

**OUR FUTURE CIRENCESTER**

**TOWNSCAPE  
STRATEGY**

**PROJECT OUTLINE**

**OFC HERITAGE WORKING GROUP  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORKING GROUP  
SEPTEMBER 2008-MARCH 2009**

### **BACKGROUND**

In September 2008, Cirencester Town Council adopted its Community Plan, “Our Future Cirencester” (OFC). This contained 16 community development projects including one to produce a Heritage Strategy for Cirencester. The Heritage Strategy had three main areas of focus: Historic Heritage and its interpretation, Townscape and Oral History. This report deals with townscape only. The original outline of the entire project is set out in **Annex A**.

From September 2008 to March 2009, the OFC Steering Group set up four working groups to consider how to take the community plan forward in detail. The task for the working groups was to consider specific topics and to make recommendations to the Steering Group in March 2009 on how the project should proceed in the 2009-2010 year. The four working groups were Heritage, Business, Infrastructure, and Children/Young People.

The Infrastructure Working Group undertook two “Planning for Real” exercises on 7 February and 21 February 2009 to learn about the public’s views on what should be taken forward as specific townscape projects under the Community Plan. This group has reported separately.

This report makes initial proposals on how townscape projects may be developed in the 2009-2010 year, and in particular, how funding might be secured.

### **SIGNAGE**

- Work within Town Council’s agreed approach towards signage(February 2009 resolution).
- Establish a working party of key stakeholders and volunteers to progress this project.
- Complete signage audit. If too onerous as currently conceived, consider focussing on amenity signage only.
- Agree a list of points of interest/destinations, perhaps through limited further consultation.
- Agreement on design of new signage with CDC to become CTC single style. Perhaps link to Cirencester Local logo.
- Identification of suppliers and costs so that budgets can be estimated and procurement strategy developed.

## **CITY BANK/ ABBEY GROUNDS/RIVERSIDE LINK**

- Establish early meeting with John Sales, formerly responsible for Gardens at National Trust who has offered to advise on management strategy for Cirencester parks.
- Establish a working party of key stakeholders and volunteers to progress this project.
- Prepare bid (s) for funding under “Parks for People” stream of HLF funding. Either one or three bids, depending on advice from HLF.
- Identify underutilised land in public ownership and consider whether this would be better managed by the Town Council.
- Implement Cirencester Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document; City Bank Management Plan.
- Improve toilets in Abbey Grounds.
- Check possibility of having a cafe in Abbey Grounds
- Identify ways of preserving and enhancing history and archaeology.
- Propose, agree and implement a tree planting scheme.
- Seek to create a riverside walk and cycle path from Open Air Pool, to Abbey Grounds, to Beeches , to City Bank.
- Seek to introduce play and recreation for all ages, passive and active.
- Improve historical interpretation.

## **CYCLING**

- Seek to introduce Cirencester Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document; Cycling strategy.
- Work with Sustrans to introduce the Safe Routes to Schools project in Cirencester.
- Join Cotswold Waterpark Society in a joint bid for Aggregates Levy funding to provide Cirencester neighbourhoods with sustainable access to the Waterpark.
- Review and join up School Travel Plans.

- Work to introduce Beeches link to town centre.
- Work with other organisations to create cycle routes to Kemble and Rendcombe.

## **STREET FURNITURE**

- Establish a working party of key stakeholders and volunteers to progress this project.
- Cirencester Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document; design codes.
- Audit existing provision.
- Agree a list of places for new provision perhaps through limited further consultation.
- Prioritise purchasing strategy.
- Agreement on design of new street furniture with CDC to become CTC single style. Perhaps link to Cirencester Local logo.
- Identification of suppliers and costs so that budgets can be estimated and procurement strategy developed.
- Ward Councillors to audit and identify local needs.

## **MAINTENANCE**

Thought will need to be given to the implications of putting new features into the town – they will need to be maintained in the long term if their positive impact is not to be lost. This may require a change to the existing maintenance regime and budgets.

## **ANNEX A: OUR FUTURE CIRENCESTER COMMUNITY PLAN**

### **ACTION PLAN FOR THE HERITAGE STRATEGY**

(SEPTEMBER 2008)

<b>PROJECT NAME</b>
<b>HERITAGE STRATEGY</b>
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>
1. Undertake a review of all aspects of Cirencester's heritage and existing strategic documents and to develop a strategy and action plan to enable better interpretation and participation by all sectors of the local population and visitors to Cirencester.
<b>PROJECT OBJECTIVES</b>
2. Review all aspects of Cirencester's unique heritage and strategies that have already been produced and develop a strategy and action plan to enable better understanding and promotion of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Historic heritage                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. History and archaeology</li> <li>ii. Historic built environment</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Oral history</li> <li>c. Townscape                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Fountains and public art</li> <li>ii. Signage and interpretation</li> <li>iii. Seating, benches and street furniture</li> <li>iv. Tree and other planting to enhance the public realm</li> <li>v. Promote and improve the Abbey Grounds and other publicly owned open spaces.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3. Encourage greater participation in, and promotion and understanding of, heritage matters in Cirencester and help create a sense of ownership in the community.
4. Establish a trust and/or fund to raise money and deliver the strategy.
5. Create a stakeholder group to advise the trust, and to enable delivery.
<b>SUCCESS INDICATORS</b>
6. Number of heritage strategy projects completed.
7. Number or art or fountain features added to townscape.
8. Number of redundant signs removed.
9. Number of appropriate new signs introduced.
10. Number of seats provided.
11. Number of trees and plants planted.
<b>KEY TASKS</b>
12. Identify scope of heritage strategy project.
13. Planning for Real exercise linked to Safe Routes to School.
14. Obtain funding to produce a strategy by using consultants.
15. Engage consultants.
16. Undertake study and consultation.

<p>17. Town Council to adopt and implement the strategy.</p> <p>18. Establish a fundraising and fund holding organisation, perhaps in the form of a trust, to implement the recommendations of the strategy.</p>
<p><b>KEY MILESTONES</b></p> <p>19. Scoping completed.</p> <p>20. Project funding obtained.</p> <p>21. Consultants report received.</p> <p>22. Strategy adopted by Town Council.</p> <p>23. Supplementary planning document adopted by Cotswold District Council.</p> <p>24. Establishment of trust or fund.</p>
<p><b>BENEFITS</b></p> <p>25. Creates a blueprint of how to maximise our heritage in terms of participation, protection and enhancement, promotion, enjoyment and understanding.</p> <p>26. Helps local people have a better spatial understanding of their local heritage.</p> <p>27. Adds social/anthropological “living history” to our understanding of Cirencester and preserve our more recent history for future generations.</p> <p>28. Assists people of more limited mobility.</p> <p>29. Improves the attractiveness and functionality of current public infrastructure provision.</p> <p>30. Reduces street clutter and improve the overall appearance of the town.</p> <p>31. Improves navigation.</p>
<p><b>RISKS</b></p> <p>32. Consultation and Strategy fatigue: people will lose interest because this project does not lead directly to immediate provision.</p> <p>33. Funding not available for strategy or implementation.</p> <p>34. Poor consultants.</p>
<p><b>PARTNERS</b></p> <p>35. Cirencester Town Council</p> <p>36. Civic Society</p> <p>37. Action Cirencester</p> <p>38. Cotswold District Council</p> <p>39. Gloucestershire County Council</p> <p>40. English Heritage</p> <p>41. English Historic Towns Forum</p> <p>42. Centre for Architecture and the Built Environment</p> <p>43. Royal patrons</p> <p>44. Bathurst Estate</p>
<p><b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES</b></p> <p>45. Heritage Lottery Project Planning Grant to support projects that relate to the national, regional or local heritage. £5,000 to £50,000 is available where at least 10% match funding can be found.</p>
<p><b>EVIDENCE</b></p> <p>46. Consultation showed that local people value highly their local heritage but do not feel that they are as aware of what is on offer as they should be. It is also felt that visitors are not able to fully appreciate Cirencester because of poor exposure and interpretation of heritage assets.</p> <p>47. Tourism is a growing economic sector in the South West (see Strategic Links below).</p> <p>48. District Council Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Document and Conservation Area Management Statements do not provide adequate protection or guidance regarding issues of signage, interpretation,</p>

planting.

49. Developer contributions will not be sufficient to achieve this project's objectives so other resources must be identified.

50. There are no oral history records of Cirencester.

51. Street clutter is a problem in Cirencester but the District's resources are not sufficient to address the problem alone.

### **STRATEGIC LINKS**

52. Rural Economic Strategy for Gloucestershire 2007-2015 (Revised 2006), Objective 1: Leisure and Tourism

53. Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026, TC1: the range and quality of central area facilities will be maintained and enhanced to meet future needs. TO1: promote tourism by improving the quality and diversity of existing facilities and accommodation, realising the potential of environmental, cultural and heritage assets as the basis for sustainable tourism. TO2: safeguarding and investing in tourism destinations.

54. Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan, Cotswold AONB partnership, support for tourism.

### **LINKS TO OTHER PARTS OF THE PLAN**

55. Cirencester Local: "Cirencester Local" logo on relevant signage and both to be prepared in complementary styles. New seating provided to be marked with "Cirencester Local" logo.

56. Sustainable Transport: sustainable transport routes and linkages should be easy to understand.

57. Safe Routes to Schools: Safe Routes to School should be properly way marked.

58. Cirencester Open Air Swimming Pool: The Heritage Strategy should acknowledge the historical and social interest of the Cirencester Open Air Swimming Pool.

59. Amphitheatre: The Heritage Strategy should acknowledge the historical and social interest of the Amphitheatre.

60. Market Place: The Heritage Strategy should acknowledge the historical and social interest of the Market Place.