

# Traffic in Cottingham Village.

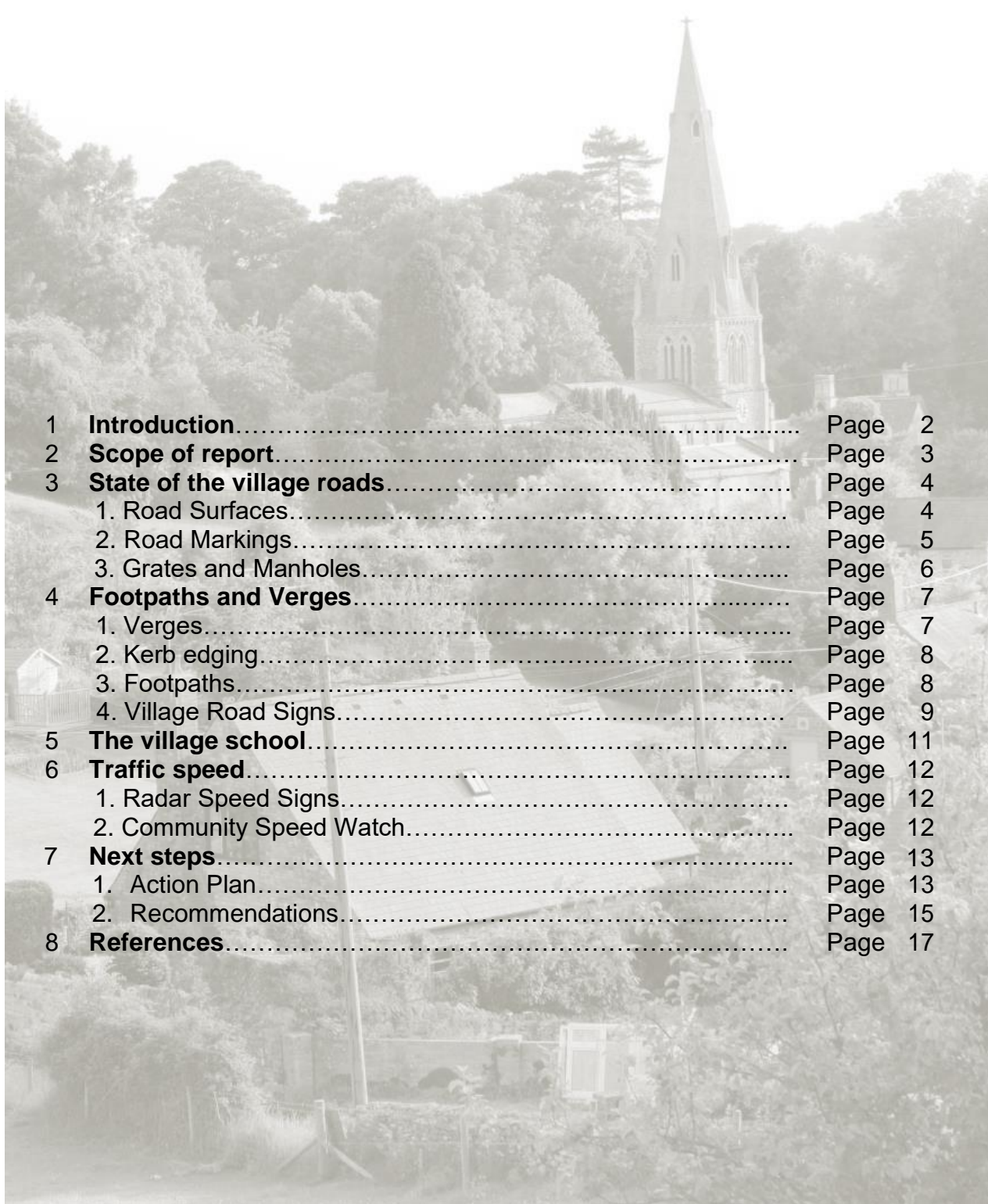


A report by the Cottingham Parish Council, Northamptonshire.

Version 8

May 2024

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Sadly, this year's report is not as upbeat as last year's report. The state of the village road surfaces have deteriorated at an alarming rate. This deterioration is prevalent on Ripley Road, Church Street, Bind Lane and the entry to the Village School. However, by far the majority of village roads have pot-holes of varying sizes. All attempts by the Parish Council to improve the road surface have met with the odd pothole filling which, in the case of Ripley Road (e.g.) is merely accelerating the surface deterioration of the road.

What follows is a report on the general health and safety of our roads and footpaths. Readers should be aware that roads and footpaths are the responsibility of the Northamptonshire Highways. It is only the Highways Department which can instigate maintenance. Cottingham Parish Council can do little more than to lobby to get work completed, which we do.

## 2. SCOPE OF REPORT

- Responsibility for highways rests with the Highways Authority for North Northamptonshire. Originally Northamptonshire Highways had a single County wide responsibility. However, with the inception of the Unitary Authorities North and West Northamptonshire are now responsible for their separate authorities.
- It is still the case that “Outside Greater London the council of a county [or metropolitan district] are the highway authorities for all highways in the county [or, as the case may be, the district], whether or not maintainable at the public expense [..]”.  
(Highways Act 1980, ch.66 part 1).
- Verge cutting and maintenance has been accepted as the responsibility of Cottingham Parish Council.
- As a Parish Council, Cottingham Parish Council must approach North Northamptonshire (NNC) Highways Authority, if the Parish requires any work involving highways to be undertaken.
- Councils are facing budget cuts. Hence, finding solutions to the issues raised in this report, which will inevitably incur expense, are going to be difficult

# 3. THE STATE OF THE VILLAGE ROADS

## 1. Road Surfaces

Last year a number of roads were reported as being in a poor state of repair (Traffic in Cottingham Village, V6; May 2023).

Despite numerous requests to Highways to resurface Ripley Road, especially at the top where the road meets Bancroft Road, there is still an insistence that pothole filling provides an adequate repair. Pothole filling on Ripley Road (top) is merely speeding up the deterioration of the road surface.

The Blind Lane road surface is also showing signs of severe wear. All attempts by the Parish Council to correct this have been met with little or no action being taken by Highways.



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- 1 Ripley Road
- 2. Road to School off Berryfield Road.
- 3. Road to School off Berryfield Road.
- 4 High Street

One of the worst road surfaces in the village is the road which provides entry to the Village School (See 2 & 3 above).

Church Street has a number of potholes, and High Street (see photo 4 on page 4) is beginning to develop some. Unfortunately, the majority of the roads in the village suffer from potholes, and the numbers are increasing year on year.



## 2. Road Markings

Many road markings in the village were renewed during 2022/23 and whilst some have faded, they are generally acceptable.



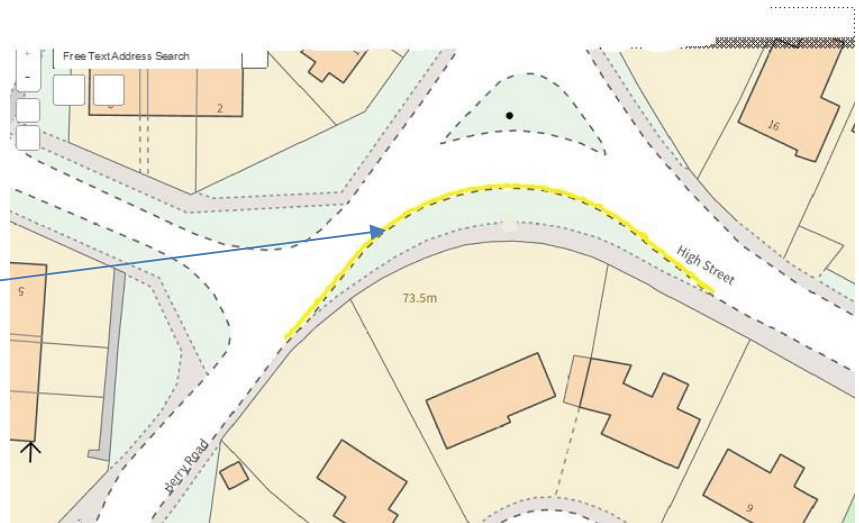
School Zebra Crossing.



The junction of Blind Lane and  
Rockingham Road  
(Photos from Traffic Report V7 2023)

The Parish Council made a request to paint yellow no parking lines around bottom of High Street. It was the Council's view that parking during school opening and leaving times was causing a problem to the verge and a hazard to through traffic.

Double Yellow Lines



Request, it was followed by a public consultation.  
To date we have no information regarding the outcome of that consultation.

### 3. Grates and Manhole Covers

Sunken grates on Corby Road have been a hazard for too many years. The pictures below were taken from last year's traffic report and to date the issues are still live. The majority of the grates on the stretch of Corby Road from the Old Harborough Road to Millfield Road are below road surface level. As with a number of other complaints to the Highways Authority within this report, the Parish Council has had little success in obtaining the necessary improvements.



# 4. FOOTPATHS and VERGES.

## 1. Verges

Parking on verges remains a problem, especially where there is insufficient room to park on the road. This is the case with Ripley Road where verge parking is necessary in order to avoid a complete road blockage. However, there are examples of serious damage to the verges creating major eyesores

To prevent verge parking the Parish Council has placed posts on a verge close to the school. This is the area where the Council has requested double yellow lines (no parking)



Last year some residents took action to protect the verge near their houses, as with this example on Berryfield Road.

When compared with the picture to the right, also Berryfield Road, it is a strategy that appears to work. Unfortunately, the no parking signs make it difficult for the verges to be cut.





## 2. Kerb edging



There are still a few examples of damaged kerb edging like the one shown on the left which is on High Street. However, Kerb edging throughout the village is generally good.

(From Highways Report V7 2023)

## 3. Footpaths

A number of the village's footpaths are showing signs of wear and tear. Exacerbating problems are the number of footpaths which are slowly being taken over with weeds.



Bancroft Road



Mill Lane



The footpath, above left, has been improved recently. Thanks to a resident's complaint.



Bancroft Road



Berryfield Road



Before



After

The two photographs immediately above are of the footpath on the bank on Corby Road. The path was cleared by a Resident and member of FROGS (Friend of Green Spaces) and what a good job he made of it. Residents have had more success at getting paths cleared than the Parish Council.

#### 4. Village Road Signs

Most of the village signs are in need of a wash. The finger posts on the triangle near the school and the sign at the bottom of Corby Road are all dirty. The Parish Council did have some success getting the Give Way sign at the junction of Corby Road and the old Harborough Road cleaned. However, once cleaned the sign was shown to be very faint.



(From Highways Report V7 2023)



A request has also been made to move the 30mph signs on Rockingham Road to a position nearer the Village sign.



As with the request for No Parking lines the Authority agreed to move the signs, put the proposition to public consultation and once again we have no idea of the outcome.

The "Rockingham Road" street sign has been removed.



This Give Way sign below, was almost completely obliterated by hedge. The new owner of the house has had the hedge removed.



(Prior to hedge removal)

# 5. THE VILLAGE SCHOOL.

The village is still facing disruption at “School Run” times. Roads around the school are, for a short time at least, congested to the point where they can cause inconvenience to residents.

All attempts to find parking spaces for some of the cars have failed. The Mill development, which could alleviate some of the parking issues, is still not on stream. There is some evidence that the car park for the old Spread eagled public house is being used by some parents.



Example from 2022 Report

# 6. Traffic speed

## 1. Radar Speed Signs

A third speed sign was placed by the Council on Mill Road just before the school. The intention is that the sign will warn drivers that sign, the school is close and suggest that they reduce their speed to 20mph. To date we have been unable to obtain any statistics from this sign.



Just beyond the School Speed Sign, there is a “Watch Your Speed” sign. This may well cause confusion when the main sign shows 20mph. Perhaps the Council should consider removing this sign.

Statistics from the older signs are not downloaded every four months as was the case earlier in last year. The Council decided that the downloads showed little change from quarter to quarter and in future reading will only be taken if there appears to be a problem with speeding traffic.

Of note is that 45% of traffic leaving Cottingham via Corby Road, exceed the speed limit. There is approximately twice the number of vehicles per day on Corby Road than on Rockingham Road. Finally, there are still those who feel that excessive speed is acceptable, sometimes 100mph. The Police will operate a mobile speed camera on Corby if requested.

## 2. Community Speed Watch.

The organiser was very disappointed with the poor support by Councillor. This led to a lower number of sessions that normally would be the case.

The results were that one car on Corby Road (36mph) and two cars on Rockingham Road (42 & 36 mph) were reported to the police.



It was believed that the timing of the Speed Watch, 4 weeks in July and August, were



the wrong time for the Speed Watch to take place (holidays). Hence, next years Speed Watch yet to be confirmed, will take place during School terms

## 7. Next steps.

### 1. Action Plan

The Road Safety Group continues to use an action plan, an example off which is shown below. This is likely to be continued in the future. However, the recommendations shown at the end of this chapter should form the priority objectives for 2024/25.

Action	Update – 5 March 2024
	<p><b>Present:</b> David Grayson (DG) Terri McLean-Bowman(TMB) Rachel Faulkner (RF) Tom Russell (TR) Suzanne Preston (SP)</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Andy Mackie (AM)</p>
<p><b>1. Warden/NPT attendance at PC meetings &amp; re-start of community walkabouts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safer Communities Warden Team continue to attend PC meetings when available (in line with their late shifts)</li> <li>• The Safer Communities Team email address has now changed : <a href="mailto:safercommunitiesteam@northnorthants.gov.uk">safercommunitiesteam@northnorthants.gov.uk</a></li> <li>• Regular NPT update and attendance at PC meetings via PC Brad Wilson.</li> </ul> <p>Brad has returned from absence and continues to link in with PC and support on local issues.</p>
<p><b>2. Corby Road classification</b></p>	<p>AM to progress pothole/manhole survey over next few weeks and update group at next meeting. DG to chase AM</p>
<p><b>3. Crime statistic information</b></p>	<p>• <u>TR now having regular updates/data from PC Brad Wilson. All actions are ongoing. BW attending meetings and actively engages.</u></p>
<p><b>4. Double yellow parking restriction – High St leading on to Berry Rd</b></p>	<p><u>Application submitted. Timescale of outcome not known at this point. A 3-stage consultation process is in motion. There was some confusion regarding which stage the process was at and whether the public phase had taken place.</u></p>
<p><b>5. Road Safety concerns – local school area</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Radar speed sign, Mill Road:</u> Data access – RF/DG to download userlink/instructions from manufacturer and run trial. Unit is currently programmed to active during school hours and holidays at present. To be reviewed annually.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Zebra crossing beacon lighting upgrade</u> – feedback from Safer Roads Alliance - not classed as priority issue so works won't be undertaken.</li> </ul>
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<b>6. Corby Road footpath &amp; general hedgerow encroachment across footpaths in parish</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AM leading on hedgerow survey. No update available. RF to liaise with Peter Crane regarding overgrown vegetation on Lawson Court.</li> </ul>
<b>7. Weed spraying on footpaths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R to contact NNC Highways regarding position on weed spraying services. Ongoing</li> </ul>
<b>8. Updates to local residents</b>	Ongoing.
<b>9. Feedback to Cottingham Parish Council</b>	Monthly report continuing.
<b>10 Cottingham Parish Highways report</b>	On village website. Speed reports won't be included going forward. DG will submit report end of April.
<b>11. Parking issues around school drop-off/pick-up times.</b>	<p>School parking issues continue to be monitored.  <u>Spread Eagle premises/car park area</u> - vehicles are now able to access area for parking at present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policing Team schedule patrols as and when available.</li> <li>• School continuing to send communication out to parents/carers.</li> <li>• Mill carpark will provide significant benefit in terms of reducing parking problems in the long term. There has been further consideration of grass-crete and access gate installation to manage future parking issues. Ongoing.</li> <li>• RF to draft letter to school Headteacher of ongoing issues.</li> </ul>
<b>11 Community Speedwatch &amp; NPT Speedgun Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Community Speedwatch</u> – A different month will be requested. TBC. Will not be scheduled during summer holiday season.</li> <li>• NPT continue to deliver speeding ops where capacity allows and in line with relevant road safety campaigns throughout the year. DG to discuss further with Brad Wilson</li> </ul>
<b>12 Removal of outdated Hunting Lodge Road signage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response from S Barnwell – works to be considered at meeting scheduled for 7 March- waiting for update, SP to chase</li> </ul>
<b>13 Inconsiderate parking – Blind Lane &amp; Welland Road</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passed on to Brad Wilson.</li> <li>• To be raised at next PC meeting</li> </ul>

<b>14 Parking issues/tensions across various locations in parish</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A draft resident letter was viewed. The group agreed this needed to be discussed at PC level before progressing further. Article was included in last edition of parish newsletter.</li> </ul>
<b>15 Substandard road condition - Ripley Road &amp; Blind Lane</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patching works are now deteriorating significantly. Issue is raised on a regular basis with NNC Highways.</li> <li>• <u>Footpath condition – Bancroft Road</u>: there were concerns with the state of some footpaths in the parish and the lack of weed maintenance. AM to monitor. Update required</li> </ul>
<b>16 Missing road sign on retainer wall opposite Corby Rd Junction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah Barnwell has forwarded request to specialist team to progress further. SP to chase.</li> </ul>
<b>17 30 mph sign re-siting on Rockingham Rd</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highways to re-position in same location as village entry road sign. In progress</li> </ul>
<b>18 Date of next meeting</b>	<b>Tuesday 23 April, via TEAMS (RF to send out link nearer the time).</b>

## 2. Recommendations

The Parish Council needs to continuing lobbying the Highways Authority on the maintenance of the village road surfaces signage and footpaths. Perhaps the Parish Council could suggest to residents that they constantly make complaints to the Highways Authority in addition to the Parrish Council and maybe the weight of complaints might produce some action.

Sunken grates on Corby Road still need attention.

For some time, there has been a discussion about the loss of footpath surface to grass and weeds. Corby Borough Council refused to spray these paths with weed killer. It is understood that NNC still have responsibility for clearing footpaths and as such it is recommended that the Parish Council considers this one of its priorities for next year.

Statistics from the new village radar speed sign (Mill Road) are required.

Verges are owned by the Highways Authority but maintained by the Parish Council, it is recommended that the Parish Council uses its responsibility for maintenance to protect grass verges from damage. (Recommendation from Highways Report v7)

Although not mentioned directly in this report, problems caused by vehicle parking are regularly noted and maintenance such as leaf clearance in Autumn is requested from the Authority.

A replacement sign “Rockingham Road” is required to be placed to the left of the Village Notice Board.

Road signs in the village need cleaning.

Cottingham Parish Council still has its Working Group, whose numbers are made of four Parish Councillors, the Clerk to the Parish Council and a representative of Corby Borough Council who along with the Safer Corby Warden's Team who support the Parish Council's attempts to obtain improvements it is the group's responsibility to highlight the issues found in this report and to report to the Parish Council on any progress, or otherwise, made.

## 8. References.

Highways Act 1980; Chapter 66 part 1.

Traffic in Villages Safety and Civility for Rural Roads - A Toolkit for Communities; Mitchell and Hamilton-Baillie; (2012/13?).

Cottingham Parish Council; "Traffic in Cottingham Village 2023".

TVAS data from Parish Council owned Evolis Radar signs.