

seven others in series along the Bridgwater road. Most of them were badly overgrown after years of neglect, but after clearing the overgrowth I think they will function well enough to drain the road for the next couple of hundred yards. The culvert then ends at a ditch by Postridge Farm. But here the ditch is totally blocked by compacted silt, and hedge cuttings. Spaxton's unwanted water therefore overflows on to the road for about ten yards until it finds a channel to a ditch able to take the flow. These channels or *highway grips*, as they are called are cut through the verge at certain places, to help drain the road where there are no gullies. This is really an issue for the Council and the Landowner to sort out, since both parties are involved. The resulting damage to the road edge is evident for fifty yards or so. Cyclists, in particular need to be aware of this hazard when forced to the edge by passing traffic.

The blocked ditch has been reported to the Authority, but it is only the tip of the iceberg as the problem is not limited to this instance. Manual ditch clearing is possible of course but having tried it, it is an awkward and very messy job! There must be an easier way, but I am not aware if any machine is available specifically for clearing ditches. The question arises as to who should clear them, how and when? (*Could be a project for a 'scrap-heap challenge'?*)

The state of the Bridgwater road is a good example of what's wrong with rural roads' maintenance generally. It seems the Council are not enforcing or even complying with the law! Rather than do preventive maintenance and scheduled work, the policy seems to be one of only responding to problems when reported by the public. The result is that verges have become overgrown, ditches blocked, hedges left uncut, debris and litter uncollected, rutted roads etc., etc. Now is the time for action before the growing season starts and everything gets worse next winter!

John Tomlinson

THE KINGDOM SINGERS IN CONCERT

At and in aid of The Church of St Michael & All Angels , Enmore

20th May 2016 at 7.00pm

Tickets £10.00 to include a glass of wine & nibbles

Booking advisable but not essential from: Doreen & Doug Cole Tel: 01278 671188



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