

ST BOSWELLS VILLAGE HALL

Analysis of responses to village hall user survey – September 2023

BACKGROUND TO THE SURVEY

The St Boswells Village Hall committee has embarked on a strategy aimed at reducing energy costs and CO₂ emissions. Some aspects of this strategy require grant funding and the bodies that award those grants are increasingly seeking assurance that the hall is well supported and valued by the local community.

To understand (and quantify) the level of local community support, a survey was undertaken asking for views on a range of aspects of village hall activities. The survey was created using the free version of “SurveyMonkey”¹, thus enabling it to be distributed and collated electronically.

Three channels were used to distribute survey links during September 2023:

- Via e-mail to Village Hall contacts;
- Via e-mail to St Boswells Community Council contacts;
- Via a link posted on the village hall Facebook page.

It is important to note that the survey was almost exclusively a sample of the views of Village Hall users. *It is therefore not necessarily representative of the views of the wider community.*

SURVEY THEMES

There were eight questions on the following themes:

1. Frequency of use of the village hall;
2. Types of events attended;
3. Sources of information about events or activities;
4. Attendance at “Wednesday Warmup” sessions;
5. Ownership of the hall;
6. Sources of operational funding for the hall;
7. Value to the community of different types of events / activities;
8. Approach to reducing carbon emissions.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

By 4 Oct 2023 there had been a total of 57 responses: 20 from the Facebook link; 4 from the Community Council e-mail; and 33 from the Village Hall e-mail. However, only 25 of the latter could be accessed because of the limit imposed by the free version of “SurveyMonkey”.

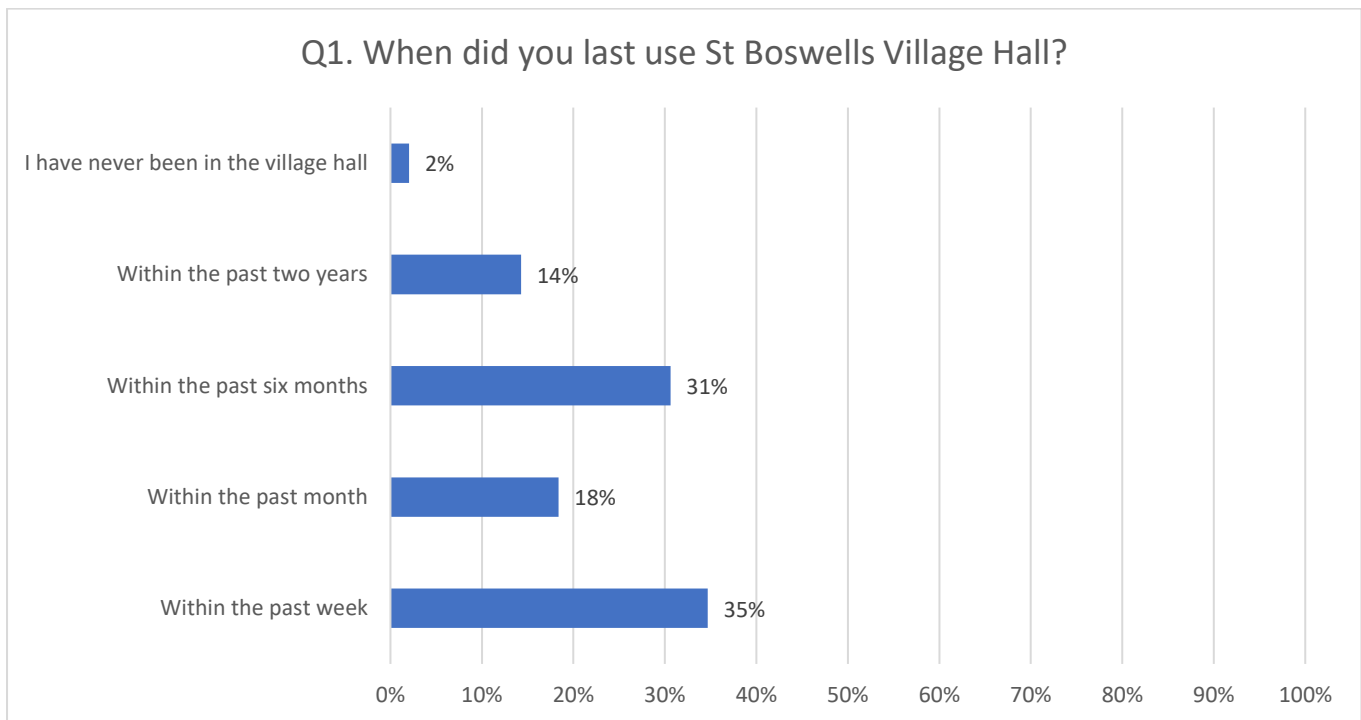
The 49 “accessible” responses can be summarised as:

1. 98% of respondents had used the hall within the past two years; 35% had used it within the previous week.
2. Respondents had attended a fairly broad spread of activities and event types including: fitness/wellness activities; sports; group/society meetings; social events; entertainment; and voting in elections.

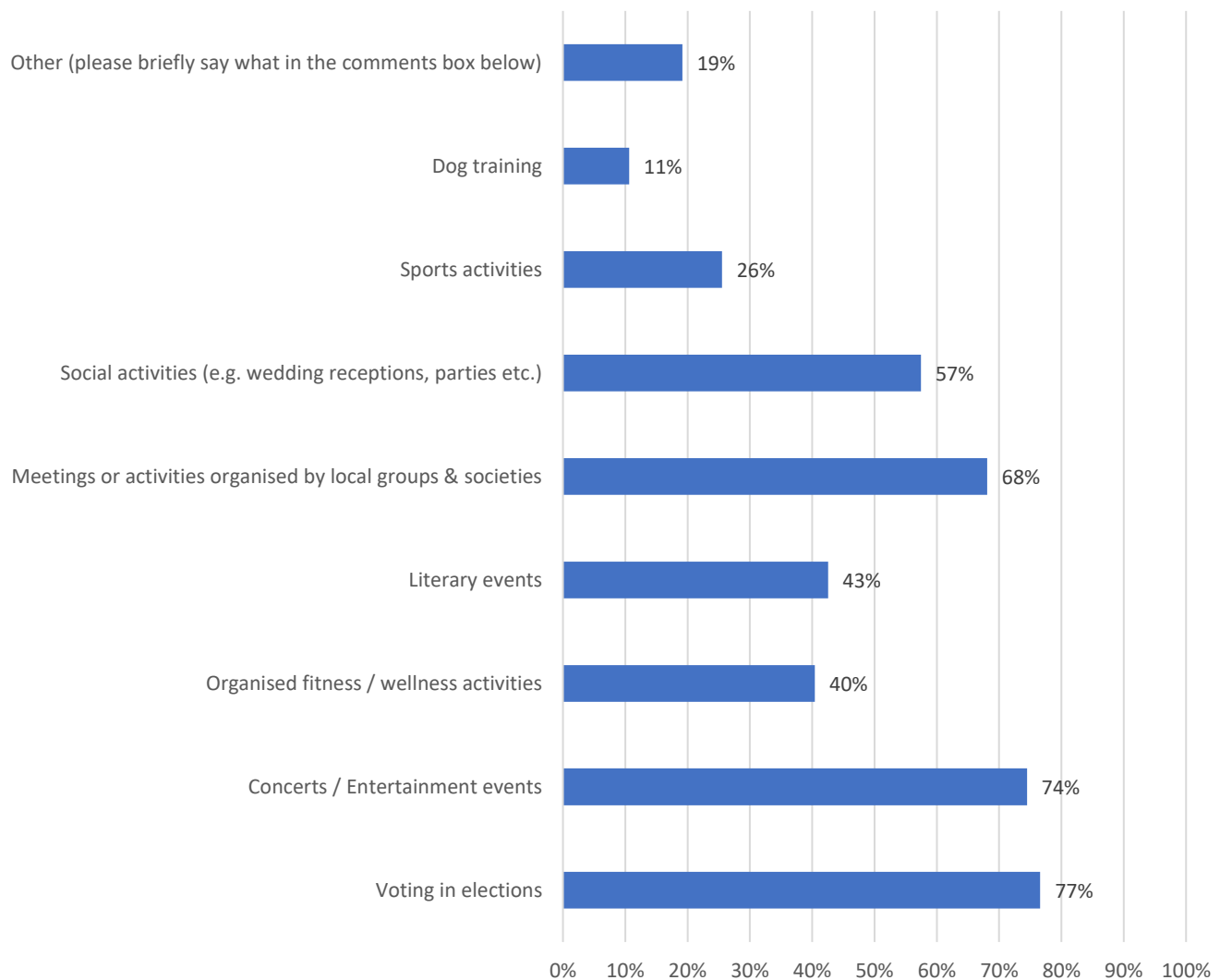
¹ The free version of SurveyMonkey limits the number of responses to any survey to 25. To circumvent this limitation, three identical surveys were created under slightly different names.

3. A slight majority of people preferred to access village hall information via social media. However, e-mails, word-of-mouth, notices and the hall website were also frequently used.
4. About 30% of respondents had attended one or more of the “Wednesday Warmup” sessions during the winter of 2022/23.
5. The overwhelming majority of respondents (96%) were aware that the village hall is owned by the local community.
6. 72% of respondents were aware that the running costs of the hall are met purely from payments by users; 21% had not considered it and 9% thought the hall was funded by the Scottish Borders Council.
7. All of the events and activities that take place in the hall were considered to provide positive benefits to the local community. The lowest score was for lectures which was identified by 85% of respondents as having positive benefits; meanwhile fitness/wellness activities and group/society meetings were joint top scorers at 100% each.
8. 94% of respondents felt the committee should take prompt action to reduce hall-related carbon emissions; 6% thought the committee should delay action or await Government directive; and two respondents (4%) did not complete the question.

DETAILED RESULTS FOR EACH QUESTION



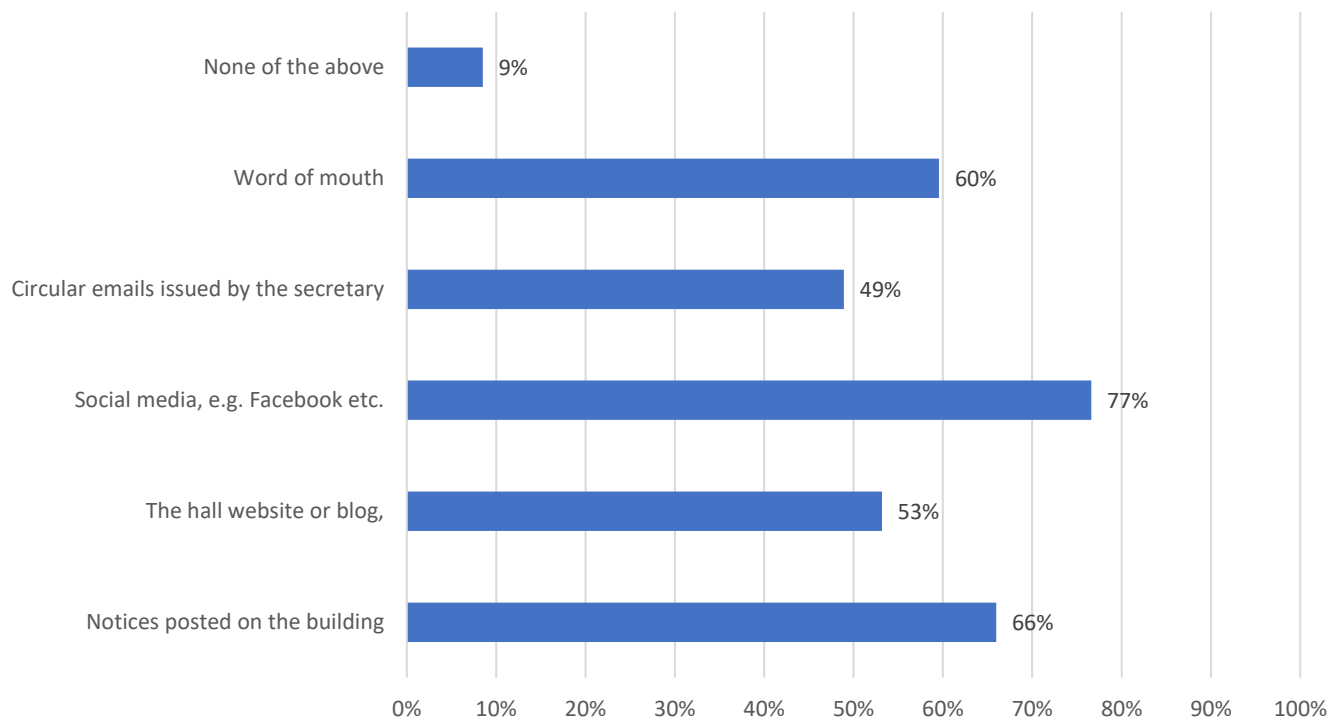
Q2. Which of the types of event below have you ever attended in the village hall (tick all that apply)?



Respondent Q2 comments regarding other types of event they had attended

- “Winter warm up sessions”
- “Village Wednesday warmers”
- “Use every week attending Art Group, Hold meeting to organise village week and other community activities.”
- “Youth Groups”
- “Community Council meetings”
- “Sales”
- “Coffee mornings, AGMs, Lunch club”
- “Events”

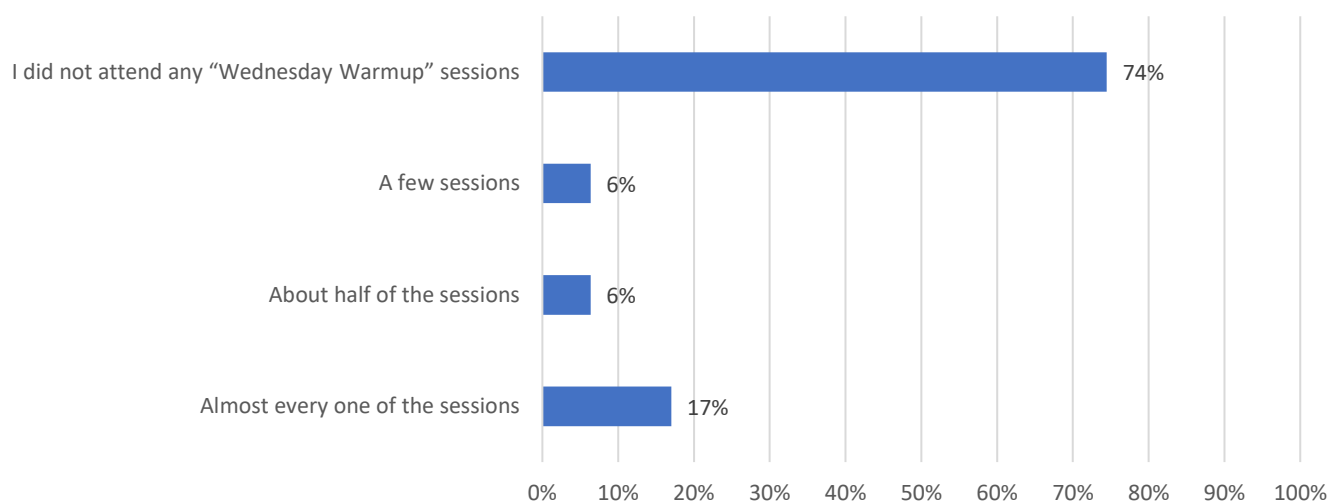
Q3. How do you access information about events or activities that are being held in the village hall?



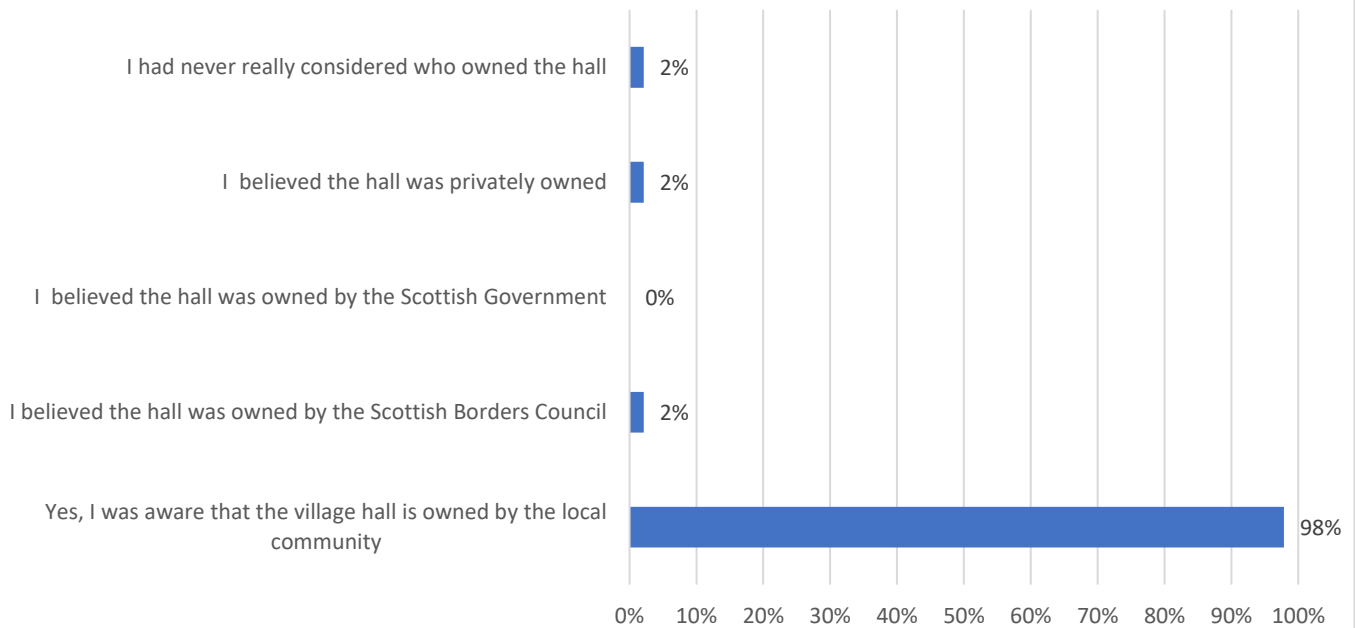
Respondent Q3 comments regarding other information channels

- “Information from organisations themselves who may be using the hall.”
- “Direct advertising by the organisations”
- “Notices on TheGreen”

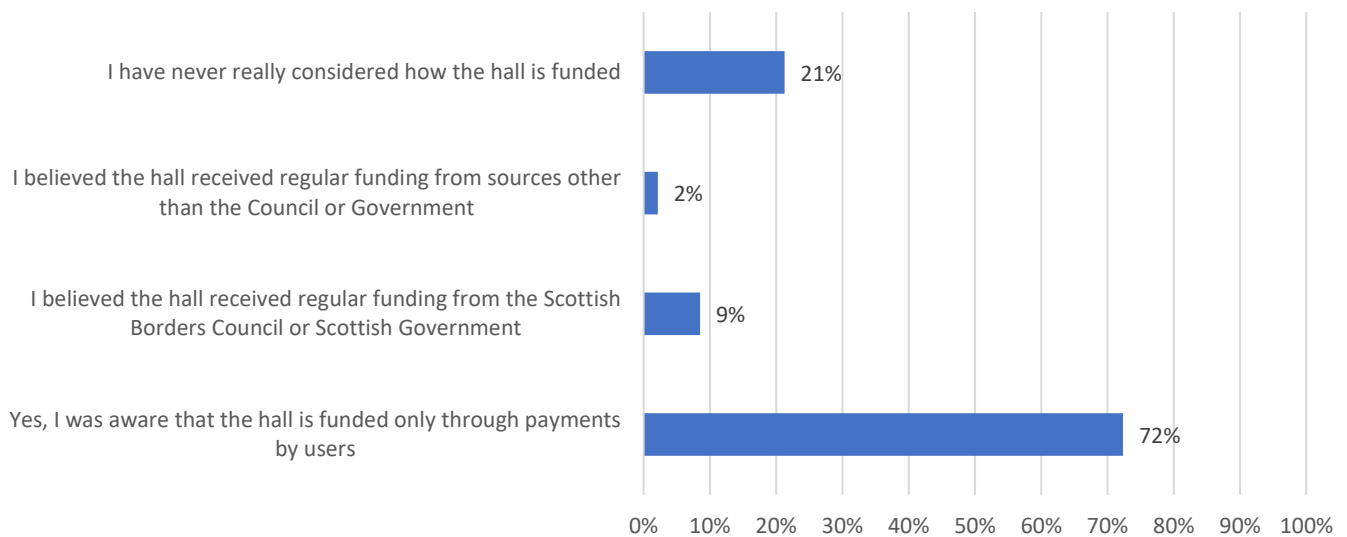
Q4. How often did you attend the “Wednesday Warmup” sessions in the village hall last winter?



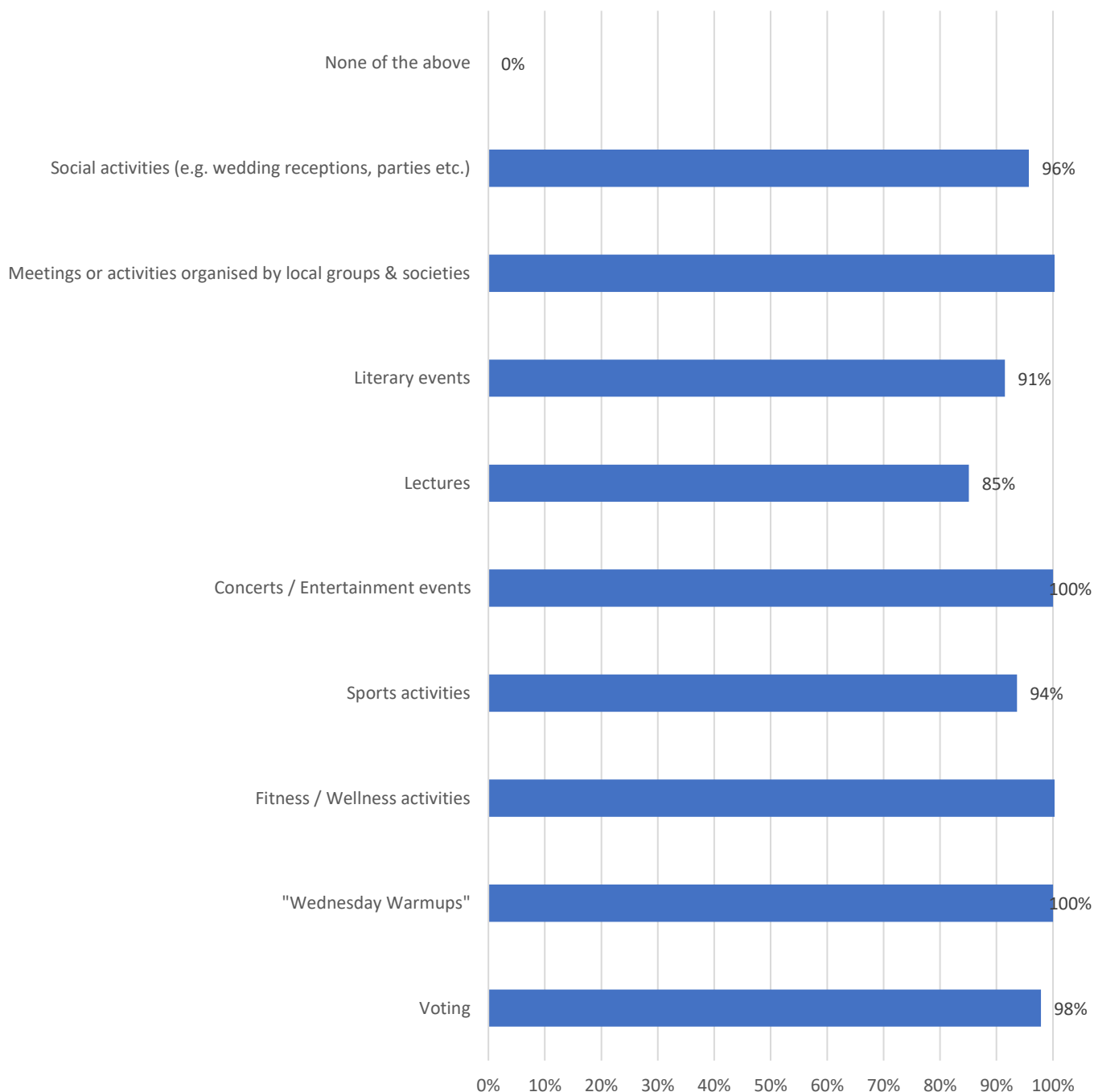
Q5. Were you aware that the village hall is owned by the local community?



Q6. Were you aware that the village hall is funded only through payments it receives from the people or organisations that use it?



Q7. The following list shows the type of activities that take place at the village hall. Please tick those that you see as being a positive benefit to the local community (tick all that apply)

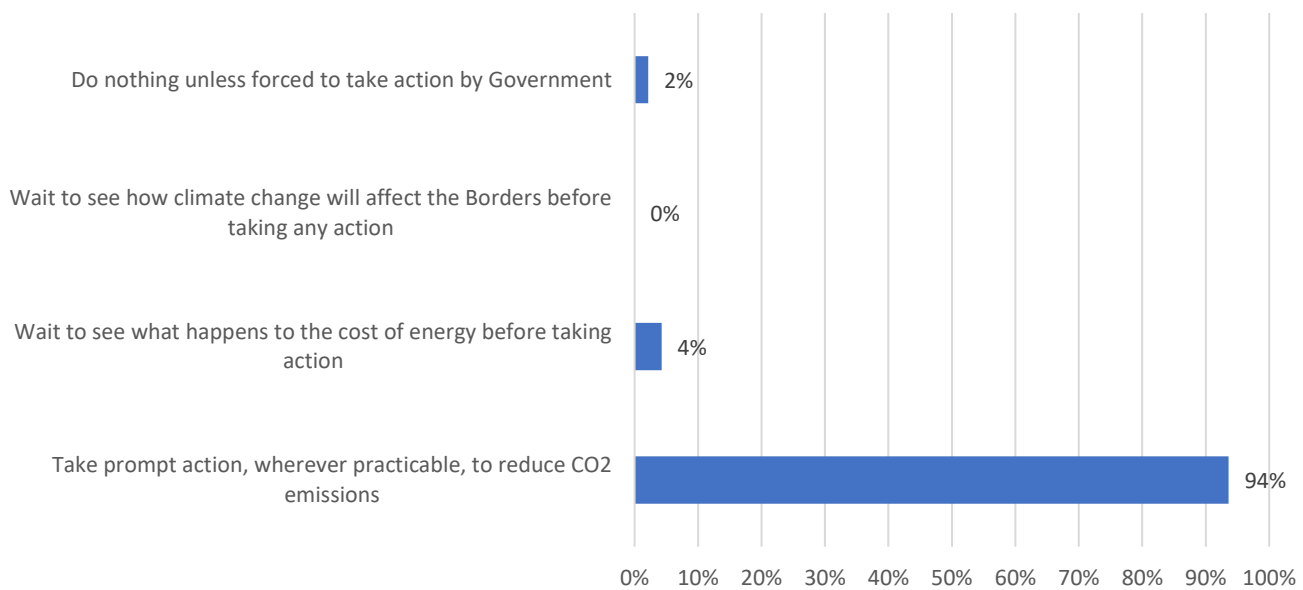


Respondent Q7 comments regarding other beneficial activities

- “A beautiful village hall. Perfect for every type of activity and the hub of our village. It brings young and old together. Encourages fitness and learning and entertainment. It creates a sense of belonging, prevents loneliness as a place to gather and also show off our talents and is totally inclusive. Run by the Community and used by the Community.”
- “Blood donation as well. [Note from author: the remainder of this respondent’s comment has been redacted as it is contentious and not relevant to the survey].”

- “This hall is a must for our village, I had my wedding reception their on June 6th 1987 and my 3 children attended mother and toddlers, playgroup and nursery.”
- “Dog training classes”
- “The village hall is a great asset to the village.”
- “Very important to have a village hall that is well used. It’s a hub for many in the village and beyond.”
- “I would be interested in hiring for an hour or hour and a half but your insistence on either a morning or an afternoon, makes it uneconomic for us. *[Note from author: the minimum morning/afternoon booking duration is due to the uneconomic cost of heating the hall for a shorter booking].*”

Q8. Currently the gas and electricity used annually by the village hall results in more than 7 tonnes of carbon dioxide pollution being released into the air every year. What do you feel the committee should do about this?



Respondent Q8 comments regarding CO2 emissions

- “The United nations has produced 17 sustainability goal. Hence net zero is important to all of us.”
- “Although I am aware the hall is nearly as energy efficient as practicable due to energy generation not being possible on site.”
- “Do whatever they can to reduce impact using available funds and encourage users to be more energy aware.”
- “Try solar panels if roof allows for it”
- “Only if its economically feasible.”
- “Help to reduce emissions. But not at the cost of closing as that would be departmental to the village”