

## Teignbridge District Council - Budget Consultation Report

**Date:** 26 February 2026

**From:** Communications Team

**Subject:** Consultation feedback to Executive Committee

### Methodology

The Communications Team was tasked to consult with the public, businesses, on the website, about the budget proposals. The consultation ran from 18th December 2025 to 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026 and below you will find a short summary of the results so that full Council on 26th February has the opportunity to take into account residents' feedback when considering the final budget recommendations from Executive.

### The survey

**544 people responded to the survey.**

The following budget questions were put to Teignbridge residents:

1. Do you agree with the current recommendation to increase council tax by 2.99%, which equates to £6.05 per year for a Band D property, (taking the council tax to £208.33) to help maintain essential services?
2. Please rank in priority order, those non statutory services that you think are important (9 top priority – 1 least important).
3. Is there anything else we should be prioritising?
4. To Balance the Council's budget in the future, please indicate which of these measures we should be considering? – residents could tick more than one option.

<b>Q1</b>	<b>Increase council Tax.</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<b>74 % agree</b>	<b>26 %</b>
<b>Q2</b>	<b>Ranking - in priority order.(Non-Statutory services)</b>	
489	Walking and Cycling routes	Ranked <b>Highest</b>
437	Affordable and extra Care housing	Ranked <b>Equal 2<sup>nd</sup></b> (so no 3 <sup>rd</sup> )
437	Toilets	Ranked <b>Equal 2<sup>nd</sup></b>
434	Projects to support Town centre vitality	Ranked 4th
431	Employment Land	Ranked 5th
407	Parks and Green Spaces	Ranked <b>Equal 6<sup>th</sup></b> (so no 7 <sup>th</sup> )
407	Reducing the carbon footprint of the District	Ranked <b>Equal 6th</b>
397	Coastal resorts	Ranked 8th
378	Leisure	Ranked 9 <sup>th</sup> <b>Least important</b>
<b>Q3</b>	<b>See comments</b>	
<b>Q4</b>	<b>Other measures to consider.</b>	
<b>Residents could tick more than one measure.</b>	Increasing Council Tax	42%

	Generate more income through charging for services	34%
	Reducing the discretionary services, we provide	48% <b>Highest</b>

# Report Summary: Key Themes from Open-Text Responses (Q3)

**Source:** Analysis of all free-text comments submitted by respondents. Produced by Co-pilot AI.

## 1. Introduction

This report summarises the qualitative feedback provided in response to Question 3 of the consultation. The comments reflect a broad range of priorities, concerns and suggestions related to local services, infrastructure, community facilities, and council operations. Themes have been categorised to identify the most commonly occurring issues.

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## 2. Overview of Main Themes

Across all responses, several dominant themes emerge. The most frequently cited relates to the condition of highways and footways, followed by concerns around the cost of parking, the adequacy of leisure and community facilities, and the maintenance and appearance of town centres.

A detailed breakdown of the thematic areas is provided below.

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## 3. Detailed Thematic Findings

### 3.1 Highways, Roads, and Pavements (Most Frequent Theme)

A substantial proportion of respondents highlighted the deteriorating condition of local roads. The most common comments refer to:

- The **prevalence of potholes** and the perceived poor quality or short-lasting nature of repairs.
- Requests for **comprehensive resurfacing** rather than patchwork repairs.
- Safety concerns linked to uneven pavements, lack of dropped kerbs, and obstructions caused by pavement parking.
- Calls for improved road drainage, ditch clearing and routine sweeping.
- Concerns about inadequate street lighting on non-main roads.

These comments collectively demonstrate a strong expectation that road and pavement maintenance should be prioritised.

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### 3.2 Parking Costs and Transport

Respondents frequently raised transport-related issues, including:

- Reducing or subsidising car parking charges to support town centre activity.
- Introducing resident parking passes or providing a free first hour in car parks.
- Improving the reliability and frequency of **public transport**, particularly bus services.
- Introducing or revising one-way systems to improve traffic flow.

Some residents link parking affordability directly to economic vitality and the viability of local shops.

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### 3.3 Leisure Centres, Swimming Pools, and Sports Facilities

A significant number of comments emphasise the need for investment in leisure provision. Common points include:

- Calls for a **new leisure centre**, particularly in Newton Abbot, with modern facilities and improved parking.
- Upgrading existing swimming pools and replacing ageing changing rooms.
- Expanding provision to include soft play, bowling, and larger, modern gym spaces.

The condition and capacity of current facilities are frequently described as outdated or inadequate.

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### 3.4 Public Toilets

Many respondents express strong opposition to any reduction in public toilet provision. Key points include:

- Requests to maintain or increase availability of toilets.
- Concerns about cleanliness, accessibility, and safety.
- Comments that reducing provision would be a step “backwards.”

Public toilet access is seen as essential, particularly in town centres and coastal locations.

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### 3.5 Town Centre Appearance, Cleanliness and Tourism

The overall condition and attractiveness of town centres—especially Teignmouth—is a recurring concern. Responses reference:

- Persistent issues with weeds, litter and poorly maintained public spaces.
- The removal or absence of seafront lighting in Teignmouth and calls for its reinstatement.
- A desire for improved visual appeal to support tourism and local business.
- Comments that Teignmouth should receive greater investment and attention relative to other towns.

Several respondents highlight the importance of presenting a clean, vibrant, and welcoming environment to visitors.

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### 3.6 Housing

Housing-related concerns fall into several categories:

- The need for more **social housing**, particularly for local residents and single people.
- A desire for “genuinely affordable” homes.
- Strong opposition to development on greenfield land.
- Frustrations regarding unadopted new-build estate roads and associated management company fees.

Housing supply, affordability, and the location of new development remain significant issues for many respondents.

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### 3.7 Financial Management, Efficiency and Council Tax

Financial concerns appear throughout the responses. Themes include:

- Reducing unnecessary spending and increasing efficiency.
- Cutting bureaucracy and administrative overheads.

- Opposition to increases in council tax, particularly from pensioners and low-income households.
- Expectations that statutory services should be prioritised over non-statutory services.

Several respondents link financial pressures to wider national funding issues.

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### **3.8 Environment, Green Spaces and Climate**

Environmental issues feature prominently, with comments calling for:

- Greater protection of wildlife, habitats, and green spaces.
- Maintenance of grass verges, nature areas, and tree planting.
- Action on coastal erosion.
- Support for active travel, including walking and cycling routes.

Some respondents emphasise the link between environmental action, health benefits, and reduced carbon impact.

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### **3.9 Community, Youth and Social Support**

A range of comments focus on community wellbeing and youth support, including:

- Requests for more youth clubs and safe indoor spaces.
- More community centres, especially in new developments.
- Support for older people, disabled residents, and new parents.
- Concerns about anti-social behaviour.

These responses reflect a desire for stronger community infrastructure and social support networks.

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### **3.10 Crime, Safety and Enforcement**

Respondents also raise:

- Requests for greater police visibility.
- A desire for traffic calming measures, including 20mph zones.
- Calls for dog wardens and action on littering and dog fouling.

Safety—both perceived and actual—remains a noticeable concern.

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### 3.11 Other Frequently Mentioned Projects and Issues

Several specific projects and locations receive multiple mentions:

- **Teign Estuary Trail**
- **Dawlish Strand**
- **Queen Street (Newton Abbot)**
- Improvements to **Brunel Road recycling centre**

Additionally, some respondents comment on the consultation itself, reporting technical limitations in the survey design.

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## 4. Conclusions

The open-text responses provide a clear indication of resident priorities. The condition of roads and pavements is overwhelmingly the most significant concern, but there is also strong emphasis on parking affordability, investment in leisure and community facilities, and improvements to the physical environment of town centres.

Financial pressures, housing supply, environmental protection, and community safety also feature prominently. Many responses underline the importance of delivering value for money and protecting essential services.