



Councillor Woodifield
8 Market Place
Ringwood
BH24 1AW.

22 January 2010

Dear Councillor Woodifield,

Re. Ringwood Toad Crossing

As a national wildlife charity for the protection of amphibians and reptiles, we run a scheme called 'Toads on Roads'. The scheme (formerly run by Froglife, our previous name) registers roads where toads are known to cross on their spring migrations to breeding ponds. Our registration of these sites means that local councils can erect 'Toad crossing' signs, and we work to set-up and coordinate active 'toad patrols' at these sites. These are groups of volunteers who carry toads across roads to safety, whilst recording important data that we use to monitor nationally how toads are faring. In the last 25 years we have registered over 750 sites across the UK.

I write this letter to inform you of one-such toad patrol in Ringwood, which this year we have highlighted as one of the nation's most important toad crossings. This crossing occurs across North Poulner Rd & Gorley Rd near North Poulner. In 2008, Teresa Baker, a local resident, and her volunteer team rescued over 1,200 toads from death on this single stretch of road. Over a span of twenty years the group has rescued tens of thousands of toads.

This population of toads in Ringwood is undoubtedly one of the most important in the region and it has been made famous by Sir David Attenborough, *Springwatch* presenter Chris Packham and last year, Alan Titchmarsh. Incredibly, the site has also been discussed on a number of US chat shows.

We urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that this population of toads at North Poulner is acknowledged and protected.

The common toad *Bufo bufo* is recognised as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, and as such all public bodies have a 'biodiversity duty' to carry regard for these species when carrying out their function. We urge you to wherever possible safeguard this important population of toads and to celebrate the work of this volunteer workforce locally. We would also urge you to do all that you can to support this volunteer group, financially and otherwise.

Over more than twenty years, the action that this group takes is undoubtedly enhancing Ringwood's local biodiversity value and heritage. We hope that the local council can acknowledge, support and celebrate what the group is achieving, and look to safeguard this important toad population for future generations.

a: 2A Flag Business Exchange, Vicarage Farm Road,
Fengate, Peterborough PE1 5TX

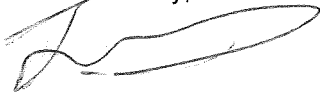
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I would be happy to talk with you further about this toad crossing and to provide details for Teresa Baker, the long-standing toad patrol coordinator at this site, should you like to discuss the site's details further.

Yours sincerely,



Jules Howard – Head of Communications

CC – Teresa Baker, Toad crossing coordinator (Ringwood).

