



MEETING PAPER

Subject: Survey of the Drying Racks

Meeting: Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee

Date: 15th August 2023

Meeting Paper by Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

At the close of the survey, 376 responses had been received.

The first question asked if they lived in Lowestoft received the following responses:

1. Do you live in Lowestoft?

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● Yes	314
● No	62



The second question asking how often they visit the Ness received the following responses:

2. How often do you visit The Ness?

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● Weekly	125
● Monthly	141
● Yearly	55
● Never	14
● Other	33

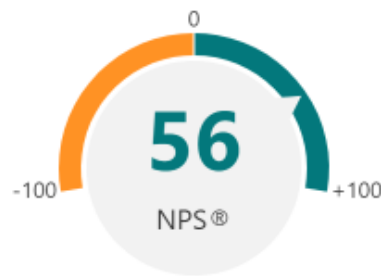


The next question established the awareness of the history of the drying racks on a score of 1-10 (1 being not aware and 10 being aware). Promotors are scores of 9-10, passives are 7-8 and detractors are 0-6. The 56 in the chart is an aggregate score demonstrating most people had some awareness of the history of the racks.

3. How aware were you of the history of the 'Drying Racks' at The Ness?

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Promoters	253
Passives	82
Detractors	40



The survey then queried if they wanted the current Drying Racks to be replaced with new replicas:

4. Given the condition of the 'Drying Racks' would you like to see them replaced with new replicas (replacing the existing 1950s replicas)?

[More Details](#)

Yes	229
No	147



Of the 229 responses in favour of the racks being replaced, the responses have been sorted into the following categories:

- Tourism – 9. These answers noted the heritage value and focussed on how the area could be developed to bring in tourism for the town by highlighting it as the most easterly point, depicting the beach village as a historical attraction and installing public art to celebrate the site.
- Heritage and historical value – 177. These answers expressed the importance of the drying racks for the heritage of Lowestoft and its maritime history, with many reflecting on how much history has been lost over the years. Family history was often a focus in these answers.
- Inclusion of information boards and highlighting the historical area – 19. These responses felt the area should be expanded with information on its history provided via information panels. Quite a few of these responses were in favour of replacing some of the racks whilst maintaining several of the current replicas as well. Some responses also emphasised the educational impact for the youth as well.

- Commemorating those involved in the fishing industry – 4. These answers reflected on personal family history and noted that the racks commemorated not only the fishing industry of Lowestoft, but the people who lived and worked here and the fishermen’s hard and dangerous work with many losing their lives at sea.
- Importance to wildlife – 5. These answers similarly mentioned heritage value but they were unique in also discussing the importance of wildlife and many noted that migratory birds often perched in this area.
- Miscellaneous – 11. Many responses were short and simply stated that the racks should be replaced.
- Blank – 4. They gave no reason with their response.

In terms of how the racks should be replaced, 33 gave further details:

- 6 stipulated that the replacement should consist of keeping or restoring the current replicas, with many stating that the wood should be treated and preserved to show the history of the racks. One response in this category requested that the wood to be reused rather than replaced where possible.
- 14 specified replacement, some mentioned there was no need to replace all of the racks whilst others were in favour of all being replaced with a hardier material such as hardwood or steel.
- 13 were in favour of a compromise approach of partial replacement and restoration, with half replaced and the other half kept and restored, thus allowing the established wildflowers and wildlife to continue thriving. Some answers specified that the rotted unsalvageable racks should be the ones replaced and the rest maintained.

Of the 147 who did not opt to replace the drying racks, they were asked what should happen instead:

6. What would you like to happen to the 'Drying Racks'?

[More Details](#)

● Left as a wildlife habitat	55
● Removed and replaced with wil...	43
● Other	45



The first two had no further comments added so 55 suggested the area be left as a wildlife habitat and 43 suggested the racks be removed and replaced with wildflower meadows.

45 Other:

- 2 said to combine both other options, with the area left as a wildlife habitat and the racks removed to sow wildflowers.
- 1 suggested it be made a wildflower area.

- 2 suggested it be made into a wildlife habitat.
- 8 suggested the racks be repaired and restored as part of the heritage of the town.
- 17 suggested the removal of the racks and a replacement on the site of a variety of amenities, including extension of the park for sports; make into an open area; parking; shops; tourist attraction; a well-maintained landscape; a caravan park; sell the land to raise money for local people.
- 15 were miscellaneous with answers ranging from regeneration of the area to restoring half the racks and converting the rest into a meadow.

4 were blank and therefore are not part of total count so the 147 total responses would be 143 with responses and 4 blanks.

It should be noted that since under 'Other' 2 suggested it be made into a wildlife habitat and 1 suggested to remove the racks and sow wildflowers, the incorrect boxes had been ticked, therefore the final tally should be considered: 57 left as wildlife habitat, 44 removed and replaced with wildflowers and 42 other.