

Cranbrook Leisure and Wellbeing Centre Survey Summary report



Contents	
Summary.....	2
Survey goals and methodology.....	2
Survey process	3
Data analysis	3
Key findings	24
Recommendations	25
Next steps	25

Summary

The survey shows strong public support for the new Cranbrook Leisure and Wellbeing Centre, with most respondents saying they are likely to use it once it opens. The strongest demand is for the swimming pool, gym, café/social spaces and exercise studios, alongside a building that feels bright, welcoming and easy to navigate. Feedback also highlights clear expectations around privacy, accessibility and inclusive design, particularly in changing, poolside and arrival areas. Overall, residents are positive about the project but want a more ambitious, future-ready facility that also addresses concerns about parking, access, safety and delivery timescales.

Survey goals and methodology

We asked for views to help shape how the new Leisure and Community Wellbeing Centre would be used and experienced by local people. While the main facilities were already planned, the engagement focused on helping to shape how spaces would feel and work day to day, and which features would make them welcoming and enjoyable for everyone.

The survey was designed to gather public feedback on the proposals for the Cranbrook Leisure and Wellbeing Centre. The objectives were to understand: how likely residents and other users were to use the new building when it opened; who people expected to visit with and which facilities they anticipated using most; how people were likely to travel to the site; and views on the proposed look and feel of key spaces and priorities for facilities and features (including open comments).

Survey process

The survey was hosted online via Commonplace, with responses submitted through the Cranbrook survey site. It closed at **10am on Wednesday 4 March 2026**. In total, it received **874 responses** and **979 contributions**.

Alongside the online survey, a public drop-in event was held on **Wednesday 11 February 2026 (2pm–8pm)** at **The Cranberry Farm, Cranbrook**, giving residents the opportunity to view early proposals, ask questions, and share feedback in person.

Promotion was carried out through Council communications and social media channels (including Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn).

Data analysis

Cranbrook survey results

1. How likely are you to use the new building once it opens?

There were 941 contributions to this question.

The results show that most people expect to use the new building once it opens. Over half of respondents (54.9%) said they are “Very likely” to use it, and a further 37.5% said they are “Quite likely.” This means more than nine in ten respondents gave a positive answer overall. A small number of people were “Not sure” (5.6%), which may reflect that they need more information about how the building will work in practice. Only 1.9% said they were unlikely to use the building, showing very little expected non-use.

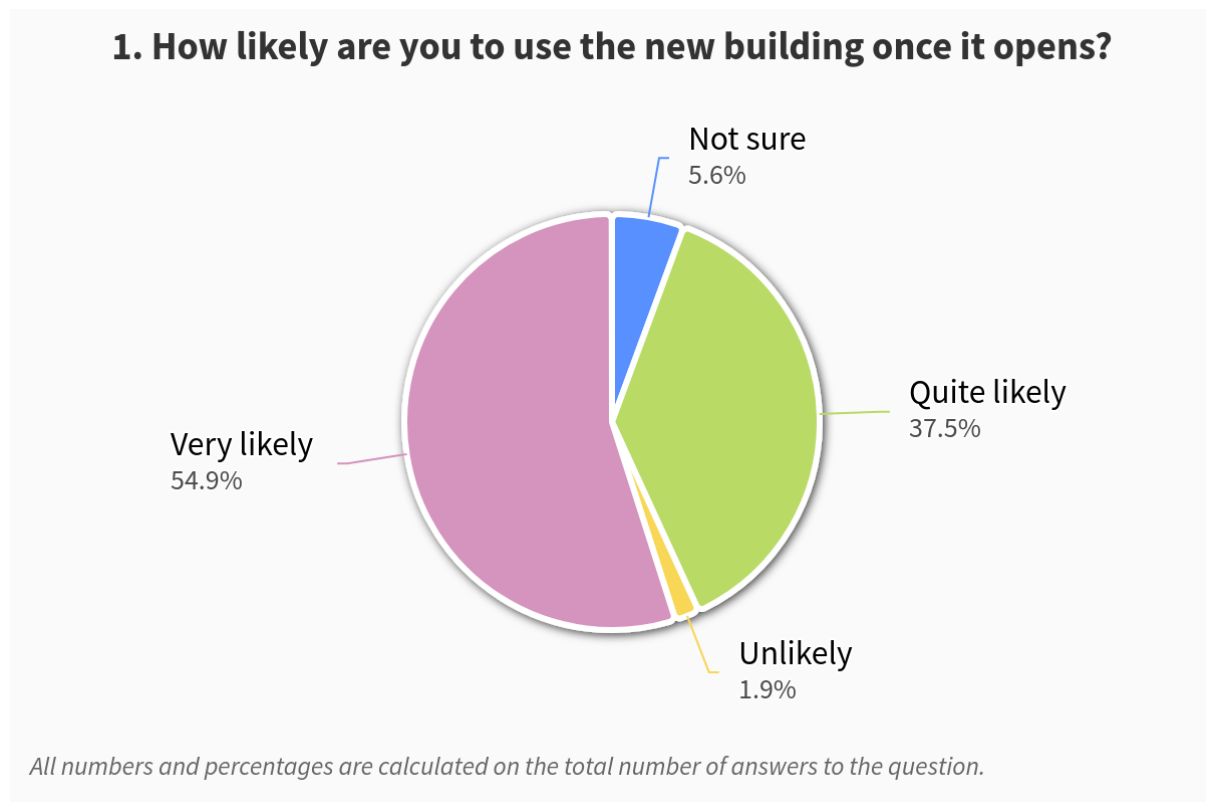


Figure 1: Likelihood of using the new Leisure and Wellbeing Centre once it opens

2. Who would you most often visit the building with? (Please select all that apply)

There were 964 contributions to this question.

The most common expected visiting patterns were with friends or family (28.8%) and alone (27.6%), suggesting the facility will serve both social and independent use. Families with children were also well represented, with visits alongside children aged 5–11 (16.6%), 0–4 (12.3%) and 12+ (8.9%). Group visits with sports clubs (4.4%) or support groups (1.5%) were the least anticipated.

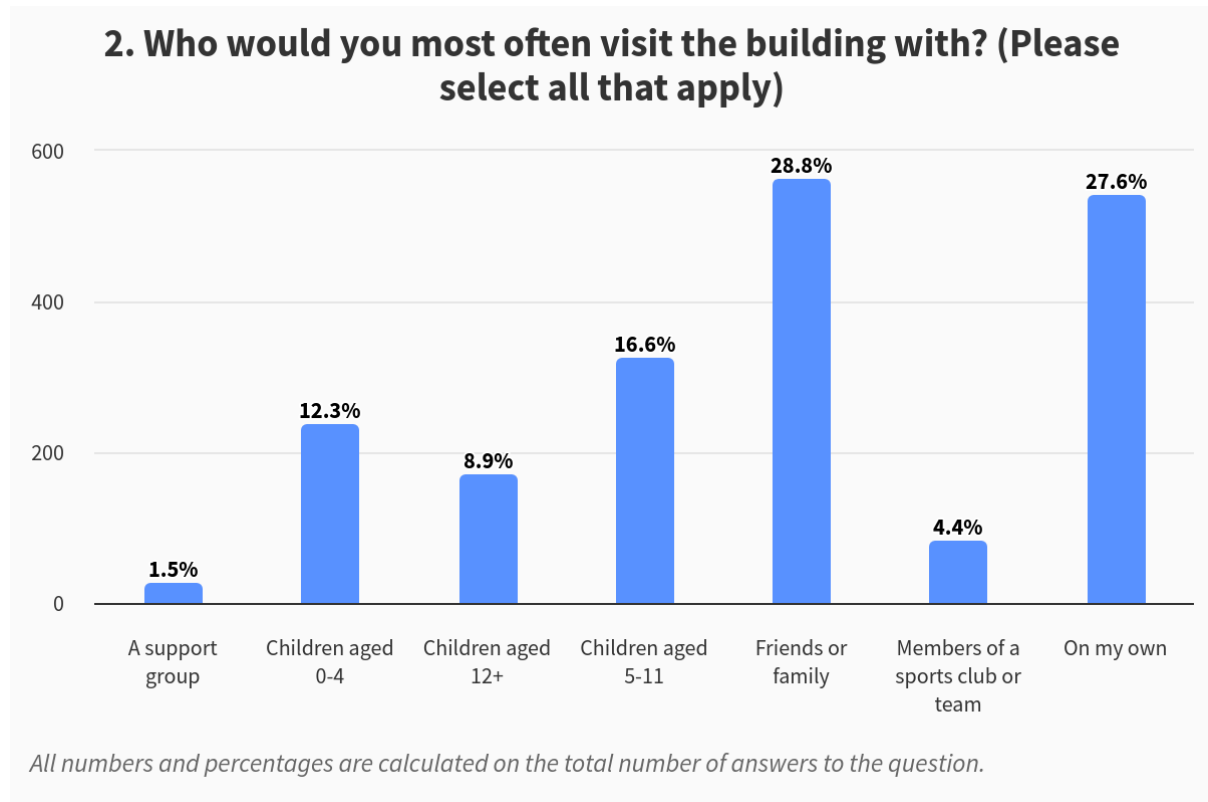


Figure 2: Who people expect to visit the Leisure and Wellbeing Centre with

3. Which areas do you expect to use most often?

There were 964 contributions to this question.

The results show that the 25-metre swimming pool is the area people expect to use most often, with 23.1% of respondents choosing this option. This is followed by strong interest in the gym/fitness suite (17.2%), café/social spaces (16.8%), and exercise studios/classes (14.3%). Together, these results suggest that swimming, fitness activities and social spaces will be the main reasons people visit the building.

A smaller number of respondents expect to use the soft play area or children’s parties space (9.7%), the learner pool (8.2%), or the small library space (7.5%). Only 2.7% selected bookable community rooms, and 0.7% chose “Other”, showing that most people plan to use the building’s main leisure facilities rather than specialist spaces.

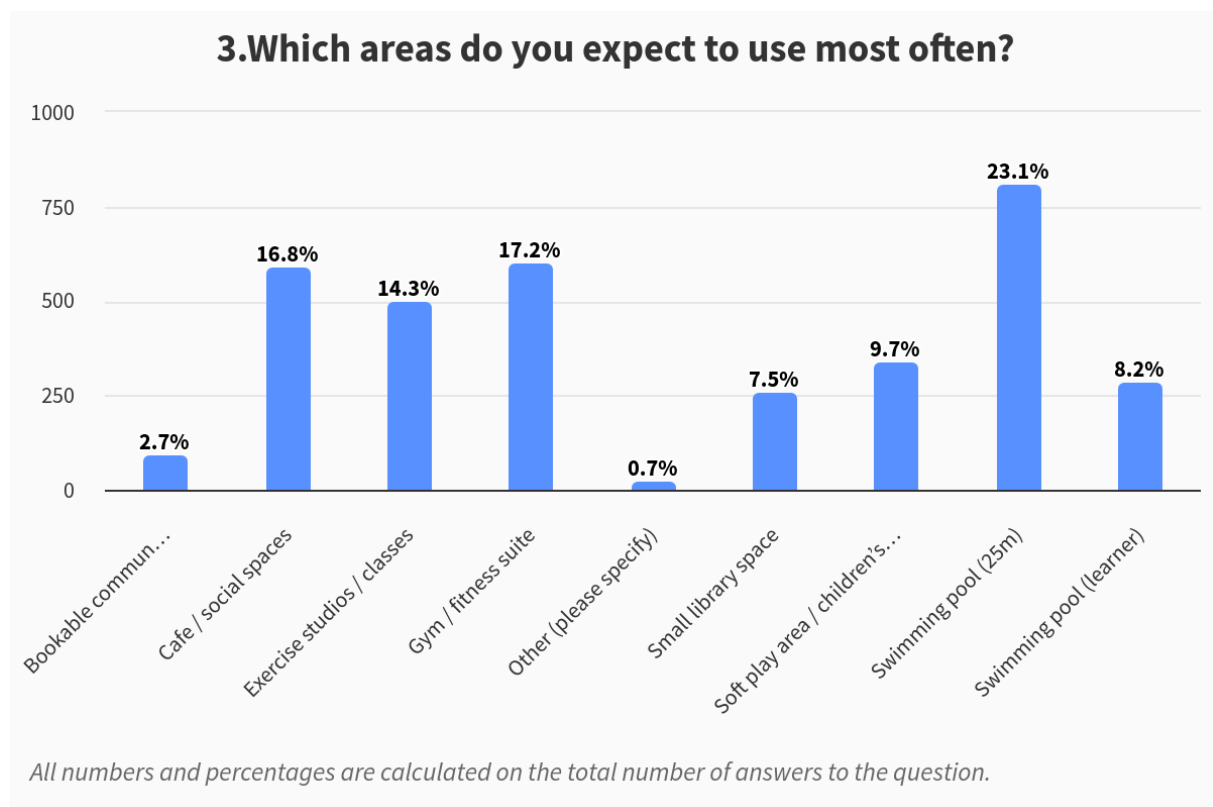


Figure 3: Area’s people expect to use most often within the building

Free text analysis

70 free text comments were left for question 3.

The free-text responses demonstrate which facilities, aside from the ones listed in Figure 1, people expect to use most often. Some respondents suggested multiple items within a single response.

Theme / Item	Number of mentions	Notes / Examples
Spa, sauna, and hydrotherapy	19	“steam and sauna spaces would be great”, “jacuzzi/sauna/heated beds”, “a hydrotherapy pool”, “Spa/sauna/hot tubs/hydro pools/cold water therapy”

Sports hall and court sports	11	“sports hall”, “badminton court or basketball court”, “volleyball court”, “football courts”, “short tennis”, “pickleball”, “cricket nets”, running track”
Other indoor and outdoor sports provision	10	“climbing wall”, “ice rink”, “cyclist hub”, “gym”, eGym”, “spin studio”, “yoga”
Bigger or specialist water facilities	9	“50 meter pool”, “warm swimming pool for babies”, “diving boards”, “slides”
Children and family spaces	7	“childcare provision”, “proper play space”, “children sports clubs”, “viewing area for watching swimming lessons”, “area for teenagers - pool tables, dart boards, skittles alley”
Accessibility and wellbeing	6	“wellbeing centre”, “exercise for over 60s”, “steps and not just ladders for the pool”
Workspace and bookable rooms	3	“quiet work space”, “bookable for pods for parents”, “affordable bookable rooms”
Art classes	1	“art studio, art classes”

- **Wellbeing and relaxation were the most mentioned theme** — strong interest in saunas, steam rooms and hydrotherapy pools as part of a health-focused offer
- **Sports hall provision was the second strongest theme** — clear demand for a multi-use hall suitable for a range of sports, with some interest in a running track
- **Enhanced swimming facilities were widely requested** — including a 50-metre pool, diving boards, slides and warm-water areas for babies, reflecting both competitive and family-focused demand
- **A broad range of activities attracted steady interest** — climbing, ice skating, cycling hub, eGym equipment, spin and yoga, alongside children's clubs, teen spaces and parent viewing areas
- **Accessibility and workspace needs were also noted** — steps into the pool, provision for older adults, bookable work pods and meeting rooms were raised by a smaller number of respondents

Summary: Wellbeing facilities and a multi-use sports hall were the strongest priorities, followed by an enhanced swimming offer and a broad range of activities. Family provision, accessibility and workspace requests also featured, indicating a clear appetite for a centre that offers diverse ways to stay active and well.

4.How will you most likely travel to the leisure centre?

There were 963 contributions to this question.

The results show that walking is the most common way people expect to travel to the leisure centre, with 48.8% of respondents selecting this option. This is followed by car or taxi travel (29.2%) and cycling (14.5%), which together make up the majority of the remaining responses. Smaller numbers expect to use public transport (3.4%) or scooters (2.5%).

Very few respondents chose leisure facilities transport (0.3%), mobility scooter or wheelchair (0.9%), or 'Other' (0.5%), showing that most people anticipate travelling on foot, by car, or by bike rather than by alternative modes of transport.

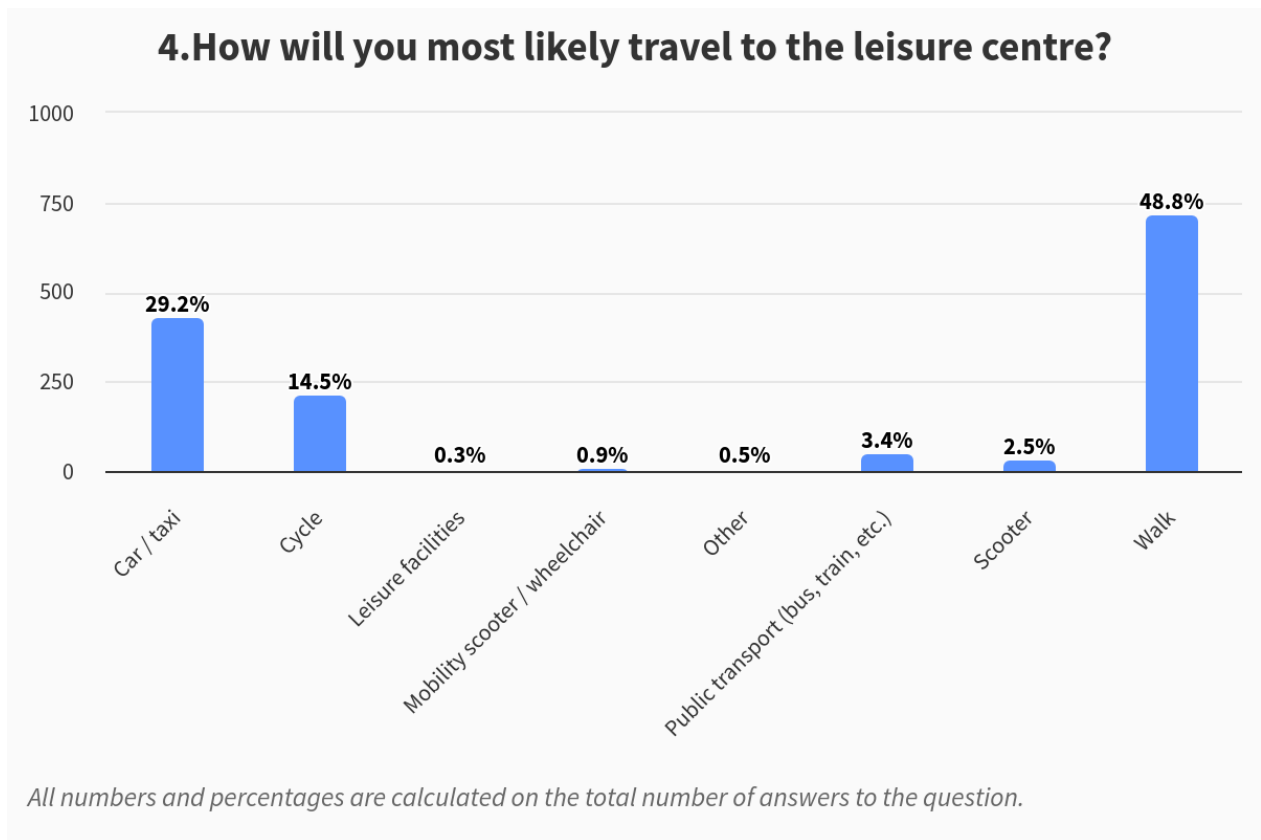


Figure 4: Expected travel methods to the Leisure and Wellbeing Centre

Free text analysis

22 free text comments were left for question 4. They highlight the following themes:

- Many people would walk or run to the facility, with several mentions of running, walking from nearby homes, and using prams or wheelchairs.
- Car use is influenced by parking charges, with multiple comments saying people would avoid pay-and-display, park elsewhere, or that paid parking is disappointing.
- Some respondents highlighted wider issues, including limited public transport, lack of routes, and general concerns about local infrastructure and nature.

5. The proposals will include external landscape features. Which of the following would you like to see?

There were 904 contributions to this question.

Feature	Overall position in preferences	Key rank peaks (votes & %)	Interpretation
Trees and planting	Clear first choice / top priority	Rank 1: 514 (56.9%) • Rank 2: 122 (13.5%)	Dominant top-rank choice, far ahead of all other features. Majority of its votes in the first rank confirm it as the strongest community priority.
Outdoor seating and social areas	Strong upper-rank preference (2nd tier)	Rank 2: 314 (34.7%) • Rank 3: 202 (22.3%)	Widely valued, often placed just behind planting. Most respondents see it as very important, typically in the top four preferences.
Sheltered seating	Upper-middle preference	Rank 3: 251 (27.8%) • Rank 4: 173 (19.1%)	Frequently ranked in the upper half, showing strong support for sheltered seating places.
Café spill-out space	Mixed priority	Rank 2: 141 (15.6%) • Rank 3: 138 (15.3%) • Rank 8: 203 (22.5%)	Highly polarised: some prioritise spill-out space, but many also rank it as the lowest priority.
Informal play equipment	Lower-middle preference	Rank 4: 211 (23.3%) • Rank 5: 135 (14.9%) • Rank 6: 127 (14.0%)	Most often placed in the middle of the order, with a relatively even number of votes across ranks 5-8.
Accessible pathways	Lower-middle preference	Rank 7: 211 (23.3%) • Rank 8: 165 (18.3%)	Often placed in later ranks, with between 76 and 105 votes for each of the earlier ranks. Seen as widely supported infrastructure but not a key preference for respondents.
Cycle parking	Low priority	Rank 6: 210 (23.2%) • Rank 7: 229 (25.3%)	Strongly concentrated in the lower ranks, indicating limited relative importance to respondents.
Outdoor fitness equipment	Lowest priority overall	Rank 7: 192 (21.2%) • Rank 8: 206 (22.8%)	Consistently placed last or near last. Widely not prioritised compared with all other landscape features.

The results show a very strong preference for trees and planting, followed by high support for outdoor seating and social spaces. Other features such as sheltered seating, café spill-out space, and informal play equipment sit in the middle of public priorities, while accessible pathways, cycle parking and outdoor fitness equipment tend to be ranked lower and are generally viewed as supporting rather than leading features.

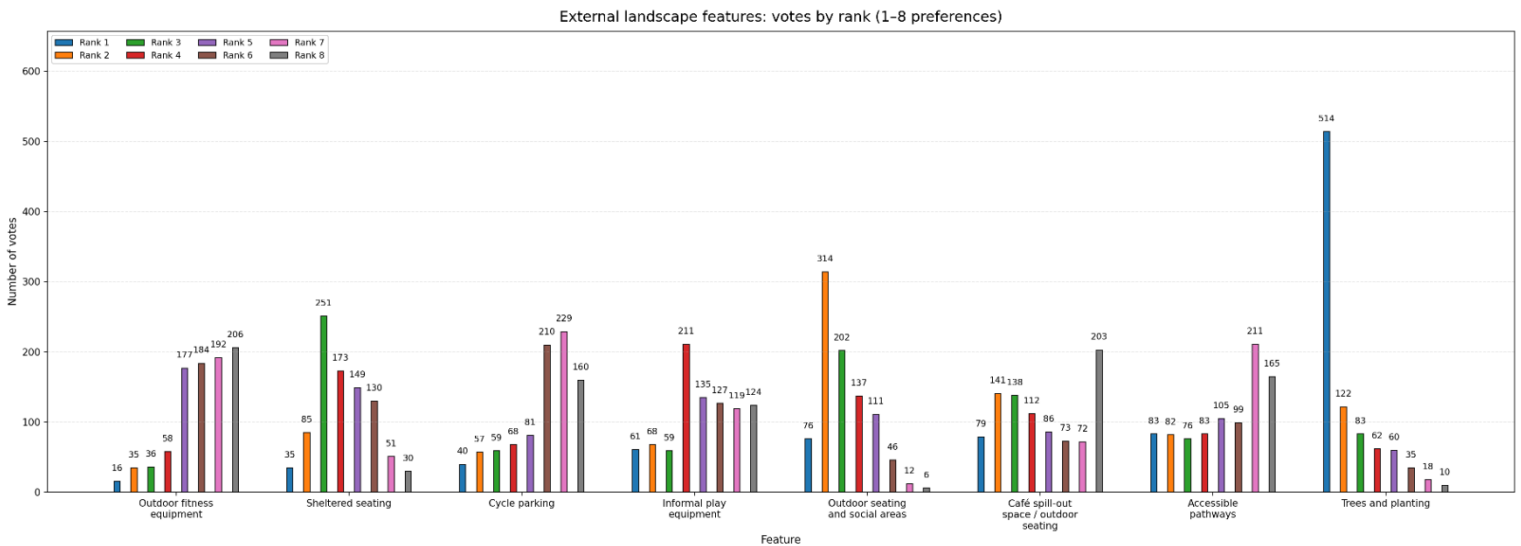


Figure 5: Preferences for external landscape features around the centre

6. How would you like the entrance and main area to look and feel?

There were 946 contributions to this question.

The results show a preference for the entrance and main area to feel bright and airy, with 34.4% of respondents choosing this option. Warm and welcoming (24.7%) and calm and relaxing (21.4%) were the next most preferred styles. Modern and sleek (14.4%) and fun and colourful (4.7%) were selected less frequently, while only 0.5% chose “Other”, showing that most people favour clear, simple design styles over more themed or playful approaches.

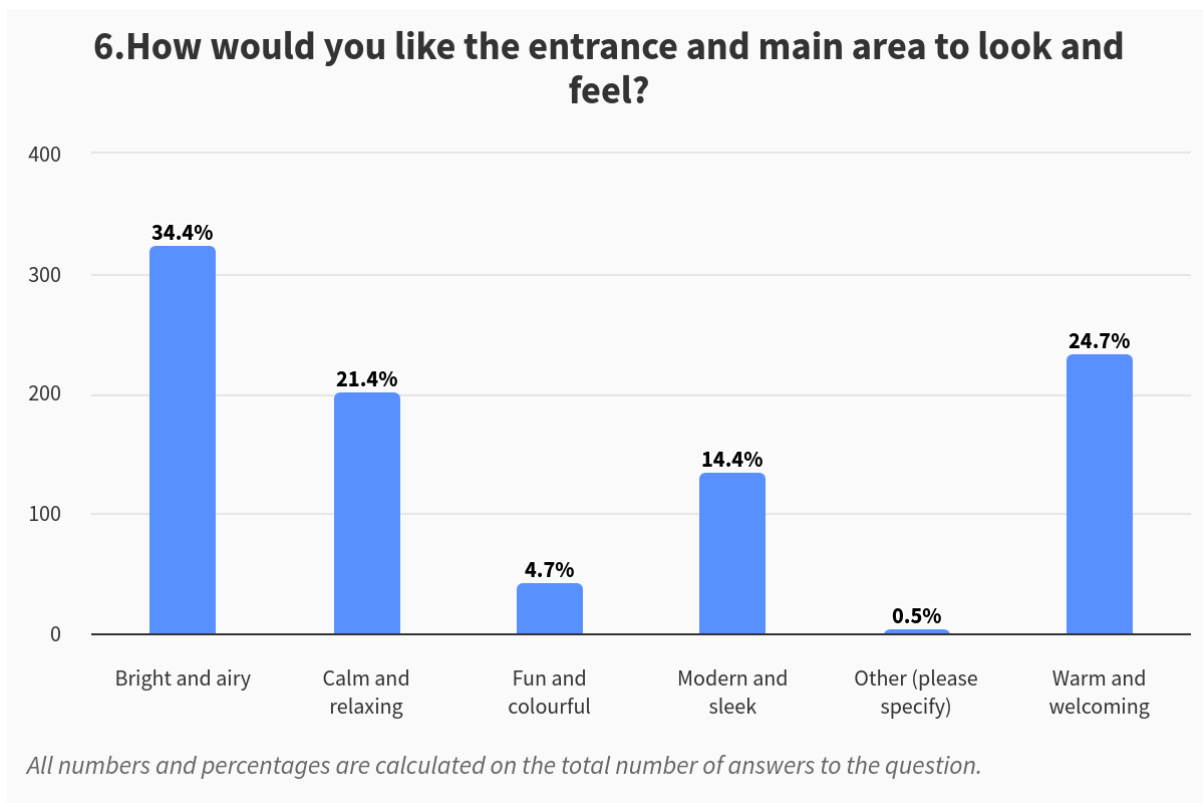


Figure 6: Preferred look and feel of the entrance and main area

Free text analysis

5 free text comments were left for question 6.

A small number of individual comments were shared about the look and feel of the building. One person said they would like all the suggested design ideas, while another asked for a modern and welcoming space. Someone else suggested a calmer, more nature-inspired design, like a greenhouse. Another respondent emphasised the importance of a quiet and organised entrance, suggesting that the café be placed away from the main doors to help create a calm atmosphere. It was also highlighted that tactile paving is very important for blind and visually impaired visitors.

Design and atmosphere — individual comments called for a modern, welcoming space with a calm and nature-inspired feel, a well-organised entrance with the café set back from the main doors, and tactile paving to support blind and visually impaired visitors

7. How would you use the pool?

There were 947 contributions to this question.

The results show that the most common intended use of the pool is swimming recreationally or for fun, selected by 25.2% of respondents. This is closely followed by swimming for fitness or exercise (23.9%), indicating that leisure and wellbeing activities will be the primary reasons people visit the pool. Social swimming is also popular, with 15.6% choosing swimming with friends or family.

A further 14.1% expect to use the pool for children’s or adults’ lessons, while 9.8% are interested in lane swimming or training and 8.8% in aqua aerobics or water fitness, showing steady demand for more structured sessions. Smaller proportions selected specialist club-based activities such as swim or water polo club (1.3%) or water polo (0.6%), and 0.5% chose “Other”, suggesting most respondents foresee using the pool for mainstream recreational or fitness-focused activities.

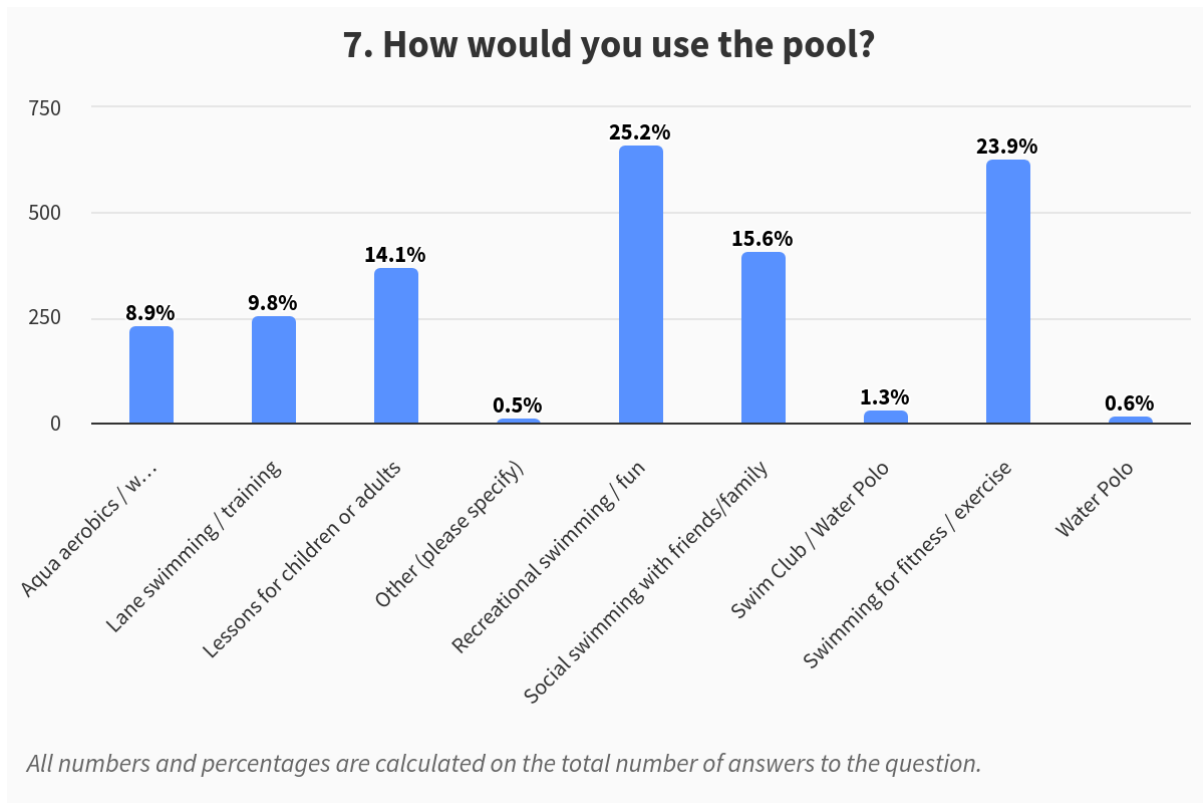


Figure 7: How respondents expect to use the swimming pool

Free text response analysis

37 free text comments were left for question 7.

They focused around three key themes:

- **Pool size and long-term capacity** — a significant number of respondents felt a 25-metre pool would not meet the area's long-term needs, with calls for a 50-metre pool, diving facilities and adaptable water space to support competitive swimming and anticipated population growth
- **Inclusive and accessible provision** — respondents emphasised the importance of women-only sessions, hydrotherapy, disability-friendly activities and quieter swimming times to ensure the facility is accessible and welcoming to all members of the community
- **Wider amenities and extended offer** — slides, inflatables, family sessions, sauna, steam room and spa facilities were frequently requested, alongside practical

considerations such as warm water temperatures and extended opening hours to maximise usage

Summary: Respondents called for a pool offer that extends beyond standard leisure provision — larger, more flexible, and supported by amenities that address fitness, recreation, wellbeing and inclusive access across the whole community.

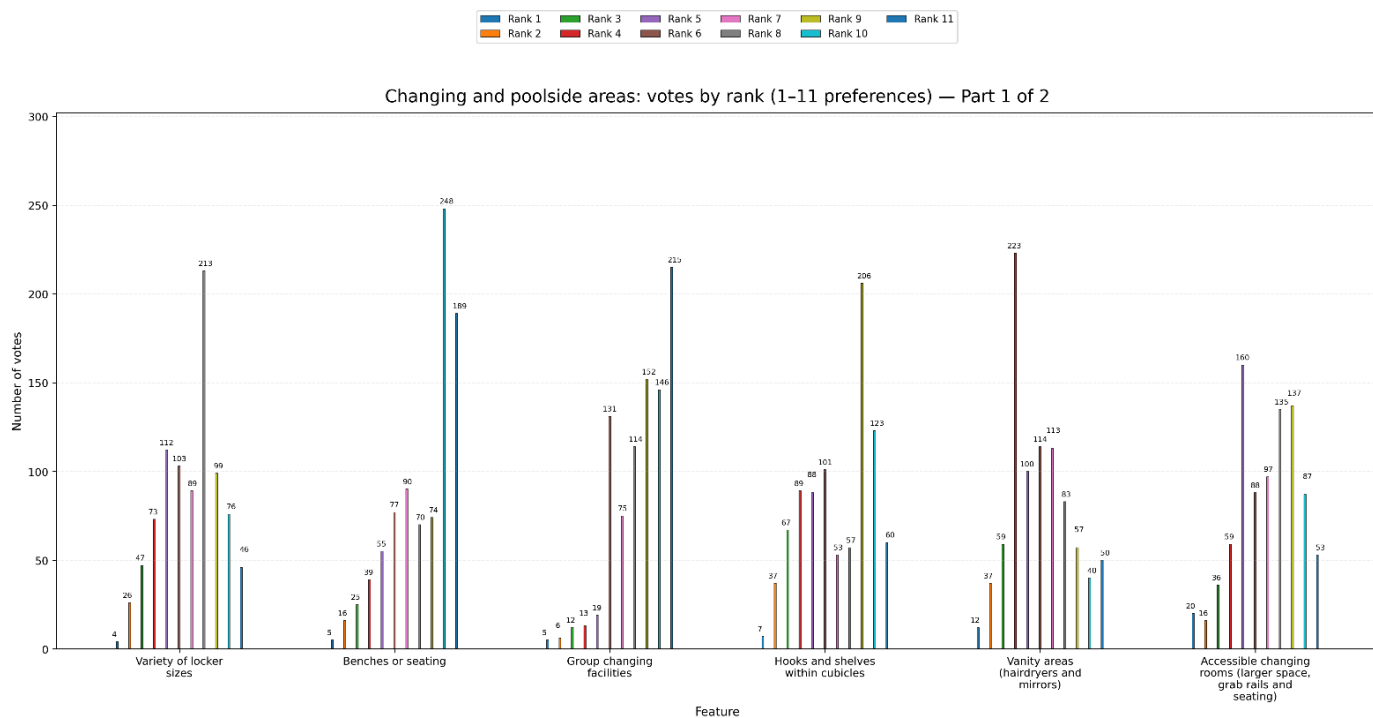
8. What is most important to you in the changing and poolside areas?

There were 888 contributions to this question.

Feature	Overall position in preferences	Key rank peaks (votes & %)	Interpretation
Individual changing cubicles	Top priority overall	Rank 1: 436 (49.1%) • Rank 2: 179 (20.2%)	The dominant first choice. Nearly half of all respondents placed this as their highest priority.
Family changing cubicles	Strong upper-rank preference	Rank 1: 195 (22.0%) • Rank 2: 246 (27.7%)	One of the most important features overall, with the majority of its votes (62.2%) in the first three ranks.
Private shower cubicles	Upper-middle preference	Rank 2: 169 (19.0%) • Rank 7: 149 (16.8%)	Popular among many respondents, but not universally top-ranked, with many votes in rank 7.
Changing cubicles with baby-changing facilities	Upper-middle preference	Rank 3: 184 (20.7%) • Rank 4: 82 (9.2%) Rank 5: 86 (9.7%)	A mix between upper and middle ranking. Relevant to certain users but not universally prioritised.
Toilets	Upper-middle preference (polarised priority)	Rank 3: 133 (15.0%) • Rank 11: 173 (19.5%)	Very mixed opinions with a split response. Some see it as essential, and others rank it lowest.
Vanity areas (hairdryers and mirrors)	Middle preference	Rank 4: 223 (25.1%) • Rank 6: 114 (12.8%) • Rank 7: 113 (12.7%)	Most often placed mid-order; appreciated as part of the experience, but not a leading priority.
Variety of locker sizes	Middle preference	Rank 5: 112 (12.6%) • Rank 6: 103 (11.6%) • Rank 8: 213 (24.0%)	Typically ranked in the lower half, suggesting it's useful but not decisive for most respondents.
Accessible changing rooms (larger space, grab rails and seating)	Middle preference	Rank 5: 160 (18.0%) • Rank 8: 135 (15.2%) • Rank 9: 137 (15.4%)	Shows a mixed but steady pattern of support; recognised as important, though not typically a top-three priority.

Hooks and shelves within cubicles	Lower-middle preference	Rank 6: 101 (11.4%) • Rank 9: 206 (23.2%) • Rank 10: 123 (13.9%)	Moderately valued but generally ranked low. Seen as useful but not essential.
Benches or seating	Low priority	Rank 7: 90 (10.1%) • Rank 10: 248 (27.9%) • Rank 11: 189 (21.3%)	Strongly concentrated at the bottom of rankings, indicating relatively low importance compared with other features.
Group changing facilities	Low priority	Rank 9: 152 (17.1%) • Rank 10: 146 (16.4%) • Rank 11: 215 (24.2%)	The least valued feature. Heavily concentrated in the lowest three ranks.

Respondents placed the greatest importance on privacy and flexibility in the changing areas. Individual changing cubicles were the clear top priority, with almost half ranking them first, followed by strong support for family changing cubicles. Private shower cubicles and baby-changing facilities were also rated highly, though less consistently. Toilets received more varied opinions, while vanity areas, locker sizes and accessible changing rooms were generally seen as useful additions rather than priorities.



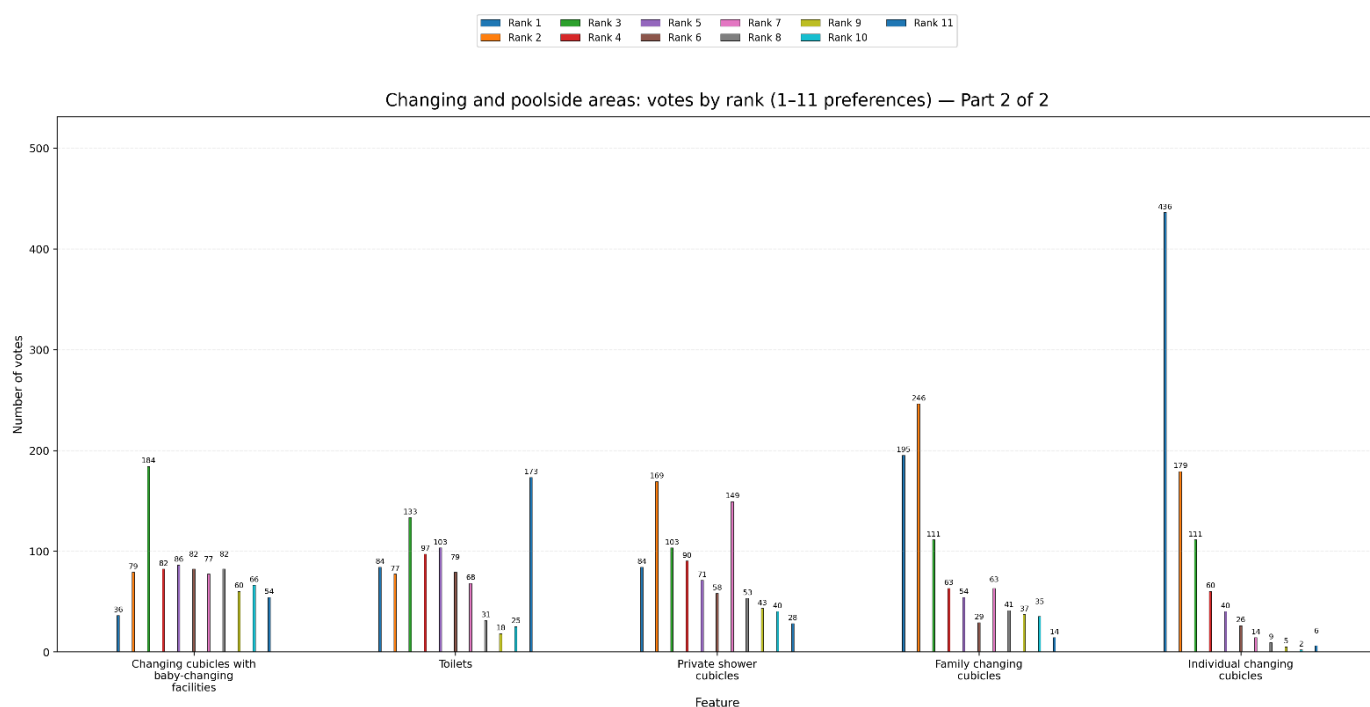


Figure 8: Importance of features in changing and poolside areas (ranked preferences)

Free text response analysis

131 free text comments were left for question 8

- Privacy and single-sex provision were the top theme, with calls for separate changing rooms, full-privacy cubicles, and safeguarding for women and girls.
- Inclusive options were the second strongest theme, including gender-neutral cubicles, family spaces, and facilities for carers or opposite-sex support.
- Accessibility and sensory-friendly design were highlighted, covering wheelchair access, hoists, reduced noise, and quieter spaces for autistic users.
- Family-friendly provision was widely requested, including family cubicles, baby-safe areas, buggy storage, and baby changing in both male and female areas.
- Poolside privacy and cleanliness were notable concerns.
- Additional requests included a 50m pool, slides, sauna/steam rooms, swimsuit dryers, and coin-free lockers.

Summary: Respondents prioritised privacy, safety, and single-sex spaces, alongside inclusive, accessible, and family-friendly facilities, with sensory-friendly design and cleanliness as key expectations.

9. What kind of gym equipment and/or exercise classes would you like to see and use? (For example: cardio equipment, free weights, resistance machines, group exercise classes, or specialist sessions) Please provide any comments below:

Free text response analysis

540 free text comments were left for question 9

Provision type	Theme / Category	Count	Example Mentions
Equipment	Free weights and weight benches	248	"Free weights", "Free weights including squat racks/deadlift stations", "Olympic barbells", "power racks", "range of dumbbells", "powerlifting platforms", "weights", "Smith machine"
Equipment	Cardio machines	234	"Stairmaster", "cardio equipment", "treadmill", "bikes", "Zwift bikes", "Watt bikes" "Ski Erg", "rowing machine", "curved treadmill", "step machine", cross trainer", "ellipticals"
Equipment	Resistance and cable machines	153	"resistance machines", "cable machines", "plate loaded Olympic resistance machines", "leg press", "machines", "hip thrust machine", "weight machines"
Equipment	Standard gym equipment	42	"standard gym equipment", "all gym equipment", "full gym", "mixed range of options", "a good variety"
Equipment	Functional fitness and calisthenics	29	"track for sled pushes", "fitness ropes", "gym turf", "hyrox area", "calisthenics", "pull up bars", "box jump", "TRX", "wall ball"
Equipment	Modern electronic equipment	3	"smart scales", "eGym", "Box12", "interactive machines", "use of XR/VR"
Equipment and group exercise	All listed in the question (cardio equipment, free weights, resistance machines, group exercise classes, or specialist sessions)	19	"all of the above", "all of the ones listed", "all mentioned above"
Group exercise	Group general fitness, conditioning, flexibility, and relaxation classes	132	"Pilates", "yoga", "stretch classes", "body balance", "tai chi", "meditation"
Group exercise	Any other group classes	99	"group exercise classes", "group exercise", "classes", "group strength training", "aerobics"
Group exercise	Strength group classes, mostly with weights	88	"Les mills classes", "body combat", "CrossFit classes", "Body pump", "combat", "kettle bell classes", "HIIT", "circuit classes", "bootcamp classes", "LBT"
Group exercise	Spin classes	62	"Spinning", "spin classes", "cycle spin"
Group exercise	Dance exercise	44	"Zumba", "adult ballet", "dance exercise", "barre class", "bungee fitness", "pole fitness"
Group exercise	Fighting sports	11	"boxing", "martial arts", "muay thai", "karate", "self defence"

Space provision	Pitches, courts, and outdoor sport	11	"padel", "pickle ball", "badminton or tennis", "outdoor gym", "cricket", "football", "team sports", "track"
Space provision	Indoor open space	10	"matt studio", "space for floor exercises"
Other	Accessible fitness	53	"beginners classes", "all ages", "in the evening", "consideration of childcare", "sessions for disabled people and also the elderly", "group family class", "women's strength classes", "SEND kids", "classes for teenagers or children", "wheelchair accessible"
Other	Water-based activities	34	"aqua aerobic", "aqua fit", "water aerobics", "aqua Zumba", "floating sound bath sessions", "inflatables", "swimming lessons", "land swimming", "sauna", "jacuzzi"
Other	Physiotherapy	10	"rehabilitation classes", "PT sessions", "sports massage"
Other	Personal training sessions	5	"trained instructors and personal trainers", "access to advice and training for gym equipment"

Additional comments from question 9:

Key themes from open responses included a desire for reasonable membership pricing, a women's-only gym section, an accessible and welcoming environment, and evening classes to accommodate those working standard office hours.

Equipment requests focused on free weights, cardio machines and resistance and cable equipment, with some interest in functional fitness areas. Group exercise classes were highly sought after, particularly Pilates, yoga, HIIT, circuits, spin and dance. Respondents also highlighted the value of inclusive activities for different ages and abilities, water-based sessions, open indoor space, and access to personal training and physiotherapy.

10. When arriving, what matters most?

There were 887 contributions to this question.

The results show that the most important factor when arriving is a welcoming atmosphere, selected by 26% of respondents. This is followed by a strong emphasis on clear signage (20.6%) and spaces that are easy to navigate (19.2%), suggesting that first impressions and straightforward wayfinding are key considerations for visitors. Feeling safe and supported is also a significant priority, chosen by 14.1%.

Smaller but still meaningful proportions selected café or refreshment options (10.4%) and seating and waiting space (9.6%), indicating that comfort and convenience also play a role in shaping people's experience on arrival.

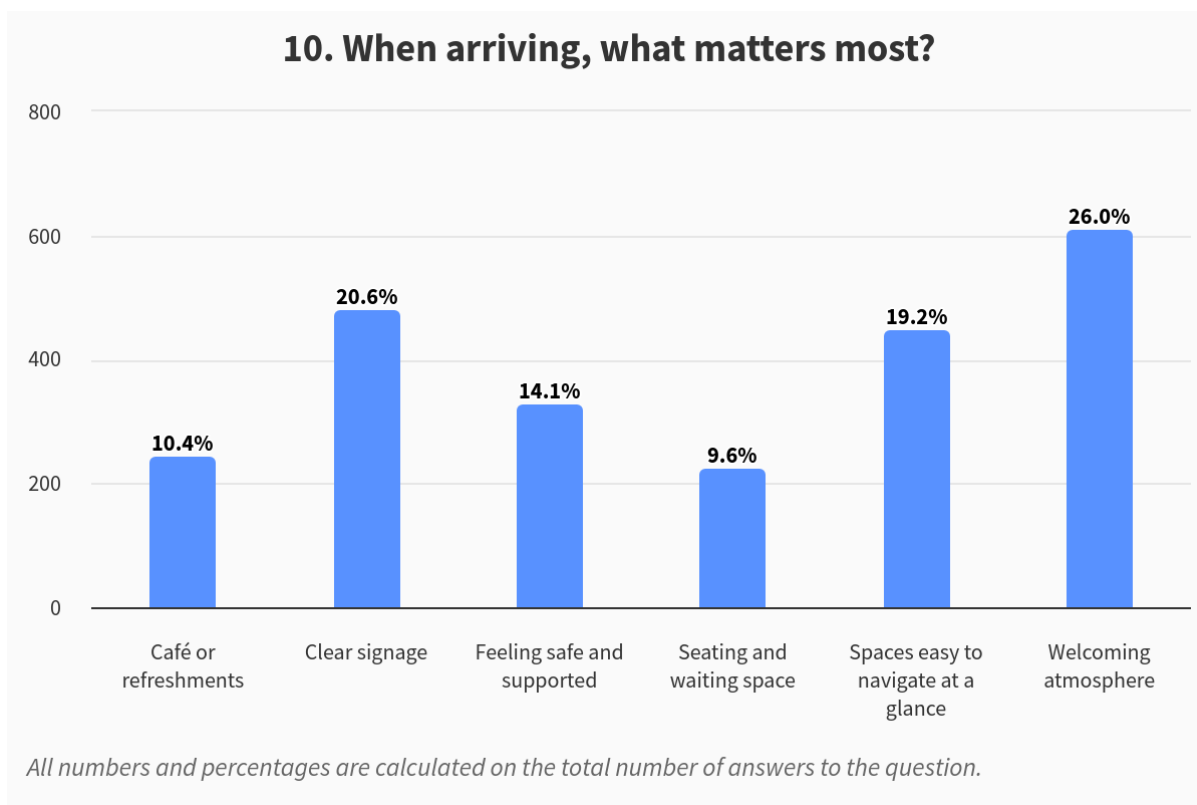


Figure 9: What matters most to people when arriving at the centre

11. What facilities are you most likely to use in the arrival area? (Please arrange in order of priority)

There were 790 contributions to this question.

Feature	Overall position in preferences	Key rank peaks (votes & %)	Interpretation
Café	Clear first choice / top priority	Rank 1: 533 (67.5%) • Rank 2: 150 (19.0%)	Dominant top-rank choice, far ahead of all other facilities. Just over two-thirds of respondents place it first, confirming it as the strongest community priority.
Small Library Space	Strong upper-rank preference (2nd tier)	Rank 2: 273 (34.6%) • Rank 3: 213 (27.0%) • Rank 4: 138 (17.5%)	Widely valued and typically placed just behind the café. 68.1% of votes are in the top three ranks, indicating strong importance.
Soft Play Area	Upper-middle preference	Rank 2: 140 (17.7%) • Rank 3: 146 (18.5%) • Rank 4: 137 (17.3%)	Broad support spread relatively evenly across ranks, but clustered more in the top half (66.6% across ranks 1–4).
Community Wellbeing Centre	Mixed priority	Rank 2: 123 (15.6%) • Rank 3: 170 (21.5%) • Rank 5:	Opinions are spread across the middle and lower ranks, with many placing it in ranks 2 and 3 (37%)

		185 (23.4%) • Rank 6: 159 (20.1%)	but even more assigning it to ranks 5 and 6 (43.5%).
Bookable Children's Party Room	Lower-middle preference	Rank 4: 182 (23.0%) • Rank 5: 228 (28.9%) • Rank 6: 171 (21.6%)	Most commonly placed in the middle to lower ranks, with 65.4% of votes in ranks 5–7; rarely a top-three choice (11.5%).
Bookable Community Meeting Rooms	Low priority	Rank 4: 144 (18.2%) • Rank 6: 260 (32.9%) • Rank 7: 234 (29.6%)	Strongly concentrated in the lower ranks (62.5% across ranks 6–7), suggesting it is a lower priority for respondents.
Learner Pool Viewing Area Facility	Lowest priority overall	Rank 5: 130 (16.5%) • Rank 7: 314 (39.7%)	Consistently placed last or near last; 50.1% of votes are in the bottom two ranks, making it the weakest priority overall.

The café is the clear top priority, with over two-thirds of respondents ranking it first. The small library space commands strong support, with most of its votes in the top three ranks. The soft play area also performed well across the upper-middle ranks.

Support for the community wellbeing centre is more divided, with notable votes at both ranks 2–3 and 5–6. The bookable children's party room and community meeting rooms fell in the middle to lower ranks, indicating lower priority. The learner pool viewing area received the most late-rank votes, making it the least preferred option overall.

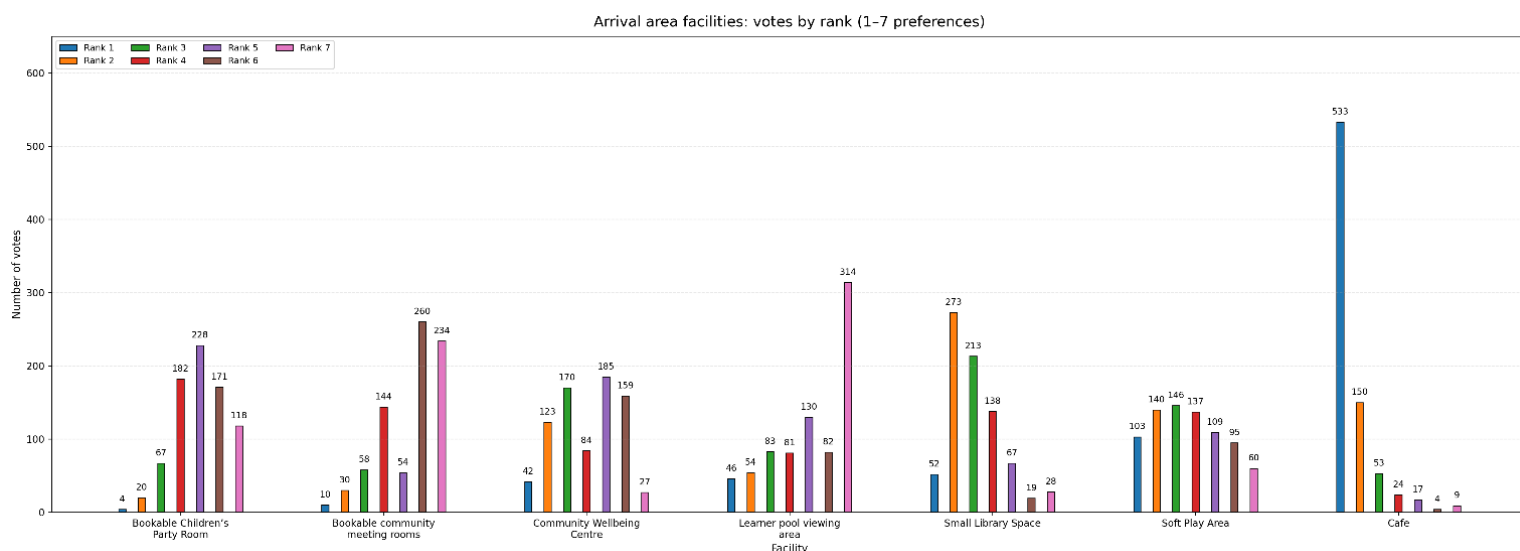


Figure 10: Facilities people are most likely to use in the arrival area (ranked priorities)

12. What facilities or features would you like to see in the small library space?

There were 837 contributions to this question.

Soft seating was the most desired feature (17.8%), followed by quiet reading space (15.5%), book loan services (14.7%), and a children's reading area (13.7%). Printing facilities were close behind at 13.4%. Smaller proportions valued children's activities (9.4%), public computers (7.6%), and equipment loan (7.3%), with 0.7% selecting 'Other'. Overall, respondents favour a comfortable, multi-purpose space combining reading, borrowing, activities, and basic digital services.

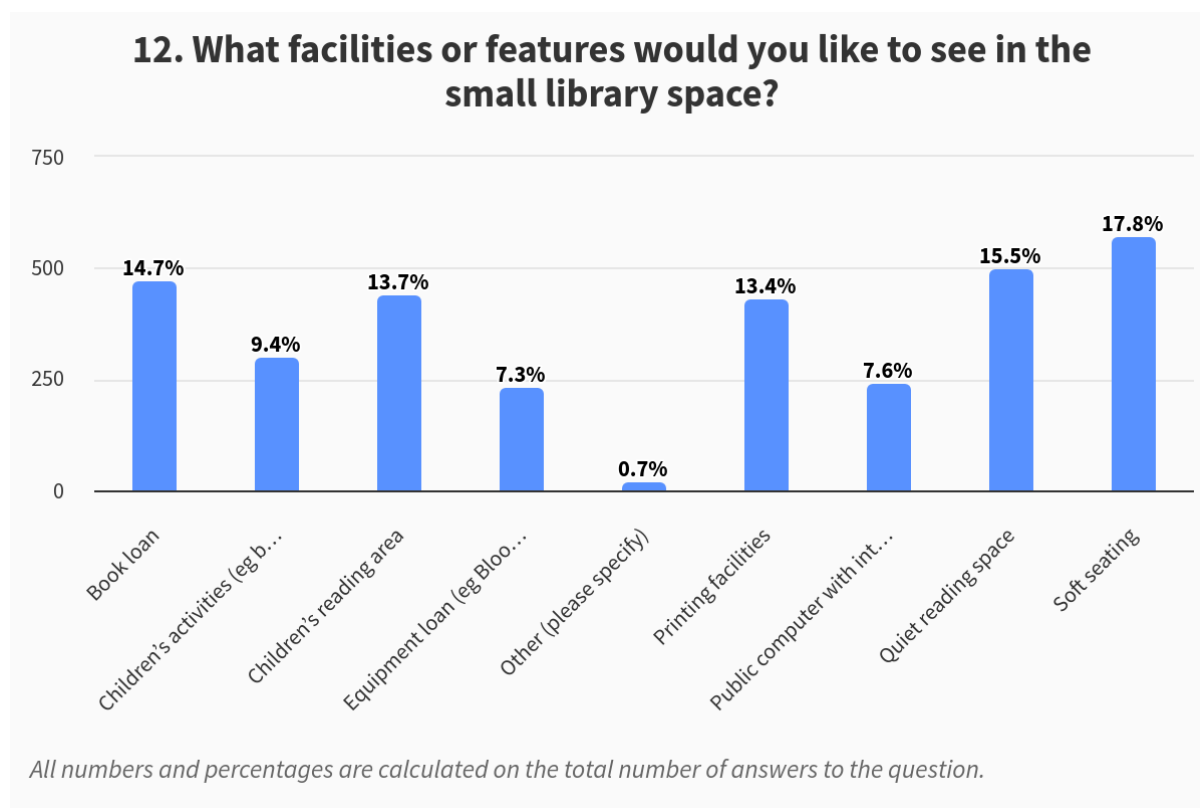


Figure 11: Features people would like to see in the small library space

Free text response analysis

51 free text comments were left for question 12. They highlighted the following themes:

- **Work and study spaces were frequently requested** — quiet zones, bookable pods, desks, printing and accessible seating, reflecting demand for a centre that supports modern working and inclusive study
- **A well-resourced library was strongly valued** — respondents called for a broad book selection, children's reading areas, and space for clubs and events, with many concerned the proposed library is too small for Cranbrook's growing population
- **Family and community provision drew significant interest** — sensory areas, baby facilities, children's activity spaces and weekend opening were highlighted, alongside some concern about the impact on existing local businesses

Summary: Respondents want a library and study offer that is genuinely substantial and well-equipped, not an afterthought — with inclusive, family-friendly design and practical amenities central to how the space should function.

13. What types of health and wellbeing support or activities would you value in the community spaces?

There were 841 contributions to this question.

The most valued forms of health and wellbeing support were calm, safe and accessible spaces (18.6%) and self-care, mental wellbeing or resilience resources (18.3%), followed by small group activities (17.7%) and activities for specific groups (16.8%). This suggests a preference for environments that support both individual reflection and social connection. Interest in information about local health and support services stood at 15.3%, while one-to-one support or advice sessions were selected by 7.7%. A small proportion indicated they would not expect to use these services (4.6%).

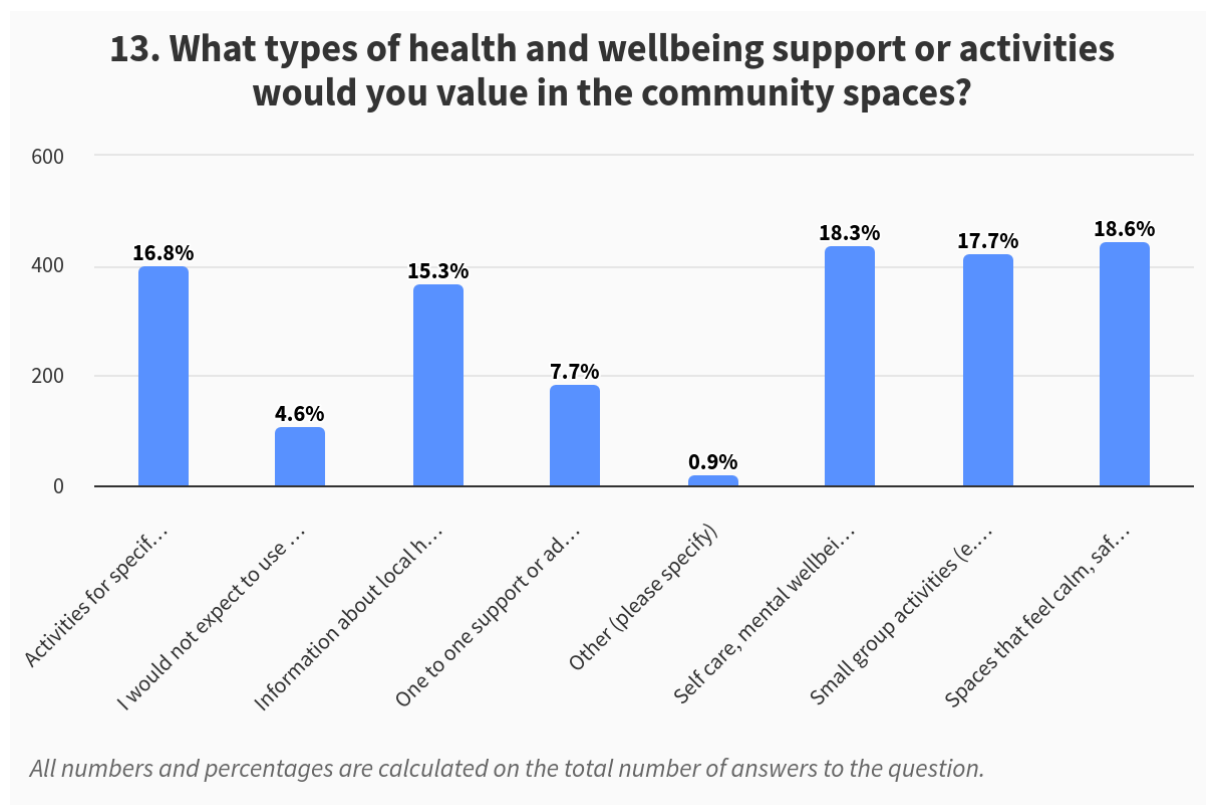


Figure 12: Types of health and wellbeing support valued in community spaces

Free text response analysis

41 free text comments were left for question 13.

They highlighted the following themes:

- **Wellbeing and safety were the most mentioned theme** — including calm/meditation rooms, domestic abuse support, mental health groups (e.g. Andy's Man Club), recovery meetings, new parent support and accessible health services
- **Inclusive activities and services formed a strong second theme** — with strong demand for SEND groups, sensory spaces, teen and family provision, home-ed bookings, therapies (physio, massage), craft and BSL classes, and a dedicated teenage/gaming area

- **Flexible community space attracted moderate interest** — including co-working, faith group rooms, food bank/community fridge, an information point for local groups, and wellness extras like sauna/steam room
- **A minority of respondents questioned whether community rooms were needed at all**, suggesting the space would be better used expanding the gym or pool

Summary: Respondents most strongly wanted community spaces to address real social need mental health, family support and inclusive activities with moderate interest in practical amenities. A small number questioned the value of community rooms over expanding core fitness facilities.

14. What would make the small library space appealing and comfortable?

Free text response analysis

285 free text comments were left for question 14

They highlighted the following themes:

- **Quiet and calm spaces were the most mentioned theme.** Demand for silent or low-noise areas, sound separation from the soft play and café, warm lighting and comfortable seating that creates a peaceful, bookshop-like atmosphere.
- **Clear zoning for different users was the second strongest theme.** Distinct areas for children, adults, teenagers and remote workers, alongside sensory-friendly zones and well-signposted layouts were suggested.
- **Child and family-friendly provision was a major recurring theme.** Requests for children's corners, reading dens, low shelving and story time space, with the consistent expectation that children's areas would be acoustically separated from adult quiet zones.
- **Practical library features attracted steady interest**, including a broad book range, Wi-Fi, printing, computers, charging points and natural light, along with friendly staff and basic amenities.
- **A minority raised concerns about the size or location of the space** or indicated a preference for investment in other facilities.

Summary: Respondents most strongly wanted a quiet, well-zoned library balancing peaceful adult spaces with a welcoming, acoustically contained children's area. Practical amenities and book access were valued, while a minority expressed concerns about noise, space constraints or personal relevance.

15. What group activities would you like to see delivered by the community in the meeting rooms? (Please select all that apply)

There were 812 contributions to this question.

The results show that interest is spread evenly across several group activities, with baby and toddler groups being the most popular choice at 14.6%. This is closely followed by book clubs (14.3%) and art classes (13.9%), indicating strong demand for creative and social activities that bring people together. Board games groups (13.4%) and learning or speaking

languages groups (11.9%) also attracted notable interest, suggesting that residents value opportunities for shared hobbies and informal learning.

A further 12.4% of respondents selected repair cafés, and 10% chose meditation, highlighting demand for both practical skills and wellbeing-focused sessions. Photography classes were selected by 8.1%, while 1.5% chose “Other”. Overall, the responses suggest a desire for a varied programme of activities that support creativity, social connection, learning and wellbeing within the meeting rooms.

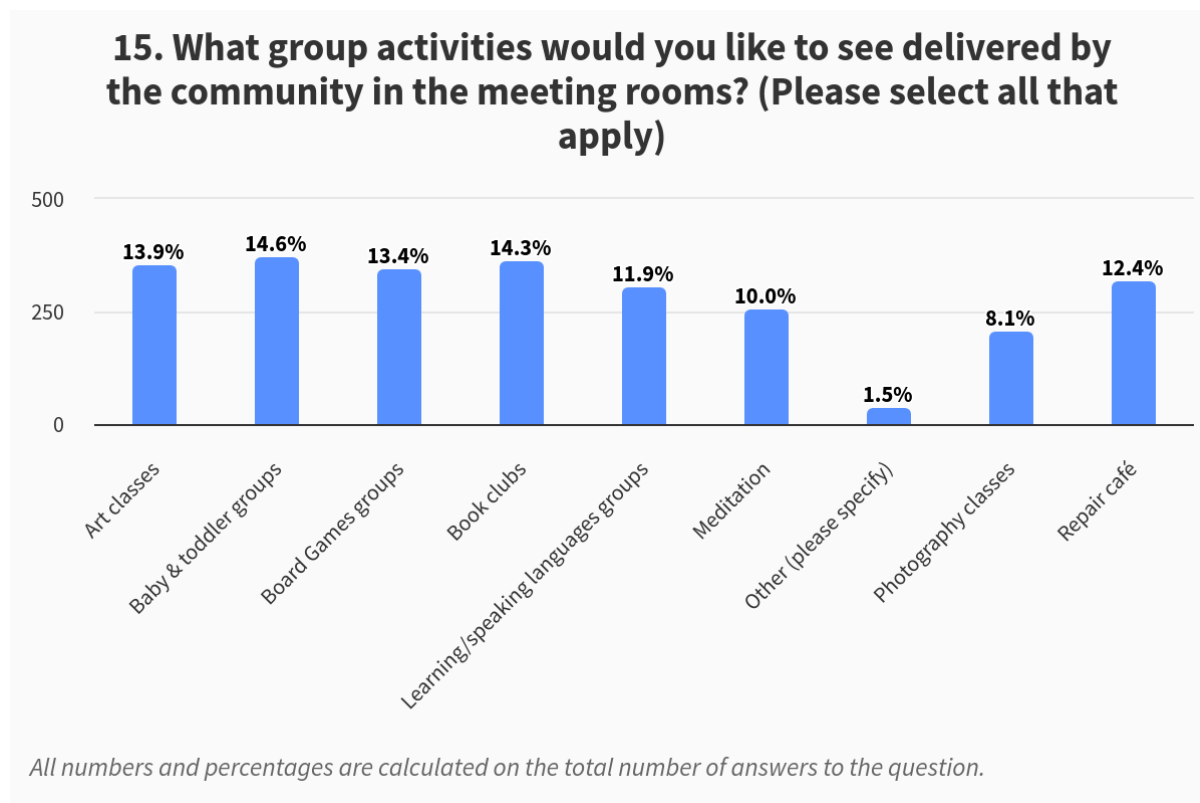


Figure 13: Group activities people would like to see delivered in the meeting rooms

Free text response analysis

There were 67 free text comments left for question 15.

Theme / Item	Number of mentions	Notes / Examples
Arts and crafts	17	“Crafting groups”, “Kid art classes”, “Arts and crafts groups”, “printing”, “pottery”
Physical and mental health classes	15	“dance classes”, “yoga”, sports groups”, “holistic and spiritual sessions”, “hospital surgeries”
Support and peer groups	11	“mental and physical health specific groups”, “SEND inclusive clubs”, “support groups”
Learning and practising hobbies	9	“writing club”, “philosophy group”, “sign language classes”, “music lessons, “choir/singing group”
Gaming and board games	5	“Lego club”, “gaming groups”, “D&D”, “gaming space for teenagers”
Children or family activities	5	“youth club”, “family hub”, “kids clubs”

Social and networking activities	5	“friendship groups”, “networking groups”, “career advice”, “social community activities”
Church groups	2	“Church meeting group”, “Discovery Bible Study”
A wide range of activities	2	“A wider range of groups for different peoples needs”, “All & any of these”

- **Creative activities** — strong demand for arts, crafts, pottery, printing and children's art sessions
- **Health & wellbeing** — yoga, dance, sports groups and holistic/mental health sessions widely requested
- **Community & support groups** — SEND, mental health, peer support, and condition-specific groups highlighted as priorities
- **Social & learning opportunities** — hobbies (writing, music, sign language), gaming/board games, teen spaces, youth clubs and family hubs all featured

Summary: Respondents want a varied, community-driven programme spanning creativity, fitness, wellbeing and social connection — with particular emphasis on inclusive support groups and activities for all ages.

16. Does the design feel welcoming and inclusive to you? Please provide any comments below

There were 339 contributions to this question.

Overall Sentiment: Broadly positive (~62% yes/positive), with ~25% positive but with caveats, ~8% negative, ~5% unsure.

- **Broadly positive reception** — the majority welcomed the modern, light and airy aesthetic with natural materials, viewing the facility as a much-needed community asset
- **Privacy and inclusivity gaps** — key concerns around pool visibility, accessible changing facilities, noise/sensory environment, and the changing village concept; disabled users, neurodivergent visitors and older adults felt underserved
- **Facilities need rethinking** — soft play seen as too small, gym/pool capacity questioned for a growing town, spa/wellness features absent, library poorly located, and clinical room purpose unclear

Summary: The design is well-received overall but risks falling short on genuine inclusivity. Addressing privacy, accessibility, sensory considerations, and facility sizing would convert most conditional supporters into firm advocates.

17. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the new building or facilities?

There were 280 contributions to this question.

Overall sentiment: Broadly positive and enthusiastic, with the majority welcoming the facility as long overdue and vital to the community. However, a significant number had strong concerns about specific aspects of the design, scale and delivery.

- **Urgency over delays was the loudest theme** — many respondents had been waiting over a decade and urged the council to commit to realistic timelines, communicate honestly about dates, and simply get on with building
- **Parking charges and road access were widely opposed** — pay-and-display parking was strongly rejected, with warnings it would push cars onto residential streets; the Badger Way/Court Royal junction was flagged as already dangerous and unfit for increased traffic
- **The pool, gym and wellness offer felt too modest** — many called for a 50m pool, a larger gym, family fun features such as slides, and sauna/steam/spa facilities, arguing the current proposals underserve a town growing towards 20,000 residents
- **Accessibility and safety need stronger attention** — pool hoists, changing places, wheelchair access and navigation for blind users were felt to be absent or unclear, while pool visibility from public areas raised significant privacy and safeguarding concerns, with many calling for single-sex changing provision

Summary: Respondents are enthusiastic but want a more ambitious, accessible facility delivered without further delay. Parking, road safety, pool size, wellness facilities and safeguarding are the priorities to resolve before finalising the design.

Key findings

1. Strong interest in using the new centre

- Most respondents expect to use the new building when it opens.
- The centre is expected to support both social and independent use.
- Families with children are clearly part of the expected user base. 2. Core leisure facilities are the main draw
- The strongest demand is for the swimming pool, gym/fitness suite, café/social spaces and exercise studios.
- Pool use is expected to focus on recreation, fitness, social swimming and lessons.
- Comments also show interest in wellness facilities, broader sports provision and enhanced swimming facilities.

2. People want a welcoming and easy-to-use building

- Respondents favoured a building that feels bright, airy, warm and welcoming.
- Clear signage and easy navigation were important priorities.
- Green space, outdoor seating and practical layouts were also strongly supported.

3. Inclusion, accessibility and privacy are major expectations

- Privacy in changing and poolside areas was a key priority

- Respondents highlighted demand for inclusive options, accessible changing and sensory-friendly design.
- Comments raised concerns about whether the design fully meets the needs of disabled users, neurodivergent visitors and older adults.

4. Residents want a more ambitious scheme that meets future need

- Many comments said the pool, gym and wellness offer felt too limited for a growing town.
- There was clear appetite for community spaces that support mental health, family support and inclusive activities.
- Residents also raised concerns about parking, road access, safety and the need to move the project forward without further delay.

Recommendations

- Review the scale of the pool, gym and wellbeing offer to ensure it meets both current demand and Cranbrook's future growth.
- Strengthen privacy, accessibility and inclusive design, particularly in changing, poolside and arrival areas.
- Keep welcoming design, clear signage and easy navigation at the heart of the final building layout.
- Prioritise trees, planting and social outdoor seating within the landscape design.
- Ensure the library and community spaces are flexible, practical and inclusive, with clear purpose and strong day-to-day usability.
- Resolve concerns around parking, access, road safety and delivery timescales as part of the next design stage.

Next steps

The results and updated designs of the leisure and wellbeing centre will be shared. This will include responses to common feedback and suggestions from the survey.

A final opportunity will be available to make comments on the updated proposals and designs. All comments received will be compiled within the Statement of Community Involvement and taken into account as part of the planning application submission.