

## 2018 ADEPT President's Awards

### Public Right of Way bridge replacements and causeway improvements between Newton Blossomville and Cold Brayfield villages

Improving the environment, promoting health



#### Project Outline (500 words):

2017 will be remembered as the year the two communities of Newton Blossomville and Cold Brayfield were linked by a safe bridge across the River Great Ouse allowing access to beautiful countryside, public transport and local amenities.

Olney Ward Councillors representing residents in the two villages lobbied Milton Keynes Council (MKC) to replace a deteriorating bridleway bridge on a key Public Right of Way linking the villages. The bridge was constructed in 1953 as a temporary crossing to replace a stone arch that was washed away.

The initial project was to replace a bridleway bridge that had a 1m wide deck, 1m high parapets, significant scour and impact damage of its supports from debris during flooding and erosion of the island it stood on. It was described as an eye sore. A second, wider bridge on the approach was to be retained. The location had difficult access, otters and was on a flood plain. The approach path from Newton Blossomville would be improved as access was only possible for the more agile members of the community. This path had a further 5 structures that were in a dangerous condition. The British Horse Society had deemed the route inaccessible.

Due to funding constraints MKC's bridge engineers faced having to stretch available funds to replace 7 structures. Early Contractor Involvement with MKC's Highways Term Contractor Ringway and buy-in from stakeholders was essential to the success of the project. Discussions with the landowner obtained agreement to move the bridleway and river crossing meaning 1 structure was required. The Environment Agency agreed to the removal of 2 structures and allowed a reduction in headroom enabling a more pleasing design for the setting, 2 decks were replaced with 1 pre-used structure reducing costs further as only 3 structures were now required.

Consultation with local Councillors, visiting the local school and discussion with other local groups gave the communities a great feeling of ownership. MKC also asked the local schoolchildren to choose the colour of the bridges so they held a competition. They followed the works progress with great enthusiasm and provided the crane driver with a countdown as one bridge was lifted into place.

On 15 July 2017 the Newton Blossomville – Cold Brayfield Bridge was opened by Catriona Weatherill with landowner George Hartigan in front of a crowd of over 100 local residents. Catriona explained she hadn't seen the river for many years due to the paths poor condition combined with her mobility issues it was 'a joy to behold'.

The project delivered a safe multipurpose route through attractive countryside providing the opportunity to improve health and benefit from exercise. Parents, teachers and schoolchildren are using the route to travel to school rather than taking a long car journey. The route is being used regularly by ramblers from neighbouring villages and cyclists and

horse riders from further afield. The restaurant will benefit from passing trade and make other ventures more viable. Access to the island was severed and it's hoped otters will form a holt.



Elevation of old bridge



View across old bridge towards Cold Brayfield



View across old bridge/second bridge towards Newton Blossomville



The new Newton Blossomville - Cold Brayfield Bridge



View over new Newton Blossomville - Cold Brayfield Bridge



Deteriorated causeway and bridge crossing



New bridge crossing



Two bridges became one



New pre-owned bridge



Catriona Weatherill after cutting the ribbon with the landowner George Hartigan



Open day display produced by the school children thanking MKC for their new bridge

**Tweet length summary:**

Milton Keynes Council's Newton Blossomville to Cold Brayfield Public Right of Way improvement links 2 villages to beautiful countryside, local amenities and passenger transport that for many years were simply off-limits.