

The Henry Colborn Trust

News item: Rolly's Lane netball courts: outcome of invitation for proposals

On 21 August 2019, the trustees of the Henry Colbron Trust (HCT) invited proposals from people or groups based in Ashwell village for the possible future use of the netball courts off Rolly's Lane, if HCT were to bring to an end the current lease of the courts to Hertfordshire County Council (Herts CC).

The invitation for proposals, including information about parameters for proposals, is reproduced on the remaining pages of this document.

Outcome

Two proposals were submitted by the deadline of 14 October 2019. The trustees considered both carefully, and are very grateful to the proposers for the time and effort they put into their concepts.

The trustees did not feel able to take either proposal further.

The first proposal was from Ashwell Playgroup. It involved building a permanent home for the Playgroup on the netball courts. The trustees' concerns included long-term financial sustainability.

The other proposal was from an informal consortium of Ashwell residents, about converting the netball courts into a porous tarmacked Multi-Use Games Area. The trustees' concerns included the realistic likely level of use throughout the year by children under 18 living full-time in Ashwell.

Next steps

Over the remainder of 2020, the trustees will investigate other options for the future of the netball courts. The lease to Herts CC remains in force, under which Herts CC remains responsible for security of the site.

Posted: 28 February 2020

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Invitation for proposals for charitable use of the disused netball courts adjoining Rollys Lane, Ashwell

Summary

The Henry Colborn Trust ('HCT') owns the freehold of the disused netball courts adjoining Rollys Lane, Ashwell. The courts are subject to a lease to Hertfordshire County Council, for the benefit of Ashwell Primary School. However, the School has confirmed to HCT that it no longer wants or needs to use them, because:

- They are too far away for children to get there, do a worthwhile amount of sport and get back to the school during a timetabled PE lesson.
- The School has recently acquired excellent on-site play and sporting facilities almost entirely funded by HCT.

The netball courts have therefore fallen into disuse. They remain the responsibility of Hertfordshire CC unless HCT brings the lease to an end. However, HCT's trustees have a legal duty to consider how to make best use of HCT's assets. In the current context that Hertfordshire CC has no educational/social or physical training purpose which it wishes to deliver on the courts, HCT's trustees are therefore considering the way forward.

Accordingly, the trustees of HCT wish to invite people and organisations living in Ashwell to submit suggestions as to the future charitable use of the netball courts, within the parameters explained below. Only suggestions which fall entirely within those parameters can be considered.

About HCT

The Henry Colborn Trust is the working name of registered charity no. 310961, 'Henry Colborn (or Colbron)': <http://www.merchant-taylors.co.uk/charities/the-henry-colborn-trust/>. Its trustees are members of the Merchant Taylors' Company, one of the City of London livery companies. HCT's charitable purposes, by law, are as follows:

- Limb 1 - providing special benefits of any kind not normally provided by the Local Education Authority for the Ashwell County Primary School
- Limb 2 - otherwise promoting the education, including social and physical training, of children resident in the parish of Ashwell.

In Limb 2, 'children resident in the parish of Ashwell' means people who are under 18 or in their final year of school/6th form college and living full time in the parish of Ashwell.

For many years, HCT has supported Ashwell Primary School with annual grants under Limb 1 of the purposes, and a small number of organisations and occasionally individual children living in Ashwell, under Limb 2.

In a typical year, HCT is able to disburse up to about £70,000 but nearly all of it goes to providing special benefits for the Primary School, under Limb 1 above.

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Parameters for proposals

To be considered, your proposal must meet all of the following parameters. To ensure that you achieve this, please put a tick in the grey column against each parameter before submitting your proposal. Only submit your proposal if you have ticked every parameter.

Deadline	To be received by charities@merchant-taylors.co.uk no later than 9 am on Monday 14 October 2019	
Length	Up to two pages	
HCT's charitable purposes – what?	<p>HCT can only consider proposals which fall exclusively within Limb 2 of its charitable purposes: 'promoting the education, including social and physical training, of' children resident in the parish of Ashwell.</p> <p>Please explain how your proposed use constitutes 'promoting education' or 'social training' or 'physical training' of children resident in Ashwell.</p>	
HCT's charitable purposes – who?	<p>HCT can only consider proposals where there is no doubt that all, or nearly all, of the beneficiaries of your proposed use of the netball courts will be people who are not only under 18 (or in final year of school/6th form college) but also living full-time in Ashwell itself.</p> <p>Please explain in as much detail as possible exactly who would benefit from your proposal, how many of these people there are, and what evidence you have that they would actually use your proposed facility and how often, if it were available.</p>	
Existing facilities?	<p>HCT's trustees have read the Draft Neighbourhood Plan created by the Ashwell parish working group in 2018, available here: https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/news2/neighbourhood-plan/.</p> <p>If that document mentions existing facilities/organisations/clubs etc which address a reasonably similar need to the one you have identified in your proposal, please explain why you think your proposed use of the netball courts is necessary in addition.</p>	
Businesses	HCT cannot consider any proposal which involves carrying on a private business. This is due to the charity law principle that if the land is being used for 'promoting the education, including social and physical training of children resident in Ashwell', any financial benefit to private individuals should be no more than trivial in scale by comparison, and a necessary by-product of the 'education' etc	

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Finances	<p>Bear in mind that HCT's income available for grant-making rarely exceeds £70,000 p.a., and every year most of it is likely to be spent under Limb 1 (Ashwell Primary School). The funds available for Limb 2 are normally very limited.</p> <p>Please explain in detail the cost of your proposal (including distinguishing between set up cost and ongoing running costs). Please also detail who else in addition to HCT (if anyone) would be contributing to the costs, and how much.</p> <p>Please explain why you think your proposed use is financially sustainable.</p> <p>Please include any other financial information necessary to enable a layperson to understand thoroughly the financial implications of your proposal.</p>	
Timetable	Please explain the realistic timetable for carrying out your proposal, in as much detail as possible.	
HCT's commitment	HCT can only consider proposals which do not involve HCT taking on any legal liabilities. Please explain any commitments or obligations to which HCT would be subject, under your proposal.	

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Please submit your proposal to charities@merchant-taylors.co.uk, by the deadline above. HCT cannot consider proposals submitted by any other method, or any additional information submitted by whatever method to coincide with or elaborate on your proposal.

In the subject bar of your email, and in the filename of any attachment, please include the phrase: "HCT proposal for use of netball courts".

What will happen after you submit your proposal?

HCT will do a screening check as to whether your proposal meets all the parameters in the table above. If it does not, your proposal will not be considered any further.

The trustees will consider all proposals which pass the screening check.

The trustees of HCT will contact you individually by email on 12 February 2020 if they think your proposal may be viable and they wish to explore it in more detail with you.

Correspondence will be by email only. The trustees regret that they and/or HCT staff cannot meet you or correspond by any other method.

If the trustees do not consider your proposal to be viable, they will not notify you individually. However, they will provide generic feedback on HCT's website on the types of proposals submitted and generic reasons if there are proposals which they do not consider viable.

The trustees' decision on your proposal is final. They cannot enter into electronic, phone or written correspondence with or meet any person or organisation whose proposal they do not consider viable, or which fails to pass the screening check.

The trustees will post the feedback on the proposals on HCT's webpage, on 12 February 2020: <http://www.merchant-taylors.co.uk/charities/the-henry-colborn-trust/>. This timing is to enable them to explore any viable proposal(s) in more detail.

On behalf of the trustees of the Henry Colborn

Trust 21 August 2019