

# THE STREETS OF **AXBRIDGE**

## PHASE 1

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

### Streets of Axbridge Phase 1 - 2015

### **Feedback from the Street Audit Day – Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015.**

The street audit day was conducted in partnership with Living Streets, the national charity.. *working to create safe, attractive, enjoyable streets around the UK.* Christy Acton, Project Manager, and Kelly Theis, Project Coordinator, attended from Living Streets.

The street audit day involved walking around Axbridge and participants talking together about different street designs. The day was for Streets of Axbridge Focus Group members and other persons who chose to participate. Most persons were members of the Focus Group and attended for the whole day. Other persons just joined in for specific zones, sections, or gave comment on particular areas and aspects.

Names of participants throughout the day:

Participated throughout:

Barrie Cross	Maggie Tier
Sarah Berry	Delia McCarthy
Tricia Clark	Lynne Jarmann
Francis Rabbitts	Phil Wookey
John Albone	Bob Foster
David Maclay	Peter Harding
Robin Goodfellow	George Ware
Ashley Gwinn	Barbara Wells
Janet Gwinn	Sharon Anderson

Christy Acton and Kelly Theis from Living Streets

Contributed in part:

Luke Studman	Marianne Swinkels
Robin Mace	Wendy Mace
Graham Capple	Paul Passey
Tom Littlewood	Baz Hamlin

### **Introduction**

Day started with an introduction to role and purpose of the day by Peter Harding and Christy Acton.

Christy said **Living Streets** ([www.livingstreets.org.uk](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk)) is the UK charity for everyday walking. They want to create a walking nation, free from congested roads and pollution, reducing the risk of preventable illness and social isolation and making walking the natural choice. They believe that a walking nation means progress for everyone. They want to work with us to make the streets we live, work, shop and play in safe, attractive and enjoyable spaces.

Agreed that the day would involve attention to the 4 zones of Axbridge.

10.00 - Coffee and welcome and introductions in the Oakhouse  
10:30 – 11:30 Zone 1 (High Street and West Street, Townsend, Hillside and routes leading West and North out of Axbridge)  
11.30 – Coffee and Cake break at Barbara's  
12.00 – 1:00 Zone 2 (Houlgate Way, Meadow Street, Moorland Street and all streets into these streets and routeways leading South out of Axbridge)  
1.00 – Lunch at The Oak House  
2:00 – 3:00 Zone 3 (the Square and routeways leading into and out of it)  
3.00 – coffee break at The Alms House  
3:30 – 4:30 Zone 4 (St Mary's Street and Cheddar Road and all streets leading into these roads and routeways leading East out of Axbridge)

Throughout the day we walked around the town and participants gave comments and ideas on specific design features that they would like to see happening for different parts of the streetscape. People also expressed views about the overall streetscape of Axbridge. Christy Acton and Kelly Theis gave feedback on their particular impressions and ideas that we could consider for specific aspects and for the overall town.

Throughout The Street Audit Day Pete and George wrote down what people said that this below is a write up of what was recorded. Generally precise names of contributors are not indicated except those of Christy and Kelly and where a particular personal opinion was being expressed. Key points that were said have been highlighted in **bold** and following this specific idea or proposal presented as a **bold statement**. All of the principle ideas and proposals that came out of the Street Audit Day are then presented as a summary in the Appendix at the end of the document.

### **Zone 1 – High Street, West Street, Townsend, Hillside and routes leading West and North out of Axbridge.**

The actual kerbs (metal kerbs) are not listed but the conservation area may say that these should be preserved.

Noted that it is felt that the area at the bottom of High Street is not safe for pedestrians. What about raising the kerbs here or making it one way? Maybe make a strip as a bike route?

Christy said that, alternatively, as there is a relatively low volume of traffic on these streets, that we should **consider making streets like this as predominantly a pedestrian street. A streetscape that cars can use but the design is changed to be a focus on pedestrians.** Christy said that the Square is designed to be more pedestrian friendly with its paved appearance. High Street immediately looks like "a road". The key would be **to make High Street more pedestrianised in its design.**

#### **1.1 Review how we can make High Street and West Street into being more for pedestrians rather than vehicles.**

One point to reinforce this is feedback that we have had from residents at The Pennings (flats for older people) is from people who say they use their scooters to go down the street. The pavements are not wide enough. Hence, more 'pedestrian focused streets' would be better.

Ashley said that, as a disabled person, the impact of the pavements and the narrowness of the street really affect him as a pedestrian using the street. He said that the pavements are too narrow for him as he sways when he walks because of his physical impairments. Hence, he would welcome any measures to make the streets more overall pedestrian friendly so that it was safer for him to use the road to walk in (as he has to do anyway) rather than the pavements.

Robin said he knew a disabled person who could not walk up the street as a result of pedestrian pavements not being wide enough.

Pete said that his father-in-law and mother-in-law (Arthur and Molly) found walking up High Street (and other roads) really difficult because of the speed of traffic and the width of the pavements.

One concern expressed is cyclists travelling too fast down High Street. (Silent peddlers). This is a serious problem for anyone especially elderly people walking down the street.

Christy said that the key is that we need to make sure that all vehicles are respectful of pedestrians on the streets. This includes cars and bicycles and larger vehicles.

**One idea expressed is that of one way up High Street/West Street and then one way down Houlgate Way?**

**1.2 Review option of one way for traffic up High Street/West Street and then one way down Houlgate Way.**

**Signage? The obvious way for directing traffic through Axbridge as the main access way into the town is along Houlgate Way.**

**1.3 Direct traffic coming in from west side of town to go down Houlgate Way instead of West Street.**

As we walked up High Street it was noted that one issue is that cars park on the pavement. This is generally residents who are unloading. However, sometimes this can be for a lengthy period of time. Hence, pedestrians have to walk out into the road to get round these cars.

Noted that a large number of people living in High Street and West Street have no parking. Maybe we should **consider on street parking on West Street and High Street?**

**1.4 Review options of more on street parking on West Street and High Street?**

However, noted that people do not want to have other people's cars parked outside of their house. Some said that it would negatively ruin their view. Also, if we had cars parked long term on the street then it would restrict options for residents needing a space to pull in and unload.

Noted 3 key options to consider so far walking up High Street:

1. Parking on streets or not?
2. One way traffic up High Street/West Street or not?
3. Moving towards a "pedestrianised" street design for High Street/West Street or not?

We walked up Horns Lane. Noted that Horns Lane road is uneven at the bottom.

Awareness – we need to make more people aware that Horns Lane exists. People need to know about this back lane as a place to walk. We should look after this pathway and encourage people to use it more.

Route ways across the A271 (the bypass). We need to change the language of "bypass". It is the A371. All agreed that there is a big issue of need for a safe crossing here. **Propose that the road here should be 40 miles per hour zone (or even 30 miles per hour).**

**1.5 Speed limit on A371 below Hillside should be 40 miles ph (or even 30 miles ph)**

If we did this we could then have a refuge in the middle of the road to **enable safe crossing at the bottom of Hillside Road**. Noted that there could be 2 options for refuges:

1. Bottom of Hillside Road or
2. By the Youth Club

Refuge one would lead into the Hillside Road or pathway leading up to Hillside by that road or the option two would lead up the steps (opposite the Youth Club) to the higher part of Hillside.

**Agreed by most that bottom of Hillside Road is the most appropriate place for a refuge.**

**1.6 Create pedestrian refuge in middle of A371 road at bottom of Hillside Road.**

Also suggested that if we change the speed of traffic on the A371 at this area we could then consider **developing parking on the “wasteland” next to the Youth Club**. This would be in keeping with a proposed wider vision for Axbridge as a more pedestrian town. **Residents or visitors could use the Horns Lane parking area and then walk down Horns Lane into the Square or the residential area of West Street/High Street**. This would encourage more use of this area of Axbridge. Parking in this area would also provide parking space for people using the Youth Club/Sea Cadet Centre.

### **1.7 Review option of developing car parking on the “wasteland” next to the Youth Club**

Noted that there used to be traffic lights by St Michaels Cheshire Home. People did use this. What happened to these lights?

We proceeded back down Horns Lane and carried on walking up West Street.

Noted that there is no way through the central area of Axbridge through to the nursing home/top part of St Johns Court. Noted that there used to be **access way between town car park and West Street**. This – as a part of a whole town vision - would be sensible to restore. We need to see how different parts of Axbridge can be connected for pedestrians. Such a linkage would also connect this part of Axbridge – including the nursing home – to Axbridge as a whole. This would make the whole town, including for the people of the nursing home, more inclusive. As a part of this - noted that it would then be easier for nursing home resident to access the town square by going through the Town Car park gate. Noted that observations are that it seems dangerous, restrictive and cumbersome for people from the nursing home to be pushed in wheelchairs up the hill to West Street and then down the narrowness of High Street to get The Square.

### **1.8 Explore how we can establish pathway through the middle of the town between Town Car Park and West Street.**

Noted that the 4 existing parking spaces on the north side of West Street (restricted parking times) are ok.

Noted that in the USA the speed for traffic in pedestrian/residential zones is normally 15 miles per hour. However, noted in UK the speed for pedestrian/ residential zones is normally 20 miles per hour – 10 miles per hour outside schools. What speed should we be promoting for Axbridge “people areas”? Generally agreed that we should try to ensure the 20 mile per hour zone is enforced and promoted by considering street design.

However, generally the **preference was that we have more of a defining zone as 20 miles per hour and as a people zone. Message is “this is a pedestrian space”**. Christy said that the appearance makes a big difference. He noted that the line of sight of West Street is for car drivers “I will put my foot down”. Also noted that the double yellow lines down the street reinforces the street being a driving road. Christy proposed that we should **extend the rules from the Square - including the no parking zone rules – up to the top of West Street**. Christy said that this vision of a ‘shared space’ could **incorporate 1 ‘paved type’ surface from left to right all the way up High Street and West Street**. This would be like continuing the zone that already exists in the Square up this area. This would give an opportunity for street furniture to be placed along all of the street to ensure there is safe egress from people’s houses on to the street. This could be in place whether we consider the one way option or not.

### **1.9 Long term plan – pave over all of the road and existing pavement going up High Street and West Street combined with locating quality street furniture throughout.**

However, some people said that no pavements would make it even more lethal for pedestrians. Especially for people coming out of houses straight on to the road.

Christy said that instead there are many examples of “shared spaces” throughout Britain and abroad where this option does work.

One context of this is that we can’t raise the “sidewalk”/pavement.

A big concern would be that if we had street furnishing going down High Street or West Street we might negatively impact the view of the street. If we did consider putting planters or bollards (etc) in the road there would need to be some level of consistency and quality in terms of what was in place.

Another option is to have access only for residents – no through traffic.

One option proposed in order to examine what the problems are and view of people was to **do a survey of drivers and riders of vehicles passing through High Street and West Street (and maybe for other parts of Axbridge)**. This would be for cars, vans and cyclist. Where are they going to? Why have you come to Axbridge? What do you feel about the street? How would you feel about cameras on the street?

### **1.10 Do a survey of drivers and riders vehicles passing through High Street and West Street (and maybe for other parts of Axbridge).**

Another proposal was a filming via a camera on the street. This would act as:

1. A survey of traffic flow down the street
2. Enable us to capture speeding.

Pete said that we do have a camera on the Square and this is noting the flow of people and vehicles around the square. However, Pete said that he believes it would not be legally permissible to film and then prosecute speeding traffic going down the road. There are rules about speed cameras. Pete suggested that we would not want to have big yellow speed cameras in situ down High Street/West Street.

**Gateway pinchpoint at top of West Street.** All were supportive of this idea. **This could include signage such as.. “Welcome to Axbridge Community Zone – go slow” and below that say “20 mph”.** Discussed options for positioning of pinchpoint/gateway. One option proposed was to have a **curved pinchpoint going across from the end of Houlgate Way to the other side of the road but going up towards the junction.** This would change the feel of the street being entered and do more than anything to change the mindset of people in or on vehicles. Once again people proposed that the main routeway into Axbridge should be down Houlgate Way and that the gateway/pinchpoint should deter people from going down West Street.

### **1.11 Create gateway/pinch point at entrance into top of West Street.**

Townsend and “Coffin Lane”. Everyone agreed that the exit way west out of Axbridge for pedestrians and cyclists are dangerous. We need to find ways of connecting up Cross and Axbridge.

Delia from Coffin Lane campaign said their proposal is to **enhance the existing pedestrian pathway on the left side of the hedge going down to the farm building. Need to make this pathway more defined and some level of hardcore for use by pedestrians and cyclists to use (with pedestrian priority).** Then the proposal is for the pathway to run along the left hand side of the road (going down) using the space that is available by the hedgerow there (round to the A38). Then there would need to be a refuge in the middle of the A38 for people to more safely cross the road there.

Delia said that Coffin Lane are looking to do a feasibility study to review these option.

All agreed that it is important that we improve the route way/pathway between Axbridge and Cross. However, Barrie said that key factor that needs to be considered is that the proposal of a path going into the field would be negative for cattle in the field. Cyclists going along the pathway wearing their bright day-glo clothing and lights would scare the cattle and cause them to panic and run away.

Hence, second suggestion is to instead consider a one-way circular circuit for traffic in this area. Cars would be limited to going up Coffin Lane/Cross Lane. There could then be cycling/pedestrian refuge way on one side of the road going down and up. This would then hence not need to use the field for the pathway. Motorised traffic going down from Cheddar would then need to use the Shute Shelf junction. Traffic would have to go up to this junction to get down to Cross. This would hence limit the amount of traffic coming down into Townsend as most traffic proceeding down to Cross and/or for the Bridgwater direction would instead carry on along the A371 to the Shute Shelf junction.

Which of these 2 options would be the best one for the Coffin Lane/Cross Lane issue? Generally, **most people felt that the Coffin Lane proposal is the easiest and best option.**

### **1.12 Support the creation of a 'Coffin Lane' pathway going up/down Cross Lane – combine with refuge crossing on A38.**

Went back to the West Street/Houlgate Way junction. Question was asked – would it be ok/fair to steer traffic down Houlgate Way instead of West Street? People said – including people who lived in this area of Axbridge – that this would be ok as long as we also considered the streetscape of Houlgate Way and how traffic flowed there.

Discussed how to progress our proposals for the West Street High Street area? Option would be to look at small changes first. Maybe **firstly trial the installation of some rumble strips (rumble strips that could be removed subsequently if required after a trial), and test out positioning of street furniture and look at a 'gateway' proposal.**

### **1.13 Trial the installation of some rumble strips (rumble strips that could be removed subsequently if required after a trial), and test out positioning of street furniture and look at a 'gateway' proposal.**

### **Zone 2 - Houlgate Way, Meadow Street, Moorland Street and all streets into these streets and routeways leading South out of Axbridge**

If we are going to put pinchpoints for West Street should we also consider putting pinchpoint leading down into Houlgate Way? Alternatively, an option that could also serve the function of creating a different mindset for drivers is by looking at **a different road surface for all of this junction area including going down the top part of Houlgate Way and West Street.**

### **2.1 Create a different road surface for all of this junction area including going down the top part of Houlgate Way and West Street.**

Discussed parking at the **top of Houlgate Way** and that some residents in this area have proposed that these **vehicles are removed to provide easier access in this area.** Noted that the pavements in this area are wide and there is the possibility of changing the location of parking here. Maybe **review parking cars on the east side of the top of Houlgate Way rather than the west side?** Christy said the top of Houlgate Way could be designed differently with the wider space that could potentially be available here. **Why not have the road "snaking" in some way and creation of car parking? Christy proposed that there should be no reason to move cars off of this top of Houlgate Way to down below. Suggested instead to look at options to create parking spaces around here and all parts of Axbridge. For example he asked - who owns strip of land outside Compton House?** Noted that we believe this belongs to Compton House. Could this be used for car parking?

### **2.2 Review different options for car parking at top of Houlgate Way.**

Maggie said that she did a traffic survey over 2 hours on Houlgate Way and there were 236 vehicles that went by – cars, lorries, buses. There is a lot of traffic on this road.

Noted that people living down Houlgate Way and Starrs Close have a lot of cars from people on High Street and West Street parking on their street. Many residents say how they find this annoying and inconvenient sometimes. Sometimes people park and block their driveways. Generally felt from the group that there is no problem with on street parking as long as people park respectfully. Key is that we do need to consider more on street parking for Axbridge.

Noted that for all the way **down Houlgate Way there are places where the road could be widened in order to facilitate more on street parking.**

### **2.3 Review option for more on street parking along Houlgate Way**

Key will be to see how we can **limit speed of traffic down Houlgate Way. Maybe use sleeping policeman or rumble strips?**

## 2.4 Install (trial) sleeping policeman or rumble strips on Houlgate Way.

We moved down to the seating area on Houlgate Way. Noted the sight line is limited here as a result of the height of the shrubs. Overall this “Jack Todd sitting area” is a good feature. One that we would like to see replicated more in other places! However, we need to consider the poor sight line as it encourages cars to travel fast. However, question was asked how many accidents have there actually been? A big problem is that people go too fast. If people travelled at respectable speeds then the sight line issue would not be such a problem.

Discussed proposed housing developments up to the right side of this road. Noted that the rights and wrongs of such a development is not a matter for the Streets of Axbridge project. The is being considered by the Neighbourhood Plan. However, if this was to proceed, could this provide an option to pay for changes to this road? Also, would this be an option for creating more parking for the whole of Axbridge?

As we walked down Houlgate Way to the surgery area it was noted that this is a danger area. Parking around the surgery needs to be modified. Otherwise, noted that the parking up Houlgate Way does not seem to be a problem. Discussed whether parking should be on south side (west) or north side (east) of Houlgate Way. Some proposals were that we should move the parking to north instead. However, generally agreed that parking on the south side – as at present - with “passing places” is the better option.

**Suggest that a parking area to the north of the surgery** would be a good idea providing parking for the surgery and parking for Axbridge residents within and outside of the proposed development. Noted that another area that could be considered for a **parking area would be the top of Houlgate Way below Compton House**. Noted that in the housing development proposals this is being proposed to be an industrial area.

## 2.5 Review options of establishing car parking on south/west side of Houlgate Way.

As we walked down we considered the **Houlgate Way/Old Church Road double yellow lines. Why can cars not park in this area as there is further up?** For example, spaces outside the flats. Noted that the **verges on Old Church Road could also provide options for more car parking**.

Noted issue for the old persons peoples flats here that if there were to be cars parked here then that might have a negative effect on drop off and pick up for residents in the flats. However, noted that there would be ample space around still for people to have options to drop off and pick up and, at the same time, provide more parking spaces.

People questioned whether there would be enough room for the bus if we did this? Noted that when the bus went by there was as much, if not more room, for the bus here as there is for the rest of Houlgate Way.

## 2.6 Review option of removing some of the double yellow lines and using others ‘unused areas’ on Houlgate Way/Old Church Road to allow for more on street parking.

We then walked down to the school at the **bottom of Old Church Road**. Suggested that the tight streets here already limit the speed of traffic. However, sometimes cars do come down at excessive speeds. This is especially concerning as this is an area where school children often inhabit. Proposed having a raised pavement area here to slow traffic down and/or **school murals to “go slow”**. Noted that the road around here is dangerous but also easier for pedestrians as the streetscape is so cramped and vehicles have to go slow.

## 2.7 Bottom of Old Church Road school murals on wall/fence to “go slow”.

Walked to the corner of Moor Green and Moorland Street. Noted that one issue is agricultural traffic coming down this street sometimes goes too fast. Other vehicles also come down this street too fast. Kelly said that Bristol schools have child friendly images on the road and on walls to remind people to drive slowly. Also outside schools are often **10 miles per hour zones**.

## **2.8 Create a 10mph zone around the school.**

Christy suggested that the **parking immediately on the corner of Moor Green coming down from Moorland needs to be removed to make sure that there are better sight lines round here.** This is especially important as this is a school area.

## **2.9 Parking immediately on the corner of Moor Green coming down from Moorland to be restricted.**

Walked up **to junction for Square and Moorland Street.** Christy said that this area needs to similarly be **made a more pedestrian zone.** A part of the Square coming down just as proposed for High Street/ West Street. This needs to **include different coloured road.** Also noted that the roadway going along Meadow Street is similarly marked with different coloured paving and that observations are traffic slows down when it hits this different coloured zone. This would similarly apply to Meadow Street moving into the Square.

## **2.10 Top of Moorland Street – entering Square – to be paved and a different coloured road surface.**

### **Zone 3 (the Square and routeways leading into and out of it)**

Many people said feel that the road exit out from the Square parking area by the Oak House is dangerous. Luke proposed that we should **change the roadway out from by the Oak House to come out instead a further 6/8 feet (1 parking bay) over to the west.**

## **3.1 Change the roadway out from by the Oak House to come out instead a further 6/8 feet (1 parking bay) over to the west.**

Proposed that we need to create more of a feel in the Square for people. Generally felt that this has stepped in the right direction by the changes to the Square made in the trial. We need to move to more of a “continental feel”. Proposed that instead we need to use the term “Axbridge feel” more than the continental feel.

We want to make sure that there is more seating around the Square as there is now as a result of the trial.

Why can't the Farmers Market use parking spaces across the road as well? We could use both sides? However, concerns that it would be dangerous for people crossing the road and people with stalls on the other side of the road would feel at a disadvantage.

Proposed that instead we remove all cars from the Square car park and provide parking elsewhere for residents and visitors?

Christy said that it is not surprising that the Square triggers a lot of contentious discussion. There are multiple issues in terms of how we want to use the Square. Christy suggested that we **“plan for the long term goals” Have a big map and play around with space with shapes such as cars, tables, chairs etc.**

Key is to think about **what we want in 10 years time? All agreed that a goal should be to see less parking in the Square. More space for people to gather. Key will be to ensure we offer alternative parking. For residents and visitors.**

- 2. For 10 years time we want see less parking in the Square. More space for people to gather. We have alternative parking elsewhere for residents and visitors.**
- 3. We should have a have a planning session for The Square using a map and little cars, tables, planters etc – as shapes to play around with.**

As a stepping stone towards this, one proposal is to **close off the exit way by the Oak House. Make all of the area in front of the Oak House pedestrianised.** No road way. **Create a “hammer head”**



**turning space up by the church step area.** Discussed how this could work? One option would be to make the road way to the back of the Square (by the flower shop) only for residents and access only. This would mean that we would **remove the existing 3 parking spaces in that area.**

**3.4 Close off road exit by Oak House and create a ‘hammer head’ turning space down from the church steps.**

**3.5 Remove the 3 existing parking spaces by The Flower Shop.**

Another area that needs to be considered for removing parking spaces is **the parking space outside – to the left – of the Co-Op.** This should be removed to enable better access by buses turning around there.

**3.6 Make the parking space outside – to the left – of the Co-Op as roadway/planter space.**

Noted that there is a feeling that if we reduce parking more in the Square the resistance would go up and up. A key for Axbridge is availability of parking. One option would be to further **reduce the parking limit time in the Square. 20 minutes or 30 minutes?** Key is if we reduce the parking on the Square to 20/30 minutes then we would need less spaces and we could consider removing some more spaces in the Square. This would mean that the shops can still have the availability of cars to pull in and pick up items (the flower shop, Co-Op, Post Office, Chemist) – as longer stays would have to park elsewhere. Question is where would people go elsewhere to park?

**3.7 Reduce the parking limit time in the Square to 20 minutes or 30 minutes.**

Noted that **Moorland Street car park** is now 2 hours. Is this long enough for people to get a meal in the pub/café? Long enough to complete a hair appointment? Noted that feedback from the Hairdressers is that **3 hours would be a better timescale for this car park.** This is because some of the hair treatments take 3 hours.

**3.8 Make Moorland Street car park 3 hours time limit.**

Key factor is to encourage people to walk in Axbridge. With the increase in housing the demand for access to the Square will increase.

Key factor is to upgrade **and improve the signage that there is available free parking in Moorland Street and Meadow Street.** Where can we increase signage? **What about on the wall of the Chemist?**

**3.9 Improve the signage that there is available free parking in Moorland Street and Meadow Street. Use Chemist wall maybe?**

**Key is to ensure there are other parking spaces around Axbridge. Including on street parking.** Another factor is to **ensure that Car Parking (in designated Car Parks and on-street parking) is attended.** Suggest that we have some parking for residents only (permit holding) or spaces for people to buy a parking space in a Car Park.

**3.10 Review over all options for parking throughout Axbridge.**

Where can we secure **additional parking? The space up by the Youth Club/Sea Cadets has already been identified as an option. Also, what about the Furlong parking? Also parking by doctors surgery on Houlgate Way? All these places could be spaces for resident or visitor parking.**

Christy wonders how we can take this forward. Key is to describe how the Square would look in 5 and 10 years time. **We need to carry on with further piloting within the space. Small steps and small changes. Options:**

- 1. Don't lose any more parking except 1 space on corner of Co-Op**
- 2. The hammer head idea. Most agreed that this is a good option.** However, 2/3 significant objections to this idea.

### **3.11 Do further additional Phase Two Trials in the Square – and incorporating trials in other parts of Axbridge – to test out options.**

If we went for option 2, one participant said that the parking bays as they presently exist outside the flower shop would create a real problem. As a result of cars needing to pull out and turn round in the hammer head. Hence, option 3 would be to go with **the hammer head idea and in addition remove the 3 parking spaces and make the road here for access and residents only.**

### **3.12 Make road at top of Square – by flower shop as access and residents only.**

Questioned why the trial moved the parking 90 degrees on the back by the flower shop. Pete explained that the idea here was to create a walk through feel from the centre of the Square to the Oak House. There was a lot of discussion around this. Instead make this space into an area for motorcycles to use. Some people said that they never use this walk through and that this is a total waste of space. However, others said that they do use the walk through and that this is a good and positive feature.

Suggested seating area in the middle is not really used. It would be better to remove this area and put parking here and increase parking in the middle of the Square outside of the flower shop by removal of the 3 parking spaces there. However, others disagreed with this approach. **The seating spaces in the middle are used frequently and this provides different zones for people to gather in the Square. We don't want to concentrate on one zone.**

### **3.13 Maintain the existing layout of zones of seating in the Square as introduced in The Trial.**

**OR**

### **3.14 Concentrate the seating and pedestrian area in one big block outside of the flower shop and transfer the seating by the signpost back into car parking.**

Key comment was that we need to maintain parking in the Square for businesses. Christy said that their experience is that people on foot spend more money. We need to find ways of encouraging people to walk around as much as possible. People who walk from their houses in Axbridge to the Square will spend more money than if they just pop down in their car.

Key is though that there needs to be a balance between making a space for people to walk and space to park cars.

**The planters.** Lots of discussion happened in terms of whether people liked the planters or not. **12 said that they liked, 8 did not. Most people who did not like the planters said that it was the plants rather than the planters themselves they disliked.** Not trees but bushes needed instead. Some people said they did not like the square feel of the planters. Need round planters in keeping with other planters on the Square.

### **3.15 Review the type of plants in the big planters.**

Noted that some feel that the planters location obstruct the Farmers Market.

**People feel positive about the seating outside the Oak House.** A key factor is for the Oak House to ensure they keep the throughway free.

### **3.16 Maintain the seating outside the Oak House**

**Noted the bike racks are well used. However, some felt the steel racks are out of keeping with the feel of the Square.** Rack should be black instead to fit in with the rest of the Square. However, most felt that the stainless steel was appropriate. Why are the racks so tall?

### **3.17 Review the design of the cycle racks.**

Seating in the middle of the Square is good but **benches are too close to the bike racks.**

One suggestion from Barrie was **to put planters in the middle of the street.** Pete said that this was in keeping with the ideas from the Haire report (The Axbridge Options Appraisal 2009 – see website) to

**push the parking from the middle out into the existing road way.** The Haire report said that if we did this it would have positive effects in 2 aspects:

1. Create more a feel of the Square being a Square
2. Force cars to do a dog leg round the Square and hence address the “drive straight through” feel of the road way through the middle of the Square. This would hence limit the speed of cars going into the Square.

**3.18 Review option of ‘pushing the centre of the Square out’. Short term put planers in middle in front of existing benches. Long term consider pushing the car parking out more into the middle of the Square.**

Christy said that this is a good idea. We would need Highways to look at this and come up with some design ideas.

Once again the suggestion was to remove the spaces in the middle and look at the parking spaces beyond. However, others said that the different zones are what is positive about the trail development. The place by the signs is a pleasure to sit in.

**The seats outside The Lamb also work well,** some felt that the “clutter” in front of the seats feels messy. However, others felt that this is a positive feature to separate people eating in this area.

**The perception is that the thoroughfare up to High Street here needs to be addressed. Need to create better space for traffic going up High Street close the road down in some way to limit the speed of traffic here.**

Christy said if **we can provide more of a pedestrian feel throughout Axbridge – including going up High Street – this will address traffic coming down into the Square and going out of the Square.**

#### **19. Create different colour paving/road at bottom of High Street.**

One participant said that the Square is wonderful. Let’s not risk doing any changes in the future that will change the feel and balance of the Square.

Discussed the **space outside the Alms House. Generally all felt that this was a positive area** and acknowledged that the space is used by the Alms House as a business but also at least 50% by other members of the public not using the Alms House. Noted that this is what is intended in the trial for this space.

#### **3.20 Main the existing seating/pedestrian space outside of the Alms House.**

Noted the Town Trust say they are looking at all the areas being used in the Square and thinking about charges for the use of spaces. Christy suggested that **community areas are assigned by having a common feature – a “common design feature”.**

#### **3.21 Furniture in community areas are assigned by having a common feature – a “common design feature”.**

Noted that the junction around the Square/Moorland Street/Meadow Street is dangerous. In particular going round the corner from Co-Op to Meadow Street. Moving the car parking space here could be helpful.

**A key is to address bad parking. Felt that the moving out of the planter into the space outside the Alms House is positive feature. This limits the opportunity for people to park in this area inappropriately.**

**Noted how we need to have a wider publicity campaign about anti-social parking and anti-social speeding including cycling. One way would be to use the children’s paintings that we have already got as part of community engagement** done by Sharon / Barbara. Can we get these reproduced and put up around the town? Discussed road markings more to be able to make people

aware of what is required in terms of areas that they can park etc. Christy advised that we do not do this. Try to move away from road markings as much as possible.

**3.22 Have a publicity campaign about anti-social parking and anti-social speeding including cycling. Use the children's paintings that we have already got as part of community engagement.**

**Zone 4 (St Mary's Street and Cheddar Road and all streets leading into these roads and routeways leading East out of Axbridge)**

Discussed the Post Office and Post Office vans parking along here. **Why can't Post Office vans use the parking area that they have available by the Post Office? These vans parking here are a danger to the traffic passing through.**

**Noted that the proposal for block paving/pedestrianised zone needs to go up St Mary's Street. As is proposed for High Street, West Street and Moorland Street.**

**1. Make St Mary Street through design into a pedestrian priority zone.**

Noted in looking back that the view of the Square is straight through. **We need to review how to address this view of the road as you come down St Mary's Street** and view the straight through 'race track' view.

Noted that people come down this route to get their children to and from school. People often drive from different parts of Axbridge to take their children to school. Kelly said we **need to do more to encourage people to walk to school**. Maybe use "Park and stride". Increasing the number of people using the 'walking bus'. Noted that we already have a walking bus by the town car park / Meadow Street car park. This is used often very well, sometimes not so well. How can we **promote the use of walking bus?** Kelly noted idea of a 5 minute walk zone. This is an exercise that you do with children to see how far you can walk in 5 minutes and 10 minutes. As it is only 5 or 10 minutes, why don't people walk?

**2. Review options for a campaign to promote walking.**

Suggested having **pinch-points/gateways going into the old street at the top of St Mary's Street and/or outside the Pennings**. This would ensure that there is demarcation of people entering the small cramped roads. A key point is if there are to be pinchpoints just beyond St Mary's Street that we need to make sure that there is traffic calming beyond this up Jubilee up Cheddar Road. We don't want car drivers to feel that they can just speed up coming out of here.

**4.3 Have pinch-points/gateways going into the old street at the top of St Mary's Street and/or outside the Pennings.**

Noted the single yellow line going up from the Georgian House. Why single yellow? Why can cars park here all day? **Why not extend the parking zone up towards Chestnut?** Maybe need drop off point for Penning.

**4.4 Extend on street parking up towards Chestnut Road turning on Jubilee Road.**

Discussed the car parking on both sides on **Cheddar Road up from Chestnut Road**. **Noted that there have been 2 accidents in the last 6 months. Suggest review having parking only on one side.** However, noted that this would entail losing parking spaces in the town. Others in the group felt that if people drove slower then the implications of accidents and the likelihood of accidents would be lessened. Key is to address excessive speeds.

**5. Review the both sides of the road parking on Cheddar Road up from Chestnut Road.**

Feeling that the junction at Chestnut is too wide. This encourages cars to go round the corner too fast. Closing this junction would also provide more on street parking. However, noted that this wide area is a turning point for lorries who come into Axbridge inappropriately and by mistake.

Walked to the top of Chestnut and road leading to Chestnut Avenue. Noted proposal from the church for some parking spaces at the end of the road here next to the church. Proposal is that some spaces will

be for church users (in particular for funerals and weddings) and other spaces for residents/public use. Noted that this also coincides with improved access being developed into the church for disabled people etc.

## **6. Review option of car parking spaces on Chestnut Avenue by the church.**

Graham Cable local resident stopped in his van at this point and enquired about what we were looking at. Pete advised him and he said that he and others in Chestnut Avenue would object to parking being allocated to others in Axbridge. Any parking needs to make allowance for parking for residents of that road.

Noted the **green space on Chestnut Avenue above Cheddar Road. This could be used for more off road parking.**

Noted that for pedestrians **crossing the road by Orchard Road is felt to be dangerous.** The car parking and the speed of cars through this space means that people cannot safely observe and cross the road safely. One suggestion for this area is to have cars parked only on one side of the road. However, as discussed earlier, this would not necessarily be viewed as a positive proposal.

Noted that Cheddar Road and Jubilee Road are not as narrow as the older streets in Axbridge. However, cars do go too fast on this road. However, can we limit the speed here?

**Can a speed camera be put on the road?** Noted that the mobile speed camera that has been there previously indicates that over 60% of cars are speeding. The cars parked on the road do have the effect of reducing speeds of the vehicles. If we could find ways of limiting the speed of traffic on Cheddar Road then maybe the parking area here would be less of an issue?

Christy said that we could look to **rumble strip to encourage cars to slow down.**

## **7. Install (trial) rumble strips on road on Cheddar Road.**

Also suggested that we **have pinch-point/gateway feature just before the junction at the far end of Cheddar Road – say 50 yards down from the A371.** This would change the culture and feel of cars entering into this part of Axbridge.

### **4.8 Have pinch-point/gateway feature just before the junction at the far end of Cheddar Road – say 50 yards down from the A371.**

We went up and looked at the Furlong Car Park. What **about extending parking in this area?** We believe that this area belongs to the church but it is controlled by the Town Council. Suggested that it would be a good idea to think about increasing this parking area and extending parking to local residents. However, what about football/sports event parking on Saturdays/Sundays? However, feeling is that we can't dedicate parking just for this. Also noted that this would be **a good drop off point for the school. Maybe for an additional walking bus or as an alternative walking bus to existing one?**

## **9. Consider using The Furlong Car Park as an area for car parking throughout the week.**

One suggestion for the whole of Axbridge is to have **'scarecrow policemen' with speed cameras throughout Axbridge. We could have a competition.** And also thinking of better signage – including no large vehicles except access.

### **4.10 Have a 'scarecrow policemen' competition.**

**4.11 Christy said that the key is that we need to develop an overall long term goal. Christie feels that within 6-12 months we need to develop a robust plan out of this that will indicate short-term, medium-term and long-term goals. Christy said that the plan should be to progress on all 3 at the same time. Short term plan would be to take small steps.**

## **Concluding comments.**

Christy Acton, Project Manager at Living Streets said: *“It was fantastic to join with people in Axbridge on a Street Route Audit and to see how enthusiastic they are about making the local area a better place for walking. Lots of positive work has already been undertaken in Axbridge in encouraging people to walk more but by introducing further measures to make the area feel safe and attractive we can grow the feelings of community and get even more people using two feet rather than four wheels”.*

Peter Harding Chairman of Axbridge Action Group said: *“Various community engagement activities including the first Focus Group meeting and the Street Audit have discovered that the majority of people are enjoying the changes that are currently being trialled in the Square. The changes have engendered just the sort of debate we were hoping for. The ideas and suggestions we have gathered are wide reaching and include all parts of Axbridge. Come along to the Town Hall on the evening of 9th November and see what we’ve found out!”*

**And finally a big BIG thank to Christy and Kelly from Living Streets for their invaluable assistance and participation. Chirsty and Kelly and Living Streets gave Axbridge their time for free and we are truly grateful.**

**Thank you to The Oakhouse, Barbara and The Alms House for supplying lovely food and refreshments throughout the day.**

**Thank you to Barbara, Sharon and George for helping me with the setting up and following through with the days’ activities. It all worked really well! Also thanks to Gabby for doing the initial typing up of the words for the Street Audit report.**

**And – most of all – thank you to everyone who took part. For your participation, commitment and enthusiasm and willingness to go along with the day! All of your contributing statements will be taken on board and help to guide the way forward for making the Streets of Axbridge a better place for people and all of us in our community!**

**Pete Harding - December 15  
APPENDIX**

### **Summary of ideas and proposals that came out of the Streets of Axbridge Street Audit from 8.10.15**

#### **Zone 1 – High Street, West Street, Townsend, Hillside and routes leading West and North out of Axbridge.**

1. Review how we can make High Street and West Street into being more for pedestrians rather than vehicles.
- 1.2 Review option of one way for traffic up High Street/West Street and then one way down Houlgate Way.
- 1.3 Direct traffic coming in from west side of town to go down Houlgate Way instead of West Street.
- 1.4 Review options of more on street parking on West Street and High Street?
- 1.5 Speed limit on A371 below Hillside should be 40 miles ph (or even 30 miles ph)
- 1.6 Create pedestrian refuge in middle of A371 road at bottom of Hillside Road.
- 1.7 Review option of developing car parking on the “wasteland” next to the Youth Club
- 1.8 Explore how we can establish pathway through the middle of the town between Town Car Park and West Street.
- 1.9 Long term plan – pave over all of the road and existing pavement going up High Street and West Street combined with locating quality street furniture throughout.
- 1.10 Do a survey of drivers and riders vehicles passing through High Street and West Street (and maybe for other parts of Axbridge).

- 1.11 Create gateway/pinch point at entrance into top of West Street.
- 1.12 Support the creation of a 'Coffin Lane' pathway going up/down Croos Lane – combine with refuge crossing on A38.
- 1.13 Trial the installation of some rumble strips (rumble strips that could be removed subsequently if required after a trial) and test out positioning of street furniture and look at a 'gateway' proposal.

Zone 2 - Houlgate Way, Meadow Street, Moorland Street and all streets into these streets and routeways leading South out of Axbridge

- 2.1 Create a different road surface for all of this junction area including going down the top part of Houlgate Way and West Street.
- 2.2 Review different options for car parking at top of Houlgate Way.
- 2.3 Review option for more on street parking along Houlgate Way
- 2.4 Install (trial) sleeping policeman or rumble strips on Houlgate Way.
- 2.5 Review options of establishing car parking on south/west side of Houlgate Way.
- 2.6 Review option of removing some of the double yellow lines and using others 'unused areas' on Houlgate Way/Old Church Road to allow for more on street parking.
- 2.7 Bottom of Old Church Road school murals on wall/fence to "go slow".
- 2.8 Create a 10mph zone around the school.
- 2.9 Parking immediately on the corner of Moor Green coming down from Moorland to be restricted.
- 2.10 Top of Moorland Street – entering Square – to be paved and a different coloured road surface.

Zone 3 (the Square and route-ways leading into and out of it)

- 3.1 Change the roadway out from by the Oak House to come out instead a further 6/8 feet (1 parking bay) over to the west.
- 2. For 10 years time we want see less parking in the Square. More space for people to gather.  
We have alternative parking elsewhere for residents and visitors.
- 3.3 We should have a have a planning session for The Square using a map and little cars, tables, planters etc – as shapes to play around with.
- 3.4 Close off road exit by Oak House and create a 'hammer head' turning space down from the church steps.
- 3.4 Remove the 3 existing parking spaces by The Flower Shop.
- 3.6 Make the parking space outside – to the left – of the Co-Op as roadway/planter space.
- 3.7 Reduce the parking limit time in the Square to 20 minutes or 30 minutes.
- 3.8 Make Moorland Street car park 3 hours time limit.
- 3.9 Improve the signage that there is available free parking in Moorland Street and Meadow Street. Use Chemist wall maybe?
- 3.10 Review over all options for parking throughout Axbridge.
- 3.11 Do further additional Phase Two Trials in the Square – and incorporating trials in other parts of Axbridge – to test out options.
- 3.12 Make road at top of Square – by flower shop as access and residents only.
- 3.13 Maintain the existing layout of zones of seating in the Square as introduced in The Trial.  
OR
- 3.14 Concentrate the seating and pedestrian area in one big block outside of the flower shop and transfer the seating by the signpost back into car parking.
- 3.15 Review the type of plants in the big planters.
- 3.16 Maintain the seating outside the Oak House

- 3.17 Review the design of the cycle racks.
- 3.18 Review option of 'pushing the centre of the Square out'. Short term put planters in middle in front of existing benches. Long term consider pushing the car parking out more into the middle of the Square.
- 3.19 Create different colour paving/road at bottom of High Street.
- 3.20 Maintain the existing seating/pedestrian space outside of the Alms House.
- 3.21 Furniture in community areas are assigned by having a common feature – a "common design feature".

Zone 4 (St Mary's Street and Cheddar Road and all streets leading into these roads and routeways leading East out of Axbridge)

- 4.1 Make St Mary Street through design into a pedestrian priority zone.
- 4.2 Review options for a campaign to promote walking.
- 4.3 Have pinchpoints/gateways going into the old street at the top of St Mary's Street and/or outside the Pennings.
- 4.4 Extend on street parking up towards chestnut turning on Jubilee Road.
- 4.5 Review both sides of the road parking on Cheddar Road up from Chestnut Road
- 4.6 Review option of car parking spaces on Chestnut Avenue by the church.
- 4.7 Install (trial) rumble strips on road on Cheddar Road.
- 4.8 Have pinch-point/gateway feature just before the junction at the far end of Cheddar Road – say 50 yards down from the A371.
- 4.9 Consider using The Furlong Car Park as an area for car parking throughout the week.
- 4.10 Have a 'scarecrow policemen' competition.
- 4.11 Christy said that the key is that we need to develop an overall long term goal. Christie feels that within 6-12 months we need to develop a robust plan out of this that will indicate short-term, medium-term and long-term goals. Christy said that the plan should be to progress on all 3 at the same time. Short term plan would be to take small steps.

Overarching ideas

- Do a survey of drivers and riders vehicles passing through High Street and West Street (and maybe for other parts of Axbridge).
- We should have a have a planning session for The Square using a map and little cars, tables, planters etc – as shapes to play around with.
- Review over all options for parking throughout Axbridge.
- Do further additional Phase Two Trials in the Square – and incorporating trials in other parts of Axbridge – to test out options.
- Have a publicity campaign about anti-social parking and anti-social speeding including cycling. Use the children's paintings that we have already got as part of community engagement.
- Review options for a campaign to promote walking.



- Have a 'scarecrow policemen' competition.
- Christy said that the key is that we need to develop an overall long term goal. Christie feels that within 6-12 months we need to develop a robust plan out of this that will indicate short-term, medium-term and long-term goals. Christy said that the plan should be to progress on all 3 at the same time. Short term plan would be to take small steps.