

HATHERLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN CENTRE BUSINESS SURVEY - RESULTS

Hatherleigh has received a £2.5k funding boost from West Devon Borough Council towards promoting its 'High St'. Hatherleigh Town Council produced a survey early in 2021 to hear the views of town centre businesses on how this should be spent to maximise the benefit to local businesses.

Out of 30 surveys posted to town centre businesses, we received 11 responses
<p>Out of the 11 responses, 0 thought that Hatherleigh receives adequate recognition for what it has to offer.</p> <p>It was said that Hatherleigh is often overlooked by busier towns and that Tourism in the area seems to be dwindling.</p>
<p>When asked '<i>Do you feel businesses in Hatherleigh receive the support they need to put them on the map?</i>'. All barring one of the responses to this question did not think that they are offered the support that they need.</p> <p>It was suggested that better signage would be beneficial, and members of the community have indicated that they should be receiving more support from the council.</p> <p>The overwhelming majority have indicated that Hatherleigh would benefit from a better website, more adequate and up-to-date signage, as well as a 'business association' whereby forces can be combined.</p>
<p>When asked '<i>Are local events publicised adequately?</i>'. The response from the surveys have indicated that Hatherleigh Carnival and Festival receive the publicity they need as established annual events.</p> <p>Other local events are not publicised outside of Hatherleigh or immediate social media pages. This is something that could be addressed by an events calendar on a Website.</p>
All respondents to the business survey agree that their footfall has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.
<p>Business owners have indicated that they are anticipating more footfall when the new development in the market is complete.</p> <p>The Tuesday Market continues to be an asset to local businesses, bringing in trade.</p>
<p>All respondents, barring one stated that they would be interested in appearing on a new Website providing it is kept up to date and interesting.</p> <p>They deemed that a reasonable contribution to this would be between £5 and £15 per month to be listed.</p>

When asked ***'is there anything you would specifically like to see on a new Website?'***

The businesses indicated that it would be beneficial to have a listing of all local businesses as well as an up-to-date and interesting events calendar to promote what is going on in Hatherleigh. It was also said that the town's year-round assets should have recognition ie, moor, walks, cycling, activities etc - in addition a directory of groups/clubs (history society, gardening club, sports etc)

We asked the businesses to tell us what they thought to be the ***'Best things about Hatherleigh'***.

The overwhelming response was walks, community, scenery, people and how central we are to reach destinations such as Exeter, Dartmoor and the coast.

When asked ***'What could the Town Council do to help our businesses?'*** it was said on multiple occasions that the signage needs to be addressed as a priority. Followed by support groups, new website and an Association of local businesses (although the latter would probably have to be arranged externally?)

In addition to the responses listed above, we have some additional comments which will be bullet pointed below:

- Town Council ought to be incentivising businesses to occupy the empty shops in our High Street.
- Hatherleigh should have a USP - perhaps year-round seasonal wreaths on shop doors to encourage people in to see them.
- Car Park, Market and Square ought to have amenity signposts (supermarket, high street, public loos, walks etc) and walking times to said attractions.
- Hatherleigh Town Council should buy the car park.
- A high-quality second hand shop would be great, perhaps community run?
- Town Council should join forces with History Society to produce a town trail, outlining history and interesting facts about the town.
- Hatherleigh has a wealth of character unlike other towns and has a varied enough demographic not to be a retirement home. The market is vital, and businesses need to be encouraged to stay/grow.
- Monthly or seasonal street markets would be of huge benefit to those businesses in the high st. Interesting stalls - think Hatherleigh Festival early 2000s, Totnes Market and similar (not 10 packs of dog poo bags for £1 and a job lot of light bulbs).
- A complete re-brand of the town needs to happen. Something that helps push the businesses, the walks, the events, the new Market Development and Hatherleigh Moor. No better time to put these measures in place than now as the clock is ticking towards the new market opening. We could hit the ground running with it.
- E-charging car points in the Town Centre would be good.