

To register a question for Public Question Time please email your question to [democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk) before 9am Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July.

**Meeting of:** The Council

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 6.30pm** or at the conclusion of Question Time and Public Engagement whichever is the later.

**Venue:** Council Chamber, The Business Centre, Futures Park, Bacup. OL13 0BB



**The meeting will also be live streamed at the following link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrLsMDOP7AYxik5pNP0gTIA/streams>

**Supported by:** Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager Tel: 01706 252422  
Email: [democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk)

ITEM		Lead Member/Contact Officer
<b>A.</b>	<b>BUSINESS MATTERS</b>	
<b>A1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>A2.</b>	To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2024.	
<b>A3.</b>	<b>Urgent Items of Business</b> To note any items which the Chair has agreed to add to the Agenda on the grounds of urgency.	
<b>A4.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> <i>Members are advised to contact the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting to seek advice on interest issues if necessary.</i> Members are requested to indicate at this stage, any items on the agenda in which they intend to declare an interest. Members are reminded that, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and the Council's Code of Conduct, they must declare the nature of any personal interest and, if the interest is prejudicial, withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item.	Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal/ Monitoring Officer 01706 252438 <a href="mailto:clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk">clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>B.</b>	<b>Communications from the Mayor, the Leader or Head of Paid Service</b> To receive any communications from the Mayor, the Leader, or the Head of the Paid Service that they may wish to lay before the Council.	The Mayor, Councillor Driver, The Leader, Councillor A.Barnes and Rob Huntington, Chief Executive 01706 252447 <a href="mailto:robhuntingdon@rossendalebc.gov.uk">robhuntingdon@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>C.</b>	<b>ORDINARY BUSINESS</b>	
<b>C1.</b>	<b>Improvements to the 3G Pitch at the Adrenaline Centre</b> To consider improvements to the 3G Pitch at the Adrenaline Centre	Councillor McInnes/ Rob Huntington, Chief Executive 01706 252447 <a href="mailto:robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk">robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>

The agenda and reports are also available for inspection on the Council's website <https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/>. Other formats are available on request. Tel 01706 217777 or contact Rosendale Borough Council, Futures Park, Bacup, OL13 0BB

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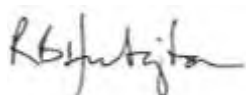


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<b>C2.</b>	<b>Long Term Plan for Towns Funding</b> To consider the Long Term Plan for Towns Funding report	Councillor A. Barnes/ David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development 01706 252429 <a href="mailto:davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk">davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>D.</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES</b>	
<b>D1.</b>	<b>Recommendation of the Appointments and Appeals Panel</b> Appointment of Director of Resources	Councillor A.Barnes/Clare Law, Head of People and Policy 01706 252457 <a href="mailto:clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk">clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>D2.</b>	<b>Recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b> Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report and Work Programme	Councillor Lythgoe/ Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal/ Monitoring Officer 01706 252438 <a href="mailto:clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk">clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>



**Rob Huntington**  
Chief Executive

**Date Published:** 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## **COUNCILLOR ANDREW WALMSLEY, MAYOR**

**MINUTES OF: THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**DATE OF MEETING: 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

**PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Walmsley (in the Chair)  
Councillors Ashworth, A. Barnes, S. Barnes, Bauld, Belli,  
Bleakley, Cheetham, Driver, Eaton, Gill, Hancock, Harris,  
Harrison, Hodgkiss, Holland, Kenyon, Looker, Lythgoe,  
McInnes, McMahon, Neal, Norton, Procter, Royds, M. Smith  
and Woods.**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal/Monitoring Officer  
Stephanie Carroll, Civic Services Officer and Leader's PA  
George Taylor, Mayor's Attendant  
Darren Kershaw, Mayor's Attendant**

**ALSO PRESENT: 65 guests**

### **CIVIC MATTERS**

#### **1. Election of the Mayor**

The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Mayor for the Municipal Year 2024/25. Councillor Judith Driver was proposed by Councillor Alyson Barnes and seconded by Councillor Alan Neal.

#### **Resolved:**

That Councillor Judith Driver be appointed as the Mayor for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

**NB: The New Mayor, Councillor Judith Driver, chaired the meeting from this point forward.**

#### **2. Election of the Deputy Mayor**

The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2024/25. Councillor Annie McMahon was proposed as Deputy Mayor by Councillor Samantha Harrison and seconded by Councillor Alan Woods.

#### **Resolved:**

That Councillor Annie McMahon be appointed as the Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

#### **3. Presentation and Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Mayor and Mayoress**

Councillor Michelle Smith moved the vote of thanks and spoke in relation to the retiring Mayor and Mayoress, seconded by Councillor Anne Cheetham, to which Councillor Andrew Walmsley responded.

#### **Resolved:**

That the grateful thanks of this Council be offered to Councillor Andrew Walmsley for the excellent manner in which he has fulfilled his duties as Mayor.

## **BUSINESS MATTERS**

### **4. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors Adshead, Payne and S.Smith.

### **5. Minutes of the last meeting**

#### **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

### **6. Urgent Items of Business**

There were no urgent items of business.

### **7. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **8. Appointment of the Leader of the Council**

The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Leader of the Council for a 4 year term.

Councillor Adrian Lythgoe moved and Councillor Marilyn Procter seconded that Councillor Alyson Barnes be appointed Leader of the Council.

#### **Resolved:**

That Councillor Alyson Barnes be appointed Leader of the Council for a 4 year term.

### **9. Retiring Councillors – Vote of Thanks**

Councillor Liz McInnes spoke in relation to those councillors who had retired following the Elections on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 including former Councillor Steve Hughes who had retired in November 2023. The vote of thanks was seconded by Councillor Alan Woods.

#### **Resolved:**

That the grateful thanks of this Council be offered to Barbara Ashworth, Mary Coogan, David Foxcroft, Steve Hughes, Janice Johnson, Andy MacNae, Patrick Marriott, Granville Morris, Jackie Oakes, Dayne Powell, Jenny Rigby, Gemma Rooke, Caroline Snowden, Laura-Beth Thompson and Janet Whitehead for their hard work throughout their service as elected members of the borough.

### **10. Election of Councillors**

The Monitoring Officer reported that the following persons had been elected councillors on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 and had each made the necessary Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The Mayor welcomed all new and returned councillors to the Council.

#### **Resolved:**

That it be noted that the following persons were elected on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024.

#### **Name of Person Elected Ward**

Judith Driver	Bacup
Jimmy Eaton	Bacup
David Hancock	Bacup
Danielle Ashworth	Britannia & Lee Mill
Michelle Smith	Britannia & Lee Mill
Andrew Walmsley	Britannia & Lee Mill
Alyson Barnes	Goodshaw & Cribden
Christine Gill	Goodshaw & Cribden



Greg Bleakley	Goodshaw & Cribden
Anne Cheetham	Greenfield & Eden
Neil Looker	Greenfield & Eden
Simon Holland	Greenfield & Eden
Annie McMahon	Hareholme & Waterfoot
Tom Belli	Hareholme & Waterfoot
Nick Harris	Hareholme & Waterfoot
Ann Kenyon	Haslingden
Adrian Lythgoe	Haslingden
Marilyn Procter	Haslingden
Samara Barnes	Helmshore
Ann Hodgkiss	Helmshore
Alan Woods	Helmshore
Liz McInnes	Longholme
Matt Norton	Longholme
Samantha Harrison	Longholme
Julie Adshead	Whitewell & Stacksteads
Bob Bauld	Whitewell & Stacksteads
John Payne	Whitewell & Stacksteads
Alan Neal	Whitworth
Scott Smith	Whitworth
Mike Royds	Whitworth

The Mayor wished them well in their role as a councillor.

**11. Communications from the Mayor, the Leader or Head of Paid Service**

There were no communications.

**12. Urgent decisions**

Council noted the Special Urgency Decision taken 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 regarding the acceptance of the Household Support Fund 5 (HSF5) grant, and the Special Urgency Decision taken 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 regarding the acceptance of the FCC grant for the redevelopment of Edgeside Park Wheeled Sports facility.

**13. Political Balance, Committees and Outside Bodies**

The Council considered the Political Balance, Committees and Outside Bodies report.

**Resolved:**

That the Council confirm appointments proposed by the various political groups as set out in the following appendices:

- Appendix A - Draft political balance calculation
- Appendix B - Draft committees of the Council, working groups, member champions and other meetings.

**Reason for Decision**

To ensure that the Council can effectively conduct its business.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**SPECIAL MEETING ITEMS**

**14. Honorary Aldermen**

In accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council considered nominations to receive the title of Honorary Alderman in recognition of eminent service to the Borough.

Councillor Andrew Walmsley proposed Jackie Oakes, seconded by Councillor Alyson Barnes.

**Resolved:**

That in accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the title of Honorary Alderman be conferred on the following individuals in recognition of their service and dedication to the local community as a councillor for the borough of Rossendale:

- Jackie Oakes

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Special thanks was given to George Taylor who was retiring after 12 years' service as Mayor's Attendant.

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**(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.08pm)**

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date .....

<b>Subject:</b>	Rossendale Leisure Facilities Capital Investment - 3G football turf pitch, play zone and grass pitches – The Adrenaline Centre	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Council	<b>Date:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
<b>Report of:</b>	Leisure Facilities Programme Manager	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Communities Housing and Health
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special Urgency</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required: No	<b>Attached:</b>	No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required: Yes	<b>Attached:</b>	No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Natalie Atkinson	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706 238640
<b>Email:</b>	natalieatkinson@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

## 1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 1.1 That Council agrees to the investment at the Adrenaline Centre, Haslingden for new 3G artificial grass, refurbishment of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) to a play zone and refurbishment of grass pitches, with investment from the Football Foundation (circa £1.5 million), following the Football Foundation Framework at Appendix one to this report.
- 1.2 That Council approves acceptance of the Football Foundation grant and delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer to enter into the grant funding agreement.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A strategic priority for the Council is the health and well-being of its residents by providing the best possible facilities within the Valley.
- In 2019 and 2021, two football / outdoor pitch (Playing Pitch Strategy / Local Facilities Football Plan) reports were produced identifying the need for investment into artificial grass pitches
- Rossendale has 15 football clubs and there has been limited support in terms of participation development, capital investment and general support through funding bodies to the football clubs to grow and develop. Providing high quality surfaces for training and playing will grow the game particularly with priority groups; women and girls, disability and recreational men’s football
- Appendix one provides a detailed overview of the Football Foundation Framework

## 3. BACKGROUND

4. Rossendale has a close knit community of football clubs that range from mini soccer through to 11 aside men’s and women’s teams. With a Lioness attending school in Rossendale, it has highlighted the need for investment into poor facilities to grow the game, allowing children and young people to excel, and create alternative playing projects including walking football is a major priority.

5. The Adrenaline Centre was identified as a preferred site for this investment following the ending of a project at Haslingden High School due to the lack of clarity and un-certainty regarding the timescales for the school re-build and funding agreement through the Department of Education.
6. The Centre was seen by Rossendale Borough Council, Rossendale Leisure Trust, Lancashire Football Association and the Football Foundation as a site of “interest” due to its location, availability of space, management infrastructure, and the aim to create a community hub on one site, in line with the Facilities Strategy. Further investment would create a renewed facility for the community with refurbishment of the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to a new play zone and investment into four of the grass pitches, which would be re-marked, catering for the demand and playing structure of the clubs using the pitches. The Adrenaline site was identified as Rossendale Leisure Trust has the required infrastructure to maximise bookings and use through their community connections, social media reach and experience of managing the Valley pitches.
7. Rossendale Borough Council has identified football as a priority sport not only to improve pitches and pitch quality, but to increase participation and work with the Football Association (FA) to deliver the National Game Strategy. For noting and of importance to Rossendale is the following aim by the FA “The FA’s long-term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on a floodlit 3G surface”
8. In 2019, the Council completed an assessment of supply and demand of outdoor pitches; **Playing Pitch Strategy (Knight Kavanagh and Page)**. The report identified the following 3G football turf pitches:
  - There is 1 full size floodlit 3G pitch in Rossendale, located at the Valley Leadership Academy.
  - There are also six small sided pitches located across three sites.
    - 2 small sided pitches located at Alder Grange School and Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School are unavailable for community use.
    - The remaining 4 small sided pitches are located at Marl Pits Leisure Centre.
9. **Playing Pitch Strategy 2020 Football (grass pitches)** The assessment report identified the following in relation to the requirement for more pitches based on current demand, future demand and the supply either by improving grass pitches and installing artificial pitches.
  - The current supply of football pitch provision is insufficient with shortfalls evident on youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitch formats.
  - When considering future demand, these shortfalls are likely to worsen and further shortfalls emerge on adult pitches.

#### **Grass football pitch supply:**

- The audit identified a total of 66 grass football pitches in Rossendale across 34 sites (14 of which are managed by RBC). Of the pitches, 57 are available, at some level, for community use across 25 sites. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites.
- **63% of football pitches which are available for community use in Rossendale are poor quality.** This severely impacts on the playability of the pitches throughout the football season. Clubs in the area report drainage issues and surface quality as being prominent issues.

## 10. The Football (artificial pitches) - Assessment Report identified the following:

- There is one full size floodlit 3G pitch in Rossendale, located at the Valley Leadership Academy (poor quality, which will cease to exist on the FA Pitch register in 2025).
- There are also six small sided pitches located across three sites. Two small sided pitches located at Alder Grange School and Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School are unavailable for community use. The remaining four small sided pitches are located at Marl Pits Leisure Centre. What about Adrenaline?
- With 107 teams currently affiliated to Rossendale there is a need for three full size 3G pitches to service current levels of demand. Future demand does not increase this shortfall.

## 11. DETAILS

12. The Council's Valley Plan identifies Healthy and Proud Communities as a Valley priority. This is supported by the Local Plan and imminent "Physical Activity Strategy". This has seven priorities including "better access to and take up of health and wellbeing activities including improved leisure facilities"
13. With the recommendations detailed within the football supply and demand plans, the Adrenaline Centre has been identified based on locality of football teams, management of the facilities, and the value to the community as the first project in Rossendale
- The Adrenaline centre – re surface of the 3G surface to a multi-sport surface (play zone)
  - The Adrenaline centre – new full size floodlit 3G pitch
  - The Adrenaline centre – refurbishment of grass pitches
14. Rossendale Borough Council received section 106 funding in 2019 via a housing development at a location named; Dark Lane (LPA Ref: 2016/0563). A total of £191,770 to be used to create a "playing pitch" on a "non-playing field" at Marl Pits and improve existing facilities.

s106 Ref.	Held (£)	Outstanding (£)	Notes
2016/0563	137127	0	Dark Ln contribution for replacement pitch
2016/0563	54643	0	Dark Ln contribution for playing pitch

15. Additional partnership funding has been identified for the development of pitches via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), a total of £230,570 which is required to be used by October 2025.
16. The priority for the Football Foundation within this funding cycle (2024/2025) is to invest in the Adrenaline centre, not only artificial grass but also enhanced grass pitch funding to improve the grass pitches from poor to good. The project of enhancement to facilities for football, multisport and leisure at the Adrenaline is seen as a priority for capital investment by the Football Foundation. **The investment from the Football Foundation would be circa £1.5 million into the site.**

## 17. RISK

The risk factors below detail an overview of the project not taking place:

- Funding has been identified via the UKSPF with a funding deadline of October 2025
- Should the Council not use partnership funding (UKSPF and Section 106) on this project the funding to be lost as there is no other match available.
- The Adrenaline project is not just a 3G. It signifies investment into grass and the development of a new playzone, creating better and more facilities for the community.
- If this project is not supported and we do nothing – we lose the funding, football growth will decline and most notably the development of players will be affected.
- The re-allocation of s106 funding. The developer has expressed support for the project and consents to varied s106 terms. The Council is working closely with Sport England to ensure that priorities are aligned.
- The funding application would require Council resources to manage from inception to completion, which would result in an additional project to a Council employee. The timescales are clear for application of grant funding between 2024 and 2025. Through the use of a sports consultant these can be adhered to within defined project timescales and deadlines. A project team meets regularly to ensure the project remains on track and within budget.
- The reputation of the Council could be damaged if these projects are not delivered for football and sport, they were clearly identified within the Playing Pitch Strategy in 2019 and Local Facilities Football Plan in 2021 as to the need from the football community.
- The financial risk if this project is not completed will result in no investment into Rossendale.
- There is a cap on the initial funding provided by the Football Foundation for pre-award consultancy work of £35k. Any fees incurred over and above this may be recouped from the Council in the event that the project does not go ahead. This is mitigated by the delivery team only incurring necessary costs at the relevant time. Any fees will be capitalised once the project is approved and recovered in full. The Council has provided for a £15k contingency in the event that the project does not go ahead.

## 18. FINANCE

As per the paragraph above, at the Pre Award stage there is a cap on funding provided by the Football Foundation of £35k for consultancy work in developing the scheme. There is a potential cost to the Council of up to £15k to cover any overspend at this stage.

Following the Pre Award stage works, a business case needs to be developed to seek approval to proceed. At this stage there is £191,770 available in S106 monies, £230,570 of UKSPF has been allocated to this scheme and the balance of circa £1.5m to be funded by the Football foundation.

## 19. LEGAL

Under the Constitution, the level of funding to be accepted requires approval of Council. The grant funding agreement will be entered into in the event that the application is successful. All legal agreements, including any required Deeds of Variation, will be entered into in order to protect the Council from challenge. The Council as landowner will lead on the application with support from the Leisure Trust as leaseholder.

## 20. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Any policy implications are included in the body of the report. There are no equality implications.

## 21. REASON FOR DECISION

To provide members with an overview of the strategic plan for investment into pitches in Rossendale from the Football Foundation and to provide authority to accept the grant funding from the Football Foundation.



# APPENDIX ONE

		START	FINISH	DURATION
<b>NEW FRAMEWORK AGP PROGRAMME</b>				
STAGE 1: PREPARATION & BRIEF	Project Start: Agreements issued to Applicant	15-Mar-24	15-Mar-24	0 WEEKS
	Applicant signs agreements	16-Mar-24	23-Mar-24	1 WEEKS
	DC and FMC instructed	24-Mar-24	07-Apr-24	2 WEEKS
	Provides Desktop Study	08-Apr-24	22-Apr-24	2 WEEKS
	Information Reviewed and DC instructed to proceed	23-Apr-24	23-Apr-24	0 WEEKS
	Visits site and carries out topo	24-Apr-24	08-May-24	2 WEEKS
STAGE 2: FEASIBILITY	Issues Initial Design	09-May-24	30-May-24	3 WEEKS
	Information Reviewed and DC instructed to proceed	31-May-24	31-May-24	0 WEEKS
	Feasibility Study	01-Jun-24	10-Aug-24	10 WEEKS
STAGE 3: DETAILED DESIGN PLANNING PERMISSION	Information reviewed and DC instructed	11-Aug-24	11-Aug-24	0 WEEKS
	Detailed Design	12-Aug-24	02-Sep-24	3 WEEKS
	Planning pack approved	03-Sep-24	10-Sep-24	1 WEEKS
	Obtains Planning Permission	11-Sep-24	01-Jan-25	16 WEEKS
	Discharge of Design Planning Conditions	02-Jan-25	03-Jan-25	1 WEEKS
STAGE 4: TENDER	Issue Third Party Warranty & Prepare Tender Docs	10-Jan-25	24-Jan-25	2 WEEKS
	Suppliers Submit GMP	25-Jan-25	22-Feb-25	4 WEEKS
	Tender Report issued	23-Feb-25	03-Mar-25	2 WEEKS
APPROVALS	Applicant to Submit FF Application	01-Dec-24	08-Dec-24	1 WEEKS
	FF Panel Date W12	06-Jan-25	06-Jan-25	0 WEEKS
	FF Board Approval W12	20-Jan-25	20-Jan-25	0 WEEKS
	Grant Offer Acceptance	07-Jan-25	21-Jan-25	2 WEEKS
	Discharge of Supplier Planning Conditions	01-Dec-24	26-Jan-25	8 WEEKS
STAGE 5 & 6: CONSTRUCTION	Applicant to Issue Full Lol to Supplier	22-Jan-25	05-Feb-25	2 WEEKS
	Mobilisation	06-Feb-25	06-Mar-25	4 WEEKS
	Pitch Construction	20-Mar-25	03-Apr-25	2 WEEKS
	<b>Handover / Practical Completion</b>	17-Apr-25	17-Apr-25	2 WEEKS



<b>Subject:</b>	Long Term Plan for Towns	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication	
<b>Report to:</b>	Full Council	<b>Date:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Housing and Regeneration	<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Lead Member for Economic Development	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached:	No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached:	No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Megan Eastwood	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706 252568	
<b>Email:</b>	meganeastwood@rossendalebc.gov.uk			

<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council to authorise acceptance of the £20m Long Term Plan for Towns funding for the core areas of Crawshawbooth, Rawtenstall and Waterfoot over a 10 year period subject to the submission of an appropriate investment plan.</li> <li>2. Council to note the establishment of a Town Board, the appointment of the Chair and members to oversee the strategic investment plan and note the governance arrangements.</li> <li>3. Council to Delegate Authority to Cabinet to approve the submission of the Vision and 3-year Investment plan to DLUHC and associated government departments.</li> <li>4. Council to Delegate Authority to the Director of Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member for Economic Development, Head of Legal Services and S151 Officer to tender and appoint any consultants required to develop the Town Board’s Long Term plan.</li> <li>5. To Delegate Authority to Programme Board to monitor spend, oversee programme delivery and manage risks.</li> <li>6. To approve the Rawtenstall Masterplan and Delegate Authority to the Director of Economic Development to monitor progress, delivery and make minor amends to the masterplan.</li> <li>7. Delegate Authority to Cabinet to develop a Waterfoot Masterplan which will be used as a key framework for action as part of the Long Term Plans for Towns investment.</li> </ol>
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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 On the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, Rossendale Borough Council was advised that Rawtenstall and the close surrounding area was selected by Government to benefit from the “Long-Term Plan for Towns” programme.
- 1.2 The area will benefit from £20m to develop an Investment Plan to support its vision.

- 1.3 A criteria of the funding is to establish a Town Board by the 1<sup>st</sup> of June which must be chaired by an independent person and include the MP, Police, Leader of the Council and an executive member of Lancashire County Council.
- 1.4 Rossendale Borough Council received £50,000 in this financial year to support capacity in establishing the board.
- 1.5 The aim of the Long Term Plan for Towns funding is to make towns places where people and businesses want to invest, creating new jobs and breathing new life into high streets and town centres.
- 1.6 In June 2023, Rossendale Borough Council approved a Levelling Up Outline Execution Plan to deliver projects relating to the gyratory, Rawtenstall Market, Bacup Market, the Bridge and Rawtenstall Connected.
- 1.7 The development of these projects highlighted some clear interdependencies with other capital projects being delivered with the same timescales as Lancashire County Council.
- 1.8 To enable a coordinated approach to the delivery of these projects a Masterplan for Rawtenstall was commissioned by Lancashire County Council in partnership with Rossendale Borough Council.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

**Long Term Plan for Towns**

- 2.1 In the spring budget statement, it was announced that Rawtenstall and the built up urban area, which includes Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth, was selected as a town for Long Term Plan for Towns funding based on a series of metrics.



Figure 1 Long Term Plan for Towns area

- 2.2 The Long Term Plan for Towns funding is designed to regenerate towns over the next decade.
- 2.3 The £20m endowment-style funding is released over a 7-year period within the 10 years, 25% is revenue and 75% is capital.
- 2.4 To release funding, the development of a 10-year Vision and Investment Plan is required to be submitted to DLUHC which indicates how funding will be allocated against projects and spend. The requirements of the submission are contained within Appendix A.
- 2.5 Rossendale Borough Council is the accountable body for the funding and executing the Long Term Plan, however, the Investment Plan must be community led and developed by a Town Board. The funding is to support 3 objectives:
- Safety and security
  - Heritage, high streets and regeneration
  - Transport and connectivity
- 2.6 A requirement of the funding is to establish a Town Board by the 1st June 2024. The Council selected the chair and Iain Taylor was appointed. Other membership can be viewed on Rossendale Borough Council's website: [town-board-members \(rossendale.gov.uk\)](https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/town-board-members)
- 2.7 The board has met and have agreed Terms of Reference and a Code of Conduct based on the Nolan Principles which define the decision making processes, governance standards and clear expectations around managing conflicts of interest and behaviour expectations. These are also available on Rossendale Borough Council's website: [Long Term Plans For Towns | Rossendale Borough Council](https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/long-term-plans-for-towns)
- 2.8 In line with Rossendale Borough Council's Constitution, Full Council authority is sought to accept the £20m.
- 2.9 An officer group has been established to co-ordinate the smooth running of the programme. The working group will not have any requirements for decision making but will resolve and overcome any tasks collectively.
- 2.10 Recruitment has commenced for a Programme Manager to internally manage the project and they will be responsible for developing the Investment Plan.
- 2.11 As the accountable body, Cabinet will have overall authority for decision- making. Progress to Cabinet will be updated verbally at monthly meetings. Programme Board will govern the project including financial monitoring, risks, communications and over-seeing the day to day running of the project.

### **Rossendale's Strategic Context**

- 2.12 The Council's Valley Plan identifies a thriving economy and a high quality environment as priorities. This is supported by the Council's Economic Development Strategy. This has five priority areas, including town centres as well as skills and employability. The Council has adopted a Bacup and Haslingden 2040 Vision and Masterplan that set out our 20-year priorities for those town centres.
- 2.13 Along with others not listed, The Long Term Plan for Towns funding could support priority projects identified in the following strategies:

- Rossendale’s local plan – housing, employment, town centre regeneration, visitor economy, links to Greater Manchester, congestion, cycling and climate change;
- The Corporate Valley Plan – Thriving Economies and High Quality Environments;
- Economic Development Strategy – Town Centres, Employability, Tourism, Inward Investment and Business Support;
- Visitor Economy Strategy 2018;
- Draft Rawtenstall Masterplan – information below;
- Developing Waterfoot Masterplan;
- Edgeside and Whitaker Park Masterplans;
- Lancashire Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan;
- Community Partnership meetings, Health and Wellbeing Partnership and related initiatives linked to the Council’s priority of a Proud, Healthy and Vibrant Rossendale.

### **3.0 RAWTENSTALL MASTERPLAN**

- 3.1 In June 2023, the Council approved a Levelling Up Outline Execution Plan to deliver projects relating to the gyratory, Rawtenstall Market, Bacup Market, the Bridge and Rawtenstall Connected.
- 3.2 These projects have clear interdependencies with other projects in close proximity delivered by Lancashire County Council. These include a Bus Service Improvement works, Valley of Stone Greenway cycle routes, Hall Carr estate and a stage 2 design for Bank Street.
- 3.3 To co-ordinate the activity and effectively ensure that they work cohesively towards the same goal, a Masterplan has been commissioned jointly by Rossendale Borough Council and Lancashire County Council.
- 3.4 Ideas were initially sought from the local community to identify priority projects to revitalise Rawtenstall Town Centre and several events took place including 2 drop in session events, where approximately 90 people attended, and a specific stakeholder engagement event.
- 3.5 The themes identified as a result of the consultation include Getting Around Town, Linking Communities, Opportunities for Development and a Greener Town.
- 3.6 Based on the analysis of evidence, consultation and strategic context, an action plan of 10 projects was created and presented as a concept Masterplan. This was shared with members from both authorities, the MP, local councillors.
- 3.7 Further public consultation took place with the general public on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2024 which attracted circa 390 attendees and a separate session with the Chamber of Commerce, along with several 1-2-1 meetings.
- 3.8 A more detailed summary of the consultation can be found at the back of Appendix B.
- 3.9 The Vision and Masterplan set out recommendations for how Rawtenstall could be.

#### **Vision Statement**

*"Rawtenstall is a vibrant town where nature threads through its streets, with charming brooks and colourful public parks, weaving their way into the surrounding hills.*

*It is a welcoming place for people of all ages, where locals feel a sense of pride and visitors feel excitement and curiosity to explore. The streets, set in the historic cobbled townscape*

*are bustling with activity, showcasing local businesses and artists and giving the community space to come together and celebrate their shared spirit."*

3.10 The Vision Statement is supported by 5 Vision objectives :

- A Welcoming Town;
- Re-stitching the Town;
- Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces;
- Bringing Communities Together;
- Re-connect the Town with Nature.

3.11 A further 10 projects have been identified to realise the Vision and objectives and these are:

Improved Arrival Experiences	Better Places and Spaces	Connecting Communities
1. Town Promenades 2. Civic Loop 3. Revitalised Town Square	4. A new Green spine (St Mary's Way) 5. Rawtenstall Market Place 6. Development Opportunities	7. Wider Links (Valley of Stone) 8. Linking communities 9. Gateway to the Hills 10. Drawing in the nature

**Appendix B** provides a comprehensive narrative on these projects.

3.12 Authority is sought from Council to approve the Masterplan to enable the clear direction of projects and align efforts during the delivery phases.

#### **4.0 WATERFOOT MASTERPLAN**

4.1 In December 2022, the Council successfully secured £2.643m in UK SPF money.

4.2 As part of the submitted and approved Investment Plan, the Council allocated £300k of capital monies towards the reinvigoration of the business environment in Waterfoot.

4.3 In summer 2023 work commenced to understand the current challenges and opportunities in Waterfoot. This involved lengthy consultation with the general public and over 550 people provided feedback. The consultation feedback is attached in Appendix C.

4.4 The consultation identified a number of themes and these were put together within an Action Plan. This was presented to Cabinet and Ward Members.

4.5 Key actions identified were:

- To appoint external support to establish a Vision and Masterplan for Waterfoot underpinned by The Arts as its unique selling point
- To establish a Conservation Area and Management Plan for Waterfoot
- To establish a Waterfoot Regeneration Board

4.6 Work so far has started to develop the Vision and Masterplan, including the appointment of Squareyard, drop in sessions with the business community and 1-2-1s with relevant stakeholders.



4.7 Delegation is requested for Cabinet to sign off the overall Masterplan following engagement with ward members and the general public. This will take place throughout summer to ensure it aligns with the Long Term Plan for Towns Investment Plan Submission.

## 5.0 FINANCE

5.1 The local authority's Chief Financial Officer will be required to submit a Statement of Grant Usage and an Assurance Letter to DLUHC alongside the Long-Term Plan. The Chief Finance Officer will be required to provide written confirmation that they have undertaken to actively apply all the necessary checks to ensure proper administration of the local authority's financial affairs regarding the funding programme, particularly in respect to financial administration and transparency of governance. This should also include compliance checks to ensure the governance requirements around the Town Board are being met.

## 6.0 LEGAL

6.1 All governance arrangements will continue to be implemented and monitored in line with approved procedures and publicised guidance.

6.2 Any necessary procurements will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

## 7.0 POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Any policy implications are included in the body of the report. There are no equality implications.

## 8.0 REASON FOR DECISION

8.1 Approving the recommendations of this report will contribute to a framework for economic development, community well-being, and infrastructure in Waterfoot, Crawshawbooth and Rawtenstall.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Appendix A	<a href="#">Long-Term Plan for Towns-Guidance</a>
Appendix B	Attached
Appendix C	Attached

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# RAWTENSTALL SPATIAL MASTERPLAN

# Contents

<b>1 Setting the Scene</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Introduction	6
<b>2 Understanding the Context</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 An Ideal Position in the Region	10
2.2 Key Local Policy and Strategy	12
2.3 Understanding the Structure of the Town	14
2.4 Historic Development of the Town Centre	16
2.5 A Century of Change - Development Timeline	18
2.6 A Strong Local Community	20
2.7 What makes Rawtenstall special?	22
<b>3 Key Opportunities for the Town Centre</b>	<b>25</b>
3.1 Introduction	26
3.2 Consultation Events - Early Engagements	27
3.3 Getting Around Town	28
3.4 A Greener Town	30
3.5 Linking Communities	32
3.6 Opportunities for Development	34
<b>4 Vision And Action Plan</b>	<b>37</b>
4.1 A Vision for Rawtenstall	38
4.2 Vision Statement	40
4.3 Vision Objectives	41
4.4 Action Plan - 10 "Stalls" for Rawtenstall Town Centre	42
4.5 1 - Town Promenades	44
4.6 2 - Gyrotory "Civic Loop"	46
4.7 3 - Revitalised Town Square	48
4.8 4 - A New 'Green Spine' (St Mary's Way)	50
4.9 5 - Market Hall Square	52
4.10 6 - Development Opportunities	54
4.11 7 - Wider Links (Valley of Stone)	56
4.12 8 - Linking Communities	58
4.13 9 - Gateway to the Hills	60
4.14 10 - Drawing in the Nature	62



---

<b>5 Illustrative Masterplan</b>	65
5.1 Illustrative Masterplan	66
5.2 Improving Connections for Pedestrian and Cyclists	68
5.3 Improving Movement for Buses, Taxis and Cars	69
5.4 Draft Masterplan Consultation	70

---

<b>6 Summary and Next Steps</b>	73
6.1 Summary	74
6.2 Next Steps	75

---

<b>7 Appendix</b>	77
7.1 Consultation Boards - February 2024	78
7.2 Consultation Report April 2024 (Rossendale Borough Council)	87

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1

# SETTING THE SCENE





## 1.1 Introduction

This document has been prepared to set out a clear vision for Rawtenstall. Analysing the key opportunities to identify **priority projects** that would help revitalise the wider town centre over the next 10-15 years.

**The Ambition** → To enhance the existing charm of Rawtenstall, looking for opportunities to strengthen the offer for its communities and visitors alike.

**Key**  
Masterplan Study Area

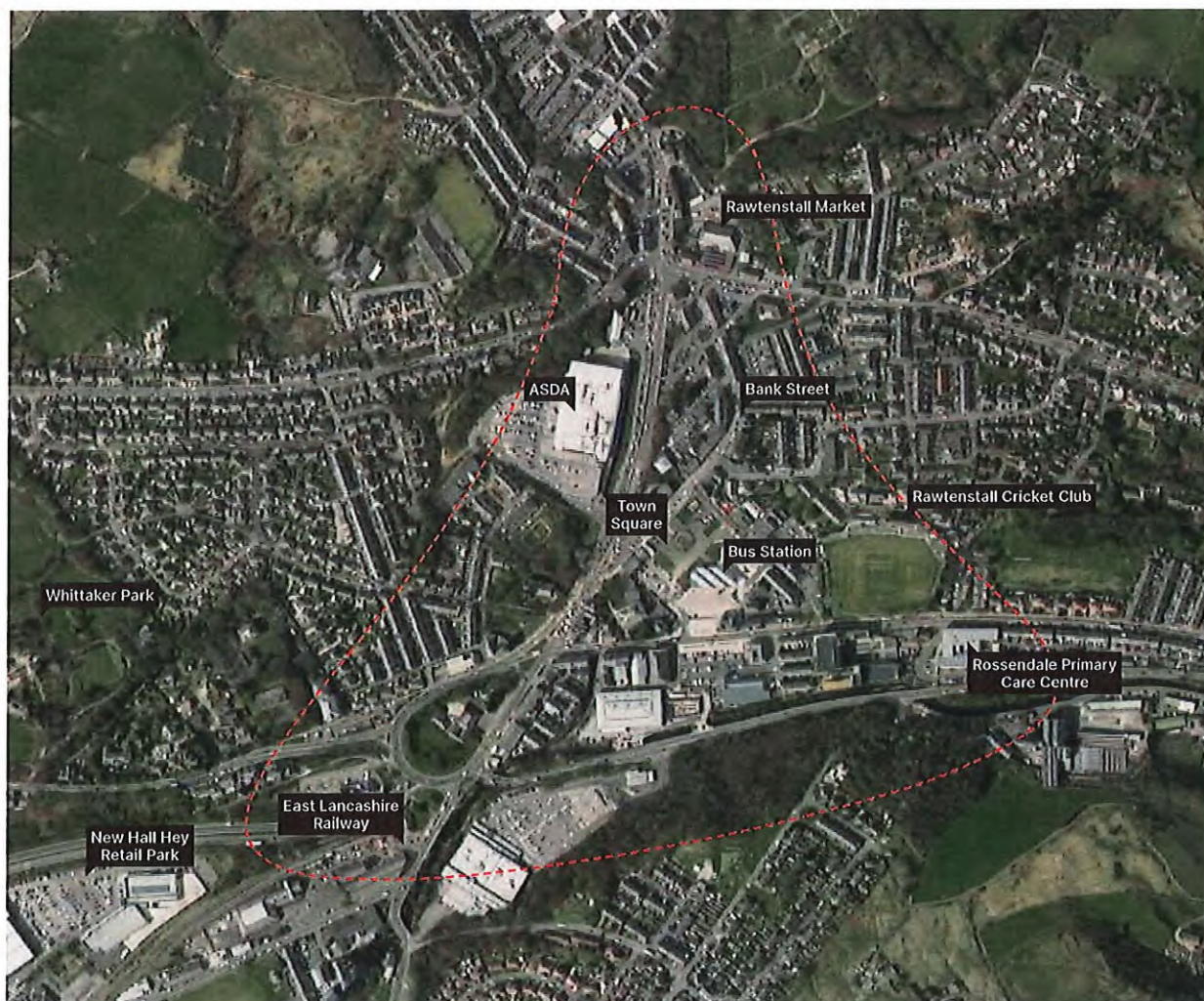


Figure 1 - Rawtenstall Town Centre and Surroundings (base image - Google Maps, 2024)



### Why does Rawtenstall need a Masterplan?

Lancashire County Council and Rossendale Borough Council have decided to commission this masterplan for Rawtenstall Town Centre due to a number of interconnected projects coming forward at the same time:

- Rawtenstall Market Hall Frontage Redesign
- Gyrotory Redesign
- Hall Carr Estate - Safer, Greener, Healthier Streets
- Bank Street - Stage 2 Public Realm Design

### Benefits of having a Masterplan

- Coordinates Public Realm, Infrastructure and Development Projects across the town centre to create a more prosperous local economy
- Gives opportunity for the community to shape the future of their town centre
- Encourages investment in to the town by showing long term strategic thinking and boosting the status of the area.
- A guide to achieve a greener and more prosperous future for the town centre
- Promotes active travel, which can boost public health
- Encourages tourism and improves the visitor economy



Rawtenstall Market Hall (Planit, 2023)



The new Town Square, Bus Station and Ilex Mill (Planit, 2024)



Bank Street looking south to Cowpe Lowe Moor (Planit, 2023)



East Lancashire Heritage Railway Station Buildings (Planit, 2023)





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2

# UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT





## 2.1 An Ideal Position in the Region

### At the Heart of "Pennine Lancashire"

Rawtenstall has a unique position in the region, both nestled in the majestic West Pennine Moors and well connected to major cities and employment hubs by strong road and public transport connections. This key strategic location has led to it emerging as the primary town centre within the borough of Rossendale in the 21st century. This means Rawtenstall's future success as a town centre is important not just to the town itself but to the residents of the wider borough who also rely on the retail and leisure offer it provides.

### Lancashire County Council Relevant Emerging Policies

- **Lancashire Walking and Cycling Investment Plan (LCWIP)** - county wide plan to deliver a truly integrated cycle network is of high strategic importance for Rossendale and Rawtenstall to become a more sustainable places.
- **Lancashire 2050** - new economic strategy will set guidance for a greener more prosperous county, which Rossendale and thus Rawtenstall can be at the heart of.

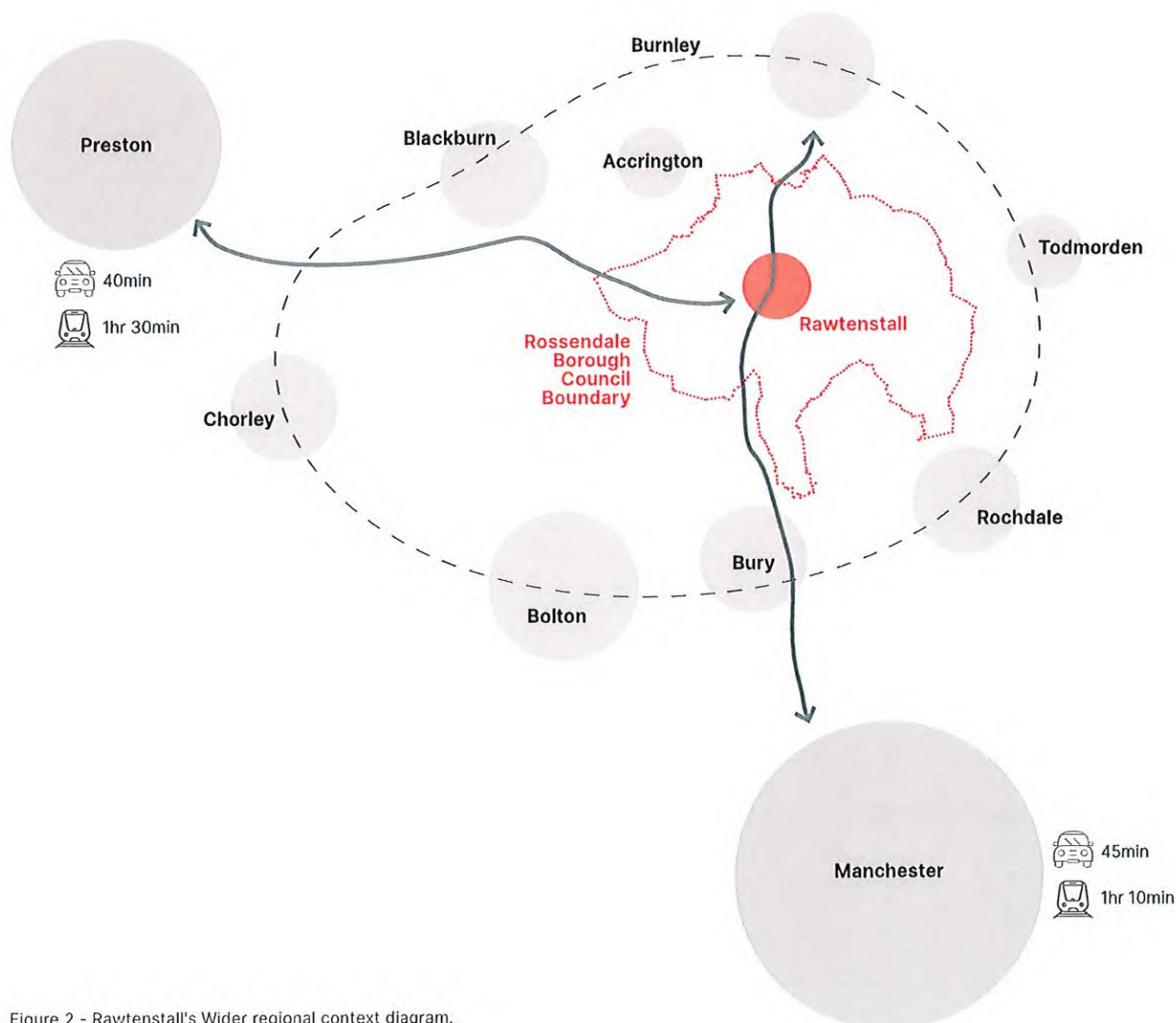


Figure 2 - Rawtenstall's Wider regional context diagram.



### At the heart of Adrenaline Valley

Rossendale is a distinctive and characterful part of Pennine Lancashire, Rossendale, with strong communities and a proud history that stretches back through its industrial heritage to its origins as a medieval hunting ground.

Rossendale promotes itself as 'Adrenaline Valley' with its excellent connections to the surrounding wild landscape and numerous adrenaline focused destinations such as Ski Rossendale, Water Ski Academy and Lee Quarry.

### An Established Visitor Destination

Rawtenstall is not short of attractions to attract new people to the town centre. The East Lancashire Heritage Railway brings thousands of visitors to the town each year, as well as other charming, historical assets to offer, such as the Whitaker Museum and Bank Street's famous independent shops. On top of this there are also more hidden gems, such as the Market, St Mary's Chambers events venue and the new Town Square that adds to this rich tourism offer.

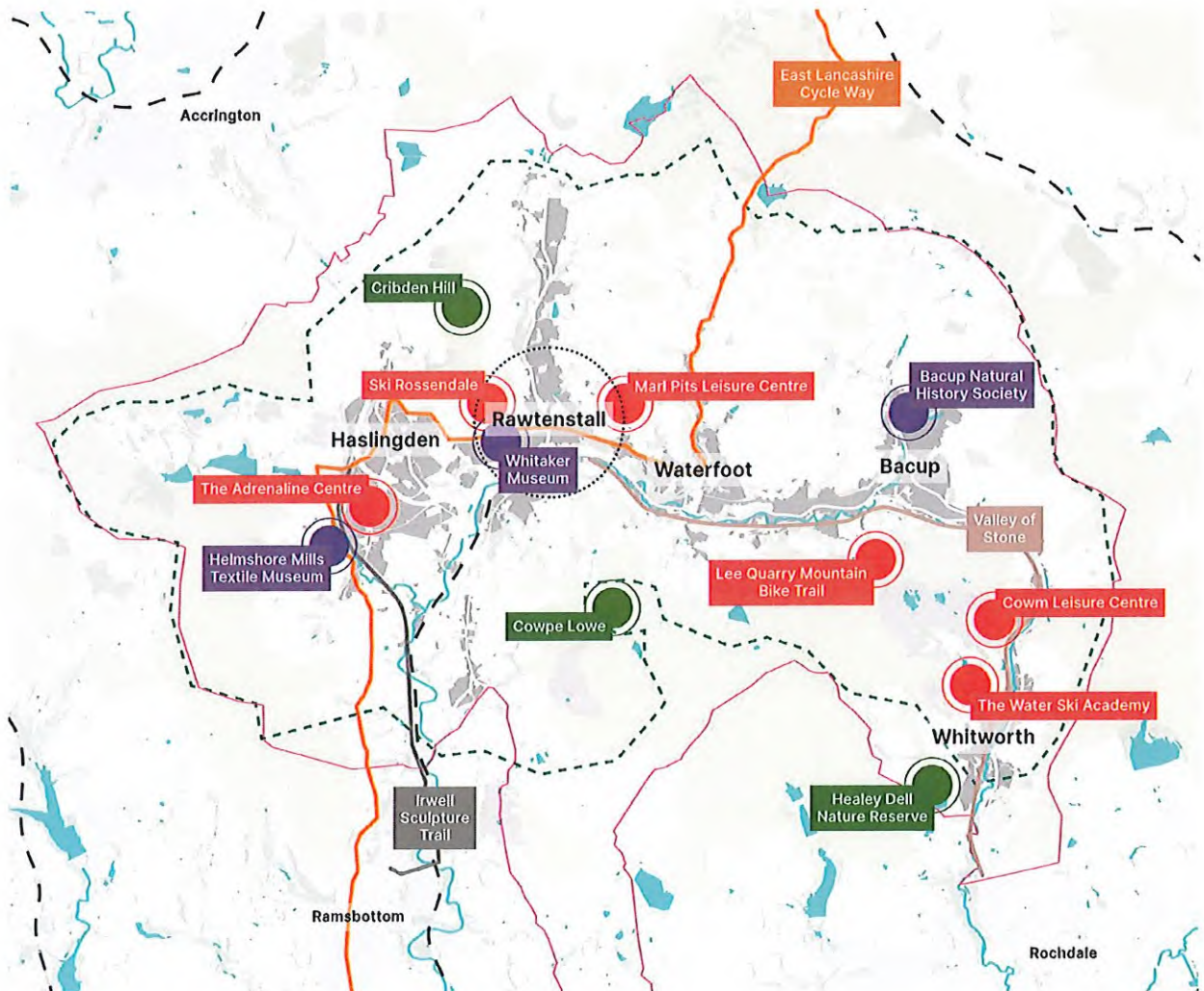


Figure 3 - The Rossendale Valley's outdoor leisure assets diagram.

## 2.2 Key Local Policy and Strategy

Our work aims to holistically encompass the existing local policies and strategies set out for Rawtenstall in order to create a climate-positive and aspirational vision.

### Rossendale Local Plan 2019-2036

Adopted in 2021, it is the main planning document of the borough of Rossendale. Its key objectives are to provide enough housing to meet demand, create jobs and boost the economy, reduce inequalities, improve infrastructure and services, protect valuable green spaces and heritage sites, and promote sustainable development.

#### Strategic priorities relevant for our work



- Delivering housing and employment allocations in the growing town of Rawtenstall
- Rawtenstall Town Centre regeneration
- Need for development to cater to visitor economy - hotel and leisure / entertainment uses most suitable in Rawtenstall Town Centre around new Town Square
- Improving links to Greater Manchester - strategic roads and exploration of reinstatement of rail links.
- Addressing congestion including Rawtenstall Gyratory improvements
- Developing the strategic cycle network, linking the Borough's towns and improving access to the countryside
- Addressing the Climate Change emergency through the enhancement of Green Infrastructure, provision of electric charging points and renewable energy projects

#### Local Plan vision statement for Rossendale

"Rossendale will be a place where people want to live, visit, work and invest. By 2034, **inequalities across the Borough will be reduced through sustainable growth** and by **strengthening opportunities in the east of Rossendale** and fulfilling the potential of the west of the Borough.

**The Town and District Centres, and key transport hubs, will be the main areas of development**, with surrounding communities also having opportunities for growth and enhancement. The vision and masterplans for Rawtenstall, Bacup and Haslingden will act as regeneration catalysts, creating new opportunities for retail, leisure, recreation, housing and other economic development. Rossendale's distinctive landscapes and natural assets will continue to be protected and enhanced for their intrinsic value to biodiversity and tackling climate change as well as their recreational and economic value to local people and visitors alike. Coupled with housing and employment growth and a range of policies designed to enhance the built, natural and social environment, this will boost the economic potential of the Borough and improve health and well-being of residents. **The special character will be maintained** whilst supporting and accommodating sustainable growth for the Borough, its residents and businesses."

## Rossendale Visitor Economy Strategy 2020-2030 (2021)

Launched in 2020, aims to transform the borough into a year-round tourist destination for families and foodies, and outdoor enthusiasts. With a target of doubling visitor numbers to 2 million by 2030, it focuses on five key objectives:

- Marketing Rossendale
- Outdoor Rossendale
- Lifestyle Rossendale
- Accommodation Rossendale
- Creative Rossendale

### Key actions relevant for our work



- Improve the knowledge of local residents and businesses
- Develop a signage strategy across Rossendale
- Improve the experience of outdoor activities
- Develop an action plan for Rawtenstall
- Encourage people using East Lancashire Railway to spend time in the boroughs visitor attractions and town centres
- Attract high-quality all-year round events
- Showcase local artists, artisans, crafts people and musicians

## Rossendale Climate Change SPD (2022)

In response to the urgent need for climate action, the Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) helps make existing future development more sustainable. The document outlines key principles and strategies to reduce carbon emissions, enhance resilience, and protect the natural environment.

### Key principles relevant for our work



- Encouraging more sustainable transport use & reducing the number of car trips
- Minimising flooding risk
- Boosting Biodiversity and providing more Green Infrastructure

## Rawtenstall Town Centre Conservation Area (1990 & 2011)

In response to the towns unique historic character and numerous heritage buildings and structures, Rossendale Borough Council has established a conservation area covering the town centre.

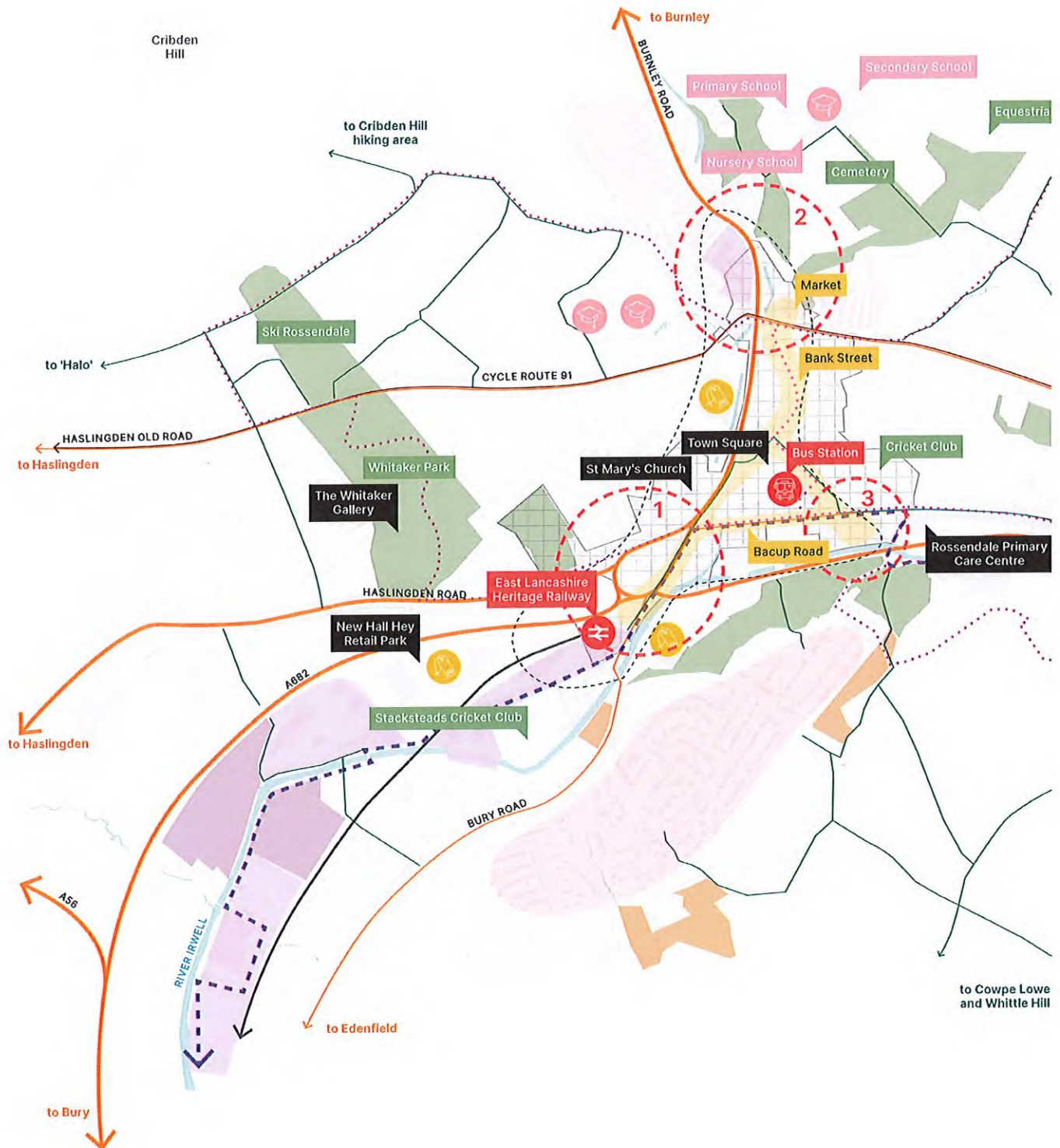
### Key principles relevant for our work

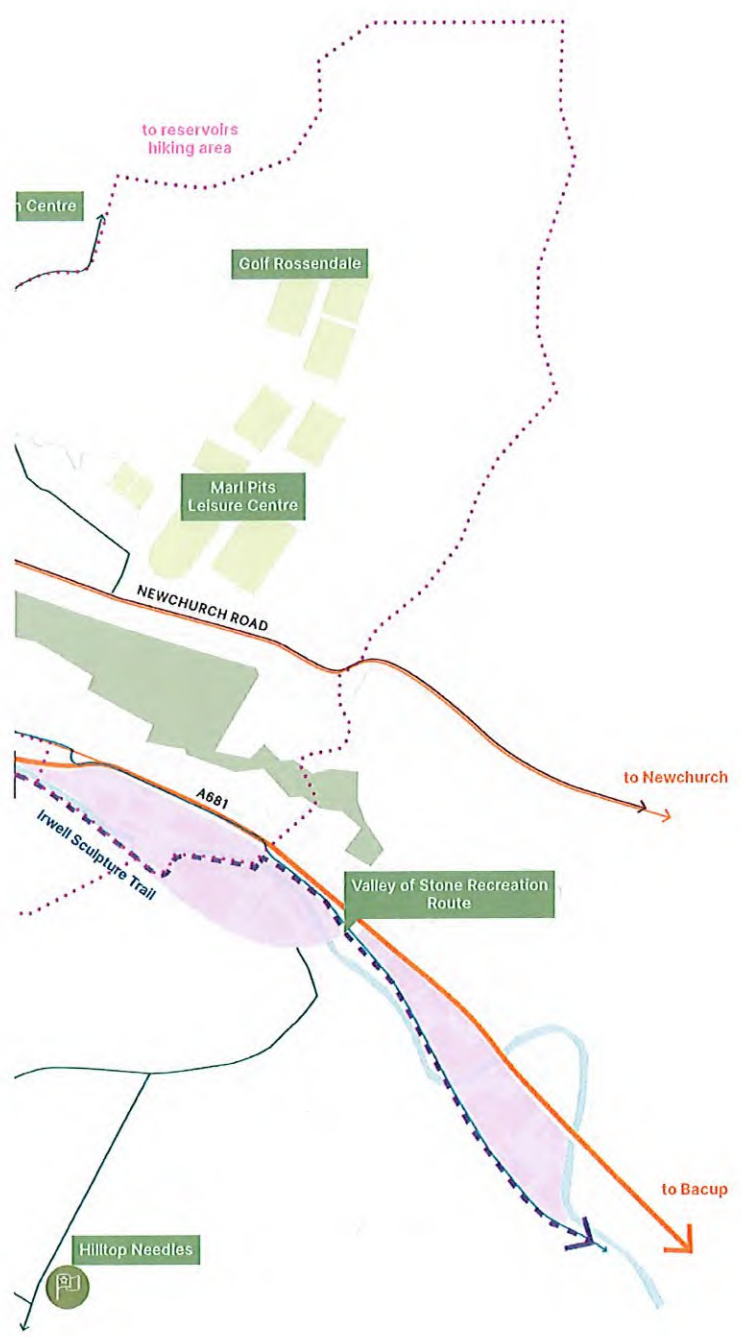


- Protecting heritage assets and enhancing their townscape setting is a major priority for future development in the town centre.
- Bank Street and the rivers also form key elements of the town's character and heritage to be celebrated and enhanced.
- Boosting Biodiversity and providing more Green Infrastructure



## 2.3 Understanding the Structure of the Town





**Key**

- Roads
- Railway
- Footways
- Cycle Route 91
- Local Walking Routes
- Irwell Sculpture Trail
- Rawtenstall Town Centre Conservation Area
- Shopping / High Streets
- Existing Employment Sites
- New Employment Sites
- Housing Site Allocation
- Areas of Higher Deprivation
- Town Centre Gateways

**Key Takeaways**

- Rawtenstall is strategically positioned on the southern junction of A56 and A682 motorway which links Manchester (south) to Burnley and M65 (north), making it a potential gateway town into the Rossendale Valley
- Town is structured around primary road corridors along the valley
- **1st & 2nd key gateways** - 1) Train Station / gyratory (south) and 2) Rawtenstall Market (north)
- **3rd key gateway** less well defined around Health Centre / Cricket Ground
- Excellent range of local facilities and independents – spread across the town
- Excellent valley wide connections – walking and cycling to wider countryside
- **Conservation Area** - Numerous Grade II listed buildings throughout town with opportunity to improve their setting
- Few parks and gardens, however there is a range of public spaces, squares and parks through the town – from pocket parks to civic and semi natural spaces – a strong sense of community ownership of green space
- Retail and employment focused around the south of town
- Residential areas within walking distance of the centre – but with challenges due to topography and road severance
- Excellent public transport links - bus services to local and regional destinations

Figure 4 - Wider context diagram of Rawtenstall Town Centre



## 2.4 Historic Development of the Town Centre

Rawtenstall is a small town with rich history - transforming from a small hamlet into an industrial powerhouse, surviving the decline of industry - it has stood the test of time and the local community is proud of this.

### Learning from the past

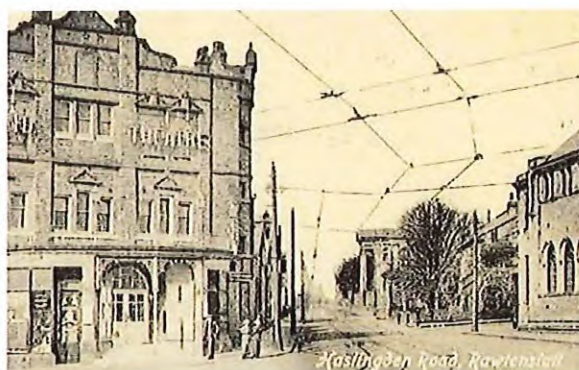
Rawtenstall rapidly grew in late-18th and 19th century during the Industrial Revolution thanks to its location close to two watercourses, which powered its mills. This, together with improvements to the local transport network, such as the establishing of the railway and tramway - connecting the town to the wider region, resulted in population expansion and rapid urbanisation of the Valley, mainly in form of back-to-back workers housing in close proximity to the mills, much of which remains in Rawtenstall today. This development resulted in relatively tight-knit urban grain with a series of pedestrian paths connecting main destinations, which greatly enhanced permeability of the place, especially between Bank Street and The Fold (today's St Mary's Way).

With the coming of 20th century, the industry saw a significant decline, with many mills either demolished (Higher Mill, Lower Mill), abandoned (Hall Carr Mill) or redeveloped (Ilex Mill). The grain of the town was significantly changed by the slum clearance in the Fold area (1920) and between Bank Street and Bacup Road to give way for the Valley Shopping Centre in late 1960s, which was later demolished and turned into the spacious Town Square. The creation of St Mary's Way as a relief road for Bank Street further disrupted the urban grain and created a major east-west barrier within the town.

Today, the town has a strong emerging local economy with a healthy mix of manufacturing, retail and wide range of independent businesses. The strength of its independents also gives the town centre a unique draw to locals and visitors and is a particular asset to the local economy.



Bank Street in early 1900s - a bustling high street (Friends of Rawtenstall, 2015)



The former Theatre at the Junction of Haslingden, Bacup and Bury Roads - a well-defined townscape at the town's southern Gateway (Rossendale Free Press, 2016).

### Key findings

- **Tight-knit historic urban grain** was eroded throughout the time due to construction of motorway and during slum clearance
- Several **pedestrian connections** between today's St Mary's Way and Bank Street enhanced permeability of the town centre.
- **Northern and southern gateways** to town centre were well-defined by cultural (theatre) and community (market) buildings, creating hubs of activity
- **Shoemaking** was an important part of Rawtenstall's economy and survives until today
- **Tramway** connected Rawtenstall to surrounding towns, remains of which are still visible in the streets



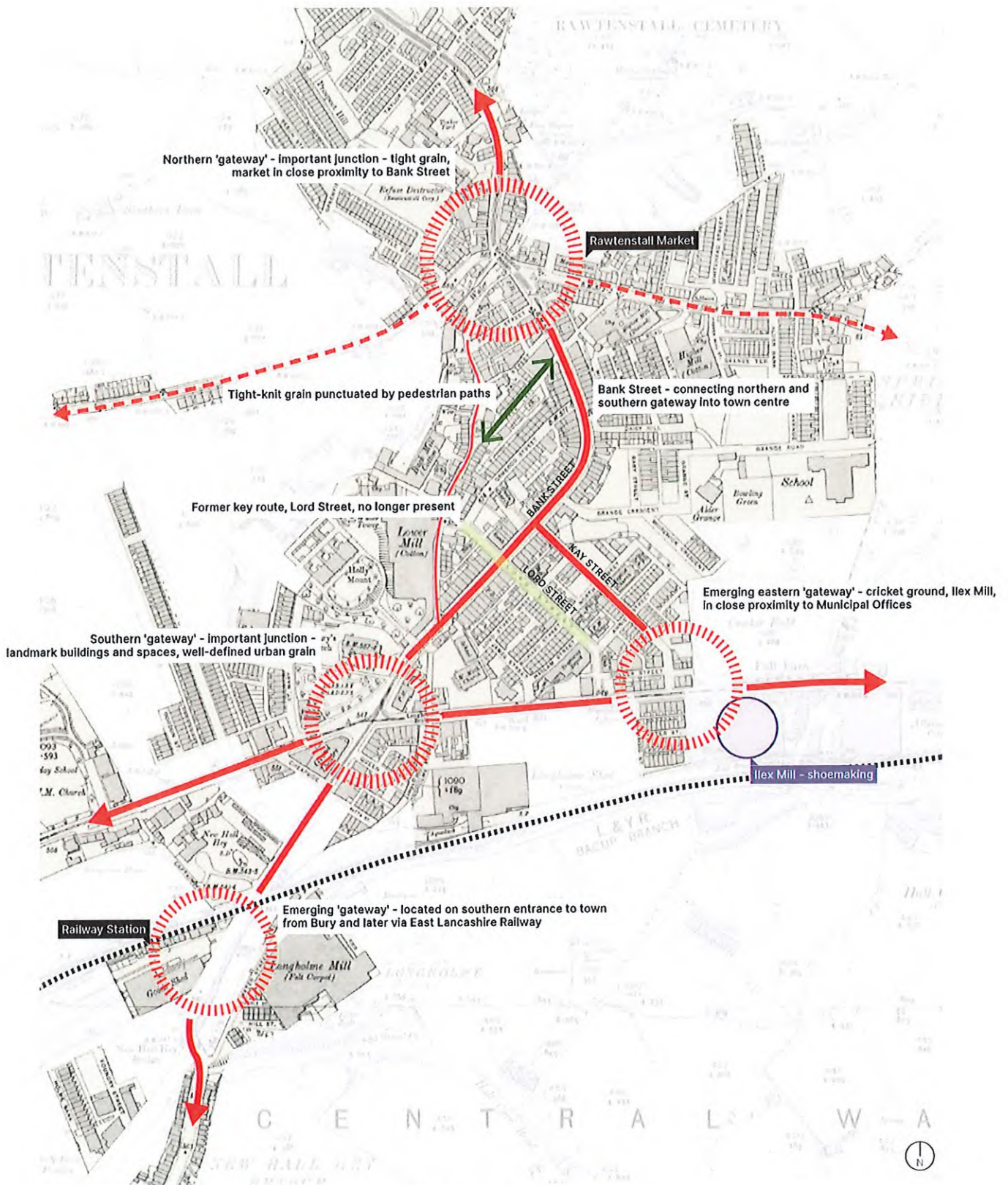


Figure 5 - Historical Analysis of Rawtenstall Town Centre ( Base Map - Ordnance Survey, 1911)

## 2.5 A Century of Change *Development Timeline*

As the historical analysis has shown, Rawtenstall Town Centre has undergone many major changes since its industrial heyday. It is important to understand the impact these changes had on how the town functions today in order to set a positive and practical plan for the future of the town centre.

Large areas of the town centre cleared for **St Mary's Way** and the **Valley Shopping Centre** to be built. Loss of historic housing and southern end of Bank Street's shop frontages and the key route of Lord Street.

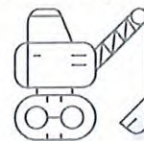


1960s



Car-centric planning

Post-war  
Redevelopment



1970s



The end of passenger train services from Rawtenstall Station in 1972.



At the start of the decade the railway reopens as a heritage line bringing thousands of visitors, whilst in 1997 the cobbles are restored on Bank Street at the heart of the town.



1990s

Rediscovering a proud history

The largely vacant valley centre is demolished in 2012 to make way for the "Spinning Point" masterplan to re-imagine the town centre for the 21st century.



2010s

Spinning Point

As Bank Street and the Market once again thrive, Levelling up Fund money is secured to revamp both these cherished landmarks of Rawtenstall.



2020s

Ambition for the future

2000s



Redevelopment of derelict mills. Ilex Mill turned into apartments, whereas Hardman's Mill is converted in to office space. Lower Clough Mill is demolished for an ASDA supermarket.



The new bus station, town square and restored old town hall come together as Phase 1 to make a positive addition to the town centre





## 2.6 A Strong Local Community

Rawtenstall is a town bursting with community pride. It is full of a tight-knit network of community groups and local, independent businesses. They are immensely proud of their town centre and help to make it a vibrant and unique place.

### Public Realm and Community Gardening

**Civic Pride Rossendale** have spread headed gardening and planting efforts across the town centre which add a striking vibrancy to the public realm even in the winter months.

**Incredible Edible Rossendale** also encourages people of all ages to engage in the local community.

### Arts, Sports and Entertainment

Rawtenstall has much more to offer than the famed **East Lancashire Railway**. Destinations such as **The Whitaker** and St Mary's Chambers provide interest and entertainment for a variety of people.

### Independent Businesses

Rawtenstall's famed independent businesses particularly along Bank Street to the Market hall have been the back bone of the town centre for over a century, as well as along Bacup Road and Kay Street. In recent years new additions outside this core area have added to this vibrancy particularly in the New Hall Hey and Kingfisher business areas.

### Community Amenities

Key services in and around the town centre such as the Youth Zone, Rossendale Primary Health Care Centre and Children's Support Services provide a strong social fabric for the local people.

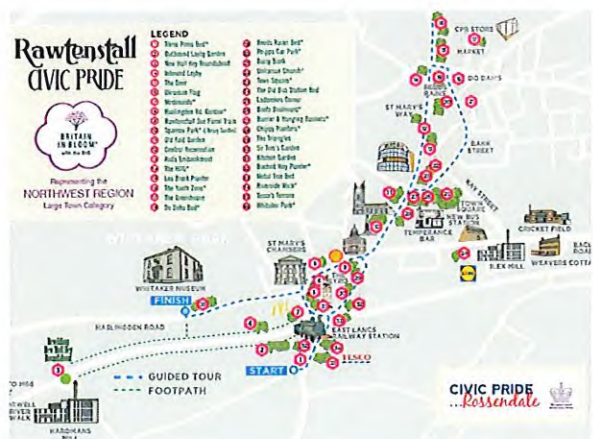
Religious groups and centres of a range of faiths also support the life and vibrancy of the town.



Civic Pride Rossendale Garden Party in Memorial Gardens (Civic Pride, 2023)



The Whitaker Museum & Art Gallery (Northern Soul, 2022).



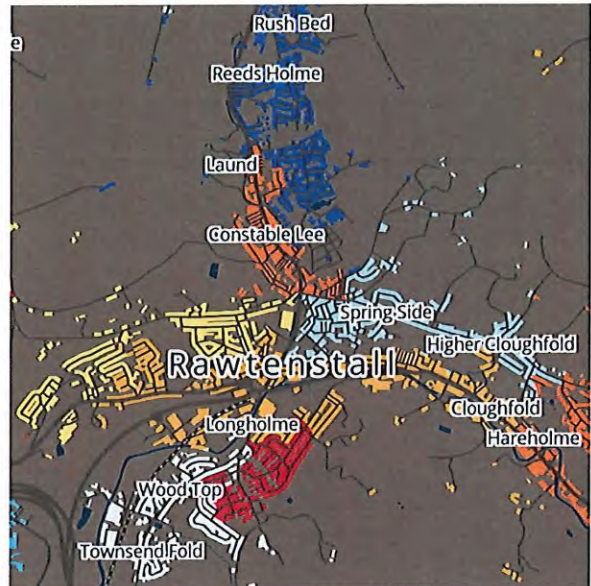
Civic Pride Rossendale's Community Map of Rawtenstall (Civic Pride Rossendale, 2022).



## The Socio-Economic Picture

Like many towns and cities across the country inequalities exist across Rawtenstall. ONS Deprivation data from 2019 shows that two communities facing the greatest challenges lie just to the south and north of the town centre. On the other hand more affluent communities exist to the east along Whitchurch Road and further north towards Reeds Holme along Burnley Road.

These lower super output areas (LSOAs) can be seen on the map opposite with darker blues showing the least deprived areas and darkest reds showing the most deprived. This masterplan will put these communities needs at the forefront and seek to help all people to thrive Rawtenstall going forward.



UK Government Indices of Multiple Deprivation Map (CRDC, 2019)

## Neighbourhoods in Need

### LSOA 004A "Lower Constable Lee"

- This community is primarily located along Burnley Road just to the north of the town centre primarily made up of a tight grid of terraced Victorian homes.
- It is within the top **30% most deprived** neighbourhoods in England.
- It is characterised by being younger and more diverse than average for the local area.
- It faces greatest deprivation regarding **living environment** with employment, health and education also being areas of challenge.

### LSOA 004D "Hall Carr Estate"

- This community is situated up on a hillside to the south above the town centre leading to it being physically isolated from the amenities of Rawtenstall.
- In the **10% most deprived** in England
- It is characterised by an older demographic, with **Income, Employment and Health** being the areas with severest challenge (all in the **top 10% deprived nationally**).

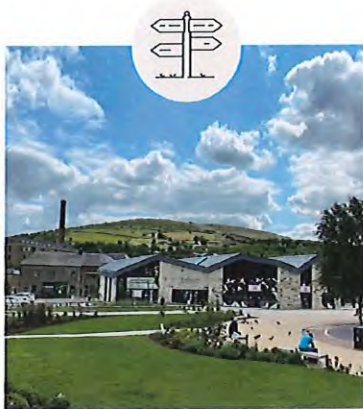


Figure 6 - Diagram of LSOAs with Highest Deprivation Levels in Rawtenstall.

## 2.7 What makes Rawtenstall special?

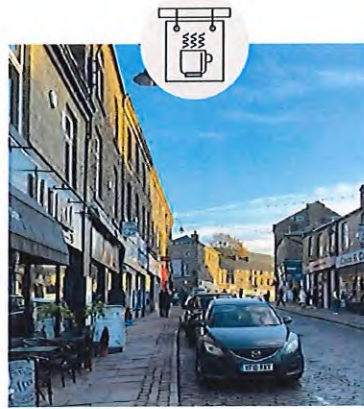
Based on our analysis and understanding of the place and its identity, we've identified a distinctive set of characteristics and assets that set Rawtenstall apart and we are looking to support and expand on these in the masterplan proposals.





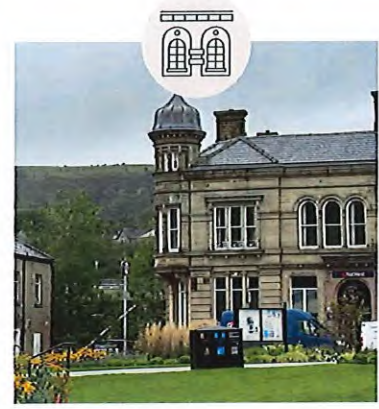
### 'Gateway into Rossendale'

Rawtenstall's size and strategic position in the heart of Rossendale mean it has become the primary town centre in the borough with enormous potential to benefit the whole area in this role.



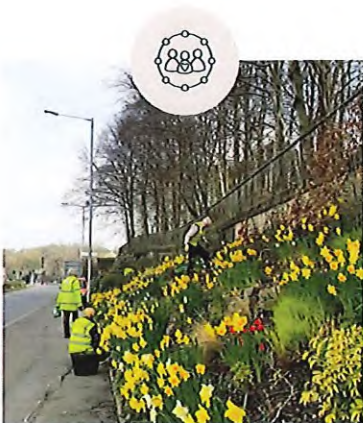
### Emerging Local Economy

There is a range of local, independent businesses across town from the station to the market that give the opportunity to shop local and enjoy the unique character and charm of Rawtenstall.



### Rich History and Heritage

Evolving from a small medieval settlement to a thriving mill town and surviving the decline of industry to the proud community it is today. Fortunately, Rawtenstall has retained much of its historic character and beautiful heritage buildings.



### Strong Local Community

An active network of community groups and cultural institutions, such as Civic Pride Rossendale, Rawtenstall Market and The Whitaker Art Gallery and Museum, are an intrinsic part of the fabric of Rawtenstall and make it a better place through their efforts.



### Hub for Sports and the Outdoors

As a part of the 'Adrenaline Valley', the town has great linkages to the surrounding countryside and hills as well as various sport activities for people of all ages.



### Great Landscape Setting

The town's position in the heart of the West Pennine Moors is intrinsic to Rawtenstall's visual character, giving a dramatic hilly backdrop to the town and providing numerous walking and cycling paths for people to enjoy.





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3

KEY  
OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR THE TOWN  
CENTRE



### 3.1 Introduction

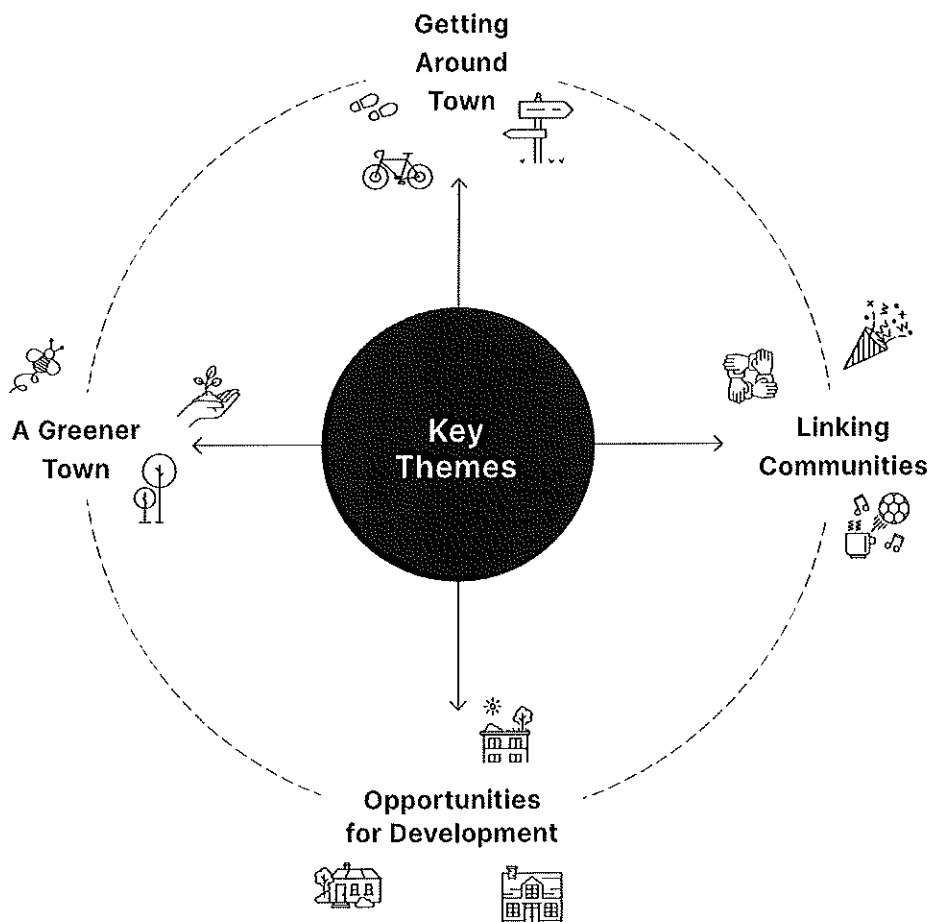
After undertaking an urban analysis of the town and its history, four key themes emerged as the main areas of opportunity to help Rawtenstall reach its full potential.

These are explored in more detail on following pages to see how the town could better respond to its challenges and grasp the opportunities.

#### Emerging Opportunities

The town already has majority of the ingredients, it is a lively place with emerging local economy that has an innate charm that draws people to want to explore more of it. The important part to unlock this potential is to create a cohesive vision underpinned by a strategy which brings all of the elements and stakeholders together.

These ideas were presented to the local community in a number of consultation workshops across Rawtenstall throughout November and December 2023. The feedback received is included in the following pages and has helped shape our vision and final proposals for the town centre at the end of this document.





## 3.2 Consultation Events

### *Early Engagements*

Three consultation events took place during November and December 2023, in order to help us understand what the local priorities were and give the local community a real voice in the process in the development of the masterplan.

#### 2023 Consultation Events

10:00-13:00

30 November 2023

Drop in Public Consultation Event at Rawtenstall Market

18:00-19:30

4 December 2023

Stakeholder Engagement Event at Rawtenstall Unitarian Church

13:00-16:00

13 December 2023

Drop in Public Consultation Event at Sophie's Boutique, Bank Street



Public Consultation Drop in at Sophie's Boutique



Consultee Feedback at Drop in Event at Sophie's Boutique

#### Key findings

We found that whilst there was some apprehension in the local community at the barriers to change for the town centre (primarily concerned with car traffic levels and cycle / pedestrian safety) there was a real optimism for Rawtenstall. This translated in to broad support for the principles presented and the nature of the opportunities and proposed type of interventions in the town centre.

Key feedback relating to each of the four themes is shown on the following pages in this chapter and a more detailed summary of the three consultation events is provided in the appendix at the end of this document.



Stakeholder Consultation Event 4th December 2023



### 3.3 Getting Around Town

#### Overarching opportunity

Through looking at the key movements and activities in and around the town centre it became clear that some major routes were in need of improvement to make them safer and more accessible to all.

The diagram below shows how by connecting the key destinations together across the major barriers of busy roadways the town centre will be able to function better as a cohesive whole.

**Key**

- Key Town Centre Destinations / Local Amenities
- Major roadways areas in need of improvement (Severance)
- Central shopping streets in need of improvement (Environment)

Routes that link on to main shopping streets / between key destinations that are in need of improvement (**Connection**):

- Primary Routes
- Secondary Routes
- - - (Dashed) - potential new routes

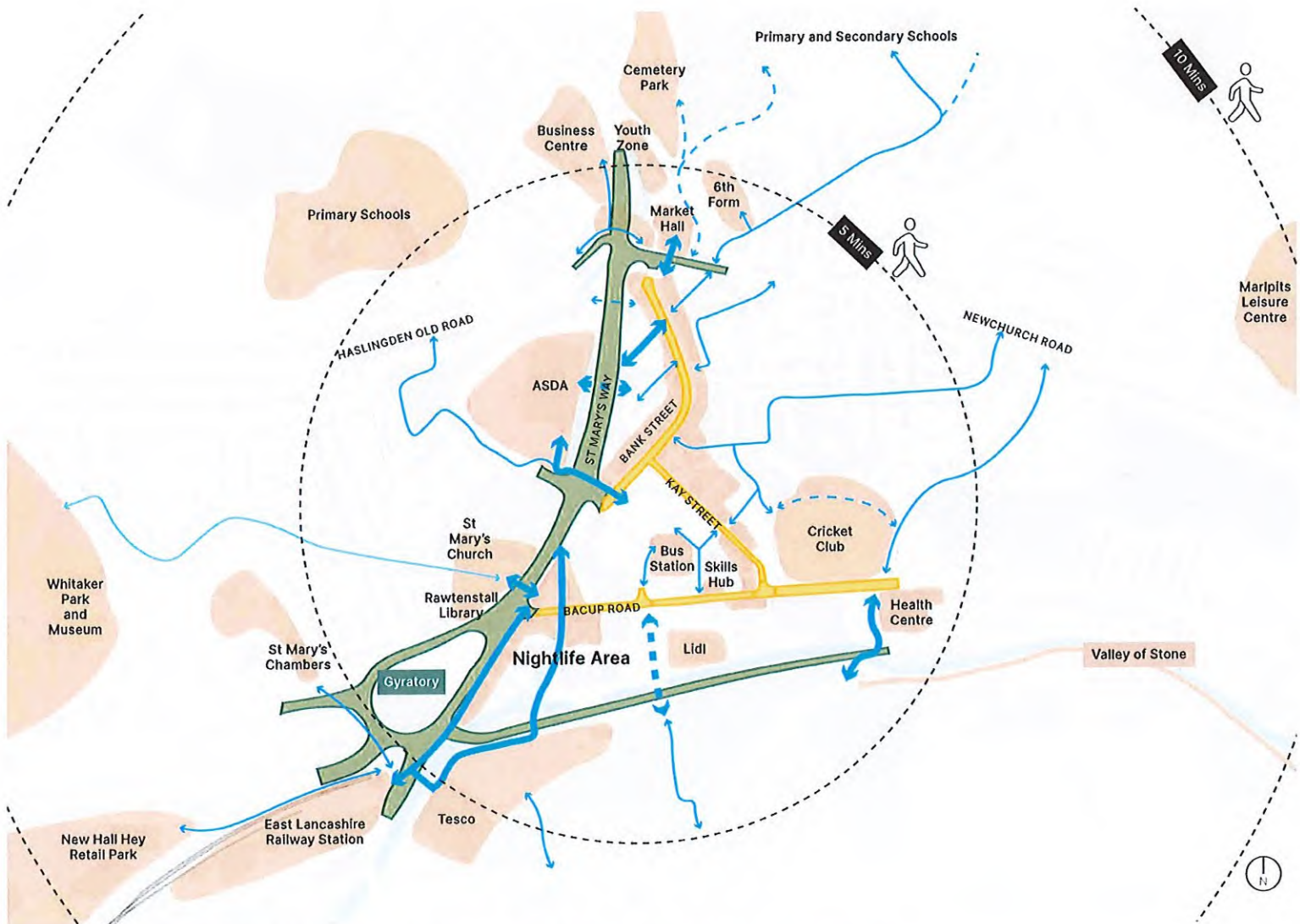
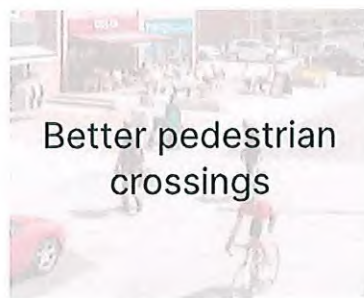
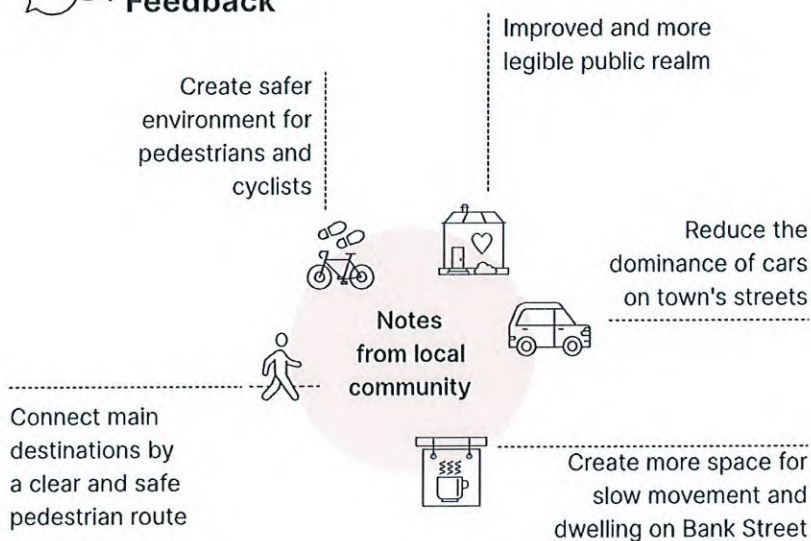


Figure 7 - Rawtenstall Town Centre Getting Around Town Key Movements and Activities Opportunities Plan

### How could the town be improved?



### Consultation Feedback



### Key Findings

Rawtenstall has great local amenities within walking distance of the town centre.

Clear pedestrian routes exist to connect all these key destinations to each other and from the surrounding communities.

But major roads and junctions stop the routes and destinations connecting together to help Rawtenstall reach its full potential.



### 3.4 A Greener Town

#### Overarching Opportunity

Rawtenstall is blessed with its majestic moorland setting and its well loved greenery in the town centre, however, it has a "missing middle" between this large and small scale green infrastructure offering. The diagram below emphasises how by improving these intermediate green spaces and rediscovering the rivers in the town centre it will help the centre and its communities rediscover the benefits of nature in everyday life.

- Key**
- Existing pocket park
  - Potential pocket park / Green space improvement
  - Improved access to river
  - Green spine (St Mary's Way)
  - New access point
  - Linkage to the countryside / hills
  - Potential green community asset
  - Gateway areas

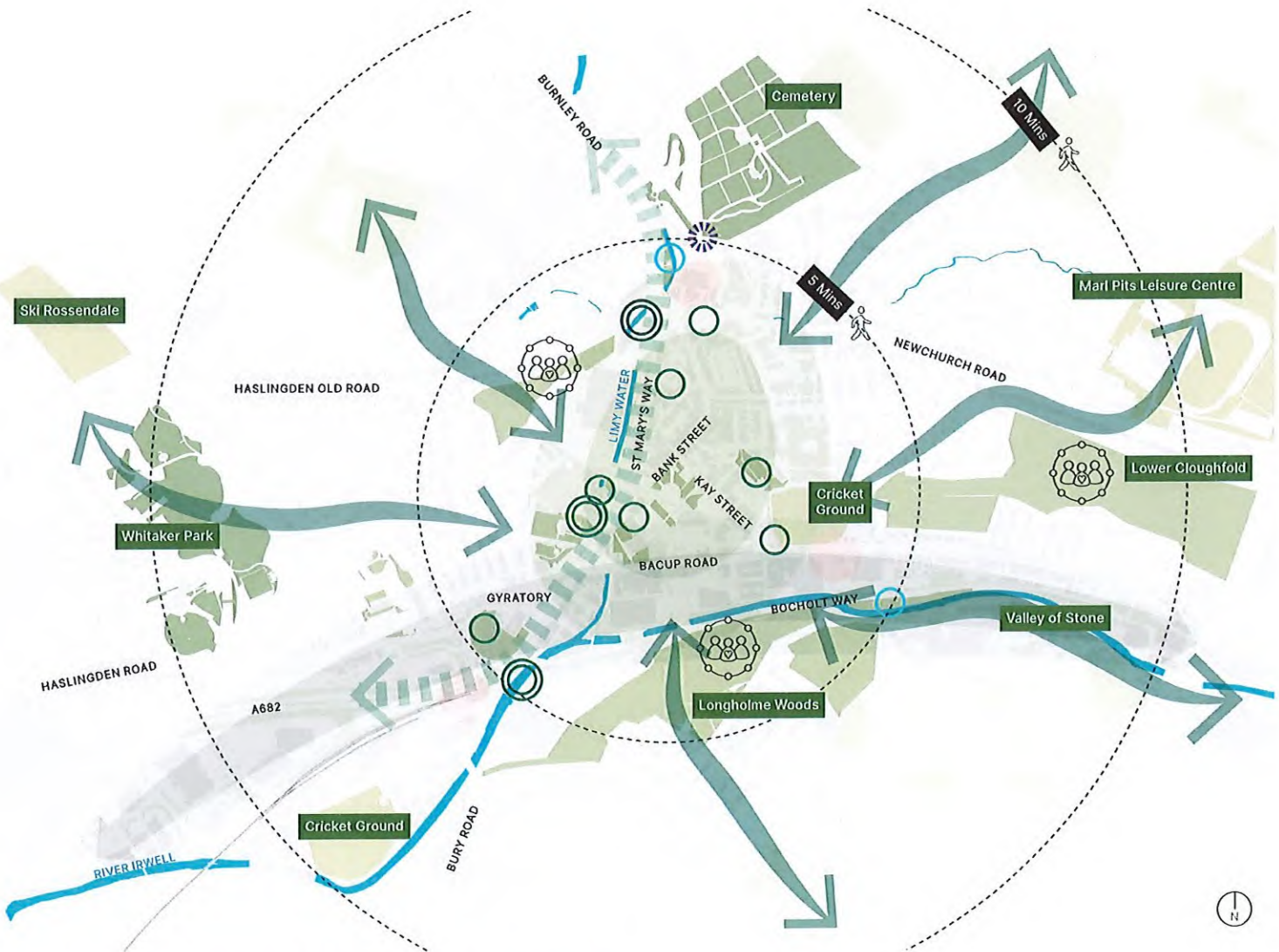
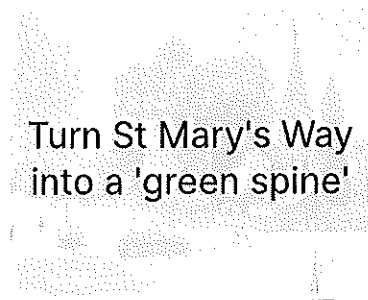
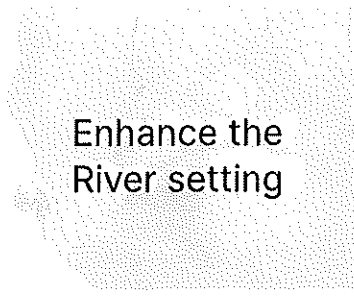


Figure 8 - Town Centre Green and Blue Infrastructure Opportunities Plan

**How could the town be improved?**



Turn St Mary's Way into a 'green spine'



Enhance the River setting



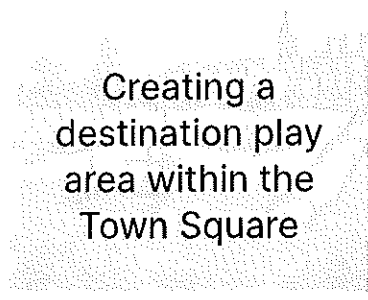
Bring nature into the town



Support community gardening projects



Linking the green spaces together

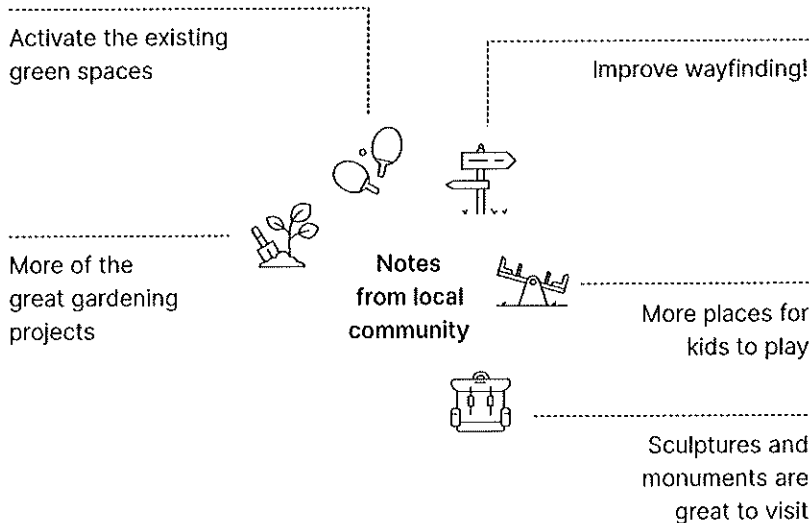


Creating a destination play area within the Town Square

\*Image © Google Street View 2023

Image © Rawtenstall Connected document

 **Consultation Feedback**



 **Key Findings**

High-quality existing network of green spaces and pocket parks within the town centre

Good existing links into the wider movement network (Valley of Stone, Irwell Sculpture Trail, links out to countryside)

Unexplored potential of the river / water bodies

Several green spaces within 5 minute walk from centre with unexplored potential



### 3.5 Linking Communities

#### Opportunities

This masterplan presents a unique chance to reconnect with some of Rawtenstall's communities that are facing greater challenges and are physically disconnected to the town centre. The diagram below shows how placemaking and public realm interventions could both help these communities integrate back with the town centre and for the town to rediscover these communities. This could be done by providing destinations and activities in these places to act as stopping points on peoples routes out to the countryside.

-  Community destinations
-  Difficult connection
-  Access points to nature
-  Employment area
-  Residential neighbourhood
-  Areas of greater social need
-  Gateway area

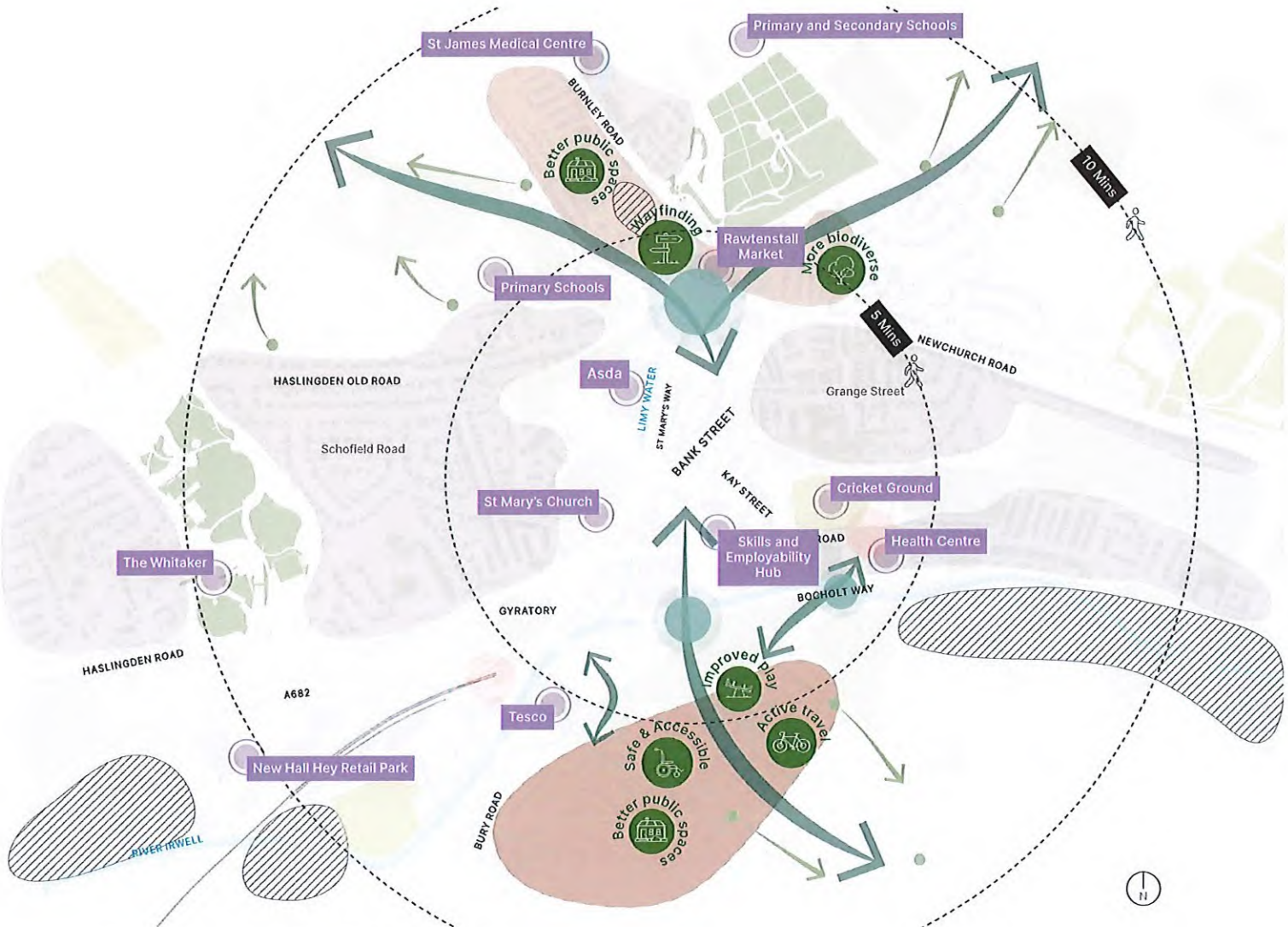


Figure 9 - Connecting Communities Opportunities Plan

**How could the town be improved?**

Utilise the Market as a community resource

Use public art to create links across town

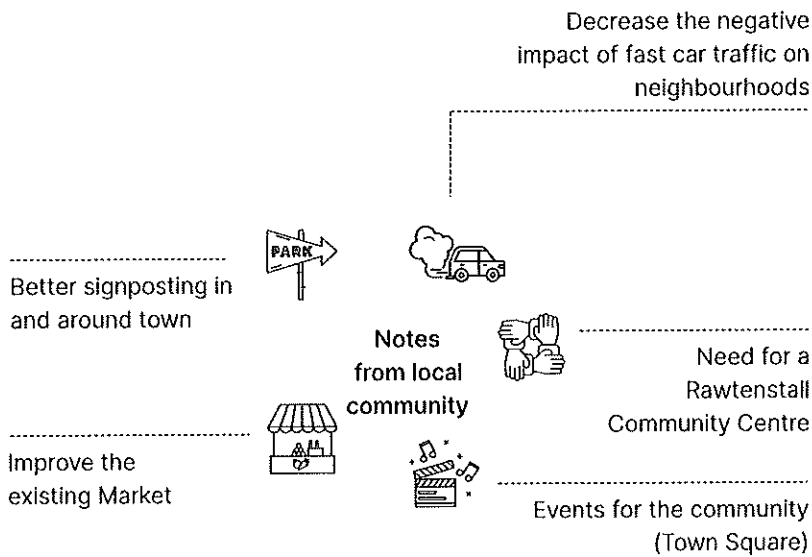
Draw the town into the neighbourhoods

Create safer direct routes to town centre

Reduce traffic impact on local communities

Support community activity in green spaces

 **Consultation Feedback**



 **Key Findings**

Residential neighbourhoods disconnected from town centre by busy roads

Local green spaces present an opportunity to create community assets with safe linkages to town

Two residential areas of greater social need - in north and south

Opportunities to strengthen links to facilities and employment



### 3.6 Opportunities for Development

#### Overarching Opportunity

Having the right buildings and uses in the right places is crucial to a thriving and successful town centre. The diagram below shows sites identified as being potential places for future development in the town centre. Delivering some of these sites in a sensitive way will help to create a more joined up, safe and lively place.

- Key**
- Undeveloped land that could be the site of future development
  - Low quality buildings that could be remodelled / replaced for more appropriate buildings
  - Long Term Potential Redevelopment Opportunities
  - ✱ Key Historic Landmark Buildings



Figure 10 - Development Opportunities Plan

## How could the town be improved?

Introduce strong frontages to make town safer and streets vibrant

Promote new buildings that reflect Rawtenstall's unique character

Improve the setting of key landmarks with new development

Places for new commercial or community uses

Build new homes in walking distance of the town centre

Provide more facilities for visitors to come and stay in Rawtenstall



### Consultation Feedback

There is a need for a hotel in town



Notes from local community



Make the most of heritage buildings to spur regeneration

There is a need for affordable housing close to town centre



Could there be a multi-storey car park to serve town centre?



### Key Findings

Rawtenstall retains many key heritage buildings and streets but over time it has lost some of its former rich historic built fabric

Many of these lost buildings are now surface car parks

This could be restored through sensitive infill developments

As outlined in the Local Plan there is demand for new commercial as well as residential development in the town centre (particularly around the Rawtenstall square)



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4

VISION AND  
ACTION PLAN



## 4.1 Vision Statement

### **Vision Statement**

*"Rawtenstall is a vibrant town where nature threads through its streets, with charming brooks and colourful public parks, weaving their way into the surrounding hills.*

*It is a welcoming place for people of all ages, where locals feel a sense of pride and visitors excitement and curiosity to explore.*

*The streets, set in the historic cobbled townscape are bustling with activity, showcasing local businesses and artists and giving the community space to come together and celebrate their shared spirit."*





## 4.2 Action Plan

### 10 'Stalls' for Rawtenstall Town Centre

Based upon analysis of the town and the feedback from consultation events, an action plan of 10 projects has been created that will realise the vision and objectives for Rawtenstall Town Centre. These are grouped into three key themes. They can be grouped in to three key themes:

#### Improved Arrival Experiences

- 1 - Town Promenades
- 2 - Civic Loop
- 3 - Revitalised Town Square

#### Better Places and Spaces

- 4 - A New 'Green Spine' (St Mary's Way)
- 5 - Rawtenstall Market Place
- 6 - Development Opportunities

#### Connecting Communities

- 7 - Wider Links (Valley of Stone)
- 8 - Linking Communities
- 9 - Gateway to the Hills
- 10 - Drawing in the Nature





**Key**

- Key buildings with active frontage (shop fronts) in the town
- Points of community activity on routes in to the town centre and out to the surrounding country side
- Key town centre hubs / gateways.
- Woodland areas adjacent to the town centre.
- 1 - Town Promenades project area
- 2 - Civic Loop project area
- 4 - A Green Spine (St Mary's Way) project area
- 6 - Development Opportunity Areas
- 7 - Wider Links (Valley of Stone) project area
- 8 - Linking Communities project areas
- 9 - Gateway to the Hills and 10 - Drawing in the Nature project areas

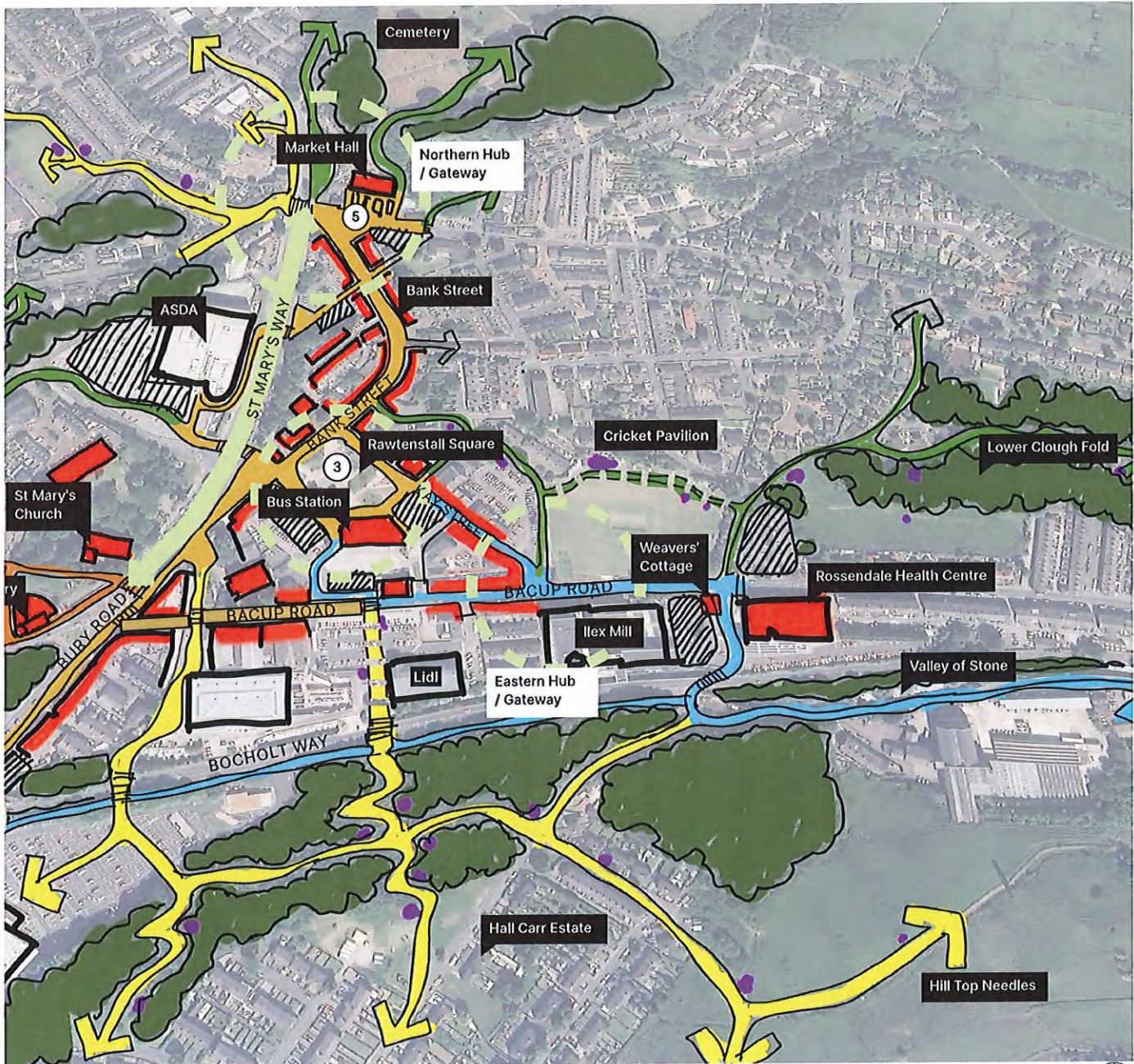


Figure 11 - Concept sketch bringing together the Key Opportunities for the town centre.





## 4.3 One Town Promenades

Building on the vision set out in the *Rawtenstall Connects* project, a new main north-south link connecting East Lancashire Railway Station, the market and emerging 'Eastern gateway' with improved public realm, people friendly crossing points and easier wayfinding around the town.

### Vision Objectives



Re-Connect the Town with Nature



Bringing Communities Together



Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces



A Welcoming Town



Figure 12 - Town Promenades Vision Diagram



Figure 13 - Artist's impression of how the route along Bury Road between the ELR Station and Bank Street could be improved (Virtual Planit)

## Opportunities

- **Improved wayfinding and signage** across town for better orientation
- **Revitalised public realm and introduction of street trees** to create a pedestrian-friendly environment
- Create **spaces for spill-out**, mainly along Bank Street
- Creation of safe and **accessible pedestrian and cycle crossing points**
- Introduction of a **safe cycle route** along St Mary's Way, Bank Street and Kay Street
- Opportunity to **create a retail strategy** and shop front design guidance to create a high-quality street scene
- Creating **green verges** separating pedestrians from busy traffic as well as safe spaces for dwelling, and **reducing flood risk**
- A **welcoming space** around East Lancashire Railway Station reflecting its importance as a gateway into town

### Best Practice Friargate, Preston



The designers of this project transformed this key route in Preston City Centre to shift the balance from a vehicles dominated shopping street to one that put people and "life" first. Crucial to its success was carefully balancing differing priorities of shoppers, businesses and movement to create a functional and attractive public realm. This has acted as catalyst for the revival in the fortunes of the city centre and led to future plans and funding for future phases of work.





## 4.4 Two Gyratory 'Civic Loop'

Making the cultural and community gems of St Mary's Church, Rawtenstall Library, the Cenotaph and St Mary's Chambers truly part of the town centre.

### Vision Objectives



Bringing Communities Together



Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces



A Welcoming Town



Re-stitching the Town

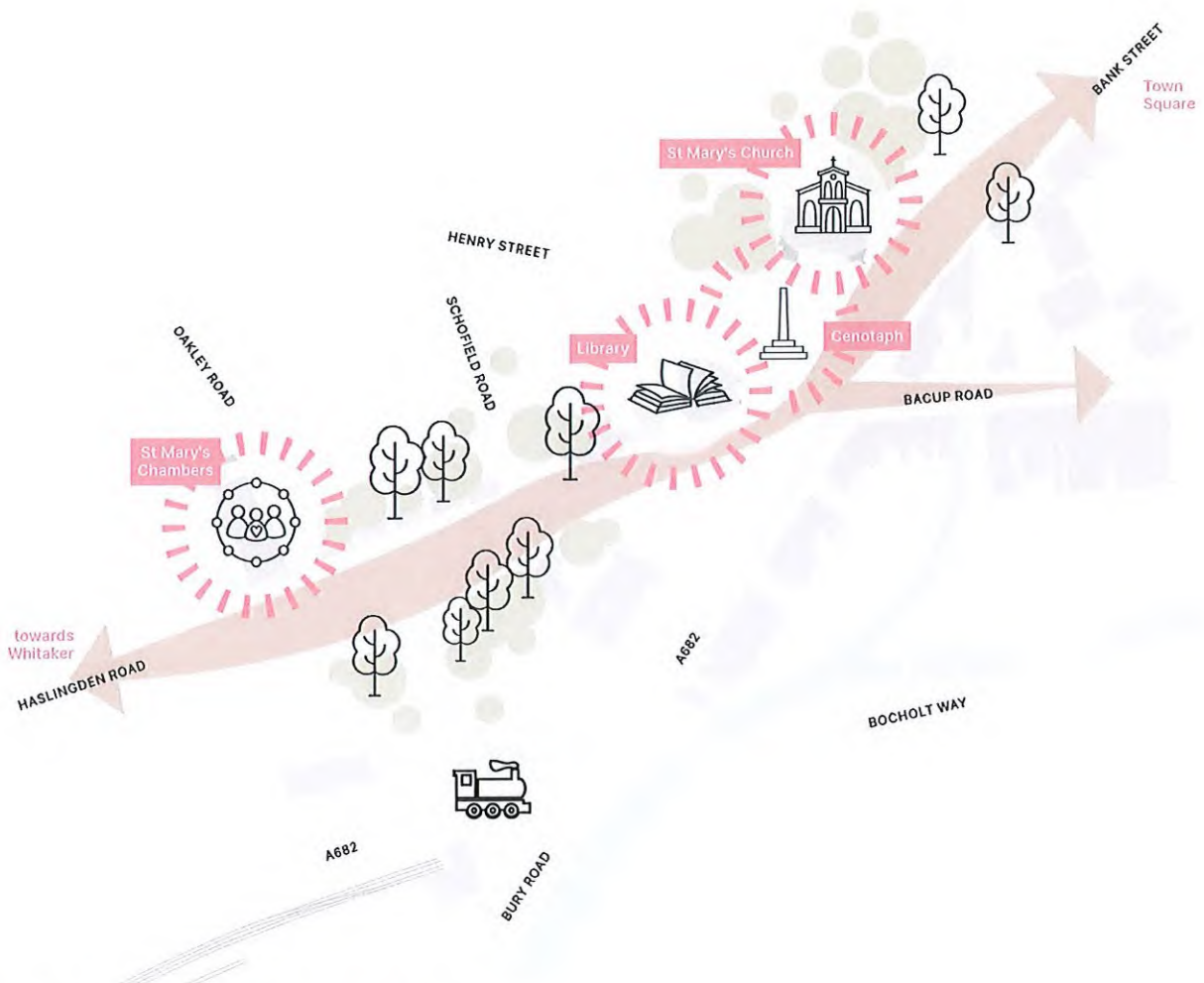


Figure 14 - Gyratory ('Civic Loop') - Vision Diagram

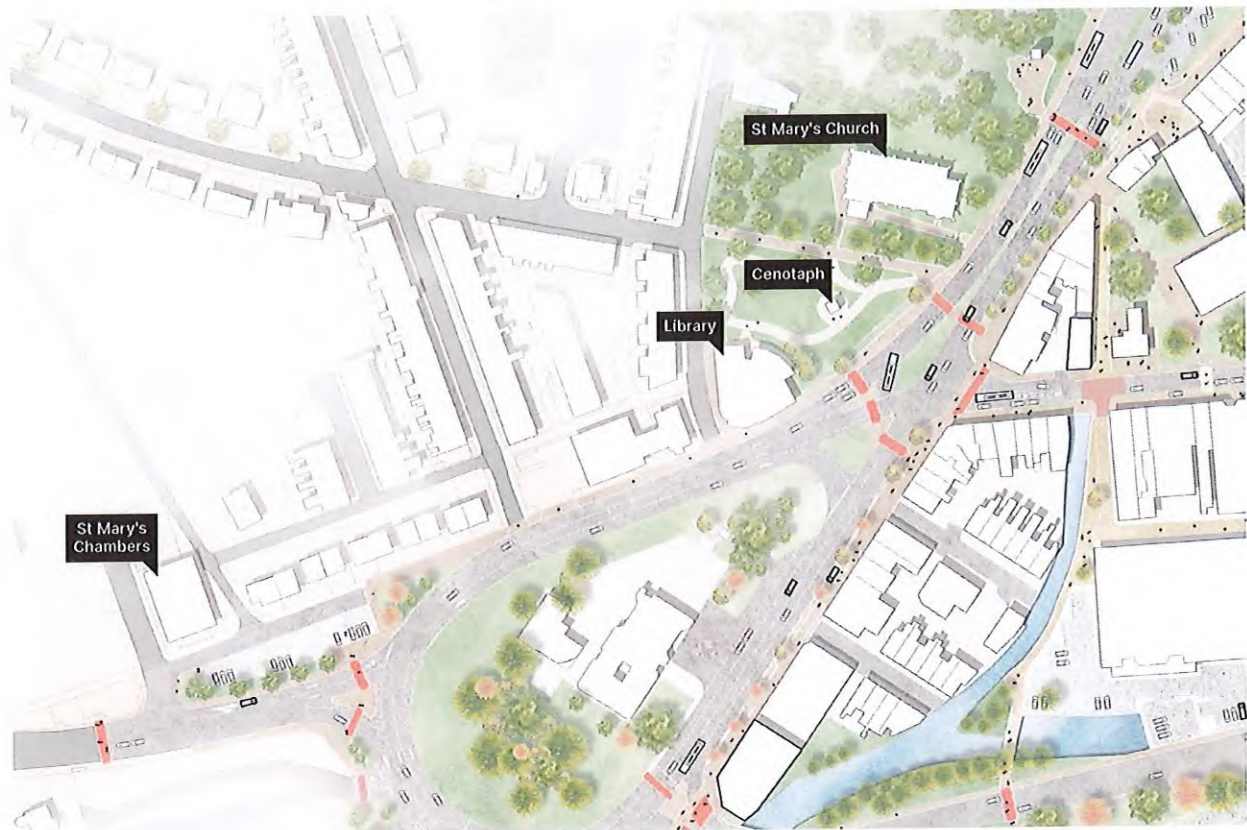


Figure 15 - an aerial view of the illustrative masterplan showing how historic, community assets could be better linked together.

### Opportunities

- **Safe and accessible pedestrian paths** connecting the **landmarks** to the town centre
- **Enhanced public realm** in front of **St Mary's Chambers** to signify its importance
- Safe pedestrian crossing points.
- **Better connection to St Mary's church** - including removal of unused pedestrian underpass.
- Well-maintained green spaces and planting to mitigate the negative impact of busy roads and provide sustainable urban drainage to reduce flood risk in the town
- Explore opportunities for even more planting on St Mary's Way to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment
- Consider additional safety measures on the sidewalk adjacent to the Shell Petrol Station to separate and protect pedestrian movement from the busy traffic of the gyratory

#### Best Practice



#### Sheffield City Centre's "Gold Route"

This key strategy in the city centre masterplan sought to stitch together a disparate string of historic assets across the area by providing a series of public realm interventions to create a clear, accessible route. The project has helped bring a sense of cohesion from the station, through the centre to the university and improved the setting of major landmarks in the city centre. A similar approach could help restitch Rawtenstall town centre's historic assets back together again.





## 4.5 Three Revitalised Town Square

### Vision Objectives



Re-Connect the Town with Nature



Bringing Communities Together



Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces



A Welcoming Town



Re-stitching the Town

Celebrating Rawtenstall's central square: improving the arrival experience, providing a 'mobility hub' and exploring opportunities for development to bring more active frontage to this central community space.

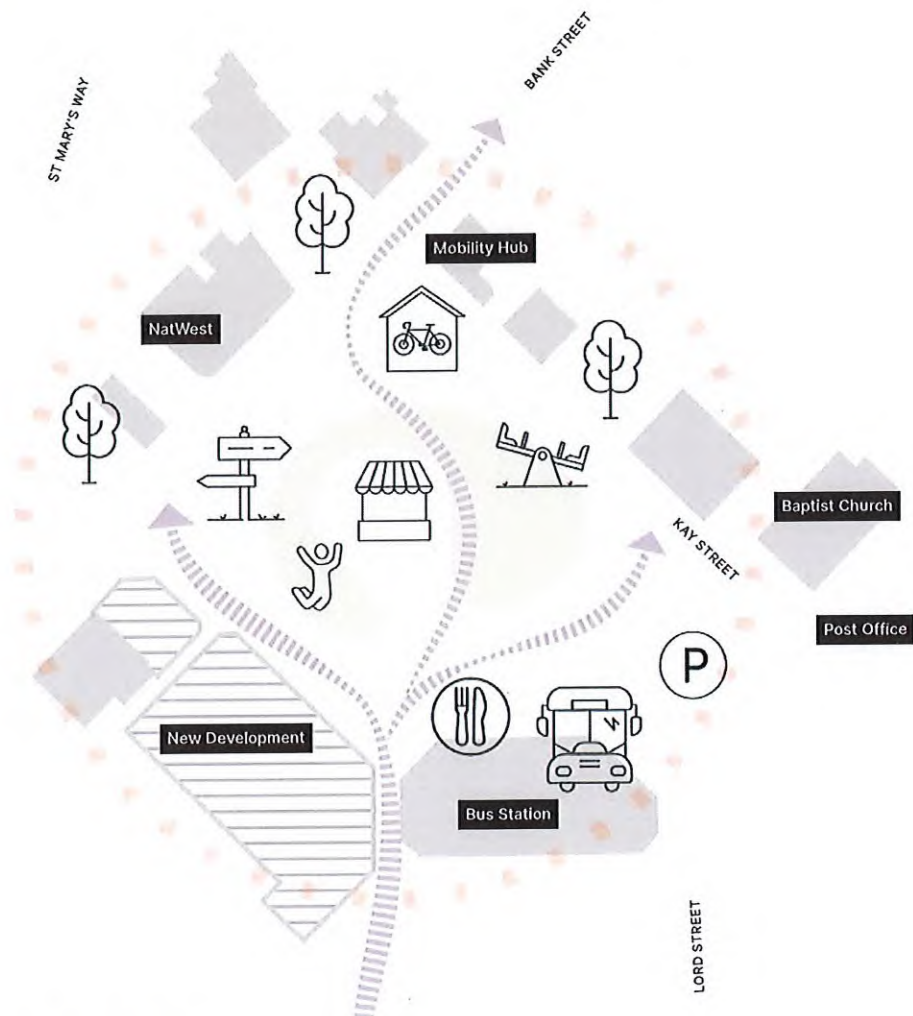


Figure 16 - Revitalised Town Square - Vision Diagram





Figure 17 - Artist's impression of how a revitalised town square could look if redeveloped to meet the vision objectives (Virtual Planit, 2024)

## Opportunities

- Add more greenery and planting to the square to make it a more pleasant place to be
- Diversification of uses on the square including markets, community growing projects (working with Incredible Edible and Civic Pride) and seasonal events
- Introduce improved and safe children's play area shielded from the traffic by a green verge
- Create pocket spaces for dwelling set in a natural environment
- Retain key views of landmarks such as Ilex Mill, hills and the traditional stone-clad buildings
- Introduction of a Mobility Hub located along the cycle path to encourage active travel and consolidate mobility options in one place
- Long-term opportunity to introduce development along the south-west edge of the square to create a better sense of enclosure and create space for businesses and accommodation
- Improve the public realm along both Bank Street and Kay Street by adding green verges
- Better lighting to improve night time safety

### Best Practice



#### Cutting Room Square

Much like in Rawtenstall, this square at the heart of the regenerated Ancoats neighbourhood in Manchester City Centre is a new area of public realm rather than a historic space. It is a vibrant new space created by enclosure from new and existing buildings and an attractive public realm design that celebrates the history of the place. The range of activities and passive surveillance make the space active both day and night leading to it feeling safe at all times of the day.





## 4.6 Four A New 'Green Spine' (St Mary's Way)

Turning St Mary's Way into a lush green boulevard not only enhances the biodiversity, but importantly reinstates key pedestrian routes to the town centre with new crossing points, a bus stop and a series of community pocket parks.

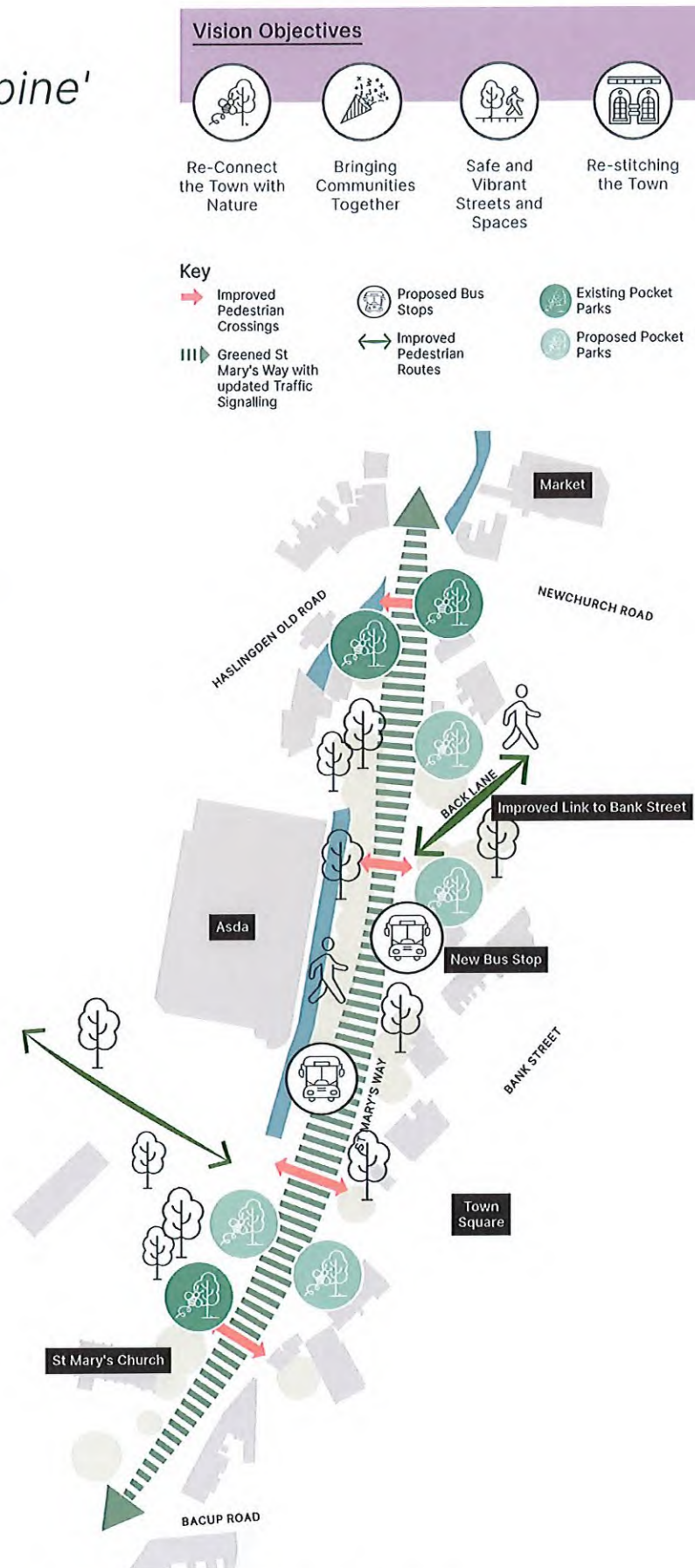


Figure 18 - A New Green Spine (St Mary's Way) - Vision Diagram





Figure 19 - A vision sketch showing how St Mary's way could be enhanced through new greening and public realm to make it easier to cross and a better pedestrian environment.

## Opportunities

- Support existing 'Rawtenstall in bloom' initiative along St Mary's Way and identify opportunities for creation of additional pocket parks
- Planting street trees and flower beds to mitigate the impact of heavy traffic and to act as Sustainable Urban Drainage to alleviate surface water flooding / flood risk elsewhere in the town.
- Re-route the pedestrian path away from the busy road and separate it by green verge
- Creation of a new bus stop on the intersection of Back Lane and St Mary's Way, while enhancing Back Lane as a pedestrian link to Bank Street
- Consider developing land adjacent to Back Lane to provide the pedestrian link with natural overlooking to make it a safer route.
- Safe and accessible crossings

### Best Practice

#### Grey to Green, Sheffield



This major landscape-led highways scheme reimaged sections of the city centre's strategic road network, providing increased space for people walking and cycling and added significant amounts of green infrastructure. This not only made the streets nicer places to move through and spend time in, but helped make the city centre a more sustainable place.





## 4.7 Five Market Hall Square

A great opportunity with the forthcoming new outdoor Market Stalls improvements to improve the public realm, create a better crossing from Bank Street and provide a possible cycle / mobility hub.

### Vision Objectives



Re-Connect the Town with Nature



Bringing Communities Together



Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces



A Welcoming Town

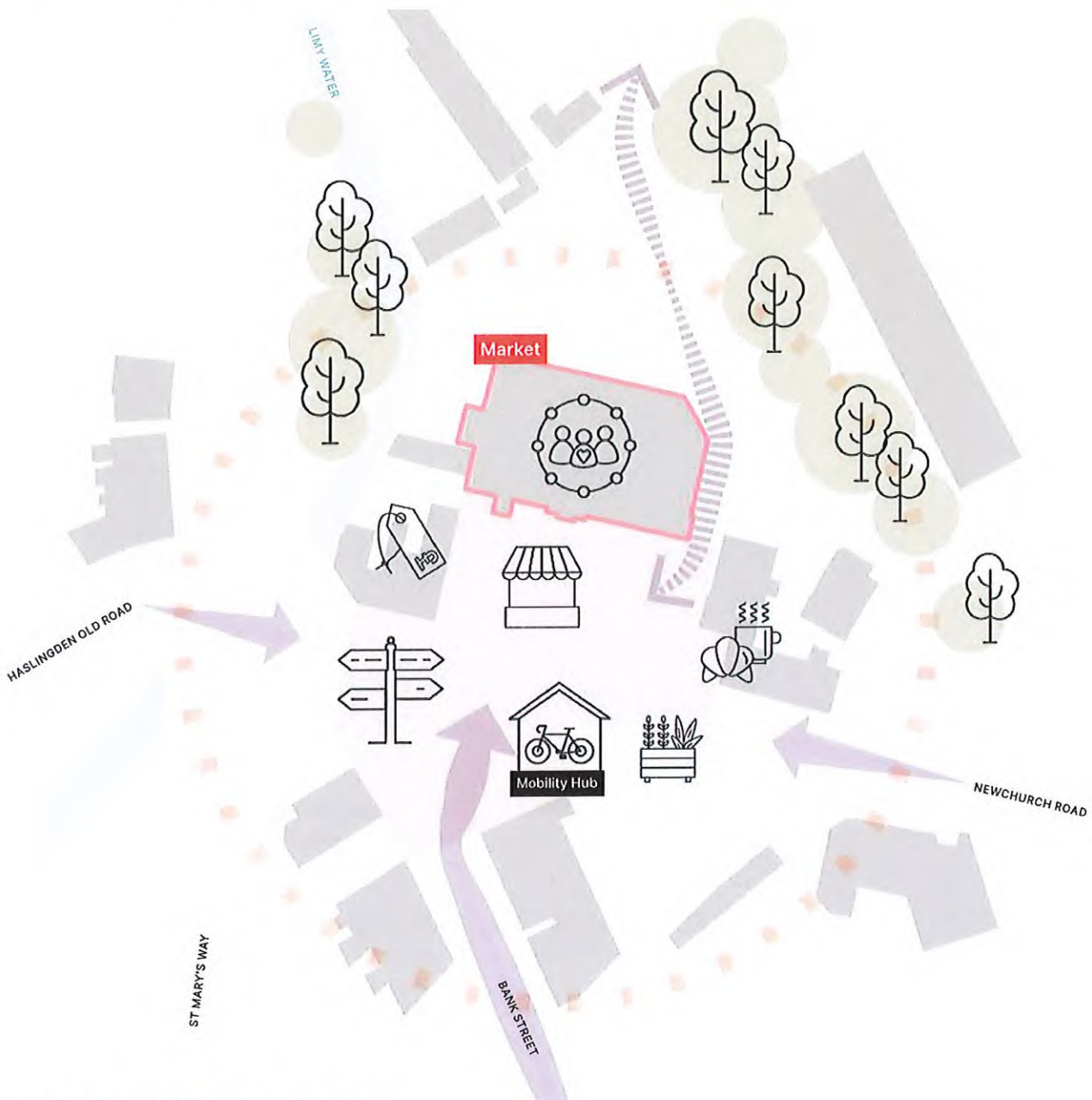


Figure 20 - Market Hall Square - Vision Diagram





Figure 21 showing how the top of Bank Street could be reconfigured to create better connection with the market (Virtual Planit, 2024).

## Opportunities

- Improve the public realm in front of the Market Hall to signify its historical and community importance, and maximise the benefits of the LUF funded project to redevelop the stalls facing Newchurch Road
- Create a seamless and accessible crossing from Bank Street to the market,
- Re-orientate the market stalls to enhance the view of the Market from Bank Street
- Introduce a mobility hub to provide a safe and secure place to store bicycles to encourage people to cycle to the market and town centre
- Improve wayfinding and signage to other key town centre destinations and out to surrounding countryside
- Create a pedestrian link connecting through the back of the market to the cemetery and the green spaces beyond
- Support local retailers and market traders
- Create a safe space where communities can meet and get involved in activities such as clubs or urban gardening

### Best Practice

#### Altrincham Market



The key driver of the masterplan to regenerate Altrincham town centre was placing the market back at the heart of the town. This was achieved through restitching the market back to the neighbouring streets and areas through high-quality public realm that placed those walking and cycling as the top priority. Once again the market hall and surrounding stalls became the natural meeting point for Altrincham. It also acted as a catalyst for the recent success of the wider town centre.





## 4.8 Six Development Opportunities

There are a number of sites within the town that could be redeveloped to support the vitality of the centre, whilst also being sensitive to the unique historic character. Opportunities are categorised in to short, medium and long term based on how deliverable they are.

### Vision Objectives



Bringing Communities Together



Re-stitching the Town



A Welcoming Town



Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces

### Key

- Short Term Development Sites
- Medium Term Development Sites
- Long Term Opportunity Areas
- Short Term Reuse of Existing Buildings

### Proposed Development

1. Market Stalls Redevelopment
2. Active Travel "Mobility Hubs"
3. Newchurch Road - townhouse / apartment infill
4. Millgate Road - 2 storey terraced homes
5. 74-78 Bank Street - 3 storey apartments with commercial ground floor
6. Bright Street Car Park - infill residential sites
7. 19 Bank Street - Commercial 3 storey
8. South Town Square - 3 storey mixed use, active frontage, potential MSCSP location
9. 37 Kay Street (Car Park) - 3 storey mixed use (resi with commercial ground floor)
10. 34 Kay Street - 4 storey, residential
11. Bacup Road - 3 infill developments - 3 storeys mixed use - office
12. Former Health Centre - 2-3 storey apartments and terraces
13. Ilex Mill Car Park - residential
14. Former Cinema Redevelopment - residential (planning approved)
15. Boots Site - redevelopment mixed use - 2-3 storeys
16. 28 Bury Road - new landmark gateway building 4 storeys mixed use
17. Rossford House - retail leisure reuse of former train shed
18. New Hall Hey - infill residential opportunities
19. Long Term Opportunity Areas: (a) ASDA Car Park, (b) Corn Exchange, (c) Hall Carr Mill, (d) Tesco, (e) B&M, (f) Gyratory Fire Station, (g) McDonalds and (h) Petrol Garage

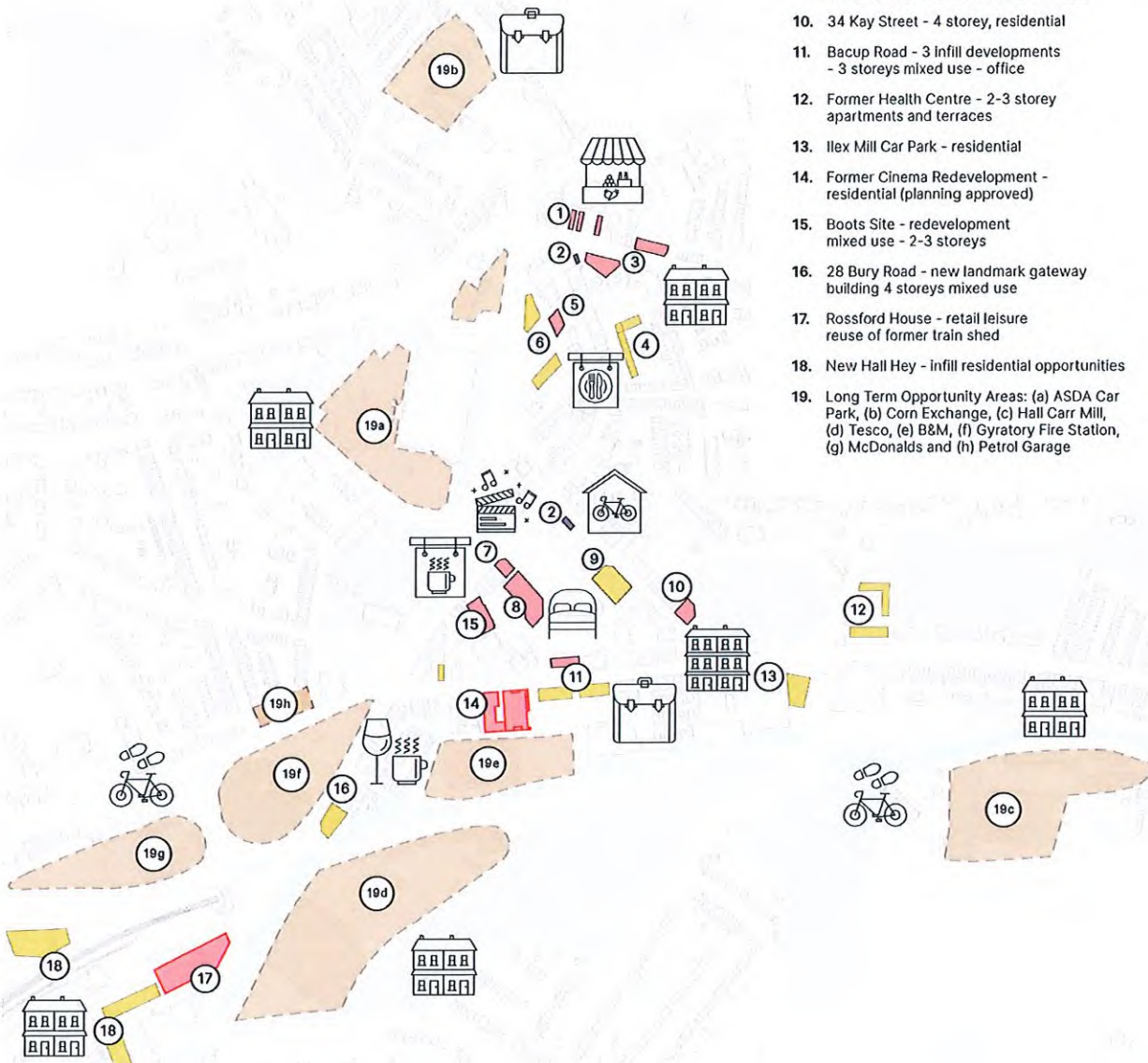


Figure 22 - Development Opportunities - Vision Diagram





Figure 23 - artist's impression of vision for the town square showing how sensitive new development could make a positive contribution to the town centre, in this case helping to animate and provide enclosure on the town square (Virtual Planit, 2024).

## Opportunities

- New residential development within and close to town centre will increase its vibrancy and safety.
- New uses to boost tourism offer such as a hotel and performance space / cinema.
- Sensitive infill development that responds to the character of Rawtenstall particularly within the conservation area.
- Reuse of existing buildings where possible - particularly retrofitting heritage assets for a range of uses as drivers for regeneration.
- Long term strategic sites around the town centre edge with potential for transformative positive change to the whole town.
- Explore suitable location near Bus Station for MSCP facility to accommodate park and ride needs for users of express bus services to Manchester and Burnley.
- Careful consideration of servicing, access and parking requirements in bringing forward sites on existing surface car parks.
- Sites to south will need careful flood risk consideration.

### Best Practice



#### Altrincham Strategy

Altrincham's recent masterplan has been one of the North West's most celebrated town centre regeneration success stories. Crucial to the strategy were sensitive developments that responded to the local context whilst providing essential new homes and amenities that have helped the town flourish. This increase in vibrancy has helped boost Altrincham's profile as a place to visit for the local community and in the wider city region. The requirements of different transport modes were also carefully considered.





## 4.9 Seven Wider Links (Valley of Stone)

Connecting the town centre to the Valley of Stone recreation route in order to create a better sense of arrival from the southwest, while linking some of the assets along this path.

### Vision Objectives



Re-Connect the Town with Nature



Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces



A Welcoming Town

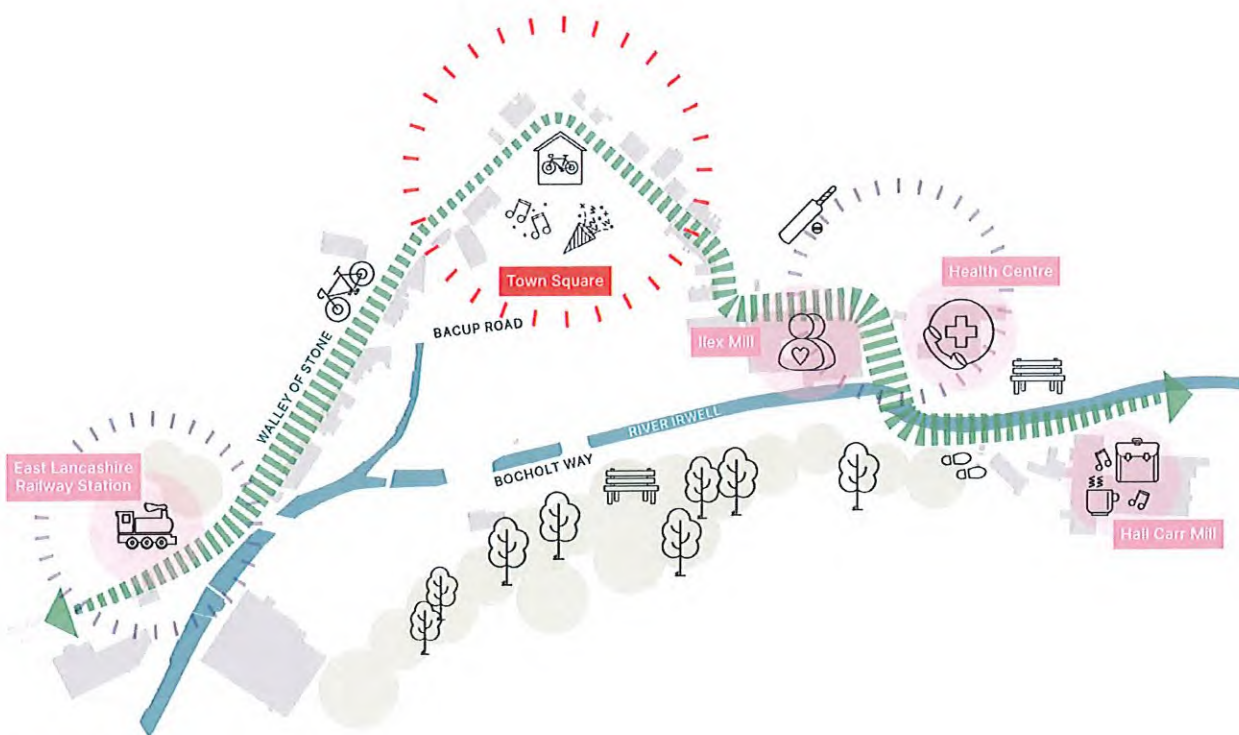


Figure 24 - Wider Links - Vision Diagram





Figure 25 - section from the illustrative masterplan showing how it will link up with the Valley of Stone recreational route.

### Opportunities

- Draw Valley of Stone route in to the town through cycle provision from ELR station to town square, safe cycle parking in the town square mobility hub and cycle lanes on Kay street and safer junctions and crossings over Bacup Road and Bocholt Way.
- Improve the public realm and pavement along Valley of stone cycleway
- Provide clear wayfinding and signage for easier navigation
- Include public art (sculptures, murals, etc.) along the route to celebrate local landmarks, artists and Rawtenstall's culture and heritage
- Create safe crossings where Valley of Stone intersects with busy roads
- Create spaces for rest and dwelling
- Additional lighting to ensure that the routes are safe and well-lit for ease of use during dark hours

#### Best Practice



#### Swinton-Monton Greenway, Salford

Salford City Council built on the success of their previous loop line active travel routes projects to restore a former rail line between Swinton and Monton. This not only provided a well lit, accessible link between two key neighbourhoods but included heritage interpretation public art and places to rest and meet along the way. The southern arrival in to Monton also created a new gateway on the high street that has helped rebalance the local centre and boost its growing success.





## 4.10 Eight Linking Communities

Diverse communities, particularly from north and south of Rawtenstall, would be better connected with their town via safe and accessible routes incorporating play, sports and recreation to attract people to use previously neglected spaces.

### Vision Objectives

-   
 Bringing Communities Together
-   
 Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces
-   
 A Welcoming Town

- Key**
- Communities in Need
  - Community Destinations
  - Improved Community Links

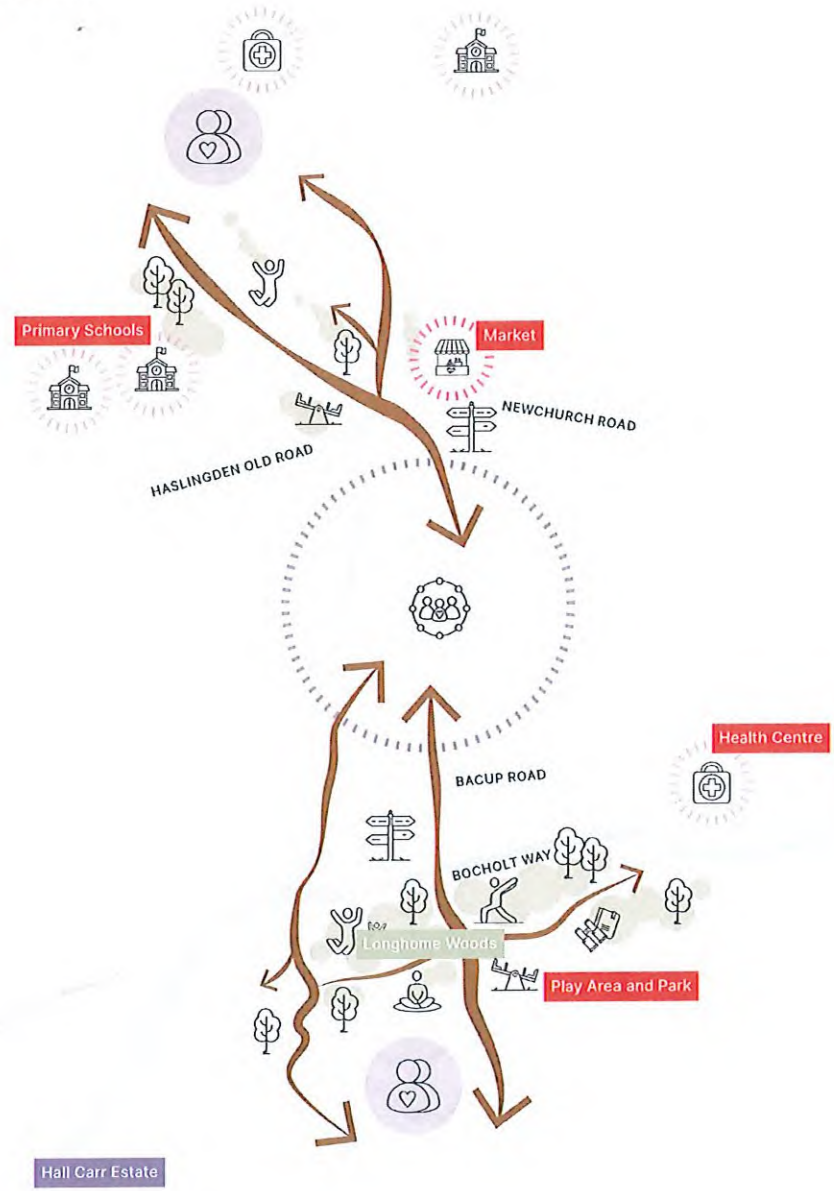


Figure 26 - Wider Links - Vision Diagram





Figure 27 - Vision sketch shows how the link to Hall Carr through Longholme Woods could look be brought to life.

## Opportunities

- Radical improvement of the pedestrian link through the steep hill of Longholme Woods, adding spaces to rest along the way,
- Introducing active land uses along the Longholme link with diverse of activities including play, nature observation and sport for all ages and possible food and drink to create a dwelling place to enjoy the views back over the town.
- Improvement of the connection to town centre - better crossing of Bocholt Way, accessible and well-lit path past Lidl to the old Town Hall and Town Square,
- Enhanced crossing of St Mary's Way and Haslingden Old Road / Newchurch Road adjacent to the Market in order to facilitate pedestrian connectivity to the northern neighbourhoods
- Creative use of signage to direct towards new paths and activities along them,
- Use Market as a community resource for gathering, events and seasonal markets.

### Best Practice



#### Best Practice - Mayfield Park, Manchester

This masterplan on the southern edge of Manchester city centre delivered the central park as the first phase. This has acted as a bridge towards the communities to the south who were drawn to the high quality public realm and play provision. The area now acts as a place where people of different backgrounds can come together through sharing the same spaces.





## 4.11 **Nine** *Gateway to the Hills*

A countryside link to the north past St Mary's and St James the Less primary schools– wayfinding pedestrian / cycle connection through residential areas – with the potential for new features and landmarks along the routes.

### Vision Objectives



Re-Connect the Town with Nature



Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces



A Welcoming Town



Figure 28 - Wider Links - Vision Diagram



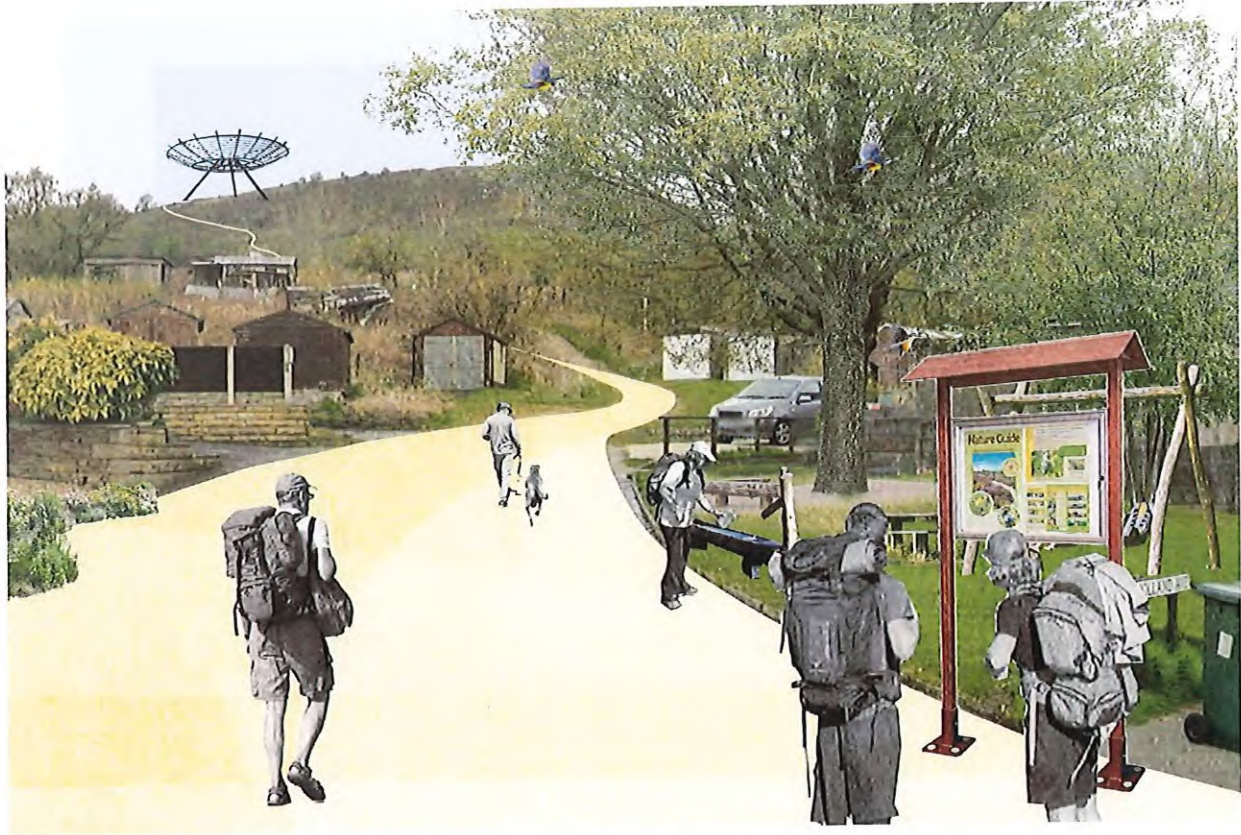


Figure 29 - Vision sketch showing how links to the surrounding countryside from the town centre could be improved.

### Opportunities

- Use of clear signage to navigate both local residents and visitors from town centre and East Lancashire Railway Station towards the recreational paths and landmarks in the surrounding hills such as the 'Halo',
- Enhance the tourist experience by strategically located mobility hubs providing equipment for hiking and acting as local information points,
- Possibility to create local hiking / sports community groups to promote Rawtenstall as a 'gateway to the hills' and further encourage tourism,
- Provide resting points along the way to ensure that people of all ages can enjoy the countryside

#### Best Practice



#### Best Practice - Buckler's Forest, Crawthorne

This project designed by Macgrgor Smith landscape architects re-imagined an unwelcoming woodland area to one where people, nature and history could coexist and thrive. The improvements to the paths and wayfinding, along with creating active spaces through seating, viewpoints and features helped activate this area and open it up to the surrounding communities.











Figure 31 - image shows how Lower Clough Fold open space could be brought to life through improved accessibility (paths), wayfinding and nature-friendly interventions.

## Opportunities

- Enhanced signage and wayfinding
- Safe, accessible and well-lit pedestrian paths
- Removal of underpass and a better connection to St Mary's Church / Library Gardens and on to Whittaker Park.
- Make it attractive to walk towards the destinations like Whitaker Park, cemetery and Lower Clough Fold by having activities along the way
- Re-discover the river Irwell and Limy Water by enhancing the public realm around them and finding opportunities to better visually interact with the watercourses
- Local artists and makers to be included - creating public art for these spaces
- Introduce Sustainable Urban Drainage infrastructure wherever possible to reduce significant flood risk around the south of the town centre.
- Provide enhancements to woodland, grassland and introduce ponds to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain benefits and improve recreational value of surrounding green spaces.

### Best Practice



#### **Best Practice - St Mary's Churchyard, Hornsey - London**

Haringey Council provided a quality active travel routes through this green space on the edge of Hornsey high street, with wide paths and clear signage. It provides both a safe, sustainable connection to surrounding residential neighbourhoods and a peaceful, nature-filled place to relax. It also serves as a place for play and for the community to gather for events. This sort of connection and activation will help bridge the gap between the town centre and the wider landscape in Rawtenstall.







5

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# ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN



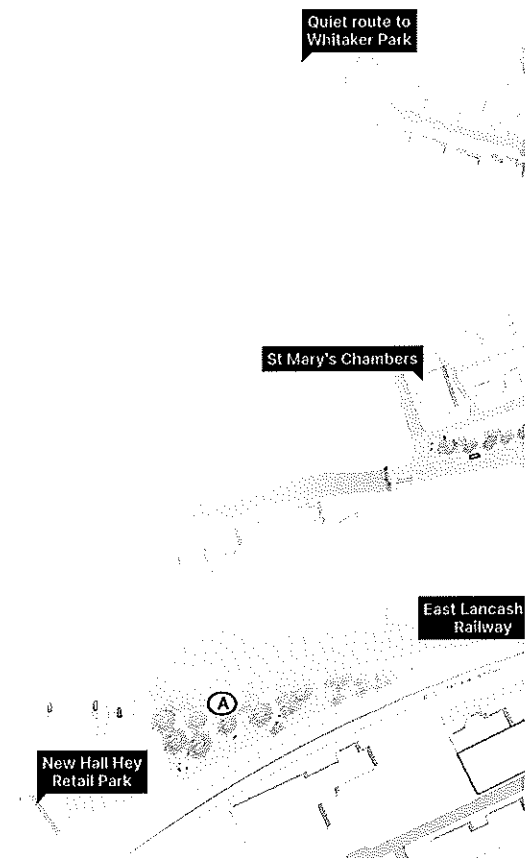
## 5.1 Illustrative Masterplan

Opposite is a visualisation for the masterplan that would realise the 10 Stalls action plan outlined in our Vision for Rawtenstall.

It focusses on the public realm aspects of the framework and shows shorter term development opportunities. For the full list of the latter please refer to project 5 - "Development Opportunities" on pages 54-55.

### Delivering the Ten Stalls to wider area

- (A) Improved path to New Hall Hey Retail Park.
- (B) Improved route to Hall Carr Estate through woodland with activation on the route through new small leisure / F&B development and improved play at Fall Barn Play Area.
- (C) Eastern Gateway - improved connection to the Valley of Stone Active Travel Route (Cycling, Horse riding and Walking etc.)
- (D) Future possible route through Rawtenstall Cricket Club to Lower Clough Fold Woodland and open green space.
- (E) Revitalised space outside Rawtenstall market hall.
- (F) New and improved link through cemetery to communities to the north such as Crawshawbooth (LCWIP priority route).
- (G) Wider pavements and better pedestrian / cycle provision at Tup Bridge junction.
- (H) Improved pedestrian link through woodland past Asda car park.
- (I) Improved link through St Mary's Church Gardens to Whitaker Park and Museum.



- Key**
- Short Term Priority Development Opportunities
  - Medium Term Priority Development Opportunities



Figure 32 - Illustrative Masterplan showing detailed public realm design along with the longer term vision for the wider town centre.



## 5.2 Improving Connections for Pedestrian and Cyclists

The below diagram shows how the illustrative masterplan will make getting to and moving around the town centre by foot, bike, wheelchair or mobility scooter easier and safer. This will help ease congestion in the town as fewer people will feel they need to drive in to the town centre.

- Key**
-  One way cycle lane
  -  Active travel routes (Cycling and Walking)
  -  Shared pedestrian / cycle route
  -  Dedicated cycle lane
  -  Mobility Hub locations (including safe cycle parking)
  -  Improved and enhanced pedestrian movement
  -  New and / or improved crossing points



Figure 34 - Diagram showing how pedestrians and cyclist movement across the town centre would function in the illustrative masterplan.



### 5.3 Improving Movement for Buses, Taxis and Cars

The below diagram shows how the town centre's vehicular movement needs would be catered for in the illustrative masterplan proposals. Private vehicles would still be able to access car parks and businesses servicing arrangements would be met.

**Key**

- One way
- Two way movement maintained to car park
- Retained Bus stop
- New bus stop
- Bus station
- Bus route
- Proposed retained car parking
- On street car parking / loading
- Taxi waiting bay



Figure 33 - Diagram showing how vehicular movement across the town centre would function in the illustrative masterplan.





## 5.4 Draft Masterplan Consultation

Once the draft masterplan had been presented to the Rossendale Borough Council (RBC) Cabinet in January 2024, a full public consultation took place, with drop in sessions on 15th and 23rd of February 2024. Along with the masterplan, detailed public realm proposals and highways design for the gyratory were shared. The public were able to ask questions about the proposals and give feedback to the project team verbally and in writing. The consultation boards were also available online during this period and an email inbox was used to record feedback. Feedback was also received from the Forward Planning Team at RBC.

On 19th March (6-8pm) a further stakeholder consultation session also was held with the Rawtenstall Chamber of Commerce to share their thoughts and concerns about the masterplan proposals and future project funding and phasing with the consultant team and council officers. Throughout the consultation period RBC officers also undertook various engagement with local business owners in the Town Centre to speak through the masterplan proposals. These sessions have highlighted the importance of retaining adequate servicing access for high street businesses.

*The consultation boards and full RBC report on the consultation for the masterplan can be found in the appendix of this document.*

### Public Consultation Events

- 15th February 2024, 10am-2pm at Rawtenstall Market Hall - attended by RBC and LCC Officers and Consultant Masterplan Team (Planit) - 90+ attendees
- 22nd February 2024, 4pm-7pm at Rawtenstall Library attended by RBC and LCC Officers and Consultant Masterplan Team (Planit) - 300+ attendees.



Photo of Public Consultation event in Rawtenstall Market on 15th February 2024.

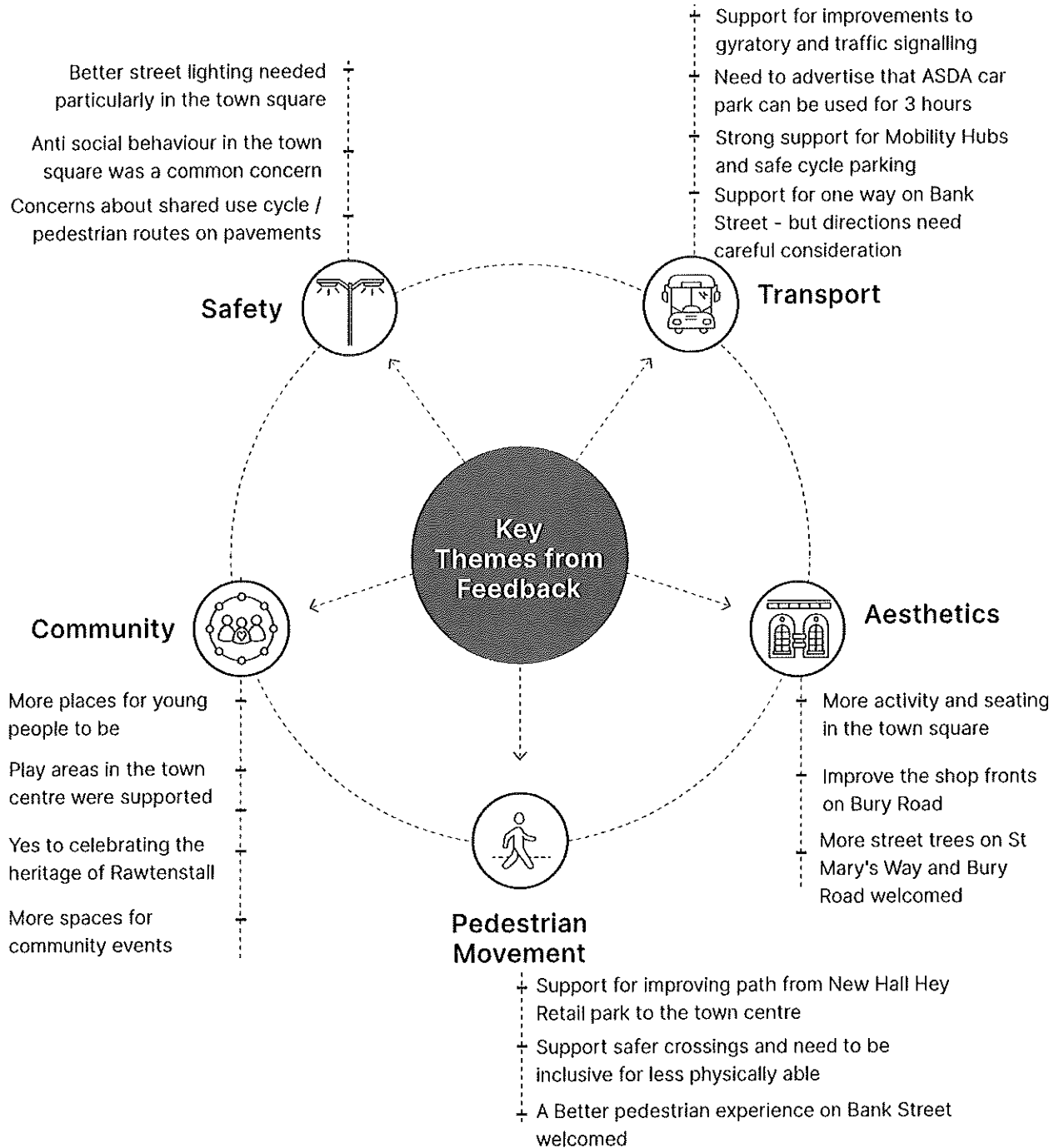
### Stakeholder Consultation Event

- 19th March 2024 (6-8pm) at Rawtenstall Unitarian Church - Rawtenstall Chamber of Commerce event attended by RBC Officers and Planit Consultant Design team.



Photo of Public Consultation event in Rawtenstall Library 22nd February 2024.

## What the Rawtenstall Community Said...



The comments and feedback received during the consultation have been recorded and the full report of this was prepared by RBC officers. The issues, comments and concerns raised were taken in to account in preparing this final version of the masterplan document. The more specific comments on the landscape proposals of streets and spaces will inform the next phases of the public realm design as it moves towards delivery

(rather than alter the illustrative masterplan layout) - helping make the plans work better for the local community. Alongside this, various experts, including traffic modellers and consultant engineers have had significant input into the masterplan and will continue to be involved throughout the development of the more detailed proposals.





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6

# SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS



## 6.1 Summary

This document lays out a plan that will help to guide the development of Rawtenstall town centre over the next 10-15 years. It will help guide it to become a safer, greener and vibrant place that brings the community together, welcomes visitors and brings nature in people's everyday lives.

This can only be truly achieved through working closely with the local community to prepare this document, and the **Vision** and **Ten "Stalls"** for Rawtenstall will only be truly achieved with the support of the local community.

### The Vision for Rawtenstall Town Centre



Bringing Communities Together



Re-connect the town with Nature



A Welcoming Town



Safe and Vibrant Streets and Spaces



Re-stitching the Town

### The Ten "Stalls" for Rawtenstall Action Plan:

#### Improved Arrival Experiences

- 1 - Town Promenades
- 2 - Civic Loop
- 3 - Revitalised Town Square

#### Better Places and Spaces

- 4 - A New 'Green Spine' (St Mary's Way)
- 5 - Rawtenstall Market Place
- 6 - Development Opportunities

#### Connecting Communities

- 7 - Wider Links (Valley of Stone)
- 8 - Linking Communities
- 9 - Gateway to the Hills
- 10 - Drawing in the Nature

## 6.2 Next Steps

### Planning Status of the Masterplan / Document

This document will not constitute a formal, statutory planning document within Rossendale Borough Council's Local Plan, but will act as a broad vision to guide the future development of the town. Having the masterplan ready will help in prioritising future projects and to secure funding for future works in the town centre. It will help realise positive regeneration for Rawtenstall which builds on the towns special and unique character and improves the lives of those who live and work there.

### Phasing - what will happen first?

Site analysis and consultation feedback suggested that a focus on the central public realm connection through the town from the ELR Station to the Market should be considered first. This was because it provided the important link between the main town gateways, as well connecting to many of its key heritage and visitor attractions.

It would also plug directly into works already underway in connection with the main gyratory system, with detailed proposals and implementation due to progress in 2024 - 25.

Alongside Bank Street / Bury Road other projects happening in the short term are:

- Improvements and repairs to Rawtenstall Market are progressing to better connect this vital asset with the town centre and future proof the building for generations to come.
- Capacity improvements to strategic road corridor of St Mary's Way and the Gyratory including Junction Re-Designs and Modernised traffic signalling (carefully coordinated with public realm improvements).

Beyond the projects above, the prioritisation of the elements in this masterplan will be guided by the council and community in Rawtenstall. They will be able to phase the ten stalls projects as they see fit from community need and funding opportunities which become available in future.

Rossendale Borough Council and Lancashire County Council will work closely to further develop the detail around the future prioritised projects, and actively source funding and investment to deliver them.





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7

# APPENDIX



# 7.1 Consultation Boards February 2024

## A Masterplan for Rawtenstall

### Our Ambition →

To enhance the existing charm of Rawtenstall, looking for opportunities to strengthen the offer for its communities and visitors.

A clear vision for Rawtenstall and its wider surroundings. Analysing the key opportunities to identify 10 priority projects that would help revitalise the wider town centre.

#### Why does Rawtenstall need a Masterplan?

Lancashire County Council and Rossendale Borough Council have decided to commission this masterplan for Rawtenstall Town Centre due to a number of interconnected projects in development at the same time:

- Rawtenstall Connected
- Rawtenstall Market Hall Frontage Redesign
- Gyrotray Redesign
- Hall Carr Estate - Safer, Greener, Healthier Streets
- Bank Street - Stage 2 Public Realm Design

#### Benefits

- Coordinates Public Realm, Infrastructure and to create a better functioning and more prosperous local economy
- Community opportunity to shape the future of their town centre
- Encourages investment and tourism
- Greener and prosperous future and active travel



Rawtenstall Town Centre and Surroundings (base image - Google Maps, 2024)

#### Consultations Events so far

10:00-13:00  
30 November 2023  
**Public Consultation**  
Rawtenstall Market

18:00-19:30  
4 December 2023  
**Stakeholder Engagement**  
Rawtenstall Unitarian Church

13:00-16:00  
13 December 2023  
**Public Consultation**  
Sophie's Boutique, Bank St

#### What makes Rawtenstall special?

Based on our analysis and understanding of the place and its identity, we've identified a distinctive set of characteristics and assets that set Rawtenstall apart and we are looking to support and expand on these in our future proposals.



#### 'Gateway into Rossendale'

Rawtenstall's size and strategic position in the heart of Rossendale mean it has become the primary town centre in the borough with enormous potential to benefit the whole area in this role.



#### Emerging Local Economy

There is a range of local, independent businesses across town from the station to the market that give the opportunity to shop local and enjoy the unique character and charm of Rawtenstall.



#### Rich History and Heritage

Evolving from a small medieval settlement to a thriving mill town and finally surviving the decline of industry to the proud community it is today. Fortunately, Rawtenstall has retained much of its historic character and beautiful heritage buildings.



#### Strong Local Community

An active network of community groups and cultural institutions, such as Civic Pride Rossendale, Rawtenstall Market and The Whitaker Art Gallery and Museum, are an intrinsic part of the fabric of Rawtenstall and make it a better place through their efforts.



#### Hub for Sports and the Outdoors

As a part of the 'Adrenaline Valley', the town has great linkages to the surrounding countryside and hills as well as various sport activities for people of all ages.



#### Great Landscape Setting

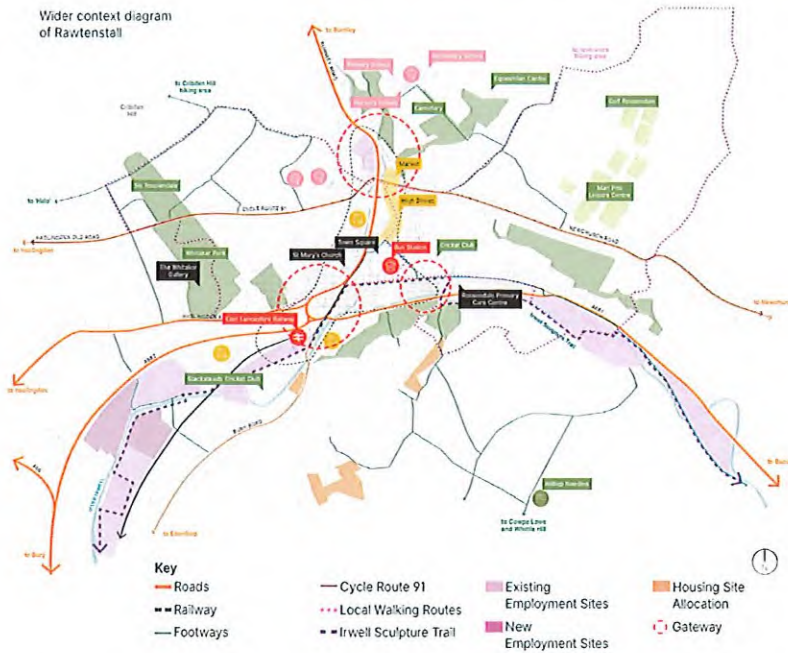
The town's position in the heart of the West Pennine Moors is natural to Rawtenstall's visual character, giving a dramatic hilly backdrop to the town and providing numerous walking and cycling paths for people to enjoy.



# Understanding the Context



Wider context diagram of Rawtenstall

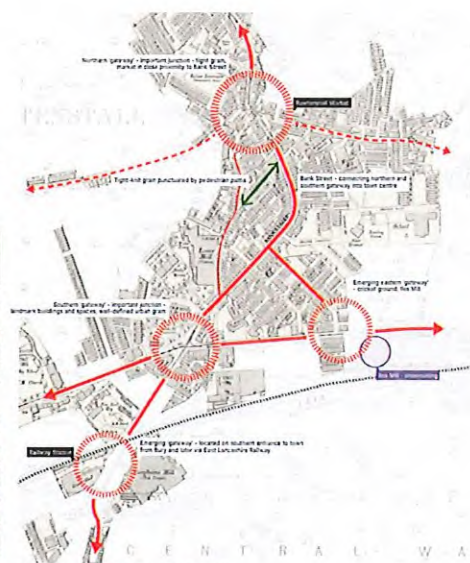


## Key Findings

- Rawtenstall is strategically positioned on the southern junction of the A56 and A682 which link south to Manchester and north to the M65 corridor, making it the gateway town into Rossendale.
- Town is structured around primary road corridors along the valley
- **2 key gateways** - Rawtenstall Market (north) and Railway Station/gyratory (south)
- **3rd gateway** less well defined around Health Centre/Cricket Ground
- Wide range of facilities and independent businesses/shops
- Excellent walking and cycling connections to wider countryside
- Listed, heritage buildings with opportunity to improve their setting
- A range of public spaces, squares and parks through the town – from pocket parks to civic and semi natural spaces – a strong sense of community ownership of green space
- Retail and employment focused around the south of town
- Residential areas within walking distance of the centre – but with challenges due to topography and road severance
- Excellent public transport links

## Historic Setting

Rawtenstall is a small town with rich history - transforming from a small hamlet into an industrial powerhouse, surviving the decline of industry - it stood the test of time and the local community is proud of it.



## Key Findings

- **Tight-knit historic urban grain** was eroded throughout the time due to construction of motorway and during slum clearance
- Several **pedestrian connections** between today's St Mary's Way and Bank Street enhanced permeability of place
- **Northern and southern gateways** to town centre were well-defined by cultural (theatre) and community (market) buildings, creating hubs of activity
- **Shoemaking** was an important part of Rawtenstall's economy and survives until today
- **Tramway** connected Rawtenstall to surrounding towns, remains of which are still visible in the streets
- **Mr. Fitzpatrick's temperance bar** opened in 1890 and is the last surviving traditional temperance bar in England
- **East Lancashire Railway Station** (originally opened in 1846) - used to be a part of a line connecting Manchester to Bacup. After closure in 1972 the station was reopened as a heritage railway in 1991.

PLANIT





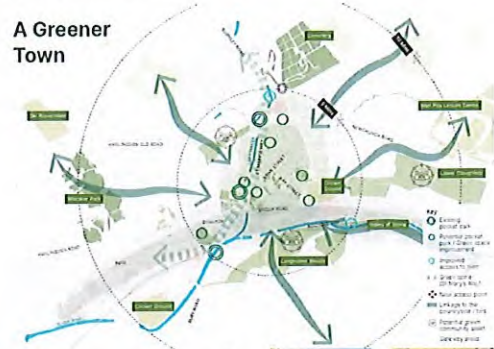
# Key Themes and Opportunities

After undertaking an urban analysis of the town and its history, four key themes emerged as the main areas of opportunity to help Rawtenstall reach its full potential.



**Key Findings**

- Rawtenstall has great local amenities within walking distance of the town centre.
- Clear pedestrian routes exist to connect all these key destinations to each other and from the surrounding communities.
- But major roads and junctions stop the routes and destinations connecting together to help Rawtenstall reach its full potential.



**Key Findings**

- High-quality existing network of green spaces and pocket parks within the town centre
- Good existing links into the wider movement network (Valley of Stone, Irwell Sculpture Trail, links out to countryside)
- Unexplored potential of the river / water bodies
- Several green spaces within 5 minute walk from centre with unexplored potential



**Key Findings**

- Residential neighbourhoods disconnected from town centre by busy roads
- Local green spaces present an opportunity to create community assets with safe linkages to town
- Two residential areas of greater social need - in north and south
- Opportunities to strengthen links to facilities and employment



**Key Findings**

- Rawtenstall retains many key heritage buildings and streets but over time it has lost some of its former rich historic built fabric
- Many of these lost buildings are now surface car parks
- This could be restored through sensitive infill developments
- There is demand for new commercial and residential development in the town centre (particularly around the town square)



# Vision and Action Plan



"Rawtenstall is a vibrant town where nature threads through its streets, creating lively brooks, colourful pocket parks and weaving its way into the surrounding hills.

It is a welcoming place for people of all ages, where locals feel a sense of pride and visitors excitement and curiosity to explore.

The cobbled streets, set in the historic townscape are bustling with activity, showcasing local businesses and artists and giving the community space to come together and celebrate their shared spirit..."

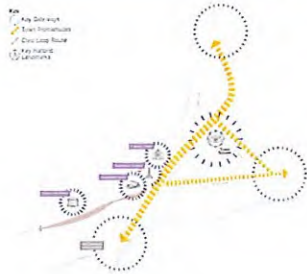
## Improved Arrival Experience



## Better Places and Spaces



## Connecting Communities



### 1 - Town Promenades

Building on the *Rawtenstall Connects* project, a new main north-south link connecting the ELR Station, market and emerging 'Eastern gateway' with improved public realm, people-friendly crossing points and easier wayfinding around the town.

### 2 - Civic Loop

Making the cultural and community gems of St Mary's Church, Rawtenstall Library, the Cenotaph and St Mary's Chambers truly part of the town centre.

### 3 - Revitalised Town Square

Celebrating Rawtenstall's central square: improving the arrival experience, providing a 'mobility hub' and exploring opportunities for development to bring more active frontage to this central community space.



### 4 - A New 'Green Spine' (St Mary's Way)

Turning St Mary's Way into a lush green boulevard not only enhances the biodiversity, but importantly creates a safer pedestrian environment, re-stitching this east-west divide by new crossing points, a bus stop and a series of community pocket parks.

### 5- Rawtenstall Market Place

A great opportunity with the forthcoming new outdoor Market Stalls improvements to improve the public realm, create a better crossing from Bank Street and provide a possible cycle/mobility hub.

### 6 - Development Opportunities

Whilst many sites exist in the town that could be developed upon, it is important that it is sensitive to Rawtenstall's unique historic character and informed by car parking requirements. Opportunities are categorised in to short, medium and long term based on the barriers that exist to development going ahead.



### 7 - Wider Links - Valley of Stone

Connecting the town centre to the Valley of Stone recreation route in order to create a better sense of arrival from the southwest, while linking some of the assets along this path.

### 8 - Linking Communities

Southern woodland links to Hall Car Estate including play, sports and recreation including a crossing point across Bolsholt Way, and past Lidl to the old Town Hall and Rawtenstall Square.

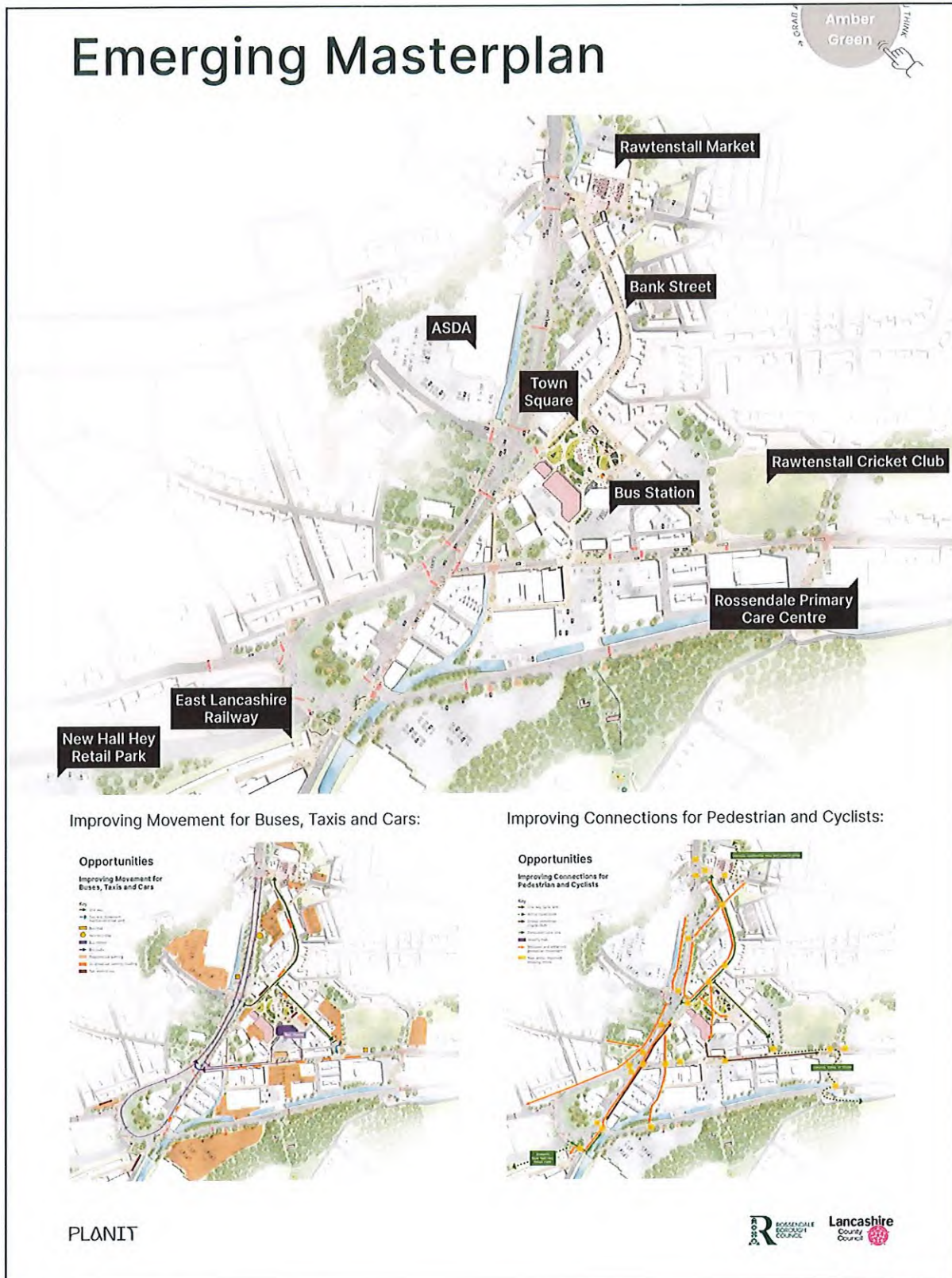
### 9 - Gateway to the Hills

A countryside link to the north past St Mary's and St James the Less primary schools- wayfinding ped/ cycle connection through housing area - possible new play offer/ café hub at the upper level.

### 10 - Drawing in the Nature

Connecting the wider moorland landscape to the town centre's vibrant planting and greenery through closeby greenspaces, parks and woodlands. From the North through the cemetery to the Market Hall, the East through the cricket ground to Kay Street, the West through Whittaker Park to Sparrow Park and St Mary's Church.





# St Mary's Way



1 Reconfigured footpaths to allow for cycle and spill-out space



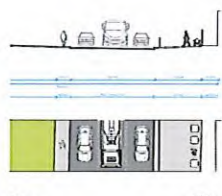
2 Improved pedestrian crossing points



3 Green verges helping to separate pedestrian links from busy vehicular routes

Before

2

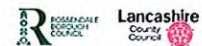


After

2



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# Bank Street



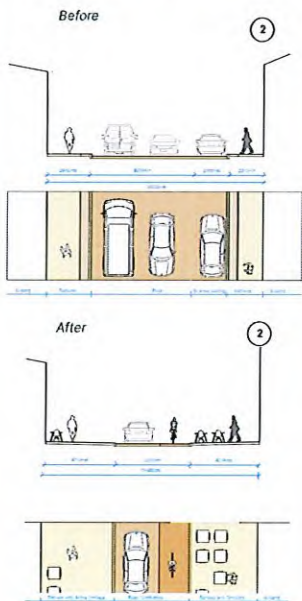
1 Gateway Market Place Public Realm which improves connections to Bank Street



2 Creating spill-out space for Bank Street businesses



3 Improved crossing points and cycle infrastructure



PLANIT





# Town Square and Kay Street



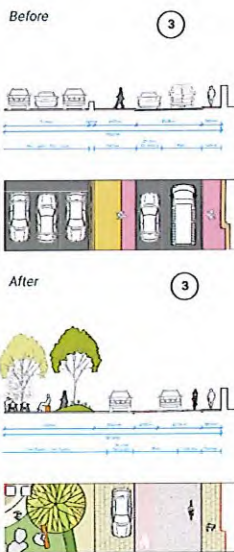
1 Lush garden islands with community involvement



2 A flexible central square with terraced lawns & planted borders to the edges



3 Improve pedestrian and cycle movement of Kay street with materiality change



PLANIT







## 7.2 Consultation Report April 2024 (Rossendale Borough Council)

They were advised that the comments would be added to documents and be used constructively when considering the masterplan concept designs.

### Written responses

The economic development email has received 21 emails, containing feedback from both stakeholders and the general public who visited the drop in sessions wanting to give feedback. These emails were received from between the beginning of February, and the beginning of April.

The town centre regeneration officer at RBC has received feedback through email after sharing plans with stakeholders who attended the session in December. Three stakeholders including a councillor shared their feedback regarding the concept designs.

A response has also been received from the planning department at Rossendale Borough Council.

Please see Appendix 1 for email response comments.

### Advertising sessions

The information and details about each session were advertised via the council's social media pages, on posters and display banners distributed throughout the town, and in the local newspaper- Rossendale Free Press.

This allowed for all age groups to hear about the drop in sessions and gave each session a well-rounded view from the public.

### One to one sessions

It should also be noted that stakeholders were given the opportunity to meet with officers on a one to one basis, giving them the chance to talk more in depth about proposed plans if they so wished.

This being the case, the town centre regeneration officer from Rosendale Borough Council met separately with Civic Pride Rossendale.

The chair of the group requested to meet in order to discuss further the green elements of the masterplan. Currently there are flower beds throughout the town centre, which the group kindly tend to. The chair was happy with the outcome of the discussions, and further explanation of other elements of the concept designs running through the masterplan.

The town centre regeneration officer from Rosendale Borough Council took a call from a resident who lives around the Grange Road estate Rawtenstall. The resident explained he had been to one of the earlier drop in sessions and wondered if there was an update. The officer explained there was now a concept design being put





## Rawtenstall Masterplan Consultation Report

11<sup>th</sup> April 2024

# PLANIT

**Contents**

Introduction – page 3  
Public Consultations – page 3  
Data Collection – page 3 - 4  
Written responses – page 4  
Advertising sessions – page 4  
One to one sessions – page 4 - 5  
Session 1 – page 6 - 7  
Session 2 & 3 – page 8 - 10  
Session 4 & 5 – page 11 - 12  
Additional session – page 13  
Conclusion – page 14  
Appendices – page 15 - 20



### **Introduction**

Rossendale Borough Council and Lancashire County Council officers have jointly commissioned PlanIt to produce a masterplan for Rawtenstall.

A series of drop in sessions were organised by council officers, in order to discover the public's feedback on several new proposals for Rawtenstall.

### **Public consultations**

#### Concept ideas gathering

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – Rawtenstall Market – 11am-2pm – 50+ attendees

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Sophie's Boutique – 1-3pm – 40+ attendees

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Unitarian church Rawtenstall – 6-8pm – Stakeholder Session – 30+ attendees

#### Concept Proposal Sessions

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024 – Rawtenstall Market – 11am-2pm – 90+ attendees

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 – Rawtenstall Library – 4-7pm – 300+ attendees

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 – Unitarian church Rawtenstall – 6-8pm – Chamber of Commerce – 40+ attendees

The earlier drop in sessions were an information gathering exercise. They allowed officers to collect ideas from both the public, and stakeholders. The suggestions and concerns collected gave officers an idea of what Rawtenstall town users would like to be improved or maintained in the centre.

The following drop in sessions then allowed officers to demonstrate those ideas as a concept design for Rawtenstall, and how it could look if suggestions were made a reality. Further comments were then collected to reflect upon and possible changes can be discussed by officers as next steps.

### **Data collection**

Whiteboards were used at each drop in session to allow for visitors to write down thoughts. The notes were captured and documented, per each session. Attendees to all of the public drop in sessions were guided to the Rossendale council's economic development email to send detailed feedback.

together, and that they could access this through the Rossendale Borough Council website and feedback is encouraged.

The resident also informed the officer that the Grange road estate residents had formed a group, due to the ongoing rat-running and speed problems they are facing, and were due to meet with the deputy crime commissioner to speak further on the matter. The resident mentioned they have spoken with LCC officers as well as both local councillors and MP regarding the matters.

The Head of Housing and Regeneration and the Town Centre Regeneration Officer met with the team at Ryder and Dutton's Rawtenstall branch. The estate agent's manager felt it was important to clear up any questions after the stakeholder session, as they would need to inform any prospective buyers of changes happening in the town.

There have been many email received from business owners in Rawtenstall, explaining their concerns. It was deemed appropriate that the town centre regeneration officer visit those businesses in order to speak in person.

This allows any concerns to be ironed out with more understanding than could be written in an email reply. The businesses have been grateful for the continual interaction and updates when possible.

These businesses include-

- Sophie's Boutique
- Isabakes
- Casked
- Nushu
- Luvin'It
- Ivy Label
- Scentsh
- Eyestyle Studio

Both the public and those with an economic interest in Rawtenstall who were not able to attend the drop in sessions, were guided to view plans online and submit comments to the economic development email.



**Session 1**

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Unitarian church Rawtenstall – 6-8pm – Stakeholder Session – 30+ attendees

Officers felt it was necessary for a separate session with key stakeholders to Rawtenstall, as they have a particular interest in Rawtenstall, for slightly different reasons. Officers invited local business owners, market traders, local councillors, local interest groups and local transport coordinators.

Attendees were presented with concept ideas by PlanIt, and asked for feedback which was noted by officers, and organised into categories:

Aesthetics	Transport	Safety	Pedestrian movement	Community
Line Bocholt Way and St. Mary's Way with trees	Improve transport networks	Substantially improve the lighting in the town square	Free 3 hour disc parking to be introduced again with enforcement	Use any old buildings or closed retail to change of use
Disguise the strip lighting in the lower car park at Asda by putting a pelmet construction around the lower end of the upper car park	Make Bank St one way from the market end down to the dual carriageway	Improve the seating in the town square	All LCC signage to be updated	Incentivise landlords, retailers and offices to improve fronts of properties in the town centre
Improve the aesthetics on Bacup Road to make it a more integral part of the town	Flatten new hall hay cricket ground and build a carpark	Fill in the subway	Further retail opportunities to be located on New Hall Hey	
Make more of the river	Advertising on buses		Improve the bridge which leads from Tesco to Bury road	
Encourage LCC to attend to the maintenance of Rawtenstall Library				
The town square to remain as a lovely public open space				

The key themes identified from this particular feedback are safety, transport, community, pedestrian movement and aesthetics. There was a clearer theme of community from the stakeholder group session as many attendees represented a small number of community groups currently involved in Rawtenstall.

It was therefore highlighted to officers how important the community within Rawtenstall is to stakeholders. It was therefore considered one of the main subjects running throughout all the concept designs forming the masterplan.

There was also a large consideration of aesthetics. This shows that the stakeholder's care how the town looks, and feel it is an important part of improvements. It was explained by many that how a town presents itself is important. When visitors arrive for the first time, they form first impressions based on what they see. The stakeholders therefore placed importance on routes into the town being attractive.

There was also a great emphasis on improving the natural asset Rawtenstall currently has, including making the river more visible and improving the site lines down Bank Street.

As part of ASDA's planning permission it is written that they have to provide parking for town centre users. In this case, it was suggested that further advertising of this could be done, to inform new visitors. Small business owners were unsure of this being a practical solution, and questioned if this would just encourage visitors to shop in ASDA instead of venturing into town.

It is hoped that the addition of a crossing from outside ASDA over to the back of Bank Street will allow better accessibility for those town centre users who do park on ASDA's car park.

Officers concluded from this session, that parking needs to be greatly considered. If new plans are to be implemented, it needs to be made clear that the town centre can handle an increase in visitors.

The stakeholder's suggestions follow a pattern throughout, making the town centre a nicer and safer place to be for both residents and visitors, from the improvement of travel infrastructure and encouragement of landlords to improve empty buildings, to small yet important aesthetic improvements, and enhancing Rawtenstall's natural assets further and have the town be known for these attributes.



**Session 2 & 3**

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – Rawtenstall Market – 11am-2pm – 50+ attendees

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Sophie's Boutique – 1-3pm – 40+ attendees

Similarly, the two public drop in sessions held in November and December 2023, gave us themes comparable to those from the stakeholder session; safety, transport, community, pedestrian movement and aesthetics.

Safety	Transport	Community	Pedestrian movement	Aesthetics
Better crossing facilities for bikes	Improve traffic on Burnley road	Market the Whitaker in town- integrate assets	Cars park on pavements and dipped curbs so wheelchair accessibility is hard	More litter bins
Better railings	Improve traffic light flow	Music clubs Youth clubs Toddler groups Art clubs	More dips in the pavement for wheelchair access across roads, including double yellow lines!	Do something with the space on the square
More CCTV in town	Need a bus stop on Burnley road	Churches need more financial support	Paving needed at the bottom of Bank Street	Name the town square
Zebra crossing on Bank Street	Not enough buses in the day to Ramsbottom	Night time economy could be better	More awnings outside shops	Shops on Bury road are poor
More lighting on the town square	Need a bus stop after the Spar before the market- it's a long walk	More events on the town square led by community groups	Covered areas for when it rains	More trees on St Mary's way
Not enough traffic wardens	Traffic lights on gyratory need resequencing	Rawtenstall market social media needs improving	Paving on Bacup road needs improving	Hide ASDA with trees
Speed on Haslingden road	More and reliable buses	Have Rawtenstall market open more days	Re-lay Kay street paving	More seating on the square
20mph on Grange road	More buses to Bolton	Attract market stalls at weekend and close the road	Make one pavement wider than the other so cafes can have outside seating	Continue Christmas lights all the way to the market

Motorway lighting	Asda needs an alternative entrance and exit	Rawtenstall is crying out for an artisan market every month. It would be so busy	Paving outside of St Marys church needs re-laying	Sort drainage outside the carpet shop, the pavement floods regularly
Can Grange road have speed bumps	Trains in town	Need a playground for children to play	Roundabout at the bottom of Newchurch road Bank street and Burnley road	Widen path on Bacup road
Missing pavements around Loveclough/ Newchurch	One way on Bank Street would help with Grange Road issues	Improve the leisure centre	Better links with Ramsbottom	More wayfinding around the gyratory
Secure bike storage with CCTV- somewhere central like the town square	Can ELR extend to Manchester?	The pavement below where the old Estoria club was, include wayfinding with information about the club. Maybe include 'stars' of bands who played there, much like Hollywood walk of fame	Yellow box junction needed where the library is as pulling out of that junction onto the gyratory is really difficult	Cobbles on Bank street need relaying
Cameras near where crossings, people get hit by cars running red lights and there is no evidence	Improve the bus service between Manchester and Ramsbottom	Market feels catered more towards visitors	Cycle route to Bury	Cyclists don't use the roads because they are too busy and dangerous
	Lines need repainting on gyratory	Improve infrastructure across Rawtenstall	A crossing at Sparrow park	More lighting from Blossom to TESCO
	Reconfigure traffic lights and crossing times	Theatre or cinema	Cycle link to the Halo	More lighting between Mimi's and Lidl
	No on street parking	Farmers markets on the square	Want better crossing at TESCO	
	Disc parking in car parks	More spill out space for restaurants		
		More community events		



Holding these two drop in sessions at different venues allowed officers to attract a larger audience range, resulting consequently, with a larger variety of suggestions.

Younger residents came with suggestions such as making the town centre safer at night, by adding more lighting down particular cut-through points, increasing the spill out spaces for restaurants, more travel links and increased events in town.

Officers spoke to residents who spoke of living in Rawtenstall over a long period of time. They expressed positive view of the new plans, and explained that any new plans must consider those who may struggle to get around town. One resident in particular spoke of pushing her elderly mother through town in a wheel chair and struggling to cross the road due to a lack of dipped curbs, or cars parked over them, leaving her without access. She also spoke of uneven surfaces both on the Bank Street cobbles and pavements, expressing support for them to be re-layed.

Residents from Newchurch and Grange road estate visited the drop in sessions. They have both set up groups in order to raise awareness of the issues they have with speeding and rat-running in their neighbourhoods. They mentioned contacting the Police, local councillors, MP and county council in order to explain why they believe traffic calming measures are much needed. They hoped that perhaps some of this could be picked up in the masterplan design.

In this case, it was then considered as to how a possible change in direction of Bank Street and possibly Kay Street could help alleviate some of the issues the residents face.

**Session 4 & 5**

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024 – Rawtenstall Market – 11am-2pm – 90+ attendees

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 – Rawtenstall Library – 4-7pm – 300+ attendees

At the market drop in session, it was hoped that the comments of natural shoppers could be collected, as well as those who were attending specifically to discuss views of the concept designs.

Key:

Further suggestions – orange

In agreement with the change – green

Disagree with the change – blue

Safety	Transport	Community	Pedestrian movement	Aesthetics
More lighting on the streets	The new light controlled pedestrian crossing on Bury road – cause a queue entering Bury Road which will back up onto the gyratory	Make Bank Street pedestrianised	All the pavements through the town centre need re-laying and maintaining afterwards!	Don't fill in the subway
More CCTV	The bus gate will help	Need an art hub	Road markings throughout town centre need re doing	More seating on town square
Block off Grange Road half way up	If the multiple traffic lights are coordinated the traffic will flow easier – at the minute they are why the traffic gets so bad	Youth hang out areas	Rethink the cycle route	Move the fire station
Concerned about cyclist and pedestrian shared space	Make the bottom end of Bank Street two way – from Kay Street down		Consider those with limited mobility when removing parking from Bank Street	
There is not enough parking in Town	Bank street one way needs to be from the market down not up		Keep Kay Street direction the same	
Anything new on the square like a park,				



will attract more antisocial behaviour				
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Throughout the session, officers noted that there were a few stand out comments made by members of the public. It was noted that the majority of attendees spoke of their disagreement to change the direction of Kay Street. They spoke of the longer journey time this would mean for residents who live in the Crawshawbooth direction. There has been a concern raised from the Baptist church on Kay Street, about the directional change affecting how they will operate during a funeral, considering the potential double parking whilst a funeral or wedding is ongoing with the event cars needing to be placed right outside the church.

The general feel of the one way direction being implemented on Bank Street was positive, although the public generally expected the one way to feed from the top of Newchurch Road down towards ASDA not the other way round which is currently being suggested.

One positive comment made by many, was the welcoming of the bus right turn change. This allows the bus to turn right, rather than having to travel around the gyratory. Residents told officers it would help with traffic flow, as well as journey time for bus users.

One surprising suggestion made by the public was an improved link between venues such as St Mary's Chambers and East Lancs Railway to the town centre and the Market. They said if they were unfamiliar with the area they feel it would not be obvious where anything is, and encouraged more wayfinding and signage to what Rawtenstall has to offer. This can be addressed within the Rawtenstall Connected scheme.

### Additional Session

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 – Unitarian church Rawtenstall – 6-8pm – Chamber of Commerce – 40+ attendees

A concern from some of the business owners was if the main shopping street is made one way it may affect a customer's choice to shop in the town centre.

A one way would make it harder for them to not only park but navigate the roads in order to visit a particular shop. They could then alternatively visit ASDA which has specific parking and has everything in one place. This is interesting to note as the majority of businesses based on Bank Street are in favour of the one way system, but the four businesses situated on Ormerod Street were all completely against it.

Another big theme from the Chamber meeting was that of loading and servicing, if Bank Street was to be made a one way. Another part of introducing the one way includes the widening of the pavements and increase the café culture on Bank Street.

As a result, the businesses had several questions around if a time limit would be implemented for servicing, as vans for most shops will need to park directly outside. They had concerns over how this may affect the availability of the companies they currently use, if a strict time limit for loading was introduced. This has been looked into carefully as to how the use of loading bays could be implemented, so that the one way traffic is not disrupted.

A large proportion of the discussions that took part on the evening, followed the theme of parking in the town centre. Many businesses have called for increased parking spaces in town, as customers mention it while shopping in their business. The hope of some changes included in the concept plans for the masterplan, include taking the priority cars have, away from the town centre, making it a safer place to be. The hope is this will encourage more visitors, including families.

It has to be considered therefore, where the parking that may be lost on Bank Street should be moved to, not gotten rid of completely – highlighted as imperative by business owners.

It was highlighted to us that the businesses have concerns over making the availability of parking in ASDA for town centre users more obvious and taking away the parking from Bank Street would further push potential customers to shop in ASDA rather than venturing onto the high street.



### Conclusion

In conclusion, the feedback received by all officers involved with the drop in sessions held, has contributed towards creating an overall picture of what both residents and visitors want from a masterplan for Rawtenstall.

There have been many opportunities for the officers to capture as much feedback as possible, however due to the popularity of the drop in sessions there has always been a chance of some being missed. As much as it was encouraged for people to send in feedback formally via email, not everyone will have the chance or time to sit down and do this.

It is the hope that due to the amount of drop in sessions held, there has been enough opportunity given for feedback to be collected.

Business owners have mentioned they have struggled especially and in this case benefitted more from the various catch up sessions with officers, where informal notes were taken instead.

The officers are happy with the turnout of each drop in session, they believe the way in which each session was advertised, allowed for a range of ages and groups to attend and give feedback. This means any analysis and conclusions made from the feedback is accurate and representation of the general population.

Because the feedback featured both support and concerns it has allowed officers to consider altering concept designs, as well as considering options that perhaps were not originally thought about. By placing all the feedback into categories, officers were able to further analyse the priority of the feedback given. Those who attended the public sessions had a stronger focus on the community and transport benefits of the concept designs. Whereas stakeholders considered aesthetics, pedestrian movement and transport, during their drop in sessions.

Further to the feedback, there can now be continued discussions with officers, as to the current concept plans for Rawtenstall's masterplan and how it can be created to feature suggestions from all those with an interest in Rawtenstall town centre.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – responses through email received

Keep Kay Street in the same direction

Bank street direction – from Newchurch road down to ASDA

Town square redevelopment – does it need to be a priority

Parking – should be free, charge for out of hours parking and there should be dedicated business parking

Ensure businesses throughout Rawtenstall get attention when it comes to improvements, Bacup Road, Kay Street, Ormerod Street

If a cycle path is being added in on Bank Street it should be a no car zone altogether

I would like to see some highlights in the Masterplan both celebrating the richness and commemorating the hardships of Rossendale's Heritage.

Perhaps a visitor Heritage Map (mentioning ELR trips to Rawtenstall etc) with routes and overnight accommodation.

Pedestrianising Bank Street would stop people nipping in – reduce customers

Creating a pedestrianised, cycle friendly town will only cater for people wanting a free day out, it certainly won't attract people who want to shop and spend money.

Making Bank street one way would make shops receiving deliveries more difficult

Making Bank street one way diverts the traffic away from the centre not towards it



We feel by making Bank Street a One Way System would help with the traffic flow especially with all the double parking.

Which a lot of the double parking is to due with Greggs bakery to be honest

Force cars going to Waterfoot along Bacup Road, rather than Bocholt Way. This could be achieved by making Bocholt Way two way only as far as the right hand turn up to Hall Carr and the small riverside industrial estate. From this point onwards the road would be one way ONLY coming from the direction of Waterfoot.

Install traffic lights to allow free flow of traffic up Bocholt Way for vehicles coming from the bypass and Haslingden. There are similar lights that allow access onto St Mary's Way from the Asda deliveries door near the carpet showroom.

Sort out the sequence of the lights throughout the gyratory

Need a rail link to Manchester

Use only one side of Bank Street for parking

Something needs to happen on the town square as to tackle anti-social behaviour

The junction of Haslingden Old Road/Newchurch/Burnley Road, is a very dangerous place to try to navigate as a pedestrian you have to time when you are able to run across the road.

The plans focus only on one area and do not include shops along Bacup Road.

The area from Rawtenstall to the retail park is not a pleasant place to walk as the pathway only extends half way so the other half is muddy and unpleasant, meaning most people have no option other than to drive.

The proposed single stage crossing at the end of Bacup Road (where the bus gate is) feels too long without any separation from traffic, like an island or something in the middle, even if it is still possible to cross in a single stage.

Road markings need redoing throughout the gyratory

Plans for the gyratory must marry up to those for Bank Street

Further high quality pedestrian crossing points on Bank Street are needed to encourage the free flow of movement on both sides of the street i.e. further road narrowing, raised tables, coloured surfacing.

Mr Fitzpatrick's is highlighted as a key Rossendale asset but capacity in the venue is quite limited. The environment outside is not very attractive generally and, in particular for children. There is way too much street furniture around the car park generally and nowhere near enough seating to comfortably accommodate eating your food.

Are we genuinely "showcasing local businesses..... and giving the community space to come together and celebrate their shared spirit" (as per the vision) or are we retaining 13 car parking spaces so people can nip to the bank or pick up a prescription? I bank with Santander and I've never used the car park.

A proper car parking strategy would appear warranted. My understanding is the Asda car park was granted so large so it could also serve Rawtenstall - this should be clarified and made clear to people.

The plans do not seem to say much about how sense of place/public realm could be enhanced on the row between 'Blossom' and the old cinema on Bacup Road

A better pedestrian crossing point of Bacup Road at Blossom towards Mr Fitzpatrick's could encourage more footfall from Tesco.

The plans for 2 lanes on to the A682 look like they could provide a real benefit to the flows of traffic at busy times.



Ensure that improved pedestrian crossings of the side roads to the north of the fire station roundabout are provided as well as the focus on the south side shown in the masterplan.

Make Bocholt way eastbound as far as tesco otherwise make it westbound only.

Filter lane – Bank Street

More developer contributions

The one way needs to go down from the market not up

Need more parking not less

Need yellow box junction where the library joins the gyratory

Is a shared cycle space with pedestrians safe?

The valley of stone name is wrong – its called the valley of stone greenway

Haslingden road side of gyratory goes into one lane and then back to three there are not enough lanes for those coming off the M66

Organisation called Living Streets – deals with accessibility of pavements etc for wheelchair users

The crossing at Haslingden old road is unsafe

The crossing at Newchurch road – view of Burnley road southbound is usually obstructed so can't see if the traffic is turning left

At the asda junction – existing crossing encourages unsafe behaviour - the wait is too long and frustrating to wait in the middle

Burney road – lots of congestion here especially into and out of prospect road and Spar will always have impacts back into the town centre – seems to have been overlooked

More pedestrian islands heading north and on Burnley road– safe to cross

Parking restrictions at Alder Hey ignored making it unsafe for children

New housing developments don't have enough travel facilities – just encourages them to drive. They don't encourage walking as here are no footpaths or ginnels joining estates

Masterplan point 10 – connection from north through the cemetery – path is falling apart and all links through the cemetery are broken and muddy

In general, I am very supportive of the plans. In particular the need to make Bank Street a less car dominated environment and to support the uptake of sustainable transport for people of all ages - especially to give independent mobility to younger generations and to avoid all future residents of Rossendale believing that the car is the only attractive transport option.

The plans for the gyratory MUST co-ordinate with those for Bank Street

If Bank Street becomes one way south to north and Kay Street west to east, there would not be a need for signals at the bottom end of Bank Street. This could reduce the complete cycle time for the signals at Asda aiding the overall traffic circulation around Rawtenstall

Can we consider adding a layby outside of Kay Street Baptist church for hearses or wedding vehicles, as they presently have issues with having to double park opposite another car – this is especially the case when it's a funeral.

Firstly, any move to make the area less car-centric is great. However, from a pedestrian point of view, I believe the proposed single stage crossing at the end of Bacup Road (where the bus gate is) feels too long without any separation from traffic, like an island or something in the middle, even if it is still possible to cross in a single stage.

I also love the secure cycle parking near the bus station — this is a must and probably the biggest barrier from me cycling instead of driving to Rawtenstall more often.

If the direction of flow were altered, then, any traffic within the Kay Street area would have to go to Bacup Road, and then, if they wish to go northwards, go around the main roundabout including six set of traffic lights. If someone wished to go south then, currently, it is possible from most of Kay Street to go via the front of the bus station and down Lord Street to Bacup Road.

A lot of traffic from the south turns right off St Marys Way at Asda traffic lights into Bank Street and then turns right into Grange Road for housing to proceed to Newchurch Road for housing along that road or in order to reach the roads to Lumb, Waterfoot etc. This saves traffic going to the market area including two more sets of traffic lights.





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PLANIT

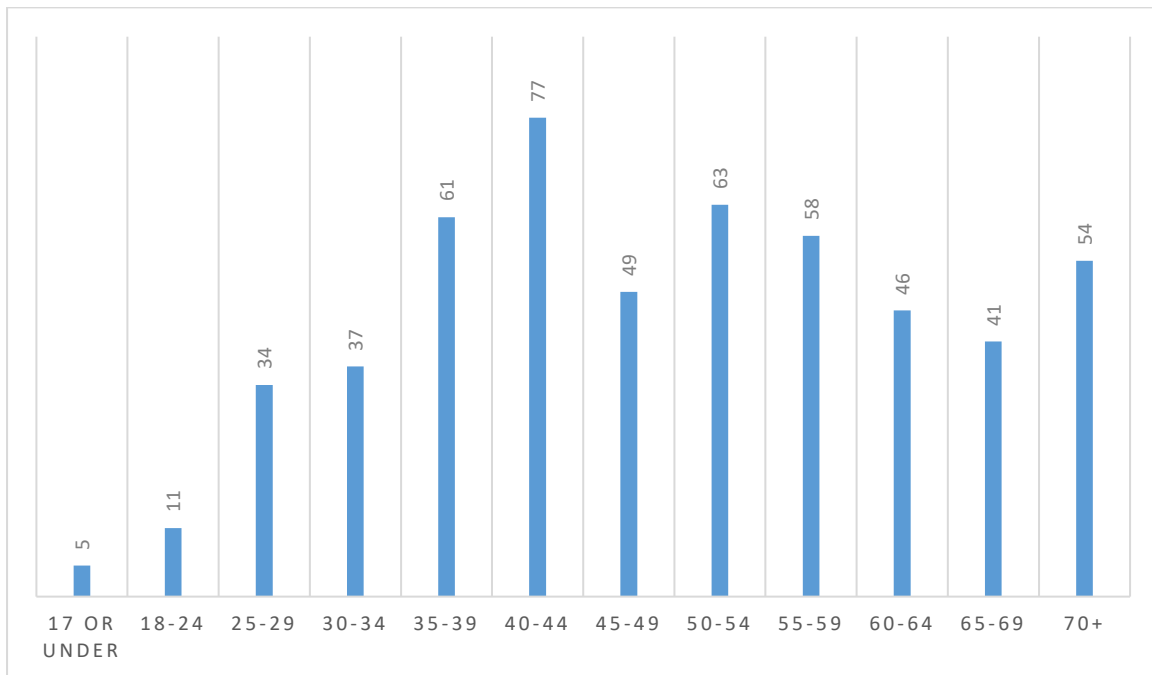


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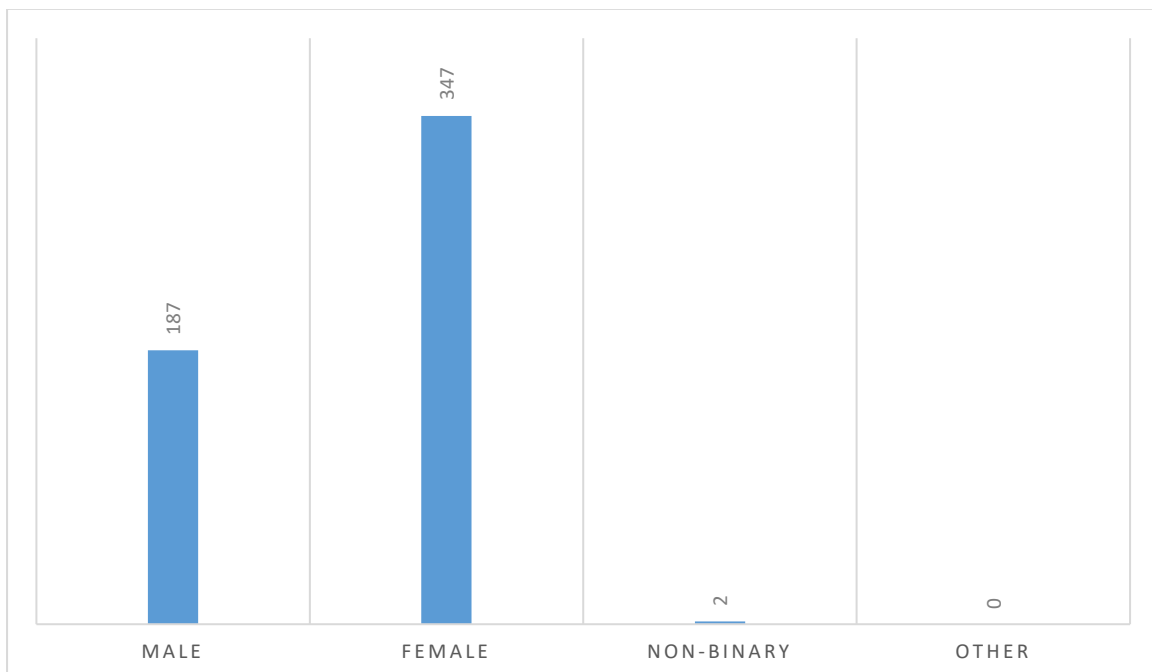
Manchester | Leeds | Liverpool | London | Standish

## Waterfoot Public Consultation – Carried out Summer 2023

1) What is your age?

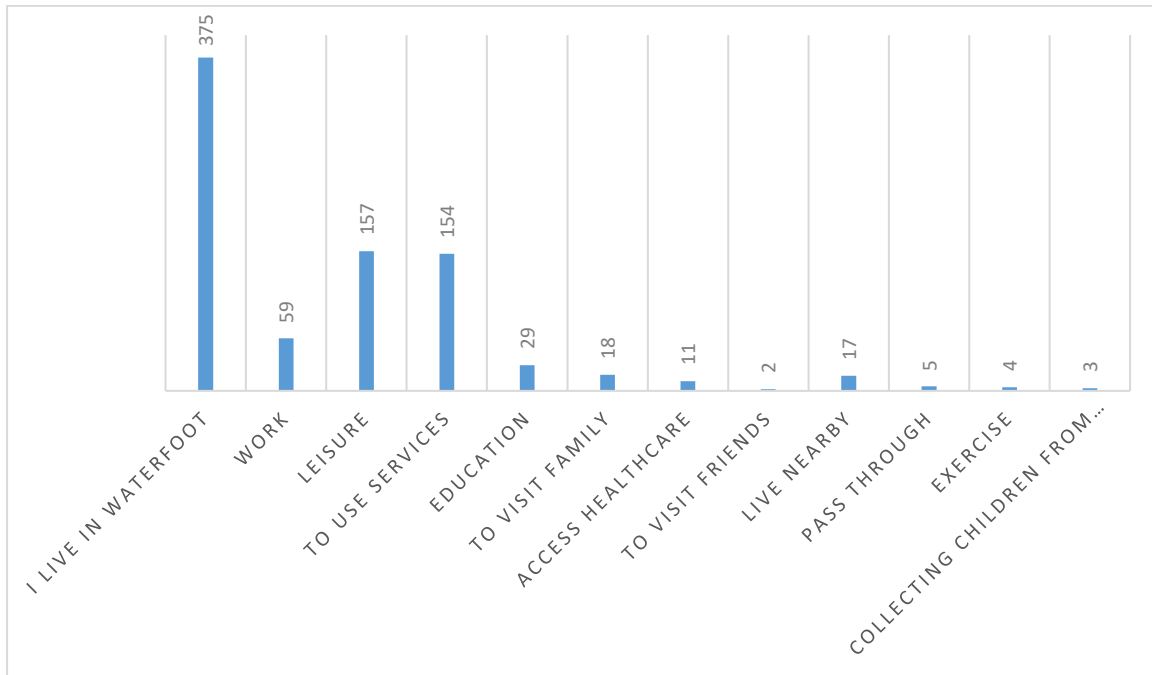


2) What is your gender?

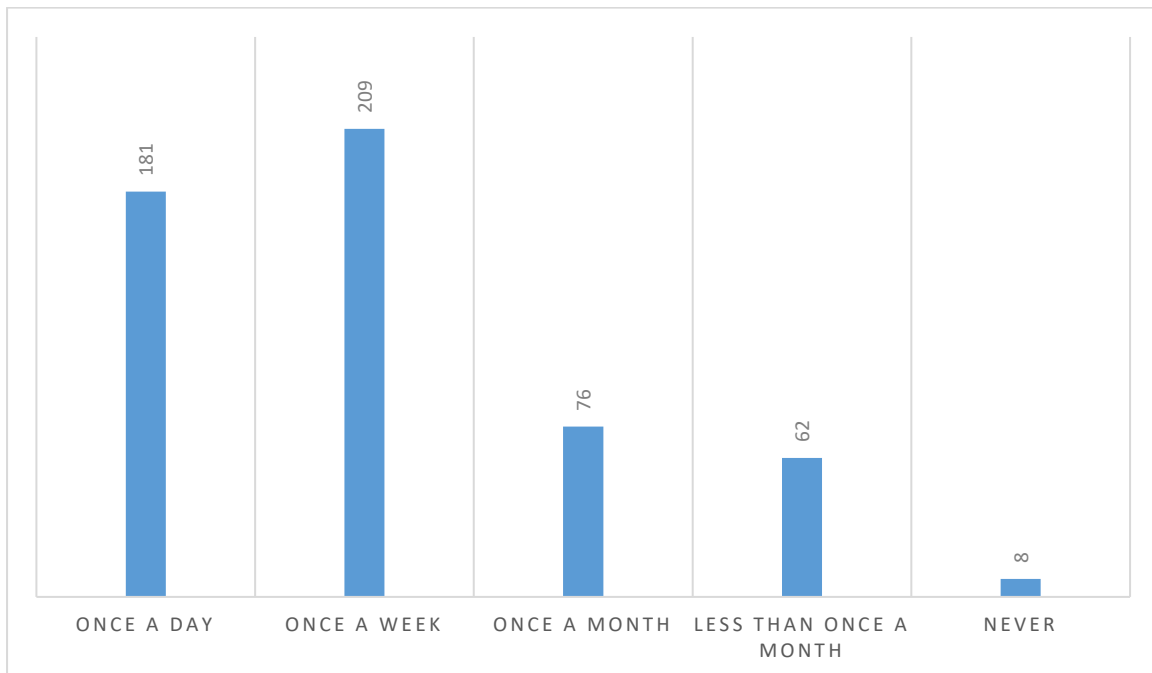




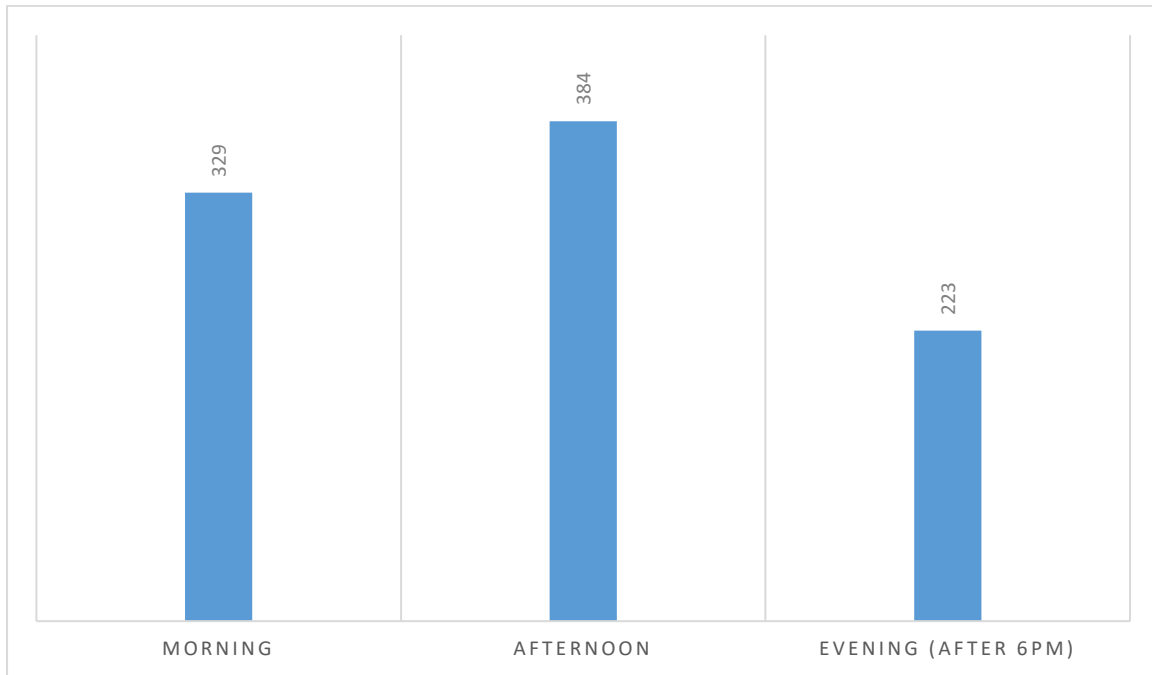
### 3) Why do you visit Waterfoot?



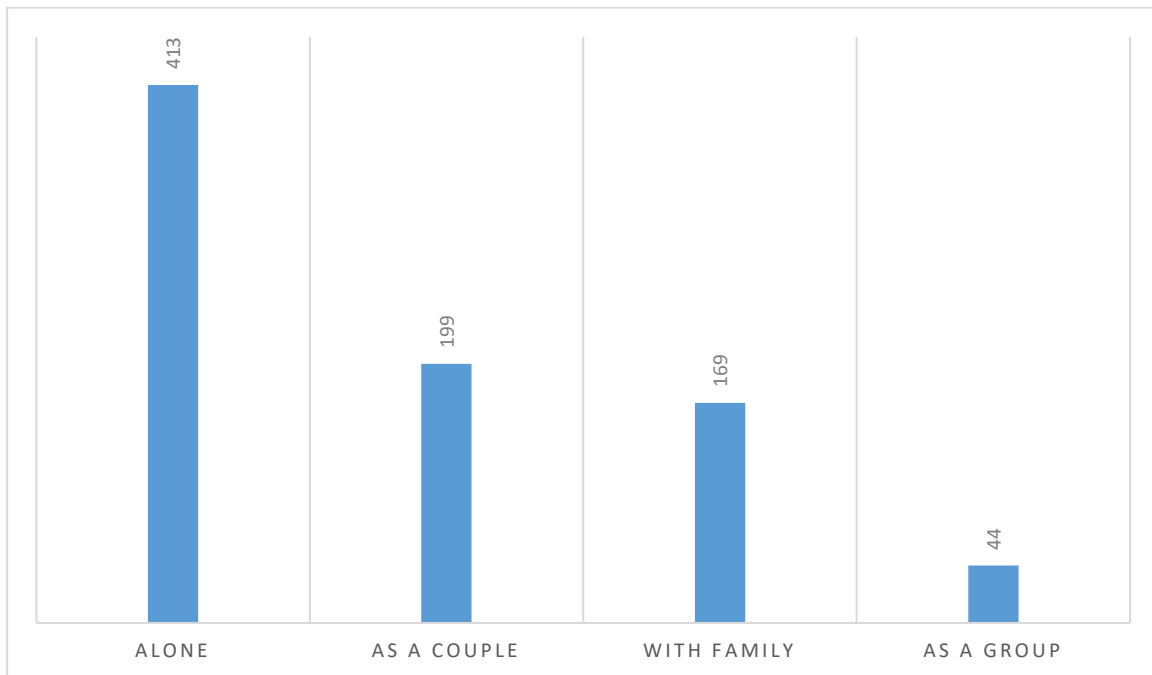
### 4) How frequently do you visit the centre of Waterfoot?



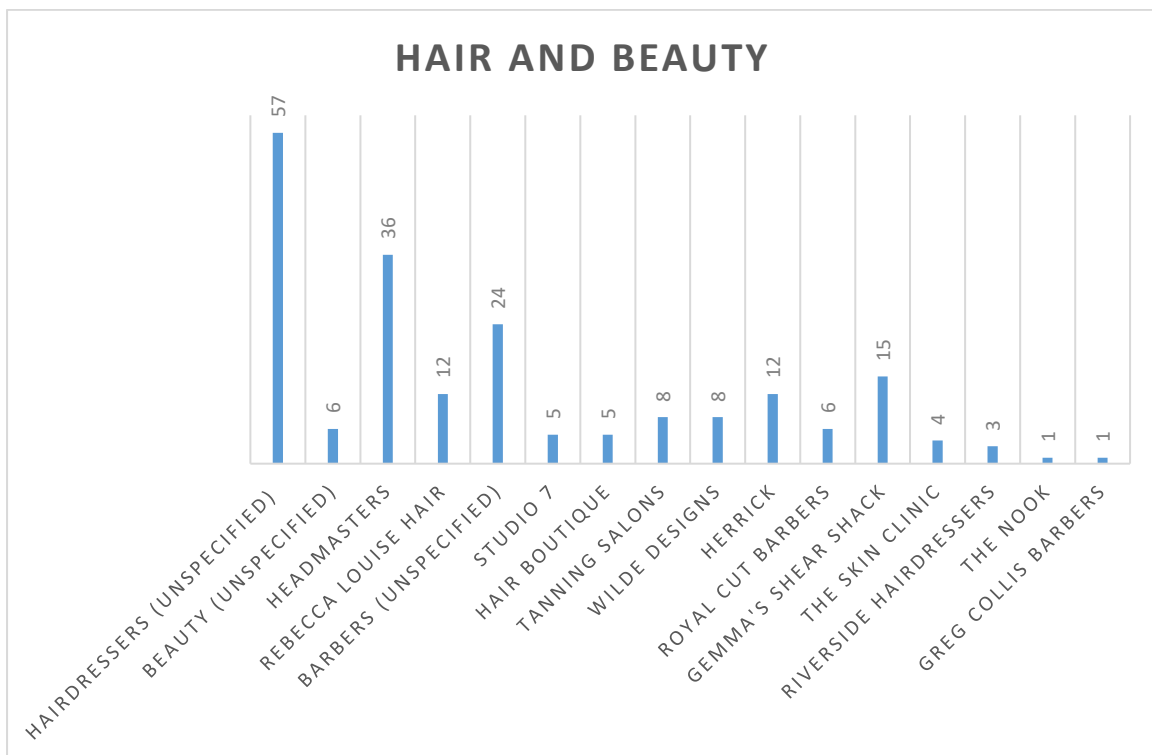
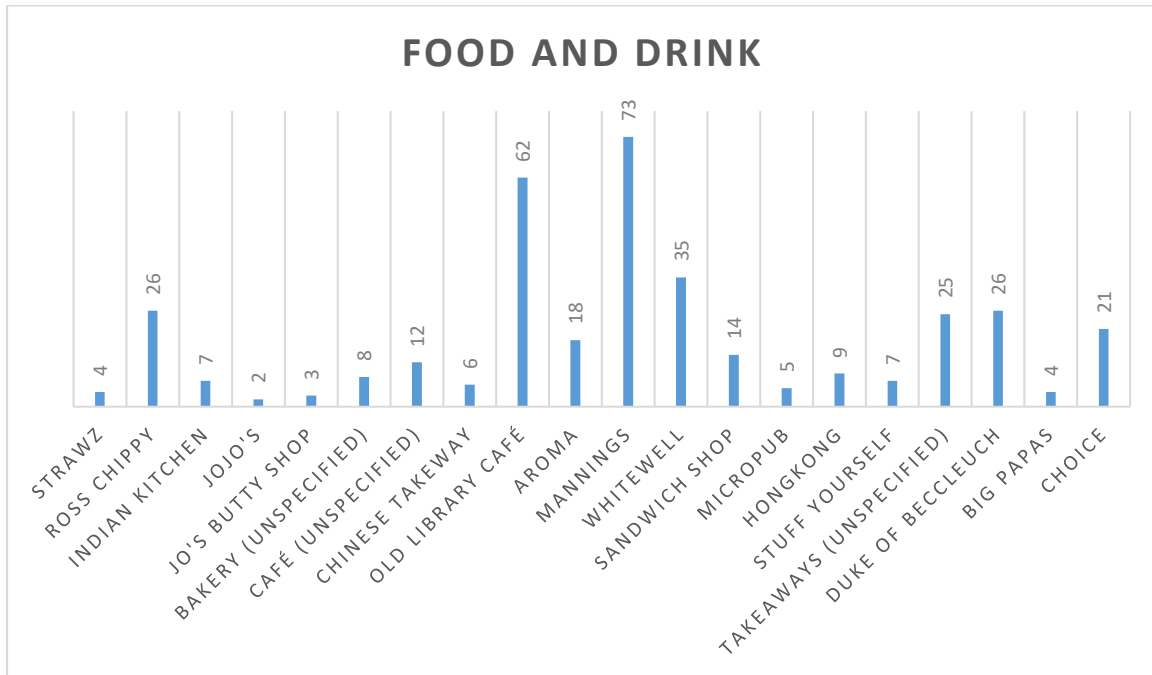
5) What time of day do you usually visit Waterfoot?



6) Who do you visit Waterfoot with?

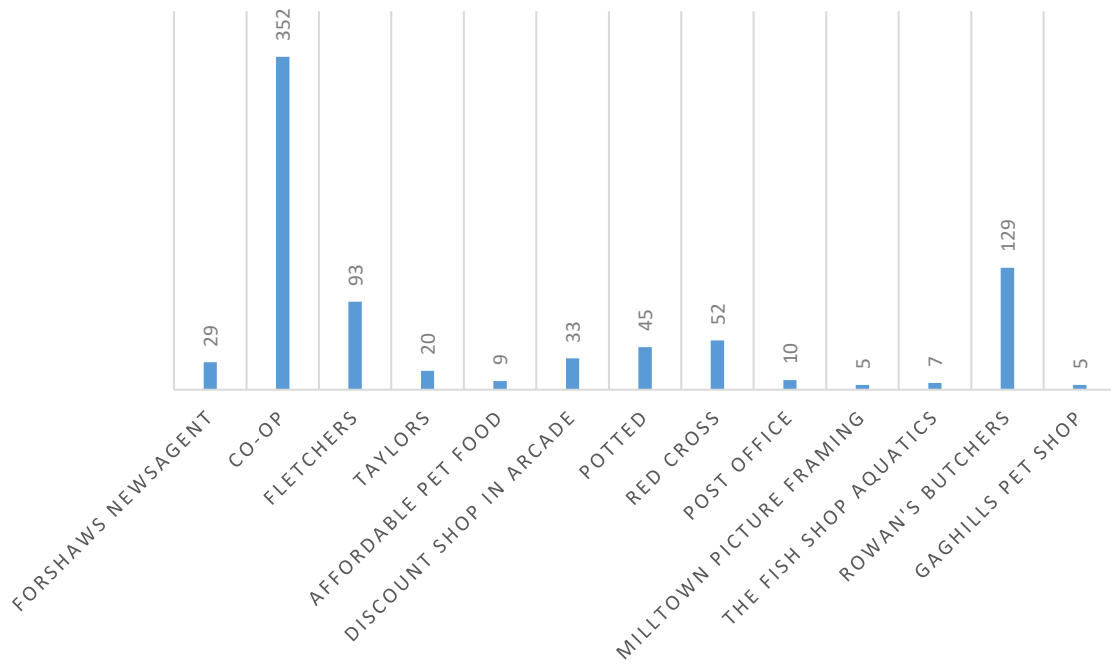


7) What businesses in Waterfoot do you visit?

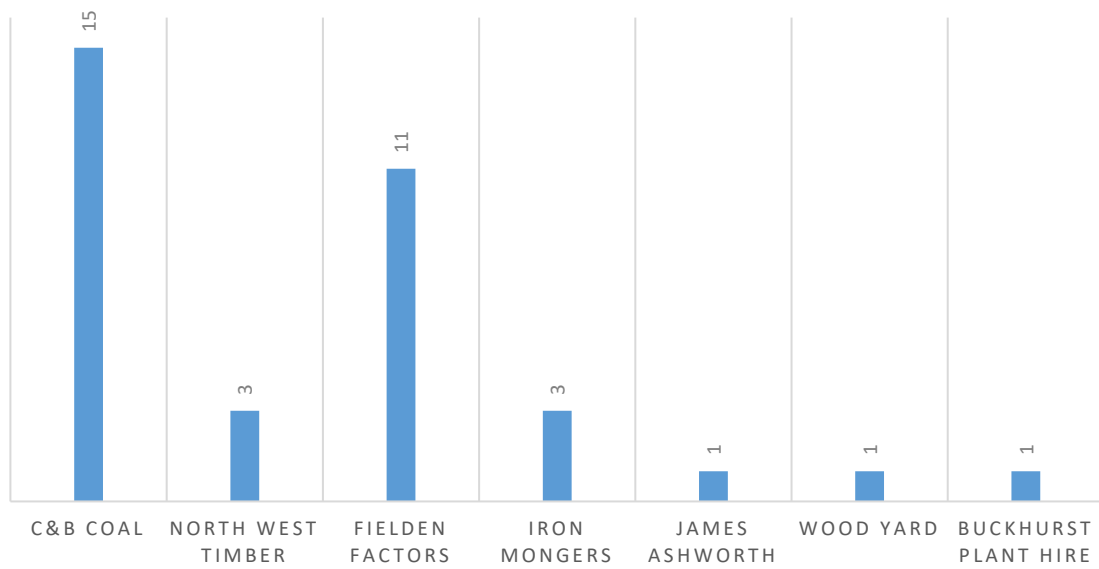




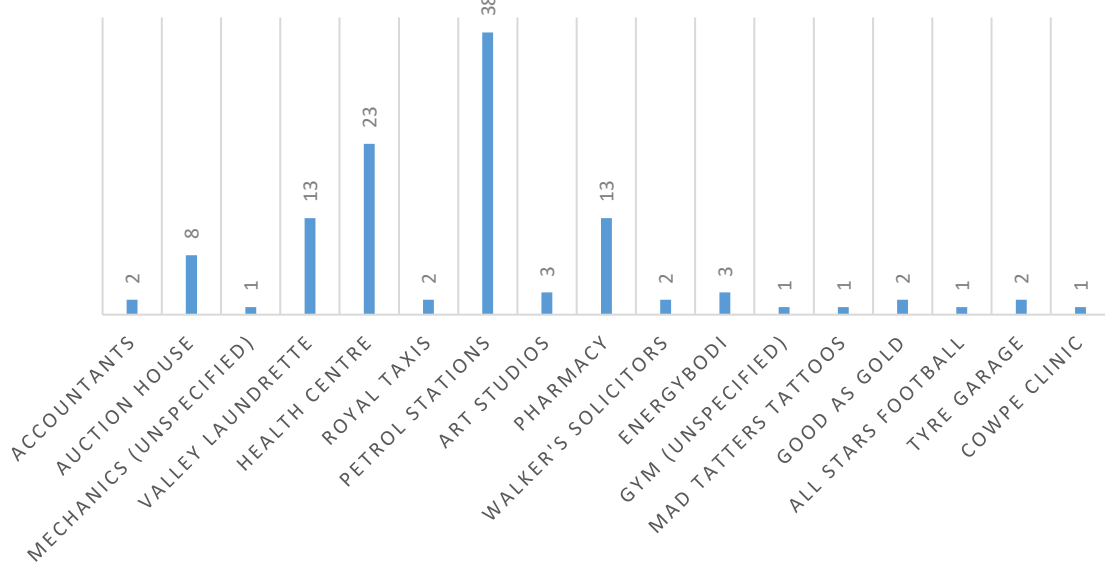
## SHOPS



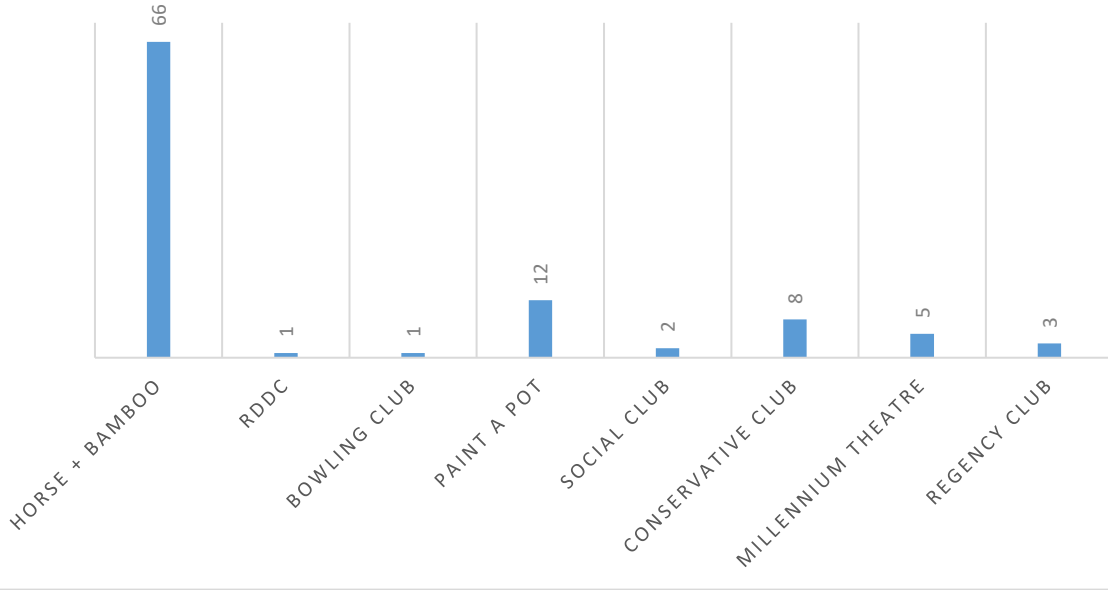
## CONSTRUCTION / BUILDING SUPPLIES



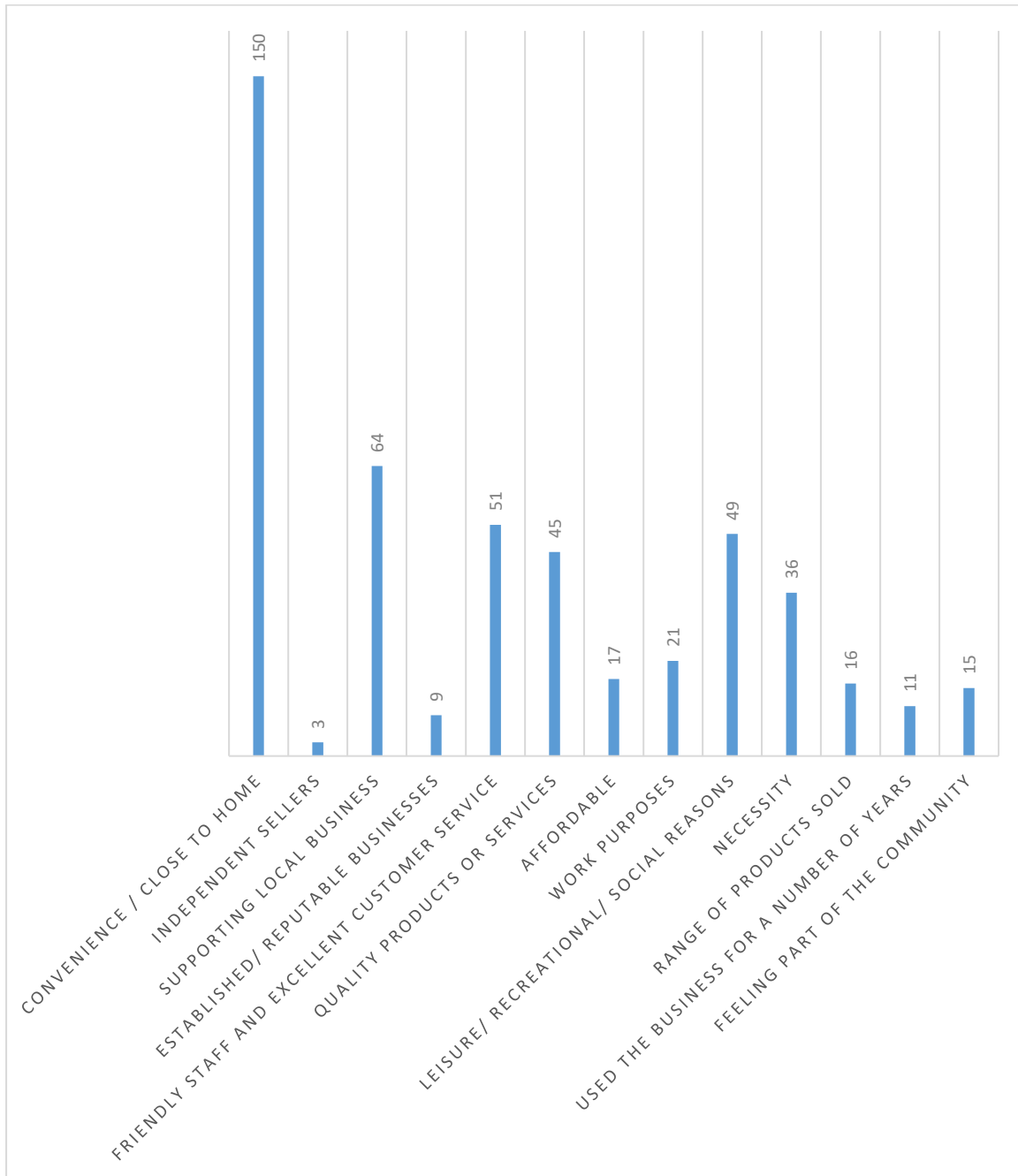
## SERVICES



## ENTERTAINMENT AND SOCIAL

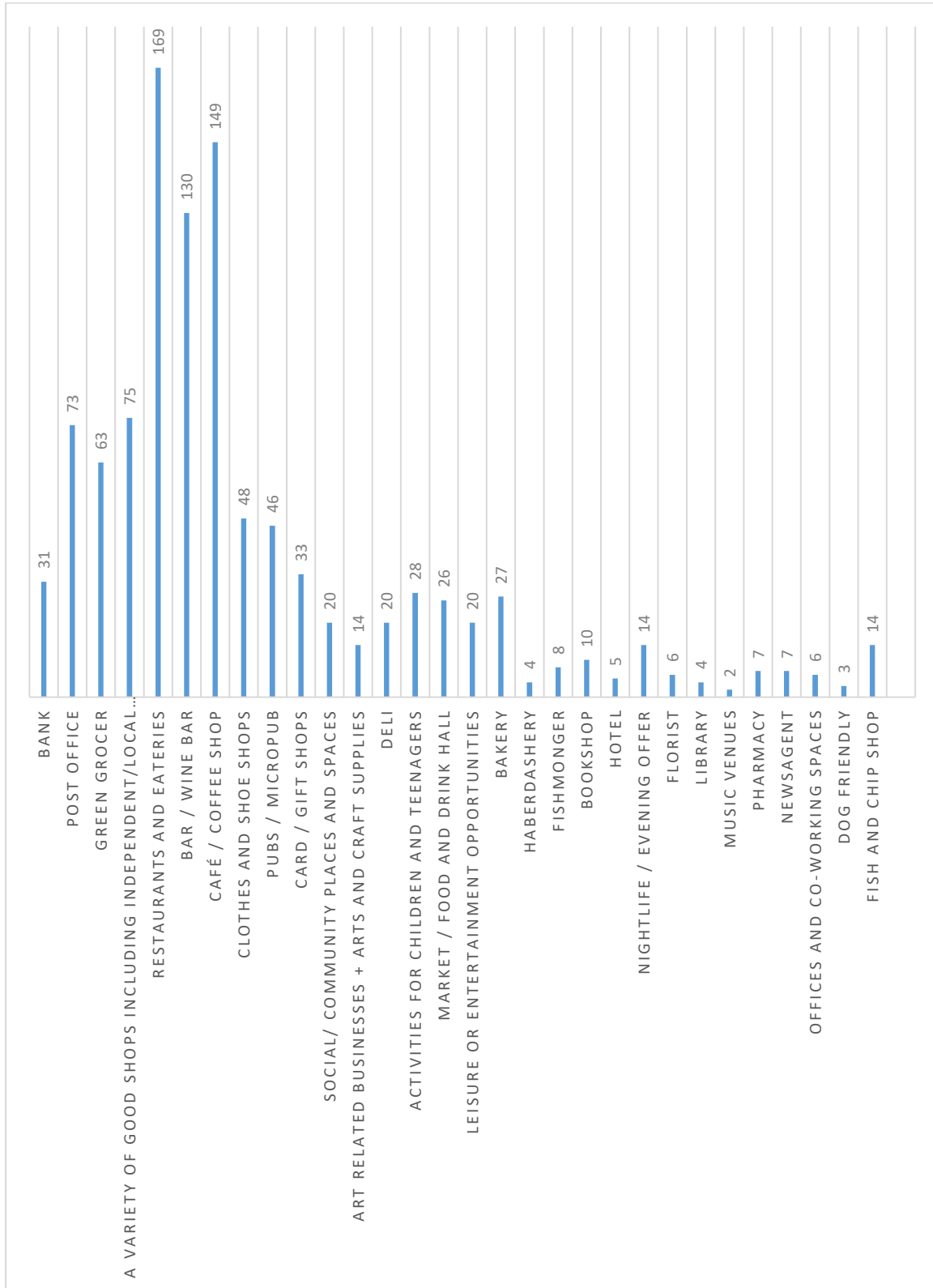


8) What makes you visit these businesses?

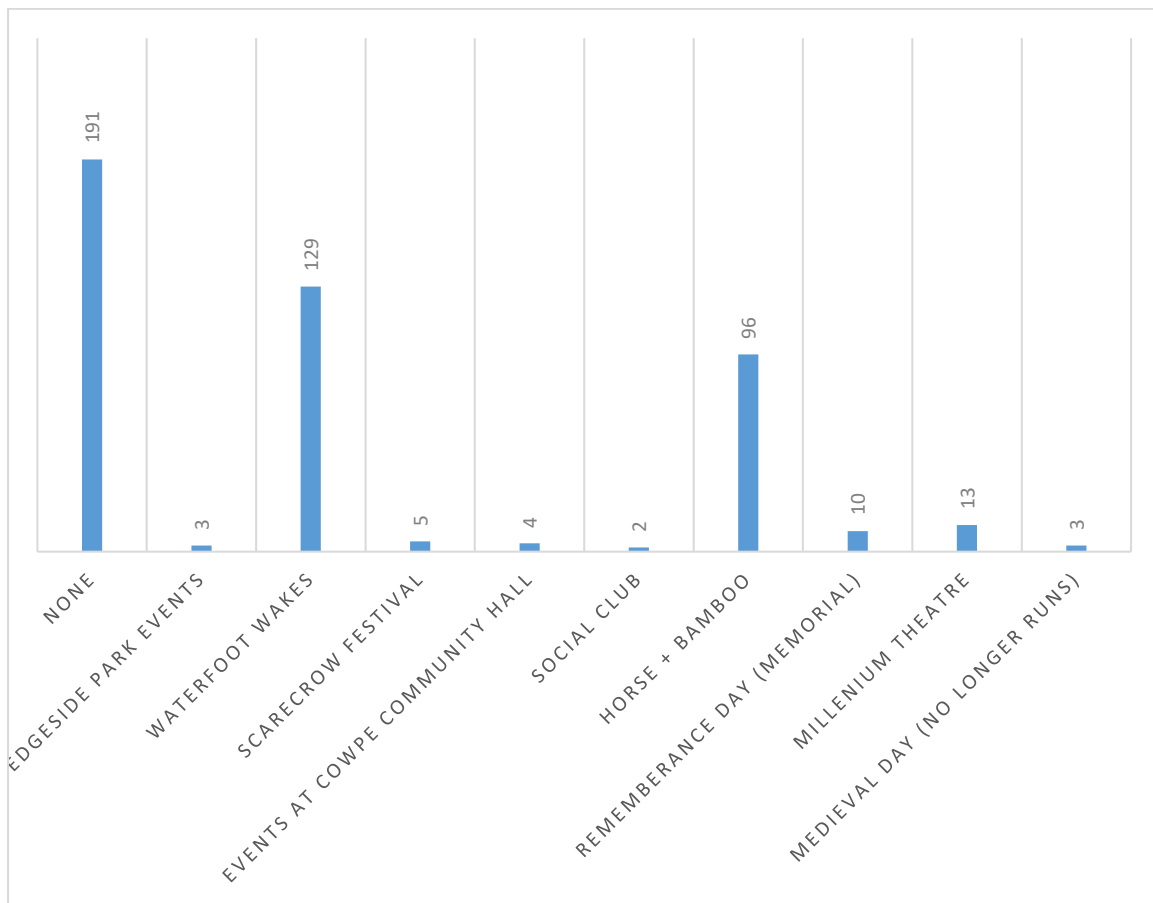




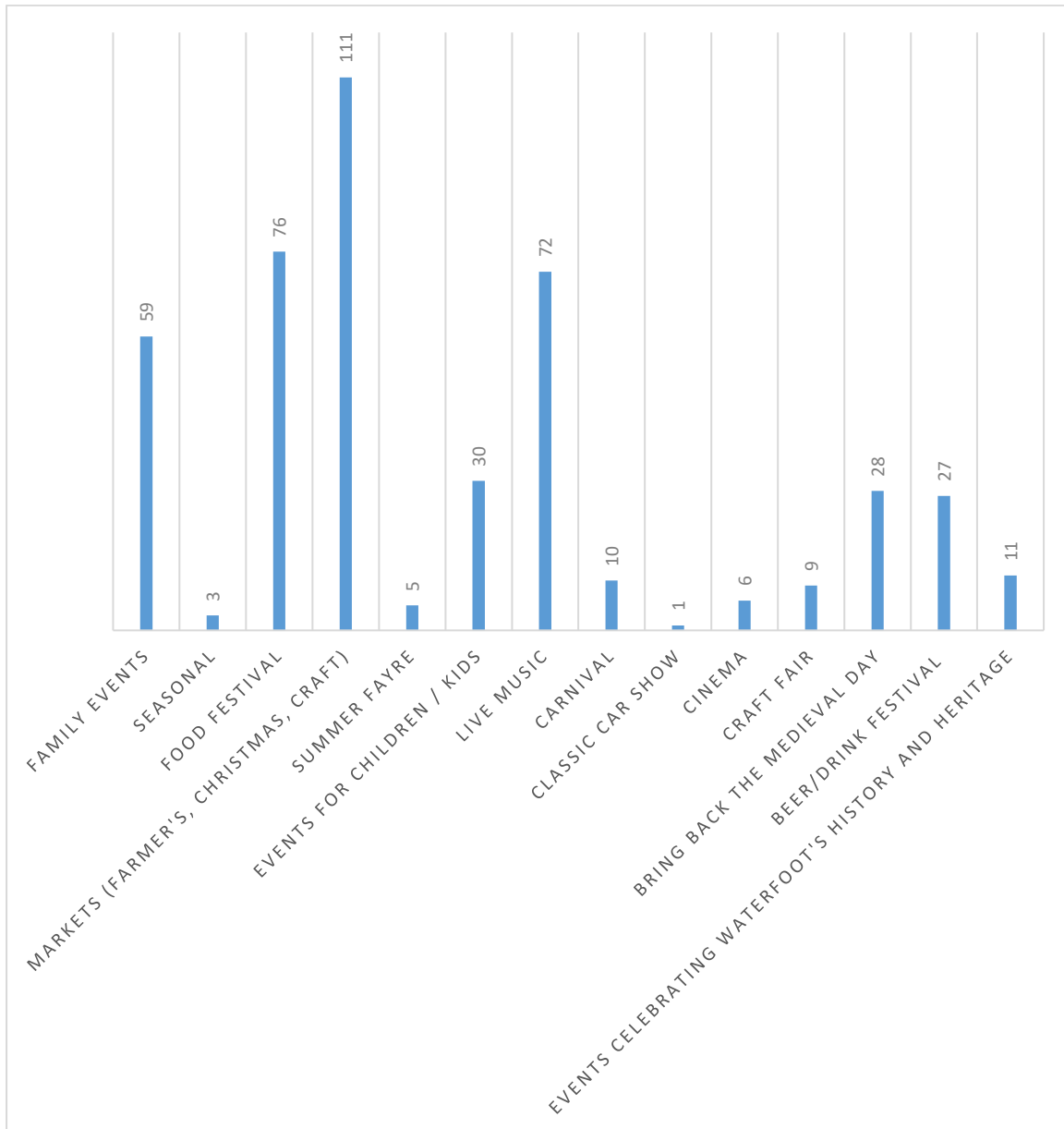
9) What type of business do you feel Waterfoot is currently missing?



### 10) Which events in Waterfoot do you attend?

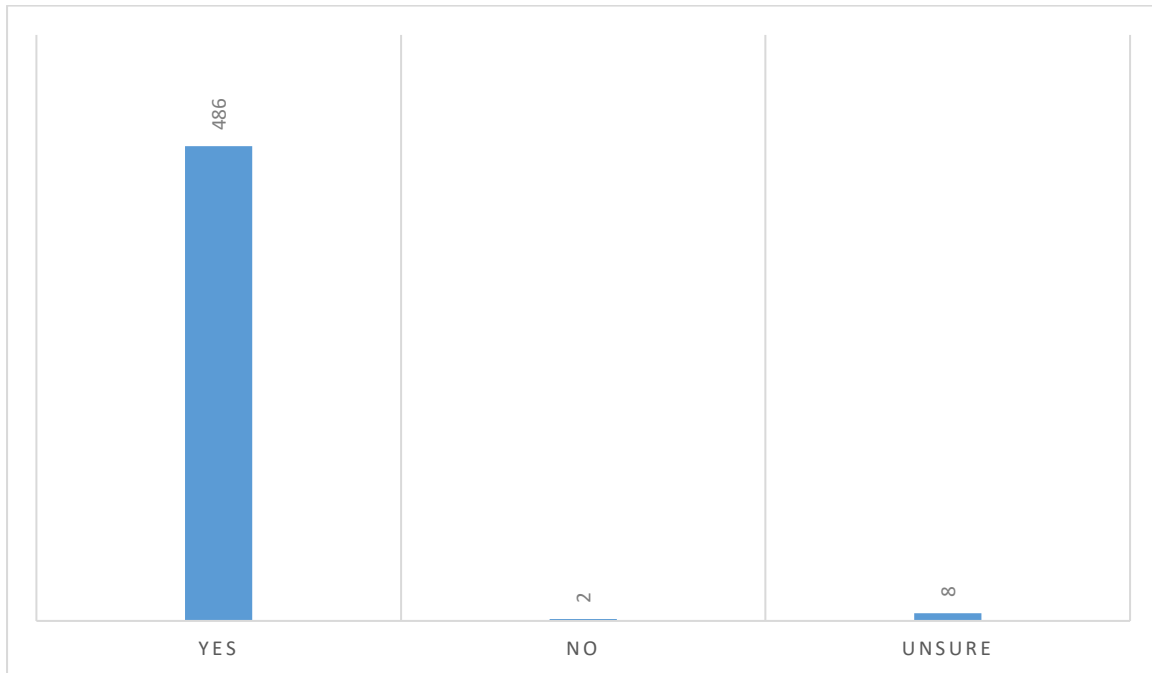


11) What type of event would you like to see in Waterfoot?

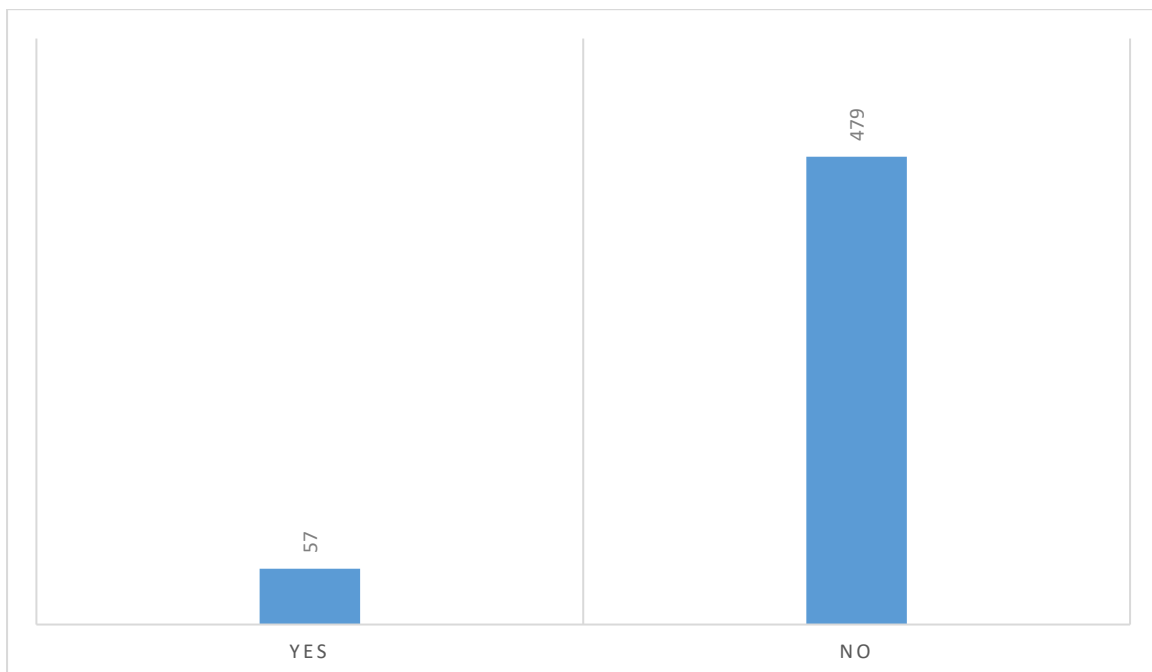




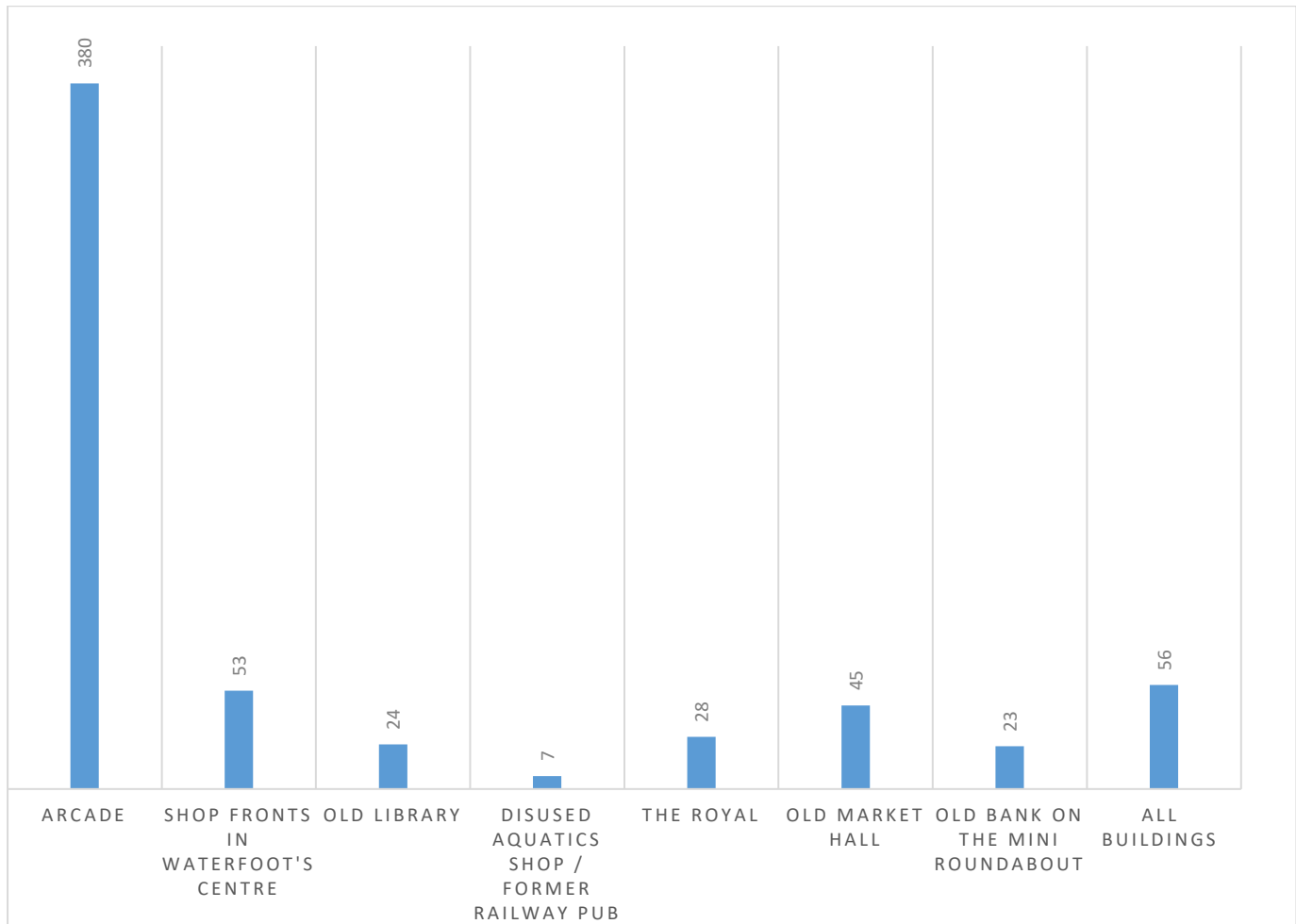
12) Would you welcome external funding for Waterfoot?



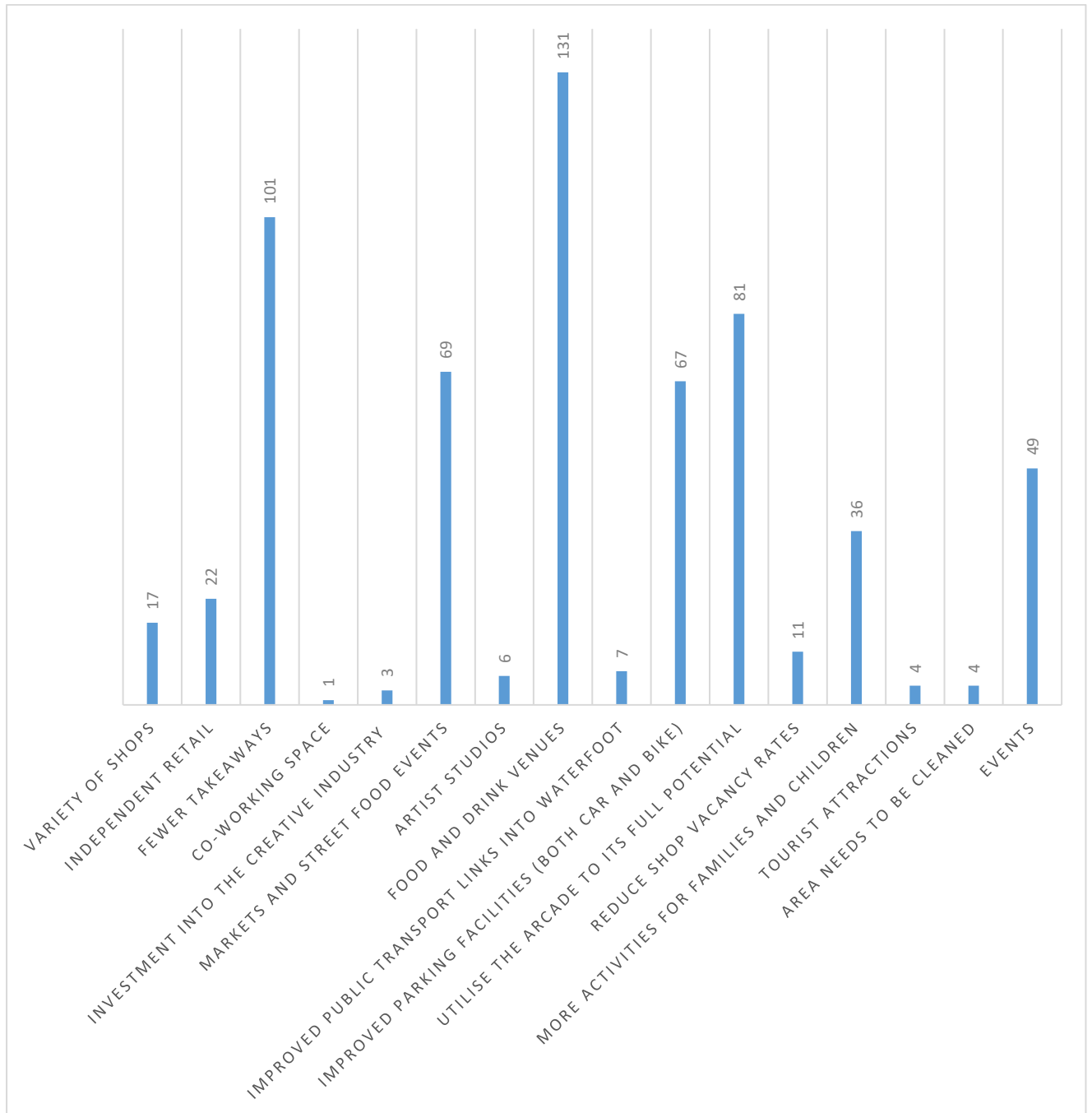
13) We are currently exploring the possibility of Waterfoot's centre becoming a conservation area. This will help to protect the unique character and heritage of the area. Does this pose any issues to you?



14) If there was more funding to enhance and protect some of the buildings in Waterfoot's centre, which buildings would you like to see improved?

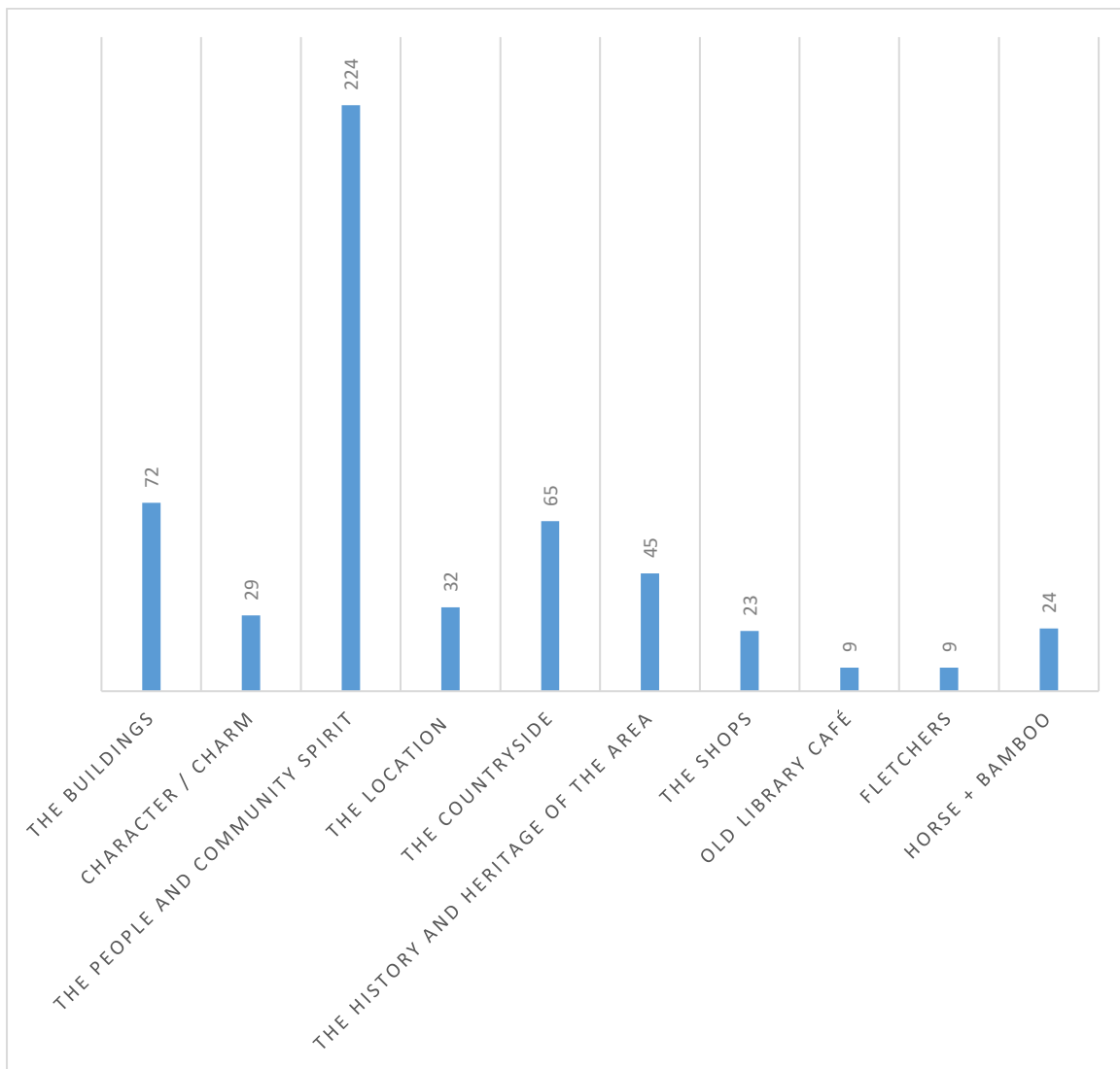


15) What ideas do you have to boost footfall in the centre of Waterfoot?

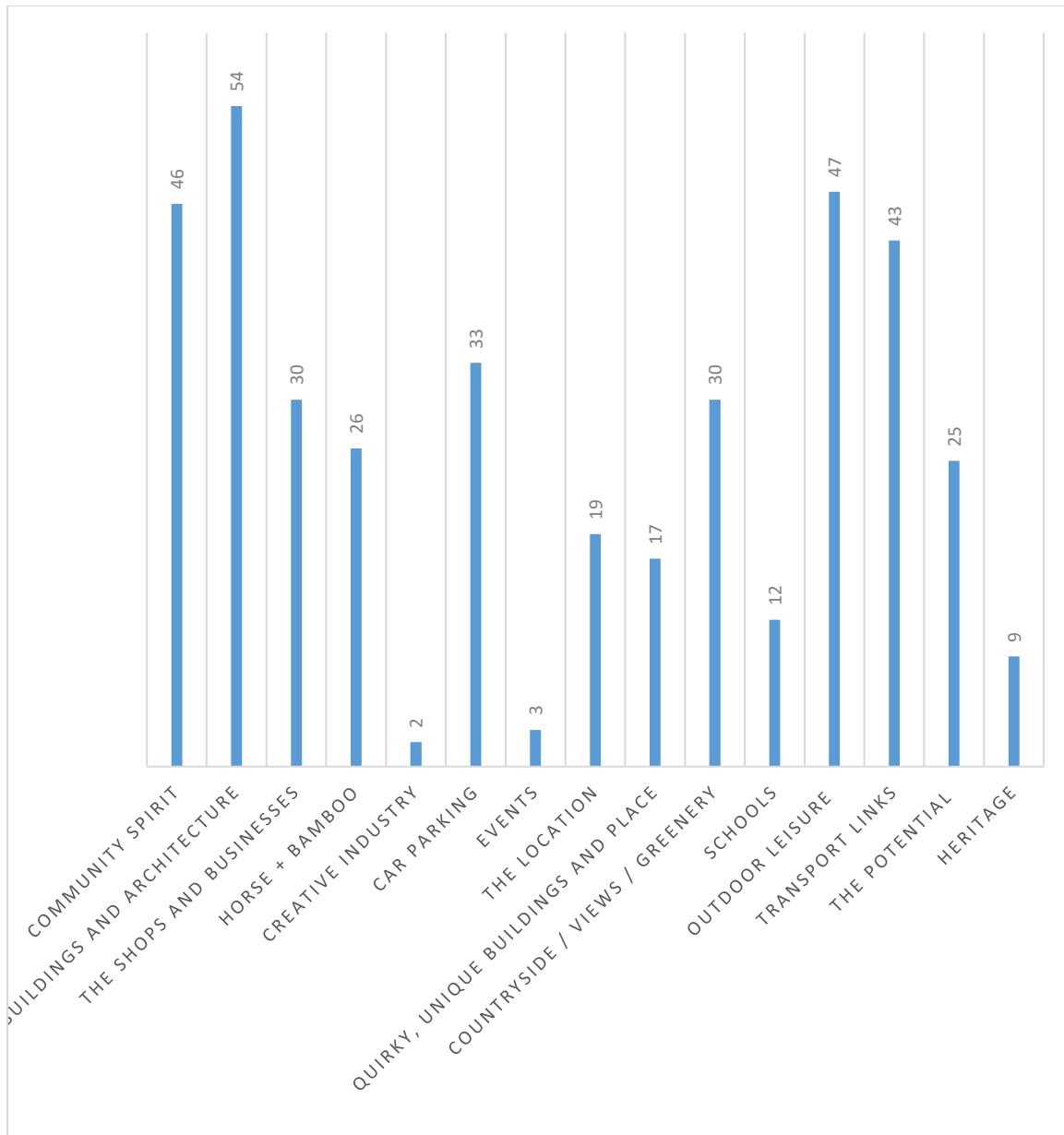




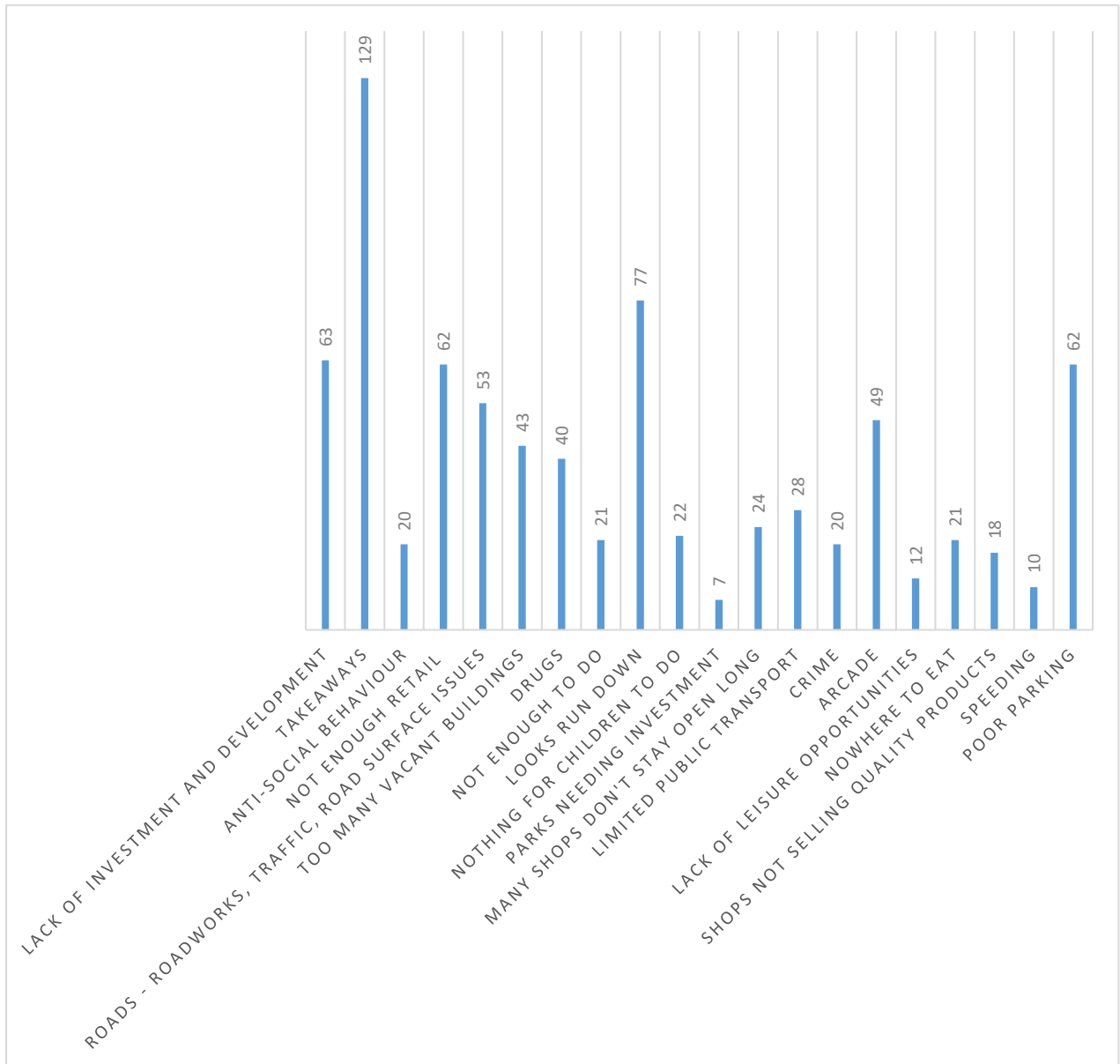
## 16) What do you love about Waterfoot?



17) What are the strengths of Waterfoot when compared with other areas of Rossendale and East Lancashire?



18) What do you feel the main challenges are in Waterfoot?





<b>Subject:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report and Work Programme	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication		
<b>Report to:</b>	Council	<b>Date:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024		
<b>Report of:</b>	Committee & Member Services Manager	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Environment and Corporate Services		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Special Urgency</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	<b>Attached:</b>	No	
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	<b>Attached:</b>	No	
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Carolyn Sharples	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706 252422		
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:carolynsharples@rossendalebc.gov.uk">carolynsharples@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>				

## 1 RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the Annual Report 2023/24 and Work Programme 2024/25.

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The annual report informs of the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2023/24 and section 6 highlights how scrutiny has made a difference.
- The work programme at section 12 details the proposed scrutiny items for 2024/25.

## 3 BACKGROUND

The annual report and work programme are required to be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and agreed at Full Council each year.

## 4 DETAILS

- 4.1 The annual report and work programme summarises the work undertaken during 2023/24 and sets out the proposed work to be carried out by the committee during the coming year in 2024/25. The work programme provides a draft of what is expected to be brought before the committee in 2024/25 and is a working document which allows for fluidity and for new items to be added as required.
- 4.2 The report was sent to Corporate Management Team for their input into the proposed agenda items and timescales for planned work, and a consultation meeting took place with the chair, vice-chair and officers on 5<sup>th</sup> June. The report was also presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024.
- 4.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made a recommendation for Council to approve the Annual Report for 2023/24 and Work Programme for 2024/25.

## 5 RISK

There are no specific risk issues to consider arising from this report.

## 6 FINANCE

All work must be contained within existing budgets and resources.

## 7 LEGAL

The committee is required to produce an Annual Report for Full Council.

**8 POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific policy and equalities implications. All work undertaken by the committee will have regard to equalities and follow Council policy.

**9 REASON FOR DECISION**

To inform of the work carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2023/24 and outline of the work to be carried out during 2024/25.

No background papers.

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee



**Annual Report 2023/24 and  
Work Programme 2024/25**



## **Foreword from the 2023/24 Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Councillor Samara Barnes**



This report highlights the activity and work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the period of 2023/24 and the expected programme of work for 2024/25.

The committee has been extremely busy during 2023/24, which is reflected in the list of policy items, performance reviews, external scrutiny and task and finish group work which has been undertaken over the course of the year. We are also pleased to highlight how scrutiny has made a difference at section 6.

It is important for scrutiny members to be involved at an early stage to influence the decision making process and to play an important role as 'critical friend' to Cabinet. This ensures the Council's policies and procedures are robust and also supports good governance and effective decision making. The report highlights which policies, plans and strategies have come before the committee for pre-decision review and where changes have been implemented to strengthen policies and processes.

This year there has been a more focussed work programme, and where suitable, reports have been circulated for comment and updates have been provided by briefing notes to allow the committee more time to focus its attention on more significant items.

The committee is also committed to continued development, and this year members have participated in external training provided by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. Continued development in scrutiny will ensure we continue to add value in the work we do.

As always, I would like to thank all members of the committee for the contributions they have made throughout the year, in addition to supporting officers and those external to the Council who have provided us with their knowledge and expertise to assist us with our committee and task and finish work.

## **Message from the Lead Member 2023/24 Councillor Adrian Lythgoe**



The overview and scrutiny process ensures that both Council services and those services of its partners, are delivered in an appropriate way and encourages further development and improvements for members of the local community who access these services.

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to support and challenge the Cabinet and provides assurance in respect of policy development and review, acting as a 'critical friend'.

Whilst Cabinet members regularly attend the committee meetings, the updates to Cabinet from the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny has kept Lead Members fully briefed on the work being undertaken. This assists our work in capturing suggestions for further improvement of public services.

Both councillors and officers continue to work together to ensure the best provision of services for the people of Rossendale.

## Annual Report 2023/24

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Overview and scrutiny is a way of achieving open and democratic accountability for the provision of public services. Local authorities operating an Executive Leader and Cabinet Model have an overview and scrutiny function which is carried out by non-Cabinet members who act as a critical friend to the Cabinet to hold them to account. In Rossendale the committee is politically balanced and made up of 10 councillors and one co-opted member. Overview and Scrutiny is not a decision making committee, but is there to monitor and influence those that are, i.e. the Cabinet. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee report their work back to the Cabinet who then decide whether recommendations will be accepted, and if not, explain their reasons for their decision.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a role in performance monitoring, and also policy development and review. The committee also undertakes more in-depth reviews by establishing task and finish groups. These are usually comprised of five politically balanced councillors (non-Cabinet members), who review specific issues and make recommendations for change and improvements, for example, in policy or service provisions. Task and finish groups are limited to a maximum of two operating at any one time to ensure there are sufficient resources to undertake an effective review.
- 1.3 Overview and scrutiny is not a mechanism for the investigation or settlement of individual complaints, as the Council has a separate complaints/member enquiry process for this. Nor can the committee look at individual planning or licensing decisions.
- 1.4 The committee welcomes suggestions for investigation and suggestions can be put forward at any time. Any suggestions received are considered as part of the work planning process for the Annual Work Programme.
- 1.5 The Council continues to work in line with statutory guidance and the Constitution, and where possible the chair, vice-chair and relevant officers attend North West Employers' Scrutiny Networks to keep up to date on the latest developments in scrutiny.

### **2. Internal scrutiny**

#### **Policy scrutiny**

#### **2.1 Pre-decision**

During 2023/24 the committee was consulted on a variety of strategies, policies and plans. Feedback and recommendations were sought on the following prior to a decision being made or prior to further development:

- Housing Benefit War Pension and Armed Forces Disregard Policy
- Communications Strategy 2023-25
- Disabled Facilities Grant Policy Review (Housing Assistance Policy)
- Retention and Disposal Policy

A briefing note on the Climate Change Strategy was also circulated to provide members with a progress update.

## **Performance scrutiny**

### **2.2 Quarterly Performance Reports**

The committee continued to monitor quarterly performance reports (which incorporate the quarterly update on the use of RIPA). If required, the committee can call a relevant senior officer to the committee meeting to answer questions and provide further clarification, or matters can be scrutinised in more depth through the Performance Management Task and Finish Group and fed back to the next committee. During 2023/24 the Head of People and Policy provided the quarterly updates to the committee and provided further clarification where requested.

### **2.3 Performance reviews and ongoing monitoring**

The committee received a variety of performance updates during 2023/24 with some items being part of the work programme and some being brought to Overview and Scrutiny for a specific reason for discussion. This internal review and monitoring activity included:

- Annual Equality Workforce Profile – this item is required to be reported to the committee on an annual basis to review the Council’s workforce profile.
- Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter and Council Feedback Update – this item is required to be reported to the committee on an annual basis and reviews the annual breakdown of formal complaints and compliments.
- Customer & Digital Strategy Projects Update – this item was included in the work programme as a briefing update and provided the opportunity to review the progress of year 1 and year 2 projects as well as inform of the work to be completed in year 3.
- Health and Well-being Plan Update – this item was included in the work programme as a briefing update and provided the opportunity to review the progress of the Health and Well-being Plan.
- Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)/Incorporating the Local Development Scheme – the AMR is required on an annual basis to report on the delivery of the Adopted Rossendale Local Plan, as agreed by the committee on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022. This was distributed to all members to keep them updated of its progress.

An Ease the Squeeze Update was also provided to keep members updated on the package of support the Council was delivering to help Rossendale residents through the cost of living crisis.

## **3. External scrutiny**

The committee received a number of presentations and updates from external organisations, which are summarised as follows:

### **3.1 Lancashire Constabulary**

As set out in the Overview and Scrutiny terms of reference, the committee acts as the Council’s Crime and Disorder Committee under the requirements of the Police and Justice Act and related statutory guidance from the Home Office. Lancashire Constabulary attend the committee each year to give a presentation on performance and progress against crime indicators. Chief Inspector Ogdin and Inspector Grey attended in January 2024 to provide the annual update and answered questions from committee members. They also provided a specific update on tackling anti-social



behaviour, particularly in relation to off road bikes. As a result of the update the committee asked Cabinet to ensure that Council officers were working as closely as possible with the Police in relation to dealing with off-road bikes.

### 3.2 Citizens Advice

In February Citizens Advice (East Lancashire) provided a briefing for members on their work and range of services offered. They informed how they were funded and noted how Council funding assisted them in attracting additional external sources of funding. They reported on their key outcomes and achievements over the last 12 months as well as highlighting the continued increase in enquires relating to the cost of living, including energy and food.

The following key points were noted from the update:

- According to the 2019 Indices of Deprivation, Rossendale was in the top 20% for employment deprivation in England and the service was working in partnership with Rossendale Works/Active Lancashire to help offer paid employment and work placements.
- At the time of the briefing, the areas with the highest number of cost of living issues in Rossendale were Worsley and Irwell wards.
- Since October last year, the top three types of assistance enquiry related to energy, debt and Personal Independence Payments (PIP).
- Since early 2022 there had been a 150% increase in the number of people contacting the service for charitable support and food bank assistance.

### 3.3 Credit Unions

The credit unions provided briefing notes to keep the committee updated regarding their work. This included the types of accounts available (for savings and loans), membership information and other services offered, such as their members being able to join Family Funeral Plans. They were also planning volunteer recruitment drives to help attract additional admin staff and board members.

In January, the First Choice Credit Union highlighted the following key points:

- Savings had decreased since 2021 whilst the amount out on loan had increased (including the number of Family Loans).
- There had been an increase in the usage of the mobile app including from established members, and the number of enquiries to the telephone and online service had also increased this year.
- Through the partnership with Fairquid, the number of employers engaged had increased, which would subsequently increase the number of new members and loans issued.
- Over the last year improvements had been made to the website and social media presence to engage more people in the local community.

In February, Bacup Credit Union highlighted the following key points:

- Total loans and advances to members on the 30th September was £200,158. The majority of loans were top up loans and there was a decrease in the overall amounts loaned in 2023, reflecting hardship in the local financial climate.
- The liquidity ratio was in keeping with national requirements for Credit Unions (5.41%).
- This year the use of the online web service had increased, along with significant increases in the use of the telephone service. There would be

further focus on IT infrastructure updates and they were looking to exploit social media more effectively in 2024 in order to to increase the loan book by 10% and increase memberships.

- They had successfully relaunched the schools service and had also facilitated office work experience placements for students.

### 3.4 Leisure

In September 2023 the Chief Executive of Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT), Samantha Sandford, provided a mid-year financial and performance update to the committee and highlighted key achievements as well as the planned ongoing work throughout the remainder of the financial year. Members noted the improvement in the quality of the data and information presented. A further update will be provided in June 2024 to reflect on the progress of the business plan for 2023/24 and to share the expectations of the business plan for 2024/25.

## 4. **Health scrutiny**

4.1 At the time of writing the report, the Lead Member for Health and Leisure is the East Lancashire representative for the Lancashire Leaders Group on Lancashire County Council Health and Wellbeing Board and also represents the Council on the Rossendale Health and Well-being Partnership and Lancashire County Council Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee.

4.2 The Rossendale Health and Wellbeing Partnership is open to any councillor to attend and issues of concern can be raised via the Lead Member for Health and Leisure for any of these meetings.

4.3 In November 2023 the committee was provided with a briefing note update on the Health and Well-being Plan which highlighted the progress made to date against the four priorities. The update also informed of the newly formed Men's health network led by a member of Men in Sheds, Haslingden; the Council's continued support in promoting warm and welcome places for local people and where they were available during the Winter of 2023, and the staff wellbeing day which had been held 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023. Other health events supporting the priorities of the Health and Well-being Plan included:

- The Big Mental Health Connect event delivered by Rossendale Connected on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and the Big Physical Activity Connect event funded by TaAF on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at the Ashcroft, Whitworth. Big connect activities take place around every 6 months with different themes from the Health and Wellbeing Plan.
- The first Park Run for Rossendale organised with Together an Active Future (TaAF) on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2023 in Victoria Park, Haslingden, which now takes place every week with around 90 participants. On the success of this a junior park run in Stubblelee Park is also being planned.

## 5. **Task and finish group work in 2023/24**

### 5.1 Road Safety

This work took place from September 2023 with the aim of helping residents feel safer when walking and cycling in their local communities by raising awareness of current safety issues and identifying best practice and how this could be implemented in Rossendale. A final report will be presented once the draft recommendations have been considered by relevant consultees.

- 5.2 Copies of task and finish group reports are available on the council's website via the link below:  
[https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/downloads/download/10718/task\\_and\\_finish\\_group\\_reports](https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/downloads/download/10718/task_and_finish_group_reports)

## 6. How has scrutiny made a difference?

- 6.1 Overview and Scrutiny continues to perform the important function of holding the executive (the Cabinet) to account, carrying out task and finish work and reviewing policies and strategies before implementation. For 2023/24 the following is worth noting:

- 6.2 Quarterly performance monitoring:

- Quarter 4 2022/23 – discussions focussed on temporary accommodation for homeless, RAG ratings, planning application targets, the regular review of all milestones, risks and key performance indicators, applying lessons learned and monitoring, the progress on the enforcement contract and Council communications procedures. As a result of the discussions, several actions were recommended and actioned as follows:
  - o *To bring the Communications Plan to the committee with the channels of communication identified, the process for communications, and how it fits in with the external organisation and how it married together with the Communications Plan.* This led to the amended Communications Strategy 2023-25 being presented to the committee, which was subsequently approved by Cabinet.
  - o *To let Overview and Scrutiny have sight of the new quarterly report before the September meeting to enable the committee to ensure there are clear markers for milestones on corporate projects and to better assist the Council in setting realistic targets.* Following the meeting, the committee attended a workshop with Corporate Management Team to discuss this work further. A copy of the new report was also circulated to members prior to the September committee meeting.
  
- Quarter 1 2023/24 – discussions focussed on previous cost savings, website information, ageing workforce and the measure for Priority 1 – A Thriving Local Economy. As a result of the discussions, several actions were recommended and actioned as follows:
  - o *To put a covering message on the Economic Development websites to say that information was currently under review.* This led to a message being added to the Invest in Rossendale website stating that the site would be undergoing updates and maintenance throughout February 2024. Following the request updates on the Visit Rossendale website were also completed and further work was ongoing.
  - o *Regarding the demographic split on the ageing workforce and risk 5, what contingencies were being put in place as mitigation for this.* The committee were informed that age demographics of the workforce were reviewed as part of the annual business planning and continuity process. Plans were also developed to mitigate any risks that impact on staffing levels, including monitoring age profile within the service, recruitment and selection monitoring data, and planned retirements etc



- *To review whether the performance measure “Engagements with the Visit Rossendale Website” was an effective measure for Priority 1 – A Thriving Local Economy.* Following further review by Corporate Management Team and Cabinet members, this performance measure was subsequently removed.
- Quarter 2 2023/24 – discussions focussed on processes around staff leaving the authority, recycling rates, processes for complaints and enquiries and the target for new housing completion completions. As a result of the discussions, several actions were recommended and actioned as follows:
  - *For the Head of Operations to attend when the next quarterly report is presented to provide further clarity on member questions, particularly in relation to the next steps to improve recycled waste following the recent campaign.* Further information and clarification was provided by the Head of Operations when he attended the February meeting. Whilst the Check before you Chuck campaign had been well recognised, the Council would be focussing on engaging schools with recycling until the new requirements for food waste had been introduced.
  - *To provide examples in the next report of sites under development in relation to the new homes performance indicator.* An update was provided to members and information would be included in future reports where relevant.
  - *To follow up an error being reported on the Council Tax application system.* As a result members were subsequently informed that the error affected management information only and not claimants’ entitlement. The issue would be fixed with the next software release.
- Quarter 3 2023/24 – discussions focussed on town centre vibrancy, waste collections and recycling, road sweeping, new homes figures, complaint responses and Council websites. As a result of the discussions, the following action was recommended and actioned as follows:
  - *To review and rationalise the Council’s websites after considering customer use and place an “under review” message on any sites not fully up to date (e.g. Visit Rossendale).* There were further updates to the Visit Rossendale website and the site would continue to be reviewed and amended.

6.3 Policy development – the committee was consulted and provided feedback on policies before they were approved by Full Council or Cabinet and this included the annual budget reports. The following policies were revised prior to approval following recommendations made by the committee:

**Communications Strategy 2023-25** - the committee recommended the following and subsequent changes were made prior to Cabinet approval:

- Making it clear in the report that the Council was working closely with an external provider.
- Making reference to how the decision was made to use an external company.
- Including information to detail what provision was required when the service was contracted out.

## 2024/25 Work Programme

### **7. Introduction**

- 7.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to produce and agree an Annual Work Programme which sets out the expected work to be carried out in the coming year.
- 7.2 As well as outlining the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the programme should also identify proposed work to be undertaken by task and finish groups, of which there can be two running at any one time.

### **8. Cabinet involvement**

- 8.1 As well as being able to make work programme suggestions, Cabinet has previously resolved that Council grant recipients provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on their work. Citizens Advice and the Credit Unions have continued to provide updates to the committee annually.

### **9. Standing agenda items**

The Council's Constitution outlines the items Overview and Scrutiny considers on a regular basis. In addition, Overview and Scrutiny can look at other non-key decisions/updates as required. The items outlined in the Constitution are detailed below:

- 9.1 Routine monitoring of the performance of the Council  
To review on a quarterly basis the Performance Report and invite officers of the Council to attend a future meeting if their service area is under-achieving on its target. Alternatively, if a service area is falling behind on their targets, the Performance Management Task and Finish Group may be re-convened to look into the matter.
- 9.2 Policy development  
a) To deal with emerging policy and assist the Council in reviewing and developing policy as detailed in the Forward Plan.  
b) Review and scrutinise decisions taken internally by the Cabinet, individual Cabinet members or officers of the Council.
- 9.3 Scrutiny of the Council's budget  
To be consulted and make recommendations on the Council's annual budget setting.
- 9.4 Complaints/compliments  
a) To monitor formal complaints received by the Council  
b) To receive information on the number of compliments received for each service area  
c) To monitor Ombudsman enquiries via the annual letter from the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 9.5 Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)  
To deal with any relevant Councillor Call for Action requests and determine the appropriate course of action.

- 9.6 Call-In  
To scrutinise decisions referred under the Council's Call-In Procedure.
- 9.7 Forward Plan  
To monitor the Forward Plan and agree those policies to be scrutinised prior to decision by Cabinet/Full Council.
- 9.8 To act as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee  
To review local performance and progress against crime indicators.
- 9.9 External/partner scrutiny  
To receive information from external organisations and partners whose operations affect the area to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working (with particular emphasis on those who receive funding from the Council).
- 9.10 Leisure scrutiny  
To monitor the performance of Rossendale Leisure Trust.

## **10. Drafting the 2024/25 Work Programme**

- 10.1 The draft work programme in the table below is based on updates requested at previous committees, items identified from the Forward Plan and the standing items outlined in the terms of reference and as summarised in section 9.
- 10.2 Although the work programme is formally agreed, it may be amended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required. The table at section 12 sets out the basic agendas and planned reports/updates going to each committee. It is important to ensure that there is room for task and finish group reports and for any other items or policies, which may be added to the Forward Plan during the year.
- 10.3 This document was presented to Corporate Management Team on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024 for advice, and comments regarding the items and suggested timescales. A meeting was also held with the chair and vice-chair and officers on 5<sup>th</sup> June to discuss the draft Work Programme and plan how to implement the agreed items. Following these consultations the draft work programme for 2024/25 at section 12 has been proposed.

## **11. Conclusion**

- 11.1 The programme provides members with a clear plan of work and engages with our partners and grant recipients. The work programme is a living document and will be amended throughout the year as necessary.
- 11.2 Details of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings for 2024/25 can be found on the Committee Schedule on the Council website: [committee schedule](#)



## 12. Work Programme 2024/25

Date	Topic	Proposed areas in scope	Suggested Approach
Jun	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report and Work Programme (standing item)	To examine the previous year's progress and review the draft work programme for year ahead.	Report for comment
	Corporate Plan Update (standing item)	To review the annual update with a specific focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific objectives and priorities</li> <li>• Reviewing the action plan and performance monitoring</li> </ul>	Committee report
	Rosendale Leisure Trust Annual Report and Annual Update (external scrutiny) - confidential	To scrutinise the report against the action plan with a specific focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the partner is improving outcomes for residents e.g. health, leisure, culture</li> <li>• Examining how the 2024/25 plan will be implemented</li> <li>• Performance monitoring against the 2023/24 action plan</li> </ul>	Committee presentation/ report
	Cabinet and Council reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
Jul	Rosendale Borough Council senior management workshop	Review of policy, performance and value for money	Workshop
	Future task and finish topics	Agree task and finish programme	Workshop
Sep	Quarter 4 performance report (standing item)	To scrutinise the performance of the council's services and corporate projects.	Report for comment
	Workforce Profile Report (standing item)	To scrutinise the workforce profile in relation to equalities.	Report for comment
	Ombudsman's Annual Letter Annual Council Complaints Review (standing item)	To scrutinise the Council's performance in dealing with/responding to complaints.	Report for comment
	Cabinet and Council reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document</li> <li>• Open Space and Outdoor Sports Supplementary Planning Document</li> <li>• Climate Change Consultation</li> </ul>	Report for comment Report for comment Committee report

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Housing Allowance Safeguarding Policy</li> </ul>	Report for comment
Nov	Together Housing	<p>To scrutinise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>value for money regarding service charges</li> <li>evidence from residents associations</li> <li>arrangements for dealing with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>anti-social behaviour</li> <li>housing condition improvements</li> <li>vulnerable residents</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Deep dive session
Nov	Quarter 1 performance report (standing item)	To scrutinise the performance of the council's services and corporate projects.	Report for comment
	Health and Well-being Plan Review (performance scrutiny)	<p>To scrutinise the Rossendale Health and Well-being Plan with a specific focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the plan and community partners are improving health outcomes for residents</li> <li>Monitoring outcomes against the action plan</li> <li>Constructively challenging the specific health objectives and priorities</li> </ul>	Briefing note
	Feedback from Together Housing Deep Dive session	Members to feed back on the Deep Dive session with Together Housing	Deep dive feedback
	Cabinet and Council reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
Jan	Lancashire Constabulary Annual Update (external scrutiny – statutory standing item)	<p>To scrutinise (as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee) the effectiveness of external partners in improving the lives of Rossendale residents with a specific focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the partner is improving outcomes for residents e.g. crime outcomes</li> <li>How effectively are partners using any council funding (where applicable)</li> <li>How the council can work more effectively with partners in the future</li> </ul>	Committee Presentation
	Quarter 2 performance report (standing item)	To scrutinise the performance of the council's services and corporate projects.	Report for comment
	Citizens Advice Annual Update (external scrutiny)	To scrutinise the effectiveness of external partners in improving the lives of Rossendale residents with a specific focus on:	Briefing note

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the partner is improving outcomes for residents e.g. well-being</li> <li>• How effectively are partners using any council funding</li> <li>• How the council can work more effectively with partners in the future</li> </ul>	
	Cabinet and Council reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
Feb	2025/26 Council Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (standing item)	To scrutinise the draft budget for 2025/26 with a specific focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation of resources</li> <li>• Planned fees and charges</li> </ul>	Committee report
	Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2025/26 (standing item)	To scrutinise the draft Capital Strategy and Capital Programme for 2025/26 with a specific focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation of resources</li> <li>• Planned projects</li> </ul>	Committee report
	Cabinet and Council reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
Mar	Quarter 3 performance report (standing item)	To scrutinise the performance of the council's services and corporate projects.	Report for comment
	Cabinet and Council reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
	Communications Strategy Action Plan	To scrutinise performance against the action plan.	Committee report

**Other reports expected during 2024/25:**

Council Tax and Non-Domestic Debt Management Policy