



**smart
communities**
part of CCS



Conducted by

Smart Communities Ltd

(part of the Community Council for Somerset)

Final report issued: 22 February 2019



Victoria House, Victoria Street, Taunton, TA1 3JZ
Smart Communities is a Limited Company by Guarantee
Registered in England and Wales No.11480430 and is Registered
for VAT No.



Telephone 01823 331222 | Email info@somerstrcc.org.uk | www.somerstrcc.org.uk/smartcommunities

© 2019 This report, or any part, may be reproduced in any format or medium, provided that is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The source must be identified and the title of the publication specified with the copyright status acknowledged

Background

Queen Camel Community Land Trust (CLT) is hoping to buy the old school site, previously occupied by Countess Gytha County Primary School, to benefit the local and wider community. Our vision is to create a Community Enterprise and Education Centre that will provide:

- Space and support for artisan type businesses, especially start-ups, with a longer-term goal of taking on young trainees, and for more general office & 'hot desk' facilities.
- Life enhancing facilities and activities and therapies for all ages, especially for those with special needs or disadvantage (e.g. physical, mental, communication, social isolation including carers). These well-being aspects will be supported by charities, Council services and community groups.
- A sensory garden possibly including food growing, tended by young people with special needs, and car parking with one or two electric charging points.

The County, District and Parish Councils are fully supportive of the CLT acquiring and developing the site in the way proposed, and each has confirmed this support by letter.

The purpose of this survey is to listen to local people and adapt and develop the project using the information gathered. This evidence will inform the business plan priorities, funding and planning applications. With the help of a grant from The Big Lottery fund, Queen Camel CLT commissioned Smart Communities who are part of the Community Council for (CCS) to undertake a survey of all households in the parish with the following aims:

Aims

- Explore the potential level of engagement with the proposed project, and which facilities and services will be relevant for users including:
 - a café
 - interest in educational provision
 - access to health and well-being activities
 - support needed for those with a disadvantage of any kind
 - a Men's Shed
- To gain an in-depth understanding of what facilities and services may be needed to help small, rural businesses develop in a supportive community space
- To establish the level of community engagement through voluntary support of the project as it progresses.

Methodology

398 paper surveys were posted to all households in the Queen Camel parish. The CLT hosted a community engagement event while the survey was live to answer questions and help anyone who may be disadvantaged in being able to complete the survey themselves. The survey was widely promoted on the CLT website, through the parish magazine, social media and posters in the village. The survey was also available to complete online (the survey questionnaire can be found in the Appendices).

In total 161 valid responses were received giving a 40% response rate.

Research was conducted between 23 November – 10 December 2018.

Presentation of Data

The sample size is relatively small, therefore undue emphasis should not be placed on specific percentages. Where a number of respondents with a particular view, or response to a question is very low, the report will normally include a 'base' (identify the actual number of responses/opinions involved). Where figures do not total 100% this may be due to computer rounding or the exclusion of 'don't knows'.

Queen Camel – The Old School Community Consultation Survey Summary

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

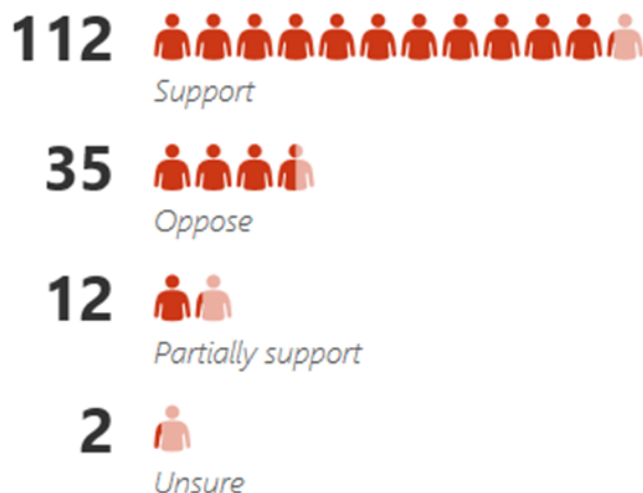
- From the 398 surveys distributed, 161 participated in the survey representing 358 household members overall and resulting in a 40% response rate. In CCS's experience of conducting similar facilities surveys, the response rate is a strong community response, particularly on a single issue consultation.
- There is a fairly even split between individuals and households taking part in the survey (50% : 49% respectively). Just 2 respondents answered on behalf of their an organisation
- The large majority of respondents live in Queen Camel parish (79%), while just under 1 in 10 live in Sparkford (9%), the remaining respondents live in Marston Magna, West Camel, South Barrow and South Cadbury. A small number live outside these parishes – 3 of them with links to Queen Camel parish.
- More female respondents took part in the survey compared to male respondents (55% vs 40%).
- There is representation across all age groups. 45-64 year olds are the largest overall group (27% - 97 household members), followed by 65-74 year olds (19%) and 25-44 year olds (16%).

MAIN FINDINGS

- When asked about uses for the proposed redevelopment of the Old School Site, nearly all respondents expressed views (93% - 149 respondents). More than 7 in 10 respondents would be most likely to use a **café** in the proposed centre in the future (72%). Around 2 in 5 are interested in adult education classes, while 1 in 3 or more may use the centre for health and well-being therapies, outlets for products made on site and for an informal library.
- In the main, further analysis shows that **the large majority of 7 in 10 respondents appear to support* the proposed plans (70% - 112 respondents)**. Over 1 in 4 are opposed to the redevelopment plans outlined in the survey (22% - 35 respondents). While there is partial opposition by some e.g. those that do not agree with different aspects of development but would use the site for some of the facilities and services suggested accounts for a further 7% (12 respondents). It was not possible to ascertain from question responses and comments whether 2 further respondents (1%) support the project.

**Support' is based on the assumption of those respondents who have indicated that they would use the facilities or services proposed in the survey and have not provided any other comment indicating resistance to the project proceeding.*

LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR OSS PROJECT



HELP AND VOLUNTEERING WITH THE OLD SCHOOL SITE PROJECT

- A good reflection of community support is that nearly half of all respondents (78 people) have **offered their help as the Old School Site project progresses**. Word of mouth, help with door to door distribution, help in the café and with fundraising events and are offered by a sizeable proportion of them. Other help offered includes survey/construction, catering. Workshops/groups/classes include sculpture, theatre, history, a Stroke café, Tai Chi, Psychological counselling/well-being, laughter/heal you/life and health creation.
- **Nearly than 2 in 4 respondents overall have provided their contact details in relation to helping in future (37% - 60 respondents).**

A CAFÉ

- For the 4 in 5 respondents expressing a view on the café proposal, the most popular services that the café could provide are **tea/coffee in the morning (71%)** and to a lesser extent in the afternoon. Food provision is popular for around 3 in 10 respondents would use the café for breakfast or for takeaway food. In terms of other facilities that the café may offer, most common are an informal library, social activities such as Scrabble or a puzzle corner and use of WiFi.

preference for any one aspect emerges, however, Life skills and Art therapy are narrowly the most sought by respondents (18% in each case). This is closely aligned with Music therapy sensory play and bereavement support or counselling. In comments, support for older people is raised by a small proportion, as well as for those with Alzheimer's and stroke survivors.

- Around 4 in 5 answered the question about support and the majority do not need help. However, more than 1 in 10 (13%) would need **help or support to help someone else needing help with illness, frailty, disability, mental health problem, addiction or because of loneliness**. A small proportion who commented raise specific areas where they need help: elderly support, a social group for early stage Alzheimer's also raised previously, mental health support for carers, bereavement support and a safe place for an adult with ME and fibromyalgia. Some respondents who answered 'yes' to the question, mention accessing support either from existing groups, neighbours or via the Medical Centre.
- A slightly larger proportion of respondents expressed a view on a 'Changing Place' toilet/shower facility (86%). 4 in 5 of them would either have no use for the 'Changing Place' toilet/shower facility, or feel it is not applicable to them (83%). A narrowly larger proportion to those needing help in the previous question would use this facility (14%). Some raised concerns about expense and maintenance, while another respondent raises that this facility is available for the community in a neighbouring parish's nursing home.

THE 'MEN'S SHED'

- 3 in 10 respondents answered the question about a 'Men's Shed', and the sizeable majority of them would be interested in using the facility (71%). A large proportion would also be interested in donating tools or materials, while a sizeable number would help to set up a 'Shed'. Skills that may be shared include help from a qualified decorator, access to DIY and practical skills, wood turning and the safe use of tools, access to a studio for workshops. Others would like to be involved with woodworking, gaining practical skills and discovering new skills.

WORKSPACE – ENTERPRISE UNITS

- Just over 1 in 10 respondents answered the question about **workspace/running a business** (11% - 17 respondents). The small majority work from home and need more facilities (9 respondents), while access to a flexible working space is sought by a slightly fewer (some of them working from home). 6 respondents want to start a new business, although 1 of them does not need any additional workspace.
- 6 respondents would like a **sales outlet for their products**, while business advice/support and networking and collaboration opportunities are quite closely aligned and sought by 5 respondents in each case. 4 respondents are looking for shared resources such as computers, phones, printers.
- Most provided details of the businesses or organisation that they run, these include painting and decorating, graphic design, engineers, an artist and a sculptor, cake making/decorating, dressmaking, a charity, an accountant, management consultancy, pub/restaurant/hotel, retail shop/Post Office and a retired respondent.
- 12 respondents indicated that they would plan to have a person working on the site. All of them would have one person. In addition, one of these respondents indicated that they would like to take on an apprentice once their business grows.

- 8 respondents indicated the **type of space they would need**. The majority would be looking for a 'hot desk' (5 respondents), 1 only accessing this occasionally – 2 mentioned the need for good WiFi connection. 4 respondents would like a separate room. Space ranges between 280m² (with access to water and shower facilities) to 30m², 25 m² and 4m².

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- 51 respondents (32% overall) commented further at the end of the survey. Around 3 in 4 of them **raised concerns** about the proposed project and services/facilities planned. Some commented that the survey did not allow respondents to indicate whether they support or oppose the project and raise the need for clear community support for the project to proceed.

Others feel the proposals represent competition with existing facilities and services available in the parish - the pub, shop, GP surgery, Open Pathway Retreat Centre and the Village Hall.

Some would prefer that the site be partially or completely sold for development to a private developer. Suggestions are made for a mixture of housing (some would like to see affordable or low cost housing). Others would like to see the site cleared and used as open green space, or partially cleared with a garden, additional car parking for the church and pub provided. Retaining the Victorian listed building is a preferred option for some, with suggestions for use as a community project, Parish office, business use,

The site being on a flood plain is seen as an issue by some for redevelopment.

Others are opposed to the development of the site by the CLT. Some question the viability of the project, and there is concern that the development would pose an on-going cost to the community in future years. A few do not feel that the planning stage has been transparent enough.

Around 1 in 4 of these respondents commented **in support of the proposed project**. Again some reinforced their previous suggestions, other comments include a café run in a similar way to the East Coker café, or an up-market café. The involvement/employment of adults with learning difficulties, a community exercise space based on donations of equipment, a drop in quiet area for study, space for groups such as Brownies, majorettes etc. In the old chapel music classes, occasional concerts or art exhibitions. A communal garden particularly for those with learning needs. Car parking, small businesses space including a bakery, butcher, florist, dentist, and for the site not to fall into disrepair.