

The Consultation

Purpose

The consultation was undertaken by the council and the Chamber of Commerce to identify the views of residents and businesses on a proposal to close the lower High Street during summer weekends to enhance safety and social distancing and to help the town's economic recovery.

A huge thank you to everyone who responded. In addition to the 'Yes'/'No' answers, people really engaged with the question of safety and economic recovery in Arundel, and very valuable suggestions were made.

The Results

Over 71% of resident supported the proposal, far exceeding our expectations. However businesses were divided, with only a minority (43%) in favour and clearly some businesses felt they would not benefit from the closures.

Other Benchmarks

The other benchmarks which we set were obtaining approval for the road closure scheme and securing grant funding. Disappointingly, after giving it a lot of thought, Arun District Council concluded that the guidelines under which they are working would not allow them to use money from their government £143,718 'Safe Reopening of High Streets' fund to pay for the stewarding of Arundel's proposed weekend road closures. However we have been encouraged to submit alternative proposals.

Conclusion

Given the opinion of the majority of businesses and the funding issue the council and the Chamber of Commerce have decided that they cannot implement the proposal. Drawing on some of the suggestions made during the consultation other ways of supporting the safe revival of the town's economy are being considered.

The Figures:

	'Yes'	'No'	Total
Residents	443 (71.1%)	180 (28.9%)	623 (100%)
Businesses	26 (43.3%)	34 (56.7%)	60 (100%)

In addition a surprising number of responses (63 in total) were disqualified for reasons such as no name or address being given.

How the Count was Conducted

The boxes containing the questionnaires were opened in Arundel Town Hall on the afternoon of Monday 13th July, and at the same time the Survey Monkey responses were downloaded. Counting was carried out by former Mayor Cllr. Angela Standing, current Mayor Tony Hunt and Town Hall manager, Sue Roderick. Sharon Blaikie, Chair of the Chamber Commerce observed the count and Father David Twinley of St. Nicholas acted as the Count Monitor, and had the final say in whether specific entries met the consultation criteria.