

Minehead Seafront Refurbishment Survey Analysis

Survey Returns:

From Online Survey Monkey site – Respondents: 143

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-JY7LQ58LL/>

From Online Survey Monkey site – Respondents: 116

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-GW69WDWLL/>, SM-CTSYZDWLL/ and SM-VX9VBDWLL/

From emails sent direct to Swan Paul – Respondents: 9

From survey forms left at the TIC Minehead – Respondents: 127

TOTAL: 395

It should be noted that respondents did not answer every question.

The online 'Survey Monkey' forms were analysed first and they broke the original 11 question form down into 26 separate questions. We have therefore returned the Survey Monkey comments to the original survey form question number.

Some respondents asked for the same thing a number of different times across the form. Where this happened it has been recorded once only per respondent and that item has been placed in the most relevant part of the form. When other respondents have asked for the same thing it has also been recorded once in the same place. For example children's play was included at various parts of the form but has all been recorded in one place at Q6.2.

Age Range – Form Filler

Age Group of Respondents:

Age Range	Responses
0-5	2
5-15	7
15-25	12
25-45	86
45-65	166
65+	107

Age Range – Attending with form filler

Age Group of people attending with Respondents

Age Range	Responses
0-5	44
5-15	72
15-25	42
25-45	74
45-65	107
65+	67

CONCLUSIONS

The majority of people filling in the forms were 45 and above but attending with people across a fairly even spread of age groups. Many are going to the seafront with children under 15.

Q1

What is the main use of the seafront?

Activity	Responses
1.1 Walking	259
1.2 Exercise	104
1.3 Dog Walking	71

CONCLUSIONS Question 1

The main use of the seafront is for walking.

Q2.1

Do you use the seafront for informal games, eg ball games, skateboarding, rollerskates?

Activity	Responses
No	147
Yes-with young children on scooters & bikes	57
Yes-but games on the beach	22
Yes-Skateboarding/ scooters/ blades (by user)	16

CONCLUSIONS Question 2.1

The majority of respondents make no specific active use of the seafront.

Small children using bikes and scooters is a popular use on the prom with others playing games on the beach.

Adult cycling and skateboarding are not currently big uses of the seafront.

Q2.2

Is the seafront a good place to do this? Do you have any problems playing informal games? What are they? Would a dedicated skate area be a good idea?

Activity	Responses
Skate area - no its dangerous	127
Skate area - yes on the prom	54
No, the beach is the place to play games	37
Skate area but only for very young	34
Maybe elsewhere	19

CONCLUSIONS Question 2.2

The majority of respondents do not want a dedicated skate area. However the number who do is not insignificant. An alternative location to the east may be a possibility for consideration in a future phase of development.

Q2.3

Do you have any other comments about informal games at the seafront? Could there be any others eg boules?, should any be restricted?

Activity	Responses
Boules area	73
Volleyball	24
There should be no activity restrictions	17
Marked out games eg Chess/ giant chess/ hopscotch	18

There should be no activities on the prom	12
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CONCLUSIONS Question 2.3

Activities are an acceptable idea particularly boules. Several respondents said these should be to the eastern end of the prom.

A low number of respondents wanted no activities on the prom.

Q3.1

Do you use the seats along the seafront, what do you think of them?

Item	Responses
Yes (various issues see below)	208
Yes and are happy with them and have no issues.	45
No	33

CONCLUSIONS Question 3.1

Most people used the seats at some time but issues included:

- They are tired and damaged.
- They are too low and have no view of the sea (most people mentioned this).
- They are uncomfortable and fill with sand, which gets wet.
- The shelters are used and enjoyed.
- Skateboarders damage them.
- Some seating with backs would be preferred

Q3.2

Could the seating be organised differently?

Item	Responses
Seats should have views of the sea	145
Seats could be better organised/ in groups or with tables for picnics etc	126
They should be properly maintained.	85
Seats with backs needed	66
More sheltered seating (from the wind)	23
Seats by landscaped areas/ plants	10
Don't like the torpedoes	13
Seats on the sand	2
Like the torpedoes	1

CONCLUSIONS Question 3.2

The majority of respondents would like to see improvements to the seating along the promenade. The most popular wishes are seats with views of the sea, some seats in groups for more social interaction and some seats with backs. Seats should also be properly maintained (chosen seating to be a low maintenance design).

Q4.1

Do you use the seafront for informal exercise such as oriental disciplines (tai-chi, yoga, pilates etc), stretches or running? If so what?

Item	Responses
No opinion/ no	119

Yes for running	39
Informal tai-chi/ Yoga	2

CONCLUSIONS Question 4.1

Most people do not use the seafront for exercise (see Q4.2) many felt they would do if there was an outdoor gym area – (although there are proposals for one at an alternative location in Minehead). A flexible open area (eg for the annual wheel) could also be used for yoga etc. A fair number of people run along the prom so any new proposals should not unduly restrict this linear route.

Q4.2

Could facilities be improved for the activities identified in question 4.1?

Item	Responses
Outdoor gym good idea	108
No opinion/ no	42
Seafront should not be narrowed too much by new equipment, planting and obstructions	23
A dedicated, marked cycle route	9
Outdoor gym not wanted	6
Sand play	2

CONCLUSIONS Question 4.2

Although an outdoor gym was the most popular response here, we understand that an outdoor gym facility is planned for the recreation ground at Irnham Road, Minehead. It will be important to keep a route that can be kept relatively open.

Q5.1

How do you get to the seafront?

Item	Responses
Walking	216
Car	99
Cycling	42

CONCLUSIONS Question 5.1

Most people access the seafront by walking.

Q5.2

Is there adequate car or bike parking? Are there adequate electric charge points? (the latter refers to points to charge electric cars)

Item	Responses
Car parking is expensive	89
Car parking is adequate	70
Car parking is inadequate	44
Bike parking/ racks needed	45
Electric (car) charging points needed	12

CONCLUSIONS Question 5.2

The current parking area to the east of the promenade is outside the 'red line' project area, but respondents felt that it was adequate but expensive. The issue of charging points was confused, some respondents thought we meant 240V outlets for phones/ gadgets etc (generally the response was, why?); a few understood the issue was for charging electric

vehicles and they generally said yes but maybe for the future. There is a need for bike parking to encourage secure parking for these users.

Q6.1

Would you like to see play areas on the seafront? Or do you mainly go with children to play on the beach?

Item	Responses
Yes more play on the prom would be good	153
No play on the prom, it should be focussed on the beach	84
No we mainly go to play on the beach	61

CONCLUSIONS Question 6.1

There is good support for some form of children's play on the promenade. Other respondents do not want play, or go to play on the beach.

Q6.2

Following on from Q 6.1, would you like to see any particular play equipment on the seafront?

Item	Responses
A general play area	150
Tidal pool on the beach	75
Splash play/pool on the prom	68
A heated lido	7
volleyball	8
trampolines	7
Sand pit and play	6
Disabled play opportunities	4

CONCLUSIONS Question 6.2

When asked for play specifics the largest response was for a general play area of a traditional nature with some people saying this should have a nautical theme. The next largest request was for water play but split between a tidal pool, or a splash-pad/paddling pool on the prom. There was a slightly greater preference for a tidal pool. Regarding a splash pad/paddling pool on the prom, it is understood that the annual maintenance budget for water play would be considerable, and due to practicalities with the (wider) Eastern end of the promenade being the worst affected area for sand dispersal, this will not be taken forward at this stage. A Tidal Pool on the beach is outside of the Eastern Esplanade development proposal area, however this may be something that may be included in a later phase subject to funding. See future phase wider masterplan graphic.

Q7.1

Is there enough planting and nature conservation on the seafront?

Item	Responses
More planting is required	207
Its ok as it is	44
More trees are needed	49

CONCLUSIONS Question 7.1

There was a general preference for more green and planting on the prom with more trees a favoured request, several people suggested these should be palm trees, and several suggested indigenous planting. Several respondents pointed out the challenging conditions for plants on the prom. Hardy and low maintenance resilient planting options will be a key consideration.

Q7.2

Is it important that this aspect of what the site could offer is recognised and enhanced?

Item	Responses
Yes	180
No	13
It should be well maintained	137

CONCLUSIONS Question 7.2

More planting was seen as important but it should be properly maintained. Although maintenance is not part of the Eastern Esplanade development proposal, maintenance is being considered separately.

Hardy and low maintenance resilient planting options will be a key consideration.

Q8.1

Elderly and disabled users - Do you use the seafront at the moment?

Item	Responses
Yes	155
No	14

CONCLUSIONS Question 8.1

This question has been answered by various age groups, not just the elderly and disabled but the seafront seems well used by the elderly and disabled respondents.

Q8.2

What Improvements would you like to see to help the elderly use the area more? This question was supposed to relate to elderly/ disabled users of the seafront and the online questionnaire did not make this clear. Answers relating to other age groups have therefore been collated into question 11.1.

Item	Responses
More comfortable seats with backs	72
More toilets	110
More regular clearing of sand/ drains	68
Better disabled/ elderly access/ ramps to beach	25

CONCLUSIONS Question 8.2

A popular request is for some seating to respond to the needs of the elderly and comfort, along with more toilets. More regular maintenance and clearing of sand would help these users.

Toilets, sand and drain clearance are not part of this funding stream, maintenance will be considered separately. Regarding the toilets in Minehead, the Town Council manage the

majority of the public toilets. It is also understood that the Carousel toilets (closed since 2015) may re-open again soon, and be run by a local business owner.

Q8.3

Is there adequate parking or stopping space for any mobility aids you use?

Item	Responses
Not applicable to me	56
There is adequate space for mobility scooters and wheelchairs	22
There is not enough space for them	17
Charging point for mobility scooters	2

CONCLUSIONS Question 8.3

Any new proposals should allow for access for mobility aids.

Q9.1

Do you use any of the buildings for your visits? What do you think of their condition or location?

Item	Responses
Use shelters but they are shabby/ badly painted and need glass or wind-proofing	85
Use ice cream kiosk and toilets at east end	31
Use Jubilee Gardens cafe	11
Don't use the buildings	7

CONCLUSIONS Question 9.1

There is good use of the seafront buildings, particularly the shelters but respondents generally stated that the shelters required some attention or needed better shelter from the wind. We may be able to enhance or repurpose some of the shelters that fall within the Eastern promenade designated area.

Q9.2

Would any other building functions be useful?

Item	Responses
More Toilets (at Jubilee Gardens end) & open existing toilets	142
Re-open Queens Hall	22
Another shelter at the east (Butlins) end	18
A better café/ restaurant	11
A glazed winter garden/ spa	1
Changing rooms	1

CONCLUSIONS Question 9.2

There is a general request for more toilets with more shelter to the east end of the promenade the next most popular. The re-opening of Queens Hall is popular but it is currently in private hands. Toilets are not included as part of this proposal. The Town Council manage the majority of the public toilets in Minehead. It is also understood that the Carousel toilets (closed since 2015) may be re-opened again soon and run by a local business owner.

Q9.2

Comments on any other issues that you feel have not been covered in the above question. (only questions related to **buildings** are included here, there were some answers with relevance to more general matters which have been relocated to question 10.1)

Item	Responses
Smarten up Jubilee Gardens cafe	7
Jubilee Gardens café to open all year	5

CONCLUSIONS Question 9.2

The Jubilee Gardens Café is seen as not reaching its full potential, however it is not part of this proposal and does not fall within the designated area for the Eastern Esplanade development.

Q10.1

In terms of creating a lively seafront for residents and visitors to enjoy, do you have any suggestions? Have you seen anything in other areas that could be appropriate for Minehead?

Comments about toilets and buildings have been moved to section 9.2.

Comments about play have been moved to section 6.2.

Item	Responses
Better maintenance/ Clean up the sand more often/ resolve flooding	92
Stalls/ kiosks/ vending/ temporary stalls	74
More family friendly things/ events/ concerts	55
Deck chairs concession	53
New seagull proof bins	34
Open air showers	41
Palm trees	29
Don't like the open air gallery	29
Don't like features of a contemporary design, traditional preferred.	22
Beach huts	33
A sculpture (some people suggested sculptures based on local heritage)	20
Lift the summer dog ban in some places on the beach. (the beach is not part of the Eastern Esplanade proposal and falls outside of the designated area)	22
Its OK as it is, no more items required	16
donkeys	13
Volleyball	16
Encourage buskers/ entertainers	9
Need for dog bins	6
Don't like big wheel or should be in a different location	4
Helter skelter	5
Minature train	3
Keep west end by Wessex water box clear of clutter for events/ scooters	9
Improve/ relocate bucket and spade sculptures/ improve legibility of sundial	2

Model boating	3
Carousel	6
Fountains	3
Everything is a waste of time	1
Tall lookout/ lighthouse	1
There are too many litter bins	1

CONCLUSIONS Question 10.1

- There is a large consensus for any new works to the prom to be properly maintained, in particular sand clearance. (Maintenance is not part of this funding proposal for the Eastern Esplanade infrastructure development, however maintenance is being considered separately.)
- Vending stalls and more family friendly opportunities are also popular and could be seasonal; as could a deck chair concession which is also popular and is a current proposal for the seafront.
- When the existing bins need replacing a more seagull proof design would be preferred.
- Some form of outdoor shower or tap would be a good idea for people to wash off mud and sand, which is seen as an issue at this beach.
- More trees were a popular answer to Q7.1 & 7.2 and some people have specifically mentioned palm trees in Q10.1; this could be a challenge on the north coast but some areas could be trialled for them, with greater use later on if they are a success.
- A small number of the overall respondent total do not like the open air gallery, although this was not a specific question on the form. The Maritime Mile and open air gallery have planning consent, will form part of the scheme and are not part of this development proposal.
- A similar number of people do not like contemporary design; this preference has also not been properly tested as this was also not a specific question, but it is worth considering / testing in the design options.
- Below this the items are getting a low number of the overall respondent numbers and should not overly influence the proposals. Any new sculptures could be of local relevance and many of the other large items such as carousels/ trains/ towers etc could be considered as seasonal alternatives to the Big Wheel and the space reserved for this would be ideal for such features if a touring operator of such things can be found.

Q10.2

Do you have any thoughts on how lighting could be used to add interest to current or new features?

Item	Responses
More decorative lighting/ fairy lights/ better lighting	165
No more lighting	19
Seasonal illuminations	7
Lighting sculptures/ lazars	9

CONCLUSIONS Question 10.2

More decorative lighting to add to and supplement the existing lights is a popular choice. The Exmoor National Park (adjacent) is a dark skies reserve so any lighting should keep this in mind.

Q10.3

Are there sufficient information points e.g. signage, info on the history of the town etc?

Item	Responses
No opinion/ existing is ok	81
More signage required	58
There are too many existing signs. It is jumbled and unsightly.	15
Needs to be well maintained (not go rusty)	9
Orientation plaque for views to south wales	5
No there is information about the town in the TIC opposite	9

CONCLUSIONS Question 10.3

The majority of respondents do not see a great need for more signage, although this may still be of benefit to the visiting population. An orientation plaque may be good to include somewhere.

Q10.4

Should there be greater opportunities for commercial use of the seafront? If so how?

Item	Responses
Yes	164
No existing is ok	47
Everything is a waste of time	1

CONCLUSIONS Q10.4

Of those that have responded most have said 'yes' and there is a general consensus in favour of the following:

- Stalls/ kiosks/ vending
- Deck chairs – Deck chairs are already in the pipeline for the seafront
- Beach huts – On a north facing coast these may not have an ideal orientation but their feasibility can be considered at a later stage
- Temporary markets/ evenings/ weekends – A summer market is already in the pipeline for the harbour area. Also the new summer festival on the seafront planned 4-5 August will attract market stalls

Overall we understand that covenants are a factor for having more of the above on the eastern promenade, and proposals would need to be agreed before being progressed.