
Whaley Bridge Regeneration Project Research Report

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Methodology & Sample Profile

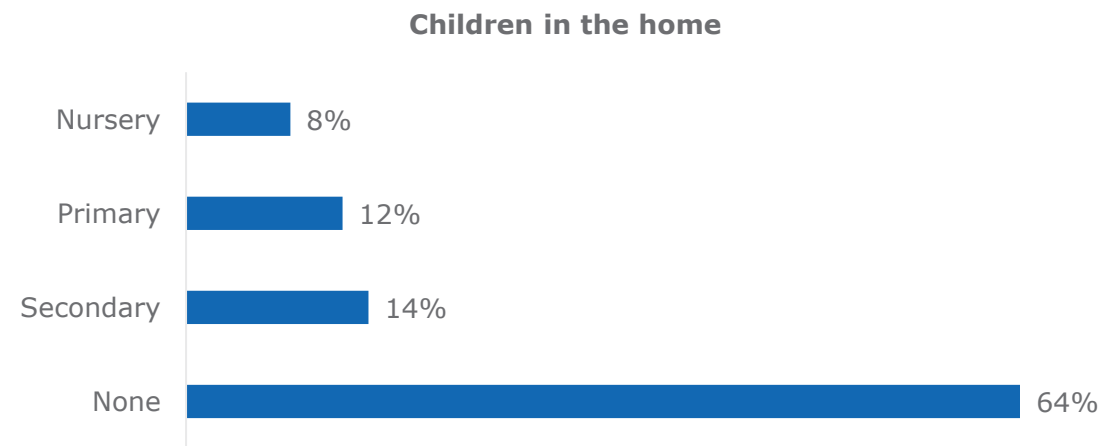
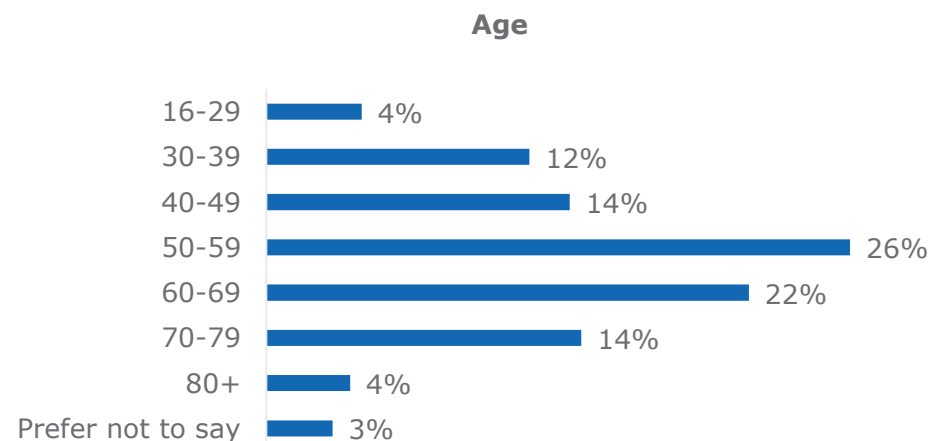
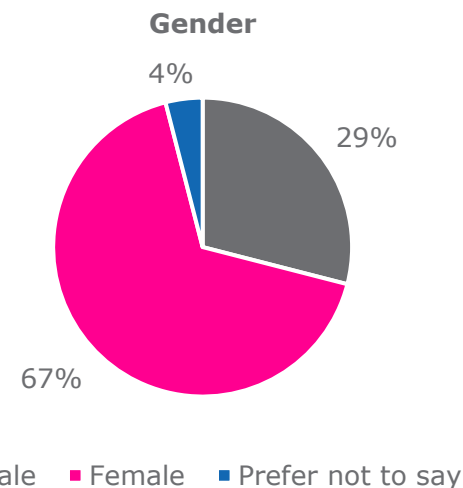
Across September 2,500 questionnaires were delivered to households across Whaley Bridge and Furness Vale.

Residents were given the opportunity to complete the survey on paper or online using a QR code.

We received 774 completed surveys from a cross section of residents.

Males are under-represented; however, feedback reveals that some households discussed the results prior to a female member of the household completing the survey.

The 18-29 years cohort is also under-represented, with feedback revealing that some left it to their parents to respond! We do, however, have a large enough sample to report on them independently.





Methodology & Sample Profile

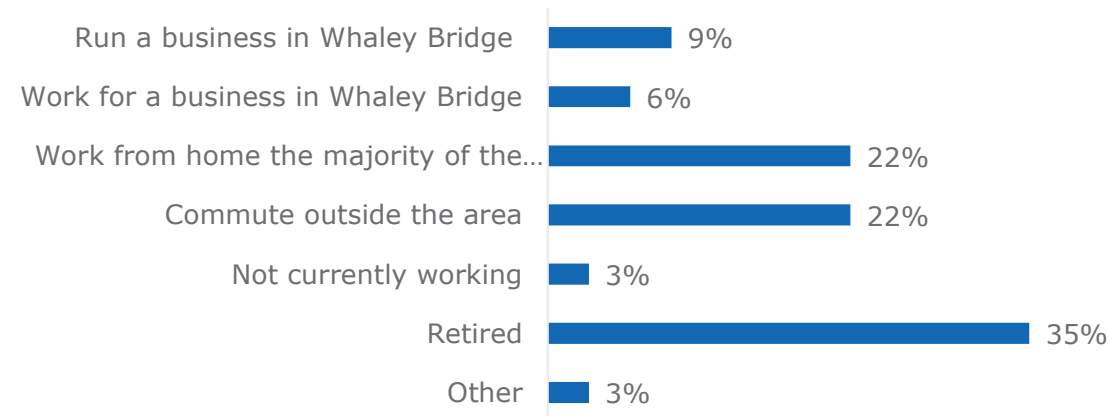
There is under-representation of semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers when compared to government statistics. This isn't unusual when issuing a self completion survey. The under-representation is too extreme to be addressed by weighting the data; however, we have enough responses to note differences between groups based on socio economic status.

The results show 22% of respondents commuting outside the area, with the remainder based locally most of the time.

Socio-economic Grouping



Working status



Source: C03 Please can you describe which of the following best describes the occupation of the main income earner in your household? Q03 Do you run a business or work for a business based in Whaley Bridge or Furness Vale?

Base: all respondents (774)

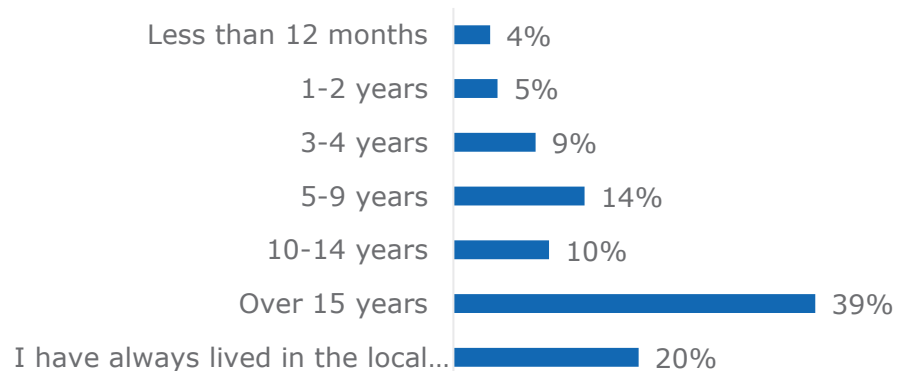


Methodology & Sample Profile

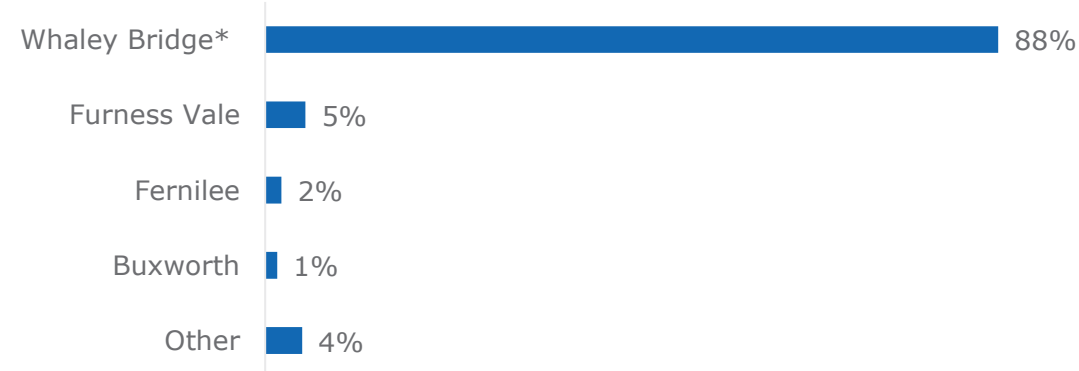
Paper surveys were delivered to Whaley Bridge and Furness Vale. The majority of responses are from Whaley Bridge. Individuals from surrounding towns and villages who visit Whaley Bridge regularly also responded using the online link and make up 7% of the sample.

Over two thirds of the sample have lived in in Whaley Bridge or surrounding areas for over 15 years.

Length of time lived in area



Area lived in





Involvement in the community

Four in ten of those responding to the survey are involved in the community in some way. Those least likely to be involved are younger (only 15% of 18-29s are involved), commuters (31%) and those who have lived in the area less than 4 years.

A quarter of respondents want to receive information on one or more community groups.

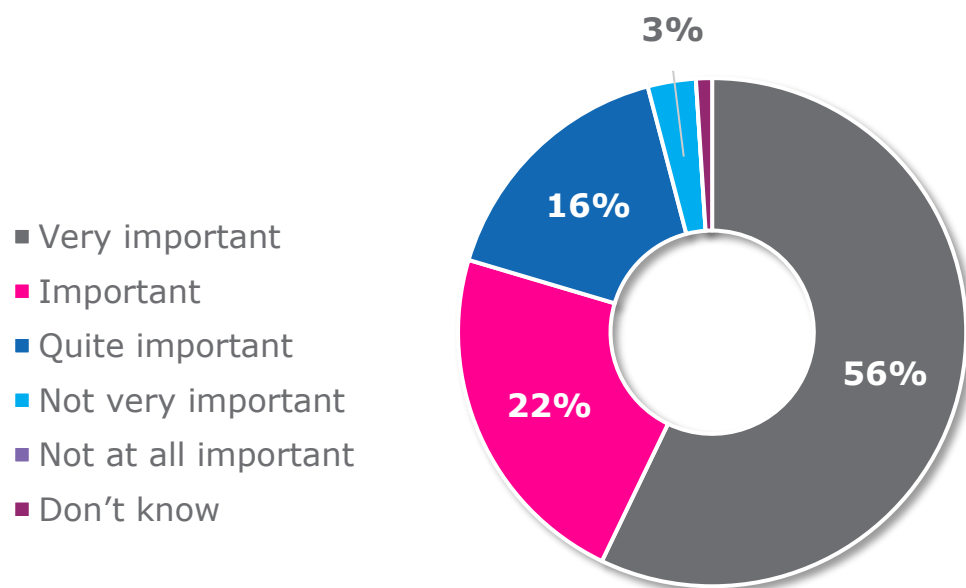
% already doing	Involved with	Would like info on
Ist Taxal scouts, cubs, brownies etc	7%	3%
Whaley Bridge Athletic FC	5%	2%
Whaley Bridge Cricket Club	4%	2%
Goyt Vallet Striders	4%	5%
Footsteps incl. book club and craft groups	4%	6%
Furness Vale Social Club	3%	1%
Whaley Bridge Canal Group CIC	3%*	6%

% already doing	Involved with	Would like info on
Primary school PTAs	2%	1%
Whaley 4Wards	2%	4%
Friends of Memorial Park	2%	6%
Whaley Bridge Carnival Committee	1%	3%
Horwich End WI	0%	5%
Other	18%	3%
Not involved in any community groups	59%	N/A
Don't want to receive any information	N/A	65%
Don't know	1%	10%

The importance of the regeneration of Whaley Bridge

The development of Whaley Bridge is important to most, but it is most important to those with nursery aged children (70%), those who have lived there for 5-14 years (64%) and those who work locally or from home most of the time (64%). Not surprisingly it's more important to those who live in Whaley Bridge than surrounding areas. It is important, but less so to the youngest and oldest age cohorts.

How important is the future development of Whaley Bridge to you?



% very important

Nursery: **70%**
Primary: 66%
Secondary: 64%
No children: **51%**

Own business: 64%
Work for business in area: 67%
Work from home: 64%
Commute: 55%
Retired: **51%**

Always lived there: 56%
Over 15 years: **52%**
5-14 years: **64%**
3-4 years: 54%
Less than 2 years: 58%

18-29 years old: 42%
30-39 years old: **64%**
40-49 years old: 61%
50-59 years old: 61%
60-69 years old: 51%
70+ years old: **45%**

Managerial: 58%
Manual: 46%

Furness Vale: 50%
Whaley Bridge: 58%

Source: Q11 How important, if at all, is the future development of Whaley Bridge to you?
Base: All respondents (774)

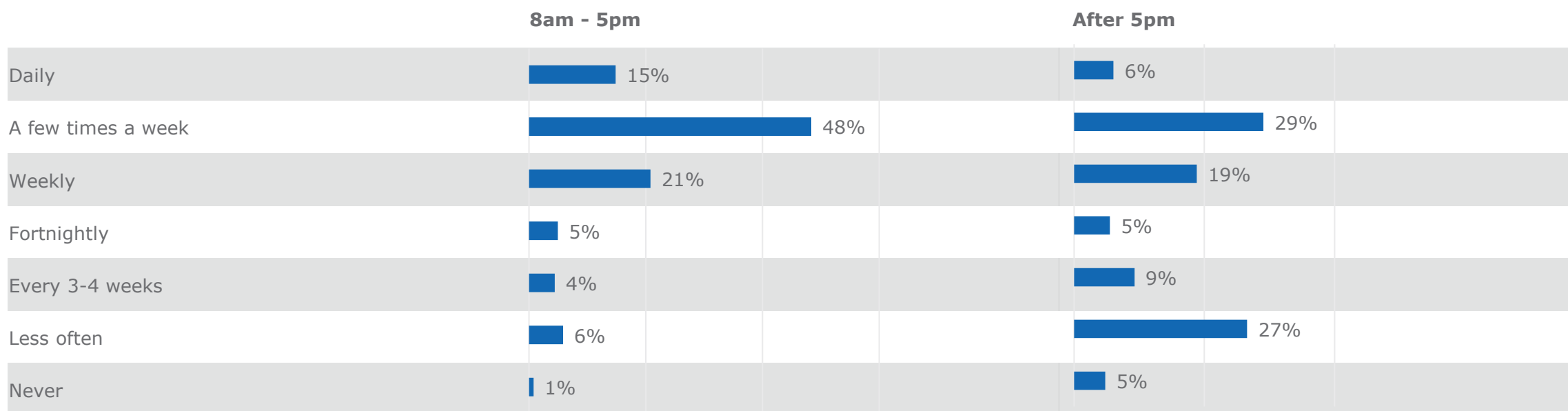
Significantly higher / significantly lower than others in their category



Frequency of visiting Whaley Bridge

Just under two thirds of the sample (63%) visit Whaley Bridge town centre between 8am and 5pm at least a few times a week. This falls to just over a third (35%) after 5pm.

There is a linear correlation with frequency of daytime visits and age. Just 46% of those aged 18-39 years visit at least a few times a week vs. 75% of over 70s. Not surprisingly, those working in or owning businesses locally are more likely to visit (63%) than commuters (44%).





Reasons for visiting Whaley Bridge town centre

The main reason residents visit Whaley Bridge is for the shops. Care should be taken when interpreting the results as some people noted in the survey that they assumed this included Tesco and B&M but others didn't. There is a linear relationship with younger cohorts significantly less likely to mention the shops than older residents.

	Total	16-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Shops	80%	63%	70%	76%	81%	84%	88%
Exercise	63%	53%	65%	65%	71%	63%	51%
Cafes	58%	63%	78%	58%	56%	59%	48%
Takeaways	49%	59%	60%	60%	58%	39%	24%
Pubs	43%	47%	37%	39%	50%	50%	25%
Health & beauty	29%	16%	24%	32%	33%	25%	32%
Transhipment warehouse	26%	3%	32%	28%	25%	28%	31%
Community spaces e.g. Footsteps	15%	6%	11%	7%	16%	17%	22%

Source: Q6 And what do you visit the town centre for? * For detail of 'Other' see notes

Base: all respondents visiting Whaley Bridge town centre (768)

Significantly higher / significantly lower than others in their category



Barriers to visiting Whaley Bridge town centre

The main barrier to those visiting Whaley Bridge less often is a lack of shops they want to visit. This is most pertinent amongst those aged 40-49 (65%), those in managerial positions (58%) and those from outside Whaley Bridge.

Those aged 40-49 are also more likely than average to say that they're not visiting because **the opening hours of shops/cafes aren't convenient** (29%).

	All barriers	Main barrier
No shops I want to visit	52%	34%
Parking	34%	16%
Not enough places to sit down and have a drink and bite to eat	31%	11%
It needs sprucing up	30%	7%
The opening hours of shops/cafes I want to visit aren't convenient to me	15%	5%
I prefer to visit other neighbouring towns	14%	3%
I struggle to get out of the house	5%	2%
Accessibility – walking/cycling	3%	0%
No convenient buses	2%	0%
Accessibility – mobility scooter	2%	0%
Other	14%	23%
Don't know	5%	0%

Those aged 18-39 are most likely to say that there **aren't enough places to sit and have a drink/ something to eat** (49%) along with those who have moved into the area more recently (3-4 years ago - 57%)

Those aged 60-69 are more likely to mention that Whaley Bridge needs **sprucing up** (45%) **along with those in higher managerial positions** (46%).

Source: Q7a What prevents you from visiting Whaley?

Base: all respondents visiting Whaley weekly or less frequently (283)

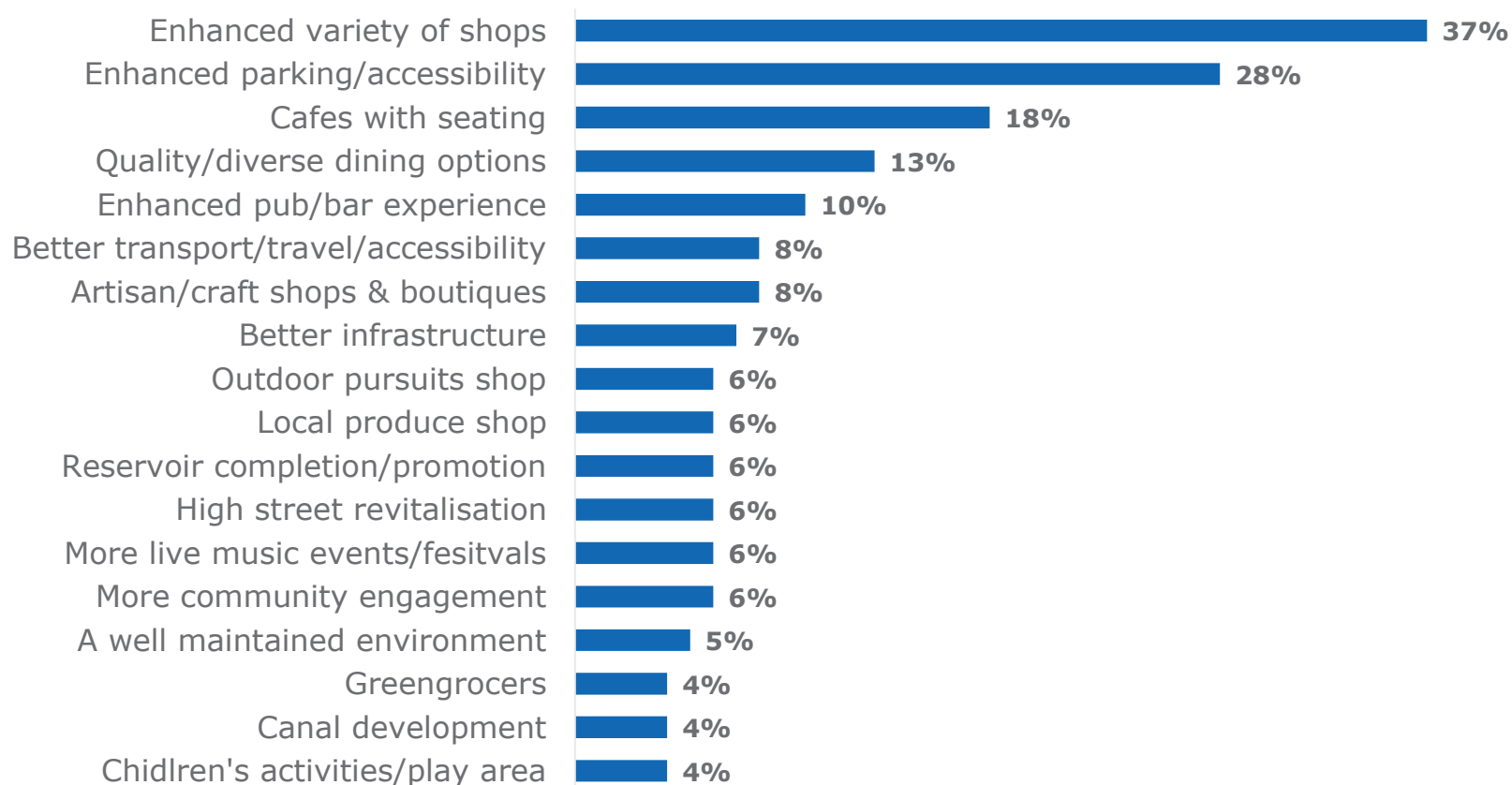
Source: Q7b What is the main barrier preventing you from visiting Whaley Bridge town centre more often during the day?

Base: all respondents selecting more than one barrier (265)



What would encourage visitors to come to Whaley Bridge?

Prior to being prompted with ideas, respondents were asked to say what they felt would encourage more visitors to come to Whaley Bridge.



Source: Q10. What do you think would encourage more visitors to come to Whaley Bridge?
Base: All respondents (774)



Over a third mention a better variety of shops

Better opening hours are also mentioned, along with reducing rents.

"We're lucky to have a lovely town but all you can really buy is a shotgun (?!), healing crystals, a road bike &/or a painting/sculpture. Many of these are big ticket items and rare purchases. I don't feel like this is reflective of the needs of local residents and families. It might be more beneficial to attracting tourism and local use if we modelled ourselves more on the likes of Hebden Bridge with a mix of independents in areas such a home decor, gifts, music, farm shop, antiques centre, fashion, vintage shops, a pizzeria or food hall, a milkshake station in association with a farm or local dairy, etc."

Male, 40-49, managerial

"An outdoor shop - running, hiking and water sports. New opportunity for water sports kit once the reservoir/sailing club opens again. Shop selling fresh / local produce. Gift shop and card shop."

Female, 50-59, managerial

"A nice deli/bakery would be good. A refill shop. A good gift and card shop (like Bluebirds Nest in Chapel-en-le-Frith)."

Female, 50-59, managerial

Turning The Jodrell into a pub like the Old Hall, a community shop selling local produce like Jo Lancaster's sourdough bread, Hockerley Farm produce, produce which is available at FAB market, a deli/cafe like Libby's in Marple Bridge or Foster's in Chapel, or Miller's Refillers in New Mills."

Female, 40-49, managerial

"Reduced empty premises Greater upkeep of premises Wider range of independent retailers to suit all budgets."

Male, 60-69, managerial

"Somewhere to buy gifts (similar to Itsy Bitsy in Chapel). More retail outlets as opposed to take aways."

Female, 40-49, managerial

"Shops and cafes open after 4pm. A greater range of independent shops."

Female, 40-49, managerial

"A deli and green grocery shop.....fresh local produce."

Female, 40-49, managerial



There is demand for more cafes, bars and eateries

Residents would welcome a wider variety of bars, cafes and eateries with more flexible opening times and seating. It is felt that eateries and pubs shut too early and are inconsistent in their opening times. They would like more to be made of the canal area and the Jodrell Arms to be occupied.

"A nice eatery/bar with personality and passion - the Jodrell 'finished' not still incomplete - something like Malt Disley or New Mills food hall - something to bring people right to the centre."

Female, 40-49, managerial

"Pubs that provide good upcoming bands. Not just karaoke and/or the same bands all the time. More food options, as hardly anywhere to go for a quick bit at either lunchtime or early evening."

Female, 40-49, managerial

"A nice cafe serving more upmarket lunchtime meals."

**Female, 60-69,
managerial**

"More food places maybe by the canal on a Friday evening. Like the bus in Furness."

**Female, 30-39,
managerial**

"A bigger cafe where you can comfortably sit with children...A nice bar with a good outside space."

**Female, 30-39,
supervisory**

"More shops/cafes/restaurants opening at once, so people have a few places to visit rather than just the odd one."

Female, 40-49, managerial

"More nice places to eat and drink. The pubs are all pretty uninspiring, bar The Nook; and since Baileys and Casa di Pizza closed and Moveable Feast stopped doing their nights there's nowhere good to eat out anymore."

Male, 40-49, managerial

"More eateries, even just a green grocers! There's things to see here but nothing really to do and the whole town is basically asleep by 8pm; not fun for those who like night life or even just to go to a nice bar for a cocktail."

Male, 30-39



Improved parking and less congestion is essential to encourage more businesses and visitors

"The on-street parking of up to an hour is insufficient to encourage anyone to stay and browse, have a coffee, have a browse through the library, meet friends etc. We just have to do what we need e.g. doctor, chemist, optician and then leave."

Female, 50-59, managerial

"Better parking facilities are the key to attracting better and more wide-ranging businesses. Persuade the churches and Whaley Club to allow free untimed parking outside church hours."

Male, 60-69, supervisory

"Better parking facilities. As car parks are free these are taking up by people working in the area; rare to get a space between 8-5."

Female, 30-39, skilled manual

"No traffic ..worst ever village for access so I use Chapel and New Mills is sooo great too ...independent shops, better parking. Community vibe is fab More parking needed in WB."

Female, 60-69, managerial

"Free accessible parking for 2 hours."

Female, 50-59, managerial

"Parking! Free for two hours so I can shop and eat."

Female, 50-59, managerial

"Better parking. 1hr parking isn't enough for a brew or a haircut."

Female, 50-59, skilled manual

"Car parking is very important and number one priority - nowhere to park, I won't bother coming."

Female, 60-69, managerial



Aesthetics are important

A significant minority want the high street and surrounding areas e.g. the canal basin, tidied up.

Shop fronts and signage is mentioned as well as the tidying up of green spaces, as well as the Jodrell Arms.

Whaley Bridge needs to look attractive to invite people in.

"Well maintained green spaces in town."

Female, 40-49, managerial

"More shops, less empty shops. Better shop front signage - some are awful!"

Female, 50-59, managerial

"Shops and the street-scape need to be improved significantly."

Male, 60-69, managerial

"Better shop fronts!"

Male, 50-59, managerial

"Regular cleaning and tidying up of the area, supported by WBTC and HPBC.."

Male, 50-59, managerial

"Tidy it up! Get rid of awful neon scraggy signs...it looks scruffy. The residential flats above, also look scruffy. It's just not a nice place to visit. A bleak contrast between e.g. The Village Kitchen & The Bakehousethen you've got Munchies..... Are there no laws in place to protect the character of the place, with inappropriate signage?"

Female, 50-59, managerial

A nicer looking high street would bring more people in I think, especially those who are driving through. Also, an emphasis on Whaley being the gateway to the High Peak would be beneficial. An expansion of the shops down to the canal basin would be lovely as well since as a "Whaley native" the basin is a massive part of Whaley culture."

I identify another way, 18-29, managerial

"The core centre needs sprucing .. go to New Mills or Disley or Chapel - they all have trees and planters to make it less 'industrial' in the centre."

Male, 50-59, managerial

"Get the Jodrell fixed as it's at the centre of the village and looks a mess. It's not welcoming to visitors."

Female, 50-59, managerial



Residents would like more to be made of the Transhipment Warehouse & canal basin

Residents are quick to praise what has been done to develop the Transhipment Warehouse and canal basin e.g. book and DVD shop, food bank, FAB market; however, many would like to see further development, viewing this as key to attracting more visitors.

A popular suggestion is more food and drink markets.

"Transhipment and canal are the best assets we have. Provide more nice areas to sit and eat for socializing for walkers groups or families, more like Bakehouse. Mobile food vans (as came for the carnival) maybe once a week, say a Friday? Canal area to be cleaned up to match Buxworth. Not allowing people to dump old caravans /boats...if Transhipment was done up properly i.e. clean & bright it could be offered to more traders. This would make Whaley Bridge a more attractive place to live and as a "destination" encouraging a bigger variety of shops."

Female, 70-79, supervisory

"A refurbished and functional canal basin. The Transhipment Warehouse is fantastic but let down by the Canal and Rivers Trust infrastructure."

Male, 70-79, managerial

"A more attractive canal basin, without palettes and caravans. One of the main points of Whaley Bridge is the canal network. This needs to be more attractive and accessible."

Male, 50-59

"Make the canal and Transhipment yard more touristy and interesting to visit. Have nice cafes like the Pig and Pudding in Chapel (it's always busy). Some interesting gift shops (similar to Mays Parlour)."

Female 50-59, managerial

"Have foodie markets on a Friday evening, copy what Stockport have done."

Male, 30-39, managerial

"The Transhipment Warehouse area seems like it would be a good place for a bar/pub with outside seating by the canal."

Female, 30-39, managerial

"Maybe utilise the area around the Transhipment warehouse with weekly pop-up markets (food, drink produce). Maybe have something like the Bohemian Bus cafe available like Furness Vale have (or similar)."

Male, 40-49, skilled manual



Marketing

A significant minority feel that Whaley Bridge needs better promotion of the town and its events.

There is also interest in a visitor or tourist information centre, more signage and information provided on walks.

"Advertise the Transhipment cafe better - make it more cheerful - do it up. More events - better publicity - I never know what's going on. Music events concerts at the Mechanics - more stalls on the FAB market. Whaley Fringe - Festival thing. What's happening etc..."

Female, 60-69, managerial

"Stronger visual identity and 'brand' - we're meant to be the gateway to the Goyt valley but how do we help people get to the GV from Whaley?"

Male, 50-59, managerial

"Up to date info on opening times as some are out of date online. Advertising the local events better. A dedicated Whaley Bridge website linking off to local businesses."

Female, 40-49, managerial

"More information/maps showing local walks for those not quite ready to navigate for themselves? A "Visit Whaley Bridge" social media presence? Calendar of events for locals and visitors? More information on how to get involved in the community/community groups."

Female, 50-59, managerial

"Wider advertising of walks and activities accessed from Whaley bridge - train tie ins?"

Female, 40-49, managerial

"We are very new to the area. There are lots of different Facebook groups, but a website or one stop shop community local page would be useful to check what's happening etc..."

Female, 40-49, managerial

"Better visibility/ advertisement of events around town across social media."

Female, 30-39, managerial

"Increased profile online."

Female, 40-49, managerial



The re-opening of Toddbrook reservoir is key but to encourage repeat visits, an eclectic mix of shops and eateries is needed

"Optimising the reservoir. Only three towns in England have a reservoir actually within the town's boundaries, and I've seen large bodies of water really well utilised as a public attraction elsewhere; especially when visitors are then signposted to nearby businesses on the high street. Parking would have to be provided to avoid cars clogging up adjacent roads, especially Reservoir Road, so perhaps access could be encouraged from the Wheatsheaf Road entrance and some sort of parking provision be made there. Perhaps a small visitors' centre could be built near the dam; selling Whaley-themed souvenirs, ideally made by local artists, and local produce that's not available elsewhere on the high street, so that the venue isn't in competition with other businesses.

It would be great too if the newly-built/repurposed sailing club house could be a venue for events and activities, and maybe could incorporate some kind of viewing area so that people could view the reservoir and its wildlife from indoors? This could be a great asset for educational trips; giving schoolchildren the opportunity to observe and learn about our local wildlife. This could serve as an add-on for guided wildlife and art walks, perhaps offering drawing and painting classes at picturesque spots along the water's edge? It might also be nice to have an ice cream kiosk, selling locally-produced ice cream (again, as long as no other local businesses were selling this).

Perhaps an area of this building could be dedicated to leaflets and books showing local walks, and detailing local history. It could be the starting or end point for walks, including the planned local history walks. The reservoir is in itself a historic landmark. We would need to liaise closely with the sailing club on this, and of course CRT. But I think it would link arguably one of our greatest assets and our unique selling point to Memorial Park, through which people could be funneled, as it were, towards the town centre. To that end, we really need businesses to extend their opening hours, if possible, especially those providing food and drink."

Female 60-69, managerial

"Visitor centre and cafe at the reservoir. Water based activities."

Female, 40-49, supervisory

"Cycle Hire/ SUP / Kayak hire on canals / Toddbrook when finished."

Female, 50-59, managerial

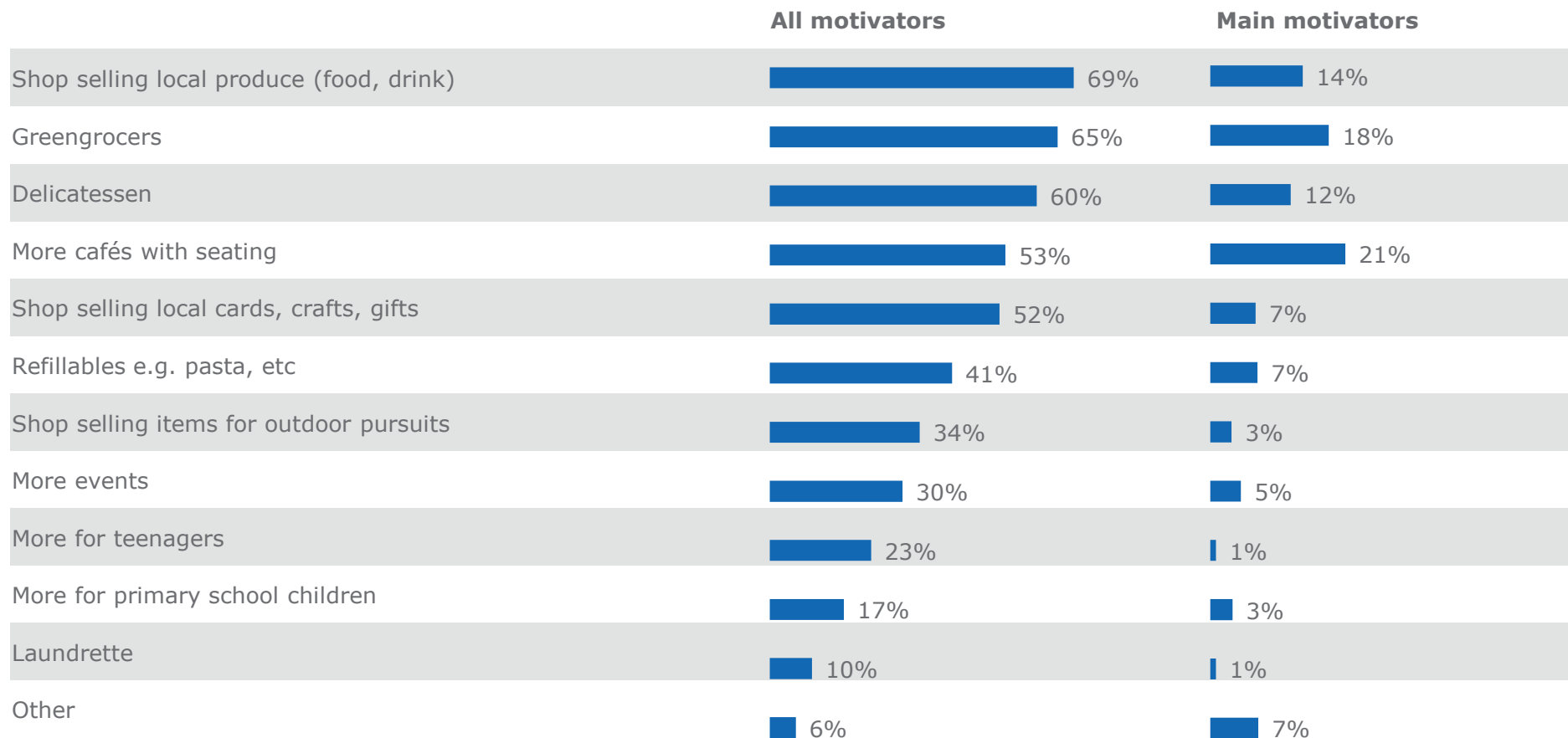
"When the dam is finished and the park redone it could be a big attraction, but people need to park. Why can't the area of derelict garages where Plant's was be developed. More heritage information, better cafes."

Female, 80+, managerial



Motivators to visiting Whaley Bridge

There is a desire amongst residents for a wider variety of shops and cafes with seating. Shops most likely to encourage locals to visit are food and drink based and/or have a local theme.



Note: 87% mentioned Deli & Greengrocers & Local Produce & Refillables
84% mentioned Greengrocers & Local Produce & Refillables
76% mentioned Local Produce & Refillables

Source: Q10a Which, if any, of the following would encourage you to visit Whaley Bridge town centre more often?

Base: all respondents (774)

Source: Q10b Which one of these would most encourage you to visit Whaley Bridge town centre more often?

Base: all respondents selecting more than one at Q10a (756)

*Mentions 10% and above shown; other mentions in notes



Motivators to visiting Whaley Bridge

Female residents are more likely to visit the high street for shops selling food and drink and local gifts; however, they are less motivated by an outdoor pursuits shop – this appeals more to males.

A shop selling local produce has all round appeal, a greengrocers appeals to the majority of over 30s and especially those aged 40-49. Cafes with seating are especially desired by 30-39 year olds and this highly correlates with nursery and primary school children.

	Total	Male	Female	16-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Shops selling local produce (food, drink)	69%	66%	72%	67%	77%	70%	70%	71%	66%
Greengrocers	65%	57%	71%	33%	64%	75%	69%	67%	69%
Delicatessen	60%	56%	64%	48%	63%	62%	64%	65%	56%
More cafes with seating	53%	50%	55%	58%	67%	57%	54%	50%	43%
Shops selling local cards, crafts, gifts	52%	36%	60%	36%	43%	55%	59%	53%	53%
Refillables e.g. pasta etc	41%	33%	46%	30%	51%	47%	41%	44%	34%
Shop selling items for outdoor pursuits	34%	43%	32%	21%	30%	40%	38%	39%	28%

Source: Q6 And what do you visit the town centre for? * For detail of 'Other' see notes

Base: all respondents visiting Whaley Bridge town centre (768)

Significantly higher / significantly lower than others in their category



Motivators to visiting Whaley Bridge

There is a high level of desire for food and drink-based shops and/or shops selling local cards and gifts amongst the higher socio-economic groups. Managerial groups are more likely to select outdoor pursuits shops too.

The appeal of these shops is higher amongst residents who have lived locally for less than 15 years. These groups are typically still working and with more disposable income than retired households.

	Total	Higher managerial	Intermediate managerial	Supervisory	Manual	Less than 2 years	3-4 years	5-14 years	15+ years	All my life
Shops selling local produce (food, drink)	69%	78%	71%	69%	55%	80%	79%	77%	61%	63%
Greengrocers	65%	73%	66%	60%	71%	68%	70%	72%	64%	57%
Delicatessen	60%	74%	65%	61%	41%	68%	70%	68%	58%	48%
More cafes with seating	53%	60%	55%	47%	44%	63%	76%	62%	48%	39%
Shops selling local cards, crafts, gifts	52%	61%	52%	48%	42%	42%	51%	60%	54%	43%
Refillables e.g. pasta etc	41%	46%	44%	39%	38%	48%	52%	46%	39%	32%
Shop selling items for outdoor pursuits	34%	38%	39%	29%	27%	37%	49%	37%	33%	23%

Source: Q6 And what do you visit the town centre for? * For detail of 'Other' see notes

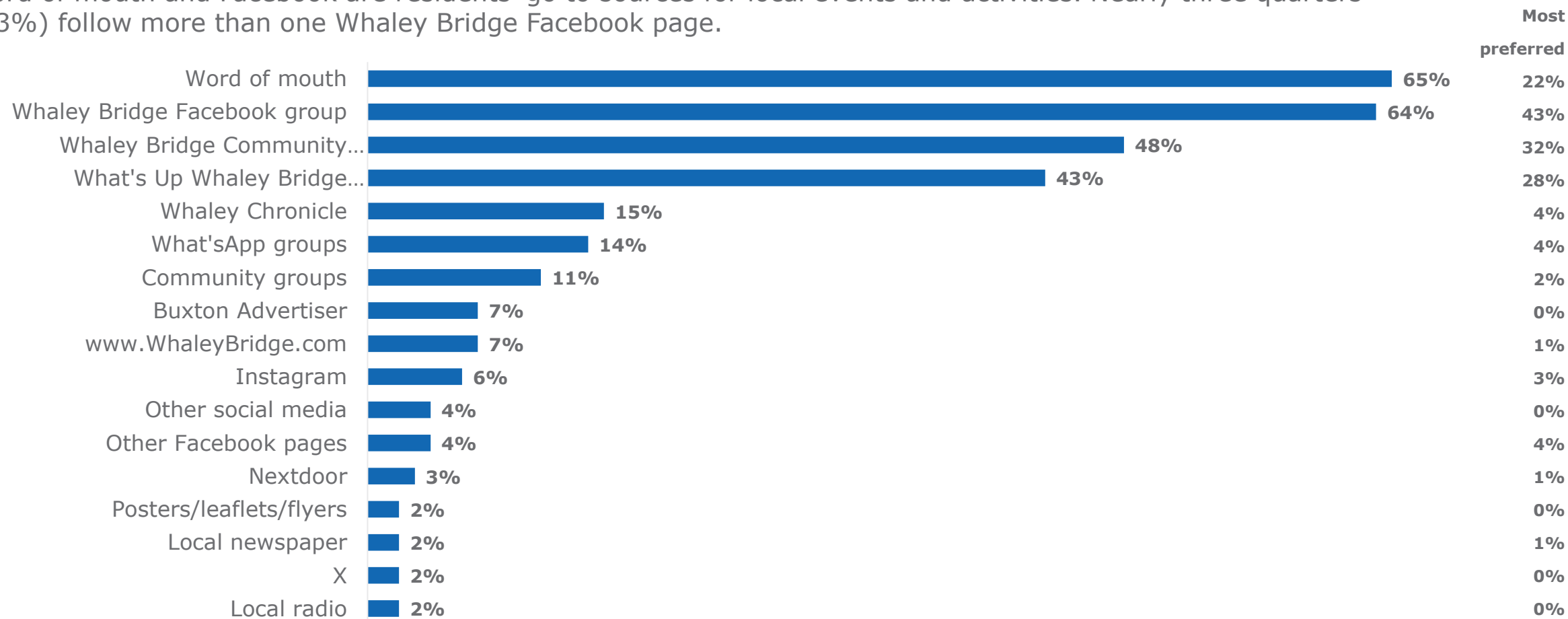
Base: all respondents visiting Whaley Bridge town centre (768)

Significantly higher / significantly lower than others in their category



How residents keep up to date with what's going on locally

Word of mouth and Facebook are residents' go to sources for local events and activities. Nearly three quarters (73%) follow more than one Whaley Bridge Facebook page.





How residents keep up to date with what's going on locally

There are demographic differences in how people keep up to date with what is going on locally. Females are more likely to use Facebook, as are those in the 30-39 age bracket. Those aged 70+ years are more likely than other age groups to use the Buxton Advertiser and community groups.

	Total	Male	Female	16-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Word of mouth	68%	59%	67%	52%	55%	65%	65%	69%	67%
Whaley Bridge Facebook Group	65%	54%	68%	67%	75%	79%	65%	58%	47%
Whaley Bridge Community FB Group	48%	38%	52%	55%	64%	53%	56%	37%	30%
What's Up Whaley Bridge FB Group	43%	30%	48%	61%	57%	49%	50%	32%	26%
Whaley Bridge Chronicle	15%	10%	16%	12%	13%	15%	14%	14%	13%
WhatsApp Groups	14%	14%	14%	3%	9%	19%	18%	9%	14%
Community Groups	11%	8%	13%	6%	8%	8%	11%	9%	20%
Buxton Advertiser	7%	8%	5%	0%	2%	1%	4%	5%	18%
WhaleyBridge.com	7%	12%	4%	9%	3%	3%	8%	5%	10%
Instagram	6%	5%	7%	9%	10%	8%	7%	4%	3%

Source: Q14a. How, if at all, do you keep up to date with what is going on locally? Q14b What is your most preferred way of keeping up to date with what is going on locally?

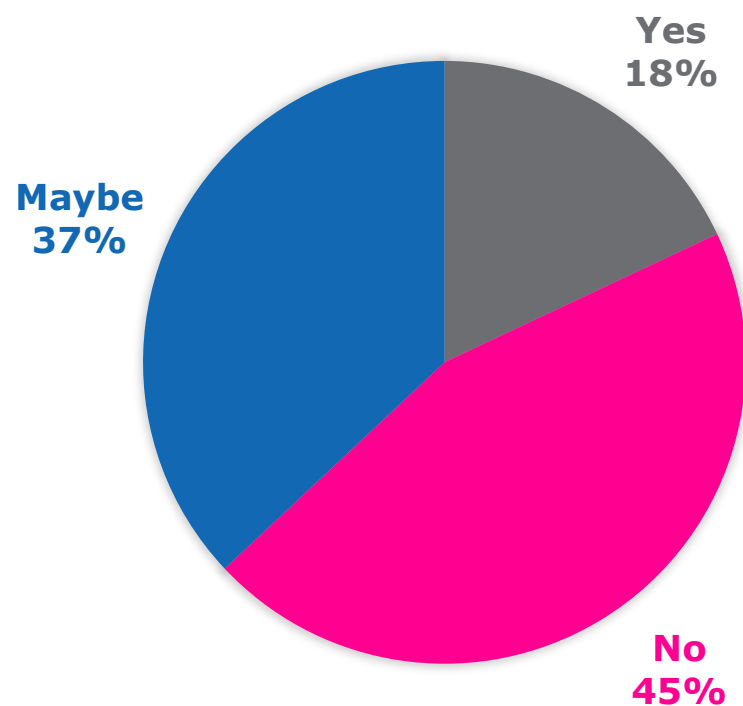
Base: All respondents (774)

Significantly higher / significantly lower than others in their category



Moving forward

136 people state they are happy to volunteer their time to this venture



Skill	Number of volunteers
Organising events	49
Writing content	30
Writing bids	26
Fundraising	30
Social media	25
Photography	11
Journalism	6
Finance	6
Landscaping	6



Conclusions & recommendations

Residents want change

The huge response to the survey shows the passion residents have for regeneration of Whaley Bridge. Such developments are important or very important to 78% of responders. This enthusiasm also comes through in the numbers willing to volunteer their time to the cause, with nearly one in five saying they will.

Change can't rely on volunteers alone

For change to happen, investment is needed in the town's infrastructure. Aesthetics, congestion and accessibility are all barriers to people visiting Whaley Bridge.

The town needs to look clean, tidy and aesthetically pleasing to make people want to stop and for businesses to invest.

There needs to be more parking so visitors can stop – the hour limit on street parking needs extending to 2 hours.

The reopening of Toddbrook presents a great opportunity

However, the infrastructure and the variety of shops, bars and eateries needs to attract repeat visitors. It is felt that current provision is too unpredictable in terms of opening times and there aren't adequate quality outlets.



Conclusions & recommendations

Further development of the canal basin is desired

Whilst this requires investment, there is a lot that volunteers could do to make the area more aesthetically pleasing.

Word of mouth is the main way residents find out what is going on locally, followed by Facebook.

Promotion of events is seen as hit and miss and coming from several sources (or none at all). Residents would like better promotion of events, with some suggesting having one source co-ordinating events.

Opportunities for existing retailers

Many residents would like to see a wider variety of shops and eateries, and existing shops and cafes open longer and with regular hours.

The results of the survey will be shared with landlords, so they are informed of what the demand is in the town.

There is an interest in locally sourced food, gifts, cards etc. Can existing retailers extend their ranges to include this?



Conclusions & recommendations

Is there a case for a community shop?

With 87% of residents wanting a deli, greengrocers, local produce and refillables, there is a case for a store selling all 4.

A community shop could deliver here with residents being offered shares in the store.

Development of the FAB market is desired

The FAB market is popular with residents and they would like to see it extended. Food and drink vendors are especially favoured, as is an evening market.

Artisan crafts don't tend to be regular purchases. By promoting the FAB market more widely, new visitors will be introduced to regular stall holders and their produce.

For more information



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Other mentions

"A strong identity. Upmarket signage. A place that looks like it is looked after and cared about. A well thought out coffee shop or two. A hub made of the area around the Transhipment Warehouse that looks and feels more like the Torr Vale Tap and mill area in New Mills. Independent outlets. Retailers need to either provide a function that is useful for the residents and neighbouring locals (such as opticians, hairdressers, framers etc.) or be locally relevant, i.e. shops that don't provide a function beyond selling clothes or other products that don't have some kind of local connection or relevance won't do too well as competing with the online market. Making the most of the wonderfully talented and authentic makers, artists and crafts people in the area to help support them would be a great boost for the town and a reason for people to visit. More made of public transport to visit using excellent train links and buses as parking is already challenging."

Female, 50-59, managerial

"With CRT owning swathes of land in Whaley Bridge, I think CRT should take more responsibility with their assets...The canal network is another conduit to bring tourists into the town. Looking at Macc canal, for example, could the canal basin be a better arrival / destination point? The area round the basin is tatty, under-utilised and underused. The Transhipment warehouse needs more than 2nd hand books and DVDs and the other things that do go in there...This does not need to be a blank boring cabin, but also something that ties through with community use, other tourist use everyday and draw people to the basin, hopefully using the cafes and chippies on the way down. The FAB market is great in emulating (on a smaller scale) the success of food halls in Macclesfield, Altrincham, Stockport and Manchester. These are good examples of area / building regeneration bringing people in. It is reflective of how many places shop now, online, whilst the (reasonably priced) food 'pop ups' or permanent thrives. Whilst we have loads of good ideas and intentions for unlocking the potential of Whaley Bridge, we then think - what about the lack of parking? The 2025 carnival showed the potential of good footfall (the weather helped) despite the outdated parking arrangements."

Male, 50-59



Other mentions

"More consistent opening times for cafes and restaurants. There needs to be seven day coverage especially from 10 to 5pm when restaurants can take over, only if they are open of course. There should be an outdoor/sport shop as this brings in many people in other towns and villages. A small covered area with power under lock and key for entertainment/ buskers. These should be vetted, good street entertainment on weekends and markets can be a huge asset. This works well in York. Indeed, if people know they have been auditioned it can be a draw. As the time gets closer a sailing and waterspout shop could be needed soon. The car park behind The White Hart needs utilising as the number of cars increases. Good signs and perhaps a visitor centre in the Mechanics would be able to highlight the local attractions, walking routes and amenities". **Male, 60-69, managerial**

"An interesting range of shops that offer reasonable quality and affordable prices and that would appeal to groups of people who access the area-walkers/walking groups, holiday makers, cyclists, people from the wider local area and above all local people. Attractive signage that has character/visual appeal that fits in with the industrial heritage of the area e.g. canals, countryside - without being overly prescriptive - colours and fonts that complement each other and give a real character, quality and welcoming, feel-good factor. Remember visual appeal is paramount. An increased number of establishments that offer food and drink in an evening-serving good, honest food that is affordable for local people and that would also draw diners in from outside of the area. The Jodrell needs to be occupied!! Parking is a real issue - the main road adjacent to the canal is a nightmare with cars parked on the pavement blocking access for pedestrians and making it difficult for buses and lorries to get through. More off road free parking needs to be available. Making the pay the 'station' car park pay and display is ludicrous. It is now never full and people are parking in on the main road and at the end of Jodrell Road. The Xmas tree look grim - the addition of coloured lights and placing the tree in a more appealing position would be a welcome change." **Female 60-69, managerial**