



A29 Landslip and road closure, Church Hill – Update – 17h March 2023

The closure of Broomers Hill Lane this week was due to a fallen tree. Work was needed to remove the remaining debris and make safe once the tree itself was dealt with. WSCC contractor attended today to cone off the tree site and re-open the road. Emergency incidents may result in other roads having to be closed, unfortunately adding pressure to roads taking diversionary traffic. We understand from WSCC that whenever possible, this will be avoided and other works will be postponed unless essential.

The Parish Council is talking with WSCC about the importance of proper repairs to the highway and verges of the unofficial diversions being used, to ensure these roads are fully restored.

Whilst understanding the frustrations and issues being experienced, we ask that people avoid apportioning blame to individuals or interpreting official communications as doing so, as these are intended to be factual and transparent about the ongoing situation. All parties involved, as well as residents and local businesses, want matters resolved and the A29 open again as soon as possible. The latest WSCC position report is copied below.

“We fully appreciate the frustrations felt by local residents about the ongoing situation and the resulting inconvenience along with the hardship felt by some businesses in the area.

As explained at the public meeting the only land the Council has control of is the road itself. The land either side of the road, which is what has caused the issue and where the required works must take place to allow the safe re-opening of the road, is not adopted highway land and is owned by private landowners.

It would be illegal for us to enter that land and undertake works without the owners' permission. As such, we feel that it is best to come to an agreement with the landowners to allow us onto their land to undertake the works to re-open the road to two-way traffic and are working hard to reach an agreement which is acceptable to all parties. This has resulted in a longer than anticipated timeline, however these discussions are ongoing and are productive. It is appropriate that before we utilise any statutory powers, we must allow sufficient time for the landowners to fully explore the implications on their property and understand what is required before they come to an agreement with us.

We understand the calls from residents and businesses to re-open the road, even with a temporary measure which opens the road using a single lane controlled by two-way traffic lights. If we were to go ahead and install this temporary measure, then once an agreement has been made with the landowners, we would then need to close the road again, and reinstate the diversion route.

We continue to give this very careful consideration, however believe that this would result in potential confusion for road users caused by the change in status to the road and it would create even more inconvenience locally due to traffic being required to queue at the lights which will then cause issues on other roads in Pulborough.

We are working hard to reach an agreement with the landowners so we can progress with implementation of the interim works to reopen the road while a permanent solution is developed and designed and agreed with all relevant parties.”