

The Parish Hall Questionnaire Report February 2024

Purpose of the Questionnaire

In October 2023 the Committee produced a two-page questionnaire and delivered it to over 600 Witheridge residents. Those who completed it, returned it to Two Moors Store by the end of November 2023.

This report has been compiled for Witheridge Parish Hall Committee. (Detailed analysis can be found in Annex A).

Objectives

- To involve our community in decision making about the parish hall.
- To gain intelligence which will inform the hall's vision, aims and priorities for 2024. 2023's can be found here:
<https://witheridgeparishhall.co.uk/vision-%26-aims-2023>
- To gather critical data which can be used to inform funding applications to support hall improvements.

Summary Findings

1. We received 100 responses, so a 17% response of extremely helpful and welcome feedback. This will enable us to produce a very specific questionnaire for the next phase of our community engagement. We anticipate this will go out online in the summer of 2024.
2. Most respondents live in Witheridge and were female. The age of respondents was mainly between the ages of 50 – 80.
3. They mostly agreed the need for a parish hall in the village with the biggest proportion using it for private functions and meetings.
4. Most people said they used it monthly closely followed by weekly with Film Night and Clubs being the most popular activities attended.
5. Most respondents said they or someone in their household would be interested in attending more music, charity and craft events and there were some excellent suggestions for new activities (**see page 5**).
6. Better heating, comfortable seats, kitchen improvements and more evening and weekend entertainment were suggested most when asked what would encourage respondents to visit more.
7. Many respondents attend activities outside the village mainly because what they are looking for is not offered in Witheridge, or not on a day and at a time that suits them (**see page 7**).
8. Less than a quarter of respondents said they would be prepared to offer help with either administration or in support of improved activities, yet nearly all said they would miss the hall if it were not there.
9. Most respondents said the stage should be left full size (**see page 13**).
10. There were some helpful suggestions for improvements and even some praise for the Committee for volunteering their time and effort as well as giving the community an opportunity to engage. (**see pages 11, 12 and 13**).

Recommendations

- A. Use summary analysis to inform an online questionnaire to go out summer 2024 on the Parish Hall website and advertised via Facebook page/What's On.
- B. Conduct full assessment/feasibility study regarding the stage including costs.
- C. Identify funding grants/opportunities to support the heating replacement, more comfortable chairs and a kitchen revamp.
- D. Explore options for a summer programme of entertainment events and activities to take place in the evenings and at weekends endorsed by residents.

How The Data Received Was Analysed

To help us analyse the anonymous responses, we assigned each with a number to enable tracking of their data across the questions in an Excel workbook with a spreadsheet for each question.

Some respondents completed their questionnaire as a couple or family and some of the questions elicited more than one answer, which is why we have refrained from using percentages to assimilate the data.

Background

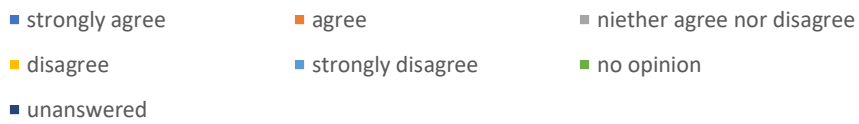
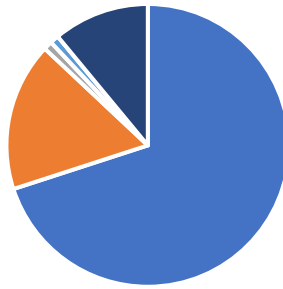
Witheridge Parish Hall has been at the centre of village life for almost half a century. The Committee is dedicated to ensuring it fulfils the needs of our ever-changing community, so it continues to be so into the future. This is a big undertaking, given we are made up of a merry band of volunteers and the building is old and needs updating. Not only do we need to reassess our activities and events programme, but we also need to explore ways of becoming more efficient and employ measures to lessen our impact on the environment. No easy task!

We want our hall to be a warm, attractive, safe and welcoming place for everyone who uses it, whether it's for celebrations, gatherings, learning and relaxing, working and playing. We want it to be a place where you can dance the night away and watch your child learn to play with others. We want it to be a place where you can start a small business, join a class, watch a film, listen to music, improve your tummy muscles, train your puppy, train your mind, throw a pot, attend a meeting or hold a wedding reception. There is no end of possible uses for this space.

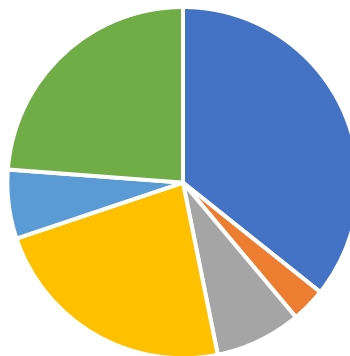
We make every effort to keep the rates we charge for hiring the hall as affordable as possible but as residents will understand the cost of running the hall is ever increasing. To support residents, there are preferential rates for local groups who use the hall weekly and use it for charitable causes and children's parties.

Annex A - Detailed Analysis

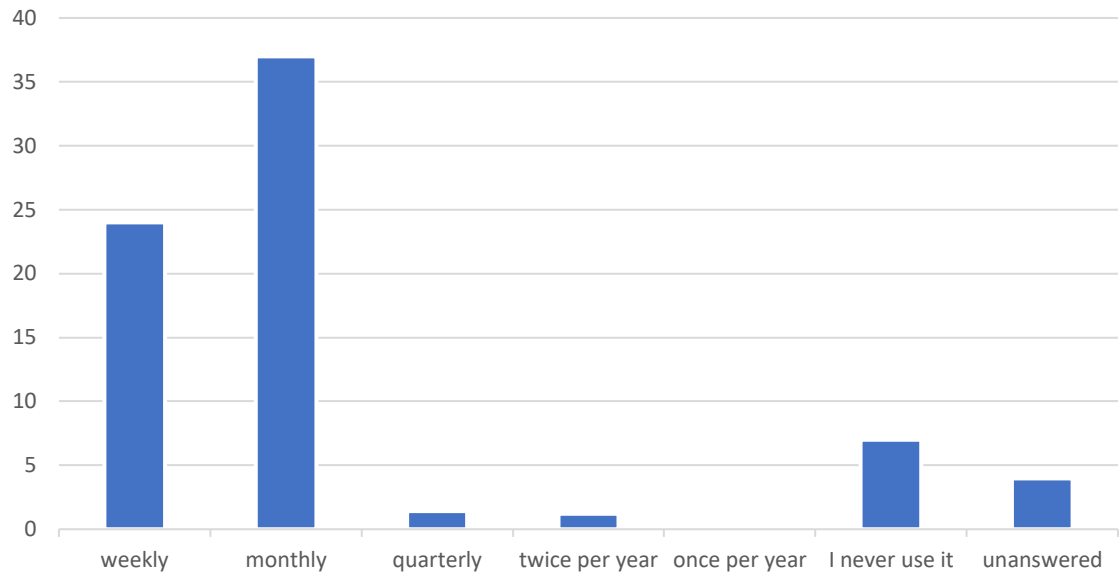
1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Witheridge needs an excellent Parish Hall for use by the whole community.



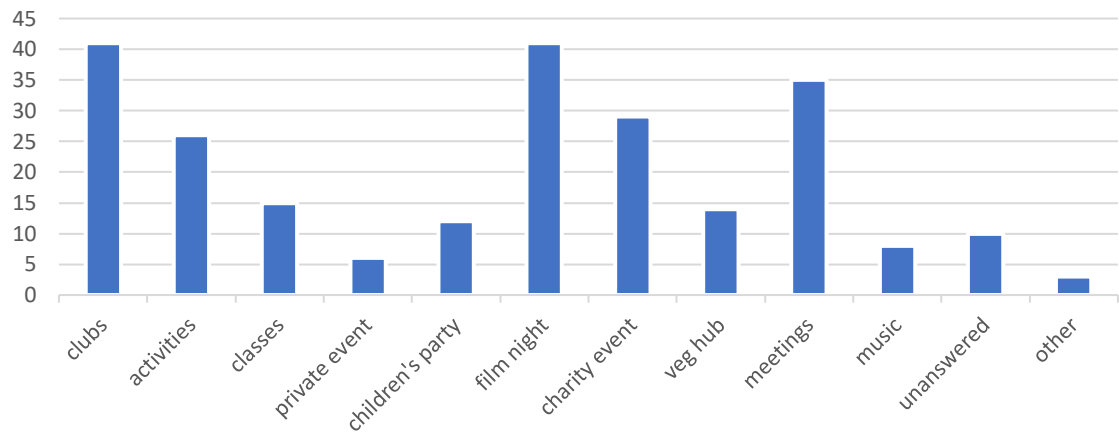
2. Would you be likely to hire the Parish Hall for any of the following:



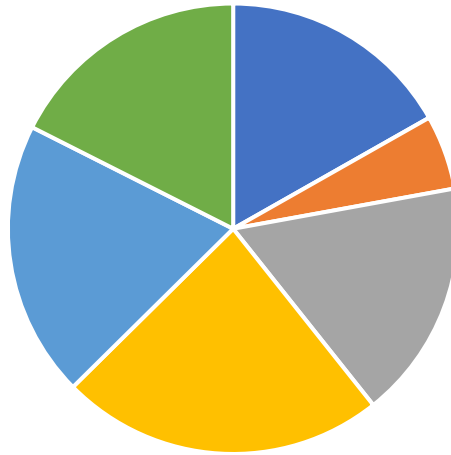
3. How often do you use the Parish Hall?



4. In the last year, have you hired or been to any of the following in the Parish Hall, either as an attendee or hired yourself?



5. What types of activities would you or someone in your household be interested in attending at the Parish Hall?

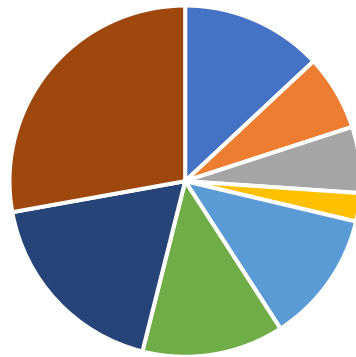


■ clubs ■ classes ■ parties ■ charity events ■ craft fairs ■ music ■ theatre

Suggestions

antique fair	car boots	jumble sales	art exhibitions/craft workshops
murder mystery inc. meal	repair workshop	xmas tree festival	fetes/festivals/local food producers markets
slimming club/aerobics	talks/quizes/WI	jazz/folk music events	bring & take, reuse/recycling, books/games library, outdoor table tennis

6. What would make you more likely to attend activities/events at the Parish Hall?

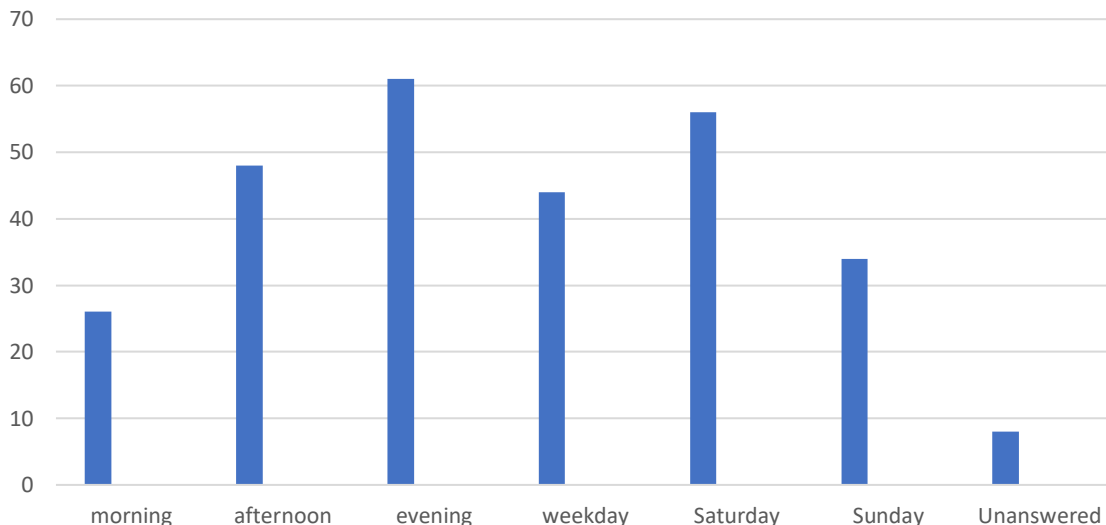


- cheaper hire
- cheaper entry to events
- larger space
- smaller space
- Wi-fi available
- online booking
- better kitchen equipment
- unanswered

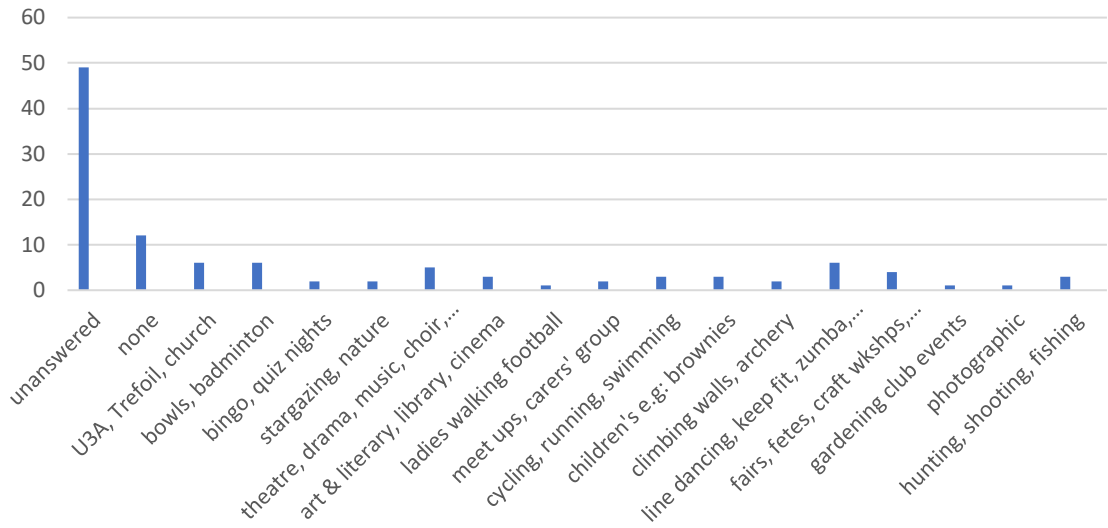
Comments/Suggestions

- already too cheap. Need different rates for each thing.
- activity charges are correct
- activities for NEETS & home-schooled
- better heating
- more comfortable chairs
- improved acoustics for music
- afternoon performances - films, especially in winter
- more evening and weekend entertainment for those working f/t
- photography

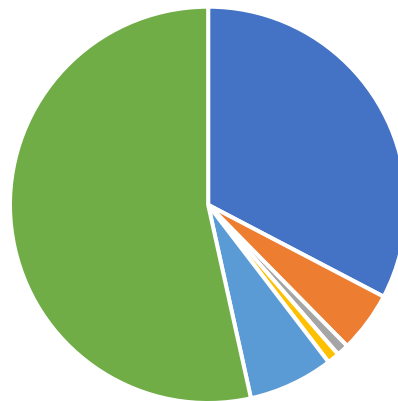
7. Thinking about activities in the Hall, what days and time suit you best to attend event?



8. Which activities/groups (if any) do you attend outside the village?



9. What prevents you attending this kind of activity in Witheridge?

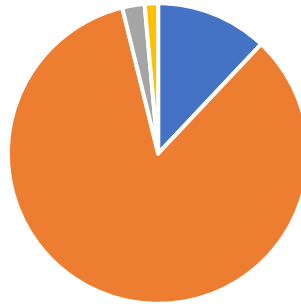


■ no activity of this type in W
 ■ venue not suitable
 ■ prefer to go out the village
■ cost
 ■ time of day it's being offered
 ■ unanswered

Comments

- streetlights too bright (stargazing)
- fewer neighbours for noise complaints (band practice)
- lack of energy, time, motivation as not much interest

10. Help! Perhaps you are not keen on joining the committee but have the skills/experience that could help us? E.g. help run new activities/events, claim grants or come up with new design ideas? Would you be willing to run or help run new activities?

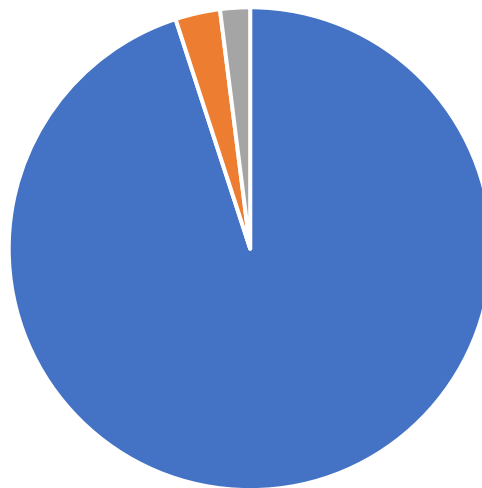


■ yes ■ no ■ maybe ■ unanswered

Comments

- have helped with committees the last 20 years.
- involved with other voluntary groups.
- already run badminton club.
- because of age and disability.
- no time to do more, sorry.
- f/t carer and I'm disabled.

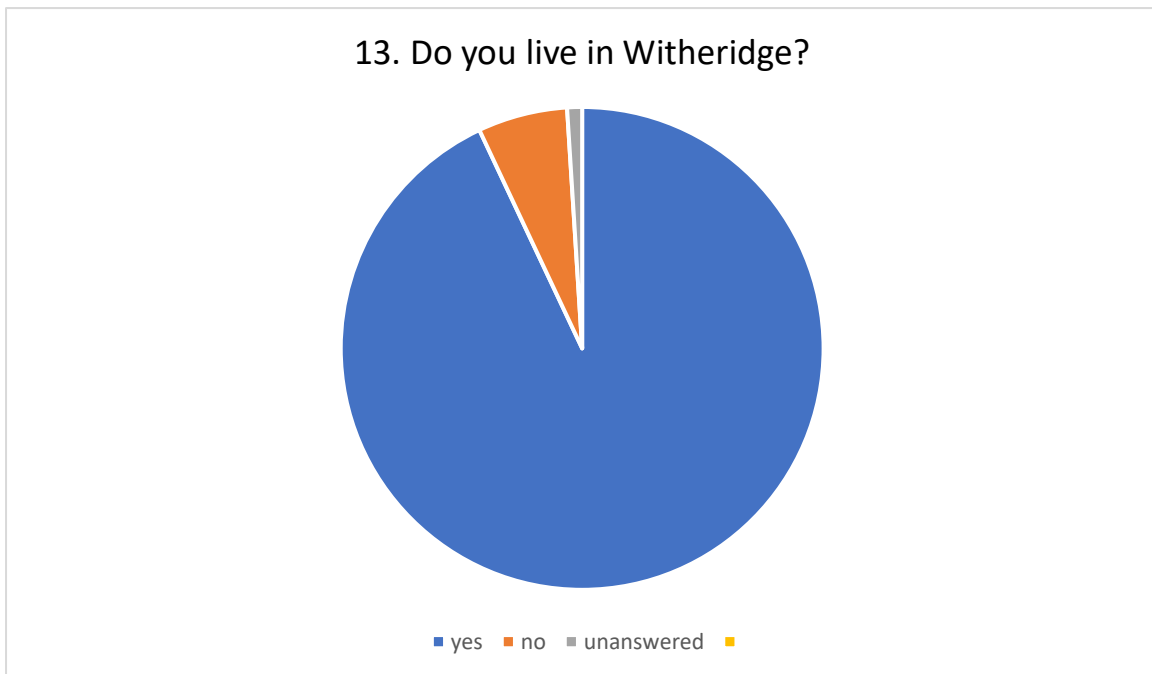
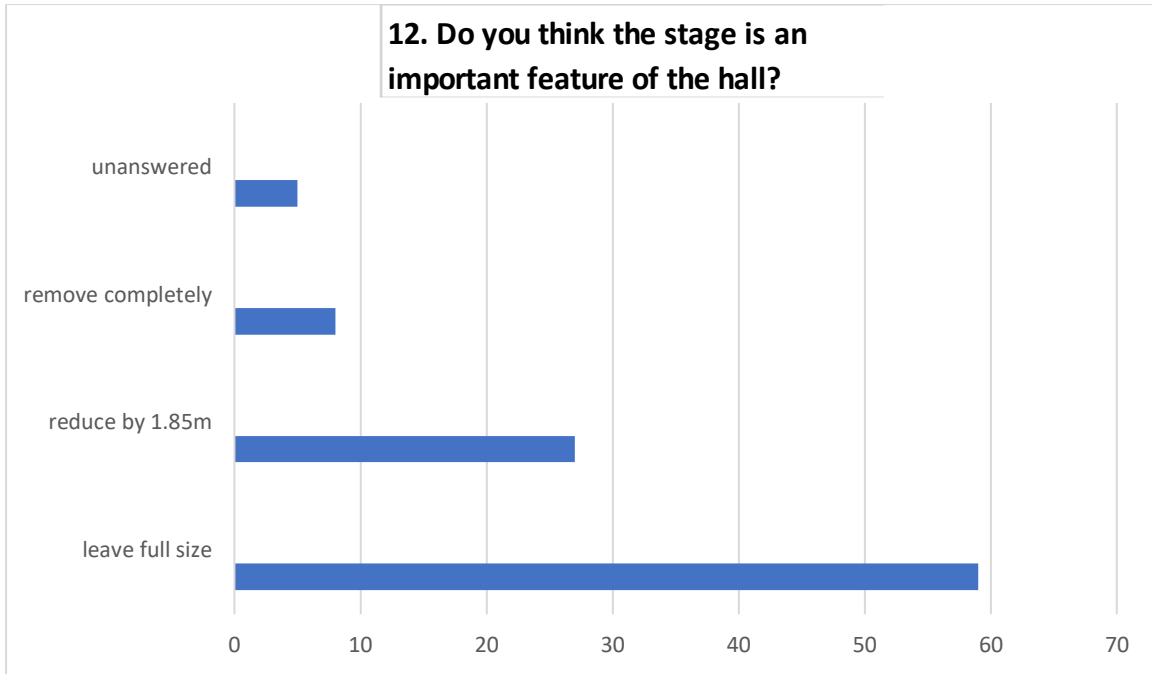
11. Would you miss the Parish Hall if it were not there?



■ yes ■ no ■ unanswered ■

Comments

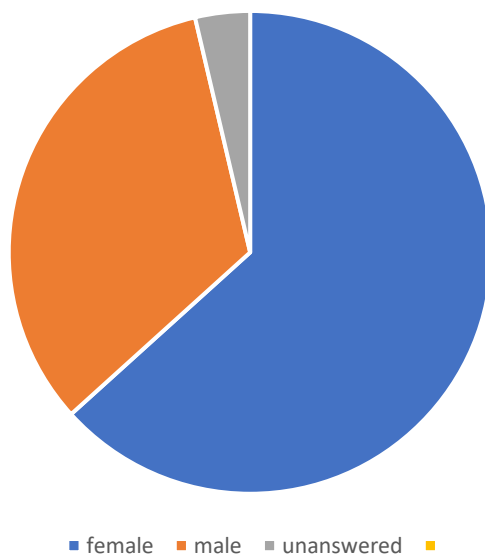
- it's a vital asset.
- very much.



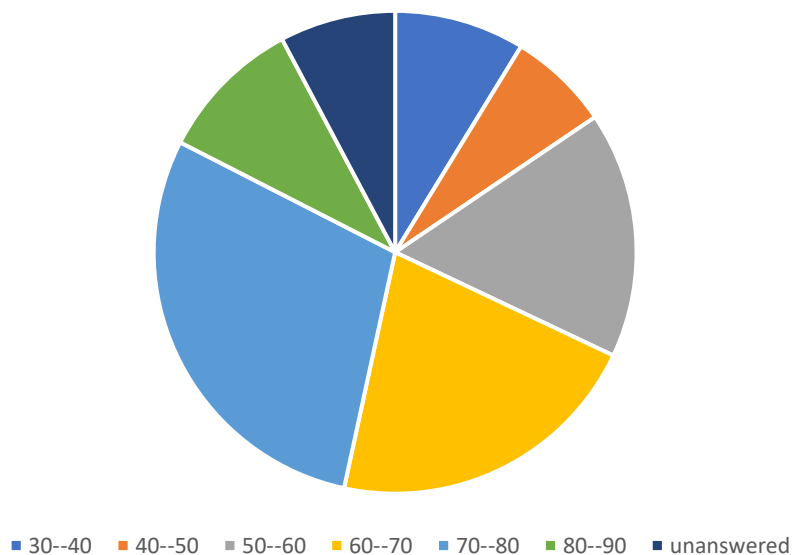
Comments

Nomansland
 Thelbridge
 Witheridge based business.

14. Gender



15. Age Group



16. Household demographic

On Average:

2 adults per house

0 children per house

respondents have lived in Witheridge & surrounding areas for upwards of 16 years

3 did not answer the question.

Comment:

why is this relevant?

17. Anything else you want to tell us? & 18. Do you have any questions/comments?

About the committee

- thank you for taking the time to ask us what we think/would like about the village hall. I appreciate this.
- reduce size of committee and make it more proactive.
- would like to thank committee for all they do for the village.
- thank you to all those who manage the hall. There should be a change of chair every year so that all board members have input. I think the chair should be paid for their time. This would incentivise someone to take on the role. Committee should reflect the wider population.
- thank you to all involved in running the hall.
- the questionnaire is a good and helpful idea.
- Sign up to ND Council for lesser-known trusts you can apply to for community grants. Good to subscribe to activities newsletter to find out about regular events.
- the parish hall is receiving money from the housing development - any decision-making process needs to be transparent and democratic.

Heating

- heating in the hall is dreadful, ugly and expensive. How are other halls heated?
- improve heating system.
the heating in the hall is awful, when on burns top of your head then goes off very quickly, I assume because it's too expensive to put any more money in and goes cold for the rest of time.
- heating needs improvement in both main hall and committee room.
- would like to see improvement in the heating.
- the heating system needs renewing. Heating in the ceiling is so wasteful and expensive. Solar panels would be better and more eco-friendly.
- have new heating installed.
- can the heating be improved please?

Facilities

- revamp kitchen to include extra power points around worktops.
- improve cooking facilities.
- a dishwasher would improve the kitchen.
- kitchen could do with a dishwasher that sits on drainage board.
- sort and restock china, cutlery and utensils,
- toilets need improvements.

Hall

- I feel it's very important to keep the hall. It's an important resource for the village.
- I think we have a perfectly usable and equipped hall now.
- the hall is very outdated but serves its function.
- the outside equipment, grass and new car park surface all great.

- why are so many cars parked in the car park when nothing is happening in the hall?
- having lived in a village for many years without a parish hall, I know it's very important to have one. If I were younger, I would have used it a lot.
- I'd heard alterations to the ceiling were being considered which would involve lowering the ceiling. Should this happen, the hall would not be suitable for badminton. It's not really ideal as it is, but we manage.
- any alteration to the hall should include a higher roofline to aid badminton club.
- the new parish hall should have a higher flat ceiling to accommodate the badminton players.
- the hall could be the hub of the ever-growing village. It needs new ideas and well-advertised events.
- Upgrade/ install decent PA system that can be used for meetings e.g. gardening club or ladies club. We can hardly hear the speakers at these meetings. Get some decent radio microphones (they are not so expensive) and give clear instructions how to use them. Also install loop system for those hard of hearing - but this only works if the speaker is using a microphone.
- nothing wrong with the parish hall except it is 40 years out of date.
- could the hall be enlarged sideways probably out towards the green?
- We are very fortunate to have a parish hall.
- the general build of the hall needs an upgrade to make cheaper to maintain in the longer term.
- more parking on the square please.
- my wedding breakfast was the first in 1964.

Stage

- although stage might not be used a lot, it is probably important for bands, public meetings.
- The stage appears to be only used as storage. A more logical layout could create 1 large room, 1 small room and 1 storeroom.
- the stage as is unsuitable for musical entertainment due to its boxed in design. When playing as a group, you listen to other members and play accordingly with them. But due to enclosed stage, sounds distort and make it difficult to adjust to other players which affects quality or music produced spoiling it for performer & audience.
- it would be a big mistake to remove or reduce the size of the stage. Although we do not currently have amateur dramatics or talent nights etc, we should retain it for the future. It may be argued that it could be replaced by a removable /sectional stage, but have you ever tried to put one up? They are v difficult to work with and take up a huge amount of space for store.

Hire Rates

- consider lower hire rates for clubs during start-up period.

Activities

- more live music events, folk, acoustic, blues.
- music nights like the ABBA tribute band. The outdoor theatre evenings were fab - perhaps some food/drink being available might bring in more money as I know it is expensive to host these.
- shame dancing not popular here. Had nil response to 2 rock n roll events I put on. Only dancers from other areas were interested.
- would attend an evening exercise class.
- thank you to all who hold events/activities for the village.
- if I was more mobile, I probably would attend more.
- could it be possible for a person with mobile knowledge help those of us that struggle to understand the jargon on the mobiles?
- I would love to attend the film, but am put off with the winter evenings.
- Film Night - don't just show films like Downton Abbey for middle aged, middle class. Try a cult film night.
- we work full time so can't attend anything in the week. Interested in more activities during the weekend.
- we preferred Withyfest when at the Parish Hall and do not now attend. Parish hall should on more events and diversity of events.
- the Tennis Club is barely used, could be opened during the week, once a week as a drop in with activities etc but relies on volunteers - could use money to pay someone part time.
- it was good to see members of the committee attend the film. More people attend entertainment in the parish hall than any of the other things offered. More music & theatre as we used to have would be great.
- I think the clubs and classes are well provided for in the village. I've been very impressed and welcomed into village activities.
- parish hall activities are one of the reasons I wanted to live here. The range of activities could be increased for all ages.
- we work full time so unable to attend during weekdays, but would be interested in Fri and Sat evenings.
- being a bit compromised with mobility, I prefer to walk somewhere in daylight.
- having lived here 23 years and now in old age, it's nice to know if I'm able and events interest me, I would still go alone.
- I would like the art group to meet in the afternoon instead of evening. I think more people would be attracted to such a group. Evening classes in winter are difficult especially for the elderly.
- I enjoyed the puddings quiz and pantomime put on by the Knights and would like to see these put on again. Enjoyed the ABBA tribute act too.
- have a swap shop, floristry, bake sales, arts & crafts festival, community market, seated exercise class, plant sales, crafts & repair workshops, traditional village fete, charity Xmas tree festival and glow in grounds, Xmas wreath class, wildlife talks, fireworks night, silent auction, food trucks festival.
- how about a breakfast morning and invite our MP so the public can ask questions, chairman of Devon Council, Nigel Farage, NDDC chairman