

Project to improve gateway into town is struck by delay

Funding failure hits £300k park scheme

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By Lee Watton

An ambitious £300,000 scheme to improve the main gateway into Stourbridge has been delayed as funding for the work has still not been secured.

Dudley Council had planned to carry out the work in phases with the first, the creation of a small park in Lower High Street, due to begin soon. But bosses today said they had been forced to postpone the scheme after failing to find enough cash. Instead the subway between Lower High Street and Amblecote High Street will be tidied up and painted.

Bigger sections of the scheme, including the installation of benches and new flooring, have been put on hold indefinitely.

The planned second and third phases - extensive redevelopment and landscaping of the subway and improvements to the town's bridge - are also "up in the air", according to officials.

They have pledged the work will still go ahead - but it may now take longer than expected.

Delay

Stourbridge town centre manager Hannah Rogers said: "Unfortunately we have had to delay starting work on the pocket park as we have not yet been able to secure the funding needed.

"Work to get the money is continuing and the project will begin as soon as we have the money in place to do it.

"However we are planning to carry out more basics work at the gateway such as cutting back the overgrown vegetation and generally cleaning up the site.

"Some of the background painting work will also be going ahead and the borough artist is already in talks over that.

"However the larger phases will not be going ahead at the time being.

"At the moment it is still all up in the air but we are working hard for funds."

The area has been in poor condition for many years and residents have long called for work to take place.