



To lease or not to lease:

Residents' views on entering into a long-term lease of the St Andrews Community Centre.

Public Consultation.

December 2024.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2007, Saxilby with Ingleby Parish Council [the Council] took on the management of Saxilby Public Recreation Ground [the Recreation Ground] and the buildings upon it.

In November 2021, Saxilby Public Recreation Ground Charity [the Charity] raised a legal issue whereby having the Council manage the site was not in compliance with charity law and the Charity's indenture. Therefore, under the current legal set-up, the Council could not manage the field.

The charity's managing trustees must carry out this role and the Council had to act within the parameters of being the custodian trustee for the Charity.

In response, in May 2022, the Council rescinded its management of the recreation ground¹.

In November 2022, the Council then considered entering into a lease agreement with the Charity to manage the St Andrews Community Centre [the Community Centre].

In order for a charity to lease areas on their land, a set process has to be followed, including obtaining a professional valuation. A professional valuation of £18,850pa was subsequently received in March 2024.

Following this, the Council paused to reconsider progressing the lease in light of this new financial information and agreed to undertake a number of further steps to gather information in order to make a final decision. This included a feasibility study, structural and condition surveys, and undertaking community consultation to gauge public opinion.

The consultation ran from 09 September to 03 November 2024, involved paper and online surveys, and achieved a total of 681 valid responses. The results showed overwhelming support for the Council to enter into a long-term lease agreement for the Community Centre, with 90% in support and 10% not in support.

The consultation also assessed the potential impacts on individuals with protected characteristics under equalities legislation. Notable concerns were raised by 24% of respondents regarding the impact on age groups and 17% regarding disabilities, with many emphasising the importance of the Community Centre for mental and physical wellbeing; especially for young people, families, and older residents.

In conclusion, the survey significantly supports the Council's pursuit of a lease for the Community Centre, with the majority of respondents viewing it as vital to community services and wellbeing.

Further detailed feedback on the consultation and comments is provided in the separate appendices.

¹ Excluding the park, wheeled park, and community centre, where there was mutual agreement to lease the outdoor areas of the play park, wheeled park, and Multi-Use Games Area on the recreation ground, with a nominal annual fee.

BACKGROUND

In April 2007, the Charity and the Council agreed that the Council would take on the day-to-day running of the Recreation Ground.

The Charity later reviewed this decision and in November 2021 made the Council aware of an issue; whereby the legal footing required for this change had not been put in place.

As a result, the management of the Recreation Ground by the Council was not legally compliant with the indenture of the Charity¹ and charity law. This is because the Recreation Ground has:

a) A committee of management undertaking the management and control of the Recreation Ground² and

b) The Recreation Ground is “held by the Council as [custodian] trustees³”.

That is to say, based on the current legal set-up of the Charity, the Council could not legally manage the field, as the separate managing committee must carry out this role under charity law.

In May 2022, the Council rescinded the management of the Recreation Ground.

A project plan was prepared and agreed at July 2022 Full Council. The road map laid down steps to complete the hand back of the management of the Recreation Ground to the Charity, to resolve the legal issues identified and ensure legal compliance.

As part of this process, in November 2022 the Council considered whether to request to lease the Community Centre from the Charity. Based on the information available at this time, it was agreed in principle to lease the Community Centre from the Charity.

In March 2024, the professional valuation of £18,850pa was shared, for a full repairing and insuring lease for the Community Centre.

Council then held a meeting to pause, reflect, and consider whether leasing the Community Centre remained the preferred course of action having received this new financial information.

A process was agreed by Council to solicit the necessary information to fully consider whether to continue with the progression of a lease (see review stages on the following page).

² Indenture of the Parish Recreation Ground Charity No. 521978

³ Indenture of the Parish Recreation Ground Charity No. 521978

Review Stages

Stage 1

- Meet with the Charity for discussions/negotiations
- Obtain legal advice

Stage 2

- Consultant to undertake feasibility study into leasing the community centre
- **Community consultation**
- Professional condition survey of the community centre

Stage 3

- Meet with the charity for discussions/negotiations
- Obtain legal advice

As part of this agreed process, a community consultation has been carried out. The community consultation forms part of the body of information being collated for Council.

The community consultation was intended to gauge residents' opinions on whether they want the Council to continue running the community centre and enter into a long-term formal lease, or not.

METHODOLOGY

A survey (see Appendix 1 for the blank survey) was conducted with residents within the parish via paper and online collection methods.

The survey was drafted by the independent consultant, refined by the clerk, reviewed by councillors, and agreed at the September 2024 Full Council meeting ([Ref FC24/187 11c](#)).

A supporting consultation [background document](#) was released following feedback from Council that residents required more detailed information to provide an informed survey response.

The community consultation period ran for seven weeks from Monday 9 September 2024 to Sunday 3 November 2024.

Paper Survey

All households within the parish received a paper survey during September 2024. If additional surveys were requested for other household members, these were available from Saxilby Library Hub and the parish office,

The surveys were hand delivered to properties in Saxilby, by Saxilby Scouts and Guides Association. For properties located in Ingleby and the outlying areas of the parish, surveys were delivered by Royal Mail.

Paper surveys were collected via a locked and secured box located in Saxilby Library.

The box was removed from the library on Monday 4 November.

The box was unlocked with two officers present and surveys counted. This process was recorded.

The surveys were input into a separate collector in Survey Monkey by one officer, with another officer present to maintain accuracy, ensuring no inputting errors occurred.

A total of 139 completed paper surveys were received and input.

Online Survey

Residents were able to complete the survey online, with links from the parish council website, on social media, on the paper survey, and in the monthly parish newsletter - the Foss Focus.

A total of 542 valid surveys were received via this method.

Data Checking and Parameters

To ensure the data was as accurate as possible, the data was checked.

Survey Monkey records the IP address of where the survey was submitted from.

Margin of error for multiple survey entries from same IP address

The margin of error was checked where multiple surveys were received from the same IP address, for 1 survey, 1-2 surveys, 1-3 surveys, and 1-4 survey submissions per IP address.

The results fell within the confidence interval of the overall survey results (+/-3.3%) with a range of +/-2% for the results (e.g. 88% Lease, 12% don't lease compared to overall results of 90% lease, 10% don't lease).

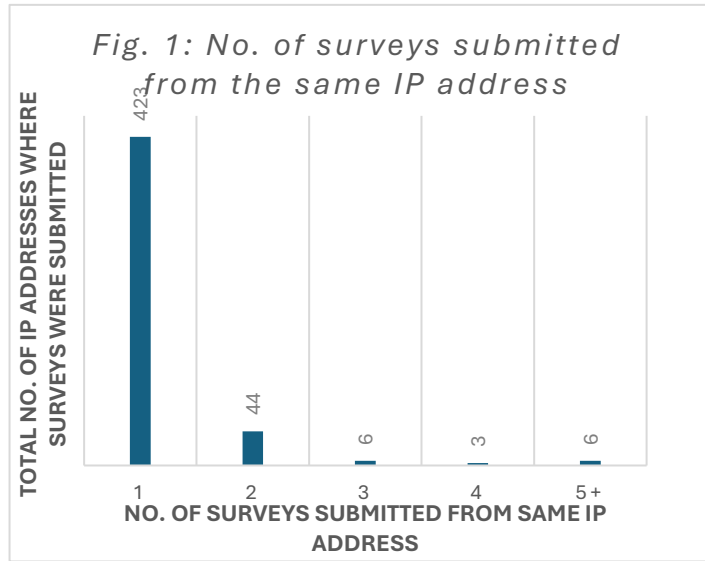
Surveys from IP address	Should lease (%)	Should not lease (%)	Responses (no.)
1 survey per IP address	90	10	423
1- 2 surveys per IP address	89	11	515
1- 3 surveys per IP address	88	12	530
1- 4 surveys per IP address	89	11	542
Overall (all surveys methods)	90	10	681

A maximum of four submissions were accepted from each IP address.⁴

Where five or more surveys were completed online from the same IP address they were not included. There were six occurrences of five or more surveys being submitted from the same IP addresses.

⁴ This parameter was selected, based on 1-4 people encompassing the household size for 97% of the population (2021 Census for Saxilby Ward, *not available at parish boundary level at time of publication*) and the average household size being 2.3 in Saxilby with Ingleby 2011 Census data/ 2.4 people based on the 2021 Census for England). Where 5+ surveys were submitted from the same IP address the validity of the results was impacted.

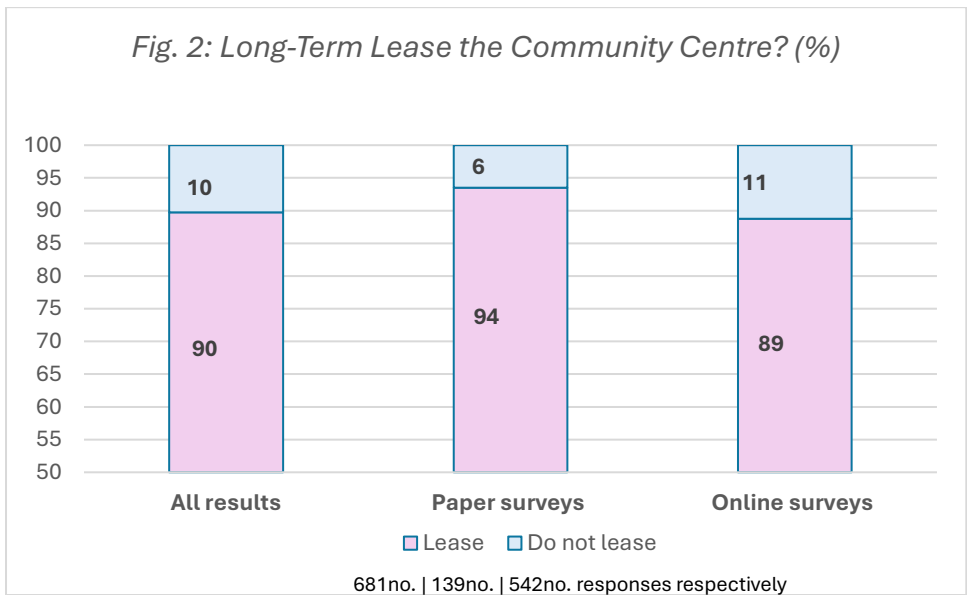
A total of 681 valid surveys were received – being those submitted by paper or online up to a maximum of four surveys per IP address.



Paper submission versus online survey submission data

The confidence interval was checked for the results of the online (+/-6.4), paper (+/-32.2 – small sample base), and the overall results (+/3.3).

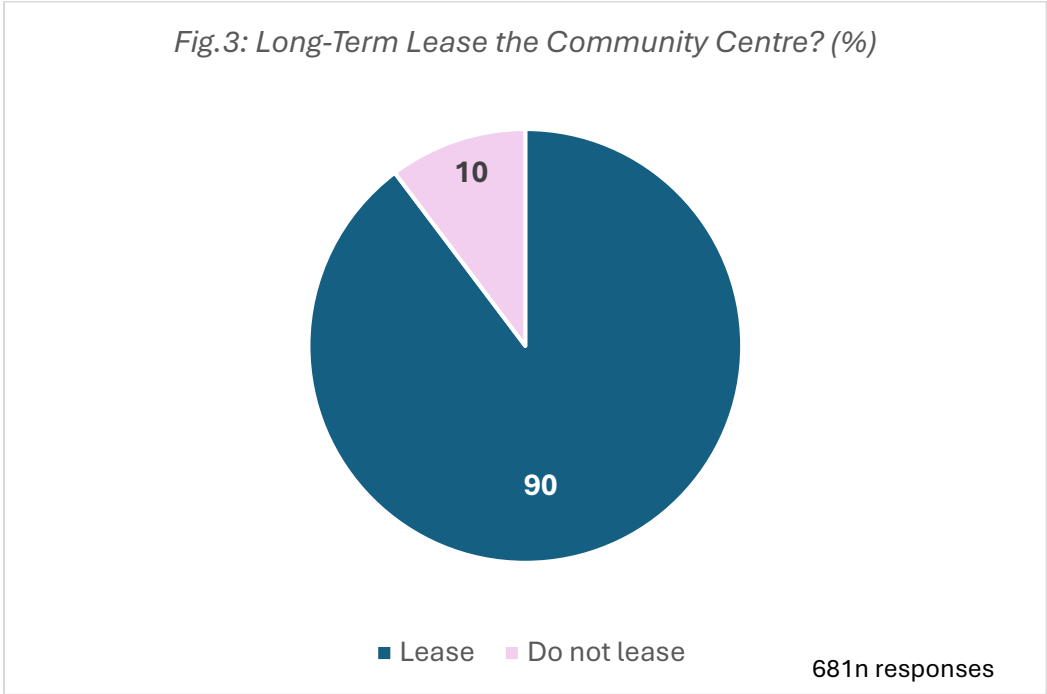
This provides confidence in the survey results, with the response remaining that the council should enter into a long-term community centre lease across all survey collection methods and when taking into account the confidence interval.



RESULTS

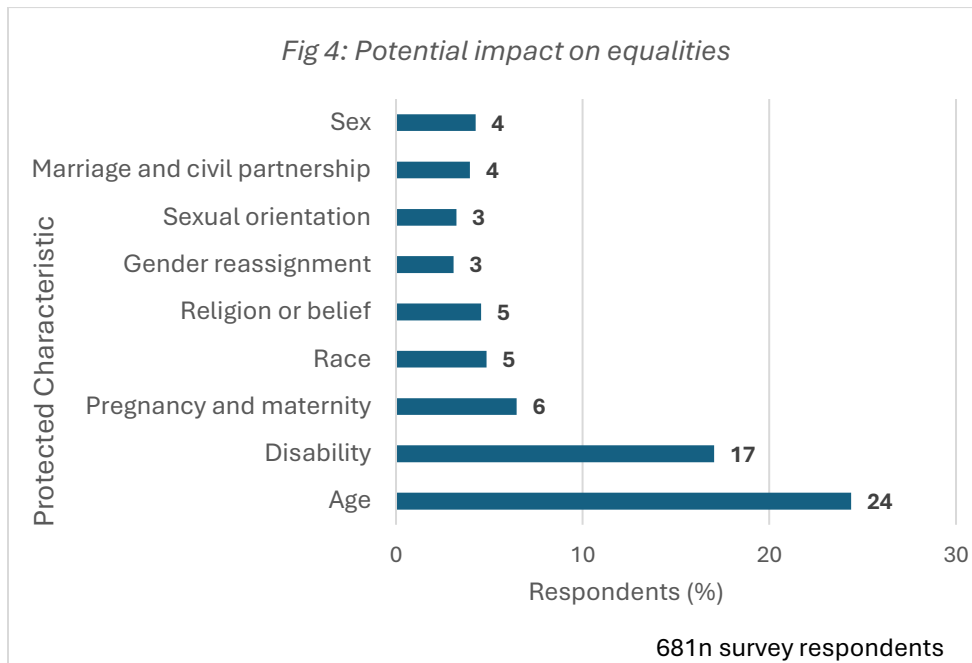
Should the council lease the Community Centre or not?

- 90% of respondents selected “I think the parish council should sign a formal lease to manage and maintain the St Andrews Community Centre”.
- 10% of respondents (70no.) selected “I think the parish council should not sign a formal lease to manage and maintain the St Andrews Community Centre.”



Impact on protected characteristics

Local authorities have a statutory duty to have due regard to certain equality considerations when exercising their functions, like making decisions⁵. As this decision will affect the provision of services and facilities, the survey asked respondents to consider whether they thought it would impact on them, or those who shared protected characteristics, shown in the graph below.



The most frequent concern was regarding the protected characteristics of age (24%, 166no.) and those with disabilities (17%, 116no.).

Themes from the comments related to the detrimental impact on young people and children, older people, and families, if the Community Centre closed. This was related to the importance of the centre in supporting residents' physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Access to facilities including the library and council office was raised, along with the building being a hub for the community.

A full list of the comments is provided in Appendix 2, with the word cloud below providing a visual representation of the themes coming from this equalities question - the larger the word the more frequent its use:

⁵ Public Sector Equality Duty (2023) - www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-for-public-authorities/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-for-public-authorities

CONCLUSION

The consultation was carried out to ascertain residents' views on whether they want the Council to progress with a long-term formal lease of the Community Centre.

The results demonstrated a clear majority of residents (90% +/-3.3) want the Council to lease the Community Centre.

This, along with the other information that is being assimilated as part of the agreed process, will facilitate the council in their final decision on whether to enter into a long-term lease agreement.