

TOWN PLAN FOR TODMORDEN



ADOPTED AUGUST 2013

TODMORDEN TOWN COUNCIL

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- Todmorden Town Councillors
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- Local schools

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IF YOU WANT TO COMMENT
If you wish to comment on the contents of this Plan, your views will be welcome.
You can do so by emailing: clerk@todmordencouncil.org.uk
or writing c/o
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The Parish of Todmorden

Todmorden is situated in West Yorkshire, close to the Lancashire border. It nestles deep in Calderdale, at the convergence of three steep valleys and is surrounded by beautiful Pennine moorland.

The name Todmorden first appears in 1641 and is believed to mean 'Valley of the Marsh Fox.' The Domesday Book (1086) first records the town, when most people lived in scattered farms or isolated hilltop agricultural settlements.

Between 1800–1845, at the time of the Industrial Revolution, the town changed. Roads and railways were built and the cotton industry grew, mainly developed by the local Fielden family. Evidence of the Fielden's legacy lives on, in the magnificent Town Hall, Unitarian Church and Dobroyd Castle. The town also boasts two Nobel Prize winners, John Cockcroft (1951 for Physics) and Geoffrey Wilkinson (1973 for Chemistry).

Todmorden is a bustling market town, blessed with stunning scenery, magnificent architecture and a diverse range of small, independent shops. Its location deep in the Upper Calder Valley and proximity to Lancashire makes it unique. It is a proud and independent place with a strong community spirit and vibrant arts/social scene.

In recent years Todmorden has become known for its links with sustainability and the growth of locally produced food. Vegetables are grown on street corners, the local schools are involved in growing their own produce and projects are underway for the protection of wildlife. The local market offers a diverse range of quality locally produced food.

The town provides an ideal location for outdoor recreation such as walking, mountain biking, bird watching and horse riding. Boating is also on offer on the Rochdale Canal, which follows a glorious route through some of the most rugged and beautiful scenery in the country.

Todmorden has a population of approximately 14,000, with many people having lived here all their lives. As well as the local English population there are strong Polish and Asian communities within the town. The different communities integrate well with each other creating a strong community spirit.

Within the parish there are 6 primary schools and one high school for the age group 11 – 18. There are strong links between the local schools and the Todmorden community.

Todmorden has excellent access to nearby towns and cities, with Manchester, Bradford and Leeds all on direct train routes.

Introduction to the Town Plan

At the start of 2011 Todmorden Town Council embarked on the production of a Town Plan. It wanted to identify the main issues that concern the people of Todmorden and to set out a vision on how the town should develop and reach its full potential.

A steering group was set up to oversee the Town Plan, with the assistance of a town plan coordinator. In December 2011 a major consultation was held with the people of Todmorden. A questionnaire was placed in the Todmorden News, with ballot boxes left in community buildings around the town for people to give their views. A consultation day was held on a market stall and the public could also comment on-line.

School children were consulted in a separate questionnaire as well as local businesses and voluntary groups.

The consultation resulted in a 5% response rate by residents, 12% of school children aged between 7 and 17, 25% of businesses contacted and 29% of voluntary groups. In addition, views had been obtained from earlier consultations, including a 'What's bugging you' campaign carried out by Calderdale Council's Safer and Stronger Communities and the Local Plan Core Strategy undertaken by Calderdale Council's Spatial Planning team in 2010/11.

Respondents gave a wide range of comments on what they thought about the town. The overwhelming view was that people loved living in Todmorden and appreciated its individuality and community spirit. (see Figure 1 below).

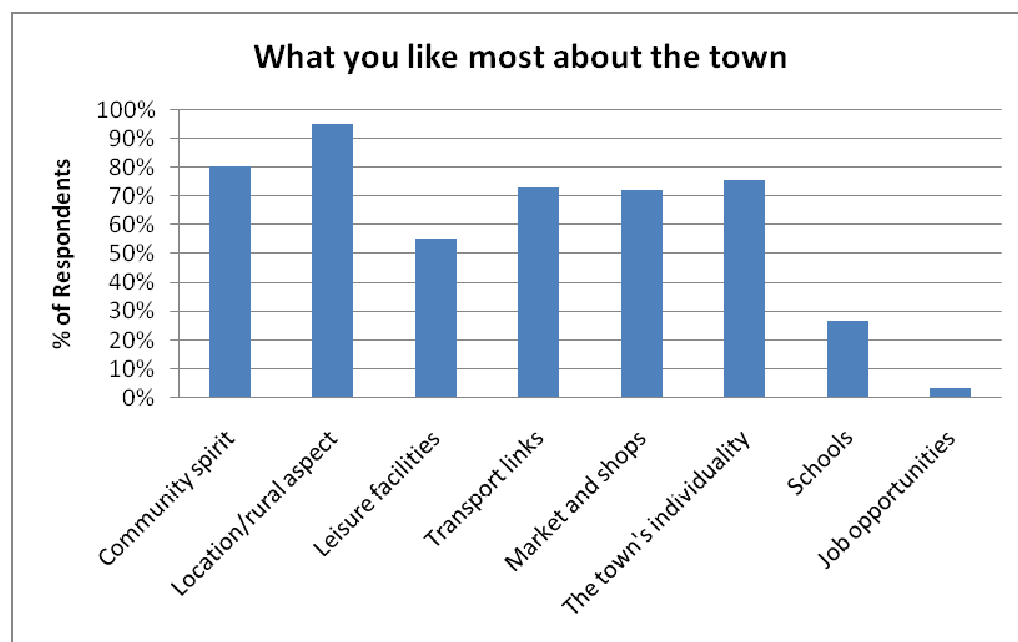


Figure 1: What you like most about the town

Respondents were proud of Todmorden but felt that it had not reached its full potential. They were concerned about derelict sites and the effect these had on the 'look' of the town. They thought that Bramsche Square would greatly benefit from redevelopment and requested more variety of shops, and greater support and encouragement of businesses in the town. There was strong feeling that more could be done to encourage tourism, and that Todmorden needed greater publicity. Its numerous assets such as the market, canal, park and beautiful location should be promoted as well as the outdoor amenities, access to towns and cities, interesting shops and involvement in sustainability issues. There were strong views for and against new supermarkets in the town and parking costs were of major concern to respondents. More details of the findings are given within this report.

Todmorden Town Council has used the responses as a basis to draw up the Town Plan. An analysis of comments is provided in Appendix 1.

The Plan gives the Town Council clear guidance on how it should prioritise its work in the town. It identifies what residents like or dislike about Todmorden and what needs to be done to enable the town to reach its full potential. The Town Plan will provide supportive evidence of need in future funding bids and planning appeals. It also aims to support the work being done by Calderdale Council, the Local Authority.

Respondents views are given in more detail below under the headings Planning and Housing; Business, Economy and Shops; Community; Leisure; Tourism; Environment; Transport; and the Role of the Town Council.

Planning and Housing

The overwhelming concern of the people of Todmorden was the need to develop the derelict sites around the town, in particular the site on Halifax Road adjacent to the health centre, the Abraham Ormerod/Olympia site and the Rose Street site. Respondents thought that the sites gave a poor impression of Todmorden and needed urgent attention. As Todmorden is located in a valley surrounded by steep hills, development space is at a premium. It is therefore important to ensure that the existing flat and centrally located sites are used appropriately.

Views varied as to what should be done with the sites. The proposed supermarket developments at both the Halifax Road and Abraham Ormerod sites gave rise to strong views, both for and against the proposals, although those against were more prevalent (see Figure 2 below).

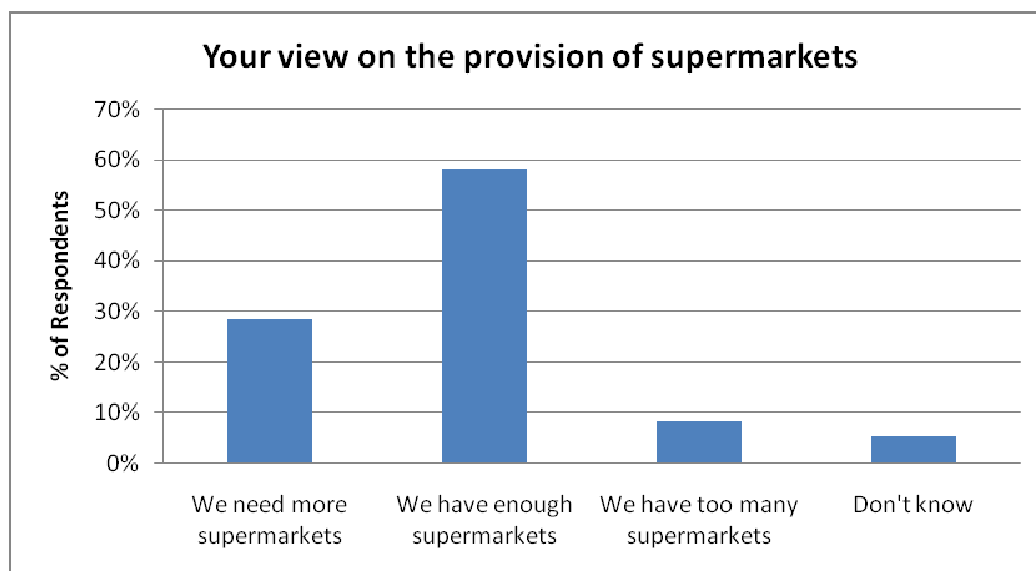


Figure 2: Your view of the provision of supermarkets

There is great concern that should a supermarket development take place on the Halifax Road site this will have a detrimental impact on the town centre and the survival of smaller independent shops and the market. Respondents felt that tourism and business development should be promoted, and the Halifax Road site is seen as an ideal location for the development of a hotel/park complex with small business units and independent shops. At the time of writing the plot of land has been sold to a private buyer, the previous planning applications for a supermarket development on the site having been refused at appeal.

Asda has received planning permission for the development of a supermarket on the Abraham Ormerod site. There is some support for this development due to its location close to the bus station in the centre of town.

Those who approved of the supermarket proposal felt that the development would bring much needed work to the town and competition to the supermarkets already located in Todmorden.

Respondents were keen to see progress on the Rose Street site and improvements to Bramsche Square. Following detailed discussions and reports, the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Board are currently obtaining tenders for its development with the proposal for small retail outlets on the ground floor, business units above and an attractive pedestrianised area with seating, flowers and space for outdoor entertainment. These proposals are in line with respondent suggestions for the site, who feel that Bramsche Square, which is currently used as a parking space, forms the heart of the town centre and needs to be developed in this way. Shops on the Halifax Road side of the square, which currently show back walls in Bramsche Square, could also be opened up to show shop fronts. In the short term a garden has been established at Rose Street with a picnic area and wildflower meadow.

Residents were concerned about the initial attractiveness of the town, particularly on entry via Halifax Road. Suggestions were made for signage on entry promoting the town, improved and more attractive shop fronts, cleaner streets and more greenery to encourage people to stop and investigate the amenities in Todmorden.

There was strong feeling that the canal area should be developed further and promoted as a tourist attraction. The Rochdale Canal has become a major tourist facility, with substantial numbers of canal boats moving in both directions every day, but few canal boats stopping in Todmorden. Impressive work has already been carried out in two locations: at Fielden Wharf with the development of an attractive seating and sculptured area, with sanitary station for canal boats, and between Lever Street and Key Syke Lane, where a section of the towpath has been re-surfaced and opened up, providing improved access between the town and the canal. Raised plant beds and interpretation boards have also been introduced. This work has been jointly funded by Todmorden Pride, Todmorden Town Council, Upper Calder Valley Renaissance (UCVR), Calderdale Council and Yorkshire Forward. British Waterways Board (the new Canal and River Trust from July 2012) and Pennine Prospects propose to install further interpretation boards along the canal between Todmorden and Sowerby Bridge, using LEADER money from the EU.

In line with respondents' views, it is essential that access to the canal is opened up further and no development from library lock to Kilnhurst Bridge is permitted, unless it provides improved visual access between the canal towpath and the town. Improved signage and interpretation boards in several places along the towpath are important as well as further seating areas, litter and dog bins, cleaning up of the towpath, moorings for canal boats, artwork, flowers and vegetables and space for anglers and cyclists.

Parking is a major area of concern, cost of parking deterring shoppers and visitors to Todmorden. Negotiations need to continue with Calderdale Council for improvements, with perhaps the introduction of 1 hour free or disc parking to encourage shoppers into the town.

Some respondents were keen to see better use being made of the Town Hall. The scaffolding around the Town Hall had caused much comment, but this issue has now been resolved. It was felt that the Town Hall could be used more frequently for events and weddings and that part of the Town Hall could be turned into a museum/ heritage centre.

It is important to recognise the excellent work already being done on regeneration by voluntary groups such as Todmorden Pride, Incredible Edible Todmorden (IET) and Todmorden in Bloom. Todmorden Pride and Incredible Edible for example have worked tirelessly on the regeneration of the town, carrying out landscaping improvements, obtaining Market Town Initiative funding, and campaigning vigorously for physical improvements to the town. The Town Council will continue to work with, support and promote these groups and work in partnership with them on the issues raised in this report.

Neighbourhood Plans, introduced under the Localism Bill in 2011 are a new way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work. If a community develop a Neighbourhood Plan and this is adopted as an official planning document, communities will have more say over where new homes, shops and offices are built, on what new buildings should look like and can apply for planning permission for the new buildings via Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders.

On the issue of housing development, respondents were generally concerned about proposals to build more housing. Although a limited increase in housing is necessary to allow for a modest population growth through inward migration, the ageing population and the growth of smaller households, respondents were concerned about the impact this would have on the infrastructure and the 'feel' of the small market town.

It was generally felt that any further housing development should primarily be on in-fill and brownfield sites. Limited sympathetic development should only be allowed on greenfield sites when brownfield sites were not available or unsuitable. Housing development should, wherever possible, be avoided on areas zoned for employment use.

Better use should be made of empty buildings and houses in the town. The refurbishment of the terraced housing in Shade in the 1970's was very successful in improving the look of the area. Initiatives for similar improvements to other areas of Victorian terraces should be supported.

Conversion of mills into flats should be encouraged. The mills, which nowadays are no longer suitable for industry, if converted to other use serve as a reminder of the industrial origins of the town.

A particular need was identified for flats and single storey accommodation for older people, as many homes in Todmorden consist of two or three storeys with very steep and narrow internal stairs. A variety of housing types was requested, both to buy and to rent to meet the needs of the ageing population. The development of accommodation for older people would be particularly beneficial in the town centre and the centres of Walsden and Cornholme, providing easy access to shops and local services.

There was also a request for more affordable housing for young people, both to buy and to rent, to support local people who are currently priced out of the market. Other housing types requested included 4/5 bed properties for larger families, more executive housing with gardens to encourage professional people into the town, and more housing for the disabled and those with special needs to support integration into the community.

Respondents commented on the successful developments already done, in particular at Harley Bank, and suggested that similar redevelopments should be replicated elsewhere.

Some respondents commented on their lack of knowledge about housing advice available. Although advice is offered by the Citizens Advice Bureau in Todmorden and staff at Pennine Housing's Halifax office, respondents were not always aware of the advice they could get and requested more promotion of these services.

Business, Economy and Shops

Respondents were very concerned about the lack of job opportunities in the town, particularly for young people, and requested that the Town Council look at ways to improve the situation. Many of the businesses questioned were happy to offer mentoring, work experience and apprenticeships to local people and this is an area which needs to be investigated further.

As the largest town in the Upper Calder Valley, Todmorden should aim to develop into the local retail and service hub of the valley. This would require a limited population growth in order to sustain and expand the retail and service offer and to encourage the development of small enterprises. Lack of space, the distance to motorways and the need to preserve a beautiful landscape means that large scale manufacturing industry is no longer a development option. The town should aim to attract and promote the development of small and micro enterprises. Obvious sectors are small scale food production, art and the creative industries and IT, which build on development already taking place in the town. In addition, small and micro businesses in the tourist industry are another sector suitable for Todmorden.

At the moment the lack of modern, affordable business premises is an obstacle to development of small businesses relocating from the large conurbations of Greater Manchester and Bradford/Leeds. Todmorden needs a small business incubation centre as well as other managed workspace, providing office, workshop and shared facilities. The development of high speed broadband is essential to this development.

Compared to many other small towns, Todmorden has maintained a diverse range of retail outlets. There are few empty shops. Given the current economic climate, businesses in the consultation were surprisingly positive and optimistic about their future. Many were considering further expansion and diversification, putting much of their success down to the support and friendly nature of the towns' residents.

The core of the retail sector in Todmorden is the 200 year old market and market hall, which provides a wide range of shopping opportunities for local people and visitors. Recent developments in the production of local food have been welcomed. These rival successful farmers markets in other parts of the country.

The retail offer in Todmorden needs to be expanded further. The Town Plan consultation has revealed a demand for a variety of outlets; clothing, shoes and speciality local foods in particular. There have also been requests for shops selling electrical goods, a petrol station, a music and art shop, and shops selling speciality equipment such as a walking shop. Concern has been raised about the number of charity shops and hairdressers in the town. Although respondents wished to see greater job opportunities, supermarkets were not seen as the way forward, due to the negative impact they would have on the success of local retail businesses already operating in the town. People also commented on the need for

a good quality restaurant in the town centre which would be open in the evening, thus encouraging greater activity in the town at this time of day.

The market hall is seen by most as the central hub of the town. 72% of respondents stated that they shopped at the market on a weekly basis and found the market to be 'great! – (having) friendly stall holders, good service and incredible wide choice' (see Figure 3 below).

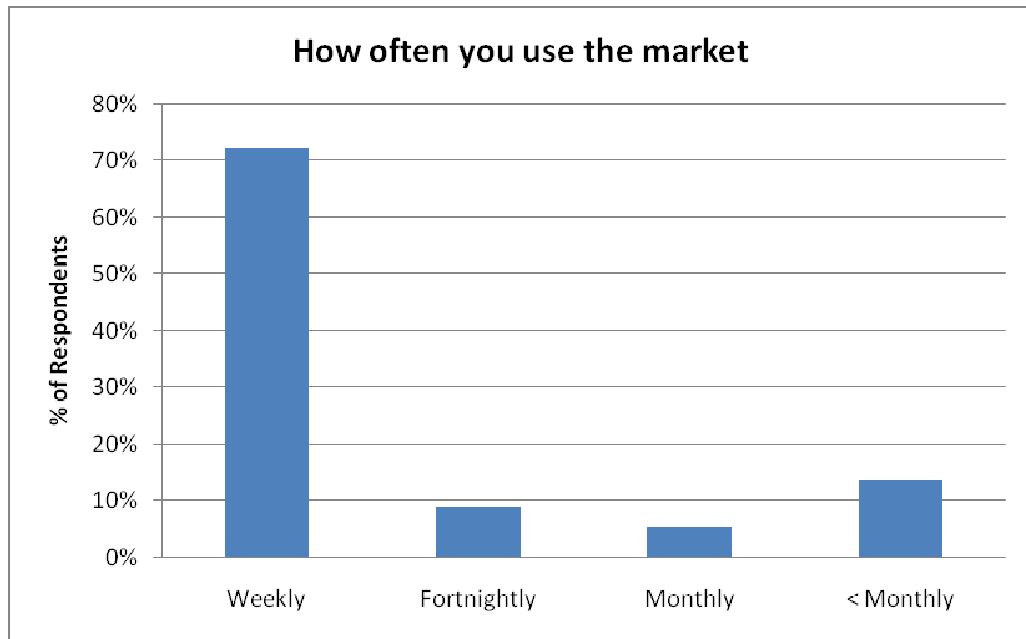


Figure 3: How often you use the market

The market hall is however in need of major refurbishment to ensure its continuation in years to come as a major food hub of the town. It needs to offer more services to customers, with greater variety of provision, longer opening hours to suit working residents, more seating areas and a 'food court' facility, where people can sit and enjoy the locally produced food purchased at the market stalls. Some suggested more events in the outdoor market such as farmers markets or local produce days. The Town Council would welcome any viable initiative to transfer the market into either community or private ownership, to enable substantial refurbishment of the market hall and its continued success.

Many businesses thought that their chances of success could be increased by lower rents and rates and an improved town website, where they could advertise their goods and services, as well as a publicity leaflet about what is on offer in the town. Cost of parking was also suggested by businesses as a deterrent to their success.

The layout of shop fronts, particularly on Halifax Road, was an area of concern, with intrusive signs affecting the attractiveness of the entrance to Todmorden.

Community

80% of respondents felt that there was good community spirit in the town with a lot of support from family, friends and neighbours. Many made comments such as 'Great local groups and communities proactive in organising events and entertainments', 'There are so many friendly people here, especially in mother and baby groups, weight loss groups etc. and they all make you feel welcome', ' There are many things for people to join and make new friends. Most people know one another so will offer help when needed. It's a friendly place.'

Residents loved the great variety of clubs and activities on offer and felt that there was a good choice in music and arts groups, outdoor and sports clubs, gardening and environmental organisations and activities for different age groups.

There was much concern about the demise of the Acorn Centre and the loss of the many community activities offered by this organisation. There were some requests for a new community centre. In light of these comments, community services in all neighbourhoods need to be reviewed and alternative sites offered for the activities lost. Respondents enjoyed the activities offered at town centre locations such as the Hippodrome, library, Central Methodist and Unitarian churches, Community College and the Town Hall. They felt, however, that better use could be made of some of these facilities.

There was concern for the lack of activities available to young people. There was a feeling that teenagers tended to hang about with little to do and that more should be on offer for this age group. It was suggested that youth facilities should be reviewed with input from the young people themselves and that work should be done on raising the aspirations of young people in the town.

Residents expressed concern about the state of the High School and the need for its urgent redevelopment. The Town Council supports improved community education in Todmorden generally and acknowledges views on the High School, seeking the refurbishment of the High School as a high priority.

Older people welcomed the minibus service provided by Community Transport, which picked them up from home and took them to clubs in the town centre. There is a need to replace the Acorn Centre minibus, lost when the centre closed down, with another service to offer transport to all age groups.

Some respondents commented that they did not always know what was going on in the community. It was suggested that a directory of leisure and community activities be developed, to be made available in the library and on- line.

Some comments were made about the timing of clubs and courses. For those who work and commute, many courses began too early and were therefore unavailable to them.

The Town Council is concerned that, in carrying out the Town Plan consultation, certain communities have been underrepresented. It therefore intends to continue to work with different communities to determine needs, promote greater partnerships between young and old and review provision for special needs groups and the disabled.

50% of respondents stated that they volunteer in the community, thus supporting the view that there is good community spirit in the town. Some respondents commented that they would like to volunteer but did not know what was on offer or how to go about it.

It was felt by many residents that there should be more organised outdoor activities for local people. Suggestions were made for weekly walks in the countryside to promote healthy living, the development of a cycling club, and the possibility of developing a charitable walk or bike ride each year to raise money for local charities.

Leisure

In the community consultation, 65% of respondents stated that they were satisfied with the leisure facilities in Todmorden. Respondents commented on the 'brilliant and free park', the canal, walking opportunities, the leisure centre and the many activities available to residents in the town.

Centre Vale Park was seen as an important facility within Todmorden, both for local people and visitors. Calderdale Council and the group 'Friends of Centre Vale Park' do an excellent job of maintaining the park and improvements are already underway with the planned development of a new bowling pavilion, and a much larger BMX/skate park.

Requests were made for improved athletics facilities and a running track, an assault course, a sandpit for children, an all-weather football, rugby and hockey pitch as well as more trees and better use of the bandstand. There was also a request for the maintenance of memorial plaques in the park. In the children's survey, primary age children were sometimes deterred from using the playgrounds because of the presence of teenagers hanging about on the play equipment. They requested separate areas for younger and older children as well as a bigger playground and better play equipment. Teenage boys particularly requested better all year pitches for football and other sports.

Many children requested more play areas nearer to their homes, with better maintained playgrounds. The Town Council has an ongoing programme of reviewing the provision of playgrounds and play areas throughout the town and outlying areas.

There were mixed feelings about facilities at the leisure centre. Although people welcomed this amenity, some felt that the building needed updating. A bigger and better equipped gym was requested as well as a larger dance studio and a squash court. Residents would welcome a greater variety of classes, such as dance and yoga. Cost was an issue with 50% of respondents stating that cost deterred them from taking part in activities; gym membership was considered expensive as well as some sports, teenagers commenting that the cost of hiring the sports hall for football was a deterrent.

It was felt that improvements could be made to the swimming pool; some thought it too small and crowded, that it needed longer opening hours, and could offer a greater variety of classes such as ladies' swims. A crèche was also requested in evenings and weekends for working parents.

Requests were made for additional leisure facilities in the town, including a bowling alley, climbing wall, cinema, as well as greater promotion of outdoor activities. Younger people asked for more variety of clubs including rock climbing, rugby, mountain biking, art and cookery clubs.

Todmorden was seen as a vibrant and artistic place to live. Residents felt that it already had a thriving arts scene, but that this could be developed further with promotion of music, theatre, dance and artwork, particularly amongst the younger age group. A music venue would also be welcomed.

Outdoor recreation opportunities were considered excellent. Again, further promotion and development of activities would be welcomed, for both visitors and local people. Younger people could be encouraged to join local youth clubs and outdoor businesses which promoted outdoor recreation, offering mountain biking, canoeing, rock climbing, hiking and camping. A climbing wall and dry ski slope were also suggested.

There was a request for more entertainment for young children in the form of indoor play areas and music groups for toddlers.

Tourism

Todmorden has a great deal to offer visitors in terms of scenery, opportunities for outdoor pursuits, shops and a variety of events. The town is full of enthusiastic residents keen to help Todmorden reach its full potential. It has already been successfully promoted by the voluntary organisation Incredible Edible Todmorden (IET). They have put Todmorden on the map nationally and internationally with their promotion of sustainability issues; their projects include growing vegetables on street corners, bee and 'making meadows' campaigns and the development of a fish farm at the High School. They have recently opened a new 'Green Route.' This leads visitors along the canal towpath, through the town to the market, thus promoting Todmorden's assets and encouraging visitors to enjoy its many amenities.

Currently visitors tend to come for the day to shop and walk in and around the town. Todmorden is ideally suited to attract a wider range of visitors from further afield. This requires the development of small businesses providing riding, walking and canal holidays, bike hire, angling, bird-watching, and shops selling activity holiday equipment. It also requires much improved marketing of Todmorden and these facilities. Businesses wanting to develop activity holiday products should be supported through the planning process.

Respondents to the consultation considered tourism to be of major importance to the town's success. They loved the events such as the agricultural show and Todstock and would welcome more events of this kind. Suggestions included a food and sustainability event, a children's festival, a New Year festival with fireworks, music, and a temporary ice rink, a local charities day and an amateur dramatics day.

The canal is a prime area for development as a tourist attraction. This has already begun with the improvements to Fielden Wharf area, but there is still much to be done to improve it. A key element of this is improved signage, making the towpath more attractive and inviting, and the development of moorings to encourage boats to stop and their inhabitants to venture into the town. This already happens at Hebden Bridge and there is no reason why similar opportunities could not be exploited here.

There is a need for overnight accommodation both in bed and breakfast and in hotels. At the moment the town has less than 40 hotel beds and only a handful of bed and breakfast beds. Although the accommodation in the town is currently underused, this is due to its lack of development as a tourist town. The promotion of Todmorden as a tourist destination goes hand in hand with the need for more and improved accommodation, including a campsite, more bed and breakfast accommodation and a small hotel.

Some respondents felt that the town needed to be cleaner and made more attractive to encourage visitors, with clean-up of the streets, more seating areas and flower borders, more picnic areas and better signage around the town and to scenic areas.

Environment

Respondents are very proud of the environment in which they live; the beautiful location and historic buildings, and are determined to protect the environment as much as possible. Excellent work on environmental issues has been done in recent years by community groups such as Todmorden Moor Restoration Trust, IET, Todmorden Pride, Todmorden Conservation Trust and Todmorden in Bloom. As well as its work already identified on community vegetable growing and the protection of wildlife, IET works with local schools in the education of children in environmental issues. The High School offers a Diploma in Environmental Studies to its students. Sustainability is seen as a major factor in the development of the town and the Town Council welcomes the promotion of schemes such as allotments, garden sharing and new food growing businesses.

Todmorden Moor Restoration Trust continue to campaign on the issues of wind farms and the restoration of Common Land, damaged by industry and illegal tipping. Many respondents spoke against the proposal to build wind farms on the moors above Todmorden, concerned about the effect they would have on the quiet enjoyment and outlook of the moors, as well as the water supply and suitability of the ground.

Residents in Eastwood have particular concerns regarding the location of the household refuse plant and the implications this has on resident's lives with noise, traffic, smells and vermin. They are also concerned about speeding traffic through a residential area and the lack of a pavement and bus shelter on Halifax Road. It is hoped that refurbishments to the re-cycling site will address many of these concerns.

Flooding has been of concern to residents, particularly since severe flooding in 2000. The Environment Agency have in recent years carried out a strategic flood risk assessment, resulting in the building of a 500 metre flood wall along Rochdale Road, as well as flood defence work in the park.

On a general note, requests were made for more litter and dog bins, more seating and picnic areas, a greater abundance of flowers in the town centre and improved signage about the town.

Travel

Respondents were overwhelmingly pleased with the public transport facilities serving Todmorden, 72% stating that they were satisfied with the bus and train service and the easy access to neighbouring towns and cities. Residents and the Town Council are delighted with the proposed reinstatement of the Burnley Curve. With regular trains from Blackpool and Preston to Manchester stopping in Todmorden town centre, the next step is the re-opening of the stations in Cornholme/Portsmouth. This will assist with the development of greater employment opportunities in the Cornholme valley. In line with the development of Burnley Curve, the additional parking spaces proposed at Todmorden railway station are greatly welcomed.

Regarding the train service, residents are still concerned about lack of access for the disabled and those with pushchairs to the far platform of Todmorden station. Other issues raised included the need for improved stock and a more frequent service with more trains stopping at Walsden.

Respondents were in general happy with the bus service, although the provision of services on some routes could be increased, in particular evening and Sunday services to Cornholme/Portsmouth and Walsden. There were requests for a bus stop at the medical centre, for the bus station to be cleaned up and to indicate the time on display boards, and for a review of services, particularly to outlying areas.

Although the road system in and around Todmorden is not ideal, it is recognised that little can be done with the layout due to the location of the town within a steep valley. There was some concern about the maintenance of the roads and pavements, on rural lanes as well as in the town centre. It was requested that any road works are carried out quickly, as it is often the case that maintenance works appear to take a very long time to get done. A pedestrian crossing was requested outside the health centre and also in Cornholme. Interest was shown in the car share scheme in Todmorden but many people were unaware about how it operated.

Parking in the town continues to be an issue, with most people requesting free or disc parking to encourage people to shop in the town centre.

Cycling was popular in the town, but requests were made for more cycle paths to ensure the safety of cyclists and to encourage more cycling by school children. The A646 road was seen as dangerous due to speeding traffic. Some respondents had safety concerns about cyclists sometimes using pavements. Cycling on the towpath also raised concerns, with suggestions that bells are used in areas which are busy with pedestrians.

Role of the Town Council

Regarding the role of the Town Council, some respondents felt that they did not have enough information about the work that the Town Council and its Members carried out. There were requests for greater promotion of the Town Council's work, more publicity of council meetings and greater interaction and accessibility between residents of the town and its Council Members.

Although the Town Council already work and support voluntary groups in the town, there was a call for more involvement and support at a time of economic difficulty.

Many respondents are concerned that Todmorden is often overlooked by Calderdale Council, due to its location on the Lancashire/Yorkshire border. There was a call for more campaigning by Todmorden Town Council to ensure that important issues such as survival and investment in the market and library are made a priority, as well as campaigning for cheaper or free parking and maintenance of services to the town.

Respondents felt that the Town Council should also take on a campaigning role with organisations such as Metro and Network Rail, in the fight for improved services.

The Way Ahead

The production of the Town Plan has provided the town with a vision for the future, based on the views of the people of Todmorden. The hard work now begins in following through the issues raised. The Town Council is not able to and has no wish to carry out the proposed work alone; success of the Plan will require the involvement of the whole community.

The Town Council plans to work more closely with the many organisations that already work tirelessly for the good of the town. It proposes to continue with its community based events, such as 'Community Mingles', bringing together a wide range of organisations and individuals to assess, plan and deliver the actions in the plan.

The Town Council acknowledges that it also has a campaigning role, and it will continue to fight for the continuation and improvement of services in Todmorden.

Finally, the Town Council will continue to supply seating and signage in the town where required, to encourage tourism and to allow Todmorden's residents to sit and enjoy its wonderful location.

It is clear that funding will be required to successfully carry out many of the projects, and it is hoped that by working together with a clear vision, Todmorden will obtain greater access to regional, national and international funds available.

Calls for Action

Issues identified from responses to the **Planning and Housing** section of the survey

Review of derelict sites	<p>List sites and determine plan of action for each.</p> <p>Short term landscaping</p> <p>Long term - Campaign for appropriate development uses for the benefit of the town.</p> <p>Bring in regeneration developers to discuss potential development of sites.</p> <p>Install signage promoting the town.</p> <p>Clean up entry points.</p> <p>Work with shop owners towards more attractive shop frontages.</p>	<p>To regenerate derelict areas with appropriate developments to support the growth of the town and increase its attractiveness</p> <p>To make entry to town more appealing encouraging more visitors to the town</p>	<p>CMBC (Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council) with relevant stakeholders and partners</p>
Continuous development of the canal area	<p>Clean up; more signage and access links to town; more seating, litter and dog bins; flower and vegetable beds; information boards; improved lighting and security; improve surface of towpath; provide moorings for boats; negotiate with boat companies for stops at Todmorden</p>	<p>To encourage greater use of canal area by walkers, cyclists, anglers, and boaters.</p> <p>To improve visual links between town and canal area.</p> <p>To encourage more visitors to canal.</p>	<p>CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners</p>
Cost of parking	<p>Campaign for improved parking – possible disc or free 1 hour parking</p>	<p>To encourage shoppers to town centre</p>	<p>TTC (Todmorden Town Council) CMBC</p>
Lack of suitable housing for young/old	<p>Work with CMBC on inclusion of housing for those with need on planning applications</p>	<p>To provide appropriate housing for local people in the town</p>	<p>CMDC Calderdale Local Plan and Core Strategy for Todmorden</p>

Issues identified from responses to the **Business, economy and shops** section of the survey

Promotion of businesses	Seek improvements to Todmorden business website; produce leaflet promoting Todmorden businesses; campaign for reduced rent/rates to support businesses Promotion of town as good place for recreation/ food/ art/ business and greater variety of shops To work towards offering a wider range of services in the town	To promote and encourage new business opportunities in Todmorden	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners – in particular -local businesses, Todmorden Business Assoc Tourist Information Centre (TIC)
Continuation of market as central hub of town	Support realistic initiatives for asset transfer of market; campaign for longer opening hours, a food court, events at outdoor market, seating areas, promotion of empty stalls	To ensure market remains hub of town	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners
Unattractive shop frontages	Improved shop fronts and window displays, reduction of intrusive signs	To increase attractiveness of Todmorden	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners

Issues identified from responses to the **Community** section of the survey

Playground and park facilities in Todmorden	To continue to support, improve and maintain playground and park facilities in Todmorden centre and outlying areas	To offer opportunities for play and recreation to population of Todmorden	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners – in particular Friends of Centre Vale Park
Greater outdoor recreation opportunities	To promote Todmorden as a sporting and leisure venue and to improve recreation opportunities for residents and visitors	To offer a wider range of outdoor opportunities to local community and visitors	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners
Community Transport facilities	To influence continual review of community transport facilities in town	To offer transport to those who are vulnerable or isolated	TTC First Northern Rail Metro
School Facilities	To support local community education	To improve facilities and	CMBC

In Todmorden	in Todmorden	opportunities for young people in Todmorden	Governors MP
Greater community cohesion	Maintain current level of involvement and encourage understanding of minority groups	Todmorden has vibrant community spirit when groups hold events to encourage cohesion	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners Representatives of minority groups

Issues identified from responses to the **Leisure** section of the survey

Centre Vale Park	Work with Friends of Centre Vale Park on suggested proposals	To improve park amenities	TTC CMBC Friends of Centre Vale Park
Promotion of the arts	To continue to promote and develop music, theatre, dance and artwork; consider venue for concerts; involve young people	To offer greater variety of opportunity to residents; to encourage tourism	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners TTC Voluntary groups associated with music and theatre
Leisure amenities	Consider requests to look at feasibility of other leisure recreational facilities in town centre	To offer greater variety of provision to residents; to encourage tourism	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners
Improvements to parks and playgrounds	Continue to review opportunities for play and recreation in parks and playgrounds	To offer more opportunities for play to young people	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners

Issues identified from responses to the **Tourism** section of the survey

Improvements to publicity of Todmorden	Continue to look at ways to promote Todmorden throughout West Yorkshire/ Lancashire	To promote town's amenities	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners
Encouragement of activity holidays and long weekends	Continue to look at ways to develop Todmorden as a tourist attraction	To encourage more visitors to town	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners – in particular TIC
Lack of tourist accommodation	Review of accommodation available; Support initiatives to establish a variety of visitor accommodation Continue to work with partners and stakeholders to review access to affordable accommodation	To encourage visitors to town	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners – in particular TIC
More events/ festivals	Organise more events to promote Todmorden eg. food and sustainability; children's festival; New Year festival; charities day; sponsored bike ride/walk; amateur dramatics festival	To encourage visitors to town and offer more events for local residents To promote Todmorden as place of leisure, culture, arts and sports	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners – in particular TIC
Development of canal area and links with town	Improvements to canal area; signage, seating, clean-ups, boats stopping, improved visual links between canal and town Support for innovative projects looking to improve the canal area	To increase enjoyment of canal area for residents and visitors	TTC CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners – in particular TIC
Best use of Town Hall	Development as heritage centre; more events – conferences, weddings	To offer more services to local people and visitors	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners

Issues identified from responses to the **Environment** section of the survey

Cleaner streets	Clean up days; more litter and dog bins; improved enforcement	To improve attractiveness of town		CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners
Proposed location of wind farms	Continue to campaign against wind farms	To maintain the moorland areas around Todmorden for quiet enjoyment of residents		CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners – in particular Todmorden Moor Restoration Trust
Make town more attractive and inviting	More seating, picnic areas, flowers, and signage	To encourage residents and visitors to sit and enjoy town environment	Short term	TTC CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners

Issues identified from responses to the **Travel** section of the survey

Trains	<p>Welcome reinstatement of Burnley Curve.</p> <p>Continue to support greater access to far platform at Todmorden station</p> <p>Campaign for improved stock, more frequent services, more frequent stopping at Walsden; reinstatement of station at Portsmouth/ Cornholme</p>	<p>To enable quicker and easier access to other towns and cities</p> <p>To improve train service to users</p>		TCC Network Rail
Bus service	Support residents who wish to campaign for more bus stops/shelters; bus station display boards indicating time; more seating at bus station; more frequent bus service (esp. on Sundays and evenings); campaign for linking of bus and train tickets	To improve bus service to users	Medium term	TTC CMBC Metro
Parking	Support residents who wish to campaign for better parking facilities	To increase footfall in town centre		TTC CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners

Cycling	Support residents who wish to campaign for improvements to cycling routes	To improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians	CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners
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Issues identified from responses to the **Role of the Town Council** section of the survey

Greater promotion of Town Council work	Continue to promote publicity of Town Council work	Greater understanding of work of Town Council by local residents	TTC
Lack of seats and signage	Provide funds for seating and signage around town	To provide greater enjoyment of town by residents and visitors	TTC
Provision of services by CMBC	Continue to press for maintenance and improvements to services eg market, library	Sustaining of services on offer to residents	TTC CMBC with relevant stakeholders and partners

Appendix 1 – Evaluation of comments from consultations

Appendix 1 provides an overview of the comments made by respondents. It attempts to give a flavour of what respondents think about living in Todmorden.

The town of Todmorden

96% of respondents stated that they loved living in Todmorden. They loved its 'beautiful location', 'proximity to other towns and cities' and its 'unique character.'

'It has a vibrant well used market and lovely scenery as well as being on a great train line between Leeds and Manchester. Having the river and canal is great for wildlife, walks and cycling and there are lots of independent shops which make the town worth visiting'

Respondents loved the town's strong 'community spirit that welcomes everyone.' and the fact that 'most people know one another so will offer help when needed - It's a friendly place.'

'I've lived in Todmorden for seven years and don't think I could feel at home anywhere else - it is a magical place full of independently-minded people, it's beautiful'

'It is a complete and self contained community, both geographically and socially, and it is small enough to engender a sense of belonging'

Respondents felt that although Todmorden needs to promote its assets, it is important that the town maintains its special brand of uniqueness and individuality.

'Todmorden has a village feel which we should try to keep as it is part of its charm'

'You get a real sense that Todmorden doesn't want to be part of any other place - it seems to stand alone, knowing it's a bit odd, yet really proud and defiant. There's something for everyone here, it can't be put in a box and easily labelled as one 'type' of place'

Planning

Respondents were most concerned about the derelict sites in the town.

'Todmorden has amazing buildings and countryside but sadly the residents are becoming disillusioned by the dereliction and neglect round the centre of an otherwise attractive market town.'

'Develop the derelict buildings in the town. They make the town look messy and dirty and won't attract external investment or families to move here'

Many commented on the need to improve the town centre. 'We need a central area where people can shop/have coffee or a meal/stroll around canal or river. All our facilities are fragmented.'

'Make Bramsche square into a pedestrian, traffic free town square where people can sit and the town has an area for events'

Although residents were keen to see derelict sites being used, there was mixed feeling about the proposed demolition of the Abraham Ormerod Centre.

'Take care not to pull down attractive individual buildings. The town's character is diminished by tearing down the older buildings such as Abraham Ormerod'

Respondents offered a variety of views on housing issues. 'Affordable housing to buy to get people on property ladder' was requested, as well as "more town centre housing for older people.'

'We need good quality rent /buy accommodation for young working people who might commute to Manchester or Leeds'

'Need housing for older people - we have an ageing population and terraced houses have access issues'

Some thought that there was a gap in provision of 'housing for people with special needs, with community integration' and that 'all new housing should be built with access for disabled and doors wide enough for wheelchairs.'

Some respondents thought that there was a lack of 'family housing with gardens' and that the town needed 'more upmarket housing - I think this would attract more people to the town which would help the local economy.'

Although a need was identified for a limited amount of new housing, respondents thought that housing should only be developed with 'careful consideration to the infrastructure of a small town.'

'Too much general housing will spoil the feel of the town and put a strain on infrastructure'

Respondents did not want development on greenfield sites and felt that 'there are plenty of empty houses around to be redeveloped.'

'I think we need to find a way of using what housing we already have in a more adventurous way...we have quite a large amount of housing that is still not occupied'

In general, people thought it important for any new developments to 'blend in' with the current housing. They were impressed by 'the Harley Bank development' which 'shows what can be done with existing housing' and thought that some of the old buildings needed to be cleaned up. 'I'm not keen on dirty looking, black stonework. It makes the place look depressing.'

However the town is developed, respondents thought that it is important to have a 'coherent town development linking the market and canal area - to create convivial space for shoppers and community.'

Business, economy and shops

Respondents were particularly concerned about lack of job opportunities in the town.

'I'd like to work locally but there are few high skilled jobs'

'More could be done by the Council to help new businesses set up/keep existing businesses'

'Can the Town Council work with the High School to try to improve job/apprentice opportunities for the young?'

Regarding shops, most respondents liked the market and considered it to be central to Todmorden's success. 'The role of the market as an attraction to visitors must be recognised and protected.'

'We have great local shops and the market which are the very character of our town. We should put them first in our thinking and be creative in promoting and making them attractive and accessible. The traders themselves are mainly imaginative and deserve support.'

'Great, great, great! Friendly stall holders, good service, incredible wide choice'

Many respondents thought that 'the market hall is in desperate need of renovation.' Requests were made for 'more seating - the population is getting older.' 'There is a need for 'a place to sit and eat near the market, enabling people to eat what they buy.' 'Farmers events' were requested as well as 'music' which 'may attract more people to listen/watch.' There was also concern that 'market stallholders dismantle stalls at 3.30, therefore people who work do not have the opportunity to shop there during the week.'

'I love the market but some days it looks very half hearted and has few stalls of any interest. We should definitely encourage local producers as is happening to some extent via IET'

'It is ridiculous that the town is basically shut on a Monday and Tuesday'

Cost of parking was an issue and many respondents requested 'free parking - its easier to nip to Morrisons than find 50p to nip to the market.' Requests were also made for 'some disabled parking spaces very close to side entrance,' 'toilets at market' and 'more child friendly facilities.'

Respondents appreciated the interesting and diverse shopping opportunities. 'The diversity of shops is a delight,' They particularly liked 'the interesting food events and the availability of good provisions.'

I really like the indoor market and use it at least once a week. I think the butchers, cheese stall and new international foods stall in particular are excellent. I also use the haberdashery/wool stall a lot. The best shop is Dawsons'

'We have some wonderful local businesses in the town centre - the butchers and cheese stalls on the market, and fish on the outdoor market. There are some great pubs and restaurants - Tapas Bar and The Staff Of Life are two of my favourite places to eat'

'Barearts brewery and the pubs in general are great with their local ales'

Some felt that there was a need for a better range of shops in the town. A petrol station, a bike repair/hire shop and somewhere to 'buy a dress, coat or shoes' were all requested. Music, art and toyshops were mentioned as well as a walking shop to cater for outdoor enthusiasts. Some felt that there was 'too much duplication of shops such as hairdressers and charity shops.'

Some respondents commented that 'shop frontages need updating', particularly on Halifax Road, giving the town a 'shabby appearance.' Residents particularly liked the Water Street shopping area and thought that it would be 'enhanced by pedestrianisation, particularly on a Saturday and Sunday.'

Requests were made for 'the Council to step in and offer cheaper rents to encourage businesses into these premises' as rent and rates were considered high.

Businesses themselves asked for 'more support for small shops in town' and 'free advertising as local paper advert is very expensive.' They also asked for 'more availability of training grants.'

Strong views were given on the proposals for additional supermarkets. The majority of respondents (67%) were against the proposals.

'We don't need any more supermarkets in the town. We need attractions to boost the footfall through the town'

'We will lose any chance of developing tourism if we continue to allow supermarkets to open in Todmorden'

'The supermarket will affect the market as people will not have to pay for parking and want to pick everything up at one place'

Some residents however felt that 'Sainsburys would be an asset to the town' and would 'stop people travelling out of town.'

'Build the supermarkets in the town centre. This will get more people in the centre, when they come out there is more chance of them popping on the market'

Community

Respondents enjoyed the variety of clubs and organisations on offer in Todmorden.

'There are many things for people to join and make new friends.'

'People are friendly and whatever your interest there will be a club or society of like minded people'

The musical and artistic opportunities were praised, including the choral society, orchestra, hippodrome, photographic society and the brass bands. Residents also welcomed the environmental groups covering natural history, sustainability and moorland restoration.

'The U3A organization caters well for the older age group, offering a variety of classes, although 'practical activities like woodwork, pottery and home furnishings are no longer provided at Calderdale College in Todmorden'

The greatest concerns related to opportunities for teenagers. Residents would like to see 'more engagement with young people to help them aspire and want to be part of a vibrant town.' Although clubs such as the youth caravan were welcomed, a need was identified for 'community centres and youth clubs, rehearsal rooms and creative outlets for young people.'

'Get more creative youth schemes up and running - arts, theatre, dance, sport, music - make the most of the local talent'

'Encourage younger residents from different age groups and backgrounds to get involved in making decisions about the town's future'

Respondents also felt strongly that the High School needed updating. 'Our High School needs and deserves better facilities, it is very disrespectful to our young people and their teachers to expect them to perform well in such run down facilities, and a huge credit to them that they do.'

As regards younger children, the children's centre was singled out as being 'brilliant for families.' Some felt, however, that there were 'very few family events/facilities.' 'We don't have any children's entertainment for cold and wet days.'

There was praise for local community projects: 'Longfield Community Centre work hard to improve community spirit' and 'Cornholme Community Project has been a victory for local people.'

Many respondents felt that the closure of the Acorn Centre had 'left a big hole in facilities for the elderly, young people and those with special needs and the unemployed' and that these facilities should be replaced.

'I think we need the restoration of the Acorn Centre with its facilities ranging from computer access/help to nourishing inexpensive meals'

The closure of Stansfield View Hospital has also resulted in the loss of provision such as 'a brilliant gardening unit and stimulating and creative activities during the daytime' for those with learning difficulties.

The effect of local authority cuts on services has already been felt.' The erosion of social services has seen advice counselling and home help support virtually depleted. This has been transferred to volunteers who run luncheon clubs and provide other kinds of support. Many of the volunteers are themselves aged and the future of care of the elderly people is bleak.'

50% of respondents stated that they volunteered with local charities. Some were put off however by lack of knowledge. 'I don't know what volunteering opportunities there are, or where to find out about them.'

'I did make some enquiries, but the form I needed to complete was very involved and off-putting'

Finally comments were made that 'courses are run at prohibitive hours as they start too early for those of us working and commuting.' Requests were also made for 'better information via Todmorden News' on clubs available.

Leisure

Leisure facilities are in abundance in Todmorden with praise for the 'brilliant and free' park, the canal, leisure centre and outdoor recreation opportunities.

'The park and leisure centre are wonderful resources, as is the library, college and health centre'

Opportunities for outdoor recreation were considered to be one of Todmorden's greatest assets. Requests were made for 'more walking events and helping people to get back into exercise/ healthy lifestyle.' Many thought that 'the wonderful countryside needs opening up more' and that 'more use should be made of available facilities such as more picnic and walking areas like Eastwood, Mankinholes, Centre Vale.' Requests were also made to 'reinstate the beautiful setts on Birks Lane, Walsden.'

'More trails(with leaflets available from TIC) around the town and environs eg a Fielden trail' were requested, as well as 'long distance walks' and 'more off-road cycle (mountain bike) routes'

'Cycling, boating, running, why are these not advertized and supported and promoted more?'

Some felt that 'a climbing/canoeing/walking centre open to all could be very successful, especially if linked to the popular Youth Hostel or other hotels and accommodation.'

Respondents loved Centre Vale Park. 'I would like to congratulate the parks department for the upkeep and design of Todmorden park.' However some thought that 'more use could be made of it' and that the town should 'promote and improve the facilities in Centre Vale Park.'

'Re-do some of the beautiful walks around Centre Vale, some of the paths are in disrepair and the woods in areas unmanaged. Promote the walks with literature and promote self exercise in a free park'

Suggestions were made for an 'outdoor assault course,' 'athletic facilities and running track.' 'BMX biking or skateboarding for teenagers' was requested as well as 'floodlit tennis - our park courts are unplayable.' Teenagers requested a pitch for 'all weather football or hockey' as 'opportunities for team sports are quite limited in the town itself.' Parents of young children would welcome 'a sandpit.'

Many school children would like the 'park play area' to be bigger with improved facilities –'more swings, a fast roundabout, a bigger slide' and 'a climbing frame' were requested, as well as 'better ramps' and a 'bigger skate park.' A 13 year old commented that there was 'not enough to do for people my age' and requests were made for more play areas in outlying neighbourhoods. Cost was an issue, particularly for team games; 'free astro turf' was requested by teenagers.

Respondents were very impressed by facilities for arts, music and drama, but thought that this amenity could be developed further. They requested 'more activity at the Hippodrome - what a wonderful facility for a town Todmorden's size - why don't we use it more?'

'A film club at the theatre would be good'

'Need a good community venue for music, film/meetings etc' and a 'music/recording centre'

Respondents thought that 'we need somewhere for children to go where they can meet without it costing if they aren't sports minded' and for the older age group, a place where 'every day you can walk in, sit at a table, play cards have a lunch, just sit and chat.'

The leisure centre was seen as a useful facility but 'a bigger gym with more modern equipment and facilities' was needed as well as 'a squash court'. The swimming pool was seen as 'too small/crowded' and 'there are a lot of problems with the floor and the ceiling in the leisure centre which has led to football being cancelled at short notice.' Some of the facilities were considered 'shabby' and

there was 'not enough ventilation so it smells of sweat.' 'The tennis courts are dangerous and need resurfacing' and 'crazy golf could be improved.' Cost was an issue: 'They need to encourage more short term membership schemes for younger people on less income.'

Some respondents mentioned the need for 'decent restaurants, indoor bowls, ice skating, ski slope and snooker hall.' 'More events in the town' were requested as well as improved publicity; 'If you don't see the Todmorden News until Friday or Saturday you miss things.'

One person suggested a 'Todmorden Community Festival with all local organizations invited to hold events - publicity, stalls in Town Hall or extended open market? Music, theatre, art, sport, guided walks, local history, conservation, wildlife talks etc.'

Tourism

'The greatest opportunity for the town is to promote itself as a centre for tourism. This would bring jobs and money into the town.' Many views were given on the best ways to market Todmorden and encourage more visitors.

'Look at prime sites in Todmorden which would attract business, package these sites to look appealing, give them a brand ID, produce advertising campaign to surrounding areas, create website for Todmorden business which looks professional: develop business community, create a unique shopping experience making it more of a market town with specialist shops'

Respondents thought that Todmorden needed a 'better online presence' and that it should be linked to 'county and national tourism,' making 'full use of the media now available.' There should be 'regular regional press releases promoting town and attractions.' It should also 'build stronger links with 'Welcome to Yorkshire' and 'Totally Locally.'

'Todmorden needs more effective marketing/advertising' and should 'use libraries, local papers and the internet to promote itself as well as social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter'

Suggestions included 'a proper tourist brochure which could be 'advertised on both sides of the Pennines', 'in Rochdale and on Victoria Station in Manchester.' It was felt that 'The BBC move to Salford is a great opportunity' and that Todmorden should 'get on the map with Media City as soon as possible.'

Some people felt that 'the tourist information centre needs to be more visible and active in promoting events.'

Respondents thought that the town should be developed 'with a specific brand.' It could, for example 'become a sustainable food town with a celebrity chef patron.' Many residents supported this idea:

'Rebrand the town – promote the arts and food'

'More local produce, not just food, and create coordinated 'made in Todmorden' brand using artists and inventors skills of all ages'

'With Incredible Edible, Todmorden in Bloom and Gordon Riggs, we are ideally situated for the title Garden Centre of the month – so why not try and get agricultural firms here, there must be plenty of contacts with our own great Todmorden agricultural show in June'

Respondents felt that the canal area should be developed into 'an area of outstanding beauty for walkers, cyclists, diners, picnickers and having a centred focus.'

'Make more of the canal, pretty it up, add more seating and market it'

The market, seen by many as the central hub of the town, was also considered important to tourism.

'Promote the market and the lovely scenery to bring in visitors, walkers and shoppers'

The beautiful countryside, within walking distance of the town centre, offered a major attraction to visitors. The area could be developed into 'an activity centre with boating on the canal and walking in the hills.'

'Some work has been done on publishing routes for walking, could they go on the town website?'

'Invite talented people to contribute to walking routes and other activities'

'Join together local hostleries with walking tours to promote stop offs in the town'

'Make mountain bike trails from the town centre around the tops and back again and promote these on a Todmorden mountain bike trail website. You could also do the same for hiking with a walking website'

Many respondents suggested that more events in the town would be welcome. Suggestions ranged from 'events that mark different seasons and festivals' to a French market, street music, farmers markets and Christmas markets.'

'Have an annual event e.g. outdoor photo exhibition like in La Gacilly, France'

Residents felt that people's first impression of Todmorden could be improved as they drive through, especially on Halifax Road.

'Need proper signs on all the entrances and exits to the town. Could come up with a proper logo/catchphrase for the town so it sticks in visitor's minds when coming through'

'Put up art boards showing what could be there rather than empty spaces and encourage existing shop owners to make their shop fronts more attractive'

Some respondents thought that the town should 'promote the Victorian heritage of the Fielden's.'

'Perhaps a small museum of Todmorden's history and current life and opportunities'

Some also thought that 'if the park was improved to provide better sports facilities it could be used for county matches or even national events!'

Respondents were concerned that if Todmorden is going to attract more visitors it needs appropriate accommodation.

'There is nowhere to stay overnight. Events that could bring hundreds of people to Todmorden cannot happen because of limited accommodation and because we are not visitor friendly'

'We need more cheap accommodation for visitors – how about a register of people who could offer cheap accommodation i.e. a room for a night in an ordinary home for a walker or eco-tourist – we'd be prepared to do this and I'm sure other people would as you would meet interesting people and be able to take them out on local walks with you'

'Need an accommodation booking service'

However Todmorden decides to promote itself, respondents felt it important to have 'a coherent plan to attract visitors and tourists to enjoy our heritage, countryside and spend money rather than drive through to Hebden Bridge.' They also felt that it is vital to 'keep the independent, creative and individual spirit of the town.'

Environment

Respondents loved Todmorden's beautiful location and considered it vital to 'preserve Todmorden's rural character.' There was strong opposition to 'the promotion and installation of wind farms' with respondents commenting that they will 'destroy the fantastic landscape people love.'

'Block unsightly windfarms that have no proven environmental benefit'

Many respondents supported Todmorden's development as a sustainable town and felt that this should be promoted further.

'Support Todmorden in Bloom and IET as they make such a big contribution'

'Impressed by IET group and way they have engaged with schools'

'I think Incredible Edible and the Bear Cafe are wonderful. Among other local groups, they raise awareness and provide information about locally available produce.'

Particular concerns were aired by Eastwood residents, largely due to the location of the refuse site nearby; 'Move the recycling centre from a residential area.' They were also concerned that 'speeding traffic makes crossing the road at Eastwood dangerous' and that there was a need for 'better residents parking on Halifax Road through Eastwood.'

Transport and roads

People were generally pleased with the public transport network in Todmorden.

'We have ideal transport connections by train and the Todmorden Curve will improve that further'

'Todmorden buses are a lifeline for many people, particularly the elderly'

However some people thought that the trains needed updating; 'The number of carriages is very poor. Trains are cramped and overheated.' They felt that 'a faster/better rail link to Manchester and Leeds' was needed, to encourage people to move into the area and set up business.

Cost was an issue as well as timing of services. 'A night bus/train from Manchester and Leeds' would be useful, as well as a 'train service that began earlier for those wishing to get to London for business.'

'Buses and trains are too expensive and services tail off after 7pm. Sundays are especially bad, and even worse if you have ongoing travel (Leeds or Manchester airport for example)'

There was real concern about the lack of access at the station. 'There should be disabled and/or elderly access to far platform.' Many respondents also referred to the lack of parking.

'The train would be an option but unless you have parked by 07:00am you have no chance of using the train'

'More parking for the station is becoming imperative - Stansfield Road parking is now becoming the station overflow. If Portsmouth had a station, this could ease some of the parking problems in the centre'

Many thought that 'it would be helpful if there were more buses to the railway station - or if buses and trains linked more closely.'

'A bus link between Walsden station and Todmorden station would be useful; can park, catch train in Walsden but return to Todmorden (many more trains) and get a bus immediately, all on one ticket'

'Very little joined up thinking as they are not spaced out at proper intervals and some bus companies refuse to accept metro cards'

The local bus service was popular, although 'a more frequent service to Walsden and to Cornholme' was requested. A 'better service is needed in Burnley and Rochdale valleys in evenings and Sundays.' as well as 'more direct buses to Halifax and Bradford.'

'The T8/T6 bus needs to run at 7.30 for commuters'

'The small local bus services (eg Mankinholes circular) are already and will become even more essential'

Respondents found the bus fares 'very expensive.' 'The fares for younger people, especially on short journeys are very high.'

'Bus service is far too expensive - I would like to use local buses instead of driving. However a £2.50 single fare prevents this from being an economically feasible option'

Respondents thought that the road system was 'inadequate with little opportunity for improvement. This should be accepted as a constraint on development.'

'Too many heavy lorries, too many people passing through and not stopping'

'Too many cars - will increase with supermarket plans'

There were concerns that 'pavements are too narrow in certain areas e.g. past the waste station towards Todmorden and terraced houses. Dangerous traffic speed makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross the road/cyclists to ride safely.' Some respondents asked for 'traffic calming schemes in all outlying villages.' One respondent commented that it 'can be unpleasant crossing Rochdale Road by Cornholme Arches.' while another stated, 'crossing the road near the Town Hall' is also hazardous.

'Much should be done to improve pedestrian safety in the centre and the approach to villages'

'Burnley Road has cars massively speeding at 60/70 mph on it right by the park, school, leisure centre and local housing with loads of kids - highly dangerous. We have had one fatal accident and one that may have been. We need traffic calming measures before a kid is killed'

The 'maintenance and improvement of rural lanes' was requested as well as 'some additional parking places at lane up from Cross Stone, at Pexwood Road.'

Some respondents were concerned that 'roadworks make the town inaccessible and gridlocked'

'Roadworks are left barriered but unattended for weeks'

Respondents were also concerned that 'roads are not properly maintained. The new 'roundabout' near the bus station is confusing and dangerous.' Particular issues were raised such as 'need one or two passing places on lane up from Cross Stone towards Badestones. Need passing place on Pexwood Road which is now quite heavily used by Castle traffic'

Respondents thought that 'more active promotion of car sharing would help' in light of the build up of traffic on the main roads. However many respondents were unaware of the details of this scheme.

'Car share scheme - good idea but not too well publicised'

Regarding parking, 'free parking or disc parking' was requested by almost all respondents. Some felt that parking 'should be free on market days, weekends and bank holidays.' Such a move would encourage visitors to the town.

'Car parking in the town should be free for, say, the first half hour, and then chargeable. I have often decided not to stop off for an impulse buy for this reason - I know I'm only going to need 5 mins parking and resent having to pay the full whack. This must affect the market's trade.'

On the issue of cycling, 'more cycle ways' were requested, including 'a well-marked cycle route from Burnley Road to Halifax Road via River Calder.' Cyclists felt that 'not enough canal paths were in good condition' and that 'the towpath is too muddy for commuting.'

Some pedestrians were put off by cyclists. They felt that cyclists should 'keep off the footpaths' and that 'those who use the towpath should have a bell.' Some respondents thought that it is difficult to encourage children to cycle due to 'lack of cycling facilities.'

'There should be safe ways for children to cycle to school through the back streets. Make dedicated tracks or lanes for them. The road system cannot support much more traffic than currently uses it'

Requests were made for 'more lockable bike sheds' and 'greater advertising and promotion of cycling events and paths.'

The Role of the Town Council

Respondents felt strongly that Todmorden Town Council should 'actively defend local services against wholly unnecessary and harmful cuts.'

'Keep the library and other services running so Todmorden stays 'self sufficient'

Respondents felt that the Town Council should 'encourage and promote new ideas and initiatives by the members of the community. Let people know if there is money available for doing things in the town, even if it is only small grants.'

Finally, residents requested 'more publicity about Council meetings so the people can have their say, make them more interactive.'

'Support local groups to make Todmorden a better place to live'

'Build a united front amongst people in Todmorden about developments'

Appendix 2 - Todmorden Town Council's response to the 'Calderdale Local Plan:Core Strategy Preferred Options' for Todmorden

In 2012 Calderdale Council consulted the Town Council on its 'Preferred Option for the Local Plan Core Strategy'. The Preferred Options provides a strategic policy context for development within Calderdale over the years to 2026. Without being site specific it addresses the housing, employment, and infrastructure needs of the district; setting preferences for the scale of development and suggesting general areas where land will need to be found to accommodate growth in the future Land Allocations Plan. The Preferred Options document also provides draft policies which will help to ensure that development meets the highest standards and is sustainable. In December 2012 the Town Council submitted its response as follows:

GROWTH

The Town Council notes the wording of 'Consideration of Spatial Options 6.1. ss2 Enhance the role of Todmorden'. However it should be pointed out that there is an anomaly in the documentation in that Todmorden is listed in this section as proposed 'Principal Town' status, whilst in other sections, i.e. 'Policy CP1 Distribution of Growth' and the 'Area Based Policies' Section as proposed 'Local Town' status.

- The Town Council welcomes the enhanced role of Todmorden as listed in 6.1. ss2, provided that its status is that of 'Local Town' and not as 'Principal Town' which would be unsustainable.
- In addition to Walsden, Portsmouth should be listed as 'Local Centre' rather than 'Neighbourhood Centre' giving options for expansion of shopping and services, provided these are limited to small, independent retail enterprises.

HOUSING

The Town Council makes the following points:

- In line with 'Area Based Policies TOD1' the target of 630 new dwellings is a realistic one.
- Preference for housing developments to take place on mainly infill and brownfield sites.

- Housing development would be welcome on sites outside the Town Centre Conservation Area, such as Cinderhill and Adamroyd Mill.
- Infrastructure issues around sustainability of the town's resources should be taken into account for housing placement, e.g. roads, school places, health etc.
- As per 'Area Based Policies 25.137 Housing' the Town Council agrees that no further housing development should take place in Eastwood, Harvelin Park, Portsmouth and Cornholme.
- Land surrounding Todmorden High School should be safeguarded for further expansion or for a new school building.

EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

The Town Council makes the following points:

- In line with 'Area Based Policies TOD1' employment growth in terms of size and job numbers as listed is conservative but realistic, i.e. 'new office development (2,000 square metres) creating up to 130 jobs and increases in industry and warehousing (3,000 square metres) creating around 40 jobs'.
- There is a need to develop and regenerate the derelict Halifax Road sites (Hope Street and Cinderhill) – in the case of Cinderhill for housing purposes and in the case of Hope Street this should not be large retail use, but possibly mixed use development of small retail/commercial/tourism enterprises.
- Employment initiatives should concentrate on the following:
 - a) Food – building on recent developments in local food production, including locally produced meat and cheese and the horticultural and fish farming courses at Todmorden High School, together with the high quality of food available at Todmorden Market.
 - b) Creative industries - given Todmorden High School's Specialist Visual Arts College status and Todmorden Community College Degree Courses necessitating the need for upgrade of broadband capabilities.
 - c) Tourism - particularly activity tourism such as riding, cycling, hiking and water based activities.
- Some form of hotel development would be welcome. Todmorden is very short of hotel bed accommodation and this is currently a serious constraint to the progressive extension of tourism in the town.

IMPROVEMENTS TO SHOPPING

The Town Council makes the following points:

- No further supermarket developments should be permitted, apart from the current planning permissions in place.
- The core of the town's retail offer is Todmorden Market, and this should be dramatically refurbished and modernised for 21st century purpose.
- It is important that the Rose Street development is sympathetic to the Market and nearby shops.
- Bramsche Square, the Market Hall and outside market should be considered as the main retail and small business area, with links to be developed between Calderdale Council, the Town Council, businesses and retail traders.
- Expansion of retail opportunities in the town centre should be limited to small, independent shops.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

The Town Council makes the following points:

- As per 'Area Based Policies 25.142 Infrastructure' the Town Council welcomes investment in The Burnley Curve in Todmorden.
- An integrated transport policy is required, to include the new Burnley Curve, with a station either at Cornholme or Portsmouth, whichever is most feasible.
- The electrification of the Colne Valley railway line could result in some Leeds to Manchester services being re-routed from the Calder Valley Line. It is therefore important to consider the electrification of the Calder Valley Line.

ROADS, FOOTPATHS AND HIGHWAYS

The Town Council makes the following points:

- An updated Traffic Survey is necessary to cover all aspects of traffic management issues throughout Todmorden.
- Given the Town Council's aspirations towards tourism as listed above, the Cycle Way through Todmorden should be expanded and completed, requiring greater bike park and storage facilities.

TOURISM AND THE MOORS AREA

The Town Council feels that as the area designated as the 'Calderdale moorland' surrounds Todmorden, the town should be designated as the natural hub for the development of hiking holidays.

MINERAL EXTRACTION

The Town Council's view is that mineral extraction projects that conflict with visual amenities and tourism development should be avoided.