# Newcastle Plan
## the future of our city

# Consultation Feedback Report

**Newcastle City Council**

# Contents

# Introduction

This report summarises the main messages from our early engagement work to inform proposals for the local plan. Every local authority is required to set out their vision and objectives for the future development of their area through adoption of a development plan, often referred to as a local plan. This provides a positive strategy and policies to enable development such as new homes, commercial and leisure developments, and associated infrastructure to come forward, while protecting and enhancing the environment. Every planning application is then assessed against policies in the local plan.

The Newcastle Plan Early Consultation Report is structured around nine ambitions. This report summarises the main themes in feedback received on each of these ambitions, and also looks to see if there were differences in responses between different groups of people. We present information about who took part and how, and also consider any other significant themes within the findings that relate to other aspects of Newcastle City Council's work, and life in Newcastle upon Tyne.

## How many people and organisations took part, and how?

We provided many different ways in which people could give us their views on our initial thoughts for the Newcastle Plan, including: online surveys, social media, email, letter, telephone, drop-in events where people could either complete a form, put notes on public display stands to illustrate their priorities, or both. We also received formal responses in emails to Planning Policy. There were stalls in the Grainger Market and we received manifestos from candidates for the Youth Parliament Elections, discussions with council staff at ward meetings and voluntary organisation meetings (such as the Elders Council and Becoming Visible).

We cannot provide a definitive answer to how many individuals and groups took part, as people may well have taken part through several different channels – for example, they might comment via social media, attend a drop-in event, then take part in an online survey – and we do not have a way of measuring these. We can estimate totals as follows:

- Meetings, displays and workshops – **712** people
- Commonplace and Let's talk Newcastle Online surveys – **701** people
- Petition – **177** people
- Planning policy responses – **85** people and organisations
- Youth Parliament manifestos – **57** young people
- Social media – **17** people
- Letters and emails – **6** people
- Let's talk Newcastle Online topic wall – **3** people

In total, around 1700 people and organisations have taken part in this early engagement on the Newcastle Plan.

## How we promoted the engagement work

We promoted the engagement widely online, using videos and posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and our website. We also used non-digital communication channels, such as our residents' magazine, Citylife, email, and providing a Freepost address for people to reply via letter if they chose to do this.

Where possible, we involved voluntary organisations representing communities of interest such as disabled people, older people, and carers, such as the Elders Council, Newcastle Advisory Group, and Connected Voice and Healthwatch Newcastle. Using our stakeholder list of community and voluntary sector organisations in Newcastle for reference, we emailed information to them and asked them to take part, and to encourage their members and service users to take part. We also worked with organisations including housing developers, residents' associations, and campaigning groups. More information on the demographics of participants, can be found in the 'Who took part' and 'How people took part' sections at the end of this report.

# Summary of Findings

## Overview – What is most important to you?

We asked those taking part on Commonplace the following: "We need to develop a vision for the city up to 2045. Tell us what is important to you". The 'top three' options chosen by the 701 people who responded were:

1. Access to open spaces, play, nature, and biodiversity – 66% of people answering the question said this was important
2. Making sure it is easy to move around Newcastle – 60%
3. Addressing climate change – 52%

When people attending community events were asked about this, 'access to open spaces' and 'easy to move around' were also the 'top two' options. 'Improved affordable housing', and not 'addressing climate change' was the third most popular response and 'addressing climate change' was fourth. When asked to indicate the importance of the nine ambitions in the Newcastle Plan to them, the most popular ambitions among those attending these events were:

1. Develop a sustainable transport network – 39 people said this
2. Deliver homes and sustainable communities – 18 people said this
3. Net Zero and adapt to climate change – 18 people said this
4. Reduce social and health inequalities – 18 people said this

The top nine themes in people's comments about this on Commonplace were: 'protect the green belt', 'address the biodiversity crisis and protect wildlife' and 'keep Newcastle clean and tidy'.

Young people standing for election to the Newcastle Youth Parliament prioritised health, safe community places, and other issues which were not included in the nine ambitions, such as tackling racism and promoting equality.

The key messages to be taken forward in a vision for the local plan include the importance of access to the natural environment, being able to move easily around the city, addressing climate change and delivering homes including affordable housing. The local plan will also include policies on addressing the biodiversity crisis and protecting wildlife and on healthy communities and developing safe spaces through new development.

## Ambition 1 – Reducing social and health inequalities

This ambition is: "To support reduction of social and health inequalities, ensuring the city becomes fairer, more economically inclusive, and healthier." We asked those taking part on Commonplace the following: "Which of these options should be prioritised to help people achieve healthy lifestyles". 625 people answered this question on Commonplace, and the option: '**Deliver active travel schemes**, such as walking, wheeling, and cycling' had the **highest** percentage of respondents ranking it as their first or second priority (49%), followed by 'Provide new open spaces with access to nature, and improving access to existing spaces' (43%). The 'top themes' in people's comments about this were: "we need better public transport", "we need to protect the green belt", and 'promote active travel".

We also asked: "Is there **something** else we should prioritise to help achieve healthy lifestyles?", and the 'top themes' were 'we need better public transport', 'protect the green belt', and 'promote active travel'.

Feedback from **community groups and events** included improving air and water quality, better local access to health services such as GP surgeries and dentists, tackling vaping, better mental health services, and better local leisure services.

Feedback from Planning Policy responses included focusing on the role of housing in health, tackling food poverty, and looking at the specific needs of older people and disabled people.

The key messages to be taken forward in the local plan are the importance of active travel and opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use, access to and provision of open spaces and nature. The local plan's role in supporting local health provision, the role of good quality housing and helping to address specific housing needs, for example affordable housing was also raised by those taking part.

## Ambition 2 – Adapting to climate change

This ambition is: "To support the city's ambition to be net zero and to mitigate and adapt to climate change." We asked those taking part on Commonplace the following: "What should Newcastle do to prioritise addressing climate change". 625 people answered this question on Commonplace, and the option: '**build housing in sustainable locations**' had the highest percentage of respondents ranking it as their first or second priority (43%), followed by 'build net-zero carbon buildings' (37%). The 'top themes' in people's comments about this were: 'we need to protect the green belt', 'New buildings, including houses, must be energy-efficient' and 'protect green spaces''.

Feedback from **community groups and events** included the need to balance tackling climate change with the need for some people (such as disabled people and older people) have to use cars, planting more trees, and greater use of electric vehicles.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included putting in more chargers for electric vehicles, designing planning policy around central government targets for new housing, and building specialist housing for groups needing it, such as student accommodation and residential care.

The key messages to be taken forward in the local plan are that addressing the impacts of climate change needs to be embedded across all parts of the local plan, this includes building homes in sustainable locations and protecting green spaces.

## Ambition 3 – Inclusive and connected communities

This ambition is: "To promote inclusive and connected communities within our neighbourhoods, supported by vibrant centres and a distinctive city centre."

We asked people responding on Commonplace to **review a map** showing the current location and extent of the city centre area, district centres, and local centres, then choose one of three options. The most popular option (just over half of responses, 56%) were from people preferring us to: "review these areas and introduce new centres, to reflect demand and needs for new facilities and services".

We asked people responding on Commonplace how we could make the **city centre** a more attractive place, and the following options were the most popular 'top three': 'more green and natural spaces' 'greater pedestrianisation', and 'more and improved public toilets'. The main themes in their comments about this were: 'improve cleanliness and tackle litter and chewing gum', 'better public transport is needed', and 'encourage traffic to flow through the city centre'.

Feedback from **community groups and events about the city centre** was that people wanted to see greater cleanliness, more seating, and making it easier for disabled people to get into the city centre and move around it.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses about the city centre** included providing more residential properties within the city centre, and making it more welcoming for older people.

We asked people responding on Commonplace how we could make the **district and local centres** more attractive places, and the following options were the most popular 'top three': 'more green and natural spaces', 'more facilities and services such as a library or wellbeing hub', and 'more places to sit'. The main themes in their comments about this were: 'improve cleanliness and tackle litter and chewing gum', 'we need more and free disabled parking', and 'reduce traffic'.

Feedback from **community groups and events about district centres** was that people wanted to have greater access to cheaper food and products in their local areas, getting e-bikes, bikes, and scooters off pavements, and better shops.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses about district centres** included support for active travel, releasing land for housing developments, and locating new housing near transport hubs.

We asked people responding on Commonplace: "Which of these **facilities and services** do you use, and how often?", providing a list of 18 local facilities and services. The most common one used 'daily' was 'outdoor recreational spaces', 'weekly' was 'supermarkets', 'monthly' was 'cultural venues', 'less often' was 'hospitals', and 'never' was 'special education needs and disabilities schools'. When asked if there were other services they used, the most common one mentioned was 'libraries'.

We asked people responding on Commonplace how many minutes they would be willing to travel each way to the facilities and services they use regularly using **active travel** and found that the form of active travel people are willing to spend most time using is walking.

The key messages to be taken forward in the local plan are support to review the number of centres across the city and the extent of their boundaries. How future policies could also support the role and function of centres and the facilities and services within them will need to be considered. This includes how accessible they are by public transport and active travel and the importance of green and natural spaces within centres. The local plan provides the opportunity to develop policies aimed towards meeting our communities' daily needs within our neighbourhoods, for instance, we will explore how we can improve access to more affordable food.

## Ambition 4 – Increase economic performance

This ambition is: "To increase our economic performance, maximise employment opportunities, promote the green economy, and improve skills and qualifications."

We asked people responding on Commonplace to **review a map** showing the current location and extent of employment sites", then choose one of three options: the most popular option (80%) was: "keep employment sites in areas where they already exist, but also find new employment sites where employment could be suitable".

Feedback from **community groups and events** was that there needs to be more support for disabled people to find employment, people wanted more training opportunities and jobs in their neighbourhoods, and better support for starting and running small businesses.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included the importance of public transport to enable people to access employment options, the role of the universities in providing skilled workers, and the need for mixed-use developments.

We asked people responding on Commonplace: "What do you think would be the best way to promote employment sites in Newcastle that would **support local communities**?" and just over half of respondents wanted us to 'identify locations that could support specific types of employment including high-tech industries, green and sustainable businesses' (53%).

The key messages to be taken forward in the local plan are that it will be important to review land for future employment use - protecting existing employment land where possible, identifying new areas that are suitable for employment uses with a focus on high-tech industries, green and sustainable businesses.

## Ambition 5 – Sustainable transport network

This ambition is: "To develop a sustainable transport network, creating safe and accessible neighbourhoods where people choose active and sustainable travel modes to achieve healthier lifestyles and improved air quality."

We asked those taking part on Commonplace the following: "What improvements do you think we should prioritise to improve transport connectivity around Newcastle". 510 people responded on Commonplace, and the top three priorities from their comments were "we need integrated public transport", "we need more reliable public transport", and "we need to improve the Metro".

Feedback from **community groups and events** was that transport planning needed to be better coordinated across the entire North East region, that congestion and traffic flows are problems, and that it needed to be easier to travel between different neighbourhoods by public transport, not only in and out of the city centre.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included the need to locate new housing developments near public transport and active transport networks, ensuring that people with restricted mobility who need to use cars are still able to, and looking at whether park and ride services could be introduced.

We asked people responding on Commonplace: "What would make it **easier** for you to use more **active travel** options?" and the 'top three' options were 'make active travel routes safer', 'providing segregated cycle routes', and 'less distance to travel'.

The key messages to be taken forward in the local plan are how planning can help facilitate better integrated and more reliable public transport, how we can make it easier to travel between different neighbourhoods by public transport, not only in and out of the city

centre. New housing developments should be located near public transport and active travel networks, and we need to make active travel routes safer and easier to use.

## Ambition 6 – High-quality leisure, culture and tourism

This ambition is: "To deliver a high-quality leisure, culture, and tourism experience which celebrates local pride, the city's rich heritage and natural spaces."

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us which of four possible approaches they would prefer us to adopt to plan for new leisure, culture, and tourism facilities, and the option attracting most support (44% of the 628 responses) was 'focus on providing these facilities in new locations across the city, based on future needs'.

Feedback from **community groups and events** was that they wanted to see the cultural and tourism offer of local neighbourhoods promoted, more facilities for children and young people, and a wider range of leisure facilities.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included the need to provide better information for tourists, promoting Newcastle's history and heritage, and the need for leisure and culture facilities in local neighbourhoods.

We asked people responding on Commonplace: "Which of these approaches do you think we should take to improve people's access to natural spaces in Newcastle?" and nearly three-quarters of respondents (70%) said that they wanted to see both approaches used; both providing new natural spaces in existing and new developments, and ensuring existing natural spaces are safe & attractive and can easily be accessed.

The key messages to be taken forward in the local plan are that leisure, culture and tourism facilities should be provided across the city based on future needs, the cultural and tourism offer of local neighbourhoods should be promoted including providing a wider range of facilities for children and young people. Promoting Newcastle's history and heritage was also a key message along with providing new natural spaces and ensuring existing spaces are safe and attractive.

## Ambition 7 – Deliver homes and sustainable communities

This ambition is: "To deliver homes people need throughout their lifetime in sustainable communities where they want to live."

We asked people responding on Commonplace about what type of housing they would like to see more of in the future, and the 'top three' options were carbon-neutral properties (65%), properties for sale (34%), and communal co-housing (31%).

Feedback from **community groups and events** was that they wanted to see more housing to meet the specific needs of disabled people, a wider range of types of property including affordable housing, and the need to ensure that there are sufficient local facilities and infrastructure to meet increased demand caused by new housing developments.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included responses from developers about the role their proposed developments could play in this, the need to improve the quality of housing in the private rented sector, and providing suitable housing for older people and students.

We asked people responding on Commonplace: "Which locations should be a priority for **new housing developments**?" and nearly three-quarters (73%) said 'in areas which are well-served by existing public transport routes'.

We asked people responding on Commonplace: "Where do you think homes for **older people** should be built?" and half of all respondents said that they thought homes for older people should be built in existing communities, adapting or converting existing properties which have good access to facilities and public transport.

We asked people responding on Commonplace: "Which of these options for making the most use of land by increasing the **density of housing** in Newcastle do you support?" and the three most popular options were 'building new homes on brownfield sites', 'making more use of land and buildings', and 'build more types of housing'.

The key messages to be taken forward in the local plan is the need to plan for a greater variety of new homes, including carbon neutral construction, affordable homes and specialist dwellings to meet specific needs, such as older people. New homes should be planned in areas with good access to public transport, making use of sufficient infrastructure and adapting/converting properties located in accessible locations for older people.

## Ambition 8 – Creating well-designed and safe places

This ambition is: "To deliver well-designed and safe places that communities can help to shape and be proud of."

We asked people responding on Commonplace, 'what is special about the environment where you live, work, or visit in Newcastle?' The three most popular options were 'nearby green and open spaces', 'good local parks' and 'good local shops'.

We also asked, "Tell us what you think are the most important features in the area that you live", and the 'top three' answers were 'feeling safe in the local area', 'local parks, open spaces, and nature', and 'design of homes and buildings'.

Feedback from **community groups and events** was that tackling litter was important to them, more facilities for older children and teenagers are needed, and there is a need to tackle anti-social behaviour.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** emphasised the importance of good design for the public realm, creating high-quality buildings, and improving road safety.

The key messages to be taken forward in the local plan and emerging design code are the value of green and open spaces, such as parks. Both the local plan and design code provide the opportunity to develop policies that place importance on good, high-quality design across both buildings and public spaces and help ensure that local areas and environments are safe.

## Ambition 9 – Protect and enhance green and blue infrastructure

This ambition is: "To protect and enhance a network of green and blue infrastructure, habitats and biodiversity which have a key role to play in responding to the climate, ecological, and health emergencies."

We asked people responding on Commonplace, 'how can green and blue infrastructure be improved in Newcastle?' and the top two options were 'improving biodiversity' and 'providing outdoor spaces'.

Feedback from **community groups and events** was they wanted to see increased biodiversity, not building on green belt land, and protecting wildlife corridors and trees.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** emphasised the importance of incorporating green spaces in new housing developments, building on brownfield sites, and the need to base planning policy on central government targets.

We asked people responding on Commonplace, 'what would you like to **see more of** in Newcastle?' and the top three options were 'greening of walking and cycling routes', 'improving access to recreational spaces', and 'improving biodiversity'. When asked '**where would you like to see** new green and blue infrastructure?', the top two options were 'in the city centre' and 'in existing open spaces and parks'.

The key messages to be taken forward in the local plan are how planning can improve biodiversity and provide outdoor spaces, protect wildlife corridors and trees. The importance of incorporating green spaces in new development was highlighted along with greening of walking and cycling routes and improving access to recreational spaces.

## Who took part?

We know the following about the participants who provided information about their personal characteristics. These were nearly all people who took part via Commonplace, so we do not hold this information for around half the people who took part:

- 82% said they usually travelled around Newcastle by walking.
- 51% were employed full-time.
- 51% said their connection to the local area was that they live here.
- 47% were female, 47% were male.
- 29% were disabled.
- 23% were aged between 35-44.
- 5% described their ethnicity as Black or Minority Ethnic.
- 1% described themselves as transgender.
- 46 people lived in Callerton and Throckley ward.

# Main Findings

# Overview – what is most important to you?

We asked those taking part on Commonplace the following question: "We need to develop a vision for the city up to 2045. Tell us what is important to you - select one or more options from the following". The full list of options was:

1. Access to open spaces, play, nature, and biodiversity

2. Easy to move around

3. Help to address climate change

4. Improved access to local services and facilities

5. Improved affordable and good quality housing

6. Opportunities for active travel

7. Providing job opportunities

8. Safe and well-designed places

9. Protecting and enhancing Newcastle's strong identity, history and heritage

10. Celebrating Geordie pride and maintaining our reputation as a welcoming city

11. Is there something else important to you?

People could choose as many options as they wanted to; they were not asked to rank them in order of importance, just indicate which ones were important to them. The percentages in the chart on the next page are calculated from the number of people who replied that a particular option was 'important', shown as a percentage of the number of people who answered the question (701). The 'top three' options were:

1. Access to open spaces, play, nature, and biodiversity – 66%

2. Easy to move around – 60%

3. Help to address climate change – 52%

The chart on the next page shows all responses.

## What is important to you?
## (701 responses)

**66%** 1a. Access to open spaces
**60%** 1b. Easy to move around
**52%** 1c. Address climate change
**50%** 1i. Protecting Newcastle's identity
**42%** 1g. Job opportunities
**42%** 1d. Improved access to local services
**40%** 1e. Improved affordable housing
**39%** 1h. Safe and well-designed places
**37%** 1f. Active travel
**30%** 1k. Other
**28%** 1j. Celebrating Geordie pride
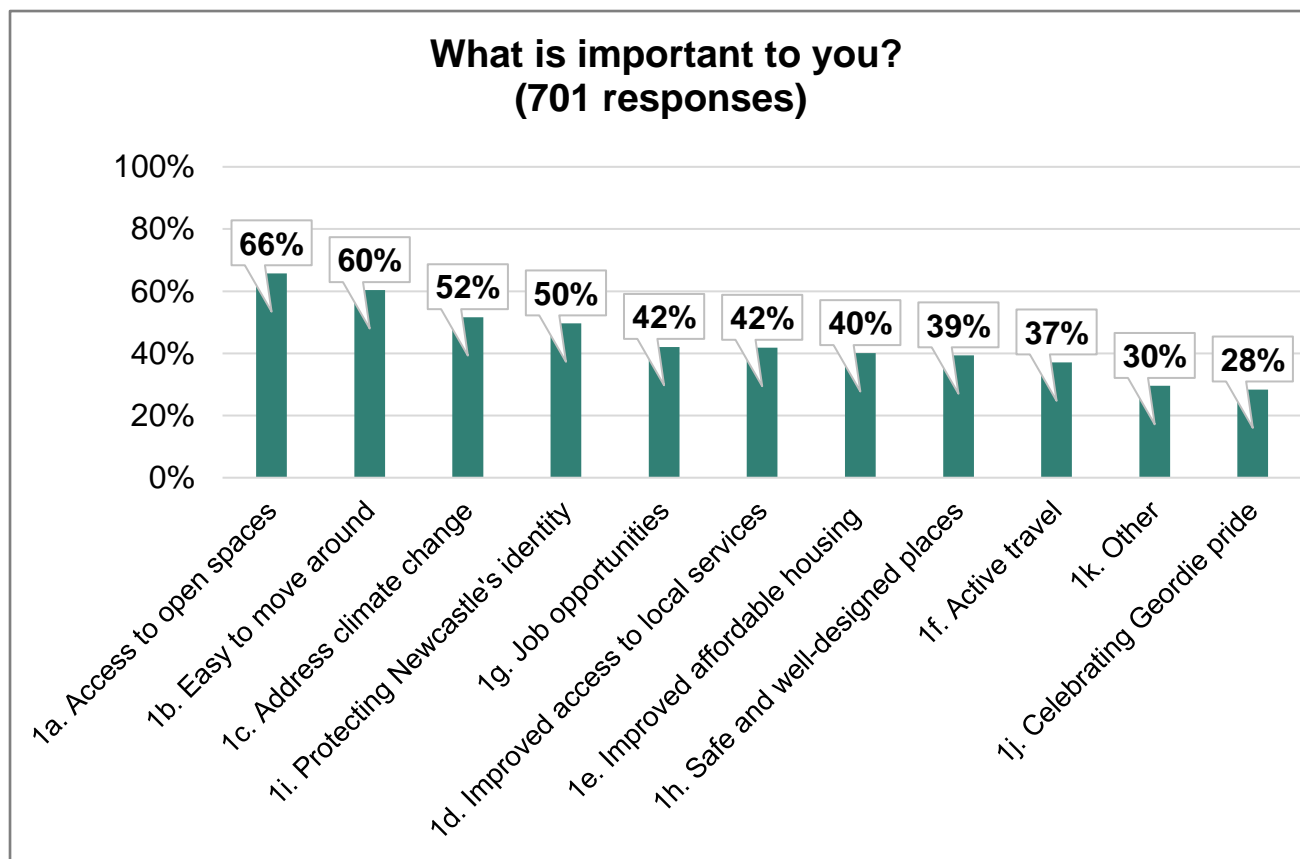
We asked people to comment on what 'something else' was, if they replied that something else was important to them. 208 people did this, and analysis shows that the top nine themes in their comments were:

1. **Protect the green belt** – 39 people said this

2. **Addressing the biodiversity crisis** and protecting wildlife – 25 mentions

3. **Keep Newcastle clean** and tidy – 16 mentions

4. **Better public transport** – 10 mentions

5. **Improve air quality** – 9 mentions

6. **Protect woodland** – 8 mentions

7. **Better litter collection** – 7 mentions

8. **More green spaces** – 7 mentions

9. **Protect green spaces** in local neighbourhoods – 7 mentions

Comments included:

"We need to keep the green belt around Woolsington Village a green belt. We have lost so much of this ancient woodland with buildings being built, the abundance of wildlife that lives there will disappear."

"Get rid of litter and graffiti which blight our beautiful city and its suburbs."

We also asked people attending community events to look at a board displaying the 10 options for this question and put a sticky dot on the options that mattered to them. As shown below, the top three options were:

1. Access to open spaces – 57 people said this
2. Easy to move around – 53 people said this
3. Improved affordable housing – 51 people said this
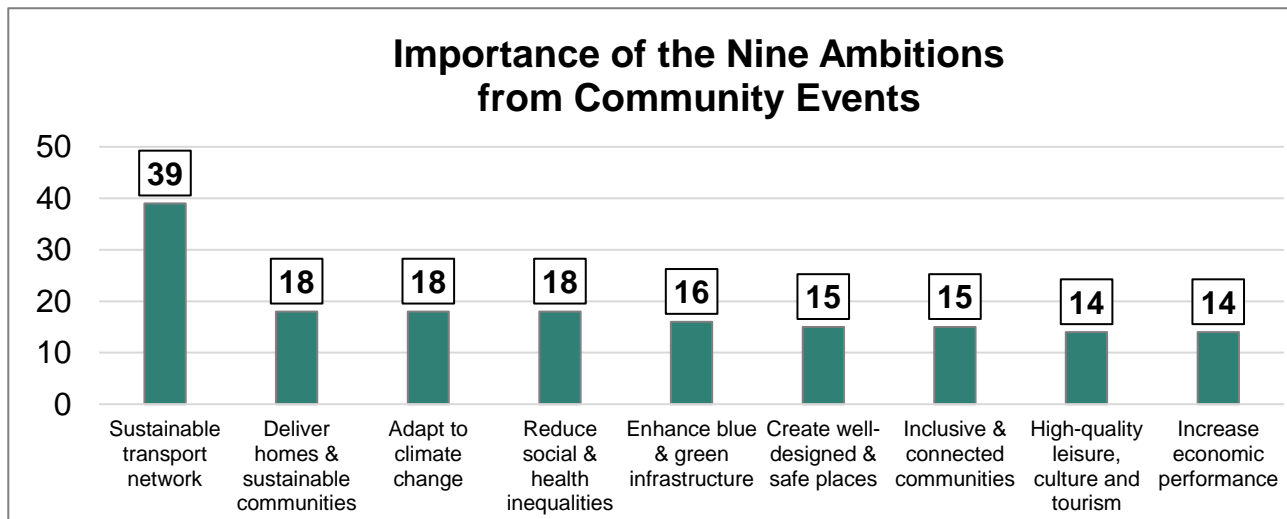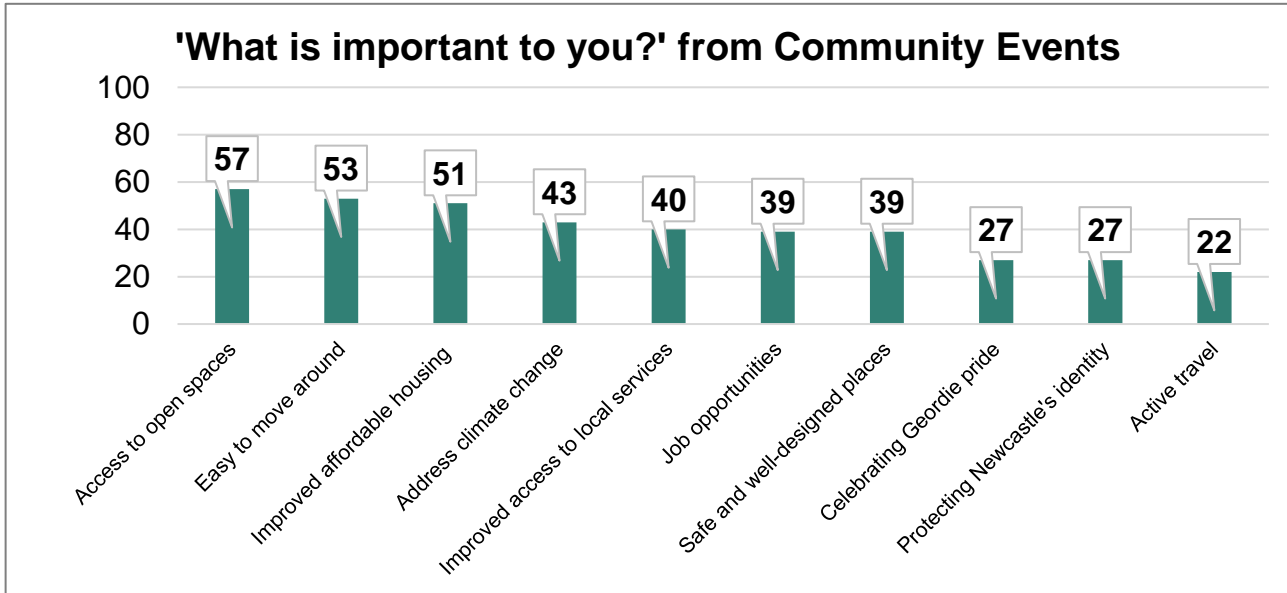


**'What is important to you?' from Community Events**

Note that we did not keep a count of how many people took part in this (they could choose more than one option), so we cannot calculate percentages.

We also asked them to choose which ambitions mattered most to them, and this is shown in the chart below, with the top four' being:

1. Develop a sustainable transport network – 39 people said this
2. Deliver homes and sustainable communities – 18 people said this
3. Net Zero and adapt to climate change – 18 people said this
4. Reduce social and health inequalities – 18 people said this

Note that we did not keep a count of how many people took part in this (they could choose more than one option), so we cannot calculate percentages.

## Young people's priorities

Elections to Newcastle's Youth Parliament took place on 14 March 2024, when 57 young people aged between 11-17 put forward their manifestos for election. To help inform our understanding of young people's priorities for Newcastle, we analysed their manifestos to identify which of the nine ambitions were closest to their priorities, with the results shown below, and the 'top three' being:

1. **Health** – Helping people to achieve healthy lifestyles; 60% of candidates' manifestos mentioned health

2. **Safe community places** – Delivering well-designed and safe places that communities can help to shape and be proud of; 47% mentioned this

3. **Other** – 40% mentioned other issues which do not have a direct link to any of the Newcastle Plan issues, such as tackling racism and promoting equality.

**Young people's priorities from Youth Parliament 2024 Manifestos**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Health | 60% |
| Safe places | 47% |
| Other | 40% |
| Leisure and Culture | 33% |
| Travel | 25% |
| Climate | 23% |
| Employment | 18% |
| Green and blue | 12% |
| Districts and city centre | 9% |
| Housing | 0% |
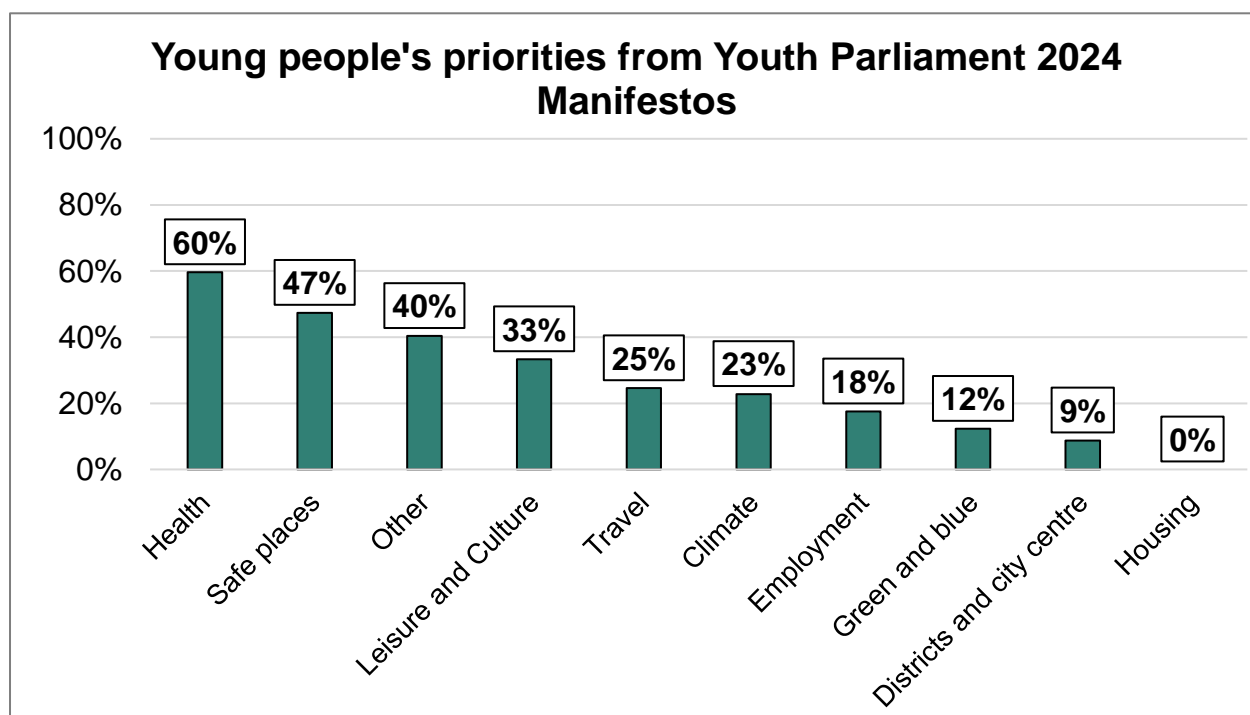
When Youth Parliament members discussed taking action on health, they most commonly mentioned improving young people's mental health, and tackling high rates of vaping. In connection with 'well-designed and safe places that communities can help to shape and be proud of', many mentioned a need for better-quality outdoor spaces and, in particular, facilities and activities for older children and teenagers – this is also reflected in the relative importance of 'leisure and culture' to candidates. Better quality and cheaper public transport was mentioned several times. Comments included:

"When you go out with your friends, do you end up at the park most of the time? Or are you looking for things in town aimlessly? I think teenagers need more fun things that they can do when they go out without having to be driven by their parents."

"All young people should have access to safe and affordable transport. This can't be a barrier to our use of opportunities: education, training, leisure."

# What happens next for the spatial vision?

## What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Vision?

**Keeping Newcastle clean and tidy:**

To keep Newcastle clean and tidy the council regularly removes fly-tipped waste, sweeps roads and pavements on either a daily or 10-day cycle and implements an annual leaf clearance program across the city every Autumn. In 2022 we mobilised a new work programme in all wards for targeted additional neighbourhood cleans and grounds maintenance works. Pilot schemes were trialed in streets in the West End, where bollards were placed on some lanes to deter fly tippers, this did appear to reduce those kinds of incidents, but also showed that there was still considerable dumping being done by residents and landlords. We will continue our programme of pop-up recycling centres.

**Making sure it is easy to move around Newcastle and the North East region:**

It's important we get the transport opportunities and conditions right, so we can all benefit from being able to move around easily. The council is currently planning how we can help improve travel by 2045 by preparing a 'Movement Strategy'. The Movement Strategy will provide the policy direction for future transport schemes and will set out our high-level policies, guiding commitments and key actions. It will also align with the Regional Transport Plan. The Movement Strategy will add value to the local plan by ensuring that transport priorities are key considerations for our future spatial planning.

## Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan

The key messages to be taken forward in a spatial vision for the local plan include the importance of access to the natural environment, being able to move easily around the city, addressing climate change and delivering homes including affordable housing.

The local plan will also include policies on addressing the biodiversity crisis and protecting wildlife and on healthy communities and developing safe spaces through new development.

# Ambition 1 – Which of these options should be prioritised to help achieve healthy lifestyles?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to prioritise the following seven options for helping people to achieve healthy lifestyles by putting them in order from 1 (most important) to 7 (least important):

1. Deliver active travel schemes, such as walking, wheeling, and cycling

2. Limit new unhealthy eating outlets (hot food takeaways)

3. Provide better access to local services and facilities

4. Provide more accessible and adaptable homes

5. Provide new open spaces with access to nature, and improving access to existing spaces

6. Provide opportunities for communal food growing and allotments

7. Require all new housing to be energy and heat-efficient

625 people answered this question. As shown below, 'Deliver active travel schemes, such as walking, wheeling, and cycling' had the highest percentage of respondents ranking it as their first or second priority (49%), followed by 'Provide new open spaces with access to nature, and improving access to existing spaces' (43%).
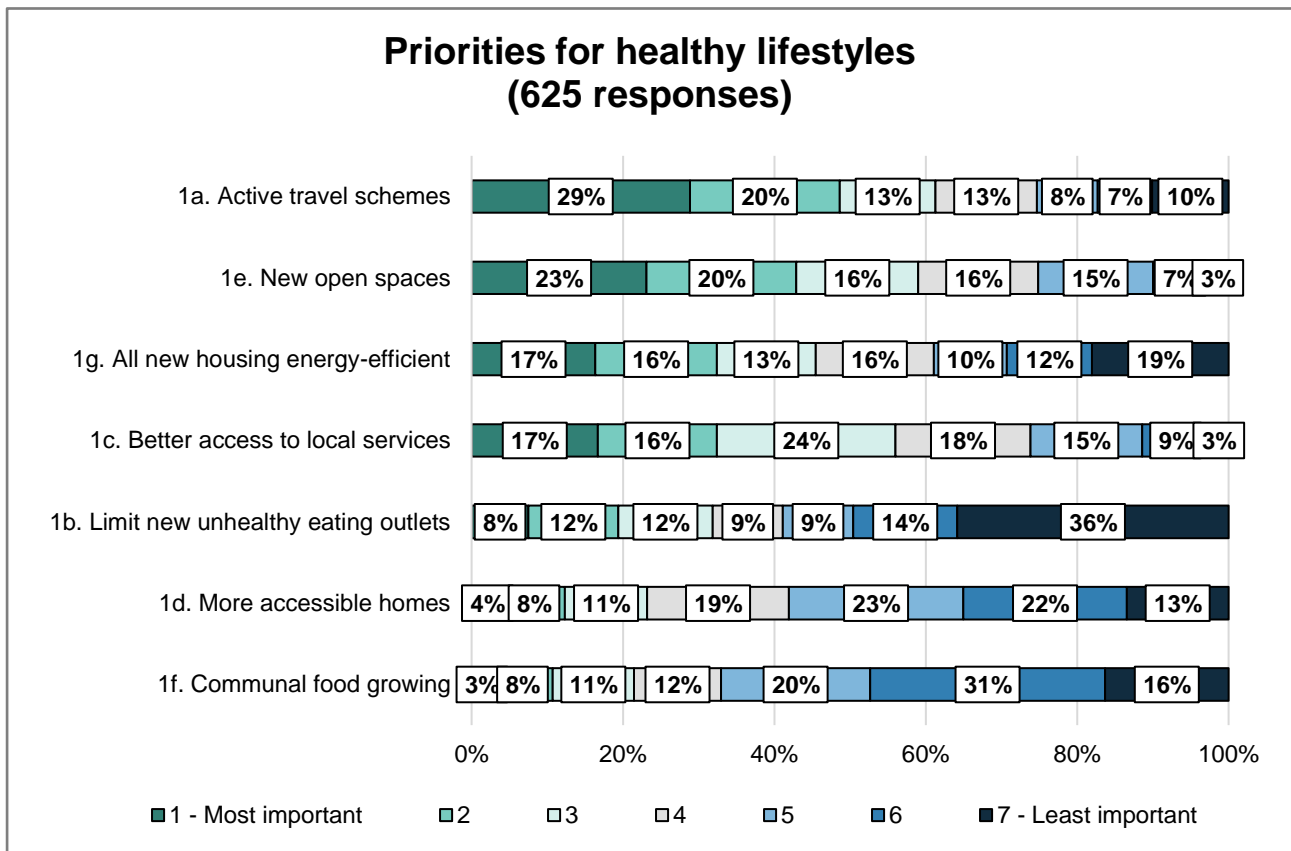


Interestingly, whilst 'Provide opportunities for communal food growing and allotments' had the lowest proportion of respondents ranking it their highest or second highest priority (11%), if we look at the responses ranked by which had the highest percentages of

respondents ranking them as 'least important' or 'second least important', the 'bottom two' are: 'Limit new unhealthy eating outlets (hot food takeaways)' (50%) and 'Provide opportunities for communal food growing and allotments' (47%).

We also asked: "Is there something else we should prioritise to help achieve healthy lifestyles?". We received a very wide variety of comments about this via Commonplace, from 185 people. Many people used this space to emphasise their support of the option they had chosen to prioritise in the question above. The 'top themes' in responses on Commonplace were:

1. **Need better public transport** – 10 people said this

2. **Protect the green belt** – 10 people

3. **Promote active travel** – 9 people said this, as did HBF

4. **Discourage car use** – 9 people said this, as did one person visiting a stall in the Grainger Market

5. **Educate children** on healthy lifestyles – 9 people

6. People need **better education about healthy lifestyles** – 7 people

7. **Support healthy eating** including more affordable food – 6 people

Comments included:

"We need free, green and natural space. It supports mental wellbeing and the productivity and creativity of your citizens."

"Promote cycling and walking within the city and improve public transport to reduce pollution and traffic."

Feedback from **community groups and events** included:

Students attending an event organised by the EPIC project ('Empowering People in Communities') project for **ESOL learners** (English for Speakers of Other Languages) commented on difficulties they had faced trying to register for health services including doctors and dentists, and that better support for people needing to do this would help improve health. They also appreciated being able to walk to local shops and other facilities and said that more open space and free activities were needed in people's local areas. EPIC is the 'Empowering People in Communities' community development project active in Walker, Elswick and West Denton, see here for more information: https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/citylife-news/epic-project-helps-newcastle-communities-thrive.)

People attending a drop-in event in **Fenham** said that there was a need to make sure people have access to exercise and leisure facilities.

People attending a drop-in event in **Gosforth** also said that there was a need to make sure people have access to exercise and leisure facilities, and to make these facilities attractive. They also wanted to see better mental health services for children and young people.

People visiting a stall in the **Grainger Market** on 23 February said that they wanted to see less pollution from motor traffic in the city centre, that they thought that clouds of vapour

from vaping were unpleasant and that where people vape should be controlled, and that it was necessary to tackle social isolation among older people.

People attending a drop-in event in **Heaton** emphasised the need for people to have better and easier access to health services such as dentists and doctors.

People attending a drop-in event at **Jesmond Library** wanted the council to work with support groups like Elders Council and Deaflink to engage residents in planning for the future.

Early feedback from the **Newcastle Disability Forum** were that there is a need for more play spaces for children, especially in urban residential areas.

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** were concerned at the impact on public health of leisure facilities closing.

Feedback received from the **Let's talk Newcastle topic wall** was that one person wanted to see more investment in swimming pools, and another felt that some neighbourhoods did not have adequate access to health services such as dentists' surgeries.

Two people commented via **social media**, both saying that better mental health services were needed.

One person commented via **letter**, saying that easy access to open green space and nature is essential for health.

Two comments from the **Youth Voice Locality groups** commented that some young people do not eat nutritious food during the school day; another was concerned that too many young people were smoking are vaping.

34 **Youth Parliament** candidates mentioned health in their manifestos, mostly focusing on the need to improve young people's mental health (and the related need for better mental health services).

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included:

76% of the 45 people responding to the survey run by student **Bea Chivers** as part of a research project for the PlanBEE Higher Apprenticeship course at Gateshead College felt that introducing Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) decreased air pollution either 'a moderate amount' or 'a great deal', and 61% said that implementing green walls did this. They also prioritised having shared spaces, a clean environment, and good air quality. The need to promote active travel was mentioned.

**Cities 4 People** commented on the need to improve air and water quality in the local area.

**Commercial Estates Projects Ltd** described how their plans for the housing allocation at Middle Callerton and Upper Callerton could fit with these goals, and also with biodiversity and blue-green infrastructure goals. They also listed factors to consider when planning for housing needs, including: "planned growth and investment in the North East as a result of the Devolution Deal, the rapidly growing population in the city, the need to deliver new homes to allow housing to remain affordable within the region, and the fact that Newcastle is required to deliver a 35% uplift on the standard method." They argue that spatial policies can be used to deliver a healthier local area through better open spaces, housing and services, but asked the council to consider if the use of Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) would be the best tool to use to achieve this.

The **Elders Council** discussed the particular health needs of older people, including locally accessible health services such as GP surgeries and pharmacies, and making it easy to walk around local areas to support physical and mental health. They also

emphasised the importance of wellbeing as well as health and supporting community connections to help tackle loneliness. Other concerns included air pollution and the greater susceptibility of older people to the health impacts of heat waves. Finally, accessible and warmer homes were referred to, as older people spend more time in their homes compared to other groups.

**Food Newcastle** expressed a willingness to work with the council and other partners to promote good food for all and tackle food poverty and explore how this links to our ambitions for creating a healthier city.

**Harworth Group** commented that they felt their plans for their site at north-west Throckley could support this ambition by provided good quality housing, links to active and public transport, and access to open space. They emphasised the need for good planning if this goal is to be achieved.

The **Home Builders Federation (HBF)** emphasised the need for good quality housing in any plans to improve health and wellbeing in the local area, and also a general need for local planning to support active travel, access to green spaces, and healthy food choices. Discussing the possible use of Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) for major developments such as those with 100 or more dwellings proposed, they commented that, in their view: "local plans should already have considered the impact of development on the health and well-being of their communities…consequently, where a development is in line with policies in the local plan, a HIA should not be necessary".

**McCarthy Stone** commented specifically on the needs of older people, noting that people within this group can vary widely in terms of their health needs, and that a range of different housing options is needed to help meet these needs and support people to stay healthy and active in later life. They observed that the needs of older people are not synonymous with those of wheelchair users, and that wheelchair-accessible housing alone does not meet all the needs of older people, such as on-site support and opportunities for socialising.

**Newcastle University** commented on their plans to create the Health Innovation Neighbourhood on the old Newcastle General Hospital Site to "create a high-quality neighbourhood with a focus on health innovation and healthy living", and how this can contribute to tackling health inequalities through the built environment.

**NGP Consortium** commented on the importance of social, transport and environmental infrastructure in promoting health. Like HBF and Commercial Estates Projects Ltd, they commented on the possible use of Health Impact Assessments, saying that in their view "the council should be seeking to produce a new plan which sets the conditions in which sustainable development that contributes to improving health is supported at the plan-making stage, rather than leave this to be demonstrated at the application stage".

**Persimmon Homes** thought that developing more homes could be part of tackling health inequalities by offering better quality housing. Like NGP Consortium, HBF and Commercial Estates Projects Ltd., they commented on the use of Health Impact Assessments, sharing the view of NGP Consortium that "sustainable development that contributes to improving health is supported at the plan-making stage".

**Space for Gosforth** commented on how walking and cycling can contribute to mental and physical health and reduce air and noise pollution. They wanted to see improved active transport infrastructure to support this.

**The Glasshouse** (formerly the Sage Gateshead) said that they wanted to look at how culture can support health and wellbeing within local communities, and to work with

Newcastle City Council and other local partners to deliver this. They emphasised the importance of local infrastructure, including transport and digital infrastructure, and economic development work in order to deliver this.

**Woolsington Parish Council** recommended three actions to make Newcastle a healthier city; protecting open green space and blue spaces, preventing the introduction of more fast-food outlets, and introduce more community gardens and allotments.

## What happens next for Ambition 1 – Health?

**What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Ambition?**

**Improving air and water quality:**
We monitor air quality through our Annual Status Reporting, which helps us track progress and make necessary adjustments to our policies and infrastructure. We currently have the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) operating to improve air quality in the city centre. As part of the council's Movement Strategy, we are proposing to prioritise clean air. We propose to do this by ensuring local air quality meets safe standards by reducing motor traffic and increasing the use of electric vehicles or other air pollution benefiting technologies. Better water quality in our rivers will be achieved by treating surface water run-off from highways in SuDS features and separating combined sewer networks to reduce storm overflows.

**Providing improved mental health services:**
The local authority does not commission directly mental health services (other than provision within adult social care), this is through the Integrated Care Board.

Our vision for Newcastle is that those with mental health support needs should have these met through mainstream housing wherever possible, rather than in residential or institutional settings. Supported housing can be key to achieving this, by providing a more intensively supported environment which meets the aspirations of people accessing support. Close links with community mental health teams and with other involved professionals are vital. We currently provide a choice of mixed tenure housing options for people suffering a mental health condition. This comprises of specialist housing linked to care to meet the diverse needs, such as supported living and floating support and step-up, step-down support options.  A review is currently across our internal and commissioned mental health continuum of support offer.

**Supporting the reduction of social and health inequalities:**
We are committed to working together with the people of Newcastle to improve the health and wellbeing of people, with an equal focus on physical and mental health and wellbeing. At a time of increasing demand on services and pressures on funding, it is even more important to make sure the city is a healthy place by supporting people to be able to make healthy and informed choices and that services are delivered as efficiently as possible, and that support is given to research and innovation to drive improvements.

Age Friendly Newcastle steering group was re-established in 2023/24 coordinated by Public Health with support from the Elder's Council and Newcastle University. The previous mission statement/strategy has been reviewed and is being updated into an operational action plan by partners.  Ageing well, is important and making sure that adults of all ages can continue to be a connected and valued part of their communities.

Health and social care integration is a priority ensuring that our services are designed around the individual and that they offer the best health and wellbeing outcomes possible. We will ensure that we place the voices of older people and their families at the heart of our work. Tackling ageism by challenging negative stereotypes and creating opportunities is vital for older people to remain part of their communities. We will work to ensure our local environment and communities are safe and accessible and enable older people to be active, participate in and shape the places in which they live. There will be a variety of housing options which enable people to live well at home including retrofitting existing housing as well as development of specialist housing.

There will be further development of a multi-agency Age Friendly Newcastle action plan led by steering group members including Public Health, the council, Elder's Council and Newcastle University taking a thematic approach to addressing the needs and inequalities faced by older people in the city.

**Providing better local access to health services such as GP surgeries:**
The responsibility to provide new primary healthcare provision lies with the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB).

The council's local plan does require new residential development sites to provide access to and provision of local facilities and services including shops and healthcare to serve the needs of the new and existing communities. When planning applications for residential developments are being considered, the ICB are consulted as part of this process. To date, on some of the major residential developments, including at Middle and Lower Callerton, the ICB requested monetary contributions to expand existing GP practices in the area. The decision as to when these funds are drawn down to enable capacity to be extended is the responsibility of the ICB and the individual practices. The council is working with the ICB to support and encourage the use of S106 funds and secure additional funds where appropriate.

**Tackling food poverty:**
Public Health's Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire includes questions on whether a young person has recently skipped a meal which provides some intelligence. Public Health's role as convenor of multi-agency work around food poverty in babies, children and young people convene a working group to improve uptake of Healthy Start, a national scheme providing free vitamins and financial support to buy healthy food for pregnant women and pre-school children. We also convene Food in Schools working group, aimed at improving uptake of free school meals.

**Supporting healthy eating and better education on healthy lifestyles:**

Public Health currently commission a health trainer service via HealthWorks Newcastle (to March 2025) which provides healthy lifestyles support and education to a range of communities across the city around nutrition and weight management, alcohol, smoking, mental health and access to physical activity including onward referrals and signposting to further support for more complex needs. For wider lifestyle issues and more complex needs Public Health also commission services around stop smoking, drug and alcohol addiction/recovery and provision of NHS Health Checks to assess Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) risk. The Health Trainer Service is currently under review to inform commissioning arrangements for 2025/26 and beyond.

Public Health will develop a more coordinated and impactful approach to Public Health campaigns and messaging across the city to ensure healthy lifestyle information and awareness of behavioural support reaches the right communities and is provided in understandable and accessible formats. There are additional government grants currently in place for 2024/25 to enhance stop smoking and drug and alcohol support.

**Support the role of housing in better health outcomes:**

Housing is a key social determinant. The local authority housing resident survey has included input from Public Health and this will give us valuable data about our housing residents. Public Health has also recently developed a health needs assessment for homelessness and rough sleeping, to help us work together on the procurement and recommissioning activity planned. Public Health will be working closely with the Housing and Communities directorate to embed a health in all policies approach in the new Housing strategies and plans.

**Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan**

The responses to this ambition will help to shape future policies in the local plan which have implications on health and wellbeing and will help inform what policy interventions are required.

Key messages from the responses include the importance of active travel and opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use, access to and provision of open spaces and nature. The local plan's role in supporting local health provision, good quality housing and helping to address specific housing needs, for example affordable housing was also raised.

These responses show that there are many policy interventions needed across the different topic areas within the local plan, that will help improve health and wellbeing, and have been identified as important to our communities and stakeholders.

Some solutions which the Newcastle Plan could facilitate include urban greening, making streets, buildings and other public spaces green. This could include roofs and walls covered in plants, street trees and small pocket parks. Urban greening

can help to improve air and noise pollution, soak up rainwater that may cause flooding, reduce urban heating effects, create habitats for local wildlife, offset carbon emissions in the local area, improve physical and mental health and make places look more attractive.

New policies in the local plan will be developed based on evidence including on open spaces, sustainable transport and housing needs.

# Ambition 2 – To support the city's ambition to be net zero and to mitigate and adapt to climate change

We asked people responding on Commonplace to prioritise the following seven options for helping people to achieve healthy lifestyles by putting them in order from 1 (most important) to 8 (least important):

1. Build 'net-zero carbon' buildings
2. Ensure new developments are designed to manage the risk of flooding
3. Build housing in sustainable locations
4. Identify sites for new tree planting and urban greening
5. Increase active travel including walking, wheeling, and cycling
6. Create new habitats for wildlife to improve biodiversity
7. Identify suitable sites for renewable energy generation
8. Reduce waste generated by development
9. Is there something else the city should prioritise to address climate change?

625 people answered this question; as shown below, 'build housing in sustainable locations' had the highest percentage of respondents ranking it as their first or second priority (43%), followed by 'build 'net-zero carbon' buildings' (37%).

## 2. Priorities for addressing climate change - high priorities (625 responses)

| Option | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2c. Build housing in sustainable locations | 22% | 21% | 20% | 11% | 9% | 6% | 6% | 5% |
| 2a. Build 'net-zero carbon' buildings | 20% | 17% | 17% | 14% | 10% | 11% | 6% | 5% |
| 2e. Increase active travel including walking, wheeling, and cycling | 14% | 11% | 11% | 11% | 16% | 12% | 12% | 12% |
| 2d. Identify sites for new tree planting and urban greening | 13% | 19% | 16% | 21% | 18% | 9% | 5 | 1% |
| 2f. Create new habitats for wildlife to improve biodiversity | 12% | 12% | 9% | 11% | 13% | 26% | 11% | 7% |
| 2g. Identify suitable sites for renewable energy generation | 9% | 5% | 7% | 8% | 11% | 11% | 35% | 14% |
| 2b. Ensure new developments are designed to manage the risk of… | 8% | 13% | 14% | 17% | 13% | 15% | 10% | 11% |
| 2h. Reduce waste generated by development | 3 | 3% | 6% | 7% | 11% | 10% | 16% | 44% |

Legend: ■1 - Most important  ■2  □3  □4  ■5  ■6  ■7  ■8 - Least important

24

When we look at the responses ranked by which had the highest percentages of respondents ranking them as 'least important' or 'second least important', the 'bottom two' are: 'reduce waste generated by development' (56%) and 'identify suitable sites for renewable energy generation' (49%).

## 2. Priorities for addressing climate change - low priorities (625 responses)

| Priority | 1 - Most important | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 - Least important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2h. Reduce waste generated by development | 3 | 3% | 6% | 7% | 11% | 10% | 16% | 44% |
| 2g. Identify suitable sites for renewable energy generation | 9% | 5% | 7% | 8% | 11% | 11% | 35% | 14% |
| 2e. Increase active travel including walking, wheeling, and cycling | 14% | 11% | 11% | 11% | 16% | 12% | 12% | 12% |
| 2b. Ensure new developments are designed to manage the risk of flooding | 8% | 13% | 14% | 17% | 13% | 15% | 10% | 11% |
| 2f. Create new habitats for wildlife to improve biodiversity | 12% | 12% | 9% | 11% | 13% | 26% | 11% | 7% |
| 2c. Build housing in sustainable locations | 22% | 21% | 20% | 11% | 9% | 6% | 6% | 5% |
| 2a. Build 'net-zero carbon' buildings | 20% | 17% | 17% | 14% | 10% | 11% | 6% | 5% |
| 2d. Identify sites for new tree planting and urban greening | 13% | 19% | 16% | 21% | 18% | 9% | 5 | 1% |

We also asked: "Is there something else we should prioritise to address climate change?". We received a very wide variety of comments about this from 160 people. The 'top themes' in responses on Commonplace were:

1. **Protect the green belt** – 19 people mentioned this.

2. **New buildings including houses must be energy efficient** – 13 people mentioned this, as did people attending a drop in event in Great Park, Commercial Estates Projects Ltd. and the Elders Council. Commercial Estates Projects Ltd, HBF and NGP Consortium said that in their view, policies on this should be in line with the December 2023 Written Ministerial Statement on energy efficiency in building regulations.

3. **Protect green spaces** – 13 people mentioned this.

4. **Protect wildlife** – 12 people mentioned this, as did people attending the Grainger Market stalls, and the Elders Council.

5. **Support solar power** – 11 people mentioned this, as did ESOL students attending an event at Westgate College and Cities 4 People.

6. **Need better public transport** – 10 people mentioned this, as did several Planning Policy responses.

7. **Introduce more energy-efficient measures like green walls to existing buildings** – 8 people mentioned this, as did several community groups, and planning policy responses from Cities for People and the Elders Council.

8. **Reduce car use** – 8 people mentioned this, as did people attending drop-in sessions in Gosforth and in the West End.

Comments included:

"Stop all urban sprawl development on greenfield sites, greenbelt sites and regenerate older or empty buildings, or make developers clean up brownfield or greyfield sites for social housing."

"Ensure new schemes for wildlife and biodiversity are done in consultation with local environments NGOs [non-governmental organisations] to ensure that we are creating a connected landscape for wildlife and consider the importance of ecosystem services in the design of these schemes."

"New and remodelled buildings should not only be built in a carbon-neutral way, but they should have elements to help them be energy-efficient and have things like moss walls or green roofs, etc."

Feedback from **community groups and events** included the following.

People from the **Becoming Visible** group, which works with and for deaf people, commented on the challenge of balancing cleaner transport with the fact that many disabled people need to use cars to access services and live their lives.

Students attending an event organised by the EPIC project for **ESOL learners** (English for Speakers of Other Languages) said that solar panels on buildings could help both achieve net zero goals and tackling the cost-of-living crisis, as they had seen their energy bills increase in recent years.

People at a drop-in session in **Fenham** wanted to see more trees planted and better maintenance of existing trees.

People at a drop-in session at Trinity Church in **Gosforth** emphasised the importance of getting the basics rights in terms of open space and tree management, increasing biodiversity on the Town Moor and planting more trees. They also asked how the Net Zero 2030 targets would fit into the local plan and expressed concern that urban design of new housing developments tended to encourage car use.

People at a drop-in session in **Great Park** wanted new houses to be built with solar panels, heat pumps, energy efficient roof tiles, and EV chargers.

People visiting a stall in the **Grainger Market** on 20 February 2024 wanted to see biodiversity protected and increased, and asked if the roofs of buildings could be used to support this. They also commented on the need for sustainable local food systems, having more green spaces in the city centre, factoring in the impact of climate change on Newcastle into future planning, and asking whether Urban Green Newcastle have been able to keep up with maintenance of parks and green spaces.

People visiting a stall in the **Grainger Market** on 23 February 2024 emphasised the role of active travel and public transport in this, including using electric vehicles and making sure public transport is accessible. They wanted to see allotments and green spaces protected, and whether heat generated by some industries, such as server farms, could be used for domestic or commercial heating.

People attending a drop-in event in **Heaton** thought that educating people about maintaining and tidying their gardens was needed.

People attending a drop-in event at **Jesmond Library** thought that better education about recycling is needed and that there should be street recycling facilities. One view was that there is a need to collect data on hot areas of the city due to climate change and use this to inform planning and design in future.

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** said that they wanted to see more EV parking and charging points in Newcastle, and more support and encouragement for car sharing, particularly for sharing electric vehicles.

Feedback received from the **Let's talk Newcastle topic wall** was that one person was unhappy with traffic management measures and the 'green agenda'.

Two people commented via **social media**, one saying that they though existing traffic management measures, especially in the city centre, were causing congestion and increase carbon emissions; another though they were needed to tackle climate change.

13 **Youth Parliament** candidates mentioned climate change in their manifestos, with common themes being the need to tackle plastic pollution, supporting people to switch to electric vehicles, and encourage people to make sustainable choices when buying clothes.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included:

People responding to the survey run by student **Bea Chivers** commented on the need for more chargers for electric vehicles (EVs).

**Cities 4 People** expressed the view that many existing buildings need to be renovated to improve insulation and look at installing solar panels.

**Commercial Estates Projects Ltd** generally supported the council's Net Zero ambitions, but wondered if the council's target was more ambitious than targets set by central government. They asked if it was achievable given the timescale and suggested that the council should prioritise developing sustainable communities as a way of moving towards being carbon neutral. They also commented on the importance of the recent North East Combined Mayoral Authority devolution deal and the need for co-ordinated regional action to tackle climate change.

The **Elders Council** commented on the concern many of their members had for the future of their children and grandchildren, and the work they have been doing to support action to tackle climate change. They commented that they thought it necessary to consider carbon emissions as part of a wider climate crisis which includes plastic pollution, waste generation, and biodiversity loss. They wanted to see it made easier for people in Newcastle to responsibly dispose of waste and recycle where possible and consider how more energy-efficient housing can help to meet our Net Zero goals.

**Harworth Group** commented that they felt their plans for their site at north-west Throckley could support this ambition as it is a 'sustainable settlement' where community facilities are located within easy walking and cycling distance.

The **Home Builders Federation (HBF)** supported the council's goal of taking action on climate change and said that in their view: "the council should ensure that any policy is only implemented in line with the December 2023 Written Ministerial Statement", which states that further change to energy efficiency building regulations is planned for 2025, meaning that homes built to this standard with be Net Zero- ready. They wanted to see a "flexible approach" taken to incorporating active travel within new housing developments.

**McCarthy Stone** commented that building specialist retirement housing can contribute to net zero goals by making more efficient use of land, providing housing close to shops and other facilities meaning that people can walk to them rather than needing a car, and that shared facilities within a single large building can be a more efficient use of energy and material resources.

**Newcastle University** reiterated their commitment to tackling climate change through achieving net-zero emissions by 2030, and how this can contribute to the goals set out in the Newcastle Plan.

**NGP Consortium** expressed support for sustainable communities, but also expressed a view (shared by Commercial Estates Projects Ltd. and HBF) that they wanted to see the Newcastle Plan be consistent with the guidance from central government, where: "the direction from national government is clear that Local Planning Authorities should not seek to introduce local planning policy requirements which go above and beyond nationally-set requirements for energy efficiency."

**Newcastle Public Transport Users Group** said that in their view, a "big modal shift" from private car use to public and active transport was necessary in order to achieve net zero goals, and that land-use planning policy is an essential part of this shift.

**Persimmon Homes** wanted to see more detailed policy proposals about net zero goals and planning, as they had concerns that this should not "unnecessarily restrict developments" and should be based on national guidance (a view similar to those of Commercial Estates Projects Ltd., HBF and NGP Consortium). They felt that greater housing density should be part of this process, as should be the sustainable use of land currently within the green belt.

**PfP Igloo** noted that the recent North East Combined Mayoral Authority devolution deal offered increased opportunities for regional planning to improve transport and address climate change. They also observed that new housing developments can offer options such as building new properties with solar panels and heat pumps.

**Space for Gosforth** said that reducing motor traffic is essential to achieving Net Zero goals, alongside transitioning to greater use of electric vehicles. They also observed that infrastructure for walking and cycling takes up less space than infrastructure for motor vehicles, and "freed-up space" that could be used for green infrastructure.

**Unite** expressed their commitment to ensuring all their existing and new student accommodation will be net-zero by 2030. They observed that whilst retrofitting may be appropriate in some cases, it may be necessary sometimes to replace old buildings with new ones of a higher standard and options such as solar panels and heat pumps. With regard to the specific area of Castle Leazes, they saw a need to reduce embodied carbon, reduce operational energy, and "mitigate residual carbon by using certified carbon offsetting".

**Woolsington Parish Council** recommended four actions to make Newcastle a greener city; introduce 'safeguarding' policies to prevent urban sprawl or 'coalescence of settlements, respect the 'social objective' in the sustainable development goals in the National Planning Policy Framework, make better use of brownfield sites, and protect woodlands.

## What happens next for Ambition 2 – Climate Change?

**What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Ambition?**

**Addressing climate change:**

The council declared a climate emergency in 2019. Following this the council adopted a Net Zero Action Plan which set out to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. To deliver this the council set up a Net Zero Action Board to track progress and a Climate Change Committee to ensure Councillors scrutinise progress. The council is currently refreshing its Net Zero Action Plan to reflect what has been achieved to date and changes in external factors (including the change in national government). The council will continue to address climate change through a refreshed net zero strategy and action plan.

**Supporting the delivery of net zero carbon buildings:**

The council supports net zero carbon buildings through various approaches:

- Decarbonising its current public sector buildings. Examples include installing solar panels and heat pumps at the Civic Centre, and Gosforth pool, where we upgraded the fabric of the building to increase energy efficiency and installed solar panels and heat pumps.
- Decarbonising social housing. The council has used the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to reduce social housing emissions across the city. A recent example includes Heaton Park Court which has involved decarbonising by removing all gas appliances and a range of energy efficiency measures have been installed.

Providing guidance to residents through the Energy Saving Trust's one stop shop. This provides information on improving the energy efficiency of their home by installing measures such as insulation, heat pumps and solar panels. The council continues to deliver building decarbonisation. Further decarbonising of social housing is to be achieved through the installation of similar interventions to Heaton Park Court, at three Shieldfield tower blocks and 96 Heaton and Walker homes later this year. The council is also conducting a survey of all of its social houses to identify improvements.

**Putting in more chargers for electric vehicles:**

Any new developments that come under Building Regulations Approved Document Part S will have Electric Vehicle Charge Points installed. The North East has developed a Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy and the council has an Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy. In line with these strategies the aim is to install electric vehicle charge points to support our residents and visitors to transition to electric vehicles. The North East Combined Authority has been allocated £15,829,000 via the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) scheme, an application has been submitted and if successful, the scheme will deliver an on-street charging solution to help residents without their own off-street parking transition to electric vehicles. As funding allows, the council also aims to upgrade and install electric vehicle charge points within our own car parks.

**Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan**

The responses to this ambition will help to shape future policies in the local plan which can support the council's ambition to be net zero and to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Key messages from the responses include the importance of building homes in sustainable locations, building net zero carbon homes and protecting green spaces. A lot of the comments received focused on mitigation measures which could be implemented to help address the impacts of climate change including planting more trees.

These responses show that addressing the impacts of climate change needs to be embedded across all parts of the local plan.

New policies in the local plan will be developed based on evidence including carbon assessments, strategic flood risk assessments and provision of sustainable and active transport.

# Ambition 3 – To promote inclusive and connected communities within our neighbourhoods, supported by vibrant centres and a distinctive city centre

## Which of these options should we adopt?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to review a map showing the current location and extent of the city centre area, district centres, and local centres, then choose one of three options:

1. Review these areas and introduce new centres, to reflect demand and needs for new facilities and services

2. Keep these areas as they are now

3. Something else
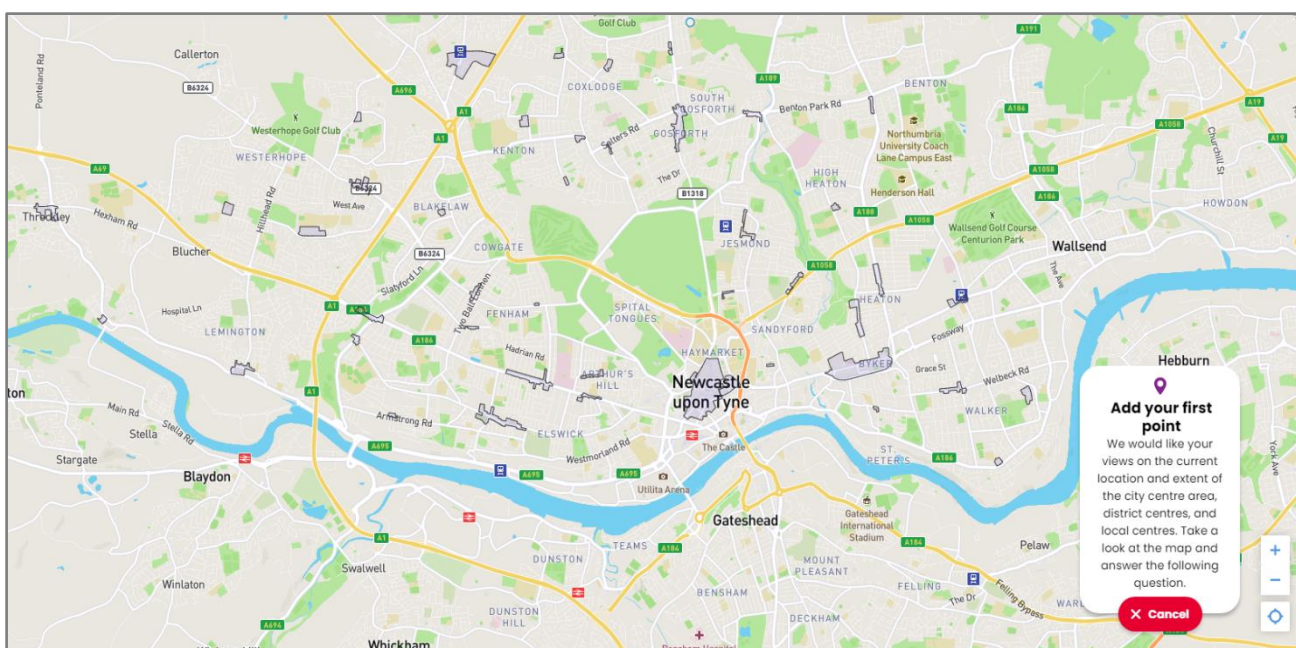


As shown in the chart on the next page, just over half of the 538 responses to this question on Commonplace (56%) were from people preferring us to "review these areas and introduce new centres, to reflect demand and needs for new facilities and services".

## Ambition 3: Thinking about the City Centre, District and Local Centres, which of these options should we do? (538 responses)
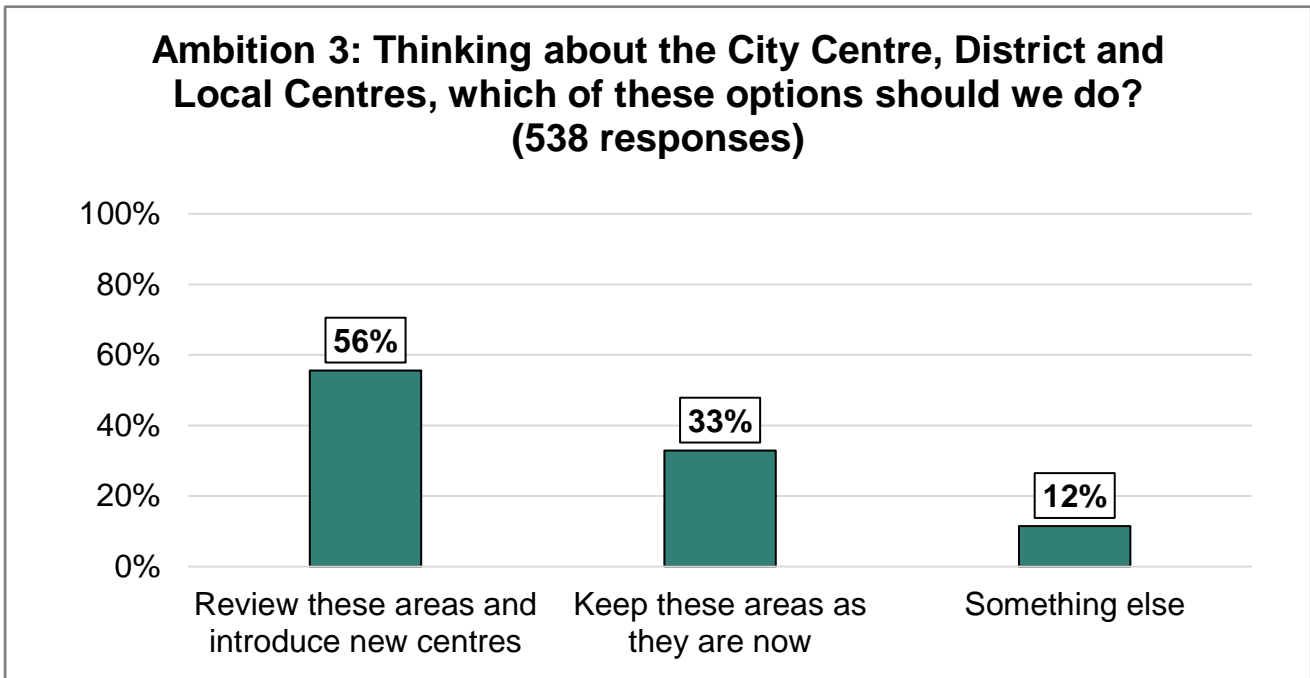


The main themes in the comments from the 63 people who replied 'something else' were:

1. **Encourage and protect wildlife** – 4 people said this

2. **Protect the green belt** – 4 people

3. **Any new developments need appropriate health, education and retail facilities** – 3 people

4. **Make sure services meet local needs** – 3 people

5. **Redevelop existing buildings rather than creating new builds** – 3 people

Comments included:

"Depending on the size of new out-of-the-city-centre developments, [they] do need to take into account the need for healthcare facilities, food shops, and schools."

"Rather than putting significant funds into new builds, improve those that currently exist and encourage collaboration amongst existing services."

"Connect with communities so that services are relevant to those who live there."

"Think of nature and wildlife in any plans, be thoughtful to the other species we share our surroundings with."

## Which of these things would be most important to you to make the CITY CENTRE a more attractive place?

We asked those taking part on Commonplace the following question: "Which of these things would be most important to you to make the CITY CENTRE a more attractive place?". The full list of options was:

1. Bike storage or parking

2. Cultural opportunities, such as events and galleries

3. Facilities and services such as a library or wellbeing hub

4. Green and natural spaces

5. Improved accessibility including active travel hubs

6. Indoor community spaces

7. Leisure facilities such as gyms

8. New shops

9. Parking

10. Pedestrianisation

11. Places to eat

12. Places to sit

13. Public toilets

14. Other

701 people replied, and the chart below shows their responses:



**Ambition 3. Which of these things would be most important to you to make the CITY CENTRE a more attractive place? (701 responses)**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Green and natural spaces | 60% |
| Pedestrianisation | 47% |
| Public toilets | 46% |
| Cultural opportunities | 45% |
| Places to sit | 43% |
| Improved accessibility | 33% |
| Facilities and services | 32% |
| Places to eat | 27% |
| Bike storage or parking | 27% |
| Parking | 20% |
| Indoor community spaces | 20% |
| Leisure facilities | 15% |
| Other | 10% |

As with the first question on Commonplace, we did not ask those taking part to rank them in order of importance. 701 people answered this question, and the 'top three' options were:

1. Green and natural spaces – 60%
2. Pedestrianisation – 47%
3. Public toilets – 46%

The main themes in the comments received from the 70 people who discussed this were:

1. **Improve cleanliness and tackle litter and chewing gum** – 11 people said this, as did people attending drop-in events in Fenham and Gosforth.

2. **Better public transport is needed** – 8 people

3. **Encourage traffic to flow through the city centre** – 4 people, and this was also mentioned by the Becoming Visible group and Newcastle Disability Forum.

4. **Provide park and ride facilities** – 4 people

5. **Improve accessibility for disabled people** – 3 people said this, as did people visiting the Grainger Market stalls on both days, those visiting Jesmond Library, the Newcastle Disability Forum and the Elders Council.

6. **Improve safety in the city centre** – 3 people

7. **Learn from other similar cities such as Nottingham or Bristol** – 3 people

8. **Reduce traffic in the city centre** – 3 people said this, as did people attending drop-in events event in Gosforth and Jesmond.

9. **Tackle begging and street drinking** – 3 people said this, as did people visiting the Grainger Market on 23 February

Comments included:

"We need to focus on cleanliness. Newcastle has become a dirty city with chewing gum everywhere, dirty streets and buildings."

"Ensure public transport interchanges and stations in the city centre are supported with adequate funding to enhance the overall attraction of public transport."

"Park and Ride would be another option to consider reducing congestion and effectively use space so that we have less space used for parking and more for increased facilities."

"Provide a simpler traffic system and flow to travel through and across the city, to make the one-way system and bus lanes less complex and confusing for drivers."

Feedback from **community groups and events** included the following.

People from the **Becoming Visible** group remarked that the cost of operating in the city centre means that it is difficult for voluntary and community organisations and small businesses to be located there. They also wondered if existing transport infrastructure would be able to cope with large new developments such as those on East Pilgrim Street. They said that it felt as though there is less 'space' in the city centre due to bus lanes and the one-way system.

People attending a drop-in event in **Fenham** wanted to see improved design in new buildings, better shops, and better seating quality in the city centre. One person

commented: "Improve the general state of the public realm – Northumberland Street is a terrible state". Another wanted to see the city centre pedestrianised.

People attending a drop-in event in **Gosforth** wanted to see greater cleanliness and more frequent bin emptying, better signage to welcome people into the city centre, and less traffic in the city centre. They also wanted better cycle routes into the city centre.

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 20 February: a common theme in comments was disability access and access for people with pushchairs and buddies. People's comments included wanting to see Blackett Street pedestrianised, more disabled parking spaces, keeping the Shopmobility scheme, improving access for disabled people to Quayside events, and better access for wheelchairs and pushchairs including dropped kerbs. One comment was about protecting the unique heritage of Newcastle such as Grainger Town, and several people wanted to see empty and under-used city centre spaces brought back into use, for example through pop-up shops and exhibitions. Another view was that there are a lack of options for young children. Finally, they emphasised the important of protecting Newcastle's heritage and historical buildings.

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 23 February: disability access was also mentioned by people visiting the stall, as was making sure the city centre feels safe – some people felt this was negatively affected by an increase in homelessness and street drinking. Empty shops and market units were mentioned as being a problem, and people asked if we could learn from other cities, for example the Indoor Market in Leeds. One person said "avoid a multiplicity of shops"; other emphasised supporting local businesses, and promoting green spaces in the city centre.

People attending a drop-in event at **Jesmond Library** suggested that more pedestrianisation is needed and traffic needs to be removed from the city centre. One person said they wanted it to stay a retail destination, especially for people who prefer shopping in person rather than online, and Newcastle should be considered a regional destination. Another comment was that city centre streets need better maintenance and that Northumberland Street needed to be improved following recent utility works. Two people suggested introducing trams, another wanted accessible toilets to be better signposted, and that city centre maps needed to be in colour for accessibility reasons, and should include information on taxi ranks. One person was unhappy with cycling on Northumberland Street.

Early feedback from the **Newcastle Disability Forum** was to suggest that "can the city decide what kind of city it wants to be?" There was a suggestion that the city centre should have less retail space and more commercial space.

Feedback from a meeting of the **Newcastle Disability Forum** was that it was important to consider what attracts people to visit the city centre, that they wanted to see more public toilets, and that it needed to be made easier to find your way around the city centre. Making it easier to get in and around the city centre was also mentioned, particularly for disabled people. For example, they wanted to see Blackett Street kept open for buses, to have a free bus link between Central Station and the city centre, that accessibility of shops and services for disabled people needed to be improved, and that if it is difficult for people to access the city centre, they will go elsewhere to places like the Metrocentre.

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** talked about the importance of clean streets, reducing fly-tipping and rubbish being left in the streets. They were unhappy with scooters and e-bike delivery drivers riding on pavements, and thought that more low-cost public transport was needed to help people to access the city centre.

Seven people commented via **social media**. One person said that empty retail units in the city centre are a problem for cities across the UK; another two people thought that changes to the city centre road layout had deterred people from coming in, and that people now prefer shopping online and at the Metrocentre. One person thought that the Science Central site needed to be regenerated. One person wanted more tall buildings built; another thought that more flower planting and street cleaning are needed to make the city centre more attractive. One person wanted to see St James' Park retained in the city centre and expanded to bring in more business.

Five **Youth Parliament** candidates mentioned the city centre in their manifestos. Several commented that there needs to be more spaces for older children and teenagers; others said that there should be more bins throughout the city to tackle litter.

Three people commented via **letter**, saying that they felt it was necessary to clean up the city centre to bring people back into it, including tackling littering, having more flower planters, and improving the appearance of Northumberland Street. One person thought that encouraging more people to live in the city centre would revive the city centre economy, and that some of the taller buildings should be removed to stop it feeling 'claustrophobic'.

One comment from the **Youth Voice Locality groups** was that the city centre needs to be cleaner, and have more "interactive opportunities and more green spaces".

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included:

The **Elders Council** commented that the city centre would be more attractive to older people if it had more public seating and public toilets.

The **PfP Igloo: Candle Flame Site** response sent in by DPP One Limited expressed the view that there should be more focus on providing residential properties and facilities in and near the city centre.

The **PfP Igloo: Helix and Stephenson Works** response sent in by Avison Young commented on the current low office vacancy rate in Newcastle city centre and said that the Newcastle Plan should aim to facilitate more such sites being developed in future. They commented that their planned development work on the two sites would support goals relating to the development of new housing and employment sites.

**South Tyneside Council** expressed support for being involved in the Newcastle Plan and wanted to take part in future consultation on this.

## Which of these things would be most important to you to make the DISTRICT and LOCAL CENTRES a more attractive place?

We asked those taking part on Commonplace the following question: "Which of these things would be most important to you to make the DISTRICT and LOCAL CENTRE a more attractive place?". The full list of options was:

1. Bike storage or parking
2. Cultural opportunities, such as events and galleries
3. Facilities and services such as a library or wellbeing hub
4. Green and natural spaces
5. Improved accessibility including active travel hubs
6. Indoor community spaces
7. Leisure facilities such as gyms
8. New shops
9. Parking
10. Pedestrianisation
11. Places to eat
12. Places to sit
13. Public toilets
14. Other

The chart below shows the results:



Ambition 3. Which of these things would be most important to you to make DISTRICT and LOCAL CENTRES more attractive places? (700 responses)
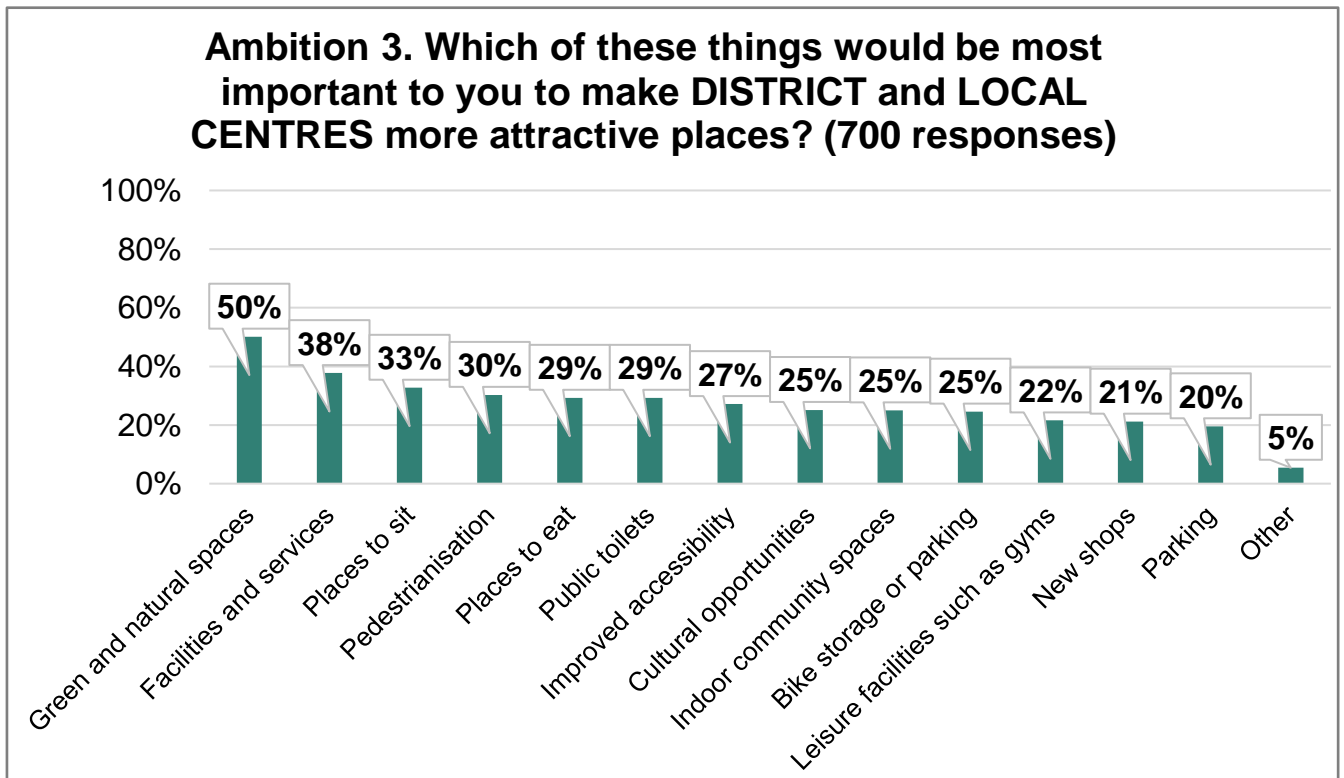
Again, we did not ask those taking part to rank the options in order of importance.

700 people answered this question, and the 'top three' options, as shown on the previous page, were noticeably different from those people favoured for the city centre:

1. Green and natural spaces – 50%

2. Facilities and services such as a library or wellbeing hub – 38%

3. Places to sit – 33%

The main themes in the comments received from 39 people were:

1. **Need improved cleanliness and to tackle litter** – 8 people said this, as did people attending community events in Fenham and the West End, students at an event for ESOL learners at Westgate College, and the Elders Council.

2. **Need more and free disabled parking** – 3 people

3. **Reduce traffic** – 3 people

4. **Better public transport is needed** – 2 people

5. **Improve community safety with more CCTV and security teams** – 2 people

6. **Need integrated public transport** – 2 people

7. **Plant more trees** – 2 people

8. **Provide bike storage rather than just bike parking** – 2 people

Comments included:

"We need better street cleaning, including cleaning the corners that the street-cleaning machines don't reach."

"We need free off-street accessible parking with no time restriction for those unable to use public transport."

"We need less car parking and less motor traffic."

Feedback from **community groups and events** included the following.

Students attending an event for **ESOL learners** said that whilst they could get what they needed at local shops, they often found that prices were high, and that without access to a car, it is difficult to travel to shops such as Aldi and LIDL which have lower prices, particularly in areas such as the west end terraces which have steep inclines. They wanted more lower-priced retail outlets in local neighbourhoods.

People attending a drop-in event in **Fenham** wanted to see 'street clutter' removed, such as unused phone boxes.

People attending a drop-in event in **Gosforth** emphasised a need for democratic decision-making based on local consent, and avoided what they described as a 'free for all'.

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 20 February: Several people commented that they needed more local shops in neighbourhoods, including in Scotswood, Throckley, Newburn and Arthur's Hill, and generally better district facilities all together.

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 23 February: One concern was that too many retail facilities make areas such Kingston Park feel more like out-of-town shopping areas rather than local communities and can increase motor traffic.

People attending a drop-in event in **Heaton** commented on services they thought were important to make district centres better used; they wanted to see more libraires, more youth activities and facilities, more SEND schools in local areas, more community facilities, and more men's groups. One comment was to consider the role of faith groups and organisations in sustaining communities and involve them in creating the Newcastle Plan.

People attending a drop-in event at **Jesmond Library** expressed concern about whether residents' views will be heard when decisions are made about changes in neighbourhoods. They wanted to see high-quality developments and improvements to the public realm, that will last. One person was concerned at the safety risks of two people using one e-scooter, and another wanted action to stop delivery cyclists riding on pavements. Two people said that they were unhappy with pavement parking, as it blocks access to shops and parking over dropped kerbs makes it harder for disabled people and older people to travel around them.

People attending a presentation about the local plan in **St. Peter's Basin** in **Ouseburn** said that they wanted more space for community ownership of community facilities and work on building community wealth. One suggestion was to have more multi-use spaces in local neighbourhoods, containing (for example) housing, workplaces, shops, and community facilities in one place, so that people can access all of them in their local area and not have to travel to different parts of Newcastle to do this.

People attending a drop-in event at **Throckley Community Centre** said that there was a lack of shops in the local area (3 people said this).

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** said that some parts of their local areas need traffic calming, and to protect spaces that are important to local communities, including listing them if necessary.

Feedback received from the **Let's talk Newcastle topic wall** was that one person wanted the council to work to prevent more local bank and post office branch closures.

One comment from the **Youth Voice Locality groups** was that there are not enough places in local neighbourhoods for teenagers to go.

Two people commented via **letter**. One said that having too many shops in local neighbourhoods could lead to litter, no car parking, and gridlocked roads. Another wanted to see local businesses made to take a bigger role in clearing up litter in the local area, in particular, litter caused by their business (such as food packaging).

Feedback from **Planning Policy Responses** included:

The **Elders Council** commented that they generally supported the '15-minute neighbourhood' approach and that small local shops are often very important for older people who need to buy small numbers of items locally. They did not want to see more large-scale out-of-town shopping developments. They also felt that issues such as litter, street clutter, and heavy traffic made district centres less pleasant to visit and travel through. Finally, they suggested learning from local examples of good practice such as Gosforth Civic Theatre.

Three **Gosforth** residents with backgrounds in architecture planning, urban design, and housing wrote a formal response on this topic as it applies to Gosforth and north Newcastle. Their view is that Gosforth High Street is currently more of a traffic route than a neighbourhood centre, and that this should be addressed by rerouting traffic away from it and improving the public realm, including managing car parking, better maintenance, and tree planting.

**Harworth Group** commented that they felt their plans for their site at north-west Throckley could support this ambition as it is near the local centre, and could provide increased spend in the area, helping to sustain community facilities.

The PfP **Igloo: Helix and Stephenson Works** response sent in by Avison Young commented on how the proposed works on these two sites would be located near public transport interchanges, in line with the goal that future housing developments should support the use of public and active transport.

**Newcastle Public Transport Users Group** commented on the impact of travel to shopping centres on congestion, air pollution and net zero goals, and thought it was importance to support use of existing local retail centres such as Chillingham Road and Gosforth High Street through "high-density and mixed-use" residential developments.

**Persimmon Homes** felt that continuing to support "sustainable locations", which they consider essential to creating attractive neighbourhoods, and there was a need to "release more land for housing in sustainable locations", as in their view there are limited opportunities for development in the city, district, and local centres.

**Space for Gosforth** wanted to see it made easier to access district centres by walking and cycling with better active transport infrastructure, noting that this could increase spending and boost local economies.

**Woolsington Parish Council** recommended three actions to make the neighbourhood centres more attractive places to shop and visit, thinking about Woolsington specifically: tackle litter and fly-tipping both to improve appearance and keep down vermin, continue landscape maintenance such as flower planting and new walkways, and look at accessing funding from section 106 commitments.

## Which of these facilities and services do you use, and how often?

We asked people "Which of these facilities and services do you use, and how often?", providing a list of 18 local facilities and services and asking whether they used them on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis, less often or never. The chart on the next page illustrates the key findings, which are:

- **Daily**: The three facilities and services that the highest percentages of people use daily are: outdoor recreational spaces (30%), supermarkets (19%), and primary & secondary schools (16%).

- **Weekly**: The three facilities and services that the highest percentages of people use weekly are: supermarkets (70%), convenience stores (47%), and outdoor recreational spaces (37%).

- **Monthly**: The three facilities and services that the highest percentages of people use monthly are: cultural venues such as museums, galleries, theatres (48%), post offices (36%), and convenience stores (23%).

- **Less often**: The three facilities and services that the highest percentages of people use less often than monthly are: hospitals (69%), banks (52%), and post offices (35%).

- **Never**: The three facilities and services that the highest percentages of people said they never used are: Special Education Needs and Disabilities Schools – SEND (96%), youth clubs (90%), and food pantries & Early Years education such as nurseries (85%).

It is apparent that (as might be expected), there are some facilities that people either use frequently or never, such as schools, some, where frequency of usage is more evenly distributed, such as outdoor recreational spaces and supermarkets, and some where only a small minority of people use them, often based upon their age or their children's ages, such as early years education, youth clubs, or special education needs and disabilities.

We did not ask this question of people attending community events or providing public planning responses.

## Frequency of use of local facilities and services (631 responses)

| Facility | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Less often | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7k. Outdoor Recreational Space | 30% | 37% | 16% | 10% | 7% |
| 7o. Supermarket | 19% | 70% | | 8% | 3% |
| 7n. Primary or Secondary School | 16% | 3% | 4% | | 76% |
| 7d. Convenience Store | 9% | 47% | 23% | 17% | 5% |
| 7f. Early Years Education such as nurseries | 7% | 2% | 1% | 5% | 85% |
| 7g. Further Education | 6% | 4% | 3% | 14% | 72% |
| 7j. Leisure Centre | 5% | 22% | 12% | 28% | 33% |
| 7a. Allotment or Community Garden | 4% | 11% | 5% | 11% | 69% |
| 7m. Post Office | 2% | 21% | 36% | 35% | 6% |
| 7i. Hospital | 2% | 5% | 14% | 69% | 10% |
| 7b. Bank | 2% | 8% | 21% | 52% | 17% |
| 7n. Special Education Needs and Disabilities School | 2% | 1% | 2% | | 96% |
| 7c. Community Centre | 1% | 12% | 10% | 30% | 47% |
| 7h. Food Pantry | 1% | 3% | 4% | 7% | 85% |
| 7o. Primary Care Facility such as a GP, Pharmacy, Dentist | 1% | 9% | 4% | 17% | 70% |
| 7l. Places of Worship | 1% | 9% | 4% | 17% | 70% |
| 7e. Cultural venues such as museums, galleries, theatres | 1% | 15% | 48% | 32% | 4% |
| 7p. Youth Club | 3% | 2% | 5% | | 90% |

Legend: ■ Daily ■ Weekly □ Monthly ■ Less often ■ Never

When asked if there were **other** facilities or services they used regularly, the 'top ten' answers from the 149 people who replied were:

1.  Library – 25 people

2.  Public transport – 19 people

3.  Buses – 13 people

4.  Cafes – 12 people

5.  Local independent shops – 12 people

6.  Parks – 11 people

7.  Restaurants – 11 people

8.  Gym – 9 people

9.  Green spaces – 8 people

10. Pubs – 8 people

11. Used to use the facilities listed in the question, but they are no longer available in the local area – 7 people

Comments included:

"Library, cafe, outdoor food market selling local produce."

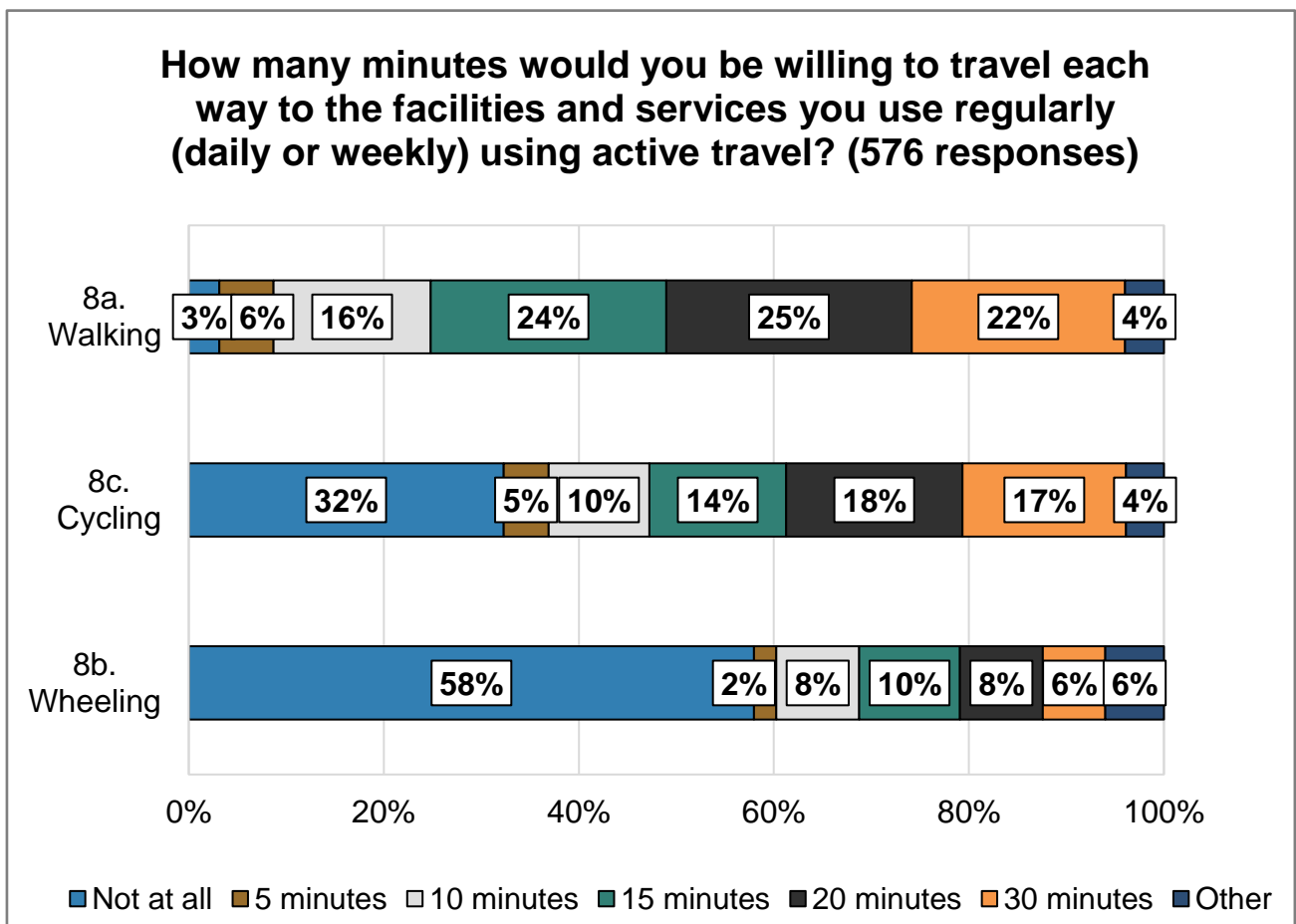"Independent businesses such as coffee shops, micropubs, boutique stores."

"Interchange public transport facilities, I pass through these every day – the little details matter."

We did not ask this question of people attending community events or providing public planning responses.

# How many minutes would you be willing to travel each way to the facilities and services you use regularly (daily or weekly) using active travel?

We asked people "How many minutes would you be willing to travel each way to the facilities and services you use regularly (daily or weekly) using active travel?", and their answers were:

- The form of active travel people are willing to spend most time using is **walking** – 71% of people said they would be willing to walk to local facilities and services they use regularly for up to 20 minutes.

- This **compares** with 47% for cycling, and 28% for wheeling (using a scooter, wheelchair, mobility scooter or rollator).



**How many minutes would you be willing to travel each way to the facilities and services you use regularly (daily or weekly) using active travel? (576 responses)**

| | Not at all | 5 minutes | 10 minutes | 15 minutes | 20 minutes | 30 minutes | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8a. Walking | 3% | 6% | 16% | 24% | 25% | 22% | 4% |
| 8c. Cycling | 32% | 5% | 10% | 14% | 18% | 17% | 4% |
| 8b. Wheeling | 58% | 2% | 8% | 10% | 8% | 6% | 6% |

We did not ask this question of people attending community events, or providing public planning responses.

When asked to provide more details about the 'other' times they would be willing to travel, most people took this as an opportunity to comment on the factors affecting how long they would be willing to travel by active travel routes or, if not, why not. The main themes in people's comments from the 53 people who replied were:

1. I will travel up to 1 hour using active travel – 6 people said this

2. Need better and more joined-up cycle routes – 5 people

3. Feel that drivers are being excluded – 4 people

4. I am not physically able to use active travel – 4 people

5. I will travel more than 45 minutes using active travel – 4 people

6. I prefer to travel by public transport – 3 people

7. I would cycle more if I felt it was safe – 3 people

Comments included:

"Why is there no driving option in this question? I cannot cycle for medical reasons. The anti-car approach you are taking is penalising the elderly and disabled in their homes, unable to use their cars."

"It is not possible for me to use bikes etc. because of my medical condition. The focus on cycling is very exclusionary."

"I am happy to travel 45 minutes by foot or bike."

"It depends massively on how safe, direct, and attractive the cycling route and infrastructure is. If it is segregated from cars and is high quality (for example, you don't have to dismount or give way to cars all the time), then I would be happier to cycle further."

"I cycled from Jesmond to Cramlington every day for work, so I would happily cycle a long way to use services."

## What happens next for Ambition 3 – Connected communities?

**What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Ambition?**

**Improving cleanliness and tackling litter:**
We have 1,242 high-capacity street litter bins for residents to use, placed in areas of greatest footfall. Using smart bin sensor technology, we have been able to implement scheduled servicing based on need, rather than have schedule collections whether a bin needs servicing or not. We have recently introduced 2 chewing gum removal machines that are currently operating in the city centre.  We will soon be equipping staff with backpack battery operated chewing gum removal kit to spot clean areas of the city. We have regular litter and waste enforcement patrols and some of the highest enforcement figures in the country. The council's Engagement Team will continue to work with community groups, schools, and universities to help educate people about recycling and correct waste disposal.

**Provide more and free disabled parking in centres:**
We currently have 152 disabled/shop mobility bays within our city centre multi storey car parks which is just short of the British Parking Association guidance. Whilst our 'off street' car parks charge blue badge holders to pay, they do receive one hour free in addition to the paid session in recognition of their mobility. Furthermore, blue badge holders can continue to park free of charge when parking on street, in both standard and disabled bays when displaying their blue badge. Blue badge holders can also park free of charge on single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours using their blue badge and clock. We are not planning on increasing the number of disabled bays, although we do keep this under review by reviewing the demand on spaces on a regular basis. If we feel we need to increase capacity, then this will be acted on. There are no plans to provide free disabled parking other than the current additional hour at the end of a paid session.

**Support the government's ambitions to build more housing and support sustainable growth by releasing land in centres for housing:**
There are limited opportunities for development on land in centres currently given the lack of supply. There is a current demand to develop land in Ouseburn although this is the subject of a master plan. Conversion of dilapidated and unused commercial space would provide the greatest opportunity. The council could explore using CPO powers for site assembly in key areas although this would come with a huge resource requirement. It would however ensure a more joined up approach to residential provision.

**Provide more facilities and services and more places to sit in district and local centres:**
The council has secured £1.5m UKSPF funding to deliver a grant scheme for local voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations in Outer West and North of Newcastle. We have awarded 29 grants supporting activities for residents delivered from local community venues in 2024/25. Through the Newcastle – Inclusive, Healthy, Vibrant High Streets Project we have secured £3.1m of devolution and UKSPF funding to co-design and co-produce improvements to 6 high streets (5 within the east of the city and 1 in the west). A new pedestrian crossing has been installed in 2023 on Heaton Park Road and public realm improvements are scheduled in 2024 for Chillingham Road and Heaton Road. This initiative depends on availability of external funding. We would like to apply for more funding to extend this offer into future years and more areas. We are working with the North East Combined Authority on extending the Newcastle High Streets Project into future years.

**Provide more green and natural spaces, more pedestrianisation, improving road safety and more seating in the city centre:**
A programme is underway to transform the public realm on a number of city centre streets including Northumberland Street and Grey Street. Northumberland Street and Grey Street both form part of a major movement corridor within the city's Primary Shopping Area, connecting places and spaces and providing the primary pedestrian route through the city centre from the north of the city to the Quayside. The existing public realm on Northumberland Street is cluttered and in a poor state of repair. Grey Street has long been dominated by vehicular traffic and both streets

have hard landscaping with little greenery. Through investment we can reinforce Northumberland Street as the city's premier shopping destination setting it apart from other streets, and through increased space for pedestrians on Grey Street we can create attractive spaces where people want to spend time. Grey Street has been redesigned to reduce the width of the carriageway to create wider footpaths with clear and direct pedestrian routes. Public seating will be set amongst planted rain gardens (with sustainable drainage) to create a more family friendly place to visit. This will be completed in 2024. Northumberland Street has been redesigned to realign the street furniture and create a less cluttered environment with clearer pedestrian routes. New paving, seating, trees, planting, and lighting form part of the major construction works that started in January 2024 and will run throughout 2025.

**Make the city centre more welcoming:**
A number of streets in the city centre have poor quality public realm dominated by vehicles or hard landscaping making them uninviting and not an attractive place where people want to visit or spend time. A programme to improve streets in the city centre has been established and the process to deliver improvements across the city centre is underway. Ridley Place has benefited from investment and has seen an increase in new businesses trading that are primarily independents, helping to create a community feel to the street. Grey Street works will complete in 2024 and the improvements offer a more family friendly environment for all to enjoy. Northumberland Street improvements will provide an attractive and welcome space to support the retail offer in the city centre.

Creative Central NCL is a place-based regeneration programme that aims to create a vibrant, distinctive creative district in the city centre where artists, creatives, cultural practitioners, and creative businesses start, learn, create, and grow, and ultimately establish themselves as sustainable contributors to the creative and cultural landscape of the city. Creative Central NCL aims to create a distinctive new cultural destination for participants, residents, and visitors. We have identified several areas within the city centre with the potential for new public art and public realm interventions. We are working with partners to shape these plans and hope to secure funding in the near future to put these plans into action.

**Provide more public toilets in the city centre:**
Like many councils we were forced to shut our public toilets due to austerity – we simply could no longer afford to maintain and keep them clean. Instead, we encourage people to use the toilets in Eldon Square while retaining publicly accessible toilets in our own public buildings such as Grainger Market and City Library although their opening hours are limited. We understand providing toilets is an important issues especially for those who have medical conditions and so continue to push government to make more money available. We are always alert to new opportunities to fund public toilets and were successful in securing £60,000 of Government funding to open two new ones at Newcastle Civic Centre and Northern Stage. These new toilets are fully accessible and have been designed with advice from a disability charity so they can meet the requirements of people with disabilities as well as those without.

**Provide more public seating in the city centre:**
It is recognised that Newcastle has a relatively lower volume of public seats in the city centre, and what is available is often aging and lacking in quality. As the investment to transform the city centre and improve the public realm is rolled out, new purpose-built seating is being designed into the schemes. There will be a range of seating types, heights etc. to suit a range of users, across the city centre. Schemes on Ridley Place and Saville Row have already introduced new seating, with Grey Street to follow this year and Northumberland Street in 2025.

**Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan**
The responses to this ambition will help to shape future policies in the local plan which have implications for all our centres including the city centre and centres within our neighbourhoods and villages. The responses will help inform what policy interventions are required to support the long-term vitality and viability of centres.

Key messages from the responses include support to review the number of centres across the city and the extent of their boundaries. How future policies could also support the role and function of centres and the facilities and services within them will need to be considered. This includes how accessible they are by public transport and active travel.

The importance of green and natural spaces within centres and how these can be secured and improved as part of new development will also be considered in the next local plan.

The role of housing in centres also featured in responses. It is recognised that housing can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and that residential development on appropriate sites should be encouraged. This will be explored further as part of new evidence on appropriate sites for housing.

These responses show that there are many policy interventions needed across the different topic areas within the local plan, that will help promote inclusive and connected communities.

The plan provides the opportunity to develop policies aimed towards meeting our communities' daily needs within our neighbourhoods. New policies in the local plan will be developed based on evidence including on understanding how centres function and future interventions needed to support them. The responses to this consultation are the first step in this process.

# Ambition 4 – To increase our economic performance, maximise employment opportunities, promote the green economy, and improve skills and qualifications

## Which of these options should we adopt?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to review a map showing the current location and extent of employment sites, explaining that "an employment site is a location within which is set aside for businesses, factories, and other employers, and not intended for other uses, such as housing, shopping, or leisure", then choose one of three options:

1. Keep employment sites where they already are, and only in these areas

2. Keep employment sites in areas where they already exist, but also find new employment sites where employment could be suitable (for example, close to public transport links and in centres)

3. Something else



As shown in the chart on the next page, the majority of respondents on Commonplace (80%) preferred the option "Keep employment sites in areas where they already exist, but also find new employment sites where employment could be suitable".

When asked whether they thought 'something else' would be an option and, if so, what, most people who commented took the opportunity to describe their reasons for how they answered the question. The main themes in the comments received from 37 people were:

1. **Redevelop existing sites** and brownfield sites – 7 people said this

2. Employment sites need **better public transport** – 5 people

3. Business parks are **not very accessible** so tend to encourage car use – 4 people

4. Employment sites need to be **near local communities** – 4 people said this, as did people attending an event in Fenham

5. Employment sites should be **accessible with active travel** and proximity to housing – 4 people said this.

6. New sites should be **mixed-use** – 4 people

**Which of these approaches to locating employment sites do you prefer? (595 responses)**

- Keep employment sites in areas where they already exist, but also find new ones: **80%**
- Keep employment sites where they already are and only in these areas: **14%**
- Something else: **6%**
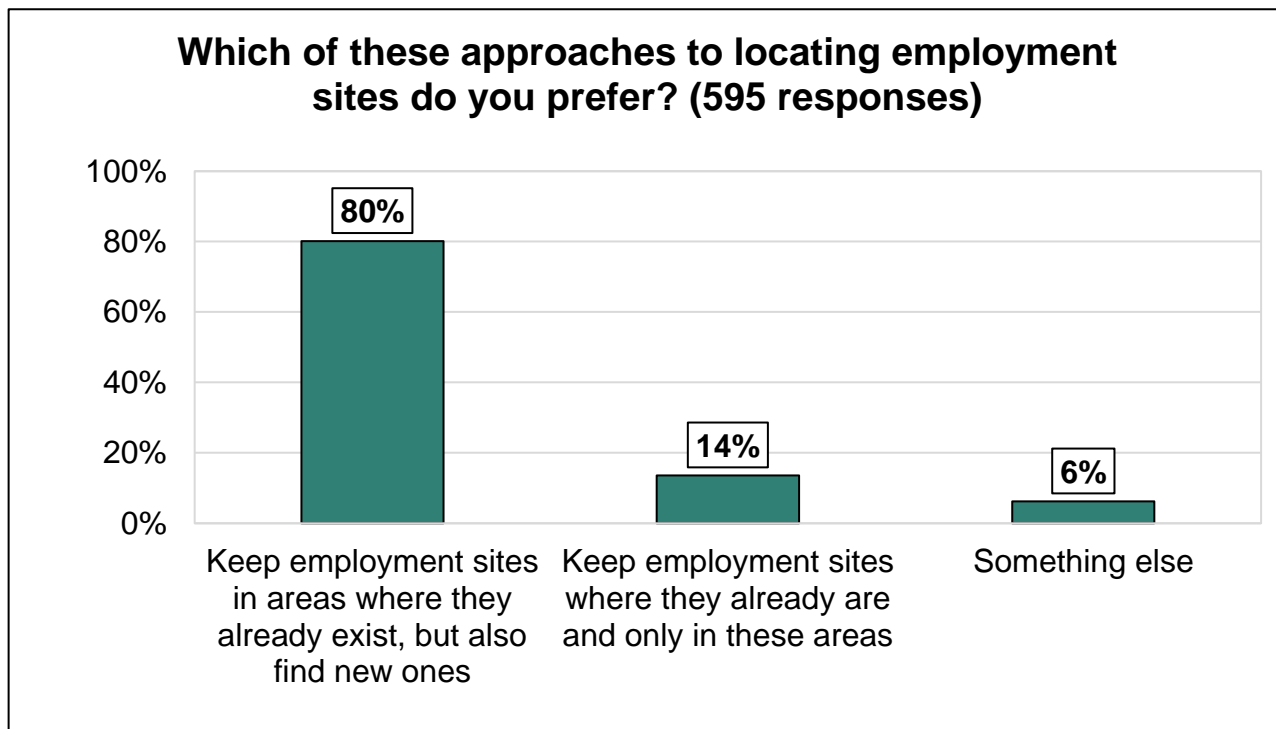
Comments included:

"We should use the huge amount of existing empty buildings and stop building new stuff, use the existing abandoned buildings. We need to reduce business rates to encourage independent businesses to thrive."

"Find new employment sites where suitable, they should be close to public transport links but excluding the city centre."

Feedback from **community groups and events** included the following.

People from the **Becoming Visible** group said that the north east has very poor employment rates for D/deaf people, and there is a need to support them into employment, also to tackle any misperceptions among employers about employing D/deaf people. There has also been a recent loss of places for D/deaf people to socialise and share knowledge about accessing services and employment opportunities, meaning that Newcastle is not always seen as an attractive place for them to live. They also made the general point that Newcastle had a reputation based on historic industries such as mining and shipbuilding, and there is a need to think about our 'contribution to the world'.

Students attending an event for **ESOL learners** said that they wanted more training opportunities and jobs in their local areas, including more "starter courses", courses on childcare and food hygiene, and support for students who are also parents, with childcare provision to help people attend, and hours of study that are compatible with needing to collect children from school. They also wanted better library facilities locally, to reduce the need to travel to the city centre to access the City Library.

People at a drop-in session in **Fenham** commented on the need to encourage small businesses and start-ups to develop across the entire Newcastle area, including in district and local centres. They also wanted to see the council offer affordable rents in council-owned properties to local businesses.

People at a drop-in session in **Gosforth** also wanted to see the council offer affordable rents in council-owned properties to local businesses as an incentive for start-ups. They also commented on the need for better local childcare options and good public transport links to make it easier for people to enter employment.

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 20 February: People mentioned the need for more jobs for young people, and to factor into the likely impact of increased use of AI on employment opportunities, and how this would impact on employment sites.

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 23 February: Jobs for young people were mentioned once again, in particular, the need to have jobs that will attract young local people who have travelled away for study to return to Newcastle and work here, and that affordable housing is also necessary for this to happen. One concern was that the rise of automation and self-service will lead to fewer jobs. Other views were that it would be good to learn from other cities such as Cambridge, and that we should encourage and support people to live within walking distance of their workplace.

People at a drop-in session in **Great Park** wanted better services to help SEND young people into employment when they leave education.

People attending a drop-in event in **Heaton** wanted to see more apprenticeships, and more support for businesses that close.

People attending a drop-in event at **Jesmond Library** said there was a need for more high-quality jobs and businesses, and for building on the existing skills base in Newcastle.

Early feedback from the **Newcastle Disability Forum** was that there was a general need for more employment opportunities in the Newcastle area.

People attending a presentation about the local plan in **St. Peter's Basin** in **Ouseburn** said that they thought there was a need for jobs that could attract more families to the area.

One person attending a drop-in event at **Throckley Community Centre** felt that education in Newcastle was "not fit for purpose".

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** wanted to see more jobs and apprenticeships for young people.

Two people commented via **social media**, one wanting to see more tall buildings built in the city centre, and another addressing homelessness.

One person commented via **letter**, saying that their small rural village did not have room for more businesses, as they are near the airport and also have other factories and businesses premises located nearby, and wanted employment sites located elsewhere.

Ten **Youth Parliament** candidates mentioned this in their manifestos, some wanting to see more career days in schools to help young people learn more about the range of different careers available to them, others commenting on the importance of education and making sure everyone, including neurodiverse students, can benefit from it. One mentioned the need to improve social mobility.

Feedback from **Planning Policy Responses** included:

**Commercial Estates Projects Ltd** commented on the importance of the devolution deal and coordinated regional work to improve job opportunities and connectivity within the north east.

The **Elders Council** commented that whilst many of their members are retired, they support initiatives to ensure people have access to good quality, safe and secure work. They also noted that in future, many people may need to work longer, and part-time working in older age may become more common. The importance of volunteering was mentioned, as many older people do this in retirement, and they wanted to see volunteering opportunities included in the local plan.

**Food Newcastle** commented on the importance of preserving local food traditions and small-scale producers as part of supporting the local economy.

**High Gosforth Park Ltd**. stated that they wanted to see Newcastle Racecourse, as a significant employment site, to be considered an integral part of local economic planning, particularly given its location in the north of the city, and near Newcastle Airport, and that it is a larger facility than other racecourses in the North East region.

**Historic England** said that they wanted to see the Newcastle Plan include strategic policies to "conserve and enhance" the area's historic environment, and noted that this also provides employment and contributes to the local economy through culture and tourism.

The **PfP Igloo: Candle Flame Site** response sent in by DPP One Limited expressed the view that there should be more focus on providing residential properties and facilities in and near the city centre.

The **PfP Igloo: Helix and Stephenson Works** response sent in by Avison Young emphasised how they saw the development of these two sites contributing to increased future employment opportunities in the city centre through mixed-use development, including office space, research and development, educational uses and residential properties.

**Newcastle University** commented on the role of both universities (Newcastle and Northumbria) in increasing local economic performance by ensuring a steady supply of "skilled, intellectual and talented individuals" to help attract businesses to the area. They emphasised the importance of suitable housing in this, both in terms of adequate student accommodation, and good housing options for students wanting to stay in the area. They also asked that the Newcastle Plan support the ongoing growth and development of the university and developing new university facilities to help attract growth and investment.

**Newcastle Public Transport Users Group** said that the selection of employment sites should prioritise transport links in terms of access to existing active travel infrastructure such as walking routes and cycle networks, and access to public transport. They considered that this would help to achieve not only better employment and economic performance, but help to achieve net zero goals and tackle air pollution. They also commented that this would improve equal access to employment as a significant minority of Newcastle households do not have access to a car or van (note that the figure quoted by NPTUG is 42%; Census 2021 data puts this figure at 37% - the source is: https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/housing/number-of-cars-or-vans/number-of-cars-3a/no-cars-or-vans-in-household?lad=E08000021). They felt that mixed-used developments could be an important part of this.

**Persimmon Homes** agreed there is a need to provide sufficient land to meet future demand for employment, that they wanted to see this based upon an employment land review, and this should be joined up with housing planning policy.

**Space for Gosforth** commented that supporting active transport such as walking and cycling can improve equal access to employment opportunities for people who do not have access to cars, and also potentially free up land for employment site use.

**The Glasshouse** described their ten-year vision, saying that they wanted to make "Newcastle and Gateshead a centre of excellence in cultural skills and the workforce".

Like Newcastle University, **Unite** felt it was important to focus on how the two universities can help the city to grow and thrive, provide a skilled workforce and attract businesses to the area.

**Woolsington Parish Council** recommended that it was important to maintain the identity of an area when selecting employment sites, such as Air Park View.

# Approaches to locating employment sites

We asked people responding on Commonplace: "What do you think would be the best way to promote employment sites in Newcastle that would support local communities?"

1. Identify locations that could support a range of different types of employment uses across the city

2. Identify locations that could support specific types of employment including high-tech industries, green and sustainable businesses

3. Something else

As shown in the chart below, just over half of respondents wanted us to 'identify locations that could support specific types of employment including high-tech industries, green and sustainable businesses' (53% of responses).

**What do you think would be the best way to promote employment sites in Newcastle that would support local communities? (543 responses)**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Identify locations that could support specific types of employment | 53% |
| Identify locations that could support a range of different types of employment uses | 42% |
| Something else | 5% |
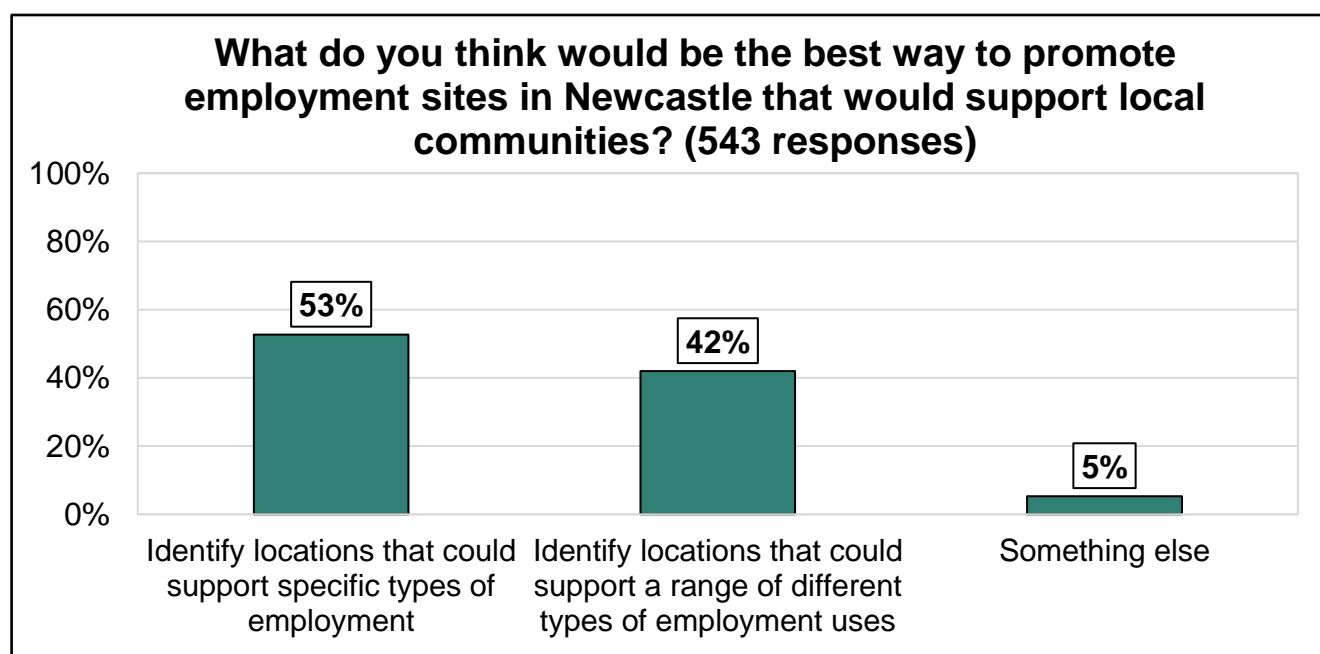
When asked whether they thought 'something else' would be an option and, if so, what, of the 30 people who commented, most took the opportunity to describe their reasons for how they answered the question. The main themes in their comments were:

1. Employment sites should be located **near areas of high unemployment** – 4 people said this.

2. **Better public transport links** to employment sites are needed to support employment – 3 people

3. **Both** approaches are good – 3 people

4. Need to **integrate employment** into the community – 3 people

Comments included:

"Integrate employment into the community so that people aren't leaving their areas to work (using their homes like dormitories) but live and work close by and integrate into the community."

"Ensuring good public transport connectivity between local communities and areas of employment will ensure equality of opportunity for those across Newcastle, reducing the requirement for a private vehicle to access employment."

"It's fairly obvious that you need to do both here."

"Local Employment centres and Work Hubs would reduce the need for travel and lead to less congestion, a greener city and better work-life balance. Wouldn't it be great if everyone could walk to work?"

## What happens next for Ambition 4 – Economic development?

**What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Ambition?**

**Help to identify locations to support high-tech industries, green and sustainable businesses:**

Sites such as Newcastle Helix, Stephenson Quarter, and around Pilgrim Street in the city centre have secured significant investment over recent years. Their special designation as Accelerated Development Zones has opened up new funding opportunities to help realise this investment. These new neighbourhoods have created the ideal conditions to support some of our fast-growing industries; such as digital, life science and the creative industries. Likewise, investment in our Enterprise Zones, located beside Newcastle Airport and along the north bank of the Tyne continues to unlock new employment sites with a particular focus on logistics and offshore energy. The River Tyne Regeneration Infrastructure project will create a restoration facility which is critical to the long-term management of the River Tyne as a key economic and environmental asset. This innovative technical solution will enable the deposit of dredged material containing elevated levels of heavy metals that are too expensive to dispose of to landfill. Without such a purpose-built facility, over time, the berths on the North bank of the Tyne would become unviable economically resulting in the loss of global businesses and 14,000 jobs. Combined with the Walker Quay works, the project will sustain the use of the river and access to quays to support economic activities, unlock 926 new jobs, meet the needs of the offshore energy sector and increase international trade.

Earlier this year, the Government announced a new £160m North East Investment Zone that would unlock growth across 'clean energy and green manufacturing' businesses through a ten year programme. Locally, this would be channelled through the 'River Tyne Economic Corridor'. As part of the £100m North East Trailblazer Devolution Deal agreed earlier this year, significant investment is planned for the Health Innovation Neighbourhood and Forth Yards sites in Newcastle.

**Provide more support for disabled people to find employment:**
Supported Employment Service (SES) comprises of 2 teams: Work First and FoodWorks. WorkFirst supports people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and mental health conditions into paid employment. It utilises the supported employment model of employment support, sometimes called place and train, or IPS. FoodWorks runs the canteen service at Westgate College, which is utilised to provide employment training in a real-life work environment. It also employs 4 kitchen assistants who were supported by WorkFirst.
SES is currently supporting 49 people to maintain their paid employment role and 21 job seekers to either develop skills or gain them.
The current focus of the service is to:
- Build further upon links with existing employers.
- Advance correspondence with the City's Disability Confident employers to provide job opportunities.
- Evaluate scope and models surrounding Supported Internships and improve connections with SEND providers.
- Use 'Fidelity' Supported Employment Quality Framework to assess the service's performance and operations against, to ensure continual improvement.

The Work and Thrive Partnership brings together a range of employment support organisations, including those who support people with disabilities, autism and learning difficulties, to offer a coordinated employment support offer for Newcastle residents. The Partnership works closely with the local job centres.

Pathways from education to employment need to be enhanced, to prevent people with disabilities (particularly learning disabilities) leaving education and then automatically being in receipt of formal care support.

The Supported Employment Service is working to raise the profile of the supported employment model with all Adult Social Care and Prevention and Children Social Care colleagues to ensure that paid employment is uppermost in the minds of practitioners when supporting Newcastle residents to achieve their lifetime ambitions.

The Supported Employment Service will work alongside council colleagues to explore Care Academy training and job, opportunities, available through Newcastle City Learning, and the registration of people with the Talent Pool for social care jobs, organised through Work and Thrive. The FoodWorks service will work towards an enablement 'through-put' model whereby there is constant assessment of people's capabilities and progress against a competency framework and their job profile to ensure people's skills can be maximised and the service serves as a platform for people to go onto external paid employment opportunities.

**Provide more training opportunities and jobs in neighbourhoods:**
The Newcastle Futures service, which is part of the Inclusive Employment team, along with a range of other employment support organisations, delivers employment support in neighbourhood settings, advising residents on how to access training opportunities and jobs. City Learning also delivers a range of training courses in neighbourhood settings.

The Work and Thrive Partnership has strong links with the North East Combined Authority who commission the Small Grants programmes. Our close working relationship ensures we are able to align priorities around local needs. The Green Streets Initiative, funded by the council's High Streets project, provides tailored advice on sustainable practices to local businesses within our neighbourhoods. The Work and Thrive Partnership has recently consulted on how to expand the employment support offer in the city to cover outreach venues. The team is looking to incorporate the findings into the core offer.

We will work to improve information that is available locally about the range of training provision across the city and look into help for people to overcome financial barriers to access training. We will support maximising social value in communities and tailor the social value offer dependent on need. For instance, by encouraging commissioned services to offer work experience, training opportunities and jobs to local residents.

**Support for starting and running small businesses:**
We offer start-up and business support as part of the Business and IP Centre (BIPC) for example start-ups and businesses can access business advice from local 'experts in residence' (including fully funded 12 hours of 'Citylife Business Support'), intellectual property advice and information and market research support. We also work together with local partners: RHWE and the Millin charity who offer community-based start-up and business support to local residents (including women-only support). All these services are currently funded through UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the devolution funding from the Combined Authority. We will continue to seek external funding to provide start-up and business support in Newcastle.

**Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan**
It will be important to review land for future employment use - protecting existing employment land where appropriate, identifying new areas that are suitable for employment uses with a focus on high-tech industries, green and sustainable businesses.

In response to the commonplace consultation, planning for employment sites should give great importance to physical access to places of employment including planning for better access to employment by public transport; improved opportunities to use active travel; and locating employment opportunities close to where people live where suitable. Planning for active travel could have multiple benefits including reduced travel costs, reduced impact on the environment and improved health and wellbeing.

There was support for measures such as work hubs in local centres and live work units.

In the city centre the local plan will need to plan for new University facilities to meet the needs of the growing student population and universities.

# Ambition 5 – To develop a sustainable transport network, creating safe and accessible neighbourhoods where people choose active and sustainable travel modes to achieve healthier lifestyles and improved air quality

## What improvements do you think we should prioritise to improve transport connectivity around Newcastle?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us what improvements they thought we should prioritise to improve transport connectivity around Newcastle, and 510 people gave us their views. The top ten themes in their comments were:

1. **Need integrated public transport** – 62 people said this, as did people attending drop-in sessions in the Grainger Market, Gosforth and Heaton, the Elders Council, Newcastle Public Transport User Group, and Space for Gosforth.

2. **Need more reliable public transport** – 59 people said this, as did people from the Becoming Visible group, people attending drop-in sessions in Gosforth and the West End, and the Elders Council.

3. **Improve the Metro** – 58 people said this, as did people attending drop-in sessions in the Grainger Market.

4. **Cheaper public transport is needed** – 45 people said this, as did people attending drop-in sessions in Gosforth and Heaton, and ESOL students at an event at Westgate College.

5. **Need a complete cycle network** – 42 people said this, as did people attending drop-in sessions in Gosforth, Heaton, Jesmond and the West End, and Space for Gosforth.

6. **Need segregated cycle lanes apart from pedestrians and traffic** – 42 people said this, as did people attending drop-in sessions in the Grainger Market and in Gosforth, and the Elders Council.

7. **More frequent buses** – 39 people said this, as did people from the Becoming Visible group and drop-in sessions at the Grainger Market.

8. **Extend the Metro** – 37 people said this, as did people attending drop-in sessions in the Grainger Market, Great Park and Jesmond.

9. **More cycle paths are needed** – 30 people said this, as did people attending drop-in sessions in Gosforth and the West End, and Space for Gosforth.

10. **Reduce car use and traffic** – 30 people said this, as did Space for Gosforth.

Comments included:

"An integrated service between the different providers, and bus stops giving live information as they do in most other big cities would be an improvement."

"Ensure bus services run on time and they stop cancelling services at the last minute."

"Need better Metro links and more staff on trains, better, more frequent trains, and make travel more affordable."

Feedback from **community groups and events** included the following.

People from the **Becoming Visible** group said that they thought that transport planning needed to be better coordinated across the whole North East, and that they wanted to see less traffic in the city centre, but at the same time that they currently found it difficult to access the city centre without driving in, and commented that parking is expensive with long queues to enter car parks. They suggested learning from other cities, such as Manchester. They wanted to see efforts made to tackle congestion and traffic flow, especially on matchdays, and commented that it can be difficult to navigate around Central Station. Those who use buses said that they wanted them to be more frequent and more reliable, and also wondered if trams could be introduced (this was also mentioned by 19 people taking part on Commonplace).

Students attending an event for **ESOL learners** said that they usually walk to local facilities, implying that good street lighting and pavements are important to them. They also wanted cheaper public transport.

People at a drop-in session in **Fenham** commented on problems with congestion and traffic flow (this was also mentioned by 19 people taking part on Commonplace).; that they wanted to see this tackled with better traffic management to stop vehicles idling, that roadworks needed to be completed quickly to prevent this, and that in their view bike lanes at junctions were a problem because "changing segregation of traffic can be dangerous".

People attending a drop-in event in **Gosforth** wanted subsidies for public transport, better bus information and connectivity, tackling delays to buses which are caused by queues of cars waiting to enter car parks, and generally they want improved public transport. They also wanted bus routes which connected different parts of Newcastle with each other such as between Gosforth and Shieldfield; a common theme also in both Commonplace comments and at drop-in events. Those commenting on cycling said that they wanted better cycle routes to shops, that a joined-up and safe cycle and walking network was necessary, and that they felt car drivers needed to be more respectful towards cyclists. Speaking about cars, one person felt that more electric vehicles would help to ease road congestion, that the A1 was a barrier to connecting different parts of Newcastle, and finally, that it is difficult to use active travel to get to school due to fast traffic.

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 20 February: Many people were happy with the existing Metro and bus services (two people from Fawdon mentioned they appreciated good connectivity between this area and the city centre) and wanted to see this high standard of service maintained. Changes people wanted to see were the introduction of a Park and Ride service for the city centre (20 people commenting on Commonplace also wanted this), a generally good public transport system with good integration between different services and modes of travel, bus routes that served different parts of Newcastle – for example, links between the north and south of Newcastle, the Metrocentre, and Throckley – and extending the Metro to the west of Newcastle.

Two people living in **Throckley** said that bus services there needed to be more frequent and more reliable as it can make children late for school. Another view was that people wanted to see active travel routes, especially in the city centre, designed so as to segregate bikes, e-bikes and scooters from pedestrians (this was also a theme Commonplace). One person raised the accessibility issue that Metro station lifts are "often out of order". Finally, one person thought that there needed to be more incentives for people to use public transport.

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 23 February: As with the earlier stall in the Grainger Market, people were happy with the existing Metro and bus services, particularly

good links between different areas and the city centre, and wanted to see this high standard of service maintained. However, others thought that it needed to be improved by having a better rail service, and were unhappy with private ownership of public transport (20 people commenting on Commonplace also said this). Connectivity was mentioned by several people; between the city centre and different areas of Newcastle, between areas of Newcastle (without having to travel between the city centre), and that they did not want to see Newcastle grow too big. One person commented that parking was too expensive, and another said that large developments should be reviewed six months after completion to consider intended and unintended consequences such as changes to traffic patterns. One person living in Fenham said they wished they still had the low traffic neighbourhood in place. Older people commented that they appreciated being able to travel easily with their bus passes.

People at a drop-in session in **Great Park** said that they wanted to see the Metro extended, more electric buses in service, and for disabled people to be involved in developing transport plans.

People at a drop-in session in **Heaton** wanted to see improvements to active travel infrastructure, such as more cycle lanes and footpaths, more pedestrianisation in the city centre, and more school safety zones. However, one person commented that they were unhappy with the Jesmond low-traffic neighbourhoods. Another person was not happy with electric scooters and wanted to see them banned. Those commenting on public transport wanted to see better integration between buses and the Metro, single tickets for both services (25 people on Commonplace also said this), and that they wanted free public transport.

Some people at a drop-in session in **Jesmond** commenting on cycling said that they wanted to see clearer cycle routes and a complete citywide cycle network. However, others felt that spending money on cycle lanes was not value for money as they are not well-used, and were unhappy at the feeling that cyclists do not obey traffic regulations. Another person commenting on active travel wanted to see carers' needs integrated into transport planning, and that many disabled people need to use cars to access services. Commenting on public transport, people said they wanted integrated public transport, prioritising buses over other road users to improve reliability and punctuality of buses, and that many areas with a higher proportion of older residents seem to have fewer bus services. Similarly, one person commented that "not everyone owns a car and if we want to reduce car ownership we need to make it easier to access places by public transport, especially for food shopping". Speaking about driving, one person wanted to see potholes repaired, and demarcation of parking bays repainted.

People at a drop-in session in **Lemington** felt that public transport in the north east was poor compared to other areas in England and needed to be improved. Another comment was that walking in local areas could be very difficult due to obstacles such as pavement parking (four people on Commonplace mentioned this) and overhanging hedges and trees. This can be a deterrent to people walking children to school.

Early feedback from the **Newcastle Disability Forum** was that members' views were split between those who wanted the city centre closed to traffic apart from public transport, taxis, delivery vehicles, or drivers with blue badges, and those who thought that doing this would damage the city centre economy. Some wanted to see Blackett Street left open for buses to improve connectivity between the west and east of Newcastle, and also asked about whether new bus stations were needed on the periphery of the city centre. Other comments included whether lampposts could be used as charging points for electric

vehicles, preventing people using bikes, e-bikes and scooters on pavements, and the need for integrated public transport.

People attending a drop-in event at **Throckley Community Centre** said that there is a need for better public transport links across the whole city (four people said this), and they would like to the Metro extended (one person).

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** said that they were happy with improved cycle lanes in the city centre, and wanted to see a joined-up cycle network to make it safer to cycle and deter cycling on pavements. Some also wanted to see increased pedestrianisation in the city centre to reduce traffic, air pollution, and damage to historic buildings – one person commented that this should include Blackett Street. Making it easier to move around was a general theme, and another comment was that people wanted more reliable public transport.

Feedback received from the **Let's talk Newcastle topic wall** was that one person thought that roads around Kenton and Fawdon were not fit for purpose and needed resurfacing; another was unhappy with traffic management measures. Another comment was the there was a need to improve the Metro, and reintroduce cash payments for car parking.

Nine people commented via **social media**. Four were unhappy with existing traffic management measures in the city centre; another four were happy with them. One was unhappy with proposals to pedestrianise Blackett Street.

Three people commented via **letter**. Two people said that they wanted to see bridlepaths and footpaths in rural areas better maintained, display boards introduced, and roads and pavements repaired. They also wanted to do see nuisance motorbike and quad bike riding tackled by the police. Another wanted to see roadworks completed or removed.

Two comments from the **Youth Voice Locality groups** were that the Metro zoning system is unfair if people make short journeys which cross zones, and that more reliable public transport is needed.

Fourteen **Youth Parliament** candidates mentioned this. Several wanted to see more frequent, cleaner and cheaper public transport across the whole of Newcastle; a couple commented that safety, especially on the Metro, was a concern for them. One mentioned the need for improved safety at pedestrian crossings, and another wanted more charging points for electric vehicles to help tackle air pollution.

Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included:

Views expressed by the 45 people responding to the survey run by student **Bea Chivers** were that more places needed to be reachable by public transport to discourage car use, and more pedestrianisation was needed to enable both active and sustainable travel.

**Cities 4 People** suggested revisiting the one-way system to see if traffic flow in the city centre can be improved, and introducing a park and ride service.

**Commercial Estates Projects Ltd** commented on the importance of making sure new housing developments have active travel links from housing to open and green spaces, and also of maximising the benefits of new infrastructure, including new roads, when determining the locations of new housing and employment sites.

The **Elders Council** noted that many older people do not have access to a car through either financial reasons or health issues making driving impossible, and that some of their members feel that transport planning at present prioritises infrastructure for cars, rather than active and public transport. They also felt that planning does not always appreciate

that walking is a very important mode of transport for older people, and that action to make this easier, such as repairing pavements and removing street clutter, is not always a priority. Alongside this, support for those with restricted mobility needs to be included in transport planning. They felt that both groups would benefit from wider use of 20mph speed limits. Public transport was also considered a priority, and the Elders Council said that they wanted more reliable services, better bus shelters, better public transport information that does not rely mostly on smartphones, and simpler ticketing schemes. Finally, they wanted to see segregated spaces for cyclists, scooter users, and pedestrians, saying that many of their members do not feel safe due to people using bikes, e-bikes and scooters on pavements.

Three **Gosforth** residents with backgrounds in architecture planning, urban design, and housing wrote a formal response on this topic as it applies to Gosforth and north Newcastle. They felt that the two primary traffic routes in this area are severely congested, and this is causing rat-running in residential areas and the decline of the local high street. In their view, what is needed is a more comprehensive approach to traffic movement across the area to discourage private car use in this area, reduce non-stopping buses on the high street, and support public transport including re-establishing the role of the Regent Centre transport interchange.

**Harworth Group** commented that they felt their plans for their site at north-west Throckley could support this ambition as it has good links to active and public transport networks.

The PfP **Igloo: Helix and Stephenson Works** response sent in by Avison Young commented on the mixed-use aspect of these two projects could contribute to people being able to live near to where they work, and also access active and public transport.

**National Highways** emphasised their commitment to working with Newcastle City Council during the development of the Newcastle Plan, in particular to resolve any issues regarding the implications of the Plan for the Strategic Road Network including the local key routes of the A1, A69 and A696, and working together to maximise people's access to active and public transport.

**Newcastle University** supported the creation of policies which encourage new developments, both residential and employment sites, near local facilities to support the use of active and public transport.

**Newcastle Public Transport Users Group** stated that future planning policy should encourage developments near existing public and active travel infrastructure and that this should be consistent throughout all aspects of planning policy, including allocating employment and residential sites. They also wanted to see policies which would discourage private car use, such as a workplace parking levy and possible increases in car parking fees, and a park and ride system to discourage people driving into the city centre.

**Persimmon Homes** said that they supported active and sustainable travel, but that policies around this should be flexible and take into account the "wider context of the area". They wanted to see any proposals around car parking be subject to a separate consultation, and that planning policies should not go beyond that required by national legislation.

**Space for Gosforth** wanted to see a comprehensive plan for walking and cycling, with the creation of "a network of safe, accessible, all age and ability routes", and also provision for the increased use of e-scooters, e-bikes and cargo bikes. They wanted to see a commitment to high-quality pavements and crossings, a cycling network, local streets used solely for access to neighbourhoods, and limits on pollution and noise from traffic. They also listed earlier City Council motions which link to cycling, transport, and the climate
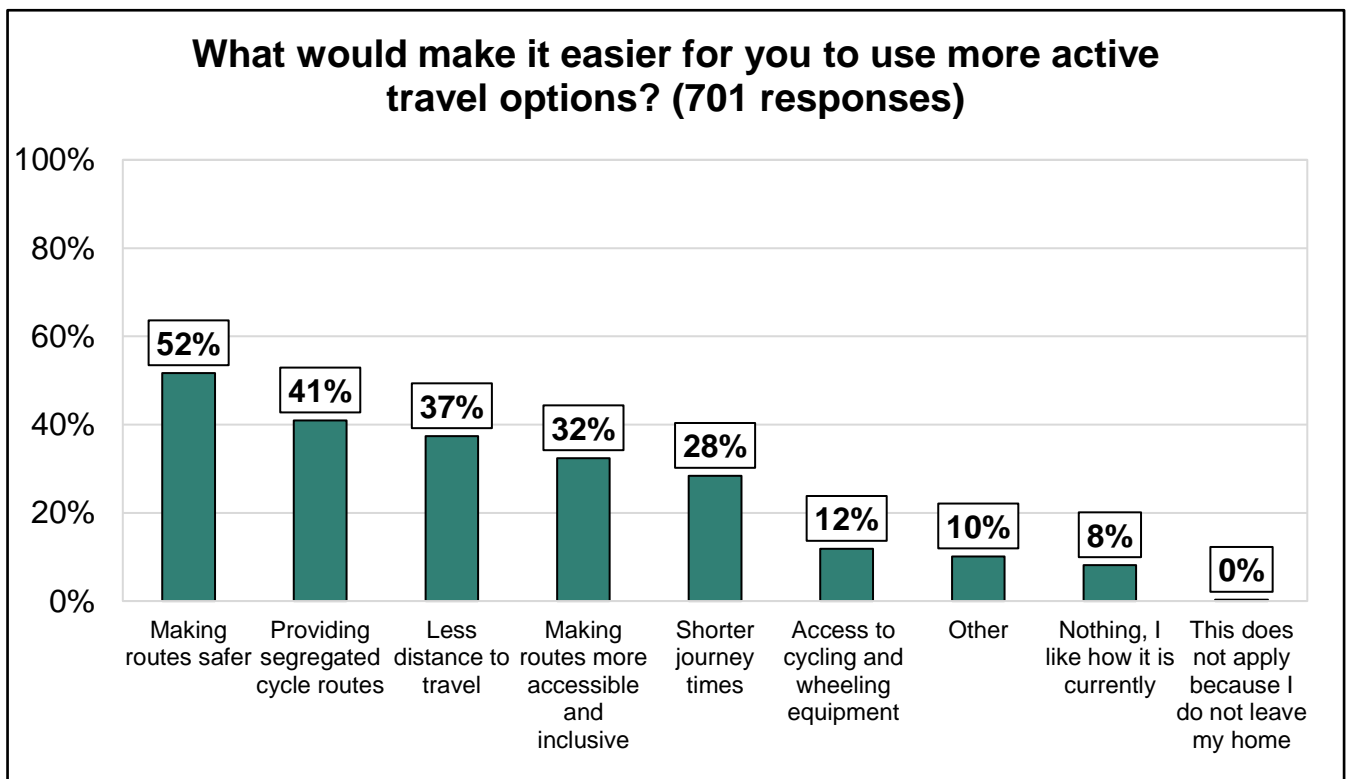
emergency, and stated that they wanted to see the Newcastle Plan be consistent with these.

**Woolsington Parish Council** made four recommendations; maintain key routes into and out of Newcastle, such as the B6918, to make accessing the city visually appealing, work with local residents and communities, enforce red route restrictions where this applies to maintain good relations with local communities, and provide more diverse sporting facilities.

## What would make it easier for you to use more active travel options?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us what would make it easier for them to use more active travel options. They were not asked to rank the options provided in order of importance, and could choose as many as they thought would make it easier for them. As shown in the chart below, the 'top three' options were:

1. Making routes safer = 52% of respondents

2. Providing segregated cycle routes = 41%

3. Less distance to travel = 37%

**What would make it easier for you to use more active travel options? (701 responses)**

| Option | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Making routes safer | 52% |
| Providing segregated cycle routes | 41% |
| Less distance to travel | 37% |
| Making routes more accessible and inclusive | 32% |
| Shorter journey times | 28% |
| Access to cycling and wheeling equipment | 12% |
| Other | 10% |
| Nothing, I like how it is currently | 8% |
| This does not apply because I do not leave my home | 0% |

When asked to describe what 'something else' would be, 78 people used the space to describe the reasons for choosing one or more of the options to the question. Interestingly, many also commented on factors affecting whether they do or do not use public transport. Some seemed to be unclear on the distinction between 'active travel' and 'public transport', thinking that the question refers to whether someone does or does not travel by car, others used both modes of transport and wanted to comment on this. The main themes in their comments were:

1. **Secure cycle storage** – 8 people said this
2. **Access to cycling and wheeling equipment** – 7 people
3. **Joined-up active travel routes** – 6 people
4. **Broken glass on cycle routes is a hazard** – 5 people
5. **Cycle routes which are segregated from main roads** – 5 people
6. **Reliable public transport that keeps to the timetable** – 5 people
7. **Cheaper public transport** – 4 people
8. **Clean up fallen leaves to make it safer to walk around** – 4 people
9. **Cyclists feel unsafe due to anti-social behaviour encountered on cycle routes** – 4 people

Comments included:

"Active travel infrastructure, such as bike storage at stations, will encourage more journeys to be made sustainably."

"Access to cycling and wheeling equipment."

"Creating joined-up routes to and from people's doors."

## What happens next for Ambition 5 – Transport?

**What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Ambition?**

**Making sure it is easy to move around Newcastle and the North East region:**

It's important we get the transport opportunities and conditions right, so we can all benefit from being able to move around easily. The council is currently planning how we can help improve travel by 2045 by preparing a 'Movement Strategy'. The Movement Strategy will provide the policy direction for future transport schemes and will set out our high-level policies, guiding commitments and key actions. It will align with the Regional Transport Plan. The Movement Strategy will support the local plan identifying transport priorities and key considerations for our future spatial planning.

**Developing a sustainable and integrated transport network:**

Currently the bus system is deregulated, and so bus operators compete for passengers and are responsible for setting commercial bus routes, timetables, fares, and overall standards. Bus operators are largely free to operate services where they deem it will be commercially viable for them to do so. During the Covid Pandemic, bus patronage rapidly declined and has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Services have been reduced in Newcastle within the last 3 years.

The North East Combined Authority are in the process of preparing a Franchise Scheme Assessment for buses covering the area of the North East Combined

Authority. Franchising regulates the bus market and removes 'on road' competition (changing to competition for the market, as opposed to competition in the market). Franchising gives an authority the ability to specify bus routes, timetables, fares and overall standards. Bus operators are contracted to run bus services following competitive tendering processes. Only contracted routes, routes exempt from the scheme, or routes granted service permits by the franchising authority can operate within the specified franchise area.

The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) will also be updated. The BSIP and associated funding allow the authorities, working in partnership with bus operators, to make improvements to the bus network in the more immediate term whilst longer-term options for reform are developed. Newcastle is currently developing BSIP Tranche 1 schemes (bus reliability schemes on 5 key routes) and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) improvements.

**Delivering active travel schemes:**
Walking remains the predominant active travel mode (between walking and cycling) in the city for commuting and the journey to school. Cycling into the city centre is still showing increases via our long-term trends from annual cordon counts. Despite the increases in cycling seen during the Covid lockdowns, cycling has returned to around 2% of commuting trips. The static levels of cycling is in large part due to a lack of attractive and connected infrastructure creating a city wide network. Schemes on Heaton Road and Queen Victoria Road, for example, connect key trip generators but are relatively short. A network of high-quality routes is still required to start seeing increases in cycling across the city. Many junctions also remain a barrier to people walking and cycling more due to their perceived lack of safety. For example, old junctions like the Corner House junction on the Coast Road needs significant upgrading to widen pedestrian islands and to speed up the time it takes to cross.

We have Active Travel England funded schemes already in design and close to construction. This will help expand certain segregated routes for cycling, introducing new green/blue infrastructure in the process, and improve junctions and new crossings for pedestrians. The various schemes are at different design stages, with many more in the pipeline (subject to funding). We are also extending crossing times and doubling the pedestrian stages at key junctions to prioritise pedestrian movements where possible. We have a growing schedule of junctions to look at. We have a new Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) being developed, setting out delivery priorities over the next 5/10/20 years. The focus of the new LCWIP will be to help prioritise the delivery of local networks of cycling infrastructure and help plan key walking interventions at strategic junctions. Developing a city-wide network of routes is crucial to enabling more walking, wheeling and cycling journeys. The new LCWIP focuses on connecting people to public transport for multi-modal journeys and to help expand opportunities for residents to access better jobs, education and services, particularly the journey to school.

We are also working in partnership with Public Health to reduce inequalities in access to public transport by making sure we build walking and cycling

infrastructure in areas where physical activity levels are relatively low, and where levels of transport related poverty/social isolation are relatively high.

**Supporting disabled people and people with restricted mobility to use their cars providing more disabled parking:**
Data for Newcastle's car ownership and link to disability shows that people with a disability are less likely to have a car or van in their household than people who do not have a disability. We should be mindful about supporting the transport needs of people with disabilities, and not restricting that support to only considering disabled parking. Inclusivity is a key theme in the Movement Strategy.
We will plan and design for protected characteristics, the elderly, and children. We propose to do this by:
- Improving physical access for people with disability and people with limited mobility, including step free access, dropped kerbs, Disabled Car Park spaces, wide footways for pushchairs and wheelchairs, decluttering and highway improvements.
- Ensuring pedestrians have priority on our streets, with the whole street environment tailored to their needs. All arms of all junctions have a 'green man' phase with crossing times extended and wait times for pedestrians reduced. Crossings are located on desire lines and priority for pedestrians is emphasised at side roads.
- Prioritise the parking needs for disabled people, and families with small children, by evaluating the provision across the city.

**Make it easier to travel between different neighbourhoods by public transport and not just to the city centre:**
The Movement Strategy will set out what we want transport movement in and through our city to look like by 2045, and what we need to do to achieve that. The Movement Strategy will initiate a more connected and inclusive Newcastle with improved service provision.

**Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan**
The responses to this ambition will help to shape future policies in the local plan which can support a safe transport network and sustainable growth.

Key messages from the responses include we need better integrated and more reliable public transport, we need to make it easier to travel between different neighbourhoods by public transport, not only in and out of the city centre. New housing developments should be located near public transport and active travel networks, and we need to make active travel routes safer and easier to use.

These responses show that the local plan has an important role in shaping sustainable transport choices and new transport and infrastructure provision to support sustainable development. The responses will help to inform what transport improvements we should prioritise to improve connectivity in Newcastle and to make sustainable and active travel more attractive. The impacts of potential development on the transport network must be understood early in the plan making process.

New policies in the local plan will be developed based on evidence including sustainable transport.

# Ambition 6 – To deliver a high-quality leisure, culture, and tourism experience which celebrates local pride, the city's rich heritage and natural spaces

## How would you prefer us to plan for new leisure, culture, and tourism facilities?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us which of these four approaches they would prefer us to adopt to plan for new leisure, culture, and tourism facilities:

1. Focus on providing these facilities in district and local centres, and the city centre

2. Focus on providing these facilities in new locations across the city, based on future needs

3. Have a more flexible approach so that we can respond to new trends

4. Something else

As shown below, views were mixed. The single most common response from the 628 respondents was: 'Focus on providing these facilities in new locations across the city, based on future needs' (44% of respondents said this).

**How would you prefer us to plan for new leisure, culture, and tourism facilities? (628 responses)**

| Response | Percentage |
| --- | --- |
| Focus on providing facilities in new locations across the city | 44% |
| Focus on providing facilities in district & local centres AND the city centre | 26% |
| Have a more flexible approach to that we can respond to new trends | 25% |
| Something else | 5% |
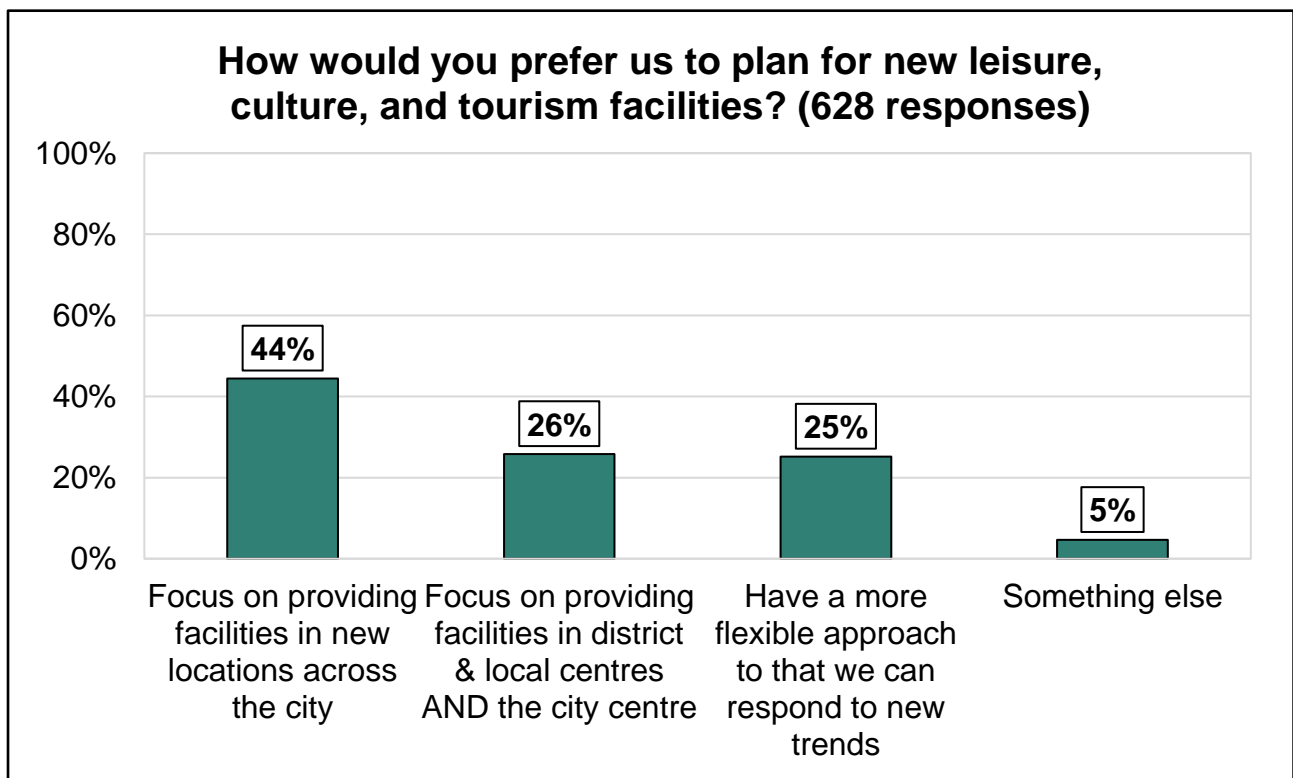
29 people commented on this, and the main themes in their comments were:

1. Ensure events can be **reached by active and public transport** – 3 people said this, as did the Elders Council.

2. **Improve existing facilities** rather than building new ones – 3 people

3. Any new facilities need to have **good public transport connections** – 2 people

4. City centre should be a **hub for leisure** and cultural facilities – 2 people

5. Council leisure facilities should have **longer opening hours** – 2 people

6. Put new facilities in neighbourhoods to **evenly distribute benefits** – 2 people said this, as did some people visiting the Grainger Market stalls

7. **Support existing** cultural and leisure facilities – 2 people

Comments included:

"We need a flexible approach that ensures events are held in places that can be reached by active and public transport."

"Put these facilities in housing areas where people can access them, do not put everything in the town as disabled people can't access it as easily."

"Newcastle used to be busy every night, now it is a ghost town."

Feedback from **community groups and events** included the following.

People attending a drop-in event in **Byker** said they wanted to see more independent shops in the local area, such as butchers and greengrocers, and fewer takeaways and barbers.

People attending a drop-in event in **Fenham** said they wanted the council to "improve the Christmas Fayre [markets] and [have more] events in the city centre to encourage people to shop there."

People attending a drop-in event in **Gosforth** wanted more libraries, community facilities, and play parks. One person was unhappy with Urban Green and wanted to see parks returned to council ownership.

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 20 February: People wanted to see Newcastle achieve City of Culture status, and to have better leisure and culture facilities built whenever new housing is built, for example in Throckley. Again, people mentioned a need for provision for older children and teenagers. One person joked: "don't tell anyone how good Newcastle is, or they will all move here, and it will no longer be as good!"

From people at the **Grainger Market** stall on 23 February: As with the stall on 20 February and in Commonplace, more options for young people were mentioned, with Ouseburn Farm mentioned as an example of good provision. People wanted more green space in the city centre and in neighbourhoods, and more play spaces, and to make more of the city's heritage such as the Castle.

People at a drop-in session in **Great Park** wanted more leisure services targeted to encourage and support women to be active, particularly women with young children.

People attending a drop-in event in **Heaton** stressed the importance of maintaining 'Geordie culture', and also wanted more swimming pools.

People attending a drop-in event at **Jesmond Library** cited the example of the Wylam Brewery re-using the old Military Museum buildings in Exhibition Park as an example of success in bringing people into the park and making it a destination. Similarly, one person suggested putting a Museum of the North on the old arena site. The need for high-quality tourism and leisure facilities was mentioned.

Early feedback from the **Newcastle Disability Forum** was to generally encourage tourism in the Newcastle area.

People attending a presentation about the local plan in **St. Peter's Basin** in **Ouseburn** spoke about the need to recognise how local neighbourhoods as well as the city centre need good local culture facilities, and how local neighbourhoods "cultural landmarks" should be recognised.

Two people attending a drop-in event at **Throckley Community Centre** felt that there was a lack of facilities for children. Other issues mentioned (one person each) were that there needed to be more children's play areas, and that play equipment should be made from metal so that it cannot be burnt or vandalised. Another commented that Community Centres are very important, and that more free outdoor events for families would be good. One person said they were unhappy with Urban Green and wanted parks to be managed by the council again.

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** said that they felt that pedestrianisation in the city centre had made it a more pleasant place to visit, and wanted to see historic and impressive buildings in Newcastle properly protected.

Feedback received from the **Let's talk Newcastle topic wall** was that one person was unhappy with spending on festivals in the local area.

One person commented via **social media** about the appeal of local attractions in Northumberland.

One person commented via **letter**, saying that they wanted more tennis, cycling and bowling facilities in local neighbourhoods, and that there are only football facilities available.

Two people from the **Youth Voice Locality groups** commented on this; one saying that cars in Exhibition Park can make it feel unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists, another saying that they would like to have a local park in their neighbourhood with play facilities.

Nineteen **Youth Parliament** candidates mentioned this in their manifestos, mostly in the context of wanting more activities for young people and teenagers, both for sport and physical activity, and more social activities and facilities such as community centres.

Feedback from **Planning Policy Responses** included:

**Cities 4 People** said that they felt that there was a severe lack of information for tourists available in the city centre, and wondered if introducing a bus loop around the city centre could help tourists move around.

The **Elders Council** said that many of their members appreciated Newcastle's cultural and leisure options, such as theatre and facilities such as the Lit and Phil. They felt it was important to ensure that people could easily access them via public and active transport, especially for activities happening in the evening and at night. They also mentioned the important of informal and volunteer-organised activities such as walks, allotments, yoga classes, men's groups, local societies and similar activities, and the need to support them. In connection with this, they said that it has been difficult for these activities to keep going in recent years due to a lack of affordable venues. Finally, ensuring that venues and activities are accessible for older people and disabled people was a priority for them – for example, considering the needs of people with sensory impairments.

**Food Newcastle** commented on the importance of preserving local food traditions and small-scale producers as part of preserving Newcastle's history and identity.

**High Gosforth Park Ltd**. commented in detail on how their plans for future development of Newcastle racecourse could support the ambition for high-quality leisure and tourism facilities, and how this could also support the local economy. They wanted to work with Newcastle City Council to develop this further, for example by looking at improved accommodation and transport facilities.

**Historic England** commented on Newcastle's "incredibly rich and diverse historic environment consisting of heritage assets dating from before the Roman period through to the 20th century" and how it can be a resource for culture, leisure and tourism. They wanted to see the Newcastle Plan include strategic policies to "conserve and enhance" the area's historic environment.

**Persimmon Homes** supported the provision of high-quality leisure, culture and tourism facilities, and wanted to see these based upon a solid evidence base to ensure viability.

**PfP Igloo** described how their recent housing developments in Ouseburn Valley demonstrated how development can encourage and support culture, leisure and tourism facilities, and regenerate local communities.

**Space for Gosforth** commented that better infrastructure for walking and cycling could encourage people to do these activities in their leisure time. They also noted that Newcastle has local attractions such as Jesmond Dene and the Town Moor and is near the coast and Northumberland countryside, meaning there is potential to encourage more tourism for people wanting outdoor activities.

**The Glasshouse** described their vision for the next ten years, including developing an "internationally-distinctive events programme" and giving young people access to a "cultural commitment". They noted that this could link to work to tackle local child poverty.

# Which of these approaches do you think we should take to improve people's access to natural spaces in Newcastle?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us which of these four approaches they would prefer us to adopt to improve people's access to natural spaces in Newcastle:

1. Provide new natural spaces in existing and new developments
2. Ensure existing natural spaces are safe and attractive and can easily be accessed
3. Both of the above
4. Something else

As shown below, nearly three-quarters of respondents (70%) said that they wanted to see both approaches used.

**Which of these approaches do you think we should take to improve people's access to natural spaces in Newcastle? (569 responses)**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Both of the above | 70% |
| Ensure existing natural spaces are safe & attractive and can easily be accessed | 20% |
| Something else | 7% |
| Provide new natural spaces in existing and new developments | 4% |
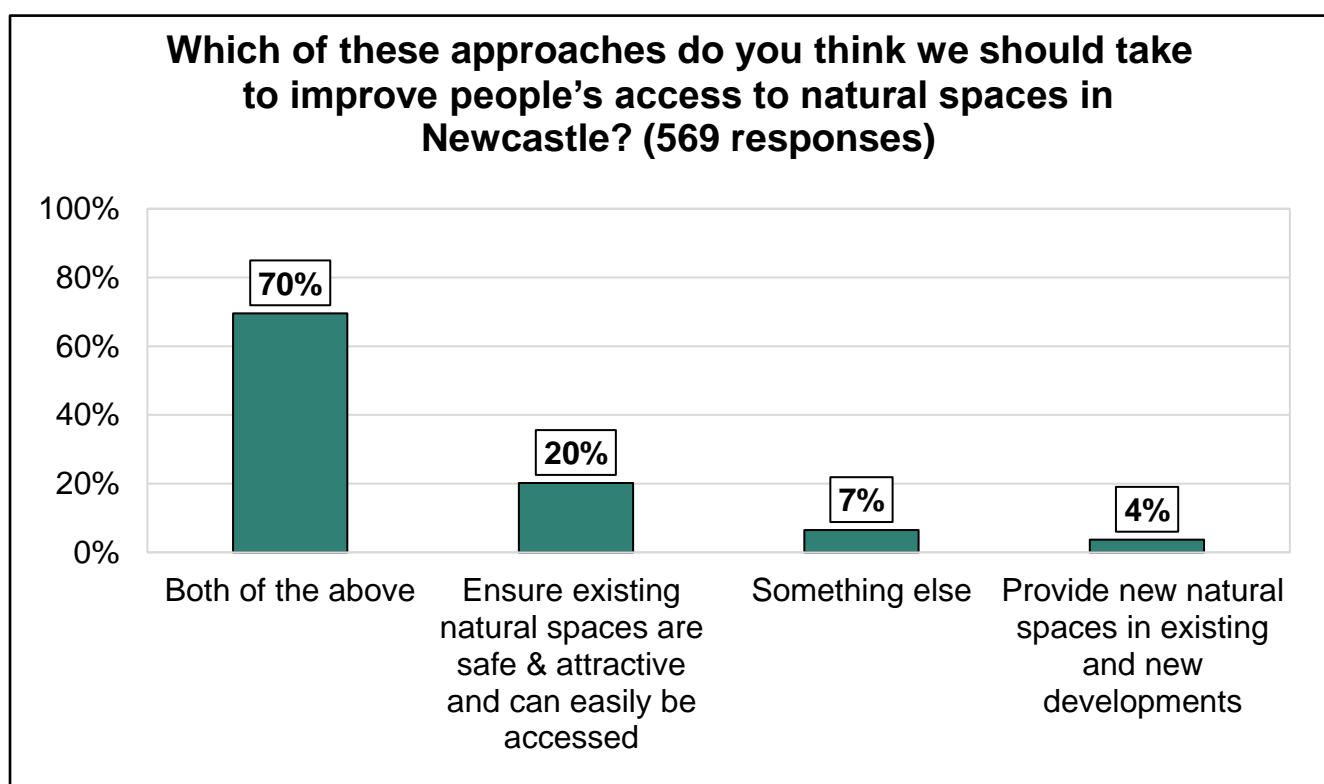
37 people commented on this via Commonplace, and the main themes in their comments were:

1. Protect biodiversity – 3 people said this
2. Protect green spaces from cars – 2 people
3. Protect the green belt – 2 people

Comments included:

"Make a green ring around the city with green corridors expanding outward from there, away from roads."

"More should be done to protect this high-profile route from vehicles parking on the grass verges and litter, and filth being deposited by waiting vehicles."

"Improve biodiversity of parks."

## What happens next for Ambition 6 – Leisure, culture and tourism?

**What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Ambition?**

**Improving information for tourists, promoting Newcastle's history and heritage:**
Creative Central Newcastle is supporting cultural venues within the city centre to explore ways to engage with 'Heritage Open Days', which will open up the city's wonderful heritage assets to new audiences.

**Improving the cultural and leisure offer in neighbourhoods, including for children and young people:**
As part of the Newcastle – Inclusive, Healthy, Vibrant High Streets Project, we have commissioned artist residency programmes, events delivered in 2023 with more scheduled in for 2024. These include a programme of free and family friendly events delivered on Hadrian Square and Shields Road throughout the 6 weeks of summer holidays. We are working with the North East Combined Authority on extending the Newcastle High Streets Project into future years.

Through the Local Community Partnership – we have secured £1.5m UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) funding to deliver a grant scheme for local Voluntary, Community Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations in Outer West and North of Newcastle. We have awarded 29 grants supporting activities for residents – including children, young people and families - delivered from local community venues in 2024/25. This initiative depends on availability of external funding. We would like to apply for more funding to extend this offer into future years and more areas.

**How can the council improve local leisure services:**
Due to the financial pressures on local authorities our leisure services have suffered in recent years and the council took the difficult decision to outsource management of leisure centres in recent years. However, we understand that we can support local businesses in diversifying their offer. We will utilise grant funding wherever possible to boost the leisure offering in Newcastle, evidenced most recently by the project to create a new leisure centre in West Denton.

**Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan**
The responses to this ambition will help to shape future policies in the local plan including making sufficient provision for leisure and cultural infrastructure. Many leisure, culture and tourism developments are defined as main town centre uses and can provide positive contributions to the vitality and viability of centres. Protecting existing leisure and cultural facilities from loss is also important to ensure that all parts of the city remain vibrant and successful.

Key messages from the responses include that leisure, culture and tourism facilities should be provided across the city based on future needs, the cultural and tourism offer of local neighbourhoods should be promoted including providing a

wider range of facilities for children and young people. Highlighting Newcastle's history and heritage was also a key message along with providing new natural spaces and ensuring existing spaces are safe and attractive.

These responses show that there are many policy interventions needed across the different topic areas within the local plan, that will help promote high-quality leisure, culture and tourism.

The council is preparing a Culture, Heritage and Events Strategic Plan which will set out how the council can, together with partners across the city, establish Newcastle as a forward-thinking cultural city. Culture, leisure and tourism must be central to developing an inclusive economy creating jobs and attractions across the city. This document will be used to help shape future policy options in the local plan.

# Ambition 7 – To deliver homes people need throughout their lifetime in sustainable communities where they want to live.

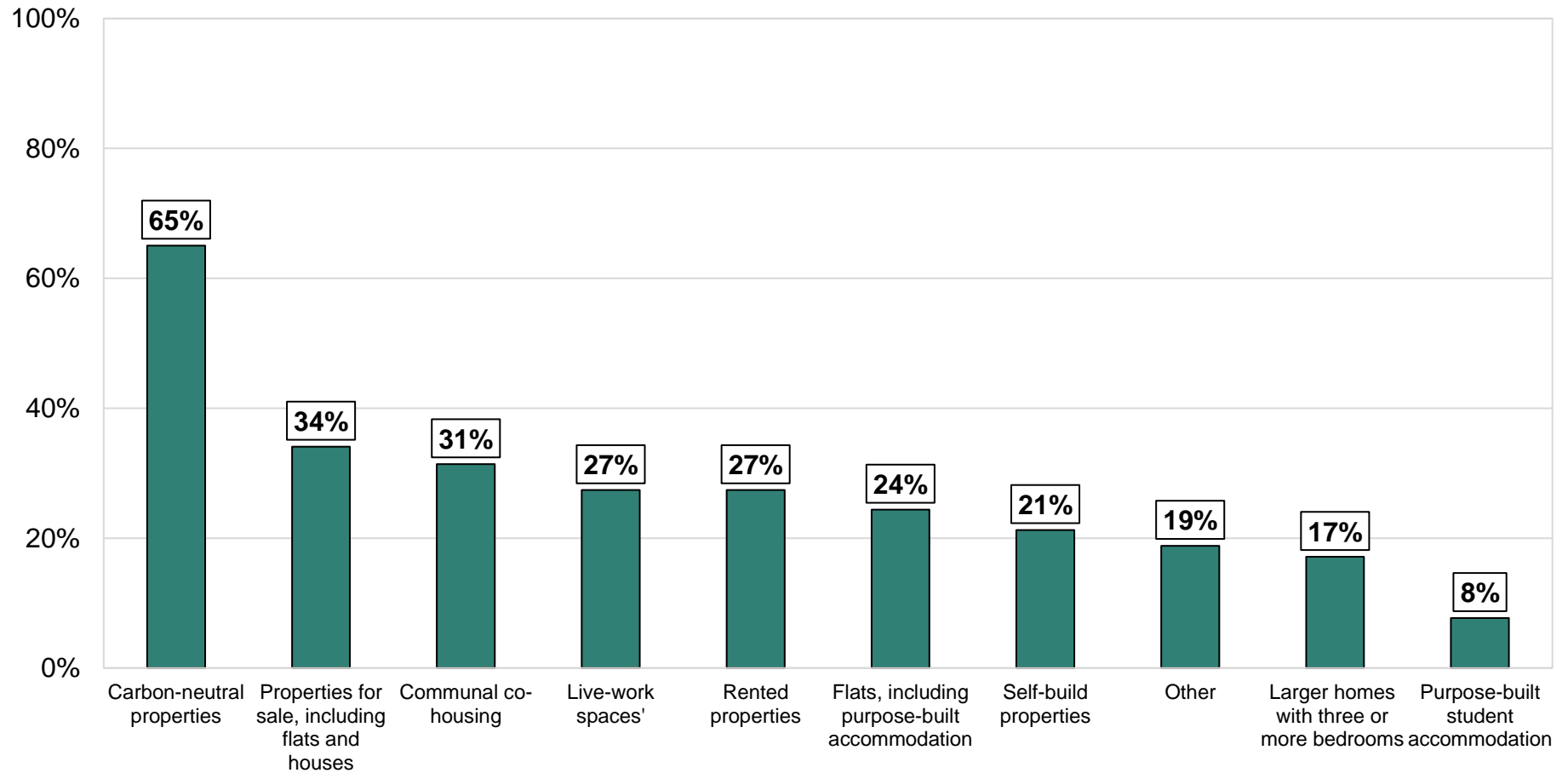## What type of housing would you like to see more of in the future?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us which of these types of housing they would like to see more of in future:

1. Carbon-neutral properties, to help address the climate crisis and affordability (reduce household bills)

2. Communal co-housing – where people from differing ages and mixed households live together

3. Flats, including purpose-built accommodation

4. Larger homes with three or more bedrooms

5. 'Live-work' spaces – these are homes with dedicated spaces for work

6. Properties for sale, including flats and houses

7. Purpose-built student accommodation

8. Rented properties, including flats and houses

9. Self-built properties, or properties which can be customised according to the owner's preferences

10. Something else

Respondents did not have to rank the options in order of importance, and they could choose as many as they thought they wanted to see more of. We received 701 responses, and as shown in the chart on the next page, the 'top three' most popular options were:

1. **Carbon-neutral properties**, to help address the climate crisis and affordability (reduced household bills) – 65% of respondents said they wanted to see this.

2. **Properties for sale**, including flats and houses – 34%

3. **Communal co-housing**, where people from differing ages and mixed households live together – 31%

**What type of housing would you like to see more of in the future?**
**(701 responses)**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Carbon-neutral properties | 65% |
| Properties for sale, including flats and houses | 34% |
| Communal co-housing | 31% |
| Live-work spaces' | 27% |
| Rented properties | 27% |
| Flats, including purpose-built accommodation | 24% |
| Self-build properties | 21% |
| Other | 19% |
| Larger homes with three or more bedrooms | 17% |
| Purpose-built student accommodation | 8% |

69 people commented on this via Commonplace, often using the space for 'other' to comment on why they had answered as they had, and commented on housing in general. The main themes in their comments were:

1. **Need more council houses** – 12 people said this, as did people attending a drop-in event at Throckley Community Centre

2. **Need affordable housing** – 9 people said this, as did people attending drop-in events in Gosforth, Jesmond, Throckley and the West End

3. **Need more social housing** – 8 people said this, as did people attending a drop-in event at Throckley Community Centre

4. Need **higher-density housing** developments – 8 people said this, as did people attending a drop-in event in Gosforth, however, the Elders Council questioned whether this could lead to greater social division.

5. Build more **bungalows** – 7 people said this

6. **Need smaller properties** so older people can downsize – 7 people said this, as did the Elders Council and people attending drop-in events at Throckley Community Centre, and the West End Library and Customer Service Centre.

Feedback from **community groups and events** included the following.

People from the **Becoming Visible** group said that they had experienced difficulties bidding on social housing as they felt that the properties on offer are not always appropriate, and it is difficult for them to get face-to-face appointments – telephone discussions do not work for them, and letters can be inaccessible. This is especially difficult for deafblind people. The group would like to see a social worker appointed specifically to support D/deaf people, and more widespread BSL interpretation and knowledge so that they are able to be part of their communities. They also wanted to see better provision for homeless people to tackle street sleeping and said that sometimes people are afraid to be outdoors after 11pm. Finally, they questioned whether high-density student accommodation is a good idea, and whether it would be better to have more mixed communities with student accommodation distributed throughout family homes.

People attending a drop-in event in **Fenham** said they wanted to see a greater mix of housing types to encourage sustainable communities, which was also mentioned by five people on Commonplace. They also wanted to see the council take action on poor landlords, again, this was mentioned by two people on Commonplace.

People attending a drop-in event in **Gosforth** asked if affordable housing could be located in vacant buildings. They wanted to see higher-density and better-quality housing developments. Climate change was also a topic, with one person wanting to see district heating and heating pumps being installed, others wanting properties to support people commuting by cycling, and another saying there is a general need to support people to make their homes carbon-neutral. One wanted housing to be located near Metro stations, and another wanted controls on private landlords being able to rent out properties on a short term basis.

People attending the stall in the **Grainger Market** on 20 February 2024 said they wanted to see more social housing, more homes suitable for single people, more affordable housing, and that there is an unmet need for housing in Newcastle. They also mentioned 'safe options for homeless people', and that they felt there was too much student accommodation.

People at a drop-in session in **Great Park** said that new developments should be adopted more quickly, and that the Great Park needs more school places.

People attending a drop-in event in **Heaton** stressed the need for more social housing and more affordable housing (several people commented on this). They wanted more housing advice and support services, and also said that new housing developments should be created with an awareness of what is already in the local place where developments are being creating.

People attending a drop-in event at **Jesmond Library** wanted to see more affordable housing, and for the council to seek funding for housing investment. They said that all new housing developments should include sustainable technologies such as heat pumps and solar panels. Cleanliness was mentioned, with people wanting to see litter cleared up and untidy gardens improved, and one person mentioned that they wanted overgrown hedges cut back as it makes it harder for wheelchair users and people with buggies to walk around the local area. Similarly, another comment was that housing developments should be designed with the needs of disabled people in mind, including their need for using cars for travel. Others felt that the needs of students were given too much priority. Another person wanted to see separate local plans for individual neighbourhoods.

Early feedback from the **Newcastle Disability Forum** was to suggest that unneeded shops could be converted into housing, and that they preferred to see any new housing developments built on brownfield sites. They also emphasised a need for accessible and adaptable 'lifetime' homes.

Feedback from a **meeting of the Newcastle Disability Forum** was that brownfield land should be prioritised for housing development, and that local authorities should work together to identify the best places for housing development in the region.

Three people attending a drop-in event at **Throckley Community Centre** wanted to see unused buildings repurposed and brownfield sites used to provide more housing. Other views (one person each) were that elderly people wait too long for suitable housing, that more social housing and affordable housing is needed, and that people were unhappy that planning permission is being granted to convert bungalows into two-storey houses. One person wanted to see housing with space for mobility scooters.

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** said they wanted to see unused buildings being repurposed into housing, more affordable housing, and a wider choice of housing to meet people's needs at different stages of life – for example, starter homes for younger people, and smaller homes for older people wanting to downsize. They felt that a better quality of housing was needed to improve the West Road area.

Three people commented via **letter**. Two people said that they wanted to see houses built on brownfield sites, not green belt. Another was concerned that Newcastle's infrastructure would not be able to cope with the increased need for housing and related services, such as energy, water, and sewerage, if the population increases in the next ten years.

Feedback received from the **Let's talk Newcastle topic wall** was that one person felt that communities in the outer west of the city such as Chapel Park and Chapel House were neglected, and that they needed better infrastructure. Another felt that too much house-building was happening in Gosforth.

Feedback from **Planning Policy Responses** included:

**Commercial Estates Projects Ltd** described how their plans for the housing allocation at Middle Callerton and Upper Callerton could fit with these goals, and also with biodiversity and blue-green infrastructure goals. They also listed factors to consider when planning for housing needs, including: "planned growth and investment in the North East as a result of the Devolution Deal, the rapidly growing population in the city, the need to deliver new homes to allow housing to remain affordable within the region, and the fact that Newcastle is required to deliver a 35% uplift on the standard method." Finally, they commented on the need to build all future housing to modern standards. (Note that this is a summary of a detailed response on this topic.)

The **Elders Council** described their views on how housing can meet the needs of older people, including being accessible, adaptable, and easy to heat, and also located in communities where people can easily socialise and maintain links with friends and family. They also wanted more smaller properties to be made available for older people wanting to downsize. Finally, they expressed concern that planning should aim to avoid the 'doughnut city' effect, with more affluent communities living in a 'ring' around the urban core, with poorer communities with inadequate community facilities living in the centre.

**ESOL students** attending an event at Westgate College commented on the need to improve the quality of existing housing, including tackling damp, mould, and poor insulation. Many said they had first-hand experience of this though living in rented properties, and that they had had difficulty persuading landlords to take action on these issues. They also had issues with poor soundproofing and noise from neighbourhoods. Some said that they wanted to move to areas such as Arthur's Hill and Fenham, as they felt that properties there were of higher quality, with cleaner streets.

Thinking about what new housing was needed, several of those attending wanted to see more social housing, as they perceived this to be of higher quality and kept in better repair. They also wanted a wider choice of property types, including three-bedroom family homes with bigger kitchens and gardens, and bungalows for older people, and that all new properties should have access to green space. Another comment was that sometimes people feel unsafe when outside in their local areas, and asked whether this could be mitigated by better housing design in future.

Three **Gosforth** residents with backgrounds in architecture planning, urban design, and housing wrote a formal response on this, saying that local residential areas were struggling with traffic and need a strategic traffic management system, discouraging car use, supporting active travel and introducing a low-traffic neighbourhood.

**High Gosforth Park Ltd**. observed that there are areas within the racecourse site which could help to meet the area's housing need.

People attending the stall in the **Grainger Market** on 20 February 2024 said they thought it was important to focus on community facilities, such as schools, and consider how to make the best use of them for the whole community. They wanted to see communities empowered to shape their local areas according to their needs, rather than focusing only on physical infrastructure, and also to see wards working together to share ideas and learn from each other.

People attending the stall in the **Grainger Market** on 23 February 2024 said they thought all new developments should have green spaces, play spaces and communal spaces, and should also have proper infrastructure including public and active transport links. Some wanted to see more building on brownfield sites. Comments specifically about housing were that people wanted to see more housing for families, for refugees, and more

affordable and improved housing in general. One person said that student accommodation seemed under-occupied, another said that it was important to make full use of historic architecture.

The **Home Builders Federation (HBF)** said that when determining the minimum number of homes needed to meet housing needs in Newcastle over a short to long term period, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing needs assessment, conducted using the standard method set out by central government in the PPG (Planning Practice Guidance). They also wanted to see the council commit to investigating where might be appropriate to plan for a higher housing need figure, for example where there are local growth strategies, infrastructure improvements, there is a need to consider unmet need from a neighbouring local authority, and consider where previous assessments of needs have been significantly higher.

The PfP **Igloo: Candle Flame Site** response sent in by DPP One Limited expressed the view that there should be more focus on providing residential properties and facilities in and near the city centre, and supported the repurposing of existing properties and use of brownfield sites for housing where possible.

The PfP **Igloo: Helix and Stephenson Works** response sent in by Avison Young described how development on the Helix site would provide a wider choice of residential properties near the city centre with a mix of one- to four- bedroom properties and apartments.

**McCarthy Stone** emphasised they saw a need to provide specialist retirement housing for older people to support their health and wellbeing, through providing homes which are easier and cheaper to heat, more accessible, and which contain adaptations such as wider internal doors, stairlifts, walk-in showers and similar features which make it easier for older people to continue living independently. They commented that alongside supporting physical health, this contributes to reducing anxiety by providing safety and security.

**Newcastle University** emphasised the importance of meeting the need for student accommodation, wanting to see an increase in the creation of purpose-built student accommodation to match the demand caused by a recent increase in student numbers, and manage the demand for HMOs in local residential areas.

**Persimmon Homes** asked for the Newcastle Plan to consider increasing opportunities for development in the suburban and outer west areas of the city, and felt that to meet future housing need, it would be necessary to consider releasing land from the green belt for housing developments.

**PfP Igloo** described how their recent housing developments in Ouseburn Valley had provided a wider choice of housing in the area, including one-bedroom flats and large houses. They wanted to see support for housing developments on brownfield land, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.

The PfP **Igloo: Helix and Stephenson Works** response sent in by Avison Young described their plans for the Helix site would provide a wider range of residential properties near the city centre (note that the Helix site was formerly known as Science Central).

**NGP Consortium** strongly supported this ambition and the goal of identifying suitable sites for affordable and sustainable housing. They consider that Newcastle Great Park was the first area to be considered for this.

**Newcastle Public Transport Users Group** want to see "high-density and mixed-use" residential developments around existing retail centres and new employment sites, to

encourage and support people to access them by public and active transport, not private car use.

**Space for Gosforth** said that denser low-car neighbourhoods could make it easier to provide better local services, and better active transport infrastructure can make it easier for children to travel independently, helping to make local communities attractive to families.

Like Newcastle University, **Unite** saw a need to ensure that Newcastle has sufficient housing to meet the future needs of everyone, and specifically the rising student population. They felt that more purpose-built student accommodation is needed.

**Woolsington Parish Council** made two recommendations; they only wanted to see further house building in their area if it complies with paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and stricter enforcement of rules around construction, such as disposal of waste, minimising light and noise pollution, and traffic management.

The **Woolsington Residents Association** submitted a petition, signed by 166 Woolsington residents and 11 non-residents as follows:

"Woolsington and the surrounding area has already been severely impacted by housing development with much more to follow.

This has resulted in significant losses of Green Belt, wildlife corridors, woodland, and hedgerows. It has also led to huge increases in road traffic, noise and light pollution and litter.

Woolsington Residents hope that the emerging local plan will protect our remaining green and blue spaces. Following the National Planning Policy [Framework] regulations for sustainable development, the prevention of urban sprawl and consequently maintaining the unique identity of Woolsington Village."

## Which locations should be a priority for new housing developments?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us which locations should be a priority for new housing developments in future, by sorting the following options into order of importance:

1. In and around the city centre on areas of land which are **not being used** or not used much, to provide opportunities for higher-density housing and a mix of different uses.

2. In areas which are well-served by **existing public transport routes** or which have potential for improved public transport in future

3. In or next to existing communities which have good access to facilities and services by **active travel methods**, such as walking or wheeling

4. In the city centre and local and district centres, to be **closer to jobs and facilities** such as shops and health services

5. **'Mixed-use' developments** – where new buildings contain a mix of different uses which work well together, for example having offices and shops on the ground floor and flats on the first floor

6. **Something else**

The most popular options, ranked as either most important or second most important by the largest percentages of people taking part, are:

1. In areas which are well-served by existing public transport routes – 73% in total

2. In or next to existing communities – 48%


122 people commented on where they thought new housing developments should be placed via Commonplace. The main themes in their comments were:

1. **Build on brownfield sites** – 49 people said this, as did people visiting a stall in the Grainger Market on 23 February 2024.

2. **Do not build on the green belt** – 21 people

3. **Re-purpose existing buildings** – 13 people

4. **Re-purpose abandoned sites and buildings** – 11 people

5. **Build in the city centre** – 9 people said this, and the PfP Igloo: Helix and Stephenson Works response sent in by Avison Young described their plans for doing so.

6. **High-density housing is needed** – 7 people

Comments included:

"We should be optimising central city areas that require development and using areas that have already been developed. We need to limit the use of the remaining green belt we have left."

"Continental cities have far more people living in the city centre. We should follow that model and confine all new build to the existing built-up area."

## Which locations should be a priority for new housing developments?
### (466 responses)

| Location | 1 - Most important | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 - least important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| In areas which are well-served by existing public transport routes | 45% | 28% | 18% | 8% | 2% |
| In or next to existing communities | 16% | 32% | 25% | 17% | 11% |
| In the city centre and centres | 16% | 16% | 21% | 24% | 23% |
| In and around the city centre | 15% | 15% | 19% | 30% | 21% |
| 'Mixed-use' developments | 8% | 9% | 17% | 21% | 44% |

Legend:
- ■ 1 - Most important
- ■ 2
- □ 3
- ■ 4
- ■ 5 - least important
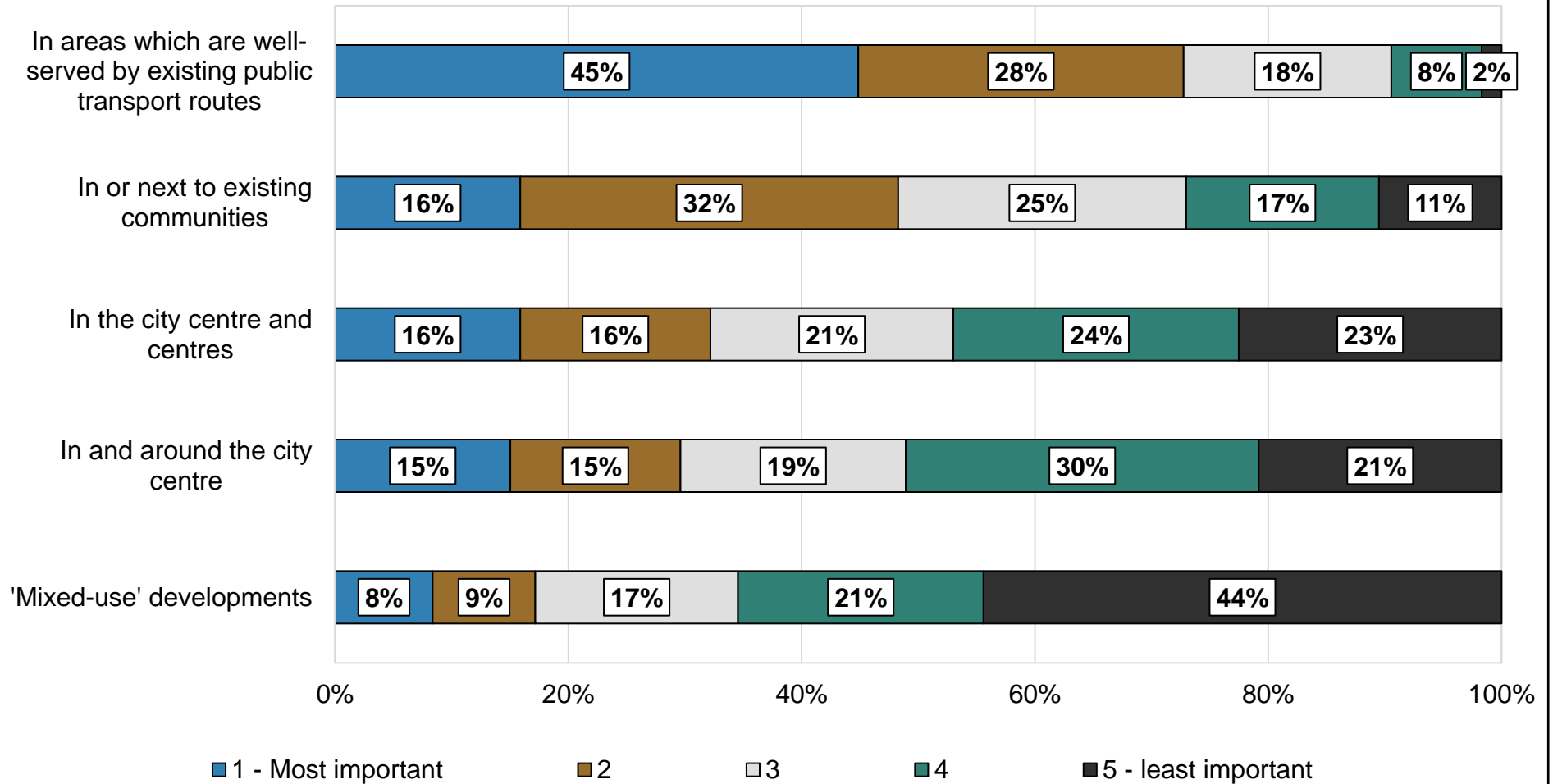
## Where do you think homes for older people should be built?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us which of these four options expressed their views on where homes for older people should be built:

1. In existing communities adapting or converting existing properties which are good access to facilities and public transport

2. As part of new communities in new locations, which are a mix of different types of homes

3. Purpose-built retirement development, with supporting facilities

4. Something else

As shown in the chart below, half of all respondents said that they thought homes for older people should be built in existing communities, adapting, or converting existing properties which have good access to facilities and public transport.

**Where do you think homes for older people should be built? (643 responses)**

| Category | Percentage |
| --- | --- |
| In existing communities using existing properties | 50% |
| Purpose-built retirement development | 30% |
| As part of new communities | 18% |
| Something else | 3% |
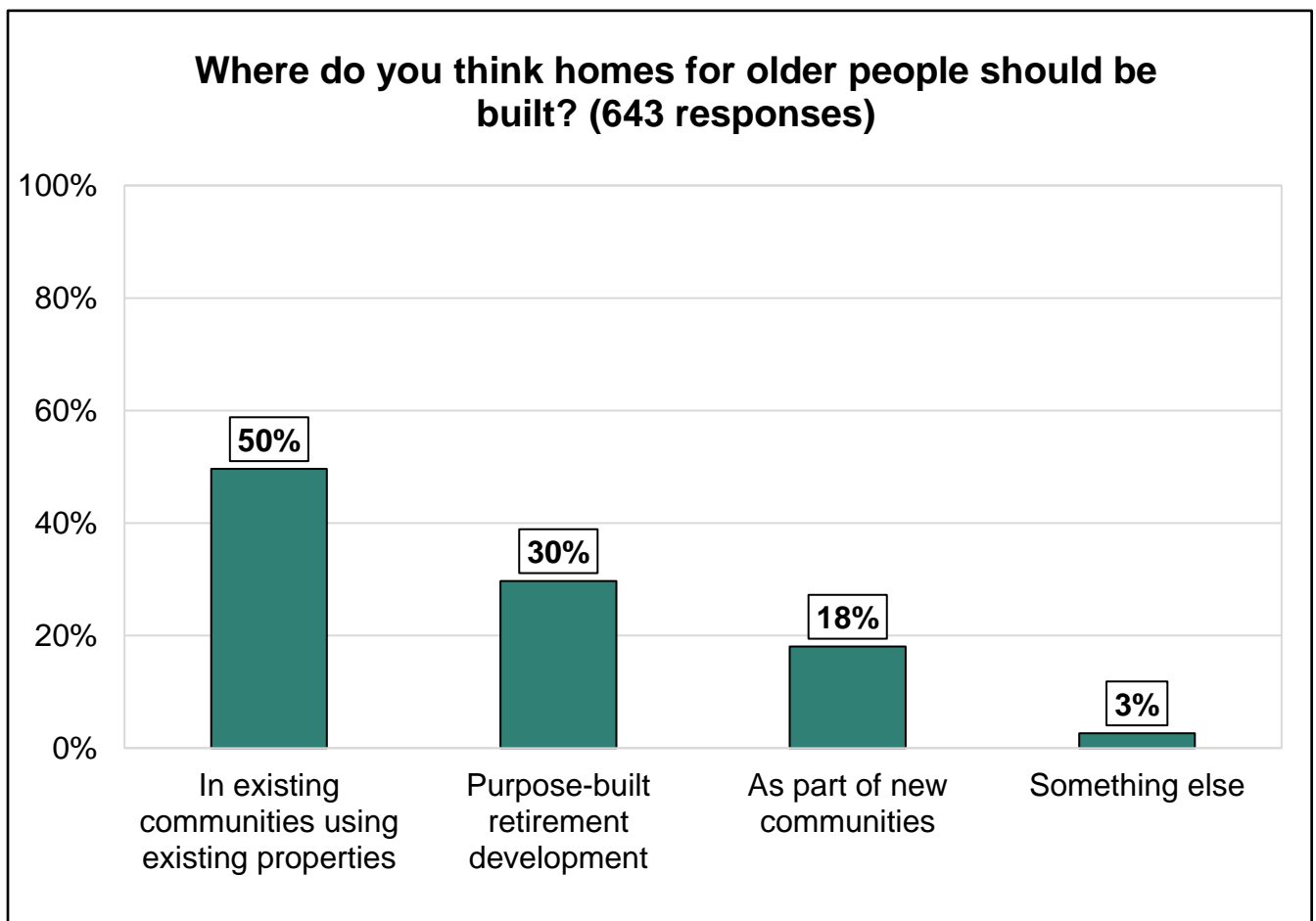
17 people on Commonplace made comments about this, with the main comments being:

1. Homes for older people should be located in communities, not isolated – 5 people

2. Many older people simply want peace and quiet – 2 people

3. Mixed age communities are best – 2 people

4. Older people's homes need good public transport links – 2 people

Comments included:

"Mixed-use housing and mixed communities are best to prevent separation of young people, old people, and families. Public transport is always key."

"Older people sometimes stay in houses larger than they want to maintain because there isn't suitable housing in the neighbourhood that they want to stay in."

We did not ask this specific question of people attending community events, or providing public planning responses, but we did receive some feedback about this topic from **McCarthy Stone**, who said that in their view, meeting the housing needs of older people requires identifying specific needs. This includes choosing sites close to key services, and committing to delivering specialist housing that can meet these needs through in-house provision of support and facilities, and / or being located near community facilities. They emphasised what they saw as the need to provide specialist retirement housing for older people to support their health and wellbeing, through providing homes which are easier and cheaper to heat, more accessible, contain adaptations such as wider internal doors, stairlifts, walk-in showers which make it easier for older people to continue living independently. They commented that alongside supporting physical health, this contributes to reducing anxiety by providing safety and security.
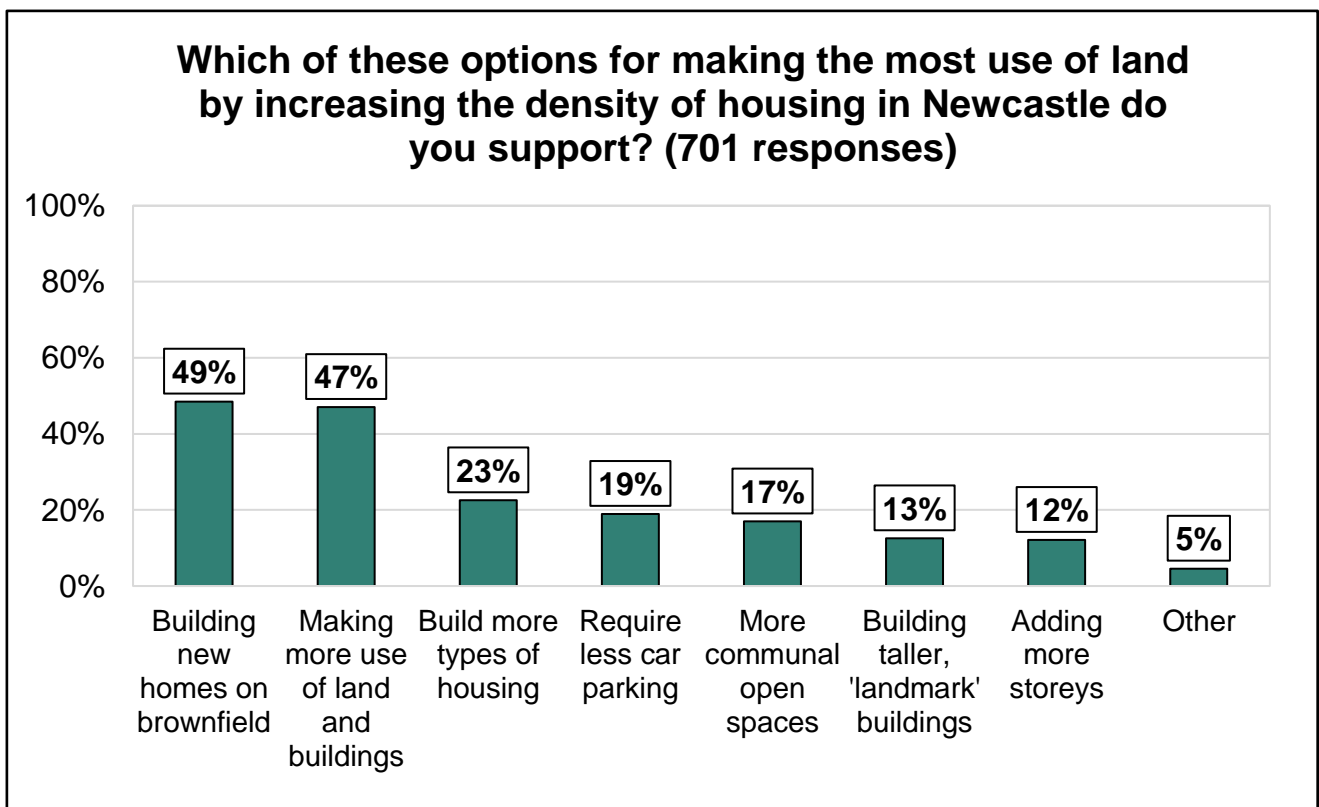
## Which of these options for making the most use of land by increasing the density of housing in Newcastle do you support?

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us which of these eight options for making the most use of land by increasing the density of housing in Newcastle they supported:

1. Adding more storeys to existing buildings

2. Build more types of housing that use less land such as maisonettes and flats

3. Building new homes on brownfield land (land that has been developed before)

4. Building taller, 'landmark' buildings in appropriate locations

5. Making more use of land and buildings that are not currently being used

6. Plan for development which includes more communal open spaces in new developments and reducing the size of private gardens

7. Requiring less car parking in appropriate locations

8. Something else

Respondents were not asked to rank the options in order of importance. 701 people answered this question. As shown in the chart below, the three most popular options were:

1. Building new homes on **brownfield land** – 49%

2. Making **more use** of land and buildings – 47%

3. Build **more types** of housing – 23%



Which of these options for making the most use of land by increasing the density of housing in Newcastle do you support? (701 responses)

33 people on Commonplace commented on this as follows:

1. Build more **taller** buildings – 2 people said this

2. Consider developing **sustainable green belt** sites – 2 people

3. **Do not build on the green belt** as transport connectivity is poor – 2 people

4. Only build new flats if they do not have **leasehold** – 2 people

5. **Reduce car use** where possible – 2 people

Comments included:

"We suggest that the council also look at greenfield sites and the green belt to ensure growth in the local economy and for sufficient sites of scale to be allocated to deliver the number of houses required."

"Utilising public transport infrastructure will ensure high density housing is sustainable, and the high number of journeys made from these developments are made by sustainable modes."

We did not ask this specific question of people attending community events, or providing public planning responses.

## What happens next for Ambition 7 – Housing?

**What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Ambition?**

**Supporting the provision of an improved offer of affordable housing:**
In 2023/24 approximately £60m was invested in council housing including for upgrades, repairs, new-build and acquisitions in order to increase the council's supply of affordable well managed homes. Significant investment has also been identified for 2024/25. This level of investment highlights the council's commitment to provide good quality housing in safe environments.

**Helping to deliver net zero carbon homes:**
Ensuring the highest-quality energy efficiency standards for new-build houses, as well as finding new ways to insulate existing properties and changing to low carbon heat sources will not only help people to save money but will help tackle the climate crisis. The council's Net Zero Action Plan applies programmes of activity to ensure we cover all bases for tackling domestic carbon emissions and the use of carbon heavy energy sources. The council is proactive in supporting residents across all tenures to access support to insulate their homes and transition across to low carbon heating and hot water systems.

The council have been successful in securing external funding towards the cost of installing retrofit measures and developed the provision of advice and guidance. Over the next year, we will continue to seek to secure further grant funding to support the installation of retrofit measures across homes in Newcastle.

**Helping to facilitate the delivery of specialist housing, such as student accommodation and suitable housing for older people:**
The provision of student housing is market led based on demand and market forces. The council regularly engages with the universities to understand current and future demand and any changes in provision that could have implications for housing and planning strategy. Housing for older people can include level access and specialist housing with support and is considered in as part of the council's housing needs assessment and requirements provided by Adult Social Care. The council will continue to assess the requirements for specialist accommodation including housing for older people.

**Helping to deliver specialist housing:**
The vision in Newcastle is one where 'People have access to a range of housing options and support to help them remain independent for as long as possible in a home of their choice'. We wish to see people enriched by their home environment which is supportive to their needs throughout their life. We will provide a broader choice of housing options, including housing-based models of care such as assisted living / extra care, and preventative and early intervention services supported by improved information and advice.

**Improving the quality of housing in the private rented sector:**
Licensing now covers approximately 17,000 properties, which is almost a third of the private rented sector in the city – providing additional support for both landlords and tenants, while helping to improve and maintain property and management standards. A new selective and additional licensing scheme will ensure that Newcastle has a strongly regulated private market. This will ensure tenants are able to access a range of privately rented properties with the assurance that the property will meet at least the minimum standard, and the landlord/agent has been assessed. It is also proposed to introduce a city-wide additional licensing designation scheme for smaller houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). The proposed schemes cover housing areas which will see the greatest benefit from the introduction of licensing.

**Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan**
There is a need to plan for a greater variety of new homes, including carbon neutral construction, affordable homes, and specialist dwellings to meet specific needs, such as older people. Whilst developers identified the need to build more homes to meet the growing population and by building in sufficient quantity to help homes remain affordable, wider community responses focused on the need for affordable, social, and council housing.

There is support for building more accommodation for the homeless, a greater mix of dwelling types to foster mixed communities including a distribution of student accommodation.  Additionally, it was set out that there is a need to continue to plan for greater controls of the rented sector.

Responses suggested new homes should be planned in areas with good access to public transport, making use of sufficient infrastructure and adapting/converting properties located in accessible locations for older people. In particular there was a measured support for planning for higher density buildings in certain locations; for

making better use of existing land and refurbishment of existing buildings. Some responses suggested developments could consider less car parking and more communal open spaces and developing homes that are resilient to the challenges of climate change.

# Ambition 8 – To deliver well-designed and safe places that communities can help to shape and be proud of

## What is special about the environment where you live, work, or visit in Newcastle?

We asked people to consider the map below, and answer the question: "What is special about the environment where you live, work, or visit in Newcastle?"
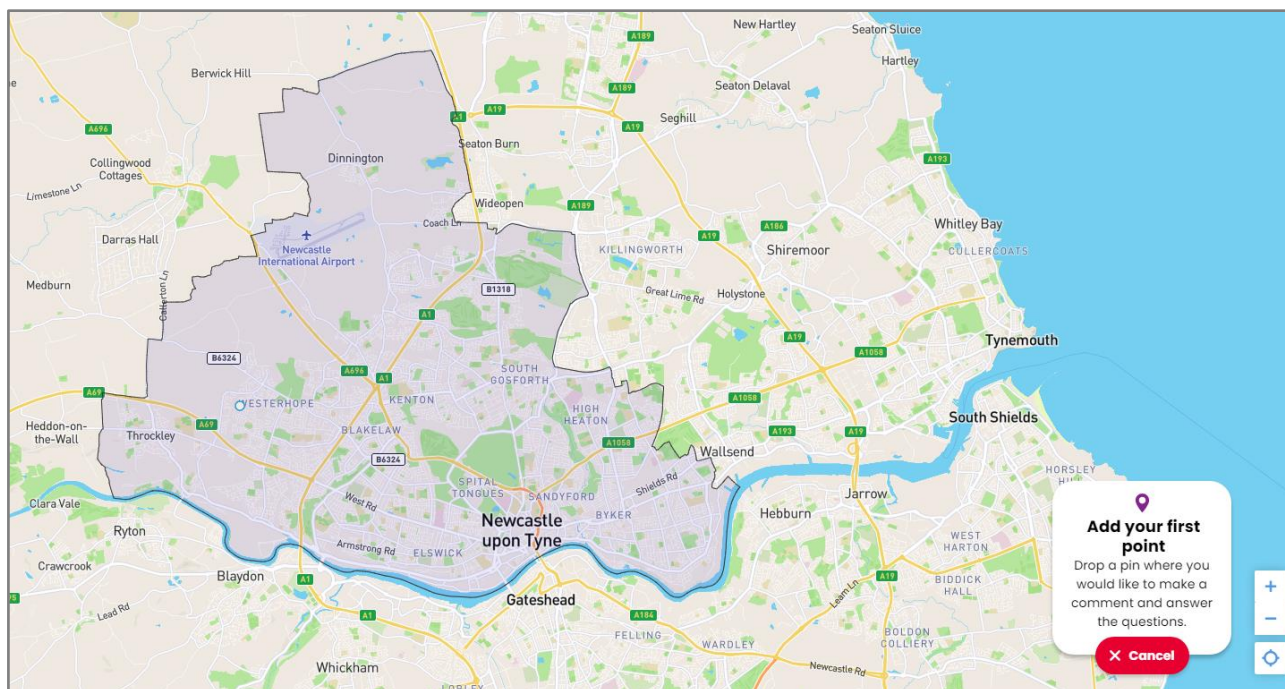


453 people on Commonplace commented on this, with the most popular themes being:

1. Nearby green and open spaces – 161 people said this
2. Good local parks – 63 people
3. Good local shops – 56 people
4. Local wildlife and biodiversity – 54 people
5. Jesmond Dene – 44 people
6. Good access to public transport – 41 people
7. Strong community spirit – 40 people
8. Good access to the city centre – 37 people
9. Access to Town Moor – 33 people
10. Good range of community facilities – 31 people
11. Area is safe – 28 people
12. Good transport connectivity – 28 people

Comments included:

"The majority of areas [in Newcastle] have good access to parks and green space, these areas need looking after and protecting as they are quite unique to modern cities."

"I live close to Jesmond Dene and think it's such a special local treasure. Three to five times a week I use the park to get my daily exercise in, and always feel really positive after this having taken in the beauty of the green space."

"Heaton Park Road has some fantastic small businesses on it."

The word cloud below visualises key words used to respond.

families
connectivity    walking    happy    atmosphere
active    see    spirit    choice
belt    green    development    easily
community    town
facilities    moor
city    cycle    nearby    trees    good
park    housing    dene    transport    access
biodiversity    safe    everything
parks    spaces    open
traffic    space    developments    shops    range
ouseburn    better    health    want    centre    local    neighbourhood
public    area    able    need    wildlife    unhappy
newcastle    walk    strong    jesmond
quality    feel
neighbourhoods

We also asked people: "Would you like to share a photo of what makes this area special?", and their responses can be seen in the photo gallery at the end of this report.

When asked to drop a pin on a map of Newcastle to illustrate which parts of the city are important to them, the responses from 177 respondents on Commonplace are shown in the map below:
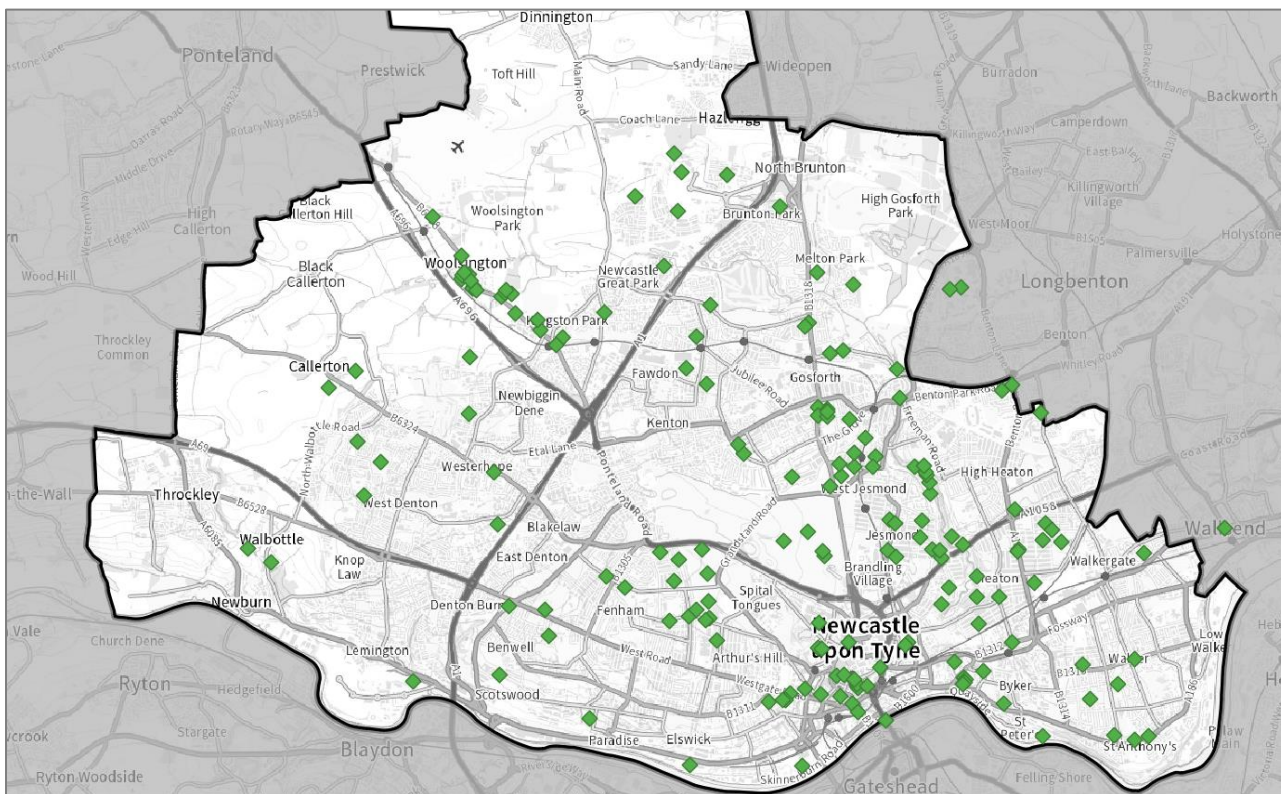


## Tell us what you think are the most important features in the area that you live

We asked people responding on Commonplace to tell us what they think are the most important features in the area that you live, by sorting the following options into order of importance:

1. Design of homes and buildings, such as the period they were built in and their size and style

2. Feeling safe in the local area

3. Heritage & historic buildings and environment

4. Level of activity, for example how busy a place is

5. Local parks, open spaces, and nature

6. Shopping centre, different types of shops, and a variety of local facilities

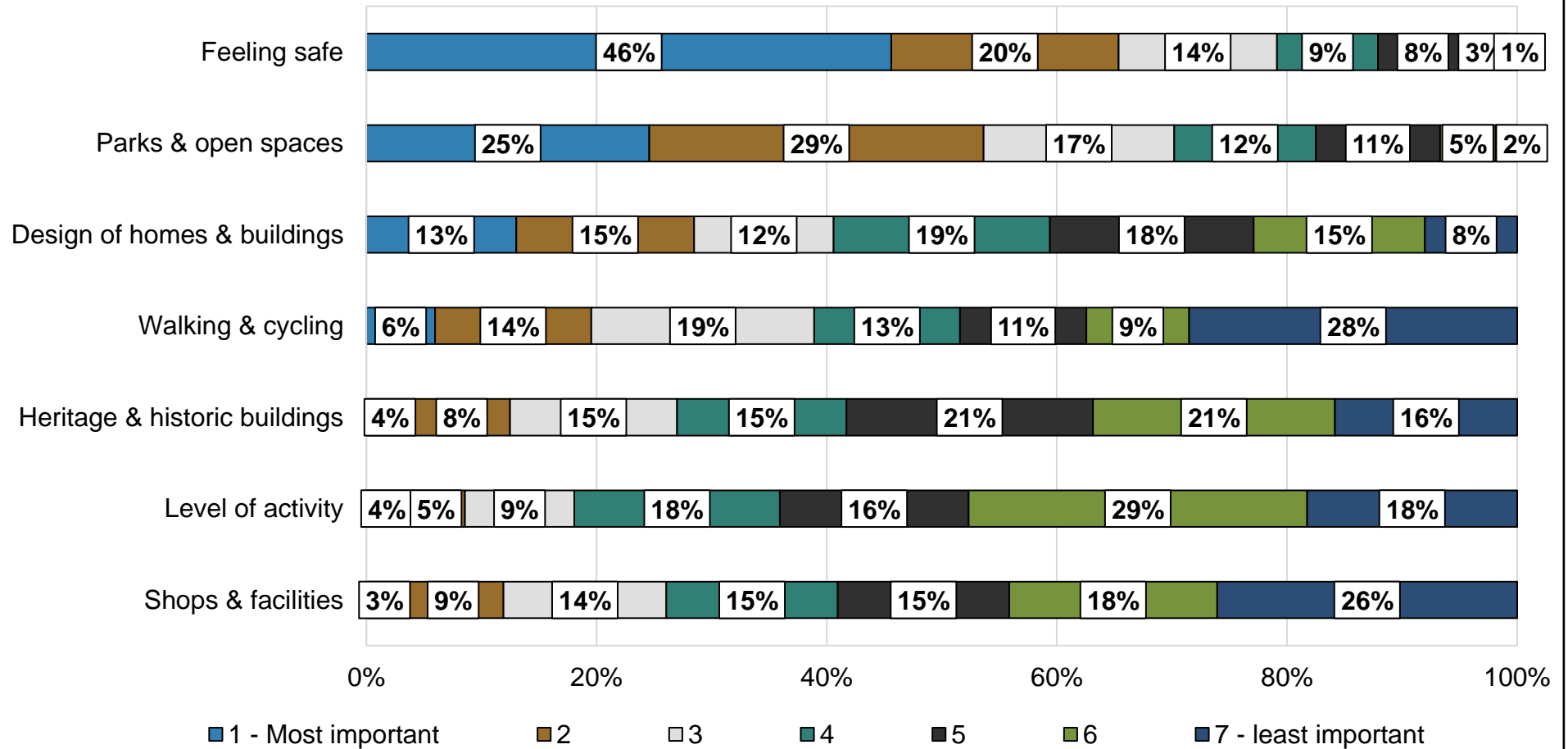7. Walking and cycling opportunities

8. Something else

537 people answered this question. As shown in the chart on the next page, the 'top three' options which had the highest percentages of people ranking them as either the most important, or second most important, option were:

1. **Feeling safe in the local area** – 66%; this was also mentioned in Planning Policy Responses

2. **Local parks, open spaces, and nature** – 54%; this was also mentioned in Planning Policy Responses

3. **Design of homes and buildings**, such as the period they were built in and their size and style – 28%

We also asked "Is there something else that is the most important feature in your area?" 122 people on Commonplace replied to this, and the main themes in their responses were:

1. Local **wildlife** – 16 people said this

2. Access to **green space** such as Jesmond Dene – 15 people

3. Concerned that **local green belt land** could be lost – 13 people

4. A sense of **community** – 11 people

5. **Friendly** people in the local area – 8 people

6. Good **public transport** – 8 people said this, as did the Elders Council

7. Local **woodlands** – 7 people

8. **Village feel** to the local community – 5 people

## Tell us what you think are the most important features in the area that you live (537 responses)



| Feature | 1 - Most important | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 - least important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feeling safe | 46% | 20% | 14% | 9% | 8% | 3% | 1% |
| Parks & open spaces | 25% | 29% | 17% | 12% | 11% | 5% | 2% |
| Design of homes & buildings | 13% | 15% | 12% | 19% | 18% | 15% | 8% |
| Walking & cycling | 6% | 14% | 19% | 13% | 11% | 9% | 28% |
| Heritage & historic buildings | 4% | 8% | 15% | 15% | 21% | 21% | 16% |
| Level of activity | 4% | 5% | 9% | 18% | 16% | 29% | 18% |
| Shops & facilities | 3% | 9% | 14% | 15% | 15% | 18% | 26% |

Feedback from **community groups and events** on how we could provide attractive and safe places in Newcastle to live, work and visit included the following.

**ESOL students** attending an event at Westgate College discussed what made areas feel unattractive or unsafe; some said that drug-taking and teenagers hanging around on the streets made them feel unsafe when outside in their local areas. They said that rubbish lying around in the streets and rats also contributed to people being unhappy with their local areas. They suggested better education about how to correctly dispose of waste, possibly restoring individual rather than communal bins, fining people for littering and fly-tipping, and community litter-picks as ways of tackling these issues. Finally, some were unhappy at the lack of play spaces for children, mentioning the removal of the multi-use games area (MUGA) at Britannia Place in Elswick and broken play equipment elsewhere.

People attending a drop-in event in **Fenham** emphasised the importance of good design in creating cohesive communities and improving the local area and public realm. They also thought that plastic grass should not be used.

People attending a drop-in event in **Gosforth** wanted to see outdoor seating and rest spaces in neighbourhoods, and more play spaces for children and young people, including suitable facilities for teenagers and cheap access to sports facilities. They wanted action to tackle pavement parking, and also more dropped kerbs to make it easier for disabled people to travel around. Some people wanted more facilities in the Great Park area.

People attending the stall in the **Grainger Market** on 20 February 2024 said that litter and lack of cleanliness in local communities make it feel as though these areas are not cared about, and that maintenance of public spaces needs to be improved.

People attending the stall in the **Grainger Market** on 23 February 2024 said that they were happy with existing development with new public buildings and more job opportunities.

People attending a drop-in event in **Heaton** thought that existing parking is not sustainable, that there needed to be a 'more holistic approach to traffic calming', and that overgrown hedges and bike theft are problems in the local area. They also thought that services to address homelessness and rough sleeping should be located in local neighbourhoods as well as the city centre.

People attending a drop-in event in **Jesmond Library** thought that there was a local issue with poor quality HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation) being granted licences and rented to students, particularly since (in their view), students are moving out of purpose-built student accommodation into local neighbourhoods and reducing the supply of houses for families. Another person wanted to see the university involved in creating charters for behaviour and getting students involved in cleaning up and maintaining the local environment. Finally, another comment was that officers and members are well trained on the local plan and can answer queries.

People attending a presentation about the local plan in **Ouseburn** said that litter is a big problem in areas such as theirs, which receive large numbers of day visitors, and needs to be addressed as existing infrastructure and volunteer work is not working. Some were concerned that parts of their local area did not always feel safe due to lack of lighting and undeveloped areas.

Five people attending a drop-in event at **Throckley Community Centre** said that there needed to be more rubbish bins, another four said that litter is a problem in Newcastle, and that it needed to be less expensive to use the household waste and recycling centres, and to have bulky waste collections. One person felt frightened when visiting Benwell due to how it looks, and four people said that there was a need to better maintain trees and

cemeteries. One person said that there was a need for more childcare and after-school clubs.

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** said that they felt racism was a problem in the local area and some people feel unsafe because of this. They wanted to see better education and training about diversity provided. Another problem was that people felt there are not enough local services and activities for young people and young adults.

Feedback received from the **Let's talk Newcastle topic wall** was that one person wanted more police on the streets to help people feel safe in local neighbourhoods.

Four young people from the **Youth Voice Locality groups** commented on this, all of whom spoke about feeling unsafe either in their local neighbourhood or in local parks.

27 **Youth Parliament** candidates mentioned this in their manifestos, mostly in the context of wanting more indoor and outdoor activities and facilities for young people. Several said that they felt younger children were well-catered for, but not older children or teenagers.


Feedback from **Planning Policy responses** included:

Feedback from 45 people responding to the survey run by student **Bea Chivers** included comments on the importance of people feeling safe walking around in the local area, that areas should be accessible to all, and that there needed to be more services for young people. They wanted to see partnership with private organisations, local authorities, and design consultants, and emphasised the importance of urban design in creating sustainable communities.

**Cities 4 People** commented on the need to co-ordinate planning between Newcastle and other neighbouring local authorities such as Gateshead.

**Commercial Estates Projects Ltd** also referred to the need for good design in creating safe public spaces, and for a Design Code which is aligned with the National Design Guide.

The **Elders Council** commented that safety is often a matter of perception, and that many older people feel unsafe when outside due to a lack of local police presence, a lack of staff in public transport stations, heavy traffic and people using bikes and scooters on pavements. They suggested studying areas people like to live and visit to identify what features are considered 'attractive'.

**Harworth Group** commented that they felt their plans for their site at north-west Throckley could support this ambition as they are committed to achieving a "well-designed and high-quality development". They expressed a commitment to community engagement throughout the process of site development.

**High Gosforth Park Ltd**. discussed options for releasing some green belt land to be allocated for future development of the racecourse site, and how they had aimed to provide a justification for this in their plans, including work to expand and enhance the SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) area within the site.

**Historic England** observed that Newcastle's rich historic environment is part of its local character, both within the city centre and in local communities, and contributes to local pride and happiness in living within Newcastle.

The **Home Builders Federation (HBF)** wanted to see the creation of a Design Code to encourage the creation of "high-quality, well-designed and sustainable buildings". This

should also include climate change targets and support the use of brownfield sites and higher-density developments.

**NGP Consortium** expressed support for this ambition and recommended that future design policy requirements be made available at an early stage to ensure that a consistent approach can be applied throughout all new developments. They suggested that this should be based upon the National Model Design Code's 10 characteristics of good design.

**PfP Igloo** suggested learning from recent developments, including the Lower Steenberg's Yard project which won the 2021 Future Cities Forum award for housing, including about the characteristics of communities which people feel strong attachments to.

The **PfP Igloo: Helix and Stephenson Works** response sent in by Avison Young describes how their plans for the Stephenson Works site intend to redevelop the historic buildings on the site to regenerate the area and encourage people to work there and visit.

**Persimmon Homes** wanted to see any future design code be aligned with the National Model Design Code, undergo appropriate consultation, and consider the local context and circumstances.

**Space for Gosforth** commented that road safety is a key factor in whether people feel safe in their local neighbourhood and make it easier to move around.

**Woolsington Parish Council** made three recommendations; with regard to their area. They wanted to see the 'Woolsington Envelope' (an area where "limited infill development" is allowed only under specific conditions) remain in place, the green belt protected as it currently is in Newcastle, as it is specifically in Newcastle, and that the contribution the green belt can make is recognised to achieving all nine ambitions in the Newcastle Plan.

## What happens next for Ambition 8 – Well-designed places?

**What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Ambition?**

**Increasing facilities for children and young people:**

Newcastle continues to invest in youth services via the Newcastle Youth Fund. We recognise that these services contribute to a more inclusive, healthier, and safer city. In 2024/25 following assessments by young people, we are investing in 23 grass roots projects in communities across the city. Wider voluntary and community sector partners also deliver important youth services and activities. Young people, including our Youth Council, tell us that fantastic things to do is important to them. Programmes like the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF), Evry and the work of sporting, cultural and business organisations also contribute to the breadth and diversity of exciting activities across the city. A sufficiency audit is being undertaken via Streetgames and our youth lead which will assist in understanding the offer in the city.

The council commissioned a Play Strategy for the city which set out recommendations for each play area. This led to a £2m investment program, consisting of 67 projects over two phases which was substantially completed in 2023. In addition to this, the council's operational team carry out weekly inspections of all our play areas, carrying out minor repairs and maintenance. Litter picking and isolated grass cutting and strimming keeps our play parks clean, safe and tidy. We have recently updated the Play Strategy and recommendations, which have now been adopted and will be taken forward subject to securing some additional investment. We are exploring the use of Section 106 funding and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to accelerate this investment, with a view to improving the highest priority sites, and enhancing the play provision over the next few years across the city. We will continue to carry out weekly inspections, site cleaning and provide a minor repairs and maintenance program to all the council's sites. We will also try to replace isolated play equipment as and when funding allows.

**Helping to tackle anti-social behaviour:**

The Youth Justice service works closely with Safe Newcastle and the Police Crime and Commissioners Violence Reduction Unit to address local challenges which includes antisocial behaviour amongst young people. The Focussed Deterrence model forms part of the new City Safe Hub. This approach recognises that a small number of young people are responsible for a disproportionately large amount of crime within the city and its focus is on deterring offending by implementing enforcement and enabling access to interventions and offering community and social services support. Through the Newcastle Youth Fund and the Better Lives Safer Communities programme we have also invested in targeted outreach and hub services in parts of the city designed to support young people at risk. Prevention is a key focus for the Youth Justice service for 2024/25, embedding preventative models of practice with young people and key partners.

**Helping people to feel safe in their local area:**
There are many issues that can affect how safe people feel in their local area, actual and perceived levels of crime and anti-social behaviour have a huge impact on how people feel. Perceptions can also be influenced by other factors that we cannot control such as what they see across media including TV and newspapers (local, national and global), hearsay and stories from friends and family, and personal vulnerabilities. The Community Safety Partnership, Safe Newcastle, work across partners from different agencies to collectively tackle crime and Anti Social Behaviour (ASB).  The Safe Newcastle priorities are reviewed every year to ensure we are working towards tackling the right things.

Over the past 2 years the council has invested over £2m into tackling ASB and crime in neighbourhoods. We developed a programme of activity, known as 'Better Lives, Safer Communities' (BLSC) which has a range of reactive and proactive initiatives which seek to deal with the current problems as well as looking at ways to have long-term change in communities. As part of BLSC we have developed a project known as EPiC (Empowering People in Communities).  EPiC aims are to understand the root cause of crime and ASB and support the community to come up with ways to tackle them. By doing this residents will become invested in and be proud of their local community resulting in more long-term solutions. EPiC has provided 2 local multi-agency hubs to be developed, these hubs ensure that there is an increase in sharing information and a joined up approach with clear tasking for each partner on how problems will be dealt with.  These hubs are in the City Centre, known as 'City Safe' and a new hub is under development in the West End of Newcastle, this is known as EPiC West. It is early days for both hubs but so far there has already been some substantial impact in those areas.

In addition to EPiC we work with our colleagues regionally and across neighbouring local authorities to share good practice and discuss joint working to reduce the likelihood of displacing problems. The Police and Crime Commissioners Office provide us with funding to run various projects such as City Centre Task Force, patrols on public transport, increased presence on problematic streets and additional presence of officers at key events and times such as during the Hoppings funfair and NUFC football matches.

**Improving road safety:**
As part of the Movement Strategy we are proposing to make our streets safer and prioritise the safety of our most vulnerable users. We propose to do this by:
- Introducing 20mph roads and enforcing compliance by all vehicles.
- Delivering collision reduction schemes at priority locations.
- Incorporating road danger reduction focus into all council street investment opportunities to ensure that all changes deliver safety and access improvement.
- Implementing training and education programmes to promote behaviour change to the whole community and focus on specific groups, including schools and under-represented groups.
- Working with schools to reduce motor traffic, improve air quality and increase active travel to school.

**Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan**

The responses to this ambition will help to shape future policies within both the local plan and emerging design code.

Key messages from the responses have highlighted the value of green and open spaces, such as parks. Protecting access to nature is important and is part of what makes the environment in Newcastle special.

Both the plan and design code provide the opportunity to develop policies that place importance on good, high-quality design across both buildings and public spaces. Well-designed places and spaces are not just dependent on how places look, but on a number of factors, including how accessible and easy to move around they are, whether they feel safe and inclusive, and their sustainability.

Policies will be developed on local character and what makes Newcastle distinctive alongside the characteristics of well-designed places identified in the Government's National Model Design Guide. The responses to this consultation are the first step to identifying the special qualities of Newcastle, and how local characteristics could be enhanced in new development.

# Ambition 9 – To protect and enhance a network of green and blue infrastructure, habitats and biodiversity which have a key role to play in responding to the climate, ecological, and health emergencies

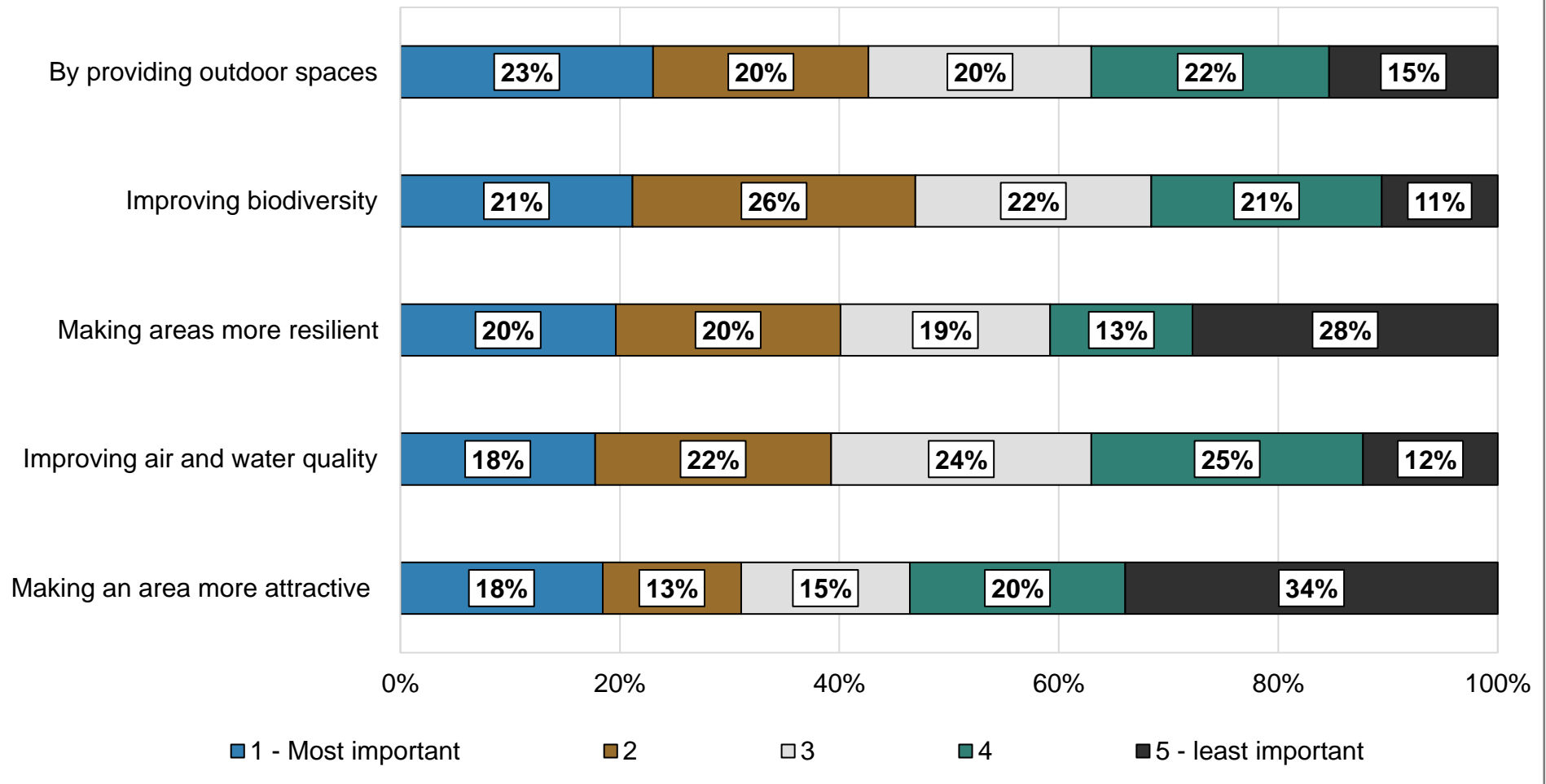## How can green and blue infrastructure be improved in Newcastle?

We asked people to answer the question: "How can green (such as parks and woodlands) and blue (such as waterways, lakes, and ponds) infrastructure be improved in Newcastle?" by putting the following options in order of importance:

1. By providing outdoor spaces for meeting and socialising

2. Improving air and water quality

3. Improving biodiversity – the number of different species of plants and animals in an area

4. Making an area more attractive

5. Making areas more resilient and able to survive negative impacts of climate change, for example, by planting more trees

586 people answered this question. As shown in the chart on the next page, the top two options which had the highest percentages of people ranking them as either the most important, or second most important option were:

1. **Improving biodiversity** - the number of different species of plants and animals in an area – 47%

2. **By providing outdoor spaces** for meeting and socialising – 43%

**How can green and blue infrastructure be improved in Newcastle?**
**(586 responses)**

| | 1 - Most important | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 - least important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| By providing outdoor spaces | 23% | 20% | 20% | 22% | 15% |
| Improving biodiversity | 21% | 26% | 22% | 21% | 11% |
| Making areas more resilient | 20% | 20% | 19% | 13% | 28% |
| Improving air and water quality | 18% | 22% | 24% | 25% | 12% |
| Making an area more attractive | 18% | 13% | 15% | 20% | 34% |

# Is there something else that can improve green and blue infrastructure?

We asked people to answer the question: "Is there something else that can improve green and blue infrastructure?". The most common themes in their comments were:

1. Do not **build on the green belt** – 20 people said this

2. Better **maintenance of green spaces** is needed – 18 people

3. Need **tree planting** programme – 13 people said this, as did the Elders Council

4. **More green spaces** are needed – 9 people

5. Do **community engagement work** around protecting green spaces – 8 people

6. Improve local **water quality** – 8 people

7. Need **wildlife corridors** – 8 people said this, as did the Elders Council.

8. Improve **Jesmond Dene** – 7 people

9. Tackle **littering** and **fly-tipping** – 7 people

Comments included:

"Not allowing housing developments to be built on the greenbelt. We have enough space in Newcastle already and plenty of brown belt land that can be redeveloped and serve its existing community better."

"Make green spaces safer – less crime, fear of crime, especially anti-social behaviour, vandalism and graffiti, and make sure they are well-maintained."

"Encourage planting of all kinds – for example, more trees (any felled tree should be replaced) and by discouraging gardens being concreted over."

Feedback from **community groups and events** included the following:

**ESOL students** attending an event at Westgate College said that some parks are in poor repair and need to be cleaner, with places for children to play safely.

People attending a drop-in event in **Fenham** emphasised the importance of educating people how to contribute to mitigating the impact of climate change.

People attending a drop-in event in **Gosforth** wanted to see improved **biodiversity**, more wild meadow areas, and an end to routine grass-cutting on verges and green spaces such as the Town Moor. Another concern mentioned was that increased conversion of domestic gardens to driveways is diminishing Newcastle's green infrastructure.

People attending the stall in the **Grainger Market** on 23 February 2024 said they wanted more areas for plants and wildflowers to grow, to support biodiversity and help tackle climate change. They asked if waste areas could be used for this, and suggested looking at how this has been achieved in Gateshead.

People at a drop-in session in **Great Park** said that the green belt needed to be protected, as did wildlife, and that sewerage systems and waterways needed better maintenance.

People attending a drop-in event in **Heaton** commented on a general need to protect and improve the natural environment.

Early feedback from the **Newcastle Disability Forum** were that there is a need for more biodiversity in general. They were happy with ponds and woodlands being created, with plans to plant 100 trees on the Town Moor and suggested that new developments should include parks that could be maintained by residents.

Feedback from a meeting of the **Newcastle Disability Forum** was that they were concerned about pollution in the Ouseburn.

People attending a presentation about the local plan in **Ouseburn** wanted to see improving biodiversity become a priority, and they wanted to see any biodiversity net gains happening within Newcastle, not moving to other areas.

Four people attending a drop-in event at **Throckley Community Centre** said that they wanted to see no building on the green belt; another three felt that the outer west is "forgotten land".

People attending a drop-in event at the **West End Library and Customer Service Centre** in **West Denton** said that they thought more trees were needed to support local wildlife.

Feedback received from the **Let's talk Newcastle topic wall** was that one person was concerned that too much house building in Gosforth would lead to there being no green space in the local area.

Three people commented via **letter**. One said that they wanted to see trees and hedgerows replaced, and rubble removed form hedgerows following the completion of building works. Two people wanted to see all green spaces, wildflowers and pollinators, and wildlife corridors protected. One person wanted more tree planting; another wanted the council to employ more staff to maintain green spaces.

Seven **Youth Parliament** candidates mentioned this in their manifestos, mentioning topics including planting more trees, tackling plastic pollution, improving parks and open spaces including reducing litter, and introducing more green spaces.

Feedback from **Planning Policy Responses** included:

45 people responded to the survey run by student **Bea Chivers** comments were on the need to protect green spaces and introduce new ones, in order to preserve local biodiversity, and to make these spaces attractive and accessible.

**Cities 4 People** proposed the creation of an 'eco-capital' in the North East, a new city near the Western Bypass to improve transport connectivity, better quality buildings, and options for being self-sufficient in food and energy.

**Commercial Estates Projects Ltd** described how their plans for the housing allocation at Middle Callerton and Upper Callerton could fit with these goals, and also with biodiversity and blue-green infrastructure goals. There should be protection of the existing network of green and blue infrastructure, and selecting the best possible sites for housing and employment in terms of which sites can achieve the greatest biodiversity net gain.

The **Elders Council** expressed concern at the biodiversity crisis, especially as many of their members enjoy being outside in green spaces and activities such as walking and birdwatching. They wondered if biodiversity could be improved on the Town Moor, and wanted to see 'green corridors' protected. Another concern was to avoid development which increases the risk of flooding, and asking whether goals such as preserving green space and using parks to generate income (for example through festivals) were incompatible.

**Harworth Group** commented that they felt their plans for their site at north-west Throckley could support this ambition as they intended to incorporate green infrastructure into development of the site and achieve 10% biodiversity net gain.

**Historic England** said that they wanted to see the Newcastle Plan include strategic policies to "conserve and enhance" the area's historic environment, including its links to protecting wildlife and biodiversity.

**PfP Igloo** observed that new developments can offer improvements including biodiversity net gains, and also new green infrastructure.

The **PfP Igloo: Candle Flame Site** response sent in by DPP One Limited commented that use of brownfield sites and repurposing existing properties could avoid or reduce the need to release green belt land for housing or employment sites.

**Natural England** noted that the following plans should be considered where applicable: "green infrastructure strategies, biodiversity plans, Rights of Way Improvement Plans, shoreline management plans, river basin management plans, AONB and National Park management plans, and relevant landscape plans and strategies". They included other recommendations relating to ensuring that the Newcastle Plan would protect biodiversity and wildlife.

The response from **Northumbria Water** commented that they generally supported the nine ambitions, and that they wanted to be involved in further discussions. They supported planning policies designed to minimise flood risk based on "preference of hierarchy", in other words determining the order of priority of protection of different types of water supply such as residential, industrial, agricultural, and so forth. They also wanted to see the incorporation of design principles that support efficient water use.

**Persimmon Homes** wanted to see planning policy based on national guidance (a view similar to those of Commercial Estates Projects Ltd., HBF and NGP Consortium), in this case the Environment Act provision for 10% net gain in biodiversity and that requirements should not go beyond this, as "delivery of biodiversity net gain is already proving a challenge in land terms for many schemes". They stated that in their view flood risk policy should be reviewed on a "site-by-site" basis. They felt that Local Nature Recovery Strategies could be valuable but did not want to see these too heavily relied-upon.

**Space for Gosforth** commented that transport contributes to air and noise pollution, including carbon emissions and microplastics from tyres. They also observed that roadkill damages biodiversity.

**Woolsington Parish Council** expressed their willingness to work in partnership with Newcastle City Council to protect and maintain local green spaces, including trees, hedgerows, wildflowers, waterways and ponds, and wildlife corridors.

The **Woolsington Residents Association** submitted a petition, signed by 166 Woolsington residents and 11 non-residents, as follows:

"Woolsington and the surrounding area has already been severely impacted by housing development with much more to follow.

This has resulted in significant losses of Green Belt, wildlife corridors, woodland and hedgerows. It has also led to huge increases in road traffic, noise and light pollution and litter.

Woolsington Residents hope that the emerging local plan will protect our remaining green and blue spaces. Following the National Planning Policy [Framework] regulations for sustainable development, the prevention of urban sprawl and consequently maintaining the unique identity of Woolsington Village."

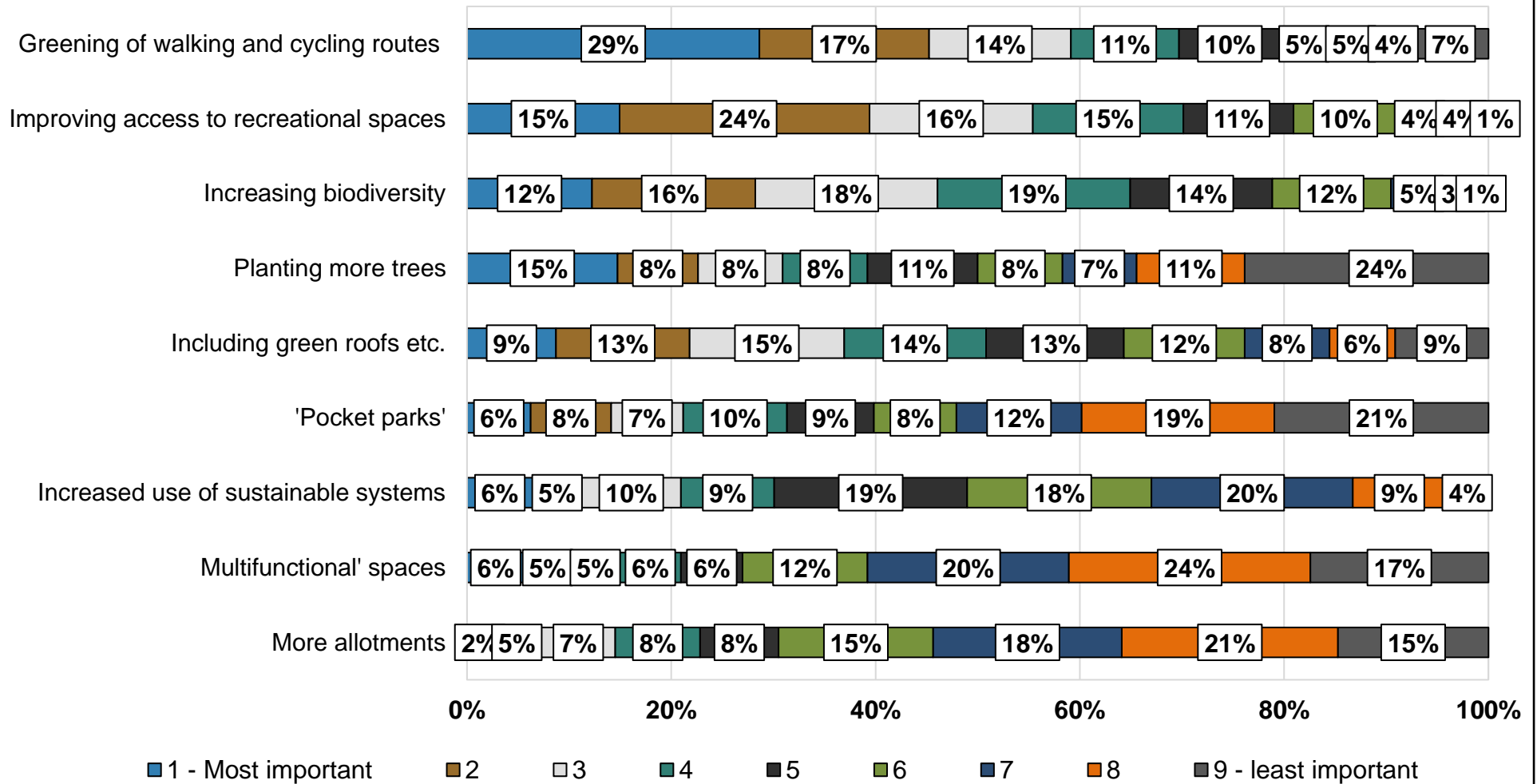## What would you like to see more of in Newcastle?

We asked people to answer the question: "What would you like to see more of in Newcastle?" by putting the following options in order of importance:

1. Greening of recreational walking and cycling routes
2. Improving access to recreational green and blue spaces, including waterways
3. Including green roofs, living walls and raingardens in new buildings
4. Increasing biodiversity in local neighbourhoods, for example more wildlife-friendly planting
5. Increased use of sustainable systems in developments – for example, including more planted sustainable drainage areas
6. More allotments and community food-growing sites in the community
7. Recreational and play spaces to be 'multi-functional', open to lots of different areas
8. 'Pocket parks' (very small parks) within the city centre and district & local centres
9. Planting more trees

**482** people answered this question. As shown in the chart on the next page, the 'top three' options which had the highest percentages of people ranking them as either the most important, or second most important, option were:

1. **Greening** of walking and cycling routes – 46%
2. **Improving access** to recreational spaces – 39%
3. **Improving biodiversity** – 28% of respondents said this was a top priority, and people attending a drop-in event in Gosforth also said this was important.

**What would you like to see more of in Newcastle?**
**(482 responses)**

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Greening of walking and cycling routes | 29% | 17% | 14% | 11% | 10% | 5% | 5% | 4% | 7% |
| Improving access to recreational spaces | 15% | 24% | 16% | 15% | 11% | 10% | 4% | 4% | 1% |
| Increasing biodiversity | 12% | 16% | 18% | 19% | 14% | 12% | 5% | 3% | 1% |
| Planting more trees | 15% | 8% | 8% | 8% | 11% | 8% | 7% | 11% | 24% |
| Including green roofs etc. | 9% | 13% | 15% | 14% | 13% | 12% | 8% | 6% | 9% |
| 'Pocket parks' | 6% | 8% | 7% | 10% | 9% | 8% | 12% | 19% | 21% |
| Increased use of sustainable systems | 6% | 5% | 10% | 9% | 19% | 18% | 20% | 9% | 4% |
| Multifunctional' spaces | 6% | 5% | 5% | 6% | 6% | 12% | 20% | 24% | 17% |
| More allotments | 2% | 5% | 7% | 8% | 8% | 15% | 18% | 21% | 15% |

Legend: ■1 - Most important ■2 □3 ■4 ■5 ■6 ■7 ■8 ■9 - least important

## Is there something else you would like to see more of?

Linked to the question above, we asked: "Is there something you would like to see more of?" 95 people answered this question, and the most common themes in their comments were:

1. **Maintain** existing green space – 7 people mentioned this

2. **More green spaces** are needed – 4 people

3. **Play equipment** is needed to encourage children to use green spaces – 4 people

4. **Support local groups** to maintain green spaces – 4 people

5. **Wildlife corridors** are needed – 4 people

6. **Ban use of weedkillers** including glyphosate – 3 people

7. Clean up **roadside litter** – 3 people

8. Do **not build on green belt** – 3 people

9. Introduce green space on the old **Spiller's Wharf** site – 3 people

10. Plant more **trees** – 3 people

Comments included:

"We would love the Malmo Quay and Spiller's Wharf area in Ouseburn to be turned into a green space or park."

"More attention to community involvement to give people back a sense of pride, the 'I did that' feeling is a pretty good one."

"I would like to see better maintenance of green spaces as they can quickly become weed beds and overgrown, sites for crime and litter, etc. If left untended, they very rapidly decay and become no-go areas."

## Where would you like to see new green and blue infrastructure?

We asked people to answer the question: "Where would you like to see new green and blue infrastructure?" by putting the following options in order of importance:

1. City centre

2. Existing open spaces and parks

3. High streets (shopping centres)

4. Near existing waterways such as riversides

5. Residential areas

401 people answered this question. As shown in the chart on the next page, the 'top two' options which had the highest percentages of people ranking them as either the most important, or second most important, option were:

1. In the city centre – 52%

2. In existing open spaces and parks – 49%

We did not ask this question of people attending community events or providing public planning responses.

## Is there somewhere else you would like to see new blue and green infrastructure?

We asked people to answer the question: "Is there somewhere else you would like to see new blue and green infrastructure?". 68 people answered this question, and the main themes in their comments were:
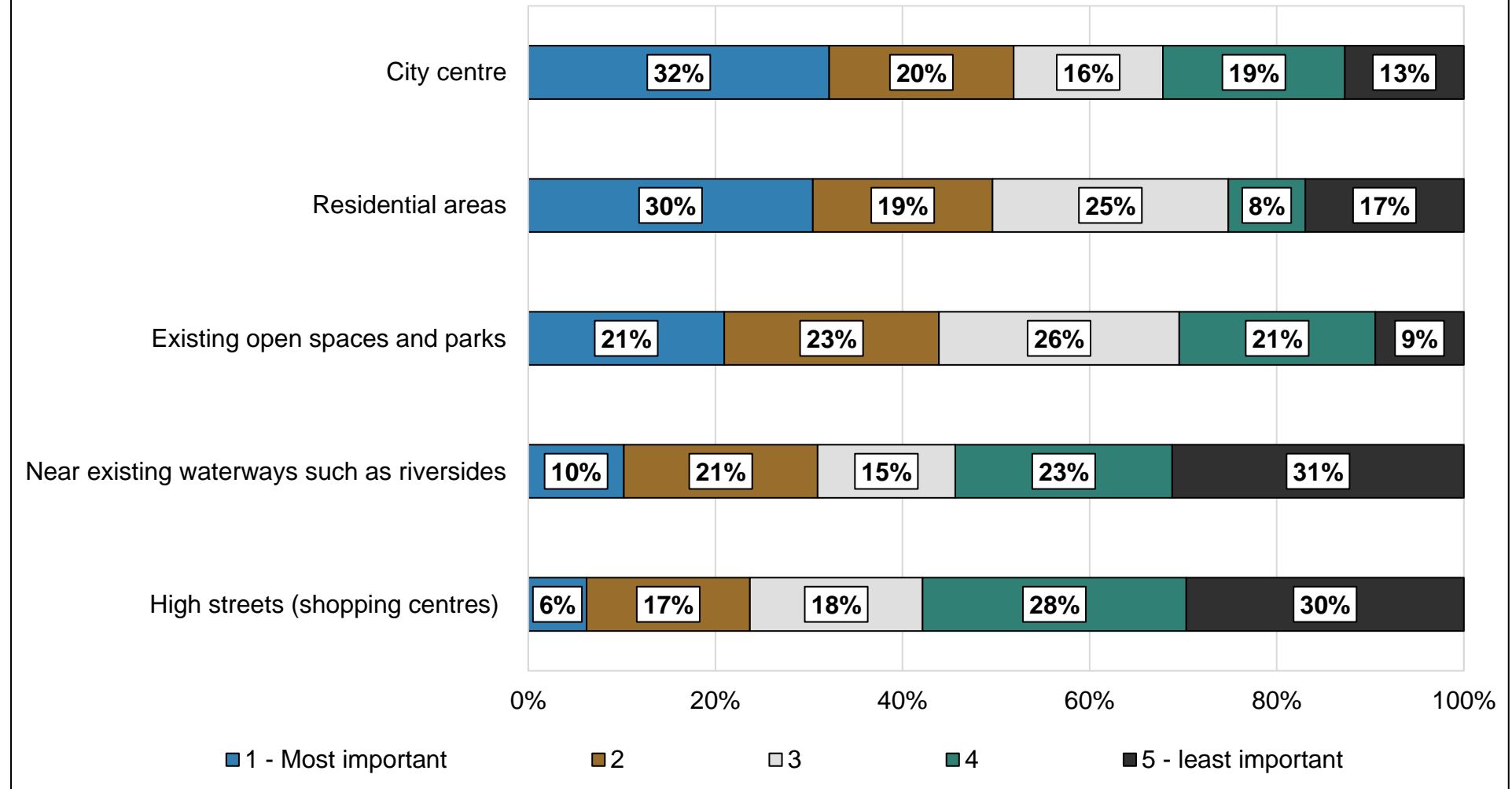
1. **Existing parks** need to be improved – 5 people said this

2. Need these spaces **everywhere** – 5 people

3. More green space along the **riverside** – 4 people

4. **New developments** need green and blue infrastructure – 4

5. **Existing** green and blue spaces should be enhanced – 3 people

6. **Highways**, roads and pavements need green and blue infrastructure – 3 people

7. I **do not know** what Blue and Green infrastructure are – 3 people

8. Malmo Quay and **Spiller's Wharf** should become a green space – 3 people

9. More **trees** are needed – 3 people

10. **Reallocate space from cars** to green spaces – 3 people

Comments included:

"Existing spaces and parks should not be changed because wildlife is stressed enough in existing areas, adding new areas is best."

"All of these are so important."

**Where would you like to see new green and blue infrastructure?**
**(401 responses)**

| | 1 - Most important | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 - least important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City centre | 32% | 20% | 16% | 19% | 13% |
| Residential areas | 30% | 19% | 25% | 8% | 17% |
| Existing open spaces and parks | 21% | 23% | 26% | 21% | 9% |
| Near existing waterways such as riversides | 10% | 21% | 15% | 23% | 31% |
| High streets (shopping centres) | 6% | 17% | 18% | 28% | 30% |

■ 1 - Most important   ■ 2   □ 3   ■ 4   ■ 5 - least important

## What happens next for Ambition 9 – Blue-green infrastructure?

**What is the Council doing now and what is planned to support this Ambition?**

**Greening of walking and cycling routes:**
The Blue Green Newcastle project is a long-term plan to introduce blue green infrastructure into the city. The project involves working with internal and external stakeholders to identify locations for blue green infrastructure to deliver a more climate resilient city. It considers environmental, amenity and movement to help protect the city from surface water flooding. Project features include raingardens, swales, bioretention areas, or multi-use sacrificial storage areas that only operate for flood prevention purposes during very intense storms, better protecting buildings and infrastructure from surface water flooding.

**Climate adaptation:**
A Pilot project on the Town Moor and Exhibition Park is being developed. The aim of this project is to address flood risk by creating storage on the Town Moor. A wetland habitat would also be created in Exhibition Park.

The integration of the Blue Green Newcastle project with active travel is seen as a fantastic opportunity and an essential part of the project.

**Key messages to be taken forward in the Local Plan**
The responses to this ambition will help to shape the green and blue infrastructure policies which are a key component to achieving a sustainable city.

Environmental conditions linked to climate change including areas of poor air quality, urban heat island and flooding impacting on areas of the city are likely to become intensified as the impact of climate change continues. Newcastle already has some of the most deprived areas in England and large health inequalities within the city. These environmental issues linked to climate change can further impact health and wellbeing.

Key messages from the responses include improving biodiversity and providing outdoor spaces, not building on the green belt, protecting wildlife corridors and trees. The importance of incorporating green spaces in new development was highlighted along with greening of walking and cycling routes and improving access to recreational spaces. The city centre and existing open spaces were highlighted as the top options for providing new green and blue infrastructure.

These responses show that there are many policy interventions needed across the different topic areas within the local plan. The plan will need to address flood risk, water management, and improve water quality. There is a potential to improve green infrastructure in new development, connectivity, quality, and greenness of active travel routes including public rights of way and the cycle network enhancing connectivity between open spaces and the urban and rural parts of the city.

New policies in the local plan will be developed based on evidence including on flood risk and biodiversity.
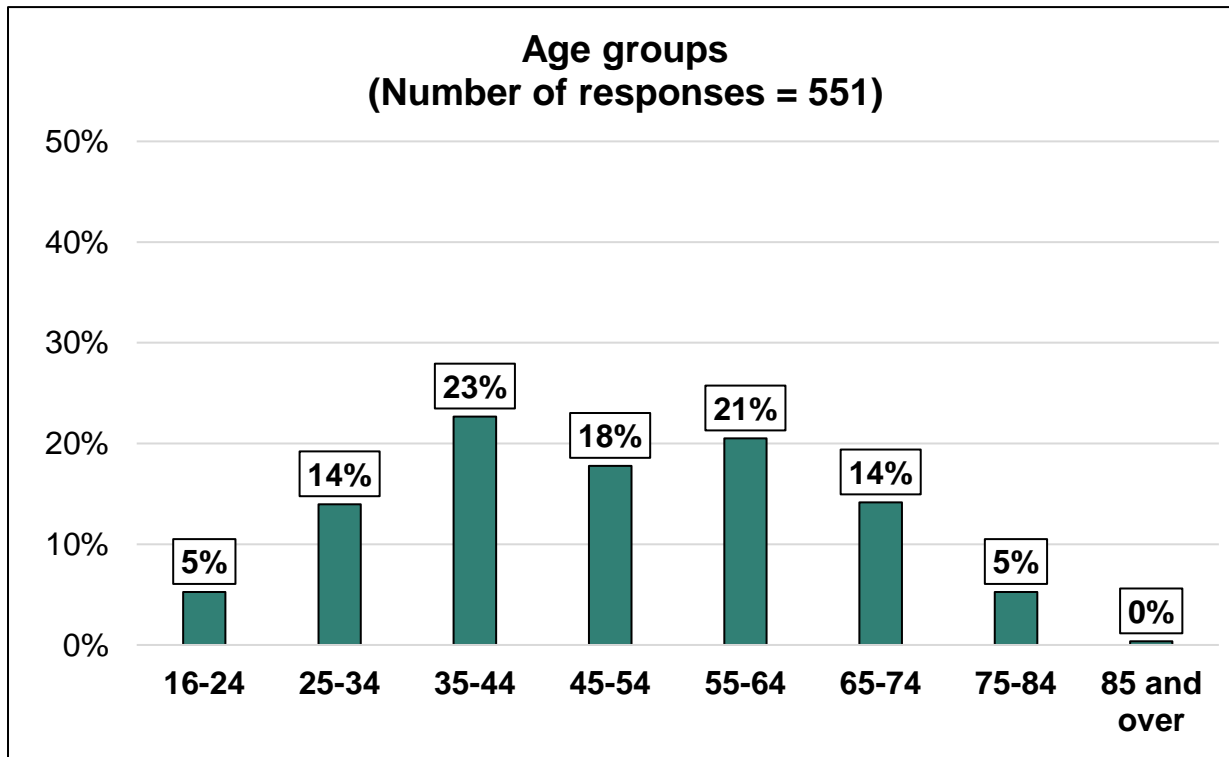
112

# Who took part

We gathered information on the demographics of who took part via Commonplace as follows:

- Age
- Sex
- Gender
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Employment
- How they usually travel in or around the area
- Location
- Connection to the area

We do not have this information for those who took part via other methods such as meetings and drop-in sessions.
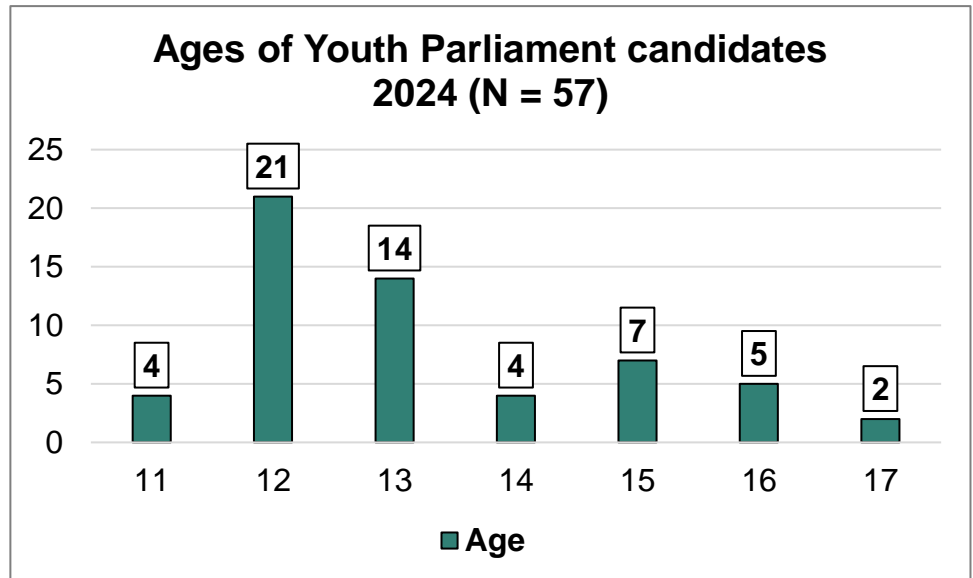
## Age

The biggest single percentage (23%) of respondents on Commonplace were aged 35-44 (125 people out of 551). 139 people chose not to answer the question.
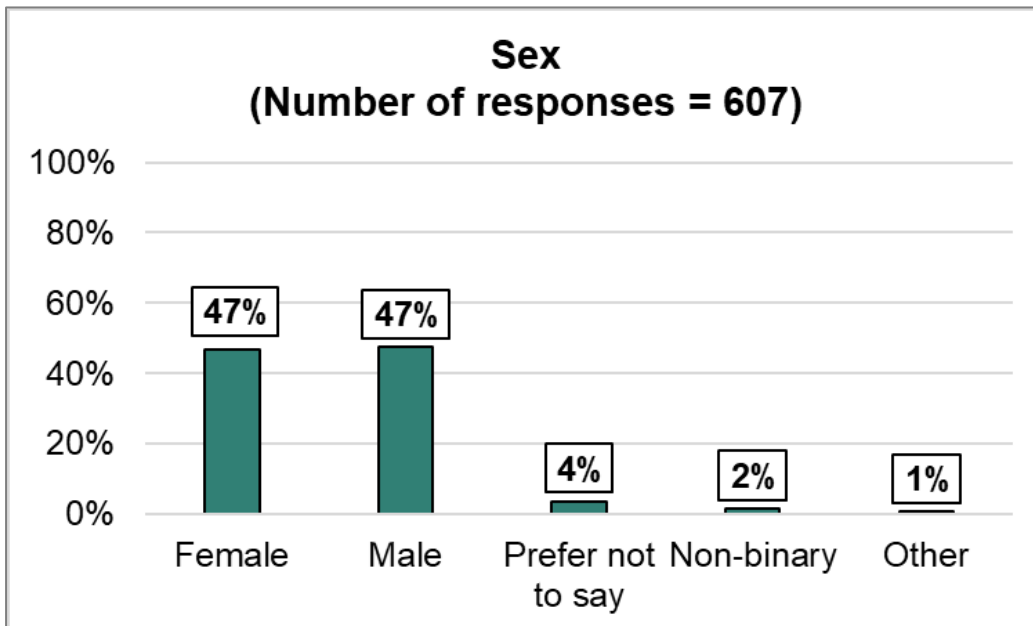
**Age groups
(Number of responses = 551)**

| Age group | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|
| 16-24 | 5% |
| 25-34 | 14% |
| 35-44 | 23% |
| 45-54 | 18% |
| 55-64 | 21% |
| 65-74 | 14% |
| 75-84 | 5% |
| 85 and over | 0% |

We also received a response from the Elders Council of Newcastle, the voluntary organisation run by and for older people in Newcastle working to "make Newcastle a great place to grow old". All three respondents on the Let's talk Newcastle topic wall were aged

over 60. The largest single number of 39 Youth Parliament candidates were female, 11 were male, and there are 3 for whom we do not have this information; we also do not have this information for people who took part via social media, letter, email or planning policy responses, or at community events.

**Ages of Youth Parliament candidates 2024 (N = 57)**

| Age | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Count | 4 | 21 | 14 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 2 |

## Sex

Of those who provided information about their sex, there were roughly equal proportions of male and female respondents; 47% each, with 2% replying 'non-binary', 1% replying 'other', and 4% replying 'prefer not to say'. Others simply did not answer the question.

**Sex (Number of responses = 607)**

| | Female | Male | Prefer not to say | Non-binary | Other |
|---|--------|------|-------------------|------------|-------|
| % | 47% | 47% | 4% | 2% | 1% |

The biggest single percentage (49%) of respondents on Commonplace were male (257 people out of 551). 174 people chose not to answer the question All three respondents on Let's talk Newcastle Online were male; 39 Youth Parliament candidates were female, 11 were male, and there are 3 for whom we do not have this information; we also do not have this information for people who took part via social media, letter, email or planning policy responses, or at community events.
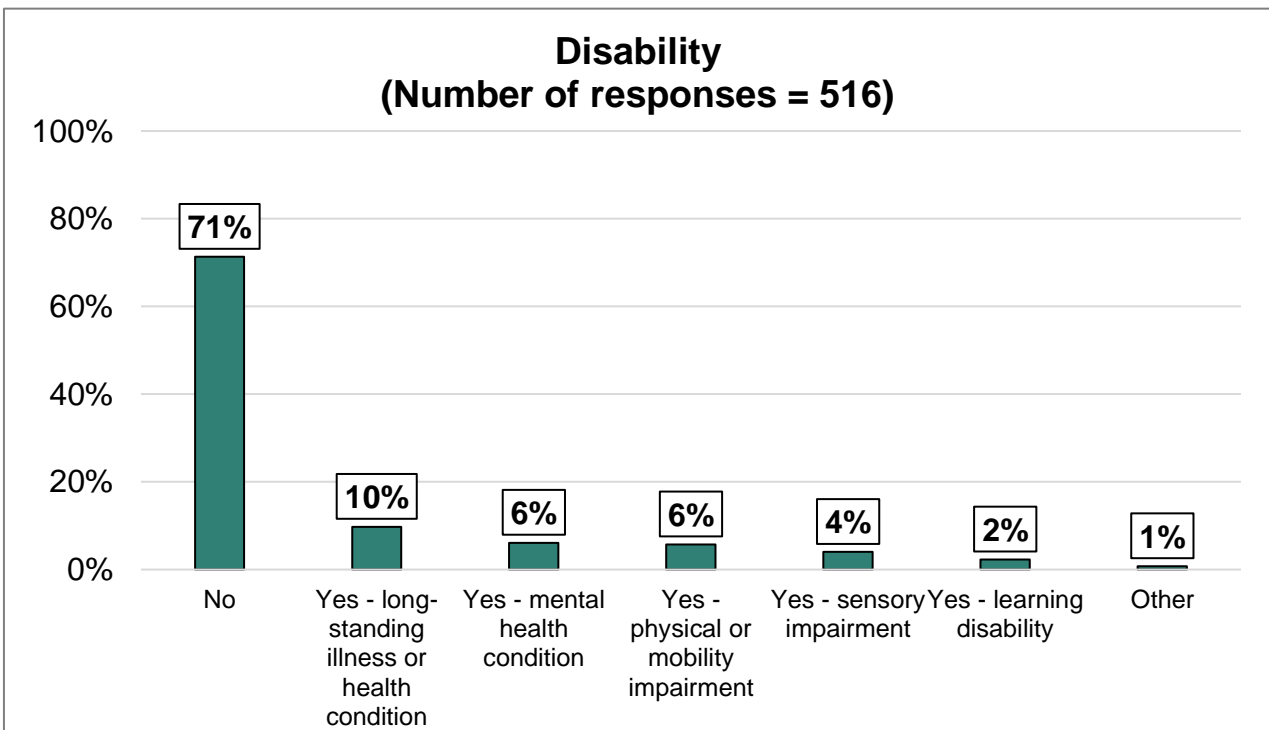
## Gender

99% of people who answered the question on Commonplace (491 people) said they were cisgender. We do not have this information for anyone who took part in another way.

**Gender identity**
**(Number of responses = 498)**
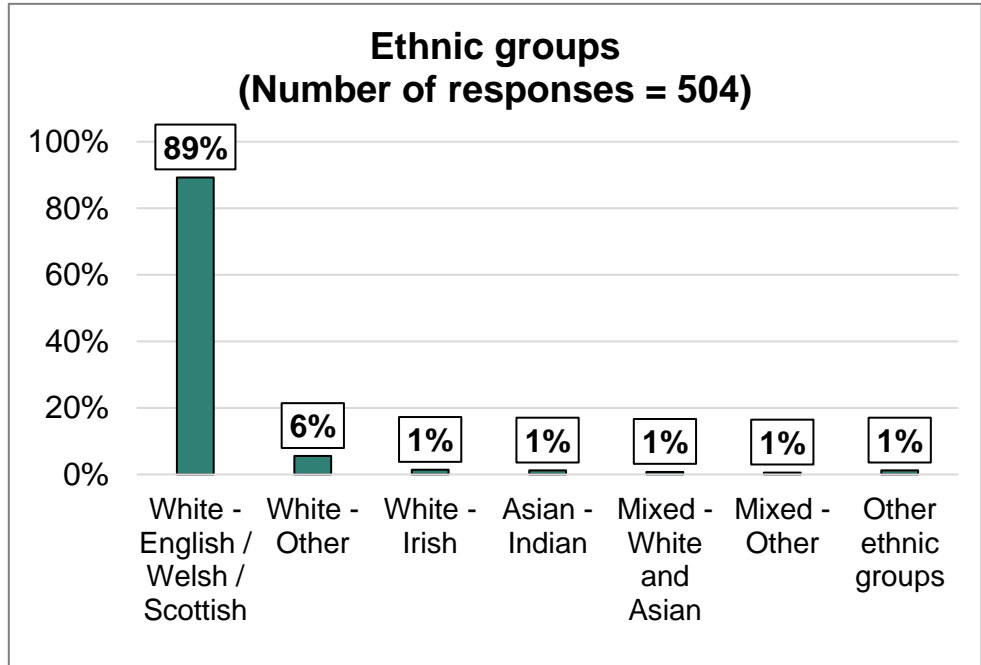
- Cisgender: 99%
- Transgender: 1%
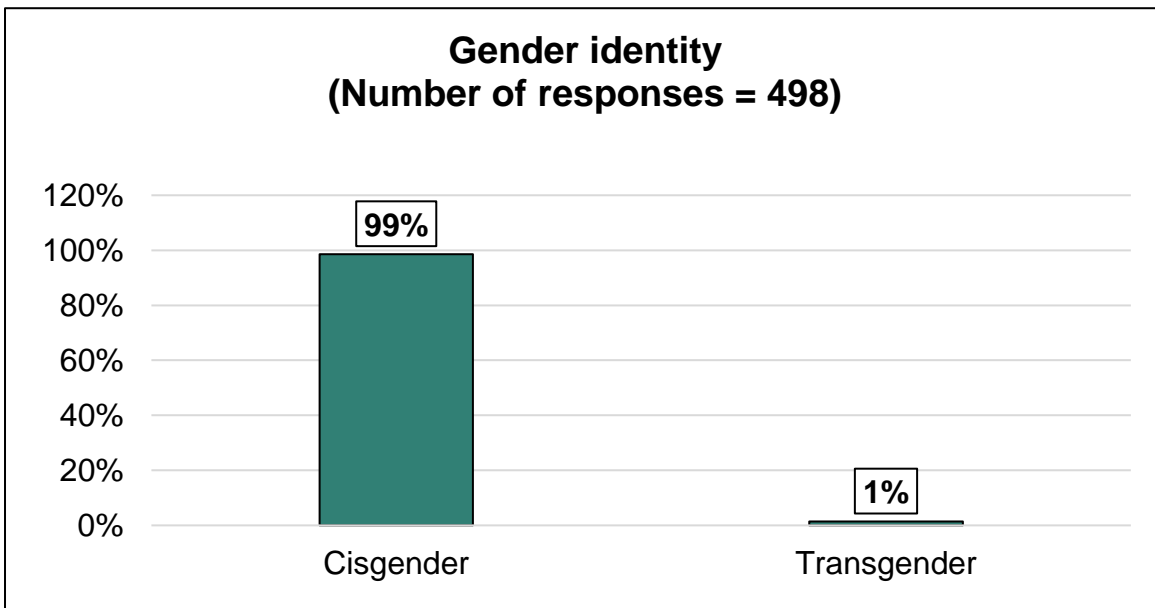
## Disability

The majority of people who took part (71% - 373) were not disabled. Of those who were, the biggest single percentage (10% - 51 people) said they had a long-standing illness or health condition. We have included people who took part in the consultation from the Newcastle Disability Forum and Becoming Visible groups in these numbers, as we do have information about their disability status. 185 people did not answer the question. The three people who took part via Let's talk Newcastle online said that they were not disabled. We do not have this information for anyone who took part in another way.

**Disability**
**(Number of responses = 516)**

- No: 71%
- Yes - long-standing illness or health condition: 10%
- Yes - mental health condition: 6%
- Yes - physical or mobility impairment: 6%
- Yes - sensory impairment: 4%
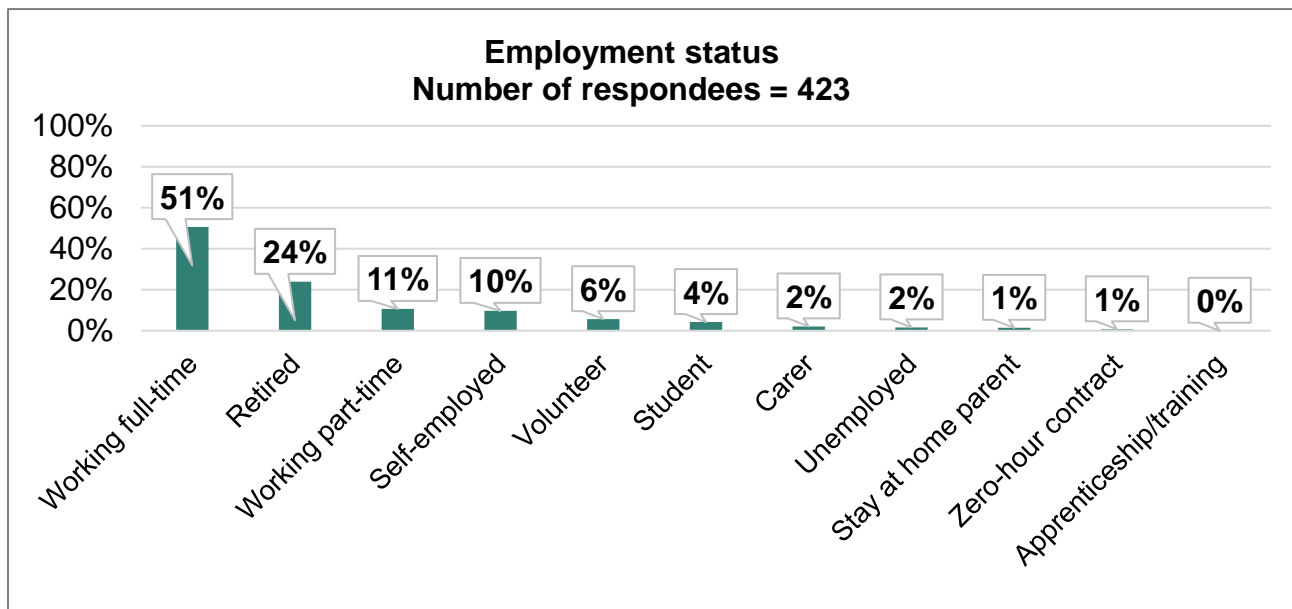- Yes - learning disability: 2%
- Other: 1%

## Ethnicity

The majority of people who took part (89% - 450) described themselves as 'White – English / Welsh / Scottish'. 197 people did not answer the question. The three people who took part via Let's talk Newcastle online described themselves as 'White British'. We do not have this information for anyone who took part in another way.

**Ethnic groups**
**(Number of responses = 504)**

White - English / Welsh / Scottish: 89%
White - Other: 6%
White - Irish: 1%
Asian - Indian: 1%
Mixed - White and Asian: 1%
Mixed - Other: 1%
Other ethnic groups: 1%

## Employment status

We asked people who took part on Commonplace about their employment status; 423 answered the question (278 did not). They could choose as many options as applied to them. As shown below, the most common employment statuses were:

1. **Working full-time** – 51% of those taking part said they were employed full-time, as did two people taking part via Let's talk Newcastle Online.
2. **Retired** – 24% of those taking part said this, as did one person taking part via Let's talk Newcastle Online.
3. **Working part-time** – 11% of those taking part said this.

**Employment status**
**Number of respondees = 423**

Working full-time: 51%
Retired: 24%
Working part-time: 11%
Self-employed: 10%
Volunteer: 6%
Student: 4%
Carer: 2%
Unemployed: 2%
Stay at home parent: 1%
Zero-hour contract: 1%
Apprenticeship/training: 0%

# How they usually travel in or around the area

We asked people who took part on Commonplace how they usually travel in or around Newcastle; 545 answered the question. They could choose as many options as applied to them. As shown below, the most commonly-used options were:

1. **Walking** – 82% of those taking part said they regularly walked in and around Newcastle.

2. **Driving a car** – 58%

3. **Travelling by bus** – 43%

We do not have this information for anyone who took part in another way.



How do you usually travel in or around the Newcastle area? Number of respondees = 545
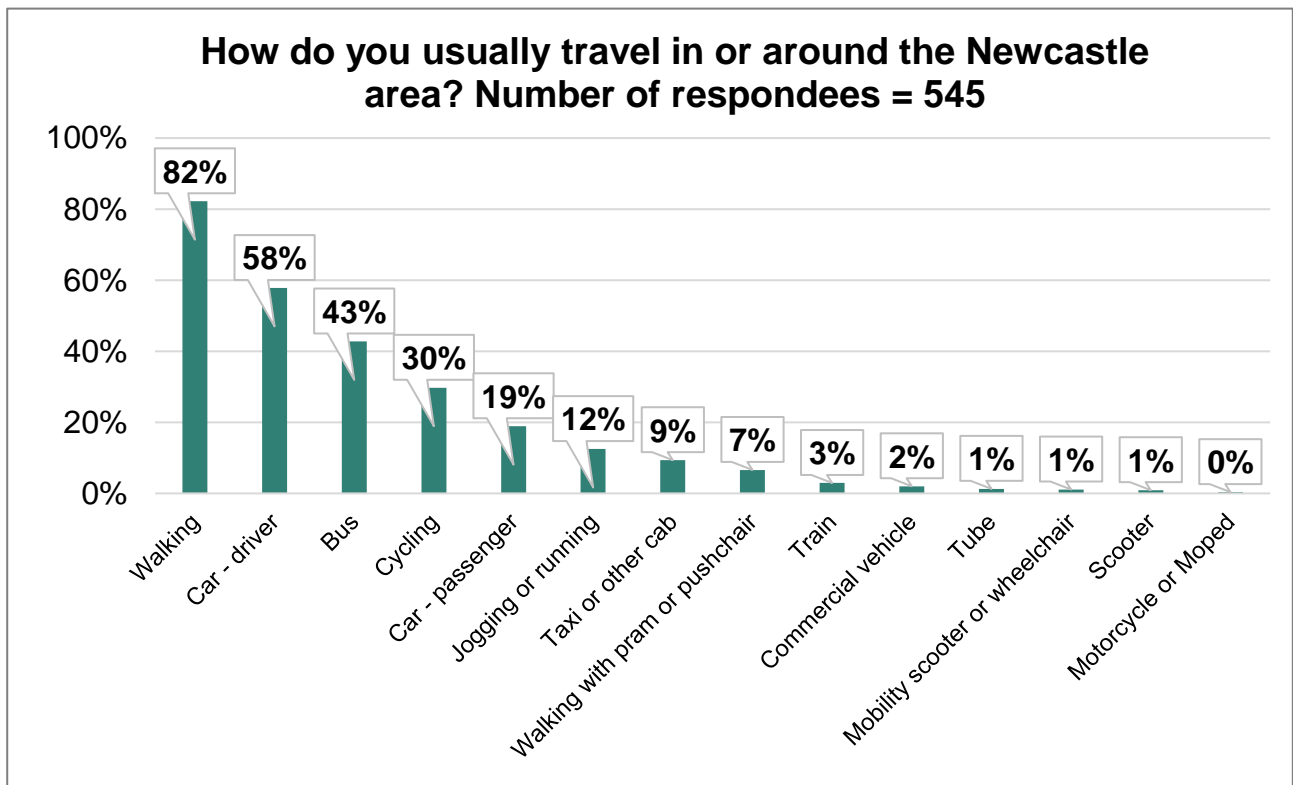
## Location

We asked people who took part on Commonplace and Let's talk Newcastle Online for their postcode and matched to this to their wards. Three people who took part on Let's talk Newcastle Online gave us their postcode, and 481 people on Commonplace did this (220 people did not give their postcodes). We do not have this information for people who took part via another route (whilst we did hold events in different locations around the city, we did not gather information on where people attending these events lived).
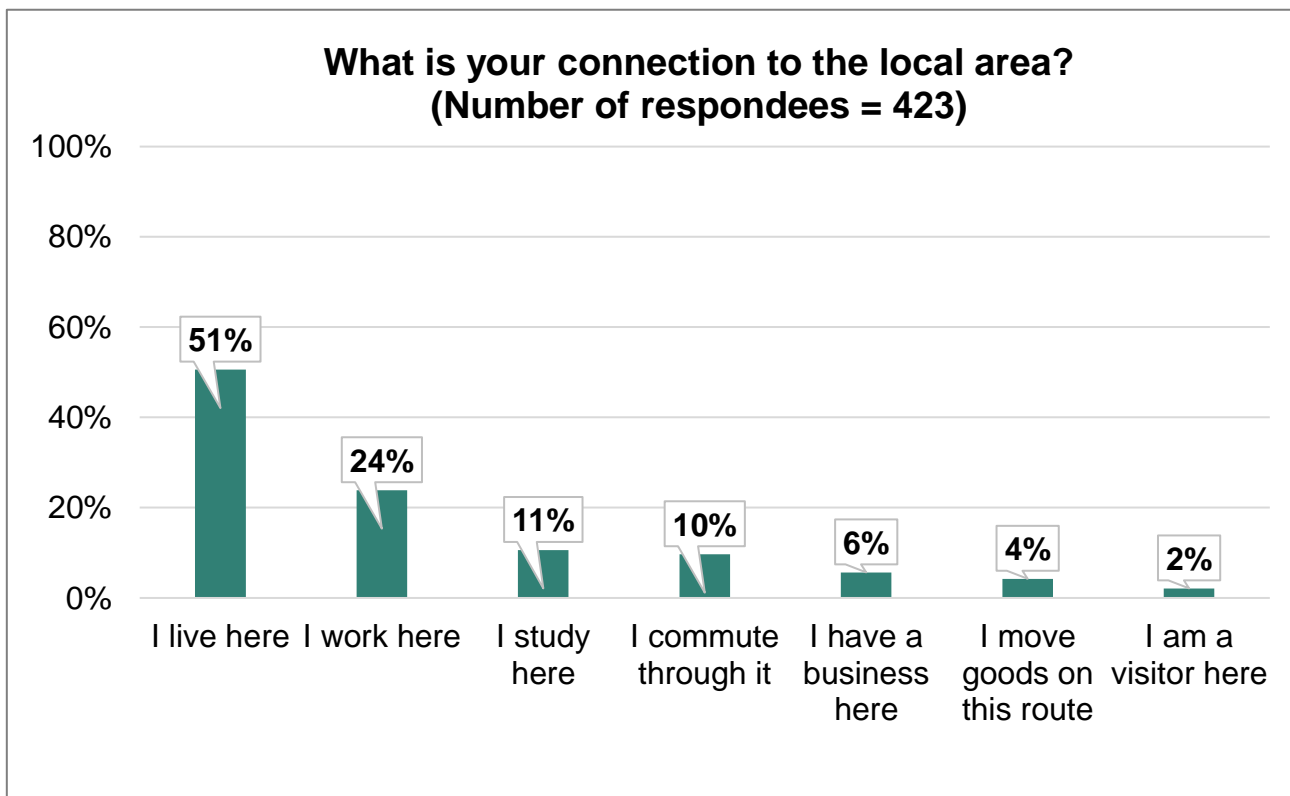
As shown below, the wards with the largest percentages of respondents were Callerton & Throckley, Dene & South Gosforth, Gosforth, and North Jesmond. 80% of those respondents we have location information for lived within Newcastle, whereas 20% lived outside.

| Ward Names | Number |
|---|---|
| Callerton & Throckley | 46 |
| Dene & South Gosforth | 30 |
| Gosforth | 28 |
| North Jesmond | 27 |
| Byker | 23 |
| Castle | 23 |
| Heaton | 22 |
| Fawdon & West Gosforth | 21 |
| Monument | 20 |
| Ouseburn | 18 |
| Parklands | 18 |
| Manor Park | 15 |
| Wingrove | 14 |
| Chapel | 9 |
| Benwell & Scotswood | 8 |
| Kenton | 8 |
| Elswick | 7 |
| Kingston Park South & Newbiggin Hall | 6 |
| West Fenham | 6 |
| Arthur's Hill | 5 |
| Walker | 5 |
| Walkergate | 5 |
| Blakelaw | 3 |
| Denton & Westerhope | 3 |
| Lemington | 2 |
| Woolsington | 1 |

| Ward Names | Number |
|---|---|
| **Outside Newcastle** | |
| North Tyneside | 31 |
| Gateshead | 20 |
| Northumberland | 18 |
| County Durham | 8 |
| South Tyneside | 8 |
| Sunderland | 7 |
| Bedfordshire | 1 |
| Hampshire | 1 |
| North Yorkshire | 1 |
| Northern Ireland | 1 |
| Sussex | 1 |
| Wales | 1 |

## Connection to the area

We asked people who took part on Commonplace what their connection to the local area was; just over half (51%) replied 'I live here', followed by 'I work here'. (People could choose more than one answer to this question, so percentages total more than 100%.) We do not have this information for anyone who took part in another way.

**What is your connection to the local area?**
**(Number of respondees = 423)**

| Connection | Percentage |
|---|---|
| I live here | 51% |
| I work here | 24% |
| I study here | 11% |
| I commute through it | 10% |
| I have a business here | 6% |
| I move goods on this route | 4% |
| I am a visitor here | 2% |

# How people took part

There were several different ways people could take part, as shown below.

## Meetings, displays and workshops

We were keen to give people the chance to learn about this and discuss it in person, so we arranged a series of 15 meetings and drop-in sessions as shown below. Please note that the 'number of people' is the estimated number of people who had conversations with staff or left feedback using post-it notes or similar.

| Date | Location | Number of people |
|---|---|---|
| February-March 2024 | Youth Voice Locality Groups | 20 |
| 24 January 2024 | ESOL World Café at Westgate College, West End | 300 |
| 1 February 2024 | Denton & Westerhope Ward Committee, Methodist Church, Denton (note that we did not receive feedback from people at this meeting, but discussed the purpose of the early engagement work, and how people could have their say on it). | 15 |
| 6 February 2024 | Throckley Community Centre, Throckley | 46 |
| 7 February 2024 | Lemington Health Resource Centre, Lemington | 26 |
| 8 February 2024 | Trinity Church, Gosforth | 20 |
| 12 February 2024 | West End Library and Customer Service Centre, Denton | 18 |
| 13 February 2024 | Newcastle East End Football Club, Walker (note that we did not receive feedback from people at this meeting, but discussed the purpose of the early engagement work, and how people could have their say on it). | 2 |
| 15 February 2024 | St James' & St Basil's Church Café, Fenham | 25 |
| 16 February 2024 | Farrell Centre, city centre | 0 |
| | Newcastle Disability Forum, telephone discussion | 1 |
| 20 February 2024 | Heaton Baptist Church, Heaton | 30 |
| | Grainger Market – Family-Focused Event, city centre | 60 |
| 23 February 2024 | Grainger Market – Family-Focused Event, city centre | 23 |
| 26 February 2024 | St Silas Church, Byker | 25 |
| 29 February 2024 | Newcastle Great Park Community Centre, Great Park | 28 |
| 1 March 2024 | Jesmond Library, Jesmond | 30 |
| 1 March 2024 | Ouseburn - presentation | 26 |
| 4 March 2024 | Newcastle Disability Forum, meeting | 11 |
| 7 March 2024 | Becoming Visible discussion, Civic Centre | 6 |
| | Total | 712 |

## Letters and telephone calls

We received six responses by letter and email, and had a telephone discussion with a representative from the Newcastle Disability Forum – this is in the list above.

## Social media

Compared to previous years, we did not receive much feedback from social media. We posted three videos on our Facebook page, which 17 people commented on.

## Youth Parliament Manifestos

We included manifestos from 57 young people standing for the Newcastle Youth Parliament in our analysis.

## Petition

We received 1 petition, sent in by the Woolsington Residents Association referring specifically to protecting the Green Belt, with 166 signatures from Woolsington residents and 11 signatures from non-residents.

## Planning Policy Responses

We received 27 Planning Policy Responses from stakeholder organisations including businesses, academics, elected members, and voluntary and community sector organisations in the local area – details are provided below.

Given the level of detail provided in these responses, we have included a summary of the main points made in each submission. The detailed information provided will be used in shaping the draft local plan.

We also received responses from Nexus and BDW Trading Ltd (England and Wales), part of Barratt Developments plc, via Commonplace, and these have been included in the analysis of Commonplace responses.

| Location | Comments | Number of people / organisations represented (where appropriate) |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Bea Chivers Research Project | Submission of survey results relating to a research project on urban design strategies relating to net zero and reducing air pollution: 'Empowering Tomorrow: Urban Design's Vital Role in Achieving Net Zero through Energy-Efficient Solutions'. | 46 – the researcher, plus 45 participants. |

| Location | | Comments | Number of people / organisations represented (where appropriate) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2. | Cities4People | Cities 4 People are "a network of environmental campaign groups working together to protect the green spaces and natural environments of Newcastle, Gateshead and our neighbours". (Note that this is unrelated to the EU funded 'Cities-4-People' project researching 'sustainable and people-oriented transport'.). | 1 organisation |
| 3. | Commercial Estates Projects Ltd | 15-page submission responding to the nine ambitions contained in the early engagement information, and discussing how their future plans can support these ambitions, including plans for Upper and Middle Callerton. | 1 organisation |
| 4. | Elders Council | 25-page submission from the voluntary organisation run by and for older people in Newcastle, working to "make Newcastle a great place to grow old". | 1 organisation |
| 5. | Food Newcastle | Submission from Food Newcastle, a "partnership of businesses, organisations and individuals with a passion, interest or remit around various aspects of good food". | 1 organisation |
| 6. | Gosforth 'Key Issues' response | Three Gosforth residents with backgrounds in architecture planning, urban design, and housing wrote a formal response – one is a former senior partner of an architecture firm, one a chairman of a planning and development consultancy, and the third a director of a housing provider. | 3 people |
| 7. | Haworth Group Plc | Letter from Savills on behalf of Haworth Group, regarding proposed developments in north-west Throckley. | 1 organisation |
| 8. | High Gosforth Park – Newcastle Racecourse | Letter from Savills on behalf of High Gosforth Park Ltd. regarding the Newcastle Racecourse site within the High Gosforth Park estate. | 1 organisation |
| 9. | Historic England | Letter from Historic England, the Government's statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment in England. | 1 organisation |

| | Location | Comments | Number of people / organisations represented (where appropriate) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10. | Home Builders Federation (HBF) | Letter from the Home Builders Federation (HBF) on facilitating future discussions with the housebuilder industry, the use of Health Impact Assessments, design codes and viability issues. | 1 organisation |
| 11. | Igloo: Helix and Stephenson Works – Avison Young | Letter from Avison Young (real estate agent) on behalf of PfP Igloo in connection with the Helix and Stephenson Works schemes. | 1 organisation |
| 12. | Igloo: 'Candle Flame' – DPP | Letter from DPP (national planning consultancy) on behalf of PfP Igloo in connection with the 'Candle Flame' development scheme in the Ouseburn Valley. | 1 organisation |
| 13. | McCarthy Stone | Letter from McCarthy Stone, a provider of specialist housing for older people setting out the need to plan for older persons accommodation in the local plan. | 1 organisation |
| 14. | National Highways | Letter from the National Highways agency whose statutory purpose includes supporting the council in local plan making. | 1 organisation |
| 15. | Natural England | Natural England is a non-departmental public body whose statutory purpose is to "ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations". | 1 organisation |
| 16. | Newcastle University | Letter from Pegasus Group on behalf of Newcastle University setting out the role of the university in attracting and supporting growth and investment and the need to adequately plan for student accommodation. | 1 organisation |
| 17. | NGP Consortium | Letter from Stantec UK Limited on behalf of Newcastle Great Park Consortium ('NGP Consortium' – consisting of Persimmon Homes and Taylor Wimpey). The comments include future policy direction and planning for growth. | 2 organisations |

| | Location | Comments | Number of people / organisations represented (where appropriate) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 18. | North East Public Transport Users Group | North East Public Transport Users Group is a voluntary organisation that campaigns on behalf of current and future users of public transport (including walking and cycling) in Newcastle. Comments include the need to consider the role of sustainable transport in plan making. | 1 organisation |
| 19. | Northumbrian Water Limited | Northumbrian Water Limited is a water company in the United Kingdom, providing mains water and sewerage services in Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham and parts of North Yorkshire. Comments include policy formulation that strongly directs the sustainable management of drainage and flood risk. | 1 organisation |
| 20. | Persimmon Homes | Persimmon Homes is a housebuilder and submitted comments relating to evidence work needed to support plan making. | 1 organisation |
| 21. | PfP Igloo | Letter from Pegasus Group on behalf of PfP igloo, a partnership between Thriving Investments (formerly PfP Capital) and igloo Regeneration and discussing plans for development within the Ouseburn Valley. | 1 organisation |
| 22. | South Tyneside Council | South Tyneside Council is one of the five Tyne and Wear local authorities. South Tyneside Council look forward to being consulted on the plan as work progresses. | 1 organisation |
| 23. | Space for Gosforth | Space for Gosforth is an association of Gosforth residents who "promote healthy, liveable, accessible and safe neighbourhoods". The new local plan should build on previous policies with a stronger focus on walking, cycling and sustainable travel. | 1 organisation |

| Location | Comments | Number of people / organisations represented (where appropriate) |
|---|---|---|
| 24. The Glasshouse | The Glasshouse is an international centre for music on the River Tyne (it was previously known as the Sage Gateshead). The Glasshouse would like to work with the council to maximise the multiple benefits of culture for communities. | 1 organisation |
| 25. Unite Group Plc | Letter from Pegasus Group on behalf of Unite, a provider of student housing across the UK. Comments include providing adequate student accommodation and supporting graduates to stay living and working in the city. | 1 organisation |
| 26. Woolsington Parish Council | Woolsington Parish Council covers the areas of two wards, Kingston Park South & Newbiggin Hall, and Callerton & Throckley. Comments include local plan policies should protect open space, support use of brownfield sites and the green belt should be preserved. | 1 organisation (12 councillors) |
| 27. Woolsington Residents Association Petition | A petition sent in by the Woolsington Residents Association referring specifically to protecting the Green Belt. | 1 organisation; 166 signatures from Woolsington residents and 11 signatures from non-residents |

# "What is special about the environment where you live, work, or visit in Newcastle?" – Photo Gallery

As part of asking about people's views on Ambition 8, "To deliver well-designed and safe places that communities can help to shape and be proud of", we asked those taking part: "What is special about the environment where you live, work, or visit in Newcastle? If you wish to, please upload an image that illustrates this."

This gallery of images shows their choices; we do not have the contributors' descriptions of what these images contain, although where it is obvious what is shown we have included this in the caption.



1. Wildflowers by a road



2. Heaton Park



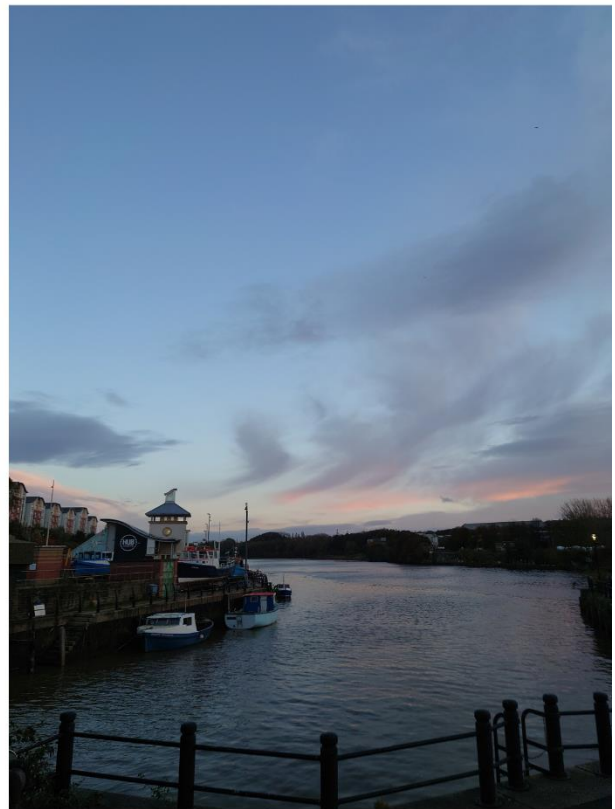3. Woodlands



4. Woodlands and fields

5. Food planters in Heaton



6. Local green space
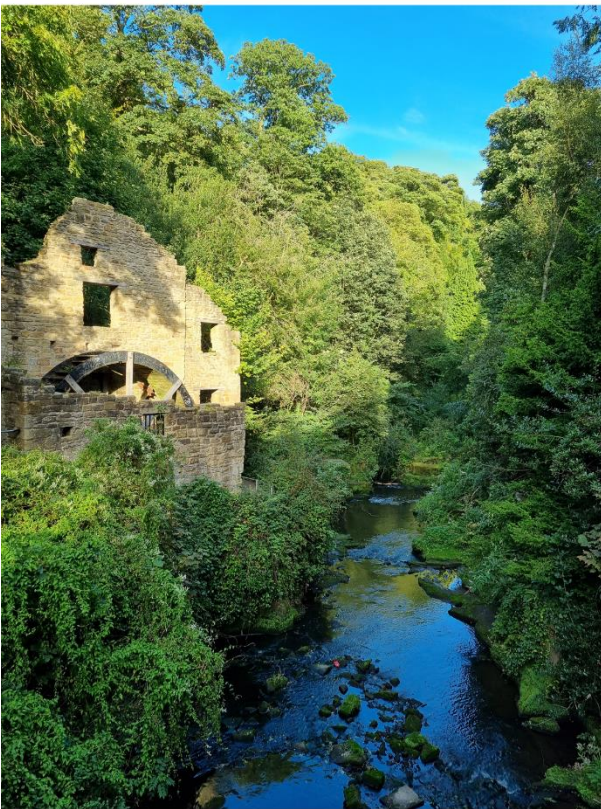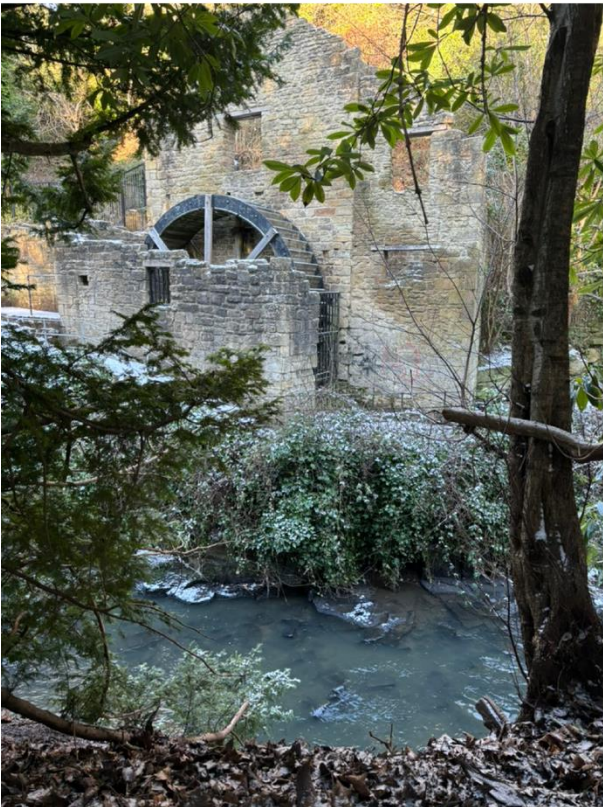


7. Jesmond Dene



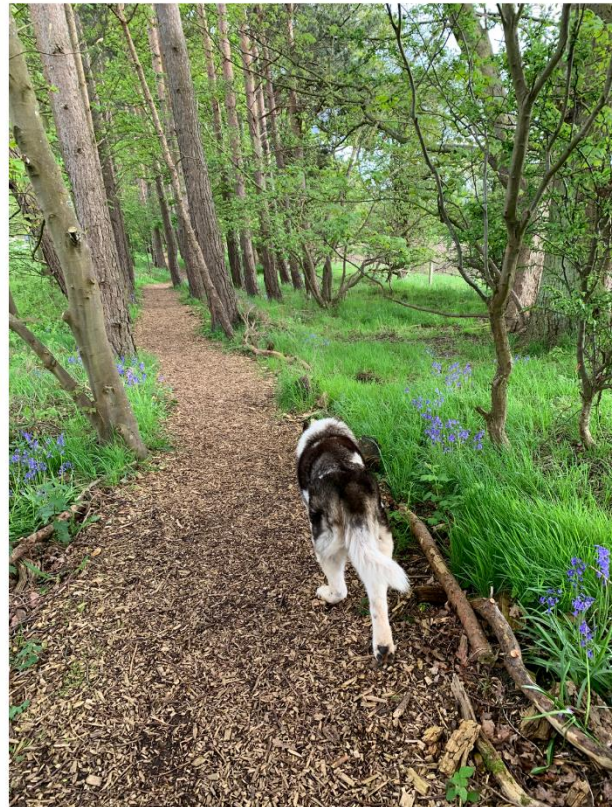8. Ouseburn Riverside

9. Lemington Gut



10. The Town Moor in winter



11. Jesmond Dene



12. Woodland paths

13. Dog walking in the early morning



14. Sunset over fields



15. Fields and ponds



16. Jesmond Dene

17. Hedgehog and flowers



18. Hodgkin Park



19. River and bridges



20. Deer in woodland

21. Fields in the early morning



22. Orchard in autumn



23. Goslings



24. Swan and cygnet



25. Street at night



26. Trees and pavements

27. Trees in autumn



28. Deer in woodland



29. Grey Street



30. The remains of Lemington Staiths



31. Woodlands

32. Wildflowers and ponds



33. Wildflowers by a road