

Quarterly Report – Travel and Road Safety April 2025

Here are the main issues of concern as far as traffic and highways are concerned.

1. The Boniface trail

A meeting was held at the Parish hall on 13/3/25 where Stuart Jarvis presented the results of the public engagement exercise on behalf of the DCC. A copy of his PowerPoint presentation has been circulated.

There were a total of 828 responses, 98% were in favour of a multi-use trail from Crediton to Exeter. 46% favoured the A377 route with 39% preferring the so-called 'quiet lanes' approach. Responses from stakeholder groups such as the NSCPC, Boniface Trail Association and Exeter Cycling campaign counted as single votes. Those living in the EX5 postcode had a much higher preference for the A377 route, which overall scored much higher on safety than the 'quiet lanes' route. The trail is now officially part of the DCC Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

The next steps are to commission technical reports on both options in three sections, Crediton to NSC, NSC to Cowley bridge and Cowley to Exeter. And to seek approval by the cabinet of the new combined county authority.

2. Winscott Barton farm entrance.

Meeting with Richard Browne (RB), John Dean (JD), Nick Gillon (NG) and Steve Tucker (ST) 8/4/25

Issue: With the continued access to the farm by artic trucks (mainly) the tarmac sections of the road are being chewed up, creating deep troughs in the road causing a hazard to road users.

ST reported that the best long-term solution would be to concrete the whole section of road that takes the majority of the traffic up to the entrance – however in the current financial climate this would not be an affordable solution. We discussed mitigating damage by encouraging the trucks to utilise the lower entrance to the farm to share the wear on the road – RB said that he would make sure this happened. ST then measured up the whole section of road and reported that he would suggest to DCC highways that a concrete pad just outside the main entrance should help to reduce longer term wear, and also to apply for a section of re-tarmacking up to this concrete pad which should, at least in the short/medium term solve the issues and bring the road back up to safe use. Possibly to trial the new material 'elastomac' to see if this would be a good solution.

ACTION: ST to report back to highways for repairs to the roads; RB to share the access to the farm to both entrances

3. Smallbrook Farm/residential entrance.

Issue: Broken and blocked drains on private land. The landowner (Phillip Browne) has agreed to affect the repair this summer. Previous meetings with Phillip and the PC road wardens (RWs) worked out a plan for this. In addition,

there is a continuing problem of blocking of the lower surface water drains. ST reported that the Smallbrook public roads are not currently on the DCC register, meaning that they do not get any annual gulley cleaning as they should. He said that he would make sure that this would be corrected.

Previous attendance by RWs also discovered raw sewage being discharged from further up the drain system (almost certainly from cottages further up the road) and therefore directly into the Smallbrook.

JD reported the sewage leak to the Environment Agency (EA) and had a site meeting with Derrick Reid on 23/4/25. He has no record on the EA system to say this issue has been reported before, although the RWs were confident that it had been some years ago. The EA will investigate the source of the leak and report back to the PC via JD.

ACTION: ST to register the Smallbrook roads on the County system to ensure the annual maintenance to the gulleys are carried out. EA to report back to JD with outcome of their investigation.

4. Station road river bridge.

Issues: Some fallen trees are trapped on the upper section of the river potentially causing damage to bridge; erosion of the banks around the footings of the bridge on the upper river section; break up of road surface around the access cover causing a hazard to road users.

ST has reported the problems to the Bridges department and they should be cleared in good time. Similar to the erosion concerns – the Bridges dept. should come out for an inspection after a report. The road surface does not meet the criteria for Highways repair so NG suggested RWs do this.

ACTION: PC to report to Highways regards the fallen trees and erosion concerns; RWs to carry out repairs to road surface.

5. Marsh Lane drainage.

Issue: Previous RW work to clear the blocked drains discovered a collapsed pipe under the road on the upper gulley; erosion concerns under the road from the river side of the roads

ST reported that Marsh Lane is not on the Highways system so would not have been part of the maintenance programme. He said that he would register the Lane, and the gulleys present to ensure future maintenance of the road and drainage system. Also, he would report the erosion concerns as the road surface is slowly disappearing into the river. The wooden fence on the Shuttern brook side of the road is in a poor state of repair and will need replacing.

ACTION: ST to register Marsh Lane on the Highways system; ST to report the erosion concerns to the appropriate department; ST to register the drainage pipe collapse for Highways repair

6. Kingfisher Close adoption.

ST clarified that KFC has now been formally adopted by Highways from the house builder and they are now responsible for its maintenance in the future.

7. Safety concerns relating to A377 at Smallbrook and Tytheing Close, lack of school signage (see previous quarterly reports).

The PC have agreed a plan to meet with the new county councillor after the May 1st election to discuss all these issues.

John Dean 28th April 2025