



**SURVEY AMONG RESIDENTS OF PEWSEY
COMMUNITY AREA**

Prepared for

PEWSEY PARISH COUNCIL

September 2008

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In order to obtain the views on the concept of the Alfred Project from residents in the Pewsey Community Area a simple postal questionnaire was sent to all households. A total of 5,094 questionnaires were sent out resulting in a total of 1005 completed questionnaires being returned by the end of August. This represents a return rate of 20% which is exceptionally high for postal surveys and indicates a high level of interest among residents of Pewsey and the surrounding area. 835 questionnaires were accepted for analysis; the remaining 170 were received after the deadline for processing. Although questionnaires were addressed to households there was usually one person who completed the questionnaire on behalf of the household. In some cases two people from a household completed the questionnaire jointly.
- 1.2 Interest in the Alfred Project was further emphasised by a high number of spontaneous comments made by respondents. The comments given suggested a degree of polarisation between those supporting the concept and those who were opposed, and some of the more relevant remarks have been included within the body of this report.
- 1.3 It should be emphasised that the results of this survey should be treated with a degree of caution. Respondents were, in effect, being asked to comment on a 'wish list' without any financial commitment on their part. That said, the results do prioritise the activities and facilities which residents would like to see being provided by the Alfred Project.
- 1.4 A copy of the questionnaire is appended to this report.
- 1.5 Questionnaires were sent out and completed during August 2008.

2. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The high level of response to this survey indicates a high level of interest in the Alfred Project in the Pewsey catchment area.
- 2.2 The age distribution of the sample responding was skewed towards older people which in turn reflects the age profile of the Pewsey Community Area.
- 2.3 Facilities wanted or currently used by respondents formed a 'wish list', with some facilities listed already available whilst others would be in addition to those currently available.
- 2.4 By far the most important facility mentioned by respondents was the swimming pool, with 2 in 3 respondents mentioning this as a facility they did, or would like to, use. Analysis of use by time of day indicated that many respondents would like to use the pool beyond the current restricted hours which are determined by day time school use during term time. This finding is significant and indicates that consideration should be given to re-assessing school use to see if more time can be released for public access.
- 2.5 More than 4 in 10 respondents would like to see adult education classes at the centre. This should provide encouragement to Pewsey Vale School to implement the proposed Extended Learning Programme. However, it must be recognised that there are already some courses available in Pewsey at the PACT Centre so the content of any programme should not duplicate those already available. It should also be recognised that there is a significant difference between what people would like to see and what they would be prepared to support.
- 2.6 A comparable number of respondents expressed an interest in an Activity Room, described as suitable for dance, yoga, etc. We know that classes of this nature have taken place in the past at the Bouverie Hall and classes currently take place in Village Halls in the Pewsey Vale. In fact, some teachers of dance, Pilates, and yoga responded to the questionnaire offering their services to the Alfred Project. The fact that the relatively small number of people undertaking these activities in the past and currently does suggest that active participation in these activities within the Alfred Project will be far less than is suggested by the number of people interested. In our view the building of a specific Activity Hall to accommodate these activities would be risky.
- 2.7 Again 4 in 10 respondents would like to see a café within the Alfred Project. Experience of leisure centres elsewhere indicates that café facilities are unlikely to be self financing and franchises have a chequered history. A social enterprise may be a way forward but would not add significantly to potential revenue for Project Alfred as a whole.
- 2.8 The relatively low level of interest in squash (13%) and the sports hall (12%) raises the question of the most economic use of space within the current leisure centre. The sports hall is currently available for use by Pewsey Vale School during the day in term time which limits its use for the public during these times. Clearly the sports hall is a multi use facility for activities such as badminton, five-a-

side football, martial arts, and trampolining but consideration should be given to extended public use as well as potential use for other activities.

- 2.9 Respondents were asked to rank a number of listed issues on a scale of 1-8 in order to determine those most important to current and potential users. The most important of all was 'affordable prices', which obviously can mean different things to different people depending on their personal circumstances. However, a number of respondents using facilities elsewhere – principally Devizes and Marlborough – indicated that Pewsey compared unfavourably with competing facilities particularly in view of the limited access, equipment available, and current state of repair of the centre. This issue needs to be addressed in determining a pricing structure for the facilities which are, or will be, available.
- 2.10 The overall cleanliness of the current centre was mentioned as another important issue, with a number of negative comments relating to the overall cleanliness and specific mention of the changing rooms. There is certainly a need for some refurbishment particularly in view of the very significant capital sums spent by Kennet on competing facilities.
- 2.11 Another issue mentioned at a high level of importance was the friendliness of staff. This was not necessarily a criticism of existing staff but a desire to feel welcome and receive constructive help and advice.
- 2.12 When asked about their interest in a number of specific activities the responses reflected those obtained earlier: there was a significant interest in Pilates, yoga, aerobics, and dance lessons – in that order. This in turn reflected the female bias among respondents. The fact that most, if not all, of these activities are available elsewhere in the Pewsey Vale raises the question as to whether there would be a significant level of active support if they were available within the Alfred Project.
- 2.13 Overall the results of this survey, whilst reflecting the views of the community within the Pewsey Vale, should be treated with some caution since they do not take into account the potential costs involved or indeed the commitment of respondents to participate in the activities listed.

3. PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

- 3.1 Those completing the questionnaire were initially asked to complete a number of pre-coded questions to establish their age group, gender, and the number of children – if any – in their household.
- 3.2 The age distribution of the sample under-represented younger members of the population – those in the age ranges 12-17, 18-25, and 26-35 – but there was an even response from those in older age groups and the results indicated that the distribution of the sample by age among those 35+ was proportionate to other data available elsewhere.
- 3.3 The sample indicated that 2 in 3 respondents were female and 1 in 4 was male. A further 1 in 10 did not divulge their gender.
- 3.4 Three in 10 of those responding had dependent children in their household whilst 7 in 10 did not. This is consistent with almost half the sample coming from the 56+ years age groups, who were principally two person or single person households. The needs of younger people appear to be reflected in the comments made by parents in completing the questionnaire.
- 3.5 These results, which are shown on the following pages, indicate that the overall sample was broadly representative of residents of Pewsey and the surrounding area.

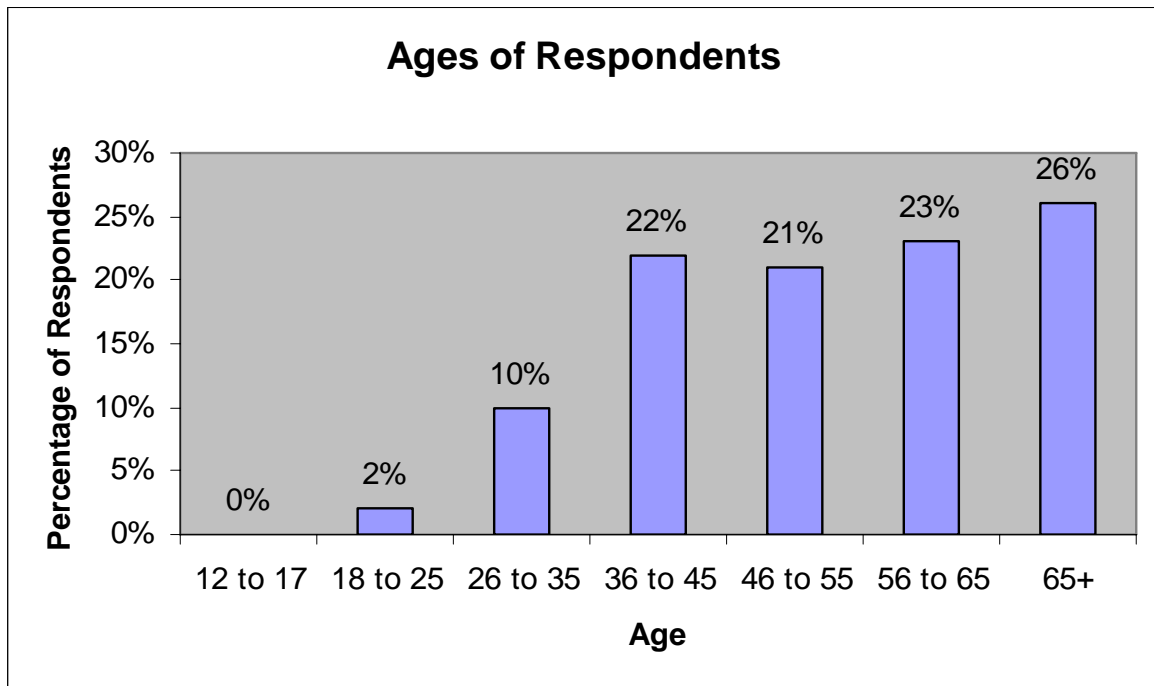


Figure 1: Ages of questionnaire respondents as a percentage

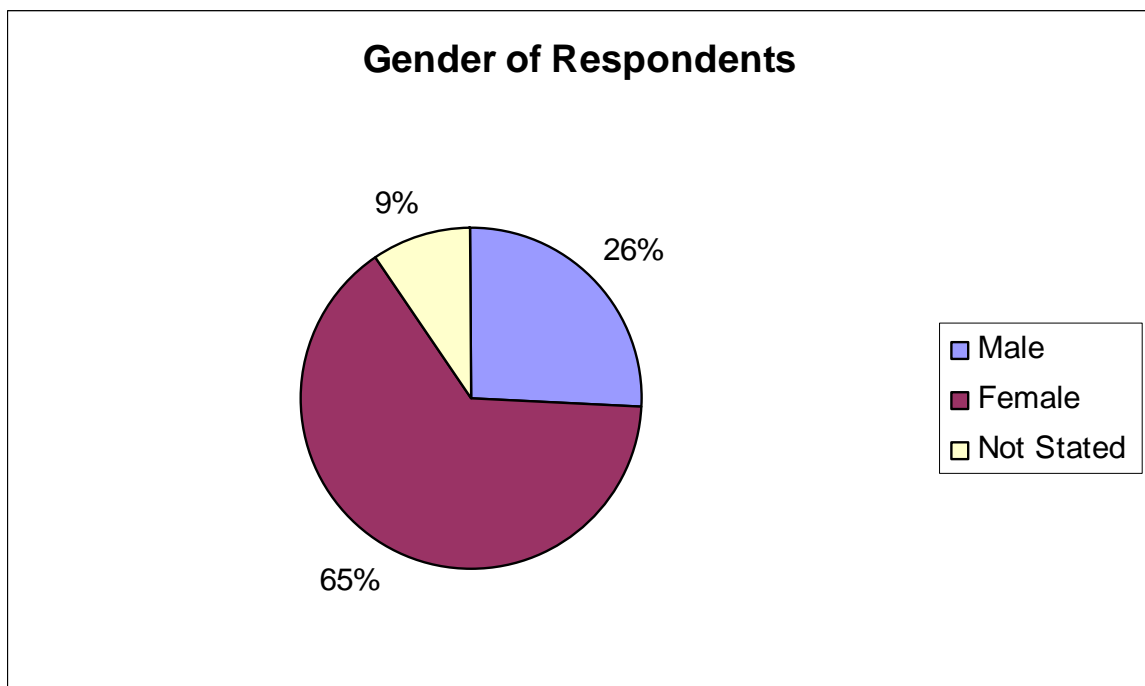


Figure 2: Gender make-up of respondents

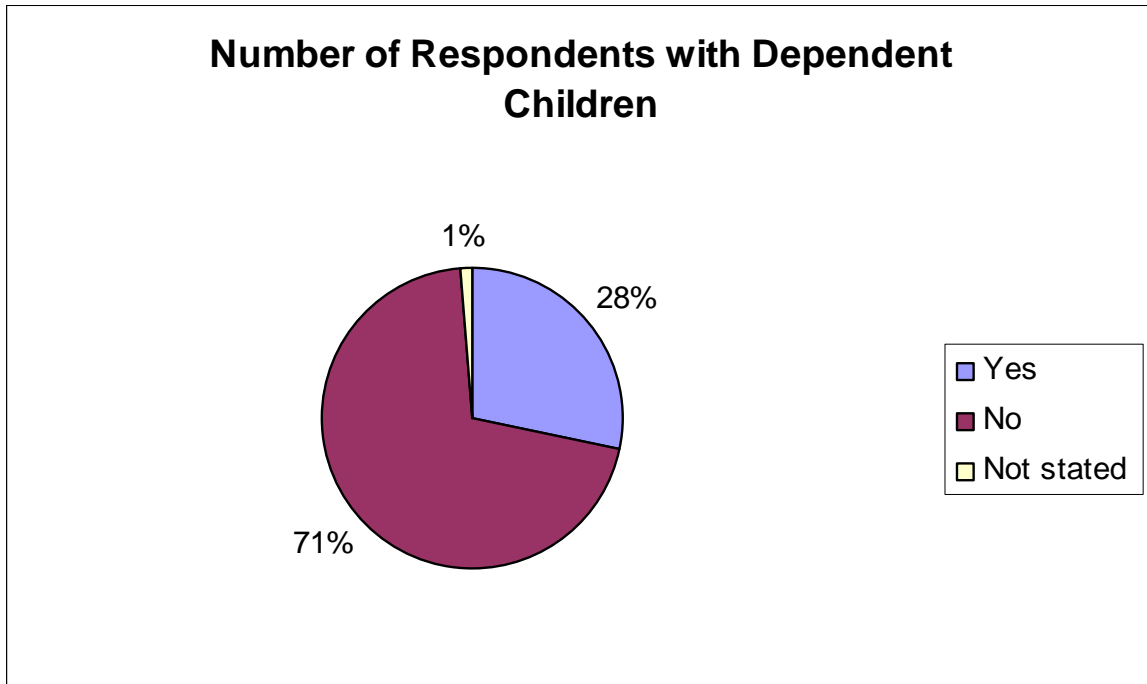


Figure 3: Number of households with dependent children

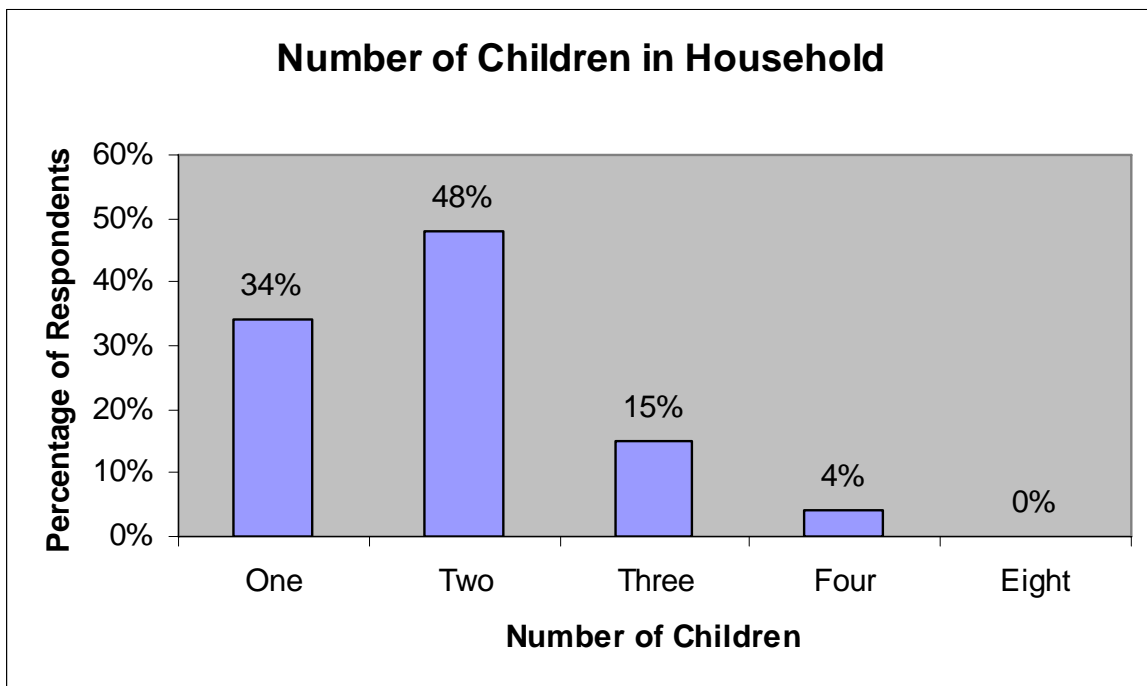


Figure 4: Number of dependent children per household as a percentage

4. CLAIMED POTENTIAL USE OF FACILITIES

- 4.1 Respondents were provided with a comprehensive list of facilities which are, or could be, available in the new Centre and asked which of them they would use and at what times.
- 4.2 The swimming pool was by far the most mentioned of all the facilities listed. Two thirds of the sample said they would, or did, use this facility but an analysis of preferred time of use indicated that blanket day time use of the pool by schools in the area causes problems. Two thirds of those planning to use the pool would use it in the evenings but more than half also would like to have access between 9-12 pm and 2-6 pm, when during term time use of the pool is reserved exclusively for schools. Expected use 7-9am and 12-2pm, when the pool is open to the public, was at a lower level of mention. Even at these times the pool cannot be used on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- 4.3 The blanket reservation of the swimming pool during the day in term time is clearly a contentious issue and not confined to Pewsey. However, there must be ways in which the pool can be made more generally available during the day when it is clearly not in use by schools every day, morning and afternoon. The falling roll numbers at Pewsey Vale School would suggest that there is room for a revision of the times when it is made available to them as well as to other schools in the area.
- 4.4 This idea was also supported by a number of comments put forward by the respondents. A lot of positive comments were made about the use of the pool and its need to remain in use, with one male aged 36-45 simply saying:

"[The] swimming pool is very important"

whilst one female aged 46-55 stated

"I think having a swimming pool in the village is the most important thing".

- 4.5 Problems with the current set up were also mentioned by some respondents. These were in the vast majority about the lack of current opening hours; one female aged 36-45 said:

"Very interested in...the improved swimming availability, currently find it hard to go swimming because the existing programme doesn't suit me"

and another female aged 36-45 stated that she would like

"[The] swimming pool open as much as possible".

- 4.6 Many people stated that if the facilities, including the pool, were available for a greater period of time throughout the week then more people would use them and the centre as a whole. This was highlighted by one response from a female aged 46-55 who said:

"[The] deciding factor will be the availability of the activities at a time that I can use them".

- 4.7 The need for longer usage hours for the pool was highlighted by some of the comments made about the type of usage desired. Many people wanted a wider range of sessions.

One female aged 46-55 wanted:

“Child free times”

whilst another person aged 26-35 said:

“I would like to see more baby classes, adult swim and for disabled children.

Another female aged 56-65 suggested:

“separate session times for nervous swimmers”.

- 4.8 These examples highlight the diverse nature of services wanted by potential users of the new Centre and, whilst it is impossible to accommodate all of the ideas, longer pool usage times would go some way to supporting this process.

- 4.9 More surprisingly, perhaps, was the finding that more than 4 in 10 respondents would like to make use of adult learning classes if they were made available at the Centre. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ would like these to take place in the evening, although a significant proportion would like to see morning and afternoon classes – 4 in 10 for each time period. Although the content of these classes was not specified there were a number of spontaneous remarks with several areas of interest. These ranged from one couple aged 65+ wanting lessons on:

“computers for the terrified”

to a female aged 36-45 asking for:

“day courses [in] massage, floristry etc”.

This result should give some encouragement to Pewsey Vale School’s extended learning initiative.

- 4.10 An Activities Room was also rated highly as a facility which would be used – again by more than 4 in 10 respondents. This was further reinforced by the relatively high proportion who said they would support specific activities (see below). Again, proposed use of an Activities Room was highest in the evening, with $\frac{3}{4}$ saying they would use it between 6-10 pm, but a significant proportion also favoured day time use – around 4 in 10 opting for 9-12 pm and 2-6 pm.

- 4.11 There was also however a large amount of opposition to the addition of a new Activities Room to the current site. Various respondents raised the query as to why existing sites such as the Bouverie Hall could not be used to provide the services offered. One person aged 56-65 said:

“[There is] no necessity for another Activities Hall in Pewsey. A new hall would seriously undermine the financial viability of the existing ones”

whilst another respondent, male, aged 65+ said:

“A new Activity Hall is a waste of money. Pewsey has plenty of facilities already”.

Others were worried as to what effect the building of a new Activities centre would have on the existing facilities in the village. One person aged 56-65 asked:

“How many facilities can the village sustain? There are already several areas available...which are already competing against each other”

Another male respondent aged 65+ added:

“How will this affect the Bouverie Hall, Scout Hut and New Wesley Hall? Can Pewsey support them all?”

4.12 These issues raised doubts as to the viability of the new Activity Hall as many residents believe that the existing facilities are already adequate. It also raises questions as to the potential uptake of activities offered by the new Hall as people know the facilities already exist yet the participation when these activities have been previously offered has been low.

4.13 The idea of a café found favour among 4 in 10 respondents who favoured day time use, particularly in the morning. More than 6 in 10 said they would use it from 9-12 pm, with more than half using it 12-2 pm and 2-6 pm. Proposed evening use fell to 4 in 10. The idea of a café is an attractive one as a number of respondents specifically mentioned it in the comments section. One female aged 35-46 said:

“A café is a great idea”

and two more respondents both female with one aged 36-45 and the other 56-65 thought that the café should be a:

“meeting area at the heart of the complex” and “a place to socialise”.

4.14 But experience elsewhere suggests it is fraught with problems. Most leisure centres which have a café run on a franchise basis and the high level of turnover of franchisees suggests they are less than successful. However, Pewsey has its own successful social enterprise café in the village run by volunteers. It may be that this enterprise’s success could be translated into a successful social enterprise in the new Centre.

4.15 A ‘Fitness Edge’ gym was an aspiration for one third of all respondents although this is not borne out by use of the current gym. It may be that new equipment and a more positive branding of the facility will increase the numbers using it as some people mentioned this in their responses, with one couple aged 65+ saying they stopped using the gym (and the centre as a whole) because:

“the equipment was broken and the gym was unsupervised”.

Various other respondents, including a female aged 18-25 wanted:

“new equipment for the gym”.

This suggests that there is potential to improve on the current usage of this facility.

- 4.16 Almost 1 in 4 mentioned Badminton as an activity of interest. This would be carried out in the existing Sports Hall whose use by the public is limited by Pewsey Vale School’s exclusive day time use during term time. Badminton is currently offered as an activity by the Sports Centre and there is a 50+ Badminton Club which plays on Friday mornings. The scheduling of Badminton on Friday morning was by permission of the School and negotiable on a termly basis. Again, Badminton’s most preferred time of day use is in the evenings but a significant proportion would like to be able to play in the mornings and afternoons.
- 4.17 Interest in Squash was at a low 13%, confirming the declining interest in this sport throughout the county – with the exception of Tidworth. This suggests that better use could be made of the squash courts at Pewsey to accommodate activities which have more potential support.
- 4.18 Among the other listed activities there were some which did not find general favour with respondents – party packages (which are already offered), solarium, table tennis, private meeting rooms, and pool tables.
- 4.19 Both kayaking and Martial Arts received a low level of mention - in part because they are younger person’s sports and our sample was biased towards older people, and in part because they are minority sports. Pewsey already provides successful courses in kayaking and the Sports Centre already supports both judo and tae kwon-do.
- 4.20 Child care was mentioned by 1 in 10 respondents overall but, bearing in mind the relatively small number of parents with children in the 0-5 years age group within the sample, this is an important activity for a minority of respondents. Although based on a relatively small sample, interest in child care extended from 7 am through to 6 pm, indicating a need which will be satisfied with the proposed Children’s Centre.
- 4.21 Results are shown overleaf.

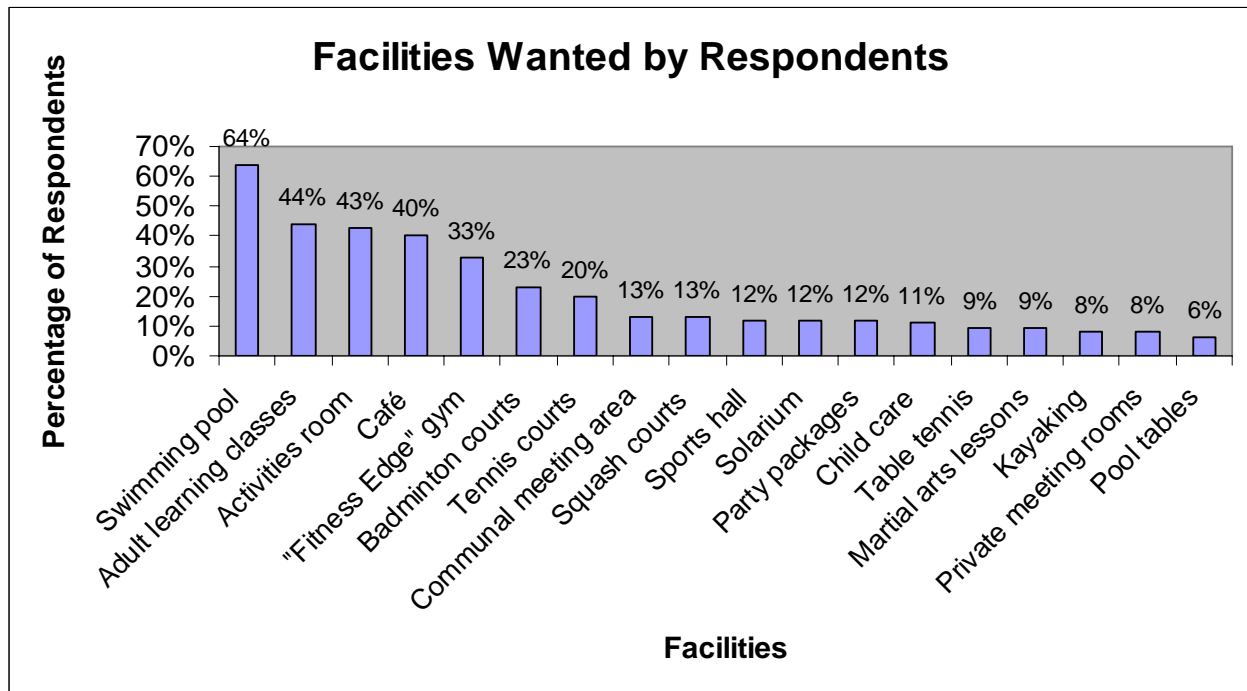


Figure 5: Facilities wanted by respondents

5. RANKING OF ISSUES

5.1 Respondents were given a list of 8 issues and asked to rank them in order of importance as factors which would encourage them to use the Centre, from 8 as being the most important, down to 1 being the least important. They were asked to leave blank any issue they saw of no importance or relevance. The highest score which could be achieved was therefore 8, and the lowest 1.

5.2 By far the most important factor in encouraging use of the Centre was affordable prices which achieved a score of 7.11 among those ranking these factors. Clearly what is seen to be affordable by one person may not be affordable to another but it is clear that prices for any activity or facility should be 'fair'. It is known, for example, that the monthly cost of using the Pewsey Sports Centre's facilities is currently greater than other leisure centres in the Kennet area. Comments from respondents confirm that the facilities currently provided by Pewsey are seen to be inferior to the other leisure centres.

5.3 This is again confirmed by a number of the comments received by various respondents. One female aged 36-45 stated:

"I would use the centre most days if it were affordable" adding that the prices were "ludicrous".

Another female aged 18-25 who also had a child said:

"Affordable prices are an absolute must because the only reason we don't attend Pewsey Sport Centre is because of the very high prices."

5.4 The fact that the majority of the comments regarding cost came from younger respondents is a cause for concern as these are the people that will arguably use the centre on a more regular basis. The question of price is addressed more fully elsewhere in the main report.

5.5 Cleanliness of the centre was the second most important factor, achieving an average score of 6.25. Spontaneous comments made by some respondents indicated that the cleanliness of the Pewsey Sports Centre left a lot to be desired. One couple aged 65+ commented that the

"General cleanliness isn't good"

whilst another, female, aged 36-45 said:

"Pool changing rooms are often filthy, mouldy and unappealing."

This is an issue that must be addressed if continued success of the centre is to be achieved.

5.6 The third most important attribute, achieving a score of 5.36, was friendly staff. Again, there were some negative comments about Pewsey in this regard. One female aged 36-45 with two children commented that the staff were:

“unfriendly” and often “unable to assist you”.

To add to this another female aged 46-55 said that the centre needed to:

“employ well trained staff that care”.

This is obviously a problem that needs to be solved if the new centre is to be a success.

- 5.7 Available parking was an important requirement achieving an average score of 5.23. Of course, adequate parking is limited by the space available on the site and it does not appear that the potential increase in numbers could not be accommodated within the current site.
- 5.8 Other factors: décor of the centre, lifestyle programmes, personally tailored programmes, and equipment retail, were all ranked at a relatively low level of importance compared with those already mentioned.
- 5.9 Results are shown on the following page.

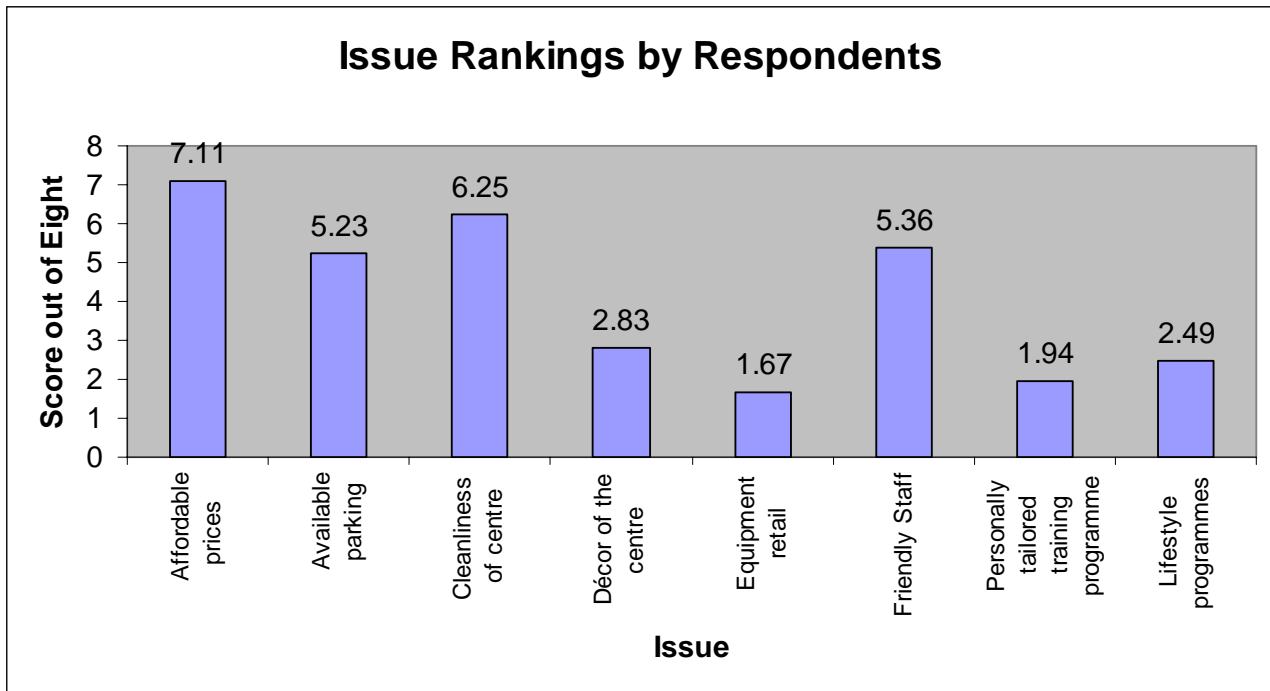


Figure 6: Ranking of issues expressed by respondents

6. INTEREST IN SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

- 6.1 Respondents were asked to identify their interest in a number of listed activities and the times at which these activities should take place. The listed activities could all be undertaken in an Activity Hall. They were also asked to write in any other activities they would like to see available at the Alfred Project.
- 6.2 The sample bias in favour of females was reflected in the activities which respondents identified. One third of the overall sample would like to see Pilates classes, 3 in 10 favoured yoga classes and aerobics classes, and a little less than 3 in 10 would like to see dance lessons. None of these activities were mutually exclusive, with a significant proportion of respondents identifying more than one activity.
- 6.3 At a much lower level studio cycling sessions and short mat bowls were mentioned by around 1 in 10 respondents.
- 6.4 By far and away the most favoured time for these activities was in the evening, with at least 2 out of 3 indicating 6-10 pm as the most appropriate time. However, a significant proportion – up to 4 in 10 – indicated both mornings and afternoons as appropriate times. Again, multiple responses indicated that, for many, any time other than early morning or lunch time was considered appropriate.
- 6.5 Aerobics classes are already offered by Pewsey Sports Centre and it is understood that other exercise classes have taken place at the Bouverie Hall in the past with limited success. It is therefore surprising that these activities rate so highly in this survey. We can only assume that the current availability of these classes is not generally known or factors such as timing, cost, ambience, etc come into play. Certainly the facilities of the Pewsey Sports Centre do not currently lend themselves easily to these types of activity.
- 6.6 The significant level of interest for these activities in the evenings does bring into question the current opening hours of the Sports Centre, which closes at 9 pm. Most, if not all, activities stop before this time in order that the 9 pm closing deadline is met?
- 6.7 Results are shown overleaf.

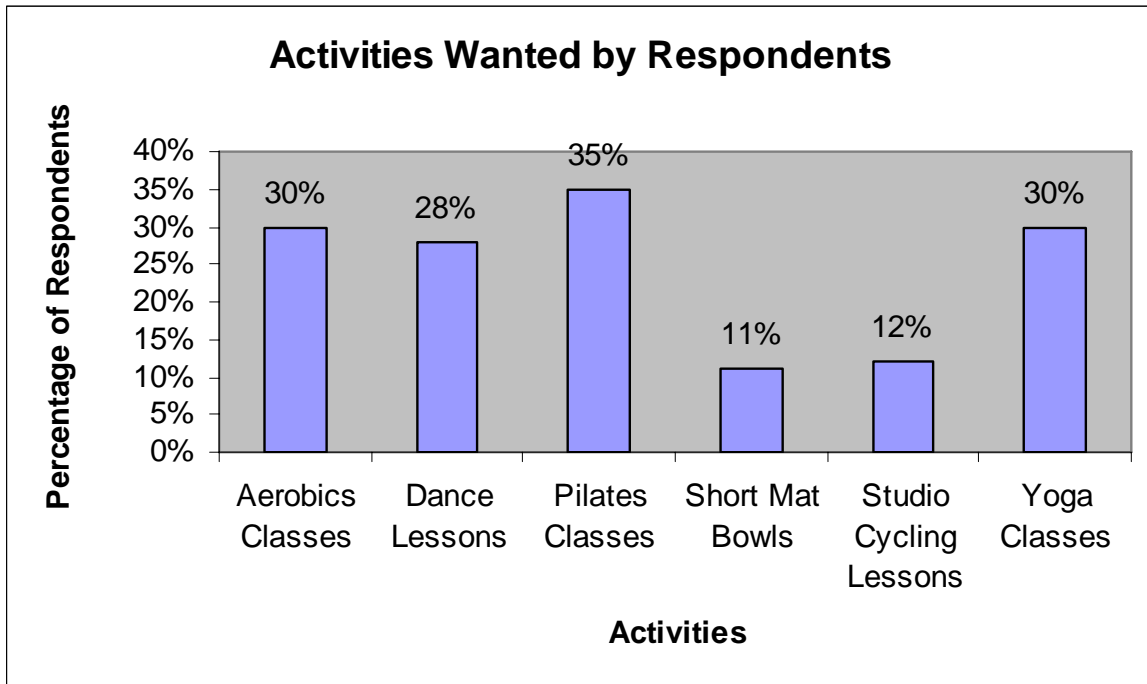
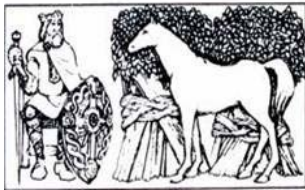


Figure 7: Activities wanted by respondents

APPENDIX



**PEWSEY
PARISH
COUNCIL**



Community First, the rural community council for Wiltshire, has been asked by Pewsey Parish Council to prepare a business plan for a new centre which will incorporate Pewsey Vale School, the Swimming and Sports Centre, a new Children’s Centre and, possibly, a new Activity Hall, into one integrated facility.

We would be grateful if you would take a few minutes to complete this short questionnaire. Your response will help us to develop a centre that can be enjoyed by everyone.

As a small incentive we will arrange a Prize Draw, with a prize of £100, for all those who complete and return this questionnaire.

Your age:	12-17 <input type="checkbox"/>	18-25 <input type="checkbox"/>	26-35 <input type="checkbox"/>	36-45 <input type="checkbox"/>	46-55 <input type="checkbox"/>	56-65 <input type="checkbox"/>	65+ <input type="checkbox"/>
Sex:	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>					
Are there currently any dependent children living in the household?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>						No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes how many?						

Which of the following facilities would you use in the new centre and at what times would you prefer to use them? Please indicate with a tick (✓) all that apply.

	7am - 9am	9am - 12pm	12pm - 2pm	2pm – 6pm	6pm – 10pm
Activities room (for dance, yoga classes etc.)					
Adult learning classes					
Badminton courts					
Café					
Child care					
Communal meeting area					
“Fitness Edge” gym					
Kayaking					
Martial arts lessons					
Party packages					
Pool tables					
Private meeting rooms					
Solarium					
Sports hall					
Squash courts					
Swimming pool					
Table tennis					
Tennis courts					

**Which of the following activities would you like to join if they were available through Pewsey Sports Centre and at what times would you prefer to undertake them?
Please indicate with a tick (✓) all that apply.**

	7am – 9am	9am – 12pm	12pm – 2pm	2pm – 6pm	6pm – 10pm
Aerobics classes					
Dance lessons					
Pilates classes					
Short mat bowls					
Studio cycling sessions					
Yoga classes					
Other (please state)					

**Please rate the following issues on whether or not they would encourage you to use the centre more often. Number the most important issue 1, the next 2 and so on.
If an issue has no importance at all, please leave it blank.**

- Affordable prices
- Available parking
- Cleanliness of centre
- Décor of the centre
- Equipment retail (tennis rackets, swimming kit etc.)
- Friendly staff
- Personally tailored training programme
- Lifestyle programmes (weight loss classes, health and beauty etc.)

Any other issues or comments you would like to add?

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Thank you very much for your time. The results of this survey will be made available by Pewsey Parish Council.

If you would like to enter the prize draw please complete the following information. (Please note: all personal information provided will be used solely for the prize draw and will be not be kept by Community First or be sent to any 3rd party organisations.)

Your name: Your address and postcode:
