

Surrey County Council  
Grovsnor House  
London Square, Cross Lanes  
Guildford, GU1 1FA

June 27, 2007

To Sarah Akerman:

I am writing to you regarding an extremely urgent matter on behalf of all the parents who have signed the attached petition and others who cross at the pedestrian crossing on Lockfield Drive and Well Lane. This crossing is approximately 50 metres from Goldsworth Primary School entrance and is used regularly by parents, children aged 4-11 years who attend Goldsworth Primary School and their younger siblings. As many as 20% of the children attending Goldsworth School use the crossing. Including younger siblings upwards of 100 children cross every school day. I have called Surrey County Council, Woking Borough Council and the local police regarding this matter and I understand that dozens of other parents have done the same. However, the issue has not been addressed to date. I believe that there is a simple solution that will significantly reduce the dangerous nature of this crossing as outlined below.

The issue is that cars and trucks drive at very fast speed (a minimum of 40 mph) along Lockfield Drive and they regularly fail to stop at the pedestrian crossing when heading west away from Woking Town Centre. The light turns green for pedestrians, the beeping signal for the blind starts and cars continue to pass over the crossing. I was new to the area in March of this year and I was crossing the road in question with my daughter aged 2 and my son aged 4 after dropping my daughter aged 6 at Goldsworth School. My son was standing beside me and when he heard the beeping sound he started to cross the road. He was pushed back onto the pavement by the force of a car running through the red light. He came within centimetres of being hit by the passing car. The car was going so fast that I was unable to get the licence number. In the two months since this incident I have seen five other cars running through the pedestrian crossing against their light. I have also become very familiar with the acknowledgement of other parents expressing their fear and concern over the safety of this crossing.

The predominant issue seems to be that there are TWO sets of lights with approximately 15 metres between them when approaching the Well Lane intersection while heading west on Lockfield Drive away from Woking Town Centre (See diagram attached). Importantly the drivers of the cars appear to believe that these two sets of lights are one and the same. If a car decides to run a yellow light at the first set of lights, then by the time they reach the second set 15 metres further on, their light is red and the pedestrian light is green and beeping, yet they continue on. My son was almost killed and a blind person

would not stand a chance. As a matter of consideration I will also mention that I have recently noticed a blind child aged approximately 12 years crossing at these lights on a number of occasions accompanied by a younger child.

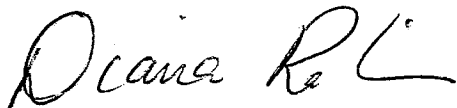
The solution to this issue would appear to be simple and I am amazed that nothing has been done to remedy the situation to date:

1. The two sets of lights and pedestrian lights must be adjusted so that there is sufficient time for cars running through a yellow light to clear the second set of lights before the light turns green and starts beeping for pedestrians. A SIMPLE DELAY OF 3-5 SECONDS to the pedestrian light would probably be sufficient.
2. Large School signs, flashing lights, images of children crossing the road indicating that this is a school crossing are required. There is currently NO indication that this is a school crossing?
3. A camera to catch cars disobeying the lights and sufficient signage to warn drivers that the crossing is being monitored.

On behalf of all the parents who have signed the attached petition and many others who use the crosswalk at Lockfield Drive and Well Lane, I implore you to give this matter your immediate attention. Please make the required changes to ensure that there is not another fatality of one of our most precious children as occurred on June 24<sup>th</sup> only a few hundred metres away.

I would appreciate a reply to this petition with acknowledgment that action will take place to ensure the safety of our children.

Sincerely,



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HEADTEACHER  
GOLDSWORTH PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE  
(WOKING)**

**RESPONSE TO PETITION**

**PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON LOCKFIELD DRIVE, JUNCTION  
WITH WELL LANE**

**31 OCTOBER 2007**

**SUMMARY**

**Wording of the petition:**

We request that changes be made immediately to the traffic lights and pedestrian crossing at Lockfield Drive and Well Lane in order to ensure the safety of the many school children who cross every day in order to attend Goldsworth Primary School.

**Presentation of the Petition:**

We understand that the petition is signed by 89 people and will be presented to the Committee by Mrs Diana Rankin.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Local Committee (Woking) is asked to agree that:**

**£2,500 is allocated from the 'Emerging Safety Problems' budget (Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport), to carry out works to the controller to enable the revised timings on the toucan crossing to be made permanent.**

**Paul Fishwick, Local Highways Manager, responded:**

The crossing on Lockfield Drive, at the base of the ramp leading up to the bridge over the Basingstoke Canal, is a toucan crossing that can be used by both pedestrians and cyclists. There has been a crossing in this location for over twenty years and when major works were undertaken approximately 3 years ago to signalise the junction of Lockfield Drive and Well Lane, the crossing was incorporated into the scheme.

However, it is slightly unusual in that, whilst it has been incorporated into the scheme, it still operates as a separate crossing, as opposed to being a pedestrian facility at a signalised junction. This is due to the crossing point being offset from the junction a little further than is normal and this is so that it is at the base of the ramp to the bridge.

Before receipt of the petition, there was very little time between traffic on Lockfield Drive receiving a red signal to stop and pedestrians receiving their visual and audible warnings to cross the road. This was not too much of a problem if traffic was emerging from Well Lane since this traffic is slow moving (this is the only movement that the signals permit whilst pedestrians are crossing). However, there was a problem with traffic on Lockfield Drive coming away from the town centre. In some instances, traffic would pass through the red signal at the crossing just as, or immediately after, pedestrians had been given their signal to cross. The reason for this is that the signals controlling the junction and the crossing change at the same time. The first, or primary, signal that this traffic passed is approximately 40 metres away and whilst a vehicle may have passed this signal as it changed to amber, by the time the signal at the crossing had been reached, it would have changed to red.

Immediately after receiving the petition in early July 2007, Officers consulted their Traffic Signal colleagues who made arrangements for the intergreen at the crossing to be extended. The intergreen is the time between the traffic signal showing red and the pedestrians being given their indication to cross. This was done and the results have been extremely favourable. However, it does not stop the scenario of traffic passing the primary junction signal at amber and the crossing signal at red but it does give these vehicles time to clear the crossing before pedestrians set off.

These changes cannot be permanently saved within the traffic signal controller without physically changing part of the control panel; the current changes would be lost if the power to the controller went off. It will, therefore, be necessary to replace this part of the controller to permanently save the altered inter green. However, this will cost in the region of £2500.

If this money is to be spent, it is recommended that two further alterations be incorporated, which should eliminate all of the current issues. These additional alterations are;

- For traffic on Lockfield Drive, heading away from town, the junction signal head should change to red before the crossing signal (this should eliminate passing through the crossing signal at red)
- Pedestrians should cross during an “all-red” phase. In simple terms, this means that the traffic in Well Lane will be held in the road until pedestrians have finished crossing and then be allowed out onto Lockfield Drive

These additional modifications will result in slightly increased delays to traffic, particularly the “all-red” proposal, as this will delay left turning traffic coming out of Well Lane, which does not conflict with the crossing at all. Clearly, it is not really desirable to introduce further delays but it will be for the benefit of a very well used pedestrian crossing.

The covering letter that accompanied the petition also requested school signs and flashing lights and a camera to catch drivers passing through the red signals. Unfortunately, although this crossing is heavily used by school children, it is not a school crossing. In this particular location, signs alone are unlikely to be of any benefit and, of course, the crossing could be used at any time of day. The use of flashing signs close to traffic signals (including crossings) is not allowed.

Cameras are only permitted if there is a long history of personal injuries being caused by collisions with vehicles passing through a red signal. That is not the case at this location so, regrettably, a camera cannot be provided.

In addition, Officers have spoken with the lead petitioner about the visual indicators at the crossing. With puffin and toucan crossings (this is a toucan), the “red and green man” indicators are at waist height, above the push button units and not at high-level opposite, as at pelican crossings. The concern expressed by the petitioner was that if a pedestrian only manages to cross half of Lockfield Drive, there is no visible indicator of when it is safe to cross the rest of the road, the indicators in the middle of the road being in line with or slightly behind any waiting pedestrian. Unfortunately, the width of the central refuge is such that the indicators cannot be relocated and the specification of a toucan crossing such that it cannot be provided with far-side indicators. The provision of central push button units and visual indicators in itself is relatively unusual but by no means unique. In this instance the indicators are angled in the opposite direction to what they should but this is purely so that waiting drivers cannot see them – it is not unknown for drivers’ behaviour to be influenced by these indicators rather than the traffic signals.

### **Recommendation**

It is therefore recommended to allocate £2,500 to carryout alterations to the controller to allow the revised ‘inter green’ timings to be made permanent.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Petition to Local Committee (Woking) on 1 February 2006

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