

Speaking note

CORSTON'S ROAD SAFETY PETITION

Hello.

I'm Anthony Acton, and I'm Vice-Chairman of Corston's Parochial Church Council. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present this Petition which has 170 signatures from people who use Corston church. This is in support of our Parish Council and the wider community of Corston residents. The Petition is headed "Road Safety Petition" and reads

We being residents of Corston and/or members of All Saints Church Corston, hereby petition Bath & North-East Somerset Council to provide us with a safe means of crossing the A39 highway to and from our village church.

Councillors will know that the A39 passes through Corston, but not all of you will have tried to cross it from Corston church. To help you understand our heartfelt deep concern. Drawing from past tragedies, let me set a not too unrealistic scenario. Please would you imagine it's 4.30pm and you are the driver of a fast moving coach full of tourists who are spending a week exploring the West Country and the next place on the itinerary is the World Heritage City of Bath, where they will stay overnight in a smart hotel.

Your route takes you on the A39 towards Bath. A couple of miles before you get to the Globe roundabout, the road has a fast stretch ending with a long downhill section; the speed builds to more than 50mph, then suddenly a small speed limit sign and village name, both partially hidden in an overgrown hedgerow, flashes by and you find yourself in Corston. A sharp right-hand bend is directly in front of you and you are still doing over 40mph, unavoidably your coach moves to the crown of the road and then passes across the central white line as you take the corner.

Meanwhile the children from Corston's Buzz Club have just finished their after school activity in the church. The church is on the south side of the A39, while almost the whole of Corston is on the north side, so the children have to cross the road to get home. We do have a controlled crossing by the village hall, but people leaving the church can't get to it because there is no pavement on that side of the road.

When crossing from the church to Corston Lane there is no option but to cross the A39 on the sharp bend in the road, which means if you are standing on the pavement by the church gate and look left, you can't see what's coming towards you down the hill. The only way for anyone to cross is to wait for a gap in the fast moving traffic coming from the right, then go to the central white line where you can see left up the hill, and wait there for a gap in the traffic coming at you that way.

Our nightmare is that the children get to the central white line just as the tourist's coach hurtles across it.

Believe me, this is not an unrealistic scenario. For children, read anyone using our church, which is quite a busy place – it's also regularly used for music group practice, soup lunches, and meetings, as well as the usual church services and other activities, including walkers using the public right of way footpaths on this side of the village.

All have to cross the A39, hence this petition to have B&NES council install a Pedestrian Refuge and Speed Activated Warning signs on the A39 east and west approaches to our village.

Corston Parish Council has advised me that the necessary road crossing works have been on your Council's task list, awaiting sufficient prioritisation, for over 4 years. Please could you now give this work the necessary priority to have it undertaken with immediate effect?

Thank you very much for listening, and for receiving this petition.