

13.11.2020

Interim report: Our Town Dewsbury consultation – Dewsbury Town Investment Plan

This document provides initial analysis of the Dewsbury Town Fund consultation (accurate up to 13.11.2020). To date we have received 170 replies to the consultation which includes survey responses (144) and 26 contributions to the interactive map. The interactive map is available at [this link](#).

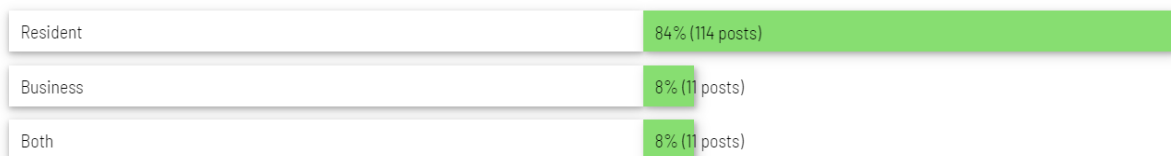
The analysis includes graphs outlining responses to the survey and the location of those responding to the consultation. The survey also invites detailed feedback and we have drawn out several key recurring themes and comments. The full raw data is attached as an Excel document.

This report represents only a snapshot of the feedback received from the last 9 days (consultation first responses came in from Wednesday 4th). Decisions should only be taken on the basis of the full end of consultation report which will consider the wider stakeholder engagement which is currently ongoing.

Survey responses

Are you a resident, business or both?

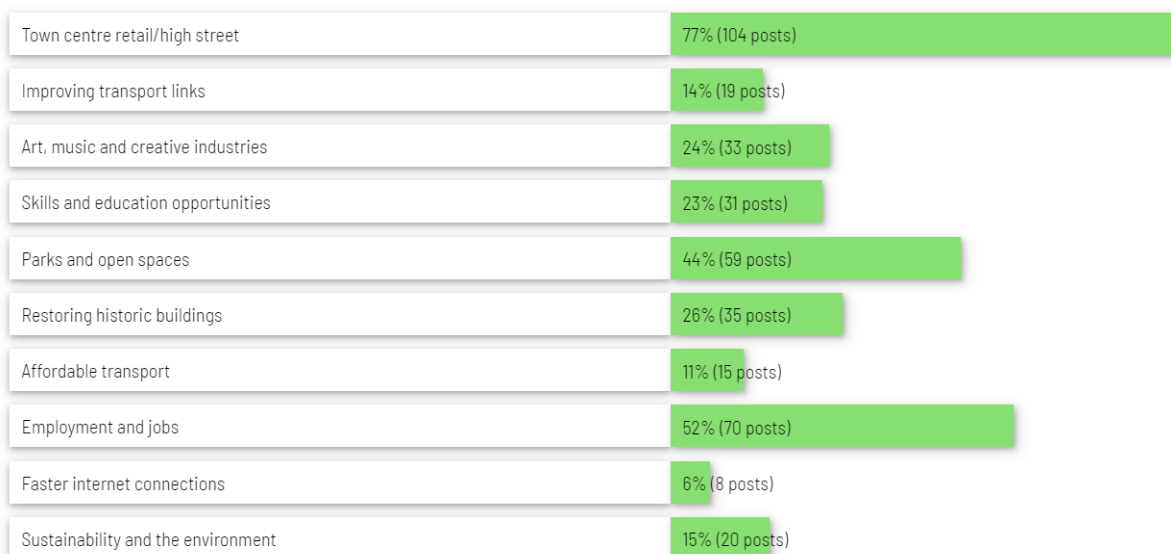
All posts



Q1

Which areas should the Dewsbury Towns Fund application prioritise?

All posts



Q2

Which projects would you most like to see receive investment?

All posts



Q3

Are there any other projects missing from this list that are needed to help Dewsbury's economy grow or any other comments you would like to make?

Full list of responses available in attached Excel document.

Key areas/issues raised:

- Access to skills/education opportunities and jobs
- Safety in the town centre
- Make more of Dewsbury's heritage
- Improve the high street and make it better for families to visit
- Invest in arts and culture

Heritage

"Concentrate on the history of Yorkshire and what Dewsbury can do to link into that to entice people back to the centre of Dewsbury. We need the right shops to bring in the right clientele to the town to then spend money and help or economy".

Skills and technology

"The main focus should be on helping people to upskill, find work and a feeling of community and belonging".

"Giving out cash for beatification and vanity project doesn't affect the actual issues in the town... Lack of job opportunities, Kirklees as a whole does not attract business. Especially technology, which is the future".

Heritage

"It would also be good to make an industrial trail/signage around the town including all famous buildings (or the sites where they stood), e.g. the old theatres, music halls, old train stations, etc".

Addressing crime

“There needs to be a holistic approach. Drug and crime issues need to be dealt with so that people feel safe to go into the town”.

Invest in Dewsbury’s community – avoid becoming commuter town

“I feel there is a danger it could become a commuter hub of soulless flats for people who never venture into the town and move away after 6 months if the focus of this development is wrong. Creating job opportunities within the town and attractive areas to meet will support businesses to grow as well as heavy investment in infrastructure and office space. A lot of work is needed to bring the community together and feel pride in their town”.

Improve public realm

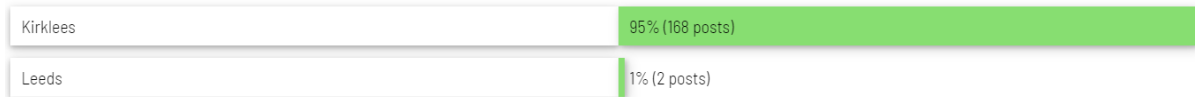
“This should involve redeveloping public realm (the market, the arcade) and changing the expanse of hard surfaces to a greater mix of pocket parks and greenery (research indicates this has a hugely positive effect on wellbeing in town centres), plus allowing shops and cafes to expand into shared spaces to increase pavement interest and removing vehicles from the town centre to encourage more active transport. Creating a mix of housing, flexible workspace and high-speed internet infrastructure will also be vital to Dewsbury's future in my view”.

Analysis of responses received

Local authority of contributor

Top local authority areas

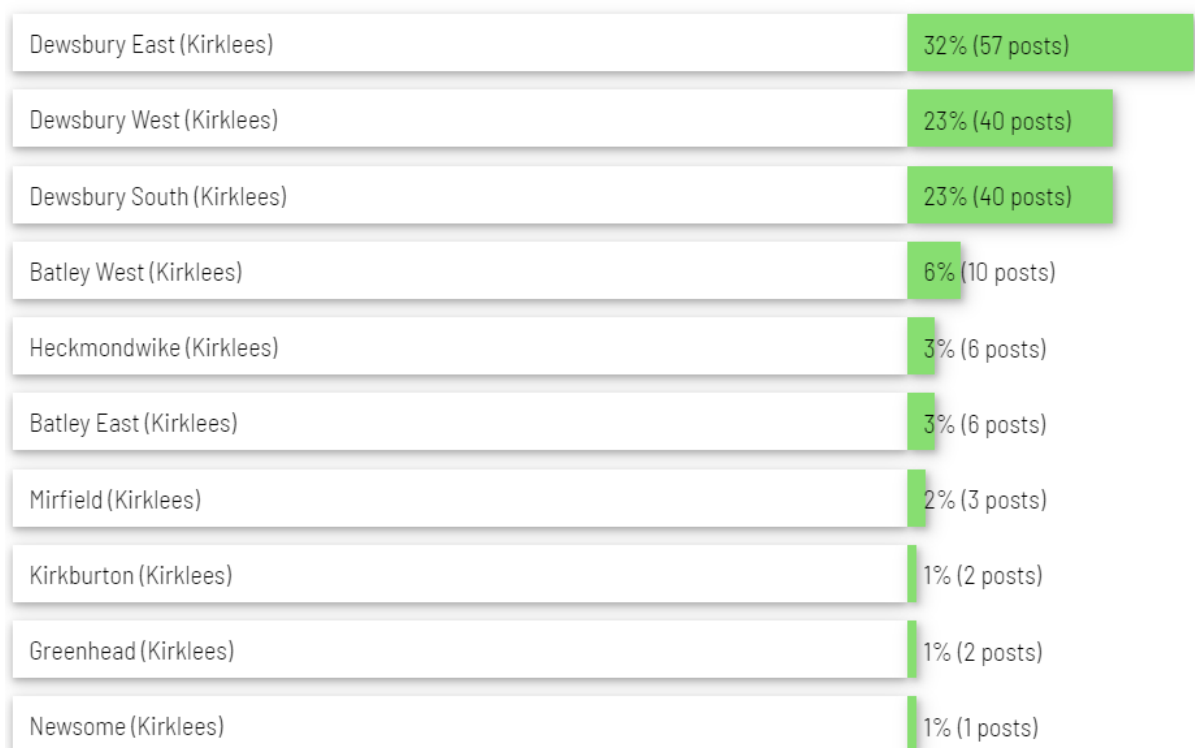
All posts



Electoral ward of contributor

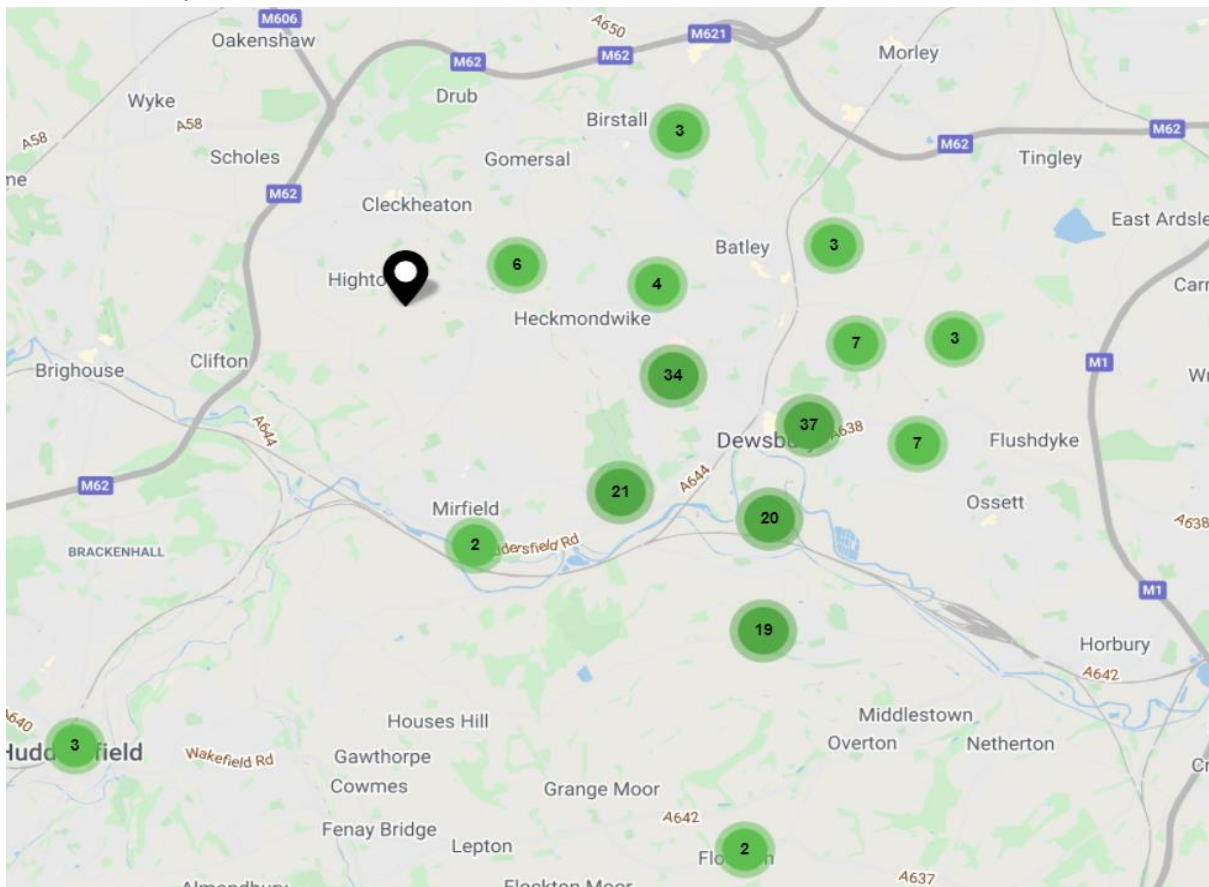
Top ward or electoral division locations

All posts



Responses by location

This map shows the location of each person responding to the consultation (both the survey and interactive map).



Analysis of interactive map responses

Is this something you like, something you dislike or an idea?

All posts



The Arcade

- The Arcade has great potential following investment

Dewsbury Market

- It has great cultural and economic potential

Invest across Dewsbury – not just the town centre

- *'Spend more in local villages than just the town centre'.*

Focus groups

Having completed a stakeholder mapping exercise, we have started organising interviews and online focus groups with key groups across Dewsbury. So far, these have featured.

- Local business figures
- Voluntary sector/community groups
- Young people
- Culture

In the next few weeks, we will be extending this to include faith groups, housing, education and leisure representatives.

Some of the key findings so far are:

- *There is a real concern that this investment will not achieve the maximum return until safety in the town centre is addressed. The perception that it is unsafe to go into Dewsbury is very real and until people feel it is safer, ambitious capital projects will fail to get the backing they deserve.*
- *Over 30 per cent of Dewsbury's population is under 24 and there is a strong view among young people that there is nothing for them in the town centre*