

Rose Garden Café Restoration *Developing the Partnership* Discussion Workshop Report



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J G Graves Woodland Discovery Centre, Sheffield

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Objectives

By the end of the workshop we will have:

- Shared our aspirations for the Rose Garden Café restoration and refurbishment.
- Reflected on what makes an effective partnership – what are the ingredients for success?
- Identified the skills and experience required specifically within the Rose Garden Café partnership.
- Discussed and agreed the requirements of the Chair's role, including how they might be recruited.
- Drawn out the key priorities for the partnership over the coming months, and how best this work can be actioned.

Agenda

Time	Session
09:45	Welcome & introductions
	Developing a partnership – the ingredients for success
	Break
	Getting into the detail – the Rose Garden Café Partnership perspective
	Thoughts on the Chair
	Where to from here?
12:45	Depart

Attendees

First name	Surname	Title / Organisation
Julie	Collins	Previous Rose Garden Café Manager
Caroline	Dewar	Chair, Friends of Graves Park
David	Hartlebury	Friends of Graves Park
Andy	Kershaw	Save the Rose Garden Café Campaign
Cllr Mohammed	Mahroof	Graves Park Ward Councillor invited by FoGP
Catherine	McDougall	Graves Park Manager, Sheffield City Council
Rebecca	Nixon	Project Manager, Sheffield City Council
Nathan	Rodgers	Head of Service, Operational Services, Sheffield City Council
Simon	Ross	Service Manager, Parks & Public Realm, Sheffield City Council
Tom	Smith	Director of Operational Services, Sheffield City Council
Gertie	Whitfield	Friends of Graves Park
Rebekah	Wood	BrewKitchen Operator

Welcome & introductions

After an outline of the workshop objectives, agenda and a round of introductions Tom Smith shared a few opening reflections. He hoped for a genuine partnership approach, not led by the council. He acknowledged the process had taken too long to date, and there was now a pressing need to move towards the restoration and refurbishment of the Rose Garden Café. There was, sadly, a significant maintenance backlog across the council property portfolio which exceeded the available budgets, but that didn't remove the council's duty of care towards the building. He stated that no officers wanted to see the building demolished, and they would now be working hard to support the partnership to achieve the refurbishment and restoration as agreed at the recent committee meeting.

Caroline Dewar responded by stating that despite a serious lack of trust in the council the Friends of Graves Park were willing to work in partnership in order to deliver the restoration and refurbishment of the café.

Pete Spriggs concluded the opening remarks by asking for open and honest contributions throughout the morning's discussions. He stressed the importance of everyone's input. The Rose Garden Café was at an exciting but challenging moment – for the refurbishment to be a success all those involved needed to create an environment and a set of relationships where the partnership forms and works together for the benefit of the building and all those who are connected with it. This would require setting aside some of the historical frustrations felt by all parties.

Each person then shared their aspirations for the Rose Garden Café, completing the statement **'I'd like to see...'**

The Rose Garden Café is fully restored to its former glory, with a fully operational café inside.	Full structural stabilisation and refurbishment of the café at less than the £1.79m independent quotes.
For the front wall to be made safe and a business plan and strategy to be produced.	A cost-effective solution, developed in partnership to suit the needs for the future of the users of the Graves Park community.
The café restored and refurbished by the partnership utilising all the shared funds.	A high quality, accessible café / facility for the community.
Refurbishment; carbon neutral; accessibility; improved offer; maintained / sustainable for coming decades.	Complete restoration in a timely manner. With a budget identified immediately. Working with the volunteers.
A café which serves the community standing for the next 100 years. Full refurbishment inside and out.	Sympathetic restoration, incorporates modern requirements of a park café!
For the reason for the lean to be clarified by council officers.	People using it again, inside – warm and dry.
Number 1 Café on TripAdvisor! Bright, light inside space with more function and options e.g. breakout space for groups and meetings.	

Developing a partnership – the ingredients for success

The purpose of this session was to briefly reflect on what makes an effective partnership – what are the ingredients for success?

Working in pairs each answered the questions ‘Why do partnerships succeed?’ and ‘Why do partnerships fail?’ The outputs were shared in a ‘Word Cloud’ format and are shown below.

Why do partnerships succeed?



Why do partnerships fail?



Reflections from the group in response to the exercise were noted as follows:

- Partnerships require work – they can be hard!
- Have to ensure we can be honest and hold each other to account.
- We want to be proud of what we collectively achieve,
- Needs to feel and be equal.
- We are still wary / worried.
- Need to counter any views that the Council doesn't want to work with the community.
- There is a feeling of being dismissed.
- There are examples of what we can achieve – we're sitting in such a building!
- Importance of being brave – doing things differently, with creativity.
- This is unique – this approach is refreshing / should be applauded.
- Importance of valuing diversity of views / opinions.

Getting into the detail – the Rose Garden Café Partnership perspective

This session provided an opportunity to identify the skills and experience required within the Rose Garden Café partnership.

Working in small groups, each listed out the skills and experience that they thought the partnership would require.

Each group then shared back their list of skills / experience; any duplication was removed. This generated a 'master' list (shown below).



The discussion then moved on to which areas of skill and expertise existed across the current partners. The mini skills audit generated the following output:

Area of skill / experience required within the partnership	In existence across the current partners?
Project manager – excellent planning & organisational skills	Y
Community engagement	Y for local. Less certain for 'City Wide' engagement (though there is already a good basis via the petition & members of the groups).
Fundraising knowledge – bid writing and seeking donations	Y
Budget skills	Y
Operational day to day understanding	Y
Understanding the council procedures / governance	Y
Quantity Surveyor skills	Y
Café / catering design consultancy (Design Team)	Y – But useful to seek guidance
Café operator / business knowledge	Y
Good compromising skills	Y
Architect with experience of historic buildings	Y
Building surveyor	Y

Area of skill / experience required within the partnership	In existence across the current partners?
Marking, promotion and information gathering	Y
Good communicator	Y
Creativity	Y
Influence / advocacy	Y
Ability to develop an action plan	Y
Leadership	Y ? Independent
Council officers with dedicated responsibility	Y
Ability to communicate / link with community	Y

Those areas which the group didn't feel the current partners had the skills or experience were:

Area of skill / experience required within the partnership	In existence across the current partners?
Possible outside experience of a similar situation	N
Structural engineers with experience of historic buildings	N
Legal relationship between the council and volunteers	N
Legal expert (on types of lease) – different options / routes	N
Good contractors	N
Skill to challenge so that we can have 'safe' space for communication	N

Thoughts on the Chair

The discussions then moved on to consider the requirements of the Chair's role, including how he or she might be recruited.

The group put forward what they considered to be required within the role of the Chair. Those aspects deemed essential were highlighted in **green**:



Role of the Chair

- **Trusted (ideally independent) by all parties for credibility.**
- **Related experience – within the voluntary sector.**
- **Ability to create a safe space – allowing good communication.**
- **Clear understanding of what the charitable status of Graves Park means.**
- Strategic overview and leadership.
- Motivator and problem solver.
- May need to be remunerated.

If the partnership was looking to recruit someone with these skills and experience what would be the best process to find such a person? The suggestions made were noted up as below:

Process to recruit

- Create a job description.
- Advertise the ask – through the council and voluntary sector networks.

- Agree on a selection process.
- Ask for a volunteer at the first instance (may need to be remunerated).

Concern was expressed around the cost of the Chair. Tom Smith stated that if required the council would pay for this resource. It was confirmed that this would not be taken from the Graves Park Trust budget. It was also agreed that partners can directly approach people who may be interested in becoming a partner as well as advertising on their various communication channels.

Where to from here?

The final session provided an opportunity to identify the key priorities for the partnership over the coming months, and how this work should be actioned.

The group were asked to share what they felt were the top priorities for the partnership over the coming months, completing the statement '**By March 2024 the partnership will have... '**

The areas of work / actions identified were as follows:

Agreed the cause of the lean	Agreed an action plan	Identified and progressed with securing funding sources
Design development	Reviewed the cost plan	Produced and agreed the MOU / TOR (including principles on communication)
Advertised for a Chair	Established the Partnership	Have a forum to share information across the partnership
Agreed a method to share comms		

The actions were then timelined and responsibility assigned resulting in the following agreed initial action plan:

What?	Who?	When?
Produce and agree the MOU / TOR (including principles on communication).	SCC to draft and share for comments.	By the end of November.
	SCC to draft a statement saying they have agreed to work in principle with the other partners in pursuit of restoring the Rose Garden Café (i.e. reiterating the Committee decision).	By w/c 20/11/23.
Advertise for a Chair.	SCC to draft the Chair's job spec. and advert then share for comments.	By the end of November.

What?	Who?	When?
	Tom Smith to speak to Steve Chew to gauge his interest in becoming the chair, or his views on other potential people to approach (such as Prof Ian Rotherham).	w/c 13/11/ 23.
Partnership established.	All partners agree and sign up to the partnership MOU / TOR.	By Christmas.
Create a forum to share information across the partnership.	Becky Nixon to explore SharePoint folder options.	End of November.
Agree the method to share comms [it was agreed that after each meeting a shared message would be drafted].	All.	From today!
Cause of the lean agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reshare the info that already exists. Meet to review the information – discussion to clarify areas of agreement. Seek a third-party view on any areas of disagreement. 	Nathan Rodgers to coordinate a meeting with partnership reps. Each group is to nominate a rep to meet regularly to move items forward.	By the end of November.

Other action areas, not yet agreed in detail but which will follow included:

Design development	Agreed an action plan	Reviewed the cost plan
Identified and progressed with securing funding sources		

The following points had been noted during the morning:

- The partnership needs to remain conscious of the political dimension of this work.
- There is concern over the use of prudential borrowing to fund the restoration as this might mean that the café no longer offers affordable beverages and food.
- Those involved as partners at this point are Sheffield City Council; Save the Rose Garden Café; Friends of Graves Park and BrewKitchen.

The message to share from the workshop was agreed as follows:

- The key Rose Garden Café Restoration partners met.
- They thrashed out the issues to work on.
- There was an understanding of the work required, and the timeframes to meet.
- The partners will be meeting regularly in future to progress the restoration of the Rose Garden Café – they all want this to proceed at pace.
- They will continue to explore funding and support options.
- They will be appointing a chair and agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding/Terms of Reference for the partnership.

The following closing remarks were made by the group. **After today it's important that we...**

Meet regularly	Accountable	Committee to succeed
Build Trust in each other and hold each other to account	Share ideas in between meetings	Trusted
Get on with it.	Keep on communicating openly	Establish the cause of the lean
Stick to the agreed timeline, develop trust	Are positive	Communicate
Collaborative	Move things on quickly	Action focused

Pete thanked everyone for their contributions throughout the morning. The draft workshop report would be generated then circulated for any errors for omissions to be flagged before being signed off.

The workshop concluded at 12:55.

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