



Funded by
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Telford Theatre @ Oakengates Remodelling

Consultation Survey Report
January 2024



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest
to create a better borough

Introduction

- Telford & Wrekin Council has been awarded funding from central government's Levelling Up Fund to remodel and expand Telford Theatre @ Oakengates.
- Public consultation was carried out in May and June 2022 to shape the initial plans for the theatre.
- Further consultation was undertaken in December 2023 to gather feedback on the proposals developed following the initial consultation.
- Consultation was carried out online and face to face with people able to comment on the proposal using a survey which was available both electronically and in paper format.
- Consultation was carried out between 4 December and 18 December 2023.
- A total of 597 responses were received, with 581 submitted using the online survey and 16 from paper surveys.
- This report presents a summary of the main findings from the consultation survey.

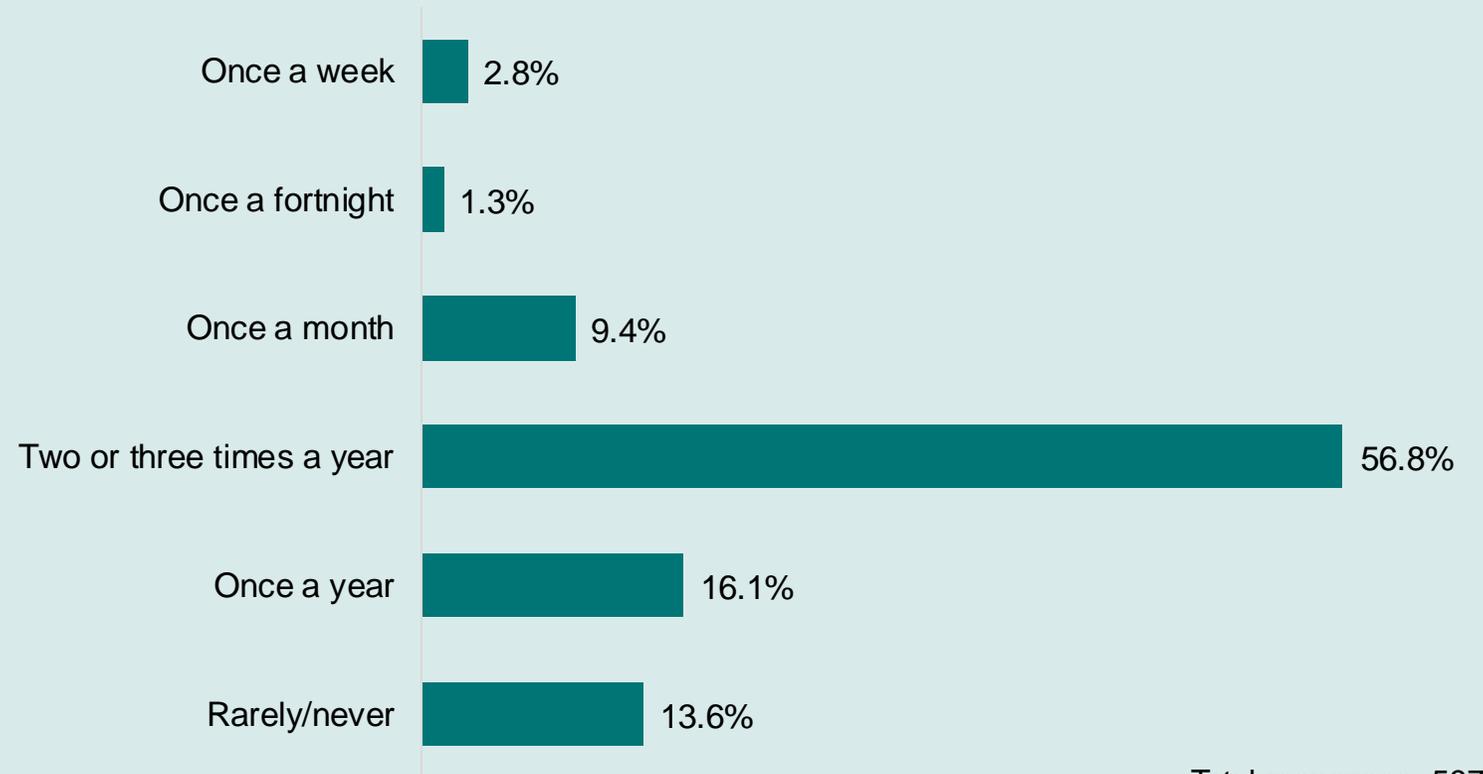
Executive Summary

- 79.0% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the initial plans for the theatre.
- Most respondents strongly agreed or agreed with all the proposed changes.
 - The greatest support was for the introduction of additional toilets (91.8%).
 - 85.7% supported the introduction of green technology, 83.2% the creation of a larger main auditorium and 80.7% a new bar/foyer.
- 3 in 4 respondents (74.9%) thought that remodelling the theatre would bring more visitors to Oakengates supporting local businesses.
- 67.5% thought it would improve the town centre and raise the reputation and profile of Oakengates.
- 76.6% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed new entrances will improve access to the theatre.
- 64.5% of respondents indicated that the plans would make them much more likely or more likely to visit the theatre in the future.

Visiting Telford Theatre @ Oakengates

- Most respondents (56.8%) indicated that they visited the theatre two to three times a year.
- 16.1% said that they visited once a year.
- 13.6% of respondents visited the theatre rarely or never.
- 13.6% indicated that they visited the theatre somewhere between once a week and once a month.

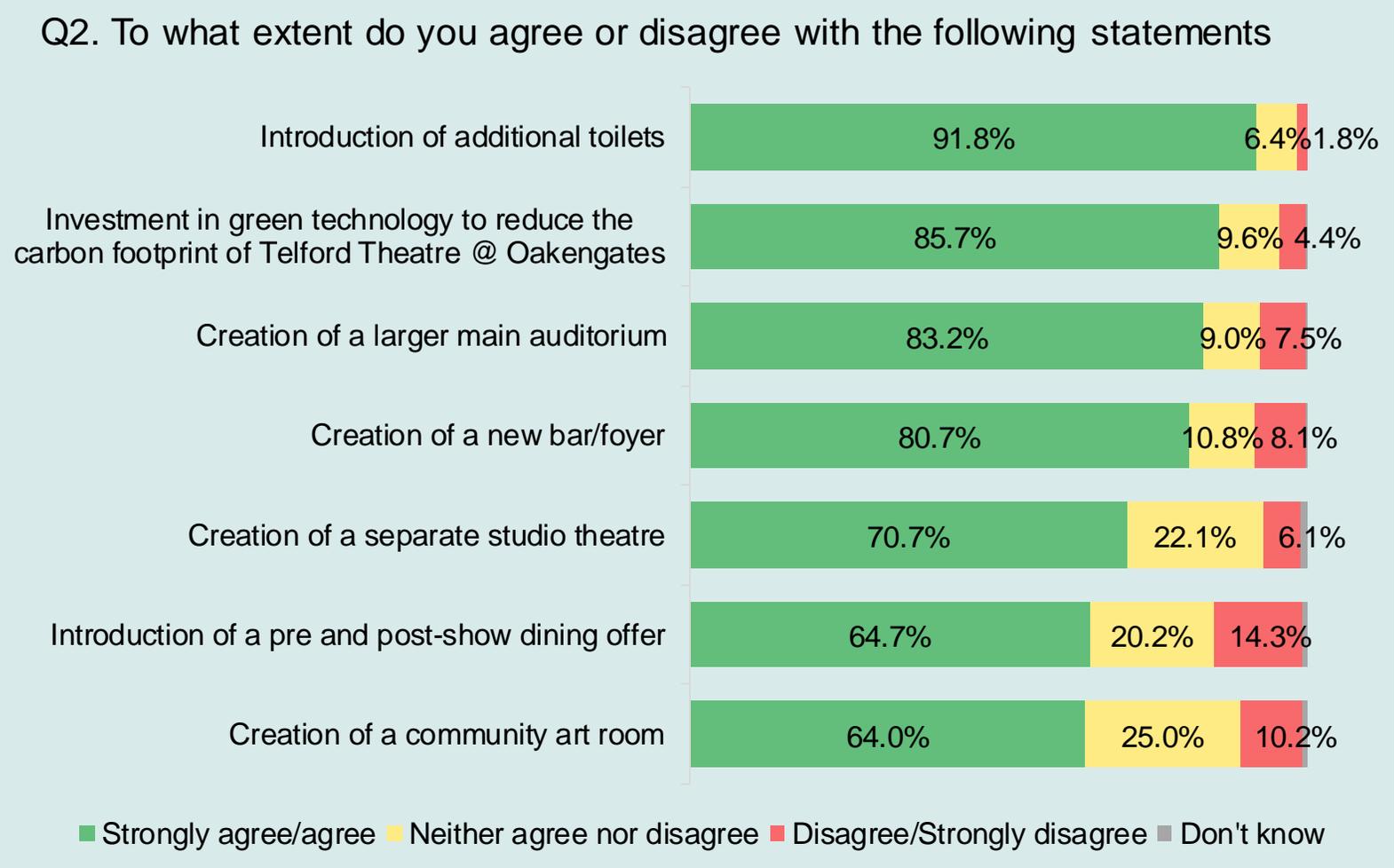
Q1. How often do you visit Telford Theatre @ Oakengates?



Total responses: 597

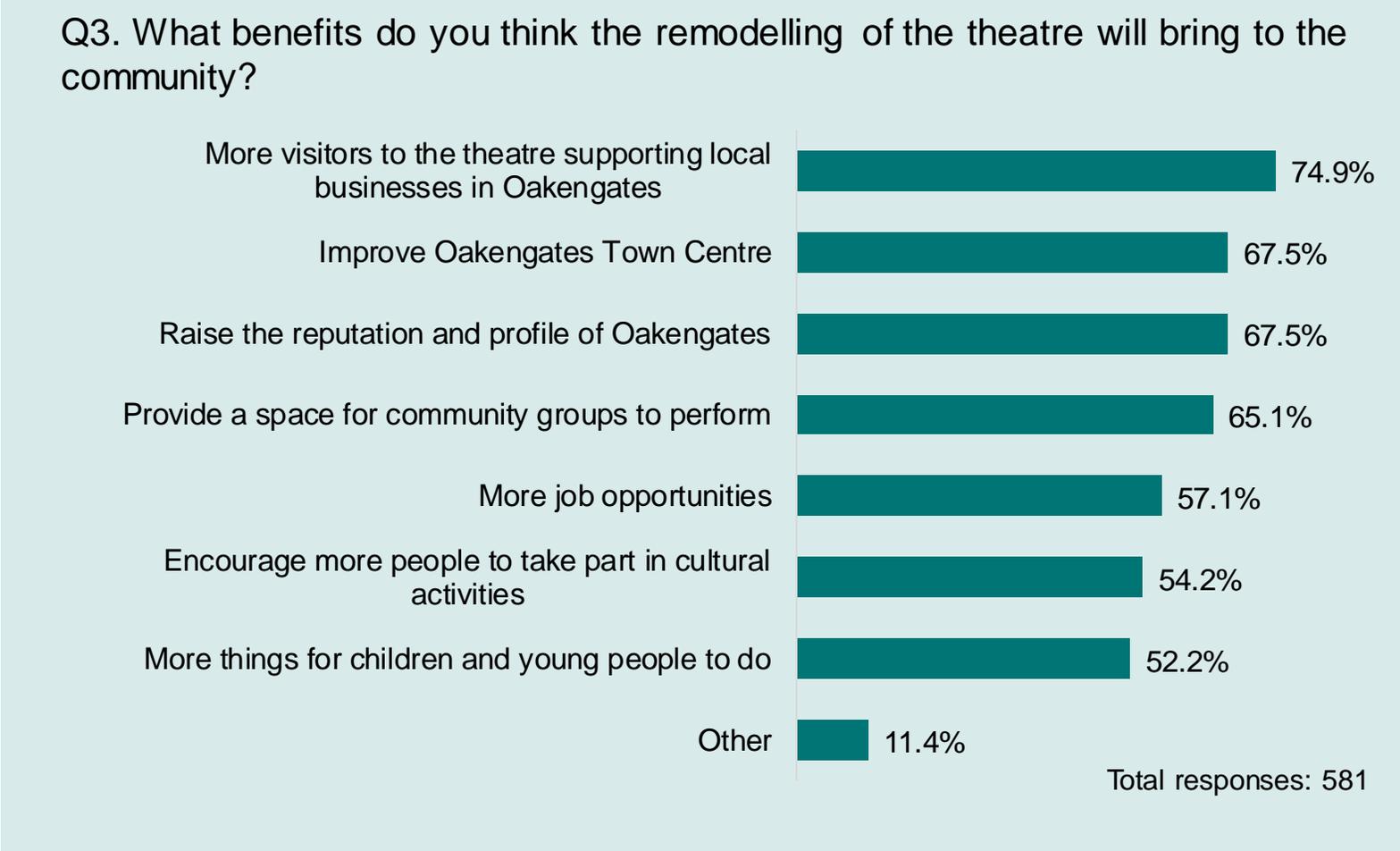
Support for proposed changes

- Most respondents strongly agreed or agreed with all the proposed changes.
- The greatest support was for the introduction of additional toilets (91.8%).
- 85.7% supported the introduction of green technology, 83.2% the creation of a larger main auditorium and 80.7% a new bar/foyer.
- A similar proportion of respondents supported the introduction of a pre and post-show dining offer and the creation of a community art room.



Benefits of remodelling of the theatre

- 3 in 4 respondents (74.9%) thought that remodelling the theatre would bring more visitors to Oakengates supporting local businesses.
- 67.5% thought it would improve the town centre and raise the reputation and profile of Oakengates.
- Around half of respondents thought that that it would encourage more people to take part in cultural activities and create more things for children and young people to do.



Benefits of remodelling the theatre...

In terms of 'other' benefits, a range of comments were received relating to the following themes...

- **Attracting a wider variety of acts and performances** to Telford theatre @ Oakengates.
- **Supporting inclusion and diversity** by creating a designated space for activities for the community and minority groups, encouraging more visitors and improving accessibility for all.
- The **positive impact** the project could have for Oakengates, including an increase in visitors to the theatre, a rise in footfall in Oakengates town centre, and raising the profile of the town.
- **Improved accessibility to the arts**, encouraging interest and participation for all ages, and raising the reputation of the town as a place of culture.

A proportion of comments were concerned that the remodelling of the theatre would have...

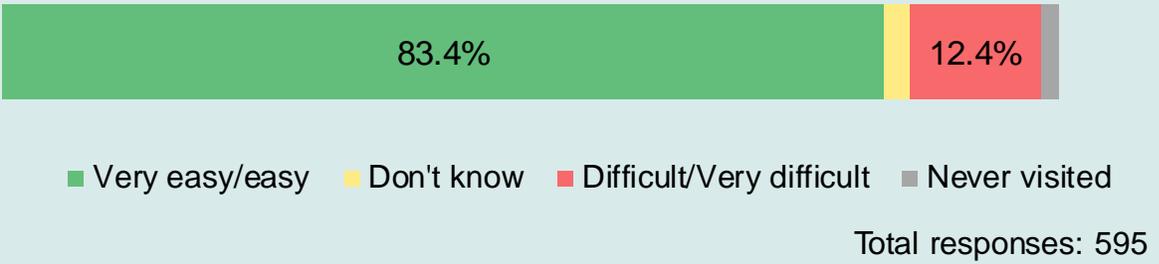
- no benefit to Oakengates or the community.
- potentially a negative impact on local businesses.

Access to the theatre

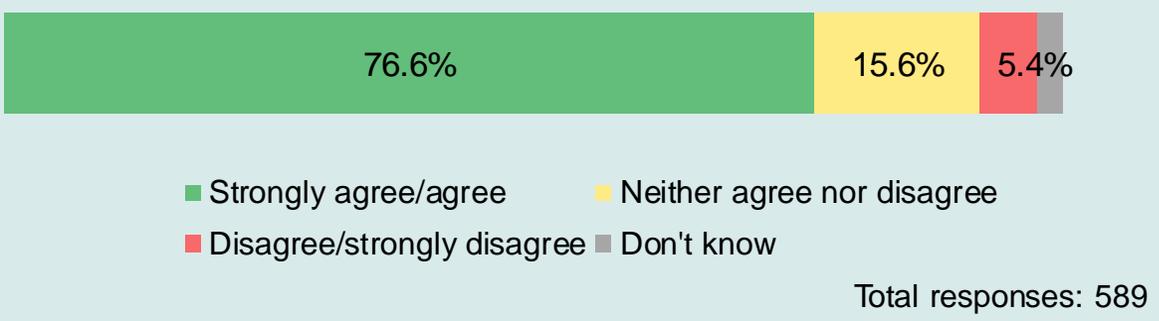
- 83.4% of respondents found it very easy or easy to get in and out of the theatre building on their last visit.
- 12.4% had found it difficult or very difficult access and exit the theatre.

- 76.6% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed new entrances will improve access to the theatre.
- 5.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed that the changes will improve access.
- 15.6% neither agreed or disagreed with the statement.

Q4. How easy did you find it to get in and out of the Telford Theatre @ Oakengates building when you last visited?



Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed new entrances will improve access to the theatre building?



Impact of plans on future visits to the theatre and overall support for plans

- 64.5% of respondents indicated that the plans would make them much more likely or more likely to visit the theatre in the future.
- 29.7% said that they would be neither more or less likely to visit.
- 5.7% indicated that they would be less likely or much less likely to visit in future.

- 79.0% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the initial plans for the theatre.
- 11.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the plans.
- 9.1% of respondents indicated that they neither agreed or disagreed with the plans for the theatre.

Q6. To what extent would the proposed remodelling of the theatre make you more or less likely to visit the theatre in future?



■ Much more likely/more likely ■ Neither more likely or less likely
■ Less likely/much less likely

Total responses: 595

Q7. Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the initial plans for Telford Theatre @ Oakengates?

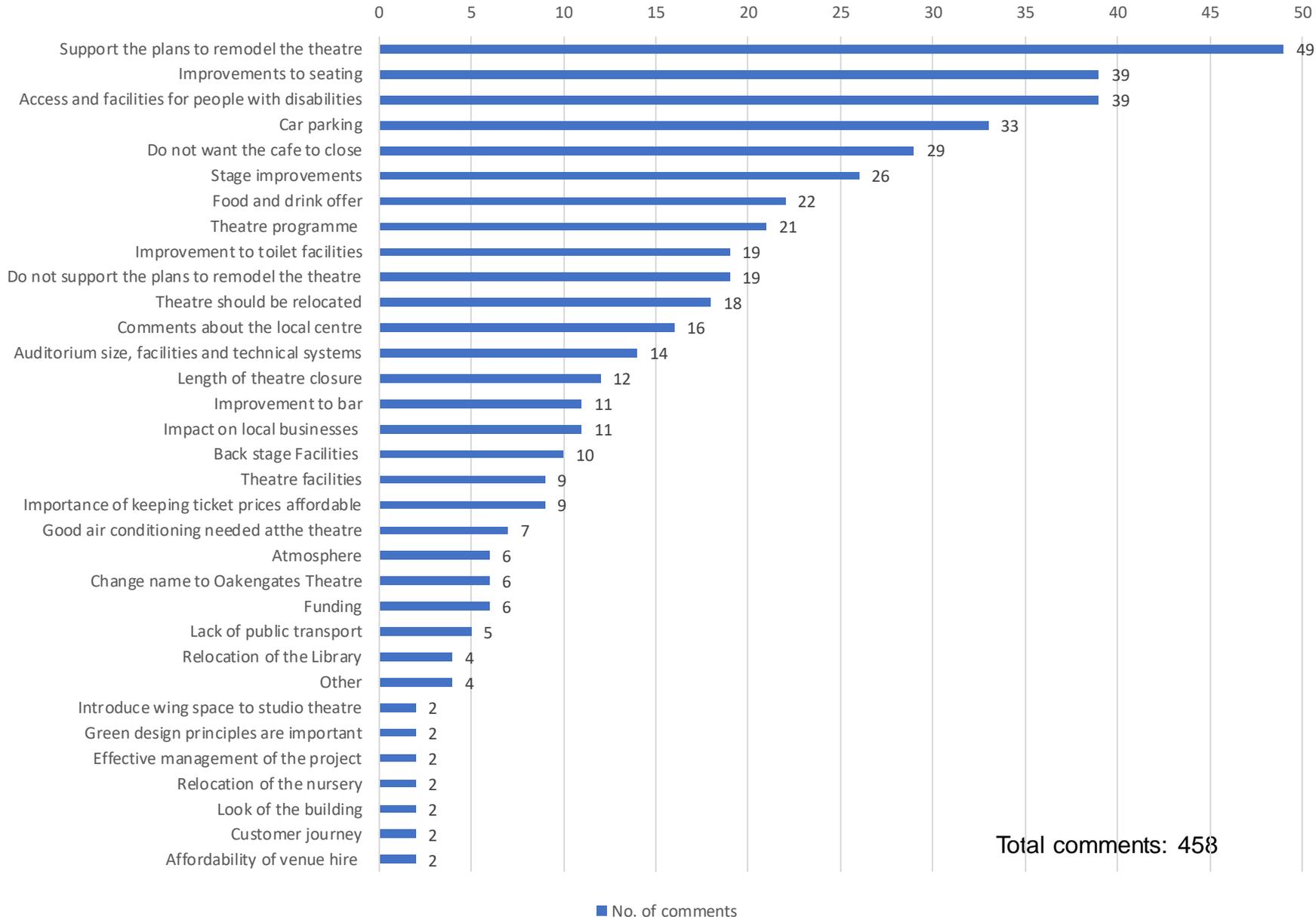


■ Strongly agree/agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree
■ Disagree/strongly disagree ■ Don't know

Total responses: 591

Comments

Comments by theme



Comments summary

- 458 comments received relating to a wide range of themes. Top 10 themes:
 - 49 comments expressing **support for plans**, including that the plans will attract bigger act/show and that it will improve the town.
 - 39 comments relating to the **need for improved seating**, including the more space between rows of seating to help with access and leg room and quality/comfort of seating.
 - 39 comments relating to **access and facilities for people with disabilities**, including ensuring good disabled access and space throughout the theatre and the need to improve disabled facilities for all including those not in wheelchairs i.e. user friendly systems for deaf/hard of hearing.
 - 33 comments about **car parking**, over half of which referenced a concern about the availability of car parking spaces.
 - 29 comments stating that they do not want the existing café in the theatre to close.

Comments summary

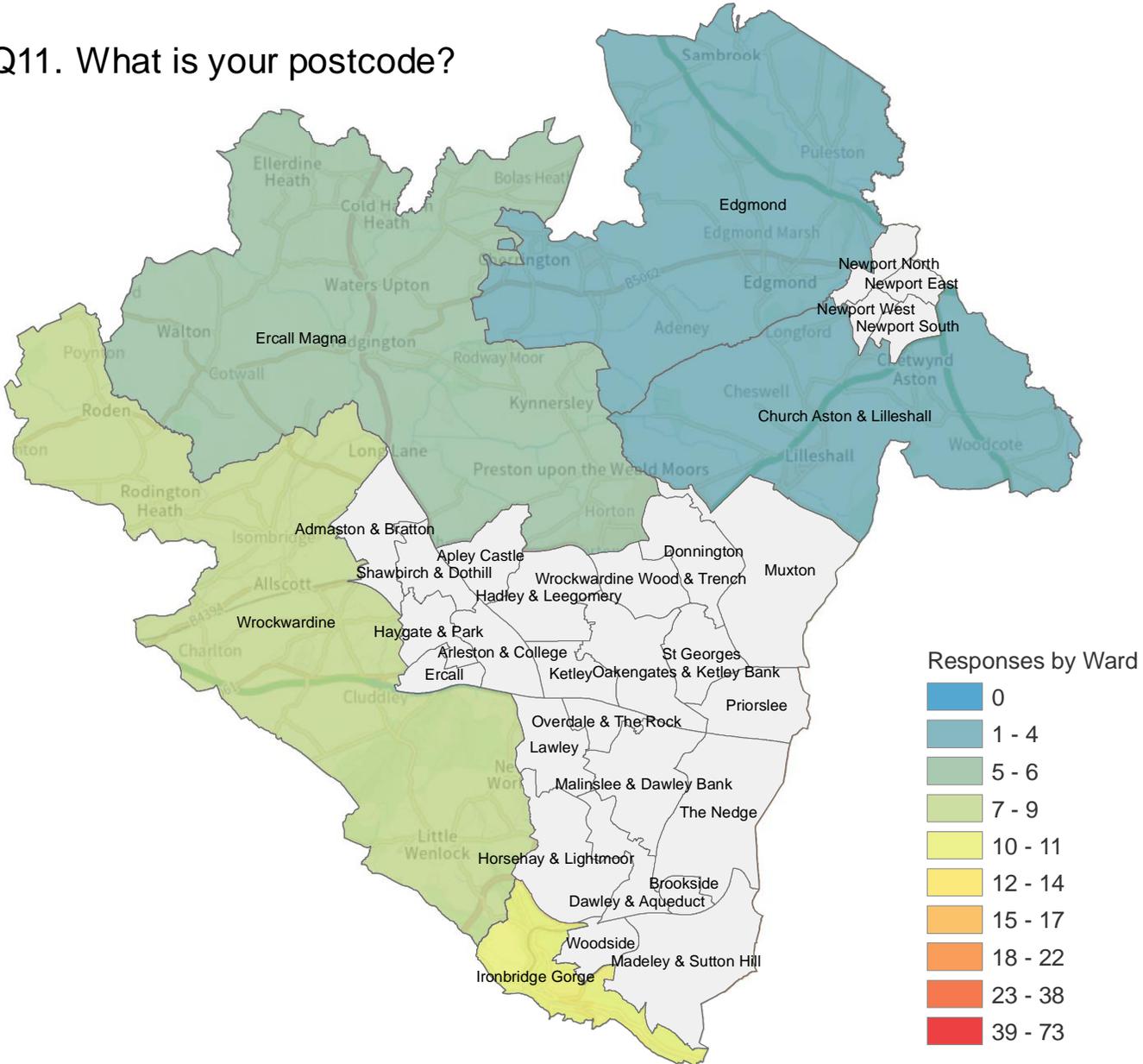
- 26 comments relating to stage improvements, including a need for a fly tower and a bigger stage with more wing space to accommodate larger productions .
- 22 comments regarding the food and drink offer, including comments expressing support for a pre/post dining offer and that a dining offer will attract more people to visit the theatre.
- 21 comments relating to the theatre programme. The main comment was the need to improve the quality, diversity and size of acts and shows.
- 19 comments about the toilet facilities, including the need for more toilets, more good quality disabled and changing spaces toilets and toilets in more than one location.
- 19 comments expressing that they do not support the plans to remodel the theatre, including that the investment was not necessary and that they like the existing theatre.

You can view a summary of comments received here [Appendix - Telford Theatre @ Oakengates Remodelling Consultation Survey](#)

Respondent profile

- 85.4% of respondents who provided postcode details were residents of Telford and Wrekin.
- Responses were received from residents of 31 of the borough's 32 Wards.
- The greatest number of responses (73 responses, 15.6%) came from residents of Oakengates & Ketley Bank Ward.

Q11. What is your postcode?



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Respondent profile

- 82.2% of respondents were aged between 35 and 74.
- 60.4% of respondents identified as female, 37.2% as male, 0.2% as other and 2.2% preferred not to say.
- 1 in 4 respondents indicated that they had a long-standing illness, health problem or disability (25.3%).
- Most respondents were from a White British ethnic background (91.3%).
- Fewer than 1 in 20 respondents were from a minority ethnic background (3.4%).

