

BARNS GREEN TRAFFIC GROUP

The Group was established because many residents of the Parish were concerned about the increasing level of anti-social driving and other road safety issues.

Itchingfield Parish Council have a full agenda, of which highways is one of many areas they are involved in. However, the Group would solely concentrate on highways issues and make recommendations to IPC.

Since its inception the Group has:

- Encouraged all residents to
 - (i) Report anti-social driving to Operation Crackdown, www.operationcrackdown.co.uk
 - (ii) Report road damage, overgrown vegetation, damaged signage, etc., to Love West Sussex www.lovestsussex.gov.uk
- Developed and maintained an excellent relationship with Barns Green School and achieved:
 - (i) Twenty Plenty Campaigns
 - (ii) Installation of flashing road signs near the school, which operate around school opening and closing times
 - (iii) Conversion of advisory double yellow road markings near the school to statutory signs
- Established a good working relationship with West Sussex County Highways, especially Chris Stark, Area Manager Horsham District. The Group is now taken seriously and are accepted as having a good knowledge of highways issues.
- Liaised with PCSO Erica Baxter of Sussex Police
- Made an application in August 2017 to West Sussex County Council Community Fund for a pavement from opposite Farm Close right around to the railway crossing near Valewood Lane. This passed an initial assessment. In the last financial year, it passed a feasibility study and is due to be delivered in 2019/2020.

On 3 June 2019, Chris Stark wrote:

Our design consultant has produced a design which shows we should be able to install a 1.5m footway from opposite Farm Close to the entrance to Sumners Ponds and continuing through the bend toward Valewood Lane. It is then shown as crossing over to the north side of the road to link with the footpath from Smugglers Way.

It's intended that the footway can be accommodated entirely within the existing highway verge with no impact on carriageway width, however will require significant cut back of vegetation and some level changes where the verge is banked higher than the road. A small

retaining wall (material to be defined) will be needed to support the verge alongside the rear of properties in Finians Field. Some localised improvement drainage will also be needed.

There will need to be further discussion before the works are agreed and programmed, which should take place late summer/autumn. It is envisaged works will be programmed for the winter period (to avoid nesting birds in the hedgerow) but unless any issues arise it will be in this financial year.

- Following two unsuccessful applications in 2017 and 2018 for a mini-roundabout at the Village crossroads, the Group carried out further research at this location and communicated the findings.

It was noted how busy and dangerous the area was, especially around school opening and closing times. Another observation was that some parents were parking their car on Muntham Drive and walking their children to and from school. This is to be applauded and when other parents were asked why they did not do the same, the answer was that crossing the road was very dangerous. The Group lobbied WSCC and prepared a report about this. Meetings were arranged with officials and they agreed that a manned school crossing should be established. After a few proposals were raised stakeholders agreed upon an option and Highways have included the scheme in their programme of works for 2020/2021. Hopefully it will be completed in that financial year. (See attached plan).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- All the work so far has been concentrated in Barns Green. Residents of Itchingfield and Bashurst Hill should be approached for particular highways issues they may have. Do any Parish Councillors live in these areas, who could advise the Council or canvas neighbours?
- A housing development at Sumners Ponds is likely to be adopted into the Itchingfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan. In the submission document to the Plan Steering Group, the owner/developer mentions on many occasions that a path would be offered from the entrance of Sumners Ponds to opposite Farm Close. Page 4 of the document stated this would be offered as a voluntary 104 agreement through a planning application.

This proposed footpath forms part of the highway and will be constructed during 2019/2020 as part of the agreement with WSCC. This means it will happen and have a zero cost to the owner/developer of Sumners Ponds. However, they would benefit from it. An early dialogue should be opened with them to seek an agreement that, if the development goes ahead, the voluntary 104 monies which they have made a provision for, should be donated to IPC for use on road safety within the Parish. This would be in addition to any statutory obligations they would have. County Councillor Amanda Jupp has indicated she would be willing to take part in any such dialogue.

- Section 106 Funds
Circa £80,000 Section 106 monies were allocated to the Parish from the building of Barns Green School. Research has indicated it can be used for general road safety work and not for any restricted work. So far HDC and WSCC Highways have been somewhat vague about this - so a question needs to be submitted in person at the next meeting of the West Sussex County Council, County Local Committee (North Horsham CLC). These sums of money are usually only available for 10 years following the completion of a development. If not used, they get swallowed up into a general HDC fund.

- Speed Indication Devices (SIDS)

Two devices should be purchased by IPC. They would be battery operated, which means they could be sited in selected locations. See attached for suggested locations - which would need to be agreed with WSCC Highways and Sussex Police.

They would be permanently fixed to posts at these locations. Each SID needs to be positioned so it can be used to monitor the traffic in both directions. The SID will only monitor one direction at any time but, by simply rotating it and re-clamping to the post, the opposite direction could be monitored. By moving SIDS to different posts, plus the option of rotating them on each post, would ensure traffic could be monitored in 12 different areas of the Parish.

Some SIDs are able to use different messages within the same unit. Others record volumes, speed, times and VRN of traffic. This can be useful as the data collected is similar to what is provided by road traffic surveys using counters across the road. The Parish would then not need to pay for future surveys. The costs in quotations attached from Westcotec are still valid and their advice is that the devices including ANPR are not generally used by parishes and the standard SIDs are more appropriate.

Two major suppliers of these devices are Westcotec Co Ltd (www.westcotec.co.uk) and Elancity Co Ltd (www.elancity.co.uk). To purchase two machines and ancillary equipment would cost around £10,000, which includes VAT. IPC would be able to reclaim the VAT.

WSCC Highways should also be approached for information regarding other manufacturers/suppliers.

- Muntham Drive

Now that there is an agreed scheme for the village crossroads, we should look to see what can be achieved on Muntham Drive to make it a safer place for pedestrians. This should cover the area from the crossroads to the Village Hall.

Apart from the lower two metres, it is a private drive and WSCC Highways are not responsible for it. However, they should be approached to give us any ideas.

Muntham House School own the drive and ultimately decide what it is to be done. Local residents should be approached when ideas have been obtained. It should be noted that the cost of any work would have to be funded by the Community.

One suggestion is to have a marked pathway on the drive as shown in the appendix, from the lower end of the Social Club up to the lower end of the Village Hall. This should be in red, as that indicates danger, with some graphics between the lines. Cats eyes could be inserted in the outer line. Tidey & Webb use a firm called Central Linemarkings Ltd of Aldershot.

- Community Speedwatch

Please see www.communityspeedwatch.co.uk for more information. For this to be successful, you will need a co-ordinator, deputy co-ordinator and several volunteers. PCSO Erica Baxter has already identified several sites in the Parish and a group has been set up. This will not move forward until the positions have been filled. Police forces now take this more seriously and are actively encouraging new groups to be set up.

- West Sussex County Council County Local Committee (North Horsham CLC)
There are about 11 of these around the County and the aim is to bring County Councillors closer to local people and vice versa. Residents are encouraged to attend, to quiz councillors on various issues and to receive information on what is going on in their area. Professional employees of WSCC are also in attendance

The Vice Chair of the North Horsham Committee is Amanda Jupp, Chris Stark Area Highways Manager Horsham District, also attends meetings, which are held in Horsham every quarter. A representative of IPC should attend to pick up any useful information and to use this as an avenue to raise highways and other issues on behalf of IPC.

- IPC Highways Officer

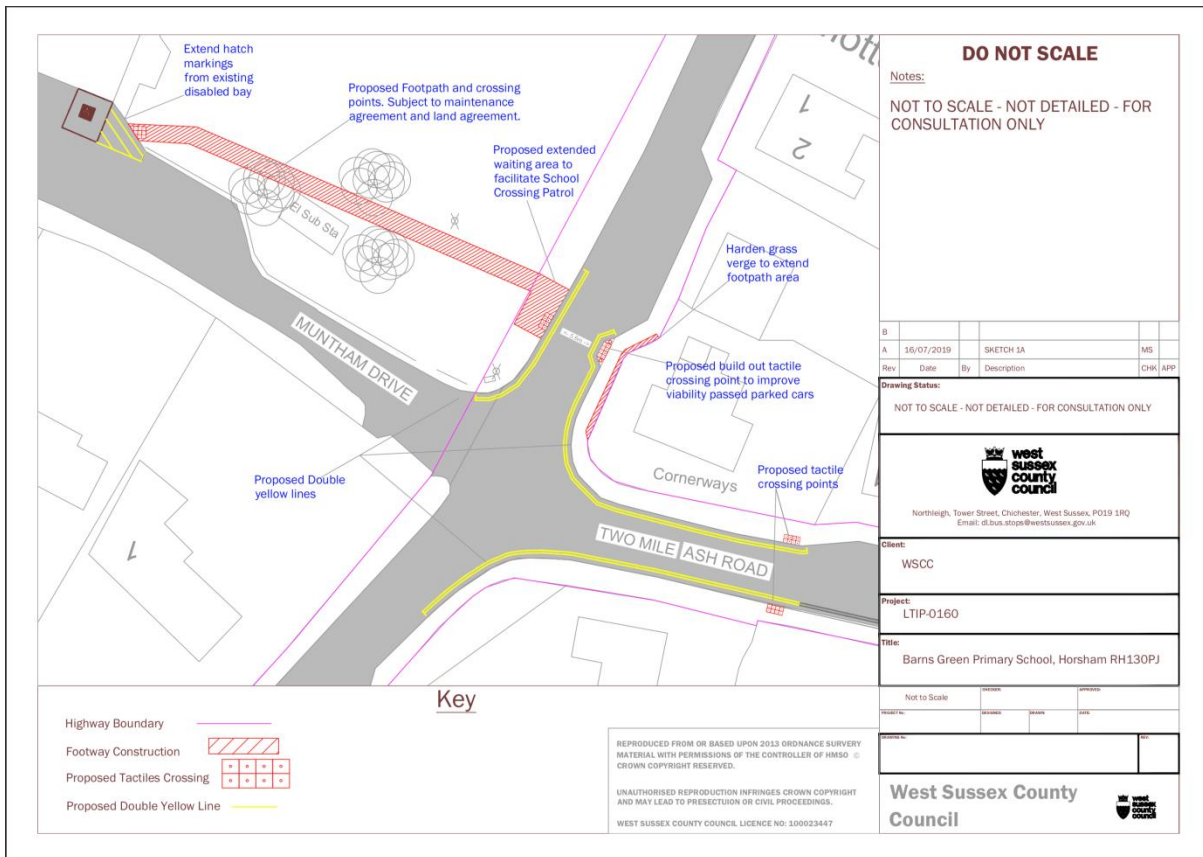
IPC should appoint someone to take on this role. We have had dialogue with Warnham PC and Thakeham PC who have identified people to focus on this key area.

Identified tasks should include at least the following: -

- (i) making a monthly inspection of the Parish to look for potential hazards, i.e. overgrown vegetation and trees blocking signage; road, pavement and verge damage. Reporting to Love West Sussex and monitoring/progressing until work completed.
- (ii) be the single point of contact for IPC on all dealings involving highway issues
- (iii) continue building the relationship with WSCC Highways, Chris Stark and others.
- (iv) prepare a monthly report for IPC on highways matters
- (v) continue to work with Barns Green School and other local organisations
- (vi) management of the Speed Indication Devices (SIDS). Ensure SID batteries are charged and SIDS fully operational; move the devices on a regular basis to maximise their impact; monitor and analyse the data they provide to brief the Parish Council of traffic movement in the Parish
- (vii) act as Co-ordinator for the Community Speedwatch and actively recruit and retain volunteers
- (viii) write appropriate and relevant articles on a regular basis for the Big Mag
- (ix) post relevant highways information on IPC Facebook page
- (x) attend the quarterly meetings of North Horsham County Local Committee as the representative of IPC
- (xi) review IPC website and set up a Highways Section, which is updated regularly
- (xii) continue promoting Operation Crackdown to residents.

Appendix – Plans, recommendations and ideas

School Crossing Design



Improvement for Traffic Calming



SID Location Plan



Muntham Drive Pathway

