

# Listening to Ravensthorpe



## Listening to Ravensthorpe 21st June to 1st August 2021

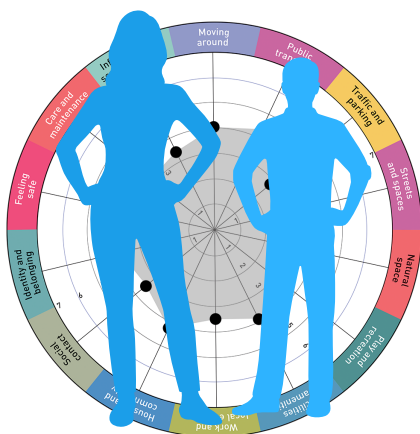
### What we did:

Dewsbury West ward councillors and Kirklees Council asked local people what they think about the neighbourhood of Ravensthorpe. We asked people what life in Ravensthorpe is like now, how things might change in the future, and what matters most. We used a tool called the “Place Standard” which is a way of having conversations about your local place, by using some simple questions.

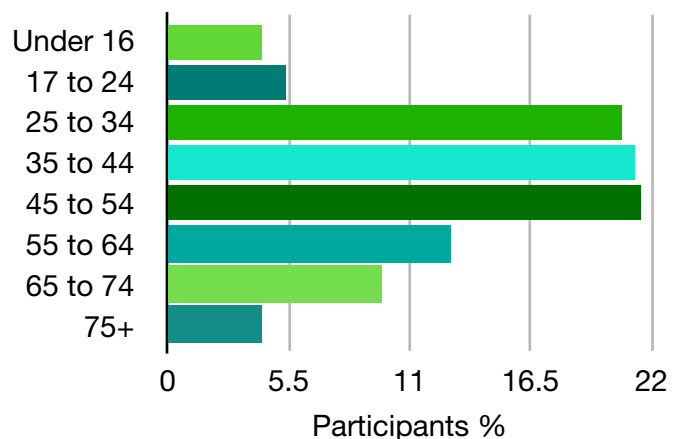
### Who participated?

A team of 15 volunteers talked to people in many places across Ravensthorpe, including local schools, community centres, the library, shops, business, and places of worship. We went door to door across the neighbourhood to reach as many households as we could. We talked to residents in the street, parks, and local bus stops. 122 assessments were completed online.

**385** citizens took part, completing **349** Place Standard assessments.



**Female 44% Male 43%**  
**Other / unknown 13%**



## What participants said

### Moving around



**Key issues:** Most participants who commented on this theme talked about the walking and cycling routes across Ravensthorpe.



Residents said Dewsbury Country Park and the Greenway are exceptional assets for Ravensthorpe, with lots of accessible routes for all abilities. More people were getting out and about in lockdown and this allowed people to explore and find nice local walking and cycle routes. However, people tell us there are not enough obvious, dedicated walking routes and not enough cycle tracks.

Participants said The Greenway is not as well connected with other routes as in other areas of Kirklees. There are no direct links to places of interest and any link routes are not attractive. Other than the Greenway at the end of Ravensthorpe and the cycle path behind Ravensthorpe (not through), there is limited cycling provision. There are no signposts or a proper link for people coming off the Greenway to get to Route 66 in Holroyd Park. The cycling lanes are not there for people to cycle on the road therefore they use the sidewalk to cycle on.

People raised concerns about not feeling safe on walking and cycling routes in Ravensthorpe. This is due to a combination of groups gathering on street corners, heavy on-street traffic, parking in no parking areas, speeding cars and reckless driving. Many pavements are covered in litter and can be unsafe for people with mobility issues, due to potholes and bumps.

People said the river and canal pathways through Ravensthorpe are dark, overgrown and full of litter, and people are taking drugs under the bridge. There is too much antisocial and possibly criminal behaviour which appears to go unchallenged. The river and canal in some places appear to be filled with industrial waste. There is often lots of rubbish and discarded furniture items left on pathways around the streets.

Routes are not maintained well. There is litter and overgrown vegetation and weeds, and the paths are not in good condition. A new path has been created in Holroyd Park, but it is not wide enough for both disabled and abled people to use. The path has been completed to a poor standard and the sides are already crumbling away. There is a lack of seating along many of the walkways, and where there is any seating it is worn and in bad condition. There are not enough bins and they are not emptied enough, so are overflowing.

One area between Heron Close and Clarkson Street / Broomer Street has no lighting at all. It is a very busy area but doesn't feel safe at night or in winter when it is dark earlier. Most routes are unlit after dark and only suitable for daylight hours. There is no lighting on the cycle route, which runs along the river from Ravensthorpe to Dewsbury.

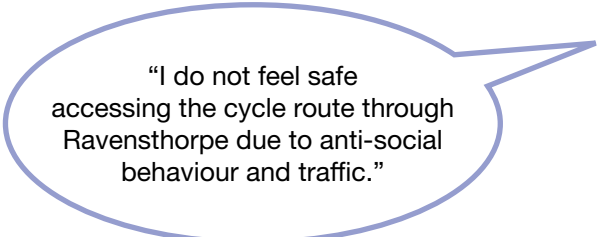
Participants said lots of cars park on pavements on residential streets blocking the pavements fully, especially close to take-away shops on Huddersfield Road. Outside local schools cars park in no drop zones. Lorries park on paths and block roads, making it dangerous for pedestrians on Havelock and John Street.

People said there are not enough dropped kerbs and not enough zebra crossings on Huddersfield Road. The gyratory is constantly busy, with traffic queuing back to Calder Road onto Huddersfield Road itself, blocking traffic that is joining onto Huddersfield Road.

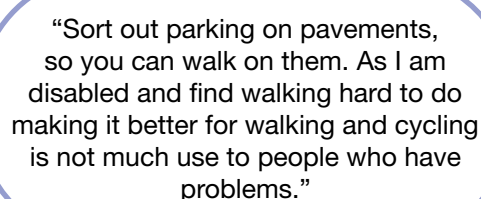
### Suggestions:

More seating needs to be installed. More could be done with lighting on Park Road, CCTV and car park open to visitors during the day. Car park to Dewsbury Country Park should be open to people during the day. Roads need widening to enable proper cycle lanes. Walking routes need to be cleaned and more pleasant to walk on. A lot of the area in general needs greenery cutting back, for example, in front of Northstead allotment site you can't walk on the pavement. Lots of areas need increased lighting, such as Heron Close. Walking to school instead of driving, should be investigated.

**166 people** commented on this theme.



"I do not feel safe accessing the cycle route through Ravensthorpe due to anti-social behaviour and traffic."

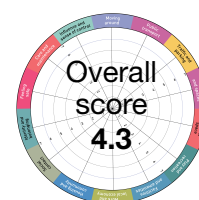


"Sort out parking on pavements, so you can walk on them. As I am disabled and find walking hard to do making it better for walking and cycling is not much use to people who have problems."

## Public transport



**Key issues:** The highest number of comments from people who use public transport were about the overall service, routes and connections (38 comments). 23 people said the service is good and that it meets their needs, but 15 people said that it does not.



Participants said that plenty of public buses serve Ravensthorpe to Huddersfield, Dewsbury, and Leeds. Sometimes the buses cannot progress because the roads in Ravensthorpe are so congested.

Other participants said there are too few buses and they can be unreliable, with services too disjointed. For example, having to go to Cleckheaton to get to Bradford. A lot of bus routes have been stopped, such as the Halifax and Bradford 205, and Dewsbury & Mirfield 202 and 203. Often a change of bus is needed, and the journey is very long and tiring, especially for older or less able residents. The bus to Leeds takes well over an hour, compared to the train, at 20 minutes. People must get taxis because they are left stranded by buses not turning up. It is not safe and accessible for disabled adults and carers.

People said bus and train fares are expensive in this area. Not everyone can afford public transport. There is only one main bus company, so residents must pay that price as there is no competition. Most bus stops don't have shelters or are broken in some way. Bus stops are in the wrong place because vehicles cannot get around the bus once it's stationary at the stop. Dewsbury bus station has no parking or cycle storage. There are no public toilets at Dewsbury station.

People said train journeys are very limited and there are not enough services. Trains are over-crowded and expensive. Ravensthorpe railway station is remote for most people, far from the centre of Ravensthorpe and has limited services. It is not central enough. It has no car or cycle parking, little shelter from bad weather and no ticket machine. The station is a bit secluded and unsafe, especially in the winter months, and could do with improved lighting.

### Suggestions:

If rail links are to be improved, there need to be more trains stopping at Ravensthorpe instead of one every hour, to encourage commuters to leave their cars at home. Parking needs to improve at the train station. Plenty of bus access, but people would like to see more green transport options, like electric personal transport and electric buses in use. The bus station should be together with the train station, as this would require less walk in-between the train station and bus station.

Public transport needs to be more affordable. People would like to see bus timetables put up at bus shelters. The buses need to be cleaned more often and the train stations need to be improved in Ravensthorpe because there is no lift or elevator for people who are carrying heavy suitcases or for people with wheelchairs. It also needs to be safer.

**158 people** commented on this theme.

"I cannot afford to travel on bus. Cheaper to get to Dewsbury Town Centre in Taxi than bus or train."

"The main Dewsbury to Huddersfield Road is very congested and at times grid locked and at a standstill. A ten-minute journey can take up to 40 or 50 minutes."

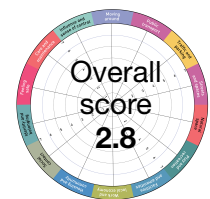
## Traffic and parking



### Key issues:

#### **Congestion and too much traffic**

108 participants said that there is too much traffic in Ravensthorpe. The main artery road through the middle of Ravensthorpe - A644 Huddersfield Road - was described as "horrendous" and "disgraceful". The traffic queues and delays sitting in traffic along the road can last 30 minutes or more, especially in rush hour. The route is used as a short cut for HGVs and cars between the M62 and the M1.



People said there are related issues of pollution, dirt and noise along the route. It is unpleasant to walk along the pavements, along the road and it can be dangerous to cross the road even at the crossings, where some vehicles seem reluctant to stop. The volume of traffic causes significant levels of dirt and noise for pedestrians, shoppers, and for households along the road.

People said the gyratory between the retail park and the library and GP surgery, which is meant to help the congestion on this stretch of the road, has made it worse. Congestion on the main route through the neighbourhood leads to congestion in the side roads throughout the neighbourhood.

School drop off and pick up times add to the congestion, as local parents choose to drive to schools rather than walk the relatively short distances to the schools. Parking problems on pavements and outside schools is a potential hazard for children and families trying to get safely to and from school.

### **Parking**

88 people mentioned concerns about parking issues across Ravensthorpe. Given the number of larger family households with 2 to 3 cars or more, there are just too few parking places throughout the neighbourhood. Roads are relatively narrow, parking is mostly on the kerb side, and on both sides of the road. Housing is dense, of mostly back-to-back and terraced. Residents often find it difficult to find a parking space outside their house, and this is what most would like to be able to do. People are concerned that residents end up double parking, parking on double yellow lines, across driveways, and on pavements. On Calder Road, the permit system is not working and not enforced. People consider Crawshaw Street a real problem in relation to parking at prayer time, at the mosque on Fridays.

### **Gyratory**

The gyratory is considered by residents (and people driving through the neighbourhood), as a change to the local road system that has added to problems such as congestion, rather than helping. They would like the problems addressed. People are concerned that adding 4,000 houses in Dewsbury Riverside will make this road system even worse.

Residents on Ravensthorpe Road / Calder Road – leading from Thornhill Lees to the gyratory and Ravensthorpe and Huddersfield Road – reported that the volume of traffic and the noise pollution has a significant and detrimental impact on their quality of life. They have dirt attaching to their windows, walls and doors, as well as almost constant vibration and noise throughout the day and night.

### **Dangerous driving and speeding**

Several participants commented on the number of people speeding on the roads throughout the neighbourhood. This is particularly troublesome at night when noisy exhausts add to the disruption caused. When there are weddings at the local banqueting hall off Huddersfield Road, there is more speeding along Huddersfield Road, with honking horns. This extends into the rest of the neighbourhood.

### **Pollution – noise and dirt**

This is especially of concern to participants along the Huddersfield Road corridor. It is added to by the number of takeaways along the route, and the rubbish around them.

### **Traffic calming**

Residents said the traffic calming measures to put in place have been ineffective, and in some instances, made the situation worse.

### **HGVs and industrial areas**

The residential neighbourhood is surrounded by industrial premises, that leads to lorries and HGVs along the narrow roads parking and offloading goods. This adds to congestion, noise and pollution.

## Dewsbury Riverside

People raised concerns that the addition of 4,000 extra homes in such close proximity will only add to pressures on traffic and parking locally.

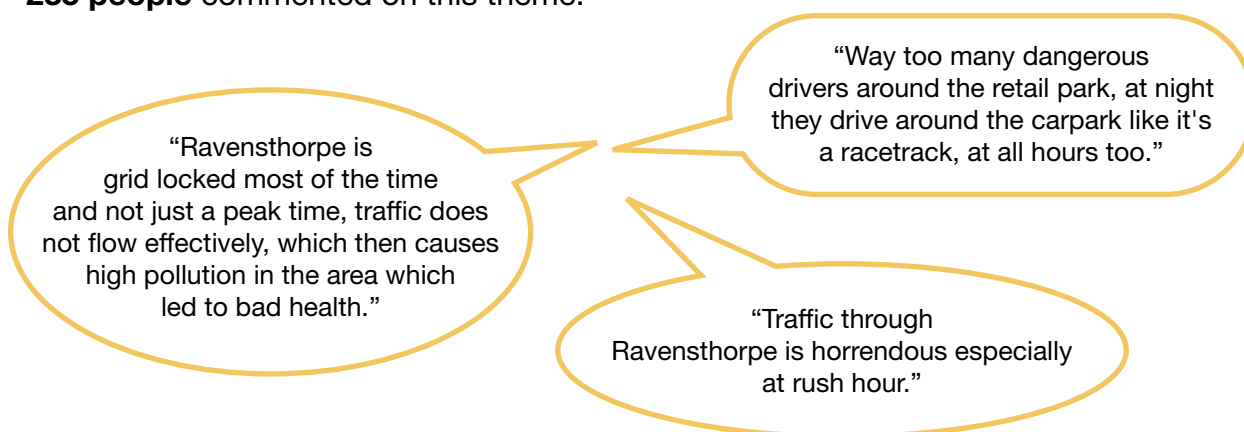
### Lack of policing

Given the number and nature of the problems, especially speeding, parking issues, and vandalism to cars, participants expressed concern at the lack of any visible policing.

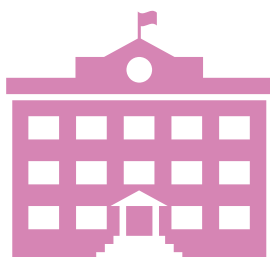
### Suggestions:

There needs to be more access to private parking. Residents of Ravensthorpe need to be educated on parking safely for the needs of pedestrians. Stop all larger (other than local) lorries using the main road. Lower bridges so that lorries cannot use it. Slow the traffic down by way of narrowing, lowering bridges or putting in humps so it is not worth taking the short cut. Parking permits on some streets. Roadworks to be completed in the evening or night – there is too much traffic in the day. What we need is POLICE. The school near North Road now has cars parking on pavements daily - sort it out! Gyratory needs looking into. It is a hazard due to limited visibility, doesn't help easing congestion. The whole road including the gyratory needs a rethink.

**235 people** commented on this theme.



## Streets and spaces



### Key issues:

#### Litter and rubbish

Participants commented most about the poor and deteriorating state of the streets and spaces across Ravensthorpe.



People's major concern is about the amount of litter and rubbish seen lying on the ground across the area – especially outside takeaways on Huddersfield Road. Parks and greenspaces also have a lot of litter, with the greenspace in front of the Greenwood Centre as well as the whole of Holroyd Park being mentioned most.

Participants are concerned that people do not use on-street bins enough, that there are not enough bins in some locations, and that the bins do not get emptied often enough. Residents have started taking black bins of household rubbish and other larger articles, such as carpeting, and dumping these next to the street litter bins.

### **Fly tipping**

People see this as a serious problem across the neighbourhood, with mattresses, sofas and white goods seen frequently on public spaces and waste ground, especially the back of Broomer Street. These can also sit in gardens uncollected for long periods of time.

### **Household bins**

People said how dense the housing is in some locations, including streets of Victorian age terraces. These houses must put bins on the pavements outside the house. In the summer, the smell can get bad, and litter can overflow onto the streets. This results in there being maggots, flies and rats. Several people raised concerns about the number of rats they had seen locally, including in the small parks.

### **Rundown appearance of the area**

The second highest number of comments from participants (26) is about the area overall looking rundown. People commented about it being messy and dirty, and needing a good overhaul and upgrade in appearance. 20 people talked about many buildings being old and poorly maintained, and this needs addressing if possible.

Huddersfield Road, with all the traffic, noise, takeaways, rubbish, and groups gathering on street corners sometimes openly drinking alcohol, raised criticism from participants. A couple of people said that what they consider the centre (Huddersfield Road) and the streets joined to this are run down, but Northsteads is a nice area. People are concerned about the big contrast between how dilapidated Ravensthorpe is compared to how well kept and maintained Mirfield is, given they are next door to each other.

A few people said that Dewsbury Country Park and the Greenway are real assets in the area and there are some significant and historic buildings, such as the mosque, old co-op, St Saviour's Church and the Wesleyan Chapel. These are unnoticed because of all the dirt and rubbish around them.

### **No neighbourhood centre**

People said there is no neighbourhood centre or meeting space where people can go and walk and gather.

### **Groups in parks and on street corners**

Participants said they feel "intimidated" by groups of drunken individuals walking through the grassed area in front of the library, to the doctors or the Greenwood centre. Such groups can also be present on street corners along Huddersfield Road and in some other park areas, including Holroyd Park and some children's' play areas. People are concerned that many of the shops on Huddersfield Road supply cheap alcohol from very early on in the morning, until late at night.

### **Feeling unsafe**

Some participants said that it can feel unsafe in certain areas, especially at night, and there is nothing to do at night locally.

### **Drug use and dealing - more Police needed**

Participants said that drug use and drug dealing are relatively common, and some had witnessed use and dealing on the streets and from cars. They said telling the police did not mean it is dealt with, and there needs to be more and more visible policing in the area.

### **Parks and play areas**

15 people said how concerned they are that the parks are not well maintained. They see them as unsafe, especially in the evening, and somewhere that groups gather, intimidating others. There is too much litter and the children's play areas not as up to date or well-maintained as they could be. People said there is drug use in the parks and play areas, with needles and other drugs paraphernalia found there. The play areas across the neighbourhood have rubbish, broken glass and weeds. Some are used as meeting places for older young people and even adults, so are considered unsafe for toddlers and younger children. There was a request for fencing and gates around all play areas to help make them safer. There is too little for older young people to do.

### **Library and public buildings**

Participants want the library and public buildings to be open longer, and during weekends and evenings.

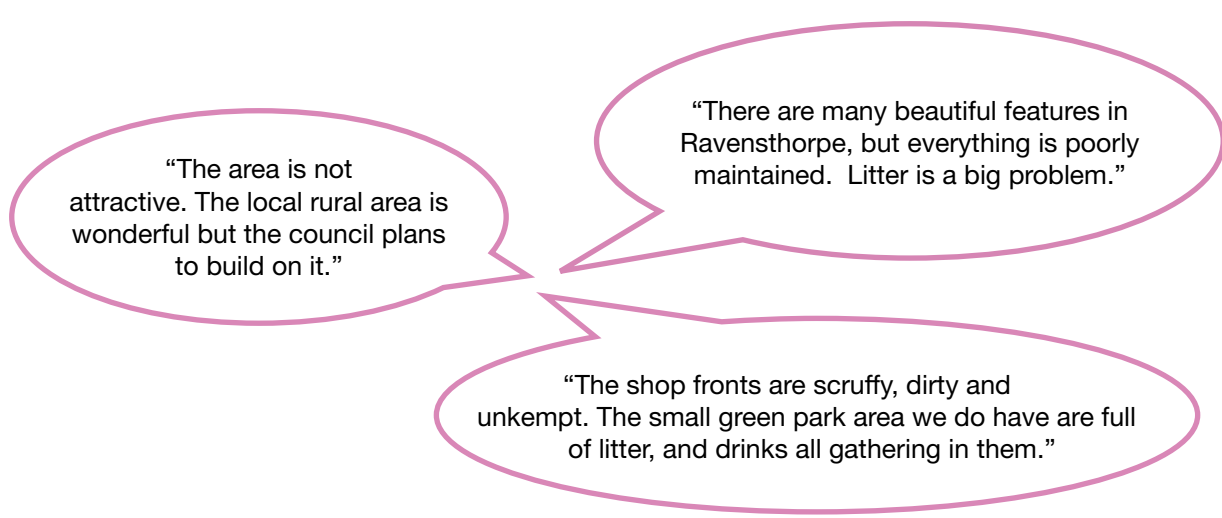
### **Street cleansing and grass cutting**

Participants thought that street cleaning could be better, especially in hotspots like Huddersfield Road, North Road and John Street. Someone said that the level of problem was so bad, no wonder the street cleaner could not keep time. There was a suggestion on spot fines might help. People commented that the grass cutting could be more frequent and the cuts shorter. Some public spaces become overgrown and more of an attraction for dumping and fly tipping.

### **Suggestions:**

The shop fronts require a full refurb and the advertisements on each shop front ripping down. Areas around Ravensthorpe could be improved with tree planting, 'Ravensthorpe in bloom' projects. Streets and spaces need to be cleaned and improved to a high standard, clear signposting. Deal with some of the unsavoury law-breaking people and all the fly tipping. The council should fine offences – on the spot fines for littering. There is not enough made of the decent bits of Holroyd Park. Library needs to be open longer and more days and even on the weekend. A letter to each house about waste disposal and fly tipping, and this needs to be in different languages. There needs to be more signs up about litter and dog fouling, and again in different languages.

**177 people** commented on this theme.



“The area is not attractive. The local rural area is wonderful but the council plans to build on it.”

“There are many beautiful features in Ravensthorpe, but everything is poorly maintained. Litter is a big problem.”

“The shop fronts are scruffy, dirty and unkempt. The small green park area we do have are full of litter, and drinks all gathering in them.”

## Natural space



**Key issues:** People said the Greenway and Dewsbury Country Park are brilliant green open spaces. Dewsbury Country Park is very accessible and has lots of local wildlife and the walk by river and canal is good.



However, many people are concerned that green spaces are not well maintained and are spoiled by litter, broken glass and fly tipping.

15 people said that drinking and drug taking was common, making the spaces unsuitable for children and families. There is a lack of available seating, and what there is can be taken up by people drinking.

Over 30 people said they consider parks as unsafe places which they avoid - they are poorly maintained and lacking in safe and modern play equipment. People want more regular grass cutting, flower beds restoring and more seating.

The Riverside development prompted people to link the building of new homes to a corresponding reduction in green space and the natural landscape, which will result in a loss of woodland, plant diversity and wildlife.

### Suggestions:

More and better play equipment would encourage more family use and thereby increase feelings of safety. More bins and swifter response to fly tipping and litter build up would improve the look and feel of the area. More and better located seating which provides rest and social gathering space but in areas that do not intimidate or prevent access to play spaces.

**172 people** commented on this theme.

"There are some nice green spaces however they are ruined by litter, glass and anti-social behaviour."

"Dewsbury country park is lovely, but I wouldn't go there on my own, nor Holroyd Park."

## Play and recreation



**Key issues:** Some participants have enjoyable park experiences, but the majority of people were more negative. Top of the list is the amount of litter and broken glass in the parks generally and play areas, making the spaces unpleasant, unhygienic, and unsafe. Over 40 people mentioned play equipment and thought it insufficient for the range of ages; outdated and in need of more regular maintenance. People think the spaces are poorly maintained and that equipment is removed rather than being repaired or replaced. 20 people said that groups of adult males congregating in parks is intimidating and off putting to families, particularly when linked with drinking and drug use. This is considered even more disturbing after dark because of poor lighting.



There is a lack of a range of opportunities to engage in recreational activities. People highlighted that teenagers and older people have even less opportunities and less variety.

The amount and speed of traffic and parked cars in communal areas makes it unsafe for traditional street games.

### Suggestions:

More facilities need putting in place for children with disabilities. More people using the track and playing on the field would help prevent a lot of the antisocial behaviour that happens there. More green gym equipment in the area making exercise more accessible to the community. Crow Nest Park was singled out as a great park but lacks toilets and a café. More seating generally in parks in more well considered and pleasant locations is suggested, along with better located bins which are emptied more often. A better range and quality of well-maintained play equipment suitable for a range of ages and abilities and free play equipment would make the spaces more attractive to families. Friends of the Parks groups could increase community ownership and provide a more regular oversight.

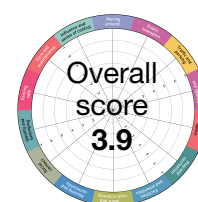
**186 people** commented on this theme.



### Facilities and amenities



**Key issues:** 72 people said positive things about local amenities such as schools, shops, the retail park, library, Greenwood Centre and health services. 95 people said facilities are poor or not enough, that “they could be better and more of them.”



People said there aren't many places to sit and eat or drink, such as cafes or restaurants. There is nowhere in Ravensthorpe that provides any free recreational facilities, like coffee mornings, craft clubs, or exercise classes to encourage a healthy lifestyle. There are not enough outdoor meeting places safe for families.

Participants said there used to be a great range of small, local shops, but many have become takeaways. The range of shops is poor. There are too many fast-food outlets on Huddersfield Road. Some shops on Huddersfield Road are smart and very nice to look at, but others look unkempt, dirty and full of unsightly signage.

The retail park is “worth visiting, where you can find the goods you need” and “when it is open” and it is well maintained. However, people said it hasn’t improved the variety or quality of other shops (with a couple of exceptions) available in the area.

People are concerned by the overall lack of maintenance and investment.

Some shops are not accessible for wheelchair users. “A lot of shops, if not all, don't have disabled ramps which I thought was law now, very disappointed.” There are insufficient public toilet facilities, except in the Greenwood Centre. However, “the library is mainly closed – even before covid – and the 2 other toilets are the doctors or Subway, and you can't use them without paying or having an appointment.”

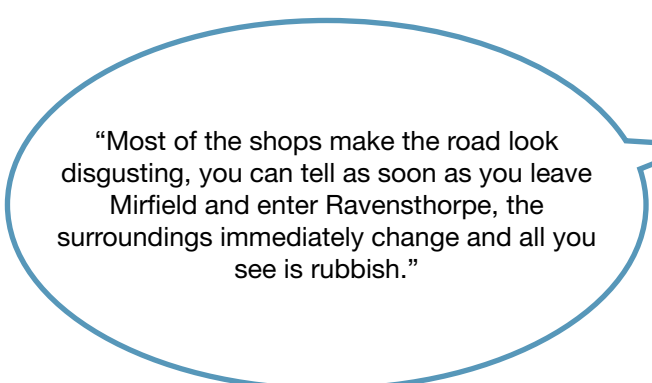
The library opening times should be extended “because there isn't much computer equipment available and sometimes the kids make too much noise and then you can hardly get access to a computer.”

Doctors are accessible and within walking distance for most residents, but they are oversubscribed. It is difficult to get an appointment and can take an hour to book on the phone. There is no dentist in this area with capacity to take new patients, and this is a big issue that needs addressing.

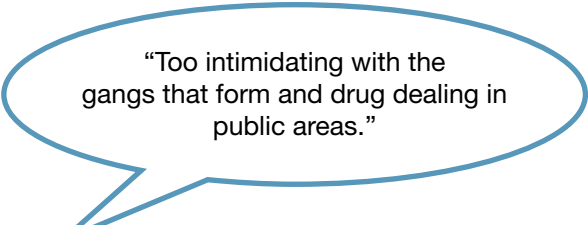
### Suggestions:

More places to socialise and entertainment. Shops on main Huddersfield Road should have a standard about how they present and look smarter. A broader range of retailers. Flowers and seating. Public toilets. More amenities and facilities required for disabled children to relax and enjoy. A leisure centre or sports facility would be good. Extended opening times at the library with access to computers. More healthy exercise opportunities.

**159 people** commented on this theme.



“Most of the shops make the road look disgusting, you can tell as soon as you leave Mirfield and enter Ravensthorpe, the surroundings immediately change and all you see is rubbish.”



“Too intimidating with the gangs that form and drug dealing in public areas.”

## Work and local economy



**Key issues:** Over a third of participants said they think there are a lack of jobs and opportunities in Ravensthorpe, and any available are low pay, low skill and insecure. Some people are positive about being in work and jobs being available locally, but said communication about opportunities

could be improved. The lack of variety in jobs was highlighted and the main perception was that work is limited to mill work, takeaways, car washes or taxi driving.



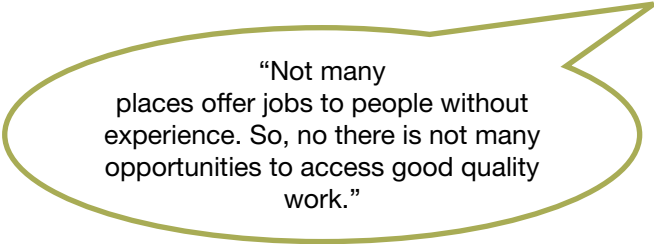
15 participants said that you must travel out of the area to access a wider choice of better paid jobs. Opportunities for young people were singled out as particularly lacking, both to gain experience but also to access training and skills. There is a lack of apprenticeship opportunities in local companies.

People said there is poor road infrastructure and lack of quality industrial premises, which are barriers to building a better economy. Several people said there is illicit drug use with dealing being prevalent, and that this can deter legitimate businesses from locating to the area.

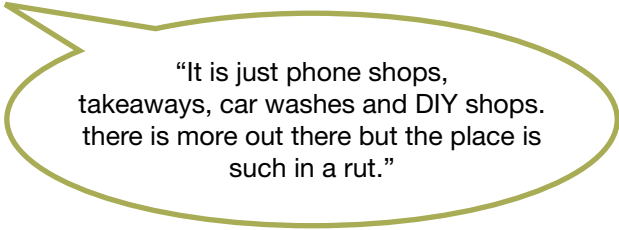
### **Suggestions:**

Jobs should be available to help those who failed in passing exams and help provide support local apprenticeships for students. More office related jobs, rather than factories. More paying teenage jobs. There are enough nurseries, but we need less takeaways and more offices and businesses opening so the job opportunity is improved. We need to investigate more emerging technologies to help create more jobs.

**130 people** commented on this theme.



“Not many places offer jobs to people without experience. So, no there is not many opportunities to access good quality work.”



“It is just phone shops, takeaways, car washes and DIY shops. there is more out there but the place is such in a rut.”

## **Housing and community**



### **Key issues:**

#### **Good quality housing and condition of housing**

Participants said the quality of new build housing is relatively poor. They said new houses are being built quickly to provide a quick fix for the housing shortage and worry they may not last very long.



There are concerns that many older properties are in poor condition due to lack of maintenance, especially those owned by private landlords.

#### **Lack of maintenance and upkeep of spaces**

People said that in some places there are poorly maintained gardens (often rental properties) as well as fly tipping and a lack of care and maintenance in public spaces. Residents can throw rubbish onto the street which has led to a problem with rats. The drains are not cleared as well or as regularly as they could be and can become blocked. This has caused flooding (another reason for increased chance of flooding has been the building on green space). Some residents have issues with their individual houses due to the council not responding to them reporting repairs, such as blocked guttering or roof leaks.

## House sizes

Participants said there is a wide range and variety of houses available in the area. Some people think houses are too small or too large. Other people mentioned the lack of facilities for older residents and those who need special housing.

## Over occupation and overcrowding

A significant proportion of participants said too many people live in some houses. The overcrowding is making the issues with fly tipping and rubbish worse, as there is too much waste from the properties to go in their bins.

## Unregulated extensions and house improvements

Participants are concerned about the extensions that are being added to houses that were of poor quality or design and they believe that many are being built without the necessary permissions. No actions are taken to have these rectified.

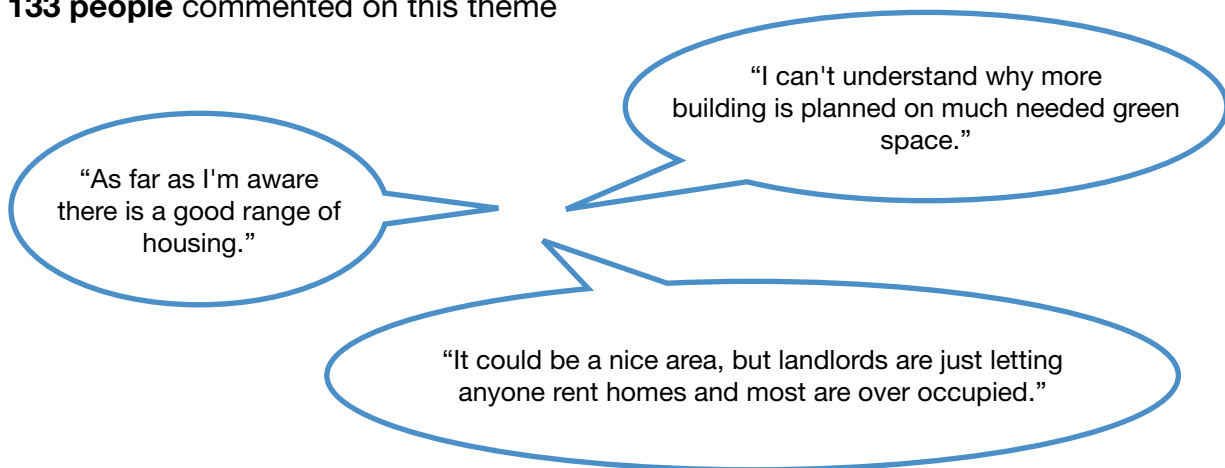
## Anti-social behaviour and crime

A small number of people commented that anti-social behaviour and fast driving is a concern. Some said Ravensthorpe has become a “dumping ground” and as so many properties are rented and not cared for, an area that people were once proud to live in has become dirty and neglected.

## Suggestions:

Clear up the streets. This includes not just rubbish but larger dumped items. Clear the drains to prevent flooding.

**133 people** commented on this theme

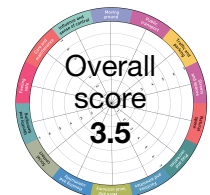


## Social contact



**Key issue:** A significant proportion of participants said there is limited social interaction or contact across the neighbourhood. They said there is a lack of places and spaces, especially indoors, to meet other people.

Participants said the community has a diverse range of residents from across different nationalities and cultures, but these different groups do not interact that well. Participants said there is a need for more opportunities and activities, across the different age and cultural groups, for people to get together. Places where this happens already include religious buildings, the scout hut, library and some local business.



People also said that safety is a concern, that the area requires more police presence. A noticeable concern is about groups of people 'hanging around', even throughout the pandemic. Although some people recognise this as a cultural difference, people still said it is a concern.

A smaller number of people said that there is social contact, but did not explain why or give any other detail. Some people say the parks, Greenway and other green spaces can be a good place to get together.

People also said they find it difficult to find local information, as to what activities are happening in the area.

### **Suggestions:**

Could do with more meeting places like cafes. Holroyd Park could do with some sort of café or ice cream parlour. Holroyd Park would be a perfect place for people to meet if it had seating or shelters, as it joins on to the local Greenway.

**145 people** commented on this theme



## **Identity and belonging**



**Key issues:** A significant number of participants said there is little community feeling or general opportunity for social contact. A few suggest they feel they no longer belong to the area. People also feel that the area has a poor reputation or negative identity, when they talk about it to anyone else.



People are concerned about criminal behaviour. Even if people do not have facts showing high crime rates, there is still a perception of that the area has a high level of crime. People also believe that the area looks run down and no longer cared for, with a lack of investment and poor maintenance or cleanliness.

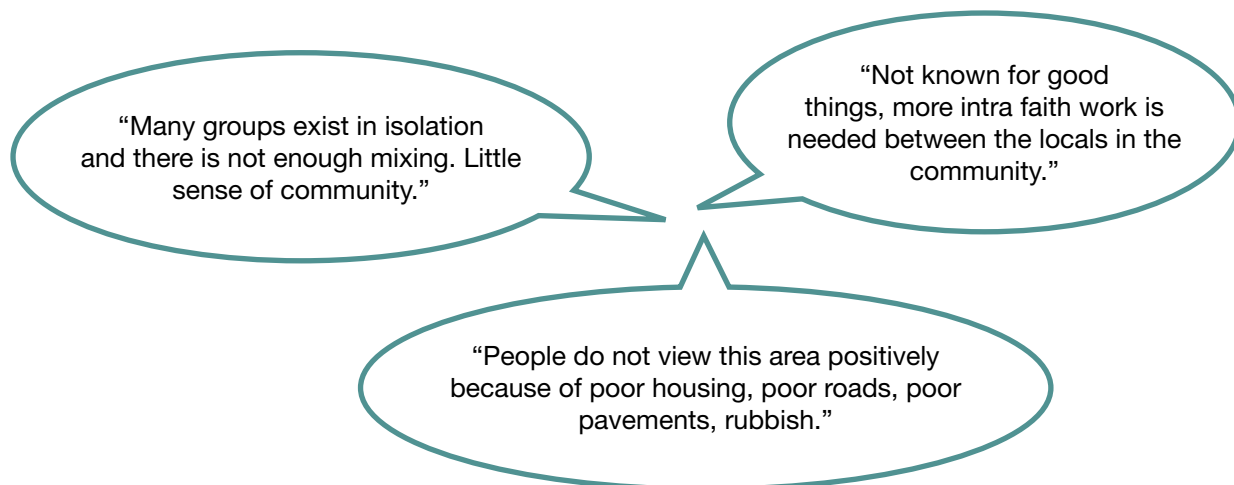
Some participants said there is a lack of community leadership and response. A few people said there are some divisions in the community, with clashes of different cultures. Other participants believe things are okay. Some said that within their street or place they have good neighbourly connections. Some people know of good community opportunities, but more people feel that this aspect of the area needs to improve.

Several people point to the history of the area and feel this isn't shared enough or used as something to bring people together.

### Suggestions:

More events for and in the community where all are encouraged to take part.

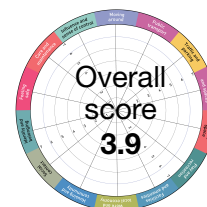
**147 people** commented on this theme



### Feeling safe



**Key issues:** People said they feel unsafe particularly at night, when there are gangs of people hanging around, as well as antisocial behaviour around driving habits, including speeding and racing. Some people said they see drugs being dealt quite openly at a few locations.



Participants are concerned that what might be considered “petty crimes”, such as dangerous driving, are ignored.

There are a number of adults who hang around the parks, making parents feel it is unsafe to let their children play out. There needs to be more for children and young adults to do safely.

Some people said they have no voice when it comes to crimes, and that complaints are not responded to. They said that people who make decisions on their behalf do so without knowing what the real issues are.

### Suggestions:

Extra measures taken against those who fly tip – need to be held accountable. Increase the number of police and traffic wardens and issue fines for people breaking any laws. There needs to be a proactive and determined effort to make people follow the law. Organise more community events. More social spaces available for people to meet - this will encourage people from different backgrounds to mingle and get to know each other. New arrivals in the area should be supported so they know accepted social behaviour – how local government works, how to take out the bins and when. Educate children about not putting rubbish out onto the street. Councillors need to become more involved at a local level. They need to share information with the residents, so people know what is going on. Residents want to talk to the people who make decisions on their behalf.

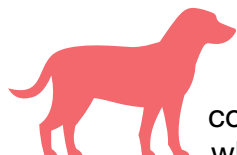
**191 people** commented on this theme.

“Policing is very poor. People are breaking the law with no consequences.”

“As soon as relationships and trust get built up with officers allocated to the area, they seem to be moved on.”

“Not enough facilities or activities to help people from different backgrounds mix.”

## Care and maintenance



**Key issues:** Most participants said the amount of litter and rubbish across Ravensthorpe in general is a key concern. People did not share specific areas or patches where this is a problem, as it is a widespread issue.



Some people said that some local parks, such as Crows Nest Park, are well maintained and clean. However, there a similar number of people referred to parks and outdoor spaces as not being cared for enough. Some explained that they think this is because of residents not caring about how Ravensthorpe looks, whilst others feel local shops and business should do more to stop littering, such as using business bins.

Some people said that the council cleans the streets and collects refuse quickly enough and to a high enough standard, but many other people are frustrated with the council for the general level of uncleanliness in Ravensthorpe.

The next most common complaint was about fly tipping, which many see as a key issue in Ravensthorpe. Some people state that Kirklees Council respond quickly when dealing with fly tipping, but others say the council is too slow. Even those who said the council are efficient add that the fly tipping tends to return within a couple of days anyway.

Many residents make a link between littering and fly tipping in Ravensthorpe and the presence of vermin, specifically rats, across the area. Some people said the decision to charge for rubbish collection has contributed to the amount of fly tipping and littering.

Dog fouling and dog mess being left in public places and on pavements is another common problem in Ravensthorpe, with some participants asking for more dog poo bins and for dog owners to be more responsible.

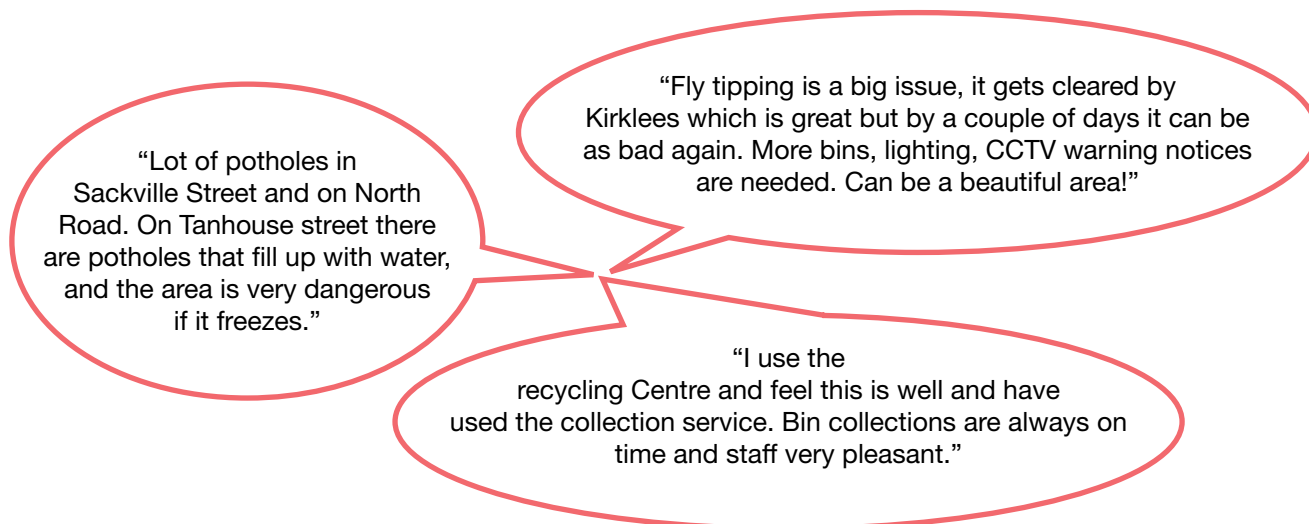
Several people commented on the run-down appearance or disrepair of many of the buildings in Ravensthorpe. They said that buildings across Ravensthorpe are unattractive and neglected with some people saying that those owned by private landlords or the council, are in a worse state than others. People also said that the shop fronts in Ravensthorpe can be untidy and appear old and unclean. Graffiti and vandalism are also issues.

Residents are concerned about potholes on roads such as Sackville Street, North Road and Fir Avenue.

## Suggestions:

The area needs a thorough clean and residents need to understand it's not acceptable to throw their waste where they like. All streets should be newly tarmaced to deal with potholes. Local parks and spaces could be maintained more often and clean litter. Need more litter bins and emptying more regularly. Needs more investment. More education and support on litter disposal is needed, and letters to all households in different languages. Need more litter pickers. More benches. Parks need to be kept clean and landlords need to clean their tenants' houses for the area to look presentable. Graveyards need to be kept clean and safe with CCTV.

**154 people** commented on this theme.



## Influence and sense of control



**Key issues:** Some people said they do not have any influence or sense of control in Ravensthorpe, with practical matters such as overgrown hedges or vandalism, or about bigger and significant decisions that will affect the whole area.



Some said they do not know how to make themselves heard or do not understand how they are represented, or how actions are taken. Some people said they think the council and other public bodies are not able or willing to take the views of local people into account. When saying they don't know how to make themselves heard, some people mentioned their local ward councillor as a single individual, perhaps suggesting that some people are unaware that each ward has three councillors. Participants didn't know other ways of raising problems, asking for help, or getting involved in local activities.

Some people said there are not enough local community groups in the area, and this reduces opportunities for sharing thoughts and opinions or becoming involved. There was a positive comment about quarterly area meetings involving a range of services that took place at Ravensthorpe Community Centre before the pandemic. Some people said that Listening to Ravensthorpe is a welcome way of supporting residents to share their views.

Some participants said that they think their opinions and thoughts are only heard when they are in line with a decision the council has already taken. Other people feel as though their councillors are only interested in working with and speaking to friends, or with those who will 'benefit' them. A few shared frustrations that they only see councillors during election times, that election promises are rarely followed through, and that councillors don't engage with the community enough.

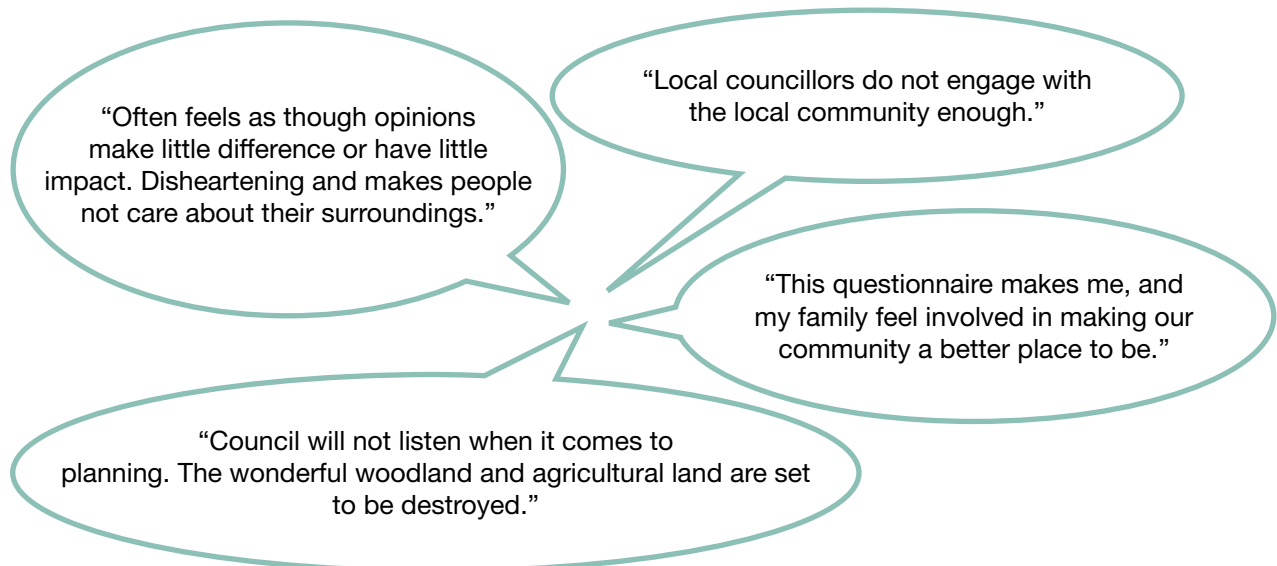
Some participants said their opinions and thoughts are heard by the council, but then because subsequent action takes so long it creates the impression that local people have no influence or sense of control.

A few people said there is a disparity between the amount of influence different demographics within Ravensthorpe have over decisions. One person suggested that this is in part due to language barriers and the difficulties this brings for finding out what else is happening locally, how to get involved and communication between different groups and people.

### **Suggestions:**

Kirklees Council needs to make landlords act for their tenants - deal with boarded windows, overgrown hedges and piles of rubbish in gardens. Fines should be handed out to fly tipping residents and landlords. The local community centre could be very active in improving things for Ravensthorpe. Bring the local community together to discuss issues in the local area. The local MP and councillors could play a better role in dealing with the issues. More engagement is needed. Perhaps a focus group can be made.

**115 people** commented on this theme.



## Listening to Ravensthorpe score sheet

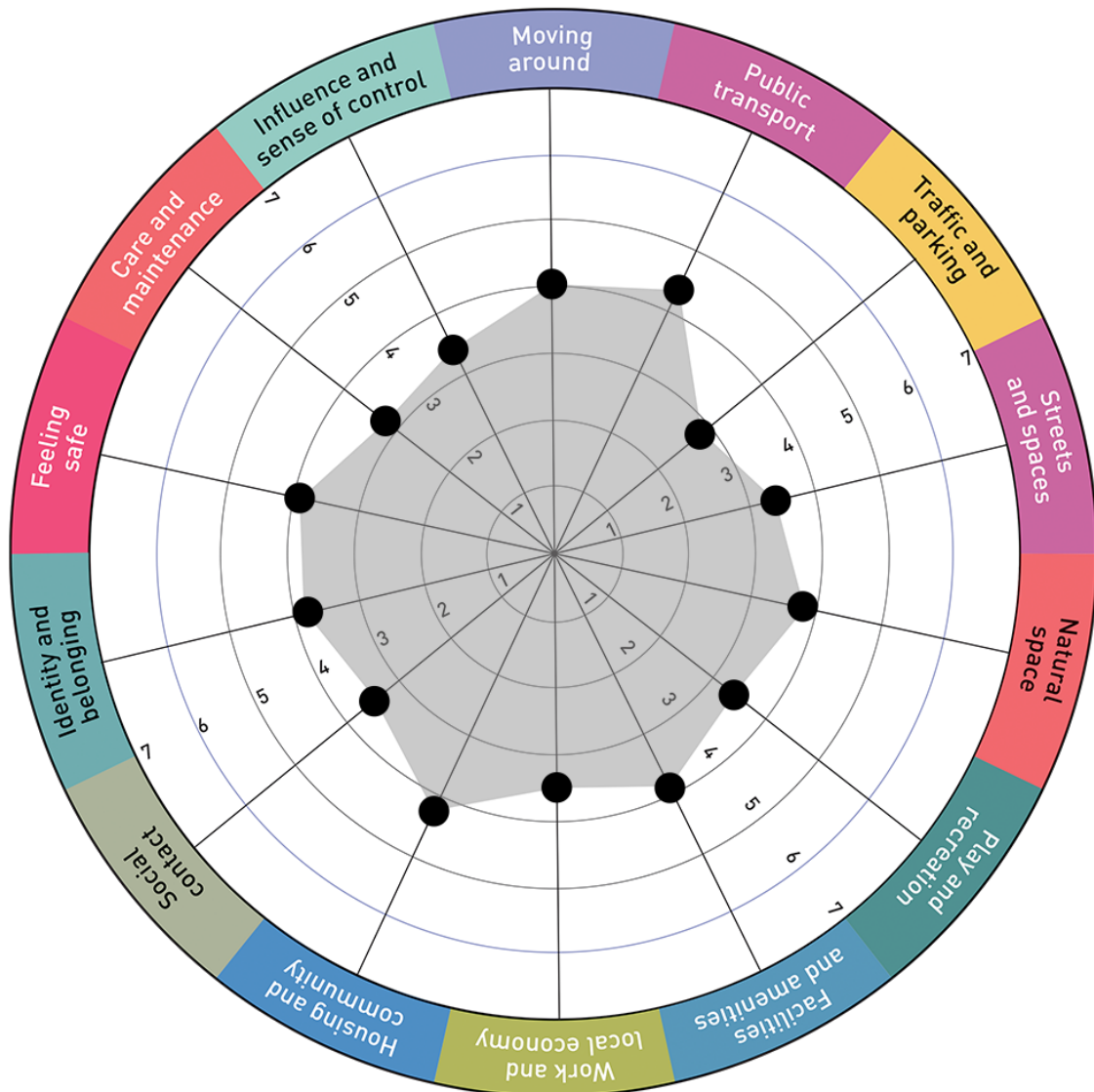
How people in Ravensthorpe scored their place, on a scale of 1 to 7, whilst talking about 14 different themes:

	Overall	Age 25 to 44	Age 45 to 64	Age 65 to 75+	Male	Female
Moving around	4	4	4	4.1	4.1	4
Public transport	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3
Traffic and parking	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
Streets and spaces	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3
Natural space	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8
Play and recreation	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3
Facilities and amenities	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9
Work and local economy	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Housing and community	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
Social contact	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Identity and belonging	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8
Feeling safe	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9
Care and maintenance	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2
Influence and sense of control	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4

**385** people participated in the Ravensthorpe conversations, completing **349** assessments.

The overall scores are the **Mean average** of the **349** assessments.

## Overall scores for Ravensthorpe



Public transport	4.3
Housing and community	4.2
Moving around	4
Facilities and amenities	3.9
Feeling safe	3.9
Natural space	3.8
Identity and belonging	3.8

Social contact	3.5
Work and local economy	3.5
Influence and sense of control	3.4
Play and recreation	3.3
Streets and spaces	3.3
Care and maintenance	3.2
Traffic and parking	2.8

Full data is available at:  
[www.HowGoodIsOurPlace.org.uk](http://www.HowGoodIsOurPlace.org.uk)