Future Rowner:

Environmental Improvements Prospectus



INTRODUCTION

This prospectus sets out some early ideas about how we all can help to improve the neighbourhood.

Too many plans about the area have come and gone and while some important improvements have been made some of the key changes that were needed have not happened. We all now need to be involved in changing that…

Rowner has changed, is changing and it has always had some great things going on. But yes, there will always be a need for improvements and for some people locally and especially more widely they still have a negative, but out-of-date, view of the neighbourhood which stigmatises us all.

At Rowner Community Trust we believe there needs to be a reenergised focus on some key things which will improve both the local environment and our quality of life. We think these are:

1. Improving the look of our block squares, courts, closes to give a better image of the area and improve resident's quality of life.
2. Involve young people in positive options – give them chances to both enjoy and improve their lives and to make a contribution to their neighbourhood…
3. We need to change the story about and image of our area both for residents and more widely.

This document focuses on the first item on this list – but they are all connected. We think that we definitely need to focus on some key public areas because they currently bring that whole area and people down. But while doing this we need to involve our children, young people and all residents in making this happen and also at the same time be showing and telling the world what an even better neighbourhood this is becoming.

We want to hear your views and ideas. Rowner Community Trust can take leading role on this, get the money, tools, plants etc to make this happen – but we cannot do this without you!

The days of a local council or anybody else being able to do all of this are now long gone. We all know that it won't work unless all residents get behind this…

Implementing any ideas which emerge will take time and we are aiming to improve more than twenty spaces over the next five years. We are not promising paradise – but there will definitely be an improvement.

We have been talking with the University as well as other organisations to get their involvement and support. We have also had some good conversations with funders too – and their support will help speed up any changes that we all want to see…

But again, there is no point starting anything unless:

a) We know that it is the right thing to be doing?

b) It has the support of all residents in the affected spaces?

c) People want to help make it happen and will help keep any improvements looking nice?

The next few pages set out some very early ideas - NOT PLANS!

We want to encourage conversations, discussion and debate about whether we should do this or not – and if so, then begin to sketch out more what this could look like…

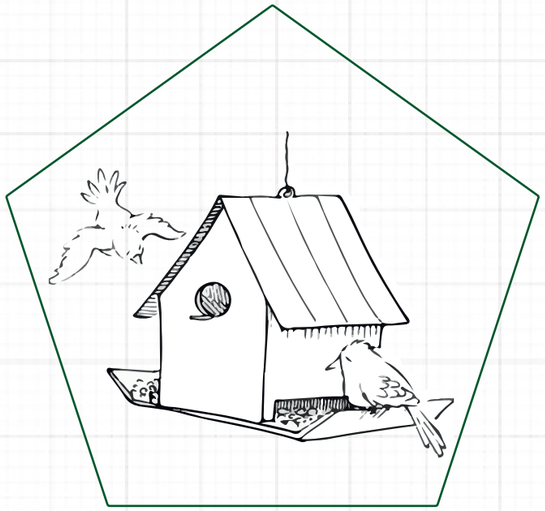
We have included some first drawings about what we are doing with some of our immediate spaces to give some quick ideas about what we are talking about. In the coming months you will see some student architects and landscape designers from the University visiting different parts across the neighbourhood to come up with some initial ideas. There will then be opportunities for you to feedback, help shape the designs and to get involved.

For us this feels both long overdue and exciting, but if it is not wanted then it won't happen. We are a community trust and we have no other agenda other than improving the area and the quality of life of residents. We genuinely want to hear your views, ideas and any alternatives… so let us know what you think!

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

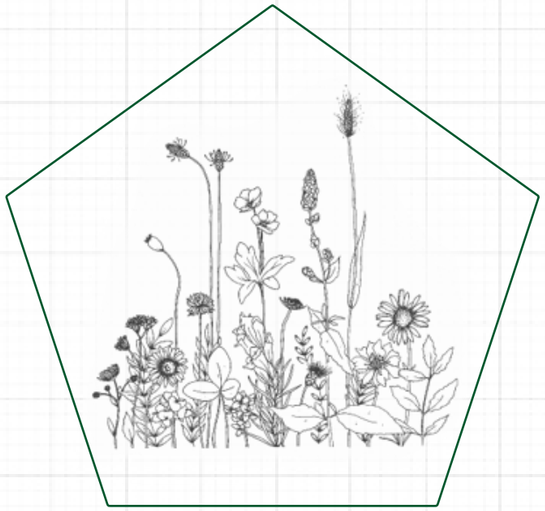
Rowner Community Trust has a mission to improve the local environment and quality of life. Below are the key areas for focus of how this could be achieved…

Bio-diversity



Nature urgently needs all our help – we have some fantastic local green spaces like the Alver Valley Country Park. But currently some of our spaces are not only boring to look at but they are also working against nature. They are also not as good for health and wellbeing as they could be. By encouraging more wildflowers, window boxes, creating bird and bug boxes and planting fruit trees which attract bees, birds, butterflies and insects. We can help to create a cleaner and better-looking environment which is much better for ourselves and nature.

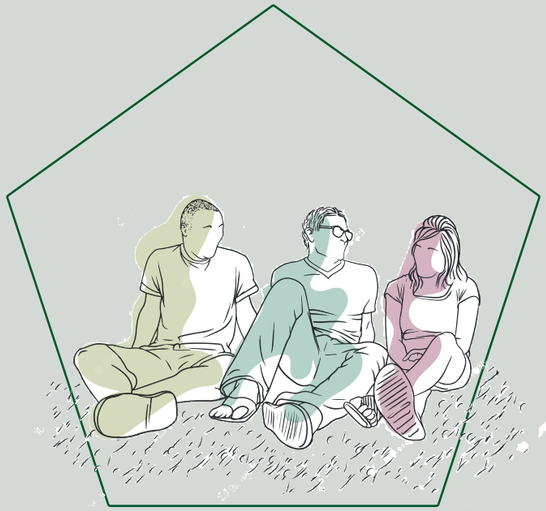
Walkability



Compared with other areas, we live in a very walkable and cyclable neighbourhood – we want to encourage this as a positive choice as it helps to improve health and saves money. Having more people out and about will also make the area feel safer. By having nicer spaces and views, more trees, flowers and street art and more cycling facilities etc. this will help to make it easier and nicer to walk and cycle.

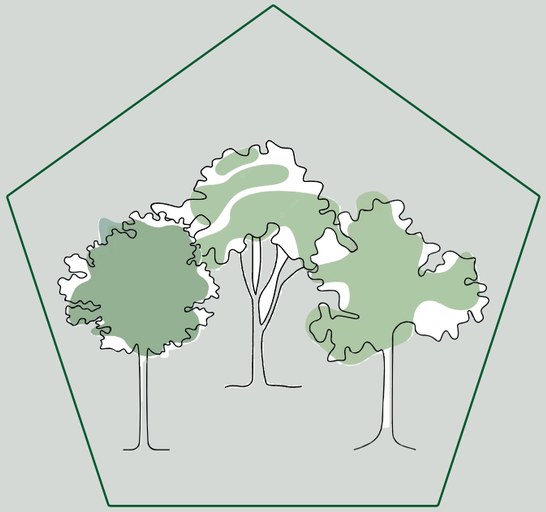
Sociability

A nicer environment with better public spaces and green areas, more block-based events, places to sit, walk and play will also help to make the neighbourhood more sociable. More people about creates more chances to meet our neighbours, talk and get to know each other and get involved. This is good for our health and wellbeing and improving local relationships will help make our neighbourhood a more vibrant and positive place to live.



Environmental quality

We have some unique public spaces (closes, squares and courts) – but many of them are not in a good state and this makes the neighbourhood look neglected. This reflects badly on both our internal and external image. By residents taking the lead in improving and maintaining our public spaces over time then we can have a positive impact on how we feel about our neighbourhood and also how it is seen by others.



NEIGHBOURHOOD

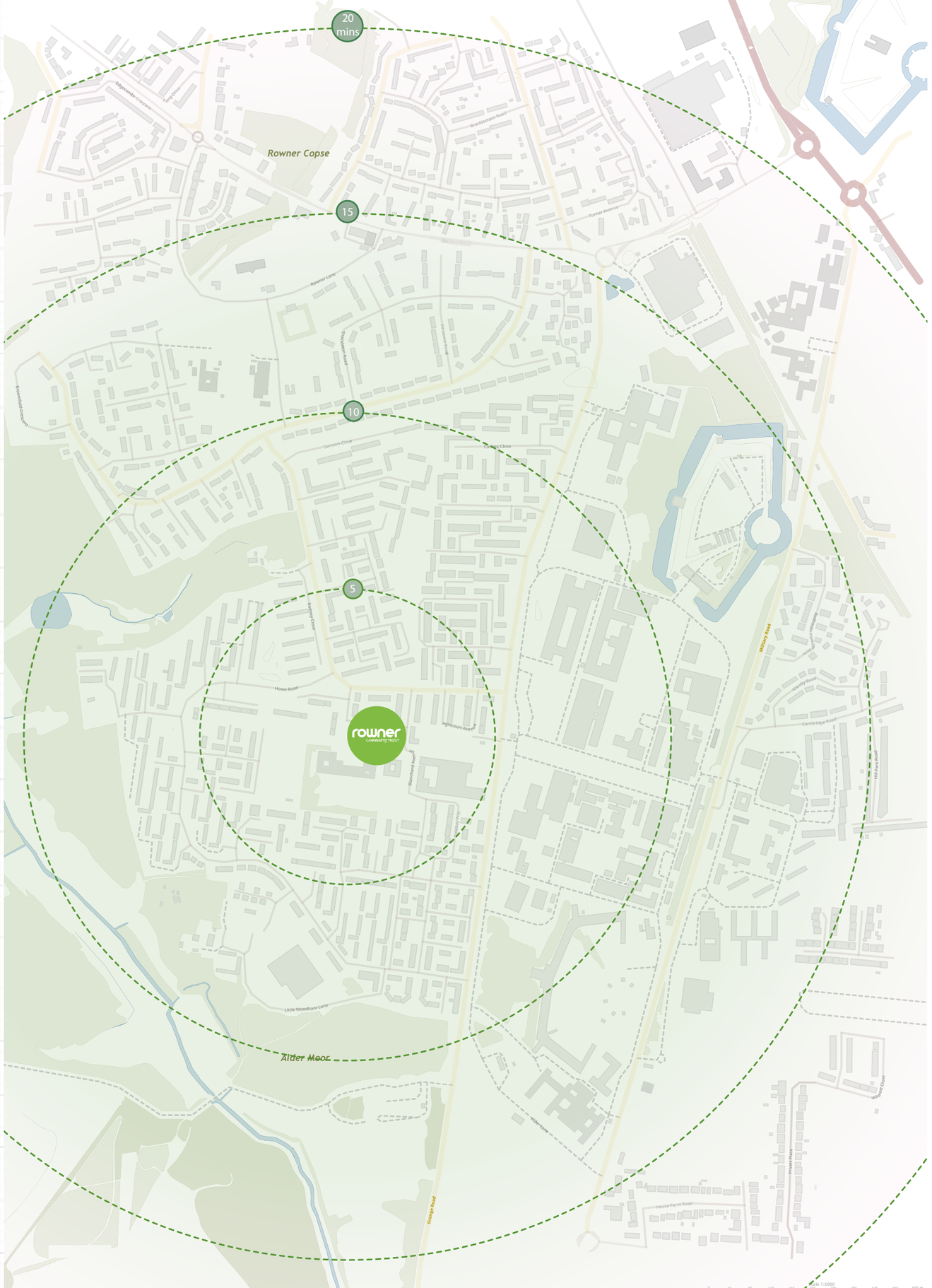
Rowner is a great place – but no place is ever perfect, and every area has some issues! Below we set out some of the great things locally and also some of the key issues which we need to try and improve. Many of these issues can be addressed and positive changes made. While nobody has a magic wand if we focus and work positively together, then we can all make this an even better place to live!

- A good location and proximity to some great green and historic places like Alver Valley Country Park.
- A very walkable and cyclable area.
- A very young and increasingly diverse population.
- Good local amenities with shops, schools, pharmacies and community venues.
- Lots of greenery and public spaces.

- There is still a negative image of the area held and shared by some.
- Some of our green and public spaces look + feel neglected.
- We need more positive things for young people to do…
- Because of transport issues and to save money we need more good stuff going on locally…
- We need people to come together more and take pride in the whole neighbourhood.

Like all areas we have issues – the neighbourhoods which thrive get organised, build on their strengths and address positively together the issues that they have. This improves their environment; quality of life and image and it can even help to maintain the quality and value of their home.

The next pages give some ideas about some practical things we can do to make the neighbourhood even better.



FUTURE IDEAS



Palm Tress : Using trees in a box is a quick way to create a landmark and make a high impact visual change.



Round seat: Existing or new trees can be planted with new places to sit and also it can help them grow and make weeding etc easier…



Bench/picnic table: Places to sit and talk, read or play – can bring people out of their house and make new friends.



Flower baskets: Some of our doorways can look a bit drab – if everyone had a flower basket or two then this will help bring colour and create a brighter image for everyone…



Planters: Planters can mark out spaces for sitting, playing etc as well as create entrances and boundaries for our squares, courts and closes.



Bird & bug boxes: More birds and bugs will help bring back nature to the neighbourhood and help the flowers and bring more life to our spaces.



Flower boxes: On some of our balconies flower boxes will bring colour and life and help reduce the visual impact of bigger buildings.



Wildflowers: Wildflowers quickly increase the level of nature (x5 times!) – more pollinators and butterflies and colours will help both improve nature and also improve people's mood!

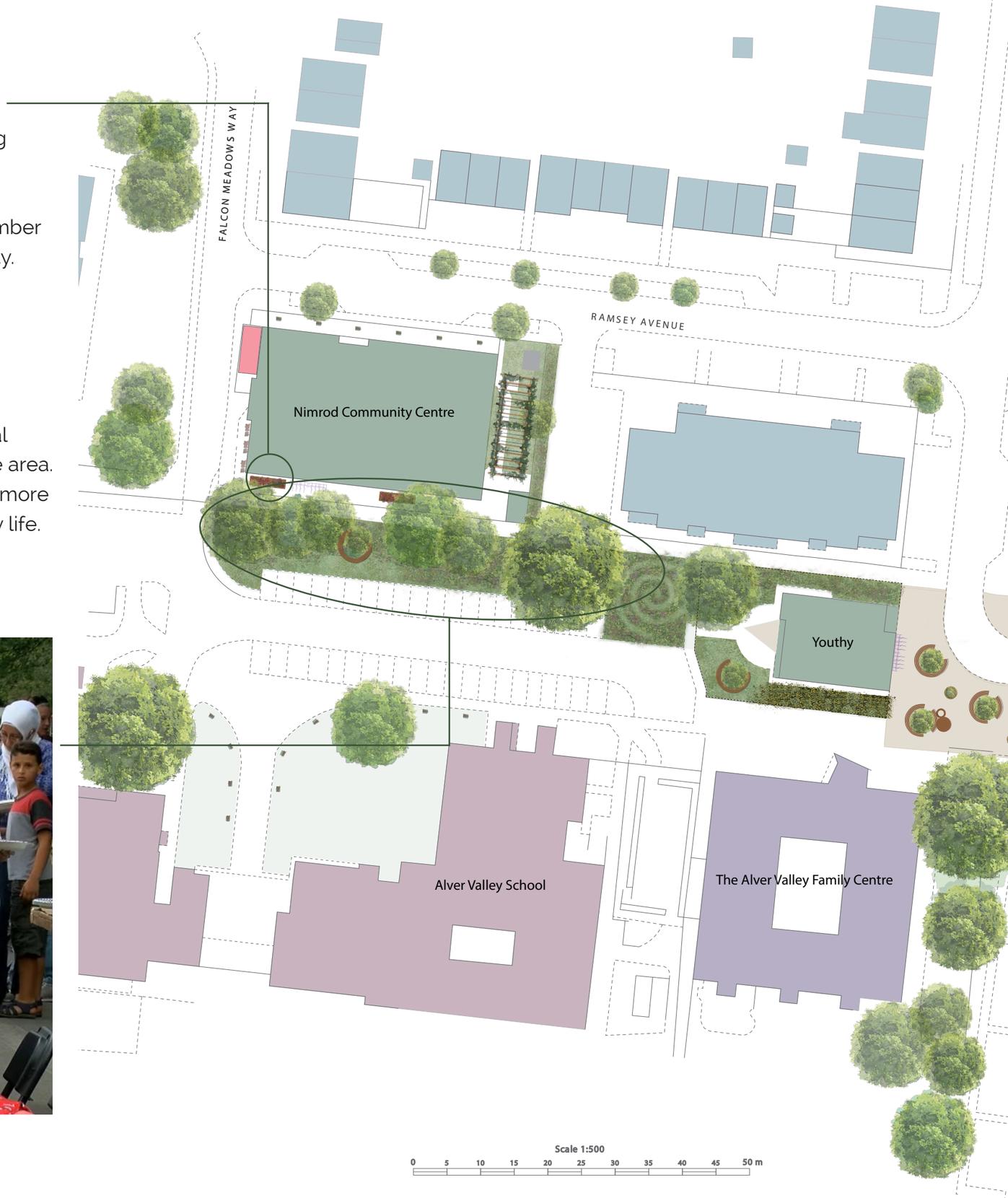
MEADOW LANE: INTERVENTION



Planters

- Enhance Nimrod Building surroundings with flower planters.
- Crafted from recycled timber or pallets for sustainability.
- Planted by local school children and residents.
- Adding outdoor seating creates place to rest and socialise.
- Elevates aesthetic appeal while adding value to the area.
- More events will make it more of a centre of community life.





CALL TO ACTION

Some of the ideas outlined above can be done quickly, relatively cheaply and they can have a big impact.

We are a community trust for the whole neighbourhood not a property developer or a local authority so we can only help make this happen if residents want it to happen and when all of us get involved...

We think this is a good way of making the area look nicer and feel better for ourselves. It is something people have said that they have wanted for several years!

We think it will also challenge some of the prejudices about the neighbourhood which are held and shared by people both inside and outside the area.

So...

- What do you think?
- Do you want this?
- Do you want to be involved in making it happen?

Ultimately, it is up to you!

Again, we can provide the tools, material, seeds, plants etc. and bring in student interns and local young people and other residents to help make it happen... but we can't control the weather!

However, we can choose whether we want to make it happen!

Contact Us

Phone: 023 9250 3433
Website: https://www.rownercommunitytrust.org/
Facebook & Instagram: Rowner Community Trust

Nimrod Community Centre
17 Falcon Meadows Way, Gosport, PO13 8AA
Email: hello@rownercommunitytrust.org

