



Northumberland
County Council

Energising Blyth Blyth Town Deal Consultation Report

16th October – 1st November 2020

www.northumberland.gov.uk

Town Deal - Vision

'Blyth will be a culturally vibrant, inclusive and welcoming town, an international centre for clean energy industry, innovation and sustainability well connected to the regional and national economy'



Blyth Town Deal Objectives

Objective 1: Growing Town - Creating economic growth, jobs and wealth, capitalising on our unique strengths in the clean energy sector

Objective 2: Vibrant Town - Revitalising the town centre experience through culture, skills and energy-led renewal securing a welcoming, safe and vibrant destination

Objective 3: Connected Town - Improving connectivity into and around the town, making the place more accessible for work, education and leisure

Objective 4: Inclusive and Sustainable Town - Spreading the benefits of sustainable economic growth among residents from all backgrounds, and supporting the town to recover from Covid-19

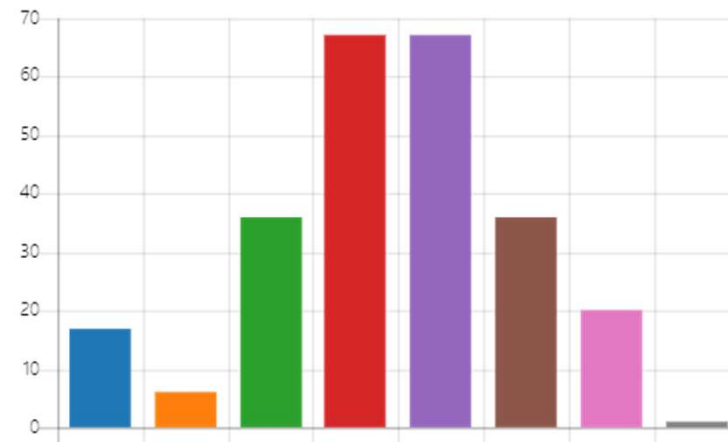
October 2020 Consultation results

Of 250 Respondents:




●	Male	114	46%
●	Female	136	54%

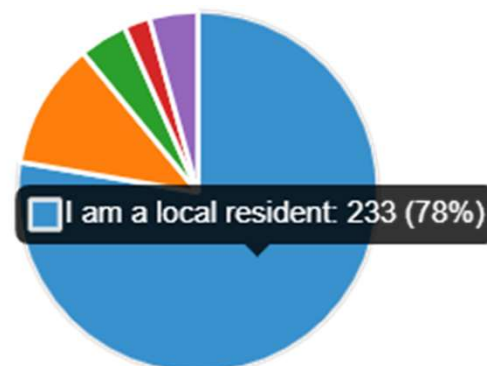


●	5 and under	17	6.8%
●	16-24	6	2.4%
●	25-34	36	14.4%
●	35-44	67	26.8%
●	45-54	67	26.8%
●	55-64	36	14.4%
●	65-74	20	8%
●	75+	1	0.4%





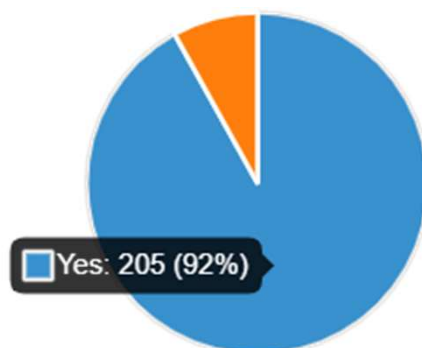
October 2020 Consultation results

	I am a local resident	233	93.2%
	I work in Blyth	34	13.6%
	I have a business in Blyth	13	5.2%
	I am studying in Blyth	7	2.8%
	Other	13	5.2%





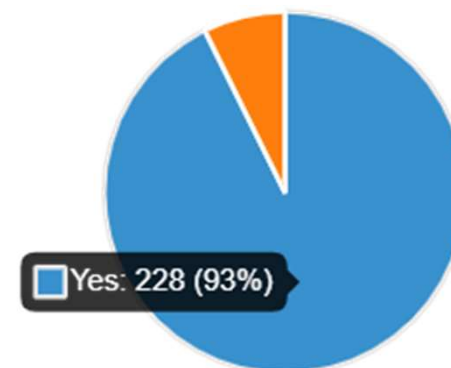
Do you agree with our Vision for Blyth?

	Yes	205	92%
	No	18	8%



Do you agree with our Objectives for Blyth?

	Yes	228	93%
	No	18	7%



October 2020 Consultation results

Currently, what are the BEST things about Blyth as a place to live, work and visit?

229 Responses

Favourites

Beach / Coastline	187
Ridley Park / Green Spaces	76
People / Community / Family	49
Quayside and ships	39
Countryside / walks / wildlife	32
Harbour / Port	29
Cafes / Restaurants / Bars / Hotel	28

Mentioned between 10-20 times

Access to other places / short commute
History / heritage / old buildings
House prices
Industry / renewable energy / job opportunities / work
Supermarkets / shopping
Nothing
Sports facilities / Cycling routes / golf club

Other mentions – Local amenities (non retail), Bede Academy, Free Parking, South Beach Housing, Events, Arts and Culture, Facilities for Children and YP, Town Centre

October 2020 Consultation results

Currently, what are the WORST things about Blyth as a place to live, work and visit?

230 Responses

Shops – empty / selection / quality	113
Town Centre	94 *
ASB / policing / drugs / alcohol	85 *
Roads / Access / Transport links / footpaths cycleways	47
Market place and existing market	45 *
Dog mess / litter / cleanliness /weeds	29
Lack of / quality of leisure provision – YP / night-time economy	24 *
Condition of buildings – heritage, town centre housing	19
HMOs / hostels	12
Less than ten but more than five mentions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unemployment• Lack of amenities• Boy racers• Parking in residential areas (populated by businesses)• Town centre traffic• Deprivation / poverty	

* Note that those issues highlighted in green have interventions planned through the Town Deal 20/21 project, FHSF & Shaping Places for Healthier Lives applications, and / or through work with Northumbria Police on Project Aurora.

October 2020 Consultation results

Objective 1: Growing Town - creating economic growth, jobs and wealth, capitalising on our unique strengths in the clean energy sector

145 Responses

Ensure new jobs are for local people / local young people / don't just bring in commuters	32
Bring in jobs and create economic growth	29
Capitalise on clean energy / growth	22
Develop skills of young people for jobs in the town / clean growth industry	17
Other mentions - <10 >5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bring in better shops / jobs in shops• Overhaul public transport / bridge / ferry / metro / improve roads to support growth	

October 2020 Consultation results

Objective 2: Vibrant Town - revitalise the town centre experience through culture, skills and energy led renewal securing a welcoming, safe and vibrant destination

140 Responses

Make the town safe / ASB	23
Agree – revitalise Blyth	22
Increase cultural offer / variety	21
More leisure facilities / night-time economy / family friendly	17
Improve Shops – range / quality /more of them / market	16
Develop heritage assets – buildings & capitalise on rich heritage mining / port	5
Attract more visitors	5

October Consultation results

Objective 3: Connected Town - improving connectivity into and around the town, making the place more accessible for work, education and leisure

145 Responses

Better road linkages between the town and the Spine Road	33
New Rail link to Newsham and Bebside	32
Bring in the Metro link	16
Improve cycle provision, walking, wheelchair access	16
More flexible / frequent public transport	15
Improving connectivity is a great idea	15
Create bus to train routes for new stations	6

October 2020 Consultation results

Objective 4: Inclusive and Sustainable Town - spreading the benefits of sustainable economic growth among residents from all backgrounds, and supporting the Town to recover from Covid 19

97 Responses

Agree	22
Don't understand / meaningless	14
Bring employment opportunities for locals	9
Support local businesses	6
Provide opportunities for socially disadvantaged	5
Upskill to access opportunities	5

October 2020 Consultation results

What are the THREE most important changes that would make Blyth a better place to live, work, and visit in the future? **233** Responses

More / better shops	118
Reduce crime / ASB / increase police presence / CCTV / lighting	68
Update / improve town centre	66
Better leisure facilities / night-time entertainment / cinema	65
Better roads linking to Spine Road / fix roads	37
Change / improve on physical market place	35
Rail link to Newcastle	26
Reduce litter / tidy up / river litter / educate on littering / enforce	25
More jobs / invest in manufacturing / energy sector	25
Improve public transport links	24
Improve South Beach buildings and facilities	24
Capitalise on history & heritage, maintain buildings, cultural events	23
Provide a better quality / varied / interesting market	18
Increase / maintain green spaces / more nature friendly	18
Improve / more kids outdoor play / activities	18
Better support for community / elderly / disabled / improved service infrastructure	18
Improve / increase walking and cycling routes	17
Less HMOs	13
Improve parking / park and ride	10
Improve further education and vocational training, Promote Blyth positively, More / better sporting facilities, Increase tourism, Improve quality of existing housing	>5 <10 mentions

October 2020 Consultation results

Is there anything else you feel we should be doing to support businesses in the town centre to recover from Covid-19?

118 Responses

Financial support / rent reduction / rates reduction	34
Increased opportunities / support for small business including physical presence / units and online opportunities	9
Provide confidence through regeneration	6
Others •Help business work together •Wider footpaths	
Lots of people answered a variation of 'no' to this one which has inflated the response count	

October 2020 Consultation results – Northern Gateway Phase 1

- Financial package secured to develop Bowes Street East and West
 - £750,000 Town Deal 20/21
 - £95,000 LTP
 - £18,741 Blyth Town Council
- Commencing early 2021
- Consultation online and direct to impacted businesses and residents





October 2020 Consultation results – Northern Gateway Phase 1

Do you have any comments about the proposed improvements at Bowes Street and surrounding areas, called "Northern Gateway"? **182** Responses

	Occurrences	Example comments
Positive comments	83	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sounds great, can it stretch to the whole town centre please?• It's a good start to improving the area.• I think this is good and is what is needed for blyth• If this begins the regeneration of our once bustling town then it's a fantastic idea.• Brilliant! All grand investment• Fantastic proposals love them!• Better connecting the town centre to the quayside will help encourage business into the area.
Negative comments	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't waste the money. Make this a pedestrian area, covered. Create a cafe culture• Great idea but the implementations a bit lame.• Nothing could make that area ok. Demolish and rebuild

October 2020 Consultation results – Northern Gateway Phase 1

Do you have any comments about the proposed improvements at Bowes Street and surrounding areas, called "Northern Gateway"? **182** Responses

Topic	Occurrences	Example comments
Pedestrianise, reduce parking	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pedestrian only no cars, no parking.• The area should be pedestrian only with the opportunity for market type stalls in the road.• Needs to be pedestrianised. No short cut to Morrisons
Improve shop fronts, quality of shops	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update the shop fronts , more flower beds• This would only be any good if the shops on Bowes street are better than what is there at the moment otherwise it won't make much difference.• It's okay, but the shops on that street aren't great. The only one I ever frequent is Star Framing.• Provide funds to shop owners to improve their frontage and reduce rents to attract a more diverse range of shops• Shop frontages need replacing. They are scruffy and dilapidated.• Yes, give it to the business owners on the street as grants to improve shop fronts.
ASB	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will it make it feel safer? Otherwise it doesn't matter how much money is invested downtown, people will not visit it.• So long as it's kept nice and keep the vandals and drug users away, it'll be lovely.

Comments Received Through the Government's MyTown portal

The MyTown portal, designed by the government, has been live and online since the end of 2019, the following summarises community engagement in the site by 1st November 2020:

- 37 first comments received
- 69 secondary comments across 6 of the first comments
- Topics mentioned most and attracting most discussion are:
 - New rail link (36)
 - More leisure facilities / activities for kids /young people / families / Westgate House (30)
 - Improve shops (17)
 - ASB / crime / addiction (16)
 - Change / improve market place and / or market (14)