



Engagement Report on the Interim Strategic Plan 2025-2028 Consultation

September 2025

Version 2

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Introduction

Welshpool Town Council has undertaken this consultation to better understand residents' views on the services we provide, the priorities we should focus on, and how the Council can operate more effectively in the future. The Council faces significant challenges, including financial pressures and the need to make choices about where limited resources are best directed. Listening to the community is therefore vital to ensure that decisions reflect local needs and aspirations.

The purpose of this report is to present a summary of the feedback received from residents, businesses, and stakeholders. It highlights the common themes and priorities expressed during the consultation and will be used to help inform the Council's future planning, budgets, and strategies.

Responses were collected primarily via an online survey between July and August 2025, with paper copies available on request. In total, 222 responses were received with paper copies of responses being inputted into the online form for analysis reasons.

Methodology

Survey Design

A public survey was designed to gather views on key service areas provided by the Town Council, including markets, public toilets, open spaces, events, administration, meals on wheels, communication, and possible future asset transfers. Respondents were also invited to share their overall priorities and final thoughts. Both closed (quantitative) and open (qualitative) questions were included to provide measurable results alongside richer feedback.

Promotion

The consultation was promoted widely through the Council's website, social media channels, local press, and notices placed in community venues. Paper copies of the survey were also made available on request to ensure accessibility.

Analysis

Quantitative responses were collated and expressed as percentages to give a clear picture of overall opinion. Open-text responses were coded into themes, with direct

quotes included throughout the report to illustrate the views expressed in residents' own words. AI was used to collate the themes with constant checking against direct quotes to support the theming.

Staff Session

A workshop session was held with all staff on Thursday 28th August where staff responded to the consultation in groups and then gave feedback to the rest of the team. The response submitted has been incorporated into the report and broadly mirrored the same theming and ideas which had already been suggested by residents and members of the public.

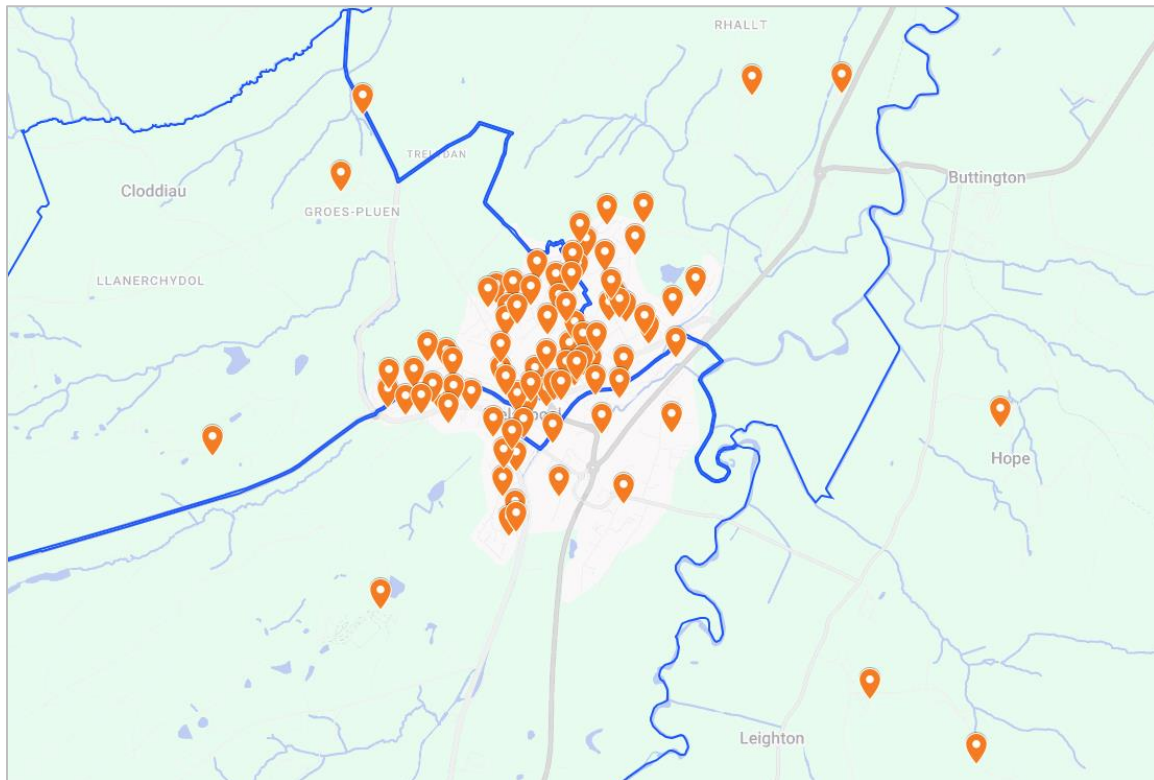
Staff were also given a first insight into some of the data and their responses helped inform the Interim Strategic Plan and associated actions.

Richard Williams
Town Clerk

Respondents

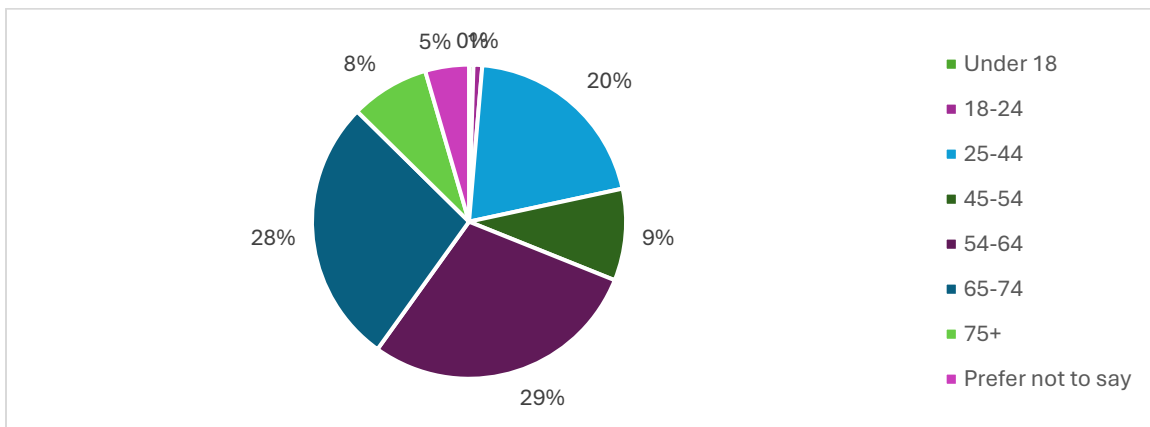
Q1 - What is your postcode?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



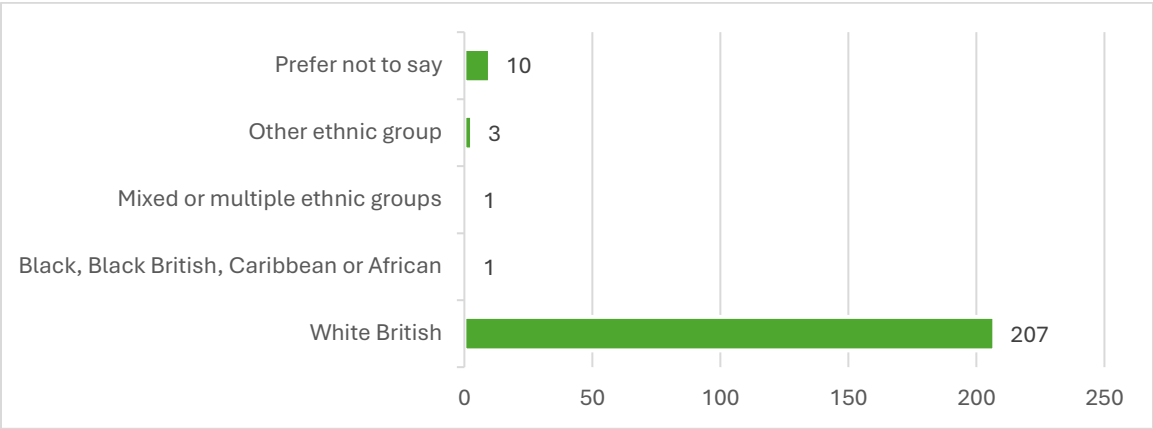
Q2 - Which age group are you in?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q3 – What is your ethnicity?

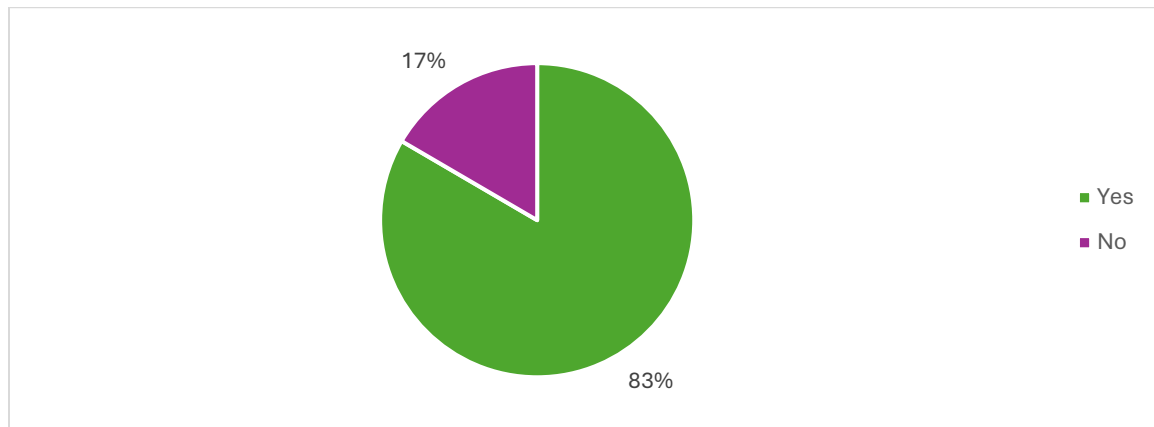
A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Town Hall & Markets

Q4 - Would you support more community involvement in the building?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q5 - How can we enhance the offering at the Town Hall to better suit the community?

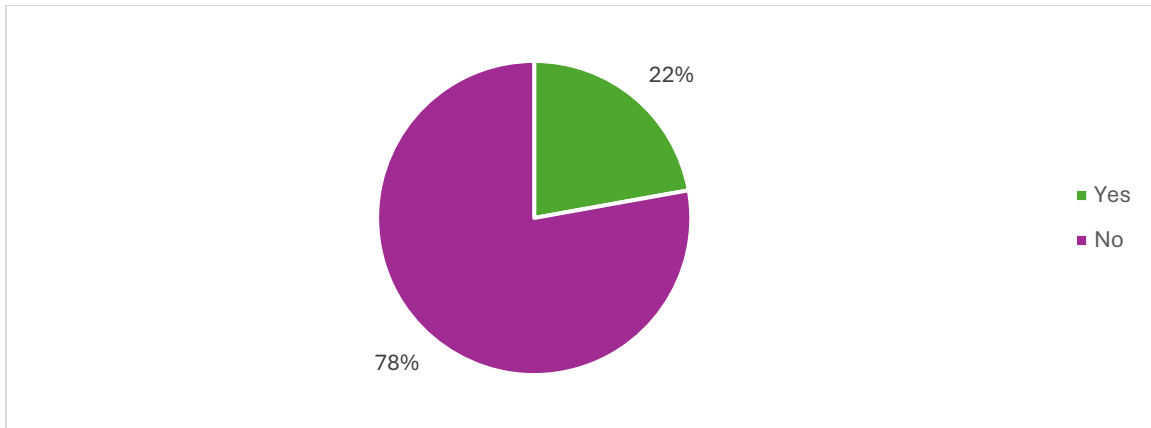
A total of 176 responses was received to this question. The responses included:

- Markets & Traders
 - Strong call for better quality market offer
 - Negative views on the current stalls
 - Inspiration drawn from other markets e.g. Oswestry
 - Suggestions for pop-up stalls and crafts
 - Calls for reduced rents, affordable units and support for start-ups
- Community and Social Use
 - Desire for Town Hall to act as a community hub – hosting local groups, charities, voluntary services, youth and more.
 - Ideas to expand warm hubs, drop-in centres and shared workspaces
 - Need for inclusive facilities – soft play, childcare, ALN friendly spaces, exercise and wellbeing classes
 - Interest in arts, crafts, exhibitions and cultural activities
 - Centralisation of local services (library, TIC etc)
- Events and Entertainment

- Calls for varied and regular programme such as music nights, comedy, cinema, theatre, bingo, quizzes, festivals
 - Requests for more targeted youth events
 - Interest in seasonal/charity/community events such as coffee mornings
 - Fully utilise the wedding licence
- Buildings & Facilities
 - Many felt that the Town Hall is dark, dingy, uninviting and needing modernisation and better lighting
 - Desire for a welcoming frontage
 - Calls to improve accessibility
 - Highlighted by many as underused – needs reconfiguration to maximise space
- Financial and Future
 - Split opinions on seeing the building as a money pit and suggestions to sell or redevelop as flats but others wanted it retained and revitalised as a community and civic asset.
 - Concerns around the high cost of restoration and calls to explore grants, income generation and asset rationalisation
 - Proposals to rent out office space, sublet or co-locate to save money
- Promotion & Engagement
 - Strong criticism of poor publicity and communication – many unaware of what goes on.
 - Requests for better social media, websites, posters, signage.
 - Suggestions for active outreach – public meetings, involving residents in planning, steering groups, youth and community input.
 - Ideas for creative PR – coloured lighting, murals by schoolchildren, guided tours, highlighting heritage (courtroom, assize cases).
- Parking
 - Calls for better parking, free/discounted parking, and deals with PCC to make visits viable.

Q6 - Do you currently visit the indoor market held on Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday?

A total of 220 responses was received to this question.



Q6 – If you said no, why not?

A total of 169 responses was received to this question. The responses included:

- Lack of interest / nothing to buy
 - People say there's nothing of interest, poor variety, or the stalls don't sell what they want.
 - Criticism of it being "tat", "junk", or more like a car boot sale than a proper market.
 - Many miss the days when it had fresh produce, eggs, cheese, butter, butchery, bakery.
- Poor quality and atmosphere
 - Described as dull, drab, depressing, shabby, uninspiring, and run down.
 - Atmosphere seen as empty and lifeless – stallholders often chatting, few customers.
 - Compared negatively with Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Newtown, which are seen as vibrant and well-run.
- Parking
 - Parking is too expensive, limited, or difficult.
 - Some feel the one-way system and parking wardens make visiting not worth it.
- Awareness and Promotion
 - Several respondents said they didn't even know the market was open, or didn't know what was sold there.
 - Lack of signage, advertising, and visibility.

- Market often appears closed or hidden.
- Preference for alternatives
 - Many prefer supermarkets (Tesco, Aldi) for convenience, quality, and price.
 - Others choose online shopping or go to other towns' markets (Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Newtown).

Q8 – What can the Council do to enhance the Indoor and Outdoor Market?

A total of 191 responses was received to this question. The responses included:

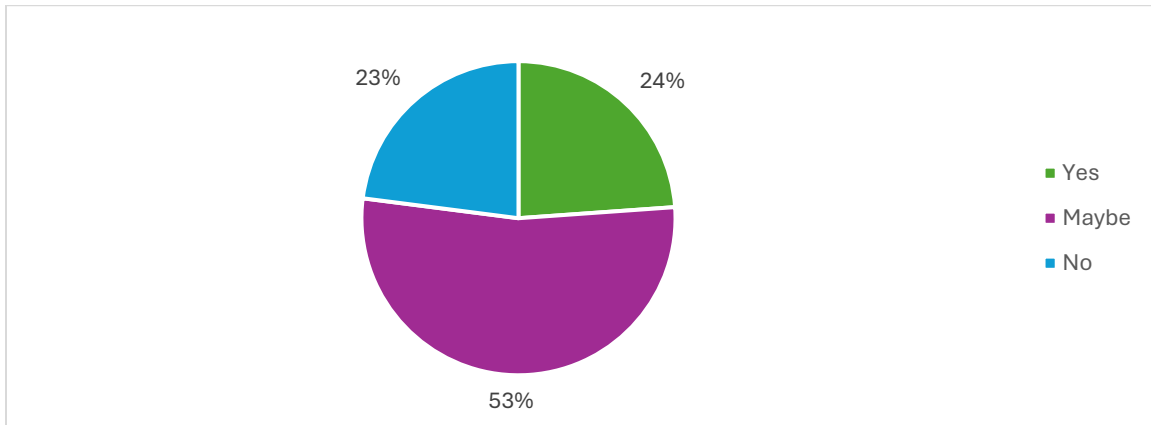
- Stall Quality & Variety
 - Strong call for better quality stalls: fresh produce (fruit, veg, meat, fish, bakery), artisan goods, crafts, antiques, ethnic/world foods, locally made products.
 - People want a wider variety, not just second-hand or bric-a-brac.
 - Calls for themed markets (farmers, craft, vintage, ethnic food, seasonal events).
 - Desire to attract professional traders rather than unmanned or low-effort stalls.
- Advertising & Promotion
 - Major concern about lack of visibility – market “looks closed” or uninviting.
 - Requests for stronger social media use, signage, posters, electronic boards, and PR.
 - Suggestions to highlight stallholders individually, use themed events to generate buzz, and actively promote Welshpool as a market town.
- Building & Environment
 - Many feel the market is dark, dingy, shabby, depressing.
 - Calls to improve entrances, lighting, layout, heating, décor, seating, and exterior appeal.
 - Ideas to open up spaces, remove partitions, restore auction space, sandblast stonework, repair the clock.
 - Some suggest relocating to the old Sainsbury's or Seven Stars car park, or investing in outdoor facilities.
- Parking
 - Lower or free parking charges seen as essential to increasing footfall.

- Ideas include: free parking with purchases, 10–15 min drop-off bays, free Blue Badge parking, or reclaiming street/car park space for markets.
- Trader Support
 - Suggestions for reduced rents, short-term/low-risk leases, and pop-up stalls to encourage new traders.
 - Calls to actively recruit stallholders (e.g., approach local producers, bakers, farmers, and makers).
 - Some suggest an external operator rather than Council running it.
- Events
 - Calls for special events: auctions, music, food festivals, craft fairs, street food nights, late-night openings.
 - More community group stalls and themed days to make the market a destination.
 - Some want to bring back auctions and traditional market practices.
- Financial & Future
 - Some say markets are a lost cause, money pit, should be closed or demolished.
 - Others see potential but stress it must be self-sustaining, not subsidized at a large cost.

Parks, Recreation and Street Scene

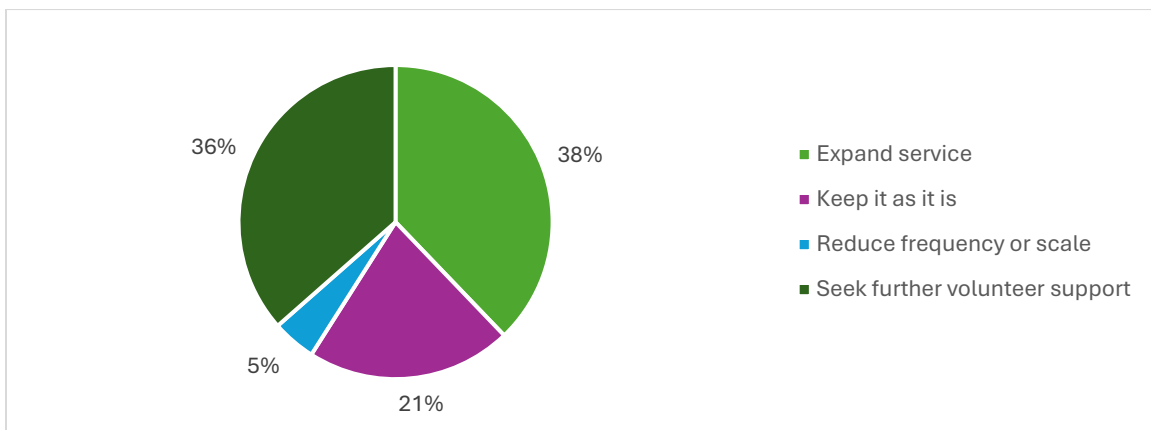
Q9 - Is this service good value for money?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



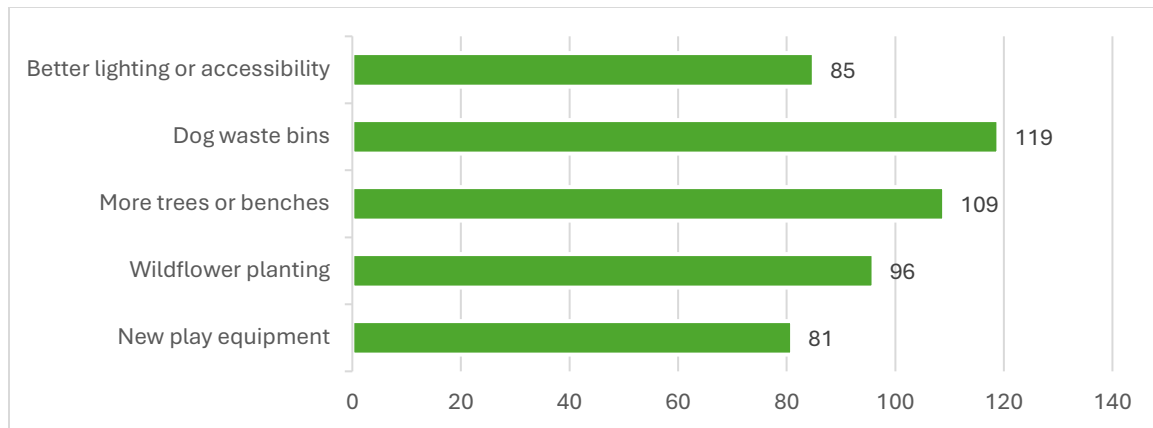
Q10 - What should the Council do?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q11 - What improvements would you like to see?

A total of 202 responses was received to this question.



Q12 – Any other comments or concerns?

A total of 141 responses was received to this question.

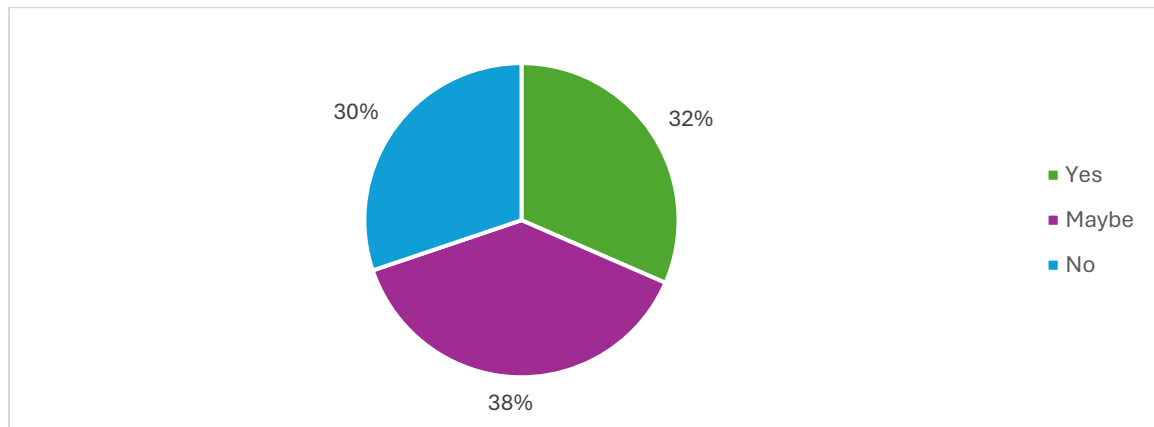
- Parks, Playgrounds and Youth Facilities
 - Upgrade playgrounds – more modern, safe, inclusive equipment (esp. for toddlers, disabled children, and older children/teens).
 - Requests for new facilities: skate park, BMX track, splash park, basketball courts, graffiti wall, youth area.
- Street Scene, Cleanliness and Maintenance
 - Strong criticism that the town looks scruffy, neglected, full of weeds, rusty bins, broken furniture, dog mess.
 - Calls for deep cleaning, repainting, repairing paving, replacing bins, improving signage.
 - Desire for a permanent caretaker/street warden to keep the town tidy.
- Volunteers and Community Involvement
 - Suggestions to recruit volunteers, work with schools, youth groups, local businesses.
 - Ideas for sponsorship schemes, shopfront competitions e.g. Tidy Welshpool campaigns.
 - Support for edible planting (fruit trees, veg planters) and community-led green projects.
- Green Spaces, Nature and Biodiversity
 - Requests to take on more land (fields behind Oldford, canal areas, nature reserves).
 - Support for wildflower planting, more trees, pollinator-friendly areas, wildlife corridors.

- Calls for a balance between formal mowing vs wilder areas.
 - Some want partnerships with Wildlife Trust / Woodland Trust.
- Dog Fouling and Bins
 - Recurring complaints about dog fouling and need for more bins, better enforcement, and fines.
 - Some said don't need dog-specific bins, just more general bins emptied often.
 - Praise for dog bag dispensers along the canal, requests for more.
- Town Centre & Shop Frontages
 - Complaints that the town looks run down, empty shops poorly maintained.
 - Suggestions for shopfront awards, murals in empty windows, stricter enforcement on landlords.
 - Calls for better floral displays, bunting, street furniture to make the town more attractive.
- Safety
 - Requests for park wardens, CCTV, and better disabled access.

Public Toilets

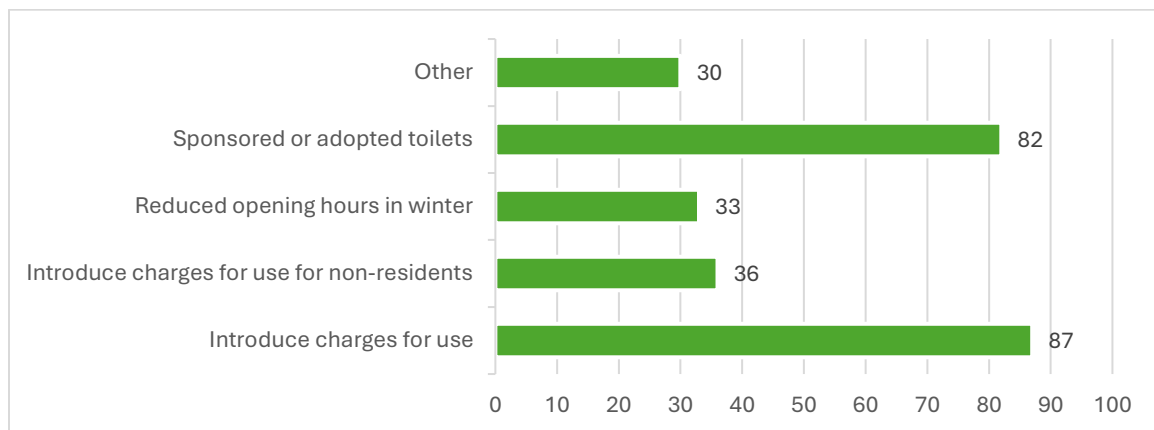
Q13 – Is this service good value for money?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q14 – Would you support the following changes?

A total of 191 responses was received to this question.



Q15 – Any other comments or concerns?

A total of 125 responses was received to this question.

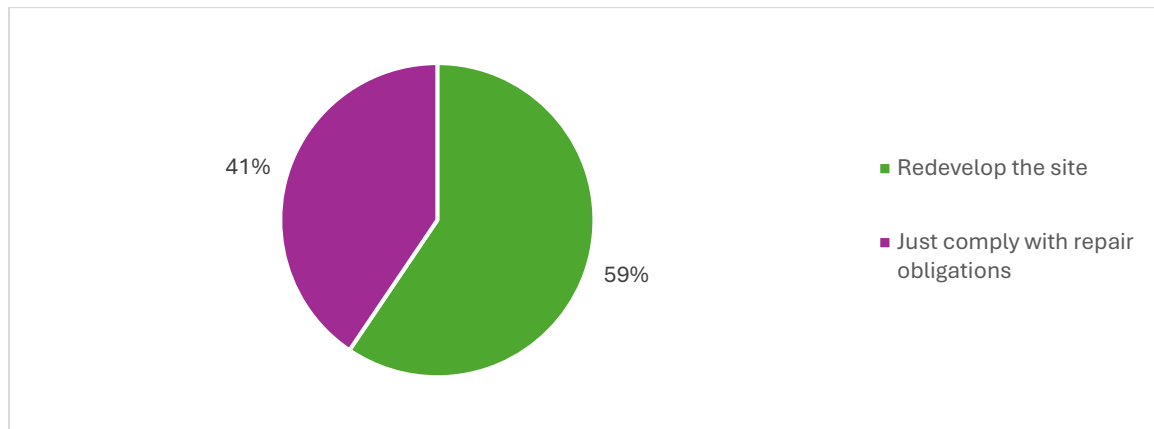
- Essential Service for Visitors & Residents
 - Strong agreement that toilets are a basic necessity and vital for tourism, families, elderly people, and those with health conditions.

- Without them, people will go to Tesco/Morrisons instead of the town centre, or worse, urinate in public.
 - Seen as core infrastructure the council must provide, even if costly.
- Cleanliness and Vandalism
 - Some complaints about dirty, unpleasant, or intimidating facilities.
 - Vandalism and people “hanging around” put people off using them.
- Charges vs Free Use
 - Many support a small charge (20–50p) if it guarantees cleanliness and reduces vandalism.
 - Others strongly oppose charges, calling toilets a basic human right that should remain free.
 - Debate over residents vs non-residents paying – most think this is impractical.
- Location, Access and Signage
 - Many unaware where toilets are or whether they’re open.
 - Calls for better signage around town.
 - Strong frustration that Berriew Street toilets are closed/derelict – seen as an “eyesore.”
 - Requests for at least one 24/7 accessible toilet.
- Costs
 - Surprise at the high cost (£29,000+) for two toilet blocks.
 - Criticism of the refurbishment cost at TIC toilets being excessive.
 - Some suggest outsourcing, sponsorship, or self-cleaning toilets to reduce costs.
- Disabled and Changing Places
 - Calls for better disabled access, hoists, and Changing Places toilets.
 - Concern that disabled users currently face charges and poor access.

Motte and Bailey

Q16 – Would you prefer the Council to redevelop the site or just comply with its repair obligations?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q17 – If redeveloped, do you have any ideas for what you think the Motte and Bailey site should become?

A total of 165 responses was received to this question.

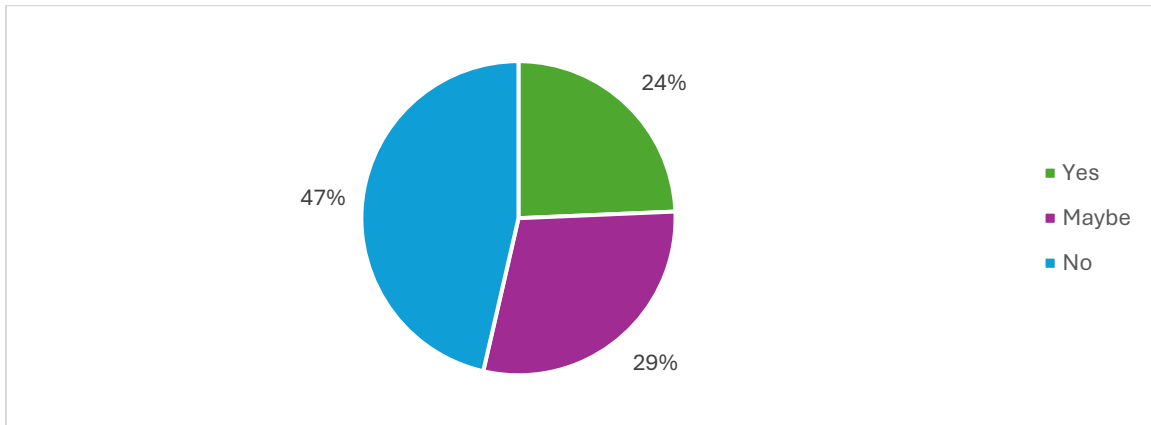
- Exit the Lease
 - Strong recurring theme that the lease was a mistake and WTC should not be responsible for a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
 - Many say the Powis Estate / Cadw / heritage charities should take over.
 - Anger that the motorbike charity proposal was rejected, seen as a lost opportunity.
- Tourism and Heritage
 - Suggestions to promote it as a tourist attraction, often compared to Montgomery or Ludlow castles.
 - Ideas include guided tours, interpretation boards, heritage trails, museum displays, archaeological digs.
 - Many emphasise advertising and signage – lots of locals don't even know it exists.
- Events & Leisure Venue

- Strong cluster of ideas around outdoor theatre, concerts, amphitheatre, festivals, weddings, cinema, craft markets, food events.
 - Some suggest multi-use with a café, picnic areas, or motorhome stopovers.
 - Seen as a way to bring life into the site if permitted.
- Green Space
 - Space for children's play, skatepark, dog walking, or a quiet place to sit.
 - Strong desire for it to be open to the public in some way.
- Criticism of previous decisions
 - Deep frustration about £10,500-£275k maintenance/repair costs.
 - Anger at "wasted money, poor management, bad decisions."
 - Some say WTC lacks the skills or capacity to manage heritage sites.

Tourist Information Centre

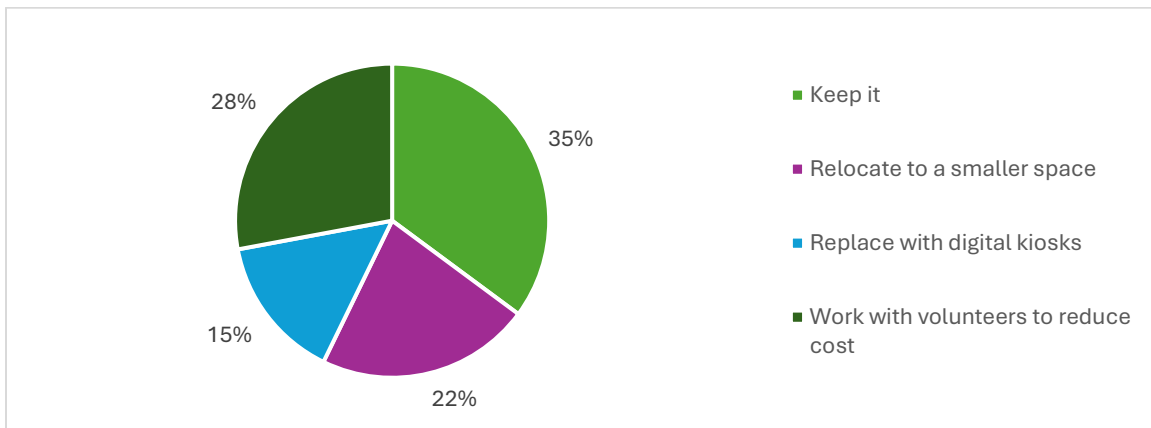
Q18 – Is this service good value for money?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



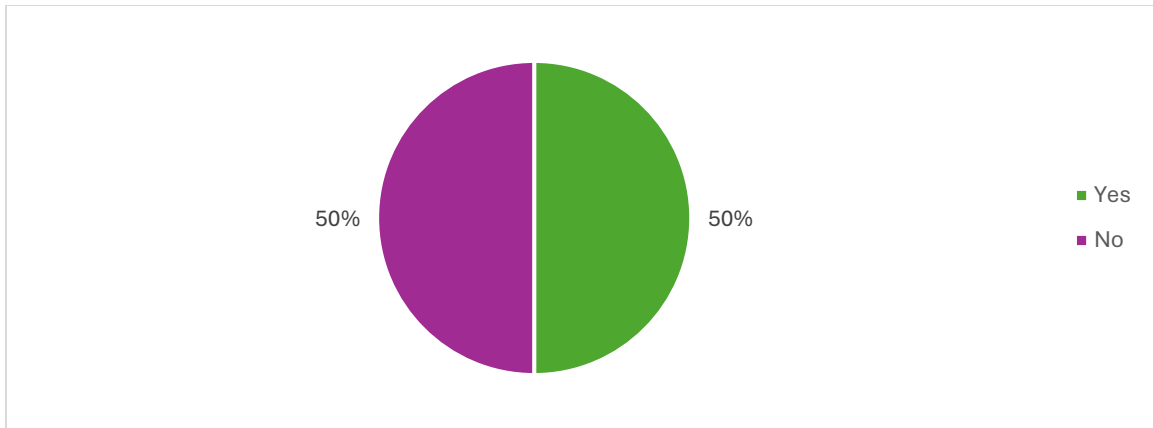
Q19 – What should the Council do?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



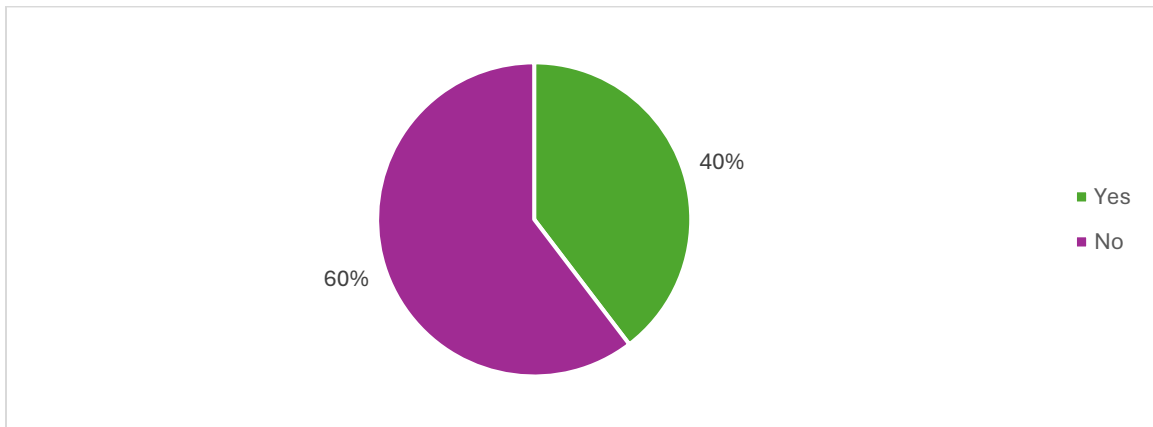
Q20 – Do you think the centre should be renamed to better reflect its usage as a local information point, not just for tourists?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q21 – Would you support adding self-service digital info screens in the town centre?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q22 – Any other comments or concerns?

A total of 123 responses was received to this question.

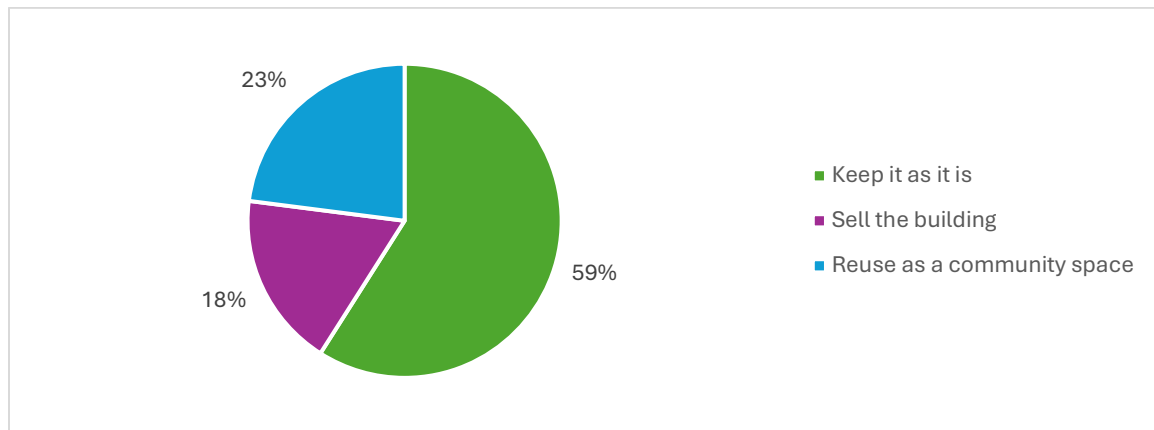
- Service Importance
 - Many see the TIC as an important service, especially for elderly people, visitors, and residents who need ticketing help.
 - Staff praised for being friendly, knowledgeable, and helpful.
 - Suggestions to expand the offer: more local products, postcards, souvenirs, event promotion, bus/train timetables, commissions from attractions.

- Some call for it to be rebranded as a Welshpool Information Centre to serve both locals and visitors.
- Relocate / Co-locate
 - Strong feeling that the TIC is in the wrong location (isolated, hard to cross road, little footfall).
 - Proposals to move it into the Town Hall, Market Hall, or High Street where it would naturally attract more visitors.
 - Some suggest co-location with the museum, bus/train station, or community hub.
- Go Digital
 - Many argue a physical TIC is outdated and costly.
 - Tourists now rely on TripAdvisor, Google, and smartphones for information.
 - Preference for digital screens, websites, or a purely online service – though often countered with fears of vandalism.
- Cost
 - Strong criticism of the high costs (£80k+ / £300k spent on relocation).
 - Many call it a waste of money, a “money pit,” or question what the TIC actually delivers.
 - Calls for radical savings given Welshpool’s high council tax.
- Promotion and Marketing
 - Many feel Welshpool doesn’t market itself well – events, attractions, and tourism info aren’t widely promoted.
 - Suggestions for a website, social media, signage in car parks, event boards, integration with town branding.
- Digital Noticeboards
 - Some doubts about digital screens being smashed or vandalised, citing failures of bus info boards.
 - Some warn that street clutter and accessibility issues already make the town centre difficult to navigate.
- Other
 - Welshpool doesn’t attract enough tourists overall.
 - Empty shops, high parking charges, and poor street scene matter more.
 - Some suggest merging TIC into a larger regeneration or community strategy.

Ann Holloway Day Centre

Q23 – What should the Council do?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q24 – What alternative uses would you support?

A total of 124 responses was received to this question.

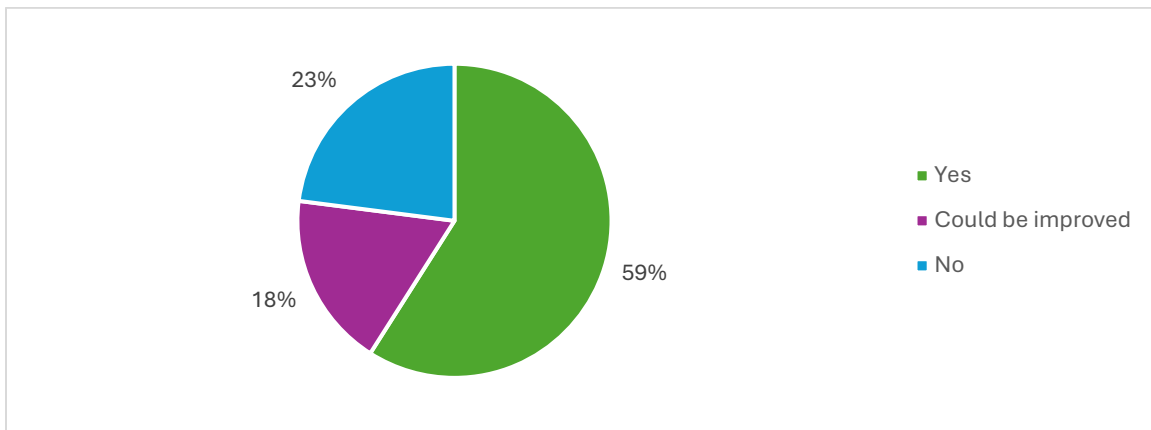
- Support for retaining the service
 - Many stress it is a vital lifeline for OAPs, disabled children, carers, and vulnerable residents.
 - Strong emotional connection: seen as one of the few safe spaces available.
- Community Hub
 - Calls for the centre to be a flexible community space when not in use by Haven/charities.
 - Ideas: hire for meetings, baby showers, clubs, parties, training, coffee mornings, youth clubs.
 - Could generate rental income to offset running costs.
- Sell or Transfer Ownership
 - Strong group feel WTC should reduce its assets and sell the building.
 - Preference for it to go to a charity (e.g. Welshpool Haven) or a social housing/health provider.
 - Selling would remove the cost burden from taxpayers.

- Alternative Uses
 - Use by NHS
- Criticism of the Council
 - Frustration that WTC is acting as a social services provider, which some see as Powys County Council or NHS's job.
 - Concerns over duplication with other centres.
- Legacies
 - Some responses emphasise Anne Holloway's wishes or legacy – that the building should always benefit the vulnerable.
 - Others dismiss the name/legacy as less important and suggest renaming or selling.

Meals on Wheels

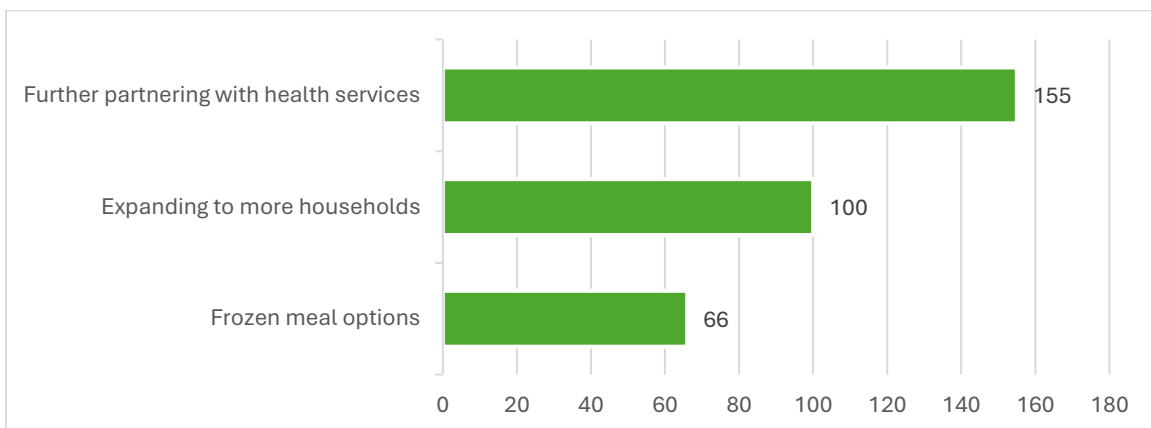
Q25 – Is this service good value for money?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q26 – Would you support any of the following?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question (multiple choice so will add up to more than 100%).



Q27 – Any other comments or concerns?

A total of 99 responses was received to this question.

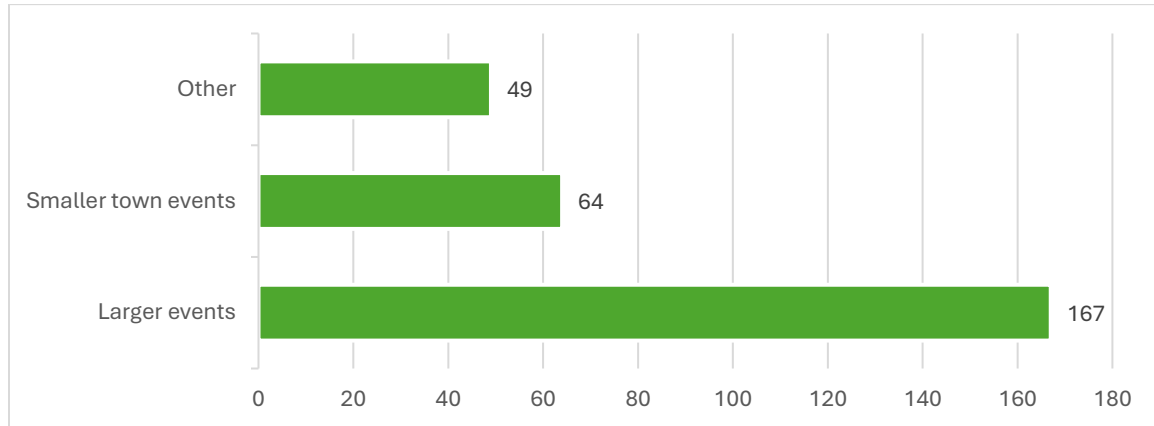
- Service importance

- Strong support that Meals on Wheels is essential for elderly, disabled, and housebound residents.
 - Many highlight it's not just about food – it provides social contact, reassurance, and reduces isolation.
 - Some describe it as “the only thing the council should be proud of” and warn against cuts.
- Questioning delivery
 - Many respondents ask why Welshpool Town Council is running what they see as a “social service”.
 - They argue it should be run or funded by Powys County Council, NHS, or charities/volunteers.
 - Several suggest WTC should stick to bins and toilets rather than social care.
- Cost
 - Concerns over cost per meal, efficiency of routes, and whether alternatives (frozen meals, takeaways, family support) would be cheaper.
 - Some suggest it may be duplicated by private providers like Wiltshire Farm Foods, Deliveroo, or supermarkets.
 - Calls for financial transparency before judging its future.
- Partnerships
 - Partner with hospital, NHS, cafes, caterers, food banks.
 - Link with markets/allotments for fresh produce.
 - Recruit more volunteers or sponsorship to reduce costs.
 -
 - Explore bulk deliveries of frozen meals with carers reheating.
- Charging
 - Some think service users should pay more or that it should be means-tested.
 - Others stress it must stay affordable or subsidised for the most vulnerable.
- Awareness and Promotion
 - A number of people said they didn't know the service existed or how to access it.
 - Calls for better advertising, referral pathways via health professionals, and modern image to encourage uptake.

Events

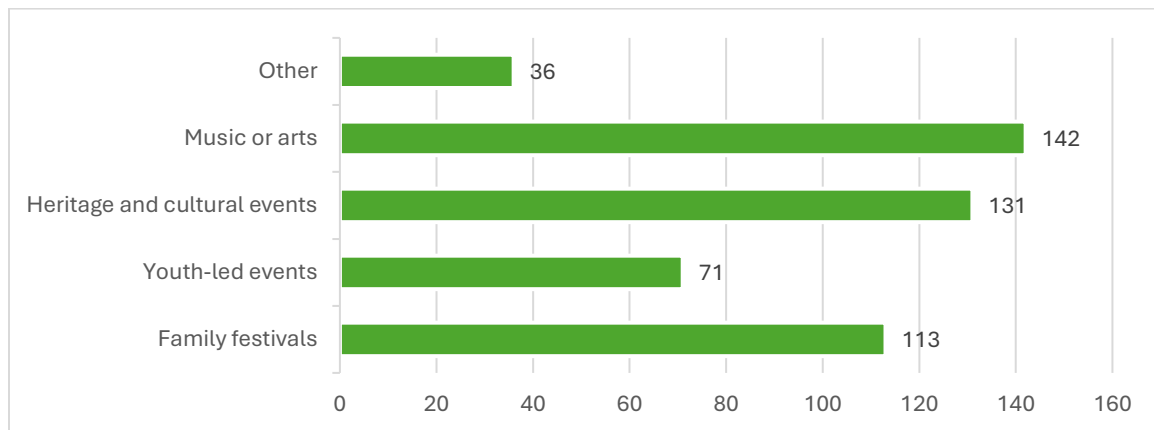
Q28 – What type of events would you like the Town Council to focus on?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question (multiple choice so will add up to more than 100%).



Q29 – What kind of events would you like to see more of?

A total of 211 responses was received to this question (multiple choice so will add up to more than 100%).



Q30 – Any other comments or concerns?

A total of 102 responses was received to this question.

- Importance

- Many stress events bring people into town, support local business, and build community spirit.
 - Popular examples: fireworks, food festival, carnival, tractor run, winter festival.
 - Some want more music, culture, and sporting events to broaden appeal.
- Poor advertising and communication
 - One of the strongest themes: residents often don't know events are happening until after.
 - Calls for better marketing: banners, posters in shops, road signs, central online hub, and longer notice periods for participants.
- Quality and variety
 - Criticism that some events feel small, underwhelming, or messy (especially carnival and Christmas lights).
 - Suggestions for more professional organisation, better theming (40s weekend to 50s/60s, cultural/family focus), and linking events together for greater impact.
 - Some say WTC should hire professionals or partner with groups like Shropshire Festivals.
- Delivery
 - A recurring point: should WTC be in the events business at all?
 - Others suggest creating a separate events committee/company.
- Cost
 - Some concern events are too costly for taxpayers (fireworks, Christmas lights).
 - Others suggest more self-financing, charging small fees, or securing sponsorship.
 - A few point to Powys CC or businesses as more appropriate funders for large events.
- Types and suggestions
 - 60s weekend, tractor shows, dog shows, farmers' markets, sports triathlons, storytelling, art trails, drone light shows instead of fireworks.
 - Calls for more kid-friendly activities and youth-oriented events.
 - Requests for events to feel more Christmassy at Christmas.
- Negative impacts

- Concerns over road closures, parking shortages, litter, and disruption for town centre residents.
- Some say events should be moved to Berriew Street car park or other open spaces instead of closing Broad Street.

Council Administration

Q31 – While some of these costs can't be cut, how could our services be clearer or more transparent to you?

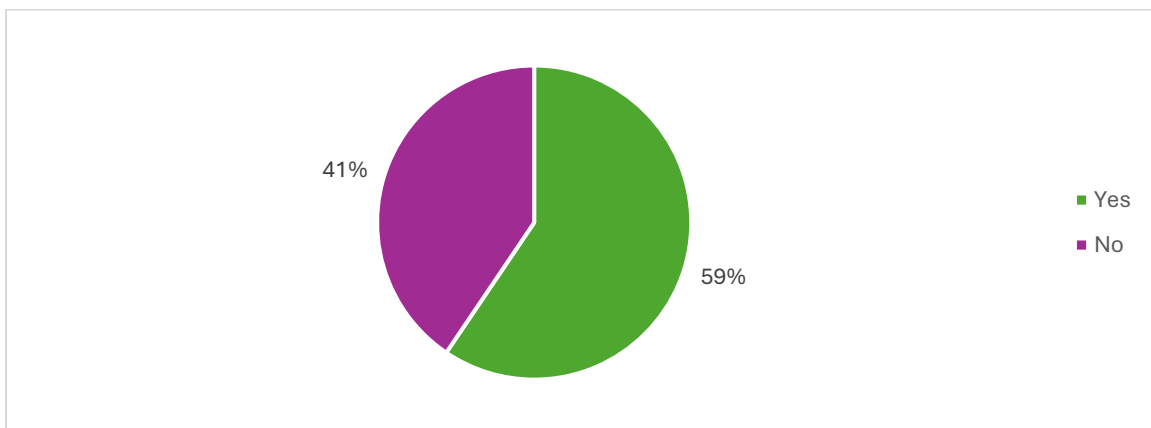
A total of 145 responses was received to this question.

- Publish clear information
 - Strongest theme: people want clear breakdowns of costs, staffing, salaries (redacted), and responsibilities.
 - Requests for easy-to-read formats: pie charts, infographics, newsletters, videos, blogs, social media updates.
 - Some suggest linking admin costs to outcomes so residents see value for money.
- Perception
 - Many think admin is too high a proportion of the budget (often quoting ~40%).
 - Frequent comparisons with other towns (Newtown, Brecon, Llandrindod) which reportedly spend less.
 - Suggestions: reduce staff, merge roles, fewer councillors, less red tape, streamline committees.
 - Some say “more broom pushers, fewer pen pushers” – want to see resources shift to frontline services.
- Improve transparency of meetings and decision making
 - Concerns over closed sessions (‘in camera’ meetings) and perceived secrecy.
 - Calls for all meetings to be open or livestreamed, with minutes and decisions published quickly.
 - Some want clearer accountability about councillors’ conduct, roles, and teamwork.
- Communication and Engagement
 - Many feel they don’t understand what WTC does or confuse it with Powys CC.
 - Requests for more public consultation, newsletters, meet & greet sessions, explanatory videos, and social media updates.
 - Need to make communications relevant to all age groups.
- Costs

- Some say everything can be cut: reduce subsidies, review staff, merge functions.
- Suggestions for AI, automation, hybrid working, digital forms, shared services with Powys CC.
- Push for a “leaner, more efficient” council administration.
- Value
 - Some say admin is necessary and justified if fairly allocated.
 - Some defend councillors as unpaid volunteers and call for more public respect.
 - A few note that residents may not appreciate the statutory or hidden work admin supports.

Q32 – Whilst the Town Council doesn't have responsibility for planning issues, it does have a statutory right to comment on applications. Do you think the Council should develop a Place Plan to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance which Powys would have to have due regard to when deciding applications?

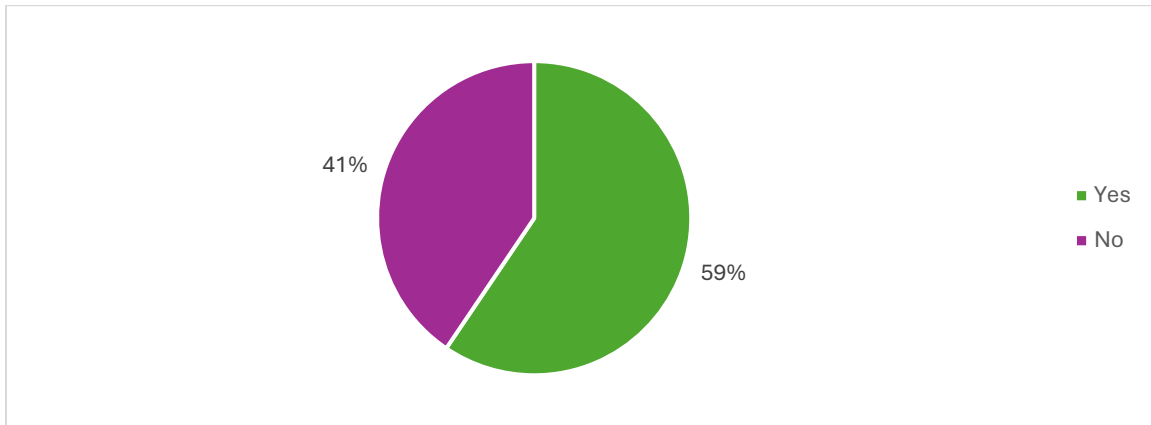
A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Future Asset Transfers

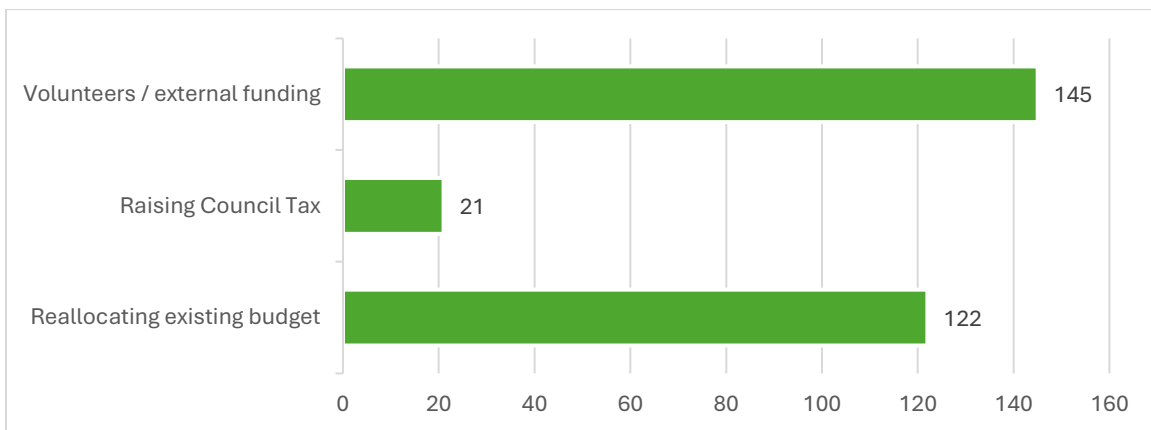
Q33 – Do you support asset/service transfers in principle?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



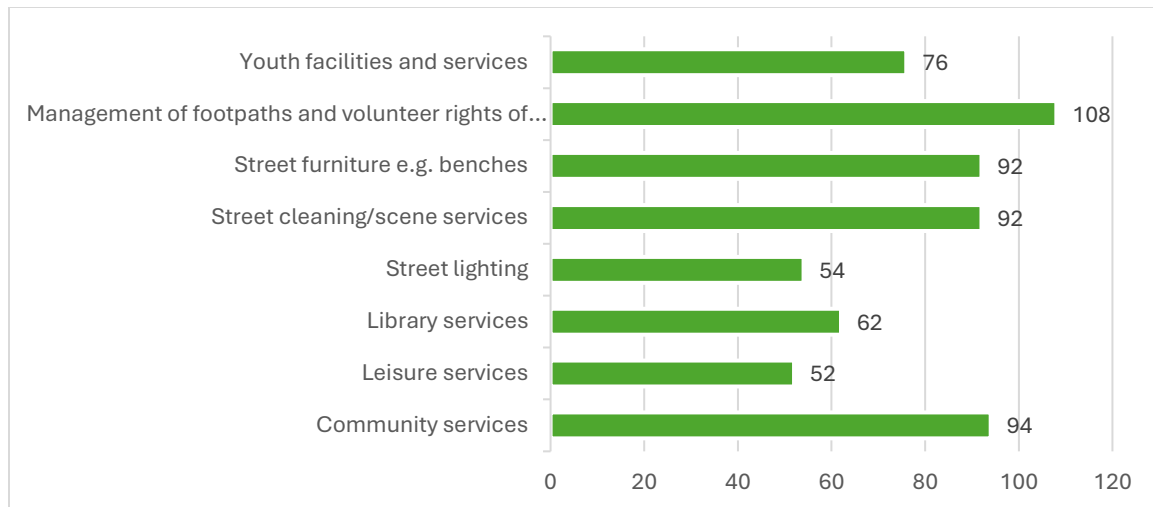
Q34 – How should new assets or services be funded?

A total of 205 responses was received to this question.



Q35 – Which types of assets would you support the Council taking on?

A total of 177 responses was received to this question.



Q36 – Any comments or concerns about asset transfers?

A total of 115 responses was received to this question.

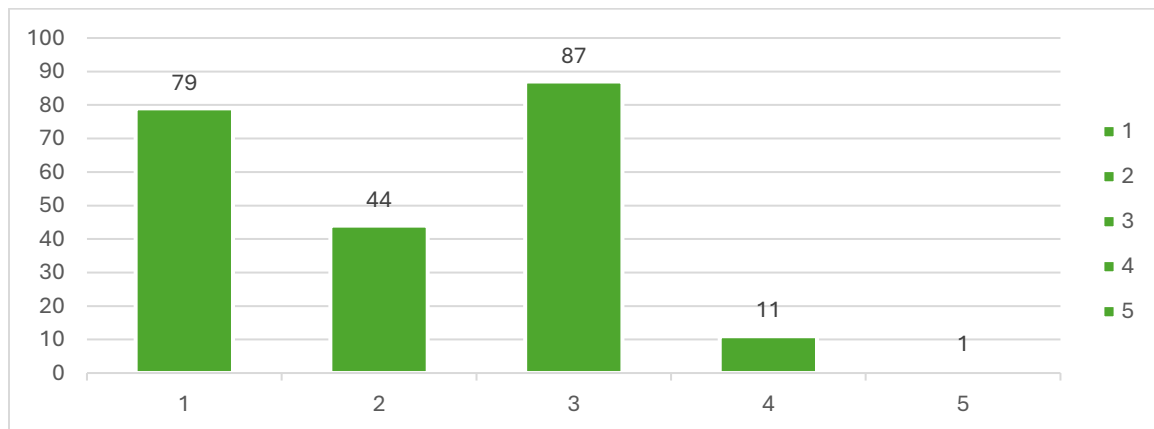
- Costs and Affordability
 - Most common theme: residents fear taking on more assets will raise council tax or bankrupt WTC.
 - Many reference past failures (street cleaning, toilets) as cautionary tales.
 - Some say Powys CC should retain responsibility, as taxpayers already fund them for these services.
- Funding
 - Many insist assets should only transfer if Powys provides full funding or budgets to cover them.
 - Fear that Powys will “dump costs” on Welshpool and then withdraw support.
 - Some propose regional/shared funding since assets (e.g. leisure centre) serve wider communities.
- Capacity
 - Strong doubt about whether WTC has the skills, staff, or financial management ability to run major services.
 - Concerns that WTC already struggles with basics and shouldn’t expand.
 - Several suggest charities, CICs, or private operators are better placed.
- Specific Services

- Leisure centre, swimming pool, youth services, library seen as vital.
 - Street cleaning, bins, grounds maintenance often cited as urgent priorities.
- Double Taxation
 - Residents feel they are already paying Powys CC and shouldn't pay again through WTC.
 - Taking on assets without rebates from Powys is seen as unfair and duplicative.
- Support
 - Several responses suggest evaluating each transfer individually with a clear business case.
 - Only take on services that are sustainable, add value, or generate income.
 - Strong emphasis on long-term planning and consultation with residents.
- General distrust of PCC and WTC
 - Residents recall previous "false rumours" of closures.
 - Frustration with both Powys and WTC for "buck passing."
 - Some believe neither authority has handled assets well.

Communication and Transparency

Q37 – The Council represents you to other bodies such as Powys County Council - how would you rate their responsiveness to the issues raised by the Town Council?

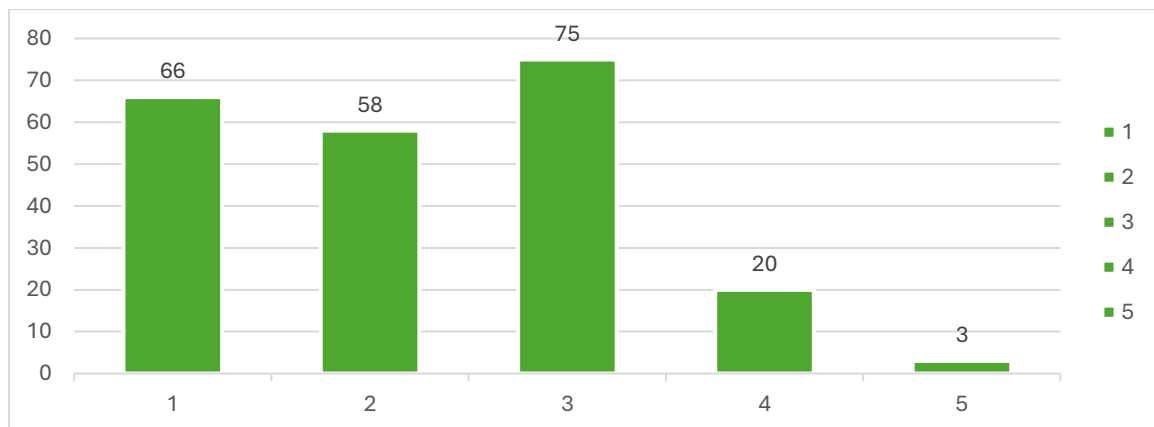
A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Average Rating – 2.15

Q38 – How would you rate the Town Council's communication with residents?

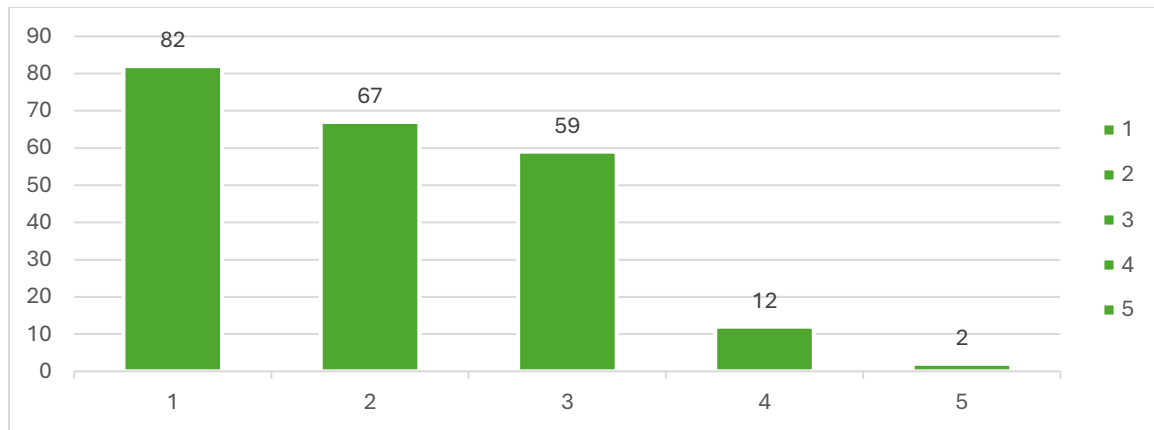
A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Average Rating – 2.26

Q39 – How transparent is the Town Council's decision-making?

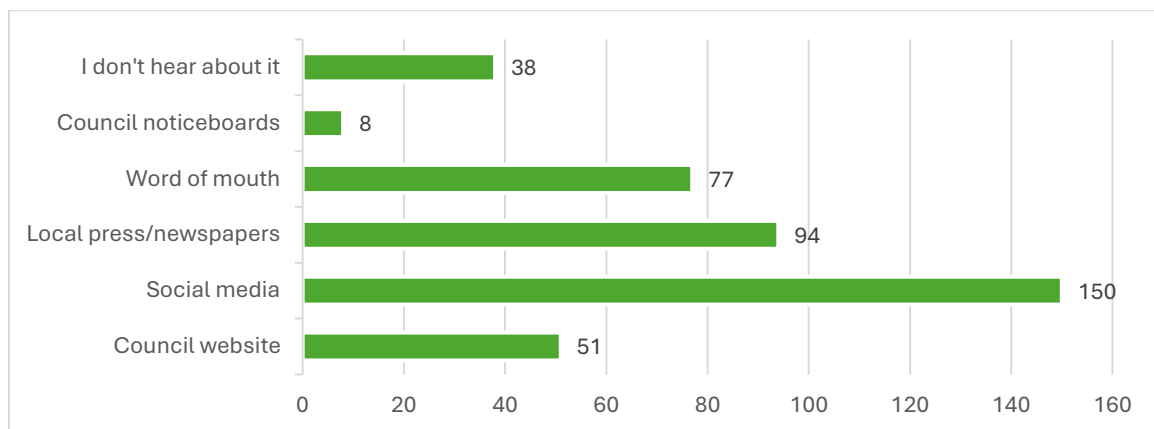
A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Average Rating – 2.03

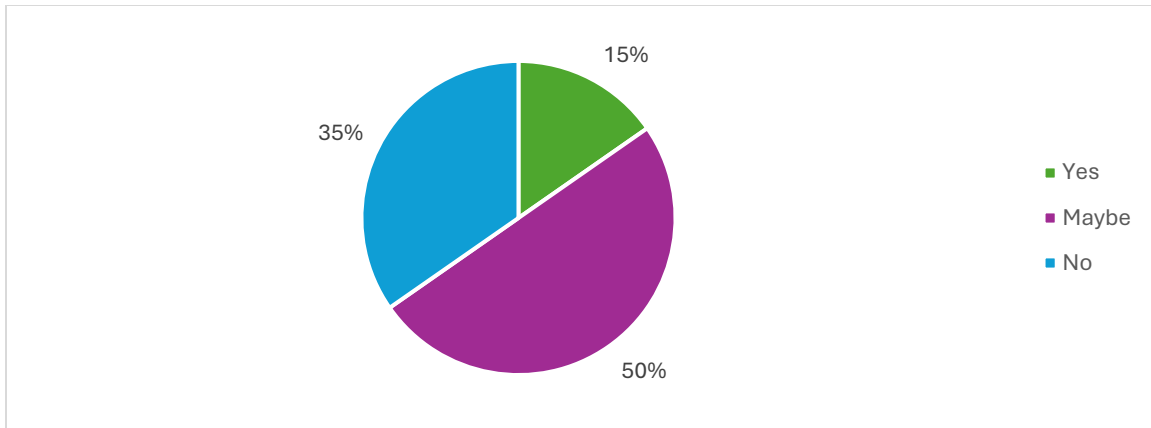
Q40 – Where do you currently get your information about the Town Council?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q41 – Would you like to be more involved in shaping decisions?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Q42 – If yes, in what ways would you like to be involved?

A total of 66 responses was received to this question.

- Consultations and Surveys
 - Many want regular surveys like the one they completed, both online and in paper form.
 - Some suggest household questionnaires on big issues (e.g. one-way system, library, major spending).
 - Requests for feedback loops so residents know their input was heard and what happened next.
- Public Meetings
 - Strong call for open public meetings in the Town Hall, with opportunities to ask questions.
 - Desire for forums or steering groups on major projects (e.g. Town Hall, strategic plan).
 - Some want meetings to be more transparent and less 'toxic'.
- Clear Communication
 - Requests for better advertising of consultations and events (banners, notices, social media, direct mail).
 - More clarity on costs and spending – residents want to see breakdowns of where money goes.
 - Calls for openness and honesty in decision-making.
- Direct Involvement and Volunteering
 - Some respondents said they'd like to volunteer or support councillors.
 - A few mentioned specific skills they could bring (e.g. cycling infrastructure, community support).

- A handful expressed interest in becoming councillors, though some feel put off by the current culture.
- Negative Views
 - A small group said they're unsure how they could get involved, or don't think the council is open to real input.
 - Some frustration with "old ways, bureaucracy and egos" in the chamber.
 - A few suggested they'd like to be involved but don't feel welcome as newcomers.

Final Thoughts

Q43 - Do you have any suggestions about the Council's future priorities or spending?

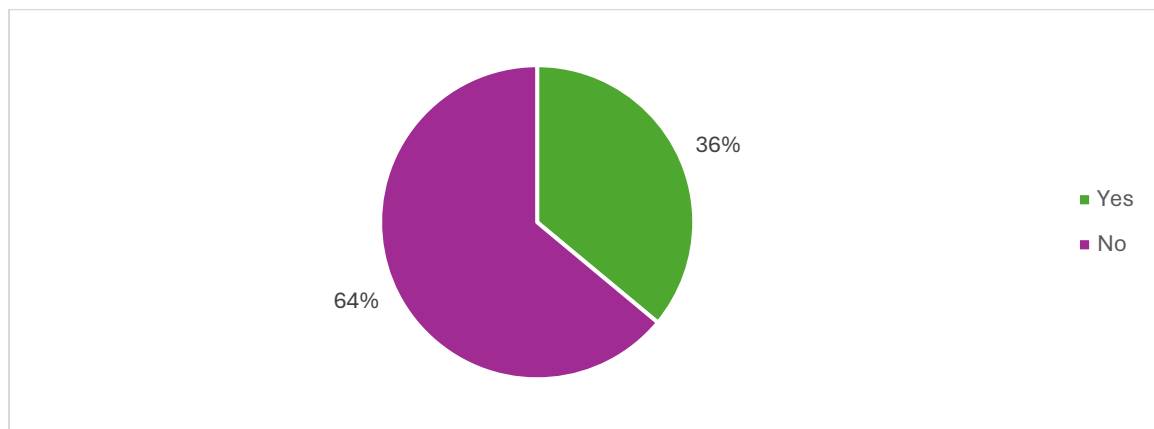
A total of 141 responses was received to this question.

- Keep Council Tax Low
 - The strongest recurring theme: residents feel council tax is too high and want it frozen, cut, or at least better value for money.
 - Calls for less waste, “basic services first,” and fewer staff/overheads.
 - Several explicitly said they don’t want “meaningless” or “expensive” projects.
- Town Centre Regeneration
 - Many want investment in revitalising Broad Street and the town centre:
 - Reuse of empty shops (Sainsbury’s, HSBC, M&Co).
 - Business rate cuts or incentives to attract new shops.
 - Support for housing above shops to bring more life back.
 - Suggestions for pedestrianisation, deep cleaning, and street scene improvements.
- Cleanliness
 - Frequent mentions of street cleaning, weeding, bins, and general upkeep.
 - Calls to make Welshpool more attractive for both residents and tourists.
 - Some want investment in parks, play areas, wildflowers, and community gardens.
- Transport and Parking
 - Parking was a major frustration:
 - Too expensive, too strict, lack of short-stay/drop-off bays.
 - Suggestions for free or cheaper parking to support shops.
 - Several proposed an integrated transport plan, pedestrianisation, and park & ride.
 - Calls for better disabled parking and improved cycling infrastructure.
- Focus on Basics
 - Many said the Council should maintain existing assets properly before adding new ones.

- Calls for repairs rather than replacements, and a focus on visible, tangible improvements.
 - Frustration that money is “spread too thin” on too many projects.
- Youth & Events
 - Some want investment in youth services, play areas, skate/pump tracks, and activities.
 - Others call for a night-time economy (cinema, restaurants, bars).
 - Events were seen as important to community spirit and attracting visitors, but should be cost-effective and make a profit.
- Strategic Vision
 - Several respondents said the Council needs a long-term vision (10–20 years) rather than piecemeal projects.
 - Ideas included place plans, business improvement districts, heritage conservation, and marketing Welshpool as a visitor town.
- Frustration with Culture
 - Several comments mentioned infighting, egos, and lack of unity among councillors.
 - Some distrust about whether consultation feedback will actually be used.
 - A few said they want councillors “vetted” or reduced in number.

Q44 – Would you like to be contacted with the results of this consultation?

A total of 222 responses was received to this question.



Conclusion

The consultation has provided a valuable insight into the views of Welshpool residents on the Town Council's current services, priorities, and future direction. Across all themes, a number of consistent messages have emerged.

First, there is a clear demand for financial restraint and transparency. Many residents feel that council tax in Welshpool is already too high and want to see spending focused on core responsibilities, better maintenance of existing assets, and improved value for money. Linked to this is a strong call for clearer communication – publishing more accessible information about costs, decisions, and outcomes – so that the public understands how and why money is spent.

Second, the condition and presentation of the town centre and public spaces emerged as a major priority. Respondents want to see more effort invested in cleaning, tidying, and repairing what already exists, alongside bolder action to address empty buildings, encourage new businesses, and make the high street more attractive and accessible. Parking and transport were also frequently raised as key barriers to revitalisation.

Third, there is recognition of the importance of youth services, green spaces, and community activities. Residents see value in supporting vulnerable groups, providing affordable recreation for young people, and running events that bring people together and promote Welshpool. However, they emphasise that such services should be affordable, well-managed, and designed in collaboration with the community.

Finally, residents have called for a more open and inclusive style of governance. Many wish to be involved through surveys, consultations, and public meetings, and there is frustration with the perception of council disunity. A longer-term vision for Welshpool – one that is ambitious but realistic, and rooted in the needs and aspirations of the community – is seen as essential.

Overall, while views differ on specific services, the consultation demonstrates a strong appetite for a Council that is financially prudent, transparent in its decisions, focused on the basics, and ambitious in restoring pride in the town's appearance and economy. These themes provide a clear direction for setting future priorities and engaging the community in shaping the next stage of Welshpool's development.

