GOADBY MARWOOD VILLAGE HALL EXTENSION AND RENOVATION PROJECT

COMMUNITY SURVEY – UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY NEEDS AND FUTURE PRIORITIES

INTRODUCTION

As Goadby Marwood Village Hall approaches the completion of its major extension and refurbishment project, Friends of Goadby Marwood Village Hall (FoGMVH) undertook a community survey to understand local residents' views, needs and aspirations for the future of the Hall.

The purpose of the survey was to gather feedback that would help FoGMVH make informed decisions about how the refurbished Hall should be used, the activities and events it should offer, and how it could best serve the community in the years ahead. By consulting residents directly, FoGMVH aimed to identify local priorities, encourage greater participation and explore opportunities for community involvement and volunteering.

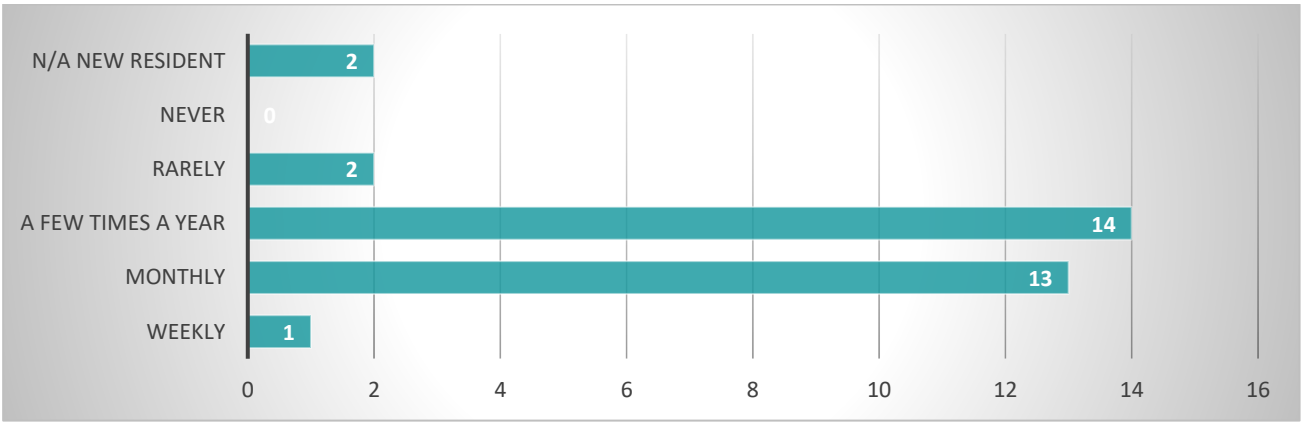
To ensure that all households had the opportunity to participate, survey copies were delivered to every household in the village, with additional copies made available to download from the Village Hall website. This provided residents with an opportunity to share their views and contribute to shaping the future of this important community facility. The response rate was around 50% of village households with 32 completed surveys returned.

The scope of the survey covered a broad range of topics, including previous use of the Hall, opinions on the extension and refurbishment and its anticipated impact, interest in potential activities and events, preferences for food-related activities and attendance times, and any barriers that might prevent residents from using the Hall more frequently. It also explored interest in hiring the Hall, views on its future role within the community, willingness to share skills or volunteer, and residents' longer-term aspirations for a thriving Village Hall. Respondents were also invited to provide additional comments and suggestions and, if they wished, to leave their contact details to hear about future activities and volunteering opportunities.

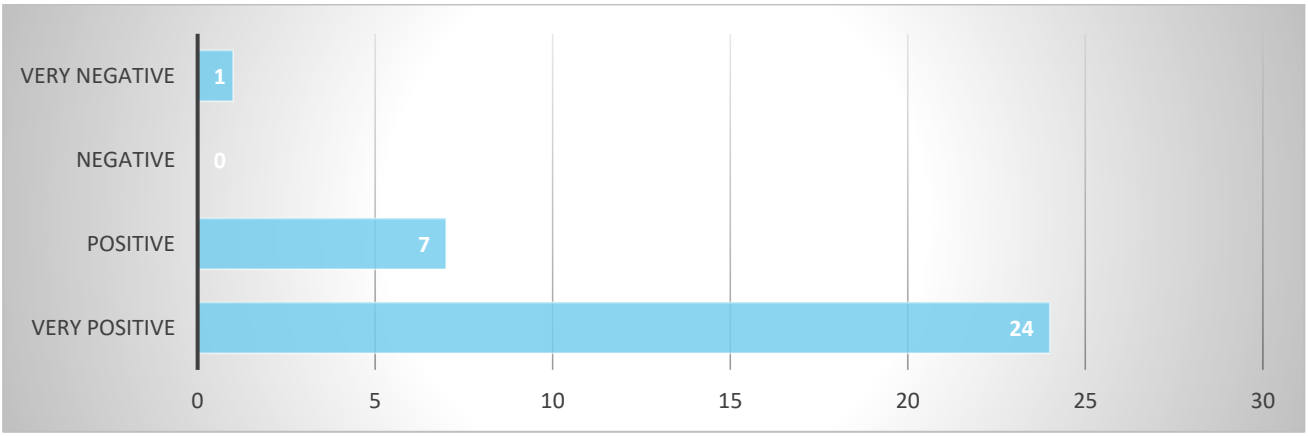
The refurbishment has transformed the facilities, providing a modern kitchen, improved toilets and storage, better insulation and heating, enhanced accessibility, and integrated audio-visual equipment. Essential structural repairs have also helped secure the future of this historic building for generations to come. The survey was therefore an important opportunity to consider how these improvements could support a wider range of activities and encourage more people to make use of the Hall.

This report presents the survey findings and considers what they reveal about community preferences, priorities and opportunities for future development. The results will help FoGMVH shape its programme of activities, identify potential volunteers and inform decisions about the ongoing management and use of the building. Ultimately, the aim is to ensure that Goadby Marwood Village Hall remains a welcoming, sustainable and valued community asset, bringing people together and meeting the needs and interests of the village for years to come.

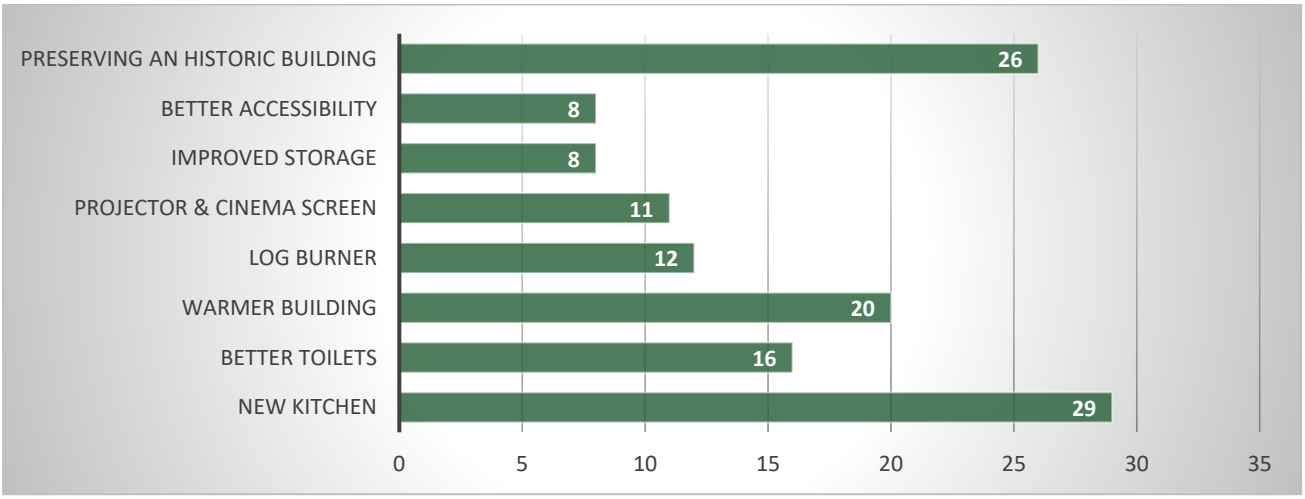
1. How often did you use the Village Hall before the refurbishment?



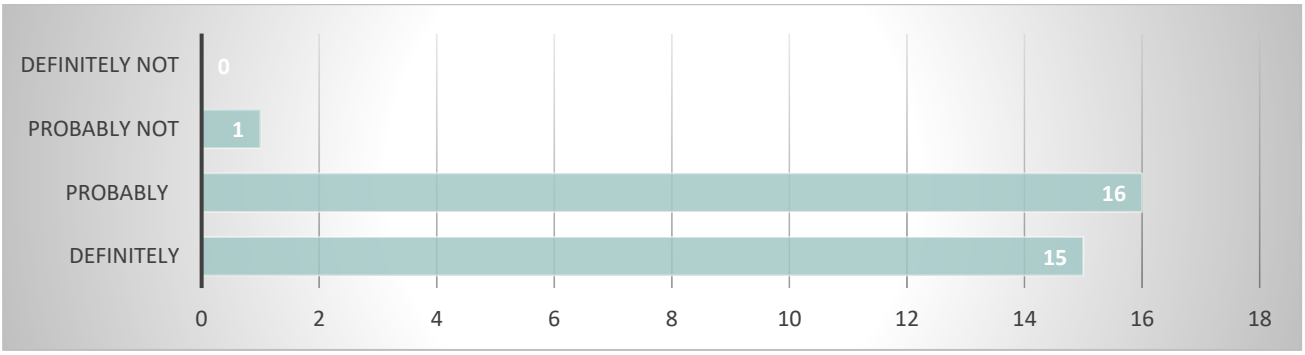
2. Overall, how do you feel about the refurbishment?



3. Which improvements do you think will make the greatest difference to the Village Hall? Choose as many as apply.

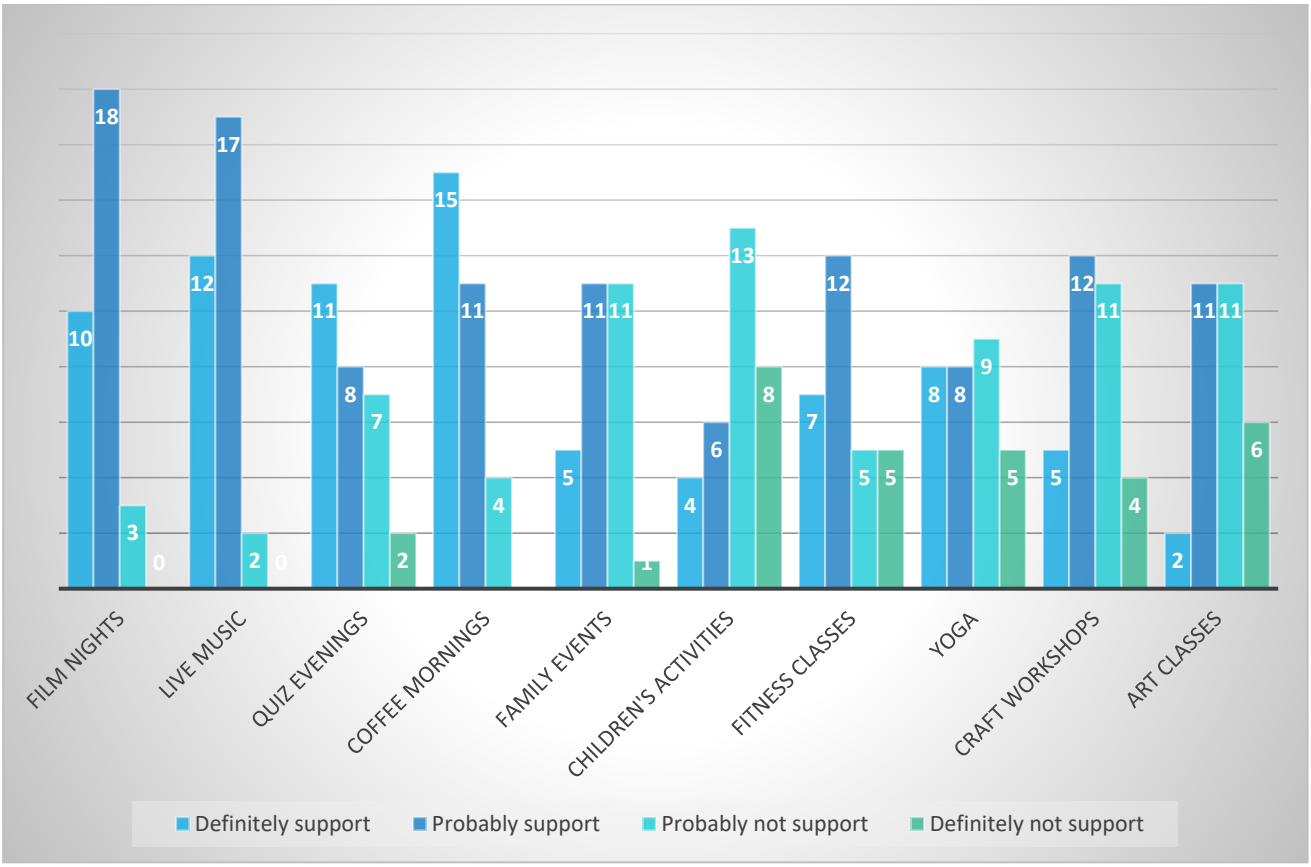


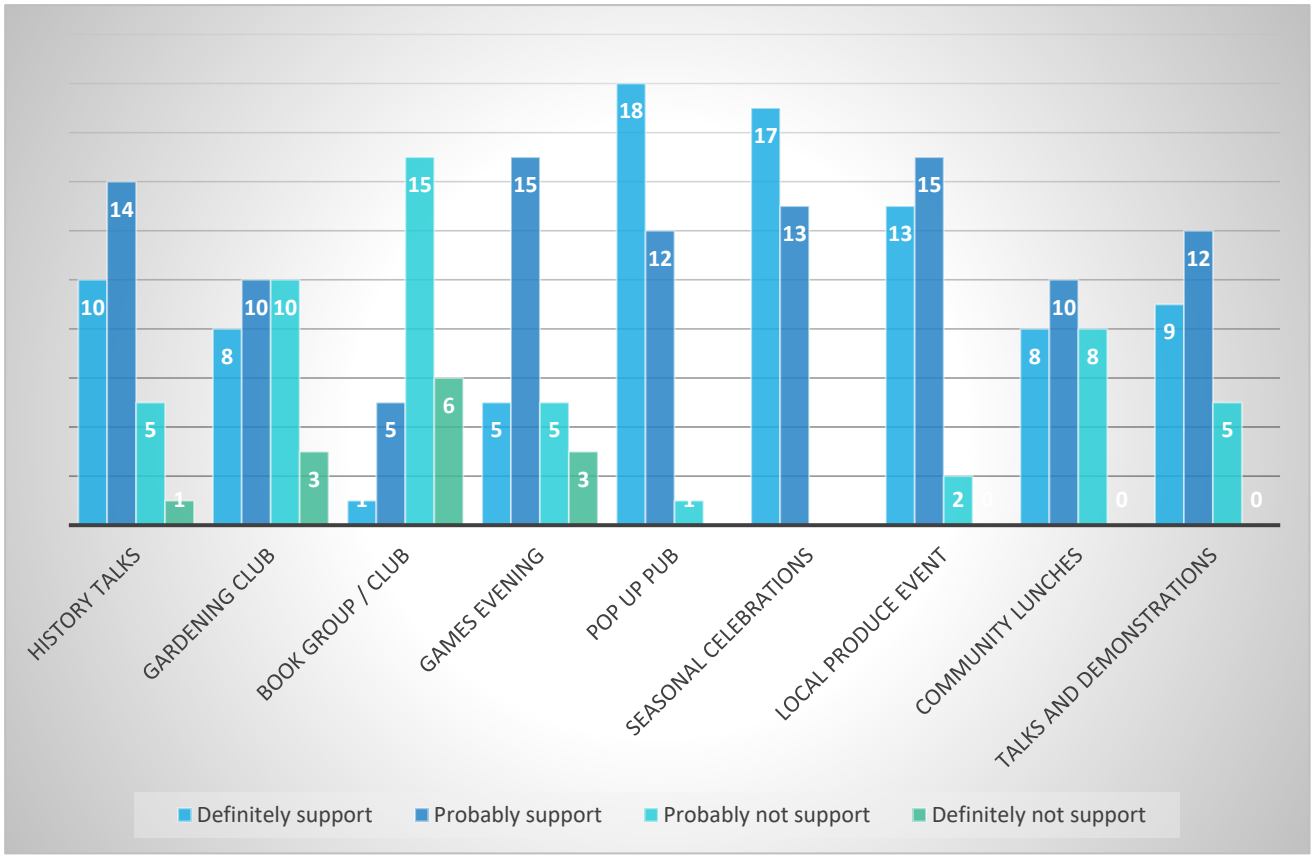
4. Do you think the refurbishment will encourage you to use the Village Hall more often?



ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

5. Which of the following activities would you be willing to support?





Other activities that you would support:

Live rugby and beer

Church meetings

Pickle ball

Sports viewing events

Bingo

Sports event screenings

6. If you could choose just ONE event or activity that would make you visit the Village Hall more often, what would it be?

Live music

Fitness classes

Local produce events

Pop Up Pub

Fitness group

Community gatherings

Live music

Yoga / Pilates

Regular coffee mornings

Yoga

Live music

Pop Up Pub

Community lunches

Yoga

Charity event or walk

Pop Up Pub

Pop Up Pub

Cinema Nights

Quiz

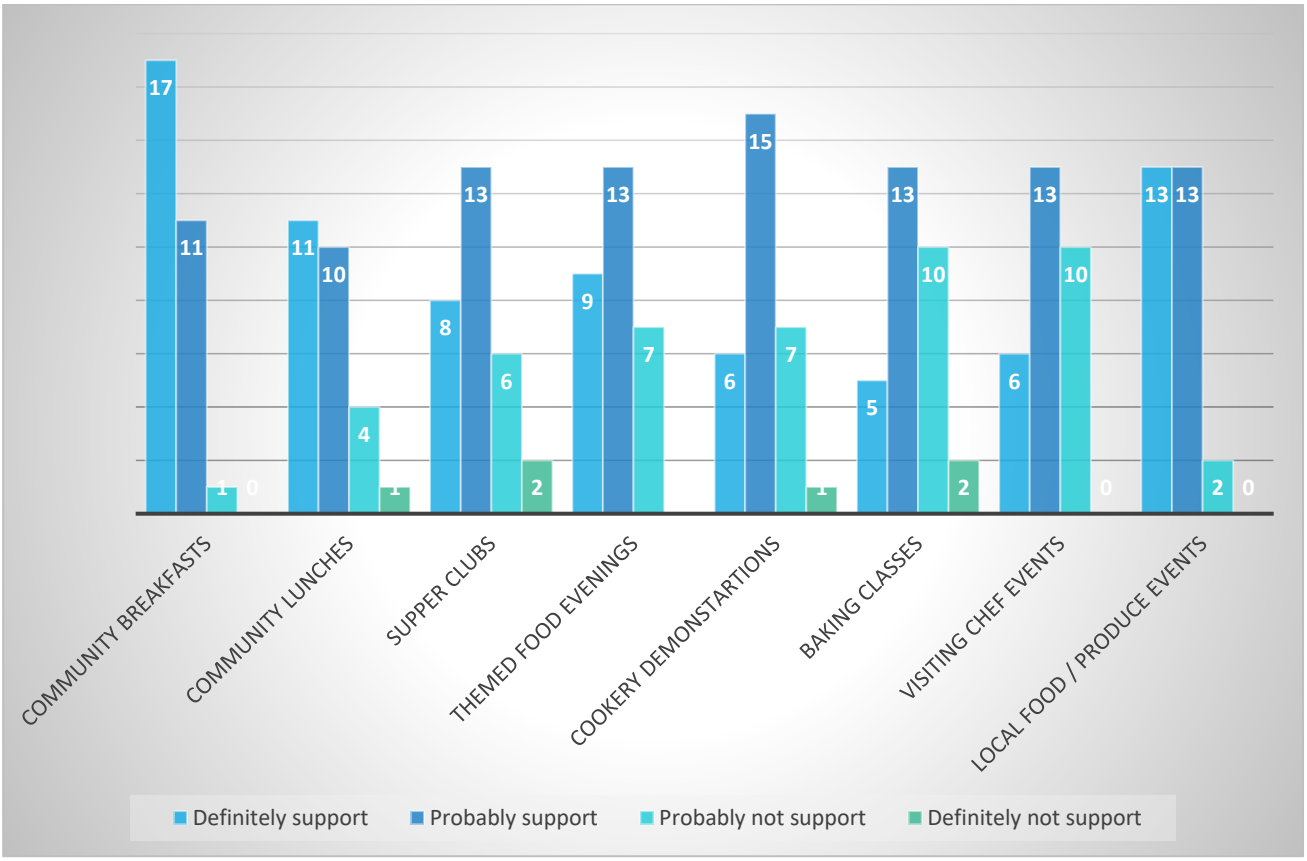
Art classes

Cosy nights

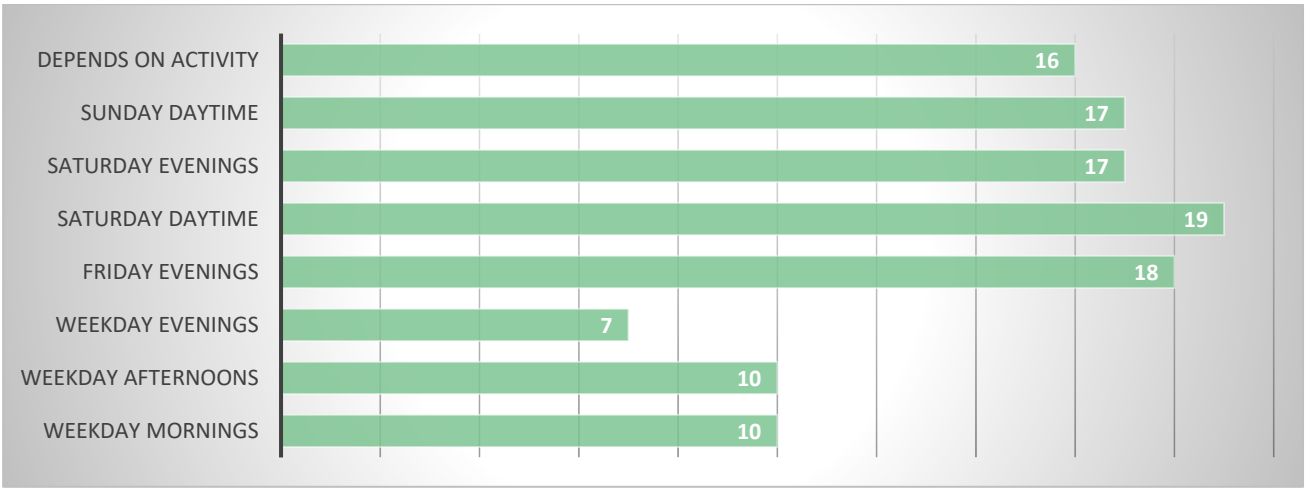
Pop Up Pub

FOOD, TIMING & ATTENDANCE

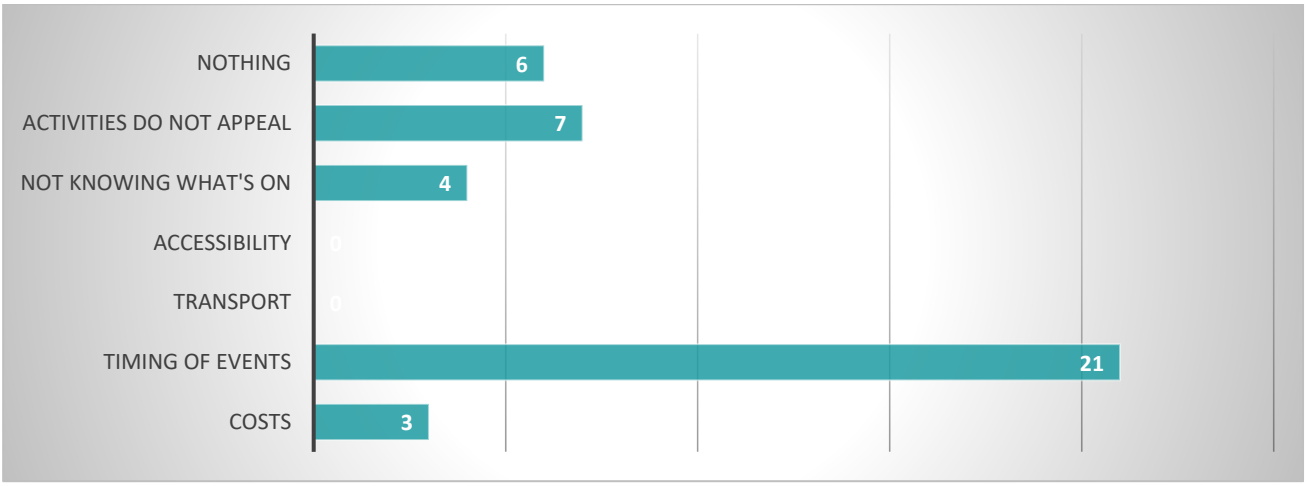
7. Which of the following food-related activities would you be willing to support?



8. When would you be most likely to attend activities at the Village Hall? Tick as many as apply.

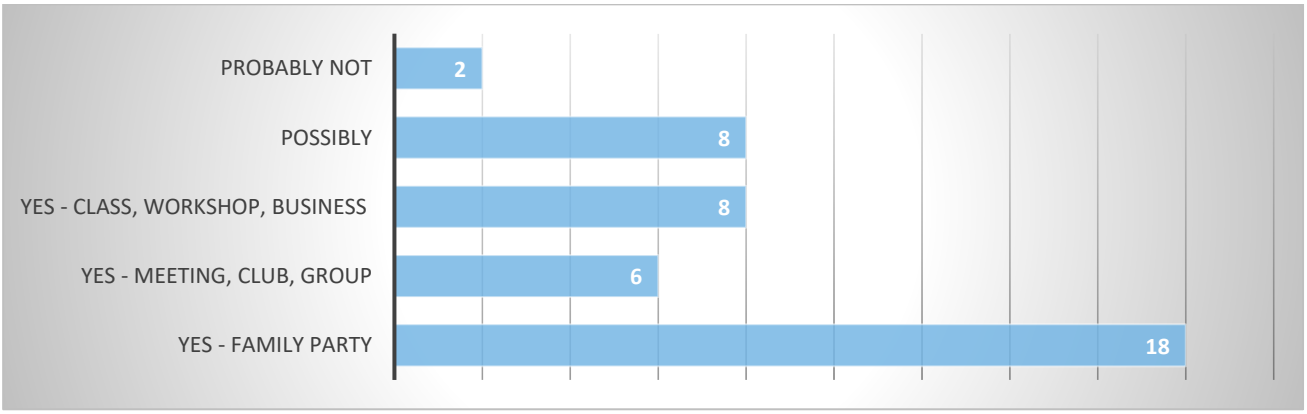


9. Is there anything that might prevent you from using the Village Hall more often?

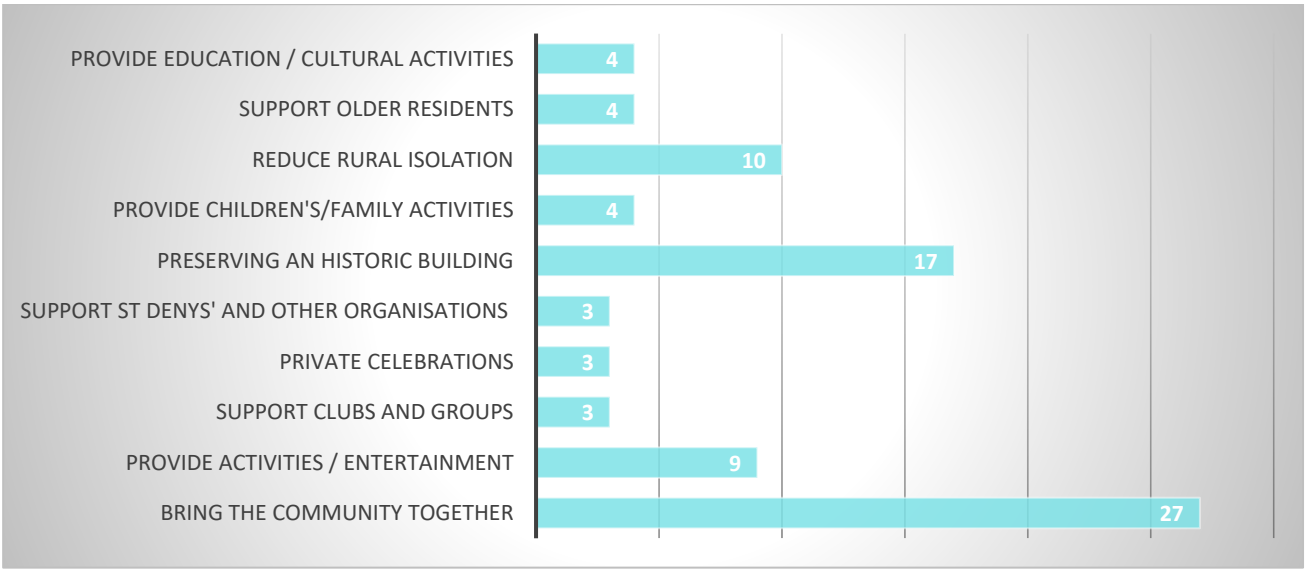


HIRING & THE VILLAGE HALL'S FUTURE

10. Would you consider hiring the Village Hall yourself?



11. What do you think the Village Hall's most important roles should be in the future? Please choose up to THREE.



12. Do you have a skill, hobby or interest that you might be willing to share with the community?

Spanish cookery classes

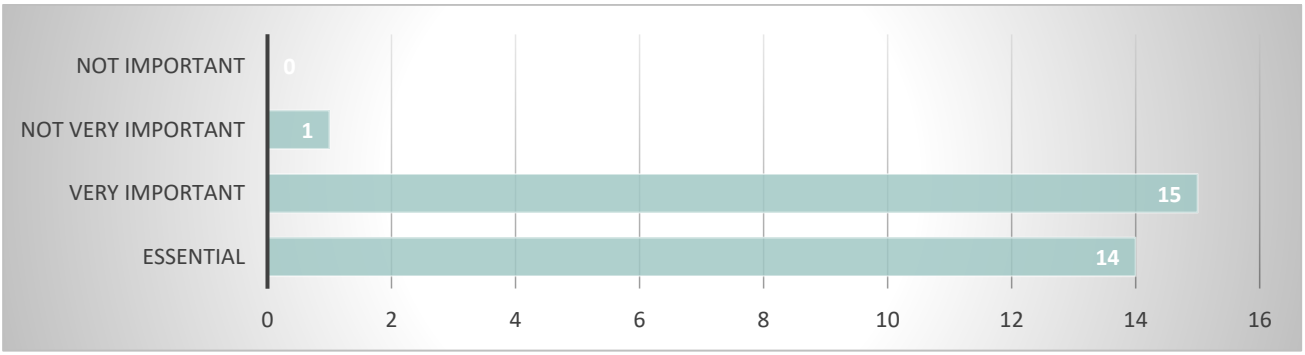
Crafts and cooking

Travel

Line dancing

Dog training

13. How important is it that Goadby Marwood has a thriving Village Hall?

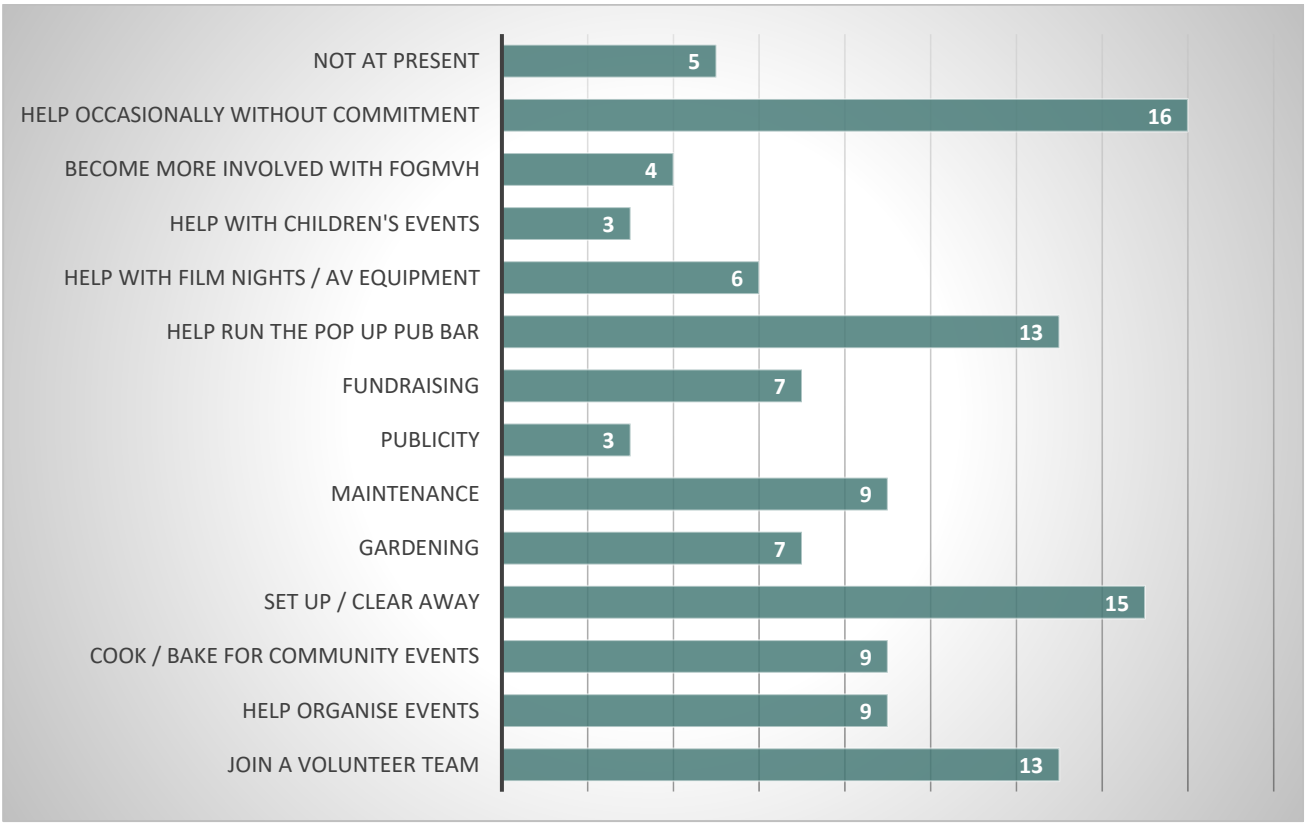


14. Looking ahead five years, imagine the Village Hall is thriving. What would you love to see happening there?

- Pop up pubs, meal nights, maybe a playground for children.
- More catered evenings and winter usage.
- Showing of important sports events on the new entertainment system.
- More social events of a varied nature and on a regular basis.
- I would love Goadby Day to make a return.
- Maintain activities.

- All of the suggested.
- Activities for the community organised by lots of different people so that the responsibility does not all fall on the same people.
- Regular events, well supported by villagers and people from further afield.
- Regular coffee mornings.
- To see it thriving and well attended.
- Music events and village fetes like they used to be.
- A variety of events being attended by villagers plus others.
- Continuing to offer a range of activities and events for the village community.
- Community breakfasts; events to raise money for charity; supper clubs, support for church.
- It would be lovely to see a wider group of people across the village and further afield use the building, create and run events of their own.
- Regular community events and lunches / suppers. More villagers involved with day to day running. A safe place for the village children to gather and be entertained.
- Lots of community gatherings which bring villagers closer to one another.
- A wider range of villagers usings and enjoying the village hall, particularly young families and newcomers.
- Live music, the valued pub nights, private events by others.
- Regular exercise classes or similar which focus on improving the health and fitness of the community. Regular movie nights, live music and sports events that will bring the community together.
- Local produce market. Events bringing people together where everyone is welcome.

15. Would you consider helping with the Village Hall? Tick any that might suit you.



16. Any other comments or suggestions?

- We're looking forward to the village hall opening again and meeting everyone in the village
- Playground swings / slide, somewhere for children to meet.
- Will be able to help more when time becomes more free.
- After the building work it would be nice to see the area in front of the hall developed.
- Look forward to the village hall becoming an asset to the village and the outside area being refurbished.
- I can't commit all of the time but would definitely like to help on the odd occasion.
- Really exciting project, can't wait to see all the changes and attend lots of events.
- The outside picnic tables need to be placed where they don't need to be moved as they are too heavy.
- Congratulations to the team on an amazing job rescuing this wonderful building. Such a commitment over 4 years from lease application to the grant opening. Incredible achievement.
- I would like to support the village hall as much as I can but it is difficult with my studies.
- Encouraging more people in the village, especially those with young families, to become involved with helping and organising events.

KEY FINDINGS AND LEARNINGS

The community survey provides a very encouraging picture of the importance residents attach to Goadby Marwood Village Hall and its future. With 32 completed responses, representing approximately 50% of village households, the survey achieved a good level of engagement and provides a useful indication of local priorities and aspirations. The findings demonstrate strong support for the renovation project and a clear desire for the Hall to become an active, welcoming focus for village life.

The response to the refurbishment was overwhelmingly positive: 24 respondents described themselves as very positive and a further seven as positive. Preserving the historic building was identified as one of the most important benefits, selected by 26 respondents, whilst the new kitchen was the most frequently selected individual improvement, with 29 votes. A warmer building (20), better toilets (16), the log burner (12) and the projector and cinema screen (11) were also recognised as important improvements. These results suggest that residents value both the preservation of the Hall's heritage and the practical improvements that will make it more comfortable, versatile and attractive to use.

There is also strong evidence that residents expect to make greater use of the Hall following the refurbishment. Fifteen respondents said they would definitely use it more often and 16 said they would probably do so. This is particularly encouraging given that, before the project, most respondents used the Hall only a few times a year or monthly. The challenge now is to turn this positive intention into regular attendance by offering a varied and appealing programme of activities.

The survey reveals clear preferences for the types of activities residents would like to see. Social and entertainment events are particularly popular, with strong support for Pop-Up Pubs (18 definite and 12 probable supporters) and seasonal celebrations (17 definite and 13 probable supporters). Film nights, live music, coffee mornings and quiz evenings also attracted encouraging support. Indeed, when asked to nominate just one activity that would encourage them to visit more often, Pop-Up Pubs were the most frequently mentioned choice. Other suggestions included sports screenings and bingo. This indicates that a varied programme of informal social events, rather than relying on one type of activity, is likely to appeal to the widest range of residents.

Food-related activities also offer considerable potential. Community breakfasts attracted particularly strong support, as did local food and produce events. Community lunches and supper clubs also received positive responses. These findings suggest that the new kitchen could become a particularly valuable asset, enabling the Hall to host a wider range of food-based social activities. There is an opportunity to build on existing successful events such as coffee mornings and Pop-Up Pubs, whilst introducing occasional new ideas such as local produce events.

One of the most significant findings concerns the timing of activities. Saturday daytime was the most popular option, selected by 19 respondents, followed by Friday evenings (18), Saturday evenings (17) and Sunday daytime (17). Sixteen respondents indicated that their preferred attendance time would depend on the activity. In contrast, weekday evenings were considerably less popular, with only seven selections. Most importantly, 21 respondents identified the timing of events as something that might prevent them from using the Hall more often. This suggests that careful scheduling and offering activities at a variety of times will be important in maximising participation. Other potential barriers were less significant: seven respondents felt that activities might not appeal to them, four cited not knowing what was happening, and three mentioned cost. No respondents identified accessibility or transport as a barrier.

The findings also demonstrate potential for increased private and community use of the building. Family parties were the most popular potential reason for hiring the Hall, selected by 18 respondents. There was also interest in hiring it for classes, workshops or business activities (eight respondents), meetings, clubs and groups (six respondents), with a further eight indicating that they would possibly consider hiring it. This represents an opportunity to develop both the Hall's community programme and its private hire income, making full use of the improved kitchen, toilets, heating and audio-visual facilities.

Perhaps the most important finding is the strength of feeling about the Hall's wider role in village life. Twenty-seven respondents identified bringing the community together as one of its three most important future roles. Preserving the historic building was selected by 17, whilst reducing rural isolation was selected by ten and providing activities and entertainment by nine. Furthermore, 29 respondents considered a thriving Village Hall either very important (15) or essential (14). The written comments reinforce these priorities, with residents expressing a desire for regular, well-attended events, greater involvement from people across the village and opportunities for newcomers and young families to feel part of the community. There is a clear expectation that the Hall should be more than simply a venue for occasional events: it should remain a welcoming focal point where people can meet, socialise and develop a stronger sense of community.

The survey also indicates a positive willingness to volunteer, although residents appear to favour flexible, manageable contributions rather than necessarily taking on formal responsibilities. Sixteen respondents said they would be willing to help occasionally without commitment, whilst 15 offered to assist with setting up and clearing away. Thirteen expressed interest in helping with the Pop-Up Pub bar and 13 in joining a volunteer team. There was also interest in maintenance, cooking and baking, organising events, and fundraising. A number of respondents offered specific skills and interests, including cookery, crafts, travel, line dancing and dog training. Importantly, some comments highlighted the need for more people to become involved in organising activities so that responsibility does not rest with the same small group of volunteers. This is an important learning for the future sustainability of FoGMVH.

Finally, whilst the survey demonstrates considerable enthusiasm, it also highlights some opportunities for further development. A number of respondents mentioned children and young families, with suggestions including a playground or outdoor space where children could meet. Others referred to improving the outside area, developing the space in front of the Hall and making the outdoor seating more practical. These comments suggest that the grounds and external areas could form part of the Hall's longer-term development, complementing the improvements to the building itself.

To complement the findings of this community survey, FoGMVH will also be gathering feedback on the completed building works and renovations at the official Opening Celebration on Saturday 21st November. Visitors, most of whom will not have seen the changes, will be invited to complete a short questionnaire giving their views on the improvements, the quality of the finished facilities and how well the renovated Hall meets the needs of the community. This will provide

an opportunity to capture feedback from a wider group of residents and guests, including those who may not have completed the original survey. The responses will help FoGMVH evaluate the success of the building project, identify any issues or areas for further improvement and inform the ongoing management and development of the Hall.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

Overall, the survey demonstrates an exceptionally positive level of support for the refurbishment and a strong desire to see Goadby Marwood Village Hall thrive as a central part of village life. Residents recognise the importance of preserving the historic building, value the significant improvements to its facilities and are enthusiastic about the opportunities these create. The findings suggest that the greatest potential lies in developing the Hall as a welcoming, inclusive and well-used community hub, offering a varied programme of social, recreational and cultural activities alongside opportunities for private hire.

The responses also provide some important lessons for the future. In particular, the importance of event timing, the need to broaden participation and the value of sharing responsibility for organising activities should inform the way FoGMVH operates. Although the response rate was encouraging, the findings represent the views of 32 households (approximately 50%) rather than the entire village. Interestingly, none of the established residents who responded said they had never used the Hall before. This suggests that further efforts should be made to reach people who may not yet feel connected to it, particularly newcomers, younger residents and families.

Based on the survey findings, the following actions are recommended:

1. Develop a varied and sustainable programme of activities.

Establish a forward programme of regular and occasional events, building on those that attracted the greatest support. Pop-Up Pubs, seasonal celebrations, film nights, live music, coffee mornings and community breakfasts would provide a good foundation. These could be complemented by occasional quizzes, fitness and wellbeing classes, craft activities, talks, community lunches and local produce events. New ideas should be introduced on a trial basis, with attendance and feedback used to assess their success. The emphasis should be on providing something for different interests and age groups rather than trying to run too many activities.

2. Give careful consideration to the timing of events.

Since event timing was the most frequently identified barrier to attendance, FoGMVH will aim to offer a mixture of daytime and evening activities, with particular emphasis on Friday evenings and weekends. Where possible, the programme should avoid relying too heavily on a single day or time. Varying the schedule will help accommodate different lifestyles and give more residents an opportunity to participate.

3. Encourage greater community involvement and develop a wider volunteer base.

The willingness of residents to offer occasional help is a valuable resource. FoGMVH will try to make it easy for people to contribute without feeling obliged to take on regular commitments. A volunteer team or informal event-by-event rota could help share tasks such as setting up, clearing away, running the bar, catering, gardening and maintaining the building. Residents' individual skills and interests could also be used to develop new activities. Importantly, responsibility for organising events should be shared more widely, avoiding over-reliance on the existing committee and a small number of regular volunteers.

4. Promote the Hall as a venue for private and community hire.

There is clear potential to increase income and use of the building through private bookings, particularly family celebrations. FoGMVH will actively promote the improved facilities, including the new commercial kitchen, better toilets,

heating, insulation and audio-visual equipment. Clear information about hire charges, facilities and booking arrangements will be made available on the website and through village communications. Encouraging local residents, groups and individuals to organise their own activities will also help increase use without placing additional demands on the committee.

5. Improve communication and awareness of activities.

Although relatively few respondents identified not knowing what was happening as a barrier, regular and effective communication will be essential to building attendance. A forward calendar of events, promoted through the website, email communications, village notices and social media, will help residents to plan ahead. Encouraging people to provide their contact details and opt in to receive updates will also help to build a wider audience. Consistent communication will be particularly important when introducing new activities.

6. Continue developing the Hall as an inclusive community asset.

The strong emphasis on bringing people together and reducing rural isolation will remain central to FoGMVH's approach. Particular attention will be given to involving newer residents, younger families and people who may not traditionally have attended village events. The suggestions concerning children's activities, outdoor seating and improvements to the surrounding grounds will be explored as part of a longer-term plan. It is important that any future developments complement the heritage character of the building and respond to demonstrated community needs.

7. Monitor progress and continue listening to the community.

The survey provides an important baseline against which the success of the refurbished Hall can be assessed. FoGMVH will keep simple records of attendance, private bookings, volunteer involvement and the popularity of different activities. Informal feedback will be encouraged after events, with a further community survey after the Hall has been operating for a year or two. This will help to establish whether the positive intentions expressed in the survey have translated into increased use and identify any groups or needs that remain under-served.

Final thoughts

The survey confirms that the refurbishment project has achieved much more than improving the physical condition and facilities of an important historic building. It has created new opportunities for the community to come together and given the Hall renewed potential as a place for friendship, shared experiences and community activity.

The most important message from residents is that they want to see a thriving Village Hall that is used regularly, supported by a wide cross-section of the community and organised through shared effort. FoGMVH now has an opportunity to build on the enthusiasm generated by the project, develop a sustainable programme of activities and encourage more people to take ownership of their village hall.

Ultimately, the long-term success of the project will not simply be measured by the quality of the building improvements, but by how successfully the Hall is used, enjoyed and valued by the community. The survey provides a very positive starting point and a clear indication of the direction in which FoGMVH should move.