



The Oakwood Centre, Headley Road, Woodley, Berkshire, RG5 4JZ
www.woodley.gov.uk

To: **Members of the Leisure Services Committee**

Councillors: D. Smith (Chairman) Y. Edwards; D. Errawalla; M. Firmager; K. Gilder;
R. Horskins; C. Jewell; M. Kennedy; V. Lewis; P. Singh;

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of the Leisure Services Committee is to be held at the Oakwood Centre at 8:00pm on Tuesday 3 September 2024, at which your attendance is requested.

The Town Council reserves the right to record and broadcast this meeting. Anybody attending the meeting will, by virtue, consent to having their image and audio recorded for this purpose.

Kevin Murray
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of interest from Members on agenda items.

3. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 JULY 2024**

To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held on 4 June 2024 and for the Chairman to sign them as a true and accurate record. *(These minutes were provided in the Full Council agenda of 25 June 2024)*

4. **ACTIONS / FOLLOW UPS**

To review the actions and follow ups arising from previous meetings of the committee. *(Appendix 4)*

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5. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

To note **Report No. LS 23/24.**

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6. **WOODFORD PARK LEISURE CENTRE, SPORTS DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES**

To receive **Report No. LS 24/24.**

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7. **PARKS AND BUILDINGS**
To receive **Report No. LS 25/24.** Page 9
8. **COMMUNITY YOUTH PARTNERSHIP**
To note **Report No. LS 26/24** of the Community Youth Partnership meeting held on 11 July 2024. Page 17

There were no recommendations made at this meeting due to be considered by the Committee.
9. **WPLC DEVELOPMENT TASK AND FINISH WORKING GROUP**
a) To note **Report No. LS 27/25** of the WPLC Development Task and Finish Working Group meeting held on 31 July 2024. Page 19

A report, summarising the outcome of the group's activities, and highlighting the Leisure Centre Manager's proposals for future re-development, is included at **Appendix 9a**, as requested by the working group. Page 28

Members are asked to consider the following recommendations made at this meeting:
 - i. That Council Officers should proceed to engage with an appropriate architect to design and create a formal proposal for the re-development of Woodford Park Leisure Centre, focusing on the inclusion of a café, dedicated exercise studio space, soft play area, and splash pad, with additional focus on making spaces multi-use, where possible, and ensuring parking capacity is taken into consideration.
 - ii. That the terms of reference of the WPLC Development task & finish working group be expanded to oversee the above task, with the group responsible for submitting a final recommendation to the Strategy & Resources Committee, via Leisure Services, for the redevelopment of Woodford Park Leisure Centre.
 - iii. That the end date of the WPLC Development task & finish working group be extended until the start of the 2025/26 municipal year.**b)** Should the end date of the task & finish working group be extended, Members are asked to note the appointment of Cllr Edwards to the vacant Labour Group place on this working group.
10. **ALLOTMENT WASTE MANAGEMENT**
To consider **Report No. LS 28/25.** Page 43
11. **FRIENDS OF WOODFORD PARK UPDATE**
To note the update provided from the Friends of Woodford Park, as set out at **Appendix 11.** Page 62
12. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**
To propose future agenda items for the Committee's consideration.
13. **PUBLICITY & WEBSITE**
To consider which items to publicise.

ACTIONS & FOLLOW UPS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Meeting Date:		6 June 2023	
Minute	Action	Progress Update	Last Updated
7	[Town Clerk] to discuss with Amenities Manager solutions for overflowing bins on Sundays in Woodford Park.	COMPLETE Trial mixed recycling bins, providing larger capacity, introduced and working well. Bins will be rolled out across Council parks during the year. Bins now emptied and park litter picked on Saturdays and Sundays.	27/08/24

Meeting Date:		5 September 2023	
Minute	Action	Progress Update	Last Updated
17	Officers to consider options for providing extra security, including the possibility of installing new bollards, a ditch or new locks, to further secure parks from future unauthorised encampments.	COMPLETE x4 Drop bollards have been installed at gate entrances to Woodford Park.	27/08/24
17	Add potential re-installation of a 'graffiti wall' to the Council's projects list.	No progress – once considered, and if approved, will be added to projects list.	02/11/23

Meeting Date:		7 November 2023	
Minute	Action	Progress Update	Last Updated
34	Consider options for improving play equipment at the Wheble Park, to be reported back to the Committee at the next meeting.	Pending S&R decision – previously discussed at S&R (23 Jan 2024 - Minute 76) and resolved to contact RBC Council Leader to try to progress discussions regarding transfer of ownership of Wheble Park to WTC. At LS (4 Jun 2024) Town Clerk updated to say Deputy Leader of RBC had now responded and would be looking to progress a response to WTC shortly.	26/03/24

Meeting Date:		16 January 2024	
Minute	Action	Progress Update	Last Updated
52	For S&R to review the nature and purpose of the Youth Grant guidelines, approved in September 2023, in light of the P&C's referral of Annual Grant applications to LS for consideration under the Youth Grant budget	S&R (26 Jan 2024 - minute 75) requested Officers pull together a report proposing a method to streamline the grant process for all grants. Aim to present to S&R mtg November 2024.	29/08/24
56	For a report on the potential installation of paths at the northern end of Woodford Park to be provided at a future LS meeting.	Update provided in Parks & Buildings report (2 April 2024) - funding request due to go to future S&R mtg.	30/05/24
56	To introduce a directory of Community & Charity Groups in the area on the website.	REMOVE Project planned to be undertaken by end of 2024 – this will be added as a regular item for update under the Planning & Community Committee.	28/08/24

Meeting Date:		2 April 2024	
Minute	Action	Progress Update	Last Updated
64	Repair rotating swings in the Woodford Park play area	Awaiting new swing assembly from manufacturer – warranty repair	27/08/24
64	Add Council's emergency contact number to signage on the public toilet	Emergency number will be added to all public space signage as soon as possible.	30/05/24
67	Get up-to-date quote for replacement of 3G pitch surface, and review £12k annual sum placed into earmarked reserve to cover replacement in light of this.	In progress. Indicative pricing £125-£140k. This will be considered in the context of the annual budget allocation from 2025.	27/08/24
68	Conduct structural survey of the sports hall at WPLC	No progress.	30/05/24

Meeting Date:		4 June 2024	
Minute	Action	Progress Update	Last Updated
5	Considering setting up a meeting of community & charity groups providing support in Woodley – hosted by the Town Mayor - to better assist joint working	REMOVE Task will be added for consideration as part of a regular Charity / Community Group Hub item under the Planning & Community Committee.	29/08/24

Meeting Date:		4 June 2024	
Minute	Action	Progress Update	Last Updated
6	Town Clerk to advise Members why expenditure figure relating to Amenities for April 2023 was £-344.	COMPLETE This was due to a year end correction relating to energy charges.	27/08/24

Once reported as complete, actions / follow ups will be removed from future reports.

LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE

Month 4 33.33%

2024/25

BUDGETARY CONTROL

EXPENDITURE	Revised Budget 2024/25	Actual Exp as at 31/07/2023	Actual Exp as at 31/07/2024	Actual Exp as % of Budget 2024/25	
Woodford Park LC & 3G pitch	458,683	132,794	150,180	32.74%	
Grounds Maintenance	58,665	14,904	16,755	28.56%	
Football	25,648	8,599	5,009	19.53%	
Cricket	16,231	4,372	5,714	35.20%	
Bowling Green	16,231	4,372	5,714	35.20%	
Woodford Park	54,886	15,719	16,073	29.28%	
Garden of Remembrance	9,229	2,692	3,004	32.55%	
Play areas and open spaces	19,810	4,930	7,080	35.74%	
Coronation Hall	35,453	8,290	9,071	25.59%	
Chapel Hall	27,934	6,309	7,038	25.20%	
Allotments	27,229	6,594	5,945	21.83%	
Amenities	8,743	2,056	2,672	30.56%	
Events	17,192	3,908	10,459	60.84%	include carnival grant
Public toilet	5,666	1,496	877	15.48%	
Youth Services	35,000	0	0	0.00%	
TOTAL	816,600	217,035	245,591	30.07%	

**LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE**

BUDGETARY CONTROL

Month 4 33.33%

INCOME	Revised Budget 2024/25	Actual Inc as at 31/07/2023	Actual Inc as at 31/07/2024	Actual Inc as % of Budget 2024/25	
Woodford Park LC & 3G pitch	455,375	168,611	192,230	42.21%	
Grounds Maintenance	430	286	215	50.00%	
Football	13,125	4,556	4,085	31.12%	
Cricket	7,928	5,138	4,717	59.50%	
Bowling Green	8,523	26	15	0.18%	
Woodford Park	5,975	1,330	987	16.52%	seats income lower
Garden of Remembrance	1,365	553	281	20.59%	
Play areas and open spaces	0	0	0	0.00%	
Coronation Hall	40,784	15,247	17,777	43.59%	
Chapel Hall	37,613	13,186	18,304	48.66%	
Allotments	15,662	158	690	4.41%	renewals in Jan
Amenities	0	0	0	0.00%	
Events	0	0	0	0.00%	
Public toilet	525	90	27	5.14%	
Youth Services	0	0	0	0.00%	
TOTAL	587,305	209,181	239,328	40.75%	

WOODFORD PARK LEISURE CENTRE, SPORTS DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES

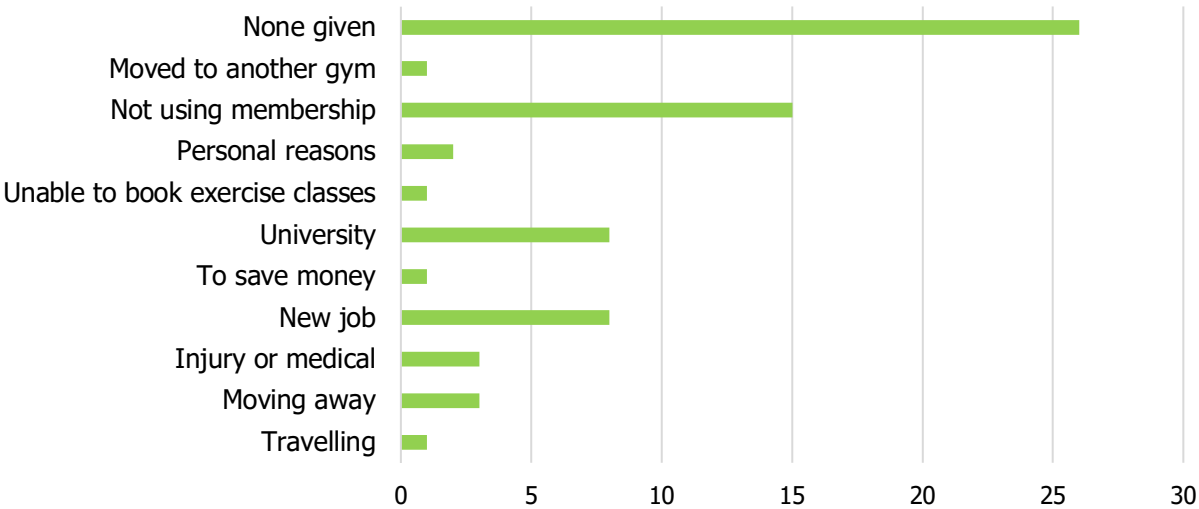
REPORT OF THE LEISURE SERVICES MANAGER

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform and update Members on developments at Woodford Park Leisure Centre and The Gym on the Park.

Member Turnover

Through the period 22nd May to 26th August 2024 we welcomed a total of 98 new members and through the same period 69 members cancelled their memberships, the reasons for which are presented below:



Flexi' Classes (Summer)

The second survey asking members for their input into which exercise classes to run as part of our group exercise timetable yielded 28 responses and resulted in the introduction of a new class named Summer Blast. The flexi' class concept continues to be popular with both members and instructors and helps to keep the exercise timetable fresh and interesting.

Phone system

A call queue system has been introduced to help staff handle the ongoing high demand for booking exercise classes each morning. The queue system has also been well received by members who generally report that the booking process for classes is now much smoother.

Recruitment

One of the full-time Duty Managers at Woodford Park Leisure Centre has been promoted to the role of full-time Administrative Officer following a successful recruitment process through the summer. This internal change will help ease the pressure on the increasingly busy admin team.

The above has also resulted in two full-time Duty Manager roles being advertised externally until early September. A permanent role to replace the member of staff who moved into the admin team and a new twelve month fixed-term position to help cover hours for a member of staff who is due to undergo an operation later this year.

IT Overhaul

The Leisure Centre underwent a much needed IT overhaul throughout the summer. New computers were installed and software updated with much greater functionality, which has been well received by centre staff.

Paddling Pool

The paddling pool has remained operational for all but three days throughout the summer, where unfortunately some damage to the pool liner and cloudy water following a period of heavy usage resulted in its necessary closure. The pool has been as popular as ever this summer.

Pending a sudden wave of hot weather, the pool is due to be shut down for the winter from Monday 9th September.

Family Racket Attack

To date, a total of 1,191 individual transactions have been recorded throughout the summer for Family Racket Attack, which is an increase from the previous summer. Details of sports booked and a comparison between summers can be seen in the table below:

	Summer 2023	Summer 2024*
Badminton	819	892
Tennis	147	198
Table Tennis	101	101
Total	1,067	1,191*

*Data accurate up until Tuesday 27th August 2024. Promotion ends on Sunday 1st September 2024.

Family Racket Attack is a popular scheme promoted through every school holiday. The scheme allows families to pay only £1.00 each per hour to play badminton, tennis or table tennis so long as an individual under the age of eighteen years is playing as part of the group.

Woodley Cricket Club

Meetings with Woodley Cricket Club and a representative from the newly formed Thames Valley Cricket League took place throughout the summer to address various issues relating to the club's participation in the 2025 season. The main concerns relate to the facilities on offer at Woodford Park Leisure Centre and the closure time of 6:00pm each Saturday, with the league requiring a later closure time of 8:00pm to allow ample time for fixtures to finish.

Following the most recent meeting, held on Friday 16th August, a number of resolutions have been put in place to hopefully allow Woodley CC to participate in the 2025 cricket season. Most notably, Woodley CC will be paying an additional £2,500 to allow the Leisure Centre to remain open until 8:00pm each Saturday throughout the cricket season. Funds will be generated directly through the clubs new fundraising initiatives and supported by the league, who are also assisting the club with a new long-term forward-thinking development plan.

The final decision on the club's participation in the 2025 season will be made by the Thames Valley Cricket League on Monday 30th September.

Redevelopment Survey

The redevelopment survey was closed on 21st June 2024 following 1339 total responses (1085 completed the full survey). Results have now been published on social media and the website.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ That Members note the contents of the report.

PARKS AND BUILDINGS

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

Purpose of Report

To inform Members of matters concerning the Town Council's buildings and maintenance of the facilities.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre

Water leak

An underground water leak has been identified and is awaiting repair by a specialist contractor. This work is expected to be carried out in the next two weeks.

Woodford Park

Bowls

The team have been receiving very positive feedback through the season from the bowls club regarding the condition and maintenance of the green. This follows the installation of the new irrigation system and the introduction of the new maintenance regime on the ground.

Sports pitches

Goal mouths and worn areas have been levelled and turfed rather than the simple grass seeding that has been carried out historically. This has provided for a better pitch surface and will last longer through the season.

Green Flag Award

Woodford Park was awarded the Green Flag Award again in 2024. The judging feedback is shown at **APPENDIX A** and will provide a basis for improvements as we work through the year.

Bollards

Steel drop bollards have been installed across 2 entrances to the Memorial Ground and the entrance to the park from Western Avenue. This is to reduce the potential for unauthorised encampments on the park, which were experienced last year.

Orchard garden

Planting of the new orchard garden to the rear of Coronation Hall will be scheduled for Spring 2025. The project was initially scheduled for Autumn 2024 however issues with staff capacity in the Amenities Team have meant that other projects have taken priority. This will provide an opportunity for more involvement from the grounds team and particularly the newly appointed team member.

Play area

We are currently awaiting the installation of replacement parts to the rotating swing in the newer play area. This is being repaired under warranty.

Allotments

The waiting list is currently 82 prospective tenants. Plot inspections are ongoing and being carried out by members of the tenants committee.

Roadways

Works are underway to resurface the roadways around the site. Some tenants have raised concerns about the surfacing along rows A and B and this is being addressed to provide a smoother surface. Works should be completed by mid September.

Toilet

The new composting toilet should be operational in the next couple of weeks.

Recommendations

- ♦ **That Members note the contents of the report.**



FEEDBACK REPORT: 2024-25

Name of Site	Woodford Park
Managing Organisation	Woodley Town Council
Date of Assessment	20 th May 2024

OVERALL RESULT	Pass	☒	Fail	☐
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NOTES ABOUT THIS REPORT
Strengths and recommendations are provided for each criteria. Photographs are included, where appropriate, to support the feedback from the judge(s) in relation to both strengths and recommendations. Please refer to the Raising the Standard guidance manual here for further information on the criteria.

DESK ASSESSMENT

(Management plan and supporting documentation)

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
Presentation	A very comprehensive document with a good vision statement that sets out the goals. They know who their users are and demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity for all park users. Good photographs demonstrating the community involvement.	The document is rather long with some repetition. Some of the appendices could be replaced with links.

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
Health, Safety & Security	Lots of plans/provision to make the park as accessible as possible to all. Lots of provision for exercise and mental well-being. Good section on lighting provision. Safer Places scheme for vulnerable people, with first aid trained staff at two buildings within the park. Strong health and safety policy in place and practices and documentation regularly audited.	
Maintenance of Equipment, Buildings & Landscape	Excellent example of a typical maintenance schedule.	Could include a maintenance schedule for buildings and facilities covering a period of 5 years, which is reviewed annually.
Litter, Cleanliness, Vandalism	Good policies for litter collection and vandalism in place.	Include some information on recycling of litter and any aims to improve the recycling system – new mixed recycling bins, etc.
Environmental Management	Aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030. Inclusion of analysis of energy use and carbon savings made through using solar panels. Good information on energy and water use. Continuous improvement demonstrated.	Provide a link to the councils' climate crisis strategy (very useful info on the website).
Biodiversity, Landscape & Heritage	Good awareness of the ecology of the site. Lots of habitats have been created and managed for wildlife.	

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
	Good before and after shot of the memorial ground board restoration. Local history remembered through memorial boards.	
Community Involvement	Lots of community group and local stakeholder information. Good to see a council member on the Friends committee. Residents survey information demonstrates commitment to providing good service to local people. Shows deep appreciation of the volunteers and community groups that contribute to the park.	Include a list of previous years community events/initiatives.
Marketing & Communication	Communications officer in post using social media, website and printed communications for the local community. Annual residents survey. Woodley Herald newsletter is a good communication method that does not exclude non computer/smartphone users.	Communication methods are appropriate for most of the local community but maybe not for teenagers and young people, who might not use Facebook and X. Other channels might reach out to this demographic.
Overall Management	Good sense of the history of the site, knowing the park users and caring about providing what they want. Good aims and aspirations with a clear set of goals and continuous monitoring and analysis. Sound and sensible management, focussed on the needs of the local community.	

FIELD ASSESSMENT

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
A Welcoming Place	At each of the main entrances to the park there are clear and colourful welcome signs with useful maps and notice boards. The entrances are well maintained with clear sightlines. There is good provision for parking and all paths are wheelchair accessible. There is appropriate provision for all sorts of park users – good accessible play equipment.	
Healthy, Safe & Secure	The buildings and main path route through the park are well lit. Police based in an on-site building, patrol the park regularly and high visitor numbers provide reassurance for park users. There is lots of provision for healthy exercise and quiet areas for users that want to keep away from busy areas. Remembrance garden provides benefits for mental health. Provision of facilities and activities is above what would be expected, because of strong community involvement and parks management support and creativity.	
Well Maintained & Clean	Some litter, but to be expected with high visitor numbers – site generally litter free. The beds looked after by the volunteers were immaculate and very diverse and colourful. Trees seemed in good health, with good succession planting, well staked and guarded.	New general waste/recycling bins are needed and some fencing is in need of repainting/replacing – these items are in hand. The exteriors of some of the buildings in the leisure center complex could do with improvement. Some graffiti on the play equipment needs removing.

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
	New reinforced grass path installed to improve desire line path that became muddy.	Some re-planting of shrubs needed to fill gaps in beds.
Environmental Management	The maintenance team are growing their own bedding plants for use in the park. 30% of the total this year and hoping to expand on this each year. Minimal chemical use and no chemical inputs on sports turf. 2 rainwater harvesting tanks are used for irrigating the plants and trees and solar panels have been fitted to some of the buildings.	It would be useful to have a list of action points for Woodford Park arising from the climate crisis initiative. More commitment needed to move to all electric tools and vehicles. Consider more solar panels and rainwater harvesting tanks on other buildings on the site.
Biodiversity Landscape & Heritage	The renovation of the lake has been very successful, providing a diverse range of habitats and an attractive feature for visitors. Long grass and wildflower areas are good and should be expanded, where possible. Diverse range of trees and good succession planting. Log piles and tree stumps left for wildlife habitat.	Install bird boxes and monitor their use. Long grass areas could be extended.
Community Involvement	Very strong community links have been made with all sorts of groups. Proactive community organisers put on events and suggest activities and this is encouraged and facilitated by the management team. Active Friends of Woodford Park group, responsible for planting and maintaining several planted areas and there are plans for a new community garden behind the Coronation Hall. The parks team are planning to host an annual park focussed event. A	

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
	successful event was held last year, and one is scheduled for this year. A resident's survey is carried out regularly and points arising are actioned.	
Marketing and Communication	The council have a communications officer in post. Communication by social media and printed newsletter is much improved. There are also good notice boards around the park. The website has recently been improved to be much more accessible.	
Management	The management plan is being implemented, with improvements planned for every year. The management team have a very positive attitude, willing to research and action ways of doing things differently to bring about improvements. They do a good job keeping many different groups of park users happy.	

Summary and additional comments:

(Highlighting the result, and the main areas of strength and recommendation)

Strong community links and the council's commitment to inclusivity for park users, make this a vibrant park that is a hub for the local area. The management are open minded, creative, and looking outside for examples of best practice that will help to improve Woodford Park and well deserve a Green Flag.

Woodley Town Council

**Report of a meeting of the Community Youth Partnership held on
Thursday 11 July 2024 at 1.00pm**

Present: *Councillors: K. Gilder (Deputy Chairman)
D. Bragg
M. Holmes
Voluntary Sector:
C. Davies – Me2 Club
D. Harman – 1st Woodley Boys' Brigade
S. Outen – Woodley United FC
G. Sumbler – Woodley Baptist Church*

Officers present: *K. Murray, Town Clerk; M. Filmore, Deputy Town Clerk*

Also present: *Thames Valley Police (TVP): PCSO C. Towse; PC D. Stone*

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

The Town Clerk asked for nominations for the appointment of Chairman.

Councillor Gilder proposed, seconded by Councillor Holmes, and it was:

RESOLVED:

- ♦ To appoint Sam Milligan as Chairman of the Community Youth Partnership for the remainder of the 2024/25 municipal year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Councillor Holmes proposed, seconded by Councillor Bragg, and it was

RESOLVED:

- ♦ To appoint Councillor Gilder as Vice Chairman of the Community Youth Partnership for the remainder of the 2024/25 municipal year.

Councillor Gilder took over as Chairman of the meeting.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Y. Edwards and voluntary sector representatives S. Milligan and C. Randle.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members noted the partnership's terms of reference.

The Deputy Town Clerk encouraged members to consider if there were any changes which might need to be made to better reflect the intentions of the partnership, advising that if there are any then these could be presented to the Leisure Service Committee for consideration. No suggestions were made for amendments to the terms of reference.

6. YOUTH PROVISION IN WOODLEY

The Chairman and the Deputy Town Clerk provided members with an update on the activities of the Youth Support Service task and finish working group, advising new members that the working group had been created to consider the Council's future youth provision.

Members fed in comments and opinions regarding what they believed the Council should take into account when considering what to provide, although it was noted it was the role of the task of the Youth Support Service working group to consider this and not the Community Youth Partnership.

As part of these discussions, members noted the Council currently favoured providing some form of youth venue. It was suggested a mobile provision could be a good option as it could access several areas of Woodley. As comment was made that any provision was unlikely to cater for everyone.

Members noted that the Council had engaged Berkshire Youth to undertake a Youth Engagement project, including a youth survey, on its behalf, the results of which were due in the autumn and would feed into the group's considerations. It was highlighted that the Council should prioritise inclusivity and accessibility in whatever provision they decide to fund.

With regards to the potential of providing a youth venue, it was noted that both specialised staff and volunteers would likely be needed.

Members noted the difficulty all groups have in securing volunteers. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Council were about to start a project to try and create a community group hub on the Council's website, highlighting groups and charities that offered services to Woodley residents. He advised that he would be seeking interest from groups who wished to be included in this hub, and from this there would then be the possibility to run wider events, such as group conferences or promotional days, which the Council could assist with. C. Davies indicated that Me2 Club provide training for their volunteers, most of which are late-teens, and was happy to be involved.

The issue of young people riding dangerously on e-bikes was raised. Thames Valley Police representatives advised Members of the difficulties they have enforcing this matter, but did advise that operations were due to take place where vehicles would now be seized.

G. Sumbler highlighted that he was encountering an issue with the number of underage children vaping at his activities, and suggested more education might be needed around the dangers of vaping. Other groups said they did not encounter the same issues.

D. Harman raised an issue he is encountering with getting minibus drivers. He advised that drivers needed a D1 or B category on their license to drive a minibus; most D1 holders were now reaching the age where they were unable to drive (e.g. 70+) and fewer younger people had the B category. It was noted that the number of volunteers needed to transport young people in cars was significantly higher than in a group on a minibus. The Deputy Town Clerk highlighted community transport operators, such as Keep Mobile, Readibus and Woodley Volunteers, who might have volunteers with the appropriate licenses and may have capacity to assist.

The meeting closed at 2.15 pm

Woodley Town Council

Report of a virtual meeting of the Woodford Park Leisure Centre Development Task & Finish Working Group held on Wednesday 31 July 2024 at 11.00am

Present: Councillors: D. Smith (Chairman); R. Horskins; M. Kennedy

Officers present: K. Murray, Town Clerk; M. Filmore, Deputy Town Clerk;
E. Whitesmith, Leisure Services Manager;

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Kennedy proposed, seconded by Councillor Horskins, and it was unanimously

RESOLVED

- ◆ To appoint Councillor Smith as the Chairman of the WPLC Development task & finish working group for the remainder of the 2024/25 municipal year.

2. APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received from members of the working group. It was noted that the Labour group had not appointed a member at the Council's Annual Meeting, but had indicated a member would be appointed at the next Leisure Services Committee meeting, should the working group continue beyond then.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

4. WPLC DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

Members discussed the results of the WPLC Development survey, which had run from the 23 April to 21 June 2024 (**Appendix A**).

Members noted there was a large, diverse response to the survey, with over 1,300 responses received from a wide variety of age ranges, including both users and non-users of the centre. It was highlighted that the activities / services which had received the highest number of responses in favour of development or introduction were a café, dedicated exercise studio space, mini-golf and a splash pad.

Following a query, the Deputy Town Clerk explained that the benefit of receiving responses from non-centre users was to capture the developments which might encourage those individuals to use the centre in future; a number of those will have visited previously but determined not to become members for various reasons.

A view was expressed that the Council might wish to make the leisure centre a destination venue for people outside of Woodley, and it was queried whether the survey should've been promoted further afield to widen the target audience. Members noted it would be difficult for Officers to publicise the survey more widely, and also, as the cost of any development would likely be primarily met by Woodley taxpayers, focus should be on achieving value for money for local residents.

Members noted that a representation had been made for the introduction of a Padel Tennis court. The Leisure Centre Manager explained that, whilst Padel Tennis is described as the fastest growing racquet sport in the UK last year, this was primarily because they started from lower participation numbers. He explained that interest in previously popular activities, such as Zumba, have now significantly dipped, and he felt Padel Tennis may be similar. It was noted that it would be beneficial for any new facilities to be multi-purpose, where possible, to be able to adapt to changes in trends.

In relation to the potential provision of mini-golf, it was noted it would be unlikely that most individuals would use this activity on a regular basis. The provision of mini-golf in Henley was discussed, and it was noted this cost around £375k.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that he was aware of the re-development of a district owned leisure centre in Newbury, and that he and the Leisure Services Manager were intending to make a visit to understand their plans. It was noted the cost of this re-development was expected to be £4.6m.

In view of the survey results, the Leisure Services Manager advised that improvements could be split into two categories; day-to-day improvements relating to regular visitors, such as the introduction of a café or dedicated exercise studio, and destination improvements, such as the introduction of a splash pad or mini-golf. It was suggested destination improvements could be considered as separate, individual projects, split from a main project to redevelop the leisure centre.

The issue of parking capacity was raised as part of the discussions, and it was noted this would need to be considered as part of any redevelopment plans. The Leisure Services Manager said current capacity was not regularly an issue, but there were individual days and times, such as Saturday mornings, or hot summer days, when parking was an issue. The Town Clerk indicated parking solutions were being considered, including utilising other areas of the park, such as the boggy area near to the basketball hoop, for temporary parking.

RESOLVED

- ◆ To note the results of the WPLC Development survey.

5. ACTIONS & TASKS

Members noted that the last action for the working group to undertake was to formally consider potential leisure services which might be offered at the centre in future, and make a recommendation to the Leisure Services Committee as to how these may be progressed.

Following discussion, and in light of the research undertaken by the group over the last 9 months, the group determined that focus should be made on re-developing the centre to introduce a new café, dedicated exercise studio space, soft play area, and a splash pad, with additional focus on making sure spaces are multi-use, where possible, and parking capacity is taken into account.

It was highlighted that the next steps required would be to engage an architect to help develop plans encompassing the elements above. Members noted the Leisure Services Manager had already developed rough sketches which could be fed into those discussions. Members requested that the Leisure Services Manager pull a report together, summarising the outcomes of the working group's activities and detailing the proposals he has for the future development, to be presented to the Leisure Services Committee.

Members noted that, once the recommendation is made to the Leisure Services Committee in September, this would formally be the end of their activities. However, Members felt it would be beneficial for the working group's terms of reference to be expanded to cover the development of architectural plans and make a final recommendation on the proposed re-development of the centre to the Strategy & Resources Committee, via Leisure Services. It was suggested the end date of the working group be extended until the start of the next municipal year to achieve this.

RESOLVED

- ◆ That the Leisure Services Manager should create a report, summarizing the outcomes of the working group's activities, and the proposals he has created for re-development of the leisure centre.

RECOMMENDATION

- ◆ That the Leisure Service Committee approve the following:
 - That Council Officers should proceed to engage with an appropriate architect to design and create a formal proposal for the re-development of Woodford Park Leisure Centre, focusing on the inclusion of a café, dedicated exercise studio space, soft play area, and splash pad, with additional focus on making spaces multi-use, where possible, and ensuring parking capacity is taken into consideration.
 - That the terms of reference of the WPLC Development task & finish working group be expanded to oversee the above task, with the group responsible for submitting a final recommendation to the Strategy & Resources Committee, via Leisure Services, for the redevelopment of Woodford Park Leisure Centre.
 - That the end date of the WPLC Development task & finish working group be extended until the start of the 2025/26 municipal year.

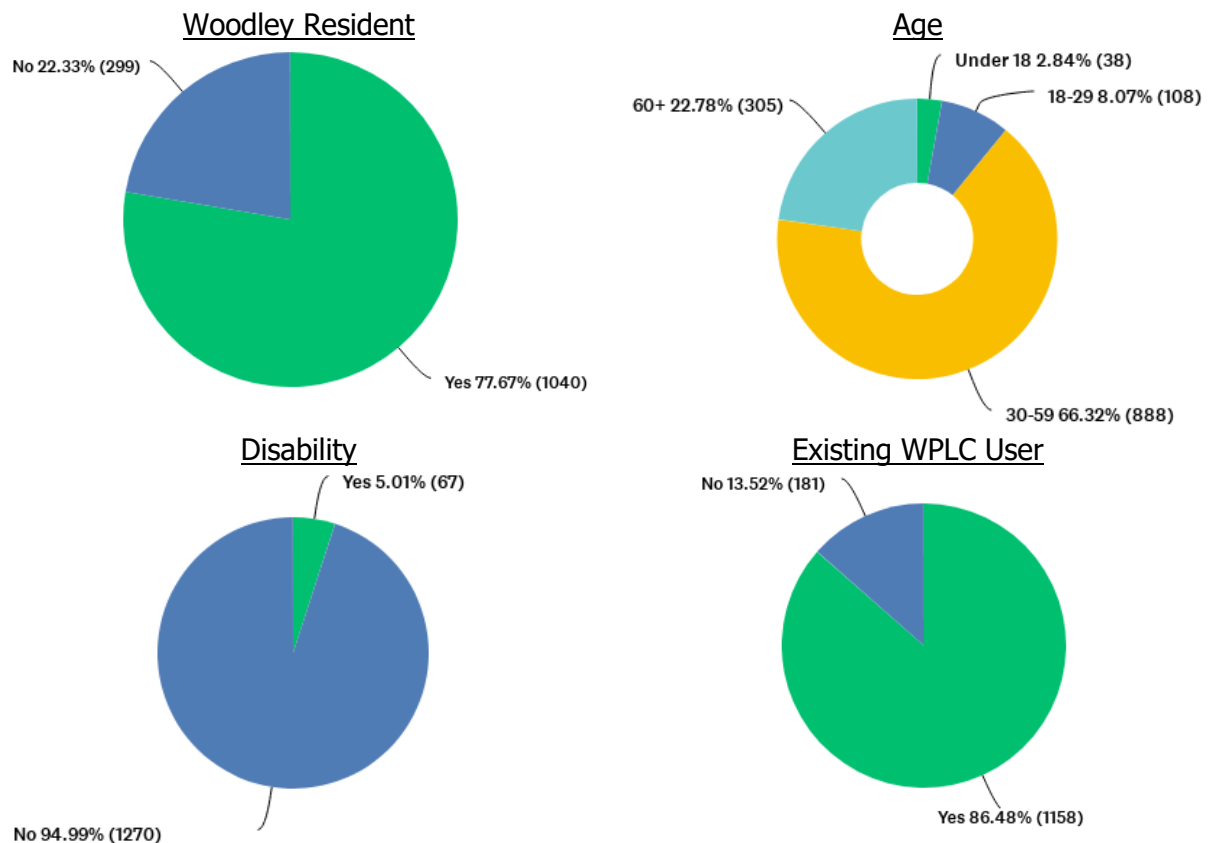
The meeting closed at 11.55 am

WOODFORD PARK LEISURE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT SURVEY RESPONSES

The Woodford Park Leisure Centre (WPLC) Development Survey was open from 23 April to 21 June 2024. The below report captures the responses received to the survey.

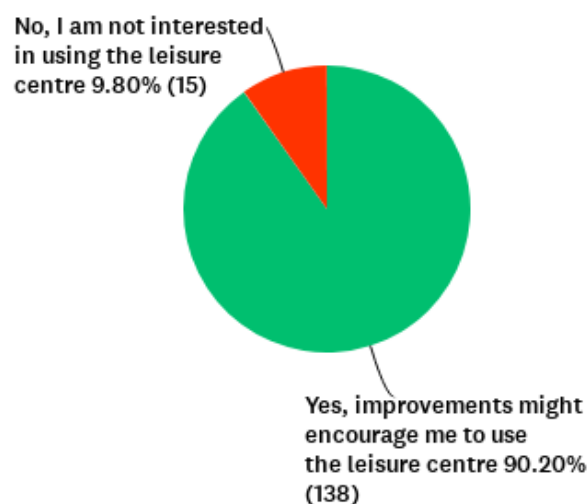
OVERVIEW

In total 1,339 responses were received to the survey; 1,077 of which were fully completed.



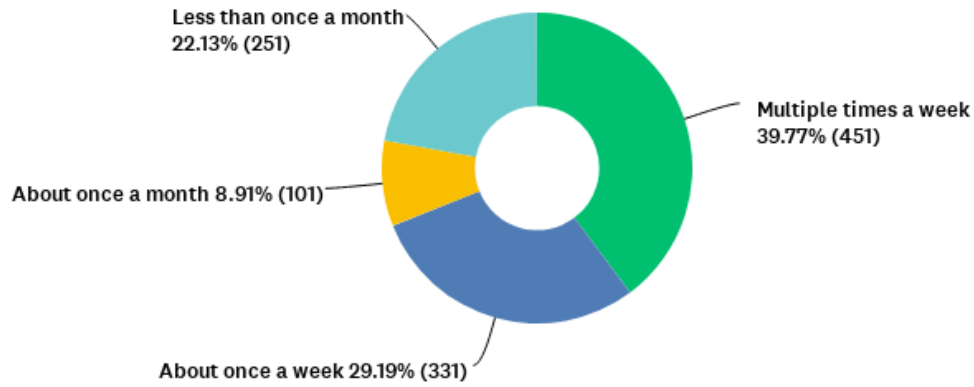
NON-WPLC USERS

When asked whether significant redevelopment or refurbishment of the centre would encourage them to attend, current non-WPLC users responded stating:

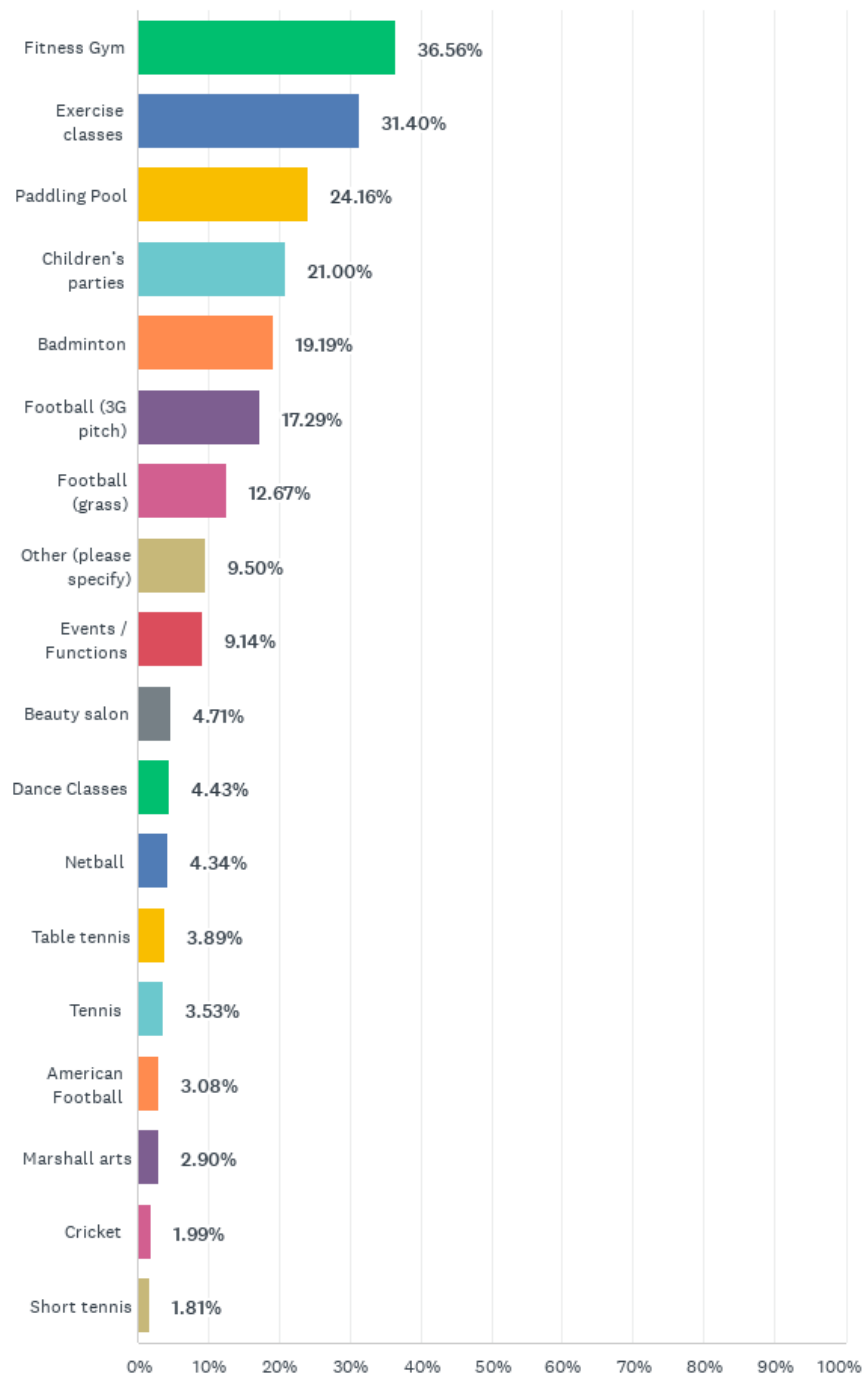


EXISTING WPLC USERS

Of those existing WPLC users who completed the survey, attendance was stated as follows:

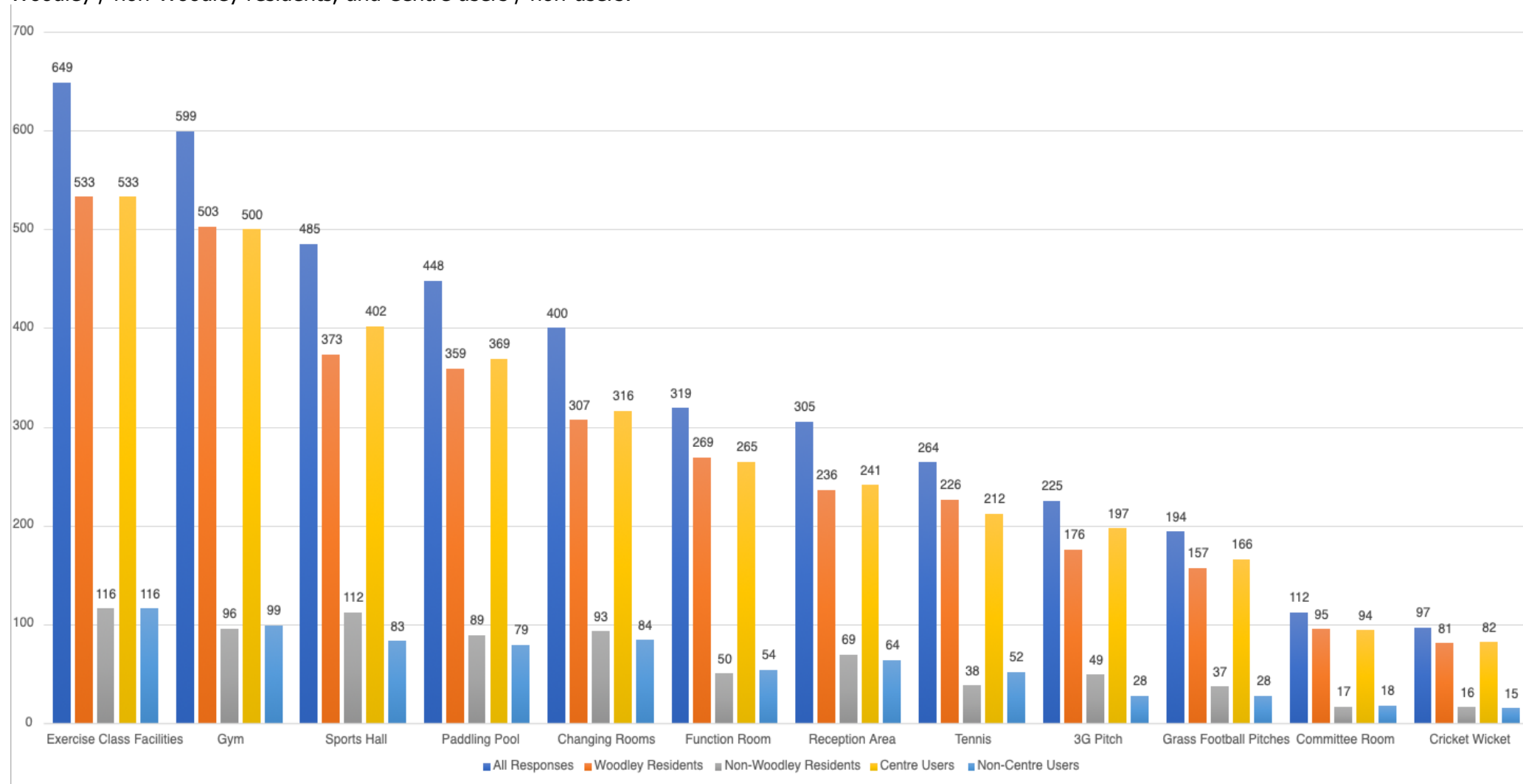


The facilities used by existing WPLC users were as follows:



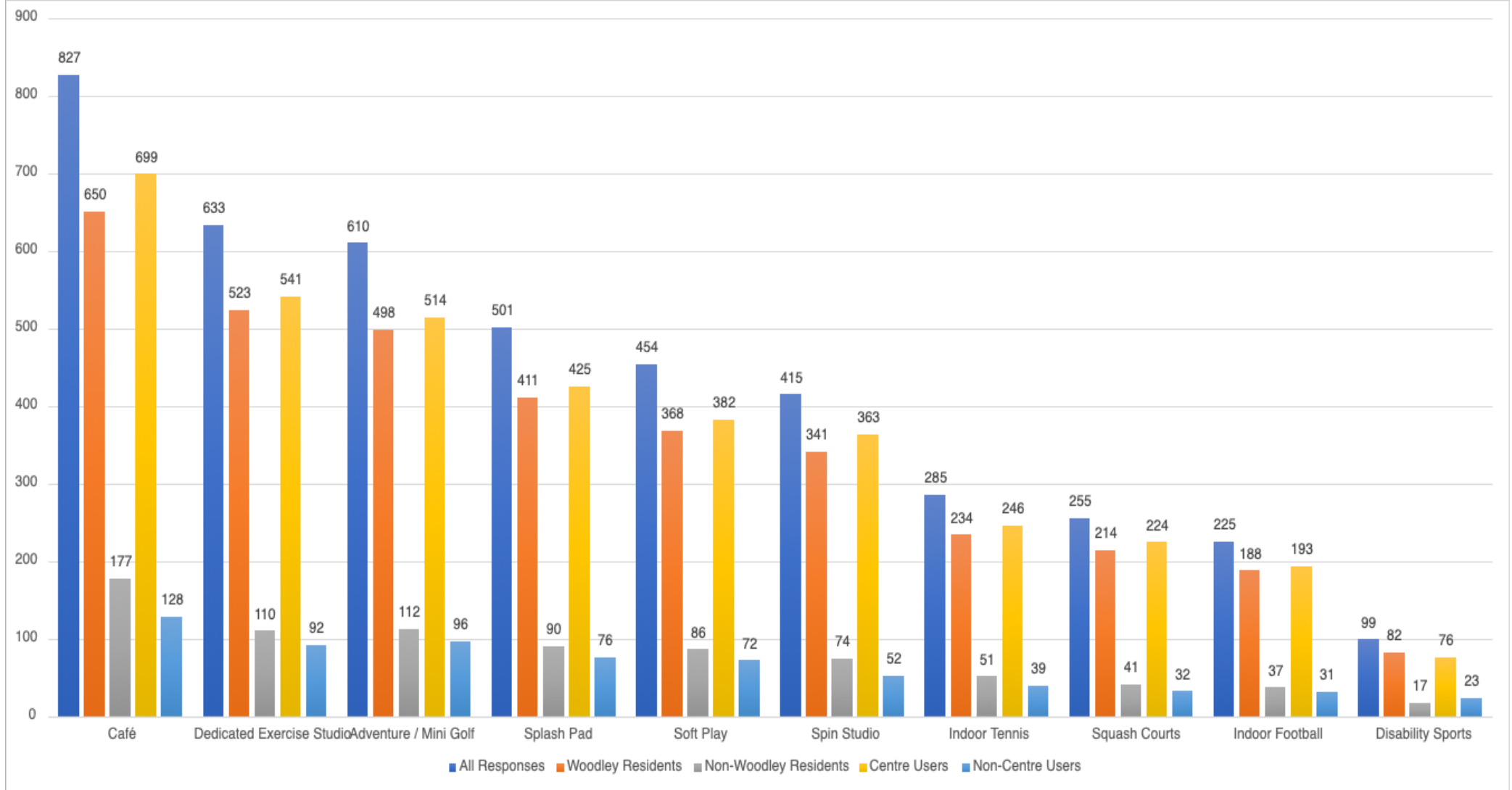
EXISTING FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS

Questions 7 and 10 asked centre users (Q7) and non-users (Q10) to indicate whether their use of WPLC would increase if improvements were to be made to certain existing facilities. The purpose of this was to help identify where improvements to existing facilities would most likely meet customer demand and potentially increase usage. The number of responses which indicated that improvements would increase usage, by facility, are as follows, broken down into Woodley / non-Woodley residents, and Centre users / non-users:

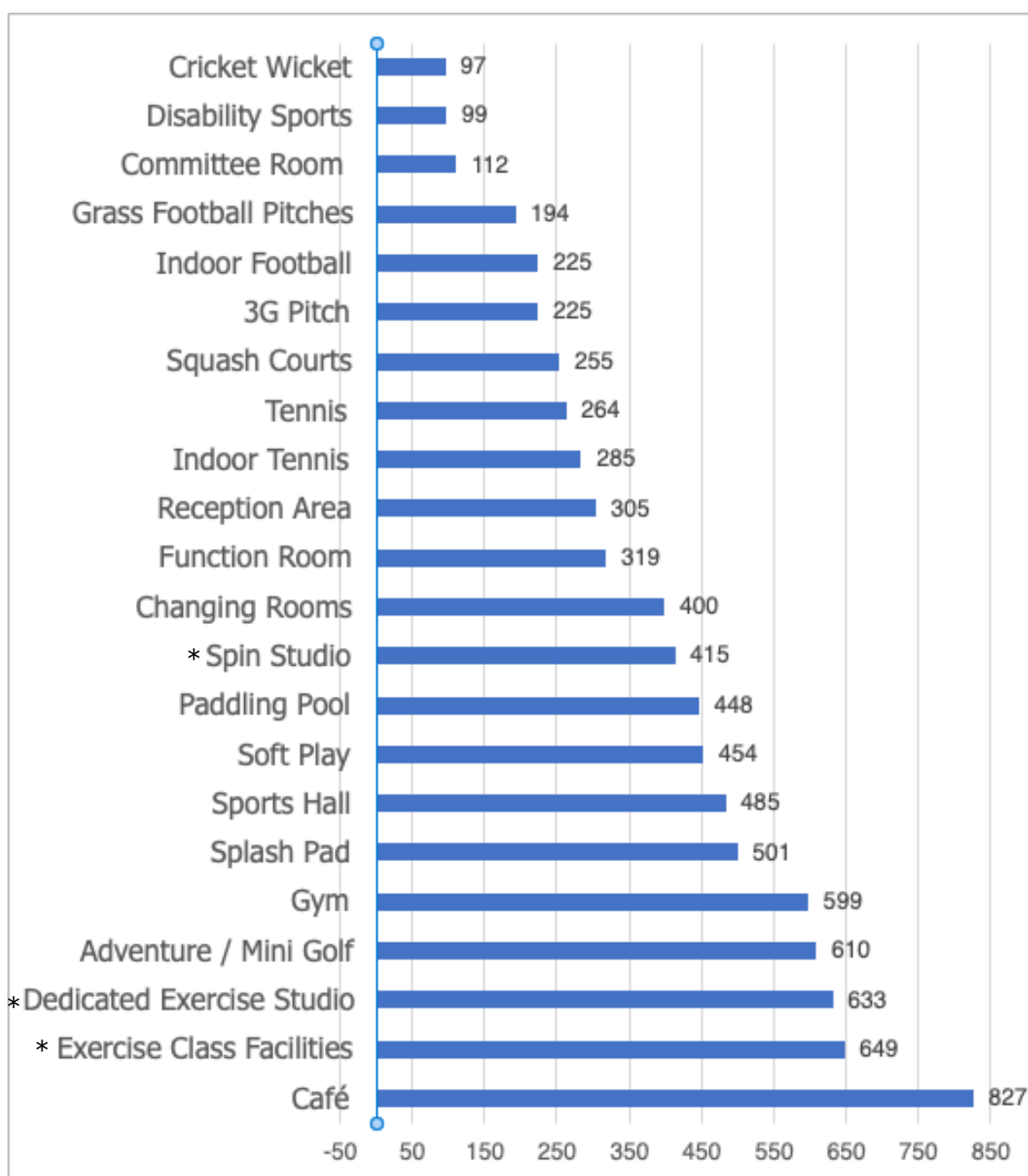


POTENTIAL FUTURE FACILITIES

Question 11 asked respondents to indicate whether the introduction of certain new facilities would increase their use of WPLC. The purpose of this was to help identify which new facilities might meet customer demand and potentially increase usage. The number of responses which indicated that the introduction of the specific new facilities (as listed) would increase usage are as follows, broken down into Woodley / non-Woodley residents, and Centre users / non-users:



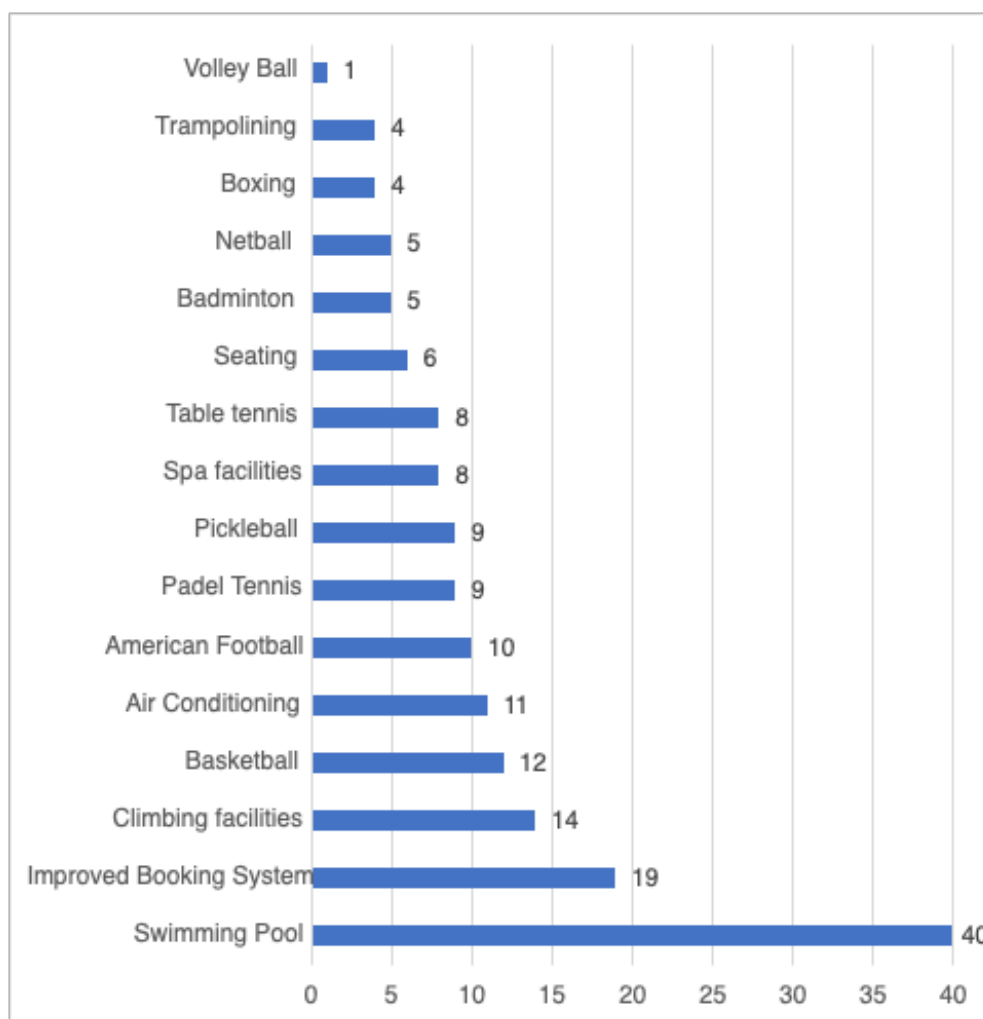
The below chart combines the number of responses received indicating an increased level of usage based on both improvements to existing facilities as well as the introduction of new facilities:



* There were 740 unique responses listed either Exercise Class Facilities, Dedicated Exercise Studio or Spin Studio

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

Alongside the facilities listed for improvements or introduction in the survey, Question 12 captured other facilities / activities respondents wished the Council to consider providing. Responses were as follows:



Woodford Park Leisure Centre

Redevelopment Strategy Report

(A summary of the work completed by the WPLC Development Task & Finish Working Group through November 2023 to August 2024 and the following redevelopment proposals of the Leisure Services Manager)

Identified redevelopment priorities and considerations

The following points were all identified as crucial considerations linked to any future redevelopment works that take place at Woodford Park Leisure Centre:

- Any developmental works should look to not only prioritise increasing income but also look to increase usage, quality and popularity; with a view to making Woodford Park Leisure Centre a popular and highly thought of destination to visit for local families and a variety of community groups.
- The thoughts, views and feedback of local residents, current Leisure Centre users and also of those that do not currently use the facilities should be heavily considered in any future redevelopment plans.
- Any developmental works should take into consideration the facilities on offer at neighboring leisure sites, not only with a view to identify potentially unique gaps in the market but also to highlight successful trends evident at other locations.
- Any future redevelopment works should aim to avoid periods of extended facility closure and disruption to current Leisure Centre users wherever possible.
- The impact that any improvement works could have on car parking and local traffic should be considered alongside any future redevelopment plans.
- All future developments and any new offerings should be accessible for a wide range of individuals, including those with disabilities and additional needs.
- All future projects and works should significantly consider any potential environmental impact and also look to progressively help the Town Council achieve the goal of becoming a carbon neutral organisation by 2030.

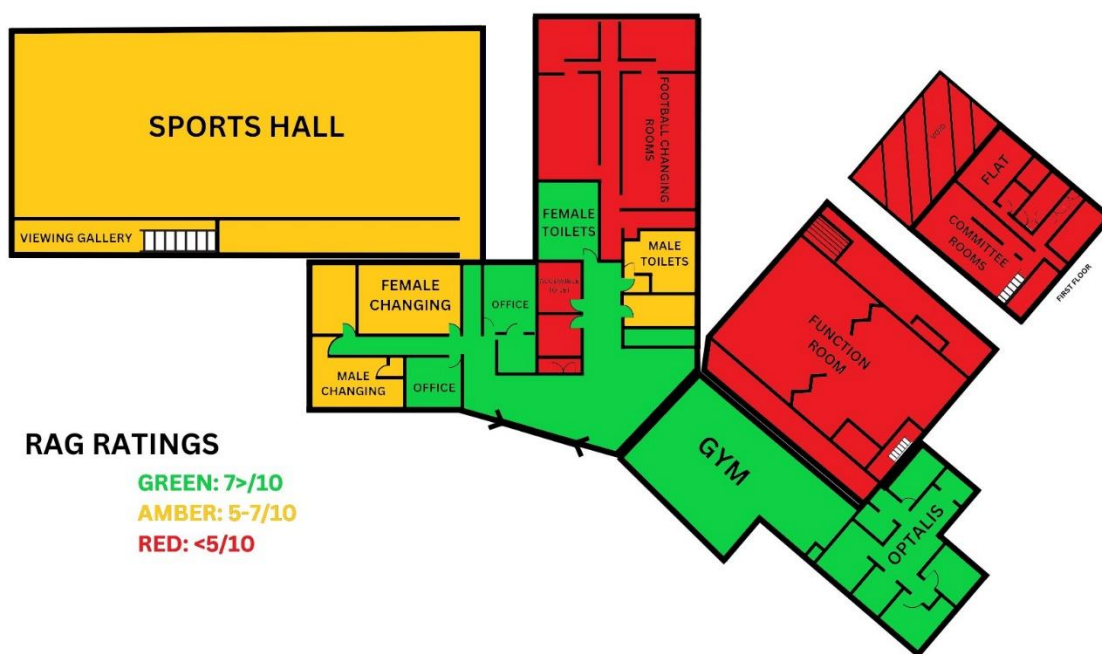
Existing facilities and services identified as needing redevelopment and improvement

The following were all identified as being current facilities or services that would benefit from redevelopment or improvement works. Areas were either highlighted throughout Leisure Centre tours, income analysis or the redevelopment survey:

- The empty space located between the Sports Hall and Paddling Pool, where the old play park used to be, was identified as an area that needs redevelopment.
- It was agreed that the Sports Hall itself should be retained as part of any future redevelopment plans due to its strong income figures and heavy usage. The need to carry out a structural survey of the Sports Hall was highlighted along with the desire to repair the internal brick work and to generally redecorate.
- The rear of the Leisure Centre, particularly the football changing rooms, was highlighted as the area most desperately in need of redevelopment. The services linked to this area of the Leisure Centre also scored less favorably in both the income analysis work and throughout the redevelopment survey.
- The accessible toilet was deemed not fit for purpose and the need for modernised equipment, flooring and drainage was identified.
- The reception area scored well during the Leisure Centre tours but the need for double doors to aid with heat retention was highlighted. There is also a desire to make improvements to the patio area outside the front of the Leisure Centre.
- The male and female changing rooms were identified as needing rejuvenation. The redevelopment survey results support the desire for improved changing facilities among both current users and non-users of the Leisure Centre.

Summary of analysis of existing services and facilities

Tours undertaken by Members resulted in the following RAG ratings being assigned to each internal area of the Leisure Centre. Members were asked to score each facility out of ten, based purely on their perception of each area, with the final diagram below showing the resulting average ratings:



An income analysis of the current Leisure Centre facilities was also undertaken, with a view to identifying which facilities were crucial to retain and to also highlight those that need redevelopment and improvement. A brief summary of the analysis is shown in the table below:

Estimated current annual income from each existing facility			
Gym / Membership	£ 146,910.00	Flat	£ 11,700.00
Sports Hall	£ 105,658.10	Grass Football	£ 10,636.00
3G Pitch	£ 94,945.00	Committee Rooms	£ 7,034.00
Function Room	£ 29,621.90	Cricket	£ 7,010.00
Optalis	£ 26,352.00	Tennis Court	£ 3,342.00

Summary of analysis of existing services and facilities cont.

The redevelopment survey asked current users and also non-users what impact refurbishment works to each facility may have on their usage of the Leisure Centre. The percentage breakdowns for each question are shown in the tables below:

Existing service or facility targeted for refurbishment works	Current user % whose usage would increase following refurbishment works	Current user % whose usage would decrease with no refurbishment works
Exercise Class Facilities	55.69%	32.50%
Gym	52.25%	32.18%
Sports Hall	42.01%	28.63%
Paddling Pool	38.66%	28.63%
Changing Rooms	33.02%	25.91%
Function Room	27.69%	19.54%
Reception Area	25.18%	17.14%
Tennis Court	22.15%	16.93%
3G Pitch	20.59%	17.14%
Grass Football	17.35%	17.76%
Committee Rooms	9.93%	12.64%
Cricket	8.57%	12.23%

Percentage of current non-users who would likely be encouraged to use the facilities or services if improvements were made to each facility			
Exercise Class Facilities	78.38%	Tennis Court	38.24%
Gym	67.81%	Function Room	37.32%
Changing Rooms	59.15%	Grass Football	20.14%
Sports Hall	57.64%	3G Pitch	20.00%
Paddling Pool	55.71%	Committee Rooms	13.04%
Reception Area	46.38%	Cricket	10.87%

It is also worth highlighting that 90.20% of non-users that took the survey indicated that refurbishment works would encourage them to make use of the Leisure Centre.

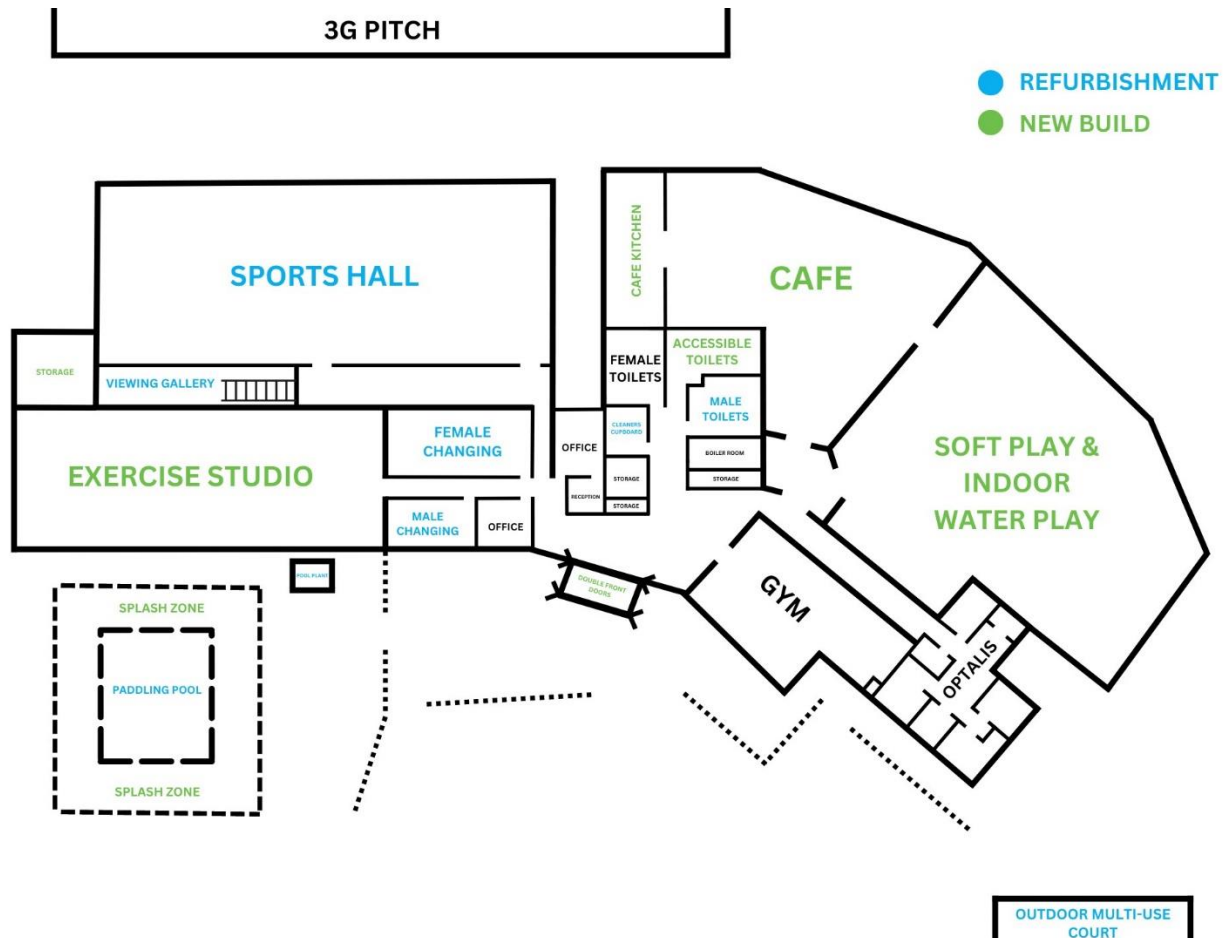
New facilities and services identified as likely to increase Leisure Centre usage, income or overall customer experience

Potential new facilities and services were identified primarily through the redevelopment survey and following an analysis of neighbouring leisure sites. The following additions have been identified as being likely to increase Leisure Centre usage, income and / or overall customer experience:

- The clear need for a Café was highlighted as a priority throughout all redevelopment meetings and analysis work. Of the 1085 individuals that completed the redevelopment survey 76.22% said their usage of the Leisure Centre would increase if a Café was introduced in the future.
- Family friendly services such as Adventure Golf, Splash Pad and Soft Play scored favorably during the redevelopment survey. It was agreed that the addition of at least one of these facilities would help push the Leisure Centre closer towards the target of being a popular destination to visit for local families.
- The desire for a dedicated exercise studio was highlighted throughout the redevelopment survey, with 58.34% of total respondents indicating that their usage of the Leisure Centre would increase if a new studio was built. Similarly, 55.69% of current users and 78.34% of non-users suggested that their usage would increase following improvements to the current exercise class facilities.
- The booking software currently in place at the Leisure Centre requires modernisation and improved functionality. The ability to book and pay for services online is now common and to a degree expected, and linking this with a dedicated app would reduce the pressure on Leisure Centre staff, improve customer experience and also likely result in increased income.

Recommended future redevelopment works and floor design

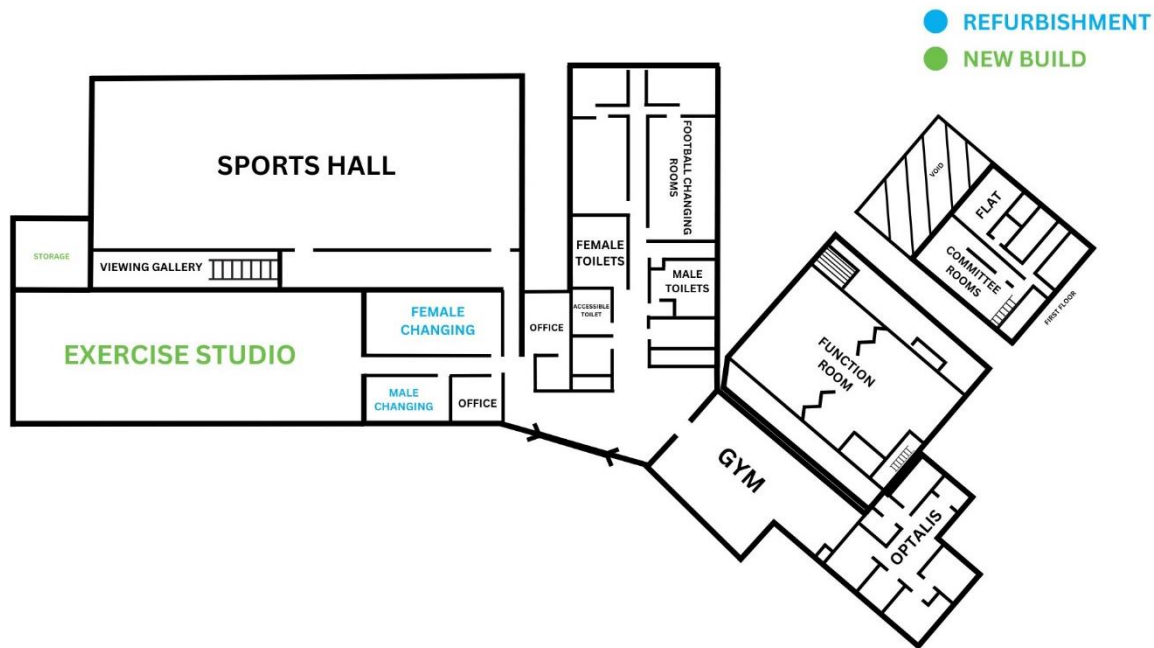
The following theoretical floor plan shows a design that pulls together all of the primary refurbishment targets as well as all of the recommended redevelopment objectives that have been identified throughout this report:



To move from the current floor plan to the recommended one is no simple task and would first require significant input from a professional architect. However, the design above should theoretically allow for the Leisure Centre to remain largely operational throughout what would need to be a series of phased redevelopment projects that have been broken down in more detail throughout the following pages.

Phase one – Exercise Studio & Changing Rooms

The construction of a completely new and modern exercise studio on the south side of the Leisure Centre and the total refurbishment of the nearby changing rooms is the most logical first phase of the redevelopment works.



Completing this phase of the redevelopment project first will:

- Result in significant enhancements to two of the most highly desired improvement areas identified throughout the analysis works.
- Significantly improve the quality of the facilities on offer for current members and hirers, thus securing current income and increasing future income.
- Allow the exercise classes and external bookings currently based in the function room to transfer across into the new exercise studio, helping to prevent disruption to current users when further redevelopment works take place.

Phase one - additional information and considerations

The following additional points should be considered in relation to the planning and design of a new exercise studio and refurbishment of the changing rooms:

Exercise studio design - key design factors and considerations

- Appearance and atmosphere are amongst the most critical factors to consider when designing an exercise studio. The studio needs to look good to make members feel good.
- Keeping the décor consistent with the nearby refurbished changing rooms and the gym would add an element of overall quality and professionalism to the Leisure Centre.
- Choosing the right lighting and flooring to create a sense of “theatre” is considered crucial. Different lighting options also allow for a greater variety of exercise classes.
- Capacity and floor space are important, both economically and to avoid members feeling cramped or restricted. The studio would need to allow for at least twenty-five attendees.
- The use of ceiling to floor windows is a good way to make the new studio feel more spacious and welcoming and would allow for a great view across the lake and park.
- Air conditioning is a frequently requested feature by current exercise class attendees.
- A good sound system is a must for dance and other high intensity exercise classes.
- Walls, windows and ceilings would need to be designed to retain sound as much as possible to prevent disturbance to other Leisure Centre users and nearby residents.
- Visiting other studios for design ideas and inspiration is a valuable exercise.

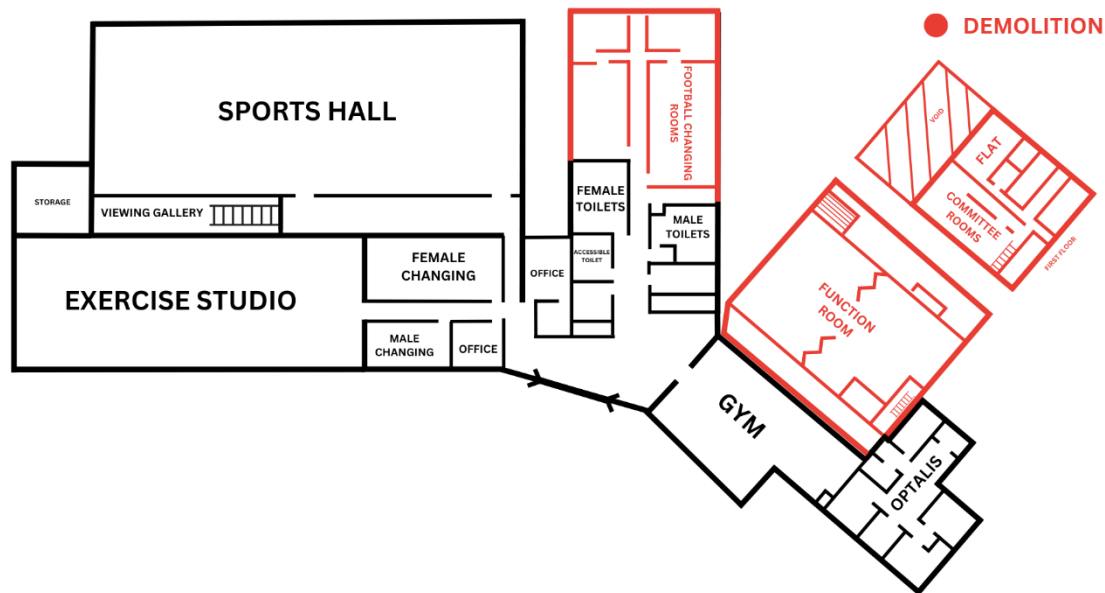
- The construction of a studio in the location of the old playpark would remove the uneven ground in the area, but also take away a convenient walkway used by the public to gain quicker access to and from the south side of the Leisure Centre.

Changing rooms refurbishment - key design factors and considerations

- Bigger and more spacious changing rooms allow for more privacy and greater freedom of movement. Personal space is important for those who make use of changing facilities.
- Cubicle showers are a must. One of the most common reasons current members avoid the changing rooms is due to the lack of cubicle showers and therefore lack of privacy.
- Installing improved flooring and drainage would allow for more efficient cleaning and a more hygienic environment. Cleanliness is crucial to good quality changing facilities.
- Consideration should be given as to whether or not toilets should be provided as part of the new changing facilities. Currently, no toilets are provided in the changing rooms.

Phase two - Demolition of the North side of the Leisure Centre

Phase two of the works is the most challenging and disruptive aspect of the whole redevelopment project and involves the demolition of the current football changing rooms, function room, committee rooms and flat.

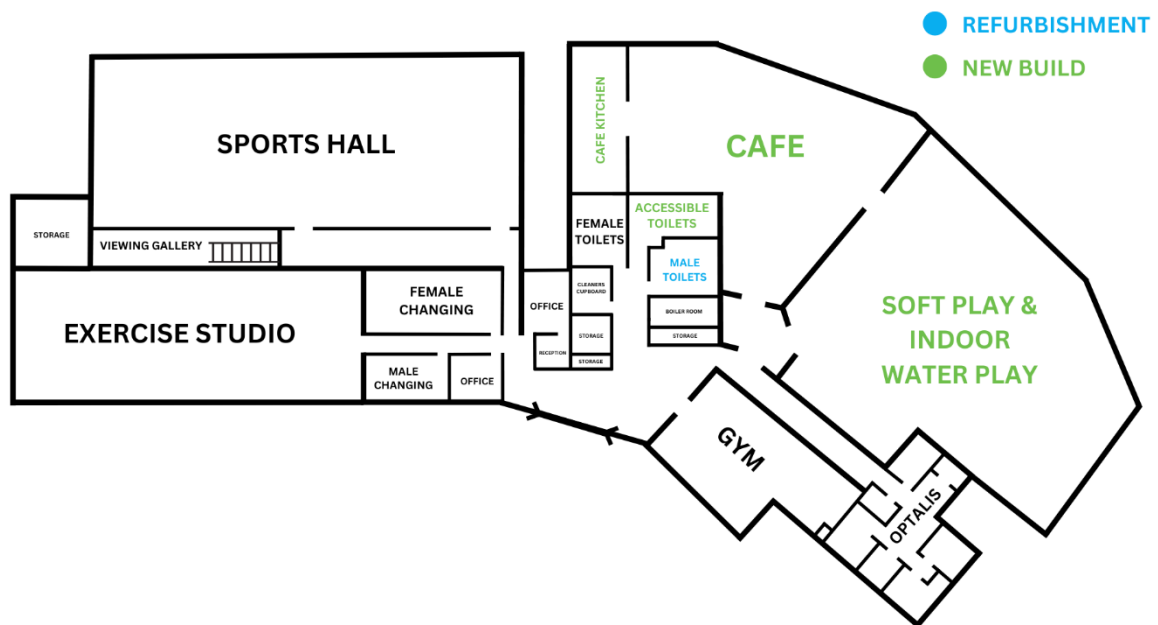


It is important to bear in mind that:

- The design layouts and plans are idealistic and are therefore subject to modification following a detailed investigation of the existing structure etc.
- Disruption to existing services is likely unavoidable during this phase of the works, particularly to the nearby male and female toilets, gym and Optalis.
- The facilities targeted for demolition were all identified throughout the analysis works as needing significant refurbishment, yet each scored comparatively low on the questions relating to how investment in these areas in their current form would impact a persons usage of the Leisure Centre.

Phase three – Café, Soft Play & Indoor Water Play

Phase three of the works is the most exciting element of the redevelopment project and is focused on the reconstruction and expansion of the north side of the Leisure Centre. This would include the building of a new café and a soft play centre equipped with a unique and innovative indoor water play zone.



In relation to this phase of the redevelopment it is important to note:

- The further the footprint of the building can be extended out into what is currently the playing fields the bigger and better the new facilities will be.
- This would be a good opportunity to also refurbish the male toilets and construct brand new and modernised accessible toilets. Both facilities were identified as areas needing improvement throughout the analysis works.
- Following expansion, consideration should be given to improving and repairing the public footpaths that surround the Leisure Centre.

Phase three - additional information, ideas and considerations

Phase three of the redevelopment presents an opportunity to create a set of modern, forward thinking and unique facilities that that would increase income, centre usage, overall quality and popularity. Key considerations and ideas for success for each are shown across the following pages.

Café - key considerations and ideas for success:

- The redevelopment survey results indicate that 76.22% of respondents would welcome the addition of a café at the Leisure Centre.
- Combining the café with a soft play centre, as well as all other existing facilities at the Leisure Centre, would guarantee a steady volume of customers and generate significant income.
- A café would be a particularly popular facility for members, who could receive a small discount as part of their membership to encourage usage.
- Having a café on site would allow the Leisure Centre to host more community focused events, for example social coffee mornings and charity fundraisers.
- As the café would be located in the middle of the park making elements of the facility dog friendly could prove popular with residents and park users.
- Installing large ceiling to floor windows that overlook the park and sports pitches would be a unique and impressive design feature for the café.
- Ensuring that the café places focus on sustainability and being environmentally friendly would be well received by the public.



Phase three - additional information, ideas and considerations

Making Woodford Park Leisure Centre a destination of choice for local families is a key objective of the redevelopment project. The building of a unique “Soft Play & Indoor Water Play Centre” achieves exactly that.

Soft Play & Indoor Water Play - ideas for success:

- The redevelopment survey results indicate that 41.84% of respondents would welcome the addition of a soft play centre at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.
- Combining a modern soft play centre with the completely unique offering of an indoor water play centre would encourage families to visit from greater distances.
- Adding an educational element to the indoor water play, with a spotlight on the importance of water for the planet, would be a forward thinking idea and could encourage schools to visit the Leisure Centre during term-time for class trips.
- Potential links with Reading University, a world leader in climate science, could be explored in relation to the educational aspect of the indoor water play centre.
- Potential funding opportunities could be available in relation to the climate education and planet sustainability aspects of the indoor water play centre.
- The soft play and indoor water play centre would prove a popular destination of choice for local families looking to book a venue for children’s birthday parties.
- The soft play and indoor water play centre would combine well with the new café and ultimately provide a steady stream of supplementary income.



Additional and supplementary redevelopment projects

There are a number of additional projects, separate from the main building redevelopment, that could be completed at any time throughout the works:

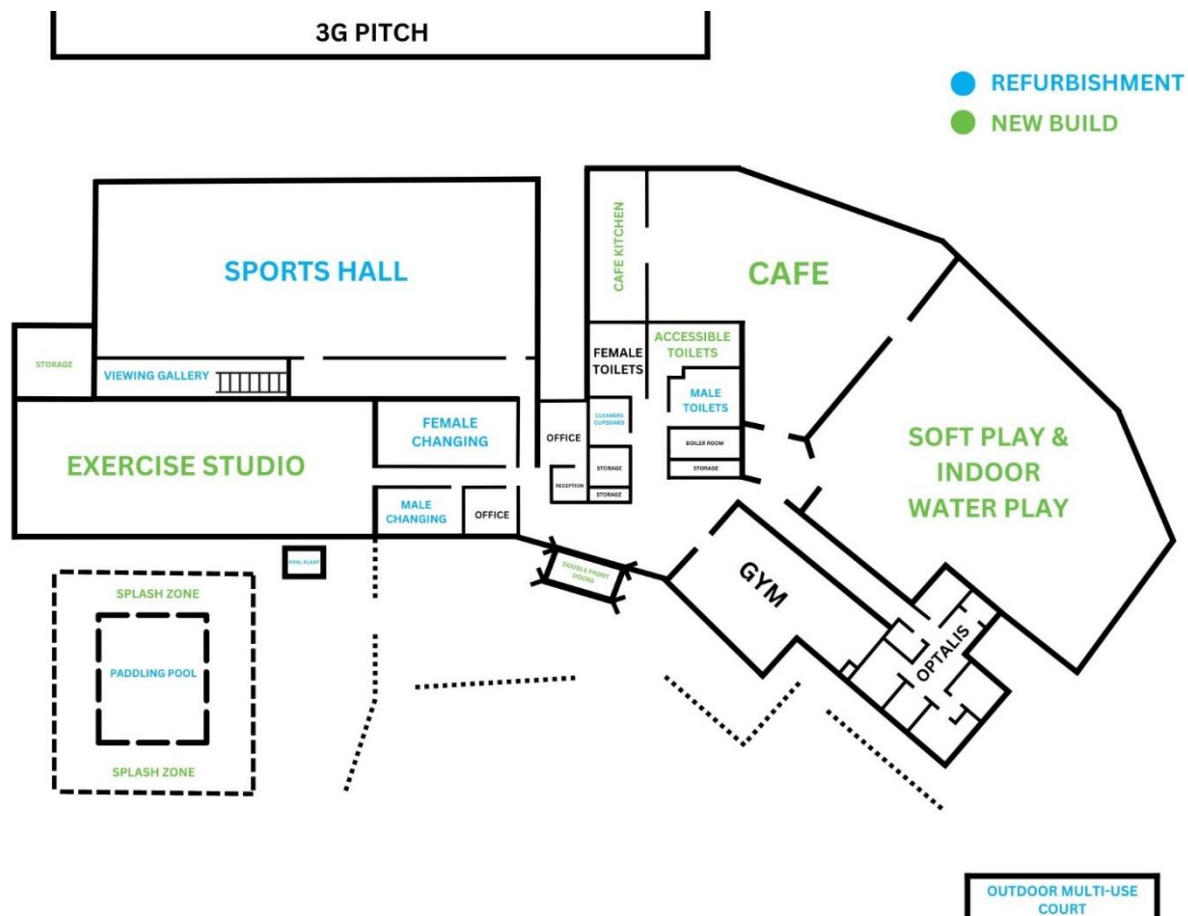
- New booking software can be introduced at any point during or even before the redevelopment works. The software would need to be future proof and be able to allow online bookings via an app of all new facilities and offerings as and when each phase of the redevelopment project is completed.
- There is a general desire to maintain some multi-use facilities as part of the redevelopment works and the current Hard Surface Area is ideal for such a purpose. Resurfacing this to allow a better provision for tennis, netball and other trending sports would be a relatively cheap, quick and non disruptive project.
- Making improvements to the paddling pool, including the addition of a splash pad surface surrounding the current pool, would be a popular redevelopment. Results from the survey indicate that 46.18% of respondents would welcome the addition of a splash pad, but there were also many comments about the importance of retaining the current paddling pool rather than fully replacing it.
- A small extension to the front of the Leisure Centre to allow for the building of double doors would improve both security and heat retention. Theoretically, this project could be completed at any time throughout the redevelopment works.
- The front of the Leisure Centre, primarily the patio area, was picked up as an area needing a fresh look and improvement works. Introducing new planting beds, seating, bicycle storage, signage etc. would be a nice final touch to the redevelopment works.

Summary

Woodford Park Leisure Centre is already a popular facility but is in need of major investment and refurbishment to realise its full potential.

The proposals throughout this report are of course idealistic and highly ambitious, but they are also unique, forward thinking, exciting and innovative.

Should these ideas and proposals become reality, Woodford Park Leisure Centre would become one of the most popular, high quality and unique leisure destinations in the entirety of Berkshire.



ALLOTMENTS WASTE MANAGEMENT

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

Purpose of Report

To update Members regarding the issue of waste at the allotment site and to ask Members to consider delaying the implementation of the clause in the tenancy agreement relating to the prohibition of bonfires from January 2025.

Background

The Leisure Services Committee of 11 November 2023 approved amendments to the allotment tenancy agreement, including the complete prohibition of bonfires, to take effect from January 2025. This was in part due to an action identified in the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan. Tenants were advised of the changes a year in advance and this has provided an opportunity to consult with tenants and the tenants committee. From the discussions with the tenants committee it was noted that there are differing views regarding the benefits of composting rather than burning green waste in terms of carbon release, however it is generally recognised that burning causes a nuisance as well as a safety hazard during hot weather.

Survey

An online survey was carried out to ascertain the proportion of tenants who light bonfires at the site and the type of waste they are burning. 174 tenants responded (approximately 50% of all tenants) and the results of the survey are attached at **APPENDIX A**.

The survey results show almost 70% of respondents who do light bonfires are burning timber and pallets in addition to green waste.

The survey also shows that the vast majority of responding tenants, including those lighting bonfires, are also composting green waste on their plot, which is encouraging.

Approximately 70% of all respondents did not support the decision to prohibit bonfires completely.

The comments received suggest that there is recognition that some regulation of bonfires at the site is required and that the current rules – restricting bonfires to after 4pm from 1 October to 30 April only, are considered to be working well.

Officers have shared the survey information with the tenants committee representatives and have met with the committee to discuss options for the best way forward in addressing the issues presented by bonfires, in addition to the wider issue of waste at the site. It was considered that an outright prohibition of bonfires without any other provision to remove or deal with waste could create a significant problem with fly tipping, with waste removal from the site already an issue which needs to be addressed. The Council's Amenities Team already remove a considerable amount of waste from the site in addition to the skips that are provided each year. This is a particular problem where waste materials are left on a plot at the end of a tenancy and the Council has limited means to recharge for any clearance required.

Information obtained from other town and parish councils in the area shows a range of approaches to waste management at their allotment sites and many do not allow bonfires at any time.

Proposal

It is proposed that the prohibition of bonfires at the site be delayed to enable further discussion and consultation with tenants and the tenants committee. This will provide an opportunity to consider bonfires in the context of the wider issues of waste management at the site and for the Council to be clear on the benefits of any actions to be taken.

Areas for further discussion and investigation include;

- managing waste on plots through the plot inspection process on a plot-by-plot basis.
- potential for introducing a deposit system whereby the deposit can be withheld in the event that a tenant leaves rubbish on the plot at the end of the tenancy.
- potential for controlled burning on specific dates – with control of materials being burned. *This may reduce the nuisance element by restricting the dates when burning is carried out.*
- explore the use of purpose made incinerators as an alternative. *This can reduce nuisance and safety risks.*
- increasing composting through education and awareness – *Although the survey suggests the level of on-site composting is high.*
- more skips provided by the Council through the year

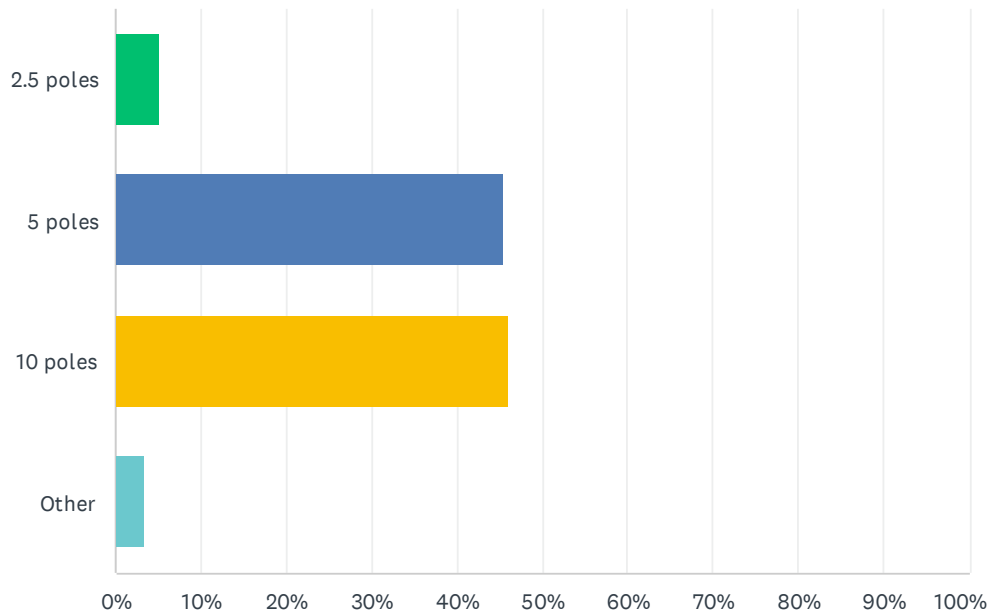
These are only areas for discussion at this stage and a range of measures are likely to be required, with some solutions addressing only certain issues e.g. safety or nuisance from smoke. Consultation with and support from tenants will be key to reducing waste at the site going forwards.

Recommendations

- ♦ **That Members note the contents of the report.**
- ♦ **That the clause in the tenancy agreement relating to bonfires revert to the previous seasonal restrictions to enable further consultation and planning to manage waste at the site .**

Q1 What size is your allotment plot?

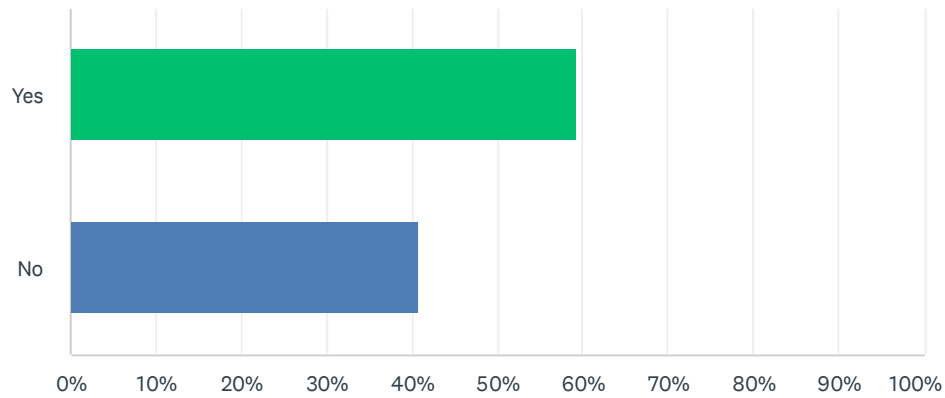
Answered: 174 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
2.5 poles	5.17%	9
5 poles	45.40%	79
10 poles	45.98%	80
Other	3.45%	6
TOTAL		174

Q2 Do you currently light bonfires at the allotment site?

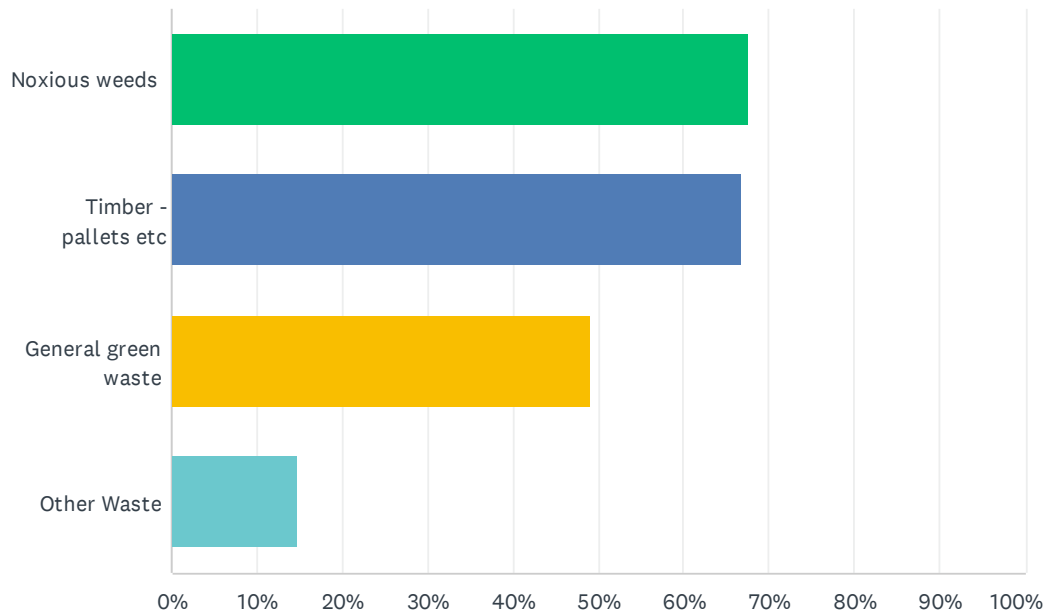
Answered: 172 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	59.30%	102
No	40.70%	70
TOTAL		172

Q3 If YES to question 2 - what do you burn?

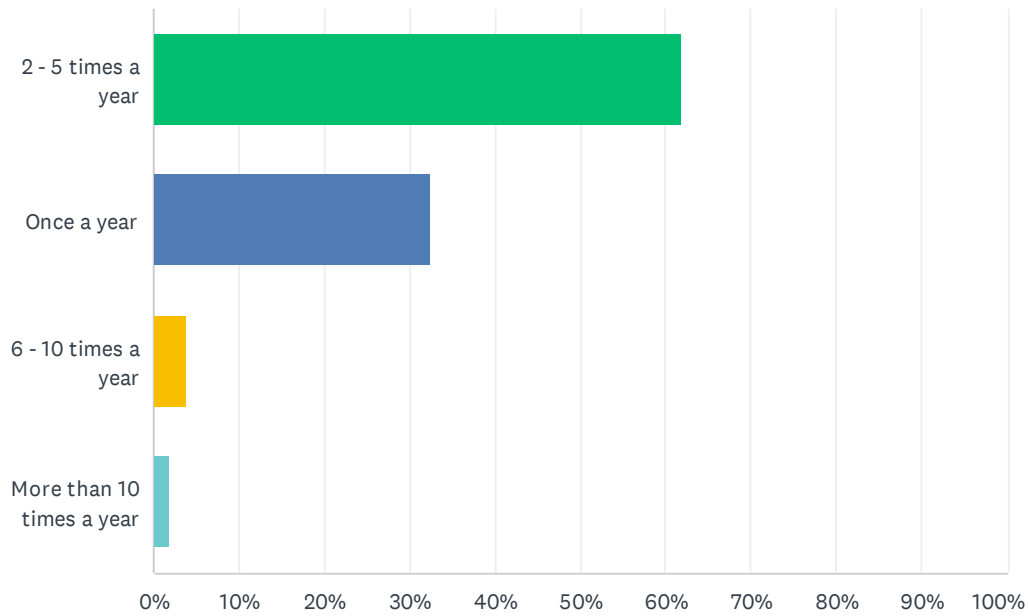
Answered: 102 Skipped: 72



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Noxious weeds	67.65%	69
Timber - pallets etc	66.67%	68
General green waste	49.02%	50
Other Waste	14.71%	15
Total Respondents: 102		

Q4 How frequently do you burn waste?

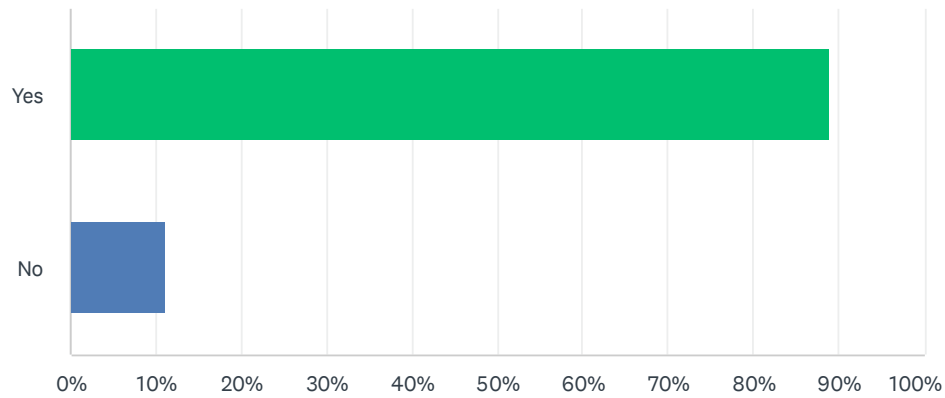
Answered: 102 Skipped: 72



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
2 - 5 times a year	61.76%	63
Once a year	32.35%	33
6 - 10 times a year	3.92%	4
More than 10 times a year	1.96%	2
TOTAL		102

Q5 Do you currently compost green waste on your plot?

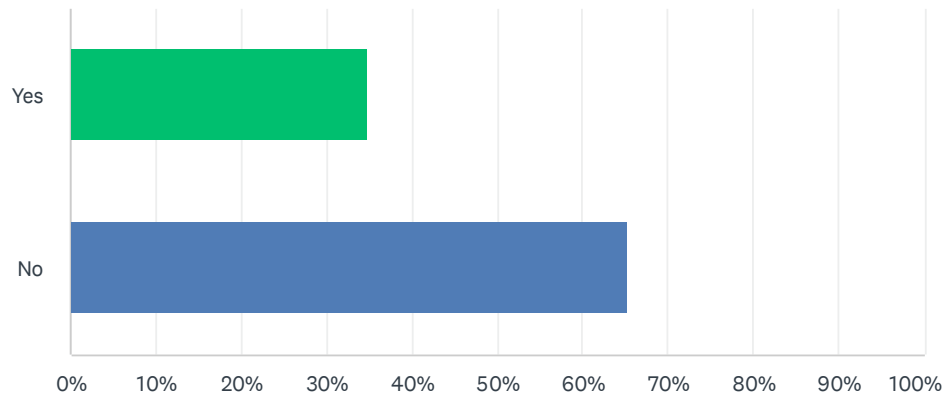
Answered: 171 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.89%	152
No	11.11%	19
TOTAL		171

Q6 Do you remove green waste from the site to dispose of elsewhere?

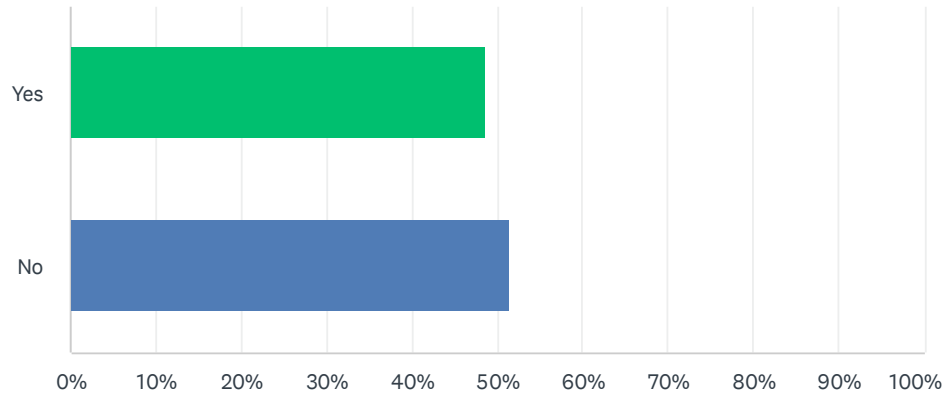
Answered: 170 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	34.71%	59
No	65.29%	111
TOTAL		170

Q7 Do you use the general waste skips provided annually by the Council for non-green waste?

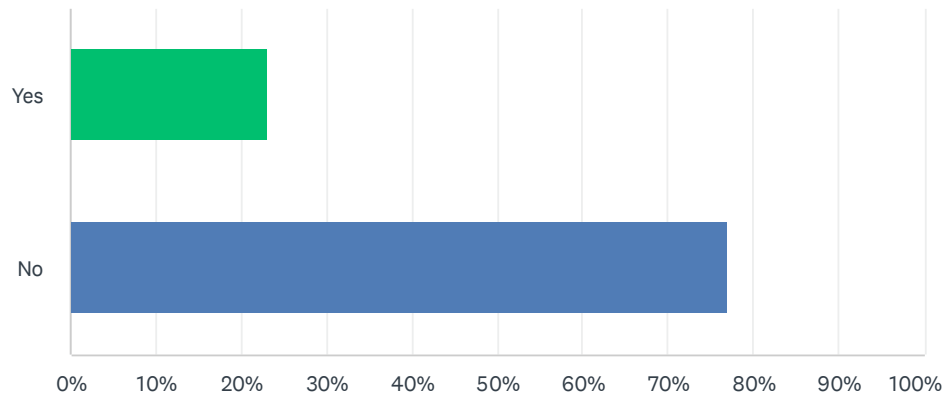
Answered: 169 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	48.52%	82
No	51.48%	87
TOTAL		169

Q8 Do you support the prohibition of bonfires at the allotment site?

Answered: 169 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	23.08%	39
No	76.92%	130
TOTAL		169

Q9 Do you have any comments about bonfires and waste at the allotment site?

Answered: 137 Skipped: 37

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The amount of green waste (specifically grass cuttings) from a combination of my allotment and the open area beside it (near the beehives) is too much to compost for my own use, so I have found the need to take some of it to the recycling centre. Having some means, e.g. a skip, to take excess green waste from the site would be welcome as it would reduce the need to make individual journeys to the recycling centre.	8/2/2024 1:36 PM
2	During winter at least 4-5 month council have to allow to use bonefires to reduce the notorious/noxious weed and enhance the productivity of the allotment	6/17/2024 10:18 AM
3	This is the only chance to control plant fungus and disease and dispose of rotted timber.	6/17/2024 8:20 AM
4	Would like to see bonfires still allowed and an increase in the number of skips for the number of allotmenters on the site.	6/16/2024 9:29 AM
5	Bonfires are the only way to get rid of noxious weeds e.g. mares tail, ground elder, bind weed, couch grass, brambles, and diseased crops which cannot be composted and which risk spreading disease across the site. Composting on site does not produce high enough temperatures to kill disease organisms or weed seeds. Burning is also needed to reduce the sheer quantity of green waste left each growing season that would otherwise prove impossible to compost on site without creating several compost heaps per allotment. Increasing the number of compost bins would invariably lead to a rapid increase in the rodent population that feed on and nest in the material deposited in the bins. Decomposition increases the temperature in the bins which makes it an attractive nesting site throughout the year. A pair of rats can produce approximately 1250 offspring per year! This could create a huge problem on a site that already has a known rodent problem. A communal compost heap would also be unwise as composted material could spread disease and difficult weeds more widely across the site. It would also need to be managed e.g. turned, watered, emptied etc. Preventing allotment holders from having a few evening bonfires during the winter months should not unduly inconvenient surrounding homeowners. However preventing bonfires would necessitate the council providing skips to remove noxious, diseased plants and plant material that is difficult to compost. For over 300 allotments, this could be a huge amount of material and therefore require a large number of skips! Failure to provide a method of removal will only result in an increase in unwanted dumping on site. It will also be necessary for the council to remove any broken wooden pallets and woody plant material (e.g. brambles) which would no longer be used as tinder for the occasional bonfire. Failure to remove this would also lead to more dumping. As a compromise, perhaps the council should allow bonfires to continue but maybe reduce the number of days in the week that they can take place or remove the number of fires that a plot holder can have?	6/13/2024 11:46 PM
6	I think we should be allowed to have bonfires in autumn n winter. When locals windows are likely closed and clothes not in washing lines.	6/12/2024 8:46 PM
7	we should be allowed to continue to have bonfires within the current structure as I prefer to burn weeds rather than try and compost them I don't particularly want to take the risk of putting seed back into the ground I have just worked hard to clear	6/11/2024 5:41 PM
8	Sometimes the smoke from bonfires is from the gardens on Church Road not always allotment plots.	6/10/2024 4:13 PM
9	Limit the bonfire to 2 hours per week and specifically which day would be agreed with local neighbours	6/10/2024 10:42 AM
10	what is more important is the lack of maintenance being carried out in keeping hedges cut back and encroachment of roads	6/9/2024 5:03 PM
11	it would be convenient if we were able to dispose of old wood in skips instead of taking it to	6/9/2024 4:13 PM

Allotments Waste

reading rubbish tip I do not burn as I am afraid of fire

12	As I work full time the skips tend to be full before I've a chance to use them. Please keep the bonfire agreement as is only after 4:00pm from October to March.	6/9/2024 3:27 PM
13	Annual clearing of noxious weeds and old wood etc is an essential part of me maintaining my plot. I think it's totally unacceptable to expect people to take waste off of the site to the tip. It will only encourage more fly tipping.	6/9/2024 11:17 AM
14	When clearing plots it is nearly impossible not to have fires unless you have a van to take the waste to the recycling centre. Some people do not drive and walk and cycle to the site so would have to pay/ask someone else to do this. Therefore inviting others onto the site.	6/9/2024 11:14 AM
15	Burnable waste that won't compost has to be taken to the tip. This means using the car and generating greenhouse gases. Possibly more damaging than having a bonfire?? I think bonfires should be allowed in the winter months when nobody living nearby is in their gardens or is drying washing.	6/8/2024 11:08 PM
16	I think the type of waste you can put in the skips is very restrictive	6/8/2024 3:47 PM
17	Bonfires are a really important for the maintenance of the plot and keeping tidy and under control. I would be happy to have further restrictions on times/days as a compromise. But would be lost without the ability to have them	6/8/2024 2:05 PM
18	By allowing the use of and the regular supply of pallets, which is extremely useful, they naturally weaken over time and become unusable the easiest way of disposing is through the occasional use of a bonfire.	6/7/2024 8:49 PM
19	I have noticed that some allotment holders bring things to use on their plot that is just rubbish. wood , metal, etc, and just left. Bonfires are dangerous on the site when left to burn out, a shed was destroyed near my plot.	6/7/2024 8:19 PM
20	How about spreading the waste skips around the site. It's a long way from my plot to where they are currently.	6/7/2024 5:18 PM
21	BETTER TO BURN IT THAN HAVE IT PILE UP ON SITE	6/7/2024 3:29 PM
22	Yes, Bonfires - Much of the green waste cannot be composted or is contaminated/diseased, therefore needs to be incinerated. If properly dried, little or no smoke is created, that will have no impact on surrounding houses. It is sad that we are losing tenants to other Wokingham allotment sites because of the strict rules Woodley has recently imposed. For those new residents taking on neglected plots, have a difficult task with the initial upkeep especially disposing of the waste, if you cannot bonfires. Tenants may not be able to drive to the local amenities centre. If waste goes to the amenities' centre, but is only suitable for household waste, it will go into landfill. If it can be burnt on the plot, the ash is good nutrients for the soil or compost. Some plots are not being used to their full potential, as per agreement, up to 70% cultivated, they have small growing patches and a lot of grass - Could this be due to lack of waste disposal opportunities. Understandably there should be rules on bonfires due to risk of fire spreading....why can't be, that fires only occur in incinerators or fire pits.	6/7/2024 3:28 PM
23	I think the April to October ban is adequate and we should be allowed to burn in the other months	6/7/2024 10:49 AM
24	I agree bonfires should be severely restricted both frequency and what can be burnt. I mainly burn fruit tree prunings and occasionally timber no longer in a useable condition. I make around half a ton of excellent compost each year. I actually have just reduced from 15 to 12.5 poles.	6/7/2024 10:28 AM
25	We compost everything that can be composted and take home everything that needs going to the skip. Generally we don't mind bonfires unless people burn plastic and tyres which create toxic smoke (unfortunately some people around our plot do that : (). We never used the communal skip but we think it is very useful to other people. Bonfires are OK as long as they don't produce toxic fumes.	6/7/2024 12:25 AM
26	Not all 'green' waste can be composted. I have a particular problem keeping down brambles which are best cut, dried and burnt. Seems a very unnecessary prohibition. Why not allow one day per month throughout the year if there is an issue?	6/6/2024 10:54 PM
27	No	6/6/2024 9:40 PM
28	With relation to bonfires whilst I agree that to help protect the ozone they need to be reduced	6/6/2024 8:58 PM

Allotments Waste

not all tenants have the facility to transport waste from the site. Whilst I compost as much green waste as possible from fruit tree pruning to leaf and grass waste, bindweed and brambles can't be composted and brambles are not easy to transport, perhaps an arrangement can be made with the garden waste vehicles one Saturday morning a month from mid to late summer to be onsite with either a committee member or council representative to make sure that only allotment site waste is disposed of. Whilst I use old broken pallets and often tidy up by the shed the broken pieces that have been left to use as a basis for my bonfire these can be composted or used to help create bug areas that are then good for the site. My main concern is people will dump their weeds etc in the hedge rows as this is being done at the moment outside of the bonfire times causing mounds and a mess. An alternative suggestion would be that tenants can purchase at a reduced rate a certain amount of the green waste paper bags and these can be left by the main gate for collecting on the green waste day for those not able to make their own journey to the tip, should someone have a lot of brambles to clear then the council can amend the amount they might be able to purchase at a reduced rate by checking the plot or the tenants provide photos to prove

29	I also use the ash burnt from bonfire on my plot	6/6/2024 7:41 PM
30	The ability to dispose of noxious weeds by bonfire is an amenity I would be unhappy to lose. Disposal of a limited amount of waste by burning reduces the number of trips to the council's waste disposal site.	6/6/2024 6:29 PM
31	Old incomplete greenhouses should slowly be removed.	6/6/2024 6:07 PM
32	If we are not allowed to burn the wood and not allowed to put it in the skip, how will we dispose of it?	6/6/2024 5:25 PM
33	I compost any waste I can, but woody waste does not compost readily and bonfires are the simplest and most practical way of disposing of it. I cannot take it away to the tip and have no other way of dealing with it. I think the current system of restricting seasons and times of setting bonfires is working fine, and see no reason why it should be changed. I have heard the council are justifying a ban due to carbon concerns but they have failed to realise the burning of plant material is carbon neutral.	6/6/2024 3:40 PM
34	If you don't allow bonfires it will increase trips to the tip (we go to Bracknell) so not any more environmentally friendly than the odd bonfire. If you stick to current restrictions, as in acceptable dates/ times, it should be fine.	6/6/2024 1:48 PM
35	(1) Green waste- to make compost (2) Non-green waste- Bonefire is required for timber and other waste, however more frequent skips for timber related waste are required if the council wants to stop bonefire. (3) Regular skips for metal, glasses and plastic would help to make the garden tidy.	6/6/2024 9:50 AM
36	You should stop truck loads of pallets being delivered free, most of them do end up in fires. Albeit a minority but there are tenants who burn them regularly every week or even daily, just for the fun of it ! Some wood bits are useful but people should get their own and are more likely to use them for other things than burning. Plastic and glass could be collected separately. There are plenty of people collecting metal so it could be either taken home left outside or even arrange for collection from the site maybe once a year.	6/6/2024 8:38 AM
37	There is a lot of rubbish that you inherit when taking on a plot from previous owners. Skips are always filled very quickly and they are not available regularly. If there were regular skips then allotment keepers could manage the waste and this would reduce the need for bonfires. I believe that if all allotments were cleaned up with a supply of skips this too would reduce and eventually no waste would be produced only green waste. All tenants should be required to keep their plots clean once skips are supplied and plots cleaned to a maintainable standard.	6/6/2024 8:35 AM
38	If you ban bonfires you will need to provide skips more often to dispose of noxious weeds (e.g. bindweed and mares tails which can't be composted) and diseased plants.	6/6/2024 7:10 AM
39	Fire of the waste in the metal container	6/5/2024 11:48 PM
40	If your plot is managed well I am not sure there is a need for a bonfire.	6/5/2024 9:44 PM
41	I do have a problem disposing of rotten wood. I do not have access to a car. In the past I have asked a neighbour to add it to his bonfire. I do support no fires but there has been no alternative	6/5/2024 9:29 PM
42	I would normally take small waste items away to dispose elsewhere but occasional burn larger	6/5/2024 9:14 PM

Allotments Waste

items (mainly wood) when allowed.

43	Bonfires are a useful means of controlling persistent weeds. In my experience bonfires at the site are well controlled, relatively infrequent and certainly not anything approaching a nuisance. The benefits of allowing limited burning far outweigh any harms. It seems an onerous, and to many upsetting, curb on their freedoms as allotment holders. Ultimately the environmental and ecological benefits of allotment holders tending their plots should be celebrated and facilitated. Unnecessary controls are simply a discouragement to this and quite demoralising. I encourage the council to think again and allow sensible controlled burning. Thank you.	6/5/2024 9:12 PM
44	Sensible and occasional burning of non toxic garden material in an incinerator or similar would be useful. The skips fill up very quickly. Other waste we take home for kerbside collection if appropriate	6/5/2024 8:54 PM
45	Just keep to the rules and wind direction as instructed by Mike	6/5/2024 8:50 PM
46	You would have to have a skip almost permanently on site.will you stop our neighbours also.	6/5/2024 8:40 PM
47	Maybe green waste only could be permitted? Appreciate that's difficult to monitor. I don't need the fire to manage the weed waste but will miss the tradition.	6/5/2024 8:34 PM
48	I think the system of burning during the winter in the evenings was fine. But tenants should be reminded that it should only be plant waste. There is no other way to dispose of fruit tree pruning as you cannot even put branches in the brown garden waste bins at home and not everyone has a garden waste option at home or a car to transport waste off the site. There are however tenants that burn black plastic and other plastic waste and this is really unpleasant	6/5/2024 8:11 PM
49	I can live without bonfires, although they are nice in the winter. But there does need to be a way to get rid of more green waste especially weeds which are rampant. I don't want to compost these on site. It would work to have a large communal green waste collection (such as the brown bins at home) which could be part of the plot rental. I am always overrun with green waste and scared of inspections as a result.	6/5/2024 7:34 PM
50	I took on my plot in 2023. I would have been good to be able to put rubble and wood collected off my site in a skip.	6/5/2024 6:48 PM
51	I do not believe bonfires locally contribute significantly to changes in global climate. I do believe wind direction should be taken into account to minimise discomfort for others, especially residents close to the site. I always do.	6/5/2024 6:38 PM
52	I think bonfires have been good idea and skip is useful for people (I would stick to them)	6/5/2024 6:34 PM
53	Composting does attract vermin, so my compost area is kept to a minimum for this reason. Bind weed, couch grass and other persistent perennial weeds do not break down in domestic compost bins/areas as it cannot get hot enough. Having requested a FOI regarding complaints about bonfires, there were only 2 reported in the last 5 years. This is clearly not the reason for the banning of bonfires. Also as Wokingham do not enforce the banning of bonfires and Woodley residents can have bonfires in their own gardens, I fail to understand the reason behind Woodley Town Councils decision for allotment holders. My primary concern will be fly tipping onto other allotment holders plots if we cannot dispose of waste.	6/5/2024 6:17 PM
54	The removal of green waste would be helpful!	6/5/2024 5:49 PM
55	I think you are using the bonfire to cover too many scenarios. I fully support being able to burn dried garden waste in controlled configs, such as an incinerator, or being able to have a small fire for cooking. I don't support the building of huge bonfires where you could roast an ox. I personally take my waste to the recycling center when it is convenient as skips on site are rare and far between. I don't have that much waste that needs to be disposed this way, as a collect most in a separate heap that I do not intend to touch for years to come.	6/5/2024 5:31 PM
56	Bonfires are a useful way to get rid of pallets that have rotted away and are no longer of use on the lot. We burn the brambles and wood from the trees after they've been pruned. To not have a bonfire would mean I would have to transfer the waste to home and either burn it there or put it in the Council brown bin. The annual bonfire for me marks the end of one year and the start of the next growing season.	6/5/2024 5:24 PM
57	Bonfires should not be banned as we cannot get rid of the volume of pernicious weeds, hardwood cuttings and decayed pallets any other way. The current system of fires in restricted months works and so don't alter it.	6/5/2024 5:24 PM

Allotments Waste

58	Yes we only light bonfires from the 1/10/2024 to the 31/4/2024 that for about 6 months the putting skips around the site would not pay the cost would be to high and they would be filled in a matter of hours	6/5/2024 5:23 PM
59	I think you should be allowed to have bonfires on the allotments after a certain time. There should also be facilities to dispose of green waste on site for example skips.	6/5/2024 5:17 PM
60	Most difficult issue is walking boards which rot over a period of time which are difficult to burn but cannot be placed in skips. Also no burning of weeds mean they have to be disposed of at home	6/5/2024 5:00 PM
61	It would be good to have skips twice per year with an option for wood as well. I believe we all should be investing into a better environment for the next generation	6/5/2024 4:48 PM
62	I believe that if we are not allowed bonfires then this will encourage rats. In the summer I take my waste to the tip but not being allowed bonfires then this will become more frequent.	6/5/2024 4:43 PM
63	No	6/5/2024 4:05 PM
64	Bonfires are at worst - dangerous, at best - anti social. Believe there should be a provision made for a central large communal compost area.	6/5/2024 3:26 PM
65	We need bonfires to get rid of deceased plants to stop it spreading I think that there should be a 20yrd roll on roll off skip provided once a year in the winter to get rid of metal plastic glass etc as this is when plots aren't being cultivated as much then for the rest of the year all plot holders need to get rid of there own rubbish	6/5/2024 3:14 PM
66	Whenever I've tried to get rid of waste in the past I've been turned away and told to dispose of another way. We usually have 2 bonfires a year and burn what waste we've accumulated then. The kids love supper around the bonfire. The ones burning things they shouldn't spoil it for the rest of us	6/5/2024 3:00 PM
67	Bonfires should be allowed for certain time periods	6/5/2024 2:59 PM
68	My plot K29 suffer from mare tail which I used to burn to stay on top of it til you band bonfires . More skips better placed would help to remove more bulker waste.	6/5/2024 2:42 PM
69	To maintain the plot, I need to replace the wood used for raised beds. This is re-used pallets. Once rotten I burn them along with weeds that I don't compost, dead branches etc. I used the skip for metal waste, glass and non-recyclable plastic.	6/5/2024 2:41 PM
70	Bonfires are totally unnecessary and for neighbours present at the time ..very unpleasant and smells clinging to clothing and inhalation of smoke drifting many yards away from source an absolute nuisance and infringement..	6/5/2024 1:55 PM
71	I think bonfires are important to remove timber / woodey plant material that is too large to compost and so if bonfires are banned then alternative removal would need to be provided. If the skip is banned then new tenants would struggle to remove waste left by previous tenants.	6/5/2024 1:47 PM
72	Any ban of bonfires needs to be compensated by more skips being available for the disposal of items such as plant infected with Blight that can't be composted.	6/5/2024 1:39 PM
73	Regularly spaced green waste points should be added across the site to encourage people to dump their regular green waste and for those who are clearing overgrown sites.	6/5/2024 1:32 PM
74	The area next to the concrete building near E30 has bits of old broken pallets etc which are unusable and unsightly...the area needs clearing.	6/5/2024 1:31 PM
75	To prohibit the ability to create fertility though the use of fire is a breach of human rights. Humanity has used this practice (e.g. slash and burn agriculture) for as long as we have had fire. Not everyone can afford to buy their fertility. Also, buying fertility, means stealing fertility from somewhere else, and has a high carbon cost (i.e. processing, and transport), as well as other environmental impacts, such as pollution associated with the production of plastic packaging. The very suggestion of banning this practice show gross ignorance of sustainability, and gardening in general. I feel very strongly about the right to burn, and will take further action, if the council goes ahead with the proposed ban.	6/5/2024 1:29 PM
76	I do not see a problem with bonfires on your plot provided they are dealt with responsibly.	6/5/2024 1:20 PM
77	I think Bonfires should be restricted to certain times of the day ie between four and seven in	6/5/2024 1:05 PM

Allotments Waste

the evening. Rather than a complete ban you could allow bonfires to happen once a month on a particular day. People adhere to the 'no bonfires' after April - October so I think they would agree to this.

78	Bonfire ash is good for the soil	6/5/2024 12:56 PM
79	I want to request if possible bonfire should be from Oct- Apr/May, especially there is no any outbreak of fire and should be control by presence of people	6/5/2024 12:45 PM
80	Banning bonfires will only achieve unwanted rubbish accumulating on plots attracting vermin . Would Residents living around site sooner have an infestation of rats or an occasional smell of smoke?	6/5/2024 12:34 PM
81	Would like to be able to have a facility for removing stones which have been sifted from my plot. Don't know what to do with them!	6/5/2024 12:32 PM
82	If you are down wind of someone's bonfire it can be so unpleasant you have to leave. Fully support the total ban.	6/5/2024 12:15 PM
83	I believe that the prohibition of bonfires will create a lot of discarded waste on random plots, I think it will be a negative decision in my opinion.	6/5/2024 12:09 PM
84	I was not aware of hard waste skips provided by the council	6/5/2024 12:02 PM
85	The allotment is having skips but it doesn't allow us to put everything we need, it is restricted so bonfires is still useful.	6/5/2024 11:55 AM
86	I personally think minimal bonfires are perfectly OK. Or maybe contained in an incinerator to help keep fires to a minimum	6/5/2024 11:42 AM
87	The prohibitions Oct to april means that you have to burn in the dark	6/5/2024 11:40 AM
88	To many people bring there rubbish from there homes to be burned on bonfires	6/5/2024 11:40 AM
89	As I am fairly new. I haven't done bonfires. I would support council providing collection of waste because my compost filled very quickly	6/5/2024 11:34 AM
90	I try as best as I can to remove any waste from my plot myself, including any green waste with horrible roots that I can't compost myself. Bonfires get out of hand too easily, unless they are contained within a proper incinerator with lid and are attended until burnt out.	6/5/2024 11:23 AM
91	Bonfires and fires are separate. A smoky green waste bonfire his horrible, but a fire using old pallet wood is smoke free.	6/5/2024 11:17 AM
92	Skips should accept timber to help remove old pallets.	6/5/2024 11:01 AM
93	Tenants who leave the allotment dump a lot of non green and household waste which are really hard for new tenants to dispose. So some guidance around waste disposal would be helpful.	6/5/2024 10:55 AM
94	If we can have a skip for green waste, this will be great.	6/5/2024 10:46 AM
95	I prune my apple trees annually to keep them under control. I also prune my fruit bushes at the same time. I then have one bonfire to burn the prunings - which then provides a natural high potash fertiliser which I dig into the allotment. I am disappointed that a complete ban has been proposed and hope that it isn't followed through on. I will not know what to do with my tree prunings without burning them - do I just let the trees grow out of control?	6/5/2024 10:37 AM
96	Bonfires are an essential part of my allotment. They should not be banned. Unauthorised tipping will undoubtedly increase on the site. When clearing new plots it is very challenging anyway and a bonfire is very useful. Any noxious emissions they fires cause are more then offset by the allotments themselves.	6/5/2024 10:34 AM
97	With no bonfires it would be good to have a way of getting rid of old pallets and rotting wood.I believe our skips will not take these items.	6/5/2024 10:32 AM
98	There ia a lot of waste which could be disposed off by bonfires which cannot be composted but is lying around everywhere causing a lot of mice trouble. If the we can not light fires to burn some of the waste then I suggest the use of council skips where we ca dispose of these unwanted items.	6/5/2024 10:23 AM
99	None at all. We should be able to have bonfires all year round.	6/5/2024 10:16 AM

Allotments Waste

100	Burning the correct waste produces no more green house gases than composting so the idea that it is for green" effect is nonsense . Maybe educating persons not to burn inappropriate materials would be a better solution . Restricting times if the year is fine . There are very few complaints about smoke etc and the allotments and bonfires have have been a normal right for many years	6/5/2024 10:16 AM
101	bonfires are a nuisance. the provision of skips is useful	6/5/2024 10:13 AM
102	If bonfires are to be banned then alternate arrangements need to be made to assist disposal of waste that cannot be composted. I would consider an exception for new tenants with very overgrown plots to clear.	6/5/2024 10:12 AM
103	No	6/5/2024 10:00 AM
104	I think during the winter months we should not be restricted to bonfire after 4pm as it gets dark then and you have to stay till fire is finished	6/5/2024 9:58 AM
105	Plots have a lot of waste on them from previous tenants which is prohibited to put in the provided skips (building waste/glass, etc) which makes it hard to clean up as need to take off site. Skips should be able to take all kinds of waste that isn't green.	6/5/2024 9:53 AM
106	The disposal of green waste is my biggest problem.	6/5/2024 9:51 AM
107	I don't have the means to transport waste off my plot so I have destroy it on the plot.	6/5/2024 9:50 AM
108	I don't see any sound reasoning behind the decision to ban bonfires. As far as I am aware, no complains have been made in recent years. The alternative to bonfires doesn't align with councils environmental and equality commitments. Not everyone is able bodied nor strong enough to carry things off site, neither does everyone has a car/driving licence, and surely burning waste produces less co2 than over 300 cars driving to/from site and to local skips for waste to be burnt anyway. To add to the situation, the council doesn't clear abandoned plots of rubbish, leaving it for new tenants to deal with. If banning bonfires goes ahead without a sensible alternative put in place the site will have a massive tipping issue.	6/5/2024 9:39 AM
109	Bonfires are already heavily restricted given the 'after 4pm' rule and taking into account the daylight hours in the permitted months. This effectively means bonfires are restricted to 2 months a year -October and March. Further restrictions are unnecessary in my opinion. I understand the concerns of local residents but as the allotments pre-date many of these properties/ owners I think they need to accept some bonfires. I think the current limits strike the correct balance.	6/5/2024 9:37 AM
110	We agree that bonfires should be prohibited during the summer months.	6/5/2024 9:30 AM
111	Allowing bonfires on a restricted schedule seems sensible, E.G. the last Sunday of the month after 4pm only or in the winter only after 4pm like in the past. Tenants should be able to dispose of other wastes themselves, last year a committee member brought waste doors from their own house and disposed of them in the skips onsite so I don't believe the skips are a good idea as too open to abuse. But new tenants and those without cars should receive some assistance to dispose of waste they inherit from past plot holders.	6/5/2024 9:28 AM
112	I have never been able to find the skip for non-green waste.please provide more skips on a regular basis. There are some weeds which really should be burned, so I think tenants ought to be allowed controlled bonfires, or why not provide a communal bonfire site?	6/5/2024 9:27 AM
113	It would be good if there were skips in the allotment side so the area would be a lot cleaner and it could be an input for us to go up there more and keep it cleaner and worked more	6/5/2024 9:22 AM
114	The issue you have is that it will encourage persons to "dump" waste on vacant plots. Also we already have a rat problem - the large composting required on allotment plots just provides more warm homes for the rat population.	6/5/2024 9:21 AM
115	I also supervise the 3 allotments rented by Launchpad these are surrounded by brambles and we have no other to get rid of them other than burn them.	6/5/2024 9:18 AM
116	No	6/5/2024 9:14 AM
117	To restrict bonfires to December and January	6/5/2024 9:14 AM
118	With the bonfire restrictions in place its almost impossible to get rid of non-green waste (wood etc). When the skips appear on site they are filled within the first hour again making it very	6/5/2024 9:13 AM

Allotments Waste

difficult to get rid of waste.

119	Allotment is the right place to get rid of pallets that can't be used further. Burning them allows to use the ash for the plants. Also the pollution caused by it is better manageable in allotment due to the trees available and the open area, thus having less impact. If the concern is not about pollution, but fire accidents or tenants not following the schedule, a common location and time can be suggested where tenants can gather and do a big bonfire.	6/5/2024 9:12 AM
120	I put some old carpet in the skip once but since then when I have tried to put a small amount of waste in the skips they have been full so took it home instead.	6/5/2024 9:08 AM
121	If nothing is provided people will continue to dump their waste on other ppl's sites. This may increase.	6/5/2024 9:07 AM
122	Can you at least provide green waste collection?	6/5/2024 9:04 AM
123	I have a large laurel at the bottom of my plot which requires regular trimming, burning is the only practical option.	6/5/2024 9:04 AM
124	I am unable to get rid of a number of old pallets and other large pieces of wood that have been dumped on my plot by other tenants. I cannot put them in the skips and I cannot fit them in my car to remove them so am stuck. What am I supposed to do? Other sites in the area have communal compost piles- why don't we do this? The council is making it more and more difficult for tenants to dispose of waste and you wonder why there is a fly tipping problem	6/5/2024 9:02 AM
125	If no bonfires there needs to be an alternative provided such as very regular skips, like many allotment sites do.	6/5/2024 9:01 AM
126	I don't understand why a ban is being considered just for the allotment site. Surely this has to be throughout the country to have any effect. Why is a ban being considered? What are the reasons?	6/5/2024 9:00 AM
127	Didn't know there were skips for refuse removal? Might use that facility in future. Have so much weed & green waste, will probably not be possible to recycle it at the moment as it's growing faster than we can keep it clear!	6/5/2024 9:00 AM
128	I would use the skips but they get full up before I even get there and are only available once or twice a year which is not often enough. One of my favourite things is to have a bonfire at the allotment so very disappointed this is being stopped	6/5/2024 8:58 AM
129	I don't have the means to take waste off the site. The skip has been instrumental to be able to clear rubbish from the site on a regular basis (i.e. broken plastic, netting, found carpets etc) and I would appreciate if it even was available twice a year. The bonfires are essential, I have trees on the plot that need annual to biannual pruning in order to stay manageable in size and have no other way to get rid of the amount of green waste produced from that. Furthermore, whilst I do compost, the amounts of weeds per year is massive and my compost is overflowing. Even if I manage to find a spot somewhere for a second compost, I can't and wouldn't put every type of plant waste in there.	6/5/2024 8:54 AM
130	Small fires are helpful for disposing of waste and do not pose any issues	6/5/2024 8:52 AM
131	I have been able to take waste to the dump but if I had not been able to this would have been a problem. I feel that allowing bonfires in winter months is helpful but appreciate why they are banned in summer months.	6/5/2024 8:51 AM
132	If bonfires are controlled I don't feel it's any different to house owners having a bonfire. Having small controlled fires shouldn't cause lots of smoke and helps to get rid of items on site. Especially when you want to get rid of weeds that keep coming back.	6/5/2024 8:50 AM
133	Recent containers didn't accept wood.... getting rid of general waste would be handy	6/5/2024 8:49 AM
134	The burning of waste does not impact the environment as much as the impact of numerous trips to the tips or even worse fly tipping!	6/5/2024 8:49 AM
135	Skip is all the time filled up very quickly before I have a chance to locate it and dispose anything. Too many people are using it and 1 skip is not enough. I need and prefer bonfire	6/5/2024 8:49 AM
136	None	6/5/2024 8:46 AM
137	We should be looking to reduce our carbon footprint at the allotments and looking to support	5/19/2024 8:41 PM

Allotments Waste

those who do not drive with maybe a collect of wood once a year with the skips. It would be nice to have the skips May and Oct/November please

August 2024

ACTIVITY REPORT BY FRIENDS OF WOODFORD PARK

As well as the Tuesday group work in maintaining the beds extra time during this period is needed in keeping the beds watered. Certainly this year has proved to be no exception.

Volunteer numbers have remained at the same level but we certainly would welcome new interest. It would be appreciated if any members of the Leisure Committee can promote the existence of the group at every opportunity.

It is disappointing to note that often small plants such as Geraniums are removed from the beds. Likewise a few of the regular dog walkers show no responsibility for the dogs using the beds inappropriately.

On the positive, feedback from the public in addition to commenting on our work, often is very much in praise the council's (Coronation) flower wall display.

The volunteers were disappointed to see in the media that the seat installed as part of the original beds by FoWP was to become a HelloBench. The group, whilst in support of the concept were disheartened that this was agreed without any prior consultation. The location of these benches needs to be given careful consideration. In this case it is noted to be the most used bench in the park, such a notice display will discourage those regular occupiers. The group recommends only new benches are used as HelloBenches.