

Supplementary Report to be read in conjunction with the main report

Council of Sanctuary Start and Finish Group 6th August 2025
SUPPLEMENTARY Community Consultation Summary of Data
Report of the Senior Development Officer



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

In order to provide members the opportunity to fully digest the information ahead of the meeting, the survey data was initially exported on 28th July 2025 at 12:12pm, ahead of the survey deadline, to enable the report to go out with the agenda. Following the close of the survey on the 31st July 2025, we can now provide the additional 49 responses in this summary, to be read in conjunction with the main report.

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1. Survey Responses

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Following the initial survey export on 28th July 2025 12:12pm, and the second export upon completion on the 1st August 2025 10:28am, a further 49 responses have been gathered. Of the 49 responses, 44 of them are from Weston-super-Mare residents. The remaining 5 responses are from out of parish areas: 'Hutton and Locking', 'Wick St Lawrence and St Georges', and some out of area or invalid postcodes.

Table 1 - Respondent Location Summary

Ward/Area	Responses
Weston-super-Mare South Worle	2
Weston-super-Mare Mid Worle	1
Weston-super-Mare Worlebury	1
Weston-super-Mare North Worle	2
Weston-super-Mare Winterstoke	4
Weston-super-Mare Milton	8
Weston-super-Mare Central	7
Weston-super-Mare Hillside	8
Weston-super-Mare South Ward	5
Weston-super-Mare Uphill	5
BS22	0
BS23	1
BS24	0
NOT VALID / Out of area	1
Hutton and Locking	2
Weston-super-Mare Kewstoke	0
Wick St Lawrence and St Georges	2
Congresbury and Puxton	0
Banwell and Winscombe	0



In order to ensure the views on the motion are strictly from Weston-super-Mare Town Council parishioners, these responses have been split into 'in parish' and 'out of parish'. This will provide clarity, but also ensure that everyone who has taken the time to complete the survey can be viewed.

AI Software has been used to summarise data due to the sheer volume. This has also ensured impartial review. For transparency, the prompt provided for each data set has been provided. Raw data is available upon request.

Each question asked has been provided ahead of the summary data for your information.

1.1. Question 1

What is your postcode? Please note - this information will only be used to ensure we are collecting data from WSM residents only.

Information summarised as per table 1 above

1.2. Question 2

Do you believe you have enough information to understand what becoming a council of sanctuary would mean for Weston-super-Mare Town Council?

Do you believe you have enough information to understand what becoming a council of sanctuary would mean for Weston-super-Mare Town Council?	In parish	Out of parish
YES	33	5
NO	11	0

1.3. Question 3

If Yes, where did you get your information?

In parish

1. **Council websites and communications (including NSC, Somerset Council)** – 16 mentions
2. **City of Sanctuary website / documents / national examples** – 10 mentions
3. **Online searches / general internet research** – 6 mentions
4. **Media, social media, and news articles** – 4 mentions
5. **Friends, family, and word of mouth** – 4 mentions
6. **Town Council meetings, discussions, or emails** – 3 mentions
7. **Live sessions, councillors, or community events** – 2 mentions
8. **Request for more transparent or unbiased information** – 1 mention
9. **Blakehay Theatre meeting** – 1 mention
10. **Observation / personal experience** – 1 mention

Out of parish

1. **City of Sanctuary website and Charter** – 2 mentions
2. **Local council meeting** – 1 mention
3. **Research into other areas that became Councils of Sanctuary** – 1 mention
4. **Links previously provided (likely online)** – 1 mention

Data Summary¹**1.4. Question 4**

If no, what additional information would you like?

In parish

1. **Impact on Local Services and Infrastructure** – 6 mentions
 - Requests for clarity on how the initiative will affect housing, healthcare, education, policing, and infrastructure.
2. **Population Numbers and Demographic Detail** – 3 mentions

¹ ChatGPT – prompt: “We have responses to an open-ended question in a survey. Could you please summarise the responses? Please do not embellish or assume anything with these responses. could you please start by noting the number of individual open-ended responses”

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- Questions about how many people will be coming, and the pressure this might place on services.
- 3. **Costs, Funding, and Benefits to Local Area** – 2 mentions
 - Specific interest in taxpayer costs, council funding, and how locals will benefit.
- 4. **Demand for Public Involvement or Democratic Process** – 3 mentions
 - Comments about lack of resident consultation or vote on the decision.
- 5. **Perceived Misinformation and Clarity on the Scheme** – 2 mentions
 - Frustration about misinformation and a lack of understanding of what “Council of Sanctuary” means.
- 6. **No Additional Information Needed / No Comment** – 5 mentions
 - Respondents indicated they don’t need further information or expressed disinterest (e.g., “None”, “No”, “Na”).
- 7. **General Confusion or Open-ended Concern** – 2 mentions
 - Expressed uncertainty (e.g., “What is happening”).

Out of parish

No responses.

Data Summary²

1.5. Question 5

What benefits do you think could come from Weston-super-Mare Town Council becoming a Council of Sanctuary?

In parish

Thematic Summary of Responses:

No Perceived Benefit (Most Frequent Theme)

- **31 responses** explicitly state “None,” “Nothing,” “No benefits,” “Unable to see a single one,” or similar.
- Common reasons:
 - Lack of direct benefit to the local population.
 - Concerns about resource allocation or priority shifting away from current local issues.

Concerns & Objections

- **6 responses** raise specific concerns:
 - **Financial strain on the council** (extra costs for services like housing, language programs).
 - **Fear of increased crime or safety issues.**
 - **Negative impact on tourism.**
 - **Worries about being excluded from the decision-making process.**
 - **Concern that the town is already struggling with issues like antisocial behaviour and housing.**

² ChatGPT – prompt: “We have responses to an open-ended question in a survey. Could you please summarise the responses? Please do not embellish or assume anything with these responses. could you please start by noting the number of individual open-ended responses”

Support for the Sanctuary Council Designation

- **7 responses** express support, citing:
 - **Moral and humanitarian obligations** to support asylum seekers.
 - **Promotion of inclusivity, compassion, and cultural diversity.**
 - **Community enrichment through multiculturalism and improved understanding.**
 - **Improved public education and engagement.**
 - **Message against racism and exclusion.**
 - **Perception of increased community safety and cohesion.**

Out of parish

Thematic Summary of Responses:

No Perceived Benefit

- **3 out of 5 responses** explicitly state "**None,**" "**None at all,**" or "**None what so ever.....**"
- These responses indicate a complete lack of perceived value in the proposed change or initiative.

Sceptical Recognition of Limited or Uncertain Benefit

- **1 response** mentions **media recognition** as a potential outcome, but doubts its usefulness:

"Media recognition is the most but I don't believe that does anything for the Town."

- **1 response** speculates about **possible government funding**, but without confidence or detail:

"Probably some money from government."

Data Summary³**1.6. Question 6**

What problems do you think could arise from Weston-super-Mare Town Council being a Council of Sanctuary?

In parish**1. Crime and Public Safety Concerns — 30 responses**

- Includes fears of:
 - **Violence, sexual assault**
 - **Knife crime, theft, antisocial behaviour**

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- Women and children **feeling or being unsafe**
- Concern over **groups of men loitering** or intimidating locals

2. Overstretched Services & Infrastructure — 28 responses

- Cites:
 - **Hospitals, GPs, NHS dentists**, schools, roads already under strain
 - **Difficulty accessing appointments**
 - View that Weston is “**not built**” to handle more people

3. Financial Burden on Taxpayers — 18 responses

- Worries about:
 - **Council tax increases**
 - **Paying for services** used by new arrivals
 - Funding diverted from existing residents

4. Housing Pressure — 17 responses

- Comments include:
 - **Social housing shortages**
 - Local families already struggling to **find homes or afford rent**
 - Fear that **new arrivals will jump the queue**

5. Cultural Tensions / Lack of Integration — 16 responses

- References to:
 - Migrants not integrating or respecting local culture
 - Specific concern about **attitudes toward women**
 - Language and social division

6. Misinformation / Division / Political Concerns — 13 responses

- Includes:
 - Misinformation from **social media, far-right, or Reform UK**
 - Risk of **division or resentment**
 - **Lack of clear communication** from council

7. Impact on Tourism / Local Economy — 7 responses

- Concerns about:
 - Town becoming **less attractive to tourists**
 - Decline in **hospitality businesses**
 - **Pubs, cafes, and shops** losing customers

8. Lack of Consultation / Democratic Process — 5 responses

- Claims that:
 - There was **no vote, survey**, or proper consultation

Supplementary Report to be read in conjunction with the main report

- Policy imposed **without local input**

9. Perceived Overpopulation / Influx of Migrants — 13 responses

- Mentions of:
 - “Lots of immigrants being shipped in”
 - Fears of a **sudden influx**
 - Worries about **losing local control** over settlement

Out of parish

Thematic Summary of Responses:

Infrastructure and Public Services Overload

- All 5 responses highlight concerns about the **local infrastructure’s inability to cope**:
 - Strain on **roads, housing, health services, dentists, doctors, schools, bin collection**, and other local amenities.
 - Concern that the **council is already struggling** to provide for current residents.

Crime and Safety Concerns

- All responses mention **increased crime** as a major perceived risk:
 - Specific mentions include **violent crime...sexual assaults, knife crime, and theft**.
 - Several concerns around **safety of women and children**, and general **public security**.

Social Cohesion and Integration

- **Lack of integration and increased diversity framed as risk**:
 - One response equates more diversity with “more danger.”
 - Concerns about “groups of young men” loitering and lack of background knowledge about them.

Economic Impact

- **Increased cost to taxpayers and strain on local budgets.**
- Fears of **decline in tourism** and **loss of local businesses** such as cafes, bars, and restaurants.
- **Property values** seen as likely to fall.

Personal and Emotional Concerns

- One response is **highly personal**, expressing fear for **female family members’ safety**.
- The same response includes strong opposition to accepting asylum seekers, expressed with emotionally charged language.

Raw data available and held by Town Council – available upon request

Data Summary⁴**1.7. Question 7**

What do you feel are the advantages to the Town Council enabling the community to shape how people are welcomed to the Town?

In parish**1. No Perceived Benefits / Opposition to Sanctuary Town Status — 25 responses**

- Explicit statements that there are **no advantages**, e.g. "None", "No advantages", "None at all"
- Some mention **resentment**, **fear**, or **pointlessness** of the proposal

2. Concerns Over Safety, Crime, and Women's Rights — 10 responses

- Strong concerns from women and families
- Fears of **terrorism**, **crime**, **women/children being unsafe**
- Includes detailed response describing **safety fears** and **loss of freedom**

3. Demand for Proper Consultation & Transparency — 12 responses

- Emphasis on:
 - **Listening to residents**
 - **Proper consultation**
 - **Transparency in decision-making**
- Frustration that decisions seem **pre-made** or **politically driven**

4. Community Cohesion & Integration (Positive View) — 7 responses

- Some hopeful about:
 - **Better integration**
 - **Community involvement**
 - **People contributing positively to the town**
- Noted only by a minority

5. Strain on Local Services (Health, Schools, Housing) — 6 responses

- Concerns about:
 - **Overstretched NHS and GP surgeries**
 - **School capacity**
 - **Costs to taxpayers**

6. Democratic Representation / Local Control — 5 responses

- Repeated views that:
 - **"It's our town, not the council's"**

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Supplementary Report to be read in conjunction with the main report

- Locals should **have the final say**
- Strong emphasis on **local voices being heard**

7. Symbolic / Political Criticism — 4 responses

- Claims that the move is:
 - **Ideological**
 - **Virtue signalling**
 - Lacking **practical value**

Out of parish

1. No Perceived Benefit / Opposition — 3 responses

- “No advantages at all”
- “Can’t see any”
- “Nothing at all, you are welcoming criminals into the town”

2. Consultation, Representation & Listening to Locals — 2 responses

- “Doubtful whether the town council actually take on board the concerns of locals”
- “Weston council need to speak to local people and listen to what we have to say”

3. Safety / Immigration Concerns — 1 response

- Suggests a distinction between **genuine war refugees** and **others** arriving by boat
- Refers to them as "**criminals**" and expresses opposition to their presence

4. Appreciation for Open Dialogue — 1 response

- “It's good to have the chance to talk about it, openly.”

Data Summary⁵

1.8. Question 8

What do you feel are the disadvantages of the Town Council enabling the community to shape how people are welcomed to the Town?

In parish

1. Safety, Crime & Community Risk — 11 responses

- Concerns raised about increased crime, particularly affecting women and children.

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- Fears that the town will become less safe or more unstable due to the arrival of newcomers.
- Some believe refugees do not integrate, and bringing in unknown groups will create division or danger.
- Reference to towns that became less safe after adopting sanctuary policies.

2. Lack of Democratic Process / Council Not Listening — 13 responses

- Strong sense that the council is not acting on behalf of residents or involving them in meaningful consultation.
- Multiple respondents say they feel silenced, bypassed, or ignored.
- Several want a public vote, not top-down decisions.
- Concerns that decisions are being made by a “small unrepresentative group” or being politically imposed.

3. Economic & Infrastructure Pressure — 9 responses

- Anxiety about the cost of additional services like housing, schools, and healthcare.
- Worry that council tax will increase or that local services will be stretched further.
- Fears that Weston could become less appealing to tourists and businesses, damaging the local economy.

4. Cultural Integration & Social Cohesion — 7 responses

- Criticism of multiculturalism and suggestions that cultural clashes or differing values could undermine community cohesion.
- Belief that certain cultures won’t adapt or integrate, leading to more division.
- Fears that imposed change will damage trust or shared identity.

5. National Politics & Misinformation — 4 responses

- Frustration about political framing, misleading consultation questions, and alleged suppression of dissenting views.
- One detailed response suggested the narrative is politically motivated and disconnected from public feeling.
- Concerns over “woke” or ideological agendas overriding practical needs.

6. “No Disadvantage” / Neutral — 5 responses

- A small number of responses stated there would be no disadvantage or expressed indifference.
- Some of these answers were dismissive or sarcastic.

Out of parish

1. Safety Concerns / Immigration Risks — 2 responses

Supplementary Report to be read in conjunction with the main report

- Respondents expressed fears that welcoming migrants (particularly unknown groups of young men) could increase crime and make the town less safe.
- There was concern that such perceptions might deter tourists from visiting.

2. Lack of Democratic Process / Not Listening to Locals — 2 responses

- Some felt the council is pushing decisions through without proper consultation or transparency.
- There's a belief that residents' voices and concerns are being ignored or overridden.

3. Concerns Over Bias / Community Division — 1 response

- One person raised concern that public consultation might generate racist or discriminatory responses, highlighting community tensions.

4. Government Imposition — 1 response

- A respondent suggested that the sanctuary town policy may be imposed by central government, leaving local people powerless.

Data Summary⁶

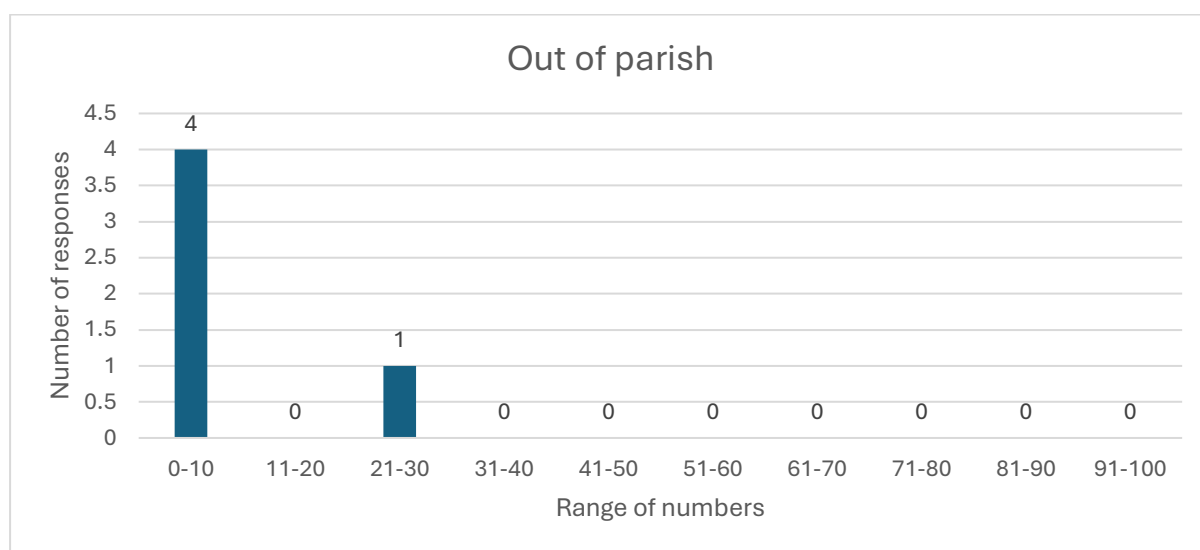
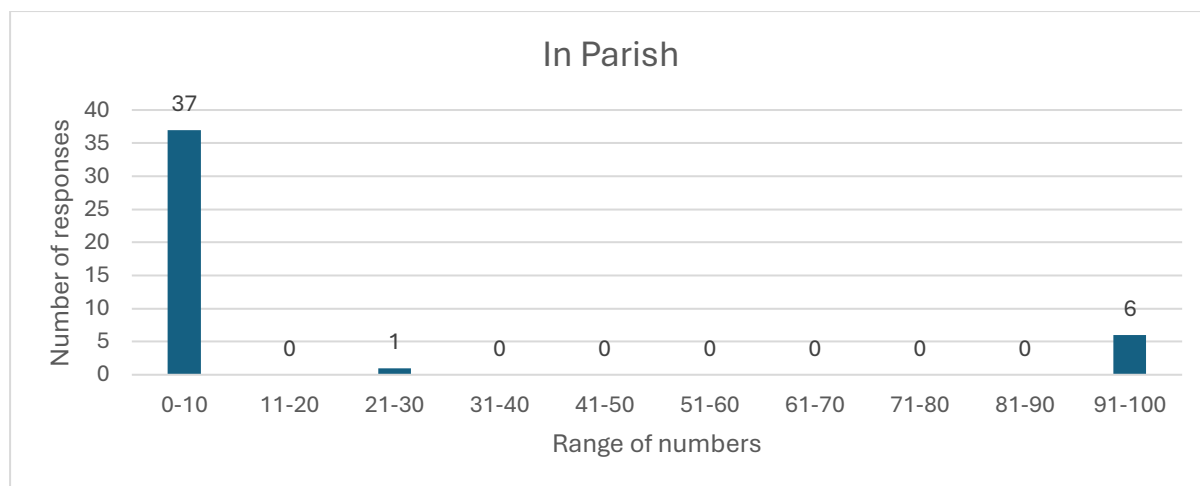
1.9. Question 9

Based on information available on the council of sanctuary motion made and passed by Weston-super-Mare Town Council, at present what is your position? (PLEASE NOTE: This question is just to gain understanding, and is not a formal vote)

The range provided was "I do not support" (0) to "I support" (100). For ease of counting, the range has been split into values of 10.

Range	In Parish	Out of Parish
0-10	37	4
11-20	0	0
21-30	1	1
31-40	0	0
41-50	0	0
51-60	0	0
61-70	0	0
71-80	0	0
81-90	0	0
91-100	6	0

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1.10. Question 10

Will you be attending one of the public meetings in July?

Will you be attending one of the public meetings in July?	in parish	out of parish
Yes	4	1
No	8	0
I was not able to get a ticket	13	2
I could not attend for practical reasons (e.g. timing, location etc)	11	2
I do not like public meetings	1	0
I would be uncomfortable sharing my views in a public meeting	7	0

1.11. Question 11

Do you have any further comments which have not been covered above?

In parish

1. Lack of Democratic Process / Opposition to Decision-Making Approach — 14 responses

Supplementary Report to be read in conjunction with the main report

- Calls for a public referendum or vote before implementing decisions of this scale.
- Many express outrage at being told rather than asked.
- Frustration over the process being perceived as secretive or predetermined.
- Several request larger, more inclusive venues for meetings.
- A few simply demand transparency and public involvement.

2. General Opposition / No Benefits Seen — 12 *responses*

- Flat rejections or dismissals of the idea without elaboration.
- Some state they see no value in the proposal or believe it serves no one locally.
- Multiple people express opposition using brief, firm language.
- View that it's a political or ideological stunt with no practical purpose.

3. Public Safety & Cultural Integration Concerns — 6 *responses*

- Worries about differing values, particularly related to gender equality and treatment of women.
- Argument that new arrivals should adapt to local language and customs.
- Implication that cultural clashes could lead to division, tension, or abuse.
- Concern about the justice system being overwhelmed.

4. Local Services & Resource Strain — 4 *responses*

- Calls for better support for existing residents before welcoming newcomers.
- Belief that services are already under strain and unable to absorb additional demand.
- One response implied that residents should be prioritised in all planning.

5. Civic Engagement & Attendance Interest — 3 *responses*

- Some express interest in attending future meetings.
- Others raise concerns about low awareness of public forums.
- A few felt previous meetings were poorly communicated or inaccessible.

6. Firm Ideological or Political Stances — 5 *responses*

- One strongly worded comment demanded deportation.
- Another explicitly opposed the “council of sanctuary” title.
- A few framed this as a broader political overreach or social justice issue.
- One called for legal action against hate speech, ironically within an anti-sanctuary response.

Out of parish

1. Conditional Support — 1 *response*

- One person supports the idea in principle but only if key concerns—especially around local infrastructure—are properly addressed.

2. Immigration Legality & Misinformation Concerns — 1 response

- Concern raised over perceived support for individuals who may have entered the UK without legal permission.
- Criticism of the language used on the Council of Sanctuary (CoS) website as misleading or too permissive.

3. Community Safety & Fear — 3 responses

- Strong fears expressed around safety for children and wider community.
- Belief that the town could deteriorate like other places (e.g., Blackpool) due to accommodating asylum seekers or migrants.
- A resident expressed feeling unsafe and considering moving away due to the perceived direction of the town.

Data Summary⁷

1.12. Question 12

Would you like to be involved in future?

Would you like to be involved in future?	in parish	out of parish
I would like to be kept informed of progress	19	4
I would like to discuss progress in meetings	9	1
I would prefer to share my views via online surveys	14	0
I am not interested in being involved in future	6	0

1.13. Additional question

If you have answered yes to any of the above (question 12), please leave your email address here.

An additional 27 people provided their email addresses to be kept up to date for Council of Sanctuary updates. With the 275 people from the first evaluation (main report), this means there are 302 people total.

Members are requested to:

1. Note the supplementary summary report
2. Having received both the main summary report, and supplementary summary report, provide direction and future considerations for the start and finish group

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