

# Sessay Village Hall Community Survey

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November 2021

## Report of the findings of the survey

Some of you will remember the survey, carried out 18 months ago, about what people wanted from Sessay Village Hall. There has been some delay in reporting back the outcomes from the survey, but the committee has not been idle. The survey indicated several areas where work could be done, and work has already started. This report will highlight work that's been done in the context of the survey and where more work can be done and how that can happen.

Firstly, the structure of the organisation was not fit for purpose and two separate parts were legally merged to form a charitable trust – Sessay Community Trust. The survey asked if people wanted a high-quality village hall. All the respondents either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed'. This has supported the current plans to reconfigure the village hall to make it a more efficient use of the building and the spaces within it. The plans can be seen at the entrance.

The survey found that 60% of respondents use the hall at least every month. People indicated interest in a range of activities. The most popular were Community Cinema, Performing Arts, music and drama, Exercise and Fitness, Arts and Crafts, Health and Wellbeing, Exhibitions, Social Events and Social Club. Since the survey and analysis of the results, it is worth noting that many of the features are already in place. Details of events can be found on the website [sessayvillagehall.co.uk](http://sessayvillagehall.co.uk) which has been created and updated following the survey. Specific items listed above and action taken is in Appendix 1.

The survey asked what would make people more likely to attend the village hall. Featuring here are a number of requests which have already been addressed or will be addressed by the upgraded facilities. These are "more community events" and "activities of interest". The number of events has increased and several events have been run for the whole community including the Queens Jubilee, the Coronation and the Scarecrow festival. Events are run roughly once a month and are of different types – comedy club, music, talks etc. Suggestions and organisers are equally welcome for more.

Better Bar facilities was suggested. The cricket club redecorated and improved the bar area and new furniture has been purchased. The bar will move and be bigger and be more flexible directly joining the main hall with direct access to the cricket pitch too. Better Kitchen facilities will happen with the improvements. The kitchen will move to the current entrance hall area and directly serve the main hall. Better heating will be addressed in the rebuild along with more insulation and green technology.

Better Wi-Fi has been provided by the cricket club and we can now live stream into the bar and main hall. Better publicity has been addressed by the new website and regular emails which you can subscribe to receive. These go out at least once a month. Events are also advertised in the village hall windows and outside the hall. Better acoustics have been partially addressed by buying through grants and donations a new audio-visual system including screen, projector, microphones, speakers and personal hearing loops. This has given the opportunity to run a cinema club. We have a full public broadcasting licence for events, all we need is someone to organise it! (or a group). We can also stream live events.

Finally, the survey offered opportunity for suggestions the people would like to see. There were 24 very specific statements made with positive comments. Its quite gratifying to note that many of these suggestions have already been incorporated into developments in one way or another. Grants are being applied for and won, and other villages visited. Development plans are modest but necessary for the future offering greater flexible use of space and storage. There is great potential for the future and future residents. Everyone working on this is a volunteer and often events are managed by a small number of the same individuals with the same people supporting. Always new ideas and suggestions need to come along with new volunteers to help run them. A good example is table tennis – we have the potential for a club which was a survey suggestion, we can buy a table, we just need a group of people to run it! Other areas of weakness identified are age range of activities and Health and Wellbeing. It's down to the community to use its evolving resource.

To conclude, the survey has proved a useful tool to give authority and direction to Sessay Community Trust to move forward with confidence that the village wants better facilities which can be used by a wider range of the population. The committee has already acted on many suggestions or has at least incorporated them into the development plan, which has planning approval. The survey has proved useful to back up successful grant applications for the developments. All its going to take now is for people to continue to support existing and run new activities.

Richard Lupson July 2023

## Appendix 1

Community Cinema – the infrastructure is in place. Needs organisers. Children's film afternoon being trialled July 27th

Performing Arts, music and drama – comedy club evening may be repeated, several music events happened and planned. Opportunity to engage with rural arts programme of music and drama. Other events possible

Exercise and Fitness – Dance exercise class every week. Opportunity for more.

Arts and Crafts - Rural Arts deliver art classes twice a month ranging from watercolour to poetry. Craft Fair at Christmas last year is to be repeated

Health and Wellbeing – down to you!

Exhibitions – small exhibitions were organised for the Queens Jubilee and the Coronation

Social Events – social events such as the pig race organised. The Tuesday Club meets regularly. Morning Coffee every month on Saturday

Social Club – potential for one. The bar is open year-round on Fridays till people go home! Including dominos bingo quizzes etc.

Diverse Interests – WI and the Tuesday Club have diverse speakers at each meeting. There's potential to use the hall for more with modern audio-visual equipment.