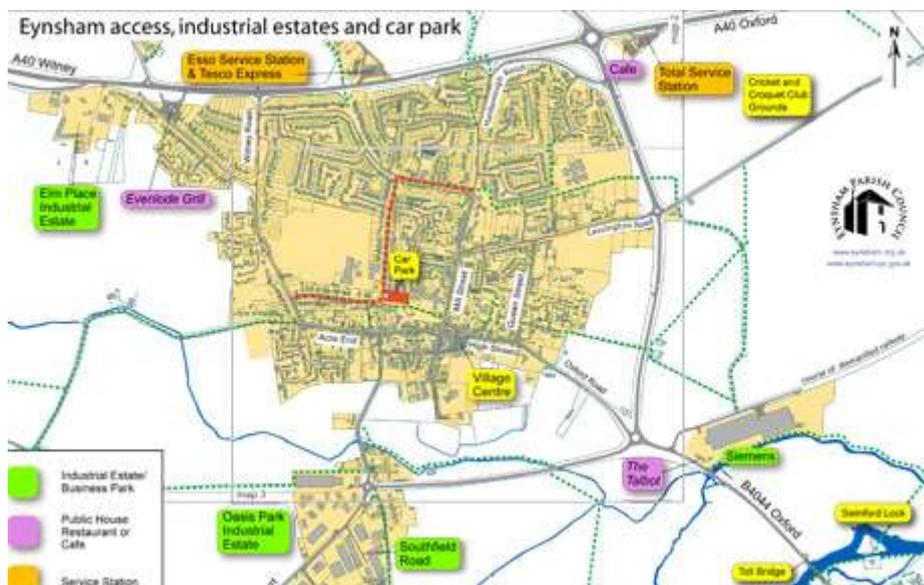


## A BIT OFF THE MAP – signposting for visitors to Eynsham

NOTE: The views expressed here are not necessarily endorsed by Eynsham Parish Council.

Eynsham lies just south of the A40, midway between Witney and Oxford and a short hop from an historic Toll Bridge (variously claimed by the parishes of Swinford and Eynsham). It acts as a service centre for the neighbouring villages of Cassington, Freeland, Hanborough, Standlake and Stanton Harcourt (a combined population of 7047), partly because it has the nearest secondary school, Catholic church and chemist (and the nearest medical centre for all but Hanborough), but also because local businesses have grown in response and an excellent bus service comes here on the way to Oxford or Witney.

Provision for drivers of private cars or transit vehicles is another matter. Set yourself the task of finding Eynsham car park, or even the village centre, without sat nav and see for yourself. The images below were taken recently on every route into Eynsham; the preview map may help with orientation.



As the images demonstrate, a handful of relatively inexpensive measures could do wonders to improve traffic flow, not to speak of the visitor experience. Suggestions follow:

- *Clean existing signs of dirt, graffiti and vegetation;*
- *Replace signs that are in poor condition or no longer big enough to work;*
- *Provide new signs to the centre – with indication of distance – at all key junctions;*
- *Explore funding for signs to other amenities, e.g. the Village Hall and Fishponds.*

The Eynsham Parish Plan made similar points in 2007. The Eynsham Business Network, currently developing an Eynsham Shopping Guide, may have more specific ideas.

Perhaps the first step should be some allocation of responsibilities. The Traffic Advisory Committee meeting on 13 July might provide a suitable forum.



## APPROACH FROM WEST – 1

Heading along the A40 towards Oxford just outside Eynsham, near the Evenlode Inn.

Non-HGV drivers should filter right at the lights for a more direct route to Eynsham car park and village centre.



## SHOULD YOU TURN RIGHT ...

First impressions count!

This sorry figure has presided over the top of Witney Road for longer than we can remember.



## LOST OPPORTUNITY 1

Southern end of Witney Road – turn left at the mini-roundabout for the village centre.

There is no mention of the centre however, either at this point or at the mini-roundabout.



## APPROACH FROM WEST – 2

Heading along the A40 barely meters from Eynsham Roundabout, pointers to Linch Hill and Combe Mill hardly do the village any favours.

How about a nice brown sign to the historic *Abbey Fishponds*?



## LOST OPPORTUNITY 2

Heading south from Eynsham Roundabout along the B4449 – two “redundant” sign posts.

Note the very small scale of the village centre sign to the right, on the other side of the road.



## BLINK AND YOU MISS IT

Believe it or not, Hanborough Road is Eynsham's main point of access from the A40.

This is also one of only two 'approved' routes into Eynsham for HGVs.

It must be possible to devise something a little more eye-catching, without distracting through traffic ...



### **B4449 SOUTH-BOUND – 2**

Sign (partly) visible on approach to the roundabout / junction with Oxford Road and the B4044.

Foliage will continue to block this important sign for at least 6 months of the year, unless it is taken in hand.



### **B4449 SOUTH-BOUND – 3**

A few meters closer to the same roundabout.

Wharf Road is the local base for Siemens – Eynsham's biggest employer.



### **B4044 EAST-BOUND**

This sad sign marks a turn-off just past the roundabout, heading towards the Toll Bridge.

Google Maps, interestingly, continue to mark the road as Dovehouse Close.

Perhaps the map makers haven't registered the sign either.



## B4044 WEST-BOUND

This sign confronts HGV traffic in the other direction, approaching the roundabout / junction with B4449 Eynsham bypass along Oxford Road.

Any *suggestions* for an alternative route?

Unless they are leaving Siemens, they have *just crossed the Toll Bridge*.



## GREAT PLACE TO GET AWAY FROM?

B4449 again – western end of the bypass and pointing firmly *out* along Stanton Harcourt Road.

The village centre lies to the right, along Station Road, but there are no indications to this effect.



## B4449 NORTH-BOUND

Approaching the same roundabout from Stanton Harcourt.

The bridleway signs have massively more impact than the sign to the village centre, barely visible at the far side of the roundabout.

And if you think this is a trick photograph, go and see for yourself.



## SHOULD YOU VENTURE ON ...

Northbound on Station Road, signs are overgrown and uninformative.



## LOST OPPORTUNITY 3

The village centre lies to the right and the car park to the left, though there are no signs for either.

The Eynsham Parish Plan drew attention to this mis-managed junction in 2007.



## LOST OPPORTUNITY 4

Junction of Mill Street and High Street, though you could be forgiven for missing it.

This may be the heart of the village but it seems to have lost the will to live.

Refurbishment would be a good start; signs to the car park – by car and on foot – might help even more.

Another of these old signs, at the western end of High Street and surely worth preserving, was also recorded in the Eynsham Parish Plan but seems to have disappeared completely.



### **MILL STREET SOUTH-BOUND**

The junction of High Street and Mill Street is notorious for hold-ups and near-misses, often involving traffic that never intended to come this way in the first place.

Parking on the double yellow lines is a regular occurrence, in spite of new traffic management arrangements.

As you see, HGV drivers have just one (modest) warning to avoid the junction.



### **LOMBARD STREET NORTH-BOUND**

The sign marking Lombard Street as unsuitable for HGVs is overgrown to the point of invisibility.

This junction with Church Street / Swan Street is another traffic black-spot, frequently blocked entirely by delivery vehicles.



### **OXFORD ROAD PLAY AREA**

The village play areas are much admired but sometimes the obvious is overlooked.

Whether these signs are important or not, they create a strong impression of neglect.



## CAR PARK AND TOILETS

Spareacre Lane west-bound, at the junction with Back Lane.

The Toilet icon in the centre of the sign is still obscured, though the toilet was re-opened in August 2009.

Back Lane is also the site of Eynsham Village Hall, though no one has seen fit to mention it here.



## BACK LANE SOUTH-BOUND

Entrance to Eynsham's main Car Park, with *one* public toilet, recycling facilities and access to Eynsham Medical Centre.

Considering the error and omissions, this sign may need rather more than a good scrub.