

Caerphilly County borough Council Draft Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-2029

Consultation Report

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Key Findings

- 711 completed surveys were returned by the closing date
- 20 additional written responses were received
- Of those who responded to the survey:
 - 94% indicated that they were a resident of the county borough
 - 12% work within the county borough
 - 8% represented a local sport club or organisation
 - 3% indicated that they were a local business person and a further 3% were elected members
 - 50% were Leisure Lifestyle members
 - 51% were male and 49% were female
- **VISION:** 85% agreed with the vision to encourage healthy lifestyles and support our residents to be more active, more often
- **ACTIONS:**
 - 75% agreed that encouraging a collective responsibility will enable the council to best deliver its vision for the county borough
 - 44% agreed with supporting others and only directly providing where the need is great and no others have the expertise or capacity to. Whilst 37 % disagreed, a further 19% indicated that they “didn’t know” in relation to this approach
- **KEY OUTCOMES:**
 - 96% agreed that “better health” should be a key outcomes of the strategy
 - 91% agreed that healthier and prosperous communities should be a key outcome
 - 70% agreed that a more efficient and sustainable future provision should be a key outcome
 - 41% felt that there were outcomes missing with ensuring that sport and active recreation is inclusive and accessible to all being a key theme. Comments specifically made reference to:
 - ensuring provision is accessible to those with disabilities, mental health issues and those of all ages.
 - ensuring provision is accessible to those living in deprivation, making reference to the lack of availability of public transport and the additional cost of transport for those required to travel further distances to access facilities
 - ensuring support for those who wish to take part in a variety of sports
 - There was strong agreement with the actions identified under the “better health” outcome with the following identified as helping to support the outcome:
 - Joining up strategies and planning for future need

- Promoting healthy living through education. This action is not just about increasing activity levels but ensuring a good understanding of role of diet and exercise
 - Making better use of outdoor space and improving active travel routes (specifically cycle networks and footpaths) to encouraging general fitness through incidental exercise
 - There was agreement with actions outlined under the “healthier and prosperous communities” outcome with the following identified as helping to support the outcome:
 - Working with other providers of sport and active recreation within the county borough
 - Encouraging and supporting local clubs and organisations to provide a range of activities including athletics, running, hockey, bowls
 - Promoting healthy living through education. This action is not just about increasing activity levels but ensuring a good understanding of role of diet and exercise
 - There was agreement with the actions identified under outcome 3 “a more efficient and financially sustainable future provision”. 54% agree with maximising use of assets through co-location, invest to save models and aim to reduce subsidy levels at our strategic leisure centres to between £1 and £1.20 per user (16% don’t know) with the following actions specifically identified as helping to support the outcome:
 - Ensure opening times allow for access to facilities at times when they are needed (full time working people, shift workers and during the day)
 - Ensure facilities provided are of a good quality (a number suggested that this was not currently the case)
 - Remove parking charges at country parks to support maximising the use of all our community amenities and the local environment
 - There were mixed views in relation to the feasibility of using school facilities (access and capacity)
 - Motivating young people beyond schools and education and inspiring future generations
- **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE:**
 - **CORPORATE POLICY:**

There was agreement with all actions under corporate policy with one exception - 58% disagreed that it is no longer feasible for the Council to provide the ‘same service for all’ whilst only 25% agreed with this statement and a further 17% indicated that they “don’t know”. Key themes were as above plus:

 - Keeping costs down was a concern, in particular, ensuring that alternative and school-based provision does not cost more however, a number also suggested increasing charges could be a means of keeping facilities open

- Making better use of a range of other venues was supported by many although smaller proportion of respondents supported joint school use. Concerns were raised over the capacity of schools to run facilities and restrictions on access to facilities (opening times, school holiday closures)
 - Ensuring a multi-agency approach that encourages healthy lifestyles beyond exercise
- **FACILITIES:**

There was agreement with actions although only 50% agreed with adopting a decision making matrix for determining the provision of strategic Leisure facilities that are directly managed by the Sport and Leisure Service. 17 disagreed and 33% said they “don’t know”. Issues raised related to

 - The lack of capacity of remaining facilities to support an expanding population
 - The suitability of alternative facilities for certain activities
 - Ensuring a full cost benefit analysis is undertaken before any decisions are made
- **RATIONALISING LEISURE CENTRES:**

52% felt the impact of rationalising leisure centres would be negative reflecting the key themes identified throughout the survey, key areas of impact were felt to be:

 - Increased travel time and distance for those who drive
 - Concern relating to inadequate public transport provision to sites
 - Increased cost of travel
 - Reduced availability and access to facilities (capacity and opening hours)

To mitigate the impact it was suggested that the Council

 - Ensure that alternative provision is in place before centres are closed
 - Maximise the use of local assets (community centres, church halls etc) to provide classes etc
 - Ensuring that there is adequate capacity within remaining facilities if leisure centres are to close
- **OUTREACH INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES**

There was strong agreement that these should continue with the following key themes:

 - A need to monitor and evidence the effectiveness of intervention programmes
 - Ensuring sustainability of provision when relying on volunteers or private companies moving forward
 - Considering the negative impact of rationalising leisure centres on local clubs who use these facilities
 - A need to work with parents to ensure they encourage and adopt healthy active lifestyles for themselves and their families and

- Encouraging a Gwent wide approach with cross border access to facilities
- Written and social media responses reflected the key themes identified in the wider survey

Context

The draft Sport and Active Recreation Strategy sets out the future purpose and direction for the provision of sport and active recreation in Caerphilly county borough, established key principles and a vision which will inform future decisions and actions.

The strategy has been developed within the context of a challenging journey of improvement and change for the Council. The Corporate Plan (2018-2023) highlights that in order to rise to future challenges, the Council will need to do things differently, to be innovative and willing to adapt and respond to change and must fundamentally redefine its unique role, the services it provides and how they are delivered. In the future, the role of the Council will be less about directly delivering services and more about enabling other organisations who already provide excellent opportunities across our communities.

Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015), the Council will need to look forward to ensure that the decisions made and opportunities provided are fit for future generations, responding to the emerging needs of our young people, the adults of tomorrow and looking after the different needs of a growing older population. The Council must also make sure what we provide is going to be sustainable i.e. we can all afford to maintain service provision into the future.

Future approaches will demand that people take greater responsibility for their own health and levels of physical activity. It is the role of the Council to support them to do this for themselves.

To deliver a 'change agenda' the Council will also have to make a number of critical decisions. It is vital therefore, that this strategy provides a clear rationale and priorities for action and must provide a vision for where we are going and how we are going to get there, so that everyone understands what we can achieve, what to expect of us, as well as the roles that others have to play.

Finally, the strategy is not focused just on buildings but the activity that can take place in a wide variety of different places found throughout our County borough and as a result of many different opportunities provided by a range of organisations.

Method

A wide scale resident and stakeholder consultation was undertaken over a 10 week period from 16th July to 21st September 2018.

To ensure the widest possible engagement, a variety of methods were used to encourage and enable participation.

Engagement

Key engagement mechanisms included:

- Online - via the CCBC Website, social media (including Facebook and Twitter)
- E-mail alerts and correspondence
- Copies of the draft report and survey were made available in key public facing Council venues across the county borough including all leisure centres
- Media releases
- The Council's newsletter "Newline" delivered to every household within the borough (June 2018 and September 2018 editions)
- Face to face – drop in sessions

A detailed stakeholder communication and engagement plan is outlined in **Appendix 1**.

Survey

The survey questionnaire and supporting information was available on the Council's Website for completion online or for printing if preferred. Hard copies of the strategy and survey were available on request and were also available at many public facing Council venues including all main Council offices, leisure centres and libraries across the county borough.

The questionnaire was designed to ensure it captured the wide ranging qualitative and quantitative data required for the authority to make an informed decision about the future of sport and active recreation provision within the county borough over the next 10 years. The questionnaire sought detailed resident and stakeholder views on the key outcomes and actions within the draft strategy. Questions were also included to enable an assessment of the activity levels of the population, the types of facilities that resident are currently using, the geographic distribution of activities being undertaken across the county borough and the proximity of facilities to those who use them. Equalities monitoring data was included to enable an assessment of the impact of the strategy on all sectors of the community.

Drop-in Sessions

Drop in sessions were arranged to facilitate face to face discussion and to provide an opportunity for officers to respond to queries regarding the draft strategy.

In total, 11 drop-in sessions were held at venues across the whole county borough to ensure a fair and equitable coverage (see **Table 1**). Drop-in sessions were held on different days of the week, including Saturdays and were held at various times throughout the day to enable as many people as possible to attend. Hard copies of the survey and the draft strategy were made available at all sessions for attendees to complete or take away with them.

Table 1: Drop-in Sessions

VENUE	DATE	TIME	PUBLIC ATTENDANCE
Rhymney Library	Monday 30th July	2:00 – 4:00pm	5
Abertridwr Library	Monday 6th August	4:00 – 6:00pm	5
Centre of Sporting Excellence	Wednesday 8th August	6:00 – 8:00pm	2
Caerphilly Library	Wednesday 15th August	3:45 – 5:45pm	4
Bargoed Library	Saturday 18th August	10:30 – 12:30pm	10
Risca Library	Monday 20th August	10:00 - 12 midday	2
White Rose Resource Centre	Friday 24th August	5:00 – 7:00pm	2
Nelson Library	Wednesday 29th August	4:00 – 6:00pm	1
Centre of Sporting Excellence	Saturday 1st September	10:00-12:00 midday	1
Blackwood Library	Tuesday 4th September	4:00 – 6:00pm	10
Newbridge Tabernacle Church	Thursday 13th September	10:00 – 12:00 midday	4

Attendance at drop in sessions was low with the highest number of attendees at Bargoed and Blackwood libraries. Most of those who attended the drop in sessions indicated that they were intending to complete the questionnaire online or had already done so. Issues raised were dependent on the individual, group or association being represented and whilst themes broadly followed those outlined in the draft strategy document, there was a geographical focus for the discussion at some sessions, in particular Blackwood Library.

Social Media

The sport and active recreation strategy was promoted on 19 separate occasions via social media. To launch the consultation a 2 minute video was produced. The video explained the key points of the strategy as well as identifying current financial challenges. The remaining posts included a line of text, photograph and links to the online consultation and full strategy document. The posts covered all aspects of the strategy including cycle routes, open spaces, play facilities, 3G pitches and leisure centres.

135,809 individuals were reached via social media with 7,242 likes, shares and comments and 250 consultation link clicks.

Consultation Survey Findings

A total of 711 completed surveys were returned by the closing date. In addition, 20 written responses were received by the closing date.

Note: Throughout this report, the results are presented as percentage (%) responses based on the total number of responses to individual questions (which will vary due to respondents not answering all the questions).

It should also be noted that caution should be taken when interpreting the results, as the responses are unlikely to be representative of the wider population. This is due to the survey being self-selecting in nature and those respondents with an interest in the topic are more likely to respond to the survey than those who are not directly affected.

Respondent Profile

Of those who responded:

- 94% indicated that they were a resident of the county borough
- 12% work within the county borough
- 8% represented a local sport club or organisation
- 3% indicated that they were a local business person and
- a further 3% were elected members

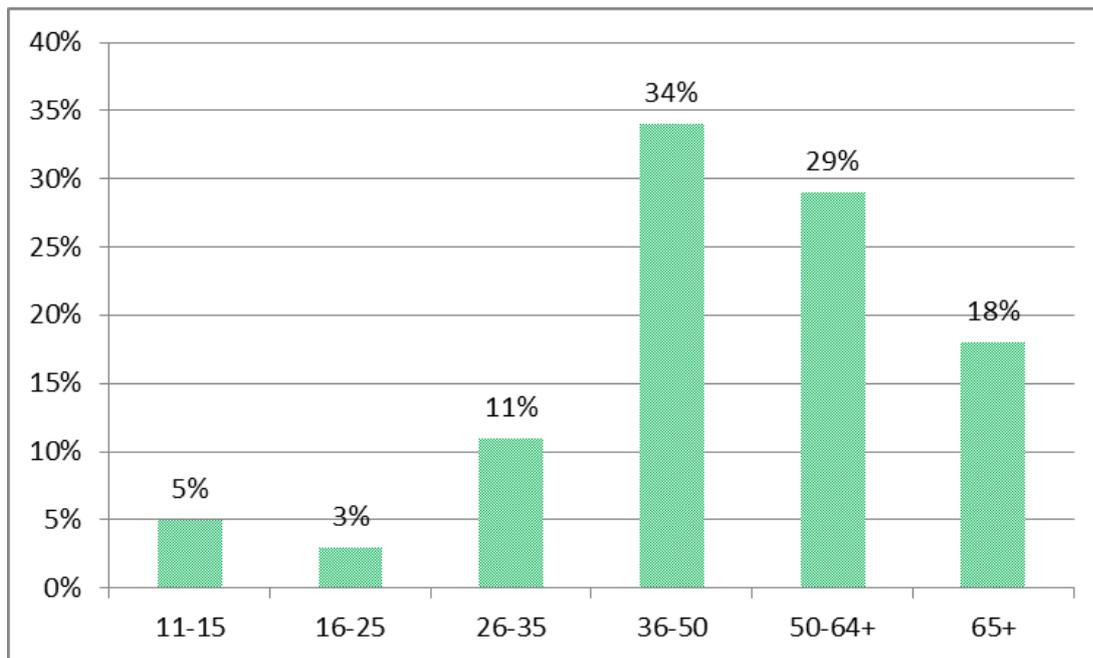
(Note: respondents could indicate more than one category)

Additionally:

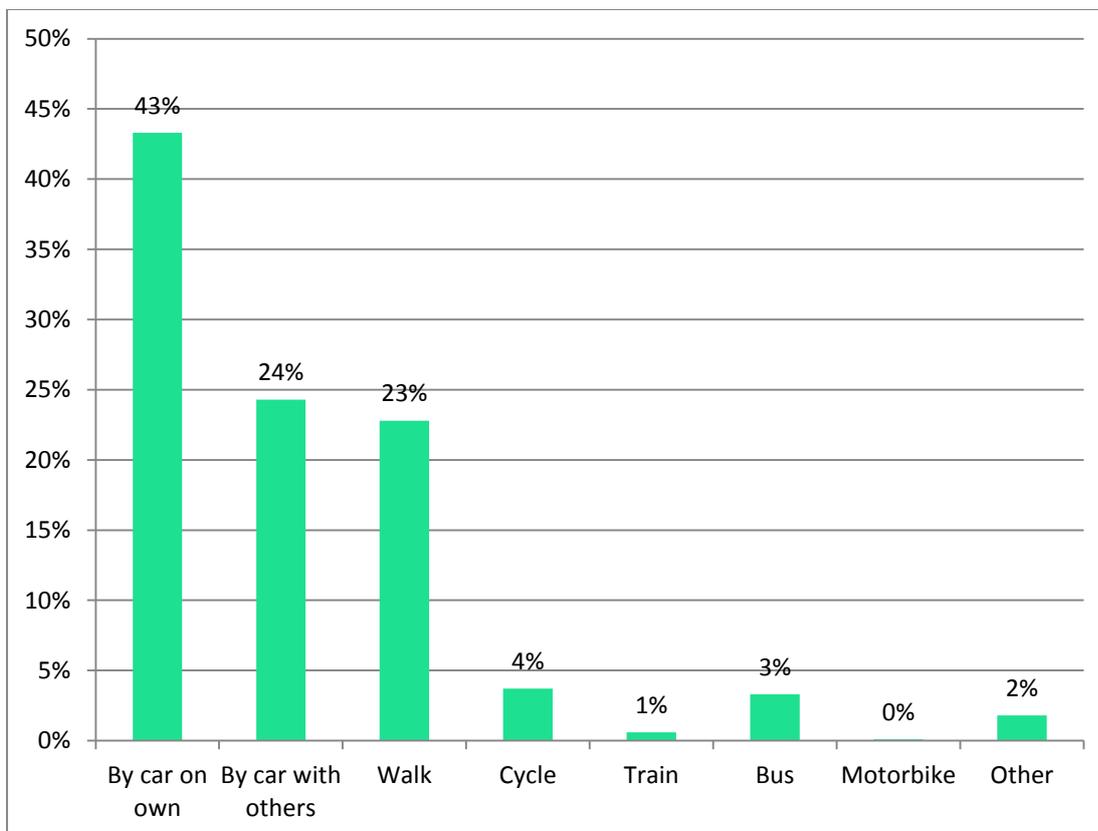
- 51% were male and 49% were female (n=652)
- The largest proportion (34%) of respondents were aged between 36 and 55 (see **Graph 1**)
- 68% indicated that they normally travel to the place where they take part in sport and active recreation by car, 23% walk, 4% cycle 4% use public transport (see **Graph 2**).

A full respondent profile is included in **Appendix 2**.

Graph1: Respondent Age Groups (n=642)



Graph2: Main mode of travel to the place where people take part in sport and active recreation (n=670)



Taking Part in Sport and Active Recreation

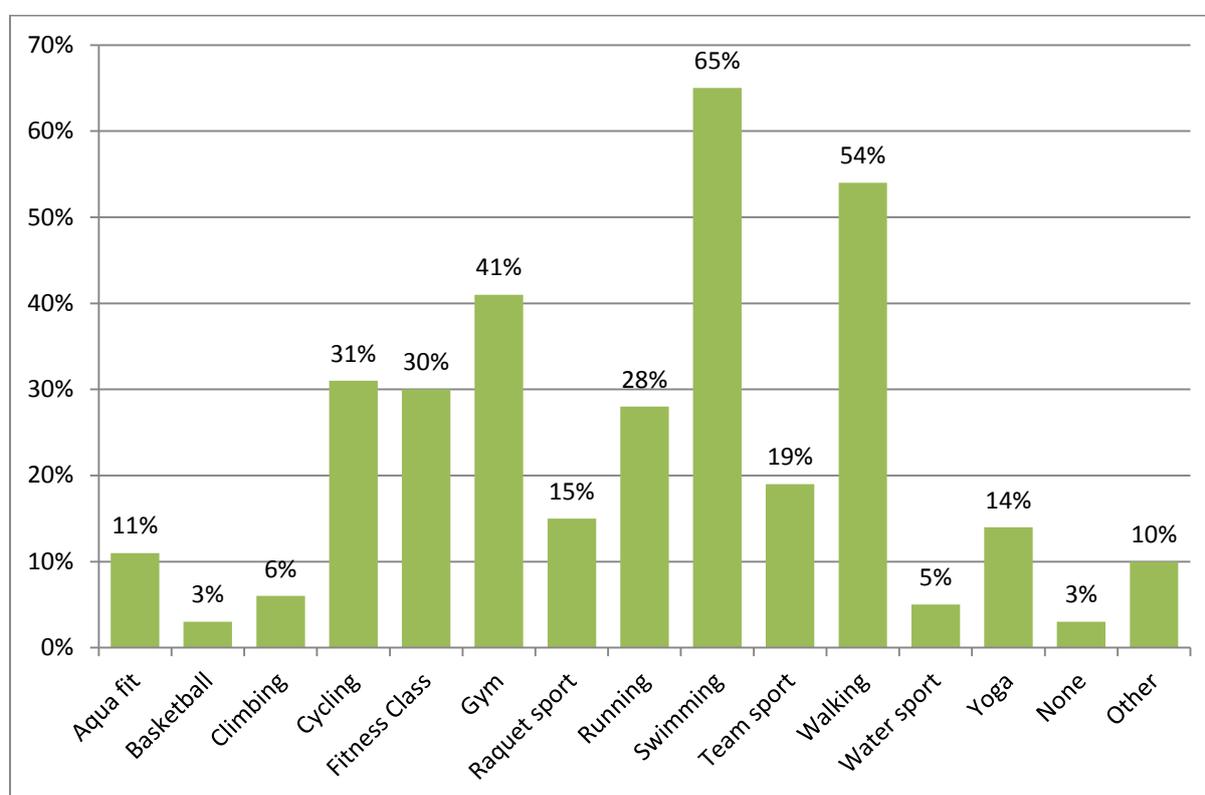
Of those who responded to the question, 50% were Leisure Lifestyle members (n=659).

During the last year, respondents had taken part in a range of sport and active recreation activities with the most popular sports being swimming (65%), walking (54%) and attending the gym (41%).

Participation in sport and active recreation activities *amongst those who responded* are highlighted in **Graph 3**. The involvement of respondents in sport and active recreation and their use of facilities helps to provide a context for views expressed later in the consultation.

(Note: respondents could indicate more than one category).

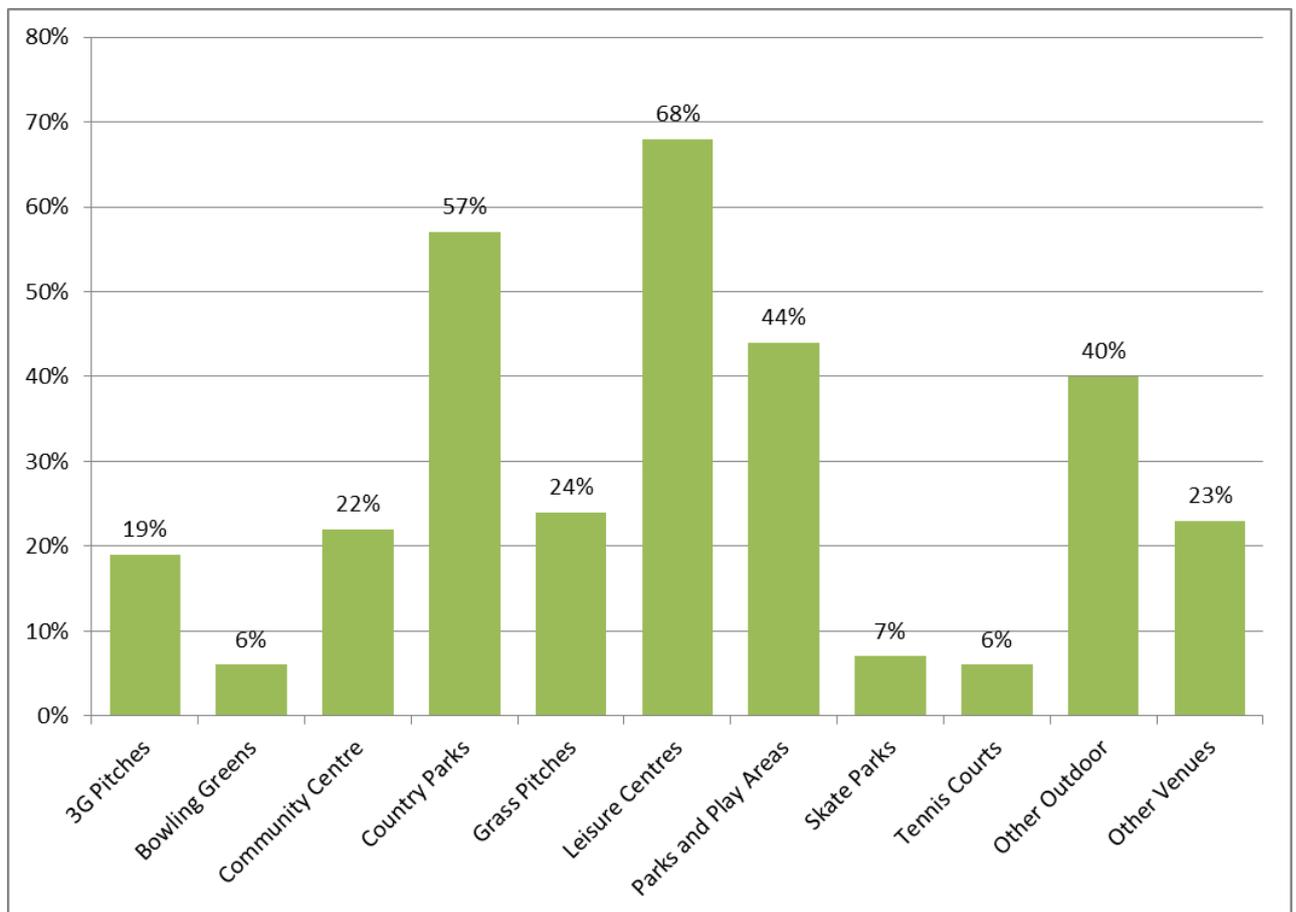
Graph 3: Sport and active recreation activities taken part in during the last year (n=687)



In addition to those listed, other sport and active recreation activities that respondents have taken part in include bowls, golf, martial arts, dancing and exercise referral classes.

Graph 4 shows that 68% of respondents to the survey had used a leisure centre at least once a month during the last year. This reflects the levels of participation in swimming and gym use amongst those who responded to the survey. A significant number had also visited country parks (57%) and parks and children's play areas (44%) at least monthly over the last 12 months.

Graph 4: Percentage of respondents who had accessed facilities to take part in sport and active recreation within Caerphilly county borough at least once a month during the last 12 months (n=711).



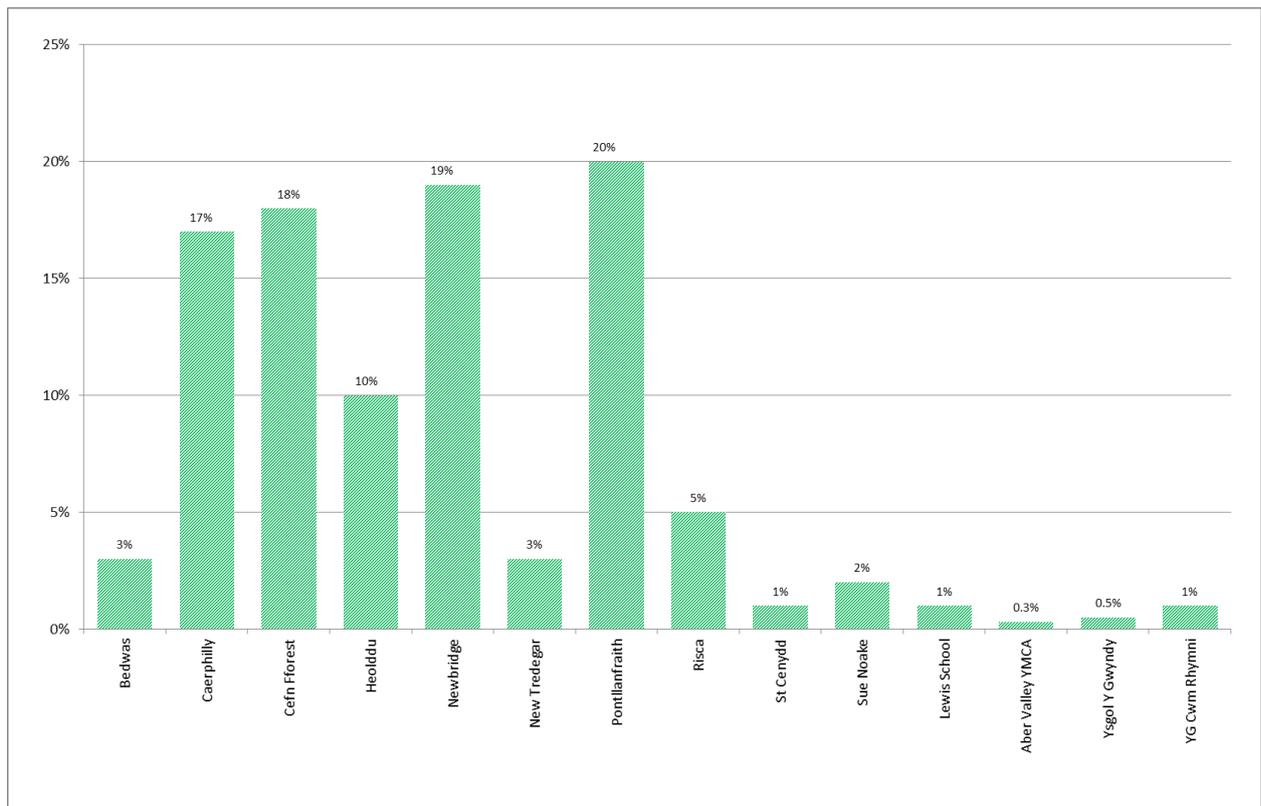
For those who indicated that they used leisure centres, country parks or parks and children’s play areas, **Graphs 5 to 7** provide a breakdown of the facilities visited most often by respondents and the facilities that are closest to home. This detail provides context for the views expressed later in the consultation.

The leisure centres used most often by those who responded to the survey were Pontllanfraith, Newbridge, Cefn Fforest and Caerphilly.

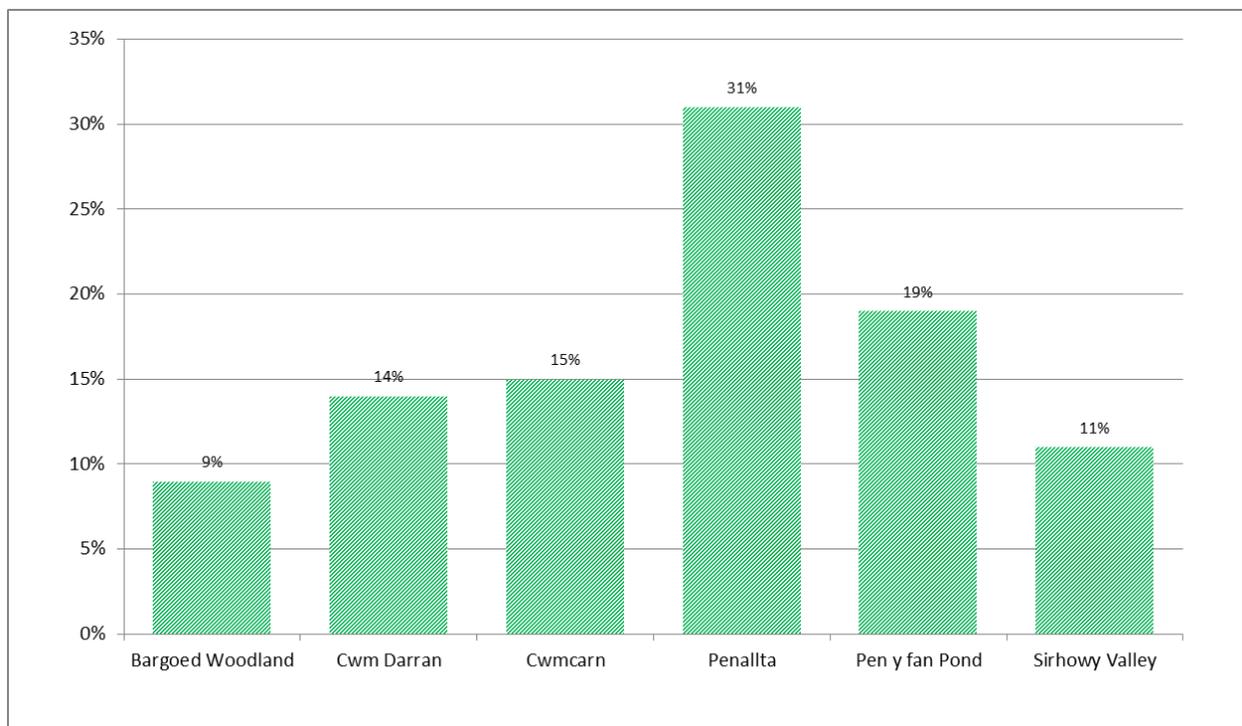
The country parks used most often by survey respondents were Penallta Park and Pen y fan Pond Country Park.

The parks and children’s play areas used most often by respondents were Ystrad Mynach, Morgan Jones and Showfield, Blackwood.

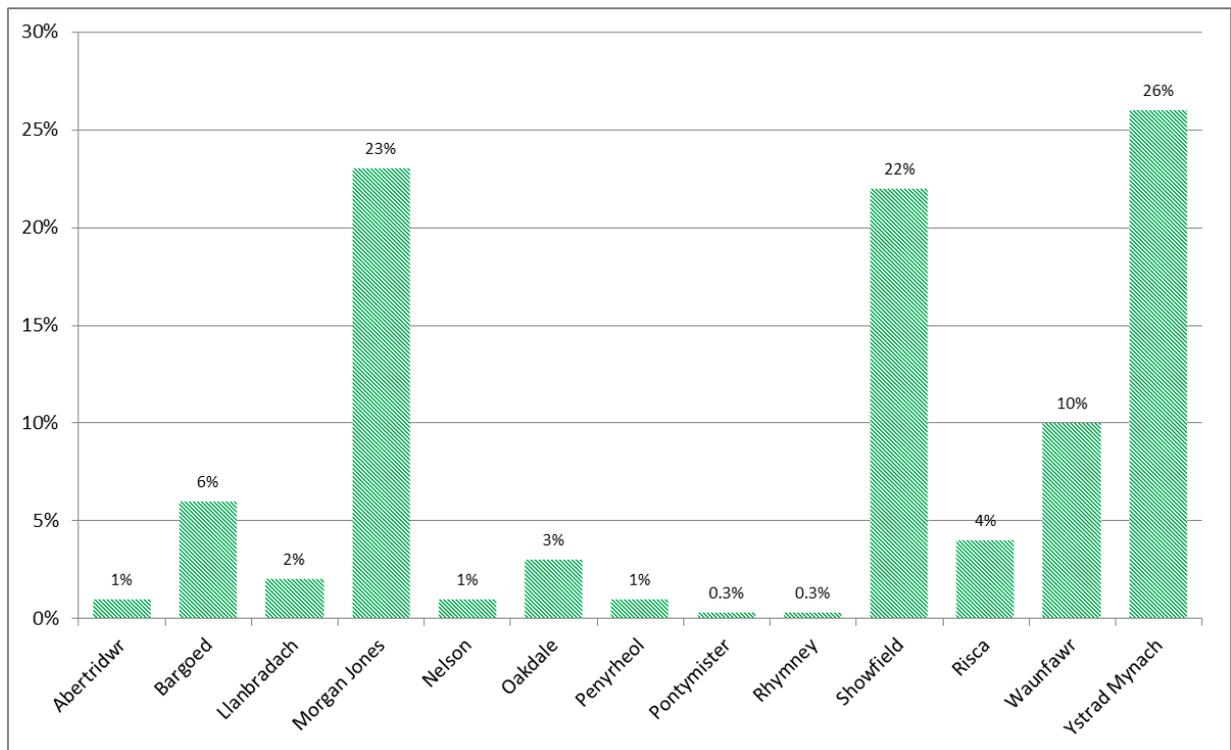
Graph 5: Leisure Centre used most often (n=567)



Graph 6: Country Parks used most often (n=474)



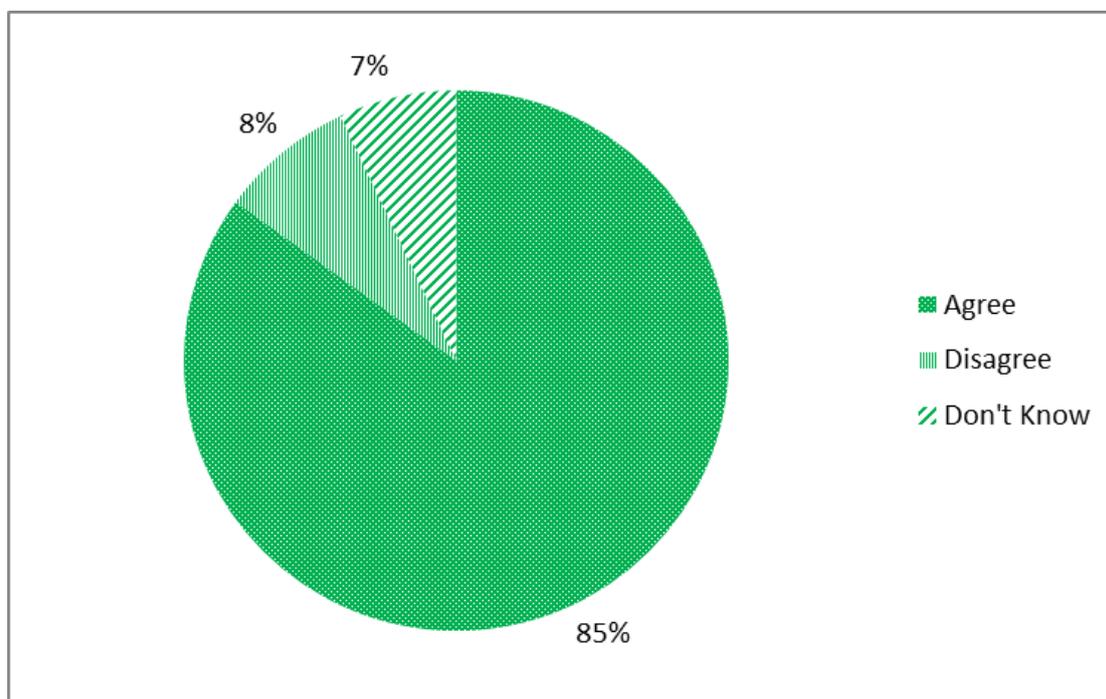
Graph 7: Parks and Children's Play areas used most often (n=303)



Our Vision

Our Vision for the future is to encourage healthy lifestyles and support our residents to be more active, more often. As shown in **Graph 8**, 85% agreed with the vision.

Graph 8: Agreement with the vision to 'encourage healthy lifestyles and support our residents to be more active, more often' (n=687)

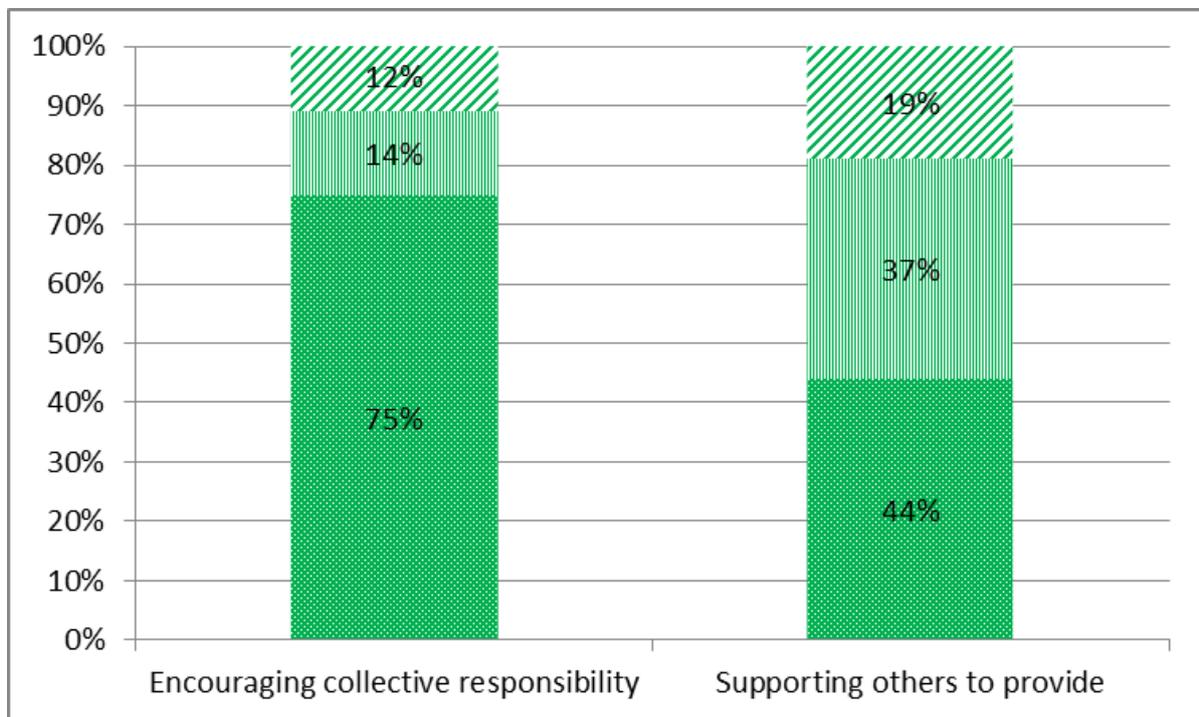


As highlighted in **Graph 9**, 75% of respondents agreed that encouraging a collective responsibility will enable the council to best deliver its vision for the county borough.

“People have to take responsibility for themselves. This should be an outcome. So many people smoke, drink and eat unhealthily and then expect the local authority and national government to fund services to cope with the effects of this unhealthy lifestyle. I was one of these people, so am not standing from a distance criticising.....”

However, less than half of respondents (44%) agreed with the action of “supporting others and only directly providing where the need is great and no others have the expertise or capacity to”. Whilst 37% disagreed, a further 19% indicated that they “didn’t know” in relation to this approach.

Graph 9: Agreement with the delivery approaches of encouraging a collective responsibility (n=671) and supporting others and only directly providing where the need is great and no others have the expertise or capacity to (n=626)



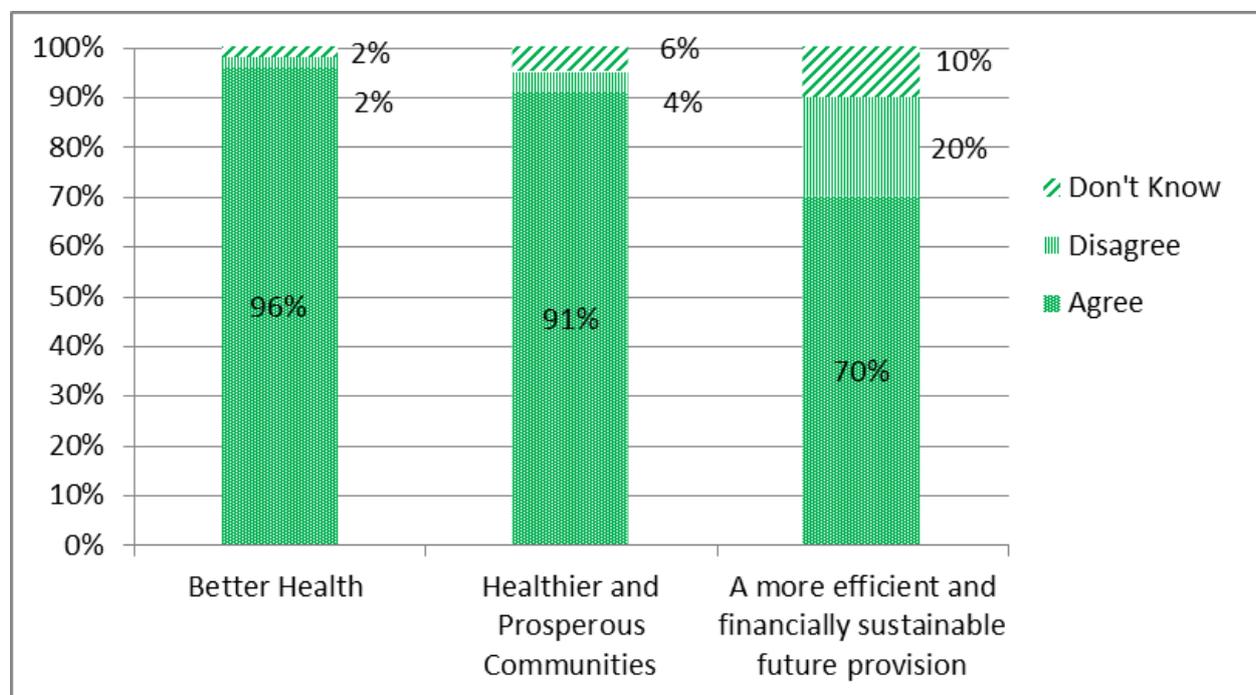
Key Outcomes

The three key outcomes identified in the draft Sport and Active Recreation Strategy were:

- Better Health
- Healthier and Prosperous Communities and
- Securing a more efficient and financially sustainable future offer.

As shown in **Graph 10**, 96% agreed that “better health” (n=657) and 91% agreed that “healthier and prosperous communities” should be a key outcome of the draft strategy (n=644). 70% also agreed that “a more efficient and sustainable future provision” should be a key outcome of the strategy (n=616).

Graph 10: Agreement with key outcome of the draft Sport and Active Recreation Strategy



Key Themes

41% indicated that they felt that there were outcomes missing from the draft strategy and were asked to outline what they felt were the missing outcomes (n=645).

A key theme highlighted in the comments around **missing outcomes** was that of ensuring that sport and active recreation is inclusive and accessible to all. Comments specifically made reference to:

- Ensuring provision was inclusive and accessible to those with disabilities, mental health issues and those of all ages.

- Ensuring provision was accessible to all including those living in areas of deprivation, making reference to the lack of availability of public transport and the additional cost of transport for those required to travel further distances to access facilities.
- Ensuring support for those who wish to take part in a wide range and variety of sports.

A number of comments were made in this section that related specifically to each of the key outcomes and to the impact of the potential rationalisation of leisure centres. These comments are noted under the relevant report headings.

Outcome 1: Better Health

There was strong agreement that the actions identified would support the outcome of achieving better health:

- 97% agreed that our future generations should be inspired to adopt healthy active lifestyles (n=663)
- 96% agreed that the council should support and encourage the provision of more opportunities for more daily active recreation in our communities and work places (n=659) and
- 84% agreed with the provision of specialist interventions e.g. exercise referral, outreach work using physical activity (n=645)

Key Themes

Comments under the “better health” outcome reinforced comments made in the previous section relating to missing outcomes. In addition, the following actions were identified as helping to support the outcome of achieving better health:

- Joining up strategies and planning for future need
- Promoting healthy living through education. This action is not just about increasing activity levels but ensuring a good understanding of role of diet and exercise
- Making better use of outdoor space and improving active travel routes (specifically cycle networks and footpaths) to encouraging general fitness through incidental exercise

“...there is a real opportunity to create a network of cycle and footpaths (away from busy roads) that will help connect communities with facilities such as the leisure centre and town centre and address the over reliance on the motor car...”

- A number of references were made to the exercise referral scheme and its importance in supporting those with health issues

Outcome 2: Healthier and Prosperous Communities

There was agreement that the actions identified in the draft strategy would support the outcome of healthier and prosperous communities:

- 88% agreed that working with community sports clubs and their governing bodies to help our clubs become bigger and stronger (n=655)
- 60% agree with reviewing the commercial business case and options for a new or improved leisure attraction in the south west of the county borough (17% don't know) (n=647)

Key Themes

Comments under the “healthier and prosperous communities” outcome reinforced comments made in the previous sections with the following actions identified as helping to support the outcome:

- Working with other providers of sport and active recreation within the county borough
- Encouraging and supporting local clubs and organisations to provide a *range* of activities including athletics, running, hockey, bowls
- Provision needs to be accessible and affordable to all

Outcome 3: A more efficient and financially sustainable future provision

Overall, there was agreement that the actions outlined would help achieve a more efficient and financially sustainable future provision.

- 94% agree with maximising the use of all our community amenities and the local environment (n=657)
- 54% agree with maximising use of assets through co-locations, invest to save models and aim to reduce subsidy levels at our strategic leisure centres to between £1 and £1.20 per user (16% don't know) (n=648)
- 74% agree with creating more sustainable facilities by improving schools use agreements and investment in more attractive strategic facilities (n=652)
- 63% agree with focussing our unique and essential role on providing specialist interventions in communities (20% don't know) (n=639)
- 87% agree with motivating young people - commissioning and supporting our schools to provide the right learning environment that is also available for community activity at appropriate times (n=653)
- 70% agree that where there is a business case, we will invest in key, strategic facilities (17% don't know) (n=637)
- 89% agreed that the council should ensure that strategic facilities directly operated by us receive the level of regular investment required to ensure that equipment and facilities are safe, functional, modern and inspirational (n=644).

Key Themes

Comments under the “more efficient and financially sustainable future provision” outcome were reflective of comments made in the previous sections with the following actions specifically identified as helping to support the outcome:

- Ensure opening times allow for access to facilities at times when they are needed (full time working people, shift workers and during the day)
- Ensure facilities provided are of a good quality (a number suggested that this was not currently the case)
- Remove parking charges at country parks to support maximising the use of all our community amenities and the local environment
- There were mixed views in relation to the feasibility of using school facilities (access and capacity)
- Motivating young people beyond schools and education and inspiring future generations

What Needs To Be Done

Corporate Policy

97% agreed sport and active recreation makes a significant contribution to achieve healthy lifestyles, education, economy and regeneration across the County borough (n=648).

58% disagreed that it is no longer feasible for the Council to provide the 'same service for all' whilst only 25% agreed with this statement and a further 17% indicated that they "don't know" (n=643).

89% agreed that the Council should work with others to make the best use of all available opportunities, facilities, funding and people (n=645).

92% agreed that the Council should make better and more innovative use of the widest possible range of indoor and outdoor physical activity spaces across all communities (n=645).

77% agreed that the Council should follow a joint sport and active recreation and schools strategy to include a new robust joint use agreement with schools (n=643).

Key Themes

As noted above, 58% of respondents disagreed with the statement that it is no longer feasible for the Council to provide the 'same service for all' and as such there were a large number of comments relating to this statement which reinforced views expressed in previous sections of the consultation i.e. ensuring accessible and inclusive provision for all, across the county borough:

"By stating the council can't 'provide the same service for all' are you implying that some communities will be treated differently to others?"

- Keeping costs down was a concern, in particular, ensuring that alternative and school-based provision does not cost more however, a number also suggested increasing charges could be a means of keeping facilities open
- Making better use of a range of other venues was supported by many although smaller proportion of respondents supported joint school use. Concerns were raised over the capacity of schools to run facilities and restrictions on access to facilities (opening times, school holiday closures)
- Ensuring a multi-agency approach that encourages healthy lifestyles beyond exercise

"It is important that the council goes out of its way to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities to use leisure facilities.The council also needs to encourage people to use the facilities it provides. Maybe there should be less focus on buildings and expensive

infrastructure, and more focus on encouraging people to use the natural facilities and natural environment all around us. “

Facilities

58% agreed with adopting the Welsh Government and Sport Wales Facilities Blueprint for Sport and Active Recreation (n=622).

50% agreed with adopting a decision making matrix for determining the provision of strategic leisure facilities that are directly managed by the Sport and Leisure Service. 17 disagreed and 33% said they “don’t know” (n=622).

69% agreed that the Council should seek clarity on the future swimming entitlement along with supporting the rationale for a sustainable programme of aquatic delivery also informing the need for future aquatic facilities (n=622).

90% agreed that the Council should develop a plan to enhance and maximise the impact of outdoor spaces, playing fields, parks and informal recreational spaces (n=630).

81% agreed with maximising the use of 3G facilities for school, community and weekend competitive use alongside the grass pitch network (n=625).

Key Themes

A number of respondents indicated that they felt more information was required to allow them to respond to the question regarding adoption of the Welsh Government and Sport Wales Facilities Blueprint for Sport and Active Recreation.

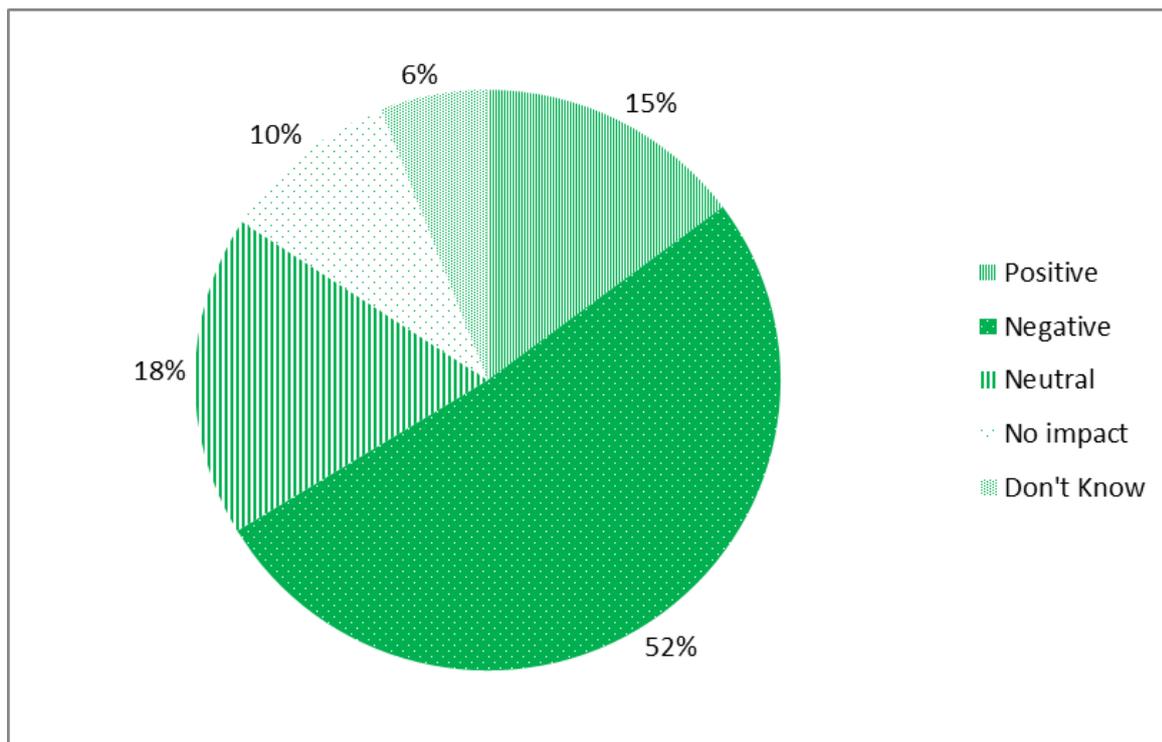
Comments made reference to the rationalisation leisure centres reflecting that only 50% agreed with the Council adopting a decision making matrix for determining the provision of strategic facilities:

- The lack of capacity of remaining facilities to support an expanding population was a concern
- Respondents questioned the suitability of alternative facilities for certain activities such as racket sports that require specialist courts
- A cost benefit analysis should be undertaken before any decisions are made

Rationalising Leisure Centres

Graph 11 shows that 52% felt that there would be a negative impact on them if the provision of leisure centres was rationalised so that the Council's Sport and Leisure service directly manages 4 strategic leisure centres at Risca, Caerphilly, Newbridge and one in the Bargoed/Aberbargoed area. This is in the context of 68% of respondents indicating that they had used a leisure centre at least once a month during the last year.

Graph 11: Impact of Rationalising Leisure Centres (n=648)



Key Themes

As noted previously, the leisure centres used most often by those who responded to the survey were Pontllanfraith, Newbridge, Cefn Fforest and Caerphilly.

Reflecting the proportion of respondents who currently use these leisure centres, a large proportion of comments relating to the proposed rationalisation specifically rejected the closure of both Cefn Fforest and Pontllanfraith Leisure Centres. A number of comments also made reference to supporting the proposal to develop a key strategic facility in the south west of the county borough.

Specifically the key areas of impact were seen to be:

- Increased travel time and distance for those who drive
- Concern relating to inadequate public transport provision to sites

- Increased cost of travel
- Reduced availability and access to facilities (capacity and opening hours)

It was felt by some respondents that these changes would either prevent or discourage them from using leisure centres in the future.

It should be noted that currently, 59% of those who use Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre most often also indicated that they travel to the place where they take part in sport and active recreation by car (alone or with others). This figure is 79% for Newbridge, 63% for Cefn Forest and 77% for Caerphilly.

As highlighted previously, comments reiterated the need to ensure that provision is inclusive and accessible to those with disabilities, mental health issues, those of all ages and those living in areas of deprivation.

In terms of how the negative impact of rationalising leisure centres could be mitigated the following themes were evident in the comments:

- Ensuring that alternative provision is in place before centres are closed
- Maximising the use of local assets (community centres, church halls etc) to provide classes etc
- Ensuring that there is adequate capacity within remaining facilities if leisure centres are to close, specifically, swimming pools and swimming lessons

Sport and Active Recreation Outreach Intervention Programmes

95% agreed that the Council should continue to collaborate with schools to motivate children and young people to adopt and continue healthy active lifestyles (n=646).

95% agreed that the Council should continue to provide targeted support to help keep older people involved and active in local communities (n=641).

88% agreed that the Council should continue to encourage and support federations of clubs sharing resources (n=636).

81% agreed that the Council should continue to provide specialist interventions to reach targeted audiences where there is evidence of need and no other alternative provider (n=631).

82% agreed that the Council should continue to lead the regional Active Gwent collaboration programme to increase participation in sport and physical activity in a way that has the greatest impact in Caerphilly (n=634).

Key themes

- There is a need to monitor and evidence the effectiveness of intervention programmes
- Ensure sustainability of provision when relying on volunteers or private companies moving forward
- Consider the negative impact of rationalising leisure centres on local clubs who use these facilities
- There is a need to work with parents to ensure they encourage and adopt healthy active lifestyles for themselves and their families
- Encourage a Gwent wide approach with cross border access to facilities

Written and Social Media Responses

Twenty individuals, groups and organisations chose to submit a written response to the consultation. These are found in **Appendix 4**. Social Media responses are contained within **Appendix 5**.

Key themes reflected those highlighted in the wider survey and in more detail:

- Accessibility for residents with specific reference to
 - lack of public transport and distance of travel to facilities
 - fair geographical distribution
 - cost of travel – mitigate increased costs to residents in areas impacted
 - removal of facilities from more deprived areas – cumulative impact
 - cost of use
 - parking charges at country parks
 - provision of alternative community health and leisure venues if local leisure centres are to close
 - capacity of swimming pools (swimming lessons)
 - disability
- Work collaboratively with other organisations
 - Encourage community-led innovation and involvement
 - support local clubs and other providers
- Explore ways to ensure viability of existing provision including community centres and shared school/leisure use facilities/church halls and other community assets – this includes promoting what is available
- Explore the feasibility of using school premises
- Acknowledging financial pressures whilst questioning economic sustainability versus true sustainability (health and deprivation)
- Support for development of strategic sites in Caerphilly and Bargoed
- Ensuring careful consideration of the importance of the sport and active recreation provision in the long term health of residents and ensuring that no changes result in poorer health outcomes for residents
- Specifically, there was opposition to the closure of Cefn Fforest and Pontllanfraith Leisure Centres. Ensuring that alternative provision is available to meet the demand for services in the area e.g. swimming pool capacity at other leisure centres if Cefn Fforest is to close
- Consider the links between sport and active recreation provision and crime and anti-social behaviour
- Consider closer links and reference to PSB Well-being Plan Action Areas (including, but not limited to, the Natural Environment, Volunteering and Good Health & Wellbeing) and other thematic areas such as Active Travel and Play

- Linking with the emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy – to consider delivery of services and natural/built infrastructure that deliver multiple benefits
- Planning - consideration of usable sport and active recreation spaces at the planning stage of any developments, in particular, housing developments
- Strengthen reference to links between the outdoors and mental health
- Active travel – encourage and improve cycle networks
- Ensure physical literacy from preschool and through the school setting
- Promote and increase awareness of opportunities for physical activity and active travel
- Promote active workplaces
- Community involvement and an innovative approach are key to achieve change

The key themes noted via social media broadly reflected those in the survey generally with specific reference to improving cycle networks and removing parking charges from country parks.