running track etc”

“Have more clothing shops i.e. New Look. Have more general shops like B&M or Home Bargains. Leisure centre/franchise gym like Pure Gym. Smaller towns have more investment in this”

“Leisure centre, youth facilities and a Leisure centre like every other town in Northumberland”

## New homes, renewal and quality of place improvements – 136 respondents

“Increase our infrastructure - the number of houses popping up is relative to town growth, however we’re not seeing this. Increasing availability of schools, DR appointments etc - this will involve investment and growth of these core facilities.”

“2 bed social housing, modern 3 bed social housing with possibilities for disabled level access, downstairs wc etc.. or even 3 bedroom bungalows”

“An explosion of new housing estates but no investment for GP surgeries schools etc shame on NCC for no planning for these essential services”

“Stop the masses of roadworks. Stop cars blocking paths. Clean the paths and streets”

“Slow down the house building - appreciate it’s needed, but consideration needs to be given to make sure we don’t lose the precious outdoor space”

“Leave the land alone stop building houses. There is not Drs to support what we have now and schools too”

“Doctors , as the town grows we need more Doctor Surgery's. Doctors and Buses , need , think infrastructure , when doing this for towns”

“Stop building houses without the infrastructure to deal with the increase in population”

“Proper enforced penalties for fog fouling. I only realised what a huge problem this was when 'walking' during lockdown. It really is appalling”

“No more housing (unless amenities to support the developments are also built)”

“Ensure the doctors etc are correctly facilitated to deal with the increasing number of houses”

“More money spent on the town. An extension to Bedlingtonshire medical group or another Doctor surgery built to run alongside the current one”

“Less houses to be built and more concentration on enhancing what we have and building services to last - better library, pharmacies, dr surgeries, bigger schools, Also stopping people from outside the area purchasing second homes, driving prices up for locals”

“A planned development of infrastructure that meets the needs of a fast growing residential town. The removal of disused former council offices which could be replaced by attractive premises, in tune with the towns more attractive building, that could incorporate a host of facilities/ resources for the benefit of the towns residents. Of massive importance is the provision of adequate school places that meet the needs of the growing population.

## Town centre improvements – 125 respondents

“Market place to be finished and some businesses to set up there so encourage people to the front street”

“Make the market place a hub as a market and a place people would feel they’d like to pop along to”

“Improve our high street - finish the work which was promised (new buildings / restaurant / facilities etc)”

“The new town centre plans to be in keeping with the rest of front street”

“Finish work on market place area. Entice new independent businesses into empty shops with incentives”

“Make the town centre a warm, welcoming place by helping to fund the infrastructure to modernise it”

“Finishing the market place development. Finishing the market place development. Finishing the market place development”

“Put some money into bedlington (from all the housing being built in bedlington ) so families can do and buy things here instead of having to go to other towns”

“Clean up campaign and anti vandalism. Get rid of dereliction on front street. Push natural assets to attract money into area”

“The Main Street needs to be completed there is nothing enjoyable or eye catching about it. People have closed business and went elsewhere. Council should be ashamed”

“Provide good variety of shops. Repair footpaths, better signage and tidy the area so more inviting”

“Finish the front street that will help the business side, update parks and offer some leisure”

“Rejuvenated town somewhere to be proud of. Not some where you don’t tell people you live there”

“Investment & Regeneration in the night time economy in Bedlington Station. Investment in Tourism and heritage in Bedlington Station. Investment in Bars, Restaurants & a Hotel in Bedlington Station”

“Investment in local area to help keep areas tidy and clean. More independent small shops”

“Ensuring the front street is an attractive, well maintained place to visit. For plans of new building work to go ahead and to tidy up the street. Providing public toilets for those that visit the area”

Do you agree with the vision?

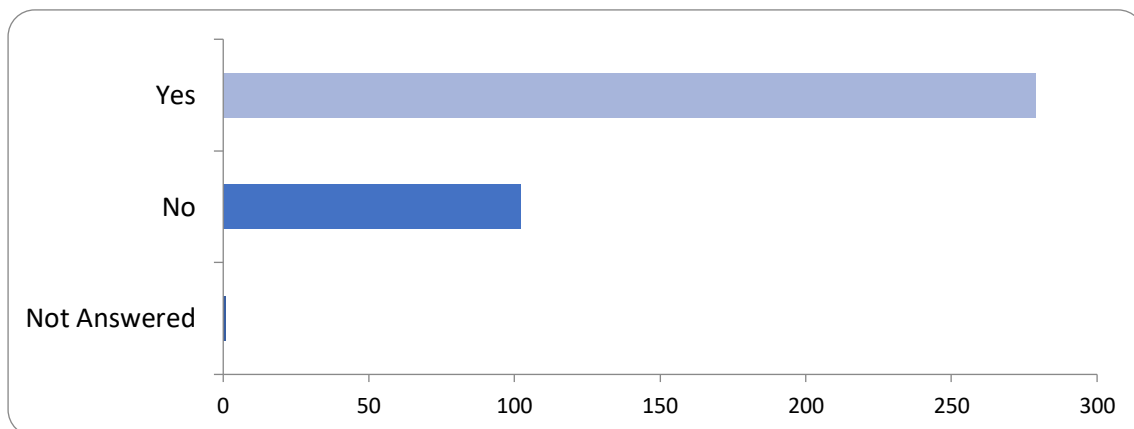
This is the Borderlands Place Programme vision for Bedlington:

*"Bedlington will continue to be a cohesive and thriving centre for residents, businesses and learners.*

*Providing quality jobs supported by outstanding skills and education opportunities for young people and adults alike, Bedlington will continue to be a growing town with services to meet the local need.*

*Bedlington will find innovative ways to celebrate the town's industrial heritage, whilst delivering a new and vibrant leisure, cultural and low carbon offer for all ages. Bedlington will attract residents and visitors alike, promoting itself as both a destination and an attractive town to live, work and learn in."*

There were 381 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	279	73.04%
No	102	26.70%
Not Answered	1	0.26%

Yes

“Be nice to deliver a vibrant leisure offer for all ages”

“It’s a great vision but I don’t believe it’s achievable”

“Take the word "continue" out and change it to "strive" that would make it more honest!”

“Whilst I agree with the vision in principle Bedlington is not cohesive and thriving centre for residents, businesses and learners. Given the track record on the redevelopment of Bedlington I highly doubt this vision will ever be put into practice”

“It won’t happen as other towns in the county get more money and investment. Whereabouts are the leisure facilities mentioned in the vision????”

“I completely agree with the needs for provision for young people. We are fortunate to have good hospitality coverage including pubs, restaurants and takeaways. Young people in the community have limited opportunities to access activities”

“But this statement is fiction. Bedlington has had vision after vision which has never materialised, instead assets sold off and never reinvested in Bedlington. We are seen as a commuter town therefore Council happy to take the Council Tax which then gets invested elsewhere”

“The vision states Bedlington is thriving. I would say its dying on its feet. People are demoralised. The industrial heritage is in the past and the truth is young people are not interested in the past but they do want a forward looking town with lots to offer. The only reason people move here is because house prices are low in comparison to other places and people can commute easily”

“I agree with the vision, but as always whatever is promised is either watered down, scraped and our opinions are totally disregarded. It may help if there was more accountability hanging over the heads of those in power to do their jobs”

“The people of Bedlington need to see this happen not just be spoken about”

“They need to start and uphold the vision and not spend all the council money on other areas with the infrastructure already in place”

“It is a fantastic vision that I would love to see happen, but alas if it is left to Northumberland Council Bedlington will get nothing at all”

“Without the investment the vision won’t happen. The town is only growing because hundreds of houses are being built however where are all these children going to go to school? Schools are full in Bedlington. How will an existing resident manage to get a routine Dr’s appointment because all of these new houses being built bringing extra people into the area with no extra infrastructure but raking in plenty of council tax!!”

No

“Bedlington has a number of independent councilors who appear to be ignored by the main party leadership, this must change to afford proper representation. It appears, and has done for a long time, that in comparison to the likes of Morpeth, Blyth & Ashington that we are the forgotten community.”

“How will we deliver a vibrant leisure culture?”

“It isn't cohesive and thriving so how can it continue to be?”

“I would love to believe that statement but after years of being neglected and I just don't think anything will be done while money earmarked for Bedlington has been given to surrounding areas”

“Because its none of those things so you can't continue something that's non existent. Thriving centre, where? Shops are all the same. Fine if you want your nails done or a grocery shop. Growing town!!! Just more houses for people with loads of money”

“I would substitute "continue to be" with "become””

“It would be lovely if this vision came to light. However we as a town have seen surrounding towns retails centres, leisure facilities all being upgraded and renewed .. whilst at the same time the promised facilities and town centre retail development have been cut in our town and the funding that had been ring fenced and promised to use almost 4 years ago.. has now been slashed greatly ... we as a town deserve some respect and funding injections that were promised at the beginning of the elections... for goodness sake we haven't even got a toilet ..never mind upgrading any of the other towns.. we would just like to have one to use.. every single one has been left to ruin then demolished”

“I don't agree with the first statement. I want Bedlington to be a thriving and cohesive centre but we're not there at the moment”

“I don't agree that Bedlington is currently a thriving town”

“We will wait and see if anything happens been promised so much for years and still not much has happens”

“Looks good written down but Bedlington rarely gets anything promised, usually our money is spent on neighbouring towns”

“What's the point of Bedlington growing when have not got the room for what's here already”

“The towns industrial heritage is prior to my time living here. I have lived here 24 years! There isn't any leisure facilities so not sure how leisure fits in?”

““Bedlington will continue to be a cohesive and thriving centre for residents, businesses and learners” ...take out the words “will continue to be”. The vision is flawed with them in... we want better not a continuation of a failing town”

“The vision is a load of rubbish. Since living in Bedlington for the past 13 years it has had very little money injected into it. All neighbouring towns have, even Morpeth is currently having built a new leisure centre even though there is nothing wrong with the current one”



Taken as a whole do you agree with these objectives?

We have four strategic objectives (you can comment on the objectives as a whole, and about each one individually):

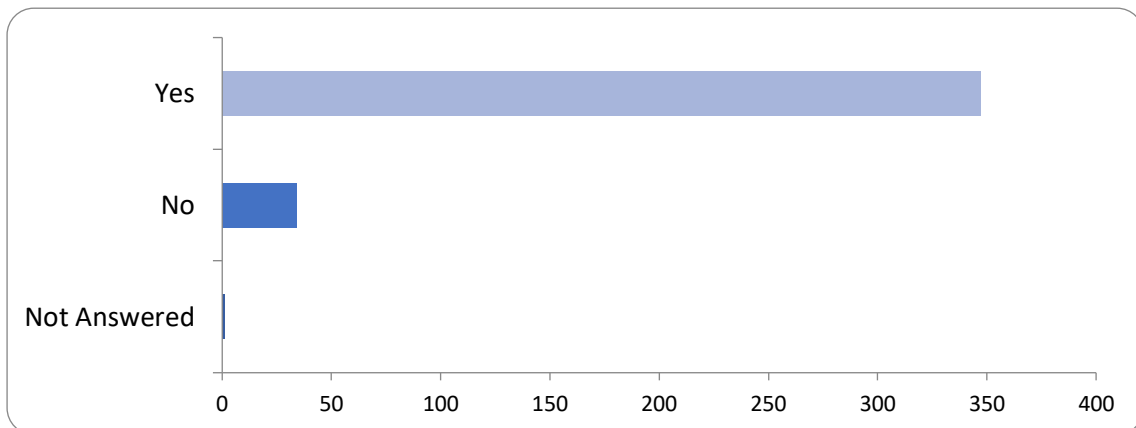
*1 - Increase the number of visitors to Bedlington accessing its retail, leisure and culture offers*

*2 - Collaborate with local residents and the business community to imagine and then realise a long-term prosperous future for Bedlington*

*3 - Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation for residents of Bedlington*

*4 - Raise the quality of the physical environment in Bedlington*

There were 381 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	347	90.84%
No	34	8.90%
Not Answered	1	0.26%

Yes

“It would be wonderful if it actually happens”

“What retail, leisure and culture offers?”

“1. There are no leisure facilities to offer. 2. Whenever councillors do collaborate with residents, nothing happens so we give up. 3. The only new job opportunities have been shops or building sites. Hardly a great opportunity. 4. The physical environment does need improving however all we have is building sites and bored young people pulling out planters and cutting down sapling trees put there to help with flooding which happens here regularly now”

“You could just copy and paste this to any town which will probably be what is happening”

“Get on with the re-generation of Bedlington not keep putting off- all the new houses why are the housing providers not investing in the town?!?”

“1. We have a poor retail offering, and negligible leisure/culture - what are these visitors coming to Bedlington for? 2. You've collaborated with us before, promised things, then ignored us and done whatever you wanted before - why will this time be different? 3&4 I'll believe it when I see it. Bedlington is the forgotten town.”

“1 - Increase the number of visitors to Bedlington accessing its retail, leisure and culture offers.... This objective implies we already have these things in place to build on... we do not... better to say. 1. Invest to build retail, leisure and cultural amenities with the objective of increasing the number of visitors to the town”

“1. What leisure facilities”

“What are these leisure and cultural services that are mentioned? We have a community centre, some good restaurants and a working men's club. Where is the theatre (alnwick/Berwick), museum (Alnwick/Morpeth) cinema (Cramlington), or sports facilities (every town in the county except Bedlington). It's our turn. Or we are paying council tax for the benefit of residents of other towns”

“Not worth it...heard it all before. 1. What leisure and retail. 2. Being waiting for that to happen since the public vote in Tesco. 3. What jobs? 4. would love to believe”

“Need actions, not words”

“What cultural offer has it got to promote?”

“Make sure the objectives are met as the neglect in previous years have had a terrible effect on the town”

“Access what leisure facilities? Safeguard what jobs?”

“Number one seems a bit silly. Can we ignore it for now and crack on with 2,3 and 4”

No

"Would love to see those points realized but NCC's track record does not fill me with confidence of any real fulfilment in the short to medium future"

"You've removed half of Bedlington. You might as well remove the rest"

"You need leisure facilities and decent shops to encourage visitors. Most people just pass through as there is nothing here for them"

"No, but it needs to happen"

"What leisure? apart from Gyms, what else is there for adults"

"Well the first one, we need the retail and certainly the leisure facilities to encourage people to come .. even our pool was taken off us mid children's swimming lessons then yes demolished without planning consent and then built more classrooms on"

"Again, nice words, but no detail and no time frame"

"What a load of rubbish"

"What retail and leisure does this refer to?"

"Words are no good. Action is required. If the greatest thing that has happened in the last three years is the opening of Aldi we have a long way to go. Independent specialised shops, improved parks and riverside and a lot more local participation in improving things instead of moaning."

"There is no collaboration with residents. You keep building lots of houses now a wind farm"

"Item 1 - Increase the number of visitors to Bedlington accessing its retail, leisure and culture offers? There is none so why would visitors come?"

"Don't worry about visitors get it right for residents first"

"Support for the town and residents must take priority over visitors. I have lived here 20 years and we seem to be going downhill"

"Unless you want a supermarket or an estate agent there is no 'retail facility' in Bedlington. As for 'leisure' Morpeth is getting a brand new leisure centre built costing millions, ashington had one not long ago, bedlington has never had one, why not? The leisure facilities in bedlington are nothing, except for the pubs and a couple of decent restaurants"

"You'll need a lot of investment to raise all of those as they don't even exist"

"Bedlington needs retail, leisure and culture offers. The two councils should work TOGETHER on this!"

### Enhanced culture, leisure & retail offer

“Smaller units for independent shops (look at Amble) try to balance the Sides up ie get rid of the old council building and make it something people would use”

“Finish the market place, encourage new businesses, give us the leisure centre everyone wants”

“Market place to be finished and some businesses to set up there so encourage people to the front street”

“A leisure centre would be advantageous. It would keep peoples travel costs down”

“A "Unique" attraction that would bring people in to the town. My suggestion would be a dry ski slope on the old pitheap in Gallagher Park. The rail connection will be an improvement for Bedlington Station, but not such an advantage for the top town. Improve the Thursday Market - is it to be integrated with the new developments?”

“Create a skate park for the kids. My children love to skateboard/Scooter. Morpeth, Blyth, Cramlington, Ashington, Newbiggin all have skate parks but not Bedlington”

“As Bedlington is a commuter town things need to be on a weekend/evening and not limited time during the day”

“Leisure centre with pool facilities, stores that aren't available in other parts of Northumberland to encourage people into the town”

“Give Bedlington something other towns don't have to get the footfall into the town. Then little shops will benefit from the footfall”

“Night life/hospitality seems to have gone down hill in the area - greater support from the council to these businesses possibly”

“An indoor sporting facility for all would make a huge difference. Even something that's not in neighbouring towns like an ice rink could bring visitors from Ashington, Morpeth, Blyth and Cramlington. Otherwise ac Active Northumberland leisure facility with a pool etc”

“A range of shops big names stores plus individual shops books store etc with cafes for meeting up to generate a community spirit”

“Increased leisure facilities - perhaps something that isn't available in nearby towns, as a point of difference for Bedlington”

## Town Centre Improvements

“Market place area to be finished and back of market place development tidied up.”

“It is the home of the Bedlington terrier and innovation on iron making, great history to encourage visitors / tourism to the town”

“Make the market place a hub as a market and a place people would feel they’d like to pop along to”

“A central garden/park where people could sit and meet near the main shopping area.”

“To push for land beside Courts/ Aldi to be used. If no business are interested build tennis court, park or something similar so it doesn't remain empty for another 30+years”

“Investment in the market place area to bring people to the town- increased footfall will benefit everyone”

“I’d like to see DR Pitt park get some real Investment it’s a play park surrounded by fencing and gates that could be secured at night to protect the equipment. The equipment is broken missing or outdated what is there is for small children. The skate section needs made bigger as loads of children use it it’s popular but currently it’s damaged and dangerous and NCC have done nothing. I’d like to see the flower section used properly to attract bees and butterflies”

“More signposting toward the main car park at the back of front street might help with above kerbside parking issues (question 6) - I feel more people could make use of that parking facility, as many park on the main road instead and it never seems to be at capacity.”

“Ensuring the front street is an attractive, well maintained place to visit. For plans of new building work to go ahead and to tidy up the street. Providing public toilets for those that visit the area”

“Clean up campaign and anti vandalism. Get rid of dereliction on front street. Push natural assets to attract money into area”

“Nurture our green spaces by smartening up the uneven and overgrown pathways, replacing broken benches and adding lighting eg 20 acres”

“Improvements in street design to return Bedlington to the beautiful location it once was”

“Maybe pedestrianise a whole area into cafes, boutiques, cafe nero etc...so it would be a pleasant place to be, instead of a row of dowdy shops and dirty streets”

“Grass cutting and public areas tidied properly especially throughout the summer.”

“Sort out the area where Aldi is now and quickly it’s been a mess for years. There are some lovely walks which I forgot to mention but impossible when it’s been raining perhaps better footpaths in these

## Business growth and jobs

“Smaller units for independent shops (look at Amble) try to balance the Sides up ie get rid of the old council building and make it something people would use”

“Get the town centre finished it’s been dragging on 8 years and finally let’s encourage new business into Bedlington reduce the rates as an incentive.”

“A unified town development trust to ensure development is in keeping with the conservation area status, making Bedlington more of a 'destination' place with local businesses that will make visitors and residents want to come back on repeat visits ... and making local businesses appealing to those of us who now work from home and spend more time than we did before in Bedlington. The development needs to do more in terms of engaging with residents in the large new build estates that see Bedlington only as a 'dormitory' town for commuting elsewhere.”

“Commitment to Fibre internet to every telephone cabinet (fttc) in the town. Future rollout plans to increase the number of properties receiving Fibre to the Premises (fttp).

“Better business support, to encourage the growth of independent businesses, which will be a reason to visit Bedlington”

“Affordable shop rates: Encouraging more business’ to open in the town. Offering a variety of shops, which would boost visitors. ( When you see how busy Morpeth is,, with the right choice of shops, there is no reason why Bedlington can’t be the same)”

“Create some affordable units in the new pipers place development to encourage small businesses rather than just salons and takeaways and large supermarkets. We could become THE town for small businesses and therefore stand out from the likes of Morpeth and Ashington. This might actually encourage people to visit Bedlington from other areas too - let's face it no one comes to Bedlington for a day out.”

“A few extra companies investing in central Bedlington, links between council and private landlords to make sure retail space is affordable and attainable. Bring back the business quarterly meetings so businesses can link up and share experiences and support each other”

“More opportunity for local/small businesses to set up shop and be supported”

“Get businesses away from residential areas and move them to the town centre so residents feel safe and can enjoy their local area”

“More input put into helping smaller businesses thrive such as Boxwood Tap, Cake Cavern etc... rather than waiting for supermarkets to come to the area.”

“Create a cafe culture at the core of the market place invite small independent businesses in portable mini wooden huts to encourage visitors on a weekend close the front street to cars at weekends and create a visitors hub”

## New homes, housing renewal, and quality of place improvements

“Modern 3 bed social housing with possibilities for disabled level access, downstairs wc etc.. or even 3 bedroom bungalows”

“A preventative programme to clean drains and gullies rather than reacting when they are blocked and flooding the roads”

“Increase our infrastructure - the number of houses popping up is relative to town growth, however we’re not seeing this. Increasing availability of schools, DR appointments etc - this will involve investment and growth of these core facilities.”

“Keep the amazing riverside looking at its best to encourage folk to use it ( reinstate park facilities for families )”

“Slow down the house building - appreciate it’s needed, but consideration needs to be given to make sure we don’t lose the precious outdoor space”

“Investment, development of leisure facilities and general town development. A planned development of infrastructure that meets the needs of a fast growing residential town. The removal of disused former council offices which could be replaced by attractive premises, in tune with the towns more attractive building, that could incorporate a host of facilities/ resources for the benefit of the towns residents. Of massive importance is the provision of adequate school places that meet the needs of the growing population”

“Stop building new houses reduce rent to encourage businesses to come to town”

“Stop building on all of the green belt land around the town, we do not need any more houses”

“Creating a better infrastructure (doctors,schools etc) rather than keep building more housing”

“Real Affordable Housing not just some excuse by builders to acquire permission to build more private houses”

## Transport connectivity (within town and with wider region)

“Sort the road network out. Adding a round about to every junction is ridiculous especially when you put a pedestrian crossing in between too”

“Transport to schools (eg bus pass) should be free to children who live 2 miles away from their school rather than the current 3 miles. Children do not feel safe walking a long distance from school on their own especially during winter months when it is dark”

“Cut back hedges on the public footpaths to make them clear and open, a bridge and a connection to the Cramlington cycle network would allow a route between Bedlington and 3 surrounding towns”

“A reliable bus service to take my daughter to and from Ridge farm area to Bedlington Academy”

“The train line asap or a more regular direct bus to the ministry”

“Stakeford - better bus services. Morpeth, Cambois are l'll served and impossible to get too for many yet less than 5 miles away. Roads - road bumps re-thought and a better alternative used. It's a joke living here”

“A metro station or more buses or train stations”

“Road structure at West End, too many of same schools in same area so traffic is a nightmare in mornings especially with all the new housing in Bedlington”

“Proper investment in the towns transport network [eg Metro/Bus links]”



## Young people provision

“More community activities, particularly for families who are living in financial difficulties”

“A community hub that’s attractive, sports and IT friendly and a focus for all age groups; not sure of its name but a sports, IT, Centre. There’s certainly an increasing concern of adolescence children wandering the streets who need some form of distraction therapy!”

“Get the youth off the street by providing a safe, engaging place for them to go that provides positive reinforcement - sports facility, leisure centre”

“I would invest more money into active places for children e.g swimming, skating, climbing etc Invest in the scenery and make it a place people want to come”

“Having more amenities for younger people, to enhance their lives and opportunities, tennis courts, swimming pool, bowling etc”

“Parks have pavilions that could be used for so much more other than old peoples bowls or old peoples art groups make that’s all it’s used for. What a waste. Improve in the park for children equipment, goal posts and the skate park for starters. Dr Pitt had so much potential Add in some flowers and it’s an area for children to safely play learn and relax. The pavilion could and should be used more for young children activities. There could be a history board on this parks coal history one of the oldest parks donated by the Pitt’s. People don’t know about that”

“A community building like they have in Cramlington. Said community centre to feel like it belongs to the community rather than an exclusive club”

“Parks we like to skate and play footy but they took the goal posts out of dr pit and the skate pipe is knackered me man rang the council who said there’s no money to fix the parks. We have 1 swing. Nothing to have fun”

“Increase leisure facilities for young people particularly”

“investment in activities for children with different ages to tackle racism, saying no to drugs and to be better neighbours/friends etc awards for children who do ‘good deeds’”

“More things for toddlers and young kids to do”

“Better facilities for young people - I know a skate park would be really appreciated, perhaps at Gallagher Park or 20 Acres?”

“A town hub (my previous town of Hebburn was on to something). Taking the town centre redevelopment more seriously. A modern community centre for this generations young children, to save them before it’s too late!”

“Centres for youths / agency’s working with young teens”