

4. Which aspects of the town are of the greatest interest/concern?

• Theatre	22
• Pedestrianisation	21
• Appearance of the streets	21
• The river	20
• Quality of the natural environment	19
• Conservation of historic properties	19
• New housing development	18
• Traffic congestion	18
• Council services	16
• Hospital and health services	16
• Crime and anti-social behaviour	16
• Access to Shakespeare properties	15
• Entertainment	14
• Shops and shopping	14
• Roads and road safety	14
• Cycling	13
• Parking	13
• Churches	13
• Number of tourists/visitors	11
• Hotels	10
• Business development	10
• Public transport	9
• Schools	7
• Recreational facilities	5
• Supermarkets	2

5. The Respondents felt that the Society was doing the following matters well:

- Talks and social events
- Liaison with local councillors
- Promoting the Historic Spine
- Keeping an eye out for planning issues
- Representing members' interests
- Communicating and informing/educating members
- A useful pressure group to monitor and help action necessary changes/developments
- A vehicle for developing new initiatives e.g. footpath plaques
- Providing a collective voice on many aspects of life in Stratford
- Keeping the members in touch with current local affairs and town's history
- Transport group
- I like the chance that the Society may be able to influence the Council when Planning Issues both in town and the countryside occur.
- Suspending meetings until safe to resume
- Consulting members on way forward.
- Involvement in transport, planning, town development strategy (NDP)
- Regular meetings (before Covid)
- Providing a forum for discussion of civic affairs and the role of the citizen
- Most of the speakers are interesting and informative.

- Performing as a long term local non-government interest group focused on structured development of our town.
- Have always found meetings interesting
- Keeping going/just surviving!
- Keeping going during difficult times
- The historic spine plaques are a really good idea.
- Keep us in touch with current local affairs and with the town's history.
- The talks have been excellent and are to be commended.
- Carrying out its role as advocate for the town's heritage and urban fabric
- High quality interesting talks

6. Respondents felt that the Society is at present failing in following areas:

- Not pursuing its primary role as a civic society with sufficient profile and vigour
- The Society has lost its way and no longer enjoys the influence or respect it once had on civic issues
- The Society has lost its identity and the reason for its existence.
- In many ways the Society has assumed the role of an Historical/ Shakespearean society
- The various sub-groups do not keep the membership up to date during the year with their discussions and at the AGM the group reports are inadequate and the AGM itself is poorly run
- The Society is no longer able to get volunteers to carry out the main functions of the Society.
- The Society needs to revive its planning group
- The Society needs to revive contact with SDC
- We are not appealing to younger potential members, this relates to style, content, and the start time of meetings
- Not enough social gatherings and excursions
- Not enough use of social media
- Talks should be delivered in a more entertaining way, to attract a wider cross section of community
- Failing to interest and appeal from a broader cross section of the community
- I am saddened that the members attending meetings are so very much of the older generation. How could we enthuse younger people to become involved?
- Are we able to influence The Shakespeare Birth Trust the way we attempt to add our voice to Council Planning?
- Having taken so much time to start to consider way forward.
- Not addressing need to increase diversity of membership, particularly attracting younger members.
- Not enough interaction with younger generations in town
- Not bringing in new and younger members to ensure continuity.
- Not recruiting enough new members (not a new problem!)
- Not getting our views on planning applications, transport issues etc routinely reported in the press
- Not high enough profile in the local community
- At the moment, not using Zoom for meetings.
- Maintain interest!

7. The respondents enjoyed the following recent programming:

- History of the Holy Trinity window
- Lindsay MacDonald – Stratford in the English Civil War
- Kate Rolfe – What’s the use of the Town Council?
- Gregory Doran – Shakespeare ‘The God of my Idolatry’
- Changes affecting Charlecote Mill
- Joint Shakespeare Club/Stratford Society meeting at Falcon

8. Respondents would like the committee to consider for future programming:

- Pedestrianizing the town centre
- Organising a guided walking tour
- Environmental issues
- Cycling
- Green spaces
- Access to the surrounding countryside
- Heritage
- Shaping the development of the town to make it a better place in which to live
- Fear of crime and disorderly behaviour in the town
- Town centre revitalisation
- More on history of town, its buildings, the historic spine, plans for regeneration of town centre
- More visits to local places of historical interest
- Traffic congestion solutions
- The new government proposals on reform of the planning laws.
- The future shape of local government
- Re-run traffic congestion debate with instructions on how to join the session.
- History of buildings and town, conservation
- Planning, events, could walking tours (led) be possible? If advertised to attract non-members
- Information/talks about the historic houses that surround the town. Just how much historic building is left in Stratford, and is its future secure?
- Find somewhere else to meet if SBC is to remain closed for a long time.
- Topical Issues discussed relative to our role

9. Frequency of events

The respondents favoured frequency as follows:

- Monthly 18
- Bi-Monthly 7
- Quarterly or less 2

Comments:

- Presentation (lecture style) once per month (6-8 per year)
- Seminar (interactive discussion) once per three months (3-4 per year)
- Social events, getting together to meet & talk to other members (2 per year)
- Visits and excursions to places of interest (1-2 per year)
- I like the current Autumn cycle of talks and Spring visits

10. Respondents favoured the introduction of the following innovations:

- More use of digital media, e.g. pre-recorded talks on video available on demand via YouTube
- More online events, e.g. seminars and interactive sessions via zoom
- Joint meetings with other groups and societies, including those in other towns
- Raise profile of the Society through promotion and social media activity
- Publish an online journal (blog) on aspects of life in the town
- Have meetings on zoom for those who are unable to attend in person
- Actively endeavour to recruit younger members with skills useful to Society e.g. tech. savvy, marketing and advertising expertise.
- Introduce and develop a Young Persons' Stratford Society
- Hold special events, e.g. an annual summer garden party.
- Presentations online, but with recorded access to enable time-shifting
- Would be good to find a couple of members interested in bringing back a programme of local school visits to look at the buildings of the Town Centre and Planning issues.
- Online presentations – no longer than 30 minutes, would be good to link them to YouTube, they can be accessed at any time and linked from our website.
- Trying to attract a younger audience to events. Could be tricky for timing during the day
- More connections with younger people.
- Visits to local historic buildings that are not normally open to the public
- Walk and talk along the historic spine (led by Bob Bearman?)

11. Would you watch on-line presentations by Stratford Society speakers?

- Yes 16 (if interesting and entertaining)
- No 1
- Maybe 7

12. Preferred time slots for meetings are:

- Mon 2 pm - 6 pm 2
- Mon – Thu, late afternoon 1
- Tue -Thu mornings 3

After 7.00 pm (respondents generally selected more than one slot)

- Mon Eve 6
- Tue Eve 5
- Wed Eve 6
- Thu Eve 6
- Fri Eve 4

A number of respondents cautioned against schedule clashes with other local societies.

13. What do you think of the lockdown arrangements in Stratford?

- School children of all ages do not think of social distancing when out of school and that will not change so any strategy must cater for that.
- Markets for traders from out of town should be discontinued for the duration of the pandemic
- It is reassuring that efforts have been made to take into account the interests of businesses who were having difficulty with deliveries etc.
- Less foot fall was a concern
- EU Planting is nice
- Very depressing effect in town centre, especially caused by the “horrible plastic barriers”
- Generally well enforced inside shops by the owners
- Many visitors in streets and parks are not social distancing
- No visibility of police patrols in the streets
- Crass arrangement of Bridge Street
- Less traffic on the streets, fewer street parking spaces – good
- As elsewhere, poorly implemented and patchily enforced. Post-lockdown, chaotic traffic/pedestrian thoroughfare restrictions have been disastrous.
- Too excessive at the beginning, but better now.
- Going forward far more focus needed on local controls i.e. South Warwickshire or SDC. Little in common with the surrounding conurbations.
- I supported them but was disappointed that the authorities gave in so easily to ill-informed criticism
- Very hard times for the hotels and leisure facilities
- It is better now that the barriers have been adjusted, but there is no hint of social distancing from the people walking around town, most of whom do not wear masks.
- It’s good to have the High Street pedestrianised. It would benefit to do Sheep Street as well, because of the number of cafes and restaurants.
- Very commendable. For once the pedestrian has some consideration and it is now a pleasure to walk round the town. The closure of High Street is something the Society has been trying to achieve for many years.
- Seem to be well organized; just need people to follow them...

14. What are the most important issues at present for the town?

- Planning how to return to as normal a version as possible of life before Covid.
- Visitors, theatre and Shakespeare properties.
- Shop closures
- Traffic congestion
- Too many levels of Local Government:
- **The Town Council**
which is a glorified parish council with pretensions but no real power
- **The District Council**
which cannot properly look after Stratford because it has to be fair to the 4 other market towns (which seem to supply most of the portfolio holders)
- **The County Council**
which appears to hate Stratford. Or it may simply not understand the town. Its ambitions to become a Unitary Authority MUST BE RESISTED.

- Residential planning
- Pedestrian river crossing
- More pedestrianisation of town centre
- Shop closures/Survival of local firms
- Tourism
- Suitable night time entertainment
- Promoting winter flu vaccination to minimize NHS overload.
- Should not reinstate the railway from Honeybourne – too much has changed in the town for this to be a viable proposition.
- Support for unemployed, businesses, tourist outlets and theatres during and after the pandemic.
- Effective traffic management and reduction of air pollution.
- Finding safe ways to reopen RSC and SBT properties
- Removing plastic barriers while continuing to restrict traffic flow in centre
- Making it easier for shops and restaurants to operate safely
- Ensuring effective redevelopment of BHS and Debenhams sites
- Tackling the problems Covid has brought to the Town
- Finding a new balance between the changes that are coming, even without the demands of the Pandemic: environmental care, (charging points for electric cars and enough convenient parking) retail business shrinking and how to find uses for the empty shops that could benefit the community
- Continued monitoring of Covid-19 spread and prompt and effective action to deal with further outbreaks.
- Making more pedestrian access available (once peripheral parking has been carefully implemented and not before), but also ensuring that there is some short-term parking within the town centre
- Finding alternative uses for empty shops (as Escape arts have done in Debenhams windows)
- Lack of tourists, especially international tourists
- Traffic congestion, especially Clopton bridge and the large 6-axle vehicles that use it – I would like to see a weight and/or size limit
- Not enough use of Park and Ride facilities
- Encourage small scale local shops to re-invigorate the town centre, and careful pedestrianisation could help, though some disagree about that!
- Better litter collection, and weed removal
- Need more cycle lanes, less cycling on pavement/footpaths
- Need to encourage more tourists to visit historic sites, promote our historic potential
- New housing development - need for a physical limit to the edge of town, stop the sprawl and encroaching on farm land. Need to have more living accommodation in the town centre so residents can walk to work, and small units for single people
- Pedestrianisation should go no further until in-town parking for shoppers is addressed. Do not do away with Windsor St Car Park.
- The shape of the local government representation for our area going forward, which is going to be either a Whole Warwickshire Council or one for the South of county and one for North. This will allow for greater funding control locally.
- Pedestrianization of town Centre restrict traffic to buses and taxis
- Cycle/pedestrian priority in town centre
- Protection of historic/architectural heritage

- Traffic management – the town becomes gridlocked during normal tourist months. We have lived here since 1978 and the problems have got worse every year. Large new housing estates have been built on the main roads leading into Stratford without any planning of how to deal with an increasing population moving around the town for education, shopping, leisure, health reasons etc.
- Should not destroy the area between the fisherman's car park and the leisure centre by making it an access to town; people who want to get into town can walk along the perfectly adequate towpath, and anyone who wants a different route can use an existing pathway through the 'wilderness'.
- The council should not be allowed to override objections to excessive house building.
- Planning for how to return to as normal a version as possible of life before Covid. Visitors, theatre, and Shakespeare properties.
- To be able to encourage visitors in a safe environment, and to address traffic

15. The respondents made the following further comments and suggestions:

- Further mass housing development near Stratford should be discouraged
- Complete an outer ring road around the town with two new bridges
- Closer cooperation with Town and District Councils to implement NDP
- Extend and improve cycle network within the town and to neighbouring towns
- Plan for the effective future use of Harvard House
- In need of younger members
- We must not expect too great an interest in local civic history or civic society. Most of the time, lack of involvement is a sign of things being pretty good. However, having a small group of interested people has shown (Historic Spine, Pavement Plaques, Henley St and now High St pedestrian priority) where the message has been propagated over a time and when opportunity arose movement happens.
- I hope there can be a full discussion on our role of the Committee and how we discharge it. Peter Burgess, a former Committee member, has some interesting views on issues relating to future growth of the town (inevitable) and how it might be managed. He would be happy to forward them.
- Keep going!

END OF SURVEY