

Traffic Presentation Script

(Slide 1)

Thank you all for coming along today.

Before we get started, we need to point out where the fire exits are. There are no fire drills planned so if the fire alarm rings please leave through the fire exits and assemble.

(Slide 2)

The Parish Council has called this meeting to update as many residents as possible on where we are up to in trying to address the traffic related issues in the Village, answers any questions and gain your feedback. This will then be used to judge what the next steps should be.

Cllr Simon Kent has been the lead on Traffic issues for the Parish Council and will be making the presentation today but also with us are other members of the Parish Council and Cllr Stuart Parker, who is the Ward Councillor for the Villages, will hopefully be able to join us later on.

So, without further ado, I'd like to hand over to Simon.

Thank you.

I'd like to firstly provide a little background. (Slide 3)

Back in 2009 a working group was formed to look at the traffic issues in the village. It identified many of the issues we still face today and ultimately this led to a referendum of the residents for the introduction of a 20 mph limit on the main routes through the village. This was implemented in 2015.

At the time, CWAC (Cheshire West and Chester) council would not sanction any traffic calming measures to help to enforce the 20mph limit, simply signage and roundels on the carriageway. The idea being to survey the roads a year later and see if the speeds had decreased. This was done in November 2017 but the results were only released to us in October 2018, hence the delay in being able to make any meaningful progress in the interim period.

We have now had the opportunity to analyse the data and we will be sharing some of the findings with you today.

We have 3 main issues in the village and I'm going to take each in turn. Firstly,

Speeding.

(Slide 4)

The data collected by CWAC over the same week long periods in 2016 and 2017 monitored traffic volumes, speeds and size of vehicles for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The weeks surveyed were in the school term times.

CWAC and the Police use the 'mean speed' figures to determine if additional traffic calming or enforcement is required. For a 20 mph area they allow 10% plus 2 mph over the limit, so basically 24 mph is 'acceptable'. The mean speeds on Christleton's main roads are shown in this chart.

As you can see, the only roads on which the speed is above this figure are Rowton Bridge Road and Little Heath Road. This means that CWAC would not see a speed issue on these other roads which would justify additional measures.

The Police also use the 'mean speed' to justify enforcement. In addition, they have stated that in order for them to carry out enforcement they would want a 20mph 'limit' area to look more like a 20 mph 'zone'. This basically means they would want there to be more traffic calming and signage than we currently have.

But, we all know that people aren't driving at 20 mph. So let's have a closer look at the data.

(Slide 5)

If we look at the 85th Quartile. This is the highest 15% of speeds recorded; we can see a different picture.

This shows that 15% of traffic has reduced its speed from 30mph but is driving at 29 mph in the 20, almost 50% over the limit. So the 20 mph limit has only had a marginal effect (5%) on the traffic speeds.

So, what can be done to slow the traffic to the nearer the 20mph that the village has voted to impose?

The obvious answer is physical traffic calming measures such as chicanes and speed cushions to initially slow the traffic down and then keep it to the limit through the village.

(Slide 6)

Chicanes could be used on the main routes through the village at the point where the 20 mph limit starts. The priority would be for vehicles leaving the Village and so reduce the speeds of vehicles entering the village and emphasize the change in speed limits. They could be deployed on Plough Lane, Birch Heath Lane and Little Heath Road. Pepper Street already has a form of chicane which was created to facilitate the mounting of the 20 mph speed limit sign.

The Department of Transport states that chicanes can also reduce traffic flows by between 7 and 15%.

Littleton PC are also considering a chicane on the Littleton Lane 'bypass' where they have found that despite extensive deployment of their SID and enforcement by the Police, vehicle speeds have not decreased.

(Slide 7)

Speed cushions are different from speed bumps in that they don't require the vehicle to slow to the same degree in order to pass over them. In a 20mph zone they would typically be deployed 75 – 100m apart and require a full assessment and design scheme by CWAC.

Once again the D of T state that speed cushions reduce traffic flows, by up to 25%.

Traffic flow reduction is only likely to affect 'discretionary' traffic. By which I mean traffic that doesn't have to come into Christleton but simply passes through.

A study by the City of Bristol showed that the average speed travelled over a speed cushion was 17mph and cars accelerated to 22mph between cushions.

Before, I move onto congestion, (Slide 8) I would like to point out that any reduction in congestion **will** lead to an increase in vehicle speeds **unless** traffic calming measures are deployed.

Congestion.

(Slide 9)

If you travel around the village early on a Sunday morning you will find that there is very little on road parking on the major arterial routes. So if the residents aren't parking their cars on the roads, where is all the traffic coming from?

(Slide 10)

Our local businesses; dentists, care home, hairdressers, etc. and their customers have a requirement for about 30 parking spaces. The Ring o' Bells has its own car park. As we have 20 spaces available in the 'toast rack', the vast majority of these cars could be parked in this designated parking area, especially as most of them are parked all day in the village centre. The toast rack is to have spaces marked out to improve parking.

(Slide 11)

We then have the Deva Bridge Club. They meet 6 days of the week and bring up to 60 cars to the Village. By their own admission, their members park everywhere but always trying to get as close as possible to the Institute.

The High School has its own parking during the day time but this passes to Brio Leisure Centre after 5pm. Parents coming to drop off and pick up create about 350 vehicle

movements each time and some of these park up on Village Road, Quarry Lane, Wood Fields and Plough Lane to wait for their children.

In the early evening we have football and other sports taking place at Brio which results in the school car parking being full and vehicles 'over flow' to Plough Lane.

There is also 'discretionary' traffic which uses Christleton as a cut through from the A51 to the A41 to try to save time.

Then, occasionally we also have a parents evening at the High School from 5pm – 8pm.

You don't need me to tell you the results....gridlock.

The problem we have is a severe shortage of car parking spaces to meet the demand. This results in a huge volume of on road parking that effectively reduces our main arteries to single track roads. Single track roads without passing places!

(Slide 12)

This is particularly bad through the S bends by the Ring o' Bells where a combination of the lack of visibility to see vehicles coming from the other direction combined with a lack of passing places results in vehicles regularly mounting the pavements to pass one another. This is a real safety issue and needs to be addressed. You can liken this to traveling down a narrow twisty country lane. If you meet a vehicle travelling the other way you need to be able to pull into a passing place or back up. Not easy when in Christleton at peak times it isn't possible to reverse!

(Slide 13)

In addition, we have a few vehicles that regularly park in places around the village triangle that completely obstruct vehicle flow and results in near gridlock at peak times. For those of you who are increasingly concerned about levels of pollution, we need to find a solution.

So, what can we do?

We need to look at the issues in the short, medium and long terms.

In the short term, we could use parking restrictions in small areas to displace vehicles that are currently causing obstructions, restricting visibility and to create passing places. However, we need to be mindful of how many vehicles this would displace and where they would probably park instead.

So what might this look like?

(Slide 14)

In the centre of the Village, if we applied the **Highway Code guidelines, there would be virtually no parking at all as vehicles should not be parked within 10m of a junction.**

This means that almost all of the vehicles currently parking in this area should not be doing so.

But following Highway Code guidelines would not work for us because it would displace too many vehicles.

(Slide 15)

The only places we need to restrict parking are on Pepper Street opposite the well and on Village Road between the Pepper Street / Birch Heath Lane junction and the start of the S bends. This is shown in hatching on the slide. In total this would only displace 4 / 5 vehicles.

(Slide 16)

Through the S bends, we need to improve visibility and create pull in places to enable drivers to be able to negotiate travelling south in a series of movements. Just like passing places on a country road. This will need to be trialled by CWAC using cones to see if this will provide a workable solution. This is likely to displace 5 / 6 vehicles.

The type of parking restriction is driven by the need to clearly communicate that drivers are not allowed to park in these areas unless loading and to allow CWAC to effectively enforce the restrictions.

Parking through the S bends is judged as a safety issue.

Parking in the Village triangle cannot be time limited as parking in this area is contrary to the Highway Code guidelines and therefore has to be double yellow.

As Christleton is only a small village, CWAC have advised that the restrictions need to be double yellow lines so that they can be instantly enforced. As we are in a conservation area, we have the option of thinner double primrose lines. As the majority of the people parking in the village do so regularly, they will quickly learn that double primrose is the same as double yellow, just kinder on the eye.

(Slide 17)

In the medium term, we could create additional parking places but we need to be sure they will actually be used. For this reason they need to be located as close to the Village centre as possible. At the moment, the only potential sites would be to extend the existing toast rack to create another 6 – 7 spaces or (slide 18) to create another 'toast rack' on the deep verge by the Primary School. Access to the village centre would be via the alley way. This could be large enough to provide up to 30 spaces.

(Slide 18)

We would need to engage with the 'traffic creators' to make sure it would be used. As a guide, this chart shows the distances from a point outside the village shop to the closest parking points currently legally available.

-Toast Rack 150m

- Pepper St 120m
- Birch Heath Lane 150m
- Toast rack by Primary School 200m
- Church Car Park 250m

(Slide 19)

In the longer term, many other things may come into play:

- The High School may build an additional car park and entry. This would ease the traffic flows in the centre of the village as children could be dropped off and picked up on the east side of the 20 mph limit.
- The Primary School may re-locate to a larger site which would free up a suitable area for a car park.
- The Deva Bridge Club may not renew its lease and move to a more suitable venue with its own off street parking, therefore reducing the requirement for parking.
- St James Church may be able to extend its car park.
- It may be possible to expand the car park at Little Heath Play area.

All of these potential options would require further analysis to test their viability and likely costs.

(Slide 20)

I'd like to turn now to Safety.

The key cause for concern is cars mounting the pavement though the S bends but another issue that we have is with cars parking on the pavements and making life difficult to pedestrians with push chairs or wheel chairs to get passed. If we have CWAC parking enforcement officers in the village they could also address this issue.

(Slide 21) In the medium term, we should also look at the lack of a pavement and any street lighting on Faulkner's Lane. Putting a pavement in would require the purchase of part of the field and we should also think about widening the road to make it 2 lanes wide.

(Slide 22)

We also lack a pavement on Rowton Bridge Road between the Quarry Lane / Plough Lane cross roads and Badgers Close. As there is no room to widen the road there, more work is required to assess the options in this area.

(Slide 23)

Recommendations

1. Install chicanes at the start of the 20 limit on Plough Lane, Birch Heath Lane and Little Heath Road with priority for vehicles leaving the village. These would help to reduce the speed of traffic entering the village and increase awareness of the reduced speed limit.
This will cost about £5k per chicane, so £15k in total.
As CWAC will not fund these works they would need to be paid for through the precept (Council Tax). As we have 1100 households in Christleton, a £15k spend results in a £15 a year increase in your council tax, varying by which band you are in.

2. Install speed cushions on Plough Lane, Little Heath Road, Village Road, Rowton Bridge Road Birch Heath Lane, Pepper Street, Quarry Lane and Faulkners Lane. The latter two don't have high speeds but the introduction of speed cushions on other roads may increase traffic volumes on these roads.
These cost £1200 a pair and we will need CWAC to provide a detailed plan and costing.

These will not only reduce speeds but will also make Christleton less attractive to people who use it as a cut through in an attempt to save time. So, we may see a drop in vehicle numbers of up to 25% of the 'discretionary' vehicles.

3. Install double primrose lines as proposed in the village centre, the S bends and for a small stretch on Plough Lane to create a passing place between the school entrance and the Old Rectory. Total vehicle displacement – 9 -11 cars.

4. Assess and cost extending the toast rack and installing another 'toast rack' at the Primary School. Extra car parking spaces added – 36.

Once completed, carry out an assessment of the effects of these measures and then, if the problems persist, carry out a detailed survey of where vehicles are coming from and going to. Analyse the data and propose any additional measures such as the feasibility of a one way system.

We have carried out some initial analysis of a one way system but at this time we believe that the other measures proposed, if accepted by the Village, would increase the availability of designated parking and reduce on street parking to negate the need for such a scheme.

(Slide 24)

What Happens Next?

- Set up a working party to develop recommendations to go to a referendum
 - o Comprise of representatives from across the entire village & the traffic creators and will be a small, active group of up to 8 people.

- Bring back worked up proposals to the village
- If supposed then take to a referendum
- If passed, implement
- Test 1 year on.

(Slide 25)

Can we now take any clarification questions?

(Slide 26)

Can we now take any comments / feedback?

(Slide 27)

Show of Hands

In order for the Parish Council to get some indicative feedback on these recommendations we would like to ask for a 'show of hands'. We appreciate that there is only a small number of the households here but it will help us to simply take the temperature of the village to this 'solution opportunity'.

Here is a reminder of the recommendations.

Firstly, can we ask you to raise your hand if you would like the Traffic Working Group to work up these recommendations?

Now, raise your hand if you don't want the TWG to develop these recommendations.

Lastly, raise your hand if you are undecided.

(Slide 28)

Thank you to everyone who has engaged with the PC and we hope that you will continue to do so!

If you would like to put yourself forward to be on the Traffic Working Group then please email Sue the Parish Clerk. (clerk@christleton-pc.gov.uk)

A few words from Cllr Stuart Parker.

Close.