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Mid Ulster District Council

Johnny McNeill

Mid Ulster District Council

Francie Molloy MP

Coalisland Community and Voluntary Representative

Brian O'Neill

Coalisland Credit Union (Vice Chair)

Patricia Toner

Sole Sister

	<b>DISCUSSION</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome</b>
	Cllr N McLernon, the Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting both in-person and those attending virtually.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024</b> Proposed by Cllr M Quinn Seconded by Cllr N McLernon and agreed: The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2024 were a true and accurate record of proceedings. It was noted a briefing was held on 17 <sup>th</sup> April 2024 to discuss Coalisland Summer Bash.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Matters Arising from Previous Meeting – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024</b> Cllr N McLernon asked Council Officers for updates on the following matters arising:  <i>3.1 Air Quality update</i> O Donnelly updated Members on the results from the nitrogen dioxide monitors from the Environmental Health department. The results show that levels are well below the national air quality level of 40 µg m-3.  <i>3.2 Guidance on town centre gritting</i> O Donnelly advised Members that current agreement with Dfl is that gritting is triggered after 3 days of continuous freezing or snowfall. He added that the Dfl guidance will be reissued to Members. Cllr McLernon asked if grit boxes could be provided for footpaths. <b>Action: O Donnelly to share Dfl's guidance with Members.</b>

	<p><b>Action: Council Officers to contact Dfl re feasibility of grit boxes for town centre.</b></p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Update on Town Centre Projects</b></p> <p><i>Halloween 2024</i></p> <p>O Donnelly updated Members with details about the upcoming Halloween event. The event will take a similar format to last year. Two changes were noted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There will be an additional juvenile apparatus due to the popularity last year's event.</li> <li>- The funfair will close at 8:00pm (30 minutes earlier than last year) to allow for movement to the Na Fianna grounds.</li> </ul> <p><i>Christmas Programme 2024</i></p> <p>O Donnelly informed Members about a district-wide <i>Christmas Town Centre Trail</i>. The objective is to encourage families to come into our towns and spend local. There are 11 businesses in Coalisland participating in the trail. It will run from 15<sup>th</sup> November 2024 until 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025. There will also be activities on Small Business Saturday (7<sup>th</sup> December) where there will be on-street animation in the towns, to drive footfall and dwell time.</p> <p>Cllr M Quinn asked if there is a measure of footfall in the town available. O Donnelly advised we have no method to measure. R O'Neill added that from his experience, footfall appears to be back to pre-covid levels and in fact may be slightly improved. This was welcoming news by all Members.</p> <p>The Christmas Lights switch-on event will take place on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2024. The event is a similar format to previous years with a stage and live music. O Donnelly explained that there was difficulty/confusion last year at the countdown when the public were moving to the Christmas tree. To mitigate this, the wooden huts, which includes Santa's grotto, will be sited in the carpark between the Cornmill building and Donnelly McAleer's Chemist.</p> <p>Cllr N McLernon asked if there could be food stalls at the Christmas event. O Donnelly advised that he would explore in line with street trading legislation.</p>

	<p>O Donnelly updated Members on the upcoming marketing and promotion campaign for Christmas. This will include a comprehensive social media campaign that will enhance the profile of Mid Ulster for shopping, eating, and experiences.</p> <p><u><i>Gortgonis Update</i></u></p> <p>Mid Ulster District Council’s Social Inclusion Manager, Martina Totten, presented Members with an update on the Gortgonis playing fields and pavilion work. She advised that enabling works are taking place so that the track can stay open for the time being.</p> <p>R O’Neill queried the material being used for the track and pitch. M Totten explained that the track will be constructed with shale which maximises its usage. The pitch will be 3G rather than grass. She added that a grass pitch would restrict its community usage and that as the pitch is being repositioned on the site, there are drainage issues in the new location.</p> <p>Cllr M Quinn asked if the playpark is going to remain open. M Totten advised that there had been concern re the matting in the playpark and it is currently being reviewed. Members will be kept informed accordingly.</p> <p>Cllr N McLernon thanked M Totten for attending tonight’s meeting</p> <p><u><i>Mid Ulster Gift Card</i></u></p> <p>O Donnelly informed Members that there are currently 220 businesses signed up to accept the Mid Ulster gift card with Officers currently conducting a further recruitment drive.</p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Town Centre Forum Membership</b></p> <p>It was agreed that Expression of Interest forms would be sent out to local businesses to encourage new representatives to join the forum. Responses will be brought to the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Action: Council officers to send out EOI forms to local businesses</b></p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p>

	<p><i>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week</i></p> <p>Enterprise week will run from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024. There will be a number of events across the week both in-person and online including a “Meet the Experts” event.</p> <p><i>Mid Ulster Business Awards</i></p> <p>The closing date for entries was Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024. Winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024.</p> <p>R O’Neill raised a query regarding trading taking place in the Cornmill car park and asked if it is possible for Council Officers to investigate if the correct permissions are in place.</p> <p><b>Action: Council Officers to raise query with relevant department</b></p> <p>R O’Neill raised a query regarding the one-way system along Main Street. O Donnelly advised that a survey is to be carried out to evaluate the public realm works and that it is important that businesses/shoppers etc. provide feedback.</p> <p>Cllr M Quinn asked for an update regarding anti-social behaviour. Sgt McDonald informed Members that there has been an overall reduction in anti-social behaviour in the town and that PSNI officers would remain vigilant in the run up to Halloween.</p>
6.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>TBC</p>
	<p><b>Meeting concluded at 7:10pm</b></p>



M McCullagh circulated Town Centre Progress Report to members and provided an update on Mid Ulster Town Centre Projects as follows:

**a) Christmas Programme 2024**

**(i) Town Centre Trail**

The 5 main towns (Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Coalisland and Maghera) will be participating in themed festive trails whereby participants will follow a map to take them to various locations throughout the retail core of the town centres. The trail will be Christmas themed with each clue point planned to showcase and promote the participating town centre businesses.

Council have issued Expression of Interest forms to relevant businesses located on William Street and James Street with a closing date of Monday 23 September 2024.

Council have appointed BNL to deliver this project and they will meet with Council officers this week to move the project forward.

**(ii) Cookstown Christmas Lights Switch On – Friday 22 November 2024**

Cookstown Christmas Lights Switch On will take place on Friday 22 November 2024 from 6.30pm – 8pm with the lights being switched on at 7.25pm.

Road closure commences at 5pm and will reopen at 9.15pm. The stage will be located outside PhotoKing – to accommodate set up the parking bays located outside the premises will be closed at 3pm.

Planned entertainment includes participants from the local area – Tullylagan Pipe Band, Showstoppers Parade, Ryan McGarrity & Alan MacPhearson and Stewartstown Panto. The theme for the parade this year will be ‘Hairspray’.

**(iii) Small Business Saturday 7 December 2024**

Small Business Saturday will take place across the 5 town centres with on-street entertainment being provided from 12Noon – 3pm and will consist of children’s activities and musical performances.

As per previous years a shoppers draw will be conducted with local participating businesses. Council will issue information in advance to traders.

**(iv) Town Centre Marketing & Promotion**

Council have appointed Kaizen to assist with Council’s Christmas Marketing Campaign which will include a range of targeted social media and videography to encourage people to shop and eat locally, and attract visitors to Mid Ulster town centres during the festive period. A range of short videos will be prepared to promote sectors in each

town and promoted on social media. A shop and dine will be local campaign will be rolled out after the Christmas lights switch on.

### **b) Mid Ulster Town Centre Proposal**

JA Spence presented the case for the development of a user-friendly channel for Mid Ulster which will showcase each urban town centre and profile businesses/services – including telling the story/personality of each town and promote good news stories. The channel will provide a useful tool for providing information to residents, visitors/shoppers and potential investors and will be funded under the Economic Development budget.

Council Officers are seeking feedback from each Town Centre Forum on the proposal before bringing to Economic Development Committee. Members advised that they were content to proceed.

### **c) Cookstown Saturday Market**

Cookstown Saturday Market Scoping Study has been approved through Council Committee. Council Officers met with a number of traders from William Street and James Street on Monday 16 September 2024 to provide an overview of the Scoping Study and the key findings. A productive discussion took place and Council officers will review and develop a road map on how to proceed which will include meeting with other relevant Departments within Council on potential long and short term options.

M McCullagh advised that they would work with all relevant Departments and stakeholders.

### **d) Cookstown Place Plan**

Council have submitted an application to Department for Communities regarding a Place Shaping Plan for Cookstown. P Cosgrove advised that funding for the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of the project should be approved and confirmation will be provided in the next few days.

JA Spence stated that the Cookstown Market will be fed into the Place Shaping Plan.

U Marshall asked for clarification on the purpose of the Plan. M McCullagh clarified that it is looking ahead for the next 15 years and developing a plan after extensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders within Cookstown Town Centre.

## **5. TOWN CENTRE FORUM MEMBERSHIP**

Members were advised that A McConnell, Large Independent Retailer has resigned his position on the Forum due to work commitments. M McCullagh extended thanks for his participation on the Forum for the last few years and for his continued support.

At the Cookstown Town Centre Forum AGM held on 1 February 2024 it was noted that there are currently 2 vacant positions on the Forum – Vintners position and a Professional Services position which were held by Tom Jebb and Jim Eastwood respectively.

M McCullagh had written to all vintners and professional services within the town centre boundary and no nominations have been received. After discussions it was agreed that M McCullagh extend the invitation to Glenavon House Hotel and Greenvale Hotel in respect of the vintners membership.

At the previous meeting, an Expression of Interest had been received regarding becoming a member of the Forum Johnny Finch who has two businesses located within Cookstown. As there is now a vacant position for Large Independent Retailer an invitation will be extended to Johnny Finch regarding becoming a member.

M McCullagh advised that both ASDA and Tesco have committed to being a member of the forum. U Marshall raised concerns regarding their commitment as the meetings are not regular and if they are community minded they should be in attendance. It was agreed that M McCullagh contact to ensure that at further meetings if unable to attend that they deputise to another staff member if they are unable to attend.

M McCullagh is liaising with relevant parties in relation to nominations for a representative from a local tenants association and will provide an update at next meeting.

## **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **(i) A29 Bypass**

The Public Enquiry for the A29 Cookstown Bypass begins on 22 October 2024.

TP Sheehy requested clarification on the situation with the budget. Councillor McNamee advised that the UK Government has paused funding but stated that positive discussions have been taking place. He stated that the DFI are proceeding with the public enquiry.

### **(ii) Mid Ulster Enterprise Week**

Mid Ulster Enterprise Week will take place from 18-22 November 2024 and all details will be available on Council's social media channels and website.

Promotion will be issued to businesses in advance via Council's business ezine.

### **(iii) Mid Ulster Business Awards**

The awards are hosted by Mid Ulster Mail and are designed to recognise the talent, entrepreneurship and excellence of the wide range of business and commerce across Mid Ulster.

There are 14 categories this year with Council sponsoring the Best SME business award.

Nominations have to be received by Wednesday 2 October 2024 and the Awards will take place at a Gala Dinner in the Royal Hotel, Cookstown on Thursday 14 November 2024.

### **(iv) Go Succeed**

D Ewing provided an overview of the Go Succeed Programme. Council is part of the new 11-Council 'Go Succeed' Service which offers a range of growth support to pre-starts, early stage businesses or existing businesses.

Free one to one support is available in areas such as marketing, planning, research, digital/social media, and much more.

As well as one-to-one mentoring with a Business Advisor business also have access to **free short** webinars delivered by business experts to help on key areas such as marketing, business planning, finance, or product development etc.

For existing businesses there is the potential to apply for a small grant once 50% of mentoring has been complete. This can be towards an activity which is specifically aimed at driving your business growth objectives (purchasing equipment, marketing materials etc.

It was agreed that an overview and links would be forward to members for their information.

### **(v) Public Realm Scheme**

Councillor McNamee advised that Council had raised concerns regarding the condition of the public realm works in some areas throughout the town, with utility companies conducting works and not replacing items as like for like. M McCullagh to liaise with DfI and relevant Council Departments to ensure our public realm remains at a high standard

U Marshall commended the improvement works conducted outside McAtamneys, James Street.

Councillor McNamee requested that any issues seen throughout the town are reported back to M McCullagh who will take forward.

## **7. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next date will be set for January 2025 and members will be notified accordingly.

The meeting ended at 1.10pm

**Cognisense**  
INSIGHTS THAT INCITE



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

# Mid Ulster District Council Coalisland Public Realm Impact

March 2025

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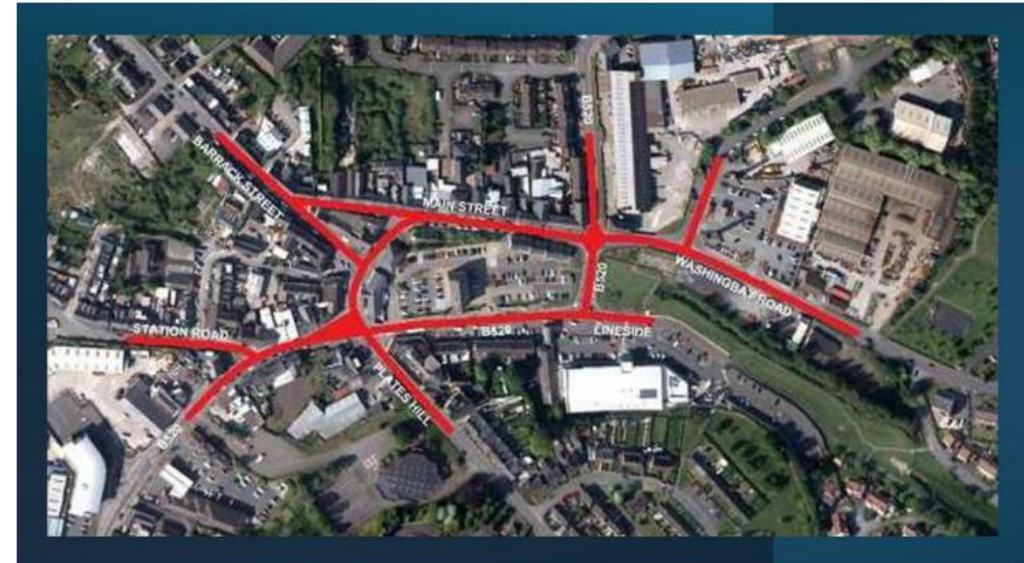


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# Background & Methodology

- Cognisense was appointed by Mid Ulster District Council to undertake surveys of businesses and town centre users in March 2025. The survey replicates a benchmark measurement that was undertaken in September 2018 prior to the commencement of public realm works.
- The public realm works involved the demolition of a derelict building in the town centre, creation of a new civic space in the centre of town. Specifically, the works included:
  - Creation of an open civic area
  - Installation of new street lighting
  - Installation of new street furniture
  - Laying of high class sandstone paving and granite kerbs
  - Creation of a new car park on Barrack Street
  - Creation of a new one way system on main street, allowing the expansion of on street parking spaces and assisting traffic flow
  - Installation of a new speaker system
  - Installation of a new bus layby on Lineside beside the Cornmill Heritage Centre
- The town centre area was defined as the 8 streets illustrated here.
- Survey work was undertaken on Tuesdays Fridays and Saturdays between 4<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> March.
- In total 50 face to face interviews were completed with businesses in this area and 103 face to face interviews with members of the general public within the town centre on Fridays and Saturdays.
- Within this report we illustrate the % responses from the benchmark study where the questions were replicated.





# Background & Methodology

- Given that the benchmark measure had been taken in 2018 and the works in the town were protracted over time, it was considered important to remind respondents how the town had looked prior to these public realms works.
- To this end at the commencement of each survey 4 screens of photographic illustrations were shown of how the town looked formerly, these are shown here.
- Additionally pedestrian counts were undertaken in all 8 areas for one hour periods between 9-10am; 12-1pm and 4-5pm



This is how **Main Street** looked before these works commenced.



This is how **Main Street** looked before these works commenced.



This is how **The Square & Lineside** looked before these works commenced.



This is how **The Square & Lineside** looked before these works commenced.



# Executive Summary – Impact of Public Realm Works

## Town Centre Users

- Over 17 in 20 town users (86%) scored their impressions of the town positively (good 45% or very good 41%) this is more than twice the 49% scoring the town positively back in 2018.
- Of the 11 measures scored all but 3 were rated positively by more than 4 in 5 town centre users with the three public realm measures that were rated most positively being: Street lighting 90%, the look and feel of the town (87%) and street furniture (85%), the positive rating of the latter having increased fivefold since 2108.
- At least three quarters of town users rated all but one measure positively, positive ratings of traffic congestion were dramatically lower at only 33%, nonetheless this has increased more than elevenfold from only 3% in 2018.
- Over three quarters (78%) of town users would probably (40%) or definitely (38%) recommend the town to family and friends.

## Businesses

- Overall impressions of the town have risen more dramatically, albeit to a lower level, amongst businesses in the town with 68% rating the town as good (36%) or very good (32%); this is. four and a half times the rating in 2018 which was only 16%.
- Of the 11 measures scored all but one was scored positively by over three in five, again street lighting was rated most highly being rated as good or very good by all but one business (98%). The next three most positively rated impacts were on car parking; street furniture and pedestrian access, all scored positively by 72% of businesses trading in the town.
- The one measure scored less favourably was the street layout where half of the businesses spoken to rated this positively, nevertheless this was over three and a half times higher than the 14% scoring the street layout positively in 2018.
- Three in five (60%) businesses stated that the public realm works in the town had exceeded their expectations. Only 10% felt that these works had fallen below their expectations, with traffic congestion being the aspect that had most disappointed them.
- Three quarters (76%) of businesses consider that the public realm works will make the town more pleasant for residents to use.

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Business Survey

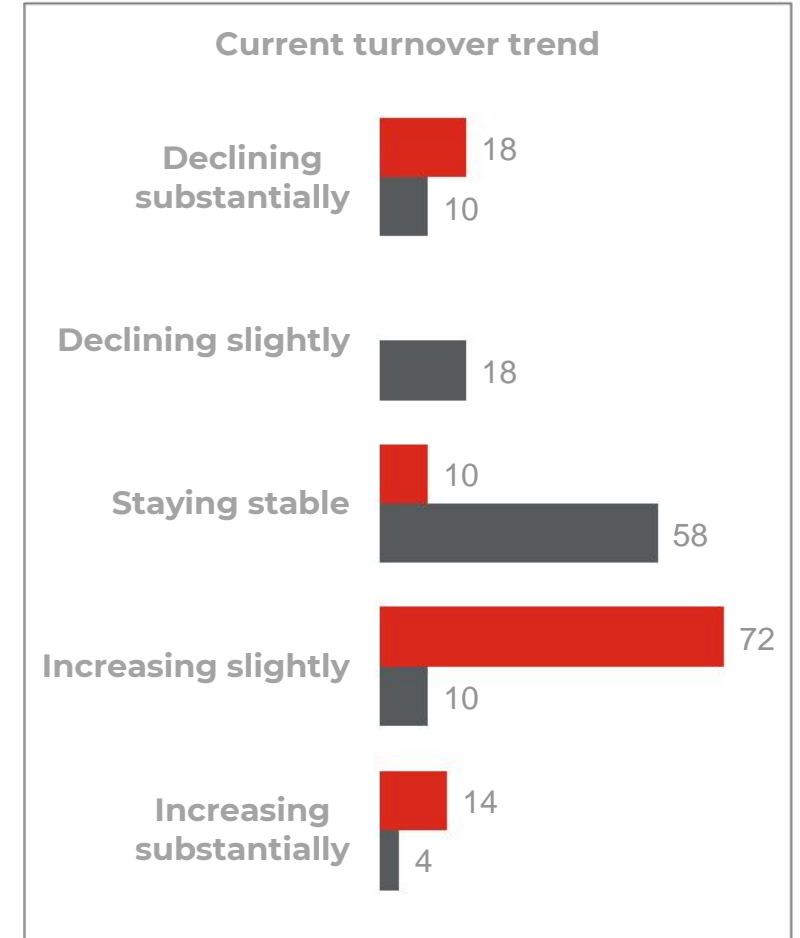
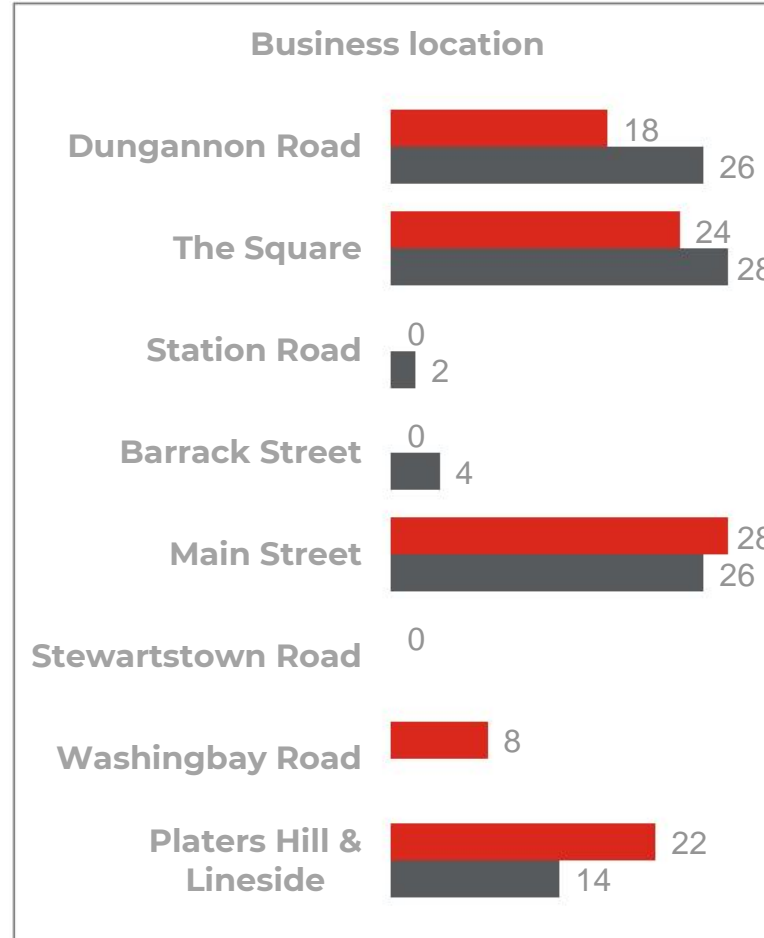
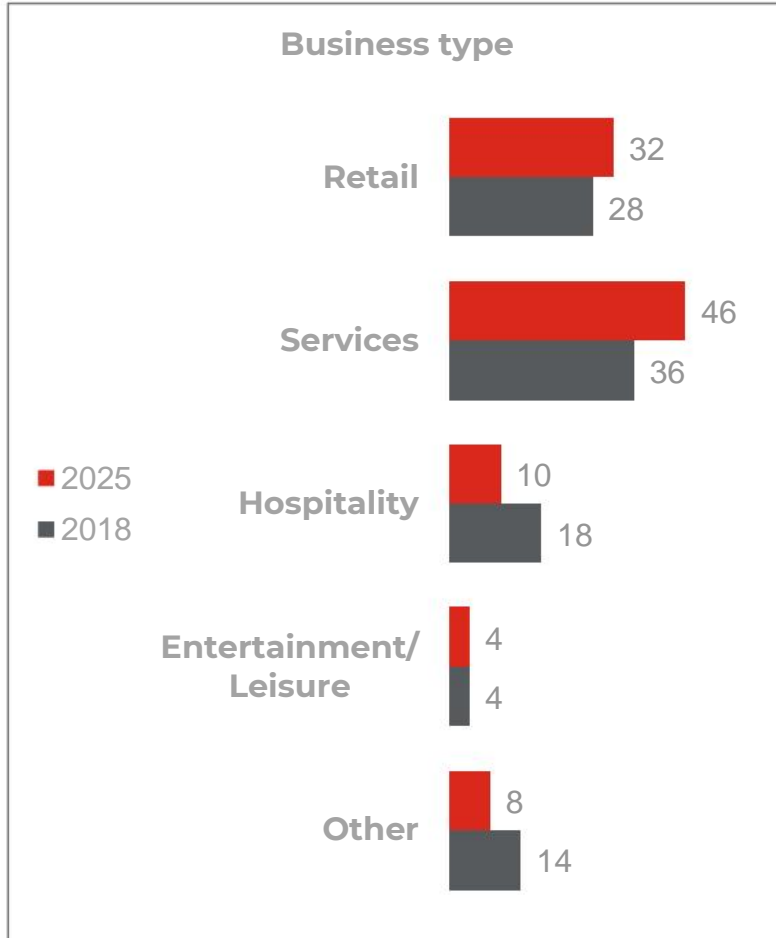
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# Business sample profile



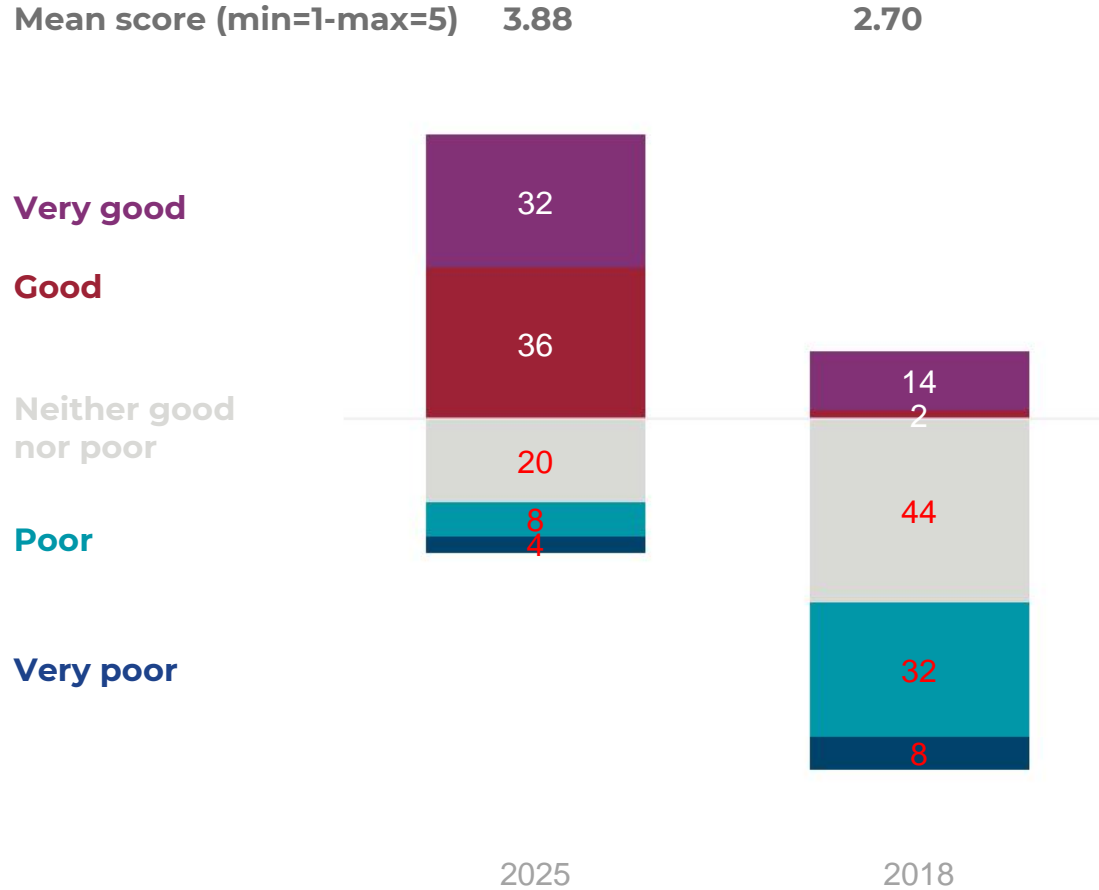
The 2025 sample represents a higher element of service enterprises. Many more businesses were reporting that their business turnover was increasing slightly. 86% reporting an increase in turnover compared to only 14% in 2018.



# Overall impression of the town centre



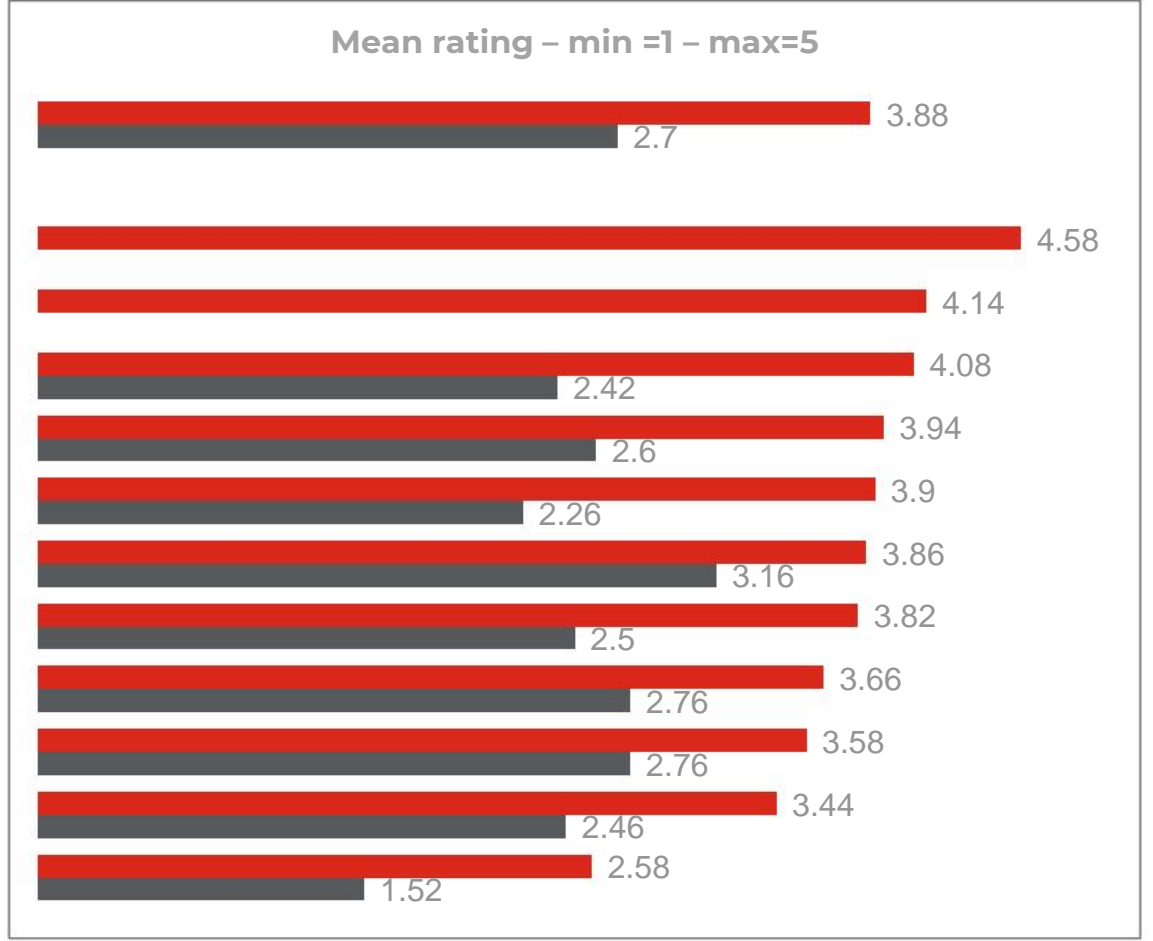
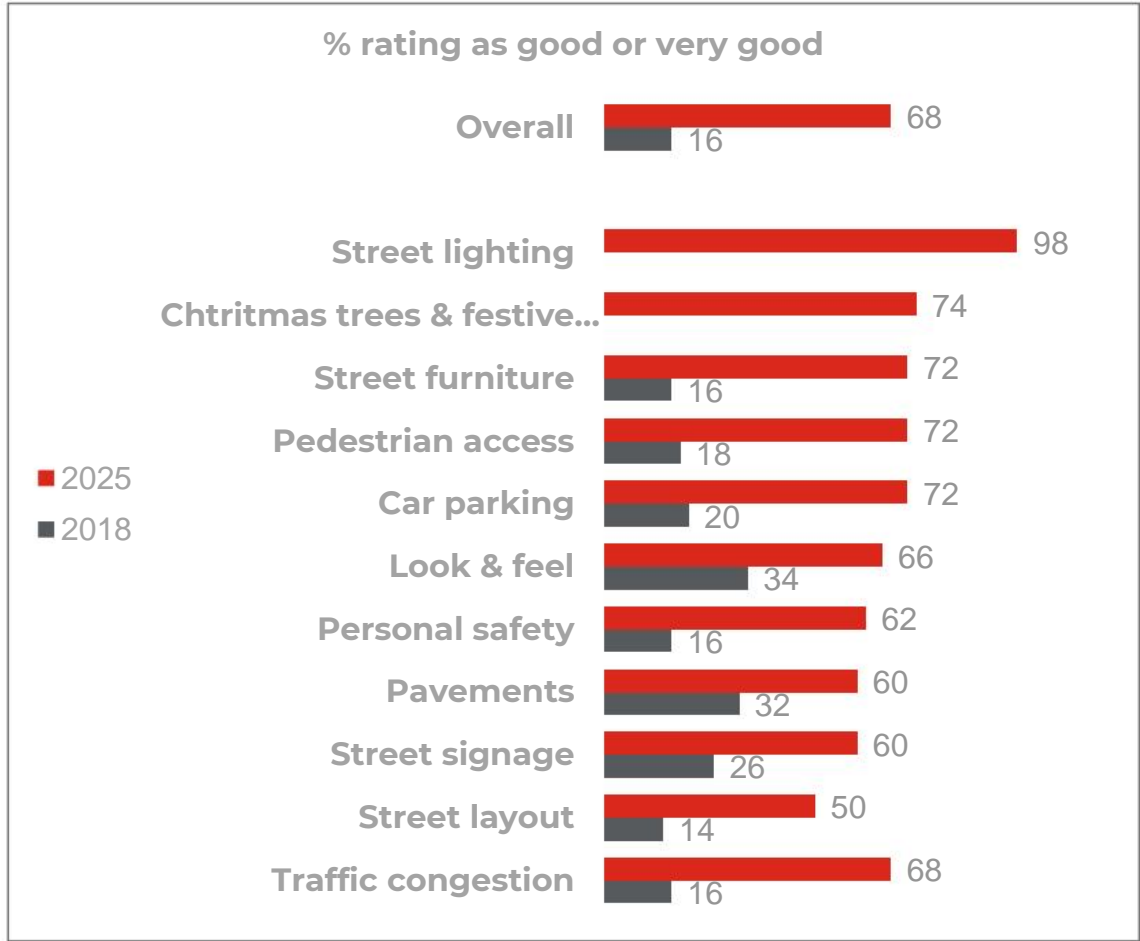
Asked to rate the overall impression of Coalisland town centre, 68% rated the town as either good or very good, over quadruple the 16% in 2018 rating the town positively.



# Rating of public realm as good or very good



The most highly rated aspects of the town centre enhancements have been the street lighting, festive lighting and Christmas tree and the street furniture, all of which scored over four on a scale from one to five. Overall the percentage scoring the town positively increased by 52%. Street layout attracted the lowest positivity, with half of the businesses scoring this aspect positively.



# Rating of aspects of public realm



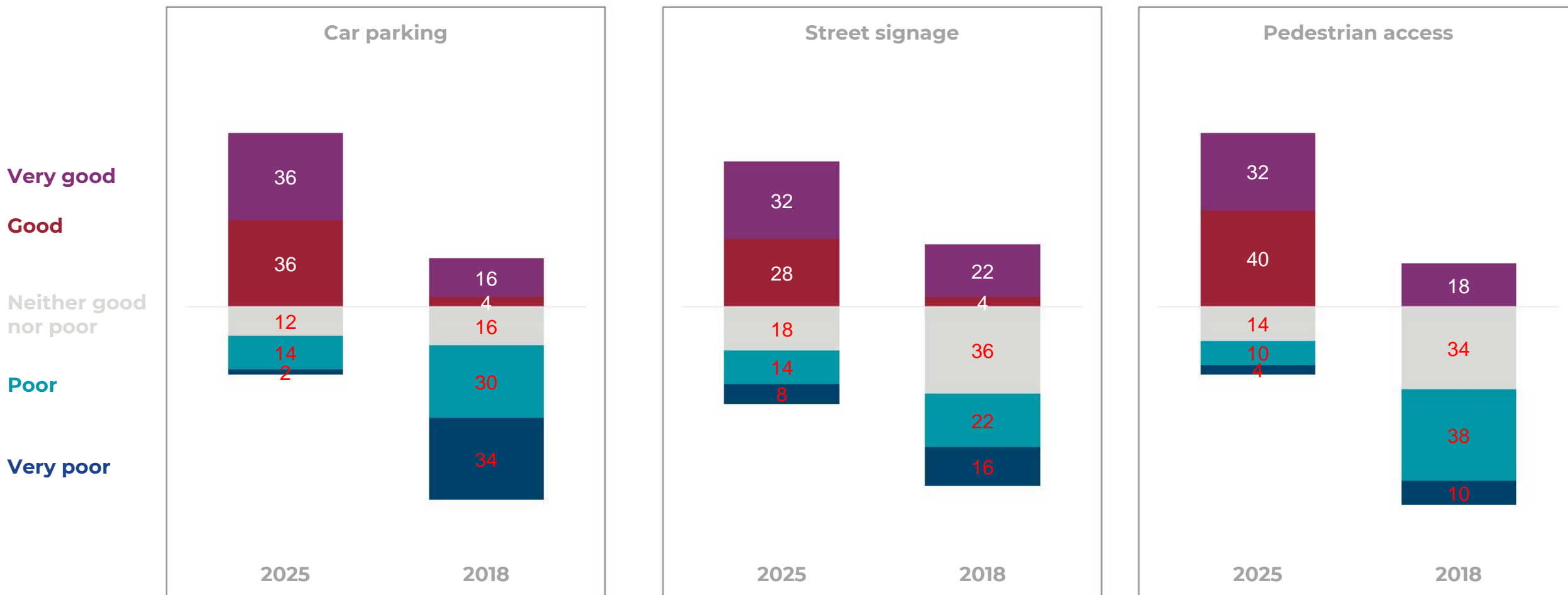
In 2018 businesses rated the look and feel of the town most positively, with 34% scoring this as good or very good, post works this has almost doubled to 66%. The quality of pavements which was the second most positively rated feature of the town in 2018 with 32% rating these as good or very good is now almost double at 60%. Positive ratings of personal safety have almost quadrupled at 62%.



# Rating of aspects of public realm



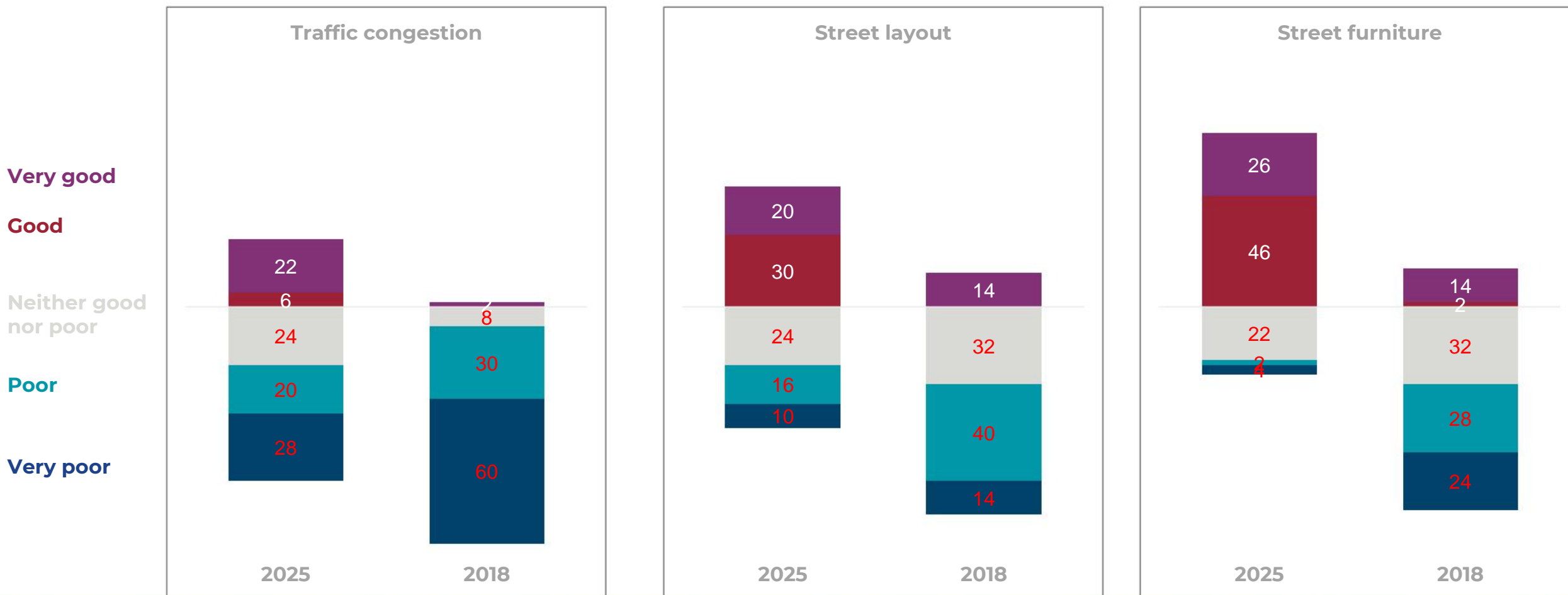
Back in 2018 only 20% of businesses scored car parking positively, this is now three and a half times higher at 72%. Street signage is now scored positively by 60% of businesses, that is over double the 26% rating street signage as good or very good back in 2018. Pedestrian access was very lowly scored in 2018 at only 18% positive in 2018, this has now quadrupled to 72%.



# Rating of aspects of public realm



Only 16% scored traffic congestion positively in 2018, this has more than quadrupled to 68% now post works. The street layout was the most critically scored aspect of the town centre in 2018; though it remains the least positively scored aspect it has risen to 50% of businesses. Three quarters (72%) of businesses score the street furniture in the town centre positively, this is four and a half times higher than in 2018.



# Rating of aspects of public realm



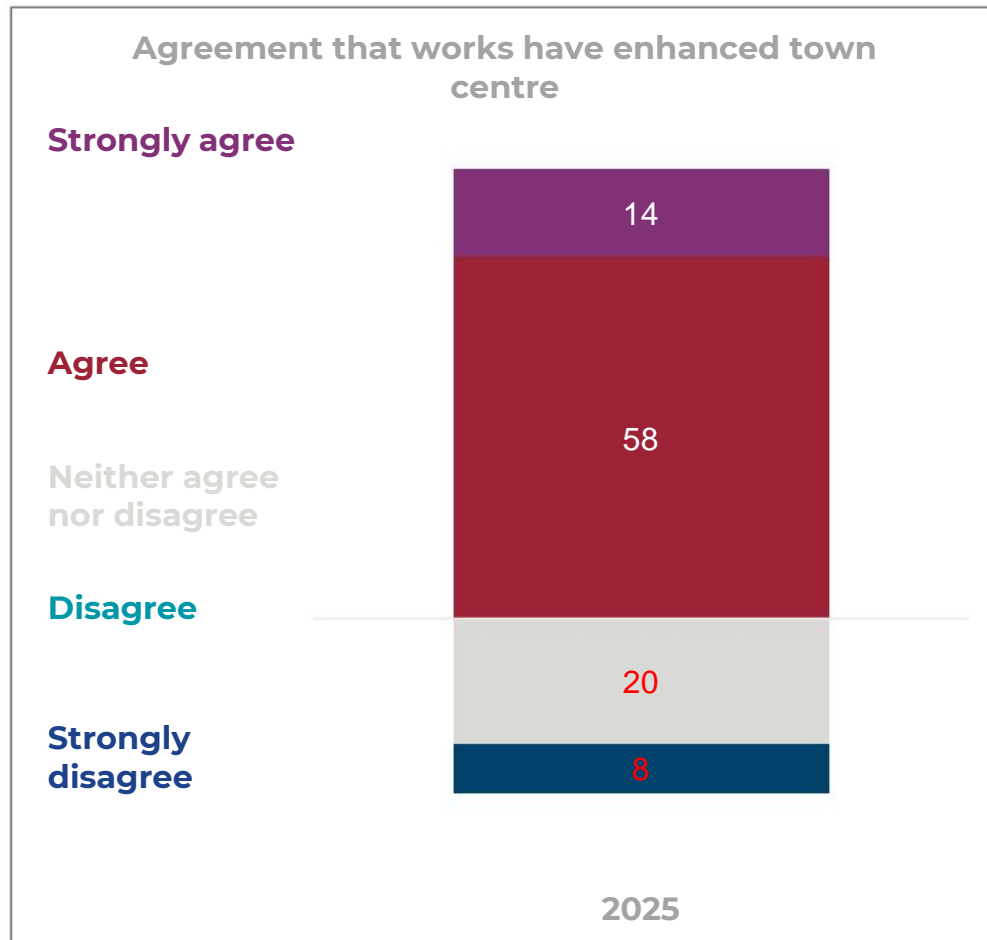
All but one business scored the street lighting in the town positively, this aspect was not rated in 2018. Within the new civic area a contemporary Christmas tree was installed, three quarters (74%) of businesses rated this tree and the festive lights positively.



# Lineside area



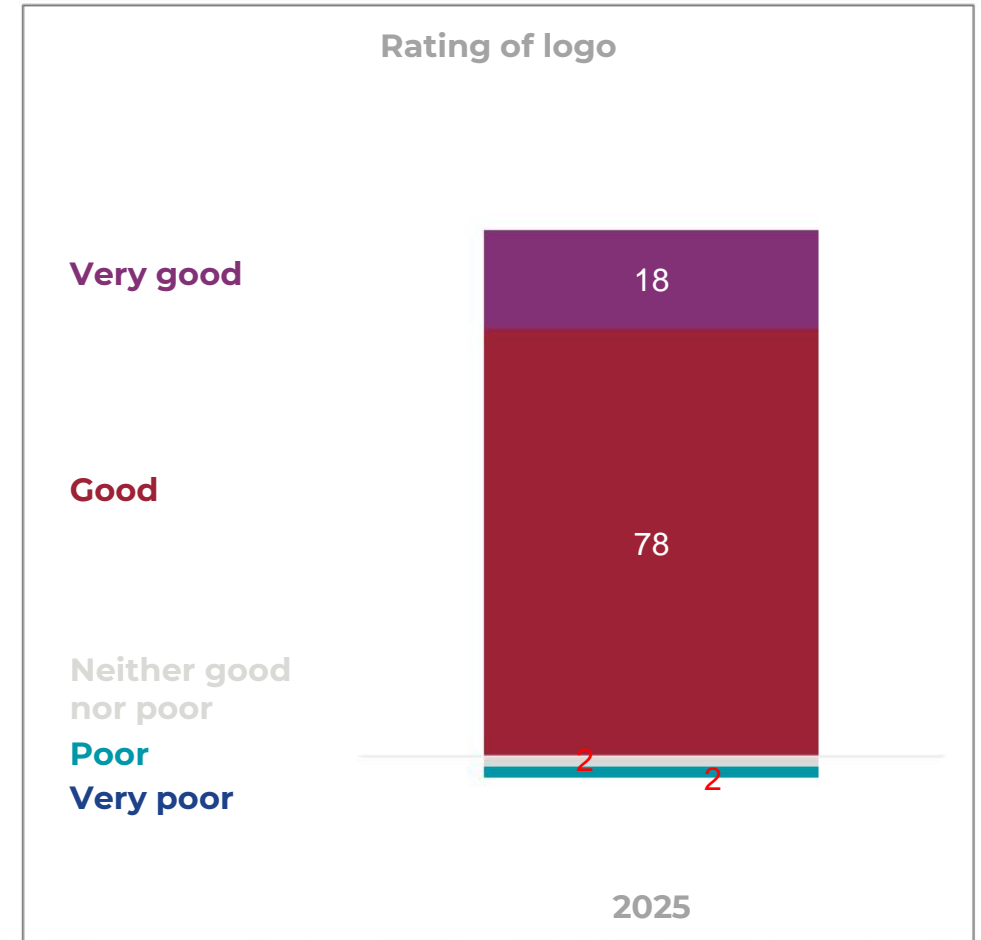
Though not part of the public realms work, additional environmental enhancements were made to the Lineside area opposite Newell stores; asked whether or not this additional works had enhanced the town centre, three quarters (72%) agreed or strongly agreed that this had added to the town, albeit that half of these business people do not regularly (monthly) visit this area of the town.



# Town logo



The vast majority (92%) of the businesses in the town are aware of the town logo and all but 2 businesses (96%) rate it positively.



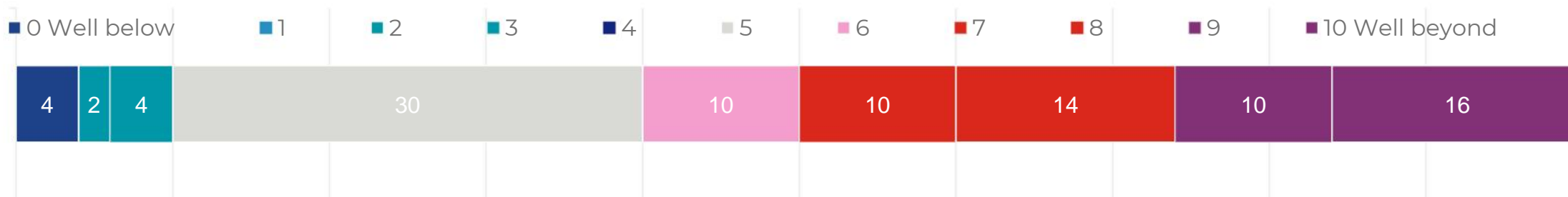
# Fulfilment of expectations



Asked to rate the experience of the public realm works against their expectations, three in five (60% scoring 6+ on a scale from 0-10) business stated that these works had exceeded their expectations, with a quarter indicating that the works went well beyond their expectations (26% scoring 9 or 10). Five businesses stated that the scheme fell below their expectations (scoring 0-4), traffic congestion in the town being the main source of disappointment.

## Impressions against expectations

Mean = 6.58

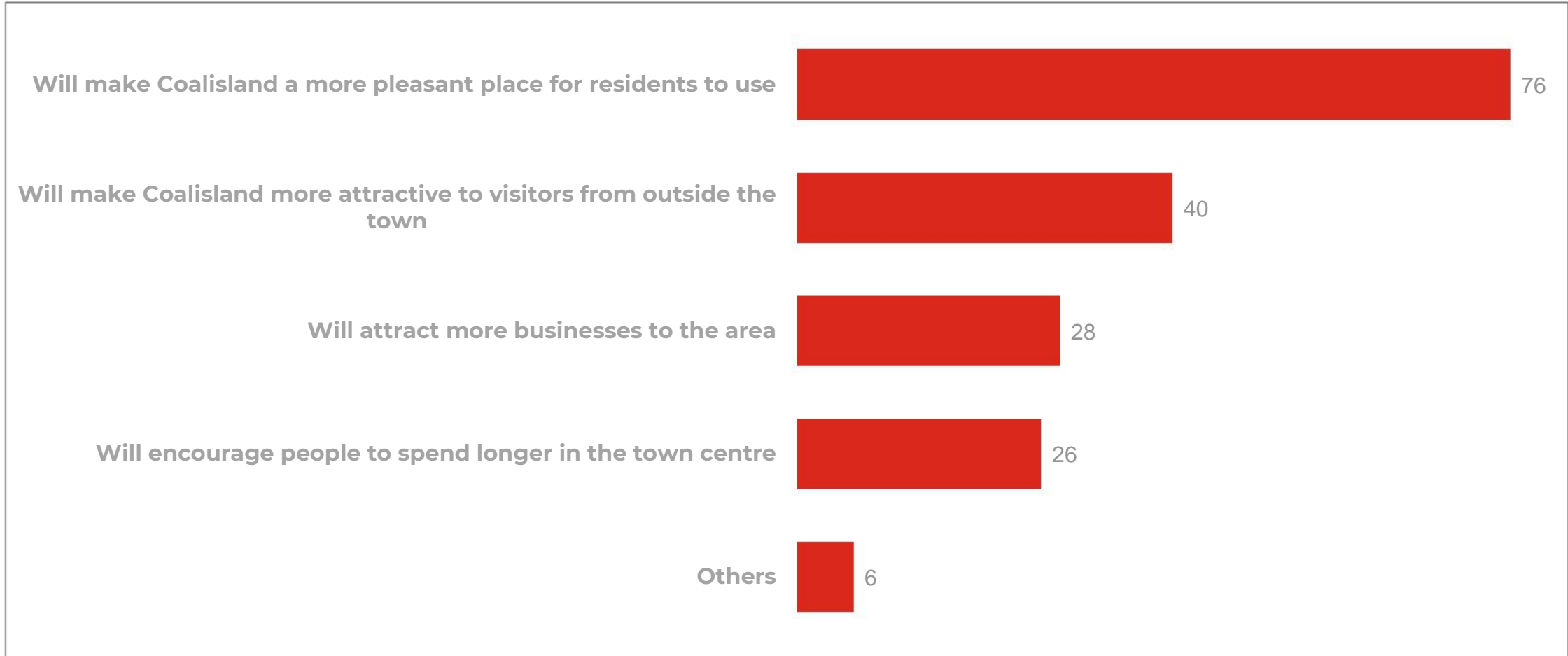


How scheme has disappointed	Abs
Traffic congestion worsened	4
Do not like the one way system	2
Disappointed in quality of paving	2
Disappointed in the street furniture	2

# Future expectations



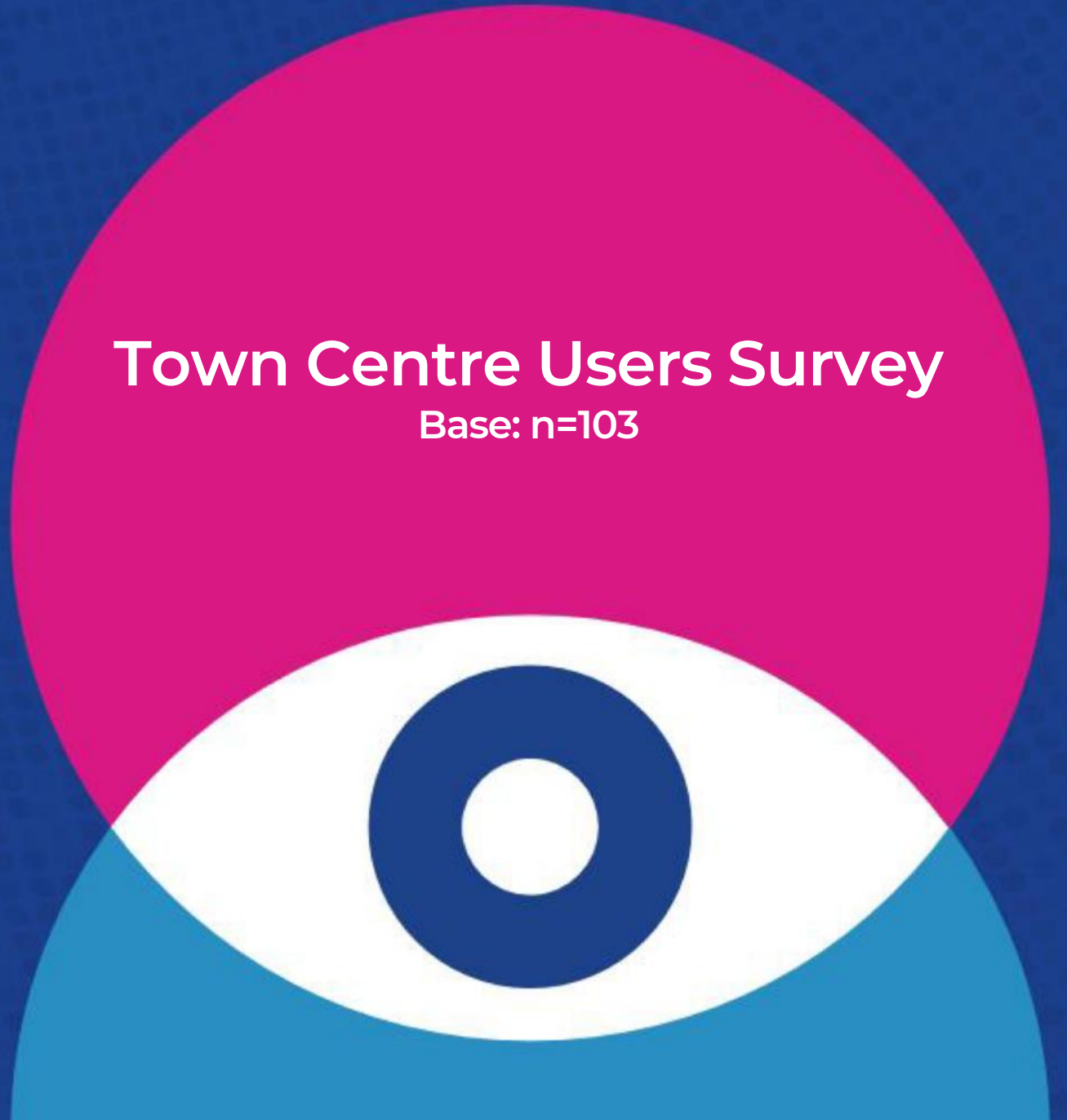
As a result of these public realm works, three quarters of business people believe that the town has become a more pleasant place for residents and two in five think that the town will now attract more visitors from outside.



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# Town Centre Users Survey

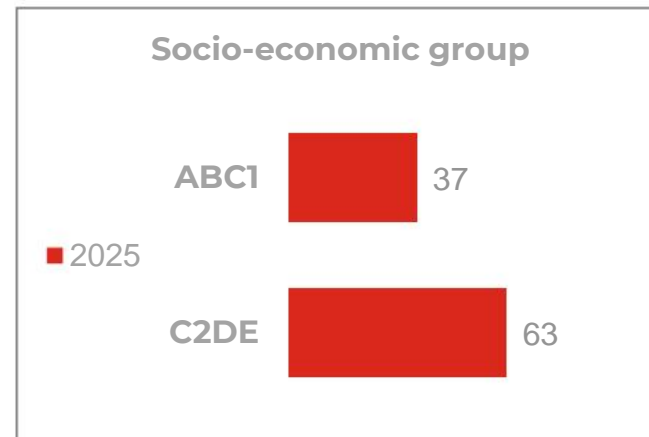
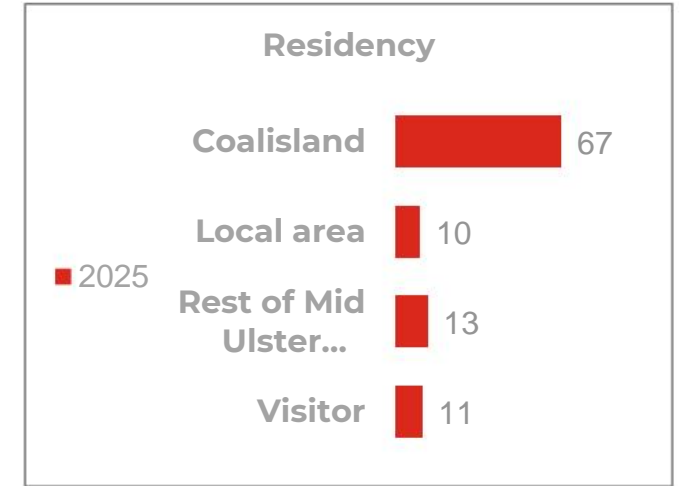
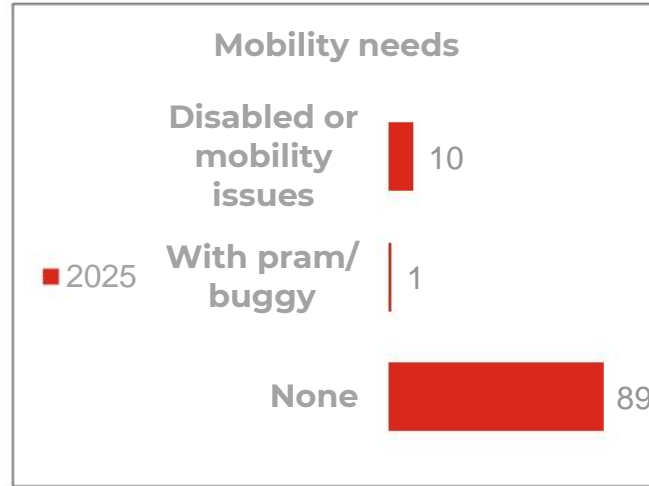
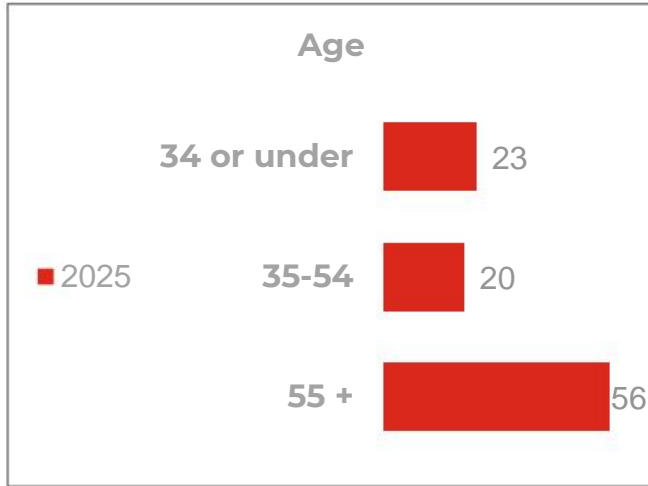
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# Sample profile



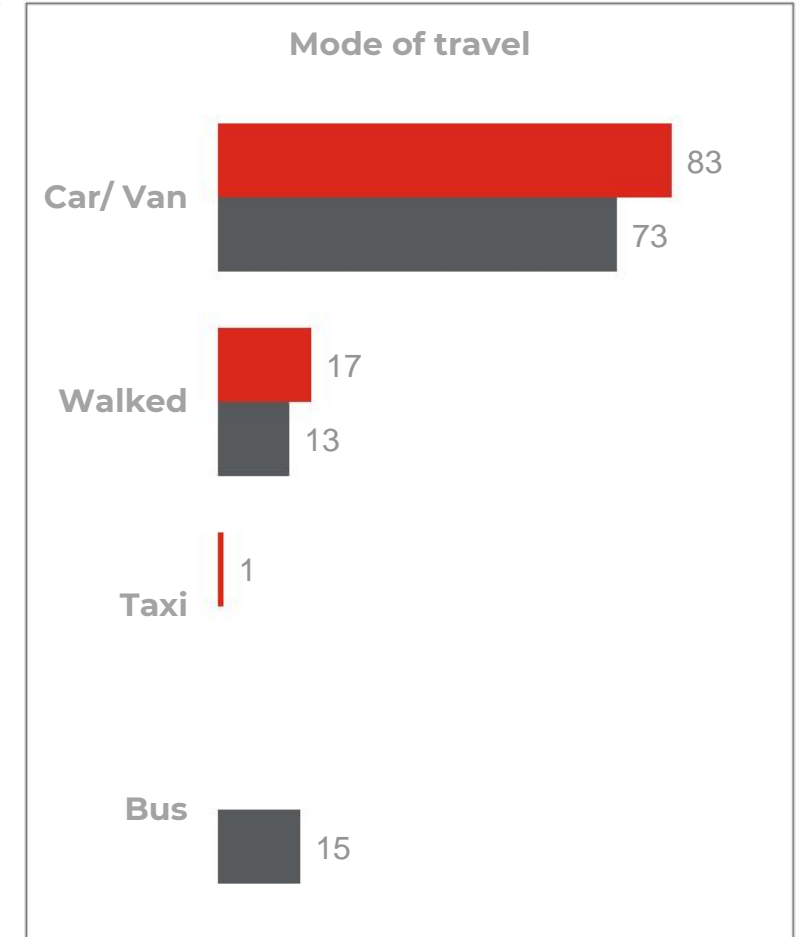
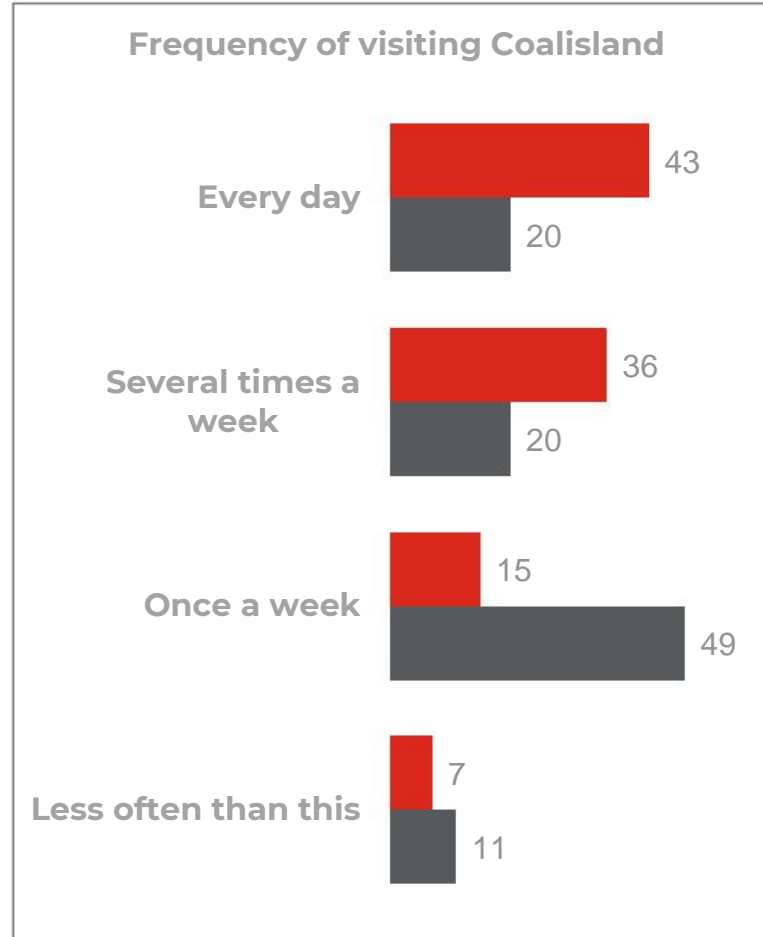
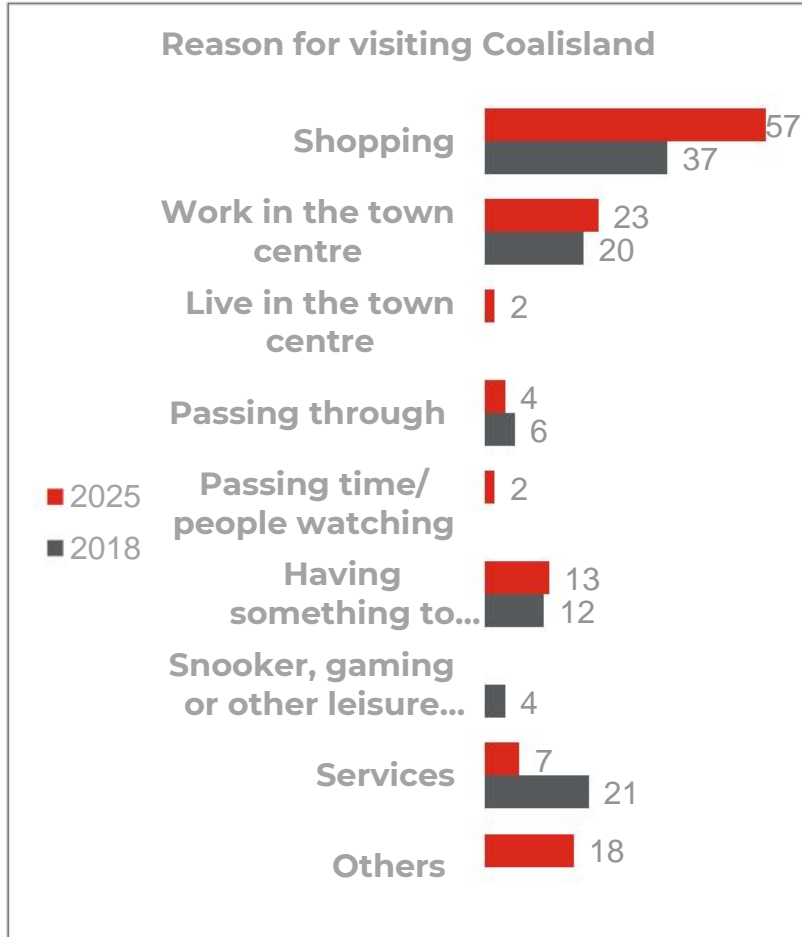
Overall 103 face to face interviews were conducted in the town during mid March 2025, the profile of those interviewed is largely reflective of what might be expected of town users during daylight hours, with a slightly older profile.



# Sample profile



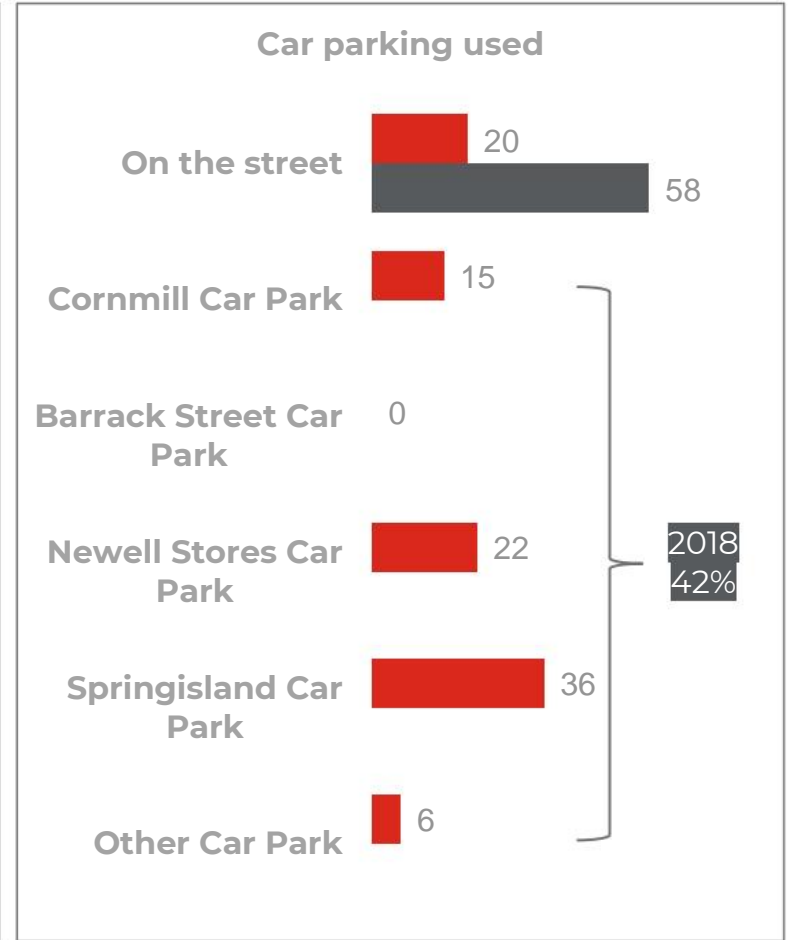
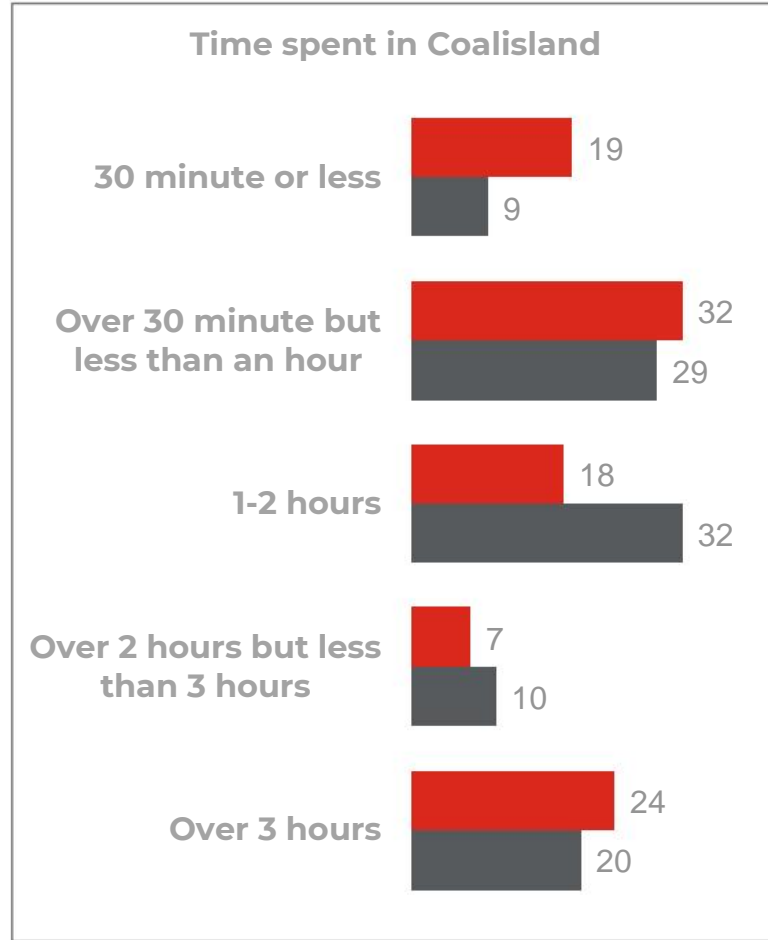
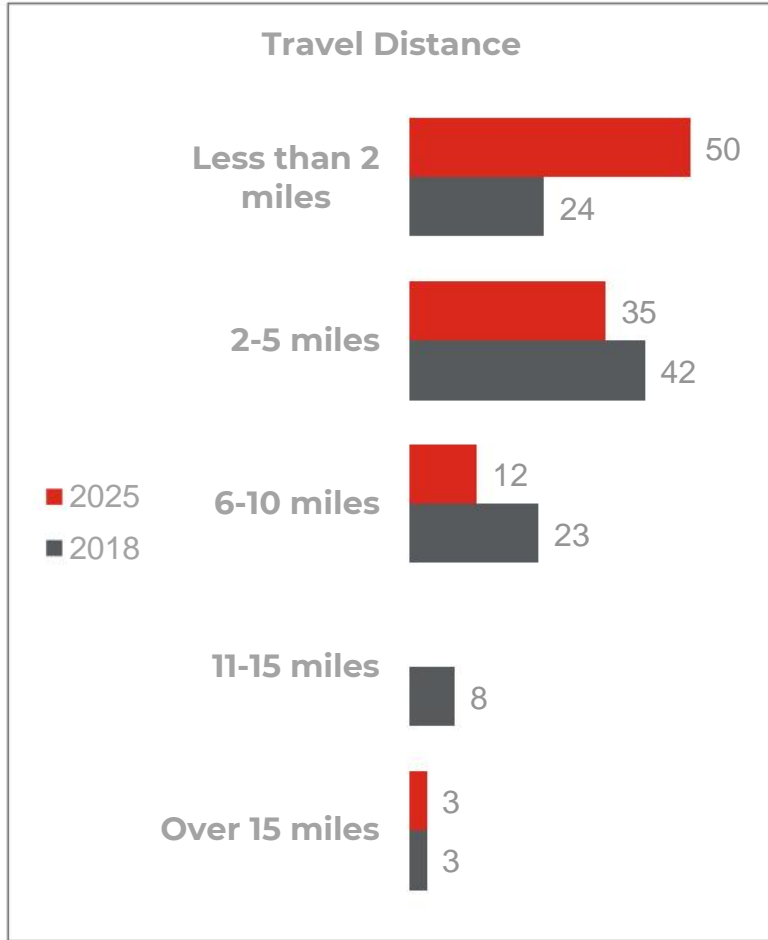
Most of those interviewed were shopping in Coalisland (57%), the vast majority of the sample are frequent users of the town centre with almost 4 in 5 (79%) visiting the town centre at least several times a week. Over 4 in 5 (83%) encountered had driven into the town centre.



# Sample profile



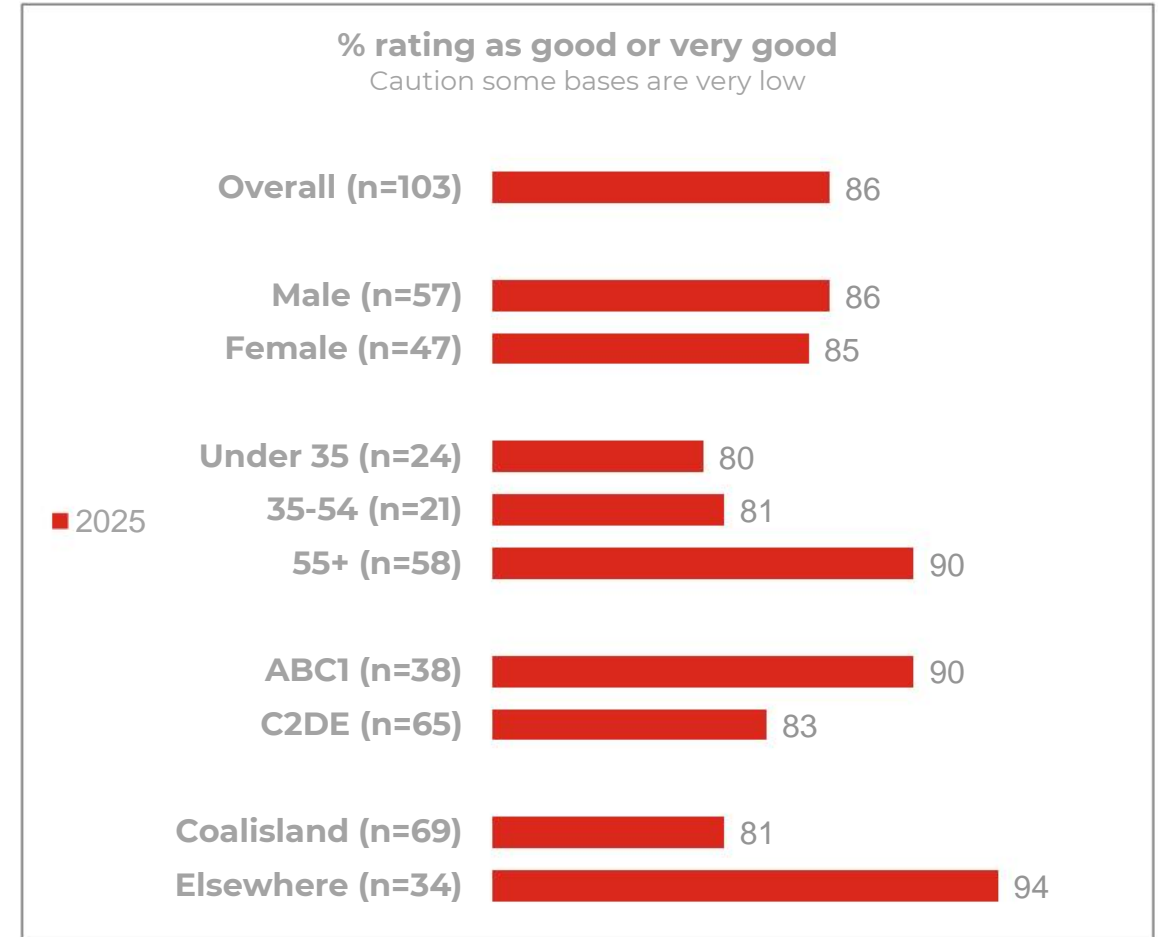
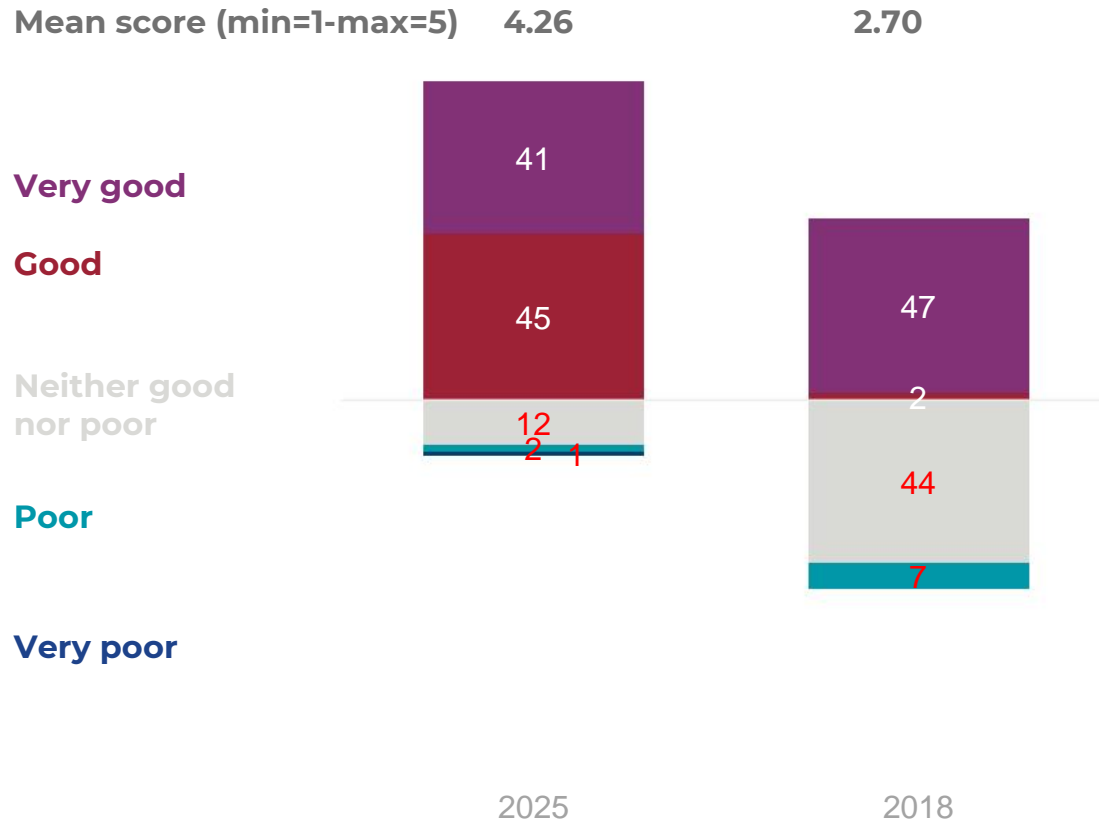
Half (50%) of the sample had travelled under 2 miles to visit the town centre and a similar proportion (51%) were expecting to spend less than an hour in the town.



# Overall impression of the town centre



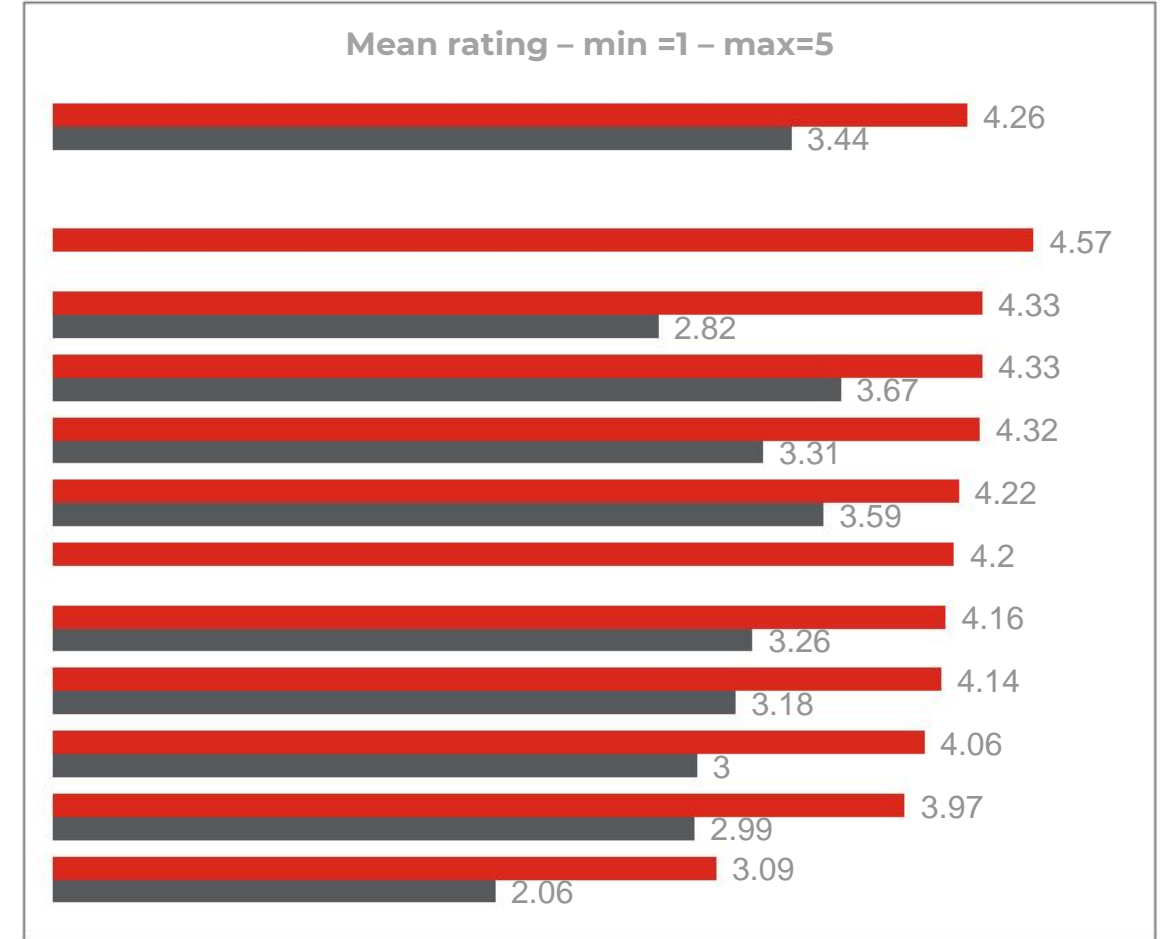
Asked to rate the overall impression of Coalisland town centre, almost 9 in 10 (86%) rate the town as either good or very good, up 70% from only 16% in 2018. Older people, those in higher socio-economic groups and those from outside the town are more impressed with the look of Coalisland now.



# Rating of public realm as good or very good



Whilst the positive overall impression of Coalisland has almost doubled since the public realm work have been completed, positive ratings on street furniture have increased fivefold up from 16% in 2018 to 85% now. Positivity on the street layout has tripled up from 26% in 2018 to 81% now.



# Rating of aspects of public realm



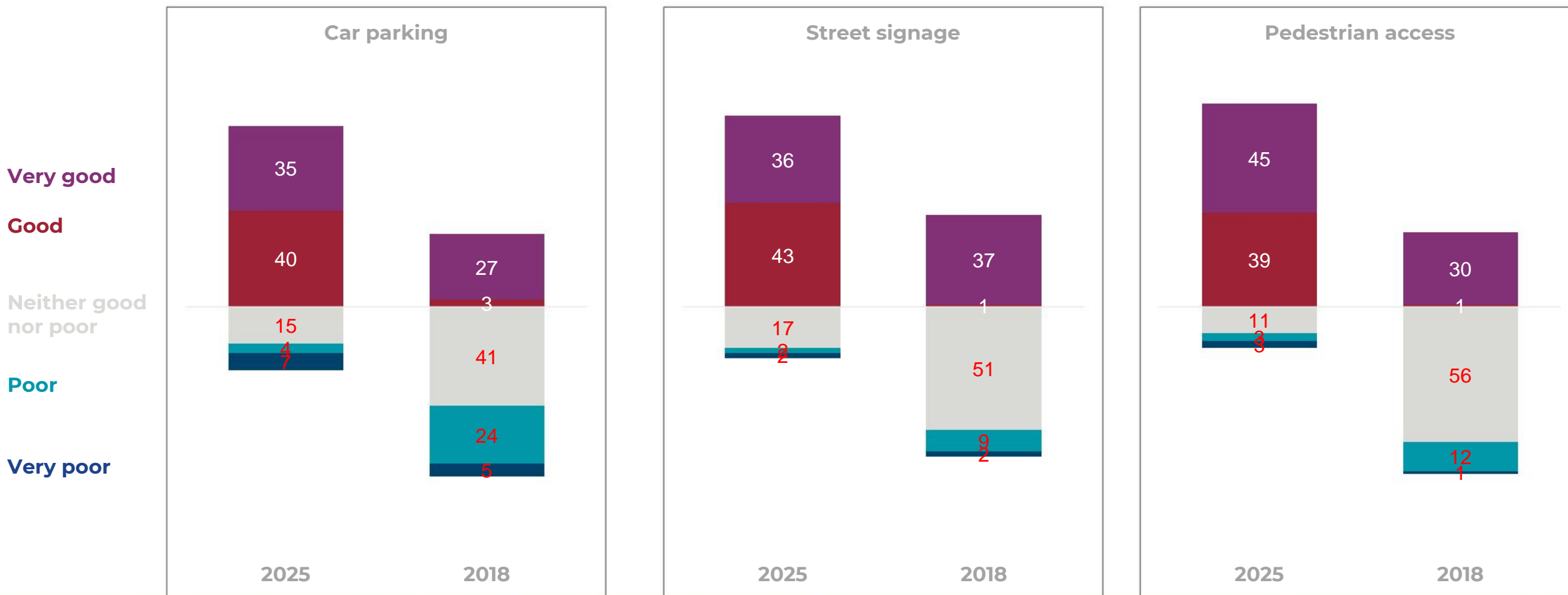
50% more town users rate the look and feel of the town positively (87%) compared to 2018 (57%). The sense of personal safety in the town had been the most positively rated aspect back in 2018, this has risen still further increasing from 62% to 83%. Positive ratings of the quality of pavements in the town have almost doubled from 43% in 2018 to 82% currently.



# Rating of aspects of public realm



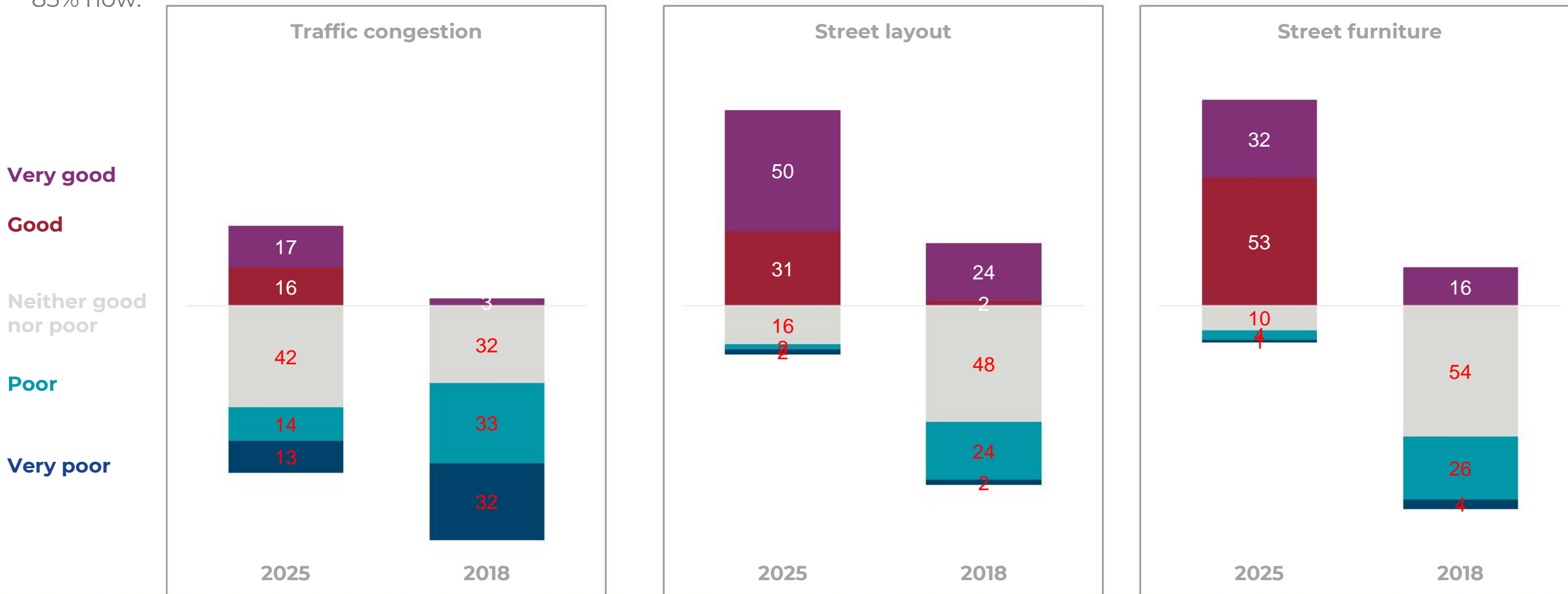
In 2018 only 30% of town users rated the car parking facilities positively, this has increased two and a half fold to three quarters (75%). Similarly, ratings of street signage in the town centre have more than doubled up from 38% in 2018 to 79% now post works. Almost three times as many town users positively rated the pedestrian access in the town centre (84%) compared to pre works in 2018 (31%).



# Rating of aspects of public realm



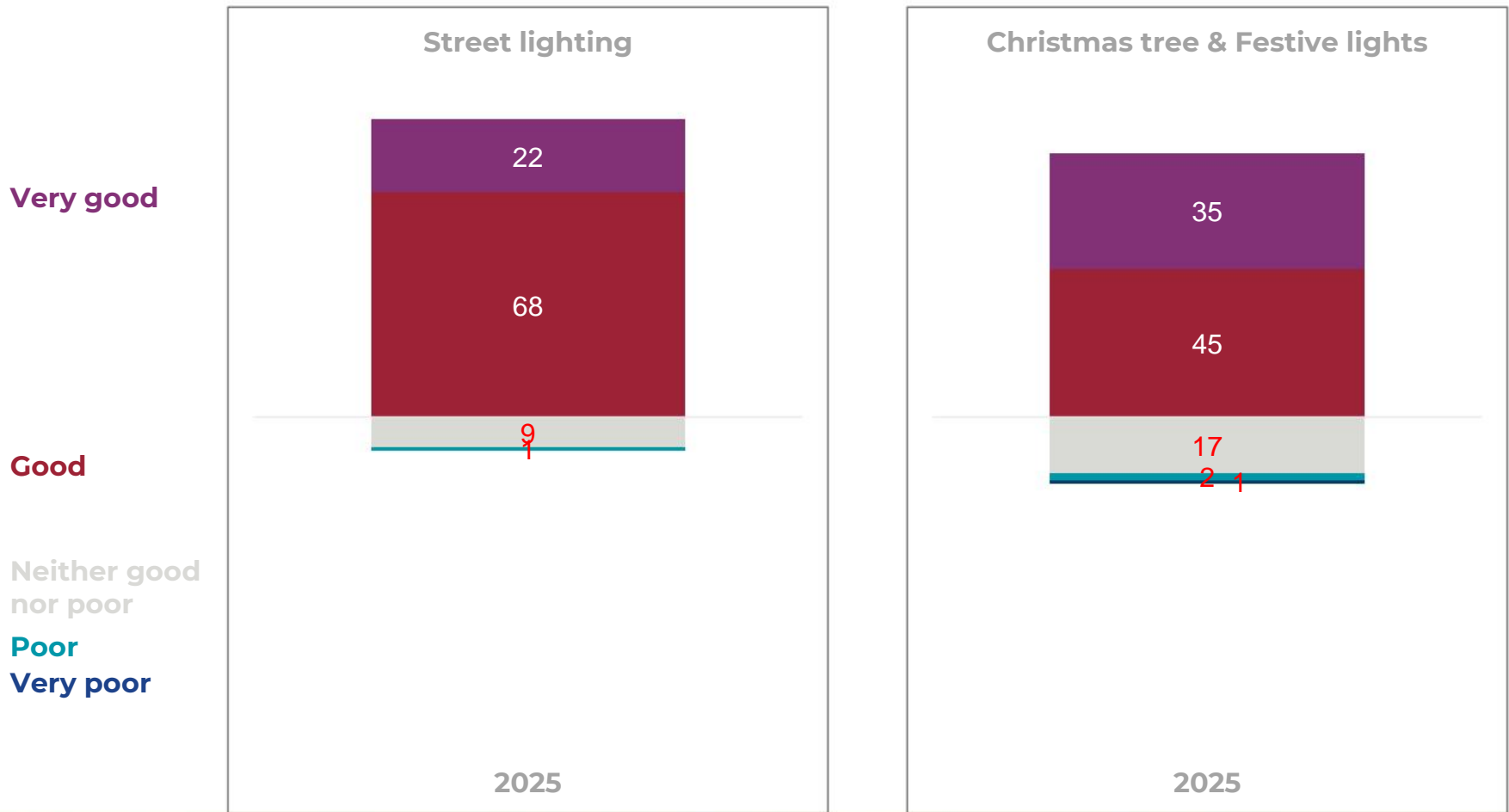
Prior to the public realms work, traffic congestion was the aspect of the town that was least favourably rated with only 3% rating this favourably, this has increased ten fold to 33%. Whilst in 2018 65% rated traffic congestion as poor or very poor this has fallen to under half this level 27%. Positivity around the street layout has more than tripled from only 26% in 2018 to 81% now. Positivity around the street furniture in the town centre increased massively, a five fold increase up from 16% in 2018 to 85% now.



# Rating of aspects of public realm



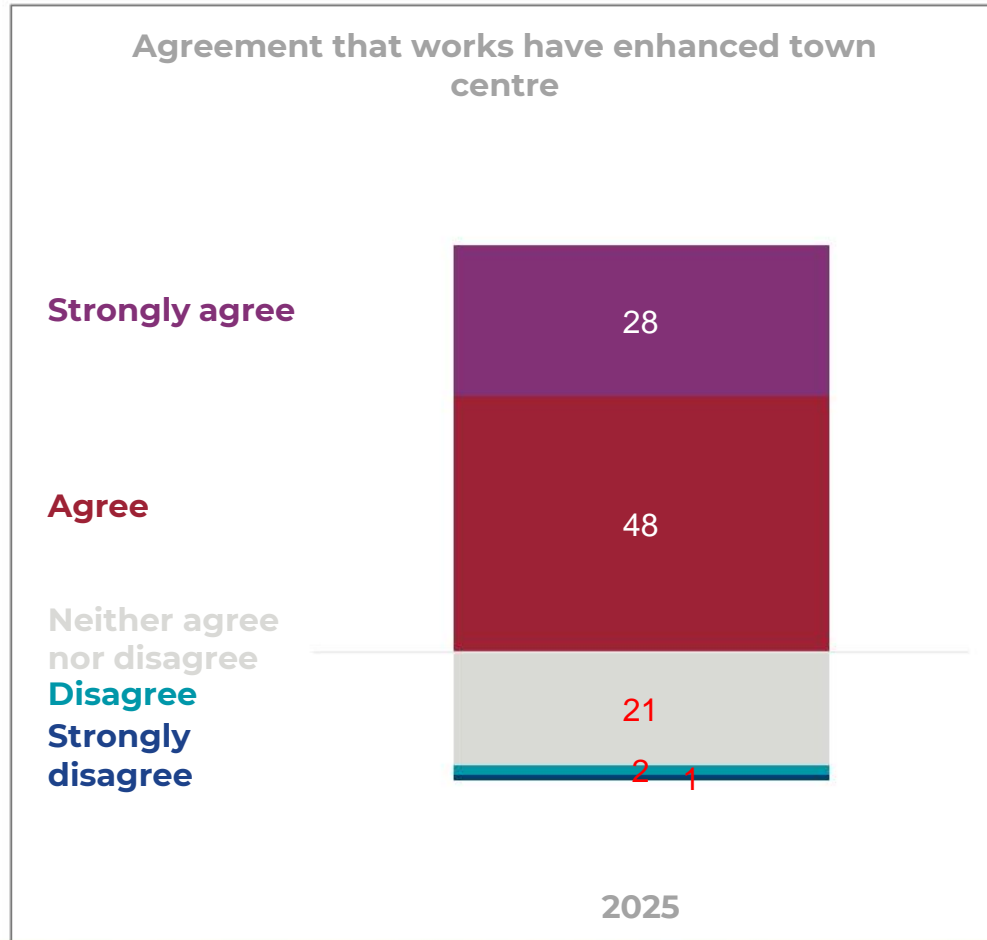
Nine in ten (90%) town users rate the street lighting as good or very good. Eight in ten (80%) rate the Christmas tree and festive lights positively.



# Lineside area



Three quarters (76%) of Coalisland town users agree that the additional work undertaken in the Lineside area has enhanced the town centre. A third (33%) of town users state that they would be in this area weekly, though this may be lower due to the time of year the survey was undertaken.

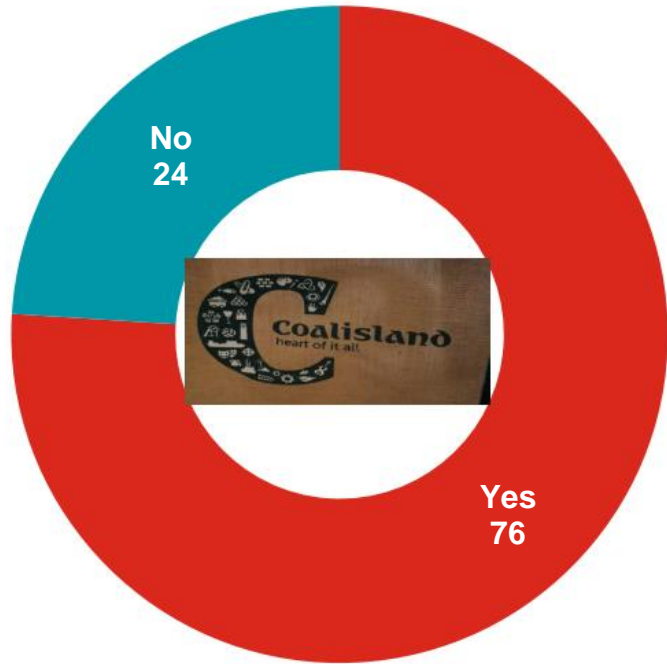


# Town logo



Three quarters of town users were familiar with the town logo. Women (87%) and those living in Coalisland (84%) were more likely to have seen the logo previously. 85% rate the logo positively.

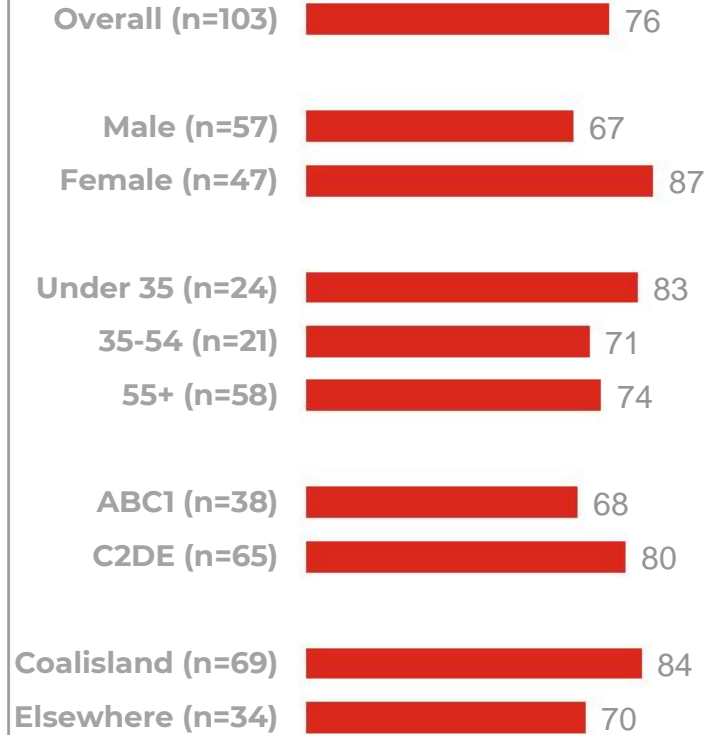
## Prior awareness of logo



## % aware of logo

Caution some bases are very low

■ 2025



## Rating of logo

Very good

35

Good

50

Neither good nor poor

16

Poor

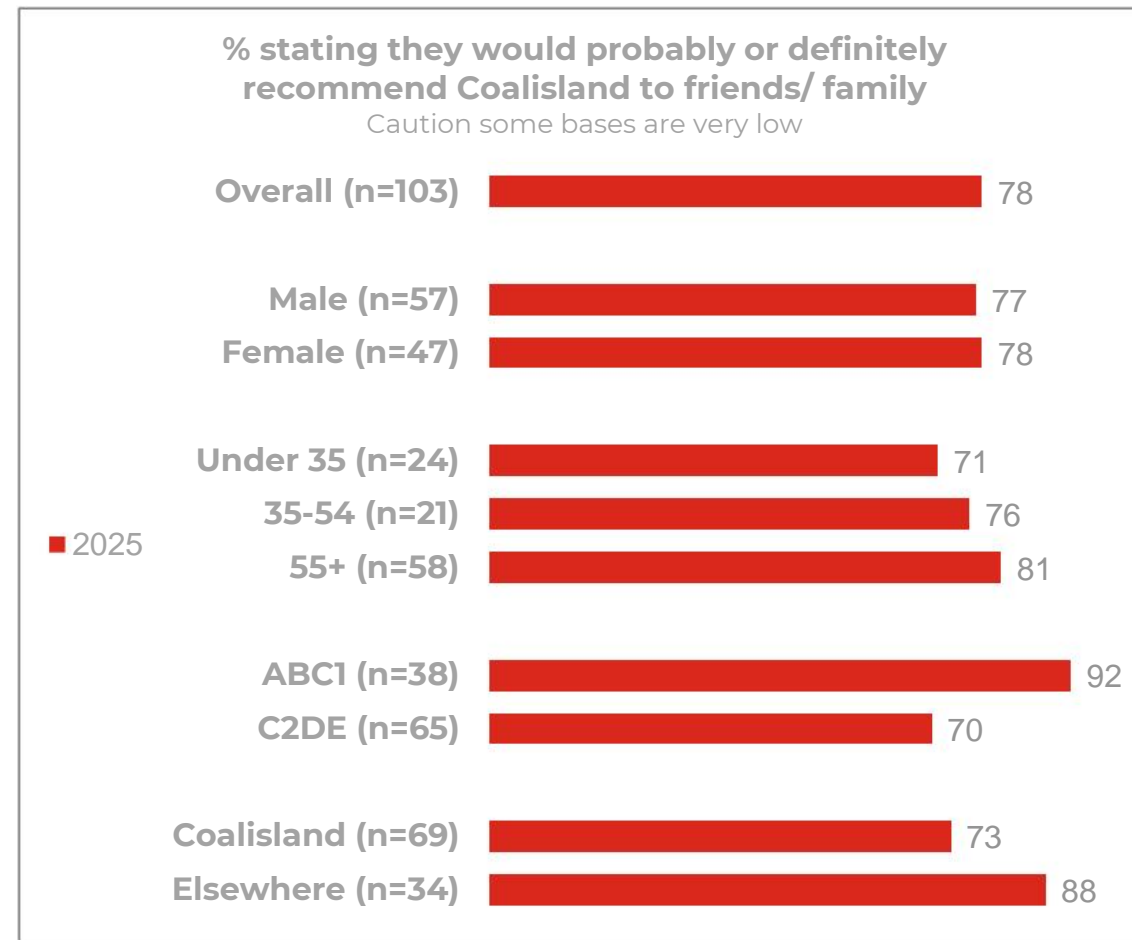
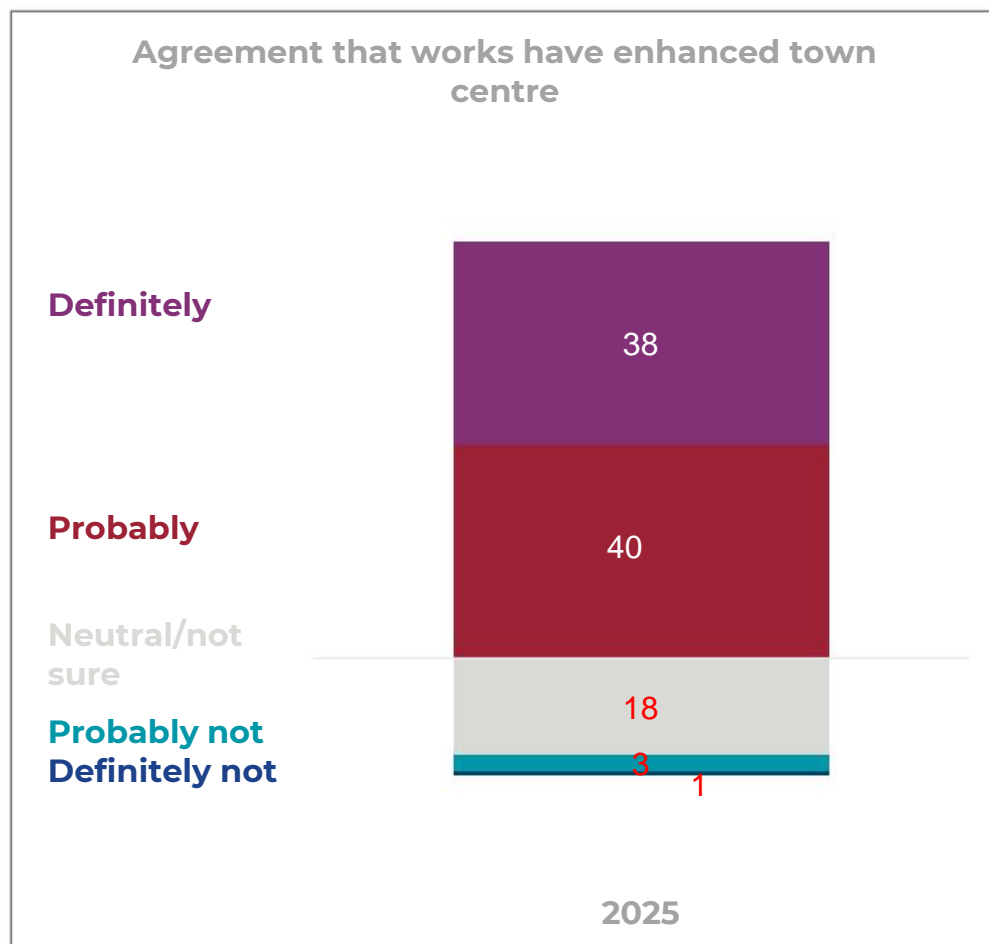
Very poor

2025

# Recommendation of Coalisland



Almost 4 in 5 town users would probably or definitely recommend the town to friends and family. Those in higher socio-economic groups (white collar workers) (92%) and those living outside Coalisland (88%) being more positive in their willingness to recommend the town to others.



# Pedestrian counts



The table below outlines the number of pedestrians walking in either direction during each one hour slot. Lineside is considerably busier than other areas of the town, with over twice the footfall of Main Street.

Time	9-10:00		12-13:00		16-17:00		3 Hours	
Direction	Into Town	Out of town	Into Town	Out of town	Into Town	Out of town	Into Town	Out of Town
Barrack Street	8	9	15	10	14	7	37	26
Dungannon Road	5	7	6	5	5	2	16	14
Main Street	18	31	33	28	38	33	89	92
Platers Hill/ Lineside	52	43	89	85	112	103	253	231
Station Road	12	3	13	8	9	7	34	18
Stewartstown Road	3	4	4	8	3	6	10	18
The Square	8	11	21	26	25	23	54	60
Washingbay Road	7	15	10	12	6	9	23	36

Cognisense



**MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**APPENDIX 4**

**Meeting of:** A5 N2 Cross Border Committee  
**Date and Time:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024 @ 10:00am  
**Location:** Canavan’s, 232 Omagh Road, Ballygawley, Co Tyrone  
**Chair:** Councillor Gael Gildernew

**Councillors Present:**  
**Donegal County Council**  
 Martin Scanlon  
**Fermanagh and Omagh District Council**  
 Bernard McGrath, Paul Robinson, Glenn Campbell, Allan Rainey MBE  
**Mid Ulster District Council**  
 Gael Gildernew, Kevin McElvogue, Eugene McConnell, Mark Robinson,  
**Monaghan County Council**  
 Noel Keelan, PJ O’Hanlon

**In Attendance:**  
**Department for Infrastructure**  
 Seamus Keenan  
**Donegal County Council**  
 Bryan Cannon (Director of Service, Roads and Transportation)  
**Mid Ulster District Council**  
 Paul McCreedy (Strategic Programmes Service Manager)  
 Shirley McIntyre (Business & Investment Officer)  
 Emma Hughes (Meeting Secretariat)  
 Sophie Steenson (Growth Deal Administrator)  
**Monaghan County Council**  
 Roisin Moore (N2 Project Liaison Officer)

**Apologies:**  
**Derry City and Strabane District Council**  
 Cllr Ruairi McHugh, Cllr Brian Harte, Cllr Brian Tierney, Cllr Raymond Barr  
**Donegal County Council**  
 Cllr Gary Doherty, Cllr Paul Canning, Cllr Martin Harley  
**Fermanagh and Omagh District Council**  
 John News (Director of Environment and Place)  
**Monaghan County Council**  
 Cllr David Maxwell, Cllr Seamus Coyle, Robert Burns (Chief Executive)  
 Gareth McMahon (Director of Service, Roads and Transportation)

No	Item	Action By:
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and apologies</b>	
	Cllr G Gildernew welcomed everyone to the meeting.	Note
<b>2.</b>	<b>Update on Ministerial Meetings</b>	
	Cllr G Gildernew updated Members on the two Ministerial Meetings that have taken place this year. A delegation from A5 N2 Cross Border Committee met with Minister Eamon Ryan in Dublin on 13 <sup>th</sup> May 2024. Minister Ryan reaffirmed his commitments to the projects.	Note

	<p>On 12<sup>th</sup> August 2024, the Committee met with Infrastructure Minister, John O'Dowd in Aghaloo Community Centre, Aughnacloy. At this meeting, Members requested that a DfI representative attend the A5 N2 meetings at key stages to update Members on the progress of the scheme.</p> <p>Seamus Keenan (A5WTC Project Sponsor) attended today's meeting to update Member's following Minister O' Dowd's announcement on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<b>A5WTR update</b>	
	<p>S Keenan provided Members with a detailed update on the A5 scheme. He advised that 55km of the total 85km length of the scheme, between south of Strabane and Ballygawley, is being progressed with vesting orders issued on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024. He added that the Department has received a formal legal challenge. A full hearing will take place in early March 2025 and it is expected that a judgement will be made by the end of March 2025.</p> <p>S Keenan advised that archaeological and geotechnical works have been undertaken. He added that some fencing work has been completed in advance of bird nesting season.</p> <p>S Keenan advised that work is ongoing to resolve issues to the remaining sections of the scheme – from the south of Strabane to New Buildings and from Ballygawley to the border.</p> <p>S Keenan informed Members that DfI are working closely with the Office of Public Works. He advised that a group will be set up with members from both sides of the border with the aim of working on common solutions.</p> <p>Cllr G Gildernew asked if any Members had questions for S Keenan.</p> <p><i>Cllr M Robinson enquired about the percentage of landowners who have received payments to date.</i></p> <p>S Keenan responded that while landowners are eligible to claim up to 90% now, the uptake has been relatively low so far.</p> <p><i>Cllr M Robinson asked how much landowners will be paid.</i></p> <p>S Keenan advised that the amount would need to be agreed upon by LPS and the District Valuer. He explained that landowners have received information regarding the vesting of their land along with a proforma to complete. He added that landowners can arrange one-to-one meetings with DfI and LPS officials to address any concerns.</p> <p><i>Cllr M Robinson asked if there was any indication of when landowners will know the value of their land.</i></p> <p>S Keenan explained that the landowner needs to meet the District Valuer. Agent fees are paid by DfI.</p> <p>Cllr PJ O'Hanlon thanked Cllr Gildernew for organising today's meeting. He enquired whether representatives from this Committee</p>	Note

	<p>could meet with the new Minister for Transport once appointed. He also requested that the creation of the new committee, as discussed by S Keenan, be expedited.</p> <p>S Keenan advised that a new consultant needs to be appointed first.</p> <p>Cllr E McConnell remarked that there is good momentum with the project and enquired about potential impacts of the legal challenge. S Keenan responded that the Department for Infrastructure plans to vigorously contest the legal challenge but cautioned that it might lead to a similar result as in 2018.</p> <p>P McCreedy enquired about the expected timeframe of the construction of the scheme. S Keenan advised that works would be conducted concurrently with an estimated timeframe of 3-4 years.</p> <p>P McCreedy asked when the Committee would receive its next update from DfI. S Keenan advised that early April would be an appropriate time to report again.</p> <p>Councillor G Campbell requested that S Keenan convey the Committee's gratitude to the Department for Infrastructure for their continued efforts on the A5 project.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Committee Business</b>	
	<p><b>Minutes of previous meeting</b>  Proposed by Cllr B McGrath  Seconded by Cllr E McConnell  The minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were a true and accurate record of proceedings.</p>	Note
	<p><b>Updates on N2 Clontibret to Border Road Scheme and N2 Ardee to Castleblayney Road Scheme</b>  R Moore advised that the design and land take of Phase 3 of the Clontibret scheme would hopefully be determined by Spring 2025. She advised that ground investigation and archaeological surveys are currently underway.  R Moore explained that no funding has been received to progress the Ardee scheme in 2024 and the design process is suspended. Funding has been requested for 2025 and a notice of allocation is expected in early 2025 from the new Government.</p>	Note
	<p><b>Update on Donegal TENT-T project</b>  B Cannon informed Members that the Government granted permission to move the project to the next stage. He advised that teams are working with CPO to get started on Phase 2. There will be 3 Land Liaison officers' appointment in due course.</p>	Note
	<p><b>Nomination of Secretariat and Chair for 2025</b>  Cllr G Gildernew stated that, according to the Terms of Reference, the Secretariat should alternate between the North and South of the border each year. Therefore, the nomination for the new Secretariat and Chair for 2025 should come from the South. Donegal County Council were</p>	Donegal County Council

	<p>nominated. B Cannon advised that a Chair would be selected and details provided at later date.</p> <p>B Cannon expressed gratitude to Cllr G Gildernew and Mid Ulster District Council for their efforts this year.</p> <p>Cllr E McConnell also extended his thanks to Cllr G Gildernew for her leadership throughout the year and acknowledged the hard work of the Mid Ulster District Council Officers.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	<p>Cllr PJ O'Hanlon expressed the need for a Ministerial meeting to occur as soon as possible. Cllr G Gildernew advised that a request for such a meeting will be made when a Minister is appointed.</p> <p>Cllr A Rainey asked whether the Committee could engage in lobbying to prevent the legal challenge from delaying the A5 project. Cllr G Gildernew responded that a report will be submitted to Minister O'Dowd in due course.</p> <p>The meeting concluded at 11:40am</p>	MUDC / DCC
<b>6.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	
	To be confirmed. Handover of secretariat to be arranged in early 2025.	MUDC / DCC



Mid Ulster District Council  
Council Offices  
Dungannon Office  
Circular Road  
Dungannon  
BT71 6DT

Work & Wellbeing Division  
Department for Communities  
Causeway Exchange  
Level 7  
1-7 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7EG  
Email: LMP@communities-ni.gov.uk

Our reference: LMP/ENI/10/25

Date: 12 March 2025

Dear Chief Executive,

**LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP (LMP) FUNDING 1 APRIL 2025 to 30 JUNE 2025 –  
INTERIM LETTER OF OFFER**

I can confirm, on behalf of the Department for Communities a funding offer of £42,517.98 to your Council for the costs associated with the LMP for the period of 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025. The funding offer is for salaries, running costs and Strategic Priority 1 activities only and the Council will be liable for any costs incurred not approved by the Department for Communities.

Specific conditions of the offer:

1. The funding provided is to be used solely for running the LMP for salaries, running costs and Strategic Priority 1 activities only.
2. This offer is governed by the conditions for LMPs funding as detailed in the LMP Financial Guidelines and Funding Agreement from the 2024/25 period, which are temporarily extended to cover this Interim Letter of Offer.
3. This offer is conditional on acceptance of and adherence to the terms and conditions contained in the LMP Funding Agreement.
4. The Department reserves the right to recover funding related to subsidies if required to do so.

## Acceptance

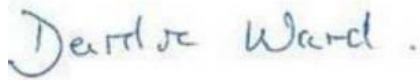
Please complete the enclosed Letter of Acceptance of funding offer with a copy of the budget attached and return it by 8 April to:

Secretariat to Labour Market Partnerships  
Work and Wellbeing Division  
Department for Communities  
Causeway Exchange  
1-7 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7EG

Alternatively, an electronic copy can be sent via the email of the Chief Executive to [LMP@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:LMP@communities-ni.gov.uk). An acceptable format for electronic return can include a scanned copy of the signed Letter of Acceptance, digital signature produced using asymmetric or public key cryptography, or the signatory typing their name in the electronic document.

The Department for Communities requires acceptance prior to authorising the LMP first quarter grant claim.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deirdre Ward." The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Deirdre Ward**  
**Department for Communities**

## **LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE**

Secretariat to Labour Market Partnerships  
Work and Wellbeing Division  
Department for Communities  
Causeway Exchange  
1-7 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7EG

Date 12 March 2025

Dear Deirdre,

### **LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE OF LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP (LMP) FUNDING 1 APRIL 2025 TO 30 JUNE 2025**

Mid Ulster District Council agrees the funding offer from the Department for Communities for the Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership for the period 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025 to administer and run the activities of the LMP in this Council in line with the funding criteria.

The funding will be wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred for salaries, running costs and Strategic Priority 1 activities of the LMP as detailed in the LMP Partnership Plan and budget schedule. The Council accept and agree to abide by the Terms and Conditions of the LMP Financial Guidelines and Funding Agreement.

#### **Statement of Financial arrangements and control environment**

I confirm the Council:

- has sound financial procedures and controls in place to govern the activities and expenditure of the LMP;
- will ensure all relevant documentation is retained to support all LMP expenditure claims;
- has arrangements in place to satisfy the requirement for providing assurance on the probity and proper use of funds;
- has effective Corporate Governance, Risk Management and operating policies referred to

in the Financial Guidelines in place for the LMP; and

- will allow reasonable access to Council records relating to LMP transactions.

This Council:

fully accepts the funding offer

does not accept the funding offer

partially accepts the funding offer  to the amount of £\_\_\_\_\_



12.3.2025

Signed..... Date .....

Chief Executive, on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council

**BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS**

DfC Reference No: LMP/ENI/10/25

Applicant Mid Ulster District Council

Period of Funding 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025

Please complete Bank details below:

Name of Organisation: Mid Ulster District Council

Billing Address: Cookstown Office  
Burn Road  
Cookstown. BT80 8DT

Name of Account: [REDACTED]

Bank Name: [REDACTED]

Bank Address: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Sort Code: [REDACTED]

Account Number: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

ADRIAN MCCREESH

12.3.2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed by (Chief Executive)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Block Capitals)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date