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Southend 2050 Evidence Report



Introduction

The Southend 2050 engagement programme reached over 35,000 people over the summer of 2018 with over 4000 people actually taking part in the conversation. A whole host of different methods were used to conduct open and ambitious conversations in locations right across the borough. These included facilitated workshops with business leaders, deliberative sessions with targeted resident representatives, meetings with local interest and community groups, engagement at public events and venues and in-depth 1:1 interviews with residents. This report brings together a highlight of the activity that took place and an insight into the evidence that has been used to develop the Ambition & Outcomes and Five Year Roadmap for Southend 2050.

Everyone had the same challenge – to think about Southend in 2050. People were asked:

“What would you miss most if you left Southend-on-Sea?”

“What makes you want to live/shop/work/do business in Southend-on-Sea?”

“What would a great day/week/year look like for you?”

“Who might need to be involved to help create your ideal Southend of the future?”



The word cloud above is made up from the conversations about Southend 2050. The size of the text indicates how frequently the issues were raised.

Scope and Reach of Engagement

Events



55 events

2,300 People engaged face to face

Online



Southend 2050 advert appeared in Facebook feeds **58,434** times

27,925 people saw the Southend 2050 advert inviting participation

With



Councillors
Staff
Businesses
Key partners
Community Groups
Volunteers
Young people
Schools
Older people
Visitors

Surveys



1,160 people completed the online Southend 2050 survey (incl. non residents)

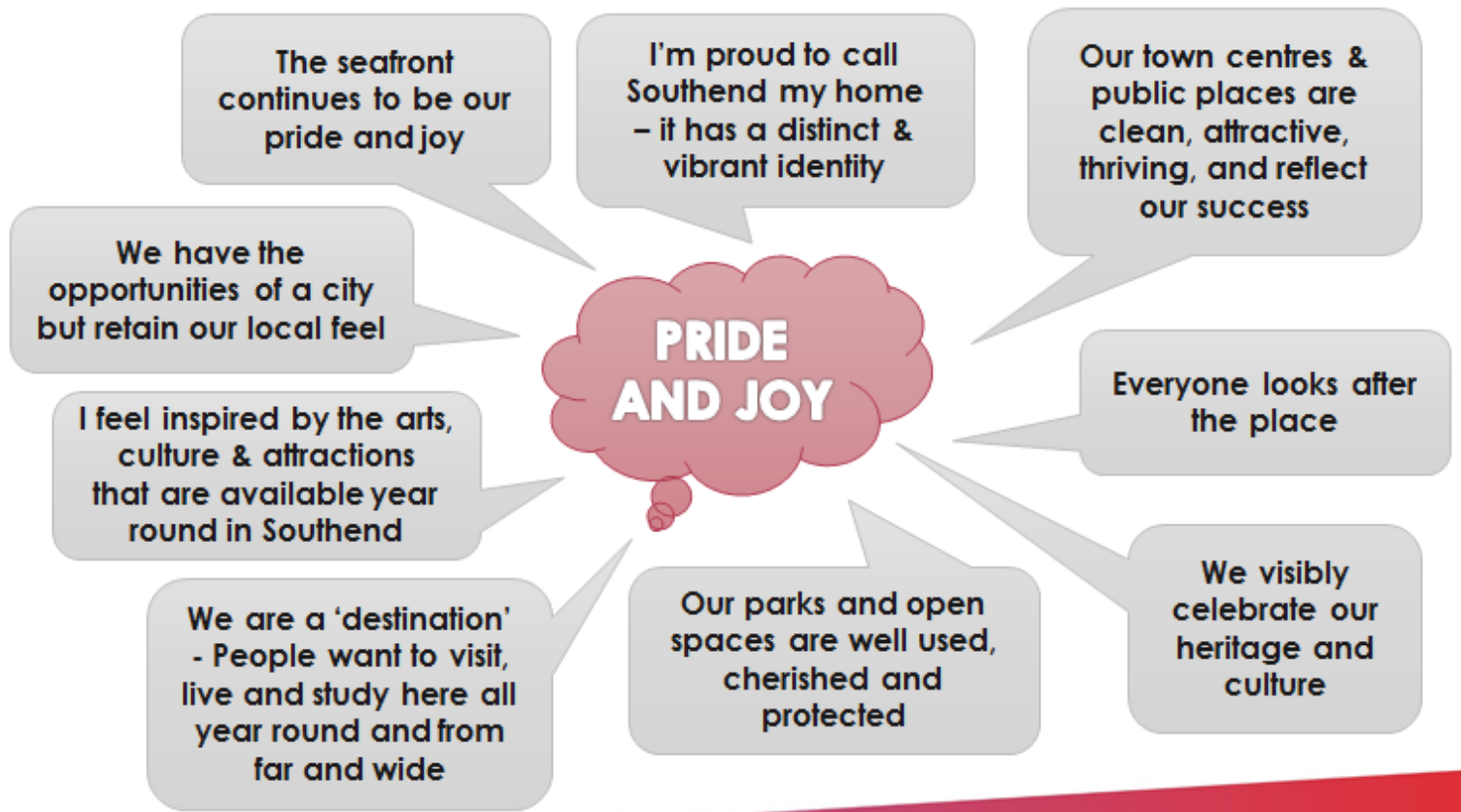
1,220 people completed a residents perception survey

115 responses on the Southend 2050 Stickyworld online forum

Good coverage across all wards

What people told us they want for Southend-on-Sea's future

Summary of key messages from the engagement, grouped thematically.



What people told us they want for Southend-on-Sea's future

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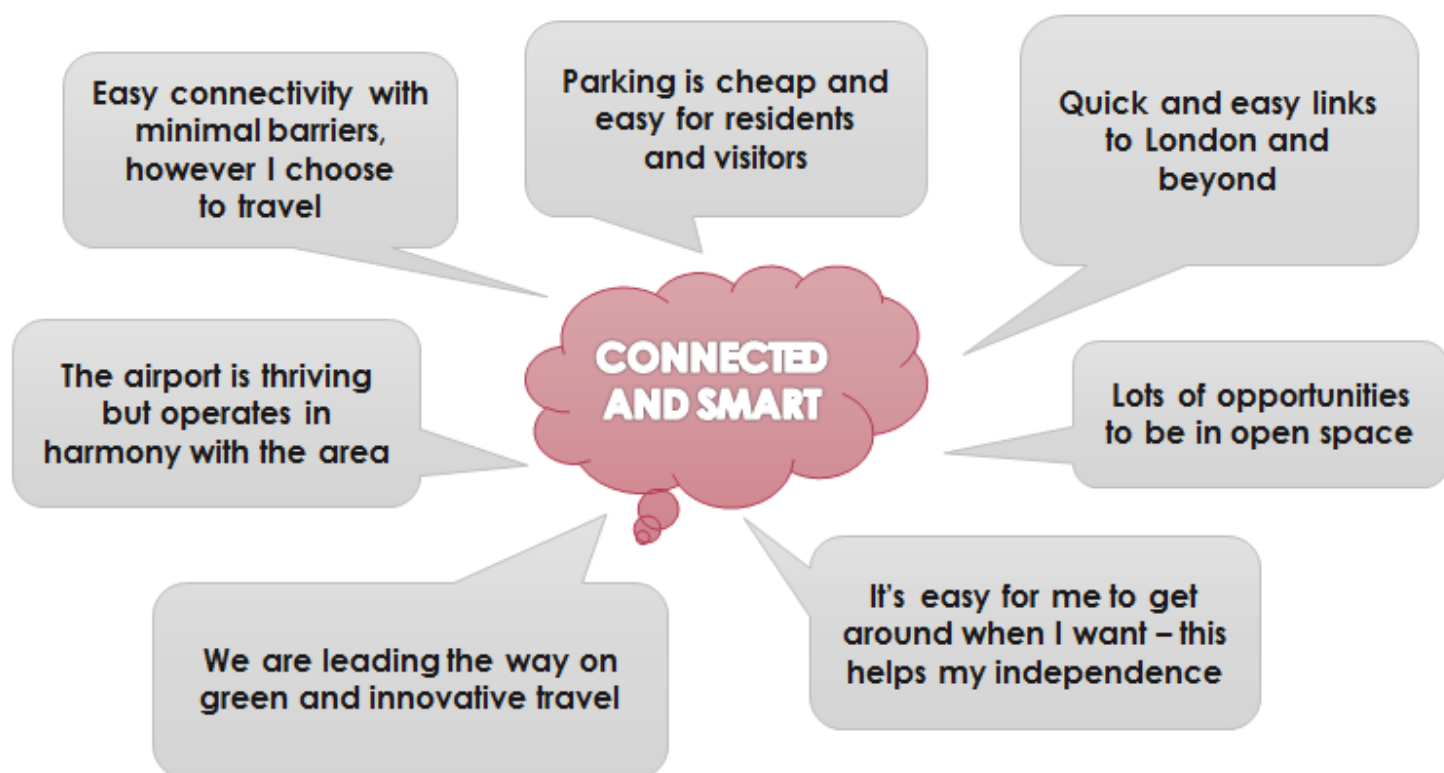
What people told us they want for Southend-on-Sea's future

Summary of key messages from the engagement, grouped thematically.



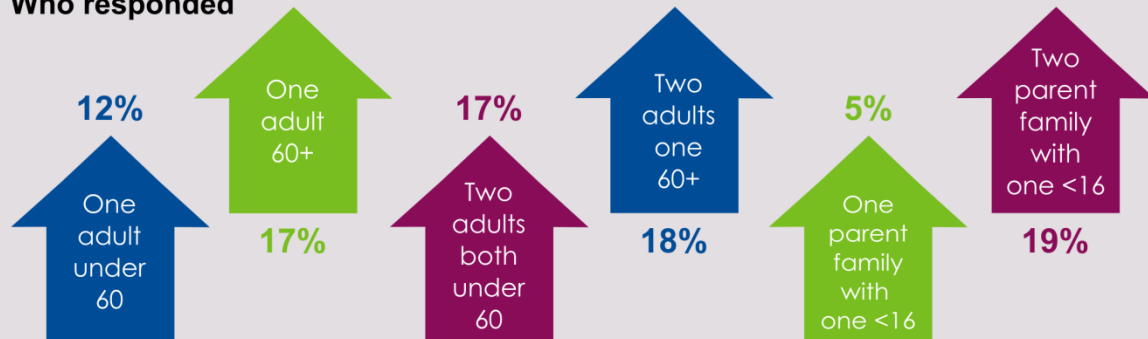
What people told us they want for Southend-on-Sea's future

Summary of key messages from the engagement, grouped thematically.



Southend Residents' Perception Survey 2018

Who responded



75%

Of residents are satisfied with local area as a place to live

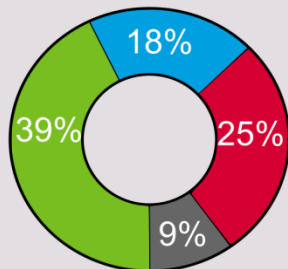
Top Likes

Seaside / Beach
Location / Convenient
Close to Family / Friends
Public Transport
Parks / Open Spaces

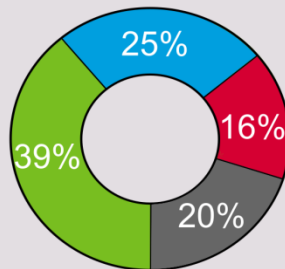
Top Dislikes

Roads / Pavements
Crime
Anti Social Behaviour
Parking
Congestion
Litter

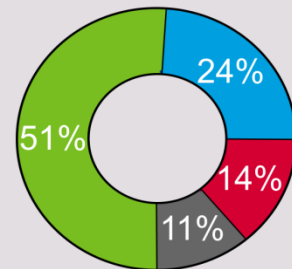
Neighbourhoods



Residents work together to improve their neighbourhood



Good relations between different ethnic and religious communities



Good relations between older and younger generations

■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree or disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Don't know

56%

Agree people from different backgrounds get on well together

38%

Feel informed by Southend Council about the services and benefits it provides

Less than **1 in 4** residents agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, with more than twice this proportion disagreeing

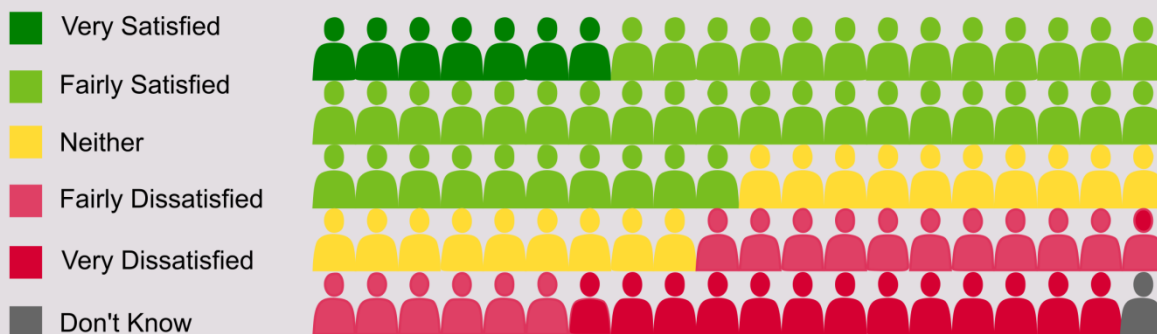
30%

Of all residents feel Southend Council acts on their concerns, with almost half disagreeing

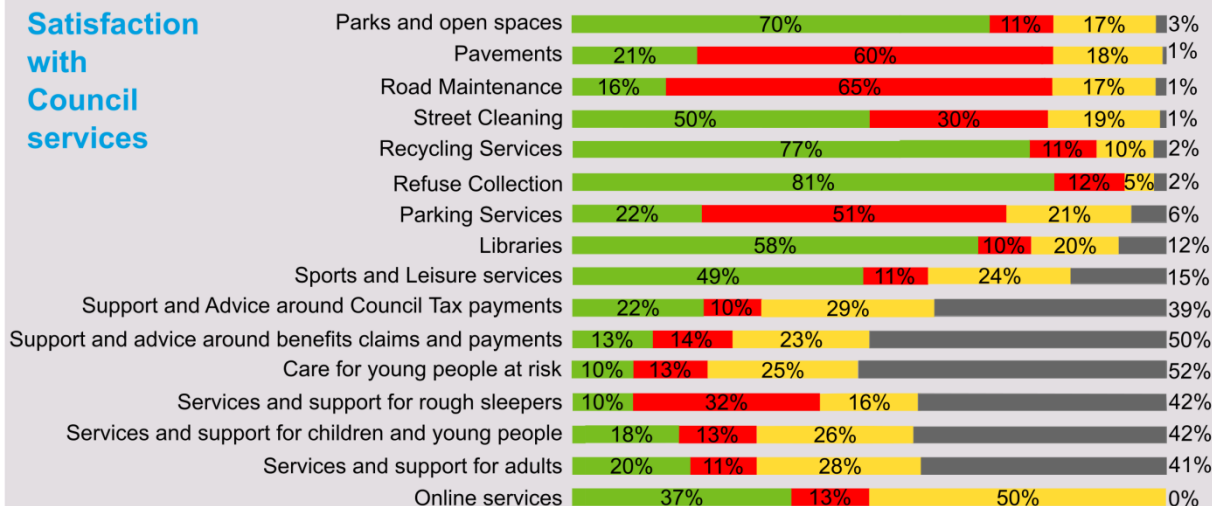
Survey took place between 1st June and 1st August 2018. Paper surveys were distributed to 5000 random residential addresses in Southend, stratified by ward. 1239 surveys were completed and returned. Results have been weighted by age, gender and ethnicity using the latest population data.

Southend Residents' Perception Survey 2018

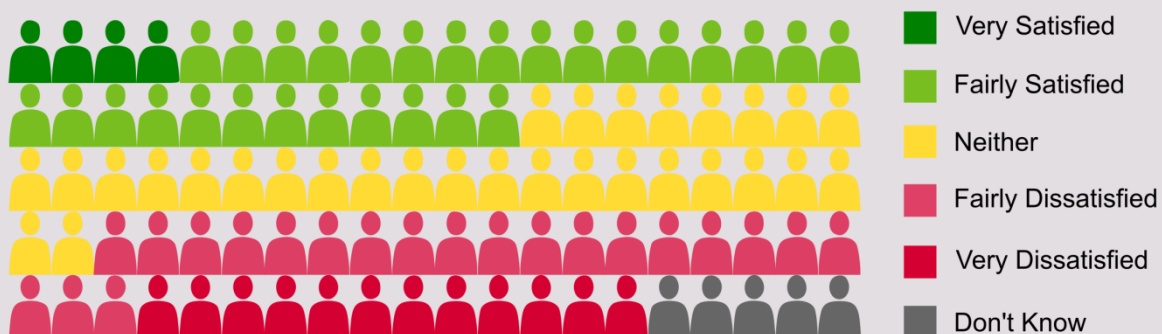
50% Satisfied with the Council overall



Satisfaction with Council services



32% Agree Southend Council provides value for money

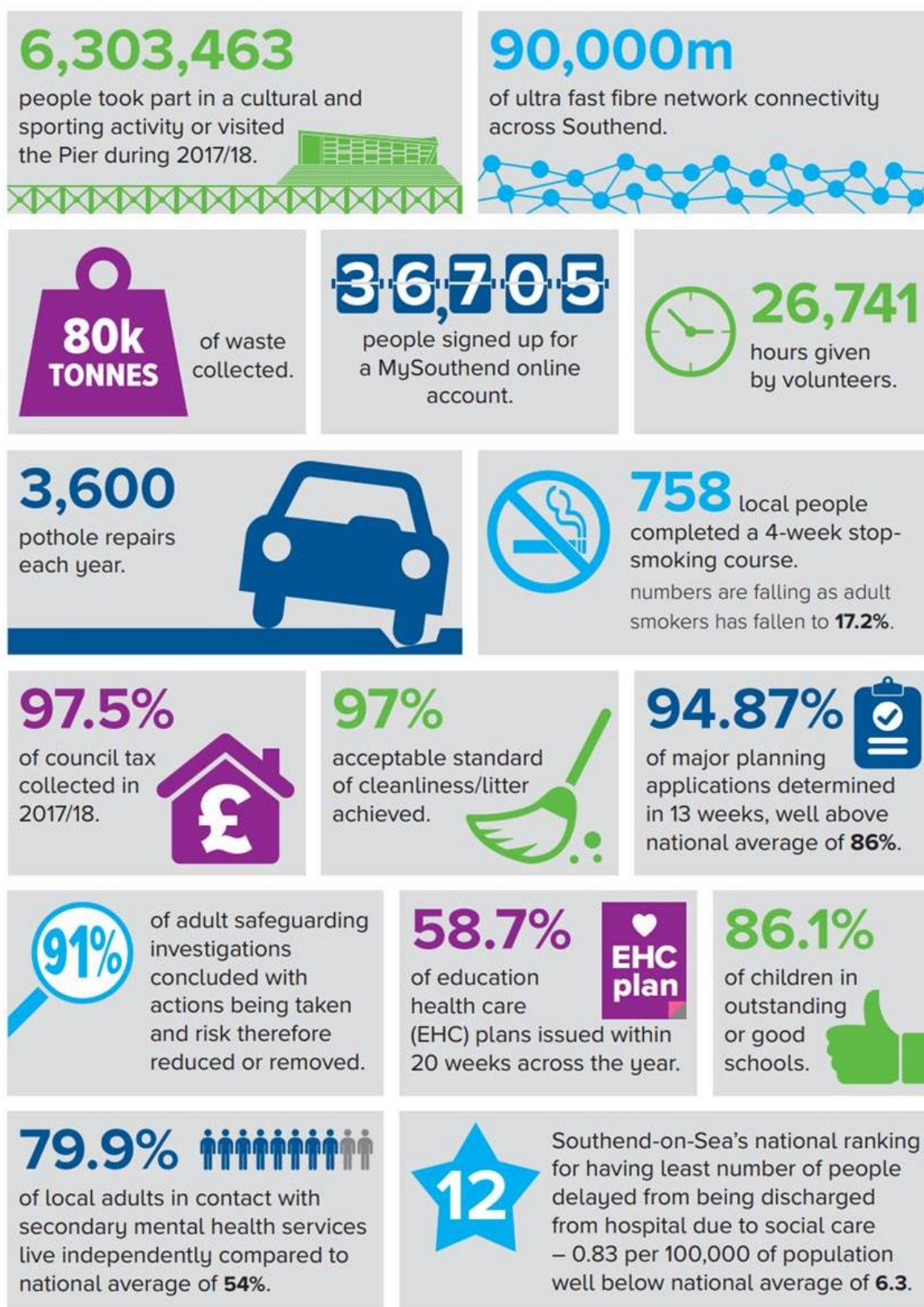


* The don't know responses are notable here 23% compared to 4% in benchmark data.

An insight into some of the key things that the Council manages and maintains....

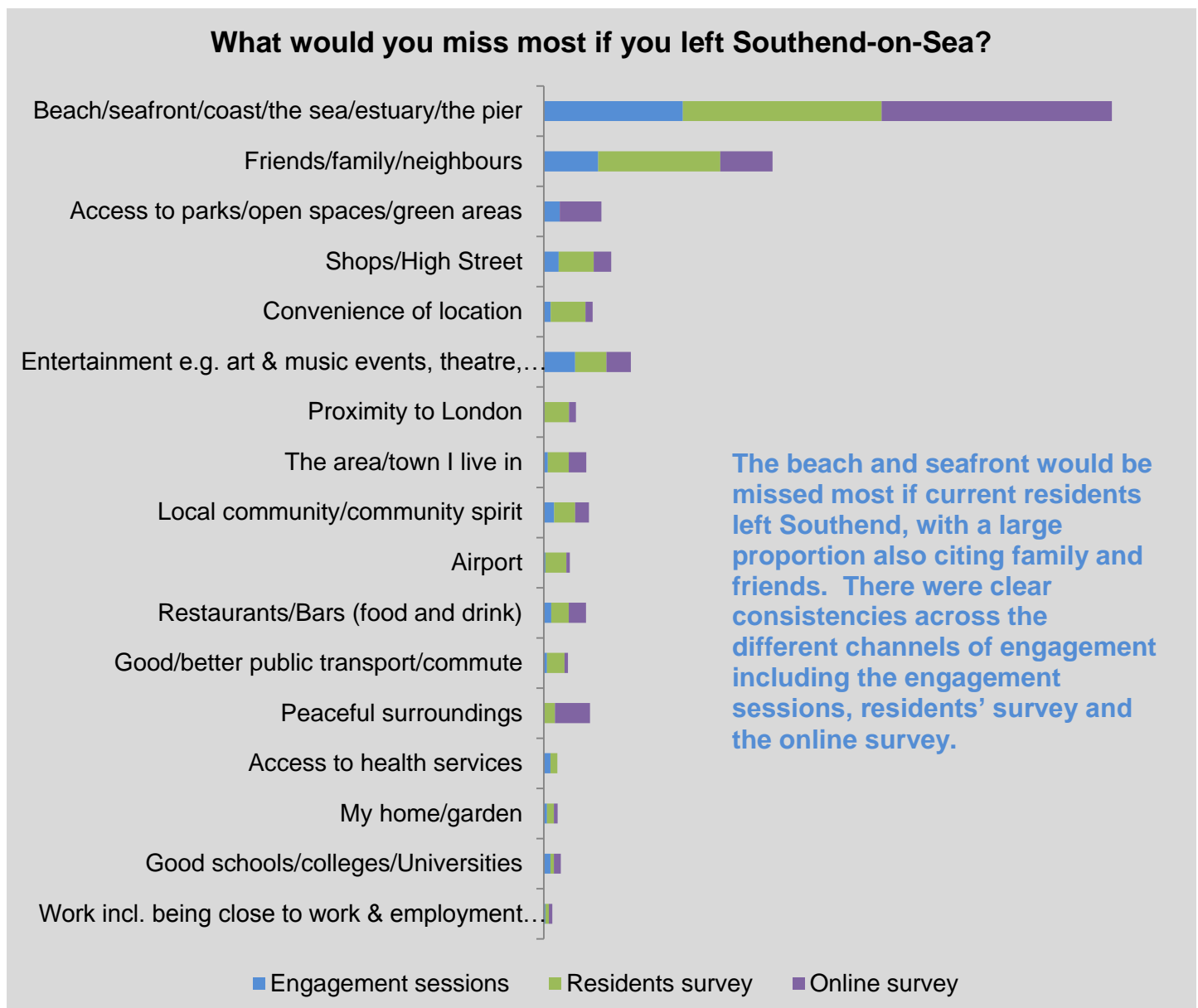


And some key achievements during 2017/18.....

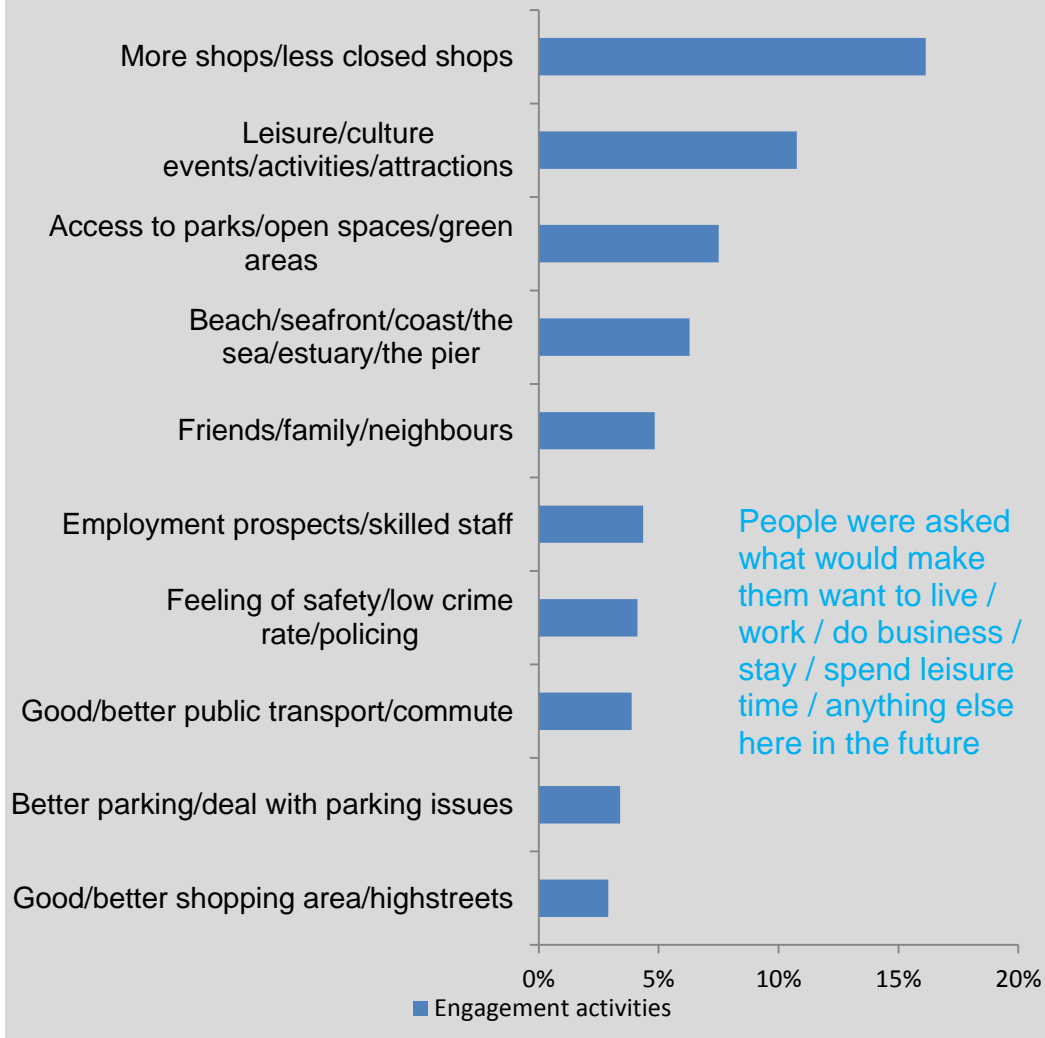


Emerging messages from the 2050 engagement activities

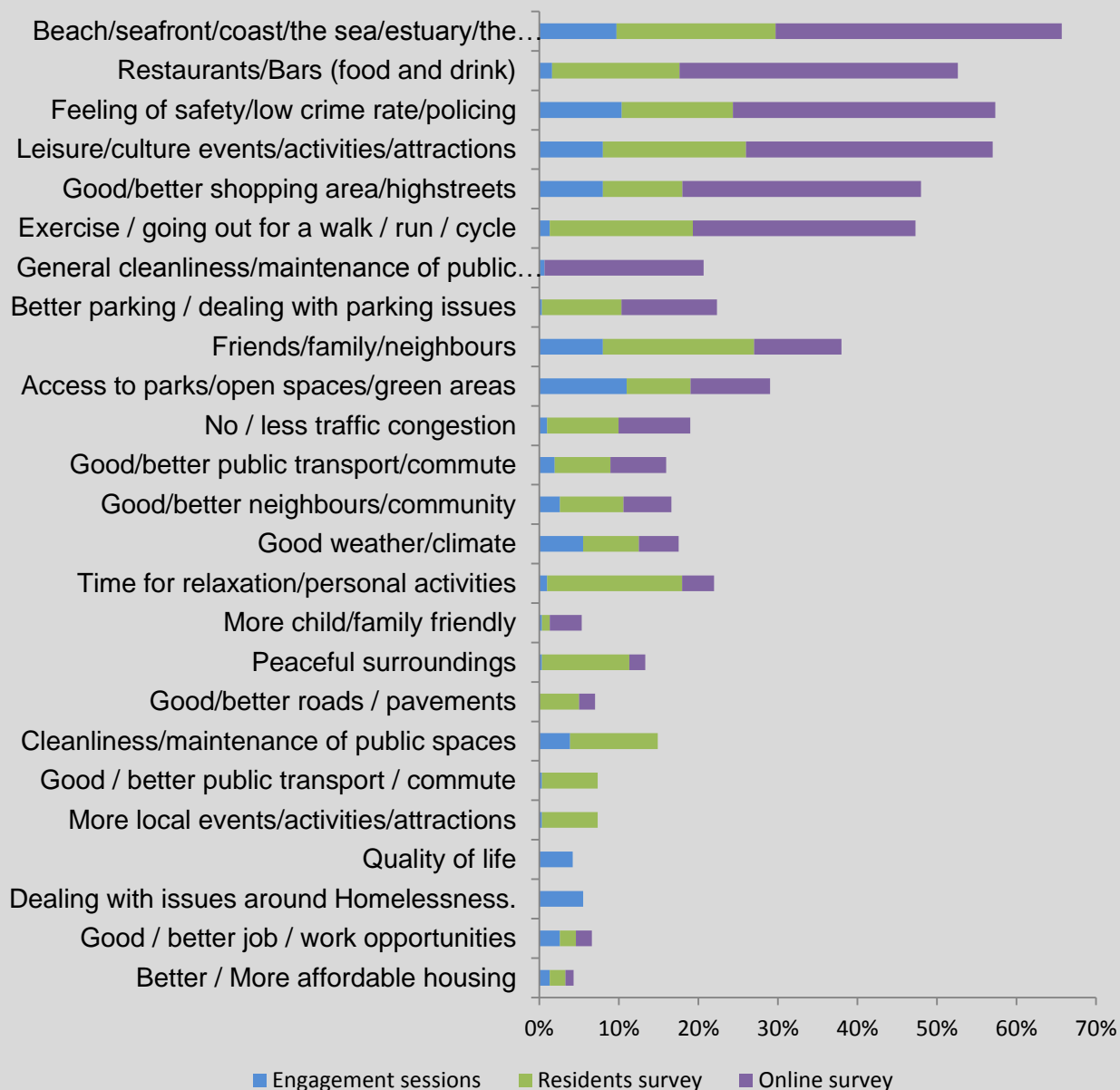
The thousands of comments have been systematically processed and coded to present some very clear emerging themes. Highlights from each of the engagement events and activity have been summarised in this report.



What would make you want here in the future?



Thinking about the future, what would a great day look like for you?



Who might need to be involved?

The word cloud below is a summary of *who* people said might need to be involved to help create their ideal Southend-on-Sea of the future.



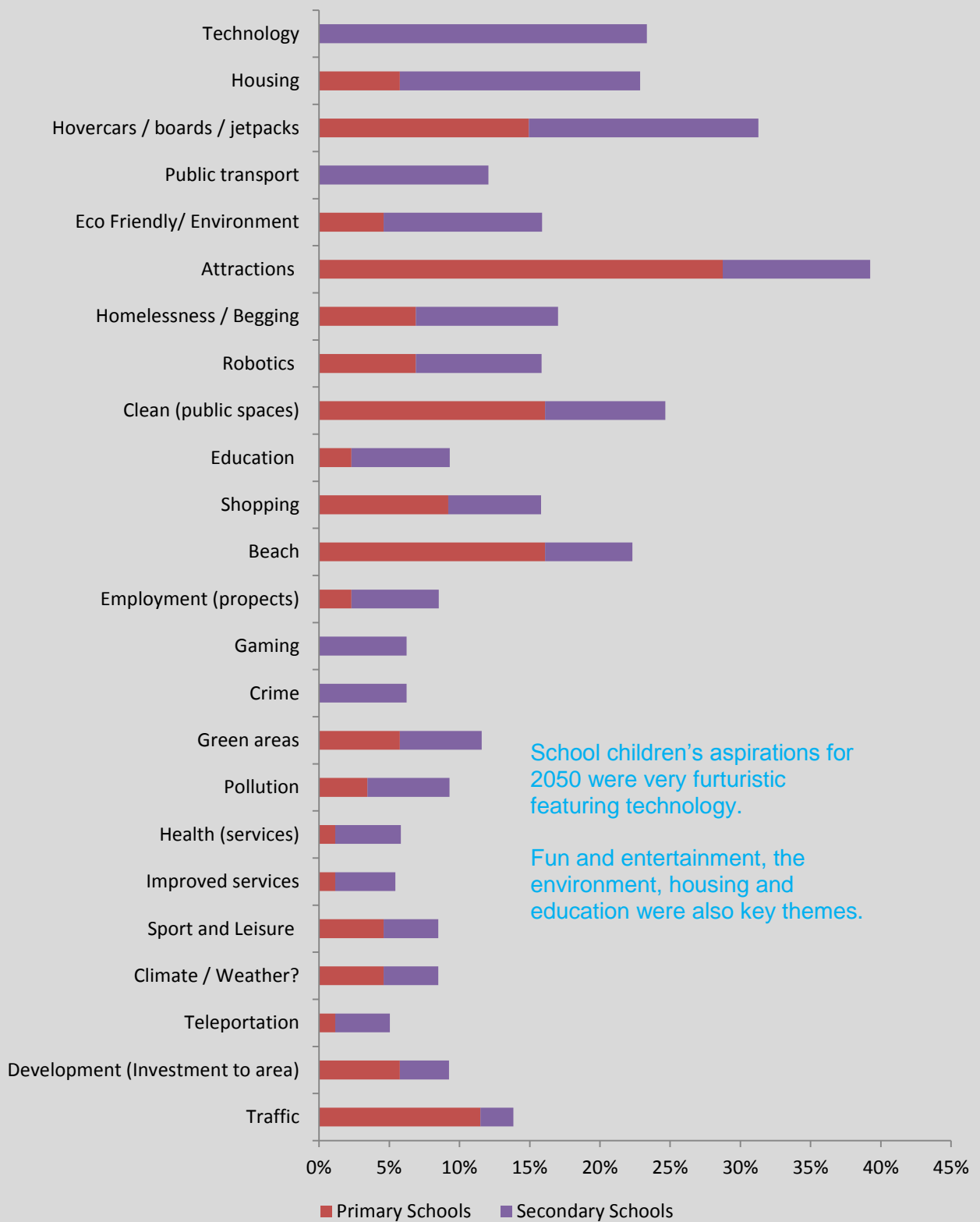
The Southend 2050 competition was set up to engage young people across the borough, to be creative in expressing their views for their future in Southend on Sea. Leading on from the success of the Love Letter to Southend project that many children enjoyed, we want to invite a range of different pupils from across the schools network to actively participate in creating the vision for a future Southend in 2050. We wanted to ensure that we provided a range of opportunity to do this across the different ages and so slightly staggered the concepts for the different age groups, ensuring that the tasks set were appropriate for their ages and skill levels.

- 5-11 year olds in Primary school were asked to participate by creating their own postcards which represent their lives in Southend in 2050. we provided blank A5 postcards, which were ready for some words, poems or pictures. Whether it was painting, writing, drawing, sewing or collage, we invited pupils to get creative and tell us what they think their lives will be like in the future.
- 11-18 year olds in secondary school were asked to write a letter (A4 one sided) from their future self, exploring their lives and the town in 2050 or to create an A4 poster promoting Southend in the year 2050

The timescales for the work were set for the first 3 weeks of the new 2018/19 school term, it was agreed that this was a good time to ask for some early engagement from schools as they start a fresh year.

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School children's aspirations for 2050



Highlights from the engagement events

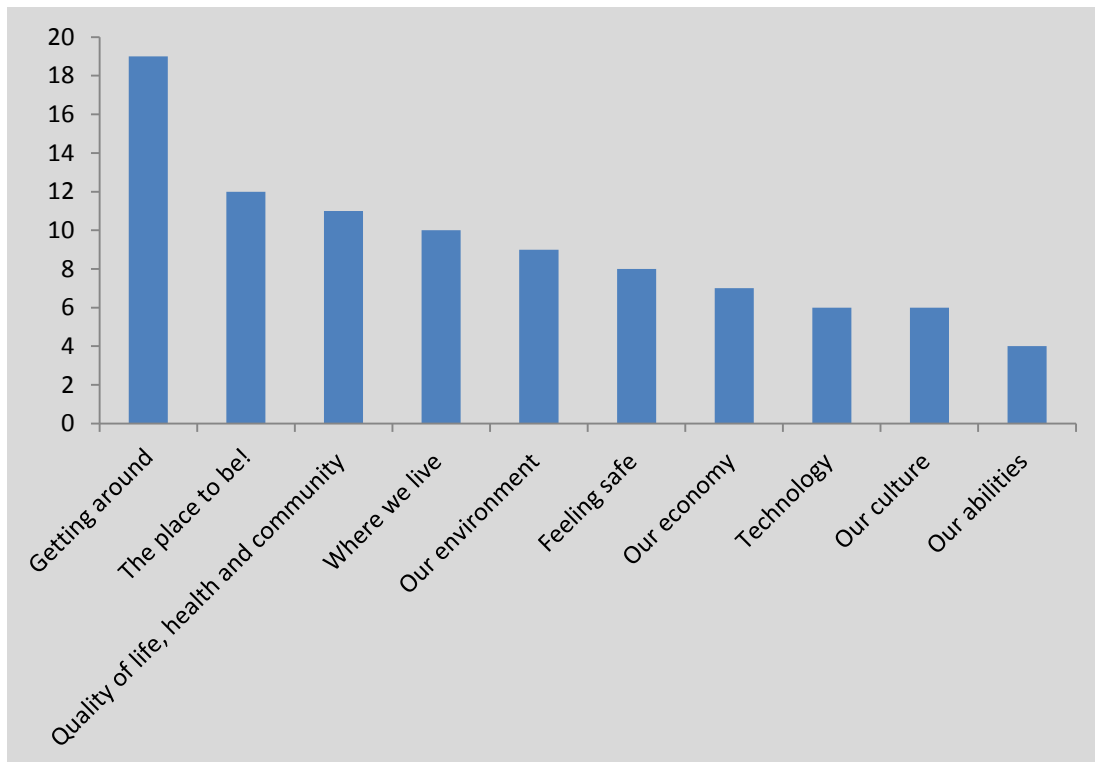
Essex Chambers of Commerce Engagement Event

Southend Council's Chief Executive presented Southend 2050 to approximately 60 members of the local business community.

Participants were invited to respond to the question “what are your aspirations for Southend in 2050 – what kind of borough do we want to be?”

The below reflects a summary of responses, grouped into themes in order of popularity:

1. **Getting around** - themes around effective transportation and accessibility
2. **The place to be!** - becoming a vibrant destination of choice
3. **Quality of life, health and community** - having quality services and connected communities that enhance wellbeing
4. **Where we live** - accessible housing, appropriate for everyone's needs
5. **Our environment** - clean and green coast and open spaces
6. **Feeling safe** - less crime, more policing, feeling safe whenever and wherever
7. **Our economy** - vibrant, quality sustainable economy, reflected in town centre areas
8. **Technology** - Smart, digital, creative centre, tech driven infrastructure
9. **Our culture** - improved sporting and cultural status and facilities
10. **Our abilities** - our people are well equipped for the changing world of work



Community Development Headspace Session

The Group were invited to select a range of images from around the borough, which represented a Southend future “where it all went right” and “where it all went wrong”. This generated lots of discussion about local assets, opportunities and challenges and helped us identify a number of aspirational themes to help inform the Southend 2050 vision discussion:

Aspirational themes

- Facilitate the growth of businesses in the Borough
- Support cohesion across Southend’s increasingly diverse communities
- Create opportunities for young people to thrive inside/outside the classroom
- Rejuvenate the town centre and create a welcoming, community-focused environment
- Reduce reliance on cars and improve transport connections in the Borough
- Create prosperity across the Borough and ensure that large businesses play their part in supporting the aspirations of residents



Southend Interfaith Working Group session

The Southend Interfaith Working Group is made up of representatives from different faith groups across the borough and meets on a bi-monthly basis. Members took part in a visioning discussion, stimulated by a range of representative visual images. Participants were invited to use the images to represent their ideal/desired future for Southend.

This generated broad discussions with several key emerging themes, including:

- Ageing population: implications as well as opportunities
- Housing need and pressures: opportunity to explore less traditional/more radical, flexible and creative solutions.
- Community: value of diversity and integrated communities + wealth of ability/resource/assets in communities – how to empower people/unlock that potential?
- Technology: people doing community differently now
- Media/comms: value and importance of positive stories, celebration / comms
- Value of quality/accessible schooling
- Getting around: be innovative with low cost travel options/solutions

A group member subsequently invited some of their congregation members to express their own sense of vision for Southend.

Themes included a future Southend-on-Sea being a place of:

- Prosperity, health and creativity - everyone is equipped and empowered to fulfil their potential and for the common good
- Good governance and noble leadership
- High employment and businesses thriving - of excellent commerce, education and technologically advanced
- Healthy families – children are nurtured – the vulnerable are protected and poverty is addressed
- Low crime - a drug free area where everyone feels safe
- Peace and calmness, where wellness thrives
- That Southend is a leader amongst cities, where people come to learn – a gateway to Europe and beyond

Visioning sessions x 3

A total of fifty participants, including stakeholders, community members and council staff attended three separate Southend 2050 'interactive vision sessions'.

Participants were invited to respond to the four Southend 2050 questions:

- What would you miss most if you left Southend-on-Sea?
- What will make you want to live, shop, work, do business, stay, spend leisure time here in the future?
- Thinking about Southend in the future, what would a great day/ week/ year look like for you?
- Who might need to be involved to help create your ideal Southend-on-Sea of the future?

Responses affirmed the importance of the following:

- Quality of high street and shops / choice / independent & specialist shops
- Improving aesthetics of public spaces – people centred design - safe, clean, pleasant
- Broad partnerships - Everyone has a part to play. Community involvement (in developments)
- Our current assets are valuable – our cultural offer/events and the beach/seafront/parks etc
- All areas are important (to promote) – not just seafront / High Street
- Heritage/preservation - "Blowing our own trumpet" – making the most of our history/ assets
- Value of family/relationships/neighbours/community spirit/friendliness - Feeling safe
- More activities for family and children
- Pride for our town -
- Appropriate and affordable housing – no homelessness.
- Education, sports facilities, health – reduced GP wait times
- Easy flow of movement around the borough – proper/intentional cycling networks. Ease and affordability of parking
- Improved infrastructure to support population

All member engagement session

Councillors and senior staff came together for an evening session, to imagine what a future Southend-on-Sea might be like and to consider any related implications.

A summary of key discussion themes and considerations are listed below:

Town centre areas - Economy / offer, atmosphere and culture, built environment and accessibility

Housing and growth - Planning and design, transportation, people and communities

Community safety and vulnerability - Active community, demographic change, partnerships, communication, crime-prevention

Leisure and culture - Local assets, community accessibility, creative possibilities, learning from other areas

Health and wellbeing -Getting around/active travel, quality community centred services, supporting people to live well, community resilience

Education and skills - Greater equality, life skills and lifelong learning, impact of positive community and family life as well as aspects such as housing and surrounding environment such as green spaces, physical activity, strong economy and opportunities

Staff engagement sessions

A broad range of internal discussion sessions enabled staff to consider their individual and departmental roles, responsibilities and involvement in developing, sharing and participating in the Southend 2050 conversation.

These included:

- Corporate Management Team sessions
- Extended Senior Leadership Group sessions
- Public Health Team session
- Staff forums joint engagement session
- Department for Place Equalities group session
- Public Protection team session

Southend Business Partnership (SBP) Executive

Project team members attended a Southend Business Partnership (SBP) Executive meeting to share an overview of the Southend 2050 conversation and invite participation. Team members subsequently delivered a Southend 2050 presentation and hosted a marketplace stand at a Southend Business Partnership Breakfast Briefing network session, engaging with numerous delegates to promote the Southend 2050 conversation.

Deliberative Events

- Two deliberative workshop events were held on Saturdays in June and July, 10am-2pm, at the Civic Centre
- 50 people took part in total, recruited to reflect the make-up Southend-on-Sea population in terms of gender, age, socio-economic background and ethnicity.
- The events were led by a lead facilitator from Traverse with participants divided evenly between 3 tables, each led by a table facilitator who guided them through each activity and captured notes

WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU WANT TO LIVE IN SOUTHEND IN THE FUTURE?

- Good (affordable) – helping young people to stay living locally
- A range of jobs and a prosperous place - helping young people to work locally
- 'Things to do' – facilities for different age groups, arts and entertainment venues and events
- Sense of community and things to be proud of - thriving neighbourhoods, independent businesses
- Education – good schools, diverse university courses
- Transport making it a place that's easy to get around and to get in and out of
- Safe and pleasant environment (police presence, less ASB)

WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU WANT TO WORK IN SOUTHEND IN THE FUTURE?

- Grow jobs in a wider range of sectors e.g. technology and creative sectors
- Salary growth to reduce the pull of London
- Encourage business start-ups with cheap office space and start-up loans
- Businesses and education institutions working together to encourage young people to stay in the area (local firms recruiting leavers, apprenticeships, clear career progression)
- Transport that enables ease of movement
- Wider 'liveability' issues covered above e.g. safer and cleaner, more cultural amenities, attractive public spaces

WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU WANT TO SPEND TIME IN SOUTHEND IN THE FUTURE?

- Well-maintained, attractive sea front
- A better leisure offer for visitors – more to do at the seafront, improved theme park and family attractions
- More vibrant town centre – better shopping offer, night life to attract young people, independent shops and restaurants
- Big annual events like the air show (lots of mentions of the air show!) plus concerts, races, other shows
- Develop the arts, cultural and heritage scene as other towns have done
- Safe and clean environment – more welcoming
- Keeping things affordable
- Making it easier to park

MANAGING TENSIONS AND MAKING CHOICES

Participants were presented with three pairs of 'pen portraits' describing fictional local people who have different priorities on a specific topic and a fourth which described two versions of the future. These were used to focus people's minds about the sort of future they would prefer for Southend.

Each scenario was discussed by two groups.

Following a discussion, each participant was given 5 counters to place on the spectrum to indicate their preferences.



‘A walk in the park or a foot on the ladder?’

A walk in the park



Karen is 54 and moved to Shoebury from London nearly 30 years ago. She was glad to get away from the hustle and bustle of the big city, and has always liked the quality of life she enjoys in Southend-on-Sea, with its parks and sea front.

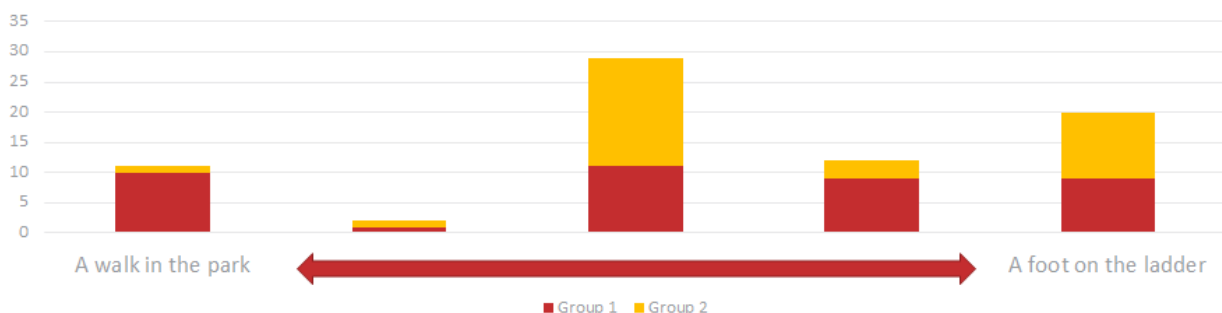
She is worried that too many new homes are being built in the borough, that the population is getting too big and that the character of the area will be ruined over time.

A foot on the ladder



Karen's neighbour Dan is 28. After a few years renting, he and his girlfriend are living back with his parents to save money for a deposit on a flat. He'd like to stay in the area but property prices are making that difficult so they are thinking of moving away.

He wants to see more new, affordable homes being built to meet demand.



- Sympathy for both characters – needs compromise on both sides
- Younger participants more likely to sympathise with Dan and older participants with Karen
- Scepticism that affordable housing often isn't affordable enough
- General view that whilst more development is needed, the infrastructure should be put in place to match; green spaces around developments should be preserved so that people are not 'crammed in'; and for some people it was important that new development fits with local character (not 'ugly modern' buildings)

‘Laptops and lattes or buckets and spades?’

Laptops and lattes



Jackie runs a small graphic design company and wants to expand, but struggles to recruit. She thinks that the combination of good rail links to London, reasonably priced office space and quality of life could attract many more professional people to move here – and set up their own businesses – if only the town could market itself differently.

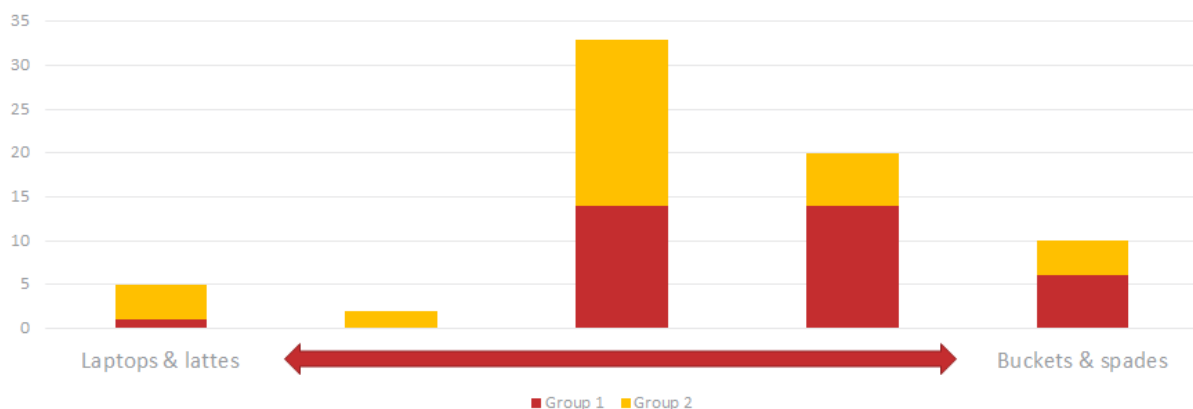
She feels that too many day-trippers ruin the area for the locals, and thinks the ‘bucket and spade’ image is out of date. She wants Southend to re-brand itself as more of a modern business destination rather than a seaside resort.

Buckets and spades



Graham is 40 and runs an ice cream parlour on the seafront. He thinks the borough is failing to reach its potential as a destination and wants more tourists encouraged to visit Southend in the summer months.

He wants to see the town return to its heyday with crowds coming into the town to enjoy their leisure time by the beach. He thinks this will be good for the local economy and help to improve the area’s image.



- People are positive about making Southend attractive to small professional businesses like Jackie’s, but also want to see Southend work for people like Graham
- Some felt that seaside towns have a bad image – especially outside holiday season – so expanding Southend’s ‘brand’ would be positive, keeping and attracting more young & skilled people
- However, there was a strong feeling that the ‘buckets and spades’ image is part of Southend’s soul – it can’t just be ditched – and other towns (like Brighton) manage to project both images – so it did not need to be either/or – in fact there would be strength in this diversity

‘Gateway to the world or a haven of tranquillity?’

Gateway to the world



Local businessman Doug wants to see Southend maximise its potential as a major transport hub for Essex by expanding activity at the airport.

He runs a manufacturing business based in the area and thinks Southend could grow its economy if businesses could get access to more overseas markets via the airport – and the improved road infrastructure to support it. This, he says, could generate skilled jobs and income for the area.

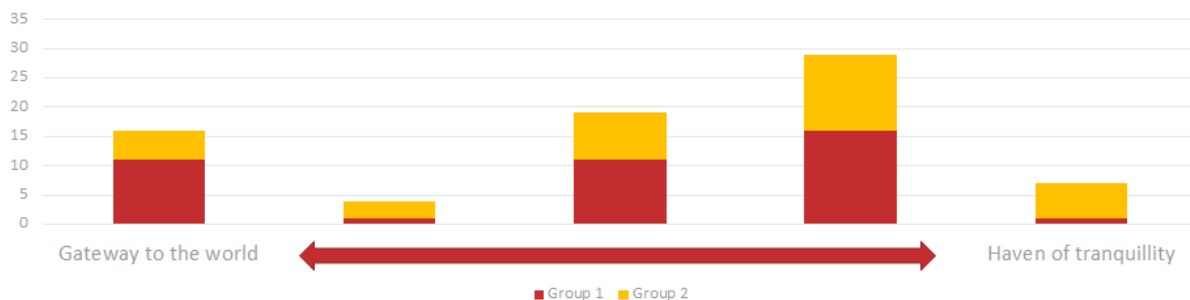
Haven of tranquillity



Nina is a recent graduate and works for a wildlife charity. She grew up in Leigh and wants to stay in the area, even though most of her friends are moving elsewhere.

She is concerned that a marked growth in air and road traffic will increase noise pollution, impact on air quality and undermine the peacefulness of the countryside around Southend.

She also thinks that as most people travelling into Southend will go straight into London, there won't be much gain for Southend itself.



- On the one hand, people were positive about the boost to jobs and growth, and that it made sense to maximise the economic benefits of the airport
- Others did not want more pollution from expanding air travel, some feeling that the economic benefits were in any case insufficient as it makes Southend ‘a departure lounge not a destination’
- Green space needs to be protected and its benefits maximised in future.
- More divergent views on this and less obvious room for accommodating both future visions – although some talked about measures to reduce the impacts on wildlife habitats, for instance

‘Southend the city or a borough of contrasts?’

Southend the city



10 years in the future:

Southend on Sea is a bustling city with a growing population to match. Like other cities, it has a busy urban centre where most people live, work and socialise (and to a lesser extent, shop). There has been a lot of new residential development since 2020, mostly apartments rather than houses with gardens. Almost all the big shops have disappeared from the high street, which has been redeveloped as a mix of residential apartments with small shops, cafes, restaurants and community venues below.

Centrally located businesses benefit from having so many people living within walking distance, so the centre of Southend is buzzing round the clock. Different parts of the city have their identities, but they are clearly part of one city and see themselves as a modern, urban community. Some people feel that the friendliness and distinctiveness of the old days has gone, however.

Borough of contrasts



10 years in the future:

Southend on Sea is a borough of contrasts – and prides itself on being a place where you can ‘get away from it all’. Its different towns and neighbourhoods have retained and even enhanced their distinctive identities, with residents tending to associate themselves with their own part of the borough rather than Southend as a single entity.

Building has been limited since 2020 as local people fight to retain the character and sense of open space that is so valued. People aspire to live away from the Centre and will often spend their leisure time close to where they live – Leigh, Thorpe, Shoebury etc – whilst Southend Centre struggles to attract a mix of residents, visitors and businesses.

Total across all six groups



- Some associated the city vision with negatives – bland and charmless, not distinctive, crime, and rising house prices with some ‘left behind’. A small number reacted very strongly against the idea of Southend as a city.
- Others were very positive about the reinvigoration of Southend centre implied by the city vision, with apartments and new businesses filling current gaps to make for a more thriving, vibrant and welcoming place
- Most liked the retention of local character in the ‘contrasts’ vision – but some also thought this scenario suggested a ‘stagnant’ future that would suit retired people but would not provide the affordable homes or jobs that others would need
- Overall, participants wanted elements of both - a Southend that can grow and move with the times but which preserves local character and heritage – and they gave examples of cities which manage both, so felt it didn’t need to be a choice between the two

Southend Association of Voluntary Services' Thematic Group sessions x 2

Participants at SAVS Thematic Group, which included representatives of local charities, group representatives and community members, were invited to respond to several questions:

What would you miss most if you left Southend?

Key themes: Open spaces, character of the place, the people, facilities, location

What we wouldn't miss:

Lack of public transport, poor state of pavements, loss of historic buildings, provision for dogs in the town

Thinking about Southend in the future what would a great day look like for you?

Key priorities: Good high street, diverse things to do, quality of open spaces, ease of parking vs less congestion (contrast), improved/affordable and varied (e.g. trams & open top buses) public transport, preservation of historic buildings, safe environment (low crime)

What role would volunteering play in your ideal Southend of the future?

Key themes: Enables innovation without being hindered by red tape, huge range of interpersonal benefits e.g. improving self-esteem/social isolation/community cohesion, supporting people into employment, huge resource with positive impact on service demand but recognising resource implications

In the second thematic group session, participants considered the future of partnership working and the role of the voluntary sector, in more depth.

Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

A project team member attended a Southend CSP meeting to invite the CSP to engage in the Southend 2050 conversation and consider how they might want to be involved going forward. Members took part in a short visioning discussion, stimulated by a range of representative visual images.

User research conversations x 3 (in-depth resident interviews)

Three residents participated in comprehensive interview discussions about their lives and aspirations for the borough.

Key themes of conversation were:

Quality of life

- Love how close I am to the sea – the open feel of the area as well as how close London is. Love all the parks and open spaces
- Having moved from London, wellbeing is better in Southend - feels more positive. Life is smoother, calmer, not so fast paced/calmer

- People are friendlier (than London). By the water feels better for wellbeing. Feels like an escape from Monday - Friday work. There's a calmness, nice landscape, positive feel.
- Would miss Southend's environment and landscape, love living by the water. Been to all local parks in different areas. Park run in Shoeburyness on a Saturday.
- Quality, accessibility and equality of schools and education is important for my children

Challenges/opportunities

- Retaining local talent, with the draw of London – could work to develop the university town environment and encourage students to remain here after studies
- Improved public transport network could help reduce congestion
- Too much reliance on tourism? What happens during the rest of the year... more focus on sustainable businesses?
- High street can currently feel intimidating - Sad about the shops closing in the town centre
- Concern about profile of homelessness/begging – can feel intimidating and put people off coming to the area
- Feeling of concern about a sense of increasing levels of crime/disrespectful behaviour – would like to feel safer
- Need more of a 'yes culture' for creative ideas – minimising obstacles and bureaucracy

Identity

- "I prefer Southend to Brighton, has more of an identity. Feels individual. Lots of positives about Southend, lots of potential". Southend should maintain its identity despite development
- Opportunity to maximise profile through things like Jamie Oliver's TV programme
- Value of celebrating and experiencing local heritage/history (e.g. history walks etc with a by-product of connecting people) – opportunity to use various media outlets to focus on this and advertise opportunities to experience it
- Don't have to sell the idea to others of moving out of London to Southend. Has a friend that said she can see herself living here. Had a negative connotation of Southend growing up. People still have that idea if you're from London but had a friend from Kent who found it amazing and stunning. It's all in the landscape, need different things for different people. Taking people to places they don't see on a day trip. The place seems to be developing itself.
- Kids love the sea life centre and arcades on seafront. So caters for everyone. Once people come they enjoy it, residents taking people to places off the beaten track.

Community

- Strong sense of community / people looking out for each other
- Desire to get involved/connect with other like-minded people. Passionate about the upkeep of Southend
- Value of communications and advertising to let people know what's going on in the borough and how to get involved

Economy

- Opportunity to explore different approach to increase quality/occupancy in high street areas
- Importance of moving with the times. Most shops are closed by the time commuters arrive back in town, but people want to support local businesses – opportunity for selective late night openings?
- Exciting to see all the redevelopment on Victoria Avenue – would like to see similar exciting regeneration in Southend High Street – perhaps less concentration on shops and more on activities

General

- I think it's great having these visions for 32 years' time and trying to address the here and now and seeing how things transpire
- Airport is such a strength - so accessible and easy

Networking and cake event at the Hive

Project team members hosted a 'Networking and Cake' event at the Hive, which involved numerous local business representatives. Following a Southend 2050 presentation from the Council's Chief Executive, project team members engaged with participants to highlight the various ways to be involved in the Southend 2050 conversation.

Figuring it out group LGBTQIA

This was a great little group to interact with, they were particularly enthusiastic about inclusive communities and how we all need to work better together. This group were animated about the message that more people need to be involved that 'care' and that 'acceptance' is a key attribute that it wants Southend to have in the future.

Healthy Schools

We attended the Healthy Schools network meeting to share the narrative for the Southend 2050 work and the links for the online engagement tools. The information was well received and the network agreed that it would be beneficial to identify an activity to specifically engage children and young people through the schools, colleges and SLN. Further information was released to the group throughout the summer and their input helped us to develop the schools art and writing competition.

London to Southend Classic Car Run

We had a good response at the event, people were willing to stop and chat for a few minutes, and it was a good event to move around the crowd whilst they wandered through the amazing cars. We had a range of conversations that produced some rich responses.

- 19 Residents responded
- 14 Visitors responded
- 8 respondents identified that they had a younger family
- 8 respondents identified that they were between the ages of 12-19
- Many people identified that they would miss their family, friends and homes
- Shops, travel, the high street and safety were all reoccurring themes across the responses

Southend Youth Council (11-18's)

It was an exciting session with the Youth Council members engaging well with the pictures of Southend and raising some valid points about the look and feel of Southend as well as observing that some images can be perceived as both negative and positive dependent of the personal perspective. Pictures that were particularly popular during the exercise represented parks, open spaces, the seafront and the high street. Those that created particularly discussion were those of rubbish, drug paraphernalia and the voting smoking bins. Themes that came out of the engagement work include safety, community transport, future jobs and youth involvement.



Project 49 Visioning & Engagement Sessions

This was a fantastic audience for the project to engage with; at times we had to think innovatively, often using pictures, emoticons and other tools to ensure that conversations were grounded and that the audience had a clear understanding of what was being asked.

We had a fantastic response from the group sessions, with conversation often being aided by each of the participants and with that focus carrying the conversation through.

It was clear that many people were passionate about the town centre and high street and were concerned about what would be there in the future. As a place to go and be the beach and pier raised much pride and passion amongst the comments, often being a focus for events and activities for them. The participants are a particularly active group and wanted to ensure that Southend provides a range of activities and facilities across the borough to enable them to live as independently as possible. Families, carers, communities and services that provide them with support were mentioned often and are clearly central to the safety and development of adults with learning disabilities. Being able to live independently was also the focus of many comments, and an active concern for now and for the future. Transport and safe roads was a reoccurring theme across the feedback and a subject that raised particular passion and comments, accessibility, safety and timing were all areas covered in comments on transport and roads.



30 Minutes to the Future sessions x 3

These drop in sessions provided an opportunity for people to find out more about Southend 2050, to reflect on their own aspirations for the borough and consider how they might like to be involved in the conversation going forward. One attendee went on to participate in one of the User Research in-depth Southend 2050 resident interviews.

Don Giovanni Live screening

The crowd were actively engaged in their social conversations often included friends and family in the conversation and their responses. The seafront, the pier and the parks were a focus for what many would miss if they left Southend. There was definitely a want from the respondents to have more activities (physical, social and cultural) and more things to do for working age people across the area and that we need to move forward to foster and nurture more community spirit. Community Safety, support for the older generation and transport around Southend were also key themes raised

Learning Disability Partnership Forum Visioning Session

With the service users, current activities and the support they receive are important to them and are key to their ability to live as independently as possible, in fact they would like to attend more activities and would like to ensure that LD service users continue to get these opportunities in the future.

It was also identified that looking to the future that the towns local utilities such as the seafront, the high street and the green spaces are all important to this key audience and that the use of these local facilities is again a key part in being as independent as possible.

Transport and travel was a key aspect of the conversations, there was some positive feedback but also some comments around improving the road safety and key bus links, it was agreed that it can be difficult and time consuming to travel across the borough.

The ability to work and to be supported to do so created some good discussion on some tables, people wanted to be able to live and work locally to ensure a good quality of life and to achieve balance between home and work lives.

Southend Hospital Engagement Session

The interest shown by NHS staff was really positive to see, as they took the time to give thoughtful responses, or took information cards to complete at home. As some respondents were in intergenerational groups, it was encouraging to see them engaging in conversations, in the café, about Southend and where they saw the future going. When asked what the participant would miss about Southend, 'family/friends' was a common response. Although this has been a common answer across our engagement

events, it may be more prevalent in the hospital as most people we interacted with were there for their friends/family.

Transport and the facilities across Southend were also common themes in the responses gathered, particularly the issues around the current shopping provision in the high street. Future concerns were expressed around education and job opportunities.

Southend Carnival Beer Festival

This was an interesting audience for the project to engage with; the conversations were lively and emphatic, providing some interesting and honest answers to the questions. Those engaged were passionate about the spaces around them and how we can maintain these effectively in the future, protecting our natural resources and beauty spots. There were reoccurring comments on family friends and community being an important part of peoples futures as well as a focus on travel and transport, particularly the movement of traffic across the town at peak periods.

Children's Carnival Day

This was a great planned event to attend, slightly dampened by the damp start but it brightened up, there were around 80 families in attendance who were all busy at the stands, stalls or watching the performers. Most respondents felt that they would miss the area they lived the sea, their family friends. They wanted to see more accessible activities for families and safer communities for the future, transport and the flow and movement were also a concern, as well as the high street.



Age Concern 50+

We really enjoyed engaging with such an active audience that had a lot of opinions and views on Southend. Although all participants enjoyed the clubs at Age Concern, all mentioned that they would like more activities – both physical and social – for their age group. Regularly, the desire for intergenerational groups surfaced, where some favourite past activities included shows with the local college.

There were mixed opinions on the public transport in Southend, where some believed that the borough has good bus services/routes, while others thought buses were too crowded and didn't accommodate to the elderly.

Almost all participants also spoke about the shops in Southend. Many believed that there wasn't enough variety (a common response across a range of topics, where similarly activities should be more varied). They wished for more traditional shops that reminded them of their past in Southend.

Southend Carnival

Three staff members were stationed at City Beach approaching people visiting for the Carnival. More cards were handed out than the number of responses collected, as many local residents wanted to really think about the quality of their response so opted to return their response cards via the drop in boxes stationed at all Southend Libraries. The duration of collecting responses was approximately 1 hour 45m, finishing as onlookers attentions were focused toward the noise of the oncoming Carnival procession.

This engagement activity also served as a campaign to raise awareness to the 2050 conversation in the form of Southend 2050's own float. The float was a visual representation of Southend's past, present and future, inviting people to join the discussion about the future of Southend (Mention quotes attached to float and the 'back to the future' style banner to the rear of the lorry).



The feedback collected on the night was from a mixture of residents and visitors. Comments were particularly focused on activities across Southend, including the previous airshow and more activities for families to participate in parking and accessibility was a key feature for both residents and visitors. Crime reduction and community safety were priority subjects and all felt that there needed to be more working together of police, the council and other key organisations to achieve a better Southend in the future.

Children's Centres and A Better Start

It was a pleasure to attend such a variety of different sessions across the 2 organisations, parents were welcoming and open to talking about their aspirations, particularly for their children heading into the future. The responses gathered focused very much on the facilities across Southend, people would miss the beach and the seafront. People were quick to praise groups and services such as ABSS and the children's centres and want to ensure that projects like this continue to support children and families into the future. Safety came out as a clear theme, people want to know that issues around antisocial behaviour, drug use and homelessness are a priority to be dealt with. Transport across the borough was another reoccurring theme, with many feeling that the local transport systems need to be improved to become more timely and usable. There was a focus from some respondents on services for children with SEN and Autism and a need to provide consistent support and information for families to live successfully and independently.



Age Concern AGM

What emanated from the meeting was an overwhelming enthusiasm and passion for the community. It was also noted recognition for self-ownership of health and wellbeing matters, made possible when supported from grass roots organisations and key partners. That empowerment is achievable given the right tools, and a new society that recognises their portion of responsibility in their own care.

Amid conversations circling the room a geographical pride and sense of community spirit was unavoidable presence, from repeated comments I soon realised that Southend is a fairly unique in its drive to use community groups as a key tool in enabling and effecting positive change for their community. All spoke with passionate accounts of the need to improve various elements of Southend but each with a vested interest and sense of ownership in matters evidently close to their hearts.

The meeting was rather constructive in its suggestions for improvement as many recognised the Council's limitations and contributing factors as society changes on the whole. It was great to hear the shared experiences of those comparing geographical positives and negatives for the town of Southend, and also understand in relation how those changes have had their impact over the course of many years.

Another key vibe from this group was not only the great understanding of the constraints in reaching a 'perfect' Southend, but for the level of tolerance those attending had for difference in their community and in turn, the need for all differing groups to work together for a prosperous future.

Business Improvement District (BID) workshop sessions

The Southend 2050 conversation was introduced to BID members at their meeting in June 2018 by Southend Council's Strategic Director, Transformation. BID members agreed that they would like to engage further in the conversation and a date for a more in depth session was arranged for 5th September 2018. The 5th Sept session used a range of imagery to promote discussion and explore future aspirations and present concerns for Southend-on-Sea. BID members and representatives, local business owners and staff, stakeholders, Southend Council officers (who provided session facilitation) attended the session.

Here and now

- Struggling with an aspirational future vision when it feels like there is so much that needs urgent attention in the here and now – Importance of 'quick wins'
- Brexit implications

Community, safety and atmosphere

- Generally, people want to create a sense of community
- Homelessness/rough sleeping and nuisance street begging + associated anti-social behaviour is becoming known outside of Southend
- Crime, anti-social behaviour - lack of Police presence/support

Transport, traffic and parking

- Positivity about the airport – could there be a Crossrail connection?
- Feeling that issues with traffic flow (A130 and A127) and parking are affecting tourism – importance of maximising footfall – suggestion of some time-limited free parking areas around the town centre to encourage footfall
- It's becoming difficult to attract and retain base wage/extended hours town centre staff in view of public transport running times and costs plus expanded parking permit-restricted areas and increasing parking charges

Design, development and infrastructure

- A sense that the Town Centre, being designed in the 1960s, needs to evolve to cater to the needs of now – spatial issues/sense of need for more open space
- Projected populations and the impact on housing, schools and infrastructure
- Planning applications - long drawn out process

Attracting people

- The Seaside! Need this to be our anchor. Sense that the seafront is our biggest asset
- We need to be open to change, stop shutting ourselves off to (sometimes radical) ideas.
- Developing a unique Southend
- Londoners moving to Southend – but tourists and visitors complain.
- People move to Southend, but work in the City.
- Need for improved social aspects for Southend
- Fears that in 2050 Southend will be a ghost town (businesses closed)
- Hotels – we need a better class

Working together

- Recognition of Council's limitations.
- Desire to be genuinely heard and included – to develop a culture of listening.
- Feeling that older people need to be more open to change and the future.



Southend SOUP event

This was a useful audience for the project to engage with; the group was lively and passionate, providing some interesting and unique answers. As people already interested and active in their communities the answers given often reflected their understanding of the need to work together and share responsibility and ideas. There was a clear sense of needing to progress and update as a town but also of reflection on positive aspects of life that Southend had given them over the years. The sea side was a prominent feature in the comments and there was a clear want to make the most of this unique feature, as well as all of the other open spaces across the borough such as the parks. The town centre was clearly creating some concern amongst the respondents, and it's clear that some new thinking needs to be applied to improve people's perception of the space and their use of it. Finally the group portrayed a sense of pride in the town across the comments, recognising that although there is opportunity for improvement there is also a need to celebrate and share some of the positive aspects of Southend.

Southend Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and NHS Southend Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Governing Body

Southend Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) partners were invited to engage in the Southend 2050 conversation in a letter from the HWB Chair and accompanying YouTube video invitation from the Councils' Chief Executive in early summer 2018.

A subsequent follow up discussion happened at September's HWB meeting in which the HWB was invited to consider how they might like to continue to engage in the ongoing conversation and also, what might be the longer term implications of the work for health and wellbeing in Southend-on-Sea.

A project team member shared an update on the process and progress of the Southend 2050 work at a subsequent NHS Southend CCG Governing Body meeting, inviting the CCG to continue to engage in the ongoing Southend 2050 conversation.

Southend Pier Visitor Information Centre August – September

For those that did contribute, it was refreshing to know that the Pier is still a valued attraction to Southend, and also that community are incited as those needed to create an ideal vision Southend for 2050.

Highlights -

- The value of family and friends
- Culture / Community
- Safety / Policing
- Housing / Employment
- Parking

Southend Libraries

Overall it was great to get a good mix of views about Southend from across the Borough. Clearly some areas have a different view about where they live in comparison to others, but it is evident that people have an appreciation for their varied surroundings and mixed environment – The sea, green spaces. People view the importance of leisure and social and outdoor activities in their lives and are keen to improve not just the visuals of their everyday places but to improve the standard of services that they are getting. The role of communities, police, Government, travel industries and local businesses in creating an idea Southend shows that groups from all areas are viewed as important if Southend is improve identified issues such as crime, drug misuse and homelessness.

Directory of Engagement

Name of event	Audience	Type of event	Date	Numbers attending
Essex Chambers of Commerce Engagement Event	Businesses	Workshop	30/1/18	60
Extended Senior Leadership Group Session	Staff	Workshop	14/02/18	40
Community Development Headspace Session	Staff	Workshop	07/03/18	20
Southend Interfaith Working group session	Faith Groups	Workshop	15/03/18	10
Public Health Team Planning session	Staff	Workshop	30/04/18	30
Visioning session 1	Staff, partners and community representatives	Workshop	21/05/18	9
All member engagement session	Councillors and Senior staff	Workshop	04/06/18	50
Visioning session 2	Staff, partners and community representatives	Workshop	04/06/18	21
Staff forums joint engagement session	Staff	Presentation, discussion	08/06/18	2
Visioning session 3	Staff, partners and community representatives	Workshop	12/06/18	21
Department for Place Equalities group	Staff	Workshop	13/06/18	8
Southend Carers and Cake Information Morning (Project 49)	Residents, Local Service providers	Public event, engagement	13/06/18	20
Southend Business Partnership (SBP)	Businesses	Presentation and discussion.	14/06/18	20

Executive				
Southend Business Partnership (SBP) Business Briefing	Businesses	Presentation and market place stand	14/06/18	100
Deliberative event 1	Selected representative community members	Workshop	16/06/18	24
SAVS thematic group session 1	3 rd Sector Partners and volunteers	Workshop	27/06/18	15
Deliberative event 2	Selected representative community members	Workshop	07/07/18	24
Community Safety Partnership	Partners	Presentation, discussion	10/07/18	10
CMT Walk and talk session	Senior staff	Workshop	31/07/18	6
SAVS thematic group session 2	3 rd Sector Partners and volunteers	Workshop	08/08/18	15
Public protection team engagement session	Staff	Workshop	08/08/18	25
User Research Conversation 1	Residents	In depth interview	01/08/18	1
User Research Conversation 2	Residents	In depth interview	04/09/18	1
User Research Conversation 3	Residents	In depth interview		1
Networking and cake event at the Hive	Businesses	Public event, engagement	25/05/18	30
Figuring it out group LGBTQIA	Residents, Local Service providers	Public event, engagement	27/06/18	7
Southend BID Meeting	Businesses		28/06/18	40
Little Heroes Parent	Residents, Local	Public event,	29/06/18	6

Peer Support Group	Service providers engagement			
Healthy Schools	Residents, Local Service providers		29/06/18	10
London to Southend Classic Car Run	Residents, visitors	Public event, engagement	01/07/18	60
Engagement Meeting NHS	Residents, Local Service providers		02/07/18	18
Southend Youth Council (11-18's)	Young people	Public event, engagement	04/07/18	21
30 Minutes to the Future session	Staff, residents	Drop in	04/07/18	5
Service User Engagement Morning (Project 49)	Residents, Local Service providers, vulnerable groups	Workshop	05/07/18	20
30 Minutes to the Future session	Staff, residents	Drop in	06/07/18	1
30 Minutes to the Future session	Staff, residents	Drop in	09/07/18	2
Don Giovanni Live screening	Residents and visitors	Public event, engagement	12/07/18	12
Project 49 Visioning & Engagement Session	Residents, Local Service providers, vulnerable groups	Public event, engagement	13/07/18	1 2
Project 49 Birthday and Wellbeing Day	Residents, Local Service providers, vulnerable groups	Public event, engagement	13/07/18	45
LDPF Visioning Session	Residents, Local Service providers, vulnerable groups	Public event, engagement	30/07/18	36
Southend Hospital	Residents,	Public event,	02/08/18	14

Engagement Session	visitors, Children and adults with disabilities (all ages) carers, parents.	engagement		
Project 49 Visioning & Engagement Session	Residents, staff, Local Service providers, children / adults with LD, carers, parents, children and adults with mental health issues	Workshop	09/08/18	20
Daddies Takeover Day	Residents, Local Service providers, working aged adults, children with LD, parents 0-5, 6-18, children with mental health issues	Public event, engagement	11/08/18	10
Southend Carnival Beer Festival	Residents, visitors, local businesses	Public event, engagement	12/08/18	40
Southend Hospital Engagement Session	Residents, visitors, Children and adults with disabilities (all ages) carers, parents.	Public event, engagement	14/08/18	15
Children's Carnival Day	Residents, visitors, Local Service providers, local businesses, Children with LD, children and young people, parents, carers	Public event, engagement	15/08/18	25
Age Concern 50+	Older people,	Public event,	16/08/18	14

	carers, disabilities, volunteers	engagement		
Southend Carnival	Residents and visitors young / old	Public event, engagement	18/08/18	1120
A Better Start Southend Stay And Play Event	Residents, Local Service providers, Children 0-5, parents, working adults 18-65	Public event, engagement	22/08/18	
Summercourt Children's centre fun day for ABSS / family action	Residents, Local Service providers, Children 0-5, parents, working adults 18-65	Public event, engagement	29/08/18	90 across all sessions
Blenheim Children's Centre	Residents, Local Service providers, Children 0-5, parents, working adults 18-65	Public event, engagement	10/09/18	
Prince Avenue Children's Centre	Residents, Local Service providers, Children 0-5, parents, working adults 18-65	Public event, engagement	12/09/18	
Eastwood Children's Centre	Residents, Local Service providers, Children 0-5, parents, working adults 18-65	Public event, engagement	13/09/18	
A Better Start Southend Nature Trail Westcliff	Residents, Local Service providers, Children 0-5, parents, working adults 18-65	Public event, engagement	30/08/18	14

Age Concern AGM	Residents, Local Service providers, local 3 rd sector organisations, Adults with disabilities, carers, older adults	Public event, engagement	04/09/18	60
BID workshop sessions	Residents, local businesses, service providers, staff	Members event, engagement	05/09/18	13
Southend SOUP event	Residents, Working age adults, parents	Public event, engagement	08/09/18	25
Southend Health and Wellbeing Board	Partners	Presentation and discussion	19/09/18	20
NHS, Southend CCG Governing Body	Partners	Presentation and discussion	26/09/18	18