

Recreation Facilities Survey

Comberton Parish Council, Autumn 2022

Full report, May 2023

1. Methodology

The Comberton Parish Council ran the Recreation Facilities Survey to gather thoughts from residents and users of Parish facilities to deliver improvements matching resident wishes.

The survey was set up online using Google Forms. It opened on 1st October 2022 and closed on 31st January 2023. Anyone using the facilities could enter a response, including non-residents. Parents and carers were invited to supervise children under 11 years old wishing to submit a response.

Posters were displayed in many areas, including bus stops, information boards, several shops, the Village Hall, and around the recreation ground. The survey was advertised on the Parish Council website, the village website, the village Facebook page and the village magazine, Contact.

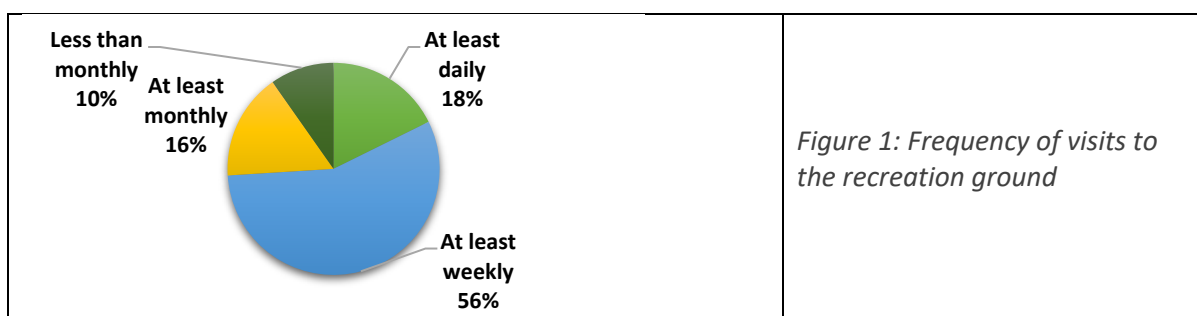
Communication was sent to Comberton groups, including Comberton Playgroup, Meridian Primary School, Comberton Village College and sports clubs for advertising. These groups were also offered the possibility to submit a letter to the Parish Council with their views about recreation facilities in the village.

The survey received 278 responses, to compare with an election roll size for Comberton of 1869 residents. Four groups provided additional comments via letters to the Parish Council.

2. Recreation ground

a. Use of the recreation ground

Figure 1 below indicates that most respondents visit the recreation ground at least weekly.



b. Use of the recreation ground as a meeting place

Figures 2 and 3 below indicate that respondents often come to the recreation ground with others; most do so with their children or children they look after.

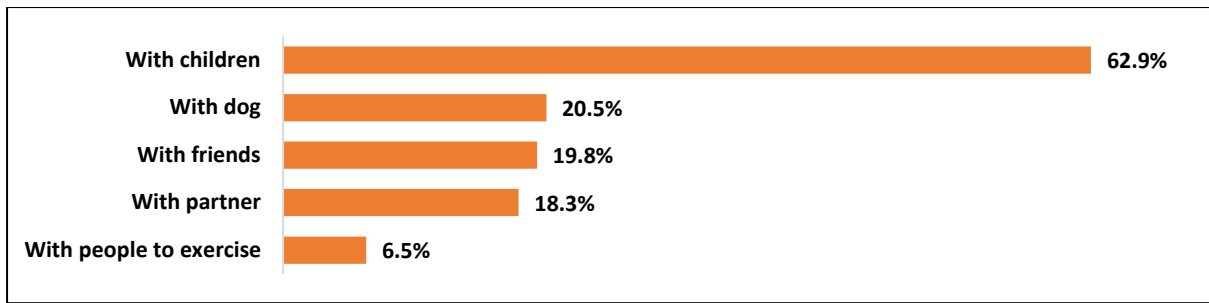


Figure 2: Percentage of respondents visiting the recreation ground with others or their dog(s).

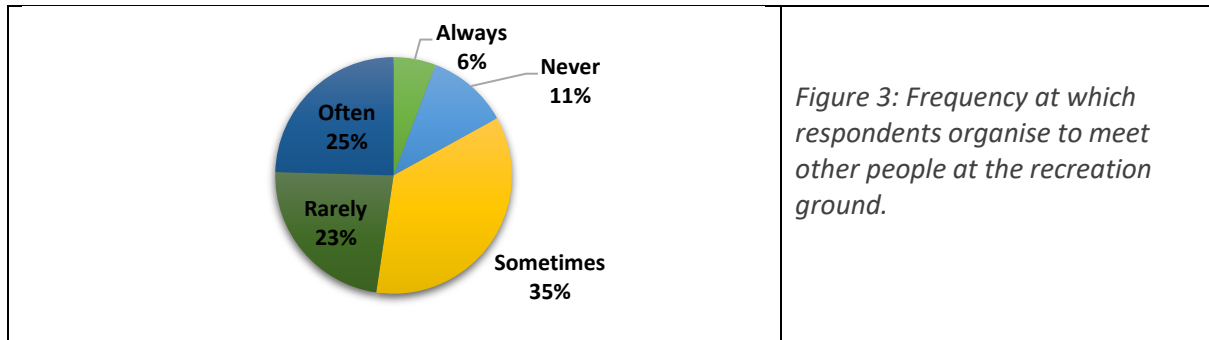


Figure 3: Frequency at which respondents organise to meet other people at the recreation ground.

c. Use of the recreation ground to exercise

Figure 4 below indicates that many respondents use the recreation ground to exercise.

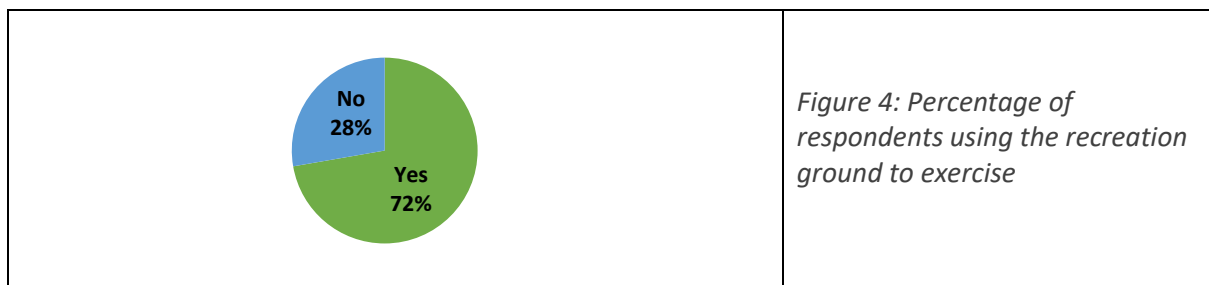


Figure 4: Percentage of respondents using the recreation ground to exercise

Figure 5 below indicates the type of exercise respondents undertake at the recreation ground. Almost half the respondents indicated that play equipment provides a means for children to exercise. Other common forms of exercise include walking, running and football.

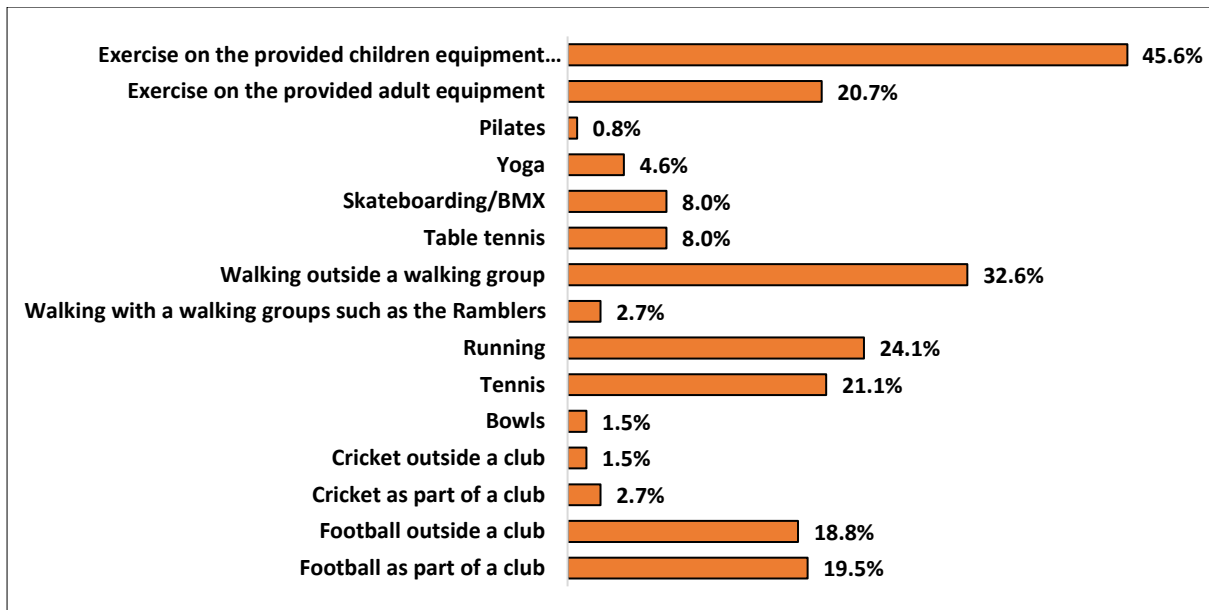


Figure 5: Type of exercise practised by respondents and their children at the recreation ground.

Figure 6 below indicates that most children (under 18 years old) in respondents' care use playground equipment.

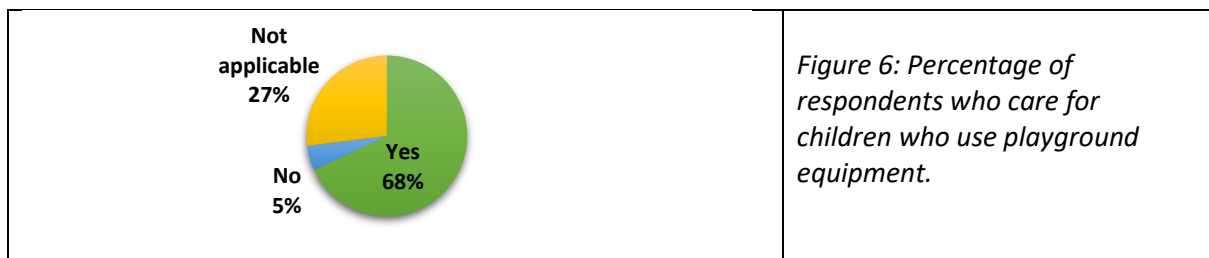


Figure 6: Percentage of respondents who care for children who use playground equipment.

d. Support for new or additional facilities on the recreation ground.

Figure 7 shows that the pieces of equipment that receive the most support from respondents are additional playground equipment, including a trim trail and additional benches and picnic tables. These items have negligible levels of opposition from respondents. A multiple-use game area and an improved skate/BMX park also show a very high level of support with low opposition. Food/drink vans and a street art wall receive a low level of support on average. The most opposed proposed facilities are a more extensive car park and barbecues.

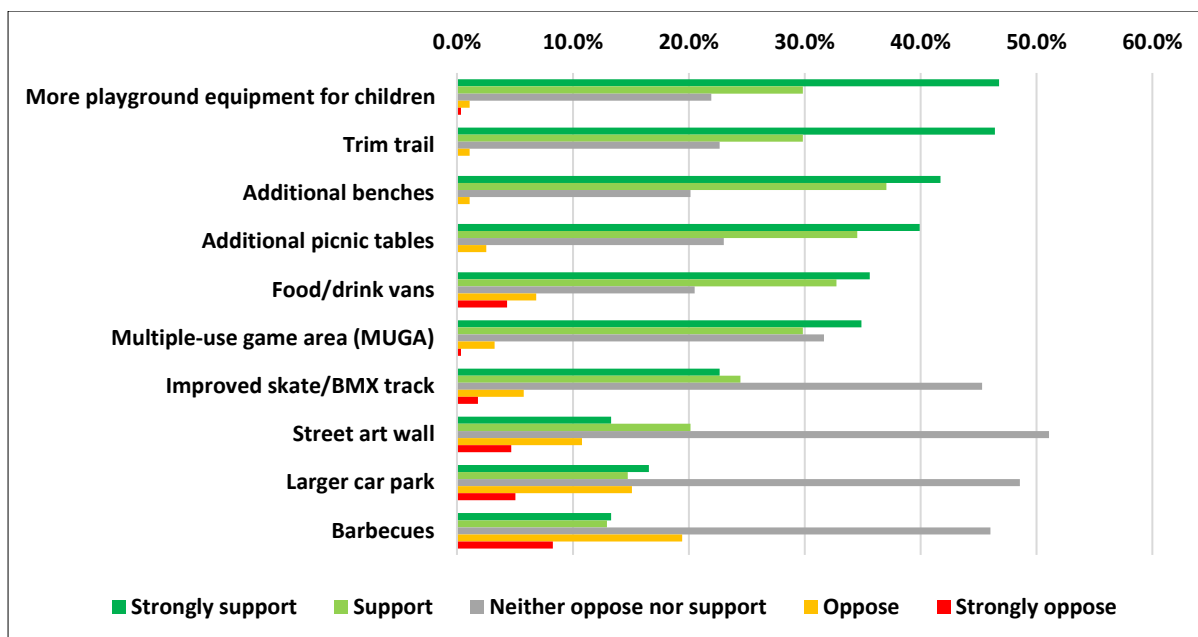


Figure 7: Level of support for various facilities that may be provided on the recreation ground.

e. Respondents' open comments – football, cricket, bowls, and tennis facilities

Respondents were asked for suggestions regarding the football, cricket, bowls, and tennis facilities. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 74 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

The most common request was for improvements to the tennis courts (39%).

Many respondents felt the Pavilion should be updated to allow more community use (16%). A specific question related to the Pavilion followed in the survey, but respondents to this question expressed a wish for an accessible toilet (9%), updated changing rooms (5%), a café (5%), storage (1%), electricity points (1%)

Many comments related to cricket facilities, noting a wish for cricket nets (14%) and an improved cricket square/outfield (4%).

Many comments related to football facilities. They noted a wish for football cages available every day for regular practice, particularly for children (11%), for improvement and routine maintenance of the pitches (4%), for pitches with a synthetic surface/astroturf (4%), for more pitches (3%).

Many respondents expressed a wish for a basketball court (9%).

Additional suggestions included:

- An improved area for spectators (3%)
- A designated area for other outdoor classes, such as yoga and fitness (3%)
- A multi-use game area (MUGA) (1%)
- Light (3%)
- A netball court (1%)
- The potential to remove the hedge between the fields (1%)
- A more extensive car park (1%)

- A splash park (1%)

Some respondents also expressed a wish for better communication about available classes (4%), taster sessions with clubs (1%), and classes for those over 50 years old (1%).

Some respondents noted issues with dog excrement left on the recreation ground (3%).

f. Respondent open comments – skate/BMX park

Respondents were asked for suggestions regarding the skate/BMX park. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 44 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

Most respondents were enthusiastic about improvements to the skate/BMX park (59%), with many commenting that it should be made “bigger and better” (39%) and that it is currently inappropriate or considered unsafe (32%), with one respondent commenting the current set up is appropriate. It was noted that there is no such skate/BMX park nearby (2%)

Suggestions made about a potential future skate & BMX park included:

- Wish for turns and hills (5%)
- Wish for an all-weather track (5%)
- Need for it to blend with nature (2%)
- Ramps (2%)

Related comments included a wish for a surfaced path around the rec for walking, running, cycling (including practice by young children), and skating (9%)

Some respondents highlighted issues with glass debris (9%) and graffiti (2%).

g. Respondent open comments – play equipment for children

Respondents were asked for suggestions regarding the play equipment for children. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 75 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

Respondents expressed a wish for the addition of the following:

- A paddling pool (11%)
- A trim trail (11%)
- A nature area (8%)
- A climbing tower for teenagers (7%)
- More swings (4%)
- A seesaw (4%)
- A sunken trampoline (4%)
- More slides (4%)

Additional recommendations for addition to the play equipment included: a play train (1%), a mini golf (1%), a small roundabout (1%), a large roundabout (1%), a climbing frame for young children (1%), bars (1%), a flying fox (1%), a natural music set up (1%), a house for young children (1%).

Respondents also expressed a wish for improvements to the zip wire (11%)

Respondents felt that the play equipment catered well for school-aged children, but additional play equipment for toddlers (9%) and teenagers (7%) would be beneficial.

The need to maintain and clean the area was noted (7%), including issues arising from the rubber chips used under the climbing dome. Several respondents expressed worries that the playground area is not prohibited for dogs (5%). Residents suggested the addition of a shade or roof over the sandpit (1%), and an additional sitting area (1%)

It was noted that it would be beneficial to increase the provision of inclusive play equipment for disabled children (1%)

h. Respondent open comments – Adapted equipment on the recreation ground

Respondents were asked for suggestions regarding adapted equipment for people with disabilities that could be installed on the recreation ground. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 31 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

Specific suggestions included:

- An adapted swing (26%)
- An adapted roundabout (13%)
- Exercise equipment accessible for wheelchair users (10%)
- An adapted slide (10%)
- Accessible toilets (3%)
- A high-level sand pit (3%)
- A sensory garden (3%)

Several residents recommended improving access to the recreation ground for wheelchair users (26%).

Residents who did not make specific suggestions still supported installing additional adapted equipment (26%).

i. Respondent open comments – Recreation ground

Respondents were asked for suggestions regarding the recreation ground in general. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 126 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

The most common suggestion was to add toilets on the recreation ground (22%).

Many residents wish for the presence of a café (15%) and food trucks (6%). Some residents recommend the organisation of community events (2%), the provision of space for community meetings (1%), and a covered stage (1%). The Meridian School Parents-Teachers Association snack stall in the summer term was noted as a positive community moment (1%).

Residents would like the recreation ground to include significant areas designated to nature (13%), including adding new trees.

Residents would like more surfaced paths around and to the playground (9%), which could serve several purposes, and improvements to accessibility in general (5%).

Issues raised by residents include dog fouling and presence on the recreation ground (6%) – with some residents suggesting designating a specific area for dogs (2%) –, the need for gates to the recreation ground (2%), the need for increased safety (1%), the problems posed by the plastic clippings under the climbing dome.

In terms of sports, the most common request is for a basketball court (6%), followed by a multi-use game area (MUGA) (2%), more space dedicated to football (1%) and football goals for everyday use (1%), the addition of astroturf (1%), more table tennis equipment (1%), and adult exercise equipment (1%).

For children, respondents would like to see the addition of a paddling pool (3%), a BMX track (2%), more focus on teenagers (2%), a climbing tower (1%), more playground equipment (1%), and a trim trail (1%).

Regarding general use of the recreation ground, respondents would like the pavilion to be improved for public use (5%), and the addition of bins (4%), picnic tables (3%), benches (2%), covered outdoor seating (2%), barbecues (1%), lights (1%), a more extensive car park (1%)

Some residents noted the need to strike a good balance in sharing the recreation ground space for various uses, including natural areas (2%).

One resident enquired when the Bennel Farm green area would be available to the public.

3. Pavilion

a. Current use

Figure 8 below indicates that most respondents currently do not use the Pavilion.

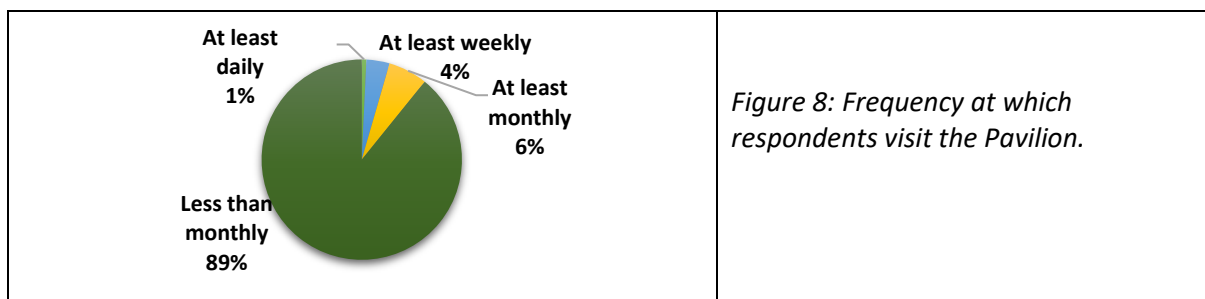


Figure 8: Frequency at which respondents visit the Pavilion.

b. Support for new or additional facilities at the Pavilion.

Figure 9 below shows that all facilities suggested in the survey receive a large amount of support from respondents, with toilets with external access having the support of over 86% of respondents.

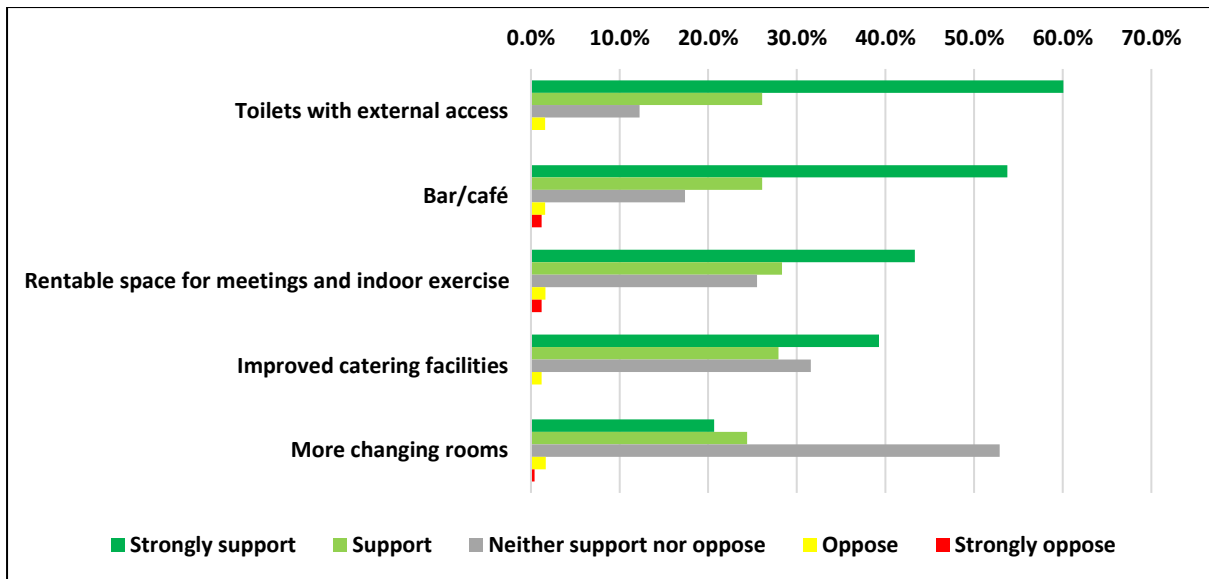


Figure 9: Level of support from respondents for various new or updated facilities at the pavilion.

c. Respondents' open comments – Pavilion

Respondents were asked for suggestions regarding the Pavilion. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 58 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

The most common answer was a wish for a café (26%).

Residents would like to see improvement to the Pavilion (24%), including the provision of toilets (14%), rentable space (3%), additional and improved changing rooms (3%), indoor seating (3%) and electricity points (2%).

Residents feel the Pavilion could become a community hub (19%) to foster inter-generational meetings.

Some residents worry about vandalism (5%) and opening hours (3%).

It was noted that the Pavilion should be a sustainable building (2%) accessible to all users (2%).

4. Swimming pool

a. Current membership

Figure 10 below shows that many residents are members of the community swimming pool, wish to join it, or have been members in the past.

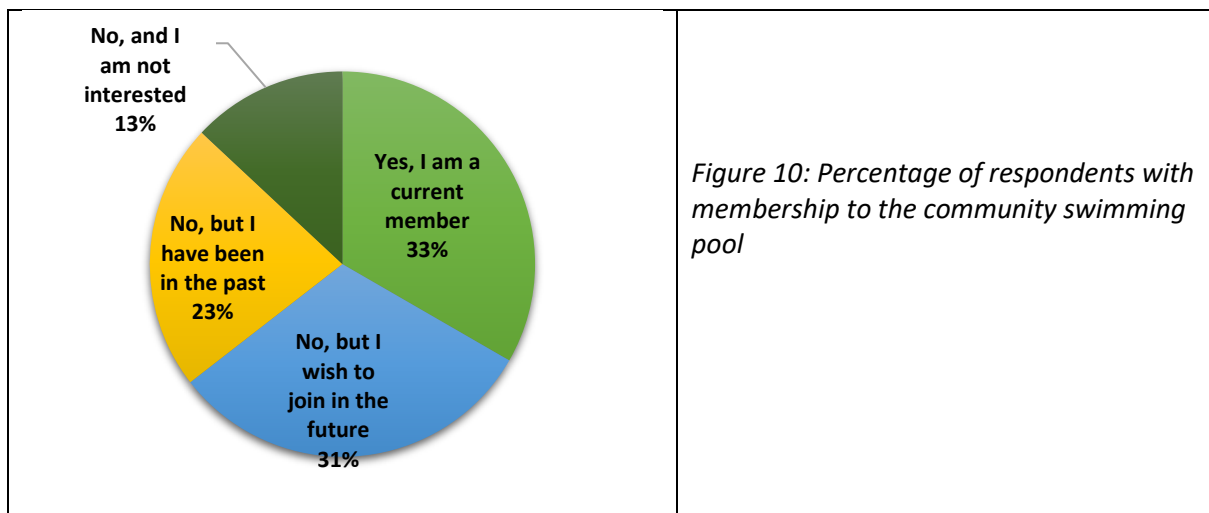


Figure 10: Percentage of respondents with membership to the community swimming pool

b. Respondents' open comments – Swimming pool

Respondents were asked for suggestions regarding the community swimming pool. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 122 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

The most common suggestion was installing a roof over the swimming pool (22%) – potentially retractable – allowing all-year use (18%).

Residents suggested either a minor refurbishment (10%) or a complete refurbishment (8%) of the swimming pool. Areas highlighted for improvements included:

- New changing rooms (21%)
- New showers (9%)
- Seating (3%)
- Availability of refreshments and snacks (2%)
- Improved cleanliness (3%)
- New toilets (2%)
- Improved surface (2%)
- Lockers (1%)
- A paddling pool (1%)

Regarding the management of the swimming pool, residents suggested the following:

- More opening hours (9%)
- The possibility of subscription without contribution, particularly for those who do not have fixed working hours (7%)
- Hours without lane swimming (2%) / More lane swimming (1%)
- The possibility of opening to non-members (1%)
- The provisions of swimming lessons (1%) and a baby swimming group (1%)

It was noted that the publicity regarding the swimming pool needs to be increased (3%), with some residents unaware of its existence.

5. Paths around the village

Figure 11 below indicates that many respondents regularly walk on village paths for leisure (81% at least weekly).

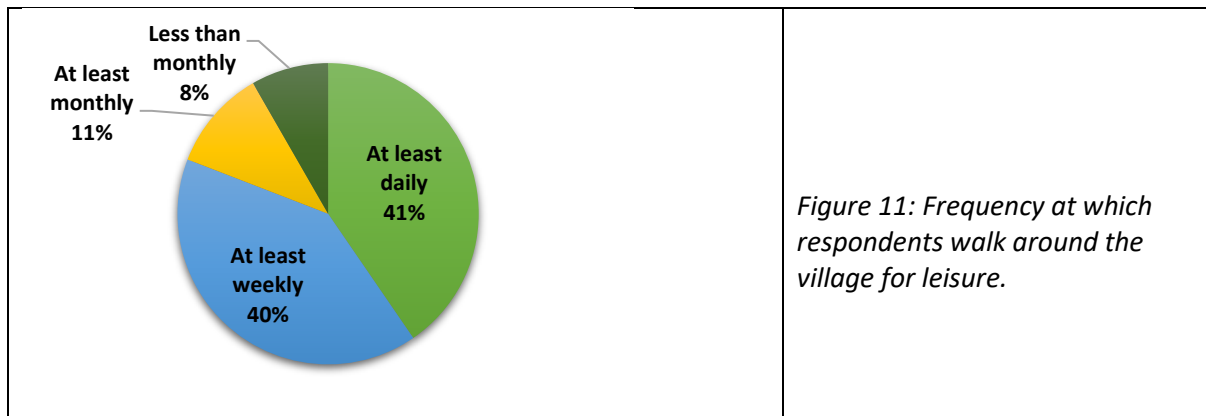


Figure 12 below indicates that most respondents visit Watt's Wood regularly.

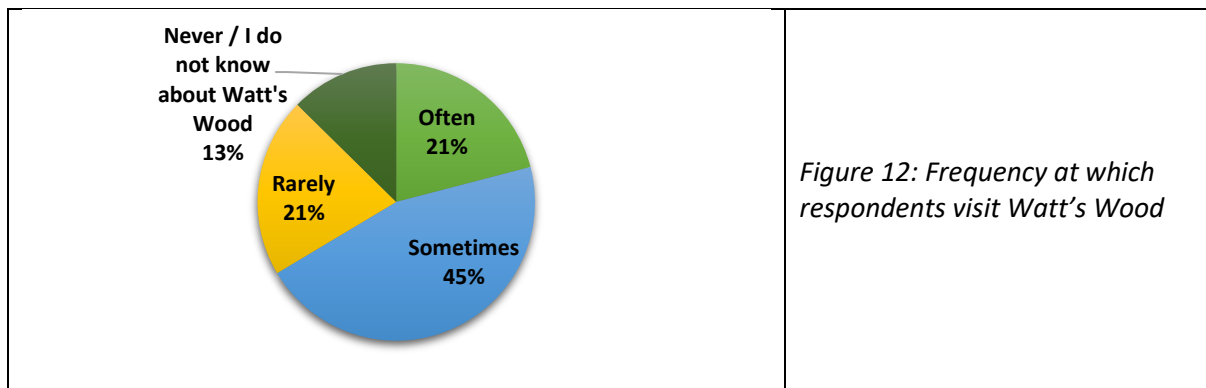
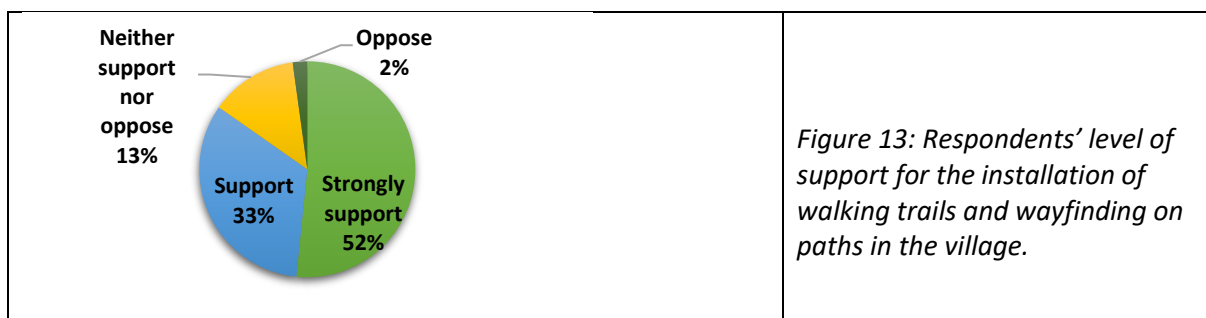


Figure 13 below indicates that a vast majority of respondents (85%) support the installation of walking trails and wayfinding on paths in the village.



a. Respondents' open comments – Paths

Respondents were asked for suggestions regarding the paths around the village. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 80 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

There was general support for an increase in the number of paths around the village (26%). Residents would like to see an improvement in the accessibility of paths (19%), including pavements. Some noted a lack of continuity of pavements (3%)

Issues raised include the need for general maintenance of paths – litter and overgrowth – (18%), problems with dog fouling (8%), the need for more bins around the village (6%), and issues with broken glass (3%).

Residents would like more paths away from roads or off-road (13%) to allow more circular routes (11%). The most common links requested included:

- To Eversden (6%)
- To Barton (6%)
- Along Long Road (5%)
- Between Birlings and Green End (4%)
- To Madingley (1%)

Residents would recommend more cycle paths in the village (9%), mainly to link to the Comberton Village College. They would also welcome maps and wayfinding, including online information about local paths (8%).

Some residents suggested extending the area covered by Watt’s Wood (1%).

6. Events in the village

Figure 14 below indicates that 68% of respondents participated in the Jubilee celebrations in the village.

b. 2022 Jubilee celebrations in Comberton



Figure 15 below indicates that Saturday was the most attended during the village Jubilee celebrations.

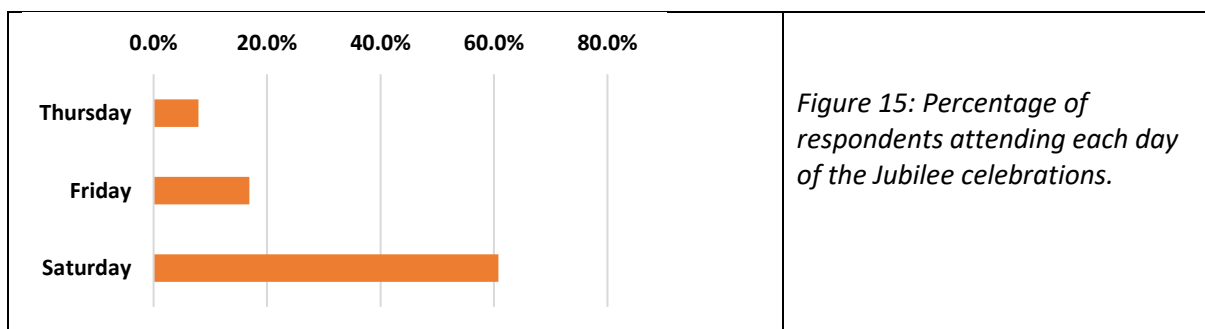


Figure 16 below indicates that 28% of respondents attended a street party as part of the Jubilee celebrations in Comberton.

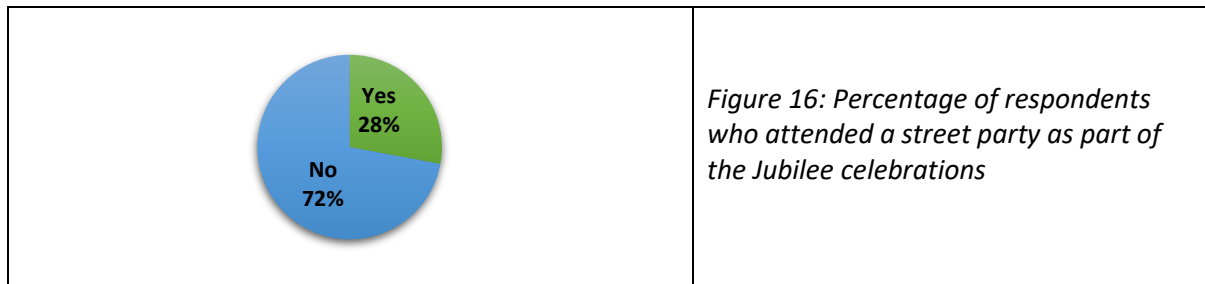
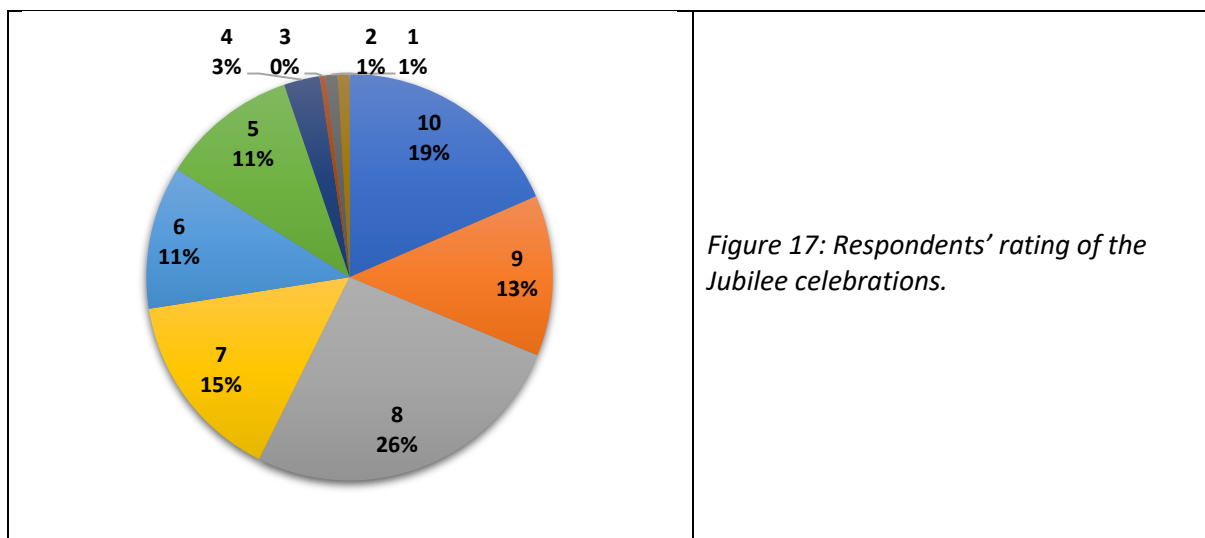


Figure 17 shows that the Jubilee celebrations in Comberton received very positive feedback, with over 58% of respondents giving them a rating of 8 or more out of 10.



c. Support for events in the village

Figure 18 below indicates a firm level of support (89%) for future events organised by the Parish Council. No respondents opposed the organisation of such events.

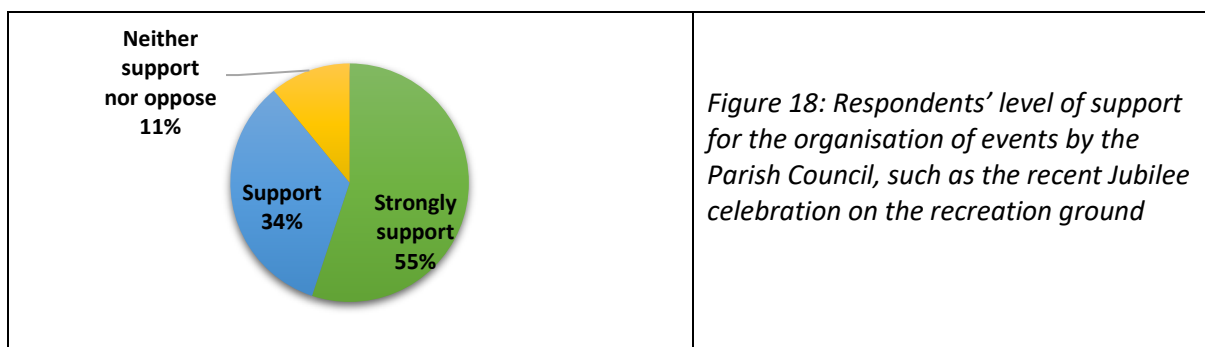
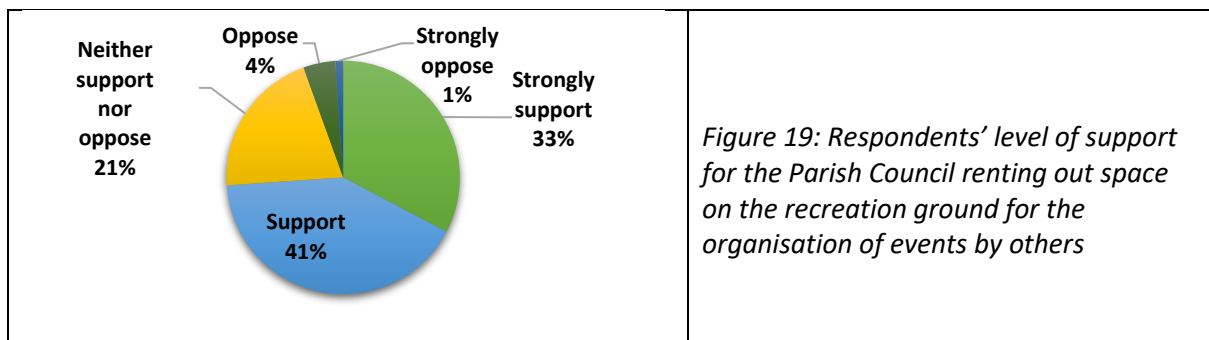


Figure 19 below indicates a very high level of support (74%) for the Parish Council renting out space on the recreation ground for the organisation of events by others.



d. Respondents' open comments – Jubilee celebrations

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the Jubilee celebrations organised in Comberton. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 72 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

Many residents commented that the event was excellent and praised the village for organising it (38%). Residents felt such events provide a positive community feeling (28%). Residents would like more events, such as the Jubilee celebrations, to be organised in Comberton (17%). Some residents asked for careful thoughts to be put into organising events on the recreation ground, mainly if the space is rented out, to avoid disruption to residents (3%).

Several constructive comments were made. The most common comment was that the stalls were too spread out (40%). In addition, residents would have liked more stalls (18%), the provision of additional seating & picnic tables (4%), more catering (3%), and improved accessibility (1%). Enhanced communication about the event and its organisation would have been beneficial (13%).

7. Prioritisation of potential new facilities by respondents

Survey respondents were invited to indicate which of the proposed facilities they wish to give the most priority. Each respondent could indicate up to five items in order.

Figure 20 below indicates that the most prioritised facilities (i.e., received the highest total of responses from 1st priority to 5th priority) are toilets with external access, a bar or café in the pavilion and more playground activities.

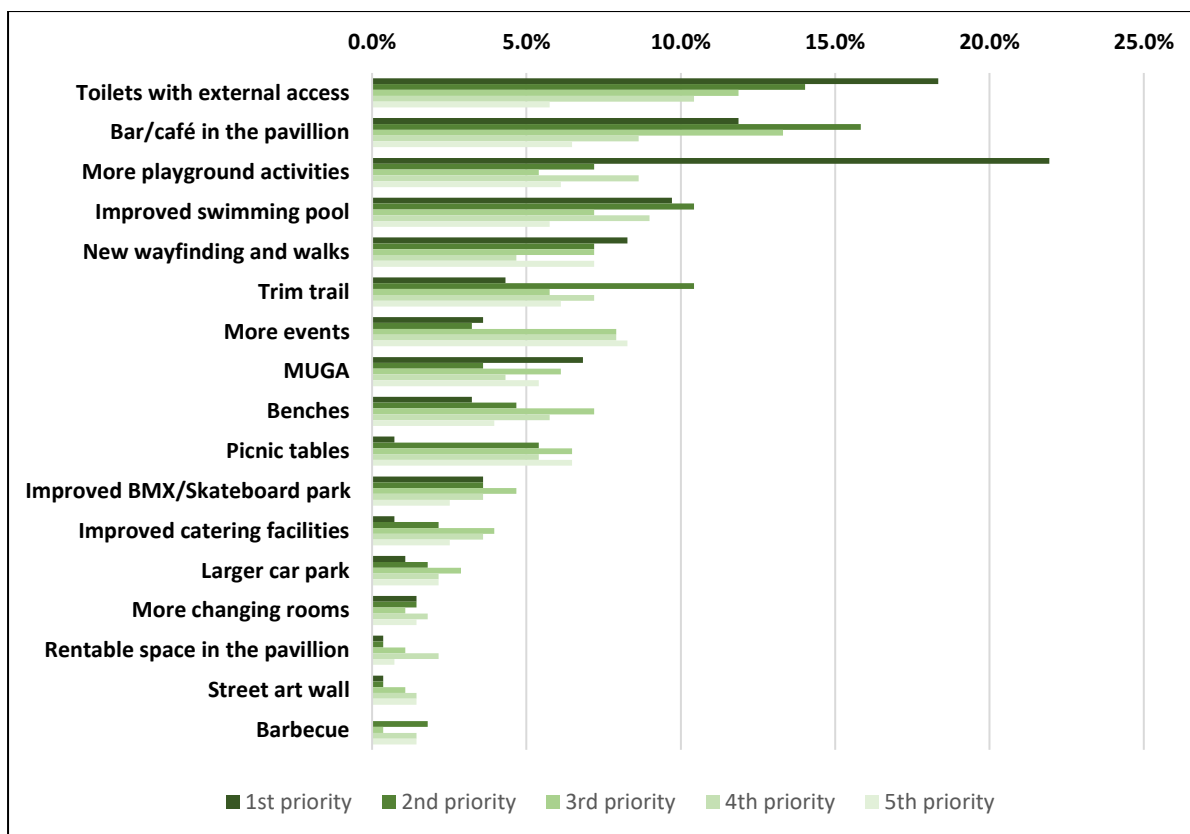


Figure 20: Respondents' top five priorities for improvements in the village. The facilities have been ordered from the facility most rated as a top 5 priority to the one least rated as a top 5 priority.

8. Respondents' open comments – Final comments

Respondents were given an opportunity to make additional comments regarding recreational facilities in Comberton. The paragraph below summarises some of the most frequent comments. This question received 67 comments. Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents to this question who raised a given topic.

The most common suggestions for additions or improvements to facilities in the village were for a café (15%), an indoor swimming pool (7%) and a basketball court (6%).

Residents would also like improved online communication in the village (7%) as they need help finding information about recreation facilities and clubs.

Residents would like the village to be kept clean (6%), paths to be improved (6%), the addition of cycle paths (6%), and maps (4%)

On the recreation ground, residents would like the addition of a toilet (4%), more provision for teenagers (3%), an accessible path around and to the recreation ground (3%), a biodiversity area (3%), CCTV (3%), and an improved pavilion (3%).

9. Examples provided by respondents

Respondents to the survey have provided a range of examples from other villages while responding to the survey. A list is provided below.

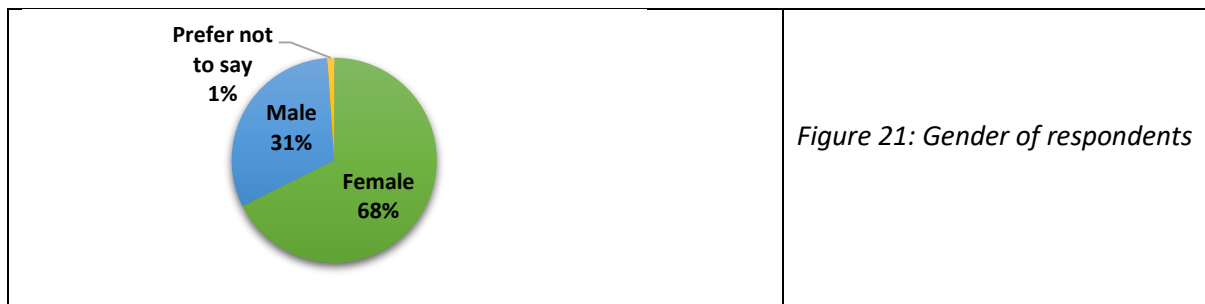
- Play equipment such as little train in Haslingfield
- Play equipment such as the climbing tower in Eddington

- Play equipment such as an adapted swing for disabled children in Hardwick.
- Play equipment, such as a small roundabout in Coton
- Inclusive playscape in Great Shelford
- Play equipment such as sunken trampoline in Hauxton
- Track for small children in Godmanchester
- Kids trails in Thetford Forest
- Multi-use games area in Barton
- BMX Park in Byron Square, Trumpington
- Toilets reserved for residents in Barton
- Friday evening community gatherings in Henlow
- Community café in Hauxton
- Community centre, including café, in Duxford
- Community barn built in Presteigne, Powys - <https://castleringoakframe.co.uk/project/wentes-meadow-community-barn/>
- Food vans in Haslingfield
- Food vans at the Cambourne Cricket Club on Fridays – Cambourne Foodies
- Paths suggestions for Comberton: <https://pghardy.net/comberton/paths/ideas/>

10. Demographics

a. Gender

Figure 21 below indicates what gender respondents identify with.



b. Age

Figure 22 below indicates the age range of survey respondents.

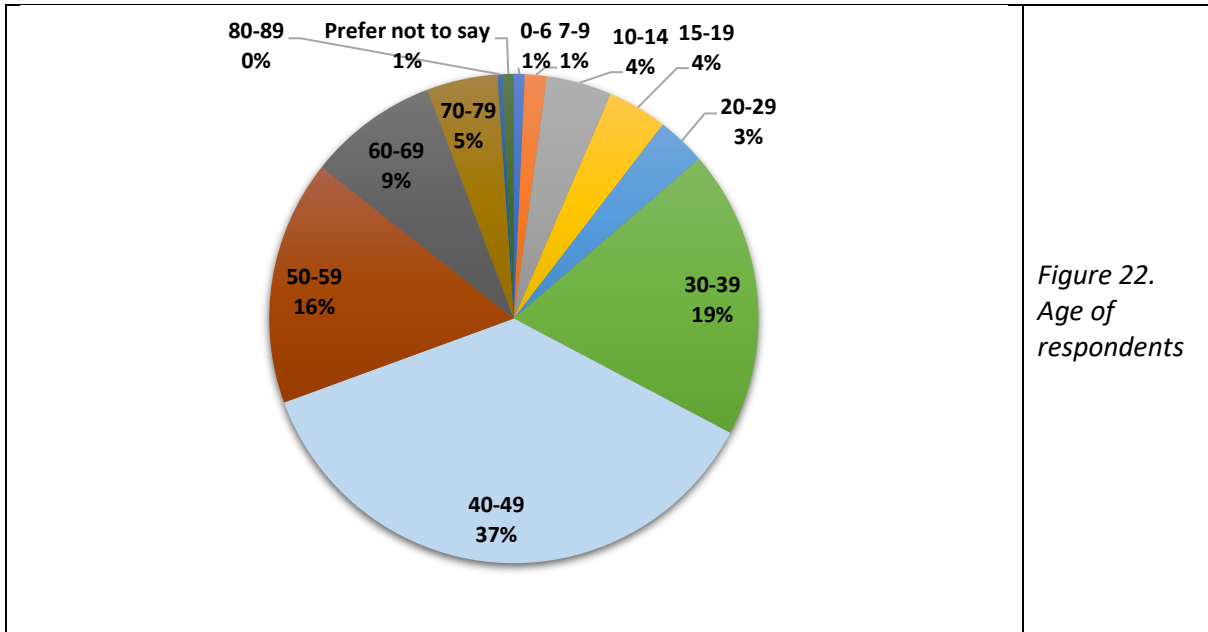


Figure 22. Age of respondents

c. Children-caring responsibility

Figure 23 below indicates the percentage of respondents who regularly care for children under 18 years old, such as parents, grandparents, or childminders.

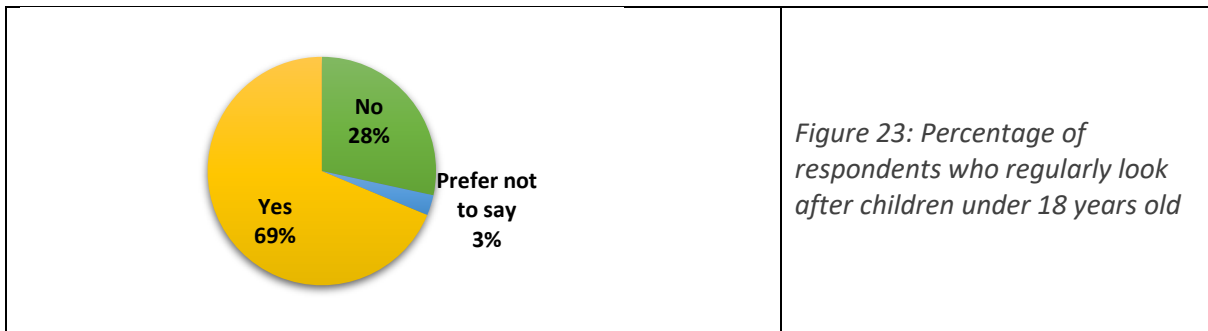


Figure 23: Percentage of respondents who regularly look after children under 18 years old

Figure 24 below indicates the age range of the children that those with caring responsibility look after.

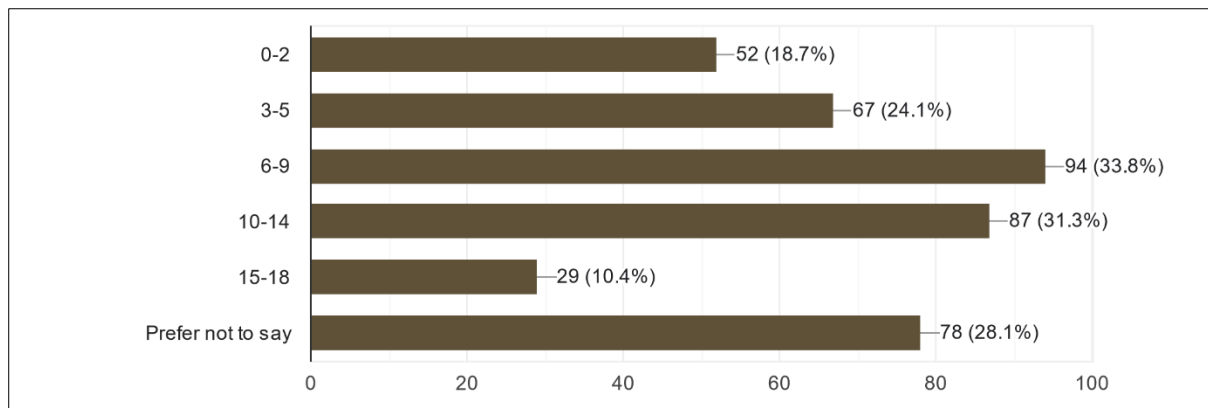


Figure 24: Age range of the children looked after by respondents with children-caring responsibilities

d. Disability

Figure 25 below indicates the percentage of survey respondents who consider they have a disability.



Figure 26 below indicates the percentage of survey respondents who consider that at least one of the children under 18 years old they regularly look after has a disability.

