

National Lottery
Reaching Communities England

CONSULTATION REVIEW



Hesketh Bank Community Centre

Station Road, Hesketh Bank, PR4 6SR
Registered Charity number: 1180178

April 2019

Public consultation review

The Trustees of Hesketh Bank Community Centre have undertaken an extensive programme of public consultation to validate and inform the decisions that will need to be made in respect of designing and building a new community centre that will meet the needs of our ever expanding community.

Our approach

In the last couple of years, a number of organisations - the Parish and Borough Council, Environment Agency, NHS and more - have held consultative meetings either in our halls and elsewhere in the community. These have been generally unsuccessful in attracting public participation and attendance, so the Trustees decided not to hold similar events but to reach out to the community directly instead. We have, therefore, combined paper-based and online surveys with face to face conversations with users, the community and organisations along with presentations. This approach has been successful and is delivering the results that we hoped for.

We have:

- Created an on line survey and used competitions to successfully increase the number of responses,
- Used paper based survey forms at our Community Centre events along with banners and posters,
- Talked extensively to users and potential users,
- Made fully illustrated presentations to many community groups, organisations, the Parish Council and Borough Council and established regular communication channels with them,
- Met with other community organisations who have expressed interest in using the centre,
- Reached out to all local schools to seek the views of children and young adults as well as volunteers,
- Consulted our neighbours and users and invited them to our meetings and AGM,
- Placed posters throughout the community,
- Held information days at a local supermarket,
- Had a strong presence at local community events,
- Increased our distribution of newsletters seeking responses to 5,000,

- Issued press releases and facilitated the publication of articles in regional media and radio broadcasts by the BBC,
- Consistently used social media to inform and involve,
- Where possible tested our ideas,
- Talked to and visited other community centres.

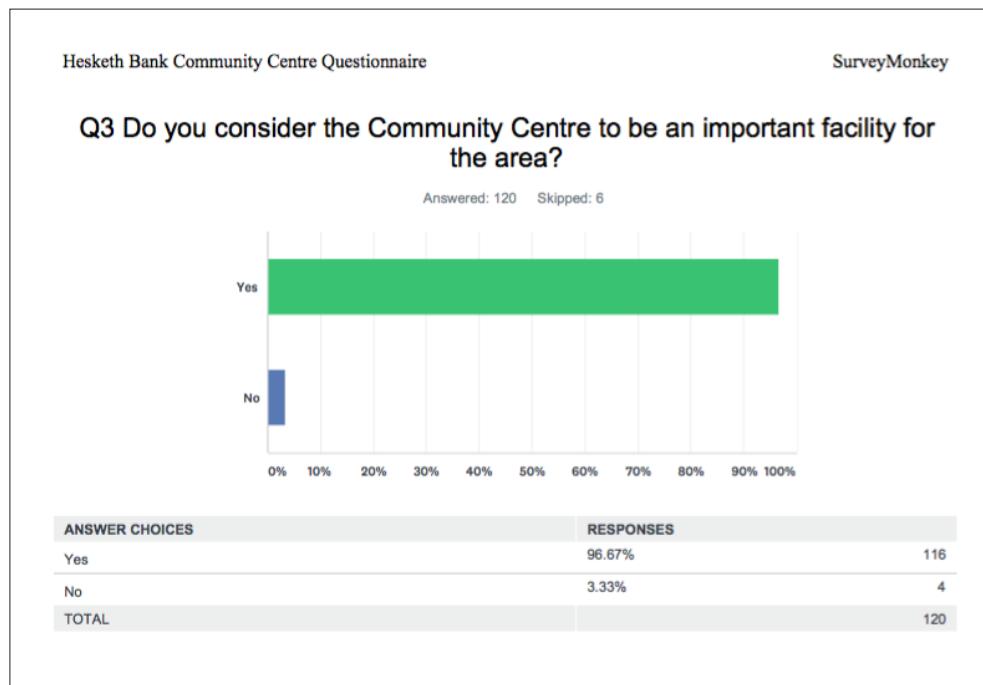
• Online surveys

Our current batch of surveys, at the time of writing this report, has totalled 126 responses from both adults and children. The results have been both informative and productive.

Key responses:

1. Are we needed?

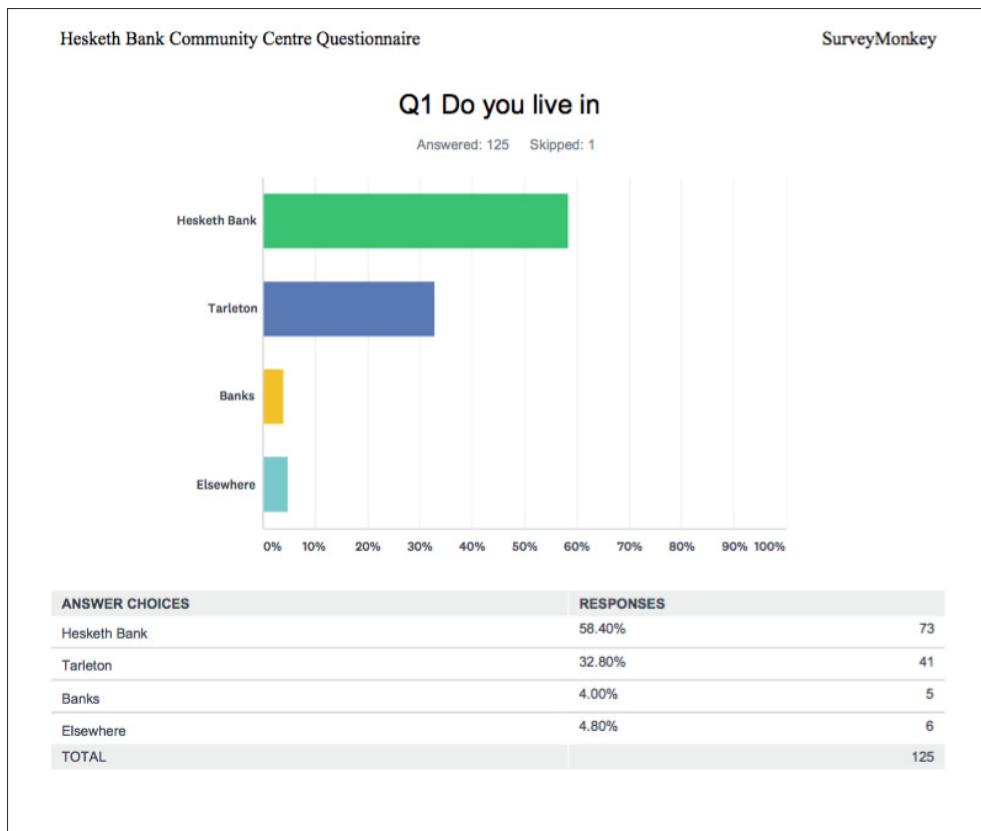
96% of respondents consider the Community Centre to be an important facility for the community.



2. Where do our users come from?

58% of respondents come from Hesketh Bank, 32% from Tarleton and 4% from Banks. This is in line with a separate survey that has been carried out by one of our users, Becconsall U3A who get members from other villages too.

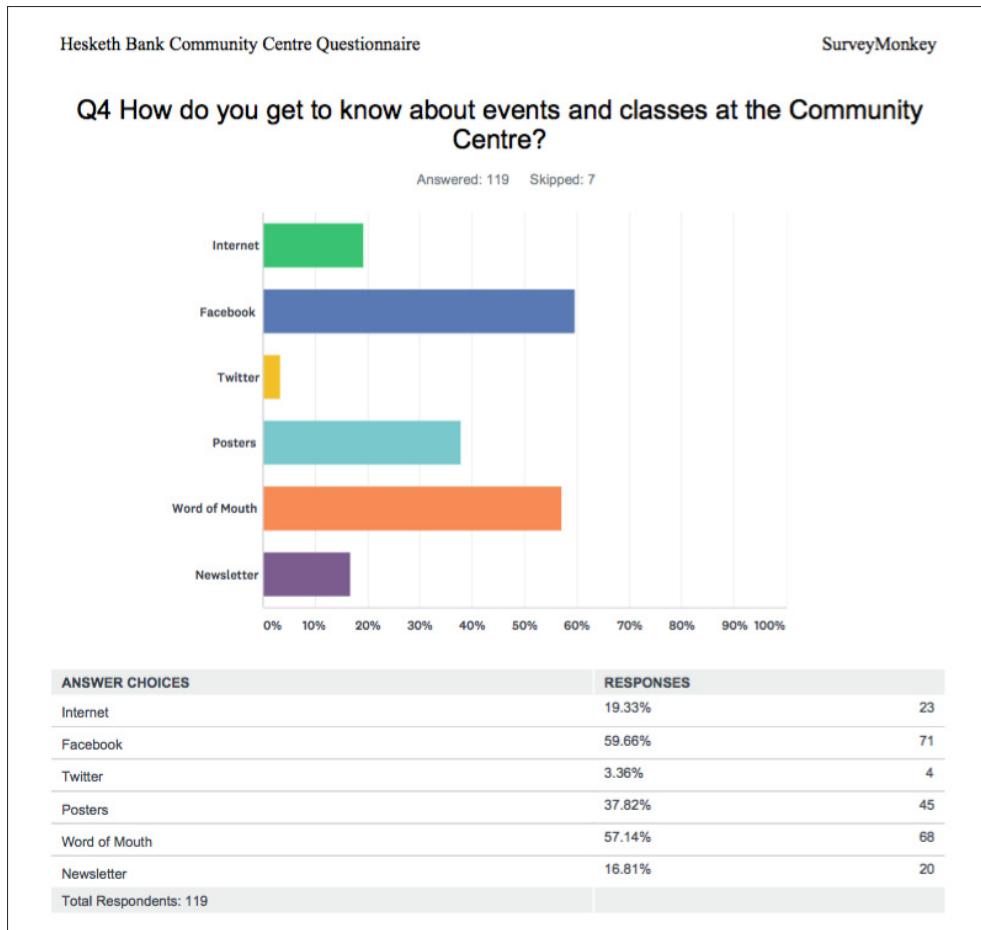
Action: We have increased our outreach in Banks and surrounding areas to increase awareness. Contact has been made with schools and notices of events have been included in school communications to parents. We have also placed posters in the local Banks Co-op shop.



3 How do people find out about us?

59% of respondents learn about events and classes through Facebook, 37% through posters and 19% through the internet. 57% learn about the Community Centre by word of mouth and even though we circulate over 2,000 newsletters, only 16% said that they used it as a source of information.

***Action:** Word of mouth responses shows that our core communication strategy is working and that people now talk about us. This is a major change from two years ago when this response was less than 10%. We have already established that social media works for us and we will look to refine and develop this. Frequent posts before an event brings in numbers even from some distance away - a recent table top sale post brought in one person from Preston who bought nearly half the contents of a stall selling craft equipment. We have limited opportunities to place posters in shops locally so this opportunity is restricted. We are now placing posters further afield to assess effectiveness. Using this research and looking at where our newsletters are distributed, we have increased the number printed to 5,000 and increased the area of coverage. Content on newsletters is changing to be more event informative. Our communications strategy will continue to evolve as we learn.*



4 How are the Trustees and the Community Centre performing?

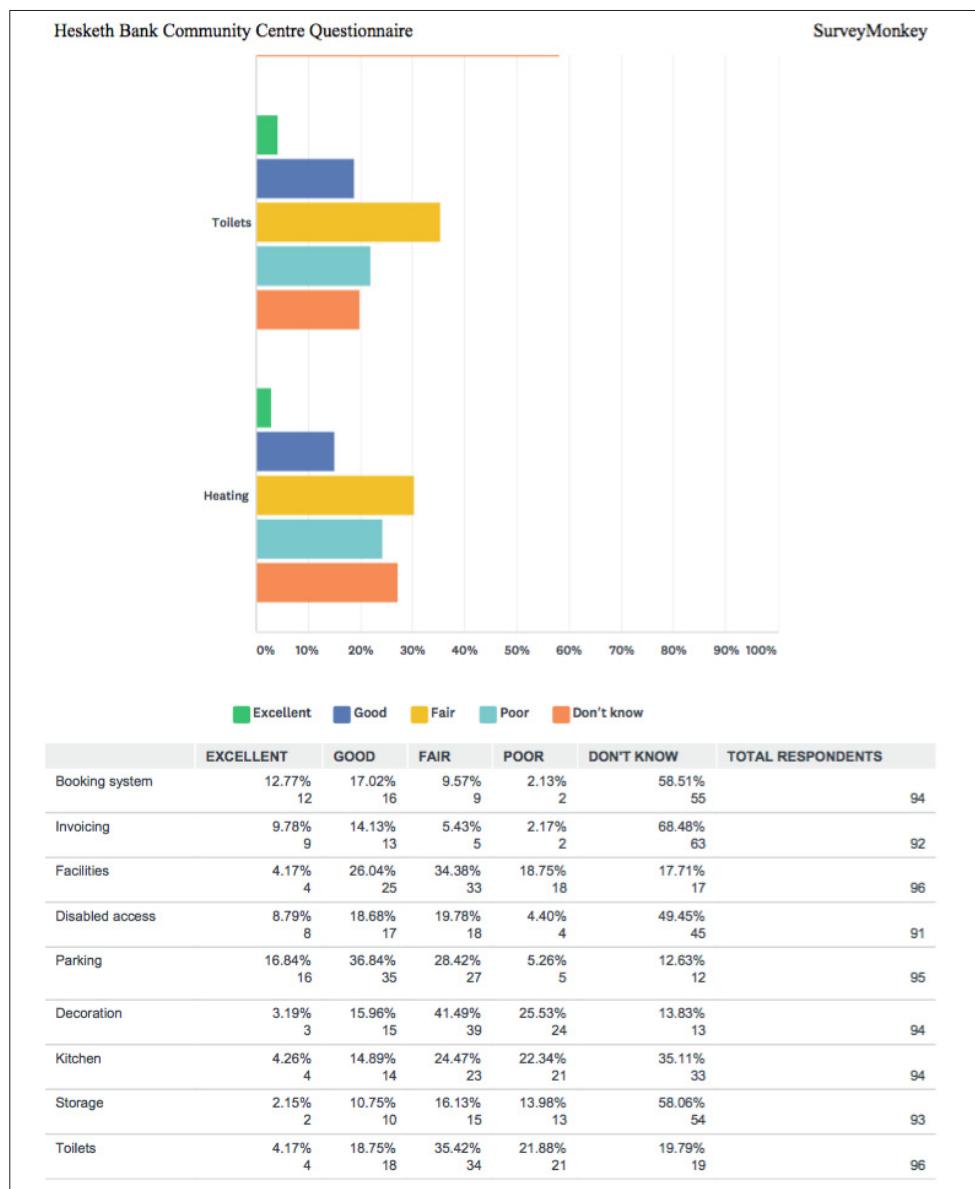
Since the current Trustees took control of the Community Centre, we have invested a great deal of time to set up a clear and simple to use booking and invoicing systems to make our contact with users as smooth as possible. We have a booking system that all Trustees can access at any time to promote transparency. Although an audit is not required, our recently audited accounts were approved with no issues. This has been a worthwhile development and although the response numbers to this question are smaller, our users appear to agree.

In respect to our facilities, the responses reflect the condition of our buildings and confirms the need to rebuild. We have used our limited resources to improve the toilets and, as far as is possible, we have reasonable disabled access. Through donations (money and equipment) and volunteer support we have done all that we can to improve what we have. That the bulk of facilities related responses are in the Fair to poor bracket is no surprise and confirms our own assessment of what we have.

Action: We will continue to refine our booking, invoicing and administration systems with the aim of getting good to excellent responses in the future.

In respect to our facilities, we do what we can. Our users understand this and whilst they are supportive, there is a clear need for better facilities. We talk to all users on a regular basis to update them, listen to their comments and where possible do what we can to respond.

The National Lottery Awards for All award that we received last year has been most beneficial; the extra tables and cups have been much appreciated by all and the much needed improvements to the toilets have been greatly welcomed. The heating equipment in the toilets can be removed and used in the new hall. This award is benefiting our current situation and will make a real difference when we build a new hall.



5 Additional facilities?

Our users have told us that we need more and better meeting spaces and the need for more social spaces has been often mentioned. With 28% wanting more meeting spaces and 64% wanting more social space confirms this. The 46% of respondents wanting better catering facilities and 54% wanting a bar confirms and supports our own opinion. The need for more storage is painful so 30% asking for it is no surprise! We have planned for a demountable stage in the new hall and because we already host a number of committee meetings including those for users, the Hesketh with Becconsall Parish Council and outside bodies, the need for a committee meeting room has been recognised. The only surprise was the 31% who asked for community computing facilities. We have discussed this but it was not in our planning.

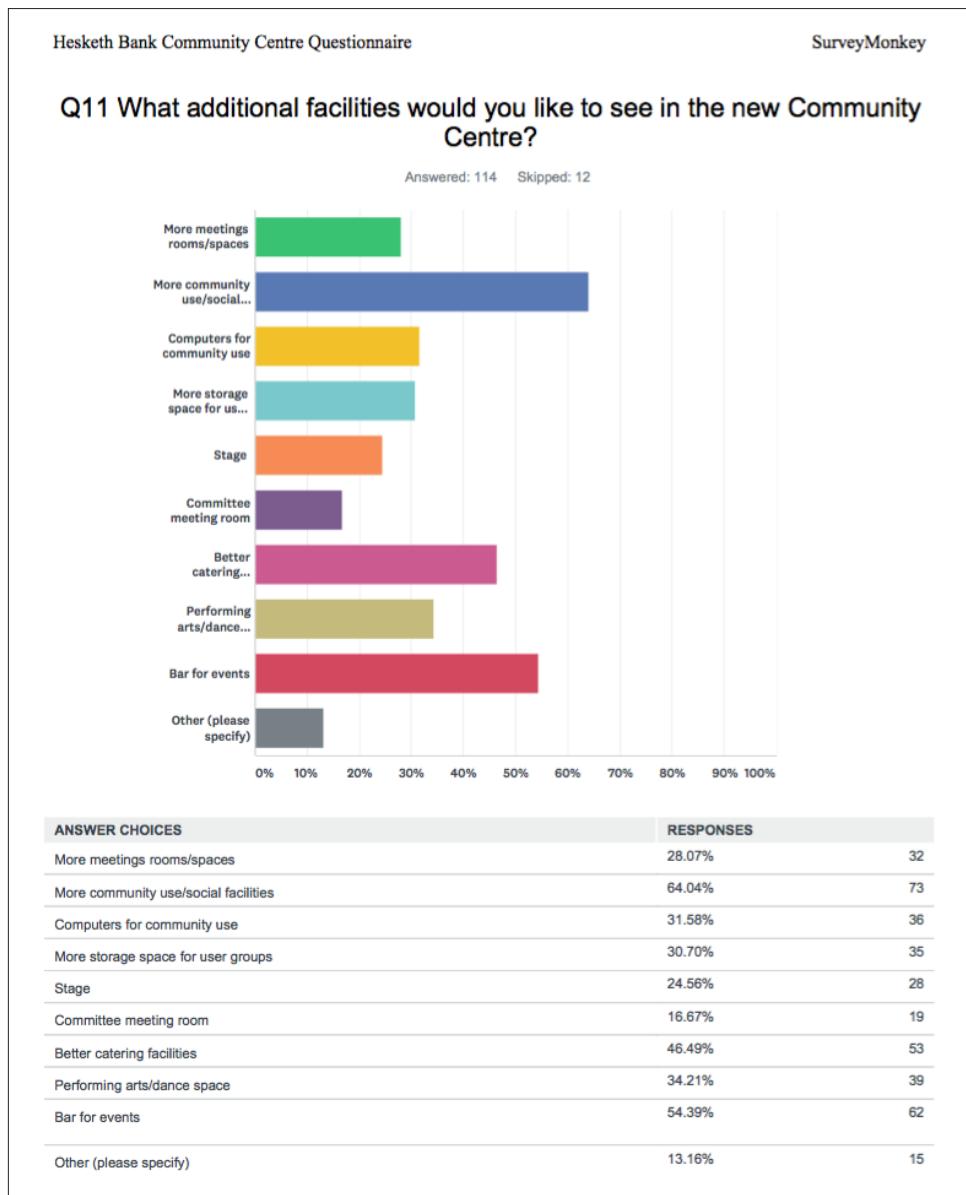
Action: Beyond the request for computing facilities, there are no surprises in this part of the survey. Current demand for space from existing and new users already emphasises the need for more and better meeting facilities and this has been at the heart of our thinking.

Additional social space in the new hall has always been considered as important in our planning but even so, the 64% responses has surprised us. Clearly this needs to be given an increased emphasis.

Because the library at Tarleton has excellent computer facilities, we had thought that we would be duplicating an existing facility so had not pursued it. In light of this survey, we will do more research and, if needed, reconsider our assessment.

We have also recognised the need for better catering facilities and this has always been an important consideration in our planning. Likewise, the need for a bar for events has always been part of our thinking. To test this, we have brought in a mobile bar for some events that we have organised and the numbers attending have been higher which confirms the survey result.

Often mentioned in the community, the Trustees have long recognised the need for a performing arts space so it's pleasing that the 34% who responded support our thinking. We have already had conversations with users and potential users about their possible requirements - bands, theatre, the arts and yoga/pilates/tai chi etc. In our planning, we have already listed a carpeted and well sound insulated room with its own integrated storage spaces and separate access.

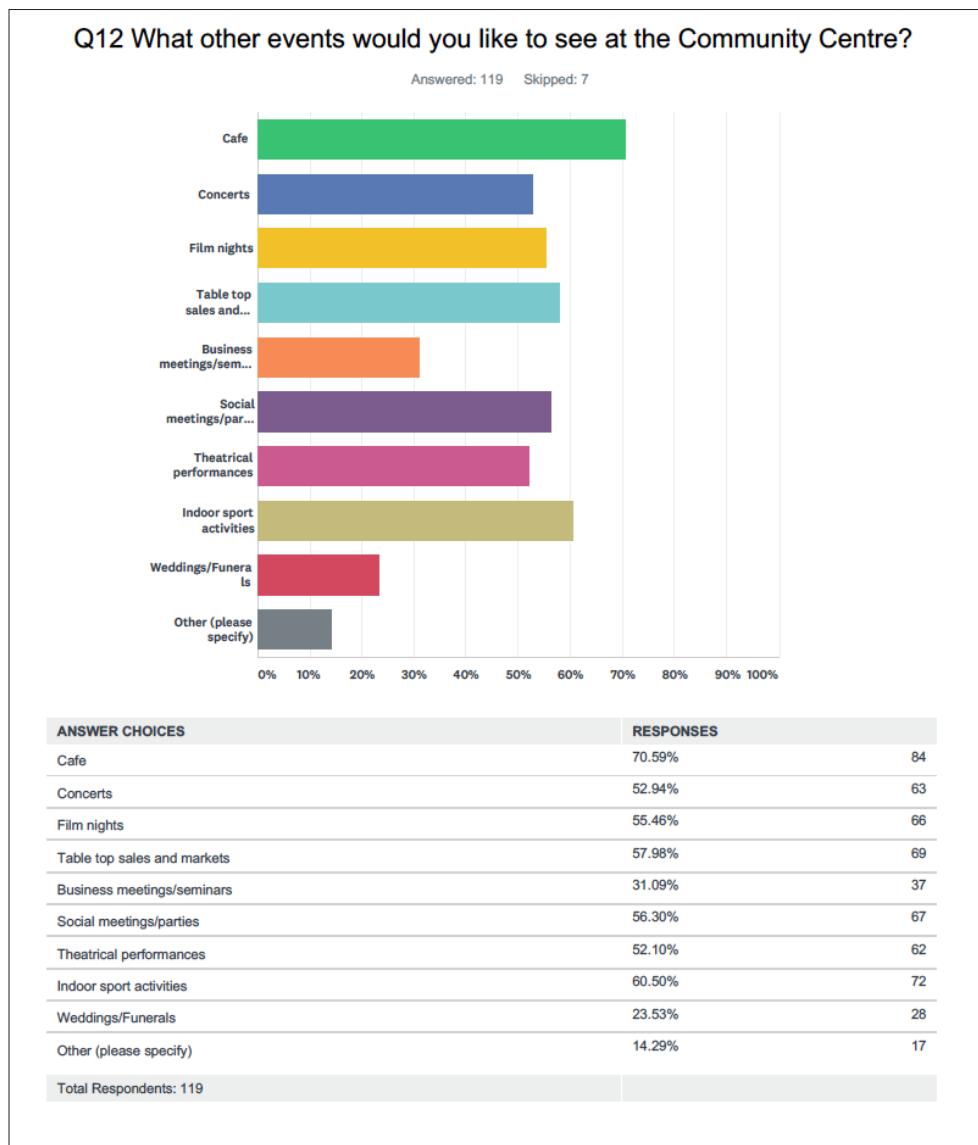


5 What else?

Action: This part of the survey contains no surprises for us and confirms what we are already doing. The need for a cafe, as part of a new social space has often been mentioned. We have tested this concept and it works. At two recent events, we ran a cafe and on both occasions they have proved immensely popular and profitable.

Listening to comment, we organised two table top sales in January and February and they have also proved a success. We are planning more table top sales in September, October, November and December in 2019 and in January and February in 2020 and we already have bookings. There is a need for indoor sales in the winter months which we are working to support.

We have found that theatrical performances have consistently proved popular and we have had capacity audiences for the travelling Mikron Theatre group. We have a Gilbert and Sullivan evening and a Jazz performance organised. We are also working to bring in more local groups and part of our planning is to provide appropriate performance spaces and facilities for them.

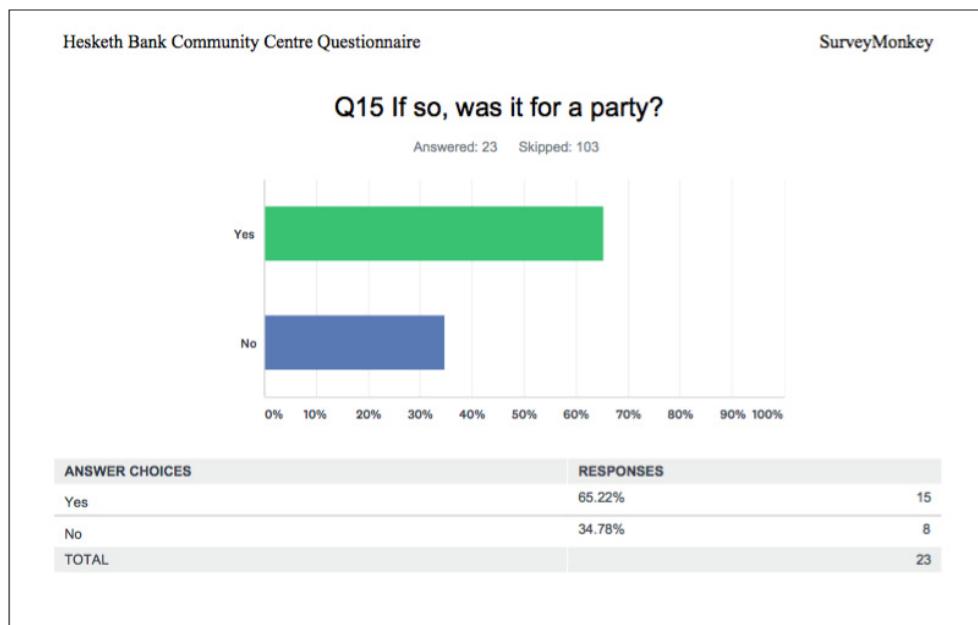
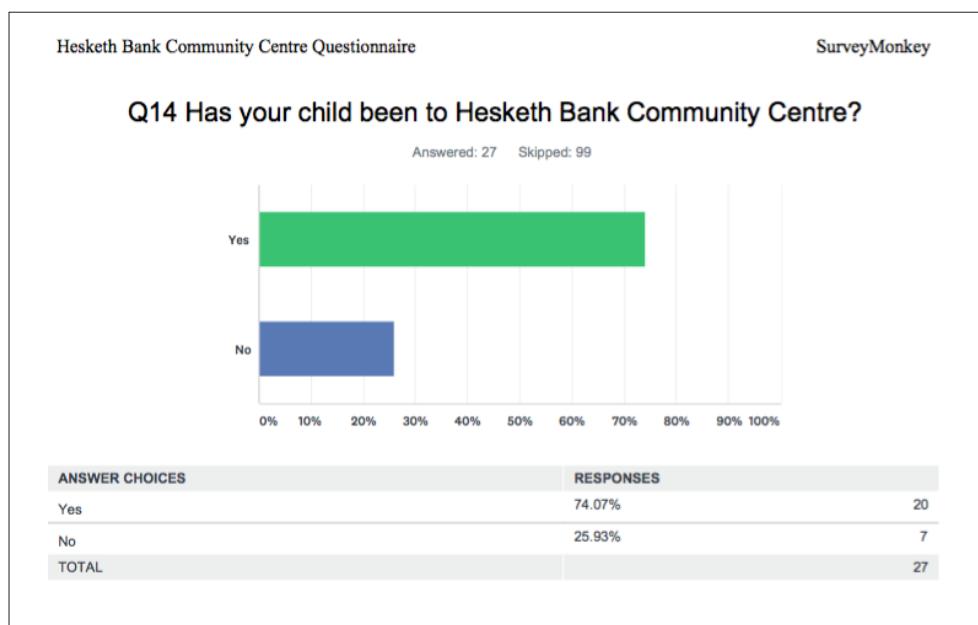


7 Young people

We have been surveying the community for two years and responses have been good and helpful. We have realised, however, that responses from younger people and children have not been as forthcoming. We are fully aware of the importance of listening to their views and have taken action.

Action: *Three Trustees have worked hard to establish links with all local schools and presentations have been made to them. One of our*

Trustees has become a Governor in one of the schools. Our online survey has been modified to include a section for children and young adults to complete and this has been promoted within the schools. Special graphic panels have been designed and produced for school events to which we are invited to attend. This is giving us a better insight into their views and will further guide our decision making processes.





Display panels outlining activities, plans and how to help us with fund raising.

8 Promoting the survey and encouraging responses

We have used a number of vehicles to promote interest in completing our surveys. This has included posters, ads and three opportunities to win vouchers for shopping. We have given away two Booths vouchers and a Co-op voucher and this has both increased awareness and given us three press releases in the local papers as well as a great deal of social media coverage.



9 Benefits of the surveys

Not only have the surveys that we have carried out provided the Trustees with valuable insights and information to guide our planning, they have greatly increased awareness of our activities and opportunities. We have noticed an increase in questions and comments from the community since we have been using the online survey in particular. Access to the surveys will continue and the questions will be modified as we develop and firm up our ideas.

But, that's not all we have done....

- We have been talking extensively to users and potential users**

From the outset, we met with and consulted our users and the wider community. This is especially important as user needs have changed over time and we had already established that the existing format of the buildings was not now appropriate.

We have discussed our plans with them on a regular basis to fully involve them in what we are planning to do. Those discussions have helped guide our approach to redevelopment and space planning. As plans and ideas have evolved, we have continued to share and consult. Whilst there are no written reports to present, this informal, continuous

and ongoing exercise is essential not only for the Trustees to learn but for the sharing of our enthusiasm. We have over 1,200 users a month so a great deal of consultation takes place.

Conversations with potential users has recently included dancing and yoga.

- **Presentations**

We have made fully illustrated presentations to many community groups, organisations, the Parish Council and Borough Council and have established regular communication channels with them which has proved very productive. We brief and seek the advice of the Parish Council on a monthly basis and meet informally with the Borough Council to keep them updated.



the future for our 
Community
C E N T R E

 Baby Sensory
Precious Early Learning for Babies

 Scouts
be prepared

 AGLOW
INTERNATIONAL

 Environment Agency

 Becconsall U3A
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

 VS
VICTIM SUPPORT

 HESKETH BANK
COMMUNITY CENTRE

- 3 presentations to Councillors and officers from West Lancs Borough Council
- Hesketh with Becconsall Parish Council
- Persimmon Homes, Lancaster
- Becconsall U3A
- Hesketh with Becconsall Silver Band
- Community Futures, Preston

- **Communicating with younger people**

We have developed links with all the local primary schools and secondary school and are actively involving children and teachers both individually and at School Council level. We have explained what we are planning and sought their views on the development of the community centre - they have responded positively. Trustees now meet with them regularly and we are assisting them with marketing advice and other support activities.

In December 2018, we held a public consultation at All Saint's Primary School in Hesketh Bank. Over 40 consultation questionnaires were completed by visitors.

- **Community Groups**

We also recognise the importance of community groups and the authorities in developing our ideas. There are regular monthly update meetings with the Hesketh with Becconsall Parish Council and they provide support, advice and assistance. We produce a report every month for the Parish Council meeting and Councillor Diane Earles represents the Council on the Board of Trustees. Our planning supports Parish and Borough Council objectives.

As part of our plan to create a community hub, we have held fruitful discussions with other organisations in Lancashire and West Lancashire who deliver services and support to the local community. These conversations are continuing and the more discussions we hold, the more we find services that are essential to the well-being of our community that are missing and we are actively working to find ways to help those organisations deliver them through the Community Centre.

- **Neighbours**

Recognising that we are located in the midst of the community and our activities will, therefore, impact on the surrounding area, we meet on a regular basis with our immediate neighbours to seek their views and listen to their ideas. They are invited to every AGM and other consultation events and are always represented. It was our neighbours who strongly suggested that we locate the new community centre at the front of the site. They also volunteered to be involved in opening the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA).

- **Posters**

We have designed and put up posters in key locations to publicise our activities, progress to date and seek responses. These include the library and shops throughout the surrounding area.

- **Information days**

We have held two access mornings at our local supermarket - Booths - when we have had a stand and tell people about what we are doing and why so that we can, again, seek their views and ideas.



- **Local events**



To find out more about the views of the wider community, we have had, for the last two years, a physical presence at a number of key local events - Rose Queen, Fêtes and others so that we can speak face-to-face with people. This way, as well as building our knowledge base and community awareness, we have found a number of volunteers and received offers of help.

We take every opportunity to talk to people, especially at events we organise and have promotional materials that encourage responses.

- **Newsletters**

We have published a regular newsletter to update the community and over 2,000 copies are circulated door-to-door throughout Hesketh Bank and Tarleton. This has now been increased to 5,000. Copies are also available from a number of locations.

- **Social media**

We have active social media platforms and given the nature of such systems, we receive many comments and views from the community which we value. We use Facebook and Twitter and are developing Instagram for a younger audience to access. There is also a website and we have a webpage on the Parish Council website.

- **The press and local/regional media**

Regular press releases are issued to publicise our progress, successes and events. We have been featured in Local Life magazine and so have our users.

To further reach out, we facilitated and hosted a two hour broadcast by BBC Radio Lancashire which showcased ourselves, local organisations and talent.

We believe that, wherever we can, we should deliver our message to, and seek the views of, as many groups and individuals as possible throughout the community. We have worked hard to do so in as a professional manner as possible and always to provide clear and precise information.

With so many new residents, the Community Centre has to reach out continuously to ensure awareness of the centre, the groups we support and the events that we organise.

This approach has worked and, to date, almost all responses that we have received have been very positive and supportive. We have, of course, taken into account the few negative responses we have received and, where we have been able to, discuss them with the respondents to find out more.

Our knowledge base has increased as a result and responses to date from both users and the community have given us confidence. We do not yet need to finalise our plans so can adapt as we learn more. In this respect, we will continue to consult and survey to test our ideas as they evolve.



Community View

The Hesketh Bank
Community Centre Newsletter

Issue 8 - August 2018



A new Community Centre?

For those of you who use the Community Centre, you will know that our buildings are in a poor state and that we are now fund raising so that we can build a new Community Centre. The concept that you see above would be located at the front of the present site and will offer more space, more halls and a community meeting space. We already have around 1,000 people a month using the centre and at peak times, we are full which is limiting what we are able to offer so we need to redevelop. Your views and ideas would be most welcome so please help us and check out our survey which is on our facebook page or here at:
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/S5LZLVT>

Help us by completing our survey. Visit: www.facebook.com/hwbvcc

New Courses



In September, we are running two six week courses in conjunction with Southport College for speakers of other languages.

English for Speakers of Other Languages

**Starts: Thursday - 27th September.
Ends: 1st November, 6pm to 8pm.**

This is an introduction to English for speakers of other languages. The course provides learners with the basic grammar and vocabulary of everyday English, using a variety of topics, for example, shopping, food and drink, healthy living and work. This will be taught in a friendly setting, encouraging learners to practise their English in groups and pairs.

Helping Your Child with English

**Starts: Tuesday - 25th September.
Ends: 30th October - 6pm to 8pm.**

This is a foundation course to equip learners with English skills, including sentence structure, punctuation and grammar, in order to help your child with English.

Fund raising Events

A popular Night at the Races event



The poster features a large circular logo with 'HESKETH BANK' at the top and 'COMMUNITY CENTRE' at the bottom. Inside the circle are stylized yellow shapes resembling wheat or money bags.

the future for our  **Community** C E N T R E

Could you organise a sponsored event to help us?

...charity abseil? ...a Zip Wire descent? ...a mountain climb? ...cycle ride? or even a raffle at Your meeting?

We would like to hear your views on how the hall might be developed so please talk to us or email your views to: fund@heskethbankcommunitycentre.org.uk Tel: 07784 942127 Follow us at: www.facebook.com/hwbvcc • @HeskethBankVCC

Hesketh Bank Community Centre - Station Road, Hesketh Bank, Preston PR4 6SR. Registered Charity Number: 521118

Next year, we are planning to rebuild the Hesketh Bank Community Centre to create more space with better facilities for all our users. It will be a comfortable, modern, light and airy building that exceeds all required standards and will use green technologies to make it as eco-friendly as possible. It will become a hub for the community.

Poster for display in the halls library and other locations.

Mikron Travelling Theatre -
an annual sell-out event



Sell-out Murder Mystery
event with food and bar.

Garden party with local Ukulele band

- over £600 raised



The image contains four separate promotional posters arranged side-by-side:

- Top Left:** A photograph of a barbecue with various meats and vegetables cooking over an open flame. Below the photo is text: "Join us for a feast of BBQ meats, salads, desserts and more." At the bottom left is a blue banner with white text: "JULY 1st - starts at 1.00 at 17 ASTLAND GATE".
- Top Middle:** A poster for a comedy event. It features a microphone and the text: "BIG COMEDY Hesketh Bank Community Centre Friday 3rd March". Below the text are three headshots of comedians: Dave Williams (BBC 5 Live), Daliso Chaponda (World Stands Up (Paramount)), and Brendan Riley (Stand Up (ITV)).
- Bottom Left:** A poster for a Christmas bingo event. It features large yellow letters spelling "Bingo" and "Christmas". The text includes: "at the Community Centre", "This Thursday!!", "HESKETH WITH BECCONSTALL VILLAGE COMMUNITY CENTRE", "Eyes down at 8.00", "Cash prizes + jackpot and raffle", "Refreshments", "Mince pies, Christmas Cake and Mulled Wine", and "Bring your own drink.". The background has a decorative border.
- Bottom Right:** A green poster advertising a "TABLE TOP SALE TODAY" from 10.00 to 3.00. It lists items for sale: CRAFTS • GIFTS • BRING & BUY • TOYS, FABRICS • PAINTINGS • CARDS • BODY SHOP. It also mentions refreshments available including soup, sandwiches and cakes. The text "Help us to redevelop The Hesketh with Becconsall Village Community Centre" is at the top. The bottom right corner features a circular logo with the word "HESKETH" and a stylized sunburst design.

Other fund raising events.