

BURWASH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Traffic and Transport Working Party held in the Parish Room, Burwash, on Tuesday 7th November 2023 at 7pm.

Attended by: Cllr. Bob Franklin (Chair), Cllr. Scott Chambers, Cllr. Natalie Crabtree, Cllr. Terry Johns, David Cowell, Steve Dixon, Sylvie Franklin, Lindsay Green, Halina Keep, Lesley Moore, Nick Moore and Jeremy Richardson.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Helga Castle and Hilary Stewart.

2. Disclosures of Interest.

There were none.

3. Minutes from the previous meeting held on 3rd October 2023.

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October had been agreed at Full Council.

4. Implementing 20mph in Burwash Village.

Les Moore had circulated a Briefing Note regarding the 20mph speed limit proposal to the members (attached as Appendix 1).

ESCC has not responded satisfactorily to the complaints from Burwash PC, and an approach to the Local Government Ombudsman was discussed. The members considered that there had not been full collaboration between the Police and ESCC regarding the design for the 20mph scheme. It was also unclear whether the speed surveys had been made available to the Police.

It was noted that traffic accidents not involving casualties are seldom reported to the Police and would therefore not be included in statistics.

There was a discussion regarding the funds available in the Burwash PC budget for the 20mph scheme and the Match Funding of £50,000 maximum that was available from ESCC.

There had been a meeting between the Clerk and Bob Franklin with GTA Civils, and now were awaiting their costings.

The Petition was discussed, and Les Moore asked that as many people as possible should attend the meeting at County Hall Lewes at 9.40am on 5th December when the Petition was being presented.

Council is asked to resolve the following:

That the Council will continue to pursue the 20mph speed limit on Burwash High Street.

That the Council will appeal to the Local Government Ombudsman regarding the inadequate response from ESCC to our complaint (the Clerk to collaborate with Les Moore and Steve Moore).

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5. Highways and Road Repairs.

a. Vicarage Lane drainage works.

Lindsay advised that 3 berms are due to be restored on 17th November. No date has been set for resurfacing. The design of the drainage system is inadequate.

b. Road surface crazing in Burwash High Street, Vicarage Lane and Road.

Dale Poore has advised he is pursuing Costain for the poor quality of the workmanship. Is the Council paying twice for an inadequate quality of repair?

The Clerk is requested to pursue an update on this.

A date has not yet been set for the resurface of the High Street.

The Clerk is requested to submit an FOI request for the specification for the repairs to be made to the High Street.

c. Spring Lane verges.

A resident has confirmed that the verges have been repaired.

d. School Hill.

It was noted that the sign has again been damaged by the lorries using the road. Concern was expressed about the safety of the 'Lollipop' man as the previous school crossing warden had resigned due to the speed of traffic and not stopping.

Feasibility Study to be submitted by Bob Franklin – safety at the school crossing and the children walking up School Hill.

Council is asked to resolve the funding for the Feasibility Study.

e. 20mph Petition.

This will be presented to ESCC at their meeting on 5th December.

The Clerk is requested to include details of the meeting in the e-Bulletins to give maximum publicity.

The Council is requested to resolve that the Press and Media should be advised that the Petition is being submitted to ESCC at County Hall (David Cowell to assist with the Press Release).

6. Speedwatch.

Ken McLeod has advised he is unable to continue as co-ordinator for Speed Watch. The members thanked him for the time and effort he has given. Natalie Crabtree confirmed that she will be taking over as co-ordinator but said she would need volunteers.

7. Quiet Lanes.

The papers had not been received for the last RALC meeting – these had been resent. The Chair of RALC has agreed to raise the matter with County. Bob has again raised the matter with Claire Dowling.

8. Proposed Cycleways (Burwash Weald to Spring Lane & Stonegate; Burwash to Etchingham Station).

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Funding opportunities are still being explored.

9. 20's Plenty Campaign.

Discussed under item 4 and 5e.

10. Extending the 40mph speed limit (Burnt House Farm) on A265 Burwash Weald.

The Clerk is requested to raise with Cllr. Eleanor Kirby-Green as to why 3 speed surveys are required.

11. Swing Gate Hill.

Lindsay's report 'Proposal to reduce the speed limit on Swing Gare Hill from 40 to 30mph' is attached at Appendix 2.

It was agreed to wait until the new houses are occupied before submitting this.

12. Car Park Update.

The car park lighting repairs are anticipated to cost approximately £3,500 and Rother have agreed to contribute £1,500 towards this.

Lindsay asked that members and Councillors attend the BCWRA meeting on 11th December to discuss problems experienced by their members with the car park.

13. Black Cat Radar.

The licence has been applied for.

14. E.V. Charging Points.

No progress as yet.

15. Points for Noting on a Future Agenda.

None.

16. Date of Next Meeting.

Tuesday 6th February 2024 - 7pm. It was agreed that this meeting would be face-to-face in the Parish Room.

Meeting closed 8.40pm.

..... Signature of Chair

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Appendix 1

Briefing note to	Burwash Parish Council Traffic and Transport Work Group
From	Les Moore
Subject	Burwash Village 20mph scheme
Date	7 th November 2023

1. Collaborating with others in East Sussex

1.1 Eastbourne sustainable Transport and Active Travel Summit 17th November: Developing sustainable transport systems with more opportunities for active travel is essential for achieving Eastbourne's 2030 carbon neutral target. It is also key to promoting better physical and mental health and wellbeing for residents and visitors.

1.2 Speakers include Rupert Club chief officer ESCC & Adrian Berendt who will speak about our shared Burwash story as an extreme example of how not to implement 20mph.

2. Collaborating with other Parish Councils

2.1 Parish clerks are in the process of getting together with County Councillors to address a multitude of shared problems working with ESCC Highways.

2.2 Teresa Killeen Parish Councillor on Ticehurst PC plans to convene a meeting of Parish Councillors to address shared ESCC Highways obstacles to achieving safe speed limits and spaces where people live.

3. Taking the Parish Council's Formal Complaint forward to the Local Government Ombudsman

3.1 The PC complaint to ESCC was not founded. The next step is seeking redress for maladministration from the Local Government Ombudsman.

3.2 When the Police's advice is put together with the ESCC Highways Safety Audit report no new or credible explanation has been provided for the expensive engineering measures now added to the original sign only scheme or for the dismissive 'take it or leave it' approach.

3.3 ESCC misrepresentation of DfT guidance added to their incessant false claims that the Police *might object* to our scheme continues to be used as an excuse for replacing their first scheme with one that they know is both unaffordable, and inappropriate for the village.

3.4 Providing more pavement for traffic to drive over only increases the dangerous risks obstacles and hazards to residents, pedestrians and drivers alike.

3.5 Chris Cannon is offering a 2nd conversation following the meeting in June [see addendum 1] with advice and clarifications re ESCC 's response to the PCs formal complaint..

3.6. Key points of remaining contention to raise with the Ombudsman include:

- ES Highways misleading interpretation of DfT Guidance and consequent policy re on Setting safe Speeds, and their divergence from increasing nos of other Traffic and Police Authorities - national context.
- ES claim that scheme 2 changes *were required*. Guidance indicates that this is NOT the case. ESCC as the responsible Traffic Authority can agree 20mph zones regardless of police comments.
- ES Highways are making a deliberate choice to deflect blame for their policy to another agency, based on a disputed version of comments provided .
- Obscuring the precise specific written concerns of the ESCC safety audit apparently permits Highways officers to reiterate their claim re a 'requirement' for additional engineering measures.
- Differences in ES Highways and Sussex Police particular accounts of what constitutes 'requirements' in respect of sign only schemes + buffer zones.

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- The timing of police comments to ES Highways in relation to receipt / non receipt of the requested speed survey outcomes. i.e. Whether ES Highways provided the police with the speed survey outcomes and then sought further comments from the police following their receipt of the speed survey results. **To Be Clarified.**
- 3.7 Following the 2nd conversation with Sussex Police T&T + to work in conjunction with BPC clerk on writing to the Ombudsman.
- 4. **Presenting the residents petition 5th December 23**
- 4.1 Following numerous surveys since 2017, and a petition signed by 600 people, nearly 400 people have now signed a second petition calling for 20mph in Burwash Village. Presenting the second petition will be a public process with a press release aimed at the widest coverage.
- 4.2 A number of residents will present the petition to Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green before a meeting of the full ES council at County Hall Lewes at 9.40 on 5th December. The more people that can join them by attending, the stronger our message will be.
- 4.3 The PC is asked to publicise the details re this presentation in upcoming bulletins to inform residents wishing to attend.

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### 5. 20splentyforus update

*Keep Calm and Carry On. 20mph has hit the news, even trending on X (formerly Twitter). With most residential streets in Wales 20mph, the media (and certain politicians!) see our progress. We are not fazed by the PM's announcements. Local Authorities set local roads. Those with existing plans for 20mph will likely progress. Please continue saying 20mph is popular. There are advances in Scotland which is why our conference is in Edinburgh on 7<sup>th</sup> December. Do join us and tell those with power to come hear superb speakers on the extension of limits in Wales and Ireland – who pledged 30kp/h on residential streets – to Scotland and England.*

#### Wales

Since 17<sup>th</sup> September, the speed limit on most residential streets is 20mph. 20's Plenty sent an open letter signed by a coalition of prestigious groups thanking the Welsh Government. The Press Association helped it to reach many newspapers, such as [Wales online](#).

Floating car data from Tom Toms analysed by Agilysis showed speeds dropped almost 3mph, similar to those achieved in other areas such as Scottish Borders. Read more [here](#)

Now 73 out of 155 (47%) Highway Authorities in England and Wales have rejected 30mph as not being fit-for-purpose for built-up areas and have set 20mph for most such roads with exceptions. By 2025 32 Scottish HAs will join them. 56% of Highway Authorities saying #20splenty.

Thank you to the local and national politicians and government officers, NGOs, stakeholders, emergency services, campaigners and others who have worked so hard over the last 5 years to bring about this change. “Diolch yn fawr iawn” and those who've done media interviews or community promotion.

The Welsh Government has proudly said that, like the smoking ban, carrier bag charge and the organ donation law, 20mph will be seen as helping public health. Others are pointing to seatbelt and drink driving laws – now accepted as sensible changes.

The opposition got noisier, as often happens just before a big change. Politicians held on to their solid roadmap developed over four years and 1 in 3 roads in Wales (c.97% of 30mph streets) now have a 20mph speed limit. History will prove it to be an enormous win for public health and for common sense, with even greater benefits than those seen in the eight pilot settlements.

**Ireland** agreed speed reduction nationally. Its 50 k/hr roads will go to 30 k/hr as a default and they went further at agreeing that roads with higher speeds should also drop by 20 k/hr. Congratulations to Mairead Forsyth from Love 30 Ireland who has worked with 20's Plenty for many years. The Government plans to cut speed limits on rural roads from 80km/h to 60km/h. While on national roads, speeds will be dropped

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from 100km/h to 80km/h. A Speed Limit task force will be set up to carry out recommendations in 2024 and early 2025. More [here](#)

**London.** Perhaps prompted by the flurry of activity in Wales, there has been a focus on 20mph limits in London with the announcement by TfL that a further 65kms of the TfL Red Route road network will have 20mph speeds limits by December 2023.

This prompted the cover of the [Evening Standard](#) to be covered by 20mph speed limit signs (!) and for a number of largely supportive [features](#) and a [podcast](#) to appear in the paper. TfL and the Standard both report that more than half of London's roads now have a 20mph limit but in reality that threshold was probably passed a little while ago. 21 out of the 33 London boroughs have now either implemented a 20mph default limit or are planning to do so (Newham and Kingston are latest to announce plans).

There was a great article in the [Sunday Times](#) on 24<sup>th</sup> September which traced the rise and success of 20's Plenty over the years from 2004 to today. It's a real testament to the work of 20's Plenty campaigners. It's on our [website](#).

## **Annual 20's Plenty Conference**

Our 2023 conference will be held in Edinburgh. **7<sup>th</sup> Dec 2023** is the date for the [20's Plenty for Scotland](#) conference co-hosted by City of Edinburgh Council.

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Addendum 1

Notes from meeting with Chris Cannon [Surrey and Sussex Police - Operations Command Road Safety and Traffic Management Team] in June 2023

The Police were not provided with the two Burwash Village speed surveys. The Police requested these from ESCC but had no response.

- Where up to 24mph is the average speed (as reflected in the two Burwash Village speed surveys) changed signage to 20mph schemes are all that are required to comply with Department of Transport (DfT) guidance.
- In such cases where the average speed is up to 27mph in places, Roundels on the road surface supported by changed signage are a sufficient "speed reduction feature".
- On buffer zones, 600 metres visibility from one speed to another is ideal, however common sense is the key requirement and DfT would allow a distance of 350 metres. This approach would remove the 'justification' for ESCC to remove the 40mph zone at the Batemans Lane section of the A265.
- Evidence shows that village gates work well in alerting road users to more populated areas and aid speed reduction.

Chris confirmed that as the Traffic Authority, ESCC are the decision makers on traffic schemes, not the Police. Even if the Police did object to a scheme which they haven't in relation to our sign only scheme this is not binding on ESCC. He also confirmed that this was not the first time the Police have been blamed for 'objecting' to a scheme when this was not the case.

Addendum 2

Data from 20splentyforus shows just those collisions in the villages of B, BC and Etchingham - 42 out of 55, including 2 families that were visited by the police to say "I'm sorry, but your parent, child, sibling isn't coming home today", another 12 who have been seriously injured and a further 29 where the injury was "slight". Aside from the grief, the financial cost (according to the DfT) for those 42 casualties is about £7m....

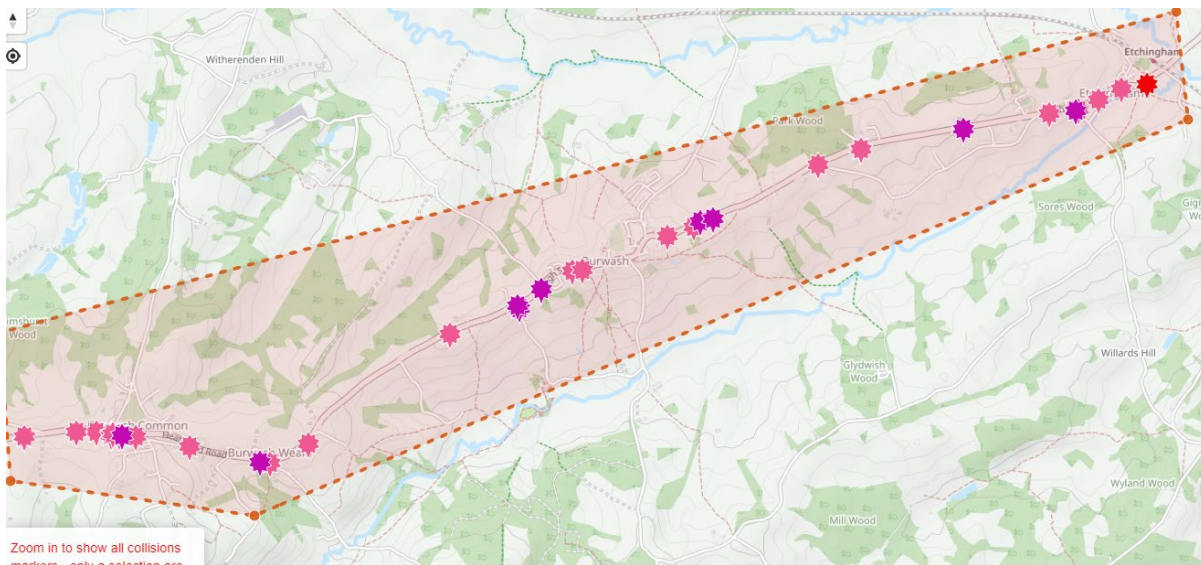
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If ESCC had implemented 20mph in the three villages of B, BC and Etchingham, 10 - 15 of those collisions could have been saved, at a financial benefit of £1m to £2m... (maybe someone might be alive today who isn't)

I would use a rule of thumb of £10 per head to implement - might be more in small villages like B, BC and E. Let's say £20... That can't be more than £40k for all three.

Red = fatalities, **purple = serious** and **pale red = slight injuries**, in the last 8 years...i.e. since you started asking for 20mph... I downloaded the A road reported injuries (bear in mind that is just REPORTED... N.B. most collisions, even if there are injuries, are NOT reported).

<https://bikedata.cyclestreets.net/collisions:field%3Acasualties=Cyclist%2CPedestrian%2CCar%20occupant&since=2014-01-01&until=2022-12-31/#12.55/50.99691/0.40571>



Appendix 2

PROPOSAL TO REDUCE THE SPEED LIMIT ON SWING GATE HILL FROM 40 TO 30 MPH

Proposal

1. It is proposed that the Parish Council should pursue a reduction in the speed limit to 30 mph (from 40 mph currently) on Swing Gate Hill, Burwash Common between the junction of Swing Gate Hill with the A265 to just past the entrance to Oakdown House where the current speed limit changes to 60 mph. See the map at AP.Q..e.Qdl.E•

History

2. This speed limit reduction was one of a series of projects submitted to East Sussex Highways (ESH) by the Parish Council in 2020 following a parish-wide traffic management survey carried out in early 2019.

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3. Following a feasibility study, ESH said that they were prepared in principle to consider a reduction in the speed limit on Swing Gate Hill, subject to a speed survey which they carried out in May 2021. There were two survey points, one at the junction of Swing Gate Hill and Goodsoal Lane (A5856) and the other adjacent to the entrance to Oakdown House (A5857).

4. The results of the speed surveys carried out by ESH are set out in the table below:

	A5856		A5857	
	Northbound	Southbound	Northbound	Southbound
Mean speed (mph)	34	31	35	34
85 th percentile speed	40	37	41	40

5. On the basis principally of the 85th percentile speed figures, ESH concluded that "the recorded speed data indicates a well observed 40 mph speed limit at each location" and that "a reduction in the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph would not be supported without a significant amount of engineering measures". The nature of the "engineering measures" were not explained.
6. In addition, ESH said that they had concerns that the density of building along this stretch of road was insufficient to justify a 30 mph speed limit: "Generally, 30 mph speed limits are only really suitable for more 'urban' areas where drivers can see the reasons for the limit, usually where there are 20 or more properties clearly visible to the driver within a 600m length".
7. ESH commented further that "there have been no personal injury crashes recorded within the 40 mph speed limit on Swing Gate Hill in the last ten years meaning that ESCC Road Safety would not support the reduction to 30 mph on road safety/traffic management grounds".
8. The ruling by ESH ignored government (Department for Transport) guidance on speed limits in rural areas. This guidance clearly states that: "It is government policy that a 30 mph speed limit should be the norm in villages." DfT guidance also states: "Mean speed and 85th percentile speed (the speed at which 85% of vehicles are traveling) are the most commonly used measures of actual traffic speed. Traffic authorities should continue to routinely collect both, but mean speeds should be used as the basis for determining local speed limits".
9. In coming to their view that housing density was too low to support a lower speed limit they also ignored the special nature of some of the buildings on this stretch of road, namely a village hall, a church, a children's play park and, in particular a residential care home. DfT guidance states: "If there are just fewer than 20 houses traffic authorities should make extra allowance for any other key buildings such as a church, shop or school". In addition, there are two bus stops on the A265 very close to the junction with Swing Gate Hill. They not only serve the general public but also act as stops for school buses. School children living in the vicinity of Swing Gate Hill must cross this road at the junction without the benefit of a pedestrian crossing and a reduction in the speed limit would reduce the risk to them.

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10. In summary, I think it is fair to say that the Traffic & Transport Working Party thought that there might be grounds for an appeal against the ESH decision but decided at the time to focus on other priorities, particularly the 20 mph speed limit in Vicarage Road and Vicarage Lane (now achieved).

What has changed?

11. Since the 2021 decision by ESH not to allow a reduction in the speed limit to 30 mph on this stretch of road, two of the relevant factors have changed:

- (i) The former Ashwood nursing home site is now under development. The proposed Ashgate View site (<https://forestersagency/ashgate-view/>) has now been sold and will add 10 properties (a mix of houses and apartments) to this part of the road with a single traffic entrance and exit for all of them being on Swing Gate Hill. The first of the two detached homes on the rest of the old nursing home site between Ashgate View and the Pavilion is already under development. Each of these properties will have its own entrance/exit onto Swing Gate Hill. Including the new developments, the total number of properties along this stretch of road will increase to approximately 27 (excluding Oakdown House).
- (ii) In 2023 there were three serious accidents at the junction of Swing Gate Hill and the A265, at least one of which involved an overturned car and injuries to passengers. The causes of the accidents are not known (and we may need to approach Sussex Police for this information) but it is at least possible that vehicles

on Swing Gate Hill were approaching the junction too fast to be able to stop and that a lower speed limit might have helped in this respect.

12. These changes, together with the lack of proper consideration given to government policy and the special nature of some of the properties on Swing Gate Hill provide a basis for a resubmission of this proposal. Given the time taken by ESH to consider and implement even simple proposals (such as this), application should be made now on the assumption that, by the time Ashgate View is fully developed, the new speed limit may have been implemented.

What will it cost?

13. Currently there are two 40 mph signs at the northern entrance to the 40 mph limit stretch of Swing Gate Hill, together with three 40 mph repeater signs. To replace these with new 30 mph signage, to instal two new 30 mph roundel signs at the A265 junction end of Swing Gate Hill, and to produce the required Traffic Regulation Order is likely to cost around £10,000 (based on the Vicarage Road/Lane project). It is proposed that this cost should be met from parish council funds.
14. The cost will be more if further traffic calming measures are required as originally suggested by ESH (without providing any detail). It is not obvious that any such measures are needed, but given their track record, we should be wary of any attempts by ESH to over-elaborate this scheme and drive up the costs.

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Lindsay Green
Steve Dixon
13 October 2023