

# **Appendix A: Ramsbottom Town Centre Plan (Draft) Consultation Report**

**March 2022**

## **1.Consultation statement**

The draft Ramsbottom Town Centre Plan was approved for public consultation by Cabinet on the 9th December 2021 and this subsequently took place between the 4th January 2022 and 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions being in place, more traditional methods of consultation i.e. face-to-face meetings or drop-in sessions were not possible, until the last 2 weeks of the consultation.

Consequently, a number of different approaches were introduced to raise the profile of the consultation process and to maximise engagement with local residents and stakeholders:

- The draft plan was available to view online on the council's website and feedback was encouraged via an online questionnaire. There was also the option to submit comments by post or email, or through a dedicated phone line, both of which allowed people to request further information. The consultation process included:
- A specific Ramsbottom Town Centre Plan consultation page on the Council's website which included full and summary versions of the draft masterplan, frequently asked questions and a link to the survey which was hosted on the One Community website;
- Promotional banners in key locations (Bury Town Hall, Ramsbottom, Library, and Morrisons in Ramsbottom) and posters were displayed in the two town centre notice boards.
- Hard copies of the Masterplan available to view at Bury Town Hall and Ramsbottom Library, which also offered hard copies of the questionnaire.
- Postcards placed in key locations including Ramsbottom Library, Nuttall Park Base, Ramsbottom Football Club and in a range of businesses.
- Council staff were out and about in the town centre over a number days, talking to businesses and residents and handing out postcards.
- Press Releases and press features;
- Social Media; Twitter and Facebook posts were posted weekly throughout the consultation period
- Distribution of links to the on-line survey to: community and business contacts/stakeholders, community hub update emails, one community newsletter, VCFA newsletter, Children's partnership newsletter, community champions Whats App group.
- Meetings included businesses, ward members and community group representatives

## 2. Consultation Responses

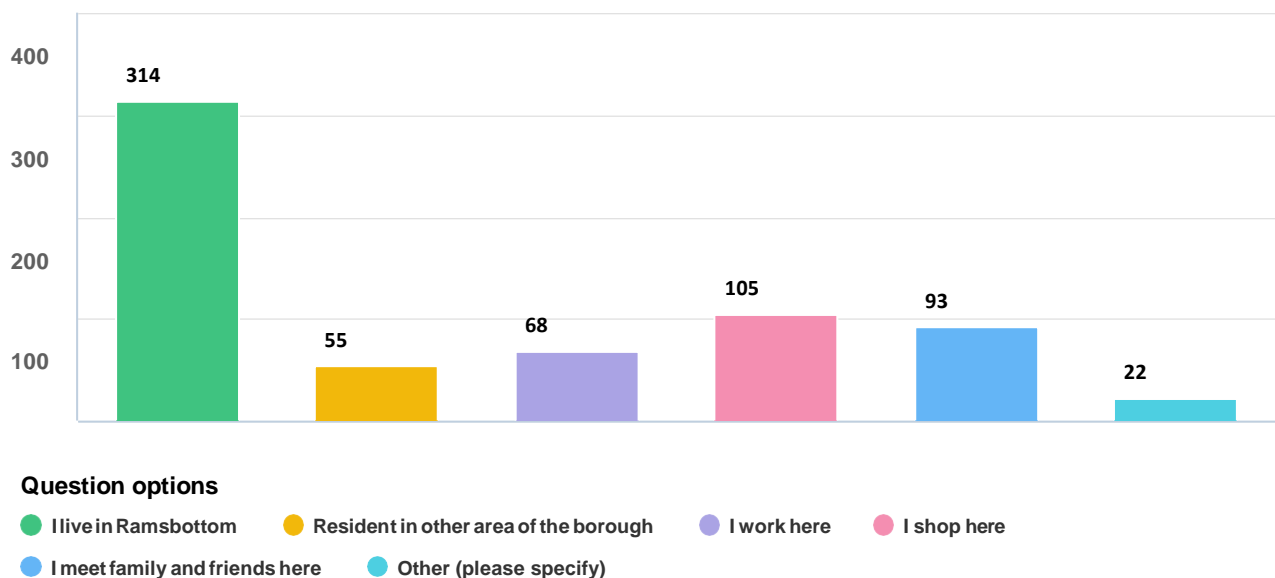
The on-line survey was accessed via the dedicated page on the Council's website with a link to One Community.

421 people contributed to the on-line survey along with 57 emails of which 15 were businesses and 2 postal responses. The comments received from the online survey, emails/letters have all been considered.

## 3. On-line survey results

Respondents to the on-line survey were asked a series of questions most of which required the respondent to select a response, some questions allowed respondents to add comments. These comments along with the ones received through emails/letters have all been considered and themed. The graphs and comments below show the responses received to the on-line survey.

### Q1. What is your connection to Ramsbottom?

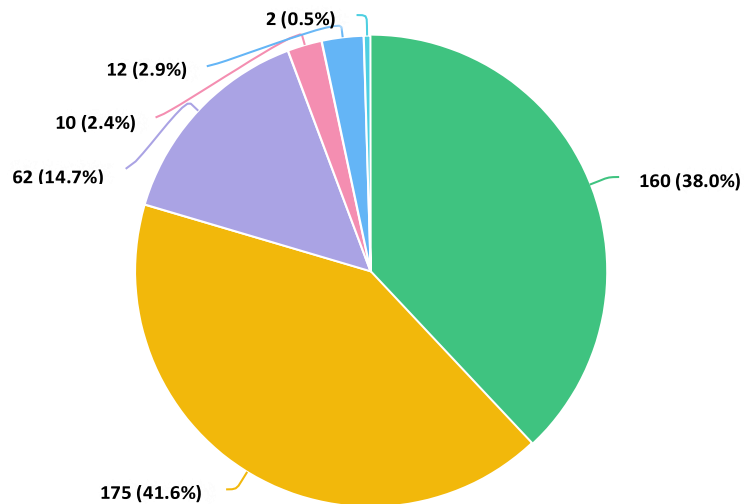


\*Contributors to this question could select more than one response.

304 respondents to this question lived in Ramsbottom, with a further 105 shopped in the town, 93 visited the town to meet friends/family. 68 respondents worked in Ramsbottom. 22 respondents had another connection to Ramsbottom. Comments made can be seen below.

- Business owner – 7
- Parents live here and I visit - 5
- Volunteer at theatre – 2
- Use leisure centre – 1
- Run events in Ramsbottom – 1
- Member of Ramsbottom rotary club – 1
- My organisation makes deliveries to businesses in Ramsbottom - 3

## Q2. How often do you currently visit Ramsbottom town centre?

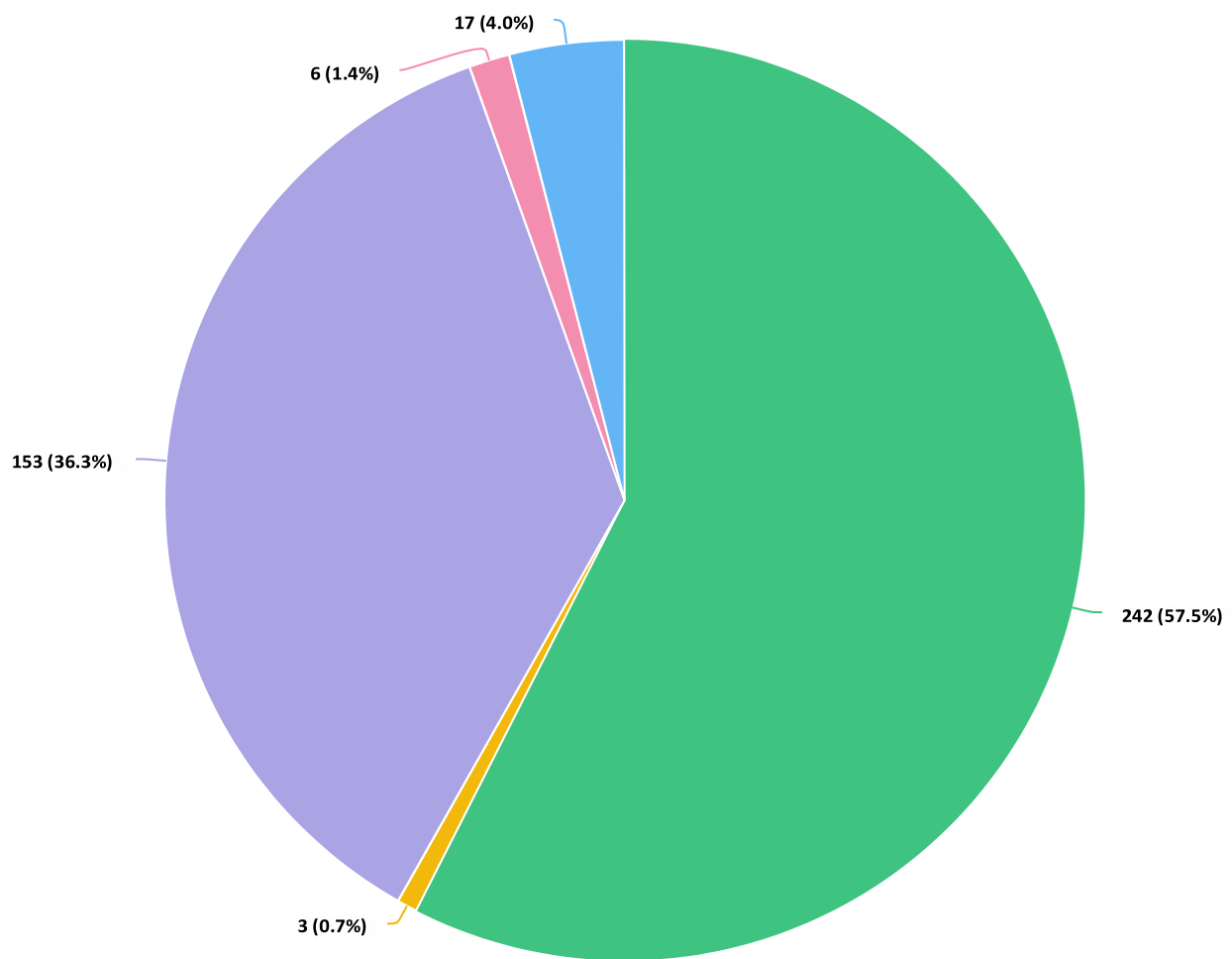


### Question options

● Everyday ● 2-4 times a week ● Weekly ● Fortnightly ● Monthly ● Never

42% of respondents visited Ramsbottom town centre 2-4 times a week, with a further (38%) visiting everyday. 15% visited on a weekly basis with smaller numbers visiting fortnightly and monthly.

### Q3. How do you usually travel to Ramsbottom town centre?



#### Question options

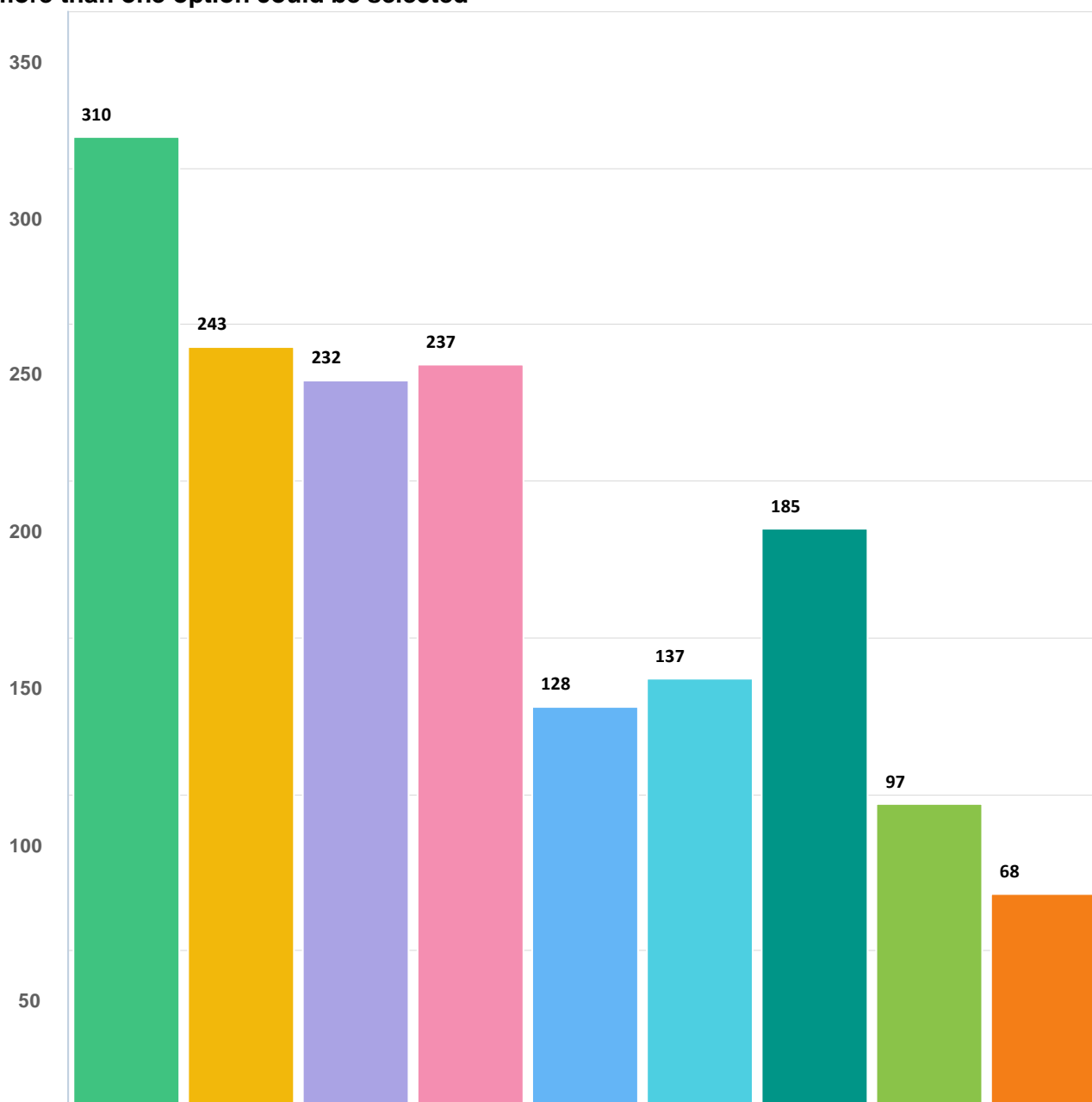
● By car ● By cycling ● By walking ● By bus ● Other (please specify)

The largest group of respondents (57%) travelled to Ramsbottom town centre by car, with a further 36% of respondents walking to the centre. The bus was used by 1% of respondents, with cycling used by 3 respondents. 17 people selected 'other' with those that left a comment mentioning:

HGV – 6  
Business Van – 1  
ELR- 1

#### Q4. What do you think are the key priorities for Ramsbottom town centre?

\* more than one option could be selected\*



##### Question options

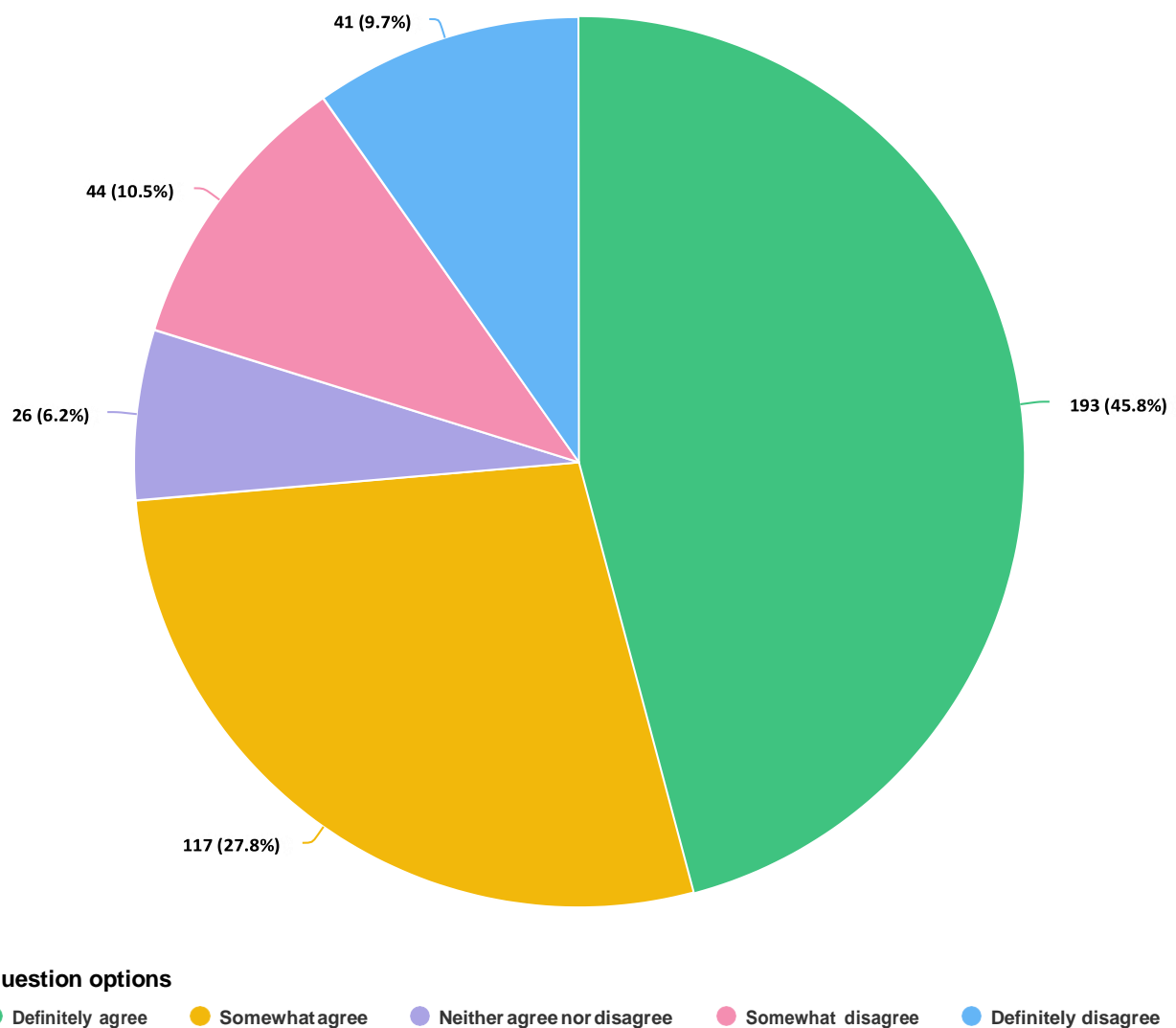
- Retaining the independent retail offer
- Retaining the food and drink offer
- Improving the quality of the streets and public spaces
- Measures to help address car parking issues
- Addressing traffic/air quality
- Ability to walk and cycle to/from and around the town centre
- Regular events/cultural programme
- Improved links between key locations
- Other

Of the eight priorities mentioned, retaining the independent retail offer was seen as key to 310 respondents, with a further 243 stating that retaining the food and drink offer was also key. 237 respondents felt that improving the quality of streets and open spaces was a priority. 185 respondents wanted to see regular events/a cultural programme, whilst 137 felt the ability to walk, to, from and around the centre was key.

Addressing air quality was important to 128 respondents, with a further 97 felt that key to the plans was improved links between key locations. 68 people selected other. Of those that left a comment mentioned:

- Improved public transport links (locally and to Bury and Manchester)
- Retain the authentic look of Ramsbottom
- Parking issues (including more free parking, parking nearer to shops, day passes for residents on event days)
- Address roads and volume of traffic including speed restrictions
- More needed for young people

#### Q5. How much do you agree with our vision for Ramsbottom town centre?



74% of respondents 'definitely agree/somewhat agree' with the vision for Ramsbottom, 21% 'definitely disagree or somewhat disagree' with the remaining respondents 'neither agree/disagree'

The next question asked respondents if they agreed or disagreed with any proposals to please explain why. Where comments were received the focus was as follows:

#### Main disagreements:

- Removal of parking in town centre
- Proposed site of town square, including potential loss of parking
- Proposed location of out of town car park at leisure centre – too far away and would see removal of green space, other locations more suited

#### General comments:

- Keep free parking to attract people to town
- Improved public transport links
- Vehicles including HGV's need to be able to access and drive through town centre
- Toilet facilities required
- Reduce traffic including HGVs

The next series of questions asked respondents how much they agreed/disagreed with key project themes which had been identified to help deliver the vision for Ramsbottom.

The table below shows responses by number of respondents with the largest response being in bold text.

| Theme                          | Definitely agree | Somewhat agree | neither | Somewhat disagree | Definitely disagree |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------|---------------------|
| New and Improved Public Spaces | <b>183</b>       | 112            | 30      | 44                | 52                  |
| Active Travel Initiatives      | <b>165</b>       | 103            | 38      | 51                | 64                  |
| New car parking arrangements   | <b>188</b>       | 107            | 44      | 30                | 52                  |
| Business support               | <b>222</b>       | 117            | 44      | 14                | 24                  |
| Longer term                    | <b>171</b>       | 103            | 92      | 20                | 35                  |

As the table shows the largest responses were 'definitely agree' for all the key project themes, showing support from large numbers of respondents.

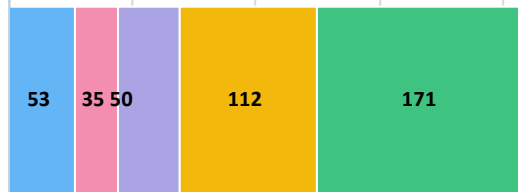
Respondents were next asked to consider each key theme in more details and again respond to how much they agreed/disagreed with each proposal.

## Public Space Proposals

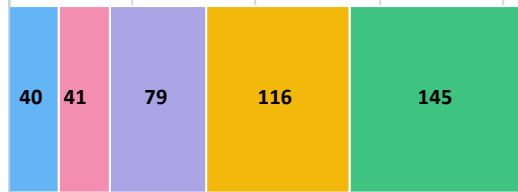
### Question options

- Definitely disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Definitely agree

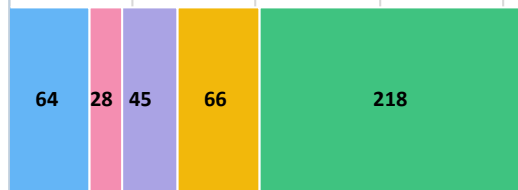
(PS1) Creation of a Public Square in the heart of the town centre



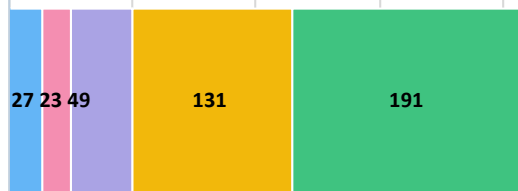
(PS2) Eastern Gateway - Upgrade of the public realm to create a gateway to the town for those arriving via Peel Brow or the East Lancashire Railway



(PS3) Square Street - Permanent pedestrianisation of upper part of Square Street to accommodate outdoor dining.



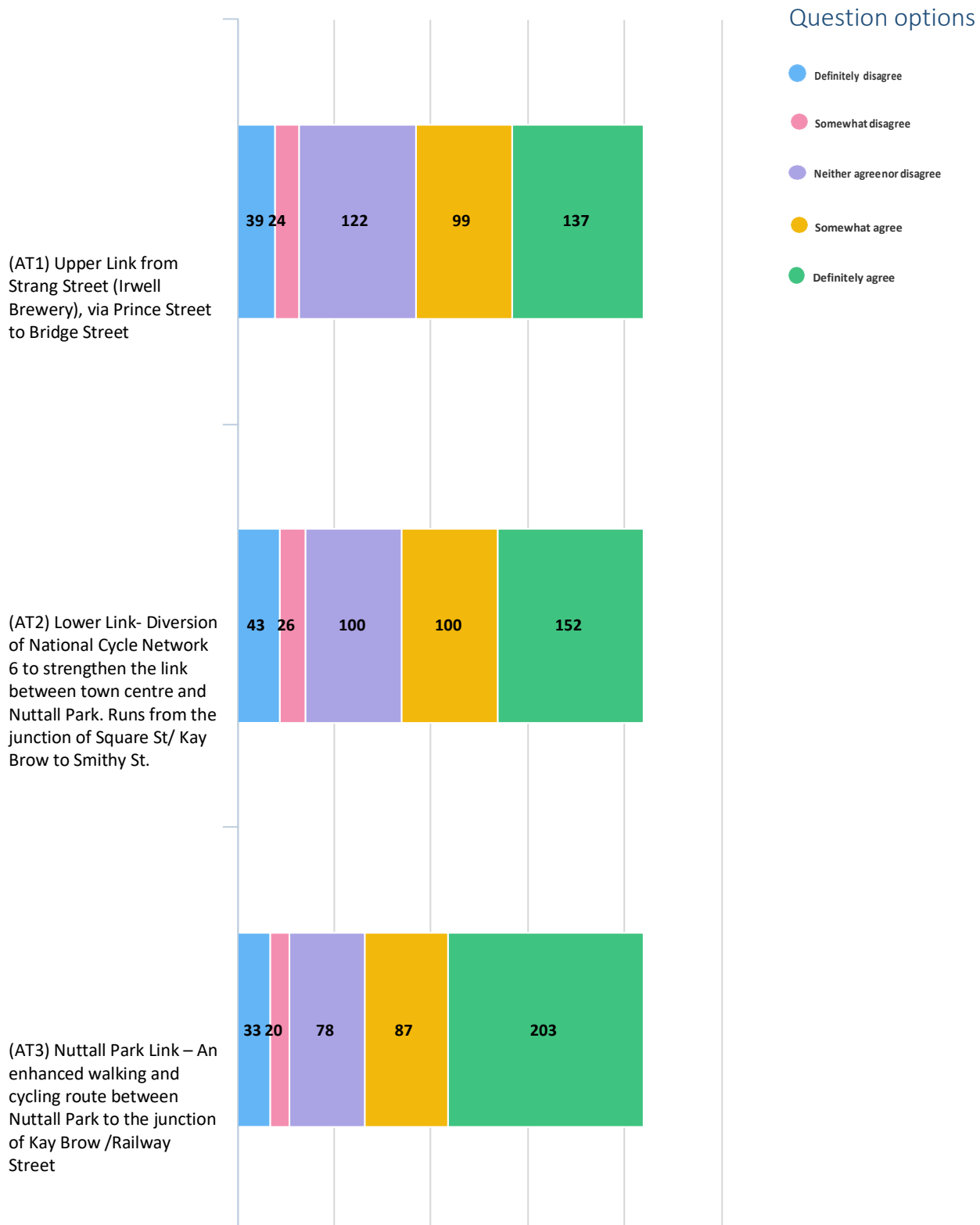
(PS4) Market Place - Small scale enhancements to refresh this valuable civic space and gateway into the town centre.





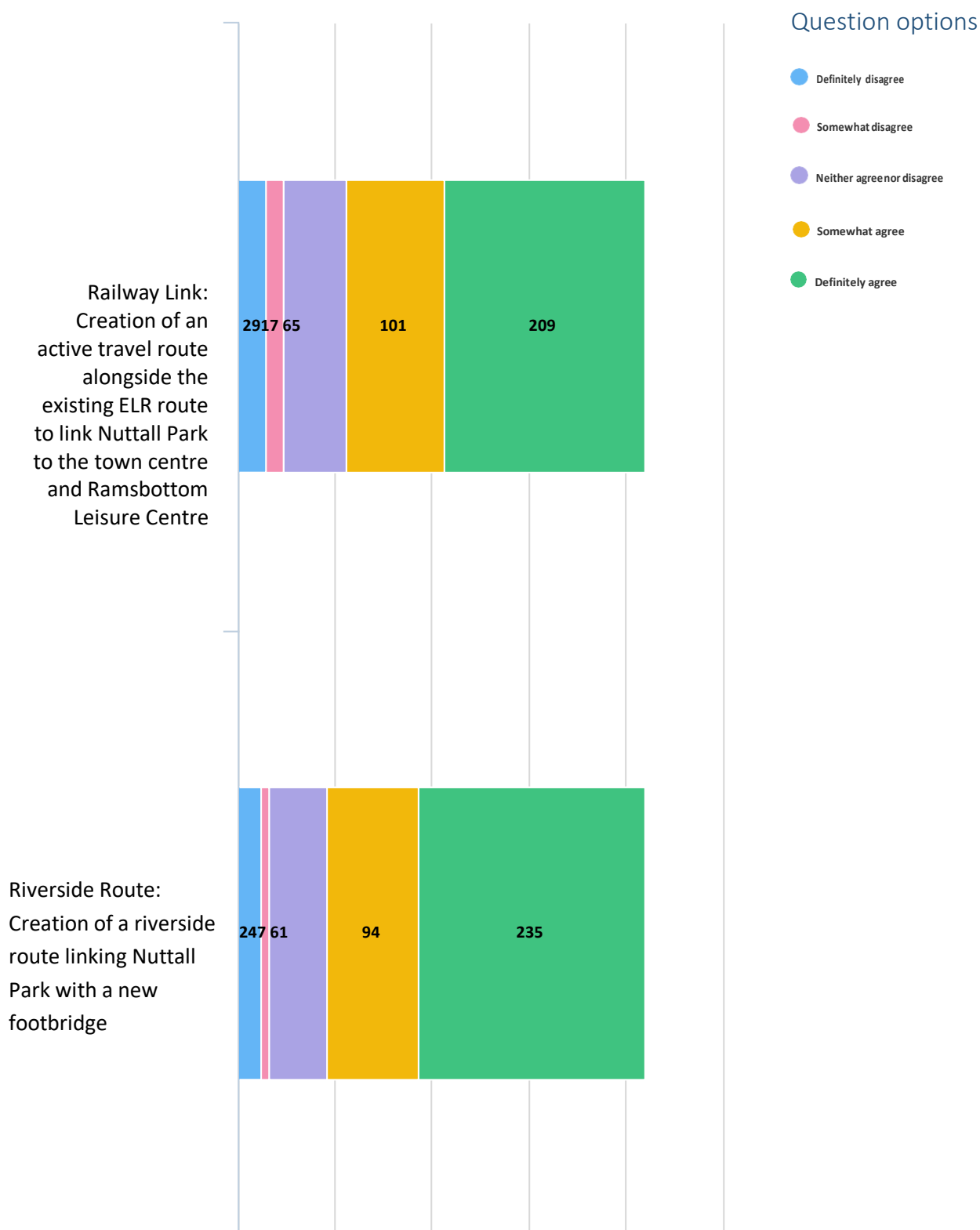
As the graph shows, all public space proposals were more supported than not supported. The most supported proposal was (PS4) –Improvements to Market Place with small scale enhancements to refresh valuable civic space and gateway to the town centre (322) followed by (PS3) permanent pedestrianisation of the upper part of Square Street to accommodate outdoor dining (284). Those least supported were Square Street (PS3) (92) and (PS1) creation of a public square in the town centre (88).

## Active Travel Proposals



As the active travel graph shows, larger numbers of respondents were neither in agreement or disagreed than with the previous priority. However, the largest number of respondents were more agreeable with all proposals than disagreed. The most supported was (AT3) Nuttall park link, followed by (AT2) to strengthen the link between the town centre and Nuttall park to Town Centre.

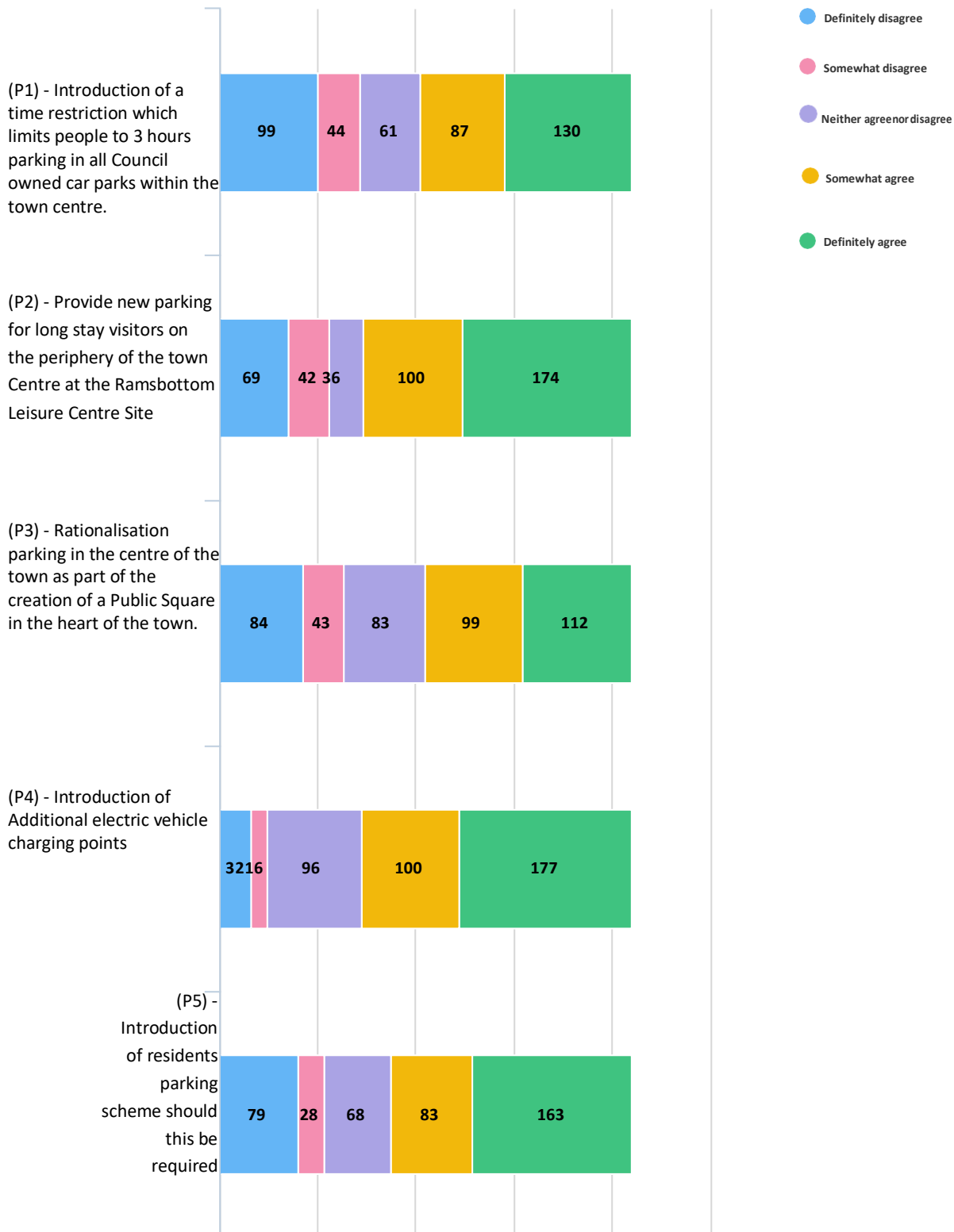
### Active Travel – Strategic Links Proposals



Both active travel strategic links were supported by over three quarters of the respondents.

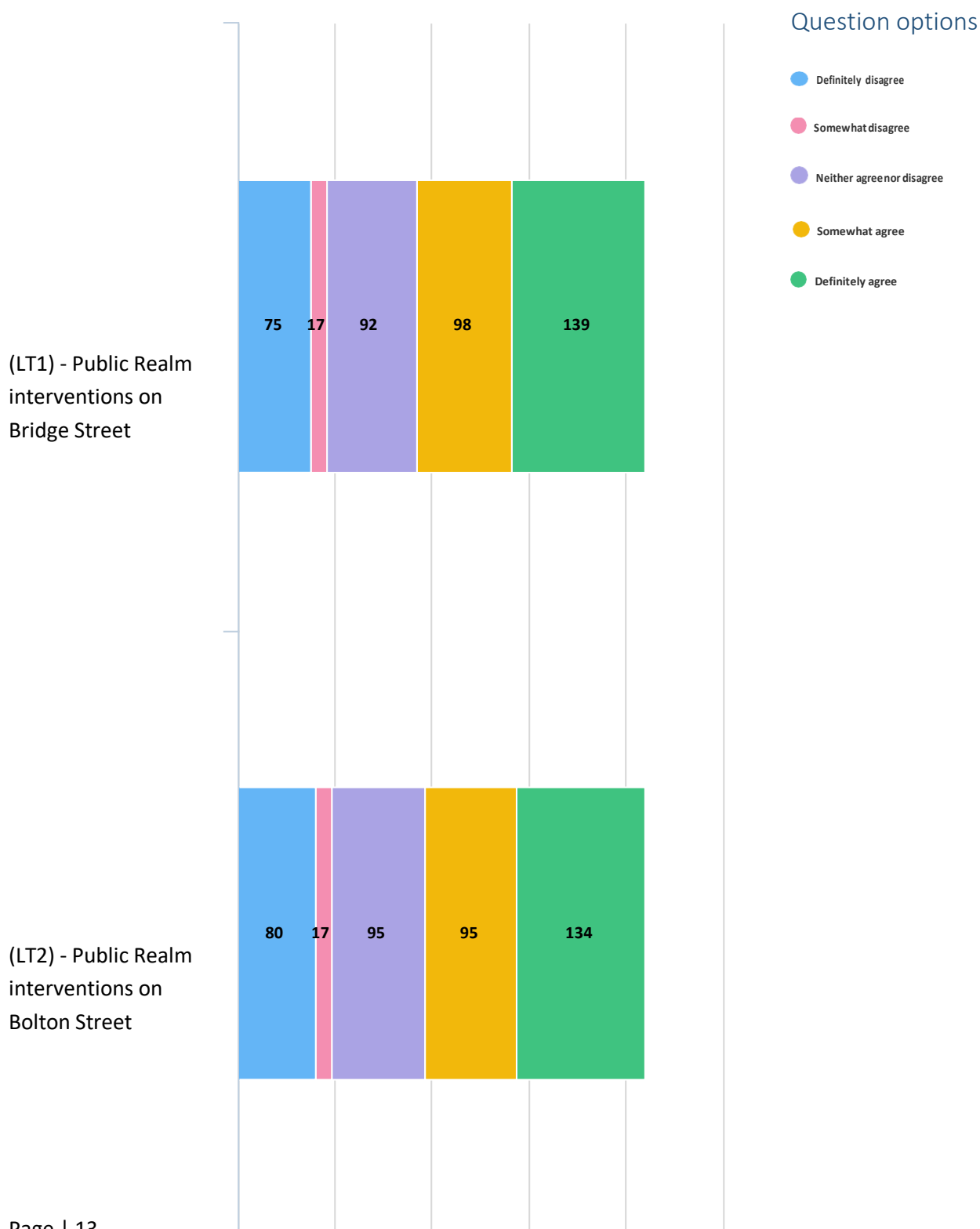
## Parking Proposals

### Question options



As the graph show for parking proposals, a mixture again or support and non-support. Proposals with the most support are (P1) 'introduction of more electric vehicle charging points (277) followed by (P2) new long term parking for visitors at the leisure centre (274). The introduction of residents parking schemes (if required) was supported by 246 respondents. However all parking proposals received some level of disagreement.

## Longer term Proposals- Improvements to Bridge Street and Bolton Street



Both longer term proposals were supported rather than not supported, however both projects had over 90 respondents feeling neither supportive/non-supportive of them.

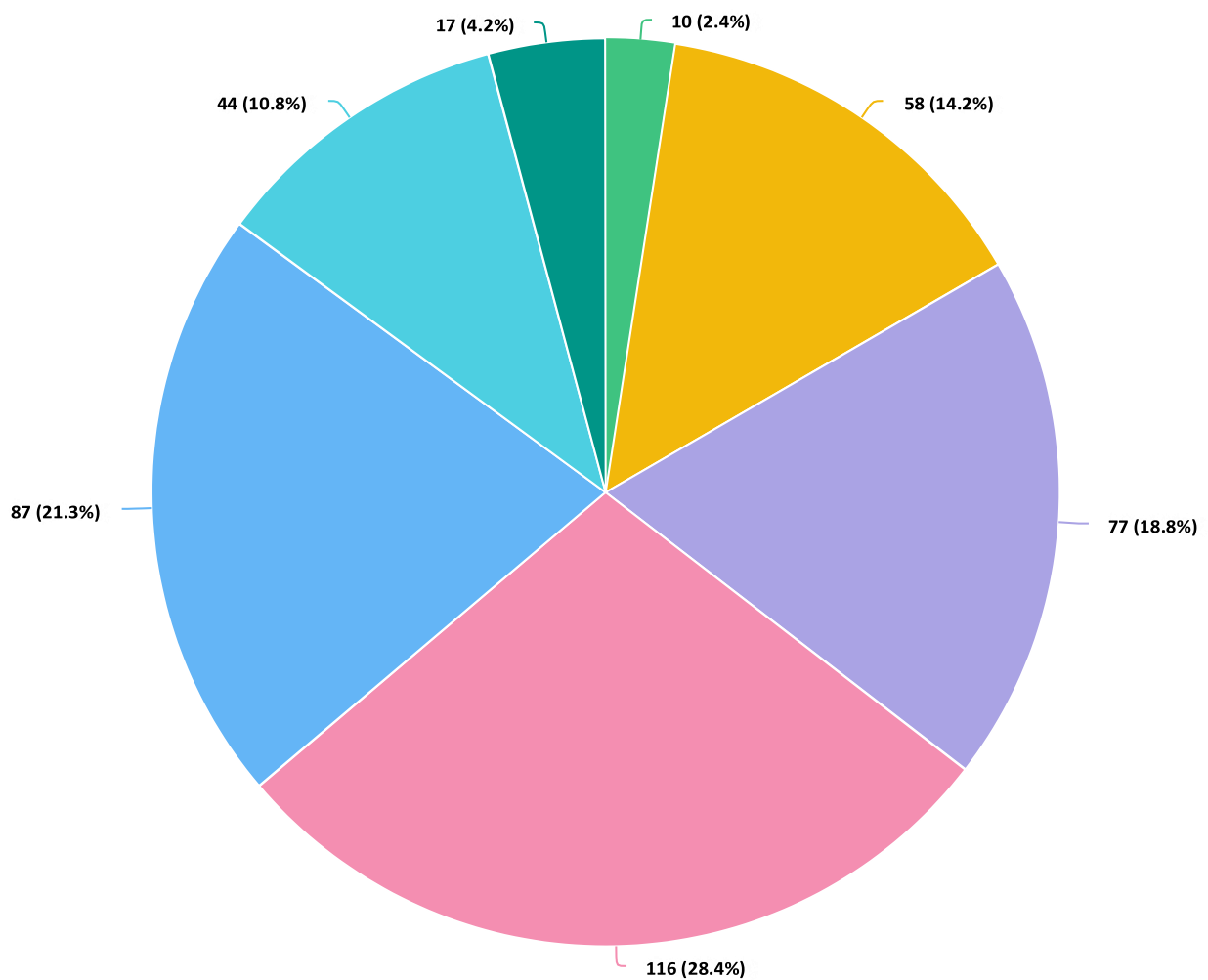


---

The proposed business support project was supported by 292 respondents, with 92 neither agreeing/disagreeing, and 37 not supportive the scheme.

The last set of questions asked people about themselves. The tables below show the results.

### What age bracket do you fit in?



#### Question options

● 75+ ● 65-74 ● 55-64 ● 45-54 ● 35-44 ● 25-34 ● 18-24

---

The graph shows that those that responded were in the 35 to 64 age groups. With those aged 18-24 and over 65 responding less.

### **Are you male or female?**

52% of respondents classified themselves as female with 48% male.

### **What is your ethnicity?**

96% of respondents to the survey classified themselves as white. Other ethnic groups were only represented in very small numbers.

### **The last question on the on-line survey asked for any other comments**

162 respondents to the survey made a wider comments, along with comments received via email and post. Many of the comments were very detailed and specific and these will be taken into future consideration where proposals in the Ramsbottom Town Centre Plan progress. Where comments were received the focus was as follows:

|  |
|--|
| <b>Other amenities needed in town:</b>                                 |
| Toilets  |
| More electric vehicle charging points                                  |
| <b>Active Travel:</b>  |
| Link to existing walking routes  |
| Secure cycle storage   |
| <b>Public transport:</b>   |
| Improved local bus routes to other parts of Bury                       |
| Improved bus links to Stubbins   |
| Improved frequency and reliability of service                          |
| Improved links from Ramsbottom to Bury, Bolton and Manchester          |
| <b>Supportive of plans:</b>  |
| Good plans   |
| Thank you for investing in Ramsbottom                                  |
| Acknowledgement that town is lovely already but cannot rest on laurels |
| <b>Traffic issues:</b>   |
| Cars are the problem in Ramsbottom not HGV's                           |
| Reduction of all traffic through the town including HGV's              |
| HGV's need to move through town  |
| <b>Mondi site:</b>   |
| Detracts from Ramsbottom   |
| Could be used for many things.   |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Conservation:</b>                        |
| Keep Ramsbottom unique                      |
| Plans should fit with local building style  |
| Maintain feel and style in any new projects |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Car Parking:</b>  |
| Resident parking passes required   |
| Out of town car park required  |
| More long stay parking spaces  |
| Out of town car park will not be used, too far away                      |
| Too much focus on parking  |
| Accessible parking required in the town centre                           |
| The introduction of 3 hours is too short, 4 hours would be more suitable |
| Location for the long stay car park will take green space                |
| Long Stay Parking on the Mondi site                                      |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Bridge Street/Bolton Street:</b>                                  |
| Parking issues on Bolton Street need addressing                      |
| Needs reduced traffic on these roads/closed to traffic               |
| More crossing points   |
| Stop HGV's from these roads  |
| Access to/ from Railway Street to Bridge Street (left turn) required |
| Both roads are vital links for HGV's servicing local employers       |
| Do not close off these roads to any vehicles                         |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Public Realm</b>                                      |
| Make more of the existing green spaces                   |
| Improvements to and maintenance of existing public realm |
| Improvements to footways                                 |
| Drop kerbs for accessibility                             |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Public Space</b>  |
| Impact on access to businesses if Square Street permanently closed |
| New public square will be good for events/concerns about weather   |
| How will this affect traffic in the town. Consider one way.        |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Other:</b>   |
| Make more of the existing green spaces                        |
| Better signage and links with existing walking routes.        |
| Improvements to existing public realm and better maintenance. |
| Improve the market  |
| Condition of road and pavements                               |



---

END