



# MIGGS Newsletter

Mobility Issues Group for Goring and Streatley

Edition 14 – October 2019



contact.miggs@gmail.com • <https://www.facebook.com/MobilityIssuesGroupForGoringAndStreatley/>

**Bellême  
room**

**MIGGS annual general meeting  
Friday 25 October 2019 • 3pm  
Goring village hall**

**Everyone  
welcome**

## Annual general meeting – Fri 25 Oct 3pm

The annual general meeting of Miggs is to be held on Friday 25 October 2019, beginning at 3pm. The venue is Goring village hall (Bellême room). All are welcome. As well as the formal business we shall review the year's activities and have the opportunity to discuss issues that may require attention in the year ahead.

## Readibus extra journeys before Christmas

Miggs and Goring parish council continue to co-support the Readibus shopping bus service for elderly and mobility impaired passengers. Miggs has guaranteed its funding to 31 March 2020. Demand fluctuates but most journeys are fully or near-fully booked.

There will be two extra journeys before Christmas, on Thursdays 21 November and 5 December. These will ensure there is a bus every week for five weeks in the run-up to Christmas, from 14 November to 12 December.

Readibus charity is funded mainly by grants from Reading and other big local councils but the marginal costs of the Goring service are met jointly by Miggs (from voluntary donations) and Goring parish council, who each pay about £800 a year.

**If you would like to consider making a donation** to help keep Readibus serving Goring please contact Dr Rhys Hamilton on 01491 680621 or John Bolter on 01491 873481.

To register as a passenger phone Readibus, on **0118 931 0000**. As the specially adapted bus has

*[next column→*

## Wallingford Road pavement immediately after it was widened by Network Rail in February 2019



limited capacity advance booking is essential. There is a modest charge for the service but it is free to holders of the national bus pass. Mobility aids can be carried.

## Wallingford Road and Gatehampton Road pavement resurfacing planned

In response to representations by Miggs, Oxfordshire highways has said the pavement between Goring High Street and the railway station will be resurfaced before the end of March.

The aim is to bring it up to full highway standard by reinforcing the edge beneath the railway fence, filling potholes in the path opposite Tesco and removing metal edging and fence post stubs that are beginning to protrude from the ground, causing potential trip hazards for pedestrians. The stubs are the remnants of the old fence and rusty rail barrier that obstructed the path and were removed in March to make the pavement wider for wheelchair users (*see below*).

The bulk of the costs will be borne by OCC but Miggs and Goring parish council have also agreed to contribute from budgets earmarked for the purpose. The Miggs contribution will come from voluntary donations made by *Goring Gap News*, the Gatehampton Trust and the Swan at Streatley.

This work will be carried out as part of a larger project, including road surface patching, drain clearance and removal of excess vegetation outside Station House. This vegetation was partly removed in February but has re-grown vigorously during the hot summer.

## Wallingford Road pavement widening

Back in February Network Rail removed the rusty rail crash barrier and replaced and realigned its boundary fence in Wallingford Road. The effect (*see left*) was to widen the pavement to a minimum of 1100mm and up to 1500mm in places. A wheelchair, pushchair and most mobility scooters can now pass safely between High Street and the station without riding on the carriageway.

Miggs had lobbied for this since July 2013, with support from the parish council and local community. The pavement surface has also been made up with concrete and tarmac where soil was exposed by the works, but not yet to full highway standard (*see above*).

## Railway bridge crash barrier alteration

Earlier, in January, OCC highways and Network Rail finally corrected a design error in the integral crash barrier of the railway bridge. The benefits were removal of a face level hazard to wheelchair users and children in buggies and a 300mm (1ft) increase in pavement width at Goring's busiest road junction. Miggs had lobbied for this for more than two years. *[pto*

## Automatic doors needed at station booking office

Miggs has applied a second time for a grant from Great Western Railway (GWR) to finance the fitting of power assisted doors at the entrances to the station booking office, which is also the main waiting room and route to the ladies' toilet. The outcome of the application is expected to be known in spring 2020. If successful the work would be done before 31 March 2021. A similar application for the current year was not successful.

## Norman Radley footbridge and lifts dedication

Among Norman Radley's many contributions to Goring and Streatley were his membership for several years of the Miggs committee and chairmanship of both Goring parish council and *Goring Gap News*. Sadly, Norman died on 13 September, two days after his 99th birthday.

As a joint initiative with GGN and the parish council, Miggs had arranged for GWR and Network Rail to erect a plaque on Goring & Streatley station celebrating Norman's 50 years of service to the local community, especially the suggestion he made in 2011 to ask for lifts to be installed when the station footbridge was replaced as part of the electrification programme.

The lifts were opened in 2016 and the plaque was unveiled on 6 August this year by council chairman, Kevin Bulmer, in front of an audience of 50 guests, including Norman's son, Geoff, representing his family. Further details are on the Miggs *Facebook* page.

## Pharmacy access problems persist

Last December Miggs approached the pharmacy, both formally and informally, with a request to keep the side entrance / exit clear of parked vehicles to ensure that wheelchair users have access when needed.

Wheelchair access signs have also been suggested. The request was "passed to head office" but, in spite of follow-up enquiries, there is no sign of decisive action. Whether access is maintained now seems to depend entirely on the thoughtfulness of the staff on duty.

## Accessible Travel by train – improvements due

GWR is due to announce a significant improvement in train travel for elderly and disabled people.

The company will appoint a team of staff, based in Reading, whose role will be to ensure that elderly and disabled passengers who book Accessible Travel (formerly Assisted Travel) are helped as much as necessary to board and alight from trains, including at stations where a change of train is necessary. In some cases this means a passenger will be escorted by GWR staff for all or part of his or her journey on the train. More details are in the September *GGN* and on *Facebook*.

The improvements fully reflect the response made by Miggs to a government consultation carried out in stages over the past year.

**GWR Accessible Travel line:** 0800 197 1329 (06:00 to 23:00) or go to: <https://www.gwr.com/plan-journey/journey-information/assisted-travel> or use Type Talk, on 18001 0800 197 1329.

## Accessible by Train leaflet update planned

Miggs was invited to provide input to the government's review of Accessible Travel because of experience

[next column→

**Right: Thames Path accessibility review north of The Swan, with rough terrain mobility scooter**

gained in producing the *Accessible by Train* leaflet, published in 2018 using a grant from GWR. The new, more helpful Accessible Travel policy mentioned above will be reflected in a new edition of the leaflet if an application for a further GWR grant is successful. We expect to hear in the spring.

## Surgery accessibility

As a result of Miggs lobbying, hand rails are being fitted in the Goring surgery corridors. This work is almost complete. Automatic internal entry doors to the waiting rooms are also planned.

## Other highway actions in 2018-19

**Goring High Street** – Miggs has provided input to the parish council's plan to improve pedestrian safety in High Street, especially between Cleeve Road and Manor Road. The slow progress with the project has led to deep frustration among some councillors.

**Station Road surface** – with help from the council Miggs has also urged OCC to level and resurface Station Road and mark one side as a dedicated pedestrian route, thereby providing some protection from speeding traffic, especially for mobility impaired pedestrians. A response is awaited.

**Lock Approach** – at the AGM last October it was recalled that Miggs had asked to have Lock Approach resurfaced for the benefit of wheelchair users and the many visitors who make a bee-line for the river. Between October 2018 and January 2019 our wish was mysteriously granted, and without our further intervention! Thanks to OCC highways and Goring parish council (and possibly George Michael fans).

**Tesco bollards, ramp and safety barrier** – at the request of Miggs, OCC highways has twice required Tesco to make alterations to the bollards, ramp and safety barrier on the shop forecourt to make it easier and safer for mobility scooters and wheelchairs to negotiate the crossing of Gatehampton Road.

**Bollards in Goring High Street** – Miggs has encouraged and supported the parish council's decision to increase the number of bollards near the High Street shops, with a view to keeping the pavements free of trucks and other parked vehicles and thereby enhancing wheelchair access and pedestrian safety.

**Thames Path at Streatley meadows** – in May Miggs was invited to take part in a review of footpaths around Streatley meadows, north of The Swan. The main path is part of the Thames Path national trail and is now passable in good weather for rough terrain mobility scooters and robust wheelchairs. It is alleged that, in what may be seen as a conflict of worthy objectives, further accessibility improvements are being frustrated by wildlife enthusiasts.

