



## **Frome Chamber Town Centre Manifesto 2015**

### **Things that should be easy**

#### **1. Better Signs to Car Parks**

We want road signs that direct visitors to the car park that suits them quickly and easily. That will keep visitors happy and reduce congestion. This includes getting irrelevant road signs removed, and signs in car parks so that visitors who have gone to the wrong car park are directed to the right one. We have had several meetings with MDC who own the car parks and SCC Highways who manage the road signs. Funding is available from s106 agreements.

#### **2. Better Signs to Public Toilets and deal with closed Public Toilets**

This is another cause of visitors being dissatisfied and frustrated. The first priority is for signs that direct visitors to the public toilets that actually exist, and signs on closed public toilets that direct visitors to the open ones. We also want MDC to repair and redecorate the public toilets they closed which give a very poor impression of the town, especially the one at Cork Street above Chateau Gontier Walk by the coach park. This is mainly an issue for MDC which owns the public toilets, but needs to be coordinated with the FTC Open Toilets Scheme, and the signs from the car parks. Funding is available from s106 agreements.

#### **3. Better Signs for Visitors**

Signs that direct pedestrians to the places they want to go quickly and easily. We want visitors who have come to Frome for a specific reason to find that easily, but also be made aware of the other things they might want to do. This needs MDC, SCC and FTC to work together. Funding is available from s106 agreements.

#### **4. Better Street Cleaning**

The streets of Frome should be free of litter (and dog poo). Litter bins should not overflow – there are not enough of them. This issue is regularly identified in surveys as a negative feature of the town centre. This needs MDC to ensure that the Landscape Group keep to the contract standards, and work with the community to reduce littering and encourage voluntary action, including the FTC Keep Frome Clean initiative.

#### **5. Better Maintenance and Repair of Footbridges**

Repair or replacement of the decking on the Westway footbridge which had been deteriorating since it was replaced by MDC's contractor two and half years ago. The previous decking lasted c.8 years. The present decking is approaching its sell by date. Solving the problems of puddles on Button Bridge which deter people from using it when it rains (which it does in Frome). Again this is a longstanding problem and MDC have not found a solution to what appears to be a design fault.



**Frome & District**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**6. The Frontier Scheme for Saxonvale**

MDC should reject the Frontier planning application 2013/2260/OTS – Outline Access only. It's a poor scheme which doesn't meet the Planning brief, or the needs of Frome and if the current outline application is granted it will continue to blight a coordinated (or any) development of the site. The Chamber has agreed a common position on this with the Town Council, The Civic Society, Vision 4 Frome, and Keep Frome Local. This is likely to be before the MDC Planning Board on 19<sup>th</sup> August.

**Medium to Long Term Aims**

**7. Car Parking**

We want MDC to have a full review of parking provision in Frome, including an open consultation process before they have decided upon any "preferred options" (increases). We recognise that MDC has to raise revenue and car parks are one way to do that, but they would raise more revenue if the car parks were managed better and they listened to local views. We would love free parking but we realise that it is currently unrealistic, and short term free parking is not necessarily a good option.

**8. The Market Place**

A practical scheme which improves the ability of pedestrians to cross from one side of the Market Place to the other. This has been a target identified by SCC since the 1980s. Not having the town centre cut in half would transform attitudes to the town centre? We think this is achievable but it requires SCC, MDC and FTC to work together both strategically and on the fine detail.

**9. Marketing Frome**

Marketing Frome as a destination to visit for retail, and for cultural events to a regional audience. Frome does well and there have a range of initiatives which have not been coordinated. MDC and FTC have economic development aims to support town centres. Coordinated action will have more impact.

**10. Retail Alternatives**

A better retail offer in the town centre, including the shops that people living in Frome want. This is a long term plan because it depends on other improvements, including the Market Place, Car Parking and Saxonvale.

**11. Business Rates**

All the experts agree this is unfair to town centres. We want a new system for Business Rates (NNDR) which is based not on retail space or location but turnover, without the artificial off-shoring of sales to avoid tax.