

Gooseacre community facilities consultation: analysis of responses

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1. Background and overall numbers

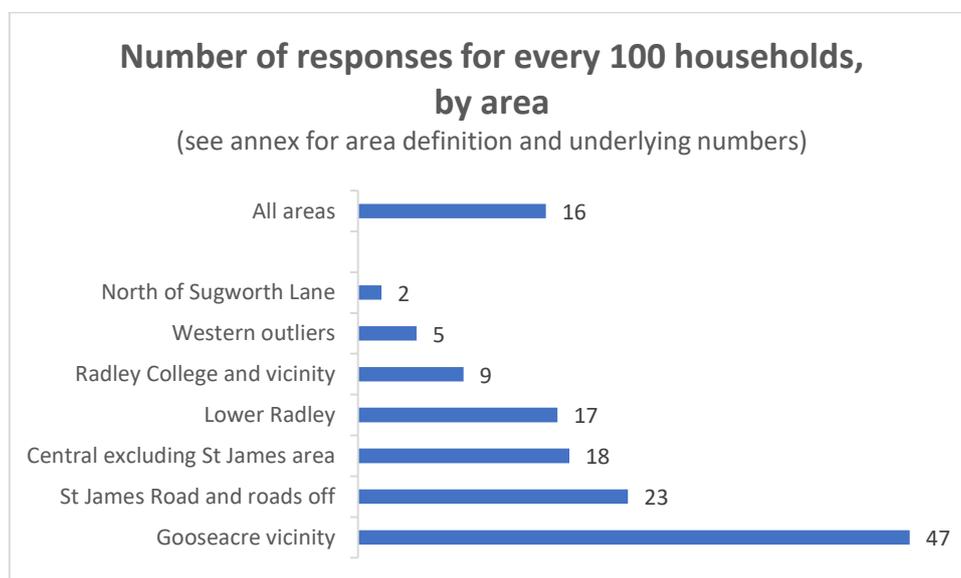
In Late February 2021, Radley Parish Council distributed a combined leaflet and questionnaire to every home in the parish, of which there are just over 1000. A link to an online version of the questionnaire was also placed on the parish website. The deadline for returns was 19 March.

167 people filled in the questionnaire, 133 online and 34 on paper. There was no requirement that there should be only one response per household, and some members of the same household submitted independently. Comments were also submitted on behalf of Radley History Club and Radley guides and rangers.

In order to understand any differences of view between long established residents and more recent arrivals, respondents were asked to tick a box showing how long they had lived in Radley. The distribution of responses by length of residence is shown in the table alongside.

Length of residence	Numbers of responses	%
Less than two years	8	5%
2 - 10 years	36	21%
11 - 30 years	77	46%
Over 30 years	43	26%
No information	3	2%
Total	167	100%

Respondents were also asked to enter their postcodes so that variations in usage and in views as between different parts of the parish could be identified. There was a marked difference in the response rates across the parish, as seen below. People living in the vicinity of Gooseacre were more than twice as likely to respond as any other group, and three times as likely to respond as the rate for the parish as a whole.

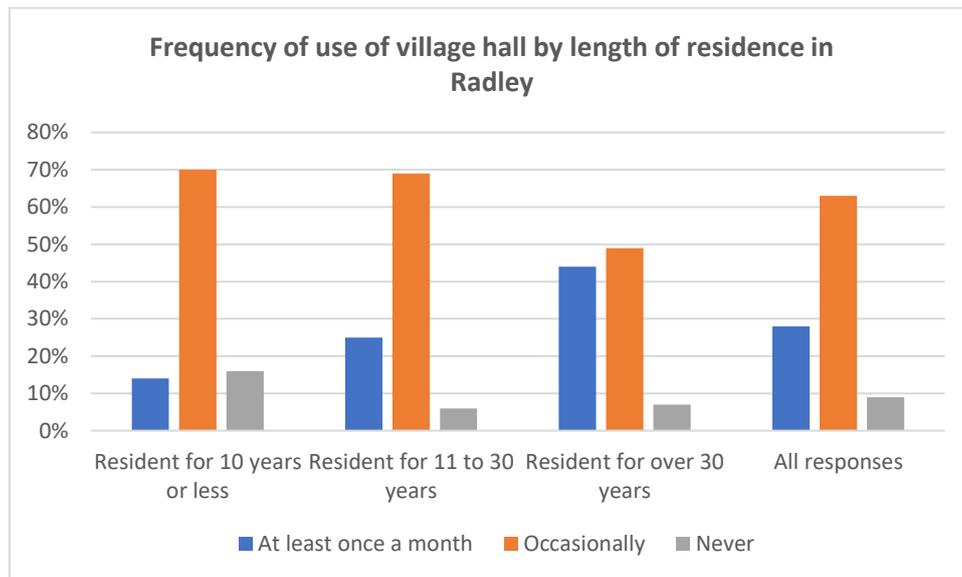


2. Use of the village hall, and views on indoor space

Current usage (column E)

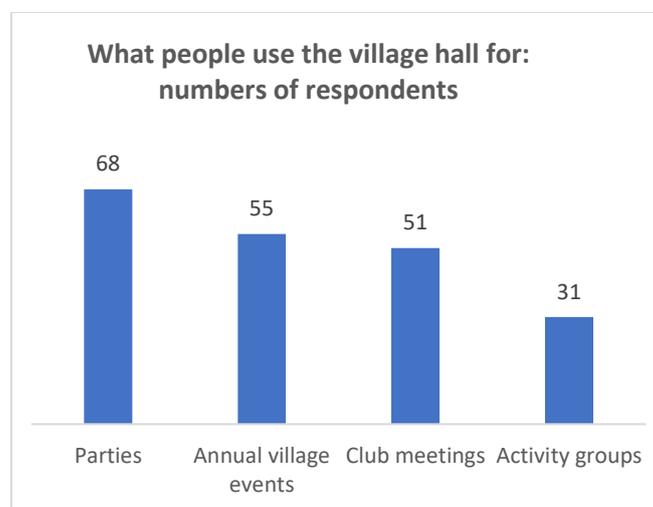
Respondents were asked to indicate how often they use the village hall. Responses showed that the majority (63%) use the hall only occasionally. 19% use it weekly or more and a further 10% at least once a month. 9% said they never use the hall.

There is a striking variation in hall usage as between long established residents and those who have moved relatively recently to the area. As shown in the chart below, 44% of those who have lived in Radley for more than 30 years use the village hall at least once a month as compared to only 14% of those who moved to Radley in the last 10 years.



What people use the hall for (column F)

Respondents were asked what activities they used the village hall for, with four pre-set responses suggested. All respondents completed this column except some of the small minority who said they never use it.



Other activities mentioned by respondents were voting (21 respondents), exhibitions and presentations about local events (6), auctions (3), quiz nights, jumble sales, brownies, exercise classes and pilates, youth club, dog training, bell ringers and bowling (1 or 2 each).

Indoor activities people would like to see provided for (Column O)

130 respondents offered views on the question of what indoor activities they would like to see provided for, a few pointing out that they did not make much use of the hall at present. Many respondents wanted to see a continuation of the activities that already take place in the village hall. There were also a range of suggestions for new activities.

Exercise and fitness

Exercise activities and fitness classes are important to people. 26 respondents referred to them expressly, with 13 specifically mentioning yoga and 8 mentioning pilates. 10 respondents thought dancing classes should be catered for. 10 respondents questioned whether badminton might be possible and 8 mentioned table tennis. 3 respondents wanted to see short mat bowling in the hall. There was also a mention of gymnastics, boxing, netball and a skittle alley.

Drama and music

There was also interest in the provision of facilities for drama and music, mentioned in 11 responses. There were references to amateur dramatics, a choir, a live music or folk club and a monthly band to dance to. Associated with these, the case was made for a permanent stage and for modern audio-visual facilities including a 'loop' for the hard of hearing.

Parties and alcohol

12 respondents mentioned parties, the biggest current use of the hall (see above). 5 suggested that an alcohol licence might be sought though there was recognition that this might result in neighbour nuisance issues.

Community events, activities and possible cafe

On community activities, there were references to annual events which are currently held in the hall, such as the flower show (7) and the Christmas bazaar (2). There were also references to community events such as bingo (7), jumble sales, talks, community discussions and public meetings.

In a more general vein, there were many comments from people seeking activities to bring the community together, such as the respondent who wanted 'plenty of activities for the widening village community', another who looked for 'a community hub, somewhere for people who don't drive to be able to socialise' and a third who wanted to see 'more community wide events - summer picnic / bbq etc'. In this context, 13 respondents were keen to see a café established, which they suggested would be 'a good meeting point for members of the community', a place for 'those using the playground and those meeting friends, local group meetings and fitness classes'.

Clubs

There were many references to existing and past clubs, and the importance of providing a space for them. Many of the clubs mentioned are aimed at particular age groups. There were 4 references to the retirement group activities. 9 respondents mentioned the importance of mother/ baby/ toddler groups, and there were several references to the need for clubs for children and teenagers. One respondent wanted to see space made for the Radley Little Library. 15 wanted to see facilities for a youth club, several regretting the closure of the club that flourished in Radley for many years. 7 respondents mentioned the importance of providing for scouts, guides, brownies and/or cubs. The leader of the village's Guide group provided detailed information on their needs, stating that their

priorities were for (i) a secure garage sized storage area close to the community that we can access at weekly meetings; and (ii) an area that we can use for tent pitching, pioneering, backwoods cooking, bbq's, games and camp fires.

Other comments

- It would be good to have activities which brought the different age groups together.
- Evening activities for working people could give newer residents an opportunity to get to know each other.
- The priority should be to use the facilities for local people rather than aim to attract users in from elsewhere.
- Ideas for activities are all very well but only if you can find the people to run them.
- A hub for home workers might be welcome for those who work from home.
- A function room smaller than the current hall would be useful for certain types of meeting and class.

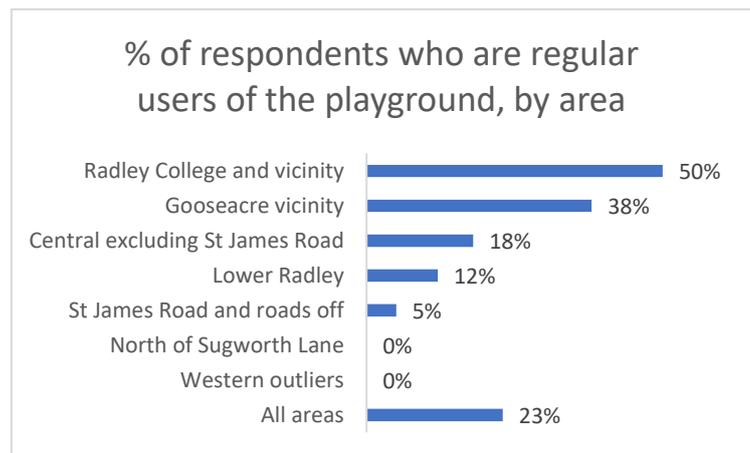
3. The playground

Current usage (column G)

23% of those responding to the questionnaire were regular users of the playground (i.e., they used it at least once a month). This is a smaller proportion of respondents than are regular users of the village hall (28%) but a slightly larger proportion than are regular users of the playing field (21%). Clearly the playground is relevant only to residents caring for young children or visiting grandchildren.

Analysis of playground use by location shows an interesting distribution, with respondents in the Radley College vicinity more than twice as likely to use the playground as the average for all locations. This is likely to reflect the household composition of College families, and perhaps also the greater likelihood that those who use the playground would have completed the questionnaire.

Proximity is also a factor in the use of the playground, with high use by respondents in the Gooseacre vicinity and none by those living north of Sugworth Lane.



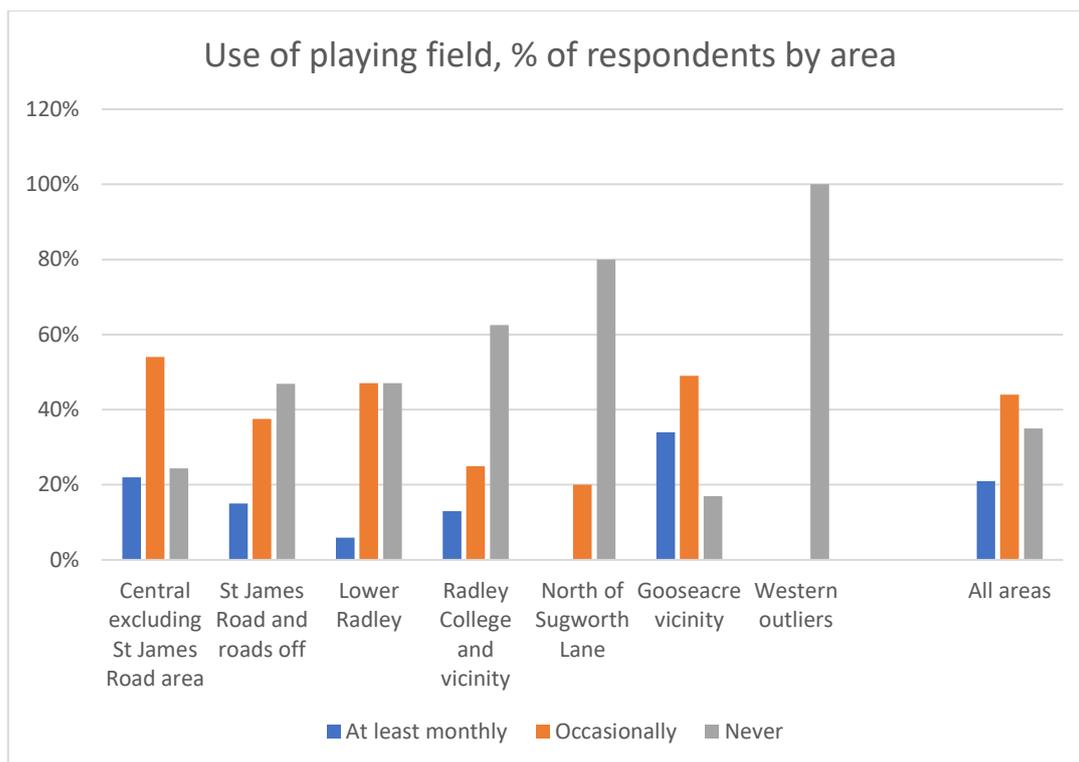
Comments on the playground (mainly column P)

See 'Outdoor activities that people would like to see provided for' below.

4. The playing field and views on outdoor space

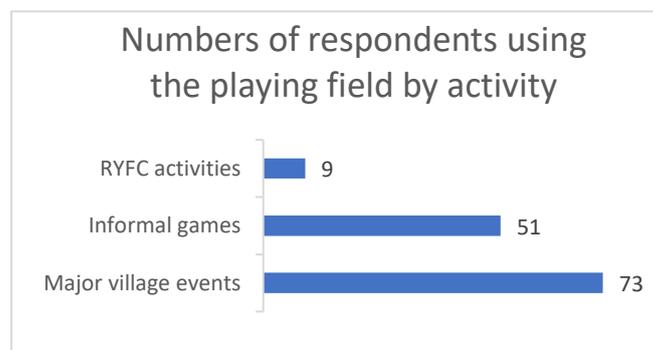
Current usage of playing field (column H)

21% of all respondents said that they used the playing field at least monthly, a smaller percentage than those claiming regular use of the other facilities at Gooseacre. 35% said they never use the playing field at all. As with use of the playground, regular users are skewed towards those who live closest to Gooseacre.



What people use the playing field for (column I)

Respondents were asked what they or their families use the playing field for, with three pre-set categories. Of the 105 respondents who said that they used the playing field at least occasionally, numbers stating that they used it for each of the pre-set categories is shown in the chart alongside. Approaching a half of all respondents said that they had attended major village events there. About a third use it for informal games. Only about 5% said they were involved in RYFC activities.



Other comments were that the field is used for picnics, running, walking, rugby training, frisbee, kicking a ball about and Tai Chi. One respondent commented that they could not use the field as dogs are not allowed. A respondent from the Sugworth Lane area said they never went there because there was no publicity for events.

Outdoor activities that people would like to see provided for

Individual sports and activities

A large number of possible activities were proposed. These included ball sports such as cricket, rugby practice, hockey, tennis and basketball; other outdoors sports such as archery, a climbing wall and a running track; and play/ exercise facilities of various kinds including an outdoor gym, kick wall, zip wire, sunken trampoline. There were also suggestions for more natural areas such as a community orchard, wildflower area and a nature trail; for a dedicated dog walking area and/or dog training provision; and for miscellaneous other facilities such as a war memorial and the ability to provide a venue for weekend caravan rallies.

There were a number of comments that play equipment such as a kick wall should be kept well away from houses.

Outdoor gym

21 respondents mentioned an outdoor gym. While most of these were in support of the idea, a minority noted that these facilities were not always well used in practice.

The playground

20 respondents commented on the playground, many noting that it was well-used, the majority looking for a larger area. There were various suggestions for specific additional pieces of equipment, including some designed to cater for older children up to 11 years. There were also suggestions for more benches and picnic tables, and a café area nearby.

Community activities

Several respondents highlighted the importance of community-wide outside events, such as the annual summer fete that used to be held. There was enthusiasm for a community sports day, a food festival or craft markets in the summer months.

RYFC activities

There were four responses querying whether the proposals did enough for the football club. One commented on the reduction in internal space proposed for the club and another on the lack of showers in the plan for the new building. There were a couple of suggestions for additional facilities and one comment that it was important to retain space for football.

Four respondents suggested that there was an over-emphasis on provision for the football club, questioning how many children from Radley play for the local team, and arguing that it was important to prioritise local users. Two commented that the pavilion was currently underused and endorsed the idea of adapting part of the pavilion for other users. One questioned the future of the club if the southern playing field is lost to development for housing and hence whether it makes sense to invest money in facilities for the club.

Integration of indoor and outdoor facilities

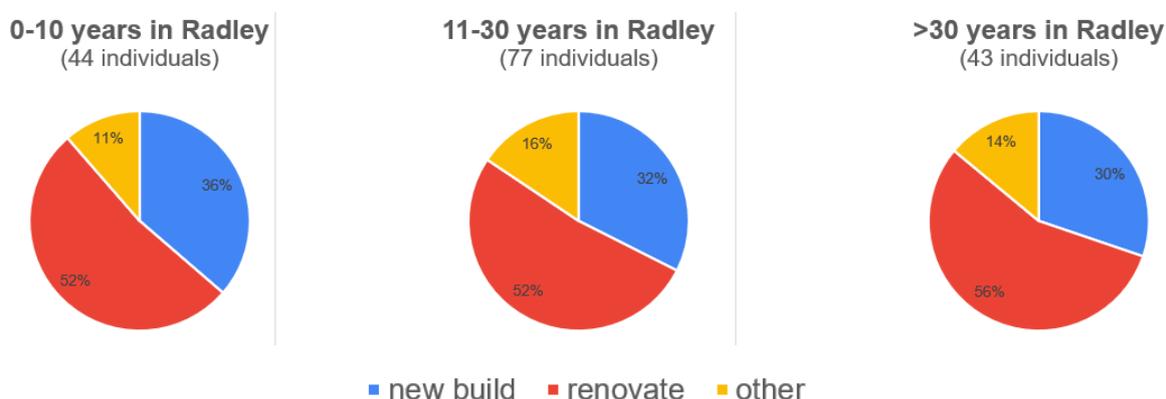
Several respondents made the point that it is important that the indoor and outdoor facilities are thought through together so that they may be used together for major village events, for parties, BBQs and certain club events and so that any café facilities benefit from outdoor space and proximity to the children's play area.

5. New build v renovation

Respondents were asked to say whether they had a preference for renovation or new build, and to support this with reasons. All but three all respondents filled in this section. 14% did not state a preference ('undecided', 'no comment', or blank). Those who did express a firm opinion were just over 3:2 in favour of renovation rather than a new build.

- Renovation: 87
- New build: 54
- No preference stated: 23

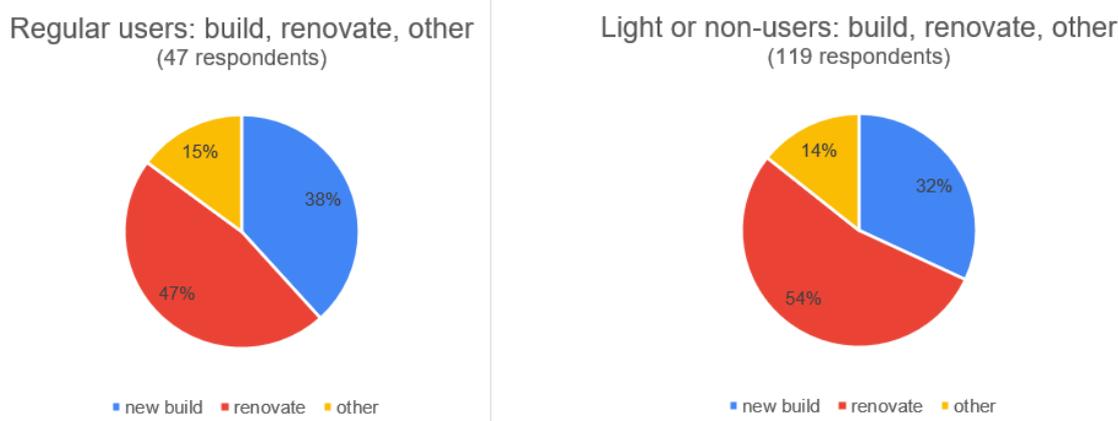
The ratios varied marginally according to how long the respondent had lived in Radley, with most support for renovation amongst the longest-serving residents; most support for new build amongst the newest group.



Rebuild v renovate mapped against current hall usage

It is striking that 72% of all respondents use the hall 'never' or 'occasionally'. This could be seen as a promising sign, in that almost 3 out of 4 respondents are looking ahead to what use they could make of the hall, in future, even though they do not use it at present.

The preference for starting afresh is highest amongst those who have been using the hall regularly – and therefore know it first-hand. (Annex 2 shows that regular users who have lived here for less than 10 years are particularly in favour of new build – but this cohort is small.).



See Annexes 7.1 and 7.2 for further breakdowns by how much the residents use the hall, how long they have lived in Radley, and which sub-area of Radley they live in.

New-build v renovate – comments summary

Most people who responded made substantive comments to back up their answer. There were very clear clusters of answers, with a handful of interesting outliers.

From the 86 in favour of **renovation**, 54 gave substantive reasons. The recurring issues were

- Affordability versus perceived benefit (mentioned 50 times – i.e., virtually everyone)
For example: *“I see no justification for demolishing perfectly good buildings and replacing them with new structures that would add comparatively little in the way of extra facilities, but would require expenditure out of all proportion to the additional benefits provided.”*
- Money has recently been spent on replacing the roof (11 times)
- For environmental/green reasons, it is better to renovate (9 times)
- Combining the hall and pavilion is wrong in principle because of the likely clash of interests between simultaneous users – such as children’s parties and football on Saturday afternoons. (5 times)
- Renovating would cause less disruption to current users and to neighbours (4 times)

From the 56 in favour of **new build**, 38 gave substantive comments. The recurring issues were

- The decision should be focused on the long-term (19). For example: *“I believe that a re-build, although more expensive than a refurb/renovation, would give a better facility capable of meeting long term needs.”*
- It would be more attractive /a good statement about the village (13)
- It would be more energy efficient and lower cost to run (12)
- The layout can be tailor-made for current and future usability (8)
- It will attract more users, and therefore more commercially viable (5)

From the 23 who were **undecided, or expressed no preference**, 7 made substantive comments. The most notable recurring point was that more detailed information is needed before a choice can be made (4)

Additional sample comments in favour of renovation

*“For environmental reasons, it seems wasteful to abandon the current village hall which, with renovation, could be used for many more years. Finally, the cost - this is a huge amount of money to raise in a village where many families are struggling with the impact of Covid on their finances.”
(2-10 years in Radley, occasional user)*

“Renovation seems adequate and conserves cash.” (11-30, occasional)

“To raise £500k in times of austerity is perhaps unrealistic. I can't see the value add in terms of facilities between the proposed new build and renovation.” (11-30, monthly)

“rebuild this would take our hall and pavilion out of action for some considerable time, of which, as no functions have happened in the past year, this could cause some unrest, as some groups are really missing, not only going out, but meeting up with other people....It would also disrupt use of the field, parking, and local residents, with heavy duty lorries, and noise pollution....The proximity of Hall and Pavilion is ideal, as the two are used for completely different activities, but close enough for our village functions, when needed.” (>30, monthly)

Additional sample comments in favour of new build

“New build - would allow sustainable modern building materials in addition to creating a space suitable for long term use and future generations of the village. Renovation would struggle to do this as well.” (2-10, *regular*)

“I believe that a re-build, although more expensive than a refurb/renovation, would give a better facility capable of meeting long term needs. In my experience of several building projects, refurbishments generally fail to meet the initial objectives and always cost more than originally expected; they are a compromise that often disappoint. Bite the bullet and go for something new.” (2-10, *never*)

“New build would be preferable... Aesthetically, it becomes a 'statement' about the future of Radley - forward-looking, up-to-date and 'can-do' - an injection of hope and intention.” (11-30, *occasionally*)

“If you renovate present village hall and it would only last another 30 years it's short sighted and will end up a lot more expensive in the future to then build a new one.” (11-30, *never*)

“New Build...always think of the future.” (>30, *never*)

“New facility. Would be designed to current requirements, be energy efficient and cater for all diverse users. People could take pride in it instead of an uneasy embarrassment with the old one, however nicely refurbished.” (>30, *occasionally*)

Sample comments from the 'undecideds'

“Rebuild if money available otherwise we renovate” (>30, *weekly*)

“It would be good to see more developed designs and costings before reaching a view on whether new build or renovation makes most sense.” (11-30, *undecided*)

“Village Hall - demolish & rebuild in current position. Pavilion - renovate in current position. Many of activities that traditionally happen in village halls & pavilions are not suited to sharing facilities in one building.” (>30, *weekly*)

Outlier comments to take note of

“If the future recreational use of the current playing field were secure spending £1m+ on a rebuild would seem more reasonable. However, given the likelihood that only the Radley College owned field will survive (and no guarantee even of that) I think it a better plan to renovate.” (11-30, *occasional*)

6. Other comments

Two questions asked for general reactions, and other comments.

‘Please let us have any other immediate reactions to any of the plans and ideas in this leaflet. These should include any views you have on where a new building, if we have one, should be sited.’

(Page 7 / Column L). ‘Please... let us have any thoughts not covered elsewhere.’ (Page 8 / Column Q)

A total of 113 respondents made one or more substantive points in these places. Of these, the top three topics grouped around the positioning of the building on the site (61), car parks and other access issues (33), and fundraising (45).

Hall and pavilion location (61)

- 36 favour the hall should remain in its current position. (NB of these 36, 10 would like a new build, but on the existing hall location.) The arguments are as follows:
 - The pavilion site would be too close to dwellings – hence noise problems (12)
 - The pavilion site would be too far from car park or other car parking issue (11)
 - Combining hall and pavilion would be a mistake; buildings must stay where they are (6)
- 20 specifically favour the pavilion site. There were a couple of references to south facing but otherwise few reasons offered.
- 5 did not state a clear preference, but 2 of these raised again the view that a village hall close to the school would be preferable.

Car park / cycling and pedestrian access (33)

- Car park issues were a concern to 26 respondents. Of those who made specific points
 - 7 argued for no increase in parking spaces, for environmental reasons
 - 5 highlighted safety concerns, and wanted the needs of children to be priorities above needs of car drivers
 - 4 argued for more parking
 - Others were concerned about the distance between the suggested car park and the new build
 - Disabled access was also mentioned
- 7 respondents called for improving cycle and pedestrian connectivity to the village, and/or improved bike racks and storage.

Finance-related (45)

- 23 gave ideas for village community initiatives such as ‘buy-a-brick’, fun-runs, raffles – useful but small-scale
- 14 expressed general concern, but offered no suggestions large or small
- 10 gave ideas for large-scale fundraising. These included
 - The need for an experienced grant fund-raiser (paid or voluntary)
 - Radley community share scheme (as per the village shop)
 - National Lottery Community Fund
 - Government’s [village hall refurbishment grant scheme](#)
 - Landfill tax grant
- 1 pointed out that some of the long-term income stream comes from people who travel from other towns/villages, and hence this has an impact on car-park provision.

Other topics

- Environmental / green priorities (9) – these also included ideas for wildlife/environmental projects throughout the village.
- Security and vandalism issues were raised by 8 respondents (3 ‘renovators’ and 5 ‘new builders’), including the request for CCTV
- Football Club issues were raised by 6 people. Three questioned why RYFC should be such a big beneficiary of this project. Others questioned what would happen to the football club if the second field to the south of the playing field is developed for housing, and whether we should be spending money on facilities for them, given this uncertainty.
- Long-term land ownership: it was noted that before investing in either refurbishment or new building, we would need to secure the lease period for the Gooseacre site.
- How usage affects design: *“It seems there is a change in human habits - modern families prefer involvement in short term projects - less straightforward to find folk who are prepared and able to commit to long term service such as youth leaders - in future this is likely to be better supported as small-scale commercial projects and opportunities for people to hire facilities to set up clubs and services which people pay for.”*

7. Annex material

7.1 Radley sub-areas: analysis of responses by area and definition of areas by road names

Responses compared to household numbers, by area

Area	Number of households	Number of respondents	Number of responses for every 100 dwellings
Central excluding St James area	207	38	18
St James Road and roads off	145	33	23
Lower Radley	98	17	17
Radley College and vicinity	90	8	9
North of Sugworth Lane	303	5	2
Gooseacre vicinity	118	56	47
Western outliers	58	3	5
No postcode/ non-Radley postcode		7	
Grand Total	1019	167	16

Central excluding St James Road area: Church Road, New Road, Catherine Close, Catherine Court, Spinneys Close, Turners Close, Bowyer Close, Stonhouse Crescent, Foxborough Road 47-108 and 73-120.

St James Road and roads off: St James Road, St James Terrace, Selwyn Crescent, Ferny Close, Little Howe Close.

Lower Radley: Lower Radley, Lower Radley caravan park, Shaw’s Copse, Pumney and Old Boat House, the boat house.

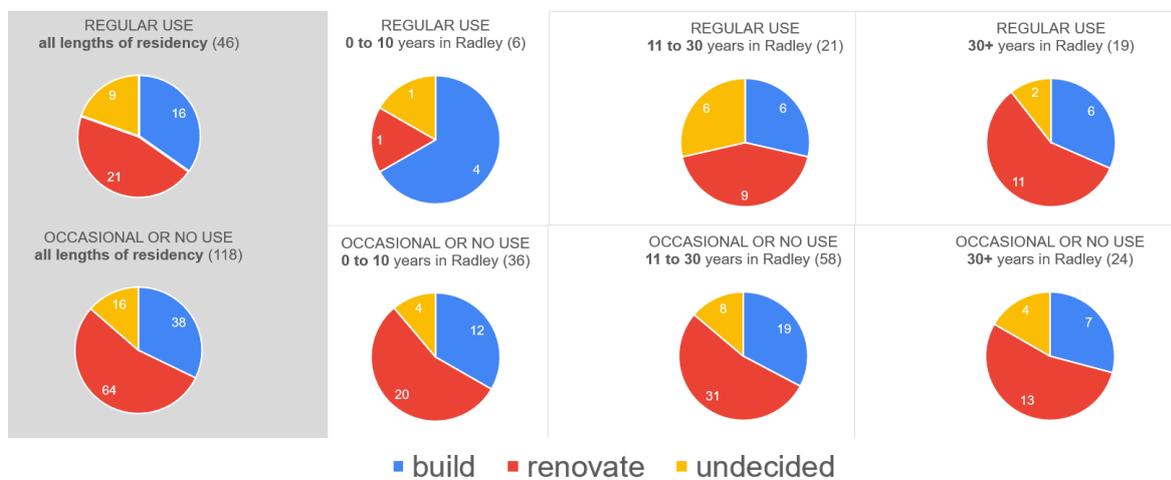
Radley College and vicinity: Kennington Road named houses plus properties on Radley College campus.

North of Sugworth Lane: Bigwood, Woodlands, Pebble Hill, 98-102 Kennington Road, The Limes, 137-151 Sugworth Lane, Sugworth Crescent.

Gooseacre vicinity: Gooseacre, Badgers Copse, Norfolk Close, Drysdale Close, 1 -78 Foxborough Road, Whites Lane, Thrupp Lane, Wick Hall, Barton Lane Thrupp houses.

Western outliers. Sugworth Lane at west end, Bayworth Road, Lodge Hill, Peachcroft Farm.

7.2 ‘Renovate or new build’ shown by combining ‘regular use v occasional use’, and ‘length or residency in Radley’



7.3 Percentages in favour of ‘Renovate or new build’ shown by the Radley sub-areas

