



Report to the Annual Parish Meeting – 2nd April 2025.

Friends of Boddington is an independent group established in 2017 to represent Boddington Parish in its dealings with HS2 Ltd and their contractors regarding the construction of HS2. Friends of Boddington hold regular meetings, and the Parish Council receives a monthly report. I attend Parish Council meetings to clarify issues further and address any questions.

Since the last APM, the main concerns raised by Friends of Boddington with EKFB, WNC, and the Rt. Hon. Stuart Andrew MP, Member of Parliament for Daventry Constituency, are:

- the deterioration of the local road network,
- connectivity issues,
- construction delays,
- diversion routes.

Alongside members of FoB, I have attended four meetings with Stuart Andrew, which included a guided tour of our road network and a discussion regarding the detrimental effects of HS2 construction on the Boddington community. As a result, he organised two separate meetings with EKFB and HS2 at the Chipping Warden compound, focusing on the Boddington section of the railway construction. I am grateful for his involvement and look forward to his continued support.

WNC Councillor Alison Eastwood, our local representative for the Silverstone Ward, has consistently attended the Friends of Boddington meetings. Alison is

fully committed to Friends of Boddington and has worked diligently this year to reduce the impact of HS2 on Boddington Parish.

I have participated in all HS2 Northants Liaison Group MS Teams meetings. Supported by Cllr Alison Eastwood, we have worked tirelessly to secure the best outcome for Boddington. Together, we have raised Boddington's profile, highlighted our concerns in discussions, and given the community a voice that is now being heard.

Haidee Williams has assumed the position of EKFB Engagement Manager for our sector, succeeding Simon Davis. With Chris James, the EKFB Senior Engagement Manager, Haidee has participated in FoB meetings and provided updates on the changing construction programme.

The construction of the Wormleighton Road Overbridge and the new road network remains unfinished. EKFB has confirmed that the new design for the parapets, remedial work on the bridge's steelwork, and modifications to the vehicle restraint system at the bridge approaches are the main factors contributing to the significant delay in the construction process.

The opening of the Banbury Road overbridge and the associated tie-ins at Warwick Road and Wormleighton Road still depend on the EKFB programme.

When the new road network opens, Stoneton Lane will be closed for approximately two years to facilitate the construction of the Stoneton Lane green overbridge. The long-distance diversion route is pending approval but will bypass Welsh Road. Traditionally, drivers tend to favour shorter, faster routes, which could make Welsh Road a more appealing option. As a result, the condition of Welsh Road could deteriorate, similar to what happened with Spella Link.

The Claydon Road, closed from November 2022, continues to disrupt the local community. The bridge structure, designed to carry Claydon Road from Lower Boddington (Carpenters Arms junction) over HS2, is nearly complete. As per the following HS2 link, the new Claydon Road overbridge is due to open in the third quarter of this year (31/07/2025):

<https://www.hs2.org.uk/work-items/notice-of-road-closure-claydon-road-near-lower-boddington/>

At the HS2 Liaison Group Meeting on January 31, 2025, I informed Councillor Phil Larratt, WNC Chair and Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, that the stretch of highway from Appletree to Claydon is in dangerous deterioration. I have also raised this concern with MP Stuart Andrew and Gary Pettit, the HS2 Marshall for WNC.

FoB has consistently received support from Gary Pettit and deserves special recognition for his commitment to resolving the highway issues on our behalf.

Recently, Gary Pettit and I conducted a site tour of the road network, during which Gary confirmed that certain sections of the highway are beyond repair and unfit for purpose. I cannot emphasise enough the importance of everyone using the “FixMyStreet” facility to report faults and damage to the local area highways.

- <https://fix.westnorthants.gov.uk/> for WNC
- and <https://fixv.uk/> for OCC (Claydon Road issues)

Road closures and diversions have greatly affected our road network. Securing repairs for Banbury Road, Claydon Road, Boddington Road, and Spella Link has been a primary objective for the Friends of Boddington this year and continues to be an ongoing challenge. Currently, maintenance to our road network is being carried out using temporary solutions that only make the roads serviceable.

Following persistent advocacy, the entire length of Spella Link Road will be resurfaced with tarmac, and the verges will be reinstated and finished with topsoil. WNC is currently assessing the construction of additional passing bays.

Prices for the prospective WNC passing bays are pending service diversion estimates before committing to funding; therefore, the delivery of the complete WNC element remains unconfirmed. The EKFB elements will be delivered regardless of the WNC elements following the opening of Banbury Road.

Since Boddington has no Undertakings and Assurances under the HS2 Act, any advantage gained by Friends of Boddington, past and future, represents a significant benefit. The agreement to repair Spella Link has set a precedent. Pressure must be applied to HS2 Ltd to allocate funds for repairing all the Boddington roads damaged by HS2 construction.

Our blighted community has continued to endure another year of the gloom and doom of HS2 construction; however, the positive news is that Friends of Boddington will remain steadfast in responding to any evolving circumstances and will consistently advocate for the best interests of all, thus ensuring a better outcome for Boddington Parish.

Philip Freer - Chair - Friends of Boddington