

Bloombox for Bicester



6th February 2026

Proposal for the Acquisition and Repurposing of a K6 Telephone Box

Executive Summary

This proposal outlines the purchase and transformation of an iconic, decommissioned **K6 red telephone box** into a permanent floral installation. Dubbed the "Bloom Box," this project serves a dual purpose: preserving British heritage while creating a high-impact visual feature that fosters community cohesion through a unique renovation partnership.

Project Vision & Social Impact

The renovation offers a prime opportunity for **social value procurement**. Rather than a standard commercial contract, we propose two pathways:

1. **Direct Council Delivery:** Utilizing the skills of our internal estates team.
2. **Community Partnership (Recommended):** Engaging a third-sector organization, such as **Bicester Green**.

This partnership would facilitate an intergenerational project, pairing **retired residents** (to combat social isolation) with **young people** struggling in traditional education. This allows for the transfer of practical skills, mentorship, and a sense of shared civic pride.

Technical Specifications

To ensure durability and public safety, the following modifications are proposed:

- **Safety & Security:** The door will be permanently locked to prevent unauthorized access. The unit must be professionally bolted to a concrete plinth to prevent toppling.
- **Interior Modification:** Removal of glass panes to allow for airflow. A bespoke, **corrosion-resistant metal stand** will be fabricated to hold the floral displays.
- **Aesthetics:** The exterior will be fully restored and repainted in traditional "Post Office Red" using weather-resistant paint.

Location & Maintenance

We suggest a high-visibility location to maximize the "wow factor":

- **Option A: Sheep Street** (Enhancing the retail experience).
- **Option B: Garth Park** (Complementing existing award-winning floral displays).

Maintenance: Planting would occur annually for the summer season. Weekly watering could be integrated into existing town floral contracts or managed by a dedicated group of community volunteers.

Budget & Planning

Item	Estimated Cost
Purchase of K6 Box	£2,000 – £2,500
Materials & Specialist Paint	Up to £500
Contingency (Planning/Fixings)	£250
Total Estimated Investment	£2,750 – £3,250

Note: Planning permission for a "Change of Use" or "Listed Building Consent" may be required depending on the chosen site.

Future Scalability

If the pilot "Bloom Box" is well-received, this model can be replicated. Future boxes could be repurposed for other community needs, such as **Defibrillators** or **Seed Swap Libraries**, creating a "Heritage Trail" throughout Bicester.

Recommendation: That the Environment Committee approves a feasibility study into the purchase of an initial unit and initiates discussions with Bicester Green regarding the social delivery of the renovation.

Examples of successful ‘Bloomboxes’ elsewhere in the UK:

