

## **Report into Crossing on Bognor Road by Sarah Sharp, County Councillor for Chichester South July 2023**

### **History**

The issue of the lack of a crossing on Bognor Road has been on the agenda for many years and raised by Cllr Margaret Evans and Cllr Jamie Fitzjohn, my two immediate predecessors as County Councillor for Chichester South.

A petition was set up to gather support for a crossing in this location in 2014:

<https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/petition-calls-for-safer-west-sussex-road-crossings-885447>

Greyfriars Housing Association and local residents worked on a paper petition in 2020 on the same issue: <https://www.chichesterpost.co.uk/2020/02/petition-launched-to-create-a-crossing-in-bognor-road/>

### **2021 Community Highways Scheme**

A Community Highways Scheme application was completed in the summer of 2021. Officers came back to say that a full crossing of the road wouldn't be possible due to closeness to the junction and so more site visits were carried out in the summer of 2022 and the idea of a "build-out" to help residents see approaching vehicles and be seen by vehicle drivers was put forward by Highways engineers. Final plans won't be drawn up until the scheme has passed assessment.

The aim of the build-out is to make it easier to cross the road for pedestrians. The build out means that the pedestrian can see further round the parked cars and the vehicle drivers can also see the pedestrians waiting to cross.

The build out will not prevent two cars passing each other at this part of Bognor Road.

I will forward a rough design for this crossing as soon as I receive this from the Highways Department.

In the autumn of 2022 this idea was moderated and failed to be taken forward for the design stage due to other applications in the county scoring more highly.

### **Request/ Recommendation**

In order to improve the scoring for this application, it would be helpful if the Planning & Conservation Committee of the City Council could consider the safety issues of the Bognor Road near the junction with York Road and send in a letter of support for this Community Highways Scheme. General support for an intervention is what is required at this stage as precise details of the design are not known.

In order to improve the scoring for this application, would the P&C Committee also consider if the City Council could offer some CIL funding towards the scheme? Ability to add some funding towards the costs would also increase the scoring for the scheme.

**Recommendation: That a letter confirming the Planning Committee's support for the scheme be sent to WSCC.**

### **Issues to consider by the Committee include (but are not limited to)**

- 1) **Safety** – The rules of assessing CHS have now changed and near misses can now be reported and included. Residents and councillors have been encouraged to use the reporting tool

here: to send in reports of near misses: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/make-an-enquiry-or-report-a-problem-with-a-road-or-pavement/report-an-emergency-with-a-road-or-pavement> or <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/make-an-enquiry-or-report-a-problem-with-a-road-or-pavement/make-an-enquiry-about-a-road-or-pavement/>

**The Crash Map UK shows a large number of incidents near this location over the last 23 years:** <https://www.crashmap.co.uk/>

**Many residents from Royal Close have shared with me stories of their near misses and difficulties crossing the road. Fear of accidents prevents residents trying to cross this road.**

- 2) **Access to public transport** – to support the new bus shelter and seat the City Council has provided on the York Road side of the road. A build-out to help cross the road for passengers returning from the City Centre by bus would be helpful and support the move to more sustainable use of public transport.
- 3) **Greyfriars Housing Association**  
There is a lot of need for this crossing from the nearby residents in Royal Close. The housing on this street is managed by the Greyfriars Housing Association and it caters for couples or single people over the age of 60. Some of these residents find crossing the road difficult and therefore are unable to access their most local amenities on foot.
- 4) **All age Use** - The crossing is not only for the residents of Royal Close (an age restricted development) but also for children from Arundel Park Estate or East of the City to get to and from Rumboldswyke and Kingsham Primary School and Busy Lizzie nursery on Whyke Road or the High School on Kingsham Road. Also, children from Whyke need to cross this road to get to the park and café.
- 5) **Other facilities need to be reached not just the Coop** – there is also a pet shop/medical centre/post box/ shop / Florence Park and the café and the Sea Cadet Hall as well as Portfield School and St George’s Church and the Community Food Hubs they run for the community. This is not just an application to help people get to one shop.

#### *West Sussex Transport Plan Themes*

**Prosperous West Sussex:** This scheme will have a positive impact on sustainable economic prosperity, and support the residents from the new Bartholomews Cathedral View development to get by foot into the southern part of the city or railway station.

**Healthy West Sussex:** this scheme will support the needs of an ageing population and improve air quality due to modal shift, allowing people to live healthy lifestyles, and ensuring access to local facilities and services. Making it easier to walk and cycle between the locations listed above will improve health and wellbeing and reduce pollution when there is modal shift.

**Protected West Sussex:** the scheme will have a positive impact on achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and adapting to the effects of climate change. Encouraging modal shift and carbon reductions instead of residents driving to further away shops as they find it difficult to shop locally due to difficulties crossing the road.

**Connected West Sussex:** the scheme will not have a negative effect on the efficiency of the road network, the build-out will address road safety issues, improve the attractiveness of the bus network and its integration with other modes, and extend and improve the network of active travel facilities. It will be easier to get to bus stop over the road and make it easier to cross the road on foot or by bike for some cyclists who don’t cycle on the road due to

road danger fears. Road safety is of great concern to the local residents and that is why this has been such a long running campaign. The build out will not prevent two vehicles crossing at this point.

Also, the following issues can be considered by the Committee:

#### *Assurance*

- Deliverability: The land is in Highways' control.
- Financial: *Would the City Council be able to support this with any CIL funding?*
- Technical: it was not seen as possible to build a full crossing due to non-compliance with national and local standards and requirements. This is why a build-out is the option put forward by the Highways Engineers.
- Legal: Due to the large number of older people living on Royal Close who aren't able to access their local shops it is important to remember Equality Duty responsibilities. The refuge further down the road near the Careline Facilities are too far for some elderly or frail people to walk.
- Political Alignment: Approaches have been made to the Head of Rumboldswyke and Kingsham Schools, Whyke Residents' Association and Greyfriars Housing Association seeking further written support. I have given my full support as the County Councillor for the area. Individual letters from the four City Councillors for Chichester South would be very helpful.
- Policy Alignment: Increased housing leading to more vehicles on the road will make it harder to cross the road in this area. I have written to the Neighbourhood Plan group at the City Council asking for support with reference to the PLACE assessments. Sadly, the new Bartholomews development at Cathedral View on Bognor Road didn't bring with it a crossing of Bognor Road.

#### **Diagram showing indicative build-out of pavement on Bognor Road to improve safety for pedestrians crossing the road**

