

Annual Parish Meeting – Monday 8 May 2006  
Highways, Footpaths And Lighting Committee

PHILIP'S FOOTBRIDGE

To our absolute delight and relief, at long last (after almost 40 years) we now have a first class footbridge across the Bybrook which now eliminates the daily and justified dread of every pedestrian crossing Bathford Bridge. The footbridge was named "Philip's Footbridge" in grateful recognition of the work for almost 30 years by Philip Harris (former Councillor and Chairman of the Parish Council) to achieve its provision. As an added bonus, the footbridge now enables the Walking Bus from our Primary School to provide a safer route to school.

B&NES are responsible for maintenance plus clearance of silt and vegetation directly underneath Bathford Bridge. The Environment Agency are responsible for stretches either side on a yearly basis but declined a recent plea to remove the vegetation from the ford..

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BOX ROAD

Restricted speed limits of 40 mph have now been extended to include Box Road Gardens.

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MORRIS LANE LEADING TO SHOCKERWICK

The unacceptable use of Shockerwick Lane from Morris Lane by heavy vehicles is now hopefully prevented by an "Unsuitable for HGVs" sign (*white on blue background*).

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A363

Restricted speed limits of: (a) 40 mph from the junction of Bathford Hill with the A363 upwards and just past Warleigh Lane; and (b) 50 mph from that point upwards to the Wiltshire boundary and beyond - have now been provided which hopefully will add to safety and also at last enable random Police speed checks to be carried out. Double white lines will also be provided in the near future on certain lengths of the A363 and will include approaches to Warleigh Lane. The A363 still has the dubious reputation of unacceptable but continuing accidents and near-misses and we will continue to lobby for further safety measures.

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WARLEIGH LANE

A road sign warning of restricted width in Warleigh Lane has been requested and approved by B&NES. At present, unsuspecting vehicles are unaware of the graduating reduced width and find themselves unable to reverse without inflicting damage to local property.

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BATHFORD HILL

New speed limits of 30 mph are also now installed. [The 40 mph signs at the junction of the A363 and Bathford Hill apply to the approach to the A363 as are the 40 mph signs at the approach to the A363 from Church Street and Pump Lane].

The promised resurfacing of Bathford Hill did not materialise ("inadequate funding") and only a section was eventually resurfaced at the junction with the A363 which (according to B&NES) is of greater importance. Dangerous potholes therefore constantly appear and our repeated requests for repair seems to be the only option.

The Resurfacing Programme for 2005/06 did not include Bathford but we have requested Bathford Hill is included in next year's funding.

The single white line has been renewed leading from 56 High Street to the Post Office.

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*PRIORITY POINT ONE*

We continue to press for the removal/resiting of Priority Point 1 at the British Legion (which I reiterate was not the position requested by the Parish Council) but B&NES are not compliant.

Their latest proposal (of which so far we have received no plans or information) is to provide a pedestrian island at the junction of Ashley Road and the High Street and narrow the entrance to Ashley Road, but plans so far produced have had to be revised to accommodate usage by heavy vehicles.

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*FINGERPOSTS, MILESTONE AND TURNPIKE MARKER STONES*

David Howell has located and recorded a complete record and photographs of our five fingerposts, various milestones and turnpike marker stones. This is of tremendous importance to us as a permanent and visual record for future maintenance as well as information. May I once again thank David for his valuable assistance.

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*DOUBLE YELLOW LINES*

This is, and always will be, a contentious issue but I emphasise that as a Parish Council we endeavour at all times to be impartial but practical with the sole objective of safety as a priority. Double yellow lines are now located at all Keep Clear locations, Dovers Park, Ashley Road, the High Street and a section of Prospect Place. They have been painted in deep cream and narrower than usual. These lines are now monitored by B&NES on a regular basis but obstruction issues will be investigated by the Police.

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*BIRDCAGE WALK*

Ownership of the steps leading from Birdcage Walk to the Manor is not known. B&NES do not accept responsibility and as a Parish Council we cannot carry out repairs or maintenance as we cannot accept liability. The official public footpath is to the left and diagonally across the green.

We have however requested funding by B&NES for 2006/07 of approximately £5,000.00 to provide lighting in Birdcage Walk to promote safety and access. The pathway is used widely by elderly and disabled residents and there is still a constant battle to keep it clear.

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*PROPOSED B.O.A.T. (BYWAY OPEN TO ALL TRAFFIC) APPLICATION AT ASHLEY ROAD - BOX PATH 83*

The proposal by Wiltshire Council to upgrade the Wiltshire-owned section of Ashley Road (which starts approximately at the stream at the end of Ashley Road leading to Wiltshire) from a bridlepath to a B.O.A.T., was vigorously contested by us as a Parish Council and by residents and users. This would undoubtedly have affected Bathford as there is no visible boundary at this section.

However, we are absolutely delighted to have been informed (April 2006) that the application has been REFUSED. There is evidence dating back to 1626 that this lane is an all purpose highway, part of the local road network. Since the application was submitted, Parliament has passed the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act which will prevent the upgrading of such ways such as Ashley Road to a Byway based on use by horse and cart. The cut-off date for such applications was 20 January 2005 and this application was made in September 2005.

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*PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE A4 ROAD AT SALTFORD*

Essential maintenance work is due to be carried out on the A4 at Saltford, between Bristol and Bath. It is proposed that the work should begin in July 2006. The recommended alternative routes recommended the use by heavy goods of the A420 to the A46 at Pennsylvania and from there to Bath, accessing by the A4 London Road. This will undoubtedly increase congestion on the London Road, Bathampton Toll Bridge and the Swainswick Roundabout and accordingly we requested Inter-route to ensure that during this period, these routes are not blocked at any time by road works.

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*COMPLAINTS*

And finally, can I remind you that Council Connect 394041 gives instant access to B&NES for any complaints.

*Shirley Beazer*  
*Chairman Highways, Footpaths & Lighting Committee*

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