WHAT IS A TOWN COUNCIL?

➢ A Town Council is the most localised tier of local government and is a properly constituted statutory authority.

➢ The powers, duties, and the way a Town Council operates is laid out in local government statute and regulations.

➢ Town Councillors are elected every four years and are not paid to perform their duties. Bexhill councillors were elected in 2021 and to align with the current electoral schedule they are due for election again in 2023 and then every four years after that.

➢ Town Councillors have no powers to act alone. The decisions of a council are either made by the corporate body at a legally constituted meeting or delegated to an officer, who is not a council member but an employee of the council (e.g., town clerk).

➢ Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council is made up of 18 elected members and meets once a month to discuss operations and local issues. Councillors serve on a range of smaller committees which meet regularly to discuss issues in more detail and report back to the full council for final decision making.

➢ 'The Big Survey 2021' was instigated to canvass opinions on how the public would like to see the Town Council develop, what issues need addressing and to help form the future strategy of the Town Council.

" More outdoor events on the seafront. "

" This should be a hub of activity most of or all of the year "

" A bandstand in Egerton park "

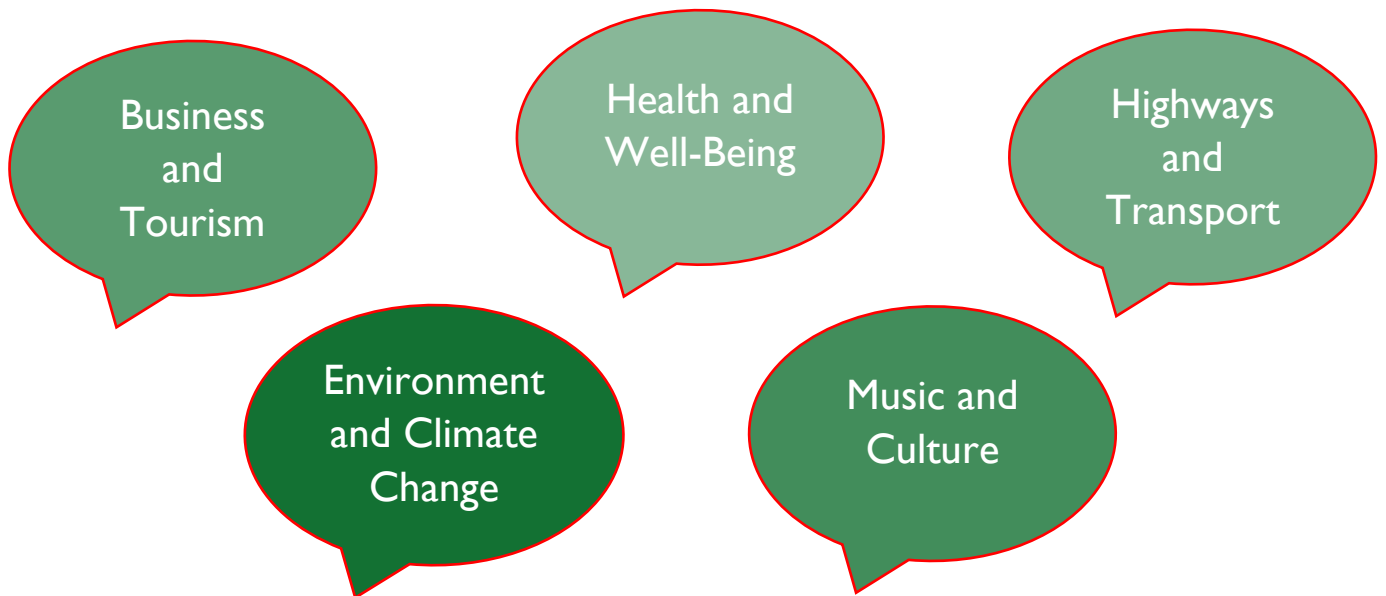" Call the railway station Bexhill-on-Sea "

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL
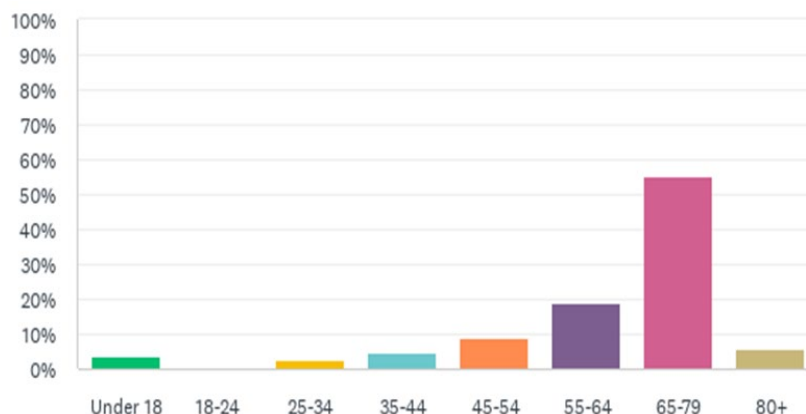
THE BIG SURVEY 2021 RESULTS

This survey was the first test of community opinion in Bexhill since the formation of the Town Council in May 2021

2089 people responded to questions around the following categories:

Business and Tourism

Health and Well-Being

Highways and Transport

Environment and Climate Change

Music and Culture

95.58% of respondents were residents of Bexhill-on-Sea

The age range of respondents was as follows:

Respondents were asked to prioritise the following:

- ✓ Smartening up your area
- ✓ Increase recycling
- ✓ Plant more trees
- ✓ Reduce litter/fly-tipping
- ✓ Reduce graffiti
- ✓ More floral displays

Highest priorities

- Residents felt that smartening up the area **(31%)** and fly-tipping **(29.49%)** were the biggest priorities.

- These concerns were increased to **63%** and **77%** respectively when appearing in the top **3** priorities for each resident

- Third place was shared fairly equally between increased recycling and planting more trees. Approximately **18%** of residents put these as a primary concern while **54%** (plant more trees) and **57%** (increase recycling) of respondents placed these in the top three.

Creating a floral display was deemed the least important issue by residents with **39.67%** placing it last.

Environment and the Effects of Climate Change
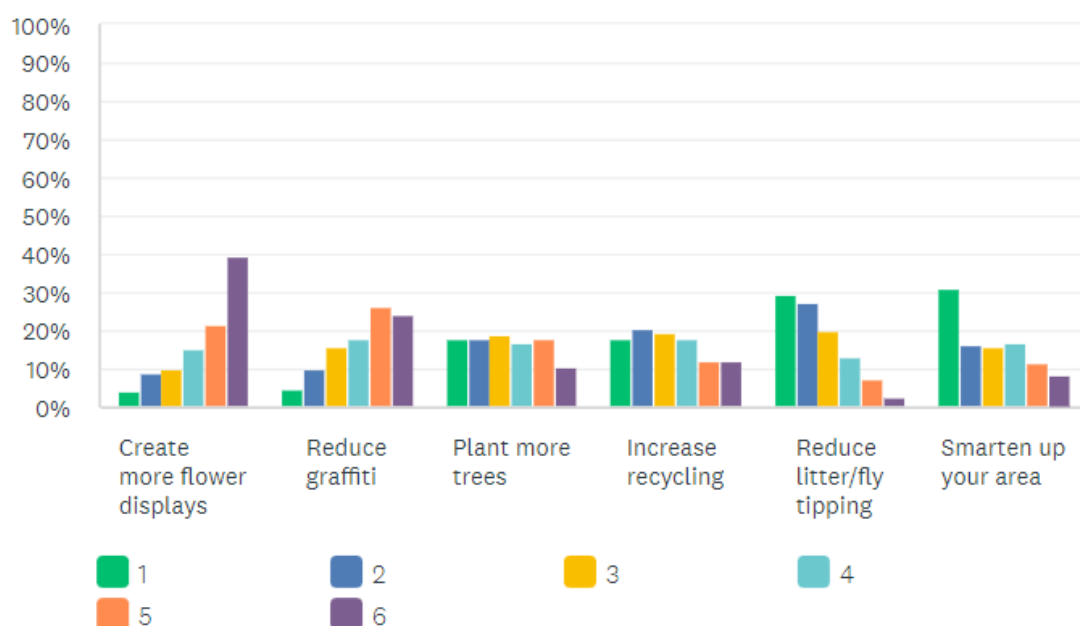
	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Create more flower displays	4.01% 76	9.19% 174	10.20% 193	15.11% 286	21.82% 413	39.67% 751	1,893	2.39
Reduce graffiti	4.92% 92	10.05% 188	16.03% 300	18.07% 338	26.51% 496	24.43% 457	1,871	2.76
Plant more trees	17.67% 336	18.15% 345	18.94% 360	16.94% 322	17.83% 339	10.47% 199	1,901	3.69
Increase recycling	17.89% 340	20.46% 389	19.46% 370	18.15% 345	11.99% 228	12.05% 229	1,901	3.78
Reduce litter/fly tipping	29.49% 567	27.30% 525	20.23% 389	13.26% 255	7.28% 140	2.44% 47	1,923	4.51
Smarten up your area	31.00% 601	16.14% 313	16.04% 311	16.66% 323	11.50% 223	8.66% 168	1,939	4.12

Additional Comments

1268 comments were received on environment and climate change issues. These were grouped into eleven categories:

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE*	NUMBER*
Environmental: grass verges, wildflower and seafront planting, street cleaning and overgrown paths	27.68%	351
Recycling and waste: more recycle bins, littering and waste disposal, and recycling accountability	20.58%	261
Roads: Potholes, road repairs and pedestrianisation	13.09%	166
Dog fouling: dog littering and more dog bins	9.68%	125
Parking: the provision of parking and enforcement of anti-social parking	6.23%	79
Cycling: cycle lanes and cycle parking	5.13%	65
Electric vehicles: the provision of charging points	4.18%	53
Leisure: leisure facilities, the seafront and promenade, new swimming pool/leisure centre etc.	3.63%	46
Toilets: improve	1.81%	23
Seafront shelters: criticism of and requests for more.	1.10%	14
Miscellaneous: other not easily categorised comments as well as 'Don't knows'	17.90%	227

*Percentage and number may add up to higher than the sample size. This is due to some comments being in multiple categories.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 'Keep verges cut and maintained. It is not the job of residents. Introduce food reycling alongside otherwaste collections'
- 'Need to make community waste sites more user friendly and reduce charges for some items'
- 'Revamp Ravenside roundabout – Poor impression of Bexhill'
- 'More dog poo bins and enforce dog fouling fines, especially on beaches and prom.'
- 'Bring back putting.
- Make more of our motoring history.'

Highways and Transport

Respondents were invited to prioritise the following issues

- ✓ Reduce vehicle speed
- ✓ Reduce anti-social parking
- ✓ Improve verge maintenance
- ✓ Create wildflower verges
- ✓ Reduce potholes
- ✓ Increase pedestrian crossings

Highest priorities

- The highest priority highlighted by residents, was to reduce potholes. More than half **(60.58%)** rated this highest. This percentage increased to **88.57%** when the first three ratings are considered.
- Reducing anti-social parking **(13.81%)** and reducing vehicle speed **(14.55%)** were rated second and third. They appeared in the top three of respondents **69%** and **49.03%** of the time respectively.
- Planting wildflower verges was the least popular option. This has been selected **5.47%** of the time and appears in the top three only **25.33%** of the time

Highways and Transport
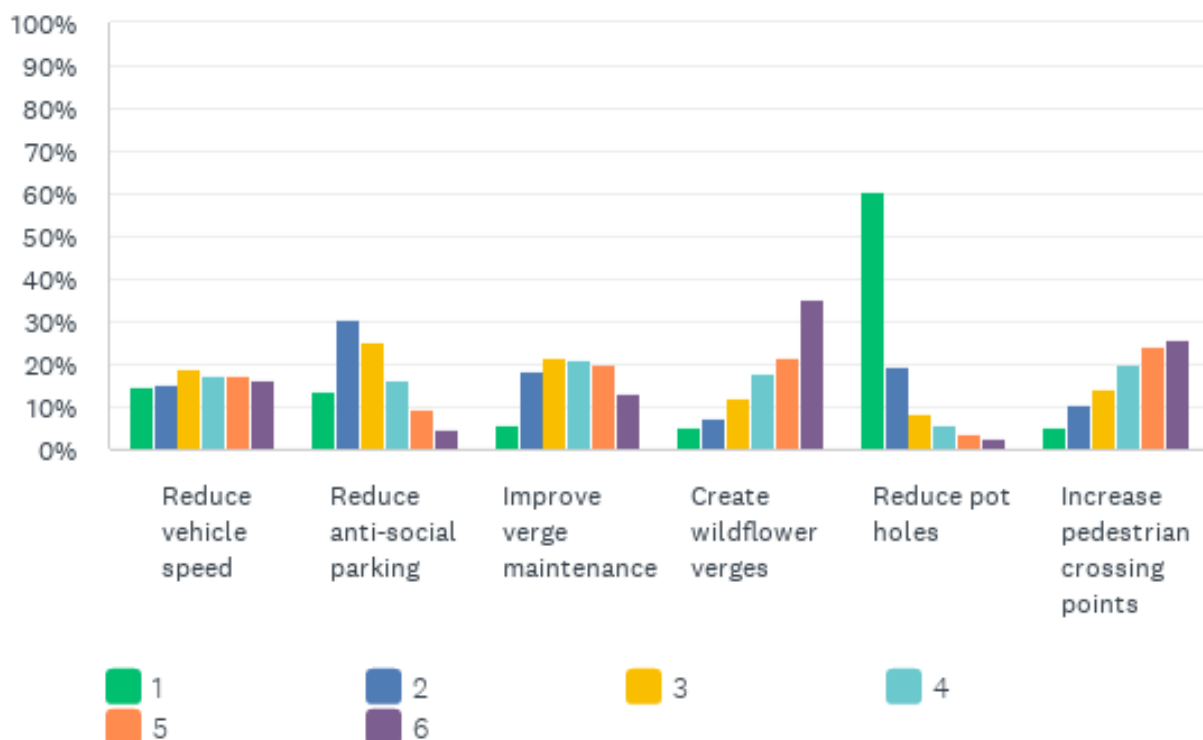
	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Reduce vehicle speed	14.55% 276	15.45% 293	19.03% 361	17.50% 332	17.24% 327	16.24% 308	1,897	3.44
Reduce anti-social parking	13.81% 262	30.42% 577	25.09% 476	16.24% 308	9.49% 180	4.96% 94	1,897	4.08
Improve verge maintenance	5.77% 109	18.36% 347	21.80% 412	20.79% 393	19.89% 376	13.39% 253	1,890	3.29
Create wildflower verges	5.47% 102	7.56% 141	12.33% 230	17.74% 331	21.49% 401	35.42% 661	1,866	2.52
Reduce pot holes	60.58% 1,182	19.53% 381	8.46% 165	5.54% 108	3.49% 68	2.41% 47	1,951	5.21
Increase pedestrian crossing points	5.07% 94	10.73% 199	14.24% 264	19.96% 370	24.27% 450	25.73% 477	1,854	2.75

Additional Comments

1265 comments were received on highways and transport issues.

These were grouped into nine categories:

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE*	NUMBER*
Parking: Additional and existing parking spaces, costs and payment methods.	32.02%	405
Paths and verges: Upkeep and maintenance of paths, pavements and verges.	17.94%	227
Regulations: Speeding, parking and issues regarding enforcement	17.15%	217
Public transport: Buses, trains and taxis.	10.59%	134
Cycling: Cycle lanes and related issues.	9.88%	125
Road repairs: Potholes and comments on road surfaces.	7.75%	98
Pedestrian crossings: Requests for additional road crossing points	4.74%	60
Electric vehicles: EV charge points and additional electric vehicles/buses	2.77%	35
Miscellaneous: Other not easily categorised comments as well as 'Don't knows'	18.42%	233

*Percentage and number may add up to higher than the sample size. This is due to some comments being in multiple categories.

HIGHLIGHTS

- *'Locals should have free parking on the seafront.'*
- *'Clamp down on parking on double lines and other illegal places.'*
- *'Buses should run a lot later to and from Hastings and Eastbourne, more frequent services/evening/weekends. Call the railway station Bexhill-on-Sea.'*
- *'Improve pavements. Clear overgrown footpaths'*
- *'Encourage more walking and cycling. Create protected cycle routes.'*
- *'Make sure there are dropped kerbs at pedestrian crossing points for disabled people to cross safely.'*

Music and Culture

Respondents were invited to prioritise the following:

- ✓ Improve access to music
- ✓ Improve access to the arts
- ✓ Develop outdoor theatre performances
- ✓ Fit noticeboards in each ward
- ✓ Create more heritage boards
- ✓ Create heritage/history trails

Highest priorities

- Cultural priorities for our residents were very evenly spread with only a **16%** range in the top three of all respondents
- Improving access to music was the top answer **27.72%** of the time, building to **59.2%** as a top three answer.
- Creating heritage/history trails **(22.03%)** followed by developing outdoor theatre performances **(15.81%)** were the second and third options. They appeared in the top three of respondents **57.12%** and **56.33%** of the time respectively.
- Noticeboards in each ward started well at **16.85%** but dropped to the lowest score **(43.22%)** in the top three of our residents' desires.

Music and Culture
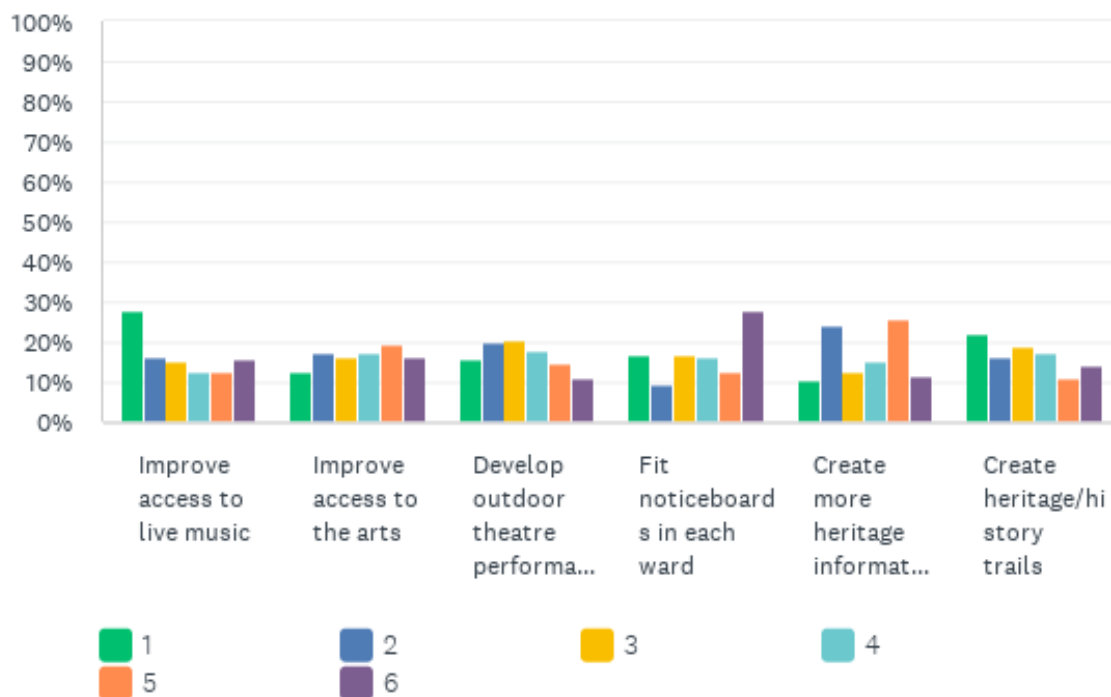
	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Improve access to live music	27.72% 502	16.07% 291	15.41% 279	12.76% 231	12.48% 226	15.57% 282	1,811	3.87
Improve access to the arts	12.59% 221	17.38% 305	16.35% 287	17.49% 307	19.66% 345	16.52% 290	1,755	3.36
Develop outdoor theatre performances	15.81% 281	19.75% 351	20.77% 369	18.12% 322	14.52% 258	11.03% 196	1,777	3.71
Fit noticeboards in each ward	16.86% 300	9.50% 169	16.86% 300	16.47% 293	12.48% 222	27.82% 495	1,779	3.18
Create more heritage information boards	10.35% 184	24.07% 428	12.82% 228	15.07% 268	25.87% 460	11.81% 210	1,778	3.43
Create heritage/history trails	22.03% 398	16.33% 295	18.76% 339	17.60% 318	11.18% 202	14.11% 255	1,807	3.78

Additional Comments

922 comments were received on music and culture issues.
These were grouped into nine categories:

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE*	NUMBER*
De La Warr Pavilion: Issues including programming and use of the space.	26.14%	241
Music: Live music, the bandstand and related issues.	20.82%	192
Art: Visual art and exhibitions.	13.02%	120
Outdoor events: Concerts, film screenings, markets and firework displays.	9.11%	84
Theatre and dance:	7.38%	68
Film and cinema:	6.18%	57
History and heritage: History trails, boards and the museum.	4.12%	38
Sport:	0.33%	3
Miscellaneous: Other not easily categorised comments as well as 'Don't knows'	40%	371

*Percentage and number may add up to higher than the sample size. This is due to some comments being in multiple categories.

HIGHLIGHTS

- *'The De La Warr is a unique building to us, however due to not being managed properly is completely underused. This should be a hub of activity most of or all of the year!!! We have suggested a number of possibilities. Completely ignored.'*
- *'A cinema. De La Warr to cater more for all ages – eg variety and plays'*
- *'More outdoor events on the seafront.'*
- *'Keep up/expand what is in place at the moment – particularly in D.W. Pavillion.'*
- *'A bandstand in Egerton park (was popular back in the day)'*

Young People

Respondents were invited to prioritise the following:

- ✓ Improve existing play areas
- ✓ Build more play areas
- ✓ Improve Galley Hill facilities/skate park
- ✓ Replace/repair water feature fountains
- ✓ Expand teenage activities
- ✓ Improve access to different sports

Highest priorities

- Expand teenage activities and repair/replace the water feature were the highest priorities for our respondents. **23.35%** and **34.76%** of residents put these as their first choices respectively building to **63.48%** and **60.83%** in the top three answers.
- Improving access to different sports was the third top choice at **17.76%,** appearing in the top three **57.13%** of the time. This is very closely followed by improving existing play areas **(14.34%/55.85%)**
- Building more play areas **(7.03%/33.18%)** and improving the Galley Hill facilities **(8.14%/37.79%)** were the least popular options.

Young People
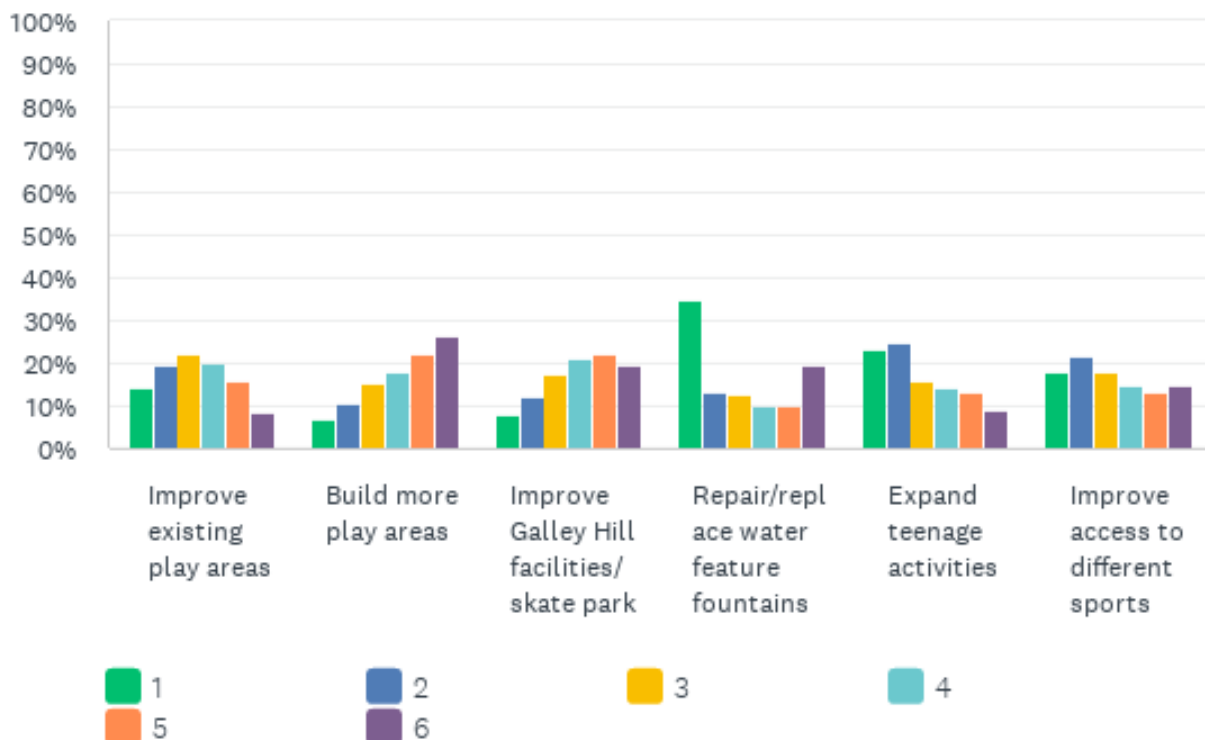
	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Improve existing play areas	14.34% 258	19.51% 351	22.01% 396	19.90% 358	16.01% 288	8.23% 148	1,799	3.72
Build more play areas	7.03% 121	10.69% 184	15.46% 266	18.13% 312	22.31% 384	26.38% 454	1,721	2.83
Improve Galley Hill facilities/skate park	8.14% 145	12.30% 219	17.35% 309	20.94% 373	21.95% 391	19.31% 344	1,781	3.06
Repair/replace water feature fountains	34.76% 632	13.20% 240	12.87% 234	10.01% 182	9.79% 178	19.36% 352	1,818	3.95
Expand teenage activities	23.35% 413	24.53% 434	15.60% 276	14.30% 253	13.28% 235	8.93% 158	1,769	4.04
Improve access to different sports	17.76% 314	21.61% 382	17.76% 314	14.65% 259	13.40% 237	14.82% 262	1,768	3.71

Additional Comments

891 comments were received on young people's issues.
These were grouped into seven categories

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE*	NUMBER*
Youth clubs and activities	17.96%	160
Other facilities: Ten-pin bowling, putting green, BMX and skatepark etc	13.24%	118
Sports:	12.01%	107
Parks and play areas:	11.67%	104
Fountains and water features:	7.18%	64
Leisure, community and swimming facilities:	5.05%	45
Miscellaneous: Other not easily categorised comments as well as 'Don't knows'	48.37%	431

*Percentage and number may add up to higher than the sample size. This is due to some comments being in multiple categories.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 'Remember today's youth are tomorrow's adults. Get more 13-18 yrs youth clubs activities centres going. PLEASE.'
- 'Improve youth club facilities and get young people involved in the planning and decorating.'
- 'Re-instate climbing wall at Bexhill Leisure centre. Bowling alley.'
- 'Create a skate park along the front. These kids are clever and it's wonderful watching them.'
- 'Tremendous focus on sports this year with the Para Olympics emphasising the importance of character in sport, and Emma Raducanu's fabulous win at the US open. Capitalise on this especially in Egerton park'

Health and Wellbeing

Respondents were invited to prioritise the following:

✓ Install outdoor gym/trim trail equipment
✓ Encourage more group fitness activities
✓ Install a putting green
✓ Address loneliness and isolation problems
✓ Improve access to mental health help
✓ Support healthy eating choices

Highest priorities

- Addressing loneliness is the primary concern amongst **33%** of respondents, with a massive **75.23%** putting it in their top three choices.
- Improving access to mental health care was the next highest concern appearing **21.86%** of the time as a first choice and **67.35%** as a top three selection.
- Encouraging more group fitness activities **(10.63%),** though pipped to third place by a new putting green **(18.88%)** and installing an outdoor gym/trim trail **(14.44%)** as a first choice nevertheless came in third when the first three choices were selected **(48.37%, 40.73% and 37.65% respectively)**
- Supporting healthy eating choices was the least favoured option as a first **(7.14%)** choice but moved up to fifth **(40.25%)** when the first three choices were considered.

Health and Well-Being

Legend: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
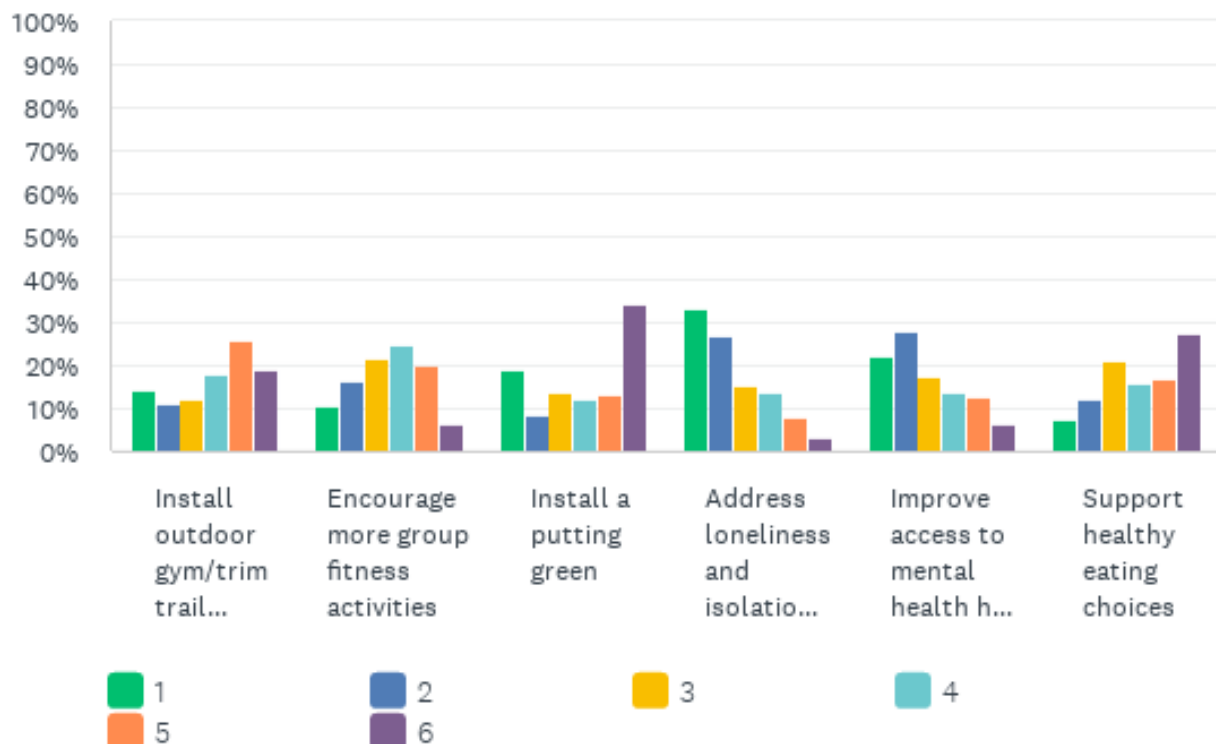
	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Install outdoor gym/trim trail equipment	14.44% 265	11.06% 203	12.15% 223	17.77% 326	25.89% 475	18.69% 343	1,835	3.14
Encourage more group fitness activities	10.63% 192	16.27% 294	21.47% 388	24.96% 451	20.14% 364	6.53% 118	1,807	3.53
Install a putting green	18.88% 350	8.31% 154	13.54% 251	12.19% 226	13.11% 243	33.98% 630	1,854	3.06
Address loneliness and isolation problems	33.03% 616	26.92% 502	15.28% 285	13.78% 257	7.67% 143	3.32% 62	1,865	4.54
Improve access to mental health help	21.86% 397	28.03% 509	17.46% 317	13.66% 248	12.44% 226	6.55% 119	1,816	4.14
Support healthy eating choices	7.14% 130	12.19% 222	20.92% 381	15.76% 287	16.75% 305	27.24% 496	1,821	2.95

Additional Comments

914 comments were received on health and well-being issues.
These were grouped into eight categories

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE*	NUMBER*
Leisure facilities: Swimming pool, leisure centre, putting green, bowling alley etc.	20.02%	183
Cycling: Cycle paths and related items	14.66%	134
Well-being: Mental health and loneliness	13.89%	127
Medical: More general health issues, doctors etc.	6.46%	59
Food and Eating: Cafes, snacks and healthy eating.	4.81%	44
Education: Classes and courses	3.39%	31
Parking	3.39%	31
Miscellaneous: Other not easily categorised comments as well as 'Don't knows'	42.01%	384

*Percentage and number may add up to higher than the sample size. This is due to some comments being in multiple categories.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 'Putting green - should also be considered under the business and tourism section. We lost our last one because RDC at that time told us it could not afford to pay the attendant who worked for the gardening contracts at the time.'
- 'Improved swimming pool'
- 'Get cycling banned on the seafront promenade and pavements, The road is the place for these.'
- 'More doctor's surgeries. Drs to be open at more convenient times for patients.'

Respondents were invited to prioritise the following:

- ✓ Encourage more holiday/hotel accommodation
- ✓ Create more pedestrian zones for shopping areas
- ✓ Improve disability access
- ✓ Encourage more street markets
- ✓ Encourage more family activities/events
- ✓ Improve public toilet facilities

Highest priorities

- Improving public toilet facilities was the primary concern amongst **36.09%** of residents, with **73.14%** of respondents putting it in their top three choices.
- In next place, improving disability access was the first choice of **15.61%** of those polled, with **54.74%** putting in the top three.
- Encouraging more family events was selected by **12.54%** of those asked as a priority.
- Encouraging more hotel accommodation was chosen by **12.32%** of respondents as a first choice but fell to the lowest score over the top three selections at **33.26%.**

Business and Tourism
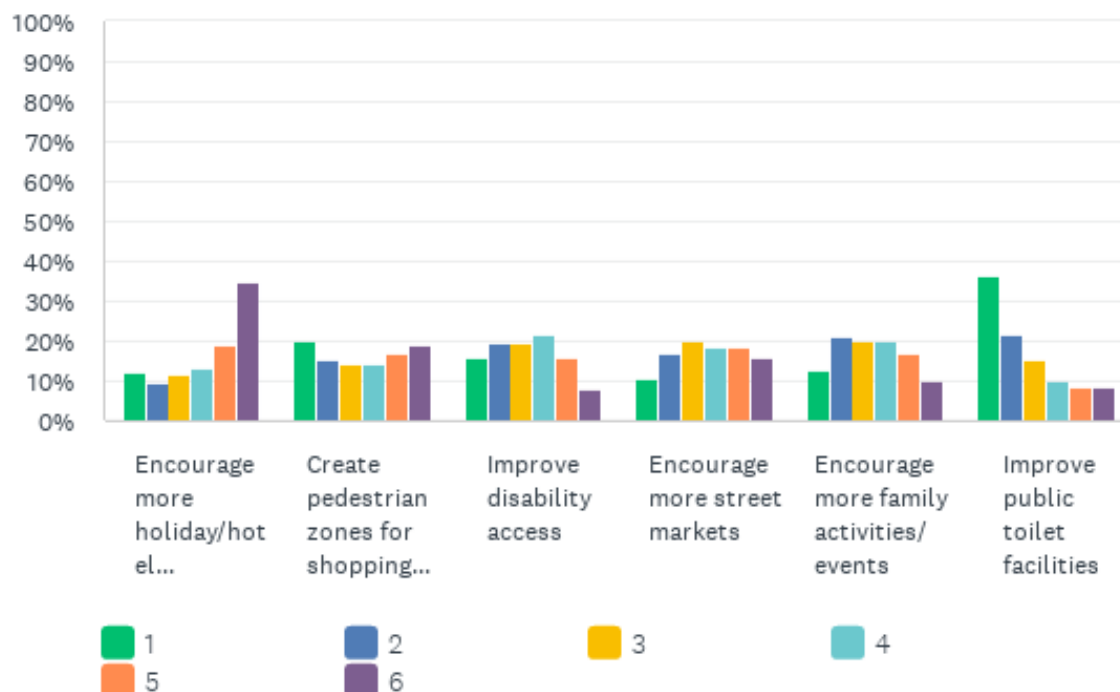
	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Encourage more holiday/hotel accomodation	12.32% 227	9.33% 172	11.61% 214	13.08% 241	18.72% 345	34.94% 644	1,843	2.79
Create pedestrian zones for shopping areas	20.16% 367	15.16% 276	14.45% 263	14.45% 263	16.92% 308	18.85% 343	1,820	3.51
Improve disability access	15.61% 288	19.51% 360	19.62% 362	21.73% 401	15.56% 287	7.97% 147	1,845	3.74
Encourage more street markets	10.39% 191	16.92% 311	20.02% 368	18.17% 334	18.50% 340	16.00% 294	1,838	3.35
Encourage more family activities/events	12.54% 227	20.94% 379	19.94% 361	20.06% 363	16.69% 302	9.83% 178	1,810	3.63
Improve public toilet facilities	36.06% 692	21.57% 414	15.48% 297	9.80% 188	8.55% 164	8.55% 164	1,919	4.41

Additional Comments

997 comments were received on business and tourism issues.
These were grouped into nine categories

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE*	NUMBER*
Events and Markets:	18.05%	180
Parking:	15.85%	158
Shops and Restaurants:	14.74%	147
Toilet Facilities:	9.73%	97
Tourist information:	4.71%	47
Transport links: Buses, trains, taxis and road links	4.01%	40
Hotels and accommodation:	3.51%	35
Facilities and fountains:	1.81%	18
Miscellaneous: Other not easily categorised comments as well as 'Don't knows'	36.41%	363

*Percentage and number may add up to higher than the sample size. This is due to some comments being in multiple categories.

HIGHLIGHTS

- *'Firework display on the seafront so no grass needs to be ruined.'*
- *'To put on more plays and entertainment geared to Bexhill residents and families in the De La Warr.'*
- *'Western Rd would make a suitable pedestrian precinct but displaced car parking is required. A car park over the railway track in Western Rd would be excellent, if costly'*
- *'Central major car park at a reasonable charge.'*
- *'Encourage diversity of shopping outlets by giving favourable business rates to new enterprises. Pedestrianise Devonshire Road'*
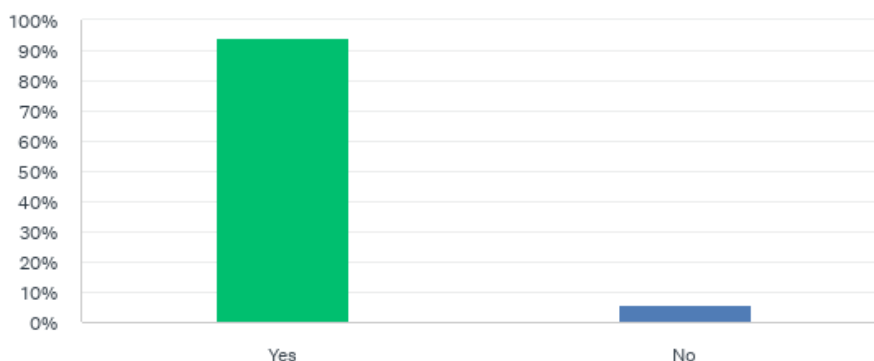
Neighbourhood Plan

WE ASKED:

Would you like to see Bexhill-on-Sea have its own Neighbourhood Plan?

There were **2002** responses.

**94.16%** of those asked were in favour of this.

Special Expenses

WE ASKED:

Rother District Council charges Bexhill-on-Sea residents 'special expenses' in their Council Tax bill for the following services:Parks and Open Spaces; Christmas Lighting; Bexhill Museum; Bus Shelters and Town Forum. Residents have suggested that we could improve these services if the funding was transferred to the Town Council, do you agree?

There were **1975** responses.

90.78% of respondents were in favour.
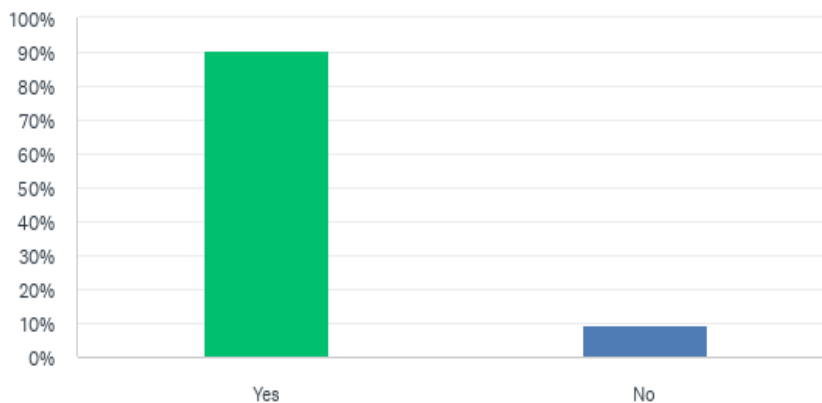
Improving the Area

WE ASKED:

What other ideas do you have for improving Bexhill-on-Sea for our residents now and in the future?

There were **1259** responses:

They were split into the following eight categories:

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE*	NUMBER*
Building: Housing and other development	15.81%	199
Transport: Road, rail, cycling and pedestrianisation	15.65%	197
Parking: Cost, availability, too much or too little!	14.65%	184
Shopping and Eating: Shops, restaurants, and cafes	14.32%	181
Leisure: New facilities. Swimming pool, bowling, putting green, fountains etc	11.52%	145
Rubbish: Issues relating to litter	6.59%	83
Policing: More police patrols and crime related comments	3.49%	44
Miscellaneous: Other not easily categorised comments as well as 'Don't knows'	30.98%	390

Percentage and number may add up to higher than the sample size. This is due to some comments being in multiple categories.

OTHER IDEAS FOR IMPROVING BEXHILL-ON-SEA
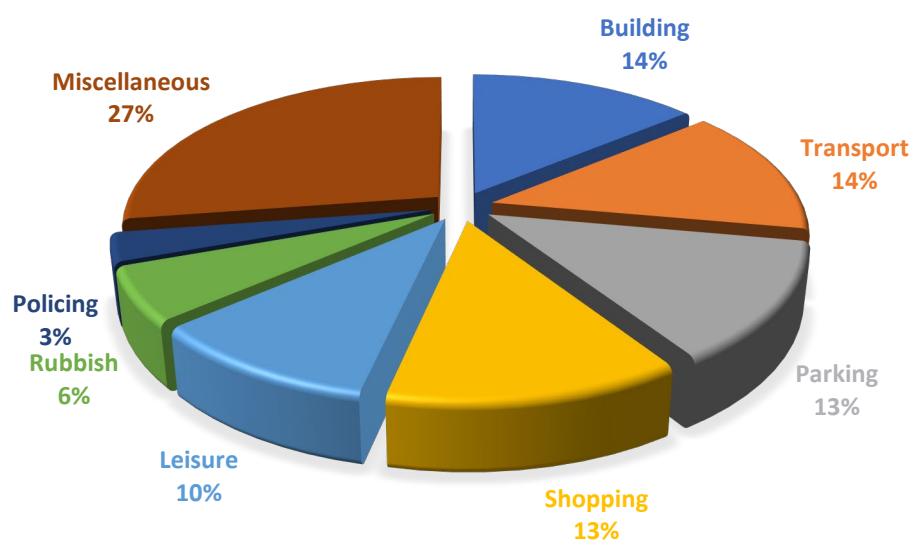
Just One Thing!

WE ASKED:

If I could change one thing for the better in Bexhill-on-Sea it would be...?

There were **1497** responses:

They were split into the following 7 Categories:

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE*	NUMBER*
Transport: Road, rail, cycling and pedestrianisation	25.32%	379
Parking: Cost, availability, too much or too little!	16.97%	254
Shopping and Eating: Shops, restaurants, and cafés.	12.36%	185
Leisure: New facilities. Swimming pool, bowling, putting green, fountains etc	7.28%	109
Building: Housing and other development	7.08%	106
Litter: Issues relating to litter, dog mess fly-tipping etc.	5.28%	79
Miscellaneous: Other not easily categorised comments as well as 'Don't knows'	29.53%	442

Percentage and number may add up to higher than the sample size. This is due to some comments being in multiple categories.

IF I COULD CHANGE ONE THING FOR THE BETTER IN BEXHILL-ON-SEA.....?
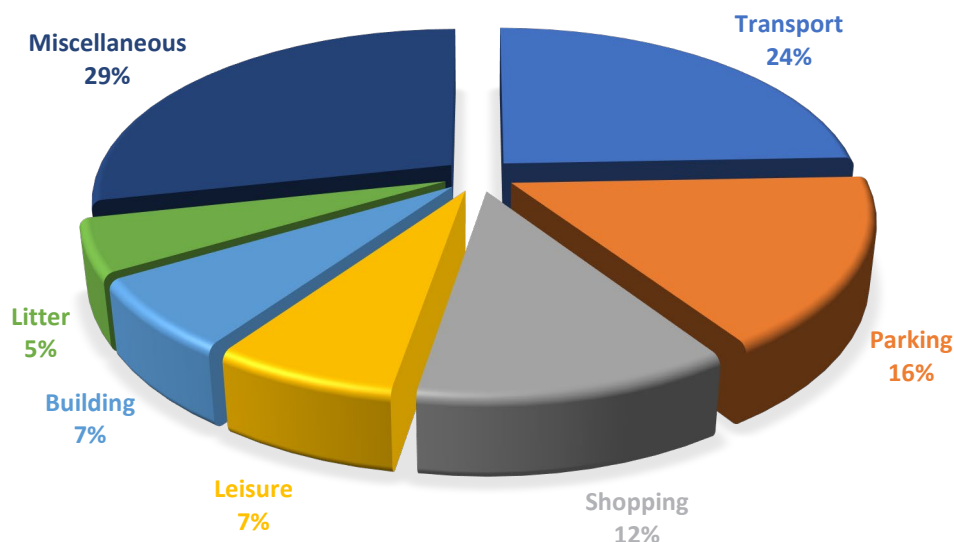
What do you value?

WE ASKED:

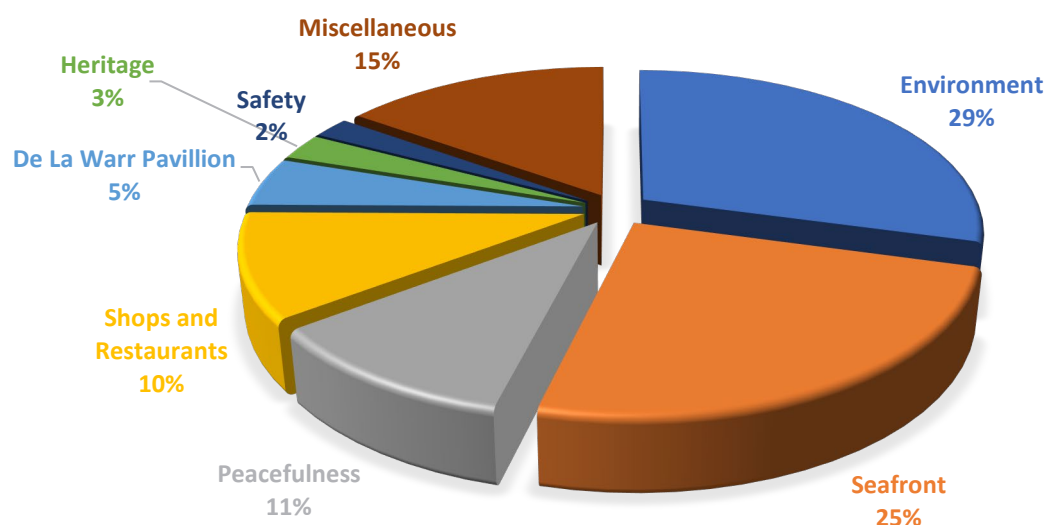The thing I value most about Bexhill-on-Sea is...?

There were **1577** responses:
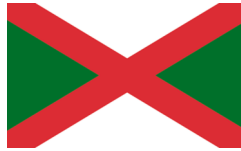
They were split into the following eight categories:

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE*	NUMBER*
Environment: Sea, seaside, parks and countryside.	30.82%	486
Seafront and Promenade:	25.94%	409
Peacefulness: Peace and quiet of the environment.	11.29%	178
Shops and Restaurants:	11.10%	175
De La Warr Pavilion:	5.20%	82
Heritage: Museum, history and Victorian/Edwardian heritage	2.79%	44
Safety: The perception of how safe the town is.	2.22%	35
Miscellaneous: Other not easily categorised comments as well as 'Don't knows	15.92%	251

Percentage and number may add up to higher than the sample size. This is due to some comments being in multiple categories.

THE THING I VALUE MOST ABOUT BEXHILL-ON-SEA IS.....?

Miscellaneous 15%
Heritage 3%
Safety 2%
De La Warr Pavillion 5%
Shops and Restaurants 10%
Peacefulness 11%
Environment 29%
Seafront 25%
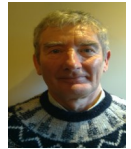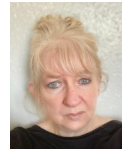
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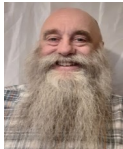
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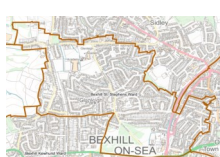
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