

Dear Editor

I was somewhat dismayed to read in last month's MADNews that there are proposals to build a pelican crossing in the village. Why is our money being used on a project like this when the building of the VERY long awaited bypass would negate this need? I agree that it would possibly cause more accidents than we currently have. Also, I object to having to pay for something that would not be needed if government could make a final decision on the bypass. It's always the man in the street that has to pay for what amounts to incompetence in local and national government.

NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED

Dear Editor

Proposed Marcham Bypass.

The County Council will be submitting a formal planning application for the bypass within the next month or so. Both the District and Parish Councils will be consulted and this is also an opportunity for all residents to make their views known. Plans will be available for inspection both at Abbey House in Abingdon and at the County Council offices in Speedwell Street, Oxford. I have asked our officers to try to set up an exhibit of these plans in Marcham itself but with the Institute closed this may be difficult.

It is hoped that the Planning Application will be determined early in the New Year. After that the timetable is:

- Spring 2005 – the issuance of Traffic Orders
- late 2005 – Public Enquiry
- late 2006 – Secretary of State's decision
- early 2007 – works to start.

Obviously this timetable is not set in stone and each stage is dependent on the outcome of previous stages.

I am also aware that some residents in Frilford are concerned that the proposals now include a roundabout at the junction of the A338 with the A415. This was as a result of the Department of Transport's role in the plans now that it is considered to be a "major scheme". The imminent planning application stage will be the initial opportunity for concerns such as these to be raised. It may be helpful that when residents communicate their views to the council, I am copied in on any correspondence so that I am fully briefed before a decision is made.

CLLR ANDREW CRAWFORD

Dear Editor

Thames Water

I had an interesting meeting with the managing director of Thames Water, John Sexton. We covered two important issues: a new proposed sewage treatment plant at Faringdon, and the proposed reservoir. First, the treatment plant. Why is this important to you? The proposed plant, although based in Faringdon, would treat sewage from Abingdon. So (you've guessed by now) that would mean several huge Thames Water lorries (25 tonners) trundling through Marcham every day on their way to Faringdon, making the traffic problems here even worse.

Following the meeting, Thames Water have agreed to review their plans for Faringdon. This means that work planned to start in January will be delayed until the summer, and may not happen at all. I will keep you posted. Now, the reservoir. Thames Water still want it. They are convinced that it is needed, they are convinced that the Oxfordshire site is the best one, and they are convinced that they need a reservoir that big. OFWAT, who regulate Thames Water, are keeping an open mind. By the time you read this, OFWAT will have published its prices and output requirements for Thames Water. This will in effect be targets for water production set for Thames Water. If they are low, the need for a reservoir may be less immediate. In any case, one specific point of difference is clear already. Thames Water would like to put in a planning application in two years' time, and OFWAT think they can wait five years. If Thames Water's view prevails, the provisional timetable is:

- 2005/6 Thames up-dates its proposals
- Late 2006 Planning application
- 2006/8 Public Enquiry

Marcham Bypass

I welcome the news that the bypass now has a clear timetable for progress. We are still, of course, waiting for confirmation that the Government will agree to fund it. Because of the cost of the bypass, it is now in the Government's in-tray, not the County Council's. Concerns have however, been expressed to me about the final route proposed for the bypass where it intersects with the A338. Residents in Frilford are worried that the proposed roundabout

is far to close to their houses. I have met the residents and heard their concerns, and will work with them in the coming months to explore alternative sites for the roundabout.

Please contact me if you have any questions on these or any other issues. Tel 01235 769090 or ed@wantageconservatives.com

ED VAIZEY

Conservative Parliamentary Candidate

Dear Editor

Parkside allotments: maintaining appearances

I would like to point out, as one of the few residents in New Road and for those of Parkside, that we are aware that we live in a very attractive area of Marcham and that we want to keep it that way.

The comments under the Council News concerning the wooded area at the junction of Parkside and New Road need to be clarified. Grass cuttings and tree branches have been deposited in this area. The branches are mainly the result of storm damage and have been cut up to help disintegration. The grass cuttings are the results of additional cuttings of the larger grass verges adjoining New Road. Contractors do cut the grass but can only do so according to the laid down schedule dictated to by costs. The extra cuttings do help to maintain the good appearance of the area.

The council is asked to support this self-help and say where these cuttings and the occasional storm damage waste should be deposited. Litter and other rubbish is general deposited in the litter bin no provided. This occasionally overflows but the general tidiness of the area is much improved.

Apart from emptying the bin there would seem to be no need for the council to pay contractors to tidy up the area. The opposite corner of the junction is another matter, where an allotment overgrown by weeds and stinging nettles is badly in need of attention.

MICHAEL CARLING



PARISHIONER OF THE YEAR

The Parish Council last year created a scheme to recognise the efforts of people within the parish who have devoted much time and energy working for the community, and without whom the parish would not be the same. A certificate is awarded to the recipient and the Parish Council awards a grant of £100 to a local village organisation of the recipient's choice. The Certificate is presented at the Annual Meeting of Electors. The Council is inviting nominations to be submitted for consideration for the next award. There are many people within the parish who have devoted much time and energy working for the community who would be worthy recipients. Names to be put forward together with a brief description, not exceeding 200 words, of why that person deserves the award should be sent to the Clerk to the Council by the end of the year.

Have your say about local issues – write to the editor by 15th Dec for Jan's issue