

Item 21- Walsden Library

Contact form on web site received 21st May 2020

We are the Walsden Neighbourhood Watch Community Group who are working hard to promote a safer, nicer, friendlier community. We have started a petition after many residents have shown interest in turning the old Library space into a community garden to promote people's wellbeing.

We would offer a place for all ages to communicate, thus helping to tackle the loneliness some feel within our society as well as providing a space for enjoyment and relaxation. This space would also offer a valuable resource to maintain and develop our wildlife population. For example, we have plans to site a bee hotel, further helping to save and help the bees within Calderdale.

This space could also grow certain foods which we have seen in other parts of Calderdale. We are working hard to establish funding and are building a team to maintain the garden. Additionally, we have support in place from community groups to help establish the garden with minimal, or no cost to the council.

The group works as a team with Councillor Matt Doyle and the petition was started online under his name, however, it is independent of all-party affiliations. We also have paper-based versions around Walsden. Some Advertisement has started to go up in some local businesses around Walsden.

We would like you to consider this proposal and offer support as a council as this idea goes forward. The well-being of residents should be the top priority.

Town Clerk Comments for consideration

- Enquiry has been made of Calderdale as to what is the intended use- response awaited.
- Not prejudicing what they say, but options that would appear to be likely for Capital Receipts to Calderdale could be:-
 - Use as Car Park to support Chapel for conversion (could it possibly allow Mobile Library location?)
 - Sale for development opportunity
 - Consolidation of Chapel and Library footprints for larger scale development opportunity- (could it possibly allow Mobile Library location?)
- Perhaps an opportunity to provide smaller one or two bed properties/ apartment to meet Demand identifies within our Housing Needs Assessment work.
- If however wishing to support the group in their ambitions
 - Does the Town Council seek transfer of demolished site in good state to TTC to act as a formal "vehicle" for fundraising/grant applications in partnership with group?
 - Subsequent lease and contract then to formally constituted community group for ongoing responsibility for maintenance/care
 - Acceptance that fallback in event of failure of group to continue would be direct management of site and with-it financial liability for ongoing maintenance etc
 - Strict covenants for use of land
 - Funding provision – Community Development Reserve
- During any discussions/support bear in mind possible mobile library provision if parking available.