

The future of our town centres



Hay on Wye

The Covid-19 crisis has had a significant impact on the lives and health of many Powys citizens, but it has also had severe economic consequences. The lockdown had an immediate impact on the way in which our town centres operate with many businesses adapting the way in which they have worked to ensure that their local communities were provided with the services and goods they needed throughout the pandemic.

To encourage the public back into our town centres and to help businesses open safely and in compliance with ongoing restrictions and regulations, it was important to make some temporary changes to how some of our town centres had traditionally worked. There will be no quick fix to recover from the Covid-19 crisis, social distancing and the need for personal protection measures will be with us for some time.

The temporary measures for social distancing were put in place following discussions with representatives of each the town to facilitate businesses trading, by providing outdoor space for their customers, and for pedestrians to social distance as they walk along pavements.

What these temporary measures have done is highlight that town centres can evolve and make use of the highway space differently. The pandemic has given rise to an element of café culture being experienced within our towns and an enthusiasm for embracing our outside areas, which is something that might be considered appropriate to retain post pandemic restrictions.

We are aware that high streets have changed over the recent years and the pandemic has accelerated that change by several years, especially with greater reliance on online shopping etc. We must therefore seek to address that change and aid the recovery of our town centres by making them destinations that people want to visit, with resilient and viable businesses and strong communities.

As we begin to plan for a safe, resilient future, this is the opportunity to look at things differently and rebalance our public spaces. Whilst some businesses may consider it is essential to park within the high streets, this does not always provide the attractive spaces which will draw people to that town. We therefore need to consider the balance of the needs of the shops and businesses and the availability of parking and develop proposals that meet the needs of the changing high streets.

The Welsh Government have made available a special placemaking grant during this current financial year to enable us to explore this in greater detail. Nothing will be put in place without the appropriate levels of consultation with all involved for each town. But first, we would like to ask your opinion of the recent temporary measures in Hay on Wye.

Once complete, please return this questionnaire to:

Town Centre Engagement Exercise
Highways Operations
Powys County Council
County Hall
Spa Road East
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5LG

Alternatively, please complete this questionnaire online: www.haveyoursaypowys.wales/the-future-of-our-town-centres

1. Are you a resident, business owner or visitor to Hay on Wye (please tick all that apply):

Resident - please provide your home postcode: _____

Business owner - what is the nature of your business: _____
- please provide your business premises postcode: _____

Visitor - please provide your home postcode: _____

2. The temporary measures introduced to Hay on Wye have benefited the businesses in the town centre and allowed them to operate safely:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. The temporary measures introduced to Hay on Wye have made shoppers and pedestrians feel safe when visiting the town centre:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

4. I would be more likely to visit Hay on Wye town centre for shopping or leisure in the future if the temporary measures to the street layouts were to remain:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. The temporary measures encourage people to spend more time in Hay on Wye town centre for either shopping, leisure, or both:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

6. Notwithstanding Covid-19 restrictions, I feel that the temporary measures in Hay on Wye have increased footfall into the town centre:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

7. The temporary measures in Hay on Wye have had a positive impact on the town centre:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

8. Bearing in mind temporary measures had to be introduced to ensure businesses could operate safely and within the regulations, and social distancing measures needed to be maintained for shoppers and pedestrians, could this have been achieved differently:

Yes (please explain):

- No
- I don't know

9. Are there any other measures that you feel could be introduced into Hay on Wye to make the town centre better for businesses recovering from the pandemic, and to encourage more visitors and customers:

Yes (please explain):

- No
- I don't know

10. Some of the temporary measures have been around limiting motor vehicles into the town centre to enable more space for people. If these restrictions were to remain are there any types of vehicles for which access would need to remain on a full-time or part-time (such as in the mornings) basis (access for emergency service vehicle will always remain):

- Buses
- Delivery vehicles
- Blue badge holders
- Taxis
- Other (please specify): _____

11. Is there anything else you would like to add about the current temporary measures or how you feel your town centre could work/look in the future: