

# What matters to Marsden



## What matters to Marsden 21st October to 10th December

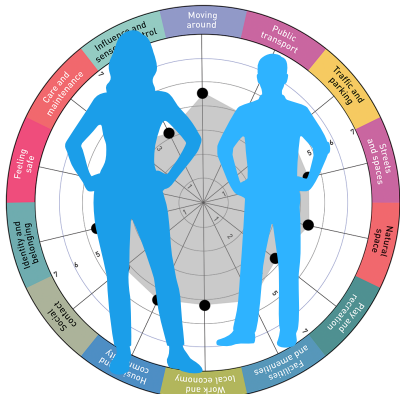
### What we did

Volunteers from community organisations across Marsden, coordinated by the Marsden Community Trust and supported by the Colne Valley ward councillors and Kirklees Council staff, had conversations with local residents, businesses and community groups. We asked people who live in, work in or visit Marsden about what life is like in the village now, how things might change in the future and what matters most to them. We used a tool called the 'Place Standard' which encourages conversations about your local place, by using simple questions.

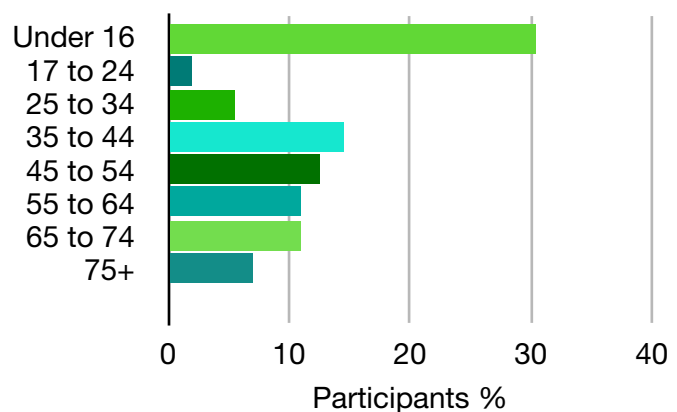
### Who participated?

We had conversations with people at the Christmas lights switch on event, at the British Legion, the Sports Hall, Parochial Hall, in the Riverhead, at the Mechanics and in the street. We also spent a day speaking to students at Marsden Junior School and attended local Scout groups. 275 people completed the assessment online.

**603** citizens took part, completing **406** Place Standard assessments.

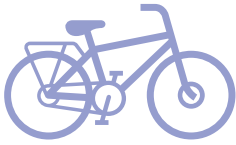


**Female 53% Male 34%**  
**Other / unknown 13%**



# What participants said

## Moving around



**Key issues:** 202 people said a lot about walking in Marsden. 59 people generally praised walking provision in the area. However, lots of people also said most of the positive walking experiences available



in Marsden were recreational rather than purposeful. Many people said the topography and condition of the paths and public rights of way could make walking around difficult. 56 people said a lot of these difficulties come from the hills, with routes being blocked by water logging, overgrown vegetation, cyclists, lack of signage and simply poor maintenance. 24 people said that quite often there is no pavement on roads around the village.

184 people talked a lot about cycling in Marsden. 118 people complained about the generally poor cycling options on the road, on the canal and off road, with concerns about the safety and usability of existing cycling options in Marsden through to the sheer lack of cycling routes or lanes. Some people said that cycle lanes are often parked in and that they aren't connected to anything. Six people mentioned a lack of good quality bike parking and two others raised concerns about off road cycling eroding paths on the moors. However, 26 people shared positive views on cycling in Marsden.

107 people talked about the village centre, of which only 13 were positive or complimentary, saying the village centre is generally easy and pleasant to move around because of its size, pavements and because the centre is relatively flat. 42 people complained about the state of Marsden's pavements, saying they are worn, broken, uneven and full of potholes. There are 12 specific concerns about Warehouse Hill, six about the difficulties caused by 'the Mechanics Corner' and eight that the centre can be unsafe or difficult to move around with children.

64 people talked about the canal, 25 of whom complained about the condition of the towpath, that it's poor when wet, uneven and is in a state of disrepair. Two people said that they find cyclists on the canal can be inconsiderate and that the towpath is difficult for wheelchairs and prams. Eight said the canal is good for walking, 14 praised the canal more generally, highlighting that it provides good access to Slaithwaite, and one said it's the only off-road cycling route to Huddersfield.

112 people spoke about traffic, split between the pace of traffic being slow enough, that there isn't too much traffic, with eight saying the roads are comparatively good. However, 78 people complained about speeding, potholes, the lack of traffic calming, safety concerns, a lack of crossing places and there being simply too much traffic in Marsden.

49 people complained about parking in Marsden, and said there is too much pavement or inconsiderate parking, too many cars parking in the centre, and too many people on double yellow lines or in front of dropped curbs. Six people said this can cause accessibility problems, three others said it can cause poor visibility when crossing the roads. Seven people said there isn't enough parking in the village, whilst two people said it was more about a lack of signage for the parking and that people don't use the parking options available.

46 people said accessibility in Marsden is an issue. 31 people said it is hard for those with mobility problems to move around, with key issues being high curbs, parking and poor quality paths and pavements. Seven people said accessibility at the train station is an issue.

30 people said that poor quality or insufficient street lighting can be a barrier for people when moving around.

### Top suggestions

- 20 people suggested improving on road cycling options.
- 12 people suggested Improving parking options in the village.
- 6 people call for a 20mph zone (mentioning: Warehouse Hill, Grange Avenue, Plains, Brougham Road, village centre).
- 6 people call for pedestrianisation areas in the village centre.

**309 people** commented on this theme.

"The Council urgently needs to think about active travel routes in rural areas, connecting them in a coherent and safe way to urban centres and routes."

"I am a wheelchair user and find access poor, curbs, parking and paths that are full of dips and potholes."

### Public transport



**Key issues:** 73 people said why they do not use public transport in Marsden, ranging from issues of reliability, frequency and cleanliness, to statements that the cost for using public transport is too high.



382 people talked about train travel in Marsden, more than anything else to do with travel. 25 people are generally positive about the trains when they run, but 138 said poor accessibility at the train station is a big issue, that it is unusable for wheelchairs, prams and bikes, because of the steep steps leading to the platform. 144 people said the issues are infrequency and unreliability of trains, with cancellations often at short notice. 24 people complained about the high price of using the train, particularly toward Manchester. Seven people complained about the behaviour of people on the Ale Trail, eight the position of the ticket machine and four about the lack of signage and physical timetables.

248 people talked about the bus service. 82 said the bus service in Marsden is okay to good. However, 17 people said the cost for buses is too high and 67 said that the frequency and reliability of buses in Marsden is poor. 13 people complained about the number and quality of bus shelters, and 13 more about the quality of vehicles used.

34 people said positive things about the public transport offer in Marsden, making comparisons with other areas that show the public transport in Marsden in a positive light. 20 people said there is a lack of public toilet facilities on or near the train station and 11 said how important a good public transport offer is to rural communities like Marsden.

### Top suggestions

- 12 people suggest increasing the variety of destinations available.
- 10 people suggest improving street lighting around the train station.
- 5 people suggest improving the public transport timetable so that trains and busses are better connected and spaced out.

**336 people** commented on this theme.

“As a shift worker, the first bus to leave from Peel Street on Saturday and Sunday is not early enough.”

“Marsden train station is not friendly to wheelchair users or anyone with a pram.”

### Traffic and parking



**Key issues:** 118 people said the main issue is too much traffic and congestion due to on street parking, and the number of cars in the centre affects traffic flow. People also said cars parked on



junctions and on double yellow lines can block others in, making it difficult for pedestrians and drivers to get about at busy times. Some people described the parking on Peel Street as turning two lanes into one, causing dangerous bottlenecks which means that buses, and on occasion emergency service vehicles, can struggle to get into Marsden. Some areas of the village are described as hazardous, for example the corner opposite the Railway Pub, corner at bottom end of Peel Street, outside the Co-op and opposite the Mechanics building, because junctions are often blocked or unsighted. It is also said that events and festivals in the village cause gridlock, with drivers taking short-cuts through the village, exacerbating the situation - in particular from Mount Road, Carrs Road, and Stubbin.

23 people said that Brougham Road is difficult, cramped and dangerous for small children, walkers and cyclists at school drop off and pick up for Marsden Infants. Specific issues mentioned are there being no school signs near the school and insufficient space on the road and pavement.

76 people said there are inadequate parking facilities in Marsden. There isn't enough convenient off street parking in the village centre for residents and visitors. Many people said there are various sites which could be used as parking areas if the owners would allow, such as the site of the former Crowther Bruce's mill on Brougham Road. It is also said that the large Old Goods Yard and National Trust carpark is free but underused and that there are no clear parking signs, so it is poorly advertised. It is also recognised that for the disabled and elderly it is a long steep walk up Station Road to the car park.

Also, there are only one or two disabled parking spaces in the village, they are always full and lowered pavements are not safe to use.

61 people said there is unsafe and inconsiderate parking, such as pavement parking, blocked driveways or parking on double yellow lines. People complain that some people are not prepared to walk from the designated car parking areas despite being relatively close to the village, and there appears to be semi-regular inconsiderate parking by commuters and visitors. Other issues raised are that cars can park too close to junctions, meaning traffic can struggle to get through or that there is poor visibility for drivers and pedestrians. On street parking makes crossing the road dangerous, especially with young children, prams and for wheelchairs. Some particularly dangerous spots mentioned were Peel Street around the Co-op, Katies Kitchen, next to the library and infant school exit, Brougham Road by St Barts to Clough Lee (emergency vehicles can't get through) and the junction of Church Drive and Clough Lane.

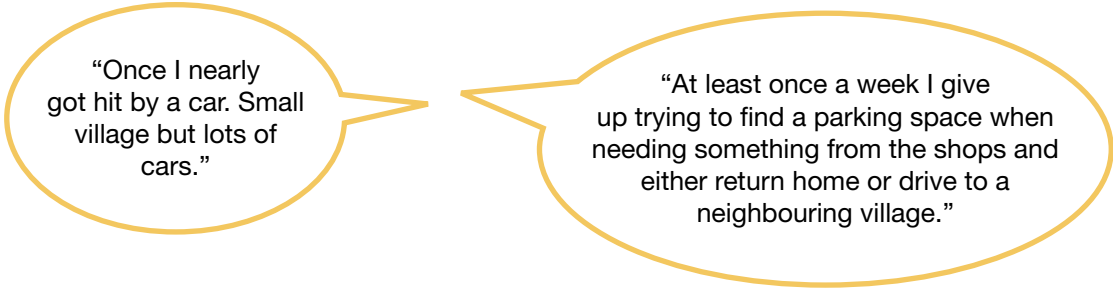
31 people said speeding is an issue, with key problem areas being along Cars Road and Fall Lane, Station Road and Manchester Road by the junior school. People also said cars don't stop at pedestrian crossings and that local speed cameras don't seem to work. However, the parked cars and Mechanics bottleneck do slow traffic down to a safe speed.

53 people said positive things about adequate parking space and considerate drivers. The Goods Yard was quoted as a great space despite needing work to be an attractive place to park for more people. Others said people park respectfully and safely and that cars usually give priority to pedestrians in the village. It was also noted that parking in Marsden is free.

### **Top suggestions**

- 63 people suggest more public parking and car parks near the centre, utilising sites such as the Crowther Bruce Mill, the land next to the infants school or land across from the New Inn.
- 28 people suggest improving signage for parking to encourage people to use existing car parks more.
- 19 people suggest having pedestrianised areas of the village centre, potentially only at key times.
- 14 people suggest having more double yellow lines and stricter enforcement, sites mentioned were near the Swann Pub, Peel Street and Station Road.
- 12 people suggest having a 20 mph speed limit in and around the centre.

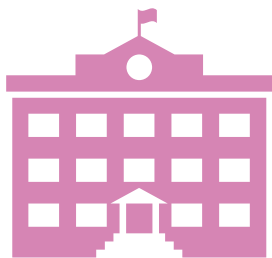
**346 people** commented on this theme.



"Once I nearly got hit by a car. Small village but lots of cars."

"At least once a week I give up trying to find a parking space when needing something from the shops and either return home or drive to a neighbouring village."

## Streets and spaces



**Key issues:** 76 people said the general appearance or 'streetscape' of Marsden village is 'attractive', 'lovely' and well maintained.



327 people talked about two large mills, Bank Bottom (bottom of Mount Road) and Crowther Bruce (bottom of Brougham Road). 165 people complained about their appearance, safety, state of repair, and the fact they take up a lot of space in the village wastefully. The most raised safety concerns are people being able to gain entry to the mills and fears around loose panes of glass. 25 people said the Mills are an important part of Marsden's heritage, that they are beautiful and full of character and represent 'world class industrial archaeology'. Many people raised concerns about the effect any development of the Mills might have on Marsden, particularly in respect of the capacity of local services, roads and parking. 115 people want some renovation to return use of the Mills, split across suggestions about using the space to create more housing, business space, increase parking in the village and for community benefit purposes. 26 people suggested that the space should be used for public amenities like a health centre, dentists, library, theatre, art studios, swimming pool, youth centre, music studios, whilst five people specifically stated that they did not want to see the mills turned into 'luxury accommodation', that locals couldn't afford. Eight people are against any demolition of the mills, whereas 14 others said they support demolishing the mills in favour of more useable space.

58 people's suggestions about Peel Street and the village centre, highlighted a split in opinion with roughly half saying the village centre appeared run down and that shop fronts are mismatched and poorly maintained, the other half suggesting the village centre is beautiful or full of character and that shop fronts are in keeping and well maintained. Five people took the opportunity to raise safety concerns about the 'Mechanics Corner' and one person complained about the images used for the Christmas lights.

107 people have issues with public space in Marsden, 13 being about littering. Six people complained about dog fouling, five the lack of public toilets and four that there aren't enough bins in Marsden. Other people said broken glass, unused or vacant land and the parks are also issues.

119 people said a lot of things about buildings in Marsden other than the Mills. 33 people generally praised the architecture in Marsden, naming buildings such as the cafes and pubs. 28 people praised the Mechanics for its external appearance and for its service to the community, and 15 people are positive about the churches in Marsden. There is also sentiment that any new builds should be in keeping with local heritage, that there are a significant amount of derelict or empty properties in Marsden and that both Wessen Court and the health centre are unpleasant buildings to look at.

72 people complained about the roads, traffic and pavements in Marsden. 18 complaints are about the quality of pavements in Marsden, seven about parking concerns, six about cars being given priority or that there are too many cars in Marsden. 3 people said potholes are an issue. Other people said the A62 divides the village, that there is insufficient street lighting and Marsden is generally hard to move around.

69 people have mixed views about green or natural spaces in Marsden. 40 people praised the countryside and parks in and around Marsden, whilst other people said there is a degree of vandalism in Marsden Park, that there is a lack of seating in nature and that poor weather can have a big effect on Marsden. Other people said they feel Marsden and its parks in particular, are poorly cared for, that anti-social behaviour in the village can make them feel unsafe and that public transport options in Marsden are poor.

### Top suggestions

- 57 people suggest redeveloping the mills or renovating them. To return them to use.
- 28 people suggest converting the mills for public and community benefit - parking, health centre, dentists, library, art galleries, theatre, pool, youth centre, music studio, traditional building technique workshops.
- 12 people suggest demolishing the mills and replacing them with housing - four people specified this should be social housing.
- 5 people suggest not allowing the mills to be converted in to 'luxury accommodation' or characterless modern housing - this would price locals out and ruin the atmosphere.

**312 people** commented on this theme.

"Derelict land could be temporarily turned into useful green space - wildflower meadow, picnic area, general walkthroughs."

"The village of Marsden has two disused listed Mill buildings that are a complete eyesore."

### Natural space



**Key issues:** 211 people praised the natural space in Marsden and said it's the best thing about Marsden or is why people live there. 46 people mentioned the natural beauty or scenery that Marsden benefits from, and 92 people said there are lots of natural spaces in easy reach, such as the moors, the canal, the parks and the woods. Other people said how tranquil or calming Marsden can be, that the natural spaces in are well cared for and that volunteers go a good job looking after them. Six people also said that the natural spaces draw visitors to the area.



93 people said active travel options are good, and 56 said it has a wealth of good walking options. Others said that there isn't much for cyclists or horse riders and that signage for routes isn't clear. It is also said that you can access good leaflets, maps or guided walks. Six people thought that most paths or routes are well maintained, but four others complained about wet or 'boggy' footpaths. Two people complained that paths can be blocked on occasion and one thought there aren't enough paths leading to natural spaces. Some people also raised concerns about cycling either damaging walking paths or considered that cycling can cause problems for other path users.

70 people said lots of positive things about the moorland around Marsden. 16 praised the moors specifically and complimented other natural spaces in the area. Two people praised the maintenance of the moors, and one person for the walking options available on the moors. Eight people praised the National Trust and one person the community fire watch scheme. However, three people said the moors are inaccessible for some people and 26 people are concerned about moorland fires.

48 people really like the canal and rivers in Marsden, five people praised Tunnel End. 16 people praised the canal without mentioning any other natural space. Eight people praised the Canal and Rivers Trust, whilst others felt that the canal is too narrow, is overused and inaccessible for some. Disrepair of the canal towpath is also an issue.

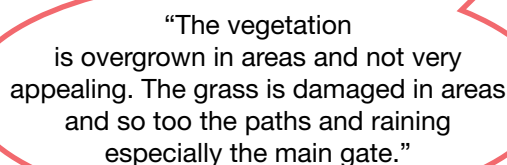
Seven people said generally positive things about the parks, with one specifically praising their maintenance. However, 22 people said that the parks are in a state of disrepair, are misused or can become flooded in wet weather.

47 people said accessibility is an issue. 33 said that Marsden and its natural space in particular isn't accessible for disabled people, whilst others raised specific difficulties or difficult spaces such as parking for the elderly at Tunnel End or the canal towpath. One person said that there are some accessible paths in Marsden.

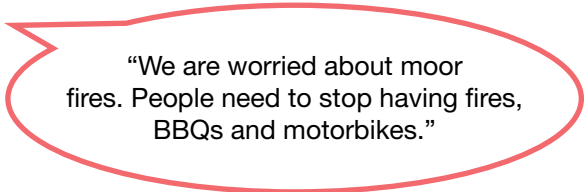
### Top suggestions

- 9 people suggest addressing moorland fires.
- 8 people suggest improving disabled access to nature.
- 7 people suggest improving the canal towpath.
- 7 people suggest installing more seating or picnic benches.
- 7 people suggest more tree planting.

**280 people** commented on this theme.



"The vegetation is overgrown in areas and not very appealing. The grass is damaged in areas and so too the paths and raining especially the main gate."



"We are worried about moor fires. People need to stop having fires, BBQs and motorbikes."

### Play and recreation



**Key issues:** 166 people said something about the parks in Marsden. 30 people said the Skate Park at the Goods Yard is popular and regularly used. 29 people said the parks are generally well maintained and good, and others highlighted Marsden Park as regularly used and accessible. However, 53

people criticised the current state of repair in the village's parks, saying they are run down or need investment. 13 people said the equipment or facilities for young people in the parks is limited and 5 people suggested there should be more for



teenagers to do in the parks. 53 people are split about the playgrounds and play areas within the parks, between positive and negative comments. 15 people said the playgrounds were generally good, whilst 12 others felt they need improving. Five people said 'natural play' spaces were needed and one person said they felt there are no outdoor green playing spaces for them or their children to use.

34 people said safety issues have a negative effect on the play offer in Marsden, with glass, traffic, bullying, anti-social behaviour and flooding all being mentioned. Four people have safety concerns for children at the skate park, 8 complained about safety in the parks in the evenings and one person about safety at Sparth Reservoir.

When considering the play and recreation options for adults a couple of people stated that there is lots for adults to do, such as using the gym, other sports facilities or attending book clubs, whilst others said there are other good facilities or groups such as running clubs, the library, activities at the Mechanics and the local pubs and eateries. Eight people said there aren't enough sport facilities for adults, and one person said the parks are all designed for young people, and that there isn't enough for 'old people' to do. Others raised the lack of public toilets, that some activities can be expensive and that more evening clubs or classes are needed.

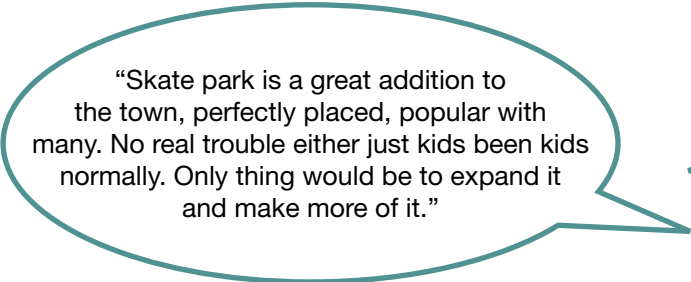
26 people said more activities or groups for older young people or teenagers is a are needed, with 15 saying a youth club in the village would be good and two others suggesting more arts activities (like a brass band or drama lessons) for young people.

82 people talked about the sport facilities in Marsden. 12 people said the sports hall could do with more activities or better advertisement, eight others praise the football grounds, although five people said they needed to be improved. 14 people gave general praise for the different sport facilities that exist, such as the golf course, cricket grounds and tennis club. Four people said more bike trails are needed and 9 people said leisure facilities could be improved, with one person suggesting that the mills could be converted in to a leisure centre.

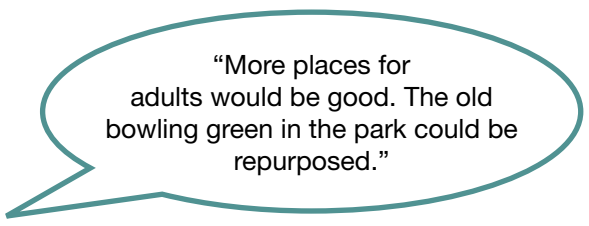
### **Top suggestions**

- 19 people suggest replacing, updating, or to maintain and increase variety of play equipment locally.
- 8 people suggest more advertisement of what is happening.
- 7 suggest a swimming pool would be good.
- 7 people suggest installing outdoor gyms.

**293 people** commented on this theme.



"Skate park is a great addition to the town, perfectly placed, popular with many. No real trouble either just kids been kids normally. Only thing would be to expand it and make more of it."



"More places for adults would be good. The old bowling green in the park could be repurposed."

## Facilities and amenities



**Key issues:** 44 people said the facilities and amenities available in Marsden generally met their needs, with some people sharing that Marsden was one of the best places to live for having all necessary facilities in one, easily accessible place.



Three people said they felt access to public toilets is good in Marsden, but 40 people said these facilities are lacking and do not meet the community's needs. Five people said the lack of public toilets in the village might deter people from visiting Marsden.

56 people said the fact that there are a lot of different cafes, pubs and eateries in Marsden, with 39 saying it makes Marsden a good place to socialise, eat and drink. However, ten people said there are too many cafes in Marsden.

123 said access to health facilities is an issue, with the majority of these being complaints about Marsden's GP surgery, chemist and dentist facilities in comparison to other areas. 47 people said the GP surgery doesn't provide an adequate service from the Marsden site, with people quoting the state of the building in comparison to the Globe Mill site and others raising capacity concerns or stating it's 'overwhelmed'. 19 people complained there isn't a dentist in Marsden and seven people said the chemist needs improvement. Other comments related to poor accessibility to these facilities, that there is no baby clinic and that it's important for the village that the GP surgery remains local. 30 people praised the local medical facilities available in Marsden.

51 people praised the shopping facilities in Marsden. The charity shops, the independent shops and the Village Green in particular, whilst others expressed that there is a good variety of shops in Marsden, and that they collectively provide the majority of what people need. Other people said that whilst the post office is important, it's hard to access and that the Coop is expensive, too small and lacks fresh food. Eight people said Marsden needs more food shopping options (such as a large supermarket), whilst seven others said that shopping in Marsden is expensive and six people said there isn't a balanced range of shops.

30 people said a lot about education facilities in Marsden, with many saying local schools are thriving, but a smaller number saying the schools aren't big enough and don't have enough space. Others said there needs to be more adult learning opportunities in Marsden. 20 people said there is a need for better sports facilities such as a gym (indoor or outdoor), sports teams, squash court and a swimming pool.

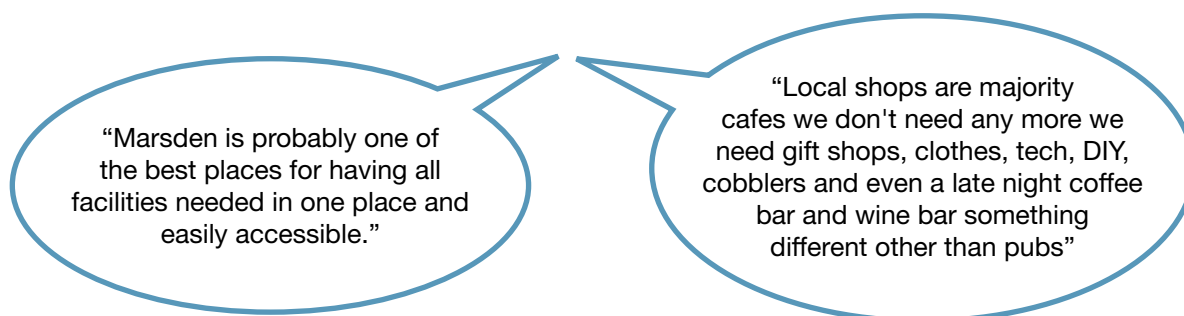
40 people praised the library. 71 people said they would like more facilities for families and children, but praising volunteers for the running of many of Marsden's facilities. Others suggested that Marsden needs a vets, banking, electric car charging point, interactive map, a barbers, petrol station and a phone box.

### Top suggestions:

- 16 people suggest a larger variety of shops is needed.
- 5 people want public toilets installing.

- 6 people want improvements to the local coop, make it cheaper, bigger and with more fresh food.
- 4 people suggest increasing the library opening hours.

**296 people** commented on this theme.



## Work and local economy



**Key issues:** People said there are a number of key issues, including the type and range of jobs available, commuting and public transport, the closure of the mills, volunteering, working from home and internet connectivity, opportunities for young people and skills and training development. 41 people said they were unable to comment on this theme, either because they were retired or because they worked outside of the area.



79 participants said there is limited or lack of diversity when it comes to employment and career opportunities locally. There are positive comments about the centre, but some feel that it was not thriving or on the up. Lack of variety, limited options for skilled and professional work and meaningful chance of progression is regularly mentioned. 42 people said there are lots of opportunities available in the food preparation sector, in cafes, pubs, restaurants and the retail sector. Whilst this is welcome, it is low paid with limited opportunities.

19 people said there is an active economy overall with a good range of jobs always available, a thriving village with plenty of local businesses offering employment. 57 people mentioned commuting and public transport. The majority of participants felt that there were good transport links, and the village is well connected for people to access work. Lot of people said they commute outside of the area for work and whilst 48 are positive overall about transport links being good, 19 people said the transport links were unreliable, with some opting to drive rather than use the train.

43 people talked about the impact of the mill closures, saying the shortage of premises and the potential and opportunity to develop the mill space to bring new businesses to the area and create much needed jobs. Volunteering is seen as a real asset and strength locally and 16 participants said there are lots of opportunities and roles available at key organisations in the village. Whilst this is viewed as a strength, a few people said what is needed is 'real' jobs and without volunteers there would be a lot less going on.

17 people said they worked from home, either sometimes or the majority of the time, especially since the pandemic. Six people said there is a need to have better internet speed. 13 people said that opportunities for young people are limited, or low paid and

temporary work. Five people said jobs in cafes, bar work are great for giving young people some work experience.

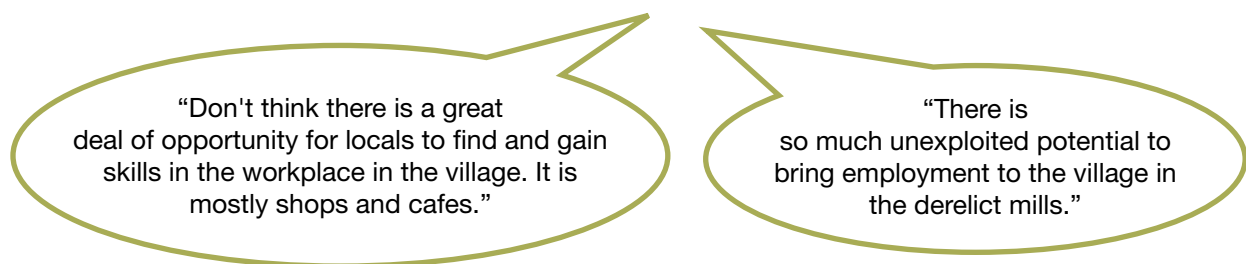
20 people said they think the range of shops and services in Marsden is good and the high street is active. Community ownership is said to be important in bringing the community together.

13 people said there is a need for adult learning, apprenticeships and more local job search support, as the nearest job centre is 7 miles away in Huddersfield.

### Top suggestions:

- 9 people suggest using the space in the Mills for businesses.
- 5 people suggest creating a co-working space in the village.
- 4 people suggest more local authority support for Small to Medium size Enterprise's.
- 3 people suggest increasing the variety of employment opportunities through apprenticeships.

**270 people** commented on this theme.



## Housing and community



**Key issues:** 72 people spoke about the cost of housing in Marsden, with 49 of these describing it as unaffordable and 28 people raising concerns about this pushing young people or 'locals' out of the village. 39 people also said that it's very difficult to rent in Marsden, in part due to the price but also because rental properties snapped up as soon as they become available. 22 people said there aren't enough homes for first time buyers, and 51 people said there needs to be more houses built in order to control prices because there simply aren't enough. 20 people said there should be more social housing, 16 people for more accessible housing and seven people said more home housing for older people is needed.



There are different views about the variety of housing available in Marsden. 48 people said there is a good mix and range of homes available, however, 33 people said there is a limited range of housing available. 35 people said that Marsden is lacking specifically bigger, family homes.

23 people argued against building any more houses in Marsden, with views ranging from the appeal of Marsden is that it isn't too busy and new builds don't fit in with the rest of

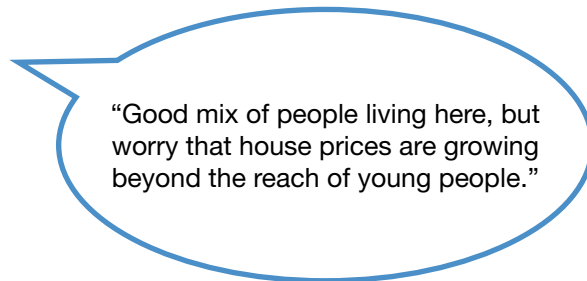
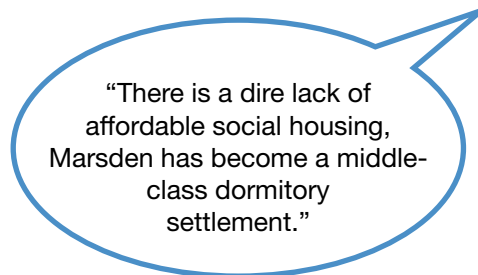
the village, through to space available in the mills for housing should be utilised instead of creating more buildings.

Seven people criticised the quality of housing in Marsden, with people saying homes need to be more sustainable and energy efficient and that some homes can suffer from damp and mould. Four people said Wessen Court needs improvement for the benefit of residents, two people said brownfield sites need to be developed before greenfield sites or are concerned that infrastructure is not keeping up with increased population size.

### Top suggestions:

- 28 people suggest using the mills to create more homes.
- 11 people suggest creating more family homes with gardens.
- 4 people suggest building more houses to fill the gap between small terraced homes and large detached houses.
- 3 people suggest building more bungalows.

### 285 people commented on this theme



### Social contact



**Key issue:** Overall, people said there are many good ways and places in Marsden to have social contact. 65 people said Marsden is good for meeting people over food or drink, commenting that the cafes, pubs and restaurants in Marsden are great places to meet people. Five people said that the Church Café provides the same opportunities. 9 people said there aren't many opportunities for social contact in Marsden, without going for something to eat or drink.



68 people said positive things about indoor public spaces in Marsden, with 17 people praising the library and 17 the Mechanics, both for hosting good community activities. Nine people are positive about the churches' contribution to social contact in Marsden. Seven people said there isn't enough indoor socialising space for young people in the village and two said the library is the only free space in the village. It is also said that the Band Room, Sports Hall and Mechanics could be better utilised by the community. 49 people mentioned outdoor public spaces, eight saying the Skate Park is a good place to spend time, 6 praising the walking groups in the village, six that the parks are good meeting places, and five people said there are generally good outdoor meeting opportunities in Marsden. However, seven people said there needs to be more sheltered areas (potentially with seating) outside, and seven more said the parks need improvement to attract more people and that there needs to be more places to meet outside. One person said they don't feel like there are any outdoors spaces for adults.

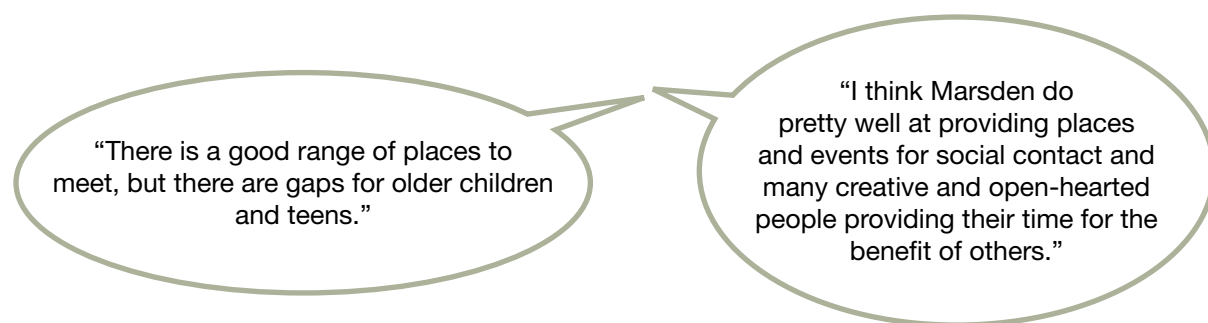
124 people mentioned the different clubs in Marsden, 53 being praise for them and their variety. People said positive things about the youth club, the Scouts, Hanson's Music and the sporting opportunities available in the village. There is also praise for the Marsden Facebook page as a space for advertising what's happening. However, seven people said there needs to be more things for working adults to do in the evening, and eight said that Marsden lacks youth activities, a further 6 people said that indoor activities all require you to spend money. Other people said that Marsden needs a safe space for the LGBTQ+ community, a companion's society and that often people are not aware of what is happening in the village.

40 people said they feel included in Marsden and it has a great community, ten of which said how friendly Marsden is as a place. 17 people said that the many village festivals or events such as Cuckoo Day, the Jazz Festival and Imbolc are great ways to support social contact.

### Top suggestions

- 5 people suggest they need other things to do on an evening apart from drinking in a pub.
- 4 people suggest having an indoor swimming pool.
- 3 people suggest improving promotion and advertisement of opportunities, activities and groups.
- 3 people support the suggestion of having cheaper or cost free social opportunities.

**257 people** commented on this theme



## Identity and belonging



**Key issues:** A significant number of people talked about their feelings toward Marsden's identity and their sense of belonging in the village. 45 people said they feel part of the community or like they belong in Marsden, and 36 people sharing that there is a good, strong sense of community, or saying such things as "I love it here" or it is a "special place and I wouldn't want to move or live anywhere else". 25 people said the they feel



Marsden has a positive image, and 22 people said they are proud to live here. 54 people said Marsden has a strong or distinctive character and that it's a friendly, welcoming place. The main negative point that people raised is the divide between some people whose families have been based in Marsden for generations and people who have 'recently' moved to here - often referred to as the 'locals vs comer-inner divide'. Seven people said the perceived divide itself is damaging to the community. People gave mixed views, split between complaints about people who have moved to Marsden 'changing the

village' and complaints about people whose family have lived in Marsden for years making people who have moved here feel unwelcome. 25 other people said that they had moved to Marsden and have always felt very welcome.

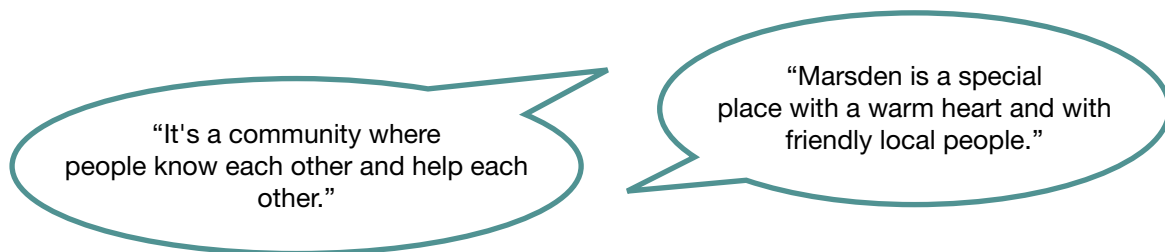
144 people said how they feel about Marsden. 31 people praised the range of community events and festivals that take place throughout the year, such as Cuckoo Day, Imbolc, the Jazz Festival and the Christmas Lights switch on as some of the many elements that contribute to a strong community and a sense of belonging. 32 people said the variety and quality of community groups that exist in Marsden is good, with a further five people expressing it's easy to get involved in 'things'. 17 people are positive about the amount of history and heritage shared in Marsden. However, there are a noticeable amount of people suggesting the events, activities, groups and heritage in Marsden need to be better promoted, to improve local knowledge of the area and what's on offer. 16 people said Marsden is a place that fosters relationships and connections between residents, with a lot of people all knowing each other and being available to help if needed.

Other people said Marsden has a reliance on volunteers to build a sense of community, with some people saying it's often the same people who volunteer their time to organise things for the village. Some people are concerned about diversity in Marsden and how welcome those from non-white backgrounds might feel in the village.

#### Top suggestions:

- 6 people suggest more overt celebrations and signage of local history are needed.
- 2 people suggest there should be more information about how to get involved or join groups.
- 2 people suggest creating more spaces and things to do for young people.
- 1 person suggests increasing the amount of volunteers supporting local activities.

**255 people commented on this theme.**



## Feeling safe



**Key issues:** There were lots of different issues raised that damage people's feelings of safety in Marsden. However, the majority of people generally

feel safe in Marsden with some people making comparisons with other areas they have lived in, or making statements to suggest they consider Marsden to be the safest place they have ever lived. 11 people credited this feeling of safety to the sense of community created by having good neighbours and family and friends nearby. 17 people said they feel the fear of crime in Marsden is exacerbated by rumours and conversations that happen in public social media forums.



48 people said they feel that crime is increasing in Marsden, with 13 specifying that it is 'petty crime' such as graffiti, fly tipping and vandalism that is on the rise. Two people accredited this to a lack of police presence in the village and others thought that the crime in Marsden is usually carried out by people who live in other areas. From conversations with young people, there is a noticeable fear in regard to personal safety whilst being out in the community.

42 people said they might not feel safe in Marsden because of the streetlighting being poor, covered by overgrown vegetation or missing from key places. Areas highlighted were Clough Leigh, the Train Station, Grange Avenue, Peel Street, Brougham Road, Cars Road, Reddisher Road, Waters Road, Fall Lane, near the Olive Branch, Church Lane, Warehouse Hill and the Goods Yard.

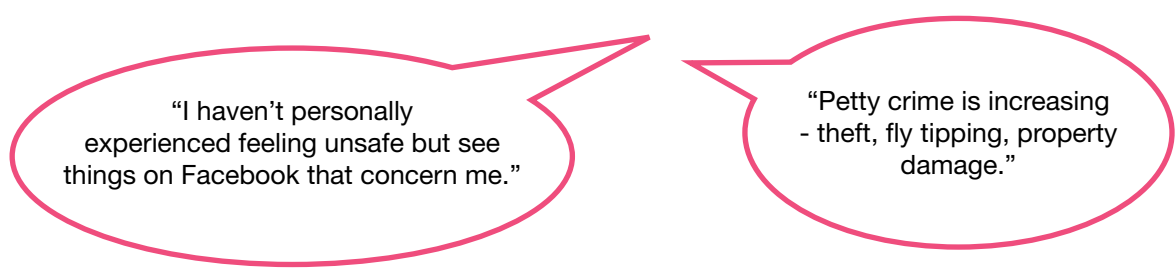
53 people complained about the perceived lack of a police presence in Marsden is, and six people saying that the closest police station to Marsden is too far away, whilst 4 people said they feel some issues in Marsden are ignored or aren't followed up quickly enough. 31 people complained about anti-social behaviour that takes place as a result of the 'real ale trail' and drug use and drug dealing in Marsden, with 21 people quoting trouble locations like the Skate Park, the Churchyard and on the street outside the Coop. 11 people connected the issue around drugs to a lack of things for older young people to do, and others simply stated they feel teenagers and young people need access to more activities. 15 people complained about young people 'hanging around' in groups, often saying that these groups can be intimidating.

20 people said the mills provide both a space to engage in illegal activity and are a threat to personal safety themselves in their current state of repair. 11 people said how speeding, drink driving or inconsiderate drivers make people feel less safe, and seven people complained about littering, four complained about the lack of CCTV and two complained about off lead dogs. People in protected characteristic groups also shared that Marsden can be unwelcoming to them, with at least one person citing examples of homophobia in the village and eight people highlighting how women can sometimes feel unsafe.

#### **Top suggestions:**

- 18 people suggest increasing police presence.
- 9 people suggest increasing CCTV.
- 4 people suggest improving or increasing lighting.
- 3 people suggest support for or increase in youth clubs.

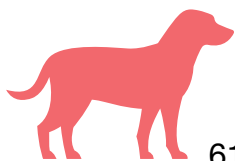
**273 people** commented on this theme.



"I haven't personally experienced feeling unsafe but see things on Facebook that concern me."

"Petty crime is increasing - theft, fly tipping, property damage."

## Care and maintenance



**Key issues:** 122 people said littering is a big issue and 109 people commented on pets and animal ownership.



61 people complained about the amount of litter that is left in public places, with specific places like Peel Street, the parks and the canal towpath being mentioned, and 31 people complained there either aren't enough bins, or that they aren't emptied enough, with one other person highlighting that events and festivals exacerbate this problem. However, 17 people suggested they don't see littering as a big issue, 9 of whom said littering had noticeably decreased since a street cleaner started working in Marsden.

74 people complained about dog fouling, and 8 people made suggestions on how to address the problem. Outside Marsden Junior School and Dirker Drive are highlighted as problem spots. 23 people complained about the lack of bins to dispose of dog waste or how infrequently they are emptied. 4 other people mentioned the amount of sheep poo that can be found around Marsden.

83 people complained about the current state of repair of the mills, highlighting safety concerns alongside their appearance and usability. There are 17 suggestions ranging from demolishing them to using the space to benefit the community (eg, for the schools or parking) or they should be taken in to public ownership to use for housing small businesses. 44 people said Marsden's green spaces need a greater level of care and maintenance, naming spaces like the parks and raising that green spaces generally appear overgrown and unkempt.

46 people have issues with reading road signs, worn road markings, potholes, parking and overgrown vegetation impacting the highway. 41 people also said footpaths are overgrown, in disrepair and poorly lit. 12 people said vandalism and graffiti is an issue, 16 said fly tipping and six the train station area.

88 people said a lot about recycling or waste collection services in Marsden. Six people suggested people are happy with these services. Others related to people feeling there is a limited range or not enough recycling services, and those that do exist are not emptied frequently enough. Other people said that glass recycling points are too far away, that the recycling area at the Goods Yard needs a clean-up and people would like to see a return of kerbside glass collection.

### Top suggestions:

- 26 people suggest installing more bins.
- 10 people suggest reintroducing home glass recycling collection.
- 8 people suggest using the mills or land they sit on for community benefit.
- 6 people suggest more anti littering and dog fouling signs.

**290 people** commented on this theme.

"Street cleaning by council street cleaners has been excellent in recent times."

"The amount of dog poo in the village and on walks is awful, the worst of anywhere I've lived. Something needs to be done about this."

## Influence and sense of control



**Key issues:** People have mixed views about whether they feel able to take part in decisions and help change things for the better. 110 people gave negative or 'not sure' responses. However, 68 people said 'yes' they are

able to get involved and influence issues within the local community, rather than decisions made by authorities which impact on Marsden.



58 people said they can get involved in the village and in local groups. It is a strong, supportive and consultative community. The village is very inclusive and encourages involvement in decision making. There are good communication channels including social media. A few people said they are not currently involved but feel they could be if they wanted to. Marsden Community Trust is accessible. The schools are a central part of village life and the church works with schools and young people - helping others have their voice heard.

38 people said Kirklees Council are unresponsive, particularly about planning decisions, and that the council 'does not listen to issues flagged', or that contacting the council via the phone is 'impossible' due to long phone queues (some people don't use the internet) and that online access can also be difficult. However, others said there is good support at the local library.

Planning decisions sometimes seem unrelated to local concerns, for example Crowther's Mill buildings development. People feel they are powerless and have little influence on strategic decisions by the council, and there is a lack of direct engagement by council leadership. People feel they don't have a say in local things like the public toilets being shut down or the parks being kept up to standard. Others expressed that council funding is constantly being cut or mentioned the closure of the fire station, lack of influence over trains, parking facilities and relocation of health services.

17 people said they don't know how decisions are made, by whom or how they can influence them, expressing views such as 'Decisions are made before consultations'. Or, they feel at the end of the day it's the councils (and other governing bodies alike) who have the final say and it feels like those who make decisions may not prioritise Marsden. A few people said that 'What matters to Marsden' is a way of being heard or a good start but that they 'will have to see if anyone takes notice now' and see how it will shape things to come.

Conversations with children and young people resulted in mixed comments. Some said they don't feel listened to by adults, though at school they do and there is a school council. Young people also said they aren't sure what decisions they could make and said they felt that they would need to already be part of a group to be heard.

People made mixed comments about local councillors. Some said ward councillors are not visible, difficult to contact or get a response from. Others said they are easy to contact, responsive, and active in the community. A couple of people mentioned a poor response from their local MP and the lack of an MP surgery in the village.

A few people mention local volunteering. People feel they are able to get involved in locally organised events such as the Jazz Fest, Cuckoo Festival, litter picking and planting moss on the moor. Some people said they volunteer at a local charity shop which gives twice yearly grants to village organisations, such as Marsden Sports Hall, the community greengrocers shop, or the school. One person said most of the big jobs that need doing are not within the reach of the voluntary sector.

12 people said they have no say in the village. They feel that there are many similar organisations and there is often duplication of work, or that there is too much "closed shop" between groups and community organisations, who can be difficult to contact.

10 people said there are barriers to getting involved. People aren't always available to go to meetings because of family or caring. It is hard to reach everyone - some people don't use social media or have experienced difficulty joining groups due to disability or work.

### **Top suggestions:**

- 5 people suggested more consultations or questionnaires through the door asking for opinions and a website where we can make comments.
- 5 people suggested regular communications to inform residents of initiatives and groups.
- 3 people suggested a village mini council or parish council.
- 3 people suggested if councillors are holding surgeries, advertise them, posters on noticeboards.

**230 people** commented on this theme.



## What matters to Marsden score sheet

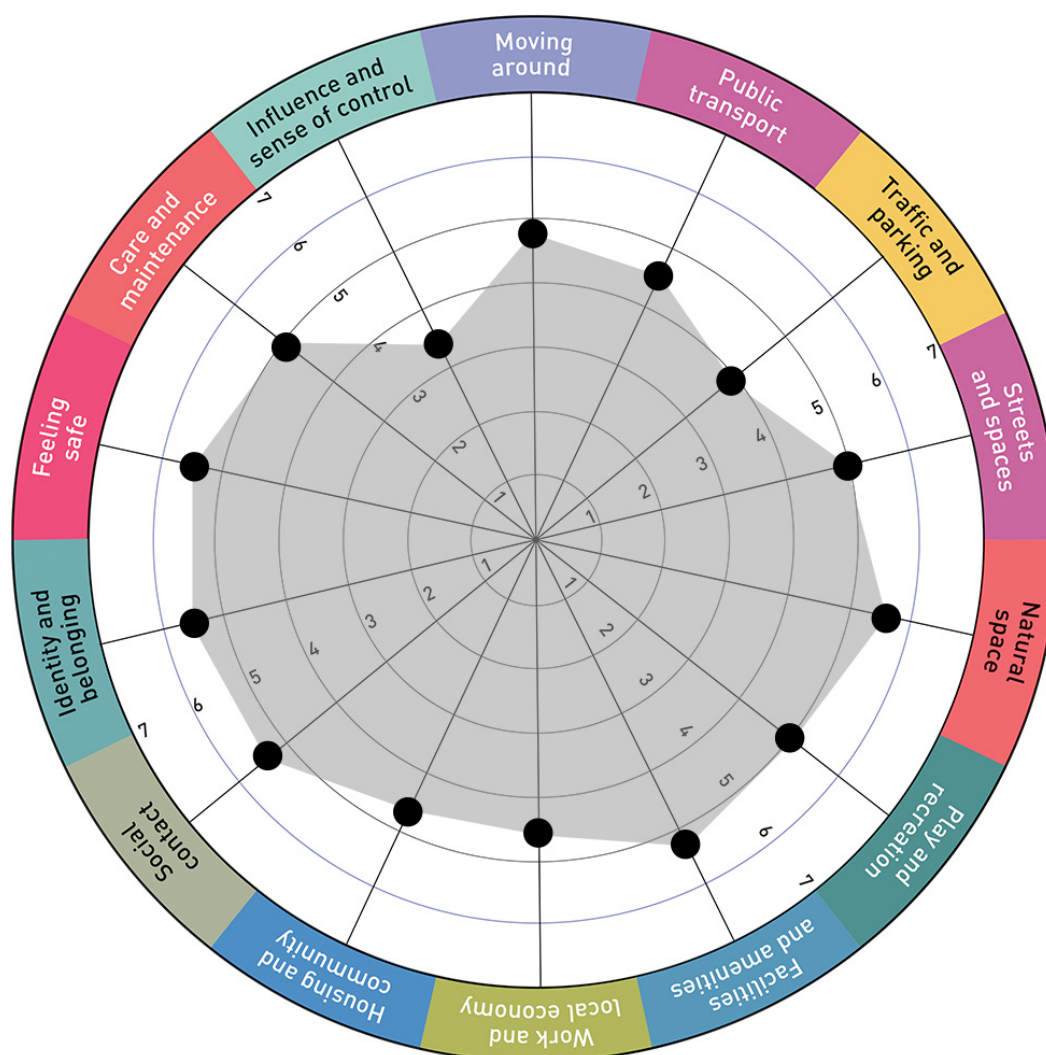
How participants scored Marsden on a scale of 1 to 7,  
whilst talking about 14 different themes:

|                                | Overall | Age Under 16 | Age 25 to 44 | Age 45 to 64 | Age 65 to 75+ | Male | Female |
|--------------------------------|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------|--------|
| Moving around                  | 4.7     | 4.9          | 4.7          | 4.7          | 4.7           | 4.7  | 4.7    |
| Public transport               | 3.9     | 4.2          | 3.9          | 3.9          | 3.9           | 3.9  | 3.9    |
| Traffic and parking            | 3.3     | 3.5          | 3.3          | 3.3          | 3.3           | 3.3  | 3.3    |
| Streets and spaces             | 4.7     | 4.7          | 4.7          | 4.7          | 4.7           | 4.7  | 4.7    |
| Natural space                  | 6.2     | 6.3          | 6.2          | 6.2          | 6.2           | 6.2  | 6.2    |
| Play and recreation            | 4.8     | 4.9          | 4.8          | 4.8          | 4.8           | 4.8  | 4.8    |
| Facilities and amenities       | 5       | 5.3          | 5            | 5            | 5             | 5    | 5      |
| Work and local economy         | 4       | 3.9          | 4            | 4            | 4             | 4    | 4      |
| Housing and community          | 4.4     | 4.4          | 4.4          | 4.4          | 4.4           | 4.4  | 4.4    |
| Social contact                 | 5.4     | 5.5          | 5.4          | 5.4          | 5.4           | 5.4  | 5.4    |
| Identity and belonging         | 5.7     | 5.9          | 5.7          | 5.7          | 5.7           | 5.7  | 5.7    |
| Feeling safe                   | 5.3     | 5.1          | 5.3          | 5.3          | 5.3           | 5.3  | 5.3    |
| Care and maintenance           | 4.4     | 4.4          | 4.4          | 4.4          | 4.4           | 4.4  | 4.4    |
| Influence and sense of control | 4.3     | 4.1          | 4.3          | 4.3          | 4.3           | 4.3  | 4.3    |

**603** people participated in the Marsden conversations,  
completing **406** assessments.

The overall scores are the **Mean average** of the **406** assessments.

## Overall scores for Marsden



|                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Natural space            | 6.2 |
| Identity and belonging   | 5.7 |
| Social contact           | 5.4 |
| Feeling safe             | 5.3 |
| Facilities and amenities | 5   |
| Play and recreation      | 4.8 |
| Moving around            | 4.7 |

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Streets and spaces             | 4.7 |
| Care and maintenance           | 4.4 |
| Housing and community          | 4.4 |
| Influence and sense of control | 4.3 |
| Work and local economy         | 4   |
| Public transport               | 3.9 |
| Traffic and parking            | 3.3 |

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