

Bubbenhall Annual Parish Assembly 20 October 2020 Report on Highways and Road Safety

Traffic

There was a noticeable decrease in the amount of traffic in all categories - apart from bicycles, of course - during the pandemic lockdown. What a joy it was to be able to walk more safely on our country roads and lanes! However, since the gradual easing of restrictions the number of large vehicles entering and passing through the village seems to have increased significantly. The HGV survey, which has provided such strong evidence in the past, was reintroduced in the second part of 2019 and we continue to encourage villagers to log any occurrence of HGVs coming into the village. A note of the name of company, registration number, time and direction, would help the Parish Council continue its close monitoring of HGVs using the village as a short cut. Such evidence should be sent directly to admin@bubbenhall.info. We have asked the developers of the Gateway South site to install more signs advising contract drivers to avoid Bubbenhall and to respect the 'no HGV' signs.

Road repairs

The Parish Council regularly informs the County about damage to roads or kerbs in the village, e.g. the top of Lower End. We are pleased that work has now been completed on the dropped kerbs so that accessibility is improved for wheel-chair users and pram-pushers.

Speeding

All Community Speed watch events have been cancelled this year. But we do ask villagers to respect the 30mph speed limit along the Stoneleigh Road where there is the dangerous cross-roads at the Watery Lane/Bubbenhall Road junction. The same applies to Spring Hill and the entrance to Pit Hill from the A445. We were pleased to get approval for the white-painted 30mph 'roundels' along Stoneleigh Road. However, the job was not done well enough by the contractors and the work to re-set them on the road surface will be done in due course.

There have been at least two road accidents on the A445 within the village boundary, where cars have ended up in the hedgerows. Fortunately no serious injuries were incurred but speeding is likely to have been the cause of the accidents.

Parking

During the height of the pandemic, the Village car-park was closed in accordance with Government Guidelines. Unfortunately, there was an inevitable rise in the number of cars parked on our residential streets. Similarly, during the closure of Ryton Pools car-park earlier this year and then continuing when only a limited number of vehicles were allowed into the country park, people sought other places to leave their vehicles. We called in the Police to control illegal and obstructive parking. Cones were placed along the verges of the A445 and the park management also put up advisory notices. Despite these interventions, drivers were still using the roadside verges irresponsibly and there was at least one collision as a result of this reckless action. There were similar incidents of inconsiderate parking along Pagets Lane and towards Shrubs Lodge. We continue to monitor the situation, reporting illegal actions to the Police.

The customary crossing at the top of Orchard Way

We continue to be concerned about the risks to pedestrians crossing the A445 at this point. In discussions with the County, we have recommended the following:

- Cutting back hedgerows and bushes to improve visibility for pedestrians and drivers
- Cleaning up both sides of the road and setting tarmac at the crossing points
- Erecting a protective metal barrier on the south side of the road similar to that on the Orchard Way side.