

Facilities & Services Group

REPORT ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB

Purpose

The purpose of this Initial Report is to document the work of the Facilities & Services Working Party Group to take forward recommendations for a Neighbourhood Hub following the outputs of the first phase of the Neighbourhood Planning process.

SECTION 1: Needs of the Community

The Working Party has identified the following needs of the community through the open meetings held in 2012 and further work completed by the Group.

Everyone

1. A large hall for theatre, musical events, and community gatherings, parties etc.
2. Room(s) for smaller gatherings.
3. Sports facilities (indoor and out) – an obvious link to the needs of the teenage group
4. Gym
5. Access to local swimming facilities
6. Shop
7. Café – from where children could be observed in a play area (Alice Park in Bath is an excellent example of this and is used by many parents in our community)
8. Post Office
9. Pub – a major area of concern as so many village pubs are closing and the loss to the community would be a disaster, incorporating other community needs into the local pubs would help ensure their survival and establish them as a community hub. (Use them or lose them).
10. Medical facilities
11. Library
12. Adult Education
13. Places of worship
14. Cashpoint
15. Affordable housing

In addition to the needs for everyone the Working Group identified specific needs for the following groups:

(A) 0 to 10 year olds and their parents

1. Provision of a Pre-school – a key requirement and location in the Freshford Memorial Hall would help ensure the sustainability of this facility, as (along with the village school) it is the main source of income for the Hall.
2. Village School
3. Village Hall – children's parties, brownies, etc.
4. Wrap around child care – breakfast club, after school childcare.
5. Play area – ideally in a position so it could be overseen by parents while they enjoy coffee at the café
6. Safe parking – parent and child
7. Access to safe cycling
8. Pavements – in particular to enable parents to walk their children to school safely
9. Footpaths

11 to 19 year olds (teenagers)

1. Club facilities – a place for them to meet
2. Sports facilities – football, tennis etc.
3. Cycling, skate board park
4. Organised youth activities
5. Good public transport

N.B. This is an area where more research is required with information coming from the young persons themselves. There is a danger of placing these facilities in an ‘out of sight out of mind’ area and isolating them from the rest of the community.

Elderly residents

1. Social interaction
2. Care
3. Provision of transport
4. Integrated medical facilities – problems have been identified in this area by senior members of the community.
5. Lunch club

N.B. This too is an area where more research is required

SECTION 2: Existing Facilities & Services

In reviewing the development of central neighbourhood hub, based around the Freshford Memorial Hall and Playing Field (including the Pre-School) and the Galleries shop, the Working Party recognises that whilst many of the community facilities could be housed there, it is not the *only* location in the area which the neighbourhood would rely on to provide facilities & services. Other key sites that are vital to maintain are:

- Limpley Stoke Village Hall & Playing Field,
- the Village School,
- the Village Pubs,
- the Village Churches,
- the Old Bakery / Younghusband Trust House
- Browns Field - possibility of developing Browns Field for a youth centre even though it is not within the boundary of the community area, and
- Surrounding Countryside

This philosophy would mean that safe access between these sites is essential and that any footpaths should be enhanced and road access made safer. This information should be referred to the Environment and Transport Groups for their consideration.

It is important to note that many problems exist when considering change to any of these sites as they are owned by trusts with many restrictions on their use. The charity trustees concerned may wish consider whether changes to their constitutions would be possible, where beneficial to the community, and the Neighbourhood Planning process may be able to provide funds towards any legal advice which is required.

Reviewing each of these facilities in turn:

1. **Freshford Memorial Hall & Playing Field** - According to the current Constitution, the charity maintains the Freshford Village Memorial Hall, with its adjacent recreation field and playground, and lets it out for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation. Hiring out the hall's multi-functional facilities for other activities is allowable, and in recent years the main day-time users of the Hall and important sources of income are Freshford School and Freshford Pre-school. The Hall trustees have prepared a design brief (<http://www.freshfordvillage.com/living-in-freshford/village-hall/hall-redevelopment>) to modernise, enhance and extend the Hall facility and are currently inviting expressions of interest for a feasibility study. The feasibility study aims to identify costed design options, which will be the subject of community consultations, before selection of the preferred one and a final design concept is presented.
2. **Freshford Pre-School** - The Pre-school opened in 2009 and offers play, care and education facilities for children aged between 2 years 6 months and 5 years at Freshford Memorial Hall. The Pre-school takes up to 20 children per session and operates from 9am to 1pm on Monday to Thursday mornings in term time only. The Pre-school is very popular and is currently running almost at capacity for the whole school year. The Pre-school is managed by a committee of parent volunteers who employ four part-time teachers/carers with an extended team of local supply teachers. This school year the trustees will be reviewing plans for the future including offering extended hours and wrap-around childcare to better meet the needs of working parents, and to improve business sustainability with less reliance on volunteers to run the Pre-school.
3. **Galleries Shop** - Built in the last five years and run with a large volunteer workforce. Profits are channelled back into the community via FLiSCA, the Freshford and Limpley Stoke Community Association, a Registered Charity, which built and owns the shop and manages the community grants programme.
4. **Limpley Stoke Village Hall & Playing Field** - *[Ask Trustees for appropriate short paragraph]*
5. **The Village School** - *[School Governors to provide short paragraph]*
6. **The Village Pubs** - The pubs provide a significant service to the community as places where local people can meet and enjoy social interaction. They could be used however for other purposes that would benefit the community and improve their viability.
7. **The Village Churches** - The churches are important not just as religious centres but for the community benefits they provide. As usable spaces they are under utilised and with some sensible thought much more use could be made of them, helping to alleviate the need to consider any new buildings within the neighbourhood for community use.
8. **The Old Bakery** - The Old Bakery is Church Owned and subject to various restrictions. It is currently used by the Parent and Toddler Group
9. **Younghusband Trust Building**. Presently used for the Freshford Surgery. [Trustees to add a/r]
10. **Browns Field** –Whilst not within the parish boundary it is a facility utilised by the community for various sporting activities *[Insert short paragraph]*
11. **Surrounding Countryside** - Much of the land area in the neighbourhood is agricultural and the majority of the community would want it to stay as such, there is however the possibility of using a wooded area as a mountain bike trail for use not only by the community's youth but by everyone of any age, sport and fitness are an important aid to health and well being.

SECTION 3: Options & next Steps

Taking the foregoing into account the group's recommendations are:

1. FRESHFORD MEMORIAL HALL & PLAYING FIELD

To work with the trustees to support the development of Freshford Memorial Hall, trying to ensure that it would then provide facilities for:

1. Freshford Pre –school
2. Freshford Village School
3. Surgery/medical centre
4. Wrap around childcare
5. Clubs (e.g. Brownies, WI, Horticultural, [list all current users])
6. Indoor sport
7. Gym
8. Arts and entertainment (including music and drama)
9. Parties (local residents use for children's and adult's parties)
10. Improved facilities in the playing field including running track, sports pitch and pre-school garden
11. Improved parking

2. FRESHFORD PRE-SCHOOL

To ensure Freshford Memorial Hall redevelopment plans satisfy needs of Pre-School (which is vital to its income). To work with local families to establish whether other 'wrap-around' childcare can be provided using the Pre-School facilities to generate additional income and support local families where both parents or carers work. For example, day care for younger children, afternoon sessions for pre-school children, a breakfast club could be provided and after school care could also be considered.

3. GALLERIES SHOP

To work with the Galleries shop, supporting its plans for enhancement but pressing for:

1. The provision of a play area for children that could be overseen from a café terrace.
2. An improvement in Post Office services
3. Café extension and improved kitchen facilities

4. LIMPLEY STOKE VILLAGE HALL & PLAYING FIELD

To work with the trustees and legal advisers to determine whether Freshford and Limpley Stoke Village Halls could be included under one charity and managed as such.

To seek to address the lack of parking facilities at the Hall.

Limpley Stoke Playing Field, this has uses not just for children but for many adult functions such as barbecues, boules, fetes and events, however parking is a major issue and needs resolution.

5. SCHOOL

To ensure Freshford Memorial Hall redevelopment plans satisfy needs of School (which is vital to its income).

To work with School Governors and relevant authorities to ensure the school has access to:

1. Additional outside play space at the school site
2. PE facilities (at Freshford Memorial Hall)
3. Adequate parking for parents
4. Safe drop-off for school buses

[Governors to review above and edit as appropriate]

6. VILLAGE PUBS / HOTELS

To work with the local publicans and hotel owners in order to improve the viability of their own business and aid other local businesses, by basing more services in them, possibilities include:

1. Lunch clubs for the elderly
2. Educational courses
3. Meeting rooms
4. Exhibitions
5. Utilising local products in their menus

7. VILLAGE CHURCHES

To work with the members of both churches to determine how they can be used to the benefit of the community, examples include:

1. Church for young families (currently monthly 4.00pm Service)
2. Pews could be replaced by removable chairs, enabling space to be used more flexibly.

8. THE OLD BAKERY

To work with the trustees and legal advisers to determine whether The Old Bakery could be used more widely than the current trust permits. It could also possibly be managed alongside Freshford and Limpley Stoke Village Halls under one charity.

9. YOUNGHUSBAND TRUST BUILDING

To work with the trustees and legal advisers to determine whether this building could be used more widely than the current trust permits. The surgery leaving would further enhance it's availability as a venue. It could also possibly be managed alongside Freshford and Limpley Stoke Village Halls under one charity.

10. BROWNS FIELD

Engage with young persons in the community to establish their needs before considering any improvement or development of the Brown Field site.

Ideas for use of Browns Field identified during the first phase of the neighbourhood plan are:

New building on site of existing scout hut to include Youth Club and Scouts as well as Sports Pavillion.

Outside facilities could include skateboard ramp, barbeque area and an off-road bike track.

There should be a safe footpath link from the central Neighbourhood Hub to Browns Field.

11. SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE

To work with local landowners to determine whether the idea of a mountain bike trail could be taken forward.

NEXT STEPS

ALL STAKEHOLDERS TO REVIEW SECTIONS RELATING TO THEIR AREA OF INTEREST AND THE WIDER DOCUMENT AND EDIT AS APPROPRIATE

1. Input required on 'needs' of 11-19 age group (teenagers) and that of elderly residents
2. To work with community members, trustees and legal advisors to understand the pros and cons of managing the neighbourhood facilities under one charity.
3. Analysis required of current demographic of residents in the neighbourhood as well as forecast changes.
4. Links between the central neighbourhood hub and the satellite locations (via pavements and footpaths) should be referred to the Environment and Transport Working Parties
5. Continue engagement with Beckington Medical Practice regarding the potential for moving the surgery into suitable accommodation in a redeveloped Freshford Memorial Hall.
6. Consider links with Hinton Charterhouse, which is outside scope of the neighbourhood plan, but as a village is part of the Village School and Church Parish.
7. Update on progress with use of The Tynning as this would be key for needs of the community as well as safe access between the central neighbourhood hub (including Pre-School) and School.