

Hazelbury Bryan Neighbourhood Plan – Roads and traffic.

Roads and traffic are often mentioned as a concern by local residents. In particular, it is generally accepted that vehicles travel too fast on the straight roads of The Causeway and Pidney Hill irrespective of the restriction to 30 mph. These concerns already exist, and comments have been raised that further development could make the current situation worse. Whilst this could be correct, we do not have any hard evidence of traffic speed surveys or traffic modelling, and we can't insist that any proposals for further development have a full-blown traffic assessment done for them.

A short traffic survey was conducted by local volunteers, which showed

- traffic is highest in the morning and evening, with the predominance of cars going out of the village in the morning and into the village in the evening. This backs the view that many people have found work away from the village
- for most of the traffic the start or end of the journey is the village itself, rather than being just through traffic
- traffic movements now include a significant number of internet shopping / courier deliveries by van
- larger vehicles (trucks, buses, tractors etc) made up about 6% of all trips.

The roads within the village are narrow with some parts only wide enough for one vehicle. The increasing size of some of the lorries and agricultural vehicles can also damage the verge sides. There are no pavements in most of the village and the speed and size of vehicles gives rise to fear by pedestrians. There are insufficient parking places serving the main amenities of the village. This is true of the shop, pub, village hall, church, school and Methodist chapel. The result is that for popular events, and drop off/pick up times for the school, cars are parked in the roadway, thereby making it all the more hazardous for traffic. In addition, pedestrians then walk from their parked cars along the road to the venue. Parking for the inhabitants has also become more of an issue over the years. Many houses do not have any, or have insufficient, off road parking. All this leads to more vehicles being parked in the road, reducing the usable width and obstructing visibility.

The rural nature and narrow width of our roads will not, in all probability, change over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan. This section contains ideas that could be presented to the Parish Council and the County Council as Highways Authority to consider. We have not included expensive or potentially unsuitable traffic calming measures (such as speed bumps and road narrowings). If supported, and funding were to be made available, these relatively low cost measures might improve the traffic issues for the village. However there are no guarantees that these recommendations will be taken forward at this point in time.

Recommendations

1. All new homes to have at least 2 car parking spaces within their grounds and adequate turning to allow forward entry onto the road.
2. Additional '30mph' and 'SLOW' markings on the road to remind vehicles of the speed restrictions, and warn of blind junctions (see map).
3. Improved signage for the various hamlets – eg Droop.
4. Speed Indicator Devices to be purchased and placed along The Causeway, entry to the village from Sturminster Newton and on Marsh Lane at least. Additional sites to be considered.
5. Protecting the key, and well used, footpaths for residents to access the main amenities of the village (see map). Any potential development must impose any restrictions on their usage, and link to them if possible. Two sites (8 - The Antelope Field and 2 - Higher field to rear of Village Hall) also include the potential to deliver new routes (as shown) which may be possible to secure if these sites are preferred. Where additional funds are available these could be spent on improvements to this network of existing paths to make them more accessible. *Note: this does not imply that any other footpaths should be downgraded.*
6. Additional 'Unsuitable for HGV' signs to be erected – e.g. from the war memorial through to the school and onward to Thickthorn Lane.

The map shows the locations of the existing 30 mph signs, places where further signs could be added, and also ideas to protect and provide new off-road walking routes around the village linking to the main community facilities