

## Review of Fleet Road Mailbox since 24th August 2020

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Summary of Comments

## **Introduction**

To monitor feedback from the scheme, a dedicated mailbox was set up on 13 July 2020. This allowed for residents, businesses and other key stakeholders to send in any feedback, comments and questions, which were to be collated and taken on board.

Summary below outlines the number type of comments received; whether these are from Businesses or residents; the time period they were received and whether the comments were positive or negative.

Pages 3 to 9 provide an overall summary of the findings. Pages 10 to 24 give a breakdown of the week-to-week findings.

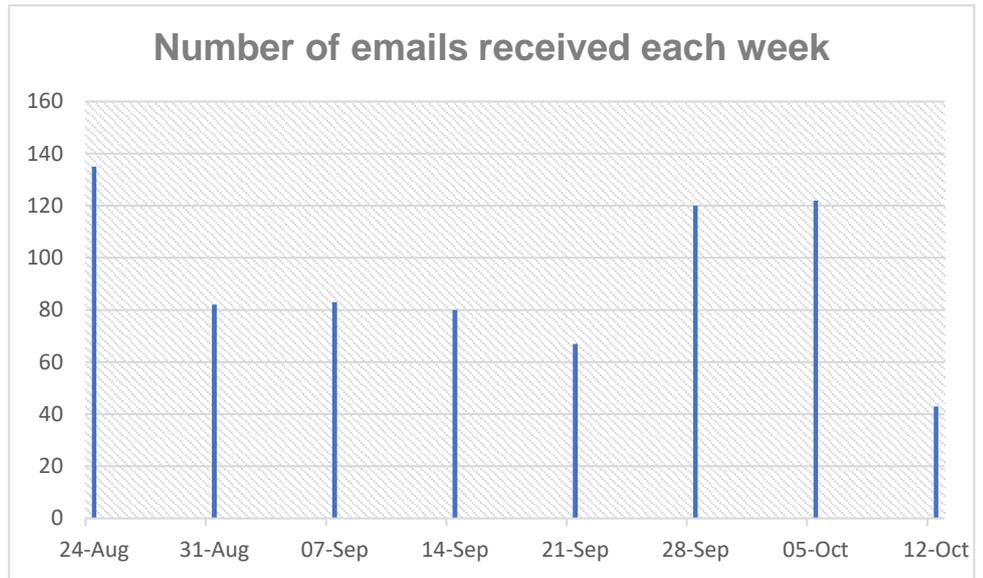
The email context was recorded on a spreadsheet, and identified if it was sent from a business or a resident. There was no personal data recorded.

**Key Findings:**

*Table 1: Number of emails received each week.*

This table shows the number of emails received each week from 24 August to 18 October. The week commencing 24 August was the highest number with 135, when the scheme was put into place.

The last week, commencing 12 October, received the fewest emails at 43.



*Table 2: Number of emails received each week displayed proportionately by sender*

This table shows the number of emails received each week from residents and businesses 24 August to 18 October. The first week, 24 August, saw the highest amount from businesses. Over the weeks, the number of emails from businesses has declined, with the last week not receiving any emails from businesses.

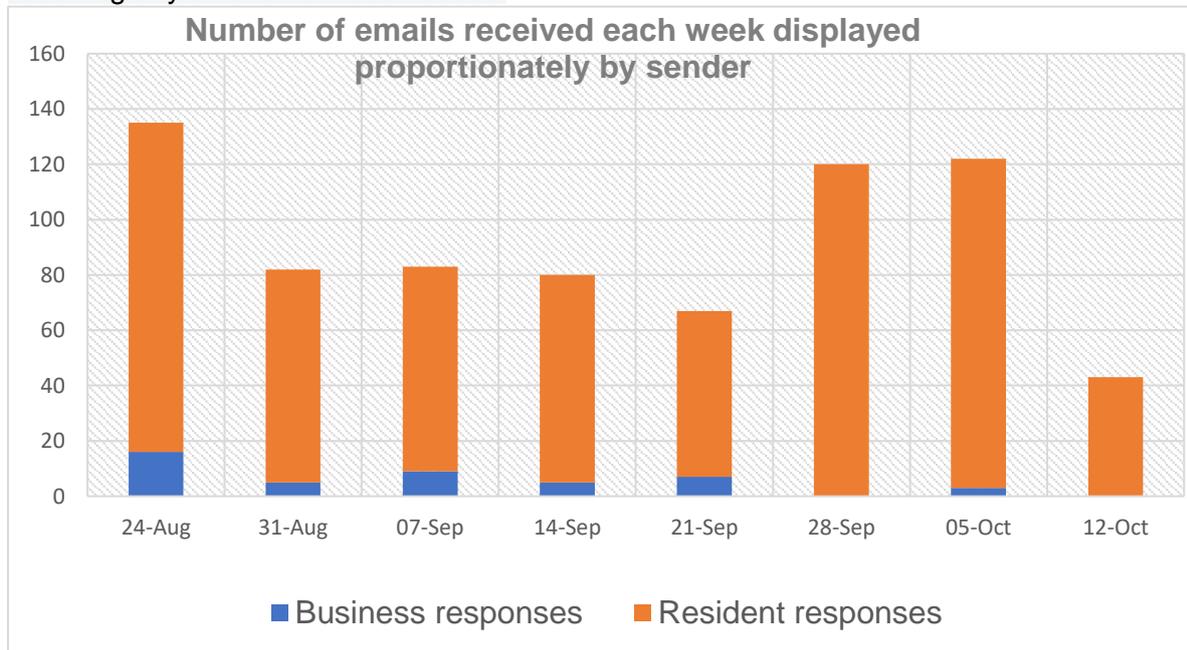


Figure 1: Overall Responses from the Fleet Road Mailbox. A total of 732 responses recorded from 24 August to 18 October 2020, of which were 65% were negative feedback, 30% positive, and 5% asked further questions or needed clarity.

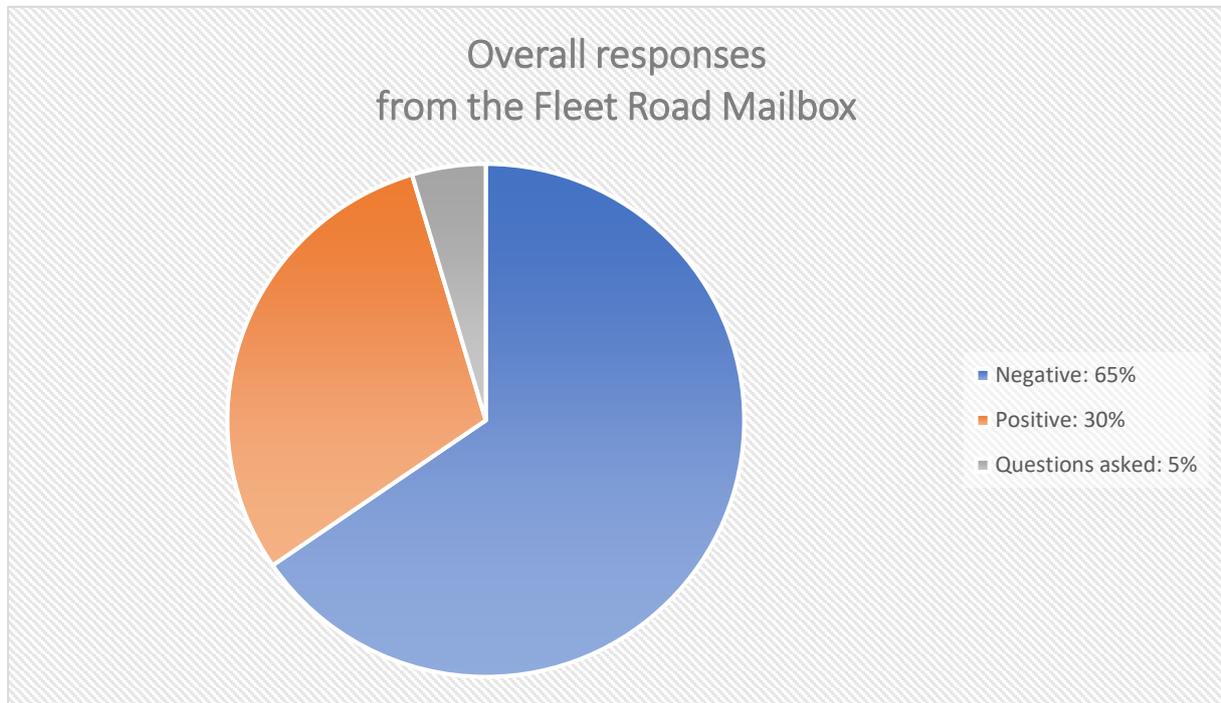
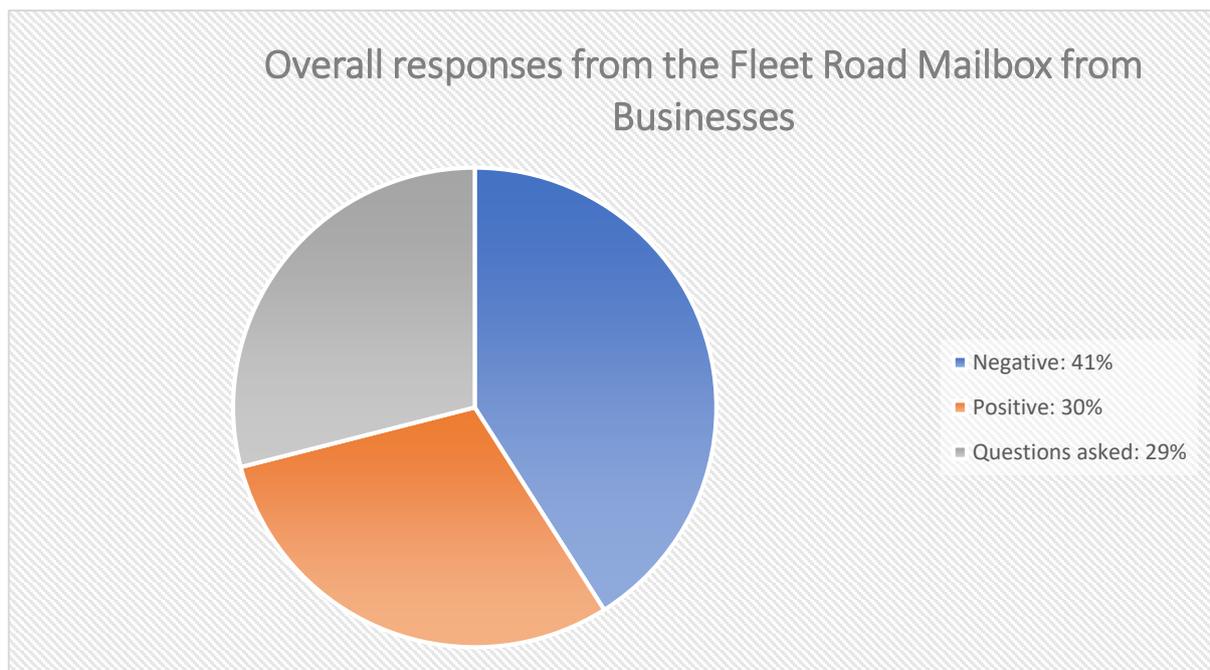


Figure 2 (below): Overall responses from the Fleet Road Mailbox from Businesses. A total of 45 responses recorded from 24 August to 18 October 2020 from businesses, of which were 41% were negative feedback, 30% positive, and 29% wanted to ask further questions or needed clarity.



## **Fleet Road closure common themes raised**

The scheme has generated both positive and negative feedback since its introduction, there are however a small number of common themes that have consistently appeared in the comments received, these are:

### **Positive comments focus on:**

Fleet is a more pleasant place to visit/shop - feels safer for elderly people, people are enjoying the markets and events.

Suggest this is made permanent – from the start of the scheme there have been comments stating this should be made permanent.

A few comments were also received at the start of the scheme from businesses stating that they had been busier since the closure.

### **Negative comments focus on:**

Lack of consultation – every week there has been a comment in relation to the need for consultation.

**Mitigation – The Fleet Road mailbox was used on any communication that was sent out to highlight that people were able to send in any feedback, comments and suggestions which then would be recorded.**

Traffic on neighbouring roads (with particular reference to Albert Street) - impact in terms of additional traffic, air pollution, noise, HGVs/buses, difficulty crossing the road.

**Mitigation – Traffic calming measures will be put in place along Albert Street, as well as a pedestrian crossing.**

Comments at the start of the scheme also mentioned disabled access and parking; delivery issues and confusing signage, but these have not been recently referred to.

**Mitigation – New parking bays were introduced; correction of signage was implemented.**

More recent comments have referred to the scheme having a negative impact on social distancing in that it is encouraging people to meet and congregate and more specifically that it will not be used in the winter.

<i>Table 3. Outlines the most common negative feedback and the mitigations</i>	
<b>Negative</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
HGV being a problem down Albert Street	HGV that do not require access for deliveries will be diverted away towards the A30. Traffic calming measures will be put in place along Albert Street, as well as a pedestrian crossing.
Traffic level increase down Albert & Church Road	Traffic calming measures will be put in place along Albert Street, as well as a pedestrian crossing.
Unable to cross the road	Traffic calming measures will be put in place along Albert Street, as well as a pedestrian crossing.
More pollution in a residential area	Traffic flow monitoring have been put into place along Albert Street, Clarence Road, Connaught Road, Church Road and Elvetham Road which will measure traffic volumes and speeds. These will be checked regularly. The vision going forward is that we hope to see more people walking, cycling and using public transport, to help with climate change.
Noise down Albert Street	Traffic flow monitoring have been put into place along Albert Street, Clarence Road, Connaught Road, Church Road and Elvetham Road which will measure traffic volumes and speeds. These will be checked regularly. The vision going forward is that we hope to see more people walking, cycling and using public transport, to help with climate change.
No information about this beforehand	Due to the timescales involved, it has not been possible to carry out extensive engagement on the proposals. but we recognise that it may be necessary to adapt the scheme over time and in response to feedback. The Fleet Road mailbox was created and used on all communication that was sent out to highlight that people were able to send in any feedback, comments and suggestions which then would be recorded.
Fleet is now like a ghost town	The Council is looking at ways to improve Fleet town centre along this stretch of road to make it a pleasant and attractive shopping area. Whilst some negative comments have been received there are also a number that welcome the scheme and the additional events and craft market that has occurred.
Pavements are wide enough	Central government has advised local authorities to take the necessary steps to ensure that town centre road layouts enable social distancing where this is possible. There is a need to help to minimise the risk of infection and to support our businesses by helping them to trade safely. Public Health is the over-riding concern. The temporary order in Fleet is intended to help town centre businesses and shoppers to comply with social distancing guidance as it will make additional floorspace available for queuing outside of shops and businesses who choose to re-open. It will also help those who are accessing the town centre on foot or by bike to do so safely.

Need traffic calming measures	Traffic calming measures will be put in place along Albert Street, as well as a pedestrian crossing.
HGV down residential streets	HGV that do not require access for deliveries will be diverted away towards the A30. Traffic calming measures will be put in place along Albert Street, as well as a pedestrian crossing.
Negative impact on taxi businesses	Branksomewood Road, Upper Street, Victoria, Church Road and Gurkha Square car park and taxi ranks will not be affected. Some bus stops will become temporary night time ranks: Norway Parade; Oatsheaf Parade; Royal Parade and Outside M&S and Sainsburys.
Pavements are wide enough	We reassure that there is extra space when visiting.
The events are not suitable during this current climate	The events are designed to support economic recovery whilst encouraging social distancing in a space dedicated for such purposes both during COVID-19 and for the foreseeable future.
Inadequate provision for the disabled and blue badge holders	Whilst Fleet Road is closed, bus stops will be relocated onto Albert Street, it is recognised that there may be a short increase in the distance from the bus stops but Fleet Road now offers a safe environment for all.
Bus stop confusion – unfair have to walk longer	Whilst Fleet Road is closed, bus stops will be relocated onto Albert Street, it is recognised that there may be a short increase in the distance from the bus stops but Fleet Road now offers a safe environment for all.
Why no consultation?	Due to the timescales involved, it has not been possible to carry out extensive engagement on the proposals. but we recognise that it may be necessary to adapt the scheme over time and in response to feedback. The Fleet Road mailbox was created and used on all communication that was sent out to highlight that people were able to send in any feedback, comments and suggestions which then would be recorded.
Give the impression Fleet is closed for business	The Council is looking at ways to improve Fleet town centre along this stretch of road to make it a pleasant and attractive shopping area. Whilst some negative comments have been received there are also a number that welcome the scheme and the additional events and craft market that has occurred.

<i>Table 4. Outlines the most common positive comments, questions asked and suggestions that people made</i>		
<b>Positive Comments</b>	<b>Questions Asked</b>	<b>Suggestions made</b>
In favour of this being permanent change	Clarify on cycling	Could you get shop mobility involved?
Market worked well	Why is Upper Street closed?	Bike parking app to use in the district
Great to see people using Fleet again	Why is the section between Victoria Road & The Oatsheaf not closed?	Can you not have further engagement with residents and businesses?
Hope to see more events using this space	Confirmed new bus routes	Could the scheme not just be at weekends?
Craft Market increased revenue	Delivery for businesses	Could you offer free parking?
Enjoyable place to shop now	Holding events in the space	Could you put in traffic calming measures in the resident roads?
Helping to improve Fleet town centre	Signage	Can you make it compulsory for cyclists to get off their bike?
Created a lovely/friendly/relaxed atmosphere	Wanting to know more about the future of scheme and possibility of moving into the high street	What about deliveries during a certain time of the day
Spending more time in town now		
Air is cleaner		
Positive move to encourage more people to walk/cycle into town		
Enjoyed the lack of traffic		
It will beautiful once all the flowers are in place		
Support for elderly able to walk in Fleet without worrying about the traffic		

Fleet needs a change		
Love the restaurants feel		

<i>Table 5. You said, We Did</i>	
<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did</b>
Could you put in traffic calming measures in the resident roads?	Traffic calming measures will be put in place along Albert Street, as well as a pedestrian crossing.
Unable to cross the road	Traffic calming measures will be put in place along Albert Street, as well as a pedestrian crossing.
Taken away disabled parking bays	Add in new parking bays
The bollards look awful -	Updating the scheme with planters and paintings on the ground
Events not suitable at the moment	Worked with Fleet BID to put in extra safety measures
Access to Birchayes Car Park	Working with key stakeholders to resolve this
Confusion over cyclists	Added in a sign at the start of the pedestrianised area

### **Communication of the directed webpage/email address for Fleet Road**

- Website [www.hart.gov.uk](http://www.hart.gov.uk)
- Press releases (or information could be found on the Hart District website)
- A leaflet drop to businesses on Fleet Road and residents of Albert Street 16 July 2020.
- A joint Fleet BID, Fleet Town Council & Hart District Council letter and leaflet drop to 18,000 residents and Businesses - 24 -25 July 2020
- Scheme information banners (Sited within Hart Shopping Centre and placed within the front window of 217 Menswear on Fleet Road)
- Hart District Council social media pages
- Hart for Business newsletter
- Fleet Town Council leaflet drop

## Review of Fleet Road mailbox since 24 August 2020

### Week Commencing 24 August 2020

Total number of emails received: 135

Total number of emails received from residents: 119

Total number of emails received from businesses: 16

Figure 3: Emails between 24/08 – 30/08

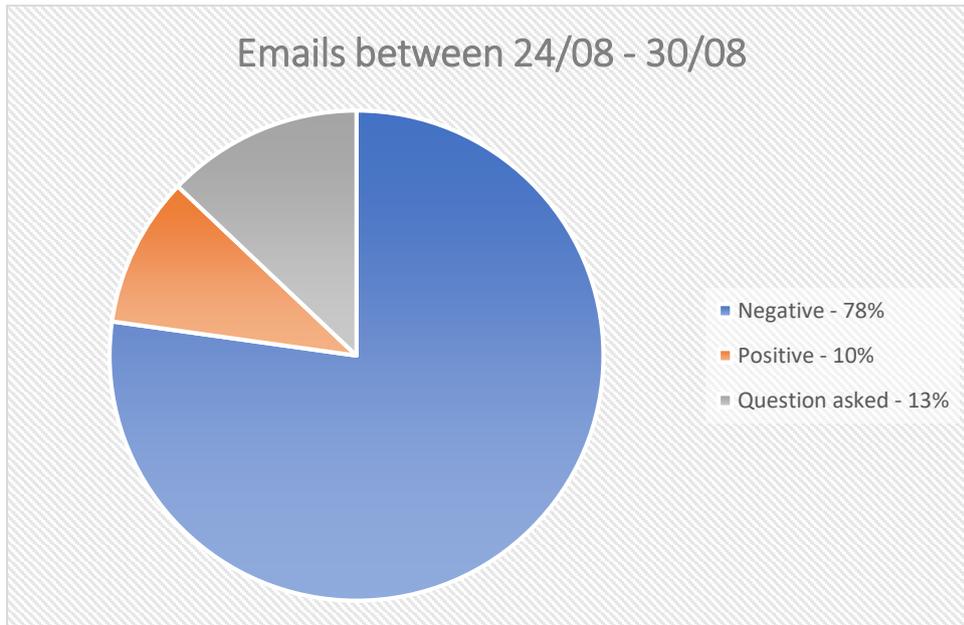
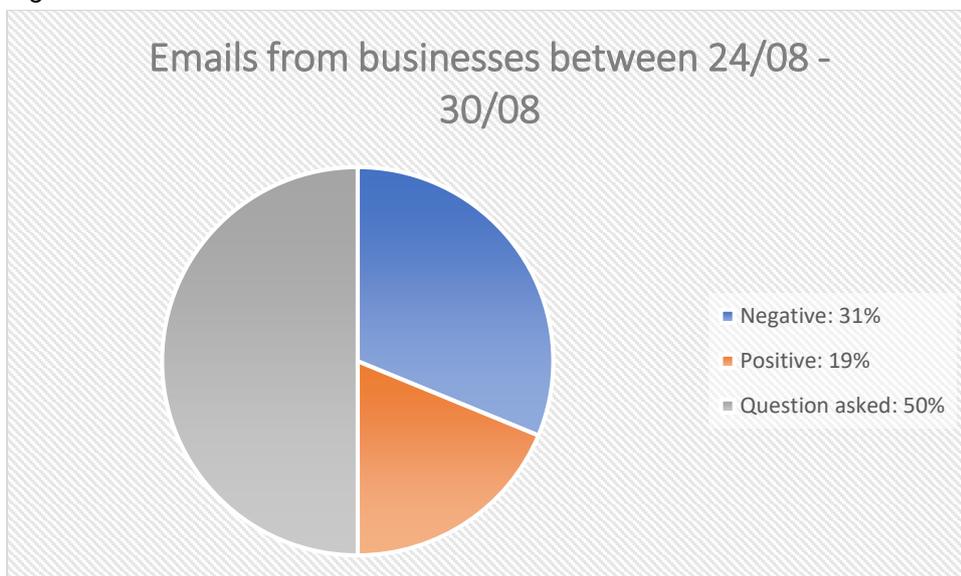


Figure 4: Emails from businesses between 24/08 – 30/08



### Common Negative Comments

- Lack of consultation
- Disabled parking
- Report of incorrect signage
- Traffic down Church Road and Albert Street

- Hard to cross Albert Street – (suggestions for a crossing)
- Problems for deliveries to those who live within the closure
- Traffic signs make the town look unappealing
- Confusion over bus stops

#### **Common Positive Comments**

- Feedback from several businesses - really busy since the closure
- In favour of this being permanent change
- Craft Market worked well
- Market was well laid out and attended – great to see people using Fleet again
- Hope to see more events using this space

#### **Common Questions Asked**

- Clarify on cycling
- Why is Upper Street closed?
- Asking about Hitches Lane being closed
- Why is the section between Victoria Road & The Oatsheaf not closed?
- Wrong signage
- Confirmed new bus routes

#### **Common Questions/Feedback from Businesses/Retailers**

- Access for parking
- Report of incorrect signage
- Complaint about a business taking up too much space on the pavement already
- Concern about bank delivery
- Delivery questions
- Great idea
- Asking about removal of the barriers
- Really busy since the closure
- Information about getting an information stand
- Why no consultation?
- Only be a good thing
- Cycling issues

## Week Commencing 31 August 2020 – 6 September 2020

Total number of emails received: 82

Total number of emails received from residents: 77

Total number of emails received from businesses: 5

Figure 5: Emails between 31/08 – 06/09

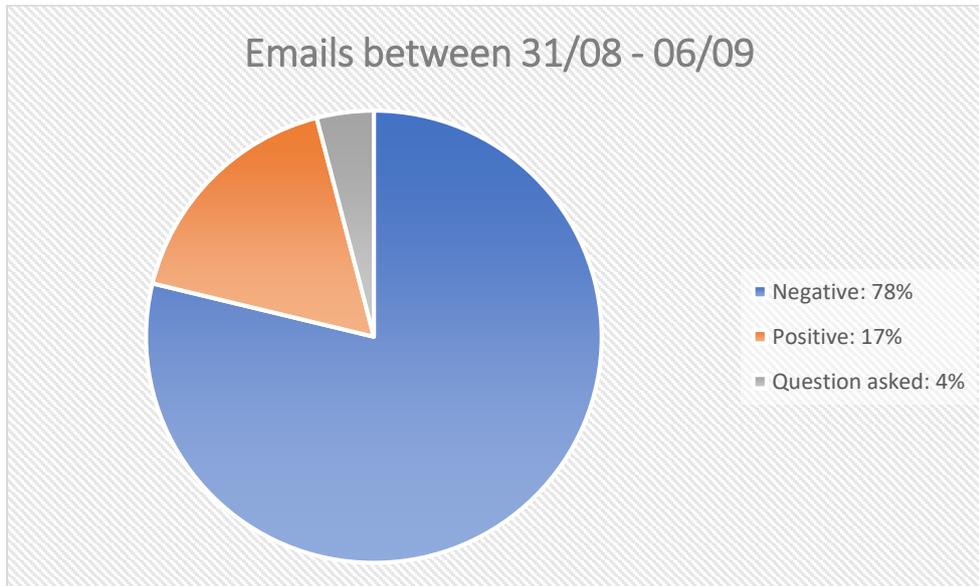
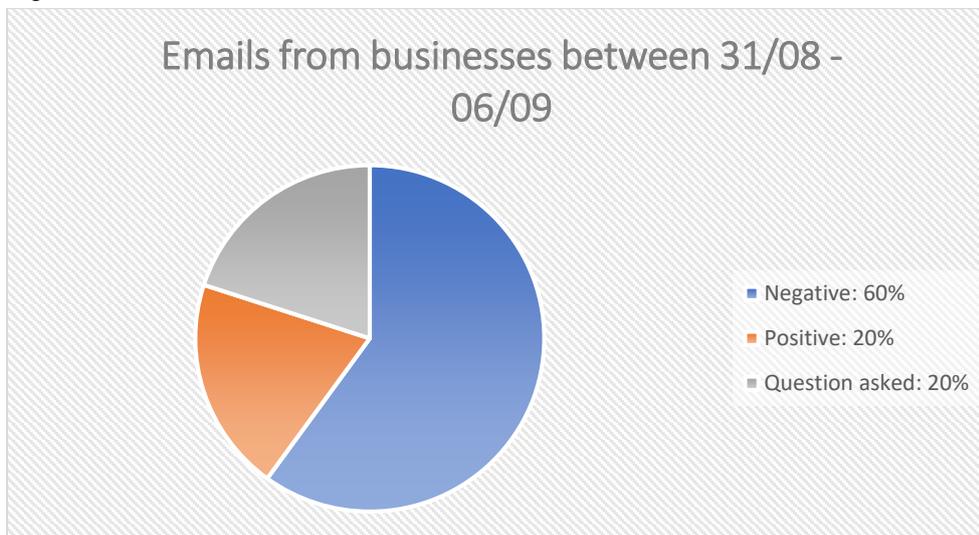


Figure 6: Emails from businesses between 31/08 – 06/09



### Common Negative Comments

- Traffic down Albert Street
- Crossing the road at Albert Street
- Traffic queues in the morning along Albert Street
- Interfering with delivery drivers
- Disabled bays
- Concerns about when schools are back with traffic, and children crossing the road
- Plenty of room to social distance before this

- Ambulance unable to get through barriers
- No monitoring of increased traffic flow in Victoria Road?

**Common Positive Comments**

- Hope it becomes permanent
- Craft Market increased revenue
- Pleasantly surprised with recent visit, enjoyable place to shop now

**Common Questions Asked:**

- Traffic down Albert Street
- Why is Upper Street closed?
- Could it be a weekend closure?
- Where is the disabled parking?

**Common Questions/Feedback from Businesses/Retailers**

- Positive feedback from stallholders from the craft market
- Against the scheme
- Access for emergency vehicles
- Missing out on passing trade
- Why no consultation?
- Economic impact on business

## Week Commencing 7 September 2020 – 13 September 2020

Total number of emails received: 83

Total number of emails received from residents: 74

Total number of emails received from businesses: 9

Figure 7: Emails between 07/09 – 13/09

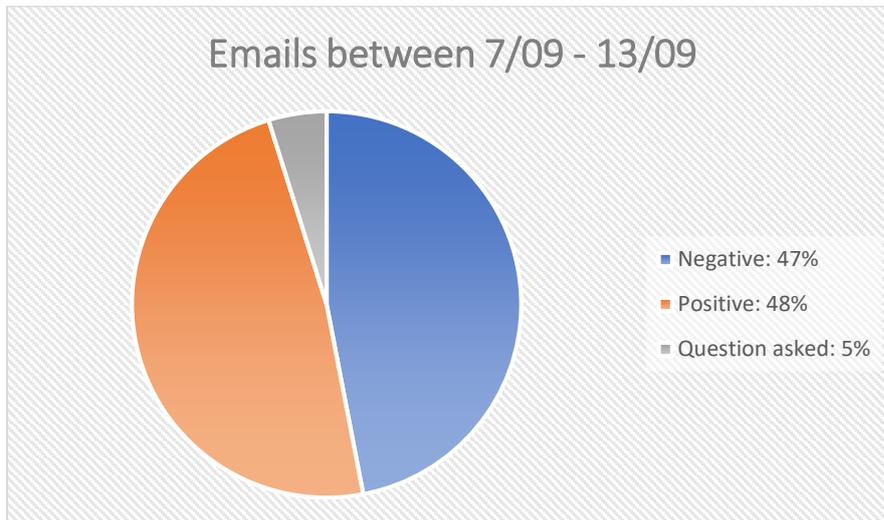
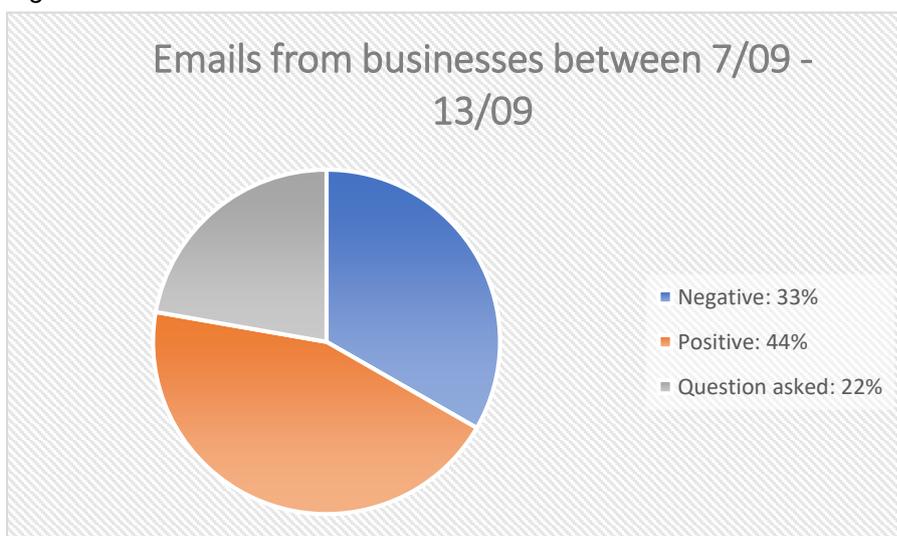


Figure 8: Emails from business between 07/09 – 13/09



### Common Negative Comments

- Traffic down Albert Street
- Road signs give the impression the road is closed
- Traffic queues in the morning along Albert Street
- Problems with refuse collection
- Further for elderly to walk from the bus stop into town
- Comments on Albert Street and Fleet Road being dangerous for cyclists
- Business has dropped off quickly

- Why was there no consultation before closure?
- Rushed through
- Bollards send out the wrong message – replace with plants and trees
- Concerns about when schools are back with traffic, and children crossing the road

#### **Common Positive Comments**

- Excellent idea - blue badge user but no problems so far
- Craft Market increased revenue
- Can see the potential
- Helping to improve Fleet town centre

#### **Common Questions Asked**

- Suggested a bike parking app could be a good opportunity for Fleet
- Add in a crossing along Albert Street

#### **Common Questions/Feedback from Businesses/Retailers**

- Request about using the space for an event
- Increase in takings
- Increase in footfall
- Traffic issues

## Week Commencing 14 September 2020 – 20 September 2020

Total number of emails received: 80

Total number of emails received from residents: 75

Total number of emails received from businesses: 5

Figure 9: Emails between 17/09 – 20/09

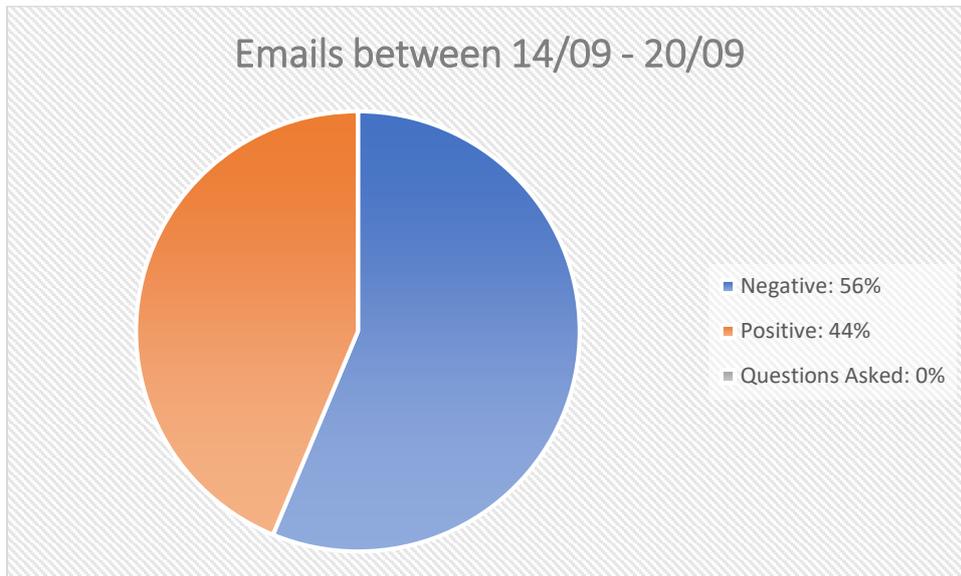
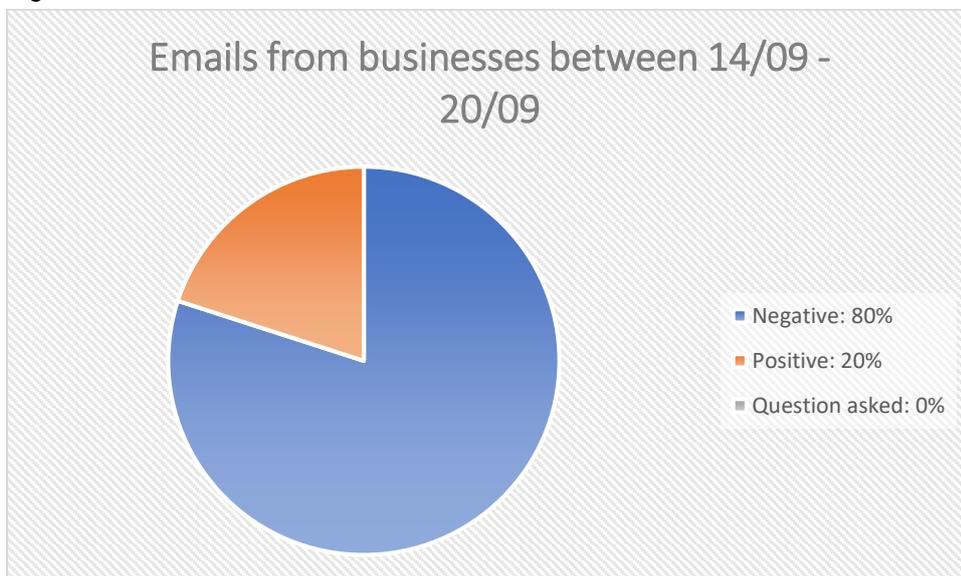


Figure 10: Emails from business between 14/09 – 20/09



### Common Negative Comments

- Traffic down Albert Street - need traffic calming measures
- HGV being a problem down Albert Street
- More pollution in a residential area
- Noise down Albert Street

- No information about this beforehand
- Fleet is now like a ghost town
- Negative impact on taxi businesses
- Pavements are wide enough

#### **Common Positive Comments**

- Created a lovely/friendly/relaxed atmosphere
- Support for elderly able to walk in Fleet without worrying about the traffic
- Keep going with it
- Support the closure – but if it is taken out could a weekend/bank holiday closure come into place?
- Spending more time in town now
- Support it being a permanent scheme
- Air is cleaner
- It will be beautiful once all the flowers are in place
- Helping to improve Fleet town centre
- Browsed the shops for the first time in a while

#### **Common Questions/Feedback from Businesses/Retailers**

- Greatest chance in helping the high street
- Complaint about the impact it is having on taxi business
- Negative impact from the Saturday market traders having their business
- Petition from businesses against the idea

## Week Commencing 21 September 2020 – to 27 September 2020

Total number of emails received: 67

Total number of emails received from residents: 60

Total number of emails received from businesses: 7

Figure 11: Emails between 21/09 – 27/09

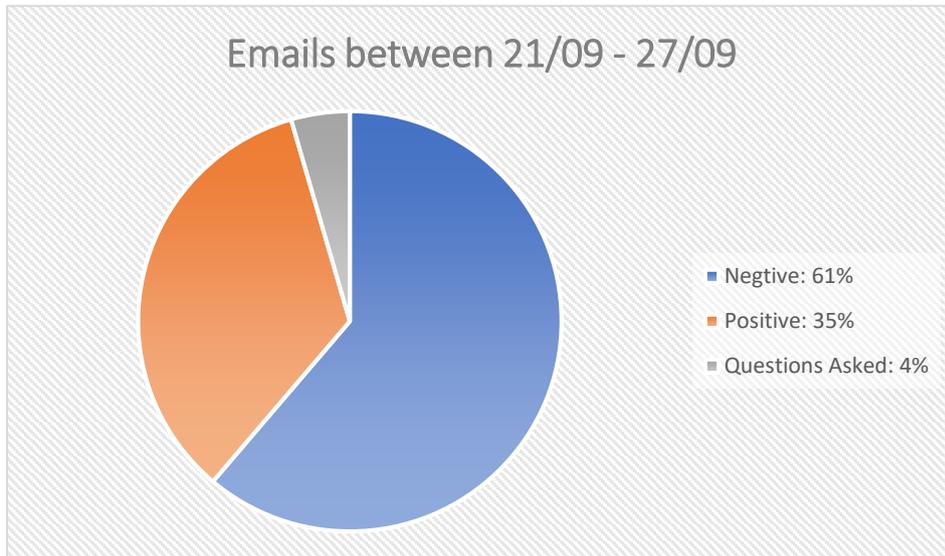
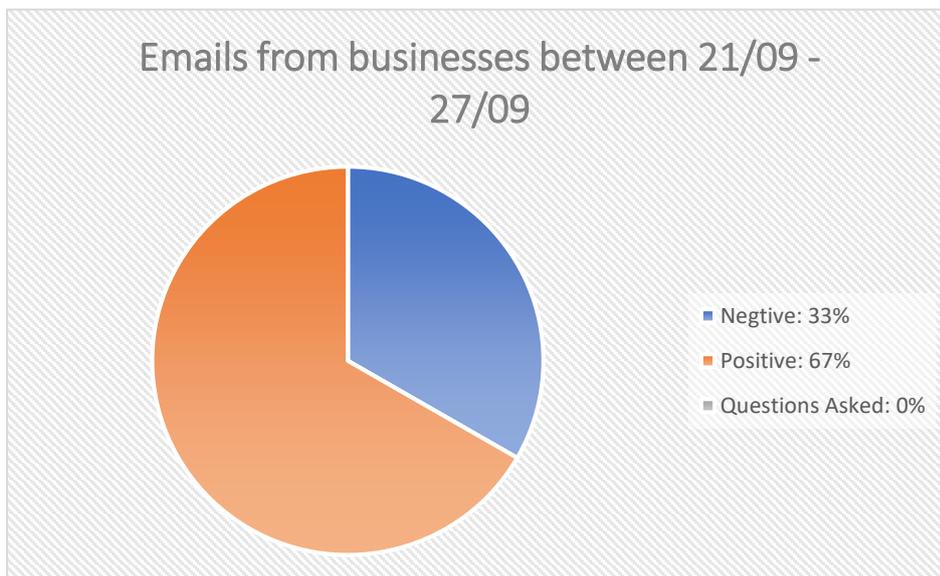


Figure 12: Emails from businesses between 21/09 – 27/09



### Common Negative Comments

- Traffic down Albert Street - need traffic calming measures
- Losing out on passing trade
- HGV being a problem down Albert Street
- More pollution in a residential area
- Noise down Albert Street

- No information about this beforehand
- Fleet is now like a ghost town
- Negative impact on taxi businesses
- Pavements are wide enough

#### **Common Positive Comments**

- In support of the scheme just get rid of the red and white barriers
- Feel safer using the bigger space
- This trial of the scheme needed to happen before this
- In support of the scheme but there must be some traffic calming measures along the residential roads
- Can help to develop a real community feel with the space
- Enjoying the events
- Breathing life into the town
- More enjoyable shopping experience now

#### **Common Questions/Feedback from Businesses/Retailers**

- Greatest chance in helping the high street
- Bringing in more business
- Could you have deliveries at certain times?
- Can it be made compulsory for cyclists to walk through the closed area?

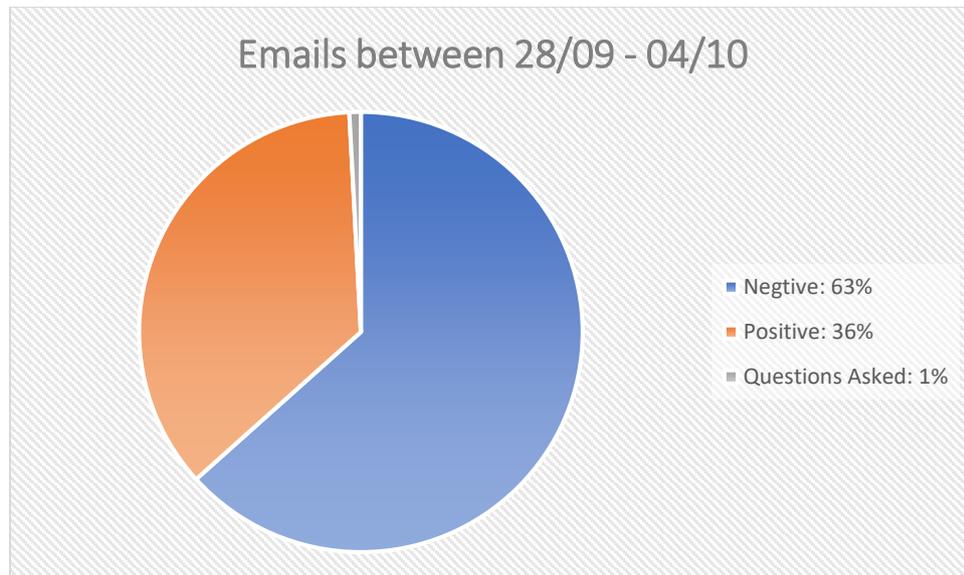
## Week Commencing 28 September 2020 – to 4 October 2020

Total number of emails received: 120

Total number of emails received from residents: 120

Total number of emails received from businesses: 0

Figure 13: Emails between 28/09 – 04/09



### Common Negative Comments

- Hard to navigate down the side roads with the vans
- No one will want to sit outside during winter months, so why have it running through winter?
- Hinders passing trade
- Do not need the extra space
- Why is does Upper Street have to be closed?
- Should have better signage at crossing and drop curbs
- Albert Street busier
- Events are not suitable in the current climate
- No consultation with the public
- HGV being a problem down Albert Street
- More pollution in a residential area
- Noise down Albert Street
- No information about this beforehand
- Fleet is now like a ghost town
- Negative impact on taxi businesses
- Pavements are wide enough

### **Common Positive Comments**

- Would encourage to have closure of the road to Oatsheaf lights, as this could help the businesses along that road in the future
- Feel safe walking in the area as not worried about cars
- Support for elderly able to walk in Fleet without worrying about the traffic
- Positive to move to encourage more people to walk/cycle into town
- Enjoyed the market
- Enjoyed the lack of traffic
- Spending more time in town now
- Support it being a permanent scheme
- Air is cleaner
- Helping to improve Fleet town centre

### **Suggestions**

- Support the closure – but, if it is taken out, could a weekend/bank holiday closure come into place?
- Volunteers to manage closure when events are running

## Week Commencing 5 October 2020 – to 11 October 2020

Total number of emails received: 122

Total number of emails received from residents: 119

Total number of emails received from businesses: 3

Figure 14: Emails between 05/10 – 11/10

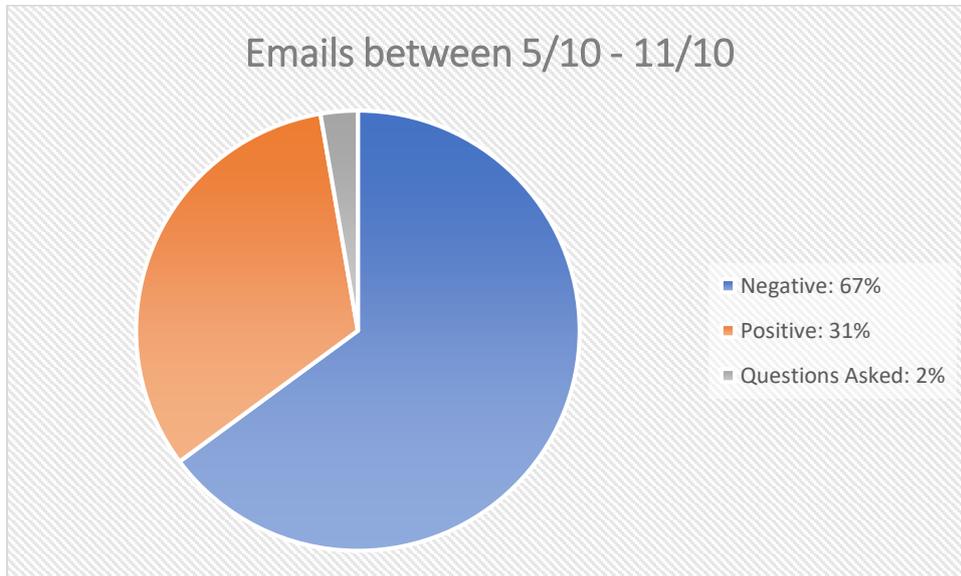
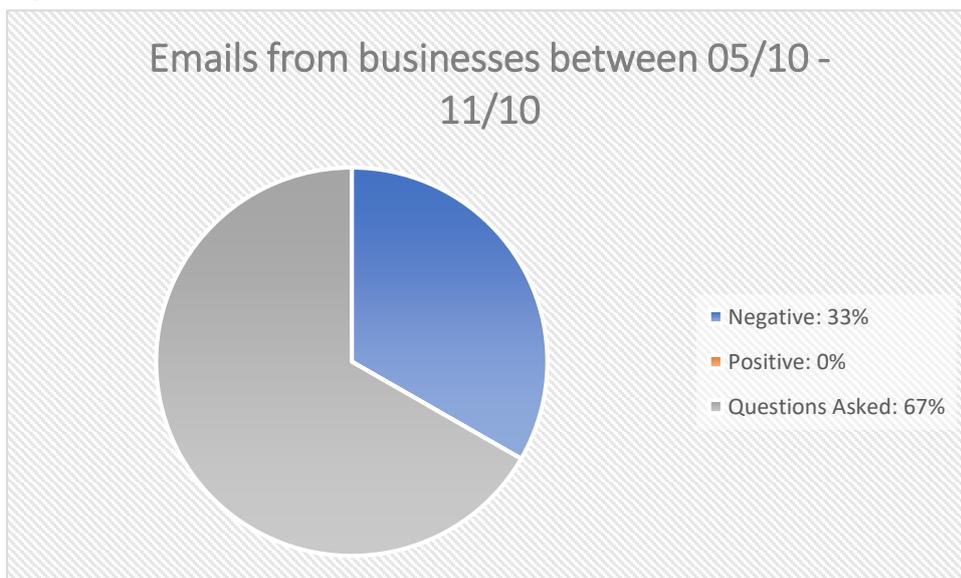


Figure 15: Emails between 05/10 – 11/10



### Common Negative Comments

- Unable to “nip into town”
- Increase traffic levels
- Increase traffic levels along Albert Street, Church Road
- Find it hard to cross the road at Church Road
- The events go against supporting social distancing
- Why no consultation?

- Should have taken the time to talk to residents and business first to help develop the idea, then would have had more support for the scheme
- Buses are too large for the residential road
- At busy times, residents are unable to park or exit their property due to traffic congestion
- Inadequate provision for disabled and blue badge holders
- Increase of noise pollution
- Scheme is not welcoming
- Just close for legitimate community events
- Events are not suitable in the current climate
- Will avoid Fleet for my shopping now

### **Common Positive Comments**

- Now doing majority of shopping in Fleet now
- Enjoy the restaurants coming onto the streets
- Enjoy that there is no traffic
- Feels cleaner and safer
- The pandemic has accentuated the need for greater provision for pedestrians and cyclists in town centres
- Planters are attractive
- Elderly relative can meet with friends and shop safely without the traffic
- Trying to keep the high street alive
- Safer for children
- Hope it is permanent

### **Common Questions/Feedback from Businesses/Retailers**

- Wanting to know more about the future of scheme and possibility of moving into the high street

### **Suggestions**

- Provide shelter for people waiting at the bus stops in Albert Street
- There is scope to improve the scheme and the appearance
- Can it not be a weekend closure?
- Keep the scheme for longer and do a survey to residents
- If it is kept, need pelican crossings in Albert Road and Church Road to help with crossing
- Make sure you create a space where all of the community can get involved
- Offer free parking

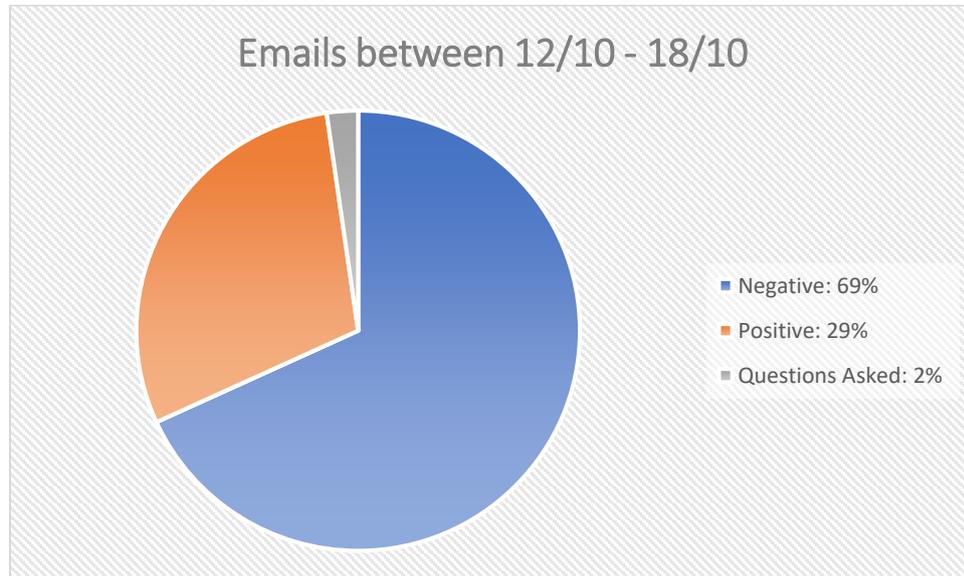
## Week Commencing 12 October 2020 – to 18 October 2020

Total number of emails received: 43

Total number of emails received from residents: 43

Total number of emails received from businesses: 0

Figure 16: Emails between 12/10 – 18/10



### Common Negative Comments

- Negative impact on taxi drivers
- Albert Street is dangerous
- Walk from the bus stop to the high street is a long walk for disabled/elderly
- HGV down a residential road
- Events not helping with social distancing

### Common Positive Comments

- Buzz around the town
- Bring the community together and money into the town
- Pleasing environment
- Less pollution
- Helps with social distancing
- Feel safe now without the traffic

### Questions asked/Suggestions

- Can it not be a weekend closure?