

The Never Ending Pot-Hole Issue.

I dare say even before we had motorised vehicles, the Romans had 'Pot-Hole' issues, I wonder if they received – what we Councillors get regularly -

'It's all our fault'

A very unhappy resident sent this to 'ALL' Whittlesey/FDC/County Councillors.

The resident is seeking to publicise the issue so here it is – I'll do it for them.

The complainant never gave their name –

All 13 of you, you should be ashamed of yourselves. I've lived in this town all my life and I've never seen the roads in such a state, Giant potholes everywhere.

Please explain to me why we pay our council taxes??? 400 new homes on already overstrained services with no plans to accommodate all the extra people? A bypass bridge that is permanently closed one side, more barber shops than we ever need, a cycle path on Drybread road with no markings so basically turning it into a car park and to top it off, the roads, massive potholes everywhere. Many cars have been damaged and if not sorted, someone is going to get severely injured.

I'm going to be putting a letter together for the residents of Drybread Road where I live and posting it through every door with all of your email addresses so everyone can contact you with there complaints about the state of the roads and any other issues that need addressing.

You should ALL be ashamed of yourselves 🙄

You work for the people not the other way round and you would all do well to remember that.

In order to be fair on 'we' Councillors, 3 responded directly to the resident, two of who are Councillors for the complainants area.

Cllr Eamonn Dorling.

Hi there!

Thank you so much for your email! I'm the ward councillor for Drybread Road, so I'm glad to connect with you as I assume you live in this area.

Just a quick note: Cambridgeshire Highways is responsible for fixing potholes, not Whittlesey Town Council (WTC). However, I completely understand your concerns about the road surfaces—it's something I've noticed too! In fact, I reported two more issues with photos today.

I hope this doesn't come across as patronising, but you might not know that you can report highway faults online. Here's a handy link to get you started: [Cambridgeshire Highways Reporting. https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults](https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults)

If you type "Cambs potholes" into Google, you'll find the guidance, and it's pretty straightforward! Just remember to zoom in on the location you want to report, since some may already be on their radar. I also recommend taking a photo to upload, and they'll email you back to confirm the report. As for the Ralph Butcher Causeway over the railway, I know it's an ongoing concern, and Jones Bros Civil Engineering, along with Cambridgeshire County Council, is working to resolve it. You can catch regular updates at the WTC monthly meetings or check this Facebook page: [WTC Updates.](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1412642812335868/posts/4126342467632542/>

I really appreciate your effort to bring these matters to the attention of fellow residents! If you have an extra copy of your information, I'd love to receive it. You can drop it off at my place at 1 Davie Lane or email it to me anytime!

Thanks again, and take care!

ED.

Cllr Barry Wainwright..... wrote back to the resident....

Dear resident,

You are quite right to be angry; the state of our roads is appalling. All the councillors agree on this and deplore the current situation — don't forget, we have to travel these roads ourselves, and also pay our taxes.

However, your anger is misplaced. Responsibility for our roads lies with Cambridgeshire County Council, not Whittlesey Town Council. That is where your anger should be directed. Complaints from Town councillors have little more effect than complaints from the general public. The behemoth of the County Administration grinds on regardless, applying priorities that all too often favour the urban centres to the south of the county, rather than the rural areas.

But, please, do not take that correction to mean we are not interested. I personally have exchanged 55 emails with County Highways since Christmas alone, raising concerns, pressing for answers, and urging action. Many other councillors are likewise engaged.

Rest assured, we are doing what we can about the current situation and endeavouring to gain improvements wherever they are possible. Please do circulate your letter and publish my email address (all our email addresses are readily available on the council website and on all the WTC notice boards)— I am always happy to hear of residents' issues and concerns, but don't fall into the error of thinking that it will achieve rapid change. That, unfortunately, is out of our hands and unlikely to happen any time soon.

Finally, if you are willing, please do send me your real name and contact details, and I will gladly meet with. You and listen to your concerns.

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Best regards,

Councillor Barry Wainwright

Cllr Chris Boden wrote back...

Good evening.

You have every right to be angry. That anger is shared, I venture to say, by all of your Town Councillors.

The pothole situation is unacceptable. Whilst this time of year is always the worst for potholes, this year the situation has been made far worse by a failure of County Highways to address the issue together with systemic diversion of funds for highways maintenance during the last few years from the north of the county to the south. We point out the issues but we have no power over County Highways. County Highways have been invited to both of the last two meetings of Whittlesey Town Council to hear our collective concerns, but both times they cried off at short notice because they were 'too busy'.

The same applies to the Ralph Butcher bridge. Had that bridge been on the outskirts of Cambridge rather than the outskirts of Whittlesey those with political control over County Highways would have given massively more attention to the problem and it would have been fixed long ago.

And all of this while County Council continues year on year to raise our Council Tax to the maximum allowed, despite their manifest failings. By contrast Fenland's Council Tax is lower now than seven years ago, and Whittlesey Town Council has reduced its precept on all properties in Whittlesey for eight successive years.

So yes, we are all angry. But the long term solution will come because Local Government Reorganisation will abolish Cambridgeshire County Council and the south of the county will no longer be able to milk us dry. In the short term we are all seeking to pile on the pressure to get even a minimum amount of attention from County Highways in starting to deal with our increasingly dangerous pothole crisis.

If you'd like to discuss any of this I'm perfectly happy, as your Town, District and County Councillor, to speak with you - my phone number is 07860 783969 and my email address is cboden@fenland.gov.uk . I may not be able to tell you what you want to hear, but I can and will at least tell you the truth on all the issues you raised so that your anger, and that of others in Whittlesey, can be directed towards those responsible.

Kind regards,

Chris Boden.

