

RESPONSES FROM BUCKS COUNTY HIGHWAYS DEPT TO QUESTIONS RAISED AT THE AGM April 2010.

1: Richings Way:- Footways are in poor condition, some defects were marked for repair but then subsequently not made good. Why was that?

The works that were started in Richings Way were cancelled as a consequence of the poor weather prior to Christmas. The continued efforts to address potholes etc. has meant that the programme has been delayed by a significant margin. We hope to be in a position to re-focus our efforts at the start of June.

2: a. North Park, between the traffic signals and the golf club entrance, is in poor structural condition. When will these works be undertaken?

Some temporary repairs have already been effected here, it is acknowledged that more work is required here. As with 1 above, we hope to be in a position to address this type of work at the start of June.

b. In North Park itself there have been a number of very poor quality repairs, one example being where the material placed didn't even fill the hole, what are we going to do about this and how are we going to improve quality? A different repair, outside of no 30, has been "made good" 6 times, no evidence of cutting out, whacker plate or other appropriate compaction tools.

Supervisors and Local Area Technicians are tasked with inspecting a proportion of all work undertaken across the network. For works of this nature 5% will be revisited. Zoe has visited site and has marked this particular repair up for a permanent patch type repair. As soon as we have a date available for the programme we will update you.

c. The section round the middle width restriction is also in a poor structural state

Chairman's comment - there is no response to this point. The problem with the flooding of the footpath between Iver and RP on Thorney Lane North was also raised

3: On the route out of the industrial estates there are a number of sunken gullies, what is the programme for repair?

Again, as we move out of reactive repairs then these defects will begin to feature on our programmes. Zoe will have a fixed allocation of "gang time" and will need to work closely with her members to determine what the respective priorities for the area are. It must be remembered that there is a fixed allocation for all of our work and only effective programming and prioritisation will ensure that we extract value from all works undertaken.

4: Thorney Mill Road:- width restriction within the Borough of Hillingdon, we will need to visit site and, if appropriate, make noises to colleagues in Hillingdon.

The 7' 0" width restriction on Thorney Mill Road within Hillingdon has been in place for over 20 years. This Authority did object at the time, but it was installed to prevent HGVs from the Iver area from entering West Drayton. The width restriction is clearly signed in advance of the Thorney Mill Road / Thorney Lane South / Richings Way mini-roundabout and there is nothing about its positioning that causes this authority a problem in terms of road safety.

Chairman's comment – it seems that they did not understand our question in terms of the "new" width restriction so I went back and explained more fully and received the following answer: For your information Zoe did visit the site for me and took a number of photographs which she also shared with Ken. Ken remains happy that the system adopted is fit for purpose.

It is surprising that Bucks do not perceive several large metal posts in the middle of the road to be in any way dangerous.

We have now been in touch with Hillingdon ourselves and it appears that they are now planning to install traffic lights at the width restriction.

5: Speed Limit Review:- when will the SLR process be complete in Iver.

In terms of the speed limit issues, Pat has just released her latest Programme update. You will recall that the TRO for Area 6, which covers Iver, was introduced in November 2006. According to Pat's latest timetable, the post implementation review for Area 6 will be completed in May 2011, as there is no funding available for 2010/11.

6: The Richings Park Residents' Association submitted a risk assessment of their own that countered that undertaken by the County Council for streetlight switch-off. This was submitted in the summer of 2009 and yet has still to receive a response other than "the trial is ongoing and the outcome will be reviewed". For completeness the RA want a full response to the points raised.

The meeting referred to took place in 2008. Whilst the issue of Iver's own risk assessment was discussed we do not have any record of receiving a copy of it. Should the Residents' Association wish for it to be commented on then please send it back to us.

Chairman's comment: another copy was forwarded to them but we have yet to receive any response.

7: Richings Way Layby, as discussed this was installed as a part of the old local area committee delegated budget process. Signs were to have been erected but have yet to be, when will they be on site?

The hard standings that were installed under last year's delegated budget are for the Safer Roads Partnership to operate from. No signs were planned to go with these and no request has been received from the Safer Roads team, so the inference is that signs are not needed as they are able to park safely.

8: Can the Residents' Association have sight of the key performance indicators under which the contract operates? And information about how we can be involved in the feed back process as we were unaware of it and there did not appear to have been any involvement locally. Is the feedback broken down regionally? If so please could we see the responses for our area.

The customer survey I referred to is a random survey undertaken by a company on our behalf. I do not have the most recent copy of the survey to hand but will ask Duncan Laird to send you an electronic copy of the "headlines" of the survey and its methodologies.

Chairman's Comment: this does not answer the question. I have communicated with Duncan Laird but have had no response as yet.

9: When will the Highways on line site be fixed so that it shows reliable information about what has been done?

The software that drives the current site changes the status once the customer record has received some action, we have tried on many occasions to change the trigger but remain in the hands of our software provider and the interface written for the web-portal. The introduction of the new SIC will give us direct control of the interface and so we should be able to report more realistic messages.

Chairman's comment: SIC is the new interactive highways website being launched by Bucks on 22nd June. We shall see how successful it is.

10: Why? The individual points below indicate there is a problem with delivery of outcomes. Why has this happened when a new system has been put in place and what is being done to address this?

Chairman's comment: there was no response to this question, only to the specific examples below.

a - why were we promised our new bigger 30 mph signs as a priority last April and they were not delivered?

Where we have introduced new systems staff have not necessarily fully understood the ramifications of the new process, in addition there is often other ancillary work that is required in the background that may need doing also. We need to get to the position where a promise made is a promise delivered.

b- why were we promised that the double yellow lines would be done last June?

as per above

c- why did it take you 5 months to repair the very dangerous width restriction which was damaged long before the bad winter set in?

Issues with the width restriction were long and protracted and our response should have been swifter. There were other issues here that were outside of our control, we are seeking to address these with the local electricity distribution company but the path is long and tortuous (for very good reason). It is our hope that within the next six months we will be able, via a partner, to undertake our own connections/ disconnections from "public" supplies. With this contract in place we will be able to do "swap outs" with weeks rather than potentially months.

d- why were we told that the culvert under Old Slade Lane by the farm had been flushed and was running when it had not and is still not?

I will discuss this with Zoe

e -why does the audit system you have in place not seem to work so that shoddy repairs can be carried out.

Shoddy repairs should not be carried out. We do not, as a company, receive any benefit from visiting a defect on multiple occasions, it does actually make the job of achieving other targets much more difficult and so becomes self defeating. In addition, both supervisors and your local technicians have been tasked with undertaking a certain amount of auditing as a part of their role.

Mark Averill
Network Operations Manager
Transport for Buckinghamshire
tel: 01296 382482