

History of Denchworth Road Crossing by Councillor Zoé Patrick.

I have gone back into my notes and this goes back to 2002! There were concerns expressed about two crossing points for schoolchildren in the village around this time. The one area at Brereton Drive (a pelican was approved and now installed) and here at the Denchworth Road.

This crossing at Denchworth Road was agreed after a petition was raised by residents in the village and handed in to Brian Short at a Traffic Advisory Committee meeting by Ms. Ana Ramos of Wick Green in 2003. She had two twin daughters attending Millbrook School and every morning at peak time she and other parents were standing for a long time waiting for a substantial break in the traffic stream before they could cross. I was also aware of many elderly and disabled residents coming from roads on the other side of the Denchworth Road who needed access to the main shopping area and the Day Centre, Library, Old Mill Hall which are all situated by Millbrook car park. Young mums also regularly use this route taking their pre-school age children to Grovelands Park Playgroup which has only recently been given a £300,000 grant from the County Council towards building improvements.

The traffic survey was undertaken, Grove Parish Council was included in the consultation process and it was agreed to put the scheme forward for the following year's programme (2004). However, not long after this we were told that all these types of schemes were now dropped and there was no mechanism for getting works of this kind through the capital programme, unless the parish council themselves funded the work. Unfortunately, they did not have sufficient funds to do so.

I therefore welcomed the arrival of the new Area Stewardship funding because this meant that I would have enough money to ensure that this important crossing point in the village was undertaken at the earliest opportunity. Since then, I have advertised the potential crossing in the Grove Parish Newsletter where I write a monthly report, Millbrook School also put it in their school newsletter, and I have worked with the parish council to try to make sure that we have a solution to this problem, especially at peak times. I am also very conscious of the fact that the planning application for the Grove Airfield Development has now been submitted, and this could create even more traffic through the village, so it is even more important that this work is done as soon as possible.

When we have been in the vicinity of the proposed site for the crossing early in the mornings at peak times, many of the residents crossing the road have been seen darting across in between the cars. Several people have said when they saw us that they hoped that a crossing was going to be installed. The schools' 'walking bus' has also given their support. The head teacher at Millbrook School, Sarah Weston has given her support too and has assured me she will write a letter in for the meeting.

I do hope we can go ahead with this important safety measure for the village. I expect that this will greatly improve the whole area around the Denchworth Road because this is also a key access point for the Bay Tree Public House and the main walk through path to the main shopping area and Millbrook car park where numerous amenities are situated.