

London Borough of Merton



Statement of Consultation and consultation results

Making More of Morden
Delivery the vision for Morden town centre

February 2016

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out how the London Borough of Merton complied with the consultation requirements of Merton's Statement of Community Involvement (2005) and the Regulations (The Town and Country Planning (Local Developments) (England) (Amended) Regulations 2012) by engaging, involving and consulting with local residents, local community groups/organisations, business, ethnic minority groups/organisations, local environmental groups/organisation and visitors to Morden town centre.
- 1.2 Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) England) (Amended) Regulation 2012 requires local authorities to prepare a Statement of Consultation setting out:
- i. Which bodies and persons the local planning authority were invited to make representations under Regulation
 - ii. How those bodies and person were invited to make representations under either of those regulations
 - iii. a summary of the main issues raised by the representations made
 - iv. pursuant to either of those regulation, and
 - v. how any representation made pursuant to either of those regulations have been taken into account

2 Merton's Statement of Consultation (SCI)

- 2.1 Merton's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was adopted in 2006 and describes how the community can be involved in the preparation of planning development documents.
- 2.2 The SCI is part of Merton's Local Plan and sets out the council's commitment to community involvement in planning. Its explains how Merton's local community, residents groups/association/organisations, stakeholders, and other interested parties can be involved in developing planning documents, by informing the council what they think of a plan/strategy, provide additional information and suggest changes to the a plan/strategy.
- 2.3 Some of the engagement tools set out in the SCI has changed since its adoption in 2006. For example the council now has a Facebook and Twitter pages which is used as an additional method of alerting communities to new press releases on a range of topics including council's consultations.
- 2.4 Furthermore the council no longer has a dedicated community engagement officer for planning matters. However in spite of not having a dedicated officer, all officers are now involved in plan making process actively take part in and conduct outreach engagements events with the local community, community groups and other interested parties. These changes are not considered to be significant changes to the principles of Merton's SCI.
- 2.5 This statement reports on the engagement methods used during the Making more of Morden consultation held between 30th September – 11th November 2015, the feedback receive and council response following this feedback.

3 How we got here

- 3.1 In 2008 and 2009 the council undertook a major consultation exercise called 'more Morden' seeking local residents and business and other interested parties views and opportunities for regeneration Morden town centre.
- 3.2 In 2009 the council formally adopted the vision for morden however, the recession and the following economic down turn meant the property market was not in a financial position or interested in any regeneration projects for Morden town centre.
- 3.3 In June 2011 the vision for Morden was incorporated into Merton's Core Planning Strategy (part of Merton's Local Plan) namely policy CS 3 Morden town centre.
- 3.4 Following six consecutive quarters of negative growth, the UK economy finally moved out of recession in the last quarter of 2009. In 2013 the council held a public consultation on the Morden Station Planning Brief site, which is considered to be a catalyst for regeneration in Morden town centre. Following the public consultation the Morden Station Planning Brief was adopted by the council in 2014.
- 3.5 In 2014 an independent planning inspector examined Merton's Site and Policies Plan (part of Merton's Local Plan), which was subject to four rounds of public consultation allocated four sites in Morden town centre for redevelopment.
- 3.6 In 2015 Transport of London (TfL) have subsequently made the Morden underground site one of its priority development site and Morden Station is included in the councils and TfL joint bid the Mayor of London for a part of the town centre to be designated as Housing Zone. In September 2015 it was announced that the council was successful in its bid.

4 How we consulted – consultation methods

- 4.1 During the Making more of Morden town centre consultation the council used different methods of public engagement to maximise public involvement and raise public awareness of the consultation. The survey was conducted using Survey Monkey, the reason being it is a user friendly survey portal and is recognisable. As well as Survey Monkey the other consultation methods used for this consultation were:
 - Meeting with Resident's groups/organisations/civic groups, for example Merton Park Residents group
 - Councillor's briefings
 - Presentation and engagement with Merton's Youth Parliament
 - Ensuring access to paper copies, maps and other consultation material in Morden library and on a dedicated webpage
 - Consultation invitation cards and posters displayed in Morden Library, Merton Link, the Planning Area (all on the ground floor entrance area) and in the lifts
 - Posters displayed in various locations at Morden Station
 - Officers handed out consultation invitation cards during the peak hours on the morning of 8 October 2015
 - Local business in the town centre also had consultation invitation cards and poster displayed on their premises, for example local estate agents, solicitors, food establishments and newsagents
 - Hand delivered consultation invitation cards to local businesses within Morden town centre

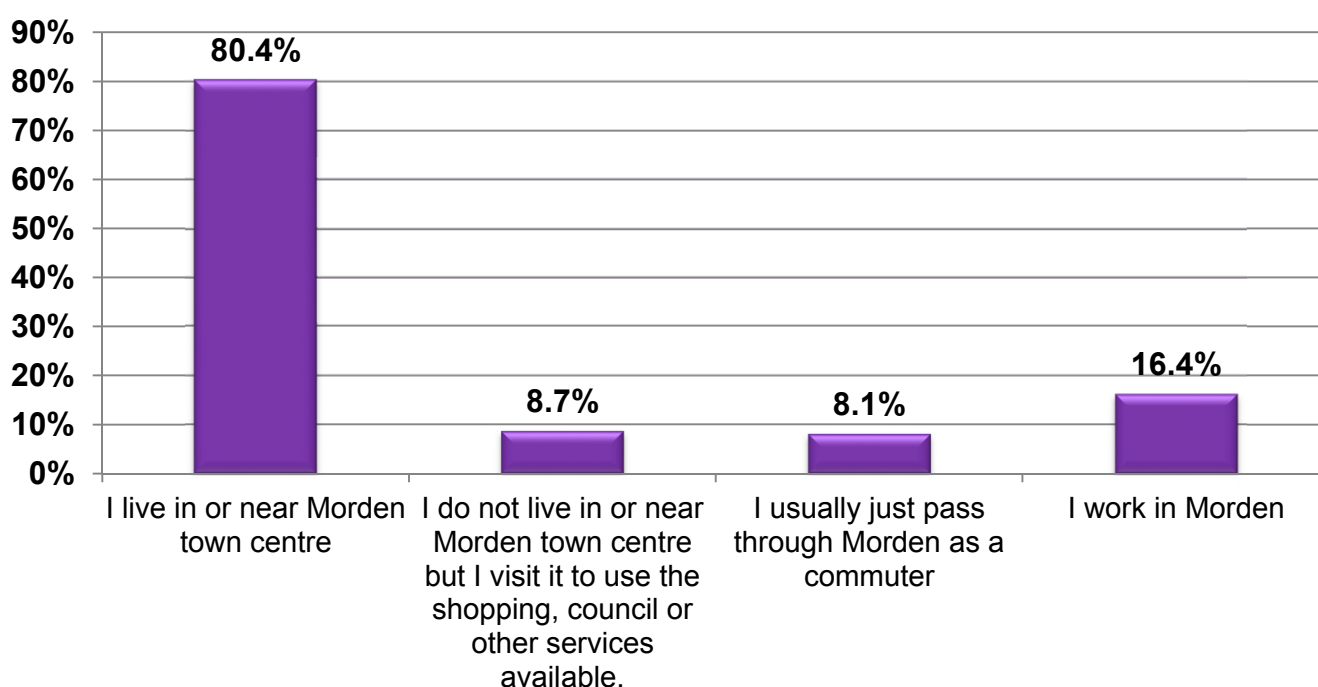
- Consultation packs given to ward councillors and the Leader of the council
- Leaflets, posters and maps provided for Labour's Cannon Hill Ward drop-in event.
- Emails sent to local primary schools inviting pupils to take part in the consultation as part of Merton's democracy week
- Consultation details tweeted on Merton's Twitter account and information on the council's Facebook page by Merton's Communication team
- Consultation information was placed on the council's Intranet Staff Bulletin page
- Formal written consultation letters and emails sent to residents and businesses
- Letters sent to all the occupants, registered landowners, lease holders and charge holders within the Housing Zone part of the town centre
- Dedicated webpage on Merton Council's website
- Public notice and front page article in Morden and Mitcham Guardian and Wimbledon Guardian (Merton's local papers).

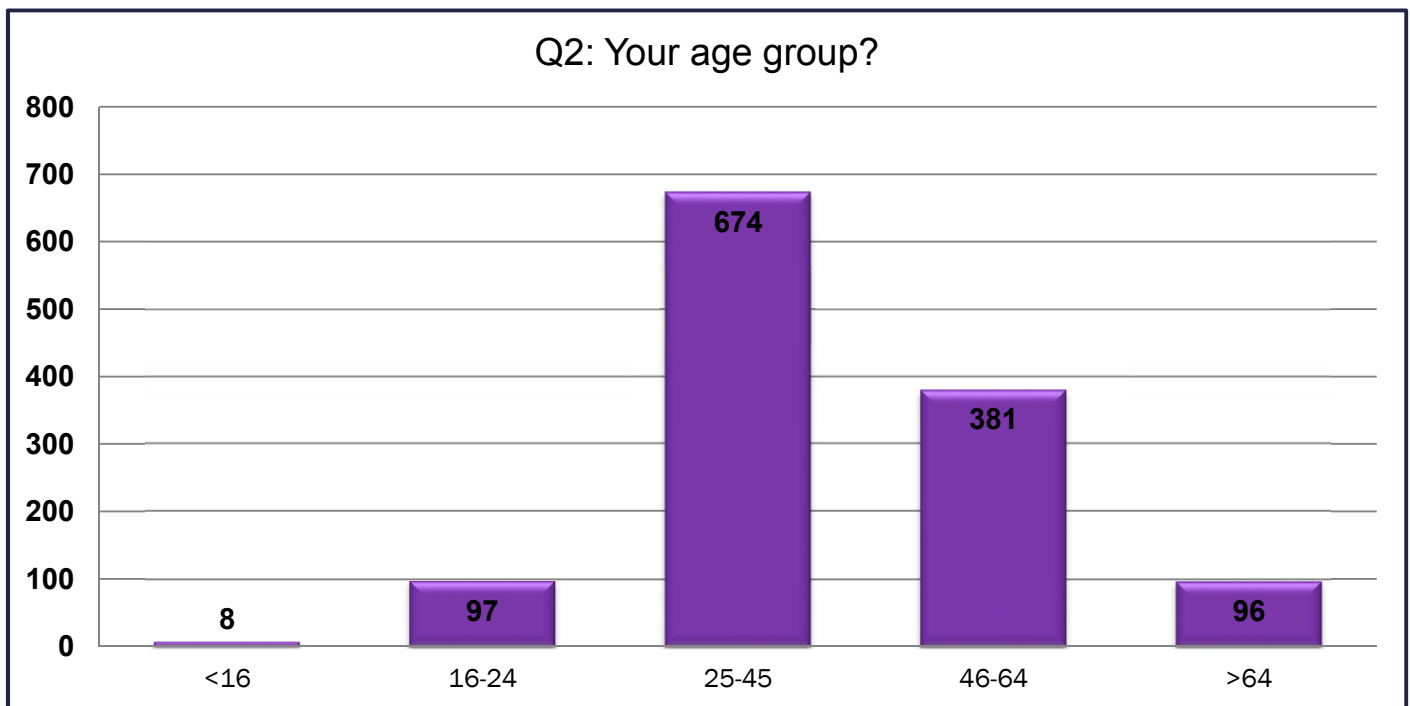
5 Consultation responses

5.1 The following section gives a summary of the response received. All individual responses can be found on the council's website at www.merton.gov.uk/moremorden.

5.2 A public consultation was carried out between September and November 2015, seeking views on the regeneration of Morden town centre. A total of 1265 response were received; of which 1255 responses were received via our online survey and 10 were on paper.

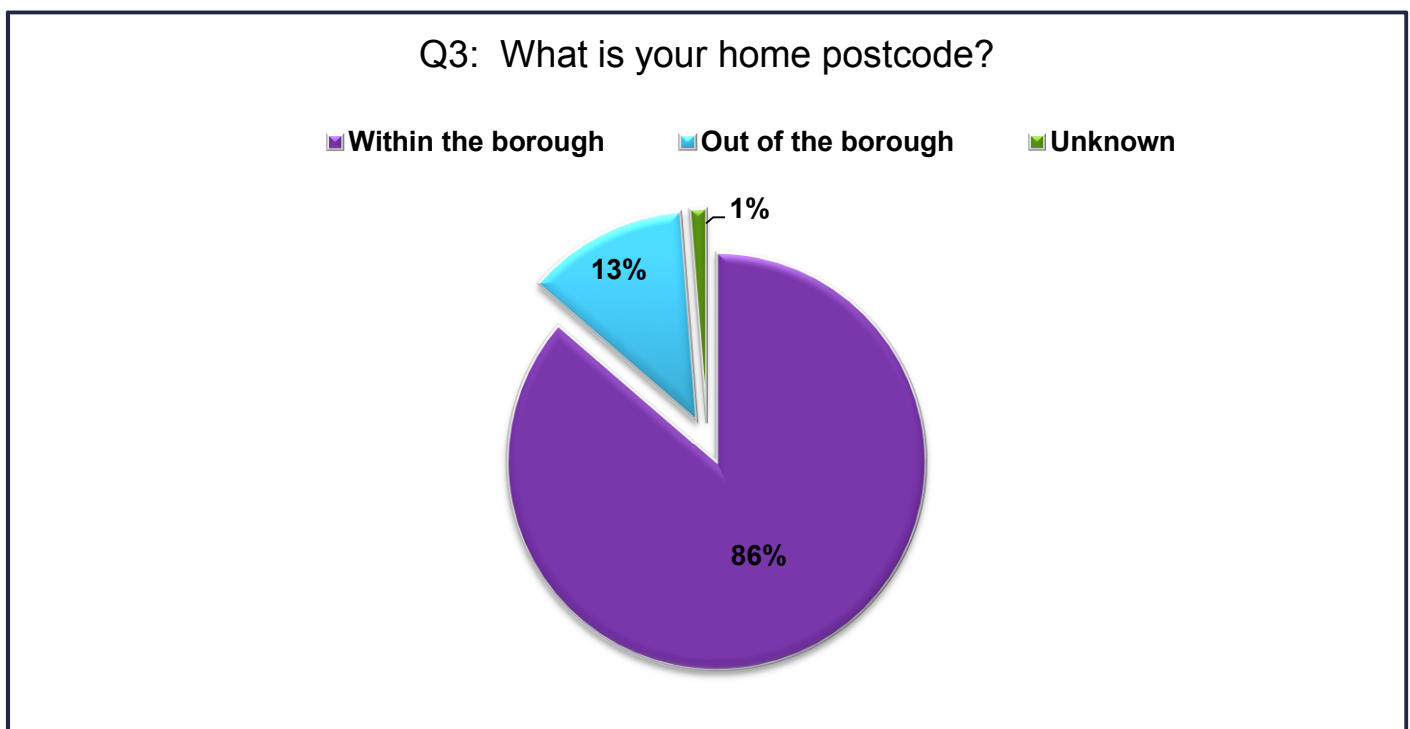
Q1. Please tick any of the following profiles that apply to you



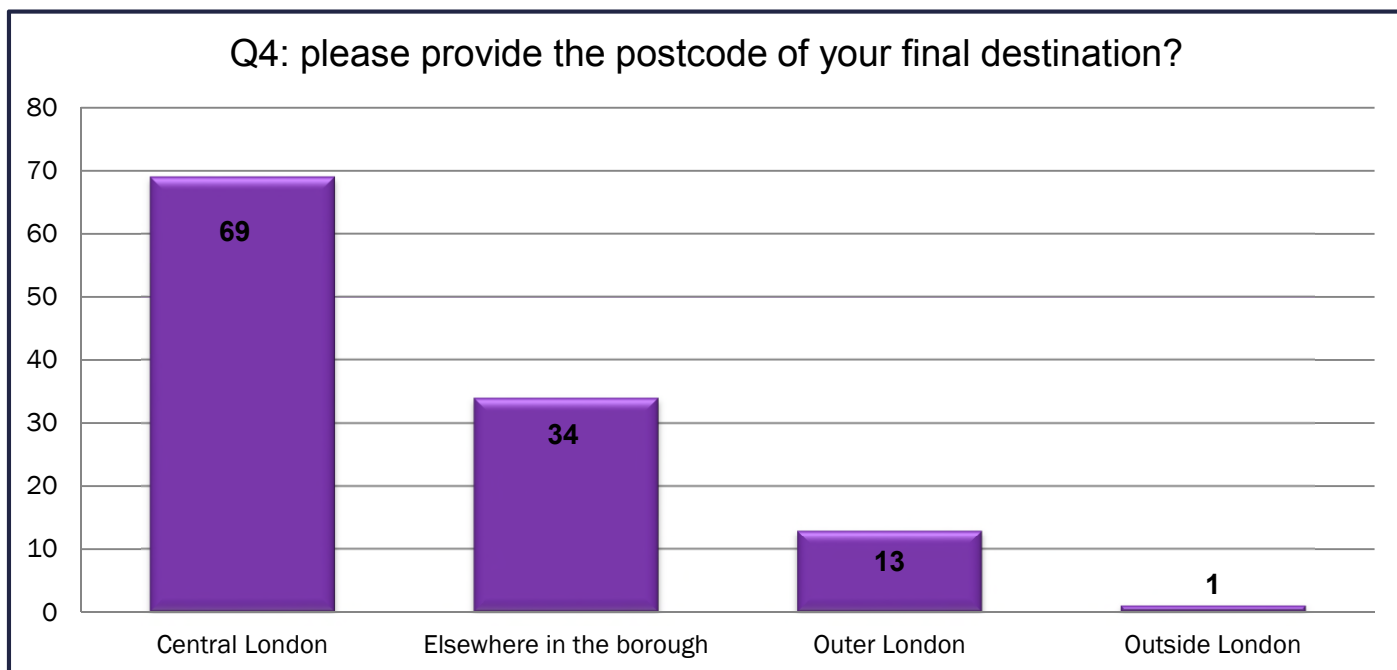


5.3 Over half (54%) of the responses received were from the 25-45 age group, followed by the 46-64 age group at 30%. The group with the lowest response was the under 16's at 0.6% of responses.

5.4 The low result in the under 16's is disappointing. The council held presentation with the Youth Parliament and sent letters to nearby school's link the consultation with Merton Democracy week.



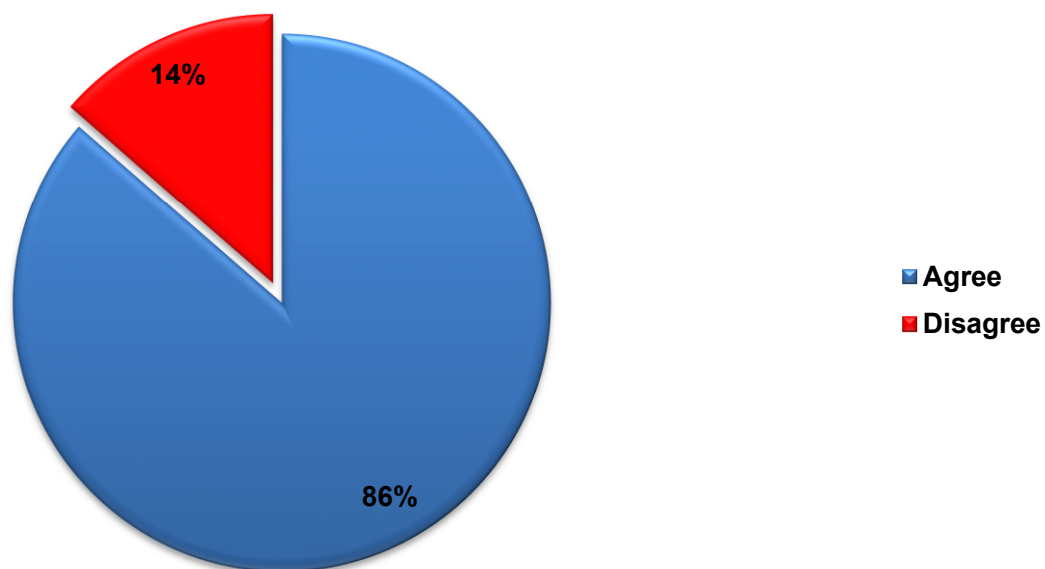
*Respondent did not give a full a postcode.



5.5 In 2008 you said the following are Morden's top positive attributes:

- Access to public transport
- Good quality housing and suburban character of the surrounding areas
- Parks, green spaces and leisure facilities

Q5: Are these still the best things about Morden?



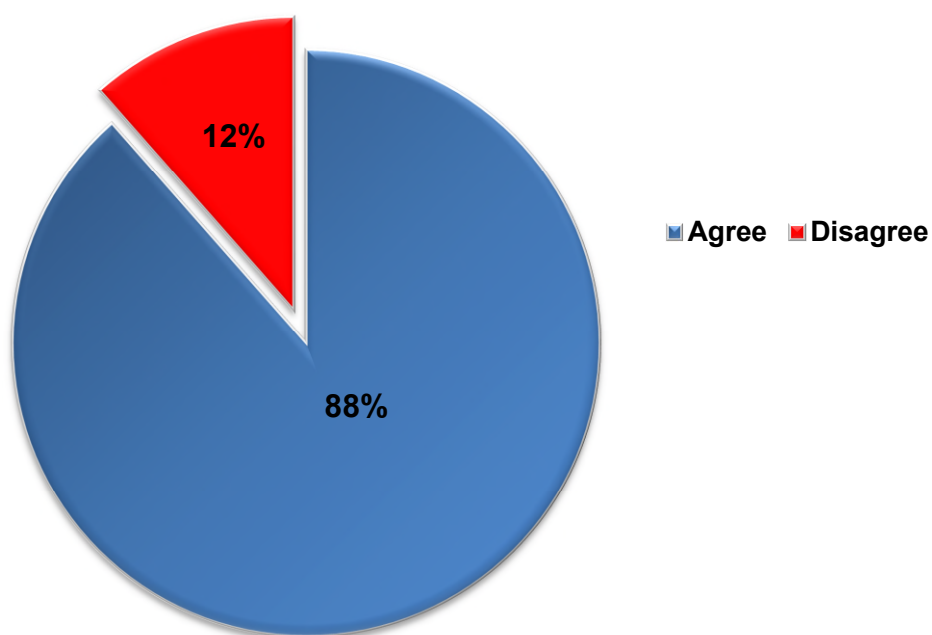
Other comments and views made under this question were:

- *'Town centre out of date'*
- *'Transport overcrowded – poor links to other parts of south London (e.g. Brixton, Streatham)'*
- *'Retail offer poor – no variety'*
- *'The green spaces are good - one of the best things about Morden'*

5.6 In 2008 you said the top three worst things about Morden town centre are:

- Poor quality and range of shops
- Pedestrian overcrowding
- Bus standing area

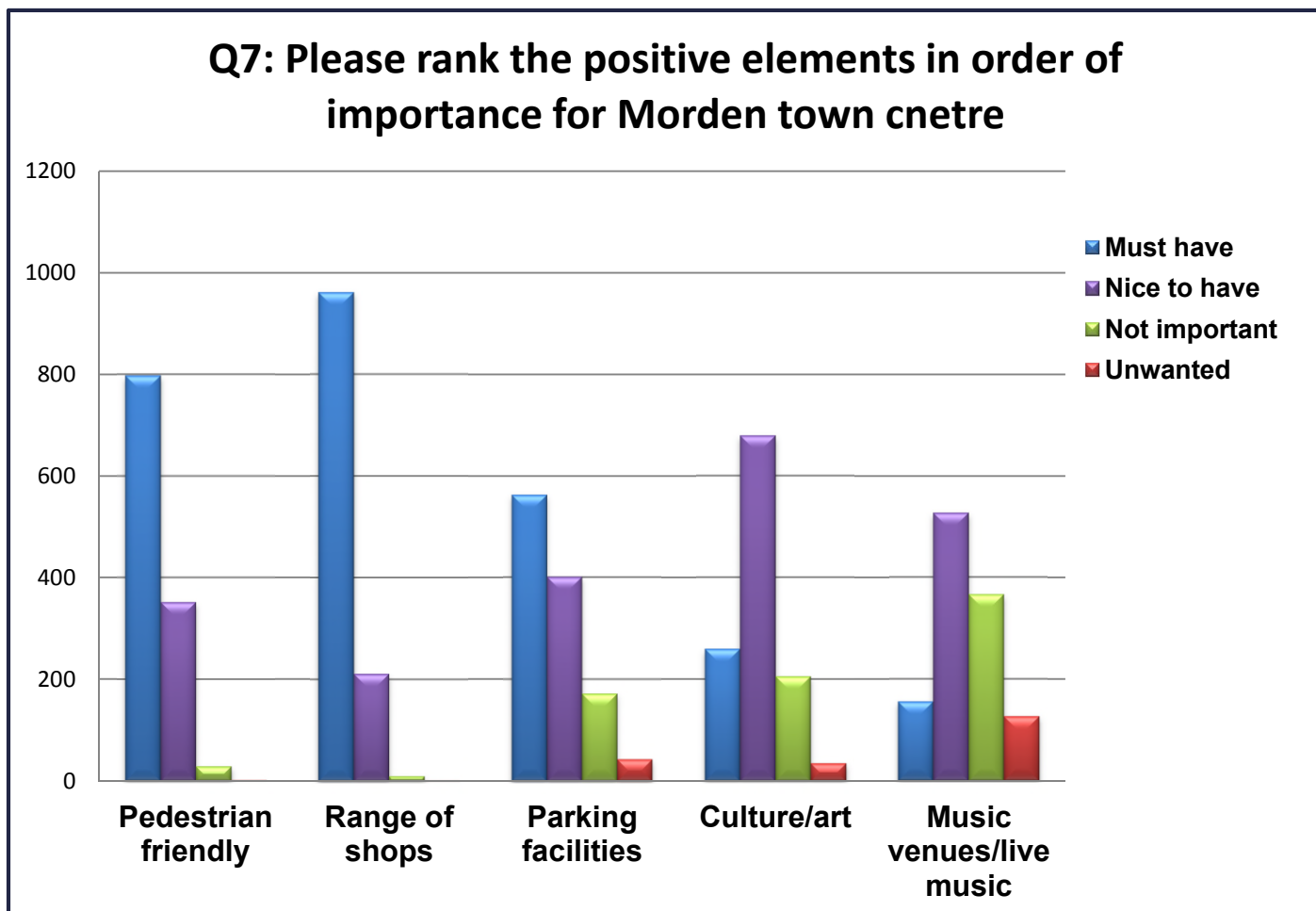
Q6: Are these still the top issues to be addressed?



Other comments and views made under this question were:

- *'Poor quality condition and range of shops'*
- *'Pedestrian overcrowding'*
- *'Bus standing area overcrowding'*

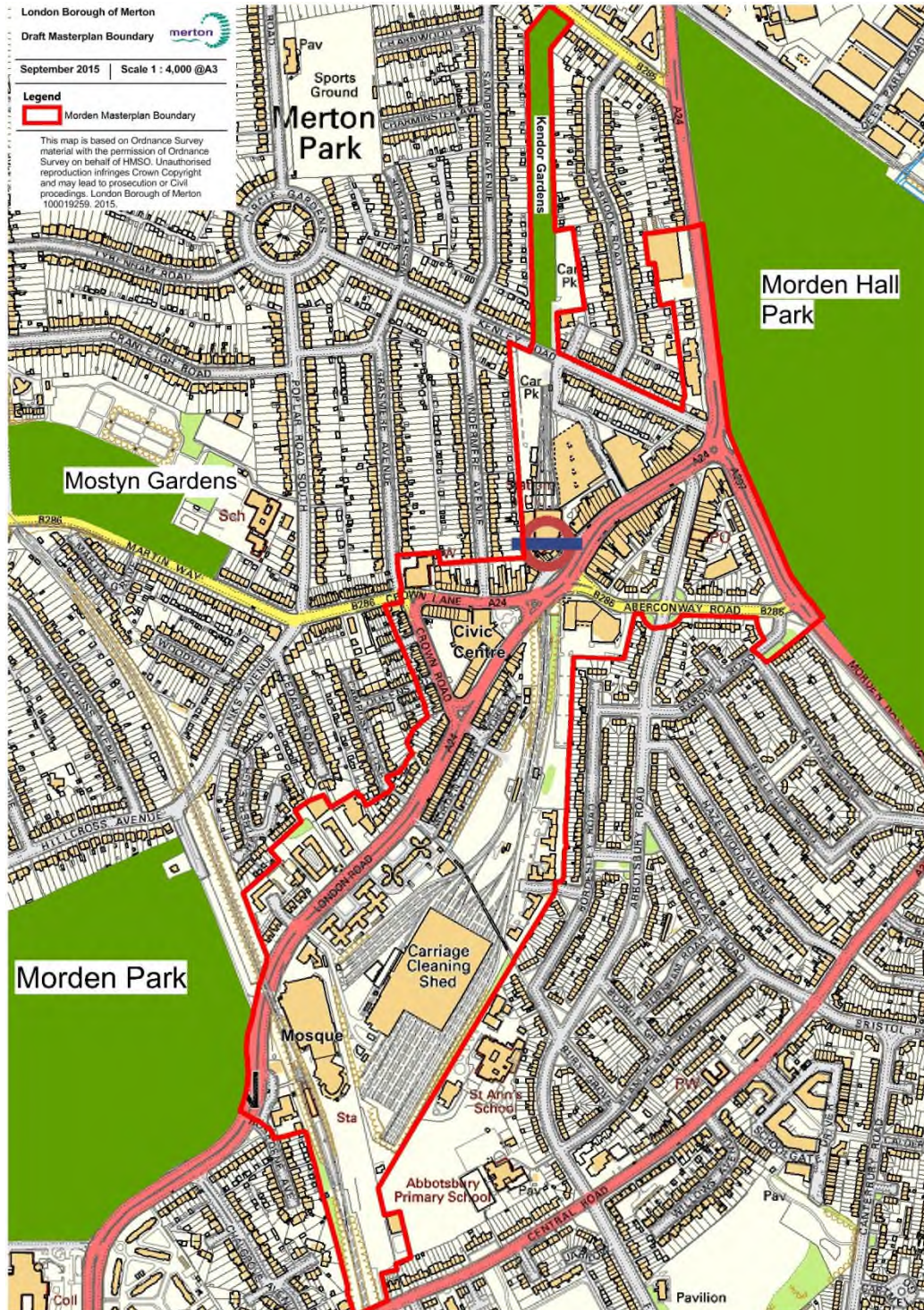
5.7 In 2008, when asked to 'think of a town centre you like, with elements that could apply to Morden town centre the top three replies were Wimbledon, Kingston and Sutton. Below are the positive elements for Wimbledon, Kingston and Sutton that the consultees provided.



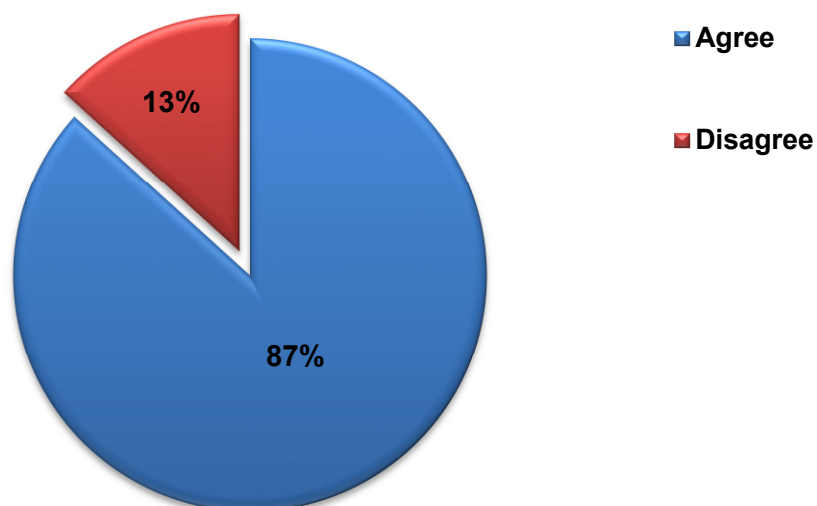
Other comments and views made under this question were:

- 'Morden Hall Park should be part of the regeneration of Morden town centre'
- 'There is a need to improve the range and variety of shops'

- 5.8 The next step for regeneration of Morden town centre is to develop a masterplan for the whole town centre.
- 5.9 The area within the boundary will become the study area for our masterplan that will identify potential regeneration opportunities. This does not mean that every site is a redevelopment opportunity; but it needs to be considered as part of the neighbourhood and street scene (or context) that the regeneration project sits within.



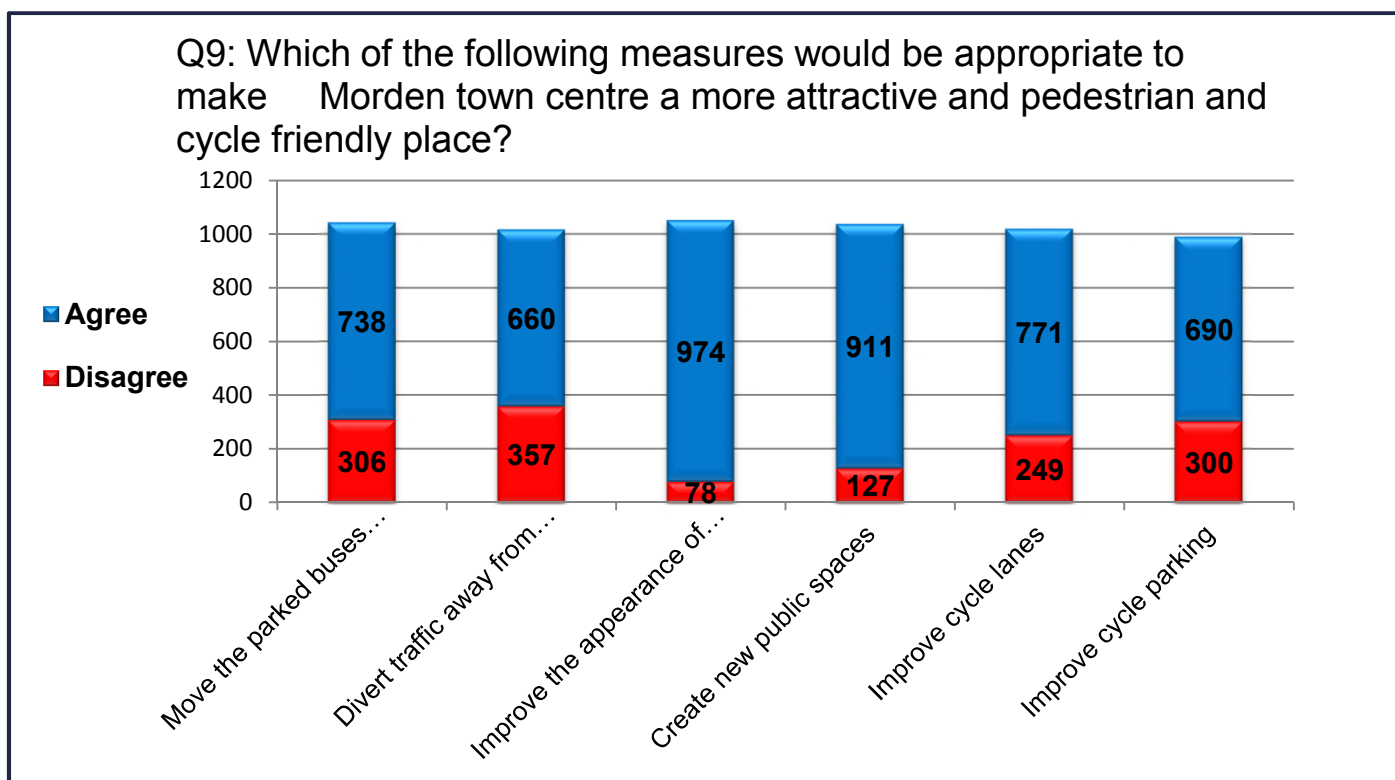
Q8: Do you agree with the proposed masterplan boundary as shown on the webpage



Other comments and views made under this question were:

- *'Why not include St Heliers or Lower Morden'*

- 5.10 In 2008 you said that Morden town centre is car dominated and not an attractive place to visit. To achieve a better balance, more space needs to be given over to pedestrians and cyclist.

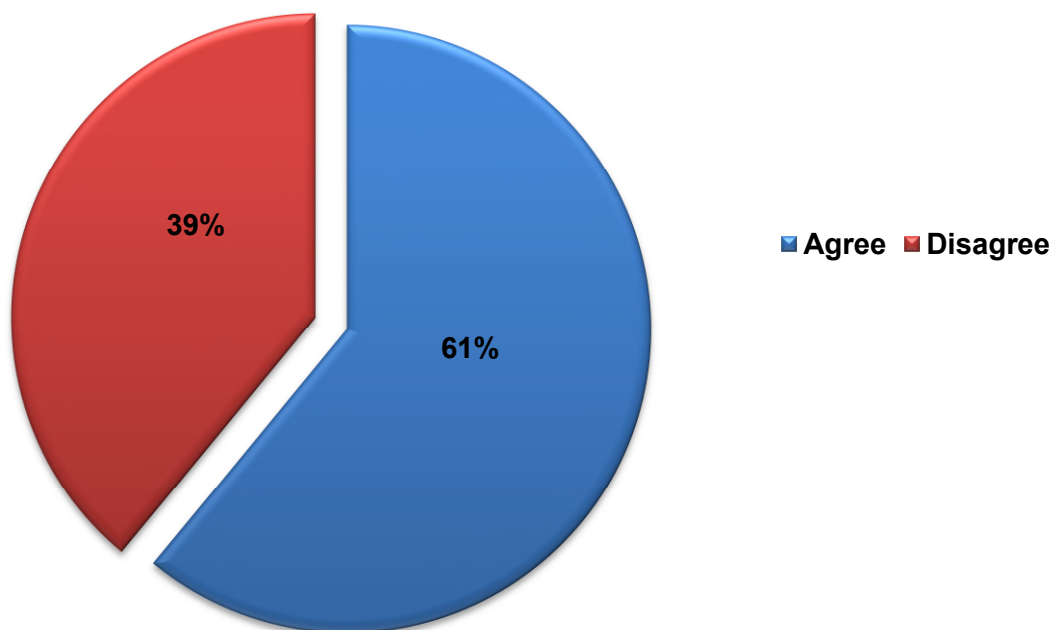


Other comments and views made under this question were:

- *'Diverting traffic away from London Rd just means causing major congestion on other routes'*
- *'I think the residents would not be very happy if traffic is diverted away from London Road'*
- *'A coffee shop, Pizza Express etc- things like that will greatly improve the area.'*
- *'The stop nearest to the tube station becomes very overcrowded, preventing pedestrians [passing during busy times]'*
- *'Totally disagree that it is car dominated'*
- *'Bus area needs to move from outside the tube station'*
- *'Open and green spaces near the transport hub area and shopping area to attract big shop brands to the area.'*
- *'better parking facilities that are clean'*
- *'More benches, more bins, better street cleaning'*

5.11 Car parking is a limited resource within Morden town centre.

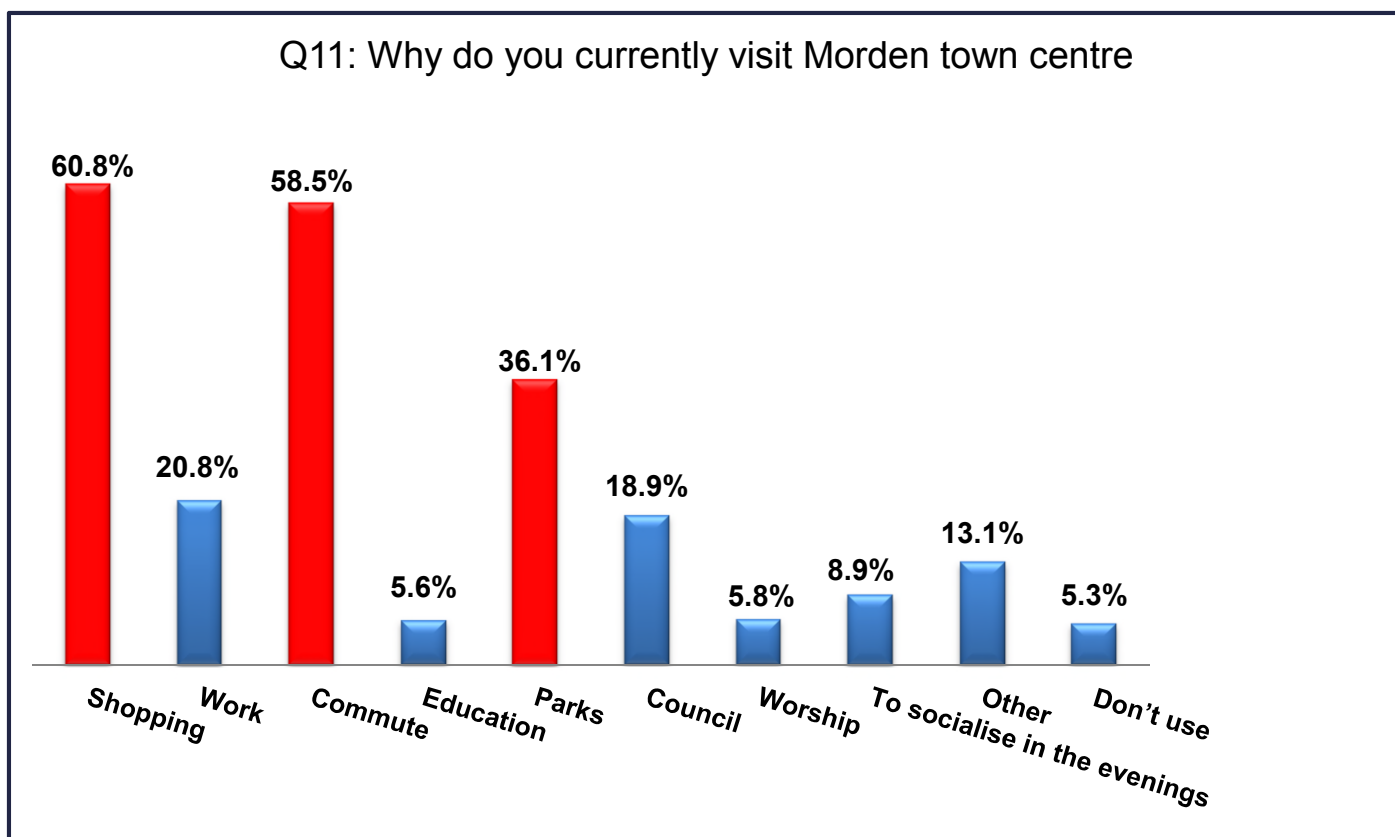
Q10: Should existing parking for commuters become parking for local shopping needs, making shopping the top priority?



Other comments and views made under this question were:

- *'People should still be encouraged to use other transport modes'*
- *'Parking should be a priority for people visiting Morden and not people simply using Morden as a transport hub'.*
- *'Better bus services/cycle routes would encourage commuters to get to Morden by other means of transport'.*

5.12 In 2008, you said the 3 main reasons for visiting Morden town centre was **to access public transport**, followed by **shopping** and then **to work at councils offices**.

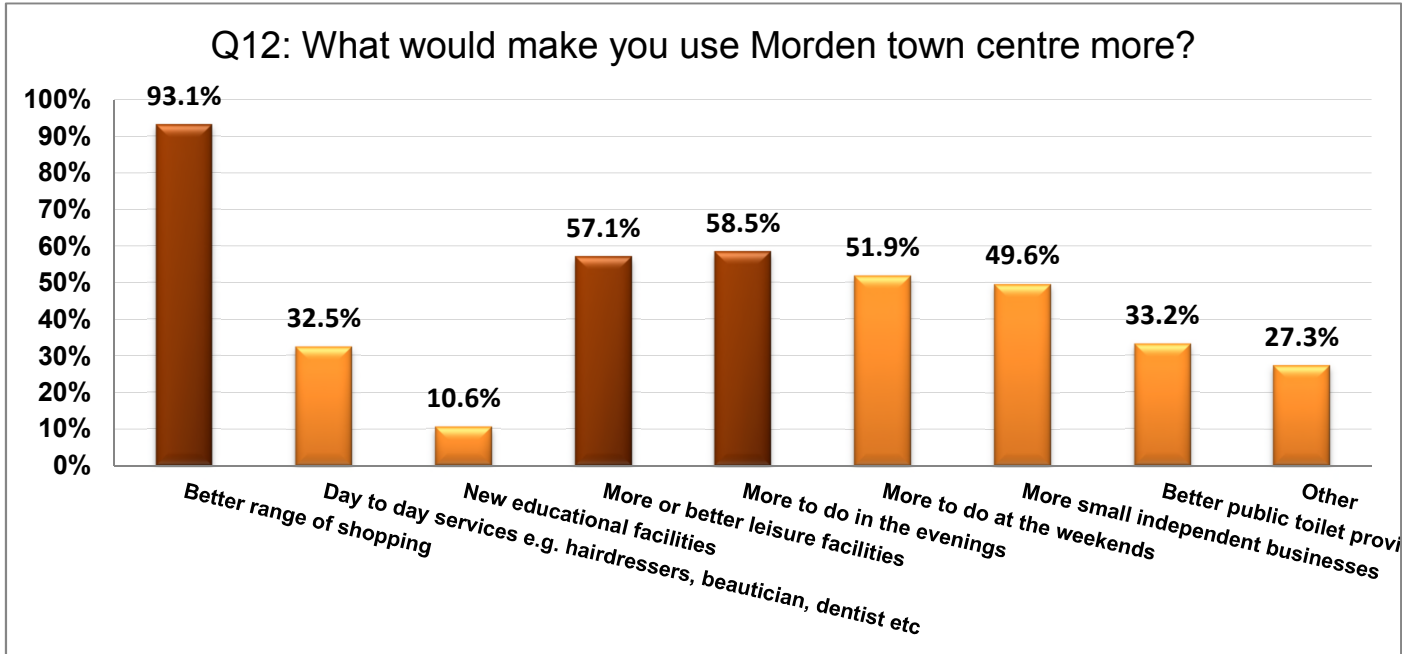


Other comments and views made under this question were:

- *'Morden really isn't very interesting. However Morden Hall Park should serve as an inspiration as to what can be achieved'*
- *'It would be nice to have some upmarket cafes in Morden - instead of having to trail up to Wimbledon Village'*
- *'Create a unique identity for Morden'*
- *'Lack of retail offer and variety'*

5.13 In 2008, you said that the top three changes that would make you use Morden town centre often were:

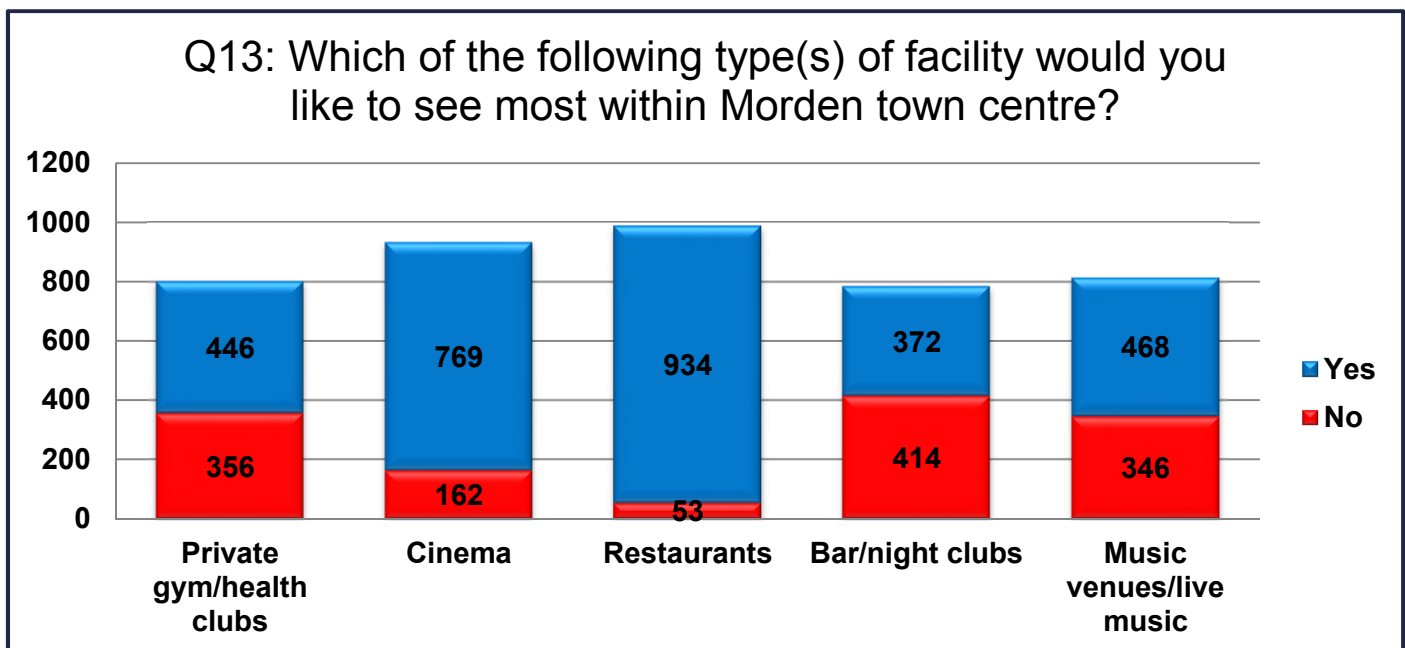
- A better range of shop
- More/better leisure facilities
- More to do in the evening



Other comments and views made under this question were:

- *'Get rid of the betting shops, pubs, charity shops, fast food shops.'*
- *'Rarely socialise in Morden in the evening - there's not much on offer.'*
- *'The town centre is not very pleasant so I don't use it at all.'*
- *'Proper restaurants, coffee shops and retail offer, like in Wimbledon and other nearby town centres (Sutton, Kingston etc)'*
- *'Better links to the neighbouring parks'*

5.14 In 2008, 85% respondents wanted leisure facilities in Morden for the evening and weekends. It should be noted that the council is currently delivering a new leisure centre, to replace the existing Morden Pool in Morden Park by 2017.

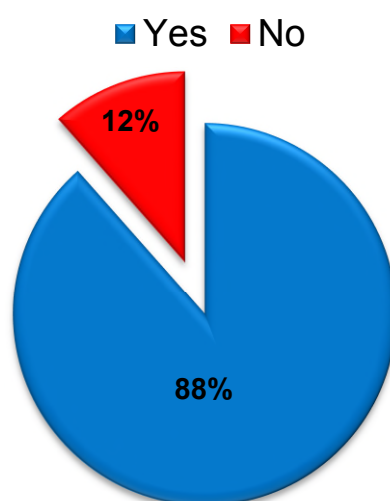


Other comments and views made under this question were:

- *'I would be worried about there being too big a focus on bars, night clubs and music venues, as traditionally conceived.'*
- *" Music venues " should include rehearsal and performance venues available for community use*
- *I'd prefer a community run real ale pub like the Hope in Carshalton*
- *'Attractive cafes which aren't greasy-spoons; pubs or bars which don't look rough, more decent quality restaurants other than fast food.'*
- *'Not bothered about having night clubs.'*
- *'Would be good for Morden park pools to be revamped.'*
- *'Cafes, cafes /bars. Not night clubs.'*
- *'Pubs or bars which don't look rough, more decent quality restaurants other than fast food . Not bothered about having night clubs. Would be good for Morden park pools to be revamped.'*
- *'There is no room for a cinema in Morden! Plus, Wimbledon is just down the road'*
- *Adult education classes - languages, music instrument lessons, crafts, professional studies anything really*

- 5.16 The council funded Community Toilet Scheme currently has three local businesses that provide toilet facilities in Morden town centre.
- 5.17 In view of 24 hour tube service and planned regeneration, there will be an increase in visitors, passengers, TfL staff and taxis drivers, which will result in an increased need for public toilet provision.
- 5.18 The council believes that as Morden underground station has the longest opening hours; it is the best location for public toilet facilities.

Q14: Do you agree that public toilets should be reinstated in Morden underground station?



Other comments made under this question were:

- *'It needs to be kept clean and maintenance of the facilities also'*

5.19 Question 15: Please use this space below for any other comments regarding the regeneration of Morden town centre.

- *We support the regeneration – it's about time – the council has been saying this for years.*
- *The area looks run down*
- *When is it going to happen?*
- *Yes, the area needs regenerating*
- *Merton Hall Park should play a role – it is an asset*
- *I don't use the town centre*
- *It's just a place to pass through*
- *We need a variety of shops*
- *We need good design*