

St Mary's School, Shaftesbury **Consultation Response Report**

Produced by Mark Simons
for Dorset Council

March 2021

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St Mary's School Shaftesbury Consultation

Consultation Response Report

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| <p>What was the consultation about?</p> | <p>Dorset Council was seeking views on its idea to create a new school for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) on the former St Mary's School site near Shaftesbury, against other alternative options for the site. The site has the potential to become somewhere that Dorset children and adults can access educational and community facilities for Dorset children and adults, which could involve a combination of uses.</p> |
| <p>What did we need to find out</p> | <p>The council needs to understand more about the levels of support for its proposal to create a SEND school at St Marys Shaftesbury. It also needs to consider other potential uses for the site and the views of the local community. Further to this the council needs to find out if there are any unforeseen impacts of the proposals, and if so whether these can be mitigated.</p> |
| <p>Over what period did the consultation run?</p> | <p>The consultation period ran from Thursday 4 February 2021 to midnight Thursday 18 March 2021</p> |
| <p>What consultation methods were used?</p> | <p>The consultation involved an online and paper consultation survey. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online survey. This included free text sections for people to add any other comments. • Paper surveys available direct from Dorset Council by post |
| <p>How many responses were received overall?</p> | <p>1,427 overall responses were received. The vast majority of responses were from individuals. 53 were from business/organisations/parish councils. 89% of the individuals were Dorset Council residents</p> |
| <p>How representative is the response to the wider population?</p> | <p>The response size is good for a council consultation of this type. As this was an open survey it is not possible to define a statistically valid sample size. The response from residents was reasonably representative of the Dorset population. There was an uneven balance between males and females with 74% of responses from females and 23% from males. Responses came from a wide range of ages but only 15% came from respondents aged 65 or older. This compares to only 29% of the population being in this age band in the wider Dorset population. With 88% of the respondents saying their ethnic group was White British this is fairly typical of the wider population. Responses from disabled people were above average at 6.5% of responses compared to a Dorset figure of 5% based on those claiming either Disability Living</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance. Responses came from 48% who said they were Christian with the second largest group at 36% with no religion. |
| Where will the results be published? | Results will be published on the council's website www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk |
| How will the results be used? | When weighing up responses to these options, before deciding which represents the most appropriate use of the site we will take into account, but will not be limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it supports the delivery of council services to whom the council owes a statutory duty (for example, education provision) having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness • the efficient use of financial resources, in particular value for money • analysis of comparative need and demand in Dorset • the public sector equality duty • the extent to which any option will be consistent with adopted Dorset Council policy |
| Who has produced this report? | Mark Simons, Consultation Officer, Dorset Council March, 2021 |

Headlines

- Good response with around **1,427 responses**
- Response came from a wide variety of individuals/organisations
- Nearly 90% of responses came from Dorset Council residents
- 32% of responses came from local residents (within 3 miles of the school)
- **Very strong support** for St Marys **continuing for educational purposes**, with 92% overall in favour.
- **Very strong support** for using St Marys as a **SEND school** with 89% overall in favour.
- **Strong support** for the additional use of the St Mary's site to create a **campus with complementary facilities** for vulnerable children, young people and adults, with 82% overall in favour.
- Other possible uses -
 - Respite Care – Strong support**
 - A training and conferencing suite - Opposed**
 - Leasing the site to an independent school provider – Opposed**
 - Innovation Centre for STEM – Mixed but supported locally**
- **Proposed Other uses** – the most consistent suggestions coming through revolved around **using the sports facilities**

Background

The consultation explained: “Dorset Council has purchased the former St Mary's School site near Shaftesbury. Opportunities to secure a site with these educational facilities and land are very rare.

Currently more than 250 Dorset children and young people with SEND are educated in expensive, independent provision, many far out of our county. This currently costs around £14 million a year. Travelling far from Dorset is not always the best option for our children and young people and we want more of our children to be educated closer to home.

We purchased St Mary's School for £10.05 million, excluding taxes and fees, so that it can become a resource for Dorset for generations to come. The site comprises 165,000 square feet of mixed-use accommodation set within grounds of 55 acres. It would cost considerably more and take years to build a facility like this to accommodate a SEND school or any of the other potential options from scratch.

The site at St Mary's has been purchased using money from Dorset Council's 2020 to 2021 Capital Budget. The purchase forms part of the council's 5 year £145 million capital programme which is financed through a combination of government grants and money from the sale of assets. The use of the site is expected to save significant revenue expenditure that would otherwise be incurred by the council.”

The website included photographs, plans of the site and a list of what already existed on the site.

What we want to create at the St Mary's site and why

Dorset Council's preferred option for use of this site is to create a new school for children and young people of Dorset with SEND. The reasons that we currently prefer this option are below.

A growing number of Dorset children and young people have SEND; approximately 3,000 children and young people who are supported by an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Dorset Council has a statutory duty to deliver educational provision for these children. While most children with SEND can be supported in mainstream schools, such as local primary and secondary schools, there are some children and young people who need more specialist support and provision. Dorset is fortunate to have excellent special schools, however we recognise there are not currently enough places for all the children and young people who need them.

Currently some pupils with SEND have to travel far from home and even live their daily lives beyond Dorset as there's not enough educational provision closer to home. This costs significantly more, as buying this external provision outside of our county is more expensive and of course, travel costs are much higher too.

This is why our preferred idea is to create a special school for approximately 280 children and young people aged from 4 to 19 years, which would be the centrepiece of a wider inter-generational campus offering educational and community facilities for Dorset children and adults.

These proposals are part of our wider strategy to develop high quality education provision for Dorset children with SEND. This is in turn part of our wider strategy to provide the 'Best Education for All' Dorset children and young people. This is outlined in our [Children's Plan 2020 to 2023](#).

What else we're proposing to do with the St Mary's site alongside our preferred option

We believe there are opportunities to create a campus of complementary facilities that could help some of our most vulnerable children, young people and adults. One of the key attractions of the St Mary's site is the amount of space, accommodation and the number of buildings available. The site offers a tranquil and welcoming space.

This campus might include:

- early years provision
- residential care for some of our looked-after children
- outdoor education
- provision for young people with SEND to prepare for independence and adulthood
- adult education

How children and young people will get to this new school, if it goes ahead

Dorset children and young people with EHC plans are able to access travel assistance in line with our policy to make sure they can access education unless they live very close to it. Even then, children and young people who live close to a school are also entitled to travel assistance, for example if they cannot walk to it because they have SEND.

Find more information about who can get travel assistance on our [school transport for children with SEND page](#).

Alternative use options for the St Mary's site

Whilst the creation of a school for children and young people with SEND to meet growing needs is Dorset Council's preferred option, we're open to considering the alternative uses for the site through this consultation. The council considered uses for this site such as:

- a centre for respite care offering a mixed use of specialist care and accommodation
- a training and conferencing suite by leasing to a third-party tenant to operate the site
- leasing the site to an independent SEN school provider to operate
- creating an innovation centre for a start-up business to promote businesses in the STEM sector

To date the council does not feel that the other uses set out would achieve the same advantages as our preferred option and support the economic, efficient, and effective delivery of council services.

The Consultation

The consultation was open from Thursday 4 February 2021 to midnight Thursday 18 March 2021 and we anticipated would take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Alternative formats of this survey were available by contacting Dorset Council

Very few questions were compulsory. A copy of the survey is available in the appendix.

Analysis Method: Questions were considered on an individual basis. Overall responses were examined and specific responses of respondents who said they had a disability. Responses were also studied based on different respondent groups. The official organisational responses were looked at separately. The main method of analysis was looking at the percentage of respondents who expressed a view on each question.

The main method of analysis was looking at the percentage of respondents who expressed a view on each question often using Net agreement.

What is net agreement? Net agreement is a method of looking at creating a numeric for overall agreement. One adds together values of those who support something and subtract those who oppose something. This takes out middle values and the don't knows. If equal amounts of people support something as oppose it, you get a net agreement of zero. More in favour than against you get a positive value. More against than in favour you get a negative value.

For each open question the text comments have been studied and “coded” depending on what issues were raised. The coded comments are then reported on based on the amount of times those individual issues have been raised. Total redacted comments are provided in an appendix. Note: some figures may not sum due to rounding.

Response Method

Overall, 1,427 responses were received. The majority of these were electronic responses. Dorset Council received 3 paper copies in total.

About respondents

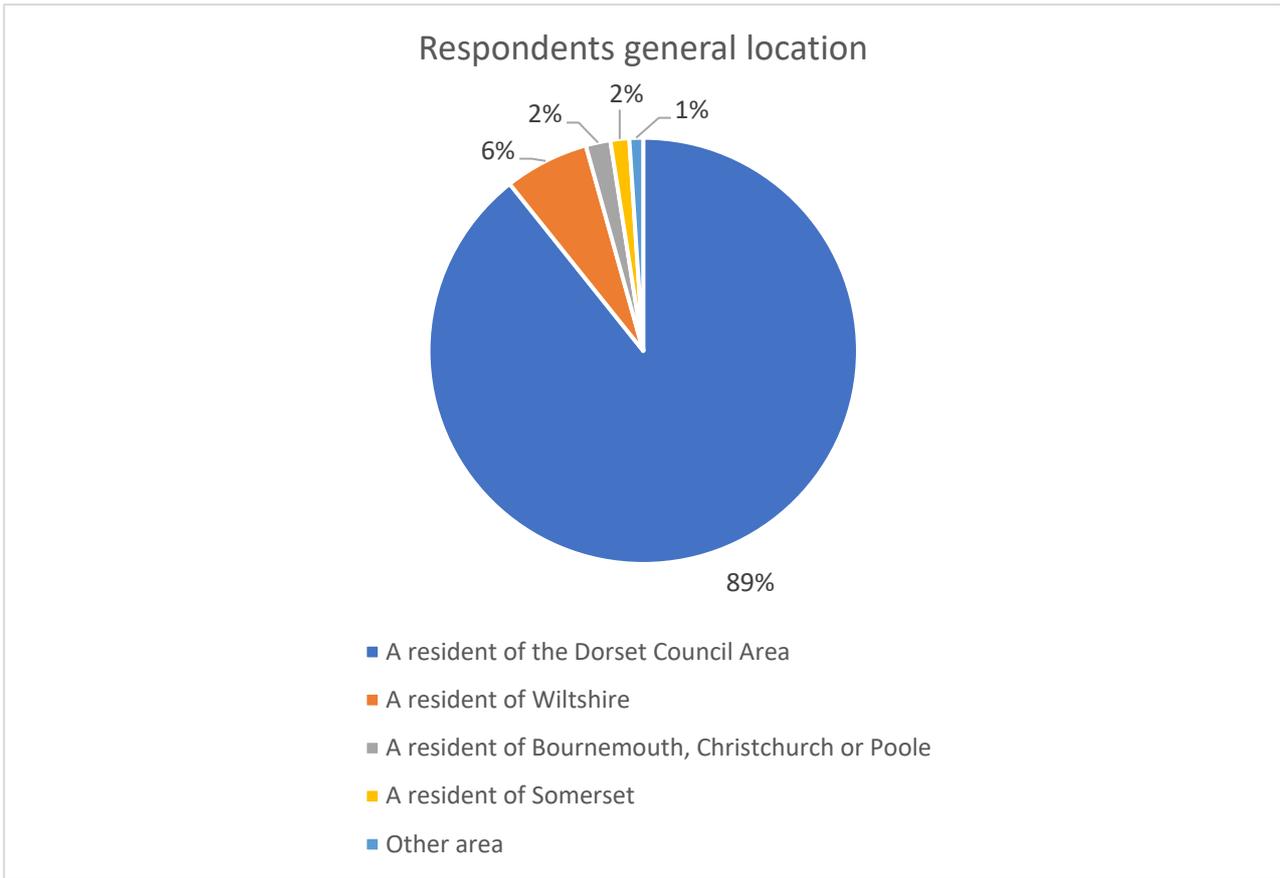
1,427 overall responses were received.

Respondents by County

| | % of all respondents | Number |
|--|----------------------|--------|
| A resident of Dorset Council area | 89.3% | 1,204 |
| A resident of Wiltshire | 6.4% | 86 |
| A resident of Bournemouth, Christchurch or Poole | 1.9% | 25 |

| | % of all respondents | Number |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------|
| A resident of Somerset | 1.4% | 19 |
| Other area | 1.1% | 14 |

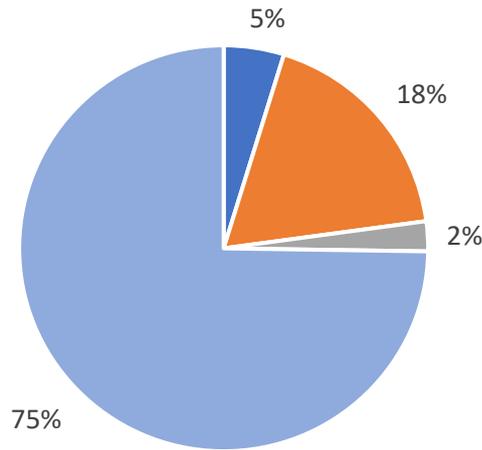
As the table above shows the respondents whose location was defined predominately came from the Dorset Council area. This made up 89.3% of those respondents.



Responses from Businesses/Community Groups/Councils/Other etc

| | Number |
|--|--------|
| A representative of a business | 10 |
| A local organisation/community group | 38 |
| A local parish/town council/ statutory organisation | 5 |
| Other (e.g. Councillor) | 157 |

Organisational/Other responses



- A representative of a business
- A local organisation/community group
- A local parish/town council/ statutory organisation
- Other (e.g. Councillor)

Further responses came on behalf of businesses, organisations, community groups, parish/town councils, statutory organisations and other. There were also responses from Town or Parish Councillors. A number of people responded as “Other”. These are broken down in the table below.

| “Other “ responses | % of other |
|---|------------|
| Ex-pupil of St Mary's | 18.8% |
| Teacher/Support Staff (SEND) | 13.3% |
| Teacher/Head (general) | 9.7% |
| Resident (Wiltshire) | 9.1% |
| Councillor | 7.9% |
| Resident ('Local'-unspecified) | 7.3% |
| Resident (Dorset) | 6.1% |
| Parent/family member/friend (of SEND child) | 6.1% |
| Clubs and organisations (e.g. swim, tennis, church) | 5.5% |
| Ex-employee of St Mary's | 4.8% |
| Other | 4.8% |
| Parent/family member (general) | 4.2% |
| Dorset Council employee | 2.4% |

Local residents' views

The figures show 462 responses from people living within 3 miles or so of the school were residents local to the Shaftesbury area. These make up 32% of the total responses. Throughout the report the views of these residents will be considered to see if they are different from the overall response.

SEND and Carers of disabled 16+

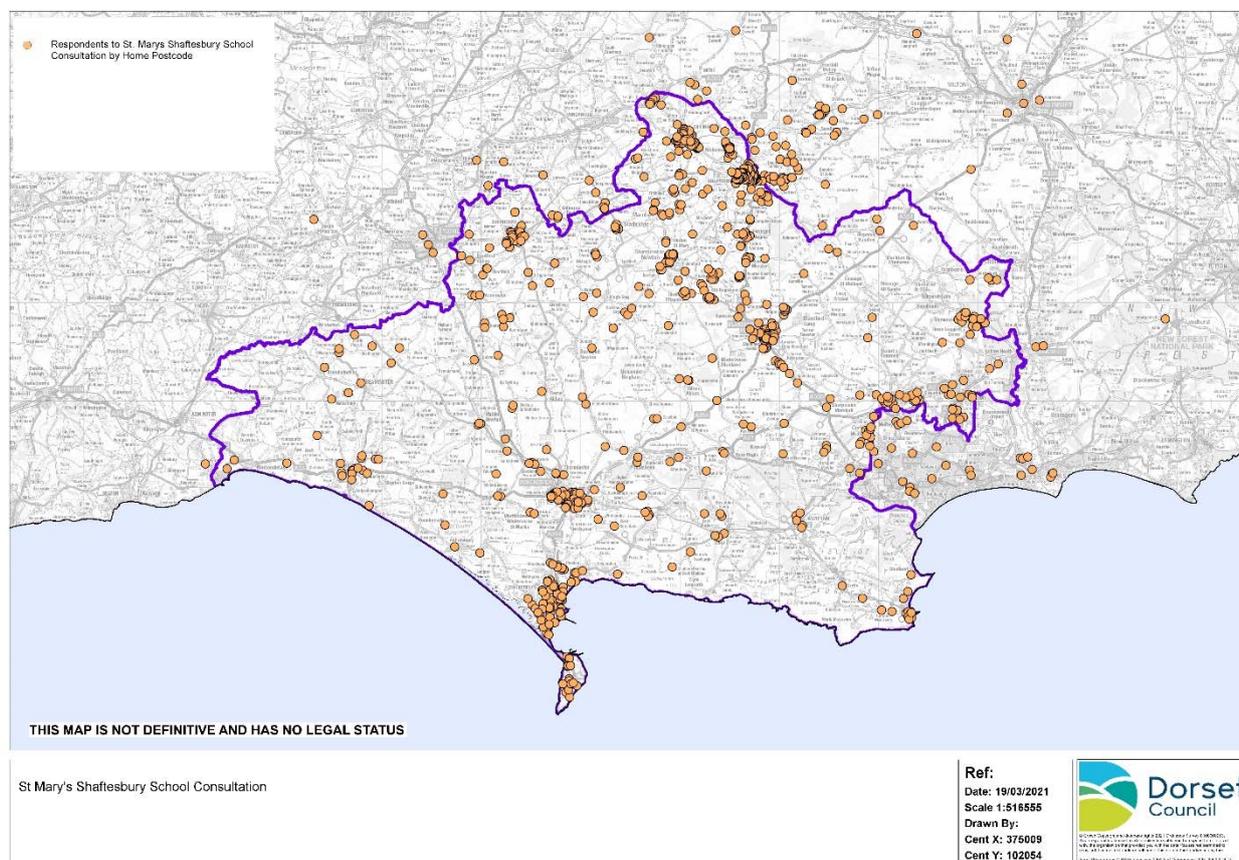
The survey also asked people if they were responding as a parent of a child with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or a parent/carer of a person who is disabled over 16 years old.

| | % of all respondents | Number |
|--|----------------------|--------|
| A parent of a child with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) | 20.4% | 291 |
| A parent or carer of a person who is disabled over 16 years old | 2.7% | 38 |

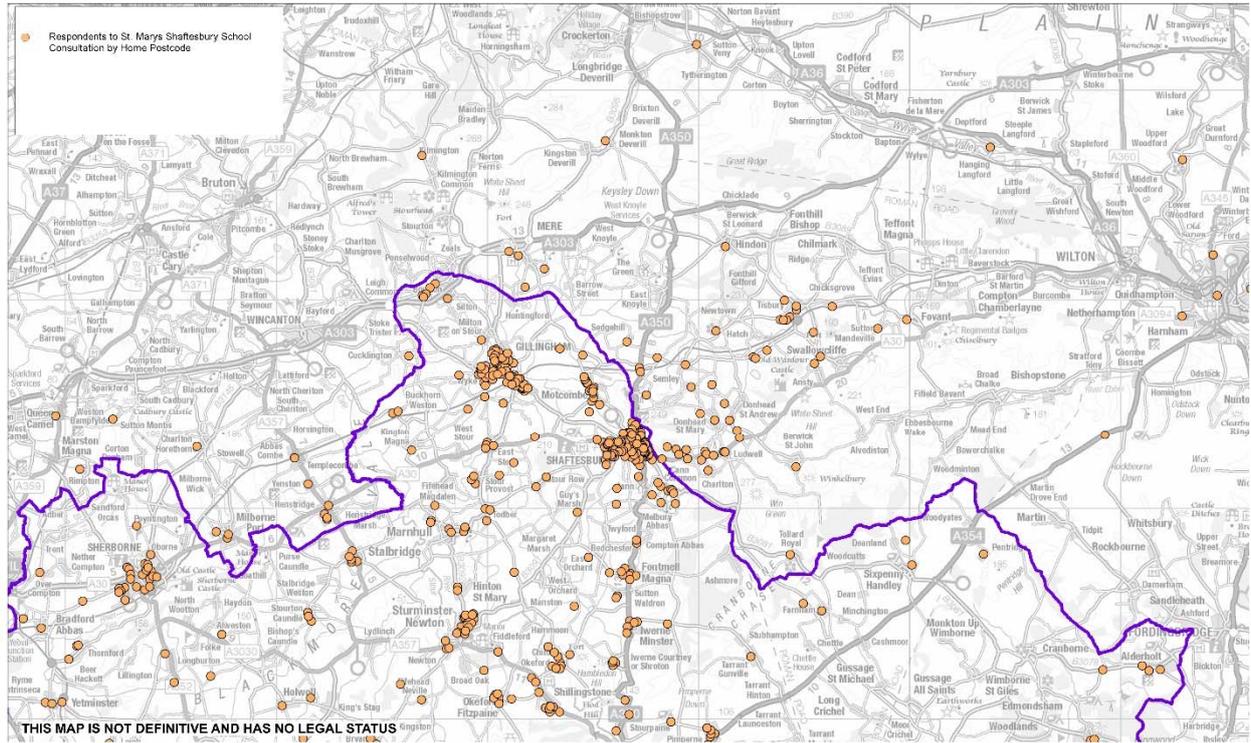
Many of these SEND and carer respondents came from within the Dorset area, but some came from over the border in Wiltshire and from other areas. These are respondents views are considered on each question.

Maps of responses to the consultation

Postcodes were supplied by 1,427 respondents with the majority of those living in the Dorset Council area. The map shows the distribution of overall responses to the consultation demonstrating a good spread across the geographical area. Promotion of the consultation appears to have been successful across all areas.



The following map shows responses from the more detailed area around the St Mary's School location.



St Mary's Shafesbury School Consultation

Ref:
Date: 19/03/2021
Scale 1:145698
Drawn By:
Cent X: 386676
Cent Y: 126518



Parish/Town/County Councils

1 response came back saying they were responding officially on behalf of a parish/town councils. This was from Sixpenny Handley & Pentridge Parish Council

There was also an official response from Wiltshire Council.

Dorset Councillors/Town/Parish Councillors

13 Dorset Councillors/town/parish councillors responded on their own behalf to the consultation.

Official Business Responses

10 businesses provided an official response from their business. Other responses came from people who worked in businesses but were not providing their official response. Overall, the responses came from the following types of business:

| |
|------------------------------|
| College |
| Business consultant |
| Health & Fitness |
| Catering Contractor |
| Freelance journalist |
| Wedding and event company |
| Baby and Toddler Swim School |
| Secondary School |
| Ecological consultancy |
| Taxi Services |

Organisational Responses

Official Organisational responses came from 14 organisations. There were also 21 individuals who responded as they were part of organisations but their response wasn't the official response. Organisational responses will be considered when looking at each question.

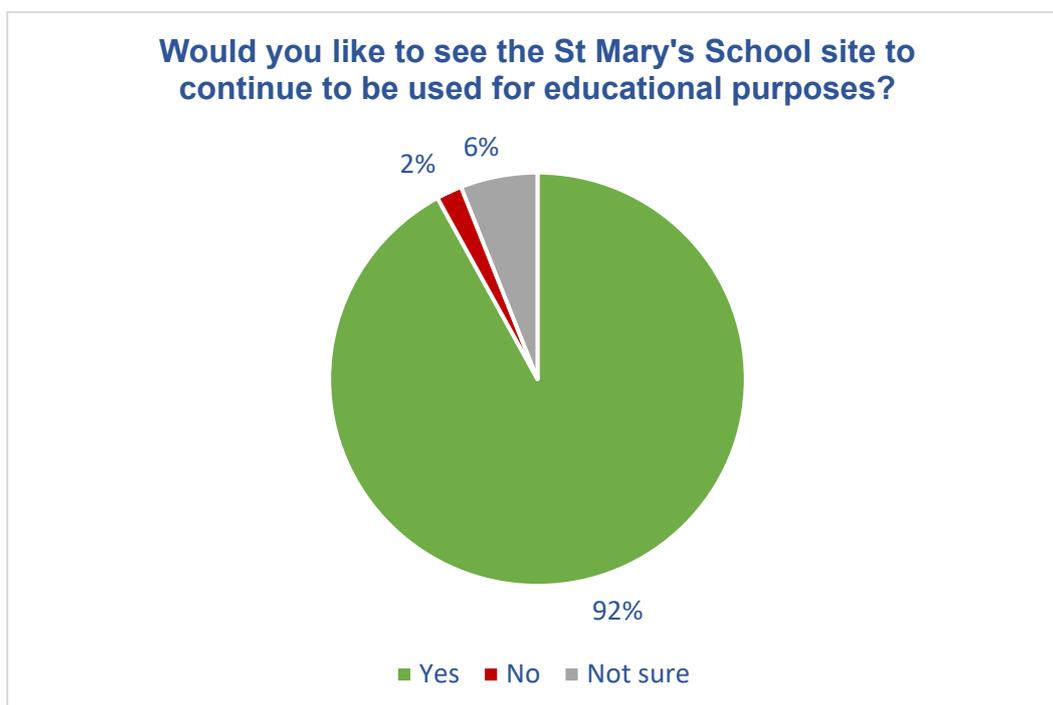
The Consultation

The consultation explained:

“Dorset Council's preferred option for the site is to expand its provision of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) for the county. The St Mary's site not only offers this potential but also a wide range of other possibilities that would make good use of the site.”

Q Would you like to see the St Mary's School site to continue to be used for educational purposes?

| Overall responses | % of all respondents | Number |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Yes | 91.9% | 1,310 |
| No | 2.0% | 28 |
| Not sure | 6.2% | 88 |



The overall response shows there is overwhelming support to continue to use the site for educational purposes, with nearly 92% supporting that proposal. This gives a **net agreement figure** of 91.9 minus 2.0= **plus 89.9**

Looking at different respondent groups, there are only some small variations. The table below shows the net agreement for these groups sorted by most agreement to the top.

| Continue to be used for educational purposes | Yes | No | Net Agreement |
|--|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Organisations/Community groups | 100.0% | 0.0% | +100.0 |
| SEND parents | 96.2% | 1.0% | +95.2 |
| Residents local to Shaftesbury (3 miles approx.) | 91.8% | 1.5% | +90.3 |
| Businesses | 90.0% | 0.0% | +90.0 |
| Overall | 91.9% | 2.0% | +89.9 |
| Parent/Carer disabled person 18+ | 89.5% | 2.6% | +86.9 |
| Disabled respondents | 86.4% | 2.3% | +79.5 |

The table shows considerable support amongst all groups for the site to remain in educational use, varying between unanimous support from organisations/community groups down to a still high net agreement of plus 79.5 from disabled respondents. It is worth noting that some groups had limited numbers of respondents, particularly “business” responses. No groups analysed were opposed to the proposal to keep the site for educational purposes.

Wiltshire Council responded supporting the proposal saying “As a neighbouring authority we welcome Dorset’s proposal to continue to use the St Mary’s School Site for educational purposes, and in particular to meet the needs of SEND for the county. Whilst we do not anticipate that large numbers of our own learners will take up places at the setting we would want to work with you in considering strategic place planning opportunities.”

Q Please could you explain your answer?

1,010 people took the opportunity to explain their answer. The table below shows the coded results from the responses.

| issue | Mentions |
|--|----------|
| The core purpose should be for SEND and educational purposes only. | 751 |
| Facilities to remain open to the public. | 70 |
| Should be used for more than just SEND purposes. | 24 |
| Concern over Council funding for the new facility. | 18 |
| Other | 15 |
| Facility to cater to SEND students over the age of 16. | 11 |
| Should be used for the arts. | 9 |
| Outdoor education / pursuits facility. | 9 |
| Site not suitable. | 8 |
| Creation of more educational facilities for all children. | 8 |
| This type of facility should be available for all ages. | 6 |
| Further details needed on how facility will be adapted for SEN. | 6 |
| Disagree with proposal for SEND facility. | 6 |
| No need for SEND facility in this area. | 6 |
| Should not have purchased site before consulting with Councillors. | 5 |
| More housing. | 5 |
| Higher education. | 5 |

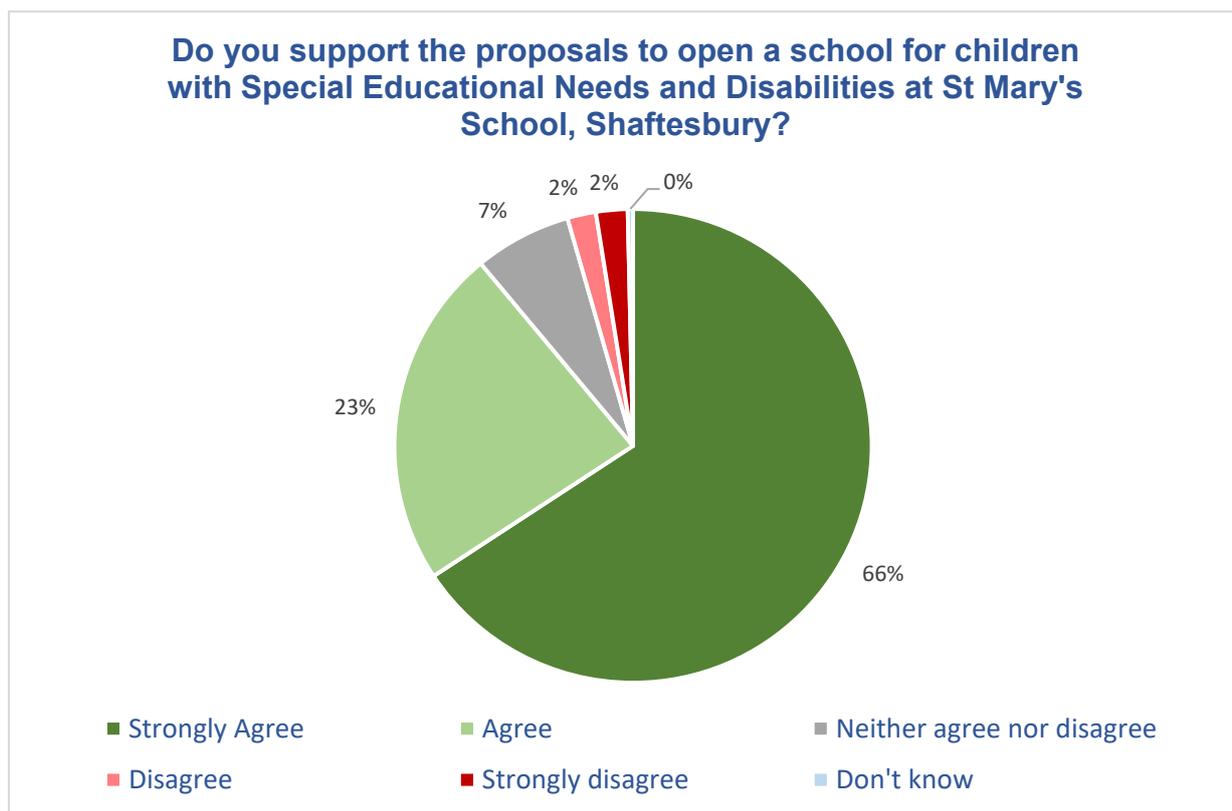
| | |
|---|---|
| Need to consider SEMH. | 4 |
| Site should be used for secondary school students instead. | 4 |
| Hospital / doctor surgery. | 4 |
| Care home. | 3 |
| Should be used to generate income. | 3 |
| Adult education / courses at facility. | 2 |
| Mental health support facility. | 2 |
| Need more schools. | 2 |
| Summer camp. | 2 |
| Site should be adapted for use by all local state schools. | 2 |
| Opportunities for businesses to rent office / training space. | 2 |
| Evening classes / night school classes for all adults. | 2 |
| Create / improve cycle path access to site. | 2 |
| Community café on site. | 2 |

As the table above shows, people used the first text question to stress their support for the creation of a SEND and educational facility, with this being mentioned by 751 individuals. This was by far the dominant theme to the first question about using the facility as an educational establishment. People explained that it is already designed for education purposes, the serious lack of SEN facilities within Dorset and saw it as a great idea for the community. They suggested the swimming pool could be used for hydrotherapy sessions, the facility must remain affordable and be available for all SEN students - including hidden disabilities. It was suggested it could include a boarding and / or respite facility.

Other issues coming through included the suggestion that the facilities should remain available to the public (70 mentions), that it should be used for more than just SEND purposes (24 mentions). People suggested that the site should not have just one purpose, should be something to benefit entire community with open gardens, more sports facilities, residential accommodation and really needs to be multi-purpose to generate enough income for it to be sustainable. There were some concerns over the council funding the facility and feelings that it was also important to cater for SEND students over the age of 16.

Q Do you support the proposals to open a school for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at St Mary's School, Shaftesbury?

| Overall responses | % of all respondents | Number |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Strongly agree | 65.5% | 930 |
| Agree | 23.2% | 329 |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 6.7% | 95 |
| Disagree | 2.0% | 29 |
| Strongly disagree | 2.1% | 30 |
| Don't know | 0.4% | 6 |



1,419 people responded to this question. The overall response shows there is overwhelming support to open a school for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at St Mary's School, Shaftesbury, with nearly 88.7% Strongly Agreeing or Agreeing with the proposal. 4.1% Strongly Disagreed or Disagreed with the proposal. This gives a **net agreement figure** of 88.7 minus 4.1 = **plus 84.6**

Looking at different respondent groups, there are some variations. The table below shows the net agreement for these groups sorted by most agreement to the top.

| Open a school for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities | Strongly agree/Agree | Strongly disagree/Disagree | Net Agreement |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| SEND parents | 96.2% | 1.7% | +94.5 |
| Parent/Carer disabled person 18+ | 94.7% | 2.6% | +92.1 |
| Organisations/Community groups | 89.1% | 0.0% | +89.1 |
| Overall | 88.7% | 4.1% | +84.6 |
| Residents local to Shaftesbury (3 miles approx.) | 86.7% | 3.7% | +83.0 |
| Disabled respondents | 85.2% | 5.7% | +79.5 |
| Businesses | 80.0% | 10.0% | +70.0 |

The table above shows considerable support amongst all groups to the proposal to open a school for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, varying between plus 94.5 from SEND parents down to a still high net agreement of plus 70.0 from business respondents. It is worth noting that some groups had limited numbers of respondents, particularly “business “responses. No groups analysed were opposed to the proposal to open a school for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Local residents supported the proposal with net agreement of plus 83.0%

Wiltshire Council supported the proposal saying “We recognise the rising demand for special school places nationally and that all authorities are working to create capacity to meet this demand, and to avoid the necessity for costly independent sector placements. We are supportive of Dorset’s proposals to use this site to generate additional capacity within the system to meet the needs of these learners, and recognise that there may be opportunities for Wiltshire and Dorset to work together given the location of the St Mary’s Site, and our own work in partnership with the DfE to open a new Free School for learners with ASD / SEMH in Salisbury in September 2022.”

Sixpenny Handley and Pentridge Council said “Thank you for providing a consultation period to allow comment on the future use of St Mary’s School in Shaftesbury –however members would have welcomed an opportunity to comment prior to such a significant purchase. Whilst we are supportive of a much-needed county based educational support provision of this kind which will benefit disadvantaged young people we have concerns over the suitability of the building. It is an old building and will inevitably have high running & maintenance costs.”

Of the 13 councillors responding (from a variety of councils) all but one strongly agreed/agreed with the proposal. The one who wasn’t sure would have liked to have seen more research on other options available to Dorset Council.

Q Please could you explain your answer?

842 people took the opportunity to explain their answer. The table below shows the coded comments, sorted with the issues raised most at the top. All comments are available in full in the appendix.

| Issue | Mentions |
|---|----------|
| Agree with proposed plans for SEND facility. | 855 |
| Facilities to remain available for public to use. | 30 |
| Site should be for all community to use and enjoy. | 27 |
| Other | 19 |
| Neither agree nor disagree. | 11 |
| Concern over costs for Council to run the proposed facility. | 10 |
| No need for this kind of facility within the area. | 9 |
| Site is an unsuitable location for SEND students - too far away. | 9 |
| Disagree that Council should have bought site. | 7 |
| Higher education for all children. | 5 |
| Need more schools. | 5 |
| Safeguarding concerns. | 5 |
| Housing / social housing. | 5 |
| Would like to see more primary schools built in Shaftesbury. | 4 |
| Consider land for outdoor educational / conservation purposes. | 4 |
| Site should not have been purchased before consulting with residents and Councillors. | 4 |
| SEND students should still attend mainstream schools. | 4 |
| Consideration for SEMH. | 3 |
| Site not suitable. | 3 |
| Will save Dorset Council money. | 2 |
| To help SEND children who are 16+ years. | 2 |
| Hospital. | 2 |
| Site needs to be self-funding. | 2 |
| Concern over footpaths on site and suitability of this for SEND students. | 2 |

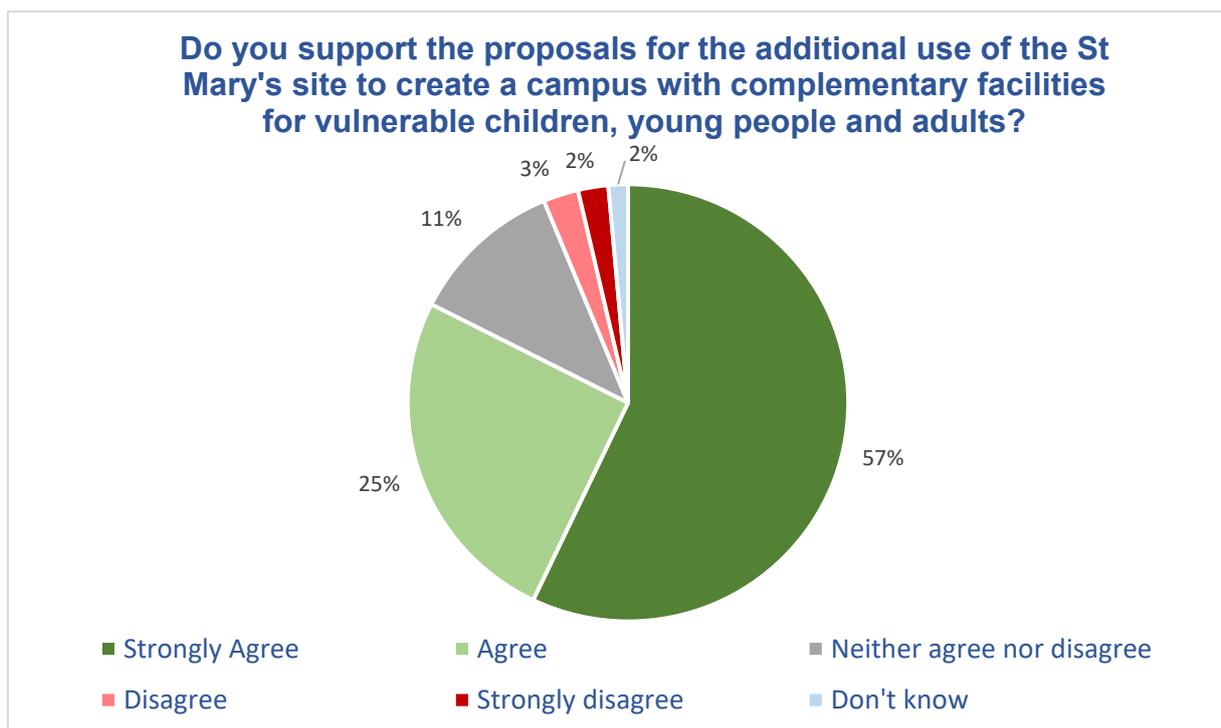
Many people again stressed their support for a SEND facility with 855 mentions agreeing to the proposal. They said they needed a facility for all SEND / vulnerable members of society and need a facility that meets the SEMH needs of children.

Again, they stressed the need for facilities to be available for the public to use (30 mentions) and should be for all community to use and enjoy (27 mentions)

A smaller number of comments related to the fact that they saw no need for the facility within the area (9 mentions), the site is an unsuitable location for SEND students - too far away(9 mentions) and some who disagree that the council should have bought the site (7 mentions)

Q Do you support the proposals for the additional use of the St Mary's site to create a campus with complementary facilities for vulnerable children, young people and adults?

| Overall responses | % of all respondents | Number |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Strongly agree | 57.0% | 807 |
| Agree | 25.3% | 358 |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 11.5% | 163 |
| Disagree | 2.6% | 37 |
| Strongly disagree | 2.2% | 31 |
| Don't know | 1.4% | 20 |



1,416 people responded to this question. The overall response shows there is very strong support the additional use of the St Mary's site to create a campus with complementary facilities for vulnerable children, young people and adults, with 82.3% Strongly Agreeing or Agreeing with the proposal. 4.8% Strongly Disagreed or Disagreed with the proposal. This gives a **net agreement figure** of 82.3 minus 4.8= **plus 77.5**

Looking at different respondent groups, there are some variations. The table below shows the net agreement for these groups sorted by most agreement to the top.

| Group | Strongly agree/Agree | Strongly disagree/Disagree | Net Agreement |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Parent/Carer disabled person 18+ | 92.1% | 2.6% | +89.5 |
| SEND parents | 90.0% | 3.8% | +86.2 |
| Overall | 82.3% | 4.8% | +77.5 |
| Organisations/Community groups | 81.1% | 5.4% | +75.7 |
| Businesses | 80.0% | 10% | +70.0 |
| Residents local to Shaftesbury (3 miles approx.) | 77.7% | 4.1% | +73.3 |
| Disabled respondents | 76.8% | 8.2% | +68.6 |

The table above shows considerable support amongst all groups to proposals for the additional use of the St Mary's site to create a campus with complementary facilities for vulnerable children, young people and adults. This varied between plus 89.5 from parents/carers with disabled people aged 18+ down to a still high net agreement of plus 68.6 from disabled respondents. It is worth noting that some groups had limited numbers of respondents, particularly "business" responses. No groups analysed were opposed to the proposal. Local Shaftesbury residents supported the proposal with net agreement of plus 73.3%.

Wiltshire Council disagreed with this proposal but gave no explanation.

Q Please could you explain your answer?

686 people took the opportunity to explain their answer. The table below shows the coded comments, sorted with the issues raised most at the top. All comments are available in full in the appendix.

| issue | Mentions |
|---|----------|
| The site would be ideal for SEND purposes. | 491 |
| Agree with campus proposal. | 259 |
| Neither agree nor disagree / Don't know. | 61 |
| Leisure centre / facility should be used for sports. | 40 |
| Site and facilities should be available for all to use. | 36 |
| Safeguarding concerns - mixing of children and adults. | 30 |
| Not the sole use of the site. | 17 |
| Other | 17 |
| Disagree with facility being used for SEND students. | 15 |
| Options for 16+ year olds must be considered. | 12 |
| Concern over Council funding for facility. | 12 |
| Higher education for all children. | 6 |
| Agree with respite facility. | 6 |
| Housing / social housing. | 5 |
| Site is too far from local community. | 5 |
| Disagree. | 5 |
| The facility should be used for the arts. | 3 |
| Consideration for elderly population. | 3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Should be for children of all ages. | 3 |
| Should have consulted Councillors before purchasing site. | 3 |
| Would be a good venue for Alternative Provision. | 2 |
| Outdoor education. | 2 |
| Questions are too leading. | 2 |

The table shows that again respondents stressed their support for the SEND proposal (491 mentions) There are a further 259 comments supporting the suggestion of a campus with complementary facilities for vulnerable children, young people and adults. A number of people were unsure about the campus proposal, mainly because they didn't feel they had enough information about what it would mean.

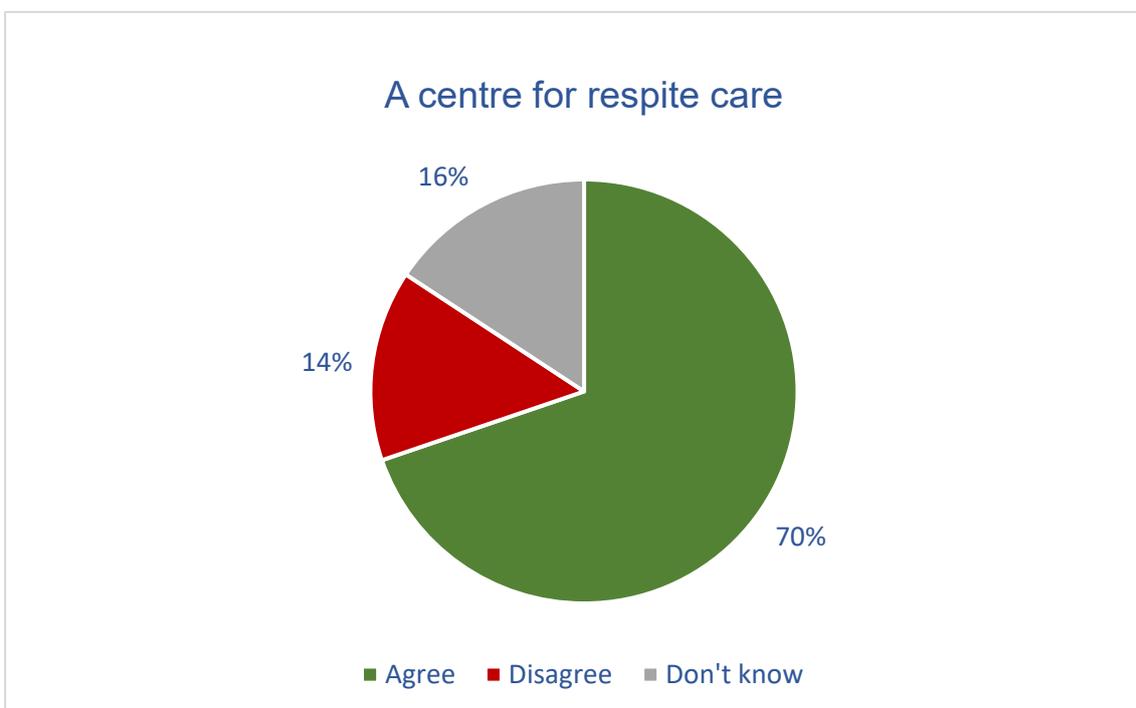
Support was expressed again for the leisure centre/facility and that it should be used for sports (40 mentions) They also said the site and facilities should be available for all to use (36 mentions)

A number of people felt there were safeguarding concerns with the mixing of children and adults (30 mentions)

Q Below are some of the other uses we have considered for the St Mary's School site. Do you agree with the following?

A centre for respite care

| Overall responses | % of all respondents | Number |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Agree | 69.7% | 942 |
| Disagree | 14.4% | 194 |
| Don't know | 15.9% | 215 |



1,351 people responded to this question. The overall response shows there is strong support for the possibility for creating a centre of respite care at St Marys School, with 69.7% agreeing with the proposal. 14.4% disagreed with the proposal. This gives a **net agreement figure** of 69.7 minus 14.4= **plus 55.3** On this question a high proportion (16%) didn't have a view either way.

Looking at different respondent groups, there are some variations. The table below shows the net agreement for these groups sorted by most agreement to the top.

| Group | Agree | Disagree | Net Agreement |
|--|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Parent/Carer disabled person 18+ | 91.9% | 5.4% | +86.5 |
| Businesses | 78.8% | 0.0% | +78.8 |
| Organisations/Community groups | 73.5% | 11.8% | +67.1 |
| SEND parents | 72.9% | 15.0% | +57.9 |
| Overall | 69.7% | 14.4% | +55.3 |
| Disabled respondents | 72.3% | 19.3% | +53.0 |
| Residents local to Shaftesbury (3 miles approx.) | 67.2% | 15.6% | +51.6 |

The table above shows support amongst all groups to proposals for the additional use of the St Mary's site for respite care. This varied between plus 86.5 from parents/carers with disabled people aged 18+ down to a still high net agreement of plus 51.6 from local Shaftesbury residents. It is worth noting that some groups had limited numbers of respondents, particularly "business" responses. No groups analysed were opposed to the proposal

Local Shaftesbury residents supported the proposal with net agreement of plus 51.6%.

Wiltshire Council agreed with this proposal

A training and conferencing suite

| Overall responses | % of all respondents | Number |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Agree | 36.7% | 481 |
| Disagree | 47.6% | 624 |
| Don't know | 15.7% | 206 |



1,311 people responded to this question. The overall response shows there more people opposed to the idea of using the site for a training and conference suite than supporting it. Overall 36.7% agreed with the proposal and 47.6% disagreed with the proposal. This gives a **net agreement figure** of 36.7 minus 47.6 = **minus 10.9** As the graph above shows (with the red area) that more people are opposed to the idea of a training and conference suite than support it. On this question a high proportion (16%) didn't have a view either way.

Looking at different respondent groups, there are some variations. The table below shows the net agreement for these groups sorted by most agreement to the top.

| A training and conferencing suite | Agree | Disagree | Net Agreement |
|--|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Businesses | 70.0% | 10.0% | +60.0 |
| Organisations/Community groups | 57.1% | 25.7% | +31.4 |
| Residents local to Shaftesbury (3 miles approx.) | 42.2% | 40.2% | +2.0 |
| Overall | 36.7% | 47.6% | -10.9 |
| Disabled respondents | 36.6% | 48.8% | -12.2 |
| Parent/Carer disabled person 18+ | 31.3% | 50.0% | -18.7 |
| SEND parents | 28.2% | 58.4% | -30.2 |

The table above shows support amongst some groups to proposals for the additional use of the St Mary's site for a training and conferencing suite. Overall respondents disagreed with the proposal by 36.7% for and 47.6% against.

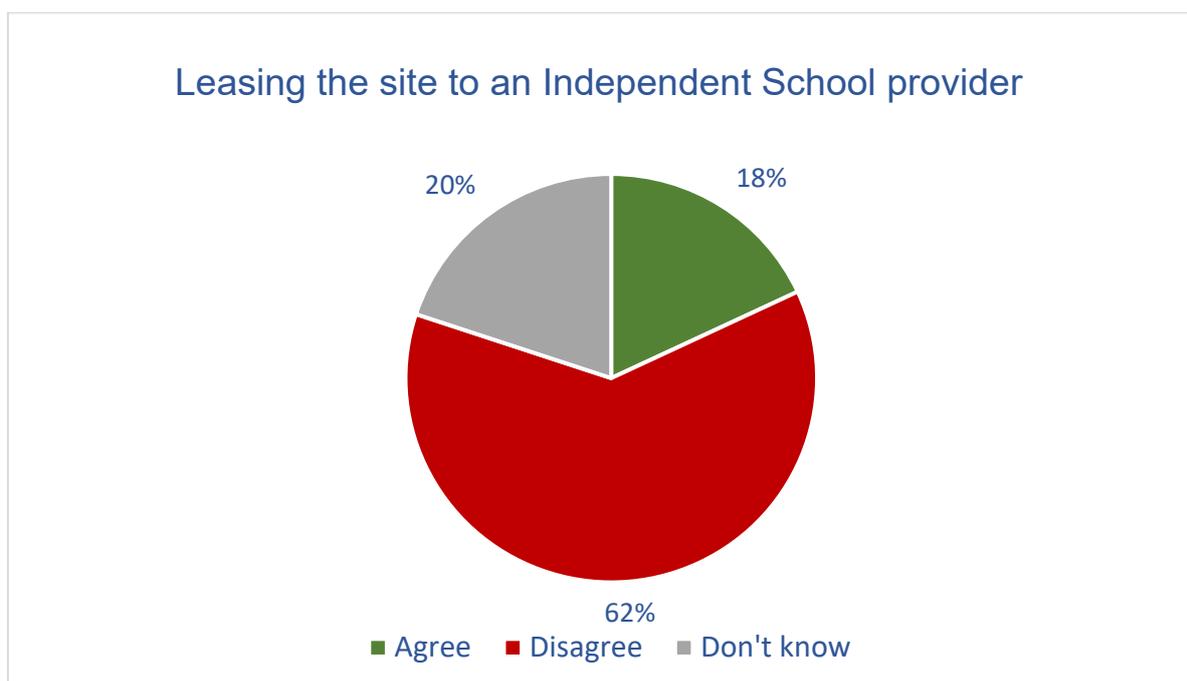
Several groups of respondents also disagreed with the proposal including Disabled respondents, Parent/Carers of disabled 18+ and particularly SEND parents with a net agreement of minus 30.2%

It is worth noting that some groups had limited numbers of respondents, particularly "business" responses.

Wiltshire Council had no view on this proposal.

Leasing the site to an Independent School provider

| Overall responses | % of all respondents | Number |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Agree | 18.0% | 233 |
| Disagree | 62.2% | 805 |
| Don't know | 19.8% | 256 |



1,294 people responded to this question. The overall response shows there are considerably more people opposed to the idea of leasing the site to an Independent School provider, with 18.0% agreeing with the proposal and 62.0% disagreeing with the proposal. This gives a **net agreement figure** of 18.0 minus 62.2 = **minus 44.2**. As the graph above shows (with the red area larger than the green area) that more people are opposed to the idea of leasing the site to an Independent School provider than support it. On this question a high proportion (19.8%) didn't have a view either way.

Looking at different respondent groups, there are some variations. The table below shows the net agreement for these groups sorted by most agreement to the top.

| Leasing the site to an Independent School provider | Agree | Disagree | Net Agreement |
|--|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Businesses | 44.4% | 44.4% | 0.0 |
| Residents local to Shaftesbury (3 miles approx.) | 21.1% | 57.8% | -36.7 |
| Disabled respondents | 22.0% | 63.4% | -41.4 |
| Overall | 18.0% | 62.2% | -44.2 |
| Organisations/Community groups | 14.3% | 62.9% | -48.6 |
| SEND parents | 12.6% | 66.3% | -53.7 |
| Parent/Carer disabled person 18+ | 6.7% | 66.7% | -60.0 |

The table above shows virtually no support for the suggestion of leasing the site to an Independent School provider. Businesses had equal numbers supporting to those opposing. All the other groups of respondents opposed the idea. Overall respondents disagreed with the proposal by 18.0% for and 62.2% against.

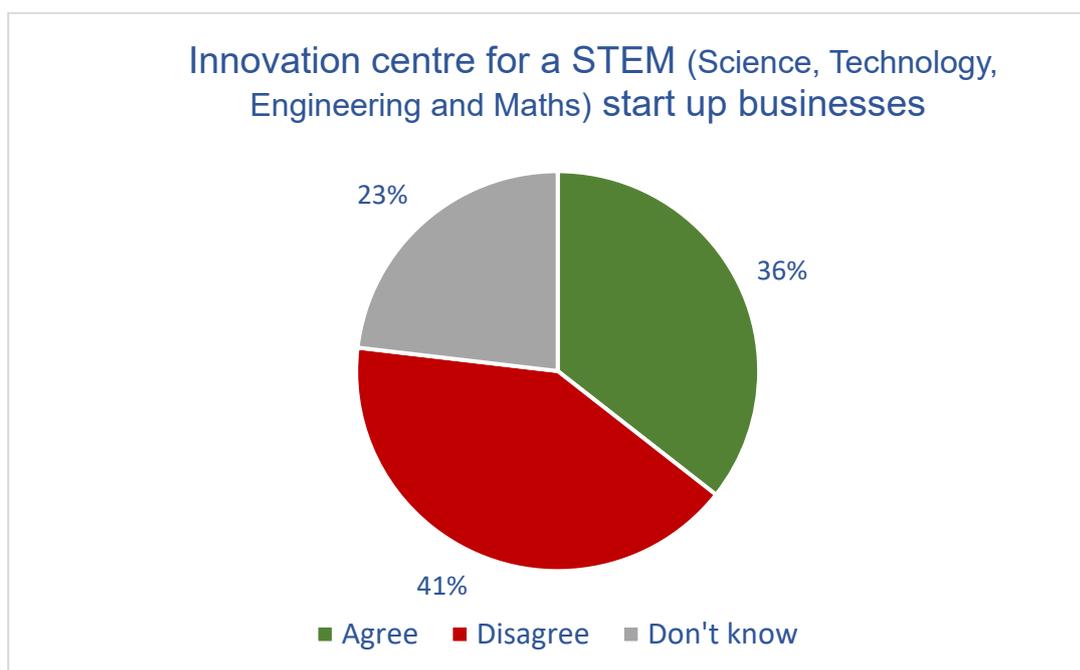
Several groups of respondents also disagreed with the proposal quite significantly including, Disabled respondents, Organisations/Community groups, SEND parents and Parent/Carers of disabled 18+.

It is worth noting that some groups had limited numbers of respondents, particularly "business" responses.

Wiltshire Council disagreed with this proposal.

Innovation centre for a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) start-up businesses

| Overall responses | % of all respondents | Number |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Agree | 35.5% | 464 |
| Disagree | 41.0% | 536 |
| Don't know | 23.5% | 307 |



1,307 people responded to this question. The overall response shows there are slightly more people opposed to the idea of creating an innovation centre for STEM start-up businesses, with 35.5% agreeing with the proposal and 41.0% disagreeing with the proposal. This gives a **net agreement figure** of 35.5 minus 41.0 = **minus 5.5**. As the graph above shows (with the red area slightly larger than the green area) that more people are opposed to the idea than support it. On this question a high proportion (23.5%) didn't have a view either way.

Looking at different respondent groups, there are some variations. The table below shows the net agreement for these groups sorted by most agreement to the top.

| Innovation centre for a STEM | Agree | Disagree | Net Agreement |
|--|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Businesses | 60.0% | 10.0% | +50.0 |
| Organisations/Community groups | 43.2% | 24.3% | +18.9 |
| Residents local to Shaftesbury (3 miles approx.) | 45.5% | 32.4% | +13.1 |
| Overall | 35.5% | 41.0% | -5.5 |
| Disabled respondents | 28.4% | 49.4% | -21.0 |
| SEND parents | 24.4% | 57.8% | -33.4 |
| Parent/Carer disabled person 18+ | 12.5% | 68.8% | -56.3 |

The table above shows support amongst some groups to proposals for the additional use of the St Mary's site as an Innovation Centre for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). Local Shaftesbury residents and organisations/community groups supported the idea.

Overall respondents disagreed slightly with the proposal by 35.5% for and 41.0% against.

Several groups of respondents disagreed with the proposal including Disabled respondents, SEND parents and Parent/Carers of disabled 18+ with a net agreement of minus 56.3%

It is worth noting that some groups had limited numbers of respondents, particularly "business" responses.

Wiltshire Council had no view on this proposal.

Q Please could you explain your answers?

753 people took the opportunity to explain their answers. The table below shows the coded results from the responses sorted with the issues raised most at the top. All comments are available in full in the appendix.

Generalised non-specific comments

| Issue | Mentions |
|---|----------|
| Should remain a school for SEND children. | 331 |
| Agree with all suggestions. | 182 |
| Disagree with any of the suggested uses in question 16. | 123 |
| Neither agree nor disagree / Don't know. | 87 |
| Facilities should remain open to residents of Dorset. | 36 |
| Site is so vast that it makes sense to use it for multiple reasons. | 18 |
| Other | 16 |
| Concern over Council funding for facility. | 11 |
| Leisure centre. | 8 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Should have been consulted before purchasing site. | 8 |
| Higher education opportunities for children. | 3 |
| There are enough places within the county that offer these kind of provisions. | 3 |
| Disagree with site being used for SEND. | 3 |
| Do not knock down site to build more housing. | 3 |
| Secondary school. | 3 |
| Concern over cost of making facilities suitable for SEND students. | 3 |
| Hospital. | 2 |
| Summer school / camp. | 2 |
| Allow conservation groups to benefit from use of the land. | 2 |
| The facility should be solely for the benefit of local Dorset residents. | 2 |
| Concern over safeguarding issues. | 2 |
| Facility should be for 0-18 years only. | 2 |
| Facilities needed for disabled adults. | 2 |
| Wedding venue. | 2 |
| Separate learning disability and mental health provisions. | 2 |
| Turn part of the facility into a luxury hotel. | 2 |
| Uncertain about terms used in document. | 2 |

As the table above shows there was some support for the alternative uses proposed but also concerns too. Most people support the SEND school provision above and beyond all the other suggestions.

Specific question orientated comments

| Issue | Mentions |
|---|----------|
| Leasing | |
| Disagree with leasing the building out. | 55 |
| Agree with leasing building. | 8 |
| If an independent school had been interested, they would have come forward when the site was up for sale. | 1 |
| | |
| Respite Care | |
| Agree with use for respite care. | 116 |
| Concern over use for respite care. | 5 |
| Respite care proposals not clear enough. | 2 |
| | |
| Training and Conference Suite | |
| Praise for training and conference suite. | 30 |
| Disagree. | 25 |
| Create buildings on site specifically for training for young adults. | 1 |
| | |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Innovation – (STEM) | |
| Support for STEM. | 47 |
| Disagree / concern over use for STEM. | 12 |

The table shows comments specifically about the 4 alternative suggestions put forward. There was little support for the idea of leasing the building out to be used as a school. However, respite care engendered strong support and few concerns. Comments on using the facility as a training and conference centre were mixed with arguments both ways.

Whilst the numerical question showed a slight majority against using the site as a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Innovation Centre there was some support within the comments with 47 comments talking positively about the idea. Some felt that there are plenty of sites locally that could be used for STEM and they should be explored instead.

Wiltshire Council said, “Whilst we recognise there may be benefits for Dorset Council in any of these alternative options, we are supportive of your proposal to retain the site for educational purposes to support learners with SEND.”

Q. Any suggestions on possible other uses you think would work well for the St Mary's School site?

733 people took the opportunity to give their views on what other uses they felt would work well for the St Mary's School site. The table below shows the coded comments, sorted with the issues raised most at the top. All comments are available in full in the appendix.

| Issue | Mentions |
|--|----------|
| Please allow the public to continue to use the swimming pool and sports facilities e.g. gym. | 229 |
| Agree with use for SEND students. | 121 |
| Use site for outdoor education. | 47 |
| Other | 44 |
| Sports academy / excellence centre. | 38 |
| Leisure centre. | 36 |
| A site to run courses during evenings and school holidays. | 26 |
| Community centre / hub. | 22 |
| Use facility for the arts. | 21 |
| Park for local community. | 14 |
| Wedding venue. | 14 |
| Agree with use for respite care. | 14 |
| A sixth form / college. | 12 |
| Hotel / accommodation / spa. | 12 |
| Café / restaurant. | 11 |
| Sell the site. | 11 |
| Hospital and doctor's surgery. | 11 |
| Training centre of excellence for SEND staff and support. | 10 |
| Care home. | 8 |
| Secondary school. | 7 |
| Housing. | 6 |
| Higher education for SEND students. | 5 |
| Allow schools across Dorset to use facilities. | 5 |
| The site should be multi use. | 5 |
| Chapel to be used by public. | 4 |
| Support for SEND students over 16+ years. | 4 |
| Training facility / vocational training. | 4 |
| Should have been consulted before purchasing site. | 4 |
| Allotment for all residents to use. | 3 |
| Day centre for SEND adults. | 3 |
| Site to develop alternative technologies. | 3 |
| Concern over funding. | 3 |
| Nature areas / conservation. | 3 |
| Accommodation for SEND students. | 3 |
| Rehabilitation. | 3 |
| Concern over safeguarding. | 2 |
| Primary school. | 2 |
| Improved pedestrian access. | 2 |
| Site needs to be carbon neutral. | 2 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Business facilities. | 2 |
| Replacement for Shaftesbury School. | 2 |
| Should be a school for all to attend. | 2 |
| Centre for climate innovation. | 2 |
| Waste of money. | 2 |
| Lease out site to generate income. | 2 |
| Community nursery school. | 2 |
| Entertainment facilities. | 2 |

As the above table shows the main suggestion was that Dorset Council should:

- allow the public to continue to use the swimming pool and sports facilities e.g. gym, with 229 mentions.

Other uses proposed more than 10 times include:

- Use site for outdoor education
- Sports academy / excellence centre
- Leisure centre
- A site to run courses during evenings and school holidays
- Community centre / hub
- Use facility for the arts.
- Park for local community
- Wedding venue
- Respite Care
- A sixth form / college
- Hotel / accommodation / spa
- Café / restaurant
- Hospital and doctor's surgery
- Training centre of excellence for SEND staff and support.

There were a number of organisational responses that made representations about using the facilities at St Marys. These included:

Dorset Sub-aqua Club “I am writing this as the Chairman of North Dorset Sub-Aqua club. We had been using the pool facilities at St Mary's as a venue for training, practising and keeping dive fit on a regular one-hour session on Thursday evening. We have lost our venue and the club now has no pool to use. We are an inclusive club catering for people from all over the catchment area. We train according to the rules of the British Sub-Aqua club which is the national governing body. We are a non-profit organisation and our instructors are all voluntary unpaid.”

Shaftesbury and Surrounding Area Runners – “Site for a monthly 5km park run for Shaftesbury as easily accessible from the town which currently has no other appropriate site. The site has large grounds and a route could be easily plotted.”

Leeson House, Dorset Council – “Use the Outdoor Education team at Dorset Council develop a 'north of the County' base for Alternative provision and general outdoor education for all young people. Could small scale accommodation be made available for small A Level Geography groups coming from Wilts, Somerset, Wales etc? It would save them travel time and we can't physically fit all of our groups into Leeson House! Could Dorset Council's Duke of Edinburgh have a semi-permanent camp site on site?”

Q. Any other comments? 364 people took the opportunity to give further comments. The table below shows the coded comments, sorted with the issues raised most at the top. All comments are available in full in the appendix.

| Issue | Mentions |
|---|----------|
| Positive | |
| Support for proposed use of facility. | 124 |
| Praise for Dorset Council for this idea. | 20 |
| Concern over Council funding for new facility. | 12 |
| Negative / Against Proposal | |
| Should have been consulted before purchasing site. | 7 |
| Waste of taxpayers' money. | 6 |
| Concern over lack of similar provisions in South West. | 1 |
| Shame that Council are only focusing on North Dorset, not West as well. | 1 |
| Suggestions | |
| Other | 44 |
| Public should be allowed to use swimming pool. | 19 |
| Keep the use of facilities open to the general public. | 16 |
| More footpaths / better pedestrian access. | 11 |
| Please do not sell off any land for housing. | 10 |
| Do not lease to private sector. | 7 |
| Chapel to be used by all. | 5 |
| Act quickly. | 4 |
| Include Dorset residents in each planning step. | 3 |
| Safer cycle access needed between St. Mary's and Shaftesbury. | 3 |
| Outdoor education. | 3 |
| Concern over main road - A30. | 3 |
| Would be ideal for hospitality training days / conferences. | 2 |
| Please consider SEMH. | 2 |
| Higher education for SEND students. | 2 |
| Do not knock any of the buildings down. | 2 |
| Ensure there is consideration for wildlife on site. | 2 |
| Plans must be undertaken with Climate and Ecological Emergency in mind. | 2 |
| Change land from Wiltshire Council to Dorset Council. | 2 |
| Leisure centre. | 2 |
| Site should be used to generate income for Dorset Council. | 2 |
| Lack of access to site via public transport. | 2 |
| Bat roost in clock tower of St. Mary's. | 2 |
| Main hall for events / theatre. | 2 |

As the above table shows analysis was divided into the type of comments: Positive, negative and suggestions. There were many further comments supporting the proposals and praising the council together with a few concerns about funding for the new facility.

The main negative comments were related to how some respondents felt the consultation should have been done before purchase and concerns over what they saw as wasting taxpayer’s money.

Some of the more regular suggestions focused around:

- Public should be allowed to use swimming pool
- Keep the use of facilities open to the general public
- More footpaths / better pedestrian access
- Please do not sell off any land for housing
- Do not lease to private sector
- Chapel should be used by all and
- Act quickly

There were a few comments about accessing the site, with better public transport needed, concerns over the A30 and the need for better cycle access into Shaftesbury.

Wiltshire Council said “We are supportive of Dorset Council’s proposals for the St Mary’s site and look forward to working with you to consider the strategic links between this school and our own, including the new Free School planned to open in Salisbury in 2022.”

Q. Would you like to be kept informed of progress on the St Mary's site project by e-newsletter?

| | % of all respondents | Number |
|------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Yes | 59.8% | 839 |
| No | 40.2% | 564 |

839 respondents (about 60%) asked to be kept informed of progress on the St Mary’s site by e-newsletter.

Demographic Information

The survey explained “we collect diversity information, not only to ensure any changes do not unfairly impact on specific sectors of the community, but also to try to make sure our consultation response comes from a representative sample of local residents. We would appreciate if you can complete the following details”

Age

1,364 answered this question.

The tables below show the profile of people taking part in the consultation. The consultation is dominated by responses from those in the younger age groups, with those aged 65+ making up 15.1% of respondents compared to them being 29% of the Dorset population.

2.2% of respondents preferred not to disclose their age group.

| | Under 18 | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65-and over | Prefer not to say |
|------------------------------------|----------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------------|-------------------|
| % of responses in age group | 0.6 % | 3.5 % | 13.3 % | 24.7% | 24.6 % | 16.1 % | 15.1 % | 2.2 % |

Gender

1,359 answered this question. The current profile of the residents of Dorset show 49.8% male and 51.1% female. As the table below shows the responses from females, does vary considerably from the Dorset profile but this is not unusual in this type of survey.

| | Male | Female | Prefer to self describe | Prefer not to say |
|---|-------|--------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| What best describes your gender? | 22.5% | 74.4% | 0.1% | 2.9% |

There was an uneven balance between males and females with 74% of responses to the survey from females and 23% from males.

Disability

1,345 answered this question.

6.5% of respondents considered they had a disability. This equates to 88 people. Responses from disabled people were slightly above average at 6.5% of responses compared to a Dorset figure of 5% based on those claiming either Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance. The data has

been used when analysing the responses to all the questions to see if people who have a disability had a different view to the majority on the key questions in the consultation.

| | Yes | No | Prefer not to say |
|--|------|-------|-------------------|
| Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act, 2010? | 6.5% | 89.4% | 4.1% |

When looking at the specific disabilities of the 88 people responding 32 had a longstanding illness, 30 said they had a physical disability, 25 had a mental health condition, 19 a learning disability/difficulty and 12 a sensory impairment.

Sexual Orientation

| | % |
|---|-------|
| Bisexual | 1.4% |
| Gay/lesbian | 1.0% |
| Heterosexual/Straight | 84.4% |
| I use another term (please describe) | 0.7% |
| Prefer not to say | 12.6% |

The above table shows the breakdown of the sexuality of respondents.

Religion

| | % |
|------------------|-------|
| Buddhist | 0.4% |
| Christian | 48.4% |

| | % |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Hindu | 0.1% |
| Jewish | 0.3% |
| Muslim | 0.2% |
| Sikh | 0.0% |
| No Religion | 35.5% |
| Other (please describe) | 3.8% |
| Prefer not to say | 11.3% |

Christian was the main religion specified at 48.4% with No Religion next highest at 35.5

Ethnic Group

| | What is your ethnic group? |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| White British | 87.8% |
| White Irish | 1.3% |
| Gypsy/Irish traveller | 0.1% |
| Any other white background | 2.7% |
| Asian/ Asian British - Bangladeshi | 0.0% |
| Asian/ Asian British - Chinese | 0.1% |
| Asian/ Asian British - Indian | 0.3% |
| Asian/ Asian British - Pakistani | 0.0% |
| Any other Asian background | 0.0% |
| Black/Black British - African | 0.0% |
| Black/Black British - Caribbean | 0.1% |

| | |
|---|------|
| Any other black background | 0.0% |
| Mixed ethnic background – White and Asian | 0.3% |
| Mixed ethnic background – White and Black African | 0.1% |
| Mixed ethnic background – White and Black Caribbean | 0.1% |
| Any other mixed background | 0.6% |
| Prefer not to say | 6.3% |
| Any other ethnic group | 0.2% |

With 88% of the respondents saying their ethnic group was White British this is fairly typical of the wider population.