5.4.1964

The Director,
The Road Research Laboratories,
D.S.I.R., Harmondsworth,
Middlesex.

Dear Sir,

The Bridge By-Pass Campaign is primarily a road safety campaign, since in this village High Street on A2 between Dover and Canterbury, there have been 8 deaths during the past 5 years, 22 cases of serious injury and 27 cases of slight injury. (Figures that are 15 times the National average when rated against population).

Because of an interesting psychological point about driving through the village, there being a hill on each side, we suffer a great deal from speeding vehicles and there have been cases of lorries whose brakes have failed in a spectacular fashion during the past years. It is because of these conditions - the 18' wide carriageway - the 7,000 plus vehicles per day - the bends in the road - the lack of crossings and traffic lights - that I felt it worth while drawing your attention to these conditions. There are worse places no doubt, but the drivers seem lulled into false security, and this aspect would appear to be of interest.

There is talk of an eventual by-pass, but since this will happen in the distant future, we are having to think in terms of improvement on the present road to combat the rapidly increasing traffic through to Dover on this popular road. It is popular because of the construction of M2, 25 miles of motorway. Traffic census figures show an increase of 47% since the opening of M2, between Brenley Corner and Canterbury. The bulk of this traffic we feel continues to Dover through Bridge.

If you would like to go any further with this matter, I know you will contact the Ministry of Transport. Their ref. number is at the head of this letter.

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

5.4.1964

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

- for the attention of the Minister.

Dear Mr. Marples,

At a Public Meeting held in the Village Hall, Bridge, on Saturday April 4th., attended by speakers from the three political parties, and chaired by the Road Safety Officer for the district, the following Resolution was proposed, seconded and carried nemine contradicente:-

"That this Meeting urges the Minister of Transport, as an interim road safety measure, to provide traffic lights at the junction of Patrixbourne Road and High Street, Bridge, and to reinstate the pedestrian crossing across the High Street at this point - these being the minimum measures to combat the heavy and increasing traffic through the village."

This Resolution was proposed by Mr. Councillor H.T. Price and seconded by Mr. J.J. Williamson. All speakers at the Meeting condemned your inaction over the matter of road safety in Bridge, and the fact that your Ministry failed to send a Representative to the Meeting was underlined by the fact that we had a vacant chair at the table with the legend "Ministry of Transport Representative" printed in front of it.

Yours faithfully,

J.D. Smith

J.D. Smith.
Road Safety Officer, Bridge.

J. Purchese.

J. Purchese.
Campaign Organiser.

5.4.1964

The Clerk of the Council,
Dover Rural District Council,
Temple Ewell, Kent.

Dear Sir,

The Bridge By-Pass Campaign is probably known to your Council as a group of villagers at Bridge attempting to penetrate the monumental sloth of the Ministry of Transport and achieve safer road conditions for motorists and pedestrians alike in Bridge.

A public meeting was held yesterday in the Village Hall at Bridge. The Ministry had been asked to send a representative, and so had the three political parties who are entering candidates in the forthcoming General Election. The politicians came, but the Ministry sent a letter.

Out of the discussion, chaired by Mr. J.D. Smith, Road Safety Officer, came the suggestion that the six villages (or districts) affected by the increase in A2 traffic - Boughton, Harbledown, Bridge, Lydden, Kearsney and Temple Ewell - should combine in representations to the Ministry. Mr. A.J. Ross said that unified strength of that kind might well achieve more than the individual efforts of various local groups.

I would like to approach your Council with regard particularly to Lydden, Kearsney and Temple Ewell to see if such a suggestion meets with approval in broad outline. I am well aware that you might feel that an official body such as your Council cannot possibly align itself with a highly unofficial body such as the Bridge By-Pass Campaign. However, if your Council knew of one unofficial person in much the same position as myself who might be interested, forces might be joined satisfactorily.

Letters are being written to the other authorities on the same lines as this; we should be very glad to hear your comments.

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

Bulletin No. 3. 9th April, 1964.

THE BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN.

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

Dear Supporter,

The March was excellent from the publicity viewpoint, resulting in photographs and reports in "The Times", "The Guardian", "The Daily Telegraph", "The Daily Express", "The Daily Herald" - and fully reported in "The Kentish Gazette", "The Kent Herald", "The Kentish Express", "The Kentish Observer" and "The Kent Messenger".

We want to thank everyone who turned out for this demonstration, and those who kindly gave great assistance in the provision of vehicles and exhibits. Thank you all very much. By the way; did you see the coverage on ITN News later the same evening?

The Meeting on 4th April proved that there is much genuine concern in the village about the road safety conditions. Mr. A. J. Ross, representing Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P., promised all support at county level and explained how priorities are often a difficult problem to resolve. Mr. George Cobbett, a member of the local Road Safety Committee, stated what had been done at local level and put forward suggestions about street lighting which will be taken up with the appropriate authority. Mr. Ted Moss spoke of the need to ginger up authority and to tackle the problem of road accidents as a whole. He gave the opinion that road-fund taxation for heavy goods vehicles should be stiffened, to put goods back on the railways and other forms of transport, thus relieving roads such as Bridge High Street.

From the floor came regrets that Sir Leslie Thomas was not present. Mr. Ross explained that Sir Leslie was engaged elsewhere. From Councillor H. T. Price came the proposal of a resolution "that this Meeting urges the Minister of Transport, as an interim road safety measure, to provide traffic lights at the junction of Patrixbourne Road and High Street, Bridge, and to reinstate the pedestrian crossing across the High Street at this point - these being the minimum measures to combat the heavy and increasing traffic through the village". This has been forwarded to Mr. E. Marples. Of the other suggestions made at the meeting, you will receive reports in due course when the suggestions have been investigated.

The main point that arises from the meeting is that all action must be directed at the Ministry of Transport. The County Council is doing all it can, and giving our campaign every sympathy. We must hammer relentlessly at the

AFTER THE PROTE

VILLAGERS C
SAFETY ME

The Man Behind Bridge's Campaign

John Purchese, aged 39, organiser of the Bridge Bypass Campaign, lives in the village with his wife and five children. This dynamic, bearded, mild-mannered man is a sound mixer engaged on T.V. films produced by British and American companies.

For eight years he was films consultant to the British Red Cross Society's publicity department, and he is a shop steward in the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians — the film worker's union.

He first took up the cause of the village's dangerous High Street when a man was killed in an accident outside the Village Hall. Since then, he has met opposition and official procrastination with a wry but determined humour.

Each letter he has written to the Ministry has been answered by a different minor official. So now he heads his letters "For circulation to" each official with whom he has had correspondence, begins them "Gentlemen" instead of "Dear Sir," and addresses them to "The Ministry Group."

He hopes satire may eventually prick Whitehall into action.

He says he has found it difficult to get any action from local Conservative officials, and showed reporters a letter he received from the local Conservative Association which states, "I would have thought it better to keep politics out of this subject; it is purely administration."

"I am not anti-Conservative," says Mr. Purchese, but he maintains that local communities' problems are, ipso facto, political questions.

He is determined to get someone to take some kind of action.

Kentish Observer. 7.4.1964

ST MARCH

CALL FOR ASURES

Councillor Urges Combined Action By Six Villages

LABOUR AND LIBERAL PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES, A COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND A ROAD SAFETY OFFICER WERE ON THE PLATFORM AT THE PUBLIC PROTEST MEETING IN BRIDGE VILLAGE HALL ARRANGED BY THE BRIDGE BYPASS CAMPAIGN ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

And there was a place set at the speakers' table for another interested party: a Ministry of Transport official spokesman. But the man from the Ministry did not come.

Another invited guest who was conspicuous by his absence was Sir Leslie Thomas, Canterbury's Conservative M.P.

"Why isn't Sir Leslie here?" demanded an angry speaker from the floor, Mr. John Williamson, of Beech Mount, Conyngham Lane, Bridge.

COMBINED ATTACK

"He has a prior engagement," replied County Councillor A. J. Ross, who came in his stead.

It was Councillor Ross who suggested that the Bridge committee get together with five other Kent villages who also have traffic problems—Boughton, Harbledown, Temple Ewell, Lydden and Kearsney—in the hope that a combined attack on Whitehall would produce more results than a solo effort.

The meeting agreed to this.

Resolutions to restore Bridge's pedestrian crossing, and to press for traffic lights and for speed limit signs at the ends of the village were passed; but the one proposal that nobody suggested was that the campaign should press for a bypass. And this was odd because, after all, the meeting had been called by the Bridge Bypass Campaign.

"The entire road, from Brenley Corner to Dover, is in a most terrible state when you think of the amount of traffic that is required to pass through," said Mr. John Purchese, organiser of the campaign.

"Temple Ewell are contemplating a protest march on the lines of the one we had in Bridge last Sunday."

HE SYMPATHISED

Councillor Ross told the villagers that he sympathised with them, and had in fact been fighting "the permanent officials in Whitehall" to get conditions on the road improved for years.

Sir Leslie Thomas, too, was doing all he could to improve matters, he said.

"I am not sure that the time has not arrived when you might approach the other villages—Boughton, Harbledown, Temple Ewell, Lydden and Kearsney—to see if they will join you in a protest, and see if the Minister will receive a deputation from the six villages," said the Councillor.

This was such a serious matter that it needed the combined help of everyone, no matter what his political colour, to bring it to a successful conclusion.

53RD ON LIST

Sir Leslie Thomas had commented that Bridge was only 53rd on the list of traffic "black spots" in Kent. This was correct, and it indicated that the efforts of the Bridge villagers alone might not be sufficient to produce results.

"This IS a political issue," Mr. Ted Moss told the villagers. "Your protest is a protest against Government policy."

Permanent officials in Whitehall merely carried out the policies laid down by the Government of the day, he said, and the only way to ensure that those policies were changed was to change the Government.

He pledged that, if he was elected to represent Canterbury in Parliament, he would personally make it his business to "plague and badger" the Minister of Transport until he got some action on Bridge's problem.

The Labour parliamentary candidate, Mr. George Cobbett, said he would be "very grateful" to hear of any suggestions for the best way of improving traffic conditions in Bridge High Street.

A BLOODBATH?

A questioner from the floor referred to the fact of Bridge's low place on the "black spot" list, and asked, "Am I to assume that we have got to have a bloodbath before we get anything done?"

Answered Mr. Ted Moss, "Yes, sir!"

Councillor H. D. Price, Chairman of Bridge Parish Council and also a Bridge-Blean Rural District councillor, proposed that the campaign press for a pedestrian crossing and traffic lights. His proposition was carried.

Also carried was a proposal by Mr. John Williamson that the campaign press for signs to be erected at either end of the village warning motorists that they were approaching a danger spot or at least proclaiming, "Bridge welcomes careful drivers."

Mr. Purchese warned that the Ministry of Transport had already refused permission for "black spot" 'signs.

NOT EXHAUSTED

And he replied to a suggestion from Councillor Ross that the campaign had exhausted all the possibilities for bringing the village's problem to the attention of the Ministry with the single word, "No."

And at an impromptu press conference after the meeting, Mr. Purchese warned reporters that they might find their weekends occupied very frequently throughout the summer.

The chair at the meeting was taken by Mr. T. D. Smith, Bridge - Blean R.D.C.'s Road Safety Officer.

BACKGROUND ON BRIDGE

According to the Bypass Campaign, Bridge's population is now not far short of 1,000. Between July 1st, 1958 and June 30th, 1963, the Ministry of Transport have said that there were 20 accidents involving personal injury in Bridge High Street. Five people were killed, nine were seriously injured and 19 slightly injured in these accidents. This was before the opening of the M2.

There are no pedestrian crossings or traffic lights in the village, but a school crossing patrol was recently instituted.

A Bloodbath Before Anything Is Done?

Kentish Gazette 10.4.64

Asks Bridge Villager

"Are we to have a bloodbath before anything is done?" asked a Bridge villager at Saturday's meeting to discuss the road traffic problem.

But, in spite of speeches by political candidates and councillors, the meeting failed to find common ground to solve the problem of eight fatal accidents in five years.

A cattle grid across the A.2 at either end of the village, traffic lights at the Bekesbourne Road junction, accident black spot signs—and finally the by-pass. These were the things discussed.

On the platform were Mr. Ted Moss (Liberal Parliamentary candidate), Mr. George Cobbett (Labour Parliamentary candidate), Cllr. A. J. Ross (representing Sir Leslie Thomas, the Conservative M.P.), Mr. John Purchese (the meeting's organiser) and Mr. J. D. Smith (chairman), who is the local Road Safety Officer. In the main body of the hall were about 40 villagers.

Also on the platform was an empty chair—put there for the spokesman of the Ministry of Transport, who had declined an invitation to attend.

Stronger Action?

The meeting was opened by Mr. Purchese, who said he would like to see some stronger action from Sir Leslie Thomas. Bridge was asking for a safer road through the village.

"We know our by-pass is coming eventually, but we will not wait. We want crossings, lights or anything that can be put up overnight if only the Ministry will put their minds to it," he said.

Cllr. A. J. Ross said he had been trying for the past four years to get something done for Bridge. He had been trying to get a new road. Twice he thought he had got what he wanted, but the Ministry had come along to alter things.

Then there had been a scheme for a new motor road from Brenley Corner to Dover. There were several meetings about it, but it then was said that until the Channel Tunnel question was settled there could be no decision about that road.

New Road

The last thing he had heard was that they would extend the Maidstone by-pass to the tunnel entrance, building a new road to link the end of the M.2 motorway and the A.20.

"If these new roads are to be built, then all the allocation of money for Kent's roads building programme will go on them," he said.

Cllr. Ross pointed out that he had heard from a policeman that since the motorway had opened traffic from Brenley Corner had increased by 47 per cent.

Many people who had used the A.20 now used the M.2. He thought that something had to be done to improve matters.

"I'm not sure," he said, "that the time has not arrived that you might tackle the problem with the other villages involved — Boughton, Harbledown, Lydden and others—to see if they will join you in a joint protest. I feel that with such a serious matter you want everybody's help, irrespective of politics."

Dangerous Place

Said Mr. Cobbett: "Bridge is undoubtedly a very dangerous place in which to live. It appears that the risk of death on the road in Bridge is 15 times greater than in the country as a whole. This danger is increasing, particularly this year which will feel the effect of the Dartford to Purfleet Tunnel and the M.2 coming into full use for the first full year.

"Bridge has already lost a considerable amount of amenity value before the road safety factor became so intolerable as it is today," he went on. "There has been more than enough time for this problem to have been settled."

Mr. Moss said that Bridge's protest was one against Government policy, which decided the future of trunk roads.

"To continue to permit, in increasing numbers, the modern lethal weapons of heavy trucks, coaches and motor cars in such close proximity to vulnerable flesh and blood pedestrians, is suicidal," he said.

Roads Policy

Having outlined the Liberal roads policy, Mr. Moss said, "I understand that Bridge just isn't in the bloodstained county league table of road deaths that has been quoted by Sir Leslie Thomas. What an indictment of Government road policy that there are 52 more towns and villages in this county alone with traffic problems far more deadly than those of Bridge.

"How many more families must suffer bereavement before dormant consciences are aroused, and we as a nation insist that immediate steps be taken to abate the slaughter on our roads?"

During question time, Cllr. Ross said that now that the Channel Tunnel was to have its entrance at Westenhanger it could be expected that the A.20 would become the major road and the M.2 and Thanet Way would fulfil the need of taking traffic to Margate and Ramsgate.

A by-pass for Bridge would cost about £1 million and nobody could expect the Government to go about the country spending money on by-passes like that without the most careful consideration.

"There are," he continued, "hundreds of villages in the country in the same position as Bridge. If by-passes are to be provided for all of them, the taxpayer will become bankrupt."

A villager who asked why Sir Leslie Thomas was absent was told that he was at another engagement.

A resolution calling for traffic lights at the junction of Bekesbourne Road with the A.2 was carried.

Mr. Purchese said that it was intended shortly to carry out a 24-hour census of traffic using the road through the village. He would also take up the question of approaching other villages about a joint protest. And his last word to villagers?

"Please be careful as you go out of the door!"

Kent Herald 8.4.1964

THE CITY AS I SEE IT

A weekly commentary on local events

BY MALCOLM MITCHELL

THE campaign at Bridge for a by-pass hots up. And, oddly enough, Canterbury's Conservative agent, Cllr. Ted Brown, has done a little to keep things at boiling point.

He was approached by the organiser of protests, Mr. John Purchese, to secure the attendance of Sir Leslie Thomas, the Conservative M.P., at Saturday's meeting in Bridge Village Hall.

It was pointed out that the Liberal and Labour viewpoints were to be put by the prospective Parliamentary candidates, Mr. Ted Moss and Mr. George Cobbett, respectively.

What was Cllr. Brown's reply? A most astounding statement—and, for one so shrewd, a trifle idiotic.

In a letter to Mr. Purchese on March 13, Cllr. Brown said . . . "I would have thought it better to keep politics out of this subject. It is purely administration."

Cllr. Brown! I'm sure you need neither myself nor Mr. Purchese to point out that the body responsible for administrating the country's road system is the Government. Be it Conservative, Socialist, Liberal or Communist controlled, it is a question for the Government. And today, even locally, what is Government but a question of politics?

I am surprised that you should have made such a naive statement.

More about Bridge

I was a little disappointed in the meeting on Saturday. After the effective demonstrations that have taken place in the village, one would have expected something definite to have come out of a protest meeting of villagers.

But what did we get? The only concrete demand was for traffic lights at the Bekesbourne Road junction. For the life of me, I cannot see how this is going to stop motorists speeding down either of the hills into the village and getting into the same trouble as they do now.

What else was suggested? Well, one villager thought the most effective way of deterring speeding drivers would be to put cattle grids across the roads on either hill! It was also suggested that they might press for accident black spot signs. But all agreed it was a waste of time—planning permission would never be granted.

But whatever happened to all the talk that has been going on about demanding a by-pass for the village? One villager suggested it—but it was passed over quickly and was never put to the meeting as a substantive proposition. Seems to me that the meeting was all a waste of villagers' time—and mine.

And just a little more

It is fair to say that the Ministry of Transport has not come out of the Bridge affair in any good light. They declined to send a spokesman to Saturday's meeting. Fair enough.

But there seems to have been one hell of a lot of buck passing going on in Whitehall. I don't know how many letters Mr. Purchese has written to the Ministry.

But I do know that six different people have answered them. It looks as though one gets fed up with the whole affair and then passes it on quickly.

So when Mr. Purchese writes now to the Ministry he addresses his letters to all six and starts off "Gentlemen."

"That way I hope that my message is getting to the right person," he told me on Saturday.

THE CALL FOR ACTION

AFTER the meeting, Mr. Purchese, one of the by-pass campaign organisers at Bridge, wrote to Mr. Anthony Wedgwood Benn, the Socialist's Shadow Transport Minister; the director of the Road Research Laboratory; and to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marples). He also wrote to the clerks of Dover Rural and Bridge-Blean Rural Councils, and to the town clerk of Faversham.

Kent Messenger. 10.4.1964

BRIDGE PRESSES ON WITH ROAD-SAFETY CAMPAIGN

THEY don't know very much about Bridge Village in Whitehall. To the men in the Ministry of Transport, it is a file number — HGP/14/42/068.

Bridge is not a paper town. It is a down-to-earth place of 900 people on the London-Dover A.2.

Because it is not very high up on the Ministry's death-chart, the village has no by-pass, no black-spot signs, no traffic lights, no pedestrian crossings.

Two weeks ago the villagers staged a mock funeral procession along the High Street in protest against road conditions, and on Saturday they went to a meeting in the village hall.

There was a place on the platform for a man from the Ministry, but his chair was empty. A letter from Whitehall talked about "nothing more we can do . . .", etc., etc.

The people of Bridge were told that only a "bloodbath" would earn them priority, although five have died and more than a score have been seriously injured on the A.2 at Bridge since 1958.

But they also learned that Bridge is not alone in its fight against red tape. They may join up with five other villages — Boughton, Harbledown, Lydden, Temple Ewell, and Kearsney—in a joint appeal to the Ministry to do something about the ever-increasing danger on the A.2 between its junction with the M.2, and Dover.

County Councillor Mr. A. J. Ross told the meeting that since the M.2 was opened, traffic from Brenley Corner to Canterbury had increased by 47 per cent.

"You might well approach the five other villages to get them in a joint protest to ask the Minister to receive a deputation," said Mr. Ross.

Mr. John Purchese said Temple Ewell were contemplating a protest march down the A.2 during the peak summertime traffic. The entire road from Brenley Corner was in a most deplorable state, he said.

Mr. Ted Moss, Liberal prospective Parliamentary candidate for the Canterbury division, said the Government permitted one of the most important trunk roads in the country to go right through the centre of a thriving community.

Bridge was not in the blood-stained table of road deaths. "What a complete indictment of their road policy that there are 52 more places in this county alone with a problem far more deadly, in the true sense of the word; than Bridge.

"How many more families have to be bereaved before we insist that immediate steps be taken to abate this appalling slaughter?" he asked.

Mr. George Cobbett, Socialist prospective Parliamentary candidate for the division, said the risk of death on the road in Bridge, in relation to the population, was 15 times greater than in the country as a whole.

He declared: "The M.2 is an unfinished piece of work. We have got to take it down to Dover in order to complete the job".

Footnote: In a pamphlet given to villagers, Mr. Purchese said Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P. for Canterbury, had promised to ask the Minister a question in the Commons about Bridge High Street. File HGP/14/42/068 is expected to grow and grow

Kent Messenger. 10.4.'64



THE EMPTY CHAIR reserved for the man from the Ministry of Transport is third from the left. Speaking is Mr. George Cobbett, and seated (left to right) are Mr. Ted Moss, Mr. J. D. Smith (road safety officer, Bridge-Blean Council, the chairman, Mr. John Purchese, and Mr. A. J. Ross.



VILLAGERS OF BRIDGE who attended the protest meeting on road safety in the village hall on Saturday.

Kent Messenger 10.4.'64

MUST THERE BE A BLOOD BATH?

Protest village steps up fight for safety

THERE will have to be a blood-bath in the village of Bridge, near Canterbury, before safety measures are taken to prevent traffic speeding through the winding main street, anxious villagers were told on Saturday.

The villagers had been called together by the Bridge By-pass Campaign, headed by Mr. John Purchese. He said he had continually pressed the Ministry of Transport to provide safety measures, but had been refused every time.

The campaigners have been active for some time, pressing for more safety for the villagers of Bridge, which straddles the A2 trunk road on the route to Dover.

Mr. Purchese and campaign secretary Brian Lewis called Saturday's meeting to follow up their successful protest march on Easter Sunday, when holiday traffic was halted for hundreds of yards in both directions.

Speakers were Mr. Purchese, Mr. A. J. Ross, the village's county councillor, Mr. George Cobbett, prospective Labour parliamentary candidate for the division, and Mr. Ted Moss, prospective Liberal parliamentary candidate. The Ministry of Transport was invited to attend, but declined.

In reply to a questioner, Mr. Moss said the position was that if several people were killed in the village something would probably be done. "It is true that if we have a blood-bath the Ministry will sit up and start taking notice."

Eight people have been killed by traffic in Bridge during the past five years. Mr. Purchese said he had asked the Ministry if "Black Spot" signs could be erected—but it had refused.

Mr. Ross, a member of Bridge-Blean Rural Council, said he had been trying to get something done for the village for four years. His efforts had been thwarted, and the latest position was that the Maidstone by-pass would be extended to the mouth of the proposed Channel Tunnel, and a link road would be built from the M2 to the A20.

"If these roads are to be built then all the allocation for Kent will go on them."

He said he recently saw a spokesman from the Ministry of Transport who had said that since the M2 opened, traffic from Brenley Corner, at the end of the M2, had increased by 47 per cent.

"He said he felt certain the Ministry would shortly have to make a start on improvements on the A2 from Brenley Corner to Dover."

Mr. Ross said he felt that the time had arrived for all the villages concerned, from Brenley Corner to Dover, to get together for a joint campaign. The other villages are Harbledown, Boughton, Temple Ewell, Kearsney and Lydden.

Mr. Cobbett said Bridge was undoubtedly a dangerous place in which to live. "It appears that the risk of death on the road here is 15 times greater than in the country as a whole. This danger is bound to go on increasing, particularly in this year, with the opening of the Dartford-Purfleet Tunnel and the M2 coming into full use.

"There has been more than enough time for this matter to be settled—whatever the problems have been."

Mr. Moss said the protest was in fact against the current transport policy, which allowed one of its most important trunk roads to go through a thriving community of people. "This is suicidal," he said.

"It is the appalling lack of urgency that worries me. How many more families have got to suffer bereavement before something is done?"

A villager said that someone would be killed very soon if nothing was done. "If a bus comes down the hill and crashes we will have a by-pass sooner than we think," he said.

Mr. H. D. Price, chairman of the parish council and a member of Bridge-Blean Council, suggested the erection of traffic lights at the Bekesbourne cross-roads, and this was adopted. It will be put to the Ministry of Transport.

Kentish Express 10.4.70

From Anthony Wedgwood Benn M.P.

8 April 1964

Dear Mr. Purchese,

Thank you for sending me the material about the Bridge By-Pass Campaign. I have sent this on to George Strauss M.P. who is our spokesman on Transport.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony Wedgwood Benn

10th April, 1964.

Dear Mr. Purchese,

Tony Wedgwood-Benn has passed your letter to me as the Party's Front Bench Spokesman on transport matters.

I read carefully all you say and I wish I could help. But it is very difficult to see how I or my Parliamentary colleagues can do so. We have constantly brought before us similar and no doubt equally justifiable complaints from all over the country, to say nothing of the equally strong and numerous protests about proposed Beeching closures. But these matters cannot be effectively debated or certainly settled in Parliament. All we can do is to express publicly there our criticism of the Minister's actions, and even then the opportunities for doing so are infrequent. The only effective protest action which can be taken in such matters as the road traffic danger at Bridge is through the Local Authorities and the pressure of public opinion on these Authorities, and I see you are doing everything possible in that direction.

I am however most grateful to you for sending us your letter and the enclosed leaflet, as the more detailed evidence we can get of the country's road traffic and road safety problems, the better equipped we are to pursue these matters in the Commons.

Yours sincerely,

G R Strauss

The Rt. Hon. G.R. Strauss, M.P.

RESTRICTED.

Bridge-Blean Rural District Council.

I. F. SOILLEUX, D.M.A.
CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

TELEPHONE,
CANTERBURY ~~4766~~ (2 LINES) 66411

Council Offices,
Old Dover Road,
Canterbury.

My ref: H5/60/1/1

10th April, 1964

Dear Mr. Purchese,

London - Dover Road, A.2.

Thank you for your letter of the 5th April.

You may be interested to know that the District Council is attempting to penetrate the same fog as yourselves, but of course in rather a more orthodox manner and in respect of the whole length of the road from Brenley Corner to Dover.

I think therefore that it would be better if the District Council acted ostensibly on their own, but behind the scenes you might keep me informed of any progress you may make. I, on my side, will reciprocate.

The only person I know who may be interested in joining forces with you is Mrs. I. Allworthy of 41 Highfield Close, Harbledown, and I suggest you approach her, as I feel sure she will help in some way or other.

Yours sincerely,

Clerk.

J. Purchese, Esq.,
"Rosebank",
High Street,
Bridge,
Near Canterbury, Kent.

S/JA

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
St. Christopher House, Southwark Street, LONDON S.E.1
Telegrams: Transminry, London, Telex
Telephone: WATerloo 7999, *ext.*

Our reference: G.T.I.
Your reference:

7th April, 1964

Dear Sir

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 5th April addressed to the Minister.

Your letter has been passed to the Minister's Divisional Road Engineer at the above address for his attention.

Yours faithfully,

L O'Donohue

J. Purchese, Esq.,
Bridge By-Pass Campaign.

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

8th April, 1964.

Dear Mr. Purchese,

It seems from the Kentish Observer of the 7th April and the Kent Herald of the 8th April, that you showed my letter to you of 13th March to the press after your meeting last Saturday. This letter was not written for publication and the law holds that the copyright of a letter is vested in the writer. I would be obliged if, in the future, should you wish a letter for publication you will let me know before hand, otherwise I shall expect you to observe the common courtesies in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

J. Purchese, Esq.,
Rose Bank,
High Street,
BRIDGE,
Nr. Canterbury.



THE TIMES.

13.4.1964

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

Dear Mr. Brown,

I wonder if you would be so kind as to pass on the Campaign's sincere thanks to Cllr. A.J. Ross who represented Sir Leslie Thomas at the meeting held on April 4th., 1964.

It was a great pleasure to meet him, and to hear of the work he has done in the County Council chamber towards road safety along A2. I am sure he will be interested to learn that we have taken his advice in joinging up forces with the other villages and preliminary correspondence has already been received on the matter.

Thank you for your letter dated April 8th. in which you point out that you would have written differently had you known the letter was going to appear in the local press. I am sorry that you have been put in such a predicament since naturally I assumed you said to me what you would gladly acknowledge publicly - however I must point out that my file of correspondence is openly available to anyone who has an interest in the matter. Not only have the Press read all in it, but so has an Inspector of Police, both the Labour and Liberal Candidates and a host of others. It was offered to Sir Leslie Thomas to read when I saw him on 20.7.1963.

Sir Leslie Thomas wrote recently that he shortkly hoped to have some news, and the Ministry has recently told me that they are passing on some information to him. I wonder if you could arrange a meeting with him, so that I might pursue the matter. A Saturday would be preferable. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Gardiner

13.4.1964

Mrs. I. Allworthy,
41, Highfield Close,
Harbledown,
Canterbury, Kent.

Dear Mrs. Allworthy,

I recently contacted the Bridge-Blean R.D.C. on the suggestion of Cllr. A.J. Ross, to see if there were private people eager to press the Ministry of Transport about the village black-spots on the A2 between Brenley Corner and Dover - and in the case of Bridge-Blean R.D.C., the portion of Harbledown in their care was the primary interest.

Mr. I.F. Soilleux kindly replied, giving me your name as that of a person very interested in reducing the traffic danger at Harbledown.

What has been envisaged is a protest, possibly a deputation to the Ministry, of interested persons from Boughton, Harbledown, Bridge, Kearsney, Temple Ewell and Lydden.

As yet I have not heard from the Dover R.D.C.; but in the meantime, could I ask you if you are willing to represent the interests of Harbledown in any action designed to bring to the Minister's attention most forcibly the feelings of those forced to live on the main artery to the Continent ?

The various R.D.C.'s and Faversham Corporation, to whom I have also written, are of course pressing through official channels. What we at Bridge are hoping to form is an unofficial but vocal group who will eventually see improvements in A2.

Yours sincerely,

John Purchese.

16.4.1964

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

HGP/14/42/068

Dear Sir,

I would be obliged to know whether you are relying on the intervention of St. Christopher, your Patron Saint, in the prevention of accidents in Bridge High Street this summer.

This is a serious question, requiring an answer. I am asking it because I can see nothing being done by the Ministry of Transport to make safer this road, and having eliminated the obvious I have to accept the remaining theory - as a certain gentleman once pointed out.

If the Ministry had sent a representative to the Public Meeting held a fortnight ago he would have heard a questioner from the floor ask whether there had to be a bloodbath at Bridge before something was done - to which the answer came from one of the politicians on the platform, "Yes, Sir !".

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

18.4.1964

Dear Gentlemen of the Ministry,

My husband is the Organiser of the Bridge By-Pass Campaign. No doubt the name at the end of this letter will be familiar to some of you as I know he has corresponded with you frequently on this matter - for over two years.

I know that I speak for all the mothers who live in Bridge. We are desperately worried about the ever-increasing danger to our children from the lunatic motorists who treat our village street as a racetrack.

Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P., recently wrote a letter to the Kentish Gazette. In it he said that "Happily" Bridge is not one of the first 50 worst places in Kent. Apart from shuddering to think of the unfortunate people who have to endure life in those 52 places rated as worse than Bridge (for to say the least of it they must be hell) I am puzzled. Happily for whom I wonder ? For us ? Or for the next crash victim ? Perhaps he or she could be classed as a human sacrifice to allocate a few more points and put us in 52nd. place. Or perhaps, happily for the Gentlemen at the Ministry who can continue to sit back and murmur the usual platitudes and do - nothing.

It is quite inconceivable that in this day and age it is seemingly impossible to get any action to make the main road to Dover a little safer.

Why can we not have some traffic lights ? Surely one set each end of the village street would not stretch the Nation's budget too far. This at least would slow the traffic down and limit the number of vehicles in the village at one time. No doubt there is some excellent reason why this is not possible, and I would be glad to hear it.

Without meaning any disrespect, I wonder how the Ministerial wives would like to have to push their babies in prams along a pavement 32" wide, with a huge lorry or a petrol tanker racing through and practically brushing their coatsleeves ? Believe me, Gentlemen, it is very frightening.

We dare not let our children walk along the village street without an adult in attendance for fear that they might stumble into the road and be crushed under the wheels of some vehicle.

Faith, it is said, can move mountains; Ministeries may take a little longer. Our By-Pass Campaign slogan is "Never take No! for an answer".

Yours faithfully,

M.J. Purchese

M.J. Purchese.(Mrs).

KENT HERALD 15.4.1964

BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

To the Editor of the Kent Herald.

Dear Sir,—

If I had realised that Mr. Purchese wished my letter of March 13 to be for use in the Press, I would have made abundantly clear the differences between politics and party politics so that even your reporter, Malcolm Mitchell, could have appreciated the difference.

I am well aware that the Government of the day is responsible for administering the trunk roads and the motorways in this country. This, as I said to Mr. Purchese in my letter of March 13, is a matter of administration and I cannot see how any party in its national manifesto is going to discuss the question of a by-pass for Bridge.

Mr. Moss, the Liberal candidate, is, of course, blatantly using the campaign for a Bridge by-pass to further his Parliamentary campaign. Mr. Cobbett is doing the same thing, but in a trifle more adult way. Both these gentlemen can play this game as neither nas the slightest chance of being elected to represent this constituency. With the sitting Member. Sir Leslie Thomas, it is a different matter and he has chosen not to play party politics but to do what he can to try and get Bridge's traffic problem alleviated.

One member of the audience at the meeting last Saturday asked both political candidates what approaches they had made to their Shadow Cabinets. The answer, that they had done nothing, puts their efforts in perspective.

If Mr. Purchese had wanted Sir Leslie Thomas to attend his meeting, it would have been courtesy for him to have found out on which date Sir Leslie could attend, but Mr. Purchese doesn't do things this way. He fixes the date and then demands your presence.

Sir Leslie Thomas would be perfectly prepared to attend, on a date suitable for him, a meeting at Bridge to which those affected by the present traffic problem could be invited. He would then be able to discuss with them the approaches he has made to the Ministry, the chances of obtaining the by-pass for Bridge and to hear their views and suggestions.

This, I would suggest to Mr. Purchese, would be the proper way of getting something moving in the matter and of putting the local residents in the picture, but Sir Leslie Thomas is not going to have this matter turned into a General Election debate and provide a platform for Mr. Cobbett and Mr. Moss which they could not otherwise obtain.

E. C. F. BROWN,
Agent and Secretary,
Canterbury Division
Conservative and Unionist
Association.

BOROUGH OF FAVERSHAM

MUNICIPAL OFFICES

FAVERSHAM

TOWN CLERK
F. G. BISHOP
SOLICITOR

FAVERSHAM 2313/4

Ref: H/1/FGB 14th April, 1964

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of the 5th instant. I am wondering whether you addressed your letter to me under the impression that the village of Boughton comes within this area. In fact it is within the area of the Swale Rural District Council whose Offices are situated at Sittingbourne.

Yours faithfully,

Town Clerk

John Purchease Esq.,
Organiser,
Bridge By-Pass Campaign,
"Rosebank",
High Street,
Bridge.

19.4.1964

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

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for you on
Saturday April 18th. at your office in Canterbu t
of useful information was exchanged.

You will recall that you as
statistics quoted to you that were supplied by
Safety Officer for Bridge. The figures supplie
Mr. Smith just prior to the Easter Sunday Prote
village were: 1959-1963, 8 dead, 27 seriously in ed.

In view of the Ministry figu
same period being somewhat different, you reques r.
Smith for his source of figures. This, today, I
assured me that the source was reputable, he was
further details for reasons of confidence. I
circumstances it would be a little difficult for
further with Mr. Smith, who resides at 4, The Te

Possibly, Sir, asking for mo
figures would clear the air on this particular as
the final incontrovertible records (or so one su

It has just been pointed out
has advised, in a letter to the local Press, that ld
be perfectly prepared to attend on a date suitabl
Bridge to which those affected by the present tra
invited. He would then be able to discuss with t as
made to the Ministry, the chances of obtaining th nd
to hear their views and suggestions." The lett g
out that this would be the proper way of getting
matter.

Naturally I applaud your Agen ave
proposed to him in my answering letter in this we ight
commence his arrangements for such a meeting as so
more pressing matters this month in Canterbury.

Yours sincerely,

Joh

RESTRICTED

Dover Rural District Council

A. SYRETT, M.B.E., D.M.A., F.C.C.S.
CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

TELEPHONE: KEARSNEY 2311/2

COUNCIL OFFICES,
TEMPLE EWELL,
NR. DOVER, KENT

16th April, 1964

Dear Sir,

Trunk Road A.2.

Thank you for your letter of the 5th instant, notifying me of the Bridge By-Pass Campaign.

This Council has for many years, through its Road and Home Safety Committee, been concerned at the dangerous conditions on that part of the Trunk Road A.2. lying within this Rural District, and representations have consistently been made to the appropriate authorities with a view to the improvement of such conditions. It does appear, from recent statements, that the pressure of public opinion has at last had an effect, because I understand that the Ministry of Transport have now agreed to the preparation of a scheme for the widening of the road.

I think the Members of the Council might well individually have considerable sympathy for your efforts, but you will appreciate, I am sure, that the Council as a body must confine its activities to its own area.

A great many people are interested in the future of the Trunk Road as you can imagine, but I am afraid I am unable to suggest anyone whom you could approach in the manner you suggest.

Yours faithfully,

A. Syrett

Clerk of the Council

John Purchese, Esq.,
Organiser,
Bridge By-Pass Campaigh,
"Rosebank", High Street,
Bridge, Nr. Canterbury.

Bridge By-Pass Campaign

Bumper Post For Minister

The Minister of Transport (Mr. Ernest Marples) is to have a bumper postbag in the near future. But it won't be fan mail. For the people of Bridge will be taking yet another step forward in their demand for a by-pass.

They are busy writing letters asking for something to be done to stop the amount of traffic passing through the village. All the letters are being sent to Mr. John Purchese, organiser of the campaign, and then . . . he will post the lot to the Minister of Transport so that the letters arrive on Mr. Marples' desk simultaneously.

K.G. 17.4.64

Sir Leslie Thomas was seen for twenty minutes on Saturday, April 18th at Hawks Lane. He said that he was seeing the Minister during the following week or two, and would be pressing him for action. Sir Leslie commented that there had been considerable political inflammation in Canterbury as a result of the Campaign drawing politics into the matter. I answered that the General Election meant one of three candidates would represent Bridge by the end of the year, and it was democratic to invite the opinions of all interested parties.

THE CITY AS I SEE IT

A weekly commentary on local events

BY MALCOLM MITCHELL

ONE thing the organisers of the Bridge by-pass demands have consistently maintained is that traffic on the A2 has been increasing considerably.

What figures had they to go on? Just those supplied by the Ministry of Transport. And these came from a census taken in August, 1961. The figure given was 6,700 vehicles a day at the peak times of August — presumably Bank Holiday and weekends.

So the organisers, John Purchese and Brian Lewis, decided to conduct their own survey. A count was taking during a complete 24-hour period over the weekend.

The result? No less than 7,074 vehicles of various types passed the census point. And this was a very ordinary, rainy weekend in April. You can cut out the holiday traffic, the people rushing to catch boats at Dover, and, perhaps, cars dashing about to summer events in the locality.

Brian Lewis tells me that he contacted Dover Harbour Board to find out if traffic across the Channel was particularly heavy—the answer was "No."

"It seems to me that this census rather strengthens our hand," he told me this week.

There is no doubt about it, traffic on the A.2 must have increased considerably since the M.2 opened. Canterbury has also felt its effect, with much bigger jams than we are accustomed to at this time of the year.

But I rather fancy that Bridge, in common with the other A.2 villages, will have to wait for the proposed extension of the M.2.

Kent Herald. 22.4.64

K.G. 24.4.'64

BRIDGE TRAFFIC CENSUS

One thing the organisers of the Bridge by-pass demands have consistently maintained is that traffic on the A2 has been increasing considerably.

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Said Mr. Lewis: "You can cut out the holiday traffic, the people rushing to catch boats at Dover, and, perhaps, cars dashing about to summer events in the locality.

"I contacted Dover Harbour Board to find out if traffic across the Channel was particularly heavy—the answer was 'No.'

"It seems to me that this census rather strengthens our hand," he said.

24.4.1964

The Chairman,
Bridge-Blean Road Safety Committee,
Bridge-Blean R.D.C.,
Old Dover Road,
Canterbury, Kent.

Dear Sir,

Recently Mr. J.V. Church, of Tubewrights Limited, Kirkby Industrial Estate, Liverpool, Lancashire, called to see me concerning the dangers of Bridge High Street. Mr. Church is a salesman for his Company who manufacture and erect street furniture of all kinds, including pedestrian bridges.

A certain amount of literature, including a pamphlet "Separate Ways To Safety" was left - and this, I felt, was of sufficient interest to forward to your Committee for consideration.

Anything that separates traffic from pedestrians is potentially useful in the matter of Bridge High Street, although against the use of a bridge there are considerations such as expense, looks, the willingness of people to use such a device and in fact the ability of people who are elderly to use it.

Guard railing is also illustrated. If the Ministry were to advocate crossings as a short term measure, then guard rails might well help in between.

There was a meeting between Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P., and Mr. G.D. Galbraith, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport, yesterday. I am sure we all hope that some real measures were discussed to reduce the traffic menace in the village High Street. Unfortunately I have no information yet of the results.

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

To the Editor of the *Kent Herald*

Dear Sir,

It was illuminating to read Cllr. E. C. F. Brown's brisk denunciation last week of the campaign, the local Press and the politicians not of his party.

As organiser, I am delighted that Cllr. Brown should show such interest in what he assures me is a matter of administration. He says that I "demanded" the presence of Sir Leslie Thomas at the public meeting held on April 4, 1964.

The meeting was arranged as a follow-up to the protest march on Easter Sunday, and this dictated the date. The principal speaker was to have been the Ministry of Transport spokesman; Sir Leslie Thomas, Mr. Ted Moss and Mr. George Cobbett were invited to be supporting speakers. This is the letter that was written, of which Cllr. Brown complains:

"Dear Mr. Brown,

I tried to contact you at Hawks Lane last Saturday, but failed to do so. I understand that you have been unwell—I trust that you are better.

"My reason for writing is to say that a public meeting has been arranged for Saturday, April 4, 1964, at 2.30 p.m. in the Village Hall, Bridge, to discuss the road through the village. In the chair will be the local Road Safety Officer, and invited speakers include a spokesman from the Ministry of Transport.

"We also wish to hear the views of each Party, in view of the pending General Election, and would be most pleased if Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P., could attend on your behalf.

"There is, I know, only a month's notice—but if Sir Leslie could not manage it I am wondering if some other local Conservative might be pursuaded to put your point of view?

"The agenda is very simple: 1. Welcome from the chair. 2. Brief statement from the organisers of the Bridge By-Pass Campaign. 3. Statements by the political representatives. 4. Statement by the Ministry spokesman. 5. Questions from the floor.

"Considerable interest has been shown in the Bridge area in the statement so kindly given for inclusion in our last publication, and I am sure you will (in some way or another) wish to take advantage of this opportunity.

"Yours faithfully, John Purchese, Organiser."

Demanded? I think not. Cllr. Brown now has other matters for his attention in Canterbury for some days; when he is free possibly he would arrange the meeting he suggests in his letter. We would all be delighted to hear from Sir Leslie himself what exertions he has undertaken on behalf of his constituents in Bridge.

JOHN PURCHESE,
Organiser.

TEL CANT 62951

'The Chroughs'
41. Highfield Close
Canterbury
Kent.
28. 4. 64

John Purchese Esq.
'Rosebank'.
High Street
Bridge

Dear Mr Purchese

Please accept my apologies for the delay in writing you, due to pressure of work allocated to me from various committees.

However I am willing to help your good cause, but my spare time is very limited these days.

Four years ago I worked hard organising a petition for a Bye Pass of Canterbury & Bridge - so when I see an M.P. again he will recall my previous efforts. The ministry may well have the petition - many letters sent by me.

Yours sincerely
Joy Allwaily (Mrs)

HANSARD.

current general review of the financial relations between local and central government.

Trunk Road, Bridge (Accidents)

Sir L. Thomas asked the Minister of Transport what were the road accident statistics in the village of Bridge, near Canterbury, for the years 1959-63 inclusive.

Mr. Galbraith: There were 23 accidents on the trunk road in the village involving personal injury. Four persons were injured fatally, 13 seriously and 17 slightly.

X

House of Commons,

London, S.W.1

30.4.64

Dear Sir

I have refrained from replying to your letter until such time as I had received official figures of the Rd accidents in Bridge in view of the disparity between those I gave (also Official) you previously and those quoted at your meeting.

Yours sincerely

Leslie Thomas

Bridge By-pass

M.P. to Ask Question?

Canterbury's Member of Parliament, Sir Leslie Thomas, is to be asked to put a question in the House of Commons as to when the A.2 is likely to be improved —and when Bridge is likely to be by-passed.

Bridge-Blean Rural District Council decided this at their meeting on Wednesday after the Clerk (Mr. I. Soilleux) had said that, in view of his "abortive efforts" to obtain information, he had taken up the question with Sir Leslie.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport had told Sir Leslie that there were a number of alternative schemes under consideration, and it was not thought wise to make the various alternatives public at that time.

The Council also decided to apply to the Kent County Council for a pedestrian crossing to be reinstated in Bridge High Street at the junction of Western Avenue and A.2.

Bridge Parish Council are to be advised to ask the County Council for a contribution towards improving street lighting in the High Street and will be told that Bridge-Blean Council will support this. KG. 1.5.64

M2

THE BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

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*

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

DATE. 2.5.1964

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

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter dated 30.4.1964, with the enclosed section of Hansard recording your written question and answer regarding the record of injuries on A2 at Bridge between 1959 and 1963. I shall see to it that these figures are brought to the attention of those involved in this matter.

Further steps are being taken to join up the efforts of the villagers at Boughton, Harbledown, Bridge, Lydden, Temple Ewell and Kearsney; to bring pressure to bear on the Ministry of Transport regarding the unsatisfactory road safety on A2 at these points.

The appearance of heavy car transporters on A2, taking new cars to London, has revealed that one large foreign firm has set up office in Dover (having previously been based in London), and receives cars by air across the Channel. The cars are stored temporarily in Dover, to receive certain adjustments, and then are carried to London. It is understood that a number of other car transport firms are planning services from Dover to London. Since up to 12 cars are carried in one load this would appear to be a hazard in the narrow sections of A2 referred to above. If you would like further information, we will see that an enquiry is made.

We would be pleased to hear of any further thoughts on the suggestion of your Agent, that you should address the villagers of Bridge on the matter of road safety.

Yours sincerely,

Purchese.

John Purchese.

M2

THE BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

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

DATE. 2.5.1964

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*

Mrs. I. Allworthy,
"The Choughs",
41, Highfield Close,
Canterbury, Kent.

Dear Mrs. Allworthy,

Thank you for your letter dated 28.4.1964 where you speak of your efforts some time ago to bring a By-Pass round Canterbury and Bridge. The Ministry certainly will be holding the correspondence and petition.

Thank you for your offer of help. It is not intended to tax your limited time too hard ! At the moment we are sounding out people in all the six villages and sections of A2 who are worried by the dangerous conditions. As soon as sufficient support has been built we are proposing to launch a six village Campaign. That would mean a comprehensive name, and publicity directed to all six danger points. For example, should a march seem desirable, we would launch it at Boughton, carry the people in it to Harbledown to continue the march, and so on down to Dover. This would take a complete afternoon to accomplish and the reluctant Ministry might begin to listen after traffic jams lasting several hours are reported to them.

For the moment, however, I will enter you on our Supporters' file if I may, so that you receive all our bulletins; and more information will be available in due course.

Please write to Sir Leslie Thomas if you can. He will certainly recall your previous correspondence, and it will help to show the weight of public opinion.

Yours sincerely,

Purchese.

John Purchese.

Kentish Gazette, May 15, 1964

New Hazard For Bridge

Organisers of the Bridge campaign for a by-pass are worried about a new road safety threat to the village.

Now that the Fiat agency has been transferred to Dover, huge car transporters are using the A.2. And the situation is going to worsen, says Mr. Bryan Lewis.

"Each of these vehicles carries between eight and 16 cars. At the moment only one firm is operating the ferry service, but we hear that shortly there will be six of them.

"On top of that, I hear that there will soon be 23 cross-Channel ferries operating in every 24 hours. This, too, is going to add to the dangers, not only in Bridge, but in the other five villages who are asking for something to be done."

The campaigners are to write to the Minister of Transport pointing out the new hazards.

BRIDGE SAFETY CAMPAIGN

To the Editor,—

Is it not about time the Ministry of Transport ceased to play "cat and mouse" with the residents of Bridge and gave them some positive statements of official action which would make the High Street a safer place? It appears, however, that eight deaths and 49 injuries over a period of five years does not justify any action from the Ministry, who must, apparently, see a massacre before they act.

With the onset of summer, Dover expects the Continental traffic to rise considerably, and it can be seen that Bridge, lying on the A.2 between Dover and Canterbury, will feel the effects of that rise. Seven thousand and seventy-four vehicles passed through the village on a wet weekend during April and 50 per cent seasonal increase is not unlikely.

Children, and old people from The Close, are endangered by traffic coming through the village, quite often at speeds in excess of the 30 m.p.h. restriction imposed on the road.

Considering the above facts, I fail to see the point made by a correspondent calling himself "Local Yokel," who, in your edition of March 26, 1964, likened a by-pass to throwing old tins into a neighbour's garden. Admittedly, Bridge doesn't want the traffic, because how can one expect a road only 18ft. 6in. wide in places to contend with heavy traffic for which it was not designed? I feel that a more appropriate likeness to the situa- is "bolting the stable door before the donkey escapes."

However, I can assure "Local Yokel" that I did take his advice to plant "your taters on Good Friday."

ANGRY YOUNG MAN.

KG. 8.5.'64

BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

To the Editor,—

Cllr. A. J. Ross, at a public meeting held at Bridge on April 4, suggested that the villagers of Boughton, Harbledown, Bridge, Lydden, Kearsney and Temple Ewell should combine in their efforts to achieve safer road conditions on the A.2 between Brenley Corner and Dover.

The Bridge By-Pass Campaign welcomed this suggestion, and as a move towards creating an A.2 GROUP which could penetrate the monumental sloth of the Ministry of Transport with an increased weight of public opinion, now appeals to anyone living in the named traffic danger spots to communicate with the organisers of the Bridge By-Pass Campaign at the address printed at the foot of this letter.

The A.2 GROUP will ensure that the present Minister, and any subsequent holder of the office, will be acutely aware of the road dangers that exist and are increasing in these Kentish villages. There is a great deal being said about road safety at the moment, here is something that your readers can do.

JOHN PURCHESE.

Rosebank,
High Street,
Bridge,
Canterbury.

K.G. 29.5.'64

'To penetrate the sloth of Ministry'

VILLAGERS at Bridge, near Canterbury, who are campaigning for a by-pass to cut accidents on the London-Dover A2, are creating an "A2 Group."

Mr. John Purchese, of Rosebank, High Street, Bridge, told the KENT MESSENGER on Wednesday that their move followed a suggestion from County Councillor Mr. A. J. Ross that the people of Boughton, Lydden, Harbledown, Bridge, Kearsney and Temple Ewell, should unite in their efforts to get safer conditions on the A2 between Brenley Corner and Dover.

Said Mr. Purchese, "The A2 Group could penetrate the monumental sloth of the Ministry of Transport with an increased weight of public opinion.

"The A2 Group will ensure that the present Minister, and any subsequent holder of the office, will be actually aware of the road dangers that exist and are increasing in these Kentish villages."

KM. 29.5.'64

CHILDREN'S WALK TO SCHOOL

To the Editor,—

In your issue of June 12, Mr. R. J. E. Waye is reported as saying that "the question of danger for children was over-emphasised. On Saturdays and Sundays, when the volume of traffic was considerable, they were allowed to go to the cinema."

What some parents allow their children to do at weekends may be deplorable, but it is their own responsibility. But Bishopsbourne parents with children of school age are compelled to send their children to school along a hazardous road. The responsibility for their children thus becomes that of the Education Committee.

May I say that in my opinion only the careful road training of the children and the skilled driving of the heavy lorries which come along the road from Bridge to Bishopsbourne have prevented serious accidents occurring.

So I was glad to read that consideration is to be given to the matter again, as what parents object to is not so much the distance as the danger.

L. F. GEDDES
(Rector of Bishopsbourne).

The Rectory,
Bishopsbourne, 19.6.'64
KG

Speeding At Bridge

Six Motorists Fined

Six motorists were fined for speeding through Bridge on May 15, by St. Augustine's magistrates at Canterbury on Wednesday. The court was told that they were caught in a Police radar trap.

They were: Denis Moat, of 23 Shipman Avenue, Canterbury (43 m.p.h.), £5; Arnold G. Fairbeard, of 2 Selling Cottages, Adisham (42 m.p.h.), £4; Andrew R. Anderson, of 119 Marshall Road, Rainham (41 m.p.h.), £5; Leonard Hutchinson, of 47 Pelham Road, Gravesend (41 m.p.h.), £5; Michael J. Bottomley, of 109 St. Andrew Road, Coulsden, Surrey (43 m.p.h.), £5; and David A. Morgan, of 34 Nursery Road, Meopham (44 m.p.h.), £7. 19.6.'64 KG.

CHILDREN'S WALK TO SCHOOL

To the Editor,—

Mr. Waye's statement that a boy was conveyed to and from school (presumably at Bridge) from Bridge Hill is interesting. The houses furthest up Bridge hill are still nearer the school than any house in Bishopsbourne. There would seem to be no reason, therefore, why special facilities could not be provided for Bishopsbourne children, if thought necessary. A rather larger bus is all that is needed.

As it is, all children going to secondary schools and some of those going to Bridge are provided with transport. There remain a group aged from five to 11 who do not qualify. In the not-too-distant past, all these children would have gone to school in Bishopsbourne itself. Now they have to walk along a road with two dangerous stretches where the road winds, the low banks are still high enough to hide a small child from a driver's view and the bend near Bridge has a false camber.

Even an experienced driver, unfamiliar with that stretch, can be caught out—and might

Continued in next column.

Continued from previous column.

well find himself unable to avoid a child. May we have action before that occurs?

As for Mr. Waye's question about what parents would say if their children were made to cycle along the A.2, may I content myself with saying that as no such fantastic suggestion has been put forward by the Education Authorities, discussion of it is irrelevant.

L. F. GEDDES,
Rector of
Bishopsbourne.

The Rectory,
Bishopsbourne. KG. 3.7.'64

BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

To the Editor,—

It would appear that the Ministry of Transport have little, if any, interest in the plight of the residents of Bridge. I say this advisedly in view of the fact that after two months they have not replied to a batch of letters written to them on the subject, and also the fact that they did not send a representative (as they were invited) to a meeting following the Easter Sunday march.

Two conclusions can be drawn from this situation: First, that they have no interest, and/or second, that they are unable to do anything.

Taking the first point, I think that the Ministry have made their "laisser-faire" attitude quite apparent. On the second point, I feel that their hands are only tied by the "red tape" surrounding their accident statistics, which would probably decrease if places such as Bridge were by-passed.

Having stated my supposition of the official attitude, let me set out the conditions of road safety under which an increasing number of people are living in the village.

The High Street is part of the London-Dover A.2 road, which still carries a high percentage of Continental traffic, which, I might add, passes through the restricted area at speeds far in excess statutory 30 m.p.h. Not only does speed present hazards, but they are added to by the width of the road (18ft. 6ins. wide in places) as well as its winding nature.

It thus becomes apparent that crossing the High Street, in peak times particularly, is something of an adventure which can be dangerous if undertaken by the very young and the elderly, not to mention women with prams.

In due course this danger will increase because the population is not static. New housing estates will house more young families, as well as the elderly, who do, of course, need special consideration.

The London-Continental traffic has of late started to constitute motor car transporters, in addition to lorries, buses, coaches, etc. In certain parts of the road mentioned above it is difficult, owing to the camber of the road, for 8ft.-wide "double-deck" buses to pass, and for a main trunk road this is an absurd situation.

Although you may have seen the Ministry's "carnage" list of villages on the trunk roads in Kent, I feel that Bridge's position on that list does not reflect the true gravity of the situation.

Are eight deaths and 49 injuries in five years not a sufficient toll for a piece of road 300 yards long? Or does it have to be that more lives have to be ruined or completely destroyed for the sake of official complacency?

I feel that every responsible person, irrespective of political conviction, who knows the truth of the situation, should assist the Campaign by writing to the Ministry representing the situation in the strongest possible terms. It can be added that death is as distasteful to us as it is to them, and their physical remoteness from the situation in no way diminishes their responsibility to improve it.

K.G. 10.7.'64 A. N. OTHER
Local Yokel.

CHILDREN'S WALK TO SCHOOL

To the Editor,—

Is it not typical that the Rev. L. F. Geddes, Rector of Bishopsbourne, has to take up cudgels on behalf of the children forced to go along dangerous sections of road on foot to Bridge School? Authority appears to care so little about road safety that one despairs.

The Ministry of Transport has failed to answer nearly 100 letters that were sent by Bridge residents at Eastertime, although the receipt of these letters was acknowledged by card. It has to be assumed that these gentlemen are busily engaged in attending to their Minister's latest folly—the relaxation of restrictions as to size of commercial vehicles, so that bigger and better juggernauts can roar through the 19th Century lanes of Kent.

The County Council and the Rural District Council are at least discussing the road problem of A.2, but one scans the local newspapers in vain for comment from our Member of Parliament. Shortly, a deputation from Bridge will be delivering an aide-memoire to the Minister of Transport, through the offices of Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P.

JOHN PURCHESE.

Rosebank,
High Street,
Bridge.
K.G. 10.7.'64

Bulletin No. 4. 24th May, 1964.

THE BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

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

Dear Supporter,

The first Campaign traffic census was carried out on Saturday 18th April and Sunday 19th April, 1964. This was a dull wet weekend, ruling out excessive holiday traffic. The results were as follows:-

TIME	NORTH - To Canterbury.			SOUTH - To Dover.			TOTAL	
	Private	Comm.	Heavy Comm.	Private	Comm.	Heavy Comm.		
3-4p.m.	304	29	7	306	34	7	687	S
4-5p.m.	255	28	8	261	24	23	599	A
5-6p.m.	257	25	7	312	32	4	637	T
6-7p.m.	227	27	4	203	22	3	486	U
7-8p.m.	175	22	4	190	18	7	416	R
8-9p.m.	96	11	3	120	16	1	247	D
9-10p.m.	93	7	4	112	5	6	227	A
10-11p.m.	84	9	1	94	6	2	196	Y
11-12p.m.	87	6	1	84	8	-	186	
12-1a.m.	60	12	-	60	4	-	136	
1-2a.m.	15	-	-	24	2	-	41	S
2-3a.m.	6	2	-	18	-	-	26	U
3-4a.m.	4	-	-	5	-	-	9	N
4-5a.m.	1	-	-	7	-	-	8	D
5-6a.m.	18	3	2	7	2	-	32	A
6-7a.m.	18	3	1	13	9	3	47	Y
7-8a.m.	32	10	2	44	14	4	106	
8-9a.m.	40	18	1	62	21	2	144	
9-10a.m.	90	11	5	101	12	4	223	
10-11a.m.	135	9	5	190	15	4	358	
11-12a.m.	148	13	3	218	20	8	410	
12-1p.m.	155	20	3	223	17	1	419	
1-2p.m.	176	13	3	165	10	3	370	
2-3p.m.	273	21	5	301	28	3	631	
3-4p.m.	307	20	5	305	17	5	659	
4-5p.m.	361	30	8	255	24	4	682	
5-6p.m.	330	24	6	206	26	4	596	
6-7p.m.	332	37	5	182	13	3	572	
7-8p.m.	315	30	4	189	25	5	568	
8-9p.m.	238	14	2	169	4	1	428	

The first 24 hour period saw a total of 6,645 vehicles, from 9.0 p.m. to 9.0 p.m. however the figures are 7,074. We would remind our supporters that the Ministry of Transport figures quoted for 1961 were 6,700 per day at peak periods. There is a significant increase to be seen.

THE A2 GROUP

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

DATE: 13.7.1964

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

Campaign Scc.: Brian A. Lewis, 1, Weston Villas, High Street, Bridge. *Tel.* Bridge 254.

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., R.L. Pearce, Esq., & G.D. Hewett, Esq. of the Div. Road Engineer's Dept., ref: RDL/34/6T71.

Gentlemen,

You may be somewhat puzzled by the Bridge By-Pass Campaign blossoming in new colours, but the fact is that we were told by a County Councillor, Mr. A.J. Ross, at our meeting in Bridge to which you were invited, that we should broaden our scope and tackle the A2 from Brenley Corner to Dover. This we are now doing, and to launch the affair along we are holding a protest march through Bridge on Sunday July 26th. 1964. At the same time, 2,000 leaflets are being distributed to every house on A2 from the junction of M2/A2 to the outskirts of Dover. Sir Leslie Thomas, M.P. for Canterbury, and Sir John Arbuthnot, M.P. for Dover, have both been informed of these moves; and Sir Leslie Thomas may shortly have a document for your Minister to see.

We are, of course, very sad that you have not replied to any of the letters sent you by a great many people at Eastertime, albeit you did acknowledge the letters by card; since a number were from people who felt that you were doing all you could in matter of local road safety, and they have rather indicated since that possibly the Campaign was correct in saying that the Ministry were hardly overactive in the matter.

At all events, our reason for writing is to ask if you have any statement you would like communicated to the readers of our leaflets, or the supporters of our march. We will gladly give you free space for your comments. I, myself, will 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.

THE A2 GROUP

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

DATE: 13.7.1964

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

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

Sir John Arbuthnot, MBE, MP.,
House of Commons,
London, S.W.1

Dear Sir,

The Bridge By-Pass Campaign has been in existence for two years, to bring some measure of safety to the High Street through the village through pressure on the Ministry of Transport. At a public meeting held in Bridge at Easter, it was suggested that we should enlarge our organisation to include the whole of the A2 from Brenley Corner to Dover. The suggestion came from Mr. A.J. Ross, County Councillor for the district.

To launch the larger group - called "The A2 Group" we are sending out leaflets for delivery to every house on A2 from Brenley Corner to the outskirts of Dover and are having a second march through the village of Bridge at the same time.

Since the outskirts of Dover now become part of the road in which we are interested we would like to ask you, as Member for this district, if you have any comments at this stage on the project. We know that you view the A2 situation in Dover as potentially dangerous, with the increase in traffic that has already taken place, and with the threat of further increase - especially of heavy goods vehicles - we feel sure that you would wish that the Ministry would act in the matter.

If you would like further information, or would
...gn Secretary, or myself;

Purchese

John Purchese

FORM REG. 16.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
ST. CHRISTOPHER HOUSE,
SOUTHWARK STREET,
LONDON, S.E.1.

Our reference HGP 14/42/068

Your reference —

Date 15/7/64

The Secretary acknowledges receipt of your letter dated 13th July with enclosure(s), which is receiving attention.

M720108 888

M2

THE BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

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

DATE. 13.7.1964

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*

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

Dear Sir,

At the suggestion of Councillor A.J. Ross, we are now enlarging the scope of the Bridge By-Pass Campaign to cover the whole of A2 from Brenley Corner to Dover, and are changing the name of the organisation to "The A2 Group".

To launch this venture we are arranging for leaflets and cards to be delivered to every house on A2 from the M2 junction to the outskirts of Dover, and have naturally written to Sir John Arbuthnot, Member for the Dover Division, explaining what we are doing. To get the matter going in Bridge, we are due to hold another march on July 26th, at which an aide-memoire to the Minister will be signed by as many supporters as we may conveniently have on the march. This document we propose to pass to you, as our Member of Parliament, for onward transmission to the Minister with whatever comments you may feel the situation demands.

This move, we feel sure, will help you in your contact with the Ministry on the subject - and we look forward to hearing of any success you have in your negotiations.

Thanking you for your interest,

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

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

House of Commons,

London, S.W.1

15th July 1964

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter advising me of the change of name of the organisation. I think it is a very good idea and you are much more likely to get something done if you approach the problem of the A.2 as a whole from Brenley Corner to Dover.

I have already been in touch with the Ministry from this particular point of view and will continue to press them.

Yours sincerely

Leslie Thomas

John Purchese, Esq.,
Rosebank,
High Street,
Bridge.

From: Sir John Arbuthnot, Bt., M.B.E., T.D., M.P.

House of Commons,

London, S.W.1

15th July 1964

Dear Mr. Purchese,

Thank you for your letter of 13th July about the Bridge By-pass Campaign. As you will appreciate, this is not in my Constituency, but rather in that of Sir Leslie Thomas.

Naturally I am interested in the improvement of the A.2. road in so far as it affects my Constituency, and I do keep in close touch with the Ministry about it. If Mr. Thomas is taking any action, no doubt he will let me know.

Yours sincerely

John Arbuthnot

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

Kent County Constabulary

13.7.1964

R.D. Lemon, Esq.,
Chief Constable of Kent,
P.O. Box 11,
Police Headquarters,
Sutton Road, Maidstone.

104/50/48.

Dear Sir,

The Bridge By-Pass Campaign mentioned to Sgt. Reid of Bridge that it would like to have a march through the village on July 26th. 1964, and in consequence a most helpful Inspector from Aylesham called to see me last Saturday. He explained that he understood that the Campaign wished to march through the village, and then proceed to Canterbury, Hawk Lane, to hand in a document.

I was able to give rather more detail, saying that the intention was to march through the village from the lay-by at the northern end to the Church, and then return. The body of the procession was then to break up, and a small group of 8 continue down to Canterbury. Apart from the usual set of banners we intended having no vehicles taking part, but were including a bed (and dummy occupant) representing the Ministry of Transport asleep to the dangers at Bridge.

Your Inspector then left to obtain a firm decision concerning this modification, and was kind enough to return later to say that it was regretted that the small group continuation to Canterbury could not be allowed.

All this is quite clear, and I would like to say at once how very helpful the Police have been in all matters concerning the Campaign. All that I wish to ask now is: can the small group
a. embuss on a vehicle in the lay-by and proceed by road to Hawk Lane ? or
b. not travel under any circumstances to hand in the letter to Sir Leslie Thomas' office ?

It is merely that I want to be quite clear as to what is disallowed. Naturally, we shall instantly obey whatever you suggest, as this has always been a group seeking to remedy what it sees as a bad situation by democratic means, and this does not allow any form of civil disobediance.

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

Bridge By-Pass Campaign : The A2 Group



Don't forget tomorrow's march - Sunday 3.0pm

PUBLISHED BY JOHN PURCHESE, ROSEBANK HIGH ST. BRIDGE.

BRIDGE BY-PASS CAMPAIGN

To the Editor,—

Your correspondent, Mr. J. Purchese, rightly deplores the attitude of "authority" to the highly dangerous course of the A.2 through Bridge.

Your anonymous correspondent, A. N. Other, also complains of the same highway, but suggests that action should be taken irrespective of political conviction.

In a democratic society such as our own, "authority is, of course, ourselves, and we are all responsible, through our elected representatives, for "authority."

Unfortunately, we generally only have the opportunity of electing our representatives or "authority" from one of the three major political parties. Thus, I am afraid that the reasons for the present traffic problems in Bridge and the answers to them are political ones.

Bridge's elected authority in the question of trunk roads is the Member of Parliament, and the citizens of Bridge must surely ask themselves if their member has pursued the matter with a sufficient sense of responsibility and urgency. If they consider that their M.P. has not done his duty in safeguarding their vital interests, then they must either bring pressure to bear upon their M.P., to force him to so do: or, they must seek to have that member replaced.

The fact is that the motor industry has been encouraged to expand violently over the past 10 years without any Governmental consideration being given to the accommodation of its products. Faster and bigger cars and lorries have been produced in ever-increasing quantities with little comparative increase in roads and road safety measures.

That Bridge is only one symptom of a tragic national illness does not detract from the fact that Bridge's problem must be dealt with immediately.

Nationally we must implement the Crowther and Buchanan proposals and segregate pedestrians and traffic as a matter of great urgency. The alternative is rapidly increasing slaughter on the roads and complete chaos in our cities.

TED MOSS
(Prospective Liberal Parliamentary Candidate, Canterbury Division).
Apple Tree Cottage,
Petham.

K.G. 17.7.64

5,000 Cars Spaces a Day

Busy Times For Dover's Famous Ships

Canterbury sees most of the Continental car traffic on its way to or from Dover. Soon it will see a lot more. From July 24 to August 2 is the high peak, when the three British Railways and one French pocket liners each make eight Channel crossings every 24 hours, thus offering a total of 50,000 car spaces. Even when every car has its full load of passengers, there is room on board to spare with luxury that all can enjoy. The popularity of this 90-minute sea trip with one's own car has already increased 1964 bookings by 8 per cent.

During the peak season, the "Maid of Kent," "Lord Warden" and "Normannia" each have three separate crews working 12 hours on and 24 hours off.

One of these ships may be sent to Newhaven next year to help out "Falaise" with increasing traffic on the Dieppe run. She will be replaced by the new car ferry now being built and for which a name has not yet been found. If you have any ideas, send them to "Public Relations," British Railways, Waterloo Station, London.

K.G. 17.7.64

No M2 extension to Dover

The Minister of Transport, asked about extending the M2 to Canterbury and then Dover, today said: "I have no such plans." In a written Commons answer Mr. Marples said: "Beyond Brenley Corner the A2 will be progressively improved as a trunk road as priorities and funds permit."

Evening Standard 17.7.64

Bulletin No. 5. 20th July, 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.

Dear Supporter,

You will recall that Councillor A. J. Ross said at the public meeting held in Bridge at Eastertime, that the Campaign would carry more weight if it concerned itself with the A2 from Brenley Corner to Dover. It seemed at first sight an odd way to campaign for road safety in Bridge, but on reflection we realise the wisdom in the advice and have made arrangements accordingly to seek for support over a much wider area - although our first concern is Bridge.

A very large distribution of leaflets and cards will be taking place soon, with every house on A2 from the Motorway to Dover receiving copies. The Member of Parliament for Dover, as well as our own Member, has been notified of these moves, and we hope to let you know what response there has been in our next bulletin.

In the meantime, to remind the Ministry of Transport that there is a problem at Bridge, we are organising a small march through the village for Sunday, 26th July, at 3 p.m., meeting at the lay-by. This march will be quicker than the one at Easter since there will be no vehicles. We would ask all our supporters, specially those who have indicated their willingness to take part in such activities, to turn out for an hour on Sunday, 26th July. Police permission has been given for the march, and we have indicated that there will be no more this year.

It is worth mentioning that there will be only banners on this march, and one "gimmick". We would repeat our comments made just before the Easter march, that "gimmicks" are unfortunately necessary if the press and television are to notice and report these marches; and it is the reporting of the marches that strengthens our hand in discussions with the Ministry.

We have requested answers from the Ministry for those people who wrote to them at Easter and who have heard nothing since. We do appreciate all the help, specially financially, for the Campaign; and we would be very pleased to hear from any supporters who have queries.

Thank you very much for your help; please help if you can by attending the march on Sunday, 26th July.

Yours faithfully,

Brian A. Lewis & John Purchese.

BODY BLOW FOR ROA

Minister and extension of M2

THE Minister of Transport, Mr. Ernest Marples, on Friday dealt a body blow to those who were hoping for the lessening of danger to life and limb on the A2 between Brenley Corner and Dover.

Asked about extending the M2 to Canterbury and then Dover, Mr. Marples, in a written Parliamentary reply, said "I have no such plans.

"Beyond Brenley Corner the A2 will be progressively improved as a trunk road as priorities and funds permit."

The M2 is linked to the A2 by a high-level roundabout at Brenley.

CONGESTED

Thousands of cars pour off the motorway on to the narrow and congested A2, heading for the Channel ports of Dover and Folkestone.

The A2 Group, who are campaigning for safety measures along its whole stretch from the motorway junction to Dover, hit back on Monday with a plan to leave leaflets and cards at EVERY house along the road from the M2 to Dover.

They announced another protest march through Bridge, near Canterbury, on Sunday at 3 p.m.

Mr. Brian Lewis and Mr. John Purchese, both of Bridge, told the KENT MESSENGER "We are appealing for support from all those living along the A2 who know how dangerous the road now is and who wish to do something about it.

"You know how, apart from official statistics, there are dozens of near-accidents every week — cars overtaking that scrape others, cars that hit the one in front, pedestrians narrowly avoiding death because of speeding lorries, and unwieldy car transporters and other huge vehicles brushing the narrow pavements in the villages," they said.

VILLAGES

Mr. Purchese, one of the organisers of the A2 Group (which embraces the villages of Boughton, Harbledown, Bridge, Lydden, Temple Ewell, and Kearnsey) has first-hand knowledge of what can happen on the "road of death".

Last year he sent the Ministry of Transport two photographs. One showed the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Michael Ramsey) crossing the High Street, Bridge, for the induction of a new vicar.

The vicar led the way, and two policemen attended to see the Primate safely across.

The second photograph was of a wall knocked down in the High Street by a lorry. The driver chose to hit the wall "rather than the village constable's wife and child who were walking along the pavement a foot or two away."

D SAFETY PLANNERS

Bridge By-Pass Campaign : The A2 Group



DEAR READER,

The Bridge By-Pass Campaign was formed two years ago to bring to the notice of the Ministry of Transport the dangerous situation at Bridge on the A2, where the traffic had been building up for years and where the opening of M2 could mean traffic chaos. For the past year the Campaign has been publicly pressing the Ministry to take action in the matter, taking its own traffic census to show the increase in traffic, and suggesting ways of preventing accidents.

At a public meeting held in April this year, a County Councillor advised the Campaign to spread its activities to the whole of A2, from Brenley Corner to Dover—and this is what we are now doing.

The Bridge By-Pass Campaign is now called "The A2 Group", and we are appealing for support from all those living along the A2, who know how dangerous the road now is and who wish to do something about it. You know, how apart from official statistics, there are dozens of near-accidents every week; cars overtaking that scrape others, cars that hit the one in front, pedestrians narrowly avoiding death because of speeding lorries, and unwieldy car transporters and other huge vehicles brushing the narrow pavements in the villages.

Yours faithfully,

BRIAN A. LEWIS, JOHN PURCHESE

PUBLISHED BY JOHN PURCHESE. ROSEBANK HIGH ST. BRIDGE.

Issued on the march : 26.7.'64

26.7.1964

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

Dear Sir,

A number of your constituents have this day signed an aide-memoire to the Minister of Transport, the Right Hon. Ernest Marples, MP., reminding him of the decrease in road safety through the village of Bridge.

The A2 Group would be most grateful if you would act on behalf of the village in your Division, by forwarding this document through the appropriate channels to the Minister. Possibly at the same time, you would wish to point out to the Minister that the A2 Group now views the whole of A2 from Brenley Corner to Dover as most dangerous, and in view of the Minister's recent statement that he proposes to do nothing towards relieving the situation also add that the Group sees no justification in his optimistic inaction. They feel he is asleep to the needs of the situation.

Yours faithfully,

John Purchese.

M EXPRESS 28.7.1964

IGHTING MAD
he village that on't take No for an answer

what you like
t English villages,
're not hasty. Not
e. Places that
changed much in
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is a village of 700
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with banners de-
a by-pass.
went to Bridge and
How do you turn
villagers into
agitators?
nen are behind the
affair: Brian Lewis,
eyor son of a local
and John Purchese,
nd technician, father
hildren.

March

R. LEWIS began
hinking about Bridge
nd its traffic a couple
rs ago when he was
a passing car.
knocked down, you
and," he says. "Just
It happens here all
e."
veryone is so lucky.
has had eight killed,
ed, in five years.
Purchese came into
use he had five
who had to run the
of the village street

writing seemed to
ere. Fifty teenagers marched with banners. Traffic was halted. And older villagers wanted to know why they hadn't been invited.

"Then we put a letter through every village door, with a card for a reply saying if they would help. All these did," said Mr. Lewis, flipping through a thick card index.

Grumble

IT has not been all easy. The man in the 500-year-old White Horse inn spoke with the voice of villagers everywhere when he said: "People not been here five minutes, trying to change things. . . ."

In fact, Mr. Lewis has lived in Bridge all his life, but since he is only 20 that makes him a newcomer by village standards. And Mr. Purchese has been there only four years, and before then he lived all of three miles away. . . .

A by-pass would cost at least £1 million, and (though the Ministry is too polite to point this out) a million would probably buy up Bridge entirely.

But Bridge is determined to keep up a steady drip, drip, drip which they hope will wear the stony Ministry down.

WILLIAM CATER

DAILY EXPRESS 27.7.'64

PROTEST

It was an odd day too for some of the holiday-makers.

ANGRY villagers at Bridge, Kent, held up two miles of cars on the A2 Dover road.

They marched through the narrow main street carrying banners demanding a by-pass.

A bowler-hatted figure in a bed they trundled along represented a "sleeping" Mr. Marples.

RATHERS climbed out of

THE A2 GROUP

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

DATE: 26.7.1964

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

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

The Right Honourable Ernest Marples, M.P.,
The Ministry of Transport,
Southwark Street, London, S.E.1

Dear Sir,

Those appending their signatures to this letter wish to remind you of the decreasing road safety at the village of Bridge on A2 caused by the increase in traffic due to the opening of M2, and by the increase in heavy goods vehicles through a High Street suitable only for 19th. century light horse traffic.

We urge you to examine this problem afresh, and ACT !

Yours faithfully,

J. Purchese L. J. Purchese Brian A. Lewis. D. J. Hodder.

P. T. Skelton. Nigel P. Lewis. [illegible]

F. Purchese. C. Purchese

P. J. Williams.

Mrs Bosc.

M. Raymer.

A. N. Austin.

For action write to:-

M. P. for Canterbury: Sir L. M. Thomas, MBE, TD, MP,

House of Commons, London, S.W.1

M. P. for Dover: Sir John Arbuthnot, MBE, MP,

House of Commons, London, S.W.1

Or: The Secretary, The Ministry of Transport,

Southwark Street, London, S.E.1

Quote M. of T. ref: HGP/14/42/068

PUBLISHED BY JOHN PURCHESE, ROSEBANK HIGH ST. BRIDGE.

Issued August Bank Holiday.

DAILY MAIL 27.7.1964

Asleep

Mr. Marples arrived in Newark last night to open the by-pass and went to bed early in his hotel.

Earlier he had been criticised for "sleeping" over another by-pass. Protest marchers at Bridge, near Canterbury, who are demanding a by-pass for their village, carried banners saying:

"The Minister of Transport is asleep to our needs."

And they pushed a bed with a dummy Mr. Marples in it.

In Southern England thousands of motorists enjoyed the hottest weekend this year.

...Y EXPRESS 28.7.1964

...IGHTING MAD ...he village that ...on't take No for an answer

...what you like ...t English villages, ...'re not hasty. Not ...e. Places that ...changed much in ...turies don't fly off ...dle for nothing.

...makes the Strange ... Bridge all the ...

...is a village of 700 ...n the London-Dover ... A2. Going through ... this artery of ... is in places all of ...le. And the traffic ...ops day or night. ...weekend, however, it ...top, jammed end to ...hile the villagers ... with banners de- ... a by-pass.

...went to Bridge and ... How do you turn ... villagers into ... agitators?

...nen are behind the ...affair: Brian Lewis, ...eyor son of a local ... and John Purchese, ...nd technician, father ...hildren.

March

MR. LEWIS began thinking about Bridge and its traffic a couple of years ago when he was hit by a passing car.

"Not knocked down, you understand," he says. "Just nudged. It happens here all the time."

Not everyone is so lucky. Bridge has had eight killed, 49 injured, in five years.

John Purchese came into it because he had five children who had to run the gauntlet of the village street to school.

Letter writing seemed to get nowhere. Fifty teenagers marched with banners. Traffic was halted. And older villagers wanted to know why they hadn't been invited.

"Then we put a letter through every village door, with a card for a reply saying if they would help. All these did," said Mr. Lewis, flipping through a thick card index.

Grumble

IT has not been all easy. The man in the 500-year-old White Horse inn spoke with the voice of villagers everywhere when he said: "People not been here five minutes, trying to change things. . . ."

In fact, Mr. Lewis has lived in Bridge all his life, but since he is only 20 that makes him a newcomer by village standards. And Mr. Purchese has been there only four years, and before then he lived all of three miles away. . . .

A by-pass would cost at least £1 million, and (though the Ministry is too polite to point this out) a million would probably buy up Bridge entirely.

But Bridge is determined to keep up a steady drip, drip, drip which they hope will wear the stony Ministry down.

WILLIAM CATER

DAILY EXPRESS 27.7.'64

PROTEST

It was an odd day too for some of the holiday-makers.

ANGRY villagers at Bridge, Kent, held up two miles of cars on the A2 Dover road.

They marched through the narrow main street carrying banners demanding a by-pass.

A bowler-hatted figure in a bed they trundled along represented a "sleeping" Mr. Marples.

RATHERS climbed out of

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

House of Commons,

London, S.W.1

29th July 1964

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter of 26th July on behalf of the A2 Group. I have forwarded this to the Minister of Transport.

I have studied the signatures with interest and should be grateful if you could let me know how many of those who have appended signatures are school children.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie Thomas

John Purchese, Esq.,
Rosebank,
High Street,
Bridge.

Bridge Traffic Problem

Minister Seeks Improvement

The Minister of Transport (Mr. Ernest Marples) is considering what he can do to improve the main Canterbury-Dover road through Bridge before he tackles the whole problem of the A.2, Bridge-Blean Rural District Council were told on Wednesday.

The Road and Home Safety Committee reported that Canterbury's M.P., Sir Leslie Thomas, had asked a question in Parliament as to when the A.2 was likely to be improved and when Bridge was likely to be by-passed.

The Minister had replied that he could not say when the schemes on the length of the A.2 concerned could be found a place in the road programme but, in the meantime, he was considering what other measures could be taken to improve conditions through the village of Bridge.

The Council agreed to thank Sir Leslie—and to ask him to enquire of the Minister what "other measures" he had in mind.

The Clerk (Mr. I. F. Soilleux) said that a suggestion that a pedestrian crossing near Western Avenue, Bridge, should be reinstated was being considered by the County Council and Bridge Parish Council had decided to install trunk road Class "A" lighting through the main street.

The Council also agreed to a proposal by Cllr. H. T. Price that Kent County Council be asked to consider providing double white lines between the Red Lion and the junction with the road to Bourne Park.

Kentish Gazette 31.7.'64

Kentish Gazette,

Bridge Villagers On The March Again

A2 Group Planned

The villagers of Bridge were on the march again on Sunday. On one of the hottest and busiest days of the summer they succeeded in holding up traffic speeding towards a Continental holiday.

About 35 took part in the demonstration, designed as an "aide-memoire" to the Minister of Transport; to jolt his memory in case he has forgotten Bridge's claim for a by-pass.

And the Right Honourable Minister was parodied in the procession. A bed was pushed along the street. In it was a figure sporting a black bowler and rolled umbrella. A poster proclaimed, "The Minister is asleep to our needs."

As the procession made its snail's-pace way through the narrow main street, queues of cars stretched either side of the village.

Said Mr. John Purchese: "We have backed this up with a letter to the Minister, which we are asking Sir Leslie Thomas to deliver on our behalf."

The demonstration was a curtain raiser to the next step forward in the village's fight to remove traffic hazards on the A2.

Steady Pressure

At a public meeting in the village a few months ago, Cllr. A. J. Ross suggested they would do better to get the whole of the A2 from Brenley Corner to Dover interested in improvements.

And this is what Bridge is now doing. It is forming the "A2 Group," designed to keep up a steady pressure on the Ministry of Transport for the extension of the M2.

Next weekend over 2,000 leaflets and forms go out to everybody who faces on to the A2 between Brenley Corner and Dover. It asks them if they are interested in pressing for improvements and if they are ready to take part in demonstrations and lobbying.

Says the letter from Mr. Purchese: "In the long run the life you save by your actions may be your own."



Carrying a bed containing a figure suggesting a sleeping Minister of Transport, residents of Bridge held on "aide-memoire" demonstration on Sunday.



PIPE-SMOKING JOHN PURCHESE, one of the organisers of the A2 Group, leads the protest march along the race-track A2 at Bridge,

Kent Messenger 31.7.'64

Bridge Protest Marchers

Dover Express 31.7.'64



Angry residents on the march. This was the scene at Bridge on Sunday as villagers staged a protest march in support of their claim for a by-pass.

Kent Messenger 31.7.80

BED HOLDS UP TRAFFIC



COMPLETE WITH UMBRELLA AND BOWLER, a dummy representing Mr. Marples is pulled in its bed through Bridge High Street, near Canterbury, on Sunday.

VILLAGE FIGHTS FOR A BY-PASS

HUNDREDS of cars were held up on the London-Dover A2 road near Canterbury on Sunday afternoon by a BED.

It was pulled on a trolley along Bridge High Street by members of the A2 Group, who are campaigning for safety measures along 20 miles of the trunk road between Brenley Corner and Dover.

In the bed was a recumbent dummy representing the Minister of Transport, Mr. Ernest Marples. A notice board read "The M.O.T. is asleep to our needs."

One of the demands of the A2 Group has been the extension of the M2 to by-pass Canterbury and Bridge. Last week, Mr. Marples rejected the idea in a written parliamentary reply.

Mr. John Purchese, one of the organisers of the A2 Group, told a KENT MESSENGER reporter after Sunday's protest march with the bed. "It was most successful. There were 50 cars at a time held up at each end of Bridge.

Letter to M.P.

"Now I am going to the Conservative headquarters in Canterbury to deliver a letter addressed to the M.P., Sir Leslie Thomas."

Both before and after the march on Sunday cars and lorries poured through Bridge—and through all the other villages on the A2—in an endless stream.

Records taken by the A2 Group in recent months have shown that more than 6,000 vehicles pass through narrow Bridge High Street in a 24-hour period at weekends.

Most of them have come, from or are heading for, the Medway Motorway.