

Date: 10 November 2020
Author: Shepton Mallet Town Council
Contact: tara.jessop@sheptonmallet-tc.gov.uk
Embargoed until 01am Thursday 12 November

START

Shepton Mallet Town Centre to be Resurfaced in Spring 2021

Pedestrianised area from north entrance of Town Street to Market Place to receive modern new surface in pivotal moment for Shepton Mallet town centre.

Following ongoing discussions between Somerset County Council and Shepton Mallet Town Council, the green light has been given to a resurfacing proposal for the Market Place and Town Street, due to begin in Spring 2021. The proposal, agreed at a town council meeting in October 2020, consists in replacing the existing paving with a modern resin surface in keeping with the area's heritage. This ambitious project marks a pivotal moment for the town, one of a number of projects underway aimed at regenerating the town centre. The project is jointly funded by Somerset County Council, Mendip District Council (via a \$106 payment) and Shepton Mallet Town Council and will be managed by the county council. The works are provisionally expected to begin in February 2021, subject to the evolution of restrictions in place due to the coronavirus pandemic, and last for approximately 3 months.

This project is a crucial part of the town council's commitment to improving the appearance and experience of Shepton Mallet's town centre. This is one of a number of projects contributing to the regeneration of the town centre, including the refurbishment of the library (also on Market Place) and the implementation of a new wayfaring signage system for the town centre. The resurfacing project is one of the major commitments made by the council in its newly adopted Town Plan 'Investing in Shepton's Future', as part of a wider commitment to investing in your town. The town council is optimistic that this transformation of the town centre will boost civic pride, encourage footfall to the town centre and improve the area's suitability for public events and markets. The Town Clerk, Charlotte Starkie, said: "This has been an aspiration of the town council for several years and we are excited that we now have the resources, both staff and funds, to take this forward. We thank residents for their patience in waiting for the scheme to be delivered, and really hope that it brings added benefits to the town, in addition to making the area safer, cleaner and visually more attractive".

The area to be resurfaced extends from the north entrance of Town Street, on the corner with Waterloo Road, to Victorian water fountain. The use of modern resin surfacing is understood to present a number of advantages, including:

- Suitable for both pedestrian use and regular road traffic use.
- Low risk of tripping owing to it being one smooth, continuous surface.
- Available in a range of colours which can be matched to surrounding buildings.

- Low-maintenance in terms of vegetation control as no gaps for weeds to grow through.

The South West Heritage Fund has been consulted on the proposal, which has been carefully considered in terms of its compatibility with the local heritage. The Market Place is home to Shepton Mallet's iconic market cross, as well as a Victorian water fountain and The Shambles – a remnant of the Medieval market stalls which one covered the Market Place.

Further information will be made available in the coming months via the town council website, and through social media and the local media. The town council will be communicating directly with stakeholders over the coming months, in particular residents and local business owners. Anyone with anyone immediate questions should contact the town council at info@sheptonmallet-tc.gov.uk

END