

Buxton Town Team

Ideas and Vision Group

NOTES of the workshop considering the Public Realm on 9th August 2012

The main issues considered were:

- Cleanliness of the streets, especially the pavements;
- Control of vehicle movements in Spring Gardens pedestrian zone;
- Pedestrian flow across the A515 between Spring Gardens and The Crescent;
- Performance and Activity Areas to bring life to the street and encourage "Exploration".

Discussion strayed into: Getting around (e.g. cycle hire) and way finding.

Cleanliness of streets Litter was still to be found in places (an example was Jordan's Walk) despite the efforts of council staff to pick it up. No action was proposed during the workshop but perhaps this should be addressed by education, peer group pressure and civic pride so that litter is not dropped. Volunteer litter pickers were also suggested.

It was questioned whether street sweeping machines were effective in all areas because roadside trees and parked cars obstructed them. Manual brushing or leaf blowers might be better in some areas.

Vehicles in Spring Gardens: Barriers or other enforcement measures were needed to prevent unauthorised vehicles entering the pedestrian area.

In general the other proposals within the Vision Buxton Community Statement on Spring Gardens were endorsed. The funding might come from any development in the town including any on the former Nestlé site.

Pedestrian flow across the A515: Currently the main road, The Quadrant and Terrace Road, was a significant barrier to pedestrian movement between the shopping area along Spring Gardens and the tourism/arts/historical quarter round The Crescent, Opera House and Pavilion Gardens. It was suggested that this could be remedied by creating a "Shared space" where kerbs are removed and vehicles have to pick their way through without priority over pedestrians. This area could extend from the roundabout at the bottom of the Palace Grounds to Potters' shop. The area between The Slopes and Cavendish Arcade could be fully pedestrianised, with vehicle access to The Crescent from the other end.

If this area proved successful, the idea of shared space might be extended to the Market Place and adjacent areas.

To take this forward, Janet and Mike were to see if Richard Silson would support this with his expertise.

Performance Areas: This idea was established from both the Community Statement on Spring Gardens and the Portas Bid. It was seen as something which could be implemented with minimal cost. A basic shelter was required to protect performers from the Buxton weather at each identified location. The space under this could then be made available to performers, or other users, if booked in advance.

Selected spots were (a) Spring Gardens at the junction with Wye Street, (b) Turners Memorial area at the bottom of The Slopes, (c) somewhere high on The Slopes to encourage pedestrians up towards Higher Buxton and (d) one or two on The Market Place.

Issues around licensing (talk to Paul Armstrong), booking and insurance all need to be worked out in detail.

It was considered that much greater use of The Slopes, as a through route and as a leisure facility, could be promoted by small "Attractions" like:

- coffee and food stalls
- covered sitting areas
- activities for children and adults (like those at the Schonbrunn Palace in Vienna)
- Interpretation boards for both the weather station and the view of the historic town.

Getting Around: As part of the discussion, we mentioned the importance of adequate signposting. The temporary provision should be considered as the council scheme is going to take a long time to be completed.

We thought that hire facilities for bicycles and electric bikes might be extended to include small electric cars for those who needed to use of a car on an occasional basis. This facility might be based on the Nestlé site.