

# Improving our local heritage

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The classifications of '*Improving our Local Heritage*' and '*Improving local transport, parking and traffic*' contained the general aim of making a major impact on the attraction of the town centre by a range of improvements to the fabric, circulation and landscape. This was recognised by SWRDA which offered a grant to enable consultants to be appointed for a strategic study of this area of the town. DCT set up a working group early in 2006 to draft a brief from the two outlines below, (H1) and (H2), for consultants, and approval was received with some supplementary funding in December 2006. Consultants *yellow book Ltd* of Edinburgh were appointed in February and carried out a public consultation on the Lawn on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Their report will lead to a public presentation early in 2008.

The initial priorities, expressed in the Strategic Plan, were:

**(H1) *Improving The Lawn and Manor Gardens, along with public parks and open spaces (DCT Action)***

## **Purpose of the project**

**To enhance the benefits to residents and visitors of these important spaces in Dawlish by improving the range of uses they can accommodate, their design, landscaping, management, access, safety, the facilities they contain and the events they host.**

DCT consultants, *yellow book Ltd*, will recommend a strategy for the public parks in central Dawlish to guide more detailed planting and management plans.

DCT will work with Teignbridge District Council and Dawlish Town Council to prepare a *Design and Management Strategy* to guide the future of each of the gardens/ parks. The strategy should include a survey of each garden or park, to show the location and condition of trees, shrubs and other planting, boundaries, rights of way, furniture, lighting and hard landscape detail together with a review of the uses for each garden/park, access arrangements for people of all abilities, maintenance, and management of activities.

Proposals for the *Lawn and Manor Gardens* may incorporate a performance stage, a garden café, restoration of the historic planted areas, the Brook Learning Zone (see H7), seating and hard landscaping where safe routes must be provided, with lighting, litter, dog bins and signage considered.

*Champion: Dawlish Community Trust*

**(H2) *Town centre enhancement of the Strand (DCT Action)***

## **Purpose of the project**

**To increase the turnover, footfall and employment in Dawlish town centre by making the Strand safer and more attractive to shoppers and visitors.**

From the plan and report being prepared by consultants, yellow book ltd, DCT will work with Devon County Council, Dawlish Town Council, Teignbridge District Council and local traders to design and implement measures to reduce congestion, improve traffic flow and alleviate the parking problems along the Strand making it safer for vehicles and pedestrians alike. The consultants' brief included looking at the possibility of the pavements being widened to make it safer for pedestrians, and parking being limited to the 'shop' side of the Strand, thus reducing congestion and lessening the traffic blockages. Similarly, they are to report on measures to keep speeds manageable without being detrimental to public transport.

*Champion: Dawlish Community Trust*

*Funding (H1)+(H2): South West Regional Development Agency, Teignbridge District Council, Devon County Council*

### ***(H3) Improve the range of shopping in Dawlish town centre (Support)***

#### **Purpose of the project**

**To increase the footfall and turnover in the shops and other services in Dawlish town centre in order to increase investment and employment in the town**

DCT will support Dawlish Chamber of Trade and Teignbridge District Council's efforts to work with existing traders to reverse the trend of the last few years in Dawlish town centre, where a number of businesses have closed, leaving some essential shopping without competition. These include two butchers, a baker, two greengrocers, and a number of other small businesses. Two major banks have closed branches in the town. New traders will be encouraged to set up in the town and existing traders to expand their offer, which will increase the number and variety of shops and other services. Local goods and services will be promoted. The shopping environment will be more attractive by reducing congestion and parking problems and by promoting the town's attractions. This will be assisted by the development of new conservation area guidelines to guide the appearance of premises and enhance the quality of the area's environment, thus making it more attractive to shoppers and to new businesses. Care will be taken to ensure new businesses will not be detrimental to existing traders.

*Champion: Teignbridge District Council, Dawlish Chamber of Trade*

### ***(H4) Develop and implement the Dawlish Townscape Conservation Scheme (Support)***

#### **Purpose of the project**

**To increase the economic benefits of tourism in the town by attracting additional visitors and by encouraging local residents to use the town centre for the majority of their shopping needs by improving the town centre environment**

Public consultation has consistently raised concerns about the poor appearance of residential and commercial properties in Dawlish town centre. Despite much of the centre being designated a conservation area, there are no guidelines available for use by the

public or planning authorities to aid the coordination of appearance of buildings, including listed properties that surround public areas. DCT supports Teignbridge District Council's intention to work with Dawlish Town Council, English Heritage and local traders to develop and promote *Dawlish Townscape Conservation Scheme* to regulate the appearance of the buildings and of the general environment. The *Dawlish Townscape Conservation Scheme* will allow Teignbridge to encourage a degree of co-ordination in appearance of the buildings within the conservation area, in particular those surrounding the Lawn and Tuck's Plot. The *Dawlish Townscape Conservation Scheme* should lead to an improved visual environment for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. The work will include a survey of the conservation area, public consultation and the development of a grant regime which will provide financial support to owners who wish to take action to comply with the Conservation Scheme.

Teignbridge are due to reveal their conservation area character assessment early in 2008, for public consultation.

*Champion: Teignbridge District Council*

#### ***(H5) Creation of a Dawlish heritage centre (DCT Action)***

##### **Purpose of the project**

**To increase the economic benefits of tourism to the local economy by attracting more visitors throughout the year and to provide residents, especially the young, with a better understanding of the heritage of the town and area**

DCT will take the lead in this project and will seek finance to work with Teignbridge District Council and Dawlish Town Council, Dawlish Museum Society and the Dawlish Local History Group to commission a feasibility study into the likely level of demand for a new all-year-round Heritage centre in Dawlish. The study will establish the likely exhibits that will be available, the amount of accommodation that is required, possible locations for the new centre, the likely capital and revenue costs, management arrangements and the possibility of setting up a web cam link with the facility at Dawlish Warren. The study will also identify and review the performance of similar facilities in the south-west.

*Champion: DCT*

#### ***(H6) Develop heritage trail (DCT Action)***

##### **Purpose of the project**

**To increase the economic benefits of tourism to the local economy by attracting more visitors and to provide residents, especially the young, with a better understanding of the heritage of the town and area**

DCT attracted Heritage Lottery Fund to grant an award to install history boards along the coast path, between Coryton Cove and Dawlish Warren with seven boards at six locations, giving a commentary on the arrival of the railway and its impact on this coast. It was opened in March 2007 and is accompanied by leaflets from Tourist Information Centres.

As a further step, DCT will seek finance to work with Teignbridge District Council, Dawlish Town Council, Dawlish Museum Society and the Dawlish Local History Group to prepare a further installation for a new Heritage Trail in Dawlish. An initial study will establish the likely buildings, artefacts that might be included in the trail which will include local historical and heritage sites, the alignment of the trail, any land ownership and access issues and the likely capital and revenue costs and management arrangements. This will be related to signage and information boards.

*Champion: DCT*

*Funding: Heritage Lottery Fund*

**(H7) Develop environmental activities - the 'Brook Learning Zone' (Support)**

**Purpose of the project**

**To increase the benefits of tourism to the local economy by increasing visitor footfall through adding to the attractions available in Dawlish and to foster young people's interest in caring for their environment**

DCT instructed *yellow book Ltd* to include this proposal in their plan for central Dawlish. Dawlish Town Council propose to renew the existing facilities for waterfowl breeding and DCT seeks a broader scope to establish a base for work with local environmental groups and schools to develop a visitor attraction & educational resource geared to all age groups on and around the Brook. The resource will focus on learning about the birds, their feeding habits, genetics, breeding, and identifying other types of wildlife and their habitats.

*Champion: Dawlish Town Council*



**(H8) Promote Dawlish Museum (Support)**

**Purpose of the project**

**To promote an understanding among residents - particularly young people - and visitors of the history and heritage of the Dawlish area**

DCT supports the efforts of Dawlish Museum Society to promote activities and events at the Dawlish Museum with historical/heritage and educational appeal. The Museum will also organise further educational school visits.

*Champion: Dawlish Museum Society*

**(H9) Restoration of the water wheel and leat (Support)**

**Purpose of the project**

**To attract additional shoppers and visitors to Dawlish town centre by improving its environment and adding to its attractions.**

DCT supports the work of Dawlish Conservation Trust to restore the water wheel and leat.

*Champion: Dawlish Conservation Trust*

**(H10) Refurbish Dawlish railway station and surrounding area (Support)**

**Purpose of the project**

**To increase the economic benefits of tourism in the town by refurbishing Dawlish Railway Station thus improving facilities for visitors coming to the town by rail and enhancing the public's enjoyment and use of the rail service – especially those members of the public who are disabled.**

The new franchise to First Great Western has brought improvements to the station premises, with the notable exception of the foot overbridge. The buildings have been uniformly painted, a new ramp access and approach pavement constructed and a ticket machine installed.

The poor condition of parts of Dawlish Railway Station was a deterrent to visitors and local travellers. DCT supports the efforts of 'Friends of Dawlish Railway Station' to work with First Great Western to improve planting on the station and surroundings, and to enhance the waiting room. A continual effort is needed to maintain the standard set.

Network Rail is responsible for repair of the viaduct, railings, surrounding structures and footbridge (Network Rail). The rusty and dangerous iron railings along Marine Parade have been replaced with new fencing, with the loss of the strong character of the cast iron version. The viaduct and the supporting brick and stone piers deserve early treatment to improve the approach from town to sea-front. The masonry piers to viaduct require cleaning, access to the seaward platform and waiting rooms must be improved, and better lighting installed. The use of vacant rooms within the station building should be encouraged.

*Champion: Network Rail, First Great Western*