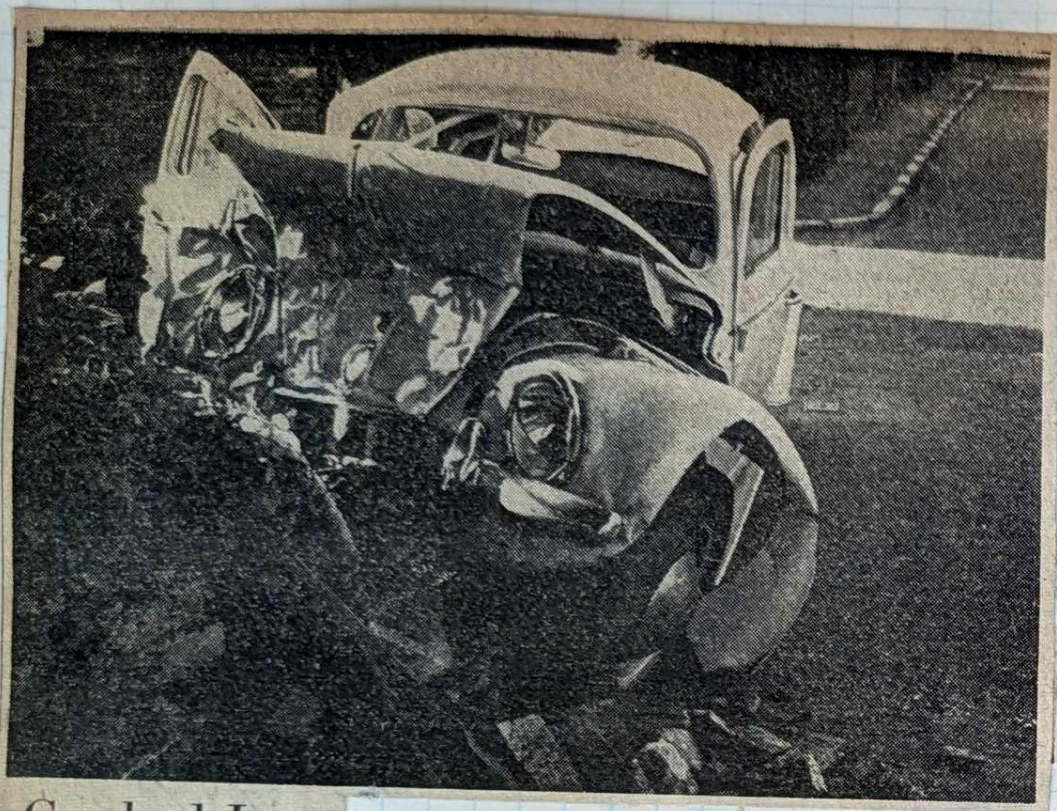


Crashed Into Wall

Motorist In Hospital

Early on Sunday morning a car driven by Edwin B. Crook, of Brenley Lodge, Boughton, crashed—from what cause is unknown—into a wall at the junction of High Street and Conyngham Lane, Bridge. The car was considerably damaged and the driver was taken to the Kent and Canterbury Hospital and detained with a dislocated right hip, cuts, bruises and shock.

Kentish Gazette; August 2, 1963

Through The Churchyard

In regard to the possibility of a right-of-way being established through Bridge Churchyard to the entrance to Bourne Park, to avoid the present danger to pedestrians on Bridge Hill, where there was no pavement, it was reported that the Vicar and P.C.C. were sympathetic and were prepared to consider dedicating a right-of-way provided no expense fell upon them.

Cllr. G. S. Cobbett asked if the work could be carried out before the start of the autumn term in view of the fact that, with reduced school bus facilities, more children would be endangered when coming from the Bourne Park entrance.

The Clerk said that no promise could be made as there were certain procedures to be carried out but, as far as his office was concerned, the matter would be expedited.

Danger Corner

Silence

Since no further information has been forthcoming from the Ministry of Transport concerning the proposed Bridge by-pass, the Clerk has been instructed to press for a reply.

Danger For Passengers

Kent Herald. 7.8.1963

BRIDGE MEANS DANGER

The dangers of the A2 at the village of Bridge may be the subject of a question in the House of Commons, says Mr. J. Purchese, who is campaigning for the construction of the village by-pass to be expedited.

Mr. Purchese said this week that Canterbury's M.P., Sir Leslie Thomas, had promised to put a question to the House—and that he had also promised full support.

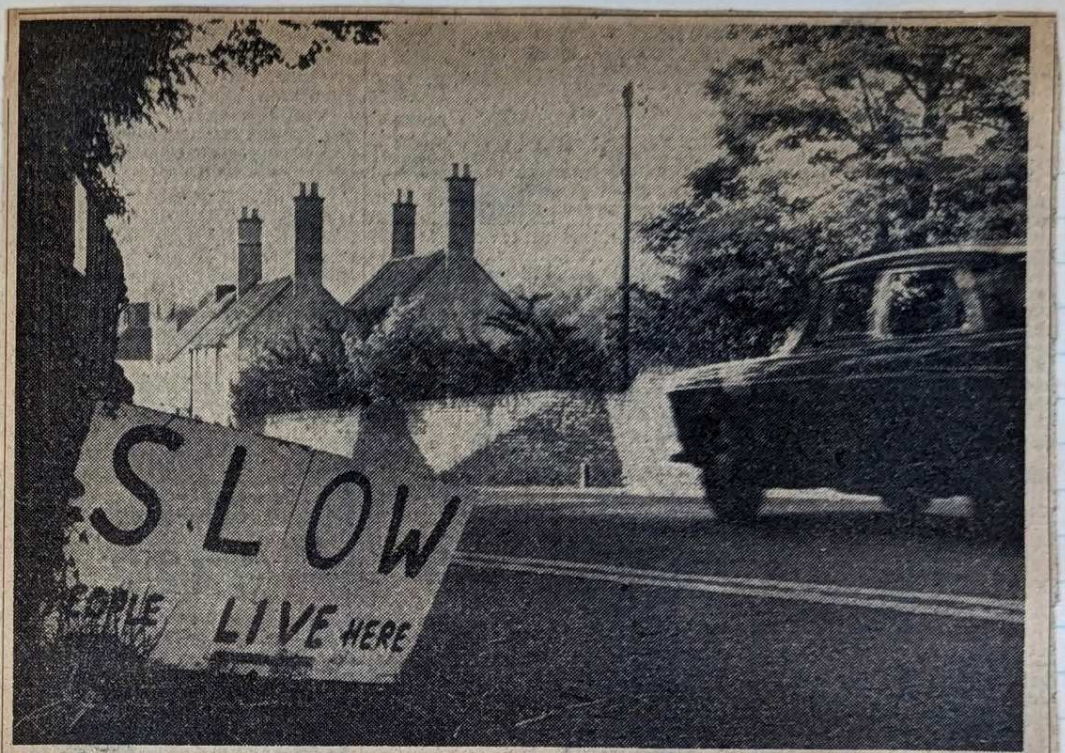
Meanwhile, Mr. Purchese is continuing his campaign for improvements to the A2 and for an alternative route.

He is organising the distribution of pamphlets which say "BRIDGE MEANS DANGER—GO SLOW" to every house in the village, and is giving out car-stickers.

Already he has written to the Transport and General Workers' Union protesting against the amount of heavy goods traffic which goes through the village, and also to the Automobile Association asking for "Danger" signposts to be erected.

The campaign has been in progress for some time, but as yet has achieved no tangible result. "But," says Mr. Purchese, "the campaign is by no means dead."

20.9.'63
Kentish
Gazette.



Motorists travelling through Bridge towards London saw this warning this week. Its appearance was a mystery.

Kentish Gazette, September 27, 1963

Bridge People Want to Live

WHETHER the strictly unofficial "Slow, people live here" notice, displayed in Bridge, had any effect on speeding motorists is doubtful, but there can be no doubt whatever that it is high time something was done to check the behaviour of many drivers who swoop down through the village. There have been protests for many years, publicity of all kinds in the Press and on the air and still, I am assured, many local people go in fear.

One day last week I arrived a few minutes after a near-miss and while a pedestrian who had escaped by inches was still having a few words with an equally angry but quite unrepentant young man in a car, The pedestrian was almost speechless, for he had just been told off in no uncertain terms for "cluttering up" the road.

When I came away he was threatening to follow the example of French villagers, whose methods of slowing down road-hogs is to dig a few channels across the approaches to their villages. Of course, he will do nothing of the kind. In this country, we are much too law-abiding to do anything illegal—except, apparently, the far too many motorists who drive through Bridge.

Kentish Gazette, October 4, 1963

"BRIDGE—PEOPLE LIVE HERE"

To the Editor,

Bridge village is expanding—more houses; more children; more old people; more cars; more accidents? If all near-misses and minor accidents, as well as the more serious ones, became news, the total would indeed be really alarming, and greater pressure applied for positive action.

DOUGLAS A. LEWIS.
1 Weston Villas,
Bridge.

Kentish Gazette, October 11, 1963

BRIDGE SPLIT OVER FILLING STATION

Petitions Clash At Inquiry

THE villagers of Bridge are split in their feelings over a new petrol filling station in the High Street. Some 82 have signed a petition in favour of the filling station. But a further 75 have signed a petition against it, warning of the traffic hazards in the village.

The two petitions came into conflict on Wednesday at the Bridge-Blean Rural District Council offices, Canterbury.

Village Properties Ltd. (managing director, Mr. Frederick Nason) were appealing against the Kent County Council's refusal of planning permission for a filling station.

Mr. C. E. Schoefield, Q.C., for the appellants, spoke of the petition for the filling station. A moment later, Mr. P. H. Jobeling, for the K.C.C., countered with his 75-signature petition.

Mr. Schoefield said that it was important to note that 94 houses were being built nearby by the appellants, and there was quite a lot of other development projected for the village, including a 10-acre Council estate.

There were also other houses in that area, and traffic from these used two very narrow roads to get on to the A.2.

It was thought it almost certain that in the future, traffic would be using the broad Bridge Farm Estate road.

"One of the reasons for saying this is an excellent idea is that local traffic will be able to fill up before coming on to the main road," he said.

Condemned

The site involved the demolition of some 150-200-year-old picturesque cottages. But these had been condemned as unfit for habitation and would have to be demolished in any case.

A petition signed by 82 people had been addressed to the Minister of Transport expressing the need for further filling facilities in Bridge.

Mr. Schoefield said that it was also proposed to build shops on the other side of the estate access road.

"People can live here, shop here and fill up with petrol here—and only once, at the conclusion of all this—need they debauch on to the main road. This is highly desirable from a traffic point of view."

Chairman of Bridge Parish Council, Mr. Herbert T. Price, of Linton Cottage, Bridge, said the plans had come before his Council and it had decided unanimously that this filling station was a desirable asset.

"It is a thing the village needs badly," he said.

"The village street is very narrow and motorists cannot pull off it when filling at Mr. Rogers' garage.

Not Open

"It is very awkward for people to fill up there—and he is not open on Saturday afternoons and Sundays.

"People run out of petrol in the village—and they do quite often—and it has to be brought from Canterbury."

At weekends, he said, people who lived in Bishopsbourne, Bekesbourne and Patrixbourne had to go six to eight miles for petrol.

He estimated that by the time the proposed housing development was finished, the population of Bridge would be doubled.

The Council proposed to develop 10 acres of land. Traffic from this site would use the applicant's road, rather than Mill Lane, which was very narrow.

Ex-Police Sergeant at Bridge, Mr. George H. Pratt, of Gate Lodge Cottage, Wickhambreaux, said that there was a demand for a good filling station in the village, especially at weekends and in the evenings.

He was often asked where drivers could get petrol and he had known of many people who had run out of petrol in the village, particularly during the summer.

He estimated that there were now three times more cars in Bridge than when he first went there seven years ago—and there would be more.

Architect Mr. Robert W. Paine said that he was called in to consider the site after the original application had been rejected.

Mr. Paine, an adviser to the Civic Trust, said the cottages which would be demolished were picturesque—but had outlived their usefulness.

"It is not a necessary corollary of having a filling station that it should be an eyesore," he said.

Mr. Nason, of Cotterell Court, Petham, said that four of the five cottages on the site had been condemned and the whole block would have to come down.

It was decided to build a filling station because so many people had been to him to say it was a wonderful site for one and it was urgently required.

"We would be quite happy to have any restrictions on signs that the authorities see fit in the interests of the village's scenic appearance," he said.

"I would rather lose this appeal than put up a filling station unworthy of the village."

Good Design

Mr. J. G. Baker, Divisional Planning Officer of the K.C.C., said he felt Mr. Paine had made the best of a bad job. As a petrol filling station, he had made a good design.

But the objection of the K.C.C., and his own personal opinion, was that this point of the village was not the right place for a petrol filling station—whoever the designer might be.

The best use of the site, he thought, would be for housing, although he was not against some shops on the site.

The Minister of Transport had directed that planning permission should be refused because it would increase traffic hazards. The Kent County Council was refusing permission because it thought a further petrol filling station would be harmful to Bridge's appearance and that there was no overriding need for one.

Bridge was set in an area designated as one of great landscape value and which the National Parks Commission would be shortly designating as an area of outstanding natural beauty.

It was an attractive village, with many High Street buildings included in the Minister of Housing and Local Government's provisional list of buildings of special architectural or historical interest.

"In my opinion, the intrusion of a new petrol filling station into the heart of this pleasant village street scene cannot fail to cause serious harm to its appearance," he said. "A petrol filling station would have a very different effect on the village street picture from shops and houses and . . . is not visually acceptable."

Planning permission had been given to the owner of the other filling station in the village to demolish Farrington House so that a forecourt could be provided. This would improve the facilities without making such an impression on the village street picture, as would the creation of an entirely new station.

Bridge was less than three miles from the centre of Canterbury, where there were numerous garages and filling stations. There were other facilities at Barham, and he could see no real need for an additional station at Bridge.

He pointed out that the Minister had previously dismissed two appeals for planning permission for filling stations—one a half-mile on the Canterbury side of the appeal site and another near the Red Lion public house. Both were dismissed because of the traffic objections.

He urged that the appeal should be dismissed.

Mr. Geoffrey D. Hewett, of the K.C.C.'s Divisional Road Engineer's Department, said that any accesses on to roads were potential dangers, because emerging vehicles and those turning in must interrupt the free flow of through traffic.

In the present case, there were two narrow accesses close to one another joining a traffic route of sub-standard width. This would aggravate the already unsatisfactory traffic conditions in the village.

In the 1961 traffic census, it was found that over 6,300 vehicles passed through the village each day—in the peak periods this rose to 6,700. This indicated a need for a three-line carriageway, whereas the present road was only 18 feet wide and grossly overloaded. It was probably worse now.

The only independent objector was Mr. A. W. Rogers, proprietor of the one petrol filling station in the village.

"I don't think there is any need for another filling station," he said. "It is very, very rare that people run out—and then it is their own silly fault," he said.

After the hearing, the Minister of Housing and Local Government's Inspector went to visit the site—and his decision will be made known later.

BRIDGE BY-PASS FOR OUR SAKE & YOURS!

FOR ACTION, WRITE:

The Sec., Ministry of Transport,

Southwark St., London, S.E.1

SAFETY FOR BRIDGE !

PUBLISHED BY JOHN PURCHESE. ROSEBANK HIGH ST. BRIDGE



Issued : 12.10.'63 on march.





Here's how the youngsters of Bridge slowed down traffic in t he village on Sunday—and put forward their plea for a by-pass.

Kentish Gazette 18.10.'63 → cont

EVENING STANDARD, MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1963—21

Young ones fight for village safety

The young people of Bridge have taken the lead to get a by-pass for the village. They are organising a campaign to bring the dangers of speeding traffic to the notice of the Minister of Transport

Bridge lies on the busy A.2 London to Dover road, just south of Canterbury. The half-timbered houses nestle between two steep hills.

Cars coming from and on their way to the Continental ferries at Dover pass through the village's narrow main street —and there have been many accidents.

Says 20-year-old Brian Lewis, organiser of the campaign: "We felt it was time we had a say in the matter. Many of us have had near accidents and we thought it was time our protest was heard.

"More and more traffic is passing through the village now that the fast M.2 motorway is open. Our narrow main street was just not made to carry this sort of traffic."

The young people, most of them teenage members of the local youth club, have already held a protest march and successfully slowed down traffic while they paraded up and down the High Street with banners.

They have also organised a petition which was signed by 90 per cent of the village's 750 population.

"We plan to have more marches and protests," says Mr. Lewis.

Teenagers march for safer road

Fifty teenagers marched through the village of Bridge, on the Canterbury to Dover road yesterday protesting against the speed of traffic.

Their organiser, 20-year-old Brian Lewis, said: "We want a by-pass. But the Ministry of Transport won't take any notice until the corpses are laid out in front of it."

Daily Express. 14.10.'63



Organiser, 20-year-old Brian Lewis, hands round "Go Slow" leaflets to the marchers.

TEENAGERS IN PROTEST MARCH

Bridge Traffic Problem

Over 35 teenagers went on a protest march through the busy village of Bridge on Sunday afternoon. They carried banners protesting against the speed of traffic through the village. And they handed out "go slow" leaflets to the motorists who were forced to crawl behind the procession.

Proclaimed the banners, "Bridge by-pass for our safety and yours," "Help save lives by supporting by-pass campaign" and "Slow through Bridge."

The youngsters were mainly members of Bridge Youth Club, aged between 13 and 19 — and their progress through the main street was watched by Mr. John Purchese, who has been leading his own campaign for a by-pass for some time.

Said Mr. Purchese, "This is nothing to do with me. The youngsters decided to do it themselves—and I am delighted.

"Since the M.2 opened, the situation has worsened. There is much more traffic using this road."

The Organiser

The protest march was organised by 20-year-old Brian Lewis, of 1 Weston Villas, Bridge. His father is a Bridge-Blean Rural District councillor.

"I thought it was about time the young people of Bridge had a say in the matter," he told the "Kentish Gazette."

"We want to know what is happening to make the village safer. The Police have done their best and are still doing everything that they can to prevent traffic speeding through the village. The sight of a policeman standing beside the road is often enough to slow down drivers.

"But the Police cannot be on duty 24 hours a day."

Mr. Lewis said that there had been many accidents and near accidents that had not been reported. Minor accidents were not recorded by the authorities. He had been nearly killed himself.

"I have been interested in this problem for about two years," he said. "I have written several letters to the Ministry of Transport and to newspapers.

"When you have a down and an up gradient like we do here in Bridge, you are bound to get speeding vehicles."

Not Wide Enough

Mr. Lewis said that the A.2 was carrying considerably more traffic now that much of the A.20 traffic was being diverted by the opening of the M.2.

"The road just isn't wide enough to take the heavy lorries and cars with which we are confronted."

Mr. Lewis said that others involved in getting the protest march organised included Stuart Dove (17), of Meadow Croft, Conyngham Lane, John Harris (18), of Regency Cottage, and his own brother, Nigel Lewis (17).

"We want a by-pass," he said. "But it seems that the Ministry of Transport won't act until the corpses are laid out in front of them."

Kentish Gazette 18.10.63

Young villagers stage danger protest march

Bridge wants a by-pass

FIFTY young people, carrying banners, marched through their home village of Bridge on Sunday, protesting against the dangers to villagers from motorists who pass through on the A2 to Dover.

Residents of the rapidly-growing village, three miles east of Canterbury, are getting more worried about traffic speeding through the narrow, winding main street.

They feel, as accidents mount, that the situation is likely to become chronic.

The remedy? A by-pass.

This will allow the village to revert to the quiet hamlet the heavy beams and narrow lanes characterise.

A petition organised by the young people in Bridge a short time ago was signed by almost every householder in the area.

It called on the Ministry of Transport to provide a by-pass or make some other arrangement for the safety of the village.

"But we haven't heard any more about it," says 20-year-old Brian Lewis, who was responsible for Sunday's march.

He lives at Weston-villas, which is on a bend the centre of the village.

"The M2 motorway has been brought down as far as Faversham, so all the traffic that used to go down the A20 to Folkestone now uses the motorway because two-thirds of the distance is a dual carriageway.

"That means the volume of traffic through Bridge has increased tremendously.

"And the road through the village is just not wide enough to cope, particularly with heavy lorries.

"The danger must have increased because the police are always setting up radar traps here.

"Continental traffic is increasing all the time, and if the Channel tunnel is built, more industry will come down."

Mr. Lewis could think of several accidents which he considers could have been avoided—lorries crashing and cars hitting the walls flanking the main street.

"One of the people on the march—John Baker—was recently hit by a car when he was walking along the pavement.

"If nothing is done soon we are obviously going to have a serious big accident."

Kentish Express 18.10.63

TEENAGERS' TRAFFIC PROTEST



AT the week-end, teenagers at Bridge paraded the High Street with banners calling attention to the need for a by-pass to relieve traffic conditions in the village.

Attempts to remedy the traffic dangers on the A2 had already been carried a stage further by a meeting between representatives of the police, highways and education authorities on the site.

The meeting, it was reported to the monthly meeting of the local joint education committee, was unable to recommend a school crossing patrol at the junction of Bourne Park Road, but suggested a patrol at what was considered a more central point, just north of the Plough and Harrow public house.

The meeting resolved that the authorities concerned be requested to re-examine the position in the light of further information. Members expressed their intention of observing local conditions for themselves.

The matter had been made all the more pressing by the decision to cease conveying some Bishopsbourne children living within the statutory walking distance of Bridge Church of England primary school.

Kent Messenger. 18.10.63.

Kentish Gazette, November 8, 1963 9

NO PETROL FILLING STATION FOR BRIDGE

Minister's Decision

Bridge will not be having a petrol filling station in its main street after all. The Minister of Housing and Local Government has upheld the Kent County Council's refusal of planning permission.

A public inquiry was held on October 8, when Village Properties Ltd. appealed against the K.C.C.'s refusal of planning permission to build a petrol filling station at the entrance of the new estate.

The Inspector (Mr. S. H. A. Rollison), in his report to the Minister, concluded that the suggested layout and design of the filling station were good. They would not materially harm the appearance of Bridge High Street.

He accepted evidence given by the appellants that the proposed station could operate without there being too many signs and clutter and that control would be exercised over this.

However, the report goes on, the trunk road through Bridge was far too narrow to cope adequately with present traffic—much of which was of a commercial nature—and which was likely to increase.

The Inspector accepted that there was a growing local need for a modern petrol filling station but he considered that this site was not the proper place for it. The need did not justify overriding the objection to the development on traffic grounds.

The Minister accepted his Inspector's recommendations and consequently dismissed the appeal.

WHAT ABOUT YOU!

A responsible job - see overleaf.

Distributed 8.12.1963

TEENAGERS' TRAFFIC PROTEST



AT the week-end, teenagers at Bridge paraded the High Street with banners calling attention to the need for a by-pass to relieve traffic conditions in the village.

Attempts to remedy the traffic dangers on the A2 had already been carried a stage further by a meeting between representatives of the police, highways and education authorities on the site.

The meeting, it was reported to the monthly meeting of the local joint education committee, was unable to recommend a school crossing patrol at the junction of Bourne Park Road, but suggested a patrol at what was considered a more central point, just north of the Plough and Harrow public house.

The meeting resolved that the authorities concerned be requested to re-examine the position in the light of further information. Members expresse observin for them

The made all by the conveyin bourne c in the distance of Engla

Kent Messenger. 18.10.63.

The Kent Education Comm

opposite. By today Sunday

NOUG

Despite responsibility fo

guard the children

to and from

Kentish Gazette, November 8, 1963 9

NO PETROL FILLING STATION FOR BRIDGE

Minister's Decision

Bridge will not be having a petrol filling station in its main street after all. The Minister of Housing and Local Government has upheld the Kent County Council's refusal of planning permission.

A public inquiry was held on October 8, when Village Properties Ltd. appealed against the K.C.C.'s refusal of planning permission to build a petrol filling station at the entrance of the new estate.

The Inspector (Mr. S. H. A. Rollison), in his report to the

The Minister accepted his Inspector's recommendations and consequently dismissed the appeal.

ittee is advertising the job

Dec. 8th. applications total

HT.

r low pay, could you

during their way

School ?

.....

WANTED

A man or woman to act as School Crossing Patrol, in Bridge High Street by the Plough and Harrow, to see the children safely over the road.

Hours: 8.30 — 9.00 a.m.

3.40 — 4.00 p.m.

Wages: 4/- per hour of service.

Interested persons should contact

The Headmistress, Mrs. O. I. Knight,

Bridge & Patrixbourne C. E. Primary School,

Patrixbourne Rd., Bridge.

Distributed 8.12.1963

M2

BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

M.O.T. REF. HGP-14-42-068

DATE. 8. 12. 1963

'Rosebank', High Street,
Bridge, Canterbury, Kent. *Bridge 485*

The Chairman,
The Isle of Thanet Divisional
Labour Party,
42, Hawley Square,
Margate, Kent.

Dear Sir,

The dangers to motorist and pedestrian alike in Bridge High Street are common knowledge. There has been a campaign for some time to reduce the accident potential of this narrow street carrying more than 6,700 vehicles a day, and the Ministry of Transport is aware both of the danger and the campaign.

I am writing to your Party, as I am to the other two main political groups, to ask if your Committee would be so good as to formulate a brief (300 words) statement of your intentions in this matter should your Party be returned to power in the forthcoming General Election. The statements would be printed in folder form much as the enclosed example, but without comment from me other than the explanation on the front that these statements are official policy lines of the parties quoted. I anticipate asking for a similar statement from candidates after nomination papers have been entered.

I should add that one prospective Party candidate has already agreed to these publications, so I look forward with interest to receiving your comments. Dead-line for copy is Saturday January 18th., 1964.

Yours sincerely,

John Purchese.

P.S. Mr. G.S. Cobbett knows of this matter, and has made great efforts locally to improve the situation.

Canterbury Division Conservative and Unionist Association

Parliamentary Representative: SIR LESLIE THOMAS, M.B.E., T.D., M.P.

President Alderman Mrs. G. R. Hews, C.B.E.
Chairman L. E. Hart, Esq., J.P.
Hon. Treasurers U. H. B. Alexander, Esq.
E. Parker, Esq., C.B.E., F.C.A.
Asst. Hon. Treasurer P. T. C. Wright, Esq.

Agent and Secretary E. C. F. Brown

9, Hawks Lane,
Canterbury.

Telephone: Canterbury 4187

9th December, 1963.

Dear Mr. Purchase,

Thank you for your letter of the 8th December addressed to my Chairman in which you ask for a statement from my Association of its intentions regarding a by-pass for Bridge in the event of the Conservative party being successful at the next General Election. At the same time you enclose a folder in which you commit us to providing such a statement and I presume that folder has already been distributed. I really think I must protest at this method of conducting your campaign. No local political Association can detail its party's intention on a Bridge By-pass. They are just not in a position to do so. The only person who can give any authoritative answer is the Minister of Transport of the day and he, unless such a by-pass is included in his programme for the next three years, cannot give any definite promise.

I am sending a copy of your letter, together with the folder, on to Sir Leslie Thomas who, no doubt, will reply to you direct. I am also sending a copy of it to the Chairman of my Association.

Yours sincerely,

AGENT & SECRETARY.

J. Purchese, Esq.,
"Rosebank,"
High Street,
BRIDGE,
Nr. Canterbury.

August, 1963.

As promised by my Private Secretary on 8th August I can now reply to your letter of 23rd July in which you asked me to let you have some statistics of road accidents at the Village of Bridge, near Canterbury.

During the five years between 1st July 1958 and 30th June 1963 a total of twenty accidents involving personal injury were reported. These caused five fatalities, nine cases of serious injury and nineteen persons were slightly hurt.

Yours sincerely,

J.K. GALBRAITH

Sir Leslie Thomas, M.B.E., T.D., M.P.

cm



PHOTO BY B. PEARSON, BRIDGE.

Bridge annoyed with K.E.C. "meanness"

VILLAGERS at Bridge, near Canterbury — an accident black spot on the A2 — are annoyed with the Kent Education Committee over a "mean" scheme for a school crossing patrol.

The villages have been campaigning for years for safety measures, and were relieved to hear that the committee was at last to employ a school crossing patrol.

But they are upset at the very low wages offered for a job with such responsibilities.

The committee has put up notices in two shops in the village asking for a man or a woman to act as a school crossing patrol. The wages work out at 3s. 4d. per day.

Scores of children have to cross the road to school as motorists tear through at up to 60 m.p.h.

There is a 30 m.p.h. limit, which many drivers ignore. Seven people, children among them, have been killed in the post-war years.

Parents have campaigned for safety measures and for a by-pass. The police have stepped up prosecutions for speeding.

The adverts say that a patrol is wanted from 8.30 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 3.40 to 4 p.m. "Wages 4s. per hour of service. Applications to the headmistress of the village school."

Mr. James Smith, road safety officer to Bridge-Blean Rural Council, who lives in High Street, Bridge, told a KENT MESSENGER reporter: "I think it's disgusting. It really is a wicked business. The education authorities should be ashamed.

I myself saw two of the seven people killed.

For such a low salary, about 3s. 4d. a day, they will not get anyone physically capable of doing it. It's not a job for a pensioner. The traffic is too quick. No young person is going to take the job on at that salary", said Mr. Smith.

A spokesman for the Kent Education Committee at Canterbury said "Four shillings per hour is the standard rate throughout the county. We pay them half-pay during holidays, and they get 1s. 6d. per week towards laundry expenses.

———

Kent Messenger 20.12.'63

Road Safety is everyone's job:

For action, write:-

The Sec., The Ministry of Transport,

Southwark St., S.E.1

*1964 will be General Election year. For the Electorate's benefit a leaflet will shortly appear, detailing each Party's official proposals for Bridge High Street road safety.

Conservative, Liberal and Labour statements will appear.

PUBLISHED BY JOHN PURCHESE. ROSEBANK HIGH ST. BRIDGE

Sir Leslie Thomas, M.B.E., T.D., M.P.

cm

To wish you a happy Christmas

and a peaceful New Year

John Pusehman

'ROSEBANK', HIGH STREET, BRIDGE, CANTERBURY, KENT.

Bridge annoyed with K.E.C. "meanness"

VILLAGERS at Bridge, near Canterbury — an accident black spot on the A2 — are annoyed with the Kent Education Committee over a "mean" scheme for a school crossing patrol.

The villages have been campaigning for years for safety measures, and were relieved to hear that the committee was at last to employ a school crossing patrol.

But they are upset at the very low wages offered for a job with such responsibilities.

The committee has put up notices in two shops in the village asking for a man or a woman to act as a school crossing patrol. The wages work out at 3s. 4d. per day.

Scores of children have to cross the road to school as motorists tear through at up to 60 m.p.h.

There is a 30 m.p.h. limit, which many drivers ignore. Seven people, children among them, have been killed in the post-war years.

Parents have campaigned for safety measures and for a by-pass. The police have stepped up prosecutions for speeding.

The adverts say that a patrol is wanted from 8.30 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 3.40 to 4 p.m. "Wages 4s. per hour of service. Applications to the headmistress of the village school."

Mr. James Smith, road safety officer to Bridge-Blean Rural Council, who lives in High Street, Bridge, told a KENT MESSENGER reporter: "I think it's disgusting. It really is a wicked business. The education authorities should be ashamed.

I myself saw two of the seven people killed.

For such a low salary, about 3s. 4d. a day, they will not get anyone physically capable of doing it. It's not a job for a pensioner. The traffic is too quick. No young person is going to take the job on at that salary", said Mr. Smith.

A spokesman for the Kent Education Committee at Canterbury said "Four shillings per hour is the standard rate throughout the county. We pay them half-pay during holidays, and they get 1s. 6d. per week towards laundry expenses.

Kent Messenger 20.12.'63

From: Sir Leslie Thomas, MBE, TD, MP.

House of Commons,

London, S.W.1

23rd December 1963

Dear Mr Purchese

Mr. Brown has forwarded to me a letter you have addressed to the Chairman regarding your By-Pass campaign and I have noted the postscript regarding the Parliamentary Question.

In fact I did communicate with the Minister and I did, after some time, get a reply. I was under the impression that this reply had been forwarded to you but unfortunately neither my Secretary nor I can find any trace of an acknowledgement or its despatch. I have therefore obtained a copy from the Ministry which I enclose.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie Thomas

J. Purchese, Esq.,
Rosebank,
High Street,
Bridge,
Canterbury.

for enclosure, see one page back.

M2 BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

M.O.T. REF. HGP-14-42-068

DATE. 28.12.1963

'Rosebank', High Street,
Bridge, Canterbury, Kent. *Bridge 485*

Sir L. M. Thomas, MBE., TD., MP.,
House of Commons,
London, S.W.1

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter dated 23.12.1963, in which your reference to the Parliamentary Question concerning Bridge mentioned that you had been in touch with the Minister. You kindly enclosed a photostat of the reply, in which Mr. G.D. Galbraith listed five fatalities, nine cases of serious injury and nineteen minor personal accidents in the period 1.7.1958 to 30.6.1963 in a total of twenty incidents.

I am much obliged to you for having elicited this information, and I am sure that the secondary purpose of your question did not go unnoticed by the Ministry.

An interesting comment by a near Ministry spokesman that may have escaped you is the following passage from a statement made on October 9th. 1963 at a hearing held by the Bridge-Blean RDC. concerning a new petrol-filling station in Bridge High Street:-

"Mr. Geoffrey D. Hewett, of the K.C.C.'s Divisional Road Engineer's Department, said that...in the 1961 traffic census, it was found that over 6,300 vehicles passed through the village each day - in the peak periods this rose to 6,700. This indicated a need for a three-line carriageway, whereas the present road was only 18 feet wide and grossly overloaded. It was probably worse now." (Kentish Gazette report:11.11.'63).

Mr. G.D. Hewett is a member of the Ministry Group who have assured me over the past two years that Bridge is not dangerous.

Yours sincerely,

John Purchese.

M2

BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

'Rosebank', High Street,
Bridge, Canterbury, Kent. *Bridge 485*

M.O.T. REF. HGP-14-42-068

DATE. 28.12.1963

Agent & Secretary,
Canterbury Division Conservative
and Unionist Association,
9, Hawks Lane,
Canterbury.

Dear Mr. Brown,

Thank you for your letter of the 9th. December. I delayed my reply until I had heard from Sir Leslie Thomas in case any point made in his letter should affect the issue.

I note that you forwarded a copy of my previous letter to the Chairman of your Association. Should you need a further copy of the leaflet enclosed with my letter I should be pleased to let you have it.

I should explain that in that letter I was not asking your Association to detail its intention about a By-Pass for Bridge, but possibly to detail its suggestions for the reduction of the accident potential of this narrow street. This is a local issue, and one I feel well within the competence of a Divisional Association.

Possibly this explanation will assist; coupled with my assurance that I am approaching your Association in the same way as I have, for example, asked the Road Transport Commercial District Officer of the Transport and General Workers Union to publicise to his members the dangers of bringing heavy goods carrying vehicles into the village both for the general good and for his members' safety.

I am sure that you would agree after the appalling road casualty figures over the Christmas Holiday period that anything that can be done, or anyone that can be harnessed to reduce this toll serves a public need.

I am grateful to Sir Leslie Thomas for having pursued his question to the Minister, and I look forward with interest to hearing your further comments. One Party has already supplied copy for my leaflet, a second Party is preparing it; I am sure you consider this local issue worth while.

Yours sincerely,

John Purchese.

M2 **BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN**

M.O.T. REF. HGP-14-42-068

DATE. 28.12.1963

'Rosebank', High Street,
Bridge, Canterbury, Kent. *Bridge 485*

The Secretary,
The Ministry of Transport,
Southwark Street,
London, S.E.1

- for circulation to:-
G. Davis, Esq.,
L. Durrant, Esq.,
F. Samuel, Esq.,
R. Pearson, Esq.,
and G.D. Hewett, Esq of the
Divisional Road Engineer's Dept. ref: RDL/34/6T71.

Gentlemen,

I would like to thank Mr. R.A. Pearson for acknowledging my last letter, and for pointing out that the Minister had received a letter from Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P., to which a reply was shortly anticipated, and that reply would doubtless reach me through the good offices of Sir Leslie. I received the reply yesterday, and would like to thank the Minister through the appropriate chain of command for supplying the valuable statistics regarding road accidents in Bridge over the past five year period.

I have noticed with interest that one of the Ministry Group, Mr. G.D. Hewett, was quoted as saying "In the 1961 traffic census, it was found that over 6,300 vehicles passed through the village each day - in the peak periods this rose to 6,700. This indicated the need for a three-line carriageway, whereas the present road was only 18 feet wide and grossly overloaded. It was probably worse now." ("Kentish Gazette", 11.11.1963 An Inquiry over a new petrol filling station in Bridge High Street.)

I would imagine this report to be accurate. Possibly the Group will examine the words "grossly overloaded" and "probably worse now" with care, and apply itself a little longer to the interim problem and favour me with some constructive suggestions. I shall quite understand if comment is delayed until due consideration has been given the points raised, but I would point out that events have a way of outstripping preparedness.

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

Enc. A new pamphlet.

KEEPING DEATH OFF

VILLAGERS FIGHT FOR A BY-PASS

The Politicians' Views

PEOPLE willing to take part in protest marches are being recruited in Bridge. This is the latest step forward in the villagers' fight to secure a by-pass for their village.

This week hundreds of leaflets and pre-paid postcards will be delivered to Bridge people. The postcard asks if they are willing to take an active interest in the campaign to make Bridge safer by taking part in protest marches and other activities.

With the postcard goes a leaflet setting out the views of three political parties on the safety of Bridge.

Conservative

Says Sir Leslie Thomas, Conservative M.P. for Canterbury:

"The problem of the density of traffic using Bridge High Street is not a small local issue, it is part and parcel of the need to bring the whole of the London to Dover road to motorway standards.

"The opening of M.2. and of the Dartford-Purfleet Tunnel has meant that an even greater volume of traffic is now using this road. The Ministry of Transport has plans for a limited by-pass running from the junction of M.2/A.2 at Brenley Corner, cutting through South Canterbury and by-passing Bridge on the northern side of the village.

"This would alleviate the problem of traffic in the village High Street, but would seriously interfere with valuable agricultural and horticultural holdings. The Ministry are also considering a wider by-pass of Canterbury which would join with A.2 further Lydden. Both these schemes would help the local problem of Bridge.

"The Minister of Transport is at present trying to reach a decision with the French Government on a Channel Tunnel. Once this question is resolved he can decide the future road priorities. We believe that whatever the decision may be it will still be necessary to extend M.2 to Dover, and shall continue to press for this to be done as quickly as possible."

Liberal

The Liberal comment comes from Mr. J. H. Stewart, chairman of the Canterbury Division Liberal Association, who says:

"No one in his senses could deny that a tiny village sitting astride the main artery to the Continent is a 19th Century anachronism. Couple this with its geographical situation in the trough between two hills with vehicular traffic in either direction accelerating through its narrow street in order to gain momentum to climb the hill on the opposite side, and it is obvious that the by-pass is not so much a question of 'if' as 'when.'

"What concerns us most is whether a simple 'ring' by-pass round Bridge will solve the fundamental problem. If Bridge is throttling the route to the Continent, then what is Canterbury itself doing? We are strongly in favour of extending the M.2 south of Bridge as soon as possible.

"Transport problems of this nature, of course, must be viewed against the entire national picture, so that the funds available can be allocated in the correct order of priorities, but we Liberals here in the Canterbury Division would press for the highest degree of priority to be given to this project.

"Quite apart from the question of the safety of the people of Bridge, it is clearly in the national interest that communication between this country and Europe should be as free and as unimpeded as modern technology can make it."

Labour

The Labour point is put by Cllr. George Cobbett, prospective Parliamentary candidate for the Canterbury Constituency:

"Like many other people near here, we are concerned about road safety in Bridge. The High Street is part of the busy Dover Road and carries a considerable volume of fast moving traffic quite unsuited to the village. In recent years there have been a number of serious accidents in which local people have been killed or injured, and others in which vehicles have crashed into buildings along the road.

"The situation is bound to become more dangerous because of the completion of parts of the M.2 motorway from London. This will certainly increase the traffic through Bridge, while the new housing development there means that more people, and particularly children, will be exposed to the danger.

Eventually Built

"No doubt a by-pass round Bridge will be built eventually, but this may not be for several years. Until then, more must be done to reduce the speed and danger of traffic in the High Street. We know that the vigorous efforts of many residents have already achieved improvements. But more still needs to be done, and I wish them further success.

"We are glad that it has been possible to set up the children's crossing patrol, to safeguard the children going to Bridge Primary School. We also hope that there will soon be a safe footpath into Bridge from the Bishopsbourne Road. We are all pressing, of course, for the pavement along the Patrixbourne Road to the new recreation ground. We will go on hammering at this problem until Bridge is safe."

KENTISH GAZETTE. 31.1.64

T HIGH STREET

Residents unite in demanding by-pass for Bridge

THE battle to keep death off the road in the High Street of old-world Bridge, near Canterbury, was aken a step closer to the people on Monday.

Cars roar through this ccident black-spot on heir way to the Channel orts, often at speeds up 60 m.p.h. The limit in he village is 30 m.p.h.

The first of 500 yellow leafts went out with BRIDGE the title, below it a picre of an accident in the llage, and under that e words MEANS DANGER!

The leaflet says "1964 is eneral Election Year. For e electorate's benefit this aflet details each party's ficial proposals for Bridge igh Street road safety."

With the leaflets went re- y postcards on which people uld indicate whether they ould help in the campaign get a by-pass for Bridge.

QUESTION

People were asked on the rds if they would take an tive role—walking in prost marches, etc.

Sir Leslie Thomas, the onservative M.P. for Canrbury, said "The Ministry Transport has plans for limited by-pass running om the junction of the M2/ at Brenley Corner, cutting rough South Canterbury d by-passing Bridge on the rthern side of the village.

"The Minister is at present ying to reach a decision th the French Government a Channel Tunnel. Once at question is resolved he n decide the future road iorities.

"We believe that whatever at decision may be it will ll be necessary to extend 2 to Dover, and shall conue to press for this to be ne as quickly as possible."

IN FAVOUR

Mr. J. H. Stewart, chairan, Canterbury Liberal sociation, said "No one in senses could deny that a y village sitting astride the ain artery to the Continent a 19th Century anachronn . . . We are strongly in vour of extending the M.2 uth of Bridge as soon as ssible."

Mr. G. S. Cobbett, prospective Socialist candidate for the Canterbury division, said "In recent years there have been a number of serious accidents in which local people have been killed or injured, and others in which vehicles have crashed into buildings along the road. No doubt a by-pass round Bridge will be built eventually, but this may not be for several years. Until then, more must be done to reduce the speed and danger of traffic in the High Street. We will go on hammering at this problem until Bridge is safe."

The leaflet is published and printed by John Purchese, of Rosebank, High Street, Bridge, whose wife Ann told a KENT MESSENGER reporter this week "We have the youth of the village behind us. There are about 20 active youngsters we could call on at any time to help.

"The problem is really very serious. Traffic is going on hurtling through."

KENT MESSENGER 31.1.1964

Problem Of The A2

Improvements Urged

It is "completely stupid" to go on waiting for a national agreement on the Channel Tunnel before agreeing to start improvements to the A.2 between Faversham and Canterbury, Cllr. D. A. Lewis, told members of Bridge - Blean Rural District Council on Wednesday.

He urged the Council to press for a starting date for these improvements which, he said, ought to include a by-pass for Bridge.

"It is utterly stupid to end the M.2 at Faversham and leave the other roads leading through to the ports of Kent," he said. "It is completely stupid to go on waiting for a national agreement of the Channel Tunnel—we shall never get road safety at Bridge.

"There is talk of Westenhanger being chosen as the site for the Channel Tunnel entrance —and that would not affect such villages as Boughton, Bridge and Lydden at all.

Traffic Increasing

"And it must be remembered that the traffic passing through Dover is increasing all the time. It is the busiest passenger port in the country.

"This Council should urge for action more than they are doing at the moment."

In full agreement was Cllr. J. H. Reid, of Sturry, who said that the A.2 from the end of the M.2 down to Dover was "terrible and accident-prone."

He said, "We should press as hard as we can for a starting date for this work."

Mr. B. G. Chittenden, the Divisional Highways Surveyor, also agreed, saying that the increased heavy traffic was destroying the surface of the A.2 in places.

"I only hope the Minister of Transport will soon decide which route will be taken, so that the work can be proceeded with," he said.

KENTISH GAZETTE 31.1.64

The Dover Express & East Kent News, Friday, 28th February, 1964



All was peaceful and quiet in Bridge when this picture was taken. But behind every door there is the fear of the Easter traffic rush.

Teenagers Of Bridge Plan Big Protest March

MORE than fifty young residents of Bridge are planning an Easter protest march. They are calling on the Ministry of Transport to provide a by-pass round Bridge which, they claim, is one of the blackest danger-spots in Kent.

"The actual plans for the march are a closely guarded secret at the moment . . . but we are adopting shock tactics," says 20-year-old Mr. Brian Lewis, one of the leaders of the action group.

"The main road is 18ft. wide in places and, three years ago was coping with 6,700 vehicles a day during the peak period.

"Since the new motorway has been opened more and more drivers are choosing this route to the coast and, this summer, Bridge will be a veritable death-trap."

Mr. Lewis, a former Dover College boy, says he expects most of the villagers to turn out to swell the protest march.

"Residents of an Old People's Home in the village centre take their lives in their hands every time they venture out.

"And parents are scared stiff to let their children go out to play — or even to go to school because, for most of them, it means crossing the main road.

"We have had five fatal accidents in Bridge in recent years and we feel we are justified in demanding action," declares Mr. Lewis.

Chief organiser of the protest group is 37-year-old Mr. John Purchese and among active supporters are: Stuart Dove (17), John Harris (18), Chris Holden (16), John Baker (18) and Nigel Lewis (17).

LIVE IN BRIDGE

"WITH vehicular traffic in either direction accelerating through its narrow street in order to gain momentum to climb the hill on the opposite side, it is obvious that the by-pass is not so much a question of 'if' as 'when'" — J. H. Stewart, Chairman, Canterbury Liberal Association.

* * *

"The problem of the density of traffic using Bridge High Street is not a small local issue" —Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P. for Canterbury.

* * *

"The situation is bound to become more dangerous because of the completion of parts of the M.2" — G. S., Cobbett, Prospective Labour Candidate for Canterbury.

Bulletin No. 1. 1st March, 1964.

THE BRIDGE BY - PASS CAMPAIGN.

Organiser: John Purchese, "Rosebank", High Street, Bridge. (Bridge 485).
Campaign Sec: Brian A. Lewis, 1 Weston Villas, High Street, Bridge (Bridge 254).

Dear Supporter,

Thank you for your interest in the campaign to improve the safety of Bridge High Street. At the time of writing this first bulletin, ~~nearly~~ over 100 people have shown interest and support for the movement.

The Government has approved a Channel Tunnel in principle, but this will not solve the traffic problem at Bridge at all. In fact it means that there will be an enormous increase in Continental traffic during the next few years until the Tunnel opens. The Government says that the construction of the Tunnel will take at least seven years from the start of the plan being put into operation. In the meantime what happens to Bridge?

The A20, with a feeder Motorway from the M2 will certainly absorb a great deal of heavy traffic from London and the North, but the Port Authorities in Dover will naturally compete for trade, and an increasing movement of traffic will be felt on the Dover road, especially up to the time of the opening of the Channel Tunnel.

It is clear from letters received from the Ministry since the Channel Tunnel decision that the Ministry is now sitting back blithely and intending to ignore Bridge. However, an immediate start should be made to improve the road conditions, and this the Ministry must learn.

A great many of you have offered to take part in demonstrations and we have planned one for Easter Sunday, 29th March, 1964 at 3.0 p.m. It will take approximately one hour to complete. So that the campaign receives the maximum publicity we intend to include in the procession a smashed motor-car on a trailer and other items to suggest the dangers of the road. Now, these additions and all such 'gimmicks' are unfortunately necessary if the press and television are to notice and report such demonstrations. Nobody demonstrates just for the fun of it. In this case, it is the safety of our children and elderly folk that is at stake.

Full details of the demonstration will be posted to you in due course. Please try to keep that afternoon free. It has been chosen carefully to have the maximum impact on holiday traffic, and at a time when you may well be free during the weekend.

Unfortunately, no campaign can run for long without some degree of financial support to cover the inevitable cost. We would like to thank most sincerely all those who have contributed recently.

Yours faithfully,

Brian A. Lewis, John Purchese.

*** STOP PRESS !** There was another traffic incident yesterday in Bridge involving an elderly person.

A2 PROTEST M

The 'Death-Trap' Village Says: We Want By-Pass

BRIDGE, an ancient village straddling the A2 between Dover and Canterbury, is planning a protest march on Easter Sunday.

Nearly 100 villagers have volunteered to take part in the march up and down this section of the busy trunk road, which carries hundreds of cars to the cross-Channel ferries at Dover.

The reason for their protest? They want the vilage by-passed. In recent years, there have been numerous road accidents and five people have been killed.

The man behind the big march is 20-year-old Mr. Brian Lewis.

He said: "The main road is 18ft. wide in places and three years ago was coping with 6,700 vehicles a day. This part of the A.2 was only built to cope with horse traffic.

CHILDREN
Play Peril

"But now that the motorway between Strood and Brenley Corner has opened more and more drivers are choosing this route to the cross-Channel ferries at Dover. Bridge is becoming a death-trap.

"Residents of an old folk's home in the village take their lives in their hands every time they venture out. Villagers are afraid to let their children out to play," said Mr. Lewis.

In addition to banners, the organisers plan to use horses and vehicles, each bearing a special protest message for the Transport Minister.

SECRET SHOCK PLANS FOR ROAD SAFETY

IT is a closely guarded secret what form a demonstration will be taking to draw attention to the traffic hazards of Bridge High Street, on the Dover - Canterbury road (the Roman Watling Street).

KENT MESSENGER 6·4·1964

Mr. John Purchase, who started a campaign for a by-pass two years ago, after the experience of seeing an accident outside his High Street house which ended fatally, told a KENT MESSENGER reporter:

"We are going to lay on a surprise, and we have 200 backers in the village. We have the approval of the clergy for what we intend to do."

In October, 1963, the youth of Bridge staged a protest march which bottled up traffic for a good half-hour.

The forthcoming demonstration — on Easter Sunday, March 29th—follows further abortive attempts to get the Minister of Transport to move in the matter, said Mr. Purchase.

An official quote from the Ministry itself gives an average of one person killed each year in a period of five years, 1958-63, nearly two seriously injured, and nearly four cases of slight injury.

Kent County Council census figures show that in 1961 over 6,300 vehicles passed through Bridge in a day — at peak times this rose to 6,700. Since then, with the opening of the M2, the situation is said to have worsened.

Meanwhile, the local road safety officer states that Bridge has been promised a by-pass for years.

But, despite correspondence with the Ministry, together with Mr. Purchase's warning that, in the event of another fatality, he will place his dossier at the coroner's disposal, little more has been done than to put down a dotted white line and splash kerbs with white paint!

Mr. Purchase, who among other things issues pamphlets, leaflets, and cards, as well as a periodic campaign bulletin, says the three political parties have been approached in view of a General Election.

It remains to be seen what he has thought up for March 29th!

BRIDGE PLANS PROTEST MARCH

The battle for a by-pass at Bridge takes another step forward on Easter Sunday. About 60 villagers — many of them young people—are to stage a protest march through the village where the A.2 narrows to 18 feet.

Behind the march is 20-year-old Brian Lewis, who organised a similar protest last year.

"This year we propose to use shock tactics," he said. "Vehicles as well as pedestrians will take part in the march and these will help point to the dangers with which villagers find themselves faced.

"The situation has really worsened in the village," Mr. Lewis said. "More and more traffic is using the A.2 to get to Dover since the motorway opened.

"There have been five fatal accidents in the village in recent years and we feel we are justified in demanding action."

KENT HERALD 4·3·1964

MARCH

EVENING NEWS 4.3.64

The Bridge By-pass

Question For

4.3.1964

The Secretary,
The Ministry of Transport,
St. Christopher House,
Southwark Street,
London, S.E.1

Dear Sir,

A public meeting is being held on Saturday April 4th., 1964, at 2.30p.m. in the Village Hall, Bridge, organised by the Bridge By-Pass Campaign. In the chair will be the Road Safety Officer of the district. Invited to speak at the meeting will be the Candidates for the 1964 Parliamentary Election from the Conservative, Liberal and Labour Associations for the Canterbury Division.

It is sincerely hoped that the Ministry will be able to arrange for one of the officers who knows something of the road conditions through the village, and the proposed plans to deal with the conditions, to be present at this meeting. It gives the Ministry an ideal opportunity to put its case, and since the Press has taken a lively interest in this proposed meeting it could ensure the widest possible reporting of the position as the Ministry sees it. There is exactly a month before the meeting, so I sincerely trust that the Ministry will find itself in a position to accept the invitation to speak. The Agenda is:-

1. Welcome to the supporters of the Campaign and public.
2. Brief statement by the Campaign organisers.
3. Brief statements by the three political representatives.
4. Statement by the representative of the Ministry.
5. Questions from the floor.

I can arrange transport from London and lunch for your representative.

Yours faithfully,

Canterbury Division Conservative and Unionist Association

Parliamentary Representative: SIR LESLIE THOMAS, M.B.E., T.D., M.P.

President Alderman Mrs. G. R. Hews, C.B.E.
Chairman L. E. Hart, Esq., J.P.
Hon. Treasurers U. H. B. Alexander, Esq.
E. Parker, Esq., C.B.E., F.C.A.
Asst. Hon. Treasurer P. T. C. Wright, Esq.

Agent and Secretary E. C. F. Brown

9, Hawks Lane,

Canterbury.

Telephone: Canterbury 4187

6th March, 1964.

Dear Mr. Purchese,

Your letter regarding your meeting on the 4th April has been forwarded to Sir Leslie Thomas to see if he is able to attend it. I would point out that in addition to Bridge there are 24 other villages in the constituency as well as 3 towns and it is quite impossible for him to accept all the engagements he is offered, particularly when he is not previously consulted as to the date.

Yours sincerely,

E. C. F. Brown.

AGENT & SECRETARY.

We are now closed on Saturday mornings.

J. Purchese, Esq.,
"Rosebank,"
High Street,
BRIDGE,
Nr. Canterbury.

Canterbury Division Conservative and Unionist Association

Parliamentary Representative: SIR LESLIE THOMAS, M.B.E., T.D., M.P.

President Alderman Mrs. G. R. Hews, C.B.E.
Chairman L. E. Hart, Esq., J.P.
Hon. Treasurers U. H. B. Alexander, Esq.
E. Parker, Esq., C.B.E., F.C.A.
Asst. Hon. Treasurer P. T. C. Wright, Esq.

Agent and Secretary E. C. F. Brown

9, Hawks Lane,
Canterbury.

Telephone: Canterbury 64187

13th March, 1964.

Dear Mr. Purchese,

You will have heard from Sir Leslie Thomas that he is not coming to your meeting on the 4th April. I have arranged for Mr. A.J. Ross, the County Councillor in the Bridge Blean area, to be present. He will be prepared to deal with the subject on a factual basis. I would have thought it better to keep politics out of this subject; it is purely administration.

Yours sincerely,

AGENT & SECRETARY.

J. Purchese, Esq.,
"Rosebank,"
High Street,
BRIDGE,
Nr. Canterbury.

From: Sir Leslie Thomas, MBE, TD, MP.

House of Commons,

London, S.W.1

9th March 1964

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter of 4th March which my Agent has forwarded to me.

I am sorry to say it will not be possible for me to attend the meeting you have arranged on Saturday 4th April as I am already committed on that day.

Yours sincerely

Leslie Thomas

J. Purchese, Esq.,
Rosebank,
High Street,
Bridge,
Canterbury.

Langham Park Farm,
Bishopsbourne,
Canterbury.
7.3.64.

Dear Mr.Purchese,

Thank you for your letter and for the invitation to come th the meeting you are holding at Bridge Village Hall on 4th April. I should certainly like to come to this.

I thought your pamphlets were very good indeed. Please excuse me for not thanking for them at the time,but as we had already discussed it so much, I knew you would understand.

Our next Road Safety meeting is on Thursday 2nd April. I hope to hear what Mr.Chittenden's plans are for the Pavement between Cartref and Bourne Park turning. I will probably also ask what progress is being made to improve the exit onto A2 from Union Lane,which is generally admitted to be unsatisfactory.

I would be glad if you could brief me about recent developments and also on any matters which we might usefully press at this juncture. You may of course prefer to get in touch with your own parish representative,Mr.Price,who is I believe also a member of the Road Safety Committee.

Yours sincerely,

George Cobbett

(George Cobbett)

16.3.1964

The Agent & Secretary,
The Conservative Association,
9, Hawk Lane,
Canterbury.

Dear Mr. Brown,

Thank you for your letters dated March 6th. and 13th., 1964.

Although naturally disappointed that Sir Leslie Thomas would be unable to be present at the meeting on April 4th., I was very pleased to hear that Mr. A.J. Ross had kindly consented to be present.

I noted both your comments as to the size of Sir Leslie's constituency and the thought that you felt that road safety at Bridge was not a political subject.

Administration, I understood, is the responsibility of Government - so, to invite the three men (one of whom will represent Bridge's interests in Parliament at the end of 1964) seemed to me to be eminently suitable. I am sorry you disagree. I note that you now shut on Saturdays.

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

THE BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN Press Bulletin

Organiser: John Purchese, 'Rosebank', High Street, Bridge. *Tel.* Bridge 485.
Campaign Sec.: Brian A. Lewis, 1, Weston Villas, High St., Bridge. *Tel.* Bridge 254.

PRESS INFORMATION

Not for release until Sun. March 29th. at 3.0pm.

THE MIN. TWINS



'My dear Everpend, an evening at Whist possibly — Bridge, never!'

Newtisle Gazette.

THE BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN Bulletin No. 2

Organiser: John Purchese, 'Rosebank', High Street, Bridge. *Tel.* Bridge 485.

Campaign Sec.: Brian A. Lewis, 1, Weston Villas, High St., Bridge. *Tel.* Bridge 254.

15th March, 1964.

Dear Supporter,

The Protest March against the traffic dangers in Bridge High Street will be on Easter Sunday, 29th March, 1964 as mentioned in our previous bulletin. The meeting place will be the lay-by a short distance up the hill towards Canterbury, at a quarter to three in the afternoon. The March starts at 3.0 p.m. prompt.

The Police say that they will attend with cars and Officers on foot to ensure safety for the marchers, so please do not hesitate on the grounds of safety to bring children if you wish - even in prams! The route for the march is down through the village to St. Peter's Church, turning off into the road to Bishopsbourne; reforming and returning up the other side of the High Street to the lay-by for dispersal. Eight people will be responsible for carrying banners and slogans, and six will distribute leaflets; but these duties will have been arranged in advance.

Please bring at least one friend with you for the walk, and encourage all you can to watch the march from the pavements. This is a serious demonstration, and the press are taking a lively interest in it, so please support it as far as you can.

A week after the march there will be a public meeting in the Village Hall, Bridge, on Saturday 4th April, 1964 at 2.30 p.m. Speakers invited include a Representative from the Ministry of Transport, and the three Candidates for the Canterbury Division in the General Election, Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P., Mr. Ted Moss and Mr. George Cobbett. The Chair will be taken by the Road Safety Officer for Bridge, Mr. J. D. Smith and the agenda will include statements from the Campaign Organiser, the three Parliamentary Candidates and the Ministry Representative. Questions will be invited, so please come armed to the teeth with good questions!

This Bulletin sees the appearance of the Min. Twins, who will have a pertinent comment each time they appear.

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully,

Brian A. Lewis,

John Purchese.

THE MIN. TWINS



'My dear Everpend, never admit that statistics prove anything but the need for delay!'

St. Christopher House, Southwark Street, S.E.1.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
DIVISIONAL ROAD ENGINEER
METROPOLITAN DIVISION
~~GAYWOOD HOUSE, GREAT PETER STREET~~
~~LONDON S.W.1~~
TELEPHONE: ~~ABBEY 2262~~ Waterloo 7999
Ext. 2342.

RDL 34/6T71

25th March, 1964.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of 4th March inviting an officer of this Ministry to a meeting at Bridge.

For long established reasons which I am sure you will readily appreciate, it is not the practice for Ministry officials to attend the kind of public meeting you have in mind. I am afraid, therefore, that I must decline your kind invitation to attend or be represented on the 4th April. Meanwhile, I understand that the Minister is hoping shortly to write again to Sir Leslie Thomas.

Yours faithfully,

V. A. S. Dakers

Divisional Road Engineer

J. Purchese, Esq.,
"Rosebank",
High Street,
BRIDGE,
Canterbury,
Kent.

Wednesday 25th March, 1964. I.T.V. Day By Day - Regional News.

Newscaster:-

The people who live in the village of Bridge, Nr. Canterbury, are staging a protest march on Sunday. They are protesting against the accident rate on the A.2. which runs through the village. Ewen McNaughton reports:-

"Built for horses, this is the A.2..Today, the road which runs to and from the continent. It is used by nearly 7,000 vehicles a day in summer rushing to the boats at Dover, and here at Bridge the A.2. becomes a death trap. Traffic races down one hill into the village, and rushes up another hill out of it. 8 people have died, and 47 have been injured in accidents here in the last 5 years. Something had to be done. Maybe the initiative of 10 year old Susan Scarisbrick is that something, for she wrote a letter to the Ministry of Transport. Susan, why did you write to the Ministry of Transport?"' Well, I thought that because there had been so many accidents on the road, that if a child wrote up to the Ministry of Transport perhaps they would take more notice' "Did they reply to you?" 'Yes they did; they said that they might build a road round Bridge.'

"Another young villager who is trying to organise official action is 20 year old Brian Lewis. He has organised a protest march for Easter Sunday. Why did you organise this march?" 'Because I was nearly killed myself one day when I was getting into my car, and also I know of a girl who was killed down here.' "How many people are going to be on the march?" 'Between 100 and 150.' "Have you been fighting for some time for a new road?" 'Yes, for very nearly 3 years now I have been writing to the Ministry and of course to the local press.'

WHY DO WE MARCH?

8 DEAD IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS!

■ We believe BRIDGE HIGH ST. is dangerous. It must be BY-PASSED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

■ Meanwhile we urge the Ministry of Transport to slow down the traffic!

PUBLISHED BY JOHN PURCHESE, ROSEBANK HIGH ST. BRIDGE

Villagers march in protest

About 150 villagers in Bridge, a village on the A2 between Canterbury and Dover, used coffins, horses and hearses during a march yesterday to delay traffic and draw attention to their demand for a by-pass round the village.

The villagers say that in the past five years eight people have been killed and 50 injured in accidents on the road through the village. An estimated 600 vehicles were said to be passing through the village hourly.

Mr Ted Moss, the prospective Liberal parliamentary candidate, for Canterbury, pushed his one-year-old baby in a pram. Mr George Cobbett, Labour's prospective candidate, also took part, but Sir Leslie Thomas, the Conservative MP for Canterbury, was not represented.

GUARDIAN 30.3.1964

PROTEST BY 'HEARSES'

With mock hearses and coffins, 150 villagers of Bridge, which straddles the A 2 between Canterbury and Dover, marched through the village yesterday to back their demand for a by-pass. In the past five years eight people have died and 50 have been injured on the main road.

DAILY TELEGRAPH 30.3.1964

Dead slow road

A procession of 100 teenagers escorting a coffin, a lorry carrying a wrecked vehicle, and a vintage car caused traffic jams yesterday on the London to Dover road at Bridge, near Canterbury. It was in protest against delay in building a by-pass.

DAILY EXPRESS 30.5.1964



Villagers at Bridge, on the A 2 between Dover and Canterbury, taking part in a protest march yesterday because they want the village by-passed. They claim that this section of the road was only built to cope with horse traffic and is now used by too many vehicles.

THE TIMES 28-3-1964

BRIDGE TRAFFIC PROBLEM

To the Editor,—

May I add a postscript to the correspondence which you have been publishing recently regarding the Bridge traffic problem. Over a very long period of time I have been in touch with the authorities on the matter, and as I am sure every responsible resident of Bridge now understands, it is part of a very much bigger problem.

A number of planning and programming issues arise from the need to by-pass Bridge (and it is because of these the Ministry informs me their engineers are taking longer than usual), not the least of which is to ensure that as little as possible is taken of some of the best agricultural land in Kent.

As "Local Yokel" in his admirable letter so rightly pointed out, the problem must not be handed over to someone else—it must be solved.

Perhaps it would be as well if the problem of Bridge as a traffic accident spot were put in its right perspective.

I have in front of me the latest "Black Spot Record" for the county indicating where the most serious and most accidents are occurring. It is in the form of a league table showing the 51 worst accident spots on Trunk and Class 1 roads, calculated on a points basis over a period of three years. Happily for all, Bridge is not included; if it were it would be at the bottom of the league with 23 points against the 136 points of the worst spot at the head of the league.

I believe a Ministerial decision will be given in the not too distant future. I shall continue to press.

LESLIE M. THOMAS.
House of Commons.

BRIDGE MARCH

To the Editor.

I see that Mr. George Cobbett, the Socialist candidate, and Mr. Ted Moss, the Liberal candidate, took part in the march through Bridge in support of a by-pass. Can it be that they did this because Aldermaston was cancelled this year?

J. SENIOR.
119 Whitstable Road,
Canterbury. 4.4.'64

KENTISH GAZETTE

BE JUST AND FEAR NOT

EDITORIAL VIEW

Public Opinion Does Matter!

WHAT a pity it is that the Ministry of Transport has said "no" to an invitation to be represented at an all-village all-party road safety meeting to be held at Bridge tomorrow to further the claims for a by-passing of A.2 traffic.

For a long time, the campaigners have been trying to wrestle with the Ministry, but have not been able to come to grips. This failure is indicative of officialdom's shortsightedness in not heeding the cries of people who live on the spot, and who claim that the accident roll over five years should be sufficient evidence to produce effective action.

The determined villagers staged a macabre demonstration on Easter Sunday. Presumably the coffin was intended to be in keeping with the latest official road safety posters.

Nevertheless, accounts of the procession showed that there was traffic chaos. As the campaigners have other demonstrations in mind, we would urge them to be exceedingly careful not to endanger traffic. Their cause is good, but one mishap in a road demonstration could do the cause much harm.

On the other hand, it is a shocking business that such methods have to be used to bring home to those in authority the message of "Safety First." After all, it is the Ministry's own slogan!

KENTISH EXPRESS 4.4.'64

M2

THE BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

M.O.T. REF: HGP-14-42-068

DATE. 30.3.1964

Organiser: JOHN PURCHESE,
'Rosebank', High Street, Bridge,
Canterbury, Kent. *Bridge 485*

Campaign Sec.: BRIAN A. LEWIS,
1, Weston Villas, High Street, Bridge,
Canterbury, Kent. *Bridge 254*

V.A.S. Dakers, Esq.,
Divisional Road Engineer,
Metropolitan Division,
The Ministry of Transport,
St. Christopher House,
Southwark Street, London, S.E.1

Dear Mr. Dakers,

Thank you for your letter dated March 25th., 1964, saying that your Department must decline the invitation to be represented at the meeting being held at Bridge on Saturday, April 4th..

We regret the decision not to attend. The phrase in your letter, "attend the kind of public meeting you have in mind" suggests that you feel it would be a meeting hostile to the Ministry. Not so; the chair is being taken by the Road Safety Officer and the discussion is intended to be a dispassionate appraisal of the situation.

It would be helpful to receive a brief statement from your Department in lieu of a representative. Although the intention of the Minister to write to Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P., might weigh in this matter, we hope that the more immediate point is made - namely that the Ministry of Transport is at least contemplating action.

An empty chair at the meeting, and no statement to offer as a substitute, might suggest to the villagers of Bridge that the Ministry did not care in the matter, a suggestion we are sure you would hasten to deplore as far from correct.

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

Post scriptum. To facilitate matters, might we ask that this correspondence is shown to G. Davis, Esq., L. Durrant, Esq., F. Samuel, Esq., R. Pearson, Esq., and R.L. Pearce, Esq. who have had dealings in the matter. I believe your Mr. Hewett also has a knowledge of the situation.

St. Christopher House, Southwark Street, S.E.1.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
DIVISIONAL ROAD ENGINEER
METROPOLITAN DIVISION
~~GAYWOOD HOUSE, GREAT PETER STREET~~
~~LONDON S.W.1~~
TELEPHONE: ~~ABBEY 2262~~ Waterloo 7999
Ext. 2342

2nd April, 1964.

Dear Mr. Purchese,

With reference to your letter dated 30th March, 1964 and your request for a brief statement from my Department instead of a representative at your meeting on Saturday, April 4th, I would refer you to Mr. R. L. Pearce's letter of 11th February, 1964.

I do not think that at the present moment I can add to what Mr. Pearce says in the second and third paragraphs of his letter.

Yours faithfully,

J. A. S. Dakers

Divisional Road Engineer

John Purchese, Esq.,
"Rosebank",
High Street,
Bridge,
Canterbury,
Kent.

M.2 TAKES BRUNT

Comment from an A.A. spokesman at Maidstone on Tuesday: "There has never been an Easter like it before—and the weather could hardly have been worse.

"But at least we have some idea what to expect this year—more traffic than ever before. It is clear that the M.2 is going to take the brunt of the burden from now on."

Dover established new passenger records when more people and vehicles passed through the port than ever recorded during a similar holiday period.

British Railways noted a remarkable increase in the number of Continentals coming into Dover, especially those with vehicles.

More than 5,000 passengers passed through Manston Airport over the holiday on passenger services operated by Air Ferry to Le Touquet, Ostend and all parts of the Continent. There was a similar rush at Ferryfield Airport, Lydd.

KENT MESSENGER. 4.4.64

TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 1964

KENTISH OBSERVER.

150 Silent Protest Marchers Block Easter Traffic

They Hope To Halt Road Deaths

A PROCESSION OF ABOUT 150 YOUNG PEOPLE WOUND ITS WAY SILENTLY THROUGH THE VILLAGE OF BRIDGE ON EASTER SUNDAY AFTERNOON IN SILENT PROTEST AT THE GOVERNMENT'S LACK OF ACTION IN PROVIDING A BY-PASS FOR THE BUSY A2—WHICH RUNS THROUGH THE CENTRE OF THE VILLAGE.

The villagers claim that the fast road causes too much traffic to go through the village too quickly, resulting in too many accidents.

Headed by a banner "Bridge By-Pass Campaign" and followed by another, preceding two horsemen, inscribed: "The road was built for this," the marchers came through the village towards Dover from a point half-way down one hill leading into the village and returned in the opposite direction.

At one time over 100 cars were held up by the marchers.

EIGHT DEATHS

Included in the procession were lorries bearing a wrecked car, its roof half torn off, and an 1897 Daimler car, symbolic of the vehicles for which the road was designed.

Three marchers were pulling a coffin with a small sign informing passers-by that in the past five years eight people had died in the 300-yards-long stretch of road through the village.

During the march, helpers distributed leaflets to watchers on the pavement and to motorists in the cars held up by the procession.

Marching in the procession were the prospective Parliamentary candidates of the Labour and Liberal parties, Mr. G. S. Cobbett and Mr. E. Moss.

EVERY METHOD

At the end of the march, the organisers, Mr. John Purchese and Mr. Brian Lewis, told the "Kentish Observer" that they intended to use "every method" to bring home to the Ministry the state of affairs in Bridge.

A protest meeting is to be held on Saturday afternoon in the village hall. A Ministry of Transport representative had been invited, but the invitation was declined, said Mr. Purchese.

The prospective Liberal and Labour candidates would be there, however, he said.

County Councillor A. J. Ross is to represent the Conservative Party at the meeting.

The three parties' views of the situation are summarised in a small leaflet handed out by the protesters during the demonstration.

BY-PASS PLANS

In the leaflet, Canterbury's M.P., Sir Leslie Thomas, is quoted as saying: "The Ministry of Transport has plans for a limited by-pass running from the junction of M2/A2 at Brenley Corner, cutting through South Canterbury and by-passing Bridge on the northern side of the village.

"This would alleviate the problem of traffic in the village High Street, but would seriously interfere with valuable agricultural and horticultural holdings.

"The Ministry are also considering a wider by-pass of Canterbury which would join with the A2 near Lydden. Both these schemes would help the local problem of Bridge."

Mr. J. H. Stewart, chairman of Canterbury Division Liberal Association, is quoted in the leaflet as saying:

"No one in his senses could deny that a tiny village sitting astride the main artery to the Continent is a nineteenth-century anachronism. Couple this with its geographical situation in the trough between two hills with vehicular traffic accelerating through its narrow street in order to gain momentum to climb the hill on the other side, and it is obvious that the by-pass is not so much a question of 'if' as 'when'."

Prospective Labour Parliamentary candidate Mr. George S. Cobbett is quoted as commenting: "The situation is bound to become more dangerous because of the completion of part of the M2 motorway from London.

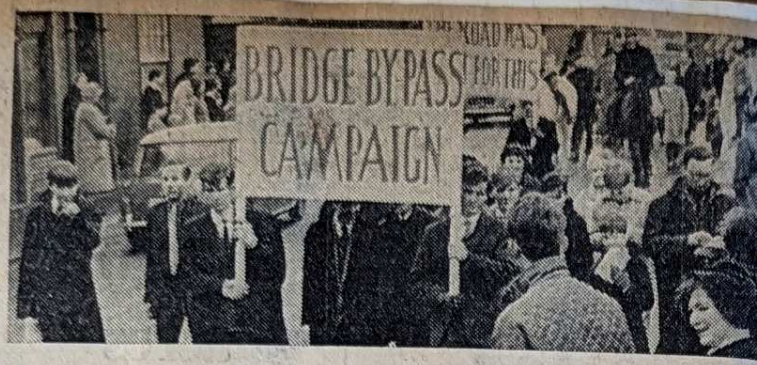
"SEVERAL YEARS"

"This will certainly increase the traffic through Bridge, while the new housing development there means that more people, and particularly children, will be exposed to the danger.

"No doubt a by-pass round Bridge will be built eventually, but this may not be for several years.

"Until then, more must be done to reduce the speed and danger of traffic in the High Street. We know that the vigorous efforts of many residents have already achieved improvements. But more still needs to be done, and I wish them further success."

WHEN A VILLAGE MARCHES



Banners halt cars

By Eddie Thomson

ABOUT 150 marchers set up a deliberate traffic jam on Easter Sunday . . . in their campaign for a by-pass round the danger-spot village of Bridge, near Canterbury.

The chaos amid the holiday rush was the latest effort by campaigners against local road safety hazards. And they succeeded in halting traffic for hundreds of yards in both directions—which was exactly what they intended to do.

Now they plan to embarrass the Ministry of Transport into doing something about the safety of the village.

Many activities have been arranged for the next few weeks.

"We will really shake the Ministry," said campaign organiser, Mr. John Purchese. "And afterwards they surely must do something about the danger here."

Dover-bound traffic descending the long hill into the village had to halt as the procession moved off from a lay-by half-way down the gradient.

Banners

There were several near crashes as the marchers headed with a banner reading "Bridge By-Pass Campaign," began to block half the road.

It consisted largely of young people, but several families were taking part and one man was being pushed in a wheel-chair.

Mr. George Cobbett, Canterbury's Labour Parliamentary candidate, and the Liberal candidate, Mr. Ted Moss, with his wife and young son, were present.

Then came another banner, "The Road Was Built For This," which was followed by two riders on horseback and a veteran car.

The next banner read, "Not This!"

This, was a huge coal lorry loaned for the occasion by a local contractor, followed by a wrecked estate car, borne on a low-load trailer.

Close behind this was a scarlet-draped coffin on a hand-cart accompanied by three bearers in black.

Police were keeping an eye on the procession and holding up all the vehicles in one direction to allow a steady one-way flow.

By-pass

But many travellers had to wait before they could drive through the village.

After the marchers had moved slowly through Bridge in one direction, they turned and made an even slower trip back to the lay-by.

The campaigners have been pressing for a by-pass round the village—which straddles the main A.2 two miles from Canterbury towards Dover—for some time.

Mr. Purchese has decided not to form a committee. He prefers direct action, and everything is arranged between him and 20-year-old campaign secretary, Mr. Brian Lewis, who has been active in many ways in trying to gain safety measures for the 1,200 villagers.

At the moment traffic sweeps down into the village from both directions, on steep hills, gaining speed to climb away up the other side of the valley.

Mr. Purchese and Mr. Lewis claim that although there is a 30 miles an hour speed limit vehicles go through the village at much higher speeds.

One of the two leaflets marchers were handing out said that eight people have been killed by traffic speeding through the narrow main street, in the last five years.

'Danger'

"Now that the M.2 is in full use the danger here has been made even greater," said Mr. Lewis, who, like Mr. Purchese, lives adjacent to the A.2.

After the march, Mr. Purchese said he was happy with the way things had gone.

"It proved to be a big success, and we are hoping that something will be done soon."

Mr. Purchese has arranged a public meeting in Bridge Village Hall tomorrow, which will be attended by Mr. A. J. Ross, Conservative County Councillor, Mr. Cobbett, and Mr. Moss.

"We invited the Ministry of Transport to come, but they have declined," said Mr. Purche—



Th



Marchers jam Easter traffic

IN PROTEST



ney want by-pass round their danger-spot village

KENTISH EXPRESS.

Two die on Kent roads

MOTORISTS on Kent's roads during the Easter week-end holiday responded to the Minister of Transport's plea for courtesy.

And in spite of traffic reaching an all-time record on some main roads, only two people were killed—the same number who died during Easter, 1963.

One death was at Bekesbourne, where auto-cyclist Mr. Albert Edward Kennett, 65, of Distant View, Bekesbourne, died after a collision with a car at the junction of Adisham-rd., Bekesbourne.

The other death was a 19-year-old motor-cyclist, Mr. Peter Warner, of Ninfield-rd., Bexhill, killed on the A21 Hastings to London road at Lamberhurst on Friday in a head-on collision with a car.

BUSIEST

An Automobile Association spokesman said that the A2 London to Dover road via Canterbury was the busiest in the county.

And the M2 motorway carried its biggest traffic quota so far.

The holiday began quietly, and some roads were almost deserted on Friday. The coldest Easter for 80 years kept many motorists at home.

It was Easter Monday that brought out the traffic. Late in the evening 3,500 vehicles an hour were streaming home along the A2.

KENTISH EXPRESS. 4.4.'64



Over 100 people joined the protest march at Bridge on Sunday, where the villagers are demanding a by-pass. This is one way they hope to attract the attention of the Minister of Transport. KENTISH GAZETTE

YOUNG AND OLD DEMAND BY-PASS

Bridge On The March

A PURPLE-COVERED coffin trundled slowly through the main street of Bridge on Easter Sunday afternoon. It was a grim and grisly reminder from the villagers—without much love—to the Minister of Transport.

It was a reminder that eight people have died and another 50 have been injured in road accidents at Bridge over the last five years.

The coffin, with a wrecked car, heavy lorries, horses and a veteran car—and accompanied by about 150 villagers—hammered home the demands that Bridge is making for a by-pass.

The procession held up holiday motorists. At one time about 100 cars were queueing to pass through the village.

Meanwhile, organisers Mr. John Purchese, a film industry cameraman, and 20-year-old Brian Lewis, son of a local councillor, rubbed their hands.

"This is just what we hoped for," they confessed. "This demonstration of villagers shows that Bridge is sincere in their demands for a by-pass.

"And this sort of thing is going on until the Minister of Transport gives in. We shall pester him until we get our by-pass."

Both watched as the cars began to pile up and the cortege made its way slowly towards the bottleneck village centre. And pile up was almost the right word. Several cars speeding down towards Bridge had to brake violently to pull up before crashing into the rear of the queue.

"See," said one villager. "That's the sort of thing that we are trying to avoid here. Motorists don't seem to be aware of the dangers of going too fast through Bridge."

Young and Old

In Sunday's procession were the ordinary folk of Bridge who have no axe to grind—other than their desire for safer roads. They were both young and old, parents with their children and members of the local youth club.

Also in the procession was Mr. Ted Moss, the Canterbury prospective Liberal Parliamentary candidate. Mr. Moss, accompanied by his wife, pushed his year-old child in a pram. Cllr. George Cobbett, the Labour Party's General Election candidate, also took part. But there was no representative of Sir Leslie Thomas, the Conservative M.P.

The next step in Bridge's fight for a by-pass is Saturday's protest meeting in the Village Hall. The chairman will be the local road safety officer (Mr. J. D. Smith). On the platform will be Mr. Moss, Mr. Cobbett and Cllr. A. J. Ross will represent Sir Leslie Thomas.

"The Minister of Transport was invited to send a representative but has declined," said Mr. Purchese. "So there will be an empty chair on the platform labelled 'The Ministry of Transport.'"

Mr. Purchese and Mr. Lewis have further stunts up their sleeves for keeping Bridge before the Minister's eyes.

Said Mr. Purchese: "We shall be doing something else in a fortnight's time. It's a good one but I cannot reveal what it is just yet."

M.M.



A wrecked car was used by Bridge villagers in their protest march on Sunday to draw attention to the need for a by-pass. [More pictures on page 15.]

PROTEST WITH



PEOPLE OF BRIDGE escort a coffin through the village in silent protest against delays in building a by-pass.

Village angry at by-pass delay

TEENAGERS and their parents caused a traffic pile-up on the London—Dover A2 road near Canterbury on Sunday afternoon when they escorted a purple-covered coffin through a village.

Other youngsters handed out leaflets which declared that eight people had died in local road crashes in the past five years.

Also in the procession were two men on horseback and a veteran car (tied on a lorry) — to stress what the road was originally built for — and a wrecked car on a lorry behind the coffin and bareheaded mourners.

H A COFFIN



THE HEAD of the "funeral procession"

It happened at Bridge. Jams formed at both ends of the High Street as they marched up and down for an hour in protest against delay in building a by-pass around the village.

Mr. John Purchese, the campaign organiser, and Mr. Brian Lewis, secretary, told a KENT MESSENGER reporter at Bridge: "The time of the exercise has been chosen to cause the maximum traffic dislocation.

"To follow-up the march there will be a public meeting at Bridge on Saturday to which a spokesman from the Ministry of Transport has been invited.

"Also present will be representatives of the Conservative, Liberal and Labour committees, Canterbury Division.

"These activities have been provoked by the apparent indifference of the Ministry of Transport to the rapidly developing dangers in the High Street caused by too many cars and lorries trying to speed through to attack the hills which lead away from the High Street at both ends".

Bridge, where between 6,300-6,700 vehicles pass along the High Street EVERY DAY, has no Belisha or Panda crossings and no traffic lights.

FLASHBACK TO 1963—An official of the county council told a public inquiry in October (into a filling-station application) that the amount of traffic at Bridge justified a three-lane carriageway, whereas the High Street is 18 FEET wide and grossly over-loaded.

KENT MESSENGER 4.4.64

'WHY I JOINED THE BRIDGE BY-PASS APPEAL MARCH'

Lib. candidate

MR. Ted Moss, prospective Liberal candidate for the Canterbury Division, made a statement to the Canterbury Liberals' Divisional Executive Committee on Sunday just after taking part in the by-pass appeal march through Bridge village.

Mr. Moss said: "I have been asked why my family and I joined the protest march in Bridge. We, as a family, took part because we believe that not only here in Bridge, but all over the country, our roads are both completely inadequate for the motor traffic that they must bear, and also deadly dangerous to both pedestrians and motorists alike.

"What conditions will be like in 1974 I shudder to think. We are shirking our duty to the future generation by failing to implement immediately, proposals made in the Buchanan Report and by the Crowther Steering Committee.

"As far back as 1952 we Liberals made proposals similar to those recently propounded by Buchanan; proposals for the segregation of vehicles and pedestrians."

OVERCROWDED

Mr. Moss went on:

"As the number of vehicles on our already overcrowded roads increases — an estimated doubling in the next ten years — so the number of people killed and maimed on our roads will increase.

"Minor battles of the Somme will be seen on our roads all over the country unless we determine to plan otherwise now.

"We Liberals offer the nation a plan to help reduce the appalling carnage on our roads, and to give Britain a proper modern transport system.

"Briefly, we say commence implementing Crowther and Buchanan **now.** Immediately set up Regional Authorities throughout the country to plan the segregation of pedestrians and vehicles **now.** Replan our city traffic to remove all through traffic from the streets and create precinct shopping centres.

"Implement a dynamic roads programme **now.** The current development of roads, particularly motorways, is staggering in its inefficiency and inadequacy — we have built only 59 miles of motorway a year since 1958. Liberal Policy states that we must spend £200,000,000 a year on our roads over the next 20 years.

"This sum will provide us with a comprehensive network of motorways, wider trunk roads, new ring roads, flyovers and bridges.

"Traffic delays in 1961 have been estimated to have cost the nation £500,000,000. It is not a question of us being unable to afford new roads, but a question of us being unable **not** to afford them.

POLICY

"Road policy of course must also be considered in conjunction with other forms of transport. The railway, canal, sea, air and hovercraft, forms of travel must all be co-ordinated to take account of community benefits", he declared.

"Liberals nonetheless believe in incentive and true competition. We do not subscribe to nationalism of road haulage nor its extension to other forms of transport. Rather do we believe that effective co-ordination of transport can only be achieved by the free choice of the consumer between services based on something like true economic cost.

"On the own admission of the Ministry of Transport, there are dozens of places in a much worse plight than Bridge. It is our duty as citizens to ensure that these traffic problems are dealt with as a matter of national emergency. I have already made my position about conditions in Bridge quite plain".

KENT MESSENGER 4.4.64

KENT HERALD 31.3.1961

LIBERALS' TRANSPORT POLICIES

Among those taking part in the Bridge by-pass demand march on Sunday was Mr. Ted Moss, the Liberal Parliamentary candidate. The same day he made a report to the Divisional Executive Committee on why he and his family had joined the march.

"We as a family took part because we believe that not only in Bridge, but all over the country, our roads are both completely inadequate for the motor traffic that they must bear and also deadly dangerous to both pedestrians and motorists alike," he said.

"If I am returned to Parliament for this constituency I shall consider it one of my first duties to exert all the pressure that I possibly can upon the Minister of Transport until Bridge is by-passed."



Over 100 people joined the protest march through Bridge on Sunday. Villagers are seeking a by-pass and this is one way they hope to claim the Minister of Transport's attention.



A COFFIN IN THE MAIN STREET

BY MALCOLM MITCHELL

A purple-covered coffin trundled slowly through the main street of Bridge on Easter Sunday afternoon. It was a grim and grisly reminder from the villagers—without much love—to the Minister of Transport.

It was a reminder that eight people have died and another 50 have been injured in road accidents at Bridge over the last five years.

The coffin, with a wrecked car, heavy lorries, horses and a veteran car—and accompanied by about 150 villagers—hammered home the demands that Bridge is making for a by-pass.

The procession held up holiday motorists. At one time about 100 cars were queueing to pass through the village.

Meanwhile, organisers Mr. John Purchese, a film industry cameraman, and 20-year-old Brian Lewis, son of a local councillor, rubbed their hands.

"This is just what we hoped for," they confessed. "This demonstration of villagers shows that Bridge is sincere in their demands for a by-pass.

"And this sort of thing is going on until the Minister of Transport gives in. We shall pester him until we get our by-pass."

Both watched as the cars began to pile up and the cortege made its way slowly towards the bottleneck village centre. And pile up was almost the right word. Several cars speeding down towards Bridge had to brake violently to pull up before crashing into the rear of the queue.

"See," said one villager. "That's the sort of thing that we are trying to avoid here. Motorists don't seem to be aware of the dangers of going too fast through Bridge."

In Sunday's procession were the ordinary folk of Bridge who have no axe to grind—other than their desire for safer roads. They were both young and old, parents with their children and members of the local youth club.

Also in the procession was Mr. Ted Moss, the Canterbury prospective Liberal Parliamentary candidate. Mr. Moss, accompanied by his wife, pushed his year-old child in a pram. Cllr. George Cobbett, the Labour Party's General Election candidate, also took

The next step in Bridge's fight for a by-pass is Saturday's protest meeting in the Village Hall. The chairman will be the local road safety officer (Mr. J. D. Smith). On the platform will be Mr. Moss, Mr. Cobbett and Cllr. A. J. Ross will represent Sir Leslie Thomas.

"The Minister of Transport was invited to send a representative but has declined," said Mr. Purchese. "So there will be an empty chair on the platform labelled 'The Ministry of Transport.'"

Mr. Purchese and Mr. Lewis have further stunts up their sleeves for keeping Bridge before the Minister's eyes.

Said Mr. Purchese: "We shall be doing something else in a fortnight's time. It's a good one but I cannot reveal what it is just yet."



A purple-covered coffin was the grisly reminder of Bridge's accident toll—eight dead and 50 injured in five years.

How Liberals Would Tackle Roads Problem

By Canterbury's Candidate

Among those taking part in the Bridge by-pass demand march on Sunday was Mr. Ted Moss, the Liberal Parliamentary candidate. The same day he made a report to the Divisional Executive Committee on why he and his family had joined the march.

"We as a family took part because we believe that not only in Bridge, but all over the country, our roads are both completely inadequate for the motor traffic that they must bear and also deadly dangerous to both pedestrians and motorists alike," he said.

"What conditions will be like in 1974 I shudder to think. We are shirking our duty to the future generation by failing to implement immediately proposals made in the Buchanan Report and by the Crowther Steering Committee.

"As far back as 1952, we Liberals made proposals similar to those recently propounded by Buchanan — proposals for the segregation of vehicles and pedestrians.

"As the number of vehicles on our already overcrowded roads increases — an estimated doubling in the next ten years—so the number of people killed and maimed on our roads will increase.

"Minor battles of the Somme will be seen on our roads all over the country unless we determine to plan otherwise now.

"We Liberals offer the nation a plan to help reduce the appalling carnage on our roads and to give Britain a proper modern transport system," he said.

"Briefly, we say commence implementing Crowther and Buchanan *now*. Immediately set up regional authorities throughout the country to plan the segregation of pedestrians and vehicles *now*. Replan our city traffic to remove all through traffic from the streets and create pedestrian precinct shopping centres.

"Implement a dynamic roads programme *now*. The current development of roads, particularly motorways, is staggering in its inefficiency and inadequacy. We have built only 59 miles of motorway a year since 1958.

"Liberal policy states that we must spend £200,000,000 a year on our roads over the next 20 years. This sum will provide us with a comprehensive network of motorways, wider trunk roads, dual carriageways, new ring roads, flyovers and bridges.

"Traffic delays in 1961 have been estimated to have cost the nation £600,000,000. It is not a question of us being unable to afford new roads, but a question of us being unable *not* to afford them.

"Road policy of course must also be considered in conjunction with other forms of transport. The railway, canal, sea, air and hovercraft forms of travel must all be co-ordinated to take account of community benefits.

"Liberals, nonetheless, believe in incentive and true competition. We do not subscribe to nationalisation of road haulage, nor its extension to other forms of transport. Rather do we believe that effective co-ordination of transport can only be achieved by the free choice of the consumer between services based on something like true economic cost.

"On the own admission of the Ministry of Transport, there are dozens of places in a much worse plight than Bridge.

"It is our duty as citizens to ensure that these traffic problems are dealt with as a matter of national emergency. I have already made my position about conditions in Bridge quite plain."

"If I am returned to Parliament for this constituency I shall consider it one of my first duties to exert all the pressure that I possibly can upon the Minister of Transport until Bridge is bypassed."

KENTISH GAZETTE 4.4.62

5.4.1964

A. Wedgwood-Benn, Esq.,
House of Commons,
London, S.W.1

Dear Mr. Wedgwood-Benn,

It was suggested that I should contact you over the traffic problem at Bridge since you have been Labour spokesman on Transport at various times. At all events, you would know to whom this letter should be addressed - and possibly you would pass it on.

We have a curious situation in this village brought about by monumental inactivity on the part of the Ministry of Transport. Bridge lies on A2, some three miles from Canterbury on the Dover Road. A quick glance at the map will show you that A2 is in almost a straight line between London and Dover, with the Dartford Tunnel loop connecting northbound traffic to the road, and with 25 miles of M2 motorway included from Rochester to Brenley Corner near Faversham. The making of M2 has attracted a considerable amount of the old A20 traffic, and commercial fleets are switching to the A2 route to the Continent through Dover.

The village itself is in a valley, so that all drivers instinctively speed up through the village High Street in order to attack the opposite hill. There are in the High Street no traffic lights, no pedestrian crossings and poor gas-lighting at night. The carriageway is only 18' wide at points with pavements under 3' wide. Traffic is 'restricted' to 30m.p.h. There have been 8 deaths in the last 5 years in this street, 22 cases of serious injury and 27 cases of slight injury. We have had promises of a by-pass on and off over the past 15 years, but nothing happens.

This Campaign staged a protest march on Easter Sunday attended by 150 of the village's 900 population, and a meeting was held in the village hall yesterday where the Labour and Liberal Parliamentary Candidates spoke. The M.P., Sir Leslie Thomas, was represented by a Conservative County Councillor. Sir Leslie, in a letter to the local press the day before said "I have in front of me the latest 'Black Spot Record' for the county...It is in the form of a league table showing the 51 worst accident spots on Trunk and Class 1 roads...Happily for all, Bridge is not included." Bridge is 53rd. in the League, but when you note that 1st. had 2 fatalities, 14 serious accidents and 43 slight accidents over a 3 year period it is not difficult to see Bridge very nearly rivals these figures.

The Ministry of Transport knows our feelings about the road conditions, but does nothing at all. There are five other villages along A2 between Brenley Corner and Dover who have the same problem; Boughton, Harbledown, Kearsney, Lydden and Temple Ewell. We are thinking of contacting these villages to make a combined protest to the Ministry, but at the same time we feel Bridge has a particular claim of urgency, being 53rd. in County League table or no.

Could we ask you to examine this matter ? The Labour prospective Parliamentary candidate (who sits on the Bridge-Blean R.D.C. Road Safety Committee) is Mr. George Cobbett, who lives at Langham Park Farm, Bishopsbourne, Canterbury, Kent. He can confirm the situation.

I apologise for adding to your work, but having met you - as the sound recordist in the A-R.T.V. team who covered your re-election at Bristol - I know from what you said at the time that you consider human problems of this kind in a serious manner.

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.