

Your voice, your Holmfirth



Next steps for 'Your voice, your Holmfirth' results June 2022

What we did

During September and October 2021, Holme Valley South councillors and Kirklees Council staff learned what local people think about Holmfirth town centre, through the 'Your voice, your Holmfirth' activities.

We published the 'Your voice, your Holmfirth' 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 May 2022, we held drop-in sessions and attended events to discuss the results and to work with local people to prioritise what is important to them. This included an option to complete an online questionnaire, which was shaped by what we've learned from participants so far.

Who participated?

315 people took part in our 'Next steps' activities in Holmfirth.

647 people have taken part in 'Your voice, your Holmfirth' overall

At the drop-in sessions, 70 local people joined ward councillors and council officers to discuss the results summary. 291 people completed our 'Next steps' questionnaire. 134 of the people who completed the questionnaire had also taken part in the 'Your voice, your Holmfirth' activities in 2021.

Age	Participants	Percentage
Under 16	1	0.3
16 to 24	9	3.3
25 to 34	13	4.7
35 to 44	32	11.6
45 to 54	62	22.5
55 to 64	67	24.3
65 to 74	71	25.7
75+	21	7.6
	276	100%

Gender	Participants	Percentage
Male	89	37
Female	143	60
Other	8	3
	240	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 drop-in sessions. Everything we did was based on what citizens in Holmfirth have told us so far. We also encouraged new participants to share their own ideas.

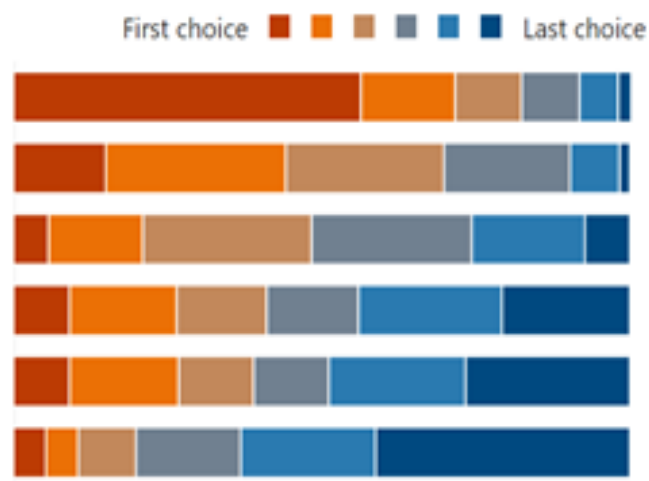
The questionnaire enabled participants to provide a ranking for different groups of priorities, based on what previous participants had said. We also asked for any further comments, ideas and suggestions about Holmfirth town centre.

Next steps questionnaire results

Getting around the town centre safely

Q1. People in Holmfirth have told us they would like improvements to traffic movement & management, pavements, cycle facilities and car parking.

1. Reduce the volume of traffic & improve flow in particular lorries through Holmfirth centre, one way system, reduce the speed limit, park & ride into the centre
2. Improve pedestrian crossings
3. Improve path & pavement surfaces, access for wheelchairs & prams, widen Huddersfield Road pavement in the centre
4. More cycle lanes, priority for cyclists & e-bikes, bike facilities & bike racks at the bus station
5. More car parking spaces in the centre, free parking for shoppers and residents
6. Enforce on-street parking, no parking on pavements



There were 117 comments and ideas on getting around the town centre safely



What people said about getting around the town centre

A loading bay to prevent delivery vans and wagons parking on the pavement. Divert lorries away from the centre. Have an air quality survey. Make Bridge Lane one way down the hill to ease congestion.

Remove the traffic lights at the junction of Victoria Street and Huddersfield Road and retain the pelican crossings. Traffic flows better when these lights are out of action.

Relocate bus stops where the road is widest so vehicles can pass while a bus is at a stop. Improve bus stops with shelters, heated seats, fans for hot days, live bus times.

Reduce on street parking on all main roads in the valley. More double or single yellow lines. Short stay street parking only and at the bus station. Move the taxi ranks at the bus station. Actively police parking

and camera enforcement. One view that pavement parking is safer to park outside home due to narrow road and blind bend.

More parking on the edge of town. Look into more long-term parking spaces and encourage workers to park there. More car parking at Sands. Train and ride scheme at Brockholes Station. Park and ride is not an option for young families going from school to work and appointments in the rural area.

Pedestrianise more areas in the centre even if only 9am-4pm, including Hollowgate, to create a shopping street. Shops to arrange deliveries outside of peak hours like city centres e.g. only 10pm to 6am. Free short term parking discs for residents to encourage local shopping. Extend the disc scheme to residents near Station Road car park or reduce it so it is equalised for all residents of Station Road.

Some people said a one-way system through the centre is essential to encourage local shoppers and visitors. Others said reducing traffic flows, volumes, HGVs and creating one-way systems through Holmfirth would impact on businesses, deliveries, and employment for local people.

Better pavement surfaces. Remove cobbles which are dangerous to those with less mobility. Improve sight lines for pedestrians, for example New Road when cars suddenly turn corners. Clean steps and pathways, repair damaged steps down from Huddersfield Road to Norridge Bottom. Slippery pavements are a challenge when wet.

Better pathways or school bus for children to walk from Netherthong to Holmfirth (no pavements, speeding drivers, bad lighting, no school buses). Improve access to Holmfirth J&I School. Better routes for school children.

Minimise signage, focus on good and relevant finishes, standardise street furniture to reflect the town as a conservation area. More electric charging points.

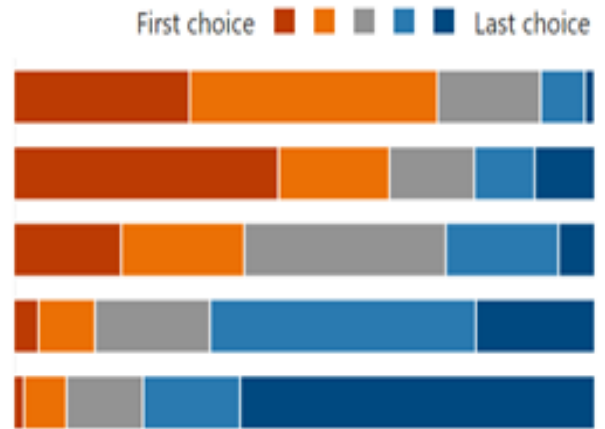
Look again at the position of the 2 pedestrian crossings by Hollowgate, they are too close together. Difficult for drivers to focus on both as well as the traffic. Replace with a light controlled crossing by the bus station (outside Harvey's) - Puffin or Toucan. A smart traffic management system to monitor flow and adjust the lights.

Put a wider path and cycle way or greenway on the river valley bottom which could continue into Huddersfield. More cycle racks and secure bike sheds, pay overnight. 20 mph enforced speed limit – people would feel safer on bikes. Remove manhole covers and metal drains, use kerb drainage system so it's safer for cyclists and scooters. Low noise tarmac on road surfaces.

Improving & maintaining public spaces

Q2. People in Holmfirth have told us that they would like to see improvements to public spaces in the town centre for locals and visitors alike to enjoy & spend time in.

1. Improve pedestrian space with pedestrian only zones such as Hollowgate, wider pavements, seating and planting. A large central space for traffic free festivals and pop-up events
2. Clean up the river and open up the riverside walk. Steps down to the river from Hollowgate, extend the riverside access & walkways from Sands Park and Holmbridge
3. Improve maintenance of parks, tackle low level vandalism, better lighting, play areas, access & signage from the centre to the parks such as a ramp to Victoria Park, more facilities in parks e.g. coffee van
4. Better lighting in the centre at night in particular on snickets, passages and riverside walk (use ambient lighting Crown Bottom to bus station to protect wildlife)
5. Waymark walking routes, more information boards and maps in particular at the bus station and Crown Bottom carpark



There were 81 comments and ideas on improving and maintaining public spaces



What people said about improving and maintaining public spaces

More pavement cafes and bars, planting and seating. More pedestrian areas – good for pop up businesses and events. Use car park by the library as an outdoor market. Covered walkway in Norridge Bottom for all weather entertainment. Make the river section outside the Picturedrome pedestrian including widening the bridge with benches. Open up and connect more public spaces. A town square for people to meet and watch the world go by.

Pedestrian only is a bad idea and would affect their access to properties on Lower Mill Lane. One way from Rocher to Lower Mill Lane and partial pedestrian only zone from 10am – 4pm on this stretch would be better.

Better access to the local parks for wheelchairs and prams, and better play equipment for young people. Regular cleaning of glass from the parks. Improve lighting, coffee van, BBQ areas, café at the Sands. More litter picking in Holmeside Memorial Gardens.

Holmfirth to Crown Bottom walkway – improve lighting (but it should not increase light pollution), remove weeds and tidy up, make more attractive so it is better utilised. Build a greenway on this stretch. Link walking trail between from each of the Stotts minibs services.

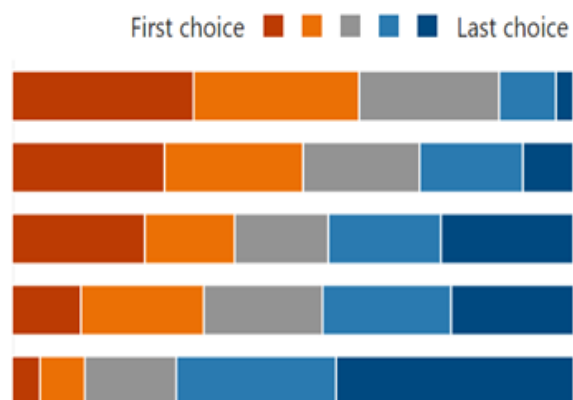
Make more use of the Methodist Church gardens, tidy up the edible garden next to Blok. Improve the 2 pedestrian bridges – they look tired.

Some paths lead to closed off or private areas – more signage would help. Better lighting on streets and connecting passages.

Supporting local businesses

Q3. People in Holmfirth have told us that they would like to see more support for local businesses to encourage more independent businesses to open in the centre, improve the retail offer and create more opportunities for local people.

1. A shop fronts design scheme, enforce standards or codes, property owners maintain premises better
2. Address rates and rents, better broadband, more incentives such as reduce rent for pop up businesses, affordable workspaces for entrepreneurs in unused buildings
3. Regular markets; outdoor, farmers, craft, antiques markets, pop-up stalls and cafes in pedestrian only zones
4. More collaboration between local businesses and regular dialogue between businesses and the council
5. Promote Holmfirth as a destination for tourism, heritage, markets. A clear identity and brand. A Holmfirth loyalty scheme for shopping etc



There were 76 comments and ideas on supporting local businesses



What people said about supporting local businesses

Don't close the market, reduce rents to attract more stallholders, open air market on Hollowgate or by the fire station.

Develop space where you can see artisans at work and buy their produce e.g. empty shopping centre by Sainsbury's. A limit on charity shops. Encourage large shopping stores like M&S to come to the valley.

Shops that attract younger people into town such as Costa, New Look. Encourage businesses for local shopping. Local shops selling local produce should have reduced rents and rates.

Businesses to modernise e.g. its difficult to find anywhere for a coffee before 10am and after 3pm. Focus on improving the town for locals and encourage them to use it. "Holmfirth should firstly be promoted for residents, not tourists." Town centre residents should be catered for.

Minimum standard for shop fronts. A design scheme. Subsidies to improve shop fronts. Address signage and maintenance issues with individual retailers. Increase rates for empty properties. Replace old signage coming into town. Encourage heritage signage. Jet wash the streets.

Improve the branding of the centre. A visual map of all the shops and more advertising. A food and drink destination alongside arts and music festivals for example a food court in the old Edinburgh Woollen Mills. Better publicised events. Promote good walking and cycling routes. Street art. Textile heritage. Move on from the Last of the Summer Wine days.

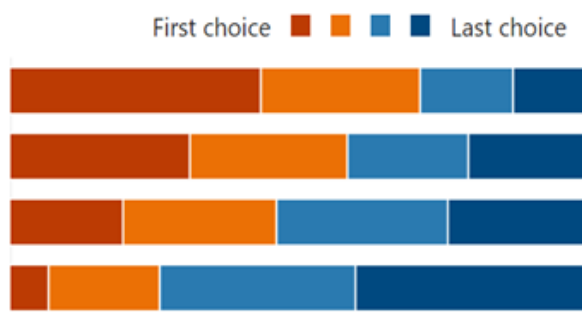
More collaboration between businesses and the council is very important. Funding for the Christmas lights.

Merge the civic hall and tech to create one cultural hall and venue. The Tech would make a great youth hostel.

Improving local facilities and amenities

Q4. People in Holmfirth have told us that they would like improvements to facilities and amenities, rejuvenating and making better use of empty buildings and outdoor spaces for a wider variety of community activities.

1. More youth clubs and activities for young people, indoor play and sports facilities for young people and families
2. Improve public toilets; Crown Bottom, bus station
3. Improve the library; more family activities, story time, toys etc
4. More cultural spaces; museum for visitors, invest in the Civic Hall and The Tech building for the community



There were 60 comments and ideas on improving local facilities and amenities



What people said about improving local facilities and amenities

Make use of spaces for activities for teens and older children. Need to find out from young people what they would like.

Better sports facilities. Kirklees needs to spend more money on the pool and gym or allow another company to take over. Re-open the lido. Outdoor fitness equipment at Sands. Lighting at the skatepark. More leisure facilities for the whole family. Large all weather multi-sports pitches at the high schools and at Sands. Improve changing facilities at Sands.

A heritage centre and place to find out about eco living. Create a Holmfirth experience e.g. virtual reality experience of historical events using old photos.

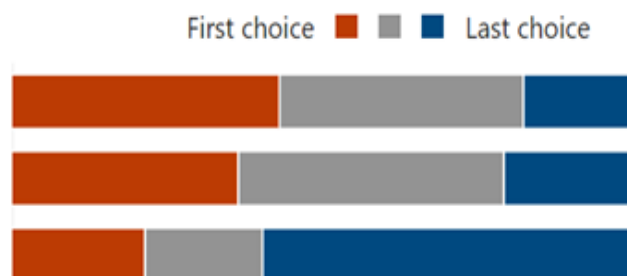
More activities for the wider community to come together that are not for profit.

Toilets at Crown Bottom. Fix the lift in the library for better access for wheelchairs and prams.

Homes that are affordable

Q5. People in Holmfirth have told us that they would like to see more affordable homes in the area for families, young people and older people in particular and for house building to be on brownfield sites only. Older people to be closer to local amenities and a sense of community is important.

1. More affordable homes in the centre of Holmfirth (for rent), rejuvenate empty properties with a mix of commercial and housing use
2. Improve conservation housing in the centre of Holmfirth, eco-friendly housing, maintain & insulate old properties
3. Restrict or regulate Air B&Bs- owners to apply for change of business use



There were 78 comments and ideas on homes that are affordable



What people said about homes that are affordable

Empty shops and buildings should be utilised as studios or apartments. Make it too expensive to have empty properties. Rejuvenate old buildings. Charge for delays in works or assist with costs. Residents need parking spaces.

Any new housing developments to have adequate parking and realistic affordable housing for young people from Holmfirth. A significant scheme in the centre for older people.

Build affordable housing on brownfield sites only. Restrict large building projects. Look into retirement properties such as well-built apartments and a quality care home to encourage people to downsize. Affordable bungalows for older people.

Change in the rules for listed buildings so people can improve insulation and make them more energy efficient. Let people modernise sympathetically. Provide subsidies to help homeowners make their homes more efficient. Should be insulating the whole building stock.

A cheap overnight B&B in Holmfirth. Air B&Bs bring in business. Vouchers for the visitors to get discounts in local bars and restaurants. Visitors should pay a visitors tax. Restriction on number of Air B&Bs and second homes would free up properties for local people to rent.

What matters most

There were 187 comments made

What matters to you most?	Number of comments
Improve traffic flow & reduce volume	40
Promote independent shops & businesses	33
More pedestrian spaces and for events	19
Regular markets	17
More attractive public realm (litter, bins, dog poo, signage, clean-up buildings, greenery and landscaping)	16
More parking & enforcement, residents parking, park & ride	16
Destination for visitors & tourism	13
Improve riverside walk & clean up the river	10
Improve pedestrian crossings	10
Uniform shop fronts/ design guide	7

Ranked as first choice

Reduce volume of traffic and improve flow	165
Improve path and pavement surfaces	43
Enforce on- street parking, no parking on pavements	26
More car parking spaces in the centre, free parking for shoppers/ residents	26
Improve pedestrian crossings	16
More cycle lanes, priority for cyclists and storage	15

Improve pedestrian space	132
Clean up the river and open up riverside walk	87
Improve maintenance of parks, low level vandalism, facilities	53
Better lighting in the centre	12
Waymark walking routes, information boards & maps	4

Regular markets, pop up stalls, cafes in pedestrian zones	49
Address rates & rents, more incentives for businesses	32
A shop fronts design scheme, better maintenance of properties	32
Promote Holmfirth as a destination for tourism, heritage. A clear brand	15
More collaboration between local businesses & regular dialogue with council	4

More youth clubs & activities for young people	121
More cultural spaces	49
Improve public toilets	22
Improve the library, more family activities	7

More affordable homes in the centre, rejuvenate empty properties	27
Improve conservation housing in the centre, eco friendly, insulate old property	16
Restrict or regulate Air B&Bs	6