# Review of Redhill PSPO: summary report of consultation

## About the consultation

A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) is a power that local councils like Reigate & Banstead Borough Council can use with the police and others to address anti-social behaviour. Councils can use PSPOs to prohibit specific activities in defined public areas.

The government says PSPOs must be drawn up in consultation with the community and reviewed at least every three years. We introduced a PSPO in 2017 to Redhill town centre (including Memorial Park) to cover behaviour that the community and council was concerned about. In 2020, we consulted the community as part of the three-year review.

The Covid outbreak made this more of a challenge for us and the community so we took that into account when we planned the consultation.

## How we consulted with the community

We carried out an online survey aimed at residents and others who may have used the town centre prior to Covid. We promoted the survey through social media, local media and on our website. Our survey asked people to think about their typical use and views about the town centre rather than their use during the Covid outbreak. It was open from 6 July to 17 August.

We were unable to carry out any face to face research and avoided using fliers to promote the survey because of concerns about spreading the Covid virus but we contacted stakeholders who work with particular groups of town centre users, such as young people and business representatives to try to maximise our reach.

## Participation

391 people participated in the survey.

71% of participants visited the town centre at least weekly, 20% monthly, 10% less often.

87% came for the shops, 48% for leisure and cultural facilities such as the park, theatre or gym, 42% passed through. Around half said they lived in or near the town centre.

Slightly more men than women took part (49% male, 46.5% female).

90% of participants said they were white British, 6% were any other white background and 4% were from black, Asian or other mixed ethnic backgrounds.

Participants ranged from the 16-17 years age group to 85+ years but just over half (53%) were in the 35 to 54 years age bracket.

## Key findings

* Over 90% supported renewing the PSPO.
* The prohibition of cycling (and skateboarding and hoverboarding) received the least amount of support (two thirds, compared to over 90% for most other behaviours).
* Prohibiting face coverings was also a concern for some, particularly related to the Covid outbreak (although the wording of the order allows for this).
* There is room for improvement in awareness of the PSPO: 33% of participants said they were aware of it, 23% said they recognised the signs.
* Overall, the PSPO does not appear to have stopped participants’ enjoyment of the town (although with some parts of the community under-represented in the survey, we would need more research to be confident about this).
* Some participants have witnessed anti-social behaviour and/or experienced it.
* There are mixed views about the value of the PSPO: some people think it has reduced anti-social behaviour or improved their feeling of personal safety, others say it was ineffective (and 14% saying problems had moved elsewhere).

### Awareness and views of the PSPO

A third of participants were aware that Redhill had a PSPO in place and nearly a quarter recognised the PSPO signs when shown to them.

Nearly all participants supported the renewal of the PSPO: 93% said they supported the extension of the PSPO for a further three years.

A third of participants were not supportive of the order prohibiting cycling or skateboarding in pedestrianised areas.

Some people said the PSPO:

* unfairly labels Redhill as a problem area
* is too heavy handed
* limits people’s freedoms
* unfairly prohibits cycling which should be encouraged.

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| Positives | Negatives |
| 72% of people thought the PSPO was a good idea | 19% thought it was ineffective |
| 60% thought it had reduced anti-social behaviour | 14% thought it had moved problems elsewhere |
| 44% said it made them feel safer. | 4% said it made them feel unwelcome and 6% felt it targeted some people unfairly |

## What happens next?

Officers and councillors have reviewed the results of the consultation, including feedback from businesses and local community groups.

The council has decided to renew the PSPO with an amendment to the regulation covering cycling. The order now prohibits “dangerous or anti-social cycling.” Skateboarding and hoverboarding are still prohibited.

The order was renewed on 10 October 2020 for a period of up to three years.

Existing signs will be replaced to reflect the change around cycling but the survey also highlighted a lack of awareness and understanding among the community surrounding the PSPO. We will tackle this by:

Adding extra signs at eye level to outline the PSPO and a map of the area it covers. These will also be placed on places where lots of people go, such as at supermarkets and on noticeboards in churches and community buildings.

Look at ways to continue to seek the views of the public, especially young people.