Entertainment Facilities

The 2014 household survey identified several entertainment activities and venues which respondents like within Otley, specifically community events/festivals, pubs and restaurants and Otley Courthouse Arts Centre. However, the poor availability of certain leisure facilities, notably a cinema (highlighted by 77 respondents), contrasts unfavourably with a number of similar towns across Yorkshire (eg neighbouring Ilkley) and means that residents have to travel elsewhere for such services. The lack of a large multi-purpose venue (of capacity circa 400) able to host music events, theatre productions and films has also been cited, alongside concerns about the future of the Civic Centre which has in the past acted as just such a venue (see Policy CF2 and section above).

The Otley Courthouse has plans to extend its facilities northwards, to the rear, taking in Leeds City Council owned buildings and land. The expanded facility would include an up to 400 seat auditorium (including full cinema equipment and sprung floor), larger café/bar and additional artists' studios, small business spaces, meetings rooms, music practice rooms and gallery space. The Neighbourhood Plan is keen to keep options open for new facilities within the town and as such sets out a supportive concept statement (Policy CF5) covering the land envisaged for Courthouse expansion.

Core Strategy Policy P9 (Community Facilities and Other Services) states that access to recreation centres is important to the wellbeing of a community and that the scale of facility should be relative to local need and size of settlement. By welcoming development that would fill an acknowledged gap in the town's suite of facilities and enable it to better cater for its year round high profile events programme, Neighbourhood Plan policy is in conformity with the City Council's strategic approach.

POLICY CF5: EXPANSION OF OTLEY COURTHOUSE

The land identified on The Neighbourhood Plan Map for the expansion of Otley Courthouse, should be developed for entertainment, leisure and limited community and employment uses, which could include any/all of a theatre, concert hall, cinema, café, drinking establishment, community facilities and small business units, the latter two only in conjunction with and ancillary to other specified uses.

The Courthouse Expansion

