

Dear Resident,

In October of 2016 a public meeting convened by the Parish Council at the Feathers discussed the potential for Hedley to fund, build, develop and manage a village hall. The discussion expanded into the alternative potential of a childrens play area, and so it was eventually decided that a village survey should be undertaken in order to establish exactly what facilities, if any, the majority of residents do in fact desire to be developed in the village.

Accordingly, a group of 5 volunteer residents set about developing a questionnaire with the objective of recording—on a confidential basis—the views of all residents. The questionnaire was to recognise the previously demonstrated interest in a hall and/or a play area, but was also to encourage new ideas and original thinking. The overriding desire of the Council was to try to find ways and means of improving the social activity within the village, as this had for some time been felt to be steadily reducing.

The survey has now been finalised, and In synopsis, the findings were:

60 of 91 households approached in Hedley (incl outlying properties within the parish) participated
Of those 60 participants, 30% were positively for a hall, 30% against and 40% neutral

Of the same 60, 58% were for a play area, 25% against and 17% neutral.

(20 children live in participating households, and the village attracts from time to time an additional 46 children who regularly visit)

12 residents were willing to be hall trustees, and a further 31 were willing to help manage a hall or play area in other ways.

Residents do have some concerns , specifically including matters of health/safety, vandalism, increased traffic, insurance availability /cost, and continuity of manager/trustee availability.

There were numerous suggestions from residents, additional to a hall and/or a play facility, which were felt by them to possibly offer improvements to community interaction. Examples include a mini-library, a village circuit/walk, car sharing schemes, and a resurrection of whole village events. These and others are all recorded in the full report which will now be placed on the Parish Council website. (hedleyparish.org.uk). Any non-computer users may obtain a hard copy by request to any Councillor.

The Council is proposing to follow up on the survey by facilitating another informal village meeting, possibly on the lines of a coffee morning where the various comments in the survey can be discussed to decide on what the village would like to do next. A date and venue will be advised in due course.

We are also keen to recruit another member of the Parish Council, either as a full member, or as a village ambassador who would not necessarily need to undertake formal Council duties.

Expressions of interest may be addressed to any Councillor

The results of the survey can be found under Council Documents