

Tut Hill update

Tut Hill formally closed to through traffic on 6 April after the signage and barrier works were completed earlier that week.

To many it was a frustratingly slow process. Equally, it's clear from social media that many in the surrounding areas are not happy with the new arrangements.

As a resident of Tut Hill it has had a dramatic and positive effect: the road no longer divides the community, people can safely cycle and walk up and down Tut Hill and, in the absence of traffic, it is much more social and pleasant. It's nice to hear the birds and it feels like a weight has been lifted from the shoulders of the residents. I appreciate that these comments may only appear to benefit Tut Hill but these are things that everyone in the village can enjoy so I do encourage people to take the opportunity to walk and cycle up and down the road.

The Parish Council is concerned to ensure that the road closure affects the Fish Farm Industrial Estate occupants as little as possible so we are looking at signage and advertising to be sure that everyone gets the message they are open for business as usual and people coming from the A14 roundabout won't be put off or confused by Tut Hill being blocked at the top.

There are still people that are driving through and up ignoring the signs but hopefully that will diminish as people get used to it. The general view is that the signs at the bottom aren't as prominent or as clear as they could be.

The hope is that the road closure will divert traffic away from Fornham All Saints for the benefit of the whole village. We don't have any measurements but my view so far is that the A1101 between the two roundabouts and Marham Parkway and Marham Parkway is busier but it's hard to see if total traffic volume has declined yet. Google Maps has now recorded the road as closed and it does seem to keep drivers on the A14 to the Tesco roundabout. It would be good to hear from anyone that has a view on traffic levels generally.

When we had the consultation in 2021 there was a clear sense that people in the village want further traffic calming to try and reduce traffic volume and speeds through the village. Some people were prepared to support the closure of Tut Hill but were also keen to have crossings on the B1106 around Pigeon Lane and over the A1101 to the Community Centre. The Parish Council are working on the B1106 pedestrian crossing and have allocated funds to support the project. However, it's fair to say that the process is highly bureaucratic and, bluntly, it seems that the highways authority are not very enthusiastic. Anyway, we will not be put off and will persist with our attempts to get a crossing in the village to allow safe crossing of the road and to regulate, and hopefully discourage, traffic.

We have also submitted an Active Travel Plan to West Suffolk Council with several suggestions (including the pedestrian crossing) to encourage and facilitate walking and cycling. That was well received but, as ever, funding is the issue and there is no concrete progress to report.

Hugo Greer-Walker