



*Your Town, your Plan...
it's time to write the future*

Initial consultation

Draft report February 2012

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1 Key findings

To inform the production of the Stratford-upon-Avon neighbourhood plan a consultation exercise was undertaken. This received 1560 responses from people who live, study and work in the Town.

Respondents were asked what they liked about living in Stratford:

- 17% mentioned the green spaces such as the Bancroft Gardens, Welcome Hills and the Recreation Ground
- 12% mentioned shopping
- 12% liked the historic nature of the Town along with the Old Town and the Shakespeare properties
- 10% like the friendly character of Stratford
- 9% mentioned the river

Respondents were asked what they would change about the Town:

- 14% mentioned traffic and congestion
- 13% would like to see improvements in parking
- 11% wanted better shopping
- 9% felt the appearance of the Town could be improved
- 8% wanted to control housing development

They were then asked which of these areas was their top priority:

- 9% mentioned traffic and congestion
- 6% wanted improved shopping
- 6% wanted improvements to parking
- 6% felt it was to protect green spaces
- 6% wanted to control development

2 Introduction

This consultation was conducted to inform the development of the Stratford-upon-Avon Neighbourhood Plan. It involved asking people who live and work in Stratford three simple questions:

1. What do you like about living in the Town
2. What would you like to change
3. Which of those things would be your priority

People were invited to respond in their own words through an online questionnaire or by completing one of 25,000 mood cards (see section 10 for a copy) which were distributed widely throughout the Town.

Around 1600 responses were received; a small number of responses from people who did not live, work or study in Stratford were removed leaving 1,568 valid responses. Of these:

- 1169 respondents live in Stratford; we noticed that many responses were from households rather than individuals and so we believe that we have received responses representing around one in ten households in the Town
- 265 respondents study in Stratford. All three secondary schools and the College were asked to distribute the cards to their students. We believe they all did distribute them but the grammar schools collected their students' cards and returned them on their behalf so we may have a higher response rate from this group.
- 134 respondents work in Stratford
- 409 respondents were under 18 at the time of the survey; 611 were between 18 and 59 and 520 were over 60.

The online questionnaire was provided in Polish; however, no responses were received. This was subsequently discovered to be due to a fault in the link from the website which went to the English questionnaire. We know, anecdotally that some Polish respondents completed the English questionnaire as a result; however we don't know how many.

The free text responses were analysed and coded into a 47 categories (see data tables in section 9) to enable the production of this report.

3 Character of Stratford-upon-Avon

It was clear from the responses that many people who live in Stratford love their town. They particularly like:

- **The green spaces and the river;** especially mentioning the Bancroft Gardens, the Recreation Ground and the Welcome Hills. 17% of respondents mentioned this as something they particularly like with higher proportions among older respondents and those who live in the Town rather than work here. 8% of respondents mentioned the river as something they particularly liked.
- **The history and heritage;** respondents mentioned Old Town, the historic houses, and the look of the Town. 12% of respondents particularly like this with no difference between people of different ages or those who live and work in the Town.
- **The character of the Town;** 10% of respondents mentioned this, they talked about friendliness, a sense of community and seeing people they know around Town. Some saw this as being a feature of the Town being its current size. The character of the Town is much more important to people who live here than those who work here and to over 18s compared to under 18s. In addition to character 2% of respondents particularly liked a feeling of safety and another 2% mentioned cleanliness.

Respondents generally did not want to change much about the character of the Town. The most important factor was a feeling expressed by 9% of respondents that the **appearance** of the Town could be improved. This covered a multitude of areas such as:

- Litter and graffiti
- Inappropriate shop fronts (Moo Moos' pink façade was singled out by several respondents)
- Shabbiness and lack of maintenance in the Town Centre
- Clutter caused by signage and street furniture
- The Bancroft development received some positive comments but more often negative views with respondents feeling it was "sterile" or not "English".

Small proportions of respondents mentioned:

- Anti-social behaviour – most often drunkenness or drug taking but also playing of loud music and begging (2% of respondents)
- Safety and a desire for more visible policing (1% of respondents and 2% of those over 18 and those living in the Town)

4 Getting around

While it is clear that respondents love the character of their Town, they find the difficulties of getting around frustrating and the areas they would most like to change are:

- **Traffic congestion**; mentioned by 14% of respondents and the top priority of 9%. It was a concern for people of all ages and those who live and work here. Typical comments included:
 - Complaints about congestion on the Birmingham Road and Clopton Bridge
 - Requests for a new bridge across the river, a ring road or extending the bypass
- **Parking** was mentioned by 13% of respondents and was the top priority for 6%. It was slightly more important for people who work but do not live in the Town and those between 18 and 59. The main complaints about parking included:
 - The cost of Town Centre parking and over-zealous enforcement of parking restrictions
 - Parking by non-residents in residents' parking areas and lack of enforcement of those areas
 - Illegal parking along with parking by delivery vehicles causing traffic congestion

Other parking related comments included:

- Complaints about inconsiderate parking by disabled drivers
 - Requests for another Park and Ride south of the River
 - Compliments for the current Park and Ride facility
 - A wish to retain the current town centre on street parking which a few respondents saw as potentially threatened by pedestrianisation
- **Public transport** drew a wide variety of comments. 6% of respondents felt that public transport should be improved; much higher among those that did not live in the Town and under 18s. The main requests were for:
 - A better train service to London, Birmingham and Leamington
 - More buses to villages and around Town
 - Later services
 - A small minority of respondents talked about re-opening the rail line to the South West

2% of respondents particularly mentioned that they liked the current public transport provision; however, this should not be taken to mean that they would have objected to more.

Walking and cycling were common topics:

- 5% of people would like to see more pedestrianisation; this was higher among people who live in the Town and those aged 60+. 1% of people did not want to see pedestrianisation extended.
 - 2% of people (and 3% of the over 60s) wanted it to be easier to walk in Town with complaints ranging from uneven pavements, danger from cyclists or mobility scooters on the pavement to more hand rails where there are steps or slopes.
 - 1% of respondents wanted improvements in facilities for cyclists
- **A Bus Station** was seen as needed by 4% of respondents. This would remove buses from Bridge Street and many suggested it should be at the cattle market site to improve connections with the Railway Station. Buses in Bridge Street were considered unsightly, noisy and to cause congestion.

5 Shopping

Shopping ranks highly among the aspects people like about Stratford-upon-Avon and highly among the aspects they would like to change.

- 12% of respondents mentioned shopping as an aspect they liked; this was higher among people who worked in the Town (18%) and among under 18s (also 18%). Older respondents like the independent shops in the Town while younger respondent particularly like Poundland, Jack Wills and New Look.
- 11% of respondents would like to change the shopping available in Town; this was also higher among young people (16%) and those who work in the Town (17%). There were a variety of views here:
 - There was a desire for a supermarket south of the river (the survey was conducted before work had started on the Waitrose site) and for a supermarket in the centre of Town now that Somerfield has closed.
 - Many people who live in the Town wanted more shops for day-to-day items, a bakers, a greengrocers, etc.

- There was a common desire for more independent shops rather than chain stores among the over 18s
- Under 18s wanted more chain stores particularly mentioning Top Shop and Primark
- 4% of respondents wanted Town Square to change; they were predominantly older and lived in the Town. Requests ranged from a general plea for it to be re-vitalised to suggestions of providing a roof or changing the name back to Bell Court. Views on the proposed cinema were mixed (see facilities below).
- People had mixed feelings about the Maybird Centre:
 - Some felt that it was detrimental to the prosperity of the Town centre and were unhappy that some stores had moved from the Town to the Maybird
 - Others liked the ability to park and the convenience of having several stores close together
 - Under 18s complained about the distance to walk from the town centre to the Maybird
- 2% of respondents felt that the Town had enough out of town shopping and large supermarkets and that there should be no further similar developments.

6 Events, entertainment and activities

10% of respondents across all age groups particularly like Stratford's events and festivals; they particularly mentioned the birthday parade, the river and food festivals, and the Christmas market and Christmas lights. However, there were some negative comments, some people:

- Disliked the closure of Bridge Street for events
- Would like to see the Mop moved from the town centre (the Recreation Ground was mentioned by many as a better venue)
- Felt the Christmas lights and the switch on could be improved. They would like to see "better" lights, more streets lit, longer hours of lighting and a celebrity switching the lights on (David Tenant may have an organised campaign at the Girls Grammar School)

9% of respondents mentioned the theatre as something they particularly liked about the Town. Somewhat more of these worked in the Town (11%) and were under 18 (12%). The theatre was seen as a valuable facility for locals and as a great economic benefit bringing in visitors.

In a similar spirit, 3% of respondents liked the fact that Stratford is a tourist town; this improved the entertainment options available to them and improved the economy. Some respondents were negative about tourists (particularly under 18s – this could be a reflection of the high response from pupils at KES).

The Town's restaurants were mentioned by 4% of respondents as something they liked. However, 2% of respondents would like to see fewer cafes, restaurants and wine bars in the town centre (3% of the over 60s). 1% of respondents (2% of under 18s) would like to see better nightlife in the Town – people mentioned a music venue, comedy clubs or more/better night clubs.

6% of respondents mentioned local facilities such as the leisure centre, the library and the cinema as aspects of the Town that they liked. This group was older and tended to live in the Town. On the other hand 4% wanted facilities to be improved; mentioning the need for a better cinema, an ice rink, bowling alley and better sports facilities. This group was predominantly young – 8% of respondents under 18 wanted better facilities compared to 1% of over 60s. In addition 3% of all respondents felt there should be more for young people to do.

7 Housing and development

8% of respondents would like to see more controls on housing development – this group predominantly lives in the Town and is over 18. Where people mentioned housing they were likely to see it as a priority – 75% of those mentioning housing (6% of all respondents) saw it as their top priority.

Opinions ranged from a blanket demand for no new housing to more nuanced views for example:

- Suggesting a limit on development size e.g. 100 or 50 homes
- Wanting less "inappropriate" development or using more "local" styles and materials
- Wanting more homes for locals and less for "outsiders"
- Wanting more "family homes"

Some respondents perceived a threat of housing being constructed on the Welcome Hills, the Racecourse or the Recreation Ground and were strongly opposed to any such development.

Several respondents suggested converting redundant retail space into housing and felt that more people living in the town centre would improve the economy and reduce anti-social behaviour.

2% of respondents (3% of the 19-59 group) would like to see more affordable housing in Stratford.

8 Other

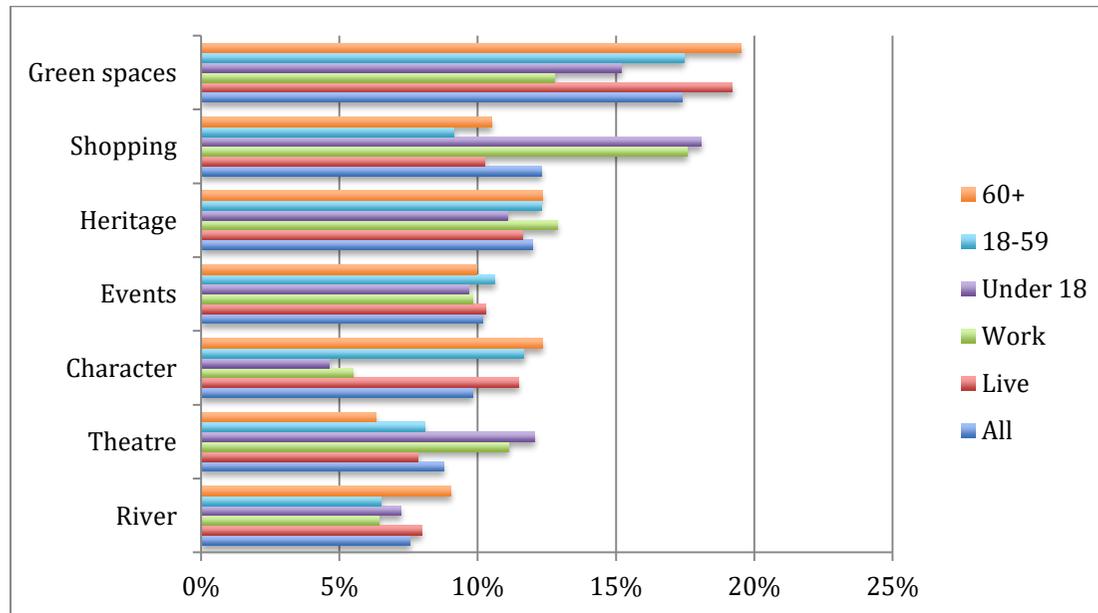
Other issues commonly mentioned by a small proportion of respondents included:

- **Health care;** respondents mentioned medical facilities (doctors and the hospital particularly) as something they liked about the Town. There was a desire for better medical facilities south of the River and a few respondents wanted to see more facilities at the hospital (particularly A&E).
- **Public toilets** were mentioned as people would like to see more of them and for the existing ones to be cleaner and open for longer. A large proportion of those asking for this were under 18s that do not live in the Town.
- **Schools** were seen as an asset and an area for change. 4% of under 18s said they particularly liked their school but 6% of this group wanted improvements (most commonly in sports facilities). Other respondents mentioned the Grammar Schools as an asset to the Town. A small number of people mentioned the lack of school places as an area for change.
- **The local economy** was seen as an area for change by 2% of respondents – they wanted to see more effort to stimulate local businesses or to attract investment. This group was more likely to live in the Town and to be between 19 and 60.
- **A greater local say in decisions;** 2% of respondents (all over 18 and living in the Town) felt that there was not enough local say in decisions. They particularly mentioned councillors from out of town making decisions about Stratford and a feeling that councils were out of touch.
- **Benches;** a small but vocal group of older respondents wanted backs to be placed on public benches.

9 Data charts and tables

9.1 What we like

The chart below shows the proportion of respondents that mentioned each of the top seven areas and the breakdown by age and location:



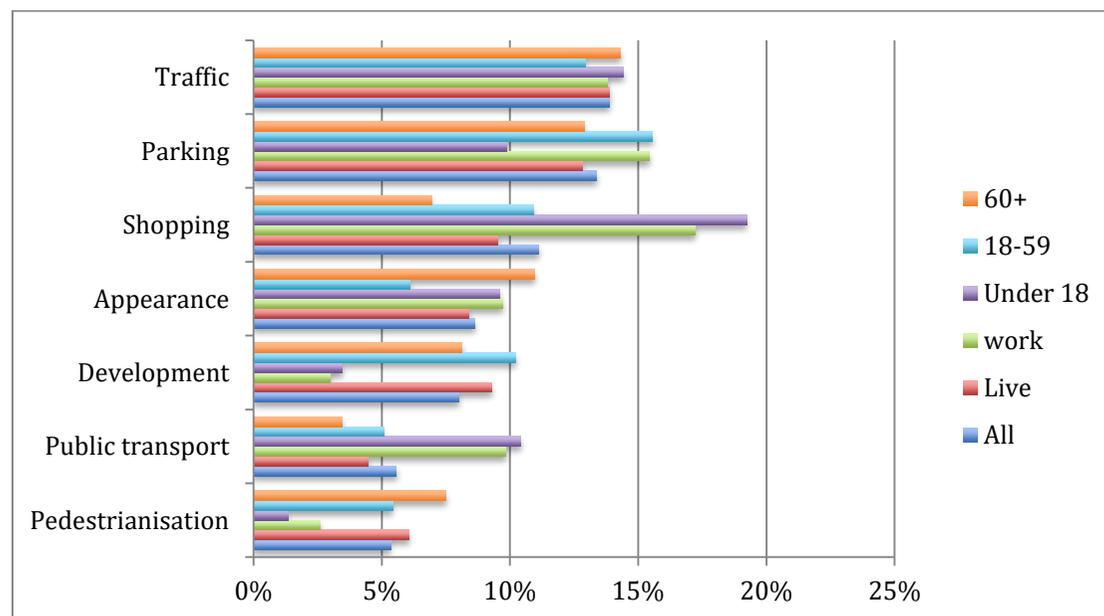
The table below provides an analysis of all responses:

	All	Live	Work	Under 18	18-59	60+
Green spaces	17%	19%	13%	15%	17%	20%
Shopping	12%	10%	18%	18%	9%	11%
Heritage	12%	12%	13%	11%	12%	12%

Events	10%	10%	10%	10%	11%	10%
Character	10%	11%	6%	5%	12%	12%
Theatre	9%	8%	11%	12%	8%	6%
River	8%	8%	6%	7%	6%	9%
Facilities	6%	7%	3%	3%	6%	8%
Restaurants	4%	3%	9%	9%	3%	1%
Tourism	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Schools	2%	2%	3%	4%	2%	1%
Cleanliness	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%
Safety	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Public transport	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%
Current level of pedestrianisation	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Current on street parking	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%

9.2 What we would change

The chart below shows the proportion of respondents that mentioned each of the top seven areas for change and the breakdown by age and location:



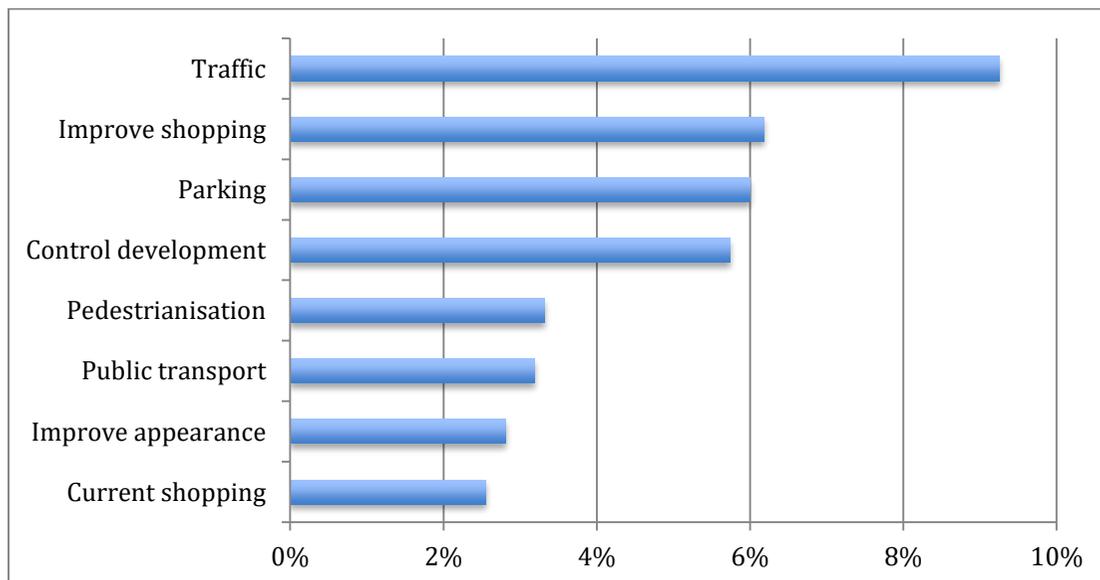
The table below shows an analysis of all responses:

	All	Live	Work	Under 18	18-59	60+
Traffic	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%
Parking	13%	13%	15%	10%	16%	13%
Shopping	11%	10%	17%	19%	11%	7%
Appearance	9%	8%	10%	10%	6%	11%
Development	8%	9%	3%	3%	10%	8%
Public transport	6%	4%	10%	10%	5%	3%
Pedestrianisation	5%	6%	3%	1%	5%	8%

Bus station	4%	5%	1%	1%	3%	7%
Town Square	4%	4%	2%	1%	3%	6%
Improve facilities	4%	3%	5%	8%	4%	1%
More for young people	3%	2%	4%	6%	3%	1%
Local say	2%	3%	0%	0%	3%	3%
Walkability	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%
Economy	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Schools	2%	1%	5%	6%	1%	0%
Less clubs etc.	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	3%
Anti social behaviour	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Fewer out of town/large retail	2%	2%	1%	0%	2%	2%
Affordable housing	2%	2%	1%	0%	3%	1%
Safety	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Cycling	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Health	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Nightlife	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%

9.3 Our priorities

The chart below shows the top priorities for respondents – 28% of respondents did not express a priority.



The table below shows an analysis of all responses:

	All	Live	Work	Under 18	18-59	60+
No priority	28%	30%	23%	22%	31%	30%
Traffic	9%	10%	6%	6%	10%	11%
Improve shopping	6%	5%	10%	10%	5%	4%
Parking	6%	5%	8%	4%	8%	5%
Green spaces	6%	7%	4%	5%	5%	7%
Control development	6%	7%	2%	1%	8%	6%
Pedestrianisation	3%	4%	1%	0%	3%	6%
Public transport	3%	2%	8%	8%	2%	1%

Improve appearance	3%	2%	4%	4%	2%	3%
Current shopping	3%	1%	7%	7%	0%	2%
Heritage	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Town Square	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	4%
Facilities	2%	2%	3%	5%	1%	0%
Character	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	3%
Bus station	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Theatre	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Schools	2%	1%	3%	4%	1%	0%
Current facilities	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Affordable housing	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%	0%
More for young people	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%	0%
Economy	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Safety	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
River	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%	1%
Events	1%	0%	3%	1%	1%	0%
Local say	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Walkability	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Anti social behaviour	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Improve schools	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%

10 Mood Card

Tell us what you think



Stratford-upon-Avon neighbourhood plan

The Stratford-upon-Avon Plan will shape the future of our community for the next 20 years, affecting everyone who lives and works in the town. We need to know what you think to make sure the plan reflects your priorities.

<p>1. Do you:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Live in Stratford Postcode</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Work in Stratford</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Neither</p> <p>2. Are you:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Studying</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Employed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Retired</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not working</p> <p>3. Are you:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 (please give age)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 19-30</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 30-45</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 45-60</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 60-75</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 75+</p>	<p>Thinking about the next 20 years:</p> <p>4. Please tell us three things that you would like to stay the same about your Town</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>5. And, three things that you would like to change</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>6. Of these six areas which is your top priority?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>7. Tell us what you think – complete this card or go online www.ourstratford.org.uk</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p><i>Please give us your email address so we can keep you informed about progress on the Plan :</i></p> <p>.....</p>
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Please return this card at a collection point or drop it into a postbox (no stamp needed).