
Executive Summary prepared for Selby District Council by



Pride in Place: A Study of Three North Yorkshire Towns

Preface

To discuss the report, its findings or next steps please contact:

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HM Government



Social Vision

About

Social Vision is a York-based social enterprise that supports, promotes and champions individuals and organisations tackling inequality, marginalisation and isolation.

We achieve this through various entrepreneurial activities which include:

Engagement and relationship building with hard to reach groups through innovative consultations and activities

Support and partnerships with third sector organisations, local authorities and socially-conscious businesses

Creating physical spaces for communities to come together and designing unique 'profit with purpose' business models

Bringing together creative communities

Championing and practising social entrepreneurship

Team



Joe Gardham

Director of Social Vision
Project Lead and
principal point of contact



Beatrice Freeman

Assistant Landscape
Architect and
Graphic Designer



Simon Hall

Director of PWP Design
landscape architecture,
based in York



Lauren Crowther

Communications
and Marketing Expert
with a specialism in
Youth retention



Justin Grasty

Community Artist and
Designer delivering
engaging sessions with
residents



Lara McClure

Professional Storyteller,
who regaled families
with exciting and
interactive tales exploring
morals, ethics and
changing towns



Project Aims

In Summer 2021, Selby District Council's (SDC) Regeneration Team commissioned Social Vision to undertake new and creative community engagement activities in the district's three main towns of Selby, Sherburn-in-Elmet and Tadcaster.

By testing new engagement processes and techniques Selby District Council aimed to reach a wider audience and engage with difficult to reach groups or organisations in the community.

They were also keen to identify a better understanding of how spaces and places in each of the towns were used, or could be used in future.

The work was undertaken in three stages.



Stage One

focuses on the initial identification of the consultation audience and consultation exercise.



Stage Two

built upon the initial consultation exercise and undertook related pilot activities in the three towns.



Stage Three

produced a summary report, which provides advice to the Council on the development of longer-term project opportunities.

Context

There are over 85,000 residents in the Selby District and 1.9 million people within a 30-minute drive.

Approximately one third of the population of Selby District live in the three market towns Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet.

Selby Town is the largest town in the district with a population of approximately 19,677 and is the main shopping centre and focus for housing, employment, and other local facilities.

High street businesses have been hit hard during the pandemic, with national retail decline and high streets at greater risk of vacancies.

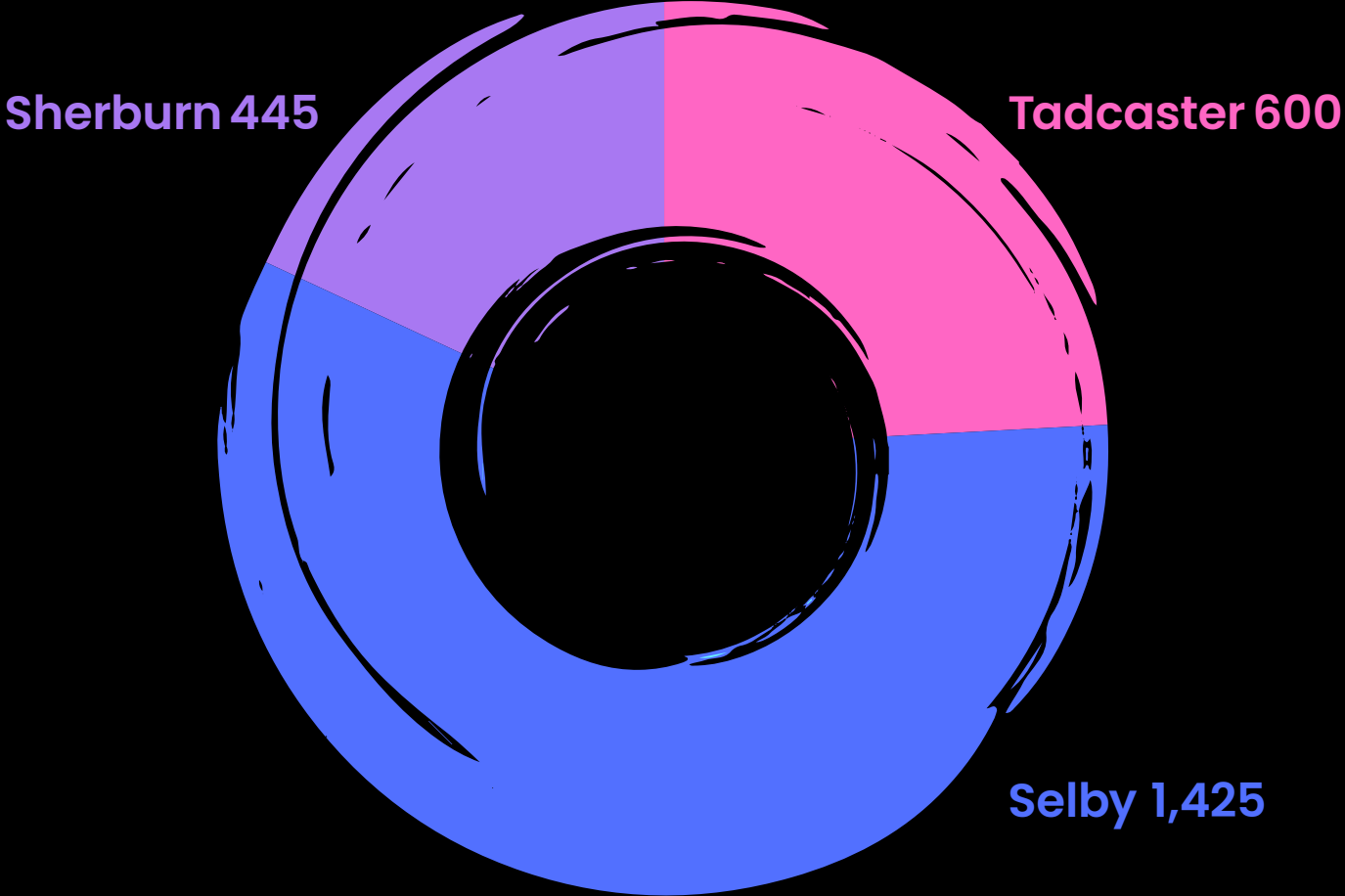
By pursuing new and innovative consultation techniques, Selby District Council aims to ensure town centres are relevant for all users and help town centres thrive through this period of uncertainty, support their recovery, and identify new uses for existing spaces within each town.

Selby District Council is delivering a Town's Revitalisation programme for wider regeneration of towns, enabling them to become more diverse, sustainable, and thriving places for communities to live, work, enjoy.

A range of initiatives will support the programme including this work.

Findings Overview

Total Engagements
Number of people we spoke to

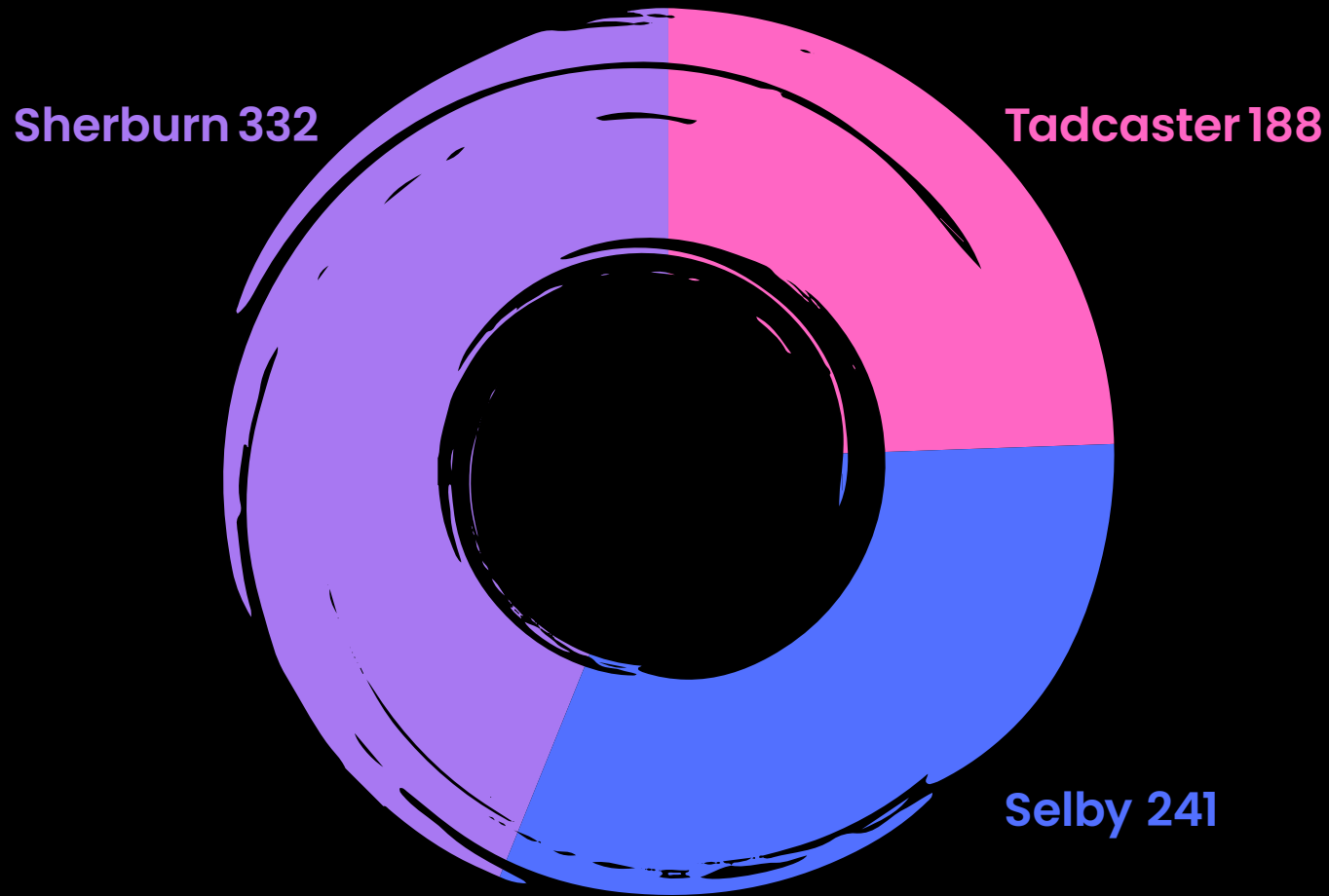


6

24

Findings Overview

Total Interactions Comments, Ideas and Pins



7
24

Consultation

Stage One focussed on engaging different communities in each of the towns to understand **what events and activities they'd like to see.**

We know that the hardest to reach communities are often the most forgotten, socio-economically disadvantaged and facing the greatest degree of marginalisation, isolation and vulnerability.

Their opinions are rarely courted or heard, leading to an infinite cycle of 'being done to, rather than with'.

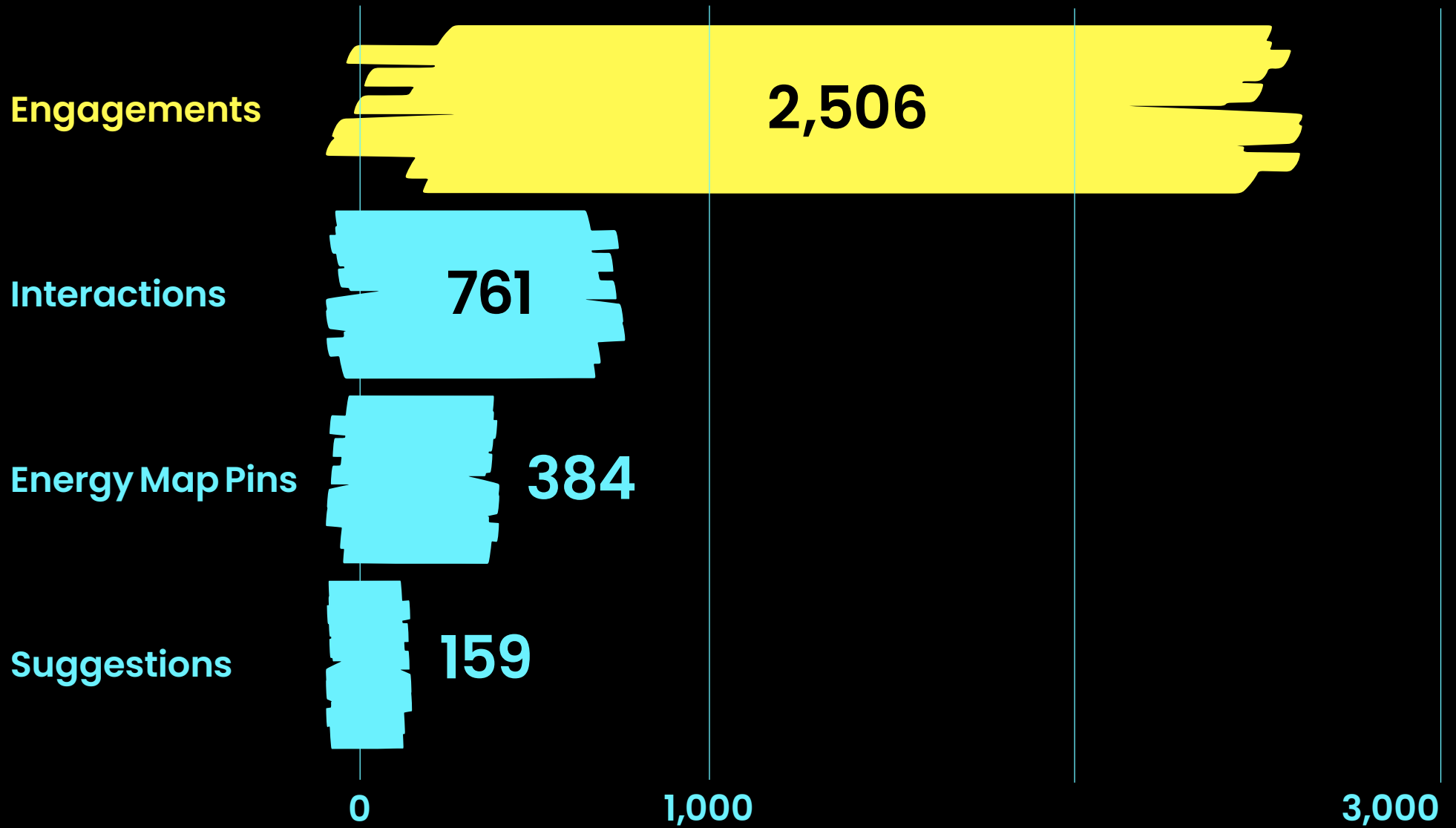
Refreshingly Selby District Council wanted to address this, commissioning Social Vision to engage these groups through unique consultation methods.

Consultation Methods:

- 1 Social Sofa
- 2 Energy Map
- 3 Public Consultation
- 4 Focussed Consultation
- 5 Online Consultation

Findings Overview

Total Numbers



Social Sofa — Selby & Tadcaster

Our Social Sofa sees us place a two seater sofa in a community and stopping passers by to ask them what they'd like to see in their area.

To make it as accessible as possible we asked two polarising questions.

Our relaxed style and chat-based approach often results in people opening up and discussing more qualitative and innovative solutions to issues.

We film the results, using a documentary style approach, which creates an engaging, high-quality format for stakeholders to digest.

For Selby and Tadcaster our target demographics were young people, so we asked two questions:

What did you do last weekend?

This encourages them to reflect on what their world looks like now, and what they do on a weekly basis.

What would you like to do next weekend?

This allows them to think about the bigger picture with no constraints around what is possible and what actually matters to them.

Social Sofa — Selby & Tadcaster

At Selby College students felt isolated from friends and cultural activity because of poor public transport.

Many relied on parents or peers to be able to drive them to access activities and entertainment.

The feedback was that young people wanted a space they can hang out and call their own, especially in the darker winter months. College Students are caught between being too old for most family activities, and too young for most adult activities in Selby. So they feel a real lack of belonging.

This disconnect from their town — if not resolved — can lead to exodus of talent, poor educational and vocational attainment, and increased vulnerability.

**SELBY'S NOT
CHANGED FOR
A LONG TIME.
NOTHING NEW
EVER HAPPENS**

The recurring theme with the young people we spoke to in Tadcaster **was wanting somewhere to hang out**, with multiple suggestions that a video game arcade would be a great addition to the town.



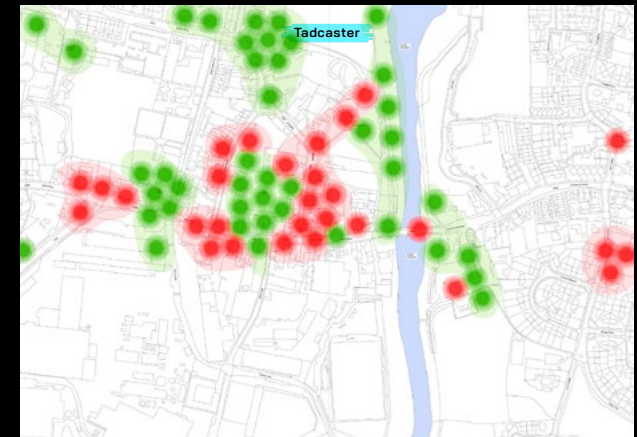
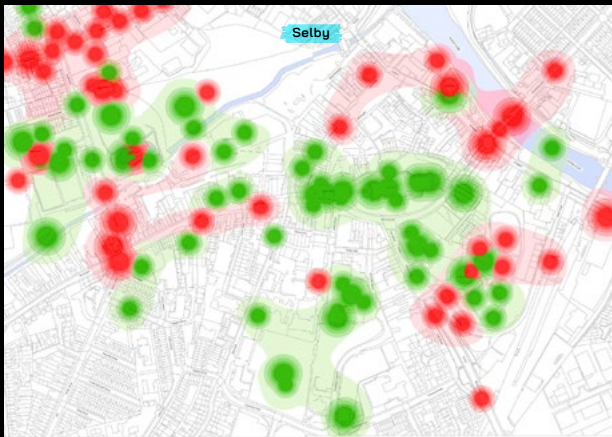
Energy Map



We designed a unique Energy Map, a huge print out of each town, and asked residents to place 128 **green (positive)** and **red (negative)** thumb pins into the map.

As well as us understanding each town better in a very quick and visual manner, this also allowed us to consider where future pilots and recommendations should take place.

Do we focus on existing energy to reinforce a particular space, or do we create events and activities in spaces the public don't like, to challenge their experiences and perceptions and turn those areas green?



Energy Map

Selby

- Selby Abbey ● Selby Park
- Scott Road Wildlife Pond
- Empty Buildings
- A19 Eastern Gateway

In Selby, we found a huge sense of pride in the town's heritage assets and public spaces, including Selby Abbey, Selby Park and the Wildlife Pond on Scott Road.

Surprisingly, this pride was shared by younger people, a group not always conscious, or appreciative, of heritage and green spaces.

Detractors for residents included empty buildings and the A19 'Eastern Gateway' into the town.

Sherburn

- Library ● Old Girls School
- Eversley Park
- Public Seating ● Litter
- Local Social Club

In Sherburn residents were happy with community facilities such as the Library, Old Girls School and Eversley Park.

There was a lot of negativity around public seating areas, litter and the local Social Club.

Tadcaster

- Banks of the River Wharfe
- Green Spaces ● Swimming Pool
- Tadcaster Barn
- Vacant / Derelict Buildings

In Tadcaster it's absolutely clear that residents love their natural environment. Both children and adults spoke fondly of the banks of the River Wharfe and other green spaces.

There was also appreciation and pride for their swimming pool, and local community organisation, Tadcaster Barn, is very well respected by all ages.

There was near universal negativity surrounding the high street running through the town; specifically in relation to individual vacant, derelict or neglected buildings.

Public Consultation

We held public consultations in each of the towns, piggybacking on the existing energy of each town's Christmas Markets, and speaking to over 2,600 residents.

At these events, we paid for a stall alongside other traders, and used a giant version of the Connect 4 game as an attractor, alongside our Energy Map and Public Post Box.

The Connect 4 invited people to tell us what activities and events they'd like to see in their town on a Connect 4 Disc, which could then be placed in the rack.

Our Public Post Box asked passers by to write on a postcard what they wanted to see, and post it in our customised post box.

To ensure we were able to target harder to reach groups, we hosted low-key consultations at targeted locations.

By taking our consultation to these communities, in their 'safe space' we were able to gather views of groups not usually consulted.

These consultations used the same methodology and techniques as the public consultation, including Connect 4, Energy Map, and Public Post Box.



Findings Overview

Most Popular Suggestions for Events and Activities

Selby

- #1 Adult Classes
- #2 Cinema
- #3 Outdoor Performances
- #4 Soft Play
- #5 Youth Club
- #6 Use Ampitheatre

Sherburn

- #1 Swimming Pool
- #2 Youth Club
- #3 Nice Restaurant/Bar
- #4 Community Events
- #5 Leisure Centre
- #6 Street Food Market

Tadcaster

- #1 Better Green Spaces
- #2 More Shops
- #3 Solve Empty Properties
- #4 Skate Park
- #5 Protect Central Car Park
- #6 Bring back the Parade

Activities

In each town we delivered a pilot activity based on the feedback we received from consultees.

Selby

Film Festival

Based on feedback from Selby College students, who were unanimous in their desire for a local cinema, we hosted a mini film festival at the College, bringing a curated selection of inspirational short films featuring their peer group, that challenged them to try new things, appreciate the outdoors, and self reflect.

Sherburn

Storytelling & Worldbuilding

Based on feedback from Sherburn residents, we delivered a family-friendly storytelling and worldbuilding event that entertained families, whilst inspiring them to think about their town and the changes it will go through in the next five years.

Tadcaster

Worldbuilding

Tadcaster residents told us they wanted more from their green spaces, so we invited them to a worldbuilding arts workshop that allowed them to explore some of these ideas through arts and crafts.

Activities

Selby College students told us they wanted a cinema in town. Unable to build them a cinema, we piloted a mini film festival held over their lunch break and featuring inspiring people and activities from around the world.

The feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive, with almost all delegates finding the event “interesting”, “inspiring” and “positive”.

I FEEL THESE SESSIONS MADE THE STUDENTS FEEL HEARD, WHICH THE STUDENTS CAN TEND TO STRUGGLE WITH IN A COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT.

Tara Marshall
Selby College

In Sherburn we hosted two storytelling and world building events looking at the past, present and future of a rapidly changing town and how residents respond to these changes.

45 families attended, staying the whole two hours and taking part in all of the stories and activities.

THE ACTIVITIES YOU BROUGHT WERE A LOVELY ADDITION TO WHAT WE USUALLY OFFER. WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU BACK!

Lynne Morrisoe
Sherburn Community Library

In Tadcaster we welcomed 30 local families to Tadcaster Barn to take part in a creative worldbuilding activity — using artistic expression to design the perfect green space.

Overview

Our recommendations for **Selby** were:

- 1 **Benchmarking**
- 2 **Partnerships**
- 3 **Forgotten Spaces**
- 4 **Walking Trails**
- 5 **Pocket Parks**
- 6 **Regular Activities and Events**



We believe that in the long-term a space should be created that provides the 'big city vibes' residents crave, whilst being accessible and enjoyable to all groups.

This can incorporate music, arts, food, drink, entertainment, youth provision, office space, artist studios, enterprise zones and more. It could be the catalyst for the partnership we offer in Recommendation 2, and host benchmarking and future consultation exercises as referenced in Recommendation 1.

Such a space would be a great source of civic pride, giving locals a place they can call their own without having to travel to York, Leeds or Hull. It would create opportunities for the city's young people to test new ideas, innovate and hang out in a safe environment.

We firmly believe that such a space will attract visitors to the town, and challenge perceptions about Selby both locally and further afield.

It will be a safe space for families, including into the early evening and create a more relevant scene for socialising, whilst creating the much-needed venue that teenagers and young adults feel safe and welcomed into.

This scheme could have a significant impact on the local economy, encouraging high disposable income families to spend more locally, creating space for local independent businesses, and encouraging entrepreneurship and aspiration within the town's youth population.

Overview

The social impact could be significant in tackling anti-social behaviour, creating role models, raising aspirations, fighting isolation and loneliness and really cementing that pride of place Selby residents seek, but don't quite yet believe in.

In the short term, a series of pop-up venues across the town would pave the way for this longer term project. Identifying, securing, refurbishing and programming events at a number of spaces across the town will unlock

forgotten corners or neglected areas, breathing life into Selby.

This should be done as phase one of a larger project, programmed for 1-2 years, leading into a permanent space as part of the station or Summit redevelopments for example.

This could be a good way to test local appetite for what works and what doesn't work.

An end-to-end monitoring and evaluation programme should

accompany this pop-up project, with the best events, activities, and traders featuring in the final delivery.

There is also a significant built environment benefit of a pop up project like this. It will draw people to lesser known spaces like the Amphitheatre; show people what can be done in empty buildings like Pocklington Carpets; and inspire property and land owners to think outside the box and bring their derelict, empty or neglected spaces back to life.



Overview

Our recommendations for **Sherburn** were:

- 1 Benchmarking**
- 2 Hospitality-based Community Venue**
- 3 Community Events Programme**
- 4 History Trail**



Based on our consultation activities we feel that the key activity for Sherburn right now is to provide a sustainable and high impact public space that meets the needs of local residents.

This should be focussed on food and drink as an enabling factor, and be supplemented by strong arts, music and entertainment programmes.

We believe, in the right location and accurate messaging, this would receive sufficient public support and be well used.

In a village like Sherburn — given its size and demographic — co-ownership and/or co-production will be critical. If residents feel they have been properly consulted and heard, and have opportunities to see their feedback incorporated, then the site will have the best chance of success.

Failing to meaningfully engage the local population will most likely alienate them and there's a risk of them feeling 'done to' rather than 'done with'.

There's also a need to avoid a perception of 'bringing the city to Sherburn', so local sensitivities must be observed with any major development like this.

We also feel the creation of History Trails could be a quick, affordable win for the town, that would provide real benefit to the older demographics, who may be most resistant to change. If designed and delivered well, it could also attract support from younger demographics, including families and increase the sense of local civic pride.

Tadcaster Recommendations

Overview

Our recommendations for **Tadcaster** were:

- 1 Benchmarking**
- 2 Meanwhile use of an empty property**
- 3 Community Events and Activities**
- 4 Bus Station Gateway Activity**
- 5 Regular Activities and Events**

Based on our consultation activities we feel that Tadcaster needs a sustainable and high impact public space that meets the needs of local residents, in particular the town's young people.

This should be revolve around food and drink as an enabling factor, and be supplemented by strong arts, music and entertainment programmes.

There is lots of local energy and civic pride, and these could be harnessed to co-produce a venue that provides aspiration, community cohesion and strong social impact.



There is an obvious and tangible link between the findings of this project, and a number of current national initiatives, including the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, and the Art Council England's Priority Places scheme.

As an entrepreneurial organisation, we see huge opportunity in all of the areas in which we worked, especially where common purpose can be agreed upon.

Tadcaster has an opportunity to engage local leaders and influencers for the future prosperity of the town.

Selby will attract more visitors and retain its young people as a result of large-scale infrastructure projects.

And Sherburn has the potential to unite through food and culture.

In line with Social Vision's core values, and based on our findings, our recommendations will result in **increased equality of opportunity, future economic and social prosperity, enhanced pride in place, and champion the three towns as trailblazers in community development.**

Acknowledgements

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Sherburn
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Tadcaster

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Tadcaster Barn

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Tadcaster Barn

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