

CALL-IN: COMMUNITY CENTRES - FUTURE BUSINESS MODEL

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To enable the Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee to review the decision taken by Cabinet on 8 July 2014, the responsible Cabinet Member is the Cabinet Member for Leisure.

2 For decision

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider whether it wishes to concur with Cabinet's decision or to refer it back for further consideration in the light of any views that Members might wish to express on the issues raised through the call-in.

3 Executive Summary

- 3.1 At its meeting on 8 July 2014 Cabinet took a decision that the management /operation for the community centres in Aylesbury should at this time remain with the district council.

Cabinet's decision was:-

1. That community centre assets are retained by AVDC to continue to operate them for the benefits of the residents of Aylesbury Vale.
2. That additional investment and management improvements are made to secure further savings.

- 3.2 Cabinet's decision was called-in by Councillors Cashman, Mrs Takodra and Vick for the following reasons:-

(i) That the criteria and decision process was not clear

(ii) That the Cabinet Member has not fully considered the financial opportunity to this council to save over £200,000 a year as outlined in the business plans put forward

(iii) That not all the options have been fully explored or examined by this Council for the future management of community centres in Aylesbury

- 3.3 To assist the Scrutiny Committee in their consideration of the call-in, a copy of the report that was submitted to Cabinet on 8 July 2014 is attached at Appendix 1.

- 3.4 The Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider whether it wishes to concur with Cabinet's decision or to refer it back for further consideration in the light of any views that Members wish to express on the issues raised through the call-in.

- 3.5 Officers' responses to the call-in reasons are as follows:

- (i) The criteria for the decision process was detailed in the Cabinet report at section 4. Section 6.1 of that report set out why the option to retain was recommended.
- (ii) The financial savings identified in the Aylesbury Town Council business case were properly considered by Cabinet.

A copy of the Town Council's business plan and a commentary setting out officers' principle concerns with the claimed savings in this plan are contained in the confidential section of this report.

- (iii) There were a total of four options explored with just two being considered feasible. The other two options were (i) transfer the facilities to community groups, (ii) Tender the management of the facilities.

The consultation process demonstrated little or no appetite from any third parties that would have been required for either of these options to have been viable.

4 Options considered and Reasons for Recommendation to Cabinet

- 4.1 The options considered and the reasons for recommending the decision are detailed in the Cabinet report at sections 5, 6 and 7.

5 Resource implications

- 5.1 As detailed in the Cabinet report the retention of the community centres would have no cost implications and also provides opportunities to achieve minimum impact on tax payers with the opportunities to make further savings through the range of actions set out at 5.3.2 in the Cabinet report.

6 Response to Key Aims and Objectives

- 6.1 The New Business Model contributes to the 'Delivering Efficient and Economic Services' strand of the Council's Corporate Plan 2011/15.

Contact Officer Caroline Wheller 01296 585185
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Background Documents Community Centres in Aylesbury future management
arrangements report Cabinet July 2014.

Community Centres - Future Business Model

Jon McGinty

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the future management arrangements for community centres in Aylesbury.

2 Recommendations/for decision

That:

- 2.1 the community centre assets are retained by AVDC to continue to operate them for the benefits of the residents of Aylesbury Vale.
- 2.2 additional investment and management improvements are made to secure further savings.

3 Summary

- 3.1 This report follows on from a report to Cabinet in September 2013, to consider the future management arrangements for the community centres in Aylesbury currently owned and funded by AVDC. The focus of work to date has been to investigate how the council can ensure the continued operation of these facilities as community assets but at a lower or ultimately nil cost to the tax payer.
- 3.2 Consultation has been undertaken with community centre hirers and users, the existing voluntary centre management bodies, other interested community organisations and the local Parish and Town Councils and staff.
- 3.3 This exercise concluded that there were only two practicable and viable options for their future management: either retain by AVDC or transfer to Aylesbury Town Council (ATC). On the balance of costs and benefits, officers recommend that retention of the centres by AVDC is the better option.

4 Supporting Information

- 4.1 In September 2013 Cabinet agreed to dispose of Elmhurst Community Centre and requested a report considering the approach to managing the remainder of the community centres it owns. This report updates on both of these issues.
- 4.2 **Elmhurst Community Centre** 4.2.1 The decision to dispose of Elmhurst community centre has instigated the Community Right to Bid process under the Localism Act 2011.

- 4.2.2 In January 2014 the Elmhurst community centre site was registered as a Community Asset by a community group who had put in a nomination application. This effectively created a moratorium on the sale for up to 6 months to allow the community group to put a business plan and funding package together to acquire/bid for the site. (The Council does not have to accept this bid, and will assess this bid against others using the usual best value considerations.)
- 4.2.3 Expressions of interest have been received from 3 community groups to date and a number of developers have also shown interest. A 'For Sale' board has been erected by the agent on the building so further enquiries may be received. Invitations to bid were issued on 19 May 2014 with a deadline for return of the end of September 2014. A further report will be brought to Cabinet in November 2014 with an evaluation of the bids received.
- 4.2.4 Elmhurst community centre will close for business at the end of September 2014. All hirers are being supported and assisted to relocate to alternative venues. This has also enabled the other centres to increase their occupancy rates.

4.3 **Remaining community centres**

- 4.3.1 The disposal of Elmhurst community centre will leave the council with eight community centres in Aylesbury. Five of these centres are managed directly by the district council, and three are managed by voluntary organisations who are supported with grant aid from the district council. A summary of the various management arrangements is set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.3.2 The ownership of these facilities derived before there was a local town council for Aylesbury. Generally when housing growth occurs, community assets are provided as part of the development permissions and historically these are usually adopted by the parish or transferred by the developer to a local group.
- 4.3.3 Whilst the community centres have been developed within particular areas, due to size and nature of town living, they serve a much broader client base. This was evidenced in the Leisure Audit in 2009/10 through mapping catchment areas, this information is included along with patterns of use in **Appendix 2**.

The district council also continues to review the design and build of new community centres by developers e.g. Buckingham Park and Berryfields.

- 4.3.4 The financial position surrounding the operation of the community centres was set out in the report to Cabinet in September 2013. In summary, the current net 2014/15 budget for running all nine community centres is £461,500. Following the removal of asset rental, which is not actual spend, the net budget is £353,100. The net budget for Elmhurst community centre is £53,800. This is currently funded by both the General Fund and Aylesbury Special Expenses. Aylesbury Special Expenses is simply the account associated AVDC with providing services in Aylesbury which in other parts of the Vale are provided by the parish council.

The General Fund budgets are contributed to by all taxpaying residents of the district whilst the Special Expenses budgets are charged solely to council tax payers in Aylesbury Town.

The review has highlighted that some community centres are charged to Special Expenses and some are charged to the General Fund. The

justification for these differing charging mechanisms is uncertain given that they all broadly fulfil the same function.

Of the £353,100 net cost of operation, £229,100 is currently charged to Special Expenses and £124,000 is charged to the General Fund.

4.3.5 In addition to the day to day revenue expenditure the district council also has significant repair responsibilities/liabilities. The estimated future maintenance liability over the next 5 years for the centres is forecast to be in the region of £260,000. However the proceeds from the sale of Elmhurst community centre have been earmarked for improvements to the remaining community centres, which could address some of these maintenance issues for at least that period of time, probably longer.

4.3.6 The community centres are managed and run by a total of 7 full time equivalent staff, (6 full time, 2 part time plus casuals).

4.4 **Future management arrangement options**

4.4.1 In reviewing the community centre provision the following broad principles have been followed :

- 1) To ensure that community centres continue to be available for the long term as assets for the community
- 2) To consider which organisation is best placed to operate the community centres in Aylesbury, as 'guardian' or 'best representative' of those assets for the communities they serve
- 3) To favour options that reduce the overall cost to the tax payer

4.5 **Consultation to Date**

4.5.1 Consultation with hirers and current users was undertaken towards the end of 2013. This took the form of a survey, the results of which are provided in **Appendix 3**.

4.5.2 The key points to note are the relatively low number of respondents and corresponding low interest by the hirers in getting involved in running the community centres in the future. This may partly be because the centres serve residents not just from the immediate locality in which they are sited but from across the whole of the town, the vale, and beyond the district boundaries. Hence there is a lower sense of identity or 'ownership' by those hirers, that a particular community centre is 'their' asset.

4.5.4 Meetings have also been held with respondents who wished to support the management to secure future operations, such as local residents associations and centre management boards. Unfortunately this has concluded that none are ready and willing to take over the management and ownership of these assets. The engagement work highlighted a significant level of support required to develop the capacity of these groups if they were to be in a position to take on the management of the centres, and maintain their operation in the long term; none of whom were able willing to provide such commitment. The existing residents associations from Prebendal Farm and Bedgrove have formally advised that they are not willing to take on the community centres in their area.

- 4.5.4 Consultation with the Parish and Town Councils in which the centres are located resulted in the Aylesbury Town Council at our request, submitting a business plan to take on the ownership and management of all the centres under review. More recently, ATC has submitted nominations under the Community Right to Bid for a number of town centre assets, including all of these community centres. Once these applications are validated, then should AVDC decide to stop running or dispose of these assets, the ATC right to bid would be activated.
- 4.5.6 Thanks are given to ATC for producing their business plan.

5.0 Options considered

- 5.1 Four options have been considered to achieve the aims set out in paragraph 4.4.1 above. **Appendix 4** sets out Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities Threats (SWOT) analysis of each. This has concluded that there are in truth only two real and practicable main options: transfer the assets to Aylesbury Town Council, or retain operation and ownership by AVDC.

5.2 Option A: Transfer the assets to Aylesbury Town Council

- 5.2.1 Aylesbury Town Council (ATC) submitted a Business Plan at the end of May 2014 which has been reviewed by officers. Excepting Hawkslade community centre (located in Stoke Mandeville Parish), the remaining centres are located within ATC jurisdiction. ATC have approached AVDC on a number of occasions in the past seeking asset transfer opportunities. Aylesbury cemetery and allotments have been transferred in the past. Stoke Mandeville Parish Council have advised that at the present time that they would not be interested in taking on the Hawkslade Centre but would agree for ATC to take it on if AVDC decided to transfer it.
- 5.2.2 A key strength for this option is that ATC already has 'admitted body status' within the local government pension scheme, meaning staff transfer under TUPE is considered to be more straight forward, and ATC have expressed an interest in taking the community centres on.
- 5.2.3 Town and Parish Councils have the ability to raise funds through the precept similar to the district council's ability to charge Special Expenses. Whilst at this time there is no government cap on the precept they can levy, it is possible that a cap may be introduced to larger town and parish councils. If such a cap were to be introduced, this would inhibit ATC's ability to raise its precept in a single year to take on this transfer.
- 5.2.4 Perhaps more importantly, transfer of those community centres currently funded through the AVDC General Fund would result in a saving to the district-wide tax-payer. However, because ATC has roughly four times fewer residents from which to recover the cost of any transferred facilities, there would be a gearing increase in Aylesbury residents' tax (precept) of approximately 4:1 arising from such any transfer.

So for example an £124,000 saving on the AVDC general fund would equate (other things being equal) to a £1.87 saving on AVDC's portion of the council tax bill for a Band D taxpayer. However, assuming ATC levied the same £124,000 in precept, band D residents in Aylesbury would have to pay an

additional £7.29 which, net of the wider AVDC £1.87 saving, would leave Aylesbury Band D residents paying an extra £5.42 for the same facilities.

The transfer of only those centres currently charged to Special Expenses should have a nil impact on taxation for Aylesbury residents, other than to change the body levying it. However, all community centres should be considered together, as a partial transfer would result in the remaining centres becoming less economic to manage for both parties.

- 5.2.5 The business plan submitted by ATC (see **Appendix 5**) proposes to continue to operate the centres in much the same way as the district council operates them. Their vision is practically the same as AVDC's, the plan appears to assume the same staffing structures and the same hiring arrangements. However, the plan appears to show a very different cost basis, which officers believe is questionable and open to challenge.

A critical appraisal of the ATC business plan is shown in **Appendix 5a**.

Broadly speaking, it raises a number of questions as to the soundness of the plan, and whether the proposed reduction in the running costs of the centres that the Town Council believe they might deliver is realistic or achievable.

5.3 Option B: Retain the assets and continue to invest to achieve savings.

- 5.3.1 The strengths of this option are avoidance of costs associated with any transfer, legal and operational as well as retention of staff and critical mass /economies of scale for facilities management across all of AVDC's property portfolio.

- 5.3.2 In addition, officers have identified that further savings between £50k and £100k could be generated through:

- A range of energy efficiency improvements to the buildings
- Continued review of fees and charges.
- Further review of the management structure.
- Investment (including proceeds from the sale of Elmhurst CC) to achieve improved use and efficiency in current operations.
- Gradual and continued reductions in grants to voluntary centre managements (£10k reduction is planned for 2015/16)

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 **Option B** (retention of the assets by AVDC) is recommended as the claimed savings to the taxpayer in the ATC business plan are questionable, and broadly similar savings with less upheaval appear to be achievable through AVDC management. Also, there is a painful tax gearing effect for Aylesbury residents arising from a transfer that would be hard to justify. In addition, the assets are seen to have a broad client base, perhaps in contrast to rural village hall hiring patterns. Thus a case can be made that it is more appropriate that AVDC should maintain these assets for this wider community benefit.

7 Reasons for the Recommendation

- 7.1 The review of the community centre operations has been prolonged but extremely thorough. The benefits to residents of the facilities being run by others who are perceived to be closer to the communities in which they are located, are not as great as anticipated.
- 7.2 The centres are not akin to village/parish halls as demonstrated by the mapping exercise and also supported by the booking patterns.
- 7.3 The financial pressures are not an imperative for AVDC to exit from this service.

8 Resource implications

- 8.1 The retention of the community centres would have no cost implications and also provides opportunities to achieve minimum impact on tax payers with the opportunities to make further savings through the range of actions set out at 5.3.2 above.

9 Response to Key Aims and Objectives

- 9.1 The New Business Model contributes to the Delivering Efficient and Economic Services strand of the Council's Corporate Plan 2011/15.

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Background Documents	Community Centre report Cabinet October 2013.

APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY CENTRE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND COSTS

Facility name	Condition of the building. Est. Spend in next 5 years	Management arrangement and Legal restrictions	Key Points	Usage details for 2012/13	
Alfred Rose Community Centre	Good £37,500	Owned and managed directly by AVDC. Restrictive covenant for future use of land as a pleasure ground	Covenant on land Wooden dance floor Limited parking	76% average usage through out year	
Bedgrove Community Centre Inc. Caretakers house (The Acorns) and outdoor training pitch	Good £83,400	Owned and managed directly by AVDC Restrictive Covenant for future use of land. Service Occupancy dated 31/08/2000 of The Acorns Bedgrove Park. No security of tenure. Tenant occupies The Acorns for the proper performance of her duties as Community Centre Development Worker.	Only 1 hall to hire Good space for meetings with hearing loop Issues with parking due to school and football use as well at set times Covenant on land	70% average usage throughout year	
Hawkslade Community Centre	Good £27,400	Owned and directly managed by AVDC. In Stoke Mandeville Parish. Building shall not be used other than as a Community /Meeting Hall. There are further restrictive covenants. Transferred as a result of S.106 Agreement	Only 1 hall, In stoke Mandeville Parish Light ,more modern centre with WIFI	80% average usage throughout year	

Prebendal Farm Community centre	Good £42,600	Owned and directly managed by AVDC. No restrictive covenant on title. Retained out of Housing Stock Transfer to VAHT	Only 1 hall Limited parking shared with residents Wooden sprung main hall floor No outdoor play space	70% average usage throughout year	
Southcourt Community Centre	Good £7,000	Owned and directly managed by AVDC. Restrictive covenant preventing use of the land. Retained out of Housing Stock Transfer to VAHT	Only 1 hall although divider in main hall Updated kitchen and good outdoor play space Plenty of parking and land around building	78% average usage throughout year	
Haydon Hill Community Centre	Good £10,500	Owned by AVDC Lease signed Sept 2004, 10 years. No restrictive covenants on title	Small local venue Popular for children's parties Close to houses and shops limits opening hours	54% average usage throughout year	
Aylesbury Vale Multicultural Community Centre	Good £53,000	Owned by AVDC, managed by voluntary organisation which receives grant. Lease signed 1999 for 25 years-2024 with no break clause. Restrictive covenant which prevents development within 30m of British Railways Board	Multiple rooms to hire out Currently building extension for sound proof music studio at front of building. Use of Multi storey car park for parking	28% average usage throughout the year. 6 rooms to hire out very under used.	

		land and the use of a jib crane. Other restrictions relating to construction of boundary fences, lighting, drainage etc.	Venue for many BME groups		
Quarrendon and Meadowcroft Community Centre (adjacent/same building as Jonathon Page Play Centre)	Good £10,500	Owned by AVDC, managed by voluntary organisation which receives grant. Lease signed April 2006 for 10 years till March 2016 with no break clause for landlord but break clause after April 2011 on 6 months notice for tenant. No restrictive covenants on title.	Predominantly sports venue with Pre school Linked to Jonathon page Play Centre 2 separate managers of same building Good size car park	65% average usage throughout the year.	

Community Centre Regular Hirers

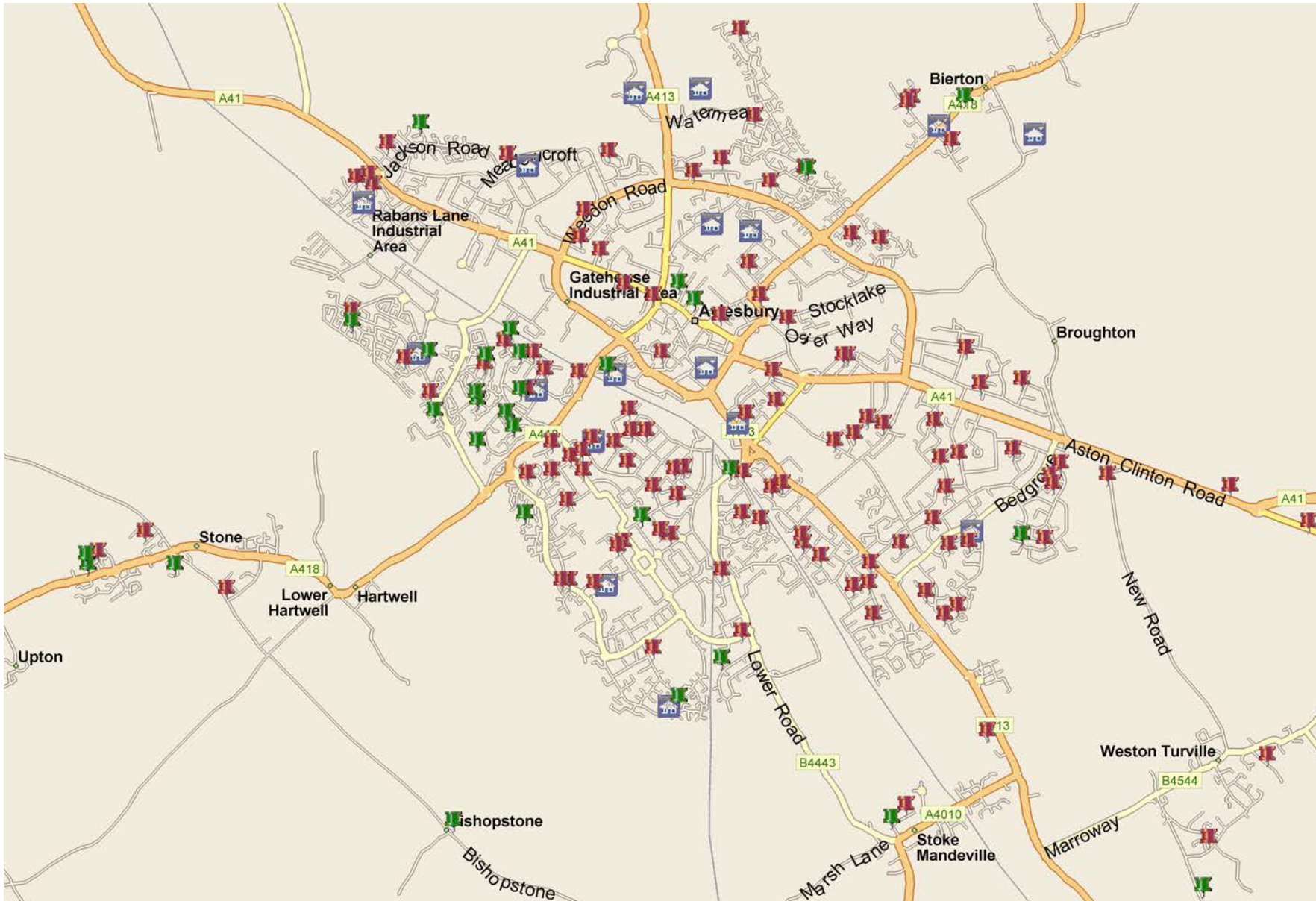
Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday	Pre- School * Special Needs Pre-School** Residents Coffee Morning*	Pre- School * Whist * Bucks PCT**	Martial Arts ** Street Dance ** Zumba** RSPB** Residents Association* Line Dancing **
Tuesday	Pre- School * Special Needs Pre-School **	Pre- School* Adult learning *	Martial Arts ** Slimming Club* Bucks Army Cadets**
Wednesday	Pre- School* Special Needs Pre-School ** Church coffee morning*	Pre- School* NHS Retirement ** WI* Unison Retired ** Kids Music classes**	Youth Club* Pilates** Exercise to Music** Martial Arts ** Street Cheer*
Thursday	Pre- School* Special Needs Pre-School** Pulmonary Rehab Classes**	Pre- School* Tea Dance** Jansel 60+ Club * U3A**	Youth Club* Martial Arts** Kids Dance Classes** Bridge ** National Childbirth Trust** Camera Club** Gardening Club**
Friday	Pre- School* WI* Pulmonary Rehab Classes**	Pre- School* Over 50's Exercise** Aylesbury Youth Training** Food Bank*	Ball Room Dancing ** Short Mat Bowls**
Saturday	Yoga ** Junior Netball League** Slimming Club* Kids football skills classes** Arabic Classes**	Bucks Genealogical Group** Bucks Family History Group**	
Sunday	Church * Church **	Church* Church**	Ball Room Dancing**

* Denotes activity with mainly local / ward participants (25)

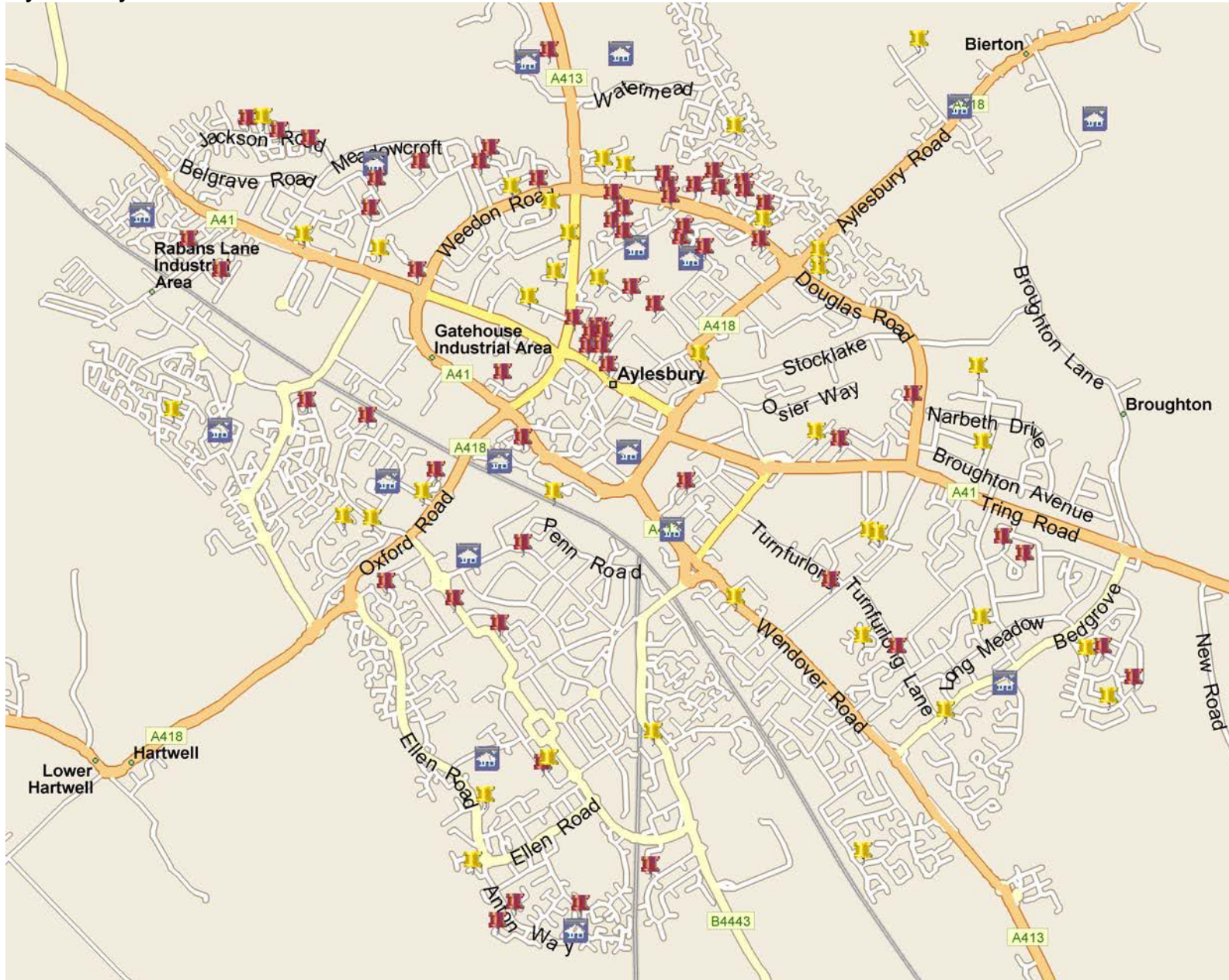
** Denotes activities that draw customers from Town wide and beyond (41)

APPENDIX 2: COMMUNITY CENTRE CATCHMENT AREAS

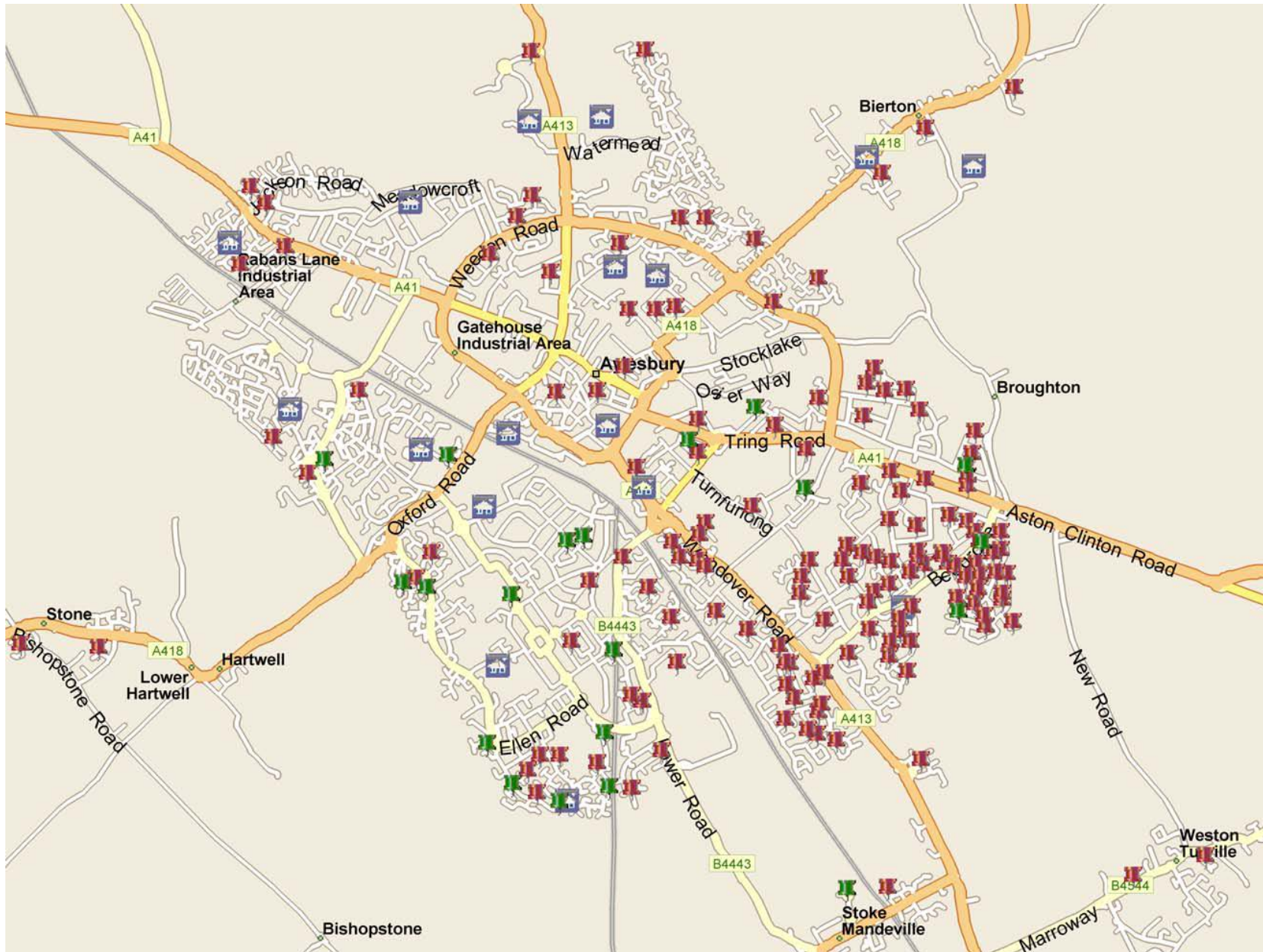
Aylesbury Urban Halls Catchment – Southcourt



Aylesbury Urban Halls Catchment – Elmhurst



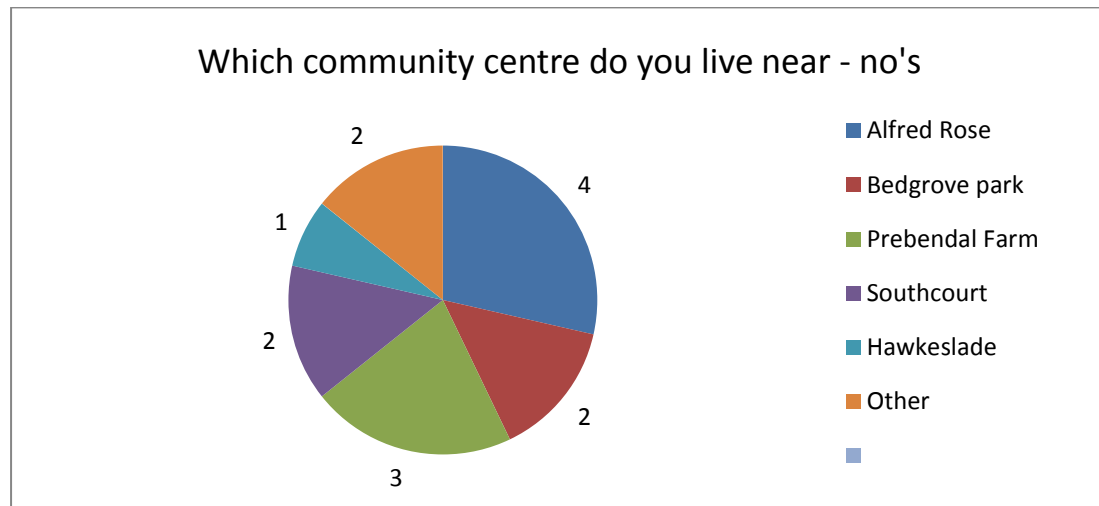
Aylesbury Urban Halls Catchment - Bedgrove and St. Mandeville



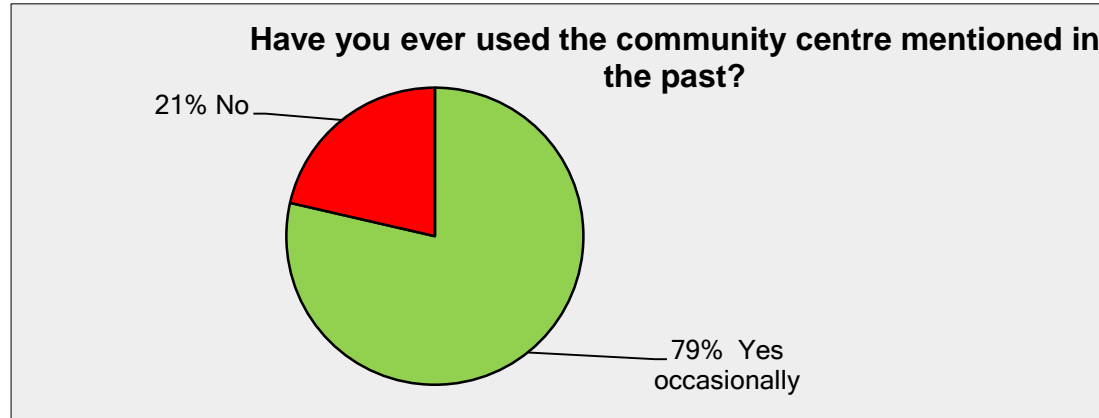
APPENDIX 3: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

1. Community Centre – local residents responses

16 responses in total – not all answered all questions.



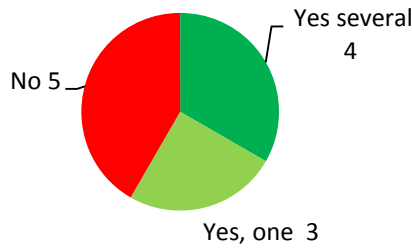
Other included: Elmhurst and Walton Court



Can you let us know why you don't use it currently? (7 comments left)

- H'lade Just moved here
- Do use as a polling clerk
- AR Inadequate car parking, particularly for disabled users.
- AR Blood donor
- W'ct Closed by VAHT
- S'ct I have no current need for using the Community Centre, I have used them in the past usually attending children's activities, but not recently.
- B'Pk I use other venues more suited to my sporting activities

Do you attend clubs or activities at other venues? - no's



If yes, at which venues:

Social Clubs

Bingo

Mainly Aylesbury & District Tennis and Table Tennis venues and Tennis Bucks Shield

Prebendal Farm

Do you hire any rooms at other community centres or other venues, such as pubs or hotels?

	%	No's
Yes, at other community centre	21%	3
Yes, at other venues	7%	1
No, I don't hire any rooms	71%	10
If you hire rooms elsewhere, please let us know where and frequency:		4

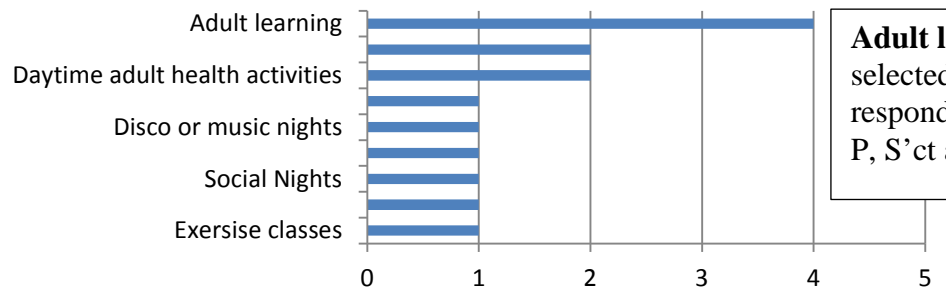
Bedgrove, May next year

Buckingham Park - weekly

Stoke Mandeville - maybe once every two years for a family occasion

Longwick Scout Hut

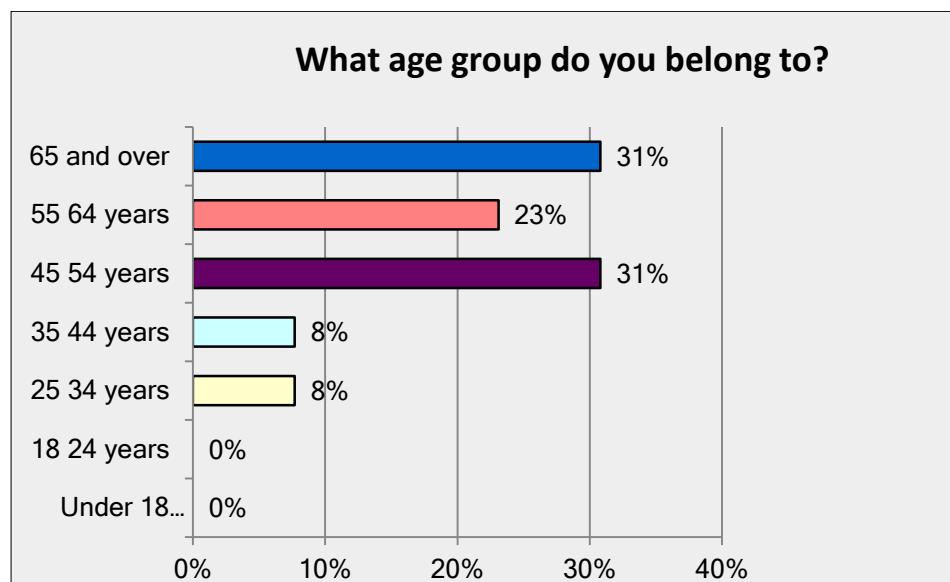
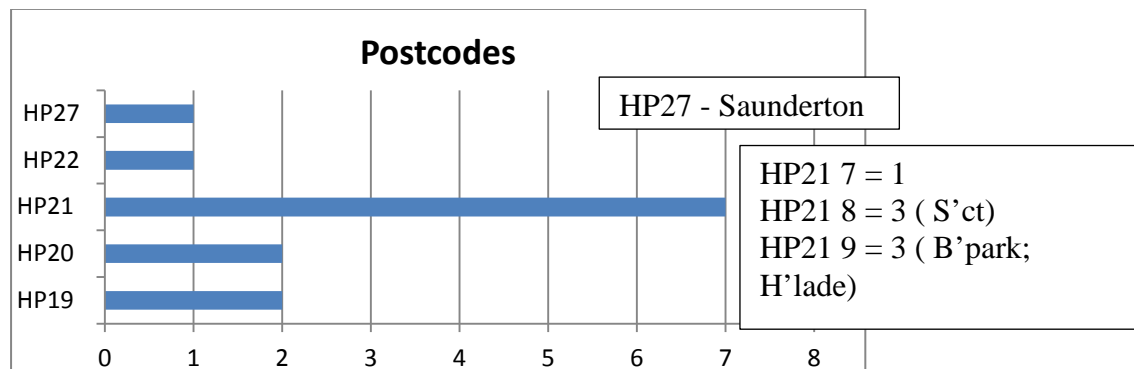
What activities/events interested in getting involved in at CC's in the future? - no's



Adult learning – selected by one respondent each at AR, P, S'ct and H.

About you

Male – 69%; Female – 31 %



100% White British

5 out of 13 say day-to-day activities limited a little because of health problems or disability.

Other comments about community centres include, from:

Hawkslade only

Community Centres need to be central focus for the community, providing a range of health, learning and entertaining activities.

Southcourt only

I feel our local community centre is under-used & should provide more family oriented events, coffee mornings, exercise classes at low rates.

Prebendal Farm only

I think community centre's are a much needed asset in the community. I feel this bring neighbourhoods together.

Alfred Rose only

I use them frequently to meet other mums in the area and have a safe environment for my children to play in, it would be a real shame if these activities were to stop
If you close these community centres you are taking away the chance for people to get together locally.

Others include:

Walton Court

Please re-open the Walton court centre. My neighbours miss the social side, and child friendly atmosphere

Elmhurst

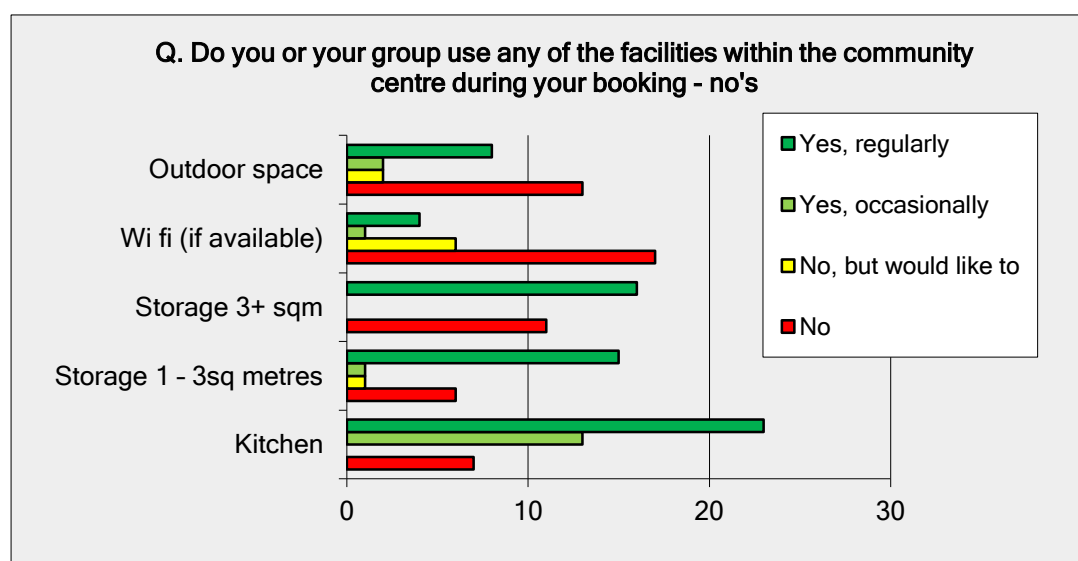
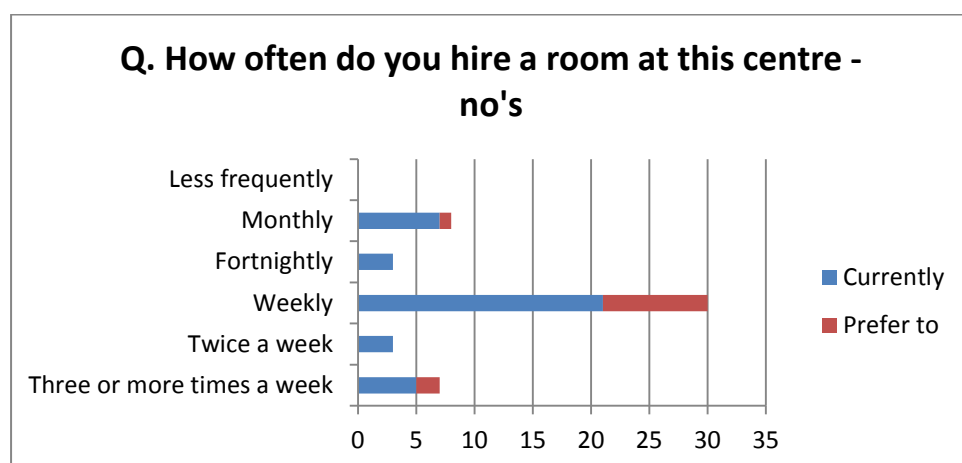
Its false economy, to close such facilities as people become isolated, less fit, gain weight and rely on the state further. we should have more of these facilities and diverse activities to keep the population active for longer.

Community Centre consultation - hirers

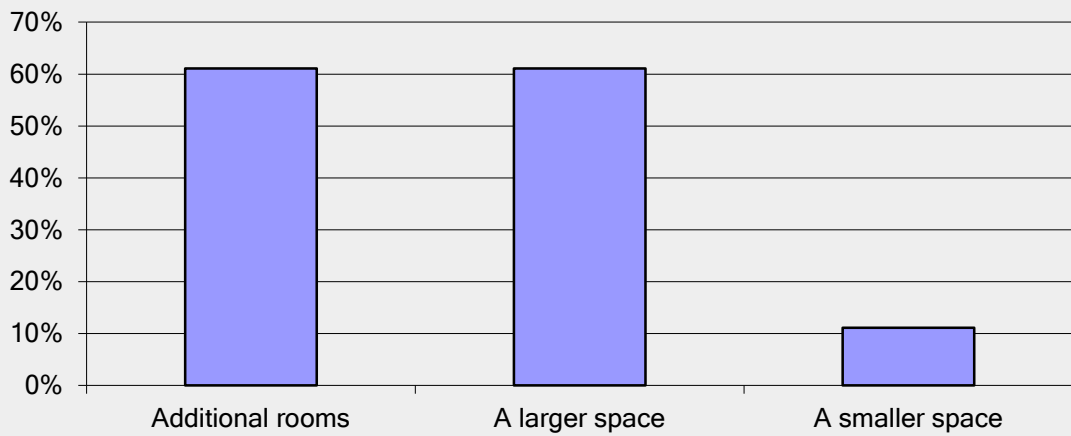
Hirer responses - 47 responses in total

Q. Centre hired and frequency

Centre	No's	%
Elmhurst	1	2
None	1	2
Hawkslade	5	11
Prebendal	6	13
Alfred Rose	7	15
Bedgrove	11	23
Southcourt	16	34
Total	47	100



Q. Thinking about the size of the room and facilities you currently use. If available, would you make use of... %



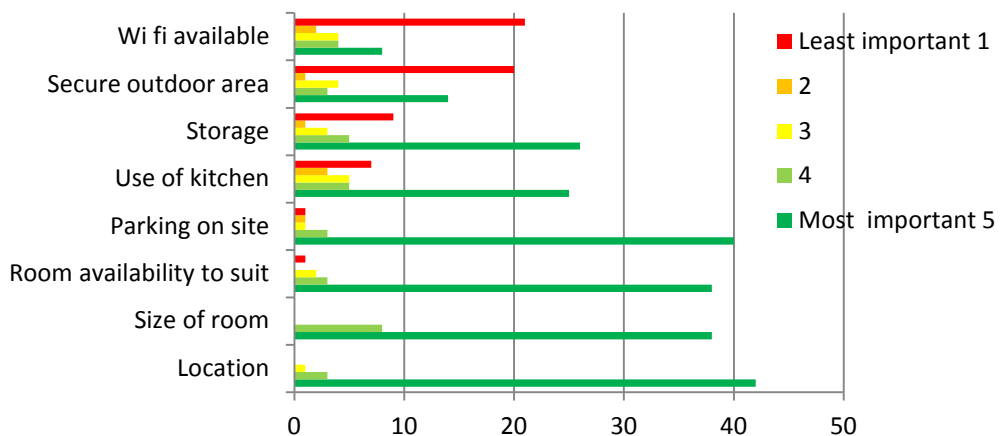
12 comments were left 11 stating they were happy with current space , one asking for storage for equipment (Prebendal).

Q. Thinking about your booking/s, are you able to book the days and time slots you want?

Answer Options	%	No's
Yes	88.6%	39
No	13.6%	6
If you answered 'No' can you say why? Please write in		8

- BPk Yes, but only as all other times are fully booked
- BPk Would like 1st Friday or Month, but another group are in once a month
- S'ct If we book in advance
- S'ct Thursday not available
- PFarm Regular weekly bookings
- H'lade We have to arrange in advance
- PFarm Would prefer a Saturday time slot in the mornings but not available
- BPk I'd like to book more days but no availability

What's important when choosing a centre - no's



Other - please write in comments

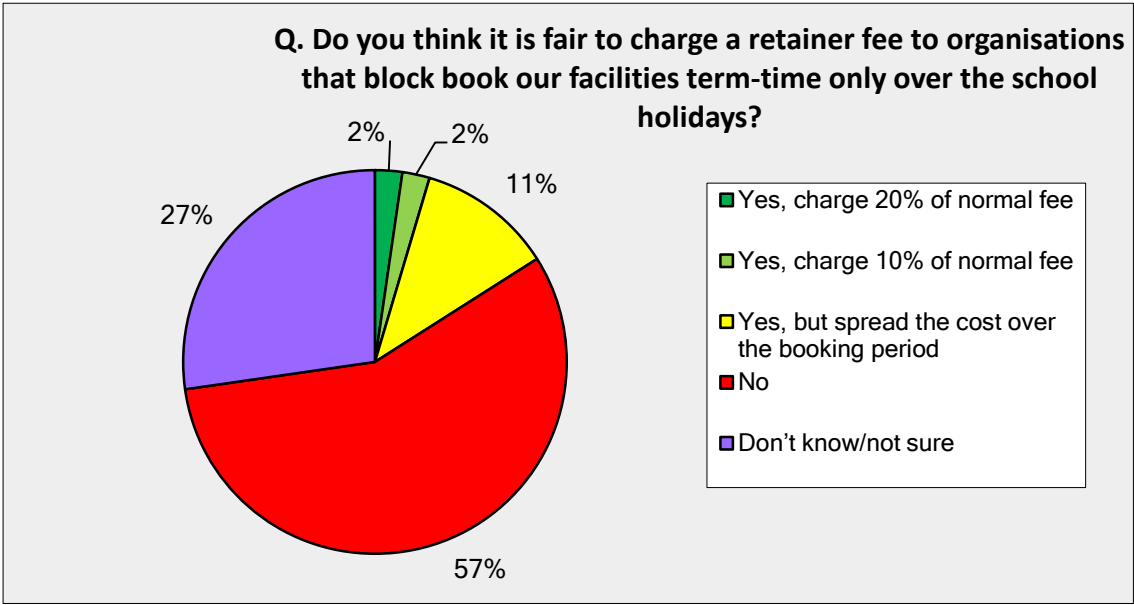
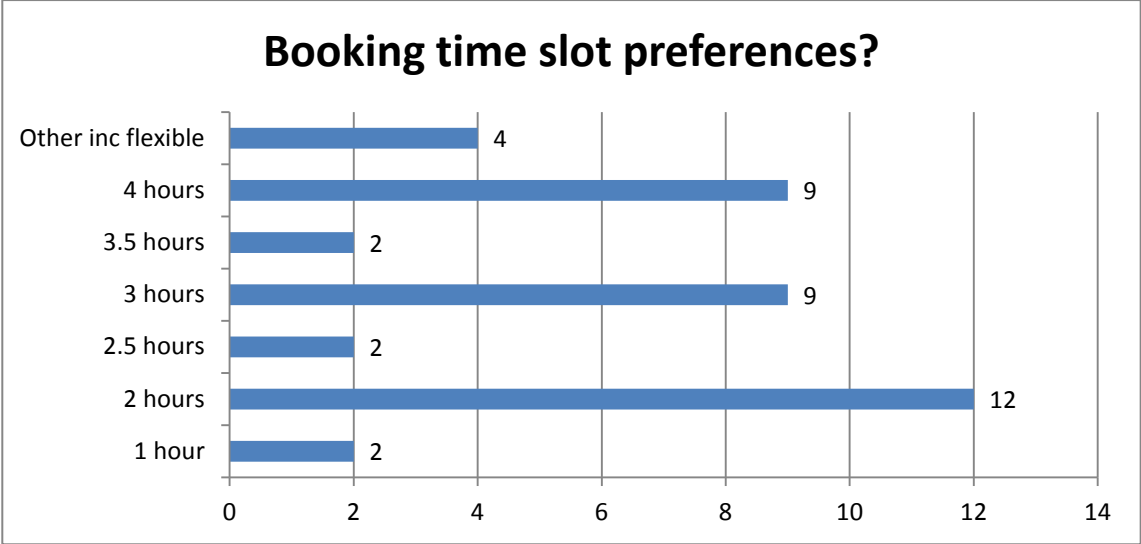
- BP'k Courts for hire - very important
- BP'k Comfortable Chairs
- S'ct Screen, Tables, Chairs
- H'lade Helpfulness of staff = 5
- BP'k Cost very important
- BP'k Cost of hire - the membership are all retired persons living on a limited income
- BP'k Cost
- S'ct Screen Projector
- PFarm sound system
- PFarm The ability to advertise
- BP'k Cost
- BP'k Could we make sure the December meeting on 2nd Wednesday of the month.
Cost
Price of hall booking. As a keep fit instructor i cannot raise my prices every year - has to be competitive to help people stay fit! With increasing cost of training, public liability insurance, cost of music, ongoing first aid training etc. After 20 years here it would help to keep cost of hall at a minimum!

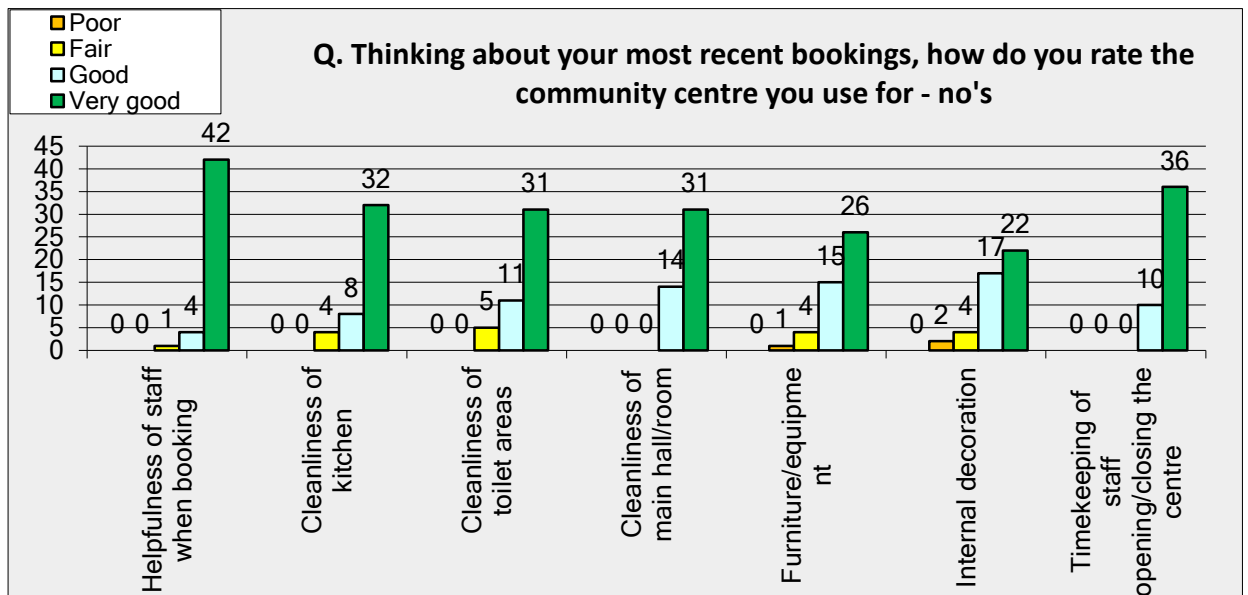
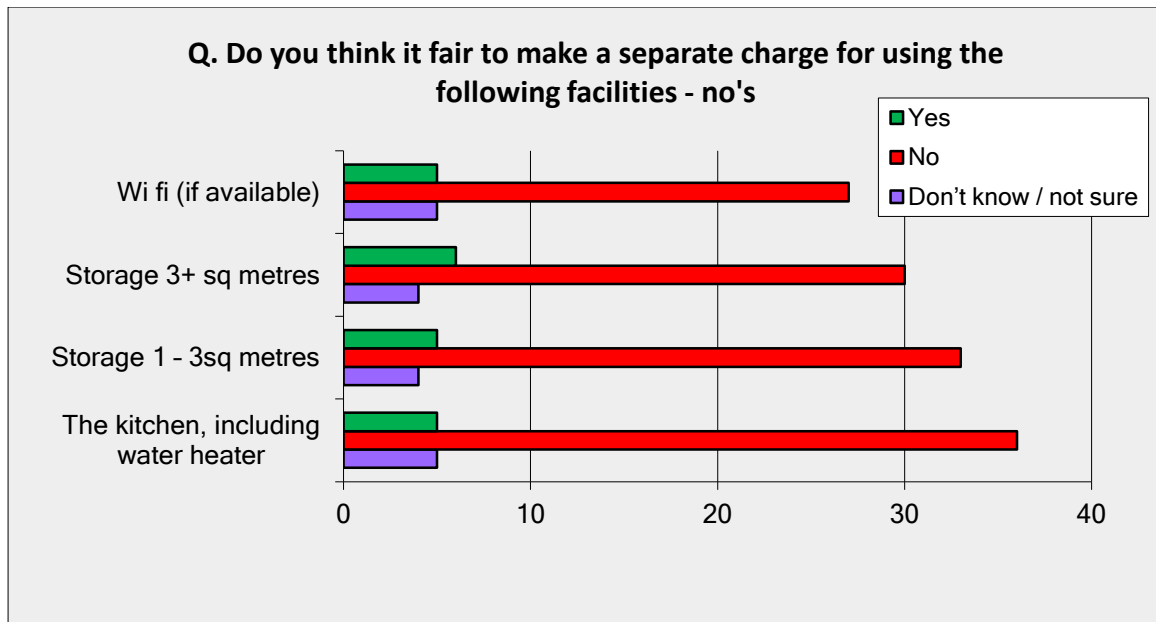
Q. Do you book any other venues to run your activity group as well as at this centre?

	%	No's
Yes, regularly	24	11
Yes, occasionally	15	7
No	61	28

If you answered 'Yes', would you let us know where and why?

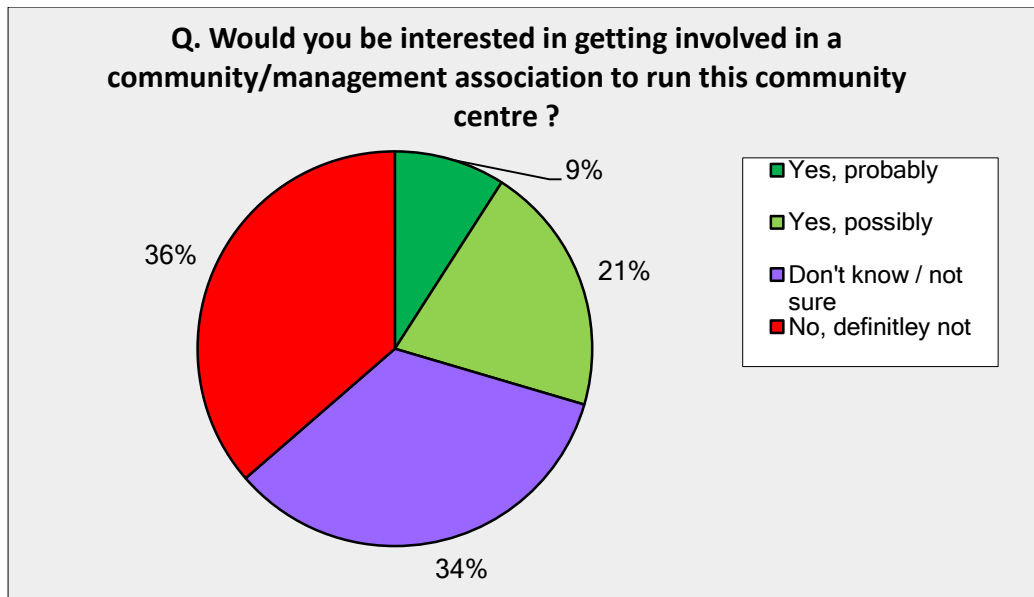
- S'ct Methodist church overnight
- S'ct Meadowcroft CC for location and low cost
- S'ct Community Centre at Fairford Leys because this centre was unavailable.
- ARose Bedgrove Community Centre
- PFarm Bourne End, Bletchley
- H'lade Stoke Mandeville Stadium hourly rates
- ARose St Bartholomew's School Wiggington, Northchurch Social Centre
- PFarm High Wycombe as classes there occasionally as cant have the 3rd Saturday college
- BP'k I run NCT yoga for pregnancy classes at the Alfred Rose
- BP'k Annual carol service at church of the holy spirit, Christmas lunch at Weston Turville golf club.
- BP'k Haydon Hill, Buckingham Park, Bedgrove Infant School
- BP'k Weston Turville, Fairford Leys, Nuffield also teach at Holiday Inn and Aqua vale.
- PFarm Fairford Leys community centre to run an activity group.
- H'lade An annual tournament is run at Stoke Mandeville stadium





Comments left by those saying 'poor' at last question

- BP'k Unclean curtains, uncomfortable chairs. Curtains should be cleaned at least once a year.
- S'ct Some of the chairs are not cleaned when used by the children's group
- ARose Toilet could be cleaner, especially the disabled toilet.
- PFarm The equipment is falling apart, chairs need a good clean, the heating doesn't work in waiting room, curtains are falling down and many users don't care.
- PFarm Outdated décor



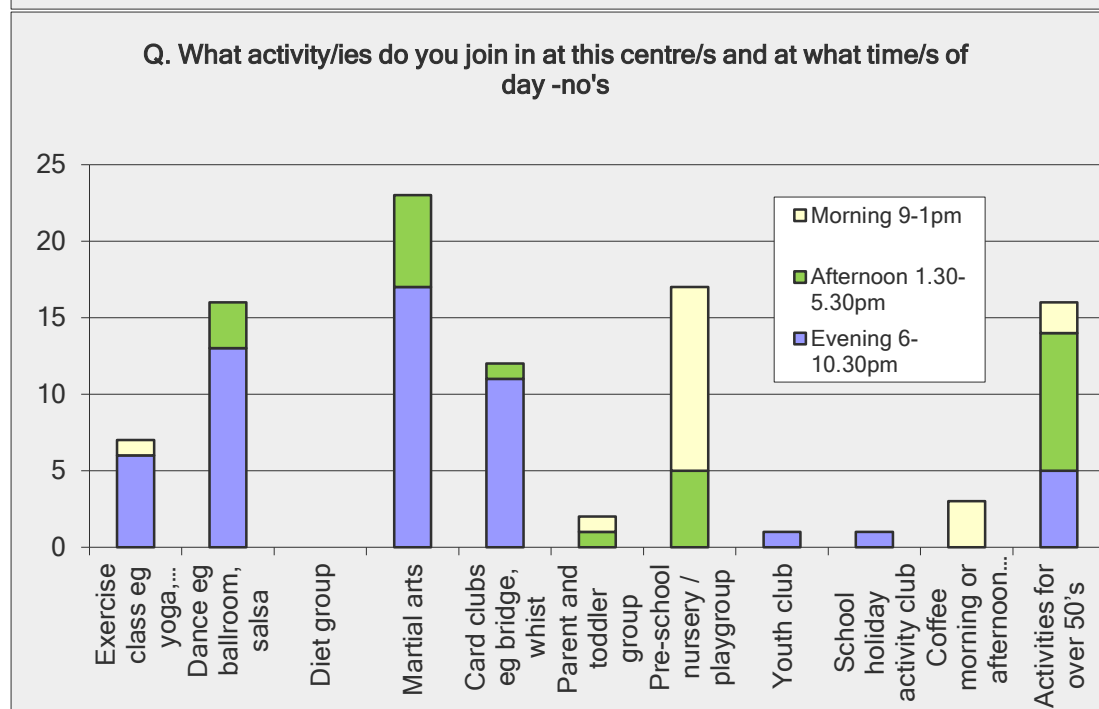
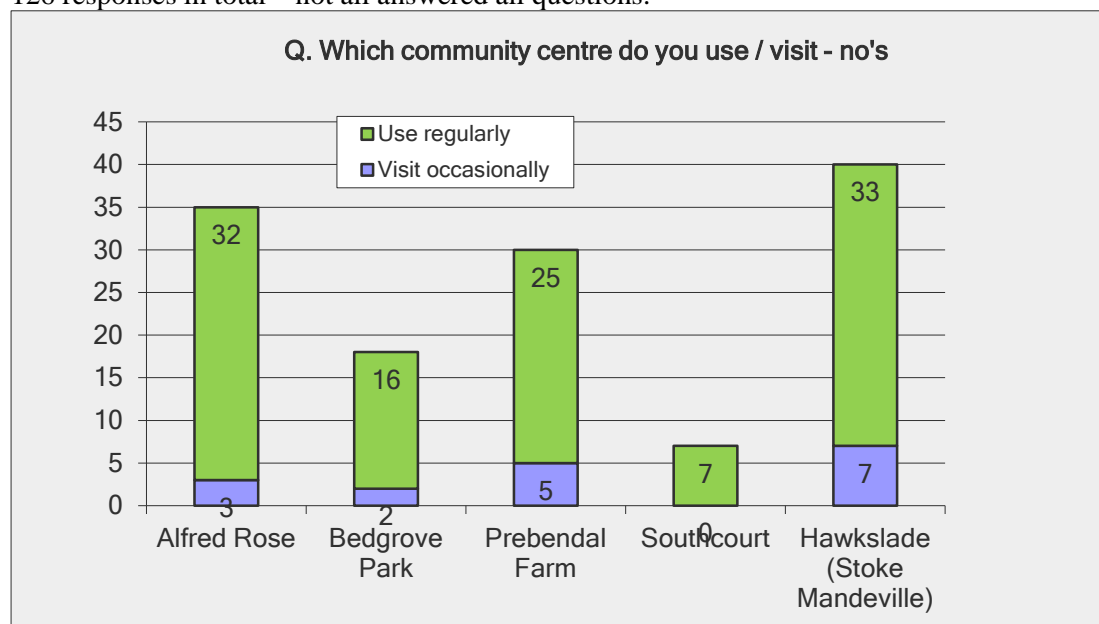
Finally, if you have any comments you'd like to make about future running of this community centre, please write in:

1. BP'k -Aylesbury Junior Netball has been using the courts on a Saturday morning for 30 years. We have always been satisfied with the venue.
2. H'lade - Mr Clive Cook is very helpful and goes beyond what is required of him in the job - excellent
3. BP'k - If costs continue to rise we will struggle to continue to operate. We are all trying to provide a service for the community, so we should work together to do this.
4. S'ct - Tutor only has to travel 20 miles
5. S'ct - I would hope that AVDC would continue to run the centre but if not, yes we would like a say in how things are run. We are happy with management as it stands.
6. S'ct -I would be very unhappy if it changed and would have to consider moving I find Chris very helpful and professional
7. ARose - Omar the warden responsible for AVDC consistently does an excellent job. He is a great ambassador for the Council with very high standards, and in our opinion has a great future in AVDC
8. PFarm - Neil Terry - Community Centre Development Worker is brilliant, very helpful, friendly always on time to open and close. Best service I have had when hiring
9. ARose - I really feel quite strongly against extra charges. However, presently I have to add that you are good value for money even with the block (morning /afternoon) bookings so don't be too quick to make any radical changes
10. H'lade - It was a good thing to have a permanent projection screen. But i do believe that the hall will benefit from a stationary overhead projector stationed on the ceiling. Businesses may be encouraged to use the hall when business facilities are here. You can advertise it and bring in more usage and more income. The community centre is an important part of the community it should be equipped to meet different needs.
11. H'lade - Hourly bookings would mean more clients could use the hall facilities

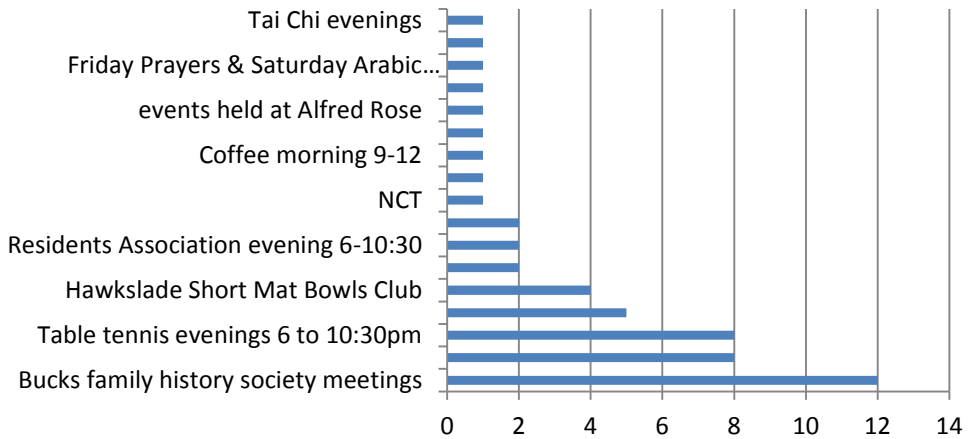
12. ARose - Not really happy with the increased rate for a Sunday evening hire compared to Friday evening, especially as we are fairly long term hall users
13. PFarm - Would be interested in taking on the whole hall if the price was right.
14. BP'k - As I'm not sure of the pros and cons of a community management association i cannot comment on question 14. I think it is a good idea to have a flexible booking system. However, can i just add that although i book morning/afternoons at the centres, I have to say that a 'block' booking works out cheaper for me than the hourly rate at some local schools who hire out their halls. You are good value for money :)
15. BP'k - Sylvia is an asset to the centre

Community Centre – users responses

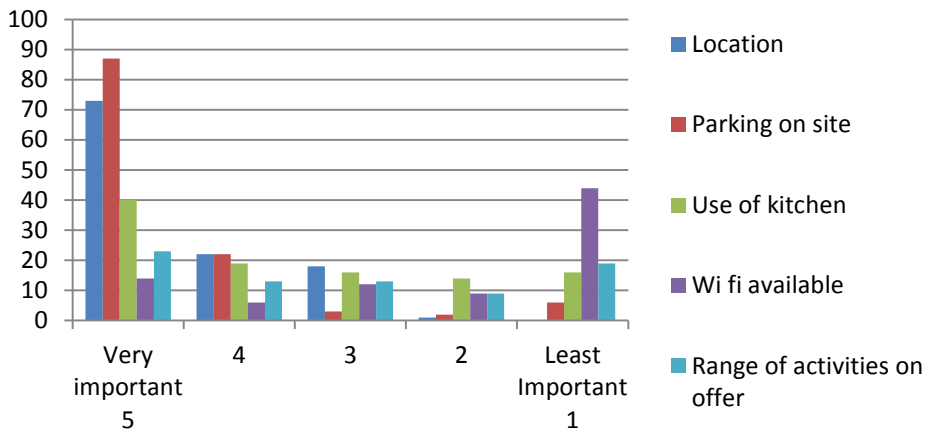
126 responses in total – not all answered all questions.



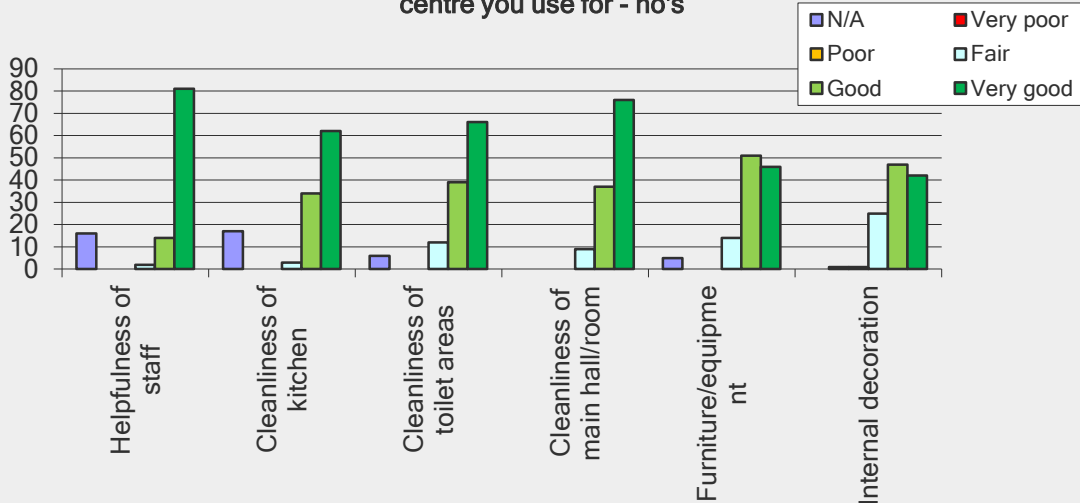
Other activities people join in - no's



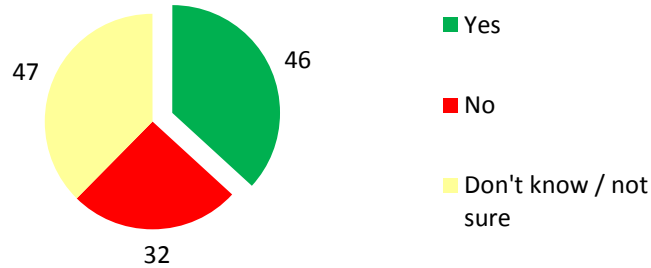
Q. What's important when using CC's - no's



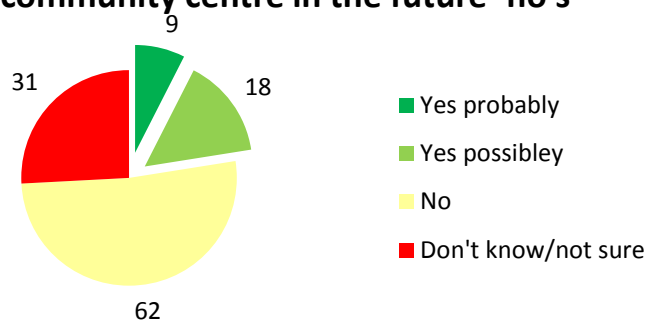
Q. Thinking about your most recent visit, how do you rate the community centre you use for - no's



Q. Would you be interested in hiring a community centre yourself in the future, eg for a private function - no's



Q. And would you be interested in helping set up/run a group or activity at a community centre in the future -no's



Q. Are there other things, activities, clubs, organisations or services you'd like to see happen in your local community centre?

The following were mentioned:

	ARose	BPark	P'farm	S'ct	H'lade
Health services			1		2
Sport or Gymnastics		1	1		
Table tennis					1
Jumble sales		1			
Coffee mornings		1			
Dance					1
Toastmasters club	1				
Police and local council drop in sessions		1			1
Church services					1
Youth activities					1
Drama					1
Information centre					1
More youth coaching			1		1
Integration of ethnic groups					1

Hawkslade only

1. Community Centres are important and it is a shame that councils are under monetary pressures and are considering closing one or more. It is a very pleasant place to play bridge
2. The caretakers does a brilliant job.
3. Overall very good facility - staff very helpful
4. The Hawkslade centre is vital for our club to be able to continue our activity. It provides a social / competitive stimulation for the over 60's which is the majority of our members - the cost is just within our means, close the centre and we die without it.
5. Community centres would get used more if they were cheaper to hire, eg regular users such as fitness classes, pre-schools should be charged less than private hirers.
6. Hawkslade Community Centre is run by fantastic people, my daughter loves going to nursery there and it is easily accessible for me, as it is within walking distance from my home.
7. To create more activities for children
8. As we all know Aylesbury is getting a lot larger, the population is increasing at a fast rate, -- & the amenities are getting shorter, !! -- we lost our ten pin bowling & now our beloved table tennis is also going !. What next ?
9. AVDC made valuable contribution to table tennis when fitting put Elmhurst, which enables coaching / youth involvement to take place. This would be lost if the centre closed.

Southcourt only

1. If we had no community centres, where would we all go = private hire would be costly.
2. No we are happy with everything.
3. They are a very important part of life, I would be very disappointed if they were to close.
4. A pleasure to visit this venue, always warm and friendly

Prebendal farm only

1. Hope service is maintained.
2. Yes we need this
3. They are a necessity to the community
4. very friendly people

Bedgrove Park only

1. Where else will the local community go if they are closed?
2. Both Bedgrove Park & Broughton Junior School both have adequate car parking and are efficiently maintained by their respective caretakers.
3. If we had no community centres, where would we all go = private hire would be costly.
4. The installation of a screen was a fantastic idea. Sometimes it is quite cold in the hall and the heaters are very noisy especially when trying to listen to a speaker. The hot boiler is a great asset. To the left hand side of the hall facing the stage always looks messy and would be a great improvement if it could be screened off. This lets the hall down.
5. Community centres would get used more if they were cheaper to hire, eg regular users such as fitness classes, pre-schools should be charged less than private hirers.
6. A very useful amenity, very helpful staff - Sylvia particularly
7. Sylvia is and has been a great asset.

8. I would like Table Tennis to be able to continue at Elmhurst Community Centre

Alfred Rose only

1. Every effort should be made to manage and fund community centres from Local Government so as to keep hire costs affordable to all the community.
2. Cost is already high enough for what is on offer. Higher than inflation increases are not acceptable when councils are cutting benefits at the same time!
3. Through the years of the lessons for karate, they have risen over the years
4. Prices seem to be rising more than the cost of living which isn't right or justifiable
5. I value being able to attend my class
6. Cost is too high
7. I feel that the rental charges at Alfred Rose should not be increased as it would adversely affect the clubs attendance.
8. www.gbdance.co.uk are fab! Don't take away the Alfred Rose centre!
9. I think it is terrible that the community centre on Fairfax Crescent is in risk of being closed just because the council needs to rise a bit of money. If the hall doesn't get used enough, make an effort to increase the usefulness of it. Plenty of people use it at the moment and for them to lose out because the council is short sighted is disgusting.

APPENDIX 4

Option A: Transfer the assets to Parish/ Town Council

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of management overheads • P/TC have requested all the properties • It could be a single block transfer – cheaper legal costs • Responsible body • Have experienced professional staff already • TUPE for staff • Could enable further grant reductions • Already able to collect precept in place of special expenses collection • Mitigates future maintenance liabilities • Common approach in other local authorities to transfer out • Reflects approach taken to new builds/equitable to Parishes having their own village halls • P/TC more likely to have capacity to accept future financial liabilities of properties • Economies of scale and critical mass for efficient operations • May have access to funding sources AVDC does not. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of innovation • Loss of control but loss of cost • Loss of asset/property • Potential issues with current surrounding AVDC land and assets • Political/Public reaction if cost reduction in delivery not achieved
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could gain additional funding through eligibility to apply for grants, and increases in precept. • The centres would remain wholly accessible to all town communities. • Claw back clauses could be agreed • Voluntary managed centres could continue to be grant aided • Size of ATC likely to lead to further innovation and creation of further savings • Transfer could include other surrounding assets as well (now or in future) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could result in increase to Aylesbury taxpayers via the precept. • Failure could be en masse • Reduction in income – effect on cash flow • Negative effect on back office services / costs of AVDC

Option B : Retain the assets and continue to invest to achieve savings.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full cost recovery by users / hirers • Responsible body • Staff retained by AVDC • Continues special expenses collection (although would need to be maximised) • Retains Assets • Economies of scale and critical mass for efficient operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of innovation • Does not mitigate future maintenance liabilities • Price rises may push existing users to other venues – resulting in lost revenue.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The centres would remain wholly accessible to all town communities. • Voluntary managed centres could continue to be grant aided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible reduction in income due to price rises and customers leaving • Divergence of offer between AVDC run and partner run centres

Option C : Transfer to community organisations

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater diversity • More innovative • Likely reduction on taxpayers in Aylesbury • Potential for voluntary effort • Equitable to Parishes running their own village halls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of Asset • Significant capacity building required – experience and financial requirements • Likely to take longer • Complexities of multiple transfers • Relatively little interest at consultation stage in Dec '13 • 'Package' of facilities lost • Potential disparity for operational arrangements/fees and charges
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement • Community Ownership leading to increased usage? • Ability to agree local charges • Ability to access grants • Claw back clauses could be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competence of managing body • Threat of falling into disrepair • Failure of the voluntary group in the long term • Increased legal costs • Cost increase overall – scale of efficiency reduced • Opening hours/ offer could become compromised or constrained • Staff unlikely to be TUPE'd – redundancy costs

Option D : Tender the facilities out under contract

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liabilities shared with operator • Assets remain in ownership of the District Council • Retain a level of control through the contract • Operator could be more innovative • Maintains wholly accessible to all town communities/ retains facilities for community uses • Could include for future new facilities if desired • TUPE would apply (benefit for staff) • More innovative than 'giving away' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not such a common approach for these type of facilities • Remains long term liability for AVDC and continued maintenance costs for the buildings • Town/Parish Councils may tender anyway wasting effort and time • Unlikely to reduce overall costs significantly
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future new community centres could be included if appropriate • Opportunity for income? But likely to require investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs could increase • Tender process and legal costs incurred • Tender failure and delay to overall savings achieved • Failure of tenderer in the long term

