

Maintenance issues

Many problems for pedestrians and cyclists are caused by property owners who fail to keep their hedges cut back. Community action might help to focus attention on these issues. Other difficulties arise because of poorly maintained road surfaces, especially when a variety of contractors excavate the same section of road at different times.

There is a major problem with on-road cycle lanes with a coloured surface which are disintegrating

in many places despite some recent patching up. The lack of maintenance is due to the high cost of the coloured surface dressing. It is suggested that HCC Highways Department acknowledges reality and dispenses with coloured cycle lanes in order to allow more regular maintenance. This is not a matter of aesthetics; poorly maintained cycle lanes are difficult to ride on, they force cyclists into the main traffic stream and generally deter potential cyclists from using their bikes.

Station users have to run the gauntlet of rush hour traffic here and north of the A27 road bridge



Crossing the road

The main roads into Emsworth; the A259 from the west and Hordean Rd/New Brighton Road from the north are busy and getting busier, with speeding vehicles being a particular problem. Crossing these roads can be very difficult, especially for the disabled and for parents with children.

Several other inadequate crossings were identified in the CSA report. In particular, the informal crossing points in the High Street cause confusion for both drivers and pedestrians alike, especially the elderly and disabled. It is suggested that a study of St Peter's Square and its approaches is needed to devise an imaginative scheme to give greater priority to pedestrians in this very busy area. Failing this, the case for a conventional crossing should be reconsidered.

Problems for the disabled

A lot of good work has been done installing dropped kerbs and tactile pavements for the visually impaired. However, in many other respects, the needs of the disabled take second place to those of the motor car, or are ignored altogether. Also, the placement of street furniture so as to block primary walking routes is commonplace. More thought and co-ordination is needed from the different agencies who install dropped kerbs, bollards, road signs and other street furniture.

Other noted problems include the use of open rain gullies in pavements. These constitute a trip hazard for the elderly and those with walking aids. Pressure on HCC has led to the replacement of such a gully outside Starr's butchers and fish shop in West Street but other examples remain.



Should the cyclist risk his front or back wheel on this narrow refuge? It's a harder decision for a mother with a pushchair



Well placed dropped kerb but why wasn't the "no entry" sign moved onto the nearby building?

Inter-village routes – going beyond Emsworth

Several good cycle routes have been established in the neighbouring areas such as the Billy Trail on Hayling Island, Salterns Way, Broadmarsh cycle scheme and the Bosham to Emsworth cycleway currently under construction. It is now essential that links from Emsworth to these other schemes are implemented to provide a continuous network that will provide a real boost to cycling for commuting and leisure.

A27 Site Extra

At the Community Board meeting on Thursday 12 June, the A27 site was discussed with special focus on the Washington Road footpath under the railway. Many board members and members of the public are very concerned about the effect on the already problematical north-south split in Emsworth. Of special concern is that the access road crosses the footpath which is designated to become a 'Safe Route to School'.

Rumour has it that a new planning application for the A27 site is imminent. We await this with interest – there is certain to be long and loud protests if this safe access for children and others between the north and south of Emsworth is in any way compromised.

Richard Jannaway

What next?

The Community Street Audit has been submitted to Havant Borough Council and Hampshire County Council. It is expected that the findings will be included in a formal Town Access Plan for Emsworth. This will set out a definitive list of improvements to be made as and when funding becomes available. In the meantime, we anticipate a dialogue with HCC and HBC Transport departments to review the issues identified in the Street Audit and agree potential improvements to resolve them.

It should be noted that both councils are keen to improve

facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. Their real problem is finding funds to make such improvements. There is funding available, the Bosham to Emsworth route is being partly funded by a grant from the national cycling charity 'Sustrans' as a part of its 'Links to Schools' programme. We therefore need to use every means of persuading Central Government and local politicians to give higher priority to schemes for promoting cycling and walking as a means of local transport.

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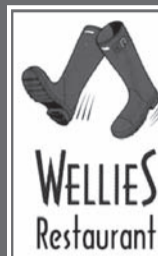


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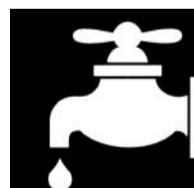
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