**Quiet Lanes initiative**

**Report to Holford Parish Council**

**6 March2021**

The Holford Road Safety Working Group (HRSWG) was set up in November 2020 and is made up of Maureen Young, Mike Wise, Mike Copleston and Stephen Campbell. Although the Group is independent of the Parish Council it will report on a regular basis to the PC through Stephen Campbell to ensure they are kept informed of progress and developments.

# HRSWG is responsible for the Community Speedwatch scheme in the village and is investigating the possible implementation of a Quiet Lanes scheme.

In February 2021 the HRSWG conducted a straw poll in order to obtain a broad indication of the support or otherwise for introducing such a Quiet Lanes (QL) scheme in the village.

57 households were contacted by leaflet and were sent an email containing a questionnaire asking the following:

1. Do you think that quiet lines are a good idea?
2. What are your reasons?
3. Which lanes do you think should be quiet lanes?
4. What problems have you had on our lanes as a walker, cyclist or horse rider.
5. Would you like a 20mph speed limit on our lanes?

Households were also asked if they had any other comments/ideas e.g. one-way system on Stowey Lane.

A response was received from every household contacted, either by email or by personal follow-up.

**Do you think that quiet lanes are a good idea?**

53 respondents were whole-heartedly in support of the idea, with only four respondents, although broadly in support of the idea, expressing some reservations.

**What are your reasons?**

All the reasons given related to concerns about the lack of safety on the lanes and vehicles travelling too fast. They included:

* traffic entering Holford from the A39 travels too fast
* vehicles travel too fast on the blind corners, a situation which will be exacerbated as the number of “silent” electric vehicles increases
* the speed at which large vehicles (delivery vans and farm machinery) travel is frequently excessive
* the amount of traffic in the village is likely to increase due to more staycations in the area and the continued rise in home shopping – more traffic brings about an increase in the risk of vehicles travelling too fast
* the increasing width of vehicles presents a risk on the narrow lanes, particularly if the vehicle is travelling too fast
* parking on blind corners is a hazard
* the lack of clearly-marked walkways on the lanes makes pedestrian use dangerous.

These reasons were given by all types of road-user – walkers (some with children), cyclists (some with children), horse riders and car users.

The four respondents did express some reservations. Whilst they all had road safety concerns, they felt they would like further explanation of the concept. In particular:

* one household considers the main traffic problem to be speeding on the A39 and would like the 30mph signs located closer to Shervage Woods together with a speed indication device (SID) and/or a speed camera at both entrances to the village
* one respondent supports the QL idea in principle but would like to know how this could be achieved and what the benefits would be
* one respondent rarely uses Front Lane but acknowledges that there has been an increase in both volume and speed of traffic

**Which lanes do you think should be quiet lanes?**

All respondents thought that Front Lane and Combe Lane should be QLs. The majority also felt that Back Lane and Stowey Lane should also be included in the scheme. One person would also like to see the inclusion of Portway Lane to the exit point of the village.

**What problems have you had as walker, cyclist or horse rider?**

Although the majority of respondents did not address this question directly, one horse rider mentioned that she can no longer mount her horse in the lane due to the risk of speeding traffic. One household said that they have problems leaving their driveway for the same reason. One family has encountered fast-moving traffic on the blind bends whilst out walking with children and expressed deep concern about allowing the eldest child to cycle unaccompanied due to the volume and speed of the traffic. Another family with young children are frequent cyclists but often feel that their safety is compromised by the speed at which vehicles travel. Vehicles parked outside residents’ homes have been damaged by passing vehicles.

**Would you like a 20mph speed limit on our lanes?**

The overwhelming response to this question was “yes”.

**Do you have any other comments/ideas e.g. one-way traffic on Stowey Lane?**

Only 6 respondents addressed the idea of one-way traffic on Stowey Lane. One person was in favour, provided it was for traffic leaving the village. Three were in two minds about the idea – they felt it could increase the amount of traffic entering the village by The Plough and may encourage drivers leaving the village to speed. Two people did not think it was a good idea.

Other comments/ ideas were:

* Back Lane should be one way as there is no where to pass an on-coming vehicle
* There should be a 40mph speed limit from Shervage Woods and approaching from Kilve
* The traffic island should be moved closer to Portway as it is no longer required in its current position, given that the cricket club now has access to a car park and players no longer park on the verge
* The existing traffic island should be retained and a second one added nearer Portway Lane
* other traffic calming methods on the A39 should be considered such as speed indication devices and speed cameras
* the owners of Combe House Hotel intend to install new speed bumps on their access road (a private road not maintained by the Highways Department)
* traffic does not speed in Corewell because of the sharp bends
* there could be a bollard near the corner at Silk Mills and by the wellie wash to prevent vehicles parking too close to the corner/left fork to Holford Combe as they could cause problems for other road users, including farm vehicles and emergency service vehicles
* road markings where Stowey Lane joins Combe Lane to slow traffic coming down Stowey Lane
* a pedestrian crossing with lights on the A39 in a position deemed suitable

Overall, the response to the straw poll was very positive and everyone was in favour of the QL scheme. As a result, the HRSWG will continue to pursue its research into QLs and enter into dialogue with relevant bodies as and when appropriate.

Holford Road Safety Working Group