

Re; Mundon Wash Road Closure

Dear Kevin Bentley

As you will be aware, Mundon village has again had its main road closed off for an excessive period.

The current project was originally presented to Mundon Parish Council in 2018, at which point the general concern was the incredibly long time-frame of 6 months. We were duly assured this was purely to allow for all contingencies, and would in reality be far shorter. The project has since been extended twice, with the current finish date of 13th December, so at best will have taken 8 months.

Over the course of this time, a multitude of highly experienced/qualified engineers, managers and contractors (even some on-site) have commented that this project could/should have been completed in about 1 month.

In the initial weeks of the Mundon Road closure, all local road traffic also had to deal with the frankly idiotic planning for the concurrent closure of Fambridge Road. This was not helped by the appalling lack of clear signage, which Mundon Parish Council was instrumental in rectifying. Any incident on Fambridge Road now creates complete mayhem for all road users, which in 7 months has become all too regular.

Whilst many Mundon roadside residents have appreciated the massive reduction in through traffic, the local economy has suffered with logistical and financial consequences, with at least two businesses relying so heavily on passing trade they have seen a devastating reduction in turnover.

The Parish Council was also assured that Blind Lane passing places would be upgraded before works started, and maintained thereafter. Neither of these assurances were met, and now winter has set in, the passing places have become unusable by cars due to the depth of mud, and the general condition of the lane and its soft verges is deteriorating fast.

We write this open letter to express our concern that the poor management of this project does not appear to be in isolation, with many Highways projects now experiencing these extended timeframes and huge associated costs that seem so readily accepted by public funded organisations such as yourselves.

We hereby ask for confirmation on the following points;

- Are there time/price penalties on this and other projects? If not, why not?
- What was the original cost, and now expected cost due to extensions?
- Will the issues in Blind Lane be rectified as a matter of urgency, and then maintained till project completion?

On behalf of Mundon Parish Council