

## **Update from the Parish Council on Open Space consultation**

If the Church Road site is developed, one fifth of the site will be set aside as public Open Space, accessible to all and directly linked to the Village Hall. In the autumn of 2020, the Parish Council ran a consultation to find out what people would like to see there. We received over 90 responses and are very grateful to everyone who took the time to give their views.

There was strong support for seating and a grassed area as part of the Open Space. Some people were keen to see a village green at the heart of Steep while others focused on making space for nature, with wildflowers and potentially a pond to attract wildlife. We received a number of suggestions that the Open Space could be a source of produce, used as allotments, a community garden or orchard. Other ideas included flower beds, woodland and specimen trees.

We received mixed views on whether the Open Space should include a children's play area in addition to the facilities already provided on the common. There was limited support for erecting buildings on the Open Space, other than perhaps a covered shelter serving as a meeting place. A number of people were interested in having a coffee shop, or a community shop with a broader range of facilities, but neither a visitor centre or a meeting room attracted support.

The consultation asked about the possibility of re-siting the War Memorial to the Open Space. Views were evenly divided on this, but a number of people made the point that the War Memorial should remain visible from the road.

Many people noted that the Open Space offers an opportunity to create a centre for the village, given its strategic position. They encouraged the Parish Council to think about the Open Space in relation to the Village Hall and its surroundings.

If you would like to know more about the consultation responses, a full analysis is available on the Parish Council website or by contacting Jenny Hollington, Clerk to the Council. The Parish Council has set up an Open Space Working Group of Councillors and community members to help translate the views expressed through the consultation into the design of the Open Space. Covid restrictions permitting, we will hold a public meeting in March 2021 to share further information on options and seek views from the village. In the meantime you are welcome to send any further comments to Jenny Hollington.

Steep Parish Council