



Haltwhistle Place Programme – Consultation 1

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

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The activity ran from 04/04/2022 to 25/04/2022

Responses to this survey: 344

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Overview

Haltwhistle Borderlands Place Programme Consultation



Haltwhistle Borderlands Place Programme Consultation

Closes 25 Apr 2022

Opened 4 Apr 2022

Contact

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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.

Each town, including Haltwhistle, 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 Haltwhistle and Northumberland's other priority towns. Towns will only enter the Place Programme should their Place Plan contain projects eligible for Borderlands investment.

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 Haltwhistle

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

Section 3 – Vision

This is the Borderlands Place Programme vision for Haltwhistle:

"By 2031 Haltwhistle will be a vibrant, growing town recognised as a 'must see' destination by visitors to the region. Attractive to residents and to those visiting Hadrian's Wall, and the natural beauty and heritage of the region, the town will offer day and night-time activities for all age groups.

New innovative businesses will be drawn to the town, complementing and developing existing business, both on the high street and on industrial parks with improved connectivity locally, nationally and internationally. "

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 three strategic objectives::

1. Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to Haltwhistle town centre and industrial parks
2. Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in Haltwhistle.
3. Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in Haltwhistle

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

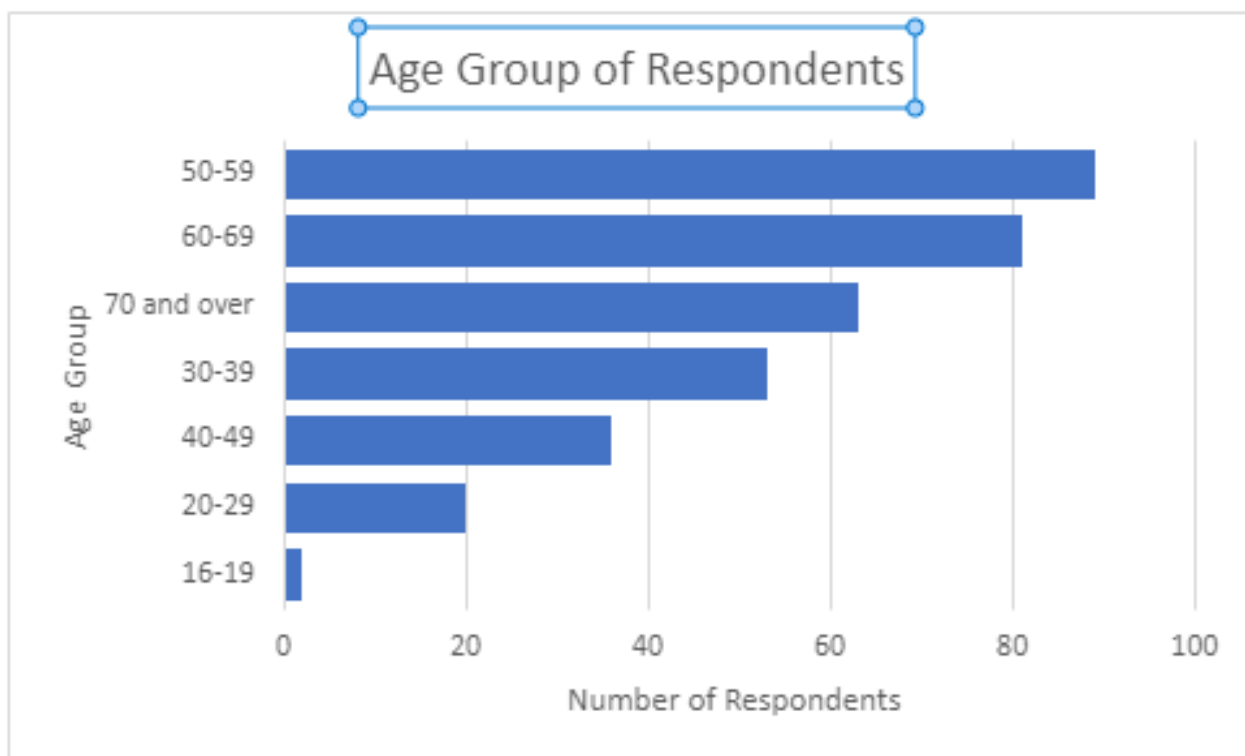
If you would like to be kept informed about future surveys then please give us your email address.

This is optional. If you do provide your details, we will only use it to contact you about future consultations related to the Haltwhistle 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

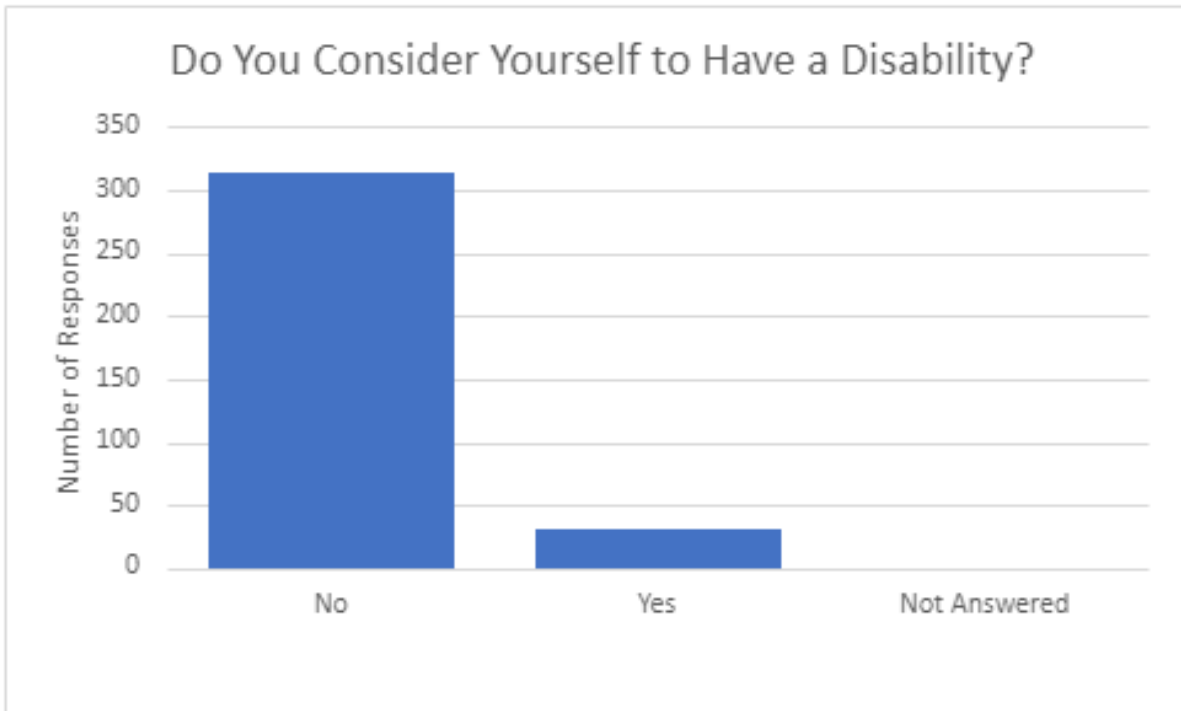
There were 344 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
16-19	2	0.58
20-29	20	5.81
30-39	53	15.41
40-49	36	10.47
50-59	89	25.87
60-69	81	23.55
70 and over	63	18.31

One hundred 5-18-year-olds were consulted via local youth groups and the resulting report is at Annex A to this main report.

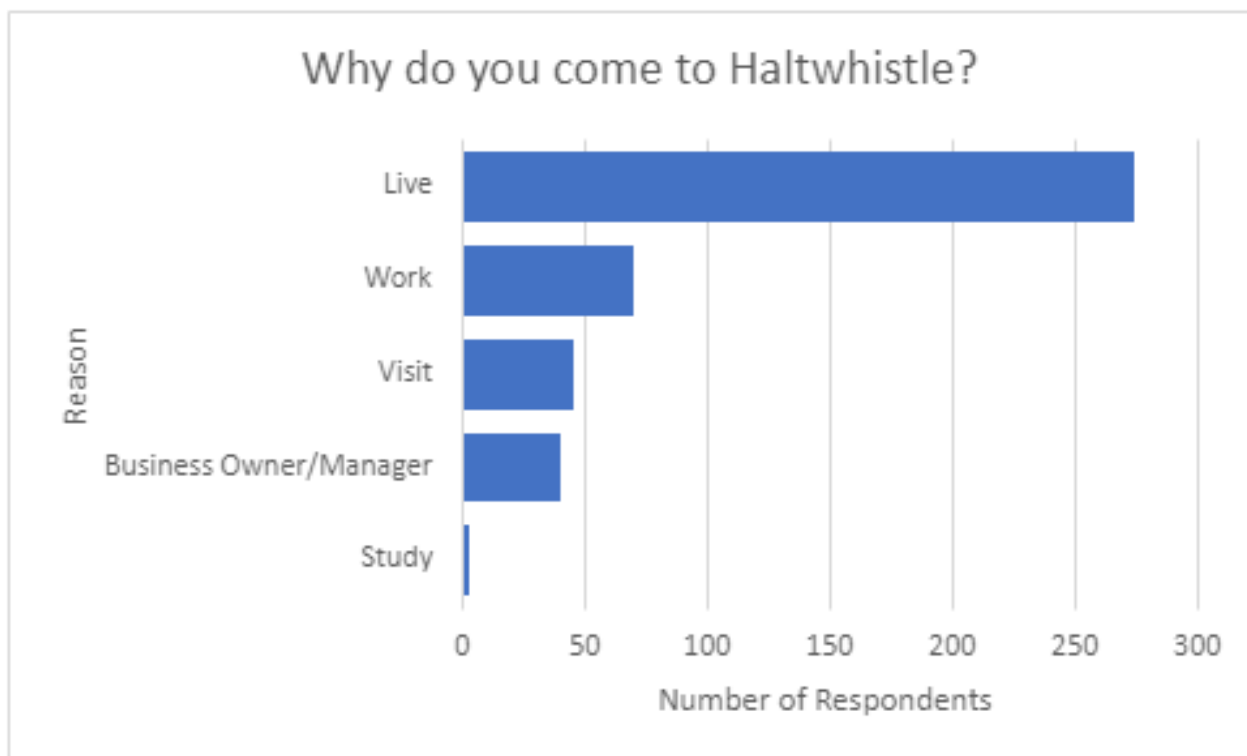
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?
 There were 344 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	31	9.02%
No	313	90.98%
Not Answered	0	0%

Why do you come to Haltwhistle?

There were 432 responses to this part of the question.

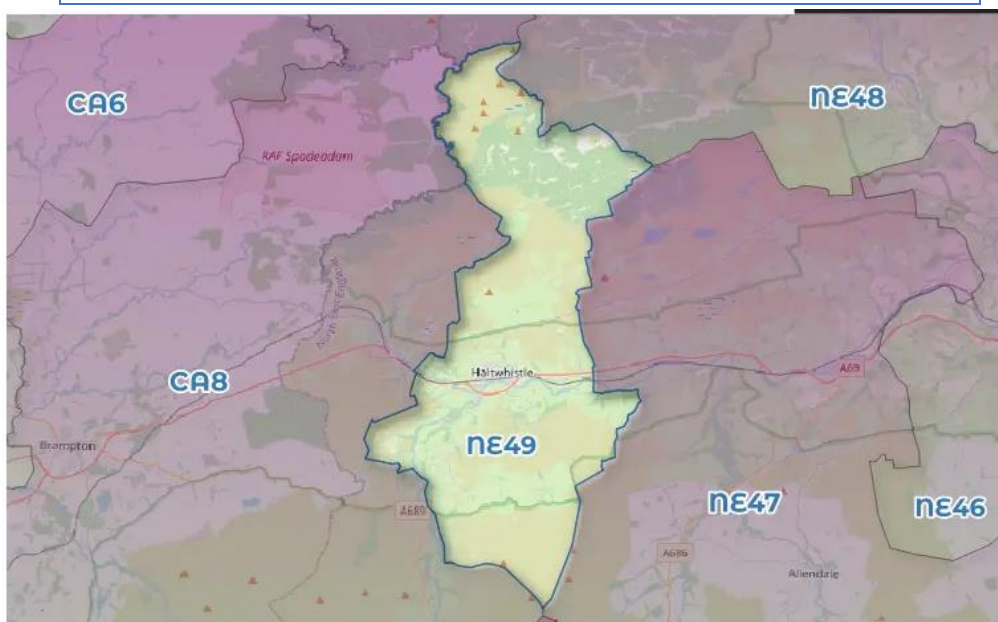


Option	Total	Percent
Business owner/manager	40	9.25%
Live	274	63.42%
Study	3	0.69%
Visit	45	10.41%
Work	70	16.2%
Not Answered	0	0%

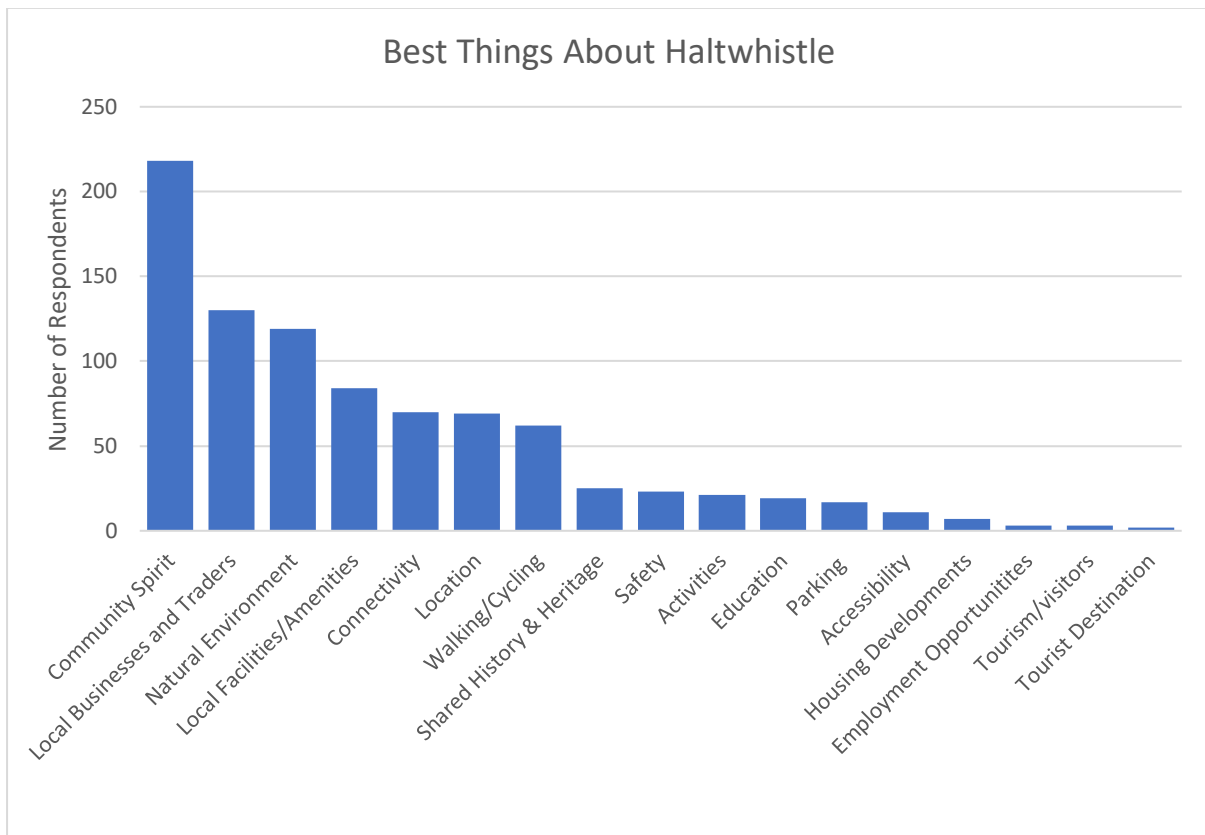
A Business Focus Group was held alongside the main consultation and the resulting report is at Annex B to this main report.

Postcode areas of respondents

Postcode	Frequency
NE499	189
NE490	73
NE477	20
NE49	7
CA87L	4
NE46	4
NE476	4
NE462	3
CA87B	3
NE47	2
CA8	2
CA87	2
NE479	2
A further 25 postcodes each had one respondent	25
TOTAL	344



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



Topic	Frequency	% Of respondents citing
Community Spirit	218	63.37
Local Businesses and Traders	130	37.79
Natural Environment	119	34.59
Local Facilities/Amenities	84	24.42
Connectivity	70	20.35
Location	69	20.06
Walking/Cycling	62	18.02
Shared History & Heritage	25	7.27
Safety	23	6.69
Activities	21	6.10
Education	19	5.52
Parking	17	4.94
Accessibility	11	3.20
Housing Developments	7	2.03
Employment Opportunities	3	0.87
Tourism/visitors	3	0.87
Tourist Destination	2	0.58

Community Spirit – 218 Respondents

“The people”

“Very friendly and supportive community”

“Friendly people willing to help neighbours”

“Strong community”

“There is a real sense of community. It feels more like a village than a town”

“All very friendly and helpful”

“Everyone looks out for each other”

“Strong sense of community”

Local Businesses and Traders – 130 Respondents

“good range of shops”

“Some great traditional shop”

“family run shops selling local produce”

“vibrant high street”

“Excellent local shops”

“fab local businesses”

“some excellent independant local businesses”

“thriving for basic shopping”

“some of the local shops go out of their way to be very helpful”

Natural Environment – 119 Respondents

“beautiful surroundings”

“open countryside on your doorstep”

“surrounded by beautiful scenery”

“Beautiful surrounding countryside”

“There are lots of different walks with great scenery”

“amazing countryside on our doorstep”

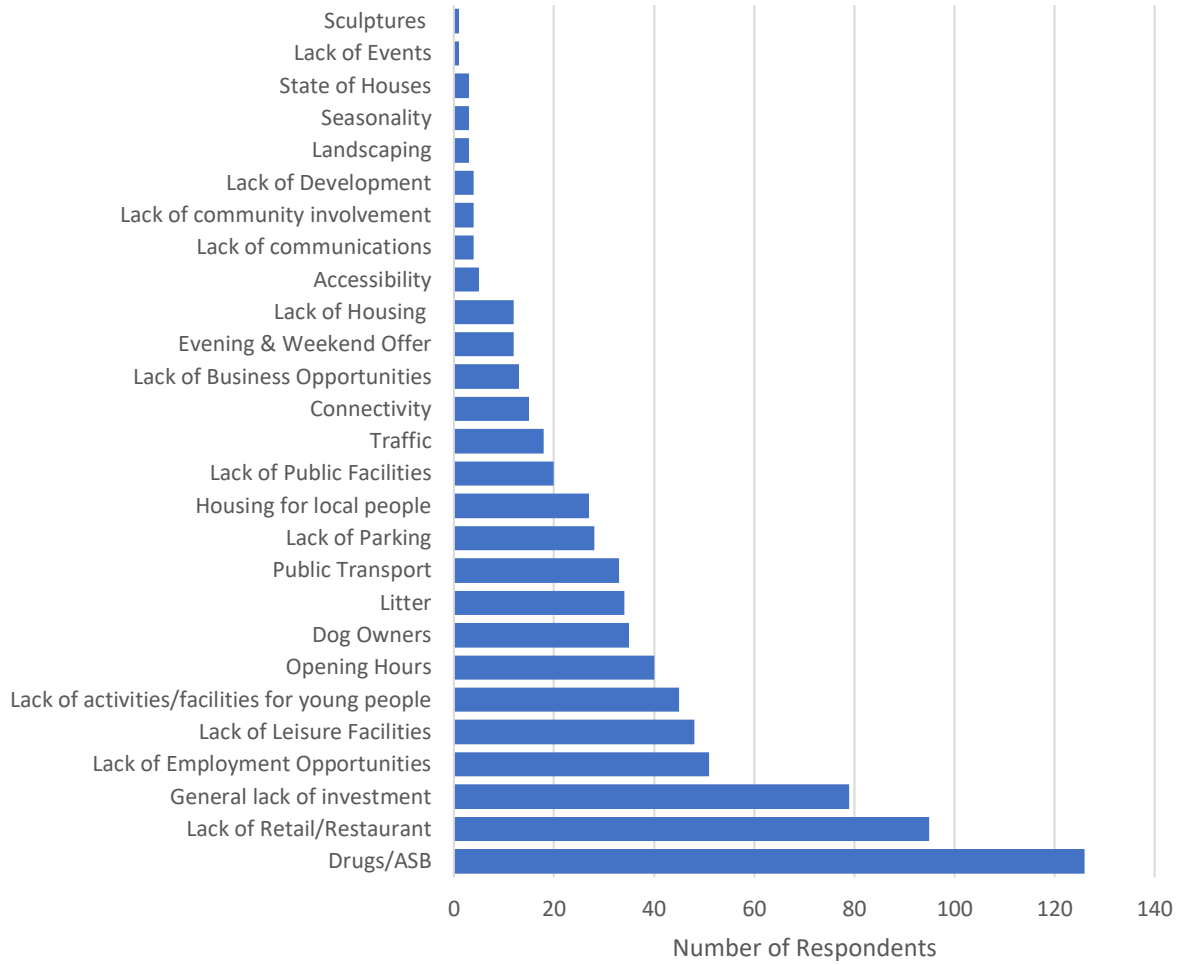
“Green spaces easy to access”

“‘Green areas’ - walks, river etc”

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

Topic	Frequency	% of respondents citing
Drugs/ASB	126	36.63
Lack of Retail/Restaurant	95	27.62
General lack of investment	79	22.97
Lack of Employment Opportunities	51	14.83
Lack of Leisure Facilities	48	13.95
Lack of activities/facilities for young people	45	13.08
Opening Hours	40	11.63
Dog Owners	35	10.17
Litter	34	9.88
Public Transport	33	9.59
Lack of Parking	28	8.14
Housing for local people	27	7.85
Lack of Public Facilities	20	5.81
Traffic	18	5.23
Connectivity	15	4.36
Lack of Business Opportunities	13	3.78
Evening & Weekend Offer	12	3.49
Lack of Housing	12	3.49
Accessibility	5	1.45
Lack of communications	4	1.16
Lack of community involvement	4	1.16
Lack of Development	4	1.16
Landscaping	3	0.87
Seasonality	3	0.87
State of Houses	3	0.87
Lack of Events	1	0.29
Sculptures	1	0.29

Worst Things About Haltwhistle



Drugs/ASB – 126 Respondents

“Drug abuse seems very high/ drug dealing during the day in plain sight.”

“Drugs problems”

“drug issues in the town”

“Anti social behaviour from a minority”

“major drug problem”

“People with Asbos moving into the town with drug and alcohol problems”

“Terrible drugs problem which is getting worse”

“vandalism/drug use”

“Big drugs problem and virtually no police presence”

“No near services available for those with addiction and mental health”

“Drug culture”

Lack of Retail/Restaurants – 95 Respondents

“Local shops are not affordable for groceries”

“No clothing retailers”

“Shops closing”

“Highstreet is dwindling”

“Lack of good places to eat.”

“Early closing both Saturday and Wednesday”

“Lack of artisanal shops.”

“little for the many visitors to Haltwhistle to spend their money on.”

“Everything's stupidly expensive”

“empty shops on the Main Street”

“Nowhere to buy men's clothes, limited provision for ladies and none for children's.”

“Limited provision of Coffee Shops.”

“Not enough restaurants”

General Lack of Investment – 79 Respondents

“The old Crown Paints factory could be used for new businesses”

“Crown paints site dilapidated”

“Empty industrial unit (old Crown paints site) would be a great development opportunity to bring businesses into the town”

“Old first school site - needs to be developed or will become another unsafe eyesore”

“Old church hall building - eye sore in the Centre of the town”

“Lack of investment in small businesses”

“Declining investment in town, shops, tourist information centre”

“Needs investment to promote more tourism”

“Old Crown Paints site needs a good sort out”

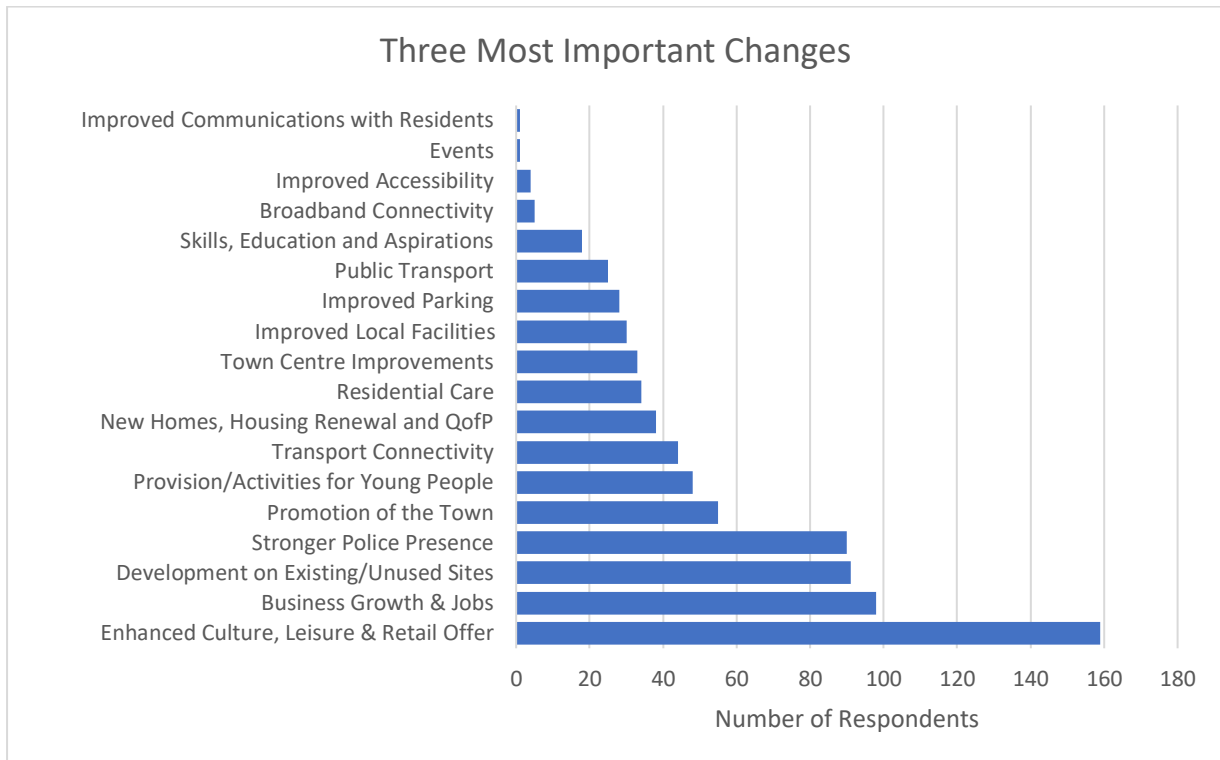
“Lack of investment from local council on the High Street”

“Derelict business park”

“always overlooked for investment”

“Lack of investment to keep the younger people interested in staying within the area”

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



Topic	Frequency	% of respondents citing
Enhanced Culture, Leisure & Retail Offer	159	46.22
Business Growth & Jobs	98	28.49
Development on Existing/Unused Sites	91	26.45
Stronger Police Presence	90	26.16
Promotion of the Town	55	15.99
Provision/Activities for Young People	48	13.95
Transport Connectivity	44	12.79
New Homes, Housing Renewal and QofP	38	11.05
Residential Care	34	9.88
Town Centre Improvements	33	9.59
Improved Local Facilities	30	8.72
Improved Parking	28	8.14
Public Transport	25	7.27
Skills, Education and Aspirations	18	5.23
Broadband Connectivity	5	1.45
Improved Accessibility	4	1.16
Events	1	0.29
Improved Communications with Residents	1	0.29

Enhanced Culture, Leisure and Retail Offer – 159 Respondents

- “Investment in the leisure centre”
- “A better selection of retail shops on the High Street.”
- “cafes with wifi”
- “more restaurants”
- “more leisure activities”
- “more choice for places to eat out”
- “More restaurants/cafes, improve the street”
- “We could do with a McDonald's and aldi or Lidl.”
- “More shopping Town stuck in the 50s”
- “Longer opening hours”
- “More essential shops i.e. bakery, greengrocers, delicatessen.”
- “More diverse night time economy”
- “soft play, bowling alley, paintball”
- “Support to the local swimming and leisure centre”
- “A high quality local museum”
- “good quality catering after 3pm with reliable opening hours”

Business Growth and Jobs – 98 Respondents

- “provide opportunities for employment”
- “More incentive to take over empty properties for new business”
- “Focus on tourism, help tourist related businesses set up in the town.”
- “Better local employment and vocational training opportunities”
- “Attract more larger business and develop better work opportunities”
- “Ensuring local business and shops can be retained”
- “Hadrian Enterprise Park could be made more use of and attract businesses to the town”
- “Create better quality employment - by building office space for Small - Medium sized enterprises - especially for tech and professional industry - accounting, legal, back office support functions, gov. offices, data centres.”
- “Availability of business premises.”
- “More visitor services for tourists.”
- “Encouragement of inward investment”
- “Affordable, well serviced and smart business units placed near the A69”

Development on Existing/Unused Sites – 91 Respondents

“development of old Crown Paints site”

“The old crown paints site needs to be developed as it’s an eye sore and a waste of commercial land”

“Development of buildings/land that are currently unproductive”

“Less abandoned industrial buildings”

“industrial site made into something to create jobs”

“Tidy and create low priced industrial units the old crown paints site.”

“Investments in empty sites”

“Investment in a business enterprise scheme or similar on the old crown paints site”

“Sort out the mess down by the old Crown Paints”

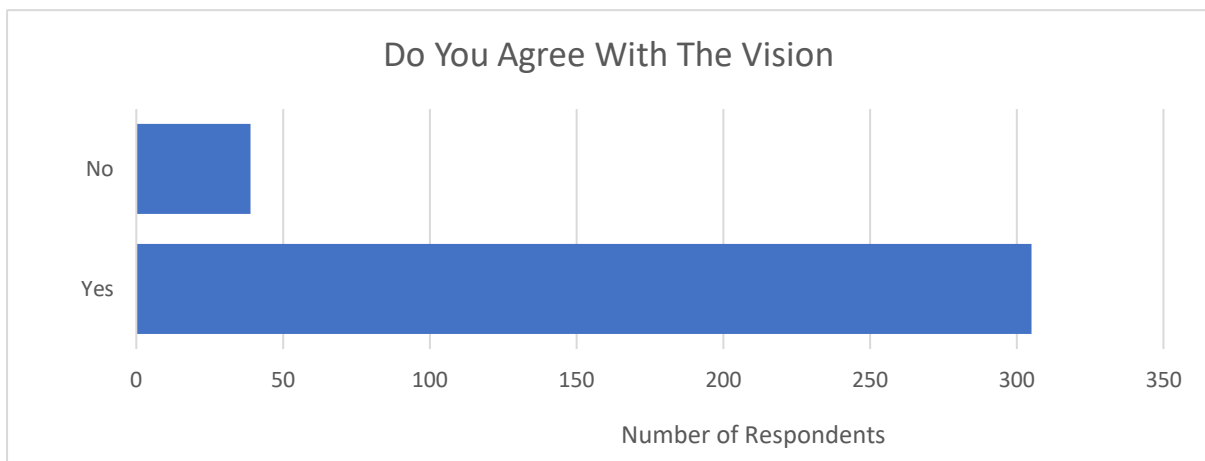
“Industrial estate could do with a revamp like Prudhoe and Hexham”

Do you agree with the vision?

This is the Borderlands Place Programme vision for Haltwhistle:

By 2031 Haltwhistle will be a vibrant, growing town recognised as a 'must see' destination by Hadrian's Wall visitors. Attracting day trippers, vacationers and new residents, the town will offer day and nighttime activities for all age groups. New innovative businesses will be drawn to the town, both on the high street and out of town industrial parks, by the combination of improved connectivity to the east and west coasts and the natural beauty of the region based in the centre of Britain.

There were 344 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	305	88.66%
No	39	11.34%
Not Answered	0	0%

Yes- 305 Respondents

The town council needs an overhaul and councillors not voting against things that would be good for the town because of their own beliefs and resistance to change.

“is it achievable given the current attitudes of local and county councils.”

“Agree completely with the vision it’s exactly what this town needs”

“Go for it !”

“emphasise importance of developing cultural activities for resident community”

“The vision is 100% accurate and exactly how i see it.”

“Consider needs of residents living both in and around Haltwhistle”

“Opportunities for involvement in these new businesses must include local people as a priority.”

“It is ambitious but necessary if the Town is to thrive”

“Haltwhistle needs both traditional and modern indoor and outdoor facilities that attract visitors into the town centre”

No – 39 Respondents

“Industrial - should be 'professional tech parks'.”

“Industrial parks are a dated concept which are subject to boom bust - and are not 'green’”

“too much reliance on tourism.”

“It's not supporting high quality skilled jobs that the town requires.”

“Tourism jobs tend not to pay well so it locks people into low wages and the ability to have money to spend locally”

“It would take a lot of investment to achieve that and sometimes the local town council can be a barrier to change.”

“just taking all footfall from the town up to the Sill and Wall, nothing for visitors in town”

“Total waste of time, obviously living in cuckoo land”

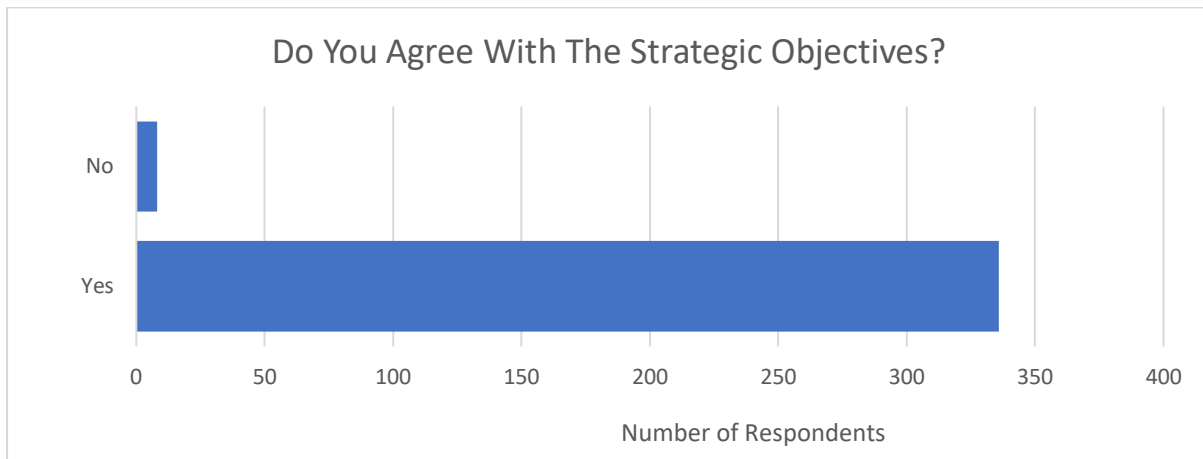
“Too vague, filled with cliches”

Taken as a whole do you agree with these objectives?

We have three strategic objectives:

1. Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to Haltwhistle town centre and out of town industrial parks
2. Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in Haltwhistle
3. Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in Haltwhistle

There were 344 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	336	97.67%
No	8	2.33%
Not Answered	0	0%

Yes – 336 Respondents

“Try and help people to open shops”

“There needs to be an objective through which social capital, capacity, skills and confidence are strengthened within the town and its surrounding localities”

“Objective 3 could be achieved fairly quickly by businesses trading at peak tourist times (ie weekends).”

“Make more use of Centre of Britain slogan to attract more visitors”

“Needs to be backed up with physical evidence of investment and not just words”

“Crown Paints would be an ideal lorry amenities are as there is no adequate overnight parking on the entire A69”

No – 8 Respondents

“there is no recognition that the RURAL characteristics of Haltwhistle might be important to residents and that they might wish for some assurances that the 3 objectives will not destroy the very aspects of their town that they most value”

“there needs to be something about developing and sustaining cultural infrastructure”

Ideas and suggestions

Business Growth and Jobs

“Develop Hadrian Enterprise Park and the First School site for jobs (walking and cycling centre and accommodation and restaurant at first school site).”

“Create better quality employment - by building office space for Small - Medium sized enterprises - especially for tech and professional industry - accounting, legal, back office support functions, gov. offices, data centres. This office park should be supported by green energy solar park.”

“Create an all year round visitor attraction to boost tourism and full year employment”

“Create a hub visitor centre/museum”

“There is a need for more serviced accommodation in Haltwhistle. Haltwhistle needs to create more affordable space for creatives to live and work in the town”

“A business representative organisation”

“Specific business development funding targeting business infra structure support.”

“local economy must be fueled by jobs all year round and not just tourists for 4 months”

“Development of the ex crown paints industrial site. Either non competing retail or light industrial or office based.”

“Facilities for home-workers (co-working space with a cafe or something similar)”

“Create a base for future sustainable manufacturing (passivhaus etc)”

“Create starter spaces”

“Incentives for manufacturing companies moving to Haltwhistle. lots of suitable units on Hadrian's park site”

“Community-owned 'Made In Northumberland' shop”

“Community-owned restaurant open 7 days a week”

Development on Existing/Unused Sites

“Industrial estate could do with a revamp like Prudhoe and Hexham - some large stores accessible to those passing on A69 - independent cafe / large Boots / TKMaxx / Sports direct / Go Outdoors - appropriate for tourists and locals”.

“sensitive, thoughtful development of the Hadrian Enterprise park along circular economy/green lines.”

“Crown Paints would be an ideal lorry amenities are as there is no adequate overnight parking on the entire A69”

Enhanced Culture, leisure and Retail Offer

“Focus on a holiday hub to bring more people in and stay for a holiday.”

“The visitor economy may benefit from a small Heritage Centre to attract visitors”

“floodlit football pitch for example”

“Investment into a skate/scooter park”

“A cultural venue, using arts for regeneration”

“Industrial estate could do with a revamp like Prudhoe and Hexham - some large stores accessible to those passing on A69 - independent cafe / large Boots / TKMaxx / Sports direct / Go Outdoors - appropriate for tourists and locals.”

“National Trust to open Bellister Castle to draw in tourists”

“pop up shops in empty premises”

“minibus for shoppers”

“encourage cafes to open in the evening”

“pop up art exhibitions”

“A high quality local museum perhaps linked to the Roman Army museum and Vindolanda”

“Theatre”

“Support to the local swimming and leisure centre”

“Use some of the country land to attract people to visit with kids (gruffalo trail or something)”

“Railway from Alston to Haltwhistle would be a great attraction”

“build on tourism potential related to outdoor activity”

“Roof on the pool or a retractable one so can open all year round”

“Allow a budget supermarket to open a branch (Iceland, Lidl, Aldi etc)”

“More opportunities to support local businesses. E.g late night shopping events or utilising green space for stall holders”

“Swimming pool ran by council not a charity”

“Build a wet weather attraction.”

Housing

“Small scale housing development with smaller industrial units to encourage small businesses”

“A care home so that people could stay here instead of being shipped all over the country.”

Promotion of the Town

“visitor centre for local information”

“The Sill and other areas on the wall to point the way to and promote Haltwhistle”

“The visitor economy may benefit from a small Heritage Centre to attract visitors”

“We should seriously try to explore ways to extend the South Tynedale Railway back to where the line started originally, Haltwhistle. To form a tourist line link between us and Alston could bring additional jobs and many more visitors”

“Focus on tourism, help tourist related businesses set up in the town.”

“Promote Haltwhistle as a tourist destination.”

“Improve reputation PR / Marketing”

“Sign post attractions within the Town.”

“More advertising to take advantage of its proximity to Hadrian's wall”

“needs a tourism focal point - a museum celebrating Haltwhistle's past”

“A centre of Britain monument”

“More international events such as getting Tour de Britain cycle race pass through”

“Designing a ‘Visit Haltwhistle’ campaign to advertise our beautiful town”

Public Transport

“Bring back local bus services to surrounding towns and villages”

“Extend the south Tyneside railway to Haltwhistle and to Cawfields”

“Better transport connections to Hadrian's Wall”

Residential Care

“A 24 hour residential, dementia and nursing care home facility”

“Restore old church into an old people's home”

Skills, Education and Aspirations

“More community development projects which actively engage disenfranchised working class people”

“Library rooms used to give classes”

Town Centre Improvements

“One way traffic in Main Street”

“Making main street more pedestrian friendly”

“Regenerate some of the buildings on the high street”

“A wider paved area of the north side of the Main Street so that it could be utilised by businesses”

“Many shop fronts need updating and more appealing to look at”

“A visible public places to sit and enjoy a sandwich and drink outside at lunchtime”

Transport Connectivity

“more investment for electric bikes or cars”

“Dual carriageway from Hexham along to Haltwhistle.”

“Cycle track from Haltwhistle along to Hexham.”

“Bridge over A69 to allow the old railway line (cycle way) to reconnect the town to the cycle networks to the south.”

“Improvements to A69 at Warwick Bridge.”

“Easy dualing of A69 Haltwhistle to Bardon mill”

“Better signposted cycle trails”

“Connect haltwhistle better to the Roman wall and surrounding villages tourist come into town via bike and walking routes with things to see along the way.”

Young People Provision

“Indoor place for kids to play”

“More facilities for young people and children such as soft play / trampoline park / skate park.”

“Make better use of the park on the comb hill. More climbing frames etc”

Haltwhistle Borderlands Place Programme

Public Consultation 5-25 April 2022

Young People's Consultation Report

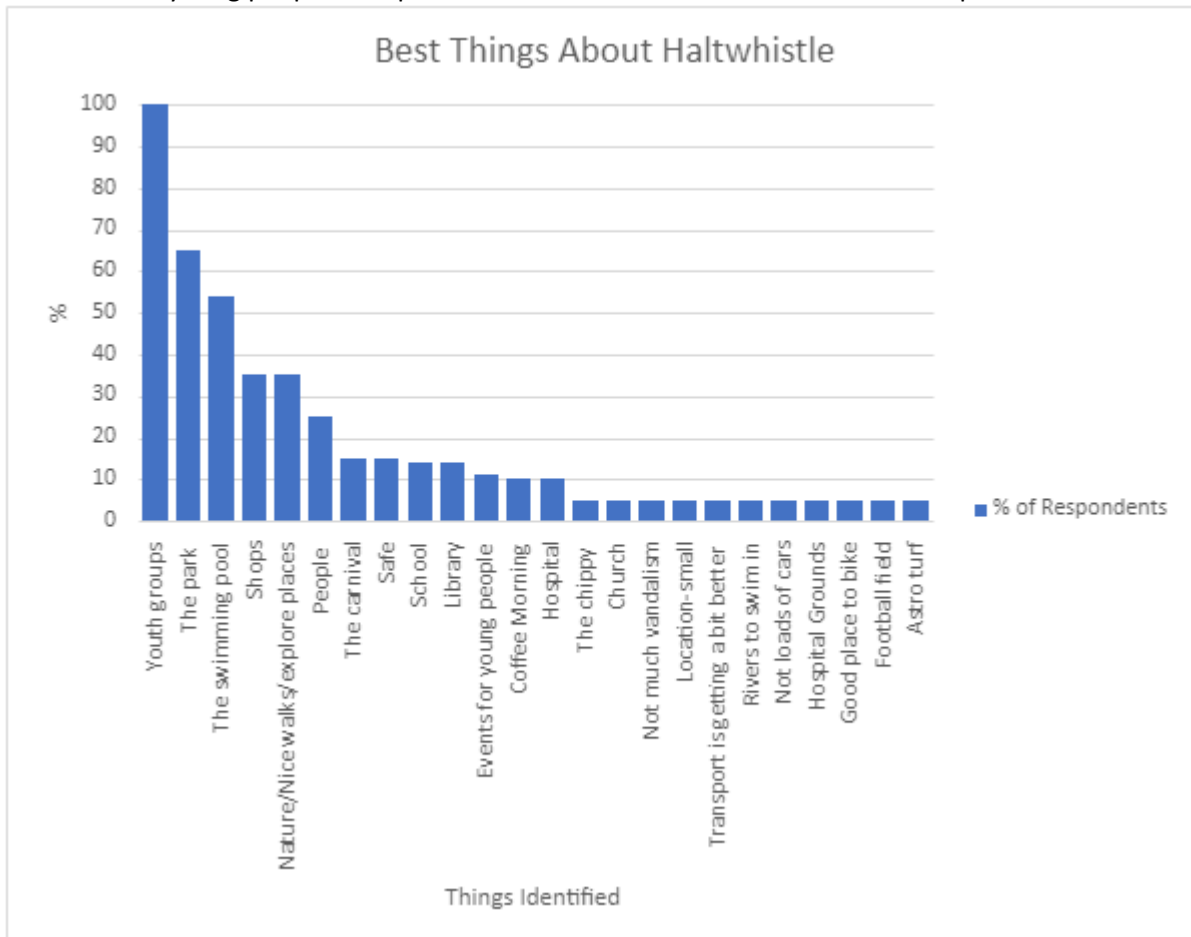
The young people of Haltwhistle were welcome to complete the main consultation, however, experience has shown that, other than when a school/college facilitate completion, the under-18 age group is usually underrepresented in survey results.

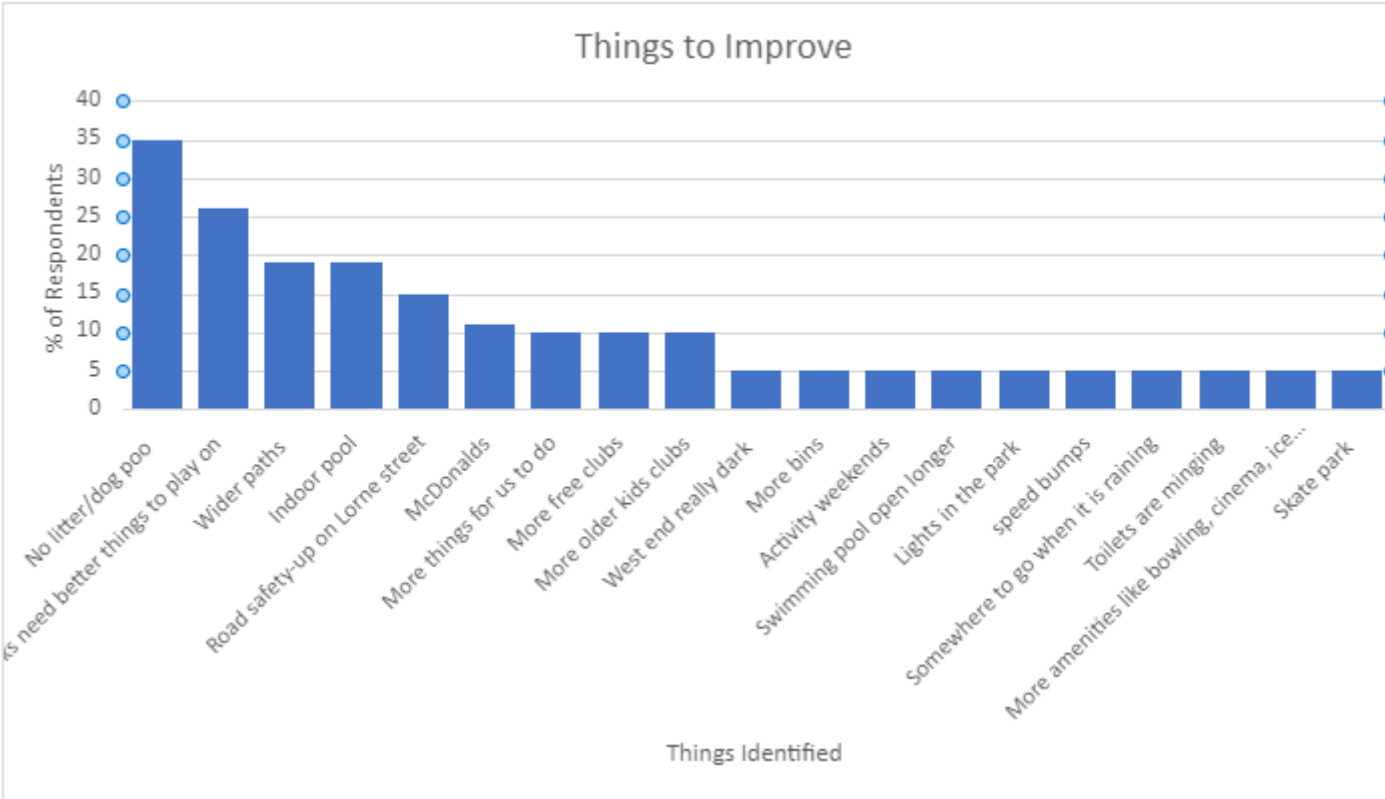
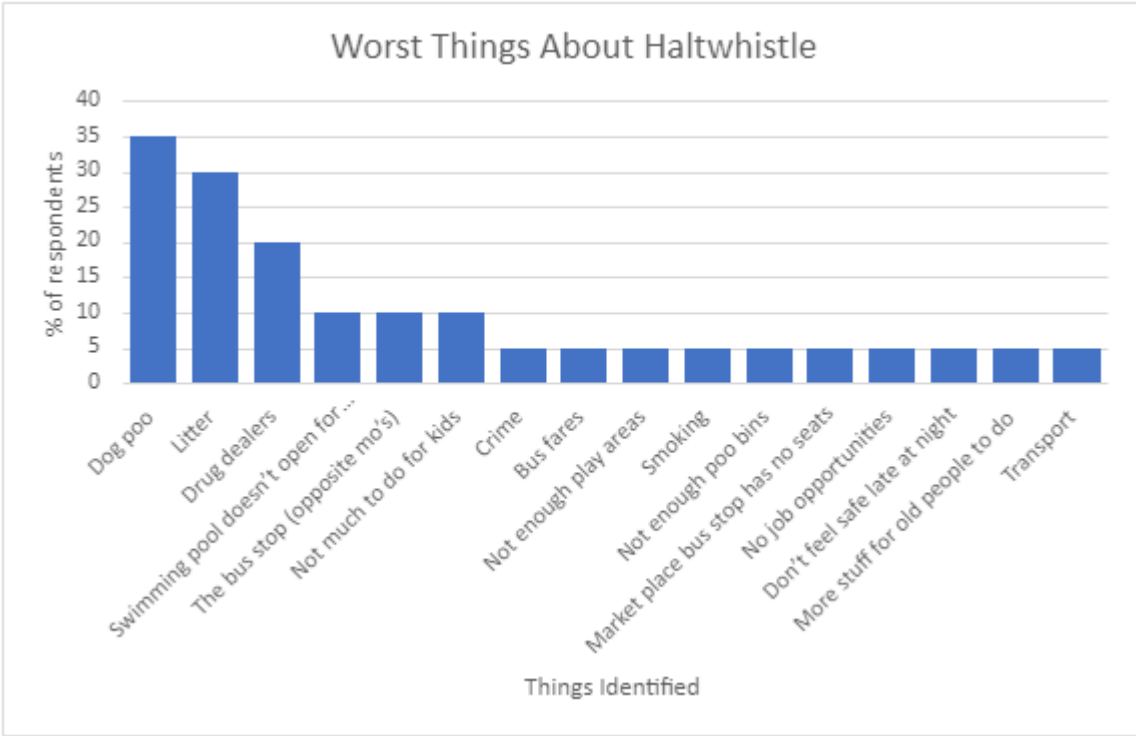
Arrangements were therefore made with youth activity providers – Young and Sweet Youth Club, Brownies and Rainbows - for the young people aged 5 to 16 to be engaged in discussions covering the main questions in the consultation:

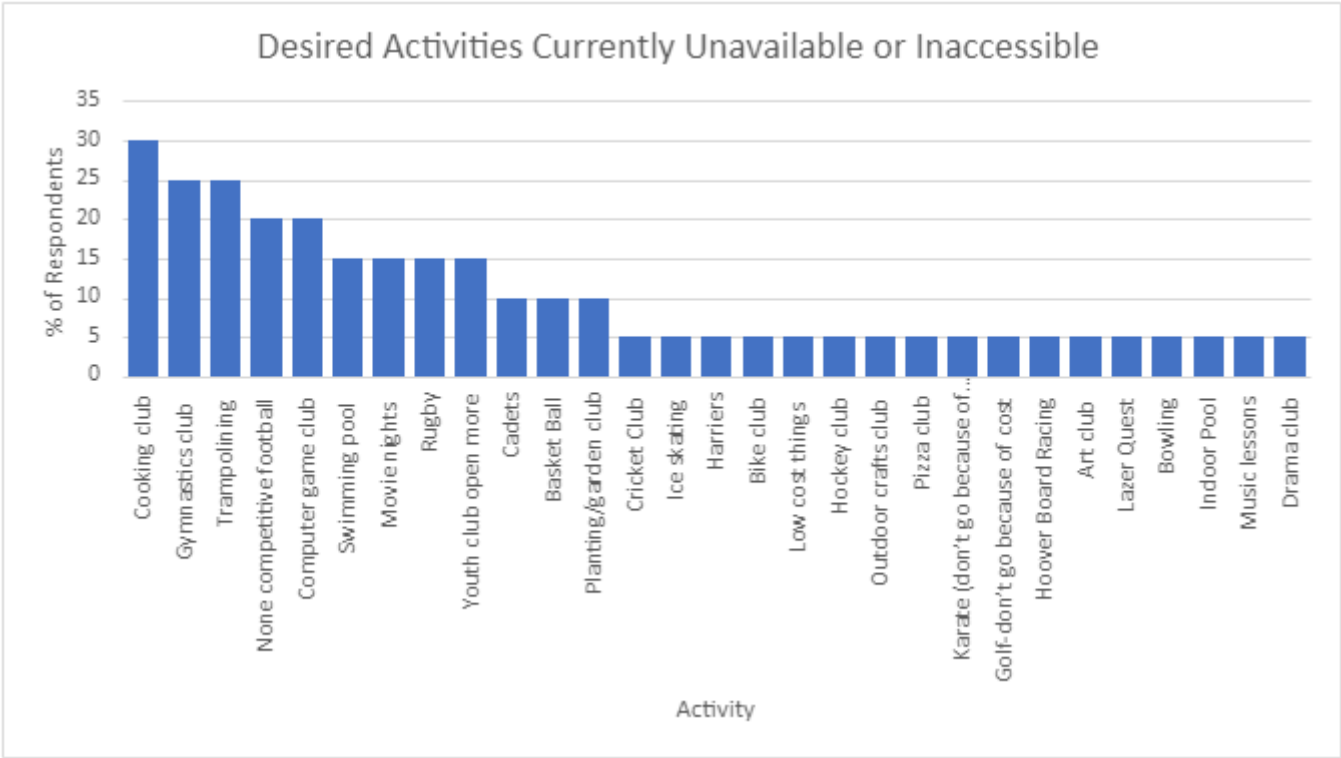
- The best things about Haltwhistle
- The worst things about Haltwhistle
- Things to improve in Haltwhistle

The youth club added a further, very valuable, question about what activities the young people would like to take part in that were either unavailable or inaccessible in Haltwhistle.

One hundred young people took part in the discussions and their answers are represented below:







Haltwhistle Borderlands Place Programme

Public Consultation 5-25 April 2022

Business Focus Group Report

The business owners of Haltwhistle were welcome to complete the main consultation and did so in good numbers with over 30 responses received. However, experience has shown that a business focus group discussion can, as the name implies, focus discussion on the pros and cons of running a business in the town.

Arrangements were therefore made with the support of the local Chamber of Commerce for a Business Focus Group to meet on Wednesday 27th April 22, to discuss:

- The best things about Haltwhistle
- The worst things about Haltwhistle
- Things to improve in Haltwhistle
- The Haltwhistle Borderlands Place Programme Town Board’s vision
- The Haltwhistle Borderlands Place Programme Town Board’s Strategic Objectives

The following business owners took part in the discussions:

Amy and Paul – Haltwhistle Butchers
John Bakewell – Harvey's Shoe Shop
Sue Humphries – Herding Hill Campsite
Julie Sullivan – Chamber of Trade
Adam Powell – Holiday Lets Business
Ian Dommett – Old School House B&B

The group shared the following opinions on the best things, worst things and things to change:

Group one (Ian, Julie and Adam)

Best things -

- Variety of visitors (inc International)
- Location – proximity to World Heritage Site, Hadrian’s Wall
- Communications – easy to get to
- Community – supportive people
- Pretty well everything we need
- Independent ownership of businesses – decisions are made here

Worst things

- Lack of variety for visitors
- Inconsistent quality
- Average age of business owners (older)
- Lack of visitor accommodation
- Stuck in their ways – inward looking – small town mentality
- Lack of flexible business space
- Bit of a run-down feel
- Parked cars everywhere
- Hadrian Enterprise Park – view from bypass
- No care home
- Little provision for arts

Things to change

- More visitor focussed businesses
- Up quality of product & service
- Lack of world experience of food offer – service, quality, variety

- More things for families
- Bad weather activities
- Need younger business owners
- Make it more walker/cyclist focussed
- Truck stop at Hadrian Business Park
- Make a 'summer only' plan – outdoor eating, traffic calming/diversion, market & stalls
- More tradespeople
- More visitor accommodation

Group two (Amy and Paul)

Best things

- Serving the community
- Friendly people/place, good sense of community, well supported by the community
- Good relationship with other shop holders
- We get lots of tourists
- Busy morning high street
- Christmas lights

Worst things

- Hidden costs, rising costs
- Quiet high street in afternoons
- ASB, drugs
- Closing businesses, empty shops
- Speed of traffic on Main Street

Things to change

- More customers
- Better suppliers, bakers
- More people to try us/see what we have to offer
- Better travel options/transport links
- Regenerate the high street to make appealing to tourists
- Empty run-down buildings
- Stop people parking on pavement outside shops (post in pavement)
- Possible traffic calming

Group three (John)

Best things

- Community spirit, loyalty to town
- Transport hub
- Good mix of independent shops
- Good spread of groups – gardeners, carnival, oldies group, church groups etc

Worst things

- Traffic problems
- Drug problem
- Lack of police
- Insufficient accommodation for walkers/cyclists
- 2 x half-day closing!

Things to change

- Make High Street more welcoming
- Replace flags without long winded and costly planning applications
- Make high street pedestrian only
- More signage from Sill to Haltwhistle

- Electric bus running from Sill to Halty

Group four (Sue and Julie)

Best things

- Capital/Heart of Hadrian's Wall
- Centre of Britain
- Location – central to West and East
- Community spirit
- Transport links, rail, A69, buses
- Roman attractions
- Walking and cycling
- Northumberland National Park
- Star gazing

Worst things

- No focus on aspects – Centre of Britain, Reiver and industrial history
- Shops unable to open to accommodate tourists – not viable
- Variety of shops – no gift shop, bakery
- Eateries close at 3pm
- Lack of activities/entertainment for the young ones

Things to change

- Regeneration
- More advertising of activities
- Town management plan
- Plan to develop a variety of shops to suit visitors and locals alike

Group 5 (Submissions post-focus group)

Best things

- Transport links to the town are very good for visitors to the town
- Tourist sites are easily reached from the town encouraging visitors
- Local people on the whole are very supportive
- Very rich in history and heritage attracting walkers and other groups interested in various aspects of history.
- Easily accessed for both Newcastle and Carlisle.
- Convenient public transport hub with vibrant town centre for travellers arriving in to the evening
- Good digital connectivity
- Offers the opportunity for great work life balance when working from home
- Great reputation once people have visited

Worst things

- Car parking in the town is very limited
- The rurality of the town makes it difficult to acquire contractors to carry out works, adding to costs
- Limited population of the town and surrounding areas means businesses do have to encourage visitors to remain sustainable
- Local government services are limited in the town eg adult education which takes people out of the area to access these
- Very little awareness of what it offers
- Transport does not run late enough to ensure people move from the car to the train
- Travellers cannot access any information following closure of TIC
- No visitor centre in the town centre to draw people in and promote what is available throughout the area
- Lack of promotion of the town in all public sector and private setor tourist destinations

Things to change

- More car parking
- Accessible learning to train local people
- More government services/resources - road/pavement repair, policing, street cleansing, support for library and community services
- Advertising and publicity at nearby tourist sites
- Investment in assets of the town Burn Gorge, Tyne riverside walks etc
- Retractable roof on the swimming pool
- Tourism businesses would benefit from:
 - i. A visitor centre that attracts larger volumes in and attracts spend – all the research indicates lower average spends in the area despite visitors having money to spend – the issue is opportunity to spend and Haltwhistle could convert potential spend, particularly within the F&B sector.

ii. We sit at the heart of an area that tells a wonderful story with over 2000 years of history on their doorstep, fabulous walks and cycle routes, wild swimming locations and a great base for Outwood bound experiences yet we don't actually tell that story with the town, a town that could thrive on the back of it.

- Community facilities – no facility is open after 5pm (eg library, community centre was closed) only church halls remain. We need a queens hall equivalent that has a community cinema, space for youth groups and artist exhibitions.
- Empty units should be considered for gallery space, artist studio's, small business centre
- Additional consideration to be given to creating a space for teenagers, a gaming unit – trialled in other UK locations including Ctrl Pad in the gate Newcastle preventing damage and nuisance within the town centre or for a wider audience - facilities like ping pong units (highly successful throughout the UK)
- Safety matters – a cctv system that works throughout the town centre should be installed
- Part of the xmas lights scheme should be considered for installation throughout the year
- For an area crying out for staff within the F&B and leisure sector we should consider the creation of a training facility which includes a development kitchen that chefs could use to create menu's, trainees could be taught key kitchen skills in relation to food prep, kitchen hygiene etc and hospitality management training. Facility could be rented out for group bookings. Could be established as a CIC / charity enabling gift aid and reduced rates
- For F&B sector – given difficulty in obtaining deliveries establish a collaborative sourcing group – enable the group purchasing power to drive down process and co-ordinate deliveries from further afield
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Consolidated recurring themes

Best Things

Community spirit – in town and within business community

Location – proximity to Hadrian's Wall, natural environment

Transport Links

Independent shops

Tourists

Worst things

Lack of visitor accommodation

Retail offer - Lack of variety on high street, open hours, empty shops, inconsistent quality

Traffic/parking

Lack of investment – run-down high street, Hadrian Enterprise Park

Drugs/ASB

Low population in town and surrounding area

Things to change

Appeal to tourists – accommodation, retail/dining offer, advertising, links to Wall, town centre improvements, family activities etc

Traffic – parking, pedestrianisation, traffic calming

Haltwhistle Place Programme Vision and Strategic Objectives

Following the discussion above, Anne presented the draft Haltwhistle Place Programme vision and strategic Objectives.

Draft Vision:

By 2031 Haltwhistle will be a vibrant, growing town recognised as a ‘must see’ destination by visitors to the region. Attractive to residents and to those visiting Hadrian's Wall, and the natural beauty and heritage of the region, the town will offer day and night-time activities for all age groups.

New innovative businesses will be drawn to the town, complementing and developing existing business, both on the high street and on industrial parks with improved connectivity locally, nationally and internationally.

Draft Strategic Objectives

1. Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to Haltwhistle town centre and industrial parks
2. Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in Haltwhistle
3. Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in Haltwhistle.

The group agreed that they supported both the draft vision and the strategic objectives.