

Community Forum Review Meeting

1/06/09



1. Mike Goldsworthy, Arthur Taylor and Paul Kent met on 1/06/09 to review the work of the Community Forum and to explore future possibilities and projects. The following comments are intended for discussion at the next Community Forum meeting on 29/06/09 at 7.30pm in the Community Centre. It is clear that some decisions will be required as they will help to provide direction for the Community Forum's activity until July 2010.
2. We felt that 2008/9 had been a very successful year for the Community Forum. In particular the greening of the village, the launch of Fair Trade, the changes to the Resource Centre, the cotton bag project, the development of the play facilities and the the sun dial restoration were notable achievements.
3. When these projects are considered in the context of other excellent work in the parish – eg the Watch House Hill developments, the Flower Bank, the work with schools, Transition preparation, the footpaths and Pill in Bloom – it is a very impressive response to the suggestions set out in the Parish Plan.
4. All these minor projects have been successful because they have been enthusiastically led by small groups of people who are committed to the work and simply get on and do things. The evidence is there for us all to see. This approach has undoubtedly stimulated new projects including ideas for the restoration of the band stand, a museum, oral histories from older parish members, more information boards and renovation suggestions for the precinct.
5. We felt that it was crucial to maintain momentum on these minor projects as they contribute so much to the overall improvement in parish life and require minimal organisation. However, we would like to see the Community Forum budget fully used by the end of the financial year and would welcome more ideas from Community Forum members – particularly from the schools and older members of the community.
6. In this context, we were especially interested in making minor improvements to the precinct area by the use of raised beds, quarry rocks and anti-skateboard surfacing. Such improvements would be in line with any major regeneration/partial redevelopment projects presented by Arthur at the meeting on 2/02/09.
7. We felt that our visit to the Bournville Healthy Living Centre had been extremely worthwhile and several of the practices we saw are continuing to resonate strongly with us. We recommend that we hold a preliminary discussion with the main interest groups - the churches, the health service agencies and the Community Centre - to explore ways forward.

8. In this context we have no wish to continue the long history of disagreement over the future of the Community Centre and recognise fully that it provides a vital venue for many important parish activities. However, we are concerned to know the long term plan for the Community Centre in view of its age, condition and replication of facilities with other buildings. We feel that there has to be a clear plan – preferably which brings all providers under one roof – so that we can turn the aims of the Parish Plan into effective local action which meets the needs of all age groups.

MG/AT/PK 1/06/09