

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

ROAD SAFETY NOW AND IN THE FUTURE PUBLIC MEETING 24th MARCH 2018

REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS



Report prepared by Trevor Brown (Parish Clerk) with input from David Roberts, Ian Graham and David Sibbert.

ATTENDANCE

Nearly 40 residents attended the consultation meeting held in the Village Hall on Saturday 24th March 2018. An additional nine residents who were unable to attend had provided comments beforehand.

County Councillor Mrs Anda Fitzgerald O'Connor and District Councillor Mr Eric Batts were present. The County Council's Highways Department had been invited to attend but no response had been received. Thames Valley Police had intended to attend but had to present apologies.

OPENING REMARKS

David Roberts (Parish Council Chairman) welcomed everyone and introduced the meeting agenda (Annex A). He thanked the Road Safety Group (the RSG) for its work in taking forward residents' concerns on road safety: this had been the single largest issue raised in the development of the Community Led Plan, which included suggestions for improvements. The RSG had already helped bring about some improvements but much still remained to be done. The public meeting had been arranged so residents could have their say on options for further improvements. The RSG had drawn up a list of preferred options, and the Parish Council now wanted to hear residents' views together with any other measures that residents thought should be considered. The outcome of the meeting would be discussed by the Parish Council and a plan of action formulated.

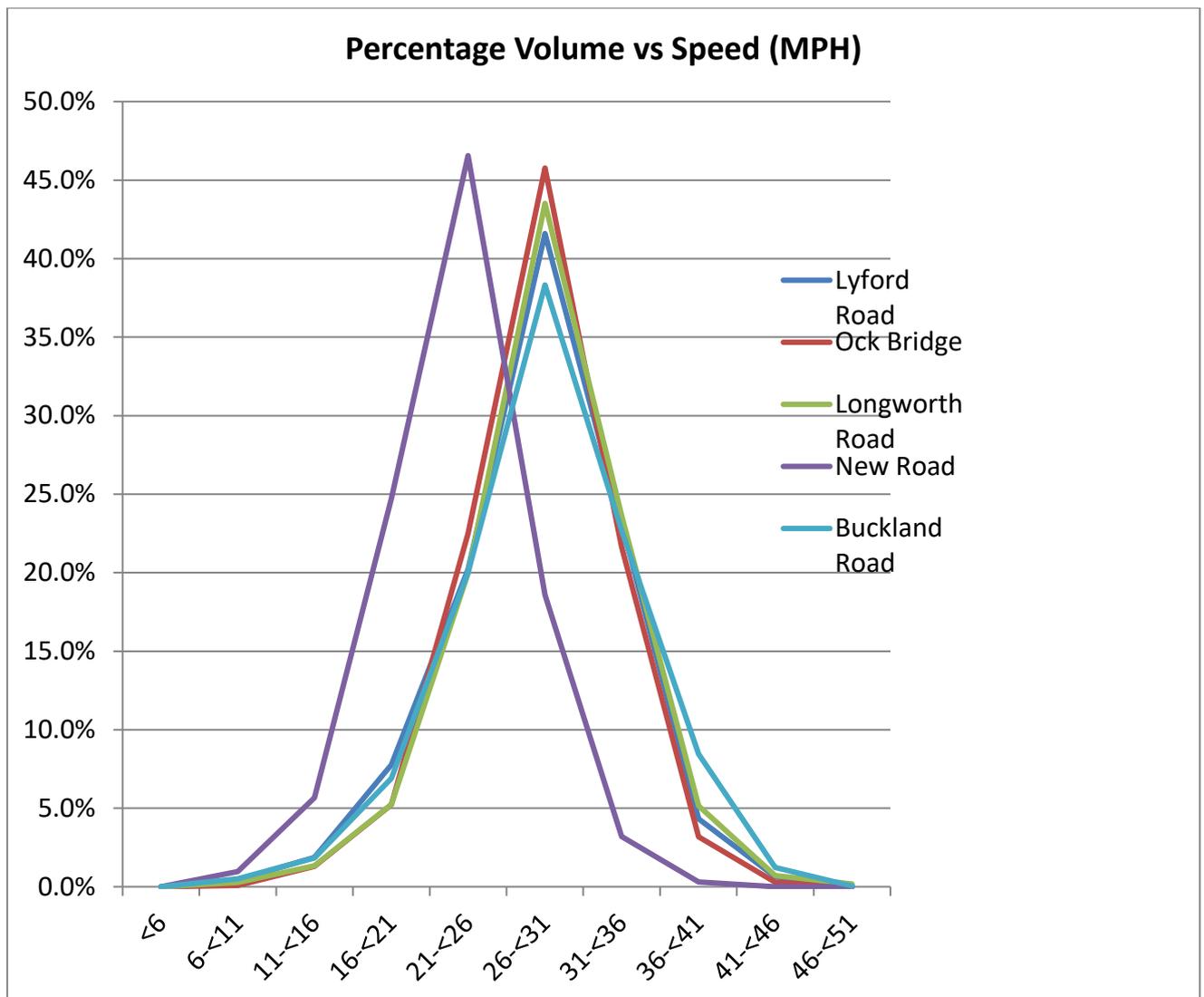
INITIAL IDEAS AND QUESTIONS

Trevor Brown (Parish Clerk) invited those present to spend a few minutes to think about road safety and identify the single most important issue for each resident. This could be in the form of an idea, a suggestion or a question. Residents were then asked to write this on a post-it note and place it on a White Board at the rear of the room. The Clerk and Mr David Sibbert then left the room with the notes to summarise them for use later in the meeting.

PRESENTATION

Ian Graham, a member of the RSG, then gave a power point presentation to explain in more detail the background to the RSG's work. He outlined a number of road safety measures that had already been implemented in the village and went on to discuss the results of a traffic volume and speed survey which had been undertaken at five locations in the village over a 7-day period in September 2017.

Ian used graphs to illustrate the volume of traffic and the extent to which the speed limit was being exceeded at the measurement locations. The highest volume of traffic was at Ock Bridge (almost 8,000 vehicles per week) followed by Longworth Road (almost 6,000 vehicles) and Buckland Road village entrance (almost 4,000 vehicles). On Buckland Road 32% of movements were exceeding the speed limit, 30% at Longworth Road and 25% at Ock Bridge. At Buckland Road nearly 400 vehicles a week were travelling at 35mph or more; and at Ock Bridge well over 300 vehicles. He also showed the number of vehicles exceeding the ACPO guidance for enforcement (35 mph). The results are confirmed on the following graph.



Ian then went through a number of measures that might well help reduce traffic speeds but which the RSG felt (following discussion with County Highway Officers) would be difficult, if not impossible, to implement. These options included speed bumps (environmentally unfriendly and require street lighting), chicanes (requires street lighting) and moving 30 mph signs further out (must be where habitation is visible and requires a change to the Traffic regulation Order). He then outlined the RSG's preferred options as follows:

- White gates (or 'Welcome' signs) at village entrances (£500 per gate);
- A '20 is Plenty' trial campaign, possibly focussed on New Road (£100);
- Fixed or mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (or Speed Indication Displays) (up to £4,000 per sign);
- Installation of 'Bell Kerbs' on vulnerable corners (£900 plus installation);
- A new grass verge footway between the Old School (New Road) and Playing Field entrance (Buckland Road) (possible Charney Army initiative).

There were likely to be a number of difficulties to overcome. The County Council is responsible for highway matters and would need to approve the type of measures being discussed but officers had previously indicated that little/no funding would likely be available. It was also becoming increasingly difficult to obtain access to officers for advice (no response had been received to requests for assistance in interpreting the results of the traffic volume and speed survey and no response had been received to invitations to attend the public meeting). The Parish Council had paid for the traffic volume and speed survey but had so far not budgeted for any further highway spending. Despite this, he felt the village should not be deterred from moving forward, particularly in view of the data on traffic speeds revealed by the recent survey.

For Mr Graham's power point slides go to <https://charneybassett.org.uk/road-safety-public-meeting-presentation-24-march/> A report developed by the RSG and considered by the Parish Council at its meeting on 10th January 2018 is also at https://charneybassett.org.uk/hq-ch/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/20171219_AgendaItem9_RoadSafetyGroup.pdf

RESIDENTS' VIEWS

Trevor Brown presented a summary of the issues that had been raised in the earlier 'post it' exercise and views expressed by residents who had been unable to attend. Most points were in the form of ideas, although some had expressed concerns (e.g. about the reduced width of many roads due to pot holes) with an implied idea for improvement (i.e. that the standard of road maintenance left much to be desired). One or two comments were clearly to aid creative thinking (full set in Annex B).

In discussion none of the measures put forward by the RSG were opposed, with particularly strong support expressed for white entrance gates. Costs could be reduced if residents were allowed to manufacture and install wooden units, but these would require regular maintenance. There was also marked support for vehicle activated signs, the general view being that the acquisition of a mobile unit might be the most practicable solution given the cost. For any '20 is Plenty' campaign it was generally agreed that New Road appeared to be the best location but a sub-group would be needed to take this forward and develop a plan.

Toward the end of the discussion a consensus emerged for footpath safety to be considered as the number one priority, the main problems being in Longworth Road and the verge from the Old School on New Road to the playing field access onto Buckland Road. It was believed that the County Council owned land behind this frontage where a footpath could be better created behind the hedge and which would not be so vulnerable to kerb mounting (the verge being very narrow at this point).

Of the issues raised by residents at the beginning of the meeting and which had not been included as a preferred option by the RSG, moving some 30 mph signs further out from their present location appeared to have most support. The cost to the County Council of administering this was not thought sufficient reason for it to not be pursued. Although several residents had raised the question of speed humps and chicanes in the post-it exercise, it seemed to be accepted that these were unlikely to be practical – there being no further discussion about them following Ian's presentation.

NEXT STEPS

David Roberts closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance, in particular the County and District Councillor. He advised that a feedback report would be drawn up, containing all of the ideas that had been put forward and that this would be circulated to all residents so that any final comments, including on the level of support for the various ideas put forward, could be

expressed. He re-iterated that all of the ideas raised would next be discussed by the Parish Council and an action plan formulated.

END

THE AGENDA

- Background
- Community Led Plan, May 2016 – Road Safety
- Your Concerns – ‘Post-Its/flip chart’
- Improvements so far
- Traffic survey results
- Options
- Review and Choices
- Summary and what happens next

Post-It Exercise

Residents' Responses (including written responses from residents unable to attend)

No.	Response	No. of respondents
1	Invest in Electronic Speed Signs (VAR, MVAR or SID)*	8
2	Install traffic calming measures (speed bumps or chicanes)	6
3	Improve standard of road maintenance to maintain full road width (pot holes filled or verges strengthened). Establish a volunteer group/encourage use of 'Fix My Street' to report problems to the County Council.	6
4	Move 30 mph signs further out of village	3
5	Restrict movements on New Road (e.g. 20 mph limit or one-way)	4
6	Install proper or grass pavements (Longworth Road and New Road)	7
7	Various proposals for New Road: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Halt sign at Main Street junction; - Extend radius at Main Street junction (widening pavement); - Narrow the road width at Main Street end. 	3
8	Restrict HGV and Tractor movements	3
9	Continue with Speed Watch irrespective of any new measures	1
10	Employ parking restrictions at New Road/Buckland Road turn area	1
11	Invest in Hi-Viz vests for dog walkers with 'Slow Down' slogans	1
12	Place bags of marbles at strategic intervals for walkers to throw under the tyres of speeding vehicles	1
13	Teach dogs to bark at speeding vehicles	1

* One additional respondent expressed the view that these measures were a waste of time unless properly enforced