



# Spring 2023 SIGNPOSTS

News and views from Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling group  
Issue 8

## LATEST NEWS ON 20MPH



*Image: Artist's impression of Thame Road with new continuous side road crossing at Wykeham Way, from [PJA final project report](#)<sup>1</sup>*

Welcome to our spring issue – after what feels like a long winter, I hope the recent warmer weather has allowed you to get out and about more in the fresh air!

Following up on our previous lead story about Haddenham becoming a 20mph village, Parish Council representatives, myself included, have since met with Buckinghamshire Council to discuss the [feasibility study](#) drawn up by our consultants PJA<sup>2</sup>. The meeting was slightly frustrating, as Bucks insisted that they cannot rely on the GPS data we supplied and speeds will have to be remeasured to comply with their processes.

We also discussed improvements to Thame Road, which would both facilitate the introduction of a 20mph limit and address the pressing need for better conditions for pedestrians, wheelers and cyclists on

the main east-west route through the village. Bucks already holds developer funds (known as ‘Section 106’ money) earmarked for precisely this purpose, although with an expiry date attached.

After initial resistance, they agreed that we could get PJA to draft a feasibility design for the improvements based on the principles already approved by the village through the Streetscape project. This has been commissioned and we eagerly await the results.

Once it has been approved by the Parish Council, the scheme will be submitted to Bucks, who we hope will then take it forward, now that their new highways contract is in place. After which, we will continue work on the 20-mph limit.

So it may be a little while before we can enjoy safer speeds around Haddenham and improvements to the Thame Road, but rest assured we will not stop pushing.

Alan Thawley,

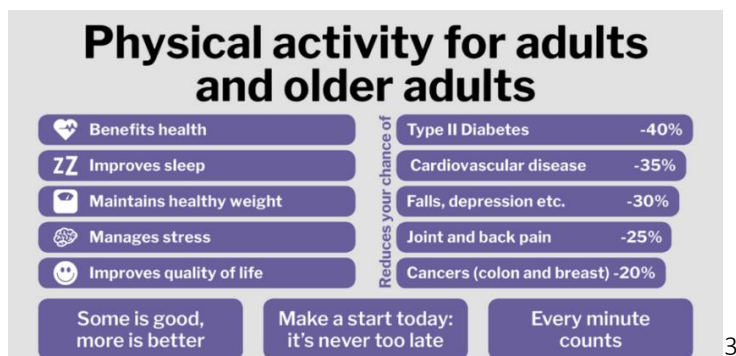
Chair, Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling Group

- ✉ Please write to [HaddSWAC@gmail.com](mailto:HaddSWAC@gmail.com) with:
  - What you would like to read about,
  - Points-of-view for publication,
  - ‘News In Brief’ items, and
  - How you think we are doing!

<sup>1</sup> See final project report at <https://tinyurl.com/smvxnedp>.

<sup>2</sup> See feasibility study at <https://tinyurl.com/27upafh9>.

## ACTIVE TRAVEL – FOR BODY AND SOUL



“ ... an excellent centre for active travel, most journeys within the village being easily walkable, and cycle paths to Thame and neighbouring villages will make it even better ...

What do people really want? It was a Roman insight that most of our stated desires come with snags attached. There was only one truly sensible prayer: for a healthy mind in a healthy body (*mens sana in corpore sano*).

For the past 100 years a car and the open road have been seen by voters as the route to happiness and contentment, and elected governments have sought to provide; but now we have the problem of too many cars. Certainly we can organise our cars better, with traffic rules and road engineering, but should we not also be considering how we as individuals use our cars? Could the car-owning lifestyle sometimes be adverse to our health and well-being?

The concept of ‘active travel’, a policy which now attracts government support, is that life for all of us would be improved if we collectively chose, whenever we can, to make short journeys by bike or on foot. Haddenham, despite recent expansion, remains an excellent centre for active travel, most journeys within the village being easily walkable, and cycle paths to Thame and neighbouring villages will make it even better. The benefits of active travel to ourselves and to village life are many.

- ✓ All the benefits of exercise: the invigoration of all bodily systems, the sense of well-being, mental alertness, tolerance of weather, sense of physical command; plus long-term protection from life-style disease, e.g. diabetes.

- ✓ Sociability: you meet people, neighbours and fellow villagers, gather local information, make connections. Sociability is also an important factor for health and long life.
- ✓ Streetscape appreciation: you notice things, houses, vistas, street furniture, day-to-day changes; you develop views on possible improvements.
- ✓ Benefits for others: greeting your neighbours benefits them too; your maintained health helps our medical centre concentrate its resources more effectively; leaving the car at home helps the planet; you may even consider not owning a car (or one fewer than you already have).
- ✓ Benefit for the streets: with active travel there will be fewer cars and more walkers and cyclists, making for a more benign and healthy balance between users of the street.

Cars and motoring are indeed a wonderful facility, but, if we are able, unladen and it’s not raining, let’s take some Roman advice and concentrate on what’s really important to us.

AG

<sup>3</sup> Image: UK Chief Medical Officer’s Physical Activity Guidelines 2019

## BE YOUR OWN SATNAV!



**A**lleys, backs, chares, ennoggs. Folds, gants, gunnels, jitties. Lokes, tewers, twitchels, twittens, wynds. Whatever you call ‘em, wherever you come from or have been to – Haddenham is rich in them. And, of course, its smaller *roads* too. Together they offer up many an intriguing way to enjoy the village.

Main village roads are full of traffic. This makes the use of the village’s other routes happy alternatives, avoiding the miasma of diesel and petrol. So if you want to go from A to B, get to know your village better. Try alpha and omega.

Alex Oldman’s a driver, but he’s been moving about Haddenham on foot and by bike for the last seven years. Our village is, of course, now as broad as it’s long. Alex likes avoiding cars, so he plots routes for himself. He says, “As a pedestrian and cyclist, I try to avoid Station Road, Thame Road and Stanbridge Road as much as possible. The trick is to plan ahead. If you are going to the station, try routing along Wykeham



Why use Churchway when you can use Crabtree and High Street? Stokes Croft has a handy cut-through for cyclists and pedestrians to get to Banks Parade, while Rudds Lane and Dollicott serve the north of the village ...

Way missing much of Thame Road. Why use Churchway when you can use Crabtree and High Street? Stokes Croft has a handy cut-through for cyclists and pedestrians going to Banks Parade, while Rudds Lane and Dollicott serve the north of the village.”

Obviously – walker, cyclist, wheelchair-user – you will tailor *your* routes to *your* needs. Be, like Alex, your own satnav. Not only will you explore, you might even meet others and say ‘hello’! (Is it provable fact that people are more friendly off busy roads?)

Go to [https://www.haddenham-bucks-pc.gov.uk/Parish\\_Map\\_23069.aspx](https://www.haddenham-bucks-pc.gov.uk/Parish_Map_23069.aspx) and start working out your routes.

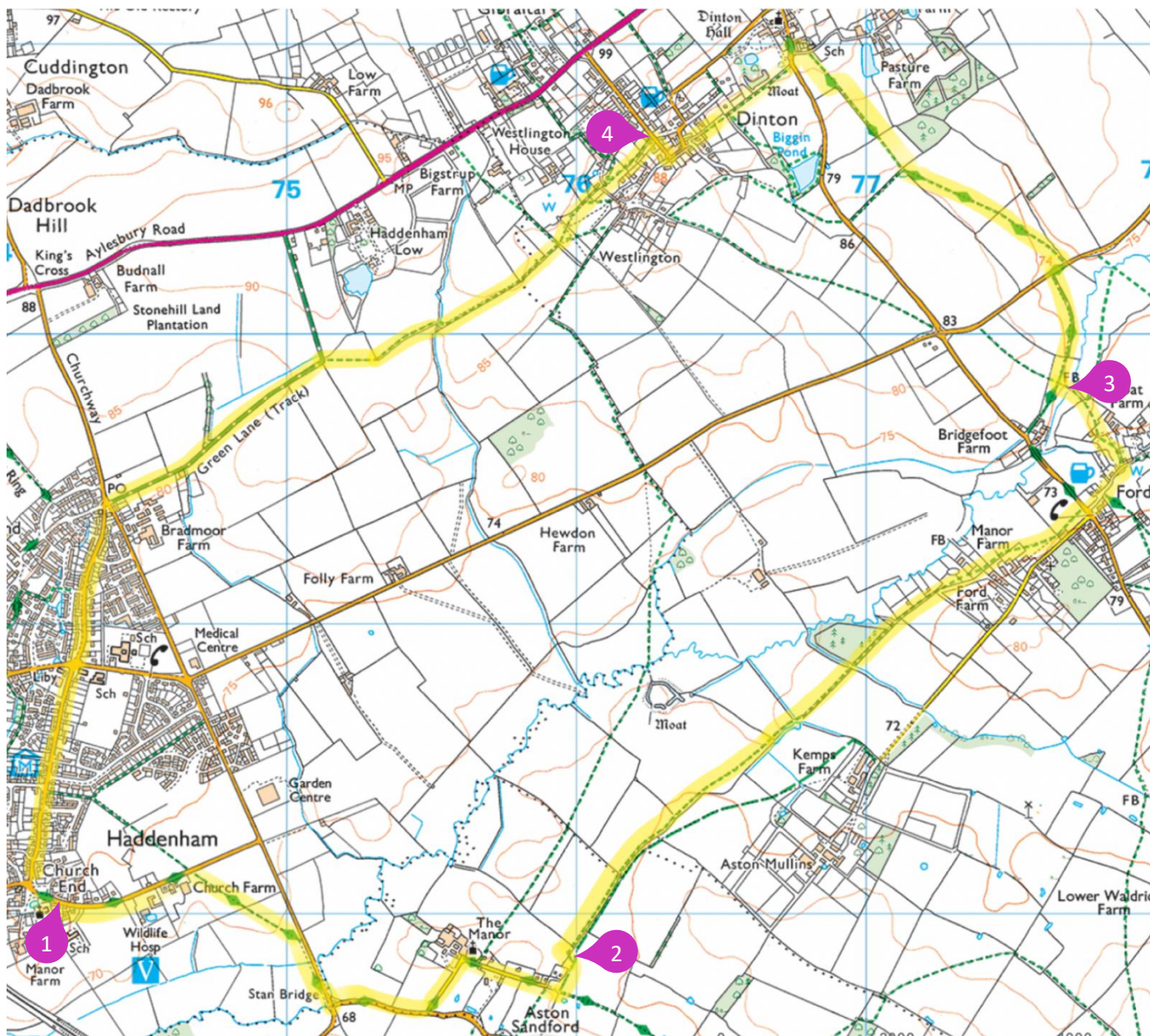
WARNING: some of Haddenham’s walled paths have signs prohibiting cycling. For good reason; cycling round a blind corner can be downright dangerous to others. Get off your bike here!!

BA

# SIGNPOSTS

Spring 2023

## KEEP WALKING



WALK TO FORD AND DINTON: 5 or 7 MILES.

This is a level walk about seven miles with several stiles, following in part [The Wychert Way](#)<sup>5</sup>. It passes two pubs: The Dinton Hermit at Ford and The Seven Stars at Dinton. Best to wear boots as some sections can be wet. Can be shortened to 5 miles by walking from Seven Stars, right up to A418 and taking 280 bus (indicated "Oxford") back to Haddenham.

<sup>4</sup> Map by kind permission: © Crown copyright 2023 Ordnance Survey. Media 17/23. Licence valid until 31 December 2023.

<sup>5</sup> For a guide to the full 12-mile length of Wychert Way, see: <https://www.wychert.org.uk>.

# SIGNPOSTS

Spring 2023

## DIRECTIONS<sup>6</sup>

**F**ROM Church End Green, starting with St. Mary's Church on your right [1], pass Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital and Church Farm. Go through kissing gate on your right. Follow sign slightly left across the field and through a farm gate. Follow the diagonal towards the hedge. Keep hedge on your left until you reach kissing-gate. Go through, onto road.

CARE. Turn right. Cross road-bridge over stream and turn immediate left on road for about 400 yards. Take left to Aston Sandford. Go past the Church and houses to the end of the road.

Go through gate and turn immediately left (with a house on your left). After the house go through a farm gate in the hedge on your left [2] and then immediately right, crossing a stile. Keep hedge on your right. Soon yellow is your friend – be it bright yellow tops on gate- and stile-posts or less bright on other posts: north-east to Ford (c. 1.5 miles).

At Ford crossroads go up Water Lane.

NOTE MEMORIAL TO TWO AIRMEN KILLED WHEN THE ENGINE OF THEIR WELLINGTON FAILED, 9th JANUARY 1944.

The [Dinton Hermit](#) is on your left. (Eventually?) go on to Moat Farm on left (250 yds).

THE VALE IS RICH IN MEDIEVAL MOATED SITES; THE COUNTY HAS ABOUT 159. MOSTLY THEY DATE FROM THE 13thC. ALL THAT REMAIN OF MANY ARE SHAPES OF WATER IN THE FIELDS, ONCE SURROUNDING DWELLINGS. RATHER THAN DEFENSIVE, THESE MOATS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN FASHIONABLE AND STATUS-SEEKING.

Take farm access and proceed with farm buildings on your right to field. Aim slightly right for footbridge (a wooden structure) [3]. After bridge, turn right towards gate. Follow causeway and trees to gate at main road. TURN right along road. TAKE CARE!

After a (very) few yards, cross the road and go through hedge into field. Bear left diagonally to a gap in the hedge. Aim for far-left corner of next field. Crossing stiles, keep hedges on your left, then fence on your right. Turn left on minor road at school. At T-junction, CHURCH TO YOUR RIGHT HAS A STUNNING ROMANESQUE SOUTH DOORWAY. But for this walk, turn left and after a few yards take footpath to right behind Dinton Hall. Follow path into Dinton.

DINTON HALL WAS THE HOME OF REGICIDE SIMON MAYNE. AFTER THE RESTORATION OF CHARLES II, HE HID HERE BUT SOON GAVE HIMSELF UP, WAS SENTENCED TO DEATH BUT DIED IN THE TOWER IN 1661. A CLERK OF HIS WAS LUCKIER. OR WAS HE? FIVE OF THE REGICIDES HAD 'VOLUNTEERED' MEN, ONE OF WHOM WAS TO CHOP OFF CHARLES I'S HEAD. IN PURSUIT OF ANONYMITY THE MEN WERE HOODED. THE MAN CHOSEN DID A SWIFT JOB. WAS IT JOHN BIGG OF DINTON? HE LIVED ON IN SILENCE FOR 35 YEARS AS A 'HERMIT', FED BY LOCALS AND PATCHING HIS CLOTHES AND SHOES WITH SCRAPS OF LEATHER. A SHOE OF HIS IS IN THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM.

Proceed along High Street and turn right by Chestnut Cottage to [Seven Stars](#) pub. Turn left (in your own time) opposite the pub down a path between houses [4]. Cross field to kissing gate. The public footpath next goes in front of Hermit's Cottage. Proceed straightish through several metal gates across field then keeping hedges on your left for half mile. *Can be wet by stream.*

At end of hedge go diagonally right to corner of field - *again, often wet.* Go through the gate to tarmacked track. This is Green Lane OPENED AS A WIDENED AND SURFACED GREENWAY IN SEPTEMBER 2018 (with considerable input from HaddSWAC). Follow it to Churchway opposite Haddenham Post Office. Turn left down Churchway all the way to St Mary's Church.

BB

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<sup>6</sup> It is walkers' responsibility to keep to footpaths. Walkers should follow the Countryside Code, which can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/247cfnrn>.

# SIGNPOSTS

Spring 2023

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH RESULTS

Drivers will be identified exceeding the speed limit along Stanbridge Road as a result of the first session of Haddenham's resumed Community Speedwatch.

More volunteers would mean more Speedwatch: contact [HaddWatch@gmail.com](mailto:HaddWatch@gmail.com) to help.

### POTHOLE UPDATE

On 14<sup>th</sup> April there were 51 'open' Haddenham reports of pothole, pavement and road surface problems on FixMyStreet, up from 43 on 12<sup>th</sup> March<sup>7</sup>.

Owing to "the prolonged period of incessant rain, combined with the extended freezing weather", [Buckinghamshire Council \(BC\) approved](#)<sup>8</sup> an extra £5m across the county for road surface repair. The [Government's Spring Budget](#)<sup>9</sup> then announced increasing England's £500m annual road maintenance budget, by a further £200m, promising to fix "the equivalent of up to 4 million additional potholes" (£2.3m of this going to BC).

Let's hope we see road improvements soon.

### SCOTSGROVE: GOOD & BAD NEWS

Raw sewage was being continuously discharged into our own Scotsgrove Brook from 28<sup>th</sup> December to 26<sup>th</sup> January, from 10<sup>th</sup> until 13<sup>th</sup> March, from 23<sup>rd</sup> March for more than 10 days, from 12<sup>th</sup> April for more than 4 days, restarting on 18<sup>th</sup> April (the time of writing).

In March, [Thames Water \(TW\) announced](#)<sup>10</sup> investment to improve 135 unspecified sewage treatment works<sup>11</sup>. SIGNPOSTS enquired about Stone Sewage Treatment Works which has an especially poor record, upstream of Haddenham. TW assured us it will be investing £2m to reduce discharges here in the next two years. We shall report on progress.

<sup>7</sup> See also SIGNPOSTS Issue 6: <https://tinyurl.com/mpp4hjih>.

<sup>8</sup> See <https://tinyurl.com/bdzc3cmu>

<sup>9</sup> See paragraph 7 under "Local Investment" at <https://tinyurl.com/sbsnjf54>.

<sup>10</sup> See <https://tinyurl.com/3jvkzxr>

### BUCKS AND OXON: TWO OUT OF FOUR

Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire County Councils were both given an active travel rating of two in terms of their "leadership, ambition and track record of delivery". Only five local authorities achieved a rating of three, and none got the top score of four.

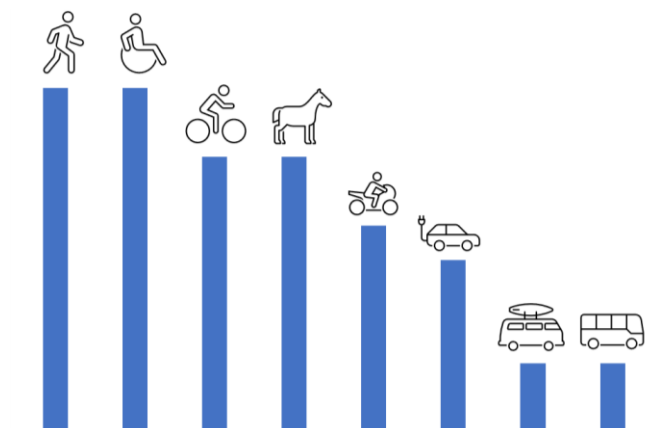
### ACTIVE TRAVEL NUMBERS

You may have heard conflicting claims of money both [added](#)<sup>12</sup> to and [cut](#)<sup>13</sup> from the Government's active travel budget for England, in February and March.

SIGNPOSTS found one number that seemed to be agreed by all. The Government quoted an estimate of active travel benefits for 2021: £36.5 billion.

### ONE YEAR ON ...

Remember the "Hierarchy of Road Users" from the new Highway Code, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2022?



A [recent survey](#)<sup>14</sup> suggests most drivers are still unaware of the eight major [changes](#)<sup>15</sup> the new Code introduced. How about you?

### POOREST VILLAGE IN ENGLAND

Where? Find out on the Haddenham Village Society's Spring Walk on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May, meeting at 10am. [All are invited](#)<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> See <https://tinyurl.com/3jvkzxr>

<sup>12</sup> See <https://tinyurl.com/3kbenp9d>.

<sup>13</sup> See <https://tinyurl.com/58hkettm>.

<sup>14</sup> See <https://tinyurl.com/3vp368a2>.

<sup>15</sup> For a reminder: <https://tinyurl.com/2s3db6dj>.

<sup>16</sup> See <https://tinyurl.com/24rvh54u>