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Summer 2024 SIGNPOSTS

News and views from Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling group
Issue 12

Family Bike Ride

for the Haddenham-Thame Greenway

We're holding a fun, family-friendly bike ride around Haddenham
Starting from the new Airfield Pavilion car park, near the station and Co-op
Refreshments; plus bike safety checks
Tell all your friends and family. All ages welcome.
Marshals will accompany the ride for safety.

**The more people take part,
the stronger the message***

What to do now: note the date Sunday 30th June at 2:30pm, check your bike for safety,
email haddswac@gmail.com to pre-register (or just scan the QR code below)

PEDAL POWER!

We'll be meeting at 2.30pm on Sunday 30th June for our mass Family Bike Ride round the village in support of the Haddenham-Thame Greenway. So if you have a bike, come along and join the fun.

All ages are very welcome - we've planned the route to avoid major roads and there will be marshals to help at junctions and road crossings, so all you need to do is enjoy the ride! More details [here](#), including the route map and FAQs.

Of course, your participation will also be a huge help in demonstrating just how many of us could use a safe

route to Thame. Twenty years ago, 160 people took part in the original 'trailblazer' ride. Back then, a police escort was enough for them to brave the A418 – these days, it would simply be too dangerous, so we are keeping to the village. But the message remains the same: **we urgently need a safe route between our two communities.**

So please do dust off your bikes if you don't ride regularly, and make sure they're in good working order. Our local bike mechanic, Nathan of Phoenix Cycles, will be offering quick checks on the day, from 1.30 pm. It would also really help if you email haddswac@gmail.com now to register your participation (any offers of help and donations of cake also gratefully received).

See you there!

Alan Thawley, Chair

Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling group

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THE SHOCK OF THE NEW



Midwives still using bikes? See footnote!

Before World War II, Nurse Gubbins lived in Thame and wore plimsolls. She also had a bicycle and served the locality as its midwife. She'd get the call - on a winter's night, say - cycle to Haddenham on what is now the A418, cross the causeway beneath Scotsgrove Hill (possibly with water lapping at its sides), push on up the hill and finally make it. "How y'doin', duck?" she'd say and examine the soon-to-be-mum anxiously lying in bed. "Or-right, then, move over." And taking off her plimsolls Nurse Gubbins would climb in beside her patient. "Give us a nudge, when you want to push," she'd say. And fall asleep.

Such care wasn't out of the ordinary. Nurse Gubbins' sit-up-and-beg bike was necessary equipment. As indeed it was later, at the time of "Call The Midwife". How midwifery - and bikes - have changed! She'd no doubt get a shock from both nowadays. She might be perplexed by the way midwifery has advanced down

“ E-bikes are ‘power-assisted’; you chose what muscular investment you want.

the road of science, but she'd probably love the chance of an e-bike - not least to get her up Scotsgrove Hill!

In fact the shock for her of riding an electric bike would be extreme. Those of us who have one, or at least have tried one, know the difference from traditional pedal-power is truly shocking. In the best possible way. E-bikes are a different species. If you haven't tried one, do. The sensation is instant.

Now, don't imagine that you have to breeze along on an e-powered bike without any muscle power. (Though you can!) E-bikes are 'power-assisted'; you chose your level of physical investment.

(Btw, you're probably best advised against adapting your own conventional bike, especially if the e-drive is to be at the front. In wet, greasy or gravelly conditions you don't want power and steering transmitted through the same wheel. This particularly applies to the smaller wheels of folding bikes.)

On **Sunday June 30th** – after the Family Bike Ride for the Haddenham-Thame Greenway – you either will be, or will have been, able to try out an e-bike at the **Haddenham Airfield Pavilion**, courtesy of [Thame Cycles](#). They are holding an **E-bike Demo**.

Once the Greenway is open, modern-day Nurse Gubbinses will be even more thrilled. Or shocked. As will the rest of us. (Plimsolls won't be obligatory...)

BA

¹ This image is courtesy of © Alison Brodrick. It shows midwives riding – in plimsolls as it happens – raising money in 2018 for their Sheffield hospital, Jessop Wing Maternity Unit.

DEVELOPMENT: CAUSE OF PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL SOLUTION?



“ without the funding unlocked by new development, how will we ever be able to afford upgrades that could make Haddenham so much nicer to walk, wheel and cycle around?

There is probably no more controversial subject in Haddenham than housing development. Having been identified as a ‘strategic settlement’ by the old Aylesbury Vale District Council, Haddenham was earmarked to grow by 50% between 2013 and 2033. Enough homes have already been built or are under construction to exceed that level of growth – at last count 1,162².

Villagers understandably feel powerless in the face of the rapid changes that this has brought. On the other hand, no one can argue that people need places to live. The new residents who have moved in also have a lot to contribute to village life.

Not to mention the fact that new developments help fund new facilities. Regular readers will be aware that the Parish Council’s Streetscape project identified a whole series of potential improvements to our streets and roads – replacement of the dangerous double roundabout, for instance, or new crossings on Stanbridge Road. The only problem is that many of these would be very costly, and as most people are aware, local authority budgets are stretched to breaking point.

When an application went in for up to 86 houses on Land South of Lower Road³ (behind the existing new developments between Woodways and the Garden Centre), the response from Bucks Council’s Highways Team stated that the developer would have to fund ‘three raised pedestrian crossings along Stanbridge Road’. These would make a huge improvement to one of the village’s speeding blackspots, both calming the traffic and helping people to cross the road.

Many villagers objected to the application, and if permission is refused, I’m sure the decision will be widely celebrated (at least until the inevitable appeal or resubmission). But without the funding unlocked by new development, how will we ever be able to afford upgrades that could make Haddenham so much nicer to walk, wheel and cycle around? Are we happy to leave residents along Stanbridge Road cut off from the rest of the village by a racetrack? Could more development be a price worth paying to address the village’s ever more pressing traffic issues?

AT

² Parish council figures.

³ See <https://tinyurl.com/25a32yac>

WALKING YOUR HUMAN IN HADDENHAM



Image courtesy of Haddenham Dog Owners Facebook ⁴

Let's be clear: the lamp-posts here aren't to be sniffed at. Okay, they may not be classics, but Haddenham is none the worse for that. It's a great place for a sniff. But above all what makes Haddenham is... company. Everyone's so chatty. Even the humans. Sure, there might be one or two who get a bit agitated, but frankly there's fun in that. Me? I like a bit of 'ruff'.

There's so much to discover here: Snakemoor, the paths off Station Road, not to mention the intriguing alleys. Enough to make any tail wag.

But there are hazards too. Mostly caused by vehicles. They travel too fast too close to pavements – or too close to you where there are no pavements. They park so as to block your way. They crash through puddles (ever been near The House of Spice after a down-pour?). They leave their engines running – right

“

Can I resist a sniff? Can I hell! But get these substances on your paws or ingest 'em and it ain't pretty ...

at nose level! – when they're parked. My human says it's just as bad for them and their friends, especially those with prams or in wheelchairs or with children in tow. I mean for barking out loud, think of others can't you?!

And it's almost as though vehicles haven't read Rule H2 of the Highway Code: when you turn into a junction, give way to dogs and humans who happen to be crossing! Right?

Talking of rules, I must say humans are pretty good at clearing up – I mean after a dog's gone and done what a dog's gotta do. But sometimes they 'forget'. Train your human! Get 'em to dispose of those plastic bags properly. Some (okay, only a few) leave them hanging on bushes or worse. That only gives us all a bad name. Per-lease!

While I'm about it, let me give a howl-out for weedkillers and pesticides. You come across 'em all too often. Can I resist a sniff? Can I hell! But get those substances on your paws or ingest 'em and it ain't pretty...

All in all Haddenham's a great place for you and your human. It's so woofing FRIENDLY! Let's keep it that way: and don't cock a leg at thinking about others.

PF, LF, BA

⁴ Apply for access to private Facebook page and join 560 humans (12th June 2024) at <https://tinyurl.com/2try36mh>

WE ALL LIKE A BENCH



The bench "offering good spots for casual meetings ..."
© The Estate of Garry Winogrand, courtesy Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco

We all like a bench. Did you know that ten per cent of us adults can't walk more than 400 metres without a rest⁵? So some of us need a bench for a proper walk. Besides rest points, benches are an important social asset, offering good spots for casual meetings. And for the garden-less in fair weather, they can even be an 'outside room', where you can sit with laptop or lunch.

Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling group has just drawn up a survey of village benches (you can see it [here](#)⁶). Haddenham, it seems, is quite well supplied with benches, but there are some 'bench deserts'. No benches near the BMX track, for example, and only one on the airfield playing fields (young people need benches too). And very few wayside benches. Our survey has maps which reveal the deserts and make some suggestions for new bench locations.

The survey also comments on bench design and age. Too many recent benches have no back or

“Haddenham, it seems, is quite well supplied with benches, but there are some 'bench deserts'.

armrests. More could have space for parking wheelchairs. More could be located under shade.

Where will new benches come from? Some, in the new estates, are provided by developers responding to planning conditions. Many are donated by villagers or village organisations⁷, sometimes as memorials, sometimes for other reasons – one simply has a touching 'THANK YOU HADDENHAM'.

New donors, of course, are welcome, either for replacements or for benches in new locations, and Haddenham Parish Council is ready with advice and costings⁸. But there is a caveat: benches along roads require the permission of the Buckinghamshire Highways, not HPC, and the application process can be complex. We are calling for a review of this process to make the provision by donors of *en route* benches much easier.

AG, DS

⁵ Source: Philpotts, M (2015), *Designing for Walking*, published by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation, accessible at <https://tinyurl.com/26shhu87>.

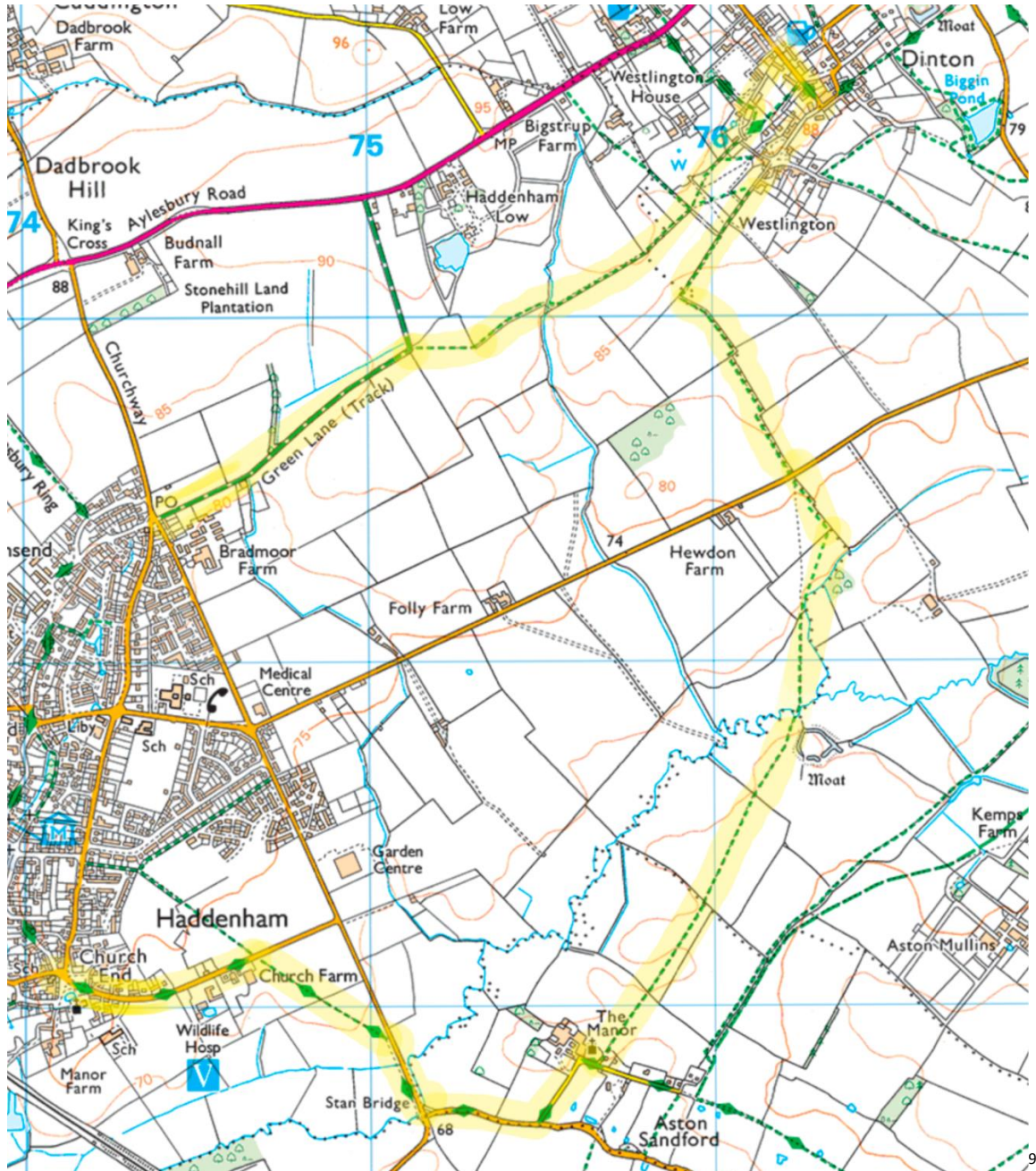
⁶ See <https://tinyurl.com/5dcckjck>. This includes a "Haddenham Bench Finder" to help those needing rests

along their village walks to plan their routes. For printed copies contact HaddSWAC@gmail.com.

⁷ Notably including Haddenham and District Rotary: see <https://tinyurl.com/bdejhvmb>.

⁸ See HPC's website: <https://tinyurl.com/8vhv8nzk>.

KEEP WALKING: SUMMER IS HERE



A level walk of about 6 miles. Wear boots, as it is wet more or less any time of the year, it seems: its chief interest is the moat site at Aston Mullins. The path is not clearly indicated there, as the farmer has put electric fencing up. He has provided a safe way over the fence which is not immediately easy to find. Much of this path is not often used. Your spirit of adventure should be to the fore... The Walk incorporates much of the SIGNPOSTS Issue 8 walk and can include a stop-off at The Seven Stars, Dinton.

⁹ Map by kind permission: © Crown copyright 2024 Ordnance Survey. Media 08/24. Licence valid until 31 December 2024.

DIRECTIONS¹⁰

From Church Green go down Aston Road (past the new path being made - at the time of writing - from The Grove to The Green). After Tiggywinkles and Church Farm, go through kissing gate (opposite Cricketers Way) and proceed diagonally to hedge at 10 o'clock. Then keep the hedge on your left until the somewhat hidden kissing gate. Cross road. Go over road bridge. Turn immediate left. Then left again to Aston Sandford.

ASTON MEANS SETTLEMENT TO THE EAST (in this case, of Haddenham). MUCH OF IT WAS HELD BY BISHOP ODO IN 1086. HE HELD MORE LAND IN ENGLAND THAN ANYONE OTHER THAN HIS HALF-BROTHER, WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR. HE IS IN THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY NEXT TO HIM HOLDING A CLUB. ODO'S HEIRS WERE SANDFORDS AND FROM 1199 THE NAME WAS LINKED TO THE VILLAGE.

Turn right by Aston Sandford Church (ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS - ONE OF THE SMALLEST IN ENGLAND, IT PROBABLY DATES FROM 12th CENTURY BUT WAS EXTENSIVELY RESTORED IN 1878. REV THOMAS SCOTT – RECTOR – A FOUNDER OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, DIED HERE, IN 1821) Turn left alongside churchyard, heading north. (You're now shot of roads for a while.) Keep on this path over two fields. Entering second field proceed at 11 o'clock towards foot bridge (this appears, in the distance, as a short stretch of fence in the hedge).

Enter third field. Towards another foot bridge. Before the foot bridge, the moat-site is on your right. Go up a bank with barbed wire fence at the top: you have two views of the two-acre site, south and east.

BUCKS HAS 159 MOATED SITES (ONLY THREE HAVE BEEN EXCAVATED - NOT THIS ONE). MOSTLY THEY DATE FROM THE 13th/14th CENTURIES. THEY SEEM TO BE BUILT FOR STATUS RATHER THAN DEFENCE. IN 1336 SIR JOHN DE MOLEYNS AND HIS WIFE EGIDIA WERE GRANTED A ROYAL LICENCE TO CRENELLATE HERE. PROBABLY TO IMPRESS THE NEIGHBOURS.

EARLIER SIR JOHN WAS THE ROYAL TREASURER AND IN 1326 HE IMPRESSED IN OTHER WAYS: THROUGH HIS WIFE, HE CLAIMED STOKE POGES. HE WAS CHARGED WITH MURDERING THE LORD OF THAT MANOR BUT ACQUITTED – BY A JURY HE SELECTED...

Return to the foot bridge (this crosses Scotsgrove Brook, which eventually enters the Thame beneath Scotsgrove Hill). Go over the foot bridge and proceed at about 11 o'clock. You will see an old abandoned cast-iron clod-crusher in the next field. Here keep boundary on your right. In the next field there is a rectangular area bounded by electric fencing. Proceed along the long side of the rectangle until you see a point in it where you can step over it; the farmer has insulated the wires. Here are signs indicating the footpath. You will see the Lower Road to Haddenham ahead of you (NW). You are eventually to cross this road, following the hedge on your right. Once you cross, proceed through three fields keeping dog-leg boundaries on your right. At end of third field turn right on footpath to Westlington.

Keep straight on (path becomes road), past La Chouette restaurant on your right and several cottages named after flowers on your left. In front of Chestnut Cottage turn left up New Road. The Seven Stars is on your right.

Later. Take footpath opposite the pub (between two houses) back to Haddenham. Keep straight till you hit a lane and turn left and then swift right (this avoids the densest patch of nettle in Bucks near Hermit's Cottage). Keep straight (with boundaries on your left) till you emerge into a field. Go across (at 2 o'clock) and reach the corner of the end of Green Lane. Go all the way into Haddenham. You arrive opposite the Post Office. Turn left into Churchway and follow to Church Green.

BA, BB

¹⁰ It is walkers' responsibility to keep to footpaths. Walkers should follow the Countryside Code, which can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/247cfnnr>.

NEWS IN BRIEF

CODES 121, X7 AND X20

The Grove in Haddenham now has a bus service (121). A roughly hourly six-day service will ply between Haddenham and Thame via Church End and the station. The timetable can be found [here](#)¹¹.

And Redline has [announced it will provide a service to Haddenham by diverting its X20](#)¹² after the [threatened local withdrawal of Arriva on 27th July](#),¹³ which puts Haddenham's most frequent service (X7) at risk.

JUNIOR ROAD SAFETY OFFICERS

"Children who have walked to school every day next week should receive a headteacher's award." This was an idea championed by Haddenham Community Infant School's [JRSOs](#)¹⁴ in May 2024. What is a JRSO? "They promote road safety and sustainable transport to their fellow pupils, and have fun whilst they are doing it!" Top marks!

HADDENHAM TO HADDENHAM

In the early hours of the morning of Monday 1st July, a group of pilgrims will be setting off from Haddenham in Cambridgeshire on a long journey through several counties, villages and forests. They will cross rivers, railway lines and motorways but hopefully will not encounter any polar bears, crocodiles or wolves.

The destination is Haddenham in Buckinghamshire where the pilgrims hope to arrive at [Haddenham Summerfest](#)¹⁵ (probably the UK's biggest one day beer festival) at around 12.30pm on Saturday 6th July.

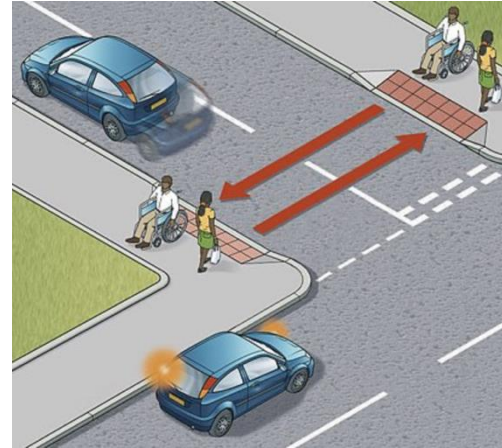
This pilgrimage is a Haddenham Beer Festival Trust fund-raising event. The pilgrims hope to raise as much money as possible for the trust. You can donate [here](#)¹⁶.

SAFER CIRCUIT

On 13th May 2024, a full session of Haddenham Parish Council agreed to work with Bucks Council on the

feasibility of a pilot "safer pavement" circuit for less able residents between the Woodlands housing area and Woodways, first reported in [SIGNPOSTS Issue 7](#)¹⁷.

NEW HIGHWAY CODE TWO YEARS OLD



Failing to give way to a pedestrian waiting to cross at a junction is potentially subject to a fixed penalty fine. Covered by a rule introduced to the Highway Code at the beginning of 2022, the relevant subcategory of fines (neglect of pedestrian rights) was up by a third in the Department for Transport's latest figures.

The new rule is only being observed by around two-thirds of drivers according to an RAC poll in January 2024 – note the canine comments on [page 4](#).

A RIPPLE OF APPLAUSE PLEASE!

Led by Bill Piers, rRIPPLE has talked with landowners and has been funded by Dinton Beer Festival so that the two most muddy stretches of footpath between Haddenham and Dinton will be made more navigable in wet weather. See our summer walk on [page 5](#)!

HaddSWAC is very grateful for financial support from Haddenham Village Fête, The Haddenham Beer Festivals Trust and Thame Cycles.

We welcome news and views to be published in SIGNPOSTS at the editorial committee's discretion.

To subscribe, FREE, simply email your request to HaddSWAC@gmail.com.

¹¹ See <https://www.redrosetravel.com/service-121>

¹² See <https://tinyurl.com/2xxb6m9u>

¹³ See <https://tinyurl.com/3th985a5>

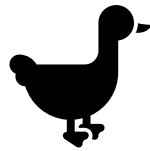
¹⁴ See <https://tinyurl.com/37mt2v4m>

¹⁵ See <https://tinyurl.com/5ybrxsjf>

¹⁶ See <https://tinyurl.com/4vahwmmc>

¹⁷ See <https://www.villagesociety.org/doc/issue-07-D722240.pdf#page=4>

Please display
this poster (see over)
if you would like to “vote” for
the Haddenham-Thame
Greenway



Thanking you in anticipation

Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling group

Family Bike Ride

for the Haddenham-Thame Greenway



We're holding a fun, family-friendly bike ride around Haddenham

Starting from the new Airfield Pavilion car park, near the station and Co-op

Refreshments; plus bike safety checks

Tell all your friends and family. All ages welcome.

Marshals will accompany the ride for safety.



**The more people take part,
the stronger the message***

What to do now: note the date **Sunday 30th June at 2:30pm**, check your bike for safety, email haddswac@gmail.com to pre-register (or just scan the QR code below)



TO REGISTER



For the day: Riders under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. There will be the opportunity for younger riders to finish after 2km to return with their adult to the Pavilion for refreshments (full ride 5½km). For detailed route scan QR code to right, or visit <https://tinyurl.com/2rjemw2t>

We recommend a cycle helmet for all riders.

All riders will have to register to participate (a condition of our insurance). You can register on the day but this will be made much quicker and easier by pre-registering now.

FOR MORE DETAIL



*Why?

- We desperately need a safe, all-weather route between Haddenham and Thame, away from the horrible traffic of the A418.
- Like the Phoenix Trail, it will be great for walkers, wheelers, cyclists and horse riders.

