**The Library and Old School Room**

*In November/December 2015 a house-to-house survey of residents’ opinions on the use and potential of the Library and Old School Room was undertaken. Volunteers delivered forms to every household. The forms were either collected or were taken by residents to the library. The survey was undertaken in order to gauge the extent of support in the village for renovation of the Library and Old School Room. This report, which will be used in future funding applications as well as being made available locally, was compiled by Mary Tierney (volunteer) and the Library Trustees and Parish Council are grateful to her*.

This report is based on 271 self-completion questionnaires.

There is near unanimous support for the proposal to raise funds to renovate the Library and Old School Room, with 269 of respondents ticking yes.

**Suggestions/Ideas**

Respondents were asked for any ideas or suggestions they might have on improving the building. In total, 62 people made suggestions (some people gave more than one suggestion). The following table summarises their key suggestions:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Suggestions** | **Total** | **%** |
| Use for meetings | 15 | 24% |
| Refurbish | 14 | 23% |
| Heating | 12 | 19% |
| Lighting | 8 | 13% |
| New furniture | 7 | 11% |
| Shelving | 7 | 11% |
| Staircase to link two rooms | 6 | 10% |
| Tea/coffee making facilities | 6 | 10% |
| Display of village history | 5 | 8% |
| Visitor information centre | 5 | 8% |
| New windows | 5 | 8% |
| Better use of front windows | 4 | 6% |
| Preserve the building | 4 | 6% |
| Use for evening classes | 3 | 5% |
| Toilets | 3 | 5% |
| Tea room | 3 | 5% |
| Make more welcoming | 2 | 3% |
| No Staircase | 1 | 2% |
| Other | 14 | 23% |
|  n=62 |  |  |

There is general agreement that the building needs upgrading, particularly the heating, windows and lighting but also the general decor.

Suggestions for new furniture included requests for fold-away tables and chairs that could be configured in various ways for facilitating varied use for the room.

Generally, the building is seen to be important to the village heritage and history and there were interesting suggestions regarding having a small heritage centre showcasing the village history. Other suggestions included using it as a visitor centre with the possibility of it housing a tea room. A tea/coffee vending machine was also suggested, which would obviously be less reliant on volunteers.

The building is also seen to have potential as a meeting venue for smaller groups whether special interest or children focused. While some would like to see the two rooms linked some vehemently oppose this idea!

There was some criticism of the current display of posters in the library window which are considered unsightly and perhaps tacky.

Generally, the building is regarded fondly, considered an asset to the village and seen to have a lot of potential. It is possible that many of the above suggestions could be implemented together.

**Whether likely to be a new user**

The majority say they will be (new) users. However, it may be that many of those replying ‘yes’ are already users of the facility.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Likely to be a user** | **Total** |
| Yes | 205 |
| Already a user | 6 |
| No | 21 |
| Unsure | 2 |
| **Grand Total** | **234** |

**Offer of skills**

There are willing volunteers offering a range of skills. Existing volunteers appear happy to continue while others are offering DIY and general skills, as summarised in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Skills on offer** | **Total** |
| General/However I can help | 8 |
| Already volunteer | 7 |
| (Library) volunteer | 5 |
| Reading | 4 |
| Clearing/reinstating library | 2 |
| Fundraising | 2 |
| Help with exhibits | 2 |
| Cataloging | 1 |
| Coffee mornings | 1 |
| Computer skills, librarianship skills | 1 |
| DIY | 1 |
| Plumbing | 1 |
| Poster design/distribution | 1 |
| Promote library | 1 |
| Redecorating | 1 |
| Supply of archive material | 1 |
| Supporting elderly | 1 |
|  Total | 40 |