Shirehampton Public Hall Community Consultation

Summary

Consultation with users of the Hall and the local community in 2017 has demonstrated support for its continued use as a community building and for its modernisation. As a prominent listed building it plays an important part in the life of Shirehampton and feelings can run high when there is talk of change. However, there are lots of ideas on how to improve and develop the facility to make it fit for the future.

Of the 80 people responding to the survey, 43% use the library which makes it the largest single use. However, since the consultation took place the City Council has stated that it is minded to close the library. This will clearly have an impact on use and further underlines the need to develop new uses and activities to attract people to the building. The second most popular use for people responding to the survey was parties and social events (37%) while for visitors to the open day it was exercise and hobby groups. To meet the needs of all these activities, the facilities need modernising.

In terms of future uses, a cafe (76%) and more musical events (67%) were the most popular. To increase income, better use of the library space and modernisation of the toilets and kitchen were the top three priorities.

There appears to be agreement that the toilets should be moved to the front of the building, modernising the kitchen and retaining the library in its current location. People taking part in the public meeting in May were less convinced by the idea of a lift or stair-lift to the first floor and of a combined entrance for the Hall and the library.

Open Day

In February 2017 the Hall held an open day to showcase the various activities that take place and to gather information from users about how they currently use the Hall. We also asked how they would like to see the Hall evolve in the future. Approximately 150 people visited the main Hall on the open day and approximately 70 visited the library (some may have visited both).
How Often Do You Use The Hall?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What Do You Use The Hall For?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parties &amp; social events</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bingo</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise &amp; dance</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage shows</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation &amp; hobby groups</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school play and stay</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ideas For The Future

- In conjunction with library invest in IT equipment for a computer/games club for youngsters
- Disco night
- Drama group
- Keep Bingo open, great fun weekly get-together
- Keep art club going
- Better links with Shire Primary School for library
- Talks, history environment, celebrities
- Café, home-made cakes, quality, comfy sofa, be different from those in the village
- Cinema club, by subscription.
- Raise awareness of hall membership
- Promote more shows, tea dance, social events, quiz, dances
- Monthly events for 11-16 yr olds, youth club, am dram groups
- Monthly food market
- Music groups, bands, get younger audiences
- Visiting events eg Zoo Lab for children
- Community projects eg collage to display in the hall
- Make more use of the fantastic stage
- Regular open days
- Bristol University School of Architecture would be interested in doing a project around planning issues and future use of the hall
- Increase rent by 10%
- A social media presence to promote events groups and hire of the hall
- Use library as a contact and information hub for council and public services announcements and networking
• Library is friendly and helpful for people who want companionship
• More shows, concerts
• After-school clubs, ballet, gymnastics, clubs for youth
• Second hand book stall
• Youth club, cooking, cinema, pool, crafts, art, darts
• Make links with school opposite
• Hire library space for home schooling
• Exam boards
• Crafts, decoupage, pottery, café
• Hall groups display their work in library for children
• Am dram, choirs, shows, tea and coffee
• Wedding receptions, liaise with Church opposite
• Lottery application for roof/clock repairs. English Heritage
• Café/internet
• Soft play for under 6’s
• Help for people to use computers/laptops
• Café, second hand book stall
• Monthly coffee morning
• Promote the hall to other users, eg Old Vic
• Drama
• Clothes swapping parties.
• Pop-up cinema nights, old movies

The following letter was sent to The Shire newspaper after the event:

Public Hall Open Day
Dear Editor,

On behalf of the Craft Exhibition can I extend our thanks to the Shire Hall Committee for the work they put in organising the open day at the Public Hall on Saturday 25th February.

The day was a tremendous success in the numbers and diversity that attended, from young families with children to older members of the community, all showing an interest in what was happening in their local community and showing their concern for the future of the Public Hall.

There was a buzz in the Hall all day long and it was great to be able to talk to so many people about what we offer and the other groups around the Hall as well. It did show what a vibrant place the Hall can be and what an interested community we have.

I hope the Hall Committee achieved the outcomes they wanted and have some great ideas for making the Hall a success. We look forward to seeing the results.

Thanks from the Craft Exhibition—Ed Amphlett (Committee member)

PS: Any chance of making this an annual event?
Community Survey

The open day was complemented by a survey (available on paper and online) which attracted 80 responses. The results are attached at Appendix 1.

Public Meeting

A public meeting was held in May with 50 people taking part. At the meeting participants were asked to show their support for various possible changes to the building. Retaining the library in the current position was the most popular proposal (14 people) followed by moving the toilets to the front of the building (13 people), moving the railway club to the rear of the building (12 people), creating a cafe (11 people) and creating a bar (10 people).

The proposals that were most unpopular were to create a new combined entrance for the hall and library (21 people), installing a lift to the first floor (20 people), installing a stairlift (18 people), relocating the library (18 people) and extending the library (15 people).

A report on the meeting is attached at Appendix 2.
Appendix 1: Results of Survey
Q1 About the Public Hall. Do you attend any of these activities?

Answered: 80  Skipped: 0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreational and hobby groups</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise and dance</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bingo</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool play and stay</td>
<td>11.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage shows</td>
<td>21.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties and social events</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify below)</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 80
**Q2 About Shirehampton Library.**

Answered: 80  Skipped: 0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you borrow / read books?</td>
<td>8.75%</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
<td>56.25%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you have children, do...</td>
<td>16.28%</td>
<td>25.58%</td>
<td>58.14%</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you use the library?</td>
<td>1.41%</td>
<td>9.86%</td>
<td>88.73%</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q3 Do you want to keep the library open and, if you do, who should run it?

Answered: 80  Skipped: 0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It should be kept open and run by the City Council</td>
<td>68.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It should be kept open and run by a community group</td>
<td>22.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It should be allowed to close</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know / indifferent</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q4 What we might do in the future. Would you use any of these new facilities?

Answered: 68  Skipped: 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More space for use of computers</td>
<td>17.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café</td>
<td>76.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space to hire for business meetings</td>
<td>33.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More musical events and stage shows</td>
<td>67.65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 68
Q5 We need to increase our income to remain viable. If we were to raise funds in the next three years to upgrade our facilities please indicate your top three priorities. 1, 2, 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make better use of the...</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refurbish and improve access...</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct a new entrance...</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refurbish kitchen</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-hand bookshop</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install a licensed bar</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access to 1st floor...</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make no changes, we...</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answered: 80  Skipped: 0
Q6 About you: How old are you?
Answered: 80  Skipped: 0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 16</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>3.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-40</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-64</td>
<td>41.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q7 What is your postcode?

Answered: 80   Skipped: 0
Q8 Would you volunteer to help the Public Hall?

Answered: 68   Skipped: 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>58.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>41.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q9 Would you volunteer to help the library?

Answered: 69   Skipped: 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>56.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q10 Can we stay in contact with you? Please give us your name and phone number or email address.

Answered: 59  Skipped: 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>94.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>94.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone number</td>
<td>61.02%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1: Results of Survey
PUBLIC MEETING
FEEDBACK REPORT

Preface

At the Public Meeting on 9th May, 2017, the attendees were invited to fill in a 'Ranking Sheet', a 'Comment Sheet' and a 'Volunteer Sheet'. 25 Ranking Sheets were returned; one Comment Sheet; and no Volunteer Sheets.

Ranking Sheets

Of the 25 Sheets returned, 5 contained no rankings only crosses showing complete opposition to some building proposals. This may be because the writers were not so concerned about the other projects, but determined to make their objections to certain proposals known.

Ranking Sheets - Aggregate Scores

These show how many people supported each building proposal:

- New Entrance: For Library and Hall: 3
- Library: Relocate to present Staffroom: 1
- Library: Retain in present situation: 14
- Lift: For disabled vehicles: 1
- Stairlift: For disabled persons: 2
- Toilets: Adjacent Library: 7
- Toilets: Move to front entrance: 13
- Railway Club: Transfer to present Men's Toilets: 12
- Kitchenette: Change small Men's cloakroom: 7
- Bar: Change present Ladies' Toilet: 10
- Kitchen: Move to Springfield Room: 10
- Kitchen: Move to Staffroom Store/toilet: 3
- Cafe: Present Library Staffroom: 11

You can see that none of the above received the 20 'votes' available and that the retention of the Library in its present position gained the highest score - 70%.
Ranking Sheets - Priorities

If we look at what people put as their first/most important proposal we get the following:

- New Entrance For Library and Hall............................... 2
- Library Relocate to present staffroom........................ 1
- Library Retain in present position......................... 10
- Toilets Adjacent Library........................................ 1
- Toilets Move to front entrance............................. 2
- Bar Change present Ladies Toilet............................ 3
- Cafe Present Library staffroom............................ 1

By far the most people chose the retention of the Library in its present position as their priority - 50%.

Ranking Sheets - Completely Opposed

These were the people who placed crosses against the building proposals:

- New Entrance For Library and Hall............................... 21
- Library Relocate in present staffroom.................. 18
- Library Retain in present situation...................... 3
- Library Extend to side........................................ 15
- Lift For disabled vehicles................................. 20
- Stairlift For disabled persons............................. 18
- Toilets Adjacent library..................................... 11
- Toilets Move to front entrance........................... 1
- Bar Change present Ladies’ Toilets....................... 6
- Kitchen Move to Springfield Room....................... 7
- Kitchen Move to staffroom store/toilet................ 5
- Cafe Present Library staffroom........................ 4

It can be seen that more people registered their opposition to certain proposals than any which were supported. Most notable was the opposition to the New Entrance, the relocation of the Library, the Lift and Stairlift.
Comment Sheet

Only one was returned, anonymously. The comments read:

- No cafe
- Kitchen can NOT be in small meeting room at the end of a long, narrow corridor - too inconvenient.

There was another sheet of paper with the following comments on (anonymous):

- Yes to bar, either in 7 (new-build between Toilets and Library), or 10 (Ladies Toilets)
- Kitchen needs to be improved - better for lettings. Maybe tie in with new cafe in old library staffroom
- However it happens, make better use of library staffroom.

I have added an Appendix with comments jotted down on the notepads, etc.

Volunteer Sheets

There were no volunteer sheets returned, but that may be because people would have responded to the online survey, where 40 people volunteered to help in the Public Hall and 30 volunteered to help in the Library.

Conclusions

Although it cannot be claimed that the results of either the Survey or the Public Meeting represent the views of the people of Shirehampton, they do, nevertheless, represent the views of people who feel strongly about the Public Hall and are willing to give up their time to register those views.

Library: as can be seen from the Survey and Public Meeting results the future of the Library is the main concern: over 68% of survey respondents want the Library retained and run by the City Council; 50% of those who filled in Ranking Sheets wanted, as their number one priority, the Library to remain where it was (70% overall).

Cafe: 55% of people at the Meeting supported a cafe; over 76% in the Survey.

New Entrance: although 2 people at the Meeting supported the New Entrance proposal as a priority, 21 people utterly opposed it. This contrasts with the Survey, where 14 people supported it as their top priority.

Toilets: In the Survey, 14 people (as their top priority) wished to 'refurbish and improve
access to the toilets'. At the meeting, it was not such a priority compared to other proposals, but overall 13 people (65%) supported moving the toilets to the front entrance (thus endorsing refurbishment/accessibility).

**Bar:** this was a contentious issue, with 3 people supporting it as a priority, 10 people supporting it overall and 6 people utterly opposed.

**Kitchen:** this was another contentious issue, with 10 people supporting a move to the Springfield Room and 3 supporting a move to the staffroom toilet/storeroom. However, 7 people were completely opposed to the Springfield Room and 5 were completely opposed to the staffroom toilet/storeroom. Nobody supported either as a priority.

Gil Osman
PUBLIC MEETING - APPENDIX

Comments taken at random and anonymously from notepads and paper, but not entered on Comment Sheets

- Keep original Main Entrance
- Library option 2 - room space not rented when Library open
- Lift entrapment
- What does Hall Association want to achieve?
- What does Library Service offer? e.g. volunteer support.
- What does it want from us?
- Clearly define role of volunteers/professionals
- Legal requirements for lift?
- Library opening times?
- Proper advertising.
- Library: staffing issues/pay for some staff hours; swipe access; covenant for library; need to understand about what a Library is; could be used for some events when Library open; rearrange to make it easier to hire out the space; staff-room too small for class visits.
- Cafe space good idea, but what about staff
- Wheelchair access - get advice from Equalities Team
- Ideas for main hall: lunch-club, pop-up restaurant.
- Will there be a shared staff space?
- We were unanimous against changing the front/main entrance
- The majority on the table disagreed regarding a cafe - it wouldn't get used as there were already too many alternatives.
- The Library must be kept available and made usable.
- Make the cafe a fully functional paying room rather than an occasional use facility; have regular functions involving the kitchen or just table-space;
organised events, not just a drop-in cafe.

- Concern about rooms having restricted usage by being reserved for only 1 group of people and feel they should be more flexible to generate income.
- Put machines in the Cafe for snacks and/or drinks.
- What about a small children's play area outside?
A good crowd of around 50 people turned out on 9th May to discuss possible futures for the Public Hall and Library. After an interesting brief history of the Hall from David Thomas, Peter Kirsen, Public Hall Association Treasurer, explained the financial situation.

Bristol City Council owns the Public Hall but the Public Hall Association (PHA) has a long lease and is responsible for maintaining the interior. Council cuts have meant that the Hall will lose Â£5,000 in annual revenue and must find ways of increasing its income.
With that in mind the PHA is putting forward proposals for making changes to the interior of the Hall to make it more attractive to potential users.

"move the toilets..."

Suggestions included moving the toilets to the front of the building and installing a catering kitchen. And there are several proposals about how to make the Library more flexible.

Those attending the meeting were asked to study the proposals and comment on them. It was made clear that these were simply proposals to be considered and that the facade and outward appearance of the Hall were NOT under discussion.

Some of those present thought that it was premature to be re-designing the interior spaces when there is still no clarity from the Council about whether a Library Service will continue and if so in what form.

well-considered business plan...

Many agreed that a well-considered business plan should be developed which would give a better idea of the needs of potential users before attempting major re-design.

Decisions about the Library have been postponed because of the General Election and will not now be made until the New Year. That means the PHA, and the people of Shirehampton, have plenty of time to develop plans for making the Public Hall a well-used and sustainable community asset.