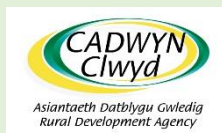




YSGOL CYFFYLLIOG OPTIONS APPRAISAL AND FEASIBILITY STUDY

Report for Cyffylliog Community Council.

Final Report:
Cynlas Cyf
25/09/2020



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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

This project has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.

Cyllidwyd y prosiect hwn drwy Cymunedau Gwledig Llywodraeth Cymru - Rhaglen Datblygu Gwledig Cymru 2014-2020, a ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru a'r Gronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig.

1. Overview.

1.1 Cadwyn Clwyd in partnership with Cyffylliog Community Council commissioned Cynlas Cyf to undertake a Community Consultation and Options Appraisal for the former school at Cyffylliog.

In anticipation of the closure of the local school in 2019, the County Council (Denbighshire) and Cyffylliog Community Council got together to agree a way forward to identifying a preferred solution for the future use of the site.

1.2 With the support of Cadwyn Clwyd through the Rural Development Programme, Cyffylliog Community Council commissioned Cynlas Cyf to undertake the feasibility study and options appraisal to fully investigate the possibility of developing a community facility that would meet the needs of community members and community groups within the Cyffylliog area.

This work would involve:

- Consultation with the residents within the Cyffylliog Community Council area (Villages of Bontuchel and Cyffylliog) to see what is required for the future use of the former Ysgol Carreg Emlyn Cyffylliog Primary School site.
- Reviewing existing facilities and provision and establishing the requirements of the local community.
- Assessing the potential for a new development and gauging support for the proposed development.
- Identifying a preferred option and then drawing the results of this work together in a written report.
- Identifying a group or bring together members of the community willing to take on the recommendations and take on the project.

The work was commissioned in October 2019, and the initial report was scheduled to be complete by early April. However, due to Covid 19 work to complete the study was halted in Mid-March.

1.3 Work to date.

Marc Roberts has met regularly with the Community Council and individual councillors, commencing with an initial start-up meeting on the 17th October 2019.

At the initial meeting, the following was agreed:

- Site Visits to the school.

- Meeting with key stakeholders, including Denbighshire County Council officers and members.
- Engagement with the community via an open meeting at the Chapel Vestry in November 2019.
- Survey with the community via postal drop.
- Review of costings and figures.
- Final presentation with community to relay findings and recommendations of the report.

1.4 The report was scheduled to be completed in early April 2020; however due to Covid 19 there was a delay to the process, and the work was recommenced in August in 2020, after being called to a halt at the outset of Lockdown in mid-March. The primary work left to do was the survey with the community. This was undertaken in August 2019, with surveys being returned by the no later than the 7th of September 2020.

1.5 The remainder of this report sets out the background, context, results of the consultation and recommendations for next steps.

2. Cyffylliog and the School

2.1 Cyffylliog lies within the county of Denbighshire. It is situated to the west of Ruthin on the banks of the River Clywedog. It also includes the smaller community of Bontuchel, as well as a small section of Clocaenog Forest.

2.2 At the 2011 census, it had a population of 495. This represented a slight growth from the previous census in 2001 of 484. A 2019 estimate indicates that the community is again slightly higher at 520, although it will not be until the result of the 2021 census that a full like for like comparison can be made.

Based on the 2019 estimate, the age makes up of the village is somewhat similar to Wales and Denbighshire in most respects:

Table 1 Age population Distribution.

	Wales	0-15	%	16-24	%	25-44	%	45-64	%	64+	%
Wales	3063456	556296	18%	373876	12%	756622	25%	814118	27%	562544	18%
Denbighshire	93734	16953	18%	10025	11%	20794	22%	26272	28%	19690	21%
Cyffylliog	520	100	19%	40	8%	100	19%	184	35%	96	18%

Source - Mid-2019 Population Estimates for 2019 Wards in England and Wales by Single Year of Age and Sex

However, the percentage of those aged between 45 is significantly higher than both the Wales and Denbighshire average, whilst those between 16 and 44 is that much lower.

If the 45-64 age group is coupled with those over the age of 64 then the picture of a growing older population becomes more evident:

Table 2 - Percentage of those Age 45 in Cyffylliog - comparison

	Cyffylliog	Denbighshire	Wales
0-15	19%	18%	18%
16-24	8%	11%	12%
25-44	19%	22%	25%
45+	54%	49%	45%
	100%	100%	100%

Source - Mid-2019 Population Estimates for 2019 Wards in England and Wales by Single Year of Age and Sex

This information is relevant as it needs to be considered in the context of what future use is made of the site, and to be particularly conscious of the fact that 54% of

the population of Cyffylliog is over the age of 45.

- 2.3** The name of the village means "place of pollard trees/stumps" and comes from the Welsh word cyffyll meaning stumps.
- 2.4** As a community there is a sense of Welshness, and the Welsh language remains evident and prolific as it does in many villages and towns in rural Denbighshire. The 2011 Census reported that 50% of the population of the community of Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch (within which the parish of Cyffylliog falls) are Welsh speakers; this is the 3rd highest proportion of Welsh speakers across the whole of Denbighshire.¹
- 2.5** The village church, St. Mary's, dates from the late 12th century, but has been extensively renewed since that time including an almost complete rebuilding in 1876. The church has been restored but retains its late medieval ceiling and Georgian 'hearse house'.
- 2.6** There is also a Presbyterian Chapel within the village. The Chapel Vestry is used for meetings of the Community Council and a range of other community activities.
- 2.7** The only evident business within the parish is the Red Lion Pub. This has been run successfully by the same family for ten years. The Red Lion run themed nights, and has appeared on social media and television. It is popular with many residents within the village.

An initiative supported by Pub is the Hub saw the Red Lion opening a shop on the premises in 2017; however, despite initially proving successful, unfortunately the lack of trade over the longer term made it unfeasible to carry on with the shop. This now means that villagers must travel to Ruthin or elsewhere for shopping.

- 2.8** Ysgol Cyffylliog was a bilingual primary school, sited in the heart of the village. Its closure in 2019 was a blow to the community; but the ageing population and dwindling numbers of children made keeping it open an unfeasible option for the County Council.

The school has also been home to a memorial garden, known as Tim's Garden, to the rear of the playground. Unfortunately, due to an oversight, parts of the garden were removed during maintenance and clearance in late 2019.

The school remains in relatively good condition and has been monitored by the County Council. Until recently the site remained under the jurisdiction of the Education Department of the Local Authority but has recently passed into the control of the Assets team within Denbighshire.

¹ Source: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Welsh-Language/Census-Welsh-Language>

We have been able to secure figures for the core running costs of the school. These were provided directly by the Local Authority Assets Team. It should be noted that these costs do not include maintenance.

Table 3 - Running Costs of Ysgol Cyffylliog

Ysgol Carreg Emlyn - Cyffylliog Site			
	15/16	16/17	17/18
Electricity	£2,542	£3,158	£4,552
Oil	£1,921	£1,501	£545
Rates	£1,203	£2,395	£2,467
Water	£589	£850	£746
Alarms	£107	£116	£103
Telephones	£307	£343	£309
Total	£6,669	£8,363	£8,722

Source 1 - Denbighshire County Council

In addition to the above costs, it is estimated that the following costs would be needed:

General Maintenance	£500
Staffing – caretaker (4 hours per week)	£1700
Total	£1200

2.9 The Community Council is one of several relatively small councils in Denbighshire. It has a stipendiary Clerk and has a cohort of up to 8 councillors. It has by no means the lowest precept in the county, but in comparison to many councils in Denbighshire, it has a relatively modest budget with which to support the community. In the previous two years the precept has been £6,345 and £7,050, respectively. For 2020/21 a small increase to £7,755.00 was agreed by the Community Council at its meeting of January 2020.²

The relatively small size of the council, its modest precept and very limited capacity needs to be considered in terms of how any new facility would be managed and operated.

² Source <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Local-Government/Finance/Council-Tax/Levels/community-council-precepts-by-community-council> & http://www.cyffylliogcommunitycouncil.co.uk/index.htm_files/Cyffylliog%20Minutes%2013.01.20.pdf

2.10 The next section sets out the consultation process undertaken in support of this exercise.

3. Consultation

3.1 An initial consultation event was held on the 14th November 2019, with a total of 40 people turning up on what was a cold, wet and dark night.

Gwyn Davies, the council clerk and council members all provided support in promoting the event, which included promotion on social media, posters and a leaflet drop each household in the community.

3.2 The following were some of the key comments received:

- *“Don’t want to see the building knocked down”*
- *Community hub – providing community services and offering rooms for hire.*
- *Playing green*
- *Somewhere where people can meet and congregate.*
- *“It is a lovely building, don’t want to see it go”.*
- *Youth Club.*
- *A place for walking football.*
- *A place that is totally “neutral”. There are different groups meeting separately. We need somewhere where the whole village can come together.*
- *Toilets*
- *Café area.*
- *A focal point for cyclists and walkers/ramblers*
- *“Love the building, would love to see it remain”*
- *Playing Fields.*
- *Bowling Green.*
- *All weather football pitch.*
- *Small Pavilion.*
- *“If it is to be demolished, look to recycle materials, and preserve some elements of the building”.*
- *Lunch club for older residents, supported by volunteers in the community working on a rota basis.*
- *Car Park*
- *“Make sure nothing is developed that displaces the Red Lion’s business”.*
- *Sheltered Housing*
- *Needs to be a sustainable and realistic proposal.*

3.3 Between December 2019 and February 2020 further consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders, most especially with Denbighshire CC and local community representatives, including Community Councillors, to further develop ideas and better understand community aspirations for the site. A meeting was also held with the family of Tim, the little boy in who’s memory a memorial garden was created at the back of the school. This latter meeting followed the inadvertent removal of the

garden features by Denbighshire County Council.

3.4 Following this it was proposed to send out a survey to the community in Mid-March 2020, then to hold a public meeting in the Chapel which would set out the main ideas that had come forward during the consultation. This was agreed at a meeting with the Community Council. This was initially scheduled for Mid-April 2020.

However, as is now known, Covid 19 meant that these ideas had to be put on hold.

The easing of regulations in August and September allowed us to revisit the project, and it was agreed with the Community Council and Cadwyn Clwyd that a survey would be sent out in August via the post, with a Freepost reply service.

Unfortunately, due to ongoing restrictions, a follow-up presentation to the Community outlining the findings and recommendations was not feasible. Recent changes in Covid 19 restrictions in mid-September 2020, made such an option even more untenable.

Therefore, this report will instead be made available via a link on the Community Council website and linked to the Cyffylliog Village Facebook Page and other appropriate websites and social media pages (as agreed with the Community Council).

3.5 The next section sets out the results of the postal survey.

4. Survey Results

4.1 The postal survey was conducted during the latter part of August 2020, with bilingual survey sheets being delivered to all households in the communities of Cyffylliog and Bontuchel. All surveys were accompanied by a freepost return envelope (to be posted back to Cynlas' office in Penygroes).

In total, 235 surveys were distributed to households in both Cyffylliog and Bontuchel during the week commencing 24th August; residents were asked to return surveys by no later than the 7th September 2020.

4.2 It is important to note that the survey was sent out on behalf of the Community Council. The survey was premised on the basis that the Community Council had fully considered the implications of taking over the building, but based on its capacity and financial limitations, was not able to do take this forward as an option. The survey set out the following:

"As residents you know more than anyone what is needed in the community, we would therefore be grateful if you could take a few minutes to fill in this short questionnaire, and return no later than 07 September 2020"

"We now have an estimate of the likely cost of maintain the school building as it is. Even without redevelopment and staffing, it is likely that the cost would be over £10,000 per year. You should be aware that the Community Council does not have the resources or capacity to be able to take on such a responsibility."

"We had also hope to identify and work with a new community group who would have responsibility for its maintenance for the diverse uses of the community. However, despite our best efforts, no such community group has emerged over the past 18 months."

"Following work with Consultants Cynlas Cyf, we have identified only two realistic options:

"Take over the site ourselves, demolish and create a new sustainable community facility"

"Allow Denbighshire CC to sell the site on the open market."

"Please could you tick which of the above is your preferred option."

The survey then goes on to ask more detailed questions (the survey template is attached as Appendix I).

A total of 77 questionnaires were returned. Albeit that 8 of those were received in the two weeks after the 7th of September 2020., all replies were fully considered and analysed.

It should be noted that not all respondents replied to every question, and the level and detail of responses varied greatly. However, out of the surveys came some interesting and noteworthy comments and ideas.

We also received three letters. These were also considered and reflected in our survey results.

In terms of response rates, the number of replies is considered relatively representative of the community. The below tables demonstrate the proportion of the population and households who replied:

Table 4 - Percentage of Population Responding

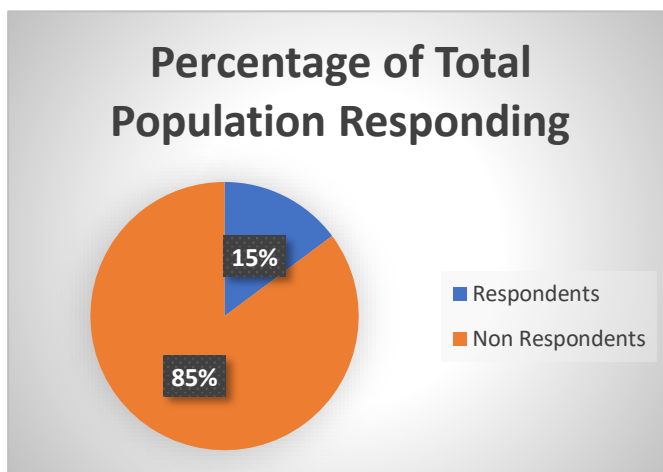
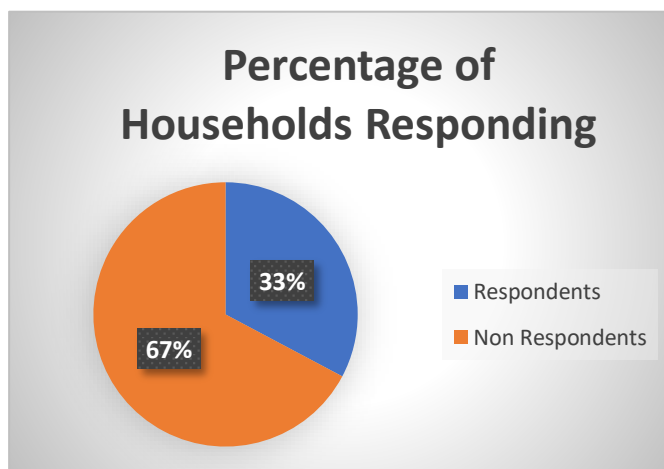


Table 5 - Percentage of Households Responding



A response rate of 33% of households is considered a good representative sample. However, a small note of caution needs to be applied, as in a few instances two surveys were received in the same return envelope. However, the proportion of such

replies were small, and do not have a significant bearing on the analysis.

The age grouping of those responding was closely aligned with the age distribution of the community (see Table 1 and Table 2). In particular the age group represented most fully in the replies is the 45-64 age group corresponds closely with the largest age group within the community itself.

Note that a small number of respondents (8 in total) did not complete this section.

Table 6 - Age Profile of Respondents

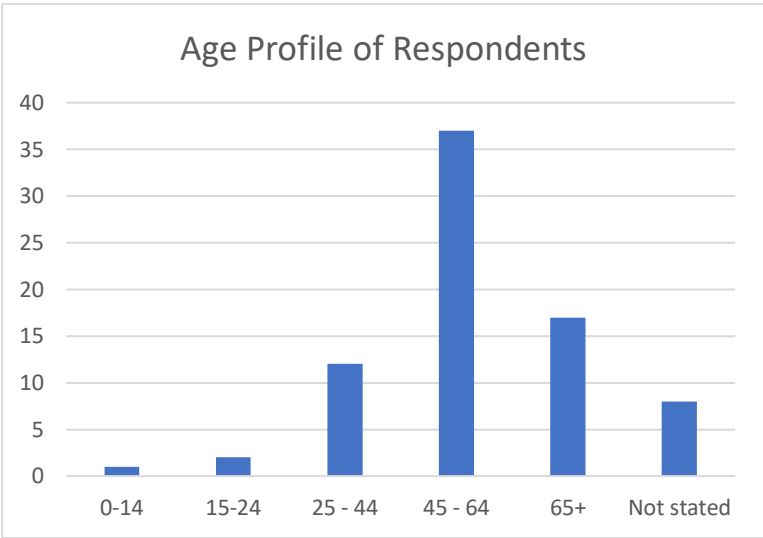
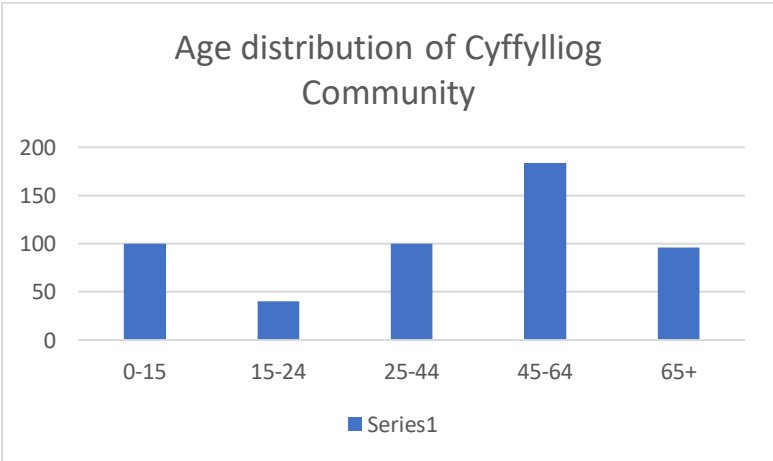


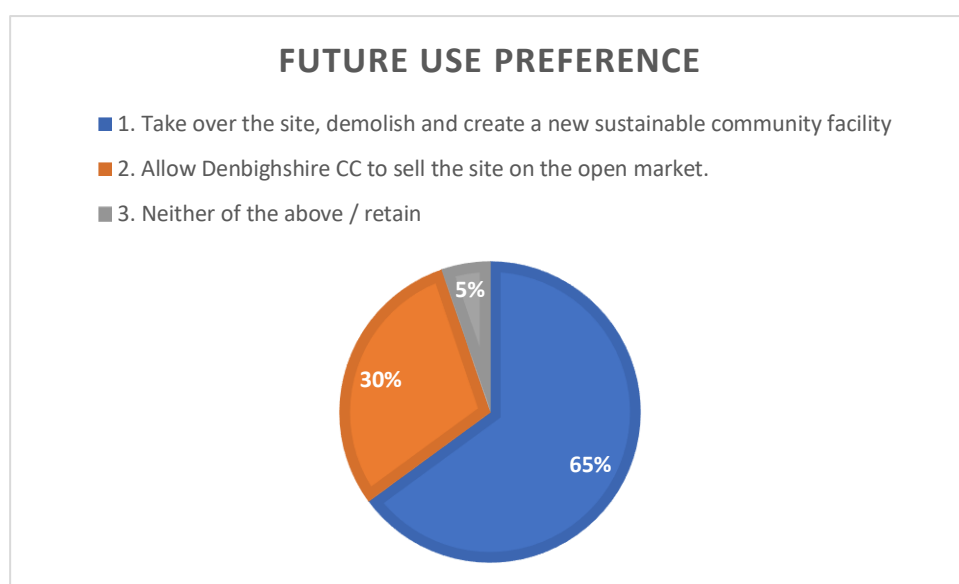
Table 7 = Age Distribution of Cyffylliog



As noted on the previous page, the primary question was binary, i.e. giving respondents only two choices. The purpose was to glean whether the community would prefer to see the site retained, even if it meant demolition or partial demolition; or whether they would prefer to see the site sold off by Denbighshire Council.

The response was overwhelmingly in favour of retaining the site:

Table 8 - Future Use Preference



The survey then asked respondents to rate the following options on a range of 1-6
 Agree Fully _____ 6 Disagree Totally

As you will see some 5% responded by annotating their view that neither of the options was applicable, or noted that they wanted to retain the building.

We analysed all the responses, but also analysed those who were in favour of the first option separately to those who wanted to retain the site or those who either didn't respond to the first question or wished to see the site sold. In the main the latter two types of respondents responded negatively, i.e. they marked each question in this section between a range of 4-6.

For the purposes of this report we focused on those who were in favour of the first option. Our main concern being to understand the preferred option within the respondents who chose to see the site retained.

The results that follow are based on the responses from the 65% who responded positively (as noted in the blues segment of the pie chart in the table above).

The three options given were as follows:

"Partly demolish the building and create an additional multipurpose space for the community to congregate, with benches and picnic tables"

"Demolish the building entirely and create an additional multipurpose space for the community to congregate, with benches and picnic tables"

"Demolish the building entirely and create a multi-purpose space, and, in addition,

develop a small community room on the site, e.g. cabin or timber frame building”

The following tables demonstrate the responses to each:

Table 9 - Support for partial demolition.

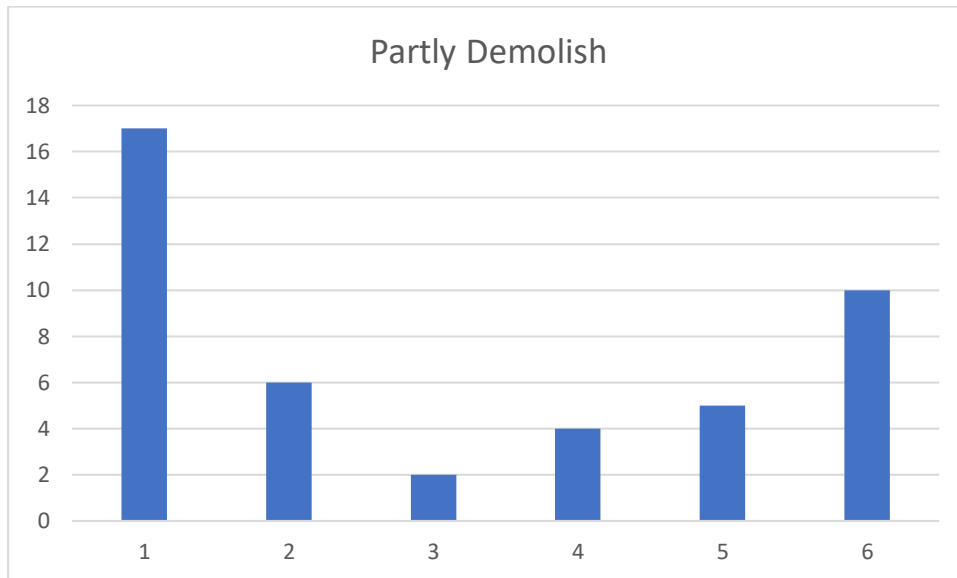


Table 10 - Support for complete demolition

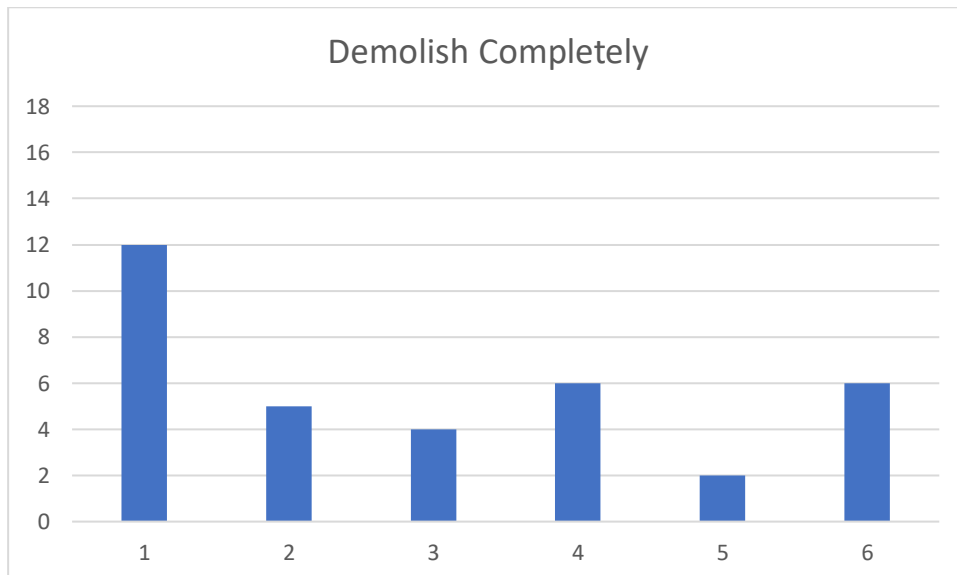
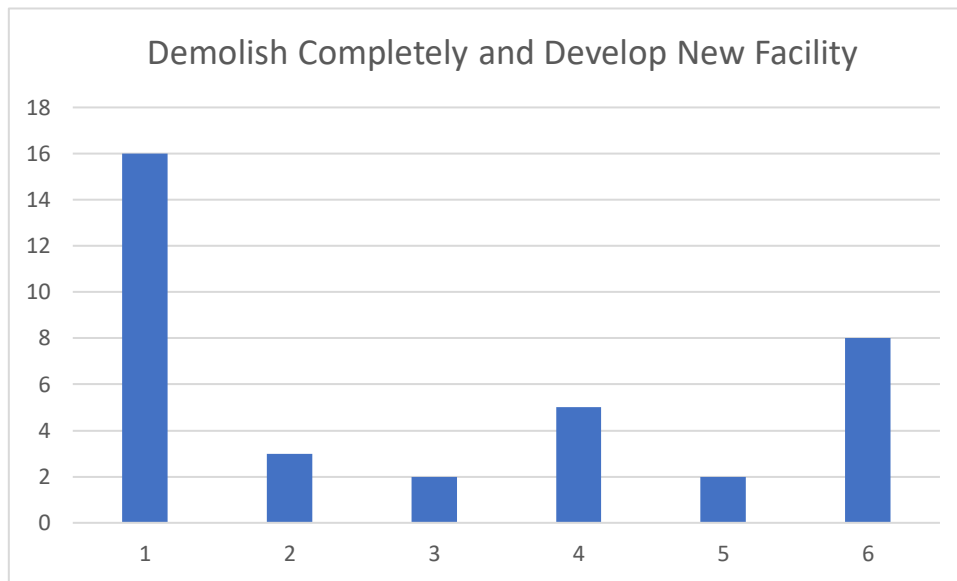


Table 11 - Support for demolition and creation of new facility



The tables above indicate that the strongest advocacy is for partial demolition and the development of a community facility / multipurpose space. However, we also analysed the responses on a binary basis, i.e. those who scored each option positively (1-3), as opposed to those who scored each option negatively (4-6).

It should be noted here that we have had an estimate for the demolition costs from Denbighshire County Council. This has been confirmed as £36,300.

These results showed a more ambivalent response to each option i.e. there would likely be some form of consensus for any of three options amongst those who support the retention of the site by the community.

These tables are set out on the next page:

Table 12 - % Consensus for Partial Demolition

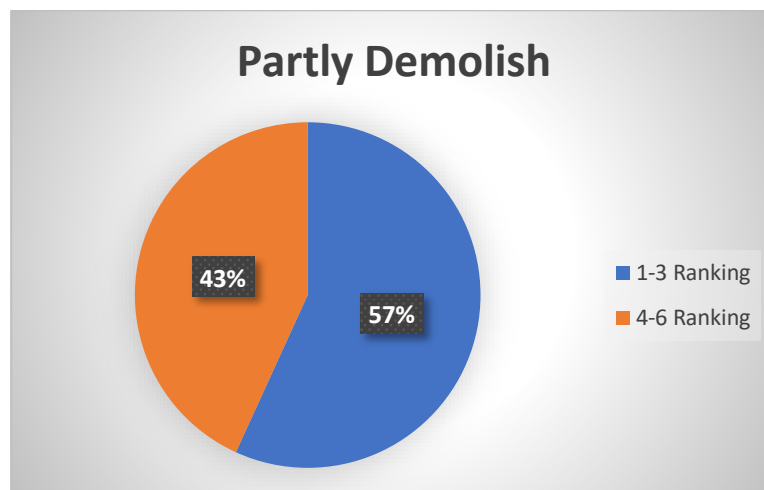


Table 13 - % Consensus for Complete Demolition

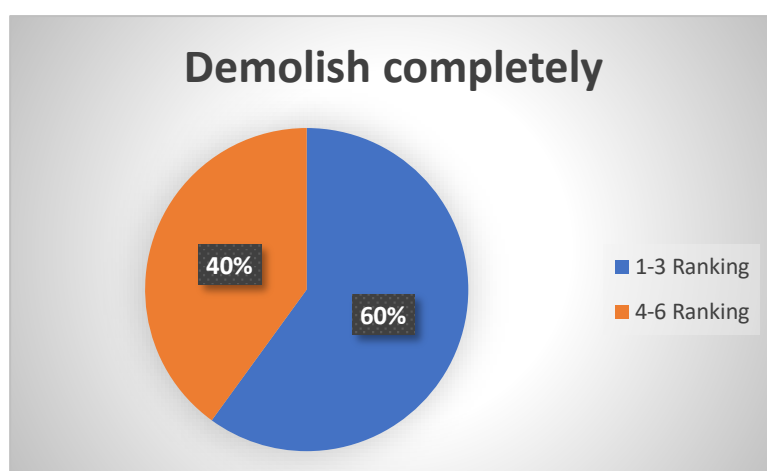
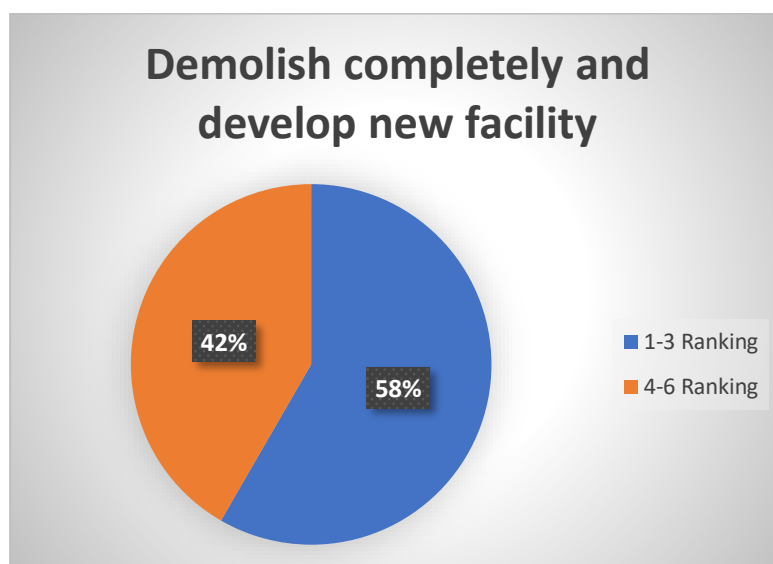


Table 14 - % Consensus for Complete Demolition and development of new facility



Analysing the responses this way suggests that the most consensus is for the second option, i.e. to demolish the building entirely and create an additional multipurpose space for the community to congregate, with benches and picnic tables.

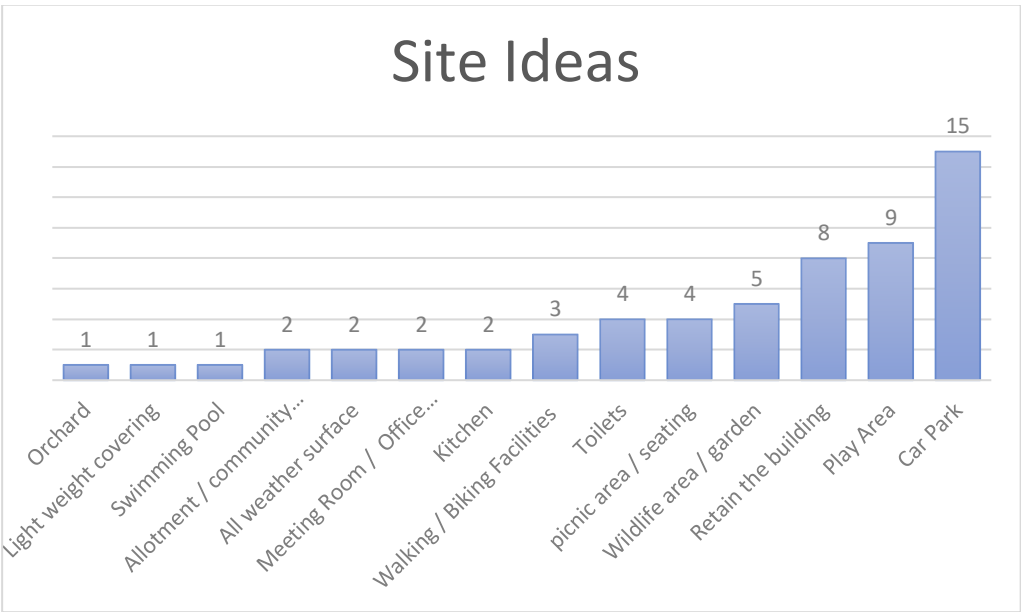
However, the differences between the three options are negligible, and we are confident that a solution that will attract majority support can be developed from within these three options.

The survey also asked respondents to provide ideas about i) the site itself, and ii) the type of activities that could be delivered.

There were a whole host of ideas offered, and there were variations on a theme. For example, some offered ideas of workshops, whilst others said classes and demonstrations. Where ideas were similar in nature we have attempted to cluster them together under one theme.

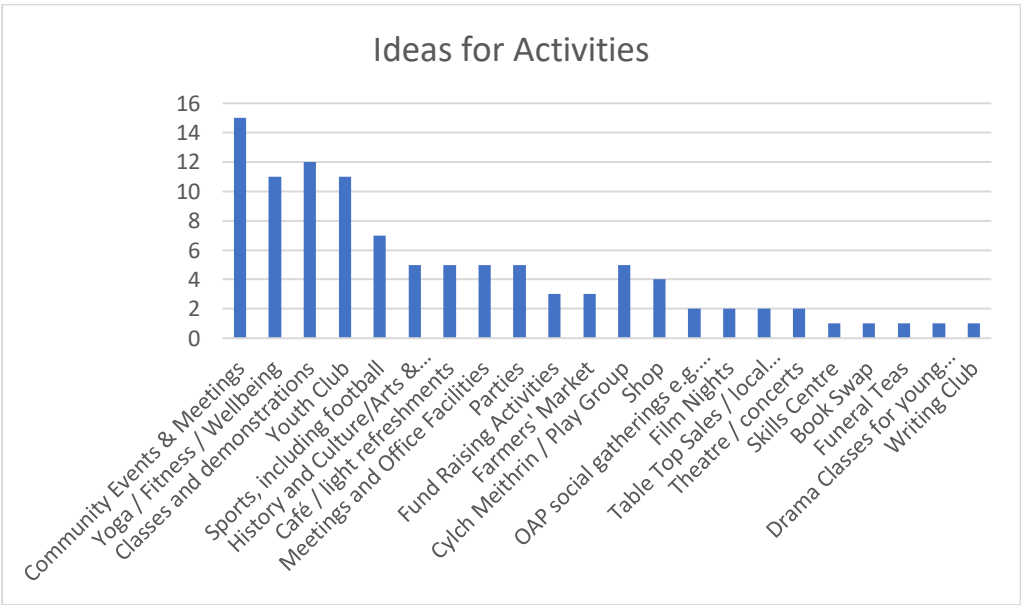
The ideas put forward for the site are set out on the next page:

Table 15 - Ideas for the site



Suggestions for services or activities were as follows:

Table 16 - Ideas for Activities



There was a final section in the questionnaire which allowed respondents to comment more generally. Where responses have been provided, we have tried to capture them in a tabulated form.

The responses were:

Table 17 - General Comments from Respondents

Tim Memorial Garden – 4 respondents emphasised the need to ensure that a memorial is retained within the plans.
Housing – 6 respondents stated that they would like to see some form of housing to encourage more young people into the village, or just generally housing.
No Housing – similarly, 4 people categorically stated that they were opposed to any form of housing on the site.
Sell the site and invest in existing facilities e.g. vestry, roads etc
Need to ensure that whatever proposition is taken up it support the Village Pub and does not displace the pub's business. This was emphasised by two respondents.
Possible Village Show location
Not convinced a community facility needed
Not sure there is a need for picnic tables
Focus on young people
Need to have clear guidance on asset transfer
Concerned about the lack of communication regarding the consultation from the Community Council.
Need to set up a trust to take this project forward.
Apply for grants / windfarm
Need Bat Survey
Sell Salvaged Materials
Happy to support any recommendations made but need to ensure everyone is informed.
Interested in buying
No Park please, who would monitor children's behaviour?
Do not build a large comm centre, not enough community here to support one.
Support the Village Pub

4.3 The results of the survey demonstrate the following:

- 4.3.1 There is overwhelming support for the retention of the site.
- 4.3.2 Amongst those in support of retaining the site, there is a significant degree of general support for either of the three options.
- 4.3.3 There are a whole host of ideas for both the site and the activities that could be pursued that need to be considered in more detail.
- 4.3.4 There is a smaller but evident cohort within the community who do not wish to see anything happen to the school building.

4.4 In the next section, fully considering the outcome of the consultation and survey, we will consider the various options in more detail, and set out a recommended path for the Community Council to take the project further forward.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations.

5.1 General Conclusions

5.1.1 Survey results

5.1.1.1 There was a good response rate from residents, with some 33% of households, equating to 77 people, returning the forms (albeit that some arrived up to a fortnight after the closing date).

5.1.1.2 There was strong support for the retention of the site, with 65% ticking option 1 – namely: *“Take over the site ourselves, demolish and create a new sustainable community facility”*

5.1.1.3 The survey elicited a host of ideas, with strong ideas put forward for both the use of the site, and the type of activities that could be delivered.

The most popular suggestion for the use of the site was as a car park, with a play area and gardens also recurring themes. Eight people also stated that they wanted the school building retained (see point 5.1.1.6 below).

Community events, classes and workshops, keep fit, yoga and wellbeing and youth club type activities came through strongly in relation to services.

5.1.1.4 A smaller number of people want to see Denbighshire sell the site, but less clear what the desired end-result would be. The suggestions varied from utilising the sale to help improve roads surfaces in the village, to allowing housing to be developed.

5.1.1.5 As noted above, there were a few calls for housing on the site; however these were in the minority, and there does not appear to be much appetite generally for additional housing (based on the consultation and results of the survey).

5.1.1.6 Although it had been made clear in the preamble to the survey form that the Community Council would not be able to consider taking on the school (primarily due to the prohibitive cost) it was evident that some respondents still wanted to see the school retained. A total of 8 people noted this on their survey form.

5.2 General Conclusions

5.2.1 Community Preference.

During the consultation period it became clear that there was general consensus that, if feasible, the school site should be kept within the control of the

community. For some people, that also included the retention of the school building.

There was less consensus about what exactly the site should be used for, and what activities and services should and could be delivered.

5.2.2 Sustainability and Viability

In considering the running costs provided by Denbighshire Council (based on actual costs of the school for the three years prior to closure), and then examining the financial capacity and human resource available from within the Community Council, a number of conclusions can be drawn.

5.2.2.1 The Community Council could not afford to take over the control of the school in situ as the forecast running costs for a publicly accessible building would exceed the amount of money the Council currently receives through precept each year.

5.2.2.2 If the Community Council was to take over responsibility, but kept the school closed for the time being, costs would still be incurred, and the danger of vandalism and serious damage to the school would become more of an issue. This is a major concern for Denbighshire Council, which has experienced similar problems elsewhere in the county.

5.2.2.3 A third option would be to hand over the building to a separate entity such as a social enterprise or trust. However, to date no such organisation has emerged. If such an organisation was to emerge then a proposal would also have to be supported by a cogent and robust business model that would persuade both the County Council and Community Council that this option was viable and sustainable in the long term.

Considering the population numbers, accessibility issues and competing facilities in the vicinity, such a business model would have to be watertight and demonstrate clearly how income could be generated, and as importantly how the facility could be managed sustainably.

A clear example of this is the notion of a new community shop. A shop was mentioned by some as a possible idea for part of the site. However, as noted earlier in the report, it was only recently that a community shop was opened within Cyffylliog. With the support of Cadwyn Clwyd and Pub is the Hub, a shop was set up at the Red Lion Public House three years ago. We are aware that there was initial support from within the community, and the shop was buoyant. However, over time, customer numbers dwindled, and the shop was eventually closed.

Any new proposal for the school site needs to be mindful of the sustainability of any such commercial operations.

5.2.2.4 We should also note that one respondent, on their form, has expressed an interest in purchasing the site. We have passed this information on to the Community Council and County Council.

5.2.3 Existing facilities and services.

One key issue that arose during the consultation was the danger of i) duplicating provision elsewhere; and ii) displacing business at the Red Lion Public House.

Both the Community Council and a number of responders to the survey noted that there were already community facilities within the village of Cyffylliog, and in particular the Vestry in the Chapel. Some felt strongly that developing an additional community at this time would be wasteful and create a surplus of provision. Instead, some argued, it would be better to improve the existing facilities.

The idea of a kitchen and a café were both noted in responses in the survey. It was also suggested during previous consultation exercises. However, there were also those who responded, and spoke to us, that expressed concern that a new facility could possibly take away business from the Red Lion. The Pub is the only evident commercial business within the community, and whilst not patronised by all residents, it does provide a focal point for the community and has a good reputation as not only a good eatery and public house, but also as a welcoming and community supportive business. It is therefore critical that any new proposal for the school site does not impact negatively on the Red Lion's trade.

Conversely, any proposal for the site should seek, where feasible, to indirectly support the Red Lion's business, particularly its food offer, by generating more custom for the Pub i.e. if an event is to be held at the school site, then you would hope that some people attending would use the Red Lion for food, drink etc.

5.2.4 Memorial Garden.

The Garden has been an emotive issue during this consultation, partly due to the unfortunate removal of parts of the garden during routine maintenance by the County Council. It is evident that all many within the village want to see some form of dedication / memorial integrated into the redesign of the school site.

5.2.5 Denbighshire County Council's position.

We are profoundly aware of the Local Authority's ongoing responsibility for the

site. In our view they have been patient and supportive of the Community Council's efforts to secure a local solution for the site. We are also of the view that they would be happy to see a strong viable proposition coming forward that would allow them to enter into a meaningful discussion about an asset transfer.

However, they have a duty to ensure that their assets are maintained appropriately and safely, and have concerns about potential damage through anti-social behaviour, or property deterioration through lack of maintenance. The clock is ticking, and any proposal emanating out of this report, and adopted by the Community Council, needs to be taken back to Denbighshire as soon as is feasible.

5.2.6 Costings and Funding

The availability of funding will be dependent on the preferred solution for the site. We do know that if the school is demolished then the cost of demolition will be circa £36,000³. We believe that such a cost could potentially be considered eligible for funding as part of a wider scheme; if the correct business case is put forward and the demolition is shown to an integral and essential element of the overall project.

Whilst Covid 19 has redirected a substantial amount of funding to Coronavirus related projects, there are still a number of potential grant sources available. In particular, Cyffylliog is within the eligible geographic areas for both the Brenig and Clocaenog Wind Farm funds. There is also a grant regime from Welsh Government – the Community Facilities Programme, as well as a number of trusts and foundations that could potentially support a project on the site.

However, note that there is no guarantee that any funding will be available, and there is, at this stage, no detail as to the eligibility criteria for the Clocaenog Wind Farm Fund (although we are aware that this detail will be made available soon). It is essential that a business case is put forward that is robust, viable and sustainable, and can clearly demonstrate community support and positive impact.

Whilst one option would be to retain part of the existing building, our consultation and previous experience suggest that this could, potentially, be more costly. It would also inhibit the ability to provide a more creative and flexible open space for the community in the future.

³ Email confirmation from Bryn Williams, Assets Manager, Denbighshire Council, 19/02/2020

5.3 Recommendations

Based on our engagement with the community, the Community Council, and with Denbighshire County Council we would propose a parallel approach to taking matters forward.

- 5.3.1 It is recommended that the Community begin immediate discussions with the Denbighshire County Council's Assets Team with a view to negotiating a possible transfer of the school site.
- 5.3.2 However, at the same time it is also recommended that the Community Council seek to offer an opportunity for an existing organisation or group of interested parties to come forward with a tangible proposition for taking over the school. This is premised on a short-term window of 3 months from the publication of this report, and subject to the agreement of Denbighshire County Council.

Whilst we are aware that overwhelming majority of respondents were relatively acceptant that the school might be demolished, there was a strong voice amongst a minority that felt that the school building should be retained at all costs. It is therefore only right that the community is given a last chance to develop and propose a tangible proposition for the retention of the school.

Should a proposal come forward which is supported by a strong and viable business model, and a strong group of people behind it, then the Community Council and Denbighshire County Council can begin a tripartite discussion on the transfer of the Asset.

Note that Denbighshire Officers have confirmed that if an Asset transfer of any sort was agreed, the asset would have to be transferred to the Community Council in the first instance, with a subsequent legal agreement put in place with a third party organisation to develop and manage the school site.

- 5.3.3 Should such proposal not come forward from the community we recommend that the Community Council seek to finalise discussions with Denbighshire County Council's Assets Team.
- 5.3.4 On the basis that a definite, cogent, and robust proposal is not received from the Community, our preferred recommendation for the Community Council would be as follows:
 - 5.3.4.1.1 To commission a design plan based on the complete demolition of the school. The plan to include green space, with facilities such as benches and a playing area, a limited provision for parking, and an information board.

- 5.3.4.1.2 The design of the park to incorporate some of the architectural features of the school building if possible, e.g. the incorporation of the red brick into the landscaping and paving.
- 5.3.4.1.3 Further, to incorporate a lasting memorial to Tim as part of the overall design (and within the name of the Park).
- 5.3.4.1.4 To further engage with the community and the local school pupils from the villages of Cyffylliog and Bontuchel and ensure that they are given the opportunity to offer further ideas on the facilities and look and feel of the Park.
- 5.3.4.1.5 To encourage residents to serve as sub-committee to take the project forward, with a long-term aim of developing a legal entity (such as a Trust) to manage and care for the site for the community in perpetuity.
- 5.3.4.1.6 To fully cost the demolition, landscaping and provision of play and recreation facilities on the site.
- 5.3.4.1.7 To further cost the ongoing maintenance liabilities for the site, post completion.
- 5.3.4.1.8 A space be identified within the design where a second phase of development of the site could be incorporated. This could, for example, include a self-contained timber framed community building. This also to be costed, but not implemented until such time as there is sufficient evidence of demand and capacity within the community to manage and sustain the building i.e. that the demand within the community cannot be met by other existing facilities.
- 5.3.4.1.9 Monitor grant funding opportunities, seek appropriate advice from Denbighshire County Council, Business Wales and Cadwyn Clwyd, and prepare applications for funding.
- 5.3.4.1.10 Ensure that the second phase development, incorporating a small community building does not in any way displace the existing business of the Red Lion or any other private commercial business that may emerge. Where possible, the Community Council should seek to work with the Landlords of the Red Lion and other commercial ventures that may emerge to ensure that any activities on the Park do not take away business from them, but rather, increase trade.

5.4 Next Steps

- 5.4.1 Engage immediately with Denbighshire Council.
- 5.4.2 Publish this report via the Community Council website, Cyffylliog Village Page on Facebook, and any other social media or relevant websites.
- 5.4.3 Subject to further discussion with Denbighshire County Council, offer a three-month window for an organisation or group to come forward with a robust proposition for the retention of the school.

End.

RMR/24 September 2020

YSGOL CYFFYLLIOG

OPTIONS APPRAISAL AND FEASIBILITY STUDY

APPENDIX I

Holiadur Safle Ysgol Cyffylliog

Fel y gwyddoch, efallai, mae Cyngor Cymuned Cyffylliog yn cynnal ymarfer ymgynghori ar ddefnyddio hen safle'r ysgol yn y dyfodol. Rydym wedi penodi ymgynghorwyr, Cynlas Cyf i helpu gyda'r ymgynghoriad, a gyda'n gilydd hoffem glywed am unrhyw syniadau sydd gennych am ddefnydd y safle yn y dyfodol.

Fel preswylwyr rydych yn eu hadnabod yn fwy na neb beth sydd ei angen yn y gymuned, byddem yn ddiolchgar felly pe gallech gymryd ychydig o funudau i lenwi'r holiadur byr hwn, a dychwelyd erbyn 07 Medi 2020 fan bellaf. Defnyddiwch yr amlen â chyfeiriad a stamp arni.

Mae gennym yn awr amcangyfrif o gost debygol cynnal adeilad yr ysgol fel y mae. Hyd yn oed heb ailddatblygu a staffio, mae'n debygol y byddai'r gost dros £10,000 y flwyddyn. Dylech fod yn ymwybodol nad oes gan y Cyngor Cymuned yr adnoddau na'r capasiti i allu ymgymryd â'r fath gyfrifoldeb.

Roeddem hefyd yn gobeithio nodi a gweithio gyda grŵp cymunedol newydd a fyddai'n gyfrifol am ei gynnal a'i ddefnyddio at ddibenion amrywiol y gymuned. Fodd bynnag, er gwaethaf ein hymdrechion gorau, nid oes grŵp cymunedol o'r fath wedi dod i'r amlwg dros y 18 mis diwethaf.

Yn dilyn gwaith gydag ymgynghorwyr Cynlas Cyf, dim ond dau opsiwn realistig a nodwyd gennym:

1) cymryd drosodd y safle ein hunain, dymchwel a chreu adeilad cynaliadwy newydd cyfleuster cymunedol.

2) galluogi Cyngor Sir Ddinbych i werthu'r safle ar y farchnad agored.

Ticiwch pa un o'r uchod yw'r opsiwn sydd orau gennych.

Byddem hefyd yn ddiolchgar pe gallech roi eich barn ar y syniadau a'r opsiynau canlynol isod. Marciwch eich ymateb ar gyfer pob cwestiwn.

1. Cytuno'n Llwyd _____ 6 Anghytuno'n Llwyd

1.1 Dymchwel yr adeilad yn rhannol a chreu gofod amlbwrpas ychwanegol i'r gymuned ymgynnull, gyda meinciau a byrddau picnic.

1	2	3	4	5	6
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1.2 Ddymchwel yr adeilad yn gyfan gwbl a chreu gofod amlbwrpas ychwanegol i'r gymuned ymgasglu, gyda meinciau a byrddau picnic.

1	2	3	4	5	6
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Cyllidwyd y prosiect hwn drwy Cymunedau Gwledig Llywodraeth Cymru - Rhaglen Datblygu Gwledig Cymru 2014-2020, a ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru a'r Gronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig.

Holiadur Safle Ysgol Cyffylliog

1.3 Ddymchwel yr adeilad yn gyfan gwbl a chreu gofod amlbwrpas, ac, yn ogystal, datblygu ystafell gymunedol fechan ar y safle, e.e. caban neu adeilad ffrâm bren.

1	2	3	4	5	6
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1.4 Nodwch unrhyw syniadau eraill:

2. Pa weithgareddau hoffech chi gymryd rhan ynddynt yn eich cymuned?

3. Unrhyw sylwadau eraill?

4. Plis nodwch eich grwp oedran?

0 – 14 ☐

15-24 ☐

25-44 ☐

45-64 ☐

65+ ☐

Diolch am eich amser.

Cyllidwyd y prosiect hwn drwy Cymunedau Gwledig Llywodraeth Cymru - Rhaglen Datblygu Gwledig Cymru 2014-2020, a ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru a'r Gronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig.

Cyffylliog School Site Questionnaire

As you may know, Cyffylliog Community Council is undertaking a consultation exercise on the future use of the former school site. We have appointed consultants, Cynlas Cyf to help with the consultation, and together would like to hear about any ideas you have about the future use of the site.

As residents you know more than anyone what is needed in the community, we would therefore be grateful if you could take a few minutes to fill in this short questionnaire, and return no later than **07 September 2020**. Please use the stamped addressed envelope provided.

We now have an estimate of the likely cost of maintain the school building as it is. Even without redevelopment and staffing, it is likely that the cost would be over £10,000 per year. You should be aware that the Community Council does not have the resources or capacity to be able to take on such a responsibility.

We had also hope to identify and work with a new community group who would have responsibility for its maintenance for the diverse uses of the community. However, despite our best efforts, no such community group has emerged over the past 18 months.

Following work with Consultants Cynlas Cyf, we have identified only two realistic options:

1) Take over the site ourselves, demolish and create a new sustainable community facility.

☐

2) Allow Denbighshire CC to sell the site on the open market.

☐

Please could you tick which of the above is your preferred option.

We would also be grateful if you could provide your views on the following ideas and options below. Please ring your response for each question.

1 Agree Fully _____ 6 Disagree Totally

1.1 Partly demolish the building and create an additional multipurpose space for the community to congregate, with benches and picnic tables.

1	2	3	4	5	6
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1.2 Demolish the building entirely and create an additional multipurpose space for the community to congregate, with benches and picnic tables.

1	2	3	4	5	6
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This project has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.

Cyffylliog School Site Questionnaire

1.3 Demolish the building entirely and create a multi-purpose space, and, in addition, develop a small community room on the site, e.g. cabin or timber frame building.

1	2	3	4	5	6
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1.4 Please note any other ideas:

2. What activities would you like to take part in in your community?

3. Any other comments?

4. Please tick your age group please?

0 – 14 ☐ 15-24 ☐ 25-44 ☐ 45-64 ☐ 65+ ☐

Thank you for your time.

This project has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.