

COUNCIL – 12 SEPTEMBER 2017

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR J LEGRYS TO COUNCILLOR A V SMITH

Mantle Lane Rail Bridge Coalville – Improvement to Environment

“Despite previous questions relating to poor environmental outlook on Mantle Lane in the vicinity of the rail bridge and cuttings, there is little improvement that the public can see.

I accept that the bridge, retaining walls & highway belong to Network Rail & Leicestershire County Council. But litter, overgrowing vegetation, vermin mess and general deterioration leaves this key access into Coalville Town Centre an unpleasant and off-putting feature for all.

I am asking the Portfolio Holder to seek out third party grants to fund (at least) removal of vegetation, jet wash the bridge structure and internal tiling. Also, could funding found to paint the bridge structure with suitable bright colours showing Coalville Town Centre features?”

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR A V SMITH

“I agree that Coalville should benefit from the best possible entrances to town, and that includes along Mantle Lane. It is the case that there is no easy fix to the issues that you have identified in your question, I am sure you will agree that periodic action is required to improve and maintain the quality of the environment related to the bridge.

The Council has been working with Network Rail in relation to the condition of the area around Mantle Lane Bridge since 2010. The Council has undertaken a number of initiatives which are summarised below:

- The Street Environment Officers arranged a big clean up of the steps including removal of rubbish and cutting back of shrubs etc
- Liaison with Network Rail resulted in Network Rail undertaking various works in the autumn and winter months of 2013. It culminated in the bridge being treated with a pigeon deterrent chemical and also the footpath side of the bridge being totally enclosed to prevent pigeons roosting under the bridge and fouling the footpath below. The final part of this enclosure work was completed in November 2013 and the bridge was monitored for a period of a few months after this to ensure the pigeons had not returned. At the time it appeared that the work had been very successful and the footpath had never looked so clean
- The Big Spring Clean organised by the Street Environment Officers, which has taken place over the last 2 years, always includes Mantle Lane Bridge steps and surrounding area of Thornborough Road and Baker Street
- The Environmental Protection Team has been working with East Midlands Housing in 2017 to improve the housing area frontage, leading up to the bridge from the clock tower as bins were being left out

- To cleanse the area under the bridge requires traffic management and in March 2017 during the Spring Clean the road was closed so that street cleansing operatives were able to clean the area
- Community Focus staff visited a number of local businesses prior to the Spring Clean 2017, to encourage them to get involved, but unfortunately no such support was forthcoming
- Discussions have taken place with Network Rail with a view to brightening up the area including planting hanging baskets which was well received, but never progressed by Network Rail

There are things that Network Rail can still do to brighten up the area including the plants or painting the bricks.

The current position is that we have been working behind the scenes to secure some improvements, however we have recently received some information about the Litter Innovation Fund (LIF), is a £450,000 programme, funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Aims to reduce litter by funding innovative approaches to pilot, implement and evaluate small scale local research projects that could be replicated more widely.

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/litter-innovation-fund>

If you are interested to apply to the grant, we can support you to put an application together”.