



@theRec

In the Wimbledon Road Pavilion Old Dean

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Situation and Proposal Summary

Low Levels of Education, Training and Skills are major factors driving inequality in the Old Dean Estate particularly in the area surrounding the Old Dean Recreation Ground. The problems start with Oracy and Literacy of children entering the school system where both skills are at a low level at home. At the same time income deprivation is a major factor preventing travel to the library facilities provided in Camberley Town Centre. This proposal is aimed at providing a small local community run Junior Library/ Community Facility called @theRec which is highly accessible to the most deprived area of Old Dean, situated immediately next to the outstanding playground facility which was renovated in 2020. @theRec would be run by volunteers, and it is hoped to make it available on Weekdays after school hours and at the Weekends.

Legal Entity

While Old Dean Community Group will be happy to provide the support needed to help setup @theRec, it is proposed that a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is created to run it day to day in order to provide the dedicated focus it will require and also to firmly place its management with local individuals in the community who have a strong and continuing personal investment in its success. A CIO will provide the most appropriate not for profit legal basis and allows for donations to the project.

Location

The proposed location is the Wimbledon Road Recreation Ground Pavilion.

Interior

@theRec would make use of the two meeting rooms, small kitchenette and unisex toilets that form one half of the building while leaving the remainder of the building to continue being used as sports changing rooms. Between the two halves of the building there is a single doorway which could be locked to provide a degree of security for the library area from the sports changing room users.

The kitchen and toilets are currently in poor condition and will need some refurbishment. However, the work required is well within the capabilities of local volunteers.

Please note that an idea has also been submitted to Your Fund Surrey for the Pavilion building which would provide a major investment to reconfigure the building with two floors as a low energy building. If that idea were to be developed, then this would deliver a more sustainable building which would also be suitable for wider uses and could potentially become financially self-sufficient.

Hours of Operation

The initial proposed hours of operation would be from 15:30 to 17:30 on Weekdays and 12:00 to 16:00 at Weekends. Opening hours will depend on the availability of volunteers to staff @theRec but it is felt that these hours are achievable.

Services

Possible services envisaged are:

- Infant and Junior Lending Library
- Toy Library
- Reading sessions
- Child and Adult Literacy
- Limited Café (tea, coffee, squash, cakes)
- Sanitary facilities

GLF Schools in Old Dean

It is hoped that the GLF Schools (Pine Ridge, Lorraine and Cordwalles) will be willing to have significant input into the provision of services to maximise the support for learning it will be able to provide. Preliminary discussions with the Executive Head of the GLF Schools have been positive on the desire to explore the options. It is also probable that Collingwood College would want to join in on the project as well.

Surrey Library Service

From a library point of view, it is hoped that some professional support, guidance, books, and technology would come from Surrey Library Service. The detailed model for doing so has yet to be determined. There is an active conversation about how the library service can support literacy and oracy in the area and we are working together on creative options.

Management

As stated earlier it is envisaged that a CIO will be setup to manage the day-to-day operation of @theRec and it is hoped that other organisations including St Martin's church, the GLF Schools and Surrey will provide some of the Trustees together with local residents. Opening @theRec will require local volunteers, several local residents have already indicated their willingness to support the project.

Financial Management

Old Dean Community Group have a Restricted Account with the sum of £3557 which must be spent on purposes related to the Wimbledon Road Playground. It is likely that the Old Dean Community Group Trustees will be willing to transfer this money to the @theRec project as it will significantly enhance the usefulness of the playground to the benefit of the inhabitants of Old Dean. This will then provide some of the initial monies to cover the start-up and initial operation of @theRec. Grants will also be sought from grant giving organisations to help provide the initial finance required to improve the interior of the premises and support the setting up costs. Setting up a CIO with trustees who are not SHBC, or SCC Members will also make it possible for them to contribute from Community Allocations.

It is hoped that Surrey Heath Borough Council will be willing to provide the premises at a peppercorn rent and that a suitable accommodation can be reached on utility costs.

It is hoped that Surrey Libraries will help to provide the required infrastructure, books etc and provide input to enable it to operate successfully as a library offshoot.

Operation of a limited café service will bring in some revenue and running events will also generate some income to offset the costs of @theRec and this should allow it to become self-sustaining.

In the event that a Your Fund Surrey bid was accepted then that would allow the creation of a Community Hub facility with limited utility costs and more community use that would further improve the sustainability of the project.

