

Ottery St Mary Section 106 summary report



OTTERY ST MARY
TOWN COUNCIL



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Summary

This report summarises the findings of the Ottery St Mary Section 106 survey which received 608 contributions and was carried out to understand community priorities for open space funding in Ottery St Mary. Overall, the strongest support was for cricket club netting, while football proposals attracted mixed support depending on the type of improvement, and residents showed a clear preference for keeping the Winters Lane tennis courts free and openly accessible.

Survey goals

The survey was carried out to understand community priorities for how remaining Section 106 funding for open spaces in Ottery St Mary should be used. It aimed to gather residents' views on which projects should be prioritised and the level of support for specific proposals, to help inform how funding is shared across the parish.

Methodology

Following an earlier ideas-gathering stage, the Town Council worked with East Devon District Council to review submissions and identify projects that could be delivered using Section 106 funding. A shortlist of eligible projects was presented to residents through the survey, which asked participants to rank priorities and indicate support for individual proposals and funding amounts. Responses were analysed to support transparent, evidence-based decision-making.¹²

Survey process

The survey followed an earlier ideas-gathering exercise, where residents shared suggestions for how Section 106 funding for open spaces could be used. These ideas were reviewed by the Town Council, working with East Devon District Council, to identify proposals that were eligible and deliverable through this funding. A shortlist of projects was

then developed and presented to the community through a survey, which received **608 total contributions**. The survey was open for **six weeks, from 13 February to 27 March**, and was promoted through **East Devon District Council and Ottery St Mary Town Council social media channels**, with a launch email issued via **Commonplace**.

Data analysis

1. Please rank the projects in priority order with the project you support most at the top.

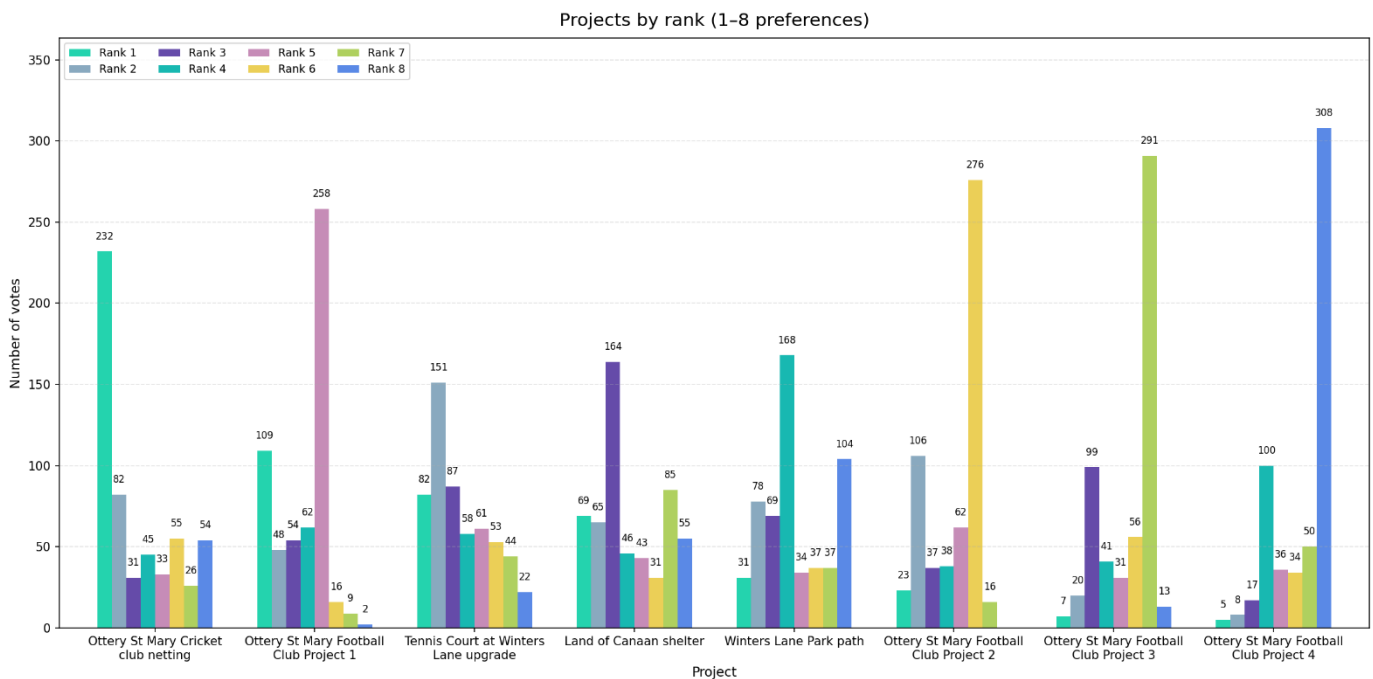
There were 559 contributions to this question.

Project Preferences Summary (with percentages)

Play Type / Project	Overall Position in Preferences	Key Rank Peaks (Votes & %)	Interpretation
Ottery St Mary Cricket Club netting	Highest priority overall	Rank#1: 232 votes (41.6%)	Strongly favoured as a first choice by a large proportion of respondents, clearly standing out as the community's top priority project.
Ottery St Mary Football Club – Project#1	High priority	Rank#5: 258 votes (46.2%); Rank#1: 109 votes (19.5%)	Attracts substantial support across higher-mid rankings, suggesting broad approval even if not always ranked first.
Tennis Court at Winters Lane upgrade	Mid-high priority	Rank#2: 151 votes (27.1%)	Frequently placed near the top of rankings, indicating solid support and perceived importance among respondents.
Land of Canaan shelter	Mid priority	Rank#3: 164 votes (29.4%)	Most often ranked in the middle, suggesting moderate support but less urgency compared with higher-ranking projects.
Winters Lane Park path	Mid priority	Rank#4: 168 votes (30.1%)	Typically seen as a middle-order priority, with steady support but limited first-choice backing.
Ottery St Mary Football Club – Project#2	Lower-mid priority	Rank#6: 276 votes (49.5%)	Predominantly ranked in the lower half of preferences, indicating it is less urgent than other options for many respondents.

Ottery St Mary Football Club – Project 3	Low priority	Rank 7: 291 votes (52.2%)	Commonly placed near the bottom of rankings, showing limited community appetite relative to other projects.
Ottery St Mary Football Club – Project 4	Lowest priority	Rank 8: 308 votes (55.2%)	Most frequently ranked last, clearly indicating it is the lowest priority overall among respondents.

- The rankings show a clear top priority for **Cricket Club netting (41.6% ranked first)**, while **Football Project 1** attracted broad but less concentrated support (**46.2% ranked fifth; 19.5% ranked first**).
- The **Tennis Court upgrade** performed strongly in the upper ranks (**27.1% at Rank 2**), suggesting it was frequently viewed as important, even if not the top choice.
- **Land of Canaan shelter** and **Winters Lane Park path** sit mainly in the middle of the rankings (peaking at **Ranks 3 and 4**), indicating moderate priority.
- **Football Projects 2–4** are consistently concentrated at the lower end (**49.5–55.2% ranked 6–8**), reflecting general voting trends rather than evidence of direct comparison or opposition between project types.

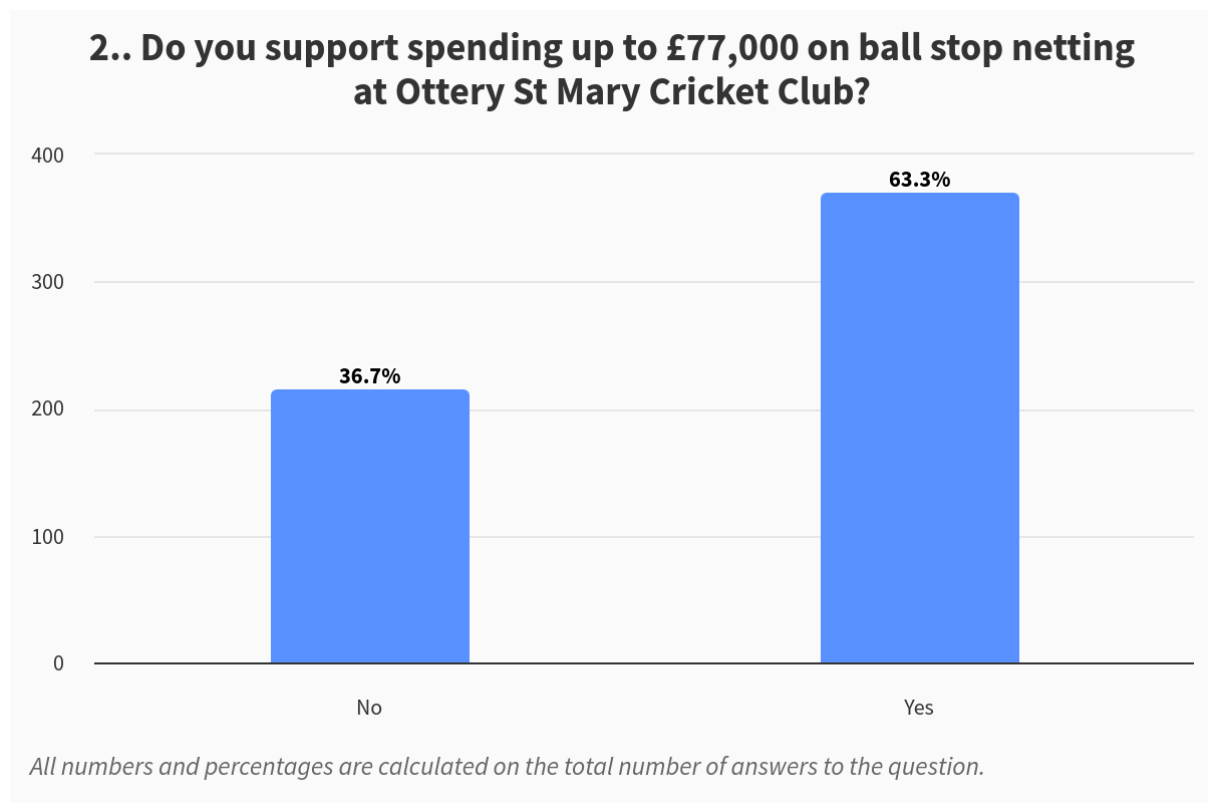


2. Do you support spending up to £77,000 on ball stop netting at Ottery St Mary Cricket Club?

There were 588 contributions to this question.

A clear majority of respondents **support spending up to £77,000 on ball-stop netting**, with **63.3% answering “Yes”**, compared with **36.7% answering “No”**.

This indicates **strong overall backing** for the proposal, with support outweighing opposition by nearly **two-to-one**.



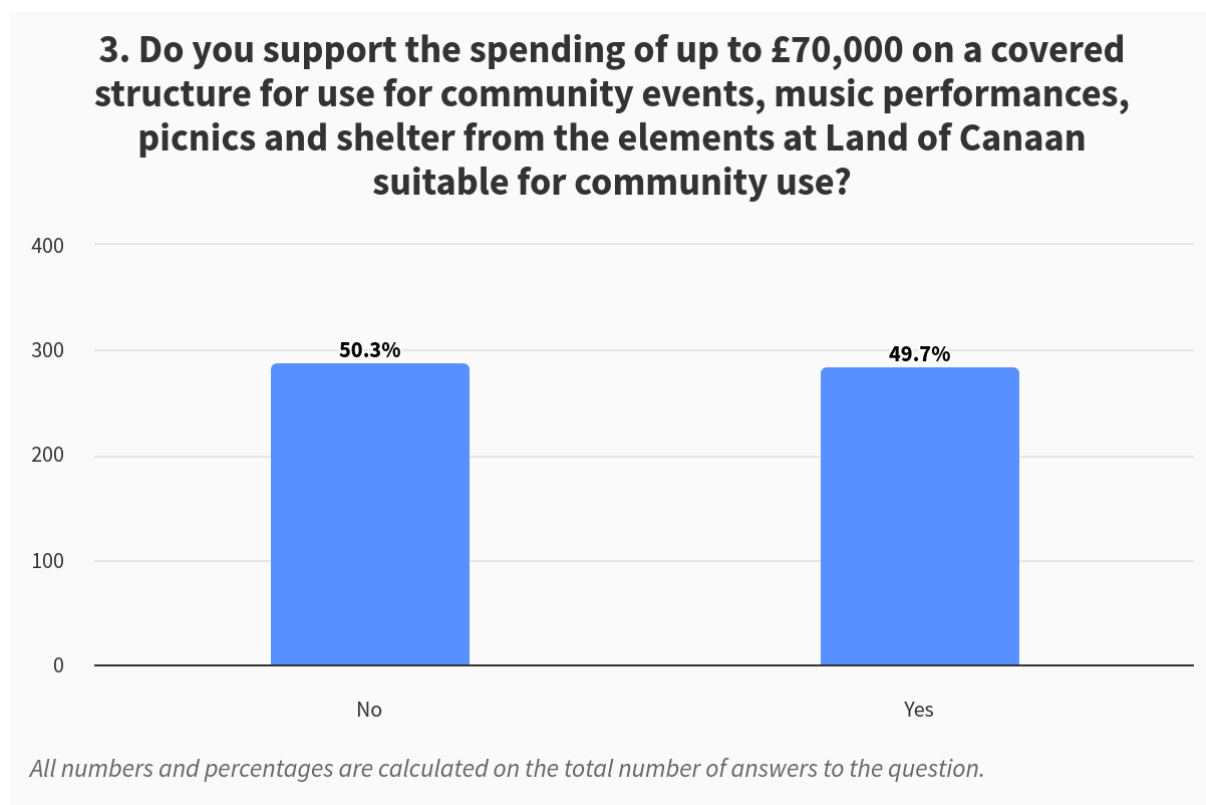
3. Do you support the spending of up to £70,000 on a covered structure for use for community events, music performances, picnics and shelter from the elements at Land of Canaan suitable for community use?

There were 559 contributions to this question.

Responses are **very evenly split**, with **49.7% supporting** the proposal and **50.3% not supporting** it.

This indicates **no clear consensus** among respondents, with views almost evenly balanced.

The result suggests the proposal is **more contested** than others in the survey, with similar levels of support and opposition among those who responded.



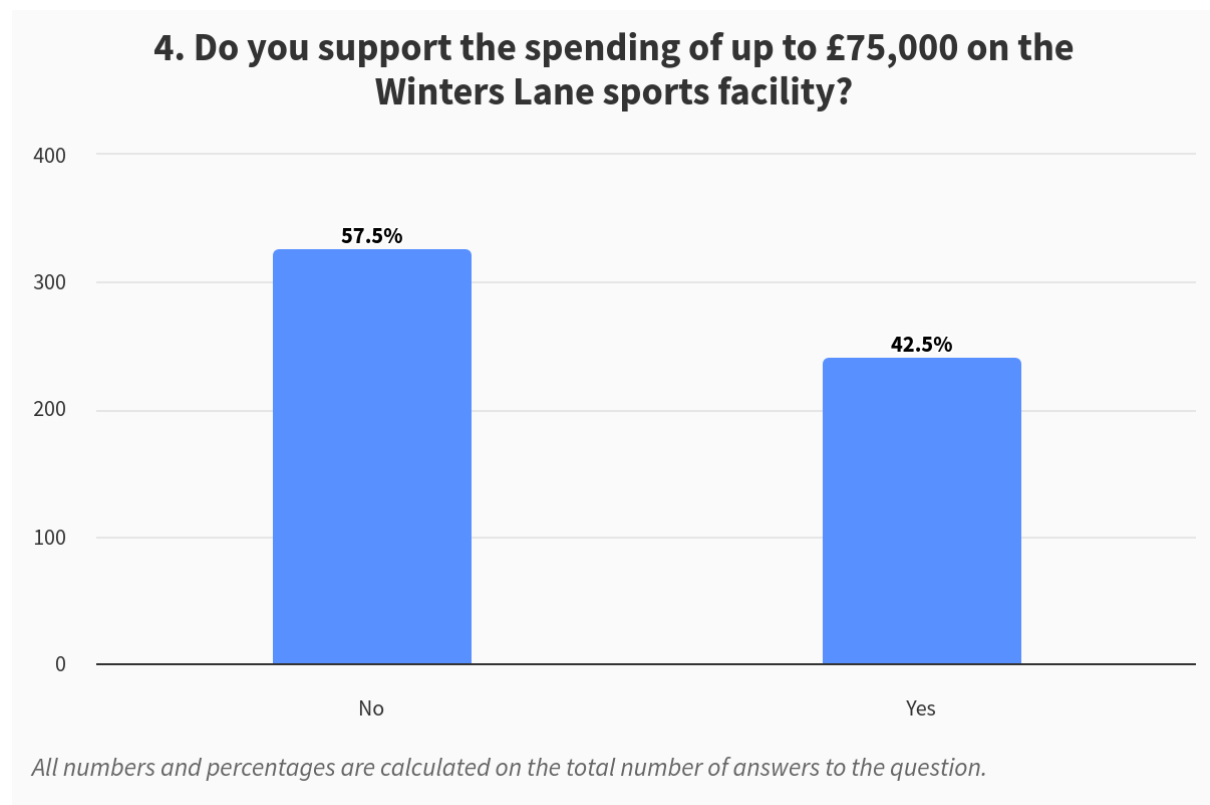
4. Do you support the spending of up to £75,000 on the Winters Lane sports facility?

There were 569 contributions to this question.

A small majority **do not support** the proposal (**57.5% No / 42.5% Yes**).

This aligns with a broader trend of **lower support for larger, less specific investments**, particularly when compared with targeted improvements.

The result suggests respondents are cautious about committing funding at this scale.



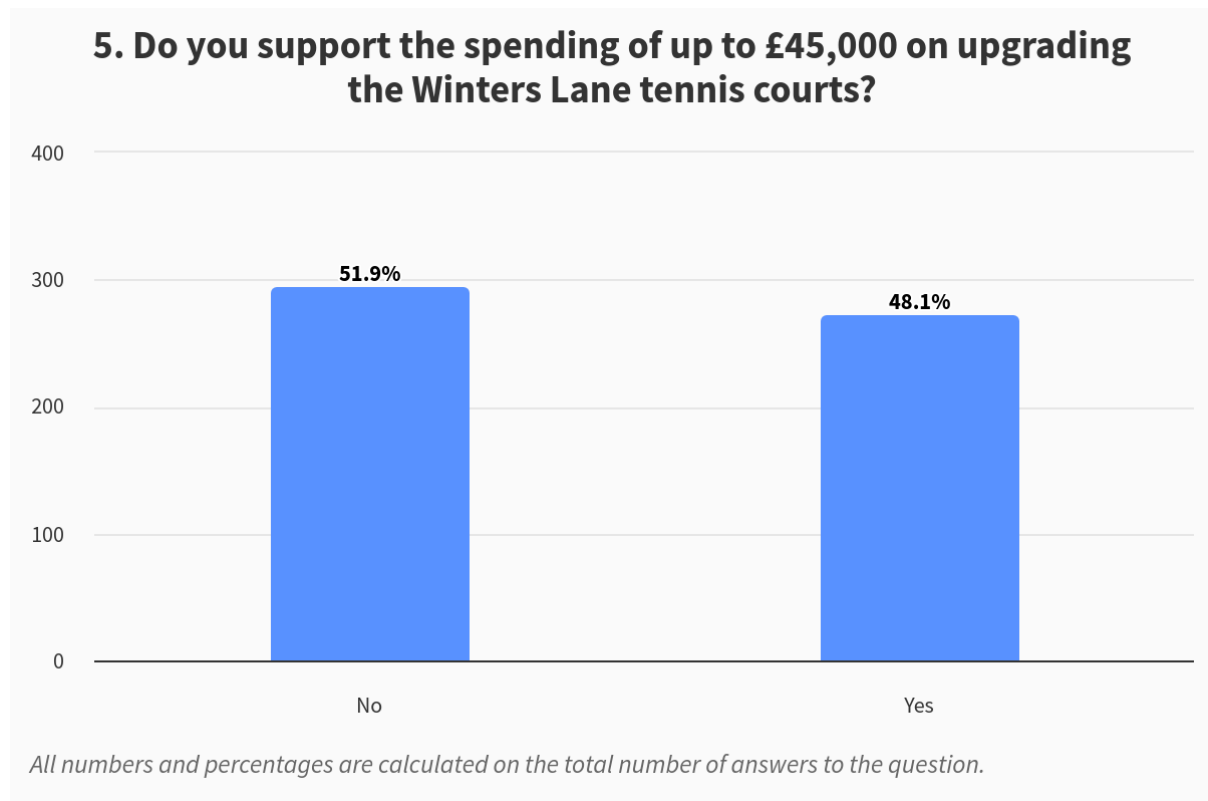
5. Do you support the spending of up to £45,000 on upgrading the Winters Lane tennis courts?

There were 570 contributions to this question.

Opinion is **closely divided**, with a slight majority against (**51.9% No / 48.1% Yes**).

This fits a wider tennis-related pattern where respondents support provision but show greater caution around capital upgrades and preference of other projects.

The result suggests mixed views on whether the investment represents sufficient priority when considering votes for other projects.



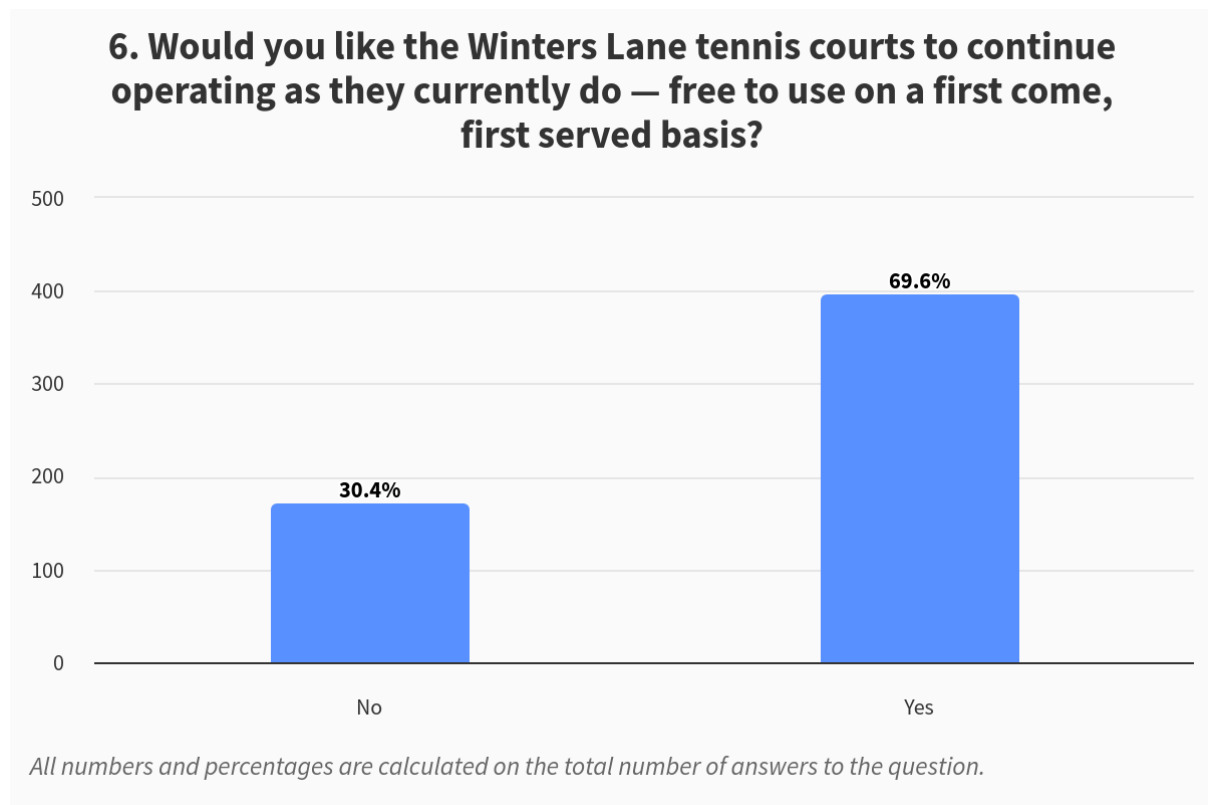
6. Would you like the Winters Lane tennis courts to continue operating as they currently do — free to use on a first come, first served basis?

There were 572 contributions to this question.

A strong majority (**69.6%**) supports retaining the current free-to-use model.

This directly aligns with opposition to booking and charging proposals, reinforcing a clear and consistent preference for open access.

The result provides strong contextual explanation for responses to Q7 and Q8.



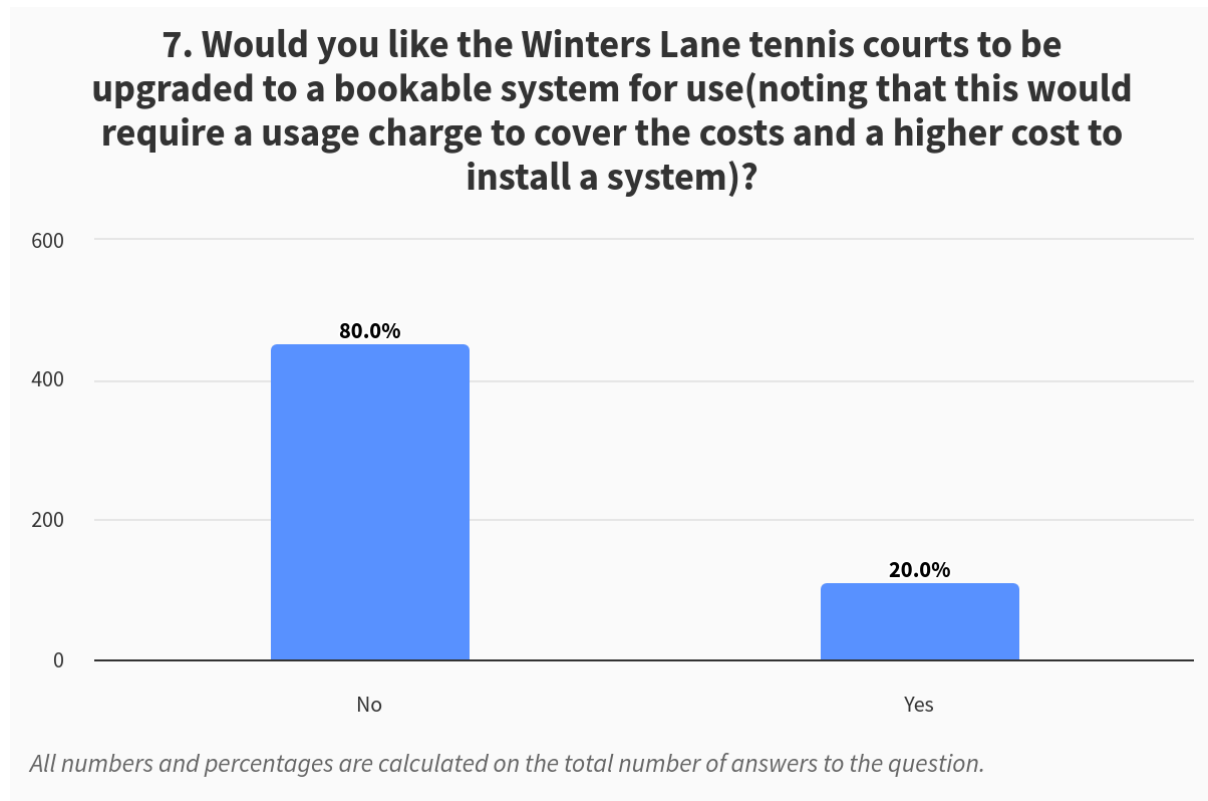
7. Would you like the Winters Lane tennis courts to be upgraded to a bookable system for use (noting that this would require a usage charge to cover the costs and a higher cost to install a system)?

There were 566 contributions to this question.

There is strong opposition, with 80.0% against the proposal.

This strongly correlates with other tennis access questions, indicating resistance is linked to charging and managed access, rather than the courts themselves.

The consistency of responses suggests a clear view that respondents want to keep the costs as low as possible.



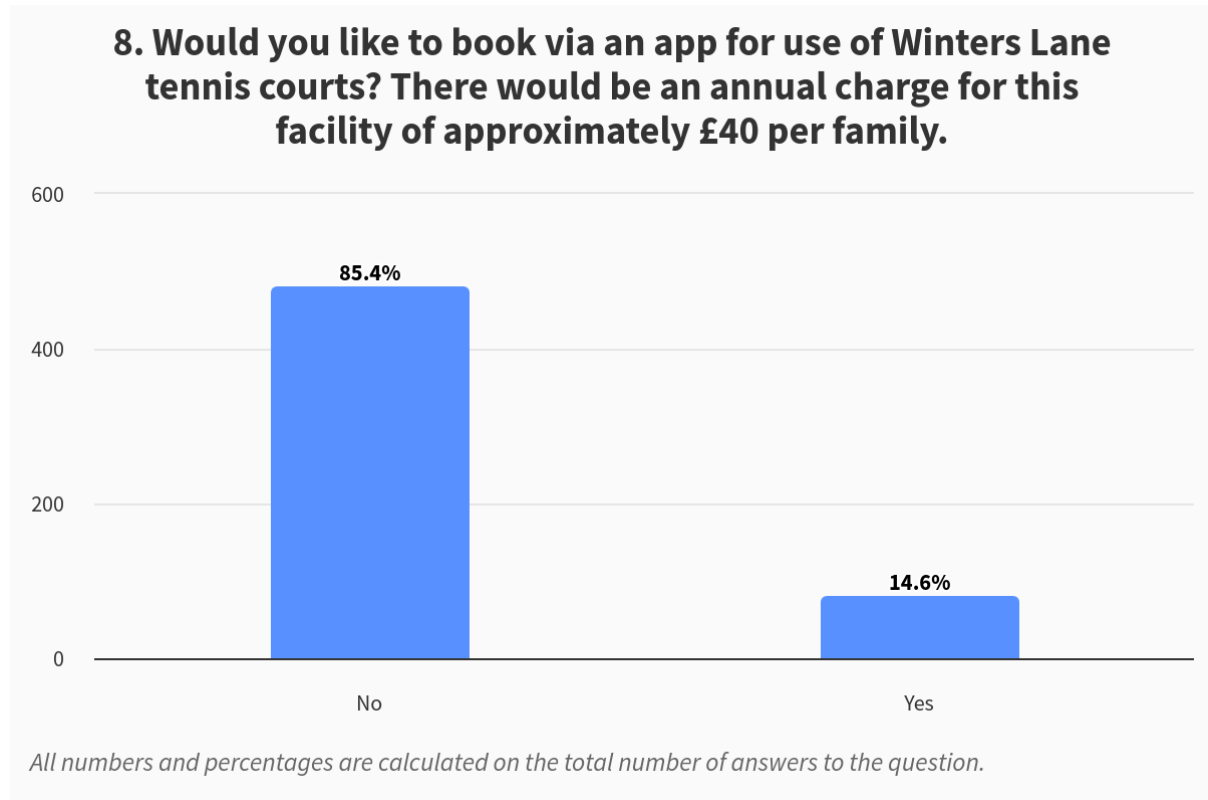
8. Would you like to book via an app for use of Winters Lane tennis courts? There would be an annual charge for this facility of approximately £40 per family.

There were 567 contributions to this question.

With 85.4% opposition, this is the least supported proposal overall.

The result strongly correlates with Q6 and Q7, indicating a consistent pattern of resistance to cost and access restrictions.

Opposition appears to relate to the principle of charging rather than the technology itself.



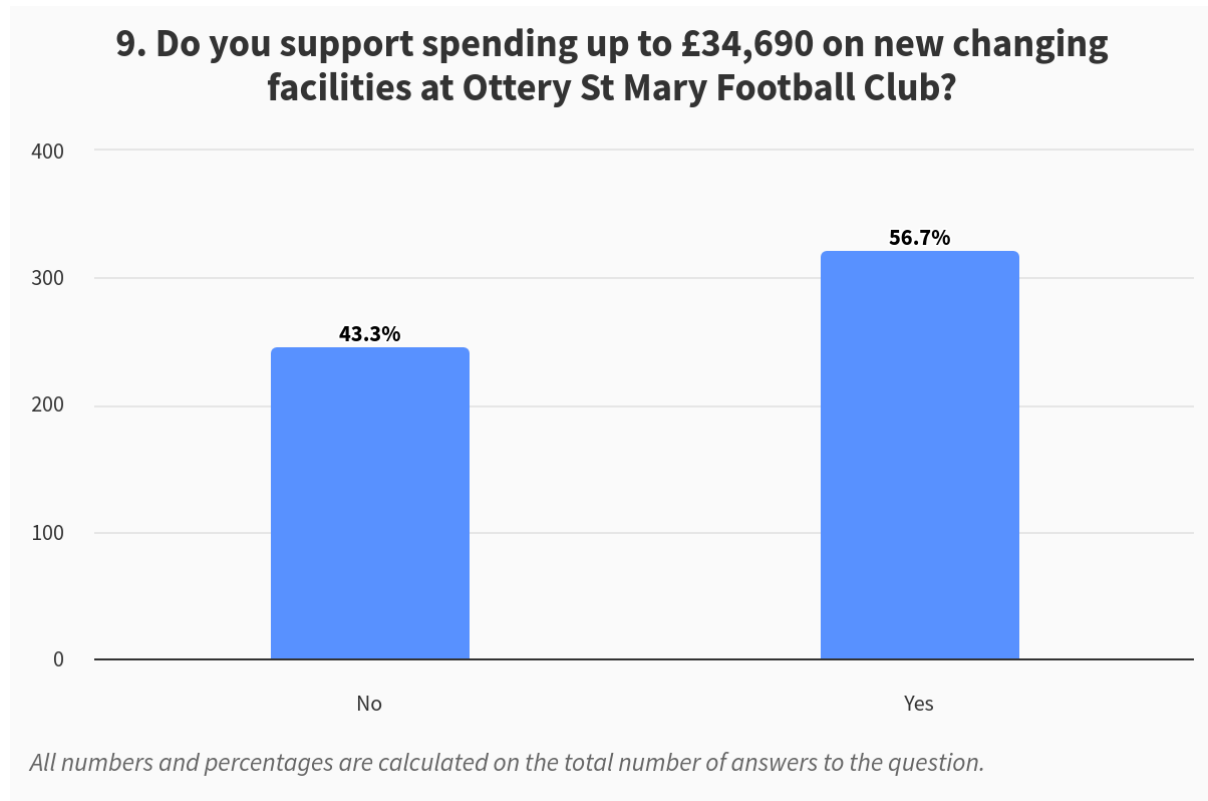
9. Do you support spending up to £34,690 on new changing facilities at Ottery St Mary Football Club?

There were 571 contributions to this question.

A **56.7% majority supports** the proposal, showing reasonably strong backing.

This aligns with other results where **direct user-experience improvements** tend to receive more support than external or ancillary works.

However, the level of opposition indicates cost, and scale may still be a consideration for some respondents.



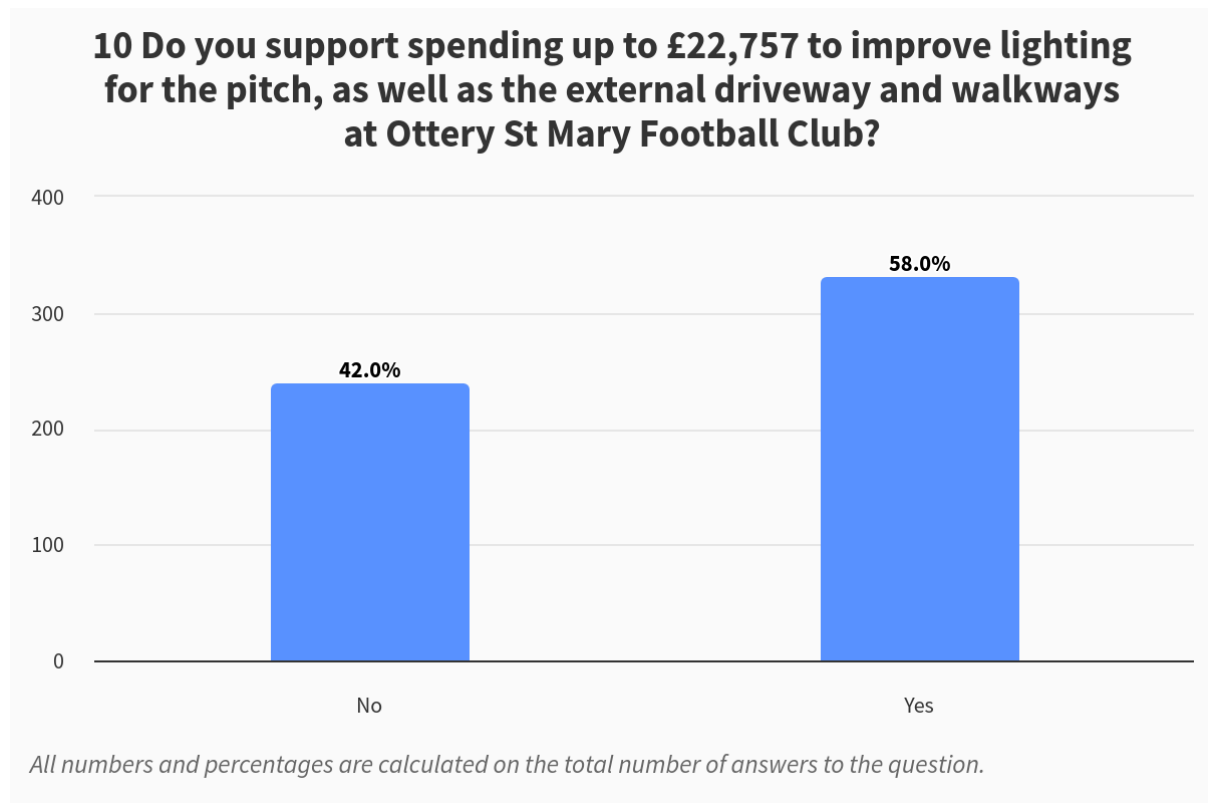
10. Do you support spending up to £22,757 to improve lighting for the pitch, as well as the external driveway and walkways at Ottery St Mary Football Club?

There were 572 contributions to this question.

With 58.0% support and 42.0% opposition, this proposal has a clear majority in favour.

Support is consistent with a wider pattern where practical, safety-related improvements perform better than more discretionary or higher-cost items.

Compared with other Football Club proposals, this sits towards the upper end of support, suggesting respondents see clear everyday benefits.



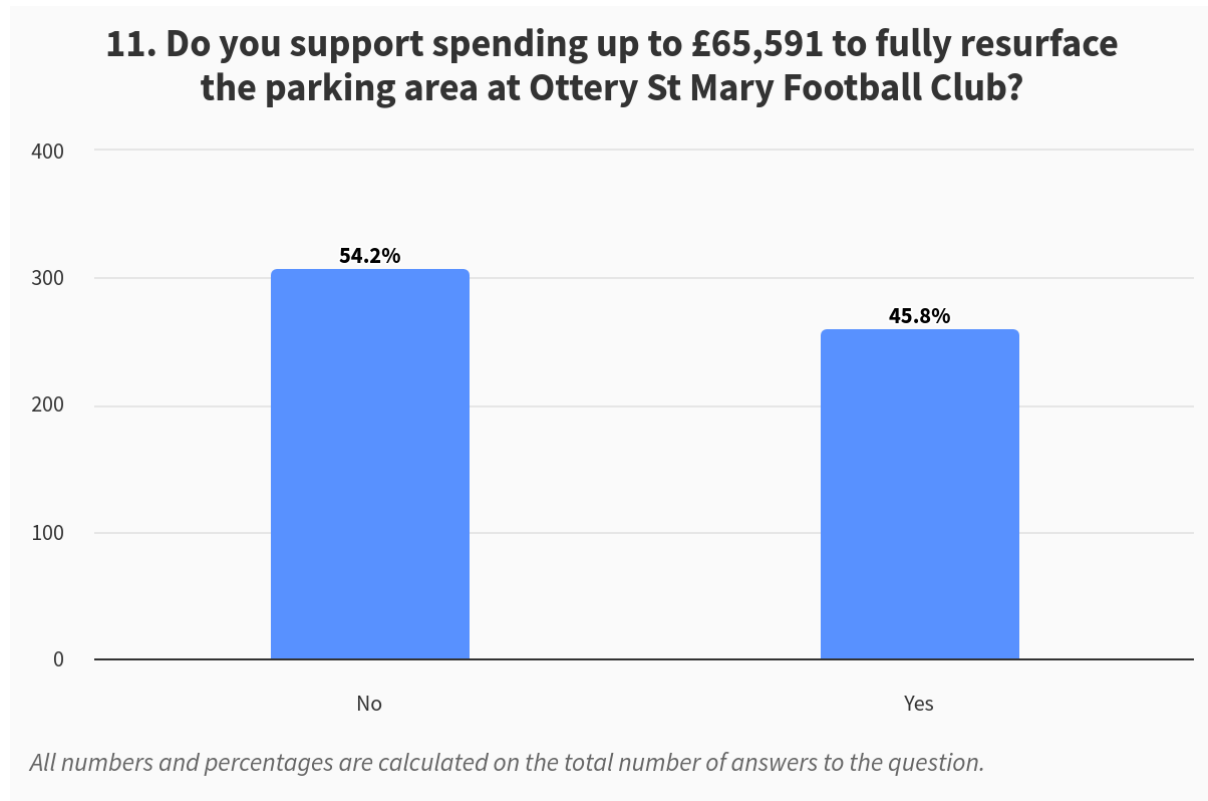
11. Do you support spending up to £65,591 to fully resurface the parking area at Ottery St Mary Football Club?

There were 570 contributions to this question.

More respondents oppose than support the proposal (54.2% No / 45.8% Yes).

This follows a clear pattern of lower support for higher-cost, non-sporting infrastructure, particularly where benefits may be perceived as indirect.

The result suggests this project is generally seen as a lower priority compared with pitch or facility improvements.



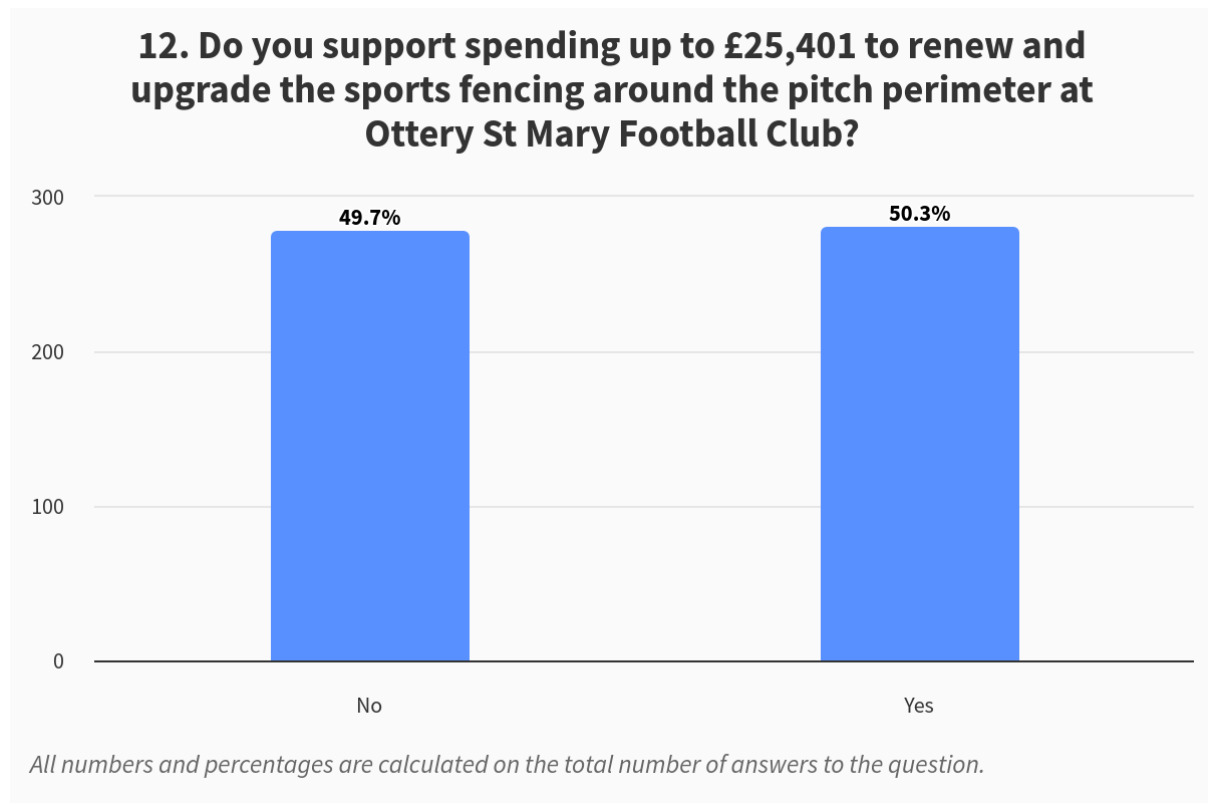
12. Do you support spending up to £25,401 to renew and upgrade the sports fencing around the pitch perimeter at Ottery St Mary Football Club?

There were 561 contributions to this question.

Results are almost evenly balanced (50.3% Yes / 49.7% No), indicating divided opinion.

This reflects a broader trend where essential but less visible infrastructure attracts mixed prioritisation, rather than strong support or rejection.

Responses suggest uncertainty over whether this should be prioritised ahead of other improvements.



13. The Town Council would like to support a number of clubs and projects. Please rank the projects in order of which should receive funding?

There were 560 contributions to this question.

Project Preferences Summary (Ranks 1–5)

Play Type / Project	Overall Position in Preferences	Key Rank Peaks (Votes & %)	Interpretation
Ottery St Mary Cricket Club	Highest overall priority	Rank 1: 237 votes (42.3%)	Strongly favoured as a first choice by a large proportion of respondents, clearly emerging as the top-priority project.

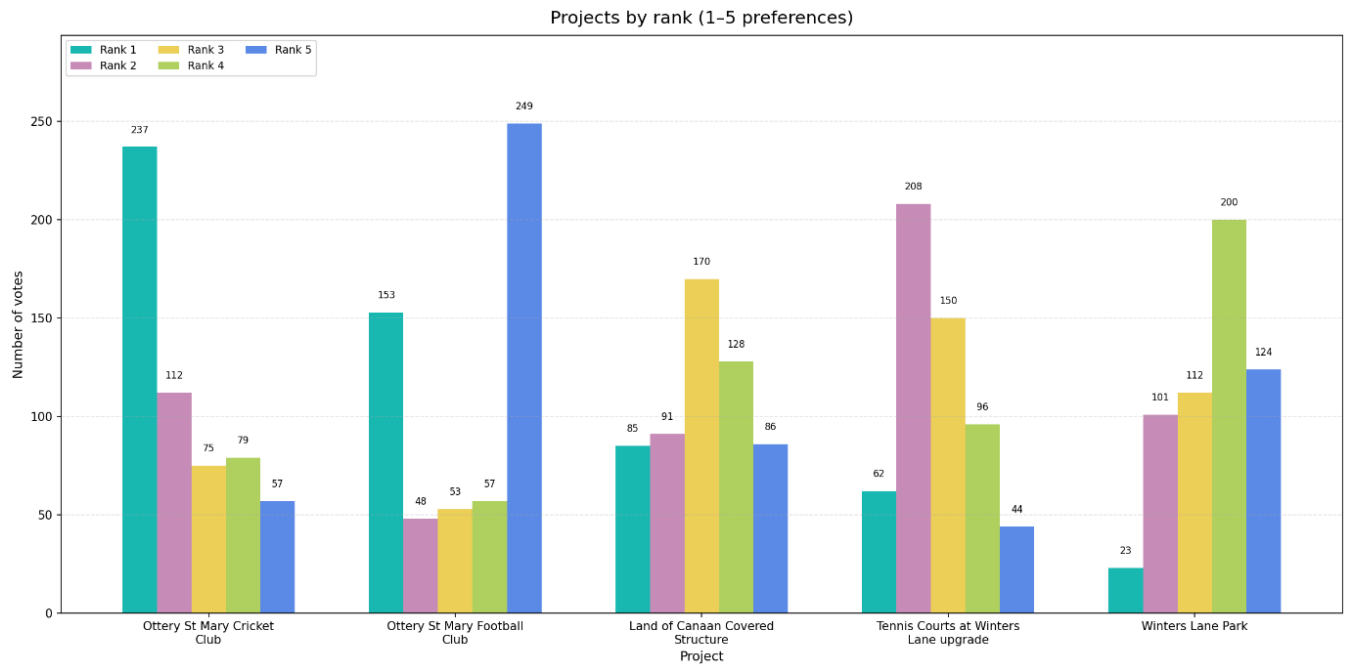
Ottery St Mary Football Club	High but polarised priority	Rank 5: 249 votes (44.5%)	Frequently ranked lowest, indicating that while the project attracts support, it is often deprioritised when compared with other options.
Tennis Courts at Winters Lane – upgrade	Upper-mid priority	Rank 2: 208 votes (37.1%)	Most commonly placed near the top of rankings, suggesting solid support but less consistent first-choice prioritisation.
Land of Canaan – Covered Structure	Mid priority	Rank 3: 170 votes (30.4%)	Typically ranked in the middle, indicating moderate support without strong pressure for immediate prioritisation.
Winters Lane Park	Lower-mid priority	Rank 4: 200 votes (35.7%)	Most often placed towards the lower end of rankings, suggesting it is seen as less urgent relative to other projects.

The data shows clear prioritisation at the top end, with the Cricket Club most strongly favoured as a first choice (42.3% ranked it first), indicating a clear preference when respondents were asked to identify their highest priority.

The Football Club project shows a more mixed pattern: it attracted the second most first placed Rank 1 votes (153) which shows that there is a want for this project to go forward. It did also have the strongest concentration at Rank 5 (44.5%), suggesting respondents were divided on this because they may prefer other projects.

Projects such as the Tennis Courts upgrade and Land of Canaan Covered Structure cluster around Ranks 2 and 3, indicating steady support but less decisive prioritisation, reflecting a middle-ground position rather than strong endorsement or rejection.

Overall, the spread of rankings suggests respondents were making relative judgements between multiple worthwhile projects, with preferences shaped by perceived urgency and impact,



Key findings

1. Strongest support was for clear, practical improvements

- The clearest support in the survey was for the cricket proposal, with Ottery St Mary Cricket Club netting ranked first by 41.6% of respondents in the first priority question.
- This was reinforced by the standalone funding question, where 63.3% supported spending up to £77,000 on ball stop netting at the cricket club.
- Overall, the strongest results tended to be attached to projects with a clear and visible purpose, particularly where the benefit to users was easy to understand.

2. Football attracted mixed but meaningful support

- The football results show that residents did support investment in football, but views differed depending on the type of project.
- Support was positive for new changing facilities (56.7% yes) and lighting improvements (58.0% yes), indicating clear backing for proposals linked to direct use and practical benefit.
- By contrast, parking resurfacing was opposed overall (45.8% yes / 54.2% no), while pitch perimeter fencing was almost evenly split (50.3% yes / 49.7% no), suggesting some football proposals were seen as lower priority than others.
- This pattern also appeared in the overall ranking question, where Ottery St Mary Football Club was described as having “high but polarised priority”, with a substantial number of first-choice rankings but its strongest concentration at Rank 5.

3. There was a strong preference for free and open access at the tennis courts

- Opinion on upgrading the tennis courts was closely divided, with 48.1% in support and 51.9% against.
- However, there was strong support for keeping the courts free to use on a first come, first served basis, with 69.6% in favour.
- Opposition increased sharply where charging or managed access was introduced, with 80.0% against a bookable system and 85.4% against app-based booking with an annual charge.
- Taken together, these results suggest that residents value the tennis courts but strongly favour open access over paid or restricted use.

4. Other projects attracted moderate or divided support

- Land of Canaan shelter and Winters Lane Park path sat mainly in the middle of the first ranking exercise, indicating moderate support rather than strong urgency.
- The proposal for a covered structure at Land of Canaan was almost evenly split, with 49.7% yes and 50.3% no, showing no clear consensus.
- In the later ranking question, the Tennis Courts at Winters Lane – upgrade and Land of Canaan – Covered Structure again sat in the upper-middle to middle range, suggesting steady support but less decisive prioritisation than the strongest-performing schemes.
- Overall, the results point to a community that was weighing up several worthwhile projects, with stronger backing for those seen as offering the clearest and most immediate benefits.

Recommendations

- Prioritise the projects with the clearest and strongest public backing first. The strongest case is for the cricket proposal, with ball stop netting ranked first by 41.6% of respondents and supported by 63.3% in the standalone funding question, making it the clearest front-runner in.
- Take a selective approach to football investment, rather than treating it as all or nothing. The results show residents did support football, but support varied by project: changing facilities (56.7% yes) and lighting improvements (58.0% yes) received majority backing, while parking resurfacing was opposed overall and fencing was almost evenly split. The overall ranking also described football as having “high but polarised priority”, which suggests real support, but not equal support for every proposal.
- If tennis investment is taken forward, keep the focus on free and open access. While opinion on upgrading the tennis courts was closely divided (48.1% yes / 51.9% no), there was strong support for keeping them free to use (69.6% yes), alongside very strong opposition to both a bookable system (80.0% no) and app-based booking with

a charge (85.4% no). Any future improvements should therefore avoid linking investment to paid or restricted access.

- Treat more divided projects as secondary priorities or review them further before committing significant funding. The results show that Land of Canaan shelter and Winters Lane Park path sat mainly in the middle of the rankings, while the Land of Canaan covered structure was almost exactly split at 49.7% yes and 50.3% no. This suggests these schemes may need either a clearer case for investment, a revised scope, or further discussion before being progressed.
- Use a phased funding approach across several projects, starting with the strongest consensus. The survey results suggest residents were weighing up several worthwhile options, with stronger backing for projects seen as delivering the clearest and most immediate benefits. A phased approach would allow funding to be shared across a range of facilities, while still giving priority to the projects with the clearest public support.

Next steps

Project Update Summary (Next 6 Months / Decision Timeline)

The Council is currently awaiting key information to confirm the viability of two proposed projects: the Land of Canaan shelter and the resurfacing of the Winters Lane tennis courts.

- Land of Canaan Shelter
The project is at an early feasibility stage. The Council is awaiting confirmation from East Devon District Council (EDDC) as to whether a licence can be granted for use of the space. Subject to this, the next step would be to progress a planning application.
- Winters Lane Tennis Courts
Progress is currently dependent on the outcome of a tree survey, due to the close proximity of trees to the courts. The Council is also in the process of obtaining quotations for the resurfacing works.

Once these outstanding matters are resolved, the Council will be in a position to make informed decisions on how to proceed with both projects. A full update will be incorporated into the report and published in due course.