

Shrewton Parish Council meeting 7th August 2019

Clerks updates from previous meetings minute ref 19/84

Clerk had written twice to Highways England (HE) and BBC Wiltshire following a query from resident at June meeting regarding announcement on radio of traffic being diverted through Shrewton when an incident had occurred on the A303.

Reply BBC Wiltshire 23.07.2019

My apologies that you have not had a response to this earlier.

BBC Wiltshire's traffic reports following a closure of the A303 use information provided by Wiltshire Police and Highways England.

Often this involves telling motorists to follow the hollow circle or solid diamond symbols.

We will report traffic being busier than normal on some other routes that may be as a result people using satellite navigation to avoid the A303 closure, but we do not encourage or endorse drivers using other routes.

I hope this answers your question.

Clerk to follow up with Wiltshire Police

Reply from HE 05.08.2019

Thank you for your email of 22 July regarding diverted traffic from the A303 travelling through Shrewton. We're sorry that, due to an administrative error, you did not receive a response to your original email

As I'm sure you're aware, this is an area with very few options in the event of an incident on the A303. Despite this, there is no approved diversion route that sends traffic through Shrewton.

Historically there was a proposed diversion that followed this route but, HGVs were not permitted to travel this way. This route is not signposted but, as you stated, we believe it is the suggested diversion by local radios.

We're aware of this issue and are considering options for an approved diversion which would then be circulated appropriately.

We hope this answers your enquiry. If you have any further queries, please contact our Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000 or info@highwaysengland.co.uk

Clerk had forwarded a letter received from a resident, with a covering letter, to Parvis Khansari, Director Highways and Waste Wiltshire Council, Highways England (HE) and John Glen MP. Responses below. (to date no response from WC)

Reply from HE received 23.07.2019

Thank you for your email of 16 July, enclosing correspondence from xxxxxxxxxx, in relation to traffic in Shrewton.

I'm sorry to hear of the problems xxxxxxxxxx has been experiencing. Please be assured that we fully understand and appreciate the problems caused by rat-running traffic through Shrewton, particularly at times when there are long queues and delays on the A303.

As you acknowledged in your email, our proposed scheme to improve the A303 via a tunnel past Stonehenge will remove congestion from the A303 and will relieve Shrewton of rat-running traffic.

The scheme is on schedule for construction to be started in 2021, following the grant of planning consent by the Secretary of State for Transport next spring.

In the meantime, as the roads through the village are the responsibility of Wiltshire Council, I'm afraid it would be for the Council to consider whether any measures can be put in place before the construction of our scheme.

You'll also be aware that Shrewton Parish Council is represented on our local Community Forum and receives regular updates on the progress being made with the scheme. We'd be happy to speak to Parish Council representatives about this issue at the Community Forum meeting tomorrow.

We're also happy for you to forward this email to xxxxxxxxxx.

Thank you once again for taking the time to contact us. If you have any further questions or concerns please don't hesitate to get in touch on 0300 123 5000 or email

A303Stonehenge@highwaysengland.co.uk.

Reply from John Glen MP. 29.07.2019

Thank you for your email regarding congestion and rat-running in the Shrewton area. I will be in Shrewton again tomorrow morning on one of the busiest traffic days of the year for the A303 so will be interesting to see first-hand the problem once again.

The present difficulties you are experiencing are precisely why I have been such a strong supporter of the A303 Stonehenge scheme. It is exactly what is needed to reduce pressure on local roads. I appreciate that if approved it will not be finished until 2026, but it is a scheme of such scale and ambition that it is unavoidable that it will take some years to complete. It will be worth the wait! I am meeting Councillor Darren Henry (copied) tomorrow morning so will discuss what we can do as a coordinated approach. Darren is obviously well placed on Wiltshire Council. The dilemma we face is that Wiltshire Council will be reluctant to throw considerable resources at fixing this problem if the A303 project is going to solve all these issues in a few years' time anyway. However, there may be some cheaper options that could bring some relief to this situation in the shorter term.

I will discuss with Darren tomorrow and then settle on what further lobbying efforts may be appropriate or effective.