

Scout Hut Survey Report



September 2020

Background & Context

Mendlesham is a rural village in Mid Suffolk, approximately 5 miles North East of Stowmarket. Approximately 2 miles from the village centre is the hamlet of Mendlesham Green and there are a number of small housing clusters and individually located houses within the parish as well.

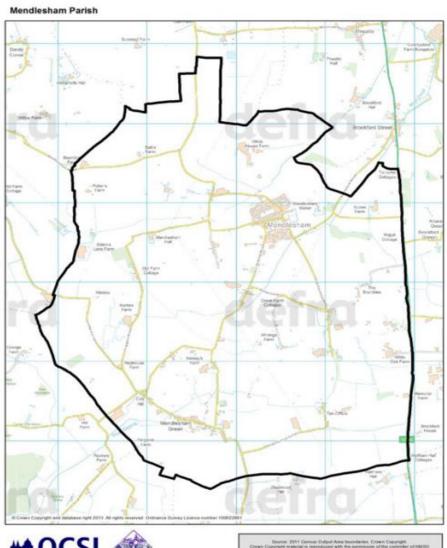
The population of Mendlesham is estimated to be 2,386 as of 7/5/2020, with 16% of the population at this time being 5-19 year olds. (Source: Suffolk Observatory)

Mendlesham is a growing village, with a recent new development on Old Station Road, as well as a proposed development of a further 28 homes to the north west of Mason Court recently having planning permission passed.

Mendlesham is a well-served village with a number of amenities: shop and post office, pub, chip shop, health centre, primary school. There are also 2 existing community buildings: Mendlesham Community Centre and The Old School Room. Mendlesham Green is a small hamlet approximately 2 miles from Mendlesham. The only amenities in Mendlesham Green are the village allotments, a play park with playing field and the scout field, where the proposed new scout hut will be built.

The Mendlesham community is very active, with lots of clubs and organisations to suit all ages: Football, Bowls, Camera Club, Writing Club, Brownies & Guides, Scouts, Over 60s, WI, and Computer Club. There is also a pop-up community cafe (Satcaf) run regularly every month.

There is a community council that organises regular community events such as the annual Street Fayre, as well as supporting other organisations within the village.





1st Mendlesham Scout Group and the old scout hut

 1^{st} Mendlesham Scouts have been active for over 90 years. The troop currently has 49 members across 4 sections: Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers. Membership is open to all young people aged 6 – 18. Scouting allows young people to develop skills for life through a varied programme of activities such as camp craft, first aid and pioneering activities, as well as learning about our community and the wider world.

The scout group needs a purpose-built building in which to run their activities. Whilst some activities can be undertaken in a community centre, there are other activities that cannot e.g. overnight camping, fire building, pioneering activities. Whilst we can make use of the existing field in the summer months, there are issues surrounding a lack of facilities – most importantly running water and toilets.

By having to rent a community centre for section meetings there are rent costs involved, which then detracts from what we are able to invest in activities and equipment for our young people. The same applies to any fundraising we undertake in order to keep our scout troop thriving - by paying to rent halls to run these, we raise less money for young people's activities.

By having a designated scout hut it will give the young people a sense of belonging, somewhere that they can make their own, with relevant information about badgework, and displays that celebrate their achievements throughout the year, amongst other things. It will provide an appropriate learning environment for our young people.

Scouting provides skills for life and it is important to keep these activities alive, and, one might argue, this is especially true in rural areas where there may be less for young people to do. Investing in a new scout hut is about much more than a building. It is investing in young people and a rural community



The scout group regularly met in the scout hut that was at Mendlesham Green. The hut was a 1940s wartime building. In 2012 the building was deemed unsafe due to the presence of asbestos, rot, and a sagging central roof beam. It would not be cost effective to repair the ageing building. It was removed in 2016 by a local history group, to be preserved at their museum.





Mendlesham scout group have continued to meet at Mendlesham Community Centre since the loss of their building, but are limited in the activities that they can offer during meetings.

The field where the scout hut stood is leased from Mendlesham Parish Council, and scouting activities still continue on site during the summer months, although regular activity is hindered by a lack of building and basic facilities.

Mendlesham Parish Council submitted a planning application to Mid Suffolk District Council on 10 June 2020. This was for a new scout hut and hardstanding for car park on the site of the original scout hut. Planning permission was granted on 30 July 2020.

Aims of the survey

- 1. To gather evidence in support of the new scout, in order to improve chances of success with grant and funding applications.
- 2. To engage with the community to gather opinions and develop support for the project.

Executive Summary

There were 55 responses to the survey. An overwhelming majority of responses felt that there should be a new scout hut built in Mendlesham Green. A lot of people felt that it should also be made available for local hire as Mendlesham Green currently does not have a community building, and all facilities are based in Mendlesham village centre. It is the scout group's intention that the hall would be available for hire, as was the old building, and be offered as a disaster muster facility for the local community if necessary.

Methodology

The survey was developed by the executive committee, with some advice from the funding and sustainability officer at Community Action Suffolk.

The survey was created online using Google forms. This allowed people to complete the survey online anonymously. Google then provided analysis of the results once the survey had ended. The survey was promoted to the village through regular posts on social media pages for the Scout group, Spotted in Mendlesham and Mendlesham Green residents. An article about the survey was also published in the village newsletter and an email was sent to local residents through the village E-news.

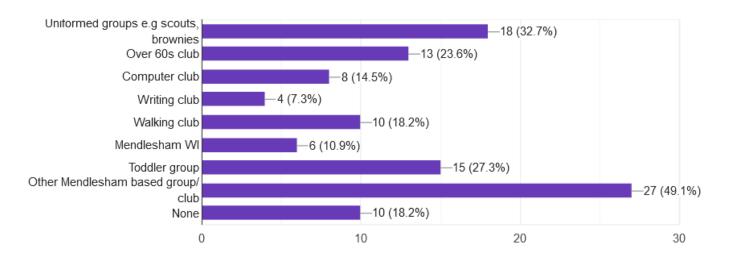
Unfortunately plans to issue paper copies and have face to face information points in the village were prevented due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Timeline

Date	Action	Outcome		
17/06/20	A survey was developed to engage with the community and to collect comments to support funding applications.	See appendix 1 for copy of questionnaire		
17/06/20	Due to Covid preventing face to face contact/events, it was decided to develop a short film about the scout hut and why this is needed. This would be available to view on social media and the village website.	This is currently still under development.		
01/07/20	Online survey went live and closed on 10/09/20.	55 surveys were completed. This provided the committee with both quantitative data as well as supporting comments that can be used as evidence for funding applications.		
24/10/2020	Report prepared, based on the survey results. This will be shared online through the E-news and social media.	This will help to continue engagement with the community and ensure that they feel involved in the development process. This will also hopefully lead to increased attendance at future fundraising events.		
Next steps	The findings from the survey can now be used to strengthen our funding bids and to ensure that the new scout hut will deliver what the scout group and community needs.	This will allow for improved bid development with a stronger chance of success.		

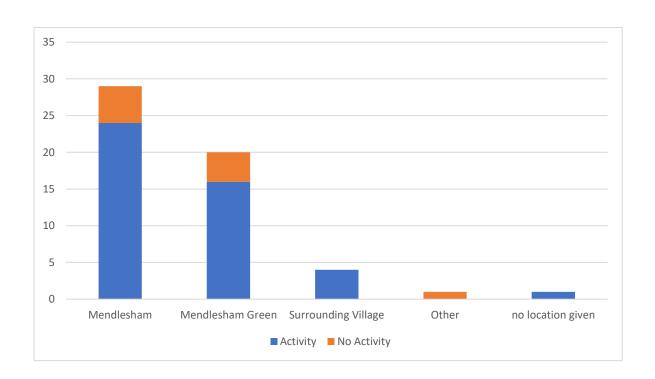
Questions, results and analysis

1. Have you attended any groups / clubs in Mendlesham? (Please tick all that apply)



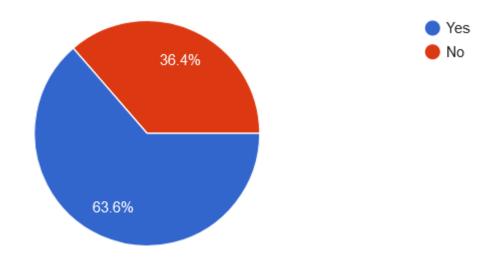
We can see that Mendlesham is an active and thriving community, with almost 82% of those responding having attended some form of club or social activity within the village.

If broken down further we can see that proportionately, Mendlesham Green is just as active as Mendlesham. 82.75% of those responding that live in Mendlesham have attended an activity in Mendlesham. 80% of those responding that live in Mendlesham Green have attended an activity.



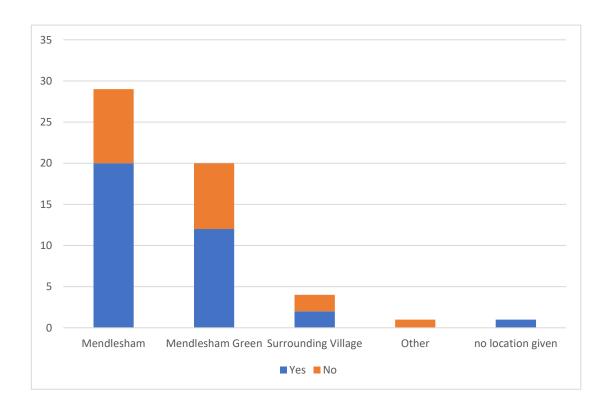
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2. Have you ever hired any of the existing halls in Mendlesham?



63.6% of 55 respondents have hired one of the existing halls in Mendlesham. This shows that there is a need for community buildings in Mendlesham and Mendlesham Green.

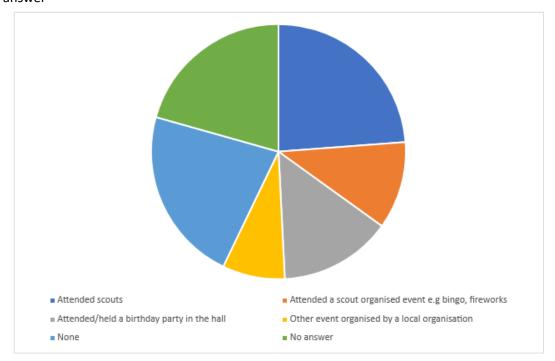
By breaking down the 'yes' responses by location we can see that, again, Mendlesham and Mendlesham Green are proportionately similar in how many have previously hired halls in Mendlesham. Almost 69% of responding Mendlesham residents have previously hired a hall, compared to a similar 60% of Mendlesham Green respondents.



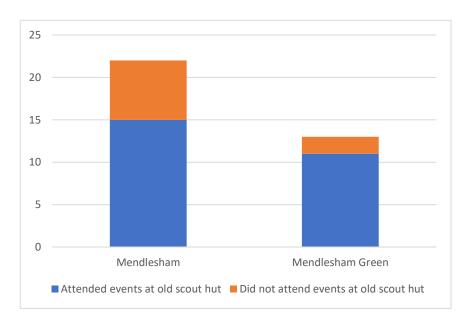
3. What, if any, groups/activities did you attend at the old scout hut?

There were 46 responses to this question, representing 78% of the survey returns. Some people had attended more than one type of event at the old scout hut and so are represented in more than 1 category on the chart below. The responses fell into the following categories:

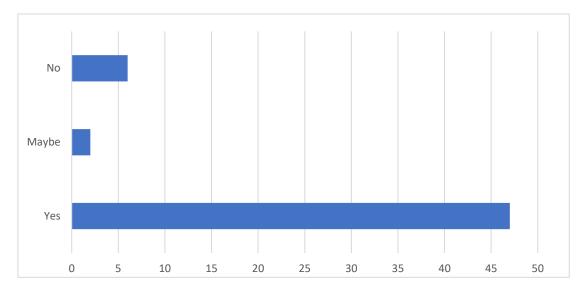
- Attended scouts
- Attended a scout organised event e.g bingo, fireworks
- Attended/held a birthday party in the hall
- Other event organised by a local organisation
- None
- No answer



Predominantly the old scout hut was used by respondents for scout section meetings and events organised by the scouts, such as bingo and fireworks night. It also shows that the old scout hut was often used for birthday and other parties. Of those respondents that live in Mendlesham and Mendlesham Green we can see that proportionately, Mendlesham Green residents attended more groups/activities at the old scout hut than those living in Mendlesham. The old scout hut was clearly a well-used community hall by those living closest to it.



4. Do you think there is a need for the new scout hut in Mendlesham? Please explain.



The vast majority of responses were in favour of a new scout hut being built, with many adding that it needed to be used as a community facility as well as a scout hut, and citing the need for / lack of a community space in Mendlesham Green as the reason for their positive response. Many other positive responses noted the need for a permanent base for the scout group to foster a sense of belonging for the young people, and also the need for facilities specifically for young people. All residents who responded from Mendlesham Green felt that there was a need for a new scout hut.

Yes. The Group needs an independent HQ from which to manage the youngsters activities, both indoor and outside. They are currently restricted (excluding Covid) and unable to enjoy the full range of educational and physical adventures for which Scouting is famous.

Yes. Mendlesham Green has no parish facilities. The old scout hut and the surrounding land was great for kids activities and parties. We often found the small hall was more restrictive when doing a kids party as the outside was not easily accessible. There were also complaints about noise from [another club] who were using the large hall as the two Mendlesham Community Halls are effectively a single space.

... Mendlesham Green needs a hall of their own.

Yes. There is a significant need in Mendlesham and Mendlesham Green for young people's activities to be set up with a supervised programme of events. The Scouts and other youth groups are ways of guiding, educating and enabling the young in our community to go on to become secure, able and responsible adults. All of these actions need a purpose-built place to meet regularly such as a new scout hut with modern and safe facilities

Mendlesham Green needs a community space. It currently has nothing

Yes, to enable the Scout Group to have a suitable building to use. To enable people living in Mendlesham Green to have a building to be used in the locality not 2 miles away in the main village.

Yes, it would help meet the needs of young people in the area, as well as in the Mendlesham Parish, it will also be a great community resource, again for communities outside Mendlesham, as well as for the parish. It will also be the only community resource in Mendlesham Green, which will be a great benefit for the hamlet.

Yes. To give the scouts a place to call their own.

Yes... Facilities for scouts to call their own, so that subs can be used for the children rather than hiring a building

With the school using the halls more, we need an alternative function place.

Scouts and beavers need a purpose-built place to meet and complete their skills and activities. Meeting in the village hall or small hall does not work for these groups. The groups need a place that has a strong connection with the outside space surrounding it. The community halls are useful spaces to use when no alternative is available but there is no opportunity to learn, leave and develop skills and ideas in either the inside or outside space; as equipment and ongoing projects etc cannot be left there.

Mendlesham Green location, as Mendlesham has ALL the facilities.

The 'maybe' comments are where no definitive answer to the question has been given. Answers consisted of people who were unsure of the need for a scout hut, felt that a base for the scout groups was needed but not necessarily a brand new building, or said no to just scout hut but if it was a community facility then this would be more positive.

I think St Michaels Hall on Old Station Road would be a good opportunity for the group, a building of reasonable size that is sitting there waiting for someone to take it over.

Just as a scout hut no. However, it is the further possibilities that such a building will offer the various local social groups that may lead to a more positive answer.

Scout group response

In response to these answers, it has always been the intention that the scout hut will be made available for hire to the community.

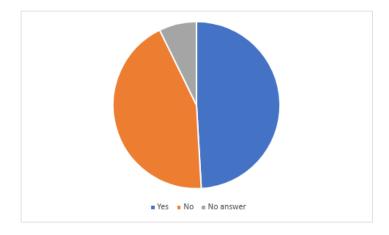
The option of adapting St Josephs Centre for scout use was explored. However, the building is in poor condition due to having been out of use for a long period of time, and it would cost more to bring the building up to a usable, safe and appropriate standard for the scout group than it would to build a new facility. It also does not provide the appropriate outdoor space for activities such as campfires and overnight camping. Whilst it may be argued that the existing field could be used for these activities alongside a conversion of St Josephs Centre, there is still a lack of basic facilities at the field, such as toilets, running water and an electricity supply. It is also not feasible to have a split scouting site with the building and outdoor facilities being almost 2 miles apart. As such, the use of St Joseph Centre has been deemed as not cost effective.

Most of the 'no' answers focused on the existing halls within Mendlesham being adequate for the scout group's needs.

Scout group response

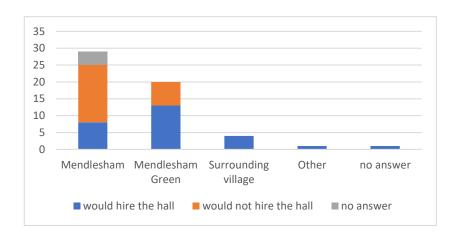
The halls we currently use are not adequate for the activities that the scout group organise e.g the small hall is not big enough for the beaver colony to safely play their team games or partake in indoor archery. We feel that these negative answers may come from a lack of understanding of the activities, needs and value of scouting.

5. Would you be likely to hire the new scout hut for event or clubs/groups?



27 people would be likely to hire the hall, whilst 24 people would not. 4 people did not answer the question.

The majority of people that would hire the hall live in Mendlesham Green, suggesting that there is a need for a hall in Mendlesham Green that would be available for community use.



6. Please explain why / why not.

Of the 27 that would hire the hall:

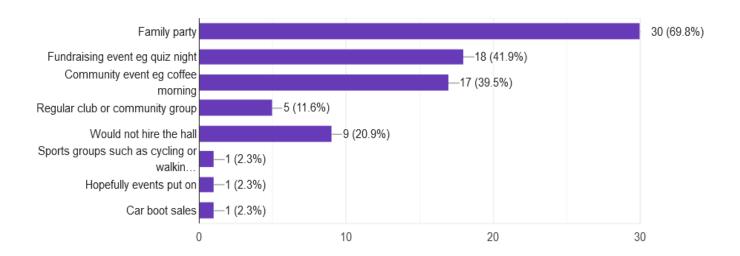
- 5 said that it would be in a convenient location or close to their home
- 12 said that it would have good facilities, be of a decent size, or be suited to the types of events they would
 use it for e.g parties.
- 5 gave reasons relating to the availability of a new hall / lack of availability at other local venues.
- 3 gave other answers relating to price and supporting the scout group
- 2 people did not give reasons

Of the 24 that would not hire the hall:

- 9 said that they would have no reason to hire a hall, e.g because they don't organise events or groups, or they are not of an age to need to hire a venue.
- 6 said that they would use the halls already in Mendlesham (Community Centre and Old School Room).
- 9 gave other reasons for not needing the hall such as moving out of the village in the near future, generally not having a need to use it, or would host events in their home.

4 people did not answer the question but their reasons given suggested that they would not use the hall. 2 of these reasons given were to do with being unable to get to a hall in Mendlesham Green due a lack of transport.

7. If you would be likely to hire the new scout hall, what might you use it for? (Please tick all that apply)



There were 46 responses to this question, with many people selecting more than one use for the hall. The majority of respondents would use a new scout hall for hosting family parties. With reference to Q3, hosting parties was also a popular use of the previous scout hut before it was taken out of use.

8. How do you think the new hut will benefit the scout troop, and the wider community?

There were 55 answers to this question.

Responses mostly focused on the following main areas:

- The ability for scouts to be able to carry out outdoor activities in a safe and suitable environment
- Giving the scout group a home and helping to develop a sense of belonging for the scout group and young people in Mendlesham and the Green
- Community use of the building for parties, meetings and other clubs / activities
- The need for a community amenity in Mendlesham Green.

Some examples of responses are below:

It will provide a much needed base and indoor facility without which it is very difficult for the group to function.

It enables a varied programme for the Scout Group and somewhere that is suitable for their activities.

It will benefit the scouts as they will have a meeting place with space for equipment and can invite speakers, trainers to help with obtaining badges which in turn expands their knowledge and experience towards a more rounded adult in the future.

The organisation needs a place to meet, store equipment and participate in activities. It will be Good for the youngsters to socialise in a wide range of activities both indoors and outdoors. Youngsters from numerous local villages can work and play together developing an understanding of the different communities. It will give all villagers a positive understanding and approach to the youngsters. All will work together for the benefit of the village and the individuals.

It gives the groups of sense of identity and belonging, pride that they themselves fundraised to build it in years to come.

With a new hut, the scout troop will be more integrated in the community and other scout groups could visit. Ideal for large space for keep fit etc.

It gives the residents of Mendlesham Green a Village Hub

All the facilities are at Mendlesham, so it would be good to have something at M. Green.

It would provide scouts with their own space and provide a community social space for the Green.

The scout group should have a base to develop - from beavers onwards. This new hut would be a great attraction for children to join beavers, cubs and scouts. These clubs are a really positive tonic to other sedentary online interests that many children enjoy. Children would benefit enormously from the 'real life' experiences that these clubs can bring and the meaningful relationship with their immediate community that it should foster.

With a new hut, the scout troop will be more integrated in the community and other scout groups could visit. Ideal for large space for keep fit etc.

it would help the green travelling all way to Mendlesham

Much needed facility for the youth of the area

...the subs won't have to be used for building hire

A place for young people where they can have ownership. Useful for other events for the community.

It will be ideal for youth and children's activities with a large green space outside. It will be within easy reach for residents of the Green.

Having a home for their groups, correct storage for their equipment and flexibility for activities. Without worries of double booking. The community can use the facility as a meeting place in case of emergency too.

Mendlesham scouts have been an important part of the community. The benefits of such an active local group are vital to a growing community. Access to structured social activities will build a better community for the Mendlesham Parish

Scout group response

It is really positive to see the value that the community places on the young people and the scout group, and that they understand what benefits a new building will offer to the scout group as well as the wider community.

There were some responses that felt that a new hall would not be of benefit to the scout group or the wider community:

• There was suggestion that provision of just a shower/toilet block on the field would suffice.

The wider community to my knowledge haven't missed having the scout hut in Mendlesham green so I'm afraid I cannot see why we would need it now. If anything an area for camping, fire lighting, outdoor activities that aren't suitable to the playing fields with a toilet / shower block and storage would be of better use for the scouts.

Scout group response

As addressed in Q4, by having this suggested set up the Scout group would be run from a split site which is not practical. This has cost implications for hall hire for indoor meetings plus also paying out for the upkeep of an amenity building at the scout site. By having one building that has a hall and amenities this lowers costs. For the younger sections of Scouts, such as Beavers, camps often take place indoors at scout halls due to their age. These camps would not be able to take place at a community centre, and in past years we have had to pay to hire other scout halls, for example at Eye, in order to allow younger members to experience overnight stays away from home.

• There was some misconception around the hall being available for hire.

My understanding is that it will not be available to the wider community due to the design.

Scout group response

We are unsure of how this misunderstanding has arisen as it has always been the intention that the new hall would be made available for community hire, as was the old hut.

Some felt that there were enough facilities in Mendlesham already

I don't think it will as there are plenty of existing options

Scout group response

As addressed in Q4, the existing halls are not suitable for the activities and needs of the scout group, and we are currently limited in the activities that we can offer.

9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the need for the new scout hut in Mendlesham?

There were a variety of responses to this question that focused on 5 main areas:

the scout group and young people

I am thoroughly in favour of this project. The scouting movement is part of Mendlesham.

The youth of today seem to spend too much time on computerised entertainment, they need the sort of activity only obtained from membership of scouting and similar organisations, obviously a meeting place is essential and needs to be a dedicated space, just the use of any hall is not really satisfactory. Having been a guide leader in the past I really believe the hut is a given

Positive asset and will be good for the younger generation and children looking to join

Scout group response

It is pleasing to see the value that people place on our local youth and the Mendlesham scout group, and the positivity toward providing facilities for them.

Providing facilities in Mendlesham Green

People in Mendlesham Green need a hall for meeting up and clubs.

It would help to equalise resources throughout the parish rather than them all being centralised in the village.

It has the potential of helping to provide more of a sense of community to Mendlesham Green.

I think it would be a valuable facility for building community spirit in the Mendlesham Green.

We always had one so why not keep one in village

Scout group response

It is clear to see that there is a desire for a community building in Mendlesham Green, and we feel by making the new scout hut available for community use, this would be fulfilled.

The need for a new hut

Our boys used to attend the scouts when young, so we hope there is still a primary demand for it.

At present there isn't a room available during the day time that is large enough for groups

Definitely needed

It needs to be used for more than the Scouts if it is to have funding.

Scout group response

We feel there is still a demand for a scout hut in Mendlesham Green and are pleased with the positive comments and support shown in the survey for the building of a new scout hut.

We feel that building the new hut will provide additional community space in the parish.

As mentioned previously, the hut will be available for community use.

The building itself

If built, ongoing costs would have to be part of a plan. The Scouts would need to link in with the public to fund raise and keep the running of the building sustained. It would be good to see a new hut built with ecological and environmental systems, including a good heating system for all year use. The hut would be well used if comfortable, spacious and has toilets. A kitchen area would attract many groups to use it too

Security of premises would be a priority.

The parish didn't adequately protect the original hut.

Ensure it is of a welcoming design that is efficient, cost effective to run and wheelchair accessible.

What is the cost of rebuild?

Scout group response

Security measures such as security lighting are being included as part of the final project.

It is a shame that the old hut became uneconomical to repair. However, given its age, it would still have taken a lot of money to bring it up to modern standards such as making it wheelchair accessible, even if the building itself had been structurally sound.

The new hut will cost close to £220,000 to build. This includes all groundworks like running services back into the site and providing hardstanding for the car park, as well as the building itself and its fixtures and fittings.

It is our intention that the hall would be available for community hire in order to ensure that adequate funds are available for the running cost and upkeep of the new building. We are in the process of exploring how we might use more eco-friendly systems in the new build. The new building will have kitchen space as well as fully accessible showers and toilets.

• Other general comments

I think money would be better spent on more needed causes.

You don't need it.

It will save the club money on hiring other venues and will add a central point to the village Hopefully you will get some grant money to assist otherwise it is going to take forever to achieve this goal and there is very little for our youngsters to do around here.

It could provide off-street parking for villagers

Scout group response

We feel that by spending the money on a new building we are providing for the whole community as well as the scout group.

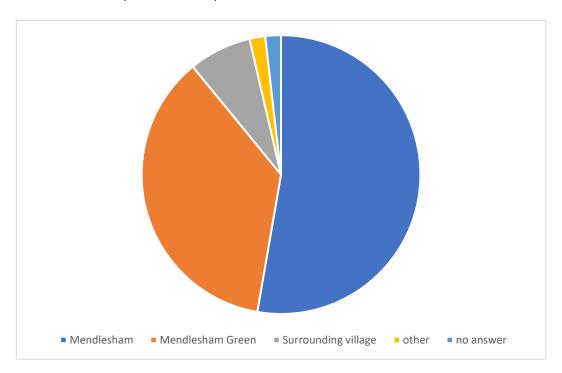
It would be helpful if this opinion had been justified so that we have better understanding of the reasons for this opinion.

The scout troop currently spends over £2000 a year on hall hire. By having our own building this money could then be used for not only the upkeep of the building but also investing in equipment and activities for our young people. The executive committee are currently working hard on grant applications. It is hope that this report on our survey will assist in providing the evidence need to be successful in our applications.

We are unsure at this stage whether the provision of resident parking will be possible. Our intention is that the hall will be made available for community hire and this would include the car park area. Therefore, we would need to ensure that the car park was clear for hirers. From a security point of view the car park will most probably need to be be gated to ensure that it is not used for unsociable activities, and that it does not become an attractive option for the travelling community.

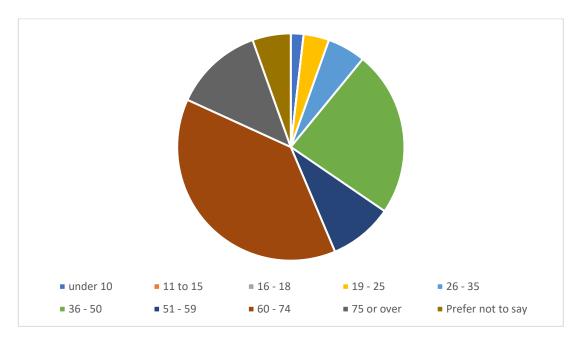
10. Where do you live?

There were 55 responses to this question.



11. What age bracket are you in?

There were 55 responses to this question.



A good mix of residents from both Mendlesham and Mendlesham Green responded to the survey, as well as a range of people in different age brackets.

Conclusions

The aims of the survey were:

1. To gather evidence in support of the new scout hut, in order to improve chances of success with grant and funding applications.

The results of the survey have provided clear evidence of support for a new scout building at Mendlesham Green. Responses to question 4 'Do you think there is a need for a new scout in Mendlesham Green?' show a clear demand for a new building, with 85.5% of people answering 'yes'.

The quantitative and qualitive data collected during the survey will be extremely useful in proving a need for the new building when applying for funding for the new building.

2. To engage with the community to gather opinions and develop support for the project.

The survey has yielded many comments and opinions about whether a new scout hut is needed in Mendlesham Green.

From the accompanying comments in question 4, and also responses to questions 8 and 9, it is clear that many people feel that the new building needs to be available for community hire for events.

A strong theme from the responses is that Mendlesham Green needs to have a community building. The new scout hut would provide a place to meet or hire in Mendlesham Green rather than Mendlesham village centre, and provide and emergency muster facility for the local community if required.

There are also a number of comments that indicate there is not sufficient availability at the existing community buildings in Mendlesham, so a new scout hut would add additional community space to the parish and local communities.

In summary, there is a great deal of support in the parish for the scout hut to be built and for the Scout Group to have a home of their own within the community.

Mendlesham Scout Hut Survey

1st Mendlesham Scouts are currently fundraising to build a new scout hut at our site in Mendlesham Green, to replace our previous 1940s building which had to be taken down a few years ago after becoming unsafe.

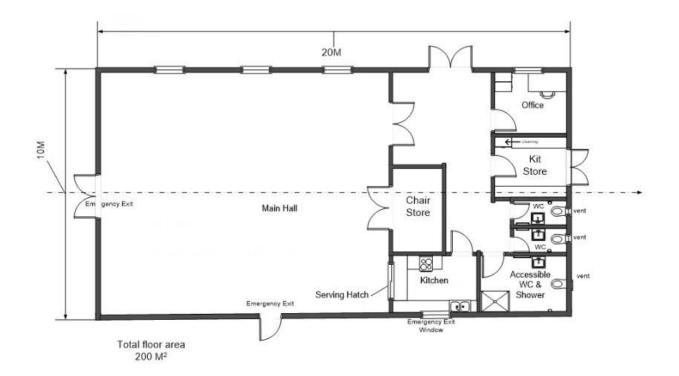
This survey will allow the scout group committee to collect data and opinions from the local community that we can use as evidence to support our applications for grants and other funding.

*Required

Artist's impression of new scout hut at Mendlesham Green for 1st Mendlesham Scouts



Floor plan of new scout hut



1.	. 1. Have you attend any groups/clubs in Mendlesham? (Please tick all that appl					
	Tick all that apply.					
	Uniformed groups e.g scouts, brownies					
	Over 60s club					
	Computer club					
	Writing club					
	Walking club					
	Mendlesham WI					
	Toddler group					
	Other Mendlesham based group/club					
	None					
2.	2. Have you ever hired any of the existing halls in Mendlesham?					
	Mark only one oval.					
	Yes					
	◯ No					
3.	3. What, if any, groups/activities did you attend at the old scout hut?					
4	4. Decrease the include a great and for the group and the start in Magazine and 2. Planes					
4.	4. Do you think there is a need for the new scout hut in Mendlesham? Please explain. *					
	explain.					

5 Would you be likely to hire the new scout hut for events or clubs/groups?
Mark only one oval.
Yes
No
6. Please explain why / why not. *
o. Hease explain with hot.
7. If you would be likely to hire the new scout hall, what might you use it for?
(Please tick all that apply)
(Please tick all that apply) Tick all that apply.
(Please tick all that apply)
(Please tick all that apply) Tick all that apply. Family party Fundraising event eg quiz night Community event eg coffee morning
(Please tick all that apply) Tick all that apply. Family party Fundraising event eg quiz night Community event eg coffee morning Regular club or community group
(Please tick all that apply) Tick all that apply. Family party Fundraising event eg quiz night Community event eg coffee morning Regular club or community group Would not hire the hall
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9	9 Is there anything else you would like to add about the need for the new scout hut in Mendlesham?				
10.	10. Where do you live?				
	Mark only one oval.				
	Mendlesham				
	Mendlesham Green				
	Surrounding village				
	Other				
11.	11. What age bracket are you in? (Optional-this question helps us ensure we collect opinions from a wide range of people)				
	Mark only one oval.				
	Under 10				
	11-15				
	16-18				
	19-25				
	26-35				
	36-50				
	51-59				
	60 - 74				
	75 or over				
	Prefer not to say				