



**Welcome
to
Taunton Town Council**

Taunton Town Council

National Associations of
Local Councils May 2026
Study Tour

Welcome

- Toilets
- Fire drills and Emergency Exits
- Please ensure that Mobile phones are on silent to not disturb speakers
- There will be scheduled breaks throughout the day
- Each presentation has a Question-and-Answer Session at the end. Please write down your questions and ask them during this time
- Dinner reservation is at 7pm and there is transport to the restaurant from the hotel

Day 1 Agenda



Who is Taunton Town Council?



Taunton Town Council was created on the 1st of April 2023. We recently celebrated our 3rd birthday.



Taunton Town Council covers an area comprising of 14 Political wards served by 20 elected Councillors.



Over 70 staff and Officers with a variety of experience from decades in Local Government to T-Level Students and apprentices who are just starting their careers.

7 Members
of SLT

29
Operations
and Assets
staff

13
Community
and Place
staff

12
Corporate
staff

10
Finance
staff

Our Corporate Strategy 2024/2027

Our Vision

Our County Town will be vibrant, welcoming and looking to the future.

Engaging inclusively alongside our communities to create a better place, providing an improved, sustainable and life-enhancing environment that celebrates our rich heritage.



Our Corporate Plan 2024/2027



A Prosperous Town



A Sustainable Environment



An Engaged Community



A Vibrant Culture



A Council That Delivers

The Importance of Corporate Strategies

Team benefit

- Staff understand processes and procedures
- Staff have professional development opportunities
- Staff feel valued and respected

Performance

- Everyone is working towards the same outcomes
- Increased productivity by having specific items prioritised
- Increased efficiency due to direct approaches to tasks

Community benefit

- Better outcomes achieved in projects
- Reduced costs therefore increased value for money
- A better place to live and work
- Reduce delays in project delivery

**Thank you for joining us and we hope you
enjoy the Taunton Town Council Study
Tour.**



**TAUNTON
TOWN
COUNCIL**

Milestone 1: Establishing Community Needs

Cllr Bev Fernandes

Outgoing Chair of Communities and Place

Craig Stone

Head of Communities and Place

Head of
Communities and Place

Comms and
Engagement Lead

Community Lead

Civic Lead

Tourism Lead

Media and
Communications

Climate Officer

Community Officer

Town Culture and
Events Officer

Sargent at Mace x 2

Visitor Centre
2.8 FTE

Design and
Communications

Apprentice

Community Support
Assistant

Apprentice

T Level x 2

T Level

Communities and Place Service



Milestone 1

Why community needs come first



The Community Review Process



The Top Community Themes



Establishing youth needs



Turning Insight into Delivery

Milestone 1:

Why Community Needs Come First



If we don't understand needs, we can't target resources well.



The Community Review helped identify priorities and shape Taunton's future plans.



It sits alongside Council priorities and supports effective resource allocation.

How we listened: Community Review Process



**Steering
Group**



**Early
Topics**



**Main
Survey**



**Survey
Window**



Steering Group

Ensured the Community Review was well governed, locally informed, providing oversight, challenge and credibility throughout the process.



Early Topics



Main Survey



Survey Window

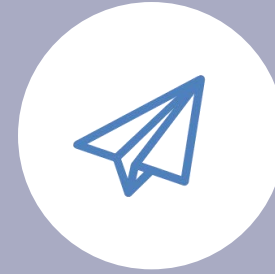


Steering Group



Early Topics

Ensured the Community Review focused on issues that mattered the most.



Main Survey



Survey Window



Steering Group



Early Topics



Main Survey

- Promote widely
- Posters
- Boosted posts
- Email newsletters
- Noticeboards.



Survey Window



**Steering
Group**



**Early
Topics**



**Main
Survey**



**Survey
Window**

2 Sept 2024 to
2 Oct 2024

Total 569 responses.



What we heard: Top themes

What People Value

Biggest Concerns

Young People

- Close to Countryside
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Sports and Local Teams
- Friendly Character
- Rail / Transport Connections
- 10 – Minute Town feel

What People Value

Biggest Concerns

Young People

- Crime & Fear of Crime
- Anti-social-Behaviour and State of the town
- Desired Improvements over 5 years
- Improving the look of the town centre
- Public toilets
- Transport; worries about public transport, road conditions, potholes and traffic congestion

What People Value

Biggest Concerns

Young People

- New leisure / recreation for young people
- Teenagers 12-18 and young adults 19-25
- Community Safety Ideas
- Greater police presence
- Safer spaces for young people
- Provision of Closed-Circuit TV

An aerial photograph of Taunton, Somerset, showing a dense urban area with a prominent cricket ground in the center. The cricket ground is surrounded by stadium seating and buildings. A river flows through the town to the right. The background shows rolling green hills under a clear sky.

Youth Services Review:

How we're establishing youth needs

Purpose



Scope



Engagement



Purpose



- Map Current Provision
- Identify Gaps
- Provide Recommendations



Scope



Engagement



Purpose

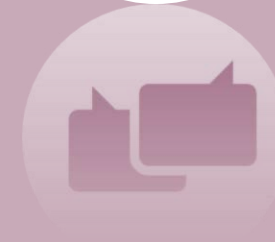


Scope

- Ages 10 – 24
- Multi-Agency Targeted Work
- Safeguarding Review
- Best Practice and Sustainability



Engagement



Purpose



Scope



Engagement



- Focus Groups
- Peer Led Street Conversations
- Anon Idea Boxes
- Youth Conference

Turning insight into delivery: What's been achieved?



Turning insight into delivery: What's been achieved?



COMMUNITY REVIEW
– PRIORITISING
COMMUNITY SAFETY,
PROVISION FOR
CCTV, STREET
MARSHAL, YOUTH
PROVISION AND
PRIDE IN PLACE



Turning insight into delivery: What's been achieved?



COMMUNITY REVIEW
– PRIORITISING
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TRACKING
PROGRESS
THROUGH
COMMUNITY IMPACT
REPORTING



Turning insight into delivery: What's been achieved?



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TRACKING
PROGRESS
THROUGH
COMMUNITY IMPACT
REPORTING



YOUTH GAPS TO BE
IDENTIFIED AND
ALIGNED WITH
BUDGET SETTING
WITH FOCUS ON
VULNERABLE AND
UNDERSERVED
YOUNG PEOPLE



Turning insight into delivery: What's been achieved?



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EVIDENCE BASED,
DECISIONS FOR
COMMITTEE AND
DELIVERY BY
OFFICERS.



Turning insight into delivery: What's been achieved?



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EVIDENCE BASED,
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COMMITTEE AND
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OFFICERS.



DELIVERING STRONG
EVIDENCE BASE TO
GUIDE FUTURE YOUTH
INVESTMENT,
COMMISSIONING AND
A YOUTH
ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGY.



Contact Information

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Cllr Bev Fernandes

cldr.b.fernandes@taunton-tc.gov.uk

**Thank You
Questions?**

Milestone 2:

Strategies and Initiatives that Serve

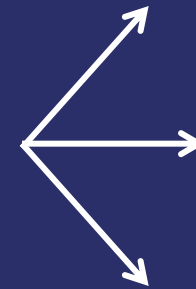
Cllr Bev Fernandes – Mayor of Taunton and Outgoing Chair of Community and Place

Tilly White-Christmas – Community Lead

The Strategy



Community Strategy Overview



Arts and Culture Plan

Climate and Ecological
Emergency Plan

Community Safety Plan

The Ambitions

Arts and Culture

1. Culture for the Whole Community
2. Supporting Local Talent
3. Destination Taunton
4. Planning for Arts, Culture and Heritage
5. Creative Collaboration
6. Arts and Culture for a Sustainable Environment

Climate and Eco

1. Leading by Example
2. Waste not, Want not
3. Energy Matters
4. Food can fit it!
5. Getting around sustainably
6. Wild about Taunton
7. Resilient, Empowered Communities

Community Safety

1. Reduce crime and antisocial behaviour within Taunton Town Centre
2. Strengthen multi agency collaboration
3. Reduce negative human related environmental impacts
4. Increase community confidence

The Initiatives



Arts and Culture



Funding The
Brewhouse Theatre

Christmas in Taunton

Music Around
the Bandstands

Civic Pride



Mayor Making & Mayor's Cadets



Taunton Cup

Carols Around the Bandstand

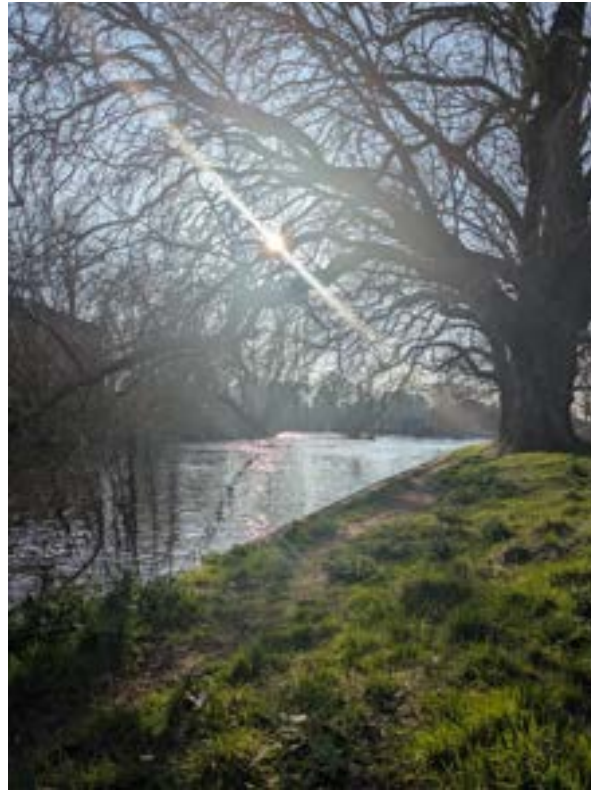


Remembrance

Climate and Ecological Projects



Pollinator Pathways



Watermark Town Status

Community Safety



Street Marshals



UKPAC



CCTV

The Initiatives That Serve

How do we know what works?



Taunton Together 2025 Evaluation



| Theme/Criteria | KPI/Indicator |
|---|--|
| Social Value | |
| Event Participation, Engagement and Enjoyment | Footfall Community group involvement Public engagement Sentiment post-event Engagement with post-event surveys |
| Cultural Outcomes | Number of performances, acts, and art exhibits Artist and performer feedback Cultural diversity |
| Long term social impact | Social Return on Investment Community Impact Stories |
| Environmental Value | |
| Environmental Sustainability | Amount of general waste collected Stalls Number of activities which enhanced climate awareness Method of transport used to attend the event Energy usage |
| Economic Value | |
| Economic Impact | Funding outcomes Stallholder satisfaction Local spending |

Taunton Together 2025 Evaluation

| Evaluation Score | Success Description |
|--|---|
| Event deemed through evaluation to score 0-1 out of 5 in terms of success against criteria | 'Unsuccessful' |
| Event deemed through evaluation to score 2-3 out of 5 in terms of success against criteria | 'Some Success' or 'Somewhat Successful' |
| Event deemed through evaluation to score 4 out of 5 in terms of success against criteria | 'Successful' |
| Event deemed through evaluation to score 5 out of 5 in terms of success against criteria | 'Very Successful' |

| Evaluation Theme | Success Level |
|---|---------------------|
| Event Participation, Engagement & Enjoyment | Successful |
| Cultural Outcomes | Successful |
| Longer-Term Social Impact | Very Successful |
| Environmental Sustainability | Somewhat Successful |
| Economic Impact | Somewhat Successful |

Quarterly Community Impact Report

You Said, We Did

- Designed to feedback on findings from the Community Review
- Provides progress reports on key projects or initiatives related to feedback

Community Facing

- Demonstrates wider works beyond just that highlighted in the review
- Grants Given Overview
- Case studies on key projects, events or activities

Values Led

- Honest – what went well? where could we improve?
- Accessible findings
- Best practice evaluation methods

Any Questions?





Milestone Case Study:
A Town of Sanctuary

Introduction



THE COMPASSIONATE SOCIETY



How it began – CHARIS Refugees

In response to an increase in anti-migrant rhetoric locally and some protests, three grass-roots organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers formed a City of Sanctuary Group in 2024

CHARIS Refugees

RAFT (Refugee Aid from Taunton)

Taunton Welcomes Refugees

- Encourage a culture of welcome in Taunton
- Develop a platform for healthy and respectful debate
- Help all who seek sanctuary in Taunton to feel safe

CoS group approached TTC with proposal to apply for Council of Sanctuary Award





City of Sanctuary Award

- LEARN

Quarterly
Meet-ups with
local refugee
organisations.

- EMBED

Adopt
policies
to ensure
inclusivity

- SHARE

Encourage
organisations
around the
town to join



Activities so far by CHARIS

Refugee Week

- Refugee Flag raising ceremony

School assemblies and classes

SALC funding activities

- Developed 'Working with displaced people' training
- Funded transport for refugees and asylum seekers to attend community events
- Shared Roots event
- Wellbeing and art activities



Support for opportunities to be in the Community



What Does it Mean for us as a Town Council

The Four Freedoms:

of SPEECH

of WORSHIP

from NEED

From FEAR





Milestone Case Study: Taunton Together

Helen Ranscombe

TTC Town Culture and Event Officer

Jackie Clementines

TYCA Artistic Director

Taunton Together: Overview

Taunton Together is a free annual festival celebrating the diversity, arts, culture, heritage and community of Taunton. It brings together local groups, artists, businesses and organisations to showcase their work and connect with residents and visitors.

- TTC flagship event
- Launched in 2024
- End of summer celebration
- Hosted across key town centre locations
- Free and accessible programme designed to remove participation barriers
- Activities include theatre, live music, art workshops, dance and fashion shows, community stalls, food, installations and more



A CELEBRATION OF DIVERSITY, ARTS, CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

TAUNTON TOGETHER 25

FOOD • MUSIC • DANCE • ART • WORKSHOPS • MARKET STALLS

Somerset Square, Goodland Gardens, Hammet Street, Orchard Centre, Castle Green, & High Street

FREE

Saturday 27 September
10am - 4pm

Join us in Taunton's end of summer celebration, **Taunton Together 2025**

The theme for 2025 is The River Tone: Community Connection.

Enjoy a vibrant day of shared experiences and discover what makes our town shine.

Stay in touch on the Taunton Town Council Facebook page, where we will be sharing our local talent and events programme ahead of the big day.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

TAUNTON TOWN COUNCIL AND PARTNERS

The poster features a QR code for more information and a row of blue silhouettes at the bottom representing a swan, a seal, a duck, a fish, and a frog.



Taunton Together 2025

TT25 Theme: The River Tone – Community Connection

Festival areas:

- Goodland Gardens – Wellbeing & Environment
- Somerset Square – Arts & Performance
- Castle Green – Museum & Market
- Hammet Street & Taunton Minster – Community Stalls
- High Street & Orchard Centre – Movement & Fashion

Programme:

- 60+ performances and activities
- 45 community stalls
- Animal Art Trail (swan, otter, duck, frog, fish)

Participation Process:

Town-wide open call via Microsoft Forms, promoted through social media, direct email outreach and on TTC website page.

Funded Activities Selection Criteria (scored anonymously):

- Locality • Value for money • Variety • Environmental impact • Credibility
- Diversity and inclusion • Accessibility • Theme relevance



Summary of Project Timeline:

Jan - Feb:

- Internal TT planning group formed
- 2025 theme confirmed
- Monthly stakeholder meetings scheduled
- Budget drafted
- Initial zone mapping

Mar - Apr:

- Outreach for activities, performers, stalls
- Zone development
- Comms plan drafted (social posts, posters, press release, High Street banner, website page, local media ads, wayfinding signs, Peacock Post, animal trail map, brochure)

May - Jun:

- Activities selected (May committee approval)
- Licensing and road closure docs
- Animal Trail development
- Draft Event Safety Management Plan
- Operational quotes (toilets, security, first aid etc)

Jul - Aug

- Final programming confirmed
- Communications materials published
- Area leads confirmed
- Risk assessments
- Operational confirmations
- Volunteer outreach
- Data collection planning

Sep:

- Final schedule published
- Logistical information sent to participants
- Wayfinding signage made
- Event briefings for participants and volunteers
- Event delivery (27 Sep)

Oct - Dec:

- Detailed evaluation report

Lessons Learned

Planning & Resourcing

- Longer lead-in needed
- Earlier decisions & committee approvals
- Additional staffing / external support

Licensing & Compliance

- Secure permissions (TTRO/S171) earlier

Engagement

- Earlier cultural outreach
- Earlier school/college engagement

Funding

- Clearer funding guidance for applicants
- Earlier external funding bids (with SROI evidence)

Business & Stakeholders

- Increase business involvement & sponsorship
- Earlier, more accessible stakeholder meetings

Volunteers

- Stronger recruitment and onboarding
- Clearer roles, hours & better comms

Promotion & Marketing

- Longer promo period
- Stronger social media presence
- Keep site maps in all comms

Layout & Wayfinding

- Reduce geographic spread or improve wayfinding
- More signage/flags/banners

Environment

- Expand sustainability activity
- Consider earlier summer date (weather)

Participation

- Longer application windows



Looking Ahead: TT26 and Beyond

New Phase for the Festival

Rapid growth = need for sustainable delivery and shared responsibility.

Governance & Delivery

- July 2025: Committee approved external event management to increase TTC officer capacity
- Jan 2026: Contract awarded to Arts Taunton, part of a new consortium including Go Create, Brewhouse and CICCIC
- TTC retains ownership, oversight and final approval on decisions
- New model brings specialist expertise, stronger local arts collaboration and increased capacity for additional fundraising

TT26 Theme: Wild About Our Town!

TT26 Delivery Timeline

- Feb: Consortium structure agreed
- Mar-Apr: Festival proposal developed and approved
- May: Open call and comms strategy
- Jun-Jul: Participant selection and “save the date” launch
- Aug: Programme confirmed, volunteers recruited
- Sep: Event delivery
- Oct-Nov: Evaluation



Participation Approach

- Open, flexible involvement model: anyone can take part in some capacity
- Funded activities selected using TT25 criteria (locality, value, variety, environment, credibility, inclusion, accessibility, theme fit)
- More collaboration with groups to shape proposals; focus on value for money
- Increased youth voice via TYCA Youth Board in decision-making

Future Development

- Proposal to extend TT into a week-long or two-week “fringe-style” festival with ticketed events and free main day (from TT27 onwards)
- Concept would need fleshing out, with proposal presented to committee for consideration
- A TT brand toolkit could be developed to support partner engagement and strengthen visibility







Thank You.
Questions?



Milestone Case Study:
Listening to Young People

Citizens Somerset
St James Church School

A faint, stylized graphic of a peacock's tail feathers is visible in the background on the right side of the slide. The feathers are rendered in a lighter shade of blue than the background, with circular patterns and curved lines.



Bringing people together to build positive working relationships with decision-makers, to bring about change in our local communities.

Listening



Negotiation



Lyngford Park Primary School

In Lyngford Park:

- ❖ Pedestrian lights changing faster
- ❖ All park lights working
- ❖ Stream cleaned of dangerous objects

St James Church School

In Victoria Park Underpass:

- ❖ Frequent glass & needle sweeps
- ❖ Anti-vandal lighting
- ❖ Mirrors on both ends
- ❖ CCTV

Celebrating Wins





Pushing for park safety upgrades

By Henry Hockley
henry.hockley@taunton.gov.uk

It highlights the need for safety at the entrance to the park, particularly a dramatic improvement. As Cllr Deakin explained, the area was not well lit, with people jumping out with lanterns and shouting, "Welcome to your safety!"

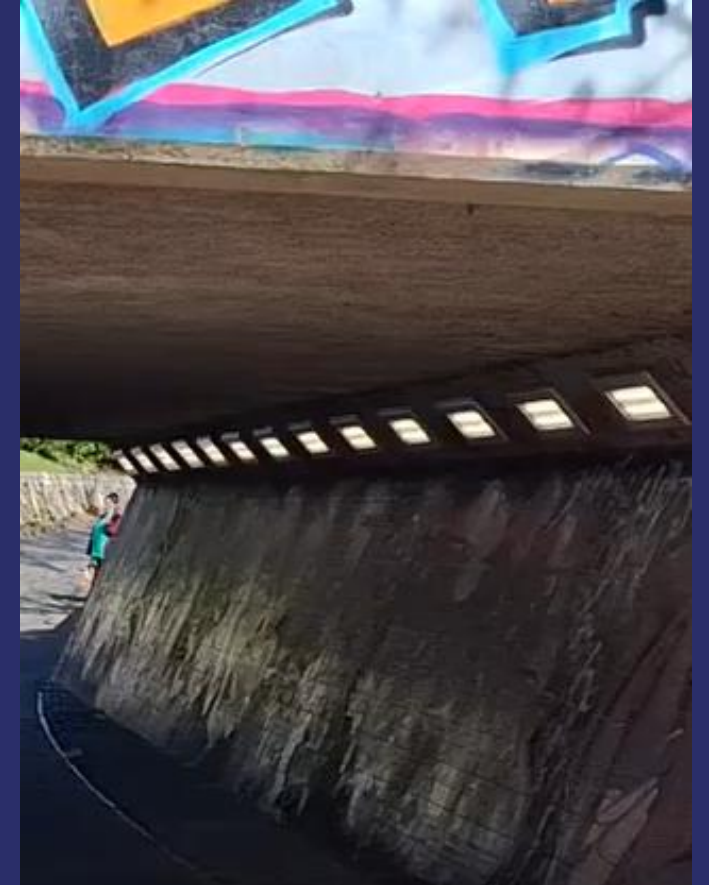
The young leaders used their campaign to be there before. "We need a timeline for delivery before we have the secondary school, because the area's crucial, in fact."

While on this occasion was...

Action



Celebrating Wins



Negotiating





Thank you!



Lunch Time

Resume at 14:30



Welcome Back

Milestone 3: Making Investment Count

Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts
Ward Member for Blackbrook
& Holway

Emily Glover
Projects Lead

Agenda

1. Why “Making Investment Count” matters
2. Our Project Delivery Approach
3. TTC Workspace Refurbishments
4. Public Toilets
5. Changing Places
6. Transport Hub (Building 2)
7. Play Park Refurbishments
8. Project challenges
9. Key messages
10. Q&A

1. Why “Making Investment Count” matters



Limited budgets



Publicly funded, highly visible projects



Expectations from residents



Long-term impacts of decisions e.g. reducing maintenance needs, increasing sustainability

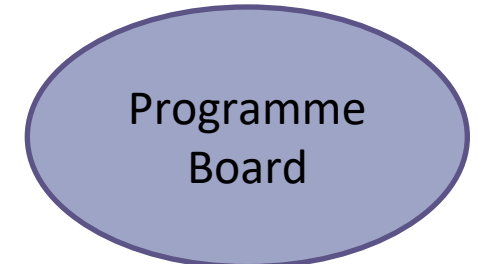
Investment should deliver visible, long-term improvements that enhance how people experience the town

2. Our Project Delivery Approach

- Weekly catch-ups
- Provide project updates
- Escalate issues

- Monthly meetings
- Not decision-making
- Provides steer & challenge

- 6-weekly meetings
- Change control requests
- Escalate issues



- Projects Team**
- Weekly team meetings & individual catch-ups
 - Issues escalated to Projects Lead

2. Our Project Delivery Approach

Initiation

- Objectives
- Member approvals
- Identify budget

Planning

- Set milestones
- Breakdown objectives into actions
- Identify stakeholders

Delivery

- Undertake actions
- Regular progress meetings
- Monitor and review
- Log decisions

Closure

- Completion report
- Lessons learned
- Benefits realisation
- Handover

Project Documentation



Individual SharePoint sites



Project Initiation Checklists

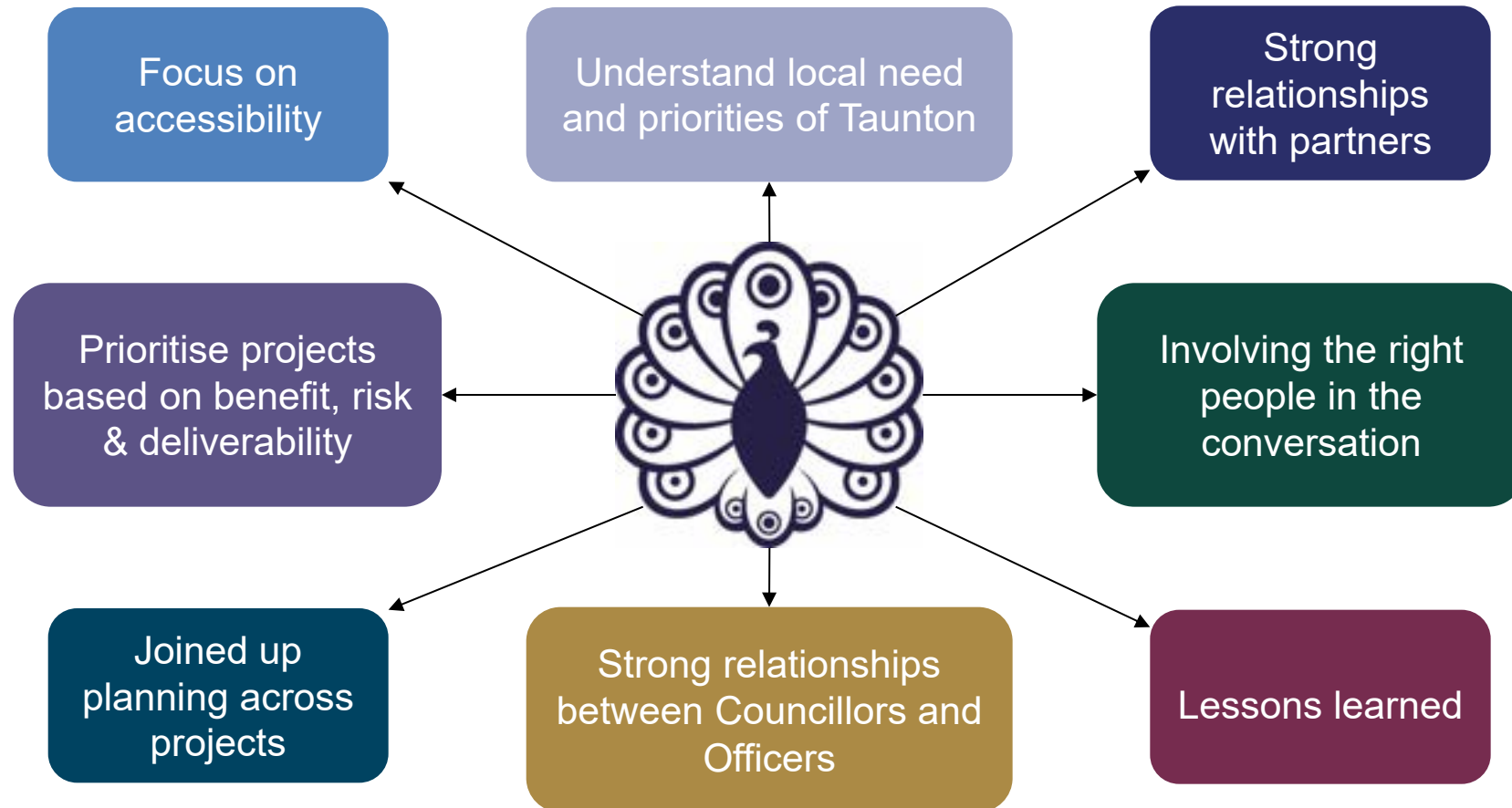


Project Budget Spreadsheets



Project Workbooks

2. Our Project Delivery Approach



3. TTC Workspace Refurbishments

Deane House Office Refurb

Project objective: To relocate from the small room on the ground floor to the second floor of Deane House for a larger office space, public reception, meeting room and its own Council chamber.

Key considerations: Staff satisfaction, H&S, accessibility

Started on site: July 2024

Date reopened: September 2024

Initial budget: £175,000

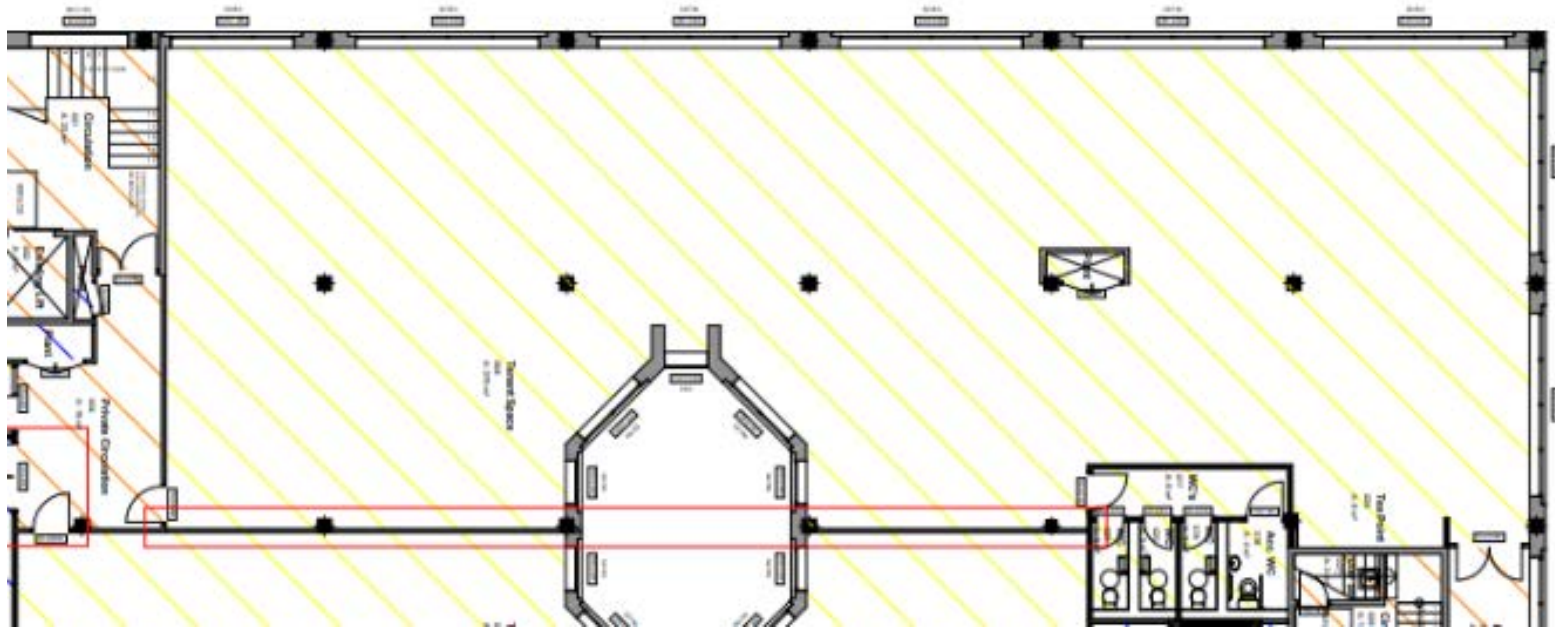
Refurbishment costs: ~ £173,500

Professional fees: £12,950

Other costs (e.g. IT equipment): ~ £36,000



Before



After



3. TTC Workspace Refurbishments

Galmington Depot Refurb

Project objective: Refurbishment of space to provide mezzanine, office space, functional compound, storage areas, toilets, kitchen and meeting rooms

Key considerations: H&S, operational continuity, space constraints, vehicle management

Started on site: February 2025

Date reopened: July 2025

Total budget: Maximum £410,000

Refurbishment costs: ~ £340,000

Professional fees: ~ £6,000

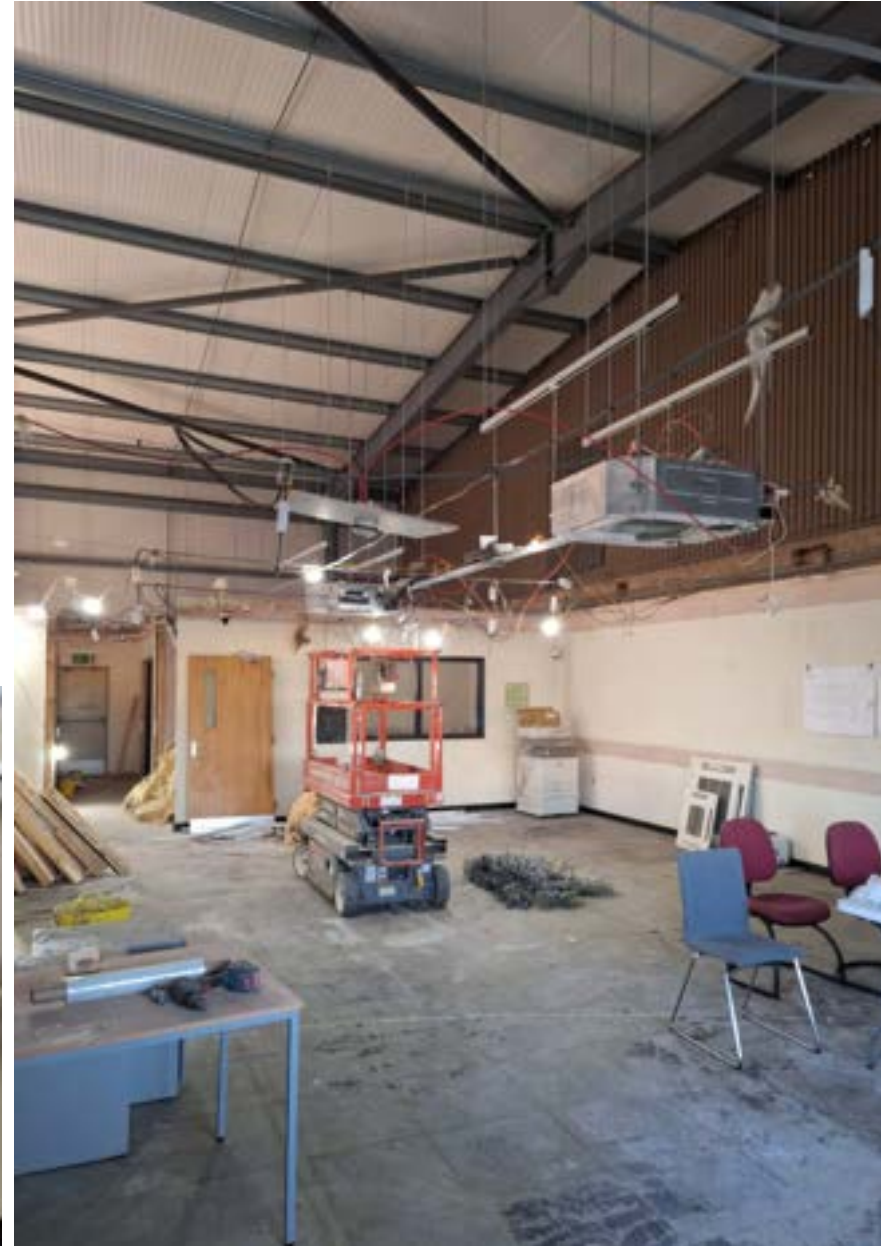
Occupation costs: ~ £35,000



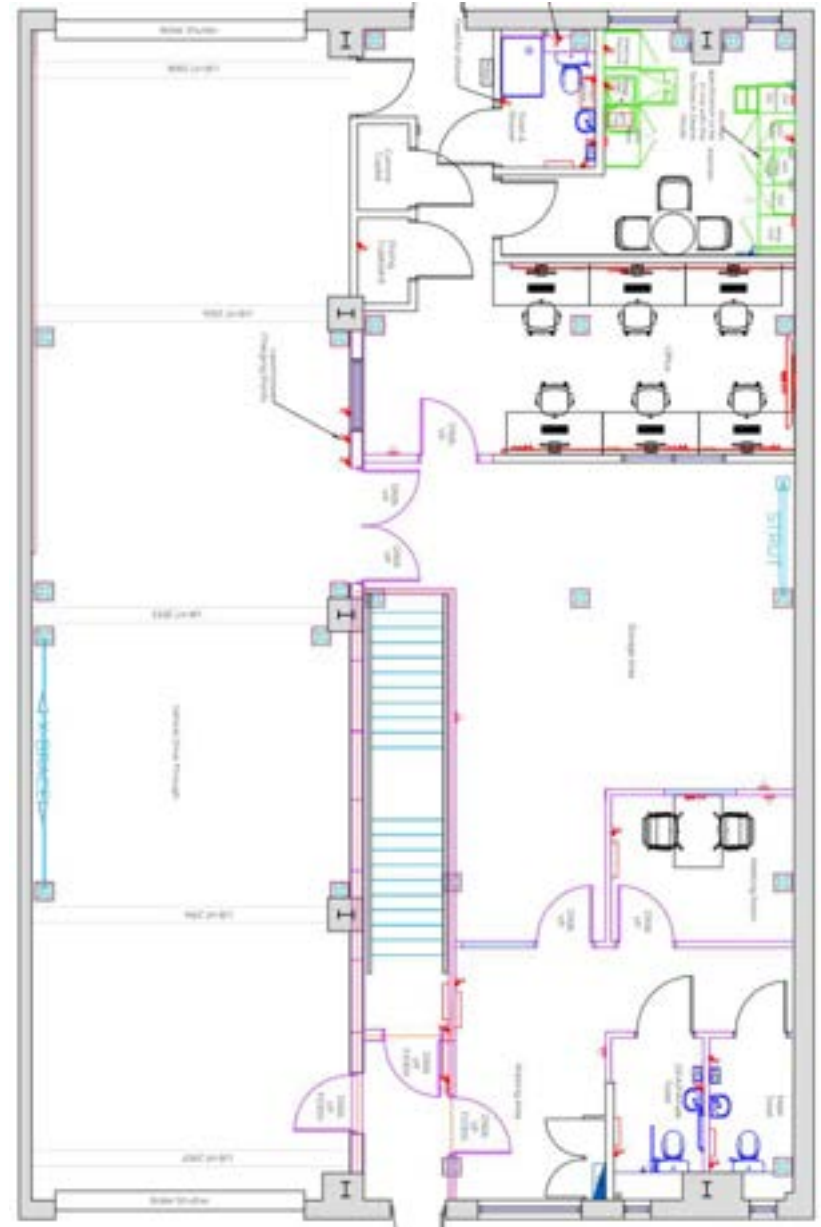
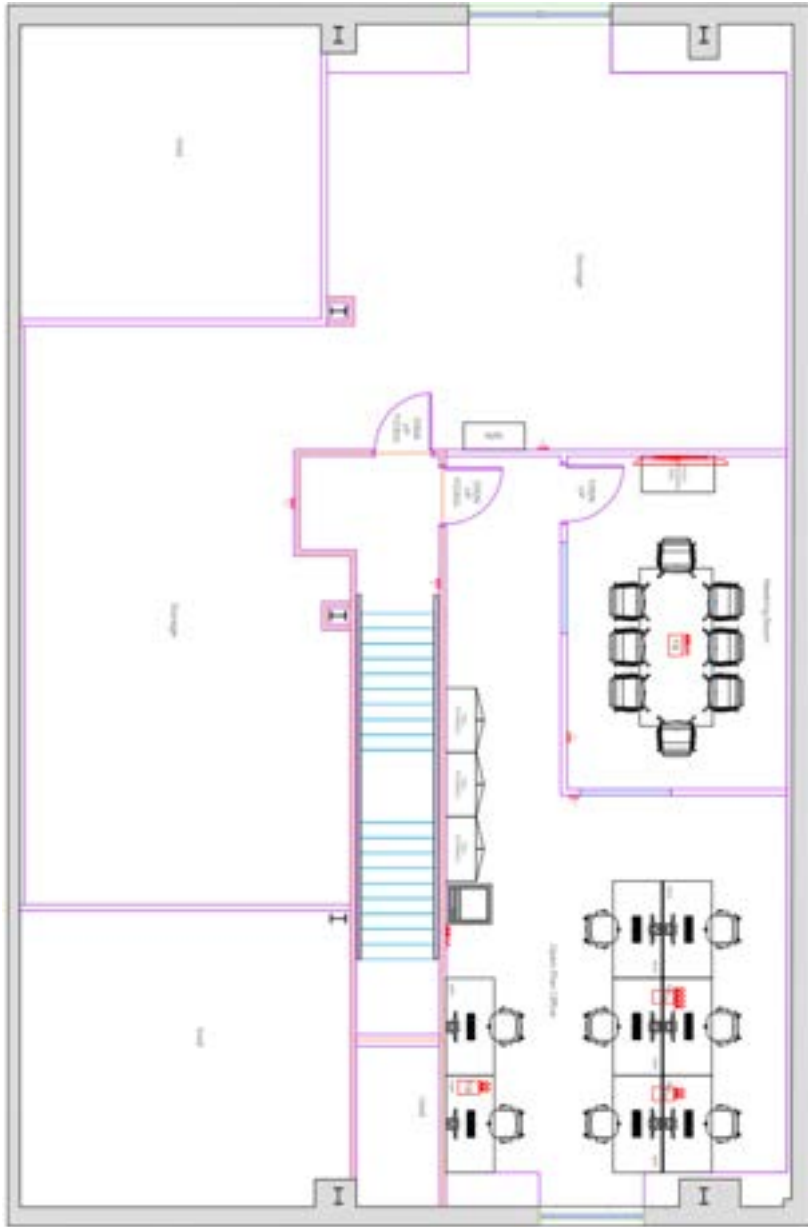
Before



Before



After



After



4. Public Toilets

Canon Street Public Conveniences

Project objective: Refurbishment of the public toilets, creating four direct access unisex cubicles, two of which are accessible

Key considerations: Improving accessibility, durability and sustainability, maintenance

Started on site: February 2025

Date reopened: May 2025

Initial budget: Maximum £250,000

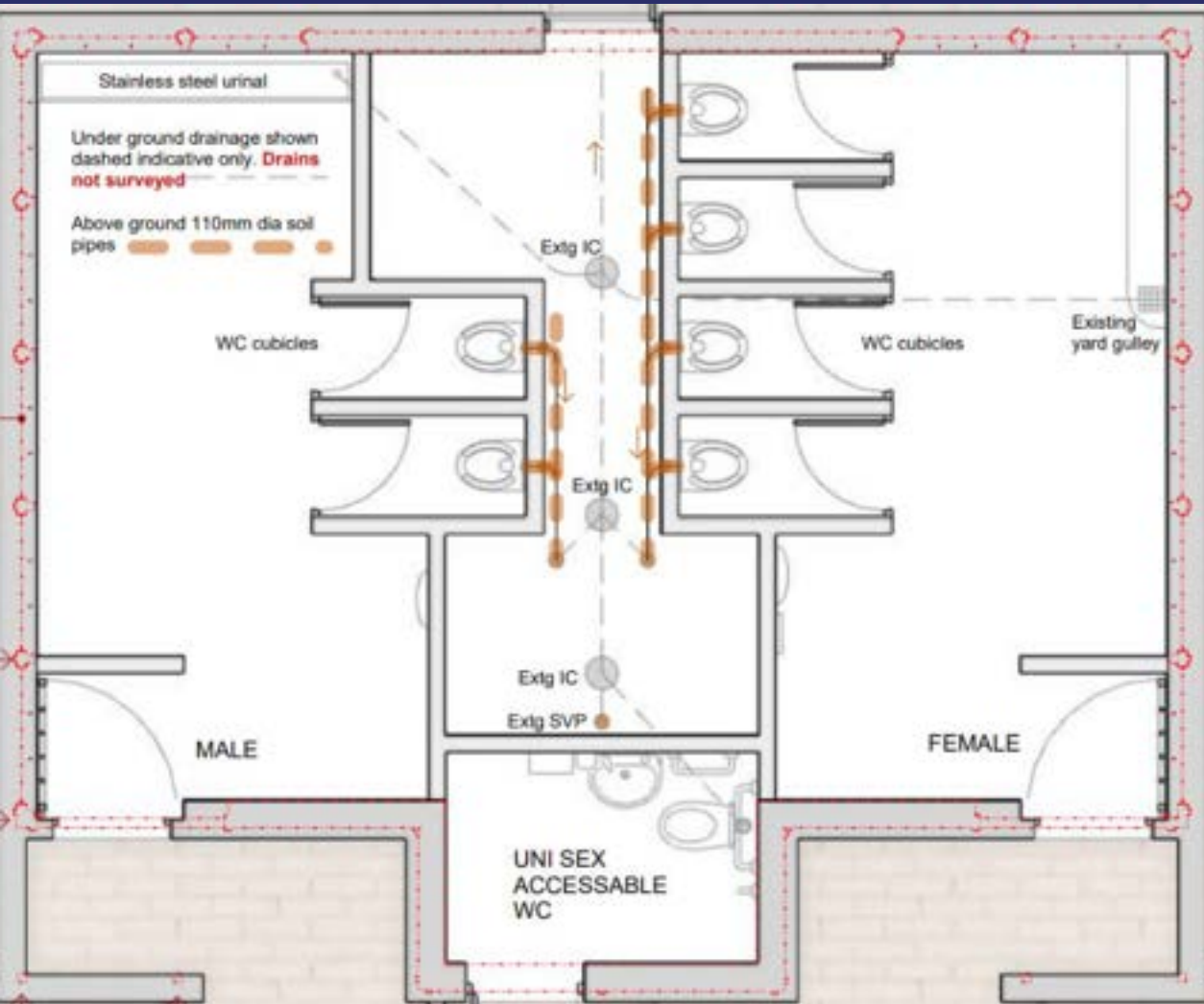
Refurbishment costs: ~ £210,000

Professional fees: ~ £20,000

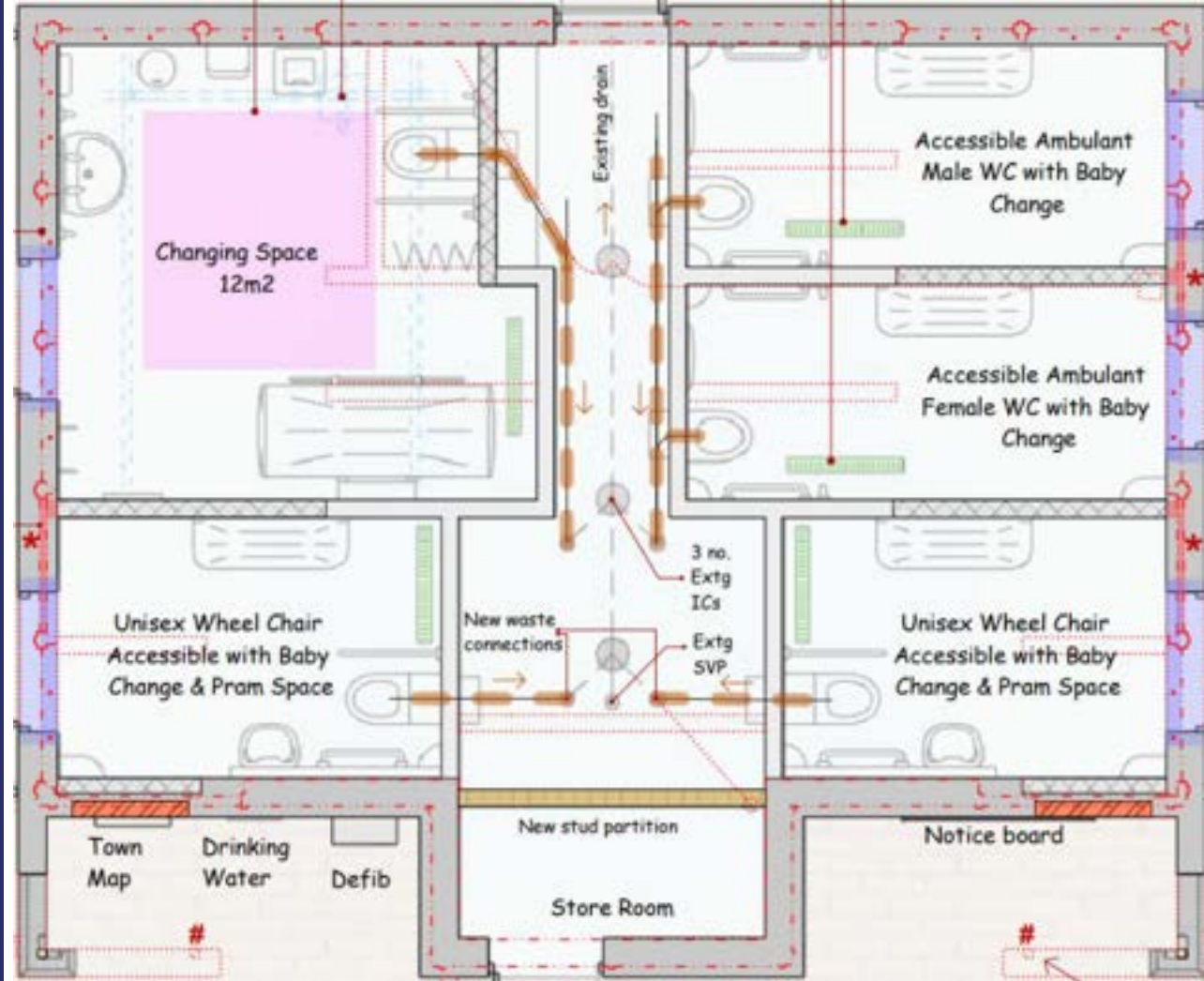
Other costs (e.g. temp toilet hire): ~ Approximately £2,500



Before



After





4. Public Toilets

Paul Street Public Conveniences

Project objective: To take on the closed public toilets from Somerset Council and refurbish them to provide improved toilet facilities in the town centre, including a Changing Places facility

Key considerations: Improving accessible toilet provision, reducing opportunities for vandalism and anti-social behaviour, maintenance

Started on site: September 2025

Date reopened: Awaiting Building Control sign-off

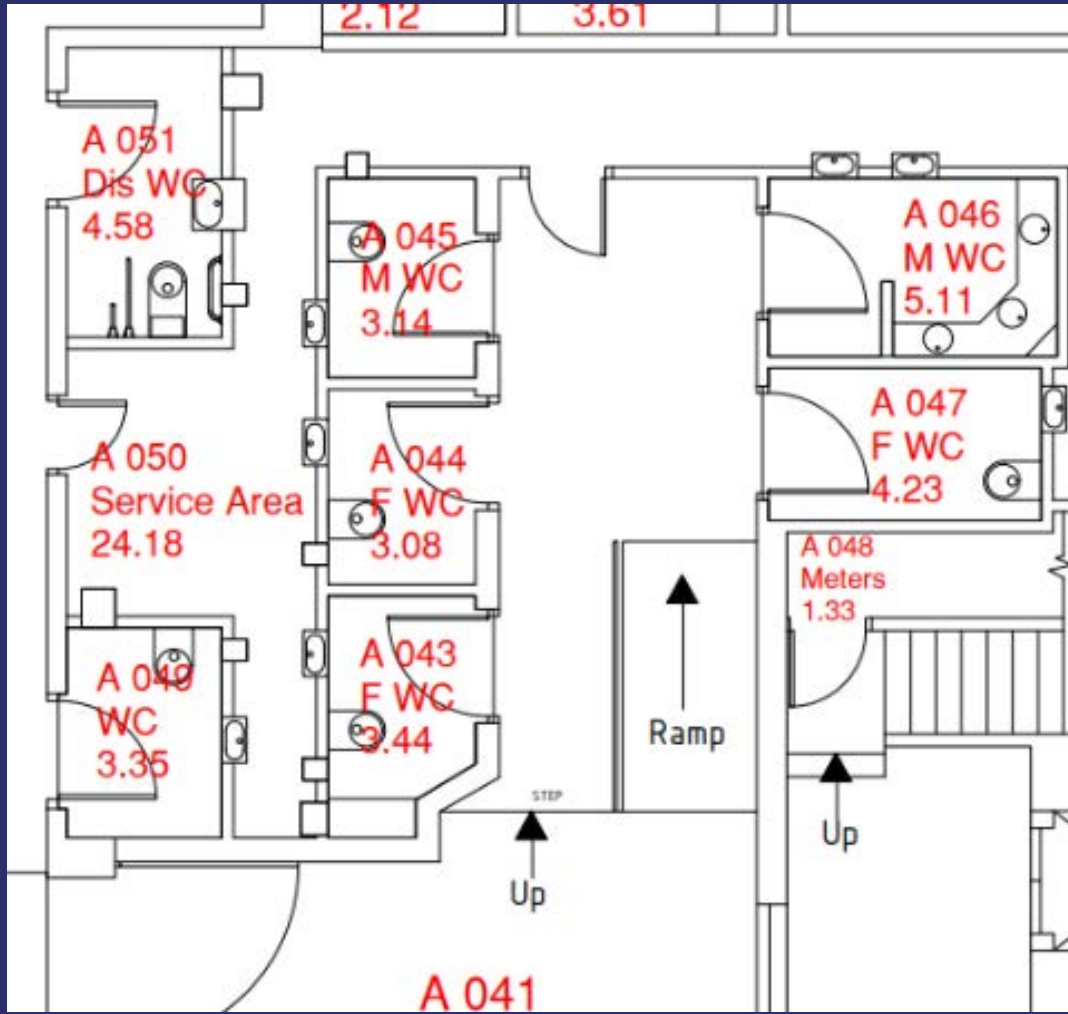
Initial budget: Maximum £205,000

Refurbishment costs: ~ £180,000

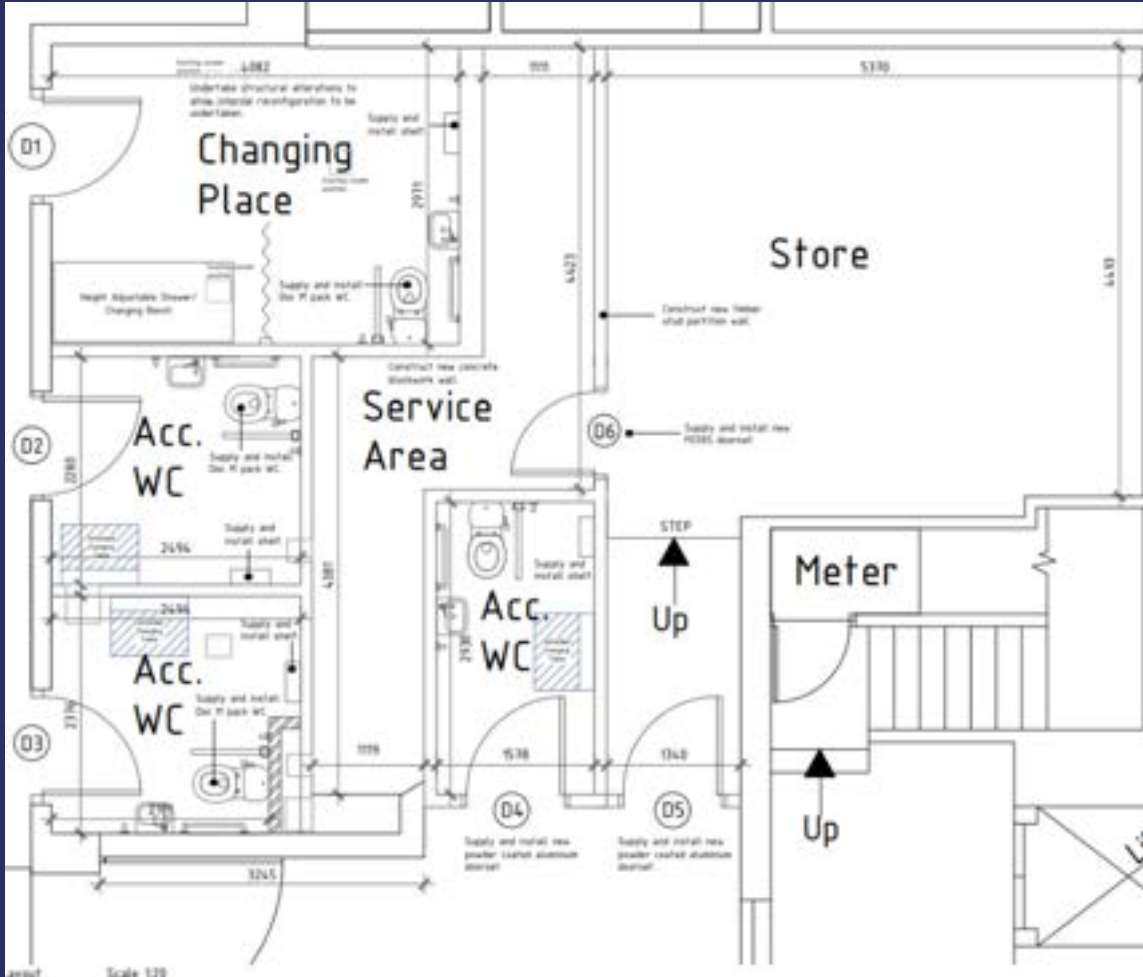
Professional fees: ~ £15,000



Before



After



5. Changing Places

What are Changing Places facilities?

Vital facilities that provide specialist equipment for people with multiple and complex disabilities. They include:

- Height adjustable adult-sized changing bench
- Ceiling track hoist system
- Centrally located toilet
- Privacy screen
- Adequate space









Project Objective: Undertake risk assessments of Changing Places facilities and identify, implement and monitor mitigation actions to minimise risk of harm to users.

Locations: Transport Hub, Paul Street PCs & Canon St (not yet fitted)

Key considerations: H&S, vandalism, anti-social behaviour, adequate consultation



| | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Engagement |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WECIL (West of England Centre for Inclusive Living) • Consultation with users (questionnaire, drop in) |
| Access control |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key fob system with an advance registration process |
| Procedures and training |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety checks, servicing and maintenance • Registration processes • General enquiries |
| Emergency alarms |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitored alarm service with 2-way comms |
| Signage |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible signage, website information, regular status updates |
| Trial, review, improve |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage • Opening hours |

6. Transport Hub

Somerset Council are delivering a wider project to create a new transport hub where the former bus station was. This involves creating bus shelters with real time information, improving the public realm and creating a waiting room. There are two buildings on site, Building 1 and Building 2.

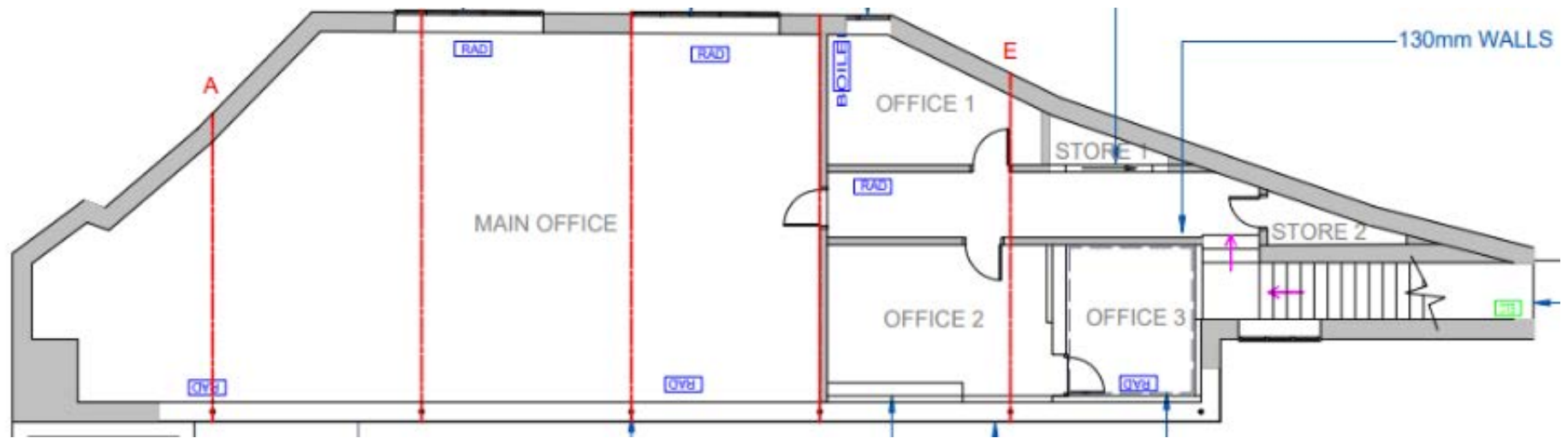
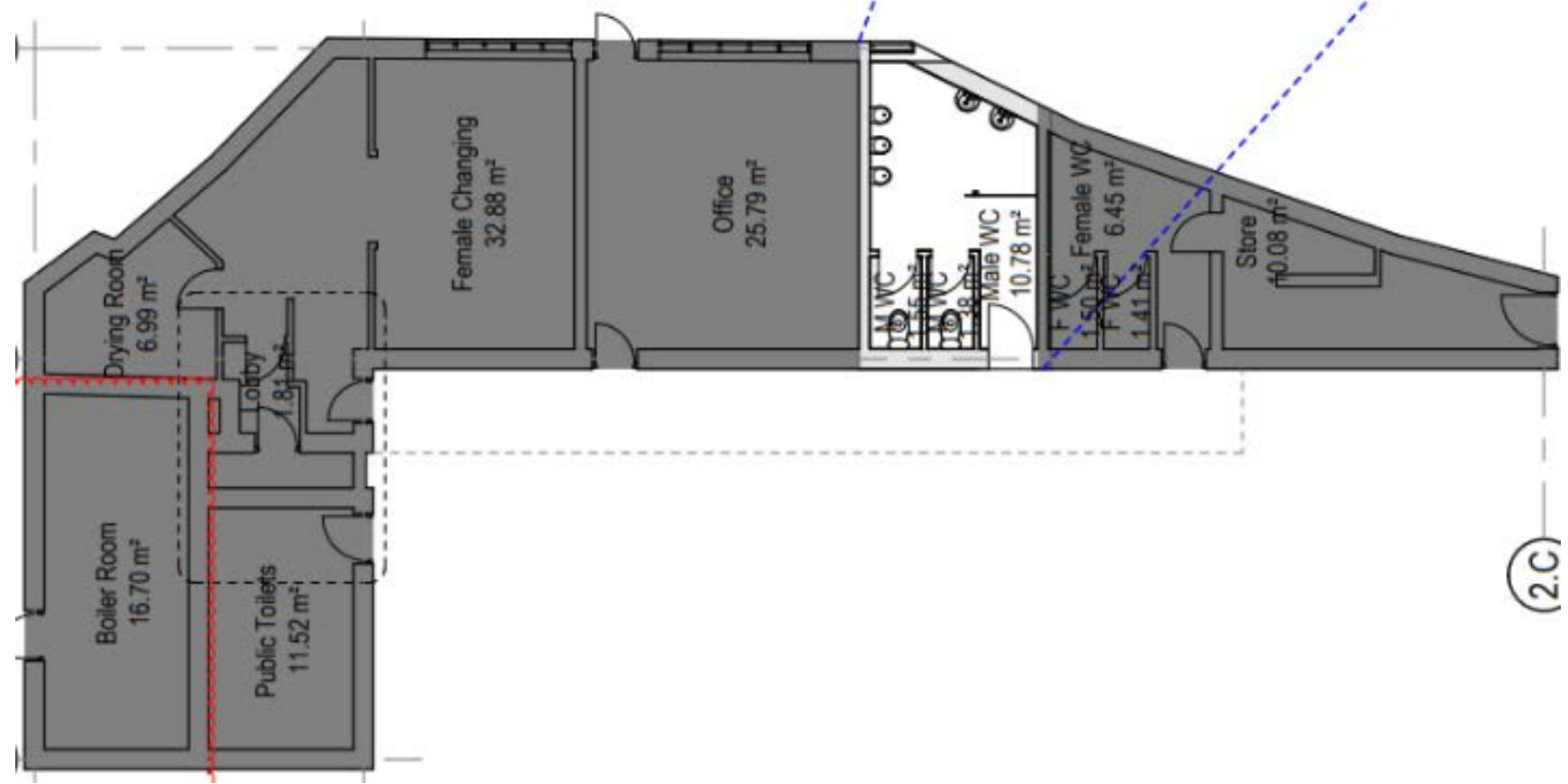
Building 2

Devolved from Somerset Council to TTC and required refurbishment.

High-level stages of the project:

- Feasibility, consultation & concept design
- Detailed design (ongoing)
- Procurement
- Construction





Feasibility, consultation & concept design

- Held a public consultation. Public wanted to see:
 - Public toilets
 - Community space
- Consultation results fed into concept design



Detailed design

- Currently in progress, focusing on:
 - Improving accessibility (lift)
 - Delivering community benefit
 - Providing public toilets
 - Opportunities for income generation (flexible retail spaces)
- Engage with stakeholders throughout



7. Play Parks Refurbishments

Project objective: To increase the play value, accessibility and inclusivity of our twelve play parks through refurbishment and surfacing upgrades.

Key considerations: Consultation, grant funding, accessibility, play value, durability, environmental impact, programming

Key milestones:

- Procurement complete March 26
- Consultation June-July 26
- Consultation analysis July-August 26
- Design revisions August 26
- First refurbishment Autumn 26

Programme: Across five years

Budget: £1.2m



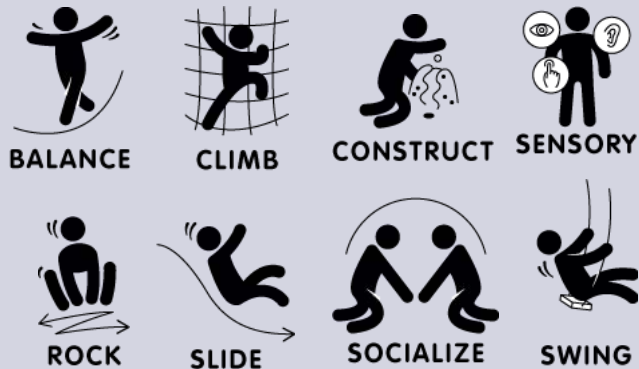
7. Play Parks Refurbishments

Consultation approach



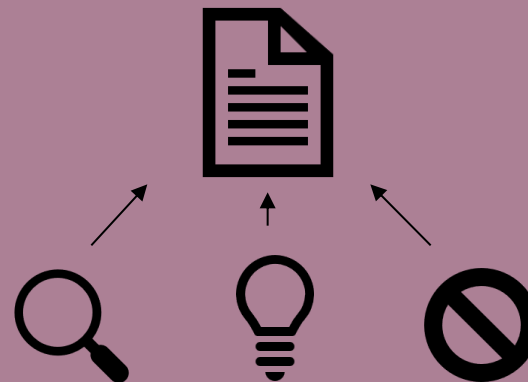
Primary school students

Paper form: select favourite activities from icons



KS3 students

Paper form: select types of activities, barriers



Parents/guardians

Online form: more detailed questions, general improvements



8. Project challenges

-  Decision delays
-  Specification development
-  Supplier delays
-  Communication with suppliers
-  External sign-offs
-  Cost increases

9. Key messages

- Start with local need
- Build the right partnerships
- Engage early and keep engaging
- Balance value for money, benefits and risk
- Design for the long-term
- Learn and improve

10. Q&A

Any questions?

Milestone 4:

Transforming Our Parks and Open Spaces

Graham Cox
Head Of Operations





- 15 Open Spaces
- 9 Allotments
- 12 Play Parks
- 15 Pitches
- 5 pavilions
- PC 8
- Head office
- Depot

Day 1:

- 1 X Manager (multiple Service)
- 1 X Operative
- Maintenance Contract with Somerset Council



Challenges

- 1** Carrying Capacity of Team
- 2** Recruitment: right people in right roles
- 3** Machine Procurement: Right tools for the right job
- 4** Environmental Responsibilities: Balancing expectation with reality
- 5** Public Pressure for delivery of service

Small Projects, Big Impact!

- Benches
- Playpark equipment repairs
- Bins
- Trees
- RoSPA

Key Projects

Completed:

- Life rings and DeFibs
- Fences and Gates
- Mass Tree Plant 365
- 3 for 1 Planting Scheme
- Speed Indicator Device
- Access Restrictions
- Community Payback scheme

Upcoming Items:

- Bridge Repairs
- Playpark Project
- Earth Bunds
- Notice Boards
- Tarmacking
- Wildflower areas
- Water Gardens

Sports Pitches

- Improved Mowing Options: cut and collect and wider mower
- Sissis Quadraplay
- Sissis Maxi-slit
- Fertiliser Programme in Place
- New Football Posts
- Licensing Agreements

Football, Baseball, American
Football, Cricket, Tennis, Boules,

Green Flag Awards

8 Standards

- A Welcoming Place
- Healthy, Safe and Secure
- Well Maintained and Clean
- Environmental Management
- Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage
- Community Involvement
- Marketing and Communication
- Management

Process

- Online Application
- Desk-Based Assessment
- On-Site Judge Visit
- Feedback
- Awards

Our Parks

2025 Award:

- Victoria Park
- French Weir

2026 Application:

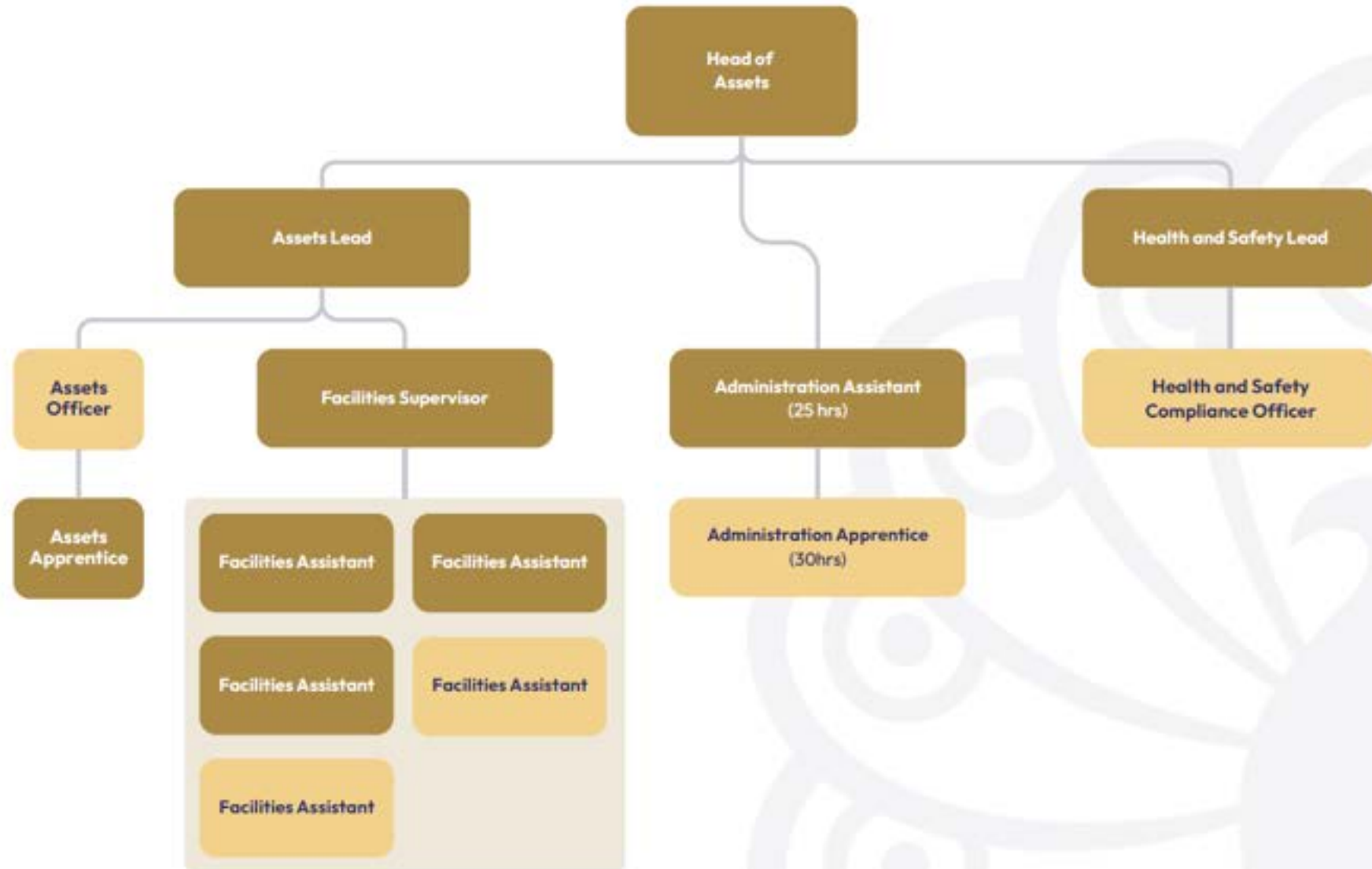
- Victoria
- French Weir
- Comeytrowe Park
- Lyngford Park
- Goodland Gardens
- Taunton Green



Taunton Town Council
**Assets – From
Devolution to Value**

Hugh Davies
Head Of Assets

Assets Team (1st April 2026)



Re-Organisation Order made October 2022 (6 months before we existed)

- Listed the Assets to be transferred on Vesting Day 1st April 2023
- Allotments, Parks, Toilets and Pavilions, Civic Regalia.
- Lack of significant income generating assets despite pressure for a car park.
- Split the work of Implementation into two distinct phases between those products which need to be in place before vesting day on 01/04/23 and those that can be established after.

South West Audit Partnership - Lessons Learned Report 2023

Key Lessons to Learn



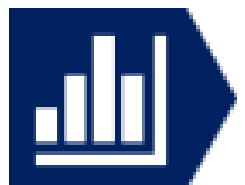
A deferred and considered approach to asset transfers would allow for adequate analysis and planning to be carried out. This result of this would be an efficient and straight forward transfer process, where the transfers are completed in a timely manner.



Meeting minutes should be adequately detailed to ensure that all key discussions and decisions are captured. Minutes should also sufficiently evidence that due diligence has been carried out.



Comprehensive due diligence would ensure that accurate asset cost and required resources would be ascertained. This would help facilitate accurate budget setting.



To ensure that external stakeholder's and the public's views on the assets are collected and concerns addressed, consultations should include specific questions around the assets to be transferred.

Challenges

- 1 Incomplete files handed over on properties and compliance records
- 2 Condition of assets handed over; lack of investment and maintenance
- 3 Outsourced contracts for Open Spaces and Facilities cleansing – hard to manage
- 4 Somewhere to work from would have been nice, to add to our one Combo van !

Trafalgar House

D

- Council need for a Depot premises; Toilet cleansing contract coming back in-house
- Two transactions where Council was 'Gazumped'
- Initial rental of Units 3 / 4 Trafalgar House turning into.....
- Opportunity to purchase from Somerset Council, who were shedding commercial properties due to Financial Emergency.
- 4 other tenants producing an income for the Council
- Use of Alder King as Property Management agent
- PWLB Loan to complete purchase of Trafalgar House based upon income potential.

Case Studies – Devolution that adds value

Brewhouse Theatre

- SC Asset Owner responsible for repairs – Theatre Association Lease
- Notice served – Theatre at risk of closure and offered a 25 year FRI by Somerset C
- Town Council negotiated hard for freehold transfer of asset. Refused.
- TTC played vital role in providing assurance to them as a going concern.
- Brewhouse offered 50 year FRI by Somerset
- Backed with a 5 year Funding agreement from TTC of £105k per annum – able to commit.
- Key cultural venue saved from closure

Vivary Park Pavilion & Paul St

- Vivary Park Toilets transferred over as part of Idverde contract.
- Pavilion also contained a café concession which wasn't transferred initially.
- Negotiation – whole pavilion transferred > £8k of income
- Paul St toilets initially closed by Somerset Council prior to TTC takeover
- Community pressure.
- TTC refurb – due open May 2026
- Changing Place facility.

Land Parcels – Pocket Park and Walled Garden

- Member interest in a redundant piece of land – Community gardening group had been using it.
- Expression from adjoining flat owner to purchase and turn into car parking.
- Council offered first refusal – purchase agreed for £3500
- Expressions of interests from charities and CIC's to operate as a community garden/growing space, aligning with Climate Plan.



Land Parcels – Pocket Park and Walled Garden

- Scrub land on corner of high profile town centre road.
- Town Council enquired – offered freehold at nil cost.
- Land cleared – designs and funding approved to turn into a ‘rest a while’ spot.



Land Adoption Policy

- Council has recently adopted a Land Adoption Policy to provide a strategic guide to requests to adopt and take on new land assets.
- Taunton is a growing Garden town with new development in the south west and north west.
- Potential to look at differing models such as Council trading operation which is in early days of being explored.



Any Questions?

Graham Cox
Head Of Operations

Hugh Davies
Head Of Assets



Thank you

Depo Tour

Meet at Flagpole at 15:40