

Report on the results of the Saxmundham household survey 2019

Summary of some key results

Those who responded

990 local residents returned the completed questionnaire, a response rate of 25%. The gender and age balance of those responding reflected the population quite well, with a slight over-representation of older residents.

Future housing growth

Asked how much Saxmundham should grow over the coming 18 years, looking at future needs for housing, 950 people responded as follows:

- 13% supported an increase of 800 or more new homes,
- 16% supported 500-600,
- 34% favoured 200-300,
- while 33% wanted no increase in housing.

New housing – where to be located?

If the District Council's Local Plan proposal for 800+ new dwellings is to go ahead:

- just 8% of respondents agreed with the District Council's original proposal to site the new housing to the South of the town including on The Layers, i.e. on both sides of the railway,
- 18% supported the plan to build all to the South of the town, but only on the west side of the railway (up to the A12 by-pass).
- 35% thought all new housing development should be to the East (up Church Hill),
- 20% supported a division of new housing between East and South (to west of railway)

What types of new housing?

53% thought the share of affordable housing (for rent or ownership) should be in the range 10 to 25%, 47% thought the 'affordable' share should be over 25%.

73% of respondents supported owner-occupied houses as a priority, with 41% for social housing. Shared ownership homes and sheltered housing each had the support of around one third.

New Community facilities

Asked which types they favoured, the top priority specified was

- new medical facilities (824 respondents), followed by
- children's play areas (399),
- indoor sports centre (395),
- swimming pool (382),
- entertainment / performance centre (355),
- gym (320),
- cinema (269), and
- allotments (267).

Environmental issues for new housing developments:

The top environmental priorities identified were:

- Adequate off-road parking (backed by 806)
- Good quality cycle and pedestrian access to town (627)
- Eco-friendly and efficient design & construction (616)

Town Centre & High Street

Asked whether the High Street would benefit from a set of changes (up to 3 to be chosen), 1,836 answers were given by 915 respondents. The preferences expressed were:

- Additional parking facilities in/near town centre (cited by 461)
- Reduce speed limit (310)
- Pedestrianisation (306)
- Widening footways (278)
- Priority for pedestrians (233)
- Traffic control of narrowest part of High Street (141)
- None of these (101)

Saxmundham Market

Asked how the market might be made more successful, 857 respondents gave 1,700 preferences. The favoured options were as follows:

- Change the nature of the market, e.g. farmer's market, flea market (393)
- Improve publicity & marketing (366)
- Change market day to Fri, Sat or Sunday (353)
- Change venue e.g. to Fromus Square (331)

The wider Town Centre and Station area

Asked if the wider Town Centre and Station area would be improved by any of five options, 844 respondents expressed 1,731 preferences:

- Development of area round the station, including new business and employment opportunities (707)
- Improvements to Station Approach for cyclists & pedestrians (404)
- Improvements to cycle and pedestrian links to town centre (340)
- Designed signage at key points to direct to facilities & points of interest (280)

Transport and mobility in and around Saxmundham

405 respondents said they regularly use train services to and from Saxmundham (486 did not). 130 said they regularly use bus services (671 did not)

Of the train users, 66% said they were mainly satisfied with the local East Suffolk service, 34% that they were not. The main reasons for dissatisfaction were: frequency and timing; cost; lack of dependability.

Of bus users, 44% were mainly satisfied, 56% not. The main reasons for dissatisfaction were: frequency and timing; it doesn't get me where I want to go.