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Technical note

Project	Connect 3: DaSTS Taunton Gateway Study	Date	11 March 2010
Note	Website and Publicity Consultation	Ref	CTCAEY302
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1. Introduction

1.1 This note outlines how a website and publicity has been used as part of the overall consultation process for the Taunton DaSTS study. Consultation with the public has been identified a critical element in identifying, developing and refining the options.

2. Process

2.1 The DaSTS Taunton Gateway Stakeholder Communications Plan details the way in which stakeholders and members of the public will be involved in the development of the DaSTS Taunton Gateway Study. It was recognised that the first stages of the study until March 2010 involved tight timescales that would be difficult to incorporate traditional consultation processes with the public. It was agreed that a website coupled with appropriate publicity provided the most effective way of achieving this.

2.2 One aspect that emerged early on in discussions was the identity of the study. There was potential for confusion with the term “Taunton Gateway”. The main concern was that the study area encompassed a wider geographical area and the recently opened Taunton Gateway park and ride site at Henlade. In addition, the County Council had recently undertaken consultation on the Taunton Transport Strategy and there risk of further confusion and potential for duplication. On the basis of this the study was rebranded publically to ensure the DaSTS goals were being met. The title “Connect 3: Exploring Transport Links between Bridgwater, Taunton and Wellington” was geared around the study objectives particularly the inter-urban links and corridors of the three towns.

2.3 In discussion with Council Officers, a decision was taken to use Somerset County Council’s main website to provide to an overview of the study, regular updates on progress, links to related documents and an opportunity for members of the public to submit comments and contact the project team if need be.

2.4 At the same time as the website being launched, publicity for the study would be undertaken. It was agreed that the publicity would be undertaken by the public relations department at Somerset County Council. A protocol was established whereby the core text would be drafted by Halcrow, approved by the client and then submitted to public relations for final editing and publication.



3. Outcomes

- 3.1 The website (www.somerset.gov.uk/connect3) went live during February 2010 as shown in appendix 1. At the start of the study, members of the public were invited to submit comments on the most important transport problems and challenges and were also invited to put forward solutions to tackle these in the longer term.
- 3.2 In March 2010, initial options were published on the website together with text indicating the work that had been undertaken to date. Members of the public have been invited to comment on the initial options as presented.
- 3.3 A number of press releases have been issued on Somerset County Council and these have been publicised in the local press such as the Bridgwater Mercury and the Somerset County Gazette. In addition, there was a radio interview with BBC Radio Somerset.



Appendix 1

DaSTS Taunton Gateway Study Public Consultation Website

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Somerset County Council website. The page is titled 'Connect3' and is part of the 'Initiatives' section. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains the following sections:

- Connect3**
- Exploring future transport links into and between Bridgwater, Taunton and Wellington**
- Priorities**
- Background**

The right column is titled 'Information and resources' and lists several technical papers and options, each with a PDF icon:

- Option A: A38 Package
- Option B: A358 Package (East of Junction 25)
- Option C: M5 J25 to Taunton Package
- Option D: Rail Package
- Option E: Self containment: Taunton
- Option F: Self containment: Bridgwater including Hinkley Point
- Option G: Self Containment Wellington
- Option H: Area Wide Public Transport Options including Taxis
- Option I: New approach to supported bus services
- Option J: Making Better Use
- Option K: Informed Traveller Strategy

