

Hebden Bridge Community Association Ltd

Public consultation, October 7th 2009



Report of public consultation, held at Hebden Bridge Town Hall on Thursday October 7th 2009.

The school students contribution

Day-time sessions were held with children from Riverside school and with young people from Calder High, who shared with us and our architects Bauman Lyons their thoughts on how the Town Hall could be better used in the future.

We were extremely impressed by the high level of energy and creativity brought to the project by the young people, and the architects hope to include many of the ideas they brought up in the final plans.



Calder High school students at work in the Town Hall



The Calder High school session in full swing

Architect Tom Vigar, who led the consultation, said of the Calder High students: "They were a real credit to the school. The pupils were all able to articulate their own opinions around very complex architectural issues in a manner well beyond their years. Even when they disagreed with each other's opinion they respected everyone's views and spoke in turn – most adults could learn a lesson or two

from them! Rarely have I been involved in such a healthy level of discussion outside of an architecture school and quite possibly never to the standard of yesterday! It was a real pleasure to work with them...As the next generation their views are far more important than most adults and architects given them credit .”

Deputy Head teacher Mr Chris Sylge, who accompanied the students, said “As a specialist Technology College, Calder High has a strong, creative, design-led character, and I knew our students would be able to contribute some great ideas. But frankly I was stunned by the quality of thinking and the superb design ideas our students were providing.”



Architect Yun Wing Ng with Riverside School pupils (and below)



The Mayor of Hebden Royd, Cllr John Beacroft-Mitchell welcomes Riverside School pupils to the Council Chamber.

The Open Doors session

We had about 200 people through for our 'Open Doors' session between 5pm-7pm, as well as about fifty people at the first formal AGM of the HB Community Association held in the evening at 7.30pm.

The Open Door session provided an opportunity for Hebden Bridge people, of all ages, to contribute their thoughts and ideas for the future of the Town Hall. The session also offered a chance for the whole town hall building to be opened up, allowing visitors to see the full range of rooms available. The building was animated by music, workshops and entertainment. Among those participating in this way were the local community choir Calder Valley Voices, bluegrass outfit Cowbaby, local artists Rachel and Anthony of Canvas/59 steps, Jason Elliott and Space 5 (Hebden Bridge 500 faces project), Johnnie McQuade (magician), and Fin Plumpton (classical guitar). Members of Hebden Bridge Local History Society showed a fascinating photo presentation of the Town Hall in the past.

Responses to the consultation

Replies to the question 'What does Hebden Bridge most need?' (all replies given)

A. Those answers potentially relating to Town Hall

Spaces

- Large community gathering space
- A permanent stage / theatre / performance space
- Municipal art gallery - permanent exhibition of acquired works and temporary local, national and touring exhibitions
- Art space / gallery space
- Retrospective museum
- More community space for arts / youth / community etc groups to meet and rehearse
- A place for ongoing historical society displays like there used to be in the tourist info centre before the council sold it off
- Vibrant community arts centre with workshop space and artists co-op shop and decent kitchen facilities
- Free meeting rooms for local groups x 3
- Meeting spaces open access
- Cheap shared office space
- Prayer space in the middle... maybe just a quiet space not just for praying but

a peaceful spot

- More places that allow dogs in
- Baby space

Activities

- Affordable good quality adult education / Interesting adult education and not too expensive
- NHS Breast screening parks here every 3 years
- Push chair access to meeting room downstairs for playgroup / NCT
- A 'by donation ' cafe and free shop where you can afford to hang out all day like when we squatted the old tourist info centre and Pitt Street
- Swimming pool x 11
- Sauna x 1
- Indoor tennis and squash courts / badminton x 5
- Sustainable youth project / youth space i.e. recording studio / youth club space
- A light Opera Society and Calder Valley Youth Society on the stage
- Me the Jester

Services / Ethos

- A dog / cat poo warden
- Break free from Victorian apron strings - make it a celebration of modern society and values
- True partnership working
- Town hall will be a excellent community resource
- Community association should have input into ALL sites in HB not just Town Hall
- A good dose of reality - who defines that then?

Sustainable

- Wind and water power
- Micro-energy schemes - local sustainable energy generation i.e. small hydro using rivers (bit like the old days!) x 2
- Sustainable power projects - hydro / wind / solar / methane x 2
- Use the water!
- As sustainable and resilient as possible

Design

- Maintain as many original features as possible
- More contemporary designs less 'nimbys'
- No more concrete please and people orientated architecture and straw bale extension built by HB citizens themselves

- Buildings with disabled access
- No more car parking provision
- Food growing spaces from M2 plots / Food growing everywhere / community garden / allotments / Fruit trees

B. Other HB issues / needs

- The creation of wild swimming areas using old mill ponds x 3
- Less cars - car free - less traffic x 4
- Less parking more growing of veg x 5
- Affordable town housing (not apartments)with gardens x 2 / No more land for luxury housing
- Reclaim the useless posh flats developments for social housing - squat them if we have to
- Kerbside to come back x 3
- Access to Hebden Bridge station westbound platform for wheel chair bound with new lift - where there used to be one)
- Less public sculptures more trees and bikes



Magician Johnny McQuade performing card tricks in one of the Town Hall rooms (normally not open to the public) during the Open Doors session on October 7th 2009