

Election Day Pomfret Town Hall Survey Results

91 surveys collected - 34 in person, 57 online

1. How long have you been a resident of Pomfret?

Between 2 and 82 years

[2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3, 4, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 6, 6, 6, 6, 7, 7, 8, 8, 9, 9, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 11, 12, 12, 13, 14, 14, 18, 18, 18, 19, 20, 20, 20+, 21, 22, 22, 22, 24, 24, 25, 26, 26, 27, 27, 27, 28, 28, 30, 31, 33, 35, 35, 35, 36, 36, 38, 40, 40, 40, 40+, 41, 42, 43, 43, 45, 45, 46, 47, 47, 50, 50+, 56+, 60, 60 (on and off), 68, 68, 68, 80, 82]

[Also a 23 year resident of Barnard]

2. Have you attended any events at the Town Hall in the past?

Yes - 78

No - 13

If yes, what was the occasion?

Community Dinners/Suppers/Empty Bowls - 51

Town meeting - 46

Wedding receptions - 18

Funerals/Memorial receptions - 17

Private events/gatherings/reunions/parties - 17

Programs/Abbott Library events/Puppet show - 12

Yard sale/pop-up clothing sale - 9

Plays/Performances/Concerts - 8

School/school functions - 8

Meetings (general) - 4

Dances - 5

Yoga - 3

Vote/Ballot counting - 3

Boy Scout ceremony - 3

Art shows - 3

Craft workshops

3. Are you aware that the Town Hall is available to rent for events?

Yes - 78 "but I forget"

No - 13

4. How would you like to see the Town Hall being used in the future?

Community events/social events - 31 *“pop-up events”, “getting to know neighbors”, “community hub”*

Community dinners/suppers - 19 *“Fire Department breakfast”, “Harvest & Strawberry Suppers”, “community pot luck events”, “pot luck”, “pie socials”,*

Private events/Parties/Gatherings/Receptions - 16 *“with kitchen use or not”, “wedding receptions”*

Music/Concerts - 14 *“School concerts”*

Dances - 15 *“or dance classes”, “square dancing”, “contra dance”, “mid-winter blues dance”, “traditional dances”, “line dancing!”*

Markets - 12 *“Winter farmers market”, “Holiday markets”, “local food markets”*

Entertainment/Performances - 12 *“puppet shows” “theater/musical performances”, “talent night”*

Yoga/movement/fitness classes - 9 *“if adequate heat [in winter]... and storage”*

Town meetings - 10 *“Selectboard”, “voting in elections”*

Classes/lectures/presentations/workshops - 7 *“Historical Society presentations”, “educational programs (conservation, environment, history)”*

Meeting space for local organizations/community - 8 *“public meetings (hearings)”, “book club”, “mom groups”, “Scouts and 4-H clubs”, “knitting/craft circles”*

Craft events/shows/fairs - 5

Movies - 3

Cooking classes/events - 3 *“instructional classes for homemaking skills (canning/preserving food), etc”*

Activities - 3 *“Community activities, year round”*

Agriculture Day/horticulture - 2

Bingo - 2

Gallery showings/exhibits - 4

Family-oriented events - 2 *“readings/stories” “puppet show”*

Memorials

Book talks

Pomfret Arts Festival

Yard sales

“Public functions & private rentals”

“Pomfret should continue to fund the maintenance & improvements of this building, if for no other reason than to honor the history of those who have kept it in repair and its community significance”

“It should be a vibrant community center!”

"It'd be awesome to see it used for small events, especially if it means earling a small revenue"

"Just as it has been"

"Same"

"Same as above" - Community suppers, funerals

"Events in conjunction with Library once Town Hall is truly accessible (minimal fee for Town organizations)"

"Rent for events" (not tallied)

"I would like to see more of the above (wedding receptions, many turkey and strawberry suppers, art show, empty bowls, dances + meetings)"

"Same as it always has" (not tallied)

"Events"

"Keep the stage!!"

"For everything as before (Town meetings + suppers + gatherings)"

"Invest the money in a new community center with offices for town employees as well as maybe incorporate the fast squad and fire department all into one main building. The town can sell the two existing fire stations and use that money toward the project."

"I miss town meetings and wish Pomfret still had Town Meeting on town meeting day. I also love that the library has been using the hall for puppet shows over the past two years. Beyond that - it would be wonderful to have winter farmers markets or a few craft shows in the town hall - could the fire department have their breakfast there? Another community meal? A contra dance? Essentially I wish we had more town functions that brought the community together and the town hall, of course, is the perfect place!"

"As it is now, possibly more library/family events. Concerts for kids, stories, readings, etc."

"Continue the traditional uses"

"I love that it is being used for a winter farmers mkt. If the kitchen could be redone to be a functioning commercial kitchen, people could rent it for group cooking events. Community movie events, historical society presentations"

“Open to all options!”

“Continue to be a part of the community and remain in use, more so than it's currently being used. Perhaps there needs to be tiers of use to include or not kitchen, stage, etc.”

“Multipurpose events including entertainment”

“I like that it is available for community events and only became aware of that last year. I think it would be a great venue for private events too, but it would need doing up.”

“I would host more Yoga workshops there, and even teach regular weekly classes if there was adequate heat in the winter and storage for yoga props.”

“For 25 years I have wanted to use the hall for traditional dances there were done in the early 1900's. The hall pricing was too high to rent the hall. The pricing discount favored programs in the summer.”

“Would love for it to be more of a community hub for connecting people through interests - yoga, meetups for building connections, etc”

“Open/usable year round”

“As a place for our residents to gather”

“Community gatherings, rented for events”

“It's a nice performance space. Maybe make it more amenable to stage and music performances. I'd love to see more town-wide social events also.”

“More rentals”

“More community events”

“Open more for community activities too year round”

“Theatre, musical performances, community pot lucks events (line dancing!), yoga, toddler playgroups”

“Continued, but expanded community use”

“Small community events- love the puppet show!”

“In my humble opinion, Town Halls should be used as central gathering places for community events such as town yard sales, pie socials, dances, talent nights, book clubs, "mom's groups",

craft fairs, Scouts and 4-H clubs, wintertime Farmers' Market, knitting (or other craft) circles, instructional classes for homemaking skills (such as how to can/preserve food), etc. Of course, the Town Hall is also an appropriate place for Town Meeting, Selectboard Meetings, and voting in elections."

"For public use"

"Just the way it is right now"

"Rentals- weddings etc. Music performances , educational programs (re: conservation, environment, history), horticulture"

"to be available for Pomfret residence to use for workshops, classes, craft fairs and local food markets"

"Continue use for rent for events, perhaps concerts?"

"A community space for all the above!"

5. What improvements would you like to see at the Town Hall?

Kitchen - 32 *"renovated", "catering kitchen" (x2), "update/resize", "redone", "tear off kitchen and build a larger modern kitchen", "restored w/ new foundation", "more complete kitchen", "catering kitchen (setup, minimal appliances)", "new fridges & large, sturdy cook stove in kitchen"*

Bathrooms - 32 *"handicap accessible bathrooms", "bigger (front rooms?)", "move to front", "NEW bathrooms - they're awful", "larger bathrooms, if possible"*

ADA compliance/accessibility - 24 *"accessibility", "ramps for handicapped accessible"*

Energy efficiency (heating/weatherization) - 18 *"insulation", "heating", "winterized and used year round", "efficient heating", "heated year round", "heat pump?", "better heating system", "updated electrical & heat"*

Parking - 8 *"feels limited"*

General maintenance/upgrades - 7 *"Mitigate disrepair", "general maintenance", "update accordingly", "electrical revamp"*

Availability - 8 *"year round", "heated year round", "year round access"*

Painting - 3 *"Quality exterior trim/window glazing/paint; Interior paint"*

Safety - 3 *"Sight lines are not good. May need to address speed limit.", "regrade Pomfret Road so cars can see cross'ers from a bit further away", "limited sight distance"*

None - 3 *"waste of money", "perfect as is", "seems fine as it is"*

Sound system - 2

Balcony usage/availability - 2

Seating - 2 *"improved seating"*

Rental information availability *"facility [description/capacity], tables, chairs, etc... list on website"*

Storage for tables & chairs

Signage

Lighting

Space for Historical Society displays

“Heat”

“Basic upgrades to the building”

“General simple remodel (paint)” - tallied above under Painting

“Remove stage for more space”

“Better use of balcony/rear space”

“Maintenance”

“Whatever it needs”

“Usable space”

“Updates”

“Make functional/Maintain history”

“Move the stage access out of kitchen and put it where the bathrooms are now”

“Please keep the stage area”

“Stage bigger going back?”

“Walk off stage instead of bathrooms?”

“Insulation for winter?”

“Full rehab”

“Restored to stay as much as possible and adding the accessibility and code/safety requirements; keep the kitchen!” (kitchen not marked above)

“Stop wasting money”

“I really don't know what it needs”

“I don't really know what kind of facilities the town hall has available, such as kitchen facilities, tables, chairs, etc. It might be helpful to list that on the town website.”

“The back part of the hall, ie: kitchen, stage and bathrooms need to be torn off and rebuilt”

“Sight lines are not good. May need to address speed limit.”

“Whatever needs to be done to make it available to use for concerts- accessibility and bathrooms”

“Better facilities and redecoration”

“Modernize the kitchen and bathrooms, more designated parking, built in, easy to use sound audio/sound system. Regrade Pomfret Road so cars can see cross'ers from a bit further away.”

“I would like to see a functioning kitchen”

“Winterization so it can be used for the above all year round”

“Kitchen restored w/ new foundation and bathrooms redone”

“Heating year round, parking feels limited”

“Winterization for year round events inside concerts yoga etc”

“ADA bathrooms, upgraded kitchen space, better utilization of space already present”

“bathrooms, kitchen, perhaps a heat pump?”

“Just keep it functional. It is such a cool old building”

“Accessibility, Better Heat / Weatherization for year round use”

“Handicapped accessible bathroom, possible one BR out of the two. Bring back the balcony. Being able to sit in the balcony for events was a "right of passage" for those of us growing up here. Update the kitchen.”

“Modernization but maintaining historical feel. Should be renovated using highest quality materials.”

“General facilities upgrade, winterization”

“Accessibility, and would have always preferred the bathrooms on the other end of the building, guess you would call it the front, maybe under the balcony. Would also be nice to have the balcony accessible again?”

“It needs a new kitchen so you can rent for more events”

“ADA compliance - bathrooms, wheel chair ramps”

“More complete kitchen”

“Accessibility, kitchen Reno, bathrooms, electrical revamp, parking”

“Seems fine as it is”

“Ramps, better bathrooms, better heating system”

“The last time I was in the Town Hall (about 5 years ago) I thought the renovations which has been done to the Town Hall had made a big improvement to the building and looked very pretty. The trouble spot to me was the parking (there is very limited sight distance to observe oncoming traffic when making a left into the parking lot when coming from South Pomfret).”

“Maybe upgrade kitchen and restrooms as well as ongoing maintenance...the building is a gem”

“Improved seating”

“Year-round weatherization, whatever else is needed to improve the buildings functionality to provide above suggests”

“Updated kitchen space and bathrooms”

6. How important are the following building characteristics to you? (1 being the least important and 5 being the most important)

Stage

1 - 7 answers

2 - 5 answers

3 - 24 answers

4 - 19 answers

5 - 33 answers

Comments:

“Already a beautiful stage, I think”

“Smaller or modified”

Kitchen

1 - 4 answers

2 - 5 answers

- 3 - 13 answers
- 4 - 16 answers
- 5 - 48 answers

Comments:

"Needs obvious improvements space-wise"

"Cost of commercial kitchen prohibitive - catering kitchen" (N/A)

Availability (Rate 1 for seasonal availability; 5 for year round availability)

- 1 - 5 answers
- 2 - 2 answers
- 3 - 13 answers
- 4 - 12 answers
- 5 - 53 answers

Comments:

"No strong opinion"

7. Are there any other aspects of the Town Hall that are important to you?

Character/historic appearance - 23 *"integrity", "charming character", "historic character/looks", "maintain same/similar feel", "preservation", "openness of space/windows/stage", "stage", "balcony"*

Community use/availability - 6 *"year round", "promotion as usable/rentable public space", "more community events", "use it for town and personal gatherings, especially for town folks"*

Parking - 4 *"better parking", "parking is a big problem", "parking is nice for... blueberry picking"*

Bathrooms - 2

Affordability

Accessibility

Kitchen *"kitchen with full capacity"*

"Retaining the integrity of the building"

"Movie nights?"

"Please keep its charming character"

"Keep the wood floors"

"Historical looks"

"Keeping the old time character"

"Make it available year round"

"Historic character"

"The openness of the space, the lovely tall windows, the stage"

“Bathrooms / more space / insulation”

“General physical attributes - changes/upgrades are fine but maintain same/similar feel”

“Bathroom - love the windows”

“Keeping things as historic as possible”

“Preserving the interior and exterior as much as possible”

“Its promotion as a usable/rentable public space”

“Historical”

“The character of the building”

“Having more community events take place there. “

“maintain its historic appearance”

“Better parking”

“Parking is a big problem”

“The balcony”

“Community”

“exterior facade stays the same”

“Keeping the town hall feel, big main room”

“Love the architecture”

“keep the historic charm”

“Historic features, beautiful exterior”

“Its presence. It is a great sight as you come over the hill. Also the parking is nice for Moore’s blueberry picking.”

“That we restore the building and continue to use it for town and personal gatherings, especially for town folks.”

“I’m stingy with spending tax dollars. However this historical building is the type of expense I am willing to support.”

“Accessibility”

“The historic value to community being used by all”

“Kitchen with full capability”

“It is important to maintain the character of the building”

“The stage and historical features of the exterior”

“A working bathroom is a very convenient amenity. Perhaps the biggest aspect of using a Town Hall is affordability: the fees for using the Town Hall should be modest enough to allow for small groups (such as a knitting circle or a 4-H club) to meet on a weekly basis without causing financial hardship to the participants, particularly during difficult financial times such as we are experiencing presently. Events at the Town Hall should be occasions for people to gather for fun socialization and to momentarily “forget their troubles” and as such, fees for attendance (or use of the building) should be kept to a minimum, if possible. That being said, users of the building should be responsible for keeping it clean and in good condition after they use it or it would be necessary to impose a cleaning fee.”

“overall preservation”

“Keep the building as a Town Hall”

8. Would you like to see the Town Hall continue to be available for public use?

Yes - 88

No - 1

9. If Yes, how could you see yourself using the Town Hall (ex. Reunion, party, meeting, gathering, yoga class, etc.)?

Private events - parties/gatherings - 69 *"Parties", "Gatherings", "receptions", "memorials", "reunions", "Scout functions", "family events"*
Yoga/Movement/exercise class - 25 *"ballet or dance class for kids"*
Meetings - 19 *"breakfast meeting"*
Craft fair/show/clubs - 7 *"craft sales", "art workshops", "knitting/crafting clubs"*
Music/concerts - 6 *"concerts for kids"*
Dance - 6 *"Pomfret contra dance", "community dance lessons/dances"*
Community events - dinners/supper club/potlucks - 7 *"Halloween party, Christmas bazaars", "game nights"*
Fundraisers - 6 *"dinner fundraiser"*
Markets - 7 *"pop-up shop", "winter market", "flea market", "farmers market", "yard sales"*
Entertainment - 5 *"kids shows", "open mic night", "movie nights", "Maybe a town movie night for kids?"*
Gallery/exhibits - 3
Classes/workshops (general) - 2
Women's retreat
Events - 2 *"any events"*
Not at all

"Possibly"

"Sounds great -- not sure that I'd personally use it, but love the idea."

"All of the above and more" - 23 answers

"Library access for kids shows is great. A venue for art workshops and parties would also be welcome."

"Yoga classes and weekend workshops, large reunions and parties"

"Yes! Our family has benefited from the hall for many Thanksgiving events, and memorial services. This is a stunning building and should be "shown off" as the beautiful space that it is. We are so blessed to have this building at the center of North and South Pomfret and it will be money well invested, especially for those of us who grew up here"

"Reunions, family gatherings, weddings, maybe shows"

“all of the above. seasonal events like Halloween party, Christmas bazaars.”

“Dinner fundraiser, breakfast meeting, Birthday party, graduation party with some snack items.”

“Class, performance, ballet class or dance class for kids would be great!”

“Please see various suggestions above. Even though I do not reside in Pomfret, I would be interested in attending various events held at the Town Hall. Thank you.”

“As a public gathering space where people can hold events like birthday parties or end of season sports parties.”

“Many possibilities”

“Not at all”

10. Additional comments and questions:

“Thanks for your efforts!”

“I would like to register my interest in volunteering to help keep Town Hall running well.”

“Thank you!”

“Thank you for your work on this!”

“Need to find out where the septic [is]”

“Possibly advertise publicly that it is available for events.”

“Thank you”

“Thank you committee members!”

“Thanks for doing this!”

“Heat? For winter rentals”

“Great historic building, needs multilevel updating”

“Thank you for this opportunity to contribute thoughts for Pomfret Town Hall Revitalization”

“Small town Town Halls are special and unique buildings and, as they did in times past, can serve as gathering places where a community can come together to share fun times and make happy memories. Please preserve your Town Hall: maintain its yesteryear character (i.e. don't modernize it beyond some improvements to HVAC systems, if necessary) and make it an affordable, accessible, and vibrant place for your community again.”

“Thank you!”

“Maybe talk to Artistree and see if they need additional performance space? What would their needs be?”

“The Town Hall is a wonderful building and it would be great to see it used more often”

“Town hall is a great building, just needs to be made useable”

“Spare no expense. This building should be renovated in such a way that people consider it the most beautiful in the state!”

“Maybe look into purchasing a little more land around it to plan for future addition on the back side to accommodate kitchen and ADA compliant bathrooms and provide more parking. Look into having someone market the town hall for use and increase the foot traffic into the building along with awareness of it, this could help funding renovation projects in the future.”

“Perhaps there are some town photos that could be put up that tell stories of the town when folks use the Town Hall. Any interest from Artistree to use Town Hall - this has probably been thought of.”

“Do you know about the scoping study that was completed in approximately 2017 for the town center buildings? It was done while I was on the Selectboard and it addressed the town hall, traffic flow, and parking.”

“I think it’s perfect as is. Has character, bathrooms, very functional. I don’t think it needs major improvements or investments. Kitchen is wonderful”

“Hoping this goes beyond the brainstorming; renovated basics long overdue, limiting potential use”

“Tear off existing L (kitchen area) + expand with handicap entrance + accessible bathrooms + kitchen/catering prep area.. Improve basement area → foundation repairs, weatherproofing, clean space. Upgrade outdoor space with picnic tables.”

“Love the new windows!”