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Spring 2026

SIGNPOSTS

News and views from Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling group
Issue 20

HADDENHAM'S DILEMMA



Chair of Haddenham Parish Council, David Truesdale, MBE, had a long list of achievements of our parish councillors and officers to share but the Annual Parish Meeting on 19 March 2026 was dominated by Haddenham's treatment in the [New and Expanded Settlements Study](#) recently published by Buckinghamshire Council.

A packed meeting room was fully engaged by Haddenham's designation as a "Small Market Town / Other Large Settlement" with capacity for up to 7,350 new dwellings.

Cllr Truesdale wondered, out loud, where residents stood. Were villagers willing to balance outrage over what seems unreasonable housing growth – which the

Parish Council is strongly challenging – with action to mitigate the effects of the expansion we will inevitably face given government priorities?

We could shape growth with a new Neighbourhood Plan – where to provide homes and where not, with what provision for schools, doctors, etc. – or perhaps with a supplementary section of the legally required Bucks Council "Local Plan".

But a Haddenham Neighbourhood Plan would have to be consistent with housing growth targets *and* be approved by us through a local referendum. Would we vote for a plan including this growth?

Regarding the Bucks Local Plan, the guest speaker, eminent planning consultant and advisor to the parish council, Neil Homer, questioned whether our county council was making sufficient progress to assist us.

What's left to our Parish Council is not an easy choice. To continue arguing about Haddenham's capacity for growth, almost certainly unheeded? Or to risk local criticism for "accepting" transformative housing development, but formalise some vital requirements for future planning applications to meet?

HaddSWAC is very grateful for financial support from Haddenham Village Fête (next 12th June 2027) and Haddenham Beer Festivals Trust (Winterfest next, on 12th December 2026), and Haddenham Garden Centre.

This is used to provide printed copies for curious readers and those unable to access SIGNPOSTS digitally.

We also thank Print World Aylesbury, for special rates for producing this newsletter.

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NOT JUST ANYWHERE: ONE VILLAGE



Figure 11: Cycle paths and footpaths in Haddenham (Sustrans (2014) with permission)

There has been much talk about Haddenham's growth and the provision of infrastructure. Or the lack of the latter. The discussion is generally about new schools, doctors' surgeries and sewage treatment plants. Transport is just as critical.

When Haddenham gets to a certain size, being able to travel from one side of the village to the other, without getting in a car, becomes a challenge. It is psychologically pivotal. The village might be defined by a Haddenham resident as where you can reach without getting in a car. After all, if you need to get in a car to go there, it is like "anywhere else".

At the recent Haddenham Annual Parish Meeting, the record attendance reflected the desire of new and more established residents to resist an "anywhere" future. There was a call for "One Village". But how can this work when the village will likely stretch up to two miles by road from side to side?

Already, reaching all the extremes of Haddenham without a car² is beyond the range of some. We are talking about maximising our range within Haddenham, to make it feel like home – not necessarily reaching every corner.

Extending a very local bus service like the current 121 is part of the solution for those with less mobility.



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But also, perhaps, a Haddenham active travel network is an idea that has come of age?

In 2014 the Walk, Cycle and Wheel Trust (formerly known as Sustrans) suggested a Haddenham network of cycling [and walking and wheeling] routes, as above³. It's imperfect and lacking full coverage of today's Haddenham, but more of us could start using it tomorrow.

A growing number of walkers, wheelers and cyclists on these routes would create awareness, encourage more to join in, and cause councils to take note and enhance it (e.g. with 20mph restrictions, and applying developer contributions).

We could improve it! Would you like to form a small team to refine and extend the network, and then project it forward to serve Haddenham's likely future housing stock? To cover the distances that will be involved should the focus be on cyclists and mobility scooter riders?

In any event, in future our village will include a wider geographic spread of amenities, possibly including a new commercial centre by the station as well as the greenway to Thame. Better walking, wheeling and cycling connections could make the difference between "One Village" and just anywhere.

DS

² 9.5% of Haddenham households didn't have access to a car or van according to the [2021 Census](#).

³ The network is embedded in the current [Haddenham Neighbourhood Plan](#), which supports "a coherent cycle network in the village for the convenience and safety of cyclists and pedestrians" (7.4.1).



OUR ANNUAL SACRIFICE: WHO'S NEXT?



Cover of Department for Transport's Road Safety Strategy, published January 2026

We have a monster in our midst. It devours our people in numbers which should make headlines but rarely do. The Greeks (in myth) *selected* the victims to be fed to their monster each year. Our victims are selected by chance, but we do what we can to move the odds in our favour. With some success, it must be said.

After the war, deaths on the road increased steadily until 1966, when the UK lost 22 people a day to motor accidents. The following year saw drink driving limits and the breathalyser, and the death rate immediately started to fall. By 1983, there were still 15 deaths per day and, amid much grumbling, we had to start wearing seats belts.

These measures, combined with much expenditure on road engineering and motorway construction, have brought the daily toll of death and bereavement steadily down to just 4.4 people a day. That's still over 1,600 untimely deaths a year. Each a tragedy but rarely making the news.

The government's [new Road Safety Strategy](#) aims to reduce road casualties by a further 65% over the next 10 years. The [Road Safety Foundation](#), a charity which has been influential in generating new road



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safety ideas over many years, says that this implies a saving of [95,000 deaths and serious injuries](#) over the ten-year period.

Economists calculate that, taking into account reduced material damage and NHS costs plus the increase in productive years of the lives of individuals, the value of the saving to the UK economy would be about £38 billion. Dr Suzy Charman of the Road Safety Foundation says that this sum shows how much it would be worth spending on new road safety measures to achieve the new casualty target. But even half this expenditure, she says, would be a good deal more than we are spending now.

The government's strategy document makes no expenditure promises but proposes a lot of consultations: on lowering the drink driving limit, introducing a learning period for new drivers, mandatory eye testing for over 70s, and appropriate safe speeds, the latter in conjunction with continued improvements in road design.

Excellent intentions. Excellent value for money. But will the funds be there?

AG



A HIDDEN GEM: HADDENHAM'S MUSEUM



Don't be misled by the title! Haddenham's Museum isn't hidden; walk up the High Street and there it is behind the Methodist Church (no 23) in the old school, with a noticeboard on the street proclaiming its opening hours: Sundays (2-4.30pm) and Tuesdays (10am-noon).

Also, the Museum isn't a single gem – it's a positive Aladdin's Cave. Push open the door at the times mentioned above and there's always a steward to welcome you. You'll be dazzled by the variety and extent of the displays. The Museum is full of colour and excitements.

Haddenham's business was always agriculture and there's plenty of historical content on that topic. Further, there *is* one particular gem: a map of how the parish was farmed before Enclosure. It enables you to see the parish's three open-fields with their many strips where the villagers toiled for centuries before the 1830 changes. The village itself is shown in detail with its crofts and tofts. This is practical, historical research of a high quality by our Alan Rose and – for my money – well worth a visit in its own right. You



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You'll also see a treasure trove of items from Roman coins found in the parish, to displays of witchert (our cob-like 'white earth' – a building material unique to the area), agricultural practices and machinery, domestic paraphernalia and memorabilia from both World Wars.

Military exhibits include items from Haddenham Airfield's time as the centre of war-time glider-training – visited by King George VI and his wife Queen Elizabeth. The Airfield also hosted the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (the "WAAFs") – the first government unit where women received the same rate of pay as men.

Why, you can also sign up! Become a member and get a discounted price on another cornucopia: the Museum's annual *Haddenham Chronicles*, going strong for twenty years now, with an expanding series of articles on many aspects of our parish's past.

BA

<https://haddenham-museum.org.uk>

<https://haddenham-museum.org.uk/the-chronicles/>



THOUGHTS FROM A FEMALE CYCLIST



From HW's photo album, a stop on the Hebridean Way.

Bicycles have always been part of my life. But according to *Cycling UK*, I'm not 'the norm'. Women make half as many cycle trips as men. We're more likely to be put off by busy traffic and intimidating drivers. A study by the *London Cycling Campaign* showed that 9 out of 10 women cyclists experienced verbal abuse, with over 90% of those saying drivers used their vehicles to intimidate. Cycling with a group has its attraction...!

I lived in the Netherlands in the late 1990's when my son was very young. There you don't get in the car if you can cycle. Yes, the Dutch landscape is generally flat and there are lots of segregated cycle lanes, but the "national mindset" means everyone's a cyclist. When we moved back here in 2000, I brought my Dutch bike (and mindset) with me and happily cycled with my toddler strapped into his seat on the back.

Then, in my late 30's, I joined a Macmillan charity bike ride in Peru – sort of by chance. I made friends and bought my first road bike when I returned. I had the choice of just two women-specific road-bikes (one inevitably pink!) – the choice for men was vast. At



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that point, there wasn't much women's cycling clothing either. Laura Kenny, not so long ago, told of being in such pain after an Omnium event that only then did it cross anyone's mind that the female anatomy was different and perhaps, they should design specific female cycling shorts.

Perhaps cycling is no different from other sports: too dominated by men for too long. There are brilliant female Olympic cyclists – Victoria Pendleton, Laura Kenny and Sarah Storey – but their track accomplishments haven't readily translated into women joining group bike-rides.

In my 40's, I was sure I'd never join a cycling club, but then someone mentioned a ride that went out at a perfect time. No one got left behind *and* there was cake at the end. The clincher! A chance conversation had changed my life – in so many ways. Cycling really *is* for everyone. Participation in cycling by women is up 20% since 2019 according to that same *Cycling UK* study – let's hope the trend continues.

HW



DROPPED KERBS OR CLIFFS?



Some suffer severe mobility constraints. But we could help.

In past issues, SIGNPOSTS has pointed out the challenges of our [uneven pavements](#) to those who are less mobile. We have also described the dependence on resting places like [benches](#).

Now we turn to dropped kerbs. Perhaps you depend on a wheelchair or mobility scooter and require a dropped kerb to cross the road. Perhaps you plain can't manage the vertical step involved with a standard kerb – you have Parkinsons, have just had or need a joint replacement, etc. Perhaps you can only imagine this and hope this will never apply to you – but more than one-in-eight over 65s have mobility difficulties⁴.

You will realise that dropped kerbs are vital. Their absence can be distressing, even life threatening. One story we heard:

“I managed to negotiate the slope onto a pavement and continue for 200 metres, only



We need volunteers to help us with the street survey. We cannot go ahead otherwise ...

to reach what might as well have been a cliff edge. No dropped kerb as an ‘off-ramp’. Near the bend on Haddenham Business Park. I retraced my route to the dropped kerb I used to access the pavement initially. The only way I could continue was to ride on the road, shared with heavy goods vehicles.”

Or perhaps the dropped kerb is blocked by a parked car, as described in recent posts on Haddenham.net Facebook. (Please, don't!)

It won't solve all the problems, but HaddSWAC would like to coordinate a survey of dropped kerbs in Haddenham.

We need volunteers to help us with the street survey. We cannot go ahead otherwise. Rather like our friends who find the cliffs.

If you can help, please contact DropKerbwg@gmail.com – we shall keep survey areas for each volunteer to half a dozen streets or less.

DS

⁴ See point 2.4 in <https://tinyurl.com/mtnfkunn>



THE ROSE AND THISTLE REBORN



A summer of hard fundraising is now under way, starting with the launch of a [crowdfunder](#). This will allow anyone in the community to contribute and become a shareholder

The Rose and Thistle pub, at the top of Station Road (No 6), just across from the Church and the pond, has been closed since 2019. As the latest in a number of pub closures in Haddenham, change of use has been resisted by the village and the authorities. Now, a group has come forward to revive the pub as a “community hub” with a plan that looks serious, realistic and exciting.

The vision, they say, is for the Rose & Thistle to be reborn as a vibrant, inclusive community hub; a place where everyone comes together to forge friendships over food and drink. The pub will offer restaurant-quality food, a beer garden with a children’s play area, a function room, dedicated parking, and access to nearby countryside walking routes – muddy boots and muddy paws will always be welcome!

The [team](#) is not without experience, including hospitality sector background and finance skills. Some of the group were involved in taking over the village greengrocer and adapting it to modern market preferences, now running it as a community enterprise. Financing, fundraising and legal structure

of the R&T will follow similar lines. A Community Benefit Society has been formed and an acquiring company registered, the Haddenham Community Public House Ltd (HCPH).

A summer of hard fundraising is now under way, starting with the launch of a [crowdfunder](#): <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/rose-and-thistle-community-benefit-society>. This will allow anyone in the community to contribute and become a shareholder, with full participation in company decisions and (one hopes) interest on their investment. At the time of writing, over £60 thousand had been raised of a £750 thousand target. Learn more [here](#). Awareness will be raised with celebrity support and ‘Pop-up-Pubs’, which will appear at village events like the [Summer Party \(on 4th July\)](#). Grants and larger contributions can be expected as community participation builds and the project takes on ever more convincing reality.

The Rose and Thistle may be old, even historic, but this successor project looks every inch a pub fit for the future.

RZ / AG



NEVER MIND SAFE WALKING & CYCLING — WHAT ABOUT SAFE RITUAL DANCING WITH THE TOWERSEY HORSESHOES?



Good exercise, fun and sociable.

Cotswold Morris is an ancient and honourable tradition, performed in Southern England by around 400 "sides". It's also performed in the USA, Australia, Holland and, in the past, by the Hong Kong Police!



There are many views about its origin. Ask Morris members and each might give a different explanation. The earliest written record is about 600 years ago, but it was clearly ancient then.

Maybe it began in the 13th Century, or perhaps in Pagan times. Or perhaps it originates in North Africa coming from the Moors. There again, I have seen traditional dancers near the Indian Desert dressed in whites, clashing their sticks in Morris-style.

A friendly tomb restorer in Egypt showed me two stone carvings (discovered about 30 years ago) depicting women dancing in formation and male dancers hitting each other's sticks – is this the first sign of formation dancing similar to ours?

In olden times dancers performed on feast days following seed-sowing or after the harvest had been brought home, in September. Dancing kept away evil spirits and brought good luck with the crops. The banging of sticks after the sowing woke up Mother Earth to get on with her miracle of growth.

The most important part of the Morris, though, is making people happy — to play music and/or dance. So, if you enjoy our show come and join in. We would welcome you with bells and hankies. And the Morris will live on.

— Robyn Thorogood

Come and find us in Haddenham: Wednesday 22 July 7.45pm at The Kings Head and 8.30pm at The Whistler. Practise with us for next year, starting September (see website). In 2027, welcome sun-up on 1st May at Towersey Crossroads at 5.20am with breakfast at the Three Horseshoes Public House at 6:30am, and join us following the Maypole Dancing on the Village Green. For full details check out our website: <http://www.towerseyhorseshoes.co.uk/> where you will see other days to find us in Towersey.



SAFE ACCESS TO THE ROYAL HUNTING FOREST!



Did you know that Haddenham is just a couple of miles away from what is billed as a “61 mile walking and cycling route which circles the former Royal Hunting Forest of Henry II, established circa 1228”?

The Bernwood Jubilee Way passes through the outskirts of Cuddington and takes you on a circuit stretching all the way up to Buckingham in the north, via Oakley, Marsh Gibbon, the Claydons and Waddesdon, with paths through woods, meadows and wildflower fields.

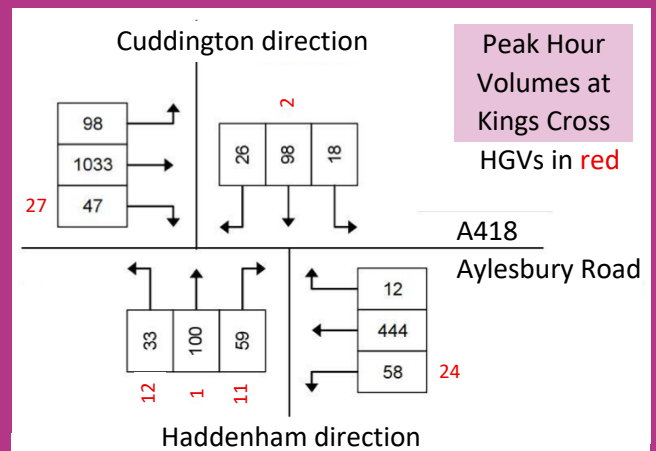
One major barrier stands in the way of our enjoyment of these delights, however: the A418. Those who regularly walk to Cuddington or Chearsley will be familiar with the need to bide your time and take the plunge. If you have young children in tow or any mobility issues, you probably just don't bother.

Crossing the A418 on a bike at the [Kings Cross junction](#) is also not for the faint-hearted but is a necessary first step to enjoy the [cycle loops](#) that are mapped out in the Bernwood Jubilee Way guidebook (request a physical guidebook [here](#)).

KINGS CROSS JUNCTION TRAFFIC VOLUMES

The Maltings planning application in 2017 included what one would expect to have been a conservative forecast of hourly traffic through the junction in 2027, assuming acceptance of the application.

This shows forecast peak-hour “turning movements”, with the A418 represented by a horizontal line, and the turnings to Cuddington and Haddenham by verticals. For example, in the peak hour shown below, 100 cars were forecast to cross the busy A418 from Haddenham towards Cuddington.



Traffic along the A418 was forecast to average one car every three seconds, at peak in 2027. Time to re-engineer Kings Cross?

Cyclists are advised to “always wear a helmet” and wear “bright-coloured or reflective clothing”. Good advice, but it still feels a little flimsy whilst waiting in the middle of an A-road with lorries thundering past.

Much more helpful would be a safer crossing, not just for walkers and cyclists heading out of Haddenham, but also Cuddington people accessing the bus stops and in the not-so-distant future, the Greenway routes to Thame, Dinton, Stone and Aylesbury. With plenty of new housing inevitably coming our way, we hope some of the developers’ contributions can be put towards this, and will be liaising with Haddenham and Cuddington parish councils to see what can be done.

AT



NEWS IN BRIEF

DIARY NOTES

On Thursday 14th May, Zero Carbon Haddenham will be hosting a [free screening of the People's Emergency Briefing film](#) at the Village Hall. Presented by Chris Packham, it shares the latest evidence on the twin climate and nature crises. Come at 7pm to browse the stalls presented by various local groups taking positive action to promote solutions, including HaddSWAC.

On 21st June, 2 to 6pm, Haddenham will be [opening its gardens](#) with money going to the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity. HaddSWAC is walking to the event with our Greenway-supporting friends from Thame, setting out from Chinnor Rugby Club at 1pm.

HADDENHAM IS NOT ALONE!

No less than 300 miles of community paths are currently held up by land ownership issues around the country. In response, author Laura Laker has produced a [toolkit](#) for campaigners to help them progress their projects and understand the issues facing local authorities. The Haddenham-Thame Greenway gets a mention too, as an example of how to work with your MP.

INSPIRED? EMPOWER!

We've been inspired by the article on page 5. If you would like to help some less privileged, brave spirits to get their own bikes and thus more time, energy and opportunity to focus on education and healthcare, visit <https://worldbicyclerelief.org/>, "empowering women and girls throughout the world"!

STATION SUNSHINE?

You may have heard the [good news](#) shared by Freddie van Mierlo, MP for Thame and Henley, that the car park refurbishment at Haddenham and Thame Parkway station will be completed by March 2027 and will not involve the whole car park being closed for a while, as initially feared.

Wouldn't it be good if at the same time as the refurbishment, solar cells were erected on the top deck? We put this idea forward in July 2024 and chased this up recently, with no response.

[In France](#), any car park with an area over 1,500 square metres must have a solar installation, by law.

WALKING FURTHER AFIELD

Our article on page 9 described the difficulty joining the Bernwood Jubilee Way with your bike. If you want to join it by foot, it's easiest in good weather to take the path to Chearsley from the north side of the Airfield. From Chearsley, the Jubilee Way is well signposted.

If you are looking for a shorter walk that is not on your normal track, why not get the train from Haddenham to High Wycombe and follow the [Wye Valley Walk](#), with 2.2, 2.9 and 5.5 mile circular options? The terrain is described as flat, mostly on good surfaces but with some muddy sections after rain.

SCOTSGROVE BROOK OR "UPSTREAM KINGSEY CUTTLE BROOK"

You may have heard that the footbridge over the stream to the south of Haddenham, beyond The Ponny, requires repairs, which Buckinghamshire Rights of Way team is attending to. In the meantime, valiant [Bill Piers with rRIPPLE](#) has patched it up, although care should be taken crossing.

But what is the stream called? The Environment Agency seems to be in [two minds](#) (contrast a separate Kingsey Cuttle Brook [here](#)).

BUCKS COUNCIL GREENWAY BUDGET

No, not for "Our Greenway" it seems.

But nevertheless, good to read that [BC decided](#) recently to "release funds" to the capital programmes of the [Railway Walk in Buckingham](#) and the [Wycombe Valley Link](#), both "active travel schemes", involving respective budgets of £2.4m and £2.2m. In April 2026, the Council announced it had evaluated these schemes and found they "offer 'High' value for money". The Wycombe Valley Link still requires a landowner's consent and to go through public consultation.

We look forward to hearing about a Bucks budget to implement the Haddenham-Thame Greenway, to go with the funds already committed by Oxfordshire County Council.