

County councillor report for May 18 to Duxford Parish Council

Cllr Peter Topping

Roads and road junctions

I met with the highways department manager and have driven around the village with him checking on the pothole filling work that was done. I have reported potholes that I have seen along Ickleton Road and Hunts Road especially. The county council app for notifying where the holes are is the easiest way of reporting potholes because when I then meet the highways manager I can go through the list and ask what are they doing to catch up. They have been catching up in recent weeks, but there is still a way to go. The county is buying more of the patching machines that can work quicker than a gang of tarmac layers and a wheelbarrow of pitch.

I have chased the highways manager, Evan, re Hunts road flooding and his response is that he cannot see that a works order or actual work has been done. He tells me that he is having a site meeting with the parish council on 22 May – he thinks it may just be a blocked gully which we can then rectify fairly quickly.

Safer road junctions

I have been pressing the county council to consider how to make road junctions safer, especially where small turn-off roads run from very busy A roads such as the A505. There are safety possibilities or interventions that can reduce the risk of an accident, and these include

- Removal of foliage at all highway junctions to improving visibility between road users and discourage injudicious entry into the main road.
- Removal of foliage in advance of all directional signs to aid road users' recognition of junctions and discourage inappropriate overtaking.
- Replacement of all directional and advanced direction signs, including increasing sign text sizes (where verge width permits) to increase junction recognition and reduce late braking.
- Replacement of large diameter posts with a passively safe type, to reduce the risk of injury in the event of collision.
- Surface dressing of sections to improve skid resistance.
- Renewal and rationalisation of white lines and road studs, to improve lane discipline and night time conspicuity in unlit sections.
- Introduction of textured lines at specific high risk locations, to reduce the risk of carriageway edge overrun and increase conspicuity in the wet.
- Widening of the hard edge (section of road beyond the edge line) at one location where regular edge overrun has been identified.
- Re-cutting of grips (channels in the verge to drain water) to reduce the risk of aquaplaning on standing water in the carriageway.

All these options cost money, and some such as cutting back a lot of foliage may not be what the local residents want anyway.

Travellers

I was pleased with the response by the county council in supporting the village when the travellers from Thriplow Heath came after the eviction last Weds. The injunction that we secured almost ten years ago in 2009 on the field next to the Pet Crematorium on the A505 to prevent unlawful trespass came in useful but the travellers returned back there. I have written to the police again urging them

to use section 61 powers under the 1994 Act. I have had the district council serve enforcement notices because of the flytipping that has now started on that site.

General

There have been reports of hare coursing starting up in the fields along the A505. I have contacted the police rural crime unit.

I will be meeting the Whittlesford station master planners next week, so will try to revive discussions about the underpass at the rail station.

Health

Regarding health matters, the county council and the hospitals have recently improved their performance in managing delayed transfer of care and while there is still much to do, in this part of Cambridgeshire there is exploration of trying to have more preventative work done in surgeries rather the later interventions in hospitals.

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