

# West Bridgford Commissioners' Report

## Executive Summary

November 2017





This report summarises the work of the three Independent Commissioners, appointed by the West Bridgford Growth Board, to undertake a consultation exercise to inform plans for the economic development of the centre of West Bridgford. The proposals reflect stakeholders' opinions on how to enhance and develop Central Avenue, Tudor Square and Gordon Road.

Four months of activity, including questionnaires, interviews, presentations and consultation, captured responses from over 450 individuals as well as a wide range of community and stakeholder groups. The group sessions included consulting with over 150 young people from schools and groups.

As well as direct insights from residents and other stakeholders, the Commissioners had access to an extensive range of secondary reports and material containing examples of 'best' practice for high street development throughout the UK and Europe. These have proved to be a valuable reference point for shaping recommendations for West Bridgford.

## Six themes emerge from the findings

### Theme 1: Accessibility.

This includes references to parking, all forms of transport (including cycling), traffic flow, pedestrianisation, mobility and all forms of digital activity including WiFi access

### Theme 2: Balance And Blend.

This refers to views on the current mix of retailers and leisure facilities within the catchment area

### Theme 3: Local And Level.

This includes views on the importance of local community initiatives and support for independent traders

### Theme 4: Green Space.

This includes comments about the importance and use of green space, trees and greenery

### Theme 5: Town Centre Co-ordination.

This reflects views about policies for street cleaning, crime, traffic offenders, homelessness and security

### Theme 6: Strategic Considerations.

Views on 'branding', investment, planning and the use of land and leadership options, the role of the strategic plan and co-ordinated actions including marketing, communications and information sharing

## Recommendations

*(full details are contained in the main report)*

### Plan and Ambitions

- A detailed Plan to be managed by the West Bridgford Growth Board to ensure key actions and ambitions are delivered

### Brand identity and vision to be developed and articulated

- Suggestion to name this 'The West Bridgford Way' (WBW) and develop it through structured consultation with all stakeholders. The Brand to build on the history, culture and heritage of WB. It should highlight uniqueness and identity and be reinforced and connected to the Heritage trail (historical assets) and cycle routes
- Production of a physical map of the 'West Bridgford Way' streetscape connected to cycle route and 'historical' landmarks

- A further series of stakeholder consultation events which gives citizens the opportunity to get involved in aspects of the WBW
- Appoint professional window dresser for improving shop fronts to be co-ordinated with existing grant management

**Improve digital capability** to reinforce the brand, the WBW. This is likely to involve and build on the expertise within the community and best practice elsewhere.

- This might include; further developing the library into a knowledge hub, appointing a Digital manager, Joining the WDYT campaign
- Audit current digital capability
- Develop a town APP

### Take steps to develop an appropriate Retail Mix

- Consider incentives, innovations and support to encourage more Independents and local businesses to locate in West Bridgford
- Prioritise the opportunity for high quality clothing/ fashion retail tenants to locate in West Bridgford
- RBC engage with Landlords to secure more independent businesses
- RBC to review Business Rates in light of findings
- Consider innovations and support to encourage more Independents and local businesses to locate in WB. This is a clear priority for many residents and visitors and could build on the rich talent for local craft if incentives were made available
- Coordinate and review local charity donations, enable residents to donate to charity but aim to restrict the number of charity shops (*e.g. by having a charity barn*)



### Enhance the physical environment and access

- Agree plan to deliver adopted options for Tudor Square
- Consider potential for further tree planting and greening in the centre
- Improve traffic and pedestrian flow through Tudor Square
- Consider greening to soften the appearance of some of the unsightly buildings
- Introduce and trial a range of flexible parking schemes
- Review parking with the aim of enhancing the number of spaces
- Pedestrianise Central Avenue for summer-based events at weekends only
- Secure electric / low-emission buses
- Improve cycling routes, provide more secure cycling storage facilities
- Review road widening schemes to improve access
- Create retail space by using land or buildings under-utilised on Bridgford Road and Gordon Road

### General Management

- Provide improved management and co-ordination to the town centre
- Address concerns over litter and dog mess
- ANPR technology or alternative to stop inappropriate car usage on Central Avenue



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## Summary

The Commissioners are confident that this report remains evidence-based as drawn from the extensive primary and secondary research and findings.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed, for the many ideas and suggestions proposed and to the support given by many people throughout the Commission's existence.

We saw at first-hand what a great place West Bridgford is. We caught the spirit and ambitions of local people who simply want to ensure it remains a nice, friendly place that continues to enhance its retail and leisure offer through a more integrated and future-proofed approach.

Finally, the spirit of the area was captured in one of your responses:

*'A laughter session on a Saturday morning on the croquet lawn, where people just go and laugh, I'll lead it'*

...we might see you there.

The Commissioners detailed report can be found on [rushcliffe.gov.uk/wbcommissioners](http://rushcliffe.gov.uk/wbcommissioners). Paper copies are also available in the Library and the Customer Contact Centre.

If you have any comments to make on the report and its findings please send them to [consultation@rushcliffe.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@rushcliffe.gov.uk) or hand your comments into the Library or Customer Contact Centre.

