

Correspondence (7 July – 10 July 2009)

Kent County Council and RTW residents of Frant Road

A267 Frant Road, Tunbridge Wells – Proposed Pedestrian Safety Scheme

Long outstanding pedestrian crossing since 2004 at Frant Road - KHS Inaction

From: Alan.Ash@kent.gov.uk

To: Sharon Hunt – Frant Road, Residents and TWBC Councillors

cc: MP Greg Clark and Councillors KCC & TWBC

Sent: Friday 10 July 2009 11:25 AM

Subject: RE: A267 Frant Road, Tunbridge Wells – Proposed Pedestrian Safety Scheme

Dear Sharon,

I am pleased to be able to tell you that following a meeting this morning with John Davies, MEM, Kent County Council, (previously Chairman of The Kent Tunbridge Wells Local Board,) that he has confirmed his support for the use of his member funds to be used on the Frant Road Highway Scheme.

His agreement has made me more optimistic now that we will be able to carry out this scheme, in the near future.

Following on from the consultation that is due to start on Monday 13th July for three weeks, and assuming there are no objections then our Countywide Improvement Team will arrange for work on site to commence as soon as possible and we will let you know the programme start dates when these are firmed up.

The results of the consultation will be reported back to the next Tunbridge Wells Joint Transport Board.

Thank you for your patience in this matter and I apologise for the time that this has taken us to get to this point; however I believe that we are now finally getting some where.

Regards

Alan Ash

Local Transport and Development Manager
(Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells)
Kent Highway Services
Doubleday House
St Michael's Close
Aylesford
Kent ME20 7BU

Phone 01622 798426

Mobile 07773 317348

From: Michael.Sammut@kent.gov.uk

To: Sharon Hunt – Frant Road; Alan.Ash@kent.gov.uk; Residents and TWBC Councillors

cc: MP Greg Clark and Councillors KCC & TWBC

Sent: Friday 10 July 2009 10:07 AM

Subject: RE: **A267 Frant Road, Tunbridge Wells – Proposed Pedestrian Safety Scheme**

Dear Mrs Hunt

Thank you for email concerning the above.

In October 2008 an update report was submitted to the Tunbridge Wells Joint Transportation Board, Which advised Members of that Board , that further investigative work was carried out and a pedestrian safety scheme was being developed in response to the issues being experienced by pedestrians in Frant Road in the vicinity of St Marks Road .

A concept scheme was put through the County's PIPKIN priority rating process in May 2008 for potential funding through the Kent Local Transport Plan (KLTP) in the 2009 financial year. In parallel to the KLTP funding process, an alternative source of funding was also being explored from 2nd Homes Money allocated for Tunbridge Wells, in which case, if successful, the scheme could potentially be constructed sooner.

The outline design for consultation purposes has been completed and addresses both the pedestrian crossing needs and helps to reduce vehicle speeds in Frant Road within the area of interest. It consists of one 2m wide pedestrian island and a single 1.8m wide traffic island in Frant Road between a point some 50 metres south of St Marks Road and Forest Road . The scheme also includes enhancing the existing 30mph speed limit terminal point on Frant Road close to St Marks Road with the introduction of Kent 'gateway' feature at the Kent boundary location. The addition of coloured surfacing with 'SLOW' markings in advance of the pedestrian island and central carriageway cross hatching (ghost markings) to link the two islands will help to change the look of the carriageway. The single traffic island is designed to protect right turning traffic into St Marks Road .

The current locations of the bus stops will also be changed as part of the package of works, in order to ensure that the stops are at the most appropriate locations in relation to the proposed pedestrian island.

It was always anticipated that the public consultation would take place in February 2009, but this was not possible at the time and thereafter it has not been possible to do so due to outstanding issues related to funding.

It has now been agreed that the scheme can go to public consultation whilst the funding matter is being resolved. It is therefore planned to present the scheme to yourself, as the local residents' representative, interests groups and local Borough and County Members as well as the emergency services for their views in the next two weeks.

The consultation period is planned to last some three weeks and provided there are no significant design changes that need to be made the scheme can be passed on to the County Wide Improvement Team for detailed design (for construction purposes) and programmed to be constructed in the current financial year.

It is accepted that the process has taken some time to get the scheme to where it is now, but I am confident that it will be funded and constructed this year. Every effort will be made to get the work completed as soon as possible following the consultation.

Please get back to me if you have any further questions.

Regards

Michael Sammut

Senior Transportation Engineer

Transport & Development

Sevenoaks & Tunbridge Wells

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 www.kent.gov.uk/highways

From: Sharon Hunt
To: Ash, Alan - KHS; Sammut, Michael - E&R KHS; Residents and TWBC Councillors
cc: MP Greg Clark and Councillors KCC & TWBC
Sent: 09 July 2009 21:39
Subject: RE: A267 Frant Road, Tunbridge Wells – Proposed Pedestrian Safety Scheme

Dear Mr Ash

As you can well imagine both myself and local residents are bitterly disappointed to hear that the Frant Road crossing was not successful in its bid for funding.

Please would you give us the contact details of those involved in that decision so that we may at least have a dialogue with nameless individuals who have had such an impact on our lives? There must be a person or persons who take responsibility for turning the funding down.

You say you are 'waiting for approval to fund the final scheme' where then, are you expecting this funding to come from?

Regards
Sharon Hunt

From: CLARK, Greg <CLARKG@parliament.uk>
To: Christopher Thomas
Sent: Thursday 9 July 2009 9:08 AM
Subject: FW: Long outstanding pedestrian crossing since 2004 at Frant Road - KHS Inaction

Dear Christopher

Many thanks for your e-mail. The lack of progress on this is incredibly frustrating - in fact, I wrote to KCC's Cabinet Member for Highways, Nick Chard, only last week to express my deep concern.

Having seen Kent Highway 's response yesterday, I will now be requesting an urgent conversation with him.

I'll let both you and Sharon know the outcome.
Best wishes
Greg

From: Christopher Thomas [mailto:christownforum@btinternet.com]
To: CLARK, Greg
cc: Sharon Hunt
Sent: Wednesday 08 July 2009 19:57
Subject: Fw: Long outstanding pedestrian crossing since 2004 at Frant Road - KHS Inaction

Dear Sir (Greg)

Please find below email sent to Alan Ash of Kent County Council, Highways.

You will note the Frant Road pedestrian crossing is being deferred once again, as per his email at the bottom of this message.

Unfortunately, and as you can see from the quotation I took, this undermines the statement you have made in your Transport Special. (I found this "special" extremely interesting and a very good idea).

I believe you should be aware of this, which is why I have copied you in.

Yours faithfully
Christopher Thomas
Chairman
Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

From: Christopher Thomas
To: Alan.Ash@kent.gov.uk; Michael.Sammut@kent.gov.uk; Sharon Hunt; Residents and TWBC Councillors
cc: MP Greg Clark and Councillors KCC & TWBC
Sent: **Wednesday 8 July 2009 18:17**
Subject: Re: **Long outstanding pedestrian crossing since 2004 at Frant Road - KHS Inaction**

Dear Mr Ash

Your reply is disappointing to say the least.

Please read the following extract from an email letter dated 18th May 2008 which I sent to Cllr Roger Manning, who was at that time the Chairman Highways Advisory Board. Extract reads as follows:-

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2.) Frant Road Crossing

We are pleased to see that action is at last being taken to make the area of concern much safer to cross, however, this does not excuse the statement made by **Alan Ash**, Development Planning Manager, advising us that KHS were blissfully ignorant of the major concerns held surrounding this road. In order to underline our dismay I list below a variety of your staff who have been involved in knowing about the concern yet ignoring pleas for safety:

- Andy Smart – copies of emails as far back as 10 January 2005 from Mr J Wallace (Resident) also official letter on file from same individual sent to Mr S D Wood (Resident) dated 23 February 2005. In fact as far back as September 2004 a survey was promised to be undertaken to Mr Wallace.
- Behdad Heratbar sent an email dated 1 February 2006 to Mr Miller (Resident) and copied this to Mr Smart. On 2 February 2006 Mr Smart sent an email to Mr Miller while also copying in Mr David Bond.
- Apart from these people Jerry Ralph of the Contact Centre emailed Katie Brown of SP KHS on 27 January 2006 and Ms Brown then sent an email onto Mr Heratbar of the same date.
- Over and above this, an email was sent to Kent Highways Services dated 24 January 2006 from Mr Miller (Resident), which was addressed to the Highways Manager and letters were also sent to “The Highways Manager” from Mr Miller dated 10 September 2005 and 3 November 2005.

You will therefore understand my concern when you mentioned you would be talking to Mr Heratbar who was fully aware of the problems of Frant Road as far back as 1 February 2006. Furthermore at a Town Forum meeting, in which Mr Heratbar gave a presentation on Highways activity, he proclaimed that parking on pavements was not a concern and that people should have to expect it. I trust you will agree with me that this is not a comment that should be made as parking on pavements obstructs not only the disabled, but also potentially a nearby water main to be used by the Fire Service, which could be under a car. Naturally, such action also destroys pavements.

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Strangely enough your name is mentioned as being ignorant of numerous emails and correspondence dating back to 2004.

This crossing, as you are aware IS a major worry for not only Sharon and all the parents of children going to the school, but also the CHILDREN themselves. Apart from that I note the quote from our M.P. Greg Clark in his latest Transport Special in which he quotes "As traffic increases, it's vitally important that pedestrians can cross our roads safely. Local residents have successfully campaigned to get a new pedestrian crossing on the A267 Frant Road which should be completed this year."

Sharon Hunt came to the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum, which is a voice for the unparished area residents for help. It is all too clear to see why she came to ask for help.

This much needed crossing has been delayed once again since 2004, not bad! The attached NHS report on road fatalities and deaths in Tunbridge Wells Borough shows the borough as worse than average....wonder why? So I ask

where is the current KCC Road Safety Plan as the last one appears to have expired?

Look:

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"I would also ask you to advise me why there appears to be no current Kent Road Safety Plan for the period 2006 to 2011 as per your Local Transport Plan (Section 5.6 refers)

http://www.kent.gov.uk/static/local-transport-plan/section_131312443468.html "

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This is from an extract to a letter I sent to Cllr Ferrin (Portfolio Holder for Highways) dated 25th March 2008. I did receive a reply from Cllr Ferrin but he stated he had passed the enquiry onto you.

I also referred to this in my letter dated 18th May 2008 to Cllr Manning (Former Chair of Highways Advisory Board):-

Dear Cllr Manning

Thank you for coming over to speak at the end of the Tunbridge Wells Local Board Meeting of the 14th May and for also promising to investigate why there is no current KCC Road Safety Plan on the KCC website. I attach correspondence which Cllr Ferrin elected not to investigate, but simply pass onto **Alan Ash**.

You will note your name appears once again and you will understand I do keep correspondence, but as you know I never received a reply from you. The full letter to Cllr Manning is on the Town Forum website, which was not replied to by either you or Cllr Manning.

see: <http://www.townforum.org.uk/chairmanupdate.html>

Yours sincerely

Christopher Thomas

Chairman

Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

From: Alan.Ash@kent.gov.uk

To: Sharon Hunt; Michael.Sammut@kent.gov.uk ;

Sent: **Wednesday 08 July 2009 13:18**

Subject: RE: **A267 Frant Road, Tunbridge Wells – Proposed Pedestrian Safety Scheme**

Dear Mrs Hunt,

Thank you for your email. The scheme will be going out to consultation in the next two weeks as the first stage in the process. We are still waiting for approval to fund the final scheme. Normally schemes such as this are submitted on an annual basis as a bid for funding and have to compete with many other schemes across Kent for limited money. The scheme has been included in the bid for 2010/11 and I have now received information that it has not been successful.

I understand that you are keen to see the works in place and I am, as I said in my report to the JTB, seeking other means of funding this because of the local feelings that this is an important local safety matter.

Once we have the results of the consultation back and also the funding in place then I can pass it over to our Countywide Improvement Team to deliver the works in this financial year. I hope that this information will assist you.

Alan Ash

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From: Sharon Hunt

To: Sammut, Michael - E&R KHS; Ash, Alan - E&R KHS; Residents & TWBC Cllrs

cc: Greg Clark office

Sent: **Tuesday 07 July 2009 15:08**

Subject: **Frant Road Crossing**

Mr Ash

As I am sure you are aware the Frant Road crossing issue has now been going on for almost two years. I made a note of a telephone conversation I had with you last October in which you said you expected the designs to be ready by Jan /Feb. 09 with construction of the actual crossing taking place late spring early summer 2009. Since then I have received two emails from Mr Sammut which say more or less the same thing.

Why then has nothing happened? At the very least I feel that local people are entitled to a very honest and straightforward answer as to when we can expect to see our crossing built.

Regards
Sharon Hunt
