

Pavilion Briefing - Town Meeting 20 May 26 - Simon Bebbington

Good evening. My name is Simon Bebbington and I am a member of the project team for the new pavilion on Donald Pither Memorial Field. A bit of background, the Donald Pither Memorial Field was given to the community in 1945 by John Pither. It was in memory of his son Donald Pither who tragically died at the age of 26. Apparently Donald was a very gifted sportsman. He famously scored 1400 runs in a single season in 1938 when just 20 years old. Following the donation, the existing Jubilee Playing field was redesigned and officially opened in 1947 as the Donald Pither Memorial Field along with the current pavilion.

The pavilion is now nearly 80 years old and is no longer fit for purpose. What we want to do is build a new pavilion on the same site. Currently the poor facilities are holding back our cricket and football clubs due to non-compliance with regulations laid down by Sport England. These regulations cover things such as the size and number of changing rooms and the facilities in them such as showers and toilets. And seeing all the trophies at the back of the hall they deserve better.

A local architect, Charles Gillespie, has designed a pavilion that complies with the regulations. We have planning permission. Additionally the new facility will include a large community space for other activities. These could be exercise classes, indoor sports, and community clubs. The facility would also be central for whole community events that take place on the Donald Pither Field - such as the Somerset Science Fair, jubilee celebrations, and the event to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. The next big event is on Saturday July 11 - The Sow, Grow and Bloom Festival which is part of Cary in Bloom.

This project however does not come cheaply. We anticipate the cost to be somewhere in the region of £1million. At present we have almost £250,000 a majority of which has come from S106 monies - these are financial contributions paid by property developers as a condition for getting planning permission. We have had some contributions - recently from Viridor at Dimmer who have given us almost £1,400. The Newt has kindly contributed £10,000. Letters have been sent to all local businesses both big and small seeking contributions - we have had some smaller donations as a result but we hope for more. Barber Cheese at Ditchet have pledged a sum of up to £10,000.

Fund raising is taking place by some of the community. The White Hart runs a monthly quiz on a Sunday evening to raise money. A local elderly resident, Shirley Lane, has written a book - Growing Old Inevitably. She writes about the challenges of old age supported by entertaining stories from her own well-lived life. These books are on sale for £10 and all proceeds go to the pavilion project. We are having the

occasional coffee morning. The event I mentioned earlier will be giving some of the proceeds to the project.

We will be applying for grants. Some bad news is the National Lottery Community Fund bid has not been successful. As I say more grants will be applied for and there will be more S106 monies coming in, in the future.

Finally if you happen to know of someone with £750,000 going spare please get in touch - we would be happy to rename the pavilion after them.