

# **Bishopthorpe @Crossroads**



The Bishopthorpe Village Centre Improvement Scheme

## **Bishopthorpe@Crossroads**

### **“Bishopthorpe lacks a central point of which it can be proud.”**

Every residential community should have some kind of central focus: perhaps a green, a pond, a war memorial or some special building. Bishopthorpe has some of these but they are scattered or at the edges of the village. It has a focus of a kind: a busy crossroads, abutted by a modern school, an old school building, a utilitarian library, a fine-looking chapel, and traces of a pinfold. All this is in a Conservation Area, and there are some attractive old cottages mixed among the more recent buildings.

In a local audit and a household survey, local people have said that this area - the junction of Main Street, Sim Balk Lane and Appleton Road - is so unattractive, uncongenial, cluttered and functional that it should be transformed. They would like to see a visually attractive area that is safer and has better facilities for all.

The Bishopthorpe Millennium Trust, together with the City Council Ward Committee and Bishopthorpe Parish Council, has decided to tackle this challenge.

Here you can read how you can help.

### **The Challenge**

Problems identified by local residents include:

- Uneven surfaces in a variety of different materials; other features in a poor state, with some poor building and boundary maintenance.
- Pedestrian and cyclist safety: motor vehicles take preference over all other road users. Although people need to cross several roads there are no designated crossing points, and only one lollipop lady during school-runs. There is also some thoughtless or bad parking. Children, the elderly and disabled people, particularly those with wheel chairs feel uneasy.
- Street clutter: a mixture of traffic signs and fly-postings, bollards and other objects. There is almost no green space, and no proper seating or useful public spaces. There is poor information (despite all the signs), and the area lacks visual coherence.



## **The Plan**

A design competition was held early in 2005. The resulting design is being put on public display.

The plan consists of several elements that can be smaller projects on their own over time. The main elements are:

- realigning the roads so that the junction is no longer a five-way crossroads. The entire roadway around and including the junction would be a raised table, with a coloured surface
- replacing much of the hard landscaping with greenery, and, by the library, a 'sensory garden'. The look of the library itself would be improved by the simple addition of a pitched roof, in keeping with every other building nearby
- removing as much of the street clutter and uncoordinated signage as possible, and introducing a more integrated sign system. A new village board for visitors (and locals) would be erected
- reinstating the ancient pinfold, with a low circular wall in front and a higher wall with curved seating at the back, making both a focal point and a rest area
- providing further seating on the new green verges.

## **What is Happening Now?**

### **Refining the plan**

Each individual part of the project is to be designed and costed, and funds must be raised to carry it out. The first will be the Sensory Garden: it will demonstrate that the neighbourhood's people and their skills, combined with those of the public and voluntary services, are capable of carrying through the plan. The result will be highly visible, so the village will see that something tangible is happening.

### **Consultation and Community**

It is important to realise that no single element or detail of this plan is fixed. Consultation with local landowners, shopkeepers and other stakeholders who have a direct interest in the area continues. At the same time we continue to find and recruit local expertise, talent and other potential help to develop a sense of community ownership of the project.

### **Funding**

The Crossroads project is a long-term effort and we envisage it will take several years to complete. We are developing a long-term funding strategy, drawing on local expertise and

We are seeking personal and commercial sponsorship for the scheme, or specific elements within it. We are also applying for grants to match the funds we already have.

The project will transform the local environment, and set a template for future neighbourhood developments across the area. It represents an opportunity for local people to come together - whatever their age, skills or experience and make a big difference.

### **At the Crossroads**

People have expressed their wish for improvement, but the real test comes now. Implementing the scheme depends on wholehearted support from our elected representatives, from the City Council's officers, from those whose property adjoins the site, and from the people of Bishopthorpe who have so much to gain.

The Bishopthorpe Millennium Trust looks after money raised by villagers and spends it in support of community groups and their activities, as well as for the benefit of the village as a whole, and in particular its younger members.

Registered Charity no.1088453

[www.bishopthorpe.net/mt/trust](http://www.bishopthorpe.net/mt/trust)

If you would like to become involved with the Crossroads project, or simply to make a comment, please write to:

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