

South Stoke Primary School

May Fayre Consultation

Preamble

The Village May Fayre has been organized and run by the South Stoke Primary School Parents Association (PA) for many years. It is a wonderful village event showcasing the village and incorporating a traditional May Pole dance, Morris Men, and crowning of the May Queen.

The primary function of the May Fayre is to raise funds for the PA to help fund resources for the school children's education that fall outside of Local Authority funding. In the past, money's raised by the PA have gone towards trips to France, coach hire, computing equipment, fruit for the children, additional sports coaching, day trips and many other items.

As times change, there is a view by some that the May Fayre could benefit from moving from its current location on The Street, to the village Recreation Ground. There are many pros and cons to such a move. This document aims to discuss these and present them in order to gauge opinion. It must be appreciated, that this is not a fait-accomplis and we hope whatever the outcome of this consultation, the May Fayre will benefit and become a better event for all.

Existing Situation

The May Fayre takes place on May Bank Holiday Monday along The Street and within the grounds of the Primary School. It's setting lends itself to a very traditional May Fayre.

On the morning of the event, The Street is closed to traffic as stall holders set up. Over the past few years, we have had approximately 20 stalls including the school stalls. Once stalls are set up, it is not possible for residents who live along The Street to have vehicular access to and from their properties.

Access to the May Fayre is via the junction of The Street with Ferry Road, the junction with Cross Keys Road or via the Church. On a sunny day the event can attract many hundreds of people (numbers unknown), although the event is subject to weather conditions.

Visitors can park in Glebe Field thanks to the generosity of Mr Bullock who manages the field. However, every year individuals continue to park at the sides of the various roads in the village and have in the past made passage for emergency vehicles difficult. Steps have been taken in recent years to try to combat this to varying success.

The school's playground is used for May Pole dancing, crowning the May Queen, serving drinks and as a base for a brass band. 2015 saw the available space reduced due to the introduction of the new playground equipment, although there was still sufficient space to carry out all activities.

In the past two years, the PA has lost revenue as a result of the Perch and Pike making the most of the event. The bar and BBQ provided by the PA have always been a significant

source of revenue and with the pub open, potential customers have diminished. This is always to be expected whenever there is competition for a stall.

Having said that, 2014 saw records levels of visitors due to the glorious weather and so both the Pub and the PA did very well from the event. In 2015 cooperation between the PA and Pub was lacking (purely due to a lack of communication both ways) and this led to a slightly disjointed event and both parties may have lost out as a result. This last point however is speculation.

The PA feel that the Pub have a great deal to offer to the success of the event and would like to work in a cooperative way for the benefit of both organisations.

Proposed Situation

It is proposed that the May Fayre is moved to the Recreation Ground. We would continue to utilise Glebe Field for the car parking (subject to permission). This would reduce the incentive for individuals to park on Ferry Road and the south end of The Street as the field would provide the shortest distance to walk.

A programme of events would be managed providing for a structured day on the recreation ground with activities at the pub included within the structure to ensure the May Fayre is not adversely impacted. This could result in increased revenue to the May Fayre during the day and more individuals visiting the pub in the afternoon/evening.

The additional space afforded by the recreation ground would enable additional stalls (extra revenue from pitch fees) as well as activities, for example: shows, sporting events/demonstrations, participation by the RAF/Police/Fire Brigade etc.

There would be a benefit for the village shop, which would no doubt benefit from increased foot traffic and no doubt a fee would be paid to the Village Amenities Committee for the use and maintenance of the rec.

Entry to the rec is more easily managed (only 3 narrow entry points). The railway entry on Cross Keys Road would most likely be closed and there would be an opportunity to charge a nominal entry fee as is the case at many other villages / fayres. It would also enable us to track attendance, which would be an advantage from a health and safety point of view.

There is however, a disadvantage in that the event may lose some of its appeal by not being hosted in The Street amongst historic buildings with a street party atmosphere. It would also be difficult to showcase the school from the recreation ground.

There is also the consideration of the Pub. The Perch and Pike is an integral part of the village and the May Fayre brings in considerable revenue for them. We would therefore need to consider methods by which the pub could continue to benefit from this event were we to relocate to the rec. Of course, if the success of the May Fayre were to be considerable, and we integrated the Pub and event effectively, this could also provide an overall benefit to both parties.