

Condition of the Footways in Dingley.

A snapshot walkabout, in dry weather, on the 25th of October 2016.

Before taking the walk I spoke with Geoff Bonnett, the resident of No.1 Home Close, with regard to the concerns and experiences he had written to the council about.

Geoff confirmed that there are two areas of footway that are now too narrow to use in his wheelchair.

- *Towards Church Lane, from the Corby direction, at its narrowest point.*
- *The whole length of Braybrooke Road.*

He also felt Gigaclear were responsible for soil encroachment in places because they had not repaired their trenching adequately.

24 pictures were taken along the way which are available at the following Flickr hosting url:- <<https://www.flickr.com/gp/146101490@N04/JUAu0K>>

I personally found no significant obstacles. However, had I been walking with a Zimmer frame, with children, in a wheelchair, pushing a pushchair or similar, then there were obstacles and dangers of which these four points stand out...

1. Uneven surfaces.
2. Reduced footway width due to weeds, encroaching soil, turf or growth.
3. Significant cambers.
4. Lack of dropped kerbs on opposing sides of the road.

Points 1 & 2 highlight insufficient maintenance.

Points 3 & 4 highlight poor design that may not meet today's needs.

There were three places I found of concern; the first being at the beginning of Home Close (Pic. 03) which is covered with slippery moss

The second (see Pic. 19) being of **major** concern, is on the way to Church Lane from the Corby direction. Here the encroachment of vegetation and debris is significant and pushes users into the traffic rather than to safety. The footway is in effect single file - oneway. Large vehicles, even at 30mph, cause a vortex between the narrow footway and the high bank, sufficient to be of concern for an able bodied adult. All would be exaggerated during darker hours, with the absence of street lighting and the dazzle from oncoming vehicles.

It will be interesting to know how earlier discussion about this issue have been raised at Parish Council meetings and what measures have been suggested over time.

Have the PC ever written to express concern to any responsible agency?

Because of the inherent danger people going to the Village Hall or Church do so by car and that because, therefore, there have been no accidents the relevant highways authority sees no reason to act - Chicken and Egg.

The third concern was (see Pic. 07) by the bus stop, where the footway had sunk due to older trenching being run on by vehicles (buses?) and needs actioning.

There were differences in the surface finish from binding to loose. It's difficult to determine if the surfaces should be hard tarmac or 'tar spray and chip', or indeed if the former has rotted and become loose. If the weeding is done, or the moss scrapped off, it is likely that the surface will be damaged and liable to weeds returning.

On this particular day (early afternoon) there was little inappropriate parking. There was evidence of verge damage where cars had driven over them to park (including deep ruts where the Police van parks with his speed camera). The worse case I saw was caused by vehicles parking on the grass verge on the side of Braybrooke Road just after the turn from the A427. I have reason to believe this problem will now be resolved.

I did not encounter any rubbish or dog fouling on the footways. There were two areas where quantities of fouling was evident on the verges:-

- Between No. 6 Harboro' Road and the end of the footway towards Corby.
- Between Home Close and No. 15 Braybrooke Road.

The repairs done recently by BT and Gigaclear did not appear to be an issue generally. BT in particular had re-tarmaced the footways well and in many cases have improved the surface.

Winter salting provision. The Public Salt Bin at the corner of Church Lane and on Braybrooke Road are full. The salt is damp but still appears spreadable.

Alan Garratt