



# **LIBRARIES CONSULTATION**

**Data Analysis Document**

**April 2019**

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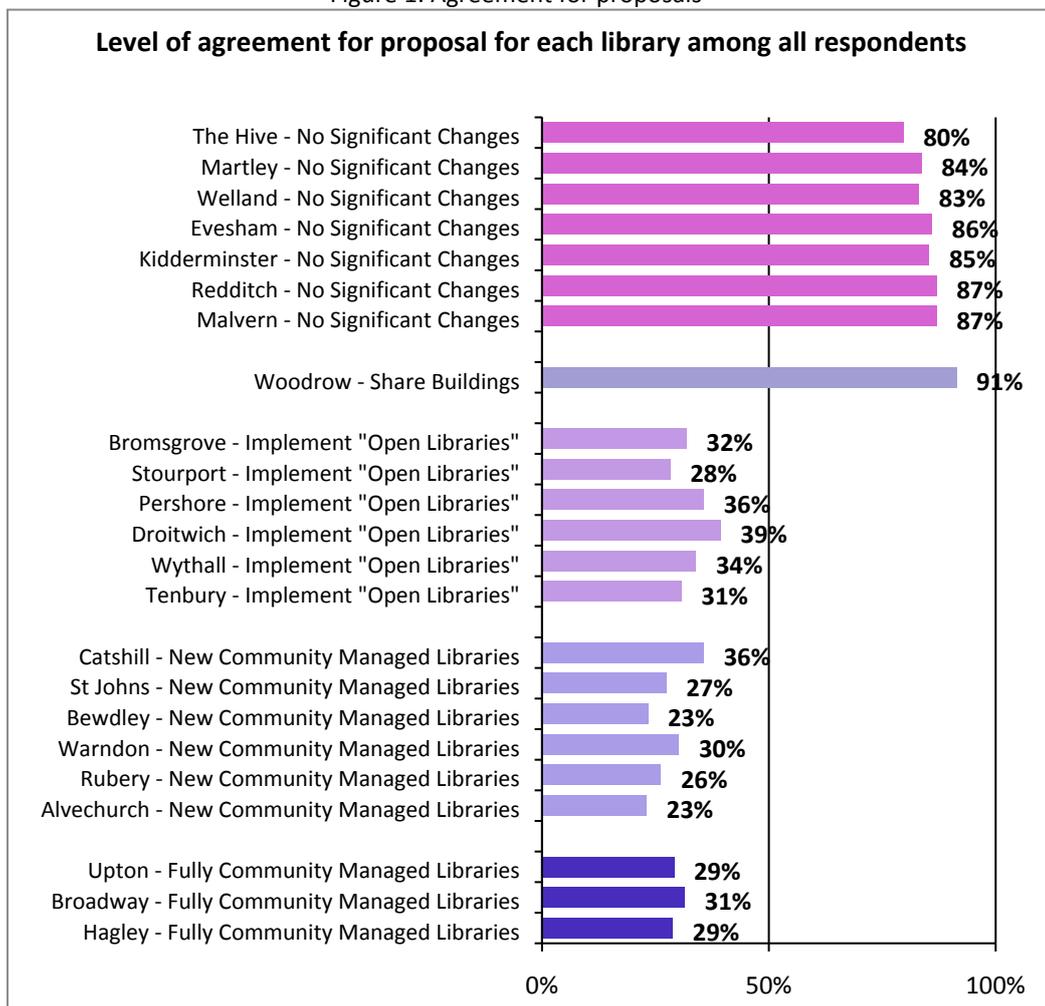
## 1. Executive Summary

- The Libraries Consultation was an opportunity for Worcestershire County Council to share the initial options for library change with Worcestershire residents and community organisations so that both groups could provide their views and make other suggestions. There were 1,947 responses in total.
- Responses were received from active users who mostly visit all libraries with the exception of Welland. The highest level of responses was received from those who usually visit Droitwich, Alvechurch and Bromsgrove libraries, with low numbers of responses from Martley and Broadway.
- Over 70% of respondents were female, and almost 40% of respondents were over 65. These two groups are over-represented compared to the Worcestershire population in the survey.
- In the Worcestershire Libraries Consultation Document, Worcestershire County Council set out its definition of local need for libraries. Almost two thirds of respondents felt that this definition was correct.
- Those who disagreed with the definition suggested inclusion of measures of the benefit a library can bring to the local community, use of the library by school children, public transport considerations particularly with reference to determining service isolation, the importance of social interaction and need to minimise isolation, and the age profile of the local population / library users. Others disputed the relevance and/or the means of capturing deprivation, distance between libraries and the activity levels.
- The elderly, those people living in areas with no or limited public transport, the less mobile and the housebound were cited as possible groups unable to access the library service.
- Charging groups for Adult Learning classes, introducing higher charges for library services, introducing a coffee shop, hosting events, sharing buildings, introducing sales of unwanted items and accepting more donations were all submitted as potential ideas to reduce costs or bring in revenue.
- Just over 40% of respondents indicated that they used the library computers, whilst a further 15% used the free wi-fi available in the library to access the internet using their own device. High proportions of those respondents attending Evesham, Rubery, St Johns and Woodrow made use of the computers in the library. Regular updates of the computers and regularly software updates were what most respondents thought would improve the computers in libraries.
- A full description of a possible model for fully community managed libraries was put forward for consideration via the Worcestershire Libraries Consultation Document. Respondents were largely in agreement with the aspects of community managed libraries that were

delivered by or managed by the Council, but were broadly not in favour of those aspects that were delivered or managed by the community or by volunteers.

- 90% of respondents agreed that the Council should provide books and a library catalogue for Community Libraries. In contrast, only 15% felt that the community should fund building costs, and around a fifth agreed that the community should manage buildings and grounds.
- 167 people said that they would be interested in volunteering to help run their local library, with a further 355 respondents stating that they "maybe" interested. Potential interest in volunteering was highest among respondents who most often visit Droitwich, St Johns and Bromsgrove libraries.

Figure 1: Agreement for proposals



- Hagley, Broadway and Upton Libraries are already well supported by volunteers and by community organisations that pay for library buildings. It was suggested that these libraries would become fully community managed libraries while Alvechurch, Rubery, Warndon, Bewdley, St Johns and Catshill libraries would become new community managed libraries. The need for paid, professional staff to support volunteers was identified by many respondents as being important for community managed libraries, and just 40% of

respondents agreed that community volunteers should deliver library services in community managed libraries.

- Around 30% of respondents agreed that Hagley, Broadway and Upton should become fully community managed libraries. Respondents who disagreed with the proposal were more likely to be in favour of sharing buildings with other community services.
- Respondents did not support the proposals for Alvechurch, Rubery, Warndon, Bewdley, St Johns and Catshill libraries to become new community managed libraries. Respondents who disagreed with the proposal for these libraries were in general most likely to feel that the libraries should share buildings with other community services.
- Support for the proposals to implement open libraries at Tenbury, Wythall, Droitwich, Pershore, Stourport and Bromsgrove varied from nearly 40% for Droitwich down to less than 30% for Stourport. Support for the proposal was higher, at over a half, among respondents that visit Wythall, Droitwich and Pershore most often. Of those that disagreed with the proposal, the highest proportion of respondents was in favour of sharing buildings.
- Almost a half of respondents suggested that they would be willing to use the library during unstaffed hours. Those respondents that mostly attend Pershore, Droitwich, Evesham, The Hive and Catshill libraries were most likely to be willing to make use of the library when unstaffed. A third of respondents suggested that it would work well for the library to be unstaffed in the evenings
- Security and safety issues, anti-social behaviour, the need for expertise and assistance from library staff and lack of social interaction were all mentioned as potential barrier to using the library during unstaffed hours.
- Over 90% of all respondents stated that they agreed with the proposal that Woodrow should share buildings with other community services.
- Respondents were generally in favour of the libraries at The Hive, Malvern, Redditch, Kidderminster, Evesham, Welland, and Martley having no significant changes. Agreement for each library was between 80% and 90% of all respondents.
- The most commonly mentioned community groups and organisations that respondents suggested may be interested in sharing buildings with library services were homework clubs and school clubs. Council services, the Post Office, Age UK and Citizen's Advice Bureau were all also mentioned as potentially interested.
- Responses asking for any community groups or organisations that could set up a community library were low, with only "Schools, colleges and universities" being suggested by a reasonably high number of respondents.

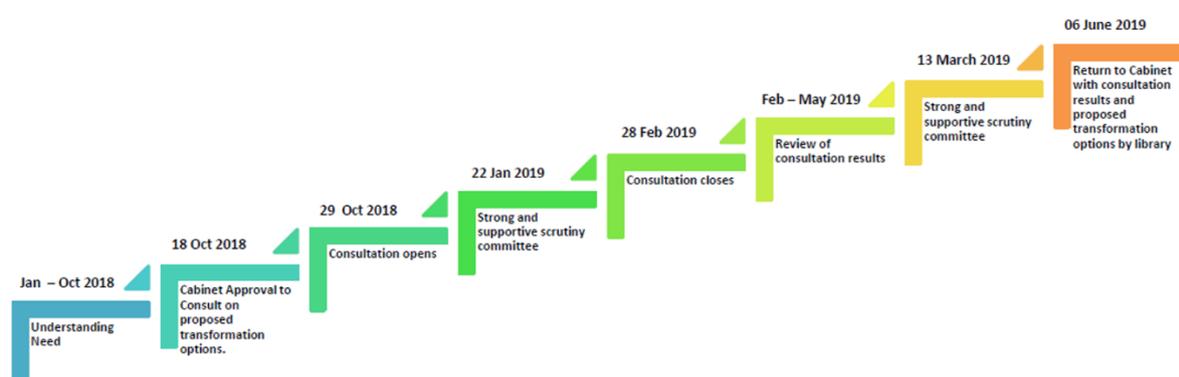
- Saturday was the most commonly mentioned time as a preference for when libraries should remain open among respondents who suggested that it would be appropriate for a library to reduce their opening hours.

## 2. Introduction

18 October 2018 Cabinet authorised the Director of Children, Families and Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities, to finalise consultation documents and commence public consultation and engagement on the proposed options for libraries service points.

The Libraries Consultation was an opportunity for Worcestershire County Council to share the initial options for library change with Worcestershire residents and community organisations so that people could provide their views and make other suggestions.

The survey ran from 29 October 2018 until 28 February 2019.



Our objectives during the consultation phase were:

- Ensure Worcestershire residents are aware of the Consultation and how to have their say
- Ensure external stakeholders including co-location partners and the public are kept fully informed and made aware of implications of the proposals on current provision
- Promote and share the journey and actions being taken to improve services for service users before, during and after the consultation
- Provide the public and partners with informed and timely communications about how the proposals could affect them
- Ensure that all staff and members were aware of the key dates for the Libraries Transformation Public Consultation
- Ensure that all library staff and members are fully informed and understand the benefits and implications of the proposals
- Provide all libraries staff with informed and timely communications about how the proposed changes could affect them

Our key messages during the consultation stage were:

- Communities are being encouraged to play a bigger role in running libraries in Worcestershire
- The role of libraries has been changing for some time now. They are about far more than borrowing books, computer access and events. They deliver adult learning programmes, targeted reading and a varied volunteering programme among a variety of other services

- As financial pressures grow on the Council, libraries need to evolve and modernise, so they continue to meet the needs of residents
- Many different options will be looked at, including further community involvement, Open Libraries, working alongside district councils and other organisations to share space
- The consultation will seek the views of residents, key partner organisations and community groups on future changes to libraries
- There are no plans to close any of Worcestershire's libraries at this stage and we did not seek approval from Cabinet to consult on this option
- A final decision on library change is expected to be made in Spring 2019

The following key stakeholders were identified:



A mixture of engagement and communication channels were utilised to promote the consultation. A summary of these channels is outlined below, and a detailed record of activity has been maintained and can be made available.

#### Promotion Channels

- Worcestershire County Council Website – Homepage Button
- Library Service Homepage
- Social Media
- Press Releases
- Posters in all Library Service Points
- Letters to key stakeholders
- Use of the Children’s Portal
- Email based Mail Shots
- Updates on Yammer and Our Space to Worcestershire County Council Staff
- Library Staff Promoting in service points

Responses to the consultation were welcomed via completion of the Online Survey, Paper Surveys, Letters, Emails and via the Public Drop In Sessions.

There were 1,947 responses in total to the Survey. This report presents the findings from analysis of survey responses; quantitative analysis of the multiple choice questions and summaries of the main themes identified from responses to free text questions. Full details of all the free text comments are available to managers in the library service and are being used in policy and service development.

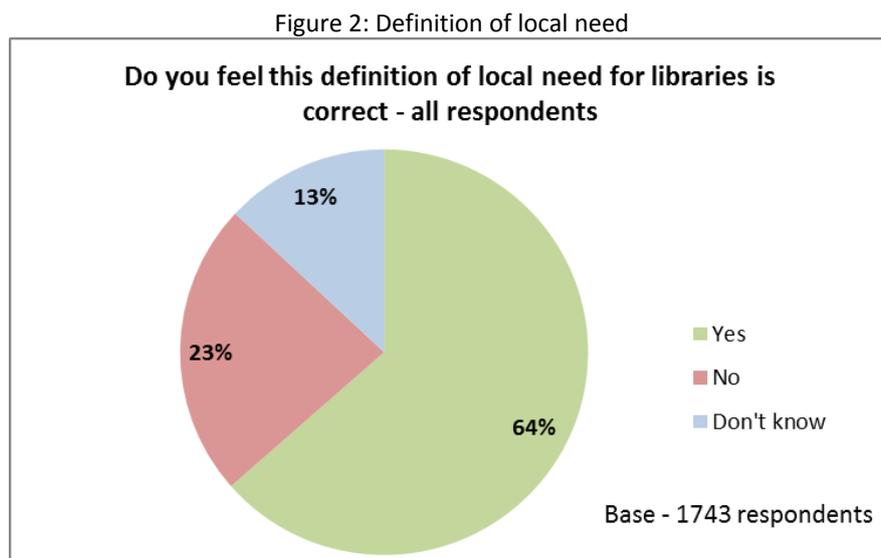
In addition, views via other channels are summarised in Chapter 11, and have also been made available to managers in the Library Service and these are being used in policy and service development.

### 3. Local Need for Libraries

In the Worcestershire Libraries Consultation Document, Worcestershire County Council put forward a definition of local need for libraries. This definition used four indicators of local need for libraries. These are:

- Deprivation: the socio-economic profile of library catchment populations which indicates their need to access services which improve health and wellbeing, literacy, learning, digital skills and employability
- Service isolation: the distance from each library to the next nearest library which indicates the relative isolation of each library and the accessibility of alternative library provision for its customers
- Exclusive use of home library site: visiting patterns of library customers to their home-site library and other Worcestershire libraries, which indicate how much they rely on the home site library
- Library activity levels: the number of visits, issues, active users, computer usage, event attendees and adult learners for each library, which indicates the number of residents that the library serves

Each library was ranked against these four characteristics of need and an overall ranking of libraries was then produced.



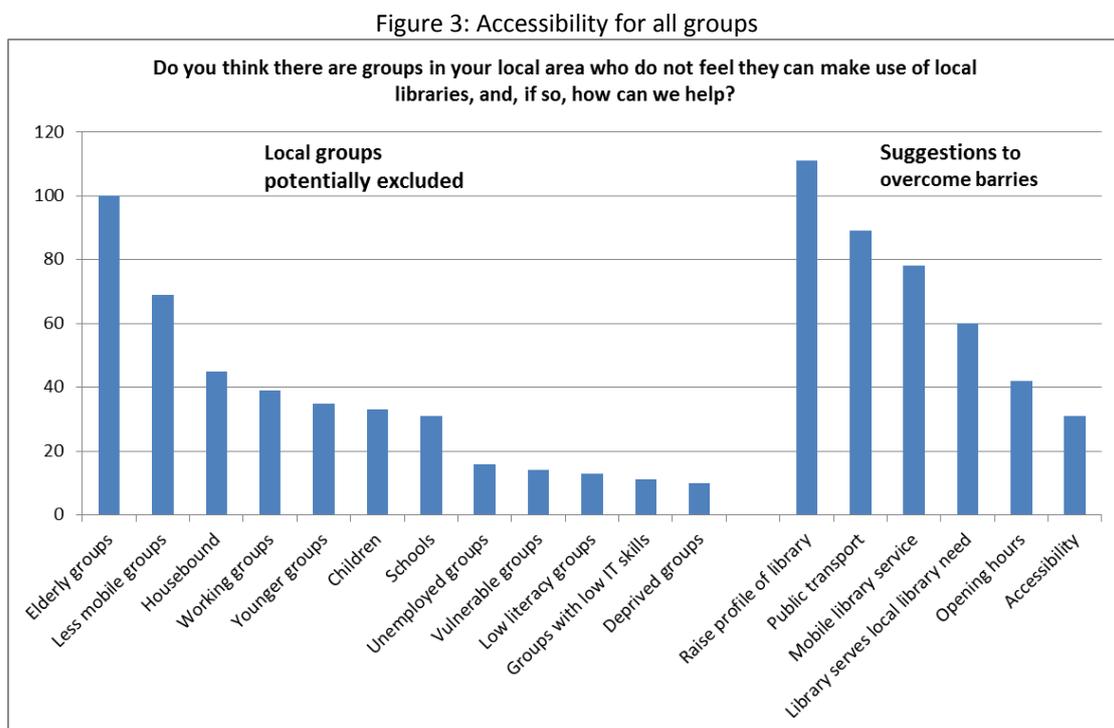
Almost two thirds of respondents (64%) felt that this definition was correct. Almost a quarter of respondents disagreed, with just over 10% indicating that they were not sure.

If they disagreed with the definition of local need, respondents were given the opportunity to state **what else they think should be included in the definition of local library need.**

The main themes identified in the analysis of this free text questions were:

- The benefit a library can bring to the local community (approx. 95 responses): supporting cultural life and community needs, acting as a social hub, providing a safe space for all to access.
- Use of the library by school children (approx. 55 responses)
- Public transport considerations particularly with reference to determining service isolation (approx. 40 responses)
- The importance of social interaction / need to minimise social isolation (approx. 35 responses)
- The age profile of the local population / library users (approx. 30 responses)
- Disagreement with the use of deprivation within the definition (approx. 30 responses)
- Disagreement with the measure and/or relevance of distance to nearest library (approx. 30 responses)
- Disagreement with the measure and/or relevance of activity levels (approx. 30 responses)

All Respondents were asked **if they thought there were groups in their local area who do not feel that they can make use of local libraries, and if so, how this could be improved.** The groups and suggestions mentioned most frequently in these free text responses are summarised in Figure 3 below showing the relevant number of comments for each.



## 4. Approaches to keeping libraries open

The recent pre-consultation Have Your Say survey gave respondents a chance to comment on approaches that residents would support to keep libraries open. These included making libraries available for community and business hire outside of opening hours, renting out space for other organisations to be based in and delivering other community services from the library.

Respondents were asked if there were any **community organisations in their local area who may be interested in hiring or renting library spaces**

A whole range of local groups and classes were mentioned here with almost 400 respondents making numerous suggestions of local groups that would potentially be interested in hiring space. Full details of all the free text comments are available to library managers and are being used to develop future plans.

Recurring suggestions within responses to this question included to advertise in the local community that the library is looking for groups interested in renting spaces (approx. 55 responses), and to ensure that prices are competitive (approx. 45 responses).

Respondents were then asked if there were any **community organisations in their area who may be interested in paying for library staff to deliver face to face services.**

Around 30 respondents indicated that they thought there would be such groups but did not provide examples. A further 30 respondents raised possible links with local schools. Care homes, local councils (for example parish councils) and U3A were mentioned as potentially interested in this service, each by around 10-15 respondents. Again, the suggestion to advertise this service in the local community was raised by several people (approx. 20 responses).

Around 20 respondents wrote that it was the responsibility of the council to identify appropriate community organisations; whilst about 15 suggested organisations that may be interested in using this service would be unable to pay due to lack of funds.

Respondents were then asked if they had any **other ideas how the library could generate income or reduce costs.**

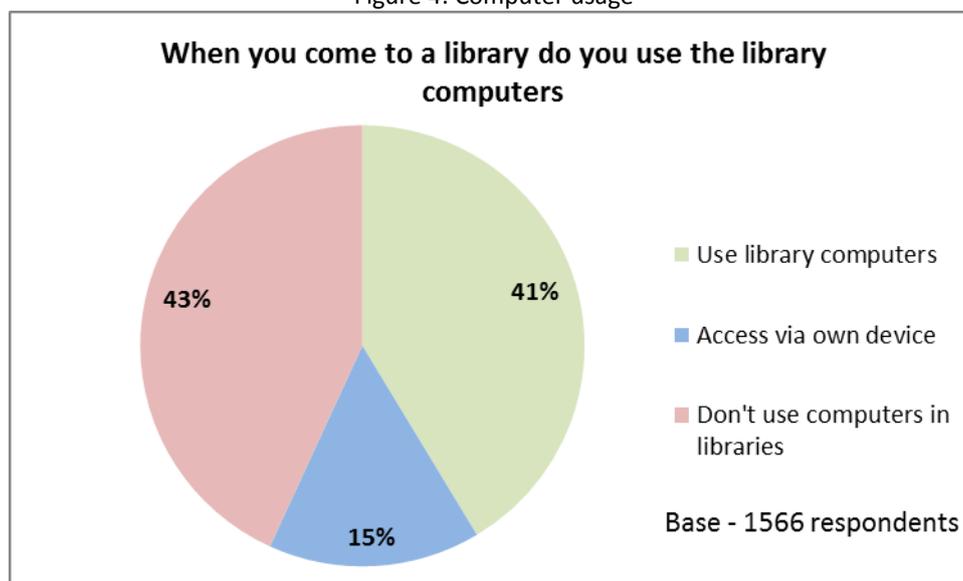
The most frequently mentioned ideas in response to this question were:

- Hosting and charging groups for classes (approx. 200 responses). It was suggested private groups offering similar services charge and minimal fees could be introduced
- Higher charges could be introduced for library services (approx. 110 responses), with modest prices for reservations, computer use, late returns, each withdrawal and even a membership fee suggested
- Introducing a coffee shop (approx. 90 responses)
- Changes to library opening hours (approx. 85 responses)
- Hosting events (approx. 80 responses)
- Sharing buildings with other organisations (approx. 80 responses)
- Introducing sales of unwanted items (approx. 60 responses)

## 5. Public Computers and Printers

Worcestershire County Council is planning to upgrade public computers and printers in libraries to ensure they are up to date and meet customer needs. Respondents were asked **if they used the library computers or brought their own device to access free wi-fi when coming to the library.**

Figure 4: Computer usage



Just over 40% of respondents indicated that they used the library computers, whilst a further 15% used the free wi-fi available in the library to access the internet using their own device.

Results split by library most often visited are now presented. Results for Martley, Broadway and the mobile library are omitted due to low numbers of responses, whilst no respondent said they mostly visited Welland library.

Figure 5: Computer usage by library

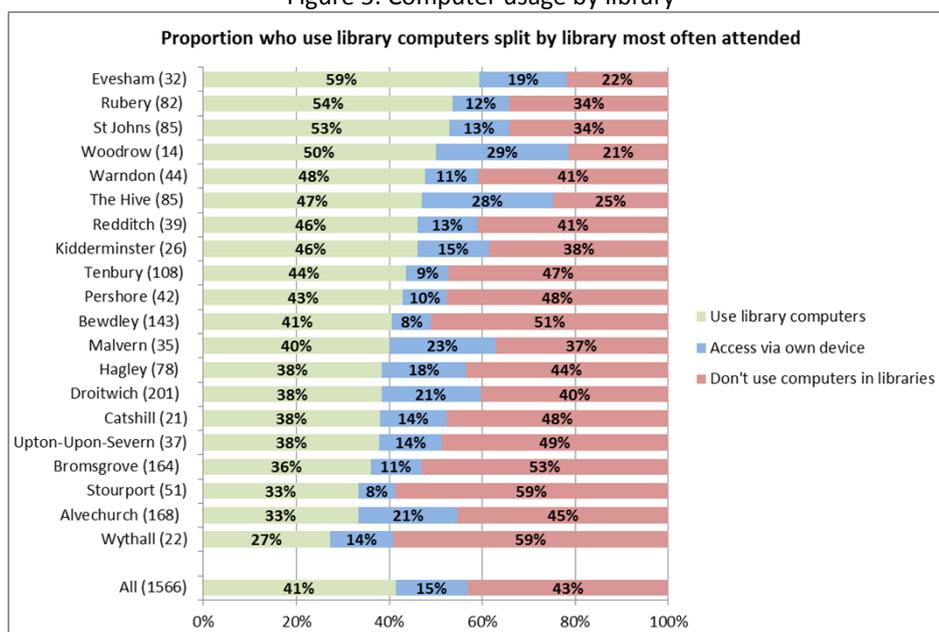
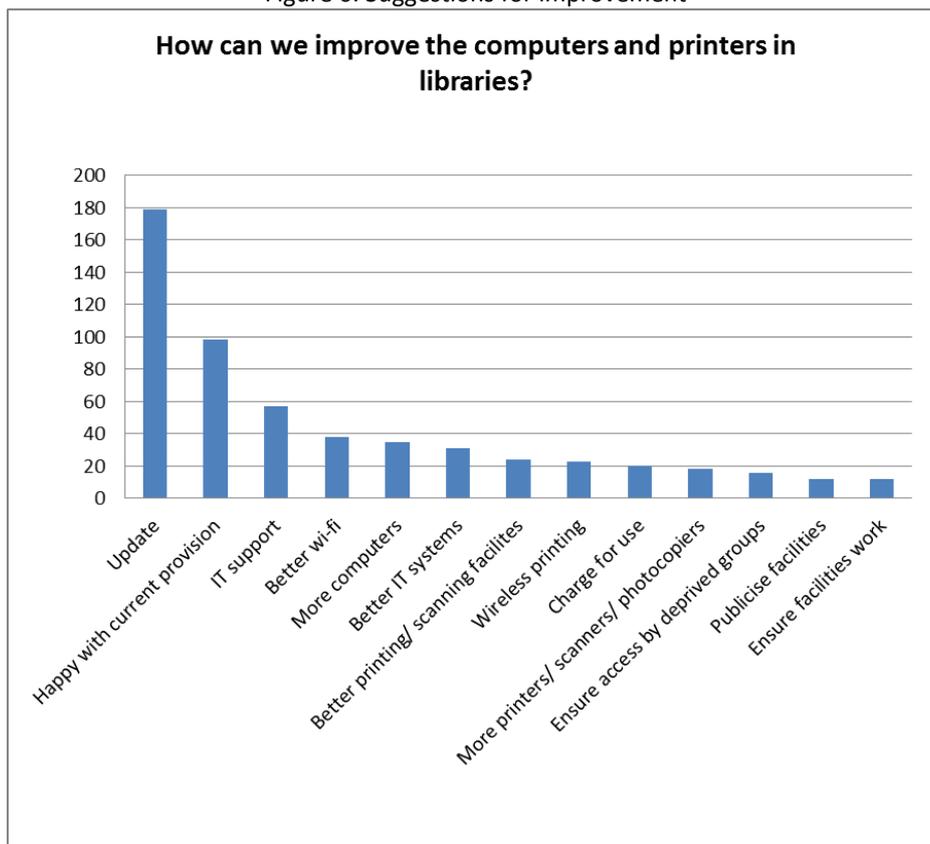


Figure 6: Suggestions for improvement



Almost 180 respondents suggested having regular updates of the computers, introducing newer models and ensuring the software was updated regularly would improve the computers and printers in libraries. In a similar vein, increasing the number of computers, improving the wi-fi and introducing better IT systems were all proposed by numerous respondents.

Almost 100 respondents indicated that they were happy with the current IT provision in libraries. However, a number of respondents did suggest that better IT support was needed to help people who were less IT literate.

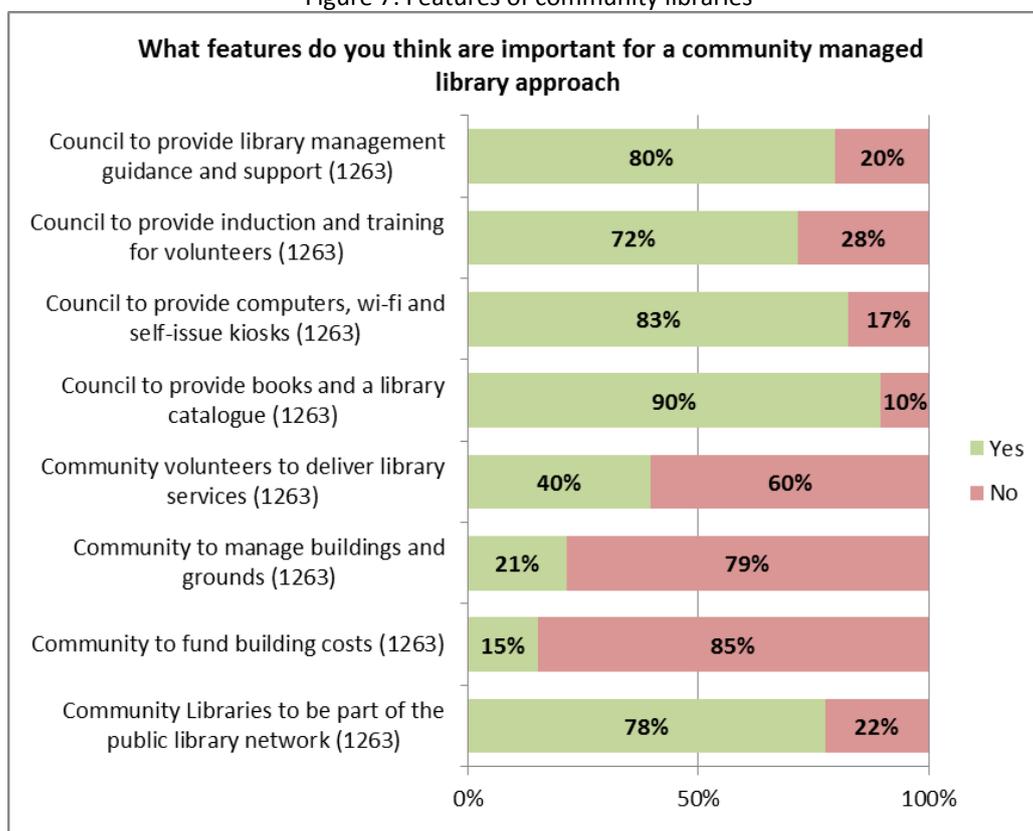
## 6. Options for Library Change

Respondents were then asked for their views and suggestions on options for library change. Libraries are grouped by the type of changes that were proposed.

## 7. Proposal - Fully Community Managed Libraries

A full description of community managed libraries was made available to respondents via the Worcestershire Libraries Consultation Document. Respondents were then asked **which of the main features they agreed were important for a community managed library approach.**

Figure 7: Features of community libraries



In general, respondents were largely in agreement with the aspects of community management library approach that were delivered or managed by the Council, but were broadly not in favour of those aspects that were delivered or managed by the community or by volunteers.

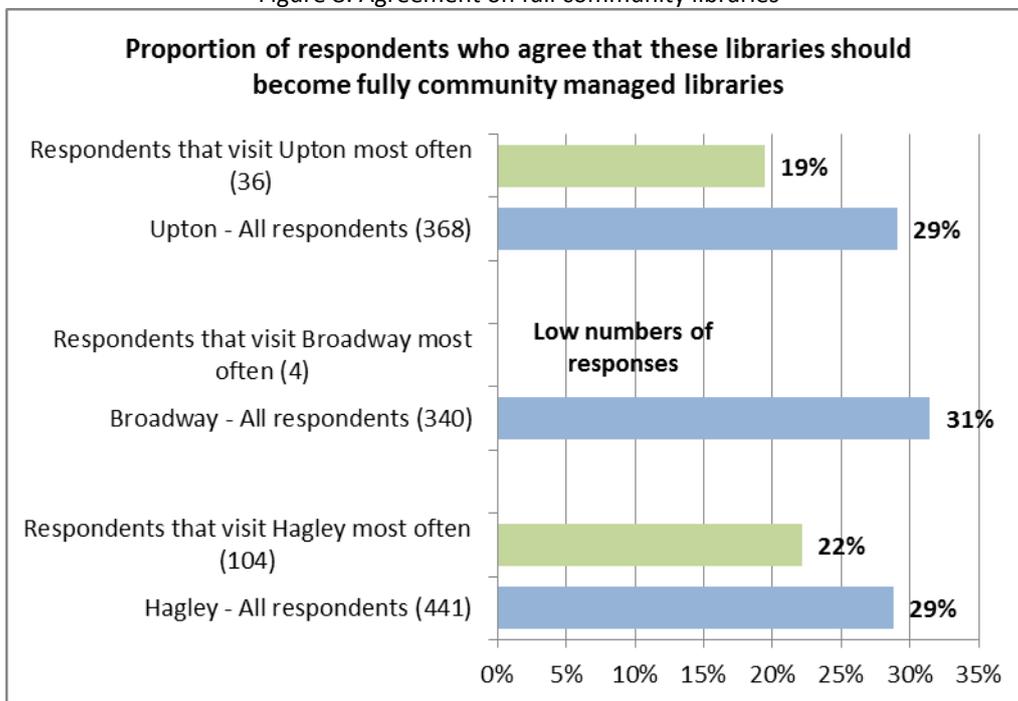
Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on **other features they think are important for community managed libraries.** The main themes identified from analysis of this free text question were:

- The need for professional library staff to support volunteers (approx. 170 responses)
- Disagreement with the idea of introducing community managed libraries (approx. 120 responses)

- Importance of council retaining responsibility for, and oversight of, the service (approx. 80 responses)
- Issues of capacity, reliability, consistency and accountability of volunteers (approx. 55 responses)
- Inclusion of community spaces and social areas (approx. 50 responses)
- Availability of facilities for community use (approx. 45 responses)
- Staff training (approx. 40 responses)

Respondents were then asked **if they agreed that Upton, Broadway and Hagley should become fully community managed libraries**. The total number of respondents that answered the question is again included in the vertical axis, and that convention will be followed throughout the document.

Figure 8: Agreement on full community libraries

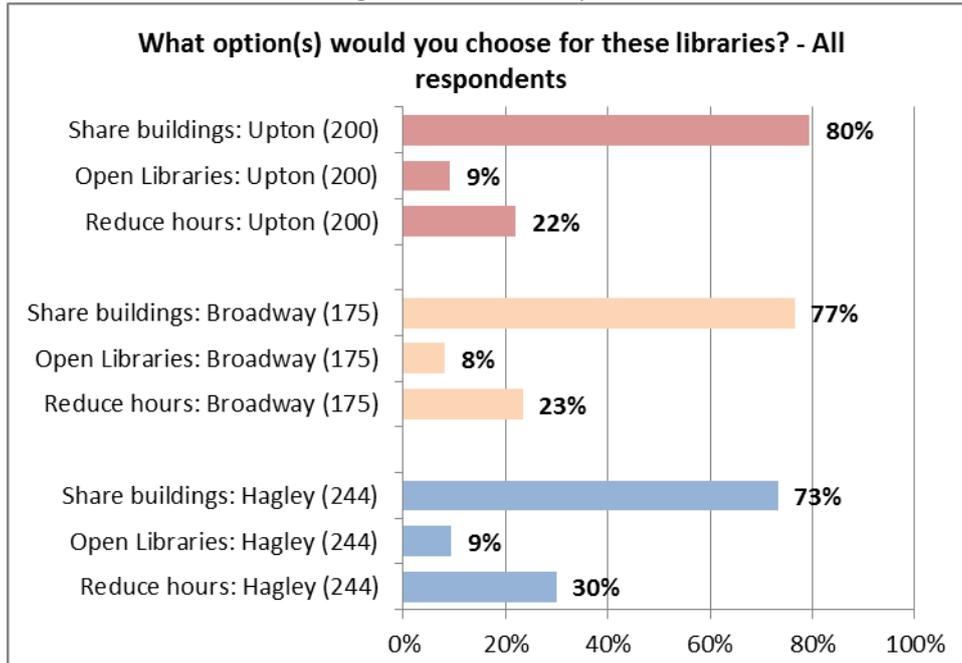


Around 30% of respondents agreed that Hagley, Broadway and Upton should become fully community managed libraries.

- Less than a quarter of respondents who visit Hagley most often agreed that it should become a fully community managed library, lower than the average across all respondents
- There were very few respondents who indicated that they visited Broadway most often, so no meaningful results are available for this
- Less than 20% of respondents who indicated that they attend Upton library most often agreed with the proposal for the library to become a fully community managed library. This is lower than the proportion in agreement across all respondents

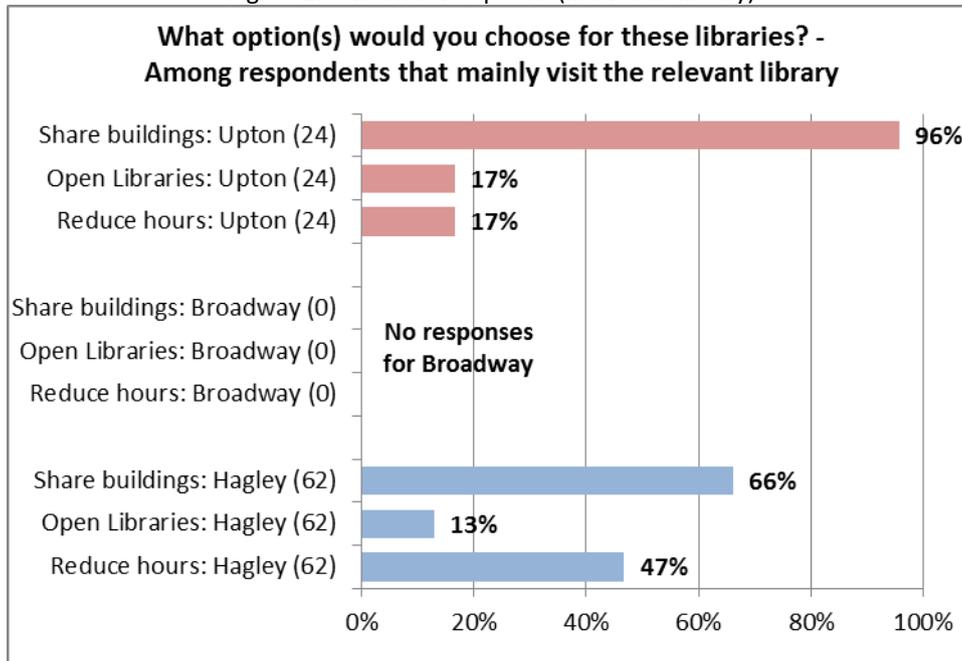
Respondents who stated that they did not agree with the proposal for each of the libraries to become a fully community managed library were then asked **what options they would choose for these libraries**.

Figure 9: Alternative options



Respondents who disagreed with the proposal were most likely to be in favour of sharing buildings with other community services. This option had the support of between 70% and 80% for each of the libraries among those that disagreed with the option for the libraries to become fully community managed. Only about a quarter of respondents who disagreed with the proposal felt that these libraries should run with reduced hours, whilst less than 10% thought that "Open Libraries" should be implemented.

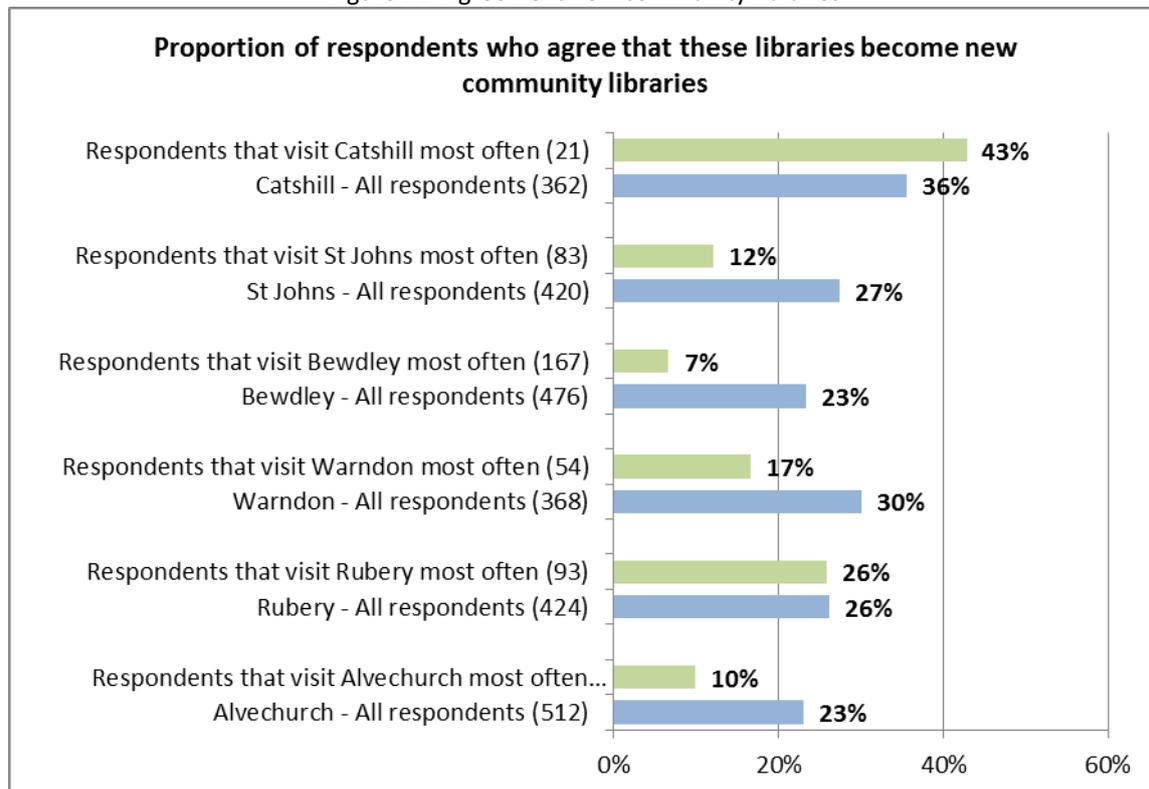
Figure 10: Alternative options (individual library)



## 1.1. Proposal – New Community Managed Libraries

It was suggested that the libraries at Alvechurch, Rubery, Warndon, Bewdley, St Johns and Catshill become new community managed libraries. Respondents were asked **if they agreed with these proposals**.

Figure 11: Agreement new community libraries



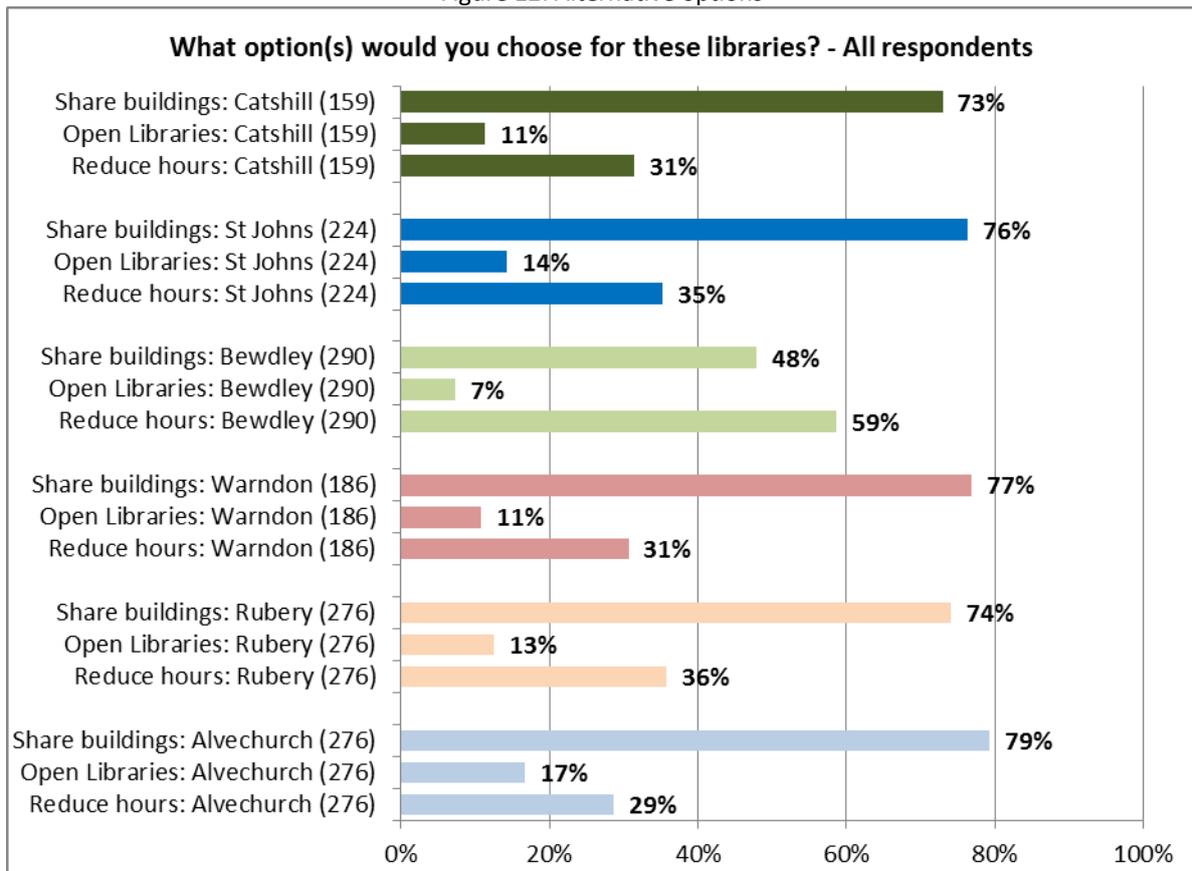
Respondents were in general against the proposals for these libraries to become new community libraries. Just over a third of respondents agreed with the proposal that Catshill become a new community managed library, whilst support for this to be the way forward for the other libraries was even lower, at between 20% and 30%.

- Only 10% of respondents who mainly visit Alvechurch agreed with the proposal that it should become a new community library, notably lower than the average across all respondents
- Just over a quarter of respondents who most often visit Rubery agreed that the library should become a new community library, similar to the average for all respondents
- Support for Warndon library becoming a new community library was at less than 20% among respondents who attend Warndon library most often, lower than the proportion in agreement for all respondents
- Less than 10% of respondents who mainly visit Bewdley library agreed that the library should become a new community library, notably lower than the average across all respondents

- Just over 10% of respondents who most often attend St Johns library were in agreement with the proposal, lower than the proportion of all respondents in favour
- Support for the proposal that Catshill become a new community library is slightly higher than for the other proposed libraries but is still only just over 40% among respondents that are most likely to visit Catshill. This is slightly higher than the average across all respondents

Respondents who stated that they did not agree with the proposal for each of the libraries to become a new community managed library were then asked **what options they would choose for these libraries.**

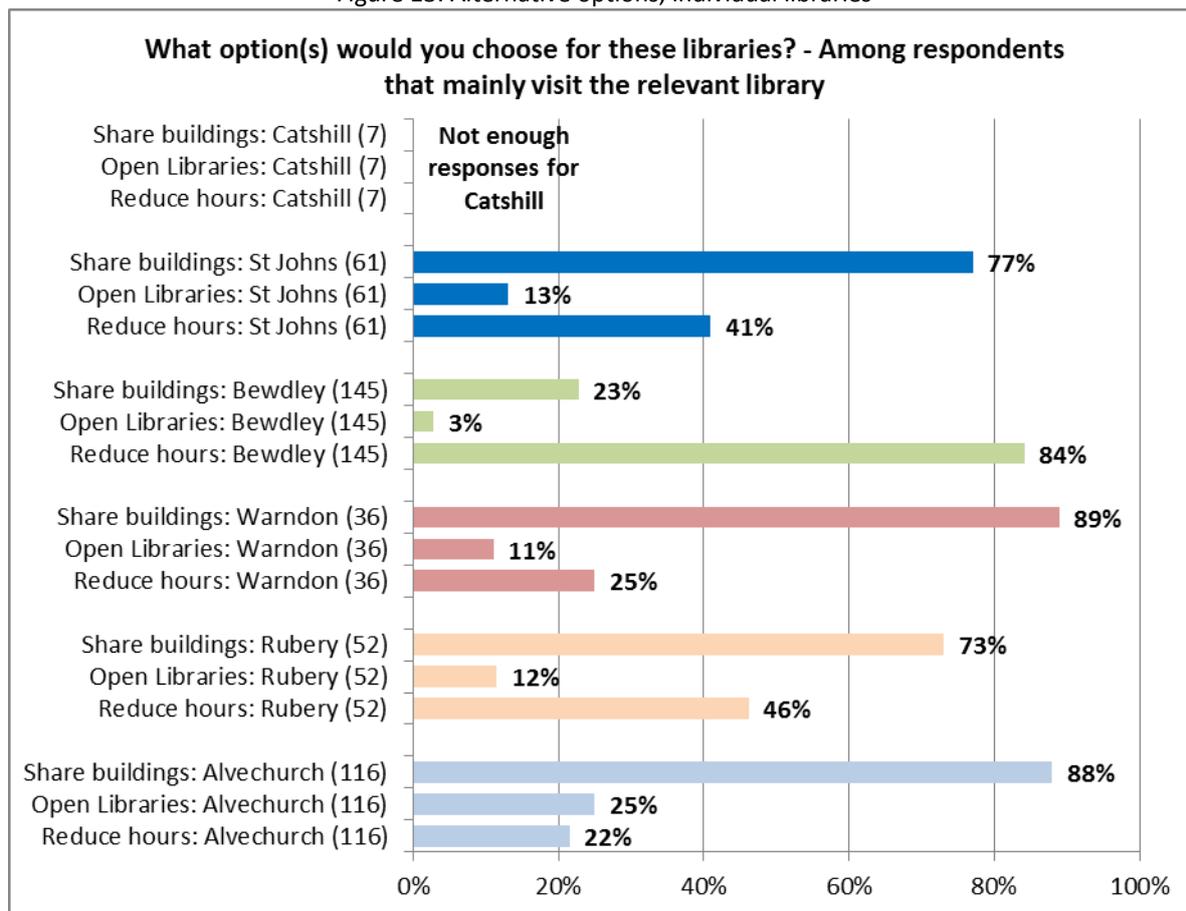
Figure 12: Alternative options



Respondents who disagreed with the proposal for these libraries to become new community managed libraries were in general most likely to feel that the libraries should share buildings with other community services. Agreement for this suggestion was between 70% and 80% across all libraries, with the exception of Bewdley, where the proportion in favour was just less than 50%.

About a third of respondents thought that these libraries should reduce their hours, again with the exception of Bewdley, where proportions were almost 60%. Support for the suggestion to implement open libraries was low across all of these libraries.

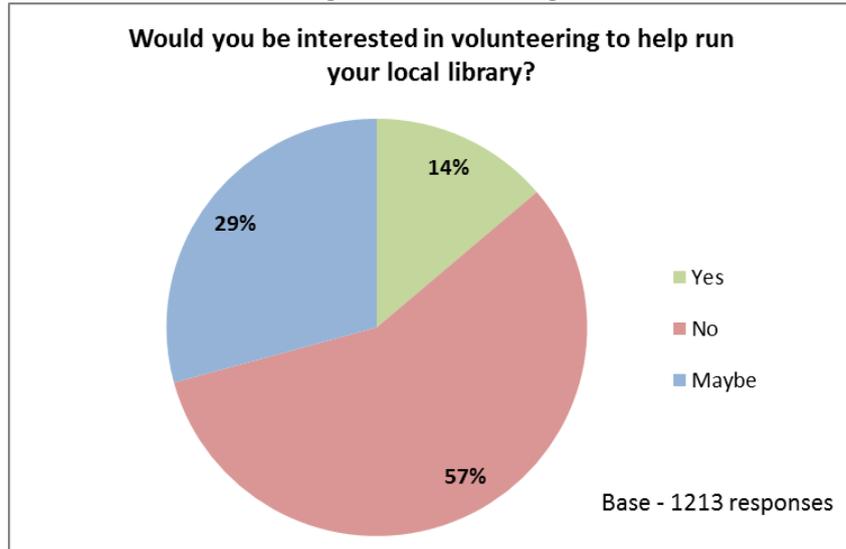
Figure 13: Alternative options, individual libraries



Among respondents who mainly visit the library in question, support for sharing buildings with other community services was almost 90% for Alvechurch and Warndon, and over 70% for St Johns and Rubery. In contrast, this suggestion had lower support at around a quarter of respondents among those attending Bewdley, where support was much higher for reducing hours than is the case for the other libraries. Support for implementing open libraries was low for all libraries. Catshill has no meaningful results available due to low response numbers.

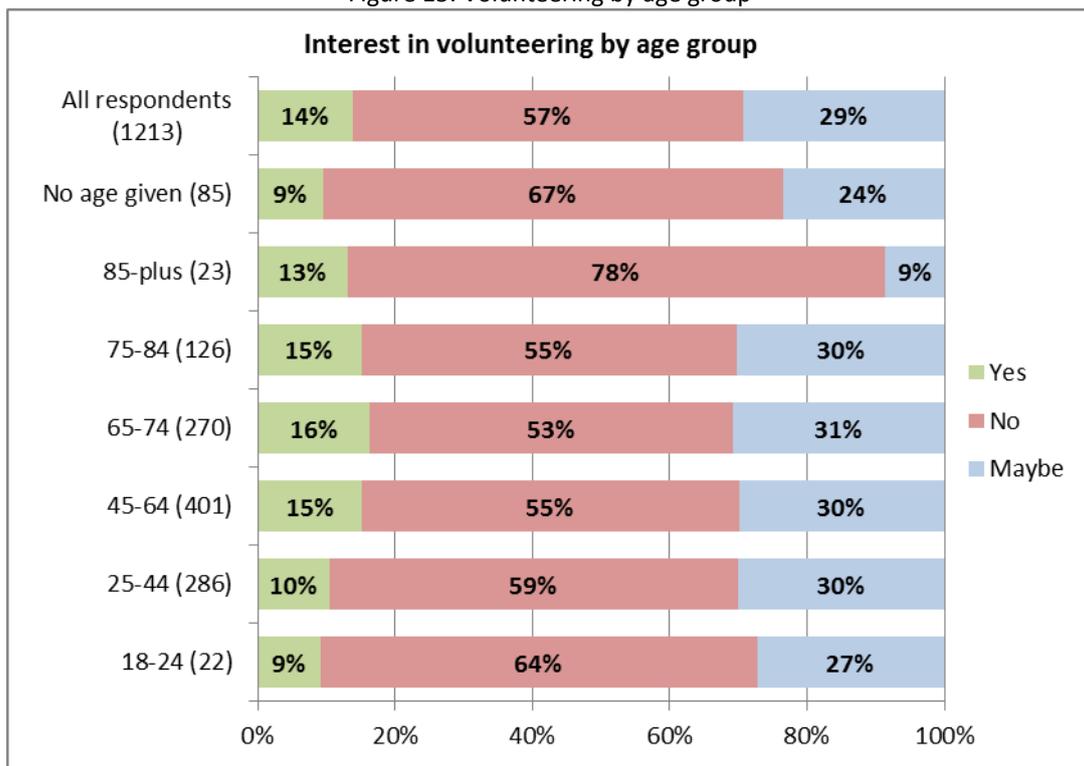
Respondents answering questions about Community Managed Libraries were asked **if they would be interested in helping to run their local libraries**

Figure 14: volunteering



167 people, representing 14% of respondents who answered, said that they would be interested in volunteering to help run their local library, with a further 29% (355 respondents) stating that they "maybe" interested.

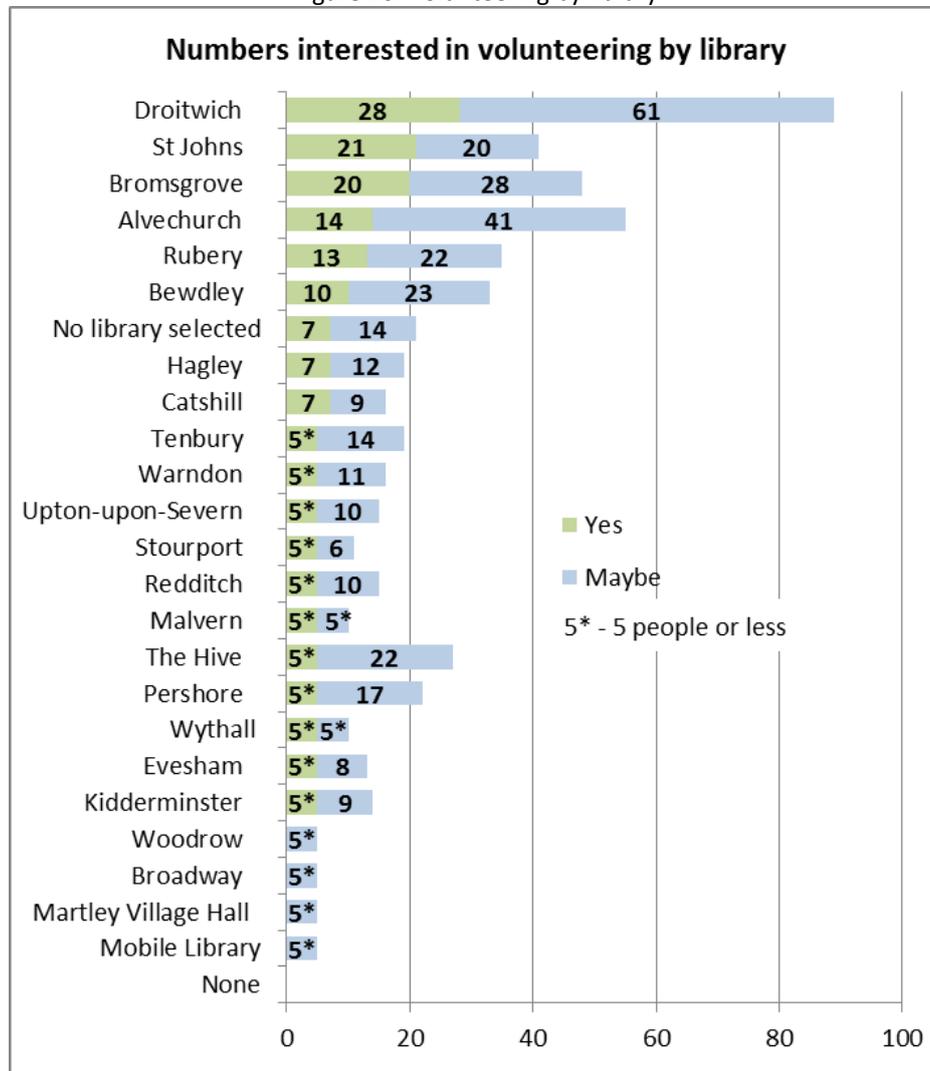
Figure 15: Volunteering by age group



There is not a big difference in interest in volunteering when split by age group, although those in younger age groups are slightly less likely to be interested, perhaps due in part to work and / or family commitments.

The number of respondents interested in volunteering, split by the library that they visit most often, is presented below to give an indication of the potential level of volunteering at the local level. Figures less than 5 have been suppressed and rounded up for confidentiality purposes.

Figure 16: Volunteering by library

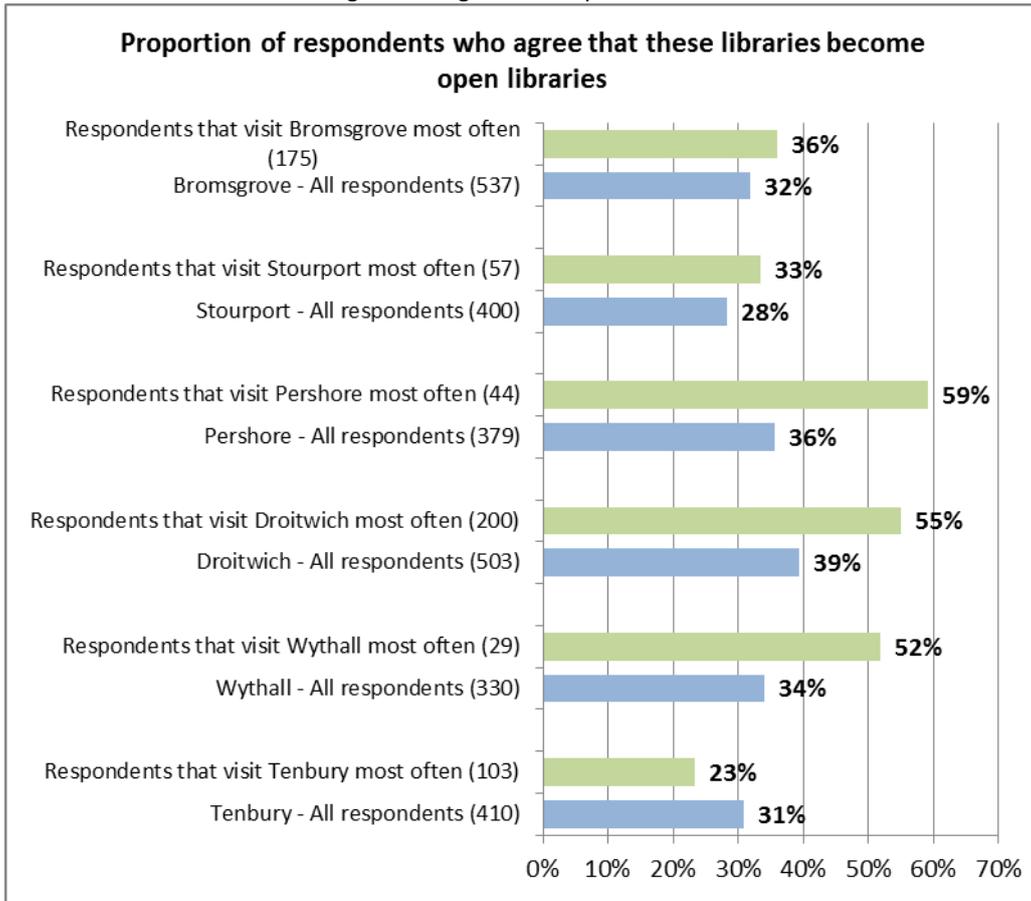


28 respondents who stated that they would be interested in volunteering visit Droitwich library most often, with a further 61 respondents attending Droitwich saying that they may be interested. Over 20 respondents most likely to attend St Johns and Bromsgrove also indicated that they would be interested in volunteering. Each of Alvechurch, Rubery and Bewdley had over 10 respondents who usually go to these libraries stating that they would be interested in volunteering.

## 1.2. Proposal - Open Libraries

A description of Open Libraries was made available to respondents in the Worcestershire Libraries Consultation Document. It was suggested that libraries at Tenbury, Wythall, Droitwich, Pershore, Stourport and Bromsgrove become Open Libraries. Respondents were asked **if they agreed with these proposals**.

Figure 17: Agreement open libraries



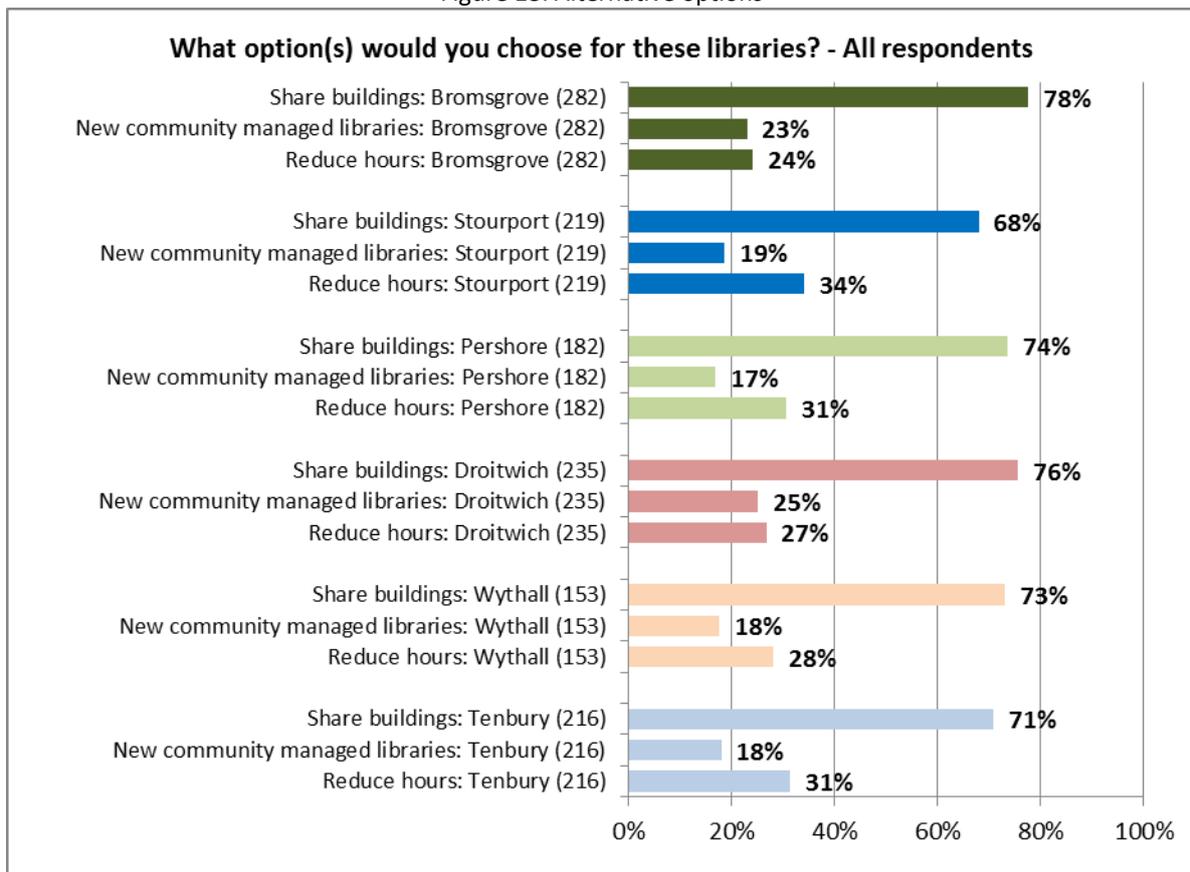
Support for the proposals to implement open libraries across these libraries varied from nearly 40% for Droitwich down to less than 30% for Stourport. Around a third of respondents were in agreement for the other libraries.

- Less than a quarter of respondents who visit Tenbury library most often agreed that the library should become an open library, lower than the proportion for all respondents
- Just over a half of respondents who mostly visit Wythall agreed that the library should become an open library. This is higher than the proportion in agreement across all responses
- Over half of respondents that visit Droitwich most often felt that the library should become an open library, higher than the proportion across all respondents
- Almost 60% of respondents who usually go to Pershore were in favour of the library becoming an open library, higher than the average across all responses

- A third of respondents most likely to visit Stourport library agreed with the proposal, slightly higher than the proportion across all responses
- Just over a third of respondents who attend Bromsgrove most often were in agreement with the proposal for Bromsgrove library to become an open library

Respondents who stated that they did not agree with the proposal for each of the libraries to become an open library were then asked **what options they would choose for these libraries**.

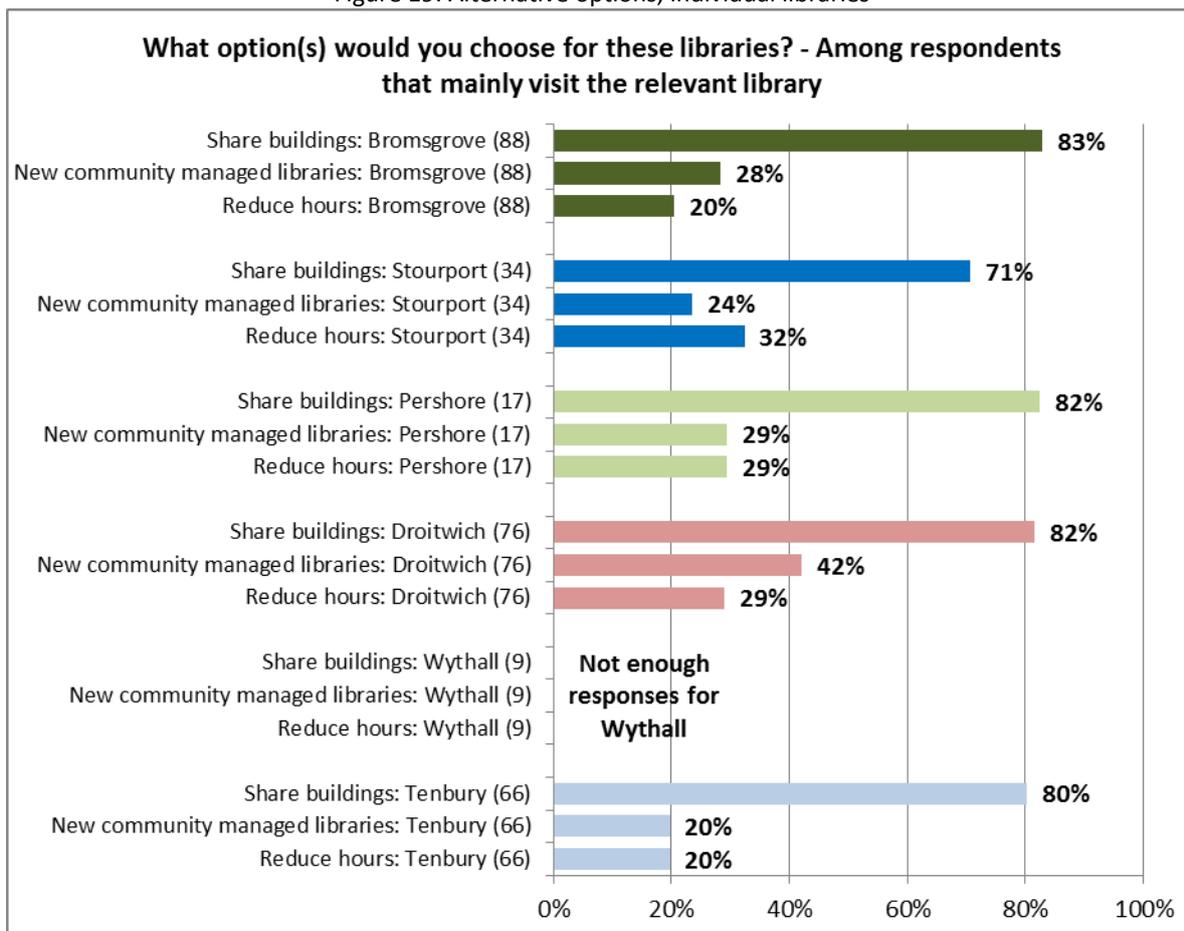
Figure 18: Alternative options



In general, a higher proportion of all respondents were in favour of sharing buildings than were in favour of the other alternative proposals. Support for sharing buildings was over 80% in the case of Bromsgrove library, and was around the 70% mark for the other libraries.

Support for the other alternative options was lower. Support for reduced hours was around a third across each of these libraries, with support for community managed libraries in general slightly lower.

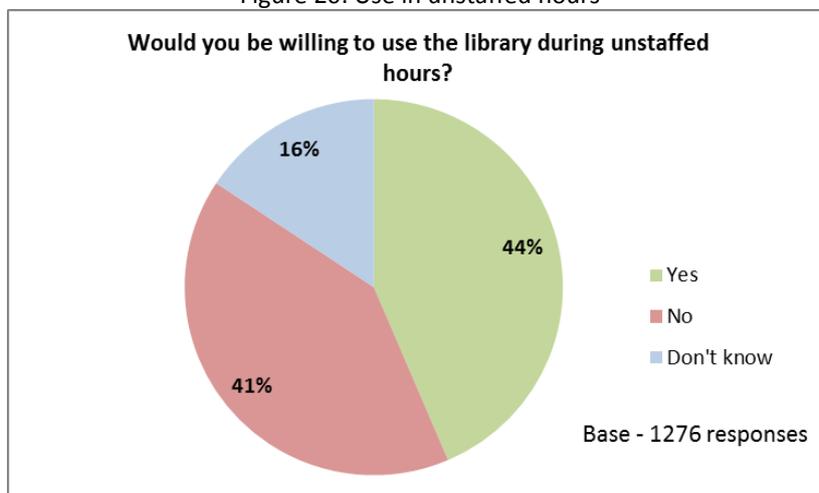
Figure 19: Alternative options, individual libraries



Support for sharing buildings among respondents that mainly visited these libraries was high, at over 70% for Stourport and over 80% across other libraries. Just over 40% thought that a new community managed library could be implemented in Droitwich, with support for other alternative options low at under a third. Wythall had low numbers of responses so is omitted from the analysis.

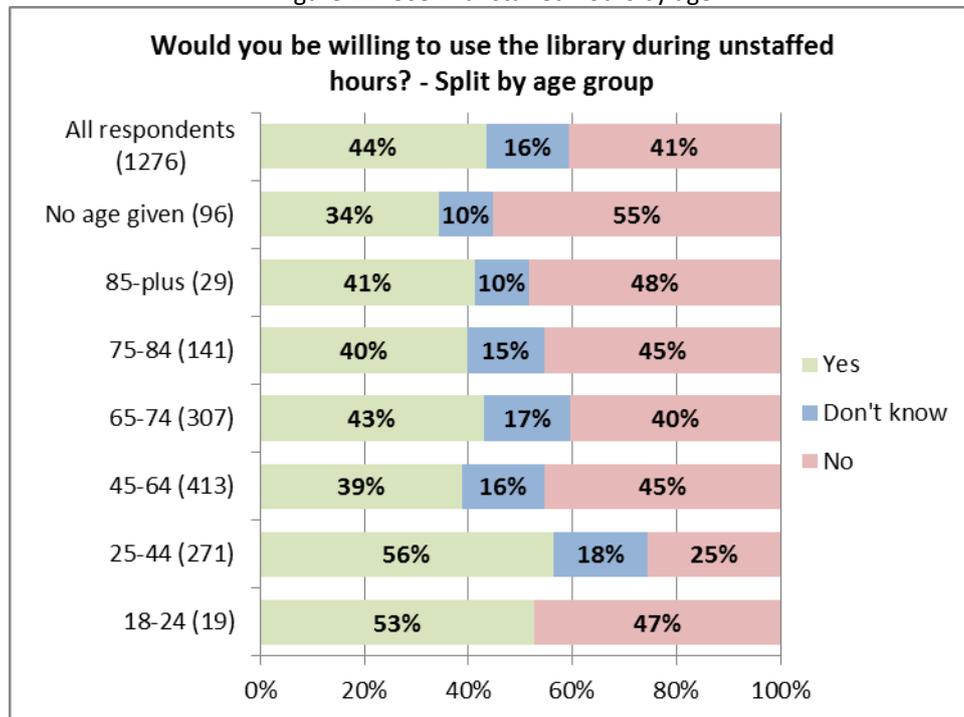
Respondents were then asked **if they would be willing to use the library during unstaffed hours.**

Figure 20: Use in unstaffed hours



In total, 44% of all respondents suggested that they would be willing to use the library during unstaffed hours, with more than 40% of respondents indicating that they would not be willing to use the library when unstaffed.

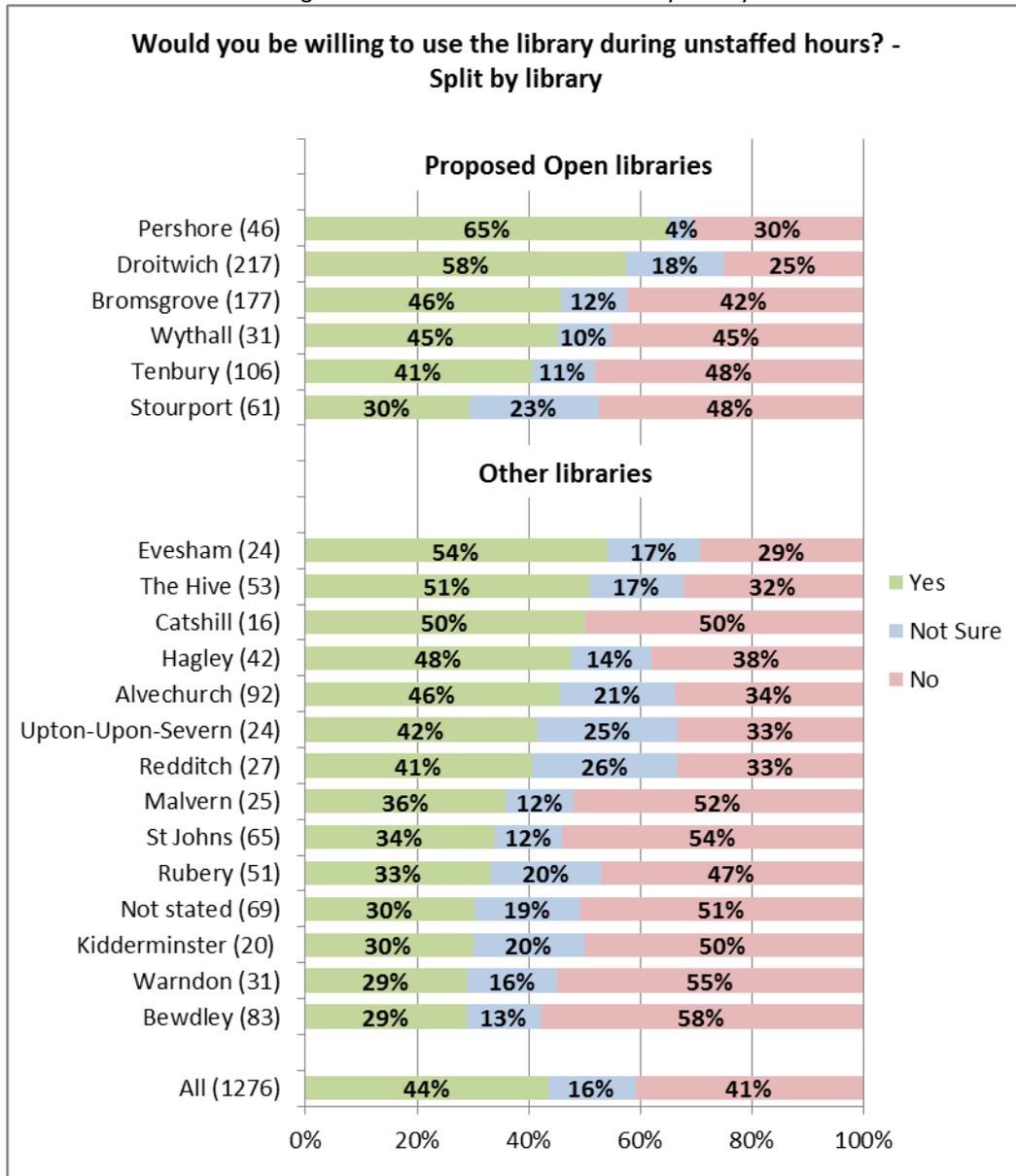
Figure 21: Use in unstaffed hours by age



Analysis split by age group showed that a slightly higher proportion of younger people would be willing to use the library when unstaffed. Over 50% of respondents in the 18-24 and 25-44 age groups indicated that they would be happy to do this, compared to proportions of around 40% among older age groups.

The level of willingness to use libraries when unstaffed split by most commonly visited library was then considered. Broadway and Woodrow are omitted due to low numbers of responses for these libraries.

Figure 222: Use in unstaffed hours by library

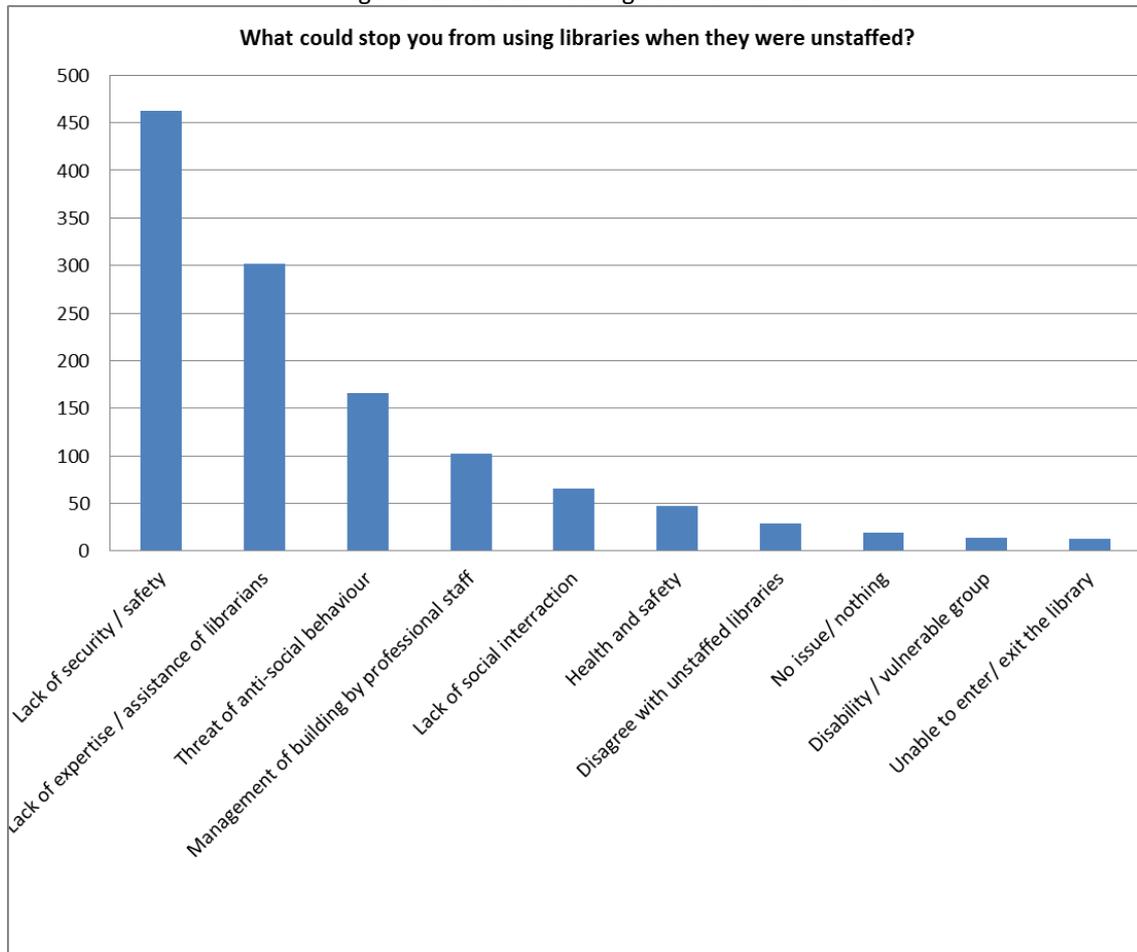


Among libraries for which the proposal was to implement Open libraries, respondents who most often go to Pershore are most likely to be willing to use libraries during unstaffed hours, at almost two thirds of respondents. Proportions of respondents who mainly visit Droitwich who would be willing to use the library during unstaffed hours are also relatively high, at almost 60%, with one quarter saying that they definitely would not use the libraries when unstaffed. Proportions that definitely would not use the libraries when unstaffed for the other libraries proposed to have open libraries implemented are between 40% and 50%.

Among other libraries, the proportion of those that mainly visit Evesham, The Hive and Catshill who would be willing to use the library during unstaffed hours are at over 50%. In contrast, over 50% definitely would not use the library when unstaffed among respondents who usually attend Bewdley, Warndon, Kidderminster, St Johns and Malvern.

Respondents were asked **what could stop them from using the library when they were unstaffed**. The main themes identified from the analysis of the free text responses are illustrated in Figure 233.

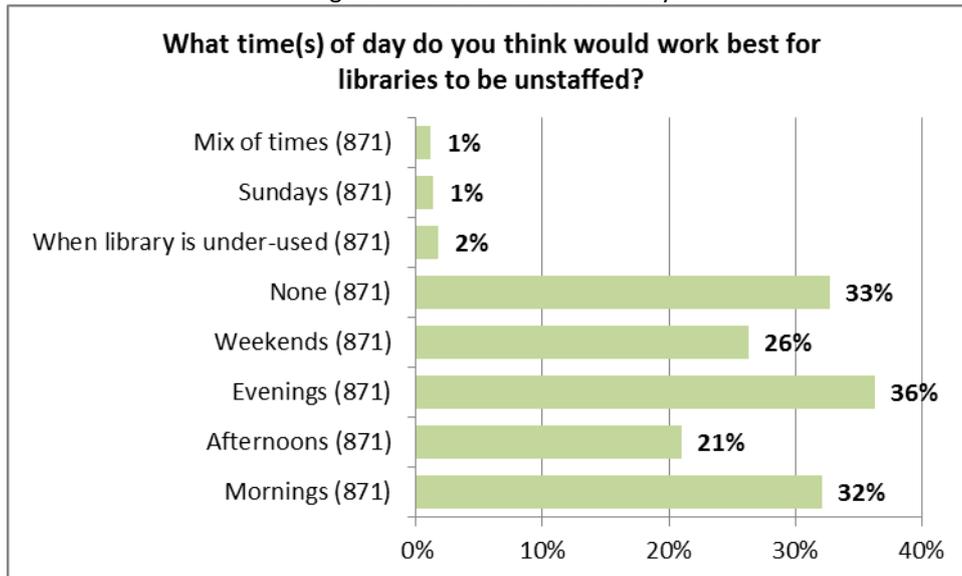
Figure 233: issues affecting use in unstaffed hours



Over 450 respondents cited security and safety issues as a potential barrier to using the library during unstaffed hours, with another 150-plus suggesting that fears of bad or anti-social behaviour from other users may prevent them from going into the library when staff are not present. Around 300 respondents felt that they would miss the expertise and assistance from library staff, whilst lack of social interaction was also often mentioned as a possible reason to not want to go to the library when unstaffed.

Respondents were then asked **what time(s) of day they thought would work best for libraries to be unstaffed**. A number of options were given from which respondents could select more than one option, with the additional opportunity for respondent to write their own suggestions. These responses have been combined in Figure 24 overleaf.

Figure 24: Unstaffed times of day

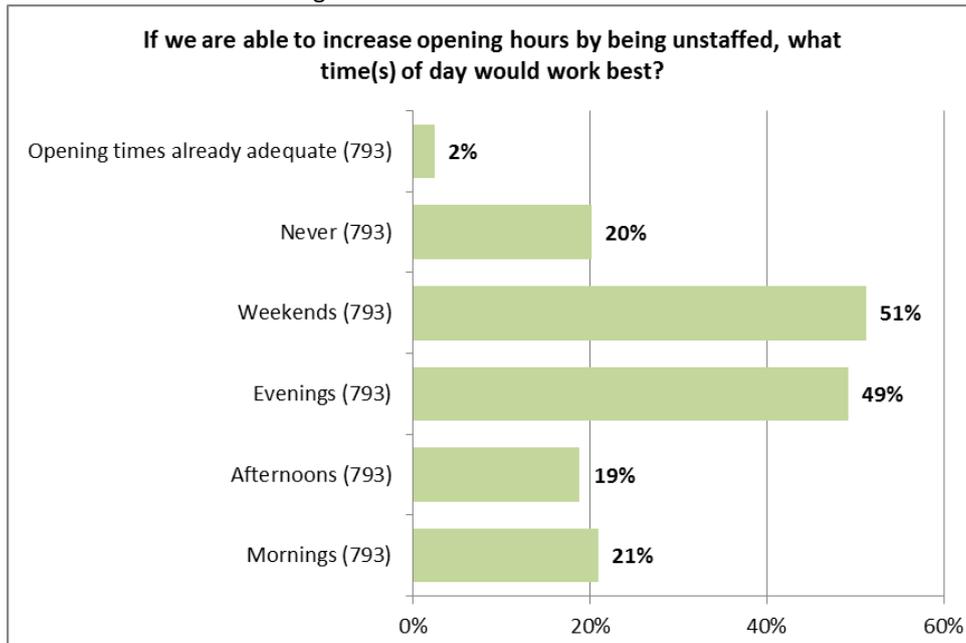


Just over a third of respondents suggested that it would work well for the library to be unstaffed in the evenings, with slightly fewer suggesting it could work well in the mornings. Just over a quarter thought that unstaffed libraries would be appropriate at weekends, with just over 20% thinking the afternoons would be a good time to try this.

A third of respondents stated that they thought no time was appropriate for the library to be unstaffed. A small number of respondents stated the best time would vary from library to library and it should be when most appropriate for each library at times of the lowest usage, whilst others thought a mix of times may work well.

Respondents were then asked **what time(s) of day would work if the libraries were able to extend opening hours by being unstaffed at these times**. Again, respondents could tick more than one option from those available, with the additional possibility for respondent to write their own comments.

Figure 25: Increased hours unstaffed



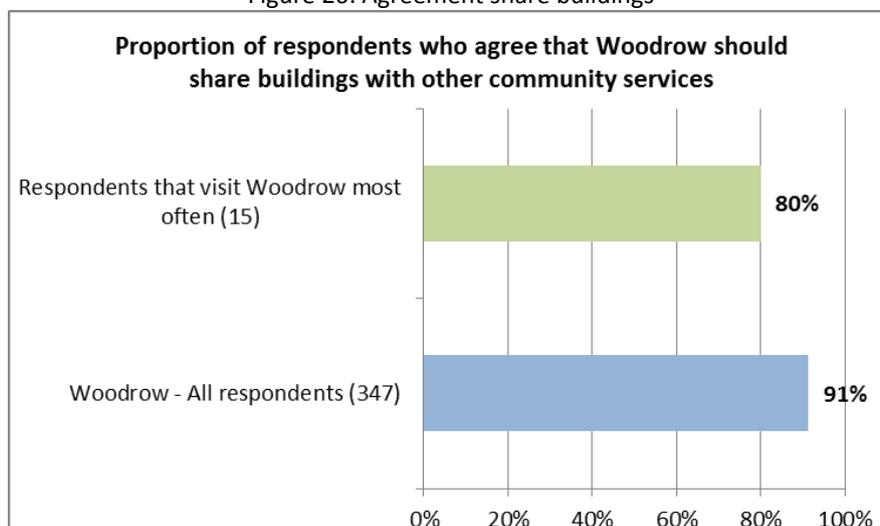
Almost a half of respondents thought evenings would be a good time to extend hours, with a similar proportion thinking the weekend would work well. A similar proportion (about a fifth) thought extended hours would work best in afternoons and mornings.

20% of respondents suggested that if the library was unstaffed they wouldn't want the opening hours increased. A small number of respondents said that the current opening hours were adequate.

### 1.3. Proposal – Share buildings with other Community Services

At Woodrow Library it was suggested that opportunities to share buildings with other community services were sought. Respondents were asked **if they agreed with this proposal**.

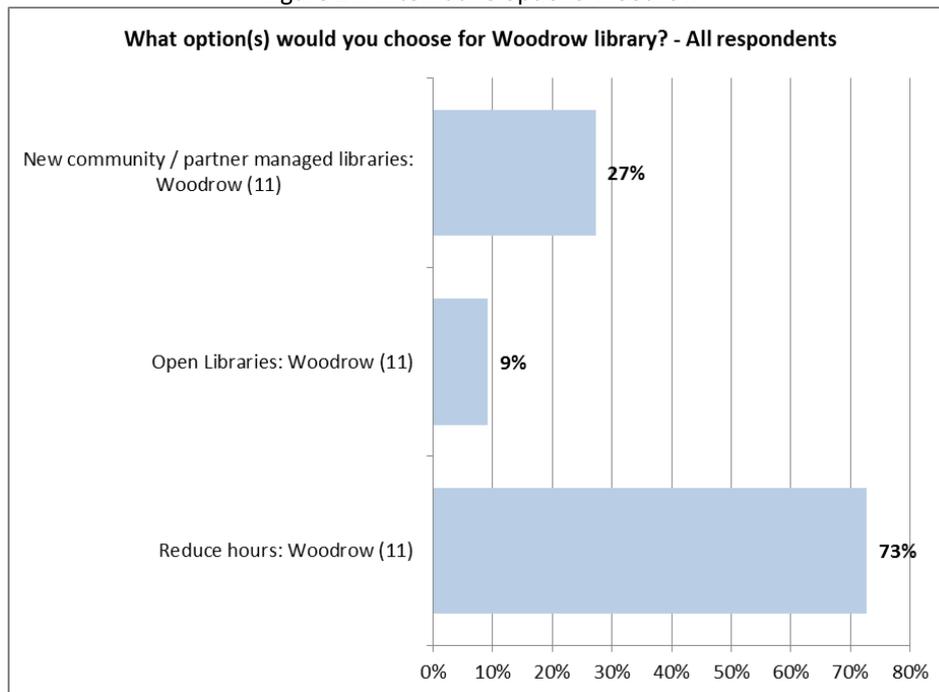
Figure 26: Agreement share buildings



Over 90% of all respondents stated that they agreed with the proposal that Woodrow should share buildings with other community services. Support is also high for this approach, at 80%, among respondents that mainly visit Woodrow library.

Respondents who stated that they did not agree with the proposal for Woodrow to share buildings with other community services were then asked **what options they would choose for Woodrow**. Numbers of responses are relatively low, but are displayed for completeness.

Figure 27: Alternative options Woodrow



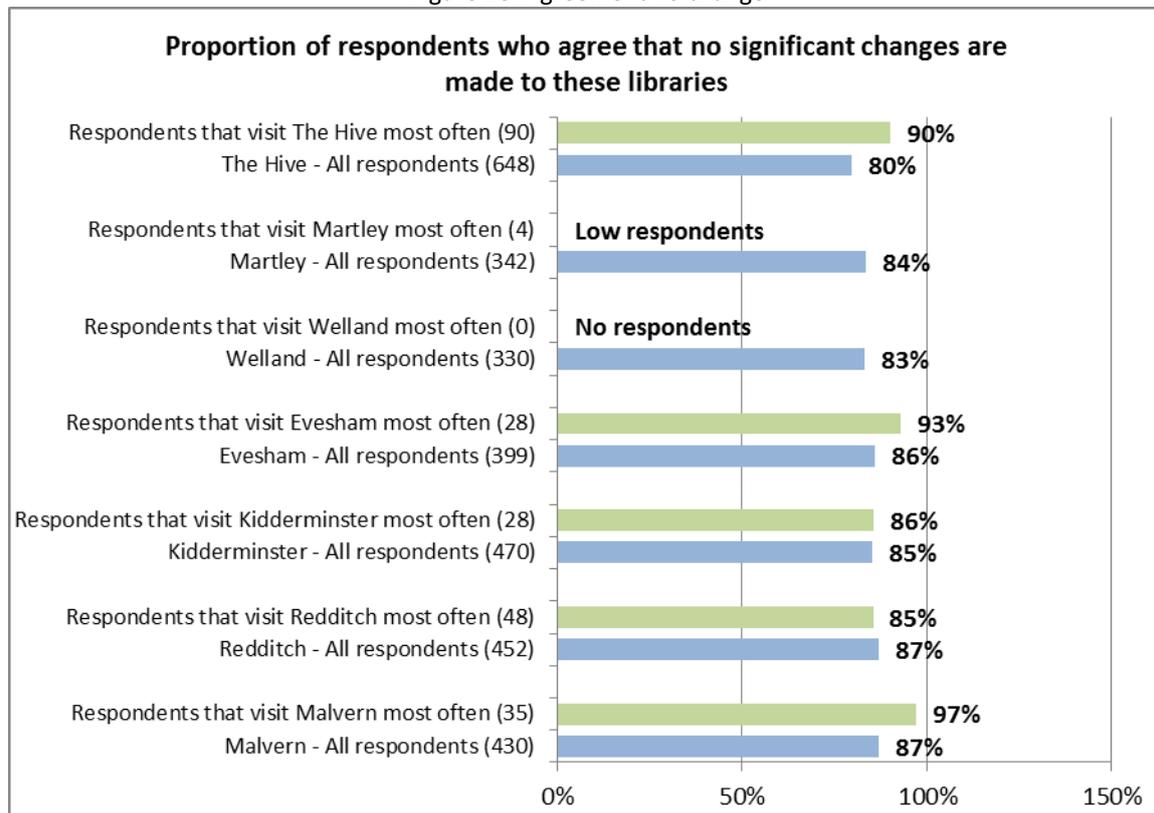
Proportions for alternative options among respondents who mainly attend Woodrow library are omitted as only three responses were received, too small to glean meaningful results.

Almost three quarters of respondents who disagreed with the proposal that Woodrow should share buildings with other community services thought that the library should reduce opening hours. Other alternative proposals were less popular, with just a quarter of respondents in favour of Woodrow becoming a new community managed library, and less than 10% in favour of making Woodrow an open library.

## 1.4. Proposal – No Significant Changes

It was suggested that no significant changes are made to the libraries at The Hive, Malvern, Redditch, Kidderminster, Evesham, Welland, and Martley. Respondents were asked **if they agreed with these proposals**.

Figure 28: Agreement no change



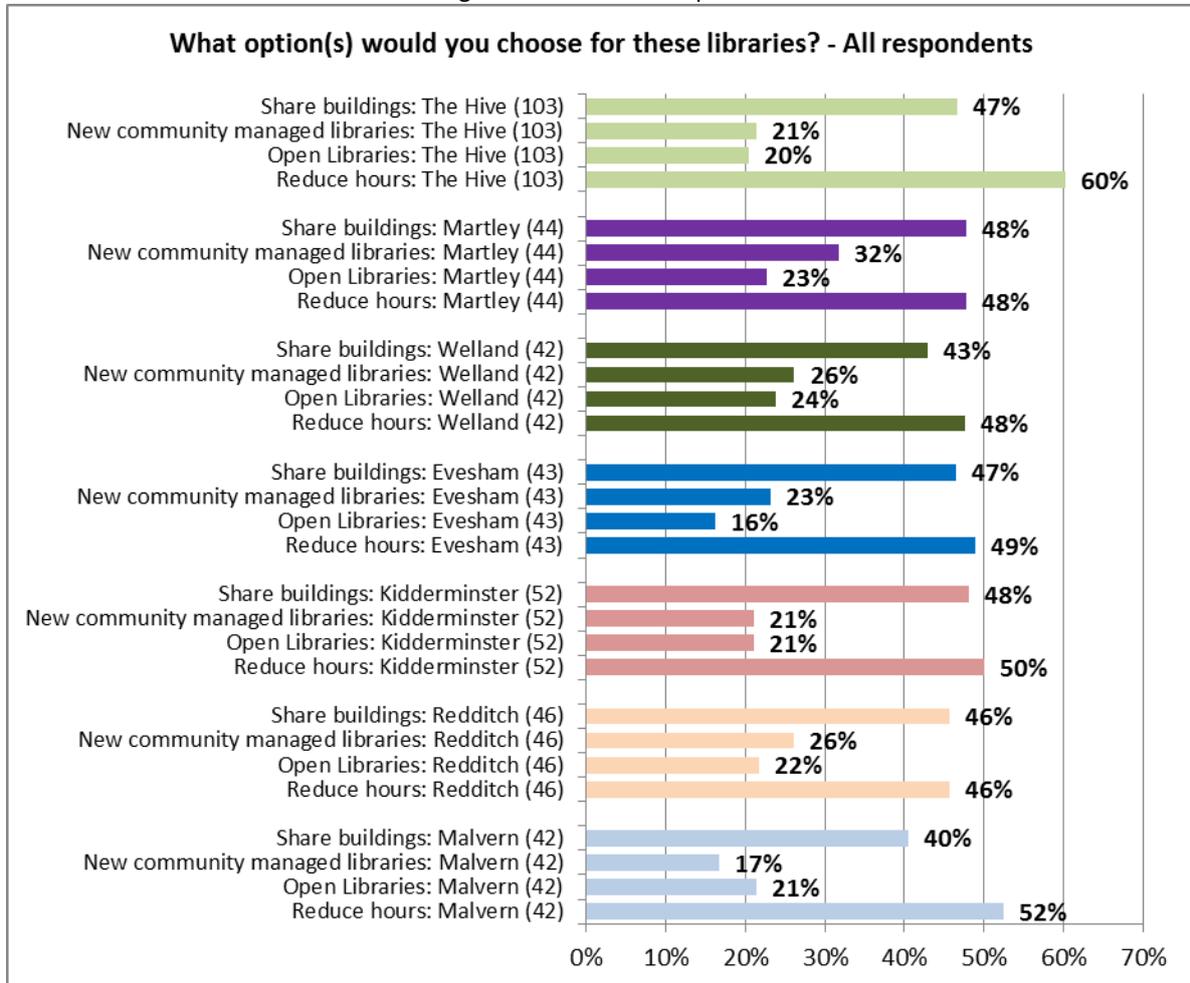
Respondents were generally in favour of these libraries having no significant changes. Agreement for each library was between 80% and 90% of all respondents.

- Support for Malvern having no significant changes among respondents who mainly visit Malvern library was very high at 97%, higher than across all respondents
- The proportion in agreement that no significant changes be made to Redditch was high among respondents that usually go to Redditch library at 85%
- Support among respondents that mainly visit Kidderminster library was high at 86%, about the same as the average across all respondents
- Over 90% of respondents that usually attend Evesham library were in agreement that no significant changes should be made, slightly higher than the proportion among all respondents
- No respondents indicated that they visit Welland most often, so no comparison can be made for this library
- Only four respondents indicated that they visit Martley most often, which is not enough to give meaningful results

- 90% of respondents who mainly visit The Hive felt that there should be no significant changes to the library, higher than the level of support across all respondents

Respondents who stated that they did not agree with the proposal for each of the libraries to have no significant changes were then asked **what options they would choose for these libraries**.

Figure 29: Alternative options



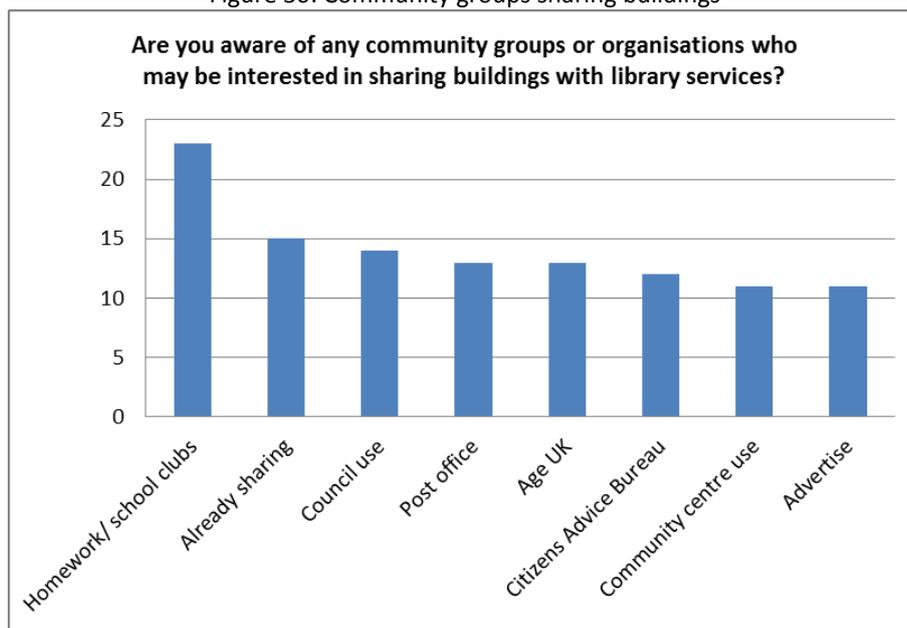
Respondents who disagreed with the proposals in general were more in favour for each of these libraries to either share buildings or reduce opening hours. 60% of respondents that thought some changes should be imposed thought that The Hive should reduce opening hours, with around half of respondents who favoured significant changes feeling that the other libraries should reduce hours. Support for sharing buildings among respondents who supported significant changes was between 40% and 50%.

Support for the other two options across all of the libraries was much lower, with open libraries suggested by about a quarter of respondents who supported significant changes for each of these libraries, and similar proportions in favour of introducing community managed libraries for these libraries.

## 2. Community groups and organisations

Throughout the survey, when respondents disagreed with the proposed option for an individual library then suggested that the library could share buildings, they were asked **if they were aware of any community groups or organisations that may be interested in sharing buildings with library services**. Responses such as "No" and "Don't know" were numerous and have been excluded from Figure below which summarises the most frequent responses. Full details of all the free text comments are available to library managers and are being used to develop future plans.

Figure 30: Community groups sharing buildings



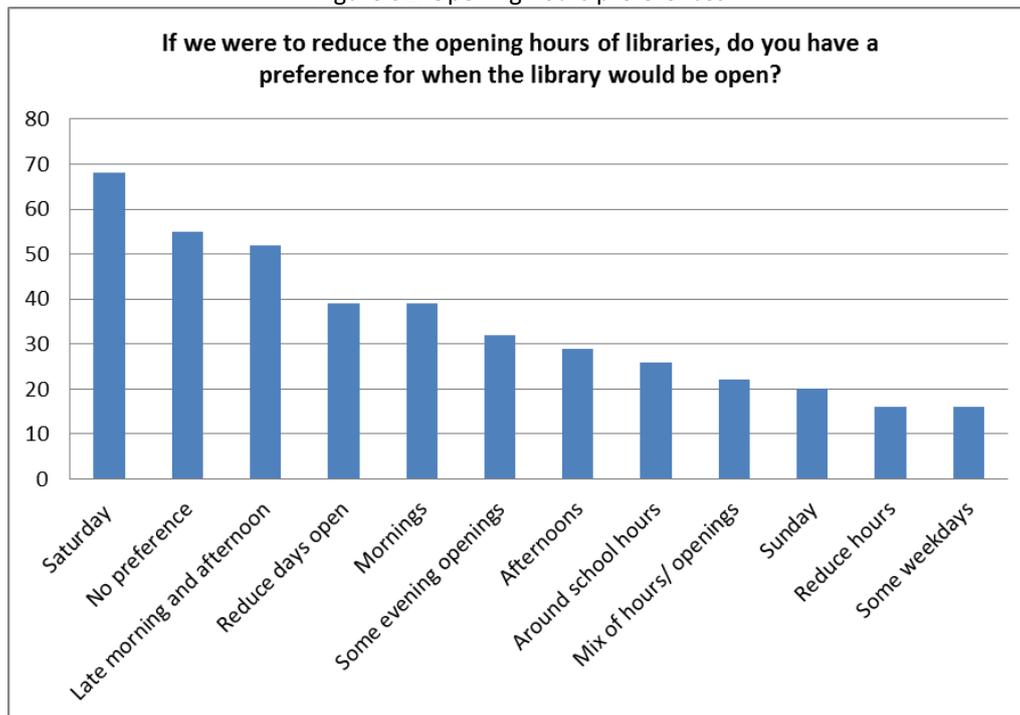
Similarly, respondents throughout the survey who suggested that a library could become a new community managed library were asked **if they were aware of any community groups or organisations that could set up a community library**.

Once responses such as "No" and "Don't know" were removed, responses were low, and only "Schools, colleges and universities" received more than 10 suggestions. Small numbers of respondents also mentioned U3A and parish / district councils as potential organisations

### 3. Reducing opening hours

Respondents who disagreed with the proposed option for an individual library then suggested that the library could reduce their opening hours were asked **if they had a preference for when the library should remain open**, Figure 31 below summarises the most frequent responses.

Figure 31: Opening hours preferences



### 4. Further suggestions

Finally, respondents were asked throughout the survey **if they had any further suggestions for their local libraries not covered in the consultation**. Full details of all the free text comments are available to library managers and are being used to develop future plans. The main themes identified in the analysis of this free text questions were:

- Disagreement with the proposals put forward and a preference for no changes to be made (approx. 260 responses)
- The importance of publically funded, council run libraries (approx. 100 responses)
- Changes to library opening hours (approx. 95 responses)
- The need for professional librarians (approx. 90 responses)
- Opportunities for shared buildings and community spaces (approx. 80 responses)
- Additional activities, groups and classes, including charged for events (approx. 60 responses)
- Savings to be made at libraries currently proposed to see no significant change, particularly the Hive (approx. 50 responses)

## 5. Views provided via other Channels

Residents were encouraged to provide their views via other channels in addition to the Survey. A summary of these channels and associated messages received are outlined below:

**Dedicated Postal Address and Dedicated Email Address were set up and monitored, to ensure ease of comment and collation of responses:**

**Number of Letters received:** 30 (In addition 34 Templated Letters were received concerning St Johns Library)

**Number of Emails received:** 96

**Petitions Received:**

### **Bewdley Library**

*'We, the undersigned, deplore the proposed withdrawal of funding by Worcestershire County Council from our highly valued Public Libraries. We urge them to retain Bewdley Library as it is – a professional service.'*

- 969 Signatories

### **Rubery Library**

*'Tory controlled Worcestershire County Council are now reviewing all their libraries as part of their cutbacks. If 'consultation' goes against them they will close. We the undersigned oppose the Tory plans which could lead to the closure of Rubery Library and call upon Worcestershire County Council to keep open and maintain the Rubery Library on its present site for the good of the local community.'*

- 1507 Signatories

### **St Johns Library**

*'Do you use St John's Library? Would you miss it if it was not there? Changes to opening hours and staffing are at the consultation stage. If you do not want it to change or would miss it if it was not available please sign the petition below, thank you.'*

- 1959 Signatories

### **Public Drop in Sessions**

- Public Drop in Sessions held in all 23 Service Points
- Led by Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities, Lucy Hodgson
- Attended by Officers
- Attendees – Approximately 800 People
- Feedback and Comments recorded

Key messages from Public Drop in Sessions included:

- Strong feeling that libraries operate essentially as Community Hubs and are vital community resources that need to be protected
- Share buildings with other services to enhance the local offer, and reduce costs to the library service
- Seek to maximise income generation
- Charging groups for Adult Learning classes, introducing higher charges for library services, introducing a coffee shop, hosting events, introducing sales of unwanted items and accepting more donations were all raised as potential ideas to reduce costs or bring in revenue

- Reticence to Open Plus Technology, but in the main, more appetite following further clarity and explanation about the system and use.
- Security and safety issues, anti-social behaviour, the need for expertise and assistance from library staff and lack of social interaction were all mentioned as potential barrier to using the library during unstaffed hours
- Community groups and organisations that attendees suggested may be interested in sharing buildings with library services were homework clubs and school clubs. Council services, the Post Office, Age UK and Citizen's Advice Bureau were all also mentioned as potentially interested.
- Importance of council retaining responsibility for, and oversight of, the service. Issues of capacity, reliability, consistency and accountability of volunteers were all cited as reasons to maintain at least partial paid staff presence or council oversight.
- Maximise the availability of facilities for community use
- Value of staff in supporting the community

#### **MP Briefings**

- MP Briefings created and circulated
- October 2018, November 2018, January 2019

#### **Member Briefings**

- Member Briefings 05 December 2018

#### **District Member Meetings**

- Meetings held in each of the 6 Districts – Members of County Council, Districts and Parishes invited to attend
- Led by Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities, Lucy Hodgson
- Attended by Officers
- Feedback and Comments recorded

#### **Schools**

- Schools contacted via Children's Portal
- Letter inviting participation and offering officer support to facilitate input
- Posters were submitted by pupils from schools in Warndon and Alvechurch

#### **Voluntary Organisations**

- Letter inviting participation and offering officer support to facilitate input
- 2 Mailshots via emails

#### **Press Releases (Pro-Active and Re-Active)**

- Throughout the Consultation Period

#### **Social Media**

- Throughout the Consultation Period

#### **Posters**

- In all 23 Service Points throughout the consultation

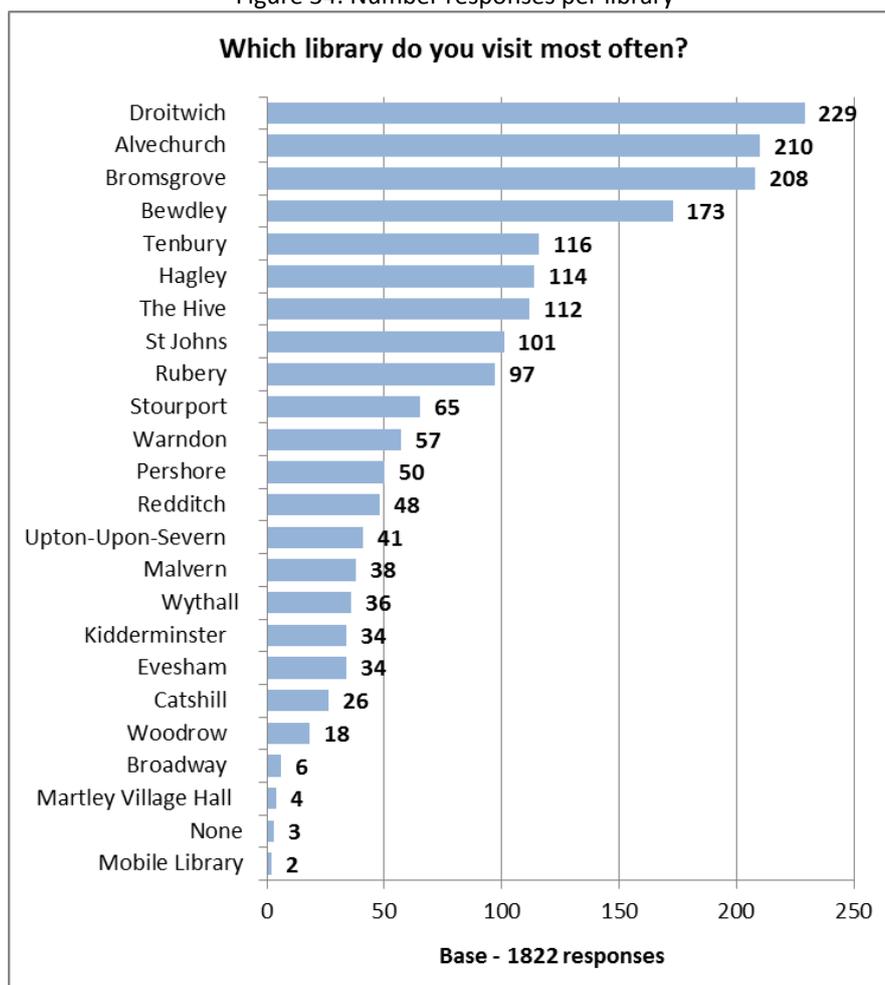
#### **Digital Displays**

- On available Library Screens throughout the Consultation Period
- On all County Hall Screens throughout the Consultation Period

## 6. Appendix - Demographics

At the end of the survey, several questions were asked of respondents to ensure that Worcestershire County Council was capturing views from all Worcestershire communities and to see if there were any significant differences between different groups. This data is presented here as an appendix to provide context for the main body of the report.

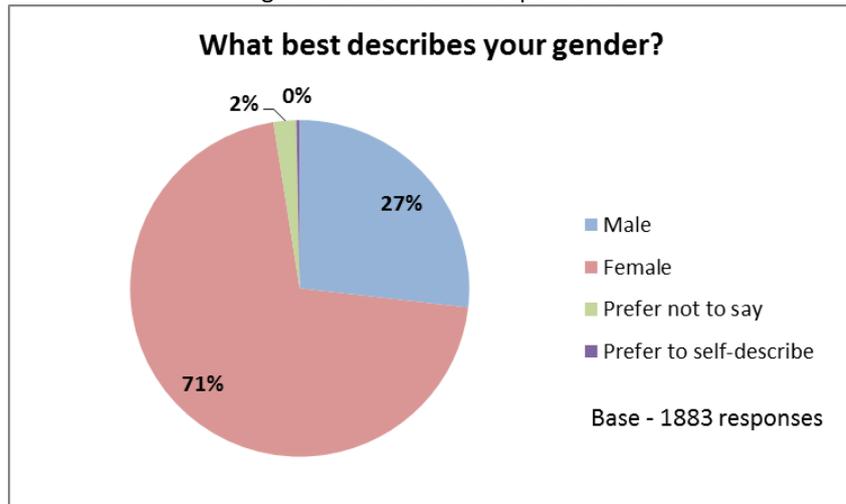
Figure 34: Number responses per library



Respondents were asked which library they visited most often. 229 (almost 13%) of respondents indicated that Droitwich Library was the one they visited most often, the highest percentage of all libraries. Alvechurch and Bromsgrove also had over 10% (over 200 people) of respondents saying this was the library they visited most often.

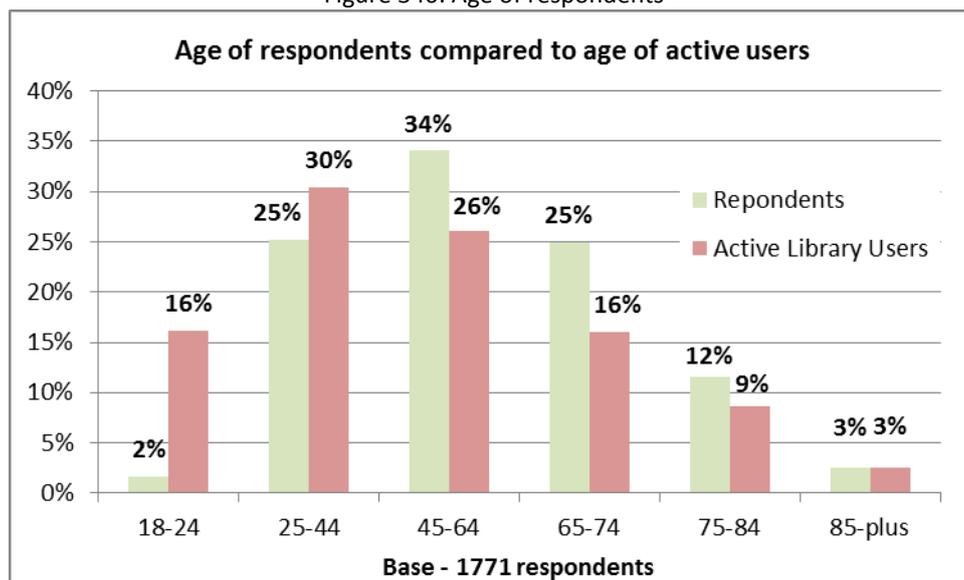
The lowest response rate was among respondents who most often visited Catshill, Woodrow, Broadway and Martley. No respondent indicated that they mostly attended Welland library.

Figure 335: Gender of respondents



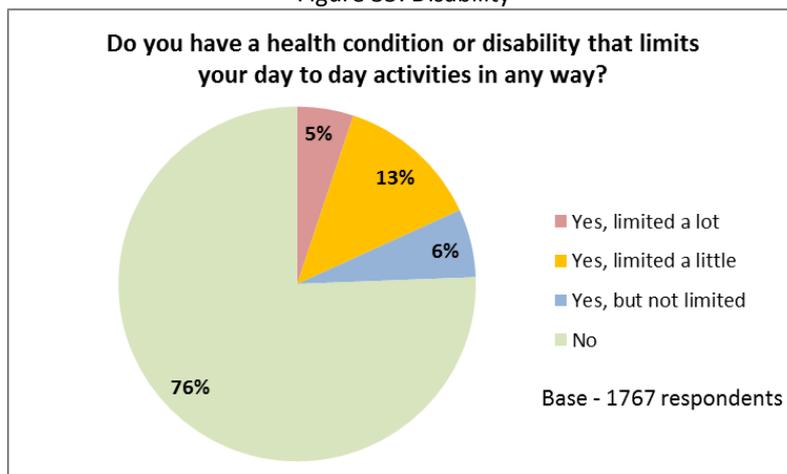
Females are over-represented in respondents with over 70% of respondents to the survey female. This compares to a 49:51 male: female split across the whole of the Worcestershire population.

Figure 346: Age of respondents



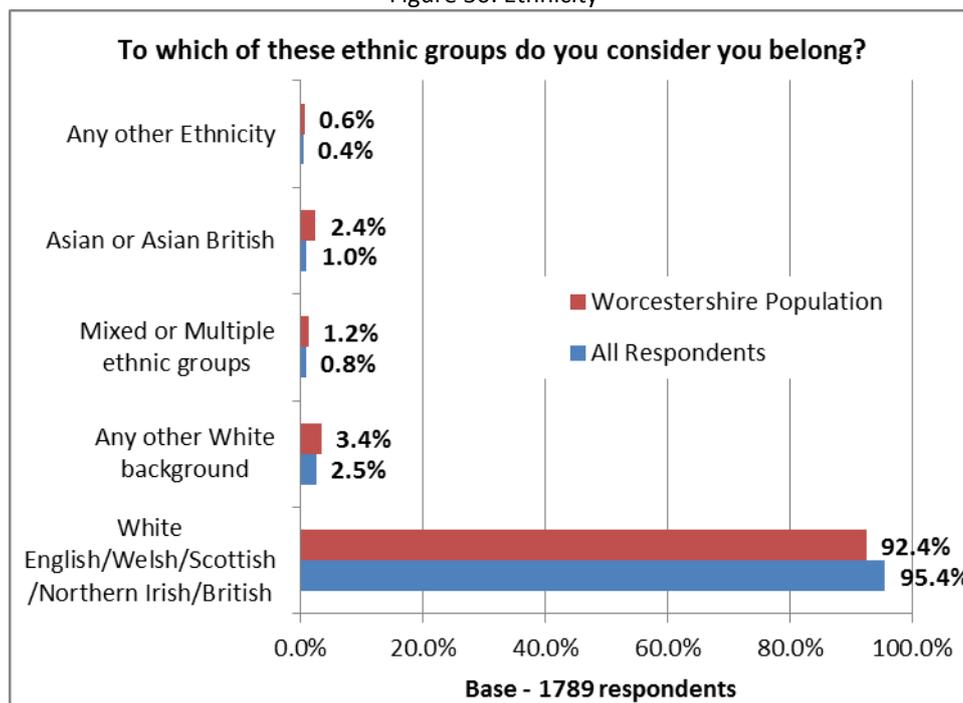
Older people are over-represented in survey respondents with almost 40% of respondents to the survey over 65. This compares to 22% across the whole of the population in Worcestershire, and 27% among active users in Worcestershire libraries. Young people aged 18-24 are the most under-represented age group in the survey with only 2% of respondents aged 18-24. People in this age range make up 7% of the population in the county, and 16% of active users across Worcestershire libraries.

Figure 35: Disability



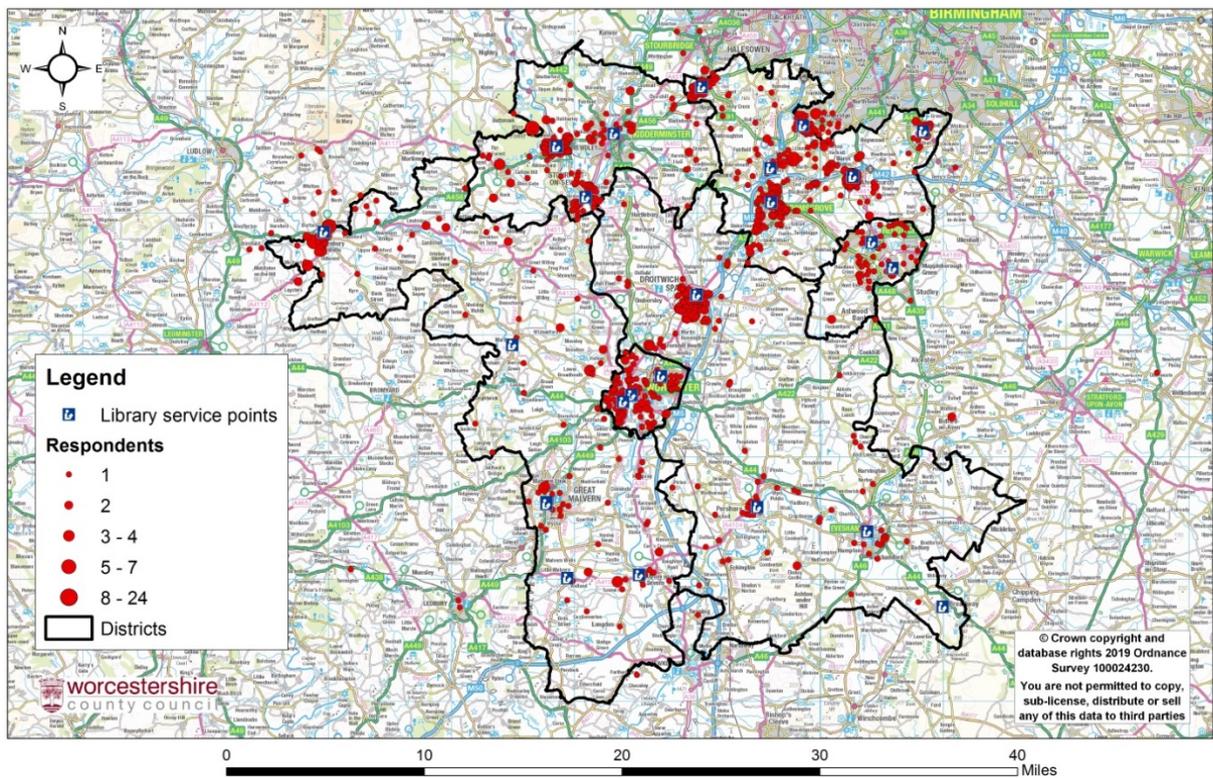
Disabled residents were well-represented in survey respondents with the most recent 2011 Census data suggesting that 8% of Worcestershire residents had a disability or health condition limiting their day-to-day activities a lot, and just under 10% indicating their day-to-day activities were limited a little. This compares to 5% and 13% respectively among survey respondents.

Figure 36: Ethnicity



Over 95% of respondents were from a White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British ethnic background. This compares to just over 92% among the Worcestershire population as a whole according to the 2011 Census. Respondents from a BAME background are slightly under-represented in the survey, although over 80 responses were received from people from a background other than White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British, which is reasonable.

Figure 37: Postcodes of respondents



The postcodes of respondents are mapped above. As would be expected there are notable clusters around most of the larger libraries and major cities and towns within Worcestershire, but also around the locations of smaller libraries that had a large number of respondents who indicated that they most regularly visited that library.

Clusters are especially notable around Droitwich, Alvechurch and Bromsgrove, and Bewdley (which are the libraries that had the largest proportions of respondents) as well as areas in and around Worcester, Redditch, Kidderminster, Stourport, and Tenbury.