

REPORT TO BIX & ASSENDON PARISH COUNCIL JULY 2021 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

GENERAL OCC REPORT

THIRD READING BRIDGE

I took the opportunity attend the first meeting of the new Cabinet and submit a written question to the new Cabinet Member for Transport (Duncan Enright, Labour) about the Third Bridge status. Officers supplied an answer which provided some new context in relation to the delayed Outline Business Case (OBC). It seems that far from agreeing to progress the OBC, the Department for Transport (DfT) wants the Cross Thames Travel Group to go back to the earlier Strategic Outline Business Case and upgrade it. This would be costly and would have to be funded locally – such funding has not been forthcoming. Additionally, DfT has confirmed its reluctance to progress the bridge at all unless all parties are in agreement. I think the threat of a car-based bridge is sunk for the foreseeable future.

OXFORDSHIRE COVID CASES SURGE – MAINLY THE UNDER 30S

People in Oxfordshire are being asked to take extra care and accept the offer of first and second vaccinations as cases in the county reach heights not seen since the winter. Cases have risen from 21.1 cases per 100,000 in late May to 101.8 cases per 100,000 in the week ending 25 June. The largest number of cases remain in people aged below 30, with 20 to 29-year olds accounting for 46 per cent of all new cases. All people aged 18 and above are now eligible to receive their first jab.

PATHWAYS TO ZERO-CARBON OXFORDSHIRE REPORT PUBLISHED

A key climate action report – [Pathways to a Zero-Carbon Oxfordshire](#) – by the University of Oxford's Environmental Change Institute and Bioregional has been published. The county council was one of many organisations involved in commissioning the report as part of its commitment to a zero-carbon future, as outlined in the Carbon Action Framework published last October. The report seeks to provide an evidence base for the transition to zero carbon and the role of partnerships in achieving these goals.

SURVEYS ON HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT ISSUES

People who live and work in Oxfordshire are urged to have their say on highways and transport issues around the county, including congestion, safety, cycling and the condition of roads and footpaths. Oxfordshire County Council has launched a number of roads and transport [online surveys](#), which are open to the public to comment on. The council is keen to hear views as soon as possible but people will have the chance to comment until February 2022. The online survey categories are:

- accessibility
- highway maintenance
- public transport
- road safety
- tackling congestion
- walking and cycling
- business users.

Earlier this year, the council announced it was investing £31.3 million in improving the highways network for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians in 2021/22. Roads, cycleways, bridges, drainage, pavements and streetlights will all benefit from the programme. The full list of projects and their locations is available to view [online](#).

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR BIX & ASSENDON

THIRD READING BRIDGE

I have already supplied an update on this in my general report.

FLOODING IN LANE NEAR GREENMARSH FARM, BIX FMS [2714897](#)

I have received further complaints flooding at this location. The problem has been around for many years. Our Highways team advises that this stretch of highway is in a low area with the adjoining land higher either side resulting in the flooding problem. The problem is exacerbated by blocked drainage ditches – clearing these is the responsibility of the landowner.

LOWER ASSENDON LAYBY

At the last PC meeting, I was asked to establish whether OCC owned the area of land in question. I subsequently confirmed that the land was not owned or controlled by OCC and that it was unregistered. I advised that the fact it was not registered did not mean it was not owned by another party as ownership might pre-date the Land Registry process.

DAMAGED SIGN NEAR A4130/B480 JUNCTION FMS 2647832

In the spring, less than two years after re-installation, the large sign in the Henley direction was again totally demolished. It has now been confirmed that a further replacement has been scheduled for installation w/c 16th August.

HENLEY TO NETTLEBED CYCLE PATH

In the light of the recent sad news about the death of a cyclist, I am attempting to get more impetus behind this proposal which I first engaged with over a year ago but has progressed little due to staffing/resource shortages. I am pursuing two options:

Option 1 (original): Link existing Henley to Assendon shared use path to old Assendon to Bix path (which would need substantial repair/upgrading), then link this path to the existing Bix to Nettlebed path which would need siding-out/upgrading to form new shared use path.

Option 2 (new): As above, but instead of repairing the old Assendon to Bix path, convert to the existing eastbound (downhill) section of the dual carriageway to single track and create a new two-way shared use path on the redundant carriageway.