

## **Update on Current Projects**

### **East West Walking Route**

The Chair, Vice Chair and Adrian Berendt met with Alan Osuaha, the KCC Project Manager and Adrian Oliver from the KCC Active Travel Team on 16 April to discuss a raised table and informal crossing point on Newton Road at the junction with Solomons Lane. There are significant challenges at this location caused by underground services, street levels and access and KCC haven't now got the funding in the project budget to meet the costs involved in putting in a raised table. In terms of future budgets they are concerned about the relative value for money provided by putting in a raised table here, in comparison to other pedestrian improvements that the Town Council has put forward. They are however happy to put in an informal pedestrian crossing point at this location. They are also discussing with SBC the possibility of funding an adjustment to the railings at Faversham Rec, to fit in with the desire line created by the East West route.

Apart from this location the work on the East West Walking Route is now complete, with the exception of some tree planting and the putting in of a bench on South Road. There will now be a period of several weeks before a safety audit is carried out and any final corrections to the work are made.

### **North South Walking Route and KCC Consolidated Active Travel Fund 2025**

The Town Council submitted a proposal of just over £1.1 million of capital and revenue funding for KCC's Consolidated Active Travel Fund for 2025/26. There is £5.4 million in the fund altogether. The bid had to go in via SBC and the majority of the request was for project funding to implement and further design out the interventions in the North South Walking Route. Our top priority was a new crossing on North Lane and related improvements on Partridge Lane to provide a safe walking route from North Preston to the Town Centre. Announcements in relation to this funding were expected at the beginning of May but have now been delayed.

### **20 MPH Compliance Fund**

At its meeting in January the Committee agreed a proposal for interventions it would like to fund from its earmarked reserve of £18,000 and agreed that discussions should start with KCC over the detailed costings of these items, so a final list could be prepared. Potential projects identified would cost over £115,000. Moving forward with the project has been delayed because our HIP Meeting didn't take place until 15 April and because we decided to offer funding from the reserve as a potential matching contribution for any funding we receive through the Consolidated Active Travel Fund this year.

It is now planned to set up a meeting with the KCC Swale Highway Manager to look detailed costs for proposed interventions and for Adrian Berendt to start working with officers to design an informal consultation with residents over how best to tackle speeding and rat running issues in the Athelstan Road area. Since the last meeting of the committee there has also been a serious incident in Cambridge Road when a vehicle driven at speed damaged six other vehicles and overturned. This follows a similar incident a few years ago and a number of complaints from residents about the suitability of the road for two-way traffic particularly during the rush hour, which have increased since the incident. The committee is therefore asked to include Cambridge Road and the roads immediately around it in the consultation. Our LCWIP already identifies this area as one for potential intervention.

## **Highways Improvement Plan Meeting**

The Vice Chair and Town Clerk met with Jenny Watson, KCC's Community Engagement Team Leader on 15 April to discuss the latest version of our Highways Improvement Plan . Antony Hook, our KCC member also attended. Jenny undertook to look at additional drop kerb requests we make; to fund additional 20mph roundels in the Athelstan Road and Saxon Road areas, with exact locations to be agreed; to carry out speed surveys on Ospringe Street and get design and quotes for 2 village gateways at the entrance to Ospringe.

She also updated us on plans for a surface level crossing on the A2. KCC have been looking at a location near the entrance of Egbert Road but there are issues at this location because of domestic drives. Jenny explained that KCC were looking at possible options for a formal crossing point. She undertook to keep the Town Council updated on progress with this. It was pointed out that our HIP identifies the problem locations as being the entrance to Abbey School and the junction with Brogdale Road.

## **Active Travel Consultancy Support**

Adrian Berendt of Berendt Consulting has agreed to provide a range of consultancy support to the Committee during the year. He will initially be reviewing planning applications that involve active travel to ensure they meet Neighbourhood Plan requirements, obtaining more information on developer funded highway projects and developing a consultation questionnaire for residents in the Athelstan/Ethelbert Rd area about options for reducing rat running and speeding.