

Statement read out by Cllr Trevor Allison

3 points before I actually start.

Firstly, I do NOT read Social media, it has a reputation for being inaccurate and 'over the top'; secondly, I am NOT a member of the Safer Roads Group, my only contribution to it has been my ambivalent views on repositioning the cross. Thirdly I wrote this a week ago and I have not changed anything since.

I am not the Parish Chair but, being aged 77 and having lived in Ruyton for 43 years and on the Parish Council for 28, I am what would be known in the House of Commons as the 'Father of the House'. As such, I have the moral duty, and right to 'read the Riot Act', and ask people to think very seriously about what they wish to be the future of this village.

I can recall the River Perry being deepened from one end of the Parish to the other; and a bad winter in the 1980s (possibly 1983) when there were deep ruts in the snow on School Road as far as the then functioning Dairy from the milk tankers delivering milk, and snow so deep beyond and up Park Bank that it was safer to walk than drive.

During all these years the road traffic has had to adapt to the changing conditions, and that is what is going to have to happen from now on, if the children and the elderly residents of the village are going to be able to move safely from one part of the village to another. The fact that lorries and tractors have become bigger, and faster, is NO excuse for the driving habits of their drivers to change. They must respect the rights of pedestrians, whether young or old, to use the pavements of the village in safety.

I have lost count of the villages in France on major routes that I have travelled through in public service buses where the street furniture constrains the traffic to drive at speeds which are conducive to walking along the pavements. There are countless villages, towns and even cities in France where the vehicular route is separated from the pedestrian one by vertical poles about a metre high and there is NO possibility of driving, or parking, half on and half off the road. For once the French have got it right; there needs to be a clear separation between pedestrian and vehicular zones. That is what is needed in our village.

If vehicles are going to use the B4397 as a through route, then they have got to be shown that pedestrian safety is our priority, and that they must adapt to the conditions imposed to keep the local population safe. It does NOT matter if Ruyton gets a reputation for being a difficult village to drive through, that will discourage others from using the B4397.

What I have unfortunately noticed, especially during the closure of the through route, is that some tractor drivers, in their high, threatening vehicles, are hardly considering the effect their speed and size is having on pedestrians; usually I freeze when I see one approaching. Yet, on the contrary, it has been a pleasure to walk through the village without a stream of H. G. V.s and 'white' vans passing through; however, I am seriously afraid that unless it is quickly made plain to everyone that this is a VILLAGE with residents on foot, the newly resurfaced road, without a string of potholes, will be treated as a 'racetrack' by many of those passing through.

There, I have had my rant; now I will sit for a while and listen to reasonable and relevant comments on the scheme, but I will NOT sit and listen to the same few points being repeated over and over again. In fact, if that happens, I will go home, not having voted either for or against the scheme, if there were to be a vote, but knowing all the same that Shropshire Council will make the final decision on what is done, as it is THEY who are spending the money.

Trevor Allison