

For the attention of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee at its meeting

on 26th March 2024

Proposal for the extension of footpaths on Thorney Leys and Curbridge Road

1. It is understood through the good offices of Councillors Jane Doughty and Thomas Ashby that consideration may be given to proposals to enhance facilities for pedestrians, with the possibility that funds in support of this may be made available from an Active Travel Fund for Walking and Cycling.
2. Currently there exists a well-constructed footpath along the boundary of Richmond Village Witney extending from the Coral Springs Way entrance to the Village on the eastern side of Curbridge Road to the kissing gate pedestrian entrance on the south side of Thorney Leys. This path and the Thorney Leys pedestrian crossing were both financed by Richmond Care Villages.
3. This proposal is for an extension of this footpath in both directions: (i) from Coral Springs Way to the S2 bus stop opposite and just beyond the Centenary Way entrance to the Windrush estate; (ii) along the south side of Thorney Leys from the kissing gate to Guild Close.
4. In the case of (i), the lack of this footpath makes it difficult for residents, especially those who need walking aids, to take advantage of the new S2 bus route to Cheltenham because of the potential danger and effort involved in crossing three roads in order to reach the S2 bus stop. The alternative route along the grass verge is extremely uneven and not a plausible option for the elderly or disabled.
5. In the case of (ii), Richmond Village residents with limited mobility cannot cope with the unpaved grass verge section along the south side of Thorney Leys. As a result, they are unable to use the public footpath which gives access to our Village Green between the Guild Close estate and the Village. Extending the Thorney Leys footpath as proposed would allow them an enhanced level of activity. The problem is even more serious for Guild Close residents whose estate has been built without any footpath along Thorney Leys, despite this being their only pedestrian route to Witney and nearby bus stops. At present they can only proceed safely in this direction by walking along the grass verge that is frequently wet, muddy and uneven as a result of its regular use.
6. It should be noted that the resident population of Richmond Village is about 150, of whom at least a third have some level of disability requiring the use of walking aids, strollers or mobility scooters. They are supported by an approximately equal number of staff many of whom live locally and walk to and from the site from a variety of directions. There are also 100 external members of the Spa some of whom walk to and from the Village site.
7. This proposal is put forward jointly by the Richmond Village Residents' Association and Richmond Care Villages Management.

Prof Ronald C King, Chair, Richmond Village Witney Residents' Association
Mr Martin Crick, Village Manager, Richmond Village Witney

21 February 2024