

Radley Parish Council

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A new community hall/garden for the Lawns area



Plans are underway to create a community hall and/or garden where people living in The Lawns and all the surrounding area can meet, and run events.

This presents an exciting opportunity to provide a facility which will bring local people together and attract interesting clubs and activities into the heart of this area – anything from fitness classes to toddler groups, community lunches to gardening workshops.

Help shape what we create

This survey will help us – the Parish Council – to know what the interests of the community are, so that we can design the space in the best way possible, to develop a lively and enjoyable community in this part of the village.

In this paper you will find:

- The story so far
- Two possible ideas about how the site might be used

These are work in progress ideas, and we look forward to hearing your thoughts about them, (closing date 10 December). The **paper questionnaire** is part of this leaflet, or you can use the **online form** on the Radley Village website (radleyvillage.org.uk).

This initial survey will shape the top-level decisions about the project. As future new residents move in, there will be many further opportunities for them to make an input.

And we are holding an **open meeting at 7.30 p.m. on 29 November** in Radley Church, when you can hear more, and ask questions.

With our thanks

Radley Parish Council

The story so far

The plot of land is at the edge of The Lawns closest to the railway and measures 1780m² / 0.44 acres / 0.18 hectares – about the size of the combined hall, carpark and play area at Radley Village Hall, Gooseacre. The two long sides each measure around 45m. (For comparison, 45m is twice the length of a tennis court.)

We expect to start construction in the final phase of Redrow's building programme, 2023.

We have allocated a budget of £300,000 from the Community Infrastructure Levy*.

We want this new community space to provide something a little different from the other halls in Radley and Kennington, rather than duplicate them.

The hall and garden will need to generate income, to cover running costs. We envisage a not-for-profit business model, with discount hire rates for local residents.

The development process will be managed by the Parish Council. The question of how and by whom the new facility should be managed in the long term is under consideration.

A working group has looked at all the details, and prepared two alternative possibilities, either of which could work well with the budget, the site location, and likely uses. Both options also take into account the importance of minimizing carbon impact in construction, and maximizing energy efficiency in the on-going running.

- Possibility One centres on a community hall
- Possibility Two centres on a community garden

The two ideas are offered here to prompt discussion; it is probable that we will adopt elements from both proposals, as well as ideas that emerge from this consultation.

Much fuller details of both proposals are available online at radleyvillage.org.uk/radleys-future/lawns-community-facility, including estimates for costings, possible layouts, and background research information.

* The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a tax which developers are required to pay towards the cost of public services needed to support the housing, such as schools, libraries and recreational facilities. 25% of the receipts are paid to the relevant parish council. Information on Radley Parish Council's CIL programme can be found here radleyvillage.org.uk/radleys-future/development-steering-group-documents



Possibility One: conventional hall, innovative construction

This approach would create a building including a main hall of at least 65m² – large enough for events such as toddler groups, exercise classes, and children’s parties – plus kitchen, toilets, and some storage, giving a total building footprint in the region of 110m².

If we used conventional building methods, construction costs for this option at this size would substantially exceed the £300K budget.

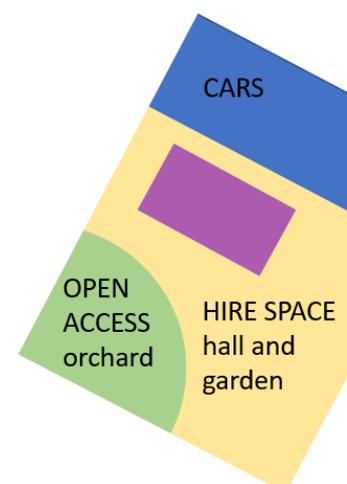
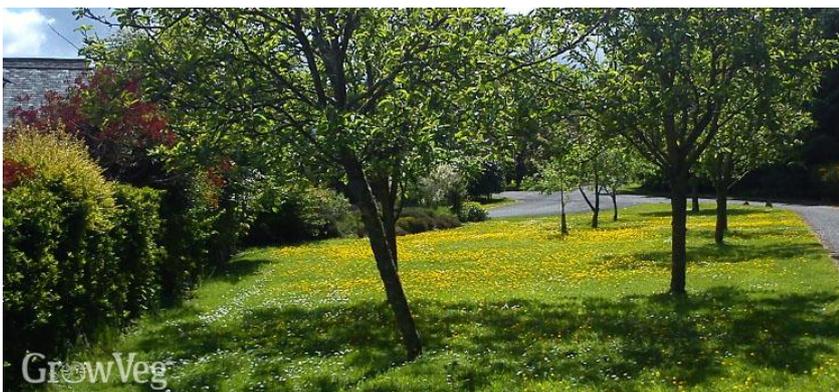
The working group therefore proposes incorporating ‘natural build’ construction elements which will both drive the price down, and substantially cut the carbon impact:

- Foundations made by a well-proven ‘zero-concrete’ method – for example a technique using car tyres.
- Walls and framework using construction panels made of natural materials. This accelerates the build process, achieves excellent thermal properties, and costs significantly less than bricks and mortar.

To deliver these, we would partner with The School of Natural Building (SNaB), the UK’s leading training school for cement-free construction methods. SNaB’s expertly supervised course trainees would provide much of the construction work, substantially reducing our labour costs. More details are available at radleyvillage.org.uk/radleys-future/lawns-community-facility.

Possibility One also includes an open access area for the whole community to use (for example as a community orchard), parking for bikes and 20 cars, and a landscaped outside space for use exclusively by those who rent the hall.

All this looks achievable in or around the £300K budget.



Possibility Two: community garden with timber roundhouse

This approach would put outdoor projects at the forefront – space for relaxation and contemplation, community gardening projects, outdoor classes in gardening and fitness, a meeting space for community groups and schools, and for private hire for events and parties.



It would consist of a large carefully designed garden with raised beds and planting areas, wildflower areas, vegetable beds and fruit bushes, formal and informal flower beds and medicinal herbs.



In addition, one or two timber roundhouses (up to 9m in diameter) would provide kitchen, toilets, and an indoor meeting space of up to approx. 55m² (a little smaller than the hall in Possibility 1.)

We envisage that the main facilities would be enclosed and locked securely when not in use, to avoid vandalism and anti-social use. As in Possibility One, part of the site would be open at all times – for example as a community orchard.

The inspiration for these ideas comes from the successful project at Barracks Lane, Oxford, and other community gardens. To find out more, this article makes good reading: houseandgarden.co.uk/article/community-gardening

The group estimates that the cost of roundhouse(s), landscaping, bike racks, car park, equipment and planting would be within the £300,000 budget.

Please let us know your thoughts, either by using **the form in this leaflet** or by completing the **online form** on the Radley Village website radleyvillage.org.uk. And to hear more, please come to the **open meeting at 7.30 pm on 29 November in Radley Church**. Then stay in touch by signing up to our **monthly newsletter**.

