

Appendix 2

Gateshead International Stadium - Stakeholder Engagement

Final Report on the results of the Gateshead International Stadium (GIS) stakeholder engagement

About this report

This report provides an overview of the feedback from the stakeholder engagement on the Review of GIS.

The report contains the following sections:

- Overview of the stakeholder engagement process
- Report 1: Feedback from the survey
- Report 2: Feedback from stakeholder engagement meetings

Overview of the stakeholder engagement process

A comprehensive stakeholder engagement process has been undertaken starting on 5 July 2023 and closing on 2 October 2023. There were a number of ways that stakeholders were able to share their views including;

On-line Survey

An on-line survey was developed to identify the feedback from stakeholders. Respondents were able to identify how they used GIS and there was the opportunity to include free text to describe whether they agreed with the future purpose of the site, the value of them using GIS and any suggestions on future sustainability of GIS in more detail. During the consultation period a total of 391 on-line surveys were submitted. [GIS online survey](#)

E Mail Correspondence

A shared email address, GISconsultation@gateshead.gov.uk, was created for stakeholders to ask questions or provide views and feedback. Any views gathered this way were also fed into the consultation process.

Targeted Key stakeholder engagement

During the stakeholder engagement process we held 11 meetings with 21 organisations. This included 8 one-to-one meetings, 2 group sessions, and a meeting with the Football Steering Group, (a group of 4 grassroots football clubs and football partner organisations).

Communication and Promotion with key stakeholders

To ensure that all GIS stakeholders were aware of and participated in the engagement process we:

- sent emails to 73 stakeholders (representing a number of sports including netball, football, athletics, rugby, basketball, volleyball, lacrosse and other organisations including school sports partnerships, universities and event organisers) for whom we had an email address;
- followed up with a phone call to arrange a suitable date and time

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Overview of responses received

- 391 responses to the main survey
- 8 individual meetings organised at request of stakeholders to discuss usage of GIS
- 2 group sessions organised to gather stakeholders views
- 5 members of the Football Steering Group contributed views
- views gained from representatives of both adult and junior sports clubs. Junior sports included football, netball and athletics and Gateshead school sports partnership. Adult sports included university sports clubs, athletics, netball and football.

During the stakeholder engagement process we did not directly engage with Go Gateshead gym members who use GIS or wider Gateshead residents who are non-stadium users. The focus of this engagement exercise was stakeholders who book and use GIS facilities, and their members. This was because at this time there are no specific proposals that would impact on Go Gateshead gym members or other Gateshead residents. If specific proposals are developed in the future which could change the services delivered at GIS then we would undertake further public consultation to inform our decision-making processes.

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Report 1: Feedback from the Survey

In total 391 responses were received to the survey.

Not all respondents answered all questions in the survey. The number of respondents for each question is indicated in the charts/tables.

Coding Frameworks were used to help analyse verbatim responses to open questions within the survey. Participant responses were analysed for key points, and those points were assigned to a 'category' – a group of comments that are making a similar point. A participant's response to a single question can consist of several points. This enables us to quantify how many people are making a similar point.

A copy of the Coding Framework used is published with this report.

Respondent Profile

A summary of the demographic breakdown of respondents, where given, is provided below:

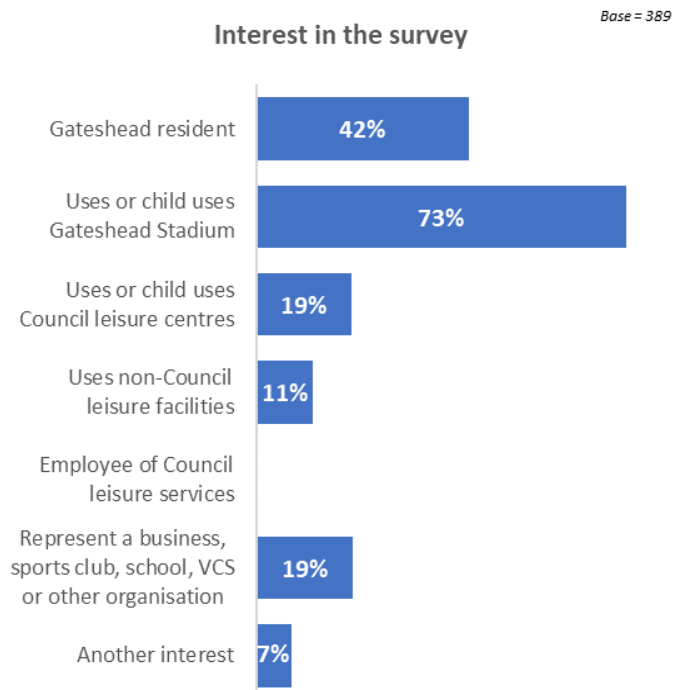
- 39% of respondents identified as Female, 57% as Male, 4% preferred not to say.
- 15% of respondents identified as limited a little by their physical or mental health, with a further 4% limited a lot.
- 90% of respondents identified as White British, 3% as White Other and 2% from Mixed, Black or Asian ethnic backgrounds.
- 42% of survey respondents stated they were a Gateshead resident. From analysis of the postcodes provided; 45% are in Gateshead, 48% are outside of Gateshead and 7% did not provide a full postcode. The largest response came from people living in areas around GIS (4% Bridges and 4% Felling and Pelaw and Heworth wards) as well as from Low Fell (5% from Low Fell).
- Responses by age were 13% under 25, 31% aged 25-44, 37% aged 45-64, 14% aged 65 or over.

The full demographic breakdown of survey respondents can be found in the charts in **Appendix A**.

The table on the right presents an overview of the type of interest in the survey. People could indicate they were responding in more than one category.

Of the 26 (7%) respondents who indicated another interest in the survey, a large proportion told us their interest was in Gateshead Football Club, as a lecturer, coach or referee, an event visitor or as a club attendee.

Respondents representing 42 organisations indicated their response was the formal response of their organisation. A list of these organisations is attached in **Table 1**.



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Our Proposals

In order to achieve a more sustainable and efficient operating model, it is proposed to remodel the site for the purpose of 'Education and Sport', working more collaboratively with Gateshead College to achieve financial sustainability.

In reality this could mean;

- A greater focus and future investment on the education offer on the site, meaning an even greater emphasis on the role of Gateshead College as the key stakeholder.
- The potential to prioritise the sports provided/delivered by Gateshead College (such as football) to provide a coherent community sport development offer and pathway.
- International athletics events may not be a priority for the site in future.
- The potential to explore an alternative management arrangement for the site.

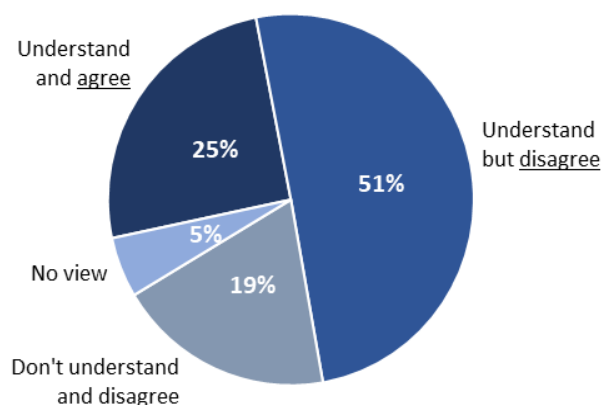
As shown in the chart (above right), about half of respondents to this question (51%) understood but disagreed with the proposal. Around a fifth (19%) did not understand the proposal and disagreed.

A quarter (25%) of respondents to this question stated they understood the proposal and agreed with it.

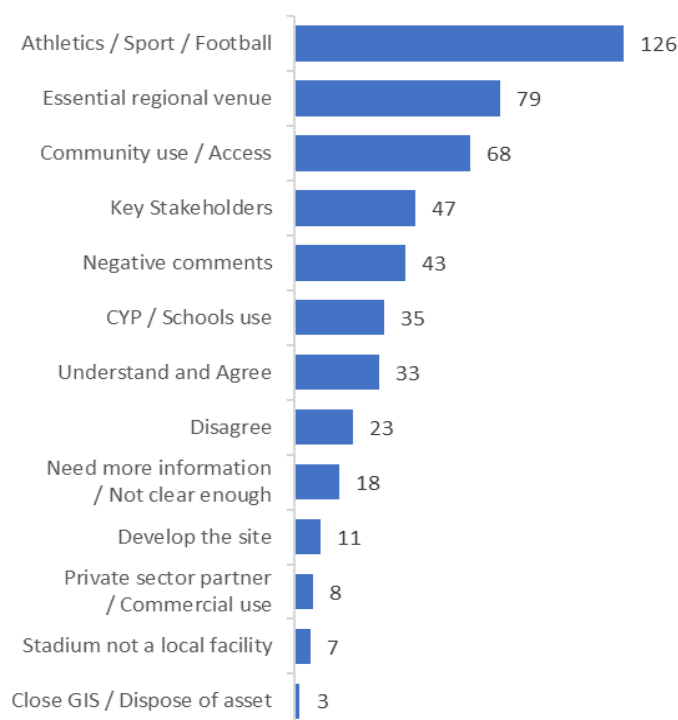
Analysis of the 278 comments made explaining why they answered in a particular way shows the following themes emerge in order of the greatest number of responses in the chart to the right. Many responses contained multiple points of view, so each comment has been coded into all categories they related to.

33 comments that were made, directly expressed support or agreed with the proposal to some extent. Equally there were 23 comments made that directly disagreed with the proposal and 18 comments made stating there was insufficient information, or proposal was not clear enough to understand what the impact of repurposing for education and sport would mean.

Extent of understanding and agreement with proposal to repurpose the site for 'Education and Sport' to develop a more sustainable and affordable operating model Base = 380



Why agree or disagree the proposal to repurpose GIS will enable a more sustainable and affordable operating model Base = 278



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Alternative Suggestions for an Operating Model

Analysis of 219 suggestions for an alternative way to create a sustainable operating model for GIS resulted in the following main themes:

- Deliver athletics / sports / other events at GIS (106)
- Seek external funding / income generation opportunities (70)
- Commercial use of GIS / Seek sponsorship / Development opportunities (54)
- Use of volunteers / Community use / School use (33)

Some responses (25) included negative comments about Gateshead Council in terms of potential mismanagement and / or neglect of GIS.

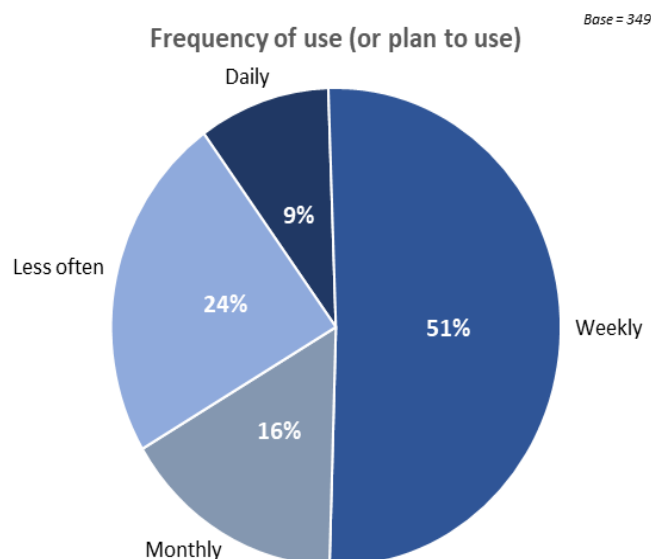
Some responses referred to working with key stakeholder organisations as a way of securing the future of GIS; Gateshead Football Club, Gateshead College and the universities.



Frequency of Using GIS

Respondents were asked to indicate which facilities at GIS they currently use or plan to use.

Half of stadium users, (51%) attend weekly, with a further 9% stating they use the stadium daily. This correlates with the vast majority of survey respondents (69%) stating they attend GIS for club or group activities. Most stakeholder activity booked at GIS takes place weekly, if not with sessions running 2 or 3 times per week.



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Facilities and Activities Used

Respondents could highlight multiple facilities & activities used at GIS. The top three responses were; running track (65%), indoor running track (31%) and athletics throws fields (31%).

These linked athletics activities correlate strongly with the type of survey respondents. Multiple survey responses were received from users associated with Darlington Athletics Club, Gateshead Harriers and Newcastle University Athletics Club. This also correlates with significant open text responses highlighting athletics as being of value and important to GIS.

Travel to GIS

Travel to GIS is in the main by car (60%), followed by public transport methods or walking. This correlates with feedback from stakeholders and survey respondents who value the accessibility and location of GIS and the free parking availability. It also reflects the statements that GIS is used by more than just local communities and is a regional venue for many sports and activities which users are willing to travel to.

A small number of responses who answered something else, stated they run to the stadium, use a school bus or are a passenger with someone else.

Over a third (36%) of respondents journey for more than 20 minutes to reach GIS. Around a fifth journey for 20 minutes (21%), 15 minutes (23%) and for 10 minutes or less (20%).

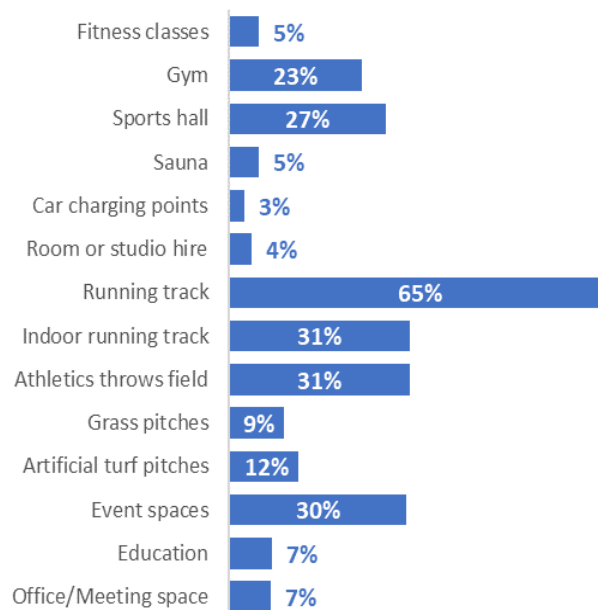
Value

The survey asked what respondents valued most about GIS. Analysis of the 285 responses made to this question shows that the top themes are (see full chart on the following page);

- Running / athletics facilities (133)
- Quality / range of facilities or equipment (82)
- Location / accessibility of GIS (72)

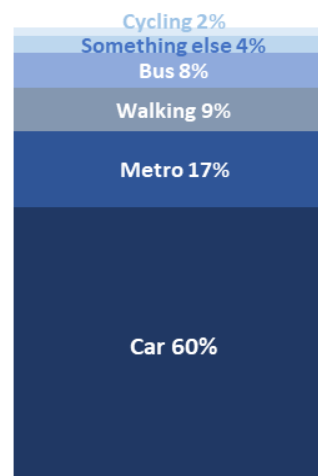
Facilities and activities use

Base = 339



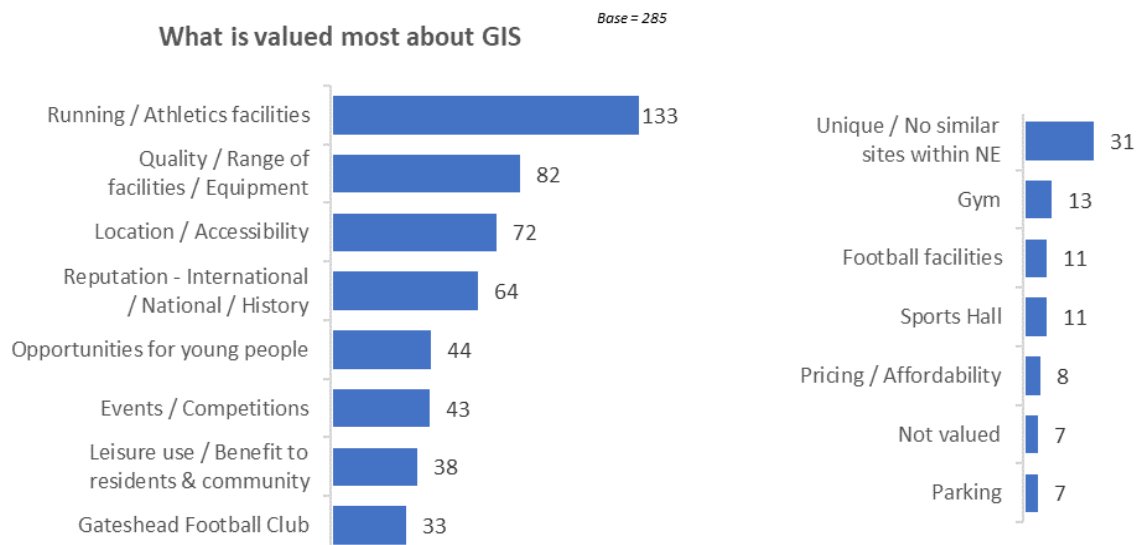
Main method of travelling to the centre

Base = 343



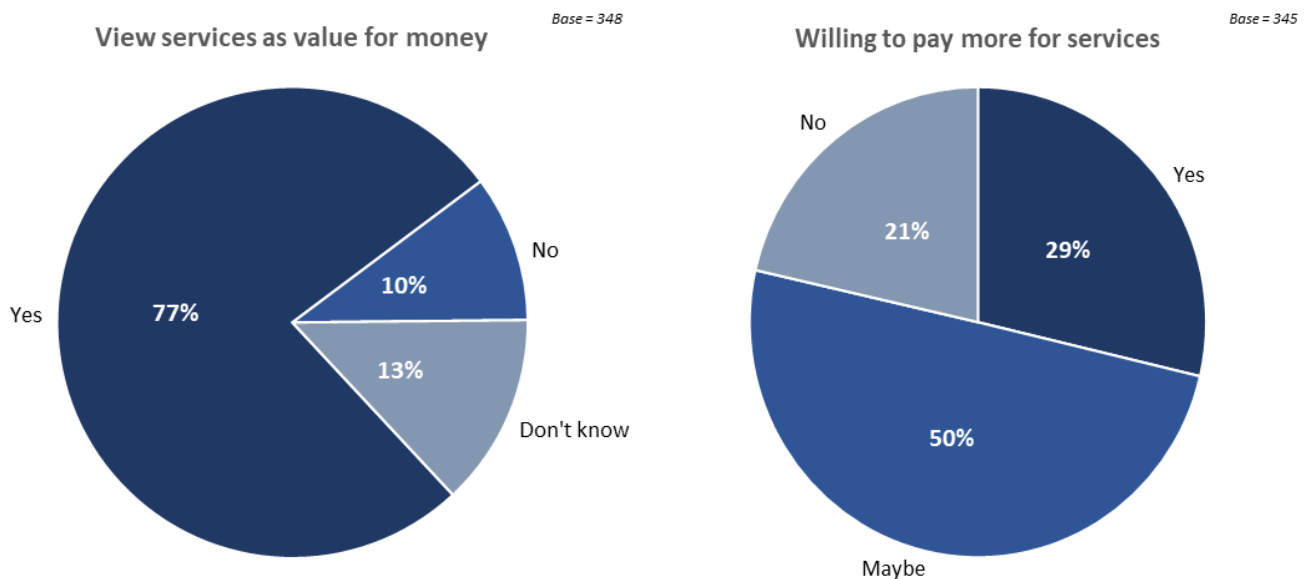
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- Reputation – International / National / Historic (64)
- Opportunities for young people (44)



When asked whether the services received at GIS represented value for money, the majority (77%) agreed. Only 10% said no.

More respondents said they would be prepared to pay more for the services they receive at GIS (29%), than those who said they would not (21%). Exactly half of respondents were undecided.



Equality Data Comparison

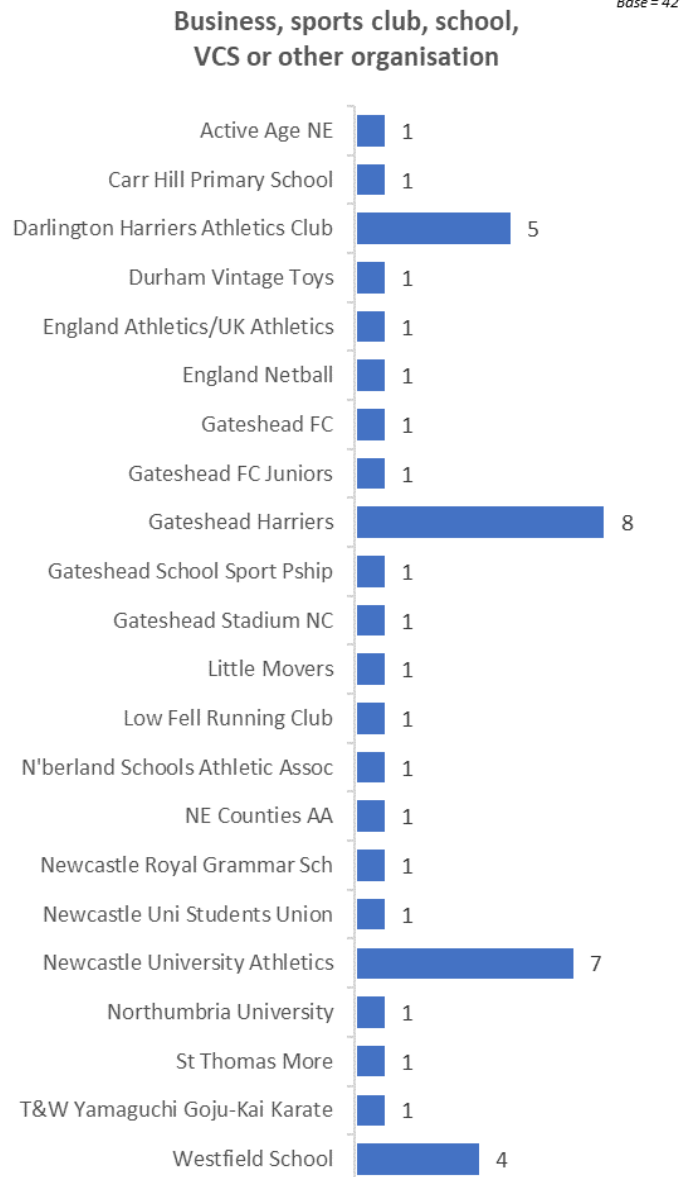
Analysis of the 'About You' survey information provided by respondents (demographic profile including data on protected characteristics) against known Gateshead comparative data for all residents shows that;

- we received a much smaller response from females (29% of respondents compared to population data of 51%)
- we received a smaller response from under 25s (13% of respondents compared to population data of 27%)

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- we received a slightly smaller response from those limited by their health a little or a lot (19% of respondents compared to population data of 22%)

The about you data collected relates to the person completing the survey, who is not necessarily the stadium user. For example a parent or carer could be completing the survey on behalf of their child who attends a club / activity at GIS, or the survey could be completed by a representative of an organisation. **Table 1** to the right shows a list of 42 responses which indicated they were providing a formal response from their organisation.



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Report 2: Feedback from stakeholder engagement meetings

As part of the stakeholder engagement we met with representatives of stadium user groups. A list of participants is in **Table 2**.

- meetings held with 20 organisations who are current stadium users
- views gained from representatives of both adult and junior sports clubs.
- A range of junior sports including; football, netball and athletics and Gateshead school sports partnership.
- A range of adult sports including; university sports clubs, athletics, netball and football.
- Of the 73 stakeholders who were invited to the meetings all are regular block bookings; some attending five days a week, some once a week, others could be four times a year for specific event bookings.
 - Of those stakeholders attending the meetings 11 are from the Gateshead or local area; Felling Magpies Football Club
 - Five-a-side football pitch users
 - Gateshead College
 - Gateshead Football Club
 - Gateshead Football Club Foundation
 - Gateshead Harriers & Athletics club
 - Gateshead Juniors Football Club
 - Gateshead Netball Club
 - Gateshead School Sports Partnership
 - Little Movers (pre-school dance)
 - Westfield School, Newcastle
- Of those stakeholders attending the meetings 7 are from the North East region;
 - Durham Football Association
 - Inspired Support
 - North East Netball association
 - Newcastle University sports clubs
 - Northumbria University sports clubs
 - Northern Toy Fairs
 - Run-Through Events
- Of those participating in the stakeholder engagement 2 are national organisations;
 - England Athletics NGB
 - England Netball NGB
-

Comments from stakeholder meetings

Themes coming out of the meetings held with a range of stakeholders who were all current stadium users include:

- Stakeholders highlighted that they really value the site, use it often, and wish to continue using the site in the future. If the stadium facilities were not available in the future this would have a negative impact on some sports and sports clubs in particular and would question the viability of some events / fixtures being able to continue. Representatives of organisations / clubs raised that they would like to use the site more, however, conflicting demand across sports and clubs makes this difficult; with peak slots of evenings and weekend usually fully booked well in advance.
- The location, accessibility, nearby public transport links and free parking were raised by several stakeholders as being key to their organisation and its members. It was highlighted that many users would find it difficult to travel to alternative venues and/or would not be

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able to afford to attend the sessions if they were also paying for parking on top of their club/organisation membership/session fees.

- Stakeholders commented that Gateshead International Stadium is a regional venue, with no comparable sites elsewhere in the northeast, due to the diverse range of facilities that are on site. It was raised that users of the site travel from all neighbouring local authority areas, and beyond, to attend activities being held at GIS.
- It was highlighted that the range and quality of facilities and equipment are of significant value to the clubs and organisations that use the site.
- Users of the sports hall raised the importance of having a double-court indoor hall for their organisation's activities as it enables cohesion for simultaneous delivery and the ability to tailor sessions to fitness levels / capability. Stakeholders highlighted that this is the only facility in the area which offers this, and that they would struggle to find or access this anywhere else in the northeast.
- It was highlighted that the outdoor track and athletics facilities are very important to the region, particularly the opportunities they offer to children and young people, and that users would have to travel far to access facilities of a comparable nature and quality. Not having these facilities would have a negative impact on these clubs.
- Stakeholders commented that the costs of booking the venue / facilities are typically higher than other facilities in the borough or locally. It was highlighted that some clubs are struggling to keep their prices affordable to families, and in some cases are subsidising the costs to families, to continue using the facilities at GIS as they are valued so highly. Several stakeholders also added that their organisation would use the site more often if it was more affordable.
- There is significant demand for 3G / five-a-side / football pitches. Many stakeholders involved in football raised that they would like to have increased access to the facilities but find it difficult to book peak slots (weekday evenings & weekends) as the site is often fully booked. It was highlighted that there is a shortage of playing pitches across the borough.
- Some participants asked is there opportunity for increased multi-purpose use of space / facilities at GIS in the future rather than single sport allocated space.
- Some participants suggested development of a GIS user network to bring together stakeholders and create better links, working relationships and opportunities to collaborate with other key stakeholders.

Table 2: List of 20 organisations participating in stakeholder meetings

Durham Football Association
England Athletics, national governing body
England Netball, national governing body
Felling Magpies Football Club
Five-a-side football pitch users
Gateshead College
Gateshead Football Club
Gateshead FC Foundation
Gateshead Harriers & Athletics Club
Gateshead Juniors Football Club
Gateshead Stadium Netball Club
Gateshead Schools Sport Partnership
Inspired Support (NE autism service provider)
Little Movers (pre-school dance)
Newcastle University sports clubs
North East Netball Association
Northern Toy Fairs

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Northumbria University sports clubs

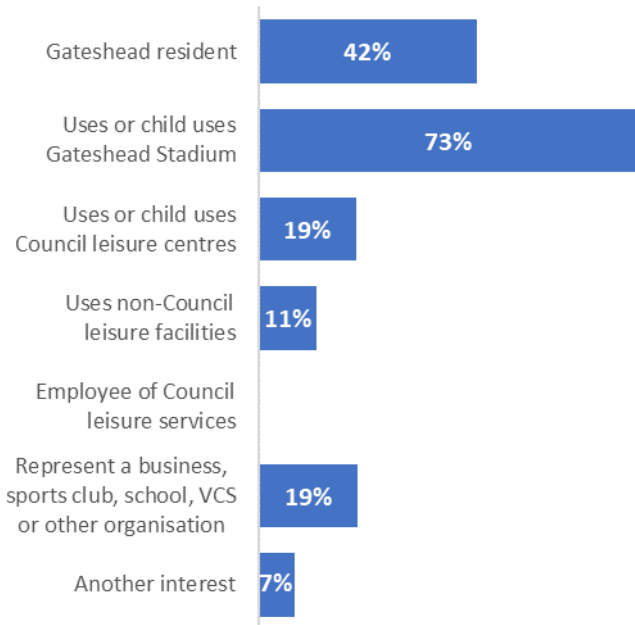
Run-through Events (events organiser)

Westfield School, Newcastle (independent school age 3-18)

Appendix A – Final GIS Survey Charts (full results/open text response charts at end)

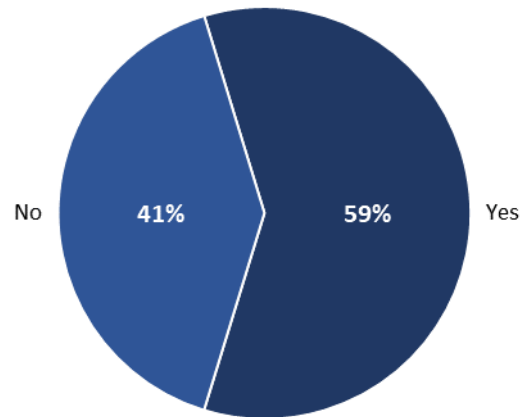
Interest in the survey

Base = 389



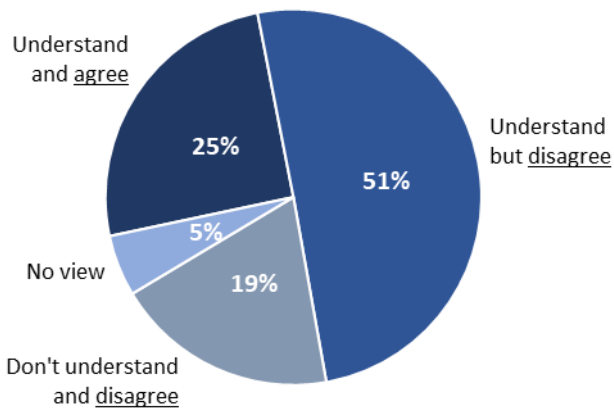
Business, sports club, school, VCS or other organisation respondents providing the formal response of that organisation

Base = 74



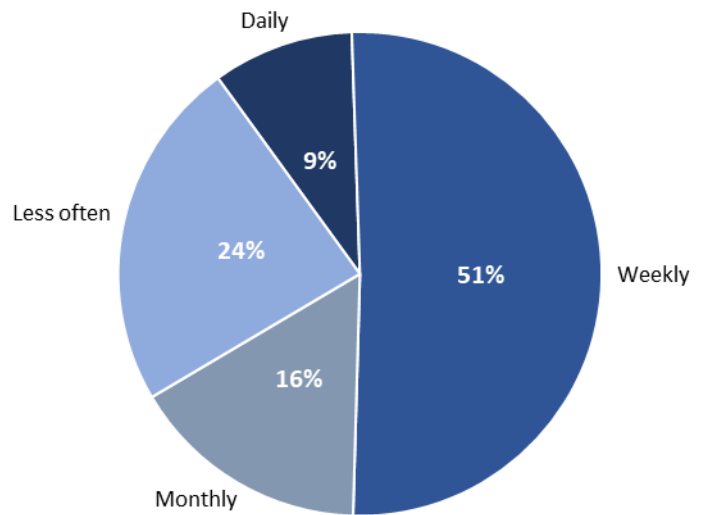
Extent of understanding and agreement with proposal to repurpose the site for 'Education and Sport' to develop a more sustainable and affordable operating model

Base = 380



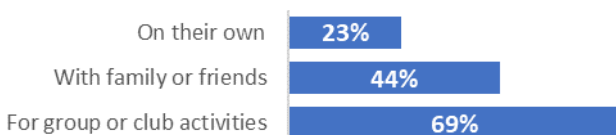
Frequency of use (or plan to use)

Base = 349



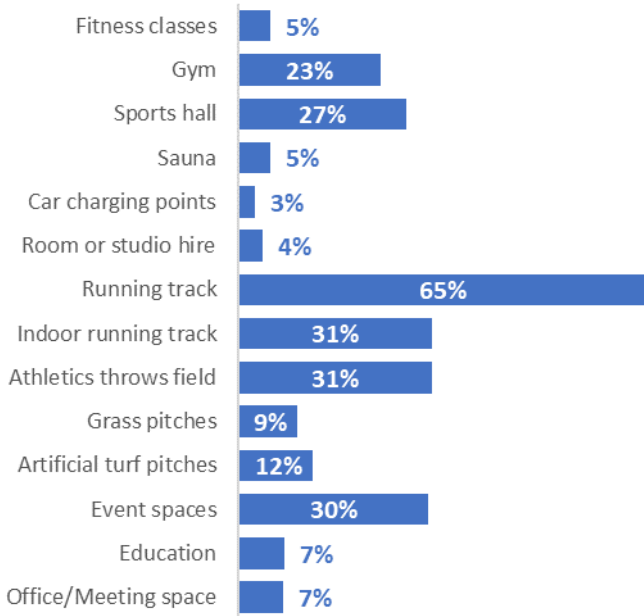
Usually visit centre...

Base = 341



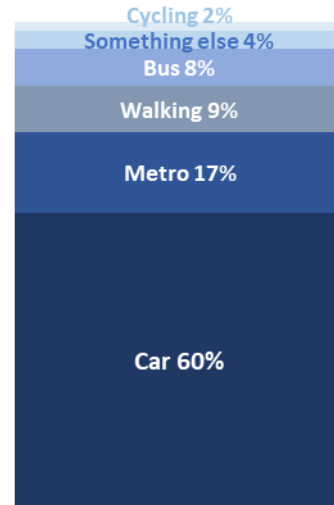
Facilities and activities use

Base = 339



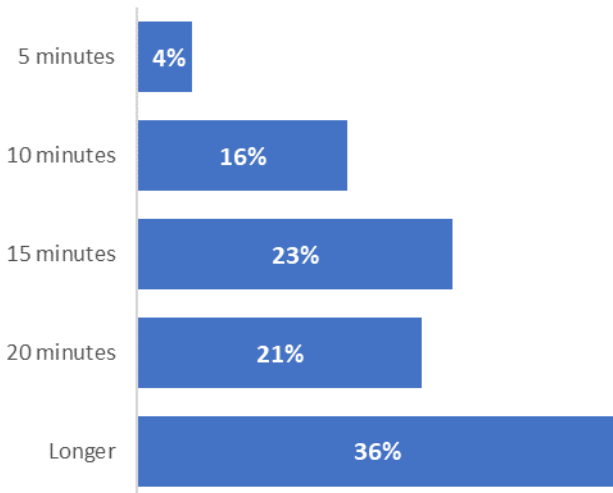
Main method of travelling to the centre

Base = 343



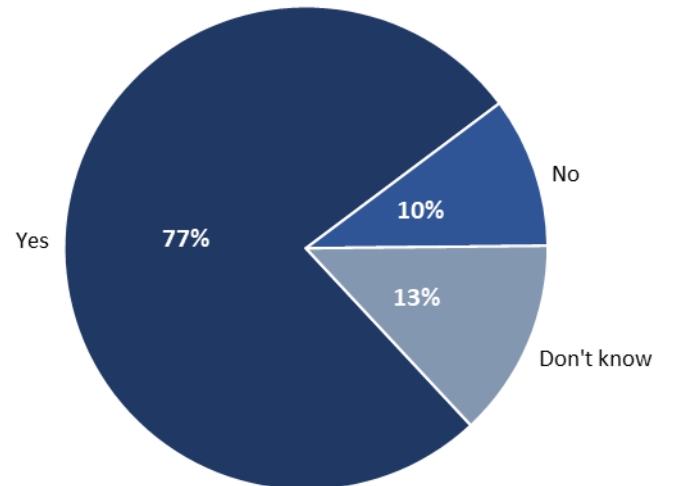
Usual travel time to centre

Base = 345

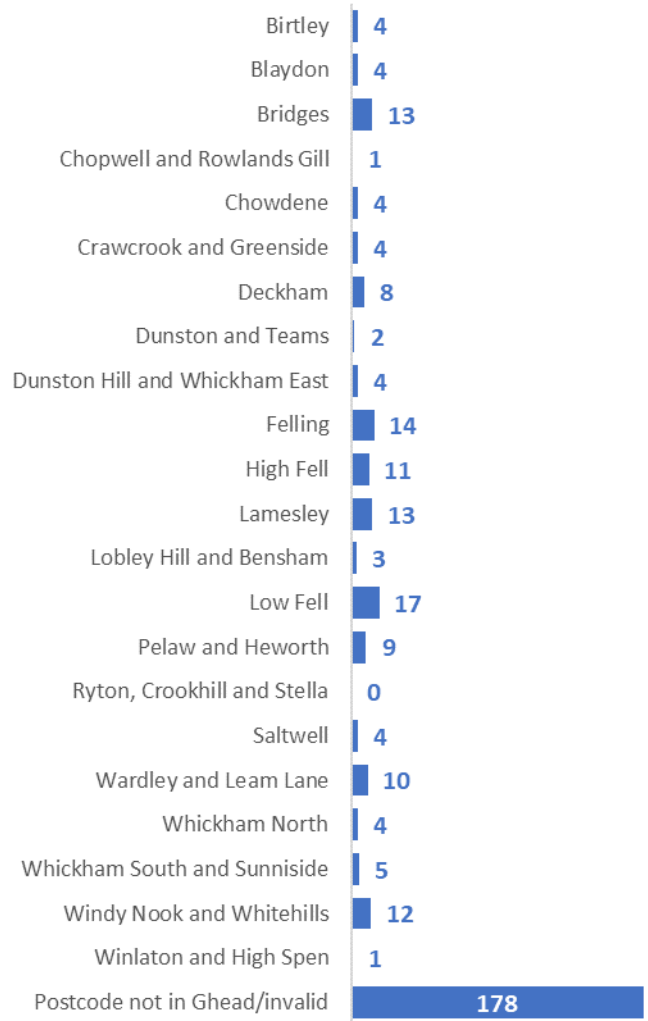


View services as value for money

Base = 348

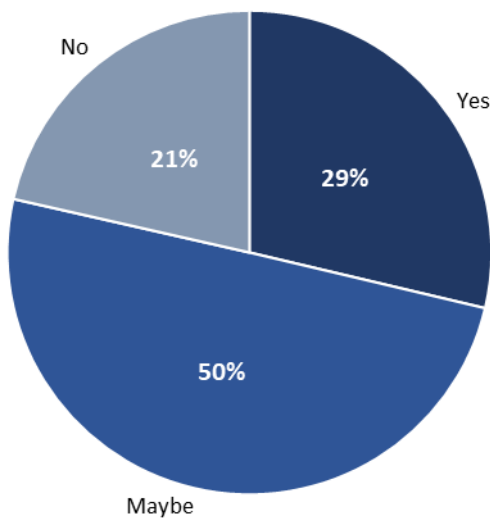


Number of responses by ward of respondent



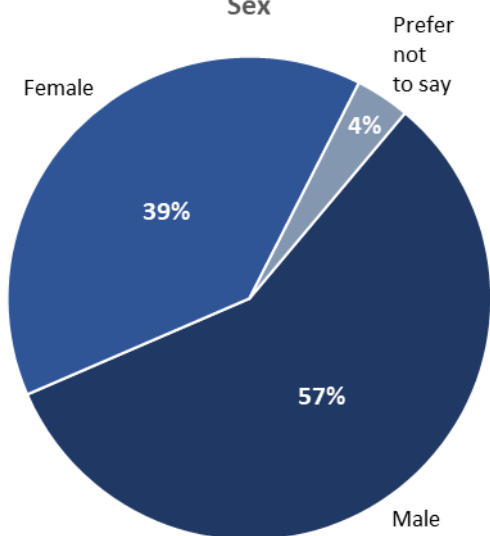
Willing to pay more for services

Base = 345



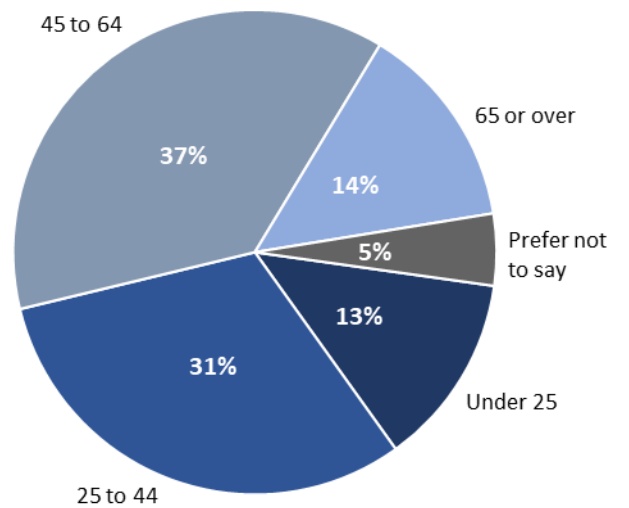
Sex

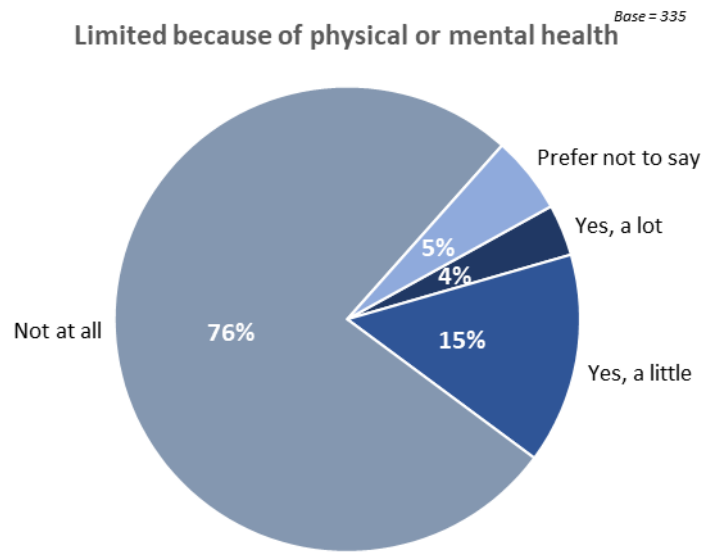
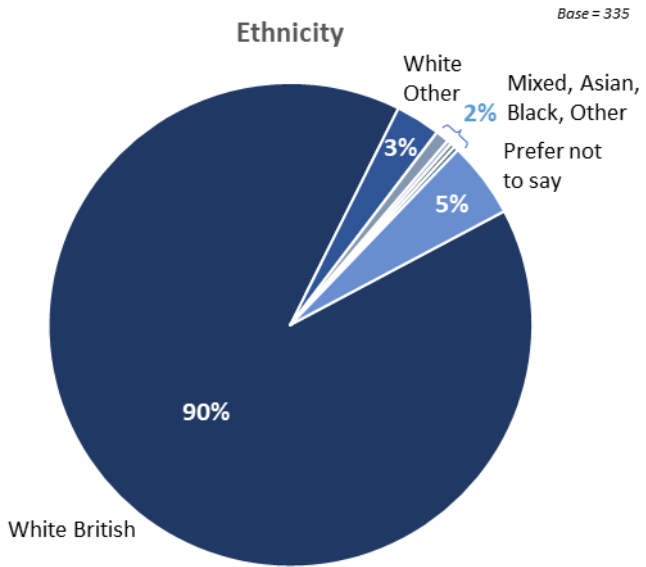
Base = 331



Age

Base = 334

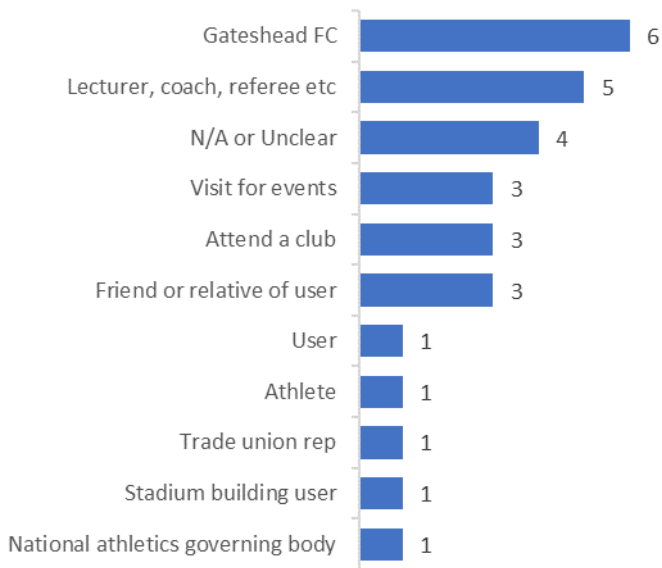




Open Text Comments Charts

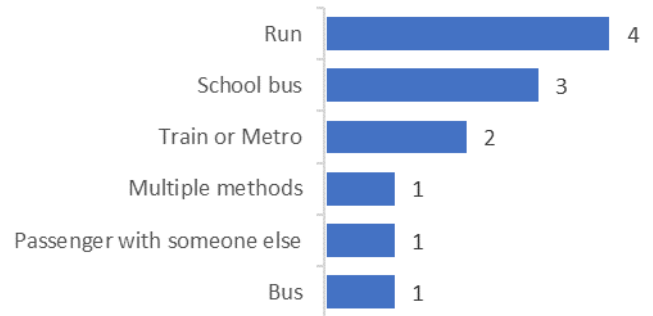
Interest in the survey (another interest)

Base = 26



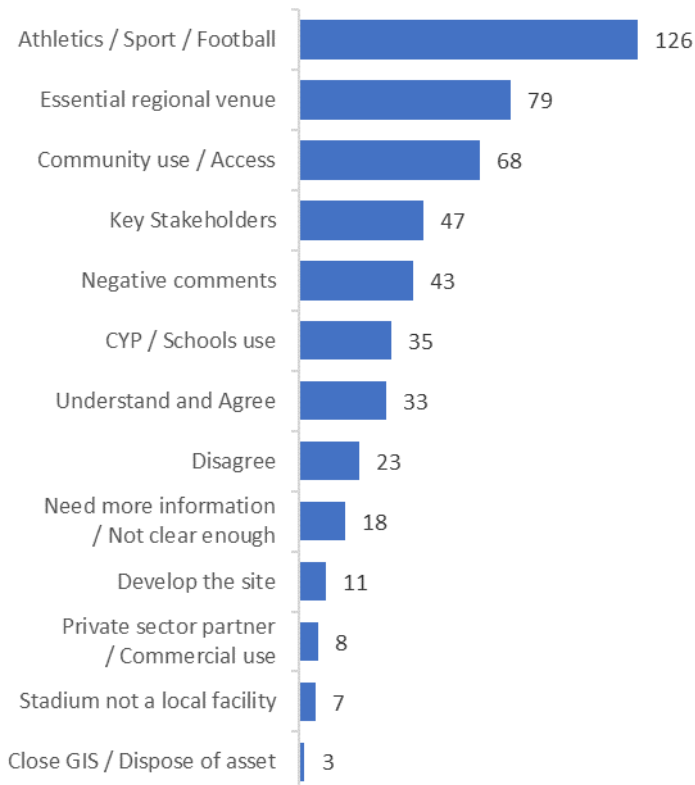
Other method of travelling to GIS

Base = 12



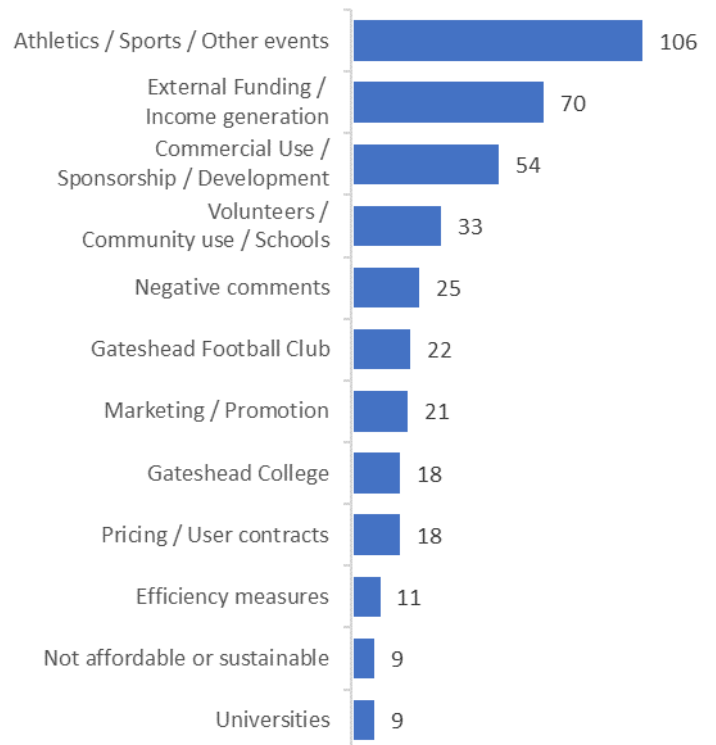
Why agree or disagree the proposal to repurpose GIS will enable a more sustainable and affordable operating model

Base = 278



Alternative suggestions for a sustainable and affordable operating model

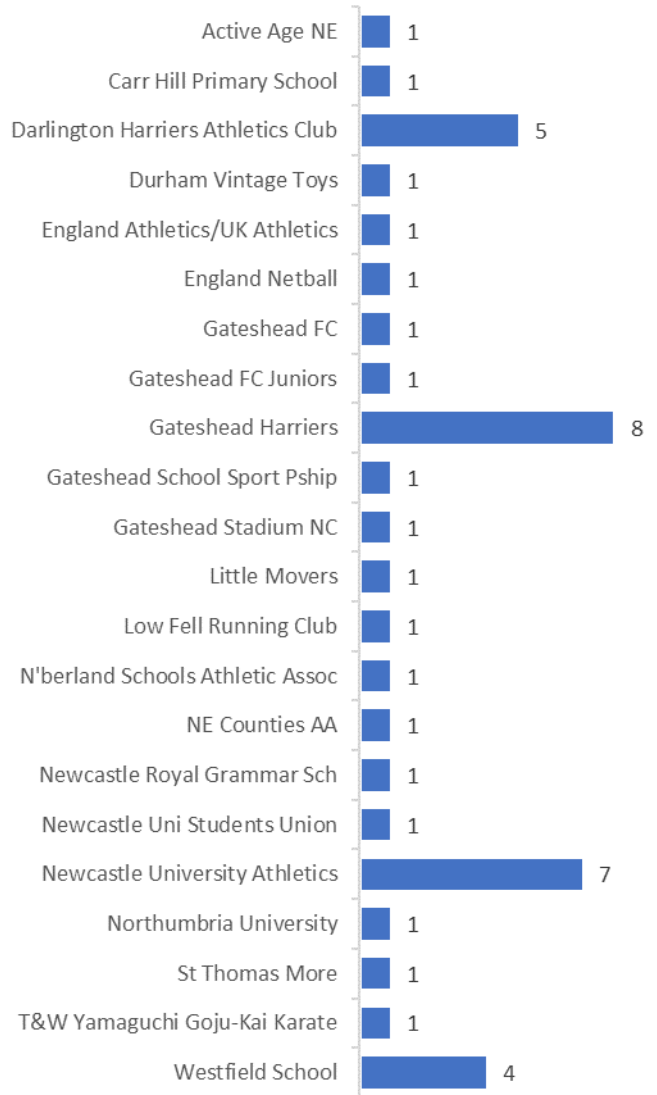
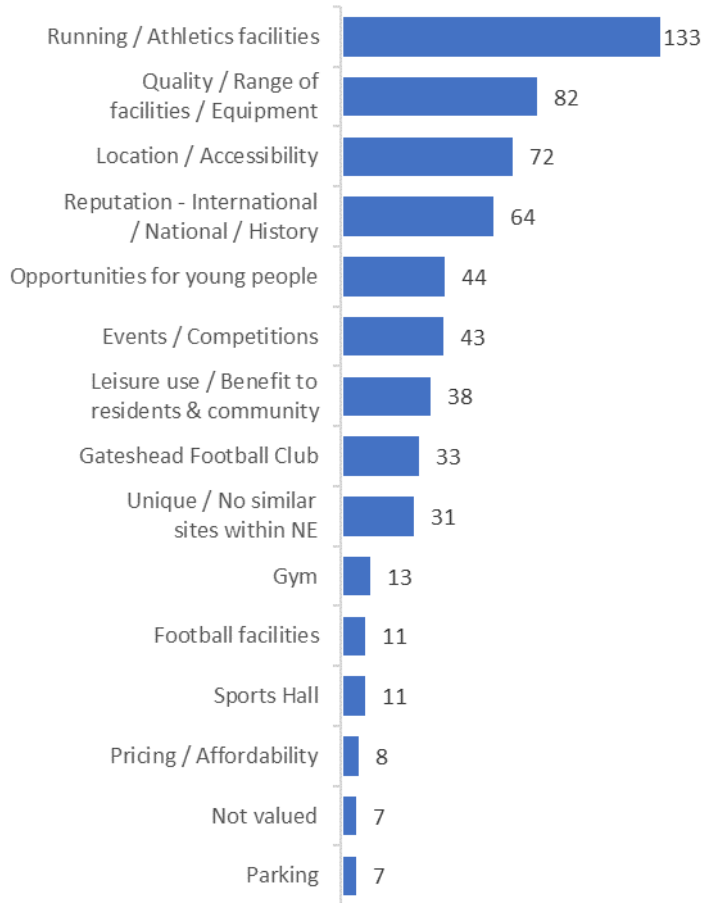
Base = 219



Business, sports club, school, VCS or other organisation

What is valued most about GIS

Base = 285



Appendix B – Coding Framework (open text survey questions)

Description of the ‘categories’ used in analysis of responses to Open Questions

Q3 To what extent do you understand and agree or disagree that the proposal to repurpose the site for ‘Education and Sport’ will enable the development of a more sustainable and affordable operating model for Gateshead International Stadium in the future?

Athletics / Sports / Football	Comments made about either athletics, other sports (including netball) or football being key to future sustainability of the stadium
Essential regional venue	Comments that refer to GIS being unique as the only regional athletics stadium facility in the NE, an international and national sporting asset.
Community use / access	Comments that state GIS is vital to the community and continued use / access to the facility is important
Key stakeholders	Reference made to key stakeholders of the stadium such as Gateshead College, Gateshead Harriers, Gateshead Football Club
Negative comment about Council	Comments that refer to perceived poor performance / management by GC as a contributing factor to the current situation, including lack of investment in or development of the facility.
Children & Young People / School use	Comments made about the importance of GIS for CYP and / or schools to encourage participation in sport
Understand and agree	Responses understand and agree with the proposal
Disagree	Responses disagree with the proposal
Need more information / not clear enough	Responses state they require more information or the proposal is not clear enough to take a view. They do not understand the impact on them as a stadium user.
Develop the site	GC should invest in GIS and develop the site to generate income
Private sector partner / Commercial use	Comments that suggest partnering with private sector or commercial use of the site to make it sustainable.
Stadium not a local facility	Comments made that state GIS is not used by the local community or is not a facility just for Gateshead residents
Close GIS / dispose of asset	Comments made suggesting closure of GIS or disposal of the asset by the Council

Q4. Do you have any alternative suggestions on how to create a sustainable and more affordable operating model for Gateshead International Stadium in the future?

Athletics / Sports / Other Events	Comments that suggest increasing the number of large events including sports, athletics, concerts, festivals, etc
External Funding / Income Generation	Comments that suggest seeking grant funding or maximising income from the existing facilities i.e., café
Commercial use / Sponsorship / Development	Comments that suggest partnering with private sector or commercial use of the site to make it sustainable, including sponsorship deals.

Volunteers / community use / schools	Comments that suggest increased availability of the site for schools and for the community, as well as working with volunteers
Gateshead Football Club	Comments that suggest working with, or transferring the land and facilities to, Gateshead Football Club
Marketing / Promotion	Comments that suggest more or better marketing and promotion of the site should be done to increase awareness of what is on site and who can use the facilities
Gateshead College	Respondents who support the Council working with Gateshead College
Pricing / user contracts	Comments that suggest pricing is too high or the length of contracts (gym) is deterring people from using the site
Efficiency measures	Respondents who suggest that efficiency measures could reduce the operating costs of the site; this includes energy efficient measures as well as cost reduction measures
Not affordable or sustainable	Comments that suggest the site is not financially viable or sustainable
Universities	Respondents who support the Council working with local universities to maximise usage
Negative Comments	Comments that refer to perceived poor performance / management by GC as a contributing factor to the current situation, including lack of investment in or development of the facility.
Other	Other comments

Q10. What do you value most about Gateshead International Stadium? Please explain the reasons for your answer...

Running / Athletics facilities	Comments that state that the running tracks (indoor and outdoor) and athletics facilities are of value
Quality / range of facilities / Equipment	Comments that state the quality of facilities and / or range of different facilities available on site is important
Location / Accessibility	Comments that state the location and / or accessibility of the stadium is important

Reputation – International / National / Historic	Respondents who highlighted the international and national reputation of the site, as well as its history
Opportunities for Young People	Comments that suggest GIS offers valuable opportunities for young people, particularly young athletes
Events / Competitions	Respondents who believe the events and athletics competitions held at GIS are of value
Leisure Use / Benefits to residents / community	Comments that state GIS is vital to the community and leisure use / access to the facility is important for residents
Gateshead Football Club	Respondents who value the opportunity to watch Gateshead Football Club play their home matches at GIS
Unique / No sites similar within NE	Comments that suggest the site / facilities at GIS are unique and nothing comparable is available elsewhere in the northeast region
Gym	Respondents who state the gym facilities are of value to them
Football facilities	Respondents who state the football facilities (3G pitches, external pitches) are of value to them
Sports Hall	Respondents who state the sports hall is of value to them
Pricing / Affordability	Respondents who believe the pricing / affordability offers good value
Parking	Responses that highlight parking or free parking as being of value
Not Valued	Comments that suggest the site is not valued