

A45 Chowns Mill Roundabout Improvement Scheme



Phase One Communications Survey

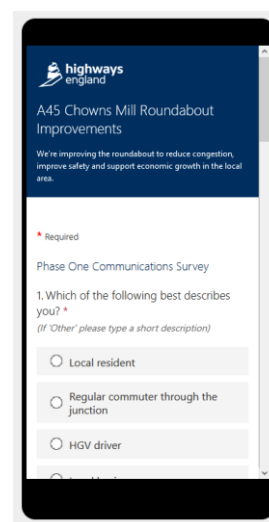
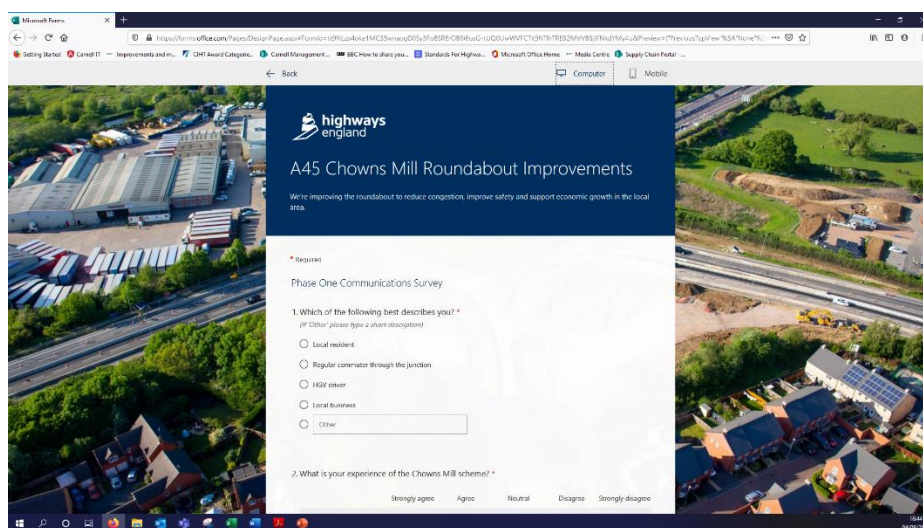


INTRODUCTION

Following the completion of Phase One on the A45 Chowns Mill Roundabout Improvement Scheme, a survey was carried out to discover the public perception of the works and the standard of the various forms of communication.

For ease of distribution and analysis of the results, the survey was presented in an online format using Microsoft Forms. A link to it is below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=tt9NLzp4oke1MC35wnaogD0Sv3FpBSRErOB9i6usG-tUQ0UwWVFCtk9NTIhTRE82MvVBSjJFNkdYMy4u>



The survey was distributed by:

- Scheme E-mail distribution list.
- Letter (200 houses)
- Local Facebook groups.
- Twitter.
- Text
- Highways England snippet page

This required zero additional expenditure.

RESPONSE

The survey went live on 1 July and was left open for five weeks.

There were 318 responses in total, with an average completion time of 2:52.

RESULTS

The responses are shown on the following pages:

1. Which of the following best describes you?

[More Details](#)

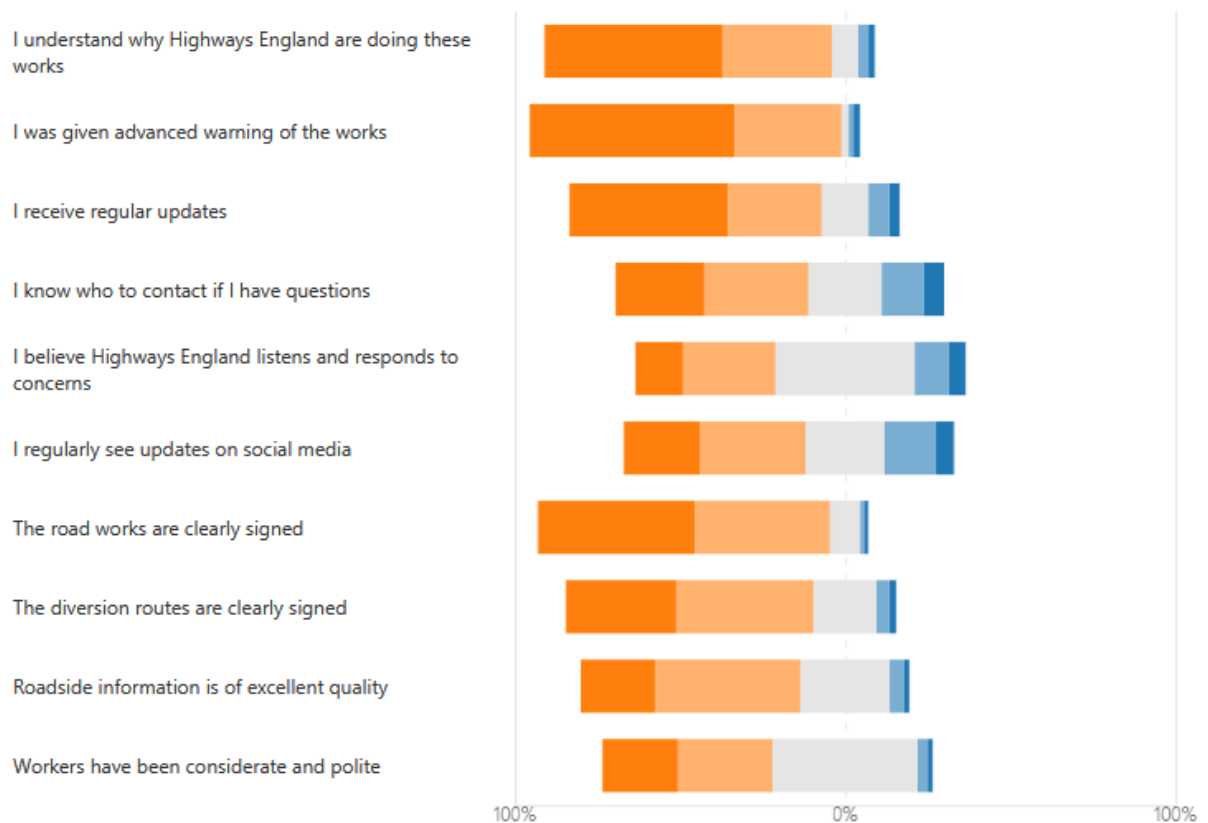
● Local resident	235
● Regular commuter through th...	51
● HGV driver	6
● Local business	12
● Other	11



2. What is your experience of the Chowns Mill scheme?

[More Details](#)

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree



3. How do you rate the communications overall?

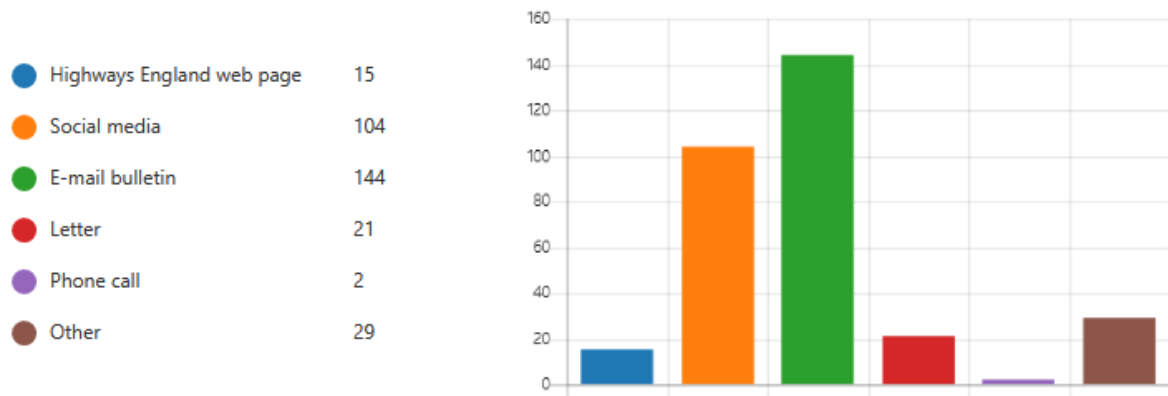
[More Details](#)

318
Responses

★★★★☆
4.00 Average Rating

4. How do you prefer to receive information about the scheme?

[More Details](#)



Q5 to Q7 requested contact details if not already on distribution list.

The following details were submitted:

- e-mail addresses x41
- postal addresses x9
- phone numbers x1

8. Have you previously visited the scheme web page?

[More Details](#)



9. Have you directly contacted the team?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	63
● No	251



10. How would you rate your overall satisfaction of the response you received?

[More Details](#)

63
Responses



Q11 asked 'Please explain why you provided this rating.' to which there were 52 responses – see Appendix A

Q12 asked 'Do you have any comments on the scheme communications or suggestions as to how we might improve in future?' to which there were 105 responses – see Appendix B

THE NUMBERS BEHIND THE POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Comprehensive customer communication laid the foundations for success:

PROACTIVE	REACTIVE
<p>Public Information Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2x sessions at compound with over 400 attendance. <p>Pre-start Packs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 nearest residents delivered packs with a customer care pack, including programme build info and free fridge magnet with 24/7 customer number on it. <p>Personal Customer Care Letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Nearest and dearest' residents plus those that prefer posted communications given monthly customer care update letters. <p>E-mails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular advanced notification advance notification of TM changes. <p>Texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18x notification advance notification of TM changes to audience of c.600. <p>Phone calls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26x 'vulnerable' customers receive phone updates (including nearby traveller site). <p>E-Newsletters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular updates sent out to 1,500 subscribers by e-mail. <p>Social Media Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80,000 audience of TM updates and monthly newsletters passed to administrators of local groups. <p>Website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5x updates to HE snippet page so it remains current. <p>Street Week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • face to face meeting of residents on nearby streets. 	<p>PLO Contacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 199x Direct complaints or queries. • On average customer issues 'service recovered' or closed within 2 days of receipt. <p>24/7 Freephone Number: 0333 0124 596</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31x customers have called during the night, redirected to supervisor, of which 95% answered. <p>HE Customer Contact Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26x contacts to CCC - Predominantly road users rather than locals (low CCC numbers indicate customers know how to make direct contact). • CCC provided with FAQs and info to quickly identify scheme and allow swift transfer to PLO to deal with. • Customer complaints reviewed weekly through RRM. • 15x Stage One complaints resolved. <p>Social Media Scanning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook groups searched for positive and negative comments about the scheme.

RESULTS SUMMARY

Understandably with distribution channels used, the large majority of respondents were local residents.

There was an overall satisfaction with comms, particularly: signage, advanced notification, regular updates and an understanding of why doing the works.

The survey gave the opportunity for 51 interested parties to record their details for future communications.

The **4.35** (out of 5) average satisfaction grade for responses when contacting the team was a particular highlight. A prompt response (on average closed in 2 days) is thought to be behind this high level of customer satisfaction, along with regular follow ups or updates to ensure customers are happy.

ACTIONS

Consider increased use of social media.

E-mail accounted for largest preference of receiving scheme information. Not far behind though was social media. This provides the ability to engage in a convenient way, without providing personal details (GDPR issues) to the project team.

'I regularly see updates on social media' was second lowest ranking in the 'experience' question.

Two-thirds of respondents had visited the HE scheme web page, but only 5% prefer this method of ongoing communications.

Highways England to consider larger schemes (that have snippet page) also having a dedicated Facebook group to include TM information and offer greater contact with the local team.

Promote ways of contacting PLO

Despite positive results in receiving advance notice and regular updates, knowing who to contact and the expectation that HE would listen and respond to concerns is lower than we would like. This is despite positive feedback from those who did get in touch.

Roadside signs could be installed with details on, or adverts in the local press could be used which would also foster positive relationships with them.

We will produce a dedicated brochure, highlighting 'you said, we did' results from the Survey feedback.

Share best practice in HE

Opportunities could be explored to promote the success of the customer engagement on the scheme within EMAD and in other areas. This could be done alongside the Customer Audit results.

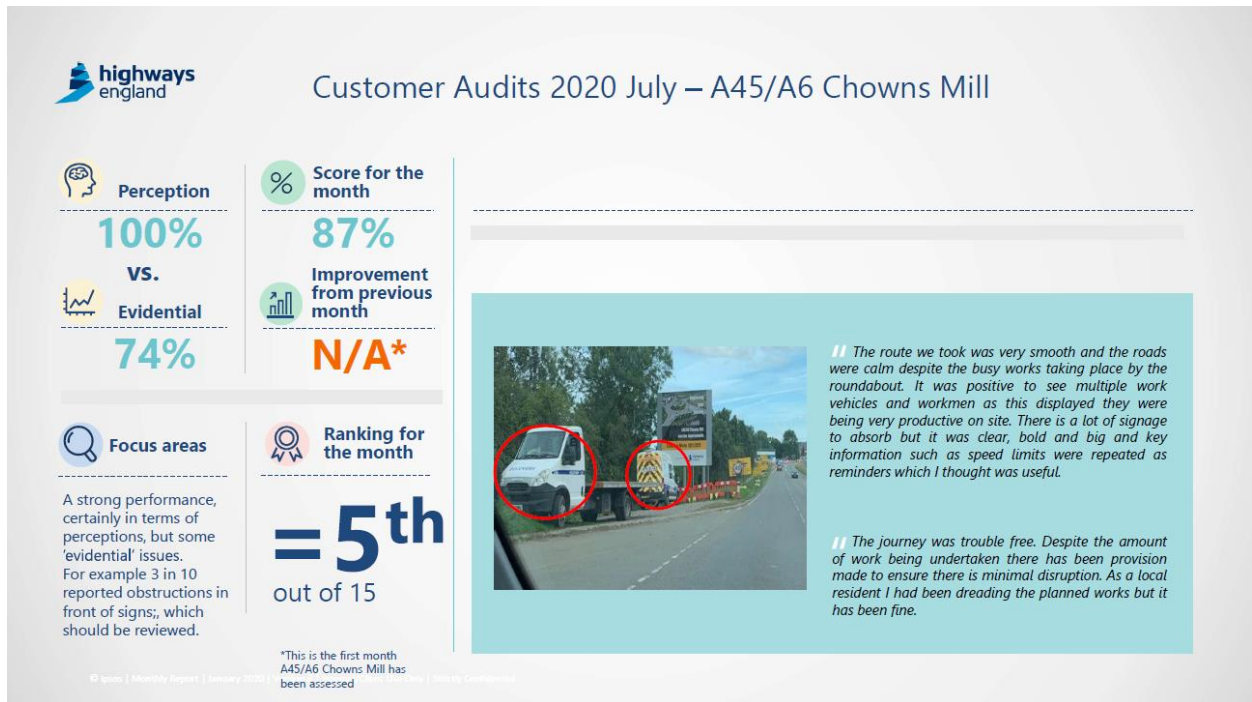
Repeat the survey

Carry out the same survey in at the end of Phase 2 (February 2021) and at the conclusion of the scheme, to compare results.

CUSTOMER AUDIT

Through engaging with Major Projects Customer Service Division, the A45 Chowns Mill scheme became the first OD project to be subject to a Customer Audit. This uses 10 'mystery shoppers' driving through the scheme and is collated by Ipsos Mori.

This will be reported on monthly for the next 6 months and shows a comparison against bigger MP schemes as well as improvements made using audit and survey feedback.



APPENDIX A

Explanation of how they rated overall satisfaction of response after contacting the team:

- 1) Paul Valentine has been excellent in providing updates and responses to questions
- 2) I complained about the noise of vehicles reversing at night which should've been turned off and after the phone call, the noise was turned off straight away
- 3) Generic email response at first to queries then actually had a personal response from onsite manager but issues not sorted given up trying now
- 4) I have had a couple of occasions when I have contacted the team. I have always received courteous, efficient, and prompt resolution.
- 5) We contacted Paul and he was very helpful and understanding
- 6) Responses tended to be along the lines of "sorry but it's got to happen"
- 7) I emailed a comment on the works and had a speedy comprehensive response
- 8) Highlighted a dangerous signage issue - was quickly resolved
- 9) The workmen were swearing and shouting very loudly during some nighttime working. I contacted the comms manager and he dealt with the matter extremely well.
- 10) My question was answered quickly and satisfactorily.
- 11) Helpful and clear comms
- 12) Courteous & quick response
- 13) Paul was very polite and explained everything clearly.
- 14) Willing to listen & talk
- 15) "I emailed Paul before the work started and he answered all my questions satisfactorily and extremely quickly. Also when we met Paul at the site office meeting he was very helpful and gave us printed information which we still use. Thank you "
- 16) Paul was excellent in explaining about the Three Oaks
- 17) Paul Valentine has been very helpful
- 18) As a regular commuter I wanted to get an idea of time scales not just for my commute but I work for Svantek UK, we supply noise, vibration and dust monitoring equipment for roads/construction sites. We are now working closely with Carnell & Highways England supplying equipment and reports. So not only did I get my questions answered I managed to gain a new customer.
- 19) This is a cheap nasty scheme. It should have been a grade separated junction with priority for the A45 at the lower level. It is a waste of money as it will cause huge delays in rush hour and will have to be rebuilt in the future as a grade separated junction.
- 20) Would like to know if upgrade is on schedule and on budget
- 21) "My dealings with Paul Valentine have been excellent he is always been as helpful as he can be. My negative feedback would be to do with the control of the tipper drivers etc delivering to the works just outside of our gateway, Every day we are being held up by drivers just pulling up in the roadway stopping us from getting to our site entrance, My main concern is road safety, with North bound A6 car drivers not expecting our lorry's to have to stop on the A6 while we wait for a tipper driver to move out the way. It is important to say that the banks man you do have outside our site is doing all he can and is very respectful."
- 22) "Spoke to Paul Valentine on behalf of a resident. Paul is excellent at his job give good clear advice and explanation"
- 23) Precise information and response time was incredibly short. Was talked through measures they were trying to implement in order to avoid the issue I had.
- 24) Always replied to promptly and courteous
- 25) Paul has always been ready to listen to issues and concerns facing the local community
- 26) Courteous responses. Named contacts. Good feedback
- 27) Got a reply answering my query
- 28) Info on timely manner
- 29) Individuals do respond but claim the work needs to be done in order to meet deadlines. No changes were made to their schedule despite the fact that night works have kept residents awake for the whole night on multiple occasions. Making complaints are therefore a waste of time.
- 30) Paul Valentine has been excellent in responding to initial issues re communication - can't fault what comes through now
- 31) The info we receive back is generally good, however it often feels like we are being "fobbed off" we are told noisy works aren't taking place, they then happen and nothing can be done about it before it's too late.

- 32) The information provided is concise and timely and in main appreciated by social media users.
- 33) Paul Valentine was very prompt in responding to my query regarding lane use on the new roundabout layout and they have resolved the issue by including my recommendations.
- 34) Attended consultation event, found those representing the works friendly, helpful and knowledgeable.
- 35) I had a cause of concern about the shuttle bus and this concern was quickly and politely understood and sorted out.
- 36) No reply to a letter I sent
- 37) Answered my query - very helpful
- 38) Initial attachments to email communication were not readable. Road numbers were not printed on maps to make clear the roads affected
- 39) The response was great, but I need to see if words are translated into action
- 40) All the staff that I met at thr "Open Day" were polite, informative and helpful.
- 41) I received a prompt response to a concern that I raised
- 42) getting good updates and speedy responses
- 43) they are doing a first class job
- 44) From the first day that I visited the site to view the plans, Paul and the team have been exemplary in their communication and customers service.
- 45) you always get an answer when you make an enquiry .
- 46) So far so good although I thought it was a different roundabout until today!
- 47) Quick response to my question
- 48) Well informed and with ample notice of any closures
- 49) They were very good. I just got the wrong roundabout.....lol
- 50) "I have been dealing with Rushden Lakes Roundabout for the last 5 years, as a Councillor on ENC. This has included Chowns Mill which I have been also involved . I feel that Rushden Lakes Roundabout also needs remodelling due to the continuous issues and I have been in contact regarding this matter. I have written to Grant Snapps, Minister of Transport in order to get a Stop Notice on Rushden Gateway, Planning Application in Northampton Road, Rushden. Dorothy Maxwell Cllr, Spencer Ward , ENC."
- 51) Quick response & immediate evidence that action was taken.
- 52) A rapid response, which had an immediate impact, but the original problem is creeping back

APPENDIX B

Comments on the scheme communications and suggestions as to how we might improve in future:

- 1) It's always a difficult challenge when Operating so close to residence. Whilst not affecting me too much, A number of people in houses in close proximity to the works have experienced considerably disruption. I would recommend some kind of compensation scheme that could help during the works.
- 2) No, all good.
- 3) I don't see why some people are so bloody whingey about it. We live in Lancaster gardens and understand that silent plant doesn't exist
- 4) I understand that this is a large scale construction and it will be noisy, but 24/7 for the first several weeks was very inconvenient especially at night. The onsite manager was never available as informed he would be to any concerns. This seems to have settled down now and the communication is a lot better than at the start.
- 5) None
- 6) The night work has completely ruined our sleep and that of our baby. The process has been a disgrace, with no consideration for residents whatsoever.
- 7) Well done for taking the initiative to crack on during lockdown, when fewer people would be affected 👍
- 8) I was obeying the speed limit diligently when the " project shuttle bus" went gliding by 10 mph quicker . Not the good example methinks!
- 9) Seems pretty good.
- 10) No
- 11) make it so we can get out of Higham easier
- 12) You need to be more open with every stakeholder and not hide or hold back things. The overall communication is poor and there are very few regular updates at all.
- 13) Only that I hope the last 3 months of no traffic, has cut down the length of time to complete. I use this junction twice a day !!
- 14) Speed restrictions are 50 and some parts 40mph. Confusing.
- 15) No, keep up the good work.
- 16) Really impressed with the regular, detailed updated information. VERY IMPRESSIVE
- 17) I think the Scheme is going well, but I think it ought to have been done with a A45 flyover from the start, but coming from a Groundworks background I understand the cost of Bridges. My personal opinion is that this will only be a short term fix for a few years.
- 18) Works fine for me.
- 19) Have only answered neutral to some questions as I haven't been that way for months
- 20) I didn't know there was a web page - I shall check it out now, thanks :)
- 21) None
- 22) So far from what I see, everyone doing great job to improve & the safety of this junction
- 23) We find the communications about the roundabout are very regular and informative
- 24) Please do more to communicate to HGV drivers/companies that they are not supposed to come through Irthlingborough as many do, not just the high street but college street is frequently used as a cut through despite a weight restriction.
- 25) Has the lockdown and subsequent less traffic helped this scheme to progress more quickly and is there a possibility it will finish earlier as a result?
- 26) Route new roads away from ancient & veteran trees.
- 27) Regular updates as to the works being on, ahead or behind schedule.
- 28) All seems good at present.
- 29) With this scheme would had been easier and cheaper with traffic lights during busy times. Then the rest of money spent on resurfacing the roads and potholes
- 30) None
- 31) I get text updates of road closures, etc. Perfect for me thank you
- 32) "Maybe coming from Stanwick, the dual carriageway could have more signs to show that Station Road is closed and perhaps the stretch from Raunds down to Stanwick. But, the frequency and content of the texts are excellent "

- 33) My main comments were to see if they had all their sound and vibration equipment as i know with sites like this local residents and commuters are both upset by change.
- 34) It is just a shame these works were not completed prior to Rushden Lakes being built as more traffic about now.
- 35) Perfectly acceptable level and content of communication.
- 36) Glad to see work continuing through the covid crisis. Thank you for keeping disruption to a minimum and adjusting schedules to work with other local road closures. We are now in year 5 of continual local disruptions and, with additional work planned for Rushden Lakes access and Ditchford Crossing alterations, it really is getting beyond the point of tolerance and patience.
- 37) See question 9
- 38) To my point above I would think about only having one lorry delivering to the works just outside my gateway at once, we some times (as it was this morning) have three tippers blocking our gateway which is causing lorry's to back up on to the A6.
- 39) "The fact that the Town Council have regular updates is good. Members of the public do contact the Town Hall if needed for information"
- 40) Appreciate the regular emails we receive - which we signed up for at the information event but if anyone missed the event it would be good to have regular posts added to the local various Facebook pages covering Rushden, Higham, Stanwick and Irthlingborough (eg Spotted Rushden and Higham) so alot more people will be aware.
- 41) The layout from Rushden A14 turning to Irthlingborough is very dangerous as drivers still in wrong lane, In left lane they should go straight over to A45 and into Higham when that junction ready but cheat for quickness so was better when it was sectioned off because you try to come over to go to Irthlingborough but they are there and it is an accident waiting to happen. It is very tight to get over due to that reason. I use it everyday to go Irthlingborough to work and wait my turn and it does infuriate me every time.
- 42) Mary Poppins
- 43) Too much speeding
- 44) "I am sure it would help the local community, if we knew how much 'on schedule' you are. Especially if you are ahead or on time. 2 years for a road project is a long time and to know the progress would help keep moral up. How about a road-side notice board?"
- 45) No sorry
- 46) Change the scheme. How can it take 2 years to complete the works? 2 bloody years after having so many delays over the years. It's pathetic that it's taking 2 bloody years.
- 47) The only thing which has really bothered me so far (my garden backs on to the works on the roundabout and I can see it all over my fence, through the trees) is that sometimes it appears that certain vehicles spend more time going backwards and beeping than forwards and not beeping which is really annoying. Once that noise gets into your head it seems to aggravate more and more through the day. Apart from that I have honestly not been as bothered as I thought I would be. I have been shielding since the middle of March so it's not as if I could escape. I always have my radio on and I just seem to push the noise into the background. Also, when the noise finishes for the day and at weekends it's so nice to hear the birds again. Many thanks to all concerned and I hope you all stay safe.
- 48) I presume work is very well advanced because of the pandemic. If so it would be good to be told rather than pulling an early finish out of the hat later
- 49) Give residents clear notice at the planning stage of the proposed works and when this will take place so that this can be contested.
- 50) Ensure a mail as well as online information is available
- 51) The text alerts work very well but you could promote the website better and have a higher profile on social media.
- 52) "Our house literally shakes sometimes I worry about the damage happening. We often hear radios and loud voices at night. I'm dissapointed that so many trees have been felled and wish some consideration would be given to local houses now backing onto a much closer and louder road. Can a noise barrier not be put up?? I see that the new road surface is not a noise reducing one and wonder why?"
- 53) No
- 54) More through social media
- 55) None
- 56) No
- 57) I signed up for emails mainly to keep up dated on road closure but due to Covid-19 I've only used the round about a handful of times since the work started.

- 58) Don't allow works vehicles to park near the entrance to the estate
- 59) I have heard that due to the virus the work will finish earlier - if this is true an update on when the works will be complete would be nice.
- 60) Not at the moment
- 61) Has been excellent
- 62) A leaflet drop providing residents with information on how they can find our regular updates. This has not happened in Irthlingborough and if I wasn't on social media I may not have known how to find up to date information.
- 63) Local social media pages have been doing most of the work for you regarding letting people know, you're own efforts seem minimal and only if you look in the right places, information locally utilises the local platforms, not sure why you wouldn't to? I used to own a local page half a million a week in rushden alone traffic, same page has been keeping the locals up to date more than your social media has, just an observation more than a complaint
- 64) No
- 65) Speeding. Better to have enforced cameras. So many random mobile speed cameras. I don't speed but very difficult when you abide by speeds and others harass you. Much better to have average speed cameras or put up how many have been caught. People need to know there are speed traps. I think lucky as we are in lockdown. Otherwise this area would have been a nightmare.
- 66) Stop being cheeky with your deceptive Carnell speed camera van. Use it by all means but put up signs
- 67) The scheme promotion signs are great. Some of the standard DfT signs appear temporary and a bit bashed etc. For a scheme of this duration, some more established, newer signs would improve the approach.
- 68) No
- 69) Regular updates with what stage you're currently working on and how ahead/behind the schedule is.
- 70) If there are lane closures - as there were with the higham bridge works further down the road - please put up clear 'use both lanes' and 'merge in turn' signs. Higham bridge works resulted in 11 months of people blocking the open lanes and causing major queues in both lanes. I contacted the council and highways several times but very little was done, they claimed signs were adequate dispute there being no signage at all around the issue.
- 71) Keep up the good work
- 72) Hurry up and finish the roadworks rather than spending a fortune on social media and "communication". Rarely do we see workers overnight or weekends, why are they different to other shift workers?
- 73) Letters through residents' doors have been informative. Lockdown has at least meant less traffic using the roundabout - I was very concerned about getting to work given Station Road's extremely long closure. I do think this part of the works should've been quicker as the A6 from Rushden already has a ridiculous amount of traffic without forcing all Higham residents to go that way too.
- 74) Sometimes putting signs with lots of text on makes them impossible to read, consider simple or repeater messages it would be good to publish "current road messages" on the website.. but the URL for the website needs to be shorter.. no one is going to remember the one above.. think of a short one or re-director which you could put on signs?
- 75) I hope you plant the trees you have in the pictures and plans and don't 'forget' seems as though you trashed a historic tree that collected plenty of carbon dioxide and new trees won't be able to capture the same amount in my lifetime.
- 76) No
- 77) Highways England sort out Ditchford Lane junction please
- 78) no
- 79) Speed the bloody work rate up and get on with it,
- 80) Why is the 40mph speed limit still in force far beyond the area of works? All it is doing is causing road rage and people who stick to the limit are losing concentration. Some years ago I carried out some experiments, and found that if a speed limit is between 20% and 30% below the psychological speed limit of a road, (the speed you would travel at if you had no speedometer, bearing in mind this speed is different for each person to a degree), your reaction times would double after 1/4 of a mile and after 1 mile you would be able to stop in a shorter distance at the higher speed because you would be more alert. I don't have a problem with the limit, only it's distance after the end of the works.

- 81) Quite satisfied. However the virus has reduced traffic flow and we have been confined to barracks so not much travelling!
- 82) None. All good
- 83) Your e-mailed updates are clear, informative and helpful - so carry on.
- 84) it's interesting to see the developments, so more photos of progress, hopefully you got ahead of schedule due to covid-19.. I don't always understand which roads are being closed based on their descriptions - e.g southbound and some of the other A roads mentioned etc, so would be good to see A45 toward Rushden lakes etc
- 85) Stop drivers coming down the A6 from Bedford in the left hand lane only to cut straight across the roundabout to continue northbound on the A6, including construction workers! Dangerous, selfish and inconsiderate.
- 86) It would be good if the emails contained details of upcoming closures rather than having to go to the website
- 87) "no it seems to be working i am always kep't up to date when the road closures are going to be at night, it would be even better if some of the road users actually followed the road signs and got in the right lanes but you can't have everything i suppose."
- 88) No
- 89) Speed limit restriction signs need to be more clear when leaving the A45 on to the A6 towards Irthlingborough you are joining a new road so needs to be another 40 mph speed limit sign off the roundabout.
- 90) Are you ahead of schedule or on track?
- 91) Ask the workers not to be quite so loud shouting... They are literally metres from our house. also turn the beepers off of the vehicles reversing, especially at night.
- 92) communication has been excellent
- 93) I changed jobs to avoid commuting through here. Best move I ever made. Thanks!
- 94) I can't find the plans and drawings for this scheme any more, only images which do not make it clear to me which road is which. Initially the plans I did see showed one road, probably the A6, going through the middle of the roundabout. The images do not show this.
- 95) Lads from chevron are the best specially dan sebedean and wayne mead i d like to let chevron know he helped us to get through as our car broke down inside the closure. Good bunch of lads
- 96) Understand why works need to be completed I think it would be beneficial to have average speed cameras along these parts once the works are completed
- 97) "The closure of the footpath from Stanwick Lakes (Stanwick Village) to Chowns Mill is more of a nuisance than is necessary. It does not need to be closed for the whole mile. It could be open for three quarters of it from Stanwick end, for Stanwick residents to walk, jog or to walk the dog. Just shut off where it really needs to be. Thanks. T Coleman"
- 98) I was pleased to see the "slow down" sign on the A6 from Rushden. I am always being overtaken by cars not adhering to this speed limit. I too, have seen vehicles jumping the queue, using the lane to turn left to Wellingborough and then going to Irthlingborough. My 7 year old granddaughter saw a large vehicle towing a caravan doing the same thing last Sunday when I was returning them to their home in Brigstock. She said there was a bad driver going in the wrong lane.
- 99) I agree with comments made about drivers using the inside lane to cross over from Rushden to the A6 even though it is clearly signed. it is dangerous as they are often those who travel faster! Could there be a sign to say don't do it?!
- 100) As long as signposting very good, should be no problems
- 101) Keep local residents of any changes and shut down of roads. Also, alternative routes if you have a problem with traffic issues due to increase traffic on the A6 and the A45.
- 102) 32RQETHETRJMHV VBB
- 103) Such a huge job being undertaken & it is great to see such progress. You are doing a great job & we look forward to completion & utilising the improvements.
- 104) I like the text service that tells you about road closures
- 105) Better communications needed and better signage on and near the roadworks