

ref: The proposal to complete stages 1-4 of a roadside footpath along Lydiard Green

January 2014

At the last Area Board Meeting (27/11/13) the board members requested: *“That the Parish Council consults with its residents on the support of this project, and that the Parish Council comes back to the 22 January 2014 Area Board meeting with the results of this consultation.”*

In December, Council decided to survey all households living along Lydiard Green, not just the Western end. As a result Council members talked with Parishioners representing 25 of the 26 Households along Lydiard Green. The missing property is on the market and the current owners are understood to have moved to France.

The results of the survey showed that while 4 households are opposed to the idea of any extension of the footpath, 21 are either supportive or as 2 of them reported: “we’re not bothered because it won’t affect us”. The overwhelming response was positive, generating such comments as:

“I look forward to the day when walking my dog I can skip the full length of Lydiard Green”

“When my brother built the house he got a letter from North Wiltshire Council asking that he leave at least a metre of ground in front of his fence for a proper footpath - it’s still there, still waiting”

“We bought the house in 1977 and were told there would be a path. Our only sadness is that this phase won’t reach to us”

Those opposing a footpath gave reasons such as:

“any improvement in the footpath could encourage undesirables into the area”

“I like the sense of being ‘cut off’ “

Following discussions with tenants of the industrial site at Bagbury Park, letters have now been sent to the owners of the various units, seeking their financial support for the project. The reaction of tenants has been enthusiastic and confirms the intelligence already gathered by LMPC, that the ability to walk safely to and from the site would be regarded as a significant asset. It is the Council’s intention to call a meeting of all the owners as soon as the LMPC Chairman has returned to the UK at the end of the month.

The minutes of the LMPC meeting on December 5th record:

Item 14. Receive report on CAT-G Meeting held on 21st November. Council to consider co-funding first stages of Lydiard Green footpath.

Councillor Cobb arrived during this item. Councillor Blackmore reported the outcome of the CAT-G meeting at which he was an observer:

The CATG agreed to recommend to the Area Board that the sum of £10,964 already allocated to this project from last year, along with the sum of up to £3,536 from this year's budget should be allocated to this project, resulting in a total CATG contribution of up to £14,500. This was on the basis that:

1. Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the project would be delivered as a minimum
2. The Parish Council will contribute the remaining funds to enable phases 1, 2 and 3 to be completed – being a sum of at least £3,000. If the Parish Council could contribute a higher amount then it might be possible to deliver phase 4 too.
3. The Parish Council would approach the industrial units at Bagbury Lane to explore whether any financial contributions towards the project could be secured.

Item 17. Receive report on Area Board meeting held on 27th November, to include update on Lydiard Green footpath. The Chairman reported the outcome from the Area Board: Following representations by three LG residents, the Area Board deferred ratification of the allocation until their January meeting. This was on the grounds that the proposed scheme was effectively a new proposal and required a further survey of the level of support. The Chairman agreed to put this proposal to LMPC.

A motion was put by Councillor Bennett that a face to face survey be conducted of the households on the western end of Lydiard Green. Motion was carried. (Vote showed that 7 were in favour and 1 against.)
It was further agreed that the Council were committed to putting forward the results of the planned survey on phases 1-3/4 at the next Area Board.

A vote was taken on whether or not the Council would be prepared to fund the £3,000 from reserves if the CATG funding was agreed. Councillor Groom Proposed and Councillor Pflieger seconded the motion. Motion was carried. (The result was 9 in favour and 1 against.)

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Tim Blackmore
Chairman LMPC

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Dean Cobb
Chairman LMPC Highways Committee
CATG Representative