

# Congleton Leisure and Healthy Lifestyle Opportunities

## Full Report



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**Produced by:  
Research and Consultation  
Cheshire East Council  
Westfields, Sandbach, CW1 1HZ**

**[randc@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:randc@cheshireeast.gov.uk)  
[www.cheshireeastcouncil.gov.uk/randi](http://www.cheshireeastcouncil.gov.uk/randi)**

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# Executive Summary

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## Background

Cheshire East Council are looking at a new healthier lifestyle / leisure opportunity for Congleton - the second in a programme of leisure related improvements that would potentially provide new all-inclusive leisure facilities, modern family and adult social care provision, Health Services, and community facilities all in one place.

As part of this programme, a pre-consultation survey was undertaken; the survey ran for 4 weeks during October 2014. Its aim was to gather resident views on what they would like to see within a new facility. Respondents were invited to answer either an online or a paper questionnaire. A total of 541 responses were returned (321 Online, 220 Postal).

## Key findings

### Current use of services

The main services considered to be included within the Congleton Lifestyle Provision were the leisure centre, children's centre, medical centre, Police service, adult day care centre, library and cafe and meeting rooms. The majority of respondents had never been to or used adult day care services (86%) or children's centres (72%) within Congleton. Respondents however were more likely to have used/visited the leisure centre; 12% used it most days every day, 39% used it at least once a week with only a small proportion (9%) having never been or used.

### Future opportunities

Just under half of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal to move children centre services into one joint use building (43%) and with the proposal to move adult day care services (47%). Respondents were more likely to agree with the proposal to move the leisure centre into a joint use building with 50% agreeing however, 29% seemed unsure answering neither agree nor disagree.

Respondents were provided with the opportunity to leave additional comments regarding the future opportunities for the offer. There were a total of 256 open comment responses received for this question, of which 15% were concerned about the specific requirements needed for each service and felt it would not be appropriate to join the three services above together into one building. However, a similar proportion (14%) felt that joining services would increase the usage of each service and improve access. A further 12% felt that joining services would help save money and would be more economic/cost effective.

When asked what would be their main method of transport to a new lifestyle provision, just over half of respondents (51%) stated that they would mainly travel by car, 22% would more than likely walk. Half of respondents (50%) stated that they would be prepared to travel up to 10 minutes to get to a new lifestyle provision.

The three most desired general facilities within a new lifestyle provision for Congleton were as follows: - Light refreshment facilities (80% would like or really like available), Cafe, (78% would like or really like available) and Community rooms for hire, (66% would like or really like available).

The five most desired facilities specifically relating to leisure were as follows:- Large swimming pool, (93% would like or really like available), Sports hall, (92% would like or really like available), Fitness Suite, (87% would like or really like available), Indoor tennis/ badminton courts, (84% would like or really like available), Outdoor sports pitches, (79% would like or really like available).

The three most desired well-being services within a new lifestyle provision were as follows: - Physiotherapy, (66% would like or really like available), Hydrotherapy, (57% would like or really like available), Sensory rooms, (45% would like or really like available).

## **Social media analysis**

The survey link was promoted via Facebook and Twitter and as such, comments were received directly on these posts. The comments were grouped into themes; Of the 21 comments made, 6 felt that money was better spent elsewhere, 5 mentioned the need for updated leisure facilities in other towns such as Sandbach, Middlewich and Macclesfield.

## **Conclusions**

### **Joining the three main proposed services together**

Respondents seemed to have neutral views regarding the proposal to move Congleton Leisure Centre, Adult Day Care Services and Children's Centre Services into a joint use building. This may not seem surprising considering the majority of respondents had not used or been to the Adult Day Care Centre or Children's Centre.

An updated leisure centre building with added/ upgraded facilities appeared to be the main priority for respondents with the swimming pool being the most important with 74% indicating that they would really like a pool to be available, 67% would really like a sports hall.

### **Opportunity to join other related services**

There was no consensus for joining the three main proposed services together; updating the leisure centre seemed the highest priority. However, it may be worthwhile looking at the option of including related health services in to the building. Services such as walk in medical centre, selected health check and related services, physiotherapy and hydrotherapy were the most popular. Health services such as a doctor surgery and dentist were not as high of a priority.

### **Further considerations**

Adequate parking provision would be required near to/ on site at the new lifestyle provision along with safe access by foot. Consideration is also needed for those who would travel in by alternative transport methods such as bus, train and bicycle.

The Research and Consultation team would recommend that a further consultation be undertaken when the feasibility study has been complete and the plans are in there draft stage.

## Full analysis of results

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### Background

Cheshire East Council are looking at a new lifestyle opportunity for Congleton - the second in a programme of leisure related improvements that would potentially provide new all-inclusive leisure facilities, modern family and adult social care provision, Health Services, and community facilities in one place.

As part of this programme, a pre-consultation survey was undertaken; the survey ran for 4 weeks during October 2014. Its aim was to gather resident and visitor views on what they would like to see within a new facility. Respondents were invited to answer either an online or a paper questionnaire. Paper versions were left at various locations across Congleton including the Leisure Centre and Library. The survey was also promoted on social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook. A total of 541 responses were returned (321 Online, 220 Postal).

### Analysis of results

#### Current use of services

The main services proposed to be included within the Congleton Lifestyle Provision were the leisure centre, children's centre and adult day care centre. Within the survey, respondents were asked how often within the last 12 months they had used each of these services.

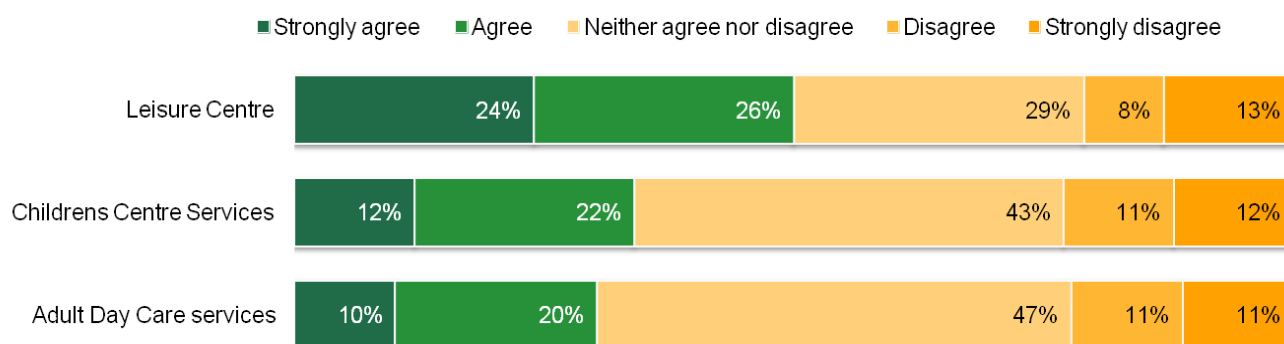
The majority of respondents had never been to or used adult day care services (86%) or children's centres (72%) within Congleton. A small proportion (6%) of respondents used adult day care services most days/ every day and 8% had used Children's Centre services at least once a month. Respondents however were more likely to have used/visited the leisure centre; 12% used it most days every day, 39% used it at least once a week with only a small proportion (9%) having never been or used.

#### Future opportunities

All respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to move each of the three services into a joint use building. Just under half of respondents (43%) stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal to move children centre services into the joint use building, with around a third (35%) agreeing. A similar number (47%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal to move adult day care services, with 30% agreeing. Respondents were more likely to agree with the proposal to move the leisure centre into a joint use building with 50% agreeing however, 29% seemed unsure answering neither agree nor disagree. Figure 1 on the next page shows the full responses received for each proposed service.



**Figure 1: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the following services into one joint use building?**



Base for % = 478 - 524

Respondents were invited to provide a reason for their answer if they so wished. 256 respondents left a valid comment, of this 15% were concerned about the specific requirements needed for each service and felt it would not be appropriate to join the three services above together into one building. However, a similar proportion (14%) felt that joining services would increase the usage of each service and improve access. A further 12% felt that joining services would help save money and would be more economic/cost effective. The top 10 grouped open comment responses can be seen within figure 2 below:

**Figure 2: Please state your reasons:**

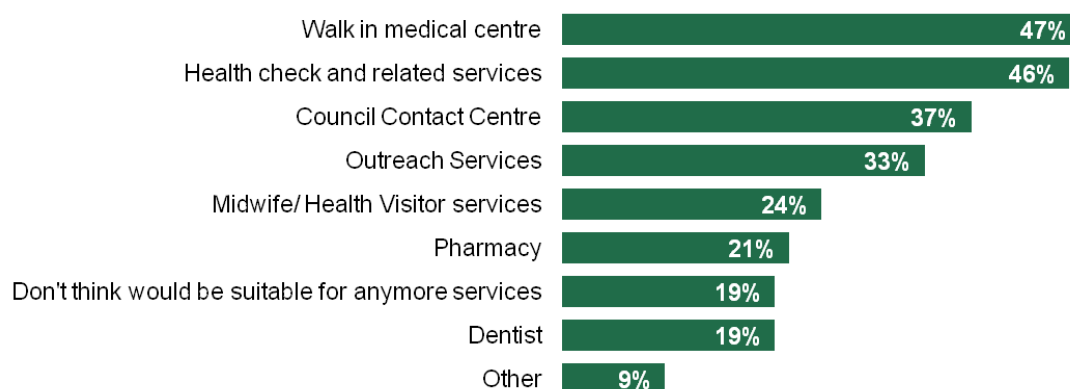


Base for % = 246

Respondents were then asked if there were any other services they felt would benefit from being within the proposed lifestyle provision, they were able to select as many services as applied. Figure 3 shows that nearly half of respondents felt that a walk in medical centre would be of benefit (46%) along with health check and related services (46%). Around a third of respondents

felt that outreach services (33%) and a Council contact centre (37%) would benefit from being within the building.

**Figure 3:** Are there any other council/ partner services that you feel would benefit from being within the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?



Base for % = 469

37 respondents provided another service suggestion that could also be included within the proposed Congleton Lifestyle Provision. The five top grouped open comment responses were:

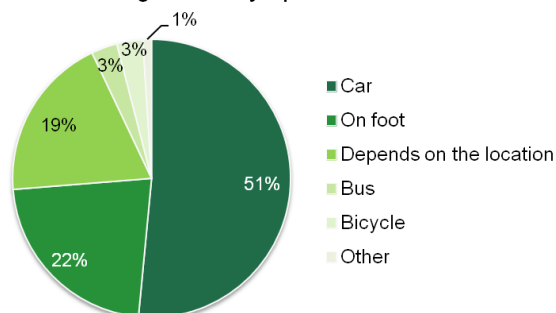
- Young people groups, clubs and services (seven respondents mentioned)
- Library (five respondents mentioned)
- Police (five respondents mentioned)
- Disability Information Bureau/support services for those with a disability (five respondents mentioned)
- Art/ music centre (four respondents mentioned).

When asked what would be their main method of transport to a new lifestyle provision, just over half of respondents (51%) stated that they would mainly travel by car, 22% would more than likely walk and 19% stated that they didn't know as it was dependent on the location. 7% would use alternative transport methods. Full results can be seen in the pie chart below.

Half of respondents (50%) stated that they would be prepared to travel up to 10 minutes to get to a new lifestyle provision; 38% would be prepared to travel up to 20 minute and 12% were willing to travel longer than 20 minutes.

**Figure 4:**

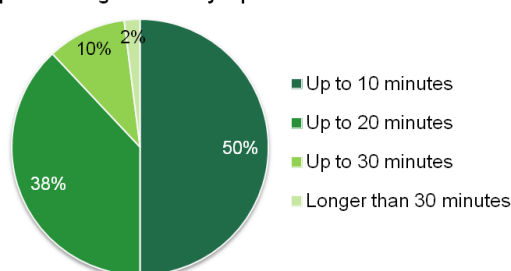
What would be your main method of transport if you were to visit the Congleton lifestyle provision?



Base for % = 513

**Figure 5:**

How long would you be prepared to travel to get to the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?



Base for % = 531

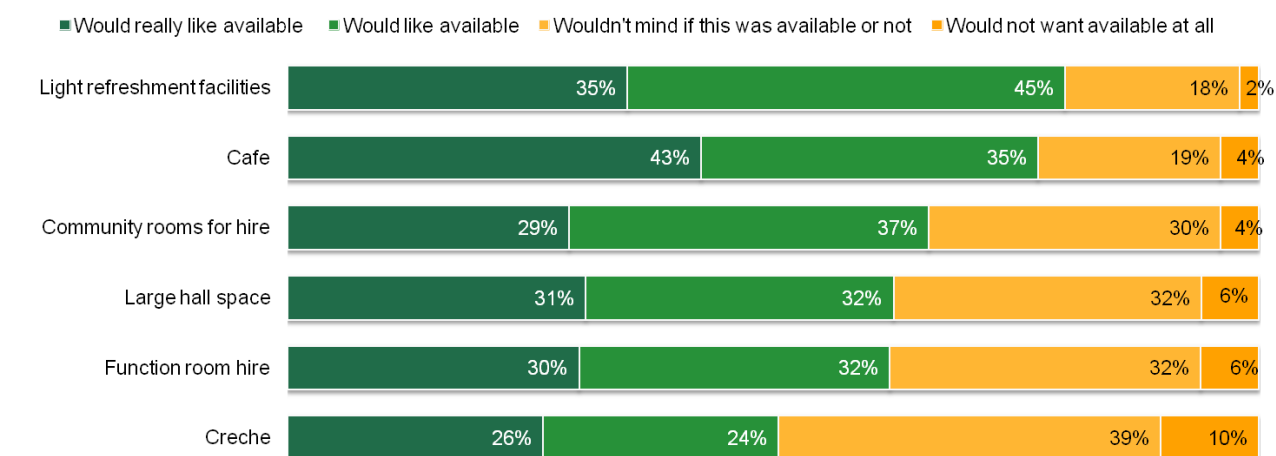
Those who would travel by car were more likely to state they would be willing to travel up to 10 minutes (57%) compared to those who would travel on foot (30%). Those who would travel by foot were more likely to state that they would be willing to travel up to 20 minutes (54%).



The three most desired general facilities within a new lifestyle provision for Congleton were as follows:-

1. Light refreshment facilities, 80% (35% really like available, 45% like available)
2. Cafe, 78% (43% really like available, 35% like available)
3. Community rooms for hire, 66% (29% really like available, 37% like available).

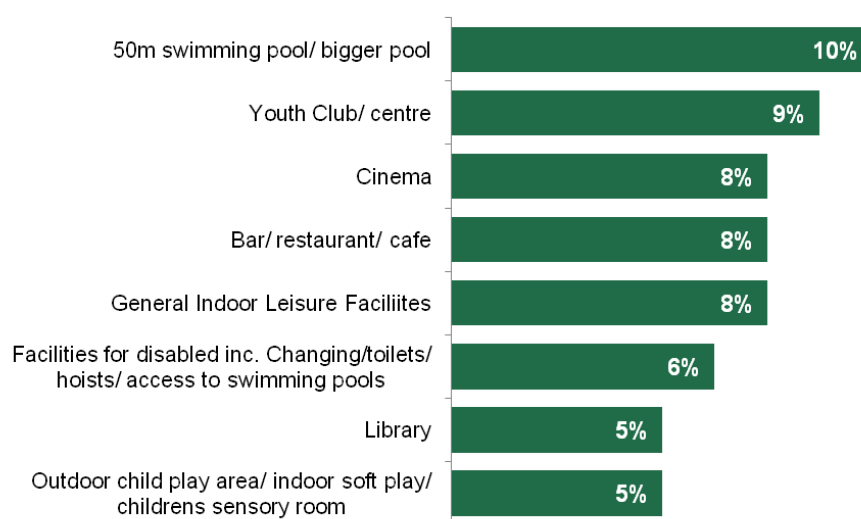
**Figure 6:** Thinking about the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision, would you like available within the building...



Base for % = 453 - 493

Respondents were able to offer suggestions for other general facilities they would like within the building. 80 respondents left a suggestion, of which 10% mentioned the need for a bigger swimming pool, 9% felt that a youth club/centre would be beneficial. The top eight open comment responses made can be seen within figure 7 below.

**Figure 7:** Are there any other facilities you would like available within the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?

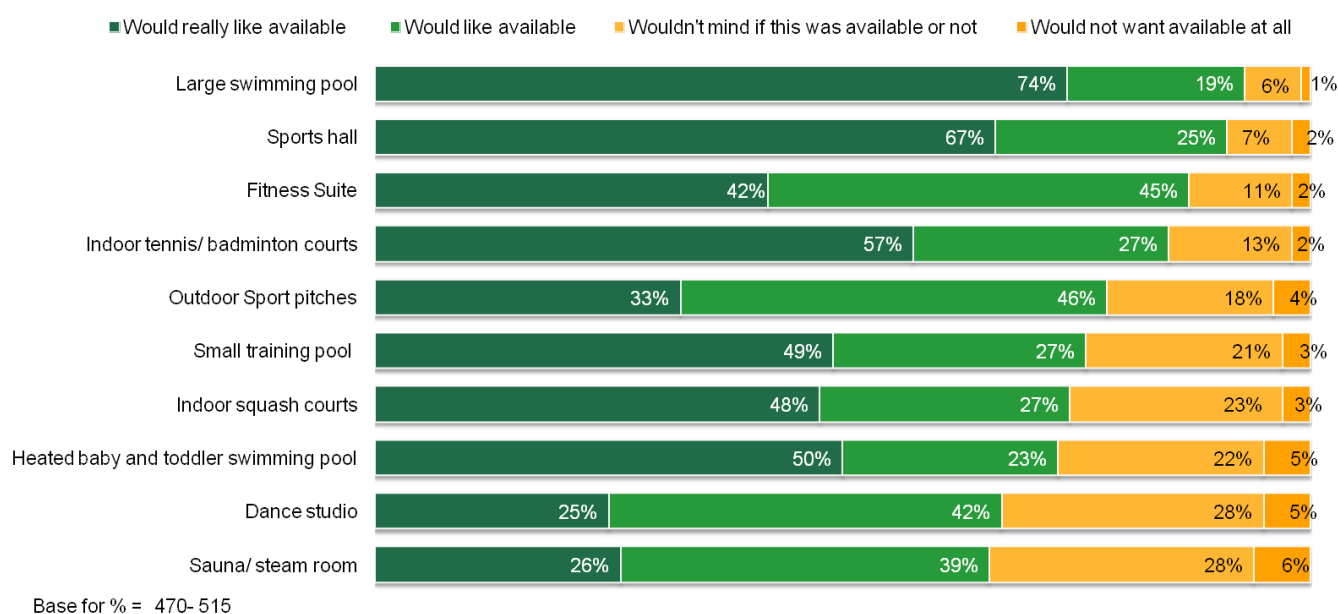


Base for % = 80

The five most desired facilities specifically relating to leisure were as follows:-

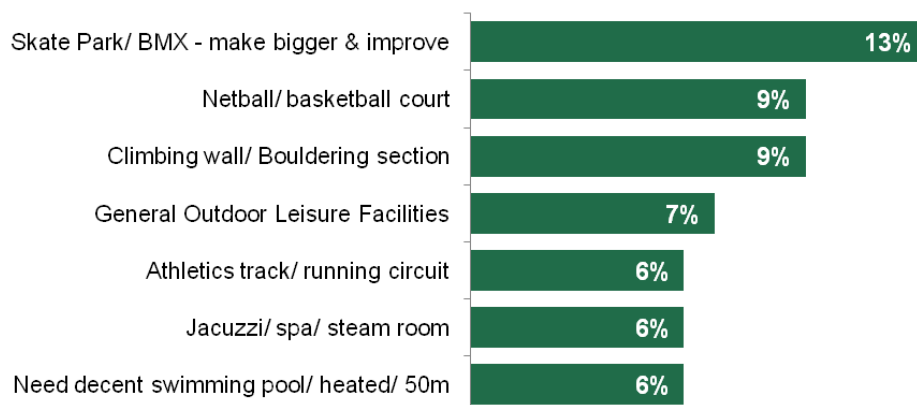
1. Large swimming pool, 93% (74% really like available, 19% like available)
2. Sports hall, 92% (67% really like available, 24% like available)
3. Fitness Suite, 87% (42% really like available, 45% like available)
4. Indoor tennis/ badminton courts, 84% (57% really like available, 27% like available)
5. Outdoor sports pitches, 79% (33% really like available, 46% like available).

**Figure 8:** Thinking specifically about leisure services at the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision, would you like to be available...



Respondents were able to offer suggestions for other leisure facilities they would like within the building. 117 respondents left a suggestion, of which, 13% would like the skate park to be improved/ made bigger. The top 10 responses are shown in the figure 9 below:

**Figure 9:** Are there any other facilities you would like available as part of the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?

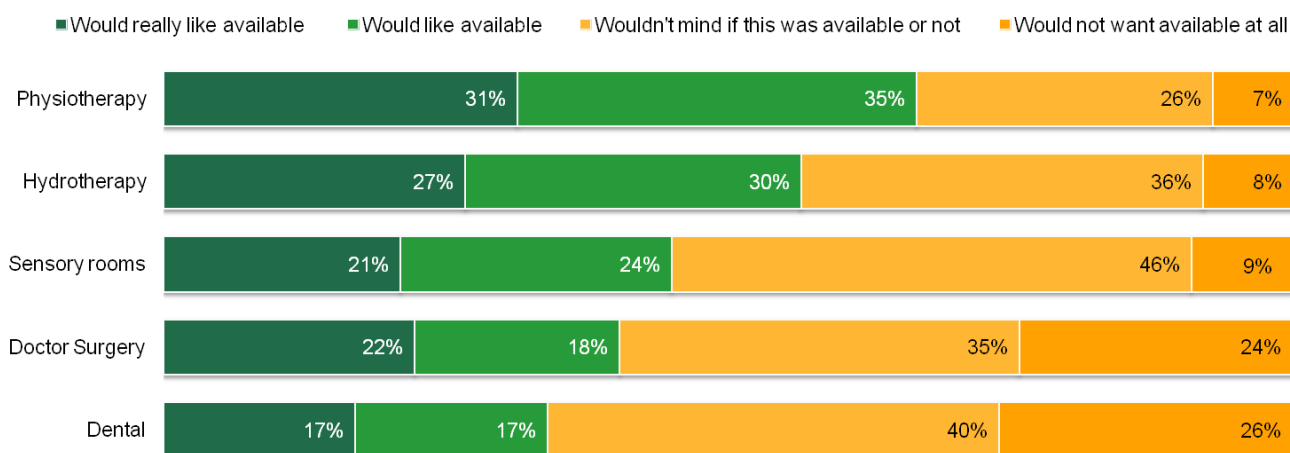


Base for % = 117

The three most desired well-being services within a new lifestyle provision were as follows:-

1. Physiotherapy, 66% (31% really like available, 35% like available)
2. Hydrotherapy, 57% (27% really like available, 30% like available)
3. Sensory rooms, 45% (21% really like available, 24% like available).

**Figure 10:** Thinking specifically about well-being services within the proposed Congleton Lifestyle provision, would you like available...



Base for % = 443 - 488

Respondents were able to offer suggestions for other wellbeing facilities they would like within the building. 28 chose to leave a suggestion, the top four grouped open comment responses were:-

- Alternative therapies such as acupuncture/ art therapy (7 respondents mentioned)
- Related health/ well being facilities such as beautician/hairdressers/ massage and spa (6 respondents mentioned)
- Disability advice bureau/ support services for disabled (4 respondents mentioned)
- Overall health checks (2 respondents mentioned).

Finally, respondents were asked whether they had any more comments to make regarding the proposed lifestyle centre. 185 left a comment of which 13% felt that an updated leisure centre was all that was needed/ should be the focus to achieve maximum benefit. 11% felt that improvements were long overdue as the current Congleton Leisure Centre is very dated. A further 11% mentioned the need for high quality sport facilities. The top 10 comments received are shown in figure 11 below:

**Figure 11: Do you have any other comments/ suggestions to make on the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?**



Base for % = 185

## Social Media Analysis

The survey link was promoted via Facebook and Twitter and as such, comments were received directly on these posts. The comments were grouped into themes – these themes and the number of mentions can be seen in table 1 below:-

**Table 1:**

Theme of comment	Number of mentions
Money would be better spent elsewhere	6
Need improved Leisure Centre in Sandbach/ Macclesfield/ Middlewich	5
Congleton leisure centre should be knocked down	3
Need more information about proposals and where the money is coming from	2
Redevelop Crewe Town Centre	1
Lower Council Tax instead	1
More health services e.g. breast clinic, testicular clinic, GUM clinic and smoking cessation support	1
New changing rooms needed	1
Children and young people should have been asked for their opinions when Crewe Lifestyle Centre was drawn up	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>

## Conclusions

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### Joining the three main proposed services together

Respondents seemed to have neutral views regarding the proposal to move Congleton Leisure Centre, Adult Day Care Services and Children's Centre Services into a joint use building especially the Adult Day Care Centre and Children's Centre services with the majority neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the proposal (47% and 43% respectively). This may not seem surprising considering the majority of respondents had not used or been to the Adult Day Care Centre or Children's Centre. However, a higher number had used/ been to the leisure centre and still 29% were unsure with the proposal.

Respondents were able to provide reasons for their answer if they wished, 15% (out of 256 responses received) were concerned that each service would have specific needs. A similar proportion however, (14%) felt that joining services would increase/ improve the usage and access of all the services within the building and 12% thought it would be more economical/cost effective to join services.

An updated leisure centre building with added/ upgraded facilities seemed to be the main priority for respondents with the swimming pool being the most important with 74% indicating that they would really like a pool to be available, 67% would really like a sports hall.

### Opportunity to join other related services

There was no consensus for joining the three main proposed services together; updating the leisure centre seemed the highest priority. However, it may be worthwhile looking at the option of including related health services in to the building as when asked about other services that would benefit from being within the building 47% selected walk in medical centre and 46% selected health check and related services. Further on, when asked what well-being services they would like available within the building 66% would like or really like physiotherapy services to be available and 57% would like or really like hydrotherapy to be available. Health services such as a doctor surgery and dentist was not as high of a priority; 58% would not mind/ want a doctor surgery to be included, 66% would not mind/ want a dental surgery to be included.

### Further considerations

Just over one-half of respondents (51%) would travel to the lifestyle provision by car, indicating that adequate parking provision would be required near to/ on site at the new lifestyle provision. Safe access by foot is also required with 22% indicating they would travel by foot to the new provision. Consideration is also needed for those who would travel in by alternative transport methods such as bus, train and bicycle.

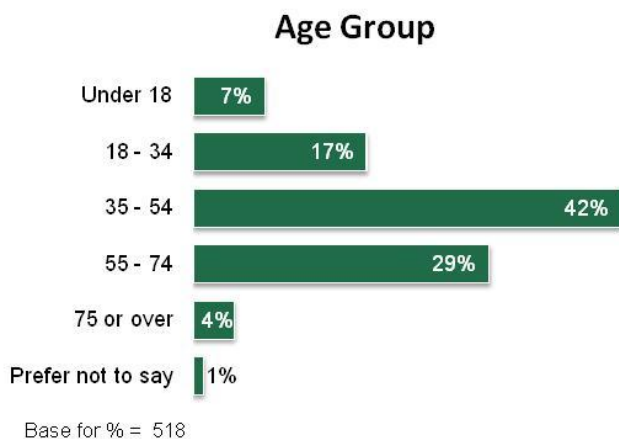
Within some of the open comment questions, the most popular suggestions were to include young clubs/groups (9% out of 80 comments) to be held at the leisure centre with improvements being made to the skate park (13% out of 117 comments) . This presents the Council with the opportunity to look into providing more services specifically aimed at young people within the lifestyle provision.

The research and Consultation team would recommend that a further consultation be undertaken when the feasibility study has been complete and the plans are in there draft stage.

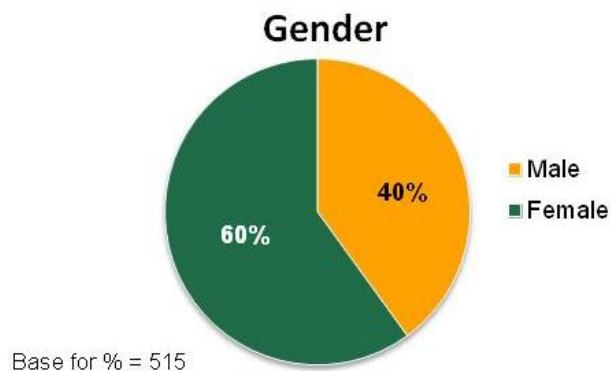
## Demographic Profile

The charts below show the age and gender breakdown of those who responded to the survey.

**Figure 12:**



**Figure 13:**



95% answered the survey as a Cheshire East resident

94% of respondents would class themselves as White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British

16% said that they had a long-term illness, health issue or disability that limits their activities in some way.

The map to the right shows the spread of respondents by those who left a valid home postcode. The majority were around the Congleton town area.

