

Chard Regeneration work continues with major safety improvements due to be completed by the end of the month

The Chard Town Centre Regeneration scheme takes a large step forward with major safety improvements at Boden Street set to be complete by April.

Contractors Alun Griffiths have been continuing work to the Chard Town Centre public realm as part of the Chard High Street Heritage Action Zone and South Somerset District Council Chard Regeneration project.

Kerbing and drainage works at Boden Street are due to be completed shortly, making way for the new asphalt to be laid by the end of the month. This means that the brand new footway along the east side of Boden Street will be in place by April – a major safety improvement for anyone walking into town from Boden Street car park, as well as pedestrian access to Chard Leisure Centre.

This is in addition to changes made to the Boden Street car park junction and Marketfield junction, which delivered improved visibility for traffic entering and exiting. This makes it safer for vehicles accessing the car parks, and for pedestrians crossing the junctions. Planting has also recently been completed at Boden Street car park, enhancing the look of the area.

Other important improvement work is also continuing throughout the town centre:

- The installation of stone paving and granite kerbs along Fore Street is almost complete, with the walkway connecting Superdrug to the Post Office now open. Howard's Row has also been repaved with natural stone and is complete.
- New, blue lias stone channels, which carry Chard's unique water rills through the town centre, are now 90% installed. The lias is locally quarried.
- With thanks to additional funding from Historic England, two new trees will be planted in Fore Street, replacing those that were damaged and removed in the past. A total of 9 new trees are due to be planted across the town centre as part of the scheme.
- On Holyrood Street, utility diversions are nearly complete and the new kerbs and paving are being laid between Pig Lane and the Bath House Hotel, before continuing on up to the High Street junction.

Cllr Jason Baker, Portfolio Holder for Chard Regeneration, said, "It is fantastic to see so many areas of the town centre improvement works almost complete. The safety of residents, visitors and leisure centre members is of utmost importance and the new footway at Boden Street is a great step towards improving this. I understand that some local businesses may be temporarily inconvenienced by the works and I would like to thank business owners and the public for their patience during this time and look forward to seeing them benefit from the improvements in the near future. This work is essential for the regeneration of the town centre and it will create a much more attractive environment for everyone that uses it."

For the latest updates on the Chard Regeneration scheme, visit our dedicated website: www.chardregeneration.co.uk

What is the Chard High Street Heritage Action Zone?

Because of its special historic character, Chard has been designated a High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) and secured £2m funding to revitalise its town centre. Over £1m of government high streets funding from Historic England has been matched by more than £1m by South Somerset District Council. These funds are being invested in making lasting physical improvements that enhance the historic high street.

The High Street Heritage Action Zone scheme is a national programme of £95 million investment across more than 60 English high streets, with £40 million from the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport's Heritage High Street Fund, £52 million from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Future High Streets Fund, and a further £3 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The HSHAZ programme for Chard has three strands – public realm improvements (that is, the pedestrian areas of the street), grants for the repair and renovation of historic buildings and shopfronts, and community engagement activity. Additional funding has been secured by a consortium of local cultural and community organisations, to deliver a cultural programme (see note below).

The aim of Chard's High Street Heritage Action Zone is to make the high street a more attractive, engaging and vibrant place for people to live, work and spend time. We want everyone to be as involved as possible in the scheme, and in the future of Chard's town centre.

About Historic England

We are Historic England the public body that helps people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's spectacular historic environment, from beaches and battlefields to parks and pie shops. We protect, champion and save the places that define who we are and where we've come from as a nation.

We care passionately about the stories they tell, the ideas they represent and the people who live, work and play among them. Working with communities and specialists we share our passion, knowledge and skills to inspire interest, care and conservation, so everyone can keep enjoying and looking after the history that surrounds us all.

To find out what is happening in your area and get involved, please follow @HistoricEngland, #HistoricHighStreets and visit: www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/HighStreetCulture

Culturally Chard

The 'Culturally Chard' consortium, led by Somerset Art Works and Chard Town Council, has been awarded £80,000 as part of the national £7.4 million HSHAZ Cultural Programme which is currently working across over 60 English high streets. Cultural activity funded by this grants scheme will take place over the next three years, co-ordinated by the consortium members and delivered by local organisations. Culturally Chard will bring new activity to the town centre and encourage people to connect to the unique heritage of Chard's high street in creative ways. For more details visit <http://www.culturallychard.org>.