

## Social and Recreation

Over forty-one suggestions were made in this category. However they can be conveniently contained in a small number of issues. Some of these obviously call for more detailed planning and thought. Some have already advanced to the planning stage and beyond.

The two main centres of village activity which involve both young and old are the Recreation Ground and the Reading Room. Both these amenities are used frequently and both of them may be or are being considered for further development.

### The Village Recreation Ground

The big event in the summer of 2003 was the opening of the new playground facilities. This has proved very popular with young people. Further enhancements are being considered such as the installation of more benches and the erection of a basket ball net.



Numerous suggestions were made relating to other sporting activities, as well as developing the area as a park or village green with a nature reserve area. There were those who were anxious to see a new pavilion established and whilst this would be of benefit should the village establish a football or cricket team, there are many problems surrounding such an idea and a great deal of thought, not to mention money, would be needed. Before any steps were taken to bring this idea to fruition there would have to be a feasibility study undertaken to establish the practicality of the idea. It may be that an open structure, similar to a bandstand, could be considered. This would be much cheaper to install and maintain, be less subject to vandalism and less likely to have improper behaviour taking place within it. A view was expressed that any development on the recreation ground should not duplicate

the functions of the Reading Room which could jeopardise the continued role of the Reading Room as a focal point within the village.

The idea of setting aside part of the ground as a nature reserve or garden area also commanded wide support. The idea of a village green with a pond and wildlife area appealed to a lot of people. The advantage of such a development would be in the relatively low costs of such a venture.

Any building developments on the recreation ground would also be subject to planning consent by the Peak District National Park Authority.

### **The Reading Room**

In 2004 the Disability Discrimination Act comes into force which, amongst other things, will require that all Public buildings provide adequate access to amenities and services for people having physical or mental impairments. Listed buildings are not exempt from these provisions therefore the Reading Room Committee has had to take steps to improve access to the building and to provide adequate toilet facilities for the disabled.

Plans have been drawn up and planning permission obtained from all the relevant authorities to go ahead with a new extension that will provide a new toilet block and wheelchair access to the Reading Room. The car park will be tarmac-ed and a safe playing area for the Playgroup developed. A ramp for wheelchairs and for others will be established at the main entrance. It is also hoped that more internal improvements can be undertaken at the same time including upgrading the present kitchen facilities.



## **Clubs for Young and Old**

There was considerable interest in developing activities for young people. It was considered that funding would be available for developments but that there was a potential problem in staffing and organising any ventures. However, a small group of younger adults should be more than capable of arranging suitable activities for both junior and senior children.

The same may be said for establishing opportunities for the elderly. People are needed to organise and take responsibility for ventures such as a luncheon club. Kitchen facilities in the Reading Room, for example, may need to be upgraded and people with relevant qualifications may need to be present to undertake the preparation of food, etc, if this was to become a regular event and not just an occasional activity.

There are currently two groups active in the village that welcome young and older participants. There is an Art Group and a Craft Group that meet regularly during the week and there is no age bar to any of their activities. If, for any reason, people find it difficult to attend because of unsuitable times, some thought might be given to arranging additional groups at different times. The weekly aerobic class has recently resumed with support from High Peak Borough Council and there is also some interest in providing a yoga class in the future.

## **Facilities for Visitors**

Although Car Parking and Public Toilet issues are not, on the face of things, recreational matters, they do impinge on the recreation of those visiting the village. The same is true of the provision of refreshments. Apart from the pub, there is nowhere in the village where one can get a cup of tea or a bite to eat, park the car or spend the proverbial penny.

There are a number of ideas that could be pursued to solve some of these problems. Again, volunteers might be needed.

## **Toilets**

Public toilets are often requested but there is concern as to where they should be sited to enable them to be open 24 hours a day and as to who would clean them and be responsible for them.

It has also been suggested that the Reading Room Committee might consider allowing people to park at the rear of the building at weekends or at other specified times. A small 'honesty' box could be provided for donations towards the upkeep of the building.

## **Refreshments**

Again, this is a real possibility but volunteers would be needed if such a facility were to become a reality. The Reading Room has tried this on one or two occasions but to make such a venture a success it would need to be offered on a regular basis and well advertised.