

Clerk's Report to Rugeley Town Council



3rd April 2024

Papers are attached for the following agenda items:-

Item 250.2 Finance – Solar – request from member of the public

Item 252 Annual Parish Assembly and A Connected Community Event

Item 254 D Day – 80th Anniversary

Item 258 Boardwalk

Item 260 Recording of meetings

Clerk

From: Clerk
Sent: 13 March 2024 14:47
To: mr n greenthumb
Subject: RE: solar

Good afternoon Mr Greenthumb,

Thank you for your email, which I will present to the next full council meeting.

Kind regards

Sue Buxton CiLCA

Town Clerk

Email: clerk@rugeleytowncouncil.gov.uk

My normal working hours are 9.30am to 3.30pm – Tuesday to Friday

**Advanced notice of leave:-
Annual leave - Tuesday 26th – Friday 29th March**



**RUGELEY
TOWN
COUNCIL**

The Rose Theatre

Taylor's Lane, Rugeley, WS15 2AA
Council: 01899 574074 Theatre: 01899 584036
www.rugeleytowncouncil.gov.uk
www.rugeley-rose-theatre.co.uk



THINK BEFORE YOU PRINT – DO YOU REALLY NEED TO PRINT THIS EMAIL?

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From: mr n greenthumb <mrngreenthumb@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 1:48 AM
To: Clerk <clerk@rugeleytowncouncil.gov.uk>
Subject: solar

Dear Clerk

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to seek clarification regarding the recent solar panel and battery storage installations at Rugeley Town Council facilities. In a recent meeting, it was mentioned that the installations have "not made any money back" for the town, despite the substantial investment exceeding £100,000.

However, I came across a statement on the installing company's website that presents a contrasting view. According to the information provided, the council has experienced significant savings on its energy bills following the installation. Specifically, it was mentioned that there was a 54% saving compared to September 2022 and a 57% saving from the bill compared to June 2023.

Given the discrepancy between the discussions in the town council meeting and the information advertised by the installation company, I believe it would be beneficial for the council and the community to have a clear and transparent understanding of the situation.

Could you please provide a public statement clarifying the following points?

1. The actual financial impact of the solar panel and battery installations on the council's energy expenses.
2. The reasons behind the difference in the reported outcomes between the council meeting and the installation company's statement.
3. Any additional context that would help the residents of Rugeley understand the situation better.

The residents of Rugeley are keen to understand the return on investment from such sustainable initiatives and ensure that public funds are being utilized effectively.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Kind regards,

N.Greenthumb.

RUGELEY TOWN COUNCIL



WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER!

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

THURSDAY 16TH MAY

4PM - COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

7PM - ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

FURTHER INFORMATION TO FOLLOW



D-DAY 80TH ANNIVERSARY BEACON AND LAMP LIGHT LIGHTING CEREMONY



Bruno Peek CVO OBE OPR, Pageantmaster, provides insights into the arrangements for the upcoming D-Day 80th anniversary, and how local councils can actively participate.



D-Day history and commemoration

6 June 2024, marks the 80th anniversary of D-Day and the beginning of Operation Overlord, the most extensive naval, air, and land operation in history, involving the landing of around 156,000 Allied troops in Normandy, with some 130,000 of them touching down on the beaches of Normandy, as they sought to recapture Western Europe from the Nazis.

To honour the bravery and sacrifice of all those who secured the peace and freedom we enjoy today, beacons will be lit around the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories at 9:15pm on 6 June. This will be followed by an event commemorating what is one of the most remarkable achievements in living memory.

We invite all town, parish, and community councils to join us in lighting beacons and hosting events to remember and honour the hundreds of thousands Allied casualties. This includes the nearly 37,000 ground forces and 16,000 air forces killed in the invasion of Normandy's Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword beaches.

Types of beacons

There are four types of beacons being lit for the occasion:

- Bonfire beacon
- Your D-Day 80 Bishops Frome Strawman
- Beacon Brazier
- Gas-Fuelled beacons

D-Day 80 Lamp Light of Peace

For local councils that would like to take part but are lacking resources or land to light a beacon, we encourage the purchase of a reusable 'Lamp Light of Peace'. A very cost efficient and simple way to take part, the lamp's ruby red colour represents the ultimate sacrifice made by brave men and women across the globe, and its flame the 'light of peace' that emerged from the



darkness of war. We would like these lamps to be lit at the same time as the beacons, and once lit for this occasion, they can be re-lit again at 11am on 11 November in 'Remembrance' for many years to come. The Lamps can be purchased and lit by care homes, hospitals, churches, hotels, pubs and families etc, enabling them to be part of this historic commemoration. Please visit <https://lamplightofpeace.co.uk/> for more details.

D-Day 80 Flag of Peace

The Nation will come together at 9am on 6 June to raise the 'Flag of Peace'. I encourage all town, parish and community councils, as well as other organisations, individuals, churches etc to take part in raising the official flag which can be purchased here: <https://newtonnewtonflags.co.uk/shop/>



D-Day 80 Empire Medal Pin Badge

Empire Medals has crafted a beautiful Pin Badge to commemorate D-Day 80, which can be purchased and worn by individuals during the build up to 6 June, and on the day itself. It can also be used as a personal tribute to past family members involved in D-Day and/or WWII as a whole. More information is available at <https://www.empiremedals.com/>.

Promotional tips:

- Extend an invitation to your Lord Lieutenant or local dignitary to light your beacon or lamp and undertake the Nation's Tribute at 9.15pm. Alternatively, organise a competition in partnership with local media, allowing the winner to light the beacon or lamp and deliver the Nation's Toast
- If appropriate - use social media channels to promote your event and post photographs of your beacon lighting ceremony
- Publicise your event. We will provide you with a Press Release template which you can customise. Send it to local media to enable them to get in touch with you directly

IMPORTANT: All participants with a beacon or D-Day 80 Lamp Light of Peace need to register their involvement by providing the following information via email to brunopeek@mac.com no later than 30 May:

- Name of county
- Name of town, parish, city etc
- Name of contact
- Email
- Beacon
- Lamp Light of Peace
- Public or private event

Ensure you comply with all legal and safety requirements before lighting your beacon or lamp.

Timeline 6 June (British Summer Time):

- **8am** – Pipers playing Highland Laddie from selected locations (as part of D-Day 80 Pipers 80-Day Countdown commencing 18 March)
- **8am** - Town Criers participate in the D-Day 80 Proclamation
- **9am** - Nation comes together to raise 'Flag of Peace'
- **11am** - Schools undertake the Poem for Schools D-Day Heroes
- **6:30pm** – Join our World in Ringing Out for Peace (Central Council of Bell Ringers)
- **8:15pm** – Lamp Lights of Peace are lit on Utah, Omaha, Juno, and Sword beaches in Normandy, France
- **9:10pm** – The sound of bagpipes will grace the capital cities of the United Kingdom - London, Edinburgh, Belfast, and Cardiff just before the beacons ignite (as part of D-Day 80's Tribute to Scottish Piper William (Bill) Millin)
- **9:15pm** – Principal Beacon lighting in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, and Isle of Man at Portsmouth. All communities in France and the UK are urged to pause and participate in The International Tribute, alongside lighting of beacons and lamps

Further information

For more detailed information, and to view and download the full 'Guide to Taking Part in D-Day 80', from where the above information is shared, please ensure you visit the official website www.d-day80beacons.co.uk.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is urging all communities to take part and you will be able to read his message on page 3 in the guide.

All information correct at time of print.

Clerk

From: Staffordshire Parish Councils Association <spca.parish@staffordshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 March 2024 10:18
To: Cruise-Taylor, Ian (EXT)
Subject: FW: D-DAY 80 FLAG OF PEACE - TOWN & PARISH COUNCILS

Pl see below

Kind Regards

Ian Cruise-Taylor
Training Officer

Staffordshire Parish Councils Association

Please note I only work part time and there may be a delay in responding to your message, or you can leave a message on 01785 276536

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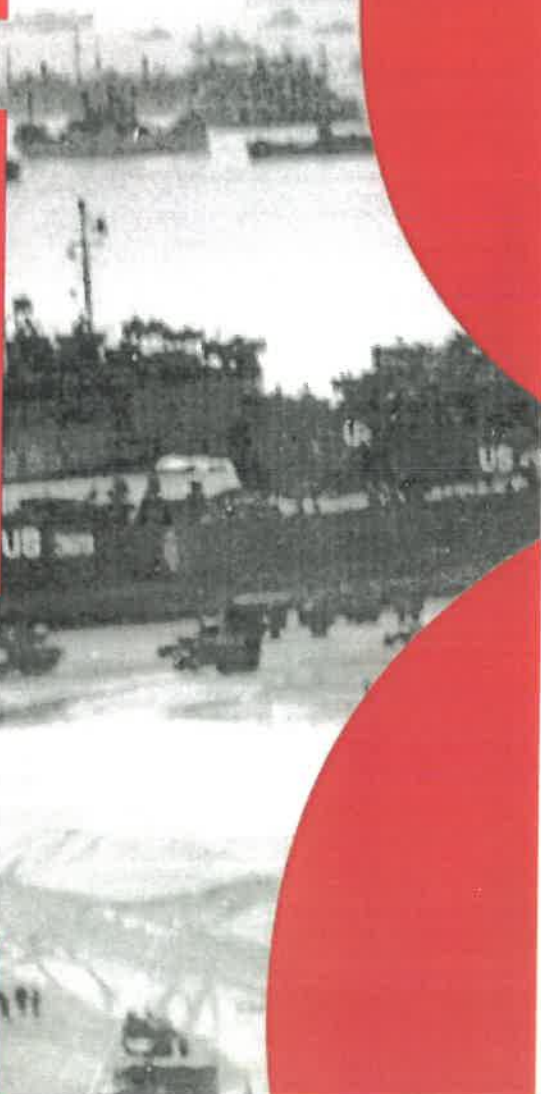
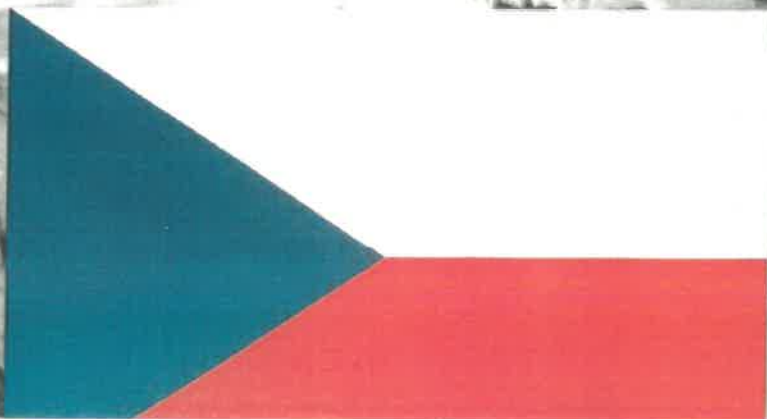
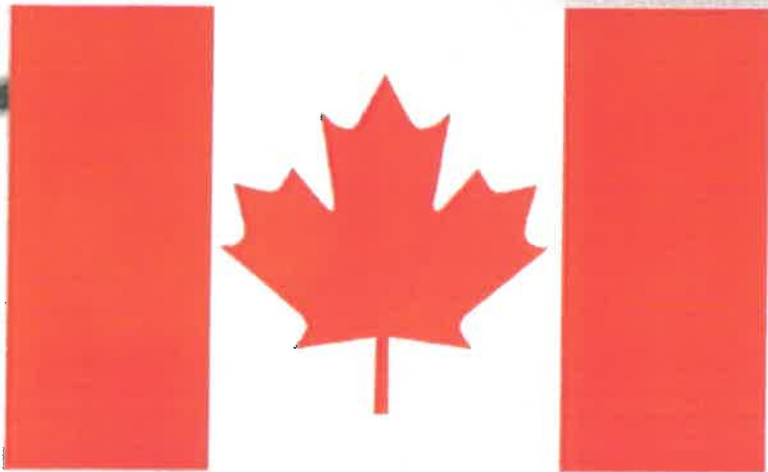
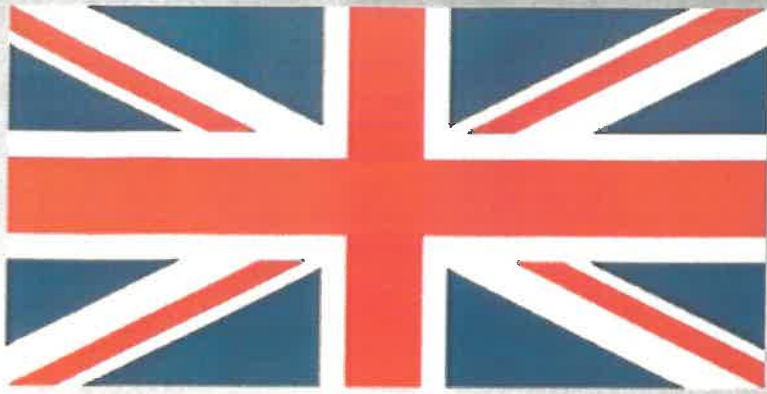
Visit our website: www.spcaonline.org.uk



 **CiLCA**
RECOGNISED TRAINER

From: Bruno Peek <brunopeek@mac.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 12:17 PM
To: Staffordshire Parish Councils Association <spca.parish@staffordshire.gov.uk>
Subject: Fwd: D-DAY 80 FLAG OF PEACE - TOWN & PARISH COUNCILS

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of Staffordshire County Council. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.





Hi,

RE: D-DAY 80 FLAG OF PEACE - TOWN & PARISH COUNCILS

I hope you are well, and thank you for your valuable assistance in circulating important information to the Town and Parish Councils within your County over the last fourteen months, regarding the preparation and opportunities for them to take part in the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landing on 6th June this year.

However, and most importantly, we have been asked by many of your Town and Parish Councils if a souvenir Flag is being produced for the occasion, providing them with another simple, meaningful and an extremely cost effective way for them to take part, so we have listened, and have developed the attached D-Day 80 Flag of Peace for them to consider purchasing and flying from **9am** on 6th June, leaving it up for one week should they wish to. The Flags come in various sizes with the largest being 5' x 3' at a cost of £28.80 including vat post and packaging, with the smallest being a 3' x 2' at a cost of £22.80 including vat post and packaging.

The Flags can be purchased direct from Tracy Turner at Newton Newton Flags Limited - email tracy@newtonnewtonflags.com, the official suppliers of Flags for D-Day 80 - 6th June 2024, who will be delighted to assist your members in providing them with costs and the individual sizes, so with this in mind, we would be grateful if at your earliest convenience please, you would kindly circulate the attached to all your members within your County please, providing them with the opportunity of taking part in these Commemorations with a D-Day 80 Flag of Peace, as well as encouraging others within their communities such as Churches and Schools etc, to participate with one.

As I am sure you are aware, June 6th is a week day, so Schools will still be open, so this Flag provides them with a unique opportunity for **young people** to become involved in this important

Commemoration that day, with the Flags being raised at 9am, which in turn could become part of their early morning Assembly programme too, so we do hope that you will kindly assist us as requested, and again, thank you for your previous and valuable support.

My warmest regards to you as always,

Bruno Peek

Bruno Peek CVO OBE OPR

Pageantmaster

D-Day 80

6th June 2024

Telephone: + 44 (0) 7737 262 913

Email: brunopeek@mac.com

www.d-day80beacons.co.uk

Tabled at mtg 16.2.24
by O. Hughes.

Redevelopment of the area surrounding the former Rugeley Boardwalk in Brook Square, Rugeley

*Draft proposal by Olivia Lyons with support of other Officers and Councillors at Rugeley Town Council
(This is for consideration only as a starting point to improve the area surrounding the former boardwalk in Brook Square, further professional guidance to be sought as project progresses)*

Location

Based in the heart of Rugeley Town Centre, Rugeley Boardwalk links Brook Square and Brewery Street with the car parks located just off Albion Street.



Level of need

The boardwalk serves as a much-appreciated walkway, connecting two of the main streets and retail areas within the town centre. It was well used, particularly by individuals with families, pushchairs and wheelchair users.

The valuable walkway is much missed by local residents and patrons of the town, clearly evidenced by a petition launched in 2020 signed by over 600 signatories.

History

The original construction was established by Staffordshire County Council and was over 20 years old at the time it was stripped down.

An area of the boardwalk was damaged and sectioned off in early 2018. Following inspection, it was closed due to risk of imminent collapse and, as a result, stripped down.



Funds were earmarked for a new boardwalk by Cannock Chase District Council in their 20/21 budget.

A structural engineer was engaged by Cannock Chase District Council to undertake groundwork and survey the required work, designs were sought, and cost estimates received. The boardwalk came in significantly overbudget – however it had been costed based upon fully replacing the boardwalk with a like for like structure. At this point, it was felt that such an expense was unjustifiable use of public funds when considered against a backdrop of high inflation, inaccessibility of raw materials and a cost-of-living crisis. It was diarised to be reconsidered by the Council in Autumn 2023 when it was hoped that inflation would have begun to fall and alternative bridge structures could be looked at.

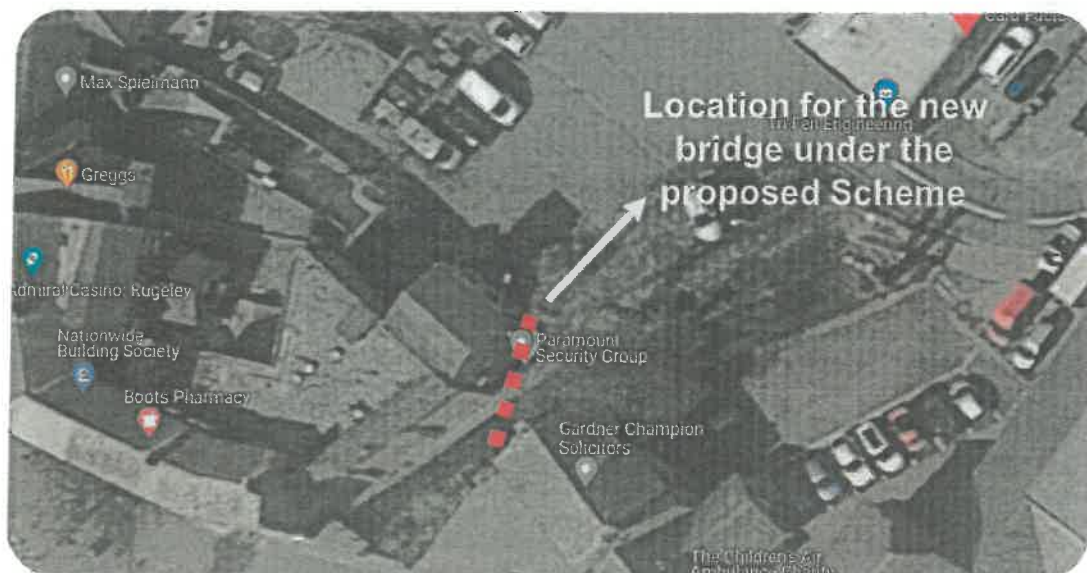
In October 2023, the new Cabinet at Cannock Chase District Council reconsidered the boardwalk. A decision was made not to proceed with replacing Rugeley Boardwalk and instead permission was granted to spend the majority of funds previously earmarked for this purpose on replacing bridges in Rawnsley and Hednesford. The remaining funds were reallocated via the general budgetary setting process.

At Cannock Chase District Council Full Council on 8th November 2023, District Councillor for Western Springs Olivia Lyons, tabled a motion during requesting that the new Cabinet at Cannock Chase District Council consider allocating the sum of £35,000 to Rugeley Town Council to be spent towards improving the area surrounding Rugeley Boardwalk, if an appropriate such Scheme could be agreed.

Proposals for a Scheme

In order to restore a pedestrian pathway in the area and enable it to return to being a walkway which links the two distinct areas of the town centre, there must be a crossing over the watercourse. It is proposed that this be a bridge crossing the water, rather than a full boardwalk running parallel to the brook (as previously considered) given that this requires a significantly greater structure.

Initial assessments have been undertaken, and it has been proposed that a new bridge be located to the side of Gardner Champion Solicitors intersecting the watercourse at an angle towards the rear corner of the building currently occupied by Paramount Security Group.





Graphic to illustrate location of proposed new bridge only (this does NOT represent to type or materials proposed for the new structure).

The proposed location of the new bridge means that the crossing will be located in the same area that the entrance to the former boardwalk was located. The markings to the entrance remain marked out by the remnants of the previous structure.



Previous entrance leading across the former boardwalk





Location of entrance onto the former boardwalk from Brook Square taken from Brook.

The bridge will stretch across the watercourse from the side of Gardner Champion Solicitors to the rear corner of the building currently occupied by Paramount Security Group.

**Side (front) of Gardner
Champion Solicitors where
proposed bridge will be located.**

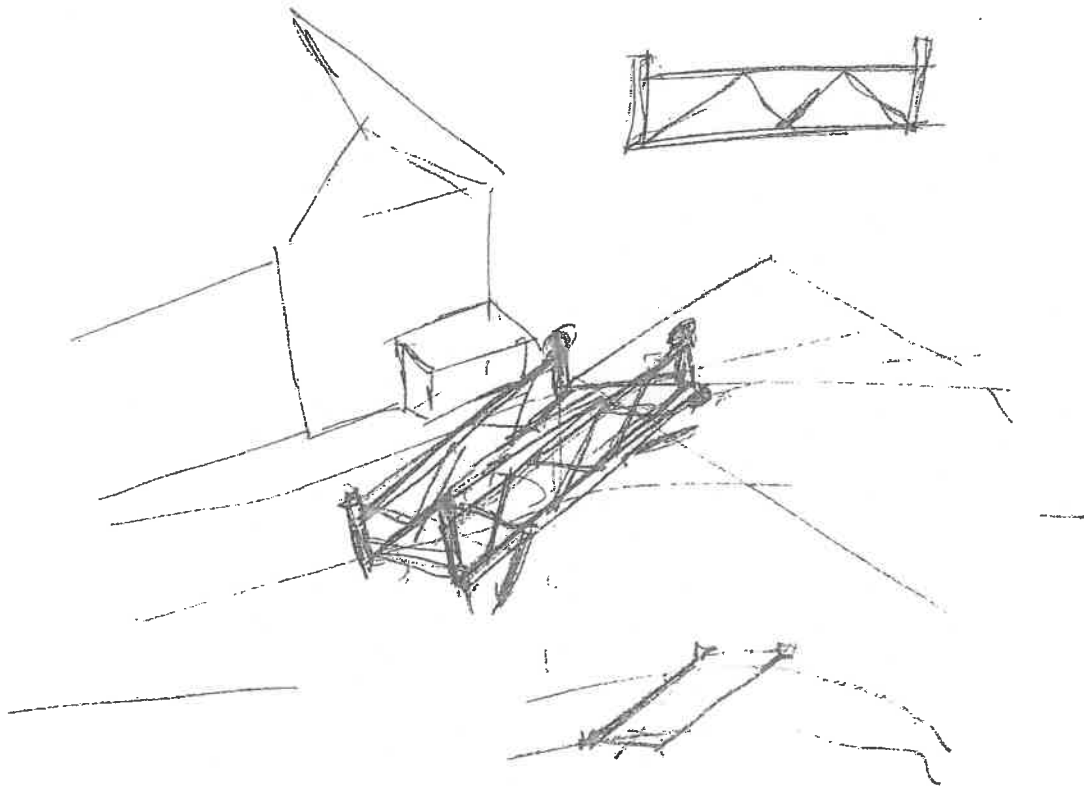


**Side (rear) of Gardner Champion
Solicitors where proposed
bridge will be located.**

Bridge

After initial investigations, a simple bridge crossing the watercourse (with additional width each side as previously requested by the Environment Agency) is proposed, similar to the existing bridges located both at both Elmore Park in Rugeley and along the Heritage Trail.

Initial sketch in respect of the type of bridge proposed in the location identified by this report:



Once the exact size and specification has been decided upon by Rugeley Town Council following further investigative works, it is proposed that a competitive process commence to ensure transparency and fair competition.

An alternative option to be considered is a 'footbridge' kit custom made to fit. 'Kit footbridges' can offer value for money given that they are manufactured using readily available timber (hardwood or softwood) to keep costs to a minimum. They are supplied in component kit form and are pretreated to enable a minimum 30 year (softwood) or 40 year (hardwood) service life – they can be vandal resistant, low maintenance and economical. They can also be designed to ensure 5kN/m² (crowd loading).

Examples of 'kit footbridges' can be found online, and example websites (amongst others) include:

- www.ctsbridges.co.uk
- <https://www.secure-a-field.co.uk/bison-bridges>
- <https://www.externalworksindex.co.uk>

Information surrounding a 'Timber Bridge Kit' obtained online from CTS Bridges:



Data Sheet—Timber Kit Bridge



Timber Kit Bridges

CTS timber kit bridges offer great value for money. They are designed to use readily available timber sizes to keep costs to a minimum.

They are supplied in component kit form making them ideal for areas where access is difficult.

Available in Hardwood or Softwood and with FSC certification. All softwood is pre-treated for a 30 year service life and Hardwood is naturally durable with a service life of 40 years.

All our kit bridges are delivered with a parts list, assembly drawing and assembly instructions. All components are pre-drilled for quick and easy assembly on site. All fittings are provided.

CTS kit bridges are all designed for 3kN/m² (crowd loading) and provide an economical yet safe bridge solution for the smaller length bridge.

Delivery is available to all areas of UK.

If you do not wish to assemble the kit yourselves, CTS can provide an assembly service for the bridge or/and abutments prepared by others.

Standard lengths are 2.7m, 3.3m, 3.6m, 4.5m, 5.1m, 5.7m, 6.2m & 6.9m, 7.5m, 8.1m, 9.0m, 9.6m, 10m, 10.5m.

The standard kit bridge widths are 450mm, 625mm, 1.2m, 1.5m, 2.0m but we can manufacture to any size required and adapt them to the requirements for cycle or horseways.

Images (top to bottom) >

6.5m x 1.0m hardwood kit bridge installed by CTS at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Huddersfield—Client Morrison Construction—Ref 1311

5m x 1.2m softwood kit bridge delivered to Depot for site installation by others—Client Sheffield City Council—Ref 2432

3.6m x 1.2m hardwood kit bridge being assembled on site by staff from Weldon Plant at Bardock Wildlife Trust—Client Weldon Plant—Ref 2218

4.5m x 450mm softwood kit bridge with uplaid parapets being installed on site by volunteers at Scarps Gap—Client Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority—Ref 2509

As an example, the following photos are of 'kit footbridges' from CTS Bridges:





Kit bridges are delivered with a parts list, assembly drawing and assembly instructions. All components are pre-drilled for quick and easy assembly on site. All fittings are provided. Many such websites include a 'Bridge Specifier Tool'.

Once the structure itself has been decided upon, the Town Council could engage with local businesses to support the build and ensure all of the required specifications are met.

Companies such as 'CTS Bridges' are familiar and experienced in providing bridges meeting required specifications for local authorities and public organisations. Examples of locations where 'Kit Bridges' are already in place include locations across Sheffield by Sheffield City Council, Blackmoorfoot Reservoir in Huddersfield, Weldon Plant at Barford Wildlife Trust and Scars Gill in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

In preparation for this initial report, a local builder was engaged (free of charge) to take some initial measurements. These measurements have subsequently been provided to CTS to enable an quote in order to provide a rough estimate and initial starting point.

The initial example quote from CTS is as follows:

Re: Brook Square Bridge

Further to your enquiry regarding the above scheme I have pleasure in offering you the following information and quotation.

General Specification

Overall Length :	9m
Clear width between parapets :	2m
Design live load :	5kN/m ²
Structural form :	Douglas Fir main beams - Beams will be flat (not cambered)
Parapet :	European Redwood - Type A (vertical infills at max 110mm spacing) - Height 1.4m
Deck :	European Redwood - Hi-Grip Excel (two strips of resin/bauite inserted into grooves of deck)
Protective system :	All softwood to be vacuum/pressure treated in accordance with BS EN 351-1 for Hazard Class 4 as defined in BSEN 335-1 for a desired service life of 30 years with preservative tested in accordance with BS EN 599-1
Additional items :	Holding down brackets and bearers included

The assembled weight of the bridge will be 3.7 tonne.

FSC® certified has been specified and this will be supplied as FSC Mix 70%. CTS hold a FSC Licence No: FSC-CO17620 & Chain of Custody Certificate No TT-COC-002257 for the supply of FSC certified timber.

Price

To design, manufacture & deliver to site in fully assembled form	£11,500 + VAT
To install on site onto prepared abutments =	£3,400 + VAT

Design

All design work will be undertaken by Chartered Civil and Structural Engineers experienced in bridgework design.

The structure will be designed for a vertical uniformly distributed live load of 5kN/m². A point load of 3kN will be considered acting on a 200mm x 200mm square in accordance with BS EN 1991-2:2003 Cl 5.2.3 (2) - (note this is a departure from BS EN 1991-2:2003 Cl 5.3.2.2(1))

The softwood bridge parapet will be designed for 0.7kN/m load.



The mark of responsible forestry
FSC C017621



Registered
Qualified Builders
Contractors
Programme



National Highway Sector Scheme



Approved Contractor
CHAS no. 12

Registered in England: 2241888

Registered Office: CTS Bridges Ltd, Abbey Road, Shepley, Huddersfield HD6 8BX

VAT Reg: 461374451

It is assumed that bollards are positioned at each end of the bridge to prohibit vehicle accidental loading. These bollards do not form part of our quotation.

It is assumed that the bridge is above the flood plain and is not subject to any lateral loading from hydraulic action.

All timber will be designed to BS EN 1995

Material Specification

CTS "Hi Grip Excel" is a factory applied non slip insert comprising a polyurethane resin base with aggregate overlay. It complies with the requirements of CD 353, Design Manual for Roads and Bridges; Design criteria for footbridges - Cl 9.5, to achieve a mean corrected pendulum test value of 45 units.

Installation

The bridge will be delivered fully assembled

Suitable abutments, in both geometry and load carrying capacity to support the superstructure, are to be designed and constructed by others. For design and build contracts, imposed loads from the superstructure will be supplied by CTS.

CTS will prepare and check construction drawings for the superstructure to suit the client's initial survey information provided by the client at design stage.

The client is responsible for ensuring and checking that the setting out, adequacy and finish of preceding trades and as built positioning of the final abutments and any other associated works are to specification and suit the CTS construction drawings as used in the design and manufacture of the superstructure.

The installation price quoted assumes that safe access, including public highways, is available for a suitable crane, delivery wagons and ballast wagons to a position that enables lifting at the radius shown below. A suitable crane lift platform for the main placing crane is to be provided by others. The lift platform must be capable of giving access for the main placing crane and resisting the loads imposed by the outriggers of the crane when lifting. The Client is responsible for determining and ensuring the suitability of the ground and ground conditions

For access to be suitable it must be of the correct width and alignment and of the correct load bearing strength for the axle loadings of the crane, delivery vehicles and ballast wagons.

The maximum lifting radius is 16m.

CTS have not visited site during the tender period and the lift radius stated is not a recommendation but a suggestion to allow a crane size to be established and a quotation given. The contractor needs to consider the costs involved of positioning the crane in the position suggested at tender stage and advise if CTS are to provide alternative quotations for different lift radii. The crane is assumed to be delivered with standard outrigger mats provided with the crane selected. Alternative sized mats will be charged.

All services above or below ground affected by our operation are to be identified, protected and made safe by others.

All traffic management required for access to the site and within the site is to be provided by others.

All negotiations with third parties regarding access permission are to be carried out by others.



The mark of responsible forestry
FSC C017621



Registered
Qualified Builders
Contractors
Programme



National Highway Sector Scheme



Approved Contractor
CHAS no. 12

Registered in England: 2241888

Registered Office: CTS Bridges Ltd, Abbey Road, Shepley, Huddersfield HD6 8BX

VAT Reg: 461374451

Delivery and installation have been assumed during normal working hours on a weekday. No allowance for adverse weather conditions such as wind in excess of 11m/sec or such that the lift cannot be undertaken have been made in the price for installation.

CTS would provide 'competent persons' as defined by BS 7121 and certified 'slinger/signallers'. Risk assessments, safe methods of working, and method statements will be provided for CTS's areas of responsibility.

Payment Information

The prices quoted in this letter are nett and do not include for any main contractor discount. The prices assume payment within 28 days of the invoice date for account holders. If you do not have an account with CTS payment in full of cleared funds, prior to delivery, will be required. Following a successful trading history, a credit trading account can be applied for.

The prices quoted in this letter do not include for any retention.

The prices quoted and the anticipated programme make no allowance for any liquidated or general damages to be applied to CTS which may or may not be applicable to the Main Contract.

The quote remains valid for 30 days

The prices quoted are based on our standard terms and conditions, a copy of which is available on request and the details contained within this quotation

Programme

Delivery would be approximately 9 weeks from receipt of order.

This programme does not make allowance for the work load within our factory operations at time of placement of order.

As outlined above, the initial costs are in the region of:

- **£11,500 plus VAT for design (by Chartered Civil and Structural Engineers), manufacture and delivery; and**
- **£3,400 plus VAT if installation on site is required.**

Fencing

It is proposed that fencing could be considered as part of the proposed Scheme to run along the waterside, in the areas where the shallow brook is exposed. Different types of fencing could be considered, including tubular metal estate fencing similar to the fencing currently in place around the lake at nearby Elmore Park.

This can be galvanised for an almost maintenance free lifespan and powder coated to match the surrounding aesthetics. Gates, if required, could also been considered.

Examples of such fencing:

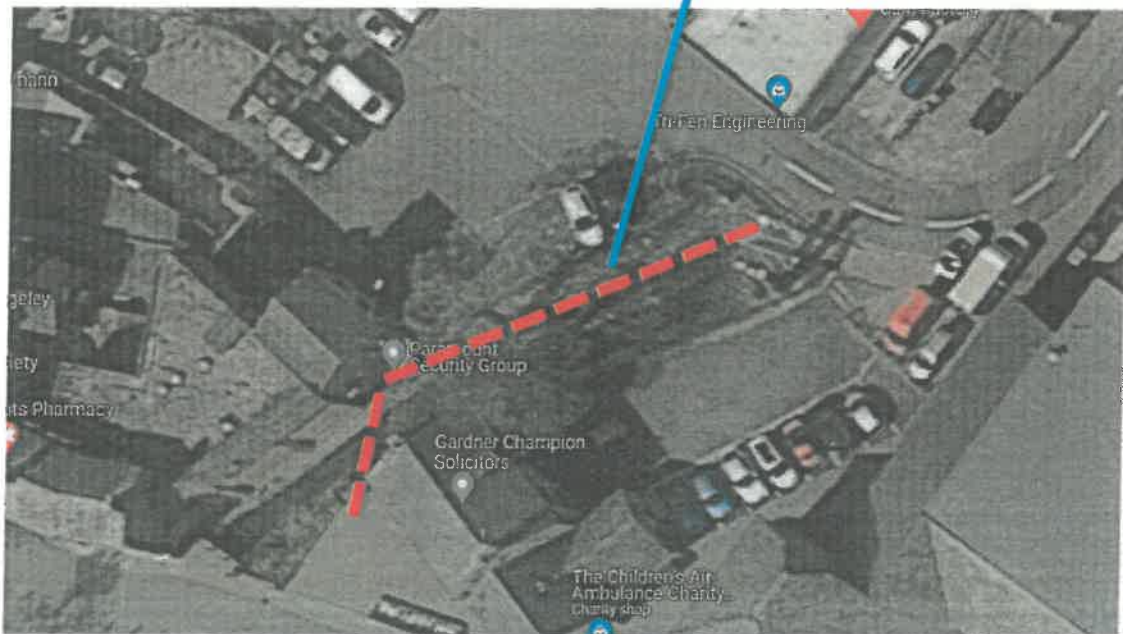


Landscaping

It is also proposed that the area surrounding the brook be landscaped or designed so as to aesthetically improve the area and provide space for local residents and the public to enjoy, such areas could include seated spaces and benches.

The pathway which formed part of the former boardwalk, once it had crossed the brook, ran along the right side (when facing Brook Square). It is proposed that a new pathway in the same location be considered to enable a formal pathway to be reestablished between Brook Square/Brewery Street and Albion Street.

Proposed new pathway running alongside brook and proposed new fencing.



Red arrow represents location of proposed pathway running parallel to Rising Brook.

It is proposed that the end of the proposed new pathway be located in the same location as the end of the former Boardwalk, towards the car parks leading to Albion Street.



Space representing the end of the former boardwalk, leading to carpark along Albion Street.

Ideas for the surrounding area could include a dedicated environmentally friendly area, such as wildflower borders, which are also considered to be lower maintenance.

Rugeley Town Council previously undertook an extremely successful community project which saw the construction of the 'Rugeley Mindfulness Garden' in neighbouring Brook Square, created with the support of a local garden designer and landscaper who created a 3D plan for Rugeley Town Council. It is hoped that the new proposed landscaping and seating areas surrounding the Rising Brook build on this success and compliment the Mindfulness Garden.



Neighbouring Rugeley Mindfulness Garden



The neighbouring Mindfulness Garden focuses on mental health and promoting wellbeing. Following the development of the neighbouring Mindfulness Garden, a local resident-led community group formed to raise awareness of suicide. There is already a public bench dedicated to suicide victims in the neighbouring Mindfulness Garden. The local group, made up of individuals impacted by suicide within their family, has set about arranging a local walk called 'Kai's Memory Miles'. The Group is spearheaded by the mother of a victim of suicide, and, during recent meetings, the Group have expressed an interest of dedicating a space within the vicinity of the former boardwalk area to further raise awareness of suicide locally, in particular youth suicide. This new Scheme could include a peaceful seating area, alongside an appropriate monument or sculpture chosen by the Group.



Funding

It is hoped that Rugeley Town Council can build on the success of the 'Rugeley Mindfulness Garden' which was managed as a community project.

It is proposed that Rugeley Town Council explore various funding streams and grant opportunities for such initiatives, such as those secured for Rugeley Mindfulness Garden. It is also proposed that local businesses be approached, and sponsorship opportunities offered.

Possible funding opportunities to be considered:

- District Councillor for Western Springs Olivia Lyons has requested that the Cabinet at Cannock Chase District Council consider allocating the sum of £35,000 towards the project. This is due to be considered at an upcoming Cabinet meeting in 2024.
- Rugeley Town Council has also been allocated a further sum of £32,436.29 from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UK SPF) for 24/25 (issued in April 2024). The UK SPF funding criteria has already been investigated and this funding could be used to support the proposed Scheme, such as funding benches, seating areas, tables, bins and planted areas.

Additional Considerations

- Discuss 'Deed of Easement' with landowners.

Next Steps

In order to prepare this report, District Councillor for Western Springs Olivia Lyons has already discussed the feasibility of any new Scheme with officers from Rugeley Town Council and the Property Services and Corporate Assets Team at Cannock Chase District Council.

Confirmation has been sought in respect of the next steps and the permissions required, which are as follows:

- Consideration be given to the request for a contribution of £35,000 by the Cabinet at Cannock Chase District Council.
- Rugeley Town Council investigate additional funding and grant opportunities (if required).
- Submit that Scheme proposal for approval from 3 parties:
 - Approval from CCDC as they adopted previous boardwalk (the Property Services Department at CCDC would then seek approval from other internal departments, including legal);
 - Approval from any associated landowners (as the right of access may need to be renegotiated); and
 - Approval and sign off from the Environment Agency who are responsible for the watercourse and brook.
- Seek exact measurements (specification) for the proposed new bridge to enable further quotes to be sought.

RUGELEY TOWN COUNCIL

Full Council – 6th March 2023

Agenda Item 225 – Recording of Meetings

Statement from Cllr Ian Gibson

"Democracy is a fragile, yet precious thing. Within this council it can be seen to be working to better the lives and environment for the population of this town. As a group of individuals, we may not always agree with each other, but we have the maturity to respect each other and to be able to come to a consensus. It may not be perfect, but it is what we have. As councillors we understand that we have rights, but we also have responsibilities, to each other, the public and importantly our staff. That unfortunately cannot hold true for some members of the public who scream about their 'rights'. Far too often they forget that they too have responsibilities of respect too.

Far too often the national press has carried stories of politicians being harassed by members of the public even to the point of murder.

We may in the future have to take some difficult decisions and we should have full confidence that we are able discuss these issues and democratically come to the best decisions that we are able to without a fear of a backlash from any factions within our society.

Unfortunately, social media is making this all too easy for misinformation, half-truths and downright lies to exist in a public platform. Social media is only as honest and as positively productive as the people who use it. It can be so easily used for evil and mischievous purposes. People's ability to be able to use social media's anonymity is only fuelling this continuing trend.

I fully agree that the public, should they wish to be able to film our meetings. As can be seen from the minutes I seconded the agenda item at the last meeting.

However, I feel that the council should be fully aware of what powers we may or may not have when it comes to erroneous information, slander and purposeful targeting of councillors through social media with the intention of making them bullied into submission.

Recently as you may or not be aware the council have been attacked on a number of issues that have come from members of the public being party to wrong information.

So, two last sobering thoughts.

“Our way of taking power and using it would have been inconceivable without the radio and the airplane,” Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels claimed in August 1933.

This may be true of social media today, our modern-day radio and go to for news and information for so many people.

AND

a traditional Lancashire saying (my home county, NOT Yorkshire bleurgh!)

"The man who did nowt wrong, never did owt"