

4.7 Community Life

During the interview stage, it became clear that many aspects within the Parish are highly valued:

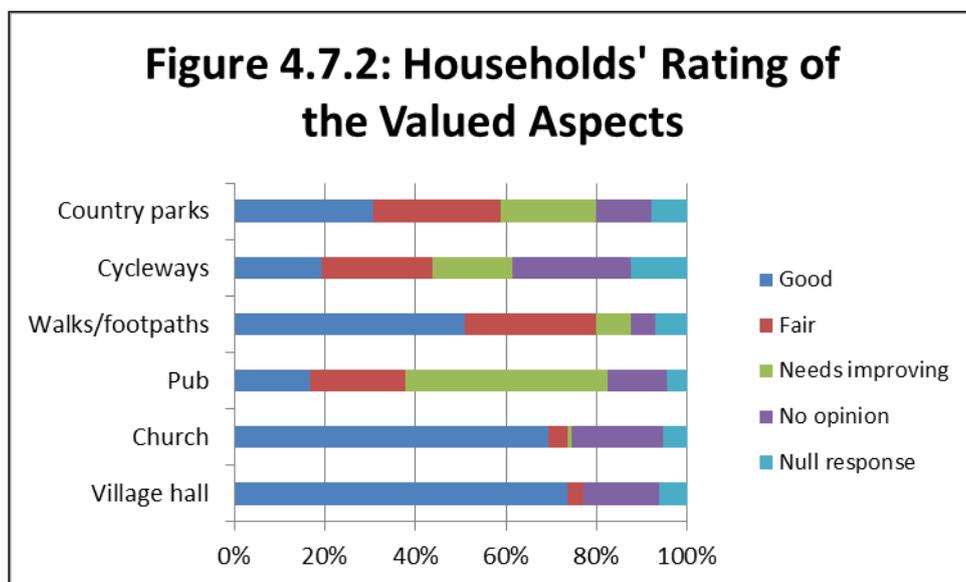
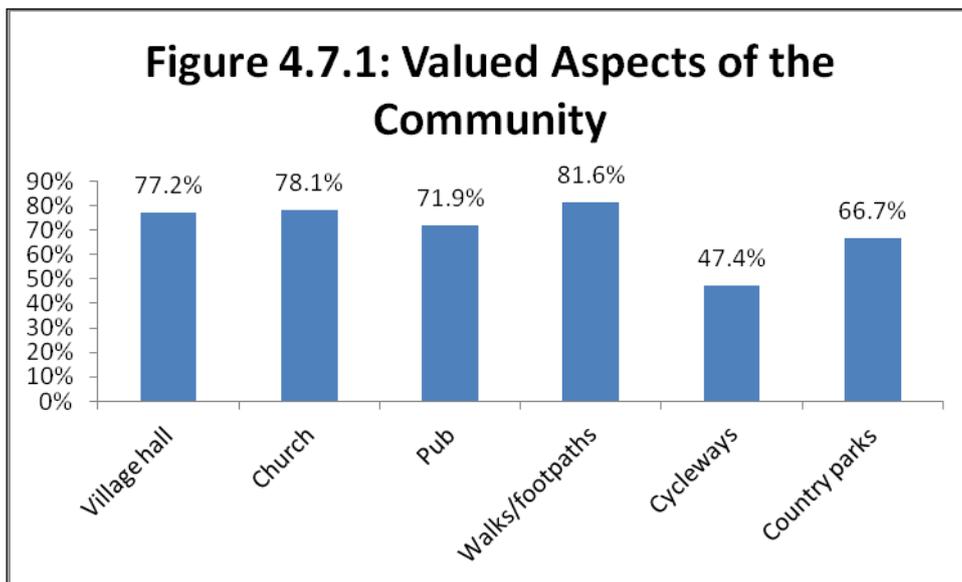
‘Walks in the countryside from right outside back door’

‘Good network of footpaths and interesting walks’

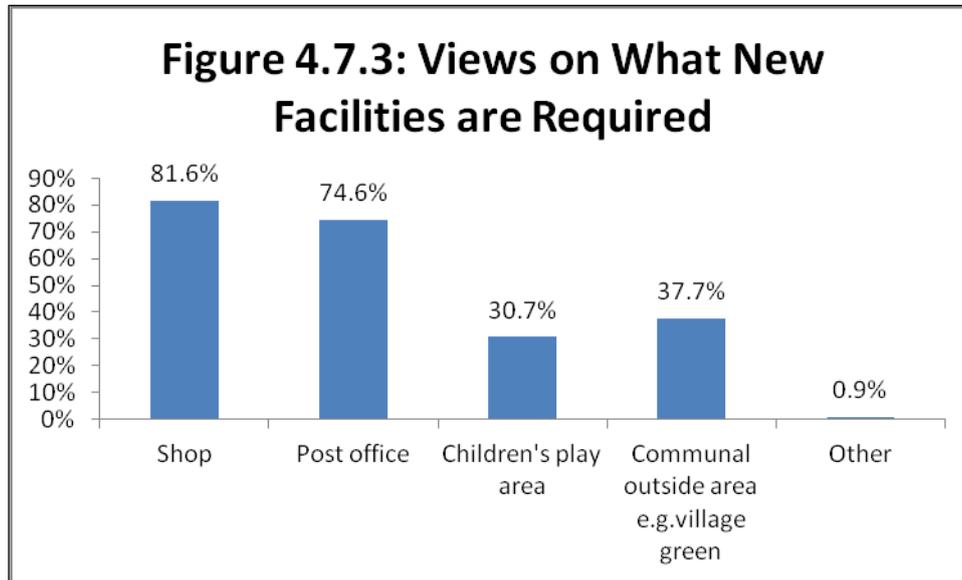
‘Great village hall’

‘Unspoilt water parks’

The following charts shows to what extent these aspects are valued and how households rate the valued aspects of our community:

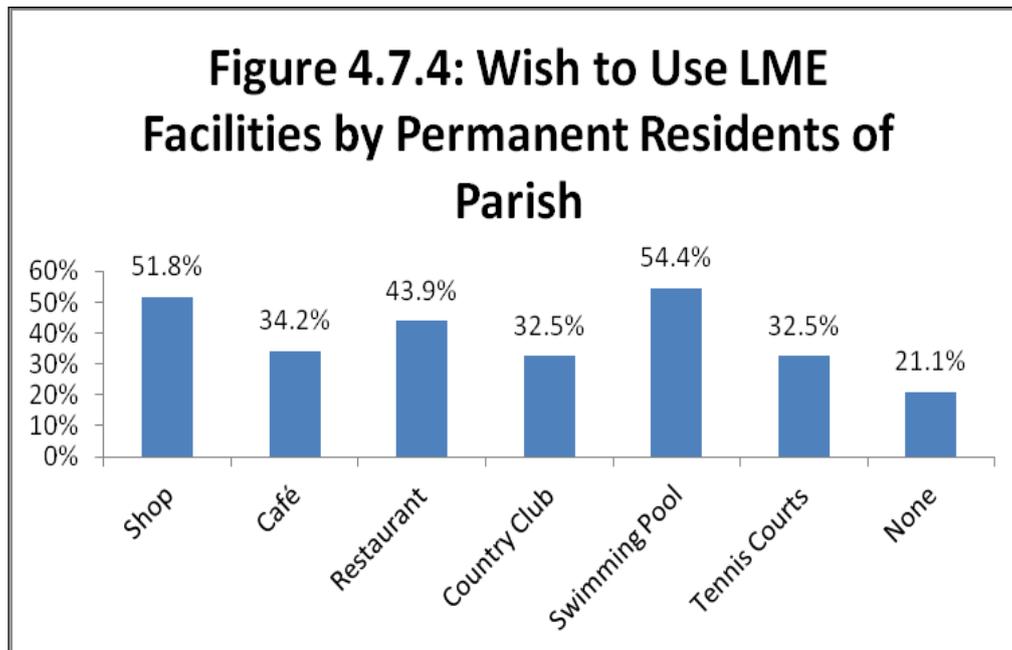


As a follow-on, households were asked what new facilities they would like to use in the Parish and figure 4.7.3 shows the responses.



23% of all households questioned stated that there are not adequate facilities for children/teenagers in the Parish (7% of households stated that there are). However, when only households with members under the age of 18 are taken into account the former figure rises to 71%, reflecting the particular needs of that group.

At the request of Lower Mill Estate, permanent residents of the Parish were asked what future facilities located on the Lower Mill Estate (that could be accessible without entering the main estate), they would like to access. The results are shown below:



It should be noted that only a minority of LME homeowners wished to make the pool available to Somerford Keynes and Shorncote residents.



Picture 4.7.4 - Entrance to Lower Mill Estate

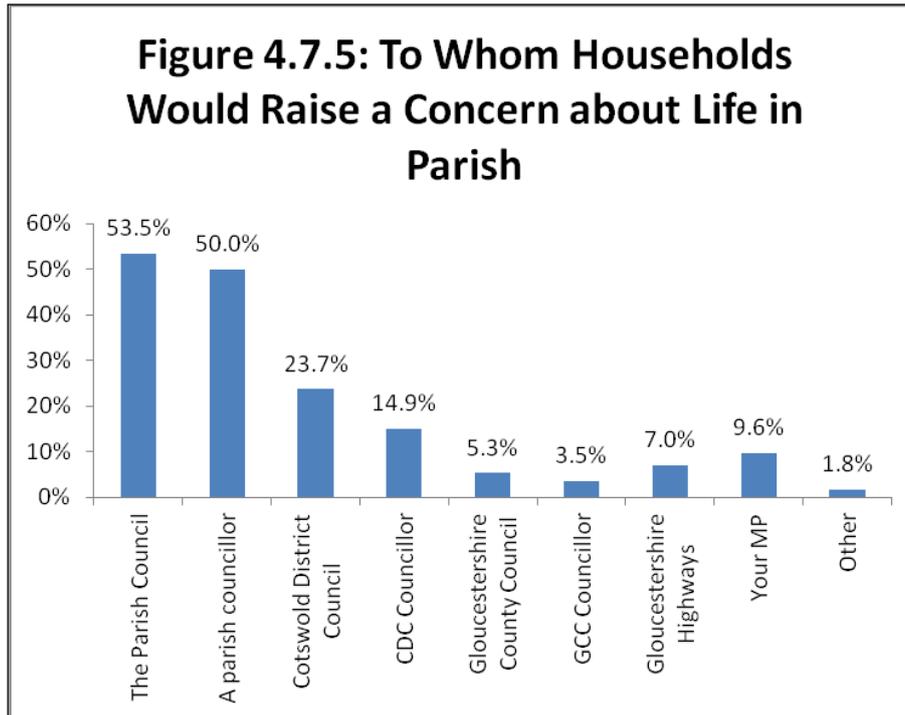
The village hall is a much treasured and well used facility within the village with 55% of households using the facility at least several times a year. However, 39% of households rarely or never use the hall.

Similarly, the church is a much valued aspect of community life with 48% of households stating that they attend festival services. There is considerable support (approximately 20%) for regular Sunday services. There is, however, minimal support for weekday services. The Church and it's surrounds are very well tended by a group of keen volunteers, which is much appreciated by those with family members buried there.

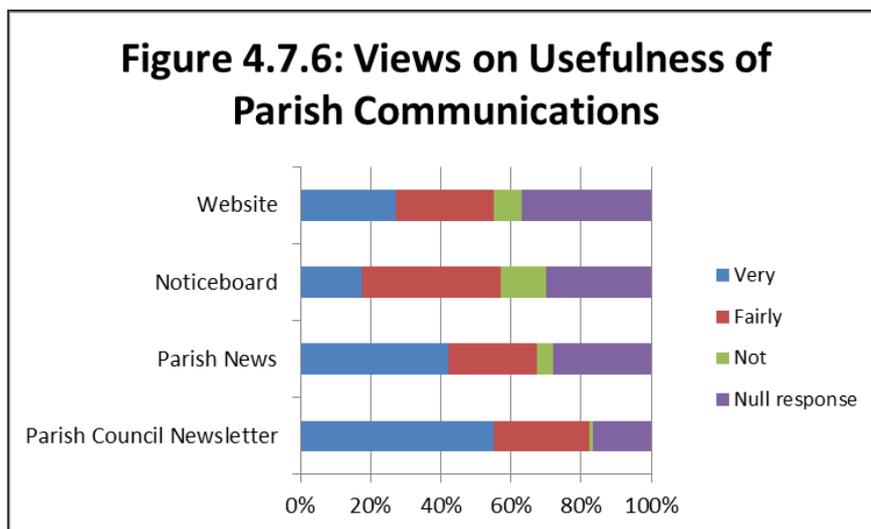


Picture 4.7.5 – Bakers Arms Pub.

86% of responding households stated that they understand the role and function of the Parish Council. 9% stated that they did not. When questioned whether they thought the Parish Council were doing a good job, 74% responded in the affirmative and only 2% thought that they were not doing a good job. This is reflected in the fact that just over 50% of households stated that they would raise a concern about some aspect of life in the Parish with the Parish Council or a parish councillor first. All the responses to this question are shown below:



The majority of households (86%) stated that they are as well-informed as they would like to be about what is happening in the Parish, 10% stated that they are not. Over three quarters of households are aware of the Parish Council newsletter, the church Parish News and the Noticeboard as means of communication. The website www.somerfordkeynes.org.uk is less well-known and is known to only two-thirds of households. Households were asked to comment on how useful they find each of the means of communication and the results are shown below:



The response from the contacts with the business community ranged from interest in being involved in the process to no indication of interest at all. Copies of the Action Plan were sent to those who expressed an interest.