

Hunsdon Village Improvement Project Proposal

(For funding by The UK shared Prosperity Fund & The Rural Prosperity Fund via Ian Campbell, East Herts District Council)

Background & Introduction

Hunsdon is a semi-rural village situated in the South East corner of Hertfordshire close to the towns of Ware (5.5 miles) and Harlow (5 miles). It has a population of around 1100 people in about 550 houses and dwellings and has a picturesque and unique village centre. The village has a long and distinguished history stretching back to Henry VIII's hunting lodge (Hunsdon House) through to being the site for a WWII airfield (Hunsdon airfield).

The village has an active Parish Council and an active social community and has recently approved its neighbourhood plan (Summer 2022) which sets strategic priorities and direction. A part of the neighbourhood plan outlines various potential village improvements which were identified during the consultation process. These potential improvements have been supplemented by further ideas from residents and the Parish Council.

All of the potential improvements have been brought together within this proposal with some initial costings and indicative timelines.

The projects provide a balanced portfolio of improvements which impact positively on all age groups and for both village residents and its visitors.

Projects summary

Project	Estimated cost	Estimated completion date	Main benefits
Refurbishment of the village sign*	£2500	3Q2023	Improved visual appearance and village identity
Village pump renovation*	£2000	4Q2023	Improved visual appearance of key historic monument (grade II listed)
Gas light renovation*	£3000	1Q2024	Improved visual appearance of key historic monument (grade II listed)
Remodelling of the immediate area surrounding the village pump and gas light	£5000	4Q2024	Improved social and communal space for villages and visitors
Renovate directional sign on the village car park.*	£500	3Q2023	Improved visual appearance and village identity
Move the bus stop to opposite the Village Hall*	£500	4Q2023	Improved social amenity for the village

Gateway boxes / picket fences at the 3 entrances to the village*	£3000	2Q2024	Improved safety by marking village entrance
Pop-up café	£7500	4Q2024	Improved social amenity for the village
Points of interest and information boards around the village.	£6000	2Q2025	Improved education and preservation of local history for village residents and visitors
Village historic walking trail	£2000	3Q2025	Improved education and preservation of local history for village residents and visitors
Clearing and widening of footpaths and pavements around the village *	£3000	3Q2023	Improved safety for adults and children accessing village communal spaces
Provision of a log 'camp' circle and other educational improvements in the wooded area known as The Dell	£2000	1Q2024	Provision of social gathering place for Scouts, Cubs and beavers and for the wider community
Communal seating on village green spaces and at points of interest	£5000	1Q2025	Provision of social gathering places for the whole community

* projects with proposed start in 2023

Individual project detail

Refurbishment of the village sign



The village sign is a key element of the village identity and location. The existing sign is showing significant signs of wear, as seen in this photograph from March 2022. Renovation now will ensure longevity of the existing sign and prevent far more costly replacement in the future.

Professional quotation has been received for £1800 + post maintenance

Village pump renovation



Together with the village gas light the village pump is an important reminder of the villages past (and is Grade II listed?). It is now significantly corroded as is its surrounding railings and requires extensive renovation to protect it for future generations.

Professional quotation has been received and gives renovation cost as £xxx

Gas light renovation



Together with the village pump the gas light is an important reminder of the villages past (and is Grade II listed?). It is now significantly corroded and requires extensive renovation to protect it for future generations. It may also be possible to renovate a second gas light at the entrance to "The Dell" wooded area.



The second phase of this project, along with the remodelling of the surrounding area will involve fitting a solar powered light and requires further investigative work on feasibility in parallel with initial renovation.

Professional quotation has been obtained for the first phase works at £xxxx

Remodelling of the immediate area surrounding the village pump and gas light



Whilst renovation of the pump and gaslight will make for a pleasing improvement to the village centre both these monuments are not ideally located being close to the main road through the village. It is not possible to move them due to their listed status so it is proposed that by use of additional kerbing and landscaping in the immediate vicinity this will make these historic sights more accessible and provide an area for social seating.



These works will require working in partnership with East Herts Council, The Highways agency and local grounds work companies to see what is achievable so budgetary estimates at this point in time are only indicative at £500

Renovate directional sign on the village car park



The centre of the village has a directional sign that shows the direction to other local towns and villages. It is showing signs of aging and requires renovation work to increase its longevity and visual appearance and these works will enhance the overall appearance of the village centre.

Professional quotation has been received for these works at £xxx

Move the bus stop to opposite the Village Hall

The existing bus stop shelter, erected for the queens jubilee in 2012, is defunct as the bus service to Harlow was stopped 5-6 years ago. The bus stop close the village hall car park is frequently used daily for services to Hertford but has no shelter. Moving the existing shelter to this new location



would provide a useful social amenity for the whole village.

Resighting the bus stop will need the existing Parish Council notice board to be moved a few meters to provide the space required.

A quote for the works from a local ground works company has been obtained for £xxx

Gateway boxes / picket fences at the 3 entrances to the village

Entrance to the village is marked at three points on the major roads by “Hunsdon” village signs, addition of picket fences and flower troughs will make a positive visual impact for the village. In



addition it will to warn motorists and other road users that they are approaching a residential area and may help to reduce the ongoing speeding issues on these roads (separate projects are being progressed by the Parish Council to help reduce the speed of vehicles through the village.

Costs from village-based companies for these works (materials and labour) have been obtained at £xxx

Village Pop-up café

Purchase of a suitable trailer/horse box and refitting it for use as a café/coffee shop would provide a valuable social amenity that could be used (in conjunction with a commercial partner) to provide drinks and snacks in the village (playing field and other areas) throughout the year.

Indicative costs subject to further exploratory works is £7500

Points of interest and information boards around the village.

The village has many listed buildings some of which are over 500 years old and are of significant historical interest. Coupled with being the site of a WWII airfield and the location of the house where Henry VIII’s children were raised means Hunsdon has many interesting sites to visit. Provision of signage and information points would help to increase footfall to the village and provide educational opportunities for residents and visitors.

The active local history society has the archive material for board content and specialist companies would manufacture and install the boards as appropriate

Indicative cost is £xxx

Village historic walking trail

Once points of interest boards have been placed these would be linked with central village signage and local marketing materials (maps etc.) to further enhance the visitor experience.

Indicative cost £xxx

Clearing and widening of footpaths and pavements around the village



A number of village footpaths and pavements have become overgrown and whilst superficial trimming is performed each year the passable widths, particularly for those with children, is not acceptable. Specialist works to remove overgrowth back to the original pavement and footpath boundaries would improve safety in the village and improve accessibility for villages and visitors alike.

Indicative cost £xxx

Provision of a log 'camp' circle in the wooded area known as The Dell



The wooded area known as The Dell is a peaceful part of the village and home to a multitude of plants and wildlife. The village has a very active Scout group (80 members across all age groups). Provision of a log circle would provide a seating area that would be used regularly by the Scout group and be available for use by the wider community to improve enjoyment of this area. In addition, dependant on funding, we could add additional educational improvements such as a compass and wildlife information board.

Quote form a local groundworks company for these works is £xxx

Communal seating on village green spaces and at points of interest



The village has a number of small green areas which could become local social meeting places for residents (similar to those popping up in larger towns and cities). Provision of benches and tables in these locations and at points of historical interest would provide improved

amenity for village residents and visitors.

Indicative cost £xxx

Summary

The initial budgetary estimate for the complete works is £42k over a three year period. We also need to factor in increased costs over the project lifetime due to the current high inflation rates in the UK so including a 10% project contingency to account for increased costs over three years results in total project cost of £46k.

The Parish Council currently sets aside £6000 per year for all village improvement projects and over the three year period it would be reasonable to assume this project would have access to £10000 of those funds resulting in a funding requirement of £36000 from The UK shared Prosperity Fund & The Rural Prosperity Fund. If total funding was not available in 2023 it could be phased over the three year length of the fund with an initial grant of £15k to start the indicated projects and fund scoping and feasibility works for the more complicated longer term projects

	design and plan				quotations				implementation			
Project	1Q2023	2Q2023	3Q2023	4Q2023	1Q2024	2Q2024	3Q2024	4Q2024	1Q2025	2Q2025	3Q2025	
Refurbishment of the village sign	Green	Yellow	Blue									
Village pump renovation		Green	Yellow	Blue								
Gas light renovation		Green	Yellow	Blue								
Remodelling of the immediate area surrounding the village pump and gas light				Green	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue				
Renovate directional sign on the village car park.		Yellow	Blue									
Move the bus stop to opposite the Village Hall		Green	Yellow	Blue								
Gateway boxes / picket fences at the 3 entrances to the village				Green	Yellow	Blue						
Pop-up café					Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue				
Points of interest and information boards around the village.					Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue		
Village historic walking trail									Green	Yellow	Blue	
Clearing and widening of footpaths and pavements around the village		Yellow	Green									
Provision of a log 'camp' circle in the wooded area known as The Dell			Green	Yellow	Blue							
Communal seating on village green spaces and at points of interest						Green	Green	Yellow	Blue			