



Streetscape and Heritage Interpretation Study

Final Report

feria
urbanism

X

WOLFSTRÖME

Bridport

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Introduction

POLICY CONTEXT

The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (BANP) passed referendum in early 2020. It contains a dedicated section with policies regarding the future management and development of the area defined as the centre of Bridport.

A key piece of work that the community volunteers involved with the BANP identified but were unable to undertake or commission at that time, was the need to review the functionality of the current streetscape/public realm and audit heritage interpretation. This was therefore included in the BANP as a future action:

BANP Project 03 — A strategy is required to define, guide, and plan the heritage interpretation activities across the neighbourhood plan area. The strategy will draw on the output from Project 01 and require extensive consultation with local parishes, voluntary groups, and statutory agencies.

Project 01 referenced above was published in 2021 and considered Access & Movement in and around the centre of Bridport. It sets out actions needed to create a visually integrated, uncluttered and fully accessible streetscape for the main retail streets in the town centre taking into account necessary resting places, pedestrian safety, access for those with mobility issues and the needs of

people with disabilities. This study has been considered as a background context to this project.

A Town Centre Working Group has been established by Bridport Town Council to oversee and drive delivery of all policy ambitions and projects related to the town centre. This group has been engaged in the production of this report.

TOWN CONTEXT

Bridport is a busy, thriving town and is a centre for shopping and services for the surrounding villages and further afield. For many people the car is the principal mode of travel for journeys into town from the surrounding parishes. In the summer months, and especially on market days and for town events, traffic can be particularly heavy leading to major congestion, increased pollution, and extended journey times.

The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan sets out “Access For All” ambitions for the centre of Bridport. The preferred policy response is to define a long-term ambition for a more sustainable transport future for the town centre whilst responding in the short to medium term to the current challenges of a primarily car-based transport system. The long-term aspiration is to make it easier to walk, cycle and use public transport in and

around the neighbourhood plan area, with the aim of reducing reliance on the car.

The need to understand and respond to forces that are driving changes across all UK high streets is also a factor in this project, in particular considering actions that respect, safeguard, and enhance the special character of the town. This report explores ideas that strengthen the vitality and the brand identity of Bridport helping to create a distinctive high quality physical environment that differentiates Bridport from other town centres in Dorset.

NOT JUST THE TOWN CENTRE

While the focus for much of this project is the centre of Bridport it is understood that the story of the area’s heritage extends out and includes the surrounding parishes. In considering a rich and coherent interpretation response, the project team explored how this wider area could be included in the design response.

PROJECT AIMS

To develop a heritage interpretation system that provides a coherent, coordinated, and well-connected interpretation across the wider Bridport area. Performance markers include:

- Encouraging local communities to engage with, value and celebrate their heritage
- Helping people to experience, understand and value heritage
- Promoting sustainable visits to the town
- Better harnessing heritage to promote and support the local economy
- Using sustainable materials that are durable, easy to maintain and compatible with a shift to a circular economy

STAKEHOLDER & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report draws on an understanding of community views and needs as expressed through the various consultation process undertaken for the BANP and through its own series of direct engagement, through a series of walking tours that helped inform the final recommendations.

AUDITS & RESEARCH



Walking Tours

The project team ran three in-person on-site walking tours and one virtual walking tour of Bridport to collect data relating to what places and spaces local people viewed as important. Over twenty people took part — members of the public, historians, staff from Bridport museum, and members of Bridport Town Council all came along to share their stories and buildings of importance.

These tours revealed many fascinating facts throughout the tours and the recurring themes that emerged were as follows:

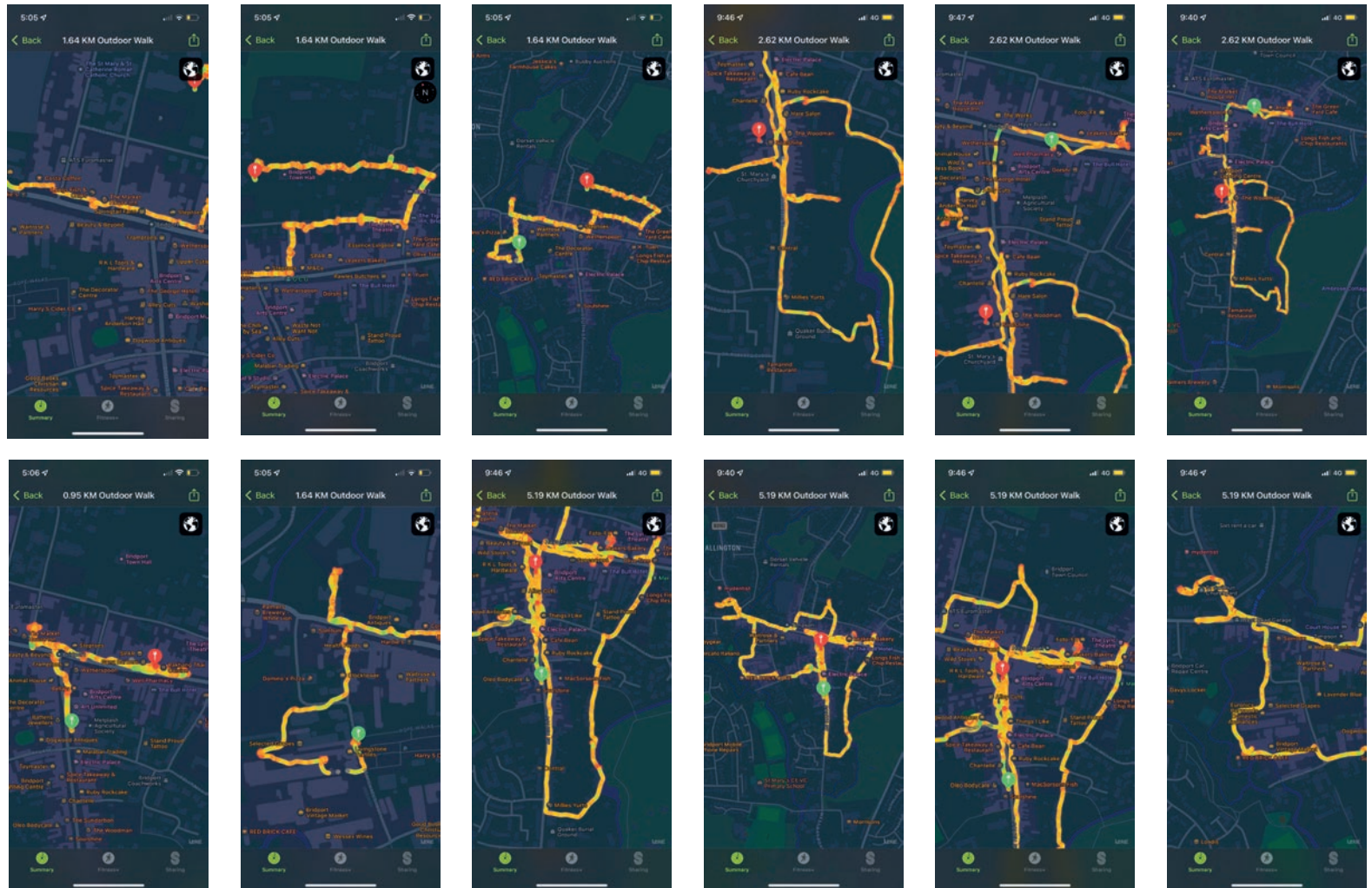
- The importance of the rivers in shaping Bridport
- The way that rope making has shaped the town such as how the street pattern has been framed by this industry
- The natural materials used to create rope and the link with the landscape
- Bridport as a place at the intersection between the industrial and the urban and the rural. It is a rural location that has faced many of the issues of an industrial conurbation, similar to many towns in northern England
- It has a spirit of revolution and resistance, of workers rights. This spirit is present today and relevant today. On the precipice of global apocalypse and climate change, people are keen to embed that spirit of action, change and revolution in the town. This project provides a way of representing this history and these contemporary themes around action and change.

The images to the right show a few pictures taken during the walking tours with the Feria Urbanism team.



Walking Tours

The GPS tracking data maps shown here capture the different routes taken during the walking tours.



Street Clutter

Part of the research phase was to assess the street clutter found in the core area of Bridport town centre. This assessment was focused on the street pattern formed by South Street, East Street, West Street and North Street.

The problem of street clutter in Bridport was highlighted in the Bridport Access & Movement Study published in 2021. While this study addressed a wide range of matters linked to mobility, travel, and transport, the detail of what can be found in the street – bins, bollards, boards, signs, posts, and other objects – was also referenced:

“I find the area in front of the Post Office particularly difficult; I don’t see the signs on the pavement until I am almost tripping over them” – interviewee with visual impairment, quoted in the Bridport Access & Movement Study, 2021.

Before any new items of wayfinding and heritage interpretation kit are introduced to the street scene in Bridport, it will be important to remove as much extraneous material as possible. Simply adding new items into the current mix without pruning and removing will only add to the problems.

WHAT IS STREET CLUTTER?

Street clutter can be defined as anything in the streets and spaces, especially the highways and footways, which does not serve a useful or necessary function. Many local councils across the country have been engaged street clutter removal schemes in recent years. The aim is to remove obstructions, to improve accessibility and to lift and modernise the visual quality of public realm.

The removal of clutter is particularly important in ensuring that streets and space provide a safe environment for blind or visually impaired pedestrians and that there is sufficient unobstructed footway space for all pedestrians including those with reduced mobility.

The most visible form of clutter comes from over use of traffic signing and traffic related equipment. The clutter effect can also arise from poorly placed street furniture, and the inappropriate use of guard railing.

Clutter constantly accumulates. Changes to car parking arrangements, new traffic management systems and better directions for tourists often result in new signs or street equipment being introduced yet the older versions remain in place.

The most common forms of street clutter encountered in Bridport are unnecessary signs, bollards, pedestrian guardrails and items such as ‘A’ boards.

In general terms, whilst some items clearly constitute clutter, such as illegal signs and redundant bollards, others will depend on their location and purpose. For example, where a regulatory sign is required to accord with signing regulations, the sign and post may be considered necessary, however, the post may be considered as street clutter if there is scope to move the sign to a nearby lamp column.

THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS

The economic well-being of our towns is increasingly dependant upon the appearance of the streets and spaces experienced by residents and visitors. Clutter has an eroding effect on the appearance of a street. It can reduce the full quality of historic views and vistas which distinguish one place from another.

This is particularly pertinent in Bridport, a town that affords fine views from the town to the adjacent countryside and has an economy increasingly linked to tourism and the visitor economy. The town needs to look smart and tidy if it is to provide a warm welcome.

CONSIDER EACH COMPONENT

Each component that makes up potential street clutter has to be considered separately. The section opposite (page 9) sets out the core components of clutter as identified in Bridport clutter and what can be done about each. Obvious signs of neglect should be addressed first. Graffiti, fly posters and overgrowing vegetation should be removed. Benches and bins may need to be repaired or replaced.

If guard-railing is not needed, it should be removed. Street lights can be put on buildings. Bus shelters can be combined with seats and bins. Traffic signs might be reduced in size and complexity and it may be possible to fix some to walls and railings rather than to separate posts.

Pavements should be neat and tidy and strong enough to resist any anticipated heavy vehicles.

Some local councils have a design champion to take these ideas forward. Some delegate to locally based panels or working parties. In other places local people in community groups take the initiative. It is recommended that the Town Centre Working Group agree how to move this forward.

Clutter Categories & Potential Actions



UTILITY BOXES

These are often fixed elements provided by the statutory services and utility companies and cannot easily be shifted to a less prominent location or placed underground. However, they can (with the right permissions) be decorated and treated as an art installation. Maybe these items could accommodate some of the wayfinding devices, such as the patterns and tiles, as described later in this report?



SHOP GOODS

Displaying goods out on the street can make a positive contribution to the vitality and vibrancy of the street scene. These should be encouraged. Displays can become a problem if set out in locations where clutter obstacles exist such as posts, bins, and bollards. Therefore a priority of the de-clutter can be to make more room for positive contributions, such as shop displays, in specific locations. The area adjacent to the Post Office is an obvious candidate here.



CAR PARKING

Parked cars are often not considered to be visual clutter but they take up a significant amount of space and can visually dominate the street scene. From an assessment of maps and plans it is estimated that there are approx. 12 on-street car parking spaces on West Street, approx. 40 on East Street and approx. 20 on South Street.

Given the large surfaces car parks within the town centre, is all this needed? Maintaining spaces for those with a disability is important so a parking review to ensure the right balance is achieved is recommended.



BENCHES AND SEATING

Places to rest are increasingly recognised as an important element of a welcoming and well-designed town centre. However, too often, benches are placed without much thought about the user experience. Issues such as noise, views, or immediate context, such as proximity to bins which can smell unpleasant need to be considered.

The strategy needs to encourage seating that is regularly placed across the town centre and in positive locations. Bespoke seats and benches are suggested as part of the system of parts.



LITTER BINS

These are a necessary item and there is an understandable expectation for there to be sufficient numbers across the town centre.

However, bins do not need to be closely grouped with seats and benches, as is often the case, but be within visual range. Bins need to be evenly distributed across the town centre, rather than concentrated in certain locations.



SHOP SIGNS

A well-designed, locally-distinctive, and creative shop A-board can become a positive addition to the street scene.

If located away from pedestrian desire lines and not creating an unnecessary obstacle, such boards can provide information, and good humour to the town centre experience.

A bespoke “wood and rope” inspired A-board could also become part of the wayfinding system kit of parts.



BOLLARDS

The main use of bollards is to prevent vehicles entering areas they are not allowed to access. A careful review of all the bollards across Bridport town centre may reveal other ways to prevent such access, such as installation of more useful items of street furniture, such as benches. However, some bollards may need to be dropped to allow access at certain times.



LAMP COLUMNS

Many historic town centres benefit from street lighting attached to the walls of buildings, negating the need for columns from the ground, helping to reduce clutter. However, the property owner permission required are hard to achieve today if not already in place. Street lighting for adopted highways needs to meet certain performance criteria (e.g. light levels) and require columns to reach this standard.

THE NEED FOR A DETAILED AUDIT

Beyond the scope of this commission, a detailed clutter audit is required to identify precisely which items in the street scene can be removed.

It is recommended that established links with Dorset Council officers responsible for highways, planning and/or public realm are used to conduct a joint street clutter audit. Without local authority participation, this audit will lack the necessary legitimacy to inform a reduction in clutter through the removal of extraneous street scape elements.

A working group could prepare the first set of results and share these with Dorset Council officers for comment and agreement. Further engagement with service providers will be required over the status of various equipment, such as utility boxes.

This audit is to be focussed on the town centre, with emphasis upon East Street, West Street, South Street and North Street, with adjoining lanes and alleyways that connect to immediate local areas.

HOW TO CONDUCT A STREET CLUTTER AUDIT

1 — Identify where the survey is taking place by providing a street name or names (if around a junction); full OS grid reference (two letter code and six figure grid reference) and a postcode.

2 — Look at each item of street furniture systematically and ask why it was put there, whether it is really necessary or whether it could be better located or designed. Note down the problem it is causing, perhaps using the four categories (page 12) of restricted movement; unattractive and messy; temporary untidiness; or duplication and repetition.

3 — Number and record each item on a street survey form according to its type (see eight category types on page 9) and what could be done with it (e.g. remove, relocate, combine with other items, redesign, leave as it is etc)

4 — Locate the item on a map and mark it with the corresponding number.

5 — Take photos of the street scene looking in each direction across the area of the survey.

6 — Take written notes of any other issues that identified on what could be done to improve the street scene.

FOCUS FOR CENTRAL BRIDPORT

The map on page 11 shows a suggested way to break the central area into five distinct “declutter zones”. It is expected that these smaller areas will make the detailed mapping exercise easier to manage. The emphasis for each area will be different, with some sections more suited to sitting-out activity and dwell time compared to others. However, the overall aim for all zones is to reduce the eroding effects of clutter on the visual quality of the street scene, to reveal new perspectives and views, and to allow positive activities to thrive.

A TOWN HALL AND BUCKYDOO SQUARE

This space to be the “show-piece space” for Bridport, with the highest quality surfaces, materials and equipment. Create a civic heart with maximum dwell time.

B SOUTH STREET

Declutter to maximise the ability for spill-out activity and sitting out on wider pavements. Make access and mobility easier. Improve visual quality.

C WEST STREET

Declutter to maximise the ability for spill-out activity and sitting out on wider pavements. Support for markets and other temporary events. Make access and mobility easier. Improve visual quality.

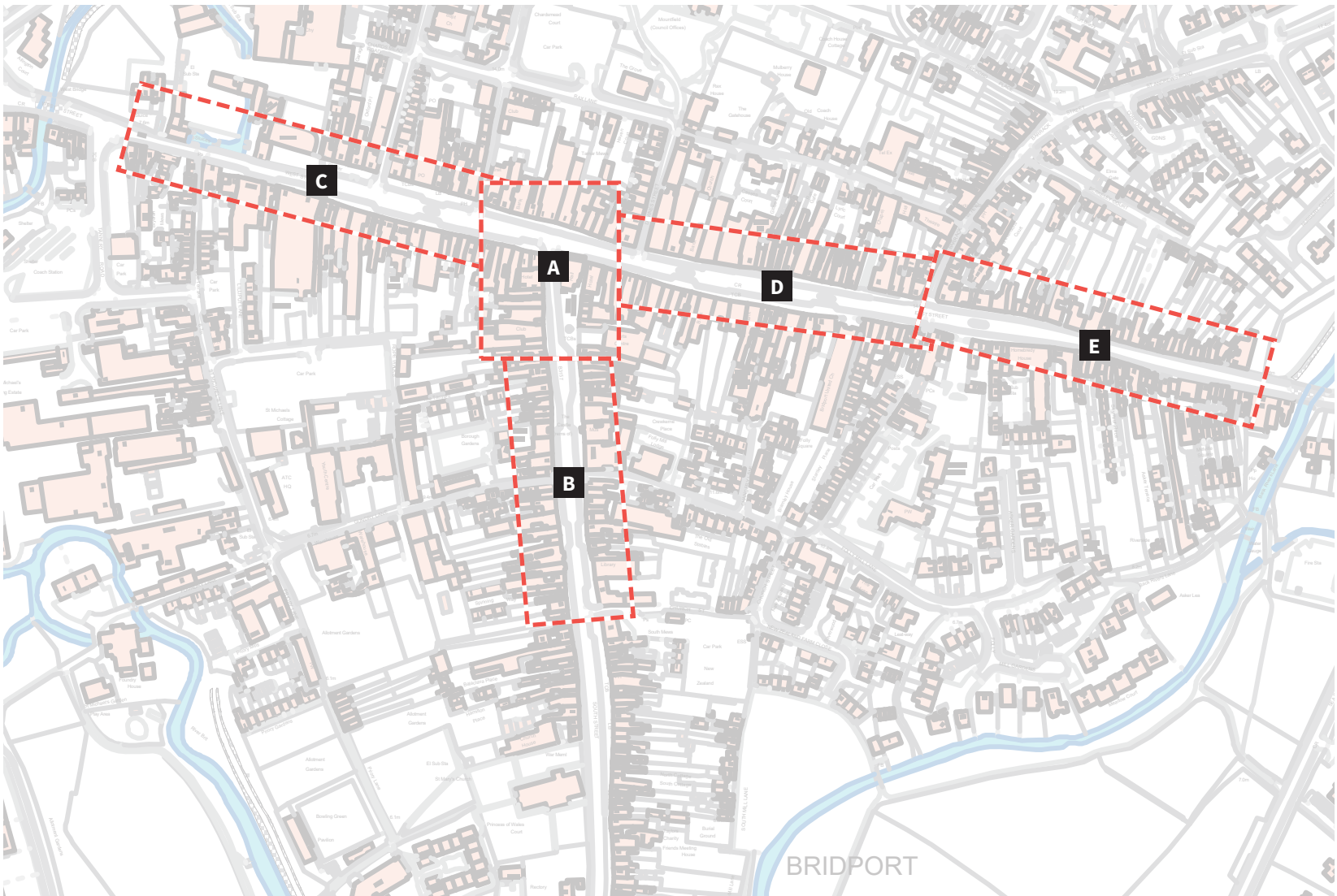
D EAST STREET (WEST OF BARRACK STREET)

Declutter to maximise the ability for spill-out activity and sitting out on wider pavements. Make access and mobility easier. Improve visual quality.

E EAST STREET (EAST OF BARRACK STREET)

Declutter to make access and mobility easier. Improve visual quality.

Potential Declutter Zones



Clutter Observations

The project team identified four broad types of problems:

RESTRICTED MOVEMENT

Too many objects in the pedestrian only areas simply reduces the amount of free space to move through. This makes walking challenging and unpleasant. The lack of space also affects those using mobility scooters. While East Street and West Street are wide streets (approx. 20m building front to building front) they do not feel generous towards pedestrians. Not feeling “hemmed in” will be an immediate and welcome benefit of any de-clutter exercise.

PHOTO REF

1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10



UNATTRACTIVE & MESSY

The accumulation of too many objects in one place, or a mismatch of objects, was observed. For example, a concentration of utility boxes, bins too close to benches leading to unpleasant smells or information boards tucked into places making them almost impossible to read. Act to separate, redistribute or rearrange.

PHOTO REF

3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15



TEMPORARY UNTIDINESS

Several objects identified in the street scene appeared to be left over from market day or other street closures. Traffic cones, signs and sandbags add unnecessary visual clutter and look untidy.

PHOTO REF

6, 15, 16, 18



DUPLICATION & REPETITION

There are incidents of repetition, where defunct/older items have not been removed after a new one was added or additional items have been introduced without obvious reason.

PHOTO REF

14, 17



Recommendations

Our Approach

The primary themes and concepts for this project focus on creating a set of interventions and mechanisms that will enable Bridport to create its own heritage and interpretation system.

1

WORKING AT SCALE

Streamline existing walks and trails into three routes that range in scale and distance, encompassing different parishes and offering accessibility to different people. These can be presented under one new identity that tie the three routes together.

2

WAYFINDING KIT OF PARTS

The wayfinding markers are primarily concerned with defining routes, giving direction and moving people around as well as an element of interpretation. There might be large signposts or small tiles that indicate the route.

3

FLEXIBLE PROGRAMMABLE SYSTEM

Encourage interaction with flexible audio guides

Facilitate a type of geo-caching for found objects and storytelling

Allow people to spot small details scattered around (“look up”)

4

IDENTIFY COMMUNITY MEETING POINTS

Enhance community notice boards

Provide places that encourage storytelling and discussion

Our Approach

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH PHASE

The primary themes and concepts revealed by the research focus on creating a set of interventions and mechanisms that will enable Bridport to create a bespoke heritage and interpretation system.

It is recommended that the system should comprise a set of interconnected parts that can be used by Bridport Town Council and its partners (e.g. the Bridport Museum) to establish a permanent set of physical interventions from which flexible content, such as audio guides, can be accessed and promoted. The recurring themes that emerged during the research phase included:

- The importance of the rivers in shaping Bridport
- The way that rope making has shaped the town
- The materials used to create rope
- Bridport as a place at the intersection between industrial and rural
- A spirit of revolution and resistance

It is important to note that some people felt the rivers were as important as rope in terms of shaping the town. This could be a nice visual metaphor: rivers and ropes could be abstracted to reference mark making, perhaps only becoming rope at certain crossover points, or only becoming river at certain points.

The research phase concluded that this project needs a multi-faceted approach that leads to a single, joined-up outcome. The opportunity now exists to create a wayfinding system that can look back, take stock, and reflect but also look to the future and consider how the local context fits into a global context.

WORKING AT DIFFERENT SCALES

The first recommendation is to deploy a system that links the urban heart of Bridport with its surrounding landscape. The history of the town is intrinsically linked to the adjacent countryside – the source of much of its economic wealth, both in the past (for hemp growing for rope manufacture) and today (for tourism and outdoor recreation).

The approach to working at scale is to streamline existing walks, trails, and public rights of way into three circular routes that range in scale and distance, encompassing different parishes and offering accessibility to different people. These three consolidated routes can be presented under one new identity that tie them all together. These routes need to be identified using physical elements that use a simple architecture.

WAYFINDING KIT OF PARTS

The physical elements can be considered as a “set of things” which are all dressed in the same outfit but perform different tasks. The physical elements could comprise the following:

- Wayfinding posts, totems, and signage
- Tiles and objects
- Community noticeboards
- Community meeting places – specifically identified places to meet, to talk, to socialise

For the wayfinding elements, a simple architecture is required. For example, these might be posts with designs that could also contain a draw for geo-caching type exchange of objects. In this sense, the wayfinding markers are primarily concerned with defining routes, giving direction, and moving people around as well as an element of interpretation.

Once the routes have been defined by the waymarking elements, a second layer of engagement is recommended in the form of a series of colours or engaging tiles located on walls, the ground, and other surfaces. These tiles can be scattered along the route and would be moments of surprise and engagement as people explore and discover more of Bridport.

These tiles could fall under three headings:

- Archive photos, shown in or as near as possible to the specific location, allowing alternative and historic views of a place
- Instructional tiles which suggest walkers ‘look up’ or ‘check out the view’
- Fact-based tiles that provide historical and contemporary information such as the longest rope, the tallest tree etc.

The recommendation for content creation is to work with the of existing archive images and text to create a series of discrete, jewel-like tiles that could be attached to buildings and places of interest.

As objects they would function as curious indicators, revealing past residents, events, or moments. As a set of interventions, this set of images and instructions embedded in the streetscape, attached to walls, and so on will create a series of curious moments for the casual Bridport wanderer.

However, for those wishing to find out more, the Bridport Museum (or others) could use these tiles as prompts to create a series of audio guides that re-contextualise the locations where the tiles are found. These audio guides will be part of the flexible programmable system.

FLEXIBLE PROGRAMMABLE SYSTEM

Audio guides can provide a deeper level of engagement. The audio guides could follow the pre-determined routes as mapped by trails and refer to the archive images installed along the way.

The local museum could be commissioned to produce these audio guides, record walks such as the town tour, women's history, worker's rights tour, historic buildings or more.

These audio files could be hosted on a website for anyone to download and listen to and should be downloadable onto a smartphone. There could also be a paywall with a donation option. The website host could be Bridport Town Council, Bridport Museum, or the Literary & Scientific Institute or another local organisation.

The audio guides will allow for the plurality of the town's heritage that people feel so strongly about but will not add to the street clutter in a way a plurality of physical objects might do.

However, the audio guides can also function as a flexible space. They can be recorded and re-recorded in order to reflect the open-ended interpretations of history, complexity, and nuance. For example, different guides can be uploaded for different seasons and different anniversaries.

After an initial set of audio guides, further commissions could include fiction, music, tradition and so on. Bridport could end up with an "album of audio trails" and people could be encouraged to contribute their own. Anybody could record one or, indeed this presents a further commissioning opportunity. There could be an annual award to a historian, a writer, an artist, or a musician to create a new audio guide. This approach also allows for a community engagement programme. For example, workshops could be run by the writers' group The Bank of Dreams and Nightmares. This could create a work of fiction work linked to a particular part of the town.

These audio files will no doubt focus upon specific locations along the routes, and some of these may be suitable for becoming community meeting points, identified using the same visual language as the other elements in the system.

IDENTIFY COMMUNITY MEETING SPACES

Implementing community meeting spaces and places to talk along the identified wayfinding routes is recommended. These will be public space interventions that both symbolically and physically create a space for people to talk. These are spaces that acknowledges history, but which also

faces the future and the uncertainty to come. It becomes a space to meet others who wish to be part of the solution. These will take the form of benches, seating, and a convivial arrangement of elements to establish gathering places in appropriate locations along the route.

Some of these spaces could include community information points. The purpose of these new community message boards is to replace existing boards with elements that share the same visual language as the other elements in the system but maintain the warmth and directness of paper and posters pinned up to communicate and share local ideas.

In some ways, these noticeboards could be seen as political spaces or spaces for action, in that they are free, open, unmediated spaces in which people can choose to communicate freely about anything they want. This is the joy of a community message board, and it is clear that these spaces are actively used in Bridport.

The community message boards element within the permanent structures could be indicator of Bridport's spirit of debate and be seen as a way to connect local self-organisation to both the past and future. Could some of these new boards be given over to manifestos for change or their locations become the venue for Speaker's Corner type meetings?

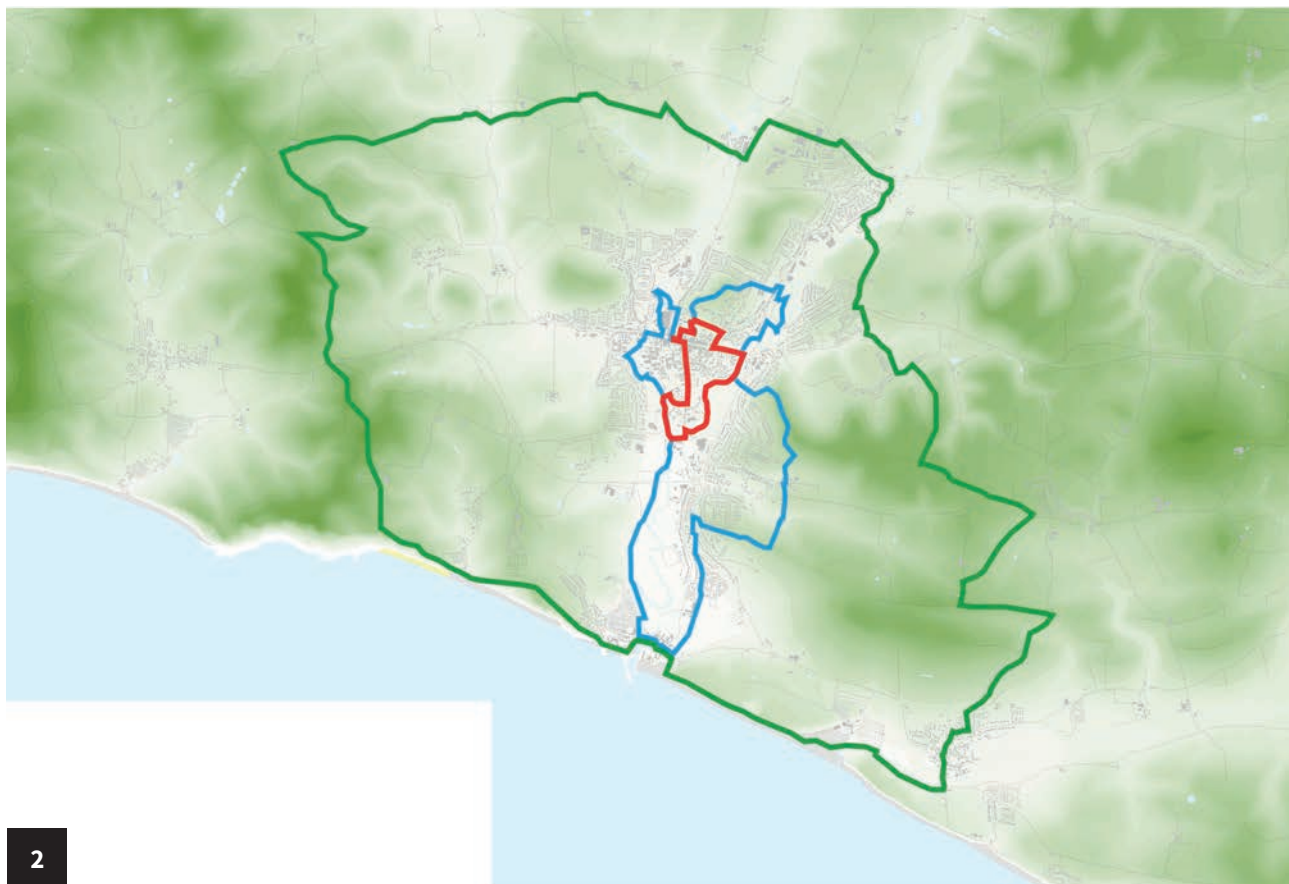
Working at Different Scales



1

The team plotted and assessed all the existing public rights of way, bridleways, footpaths, and tourist trails as found on leaflets and existing maps. These were plotted onto a single map.

- Sea view from West Bay cliffs** — Mill Street Loop from Shipton Gorge - Sea view from West Bay cliffs – Mill Street Loop from Shipton Gorge | hike | Komoot
- Bridport Green Route** — Bridport Town Council
- Women's History Walk** — Bridport Museum
- West Bay, Bothenhampton Hill, the River Brit and the River Asker Loop**
- Symondsburys loop** — Symondsburys Walks (gps-routes.co.uk)
- Colmer's Hill loop** — Colmers Hill Walking Route (gps-routes.co.uk)
- Walditch loop** — Bridport and Walditch Loop - Dorset, England | AllTrails
- Bradpole Loop** — Bradpole Parish Green Loop - BRADPOLE-PARISH-GREEN-ROUTE-June-2020.pdf / A Circular Walk Around Bradpole Parish – Bradpole
- Bridport Town Walk** — The Dorset Walk, Bridport, Dorset Life - The Dorset Magazine
- West Bay Burton Bradstock Loop** — West Bay & Burton Bradstock Walk - South West Coast Path
- Shipton Gorge Loop** — Country Walking Magazine - Country Walking: Burton Bradstock, Dorset (osmaps.com)



Based on these multiple existing routes, three concentric loops have been identified for the purposes of this project. The consolidation of eleven disparate stretches of footpath and/or public rights of way into three recognisable and legible loops creates a map onto which the wayfinding kit of parts can more easily be applied. The three loops also creates branding and promotional opportunities (see page 32).

These three loops vary in terrain and scale, with the outer loop (green) approx. 21 kms and almost exclusively rural in nature. The length and the terrain could attract weekend visitors, ramblers and more active adults.

The middle loop (blue) is approx. 10 kms in length and provides a mix of both urban and rural environments.

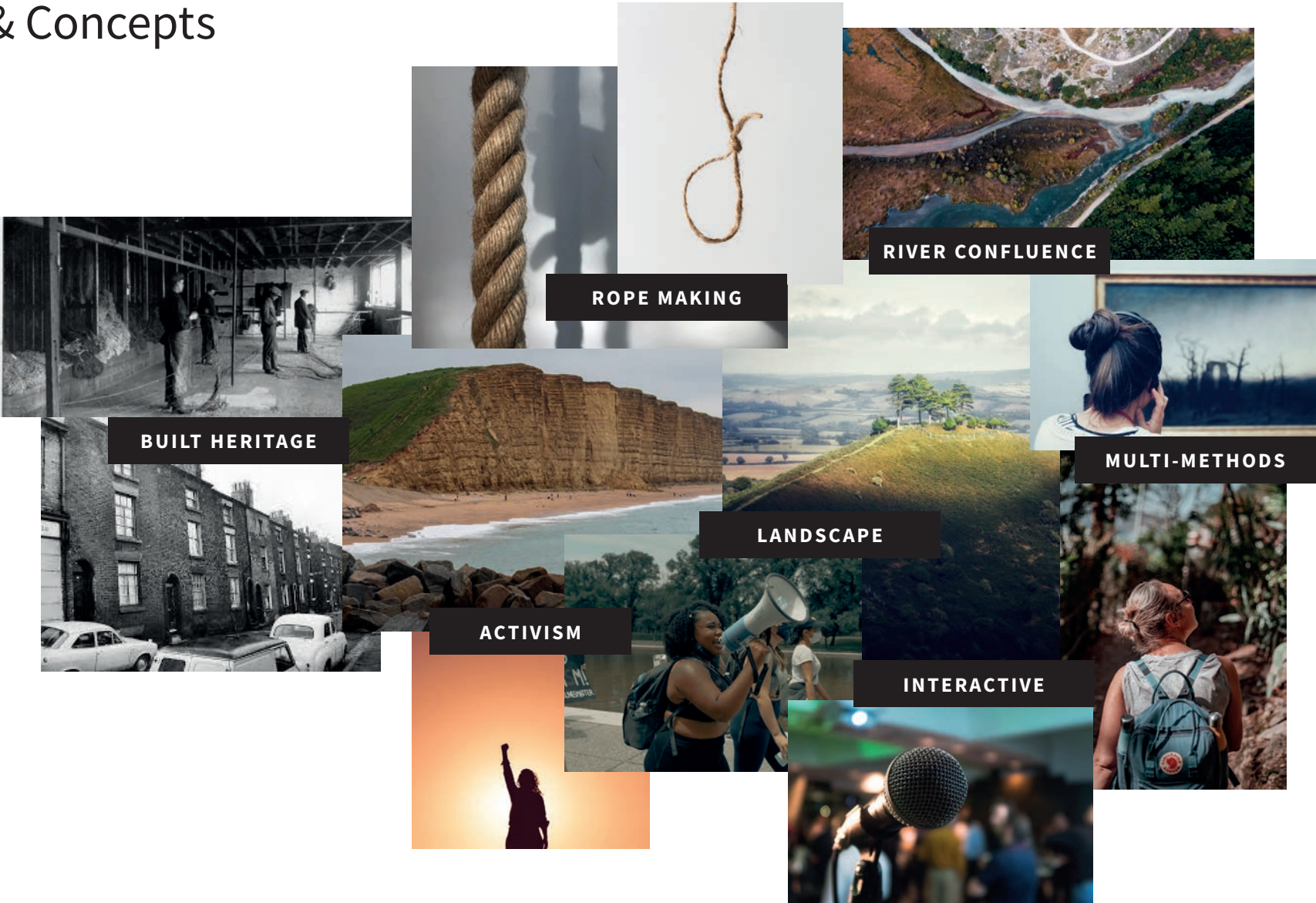
The shortest loop (red) is approx. 2.5 kms and is urban in nature. This might appeal to families with younger children or those looking to explore specific details about the built heritage of Bridport.

Each loop will allow different stories to be told. Focal points can be identified along each loop, marked by items of the wayfinding kit. Points where the loops intersect with one another would be candidates for such interventions.

The potential for spokes between the Green and Blue loops should be investigated to provide greater flexibility, allowing people to switch between different loops more easily.

- **Inner Loop** — the urban heart
- **Middle Loop** — between town and coast
- **Outer Loop** — the countryside connection

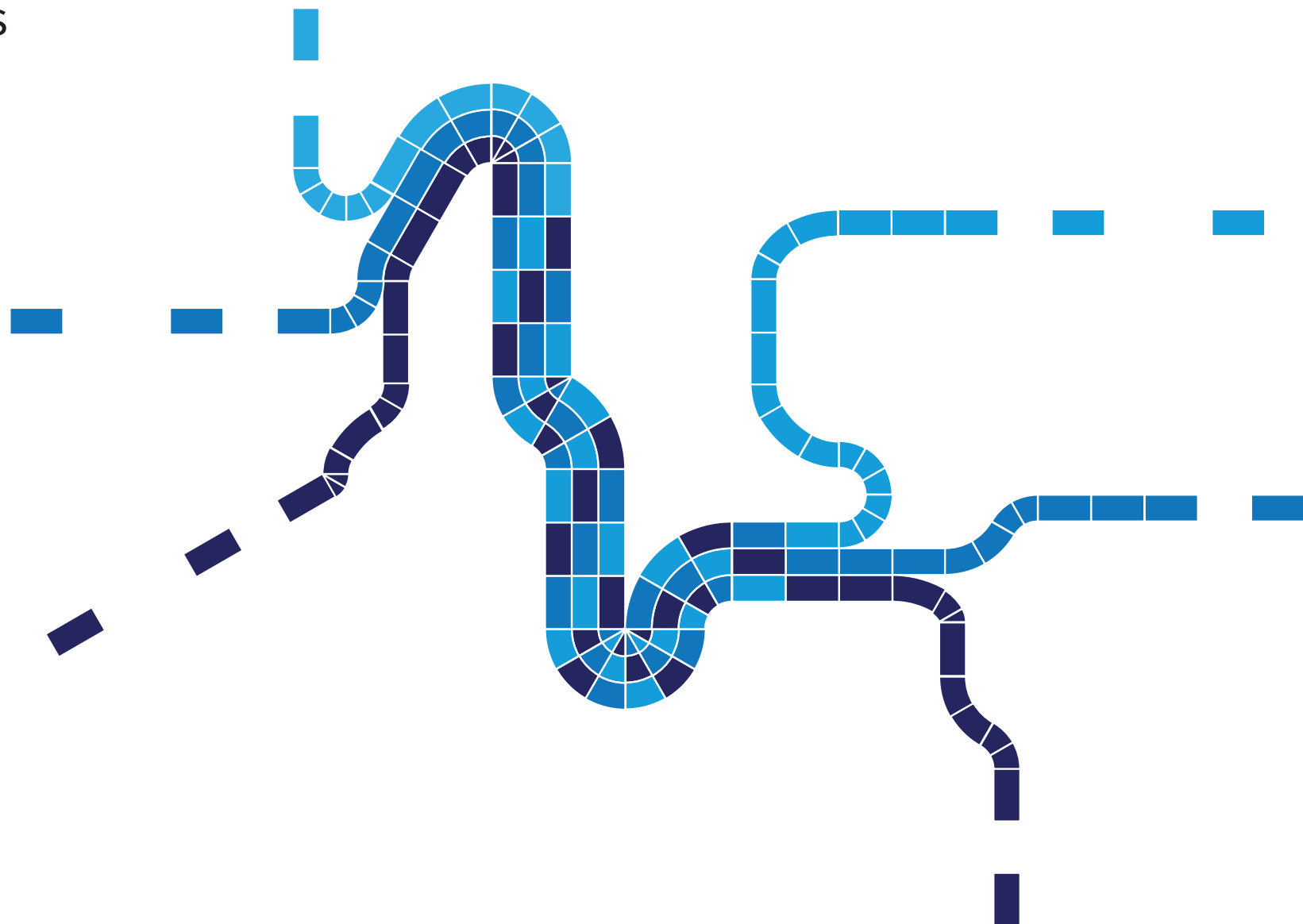
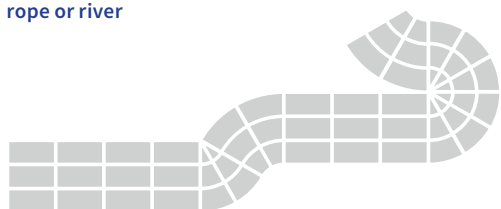
Inspiration & Concepts



Motifs & Visual Clues

People that engaged with the tours often felt that the rivers were as important as rope in terms of shaping the town. Using these references as opportunities to create a visual place identity where abstracted forms and shapes can be used in the form of a modular tile system to create a series of designs applied to surfaces and structures which flow around the town.

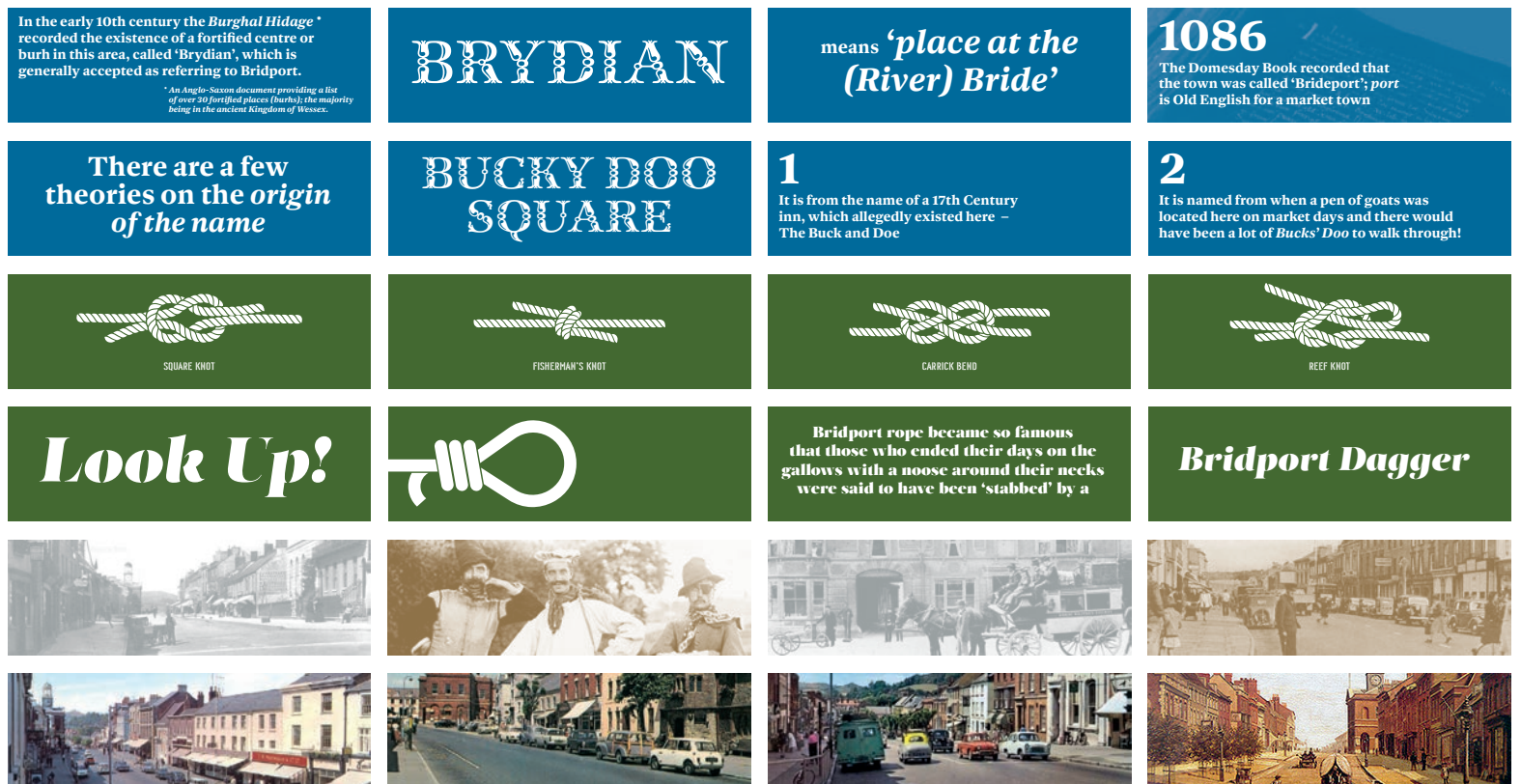
A kit of key shapes can be used as fragments or as a complete section of rope or river



Tiles

Modular tiles — possibly colour-coded — could comprise of a variety of themes, narratives and expressions. These could be historical and contemporary:

- Community expression, poetry and creative writing
- Local artist engagement to produce artworks and designs
- Archive images
- Instructional text
- Historic pointers
- Ecology, nature and sustainability
- Specific trails e.g. Women in Bridport
- Family orientated themes e.g. treasure hunt trail
- Direction and wayfinding

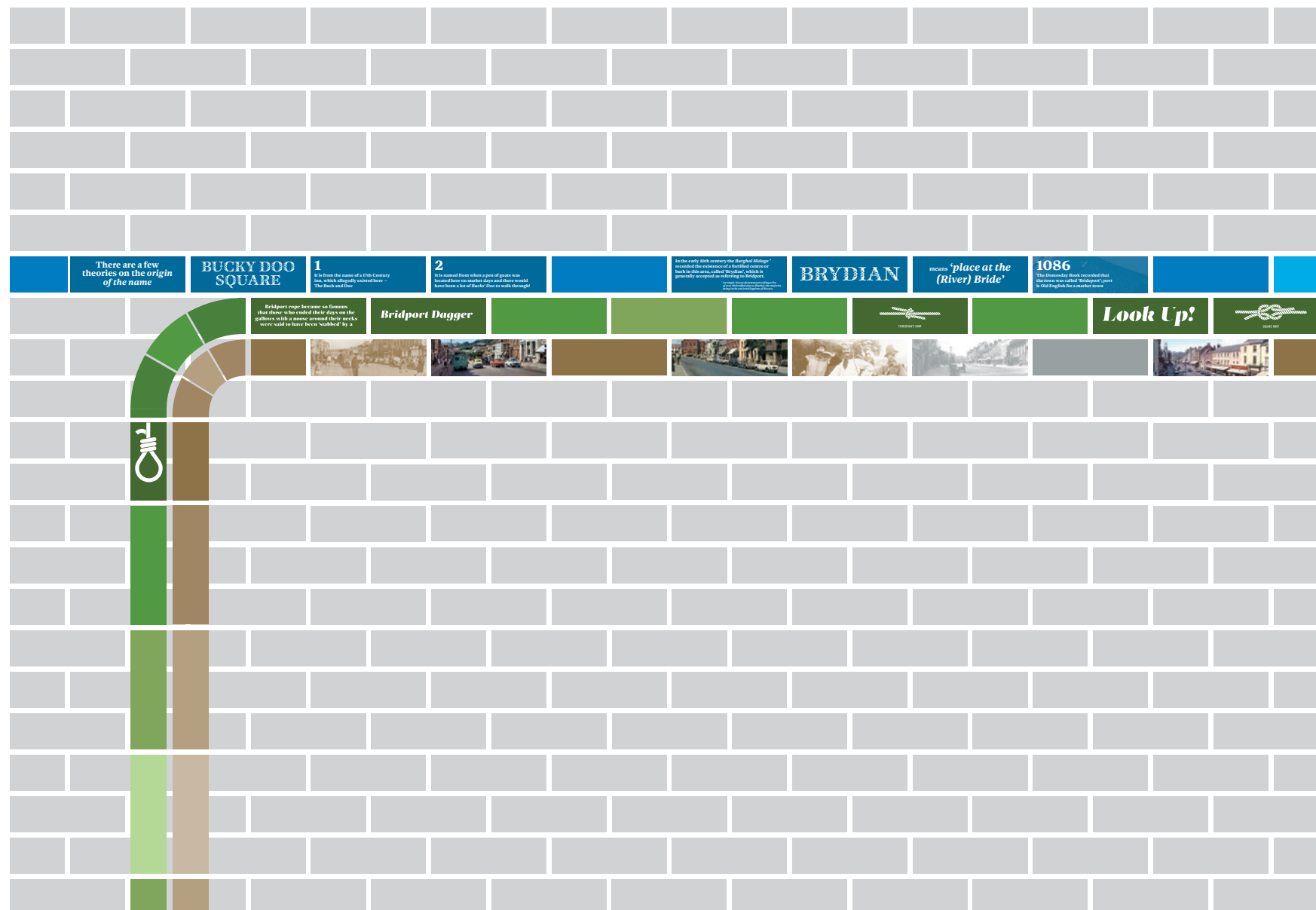


In the early 10th century the *Burghal Hidage* * recorded the existence of a fortified centre or burh in this area, called 'Brydian', which is generally accepted as referring to Bridport.

* An Anglo-Saxon document providing a list of over 30 fortified places (burhs); the majority being in the ancient Kingdom of Wessex.

BRYDIAN

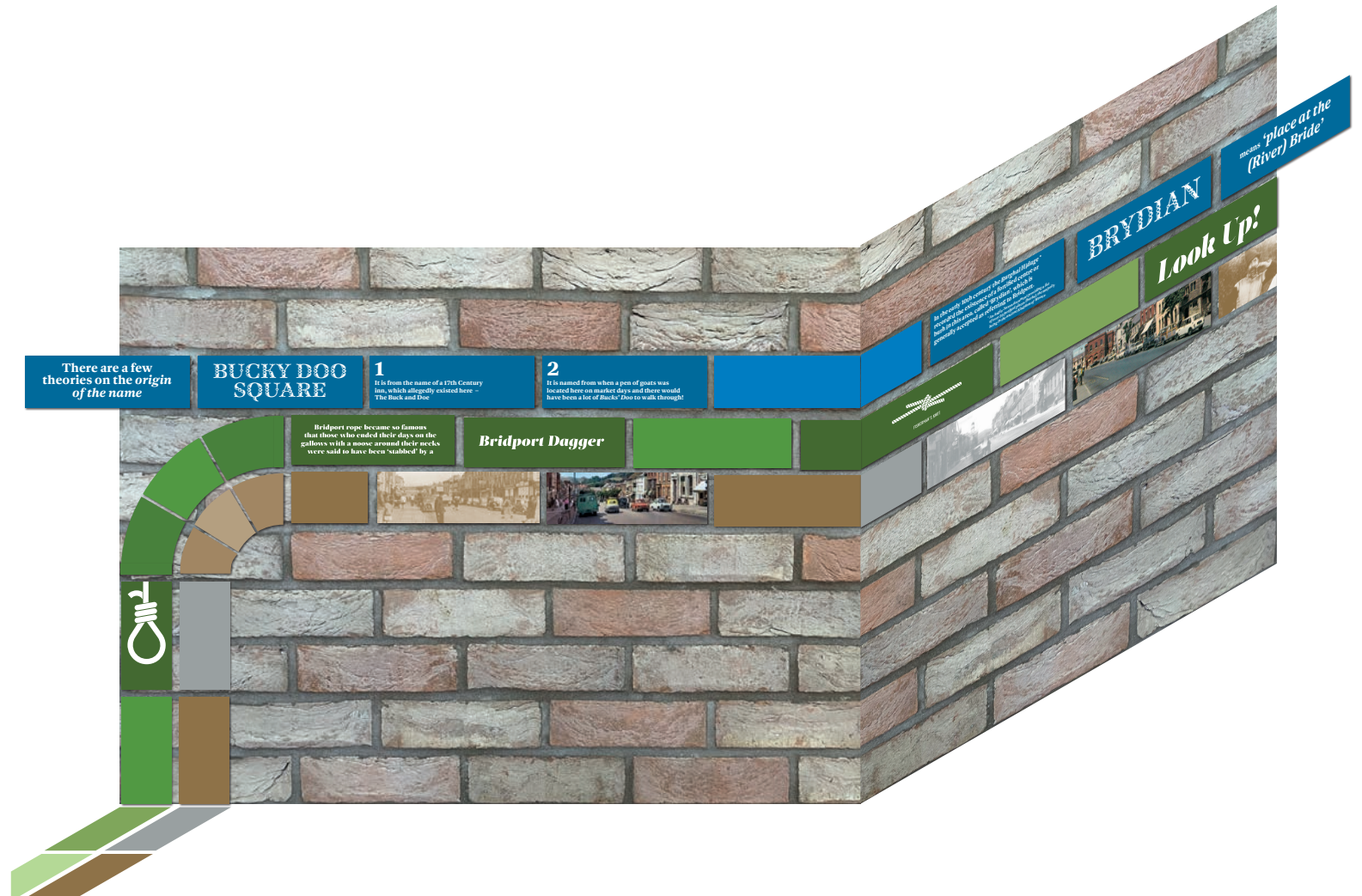
means 'place at the (River) Bride'



Brick Tiles

Applying the tiles to brick walls will allow layouts that enable the direction of trails and the flexibility of 'wrapping' around corners. The illustration here demonstrates an initial variety of content material* which be developed further to include content that is theme specific to being more 'playful' with artworks. Archive photos can be placed in locations that give the historical view of the landscape.

**Designs shown in one illustration/diagram for demonstration purposes – the final applications would likely be more minimal*



Wall Totems

Bridport has a significant number of listed buildings (see page 28) which may prevent the direct application of the 'brick tile' design solution. An alternative and additional solution could be to install a series of thin totem style designs that are embedded into the ground with simple footings, and a little away from the wall so as not to breach any listed building regulations. As with the 'bricks' they could have a variety of content types and would also good heights for children and families to help engage with and explore Bridport.



Roll-Out Opportunities

The modular system can be used to create attractive and engaging totems or finger posts, such as:

- Community expression, poetry and creative writing
- Local artist engagement to produce artworks and designs
- Archive images
- Instructional text
- Historic pointers
- Ecology, nature and sustainability
- Specific trails e.g. Women in Bridport
- Family orientated themes e.g. treasure hunt trail
- Direction and wayfinding



Posts

Other elements of the system could include large four-sided posts around the various trails and routes. These provide opportunities to include creative content.



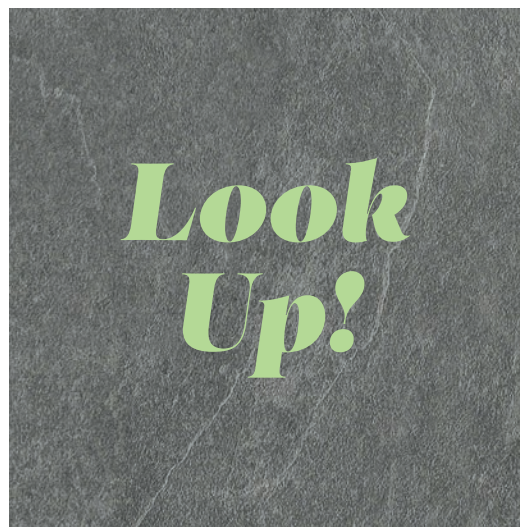
Sculptural and Functional Monoliths

Community open spaces are opportunities to include moments of pause. Places to sit, meet, socialise. Places that express culture, history and narrative. Places to meet and perhaps play a game along with embedded groundwork designs.



Pavers

In certain locations, existing paving modules could be replaced with interpretation designs using up-to-date techniques to embed words, narratives, expressions and archive or contemporary photographs.



Heritage Considerations

Due consideration of the rules and regulations that govern the historic environment will be essential prior to the further development of the wayfinding and interpretation. This section provides a summary of the issues that need to be considered.

Bridport embraces over 500 Listed Buildings and a number of distinct character areas. Listed Building Consent would be required for any works to a listed building. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the general duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.

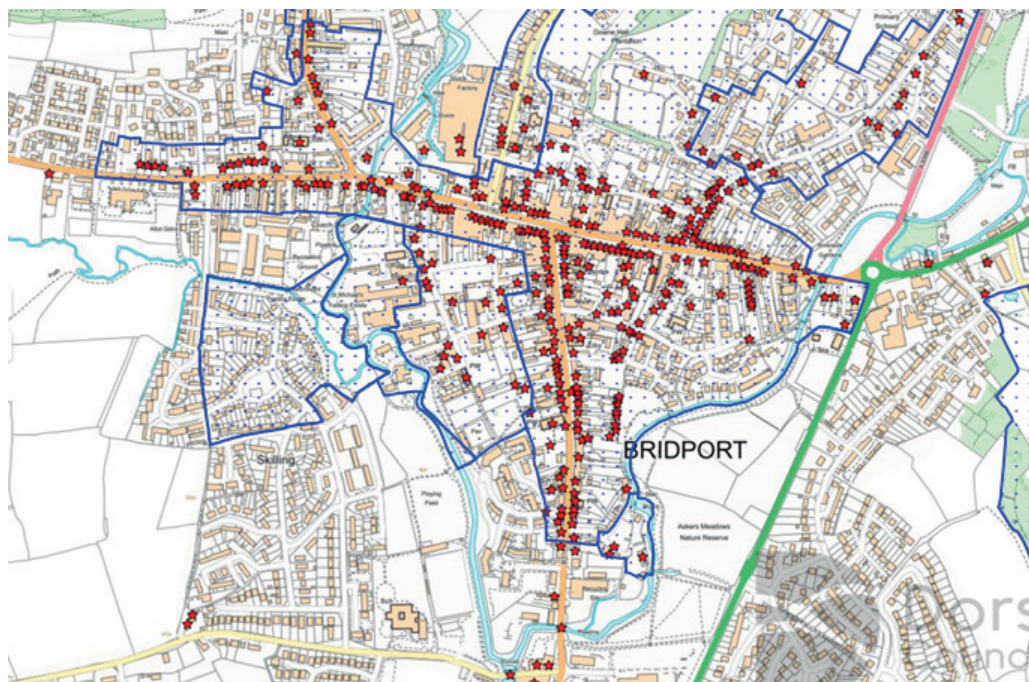
Whereby in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the planner shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

and its outlying villages and surrounding area. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 will therefore apply. This sets out the general duty that Planners have as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions. This states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. The Bridport Conservation Area Appraisal will also be relevant, which provides a basis for monitoring and controlling change and threats to the special interest of the Conservation Area and provides a basis for assessing planning applications in the area.

The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2014 would also be relevant, specifically Policy ENV4 which sets out how development of heritage assets should conserve or enhance its significance. It states how “even minor alterations and extensions or development within its setting, can potentially adversely affect the significance of a listed building. The original plan form, roof, walls and openings as well as interior and exterior features should be retained.” It will likely be considered inappropriate to place heritage devices on listed buildings as this would not signify ‘conserving and enhancing’ the assets.

If planning permission is required for any signage or plaques, then the Conservation Area in which the application may lie will need to be considered. This may be the Bridport Town Centre Conservation Area or one of the many others in Bridport

These laws and policy and guidance documents present a paradox. The wayfinding devices developed by this project are designed to increase the understanding and visibility of designated heritage assets. However, it may be that they cannot be attached to them as this would not constitute conservation or enhancement.



Listed Buildings



Conservation Areas

Branding the Interpretation System

WHY CONSIDER BRANDING?

A brand is an experience and feeling created by a service or product. Branding is much more than just a logo with aesthetic appeal and has the power to multiply the attractiveness of the service offered. It can create connections through visual associations and consistent language. There are numerous benefits of a strong identity that include the easy integration of new services and components at different points in time.

Creating a brand for the project's interventions would have many benefits. It is recommended that it could be rolled out to:

Wayfinding – helping users of the trails quickly identify that they are on the correct paths. This is where a logo would be useful. Brand experiences will also be affected by the materials used for the way markers, for example, would the trails be more attractive if natural resources are used?

Heritage markers – by giving the kit of parts a unique look and feel, it will add interest and make the physical installations easy to identify in any marketing photographs.

Audio trails – unifying the user experience between the physical and digital services

Marketing – a consistent identity between the physical installations and promotional literature and advertising (online and offline) will help tourists discover the trails when they arrive in Bridport. They may take photographs and share them on social media platforms, creating a ripple effect between curiosity and visiting.

THE BRANDING PROCESS

The brand, encompassing visual elements and language, would be defined once a series of research and development steps have been taken. These could be summarised by two key parts:

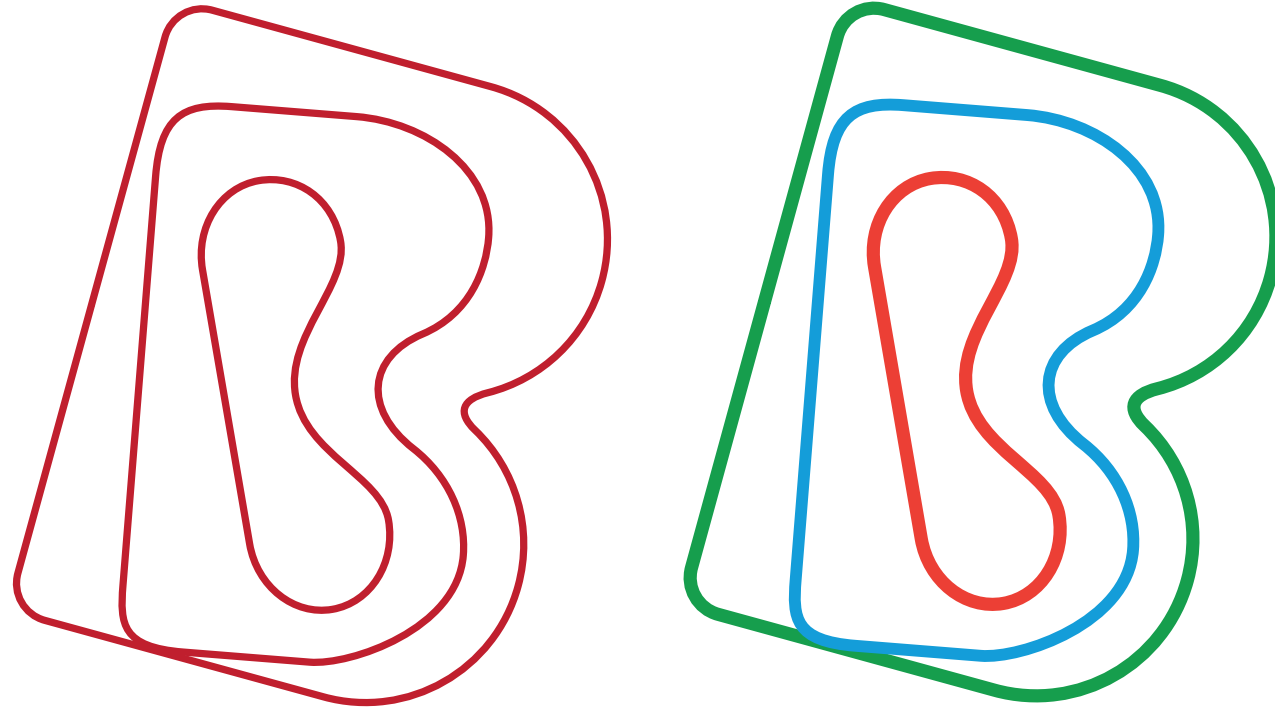
1. Audience Research. A range of questions for prospective trail users might include:
 - a. what they associate with Bridport
 - b. what they like about existing trails in other locations
 - c. what would entice them to a new trail
2. Visual development. Creating colour schemes, logos, icons and images and developing them based on user group feedback. Testing them on attractiveness, accessibility and useability.

At this point a rollout across all channels could be considered.

Branding the Interpretation

BRAND LOGO EXAMPLE

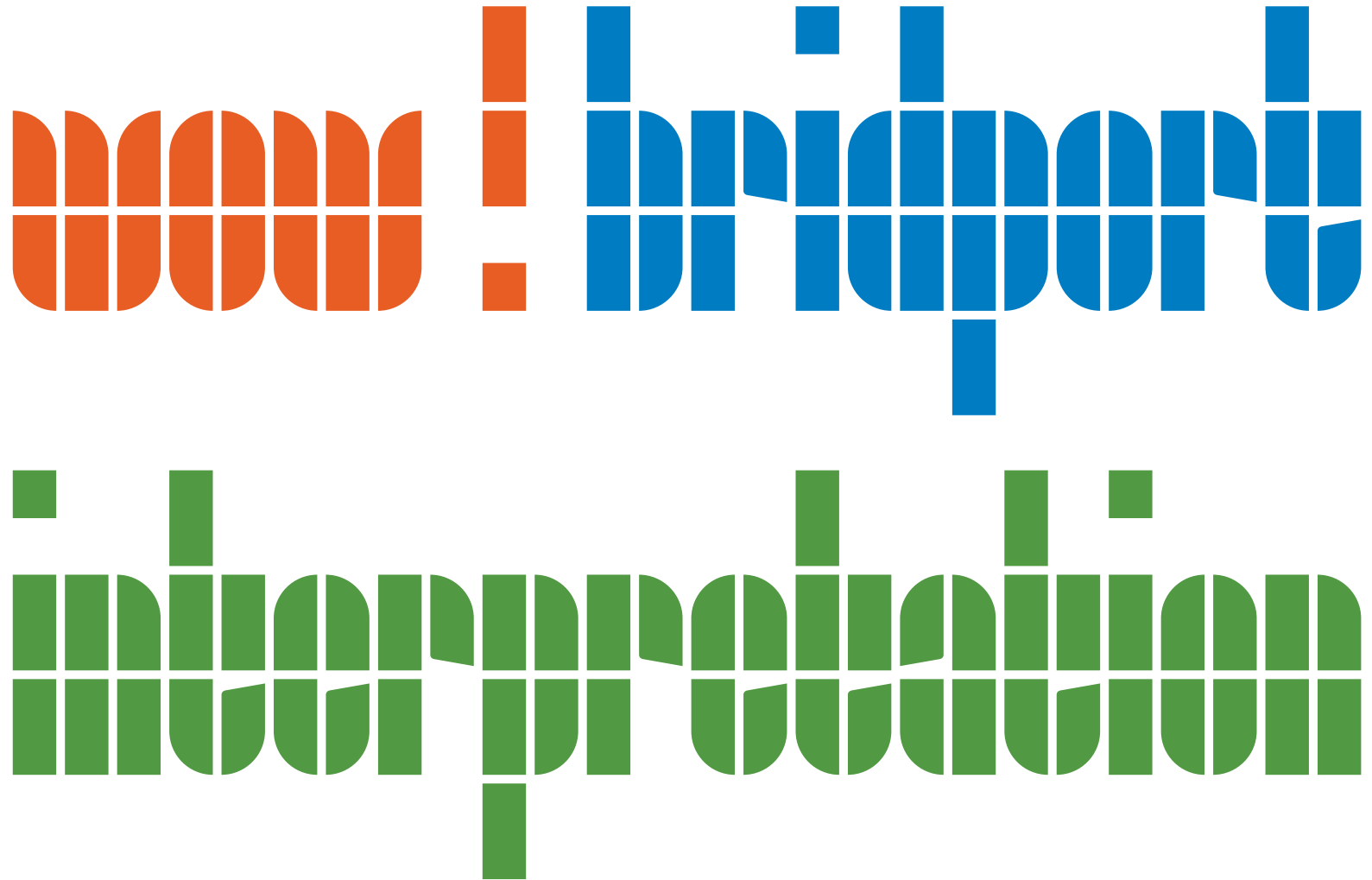
The project team has created a logo based on its own knowledge of Bridport, the landscape and project research. It is a concept that combines the B for Bridport, the coastal location, the three concentric routes and visual references to maps. This idea could be explored further as part of the development stage of branding.



Colours could link to the chosen core colours of the three routes.

Exploring Typefaces

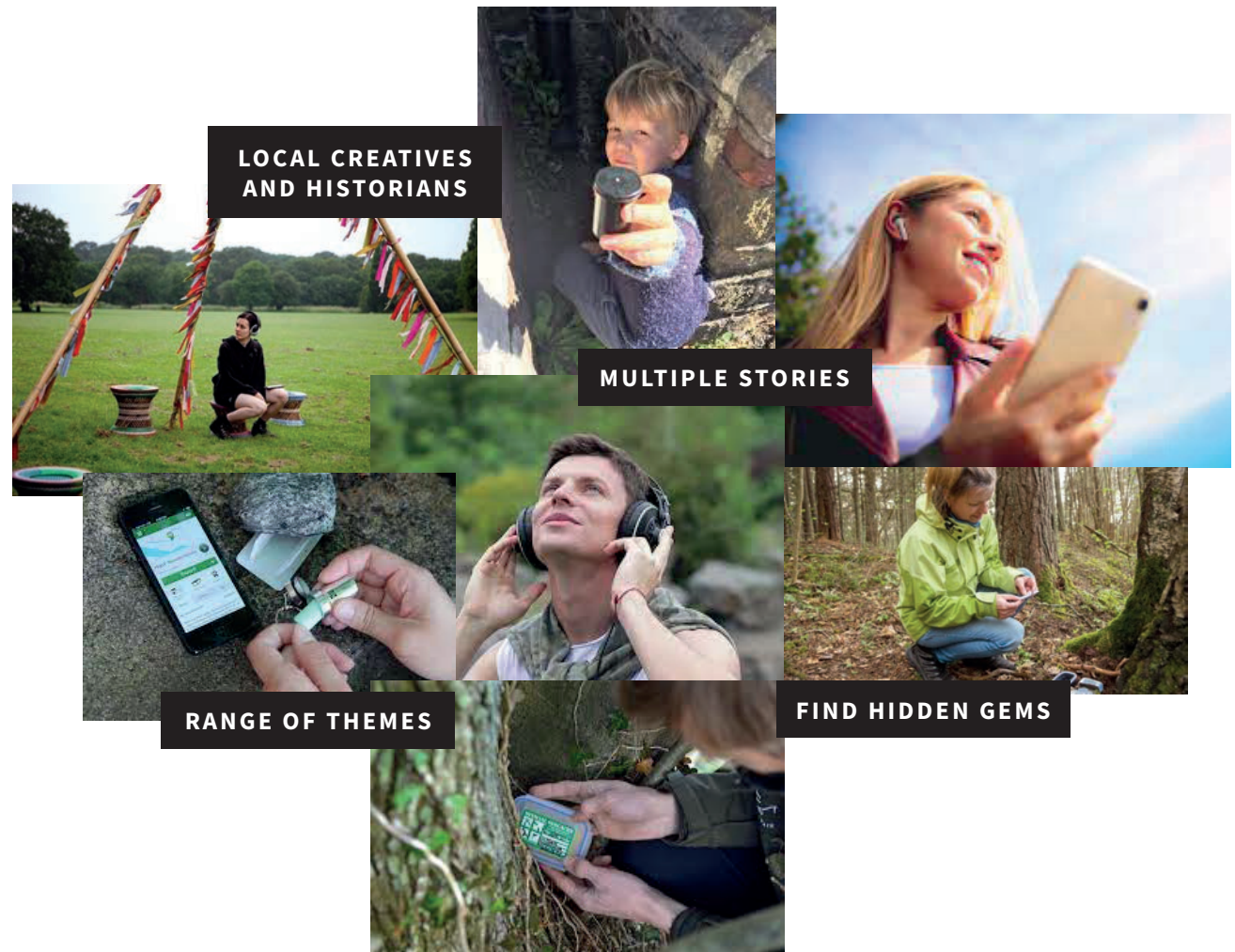
A further option is a display font based on the tile modular system. This could be introduced within the kit of parts.



Audio Trails

Audio guides can also function as a flexible space. They can be recorded and re-recorded in order to reflect the open-ended interpretations of history, complexity and nuance. For example, different guides can be uploaded for different seasons and different anniversaries.

After an initial guide, further commissions could include fiction, music, tradition and so on. Bridport could end up with an “album of audio trails” and people could be encouraged to contribute their own.



Community Message Boards

The purpose of new community message boards will be to replace existing boards but maintain the warmth and directness of paper and poster pinned up to communicate local ideas.

In some ways these noticeboards could be seen as political spaces or spaces for action, in that they are free, open, unmediated spaces in which people can choose to communicate freely about anything they want. This is the joy of a community message board and it is clear that these spaces are actively used in Bridport. It would be great to design a collection of these message boards and use the theme of free speech to influence the design.

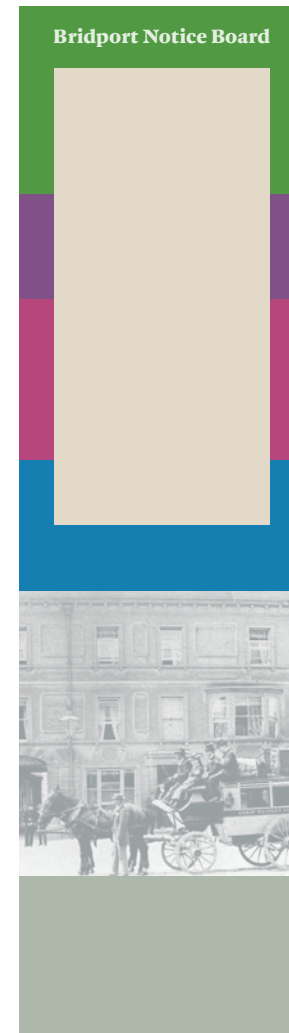
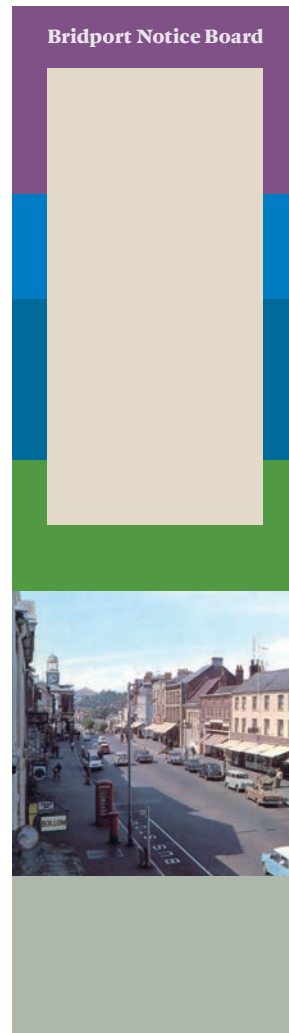


Existing message boards currently well used at Borough Gardens and Buckydoo Square



Notice Boards

A robust structure to allow for the posting of notices could replace current notice boards and create a more cohesive system. The idea to create a single unit template structure that could be used as a single item or used in multiples – along a line or as a four-sided structure – and which, as the general theme of the designs for Bridport, creates maximum flexibility to respond to specific places and spaces. The single unit also makes the structure more robust with easy glass covering use and avoids complications that can be experienced with larger panels.

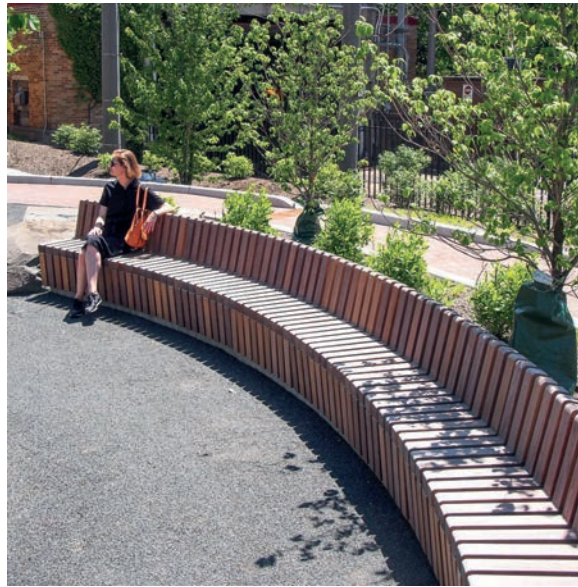




Identify Community Meeting Points

Through engagement with locals, a key theme that emerged was the absence of places to sit and chat in Bridport. This is a public space intervention that both symbolically and physically creates a space for people to talk. It is a space that acknowledges history but which also faces the future and the uncertainty to come. It becomes a space to meet others who wish to be part of the solution.

Curved furniture design encourages people to pause, listen and talk. Like the banks of a river, these can be added at locations where people might naturally rest along existing routes.



Hempcrete

Hempcrete, an innovative building material used in similar instances to concrete, should be considered as a structural material for some of the proposed interpretations. With hemp grown locally to Bridport, it would have low environmental impact and support local producers of hemp. According to website Arch20, hemp is a carbon-negative material: the carbon hemp absorbs as a plant makes up for the carbon emitted during the processing phase of hempcrete.

Like concrete, hempcrete is a versatile material that can be moulded into almost any shape and has gained popularity with experimental and environmentally conscious architects worldwide. Weather and pest resistant, its durable characteristics make it a promising option for long lasting installations. It could be used in combination with other materials such as wooden slats, tiles or it could even be embossed with patterns. Hempcrete itself has a pleasing fibrous texture that would compliment the natural surroundings of the proposed trails.

HEMP AND BRIDPORT

According to Historic England, “Bridport has played a pivotal role in the region’s hemp and flax industry for over 700 years. Hemp and flax was traditionally grown locally and used for the production of cordage, netting and sailcloth: this industry expanded from the 18th century onwards with the construction of new mills and warehouses along with the continued use of traditional rope and twine walks, creating a highly distinctive range of building types.”

With benefits to soil health and biodiversity, local study group Raise the Roof Hemp Group have been working to secure grant funding for further research and participation in the revival of hemp crops across Bridport’s farmland. Hemp would support the production of low carbon housing with hempcrete used as an excellent building material and insulator.



Illustrative image of a new hempcrete and wood curved bench in Asker Meadows alongside a way marker post.

Future Actions

The research that underpins this project concluded that a multi-faceted approach that leads to a single, joined-up outcome is required. This table provides a recommended set of future actions across the different aspects of the study. The actions in each section are presented sequentially, providing an indication on how to progress each broad topic area and move it towards delivery.

Different sections can be progressed along different timelines, as resources and funding allows. Not all sections in this table need to be actioned simultaneously. However, as the project moves towards delivery, certain sections should be prioritised before others.

For example, it is recommended that the commissioning of the content for the flexible programmable system (audio files) will only be effective once the walking routes and the points where interventions are required is firmly established. Likewise, the scheduling of the inventory of the kit of parts can only be finalised once the precise alignment of the routes is determined. Meanwhile, the commissioning of the branding exercise should not be left too late, as the results of this will be required by other aspects to inform the final designs.

In summary, the next stages will require a carefully managed, iterative process, reflecting the interrelated nature of the recommended system. Therefore, this table should be used to inform a more detailed future work programme.

Future Actions

WALKING ROUTES AND WAYFINDING ACTIONS		NOTES
A1	Undertake “on the ground research” by walking the suggested three routes, red, blue, and green. Use photography and video to note the condition of each route and identify locations for improvements, modifications, and interventions to make the routes more accessible and legible.	
A2	As part of the route audit, identify preferred locations for the installation of wayfinding elements. Use a categorisation to suggest which element (e.g. totem, finger post, sign etc) will be best installed at each location.	
A3	While on the three routes, identify an initial list of sites, junction and locations that are deserving of a heritage interpretation marker of some description. This first pass of the heritage interpretation location audit can then be cross-referenced with the results of the wayfinding location audit (see A2 above).	
A4	Use the results from these multiple audits to schedule a likely list of required kit of part elements and installations. The result can be used for an initial costings exercise.	

Future Actions

HERITAGE INTERPRETATION ACTIONS		NOTES
B1	Commission a research partner to identify a preferred selection of texts and photos from the existing historical archive. These to be represented onto the tiles, paving materials, and other objects at the defined locations (see A3 above)	
B2	Review the preferred selection of text and images and identify which element (e.g. tile, paving detail, totem, finger post etc) is best suited to carry each image or text element.	
B3	Cross reference the results of action B2 with the results of action A3 to produce a definitive set of locations and elements. This process will be iterative and will further inform the quantity of kit required, and will allow for a second pass at a costings exercise (see A4 for the initial costings exercise)	
B4	Commission a detailed design exercise to produce working drawings for all elements in the kit of parts. This will provide a third costings result (see actions A4 and B3 for the previous costing points)	

Future Actions

FLEXIBLE PROGRAMMABLE SYSTEM ACTIONS		NOTES
C1	An initial engagement required with partners across Bridport (including Bridport Museum, the Bank of Dreams & Nightmares, and others, to be identified) regarding the commissioning of audio trails. The audio content to be synchronised with the location of the tiles and other interventions and locations that will be used to trigger the audio file. This will require coordination with delivery of the physical infrastructure.	
C2	Establish a technical working group to oversee the production of audio files, their upload to websites or apps and their subsequent promotion. This action needs to be timed to coordinate with the installation of the physical elements.	
C3	Establish a creative working group to commission future audio content following the initial round of commissioning. The role of this group will be to refresh audio content and provide seasonal or event specific audio, still using the physical interventions as trigger points.	
C4	Use the results of C1, C2 and C3 to establish a budget for the flexible content creation process.	

Future Actions

IDENTIFY COMMUNITY MEETING SPACES		NOTES
D1	Revisit the results of the walking route audits (see actions A1, A2 and A3) to explore locations for community meeting points and their associated infrastructure, including seating, shelters, outdoor tables, and community notice boards.	
D2	Commission a design process to produce more detailed drawings of these elements. The results to be used to produce an initial costings exercise on these objects. While the infrastructure required to inform the community meeting places should share the same language as the other parts of the system, it is recommended that the costings for this are held separately.	

Future Actions

BRANDING & IDENTITY ACTIONS		NOTES
E1	Commission a design and branding exercise. The purpose of the brand will be to create a recognisable identity that ties together all systemic elements – the walking routes, the wayfinding kit of parts, the tiles and paving materials, the app and/or website from which the audio tours can be downloaded, and the community meeting points. The brand to recommend a consistent use of colour, logos, typography, messaging, and materials to create legibility, coherence, and uniformity to the system.	
E2	Consider the timing of the branding commission. It is recommended that the brand is established before too much detail is put in place across the other areas of delivery, such as wayfinding kit of parts or heritage interpretation elements. This will ensure that the established brand helps inform the design direction (especially in visual terms, such as colour and typography) before fabrication and installation. It is further recommended that the early results from the walking routes, wayfinding, and heritage interpretation actions are used to create a design brief for the branding exercise.	

Future Actions

STREET CLUTTER ACTIONS		NOTES
F1	Use established links with Dorset Council officers responsible for highways, planning and/or public realm to conduct a joint street clutter audit. Without local authority participation, this audit will lack the necessary legitimacy to inform a reduction in clutter through the removal of extraneous street scape elements. Clutter audit to be focussed on the town centre, with emphasis upon East Street, West Street, South Street and North Street, with adjoining lanes and alleyways that connect to immediate local areas.	
F2	The joint clutter audit should identify elements to save and those to be removed. Work with Dorset Council to agree the process, timings and actions required for the removal of extraneous items.	

FUNDING ACTIONS		NOTES
G1	Review internal Bridport Town Council budgets (while considering the results of the Town Investment Plan consultation) to identify initial funding sources to support future actions.	
G2	Explore external sources of funding, such as heritage grants, built environment grants or regeneration funds. These could be awarded by local, national, and international bodies or agencies.	
G3	Explore commercial sponsorship opportunities to assist future funding.	



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