

# Report on VH Renovation Poll

## Introduction

It is proposed that the village hall is renovated, following the provision of a new lease by Merton College. The maintenance of the hall was reduced, pending the completion of the lease discussions and as a result the hall has been underused in recent years. The work required to bring the hall back to a sufficient condition is substantial, and therefore it was considered appropriate to survey the views of the village.

In addition, a condition of the loan application process for the work was that it could be demonstrated that the village was in favour of the proposal to increase the precept to finance the project.

## Brochure

A brochure was prepared, to inform the village of the current status of the village hall, and to provide an update on the work carried out since the lease was signed. It was hand delivered to every house in the village.

In the brochure, the estimated cost of the refurbishment was presented, and the preferred option of a Public Works Loan was discussed. The brochure also contained a poll form, to collect the views of the village on the proposed renovation.

## The Poll

Three questions were asked in the poll:

- 1) Do you support the renovation of the hall? Y / N
- 2) Do you support the proposal to take out a loan to allow the project to progress within the Merton College timescales? Y / N
- 3) Would you be willing to help with the works, such as initial strip-out, decorating, etc? Y / N

A collection box was placed in the village phonebox for return forms.

The intention of the poll was to gauge the sentiments of the village. It was evident from previous meetings and discussions that there were some strong views being aired both for and against the renovation. Therefore, to ensure that all views could be included with no fear of embarrassment, the poll was set up to be anonymous with the option to add names if the voter wished.

As well as the brochure, the poll was also set up on the Parish Council Website, and a link provided in the brochure. This was provided to make it as simple to respond as possible, and to increase the likelihood of responses from villagers who may not have as easy access to the phonebox.

## Counting the Votes

The anonymous voting introduced a complication in the counting of the votes, with the possibility of 2 adults in the same household voting separately and anonymously, whereas other households cast a single anonymous vote. To address this, the votes were counted in 2 different ways, as individual votes and as household votes.

**Household** – The return forms were counted as a household, given that only one form was delivered to each house. The online returns were also counted as a household, unless it was clear that there were a number from the same household (by names provided or where there was a pattern of voting such as votes being cast within 1-2 minutes of each other. The online poll software monitored ‘unique’ votes and therefore it was clear when numerous votes had been made from the same PC. In this case, these were not counted)

**Individual** – All votes were counted as individual votes. Votes on return forms were counted as 2 individual votes, based on the assumption that each household had 2 adults. All online votes were counted individually.

The results of the poll are presented overleaf.

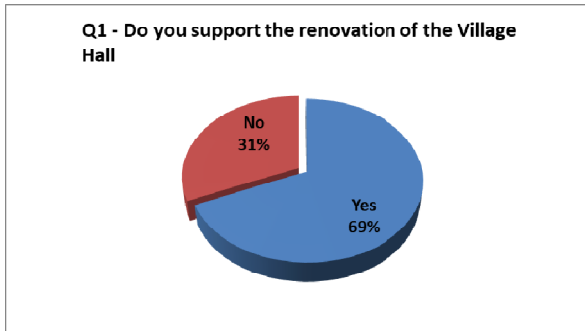
## The Results

The votes were as follows:

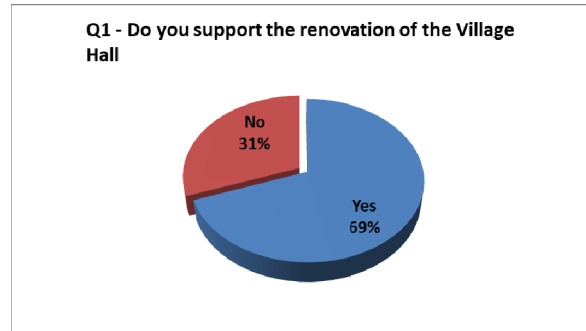
- There were 45 votes cast – 21 return forms were left in the phonebox and 24 returns were posted online.
- Of the return forms, 9 were cast anonymously. 8 of the online votes were cast anonymously.
- There were 4 partially spoilt votes in total – on 2 return forms, a “!” and “?” were written beside Q1 with no answer circled. The other questions were answered and therefore these answers were taken into account. One other return form had answers to all questions but the answers to Q1 and Q2 had been clearly scribbled out. For this vote, the answer to Q3 only was taken. One online vote had a double answer, both yes and no, to Q3. This was discounted, but the answers to Q1 and Q2 were taken into account.
- 3 returns included comments on the return forms, all of which were not in support of the renovation.
- There was one instance of multiple online votes (from the same PC), with 4 votes made in quick succession. Two of the votes were anonymous but 2 were named. The named votes were a couple, and therefore the 2 anonymous votes were considered likely to be for their children. These anonymous votes were therefore discounted from all counting.

## Findings

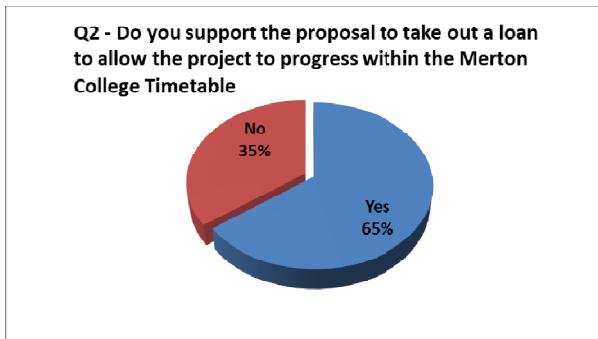
The results of the vote were as follows



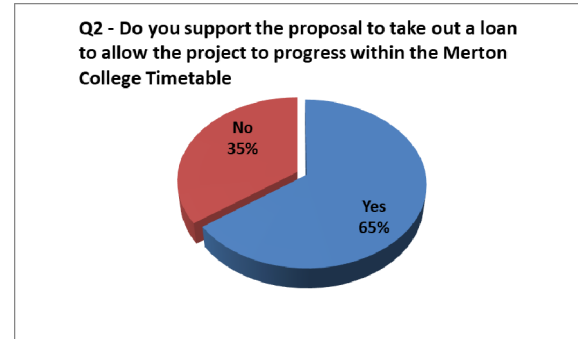
Individual



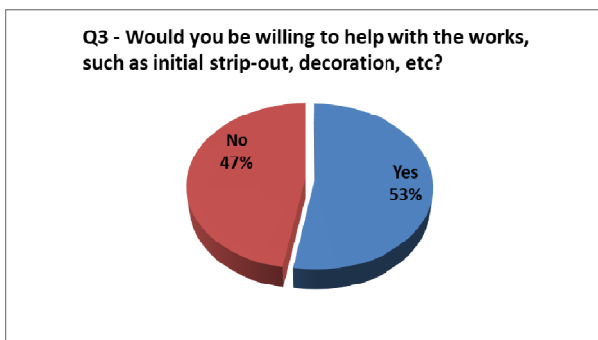
Household



Individual



Household



Individual



Household

## Analysis

- 69% of respondents support the renovation
- 65% support the proposal to take out a loan to finance the project
- Around 50% of respondents have offered help with the works

Correlation between the counting systems was high, with the counting to Q1 and Q2 giving equal results, and Q3 giving close results.