



Reigate & Banstead 2025: consultation feedback

Thank you for your comments

We would like to thank everyone who took part in the recent consultation on our new five year plan, Reigate & Banstead 2025.

We received a really encouraging number of responses from residents, visitors, community organisations, local businesses and partner agencies. During the eight weeks of the consultation we received over 600 survey responses containing over 1,000 comments, with further feedback given via social media, face to face conversations and email.


We are now in the process of finalising Reigate & Banstead 2025, and hope to be able to publish the final plan in the next couple of months.

In the meantime, we wanted to give you some feedback about some of the comments raised through the consultation and what we are doing in relation to these.



Consultation facts and figures

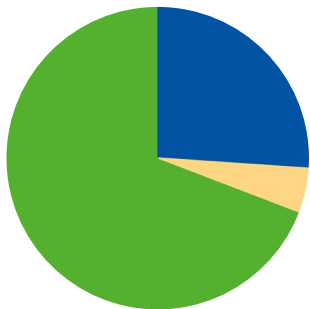
Participants

673 
survey participants





6 meetings with 60+ attendees

15 
email responses

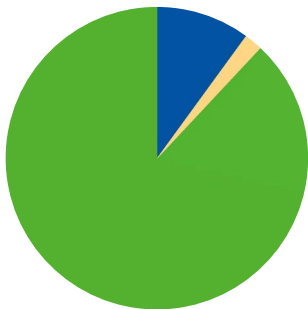
Vision






69% of survey respondents agreed with our vision, with a further 26% of respondents supporting it to some extent.

Key:
 % strongly agree or tend to agree
 % agree to some extent
 % do not agree

Commitments

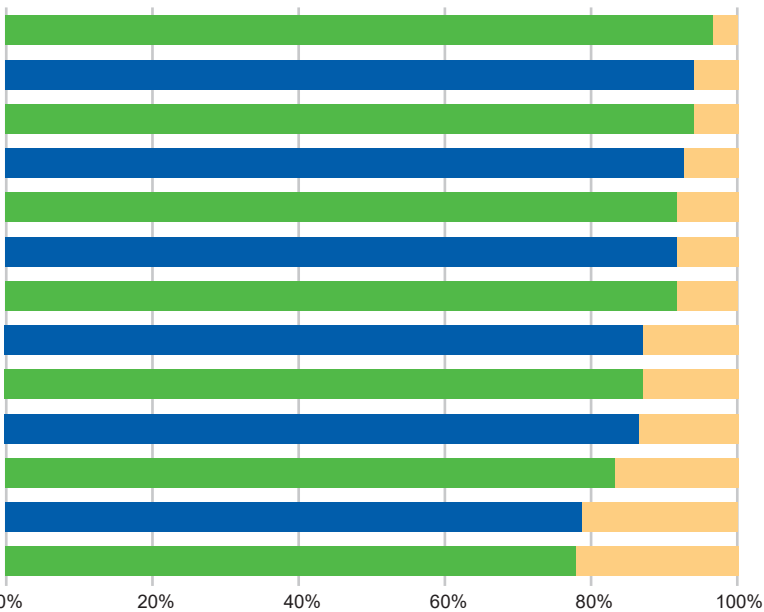




88% of respondents supported our proposed plan commitments.

Key:
 % strongly support or tend to support
 % not sure / other
 % do not support

Objectives

- 96% clean and green spaces
- 93% communities and community safety
- 93% environmental sustainability
- 92% leisure and wellbeing
- 91% towns and villages
- 91% vulnerable residents
- 91% shaping our places
- 87% economic prosperity
- 87% operational assets
- 86% skills and great people
- 83% financial sustainability
- 78% housing
- 77% commercial activities



Key:   % strongly support or tend to support



Some of your comments and what we are doing in response

This summary provides a snapshot of some of the issues that were raised most frequently through responses to our consultation.

We have not been able to record all the comments that were provided within this summary document, but rest assured that all comments have been read, considered and taken into account as we finalise the plan.



PEOPLE

Housing

Some people wanted to understand what was meant by 'housing that is affordable' as they felt that some of the 'affordable houses' currently provided are too expensive.

- We agree that our plan could be clearer about what 'housing that is affordable' means and will include more information about this in the final version.

People also made suggestions about the type of houses that we should focus on, and the facilities these houses should come with.

- We will consider these suggestions as we prepare more detailed plans, as well as looking at evidence of what the local need is.
- Most new housing is provided by private developers. Where we can, we will use our planning powers to make sure that this housing is of the right type and size, but we also have to follow national policies, which sometimes make this difficult.

Children's centres and youth provision

People asked that more support and activities be provided for children and young people, including in our parks and leisure centres.

- We welcome this suggestion. We will continue to look at how we can work with partners to provide activities and facilities for young people. More information about what we do now is available at www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/RandBeActive.

People were also concerned at the closure of children's centres and youth centres by Surrey County Council (SCC).

- We know that many of our residents will be affected by the closure of some of these services. We have been working with SCC to make sure that support and activities are still provided in Reigate & Banstead, although this may need to be done in a different way in the future.

Our community centres and the Harlequin

We had a few questions about what our plans are for our community centres and the Harlequin Theatre.

- We agree that we can make more use of these venues. We have started to do this by upgrading the cinema at the Harlequin.





Supporting those with disabilities and older people

Some people asked us to consider doing more to support those with disabilities and older people to access services. This included both physical access and the provision of other forms of support.

- We already work with partner organisations to provide a range of types of support including activities at our community centres and taxi vouchers to help people with limited mobility.
- We will continue to investigate if there is more that we should be doing to support those with disabilities, older people, and other more vulnerable groups.



PLACE

Climate change and the environment

There was a lot of support for including this objective in our plan. But people also felt that we should provide more information about what we will be doing, and made a wide range of suggestions.

- We agree that we need to provide more detail in this area.
- We are currently preparing a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy. This will include more about what we will be doing. We hope that it will be available within the next six months, and once finalised we will publish it on our website.



Roads, potholes, pavements, speed limits and streetlights

Many people commented on these things, however, they are not things that we have direct control of. Surrey County Council (SCC) is responsible for them.

- It is helpful for us to understand your concerns about these services and how they could impact on the success of our plan.
- We know that we need to work closely with SCC to promote and protect the interests of our residents. We are committed to continuing to do this, through the Reigate & Banstead Local Committee and in other ways.
- You can report these issues directly to SCC via www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/report-a-highway-problem.

Supporting our towns and villages

A number of people made specific suggestions for how towns and villages could be improved. More generally, you wanted to see more support provided for local businesses and retailers.

- Where you have made specific suggestions, these will be passed to the relevant Council teams to consider further.
- Unfortunately, things like shop unit rents and leases are largely outside our control but we will look at how we can improve the local environment in our towns and villages. We've recently had good feedback about improvements we've made in Horley.



Infrastructure and services

Lots of people commented that new housing and jobs need to be supported by new infrastructure (things like roads) and services (things like public transport, health services and schools). This is something that does not fall entirely within our control as a lot of things are provided by other organisations, including Surrey County Council and the NHS.

- We are able to collect some money from developers to put towards new services, and we will publish information about how much we collect and what the money is being spent on.
- We will also continue to plan for infrastructure within new developments and work with other service providers to make sure they invest in improving services in the local area.

Sustainable transport

A number of people said that they would like to see us do more to support walking, cycling and public transport due to the related environmental and health benefits.

- We think it is great that more people are wanting to walk and cycle, and we want to support them to do this.
- We have a longstanding partnership with Sustrans to encourage cycling and other forms of sustainable transport, but we'll talk to them and Surrey County Council about how we might be able to do more in this area.

Green spaces and public spaces

Our consultation confirmed that residents value the borough's green spaces and public spaces. Some residents made specific suggestions about how our green spaces and public areas could be improved and kept cleaner; others were more concerned that green spaces be protected from development.

- We always need to make sure that the needs of different user groups are catered for and that we balance public use and nature considerations. Detailed suggestions about green space and public space maintenance have been passed to our Neighbourhood Services teams.
- Our recently adopted Local Plan explains where development will be located and how green spaces will be protected from development. Find out more on our website at www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/dmp.

Helping people recycle

Several people commented that they would welcome more information about how to recycle and easier opportunities to do so.

- We are currently rolling out a full recycling service to flats across the borough, and also have information explaining how to recycle different materials on our website – just search for 'recycling' and see what can go in each container.
- We are also a member of the Surrey Environment Partnership and will continue to work with them to provide more information about opportunities to recycle.





ORGANISATION

Commercial activities

Many people wanted to know more about what we mean by 'commercial activities'. Some people felt that it is not right for the Council to act commercially or generate profit.

- We welcome this feedback, and we agree that we need to provide you with more information about what the Council being more commercial actually means.
- The Council is not allowed to make a profit; but we do need to generate income to fund the services we provide to residents.
- We will be able to provide more information about this over the coming months.

Council tax and other Council charges

Lots of respondents felt that council tax and other Council charges should be reduced.

- We rely on council tax and other charges to pay for the services we provide, especially as we get little funding from Government or business rates.
- Given the funding challenges we face, we do not expect to be able to reduce council tax; however our plan does include a commitment to review this position every year.
- We also know that our residents expect us to operate efficiently, and we will continue to strive to be as efficient as possible while still delivering high quality services.
- Not all of your council tax comes to us (although we collect it all). In 2019/20, for every £1 you pay we get 12p, Surrey County Council get 75p and 13p goes to Surrey Police.

Staff and councillor pay and benefits

Some people suggested that there needed to be more transparency about staff and councillor pay and benefits and sought reassurance that these were not excessive.

- We publish information about senior staff pay on the website and in our financial accounts each year. Information about councillor allowances is also published – these are reviewed annually by an independent panel.
- People rightly expect the Council to operate efficiently, but we also need to make sure that we have good staff who are able to deliver the quality of service that residents expect.

Treating residents fairly and equally

Some people wanted to see a clearer reference in the plan to the Council delivering all services fairly and equally.

- We are committed to treating residents and other service users in a fair and inclusive way. We intend to adopt some new Equality Objectives alongside Reigate & Banstead 2025 to explain how we will continue to improve in this area.



COMMUNICATING AND REPORTING ON PLAN DELIVERY

How we communicate with you

Our survey showed that people have very different views about how we should communicate with you, with some wanting to see more online services and others asking for more opportunities for face-to-face communication.

- We know that people have different preferences about how they interact with the Council. The majority of people now prefer to do business online, but we know that this is not the case with everyone. If you are unable to use online methods we will help you to ensure you can still access our services.

A number of people felt that the Council could do more to communicate or publicise the work that it does, including how to access services and sharing good news.

- We use a range of means to communicate with you – we are active on social media, and promote our news in the local media, on our website and through our twice-yearly magazine to all residents
- However, we think it is a good idea that we do more to promote the services we provide and share good news.

How will you know if we are successful in delivering Reigate & Banstead 2025?

Many people said that more information was needed about how the Council would measure its progress in delivering the plan, and how it would report this information to residents and businesses.

- We agree that it is important that we explain how we are doing in delivering Reigate & Banstead 2025. We will make sure the final plan provides more information about how we will do this.
- We will report annually on our progress in delivering the plan, and share this information with you via our website and other channels – such as our social media and resident magazine.

How will you know that we have taken your comments on board?

Some people were concerned that the Council would not take their comments on board or respond to the concerns raised.

- We hope that this document starts to explain how we are responding to the comments people made.
- We will make changes to the final plan to reflect consultation comments where these fall within the remit of the Council and align with the high level nature of the plan.
- We will share your more detailed comments about the services we provide with the relevant Council teams for consideration as they plan how their services will be delivered in the future.

