Next steps for 'Batley – Our town centre' results
March 2022

What we did

During July and August 2021, Batley ward councillors and Kirklees Council staff learned what local people think about Batley town centre, through the 'Batley – Our town centre' activities.

We published the 'Batley – Our town centre' results in December 2021 for everyone to look at. Ward councillors and council officers also wanted to make sure that more local people had the opportunity to contribute as the work progressed.

In February 2022, we held a workshop at Batley Town Hall to discuss the results and to work with local people to prioritise what is important to them. We also sent a letter to all households in Batley to let people know about the next steps. This included the option to complete an online questionnaire, which was shaped by what we've learned from participants so far.

Who participated?

757 people took part in our 'Next steps' activities in Batley

942 people have taken part in 'Batley – Our town centre' overall

At the workshop, 16 local people joined ward councillors and council officers to discuss the results summary. 741 people completed our 'Next steps' questionnaire. 568 of these were returned through the post. 68 of the people who complete the questionnaire had also taken part in the 'Batley – Our town centre' activities in 2021.

Age	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Under 16	3*	0.6
16 to 24	19*	3.6
25 to 34	41*	7.8
35 to 44	77*	14.6
45 to 54	106*	20
55 to 64	96*	18.2
65 to 74	106*	20
75+	80*	15.2
	528	**100%**

Gender	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Male	184*	43.4
Female	176*	41.5
Other	64*	15.1
	424	**100%**

*These figures are for the participants who chose to share this information.

What we've learned

We've included a summary of what we learned from participants, through our 'Next steps' questionnaire and workshop. Everything we did was based on what citizens in Batley have told us so far. We also encouraged new participants to share their own ideas.

The questionnaire enabled participants to provide a ranking for different groups of priorities, based on what previous participants had said. We also asked for any further comments, ideas and suggestions about Batley town centre.

At the workshop, we explored each of the themes through group discussions. We looked at actions that could help deal with issues in Batley town centre. We also talked about who should be involved and we considered potential timescales.
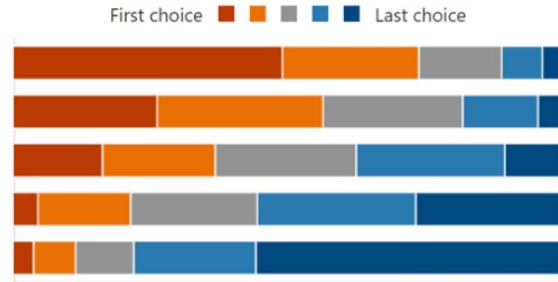
Next steps questionnaire results

Getting around the town centre

Q1. *People in Batley have told us that they would like improvements to parking in the town centre, improvements to the condition of roads and pavements, for potholes to be tackled and to have less volume of traffic in the town centre.*

Ranking

First choice ■ ■ ■ ■ Last choice

1 Reducing anti-social parking in the town centre

2 Making the town centre better for pedestrians

3 Improving the condition of town centre roads

4 Restricting vehicles in the town centre

5 Changing roads or junction layouts

Key words from comments

parking in the town
no parking
illegal parking car parks
free parking
people parking car parking
double parking
road parking
town centre
Commercial Street
road need Batley town traffic wardens social parking
parking on pavements People parking parking spaces parking in Batley

What people said about getting around the town centre

The highest proportion of comments were about antisocial parking issues. This included vehicles parking on footpaths, parking in disabled parking spaces, bus stops, double parking on the carriage way, safe and appropriate parking for delivery staff. People also commented on the enforcement of parking restrictions across the town centre, with people suggesting that there should be stricter enforcement, especially on an evening.

There are different views about the cost of parking in Batley, with some people suggesting that parking should be free, and others stating that free parking is what keeps the town centre busy.

Lots of people suggested that some pedestrianisation of Batley would improve various elements of the town centre. Comments included the general feel, safety concerns, opportunities to eat and socialise, adding green space and environmental concerns. People also considered how this would affect the business community and people with disabilities or limited mobility.

Many people also commented about footpaths and road surfaces across both the town centre and wider area. The comments included specific reference to potholes and uneven surfaces.

Lots of comments focused on the roads around Marketplace and Branch Road, referring to parking, the junction layout, enforcement and ideas for change.

Quotes about getting around the town centre

"Mainly the parking in an evening when people seem to park cars in middle of road or in disabled bays, just to go get food"

"No real problem with getting around on foot but can be difficult getting up and down side of market place, with all the parked cars there"

"Restricting vehicles in the town centre will kill the town."

"Anti-social parking is out of control in the town centre. People park where they like and when they like. Please bring order back to Batley Town Centre and make it safe for pedestrians.

"Restriction of vehicles would penalise the disabled."

Suggestions about getting around the town centre

Putting bollards up on the pavements like other towns and cities to stop parking on the pavements or pedestrianise the whole of central commercial Street.

Roadside parking on Commercial Street could be just for disabled drivers only. Everyone else can park in a carpark and walk.

Open up the central cobbled market area for parking.

Open up the space in front of the Town Hall for shoppers. This will generate business for local shops.

There should be direct access from Tesco and Asda car parks up onto the main street without having to access Tescos, or accessing the dark/urine/needle littered staircase in Tescos car park.
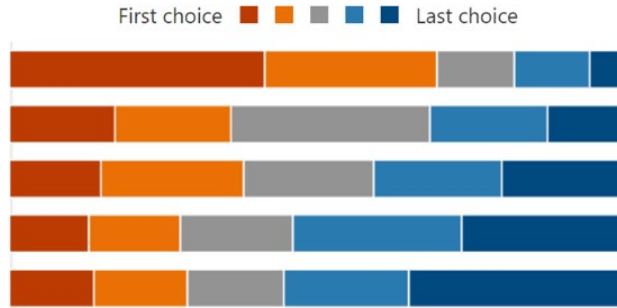
Aside from when it is trimmed for Christmas the market square appears dull and colourless. Low level planting could easily be vandalised so could the lamp standards be equipped with planters and use of trailing plants to give a good display?

Feeling safe in the town centre

Q2 *People in Batley have told us that they don't always feel safe in the town centre, and lots of people have made suggestions about how we could improve this.*

Ranking

1 More Police presence

2 CCTV in the town centre

3 Increasing enforcement activity

4 Slowing or reducing vehicles

5 Improving Street lighting

Key words from comments

safe in the town • police in Batley • lighting and more police • social behaviour • police on foot • parking • town centre • Police patrols • street • people • need • police station • police car • traffic wardens • police presence • Batley town • no police • lack of policing • police in town • police / enforcement

Comments about feeling safe in the town centre

Participants gave some mixed feedback regarding bus services, but people mainly highlighted concerns regarding bus routes not meeting the needs of local people. This includes comments about services that have been removed and changes to the frequency of some bus routes. Similar comments were made regarding train timetables.

The next most common response was 'I don't use public transport'. Individuals highlighted specific places and routes that don't meet their needs, as being the reason for not using it.

Participants mainly commented on the key priorities. They said that poor driving, speeding, and noisy vehicles were concerns. anti-social behaviour, groups congregating and concerns around drugs, were also common within responses. Broader comments that participants made focused on litter, people not feeling safe, and the need for improved pedestrian areas.

Quotes about feeling safe in the town centre

"I do not feel safe walking through the town centre after work after 5pm. And the number of drivers that do not stop at red lights is a real concern and they travel at such speed."

"On the whole and during the day especially when the shops are open, Batley is probably the safest town centre of all. Enforcement does need to focus on the area of the town centre between the traffic lights and the one-way system alongside Tesco car park. This particular area is appalling in

terms of vehicular misdemeanours and obstruction, particularly pavement parking and illegal use of disabled bays. I would recommend increasing disabled bays along one side of the road here which would be easier to police and more noticeable to users."

"I don't believe increased police presence is necessarily the answer to making the centre safer, but rather policy that address community health and cohesion. Improving the physical conditions of a neighbourhood, such as providing more green spaces, improving local and empty buildings and improving economic well-being and social connections of local people can help reduce crime and lead to safer cleaner neighbourhoods.

Suggestions about feeling safe in the town centre

Agree to more police presence to stop gangs congregating and annoying people. I think a visible MPH sign would be a good idea the ones which thank drivers for driving slowly and warn when the speed is higher than stated.

More police presence would be of benefit but only when they are present. Some areas shop owners have walkie talkies who can pass on concerns to other shop owners, warning them of certain people or situations.

More signs to say 20mph on Commercial Street. Police to be able to move vehicles, on the spot fines for parking on pavements without good reason.
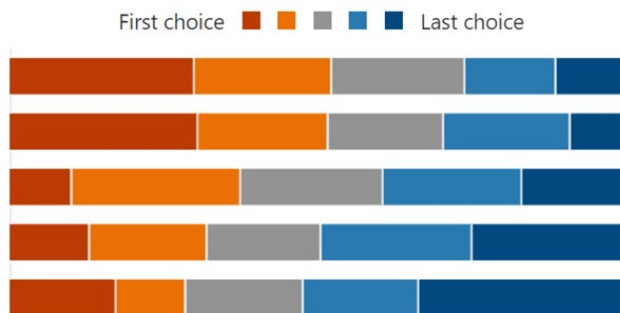
Make Cambridge Street a one-way road.

Improving local spaces

Q3. People in Batley have told us that they want to see improvements to our green spaces, better maintenance of local buildings, more done to keep the town centre clean and better play and recreation opportunities.

Ranking

1 Developing a local campaign against littering,

working with businesses and the community

2 Improving or increasing green space

3 Increasing the number of littler bins

4 Creating better play and recreation opportunities

5 Where possible, improving the look of local buildings

Key words from comments

Comments about improving local spaces

Feedback from participants mainly focused on the identified priorities. Lots of people commented on litter, fly tipping and general waste management, including recycling options, changes to waste collection schedules, partnership for litter campaigns and enforcement.

Further comments included increasing and improving green space, with suggestions that people feel there is a need to further invest in green spaces, improve recreation access and look at opportunities for young people.

Quotes about improving local spaces

"It's not so much how it looks as how it is used and facilities available. People don't use the bins."

"We are increasingly seeing litter from fast food outlets being thrown out of cars and feel that the owners of the outlets should be discouraged to demonstrate to customers the importance of disposing packaging etc at home."

"Don't see the point of more bins on the streets, as people just throw their litter on the floor."

Suggestions about improving local spaces

Why not have a litter-picking campaign in local schools to educate young people about taking litter home instead of just dropping it?

Working together with people in the community and local businesses will help to put the pride back into Batley and give people a town that they want. As a result, the people of Batley and Batley itself will thrive.

The litter problem is a disgrace. If parking wasn't allowed in the town centre the problem would cure itself.

When a shop closes, pre-printed facing with a 'street scene etc' to stop the street looking less than alive.

Businesses could 'sponsor' cleaning companies possibly in exchange for 'free' advertising and rate adjustment? Improving 'facades' etc.
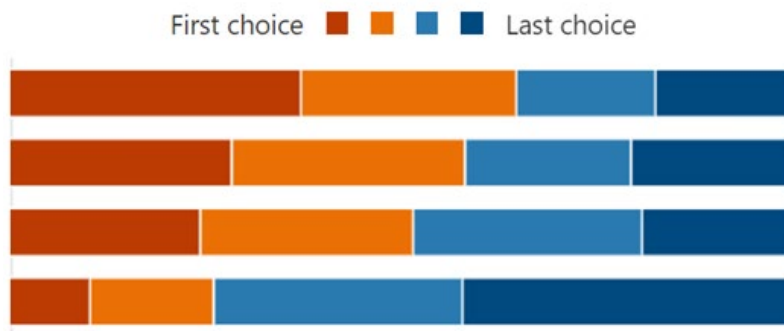
Batley needs a green like Heckmondwike has. Could the market place be to turned in to a recreational green, seen as how the market stalls seem a thing of the past.

Supporting local businesses

Q4. People in Batley have told us that they would like more support for local business and a better range of shops in the town centre.

Ranking

First choice ■ ■ ■ ■ Last choice

1 Explore the opportunities for markets (for example, Friday market, Farmers' market, Continental market)
2 Look at planning rules, to see if we can encourage a broader range of businesses
3 More grants, incentives, and opportunities for small business
4 Developing new spaces for business, collaborative workspaces etc.

Key words from comments

farmers market   market place   variety of shops   local shops
food shops town centre   Batley town   businesses shoe shops
range of shops need   market
cheap shops   shops in Batley small businesses   takeaways
charity shops   Batley market   clothes shops   market in Batley

What people said about supporting local businesses

Participants raised several concerns regarding the variety of shops and the effect this has had on the town centre. Comments suggest that visiting the town centre does not provide enough opportunity to shop for what they felt were the basics (Greengrocer, Butcher, shoe shop and independent stores etc). Similarly, participants said that the market is important to them and that variety is important (both regular and different types of market). A number of participants gave suggestions or alternative places, of towns that feel have managed this (Birstall, Morley, Ossett, Otley etc). Some people suggested covering the market, or looking at possible indoor opportunities, for the market during the winter.

Several people proposed support for new independent business, with a variety of opportunities presented. These included technology start up support, call centres and shared workspaces. Participants also suggest that vacant spaces and neglected buildings could be re-purposed to support new opportunities.

Several people said there need to be changes to planning rules, including limiting the development of future food outlets, allowing for easier development and possibly preveting further development on green spaces.

Quotes about supporting local businesses

"Foot flow in the town has disappeared. Daytime needs a different approach to shopping, there is none to minimal night economy. People have stopped using town for social activity."

"This is where parking is needed, if you park in Tesco only 2 hours not enough time to walk up into town and support local businesses."

"Better opportunities for business other than takeaways. More variety to encourage better high street atmosphere. This would need to be worked with traffic issues due to new delivery companies ie uber eats, who take up parking & dominate the high street."

"I blame the council for allowing all the food outlets in Batley town centre. This has declined the town and will never recover."

Suggestions about supporting local businesses

Market place needs to be used to its full potential. Give traders free stalls once a month.

The council now have a business and IP Centre linked to the West Yorkshire City Region and through their links, they may be able to help new start-ups and get some shops open again.

Publicity and incentives for stall holders to return to stand on Batley Market to sell their goods - free/reduced stall rental, Also, reduced rents for retail shops.

Batley is in danger of becoming a centre for fast-food, barbers and hair dressers. We need a much broader range of businesses. Why not make the old police station into a business centre at low rent rates.

I think where the market is in Batley town centre there should be a day where people can come and sell their own products in the market.

More community involvement

Q5. People in Batley have told us that they would like more community activities and more opportunities to have influence and control over what happens in Batley.
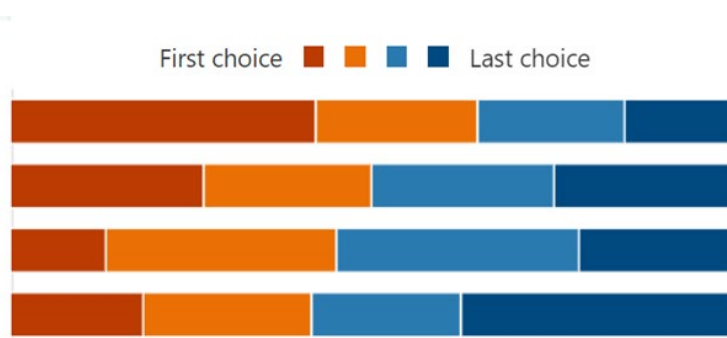
Ranking

1 Creating more opportunities for local people to influence local decisions

2 Creating more local community events (for example Arts, Recreation, Cultural events etc.)

3 Developing a town centre group, to look at creating opportunities for community involvement across the town centre

4 Doing more to promote what's happening (for example, a local newsletter or public noticeboards).

Key words from comments

What people said about more community involvement

Participants made several comments supporting the key priorities that other local people had already identified and made supporting suggestions and ideas.

People would welcome the opportunity to influence decisions regarding the town centre. Some comments also recognised the loss of historic decision-making opportunities, such as area committees or Batley Council.

People are generally supportive of having more community events and activities that would support all parts of the community. Some participants specifically commented about including young people. Others mentioned the ability to advertise and reach across the whole community (noticeboards, social media, community newsletter, newspaper and electronic screens).

Quotes about more community involvement

"For the past two years, people have greatly missed some form of social interaction, which has compromised there mental and physical wellbeing. Cultural / community events are needed which unite all ethnicities, but they need to be promoted and advertised much more effectively."

"Nothing happens in Batley. Promoting what happens in Batley would work if we actually had things happening in Batley. We are NEVER notified of events that do happen need to be promoted better."

"Find community ambassadors to ensure all areas are reached and included."

"I have lived in Batley all my life, never seen anything as good as this before from the council to help and improve where we all live and spend a lot of our time. Being able to have an opinion and more frequently would be an excellent thing.

"There is a lot going for Batley, the market place is a great event space - the library and the local churches e.g. the Methodist church and All Saints Batley are good locations. I remember the town having an opera project and also a wonderful Festival of Lights etc, plus other things. Activities bring in people (and their money) and it becomes a virtuous circle."

"More events at Batley Town Hall. Outside concerts on the market place, Affordable functions, pantomime, gigs etc. Work with local schools to organise children to perform etc."

Suggestions about more community involvement

Local newsletter a very good idea, I think. Phone in slot on local radio would be very popular for people to put ideas across! Get businesses to sponsor, possibly for funding if needed.

More local events in a nice new area would be great to promote Batley eg new pedestrianised area that has a weekly weekend pop-up market. The same area would then be used for art installations and anything – like Leeds city centre.

Should have a cultural event more often to promote and achieve Jo Cox's legacy. Eg Farmers Market, religious activities, arts and crafts. Funding is available, but not used effectively.

Tackle the issues causing problems first, once evidence is seen encourage people to become involved in the town.

More outdoor events in summer, bring back 'Batley's Got Talent' or similar and encourage community activities.

Creating diverse groups that represent all groups who live and work in the town.

There used to be local committees organised by Kirklees Council that met at regular intervals. All the local councillors for Batley attended and areas of concern discussed. There was a North Kirklees Countryside forum. All have gone. They need restoring.

What matters most to you?

Q6. Do you have any other comments or ideas about Batley town centre?

Key words from comments

Batley was the place ghost town
local businesses people of Batley
independent shops
charity shops need **shops** town centre
look of the town   car park
parking   shops such as Batley
small towns   variety of shops   Batley town   Road between Batley
area and town   shops open   Town Hall

Main themes

As part of the questionnaire, we gave an opportunity for people to tell us what matters most to them. People mainly responded with comments and suggestions around the range of shops available, community safety issues (including parking, speed, generally feeling safe), the general appearance of the town centre, parking issues, events and activities for young and old. There was also support for developing and supporting business in the town centre.

Quotes

"Old Batley values don't matter anymore. People of Batley don't care anymore. The future children of Batley need to be taught care and kindness and manners."

"Business, events, planning should involve a cross section of the community rather than a particular group having preponderance."

"I am a blue badge holder and I find that parking for the disabled is very poor and mostly taken up by non blue badge holders. Outside of Greggs, outside the post office, Specsavers, branch road. I think they should be more clearly marked."

"Needs investment to attract new business back. Need a variety of business and shops. Use planning to restrict takeaways food places."

"It will be difficult to build up business and attract new ones to the town centre as online shopping has basically finished it off. Not just here but nationwide, which we all know anyway."

"Clean up the town, litter signs in full view and phone numbers to ring if we witness litterbugs, more bins, large fines, name and shame dangerous drivers and those who litter the streets. Make our green space's safer and not rats. What have Kirklees council been spending the money on, not roads, litter clearing, not cleaning our spaces. Disgrace."

Suggestions

The town needs a flow where you can start from the library and work your way down. We also need larger business, like high-street stores, Primark.

There could be better shop or mobility scooter and other devices, so we can get in more shops.

There should be more CCTV cameras in the town centre. Parking problems.

Could you please sort out the welcome to Batley Signs? Have you seen the state of them? They are not very welcoming. I would personally volunteer my services to retore them and paint them to make them look more welcoming.

Next steps workshop results

Based on priorities that our citizens told us were important and alongside our questionnaire, we asked the community to join us in an evening workshop where people helped explore the issues and ideas.

On the evening groups explored each of the themes, looked at actions that could help deal with issues, and considered potential time scales.

Streets and spaces / Improving local spaces

Key themes from the group discussions:

- Create multi-use spaces for all throughout the town centre. Spaces that facilitate events, incidental play from children, skateboarders, adults socialising and dwell time.
- Change dominance of cars in the town centre through promoting car parks, improving access to car parks, reducing carriage ways and widening pavements, create cycle parks etc.
- Encourage businesses, residents, and users to take ownership of the town centre.
- Improve the aesthetics of the town centre and its streets – addition of greenery, public art, seating, sculptures.

Ideas, concerns and suggestions:

- Morley Bottoms is a good example of a scheme that attendees of the workshop would be supportive of happening in Batley Town Centre.
- Enforcement needs to be improved particularly on length of time parked, misuse of disabled parking bays.
- Pedestrianisation full or partial was supported. Some suggestions were to monitor air and noise pollution and enforce road closures at certain times to improve this.
- Need a multi-use space in the centre that provides play, socialisation and event space for all.
- Encourage public art.
- Improve access between the high street and Tesco. Currently, Tesco stairwell and bridge is unattractive, poorly lit and dirty.
- Litter bins not in suitable spaces to draw attention and do not have recycling option.
- Need to improve signage for car parks and attractions in the town centre
- Improve gateways into the town centre to attract people in.
- Celebrate the heritage of Batley in the town centre.
- Former Police Station in prime town centre location but is left empty.

Who should be involved in achieving the priorities?

- Businesses to take ownership of town centre. Provided with resources to do this. For example, advertisement on town centre bins and then the business to take ownership of their bins.
- Community groups involved from the start of projects to encourage ownership and understanding of responsibility.

How feasible and realistic are the ideas?

- Participants felt that if we work with community groups and businesses priorities should be feasible in the medium to long term. Some of the enforcement may be out of the council's control, and will need exploring further with partners (e.g. Policing, Public Transport)

Feeling safe

Key themes from the group discussions:

- Increase in Police presence has both a positive and negative effect. Does increased police presence raise people concerns around feeling safe?
- CCTV - there was mixed feeling around the use of CCTV and how useful it was in both preventing criminality and helping people feel safe.
- The closure of the police station has had a negative effect of the people perceptions of safety. However, people understood that it was a decision outside of the councils authority.
- Streetlighting - there was positive feedback regarding the general effect of streetlighting, however there was a feeling that some part of the town centre needed additional lighting, to help people feel safe.
- Enforcement - participants suggested this was a key area that needed to be increased.

Ideas, concerns and suggestions:

- People said it would be useful to have a place where police officers can access a community building, acting as a place people could go to.
- Recent traffic operations have been successful and well received. Is this a model that can be used in other policing areas, there were also questions asking if it is appropriate to use Council funds to support an additional police action.
- CCTV is responsive, and not proactive. This impacts on its preventative ability.
- Do Businesses know about the CCTV? How often is the CCTV used to deal with and respond to issues?
- Some people said that CCTV can create a perception of 'risk', others suggested that it was a deterrent. How do the council feel it works? Does the CCTV cover the main car parks?
- Should CCTV be advertised?
- Do enforcement fines come back into the Council, does the work pay for itself?
- Is there opportunity to develop new reporting opportunities through new legislation?
- How can we prevent illegal use of disabled parking spaces, would any pedestrian changes effect access for disabled people, could there be improved disabled parking?
- How can community safety messages be shared, providing people with relevant information?

Who should be involved in achieving the priorities?

- Police Presence is not within the scope of Kirklees Council and will need support from West Yorkshire Police.
- CCTV and Streetlighting are within scope and can form part of the Town Centre programme.

- There is also some key work with business and the community about community safety in Batley and how people can help contribute to overall community safety through encouraging increased reporting.

How feasible and realistic are the ideas?

- Participants felt that if we work with community groups and businesses priorities should be feasible in the med/long term.
- Some of the enforcement may be out of the council's control, and will need exploring further with partners (e.g. Increasing Police Prescence)

Supporting local businesses

Key themes from the group discussions:

- Involve all parties and facilitate collaboration – council, residents, businesses, community groups, keep dialogue going.
- Create an inclusive environment – something for everyone, young, old from different communities to encourage people coming together and create a day time and night time economy.
- Create a visitor experience to attract people to visit the town centre, visually attractive, quality shops, - Need to re-ignite events post COVID-19 and advertise and promote, using digital billboards, create a buzz around the town again. Free newspaper for people with no access to technology/social media.
- Plant trees, provide sponsored flower tubs/hanging baskets, pedestrian area to create vibrant safe areas that are accessible to people with disabilities, improve parking in and around the centre, discourage cars speeding through.
- Engage a designated Town Centre Manager (TCM) to focus on activities, co-ordinate all the different elements link businesses to council services etc – possibly to cover wider area ie shared with Cleckheaton, Heckmondwike, Dewsbury.
- Business team to build network with other small business associations – work with TCM, MP, Cllrs more closely.
- Engage shopkeepers/businesses in competitions to take care of the areas around their premises, competitions for flowers etc like in Mirfield – divide Batley into sections so business compete to make improvements
- Impose a levy on take-aways to encourage them to clean up and uphold licencing regulations.
- Improve the area in front of the Town Hall/better market area
- Retain council buildings to maintain some control over the main shopping area – planning developments to have caveats to ensure that the proposals fit the needs of local residents/businesses.

Ideas, concerns and suggestions:

Opportunities for Markets:

- General consensus to have a market that provides quality, independent food retailers, e.g., farmers markets, artisan foods, suggested monthly rotating type and/or market with neighbouring towns, better marketplace, covered over to adapt to seasonal shopping.
- Residents felt markets were still a large part of the community, although there was an acceptance that the traditional Market model was no longer as desirable as people's shopping behaviours have changed 'Don't shop like that anymore'
- Difficulty balancing quality and cost
- Consider attracting more hipster type shoppers to the TC, provide a shopping experience with variety.

More Grants, Incentives and opportunities for small business

- Grants – not much mention of these.
- Incentives – Rent Free schemes, new start business opportunities /rent – to encourage new businesses into spaces.
- Opportunities (*I'll include Challenges here too) – There is still a desire to shop local and use independents – but the convenience of a large chain (Tesco) makes this difficult due to costs for many local residents.
- Potential to regenerate empty spaces for hub/hive's
- Woolworth's Building mentioned a lot as a potential focal point which could provide a multi-functional space.
- Attract younger generation – by providing incentives to major stores, ie Primark/Top shop – although some acceptance that this may not be feasible as large chain stores would only settle for a larger profit margin.
- Need more traditional shops – Greengrocers, Clothes, Furniture, Hipster Coffee shops
- Lots of Charity Shops not always negative as quality ones would support the mend and make doers,
- More local's Independents – difficult to attract due to Tesco

Looking at planning rules, to see if we can encourage a broader range of businesses

- There is currently a planning consultation around Hot Food.
- [Hot food takeaway supplementary planning document (SPD) consultation | Kirklees Council](#) was welcomed as generally felt to many caused a problem with health issues, litter, etc that comes from these establishments.

Developing new spaces for business, collaborative workspaces

- Again – the Woolworth's building was mentioned as an ideal property to refurbish and utilise as a flexible multi-functional space
- Community buildings - offering free space.
- Potentially a hub, which offers a range of shops / pop-up's, coffee shops, community spaces etc
- Create a day time / night time economy control number of takeaways

Who should be involved in achieving the priorities?

- Suggested workshops with Cllrs /officers/community groups and local businesses focussing on activities to achieve the ambitions.

- Community action groups supporting cleaning up, encourage local business collaboration working together.
- Batley Business Association, Batley Festival organisers, market traders, Batley Vintage day organisers, Creative Scene mentioned, also to liaise with volunteers working with the council already.

How feasible and realistic are the ideas?

- Suggestions that start with some quick wins, improve visual appearance, make improvement to shop fronts, grants, also apply levy to takeaways to support cleaning up of streets.
- Targeted street cleansing, pedestrian areas.

More community involvement

Key themes from the group discussions:

- Develop a mixed arts & cultural programme that reflects and involves the local community. A beautification programme. There is a history of arts & culture in the town through Batley Arts College. There is now some funding obtained by Simon Cook for Batley Buddy, an art project working with veteran soldiers.
- Having a building which is a creative community space for diverse groups and projects would be a good start. It would bring people in to produce art in the town centre. A dedicated building for an arts and cultural quarter. Respect and bring out the beautiful heritage of the town. A street level programme for everyone. Walking past something you have helped create every day is powerful.
- Less red tape from Kirklees Council which is unnecessary. To run a small market as part of Batley Food Festival a volunteer had to work through a 52 page document and was insulted by staff who said there was no room for discussion or flexibility for example the park was not allowed to be used for drinks though locals would prefer to be in green spaces. The council charges too much to apply for licences. It should be more helpful and have resources such as a per prepared health and safety policy that community groups can adopt instead of having to write their own from scratch. Groups need a lot of resilience to see the process through, one example is having to put in a quote for a barrier.
- Have a residents card to local events and sights, maps for children to get involved and explore with prizes e.g. an interactive ice sculptures trail. Have a brand to go with it e.g Bat for Batley. Refund on the rates for those who have a card.
- Residents Magazine through the door 3-4 times a year, content businesses paying for adverts, where to go for advice, info, how to report to the council and what's on.
- Go back to putting in posters and notices. The council is focused on social media and websites. Bring back the council "what's on" newsletter twice a year. Notices in the bus station, shop windows, on the door to say you are meeting tonight.
- Use community champions in each street to introduce themselves to neighbours and share information with them about the services and their needs. Put local people first. Be more neighbourly.

Ideas, concerns and suggestions:

- Some ladies are unable to come into some spaces for cultural reasons. Town centre events could help overcome that barrier.
- Creative Scene do run some events in Batley and could replicate a similar model in Batley subject to obtaining funding. Knowing what funding is available.
- Promoting what is happening in buildings so more people can get involved. Having shared physical spaces in the town centre so people can share and collaborate. Older people in particular like to go more local.
- Events that bring everyone together e.g. the market place could host musicians. Have events where the community build something together that day around a theme e.g. anti-racism.
- Hold a regular creative breakfast – community and businesses coming together over a croissant to share and inspire each other.
- If promoting food at events there should be enough for everyone. At a recent event many people came to break their fast but there wasn't enough food.
- There is no regular flow of information about what is happening – news, events etc. "I have lived in 6 towns and this is the only one that I do not feel part of because it is the least connected community." We need to try to overcome the barriers between the diverse communities right down to street level. People stick to their own streets and community spaces, "they feel closed off." They are autonomous to those who run them and there is a focus on their running costs. The groups need to attract more people. We need more programmes like Jo Cox House does which bring communities together.
- Volunteer community champions – recruit local people who are genuinely interested. Use the local councillors to get people interested.
- Find the common ground or middle road that appeals to everyone in local politics so that everyone feels comfortable in their local community.
- Ward councillors to be visible and contactable by residents. They should be available to meet people at the Town Hall, with security. Face to face is important.
- More greenery in the town centre that people can enjoy with benches that are kept clean.
- Improve the signage, lighting – small steps that make a massive difference to the look and feel of the centre and help bring back pride.
- Fill the empty noticeboard on Commercial Street. Who is responsible for it?

Who should be involved in achieving the priorities?

- The needs to be a wider partnership, between the council, Councillors, Business, Voluntary groups and Community.

How feasible and realistic are the ideas?

- Batley needs to create its own identity and brand. Neighbouring towns have got theirs, Batley needs one. Batley needs to think about is audience and not compete with neighbouring towns.
- Events – the issue is around sustaining events year on year.