



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL



SIMPSON CENTRE CONSULTATION RESULTS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Stotfold Town Council would like to thank the 269 residents who took part in the recent consultation on the future of the Simpson Centre. The Council is grateful for residents taking the time to respond both online and via the Stotfold News questionnaire.

The consultation revealed a clear split in community opinion, with results showing a 50/50 divide between those wishing to keep the Simpson Centre and those supporting its sale to invest in other areas of the town. At its meeting on Wednesday 3 September 2025, Stotfold Town Council carefully considered the future of the site.

After full debate, members resolved to progress with the option to sell the site. While the Council recognises that some residents supported the idea of retaining the Simpson Centre for community use, it was agreed that this was not a reasonable or sustainable approach. The building, now over 50 years old, would require substantial investment to bring it up to modern building standards. In addition, the running costs associated with a refurbished facility would create an ongoing and significant burden on council tax. There is also no certainty that refurbishment would be fully feasible.

The preferred option when it came to selling the site was for over 55 housing. The Town Council will now investigate how best to progress with this decision. Selling the site ensures that the Council can secure a capital receipt and reinvest directly into the refurbishment of the Memorial Hall and other town assets. This approach will deliver a sustainable, accessible, and modern community facility for long-term benefit to the town.

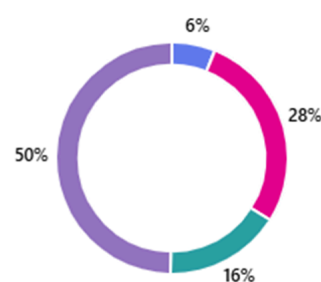
Cllr Danny Matthews, Chair of the Buildings Management Committee, said:

“This has been a difficult decision, and we want to thank residents for the time they took to respond to the consultation. In the end, members felt we could not justify placing an additional financial burden on council taxpayers for a building of uncertain viability. By choosing to sell the site, we will be able to fund the refurbishment of other Town Council assets like the Memorial Hall which would create a facility that can serve the whole community for decades to come.”

The results of the consultation are detailed below:

WHICH OPTION DO YOU THINK IS THE BEST USE OF THE SIMPSON CENTRE?

Option 1: Sell as a Parcel of Land	16
Option 2: Sell with Outline Planning Permission	74
Option 3: Sell with Caveat for Affordable Housing Development	43
Option 4: Repurpose the Site for Community Use	132



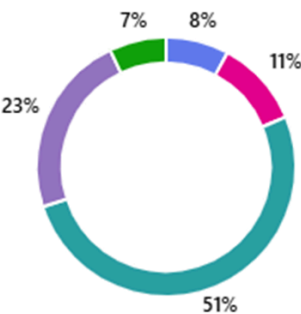
IF YOU SELECTED OPTION 4 (REPURPOSE FOR COMMUNITY USE) WOULD YOU SUPPORT INCREASED COUNCIL TAX TO COVER THE REFURBISHMENT AND ONGOING MAINTENANCE COSTS?

● Yes 79
● No 56



IF THE SITE WERE SOLD, WHAT TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT WOULD YOU CONSIDER MOST APPROPRIATE FOR THE AREA?

● Market rate residential housing 21
● Mixed affordability development (some social housing and some market rate) 29
● Senior living development 137
● Starter homes 61
● Key worker accommodation 19



PLEASE RANK THE FOLLOWING POTENTIAL BENEFITS IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE TO YOU. (THE ANSWER AT THE TOP SHOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT)

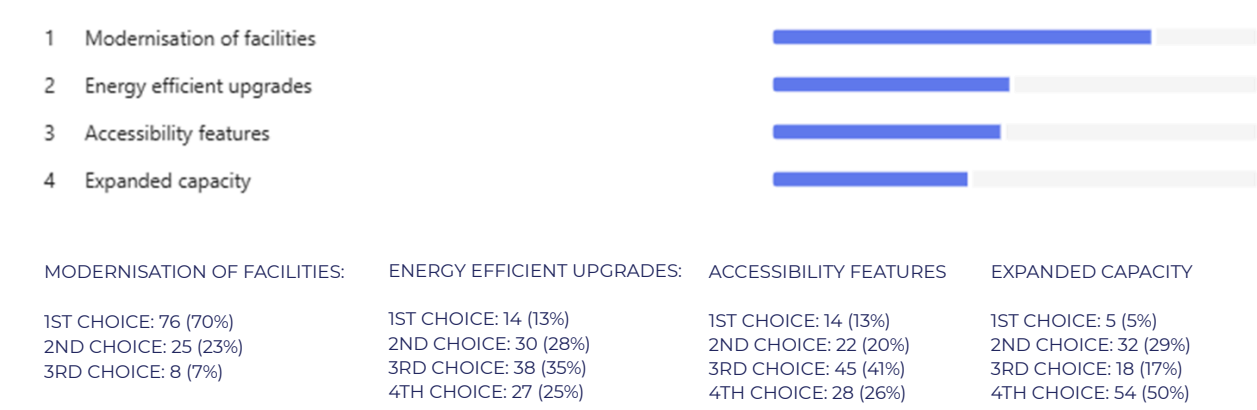


COMMUNITY BENEFIT FROM THE SALE PROCEEDS:	TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT THAT FOLLOWS:	MAXIMUM FINANCIAL RETURN:	SPEED OF SALE AND FUND GENERATION:
1ST CHOICE: 128 (51%)	1ST CHOICE: 87 (34%)	1ST CHOICE: 28 (11%)	1ST CHOICE: 10 (4%)
2ND CHOICE: 85 (34%)	2ND CHOICE: 107 (42%)	2ND CHOICE: 34 (13%)	2ND CHOICE: 27 (11%)
3RD CHOICE: 22 (9%)	3RD CHOICE: 31 (12%)	3RD CHOICE: 93 (37%)	3RD CHOICE: 107 (42%)
4TH CHOICE: 18 (7%)	4TH CHOICE: 28 (11%)	4TH CHOICE: 98 (39%)	4TH CHOICE: 109 (43%)

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE MONEY INVESTED IF THE SIMPSON CENTRE WAS SOLD?



IF PROCEEDS OF THE SALE WERE TO BE REINVESTED IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, WHICH IMPROVEMENTS WOULD YOU PRIORITISE? PLEASE RANK THE OPTIONS. (THE ANSWER AT THE TOP SHOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT)



WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE UPDATED PLAY EQUIPMENT?



INPUT ERRORS

There were some responses that were input incorrectly in the questionnaire, this includes residents not ranking their options on the questions that required it or just picking one or more options. These have been recorded as follows.

PLEASE RANK THE FOLLOWING POTENTIAL BENEFITS IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE TO YOU.



IF YOU ANSWERED "OTHER INVESTMENT IN THE TOWN" FOR QUESTION 6, WHAT OTHER INVESTMENT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE? (PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE ARE RESTRICTIONS ON HOW THESE FUNDS CAN BE INVESTED. PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION.)



OTHER INPUT ERRORS

There were a couple of input errors from residents which were recorded as comments as opposed to forming part of the data above which were:

- 1 Resident selected all 3 options for question 6.
- 1 Resident chose all options for question 3.
- 1 Resident only chose “modernisation of facilities” for question 7.

RESIDENT COMMENTS FOR QUESTIONS 9 AND 10

Thank you to all residents who took the time to leave their additional comments on the questionnaire. We received over 200 comments across the two questions. These have been provided to Councillors to consider as part of their decision making process. We have not included them in this summary due to the volume but are available for inspection on our website.

SUGGESTIONS THAT STC CANNOT IMPLEMENT

We thank everyone for their suggestions , there are some however that are not possible for Stotfold Town Council to implement. We wish to address these now, with an explanation.

Freezing the Precept

Due to legislation which governs the actions of the Town Council, any funds received from the sale of a capital asset, such as the Simpson Centre, can only be used on capital projects. In short, this means that the funds will have to be used on projects that are not already covered by the precept. To reduce the precept, this would mean using the funds to offset the current budget, which is not permitted.

Traffic Calming/Enforcement

Traffic calming measures, such as speed cameras, speed bumps and other such measures are the responsibility of Central Bedfordshire Council and therefore the Town Council cannot invest in these. Speeding enforcement is carried out by the police who have the appropriate powers to do so.

Fixing Potholes and Pavements

These areas are maintained by Central Bedfordshire Council. We would encourage all residents to report issues with the pavements and roadways to Central Bedfordshire Council via the “Fix My Street” service.

On new build estates, if the roads are to become public roads then these will be typically be maintained by the developer until such a time as they are adopted by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Investment in Public Transport - Such as Bus Routes

Bus routes are commissioned and run by Central Bedfordshire Council, the Town Council do not have the ability to invest funds into this infrastructure.

Parking on Verges and Enforcement

Parking enforcement is a service undertaken by Central Bedfordshire Council who have the appropriate enforcement powers. Parking on verges is not unlawful in Central Bedfordshire unless specific restrictions are in place.

More GPs and Police Officers

Investment in more GPs and Police Officers is outside of the remit of Stotfold Town Council and is funded at national government level. Any suggestions in respect of policing we would encourage residents to speak with the Police of Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire, John Tizard who can be contacted on 01234 842064 or email: PCC@beds.police.uk.

End the Garden Waste Scheme

This scheme is run by Central Bedfordshire Council operating in their role of waste management for the county. Funds from any potential sale of the Simpson Centre could not be used to offset the charge they make to residents to collect garden waste.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The preferred option when it came to selling the site was for over 55 housing. The Town Council will now investigate how best to progress with this decision.

The Town Council will update residents as the project progresses.

If anyone has any questions, then please feel free to visit the office, call on 01462 730 064 or email enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk.