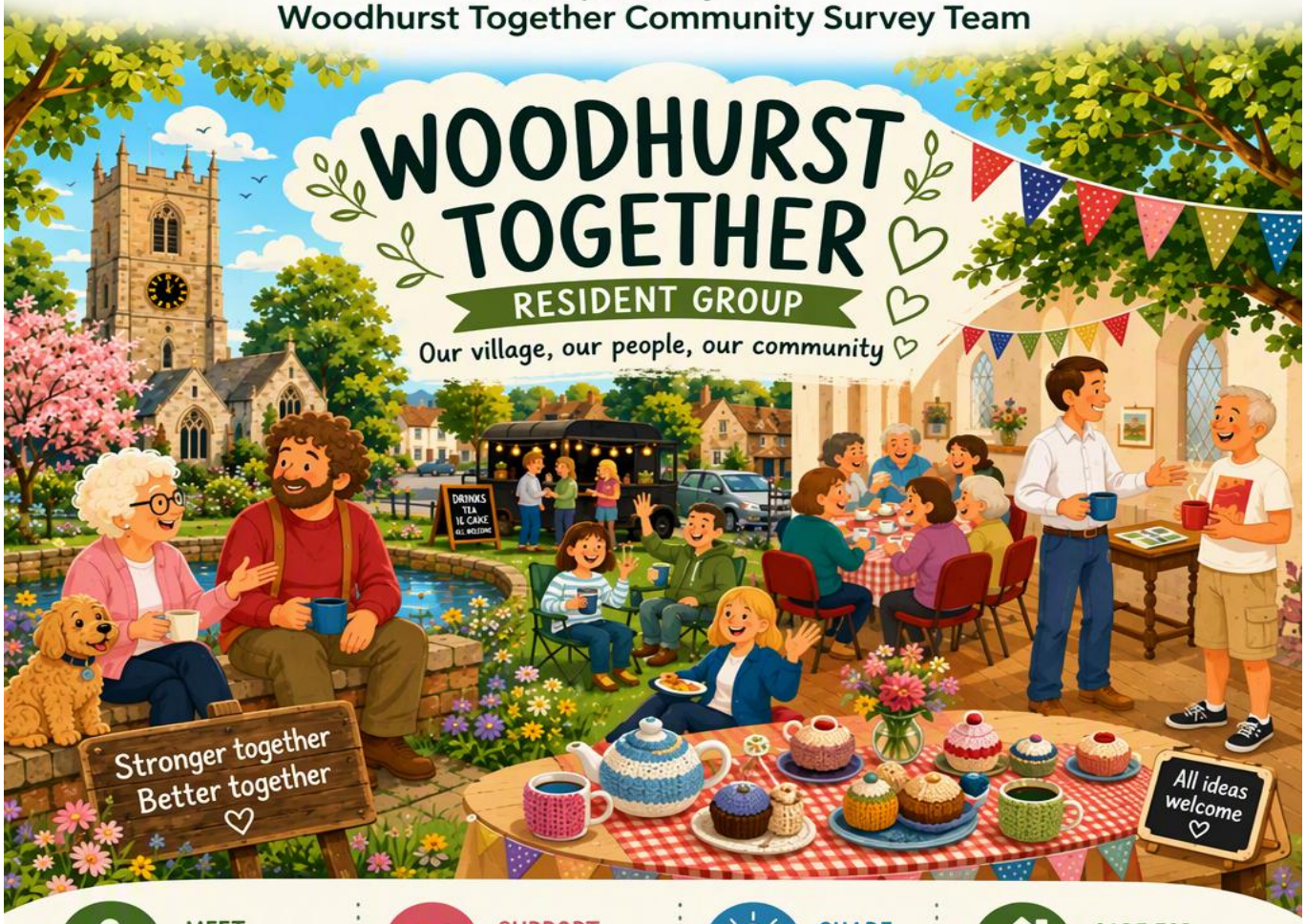
WOODHURST COMMUNITY SURVEY

October 2026

SURVEY RESULTS

For All Residents and Village Committees

Prepared by the
Woodhurst Together Community Survey Team



MEET NEW PEOPLE · SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER · SHARE IDEAS · CARE FOR OUR VILLAGE

Listening to our community • Identifying priorities • Shaping Woodhurst's future together

Introduction and Key Findings

This report outlines the results from the Community Survey carried out in October 2026. Thank you to everyone who took part. 54 of Woodhurst's 144 households returned the survey, a response rate of 37.5%.

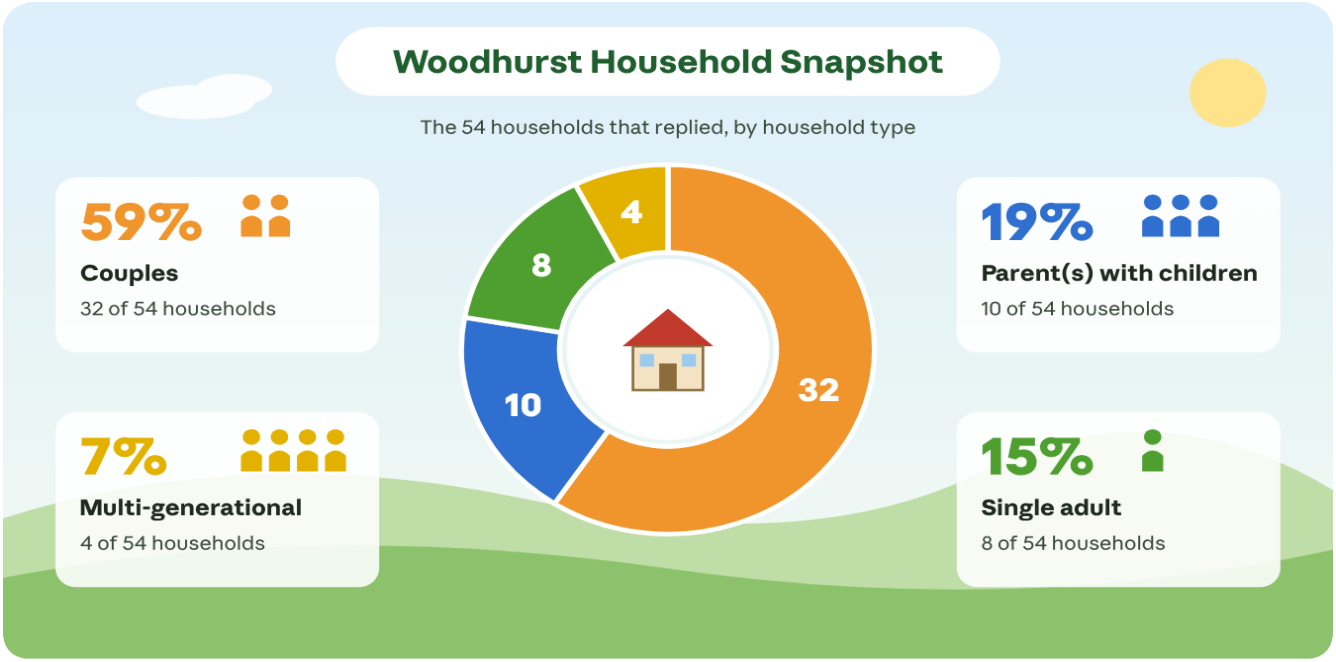
The questionnaire captured household demographics; opinions on community life, ranging from essential village features to preferences on activities and events; the usage and future of community buildings; and methods for improving village communication. Residents also highlighted specific local services and amenities that they feel require attention. The survey also captured households' highest priorities to guide future local improvements and initiatives.

Key findings at a glance

- **Peace and quiet matter most.** 98% of households rated peaceful surroundings as important or very important. A clean, well-kept village came next at 96%, followed by friendly neighbours at 93%.
- **Traffic is the top concern.** Traffic calming was the highest chosen priority, picked by 25 households (46%). Views on how to do it are mixed, and several households said they do not want speed bumps.
- **Roads and footpaths need attention.** 70% said roads and footpaths need improving.
- **Strong support for improving the church.** 38 households (70%) chose an option that renovates the church. The most popular single option was turning it into a combined community and worship space (16 households).
- **A toilet in the church** was the change most likely to encourage households to come to more events (28 households, 52%).
- **Music, coffee mornings and themed nights** are the most preferred events. Each interest more than half of households.
- **People want information in one place.** A website was the most popular way to receive news (27 households) and many asked for a single, reliable source instead of scattered posts on Facebook and WhatsApp.

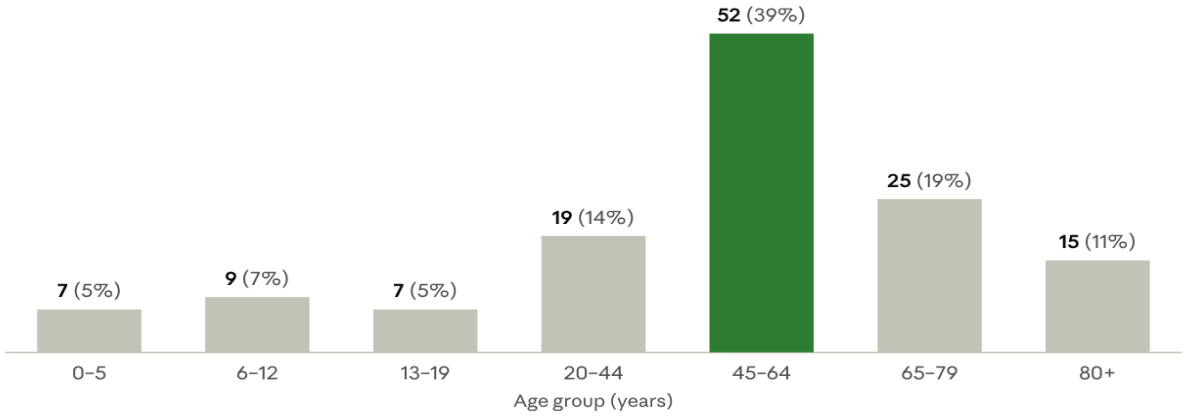
Survey Section 1: About your household

The survey asked for one response per household. The 54 households that replied include 134 people:



The largest age group is 45 to 64, with 52 people

Number of people in each age group, 134 people across 54 households



The largest age group in responding households is 45 to 64 (52 people). There are 40 people aged 65 or over, including 15 aged 80 or over. There are 23 children and young people under 20. Older households are well represented, and families with children are a smaller group.

Survey Section 2: Community life

Why people live in Woodhurst

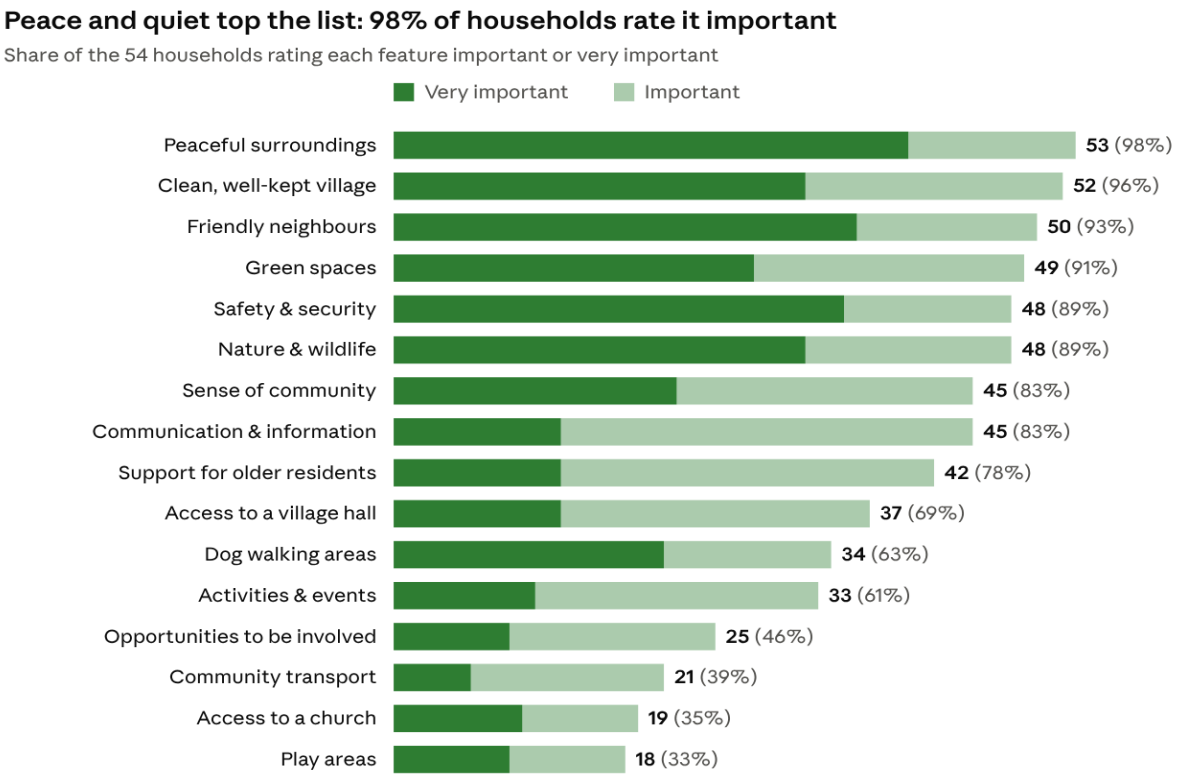
Almost every household mentioned peace and quiet, the countryside, or the friendly, close-knit community. Many also value being close to St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambridge and the railway to London.

Location, peace and quiet and the house itself bring people to Woodhurst

Larger text represents words which were mentioned more often by households in their answers to question 4

What matters about village life

Peaceful surroundings, a clean village and friendly neighbours are what households value most. Play areas, access to a church and community transport were rated lower overall, though they matter a great deal to some households.



Households were also asked what *Other* features matter to them. They said:

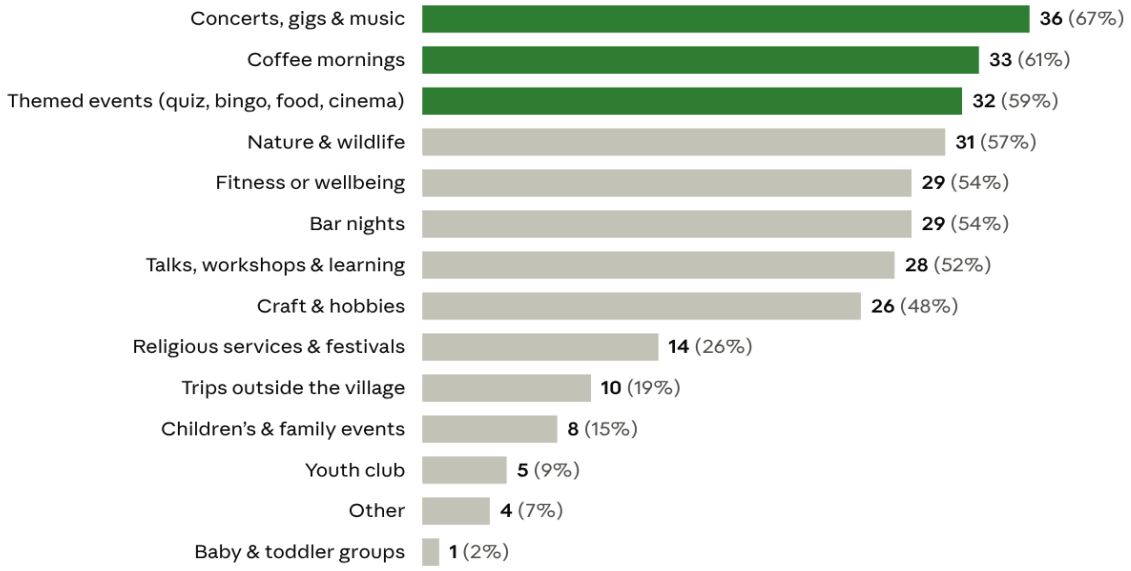
- "Avoidance of over development so we can keep it a village. Especially maintain the Saxon circle which is unique. There is also a wonderful variety of houses and cottages."
- "Environmental factors such as smells emanating from the local composting facility. Preservation of village character and spaces without excessive new building and development."
- "Opportunities for young people. Fun tradition village activities."
- "A community hub with a garden and decent wifi where you could work."
- "Walking access to other nearby villages. Village shop."
- "We love the friendliness of the village."

What activities and events are of most interest to residents

Concerts and music, coffee mornings and themed nights (quizzes, bingo, food, cinema, history) are the most popular. Children's and family events, youth club and baby and toddler groups drew fewer ticks, which reflects how few families with young children replied, rather than a lack of demand. Families who did reply asked for a playground or green space, seasonal events such as the Halloween walk, Christmas and Easter parties, and a youth club.

Music, coffee mornings and themed nights interest the most households

Households ticking each activity or event (they could tick as many as they liked)



The four households who chose *Other* wrote:

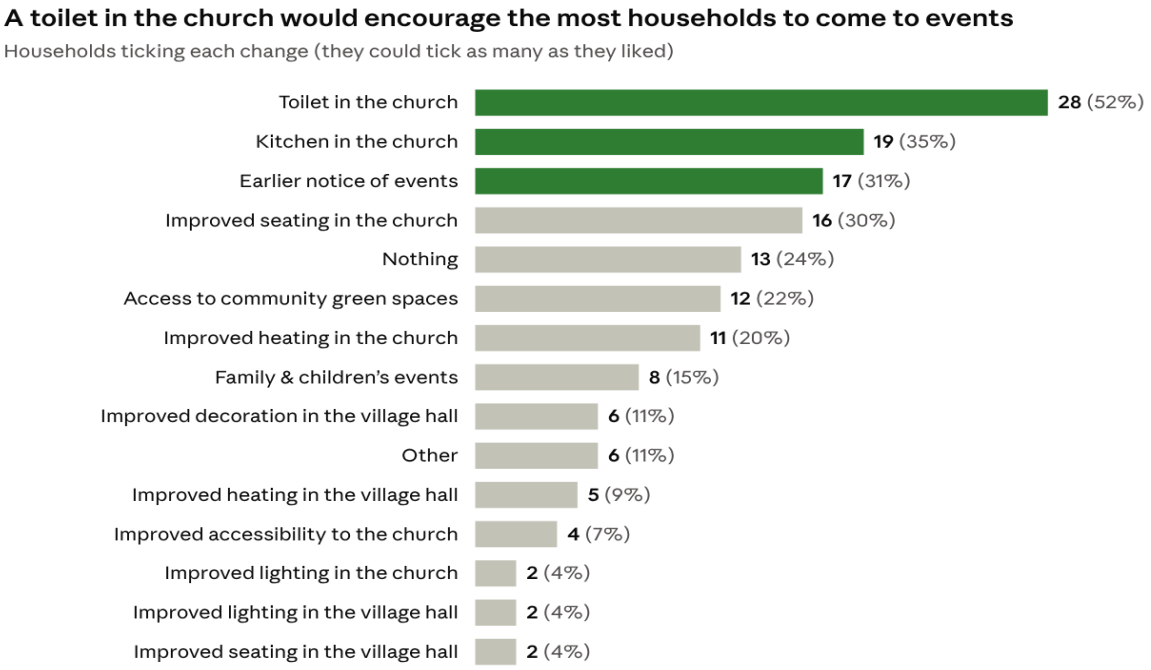
- "Local Woodhurst produce" and "cheese & wine".
- "Minibus to pub occasionally."
- "Dog walking."
- "If there is an activity that takes our fancy and we are around, we will join."

What specific activities or events do you think your children would enjoy taking part in?

11 households answered:

- "We need more for children's activities full stop. Start the bar nights earlier and have a food truck like in the summer. A playground or green space would be nice - somewhere to naturally meet and play with other families. I like Woodhurst but it's isolating for the children who live here."
- "Seasonal events like the Halloween walk. Maybe a Christmas party or Easter event so the children get to meet."
- "Anything outdoors."
- "Youth club."
- "Playground area, swings, zip line, etc."
- "Youth club, sporting activities, communal play area."
- "A park for visiting grandchildren as well as local children."
- "We have grandchildren who visit regularly. Some family events would be welcome and a children's play area would really add to the village."
- "Baby/toddler activities, dog activities."
- "A playground would be very welcome, I am sure."

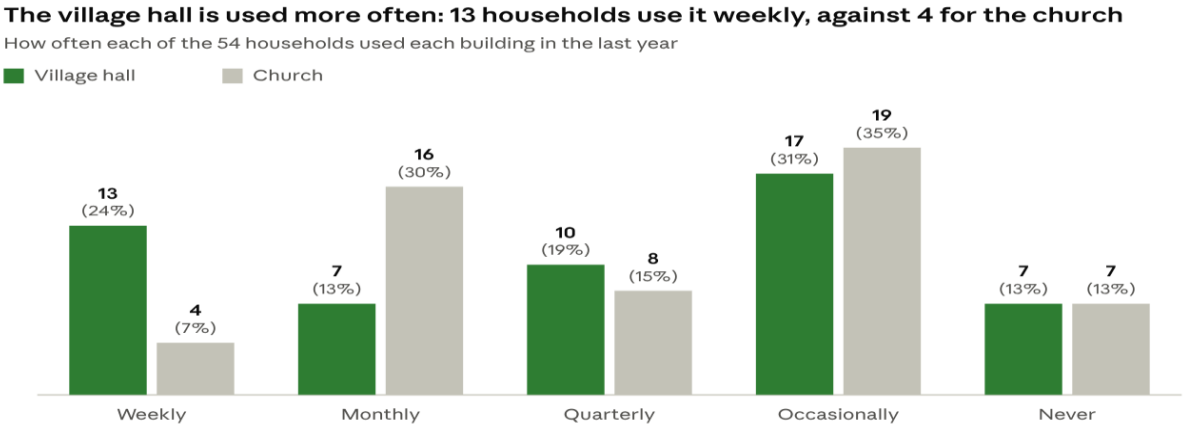
What would encourage households to come to more activities and event



The six households who chose *Other* wrote:

- "More and better communication of events eg reminders, a calendar, etc."
- "Better tables in the village hall."
- "More notices other than on Facebook like a village newsletter."
- Being made to feel more welcome when moving into the village.
- "All ok as it is."
- "The path in the churchyard is very uneven."

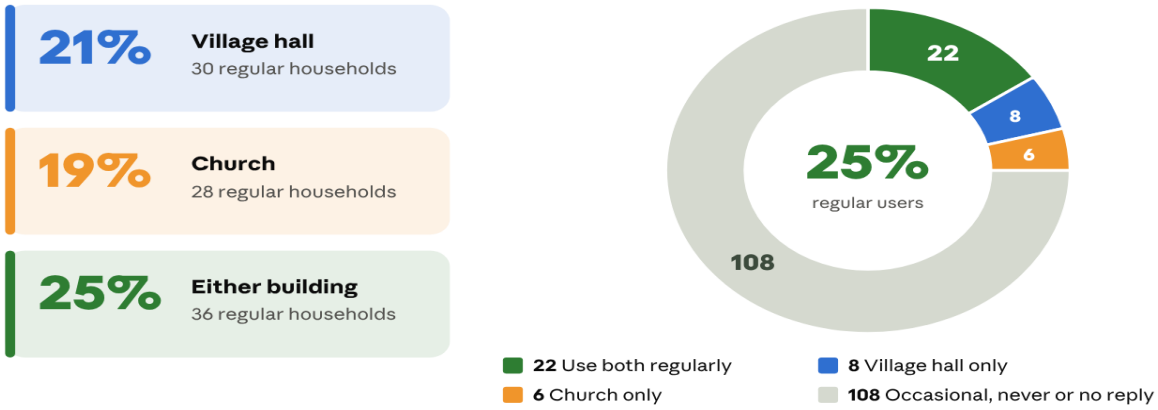
Usage of the church and village hall



In the last year, 30 households used the village hall at least every three months, and 13 used it weekly. 28 households used the church at least every three months. 7 households had not used each building at all. The 54 households that replied made nearly twice as many visits to the village hall as to the church.

About a quarter of the village uses the hall or church regularly

Regular = weekly, monthly or quarterly · out of Woodhurst's 144 households



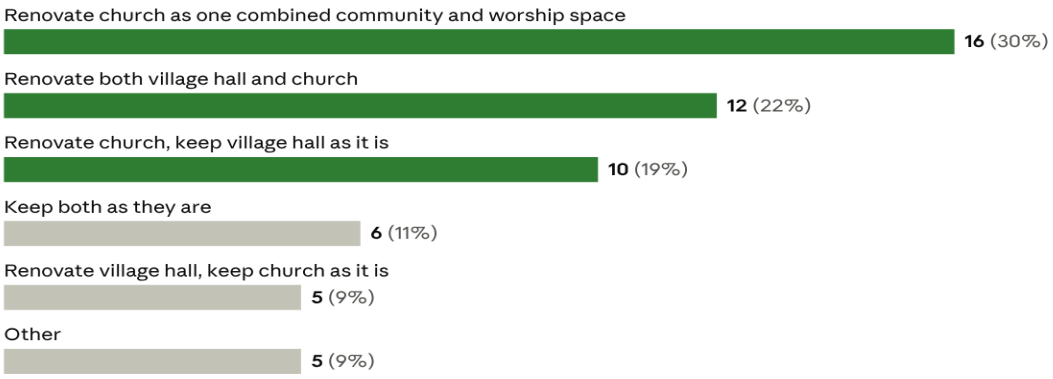
Based on the 54 households that replied, assuming the 90 that did not reply use the buildings only occasionally.

Future of our community buildings

There is no single majority, but 38 households (70%) chose an option that renovates the church. 17 (31%) chose an option that renovates the village hall.

38 households (70%) chose an option that renovates the church

Preferred future for the community buildings · one choice per household, 54 households



The five households who chose *Other* wrote:

- "No preference to which but understand that it's more realistic to maintain one rather than both."
- "Not sure."
- "Maintain the village hall and maybe improve the heating in the church and add some accessible toilets."
- "If only I won the lottery."
- "Make church more useable but there are events that should not take place in the church due to noise that local neighbours have not agreed to."

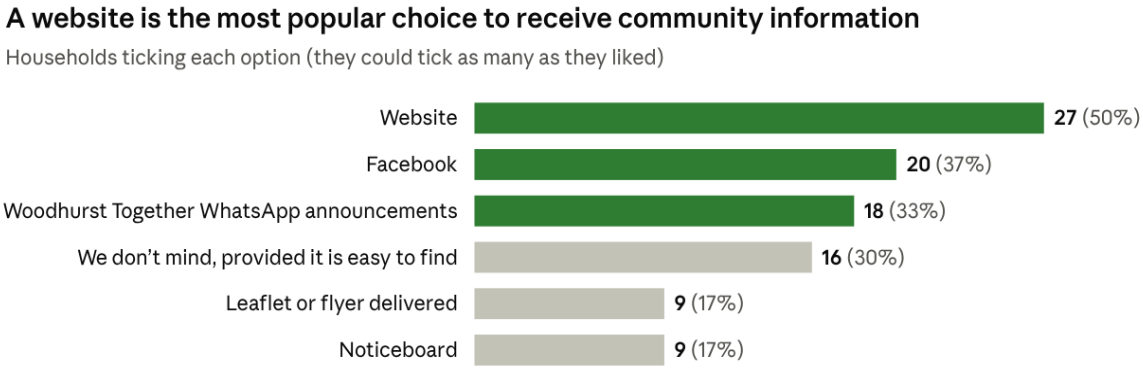
Several households raised *land ownership* in their comments, which are relevant to the future of the buildings:

- "Buy land on which village hall is located, cost of developing church better spent buying village hall."
- "Consider option of purchasing a new plot of land for amenity use and potentially a new community building."
- "We need to spend limited income wisely. Investing in a village hall prefab that is on land not owned by Woodhurst seems at odds with this. We would be happy to pay more (perhaps a monthly fee) for a great quality community space that we feel proud of and is an asset to the village. Once a monthly direct debit is set up, you get used to paying it. This seems more reliable than being asked to 'give' all the time for different causes or events."

Connecting with the village and one another

The five households who chose *Other* wrote:

- "I think that information from the parish council should come via them and not a third party and likewise with the PCC and village Hall."
- "Single website and WhatsApp group."
- "Happy with Woodhurst Facebook page to be honest."
- "On Facebook."
- "Better and wider use of the Woodhurst website and cease reliance on Facebook - not everyone in the village uses Facebook so maybe a compromise would work?"



What would improve village communication?

22 households answered this question. Their answers fell into four main themes:

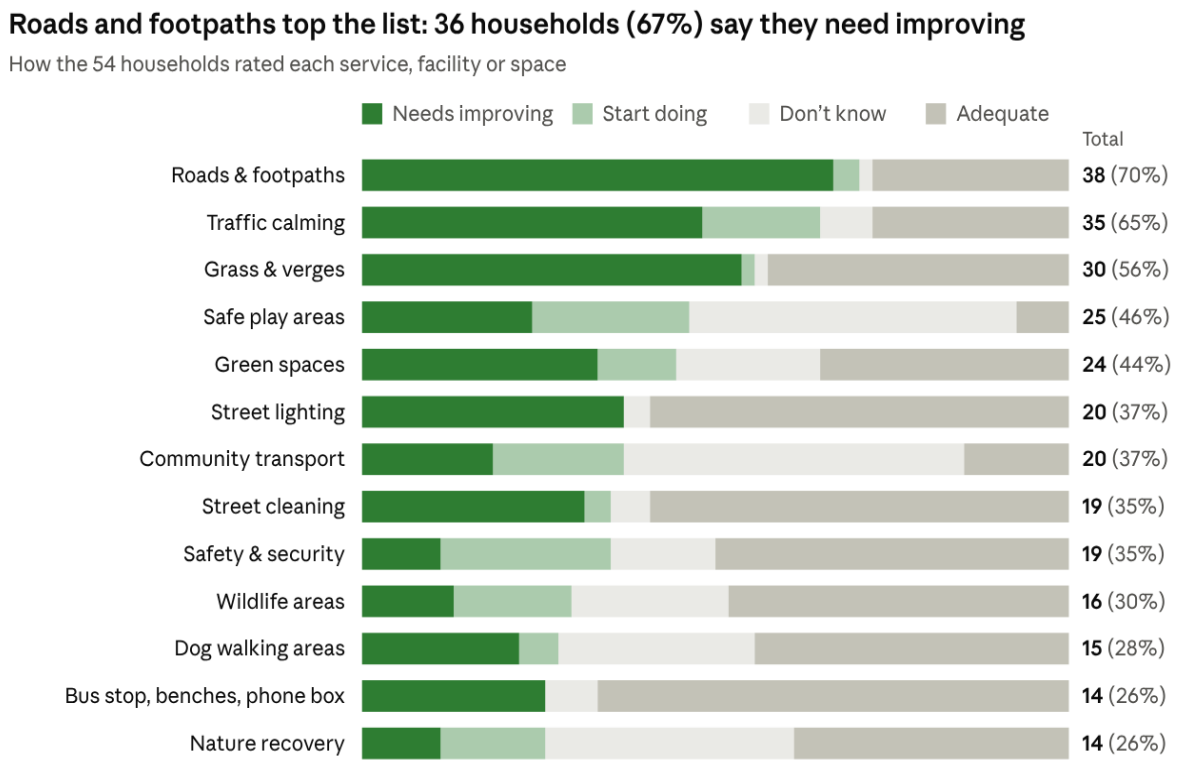
- **One reliable place for information (6 households).** A single, up-to-date website, with WhatsApp and Facebook used as reminders that point people to it. "One single point of information that is accessible on a website without needing apps or social media."
- **More notice and a shared calendar (4 households).** Better forward planning, a clear calendar of village events, links to activities in neighbouring villages, and advanced warning of road closures and repairs.
- **Not relying on social media (4 households).** Printed village newsletter, using Facebook less, and keeping communication simple so that people who do not use social media, often older residents, are not left out.
- **Happy as things are (5 households).** "WhatsApp has been helpful" and "We think everyone works really hard on this now."

Other suggestions were an up-to-date Facebook page, everyone working together, and, light-heartedly, a town crier.

Survey Section 3: Community improvements and priorities

Services and facilities

Roads and footpaths, traffic calming, and grass and verges are where most households want to see improvement. Many households answered "don't know" for community transport (26) and safe play areas (25), so views on these are less settled. Some of these services are the responsibility of the District or County Council.



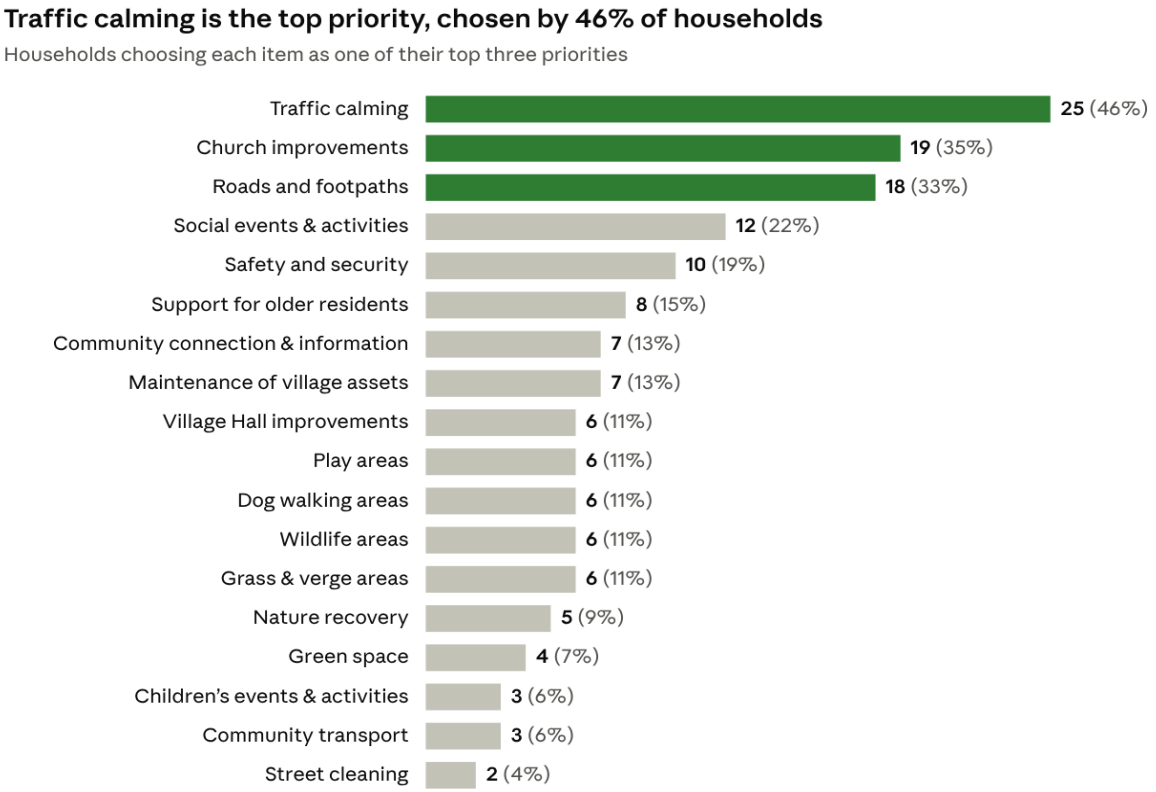
What other service, facility or community space needs improving, or should we start doing?

12 households answered. Their answers fell into these themes:

- **Footpaths, roads and verges (4 households).** Potholes and grass cutting, uneven and overgrown paths on Butt Lane, poor visibility at the West End and South Street corner, parking on the Church Street footpaths, and the look of the wildflower area at the Wheatsheaf Road entrance. One household also asked for verges to be managed sensitively for wildlife.
- **Walking and cycling links (2 households).** A well-lit walkway and cycleway to St Ives, and a cycle lane in and out of the village.
- **Somewhere for children to play (2 households).** A playground, or "even a field just for them to play together".
- **Getting about and traffic (2 households).** A volunteer driver list, run by a coordinator, for lifts to doctor and dentist appointments, and Speedwatch as part of traffic calming.
- **Comments on the question itself (2 households).** One felt the options were "guided" and did not want a play area or traffic calming. Another felt some services are better than "adequate" while others are not needed, and neither option was available.
- **Village shop and food (4 households across the survey).** Two households would like a village shop, one suggested a regular fish and chip or pizza van, and a parent suggested a food truck at bar nights. Some of these comments were made in answer to other questions.

Top priorities for the village

Each household could choose up to three priorities. Traffic calming came first, followed by church improvements and roads and footpaths.



Ideas for funding

12 households answered the question about funding. Suggestions included community grants and lottery funds (including Heritage Lottery, Biffa, rewilding, community chest and Eco Church), help from Cambridgeshire ACRE, support from local businesses, fundraising events with ring-fenced money, and a regular voluntary donation scheme.

Some also asked whether the Parish Council precept could cover more of the costs of the village hall or if the Parish Council should be disbanded, as majority of precepts cover administrative council costs, not village assets and we could ask for money to maintain assets directly from residents.

Survey Section 4: Final thoughts

25 households added final feedback, ideas or suggestions. Points already covered elsewhere in this report are not repeated here. The new points were:

- **Traffic and road safety.** Concern about the speed of all traffic through the village, its use as a rat run, and HGVs. Households asked for the junction at the end of Wheatsheaf Road to be made safe as a priority, and for the crossroads near the Envar site to be completed. Two households said they would not want speed bumps, and another asked for full consultation on the pros and cons before any traffic calming goes ahead.
- **How village groups work together.** Suggestions to streamline committees, coordinate events, volunteers, communication and funding, and hold joint meetings. One household said: "Woodhurst is a wonderful village, and it is fantastic to see new groups popping up and more activities. Well done to all those involved. It does seem though that there is a division between some which is a shame… I guess it is impossible to please everyone. Love the idea of Woodhurst Together… long may it continue." Another felt there was no need for a new organisation and that people should join the existing ones. Another reflected that "it takes time and persistent effort to build community". Not everyone was positive about the survey. One household questioned how it was designed and asked for the raw results to be shared, and a few felt the answer options were limited.
- **Events.** Summer events in open areas have always worked well. One household prefers "good old chat" to bands, karaoke and open mics at bar nights. Other ideas were Christmas lights through the village and a book club.
- **The buildings.** A better sound system in the church for people who are hard of hearing. Another household said: "If the village hall is going to be used more then sound proofing should be considered along with a notice about more considerate parking." One household said that if only one building can be renovated, they would choose the church as "the natural hub of an English village".
- **Looking out for one another.** A simple way to offer lifts or pick-ups when going to St Ives or Huntingdon, which could help older residents. One household valued the SOS group, mainly used for missing dogs, as something that could matter in an emergency.
- **Environment and upkeep.** Monitoring and reporting air pollution from the Envar site, more footpaths, and concern that long grass on the village knoll and in the churchyard looks untidy and leaves graves neglected.
- **Communication.** One household that does not use Facebook appreciated the monthly calendar through the door, and another asked that news should not be assumed to reach everyone via Facebook. One household asked what had happened to the newsletter they used to get, which they felt had been "replaced with reams of AI written propaganda", and said that using WhatsApp is "not inclusive".
- **Thanks.** Several households thanked the team for the survey and for keeping residents informed: "Thank you for addressing the needs of a very mixed community and good luck!" Many others thanked the team and welcomed the chance to have their say.

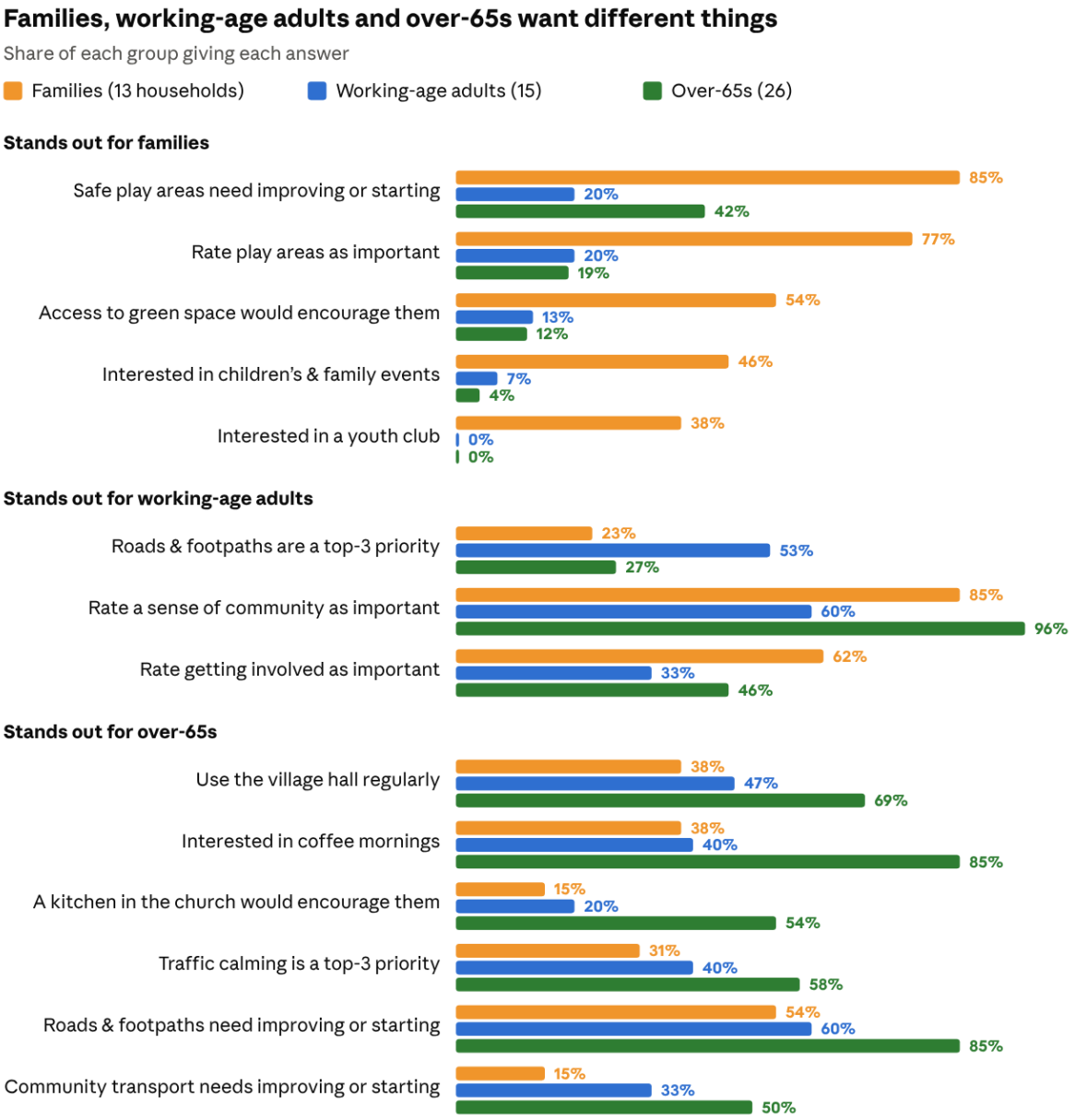
Interpreting the results

The overall results do not speak equally for everyone. Splitting the 54 replies into three demographic groups shows that each wants different things:

- **Families:** 13 households with anyone aged under 20.
- **Working-age adults:** 15 adult-only households with no one aged 65 or over.
- **Over-65s:** 26 households with someone aged 65 or over and no children.

Over-65 households make up nearly half of all replies, so the overall totals lean towards their views. Families and working-age adults are smaller groups whose needs could be lost in the majority.

How do priorities differ between families, working-age adults and over-65s?



Families

- **Somewhere to play.** 77% of families rate play areas as important, compared with around 20% of both other groups. 85% of families say safe play areas need improving or should be started.
- **Green space.** 69% say green spaces need improving, and 54% say access to community green space would encourage them to join in more.
- **Activities for children and young people.** 46% are interested in children's and family events and 38% in a youth club. Almost no other households chose these.
- **Keen to get involved, but using the buildings less.** 62% rate getting involved as important, the highest of any group, yet 4 of the 13 families had not used the village hall in the last year and 4 had not used the church.
- **Facebook** is their most popular way to receive community information (54%).

Working-age adults

- **Practical upkeep first.** Roads and footpaths are their top priority (53% chose it in their top three), well ahead of the other groups.
- **Less connected to village life.** 60% rate a sense of community as important, compared with 85% of families and 96% of over-65s. Only 33% rate getting involved as important, and fewer than half use the village hall or church regularly (47% each).
- **Least keen on change to the buildings.** 20% would keep both buildings as they are, the highest of any group, and 53% chose an option that renovates the church.
- Several working households said in their comments that they work full time, so **evening and weekend events** may suit them better.

Over-65s

- **The buildings' core users.** 69% use the village hall regularly and 65% the church, and every over-65 household has used the village hall in the last year.
- **Strongest support for the church.** 85% chose an option that renovates the church. A toilet (62%), kitchen (54%) and better seating (42%) would encourage them to come to more events.
- **Traffic, roads and getting about.** 58% chose traffic calming as a top-three priority, 85% say roads and footpaths need improving, and 50% say community transport needs improving or starting. 27% chose support for older residents as a priority.
- **Daytime and social activities.** Coffee mornings (85%), talks and workshops (62%), trips out (35%) and religious services and festivals (35%).
- **Website and noticeboard.** They are the most likely to want information on the website (54%) and the noticeboard (27%).

Common ground across the 3 groups

- Peaceful surroundings, a clean village, green spaces, nature and safety matter to 85% or more of every group.
- Concerts and music (60% to 73%) and nature and wildlife activities (54% to 60%) appeal to all three groups.
- Turning the church into a combined community and worship space is among the most popular options in every group.

What this means for us moving forward

Decisions based on the overall totals alone would mainly reflect the views of over-65 households. Their priorities, such as traffic calming, church facilities and daytime activities, are important, but so are play space, green space and activities for young people for families, and evening events and practical upkeep for working-age adults. Each group is worth considering in its own right. With only 13 family and 15 working-age households, each household counts for about 7 to 8% of its group, so these figures are best read as clear indications rather than precise measures.

What happens next

Woodhurst Together will share these results with the Parish Council, the Parochial Church Council, the Village Hall Committee and the Town Lands Charity Committee. The survey does not commit any organisation to particular actions. It gives them clear evidence and guidance of residents' views to use when planning for the future.

Some issues, such as roads, footpaths and the Wheatsheaf Road junction, are the responsibility of the District or County Council. Your answers will help the Parish Council make the case to them on our behalf.

It can also be an opportunity for Woodhurst Together to start exploring how residents could help and take action for the benefit of the wider community, such as how we can best support the village committees whether through volunteering; using the village hall for exercise classes or clubs and/or how best to communicate with one another in the wider village.

Residents may also want to consider any questions they wish to put forward to the Parish Council, the Parochial Church Council, the Village Hall Committee and the Town Lands Charity Committee regarding the future of the village based on the results of the survey.

If you do not use the internet and would like to be kept informed, please let us know and we will make sure news reaches you.

Thank you

The Woodhurst Together Community Survey would not have been possible without the dedication, enthusiasm and hard work of the survey team. In alphabetic order:

Beverley Arnold, Sally Barrett, Debbie Blaine, Simon Brown, Lynn Crossland, Philip Clark, Martin Franks, Mel Franks, Paul Haggerty, Samantha Haggerty, Gill Jordison, Naomi Kingston, Avrill Mayall, Mairead Looney Tester & Sue Petersson.

We are incredibly grateful for the time and effort they invested in designing the survey, engaging with residents, analysing the responses and preparing the results report.

We would also like to thank the representatives of the Parish Council, the Parochial Church Council, the Village Hall Committee and the Town Lands Charity Committee, who generously shared their feedback during the survey's development and supported the survey process.

This collaborative effort has resulted in an important snapshot of our community's views and provides a valuable basis for considering future improvements, opportunities and priorities for Woodhurst moving forward.