

HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – THURSDAY 7th SEPTEMBER – ITEM 24 STANDLAKE

I thought it appropriate to address the meeting in my capacity as Chair of Standlake Parish Council and a co-ordinator (and founder) of the Standlake & Brighthampton Speedwatch Group.

The Parish Council is pleased to read it is RECOMMENDED to approve the 20mph limits in Standlake and Brighthampton as advertised.

I consider it worthwhile providing some further background to how the 20mph plan was arrived at. A meeting was held with OCC in April 2022 and after subsequent dialogue, a request for input from residents was published in August 2022. This was promoted through our normal channels namely the Parish Council Web Site, Standlake People Facebook page and Standlake News and the Parish Council Notice Board opposite the Village Shop and Post Office. Furthermore, Parish Council Meeting Minutes are available on the Parish Council Web Site and a printed copy is put on the Parish Council Notice Board.

Some 46 responses were received which is approx. 8% of the dwellings in the village. Further input was also received from the Speedwatch Group. In summary, the findings were 20mph would be welcomed on – Brighthampton Road from the ‘Golden Balls’ junction (as it is still referred to by many) heading to Aston with the zone being extended beyond the village gates; High Street including Woodlands and Manor Crescent; Rack End with the zone being extended beyond the Village Hall to the ‘straight mile’ junction; Church End to The Downs which includes the Church and School. Regarding the A415 Abingdon Road, from the feedback received there was no desire to see a 20mph zone along this stretch as it was felt it would lead to more aggressive driving and who would enforce it. This view was also echoed regarding The Downs. This was the majority view for respondents.

A paper was prepared for the Parish Council February 2023 meeting summarising the findings. The paper was discussed at length and agreed that the paper was broadly in line with the findings of OCC. It was agreed the paper should be put to OCC. It should be stressed there was, and is no desire, to split the village on speeding but the Parish Council has taken a pragmatic and practical approach and supporting the majority view from residents who responded.

This has now resulted in the Public Consultation exercise being led by OCC which again gave residents chance to put their views forward but directly to OCC. The Parish Council also promoted the Public Consultation through its normal channels as detailed.

Please be assured that safety is paramount but this needs to be taken into consideration with measures that could lead to more aggressive and dangerous driving styles. Plus as mentioned previously, the question needs to be asked who is going to enforce the speed limits? We are fortunate to have a very active Speedwatch Group and in the 18 months since the group was formed [supported by the Parish Council] over 2,000 letters will have been sent by Thames Valley Police to offenders. Feedback received from residents at the Village Coronation Event and the FOSS [Friends of Standlake School] Fete shows a lot of support and also belief that Speedwatch is making a difference. In addition, input from the Speedwatch Group and Parish Council led to the road layout on A415 / Witney Road / Aston Road junction being changed following an accident.

The Parish Council continues to work with OCC regarding other considerations and is supported by our County Councillor. Although frustrating, it is recognised budgetary constraints at Parish and County levels means some things will be delayed or not move forward; for example, Average Speed Cameras are cost prohibitive and cannot be funded through external sources. However, a meeting has been arranged for later this month to consider:

- SID devices on the A415 Abingdon Road indicating speed/smiley face etc as Kingston Bagpuize etc.
- Pedestrian Crossing/Safe Refuge points – by the garage, The Orchard, between ‘Goldens Balls’ junction and leaving the village heading towards Witney (again a notorious overtaking place so would slow traffic);
- Double white lines from the ‘Golden Balls’ junction on the A415 until past the village gates.
- Downs Road: make this a 40mph or 50mph zone – currently coming come from the A415 heading to the village the limit goes from 50mph to 60mph then 30mph entering the village which makes no sense.
- Chicanes (as per Bampton) coming into the village on Aston Road and Downs Road at the very least.

In summary, it is hoped the recommendations on the table are approved today demonstrating a pragmatic approach for Standlake and Brighthampton.

Brian Parnham

Chair – Standlake Parish Council