

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

BASELINE STAGE REPORT

March to August 2020

September 2020



WAKEFIELD CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN

Introduction

This report has been prepared by UK Networks on behalf of Farrells and summarises the consultation undertaken during the Stage 1 Baseline Report on the Wakefield City Centre Masterplan, specifically;

- The approach to consultation and engagement
- Consultation and engagement activity undertaken between March - August 2020
- A high-level summary of feedback received from stakeholders and the general public regarding their views on the future of Wakefield City Centre during that time

The report only relates to the Stage one (Baseline report) and provides a summary only. Further information containing all feedback received can be found in the main report.

Feedback received during this stage will be used to inform Farrell's work on the Wakefield City Centre Masterplan, which will be consulted on separately early next year in 2021.

Key considerations

In preparing the consultation and engagement strategy the following considerations were given to:

- Respecting Government advice on social distancing, protecting the NHS and keeping vulnerable people safe during the current Covid 19 pandemic
- The Government's Chief Planner's advice to councils (March/April 2020)
- Wakefield Council's Adopted Statement of Community Involvement (November 2017)
- Previous consultations undertaken in relation to Wakefield City Centre
- The use of digital technology to overcome the restrictions and to help engage a much wider audience than traditional means typically do.

Targeted stakeholder groups

Public sector organisations	Amenity organisations
Councillors	Transport operators
Cultural organisations	Residents
City Centre Taskforce	Parish councils
Business groups	Local businesses
Education institutions	Community organisations
Major landowners	Member of Parliament
Retailers	Visitors to Wakefield
Regional and local Media	

There were two parts to the Stage One consultation:

1. Focused engagement with key stakeholders
2. Public Consultation

1. ENGAGEMENT WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Focused engagement with key stakeholders was undertaken using a variety of methods including letters, online surveys, video meetings and briefings and via the digital hub set up specifically for stakeholders.

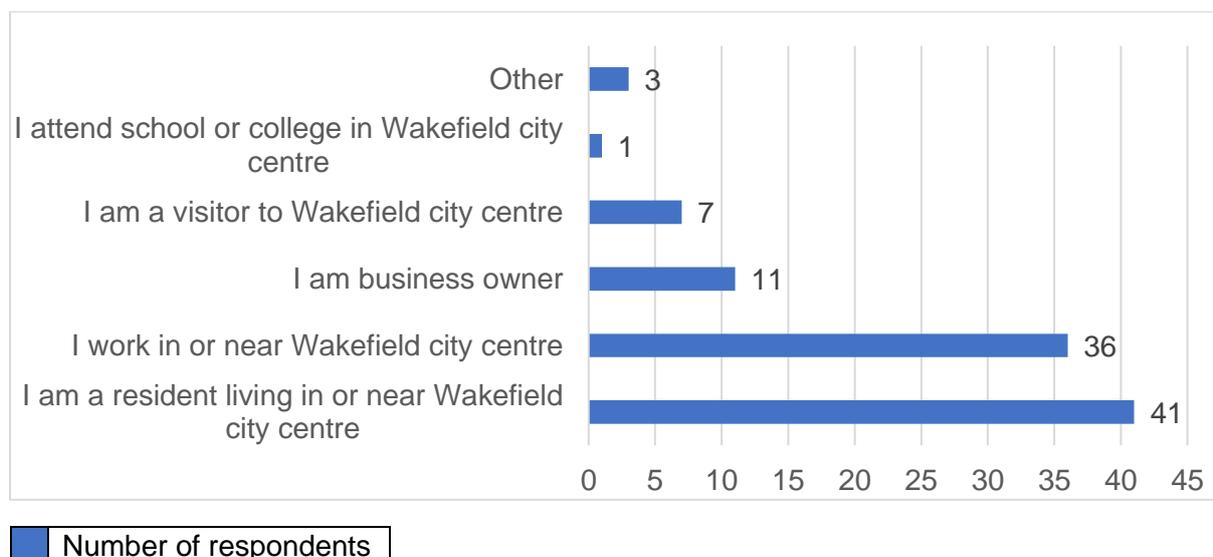
Stakeholder profile

Stakeholders engaged during this stage included:

15 Wakefield Council Officer (Test Workshop)	Paul Wright, New River Retail
Claire Elliot, Wakefield Council	Members of the Business Resilience Forum (via Imran Ahmad Khan MP)
Janet Brown, Wakefield Council	Jane Hunt, Wakefield Council
Tom Stannard, Wakefield Council	Lee Appleton, The Ridings Shopping Centre
Julie Russell, Wakefield Council	Andrew Weaver, Strata Homes
Ben Cooke, Wakefield Council	Gemma Smith, Nigel Robson, Strata Homes
City Centre Ward Members	Andy Wallhead, Wakefield District Housing
City Centre Task Force Members	Lee Carnley, Vickers Carnley
Imran Ahmad Khan MP	Dai Powell, Avison Young
David Codling, Arcadis	Maddy Sutcliffe, Ian Cockerill – NOVA
Martin Hathaway, Mid Yorkshire Chamber	Ann Cunningham, Art House
Peter Murray, YSP	Claire Lilly, YSP
Jenny Layfield, National Coal Mining Museum	James Curson (Founder), Luke Sowerby (Founder) Stuart Burdon-Bailey (Head of Leisure), Cathedral Retail Park
Gert Corfield (Managing Agent) Beck Retail Park	Sam Wright (Principal) Wakefield College
Claire Nicholson, CAPA	Laurence Perry, Wakefield Grammar
Place Board members	Jim Farmery, Production Park
Katie Town, Theatre Royal Wakefield	

The stakeholder survey asked the following question regarding stakeholder generic profiles

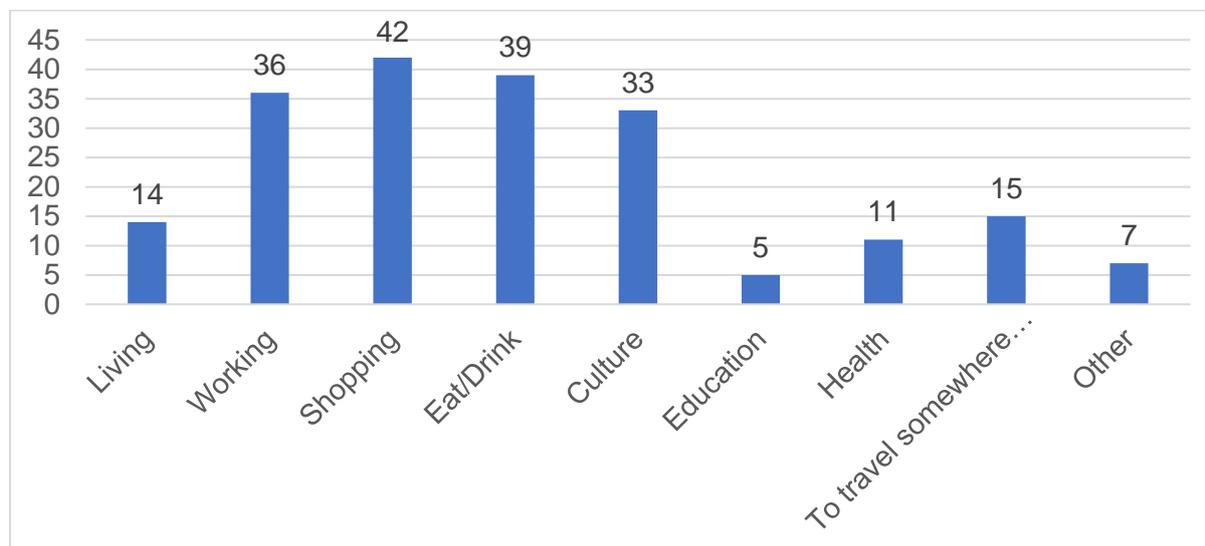
- Which of the below statements best describes you? (you may tick more than one box)



What stakeholder currently use the city centre for

The stakeholder survey asked the following question on stakeholder use of the city centre:

- What do you currently use Wakefield city centre for? (Please tick all relevant boxes)



Number of respondents

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

The stakeholder survey posed a series of questions for stakeholders:

- What do you consider the current Strengths of Wakefield city centre to be? (what is good about it?)
- What do you consider the current Weaknesses of Wakefield city centre to be? (what could be better about?)
- What do you consider are the Opportunities for Wakefield city centre’s future? (what ideas could improve it?)
- What do you consider are potential Threats for the future of Wakefield city centre? (what could prevent progress?)

The specific comments for each of these questions are contained within Appendix 1 of this report. The table overleaf, provides an overview of the emerging themes of those comments.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Location Built Environment Arts, Culture, Creative History, Heritage Community Retail and Leisure	Location Built Environment Retail and Leisure Community Image Arts, Culture History, Heritage Traffic
Opportunities	Threats

Built Environment Image Arts, Culture, Creative Retail and Leisure	Image Arts, Culture, Creative Retail and Leisure Other (Funding, Covid, Ageing population, Anti-social behaviour)
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Priorities for key interventions (Key themes)

The stakeholder survey asked stakeholders the following question:

- What key intervention e.g. projects, initiatives etc do you believe should be prioritised to improve the city centre?

The table below highlights the key themes and number of quotes relating to these which emerged as well as the specific comments provided by stakeholders.

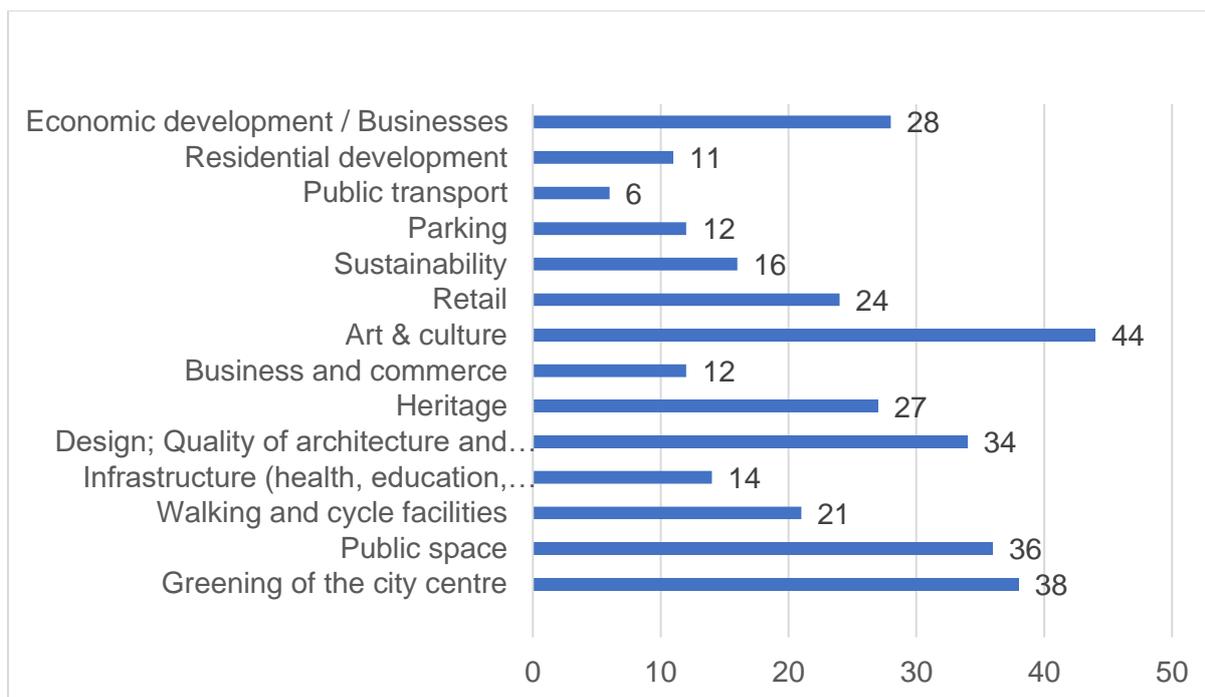
Built Environment (17)	Built Environment
'More green areas, maybe a small play area for children to use.'	'Developing and improving the whole end of the high street towards Kirkgate.'
'New high-quality architecture, a new city centre attraction (something centred on the creative industries).'	'Planting of more trees.'
'high quality public sculpture'	'Cathedral Square - knock down buildings to provide area for cultural/music events.'
'A park or garden by an acclaimed designer'	'Wildflower strips on verges. Tree planting to make areas more attractive and act as sound insulation/pollution catchers in key traffic hotspots and residential areas.'
'Greater pedestrianisation'	'Small areas that encourage playfulness from children or adults in public spaces.'
'Greener connected travel: A tram system.'	'Things that can be touched!'
'redevelopment of the ridings'	'Support for residents to create green space, play space or take ownership of certain areas.'
'redevelopment of Kirkgate'	'More outdoor seating areas'
'create focus around cathedral'	
Other (4)	Commercial property (2)
'A university.'	'Lowering rates/rents to encourage small businesses, there are some good ones but not enough.'
'Free parking.'	
'Better advertising -events that people in Wakefield don't even know about.'	'A huge project that makes empty shop units available to new businesses. The successes in The Ridings are a starting point but there needs to be longer term security. 12-24 month lease terms.'
Community (5)	Arts, Culture, Creative (5)
'Better visible policing.'	'Support to encourage creative industries.'

<p>'Cleaning and clearing of rubbish at waterfront.'</p> <p>'Try and move people on from outside the cathedral when they are being anti social.'</p> <p>'Clean ups, events to bring people to the city centre, more green spaces and public areas which are kept clean and tidy.'</p> <p>'moving on the professional beggars, more support for the meeting places and accommodation for the needy, community projects, like the ArtWalk, more people input to encourage civic pride.'</p>	<p>'More play days and events'</p> <p>'Market days.'</p> <p>'Greater support of the arts & cultural organisations in the city- currently there is a huge disconnect between them & the WDC Arts & Culture officers which needs to be resolved to allow those who can provide the creativity and ideas to redevelop the city centre to do so.'</p> <p>'Encouraging sports teams, particularly football to either have a playing facility with spectator area in the city or through better link ups with existing teams. Wakefield Trinity in the city centre?'</p>
Retail (3)	
<p>'Live music in the city centre - it works in Germany.'</p> <p>'The shopping offer needs to be enhanced, perhaps with more independent retailers, an improved markets offer.'</p> <p>'Support for independent shops.'</p>	

Themes stakeholders are most interested in

The stakeholder survey asked stakeholders to pick the themes they were most interested in:

- Which of the below topics are you most interested in? (Please select a maximum of 5)



Number of respondents

What stakeholders think makes Wakefield unique

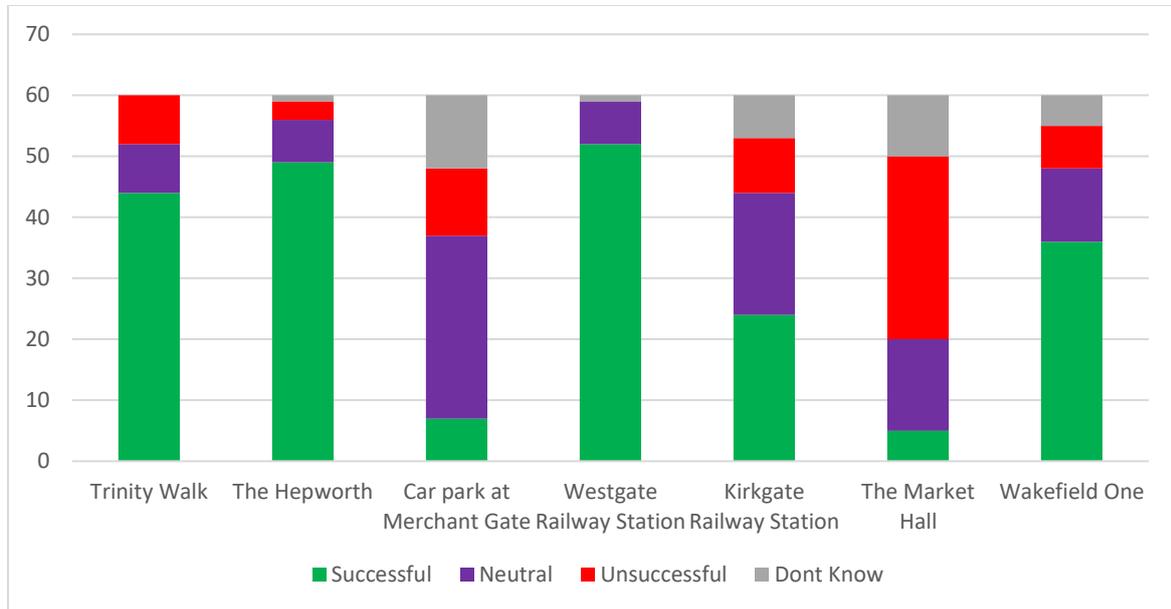
The survey asked stakeholders what they think makes Wakefield unique:

- What do you think makes Wakefield distinctive and unique within West Yorkshire and further afield, including surrounding towns and cities such as Castleford, Pontefract, Leeds etc?

The table below highlights the key themes and specific comments in relation to those.

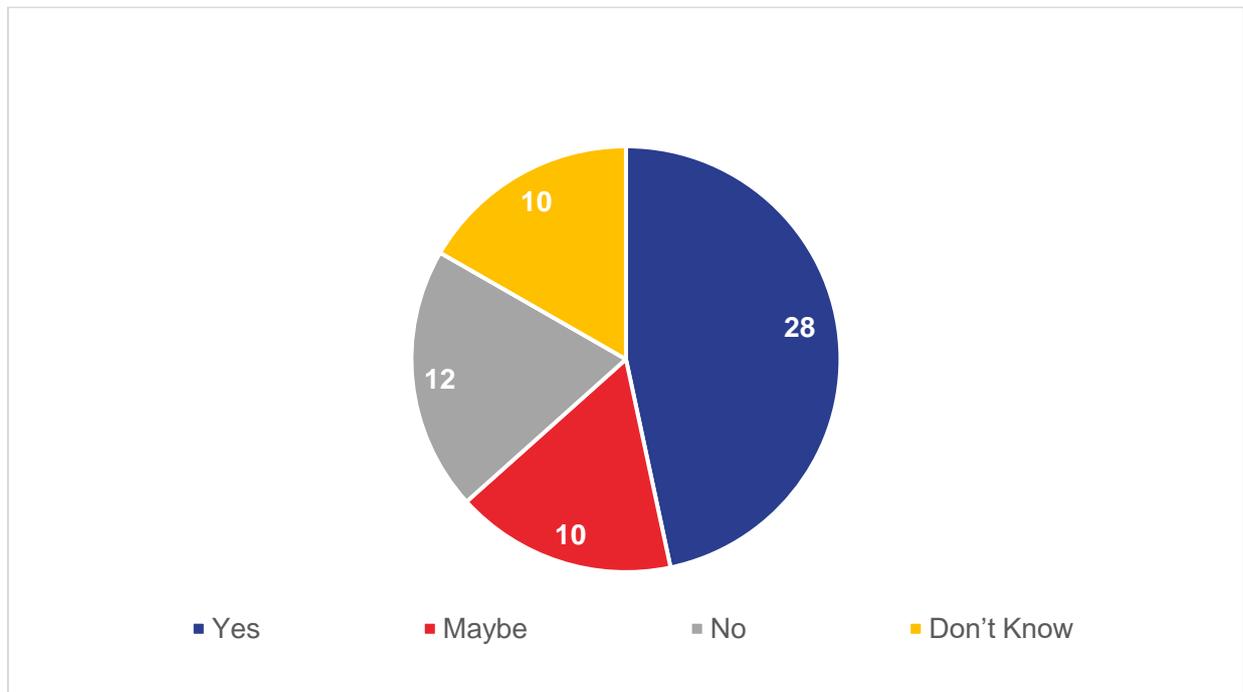
Location (2)	History (3)
'In the heart of the district.'	'West Riding.'
'Proximity to green spaces/countryside.'	'War of the Roses.'
	'The Merrie City.'
Arts, Culture, Creative (7)	Built Environment (5)
'The Hepworth'	'Waterways.'
'Yorkshire Sculpture Park'	'Interesting buildings – the Cathedral, Art House, Town Hall etc'
'The Cathedral and Civic Quarter'	
'Sculpture.'	'Architecture.'
'Amount of cultural orgs for its size.'	'Lack of high rise.'
'Rugby, Rubarb, Sculpture.'	'Connectivity; distinguished civic and heritage buildings; industrial history; cultural attractions.'
'Rhubarb and food festivals.'	

Stakeholder Views on how successful Key Projects in Wakefield have been

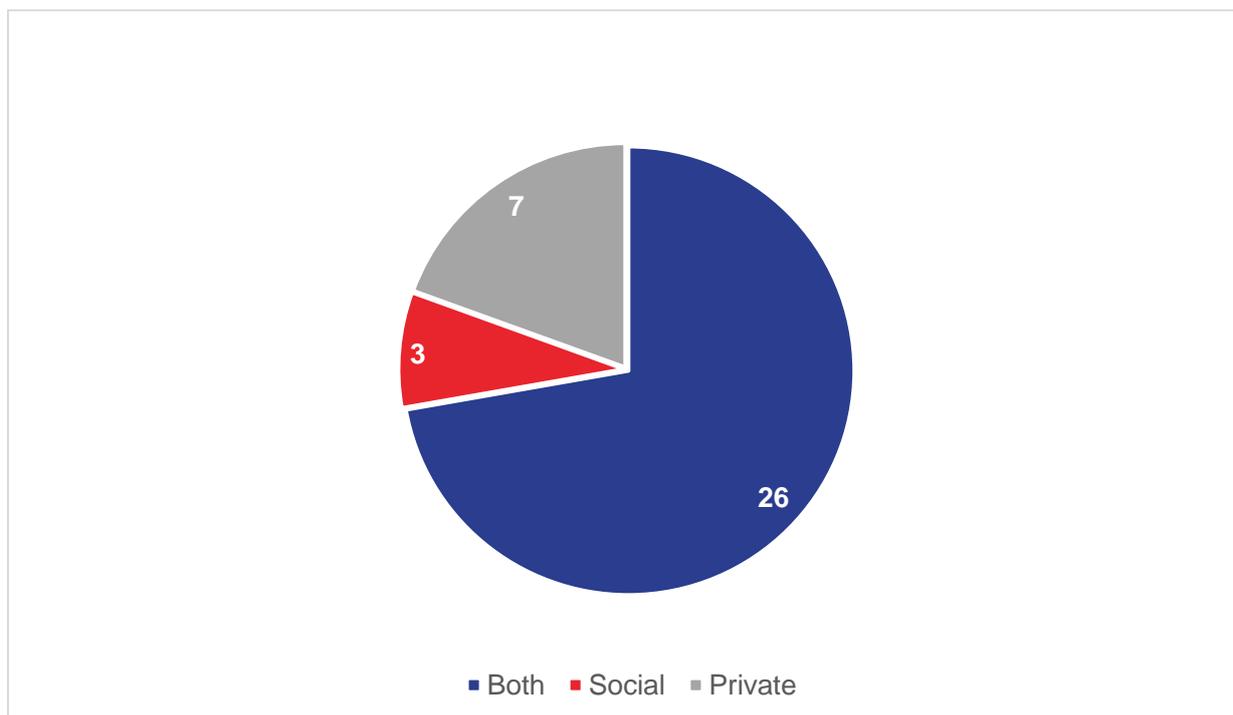


Westgate, The Hepworth Wakefield, Trinity Walk and Wakefield One are viewed as being successful by the majority of stakeholders consulted. The Market Hall is considered the least successful project by stakeholders.

Stakeholder views on whether there is a need for more city centre housing



Stakeholder views on the type of housing that is needed in the city centre



Stakeholder views on potential locations for residential development

	the dead cinema.
Near the railway station	Providence Street, the end near the bus station
Thornes Lane	Northgate
Marsh Way	periphery around Ings road from the prison round to the former bakery and round to Kirkgate station
Civic quarter	The old Clayton Hospital
The old car park at Westgate Train Station	Empty offices above retail such as Wood Street
the old Warburtons Factory on Westgate	Keep Trinity walk but develop rest of areas around cathedral and the precinct keeping nice cafes and shops
Get rid of the massive car parks that are privately owned and charge a fortune	The Ridings
Thomas Lane	Around the Hepworth

2. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Following the focused engagement with key stakeholders a public consultation website www.wakefieldmasterplan.com was launched in July 2020 to seek the views of the public on their thoughts and ideas for Wakefield City Centre.

Publicising the consultation

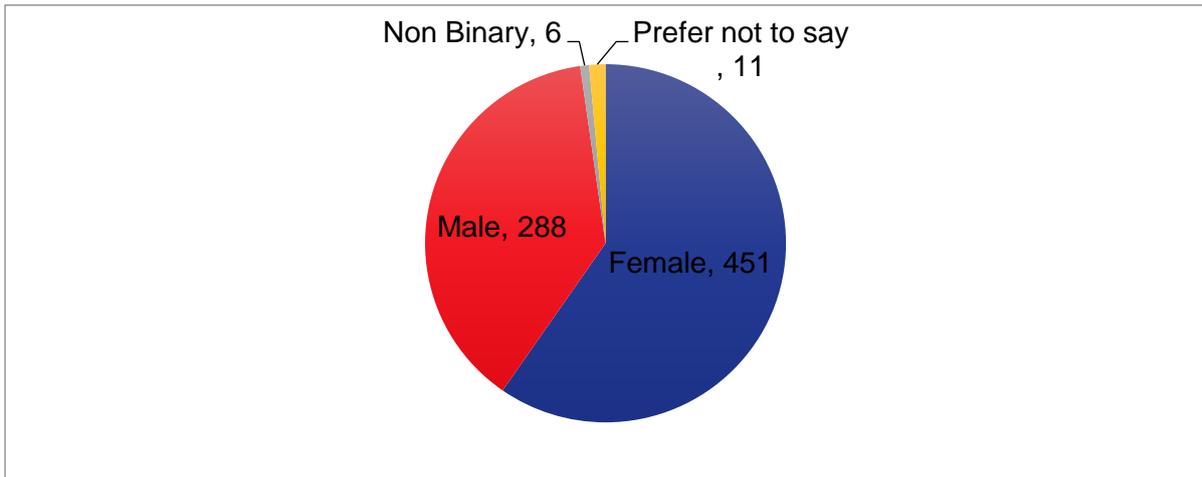
The public consultation website was publicised via:

- A Social Media Campaign – Facebook (Wakefieldmasterplan) Twitter (Wakeymasterplan) and Instagram (Wakefieldmasterplan)
- Advertisement placed in the Wakefield Express
- Press Release issued and article in the Wakefield Express
- Digital advertisement displayed at www.wakefieldexpress.co.uk
- 71 commercial address within the core area sent a stakeholder letter and advertisement poster.
- 261 Letters sent to stakeholders including elected members, businesses, parish councils, community groups etc
- 12 A2 Poster displayed across high foot fall poster location at the Ridings Centre.
- Digital adverts displayed for 7 weeks at the Ridings Centre for use on their large screen located within the centre.
- Digital adverts displayed on large screen at Trinity Walk Shopping Centre for 7 weeks.
- Advert placed in Wakefield District Housing's e-newsletter sent to 17,124 tenants.
- Digital advert displayed at Wakefield District Housing's Community Hubs and Service Access Points
- A3 posters sent to Councillors from wards 16,17 & 20
- A3 posters sent to local organisations including The Hepworth Wakefield, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield Cathedral, National Coal Museum, The Art House.
- Every person listed within the stakeholder database also received an e-version of the stakeholder letter and digital advert.

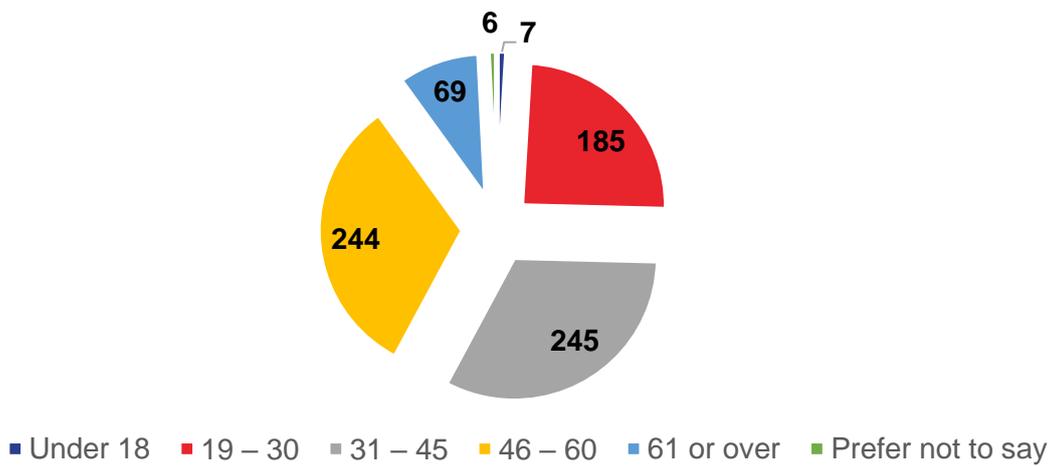
Consultation in numbers

- 3128 website views
- 816 survey responses
- 2793 social media post engagements
- 28,188 social media posts reached
- 17,124 WDH residents received e-newsletter

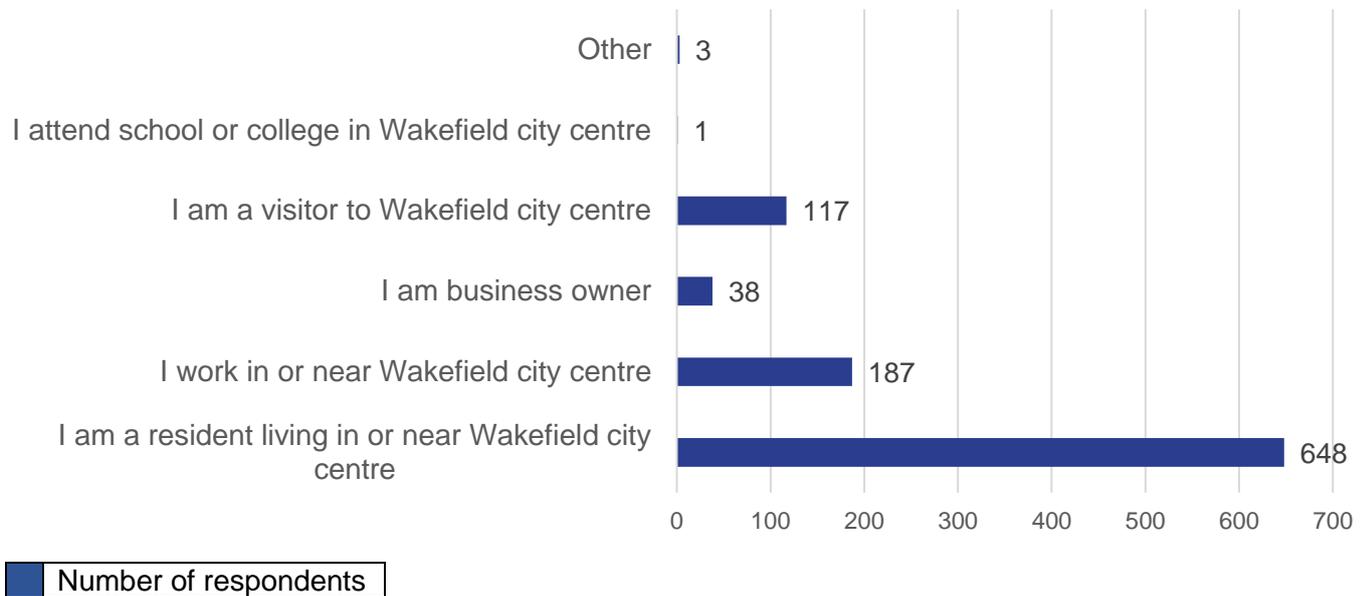
Gender of survey respondents



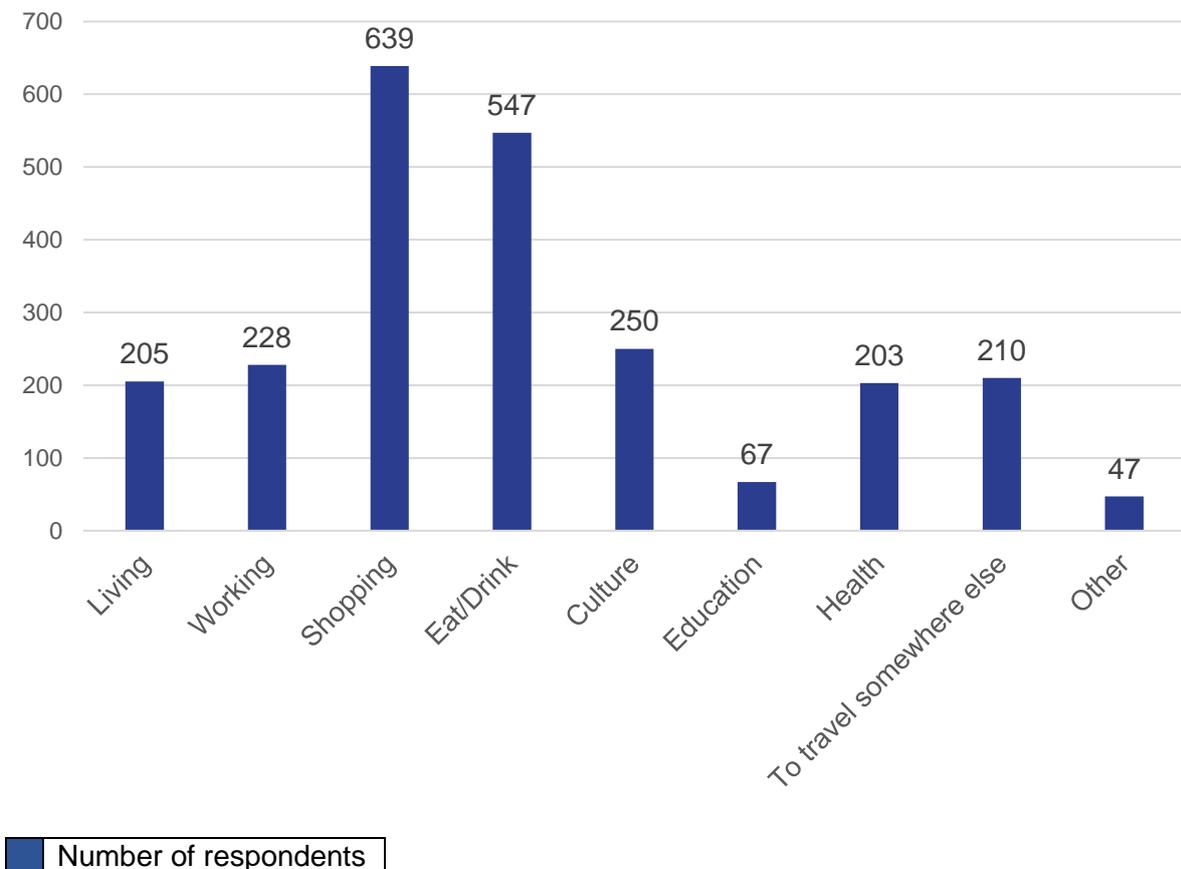
Age range of survey respondents



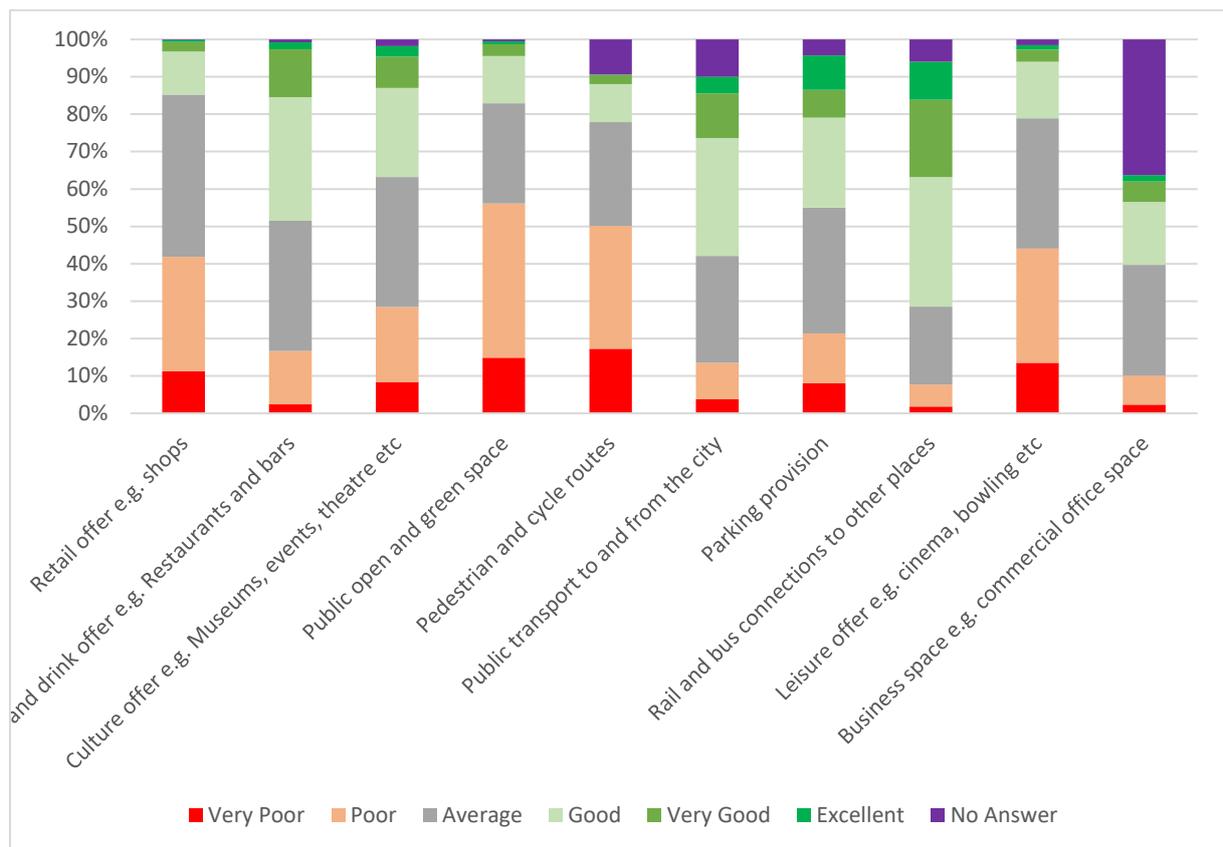
Survey respondent profile



What survey respondents currently use Wakefield City Centre for



How survey respondents currently rate key elements of the City Centre

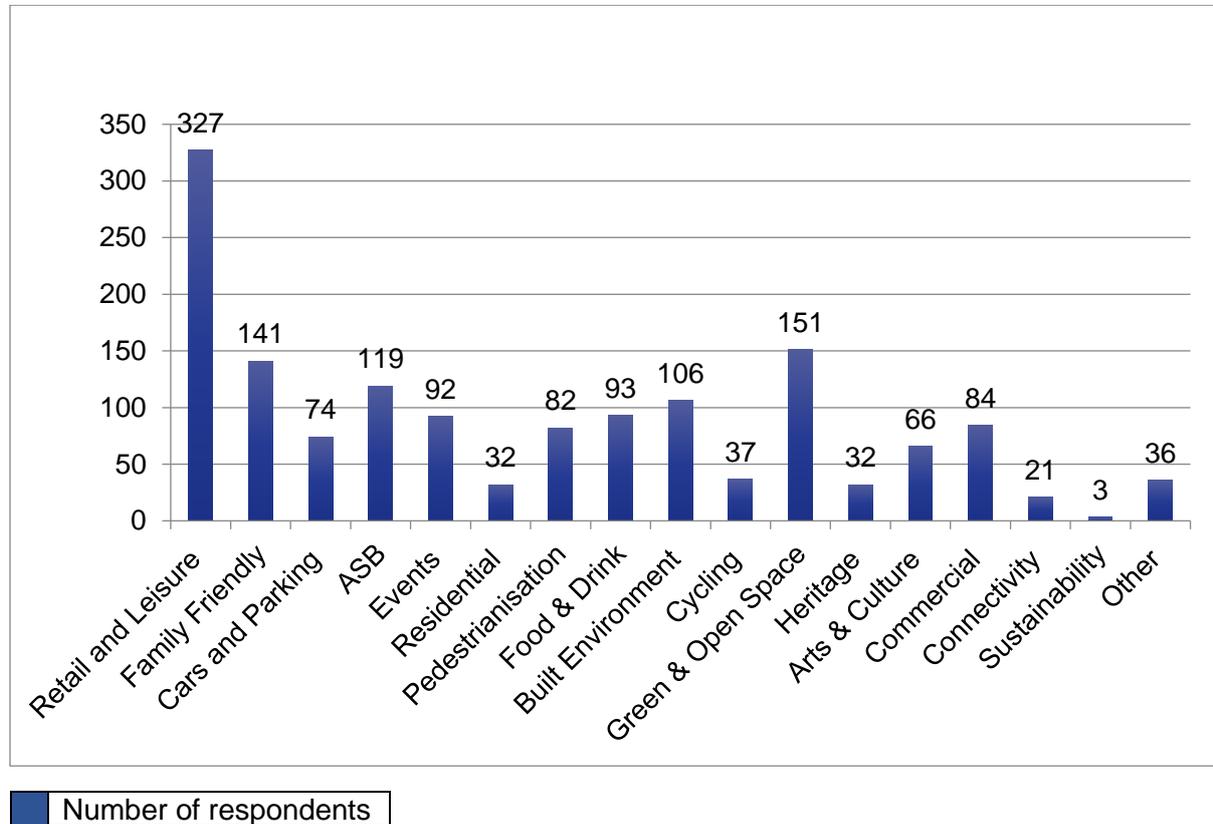


- The retail offer is considered by just under 60% of respondents to be at least Average to Very Good
- The food and drink offer is considered by over 80% of respondents to be at least Average to Very Good or Excellent.
- Just under 30% of respondents consider the Cultural offer to be poor or very poor with the majority rating it as Average to Excellent.
- Over 80% of respondents considered public open and green space to be Average to poor and very poor.
- Just 15% of respondents considered pedestrian and cycle routes to be good or very good.
- 75% of respondents considered public transport to and from the city to be Average to good and very good.
- 75% of respondents considered parking provision to be Average to Excellent.
- 90% of respondents considered bus and rail connections to other places as Average to Excellent.
- Just 20% of respondents considered the existing leisure offer as being good or very good.
- Responses on business space provision elicited a variety of views with as much as 35% of respondents not providing an answer.

Survey respondent's ideas on creating a vibrant and attractive city centre

Members of the public were asked to provide comments on their ideas to create a vibrant and attractive city centre.

The chart overleaf shows the themes that emerged and the number of comments received for each of these. All comments received can be found in Appendix 2.



Given a choice of one thing, respondents were asked to provide their ideas on what they think should be prioritised

The chart below highlights the key themes and the number of comments received for each of these. All comments relating to this question can be found in Appendix 3.

