



Ask Meltham action plan

March 2022



Ask Meltham - turning our conversations into action

What we did in Meltham, Helme and Wilshaw

Meltham Town Council, working with Kirklees Council, asked local people what life is like in Meltham, Helme and Wilshaw using the “Place Standard” tool. This is a way of helping to get conversations going about any place (it could be your street, neighbourhood, or town). 709 people took part in the conversations.

The conversations were led by a team of 30 volunteers from the local community, local town councillors, Kirklees ward councillors and council staff. We have used what we learned to create this action plan, which includes ideas for how to improve the local area.

Volunteers talked to groups, individuals and businesses about our area. We had conversations in many local places, including Meltham Library, St Bartholomew’s, Robert Ashton Memorial Park, Meltham Sports and Community Centre, Scar Green Sheltered Housing and the Crossroads Centre. We talked with local groups such as Walkers are Welcome and with children at Meltham CE, Meltham Moor and Helme CE schools. We also had conversations at local cafes, bus stops, shops and local businesses. 242 people took part online.

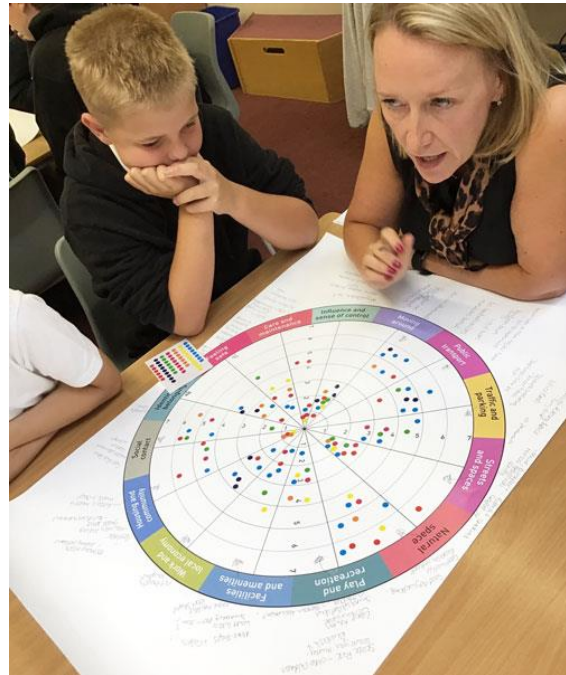


Photo: Meltham CE Primary School / @yr6melthamce

Ask Meltham was led by Meltham Town Council in partnership with Kirklees Council. The aim was to use the results to make sure planning by the town council reflects the priorities identified by Meltham residents, businesses and local groups, and to support bids for funding for Meltham.

Ask Meltham overview & Results summary with full data

www.howgoodisourplace.org.uk/ask-meltham

www.howgoodisourplace.org.uk/2019/10/02/ask-meltham-results

Meltham Town Council website

www.melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk

About Meltham, Helme and Wilshaw

Meltham Town Council is the first tier of local government serving the communities of Meltham, Helme and Wilshaw.

The total population is 8,938 (ONS population estimate 2020)

Male: 4,318 (48.3%)

Female: 4,620 (51.7%)

Age under 16: 1,657 (18.5%)

Age 16 to 29: 1,177 (13.2%)

Age 30 to 44: 1,418 (15.9%)

Age 45 to 64: 2,605 (29.2%)

Age 65 plus: 2,079 (23.3%)

White 8,249 (97.5%) (Census 2011)

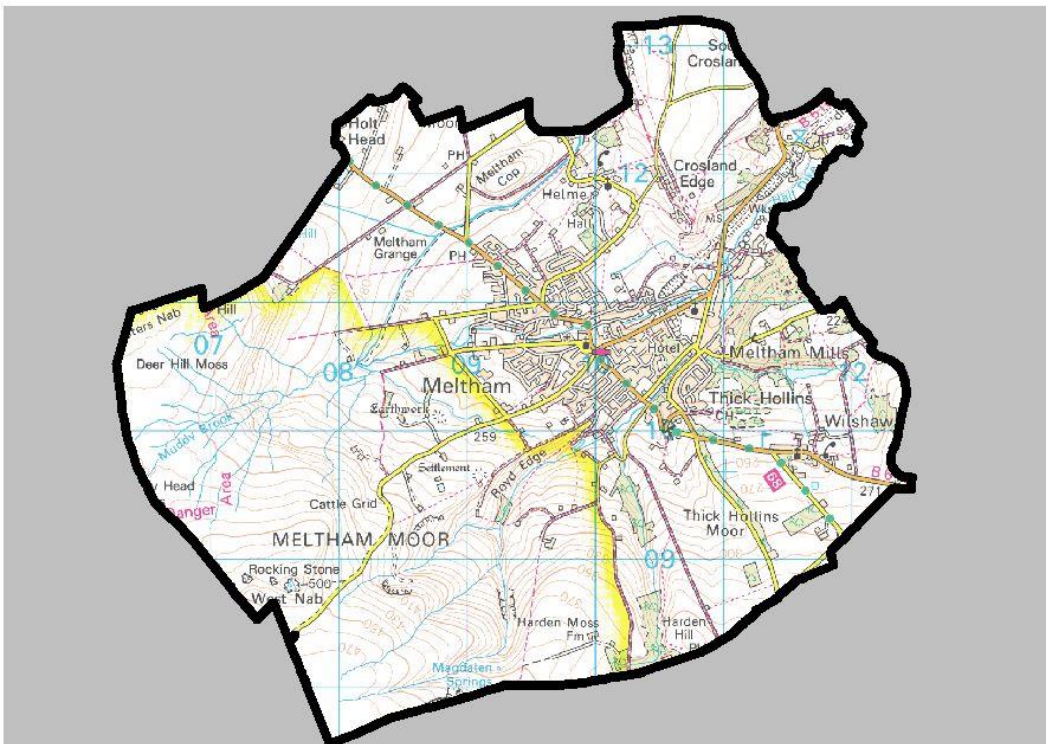
Asian or Asian British 98 (1.2%) (Census 2011)

Mixed or multiple ethnic groups 96 (1.1%) (Census 2011)

71.2% of the population was economically active in 2011 (Census 2011)

Number of households 3,538 (Census 2011)

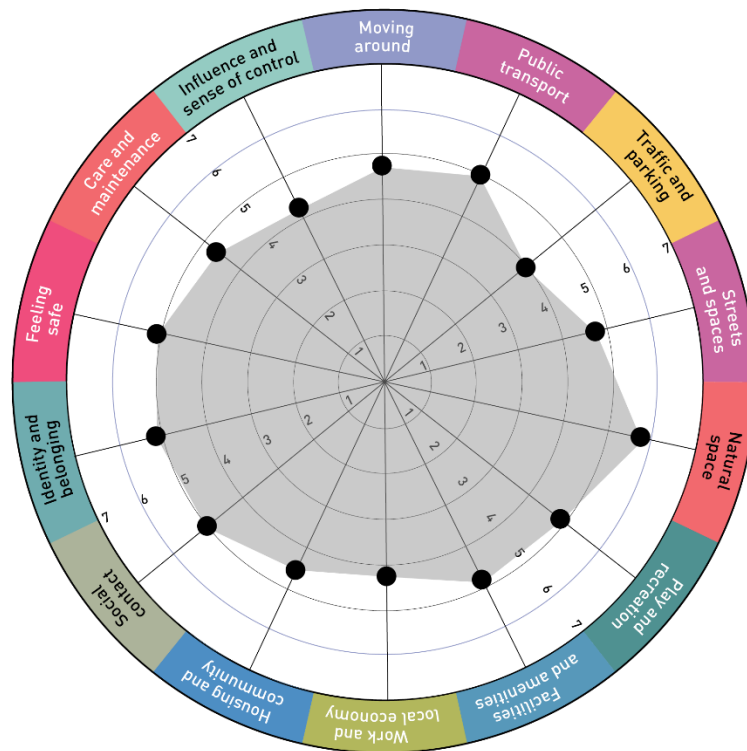
Average household size 2.4 (Census 2011)



This information for Meltham Civil Parish is from the Kirklees Observatory:

<https://observatory.kirklees.gov.uk/>

Ask Meltham results



How people in Meltham, Helme and Wilshaw scored their place, on a scale of 1 to 7, whilst talking about 14 different themes, and how many comments we received about each of these themes.

Theme	Average score overall	Range of scores received	Number of comments made
Moving around	4.8	1-7	326
Public transport	5	1-7	346
Traffic and parking	4	1-7	390
Streets and spaces	4.7	1-7	285
Natural space	5.8	1-7	137
Play and recreation	4.9	1-7	314
Facilities and amenities	4.9	1-7	322
Work and local economy	4.2	1-7	222
Housing and community	4.6	1-7	276
Social contact	5	1-7	261
Identity and belonging	5.1	1-7	264
Feeling safe	5.1	1-7	311
Care and maintenance	4.7	1-7	304
Influence and sense of control	4.2	1-7	243

Full results, including information about how different people responded, are available at: www.howgoodisourplace.org.uk/2019/10/02/ask-meltham-results

Strengths in Meltham, Helme and Wilshaw

Natural space

Key issues:

Ask Meltham participants made many comments about the beautiful countryside and access to walks, national parks and open spaces, fields, moors, parks, the Greenway and Folly Dolly Falls. People feel lucky to have lovely local parks. Robert Ashton Park is great for the kids. The Pleasure Grounds are great as a result of many volunteers' hard work and fundraising. Some open spaces are under used. Recreation ground and skate park and play areas could be upgraded. At Robert Ashton Park the toddler play area surface is broken up, causing trips and falls. In some places there is litter in the roadside ditches and poo bags hanging in trees. People are worried that house building will take over the surrounding fields.

Suggestions:

More wildlife areas to teach children about birds. Pond dipping run by volunteers. Wildlife friendly planting. Bug hotels with information boards about local wildlife. Make Folly Dolly Falls more accessible (the gate is padlocked). Community litter picks in the worst-affected spots. A community tree planting event. Planting and picnic benches at Broadland Rec. Identify land for community projects like a community orchard. Wheeled access to natural spaces. Open up the riverside. Many requests for Robert Ashton Memorial Park to be locked at night to prevent vandalism.

Identity and belonging

Key issues:

Ask Meltham participants mainly feel that Meltham is a welcoming place. 142 people said that they feel they belong and Meltham has a positive identity. 49 people said they don't feel like they belong and that Meltham does not have a positive identity. There were many comments from those who have recently moved in, saying that they feel welcomed. Others said that Meltham could be more integrated and there is a perception of a split between "Melthamers" and "incomers." Meltham has much interesting history but this is not well displayed and celebrated, apart from the tractor heritage. Local groups and small businesses make a difference in helping people to feel part of the community.

Suggestions:

"We need to come together as a community and all be involved in decision making and how we maintain the village." Young people on committees. More events, which are better supported and promoted. Turn Meltham into a hub for something (for example, walking, cycling or sports training).

Feeling safe

Key issues:

Ask Meltham participants said that Meltham is a relatively low crime area. Over 70 people said they feel safe or very safe (all or most of the time) in Meltham. 18 people said they did not feel safe in some places (such as Broadlands, the skate park and outside pubs) or do not feel safe at night. There are concerns about increases in anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Younger children said they are scared to use the skate park because teenagers are there. Children can feel intimidated by teenagers hanging out in Meltham. Some participants said they are concerned about an “anti” sentiment to people who are of different ethnicity, or who have a different religion. People are also worried that there is no visible Police presence.

Suggestions:

Police patrols, neighbourhood watch or community crime watch. Dog warden to visit and target areas. Youth projects. Speed cameras. CCTV at Robert Ashton Park. Addiction support group.

Challenges and issues in Meltham, Helme and Wilshaw

Traffic and parking

Key issues:

Ask Meltham participants commented on the volume of traffic in the centre and said crossing the main road into the centre is difficult for disabled people. There’s speeding traffic on Huddersfield Road, Helme Lane and Wessenden Head Road. Many people commented that the speed bumps at the Crossroads are dangerous. The extended corner narrowing the junction has reduced visibility for drivers turning right into Huddersfield Road (Station Street and Westgate junction) and traffic is “horrendous at the junction in the centre”. There’s inconsiderate parking on zig zags, double yellow lines and crossings (for example, outside the Co-op and the Carlile, Station Street). Traffic issues are worse at school times and when events are on.

Suggestions:

A light-controlled crossing or roundabout at the junction in the centre, to improve safety. Reduce speed limits on Helme Lane and Huddersfield Road, and by schools. Install speed bumps on Slaithwaite Road. Enforcement action for poor parking. On street parking for 2 hours maximum, more parking for workers and keep the Carlile free. More on street parking for residents when events are on. Sign at Meltham Mills directing drivers to bypass the centre. Parking bay with traffic calming measures in Wilshaw. Improve the road infrastructure when new houses are built. A bypass.

Work and local economy

Key issues:

Ask Meltham participants said there is not enough space for new businesses setting up. Empty buildings and mills in the area could be used better. Meltham Mills has quality employers. There are a good range of business units and access to local towns offering job opportunities. People mentioned the good volunteering opportunities, such as in the library and charity shop for young people. There could be more full time employment in the area. Many participants said they couldn't comment as they are not of working age or they commute for work.

Suggestions:

A business hub in Meltham Mills for start ups. Grants and a reduction in rates. Shared workspace or hot-desking for those who are self employed or work from home. Local jobs board. Night school and accessible courses. Promote Meltham as a destination with a niche or brand - for example, a mountain bike route to attract cyclists.

Influence and sense of control

Key issues:

Ask Meltham participants feel that Meltham is an independent place, with nothing in common with Kirklees. On the whole Meltham Town Council is accessible and councillors are available and interested in Meltham. Some people find out what's going on via council and community social media, whilst others feel that Meltham Town Council and Kirklees Council don't communicate enough. Some who have raised issues previously feel that nothing has been done in response (for example, concerns about housing developments raised as part of Kirklees Council consultations). People want opportunities or forums to take part in any decisions made in Meltham, and there's a feeling that these opportunities don't exist. Current meeting times don't suit families or workers. Some people asked what their extra council tax is spent on, others want to know how to contact their town and Kirklees councillors. Ask Meltham is a good method and more activities like this are needed.

Suggestions:

Better communication between the town council and residents. More updates, via different media, with opportunity to contribute. Tell people about things that affect them directly. Speak to local groups to find out what they want. A forum for local people to come together and volunteer, make local decisions. Bring church and town council together - focus on community and loneliness. Wider representation on the town council. More welcoming council sessions. Achievable local action plans. Share information about grants and funding. Use our public buildings for community projects.

Summaries of all the themes, and the full responses from participants, are available at: www.howgoodisourplace.org.uk/2019/10/02/ask-meltham-results

Ideas and actions

The following actions were identified by a working group of Meltham town councillors and Holme Valley North ward councillors. A drop-in session hosted by the Town Council and a joint ward forum were held on 9th October 2019 at Meltham Carlile Institute for the community to see the results and give their views on what the priority actions should be.

Action plan

Since April 2020 nearly £8.5k has been allocated by Meltham Town Council to develop actions resulting from Ask Meltham. This includes £1,500 for local campaigns in addition to the separate funding amounts detailed below.

Action	Theme	Suggestions	Actions being progressed	Funding	Lead/ partners
Litter Reduction					
1.	Streets & spaces; Care & maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Litter pick Work with Kirklees Improve the look of Town Centre Reduce litter in certain areas – Broadlands Park Morrisons; Town End Park Reduce weeds on pavements Community litter picks at worst spots More litter bins Liaise with Morrisons Fines for offending take-aways Increase frequency of road sweeping 	<p>Work with Meltham Walkers are Welcome to organise bi-annual community litter picks, work with local businesses and volunteers</p> <p>Arrange meeting with Cooperative, Morrison's Walkers Are Welcome. Draw up memo of understanding</p> <p>Contact Kirklees Environment Service about the process for obtaining and moving litterbins, dog bins, criteria. Explore if Town Council can purchase additional litter bin, dog bin provision</p> <p>Run a Keep Meltham tidy annual campaign Meltham (maybe to coincide with national Keep Britain Tidy campaign) with regular reminders via social media</p> <p>Continue to promote grot spot response service</p>	<p>Motion going to Meltham Town Council on 21/03/2022 to fund extra bins</p> <p>£2,000 set aside for grot spot works by Meltham Town Council</p>	<p>Meltham Town Council working with - Kirklees Environment Service Morrison's Co-operative Meltham Walkers are Welcome</p>

Improve Robert Ashton Memorial Park					
2.	Play & recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive plan • Organise events • Allotment provision • More facilities – benches • Planting edibles, wildflowers • Provision of refreshments • Upgrade picnic benches • Reduce litter; reduce dog fouling • Outdoor gym • Improve security – CCTV • Encourage usage • More grass cutting • Replace statue • Improve planting • Improve play area surface • Improve drainage - football pitch • Improve water flow to pond • Reduce vandalism • Improved play areas • Multi use sports areas • Bike park / pump track • Learning to ride (bike) • Community allotment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support development of Robert Ashton Memorial Park • Continue to develop the master plan and actions arising from it including a local consultation • To organise a minimum of three events per year to encourage usage for example picnic in the park, nature trail. Events to be publicised in the Mercury and social media 	<p>£100,000 capital investment agreed by Meltham Town Council. Supplemented by S106 monies</p> <p>Budget of £1,000 set aside by Meltham Town Council for events</p>	<p>Meltham Town Council working with – Kirklees Environment Service (commissioning landscape architects)</p>

Improve Meltham town centre					
3.	<p>Streets & spaces;</p> <p>Traffic & parking;</p> <p>Facilities & amenities;</p> <p>Care & maintenance</p> <p>Work & local economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve shop fronts, buildings • Tidy up the centre • Reduce litter, new bins, more bins • Flag holders – improve utilisation • Benchmarking • Reduce traffic • Inconsiderate parking – zig zags, yellow lines • Safer crossing for pedestrians & persons with disabilities • More parking for workers • Electric car charging points • Meltham a destination of choice • More planting • Improve feel at night • Improve time to fix minor repairs • Incentives to open new shops • Improve participation in decision making • Access to toilet facilities • Family friendly pub with good ale and food • Move bus stops to reduced congestion 	<p>Promote the established shop front grant scheme</p> <p>Tidy up bins and litter in specific locations</p> <p>Meltham Town Council to publicise Kirklees Council and ward councillors plan to move bus stops, create more parking etc – pelican crossing.</p> <p>Improve the crossing on Huddersfield Road, outside the Co-operative. Estimate of the cost by Kirklees Highways March 2022.</p> <p>Based on current estimates, widening the footway, dealing with cellars, and providing the UTC equipment is estimated at approx. £50,000. The price is not guaranteed, feasibility is subject to trial holes to identify cellars, and statutory notices to identify what, if any diversions need to take place if kerb lines are to move and widen the footway. Additional funding for feasibility work may be required. If necessary this cost will be met by delegated ward councillor budgets for Holme Valley North ward. The works will be programmed by Kirklees Highways Service.</p> <p>Run annual campaign to reduce irresponsible parking – regular reminders via social media</p> <p>Invite business representative to attend Meltham Town Council meetings in co-opted non-voting capacity</p>	<p>£5,000 per annum set aside by Meltham Town Council for shop front grant scheme</p> <p>£50,000 is sought from Kirklees Council Place Standard Investment Fund 2021-22 to improve Huddersfield Road crossing</p> <p>£1,500 per annum set aside by Meltham Town Council for campaigns on road safety, litter dog fouling etc</p>	<p>Meltham Town Council working with Kirklees Highways, Kirklees ward councillors, Meltham Walkers are Welcome</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signpost to Holmfirth & Wilshaw at junction of Huddersfield Road / Meltham Mills 	<p>Assess viability of community toilet scheme and implement if viable. May contribute to Meltham being a destination of choice</p> <p>Develop planting scheme in the town centre, hanging baskets etc.</p> <p>Review Christmas lights situation</p> <p>Work with Meltham Walkers are Welcome to publicise Meltham as walking destination</p>	<p>£2,000 set aside by Meltham Town Council for planting scheme in town centre</p>	
Improve road safety					
4.	Moving around; Traffic & parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce speeding: Slaithwaite Road; Helme Lane; Huddersfield Road, Wessenden Head Road; Wilshaw • Speed bump concerns • Improve pedestrian crossings • Reduce traffic volumes & improve flow • Improve safety – at junction of Tinker Lane and Wessenden • Cycle safety actions • Resurface Bent Ley Road • Improve street lighting – e.g. Slaithwaite Road / Birmingham Lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meltham Town Council to publicise Kirklees Council and ward councillors plans to move bus stops, create more parking – pelican crossing • Annual speed reduction campaign to coincide with Road safety week – possible poster competition annually (ongoing) • Explore with Kirklees Council additional Speed Indicator/ VAS devices and explore costings. Additional 3 movable devices are being provided for Meltham (one shared with Honley), and one shared between Helme and Brockholes • Article or Campaign on cycle speeding in Meltham Mercury and regular reminders on social media, liaise with cycling groups 	<p>See above funding set aside for road safety campaign by Meltham Town Council</p> <p>SIDS funded from Kirklees Council Highways budget from April 2022</p>	Meltham Town Council working with Kirklees Highways, Kirklees ward councillors,

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to play area in Wilshaw – crossing a dangerous road & overgrown path • Traffic calming in Wilshaw • Speed bumps on Slaithwaite Road • Reduce speed limit on Helme Lane • Reduce speed limit on Huddersfield Road to 30mph (to Greenway) • Encourage car sharing • Cycle tracks, cycle lanes • Parking controls – 2 hour limit; Carlile Street; parking bay in Wilshaw • Run speeding campaign • Speed cameras • Discuss cycle speeding with groups • Drop-in events with BRAKE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold virtual drop in Brake event 		
Improve social contact					
5.	Social contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families • 20-35s • Teens • Younger kids • Vulnerable adults • Skate-park access • Drop-in centre 	<p>Hold at least 3 events in the Robert Ashton Memorial Park annually</p> <p>Publish 'what's on' in Meltham Mercury</p> <p>Consider a Town Council and community notice board in areas not served by ones in the town centre</p>	<p>See above funding set aside for events by Meltham Town Council</p>	Meltham Town Council

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ a youth worker • Improve opportunities for people of different backgrounds • Community notice board • Community page on social media • Promote Sports and Social Clubs • Opportunities for : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families • 20-35s • Teens • Younger kids • Vulnerable adults • Skate park access • Drop-in centre • Employ a youth worker? • Improve opportunities for people of different backgrounds • Community notice board • Community page on social media • Promote Sports and Social Clubs 	<p>such as Wilshaw village hall, Helme and Calmlands areas</p> <p>Meltham Town Council grant funding to continue in order to facilitate more social contact</p> <p>Involve teenagers in inputting to Meltham Mercury (ongoing)</p>	<p>£15,000 set aside by Meltham Town Council for capital grants and £2,500 for smaller grants</p>	
A Greener Meltham					
6.	Natural spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant more trees • Create wildlife areas 	Explore viability of obtaining Plastic Free Community accreditation (surfers against sewage, provide toolkit		Meltham Town Council

	<p>Moving around</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve recycling opportunities • Zero carbon • Protect the greenbelt • Plant edibles • Wildflower verges • More open spaces allowed to wild • Encourage reduction in single use plastics • Involve schools, children • More greenery in centre • Create education boards • Community orchard • Wheeled access to green spaces • Bug hotels • Extend the Greenway • Make a circular walk linking the Greenway, Heeley House and Honley Woods • Reinstate bridleways and upgrade footpaths to bridleways where paths are wide enough to be shared by all users e.g. use wide grass verges and open up Honley Woods to create safe riding lanes for horse & cyclists • Fruit & Veg co-operative 	<p>etc). Meltham Town Council has passed resolutions to action plan and identify budget and resources</p> <p>Publicise development of Meltham Greenway etc</p> <p>Consider annually whether Meltham Town Council can plant trees, give away trees to be planted</p> <p>Erection of education boards with QR codes referencing Meltham as a destination of choice</p> <p>Make a plan to work directly with schools</p>		
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Other projects					
7.	<p>Housing & community</p> <p>Streets & spaces</p> <p>Care & maintenance</p>	<p>Flats on Mill Moor Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the flats on Mill Moor Road <p>Dog fouling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce dog fouling (4 comments) Run anti dog fouling campaigns Consider enforcement action Dog warden visits to target areas Consider more bins, emptying Fines for offences Better enforcement <p>Signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve signage for footpaths and bridleways (physical and digital) Improve bus shelters and signage Improve street signage Better signposting for footpaths and bridleways (physical and on-line) to encourage more use; where path leads, distance and time to walk or cycle 	<p>Path maintenance sign (where) to notify users of the number to ring when paths need work</p> <p>Meltham Town Council to work in partnership with Walkers Are Welcome and Kirklees Council to provide signage in the town</p> <p>Town Council, Walkers are Welcome to meet Kirklees officers to explore ways of improving coordination with Kirklees Council on footpath maintenance</p> <p>Create a Meltham map of paths and tracks & route - leaflets available from the library. Town Council to promote walks (Meltham as walking destination)</p> <p>Continue to erect anti-dog fouling signage with annual campaign</p> <p>Create joint Town Council / ward councillor forum</p> <p>Appoint Town Councillor lead for each community organisation / group in Meltham</p> <p>Review Town Council grants scheme to ensure the approved grants reflect priorities</p>	<p>A detailed project plan for these works expected soon to be funded by Meltham Town Council</p>	<p>Meltham Town Council working with – Meltham Walkers are Welcome Kirklees Council Public Rights of Way Team Kirklees ward councillors</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A central map of the routes marked up with paths and tracks in contrasting colour & route leaflets available from the library			
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Get involved

To get involved or find out more, please contact:

Michelle Chard, Clerk

Meltham Town Council

Email: townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk

This document and more information is available online at:

www.HowGoodIsOurPlace.org.uk