

Case study

Friends of Elvaston

Based in Derby, Friends of Elvaston is a voluntary, unfunded community action group, formed to try and prevent Derbyshire County Council from disposing of the 315 acre Elvaston Castle Country Park to a private real estate developer to become a hotel/golfing complex against the wishes of 100,000s of members of the public.

The Friends offer an alternative, which falls within the scope of the Big Society through their Forward Plan, the benefits being to ensure that the Country Park remains public open space for the enjoyment of its 700,000 visitors a year, providing for good health, recreation and social inclusion. This could be achieved by running a social community enterprise for that purpose.

Further activities are envisaged, including engaging with young people via schools, youth organisations, The Probation Service and local authorities, and offering guidance and opportunities that might not otherwise exist, for example The Hill Holt Wood Project in Lincolnshire.

Services to the disabled and other under represented and vulnerable groups could also be provided where none currently exist. Provision for daytime amenities for the elderly such as keep fit classes, arts and crafts, luncheon clubs, discussion groups, could all exist in friendly and tranquil surroundings.

For more information visit www.friendsofelvaston.co.uk

