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HIGH TOWN BAG RESEARCH REPORT

A report examining the views of the residents in High Town about their local community.

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Executive Summary

This report provides a deeper understanding of the issues raised by residents in the local High Town community. Opinions of these issues build awareness and as a whole will assist in promotion of future improvement initiatives. This research was conducted to delve deep into what the residents really think and feel about key issues and existing initiatives within the High Town area. This gave the opportunity for the residents to have a voice in what they find acceptable and also the changes they would like to see implemented to improve High Town overall.

With regard to the positive findings most residents agreed they felt, in varying degrees, a sense of belonging to High Town and also considered that others would also feel a strong sense of belonging to High Town. The majority also felt that the area was somewhat exciting, safe, diverse and had good public services. Around half of the participants' reasons for going to High Town was to buy groceries, followed by going to the pub, takeaway food and to visit the second hand shops, thus highlighting which shops are most likely to be beneficial in the area for future development.

The residents also showed good recycling habits overall. However, food waste seemed to be an issue with only a third of residents recycling used food. With reference to the use of plastic shopping bags most participants felt that shops should offer paper bags instead and many felt that the charge for plastic bags should be higher. A large majority of participants also felt that local shops should also charge more for plastic bags that the government should enforce a total ban the use of plastic bags.

On the other hand to highlight where improvements are needed in High Town many of the residents felt that the area should be cleaned up with regard to fly tipping, rubbish and overall cleanliness. There was also a request from many of the residents in the findings for more restaurants, nicer places to eat, cafes and child friendly areas.

The report also identified that there needs to be improvements in awareness as to who the town councillors are and that the existing local community initiatives could be promoted further.

To conclude the executive summary recommendations suggested from this report would therefore be to improve cleanliness, rubbish removal and prevent fly tipping in High Town. Promotional drives should be considered in the areas of recycling of food waste, awareness of town councillors and some of the specific community initiatives. Careful consideration of what new businesses should be setting up in the High Town with priority given to restaurants, cafes and child friendly places. Safety and public services were also highlighted as areas for improvements such as fitting CCTV to the area and more frequent bus services.

Introduction

This report details the findings of a recent survey carried out within the High Town area of Luton. The aim of this report is to understand and examine the views of the residents in High Town concerning the local area. Specifically, this report focuses on community engagement, community improvements and attitudes towards the use of plastic bags. This research was conducted to assist in giving a deeper understanding of the issues affecting the local community, to ultimately build awareness and promote improvement initiatives.

Within this study, 129 questionnaires were completed both online and face-to-face by participants of the High Town area of Luton. The data was collected in the months of July and August 2018 and the data analysis is presented in this report. The report initially gives an overview of the participants' age, gender, nationality and year the recipient moved to High Town. This follows with the interesting results found around community engagement, community improvement ideas and attitudes towards the use of plastic bags local to the High Town Area.

Demographic Information

The demographic information was gathered to give an overview of the High Town residents who took part in the survey. This included the participants' gender, age, nationality and the year the participant moved to High Town and are presented below (table 1). The main demographic results showed that 65.6% or 80 of the participants were female and 34.4 % or 42 of the participants were male. The age of the participants ranged between the ages of 18 to 84. The majority of participants identified themselves as English (42.5 %, n = 51) or from the UK (35 %, n = 42). The year that the participants moved to High Town ranged from 1933 to 2018. However, the highest number of participants surveyed have lived in High Town for two or three years since either 2015 or 2016.

Gender	%	Number of participants
Male	65.6	80
Female	34.4	42
Total	100%	122
Age	Minimum	Maximum
	18	84
Nationality	%	Number of Participants
England	42.5	51
UK	35	42
Poland	5	6
Ireland	1.7	2
America/ USA	1.7	2
Scotland	0.83	1
Austria	0.83	1
Germany	0.83	1
Luton	0.83	1
New Zealand	0.83	1
Zimbabwe	0.83	1
Northern Ireland	0.83	1
Sweden	0.83	1
Bangladesh	0.83	1
Brazil	0.83	1
Mexico	0.83	1
Australia	0.83	1
Columbia	0.83	1
Houghton Regis	0.83	1
Canada	0.83	1
Estonia	0.83	1
Nigeria	0.83	1
Total	100%	120

Table 1: Demographic information including Gender, Age and Nationality.

Year Moved to High Town	%	Number of Participants
2018	1.55	2
2017	7.75	10
2016	8.53	11
2015	8.53	11
2014	2.33	3
2013	3.88	5
2012	6.2	8
2011	4.65	6
2010	6.2	8
2009	5.43	7
2008	4.65	6
2007	4.65	6
2006	1.55	2
2005	0.78	1
2004	0.78	1
2002	3.1	4
2001	2.33	3
2000	1.55	2
1999	2.33	3
1996	0.78	1
1995	0.78	1
1994	1.55	2
1990	3.1	4
1988	2.33	3
1987	3.88	5
1983	0.78	1
1980	2.33	3
1978	0.78	1
1976	1.55	2
1975	1.55	2
1973	1.55	2
1933	0.78	1
I work in High Town	0.78	1
Been here my whole life	0.78	1
Total	100%	126

Table 2: Year moved to High Town.

Community Initiatives

The participants were asked what community initiatives they were aware of in the local area. The results are presented below (table 2). The community initiative choices on the survey included Friends of High Town, Edible High Town, The Woodcraft Folk, Ruby Women’s Fellowship, High Town Bag, and the High Town Honeys. The main results showed that the highest number of participants, over 85%, were aware of the Friends of High Town Initiative (85.93%, n = 110). Other results showed that nearly half the participants were aware of High Town Honeys (50%, n = 64) and slightly over 40 percent of the participants were aware of the recent High Town Bag community initiative (41.40, n = 53).

Community Initiatives	% of Total Participants	Count
Friends of High Town	85.93	110
Edible High Town	21.09	27
The Woodcraft Folk	25	32
Ruby Women’s Fellowship	15.65	20
High Town Bag	41.40	53
High Town Honeys	50	64

Table 3: Results of awareness of community initiatives.

Town Councillors

All of the participants were asked who their town councillors were in High Town with the results presented below (table 3). The results showed that exactly half of the participants knew who their town councillor were, with the correct answer being Andrew Malcolm and Maahwish Mizra (50%, n= 64). Just over 7 % of the participants thought that their town councillors were John Baker and Mark Rivers (7.03 %, n= 9) and under 1% thought that Irak Chowdhury and Meryl Dolling were their town councillors. However, surprisingly, nearly 45% percent of the residents of High Town were unaware of who the councillors covering the area were (43.75 %, n = 56).

High Town Councillors	%	Count
Andrew Malcolm & Maahwish Mirza	49.23	64
John Baker & Mark Rivers	6.92	9
Irak Chowdhury & Meryl Dolling	0.77	1
I don't know	43.07	56

Table 4: Results of knowledge of town councillors in High Town.

Sense of Belonging

A question was asked around the participants' sense of belonging to the local community. The participants were surveyed on a 5-point scale ranging from very weak to very strong. The results are displayed in the table below (table 4). The main results showed that over half of the participants showed a strong sense of belonging to the local community of High Town (50.78 %, n = 65). However, around a quarter of the participants feel a weak sense of belonging to the High Town community (23.45%, n = 30). With regard to the sense of belonging to the town of Luton the results showed that nearly half of participants also showed a strong sense of belonging to the town of Luton (49.22 %, n = 63). Although, around a quarter felt a weak sense of belonging to Luton (23.45%, n = 63). Thirdly the participants also found that their sense of belonging to the country was also strong (47.66 %, n = 61). Finally the participants were asked about sense of belonging to the whole world the results showed that over half of the participants also felt a very strong sense of belonging to the world (58.59 %, n = 75).

Sense of Belonging	Very Weak	%	Weak	%	Strong	%	Very Strong	%	Mean
My sense of belonging to my local community of High Town is:	6	4.69	30	23.45	65	50.78	13	10.16	2.90
My sense of belonging to the town of Luton is:	8	6.25	30	23.45	63	49.22	27	21.09	2.86
My sense of belonging to the country where I live is:	4	3.13	29	22.66	61	47.66	36	28.13	2.99
My sense of belonging to the whole world is:	10	7.81	45	35.16	57	44.53	75	58.59	3.09

Table 5: Results of participant's sense of belonging to local community.

Others Sense of Belonging

Thoughts of other people's sense of belonging were measured and the majority of participants felt that in their opinion other people in High Town felt a strong sense of belonging to the community (56.8 %, n = 71) . Although there were still a high number of participants who consider that others feel a weak sense of belonging to the community (43.2 %, n = 54). The results are displayed below (table 6).

Others Sense of Belonging	%	Count
Feel a strong sense of belonging to this community	56.8	71
Feel a weak sense of belonging to this community	43.2	54

Table 6: Results of participants' perspectives of other people's sense of belonging to High Town.

Specific features of High Town

Perspectives of specific features of High Town were collected from the participants including cleanliness, safety, diversity, public services, places to go out and whether it is family friendly. The participants were surveyed on a 7-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The results are displayed in the table below (table 5). The main results showed that around 30 % of residents agreed that High Town is somewhat exciting (32.18 %, n= 42) and over 25 % agreed that it is exciting (26.56, n= 34). The majority of residents also agreed that High Town was somewhat safe (32.81, n = 42). However, the highest number of residents disagreed somewhat that High Town was clean (14.84, n = 19). This was also reflected through the mean score which echoed the thoughts towards cleanliness in High Town (M = 2.95) showing that the average score of the participants somewhat disagreed that High Town was clean. The residents mostly agreed that there is diversity in High Town (43.75, n = 56) and mostly agreed that it had good public services (33.59 %, n = 43). Finally over 20 percent of residents agreed that High Town has a lot of nice places to go out (21.88, n = 28) although this result was not particularly high and the mean score suggests that most residents neither agreed nor disagreed on this (M = 3.78). The majority of residents, over 21%, agreed that High Town has a lot of places for families although once again this score was relatively low and the mean score suggested that the residents neither agree nor disagree (M= 3.99).

Perspectives of High Town	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Exciting	6	12	14	17	42	34	5	4.56
<i>Percent</i>	4.69	9.38	10.94	13.28	32.81	26.56	3.91	
Safe	13	12	24	22	42	15	1	3.93
<i>Percent</i>	10.15	9.38	18.75	17.19	32.81	11.72	0.78	
Clean	16	17	19	5	9	5	0	2.95
<i>Percent</i>	12.5	13.28	14.84	3.91	7.03	3.91	0	
Diverse	0	1	2	5	22	56	40	5.92
<i>Percent</i>	0	0.78	1.56	3.91	17.19	43.75	31.25	
Has Good Public Services	5	8	13	35	43	23	3	4.44
<i>Percent</i>	3.91	6.25	10.16	27.34	33.59	17.97	2.34	
Has a lot of nice places to go out	14	15	22	20	28	17	3	3.78
<i>Percent</i>	10.94	11.72	17.19	15.63	21.88	13.28	2.34	
Has a lot of places for families	10	12	23	32	35	13	5	3.99
<i>Percent</i>	7.81	9.38	17.97	25	27.34	10.15	3.91	

Table 7: Results of perspectives of features of High Town.

Reasons for Coming to High Town

The participants' main reasons for coming to High Town were surveyed. The choices included to get a haircut, buy groceries, go to the pub, buy takeaway food, visit the estate agents, visit second hand shops, to get a beauty treatment, to use other services, visit the pharmacy and to alternatively if they never come to High Town for anything. The results are presented in the table below (table 7). The main results showed around half of participants reason for going to High Town is to go to buy groceries (49.22 %, n = 63). Closely followed by going to the pub (45.31 %, n = 58), to buy takeaway food (42.97 %, n = 55) and to visit the second hand shops (41.40, n = 53). The least score for the reason to go to High Town was going to visit the estate agent (2.34 %, n = 3).

Reasons for coming to High Town	%	Count
Get a haircut	23.44	30
Buy groceries	49.22	63
Go to the pub	45.31	58
Buy Take away food	42.97	55
Visit the estate agents	2.34	3
Visit second hand shops	41.40	53
To get a beauty treatment	7.03	9
To use other services	35.16	45
Visit the pharmacy	29.69	38
I never come to high town for anything	7.03	9

Table 8: Results of reasons for coming To High Town.

Improvements

Participants were asked to write what they would like to see improved in the High Town area. Some perspectives around this were analysed and reported below (table 8) with direct quotations from the residents:

Issues and Improvements	Quotes around Issue and Improvement
<p><u>Cleanliness</u> was a key issue that participants felt should be addressed. Around 40 of the residents surveyed mentioned this as a key issue that required improvement. This included overall cleanliness, cleaning the streets, stopping fly tipping and litter picking.</p>	<p><i>“Cleaned especially at the top loads of rubbish left on street”</i></p> <p><i>“Clean the rubbish in alleyways”</i></p> <p><i>“High Town Road needs to be cleaner. Streets need to be cleaned more often”</i></p> <p><i>“Increased litter picking across High Town”</i></p> <p><i>“An end to fly tipping”</i></p> <p><i>“Broken glass swept up more often”</i></p>
<p>There was a perspective from around 30 of the respondents that <u>more shops</u> were required, <u>a wider variety of shops</u>, and more <u>restaurants and cafes</u> to be opened in High Town.</p>	<p><i>“A cafe that is easy to access with small children, e.g. Space for buggies, nappy-change, comfy seats to breastfeed babies”</i></p> <p><i>“Nice places to eat out”</i></p> <p><i>“Good supermarket”</i></p> <p><i>“More nice cafes”</i></p> <p><i>“A better variety of shops other than off licences and chicken shops”</i></p> <p><i>“Variety of shops no more charities”</i></p> <p><i>“It would be nice to have a post office back. I’d like a bakery”</i></p>

<p>Around 7 of the residents called for <u>improvements to the existing shops</u> including being cleaner and refurbished and to have less abandoned or vacant shops.</p>	<p><i>“lots of vacant shops - makes the area look derelict”</i></p> <p><i>“More work to address abandoned shops”</i></p> <p><i>“Less closed down businesses”</i></p> <p><i>“Some shops to be cleaner”</i></p> <p><i>“Staff in shops should speak English to encourage people from other languages”</i></p> <p><i>“Advertising for shops down here”</i></p> <p><i>“Prevent shop owners from being able to neglect their shop fronts/ be permanently closed/ untidy and dirty”.</i></p> <p><i>“Repaint shop fronts”</i></p>
<p>Around 6 of the residents mentioned <u>safety</u> as an area of improvement and that there should be more policing and CCTV should be installed.</p>	<p><i>“I don’t feel safe here anymore”</i></p> <p><i>“Improve security”</i></p> <p><i>“Safety and policing”</i></p> <p><i>“More CCTV”</i></p> <p><i>“Could a surveillance camera be set up to catch the culprits”</i></p>
<p>Around 7 of the participants suggested <u>parking improvements</u> and proposed parking enforcement and free parking on certain days.</p>	<p><i>“One way road system and parking”</i></p> <p><i>“Parking is terrible fine drivers for parking on double yellows”</i></p> <p><i>“Parking enforcement of cars not parking on pavement”</i></p> <p><i>“have free parking on certain days”</i></p> <p><i>“fine people for illegal parking”</i></p>

<p>Around 4 of the residents complained about <u>noise pollution</u> from the businesses, people or aircraft and that there should be a noise reduction action line and that noise incidents should be investigated.</p>	<p><i>“Late night business noise reduction(loud music and loud customers)”</i></p> <p><i>More care taken to investigate and deal with noise complaints.</i></p> <p><i>“Less noise from air craft at night. A Luton Council noise action line open every day with power to stop excessive noise from people shouting and playing music in their gardens. Noise patrols”.</i></p> <p><i>“lots of noise at night”</i></p>
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<p>There was a call from around 20 of the residents for <u>more general council-led community services</u> and structural improvements in the area this included public services in general, bus services, toilet provision, redevelopment and repairs.</p>	<p><i>“Council to visit in area”</i></p> <p><i>“Council doing their jobs”</i></p> <p><i>“Different better public services. Gardening and flowers”</i></p> <p><i>“Bus services one an hour are not enough”</i></p> <p><i>“Community services”</i></p> <p><i>“Community spaces, social spaces” “More community get togethers”</i></p> <p><i>“More family friendly services”</i></p> <p><i>“More for youth”</i></p> <p><i>“Toilets in park and High Town road”</i></p> <p><i>“Redevelopment of car-park land between High Town road and High Town community.</i></p> <p><i>“I would like to see the conservation area improved. The council should get more involved in working to preserve the local heritage”</i></p> <p><i>“Wider pavements. The bollards are impossible”</i></p> <p><i>“Pedestrianise High Town Road”</i></p> <p><i>“More community gardens, more festivals”</i></p>
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Table 9: Results from issues and improvements around High Town.

Recycling Habits

Participants from High Town were also asked about their recycling habits. The results are displayed in the table below (table 9). The results showed that every time the majority of residents recycled paper (70.08%, n = 89), glass (63.78%, n = 81), batteries (63.78 %, n = 48) and plastic (54.33%, n = 69). However, the majority of residents never recycled their food waste (36.22%, n = 46).

Recycling	Never	Sometimes	About Half the Time	Most of the Time	Every Time
Paper	3	10	5	30	89
<i>Percent</i>	2.36	7.87	3.94	23.62	70.08
Glass	14	10	4	18	81
<i>Percent</i>	11.02	7.87	3.15	14.17	63.78
Batteries	18	18	17	26	48
<i>Percent</i>	14.17	14.17	13.39	20.47	37.80
Food Waste	46	23	9	24	25
<i>Percent</i>	36.22	18.11	7.09	18.90	19.69
Plastic	4	10	11	33	69
<i>Percent</i>	3.15	7.87	8.66	25.98	54.33

Table 10: Results from participants recycling habits in High Town.

Shopping Bags

5p Bag in Supermarket

The participants were asked how often they buy plastic 5p bags in the supermarket. The findings are displayed below (table 11). The results showed that over 50 % of the participants never bought plastic bags in the supermarket and always bring their own (52.38, n = 66). This was followed closely by nearly 40 % of the residents of High Town sometimes buying plastic bags in the supermarket (38.89%, n = 49).

5p Bags	Never I bring my own	Never, I pack my shopping straight to the car	Sometimes	Most Times	Every time I shop	Mean Score
Number of participants	66	2	49	6	3	2.05
Percent	52.38	1.59	38.89	4.76	2.38	

Table 12: Results as to how often participants bought 5p bags from the supermarket.

Plastic Bags in Local Corner Shop

The participants were asked how often they asked for a plastic bag in their ‘local’ corner shop. The findings are displayed below (table 12). The results showed that the majority of residents around 48% still sometimes ask for plastic bags in their local shop (47.62 %, n = 60) closely followed by never asking and always bringing their own (44.44 %, n = 56).

Local corner shop	Never I always bring my own	Sometimes	Most Times when I shop there	Every time I shop there	Mean
Number of Participants	56	60	8	2	1.67
Percent	44.44	47.62	6.35	1.59	

Table 13: Results as to how often participants asked for a plastic bag in their local shop.

Stop using Plastic Bags

The question was asked as to what would help participants to stop using plastic bags. The findings are displayed below (table 13). The results showed that the majority of High Town residents felt that shops should offer paper shopping bags (73.02%, n = 92), there should be better planning of shopping trips (49.21, n = 62) and shops should charge more for plastic bags (48.41, n = 61).

Help participants to stop using plastic bags	Shops should offer paper shopping bags	Shops should offer only fabric shopping bags	Better planning of my shopping trips	Nothing, I think using plastic bags is very convenient	Shops should charge more for plastic bags
Number of Participants	92	43	62	3	61
Percent	73.02	34.13	49.21	2.38	48.41

Table 14: Results as to what would help participants stop using plastic bags in High Town.

Local Shops to Charge for plastic Bags

The question was asked if local shops should charge for single use plastic bags and the widely held view was that yes local shops should charge (86.17%, n = 106) and a small minority said no they shouldn't charge (13.82, n = 13.82). The findings are displayed below (table 14).

Local shops charge	Yes	No
Number of Participants	106	17
Percent	86.17	13.82

Table 15: Results as to whether local shops should charge for using plastic bags.

Government Ban the Use of Plastic Shopping Bags

The participants were asked if the government should ban the use of plastic shopping bags in small, local shops. The results showed that the view was held that plastic shopping bags should be banned in small local shops (73.78%, n = 90). Although a smaller still minority felt that they shouldn't be banned (26.23%, n = 32). The findings are displayed below (table 15).

Government Ban	Yes	No
Number of Participants	90	32
Percent	73.78	26.23

Table 16: Results as to whether the government should ban the use of plastic shopping bags in small, local shops.

Feelings about the Environment and the Impact of Consumption Choices

The residents were asked questions around their feelings about the environment and the impact of their consumption choices (Table 16). The choices were measured on a 7-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The main findings that showed the highest scores were:

- 30% of residents agreed a little that when they purchase products they consider the environmental consequence (30.95%, n = 39).
- 30% of residents agreed spending should be limited to save animals that are near extinction nationwide (32%, n = 40).
- 40% of residents agreed that consumption choices should be guided by contribution to the public interest of the society (37.6 %, n = 47).
- 35% of residents agreed what they purchase as a consumer has an effect on the nation's environmental problems.
- 35% of residents agreed each consumer's behaviour can have an effect on how companies treat the natural environment (37.3%, n = 47).
- 33% of residents agreed that each consumer has an effect on how companies behave towards the environment and it makes a difference what they do (33.06, n = 41).
- 35% of residents agreed each consumer can have a positive effect on society by purchasing products sold by environmentally responsible companies (34.96%, n = 43).
- 27% of residents neither agreed nor disagreed that they feel like they are living in a global village (26.98%, n = 34).
- 20% of residents felt that they neither agreed nor disagreed that they feel that what they do could “touch” someone all around the world (21.42 %, n = 27).
- 20% of residents felt that they neither agreed nor disagreed that they are “next door neighbours” with people living in other parts of the world (21.43, n = 27).
- 26% of residents felt that they neither agreed nor disagreed that they are related to everyone in the world as if they were family (26.19%, n = 33).
- 28% of residents agreed that they felt that people around the world are more similar than different (27.78%, n = 37).

Environment and consumption choices	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree a Little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
I decide to purchase products by considering the environmental consequence.	3	7	8	20	39	33	16	4.98
<i>Percent</i>	2.38	5.56	6.35	15.87	30.95	26.19	12.07	
We should limit our spending to save animals that are near extinction nationwide.	5	6	6	20	20	40	28	5.22
<i>Percent</i>	4	4.8	4.8	16	16	32	22.4	
Our consumption choices should be guided by our contribution to the public interest of the society.	4	5	4	14	21	47	24	5.35
<i>Percent</i>	3.2	4	3.2	11.2	21.6	37.6	19.2	
What I purchase as a consumer has an effect on the nation's environmental problems.	2	3	2	12	23	44	39	5.73
<i>Percent</i>	1.6	2.4	1.6	9.6	19.2	35.2	31.2	

Each consumer's behaviour can have an effect on how companies treat the natural environment.	3	3	2	9	27	47	41	5.76
<i>Percent</i>	2.38	2.38	1.59	7.14	16.67	37.3	32.54	
Each consumer has an effect on how companies behave towards the environment, hence it makes a difference what I do.	3	4	1	8	27	41	40	5.23
<i>Percent</i>	2.42	3.23	0.81	6.45	21.77	33.06	32.26	
Each consumer can have a positive effect on society by purchasing products sold by environmentally responsible companies.	2	3	3	7	24	43	41	5.79
<i>Percent</i>	1.62	2.44	2.44	5.69	19.51	34.96	33.33	
I feel that I am living in a global village	10	12	7	34	24	23	16	4.46
<i>Percent</i>	7.94	9.52	5.56	26.98	19.05	18.25	12.7	
I feel that what I do could "touch" someone all around the world	7	10	10	26	27	25	20	4.7
<i>Percent</i>	5.56	7.93	7.93	20.63	21.42	19.84	15.87	

I feel like I am “next door neighbours” with people living in other parts of the world	13	22	17	27	23	13	11	3.89
<i>Percent</i>	10.32	17.46	13.49	21.43	18.25	10.32	8.73	
I feel that I am related to everyone in the world as if they were my family.	18	19	15	33	22	9	10	3.73
<i>Percent</i>	14.29	15.08	11.9	26.19	17.46	7.14	7.94	
I feel that people around the world are more similar than different	5	8	7	25	25	35	21	4.96
<i>Percent</i>	3.97	6.35	5.56	19.84	19.84	27.78	16.67	

Table 17: Results of feelings about the environment and the impact of consumption choices.

High Town Festival Satisfaction

The High Town Festival 2018 survey was available online and responses were collected via Facebook page. In total, 37 people respondents filled out the survey.

Overall, the High Town Festival 2018 was perceived by the respondents of the survey as an event that helps to build a stronger community, an event that offers people of High Town an opportunity to meet and gives opportunities to find out more about the High Town community. Table 18 reports the overall satisfaction (Average) and percentages of respondents that expressed negative views about the festival (Disagree), and positive views about the festival (Agree).

Table 18: High Town Festival Satisfaction.

Is the High Town Festival:	Average*	Count	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree
Exciting	5.41	37	8% (3)	5% (2)	86% (32)
Fun	5.62	37	5% (2)	0	95% (35)
Good use of public money	5.81	37	8% (3)	5% (2)	86% (32)
Helps to build a stronger community	6.30	37	3% (1)	5% (2)	92% (34)
Promotes the diversity of High Town	6.00	37	5% (2)	3% (1)	92% (34)
Offers opportunities for people of High Town to get together	6.11	37	5% (2)	3% (1)	92% (34)
Good opportunity to find out more about the community	6.16	37	5% (2)	3% (1)	92% (34)

*Response scale was 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). Score above 4.0 indicates that, on average, respondents agreed with the statements.

Respondents were asked about their recommendations with regards to improving the festival experience. Table 19 reports direct quotes from the participants who responded to the survey.

Table 19: Direct quotes from festival participants on what aspects of the festival could be improved.

Fun fair for the children in people's park ,farm animal balloons and banners up shop on lamp post have a karaoke compition
I have plenty of ideas but won't put them forward, as require research into what residents actually want and need, to make informed decisions with their (public) money.
I would have more activities/stalls spread out over not only high town road but also people's park. I think that there could have been more stalls for children as the majority of people who

attended appeared to be families
More vegetarian/vegan food options. Small rides for children and more arts activities for all ages.
I'd try to get more Street entertainment such as jugglers and magicians as roving entertainment
More diverse food and music
Spread the word to invite a variety of good stalls. There were some interesting and unique stalls, but these were outnumbered by some which looked a little bit 'car boot sale'.
Good diverse music, food, drink (alcoholic and non-alcoholic options), entertainment.....more of whats already there along with stalls for local people and organisations, charities to publicise and raise money
Bring back the animal corner and showcase all the local activities that are on offer in high town.
More for children; bring back Aerial Arts; have standardised stalls for hire; stewards guiding people to different events
More children's activities. There was much more in 2017.
It would look quite similar. More stalls/merchandise relating to High Town specifically.
A special area for 'car boot sale' type stands, which everyone could have a stand for, but isn't spread out across the festival - makes it look a bit cheap to have it spread out across the whole street.
More activities for children
Things for kids to do
some kind kids' activities would be great
More food
More kids' activities
I'd need more time to consider this.
More charity stalls
Keep much the same, maybe have some 'fringe' talks? An after- party?!
Maybe I didn't see everything as was running a stall, but could there be more of a street party feel - some long tables and the chance to eat together? It almost needs a focal, rallying point in the day where there could be a couple of short speeches about what is going on - maybe it could be done as a short awards ceremony to name and celebrate what is going on in High Town.
It was brilliant. A few more street food stalls would be good
More variety with the entertainment. More craft stalls

Conclusion

This report has outlined the results from the recent High Town survey which examined the views of residents with regard to the local town specifically community engagement, community improvements and attitudes towards the use of plastic bags. The key findings showed that:

- The majority of residents of High Town were aware of some of the community initiatives but not all.
- Only half of the residents knew who their town councillors were and this potentially could be promoted further.
- Around half of the participants had a strong sense of belonging to the Local High Town area and half of the participants to Luton as a whole. Although it should still be noted that around a quarter of participants felt a weak sense of belonging to both High Town and Luton. Moreover, over half of the participants felt that others had a strong sense of belonging to the High Town community. Although there was still under half who felt that others did not have a strong sense of belonging to the community.
- Many of the residents somewhat disagreed that High Town was clean. This was also reflected in the written answer that many of the residents gave that there were issues with fly tipping, rubbish and overall cleanliness.
- The mean scores overall showed that residents felt that High Town was somewhat exciting, safe, diverse and had good public services. Although some of these findings including safety and public services were highlighted as areas for improvements in the written answers such as fitting CCTV to the area and better bus services.
- The mean scores overall showed that residents neither agreed nor disagreed that there were nice places to go out or that there were many places for families. However, there were suggestions for more restaurants, nicer places to eat, cafes and child friendly areas requested in the written improvement section of this report.

- The main results showed around half of participants' reason for going to High Town is to go to buy groceries, followed by going to the pub, takeaway food and to visit the second hand shops which give insights for future business openings.
- The majority of residents had good recycling habits every time including paper, glass, batteries, and plastic. However, only around a third of residents recycled food waste every time which could be an area for promotional awareness.
- The majority of residents had good shopping bag habits with over 60% of participants never buying plastic shopping bags in the supermarket. The result highlighted that many of the residents felt that shops should offer paper bags instead of plastic and that larger shops and local shops should also charge more for plastic bags. Moreover, over 75% of residents felt that the government should completely ban the use of plastic bags.

Overall, this report gives some interesting findings around the High Town area specific to the views of the residents assisting in giving a deeper understanding of the issues affecting the local community to ultimately build awareness and promote specific improvement initiatives.