

AREA BOARD PROJECTS AND COUNCILLOR LED INITIATIVES APPLICATION FORM 2016/2017

Area Board Project

1. What is the Initiative?

Footbridge Feasibility

The need to improve pedestrian access and safety in Bradford on Avon was a major finding from the results of the resident survey commissioned by Michelle Donelan MP and is a key issue raised in the Neighbourhood Plan for Bradford on Avon. How to make the town centre more "user-friendly" to pedestrians has been the subject of recent talks between the Town Council and the Wiltshire Council Highways department.

The existing town bridge is a key area of pedestrian insecurity. The restricted width of both the pavement and the carriageway of this bridge provoke difficulties for pedestrians to pass on the bridge without stepping into the busy carriageway. There is a constant danger of pedestrians being hit by large vehicle wing mirrors as they cross the bridge.

A separate footbridge crossing over the river has been proposed in the past but architectural designs were rejected by the public at a town poll. The lessons of this failed exercise need to be understood if the project is to be successfully resurrected.

My proposal is that the Area Board and Town Council agree to dust off past plans and to commission a fresh feasibility study to investigate options for a new footbridge.

I have discussed this opportunity with architects and planners and believe an initial feasibility study will need to:

1. Review existing topographical and geological plans and appraise any constraints.
2. Analyse existing reports and identify any shortfalls in information that would be required.
3. Study the wider implications for the town centre both in terms of its existing or planned infrastructure, commercial development, any environmental issues as well as the functional aspects of pedestrian safety and mobility.
4. Evaluate the previous schemes for a pedestrian bridge over the river in the town centre and the feedback from these processes including alternative locations and options for a footbridge, in consultation with the principal stakeholders of the town.
5. Deliver a proposal to be put forward for public consultation, based on points 1-4, which should include: analysis of possible sites, types of viable pedestrian bridge and an indication of the costs involved.

All this should be done with a continuous process of community involvement, engaging the high proportion of professionals and high levels of community spirit in the town.

The initial feasibility study should facilitate and contribute to the development of a Strategic Brief for this project, through direct engagement with the Town Council and other stakeholders, to include business planning and fundraising for delivery of the bridge construction.

This initial feasibility study would best be carried out by a multidisciplinary team with experience in urban design and planning and the design and structural calculation of pedestrian bridges; this will include assessment of broader environmental issues and will require a good understanding of all aspects of the town including its relevant stakeholders. Experience in successful community engagement schemes will

be fundamental for the success of this project.

2. Where is the initiative taking place?

Spanning the River Avon in the centre of Bradford on Avon, exact location to be determined.

3. When will the initiative take place?

Initial feasibility during 2016/17, in parallel but not before the final consultation and adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan.

4. What is the Community benefit/evidence of need/links to Community Plan/Community Issue?

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5. What is the desired outcome of this initiative?

An initial feasibility study to include an analysis of possible sites, types of viable pedestrian bridge and an indication of the costs involved.

6. Who will Project Manage this initiative?

Ideally a project team led by Bradford on Avon Town Council with support from Wiltshire Council and other key stakeholders.

7. Costs/quotes/ match funding? (total cost £5k require 1 quote, total cost £5k-25k require 3 quotes)

From my discussions and contacts, I believe we can commission an initial feasibility study at the very modest cost of £ 5,000.

I propose that these costs be shared between the Area Board and the Town Council.

8. Additional information