

A New Leisure Centre for Wantage and Grove

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of a consultation which asked for views on proposals to build a new leisure centre at Mably Way, Grove

OCTOBER 2017

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
SUMMARY	3
BACKGROUND TO THE CONSULTATION	4
CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY	5
CONSULTATION RESPONSES	7
NEXT STEPS	29
FURTHER INFORMATION	30
APPENDIX A – 121 STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS	31
APPENDIX B – CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE	34
APPENDIX C – PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS	41
APPENDIX D – YOUNG PERSONS CONSULTATION SESSIONS SUMMARY	43

SUMMARY

This report summarises the findings from a district-wide consultation undertaken by Vale of White Horse District Council. The consultation asked for views on the proposal to build a new leisure centre at Mably Way, Grove. Views were collected via an online survey which was promoted by a range of channels such as social media, press releases and public engagement events. Overall, 624 people responded to the survey.

The consultation found that:

- 84 per cent agreed in principle with the proposed development of a new leisure centre.
- 70 per cent agreed with the proposed location of the new leisure centre. When asked to provide any comments or suggestions on the proposed location, agreement with the chosen site was the most common theme, although this was followed by concerns with the location due to the potential impact it could have on the health centre as well as traffic/congestion.
- The six lane x 25m pool, parking, and coffee shop were the facilities most likely to be used by respondents at the new leisure centre. When asked to provide any comments or suggestions on the proposed facilities, respondents suggested a range of additional/alternative facilities in addition to what had been proposed by the Council. The most popular suggestions related to the swimming pool, such as having a recreational pool with leisure water facilities (flumes/interactive features), having a spectator area/viewing gallery, and having a 50m/8 lane pool for more competitive use. Including racquet sports within the leisure centre, sauna/steam/spa facilities and athletics facilities were also popular comments.
- Over half of respondents agreed with the proposed concept design of the new leisure centre. However, of the 16 per cent who disagreed, the most commonly cited reason for disliking the design was due to the exterior look of the building being unattractive and not in keeping with the surrounding area.
- 68 per cent agreed with the proposal to provide all funding for the project upfront, and as new houses are built locally, for the council to receive contributions towards the costs from developers. When asked to provide any comments or suggestions on the proposed funding, the most common themes were that housing developers should make financial contributions towards the leisure centre, followed by calls for the money to be spent on something else in the community.

BACKGROUND TO THE CONSULTATION

A draft leisure and sports facility strategy (2012-2029) completed in 2012 identified as its highest priority the need to confirm the future leisure provision in the Wantage and Grove area. This provision was to take into account the identified strategic housing sites within the locality; Monks Farm, Crab Hill and the former Airfield site, west of Grove.

The Vale of White Horse District Council corporate plan, 'Vision for the Vale', identified as one of its priorities a need to review the potential for building a new leisure centre in the Wantage and Grove area as the settlements expand. The Vale commissioned an initial feasibility study which concluded that the following four options were available to provide a long-term solution for leisure provision within the area:

- Refurbishment and extension of the existing leisure centre to include a learner pool;
- Rebuilding the leisure centre adjacent to the existing location within the King Alfred's Academy site;
- Building a new leisure centre within the Grove Airfield development;
- Building a new leisure centre on the council-owned site in Mably Way.

Vale of White Horse District Council considered the risks and issues associated with each of the alternative options proposed and the Mably Way site was considered to be the most suitable location.

To align with the emerging local plan, The Vale of White Horse 'Leisure and Sports Facilities Study' was further updated in 2014 up until 2031. This provided further evidence of both the existing and future needs and deficiencies for facilities for the Wantage and Grove area.

The study reiterated that the existing leisure centre at Portway, Wantage is unable to meet any additional demand that new homes in the area will bring. To address the number of homes expected to be built in the area by 2031 the council identified the importance of delivering key infrastructure to meet the growing demand.

During September and October 2017 there were two phases of consultation on the proposals for a new leisure centre for the Wantage and Grove area as detailed in the methodology section of this report.

CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

There were two phases of consultation on the proposed leisure centre.

Phase one - engagement with stakeholders and local community groups

To begin with, the council sought the views of key stakeholders with an interest in the existing leisure centre at Portway, Wantage and the proposed new leisure centre at Mably Way, Grove. This involved 1-2-1 meetings with representatives from various groups that had strong connections to the project. Notes detailing the key outcomes of this 1-2-1 engagement activity are detailed in Appendix A.

Phase two - public engagement events and online survey

To make sure that the wider public also had an opportunity to have their say on the proposed leisure centre we held some public events and hosted an online survey.

An event was held on Thursday 7 September at the existing Wantage leisure centre (Portway, Wantage) to launch this phase of the consultation. This provided an opportunity for residents to come and view the proposals and talk to the project team about them. A further event was held on Thursday 21 September at The Old Mill, Grove. Officers held an open public session on Monday 18 September from 18.30 to 20.30, to coincide with the regular disabled swimmers, to capture existing users' feedback on the current facilities and those being proposed at Mably Way. Officers also visited the Sweatbox youth centre and met with the students at Fitzwaryn and King Alfred's Academy. Notes detailing the key outcomes of this engagement activity are detailed in Appendix D.

Everyone attending these events was encouraged to formally register their views by completing the online survey which was available for completion between 7 September and 4 October 2017.

The survey was published on the council's website and asked people about their use of existing facilities and their thoughts on the council's concept plans for the new centre including, location, the facilities to be provided, design and funding. Appendix B shows the wording and presentation of the online survey.

The survey was promoted widely using a variety of methods, including:

- Dedicated webpage for the project
- Details of online survey sent to everyone on the councils corporate consultation mailing list
- Posted letters to over 200 homes adjacent to Mably Way to inform about the drop in events and online survey
- Leaflets and posters delivered for display in key public areas and local businesses in both the town centre and village shops throughout Wantage and Grove
- E-shot to all existing GLL members of Wantage Leisure Centre (1,400 members on their database)
- E-mail invite to Vale Disability Access Group for the inclusion session and link for online survey
- Press releases leading to articles in local media (Herald series newspaper and Oxford mail)
- Social media posts (Twitter and Facebook advertising)

- Local radio (Jack FM) announcements

A hard copy of the survey was also available on request with a free post returned envelope.

M.E.L Research undertook the analysis and reporting on the survey data which is presented in this report.

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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

In total, 624 people responded to the survey and/or provided comments for the survey. Not all respondents answered all questions. The demographic profile of respondents is shown in Appendix C. The number of respondents that answered each question is included in the text and/or shown in tables and charts as (n=).

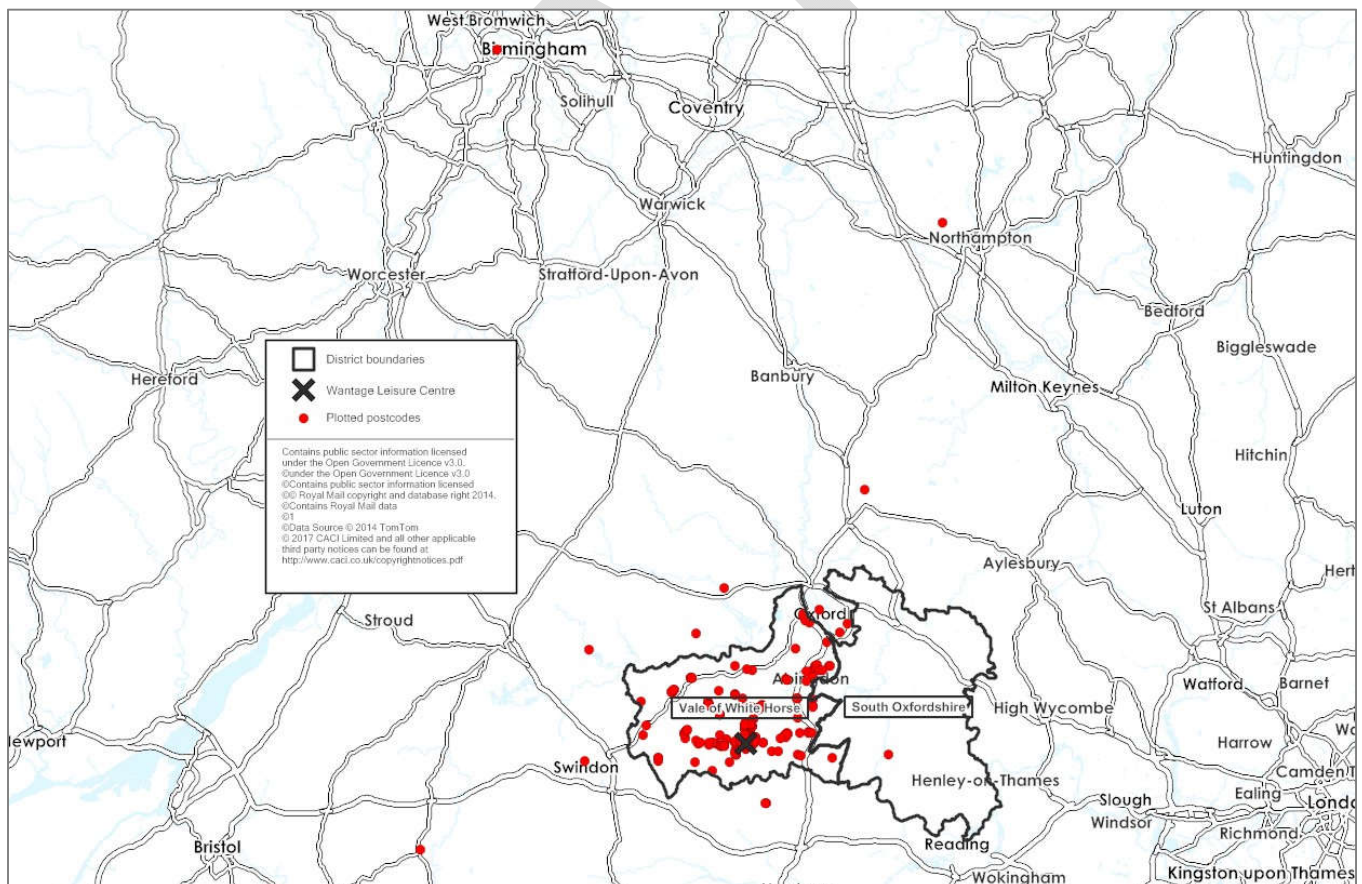
Where figures do not sum to 100 per cent, this is either due to computer rounding or where multiple answers could be provided to a question. Where figures shown in charts or tables and discussed in the text differ by 1 per cent, this will be due to computer rounding; the per cent figure discussed in the text will be correct.

Where per cent figures are not shown in charts, these will be 3 per cent or less.

Geographic spread of respondents

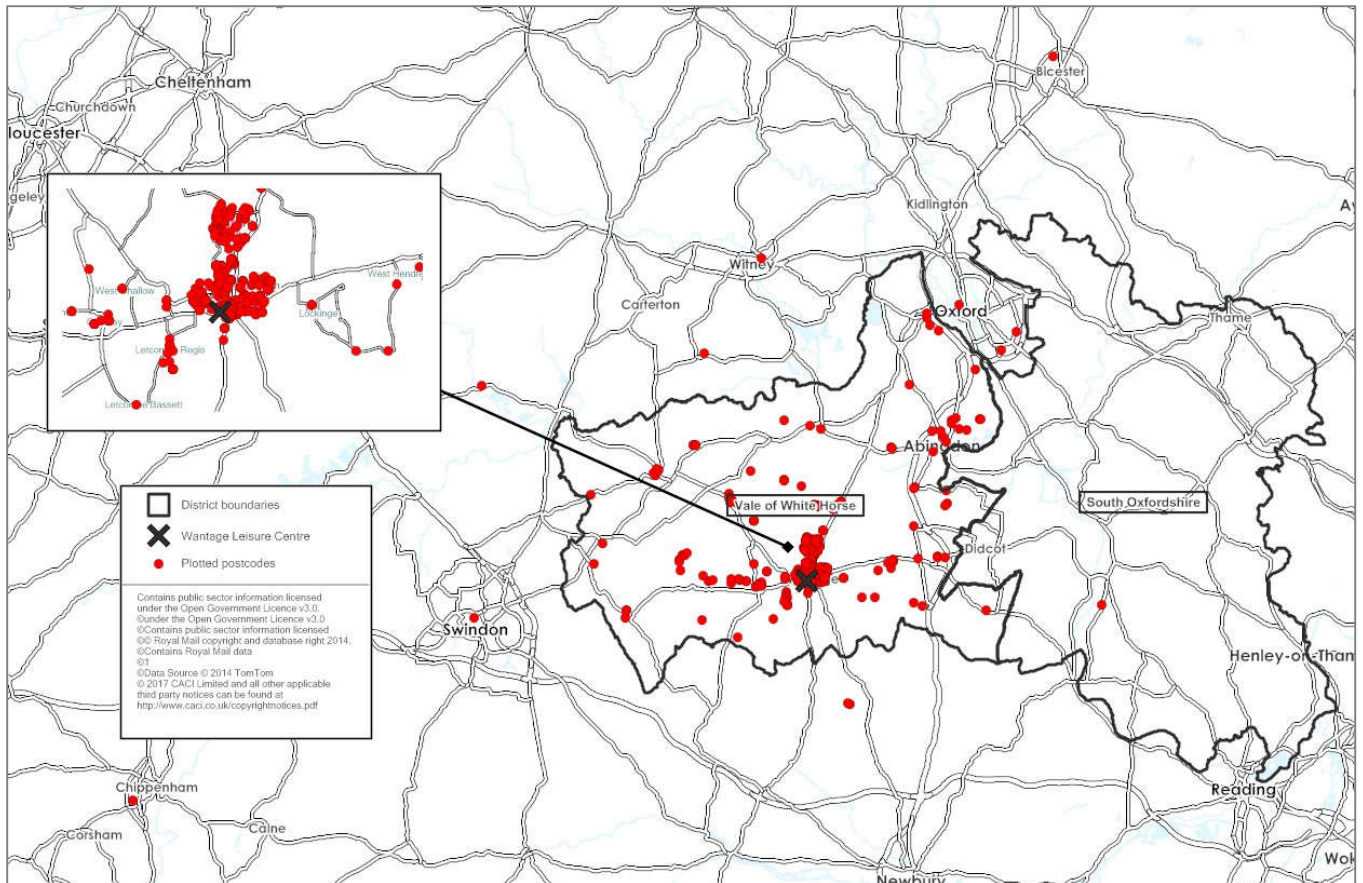
The map below gives an indication of respondent home locations for those that provided a postcode for analysis purposes. It shows, for example, that survey participants were mostly clustered within the Vale of White Horse District boundary although others were based as far away as Birmingham, Northampton and Chippenham.

Map 1: Plot of respondent postcodes



The map overleaf shows the clustering of respondents around the existing Wantage Leisure Centre at Portway.

Map 2: Clustering of respondent postcodes



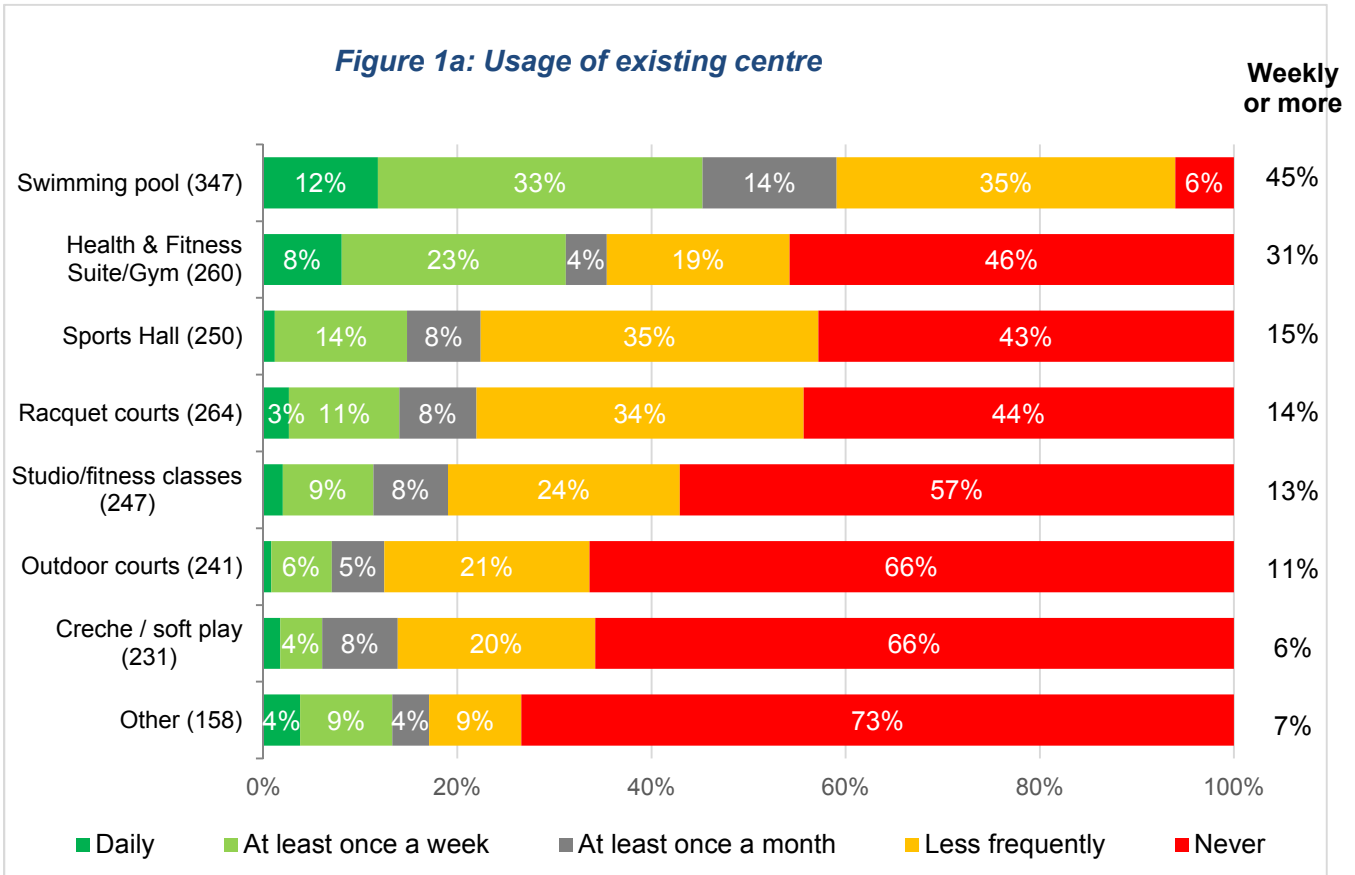
Usage of existing leisure centre at Portway

Six out of ten (61 per cent) of those who responded to the questionnaire reported that they used the existing Leisure Centre in Portway, Wantage.

Those who used the existing leisure centre were asked how often they used a range of facilities there. The most commonly used facility was the swimming pool with only 6 per cent of Wantage Leisure Centre users reporting that they had never used it; 45 per cent reported that they used it frequently (at least once a week).

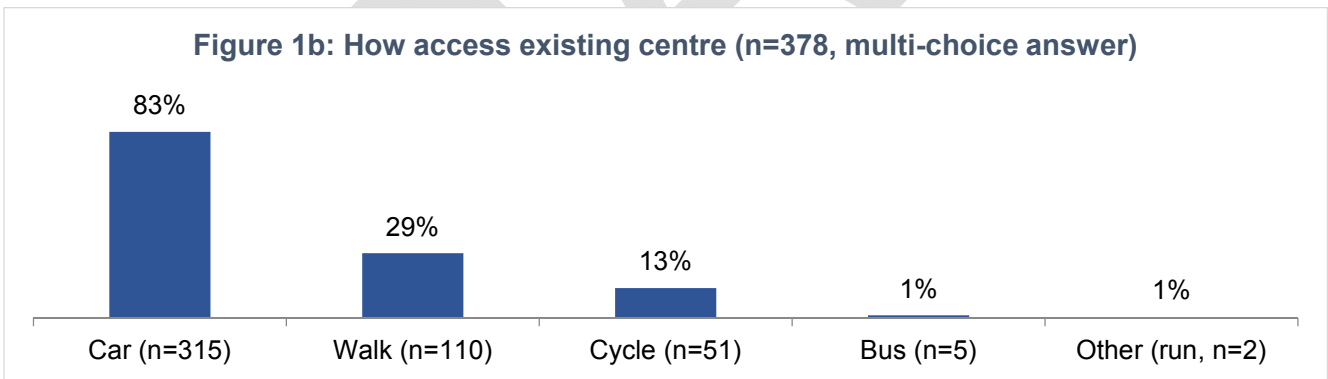
The Health and Fitness Suite/Gym was the second most commonly used facility with 31 per cent indicating that they used it at least once a week. The crèche/soft play and outdoor courts were the least used facilities by those who responded to the questionnaire (6 per cent and 7 per cent respectively using it at least once a week) (Figure 1a).

Figure 1a: Usage of existing centre



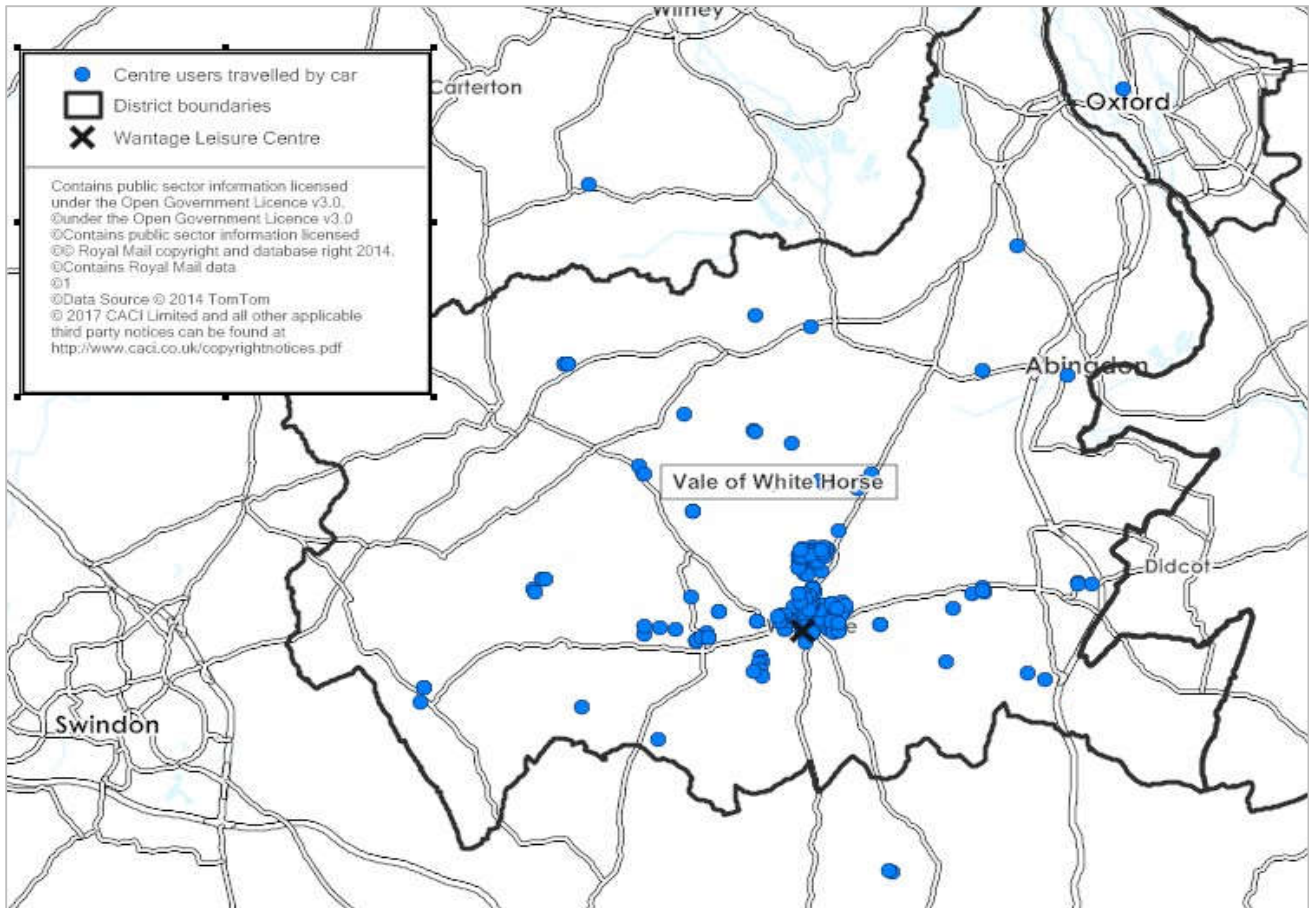
Those that use the existing centre typically access it by car; 83 per cent indicated this. Around three in ten (29 per cent) also walk to the centre and just over one in ten (13 per cent) cycle.

Figure 1b: How access existing centre (n=378, multi-choice answer)

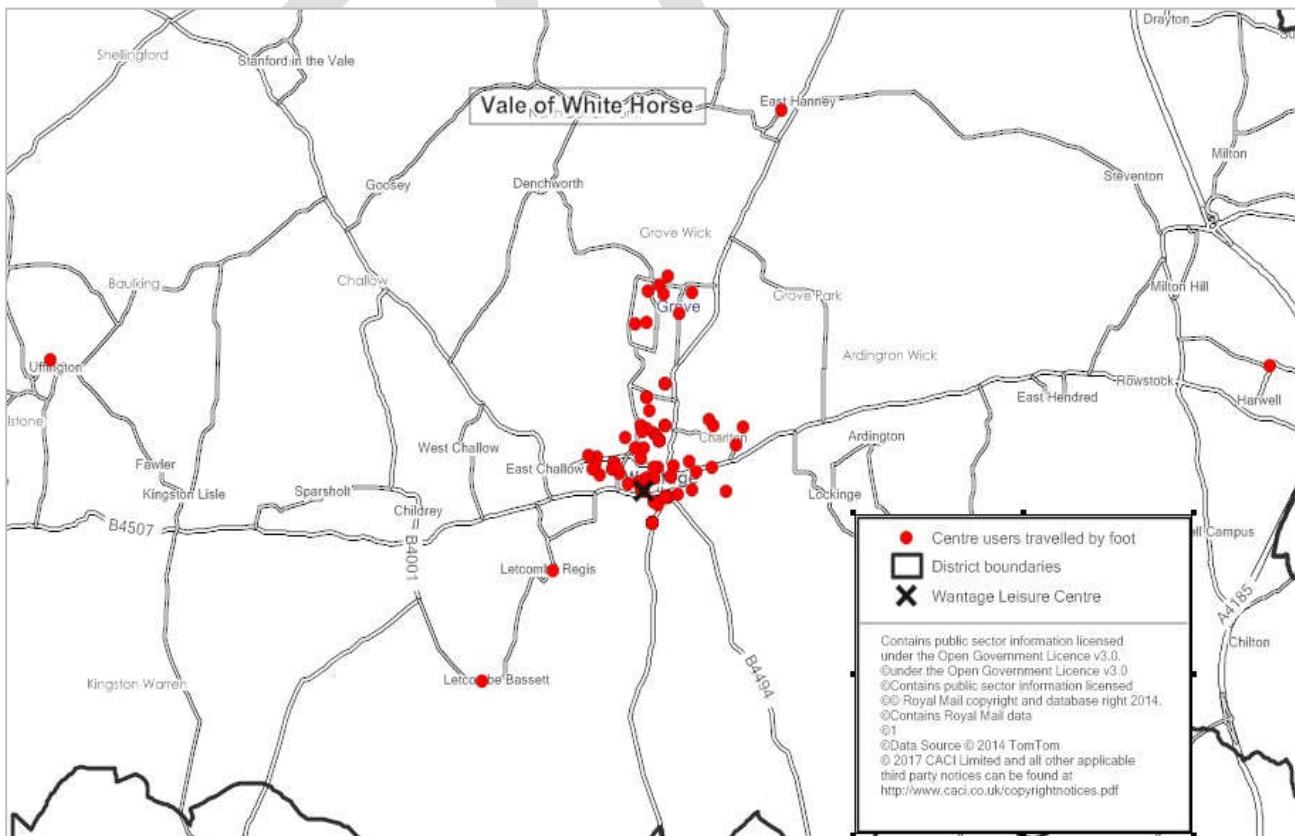


The maps overleaf show where current users of the existing leisure centre travel from by car and on foot. It's worth noting respondents may use more than one mode of transport. For example, 15 respondents indicated they may travel to the leisure centre by car, bicycle or by walking, while 20 of those who walk also cycle.

Map 3: Postcodes of existing leisure centre users who travel by car



Map 4: Postcodes of existing leisure centre users who travel by foot



Those who do not use the facility were asked why. Overall, 210 people provided a comment. Table 1 shows the themes that emerged from these comments. We have reported on the themes deemed most pertinent which are highlighted in grey.

Table 1: Reasons for not using the existing Wantage Leisure Centre

Comment type	Frequency
Use other centre/facilities/exercise	62
Lack of relevant facilities/activities/timetable	55
Distance/location	43
Lack of time/interest/age/disability	33
Cost	23
Facilities need updating/maintenance	22
Pool too cold	10
Parking	7
Health/cleanliness issues	7
Website lacks clarity	1
Other	16

USE OTHER CENTRE/FACILITIES/EXERCISE (62 PEOPLE)

The most common theme was that they do not need to use the leisure centre as they use other facilities or do exercise that does not require the use of a leisure centre. Reasons for using other facilities included that they were closer or easier to access or that other facilities provided better facilities (See themes below).

I use the White Horse Leisure Centre. (ID: 52)

I live in Abingdon and use my local leisure centre and Tilsley Park. (ID: 112)

I don't play sport and get my exercise from walking my dogs and working on my allotment. (ID: 81)

In the past we used the current leisure centre for birthday parties and our children's swimming lessons, but after a number of really poor experiences (with both a poorly run birthday party and numerous swimming lesson issues - cancellations and shambles with refunds) we vowed not to use it again, and even travel to Didcot for swimming lessons now. I looked at the gym many years ago and decided there were better gyms in town. Until recently I also played football on a weekly basis but the concrete tennis courts are not suitable for football, and too often I came away with grazed legs having slipped on the green areas or tripped over a grid. (ID: 108)

LACK OF RELEVANT FACILITIES/ACTIVITIES/TIMETABLE (55 PEOPLE)

In keeping with the first theme, many cited that the leisure centre did not meet their requirements in terms of the facilities/activities/timetable offered.

I used to use the swimming pool but found the times available didn't fit in with my schedule. (ID: 206)

There is no young children's area of the swimming pool. (ID: 10)

Not very many activities to do in there anymore. (ID: 334)

DISTANCE/LOCATION (43 PEOPLE)

In keeping with the first theme, some people commented that the leisure centre was too far for them to get to.

Too far away compared with more local facilities; laziness. (ID: 241)

I live out of town and there are facilities in my workplace. (ID: 130 - Employee of business in area)

It is out of my catchment area but I would travel for a good facility. (ID: 101)

Table 2 compares the proportion who reported that they currently use a facility at the existing leisure centre at least once a month, to the proportion who report that they would personally use the same facility at the new leisure centre.

This shows that a higher proportion report that they would use the facilities at the new leisure centre. In particular, 59 per cent reported that they used the swimming facilities at the existing leisure centre at least once a month whereas, 79 per cent reported that they would personally use the six lane x 25m pool at the new centre.

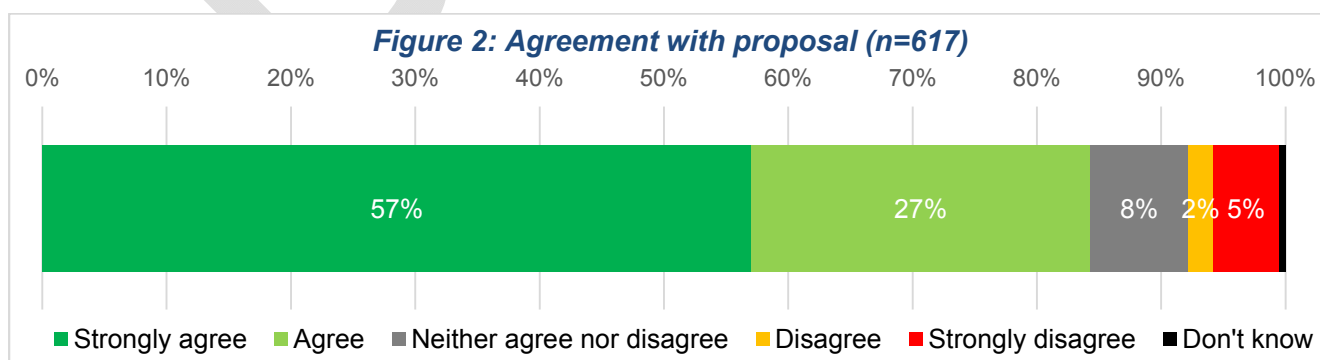
Similarly, 19 per cent reported that they accessed the studio/fitness classes at the existing leisure centre whereas, 40 per cent reported that they would personally use this facility at the new centre.

Table 2: Facilities usage comparison

Facility	Currently use ¹	Would use ²
Swimming	59%	79%
Health & Fitness Suite/Gym	35%	49%
Studio/fitness classes	19%	40%
Sports Hall	22%	30%

Agreement with proposal to build a new leisure centre

Following an explanation as to why the building of a new leisure centre was needed (See questionnaire in Appendix B), respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed in principle with the proposed development. Results show that over four-fifths (84 per cent) agreed in principle with the proposal with the majority stating that they 'strongly agreed' (57 per cent). Less than one out of ten (7 per cent) disagreed with the proposal (Figure 2).



¹ At least once a month

² At new leisure centre

Respondents were subsequently asked if they had any comments or suggestions so far on the principle of building a new leisure centre. Overall, 283 people provided a comment relevant to the question. Table 3 shows the themes that emerged from these comments. We have reported on the most common themes and those we consider pertinent which are highlighted in grey.

Table 3: Comments/suggestions on principle of building a new leisure centre

Comment type	Frequency
Agree new centre needed / good idea	81
Other considerations/facilities/activities	62
Spend money on other services/things / other areas/villages	40
Swimming / pool areas	36
Ensure good range/size of facilities (inc. for future population)	36
Location	25
Other infrastructure	24
Needs to be accessible for all	20
Parking	19
Increase in housing / population / traffic	19
Update existing centre	16
Existing centre to remain available to community	15
Flexible timetable of activities	13
Activity costs	11
Include squash courts	10
Other	26
Comment not relevant	11

AGREE NEW CENTRE NEEDED/GOOD IDEA (81 PEOPLE)

In line with the results displayed in Figure 2, the most common response was that they agreed that a new leisure centre was a good idea. Reasons for this included that existing facilities were out of date or lacking, and that there was a need to meet the demands that an increasing population would bring. However, it is worth noting that people were in support in principle, with many also highlighting concerns or caveats attached to this support.

A good idea which will serve the needs of the community as well as bringing in trade from the locality. I would question why a leisure centre is needed above new schools / doctor's surgeries etc. though. (ID: 548)

Really pleased that this is happening, the current facilities need an upgrade and without a doubt this area needs more. (ID: 175)

Well laid out. Great to see that there is a learner pool as well as a pool for serious adult swimmers. Addition of climbing wall is very good also the cafe is welcome. Only I cannot seem to see a Sauna in the drawing. If (hopefully, please, please!!!!) the Portway site is kept open there would be no need for one. I think it is great that this is happening! Not just Wantage and Grove are expanding; villages surrounding Wantage who are also making use of the Portway centre are enlarging too. The current centre is still lovely and well run-just too busy at times. (ID: 367)

With increased population and a number of new schools, the new facilities are sorely needed. (ID: 16)

I think it's essential, given the increasing population and the ageing of the existing facilities. But it does need to provide things that are not just repeats of what is available at the existing centre or the various Gyms in the area. (ID: 299)

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/FACILITIES/ACTIVITIES (62 PEOPLE)

A range of other facilities/activities not mentioned in the plans were identified which respondents felt should be included in the new leisure centre. This is discussed further in the 'Facilities' section of the report.

The principle is well founded however if the popularity of 3g pitches elsewhere in the county is to be considered, one pitch will not be enough to service Wantage and the surrounding areas. (ID: 497- Grove Challengers Football Club)

There is a strong community of basketballers growing up in Wantage. The KA academy school team has capitalised on the talent and the won the school's competition over the last few years. Would be useful to capitalise on this success with providing the community with the facilities to encourage more youngsters to enter this sport and stay with it. This is a great alternative to football, tennis & rugby which already have good facilities in the area. (ID: 119- Eagles Basketball club)

Love the plans already, an additional sauna and steam room with perhaps some beauty facilities may be favourable with the men and ladies of Grove and Wantage. (ID: 508)

I agree the existing facility is starting to look tired and needs revamping and improving. The squash courts which I use a lot are okay but a couple more would be beneficial with more people to accommodate. (ID: 155)

SPEND MONEY ON OTHER SERVICES/THINGS/OTHER AREAS/VILLAGES (40 PEOPLE)

Some highlighted that funds could be better used elsewhere such as on health services, roads and schools particularly in light of the housing developments.

We have very poor roads, lots of leisure facilities; more can be incorporated into the new school. There must be better things to spend our money on including better health facilities. (ID: 369)

I would like to see discussion about the potential need for new schools as well, and evidence that the money is justified to be spent in new leisure facilities rather than new schools including for instance a pool that the community could also use at weekends. Can there be explanation as to why funds are being spent on this not school facilities please. (ID: 211)

I would prefer that money and attention were focused on providing sufficient GPs to meet demand at Mably Way heath centre. It is more difficult to get an appointment there than it ever was at Grove Surgery. (ID: 239)

SWIMMING/POOL AREA (36 PEOPLE)

Some provided comments around what facilities they felt the swimming pool should have. This is further discussed in the Facilities section of the report.

It is very important that residents of Wantage and Grove have access to a properly maintained and supported swimming pool with at least six lanes and no less than 25m in length that is available for lane swimming during the early morning, lunchtime and evening. (ID: 179)

We desperately need some fun for children in regards to pool (e.g. toddler pool area with tiny slides/splash activities, larger slides/flumes for older children) as well as larger soft play facilities. The only reason I go to the current leisure centre so little is because these areas are extremely lacking. (ID: 433)

We would like multiple swimming pools, to include a leisure pool suitable for children with waterslides, lazy river, wave machine and spa pool. (ID: 69)

ENSURE GOOD RANGE/SIZE OF FACILITIES (36 PEOPLE)

Comments were made around the range of activities being provided at the new centre and ensuring that the size and scope of the centre would also be able to cope with the increase in population and therefore potential demand.

Flexible space- useable for many purposes. Variable in size. Well managed In reach of schools to facilitate frequent use Space available for local clubs to meet regularly. (ID: 42)

For a new leisure centre to serve the community for many years to come, and attract customers from the surrounding area it needs to be of a high quality (i.e. buildings/ pitches/ equipment) with a good variety of sports/activities catered for and for all weather. (ID: 108)

I agree it is needed but it must be designed for 2020 onwards and also the huge increase in population in the immediate area must be taken into consideration. This plan does not cover either of these points. (ID: 275)

NEEDS TO BE ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL (20 PEOPLE)

Some felt that it was important to be conscious that the leisure centre was accessible to a wide range of people such as those with disabilities, older residents, schools, those on low income and young people.

The new centre needs to be accessible and inclusive. Being 'possible' to move around as a wheelchair user is not enough - it needs to be 'easy'. A full 'Changing Places' facility with an adult sized changing bench, hoist and toilet is essential. Access to the swimming pool should be available to everyone regardless of disability - consideration should be given to users who cannot sit unaided - a simple 'pool chair' (such as the one at Didcot) does not give the support required by users with limited or no trunk or head control. (ID: 93)

It is essential that the new facility has at least 2 lifts, as the old one at the sports centre failed too often an I have been trapped upstairs until I could be helped down. (ID: 326)

It's a much needed facility to provide desperately needed access to swimming and sports facilities in the area. The existing leisure centre is barely adequate with facilities and timetabling shared with the school, local primary schools and clubs. There is very limited time for other clubs and leisure activities to flourish outside of this, and constraints for exiting clubs - the ability for them to grow and flourish is also constrained. (ID: 545)

Council response: why we are building a new leisure centre

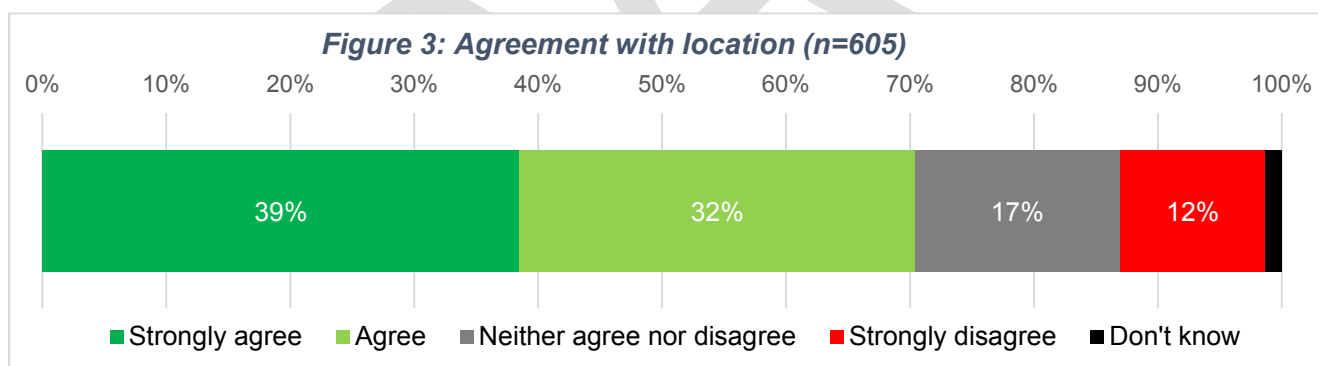
The new leisure centre's core facilities required to satisfy the identified facility needs within the Wantage and Grove area, both now and in the future, are based on retaining community use of the existing dry facilities at Portway, Wantage.

Location

Respondents were provided with some background information regarding the proposed location (See questionnaire in Appendix B). They were subsequently asked to what extent they agreed with the proposed location.

Results show that seven out of ten (70 per cent) were in agreement with it, with a greater proportion stating that they 'strongly agree' (39 per cent) as opposed to 'agree' (32 per cent). The slightly lower level of overall agreement for this question compared to the proposal to build a new centre can be explained by the fact that just under a fifth (17 per cent) reported that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Just over one out of ten (12 per cent) were in disagreement (Figure 3).



Respondents were subsequently asked if they had any comments or suggestions on the proposed location of the new leisure centre. Overall, 231 people provided a comment relevant to the question. Table 4 shows the themes that emerged from these comments. We have reported on the most common themes and those we consider pertinent which are highlighted in grey.

Table 4: Comments/suggestions on proposed location

Comment type	Frequency
Good/ideal site	52
Impact on health centre	49
Traffic / congestion	41
Suggest other location/against location	35
Environmental/green space concerns	34

Bus / cycle / walking routes	26
Other	23
Parking (inc. bicycle parking)	18
Impact on local residents	11
Comment not relevant	19

GOOD/IDEAL SITE (52 PEOPLE)

The most common response was that a good location had been chosen which was central for both Wantage and Grove residents and easily accessible.

Good location for both Wantage and Grove. (ID: 165)

It seems well situated and a well thought through location. (ID: 297- Flying Solo Trampoline Club)

Perfect location and easily accessible by all residents. (ID: 173)

IMPACT ON HEALTH CENTRE (49 PEOPLE)

Other residents however highlighted concerns that the new leisure centre may impact on the ability to expand on the existing health centre in the future.

I despair at the closed box thinking behind this proposed site. Was the authority tasked with providing adequate health care for Wantage/Grove even asked about this issue? (ID: 272)

The planned location seems to be exactly where the medical centre is located. It is unclear if the proposed leisure centre will use the medical centre access road, or another one. If it is a separate access road in close proximity, there is going to be a lot of turning traffic, which will impact road safety. How are the existing medical centre facilities going to be expanded to cope with the population increase? (ID: 256)

The doctor's surgery should be expanded before a new leisure centre is built (ID: 334)

TRAFFIC /CONGESTION (41 PEOPLE)

Residents cited concerns that roads in the area were already congested and that development of the new leisure centre would make the condition worse.

The location seems sensible but again I have concerns about transportation. The roads around Wantage are already close to maximum traffic at peak times, and without any additional modes of transportation (i.e. rail) to get people around, a new leisure centre would only increase traffic on the roads. Serious consideration needs to be made to implement either new road routes or to reopen the former station at Wantage Road. (ID: 371)

The increase in new homes is already impacting on an increasingly busy road (Mably Way) which is subject to heavy queuing at peak times. The entrance to the facility will create a bottleneck. (ID: 529)

Traffic is already a nightmare along this road & easily made worse with accidents, congestion & road diversions. This will be made much worse during the building & further encroaches buildings onto the green spaces remaining around the town. (ID: 610)

SUGGEST OTHER LOCATION /AGAINST LOCATION (35 PEOPLE)

Some residents were dissatisfied with the location suggesting for example Grove airfield, or the technology park as alternatives.

The new location is too far from the other facilities and amenities within Wantage town centre. (ID: 189)

By building a Leisure Centre here, we would forestall any further expansion at the Health Centre, which may be badly needed in the future due to increased population (it is already oversubscribed). This is surely bad planning, when we have a good Leisure Centre in Wantage, which could be refurbished. (ID: 363)

It appears to be on the same site as the Health Centre which was hoping to extend and although they do not have the money to extend at the moment, surely this is a future possibility. Why not build on the airfield? (ID: 398)

ENVIRONMENTAL /GREEN SPACE CONCERNS (34 PEOPLE)

Residents highlighted their concerns that the development of a new leisure centre would have a negative impact on the greenery and wildlife which is something that local residents enjoy and use.

In terms of access, it seems like a good idea. However, more hard surfaces right next door to Letcombe Brook, with all the flooding implications that involves seems like a poor decision. A green space, set aside for walks and wildlife with the capacity to absorb excess water would seem a more pragmatic use of the space. (ID: 13)

It is a shame to lose the playing fields and wildlife area and the additional building in this area feels like Grove is losing its identity and being subsumed into Wantage. (ID: 81)

There is little land left to separate Wantage and Grove, and this will be intruding on what there is. It is a beautiful area of land that is well-used by walkers and cyclists. But I can see that there is little choice - the area is expanding beyond what it can support (ID: 204)

Council response: location of new leisure centre

Vale Council considered a number of options to provide a long-term solution for leisure provision in the area. The Vale-owned land at Mably Way was recommended as the proposed site when considering the risks and issues associated with each option. The proposed development doesn't encroach on the Mably Way health centre land and does not impede the health centres plans for future expansion. An ecological assessment has been carried out for the site and will look at ways to mitigate and minimise any impact.

Facilities

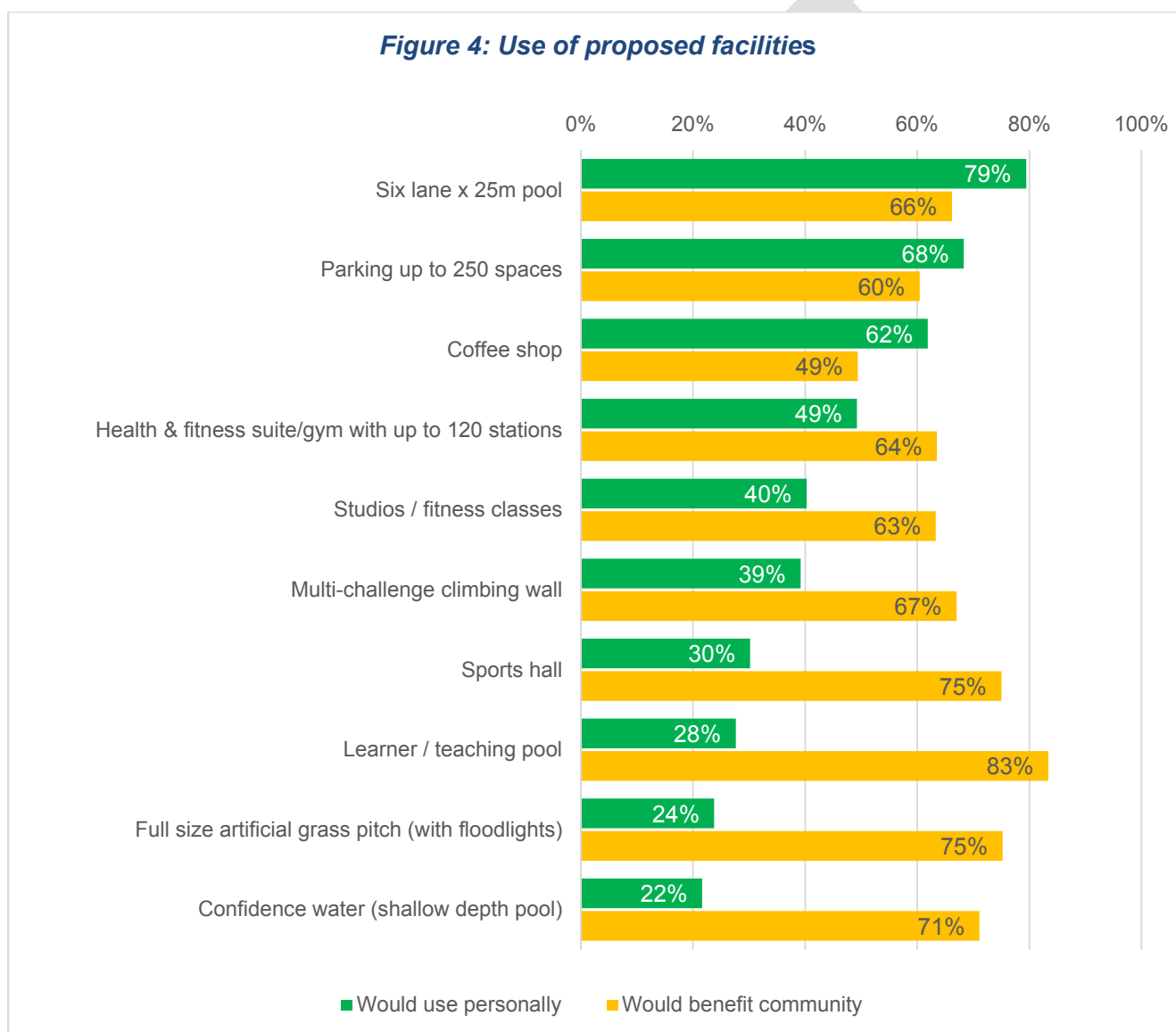
Respondents were provided with some background information about the proposed range of facilities that would be available at the new leisure centre (See questionnaire in Appendix B). They were then asked which of the proposed facilities they would personally use and also which of the facilities they think would benefit the community.

Results show the facility which appeared to be most popular with residents was the six lane x 25m pool. This ties in with the finding that this is the most popular facility at the existing centre (Figure 1). This was followed by parking and the coffee shop. Respondents were least likely to think that they would use the sports hall, learner/teaching pool, grass pitch and confidence water although the majority felt that these facilities would benefit their community (Figure 4).

For the majority of the facilities that respondents reported that they would use personally, there appeared to be no significant difference in proportions when comparing those who use the existing Wantage Leisure Centre and those who do not. This suggests that the new facilities are of equal level of interest to both users and non-users of Wantage Leisure Centre.

The only exceptions were for the six lane x 25m pool where 84 per cent of users of Wantage Leisure Centre reported that they would personally use the new facility compared to 68 per cent of non-users of the existing leisure centre. Additionally, 43 per cent of users of Wantage Leisure Centre reported that they would personally use the multi-challenge climbing wall compared to 31 per cent of non-users of the existing leisure centre. These are statistically significant differences.

Figure 4: Use of proposed facilities



Respondents were then asked if they had any comments or suggestions on the proposed facilities. Overall, 290 people provided a comment relevant to the question. Table 5 shows the themes that emerged from these comments, which also partially reflect the comments relating to provision of the new centre. We have reported on the most common themes and those we consider pertinent which are highlighted in grey.

Table 5: Comments/suggestions on proposed facilities

Comment type	Frequency
Other suggested facilities / activities	62
Pool type	58
Racquet sports	32
Gym offer / local competition	31
50 metre pool/8 lane/competitive use	27
Sauna / steam / spa facilities	22
Athletics facilities	22
Parking (inc. bicycles)	21
Artificial pitch	21
Climbing wall	19
Cafe / food & drink	13
Children's/learner pool	10
Disabled / access facilities	9
Climbing wall issues	8
Changing facilities	5
Other	49
Comment not relevant	12

OTHER SUGGESTED FACILITIES / ACTIVITIES (62 PEOPLE)

A range of facilities and activities were suggested for the new leisure centre including a trampoline park, cricket nets in sports hall, dance studio and children's activities such as soft play area. More popular suggestions have been themed individually.

Outdoor trim trail for beginner runners. Pullup bars and dips bars outside somewhere. Don't have mixed changing facilities. (ID: 85)

The Sports Hall need to be the correct size to be able to play basketball matches. There needs to be correct spacing around the court and to be able to play National League there should be viewing facilities. The floor should be wooden and the basketball rings sprung loaded. These points are essential to be able to play basketball matches. (ID: 118- Wantage Wizards Basketball Club)

The sports hall should be 20 x 34.5m The AGP surface should be carefully considered and the following NGBs should be consulted - the Football Association, England Hockey and the Rugby Football Union. (ID: 372- Sport England)

The artificial pitch is a must, as there is nothing similar for miles around, and it must of course be floodlit. It might also be worth considering having 2 or more smaller 6-a-side pitches for the same reason. The sports hall should also be fitted with cricket nets, at least 2 lanes, as the ones in the existing centre are old, broken and they couldn't care less about them. (ID: 299- Challow and Childrey Cricket Club)

Council response: allowing for other activities and facilities

The leisure centre will include a number of spaces that provide flexibility for a range of activities to take place. The new leisure centre will not be tied to an agreement that will restrict community use during the day time so this will allow greater flexibility and capacity in programming activities for both the community and local schools.

POOL TYPE (44 PEOPLE)

There were a range of suggestions made around the type of pools that should be available and who it should cater for. Some felt that the pool needed to be more 'fun' with features such as a slide and flumes which would be appealing to young people. There were 15 comments highlighting the need for a viewing/spectator area and some felt there was a need for lane swimming.

I would also like the swimming pool to have more entertainment facilities for children - water flumes/wave machine/lazy river/inflatable obstacle course. Warm/cold plunge pools would also be good. (ID: 105)

It is a pity that the opportunity was missed to provide a diving pool. (ID: 619)

Making the recreational pools fun and modern and so attract youngsters. (ID: 599)

RACQUET SPORTS (32 PEOPLE)

Comments were made around the need for racquet sports facilities. In particular, there appeared to be a concern that squash courts had not been catered for with some mentioning that they were a part of active squash clubs. A few people mentioned the need for tennis and badminton courts.

The existing squash courts are quite heavily used and it seems incredible that you are not proposing to continue/expand this facility. (ID: 325)

No mention of squash or badminton courts, or anywhere for table tennis. Ability to subdivide Sportshall for multiple uses needed. No mention of quality/facilities of changing rooms. (ID: 42)

Disappointed at the lack of racquet sport facilities in the new centre. There are already limited facilities in the area but several other venues offering gym, pool and fitness classes. The increase in new homes will make it even harder to secure court times which are already in short supply with Farringdon being the next closest racquet sports venue. (ID: 185)

Council response: squash provision

Our studies suggest there is already sufficient squash provision in the Vale. However, the council is committed to retaining existing squash facilities at the Portway centre.

GYM OFFER/LOCAL COMPETITION (31 PEOPLE)

Some highlighted there were already sufficient gyms in the area to cater for the community with there being no need for a new centre particularly as it would be replicating the same facilities/activities already available. There were also comments around ensuring that the new centre was able to compete with existing gyms in the area. One individual highlighted their concerns around the new leisure centre having a negative impact on the local fitness businesses in the area.

A functional weights area e.g. CrossFit style. Great for hit classes: scientifically proven to get results and lot of gyms are setting up this way because it works which keeps members happy because they are getting results. The old school gym regime with lots of cardio and hardly no weights does not work. It would be good to see you as a front runner of change and actually caring about people getting good results. (ID: 383)

The number of private gyms in the area already serve the community and are cheaper offering a better range of equipment and classes. What market info do you have to justify the proposal? (ID: 553)

There is already a very good gym on the Grove Park, which has excellent fitness suites and classes. Have you considered that most people in Wantage and Grove use TFD and it won't be that far from the new leisure centre? The Gym membership there is very reasonable; it would have to be competitive. (ID: 113)

50 METRE POOL/8 LANE/COMPETITIVE USE

Some respondents suggested having an 50m/8 lane pool. For some, it was simply about having a bigger pool whereas for others the need for a large sized pool was to cater for more professional/competitive use.

As a parent of a child-member of White Horses swimming club, I can say that we desperate need 50m pool with a big spectator's area. So far there is no a 50m pool in Oxfordshire. Grove is a quite small town, so there is not much traffic compared to Oxford. It means it will be easy to get to the pool. Our club went to have long course training to Bath. To have 1.5 hours of training only, we spent whole day. I am sure that the other swimming clubs in Oxfordshire will use the pool for the training and they would prefer to go to Grove rather than to a different big city. (ID: 22)

A six lane 25m pool is what we have already why not consider something to stand out from other facilities, i.e. a fifty metre pool. (ID: 180)

Why only 6 lane pool? 8 would be much better. The local swimming club is going from strength to strength - needs adequate pool access for training and hosting competitions. Please ensure there is proper seating for spectators and facility to use starting blocks and backstroke boards. (ID: 538)

Council response: size of swimming pool

Our analysis has identified the need for a 25 metre, six-lane community pool with a learner pool in the local area. The council already provides a competition pool at the White Horse Tennis and Leisure Centre with a 25 metre eight lane pool as a competition hub for swimming. There is also no evidence to support a need for a 50 metre pool in this area. This is supported by both Sports England and Swim England (formally known as the Amateur Swimming Association).

DISABLED / ACCESS FACILITIES (9 PEOPLE)

A few people mentioned that facilities needed to cater for those with a disability. In particular, changing facilities and the swimming pool were mentioned.

Easy access to the pool for disabled and elderly. (ID: 80)

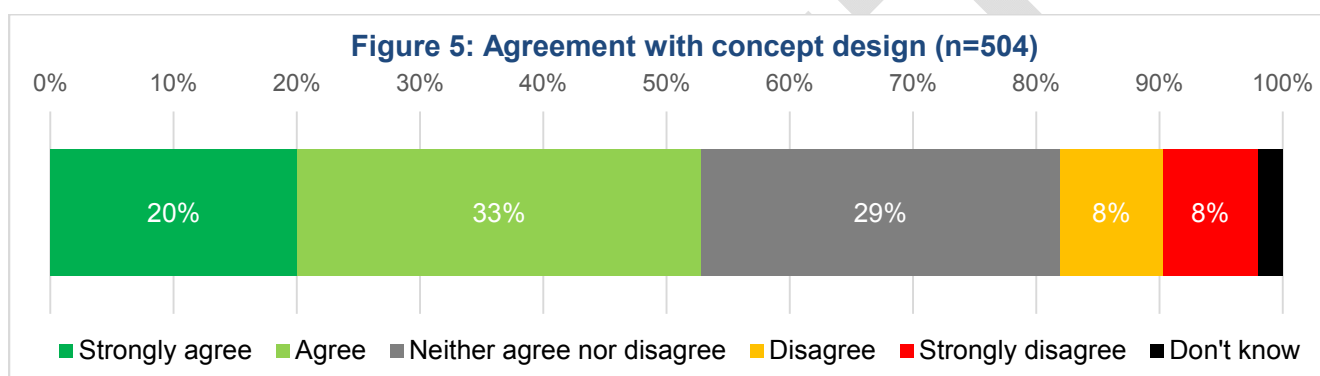
Plenty of disabled parking please. (ID: 494)

Good facilities for children and disabled people, including changing rooms and toilets. Cafe or coffee shop with space for pushchairs. (ID: 171)

Design

Respondents were provided with some information regarding the proposed look and feel of the new leisure centre (See questionnaire in Appendix B), and subsequently asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the concept design.

Respondents appeared to be more ambivalent in their views to this question with 29 per cent reporting that they neither agreed nor disagreed. Nevertheless, the majority agreed with the proposed design, albeit a much smaller proportion compared to other questions in the survey (53 per cent). 16 per cent disagreed.



Respondents were then asked if they had any comments or suggestions on the concept design. Overall, 126 people provided a comment relevant to the question. Table 6 shows the themes that emerged from these comments. We have reported on the most common themes and those we consider pertinent which are highlighted in grey.

Table 6: Comments/suggestions on concept design

Comment type	Frequency
Do not like design	49
Like design	28
Parking	9
Praise for White Horse Leisure Centre in Abingdon	9
Concerns about café	8
Affect landscape	7
Layout	7
Additional needs access consideration	5
Concerns about entrance/access	4
Other	26

DO NOT LIKE DESIGN (49 PEOPLE)

The most common theme was that the design was disliked. In particular, this related to the look of the exterior part of the building which was deemed as being unattractive and not in keeping with the surrounding area. Others expected to see a viewing gallery for the poolside area and/or sports hall.

It doesn't look like it would sit comfortably within the landscape. More glass might be better. (ID: 153)

The front square building looks awful! Like a car park! (ID: 327)

I feel the design is very lacklustre. The interior design is fine but the exterior is very bland and does not conform to any of the neighbouring/nearby buildings such as the Health Centre or the Mably Grove development. I feel the design should be reappraised to be more in keeping with the surrounding architecture. (ID: 371)

Does it have to look like a box? Can't we make it look more swish? (ID: 521)

It all seems rather formulaic and lacking in innovation (ID: 528)

There does not appear to be adequate provision for spectator viewing of the pool(s), this will be essential for parents watching children for lessons. (ID: 231)

LIKE DESIGN (28 PEOPLE)

Some respondents made comments around liking the design of the centre with several describing it as 'modern'.

I think it looks modern, attractive and accessible - I just hope the budget doesn't come crashing down and features start dropping off the plan! (ID: 93)

Light and spacious. The current centre is too dark and cramped. Abingdon leisure centre has a good feel and has good facilities. (ID: 294)

The layout of the building and facilities in the concept design are good. (ID: 192)

Despite my rooted objection to the site the concepts are excellent. (ID: 272)

I like the look of the concept design. Modern, and spacious, just what is needed and the facilities inside will be a real asset. (ID: 278)

ADDITIONAL NEEDS ACCESS CONSIDERATION (5 PEOPLE)

Five people made comments highlighting the need to ensure that those with additional needs are considered.

Not sure it is clear that it is disabled friendly enough (ID: 264)

Disabled wheelchair access appears to look slightly narrow on 1st floor viewing gallery (ID: 374- Leisure Leagues)

Assuming struck with boring rectangular swimming pool as commented on previously, then ditch the steps and replace with a ramped walking access. Easier for elderly and people with walking difficulty plus not hard step edges to trip/slip people. (ID: 537)

Would be good to have a changing places toilet and change area for people in need. (ID: 168)

How do the changing facilities associated with the pool work for special needs children who need oversight? (ID: 473)

Council response: concept design

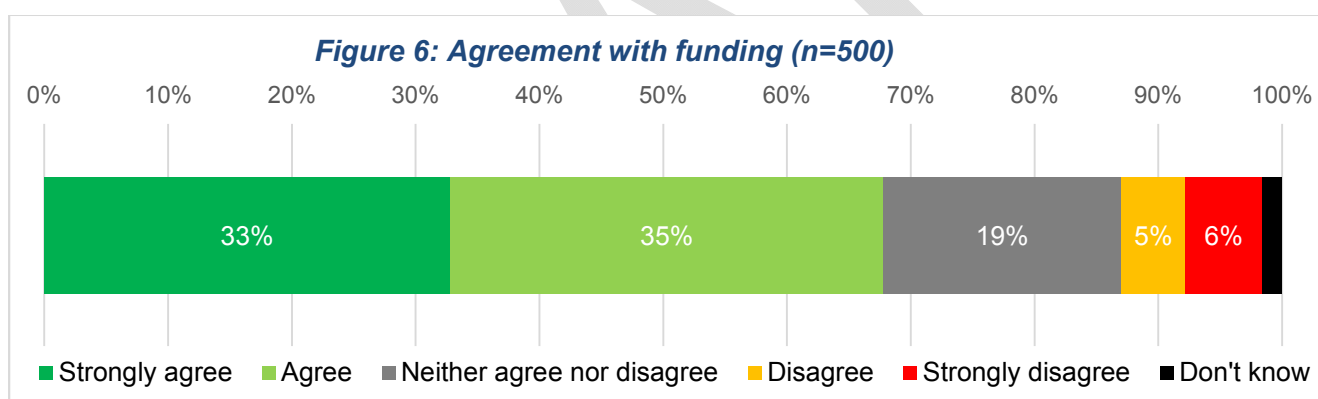
Saunders Boston Architects (SBA) presented a concept design during both stakeholder consultations and public engagement events. These designs were intended to demonstrate the proposed facility mix, internal layouts and to also give an indication of proposed elevations.

SBA will engage closely with the council during the next stage to review the comments received during these exercises and captured in MEL research analysis. Careful consideration of these comments (some are contradictory to others) will occur, with the concept designs presented at stage 2 developed in greater detail.

Funding

Respondents were provided with some background information in relation to how the leisure centre would be funded (See questionnaire in Appendix B), and then asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposed funding.

Around seven out of ten (68 per cent) agreed with the proposal to provide all funding for the project upfront, and as new houses are built locally, for the council to receive contributions towards the costs from developers. Only one out of ten (11 per cent) disagreed whilst around one-fifth were neither in agreement nor disagreement (19 per cent).



Respondents were then asked if they had any comments or suggestions on the proposed funding. Overall, 143 people provided a comment relevant to the question. Table 7 shows the themes that emerged from these comments. We have reported on the most common themes and those we consider pertinent which are highlighted in grey.

Table 7: Comments/suggestions on proposed funding

Comment type	Frequency
Ensure developers pay / contribute	60
Spend on other services/facilities	37
Seek additional / alternative funding	14
Wider implications	12
Cost to residents	11
Should cover infrastructure as well	10
Other	21
Unrelated comment	25

ENSURE DEVELOPERS PAY/CONTRIBUTE (60 PEOPLE)

The most common theme was that it was important to ensure that developers financially contributed to the cost. There appeared to be a feeling of wariness amongst some respondents towards the housing developers actually paying and an emphasis that the Council needs to make sure that it happens.

The people building the houses should contribute most of it. (ID: 91)

It has already been an issue for developers to with-hold funding for essential facilities such as schools ... what procedures will be put in place to ensure developers deliver on funding? (ID: 16)

It seems entirely reasonable that funding should be either totally or in part, based on contributions from developers. (ID: 145)

SPEND ON OTHER SERVICES/FACILITIES (37 PEOPLE)

Some residents felt that the funds would be better spent elsewhere such as on health facilities, roads and schools, instead of building a new leisure centre.

This money should be used to improve the amenities we already have, the Health Centre needs expanding to cope with all the extra people the new houses will bring to the area, it is already very difficult to get an appointment without planning weeks in advance. All the schools will need to be expanded as well to cope with all the new children in the area. Also the roads & parking are absolutely awful and very dangerous. These issues should be sorted before any more houses or this leisure centre are built. (ID: 121)

I believe that a new primary and secondary school as well as a GP surgery should be the priority. (ID: 315)

I think it is unnecessary and the money would be best spent elsewhere. (ID: 533)

Council response: funding

The priorities of the council are set out in a number of key plans and policy documents and these provide the justification for the authority and its partners for investment in sport and active recreation. The Vale's Leisure strategy forms part of the evidence base that informs the Local Plan and identifies opportunities for new provision as required under national and local planning policies.

The council considers it essential to ensure that where the existing infrastructure and services are unable to cope satisfactorily with new development, developers or landowners must provide the necessary new facilities on or off the site or make a financial contribution to enable existing facilities to be improved. This is the case in Wantage and Grove.

It is important to note that S106 contributions secured for sport and leisure facilities are not at the expense of other key infrastructure needs and services that are required to be met through planning contributions.

Other suggestions

Lastly, respondents were asked if there was anything else that could be done to make the facility better for them.

Overall, 223 people provided a comment relevant to the question. Table 8 shows the themes that emerged from these comments. This shows that the majority of themes are in line with what has already been mentioned in the previous questions. We have reported on the most common themes and those we consider pertinent which are highlighted in grey.

Table 8: Comments/suggestions on proposed funding

Comment type	Frequency
Other suggested facilities / activities	59
Pool style / type	23
Racquet sports	16
Sauna / steam / spa facilities	15
Accessible for all / disabled facilities	15
Athletics facilities	15
Bus / cycle / walking routes	14
Flexible timetable of activities	13
New centre not needed/prioritise other services	12
Activity costs	11
Viewing/spectator area	10
Changing facilities	10
Dissatisfied with location	10
50 metre/8 lane pool	8
Parking (inc. bicycles)	8
Cafe / food & drink	8
Impact on local residents	7
Gym offer / local competition	5
Artificial pitch	4
Customer service	3
Other	32
Unrelated comment	21

OTHER SUGGESTED FACILITIES / ACTIVITIES (59 PEOPLE)

The most common theme relates to suggestions to include a wide range of other activities or facilities such as indoor soft play and basketball facilities.

Trim trail, outdoor gym which just has simple equipment, so cheap. Pull up bars and dip stations. (ID: 85)

My son is a keen cyclist. I would like a pump track... (ID: 94)

A soft play area / dedication area for young kids, babies/ away from older people / adults. (ID: 129)

POOL STYLE / TYPE (23 PEOPLE)

The second most common theme was suggestions around the pool style/type such as having water slides, bubble pool and diving pool.

More lane swimming as its vital people swim for health and it's a life line for those with joint problems, mental health issues, who have mobility problems etc. It needs to be more available and more space needs to be set aside for swimmers, who battle with schools and swim club at the moment. (ID: 197)

Leisure pool with wave machine/flume would be great for children's parties. (ID: 360)

I realise that this is a blank canvas at the moment but I feel it could do with some fun injected into it! Also feel the confidence pool is a bit of a waste of space. (ID: 218)

ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL / DISABLED FACILITIES (15 PEOPLE)

There were 15 comments around ensuring that the centre is accessible to all particularly highlighting the needs of those with a disability such as being in a wheelchair. This included things such as having lifts and having toilets and changing facilities suitable for those with a disability.

Make sure it is disabled friendly, no stairs into pool but a gentle slope with handrail on both sides. Proper after swim disabled shower with seat and grab rails as Wantage currently has. Proper disabled sized changing room, accessible with some kind of key or card available only to the disabled otherwise gets used by all, same issue for the shower. Enough disabled parking spots with fines for improper use (improper parking use always a problem at Abingdon and centre say they cannot do anything about it). (ID: 264)

I would like to see some element of disability sport available (not just swimming). Perhaps a boccia or wheelchair football/basketball team...? Having a Space to Change facility on dry side as well as a Changing Places on poolside will be a major pull for disability groups. (ID: 93)

Automatic doors in place so that we do not have the issue of getting through a door with a wheelchair. Also, if there is a lift installed, make sure this is maintained regularly. When using the current Leisure centre in Wantage there were regular issues using this. (ID: 494)

Council response: making the centre accessible

We want to build a leisure centre that people can access and which meets statutory requirements. Included in the scope of the project are a number of specialist changing facilities and features that will ensure access to the pools to improve the user experience.

NEXT STEPS

Vale of White Horse District Council would like to thank all of those who responded to the survey or attended one of the many sessions regarding the new leisure centre. The consultation has generated a wealth of information about the views on the leisure provision for Wantage, Grove and the surrounding area as detailed in this report.

Council officers, working with consultants from MEL Research have taken great care to analyse the responses provided; not only the headline results but also the specific comments people made. In particular, we acknowledge the strength of public sentiment for providing additional leisure facilities in the area and also appreciate some respondents have expressed concerns on the proposals.

We will be making a recommendation on the facility mix to be taken forward for the next stage of the design process. In particular, we will ask our architects to consider whether additional facilities and other enhancements mentioned in the consultation can be delivered within the various constraints of the project.

Moving forward we will be submitting a planning application in October/ November for the access road for the leisure centre to meet the optimum window for any wildlife translocation requirements (if necessary). A separate planning application for the leisure centre itself will be submitted in early 2018.

Updates on the project will be posted on the council's website:

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/sports-leisure-and-arts/leisure-centres/new-leisure-centre-wantage-and-grove-are>

FURTHER INFORMATION

For information about the consultation or the results presented in this report, please contact:

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APPENDIX A – 121 STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS

The design team (Saunders Boston and Faithful+Gould), along with officers from the Vale of White Horse District Council undertook several 1-2-1 informal sessions with stakeholder groups with an interest in the existing leisure centre at Portway, Wantage and the proposed new leisure centre at Mably Way, Grove during September and October 2017.

Each group/grouping was invited to separate informal discussions on the proposed new leisure centre for the Wantage and Grove area. Whilst these were informal each was structured in the same format:

1. Site plan of new leisure centre and existing constraints of the site
2. Outline floor plans (ground and first)
3. Proposed facility mix
4. Understand their current interests and activities relating to the site or current leisure provision
5. Discuss the proposals and receive feedback on current plans and improvements for consideration

Discussions with these groups demonstrated there was an overall enthusiasm for improving the leisure provision in the area. The stakeholders considered that the proposals would enhance the leisure provision in the area and provide a popular attraction for local residents and visitors to the area.

Discussion about the size of individual activity areas, layout of the site, floor plans and the access to the Mably Way property created some diverse opinion as to how these should be provided.

Feedback

Location

- there was a general positive reaction to the proposed site
- concerns over ability for Mably Way health centre to expand in the future
- ensure accessibility to site by footpaths and cycleway; concern of increase in traffic, sufficient parking available and vehicle access to site
- concerns of impact on the environment; noise and light pollution

Outline floor plans

- limited viewing of main pool; main hall viewing is a positive
- sizes of both wet and dry changing facilities; café seating area; amount of storage space; grouping changing provision for primary schools and other groups
- level access throughout the ground floor from the car park; size of the through lift
- adequate run off spaces in the sports hall. Existing leisure centre is too short

Proposed facility mix

- pool not big enough for increase in population
- flexibility of learner pool with moveable floor welcomed also the confidence water
- artificial grass pitch being used for different sports and both club and recreational uses
- squash courts not being included

Improvements for consideration

- increase storage space capacity;
- additional lanes for main pool; increase depth of shallow end to one metre; wider surrounding for main pool for temporary seating; viewing of main pool

- fitness trail around the external site
- fun elements for younger children;

Other items

- future of existing leisure centre at Portway, Wantage; retaining pool for schools only
- who will be the leisure management operator for the new facility
- bus services provided

1-2-1 stakeholder sessions

Tuesday 5 September - The Beacon, Wantage

Time	Group(s)
12:00 - 12:30	Wantage and Grove Campaign Group
13:30 - 14:30	Local secondary school and primary (pool users)
15:00 - 15:30	Wantage sub-aqua diving club
16:30 - 17:00	Break
17:00 - 18:00	Existing badminton clubs
18:30 - 19:30	Wantage Town Council, Ward Members and County Council representative

Wednesday 6 September - The Old Mill, Grove

Time	Group(s)
13:30 - 14:30	Local neighbours
15:00 - 16:00	Swimming pool hirers
16:30 - 17:00	Break
17:00 - 18:00	Other sports hall users
18:30 - 19:30	Grove Parish Council

Date	Group	Venue	Time
Monday 18 September	PE coordinators	East site	15:45-17:00
	Accessibility session - existing users	Wantage leisure centre	18:30-20:20
Thursday 21 September	Wantage White Horse Swimming Club	The Old Mill, Grove	13:00-14:30
Friday 22 September	Sweat Box (youth club)	Intervention Hub	18:30-20:00
Monday 25 September	FA Partnership (six clubs attended)	FA head quarters	19:00-20:30
Tuesday 26 September	Swim England	Milton offices	15:00-16:30
Wednesday 27 September	Students Fitzwaryn school	Fitzwaryn school	13:15-14:30
Wednesday 4 October	Students King Alfred's Academy	East site	two sessions

Public consultation events

Date	Venue	Time
Thursday 7 September	Wantage leisure centre	08:00-20:00
Thursday 21 September	The Old Mill, Grove	15:00-20:00

Note: Not all stakeholders invited were able to attend the sessions offered. All stakeholders were encouraged to complete the online survey.

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APPENDIX B – CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Your views on a new leisure centre for Wantage and Grove

Introduction

We would like your views on our proposal to build a new leisure centre for the Wantage and Grove area.

Vale of White Horse District Council has been working with architects Saunders Boston to prepare plans for building a leisure centre at Mably Way, Grove. Our aim is for the new centre to open in 2020.

Our proposal to build the new leisure centre is summarised on the following pages of this survey.

Please tell us what you think by responding to this survey by midnight on 4 October 2017.

All comments will be handled anonymously unless submitted on behalf of groups or organisations.

For more information, to obtain a paper response form, or for help with completing this consultation, please contact:

Vale of White Horse Leisure Team
135 Eastern Avenue
Milton Park
Milton
OX14 4SB

Email: leisure@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Phone: 01235 422240

What type of respondent best describes you? Please tick one box only *

Resident

Business

Community or voluntary group

Other (please specify):

What is the name of your group or organisation?

Your use of existing facilities

Do you use the existing Wantage Leisure Centre, in Portway, Wantage?

Yes

No

Your use of existing facilities

Please provide details of why you do not use the existing Wantage Leisure Centre?

Your use of existing facilities

Which of the following facilities at the existing Wantage Leisure Centre do you use? Please tick all that apply

	Daily	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less frequently	Never
Swimming pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health & Fitness Suite/Gym	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Studio/fitness classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Racquet courts (Squash, Table Tennis, Badminton, Racquet Ball)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports Hall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creche / soft play	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; height: 20px;"></div>				

Your use of existing facilities

How do you normally get to the existing leisure centre?

- Car
- Bus
- Walk
- Cycle
- Other (please specify):

Why we are building a new leisure centre

To help meet the growing need for leisure facilities in the Wantage and Grove area we are planning to build a new leisure centre at Mably Way, Grove.

With close to 5,000 homes expected to be built in the Wantage and Grove area, and the current Wantage Leisure Centre already operating at full capacity, new facilities are needed. Our ambition is to deliver a new leisure centre that will address the growing demand for enhanced sport and leisure facilities, increasing participation in sport and physical activity for the whole community.

In regards to the existing Wantage Leisure Centre, we will continue to work with Oxfordshire County Council and The Vale Academy Trust to determine its future following the opening of the new leisure centre in 2020. We are keen to ensure that the existing facility remains available for community use.

How far do you agree or disagree, in principle, with our proposal to build a new leisure centre?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

Do you have any comments or suggestions so far on the principle of building a new leisure centre?

Location of new leisure centre

We looked at a number of options and identified that Mably Way, Grove, was the most suitable location for the new leisure centre.

Other sites, and the refurbishment or expansion of the existing leisure centre were not considered viable.

The site is within easy walking/cycling distance from both Grove and Wantage. There will be parking spaces and it will be next to main bus routes.



How far do you agree or disagree with the proposed location of the new leisure centre?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

Do you have any comments or suggestions on the proposed location of the new leisure centre?

The new facilities we hope to provide

The facilities we are proposing to provide are listed below.

We identified the range of facilities for the new leisure centre following a study which looked at the current usage of the existing leisure centre, as well as the future needs of a growing population.

Given the available budget for this project we believe this is the best range of facilities for the new centre.

Please see a detailed description of the proposed facilities [here](#).

Which of the following proposed facilities would you personally use and which do you think would most benefit the community?

Six lane x 25m pool

Learner / teaching pool

Confidence water (shallow depth pool)

Health & fitness suite/gym with up to 120 stations

Studios / fitness classes

Full size artificial grass pitch (with floodlights)

Sports hall

Multi-challenge climbing wall

Coffee shop

Parking up to 250 spaces

I would use

Would benefit the community

Do you have any comments or suggestions on the facilities we are looking to provide?

Look and feel of new leisure centre

We will build the leisure centre at the south east corner of the site. This will help to create an attractive entrance way and minimise any impact on the open landscape beyond. There will also be views out to the surrounding landscape from the pool areas and the first floor fitness suite.

The look of the building will help to highlight the various uses of the centre and will also reflect the surrounding landscape.



Here are concept designs of how the building might look:

[Indicative site plan with images](#)

[Indicative Ground Floor Plan with images](#)

[Indicative First Floor Plan with images](#)

How far do you agree or disagree with the concept design of the new leisure centre?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Do you have any comments or suggestions on the concept design of the new leisure centre?

How we will pay for the new leisure centre

Vale of White Horse District Council has set aside £18.8 million to deliver the new leisure centre. We will provide all funding for the project upfront. As new houses are built locally we will receive contributions towards these costs from developers. This will ensure that the centre is ready to meet the increased demand generated from the new developments.

How far do you agree or disagree with the proposed funding for the new leisure centre?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Do you have any comments or suggestions on the proposed funding for the new leisure centre?

Other suggestions

If there is anything else that we could do to make this facility better for you, please provide details below.

About you

To ensure we have gained views from a range of people we would like some information about you and your household. This information is purely voluntary but it does allow us to see whether views vary depending on the profile of survey participants.

Any information you provide will be treated as confidential and your personal details will only be used for research purposes, in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Are you?

- Male
- Female

Within which age bracket do you fall?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45 to 54 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 to 64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 44 | |

Please provide your home postcode as this will allow us to see the wider catchment areas from which people are responding on a map (the information will only be used for analysis purposes and you will not be personally identifiable in any reports or results).

Would you like to hear from us in the future?

I am happy for the council to get in touch about the comments I have made

I would like to be kept informed about other consultations being undertaken by the council

Yes

No

Personal information

The following information may be used to invite you to participate in further consultation if you have given permission for us to do so. All information will be treated confidentially and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Name:

Email address:

Telephone:

DRAFT

APPENDIX C – PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Respondent type	Qty	%
Business	21	3%
Resident	568	91%
Community or voluntary group	20	3%
Other	15	2%
Total	624	100%

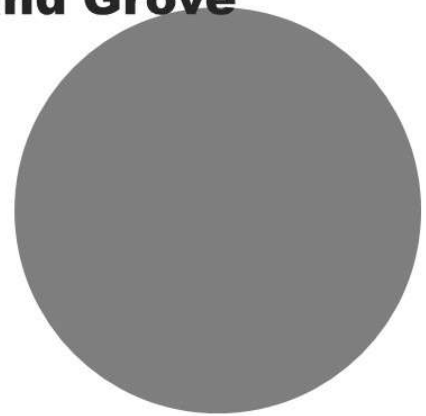
Gender	Qty	%
Male	241	39%
Female	248	40%
Not specified	135	22%
Total	624	100%

Age band	Qty	%
Under 18	7	1%
18 to 24	17	3%
25 to 34	79	13%
35 to 44	112	18%
45 to 54	133	21%
55 to 64	65	10%
65+	72	12%
Not specified	139	22%
Total	624	100%

Name of group/organisation	No. of responses
Williams F1	6
Challow Cricket Club	3
Grove Challengers FC	2
Wantage Town Boys & Girls FC	2
Didcot Barramundi Swimming Club	1
Eagles Basketball club	1
Elms farm	1
Fitzwaryn School	1
Flying Solo Trampoline Club	1
Grove Parish Council	1
Leisure Leagues	1
Letcombe Football Club	1
NMW Architects Ltd.	1
Nortoft	1
Progressive Physiotherapy Ltd	1
Robert Stanley Opticians	1
Sport England	1
Sportsart	1
Swim England	1
Wantage Town Football Club	1
Wantage White Horse Swim Club	1
Wantage Wizards Basketball Club	1
Wantage Youth Swimming Club	1
White Horse Harriers AC	1
White Horse Harriers AC	1
Wiltshire Swindon Oxfordshire Canal Partnership	1

**New Leisure Centre for Wantage and Grove
Consultation with young people**

Young People's Co-ordinator

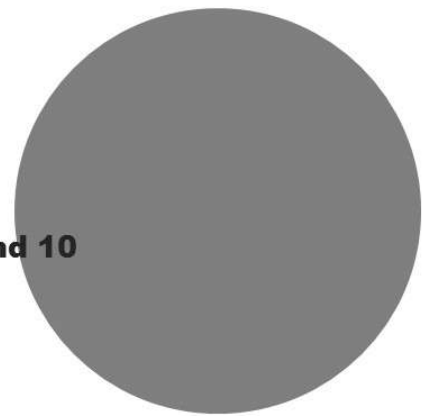


Groups engaged with:

Sweatbox youth club

King Alfred's Academy PE Changemakers: Year 8 and 10

Fitzwaryn School (Special Educational Needs)



Consultations with young people

Who we consulted	When	How many young people?
Sweatbox (King Alfred's East Site)	Friday 22nd September 2017	50 +
Fitzwaryn (SEN) School	Wednesday 27 th September 2017	42
King Alfred's (East and West Site) Years 8 and 10	Wednesday 4 th October 2017	30

Sweatbox youth club

We visited the Sweatbox on Friday 22nd September to attend the youth club session from 7 – 9 pm

Karen Tolley, Young People's Co-ordinator, Ben Border and Ruth Cross from the leisure team attended the Sweatbox to run a consultation session with young people from the lower school

Age range 11-14 years old

Over 50 young people were at the club

Plans and photos of the proposed new leisure facility were set out for young people to see. Young people came over during the course of the evening and we explained our plans and asked for their comments on post it notes (see table 1) and to add red stickers (unhappy) and/or green stickers (happy) to the photos (see appendix 1a – 1g)

Sweatbox – table 1



- I love the idea of a new leisure centre
- It looks amazing can't wait
- I think it is a good idea (2)
- Looks good
- I love to have a dance studio
- Go with it brother
- Looks a lot bigger, better equipment
- I think it's a good idea for people that live in Grove
- I think it's cool!!
- I think that is a go!
- More stuff to do
- I approve (2)
- I love it that it is in Grove
- I hope it has a dance studio
- I love it all! (2)
- I don't approve but it will take too long to write



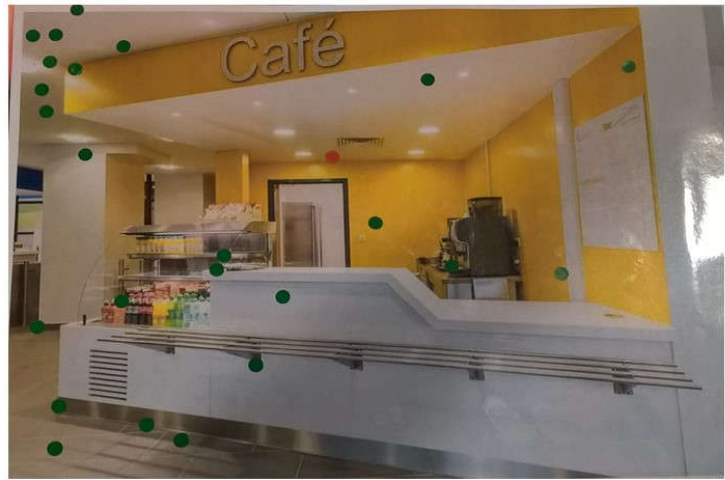
Artificial Pitch – appendix 1a

9 green dots (do like it)
2 red dots (don't like it)



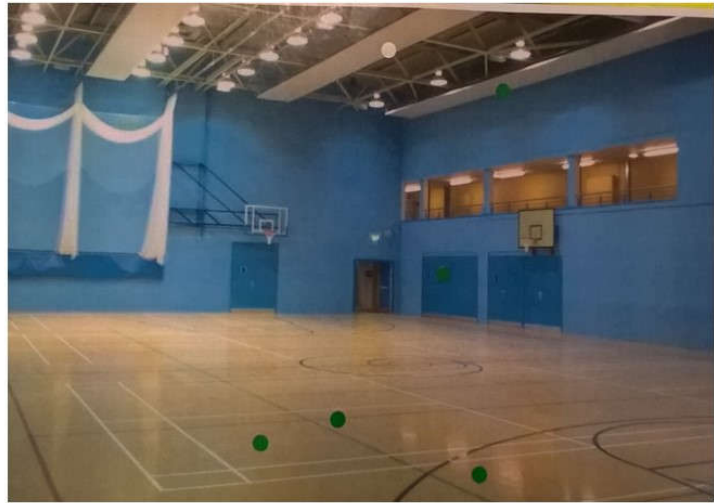
The Café - appendix 1b

24 green dots (like it)
1 red dot (don't like it)



Sports hall - appendix 1c

5 green dots (like it)
0 red dots (don't like it)



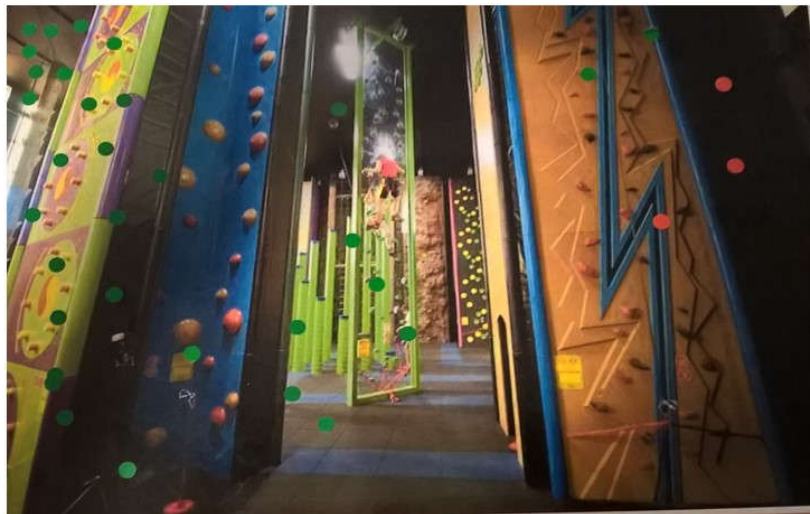
Swimming pool – appendix 1d

29 green dots (like it)
5 red dots (don't like it)



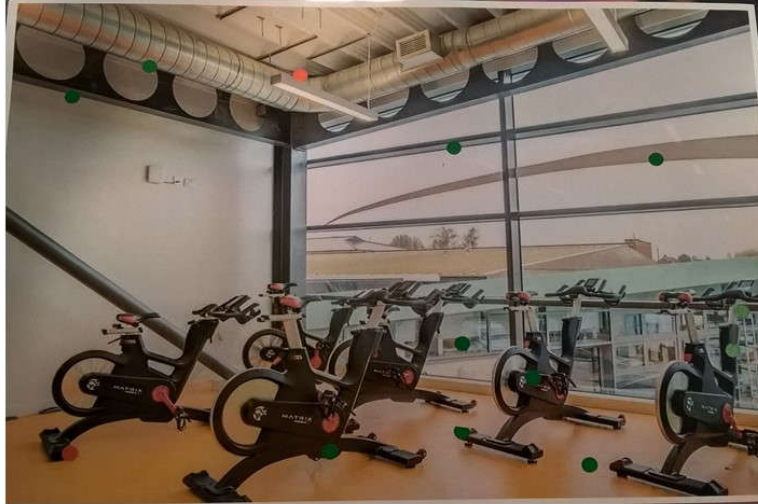
Climbing wall – appendix 1e

32 green dots (like it)
3 red dots (don't like it)



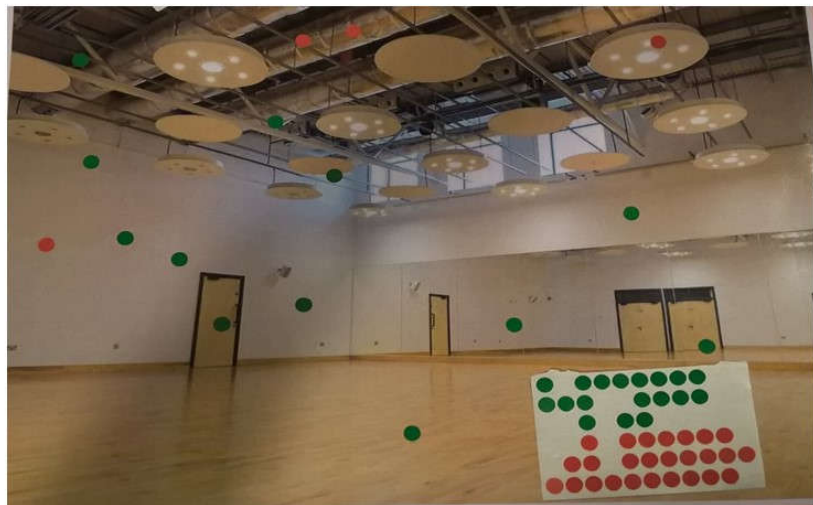
Studio – appendix 1f

10 green dots (like it)
2 red dots (don't like)



Studio - appendix 1g

12 green dots (like it)
4 red dots (don't like)



Fitzwaryn school, Grove

The Young People’s Co-ordinator, Equalities Officer and leisure team officers visited the school on 27th September to speak to students

42 young people were consulted, aged 11-15 years

Ben Border explained the details of the proposed leisure centre and Karen Tolley asked the group several questions (see table 2)

Ben showed the young people the photos and they voted by putting up their hands if they liked it. Karen asked them for general comments (see table 3)

Fitzwaryn school - Table 2

How many go to a leisure centre? (20) Where do you go?

Wantage (3)
White Horse leisure (8)
Faringdon (4)
Didcot and Faringdon (random)

What do you like doing there?

Tennis
Trampoline
Swimming pool (13)
Football Pitch (8)
Café

What would you like to see in the new leisure centre?

Trampoline	Basketball	Bowling room
Football	Yoga	Yoga
Tennis	Karate	Gym good – make it strong
Waterslides	Rooms for parties	Soft play/bouncy castle
Rock Climbing	Tennis courts	Sauna/jacuzzi/hot tub
Running track	Football	Go carting

Fitzwaryn School - Table 3

Ben showed them the photos of each area and asked if they thought it was a good idea for them and for the community

How many think it is a good idea?	
Gym (16)	Café (25)
Sports Hall (24)	ATP pitch (21)
Pool (29)	Climbing Wall (29)
Even if they wouldn't use it themselves they agreed it would benefit the community	

General comments
Ample car parking needed
Will there be an arcade?
Can it be used for meetings/community?
How much does it cost?

King Alfred's Academy – Group 1 Table 4

Ruth Cross, leisure team and Karen Tolley, Young People's Co-ordinator went to King Alfred's Academy on 4th October 2017.

We met a group of year 8 students (age 12-13) who have been elected as PE changemakers (like the school council for the PE department)

Ruth gave an overview of the design and layout of the proposed leisure centre and Karen asked some general questions (see Table 4 below)

Table 4 How many use a leisure centre? (20) Where?	What activities do you do?
Wantage Leisure centre (20)	Swimming, football, basketball, badminton, coaching and lifeguard
Didcot Wave (9)	Swimming
Tilsley Park	Athletics
White Horse Leisure (8)	Tennis, swimming
Willowbrook Didcot (1)	Taekwondo

King Alfreds – Group 1 continued

They were asked which activities they would like in the new facility (Table 5 below)

Basketball - Under 16's national team	Badminton
Tennis	5 side football
Boxing in fitness room	Cricket
Swimming / different types of pool	Cycling
Volleyball	

We asked for their views on each photo and if they thought it should be included in the new leisure centre (see below)

Climbing wall (20)

Sports Hall (20)

Fitness Suite (20)

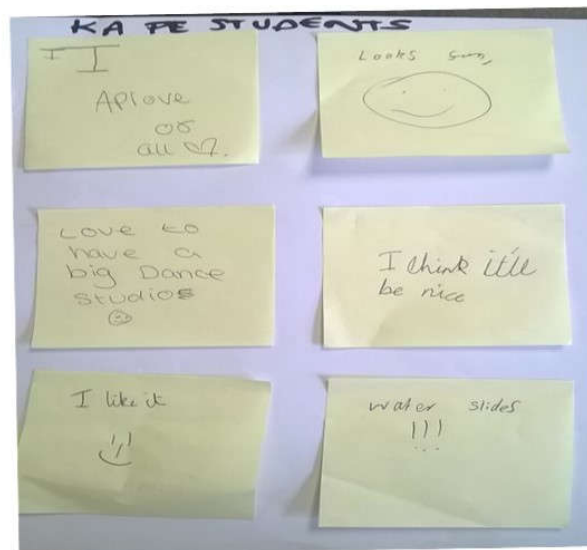
Artificial Pitch (20)

Swimming Pool (20)

Café (20)

King Alfred's – group 1

General comments year 8's



King Alfreds – Group 2

The second group of students we consulted were PE Changemakers for year 10

There were ten students aged 14-15 years

Ruth outlined the proposal for a new leisure centre and Karen asked some general questions (see Table 6 below)

They were asked for their comments on each of the photos for the different areas (see appendix 2a-e)

Table 6 Do you use a leisure centre and where?	What activities do you do?
Didcot Wave (9)	Swimming
White Horse Leisure Centre (6)	Swimming, Tennis
Wantage Leisure Centre (20)	Swimming, Basketball, badminton, netball

King Alfreds – Group 2 continued

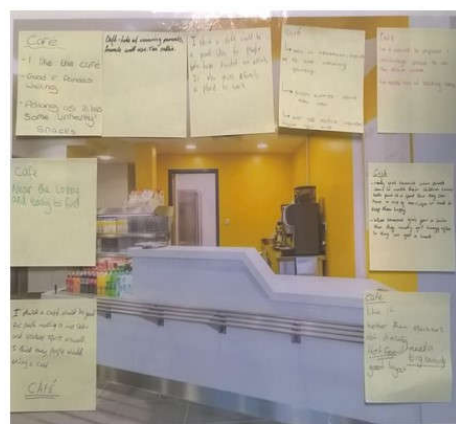
Table 7 What activities would you like to see in the new leisure Centre?	Comments and questions
Gym	How do you move through different pools?
Swimming and diving blocks, inflatable sessions	Will there be traffic problems – congestion?
Squash and badminton	Is there Gala seating around pool?
Gymnastics, trampolining	Can it be used as a community facility?
Basketball	Will it be fully accessible and upstairs?
Social areas to be with friends, parties, café, seating areas	Will there be an open café area like White Horse Leisure Centre?
football/rugby training	Will there be accessible toilets upstairs?
Climbing	

King Alfreds – Group 2 (appendix 2a)

They were asked to put comments on to each of the photos for the different areas

Cafe area

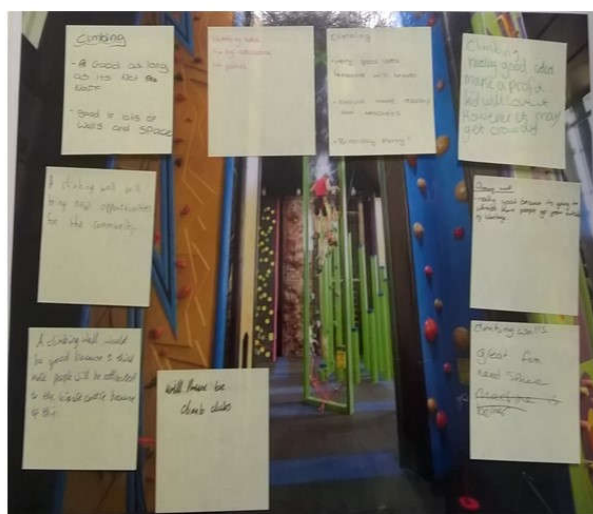
- It would be popular
- Encourage people to use the leisure centre
- Needs lots of seating
- Really good when parents watch their children swim and take part in sport
- You get hungry after swimming and want a snack
- I like it better than machines
- Hot drinks and food
- Needs a good layout
- Not in reception should be by the viewing gallery
- It is a good idea for people who have finished an activity and gives a family a place to wait (4)
- Lots of viewing parents and friends
- As long as it has some unhealthy snacks as well
- Near the lobby and easy to find
- Good for people to relax and spectate sport as well
- People will enjoy a cafe



King Alfreds – Group 2 (appendix 2b)

Climbing Wall

- Good as long as its not naff
- Good if lots of walls and space
- Climbing area big attraction and parties
- Very good idea
- People will travel
- Should have lessons and teachers
- Birthday party!
- Climbing really good idea and make a profit
- Kids will love it however may get crowded
- Will attract people from outside Wantage
- Great fun – needs space
- Will there be climb clubs?
- A climbing wall will bring new opportunities for the community
- It will attract people to come to the centre



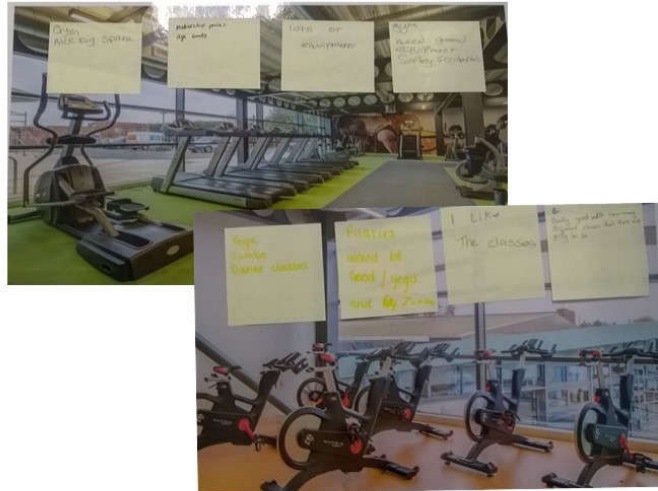
King Alfreds – Group 2 (appendix 2c)

Studio

- Yoga, Zumba, dance classes
- Pilates and Yoga would be good
- I like classes – lots of different ones

Gym

- Nice big space
- Membership prices good and age limits
- Lots of equipment
- Need good equipment and safe



Conclusion

- ✓ Young people are in favour of the proposed new leisure facility (only 1 negative response)
- ✓ Around 75% per cent already use leisure facilities in South Oxfordshire or Vale of White Horse
- ✓ 100% agree there is a need for a new leisure centre in Wantage and Grove
- ✓ There was general support the location of the new facility
- ✓ They like the design and mix of leisure provision proposed
- ✓ Want a café with plenty of seating
- ✓ Are excited about the climbing wall facility as it will encourage people to use the centre
- ✓ Would like a range of activities provided for younger people