Merthyr Tydfil-specific Engagement Activity: Collated Findings

Building on the engagement undertaken by Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board (PSB) around the preparation of the Assessment of Well-being; and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board (RPB) Population Needs Assessment; it was agreed that an additional engagement exercise would be undertaken to ensure the voice of local people could be captured and key messages considered as part of the development of Merthyr Tydfil CBC's corporate well-being objectives.

Following development of an engagement questionnaire; the local engagement survey was rolled-out during the first week of October 2022; and closed in the last week of November 2022. 3 key questions were posed in the survey:

1. What do you like most about Merthyr Tydfil?

2. What would you change about Merthyr Tydfil?

3. What do Leaders need to hear?

Respondents were asked to consider the questions and offer up some detail in responses. This document offers a thematic overview of the responses received by the Council; and the key themes emerging from analysis of the data and information collected. It is important to note that some responses received were classified as 'partial' (i.e. not all questions posed were answered); the responses to these were also considered to enable the Council to gather as much intelligence from these as possible.
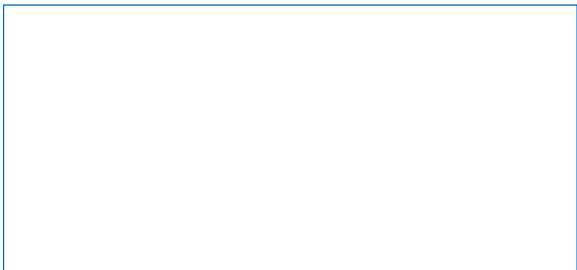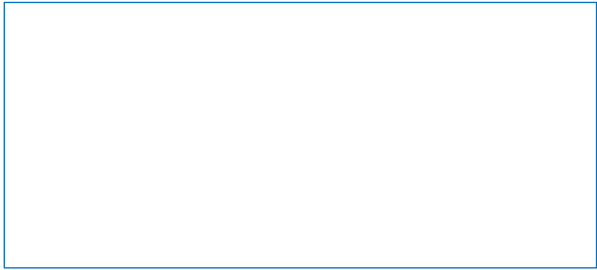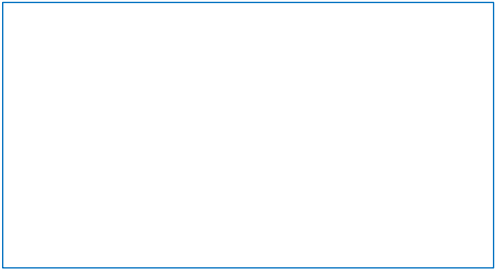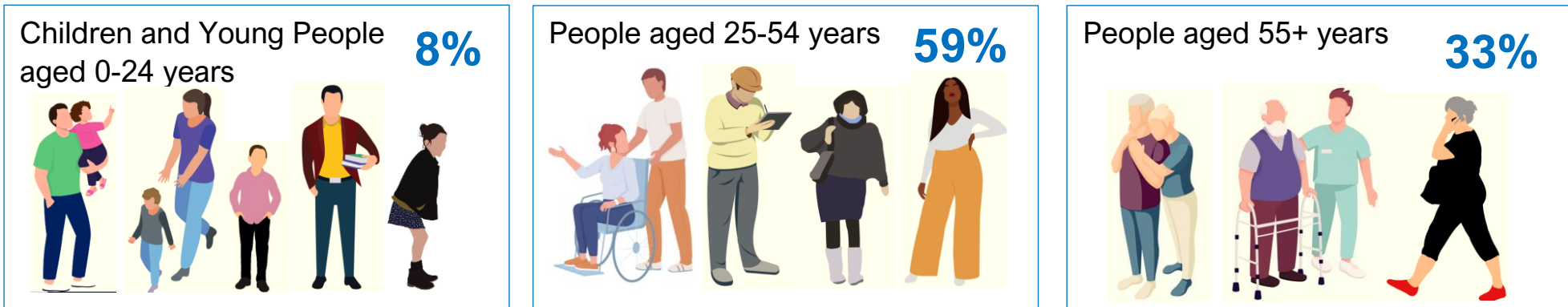
Of the **643** responses received where a ward was recorded; a ward-based breakdown records the following response numbers/rates:

	Bedlinog	Cyfarthfa	Dowlais	Gurnos	Merthyr Vale	Park	Penydarren	Plymouth	Town	Treharris	Vaynor
Number	36	71	63	57	40	53	71	55	105	51	42
Percentage	5.59%	11.04%	9.79%	8.86%	6.22%	8.24%	11.04%	8.55%	16.32%	7.93%	6.53%

We have also broken down the data captured down into broader-based age ranges that will assist Council services to understand more targeted feedback; supporting them to continue to undertake the support work for residents and communities. Our data shows us that, when looking at the 643 people who provided their age ranges; when responses are broken down into these age groups the following approximate rates were recorded:

Children and Young People aged 0-24 years **8%**

People aged 25-54 years **59%**

People aged 55+ years **33%**

We have been unable to outline the age profiles of those people responding without completing the 'equalities' section of the engagement survey.

The following information offers a breakdown of responses on a ward-by-ward basis.
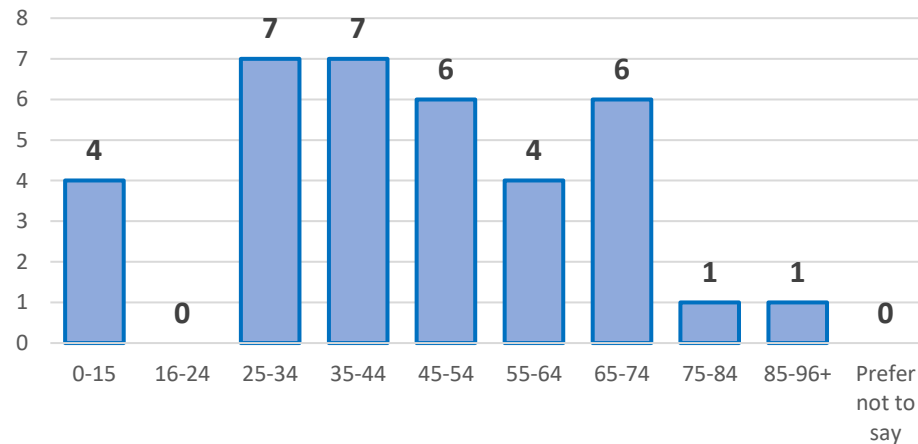
Engaging with people from: **Bedlinog Ward**

When analysing the response data; **36** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Bedlinog ward [1]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:

Bedlinog ward

Breakdown of Feedback by Age Group: Bedlinog Ward

How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Bedlinog	4	0	7	7	6	4	6	1	1	0
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities. Based on the confirmed data for **Bedlinog ward**; it was noted the response rate for respondents in the **0-15 years** and **65-75 years** age range was the most closely aligned to the County-Borough-wide average; though no responses were received from people aged between **16-24 years**

[1] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Bedlinog ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the Bedlinog ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

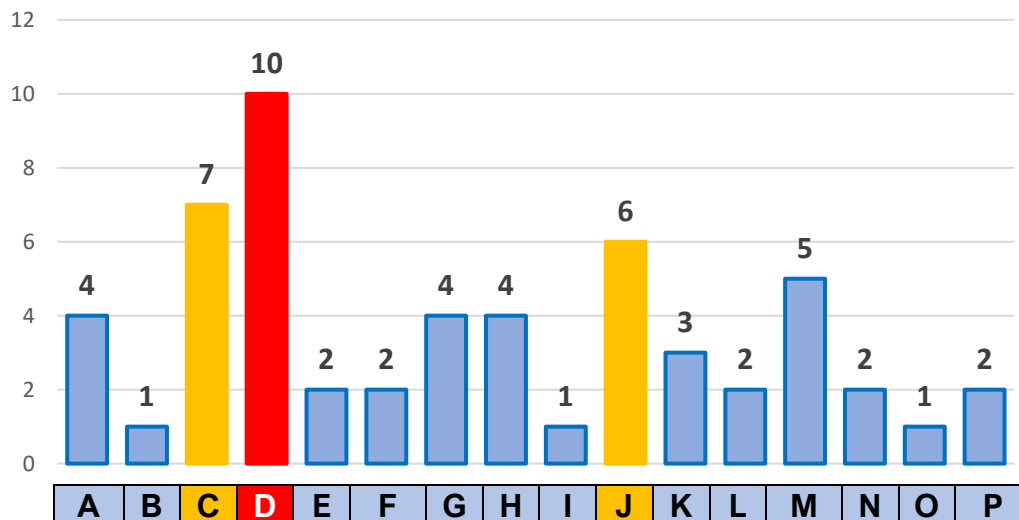It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

The people and strong sense of community spirit

The town's rich history; heritage; arts and culture

What did respondents in Bedlinog ward state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil?
Bedlinog Ward

Bar chart values:
- A: 4
- B: 1
- C: 7
- D: 10
- E: 2
- F: 2
- G: 4
- H: 4
- I: 1
- J: 6
- K: 3
- L: 2
- M: 5
- N: 2
- O: 1
- P: 2

A	More parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities for children, young people and their families (**11.11%**)
B	Improve leisure services and provide opportunities for physical activity for all ages (especially swimming) (**2.77%**)
C	Improve public transport (**19.44%**)
D	Support sustainability of local business, develop the local economy and encourage inward investment (**27.77%**)
E	Preserve our heritage sites (**5.55%**)
F	Provide education and engagement opportunities for local people (**5.55%**)
G	Address littering and fly-tipping; and undertake enforcement activity to prevent and protect our natural environment (**5.55%**)
H	Council communicates more clearly; and involves people more (**11.11%**)
I	Increase services for vulnerable people including young people, those needing mental health and social care needs (**2.77%**)
J	Tackle issues of antisocial behaviour, substance misuse and dangerous driving (**16.66%**)
K	Address the impact of climate change (**8.33%**)
L	Support people to manage the cost-of-living crisis (**5.55%**)
M	Ensure Council budgets and services are equally distributed across the County Borough (**13.88%**)
N	Regenerate the Southern Valley (**5.55%**)
O	More engagement with parents/carers by schools (**2.77%**)
P	Promote the positives and 'sell' Merthyr Tydfil (**5.55%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Bedlinog** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

Support sustainability of local business, develop the local economy and encourage inward investment	Improve public transport
• "Attract more businesses, clothes shops, furniture shops, decent restaurants (no more fast-food outlets) more use of Red House for Music and Theatre". • "The shops seem to be shutting at an alarming rate. (We need) for everything to be more affordable for everyone". • "Would like to see more shops in the town to avoid going to the retail park". • "A better high street that supports small local businesses". • "We have a lovely environment but feel that sometimes the bottom end of the valley is forgotten. We need more things like the business support coming down the valley would help cos that's been fab".	• "Bring in visitors via the Taff's trail and public transport with discounts on services in reward for use of green transport. (We need) excellent public transport: get rid of school buses and provide a better joined up bus service". • "Bus service availability to Bedlinog and surrounding lower valley". • "(Look at the) public transport so that we can reliably get there and get home". • "(We need) huge transport investment to link communities such as Bedlinog to the town". • "Public transport including trains, more and better scheduled".
Tackle anti-social behaviour; substance misuse; dangerous driving etc.	
• "Try to do something about the drink and drug problem on the streets". • "Less crime, reduce drugs". • "Address crime levels". • "I think that some of the speed cameras need to be repositioned as there's strong evidence of speeding in our area. This will make people feel safer, particularly the pedestrians on busy stretches of road". • "There are some people that hang around town are an absolute nuisance, constantly asking for money".	

What did respondents in Bedlinog feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders Needs to Hear?
Bedlinog Ward

A	Communicate with residents (and not just digitally); and listen to people more (**27.77%**)
B	Ensure the lower end of the Valley receives the same level of support as other wards (**11.11%**)
C	Improve the bus service (**11.11%**)
D	Keep our streets and pavements clean and free from litter (**5.55%**)
E	Address crime – anti-social behaviour, drugs and underage sales; and Policing should be more visible (**11.11%**)
F	Council needs to work in a more joined up way (**5.55%**)
G	Help people to reduce their carbon footprint (**2.77%**)
H	Modernise and develop the Town Centre through inward investment (**13.88%**)
I	Provide support for people around skills and employment (**2.77%**)
J	Develop a long-term forward focused vision for the County Borough (**2.77%**)

The key issues residents from **Bedlinog** ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents' comments for context:

The Council should communicate with residents (and not just digitally); and listen to people more	Modernise and develop the Town Centre through inward investment
• "Use regular communication and stop relying on social media, it's only one of many channels and only reaches a certain audience. Shout about success, celebrate success, get all the stakeholders working together to do their bit in saying how great Merthyr can be". • "They definitely need to listen especially to us at the bottom of the valley. They also need to act on what they have been told and develop a trustworthy approach to residents and help with unsolved issues". • "(Listen to) what the residents want. Hold local surgeries to ask what matters to them".	• "That small local businesses should be given a rent-free period in the high street where a lot of the shops are empty and closed, this will boost the footfall in the town at the same time as supporting small!". • "Merthyr town centre needs investment and leisure facilities". • "Attract more businesses, clothes shops, furniture shops, decent restaurants (no more fast-food outlets) more use of Red House for Music and Theatre". • "The shops seem to be shutting at an alarming rate".

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Modernise the Town Centre, bring in more shops	More activities for children and young people

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Modernise the Town Centre and support/develop local businesses	Listen to local people and give them more chances to get involved.	Improve community safety and facilities in the Town Centre (e.g.) address ASB; drug abuse	Ensure the Southern Valley has equal access to funding and services	Improve the bus transport infrastructure (e.g.) bus service; trains

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Listen to local people and give them more chances to get involved	Modernise the Town Centre and support/develop local businesses	Improve the bus transport infrastructure (e.g.) bus service; trains	Protect our environment from climate change; litter and fly-tipping	Ensure the Southern Valley has equal access to funding and services.

Engaging with people from: Cyfarthfa Ward

Cyfarthfa ward

When analysing the response data; 71 of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Cyfarthfa ward [2]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:

Breakdown of Feedback by Age Group: Cyfarthfa Ward
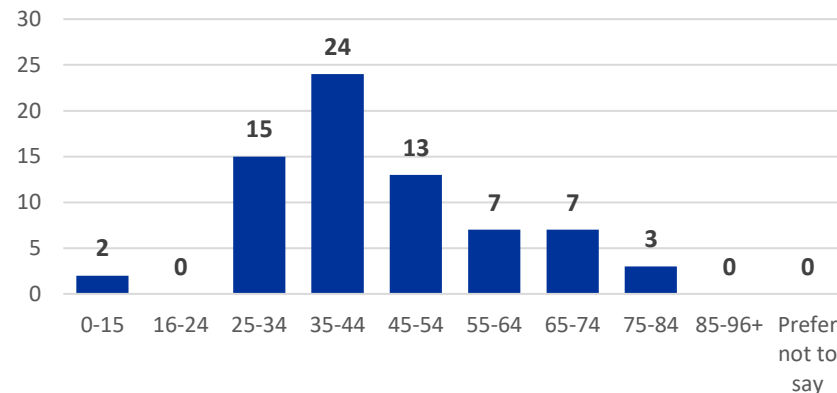
Age group	Value
0-15	2
16-24	0
25-34	15
35-44	24
45-54	13
55-64	7
65-74	7
75-84	3
85-96+	0
Prefer not to say	0

How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Cyfarthfa	2	0	15	24	13	7	7	3	0	0
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities.

Based on the confirmed data for **Cyfarthfa ward**; the age range with the highest response rate linked to residents in the age ranges **25 and 34 years;** with the **35 and 44 years** – identified a response **almost double the average rate** recorded across all wards in the County Borough.

[2] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Cyfarthfa ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the Cyfarthfa ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

The people and strong sense of community spirit

It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

The town's rich history; heritage; arts and culture

Good access to facilities such as shops; places to stay

What did respondents in Cyfarthfa ward state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil?
Cyfarthfa Ward

Bar	Value
A	10
B	17
C	11
D	9
E	21
F	9
G	13
H	6
I	3
J	6
K	10
L	1
M	4
N	4
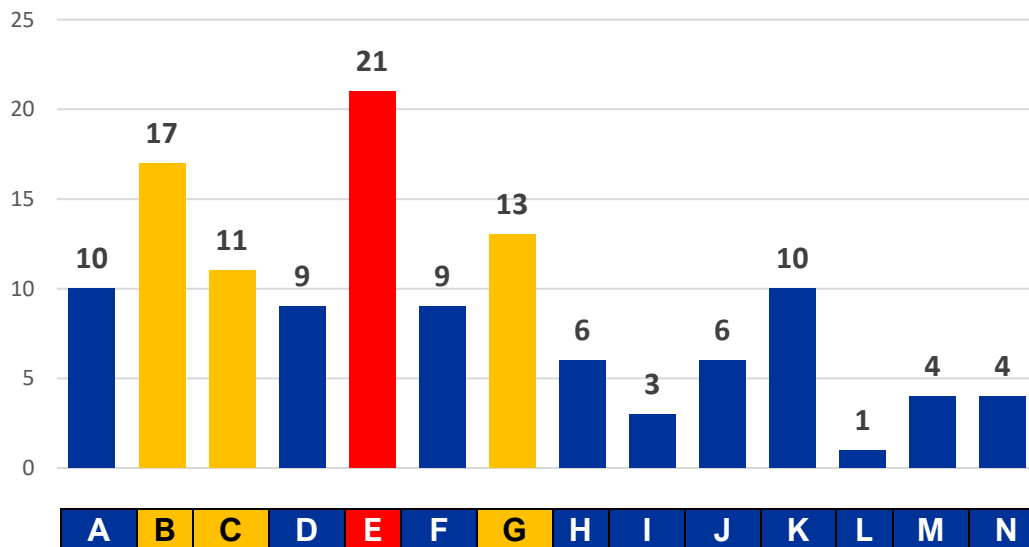
A	The perception of Merthyr Tydfil and resulting negativity; we should promote the positives (**14.08%**)
B	Modernise the Town Centre; seek inward investment and support local businesses (**23.94%**)
C	Improve public transport (**15.49%**)
D	Address traffic related issues; traffic flow and time public works better (**12.67%**)
E	Address community safety issues - antisocial behaviour; drugs and dangerous driving (**29.57%**)
F	Reduce parking charges and address parking-related issues (**12.67%**)
G	Protect our environment; tackle litter; fly-tipping and dog fouling as well as climate change (**18.30%**)
H	Promote our heritage and culture more widely (**8.45%**)
I	Address local housing and homelessness issues (**4.22%**)
J	Improve leisure and sports facilities (**8.45%**)
K	Provide activities for children; young people and their families (**14.08%**)
L	Improve access to mental health services (**1.40%**)
M	Secure better paid jobs in the County Borough to help with the cost-of-living crisis (**5.63%**)
N	Communicate more clearly and share information in a timely way (not just digitally); involve people more (**5.63%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Cyfarthfa** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

Address traffic related issues; traffic flow and time public works better	Modernise the Town Centre, support local businesses and seek inward investment
• "The anti-social behaviour, the boy racers in the early hours of the morning using the A470 as a racing track, the amount of litter on the streets, the bus services". • "I have seen trouble in the town centre - not sure whether the people concerned were under the influence of drink and/or drugs but it did make me feel a little nervous that it might all kick off - might not paint a good picture to people visiting the Town". • "As a resident of Merthyr, I haven't visited the town centre in about 5 years - possibly more. I have raised this topic on previous questionnaires over the years, but nothing has improved. The reason I don't visit the town centre, is because I'm scared to. I don't want to be threatened or intimidated by gangs of youths, turn a corner to see substance abuse taking place, (alcohol and hard drugs) and individuals laying in a gutter, incoherently mumbling and unable to get up because they are out of it on Spice! Our town centre needs a constant police presence! This is what is letting Merthyr down the most".	• "The old and tired buildings in the town that have fallen into disrepair need a facelift". • "I'd definitely have more clothes shops – since we lost Outfit on the retail park the choice is super limited". • "Free car parking / or £1 daily to encourage people to the town, get some good shops into centre instead of the retail park". • "Knock the town down and focus on becoming a big market town with a huge indoor market with affordable rent and no rates. Stop regeneration that is not evidence lead and instead embrace the change. Condense the town footprint and free parking is a must with charging points ready for EV. Move a huge park and skate park to centre of town and other free provisions. This will increase footfall and feed businesses such as cafes, bars etc. A big anchor business is lacking in the town to draw people in… Primark meets the demographics of the area".
Improve public transport	**Protect our environment; tackle litter; fly-tipping and dog fouling as well as climate change**
• "(We need a) reliable bus service 7 days a week and running until at least 10pm in the evenings". • "We have to drive EVERYWHERE, we live in Heolgerrig at the top, the bus service is poor and stops at approximately 5pm, the train service is not regular enough out or into Merthyr, this is a big downside, and we have to use our car constantly as the public services for transport are not good or reliable". • "Our location is perfect and easily accessible via public transport (usually), so getting people to visit here shouldn't be a problem". • "Hold Stagecoach to account – we are not getting value for money"	• "Positive action by the Council to fine littering, fly tipping and dog fouling". • "Again, I believe that we do not promote/signpost our heritage and gain the benefit from tourism opportunities enough. I would also clean the place up it is spoilt by litter and rubbish fly tipping, refuse and recycling teams are lazy leaving streets looking so unnecessarily dirty it's not good enough, but they get away with it all the time. We also need better policing punishing those who spoil Merthyr Tydfil". • "Something needs to be done to keep streets and countryside clean and free from fly tipping and dog poo".

What did respondents in Cyfarthfa feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders Need to Hear?
Cyfarthfa Ward
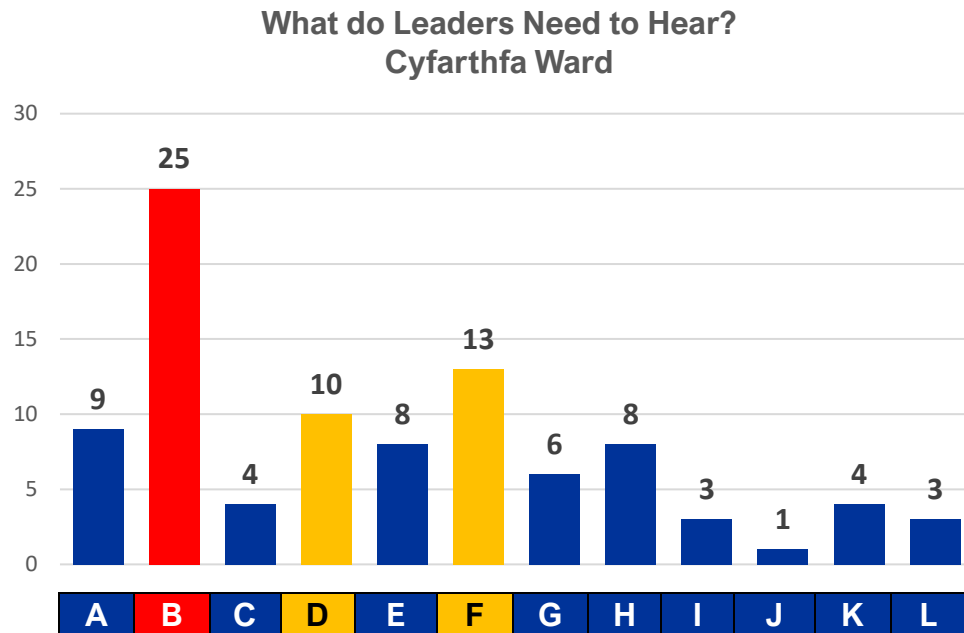
	Description
A	Improve leisure services and re-open the swimming pool (**12.67%**)
B	Listen to people and involve them more and communicate more clearly using differing methods (**35.21%**)
C	Become a more collaborative Council (**5.63%**)
D	Invest in education services for young people and work to get better jobs for them (**14.08%**)
E	Protect our environment from build development as well as from litter; fly-tipping and dog fouling (**11.26%**)
F	Modernise the Town Centre, seek inward investment and work with/support local businesses (**18.30%**)
G	Improve public transport (**8.45%**)
H	Address community safety issues - antisocial behaviour; dangerous driving etc. (**11.26%**)
I	Reduce parking charges (**4.22%**)
J	Address local housing issues (**1.40%**)
K	Support people with the cost-of-living crisis (e.g.) freeze Council Tax (**5.63%**)
L	Promote Merthyr Tydfil's positive to address the negative perception of the Town (**4.22%**)

Chart values: A = 9, B = 25, C = 4, D = 10, E = 8, F = 13, G = 6, H = 8, I = 3, J = 1, K = 4, L = 3

The key issues residents from **Cyfarthfa** ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents' comments for context:

Listen to people and involve them more; and communicate more clearly using differing methods (not just digital)	Modernise the Town Centre, seek inward investment and work with/support local businesses
• "Actually **ask** for views in a way that reaches the people. Consultation feels selective - not too well publicised, and often difficult to attend/participate. It is necessary to think beyond the MTCBC mindset - which governs most actions and decisions". • "People of Merthyr Tydfil should be well informed and have a say in the changes that are happening around the town". • "If you are taking the time to do surveys like this, you need to take the time to have some answers ready to share back with people - at the	• "Help local manufacturing and science businesses grow to provide more well-paid jobs". • "If Merthyr's supposed to be a retail centre for the Valleys, you need to get more retailers to come here to trade - that'd bring more jobs too". • "Regarding the town centre the best people to talk to would be the business community who would give good ideas what is needed". • "Spend less on renewing old buildings into offices that will never get used and invest in a new swimming pool and attracting business to the town".

moment, it feels like we're shouting into the void and that shouldn't be the case".

- "I think they need to understand people's opinions count. If they linked in with local people when they were planning how to put services on, they might be able to get some good information that would stop the projects from failing".

- "People in Merthyr have a part to play in keeping Merthyr a great place to live, but we need an opportunity to do this".

- "That people are a great source of intelligence which at the moment is largely untapped".

- "Town is dying - do something now".

- "Look at getting a better choice in jobs into Merthyr like IT jobs or renewable energy jobs".

- "More shops/restaurants in the town centre. The bottle neck by Tesco roundabout needs to be eased somehow".

- "That parking charges puts people off visiting small business who are already struggling in town centre!".

Protect our environment from building development; as well as from fly-tipping; litter and dog fouling

- "We also need public parks to be maintained and grass cut, a meadow isn't an uncut field there is no excuse cut the grass keep it tidy for everyone's wellbeing fresh air and beautiful gardens".

- "Ridiculous amount of litter and antisocial behaviour, substantially poor parks for young children, obvious drug dealing around the town and estates, free waste disposal for everyone and rat infestations everywhere"

- "(We need) safer and cleaner town, tackle those who make it unsafe and rubbish our landscapes".

- "Leisure Centres (e.g.) Rhydycar, need to be improved. Parks like Cyfarthfa and Thomastown need to be revamped".

- "Currently my weekly, monthly needs are all met out of town. For example, parks, play areas, indoor soft play, gym, without mentioning shopping".

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Better bus service that runs after 6.30 in the evenings	Improve the Town Centre; get better shops and offer more choice.	Help people to manage the impact of the cost-of-living crisis	Listen to people and pay attention to what they see as important

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Listen to the community more and involve people before decisions are made.	Modernise the Town Centre; support local businesses and offer more choice.	Protect the environment from litter; fly-tipping and dog-fouling	Reduce parking charges	Improve public transport so people can get to and from work

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Listen to the community more and involve people before decisions are made	Improve the Town Centre; get better shops and offer more choice	Protect the environment from litter; fly-tipping and dog-fouling	Promote the positives - tackle the misconceptions about Merthyr Tydfil	Protect and promote Merthyr Tydfil's unique heritage and culture

Engaging with people from: Dowlais Ward

Dowlais ward

When analysing the response data; **63** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Dowlais ward [3]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:

Breakdown of Feedback by Age Group: Dowlais Ward
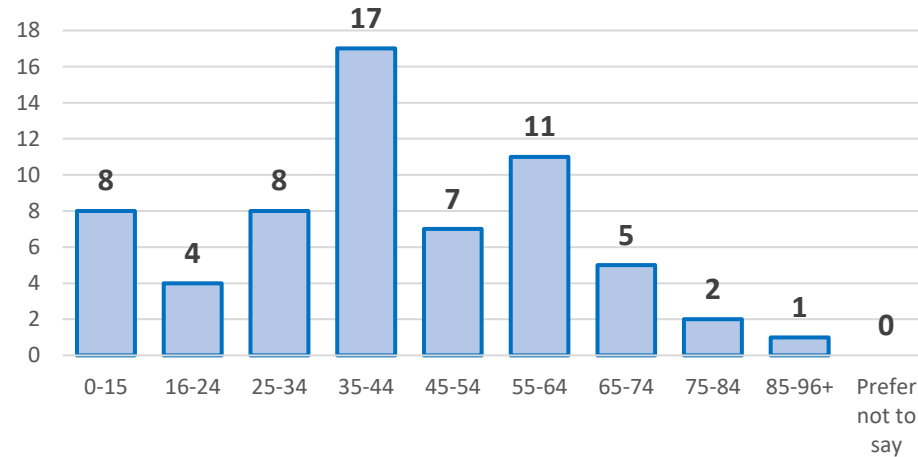
How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Dowlais	8	4	8	17	7	11	5	2	1	0
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities. Based on the confirmed data for **Gurnos ward**; the age range with the highest response rate linked to residents between **0 and 15 years** of age – this was **over twice the average rate** recorded across all wards in the County Borough.

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[3] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Dowlais ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the **Dowlais** ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

The people and strong sense of community spirit

It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

The town's rich history; heritage; arts and culture

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

What did respondents in Dowlais ward state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil? Dowlais Ward
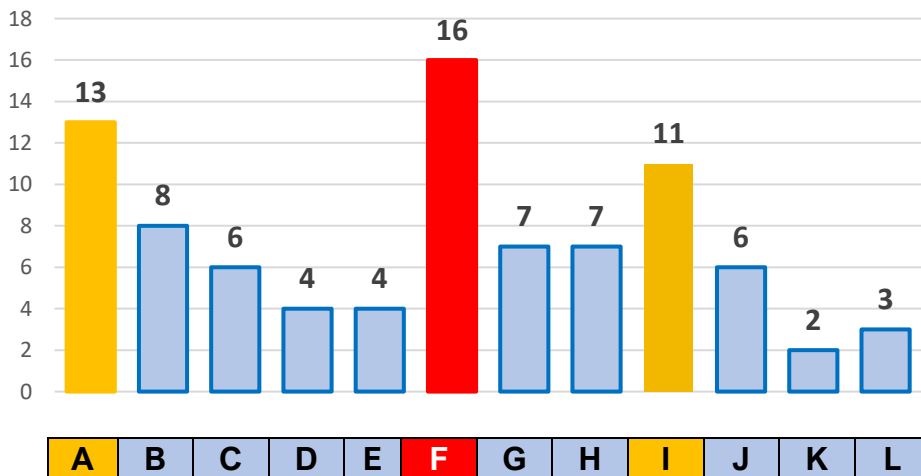
A	Improve leisure facilities so they are accessible and affordable for local people (**20.63%**)
B	Improve playgrounds; run more events for children, young people and their families (**12.69%**)
C	Improve the bus service so its reliable and affordable (**9.52%**)
D	Address issues around housing (**6.34%**)
E	Improve employment opportunities (e.g.) free training, better paid jobs (**6.34%**)
F	Address community safety issues (e.g.) ASB, drugs use, dangerous drivers (**25.39%**)
G	Promote Merthyr's positives - its arts, music and heritage (**11.11%**)
H	Improve traffic layout/flow; road condition and parking issues (**11.11%**)
I	Improve/modernise the Town Centre, encouraging positive new businesses (**17.46%**)
J	Protect our environment from littering; fly-tipping and dog fouling; address air quality around Trecatti Tip (**9.52%**)
K	Help people manage the cost-of-living crisis/poverty (**3.17%**)
L	Communicate better; involve them and make sure the website is up to date (**4.76%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Dowlais** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

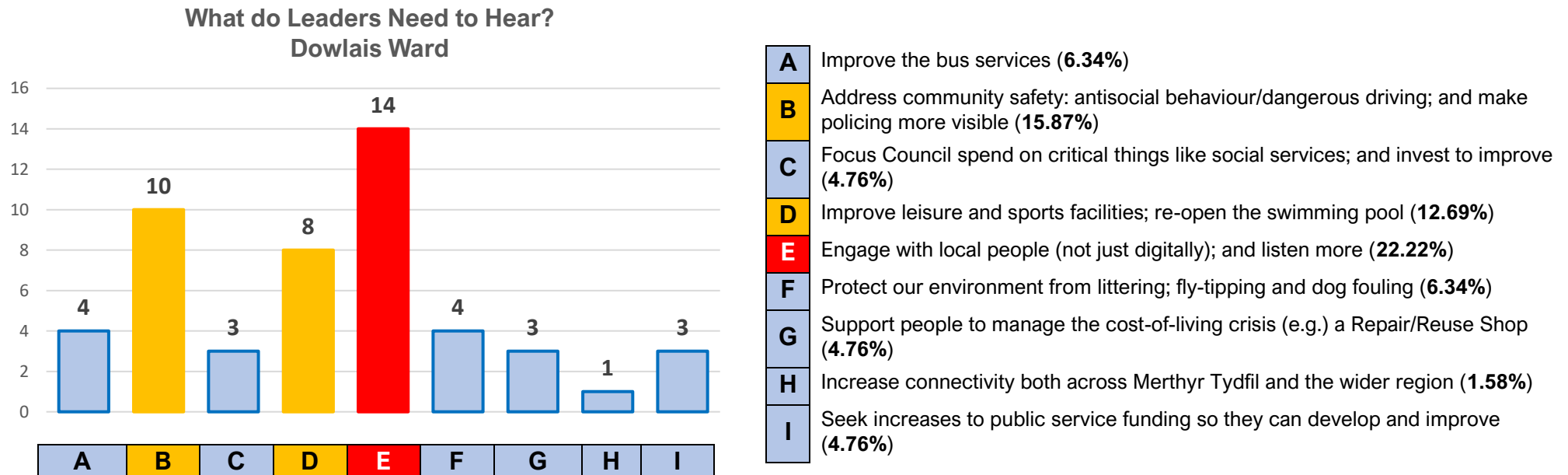| Address community safety issues (e.g.) ASB, drugs use, dangerous drivers	Improve leisure facilities so they are accessible and affordable for local people
• "Definitely do something to address antisocial behaviour. Recently there seems to have been an increase in the amount of this happening, I'm certainly seeing more and more posts about young people doing dull and dangerous things for a laugh - throwing stones at cars, trying to kick in doors, pinching bikes and smashing bottles (Dowlais is taking a pasting at the moment). I'd want to change how this problem is being addressed at the moment as its not getting any better". • "Antisocial behaviour, racing cars around Merthyr needs to stop ". • "I'd do more tackle these people who are driving like lunatics and I would try to address some of the issues around parking too". • "I think there are a real lack of community safety messages here, I mean general community safety rather than Covid specific and I think this is adding to the perception that the town isn't safe - I'd start to offer regular updates to help people recognise what's being done from a community safety perspective".	• "Improve children's play areas, more tennis courts as we haven't any within walking distance. Swimming pool as my son needs swimming lessons". • "I'd do something about the leisure facilities - I know the Council aren't in charge but the facilities have been pretty awful over the last couple of years (e.g.) No pool; splash pad; flooding in the sports centre". • "As an older person, I want to remain independent and to keep healthy and fit so I can carry on doing this. I used to go swimming years ago in Gwaunfarren Baths; and then I started going swimming in Rhydycar when it was done up – I really miss not having the pool available and would make sure that you look to sort that out – swimming is a great exercise as the water supports you as you swim so you can stay fit and healthy". • "Leisure services - massive obesity issues in the valleys and our facilities are poor".
Improve services for children and families (e.g.) playgrounds, sports facilities and free events	**Improve and modernise the Town Centre; encouraging positive new businesses**
• "Improve children's play areas, more tennis courts as we haven't any within walking distance. Swimming pool as my son needs swimming lessons". • "As I don't drive, I struggle to get about with the lack of buses. My children are very sporty and there's nothing local like football pitch, tennis courts, basketball courts to where I live in Pant". • "Improved facilities and activities for children and young people to encourage outdoor activity, learning, skills and teambuilding". • "I would change Merthyr Tydfil by adding more fun for kids to do".	• "Merthyr has loads of shops and places to eat and drink; but that means a lot of the jobs are lower wages (unless you work for the hospital or the council or places like that) - I'd look to see how we could attract bigger businesses to the area who pay better wages". • "Introduction on more manufacturing and service providers to create more jobs and better prospects." • "Buildings particularly in the town centre area and of historic nature left to rot away and potentially dangerous and of course those buildings could be utilised for various activities/new ventures".

What did respondents in Dowlais feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders Need to Hear?
Dowlais Ward

A	Improve the bus services (**6.34%**)
B	Address community safety: antisocial behaviour/dangerous driving; and make policing more visible (**15.87%**)
C	Focus Council spend on critical things like social services; and invest to improve (**4.76%**)
D	Improve leisure and sports facilities; re-open the swimming pool (**12.69%**)
E	Engage with local people (not just digitally); and listen more (**22.22%**)
F	Protect our environment from littering; fly-tipping and dog fouling (**6.34%**)
G	Support people to manage the cost-of-living crisis (e.g.) a Repair/Reuse Shop (**4.76%**)
H	Increase connectivity both across Merthyr Tydfil and the wider region (**1.58%**)
I	Seek increases to public service funding so they can develop and improve (**4.76%**)

The key issues residents from **Dowlais** ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents' comments for context:

Listen to/engage with local people (not just digitally); and listen more	Address community safety issues: antisocial behaviour, dangerous driving; and make policing more visible
• "Listen to the public and engage more. Not just at election time!". • "Members of the public who have a sensible point of view, not just the people who have a gripe against the council and moan about the service they get for the money they pay in council tax. Perhaps set up a group in each council ward with representatives in each ward. For example; most wards now have a Facebook group, I am a member of two, both regularly call on their ward councillors to convey their thoughts and messages. Perhaps if things were made a little more transparent like instances where the councils hands are tied or they are governed by budgets or	• "I think that there's something that definitely needs to be done about youth crime and antisocial behaviour. The current stuff that's being done isn't working and there have been some near misses as a result. I know this isn't only Council but also the Police, but the question was 'what do you think people in charge need to hear' so I'm just putting this out there. Years ago, Safer Merthyr used to be out and about offering crime prevention advice and helping vulnerable people by changing and upgrading locks etc. - whatever happened to that work?".

legislation, then the public may be less likely to moan as they would be better educated on the situations at hand".

- "I think they need to hear the voices and opinions of the majority of young people (not just those confident to voice their opinions, the ones who are not heard and from poorer upbringings) They need to make the town modern and with better access to facilities".

- "The community, the past decade or so, most decisions that the council have made has seemed to go against the majority of the communities wishes. The authority as a whole seem to want to do what they want regardless of the communities opinion's and wishes. It gives the community the sense that the authority doesn't respect their wishes and opinions".

- "(Leaders) need to hear the concern and anger of residents with current anti-social behaviour within the borough at present".

- "Something needs to be done about anti-social behaviour as for some reason the small minority are allowed to continually ruin it for the many".

- "I think that the Police could be doing a lot more too - I know they can't be everywhere all the time, but they could show their face sometimes when these issues are noted".

- "Sort out the anti-social behaviour in the town centre to make it a less intimidating place to visit and sort out the ugly so called 'listed' buildings. They are dreadful. And the dangerous driving that takes place at night".

Improve leisure and sports facilities; re-open the swimming pool

- "I think they need to get a grip around bring the leisure service up to date".

- "They need to hear that although the town has good development, the lack of pool in the main town and the poor management of Cyfarthfa Park needs to be addressed. There is no excuse for the main pool to have been closed for such a significant time".

- "Please do something about the swimming pool".

- "We need a swimming pool for our children!".

- "I'd do something about the leisure facilities - I know the Council aren't in charge but the facilities have been pretty awful over the last couple of years (e.g.) No pool; splash pad; flooding in the sports centre".

- "As an older person, I want to remain independent and to keep healthy and fit so I can carry on doing this. I used to go swimming years ago in Gwaunfarren Baths; and then I started going swimming in Rhydycar when it was done up – I really miss not having the pool available and would make sure that you look to sort that out – swimming is a great exercise as the water supports you as you swim so you can stay fit and healthy".

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Make leisure and sport activities more affordable	More facilities for children, young people and families	Improve community safety (e.g.) address ASB; more visible policing	Modernise the Town Centre and attract better shops	Offer more education on diversity and inclusion

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Improve leisure services	Improve community safety (e.g.) address ASB; more visible policing	More facilities for children, young people and families	Modernise the Town Centre; attract better shops and support local businesses	Listen to local people and give them more chances to get involved

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Listen to local people and give them more chances to get involved and communicate better	Improve community safety (e.g.) address ASB; more visible policing	Improve the bus service	Modernise the Town Centre; attract better shops and support local businesses	Protect and promote Merthyr Tydfil's heritage

Engaging with people from: Gurnos Ward

When analysing the response data; **57** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Gurnos ward [4]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:

Gurnos ward

Breakdown of Respondents by Age: Gurnos Ward
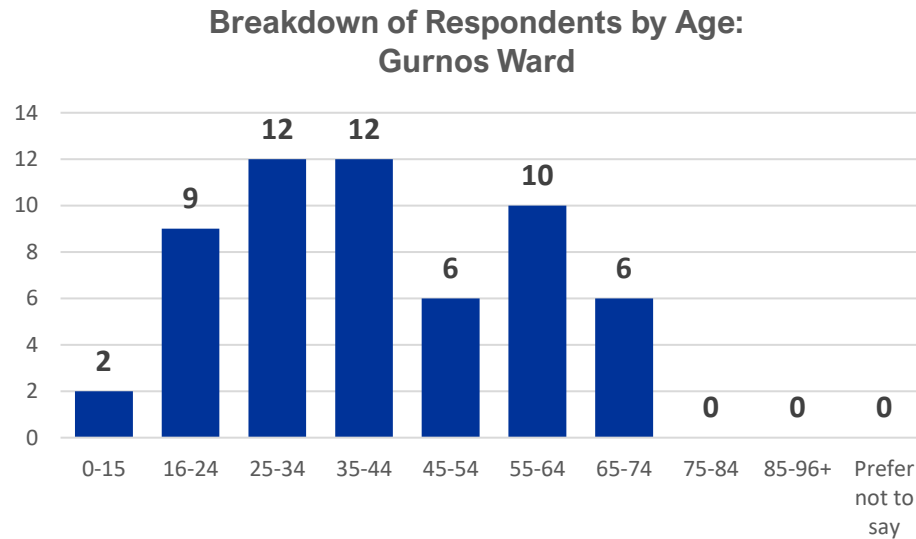
How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Gurnos	2	9	12	12	6	10	6	0	0	0
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities. Based on the confirmed data for **Gurnos ward**; the age range with the highest response rate linked to residents between **16 and 24 years** of age – this is **over 3 times the average rate** recorded across all wards in the County Borough.

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[4] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Gurnos ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the **Gurnos** ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

The people and strong sense of community spirit

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

The town's history and heritage – something to be proud of

What did respondents in Gurnos ward state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil? Gurnos Ward
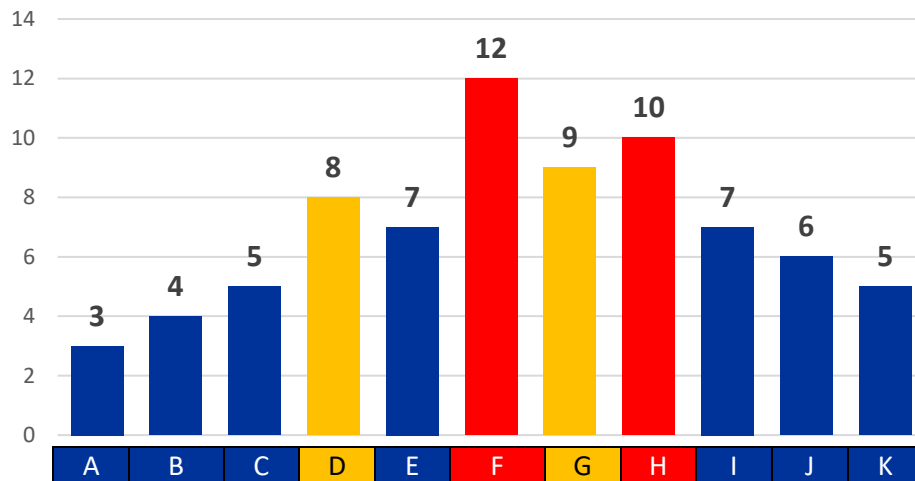
A	More affordable homes, bring empty properties back into use (**5.26%**)
B	More help for single parents and families; and improve teaching in schools (**7.01%**)
C	Improve leisure services; re-open the swimming pool (**8.77%**)
D	More funding for parks and playgrounds; and more support for community facilities (**14.03%**)
E	Protect our green spaces from development and tackle litter; fly-tipping and vermin (**12.28%**)
F	Tackle community safety issues (e.g.) antisocial behaviour; drugs (especially in the Town Centre); and increase Police visibility (**21.05%**)
G	Improve the bus services so they are reliable and meet need (**15.78%**)
H	Modernise/develop the Town Centre (e.g. introduce a creche); attract investment and support local businesses (**17.54%**)
I	Refocus/improve health and social care services (e.g.) access to GPs and dentists; more social events for older people (**12.28%**)
J	Protect and develop our heritage and culture and promote Merthyr's positives (**10.52%**)
K	Address traffic and parking issues, especially around schools (**8.77%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Gurnos** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

| Tackle community safety issues (especially the Town Centre) including antisocial behaviour; drugs etc. And increase Police visibility	Modernise/develop the Town Centre; attract inward investment and support local businesses
• "In the Town Centre; I don't feel safe(so) would change that". • "The town centre is looking quite sad at the moment – losing 'big' shops like Wilkinsons and D2 could be a blow, and no-one knows what is lined up to replace them (I know there's a Wilkinsons on the retail park but not everyone has a car to get there and the buses are pretty poor". • "I think that since Coronavirus some of the places selling food have let their standards slip and I'd change how these are inspected to check up on them more often". • "People need to feel safe, and they need to feel they can meet up with their family and friends easily. If you were going to do more around crime prevention, and you could try to get buses running later in the evenings, that would go a long way to doing that".	• "More branded shops - Nike, Adidas, Under Armour etc.". • "Lower rent on shops will encourage more people to open up more businesses and attract more high-end chains, like PRIMARK, HMV". • "The town centre is looking tired, and all the shops seem the same, I'd like to see a change of approach around this, hopefully, this will bring more people from outside Merthyr to come here and spend their money". • "Look at ways to encourage businesses that offer better quality jobs to set up here. Focus on teaching in schools - the extras that are offered a good but shouldn't be at the expense of the quality of teaching". • "When I was younger the town centre was buzzing but it's gone quiet especially since Wilko closed. I would like more different shops in town".
Improve the bus service so it's reliable and affordable	**More funding for parks and playgrounds and more support for community facilities**
• "Though I know you don't control public transport, I'm hoping you have some influence in improving this service. I know first-hand this is impacting on people who don't drive but need to get the hospital - if the buses can't be fixed, I'd be looking at schemes like voluntary community drivers as it's not just people with health conditions though, if you're coming from work and miss the last but not everyone can call someone for a lift, or afford a taxi". • "We need the buses to be more frequent". • "Transport links are poor, and although the retail park is minutes away from the town centre there is a poor selection of retail shops in the town itself".	• "There needs to be more funding and money spend improving children's parks in the area". • "I'd do something about the fly-tipping and dog poo - walking across to the park from my house it's like running the gauntlet". • "(We need) more facilities/services within communities instead of having to travel to town/Keir Hardie". • "(We need) more litter cans". • "More action is required to repair facilities in Merthyr".

What did respondents in Gurnos feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders need to Hear?
Gurnos Ward
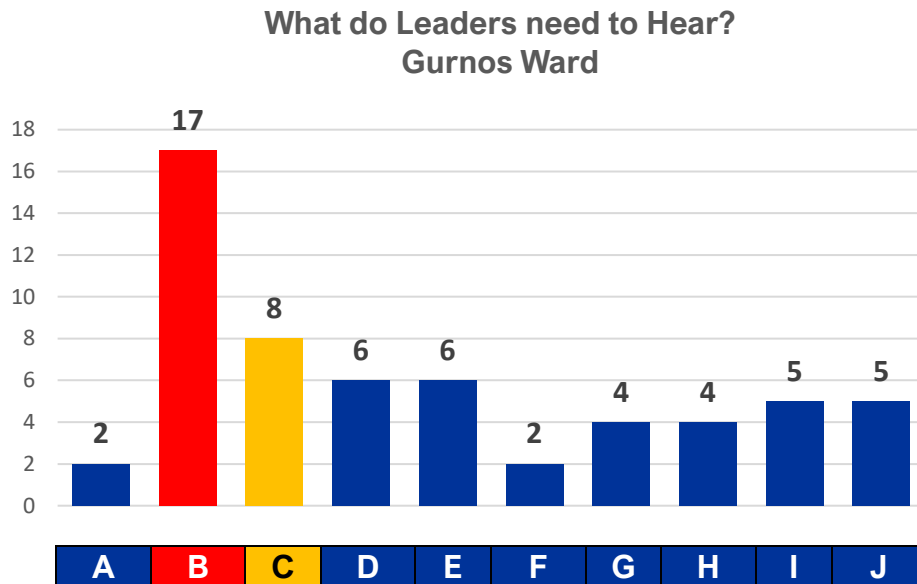
A	Improved or free parking (**3.50%**)
B	Listen to/engage with local people and improve communication (**29.82%**)
C	Invest/repair community facilities including playgrounds and parks; and sort out leisure service; re-open the swimming pool (**14.03%**)
D	Provide support to people in poverty; and trying to manage the increase in cost-of-living (**10.52%**)
E	Tackle community safety issues (e.g.) dangerous driving, drugs (**10.52%**)
F	Invest to support development of affordable housing (**3.50%**)
G	Improve bus services so they are reliable and meet need (**7.01%**)
H	Modernise/ improve the Town Centre and attract new/different employers (e.g.) in technology/sciences, to boost wages (**7.01%**)
I	Provide activities for children, young people and families (including access to childcare) (**8.77%**)
J	Promote the positives of Merthyr Tydfil (e.g.) arts, culture to capitalise on its potential (**8.77%**)

The key issues residents from **Gurnos** ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents' comments for context:

Listen to/engage with local people and improve communication	Provide support to people in poverty; and trying to manage the cost-of-living crisis
• "I say think about asking people about the stuff you're planning to do before you do it - they might be able to give extra info that will help make sure your plans are the right ones". • "The Council should listen to people living here a bit more – look at the issues with the Greenie Fields. I think that whole thing was handled very poorly and caused so much upset – if there had been some real discussions with residents when there was consulting going on, a lot of that could have been avoided." • "I think if there was more feedback given by the council on why certain decisions are taken, people would be a lot more accepting of them. I for	• "People are struggling to live and also get by". • "You're doing a good job, but I think it's going to get harder with this cost-of-living crisis". • "Poverty is only going to get worse, and everyone needs to work together to fight this, and I think the Council have a role to play in this". • "Help the people as much as you can. I know there are cuts for you as well and you may not have money but there's other help you can give, practical help"

- one understand difficult decisions have to be taken, but without knowing why, they can seem a bit unfathomable".
- "Simply learn to listen".
- "A lot of more negative views say you should work for the people. From one perspective I see this, but I think you should work WITH the people - there a huge bank of talent in the Town that's untapped".

- "There are so many pressures on everyone at the moment, now is the time to pick your battles. I'm less concerned about grass cutting and murals, and more concerned about people being able to feed their kids".

Tackle community safety issues (e.g.) drugs; antisocial behaviour and dangerous driving	Invest/repair community facilities including playgrounds and parks; and sort out leisure service; re-open the swimming pool
"There are lots of problems that we need to address. Housing is really expensive for a start. The town centre can be rough with drunks and 'spice-heads' in the main drag in town putting people off. We should look back to the thing that Safer Merthyr had years ago, they had wardens on the Gurnos, and they were brilliant. Can't we do something like that again please? ". "Buses, car racing, motorbikes on paths and the parks around Merthyr (e.g.) Cyfarthfa Park". "People need to feel safe, and they need to feel they can meet up with their family and friends easily. If you were going to do more around crime prevention, and you could try to get buses running later in the evenings, that would go a long way to doing that". "Motorbikes, speeding cars and cars popping their exhausts are a plague of this town and warnings aren't enough, if you catch them once. ACT. It will deter it spreading further". - The drug and substance misuse is evident in the town centre and needs to be addressed, it can be frightening when confronted by these users and does not portray a good image of Merthyr Tydfil".	"The issues about nothing to do in Merthyr no swimming pool etc.". "There aren't many places for young people to meet, I'd look into doing something around this". "(We need) more facilities/services within communities instead of having to travel to town/Keir Hardie". "I do think that the leisure centre would offer more if the swimming pool was open, we used to take the kids there when they were little but haven't been able to in ages, so I'd like for that to be re-opened as soon as possible)". "(Leader need to hear) how dissatisfied we are with the lack of facilities". "Give kids more stuff to do, people think they're up to no good but that could be the only place they can meet up". "I think the town centre could have a crèche so that parents and carers could drop their kids off and shop in peace safe in the knowledge their kids would be looked after. Now the Council owns St Tydfil's shopping centre, could this be something they could do?".

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

More facilities for children, young people and families	Listen to young people and pay attention to what they see as important	Provide more support for young carers	Access to affordable, accessible childcare to support access to training/work

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Modernise the Town Centre; improve safety and attract new stores	Protect our environment from littering and fly-tipping	Communicate with/involve local people more effectively and listen to their feedback.	Promote the positive of Merthyr Tydfil	Improve the bus service so that it's reliable and meets need.

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Clean up our environment; deal with littering and fly-tipping	Improve the bus service	Communicate with/involve local people more effectively and listen to their feedback.	Modernise the Town Centre; improve safety and attract new stores.	Promote the positive of Merthyr Tydfil

Engaging with people from: Merthyr Vale

Merthyr Vale ward

When analysing the response data; **40** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Merthyr Vale ward [5]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:

Breakdown of Responses by Age Group: Merthyr Vale Ward
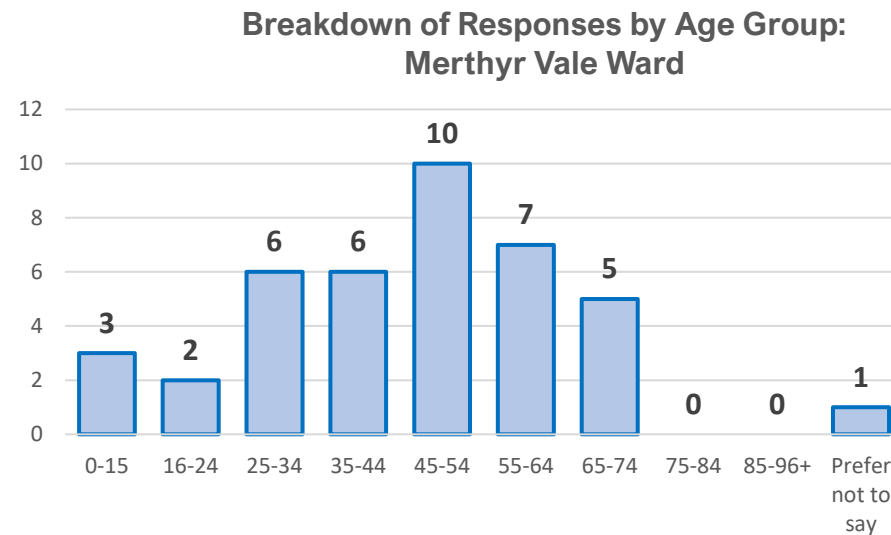
How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Merthyr Vale	3	2	6	6	10	7	5	0	0	1
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities. Based on the confirmed data for **Merthyr Vale ward**; the age range with the response rate linked to residents between **35 and 45 years** was only half the average rate recorded across all wards in the County Borough.

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[5] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Merthyr Vale ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the Merthyr Vale ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

The people and strong sense of community spirit	Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities	It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature	The town's history and heritage – something to be proud of

What did respondents in Merthyr Vale ward state they would like to change?

What Would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil? Merthyr Vale Ward
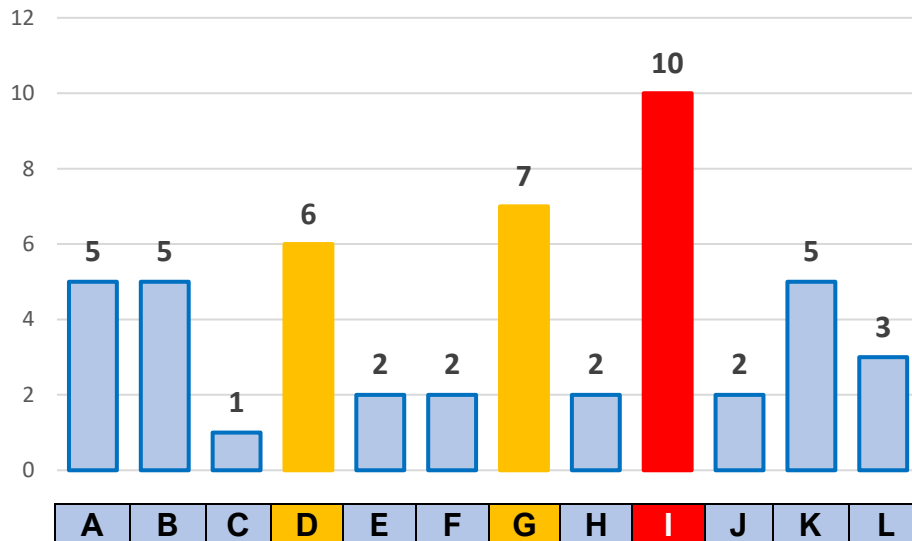
A	Improve the bus service to better meet need (**12.5%**)
B	Tackle community safety issues (e.g.) drugs; dangerous driving; and have more visible Policing (**12.5%**)
C	Protect our environment and tackle litter and fly-tipping (**2.5%**)
D	Improve traffic flow, road conditions etc. (**15%**)
E	Communicate more clearly with residents (and not just digitally) (**5%**)
F	Provide support, advice and training to access work (**5%**)
G	Improve leisure facilities in the County Borough and re-open the pool at Rhydycar (**17.5%**)
H	More youth clubs/facilities for children; young people and families (**5%**)
I	Modernise the Town Centre; attract investment and support local businesses (**25%**)
J	Bring empty buildings back into use for housing/community facilities (**5%**)
K	Tackle parking and parking-related issues (**12.5%**)
L	Promote Merthyr Tydfil's positives (e.g.) heritage, and facilities, to address negative perception of the town (**7.5%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Merthyr Vale** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

Improve facilities for children and young people; including support into employment	Improving public transport
• "We need more employment opportunities for our younger generation. For far too long our Welsh Government have concentrated investment on Cardiff and the M4 corridor to the detriment of Valley communities such as Merthyr. People should not have to travel to Cardiff to get a job. Get the jobs back to Merthyr". • "There is no where you can go for a meal and the kids can play, years ago we had Charlie chalks which was amazing closet is Aberdare, no attraction (e.g.) theme park, winter wonderlands etc. unless you drive miles (or even to England)". • Bring back the family events that use to happen in the years gone by. There also use to be more about for the youth to do.	• "From a town perspective; I think having better connections between villages would be useful, but this can be challenging if the bus service is as bad as it is - I moved to Merthyr from RCT and there weren't half as many problems there". • "Improved travel as public transport is not reliable or running at hours to support people to get to work, particularly from the lower valley". • "The local transport is not good, and people are limited as to where they can go. Transport at night is particularly bad".
More policing and the need to address anti-social behaviour	**Improving leisure services within the County Borough**
• "The level of crime especially the number of joy riders who have caused high number of fatalities. Speed cameras are located in the wrong places and more policing needed walking the streets (the road running alongside the Merthyr College is treated as a racetrack for joyriders waiting for an accident to happen)". • "Crackdown on anti-social behaviour and support the town centre to thrive again". • "A lot of older people are earlier about going out shopping and my nan is worried about going to town in case there is any trouble. I think they need help to feel safe as I can't always go to town with her as I have school".	• "Improve leisure facilities. The Main pool still closed is not acceptable". • "We've lost access to leisure services compared to years ago and having no swimming pool has been the icing on the cake. We're paying the same poll tax but we're not getting what we pay for". • "I think that since the sports centre was run by the trust it's gone downhill so I think the Council should take it back on".

What did respondents in Merthyr Vale feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders Need to Hear?
Merthyr Vale Ward

A	Tackle community safety issues (e.g.) drugs; dangerous driving; and have more visible Policing (**12.5%**)	
B	More youth clubs/facilities for children; young people and families (**10%**)	
C	Provide support to all (including those in work) around the cost-of-living crisis (**12.5%**)	
D	All Councillors to work better together to reduce bureaucracy; focus on priorities and provide services equally across all wards (**12.5%**)	
E	Communicate key messages clearly; listen to people and be open to suggestions (**17.5%**)	
F	Invest in/modernise the Town Centre to attract visitors and boost the local economy (**10%**)	
G	Regenerate empty buildings to bring them back into use for housing/community facilities (**2.5%**)	
H	Protect our environment by tackling litter; fly-tipping (**2.5%**)	
I	Improve leisure facilities and re-open the swimming pool (**5%**)	

The key issues residents from Merthyr Vale ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents comments for context:

All Councillors should work better together to reduce bureaucracy; focus on priorities and provide services equally across all wards	Tackle community safety issues (e.g.) drugs and dangerous driving; and have more visible policing
• "They (Councillors) all must unite in the common cause of working towards making ALL of the Merthyr Borough the best place in Wales". • "The only way to achieve improvements is for Councillors to work together irrespective of their party, for the good of Merthyr". • "I understand that there will be political tensions due to opposing parties (there are tensions in all walks of life), but for the sake of Merthyr, I think there's a need to keep the focus on what's best for the town and its people; and not who wins arguments".	• "(Tackle the) level of crime especially the number of joy riders who have caused high number of fatalities". • "Crackdown on antisocial behaviour and support the town centre to thrive again". • "The town centre can feel unsafe to walk through in the daytime as well as at night. We need to see a bigger police presence". • "There's frequent disruption in the Town which can be a bit frightening and so I think the Police need to be A LOT more visible".

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Tackle community safety issues and have more Police	Communicate more clearly; listen and give people more chances to get involved.	Provide more facilities/activities for children, young people and families	Protect our environment – tackle fly-tipping and littering and think about climate change	Improve the bus service to make it more reliable

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Modernise the Town Centre and support/develop local businesses	Tackle community safety issues and have more Police	Improve leisure facilities and re-open the swimming pool	Improve the bus service to make it more reliable	Communicate more clearly; listen and involve people

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Communicate more clearly; listen and involve people	Protect and promote Merthyr Tydfil's heritage	Tackle community safety issues and have more Police	Improve the bus service and make it more reliable	Protect our environment from climate change; litter and fly-tipping

Engaging with people from: Park Ward

When analysing the response data; **53** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Park ward [6]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:
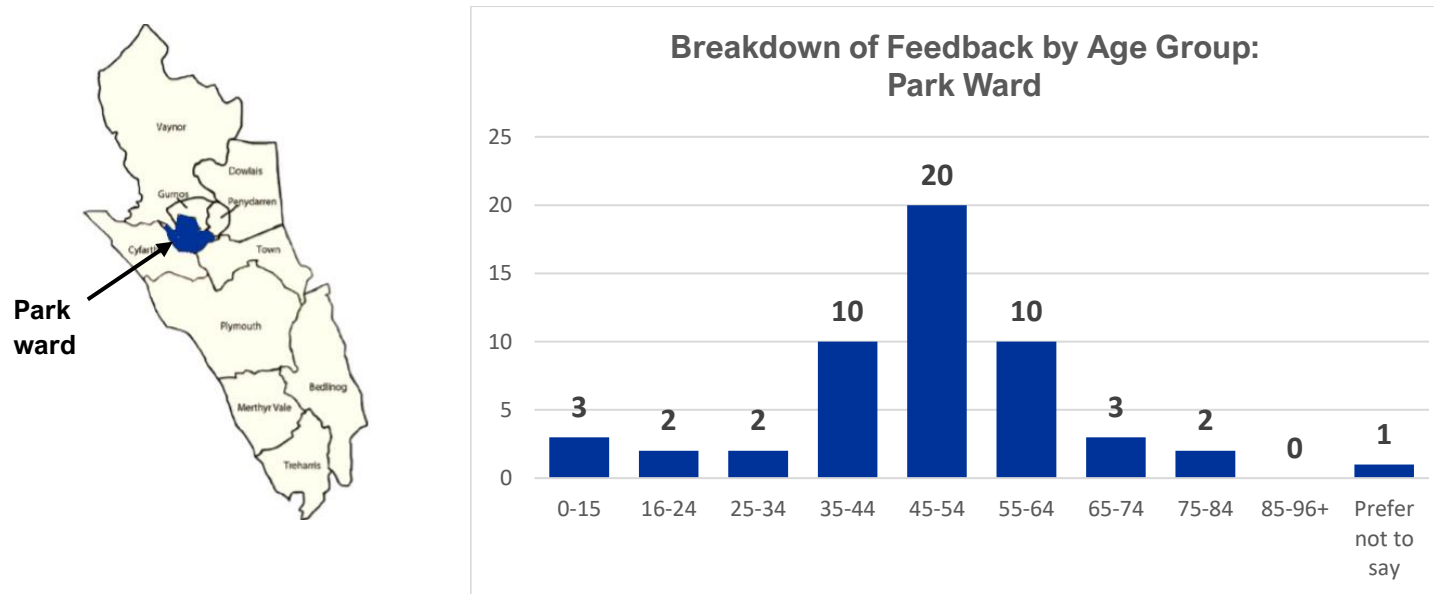
How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Park	3	2	2	10	20	10	3	2	0	1
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities. Based on the confirmed data for **Park ward**; the age range with the highest response rate linked to residents between **45 and 54 years** of age – this was **almost twice the average rate** recorded across all wards in the County Borough

[6] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Park ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in Park ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

The people and strong sense of community spirit

The town's history and heritage – something to be proud of

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

What did respondents in Park ward state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil? Park Ward
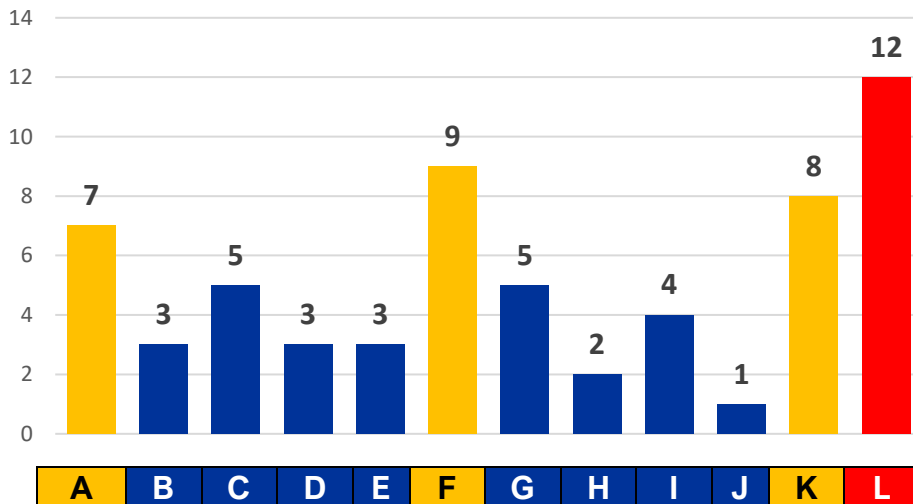
Label	Description
A	Improve the bus service to make it work for people (**13.20%**)
B	Provide support for vulnerable people (including housing and the homeless) and improve access to health and social care services (**5.66%**)
C	Protect and preserve our heritage; regenerate and reuse buildings (**13.20%**)
D	Provide more for children and young people to do (**5.66%**)
E	Promote the positive better - arts and culture, good news stories (including music in schools) (**5.66%**)
F	Modernise the Town Centre and support businesses; improve shops and encourage new investment and better paid employment (**16.98%**)
G	Look after our environment and look to the future (green technologies etc.) (**9.43%**)
H	Support people in poverty and to manage the cost-of-living crisis (**3.77%**)
I	Improve parking, traffic layout; street lighting and accessible pathways (**7.54%**)
J	Listen to people; be outward looking and learn lessons from other places - be aspirational (**1.88%**)
K	Improve leisure services and re-open the swimming pool (**15.09%**)
L	More visible policing to address antisocial behaviour and drug use (especially in the Town Centre) (**22.64%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Park** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

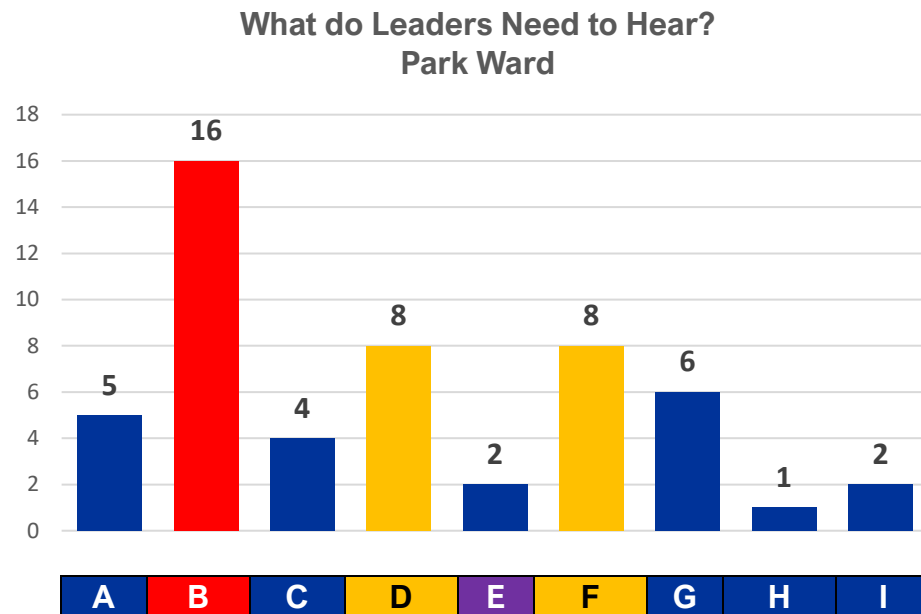| More visible policing to address antisocial behaviour and drug use (especially in the Town Centre)	Modernise the Town Centre and support businesses; improve shops and encourage better paid employment
"More police are needed, especially in the Town Centre". "Not enough police presence around the town and the old bus station is just a huge eyesore as it has been left boarded off". "Yobbish behaviour is putting people off from going to the Town Centre and its' not necessarily by the kids - it's the day drinkers. As there's so much money being spent on making the town centre better, I think sorting that problems out would help a lot". "(We need) more police presence to help prevent crime". "(I'd change) the level of antisocial behaviour and speeding vehicles around the town centre". "(What we need is) more Police presence on the street to address anti-social behaviour".	"The things I would change are the shopping areas, the town centre has nothing to offer apart from Banks, Barbers and the like. There is no draw to the town centre, no reason to come into town. the surrounding areas are picturesque and great for visitors". "(We need) investment in the town centre to open more shops and to make sure our past heritage is shown for all to see". "We run a small business which used to be open 7 days a week, but we can't afford to keep it open that much now because of the rising energy costs. If there was any way we could look to make these or any other overheads lower (e.g.) business rates, we would definitely change that". "I don't know whether this is something that you could change but I think it would be great if there was a repair shop in Merthyr like that programme repair shop on the telly". "The empty high street, it is all well and good having the retail parks but the town centre itself is looking like a sorry place. Nothing like it did 25 years ago during my childhood years".
Improve leisure services – and re-open the swimming pool	**Improve the bus service to make it work for people**
"I would love for the leisure centre to reopen as have really missed that". "(I'd sort out) the lack of facilities (swimming pool etc.)". "The leisure centre is a bit of a disaster at the moment, the pool has been closed for ages, there was flooding when we had heavy rain and if I'm honest, when I used the changing rooms, the hygiene left a lot to be desired. I've switched and now go to the centre in Aberdare, but I'd really like to use Merthyr and would if the standards improved. If this could be changed, you would have an extra customer".	"(Sort out) Public transport. Currently it is impossible to plan journeys or even travel to work due to ongoing cancellations of bus service" "The lack of affordable and reliable public transport - particularly in the evenings". "Better services to get around Merthyr - make the bus service more reliable as soon, people won't be able to afford to run their cars and will need public transport to get back and for to work". "Transport links...very poor !".

What did respondents in Park feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders Need to Hear?
Park Ward

A	Protect and preserve our heritage; arts and culture (**9.43%**)
B	Work more closely with, and listen to local people, engage and involve them (and not just digitally) (**30.18%**)
C	Address crime (e.g.) ASB, dangerous drivers etc. (**7.54%**)
D	Improve the shops and broaden the retail offer across the whole County Borough; encouraging inward investment and better paid jobs (**15.09%**)
E	Improve educational outcomes for young people (**3.77%**)
F	Improve sports and leisure services and re-open the swimming pool (**15.09%**)
G	Protect our environment and keep it clean; looking to lead on 'green futures' (**11.32%**)
H	Improve the bus service (**1.88%**)
I	Look at restructuring the traffic infrastructure to make it more effective (**3.77%**)

The key issues residents from **Park** ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents' comments for context:

Work more closely with and listen to local people, engage and involve them (and not just digitally)	Improve the shops and broaden the retail offer across the whole County Borough; encouraging inward investment and better paid jobs
• "Work with Merthyr people properly, and listen to what they've got to say". • "I think if those in charge took the time to work with local people early on when they are planning things, we might get better results and would reduce some of the criticism the town gets - by this I don't mean just online surveys, but things like town hall meetings or charrettes - there's a wealth of brain power in the area which seems to be relatively untapped".	• To attract visitors to Merthyr, and to retain the loyalty of residents, they have to offer an equal or better experience. People travel to Aberdare, Pontypridd etc to use leisure, shops etc due to the poor state and high cost of using Merthyr's few options. When people travel for one thing, they are then more likely to remain there, and spend more money with other businesses, etc.". • "All the jobs I tend to see are in cafes, bars and pubs but I want to work in other fields, and I just don't know if that's something that is available locally. I'm in my last year of college and I know some of my mates are

- "MTCBC has great control over money spent and development of the borough. Improve performance in the organisation, stop granting jobs for attendance rather than capability, stop nepotism, address poor budget management, stop petty theft, bullying and harassment which would hopefully improve sickness records".

- "They (the Council) need to place people of the town at heart of decision making".

thinking of moving to live in Swansea or Cardiff because there's more stuff there work-wise. I love Merthyr and don't want to move but it may be inevitable – if those in charge were able to signpost people to jobs of different sorts, I think more people my age would consider staying".

- "The town really depends on its people and the people depend on local businesses - any additional support you could give to local businesses could mean that they remain open; still needing workers and putting money in people's pockets which they would then spend locally too".

Address issues around leisure services and sports/physical activity

- "Leisure centre what's happening there, update on pool and the cafe area is closed. more communication is needed from leaders even if they fear being criticised at least people will appreciate what is going on".

- "I think that the Council should take back control of Cyfarthfa Castle and control what goes on there. The park itself is lovely, but I've heard the Castle is starting to deteriorate and the Trust don't know how to get the money to repair it".

- "That sport is important, and it keeps you fit, and you can play sports with your friends and there should be more money for football stuff to help us when we go football training".

- "The leisure centre is a bit of a disaster at the moment, the pool has been closed for ages, there was flooding when we had heavy rain and if I'm honest, when I used the changing rooms, the hygiene left a lot to be desired. I've switched and now go to the centre in Aberdare, but I'd really like to use Merthyr and would if the standards improved. If this could be changed, you would have an extra customer".

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

More facilities for children, young people and families	Improve leisure service and sporting activities	Listen to local young people and give them opportunities to get involved	Keep up the youth services to provide young people with things to do

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Modernise the Town Centre and support/develop local businesses	Improve leisure service and sporting activities	Listen to local people and give them more chances to get involved	Improve community safety and facilities in the Town Centre (e.g.) address ASB; encourage more shops	Protect our green spaces from litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Listen to local people and give them more chances to get involved	Preserve and protect our heritage; arts and culture	Look after our environment – keep it clean and free from litter/fly-tipping.	Modernise the Town Centre and support/develop local businesses	Improve community safety and facilities in the Town Centre (e.g.) address ASB; encourage more shops

Engaging with people from: **Penydarren Ward**

When analysing the response data; **71** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Penydarren ward[7]

A break down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward identified the following:
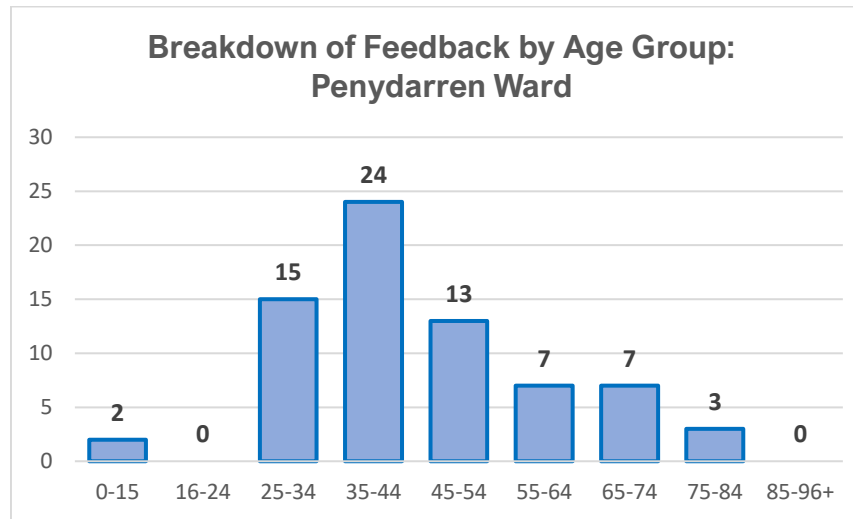
Penydarren ward

Breakdown of Feedback by Age Group: Penydarren Ward

How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Penydarren	2	0	15	24	13	7	7	3	0	0
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Based on the confirmed data for **Penydarren ward**; the age range with the highest response rate linked to residents between **35 and 44 years** of age – this is **almost double the average rate recorded across all wards in the County Borough**. However, there were **no responses received** from young people aged between **16-24 years** in response to this survey; so, this would impact on the data/information analysis explored in the rest of this document.

[7] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Penydarren ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the Penydarren ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

The people and strong sense of community spirit

It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

The town's history and heritage – it's unique

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

What did respondents in Penydarren ward state they would like to change?

What would you change about Merthyr Tydfil? Penydarren ward

Category	Value
A	15
B	7
C	8
D	1
E	11
F	5
G	10
H	17
I	15
J	2
K	1
L	1
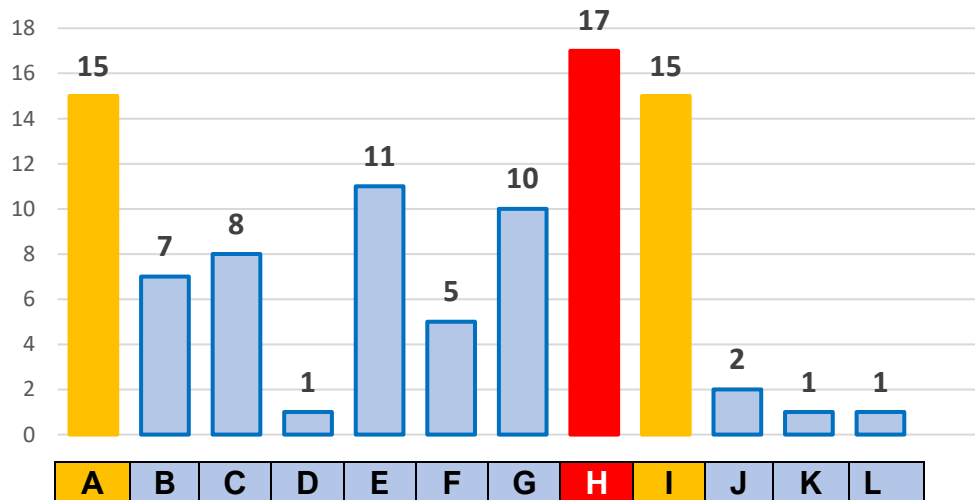
A	Modernise the Town Centre (and community-based stores), attract inward investment and support local businesses (**21.12%**)
B	Improve public transport (**9.85%**)
C	Protect our environment from building development and keep it clean an free from litter; dog fouling etc. (**11.26%**)
D	Address mess and noise arising from A465 works (**1.40%**)
E	Address traffic and parking issues (especially around schools) (**15.49%**)
F	Challenge the negative perception of Merthyr Tydfil (**7.04%**)
G	Address the issues around leisure services and re-open the swimming pool (**14.08%**)
H	More facilities for children; young people and their families (e.g.) health and social care; playgrounds and parks (**23.94%**)
I	Tackle crime (e.g.) antisocial behaviour; dangerous driving; drugs; and have more visible policing (**21.12%**)
J	Involve residents more when planning future developments (**2.81%**)
K	Protect our heritage buildings for future generations (**1.40%**)
L	Help people of all ages into work (**1.40%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Penydarren** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

More facilities for children; young people and their families (e.g.) health and social care; playgrounds and parks	Modernise the Town Centre (and community-based stores), attract inward investment and support local businesses
"Park areas for children (namely the park situated at the bottom of Rocky Road and the development of that green area)". "There needs to be more parks for the little ones and there needs to be something for the older children to do ranging from 11 plus not everyone wants to do sports etc. so a place for them to hang out or even a place where the kids can just express themself in safety will be an amazing help. A place where carers are can have a break and just be a child for 1 hour". "More inclusive playgrounds for all children. Water in the pool for children to learn to swim". "It's probably impossible but more support for social care would make a difference to people of all ages".	"Regeneration of Town Centre - Very depressing. Needs modernising. More social spaces. Full of fast-food shops, betting shops, phone shops and empty units". "We need better shops, there is no variety in the town centre or in the retail park". "The High Street seems to really be dying a death. Reduced rates on stores in the town centre could give the town an injection of energy - we could see new small businesses having half a chance of surviving and re-establishing a proper high street". "Everyone wants Merthyr to be lively and bustling but that's more difficult I'd all the jobs are in retail or service industry - better quality jobs should pay more, boosting the local economy". "We need more businesses in the town to make it vibrant again".
Tackle crime (e.g.) antisocial behaviour; drugs and dangerous driving; and have more visible policing	
"Reduce the levels of anti-social behaviour in the County Borough". "We need more Policing on our estates as well as in the Town Centre". "The antisocial behaviour in the town centre, the cars racing round every evening (need to be addressed)". "Have more police visible to deter crime and stop all the idiotic drivers who are using Merthyr as a racetrack". "There's always going to be drug issues in the town centre. Sadly, there are often people who are clearly under the influence in the town during the daytime as well as at night".	

What did respondents in Penydarren feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders Need to Hear?
Penydarren Ward

A	Modernise and regenerate the Town Centre; support local business and capitalise on opportunities to introduce better paid jobs (**9.85%**)	
B	Improve public transport to meet the community's needs (**5.63%**)	
C	Improve our highways and transport infrastructure (**2.81%**)	
D	Listen to and involve local people more; release clear, timely communications; and make contact through different methods - not just digitally (**29.57%**)	
E	Provide help and support to people around the cost of living (e.g.) freeze Council Tax (**11.26%**)	
F	Protect our environment from building development and the Opencast; clean drains and keep streets clear of litter and fly-tipping (**9.85%**)	
G	Invest in facilities for children, young people and their families (**5.63%**)	
H	Address issues with leisure services and re-open the swimming pool (**5.63%**)	
I	Tackle crime (drugs; antisocial behaviour and dangerous driving) (**11.26%**)	
J	Provide more support to children and young people with disabilities/additional needs both through education and social care (**4.22%**)	
K	Promote and protect Merthyr Tydfil's reputation more effectively (**2.81%**)	

The key issues residents from **Penydarren** ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below along with some comments for context:

Listen to and involve local people more; release clear, timely communications; and make contact through different methods – not just digital	Provide help and support to people around the cot-of-living crisis (e.g.) freeze Council Tax
• "Listen to the community more. Also, not everyone has access to online, better communications need to be in place". • "I think investing in the town needs to continue, though with the cost-of-living stuff, I know that's going to get more difficult. I think people would be willing to work along with the Council if they were given the chance, but there doesn't seem to be that many chances – there are times when you see what the Council is doing that you think to yourself 'why have they got that so wrong? People are telling them what they want and	• "I see Housing as a critical need; and more particularly homelessness – particularly if the cost-of-living increases are sustained as this will add pressure on people being able to pay rents or a mortgage – there are high levels of homelessness in Merthyr anyway, but this could really tip the balance for many families who would never have believed they could be facing this challenge just 12 months ago" • "I think investing in the town needs to continue, though with the cost-of-living stuff, I know that's going to get more difficult. I think people would be willing to work along with the Council if they were given the chance,

they're not listening' – if this could be addressed, results might get better for everyone".

- "Listen to the community more.   Also that not everyone has access to online, better communications need to be in place".

- "I think people would be willing to work along with the Council if they were given the chance, but there doesn't seem to be that many chances – there are times when you see what the Council is doing that you think to yourself 'why have they got that so wrong? People are telling them what they want and they're not listening' – if this could be addressed, results might get better for everyone".

but there doesn't seem to be that many chances – there are times when you see what the Council is doing that you think to yourself 'why have they got that so wrong? People are telling them what they want and they're not listening' – if this could be addressed, results might get better for everyone".

- "Think about freezing the Council Tax and do something about business rates - this financial crunch is having a massive impact and the council seem quite quiet about it. Also, cost-of-living support for full time workers, not just people who are entitled to UC".

Tackle crime (drugs; dangerous driving; and antisocial behaviour – particularly in the Town Centre)

- "Antisocial behaviour, boy racers need to be stopped. There are no police in the area, what are we paying them for, they are non-existent. Racing cars right outside the police station???"

- "I feel they need to realise that there are several problems within the area, drug being a bit part. Which links in with the anti-social behaviour problems".

- "I think the Police need to have a much more visible presence (I'm not talking about bobbies on the beat, but just the fact that they show up when there's an incident – my neighbour waited 11 hours for a Policeman when some drunk persons put their window through and as for the 101 service, that's pathetic)".

- "There needs to be enforcement on dog mess, dangerous drivers on streets is terrifying and streetlights going off in the night is unsafe".

- "(You need to have) better community safety messages – they're either too late or only available on social media and loads of people don't follow the Council on there, so they're missing out".

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Add more thing for younger people to do in the week	Think about accessibility of places – people can't get into some buildings easily in a wheelchair

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Listen to the community more and involve people before decisions are made.	Provide more amenities for children, young people and their families.	Leisure services need to be completed reviewed – the lack of these is impacting people's health and well-being	Modernise and regenerate the Town Centre; support local business and introduce better paid jobs	Parking needs to be addressed and public transport improved

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Address anti-social behaviour and dangerous driving: with Police MUCH more visible	Take the time to listen to residents – we have lots of experience to share	Modernise and regenerate the Town Centre; support local business and introduce better paid jobs	Make improvements for children and young people –playgrounds where needed (e.g.) Plantation Close	Help people to manage the impact of the cost-of-living crisis
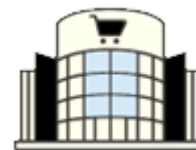
Engaging with people from: **Plymouth Ward**

When analysing the response data; **55** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Plymouth ward [8]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:

Plymouth ward

Breakdown of Feedback by Age Group: Plymouth Ward
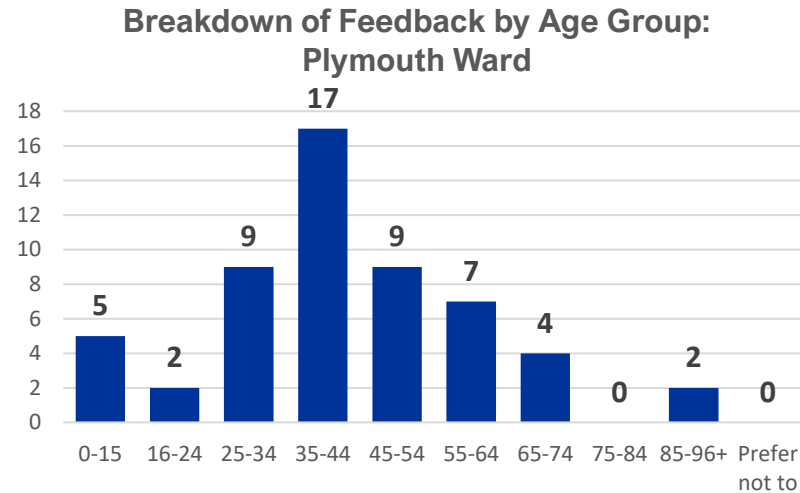
How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Plymouth	5	2	9	17	9	7	4	0	2	0
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities. Based on the confirmed data for **Plymouth ward**; the age range with the highest response rate linked to residents between **0 and 15 years** of age – this is **almost double** the average rate recorded across all wards in the County Borough.

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[8] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Plymouth ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the Plymouth ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

The people and strong sense of community spirit

It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

Great central location and good connections

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

What did respondents in Plymouth ward state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil? Plymouth Ward
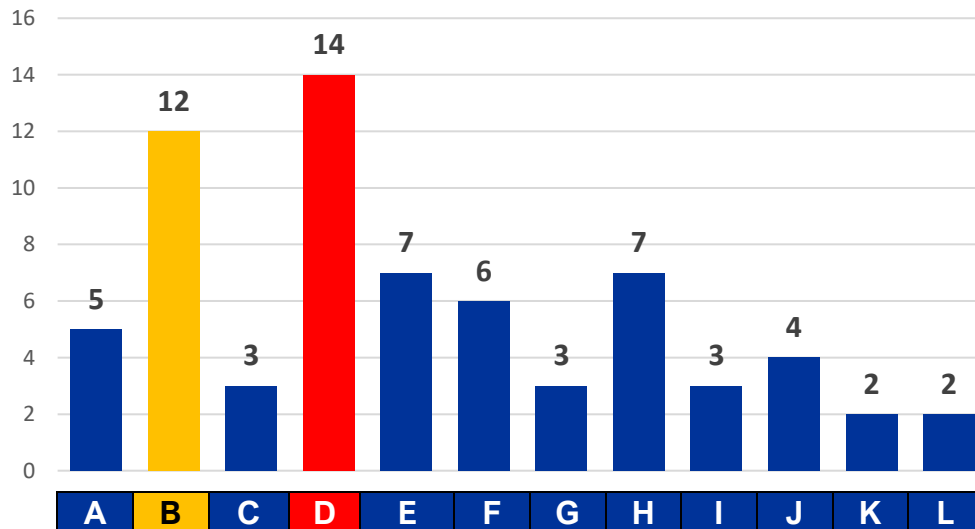
A	More leisure facilities, especially the swimming pool (**9.09%**)
B	More Police presence - tackle antisocial behaviour, drugs and dangerous driving (**21.81%**)
C	More education for young people about safe behaviours (**5.45%**)
D	Protect our open spaces; highways and trails from litter, dog fouling and fly-tipping (**25.45%**)
E	Modernise and improve the Town Centre; attract inward investment and support businesses (**12.72%**)
F	Improve public transport, specifically the bus service (**10.90%**)
G	Promote Merthyr Tydfil's positive stories (**5.45%**)
H	More activities for children, young people and their families (**12.72%**)
I	Review parking charges (**5.45%**)
J	More funding for health and social care (**7.27%**)
K	Listen to local people and communicate in a timely way; offering them opportunities to get involved (**3.63%**)
L	Help people to manage the cost-of-living crisis to help prevent its impact (e.g.) rising risk of homelessness (**3.63%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Plymouth** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

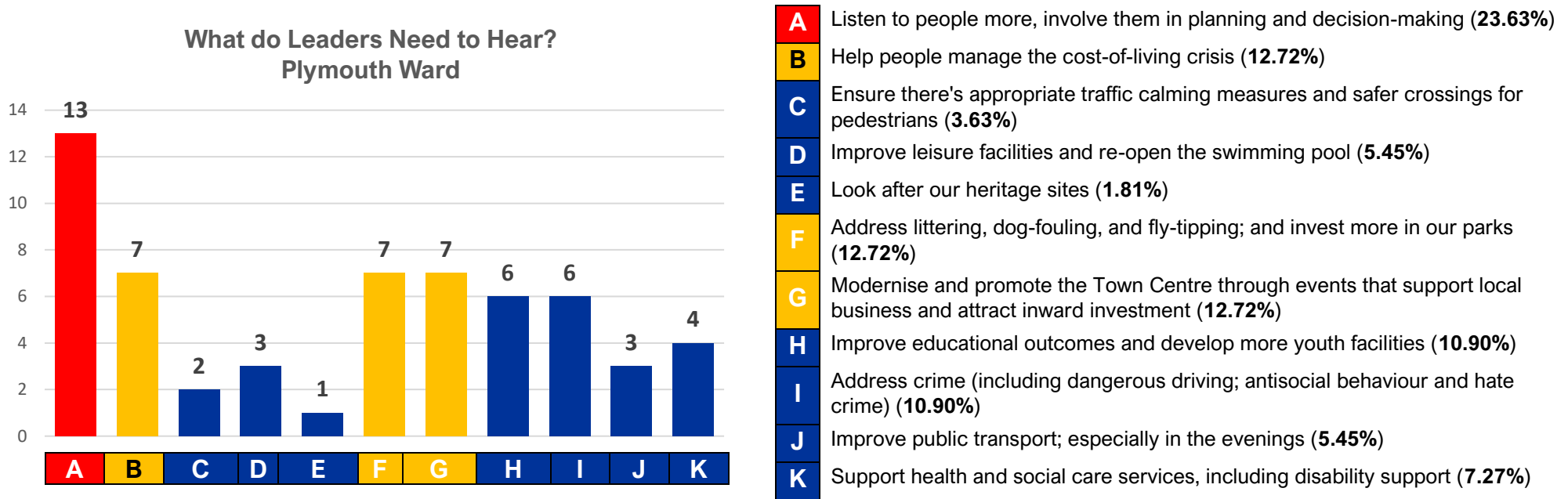| Protect our open spaces; highways and trails from litter, dog fouling and fly-tipping	More Police presence - tackle antisocial behaviour, drugs and dangerous driving
• "Sort out the littering and dog pooh everywhere as it can be a nightmare when you are out walking". • "Stop green spaces being built upon. Make all parks equal as the quality of children's parks in Merthyr is a post code lottery". • "(We need) more parks and events like Aberdare where they don't charge a fortune". • "I was going to say get the bin men to pick up after themselves when they drop stuff but I was just speaking to my friend about it and they explained how many houses the bin men had to collect from a day so I realise I was being really harsh! • "Live on the Taff Trail but don't feel safe walking it at night as there's not enough lights. • Not enough dog mess bins on Taff Trail. Upkeep of local parks needs lots of attention". • "As a dog owner, I know we need more Dog bins". • "Stop further developments on our green spaces".	• "More Police presence in villages. Perhaps visiting schools, not only primary, but secondary and now the local college, ensuring young persons are aware of dangers of drugs". • "Let's face it, Merthyr can be rough and ready, and we hear a lot of stories about how things that happen make life difficult for people. Something that's really a hot topic at the moment is the joyriders that are making going out on the roads dangerous – this has already led to issues, but we see only minimal evidence of anything being done about it. There are also issues with some young people taking things a step to far – throwing stones or eggs and stuff at cars – this is really stupid and super dangerous as well so to me, making a stand and taking action about this type of thing is a change that's needed". • "I see drink and drugs as being a big issue for Merthyr – and this can lead to trouble on the streets in the area I live (there's often arguments and lots of cars going 'to and fro' as people are dealing drugs)". • "The amount of antisocial behaviour. The boy racers. The druggies the amount of litter - people don't seem to have pride in their communities anymore". • Antisocial behaviour, boy racers need to be stopped. There are no police in the area, what are we paying them for, they are non-existent. Racing cars right outside the police station???" • "If I were them, I'd be looking to invest in the town centre. It can be really intimidating sometimes walking in the town, my nan won't go there any more cos she's afraid that someone will kick off".

What did respondents in Plymouth feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders Need to Hear?
Plymouth Ward

A	Listen to people more, involve them in planning and decision-making (**23.63%**)	
B	Help people manage the cost-of-living crisis (**12.72%**)	
C	Ensure there's appropriate traffic calming measures and safer crossings for pedestrians (**3.63%**)	
D	Improve leisure facilities and re-open the swimming pool (**5.45%**)	
E	Look after our heritage sites (**1.81%**)	
F	Address littering, dog-fouling, and fly-tipping; and invest more in our parks (**12.72%**)	
G	Modernise and promote the Town Centre through events that support local business and attract inward investment (**12.72%**)	
H	Improve educational outcomes and develop more youth facilities (**10.90%**)	
I	Address crime (including dangerous driving; antisocial behaviour and hate crime) (**10.90%**)	
J	Improve public transport; especially in the evenings (**5.45%**)	
K	Support health and social care services, including disability support (**7.27%**)	

Chart values: A=13, B=7, C=2, D=3, E=1, F=7, G=7, H=6, I=6, J=3, K=4

The key issues residents from **Plymouth** ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents' comments for context:

Listen to people more, involve them in planning and decision-making	More investment in parks; address litter; fly-tipping; and dog fouling
• "The people of Merthyr Tydfil - the ones born and bred here have seen many changes and perhaps not being heard". • "I think those in charge need to consult residents but not those who speak loudest on social media. There are people out there that won't speak out unless feet meet doorsteps". • "I think if they spoke more with people in Merthyr, they'd have a better idea of what needs to be done to make things better". • "People of the town have great ideas and suggestions to improving Merthyr. They should listen".	• "The issues we're having with litter and in particular fly-tipping are a real blight; but I don't know whether this cost-of-living crisis is making this worse - not sure the Council people would have thought of this?". • "I think we should make more of an effort to stop people dumping rubbish and littering everywhere. I was out on a walk the other day and if I passed one McDonalds wrapper, I passed about 50 - flaming blight on our beautiful countryside". • "People who have dogs should pick up after them because it's disgusting when they don't, and the dogs can't do it themselves. My mother went

• "If there was more to show you listen to people you wouldn't have such a hard time".	mad when I fell in dog pooh and said I couldn't go to football again but I still want to so I think they should get someone to clean up the dog pooh on the fields so we can play".
Help people with concerns over the cost-of-living crisis	**Modernise and promote the Town Centre through events that support local business and attract inward investment**
• "I'm finding it difficult to see a way out of this - I'm concerned about how I can afford to maintain my mortgage and have already cut back on electricity, gas, food, clothes etc, I'd like leaders to make it much clearer where support is available and where people can go to get the help they desperately need". • "Money is really tight, and people are not managing very well and it's not their fault. I'd suggest the politicians in charge think about how they can help people more, tell people how they can get grants and stuff that will help them weather the storm. They were out and about when corona virus was about, but they seem to have dropped off the face of the earth". • "Businesses need more support to stay open and build on Merthyr's innovative reputation. You need to help food banks, promote community gardens in each village, we need to build communities for all". • "I think more thought needs to be given to people on lower incomes as it's so much harder for us to make ends meet".	• "If I were them, I'd be looking to invest in the town centre. It can be really intimidating sometimes walking in the town, my nan won't go there any more cos she's afraid that someone will kick off". • "When I came back to Merthyr, I decided to start my own small business and the support I got from the Council was great – perhaps promoting this even more as a choice for local people would be a positive step (though I have seen Cayman is putting more up on social media now so work is finally getting out there)". • "The town is fast becoming a ghost town with too many fast-food shops, pound shops and charity shops". • "There's more to Merthyr than just elderly people and children/teens. Fixing parks isn't really going to fix the town, we need more for the 25-50 age gap who are going to use the town to socialise, put money back into pockets. We need more help for independent businesses to be able to survive in the town, not another Costa or Greggs"

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

More and better playground and things for children and young people to do	Modernise the Town Centre and get better shops; and support local businesses	Clean up litter and dog fouling; and tell people what the Council is doing for Climate Change

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Have a more visible Police presence in our communities; and tackle drugs and antisocial behaviour.	Listen to the community more and involve people before decisions are made.	More support for health and social care; including support for those with disabilities and additional learning needs	Provide advice, guidance and practical support around managing the cost-of-living crisis.	Improve public transport so people can get to and from work

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

| Improve local bus services; especially in the evenings	Have a more visible Police presence in our communities; and tackle drugs and antisocial behaviour.	More support for health and social care; including support for those with disabilities and additional learning needs	Work to proactively prevent flooding	Provide advice, guidance and practical support around managing the cost-of-living crisis

Engaging with people from: Town ward

When analysing the response data; **105** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Town ward [9]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:

Breakdown of Feedback by Age Group: Town Ward
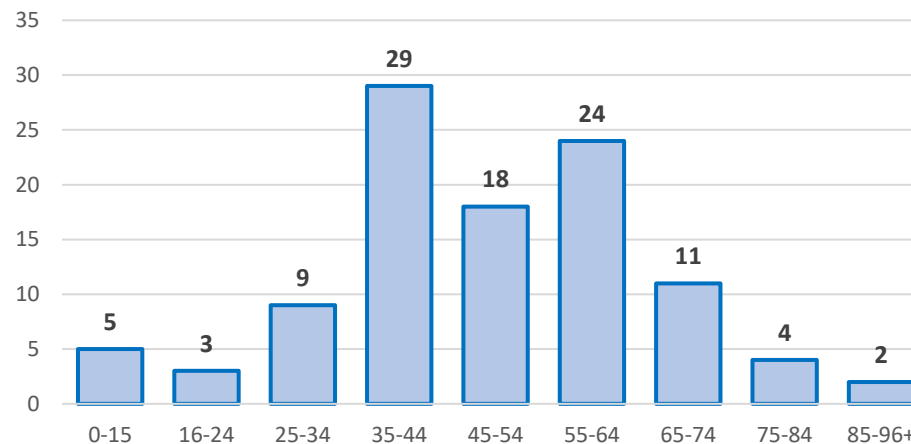
How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Town	5	3	9	29	18	24	11	4	2	
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities. Responses received from Town ward were the highest across all wards; this was expected as Town ward is the most densely populated.

Based on confirmed data; the response rates for residents between **35-44 years** and **55-64 years** recorded **more than double the average rate recorded** across all wards in the County Borough.

[9] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Town ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the Merthyr Vale ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

The people and strong sense of community spirit

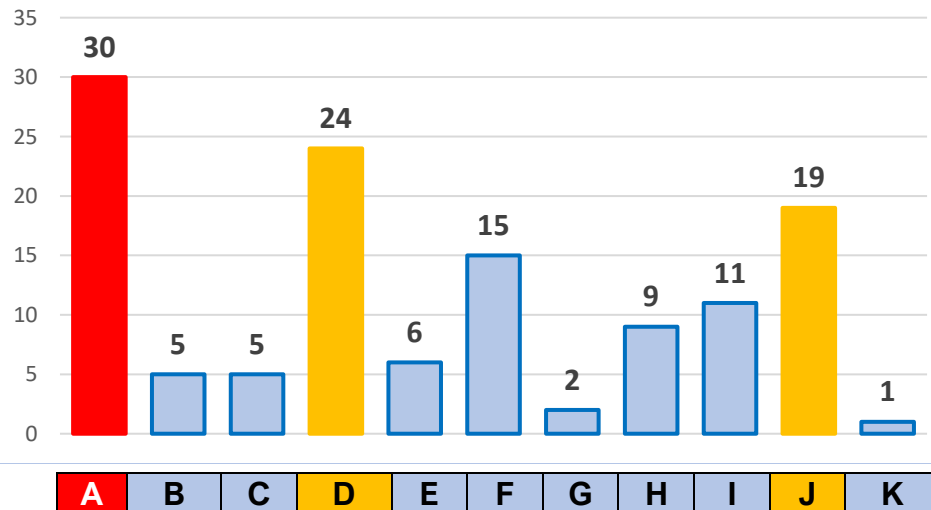It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

Merthyr Tydfil's rich history; heritage and culture

What did respondents in Town ward state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil? Town Ward

Bar	Value
A	30
B	5
C	5
D	24
E	6
F	15
G	2
H	9
I	11
J	19
K	1

A	Modernise/regenerate the Town Centre; attract inward investment and better paid jobs (**28.57%**)
B	Provide support to address poverty and the cost-of-living crisis (**4.76%**)
C	Develop and promote tourism activity across the County Borough (**4.76%**)
D	Protect our environment from litter; fly-tipping etc. and maintain green spaces/trails to ensure they are accessible (**22.85%**)
E	Improve health and social care; including support around ALN/disabilities and access to GPs and dentists (**5.71%**)
F	Improve leisure services; and re-open the main swimming pool (**14.28%**)
G	Bring empty properties back into use to help meet the housing need (**1.9%**)
H	Address parking and traffic issues (**8.57%**)
I	Improve the local bus service to meet public needs; and develop Active Travel routes (**10.47%**)
J	Address crime (e.g.) antisocial behaviour; dangerous driving and drugs; and make Policing much more visible (**18%**)
K	Improve education and teaching in schools (**1%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Town** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

Modernise and regenerate the Town Centre; attract inward investment and better paid jobs	Protect our environment from litter and fly-tipping etc.; and maintain our green spaces/trails to ensure they are accessible
• "Merthyr has loads of shops and places to eat and drink; but that means a lot of the jobs are lower wages (unless you work for the hospital or the council or places like that) - I'd look to see how we could attract bigger businesses to the area who pay better wages". • "Introduction on more manufacturing and service providers to create more jobs and better prospects." • "Buildings particularly in the town centre area and of historic nature left to rot away and potentially dangerous and of course those buildings could be utilised for various activities/new ventures". • "I would like to see better shops in the town centre, (e.g.) Primark, Waterstones, WHS Smiths. (Currently we seem to have an abundance of nail shops, hairdressers, vape shops, betting shops and charity shops which represents the area of Merthyr in a poor light)".	• "The amount of litter across the borough isn't acceptable and quite embarrassing for those that visit". • "(We need) Somewhere in Merthyr for our children and grandchildren to learn how to swim- it is a life skill- open up Rhydycar pool, really disappointed with the delay, people are travelling to other counties to swim and to learn". • "The amount of litter and general appearance of some areas/buildings /roads / common land areas. It feels generally under maintained, even as far as signage looks old/worn and often very dirty". • "I'm worried about the environment and climate change and would want to make sure that we're doing everything that we possibly can to prevent the problems from getting worse. Communication is key to this, and the Council offer lots of services which could help lead the way - by letting people know, we may increase the number of people who take up sensible behaviours".
Address crime (e.g.) antisocial behaviour; dangerous driving etc.; and make Policing much more visible	
• "As much as I love Merthyr, the town centre is a bit rough and at times, a little intimidating. It can be really intimidating, and I don't go into town often nowadays, but order things online instead - I'd rather spend money with local businesses so if that behaviour of certain people could be addressed, I would try to do that". • "More policing for the streets. Bring back the 'bobby on the beat. More policing of the car/boy racers which are plaguing the town at night. They are utterly relentless night after night. It was a matter of time before an accident occurred and now a lady has sadly lost her life". • "Address the ASB experienced in pockets of the borough and the recently publicised speeding cars on the A470 and tramroad areas. This makes residents feel unsafe and grows the negative reputation of Merthyr".	

What did respondents in Town feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders Need to Hear?
Town Ward

A	Address litter and fly-tipping; protect open green spaces and help people around managing climate change (**16.19%**)
B	Improve the leisure facilities and re-open the main swimming pool (**6.66%**)
C	Improve the bus and train services (**4.76%**)
D	Improve health and social care, especially Children's Services (**6.66%**)
E	Address crime (e.g.) antisocial behaviour; dangerous driving and give out more community safety messages (**13.33%**)
F	Modernise/regenerate the Town Centre so there are more/better paid jobs (**8.57%**)
G	Listen to and involve people more; communicate clear messages using different methods - not just digital (**26.66%**)
H	Promote Merthyr's positives more effectively to address negative perception and increase visitor interest (**8.57%**)
I	Provide residents with practical advice and support to help them manage the impact of the cost-of-living crisis (**6.66%**)

Listen to and involve people more; communicate clear messages using different methods – not just digitally	Address litter and fly-tipping; protect our open green spaces and help people around climate change
• "I think there are a lot of local people who have good ideas and are quite innovative. We don't always feel we can approach the Council to discuss ideas and sometimes, we certainly don't not feel listened to (though there have been some exceptions like the school in Cefn). If the Council could run Town Hall meetings, or charettes, that might help break down the (perceived) barriers". • "Key messages need to be communicated clearly and in plain English so that the majority of people understand. Also, Councillors have a part to play in helping communication between the people and the Council - in my ward, I don't see much evidence of this being done". • "Need a clearer mechanism for residents' voices to be heard by decision makers. Many people do not engage politically and do not speak with local councillors. There needs to be ongoing and flexible ways that	• "(I think that they should hear) that more resources should be spent on the environment and addressing climate change as it is key to addressing all issues". • "(I'd suggest) More litter pickers/ higher fines for littering". • "I'd suggest the Council think about the environment more when looking at ALL new developments". • "Love the green space we have and would really love to see more growing spaces for sustainability". • "Make sure pathways aren't overgrown so it's easy to get through". • "Sports and time outdoors is so important; I'd like to see outdoor spaces protected wherever possible".

residents can give their feedback, not just online which many people struggle with from a literacy and equipment / connectivity perspective. And give feedback so residents know the LA has listened".

- "I'd suggest we need to continue to pay attention to our communities. By actively listening to people affected by the challenges we're trying to manage, we can get real-life examples of what has/hasn't worked to help us develop meaningful solutions. I'd also suggest that the power of people working together can't be underestimated. When there is a collective effort behind a project, the increased energy helps us tackle big challenges more effectively - look at how we responded to Covid!"

- "We need to look after our environment better as we only have one chance. Fine those people dumping rubbish and name and shame them".

- "I'm worried about the environment and climate change and would want to make sure that we're doing everything that we possibly can to prevent the problems from getting worse. Communication is key to this, and the Council offer lots of services which could help lead the way - by letting people know, we may increase the number of people who take up sensible behaviours".

Address crime (e.g.) antisocial behaviour; dangerous driving etc.; and make Policing much more visible

- "More needs to be done to control the dangerous driving around Merthyr. I live in the Mardy and the noise from Rhydycar / Tesco / A470 / slip road / Twyn Hill is ridiculous. I also witness speeding and dangerous manoeuvres daily.

- "More policing for the streets. Bring back the 'bobby on the beat. More policing of the car/boy racers which are plaguing the town at night. They are utterly relentless night after night. It was a matter of time before an accident occurred and now a lady has sadly lost her life".

- "Policing CCTV and speed measures as along Merthyr outskirts and within; during the night is being used as racetrack".

- "Address the ASB experienced in pockets of the borough and the recently publicised speeding cars on the A470 and tramroad areas. This makes residents feel unsafe and grows the negative reputation of Merthyr".

- "Town centre re-energised - clamp down on anti-social behaviour!"

- "Policing needs to be increased – people need to feel safe"

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Keep Merthyr clean – less litter and fly-tipping	More facilities for children, young people and families	Improve parking (both in Town and residential)	Improve community safety (e.g.) address ASB; more visible policing	More access to counselling and support

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Improve leisure services and re-open the swimming pool	Improve community safety (e.g.) address antisocial behaviour; more visible policing	Modernise the Town Centre; attract better shops and support local businesses	More inclusive sports facilities	Improve public transport – especially the bus service

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

| Improve public transport, especially the buses	Modernise the Town Centre; support local businesses and attract more investment	Improve community safety (e.g.) address antisocial behaviour; more visible policing	Help people to manage the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis	Improve leisure services and re-open the swimming pool

Engaging with people from: Treharris Ward

When analysing the response data; **51** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Treharris ward[10]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:

Treharris ward

Breakdown of Feedback by Age Group: Treharris Ward
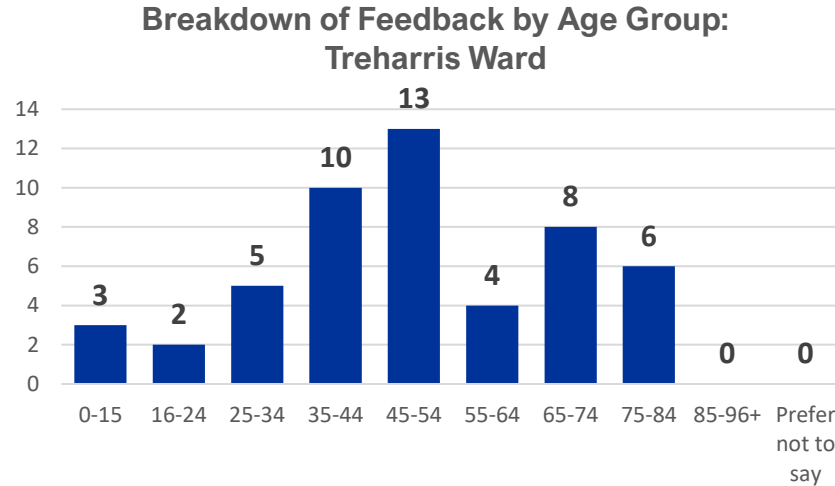
How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Treharris	3	2	5	10	13	4	8	6	0	0
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities. Based on the confirmed data for **Treharris ward**; the age ranges with the highest response rate linked to residents between **65 – 74** and **75 – 84 years** of age – both recording rates slightly above the average recorded across all wards in the County Borough.

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[10] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Treharris ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the Plymouth ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

The people and strong sense of community spirit

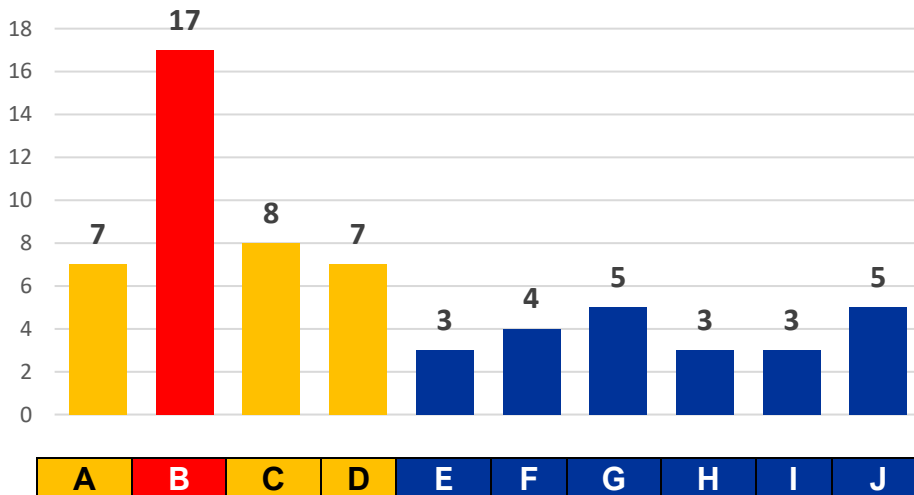It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

Great central location and good connections

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

What did respondents in Treharris ward state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil?
Treharris Ward

A — Improve community facilities in Treharris (e.g.) shops, banks, Post Office etc. (**13.72%**)

B — Modernise the Town Centre; attract inward investment and support local businesses (**33.33%**)

C — Improve travel infrastructure and public transport (**15.68%**)

D — More visible Policing to address antisocial behaviour; drugs etc. (**13.72%**)

E — Provide support for vulnerable people including services for children and young people (**5.88%**)

F — Address parking and traffic-related issues (**7.84%**)

G — Keep streets clean and maintain walking trails from litter; dog fouling and fly-tipping (**9.80%**)

H — Promote Merthyr's positives – communicate using different methods (not just digitally) (**5.88%**)

I — Provide support around the cost-of-living crisis (**5.88%**)

J — Preserve our history and heritage (**9.80%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Treharris** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

Modernise our Town Centre; attract inward investment and support local businesses	Improve facilities in Treharris (e.g.) shops; banks; Post Office etc.
• "(You need to do something about) the run-down shops, empty and neglected. Making the area look run down and poor". • "More investment in the lower valley to give young people more options of places to go and things to do. I feel that the upper valley gets all of the money spent there". • "(We need to be) encouraging branded shops into the town centre". • "Better shops in the town centre - not everyone has got a car to go up the retail park". • "There used to be a place in Merthyr to hire wheelchairs and scooters behind the Police station; I think we need that again so that the Town Centre is manageable for everyone" • "Encourage more businesses to open. Help businesses move into high street shops".	• "More local places to Treharris. Places to do a tidy shop more local, more things for children. Treharris park & pool improved. More things & places for people of the Treharris, Quakers Yard etc. area". • "I think more could be done to encourage people to stay and spend local. Keep the money in the town". • "The parking and we need more Children's parks! There definitely needs to be an improvement in facilities; especially in the Treharris ward". • "(We need) More stuff happening in the south of the valley". • "Easier access to banks around the county in the towns and villages, more local. Would like a post office in Treharris". • "I would sort of the Post Office in Treharris".
Address crime (e.g.) drugs; antisocial behaviour etc. and have more visible policing	Improve traffic infrastructure and public transport
• "Issue with drug use and anti-social behaviour in town centre and public areas needs to be addressed". • "I live in the southern part of Merthyr so don't go up to Merthyr town that much; but on the occasions I have, I've thought it's been a bit 'rough' - there are a lot of day drinkers who can be loud and its quite off-putting. I usually end up going to Ponty where I don't get the same unsettled feeling". • "Encouraging branded shops into the town centre. More police presence in town centre to make people feel more safe". • "(Do something about) people taking drugs on the streets".	• Public transport needs to improve vastly". • "The layout (i.e.) the bus station should have been built on farm foods so that the train station could be moved there allowing the bridge over Court St could be removed and the road widened. Between the old bus station and the river, including the stretch of the avenue, could be pedestrianised allowing for restaurants and boutique businesses. Transport links. The buses and trains in Treharris depart at the same time". • "(Sort out) the old bus service". • "Improved public transport would help people get around" • "Better transport to and from Merthyr which seem to be very unreliable at present".

What did respondents in Treharris feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders need to Hear?
Treharris Ward
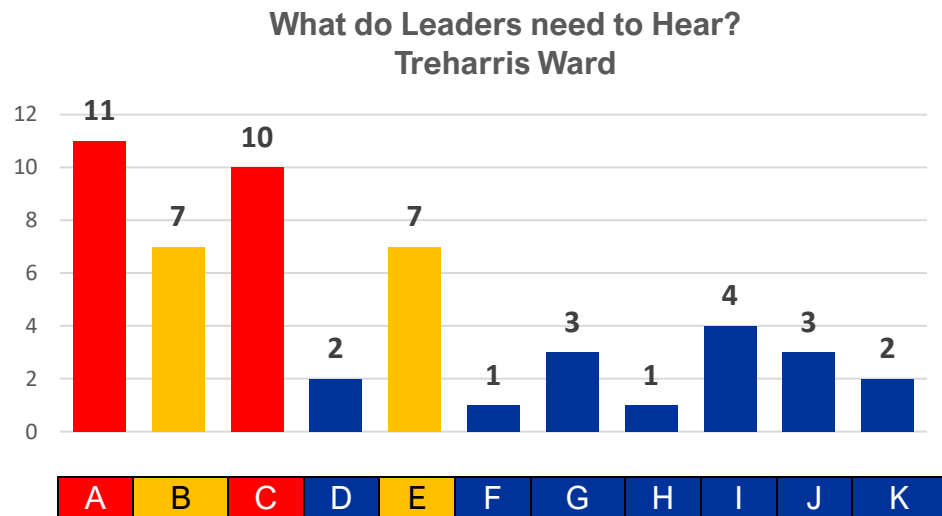
A	Improve public transport and highways infrastructure/quality (**21.56%**)
B	Improve facilities in Treharris (e.g.) parks, banks, Post Office (**13.72%**)
C	Communicate more often and clearly and listen to local people; giving them more chance to get involved (**19.60%**)
D	Make Merthyr Tydfil feel safer (especially the Town Centre) (**3.92%**)
E	Modernise the Town Centre; work with businesses and attract inward investment that brings better paid jobs (**13.72%**)
F	Address local housing issues (**1.96%**)
G	Ensure cleaner streets and tackle litter and dog fouling (**5.88%**)
H	Do the basics well: education; training; social care etc. (**1.96%**)
I	Improve leisure services and hold the Trust to account (**7.84%**)
J	Use Council resources more equally across the whole County Borough (**5.88%**)
K	Protect and promote our heritage (**3.92%**)

The key issues residents from Treharris ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents' comments for context:

Improve public transport and highways infrastructure/quality	Communicate more often (and clearly); and listen to local people; giving them more chances to get involved
• "Transport needs to be improved. Maybe a street bus to Quakers Yard?". • "That the bus services for people in the lower wards of the valley causes masses of stress and many people are facing redundancy due to bus schedules". • "For older people like me, we depend on public transport and can't be standing around waiting over an hour for a bus so getting that sorted is important". • "(They should hear) mostly how people are disheartened by lack of transport".	• "They need to listen to the people of Merthyr. Be visible, communicate with people. Take onboard what is being suggested about improvements. Take action". • "They need to get the basics right. Well paid jobs, training so that the people that live here can apply for the well-paid jobs. Good medical care. Just basics". • "I think there is fairly frequent communication from the Council but note the majority of this is good news stories. That's fine but I think that if you reported some of the challenges the Council is facing you could have offers of support from places you might not expect".

• "Public transport needs to improve vastly".	• "You need to be clearer when you give out messages to people as sometimes, I don't understand what you are saying".

Improve facilities in Treharris	**Modernise the Town Centre; work with businesses and attract inward investment that brings better paid jobs**
• "Transport needs to be improved. Maybe a street bus to Quakers yard? Treharris park would be a lovely place if pool & park was given attention & funding. Local shopping centre would mean we wouldn't need to rely on the unreliable transport".	• "I think they're missing opportunities to make Merthyr a place people want to come to - if people don't feel safe; then they won't come. Perhaps working with the Police to show what to do if you feel intimidated - where are the safe places you can go".
• "That there is much to be proud of in Merthyr, but greater investment is needed to boost the local economy".	• "That there is much to be proud of in Merthyr, but greater investment is needed to boost the local economy".
• "If there was any way to open more banks in Merthyr that would be useful. We haven't even got a Post Office in Treharris and if you don't do computers, that can be a nightmare when you are paying bills".	• "If you could sort out the parking in town and Tesco car park (though that might not be the Council), people would come to town more".
• "Local parks do need investment. Treharris park needs investment".	• "Lower shop rental cost to encourage a thriving town centre. Introduce a tourist information centre to encourage people to visit the area".
• "If there was any way for the Council to work more with small local businesses and social businesses, that would help local businesses and perhaps keep money in the town".	• "Invest!!! Local shops, make the area an attractive place to live. Local street cleaning is fantastic".
• "People in Treharris need a post office. Also, I think the surgeries need to open back up to patients".	• "Encouraging branded shops into the town centre. More police presence in town centre to make people feel more safe. More local hotels and B&B's in the area".

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Improve leisure services; and re-open the swimming pool	Make the Town Centre feel safer (e.g.) tackle the drugs issues	Invest in Treharris to make sure there are things for young people to do.	More local facilities for people in Treharris

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Modernise the Town Centre and work with local businesses	Improve leisure services; and re-open the swimming pool	Make the Town Centre feel safer (e.g.) tackle the drugs issues; antisocial behaviour	Improve local bus services; especially in the evenings and on weekends	Communicate more clearly with residents; and in a timely way

**Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:**

More local facilities for people in Treharris	Promote Merthyr Tydfil's heritage and culture	Protect our environment; and tackle litter; fly-tipping and dog-fouling	Improve local bus services; especially in the evenings and on weekends	Provide advice, guidance and practical support around managing the cost-of-living crisis

Engaging with people from: **Vaynor Ward**

Vaynor ward

When analysing the response data; **42** of the responses received stated the respondent was a resident in the Vaynor ward [11]

When breaking down the age of respondents who participated in the survey from this ward; we found the following:

Breakdown of Feedback by Age Group: Vaynor Ward
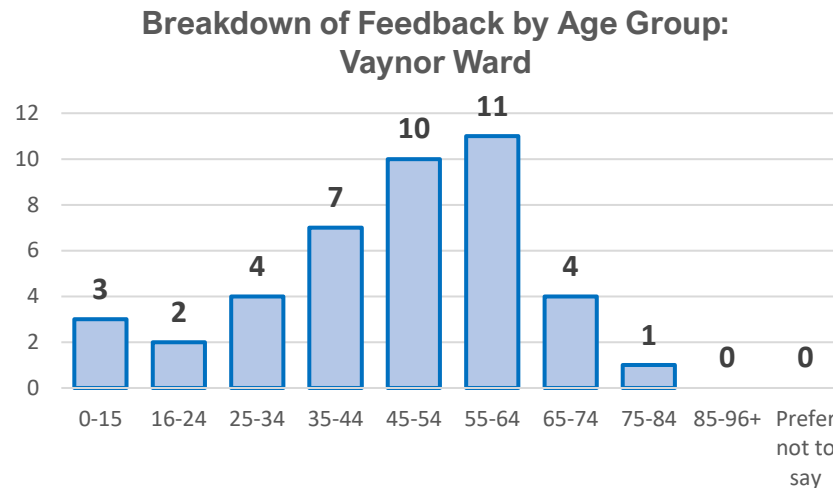
How does this response rate compare to the average response rate calculated across the County Borough?

	0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Prefer not to say
Vaynor	3	2	4	7	10	11	4	1	0	0
Average recorded	3.72	2.9	8.18	13.63	11.63	10.09	5.9	2	0.5	-

Looking at the response rates by age group; we can compare these against the overall response rate to identify any areas for development in future engagement activities. Based on the confirmed data for **Vaynor ward**; the response levels across all age groups broadly aligned to the recorded average across all wards in the County Borough.

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[11] This number cannot be fully qualified as some respondents chose not to indicate which ward they lived in when completing their response.

What did respondents in Vaynor ward state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

When analysing the feedback received from residents in the Vaynor ward; a couple of key theses could be identified in their feedback which showed what they valued the most within their community. These were:

The people and strong sense of community spirit

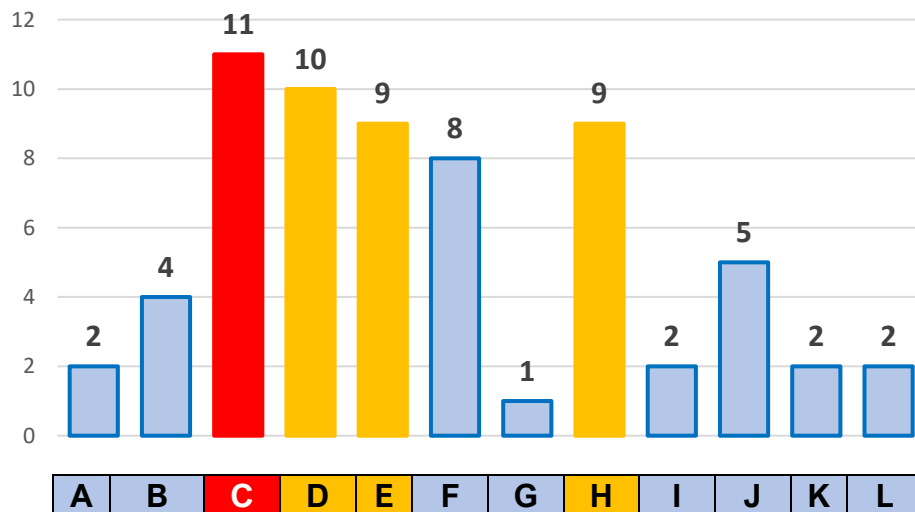It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

It's rich history and heritage

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

What did respondents in Vaynor ward state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil? Vaynor Ward

Category	Value
A	2
B	4
C	11
D	10
E	9
F	8
G	1
H	9
I	2
J	5
K	2
L	2

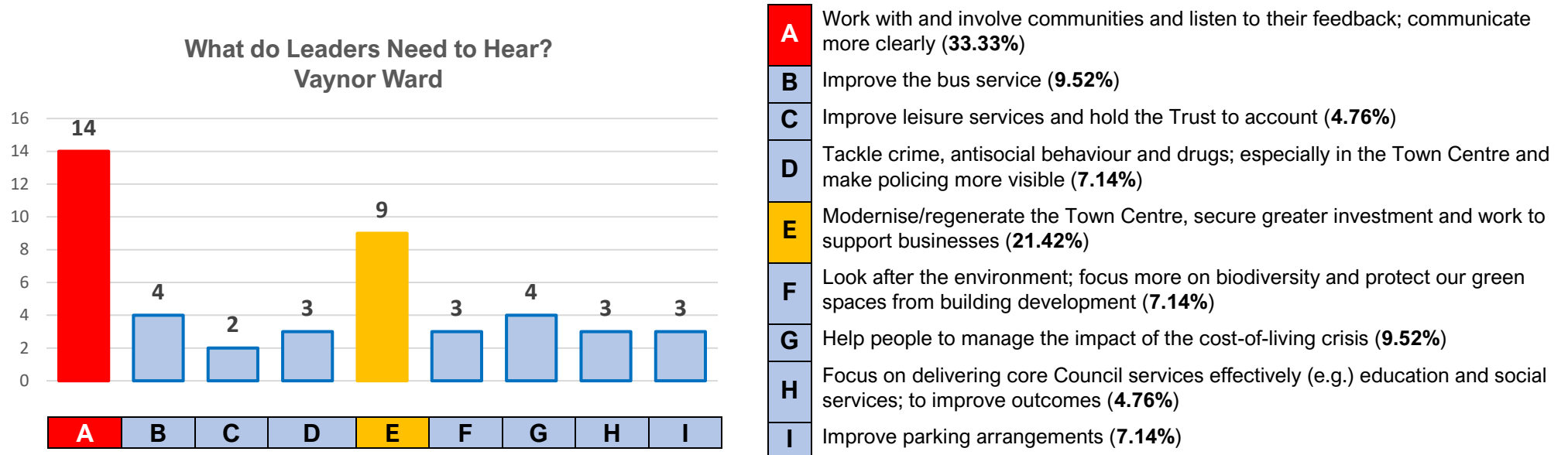|	
A	Address the negative perception of Merthyr Tydfil (**4.76%**)
B	Protect and promote Merthyr Tydfil's history and heritage (**9.52%**)
C	Invest in/modernise the Town Centre; attract inward investment and work with local businesses (**26.19%**)
D	Tackle crime (e.g.) antisocial behaviour; drugs etc., especially in the Town Centre (**21.42%**)
E	Improve public transport (**21.42%**)
F	Improve leisure facilities and re-open the swimming pool (**19.04%**)
G	Better access to childcare and improve educational outcomes (**2.38%**)
H	Protect our environment from development and tackle litter; dog-fouling and fly-tipping (**21.42%**)
I	Provide support to help people manage the impact of the cost-of-living crisis (**4.76%**)
J	Communicate key messages and Council plans better, with more Councillor contact in wards (**11.90%**)
K	Address local housing issues (**4.76%**)
L	Improve both physical and digital connectivity (**4.76%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where residents in **Vaynor** ward wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

Invest in and modernise the Town Centre, attract inward investment and work with local businesses	Tackle crime (e.g.) antisocial behaviour; drugs etc., especially in the Town Centre
• "Merthyr town centre is more run down now that I can ever remember. It is sad to see the state of our town centre, with so many empty shops, fly posting, shutters etc. There doesn't seem to be any effort being made to regenerate the town centre, with more shops closing every week. Incentives could/should be given to attract new businesses. Primark in Merthyr is a no-brainer - perfect for attracting footfall". • "I get more shops in the town would bring people to the town and a better bus service they made a new bus station, but proper bus service elderly people don t go to town much as they get stuck down there waiting for a bus home it's just gone downhill". • "The town centre needs to attract more shops and businesses". • "The Town Centre, it used to be the hub of Merthyr and now during the day doesn't feel safe and makes elderly people vulnerable targets".	• "Antisocial behaviour (from all ages) - large groups gathering in our beauty spots with fires and litter left behind; vandalism of things for the community (e.g., Charlie's Park in Cefn), recent vandalism of cars in Cefn". • "Get the police to do their job and stop dangerous driving, cars racing, dirt bikes running wild, ASB". • "The boy racers who intimidate other drivers during the late evening (A470 and Rhydycar)". • "The drug/alcohol abuse situation needs to be cleaned up. At times it is intimidating walking around the town centre - this culture seems to have taken over. This is off-putting to locals and visitors to the town alike. Try making the shopping centre non-smoking - it's been done successfully in Cwmbran".
Improve public transport	**Protect our environment from development; and tackle fly-tipping; littering and dog-fouling**
• "The bus service - needs to get a lot better". • "To have more transport and more activities for people to do". • "The fact that the public transport is a HUGE weakness – we liv in Cefn and we don't drive and though there is a bus service it stops really early – so much so that we sometimes have to walk home from town and it's a fair stretch of the legs at our age (taxis are out of the picture as we simply can't afford it). I'd change that". • "Public transport is very poor - less services than before Covid, and when buses run they are often infrequent. Also, travelling by bus or train is often as expensive as using the car, if not more. More electric charging points need to be available to encourage people to go green".	• "(Address the) amount of litter/ fly-tipping, lack of litter/ dog waste bins" • "Clean up the roads and walkways of rubbish / needles / glass". • "The proposed Welsh Water development at Pontsarn should not go ahead as it will ruin our green spaces of which very few remain!". • "We've got beautiful surroundings but the work on the A465 has made life more difficult for people in our area, so I'd want to change how that's working". • "Levels of litter and antisocial behaviour. Council refuse teams and volunteers do a great job but can't keep up. More bins, more poo bins needed".

What did respondents in Vaynor feel Leadership needed to hear?

What do Leaders Need to Hear?
Vaynor Ward

A	Work with and involve communities and listen to their feedback; communicate more clearly (**33.33%**)
B	Improve the bus service (**9.52%**)
C	Improve leisure services and hold the Trust to account (**4.76%**)
D	Tackle crime, antisocial behaviour and drugs; especially in the Town Centre and make policing more visible (**7.14%**)
E	Modernise/regenerate the Town Centre, secure greater investment and work to support businesses (**21.42%**)
F	Look after the environment; focus more on biodiversity and protect our green spaces from building development (**7.14%**)
G	Help people to manage the impact of the cost-of-living crisis (**9.52%**)
H	Focus on delivering core Council services effectively (e.g.) education and social services; to improve outcomes (**4.76%**)
I	Improve parking arrangements (**7.14%**)

The key issues residents from **Vaynor** ward wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents' comments for context:

Work with and involve communities and listen to their feedback; communicate more clearly	Modernise/regenerate the Town Centre, secure greater investment and work to support businesses
• "People's opinions count. Use population as a source of information, speak to those who have knowledge/experience in a certain field". • "Communicate better with people - be clear about what you can do and what you can't do- don't say you're going to do something and then change your mind and say you won't". • "I think it must be challenging trying to communicate what's going on in the council because I think they sometimes leave it late in the day before they announce things. If they could let us know earlier, more people might get involved" • Listen to the people of the town. Stop accepting mediocrity we deserve more".	• Merthyr is now a ghost town and in need of major redevelopment, I am considering moving to a different town after living here for 48 years due to the lack of restaurants/pubs/shops etc.". • "Our industrial heritage needs preserving before it's too late and looking further afield than Cyfarthfa Castle. It would help us as a tourist destination". • "More police present in town centre to discourage drink and drug misuse. Town centre rates and car parking charges should be reduced to attract new businesses; and encourage footfall" • "Town centre needs serious focus of support and development".

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

Children and young people (ages 0-24 years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Communicate with people earlier; listen to their feedback and ideas	Look after the environment; clean up litter and dog-fouling; and protect our green spaces	Improve local bus services; especially in the evenings and on weekends.

Working aged people (ages 25-54) highlighted they wanted: the Council to:

Improve/modernise the Town Centre; and work with businesses to secure inward investment	Communicate with people earlier; listen to their feedback and ideas	Look after/clean up the environment and protect our green spaces from development	Tackle community safety issues (e.g.) anti-social behaviour; drugs; dangerous driving	Provide advice, guidance and practical support around managing the cost-of-living crisis

Older people (ages 55+ years) highlighted they wanted the Council to:

Improve local bus services; especially in the evenings and on weekends.	Improve/modernise the Town Centre; and work with businesses to secure inward investment	Tackle community safety issues (e.g.) anti-social behaviour; drugs; dangerous driving	Improve leisure services; re-open the swimming pool; and hold the Leisure Trust to account	Communicate with people earlier; listen to their feedback and ideas

Other responses:

Though we were unable to breakdown the remaining data received by ward; we were able to identify the key themes identified through their responses and these are represented below.

As mentioned at the start of this document, a number of respondents who chose not to identify their ward when completing the survey also only partially answered the other survey questions.

What did respondents who gave no ward information state they liked best about Merthyr Tydfil?

The people and strong sense of community spirit

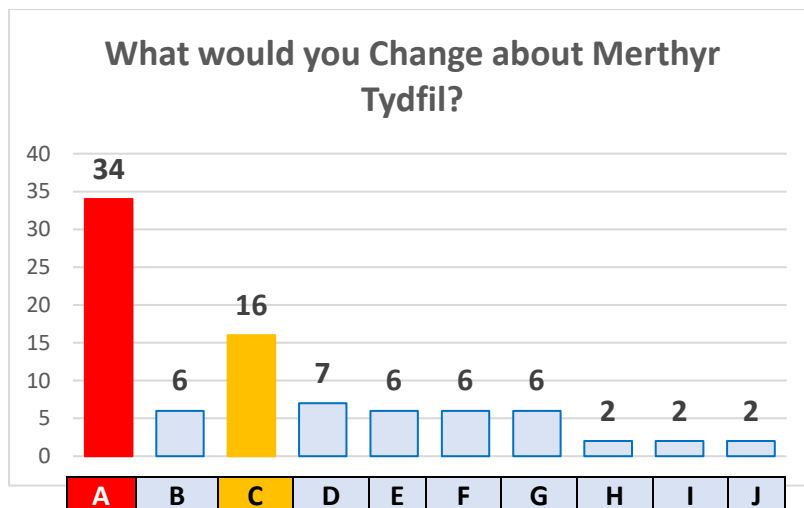It's countryside and green; open spaces and access to nature

It's rich history and heritage

Good access to facilities such as shops; medical support and activities

What did respondents state they would like to change?

What would you Change about Merthyr Tydfil?

|	
A	Improve the reliability and cost of bus services (**9.42%**)
B	Instil a sense of pride in the town and promote Merthyr Tydfil's positives (**1.66%**)
C	Modernise the struggling Town Centre, attracting inward investment and supporting small businesses a chance (**4.43%**)
D	More Policing to tackle crime (especially antisocial behaviour in the Town Centre) (**1.93%**)
E	Address littering and fly-tipping in our countryside and green spaces (**1.66%**)
F	Focus on improving leisure facilities to help people's health and well-being (**1.66%**)
G	Lower parking charges and deal with traffic issues and road maintenance (**1.66%**)
H	More support for local schools (**0.55%**)
I	Preserve Merthyr Tydfil's history and heritage (**0.55%**)
J	Tackle the issue of dangerous buildings and bring them back into community use (**0.55%**)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE WELL-BEING PLAN

The key areas where respondents wanted to see change are listed below; along with some of the comments made for context:

Improve the reliability and cost of bus services	Modernise the struggling Town Centre, attracting inward investment and supporting small businesses a chance
"Sort out the bus service - I keep missing the start of shifts and its costing me money". "(We need) more regular buses". "I'd say that for me, as someone who doesn't drive, there's a real need to improve not just the reliability of public transport; but the availability of it (into the evenings) - I can't afford to be taking taxis and at times feel there are opportunities I can't access because I just can't get to where its being held". "Sort the piggin buses out - getting to and from work is a nightmare sometimes". "Mae angen i chi wella'r gwasanaeth bws, mae'r orsaf newydd yn hyfryd, mae'r gwasanaeth ei hun yn ofnadwy". "(We need) buses after 6pm please!".	"The town centre is struggling a bit and everyone blames it on the retail park. I don't this that is the case though. More time needs to be taken to raise standards within the town centre to make it place that people will want to visit. There is a bit market now for the food economy and that needs to be explored. People will travel from afar for this. Newport has made great strides in the developments and turned around areas that were dying on their feet". "(We need) more shops, tourist attraction restaurants etc.". "Improve employment opportunities, attract more business and retail especially to town centre which has little to offer at the moment". "Town centre needs to be policed. Lots of drunk/drugged people who are intimidating". "The High Street seems to really be dying a death. Reduced rates on stores in the town centre could give the town an injection of energy - we could see new small businesses having half a chance of surviving and re-establishing a proper high street".

What did respondents feel Leadership needed to hear?
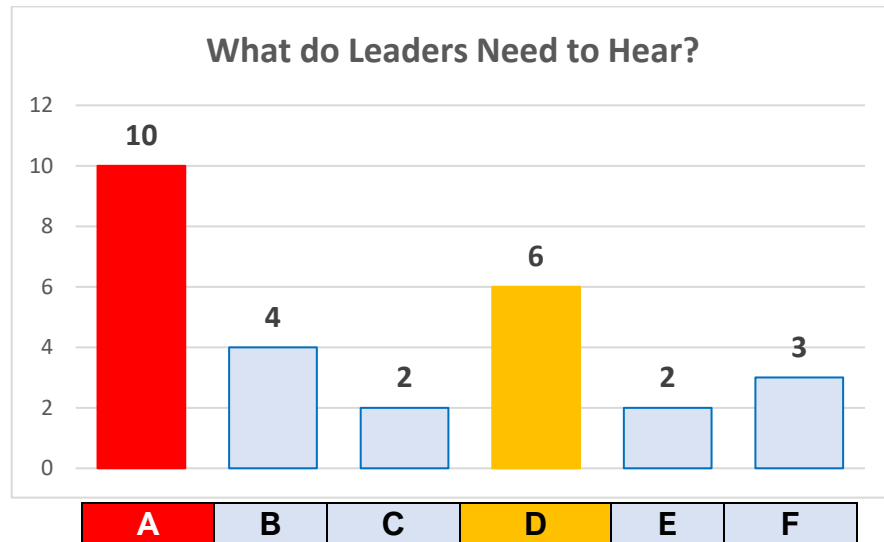
A	Listen to local people more and work with them (**2.77%**)
B	Provide help to manage the impact of the cost-of-living crisis (**1.10%**)
C	Address the challenges around leisure services to support communities to stay healthy (**0.55%**)
D	Keep Merthyr Tydfil clean; encourage more people to visit and spend to help boost the local economy (**1.66%**)
E	Build and develop the local economy - look at a more circular economy approach to support the reduction of waste (**0.55%**)
F	Focus on Merthyr becoming safer, so it better reflects the real situation and not the undeserved reputation it has (**0.83%**)

The key issues residents wanted to highlight to Leaders are listed below; along with some of the respondents' comments for context:

Listen to local people more and work with them	Keep Merthyr Tydfil clean; encourage more people to visit and spend to boost the local economy
• "Listen to feedback by local people more, don't just dismiss it". • "Listen to people more - we have good knowledge but it's like its being ignored". • "The people of Merthyr need to express their wishes on what would work well in the town of Merthyr". • "There's a lot of local people who would like to get involved but don't know how". • "Involve local people more; listen to the feedback they give you"	• "Keeping Merthyr clean will help encourage more people to visit and stay to spend their money in the local economy". • "Build and develop the local economy - look at a more circular economy approach to support the reduction of waste". • "Cut parking charges to help town centre traders; that will help boost visitor numbers". • "Boost the local economy by attracting inward investment and putting events on". • "Sort out the Town Centre, get better shops and then people could find work"

If you have any questions or queries about this survey, please contact the Policy & Improvement team: Policy&Improvement@merthyr.gov.uk