

From : stephenstacey.apc@btinternet.com
Date : 02/10/18 - 14:53 (GMTDT)
To : richard.broadhead@wiltshire.gov.uk
Cc : Jane.Davies@wiltshire.gov.uk
Subject : Avebury FP22

Dear Richard

As Chairman of Avebury Parish Council, I am writing at the suggestion of your colleagues Martin Cook and Andrew Jack, whom I met in the margins of a recent CATG meeting in Marlborough, and with the support of Councillor Jane Davies, who has asked to be copied into this mail, about the very poor condition of FP22 in Avebury.

As you may know, this footpath provides an indispensable link between Church Walk and Bray Street. In fact it is the only connection segregated from other traffic allowing pedestrians and cyclists safe access to both parts of the village. It links Bray Street and Avebury Trusloe with the facilities of Avebury; in addition it forms part of NCN Route 403. Avebury receives about 300,000 visitors annually. Not a few of them walk to Windmill Hill and adjacent sites along this pathway.

Currently the surface of FP22 is very badly degraded in places and deeply worn in others. We have impaired parishioners needing or wanting to use this route. I have myself seen a parishioner in a wheel chair having the greatest difficulty in making safe progress. I have also witnessed evidently competent cyclists similarly challenged. The surface condition poses significant health and safety concerns, especially in winter when there is often standing water on one side of the pathway.

This is not a recent development. Avebury Parish Council first asked for action in 2014. Nothing happened. In 2016 then Deputy Leader John Thompson wrote that he intended work to be carried out in FY2016. Nothing happened. We made a request in 2017. We learned that FP22 had made the list of priorities for FY2018. Later we discovered that it had slipped to ninth on a list of eight priorities. Work in FY2019 was promised. We learned ten days ago that now there was no budget available.

We appreciate that you have many demands on your resources and we recognise that those resources are diminishing. We know, too, that the work required becomes ever more substantial as year after year it is delayed. There is also the fact is that there has been a complaint about FP22 at every annual meeting of the parish council in recent years (and, I may add, at other times, too). It is becoming increasingly difficult to excuse Wiltshire's neglect of this key link within the World Heritage Site. The time for action is now.

I regret having to write in such strong terms but it is hard to write anything at all without revealing a degree of frustration. I do hope that it will be possible to review the case once again and that it is possible to find a way forward. Of course I am ready to try to provide whatever other detail you may need.

With best wishes
Stephen

Chairman
Avebury Parish Council