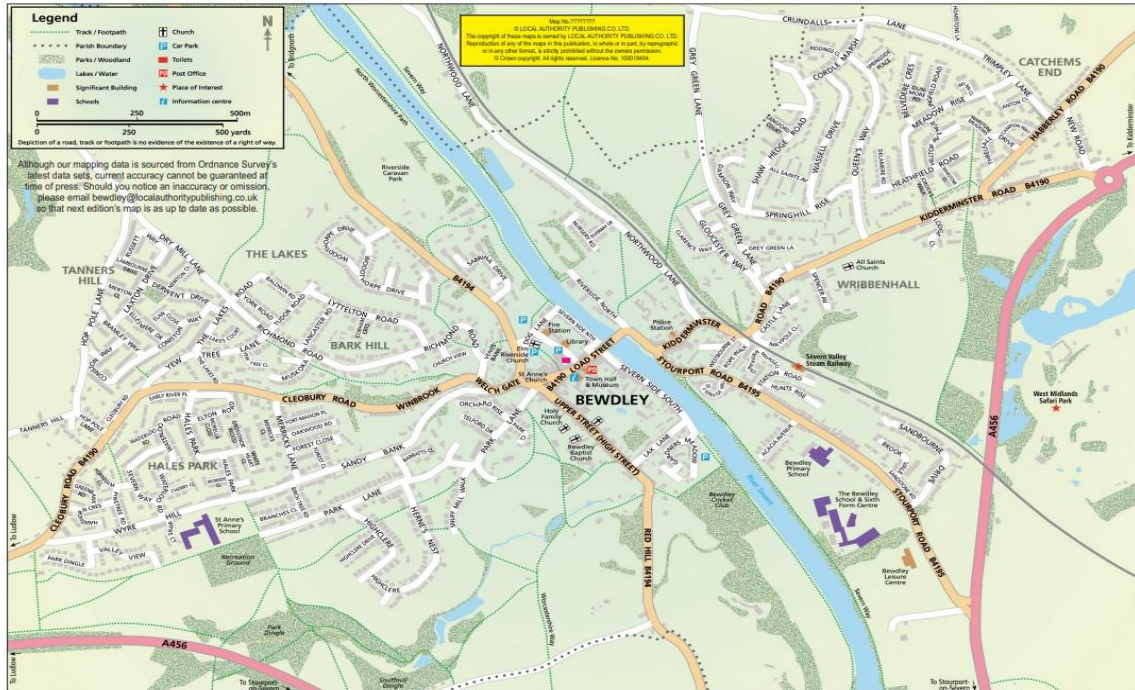




# Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan

Re-consultation Report

February / March 2024



# Introduction & Contents

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## Introduction

- Hardcopy questionnaires were distributed in various locations around the town centre & surrounding areas with digital copies to be completed online.
- 8% Response rate based on total population of Bewdley.
- The data is interpreted using the total number of moderately or strongly agree responses.

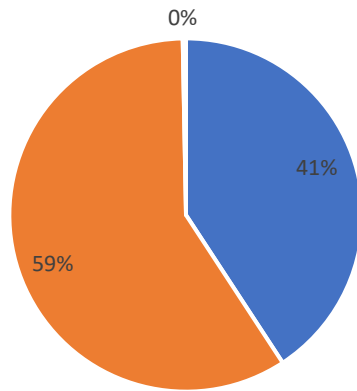
## Contents

0. Demographics
1. About Bewdley
2. Built Environment
3. Business & Trade
4. Natural Environment, Sport and Recreation
5. Transport & Communication
6. Heritage, Culture & Tourism

# 0. Demographics

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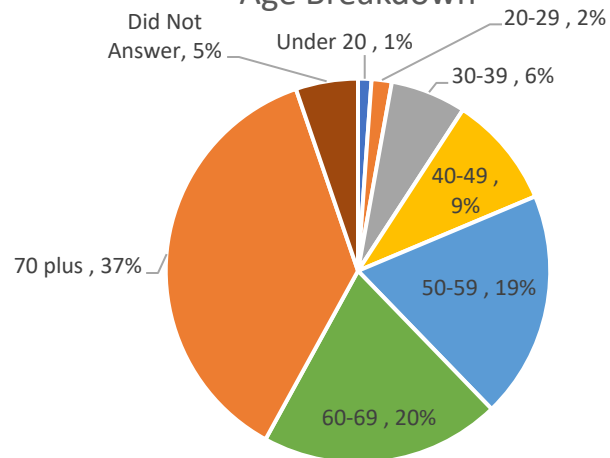
Gender



■ Male ■ Female ■ Other

- The majority of those who responded to the questionnaire were female and over 60.
- The largest age group represented in the questionnaire were in the 70+ age bracket with 37% of the respondents falling into this group, with the 60-69 bracket having the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest response rate with 20%.
- Those under 30 accounted for 3% of the total responses, with the under 20 group being least represented at 1% of the responses.

Age Breakdown

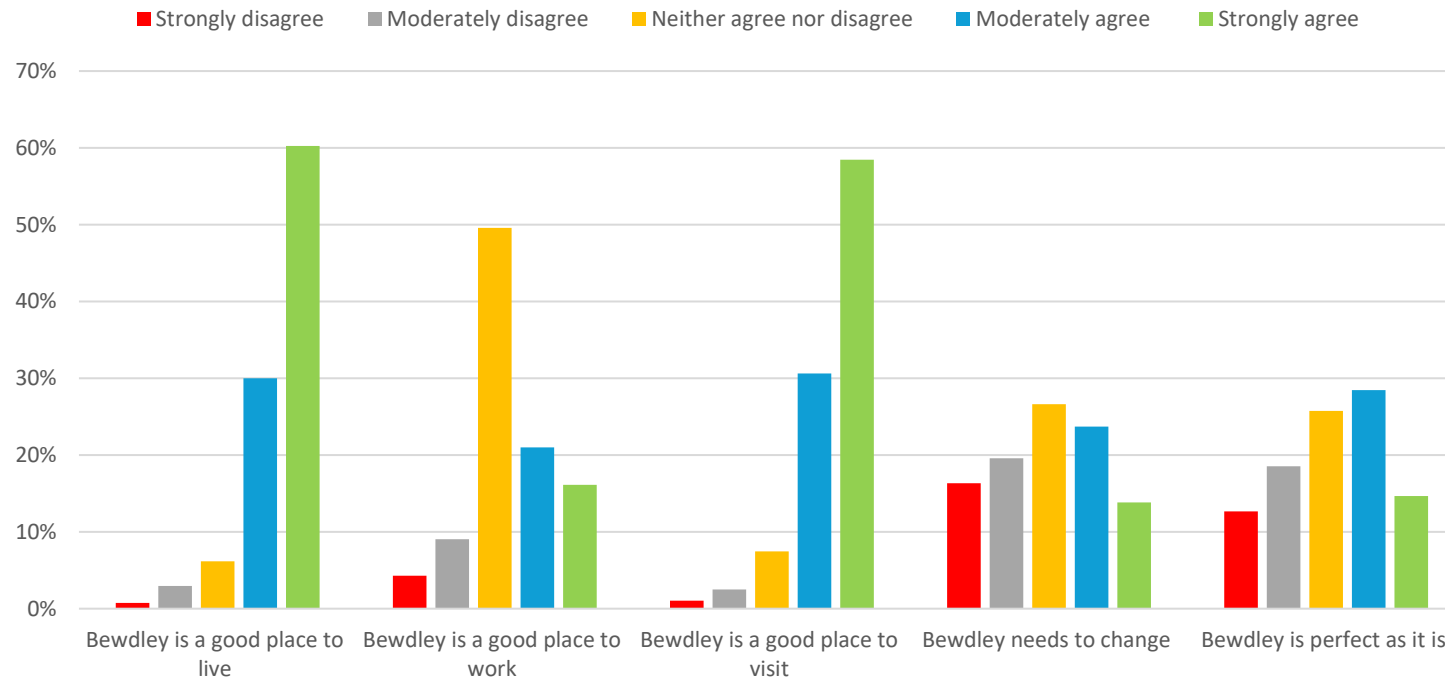


## Conclusion:

Every endeavour has been made to engage with people aged under 50 however the current results of the survey will be skewed towards the opinions of those aged 60+.

# 1. About Bewdley

Q1.1 How much do you agree with the following statements?



- 90% of responses agreed that Bewdley is both a good place to live and visit.
- 50% of respondents neither agreed or disagreed that Bewdley is a good place to work.

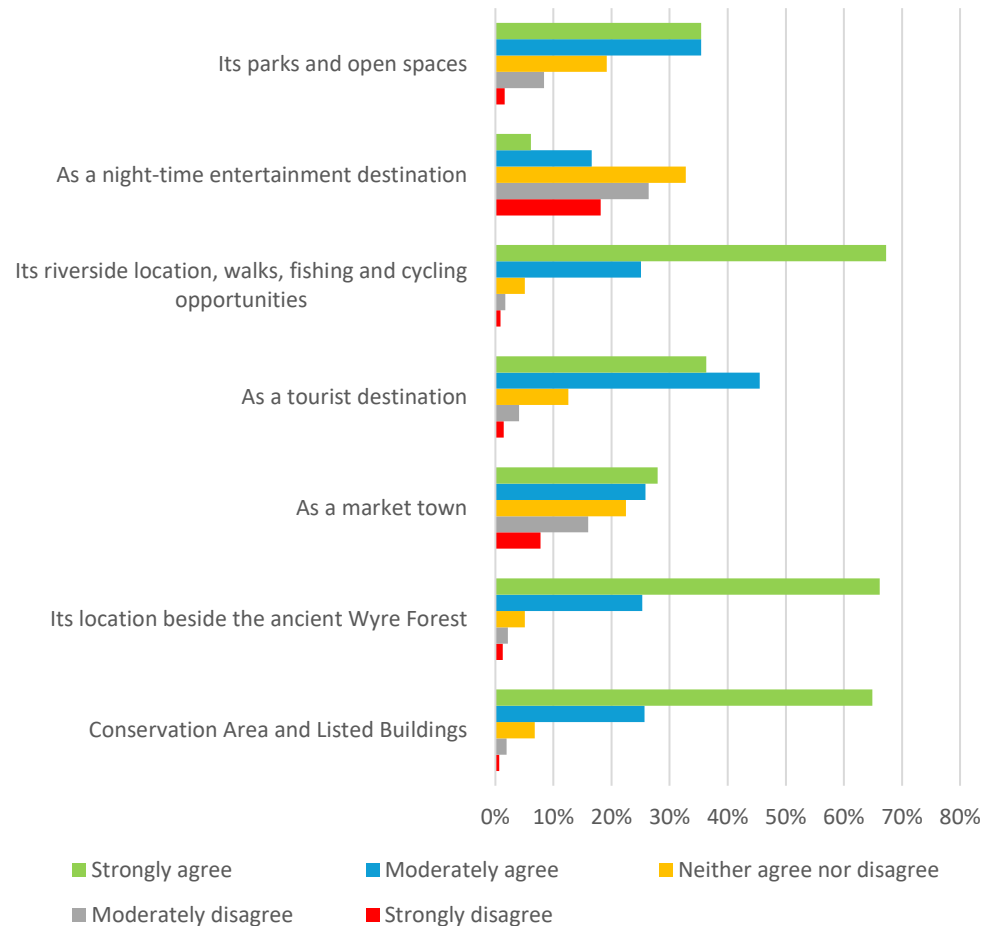
- Sentiments were similarly mixed in response to Bewdley being perfect as it is and needing to change.

**Conclusion:**

The community values Bewdley but believe the town could be improved.

# 1. About Bewdley

Q1.2 Which of the following describe the essential characteristics of Bewdley?



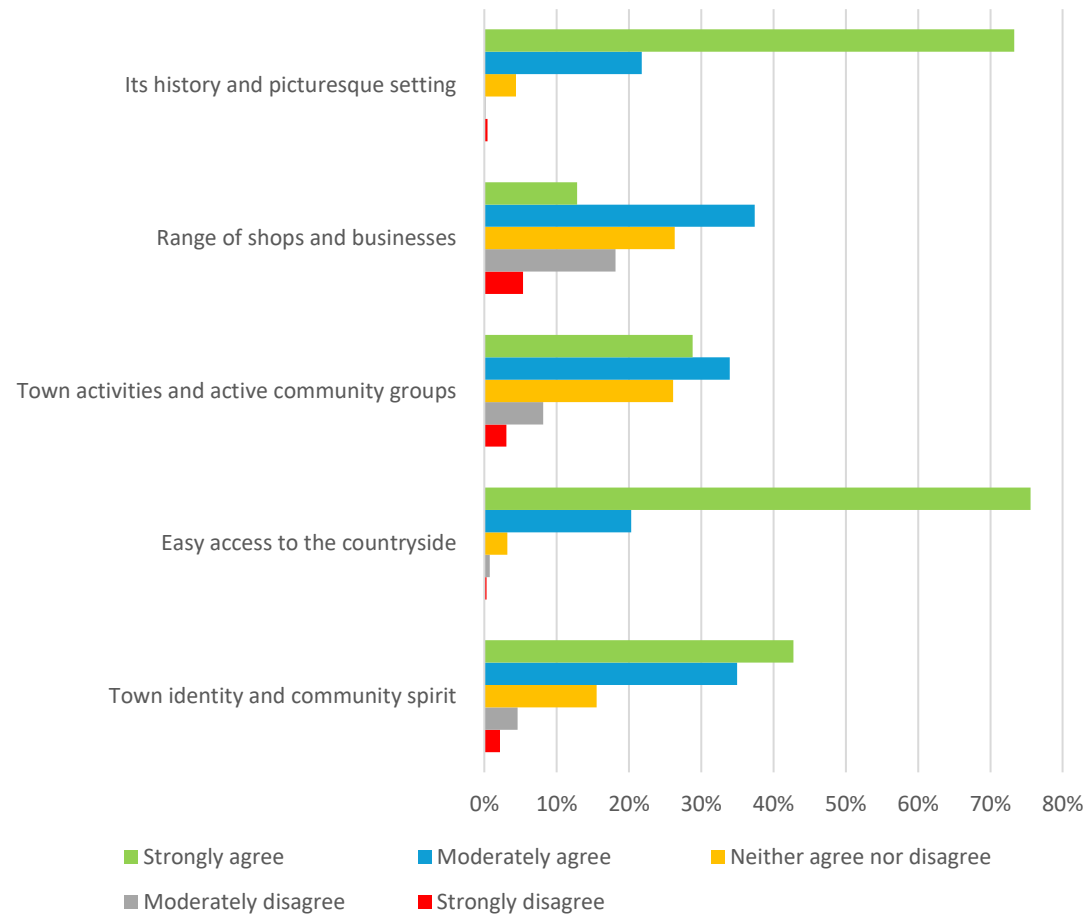
- Bewdley's location near the River Severn and Wyre Forest are seen as the most important characteristics of the town, along with its Conservation Area.
- The town's nightlife is deemed as its least important characteristic.
- The community appreciate the importance of Bewdley as a tourist destination and as a market town, but the sentiments aren't as favoured as its natural spaces.

## Conclusion:

The community Bewdley's natural environment and location as the most important characteristic of the town.

# 1. About Bewdley

## Q1.3 What do you love about living and/or working in Bewdley?



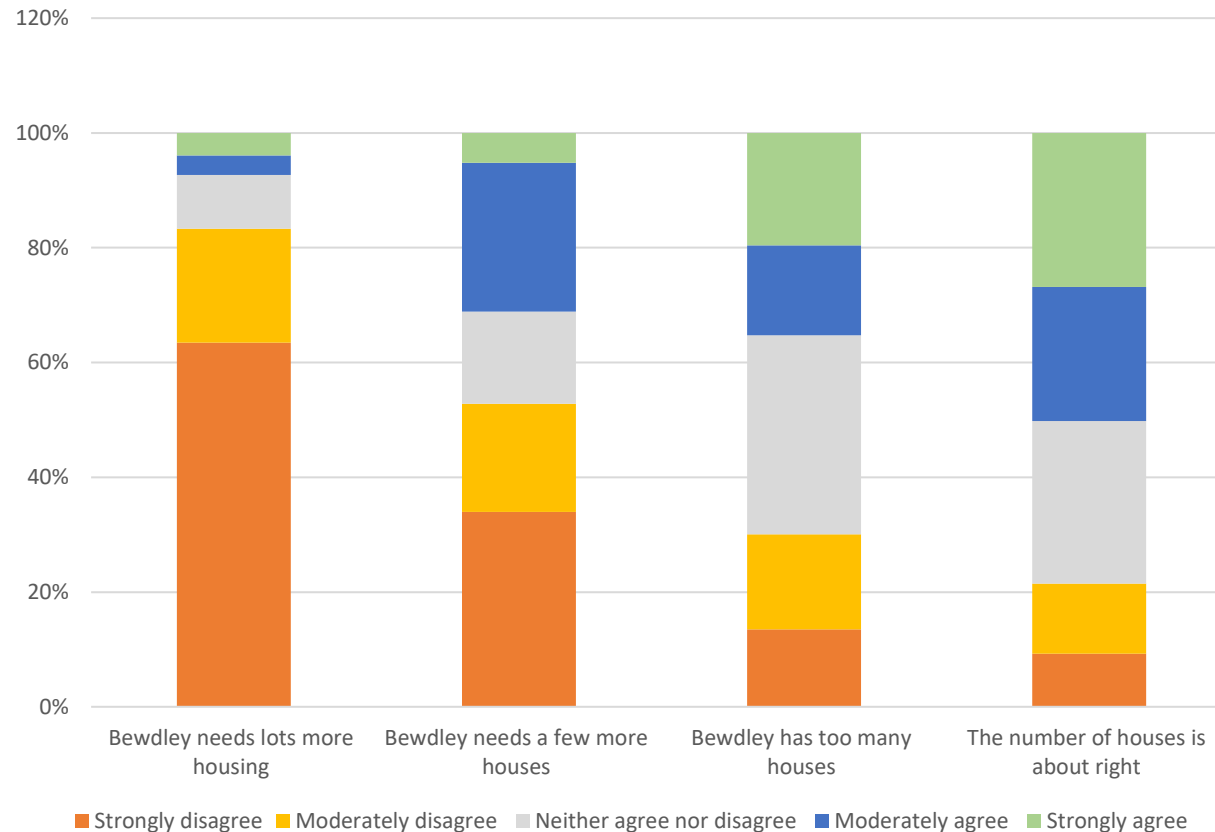
- Bewdley’s picturesque setting and easy access to the countryside are the things most loved by residents, with over 95% of responses agreeing favourably for each.
- The range of shops and businesses were the least favoured response, with only 13% strongly agreeing and 37% moderately agreeing.

### Conclusion:

Echoing sentiments from Q1.2, the natural surroundings and built environment contributing to its picturesque setting are what resonates most with the town, with its current shops and services not playing a big factor.

## 2. Built Environment

### Q2.1 How much do you agree with the following statements?



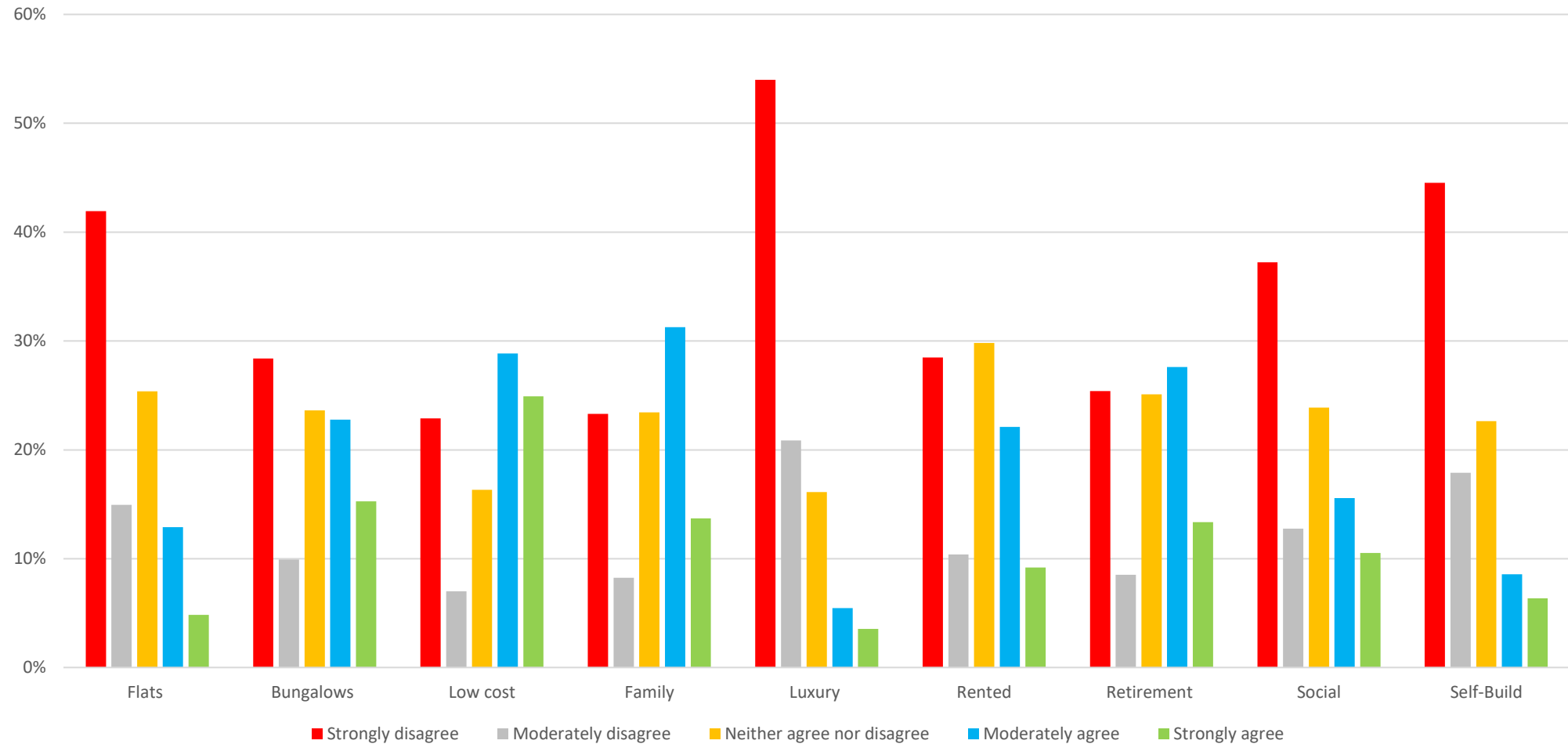
- 83% disagreed that Bewdley needs lots more housing with only 7% agreeing.
- 31% agreed that Bewdley needs a few more houses, with 51% disagreeing.
- Sentiments between agreeing, disagreeing and being neutral in response to Bewdley having too many houses are even (30% disagree, 35% neutral & agree)
- 50% of responses agree that Bewdley has the right number of houses, with 28% neutral and 22% disagreeing.

### Conclusion:

Respondents do not want lots more housing and believe the number of houses is right as they are. However, this figure may be likely due to the age demographic of responses not needing housing, as the number of participants below 40 make up a small contingent of the questionnaire.

## 2. Built Environment

### Q2.2 What sort of housing is needed in Bewdley?





## 2. Built Environment

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### Q2.2 What sort of housing is needed in Bewdley?

Housing type	% in agreement
Flats	18%
Bungalows	38%
Low cost/affordable/starter homes	54%
Family housing	45%
Luxury housing	9%
Rented accommodation	31%
Retirement accommodation	41%
Social housing	26%
Plots for Self-Build Homes	15%

- The housing type respondents were most in agreement that Bewdley needs more low cost/starter homes.
- Family housing and retirement accommodation also had a high number of responses deeming it necessary.
- Luxury housing and plots for self-built homes were deemed the least important with only 9% and 15% in agreement, respectively.
- Sentiments on bungalows and rented accommodation were mixed indicating they are seen as the current number being in line with the communities' views.

#### **Conclusion:**

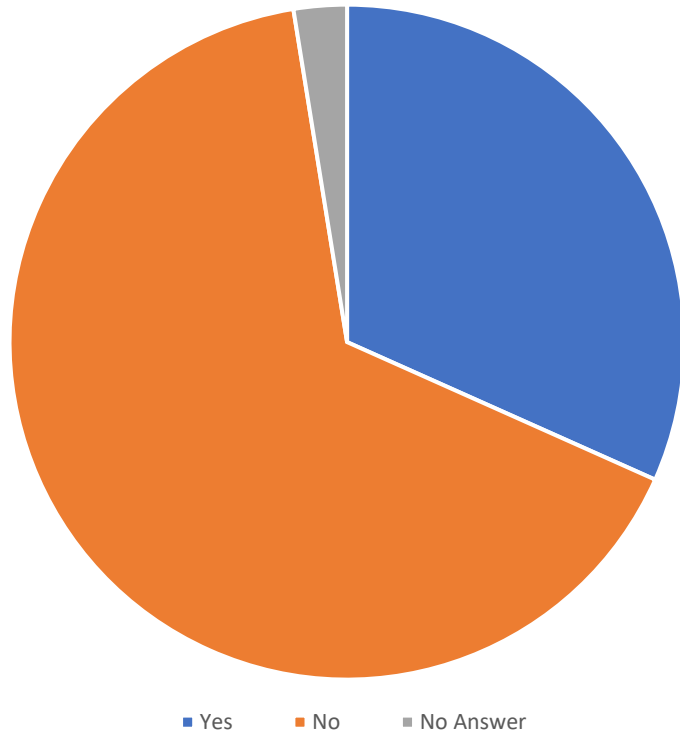
There is a view that affordable housing and family housing is needed in the community, this may be a result of young people having trouble accessing the housing market and the current cost of living crisis, as indicated on the comments section of the questionnaire.

Retirement accommodation is also seen as important due to the ageing population of the town.

## 2. Built Environment

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Q2.3 Would you accept an amount of housing above the district local plan if there was a contribution towards improving existing facilities?

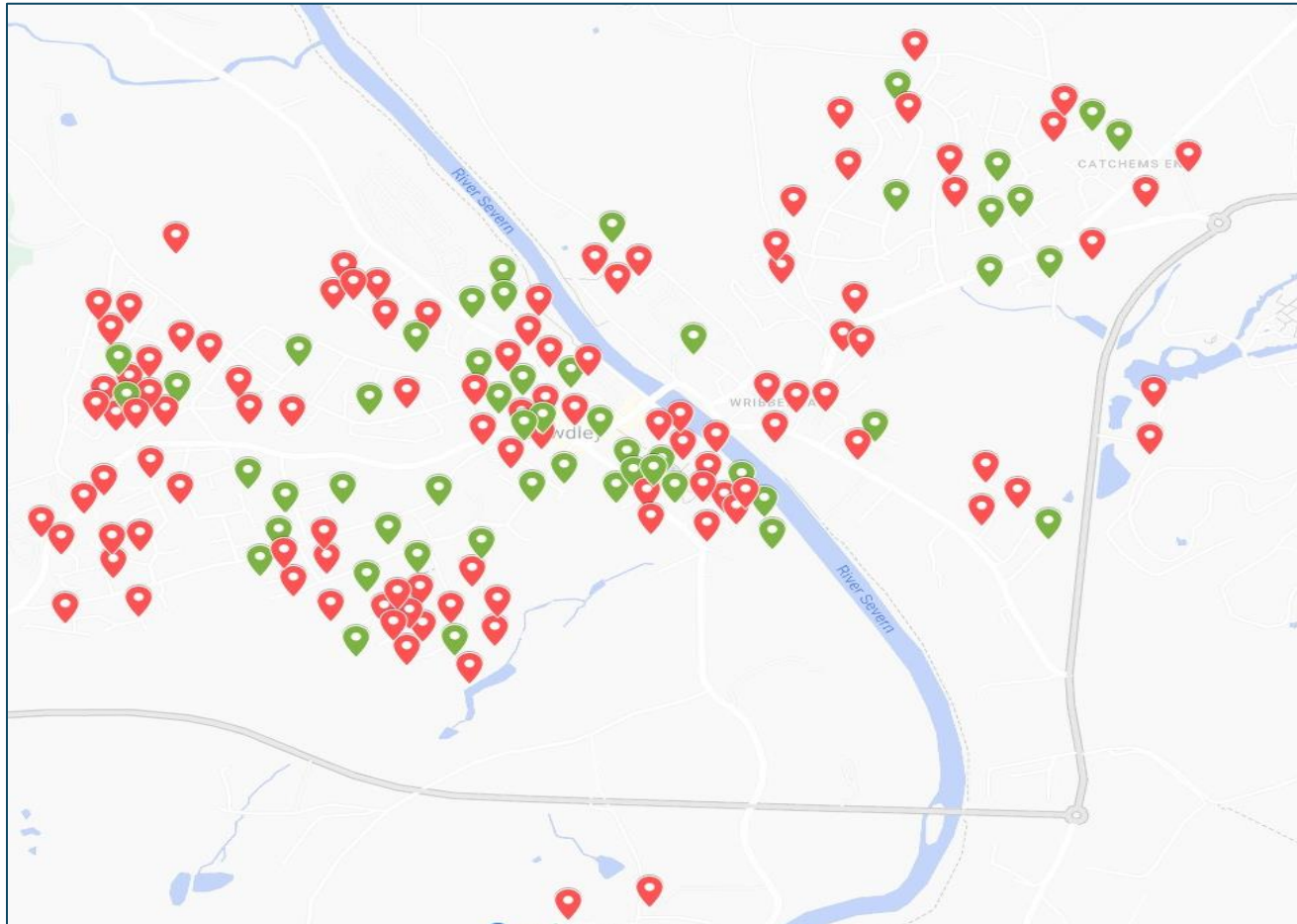


- 66% of people responded that they would not accept any amount above the district local plan even if it contributed to improving existing facilities .
- 32% said they would accept this, with 3% not responding.

## 2. Built Environment

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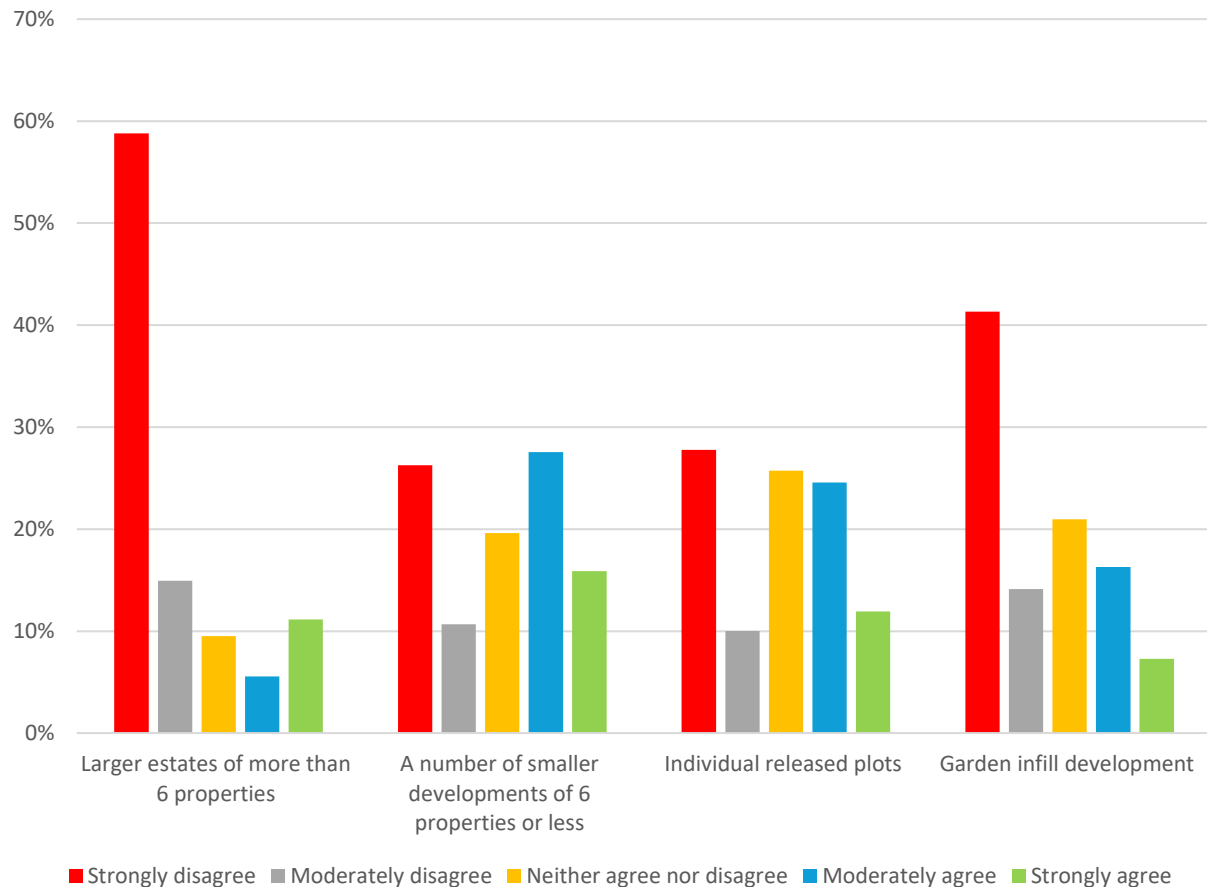
Q2.3 Would you accept an amount of housing above the district local plan if there was a contribution towards improving existing facilities?



- This map details hard copy responses only of those based in Bewdley in relation to q2.3, red = no, yes = green.
- Marginally the highest density of yes responses are towards the river and centre of town.
- Those who live further out tend to disagree with q2.3.

## 2. Built Environment

### Q2.4 Which type of housing development would you prefer to see?



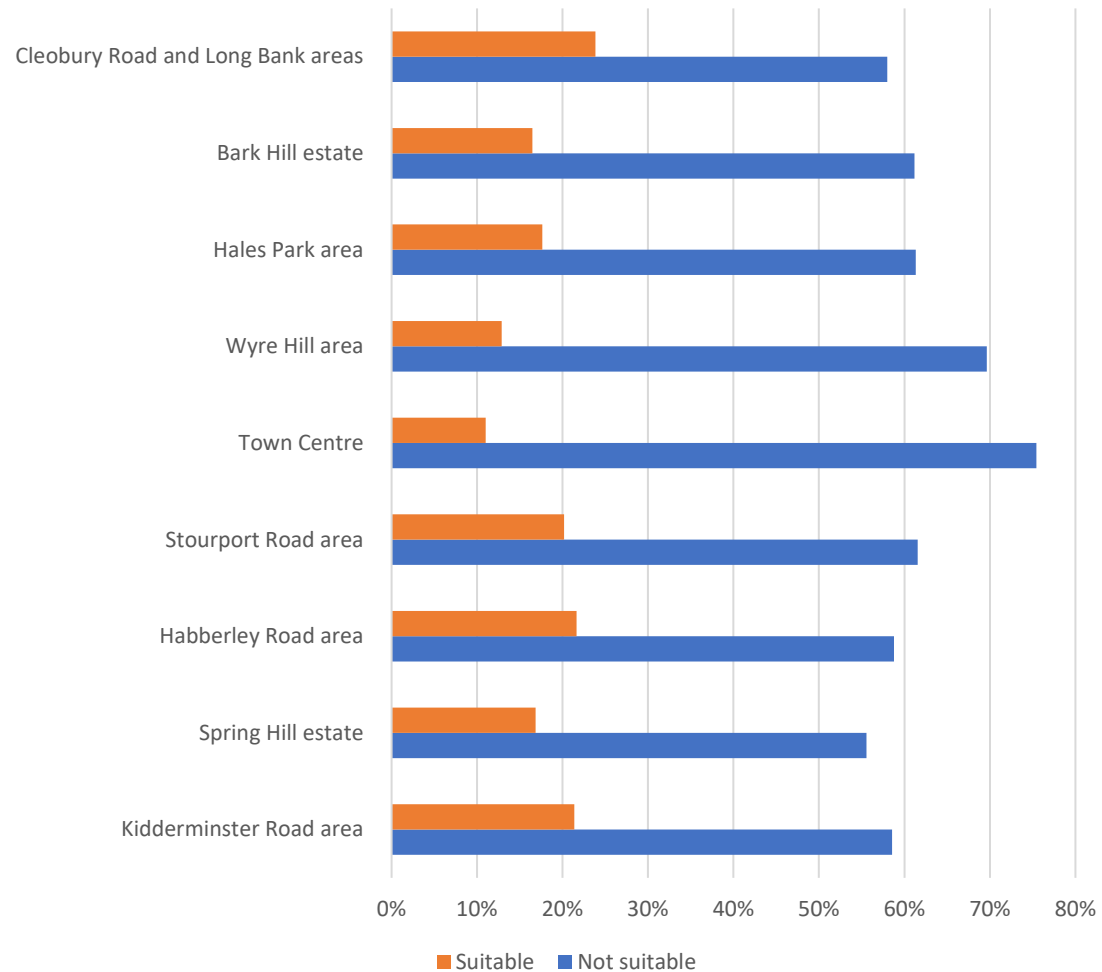
- Larger estates of more than 6 properties was very unpopular with the respondents, with 74% of respondents disagreeing showing a clear lack of support.
- Garden infill development was also not viewed favourably by the community with 55% of respondents disagreeing.
- Small developments of 6 properties or less was the most favourable option by respondents, with 43% agreeing they would prefer this option.
- Similarly, sentiment for individual plots mirrors the response to small developments, with 36% in agreement with this option.

#### Conclusion:

Small developments and individual plots are the favoured outcome among respondents.

## 2. Built Environment

### Q2.5 In which areas would you like to see any new housing development?



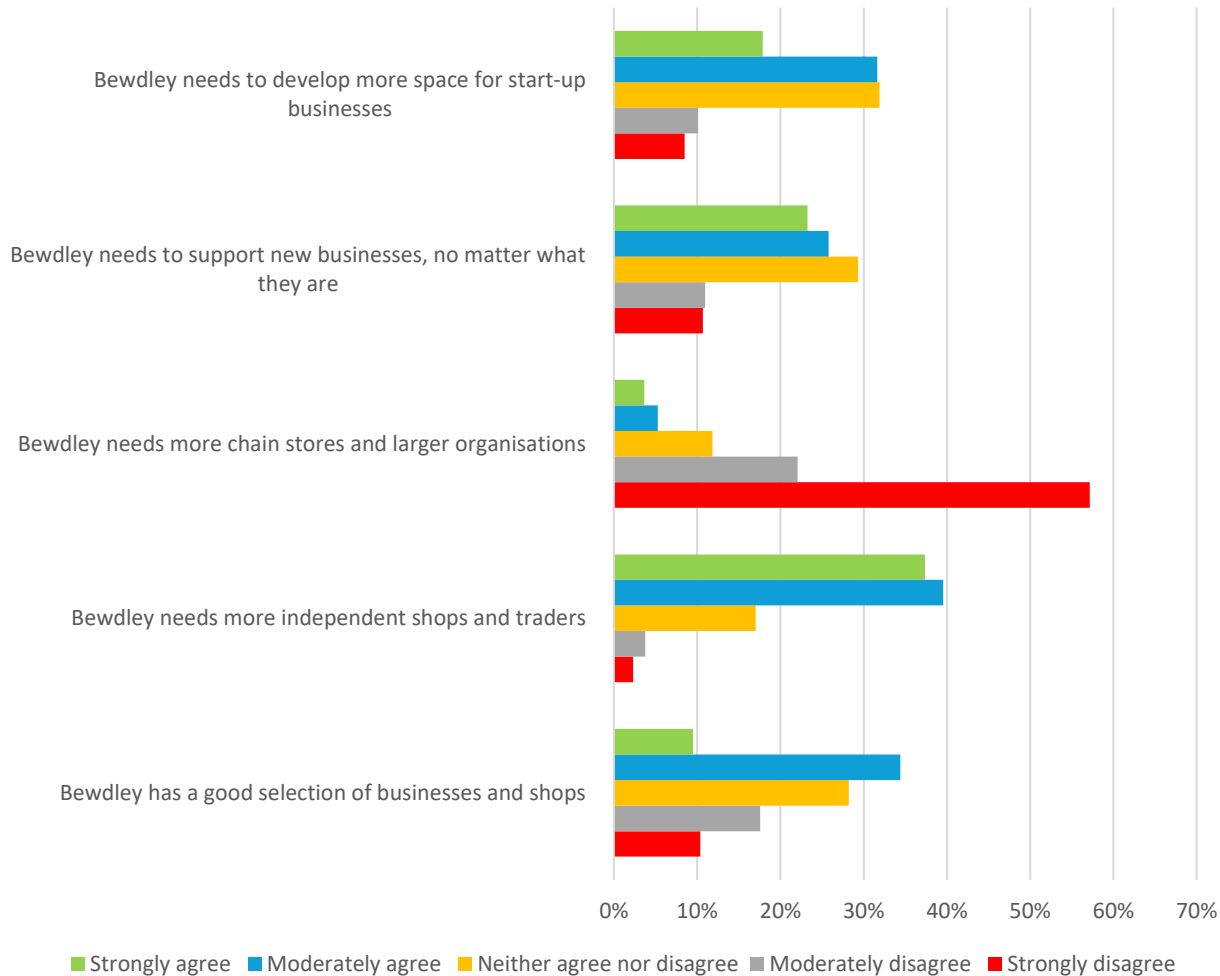
- The graph indicates the level of support for each individual site based on responses from the questionnaire. 'Suitable' is based on the number of respondents who moderately or strongly agree with development in said area and 'not suitable' being those who strongly disagree or moderately disagree.
- The Town Centre and Wyre Hill area are the options with least support with 75% and 70% indicating against development at these locations respectively.
- Habberley Road area and the Cleobury and Long Bank areas are the community's favoured area for development, albeit with only 22% and 24% in favour of development in these areas.

#### Conclusion:

No option was deemed more suitable for development than against it, showing a strong opinion that residents would rather not see new development, however the favoured option for new development is the Cleobury Road and Long Bank area.

# 3. Business and Trade

Q3.1 How much do you agree with the following statements?



- The community believe that they need more space for development of startup business and are willing to show support for these businesses regardless of what they are.
- There is a strong agreement that Bewdley needs more independent shops and traders.
- Chain stores and larger organisations have a dislike amongst the community and who not like to see any more.

**Conclusion:**

Respondents appreciate the current selection of businesses and shops available but want to see more independent traders and new businesses.

### 3. Business and Trade

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Q3.2 Which of the following types of shops and businesses are important to the town?

Most important	% in agreement
Greengrocers	92%
Pharmacy	92%
Postal Services	89%
Bakeries	89%
Restaurants/cafes	87%
Fishmongers / Butchers	87%
Bank or banking hub	81%

Least important	% in disagreement
Chain stores	68%
Charity shops	36%
Takeaways	23%
Hairdressers	18%
General convenience stores	17%
Health food shops	15%
DIY shop	15%

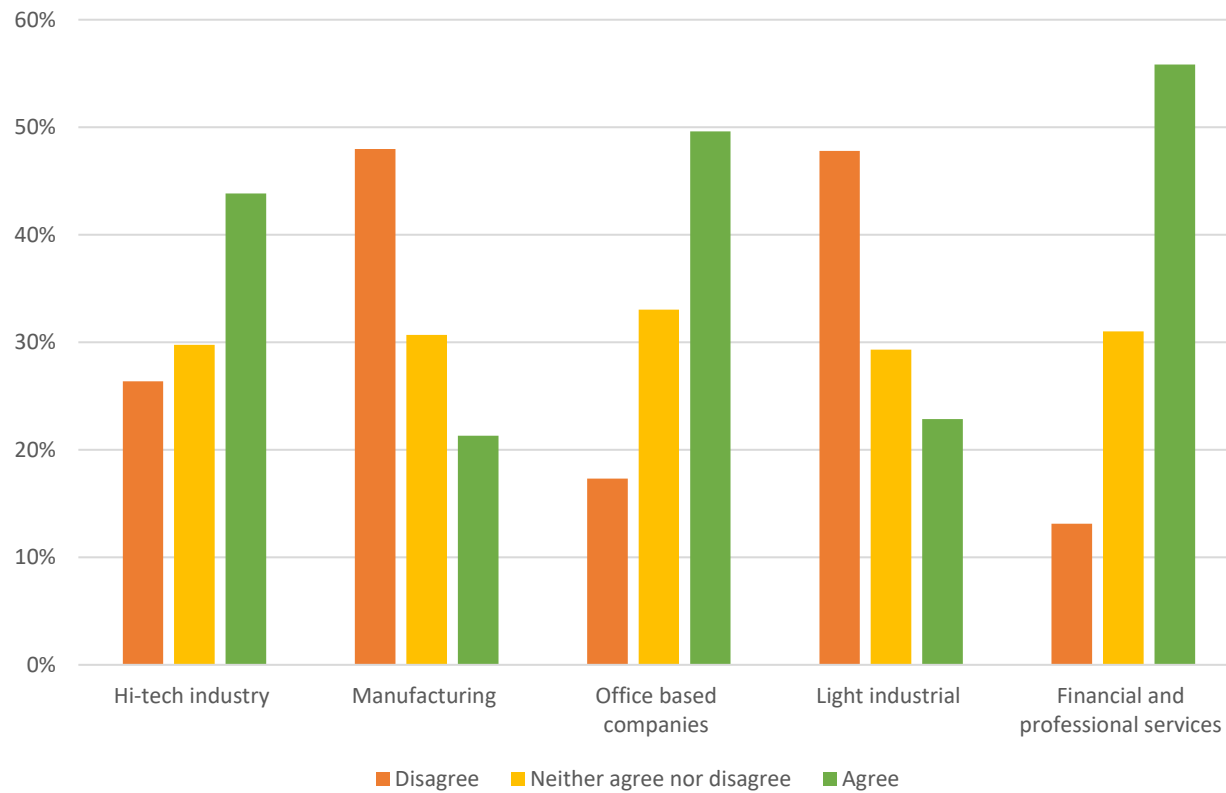
**Conclusion:**

There is lot of support from the community for food services for example restaurants and greengrocers. They also feel a strong need for essential services as illustrated in the left-hand table.

From responses analysed, chain stores and charity shops in the town are least important.

# 3. Business and Trade

Q3.3 What type of business should we encourage to Bewdley?



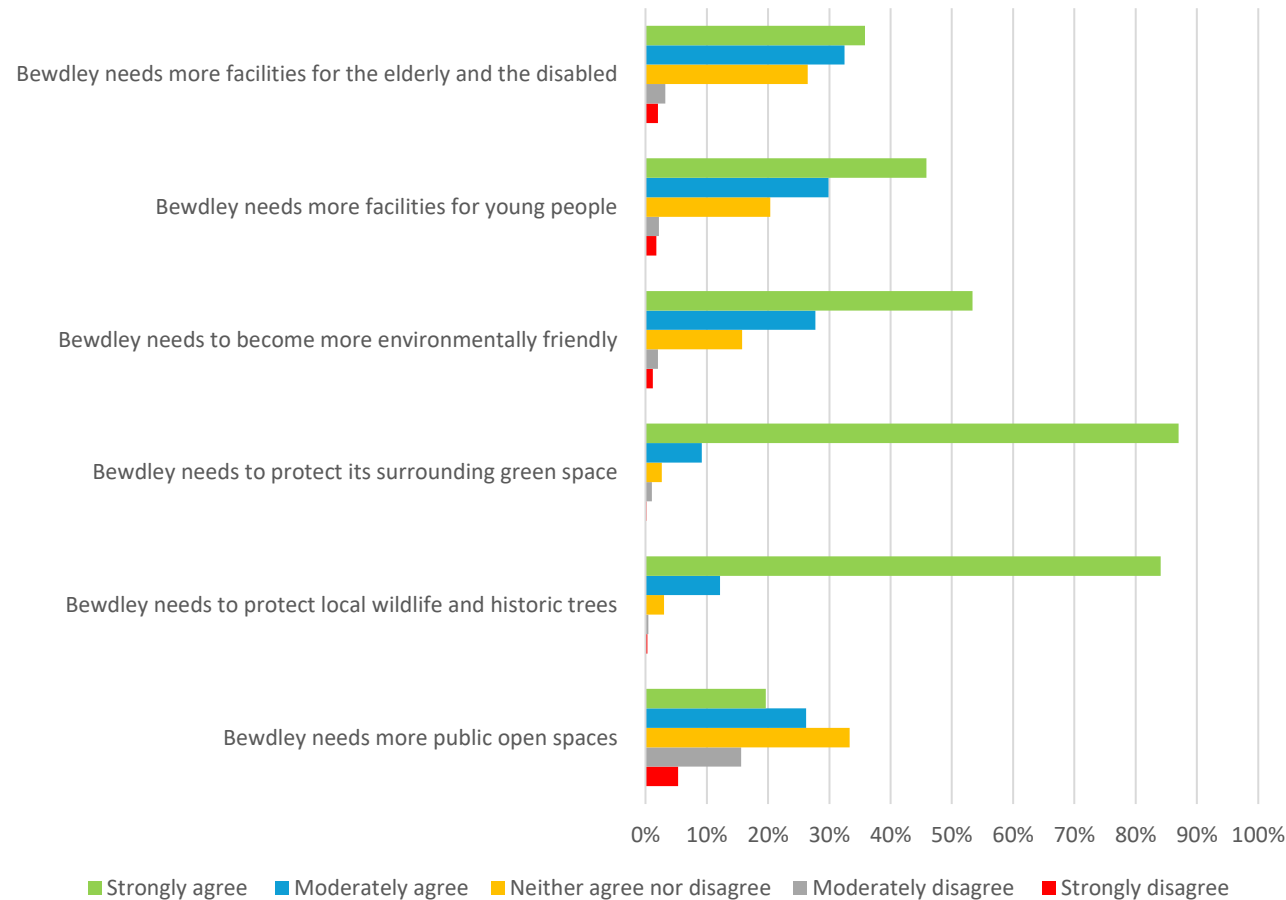
### Conclusion:

- Financial and professional services, office-based companies and hi-tech industries were the most favourably viewed by respondents.
- Manufacturing and light industrial were the least desirable industries.



# 4. Natural Environment, Sport and Recreation

Q4.1 How much do you agree with the following statements?



- The community believe it is paramount to protect its surrounding green spaces, wildlife and historic trees.
- Respondents have also placed an importance in increasing the number of facilities available for all the elderly, disabled and young.
- Agreement from residents shows that Bewdley needs to become more environmentally friendly.

**Conclusion:**

The community places more importance on preserving the current natural surroundings than increasing the amount of public open spaces available.

## 4. Natural Environment, Sport and Recreation

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Q4.2 How important to you are the following activities/facilities?

Most important	% in agreement
Public footpaths	92%
Wildlife areas	92%
Riverside picnic areas	82%
Ponds and wetlands	81%
Community Halls	78%

Least important	% in disagreement
Skate parks and adult outdoor exercising	27%
Children's play areas	19%
Cycle paths	17%
Allotments	15%
Sports pitches and courts	10%

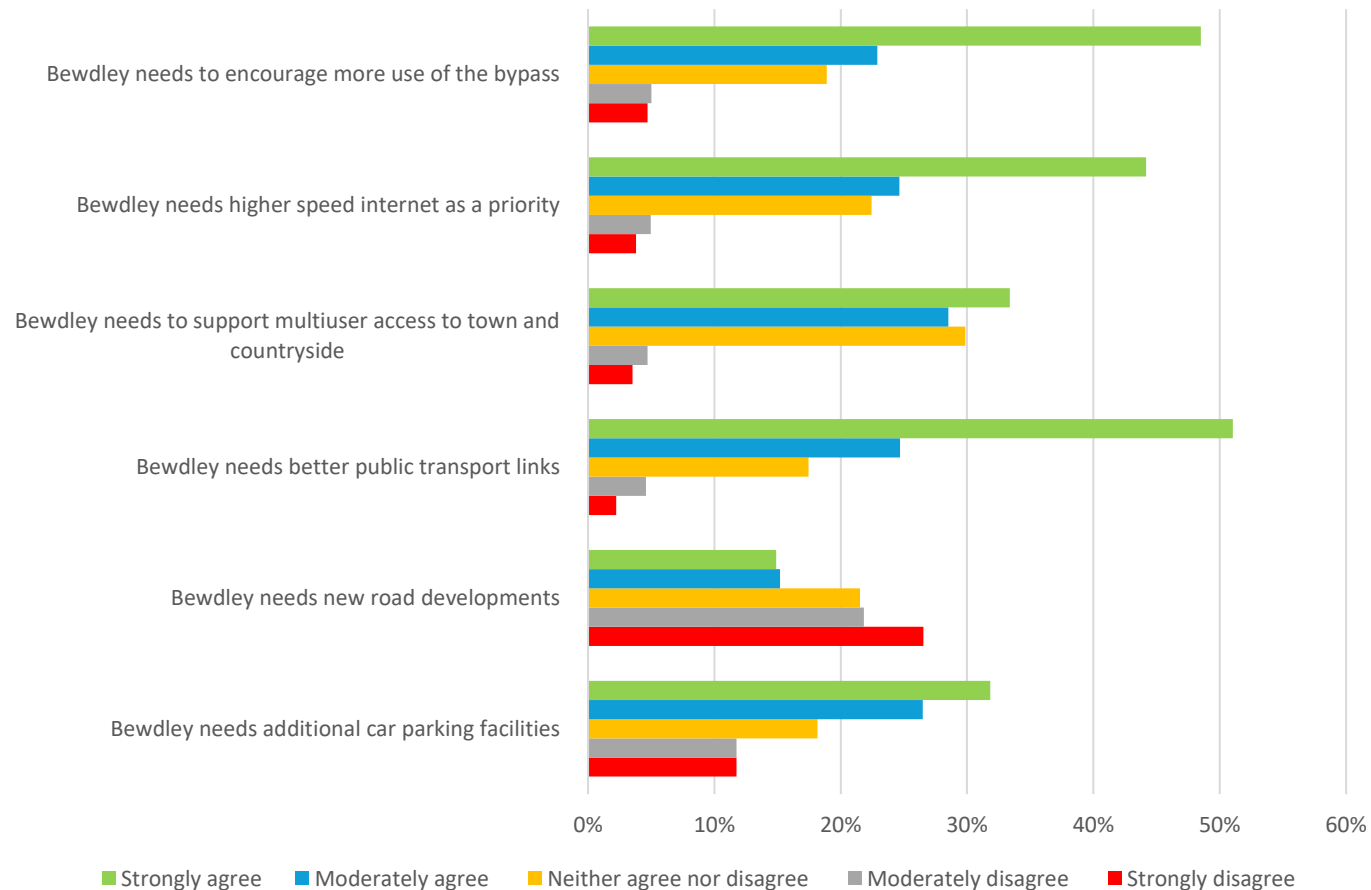
### Conclusion:

Out of 15 options respondents deemed public footpaths and wildlife areas as the most important activities or facilities.

Skate parks and adult outdoor exercising were deemed the least important.

# 5. Transport and Communication

Q5.1 How much do you agree with the following statements?



- Over 75% of respondents agreed that Bewdley needs better public transport links.
- The need to prioritise higher internet speeds was also popular with over 70% of respondents in agreement.
- 71% agreed that Bewdley needs to encourage more use of the bypass.

### Conclusion:

The community feels that Bewdley needs to improve its road networks, transport links and parking facilities but doing so without building new road developments. The community also places importance in the creation of faster internet speeds.

# 5. Transport and Communication

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Q5.2 Are any changes or improvements needed to the following?

Most important	% in agreement
Road maintenance	88%
Bus services	74%
Walk to school routes	72%
Safer pedestrian route across the river	69%
Public rights of way	68%
Internet speeds	68%

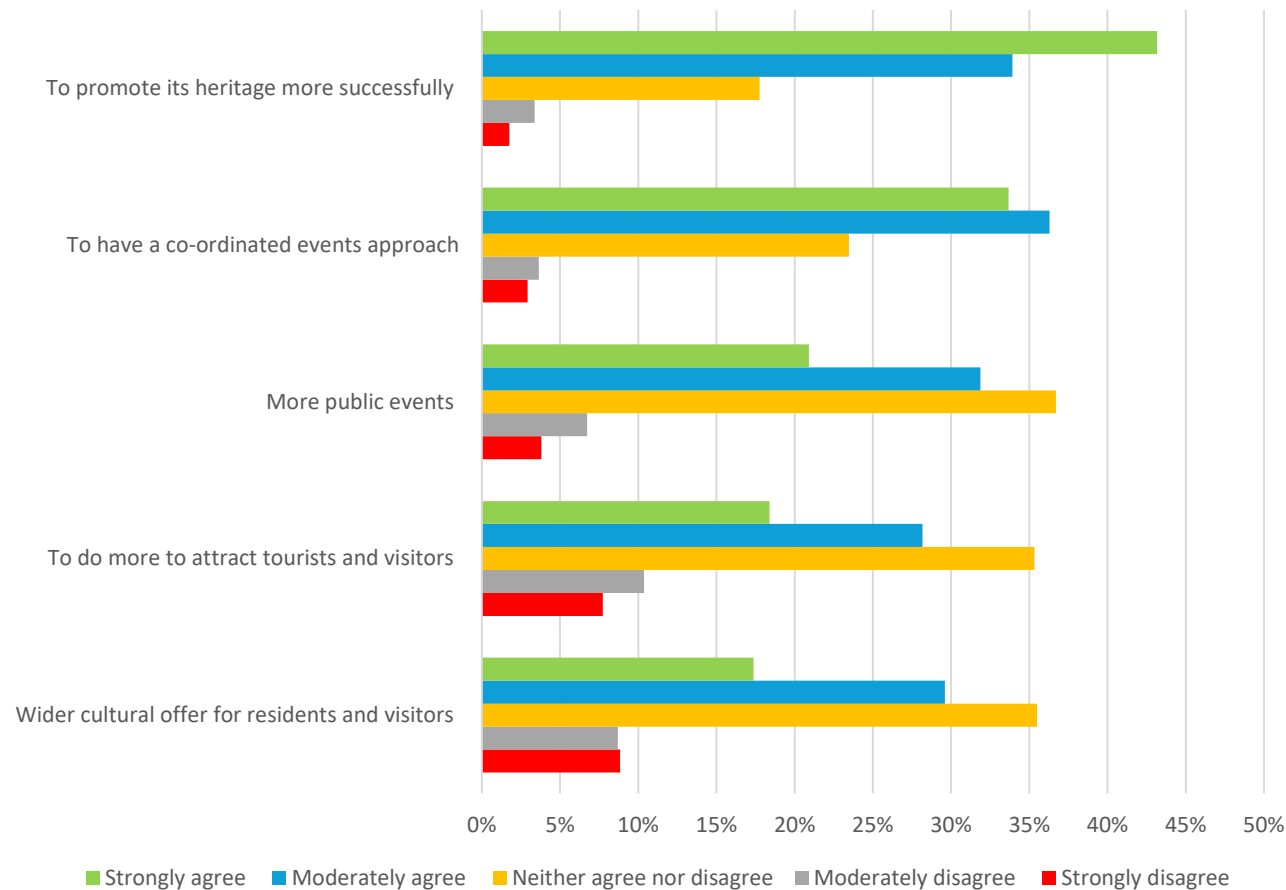
- Out of 10 choices, respondents deemed 6 choices indicated in the left-hand table to be the most needing change.
- Like sentiments in q5.1, the community feel that the road maintenance can be improved.
- Non-car networks around Bewdley were deemed as a focus for improvement by respondents such as Bus services and walking routes.
- Access to information in public places, On street parking, Cycle paths and Car parking provision were seen as the least important areas for improvement by respondents.

### Conclusion:

The community feel that the improvement of Road maintenance and public transport access to the town is very important.

# 6. Heritage, Culture & Tourism

Q6.1 How much do you agree with the following statements?



- 77% agreed or strongly agreed that they would like Bewdley to promote its heritage more successfully.
- Bewdley needs to have a co-ordinated events approach with 70% agreeing/strongly agreeing.
- While 47% of respondents were in agreement that Bewdley needs to do more to attract tourists and offer a wider cultural appeal for residents and visitors, these were also the least popular statements with 18% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

### Conclusion:

**The community agree that there needs to be a more coordinated approach to promoting the heritage of the town.**

## 6. Heritage, Culture & Tourism

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Q6.2 How important are the following?

	% in Agreement
Protecting all heritage assets not just Listed buildings	90%
Making more of the town's heritage assets to encourage visitors	80%
More regular outdoor markets aimed at tourists/visitors	68%
More arts, music and culture venues	61%
Encouraging more hotels and guest houses to open in the town	42%
More tourist related developments	32%
More caravan and camping sites	12%

### Conclusion:

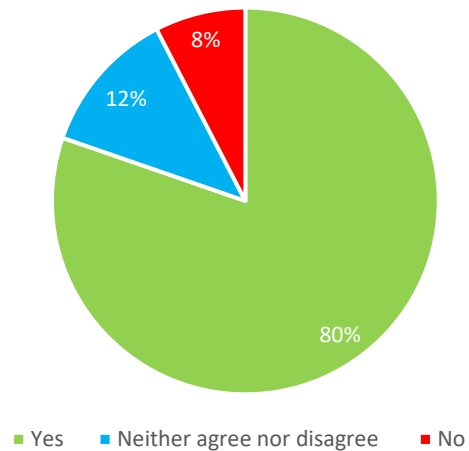
Echoed in the sentiments from 6.1, the community believe its heritage assets are of paramount importance to Bewdley and should be used to attract more visitors to the town. There is an importance placed on tourist related destinations such as arts venues and markets.

Despite wanting to provide more attractions to encourage visitors, residents do not want any more tourist related developments, camping/caravan sites and hotels to provide for these visitors.

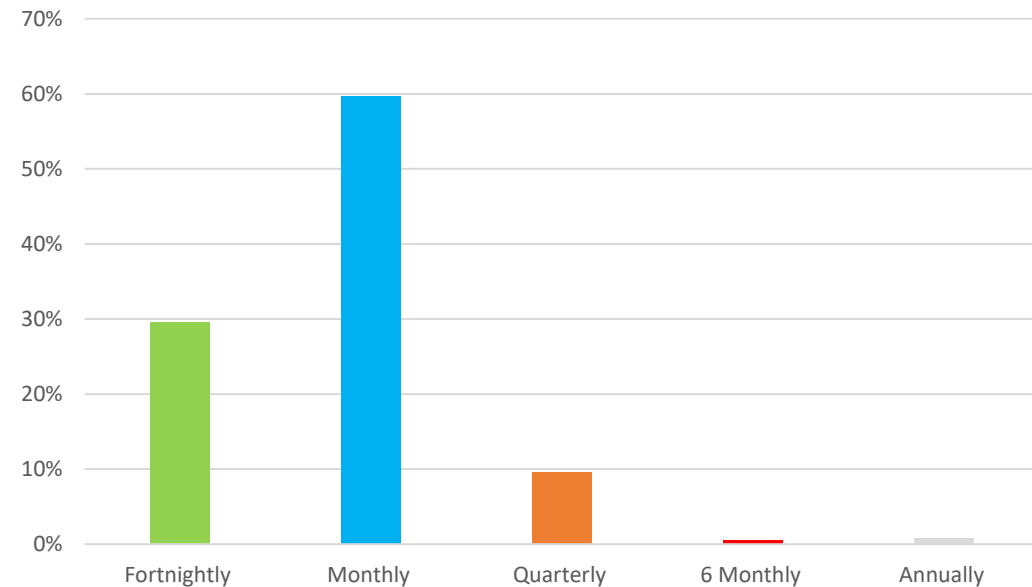
# 6. Heritage, Culture & Tourism

## Q6.3 Markets

Should markets be held in Bewdley?



If yes, how frequent should they be?



The majority of respondents (80%) would prefer having markets held in Bewdley and would like them frequently (60% monthly and 30% fortnightly).

# 7. Issues / Strengths Identified

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## **Age demographics**

- 57% of respondents were over 60 so the results will be skewed to the issues facing older people.

## **Bewdley as a place to live**

- 90% of respondents agreed that Bewdley is a good place to live or visit. This is due to Bewdley's natural characteristics like its riverside location and access to the countryside.

## **Landscape and Natural Environment**

- Preservation of the natural surroundings is extremely important to Bewdley.
- New open space is deemed less important than the preservation of the current areas.
- Public footpaths are greatly valued.



# 7. Issues / Strengths Identified

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## Built Environment

- Respondents state that they do not want lots more housing with 83% in disagreeing to the question.
- Luxury homes and self builds plots were not recognised by responders as deemed necessary.

## Housing

- Most respondents are against lots of new housing and feel Bewdley has the right number of houses currently.
- Low-cost homes on small sites is the favoured outcome.
- Most people would not accept an amount of housing above the district local plan if there was a contribution towards improving existing facilities.

# Issues / Strengths Identified

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## **Bewdley and Trade**

- The range of shops and businesses are not considered very good by the community and deemed an area for improvement.
- Most people want more independent shops and markets to attract visitors to the town.
- Chain stores, charity shops, manufacturing and light industrial works are not wanted by the residents.

## **Natural Environment / Sport & Recreation**

- The community highly prizes its areas of natural surroundings, looking to preserve these rather than increasing public open spaces.
- Skate parks and adult exercising were not deemed important to the responders.

## **Transport & Communication**

- Improvement of road networks without creation of new road developments was the key message from responses.
- Road maintenance and public transport also favoured highly.
- Improved internet speeds was also important.

## **Heritage, Culture & Tourism**

- The community feels that an increased co-ordinated approach is required for the heritage of the town.
- In contrast with a strong importance to provide more attractions to encourage visitors the community do not want to see further tourist related developments.
- There was a strong need to provide regular markets within the town.