



WEY HILL FAIRGROUND COMMUNITY WORKSHOP REVIEW

Posted on **01/07/2014**

On June 21st 2014 some 60 Haslemere residents spent a hot summer's afternoon sharing their ideas for the future of the Fairground Common on Wey Hill. The afternoon was organised by volunteers from Haslemere Vision. Ideas generated at the event will be included in a community-wide consultation planned for September/October of this year.

The opening session explored the history of the site. A lawyer explained the implications of its legal status as common land and an architect explained some of the development challenges posed by its location and topography. There was a strong consensus that, though not straightforward to develop, the Fairground Common was a highly valuable community asset that, if sensitively developed, could regenerate the Wey Hill area for years to come. Merely to repave the site as a charging car park would be to miss a major opportunity for the community.

Attendees then divided into four groups. One proposed that the site be returned to a green common with a pond for recreational use which would enhance the setting to Grade II listed St. Christopher's Church. Others suggested various mixed use developments with housing, shops, restaurants, a car park and a public space providing homes and employment for the local community.

Decked car parking was suggested to take advantage of the Fairground's sloping site and provide parking below street level whilst providing space on top for community use. Possibilities included a public square, allotments or an informal green space that could be used for markets, fairs or artistic performances.

The existing recycling facility was felt to be a significant service for the community and thought would be needed as to where this could be relocated.

One table envisaged developing the Wey Centre as a multi-use facility, not just for youth but also for the broader community, creating an Arts and Community Centre with an amphitheatre in a new square operating in a similar

way to the West End Centre in Aldershot or the Arts Centre in Cranleigh.

Another table suggested that Haslemere should use the “Right to Challenge”, conferred on communities by the Localism Act 2011, and bid to take over parking control in the town with receipts coming back directly to Haslemere.

An imaginative suggestion envisaged establishing a community interest “Haslemere Spa” Water Company to bottle the pure water from the nearby spring in Wey Springs. This might also incorporate a microbrewery and could provide revenue for the community, further local employment and, potentially, revive local pubs

At the end of the afternoon those present agreed that it had been a worthwhile, productive and enjoyable consultation exercise. The ideas generated will be further developed and presented to the community in the planned September consultation.

This entry was posted in **Consultation, News** by **Doug Chandler**. Bookmark the **permalink** [<https://www.haslemerevision.org.uk/wey-hill-fairground-community-workshop-review/>].