



**FRIENDS** of  
**CASTLE GREEN**

# **Planning the future: Hereford's Castle Green in the 21st Century**

## **FINAL REPORT**



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

By Mark Hubbard, Friends of Castle Green  
24th September 2018

Through years of close communication with the local community and regular consultation, Friends of Castle Green has a reasonable idea of what is desired by the local community to ensure a sustainable future for The Pavilion, its setting on Castle Green, and the surrounding area. However, closer and more in-depth consultation was required to determine the thoughts and ideas of the wider community.

A £10,000 grant from the Big Lottery, Awards for All, was granted in 2016 for FoCG to carry out City wide consultation through a series of World Cafe style events, with groups of like-minded people brought together over a meal to discuss ideas for "Planning the Future: Hereford's Castle Green in the 21st Century". The project plan was to hold 2 project promotion days, including a launch event in Hereford's High Town to explain the project and encourage attendees to the World Cafe evening. Three 'Planning for Real' events were held at established, popular City events; Hereford River Carnival, Hereford Country Fair and Friends of Castle Green Summer Fair. Each of these events sees in excess of 3,000 attendees so were the ideal platform to reach a wide audience. FoCG had a presence at each of these events with information on the History of Castle Green, its current status and a couple of 'food for thought' ideas for the future. Large scale maps of Castle Green and the surrounding area, as well as large scale floor plans of the Pavilion, were situated on the stand with an endless supply of post-it notes for people to write their ideas and thoughts and attach them to the relevant place on the map. FoCG members were available to talk through the information and receive more detail on visitor's ideas. These were collated as part of the overall consultation project and led some of the discussions at the World Cafe evenings. These events were also used to recruit attendees to the World Cafe events.

Of the 14 World Cafe events planned, Friends of Castle Green achieved 11 of these, with between 20 and 30 attendees at each evening. These were held at The Pavilion, the Georgian building on Castle Green undergoing a Community Asset Transfer from Herefordshire Council to Friends of Castle Green. These sit-down dinners provided a delicious meal catered for by local companies for tables of 4 people who were given a quick talk on the history of Castle Green and FoCG's thoughts, then fed and left to discuss their ideas. Attendees were each given marker pens and wrote down notes on their paper tablecloth. At the end of the evening these ideas were then further discussed with the rest of the attendees and created the basis of the final results. Invitations to each World Cafe was targetted at a different audience, with the aim being to engage all areas of the community. As well as a number of evenings for the general public that didn't necessarily fit into a specified group, the World Cafe event invitees included: Local business, young people, FoCG members, City councillors and community group leaders, Pavilion and Castle Green users, local arts and history groups, North & South Wye individuals and local professionals.

In a final bid to reach an even greater cross section of people, using the themes that emerged from the World Cafe events an online survey was constructed and distributed via the FocG website and Facebook page. The results of this can be seen in Appendix 1.

Towards the end of the project at the FoCG AGM, initial cross cut themes that had emerged from the World Cafe and Planning for Real events were discussed and displayed on posters around the room. Attendees were given 10 gold star stickers each to vote on the ideas they liked the most to give FoCG further proof of the popularity of the key themes. The themes that emerged from these events can be seen in Appendix 2.

A final evening was held to thank all of those that had participated in the project with the initial cross cut themes displayed around the room.

The majority of the themes that emerged are discussed in this report and many will be taken forward by Friends of Castle Green in the future. However there are some ideas that have not been included as they are not within the realms of reality for a small community group. Where possible FoCG will work with other community groups and organisations to create partnerships to realise the ambitions of the community but some of the ideas are unrealistic for a small group of volunteers to manage. The most strongly voiced opinion was for FoCG to avoid taking over the management of Castle Green itself from the Council. It is felt that

this will overstretch our management capabilities and pull the group in too many different directions. The overriding opinion is that we should work with the Council to improve the space but not commit to managing it in its entirety.

The project was an insightful and overall success which has given FoCG real focus for the future as well as evidence for the need to pursue further funding to take forward some of these projects. The strongest emerging themes will be given priority but there is no timeline for activity to be completed. Funding will be sought for individual projects with certain themes being prioritised, such as the refurbishment of the Pavilion, which will then lead to other projects based at the building, such as a cafe, art and historical exhibitions and development of the Youth Canoe Centre. Historical and environmental interpretation projects for Castle Green are another priority with events in partnership with other groups to be further explored. Some themes that emerged will not be taken forward as they are not central to the FoCG ethos, such as the creation of a Tourist Information Centre (which now exists in the Butter Market) and the creation of a temporary or permanent band stand/ performance space on Castle Green. FoCG needs to be practical about its ability to achieve all of the desires of the community due to the need for funding and reliance on volunteers, but we are excited about the future and realising a great number of the ideas that emerged during the consultation process. We now have a well thought out and solid plan for the future of Castle Green in the 21st Century.



## **Foreword**

It is difficult to express the enthusiasm we encountered when running "Planning the Future: Hereford's Castle Green in the 21st Century", the Awards for All funded consultation project run by Friends of Castle Green (FoCG), in a dry final report. The evening discussion events buzzed with excitement, with ideas about the future possibilities for the space and the Pavilion coming thick and fast. As Directors of FoCG it was a real boost to discover in reality what we had always assumed - people LOVE Castle Green and want the long term project for the area to succeed for the community at large. It is both a local park for local people, but also a city wide asset visited by a huge variety of people from all over the city and county

and especially loved. It is a community asset that has become an emblem for Hereford, meeting a very wide set of community needs and aspirations. It has had many "re-births" in its long history and this report is the beginning of the next chapter, for the 21st century.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2016, Friends of Castle Green (FoCG) successfully applied to the Big Lottery for an Awards for All (A4A) grant of £10,000 to run a city wide consultation on the future of the Pavilion, a Georgian building undergoing a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) to the FoCG and its park setting, Castle Green. The project was called "Planning the Future: Hereford's Castle Green in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century".
- 1.2 In short, the project aimed to hold 2 project promotions events, 3 Planning for Real consultation events and 14 World Cafe style consultation events for up to 30 people.
- 1.3 Following these 19 events, we would:
  - undertake analysis of the results of the consultation
  - write and publish a report of the consultation findings
  - make detailed representations of the results to Herefordshire Council's Forward Planning Team in order to ensure the findings inclusion in the Hereford Area Plan
  - use the consultation results to further develop our emerging long term plans for a Community Asset Transfer of the whole of the historic site of Hereford Castle
  - draw up an action plan to develop community business models in order to create sustainable long term income for Castle Green and Pavilion.
- 1.4 Initially, the project was due to run from 1/11/2016 – 30/10/17, but shortly after the grant was given, the Herefordshire Country Fair announced they would be holding their event on Hereford's King George Playing Fields – a stone's throw from Castle Green. To incorporate this event within the FoCG timescales, the project start date was amended to 1/2/17 with the end date of 30/1/18.

## **2. How Did the Project Go?**

- 2.1 FoCG has a lot of experience in running public events, so an events-based project like "Planning the Future" played to the organisation's strengths. All events that happened were remarkably successful, with the World Cafe events getting very positive feedback. We successfully held 2 promotional events, 3 Planning for Real events and 11 World Cafe Events.
- 2.2 Project Promotion days – the initial promotional event was on a cold February Saturday in Hereford's High Town. Despite this, the level of engagement was extremely positive, over 1500 leaflets were distributed, 400+ people spoken to and a large number of people requested to be included in the invitations to World Cafe events.
- 2.3 Planning for Real days were staged during 3 events – Hereford River Carnival, FoCG Summer Fair & Herefordshire Country Fair. The consultation consisted of a large scale map of the Castle Green & its environs, a large scale plan of the building and an endless supply of post-it notes. People were asked to write their ideas or comments on the post-it note & place them on the relevant part of the plan/map. Engagement at these events was positive, but it was far more difficult to capture any in-depth comments or develop ideas with those that put them forward. The space allocated to us by the organisers of each event and the weather affected the footfall and our ability to engage.

2.4 The World Cafe events were by far the most successful, both for gathering ideas and information, but also for the in-depth consideration of those ideas by the participants. The presentation focussed on an overview of the current state of play with both the Castle Green & the Pavilion and then posed the following questions for discussion in small groups whilst they ate their evening meal together:

- i. How should we use the Pavilion? Are there priorities?
- ii. Ideas that promote healthy communities – using the building & park.
- iii. Income generation? What community businesses could we run for profit?
- iv. Do we take over the park? How would you like to see the park develop? How are we going to pay for it?
- v. Attracting more people to the park? How do you feel about this? Ideas on how to do it – more people, more potential profit?
- vi. Conservation & history – what ideas do you have?

Consultees were given free rein to prioritise their own discussion and focus on what they wanted to talk about. Each table had a paper tablecloth and each person their own marker pen. Ideas and discussion points were written on the tablecloths which have become the source material for further analysis. Towards the end of the evening, each table was asked to summarise their discussions in a plenary session, during which ideas were further discussed.

2.5 Project Management – as with most projects things don't always turn out quite as envisaged. The estimates of how much time it would take to organise each event were woefully inadequate, with most events taking at least double the number of hours allocated to them. Luckily our negotiations with local suppliers allowed us to come in under budget on food provision. Many of the chefs and suppliers were keen to be associated with the project and prepared to offer extremely good terms. The project came in on budget in global terms with only a small number of changes necessary between "activity" budgets, but with some more extensive changes within individual activity budgets.

## **Presentation of Results**

In analysing the results from this consultation project, there is a clear distinction between ideas and themes. Ideas are generally formed around projects that may or may not be worth pursuing in the future. Themes emerge from all of the ideas. A theme can be a *practicality* that affects how several ideas are pursued or an *approach* or *issue* which further informs how ideas are pursued. For the purposes of this final report, these will be dealt with separately.

### **3. Project Results – Themes**

These themes can be applied to all of the project ideas detailed later in this report. Collectively they form an approach to FoCG future work programme and will need to be addressed positively when planning for the future, applying each issue in turn when developing ideas.

3.1 Capacity - This was a theme that was repeatedly cited when discussing future projects for FoCG during the consultation. Indeed it was an issue during the running of the A4A consultation project itself – finding enough volunteers for every consultation event to run smoothly added to the workload for each event. FoCG already has a very full calendar of events during the year, some of which are extremely large and attract big crowds of people. With a relatively small group of volunteers, FoCG is already running at "capacity".

Any future plans to further develop on site services or events will need to allow for capacity building or ensure that development is completely self-sustaining.

This issue was raised & discussed at 91% of World Cafe events.



### 3.2 Partnerships

Often discussed in relation to 3.1 above, partnerships were thought to be invaluable to the future development plans of FOCG. Depending on the project, partnership organisations can provide extra capacity, expertise, focus and energy. Partnerships will often create the impetus for a particular project. FoCG will need to prioritise the development of on-going relationships with both local and national partnership organisations if we are to achieve a positive future for the Pavilion and Castle Green. The imminent CAT will require the identification of major national funders covering the areas of community, heritage and sports funding, who will all hopefully become future partners to our project.

FoCG already has good working relations with many existing organisations, which were regularly acknowledged during the consultation discussions. These include:

- St James CofE Primary School & PTFA
- Hereford Youth Canoe Centre
- Livewire & Music Pool
- Hereford City Council
- Hereford Cathedral School
- Hereford River Carnival
- Local RSPCA branch
- St Johns Ambulance
- Balfour Beatty & Herefordshire Council

The value of these partnerships was regularly acknowledged during the discussions at the World Cafe events, without which many of the regular events held on the Castle Green would not happen. They bring vibrancy, energy and essential extra volunteers, enabling FoCG to deliver exciting events enjoyed by thousands of people in a safe, family friendly environment.

Many of the projects proposed during the consultation would depend on developing future partnerships to take them forward. Without the added expertise and focus new partnership organisations bring, FOCG will be unable to deliver on many of the proposals put forward by the community.

This issue was raised & discussed at 100% of world cafe events.

- 3.3 Volunteers - Attracting and retaining sufficient volunteers is a well documented limitation for many voluntary groups. FoCG is committed to staging a number of "free to attend" events on Castle Green each year and the involvement of volunteers is essential to ensure that this policy is maintained, simply due to the financial advantages of a volunteer workforce.

Conversely, there have been some projects undertaken in the past that have been too long and unwieldy for a group of volunteers to complete. This was particularly the case when FoCG decided to use volunteers to paint the railings that are part of the fabric of the Castle Green. After five full days of voluntary work, only two thirds of the railings were completed and, with no end in sight, the project ran out of steam. Luckily, with a Diamond Jubilee visit by the Queen scheduled in 2012, Herefordshire Council prioritised the remaining work and paid for its completion. This particular project was used in the presentation at the World Cafe consultation events to illustrate the particular difficulties of a volunteer workforce and produced some stimulating discussions about their role and expectations.

One of the most powerful messages received during the consultation was that volunteering is a two way street. The benefits to FOCG of volunteer activity are clearly evident, but what they receive in turn is an important part of the equation. Training, cultural benefits, job opportunities, embellishments to CVs, friendship and enjoyment were all potential benefits highlighted as additional reasons for volunteers to want to work with FoCG during the consultation.

Co-ordination of volunteer activities was also highlighted as a concern. Explaining what jobs need doing, creating a volunteer rota, publicising opportunities for people to get involved, managing "no shows", providing volunteer benefits like free food and drink and ensuring people enjoyed themselves were all issues to which FoCG need to pay close attention. The role of a volunteer co-ordinator was raised regularly during discussions and whether the role should be a paid employee (and how to finance it) or a volunteer.

Volunteers are an intrinsic part of FoCG. All of the directors of the company are volunteers and most of the activities and events are run by volunteers. There was a clear acknowledgement during the consultation that FoCG should create paid employment opportunities as it grows and develops, but the benefits of providing volunteer opportunities should not be underestimated. Volunteer policies & procedures should be prioritised in the development of the FOCG long term action plan.

This issue was raised at 100% of the world cafe events.

### 3.4 Young People

One of the best attended world cafe events was the one held specifically for young people, with 26 young people eating pizza and getting very animated! Along with a plethora of ideas of events that could be staged, there were a number of very clear messages that were conveyed:

- a) Young people have a clear sense of "ownership" of both the Castle Green and the Pavilion.
- b) Uniquely in Hereford, the space is not considered to be in either North Wye or South Wye - it is a neutral space where perceived differences in background are not considered relevant. Young people can meet up as equals.
- c) There is a very real desire for young people not to be "developed out" of the building. Its current dilapidated state allows the groups to feel comfortable in the space. "If the building is changed, make it youth friendly."
- d) Livewire, a music project for young people currently run from the Pavilion, clearly stated their project would not have been the success it is without access to the Pavilion and its facilities.

- e) Hereford Youth Canoe Centre has approximately 600 young people every season learning canoe skills from the Pavilion, entirely run by volunteers.
- f) The young people who attended showed a breadth of understanding and support for an incredibly wide range of issues. The following are direct quotes: Safe place for community - Maintain the history - Music stage rebuilt - More lighting – Embrace the history - BBQ's they really work in Oz (National Park) - Save the otters - Free WiFi - Build safe firepits - Late night meeting space - No CCTV, it takes away privacy

FOCG should not underestimate the strength of feeling the young people of Hereford have for both the Castle Green and the Pavilion. Each year, the number of young people who attend organised events both in the Pavilion and the park are in the thousands, adding to their collective perception that the park and the building are part of their personal cultural heritage of their home town. Any future development of the building must ensure that there are no adverse effects on the accessibility to this valuable resource for young people.

As an issue, young people was raised at 100% of the world cafe events.



### 3.5 Financial Viability

Throughout the consultation project, financial viability was a subject placed high on the agenda. FoCG has a record of being extremely cautious with its finances, primarily because they have been so limited. With the imminent completion of the CAT, the legal and financial liabilities of FoCG will increase dramatically, but so will potential future income. Whilst many of the ideas for projects were also potential sources of income, discussions gave a clear message of caution. FoCG should be careful not to overstretch its activities without careful financial planning. The Community Interest Company status of the organisation allows for community businesses to trade for profit, but if these become successful, clear financial advice will be needed to limit tax liabilities - ensuring maximum benefit to the community FoCG serves.

As projects are developed, clear financial planning, which will require a flexible approach to project development, must be in place.

This issue was raised at 100% of world cafe events.

- 3.6 How far do we go? - FoCG taking over the management of Castle Green was much discussed at all of the World Cafe events. There was a general acknowledgement that maintenance has diminished over the last decade, leading to a feeling of slight neglect. There were a small group of vocal local residents who appreciated this approach, allowing the Castle Green to remain a quiet, less visited place on their doorstep, but these voices were in a clear minority. Recent improvements to Castle Green were acknowledged as primarily the work of FoCG and applauded. The historical & environmental benefits of the area were clearly much appreciated as something to share with a wider audience. Support for projects to encourage



increased visitor numbers (and potential income) were in a clear majority, with people expressing pride that Hereford had managed to protect this valuable inner city space.

Having said all of this, there was also a clear majority of consultees who felt that a public open space was the responsibility of the local authority. Extreme caution was advocated in almost every World Cafe event about FoCG taking over responsibility for the park, with the exception of the young people's event, who felt FoCG would "do a better job than the council".

Working in partnership with the local authority should be the approach advocated by FoCG for the foreseeable future when considering the management and maintenance of Castle Green. FoCG should focus on developing a successful future for the Pavilion, whilst encouraging more use of the park and developing partnerships that facilitate this.

This issue was raised at 100% of world cafe events.



### 3.7 Parking

The lack of accessible parking was highlighted by one consultee suggesting that Redcliffe Gardens should be turned into a car park, thus ensuring a regular income, capacity crowds and regular bookings for any future developments undertaken by FOCG. Whilst this suggestion was "tongue in cheek", it was an extremely clever way to highlight the disadvantage Castle Green and the Pavilion face, being surrounded by restrictive parking regulations, with public car parks being a 5-10 minute walk away.

Despite this, the lack of parking did not diminish the enthusiasm for future developments. There was a clear agreement that the current practice of allowing organiser's and participant's cars on site during free to attend events should continue, but cars per se should not be given access to the park, ever! There were a significant number of people who felt the lack of parking would be a barrier to future developments, with an equally significant number seeing this as actually an asset, ensuring car free future development.

The lack of parking needs to be acknowledged as a potential "threat" to all future proposals for the area. Proposed projects that are car-centric should probably not be included in the future development plans for FOCG.

This issue was raised at 100% of world cafe events.

### 3.8 Commercialisation of Space

One of the highlights of the consultation project was the confirmation that the

approach taken by FoCG to focus on family friendly community events with no large corporate business presence, was hugely appreciated. The Fireworks Spectacular, with no businesses trading on site, was regularly mentioned as a positive alternative to more commercially run events around the County, helping to make the event more attractive to a family audience.

The value of the park and the Pavilion would be diminished by the involvement of commercialising interests - branding has no place here.

There was, however, an acknowledgement that community run business did have a place within the building and park. Profits being ploughed back into the core values of the organisation, bringing improvements that would otherwise remain un-financed, were fully supported throughout the consultation. There is clearly a balance to be struck. This also has implications for any future sponsorship deals FOCG might be able to negotiate, with big businesses with intrusive branding being considered undesirable.

This issue was raised & discussed at 91% of world cafe events.

### 3.9 Bringing Balance to the City

This theme had not occurred to FoCG until the consultation project was underway. Whilst it was only discussed in less than half of the world cafe events, it is included here as a prompt for FoCG not to underplay its hand when looking at how the site can develop in importance in the future.

Castle Green has been an occupied site since before the city of Hereford was founded in the 7th century. This historical importance, along with its environmental credentials, with the River Wye running alongside, provide the basis of a fascinating project to tell its story. The different roles the site has played in both national and local events, its various reincarnations, its strategic importance and how it survived without the usual urbanisation of historic castle sites would make a compelling visitor attraction.

Geographically, the site is diagonally opposite the most recent extension to Hereford city centre, The Old Market, a £90M retail development which has certainly increased the footfall to Hereford. With proper interpretation and the development of visitor facilities led by a non-commercial community group, Castle Green could become an incredibly important part of the "visitor experience" that Hereford has to offer.

This issue was raised & discussed at 45% of world cafe events.

## 4. **Project Results - Ideas for the Pavilion**

Ideas for the Pavilion will inform the planning process immediately following the Community Asset Transfer. Each one will need further discussion and prioritisation as we approach the restoration of the Pavilion for community use. The following ideas were the most mentioned throughout the consultation project.

### Restaurant/Cafe

The creation of a cafe/restaurant at the Pavilion was overwhelmingly the most

popular idea in every discussion we had, being raised at 100% of events. Reasons cited for wanting this facility ranged from "On a sunny summer Sunday there can be 200+ people on Castle Green and there's nowhere to get a cup of tea!" to "There is nowhere in Hereford with a view of the River Wye where you can sit and eat".

The more detailed discussions of this idea brought up a number of salient points:

- has to be designed to include music
- ticket money
- should be a runner – flexible space and design
- celebrates river (USP)
- look to University to increase business
- crafted to swell with the seasons
- expanding or contracting workforce
- Sunday brunch
- pop-up food events
- Seasonal opening?
- Bit out the way - lack of footfall
- People don't know it's there and lots competition in the town now
- Potential lack of passing trade
- Bad weather can prevent people visiting
- People using the space responsibly will deter unwanted anti-social behaviour
- Expertise necessary, unlikely to succeed in winter, difficult to manage
- Unusual place, imaginative food
- Getting local community groups (day centres, SHYPP, MIND etc) involved in the running of the cafe would give those groups extra opportunities
- Increased family time on Castle Green, no need to go back to town for food or a drink

It is clear that the provision of a food & drink offer based in the Pavilion was universally popular, but also clear that this provision should be approached very flexibly. Whether this provision should be run by FoCG itself or franchised out was a question that was posed and remains unanswered. A weekend cafe during late Spring, running more full time in the Summer and reverting back to weekends in early Autumn, might be the best approach. Partnering other organisations to provide employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups was also a recurring theme and may help to minimise costs in a positive way. Identifying the USPs of the cafe was also thought to be important - riverside dining, community run rather than private profit, local food prepared on site, environmental and historical surroundings etc. Allowing the cafe space to be hired out for private and community functions is an element that should be factored in from the beginning, ensuring the space is flexible and can be transformed easily from one use to another. Very few people thought a cafe offer in the winter would be successful when discussed.



A community run cafe will be a central part of future planning for the Pavilion. When developing this project, many people suggested we should visit other successful projects run elsewhere so FoCG can create a sustainable future based on a flexible offer, maximising income by creating a unique offer in Hereford city centre.

### Rooms for Hire/Event Space

Again this idea was mentioned in 100% of consultation events. The Pavilion is already regularly hired out to a multitude of different organisations and individuals. For very little outlay (the cost of administration by the FoCG operations manager) the simple provision of rooms for activities, meetings, office space and functions creates a steady income. Price was considered to be a key element in this. With no parking on site, the pricing structure would need to remain accessible. Weddings were regularly mentioned as a possible source of income, but when discussed in detail, a "wedding offer" was not thought to be viable, but making the building available for DIY low-cost weddings was. Disabled access to the first floor rooms is currently non-existent and will need to be addressed in any redesign plans. The young people who were consulted were very keen that any redevelopment included their desire for the building to remain available for a variety of youth focussed projects and activities: "Don't make it too posh!"

### Event Kit Store

The FOCCG community event kit store also received universal praise. Whilst not necessarily aimed at making a profit, it facilitates other community groups throughout the city and surrounding area to be able to stage outdoor events at a reasonable price. This was thought to be a central tenet of FoCG. This service requires a large amount of storage and the most regularly suggested answer to this was to use the council run toilet block for this purpose, but ONLY if there are toilets provided elsewhere, either in the Pavilion or on the Castle Green.

### Hereford Youth Canoe Centre

Many people who took part in the consultation process already knew all about the Hereford Youth Canoe Centre (HYCC), based mainly in the basement of the Pavilion with office space above, as many of them attended in their youth! Canoeing for young people based in the Pavilion started in 1970 run by the council youth service. When youth services were closed down in 2012, the HYCC came into existence to continue the service. They provide canoeing proficiency lessons for approximately 600 young people during the season, May - October, each year, entirely run by volunteers.

Extremely strong support was voiced for HYCC in all consultation events. Their presence in the building and the service they offer provides FOCCG with consistent and valuable data to support applications to funders aimed at supporting community based sports facilities. Whilst technically, they may become sub-lessees of FoCG once the CAT is finalised, they should be regarded as full partners when applying for funds to redesign the building.

### Art Gallery/ Historical Displays/ Museum

Mentioned at 100% of events, Hereford's cultural offer was clearly at the top of many people's agenda. Whilst the economic viability of running a full time art gallery or traditional museum was acknowledged as too difficult, there is a clear desire to ensure that these themes are included in any future development in the Pavilion. Incorporating the rich historical story of the Castle Green as well as providing space for both modern and traditional art within the public spaces of the building, was a strong priority for many people.

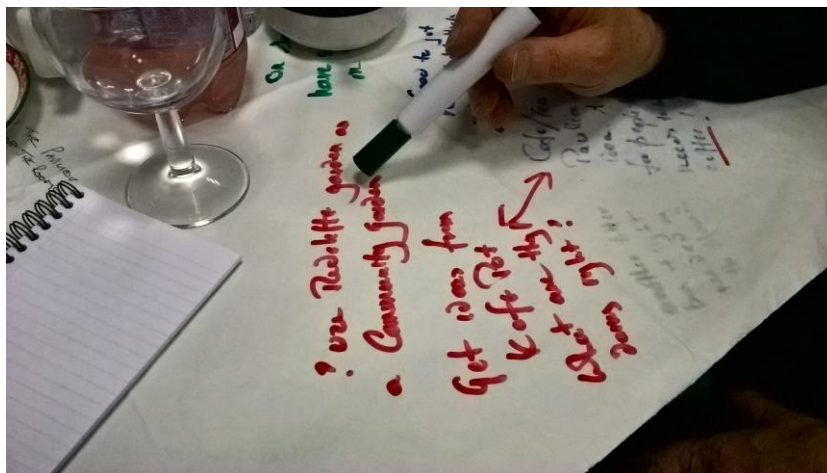
### Educational Resource/ Training Courses

Mentioned at 100% of all events, some element of educational resource should be included in future plans for the Pavilion. This reaffirms the experience FOCG had in its very early days of existence, when running a series of historical lectures about the Castle Green, which were massively over-subscribed. This could take the form of providing the venue only, but the consultation suggests that FOCG should take a more proactive approach.

### Music

The cultural theme extended to the provision of live music, again mentioned at 100% of events, and particularly high on the agenda for young people, where it is cited at least 13 times in their notes of the evening. This would not require a dedicated fixed performance space, as the Pavilion is simply not big enough, but with good design, a multi-functional space that can be easily transformed is required.

There was a strong plea from local residents that attempts to minimise disruption by soundproofing the Pavilion would have to be considered.



### More Events - large events for income

Another issue raised 100% was adding more events to our calendar. Within these discussions was a very particular call for adding large (money making) events to the programme. Whilst technically, this issue should be listed under the ideas for the park below, it is included here, as the potential for events within the building was also cited as a major consideration when redesigning the space.

### Wifi

Provision of free wifi, whilst only specifically mentioned in 18% of world cafes, was of particular concern at the young people's event and was regularly linked to discussions about historical and environmental interpretation of the site. This would have to be included in the Pavilion development.

### Tourist Information Centre

Mentioned in 45% of all events, provision for visitors to the area was thought to be an important part of what it had to offer. This was not always mentioned in the context of a traditional TIC, but could be covered by a more in depth interpretation of the site and building.

## 5. Project Results - Ideas for Castle Green

Given the themes discussed above and the extreme cautionary advice coming from the community about FoCG taking responsibility for the Castle Green itself, many of the ideas for the Castle Green will by their very nature be partnership projects. Those included here were the most popular:

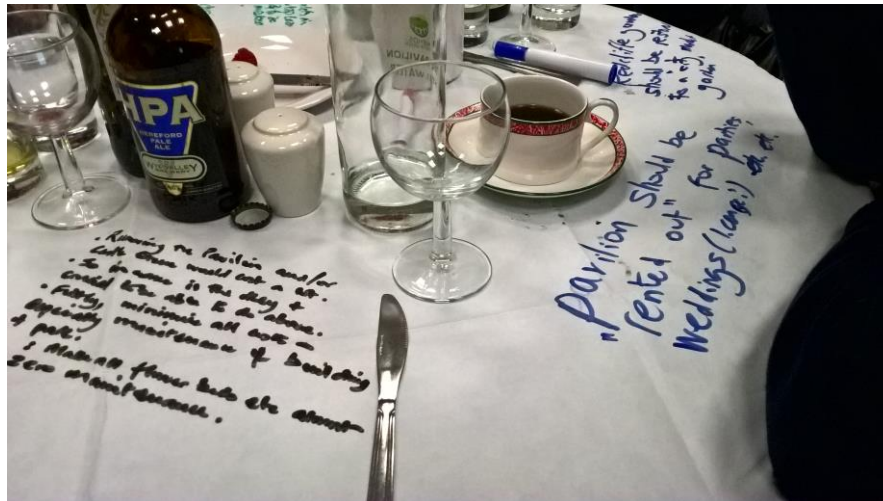
### Interpretation Project - Historical & Environmental

Considered a "no brainer", park-wide interpretation of both the historical and the environmental stories that are embedded in the area need to be told in an accessible way. Traditional interpretation boards were regularly mentioned, as were virtual reality tours for hand held mobile devices. This would be an ideal partnership project for FoCG and a local history group and was a top priority.

### Toilets

The current toilet block which is maintained by the council has seen more salubrious days, but it was seen as a crucial part of the parks facilities. For several months whilst the consultation project was running, the toilet block was closed for repair and many people had assumed it was permanently closed, which led to a lot of anger. As one consultee put it:

"I really think the public toilets should be maintained to remain here on Castle Green. Some of us who are physically not able to walk far could spend time on Castle Green if there was a loo here. I'm sure a lot of people have their own reasons for finding this public loo available while passing on the way to wherever."



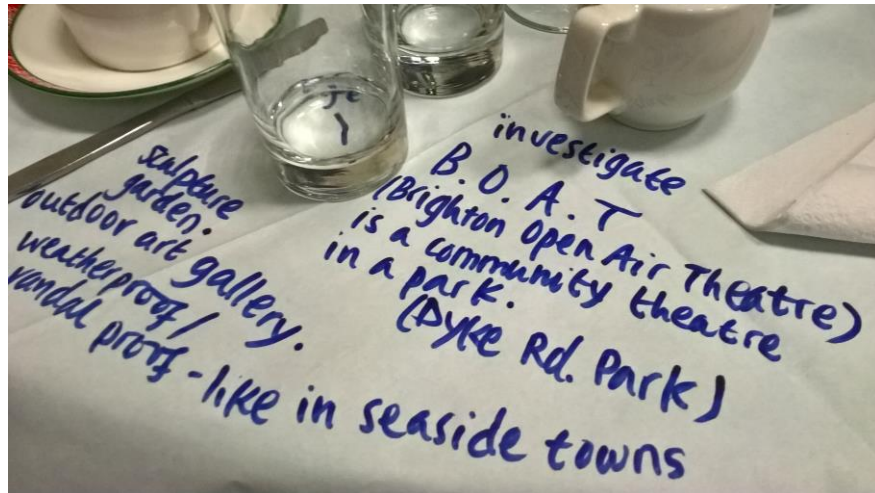
Some of the attendees had long term experience of event management and they strongly advised the retention of the separate toilet block for large events, but acknowledged that if toilets within the Pavilion could be made "public", the current toilet block could be re-designed to enable a more flexible range of uses (see Event Kit Store above).

### Band Stand/Performance Space

Since Castle Green became a public park, its bandstand has had several incarnations, the most recent being on Redcliffe Gardens but this was removed in the 1980s. Mentioned at 91% of the events, the most common approach suggested was to create a temporary structure that can be removed, as one person put it:

"A temporary bandstand - not a permanent oik structure!"

This comment highlights the conflict that arises between groups of young people gathering in the evenings and other users of the park who feel threatened by this behaviour. A well designed temporary structure that is easily erected for events, but that can then be removed was definitely thought to be the best approach. There was a very clear desire expressed for the re-creation of an outdoor performance space, particularly for music, but there was also agreement that permanent infrastructure can cause unforeseen conflict. If this project is ever pursued, its siting would need to be well removed from residential properties.



### Lighting

Another 100% project with many expressing concern about entering Castle Green after dark. Currently there are only about 10 street lamps for the whole park, but with the exception of the beautiful Victorian cast iron lamp stands (there are 4 of these on the high path), there was little enthusiasm for more. Fairy lights were most often mentioned as being less light polluting, creating more atmosphere and giving a reason for people to actually visit. Added to this discussion was the importance of "passive policing" - more people visiting means less antisocial behaviour. Done well, the addition of very modern, well designed atmospheric lighting running through the trees could create a sense of majesty, recreating the pleasure garden feel of the 18th century.

This was extremely popular and should form a long term goal for FoCG.

### Community Garden/Allotments

One of the old photographs in the presentation at the consultation events clearly showed the market garden that used to be run on Redcliffe Gardens during the late 19th/ early 20th centuries. This stimulated much discussion with people making connections between growing food on site that could then be utilised in the proposed cafe. There was a community garden project in Hereford during the 1990s on a council owned site which was eventually re-developed with the community gardeners being evicted. It must also be said that there were a few voices that were very vocal in their dismissal of the idea suggesting that it "would be easily vandalised" and would change the character of the area. Support for the idea was put forward at 82% of the events, so it was clearly a popular idea.

Sustainability was thought to be important for such a project and so was a partnership organisation with the necessary skills to maintain such a venture.

Variations on the idea ranged from the historical approach of creating a medieval medicinal herb garden to a full blown vegetable growing market garden.

This project would require a groundswell of popular support with a skilled partnership organisation to help run it, neither of which are presently available. Until these are, FoCG are unlikely to be able to consider such an idea for many years.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the Awards for All project 'Planning the future: Hereford's Castle Green in the 21st Century', was an outstanding success. It allowed FoCG to canvass opinion on its current activity and determine the needs and desires of the community for the future of Castle Green.

Through 11 World Cafe events, with over 300 attendees, as well as 2 project promotion days and 3 Planning for Real events, FoCG was able to individually discuss many ideas for the future of the Pavilion and Castle Green in great detail. The enthusiasm for the project proved that Castle Green is a well loved community asset that is beloved by a great cross section of people, with different needs and aspirations for the area.

The outcomes provide some much needed clarity and focus for future planning by FoCG in order to fulfill the objective of sustaining Castle Green for future generations for education, recreation and celebration, as well as the historic building that serves it. This report will provide the basis for future planning and grant applications to ensure that the desires of the community are met for the future of this historical asset.





With many thanks to all of those who participated in the project; attending World Cafes, volunteering at events, delivering newsletters and leaflets, sticking post it notes on maps, but special thanks to the following for their involvement:

Big Lottery, Awards for All  
Hereford City Council  
Herefordshire Council  
Hereford Drift Trikes  
Close House  
Livewire  
SHYPP  
Hope Support Centre  
La Madeleine  
Rocket Cafe  
Michelle et al  
Little Black Dog Cafe  
Madam & Adam  
St James' Primary School  
Hereford Cathedral School

Appendix 1  
Cross Cut Themes emerged from consultation

**General**

Food & Drink  
Education  
Arts  
Music  
Community – focus for & to work with

**Castle Green**

Event use Music/theatre/cinema/ Art around the railings general art/craft markets  
Sport  
Historical signposting  
Youth use  
Bandstand / icecream hut  
Better lighting  
Old/young usage

**Redcliffe Gardens**

Community garden  
Children  
Clean up slipway

**Toilets**

Modernise

**River**

Make much more use of  
Canoeing for all – with CC  
Lido area

**Promotion**

Need much more of it  
Stronger link with Cathedral & town carparks

**Bowling Green**

Protected space for young children with food & loos  
Move all community events here  
Develop into genuinely public club

## Appendix 2

### Questionnaire Results

#### Survey Monkey : Community Consultation

Via Facebook – 76 responses – 95% completion

#### **Q1. By far the most popular suggestion is a café/restaurant/bar: Should this be:**

Open all year round: **63** – 82.89%

Available for private hire (parties/business events, etc.): **31** – 40.79%

Open seasonally : **13** – 17.11%

#### **Q2. Sustainability is an important priority for any community project. Here are some of the ideas on income generation for the Pavilion, please choose your top three:**

##### **First Choice:**

Café/restaurant/bar: **37** – 52.86%

Room rental: **14** – 22.95%

Classes (eg. Pilates): **13** – 18.84%

Small exhibitions: **7**

Function venue: **4**

Membership £20: **1**

Equipment hire: **0**

##### **Second Choice:**

Function venue: **26** – 38.81%

Local History: **11** – 20.00%

Art: **9** – 16.36%

Music: **7** – 12.50%

Cookery: **7** – 11.67%

Baker: **5**

Craft: **4**

Home Computer: **1**

D.I.Y. : **1**

**g) Classes (eg. Pilates): 20** – 28.99%

**h) Café/restaurant/bar: 14** – 20.00%

**i) Room rental: 7**

**j) Small exhibitions: 4**

**k) Equipment hire: 3**

**l) Membership £20: 1**

##### **Third Choice:**

Function venue: **16** – 23.88%

Classes (eg. Pilates): **15** – 21.74%

Small exhibitions: **14** – 23.33%

Café/restaurant/bar: **10**

Room rental: **6**

Equipment hire: **6**

Membership £20: **6**

**Q3. Given the nature of the town & distance from the town centre, what are the pros & cons of running a community café / restaurant / bar in the Pavilion**

**Pros: Location –**

**Cons: Location –**

**Q4. As a community project & with education as a main theme, which top four classes would you pay to attend**

**First Choice:**

Keep fit/ Pilates: **29** – 43.94%

Local History: **11** – 20.00%

Art: **9** – 16.36%

Music: **7** – 12.50%

Cookery: **7** – 11.67%

Bakery: **5**

Craft: **4**

Home Computer: **1**

D.I.Y. : **1**

**Second Choice:**

Bakery: **13** – 24.07%

Craft: **12** – 20.69%

Cookery: **11** – 18.33%

Art: **10** – 18.18%

Keep fit / pilates: **8**

Local History: **7**

Music: **7**

D.I.Y.: **3**

Home computer: **2**

**Third Choice:**

Cookery: **12** – 20.00%

Music: **11** – 19.64%

Craft: **10** – 17.24%

Bakery: **9**

ART.: **8**

D.I.Y.: **7**

Keep fit / Pilates: **6**

Local History: **5**

Home computer: **3**

**Q5. We currently run an outdoor event equipment hire service, mainly to other community groups. Would you be interested in hiring any of the following:**

Outdoor catering equipment (hot water boiler, bainmarie, grill) : **22** – 39.29%

Café tables & chairs : **20**

Small gazebo: **19**

Large gazebo: **17**

Trestle tables: **15**

Skittles: **11**

Barbecue **10**

Other: Bikes, outdoor heater, bar equipment, other outdoor games, chess, connect 4, Jenga (2)

**Q6. Do you know about the Youth Canoe Club?**

Yes - 49 - 64.47% and No 27 – 35.53%

**Q7. To ensure sustainability of the Canoe Club, how would you rank the following ideas.**

**First Choice**

Public canoe hire: **36** – 53.73%

Escorted river trips, eg wildlife, history: **22** – 31.28%

School trips: **7** – 11.29%

Private canoe lessons: **5**

Water sports: **2**

Adopt a canoe: **1**

**Second Choice**

Escorted river trips, eg wildlife, history: **21** – 30.43%

Private canoe lessons: **16** – 25.40%

Public canoe hire: **12** – 17.910%

School trips: **11**

Water sports: **6**

Adopt a canoe: **6**

**Third Choice**

Private canoe lessons: **25** – 39.68%

School trips: **13** – 20.97%

Public canoe hire: **12** – 17.91%

Escorted river trips, eg wildlife, history: **11** – 15.94%

Water sports: **6**

Adopt a canoe: **3**

**Q8. We have discovered the Pavilion & Castle Green are generally seen as a neutral space, particularly by large numbers of young people with a wide variety of interests who use both, particularly in the summer. Please comment on the pros & cons of the**

**building attracting such numbers & how can we retain the youth element through the development process.**

Pros:

Cons:

**Q9. Are there any other ideas or comments you have regarding the Pavilion**

**Q10. And finally, some questions about you**

Male = **19**, female = **54**, N/A = **1**

Under 18 = **0**, 18-25 = **5**, 26-45 = **34**, 46-60 = **22**, over 60 = **11**

Postcode: HR1 = **47**, HR2 = **23**, HR3 = **1**, HR4 = **9**, HR6 = **1**, HR9 = **1**