



## Easingwold Town Council

### Town Centre Footpaths Scheme



### - Public Consultation - Easingwold Town Centre Footpaths Scheme

In its 2019 vision, *Easingwold and its Future*, Easingwold Town Council (ETC) talked about the physical infrastructure of Easingwold as follows:

- *With regard to Physical Easingwold the Council wishes to influence and manage through its policies and activities the appearance and nature of the town right from the bypass and all routes into the town until its focal point in the marketplace. This should reflect our town's status as a market town and local service centre...*
- *ETC views the whole Town Centre and especially the Market Place to be a 'jewel in the crown' of the community. The Council is keen to conserve this area, its feel and visual impact at a high level to retain its overall attractiveness...*
- *To retain its inherent attractiveness and importance, the Council will invest considerable effort in its support of the town centre, its infrastructure, and its key assets. It will continue with its progressive programmes of planting; grass, bush, and tree care; line renewal; public toilets and facilities; markets; traffic management and car parking etc...*
- *The cobbles are an attractive town feature the Council plans to retain. However, the way they are currently installed causes significant inconvenience and safety issues for foot traffic as well as excessive maintenance. The Council will seek to implement a progressive programme where cobbles are fixed in such a way that they retain their essential attractiveness, whilst becoming much more practical and suitable for modern life...*
- *Through and around them, ETC will invest in completing a set of flat footpaths for the town centre to enhance accessibility and mobility.*

During recent years it has become clear that finding funds or grants which might enable the relaying on a stronger foundation all the town centre cobbles was unlikely to be achieved. However, it was believed that creating some new pieces of footpath in the town centre and improving the existing ones might be possible and affordable. So ETC decided to make this work to improve the accessibility and safety of the marketplace its number one priority.

Design work on the Town Centre Footpaths Scheme has continued with the assistance of Local Transport Projects Ltd, Trinity Lane, Beverley (Registered Highway Engineers) in discussion with local experts, Forest of Galtres Society, Hambleton District Council's Planning and Conservation Offices and the North Yorkshire County Council's Highways team. This has yielded a set of proposals, which ETC believe:

- Will substantially improve the safety and accessibility of Easingwold town centre and will stop people needing to walk on either the road or the cobbles to circulate the main town square
- Are in keeping with the ambience of the town centre, having been specified to the same standard as the existing paths running through the cobbles behind the Butter Cross
- Are technically feasible and professionally designed
- May be affordable via grant funding; although working in stages may be needed as funds arise.

These proposals are now being presented for public consultation and comments. These proposals consist of three separate elements as can be seen on the design plans prepared by Local Transport Projects accompanying this document.

They are:

- 1. Four new pieces of footpath to give access in places currently forcing pedestrians to walk either on cobbles or the road, and to allow an easier main road crossing in the middle of the Marketplace...**
  - a. From the Hunters Estate Agency across the front of the George Hotel to the Boots Pharmacy. This will be on land largely owned by the George Hotel and partly by ETC. This will not affect the existing parking;
  - b. From the existing footpath behind the Butter Cross through the cobbles across the front of Tea-Hee!, Emsley Mavor and the Fika Room to the main road where an uncontrolled crossing point allows access to the footpath in the front of the York Public House;
  - c. A side branch from new path (b) above to meet the existing footpath alongside the Fika Room to Harrowells Solicitors. This is all (b + c) on land under the control of ETC and is avoiding specifically patterned areas in the cobbles of conservation value. This will cause vehicles parking in the area to move sideways to avoid the new footpath in places;
  - d. From the side of the Post Office through the cobbles across the front of Costa (and around its front entrance slope), alongside the grassed area and then following the curb edge past the Olive Branch and Angel Public House to meet the existing footpath at the bottom of Spring Street. This all on land under the control of ETC; and will likely reduce potential parking opportunities for up to a maximum of four vehicles.
  
- 2. Some refurbishments to existing footpaths at the Marketplace – Chapel Street Corner...**
  - a. Strengthening to the foundation of and the resurfacing of the footpath on the corner in front of the Boots Pharmacy where the passage of heavy vehicles has damaged it; and similar works at the opposite corner in front of the Galtres Centre main entrance;
  - b. A relaying of the drainage channel on the edge of the green on the opposite corner to stop it flooding in bad weather;
  - c. Similar works to a. above on the existing footpath through the bus stop on the Butter Cross side of the road
  
- 3. Two existing footpath upgrades...**
  - a. Upgrading the footpath that runs between Smith's Printers, Stephenson's Estate Agents, past Hearts and across the main car park to the road opposite the Commercial Public House. This will strengthen the foundation to prevent the damage being caused by vehicular use, but will keep the existing design with sets but infill with York Stone replacing the concrete pavers
  - b. Upgrading the similar footpath that runs alongside Smith's Printers to the Public Toilets and bus stop once again leaving in place the existing sets but replacing the concrete pavers with York Stone as above.

ETC is planning to use a combination of grant funding, some CIL monies it has received, and some reserves to help us complete these works. However, ETC may not have enough funds to complete the scheme in one go. Should that be the case, then funding the three new pieces of footpath would be given priority; followed by the refurbishment elements; and finally, if funds remain, the upgrades will be carried out.

Easingwold Town Council are now holding a public consultation on these proposals and would be grateful to receive your comments and thoughts. Please let us know what you think.