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Otterhampton Village Hall Refurbishment Survey

Conducted by

The Community Council for Somerset

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SUMMARY

Demographic data:

- From the 366 paper surveys distributed, 102 respondents participated in the survey, representing 222 **household members overall**. In CCS's experience of conducting similar facilities surveys, the 28% response rate is a good community response, particularly on a single issue consultation.
- All respondents live in the parish, with the exception of 1 who lives in Nether Stowey. The large majority live in Combwich (92%) while 5% live in Otterhampton and 2% in Steart. For all respondents who gave an answer, their house is their main residence .
- 7 in 10 respondents, have lived in the parish for more than 10 years (71%). Over 2 in 5 are long term residents (45%), having lived in the parish for over 20 years.
- 45-64 year olds are the largest group of respondents (40%), followed by 65-74 years (25%). Just over half the respondents are working age (under 65yrs: 51%), compared to those of retirement age (65+yrs: 49%).
- When looking at **overall household composition**, 45-64 year olds are by far the largest overall group (31%). 65-74 year olds are the next largest group (17%), with fairly equal numbers of 25-44 year olds (11%) and 75-84 year olds (12%). Further analysis shows that more than 1 in 4 households are families with children or young people (26%).

- The overwhelming majority of respondents agree **that Otterhampton needs a high quality Village Hall** with around 7 in 10 who strongly agree. Emerging themes from comments are the role that the Village Hall plays in bringing the community together, and the need for updating the current facility to ensure it meets the needs of all its users, particularly for disabled people. The Village Hall appears to be the only facility in Otterhampton able to fulfil this community cohesion role. 3 respondents indicate that they don't currently use the Village Hall, although 1 of them has been a user of the Hall in the past
- 9 in 10 respondents also **support the sympathetic refurbishment of the Village Hall**. Many remarks focus on the current condition of the Hall, especially the need for modernisation of the facilities and the unattractive exterior. There are suggestions for improved disabled access to all areas, storage and acoustics. Others raise concerns over difficulties with parking. There are also suggestions to make more use of the outside space.
- All respondents answering the question (89%) have **attended events** at the Village Hall over the last year, and the large majority of them have attended multiple events. The most popular are the village markets. However, there are a wide variety of events and activities which attract a large proportion of respondents such as pantomime and murder mystery evenings, the social club, committee meetings, OVH events and coffee mornings to name a few.

A small proportion have **hired** the Village Hall in the last year (16%), a few of them for more than

one activity/function. It is hired most frequently for private events, craft groups and themed evenings such as a pantomime and murder mystery evenings.

- A good reflection of community support is that more than 3 in 5 parishioners (63%) have **offered their help if the Village Hall refurbishment project progresses**. Word of mouth, door-to-door distribution of information and practical support helping with the refurbishment are the strongest ways in which of these members of the community will show their support.
- From the 9 in 10 with a view, there is no majority consensus about what make the **Village Hall is less attractive to hire**. However, the largest proportion consider that the Hall's **current state of repair** detracts from its appeal as a suitable venue (48%). A sizeable number also see poor access for disabled people as a barrier. Poor kitchen and parking difficulties toilet facilities also lessen the appeal of the facility, while the condition of the toilets is a concern for around 3 in 10 respondents. 1 in 4 respondents feel that facilities are better elsewhere. Although a smaller proportion consider that there is a lack of activities for families, this represents more than half the families taking part in the survey.
- For those with a view (80%), most would **be more likely to attend activities/events** if there were more activities of interest offered. An improvement of the kitchen and toilet facilities are also sought by over 1 in 3 respondents, and a similar proportion would be drawn to the facility if there was better publicity of activities and events, or more whole community events offered. Around 1 in 4 would use the Village Hall more if there were more activities for older people, or improvements to the condition of the Hall such as better heating and lighting.
- There is significant interest in **attending activities at the refurbished Village Hall** (95% of respondents expressing a preference). The most popular is a community cinema, while a large number are interested in exhibitions and shows, a film club, gardening club and exercise/fitness classes. Around 1 in 4 would attend social events or clubs, performing arts events, arts/crafts and adult education classes.
- 3 in 10 of those answering the question would be **willing to run or help run new activities and events**. Suggestions include after school activities, adult education events, setting up a library/book club and craft classes for children and adults run by a local willow artist.
- For those answering the question, **the majority would prefer to use the Village Hall for evening activities during the week**, with Saturday evening being the next most popular choice of time for events and activities. In terms of afternoon users, preference is much closer when looking at the best times of the week for users, Saturday afternoon being narrowly more popular than weekdays or Sundays. Weekday mornings are most popular with those in the 25-44 years, 65-74 years and 75-84 years age brackets. While weekday evenings are most convenient for 45-64 year olds. Those in the 85+ bracket prefer afternoon activities during the week or on a Saturday.
- Of those taking part in groups and activities outside the parish, the large majority do so because **there is currently no activity meeting their need at the Hall** (albeit some activities are less likely to be provided locally e.g. swimming, gym etc.).

The **cost of attending activities** appears to be the smallest factor preventing respondents from taking part in activities at the Village Hall.

- In terms of **activities attended outside the parish** respondents have a wide range of interests from sports and the arts, to social and community activities and wider membership of regional

and national clubs/societies. Activities mentioned by 5 or more respondents include: cinema club, theatre/concert/music events, gym, swimming.

- A small number of respondents indicate that they either run a **local business or work for a local organisation** (8%). Meetings, workshops and to a lesser extent training sessions are the most likely way in which these respondents would **hire the Village Hall**.

