



**THE STREETS OF
AXBRIDGE
PHASE 1**

*Getting the balance right between vehicles & pedestrians
to create a safe shared space for now and the future.*

The Streets of Axbridge Phase One - March 2015 to June 2016 **PROJECT UPDATE AS AT APRIL 2016**

The roots of the Streets of Axbridge Project have been in the making for over ten years with people of Axbridge repeatedly saying they want more pedestrian friendly streets.

(See document – ‘Streets of Axbridge – previous surveys and reports’ on the website - www.streetsofaxbridge.org.uk)

In 2011 Axbridge Community Partnership (ACP) was set up to both enable better cooperation and communication between key organisations in Axbridge, and to progress specific projects. ACP developed and agreed the detail of the plans for Phase One and on behalf of ACP, Axbridge Action Group (AAG) secured the funding and took the lead for the implementation of the Phase One Project through a Core Group that reports regularly to ACP.

(1) STREETS OF AXBRIDGE PHASE ONE PROJECT - GOALS

- To take the first steps towards making Axbridge a more pedestrian friendly place;
- To provide a focus and a process for residents, business owners and visitors to have a say and discuss the relationship between vehicles and people throughout all of the streets of Axbridge;
- To create a more people friendly area in The Square for visitors and local people young and old.

(See document ‘The Streets of Axbridge Trial’ on our website)

(2) THE TOWN SQUARE TRIAL

The Trial changes to the Square include new street furniture, planting, signage and cycle racks along with reduced car parking spaces. The goal of the Trial is to promote more active community use, inspire and demonstrate our wider intent and give vision and focus for community engagement and consultation.

(See document ‘The Streets of Axbridge Trial’ and other info on our website)

(3) COMMUNITY FACILITATORS

To assist us in the process of community engagement and consultation Barbara Wells and Sharon Anderson were appointed in March 2015 as Community Facilitators.

Over the months Barbara and Sharon have engaged with people at a wide range of community activities and at a Streets of Axbridge Exhibition event in July. They have interviewed people from a wide array of groups and in various locations throughout the town. They have made particular efforts to connect, observe and log feedback from marginalized groups such as disabled and elderly people and children. They have photographed and gathered data from observations around the town. Over ten months they estimate that they interviewed over 1500 residents and visitors and assisted in the capturing of about 2000 comments and points of feedback.

(The Community Facilitators report is on the www.streetsofaxbridge.org.uk website)

(4) THE FOCUS GROUP AND STREET AUDIT

The Focus Group consisted of 24 people from throughout Axbridge, who volunteered after a public appeal via Oyez, The Cheddar Valley Gazette, The Project website, and The Project Facebook Page. The aim was to agree a set of ideas for street design, pathways and activities for all parts of Axbridge. The Group met in Autumn 2015 for 3 sessions; a Street Audit Day and 2 evening meetings.

The Street Audit Day was for Focus Group members and other people who chose to participate, after the extensive public campaign. The group represented a broad demographic from the town. Christy Acton and Kelly Theis from Living Streets offered their expert advice and consultancy. Living Streets is 'The UK charity for everyday walking'. The day involved walking Axbridge and discussing different street design ideas with these independent experts.

(See document 'Feedback from the Street Audit Day' – on our website)

At the evening meetings the Focus Group used the recognised methodology 'PATH', which encourages participation and enables exploration of options together in a creative and visionary way to agree real and possible ideas and suggestions for the future.

(See document 'Results from the Streets of Axbridge PATH 2015' – on our website)

(5) THE BIG FEEDBACK EXHIBITION EVENT – 9th NOVEMBER 2015

The 50 top ideas and suggestions for street design and activities from the Focus Group process and Community Facilitation feedback were presented. 85 people attended the event – all of whom posted their 'votes' for the most liked and most disliked ideas and suggestions. A wealth of additional points of feedback and suggestions were also contributed at this event.

(6) FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS AT THE BIG FEEDBACK EXHIBITION EVENT

MOST LIKED IDEAS & SUGGESTIONS WERE (In order of preference):

1. Improve bus access by removing the car parking space outside the Co-op;
2. Consider areas for additional public/resident car parks – for example: Chestnut Ave, off of bypass beside Station/Youth club, next to Doctors Surgery and Furlong Car Park;
3. Undertake a detailed study of pavements and roads for traffic calming measures on streets..... throughout Axbridge;
4. Keep the changes already made in the Square as carried out in the Trial;
5. Support the 'Coffin Lane' proposal - pathway going up/down Cross Lane – combine with refuge crossing of A38 from Cross to Axbridge;
6. Provide pedestrian refuges for crossing the A371 at Fennel Lane (Hillside steps) and for the footpath opposite the Sea Cadet buildings and for the A371 below Hillside to be changed to a 40mph zone;
7. 20mph speed limit throughout all of Axbridge;
8. Enforce speed limits and parking restrictions throughout the town.

(For additional details and public suggestions see document 'Results from the public feedback and consultation event on the 9th November 2015' – on our website)

(7) WHAT NEXT

The Streets of Axbridge Core Group is now exploring the top ideas and suggestions that came out of the community engagement and consultation process. We will consider how these ideas can best be progressed and how we can use all of the invaluable feedback and observations materials that have been gathered. The group will then present proposals to ACP - with the goal of Phase Two of the Streets of Axbridge Project being outlined later this year. It is the desire of the project for Phase Two to be rolled out in parallel with the Axbridge Neighbourhood Plan. Further details will be forthcoming in the summer.

Please get in touch if you have any queries or want to make any comments. For further information, please see - www.streetsofaxbridge.org.uk or phone **Pete on 01934 733869**
Peter Harding- Chairperson – Axbridge Action Group 15.4.16