

(Updated 13/07/18) Large Vehicles/Lorries & Speeding through the village: It is inevitable that from time to time we will face large vehicles coming through the Village, and that some vehicles will also take literally that there is an unrestricted speed limit on the village roads.

Following the Annual Parish Meeting (18th June 2018) the Traffic Management Team at County Hall have been in touch by phone and the following e-mail was sent by Paul on 25th June 2018:

"I've re-checked the DoT Guidance on 'Setting Local Speed Limits' and the relevant info which I think is Section 73. We are particularly keen to move towards the situation as set out there:

131. Fear of traffic can affect people's quality of life in villages and it is self-evident that villages should have comparable speed limits to similar roads in urban areas. It is therefore government policy that a 30 mph speed limit should be the norm through villages.

We feel that this is particularly relevant in Lamyatt due to the nature of the road – which is for the largest part a single track road with few if any passing places (where these are available they tend to be the residents' own driveways) and with blind bends and a steep hill at one end.

We would be keen to move towards this as the recent Annual Parish Meeting yet again asked for the Parish to make efforts to deal with this issue. If you think I have mis-read or not located the relevant DoT Guidance then please advise us further.

As we discussed, if there are some costs which the Parish would need to bear in relation to achieving a reduced speed limit along the stretch of the main road (the High Street) where the radar speed recording was used then we would be keen to proceed as required.

As for the Discretionary 'Blue' 'No HGV' Lorry signs again we would be keen for this to be implemented."

We are waiting for a response to this e-mail.

Background: Following the meeting at the end of February with the SCC Highways Officer a RADAR speed recording device was used in the village during March and the findings have now been received. "The highest speed recorded was for one vehicle on Saturday 17 March at 05:00hrs travelling at 44 mph, but the majority of drivers recorded were travelling between 20 -30 mph."

As we know the maximum legal speed limit through the village (all roads) is 60mph so we are pleased that most drivers recognise that the narrow roads don't lend themselves to such an excessive speed. We are discussing further with Highways whether such a set of speed data might suggest that a lower speed limit, of say 30 or 40mph would be appropriate, especially on the main High Street.

The relevant Dept of Transport Guidance for roads in rural villages can be seen [here](#)

Previous updates and background can be found here: [Update 27 February 2018](#)

As with all vehicular traffic, if you feel there have been incidents of poor or dangerous driving, please make a note of company name (if visible); number plate; or take a photograph and report these directly to the Police, advising the Parish Chairperson, Paul, that you have done so in order that we can keep count of incidents, and subsequently raise with relevant authorities/companies.

Update 27/02/2018

We are now awaiting the installation and recording of vehicle speeds using a recording device on the main (High) Street. When the County Council findings are shared with us we will present them on the Lamyatt matters page

Previous Updates:

20/01/2018

A small group from the Parish (Paul Chadwick, Caryl Joyce & Romy Smallwood) invited our elected County Councillor Nigel Hewitt-Cooper, and our local Mendip District Councillor, Dick Skidmore, to discuss traffic issues in the village. The meeting took place on 19th January. Whilst Dick is very familiar with the village, it was a good opportunity for us to, inter alia, introduce Nigel to the Village Hall before an open discussion and a drive through the main village road so that he could see for himself the problems with the narrow single track road. The numerous blind bends, the blind hill, and the fact that there are no passing places were all pointed out. We think Nigel is in a much better position now to understand our frustrations as a village with the potential speeding traffic and heavy lorry movements.



Response from Senior Traffic Engineer, County Hall received 23/01/2018:

“Dear Mr Chadwick, thank you for your further e-mail regarding Lamyatt.

As previously mentioned generally we only now consider 30mph speed limits in built up settlements, we review actual speeds, injury accidents (my records show none in Lamyatt over the last five year period), the nature of the road, sign clutter, etc. The Department for Transport (DfT) guidance for setting local speed limits has clear criteria for where local authorities should install 30mph limits. This is to ensure consistency throughout the Country. In summary, there is a requirement for a minimum of 20 houses to be fronting the road at an average density of 3 houses per 100m, to be recognised as a settlement and to qualify for a 30mph limit and where actual speeds are already below 30mph sign clutter needs to be considered. If there is a particular area you have concerns over and a post or piece of street furniture exists (which I can attach a piece of monitoring equipment) I may be able to arrange speed readings to ascertain the level of the problem in the first instance.

In addition to the links I sent you, our website includes a list of locations where Traffic Regulation Orders are made and which includes speed limits.

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/road-works/tro/>

My experience is that new weight limits are rarely introduced, due to effective enforcement issues (Police) or to the knock on effect on other communities.

We have found that merely lowering a limit with lines and signs, it is not always respected or successful, unless accompanied by engineering measures in the form of horizontal or vertical traffic calming features. This type of engineering can also have a knock on effect in

causing noise pollution, discomfort for public transport users and result in complaints from nearby residents.

In addition, the Police, who are the only ones to enforce speeding, stance on new speed limit requests is:-

“Speed limits are only one element of speed management and local speed limits should not be set in isolation. They should be part of a package with other measures to manage speeds, which include engineering, visible interventions and landscaping standards that respect the needs of all road users and raise the driver’s awareness of their environment, together with education, driver information, training and publicity.

The police service has to ensure all resources are used effectively in responding to community priorities.

Avon and Somerset Constabulary will support all appropriate speed limits where;

The limit looks and feels like the limit, giving visiting motorists who wish to conform to that chance;

the desired outcome has to be speeds at the limit chosen so as to achieve safe roads for other and vulnerable users, not high speeds and high enforcement;

the limit is self-enforcing (with reducing features) not requiring large scale enforcement;

the limit is only introduced where mean speeds are already close to the limit to be imposed or with interventions that make the limit clear to visiting motorists;

speeding problems identified in an area must have the engineering, site clarity and needs re-assessed, not simply a call for more enforcement.

Enforcement will be considered in all clearly posted limits, given other priorities, and this will be by:

Targeted enforcement where there is deliberate offending and the limits are clear;

Where limits are not clear (that is they don’t feel like or look like the limit or are on inappropriate roads), they will not be routinely enforced, only targeted where there is intelligence of obvious deliberate disregard which may result in increased threat, harm or risk to other road users.

Deliberate high harm offenders will always be targeted and prosecuted whereas enforcement against drivers who simply misread the road may not be appropriate.

None of the above should in anyway leave the impression that we will not enforce the law, As with all speed limits, and other enforcement work, we will use evidence to ensure that our resources are allocated in the most appropriate way using appropriate tactics. Enforcement of limits that do not comply with the above representations could lead to mistaken offending and could risk the loss of public support.

Enforcement cannot and must not take the place of proper engineering and or clear signing.”

Mr Christopher Betty
Senior Traffic Engineer
Traffic and Transport Development
Somerset County Council”

We will now discuss how we take this issue forward and will be thinking hard about the best location for a speed reading device to be used in the village. If anyone in the village has other observations, please contact me.

Paul Chadwick

01749 812420

(Previous updates below)

Update 11/01/2018

Issue of heavy lorries and traffic speed limit through Lamyatt

Time line (see also previous update of 19/12)

20/12/17 SCC Traffic Regs Officer Chris Berry responded to e-mails (he had been off sick):

"I regret that due to limited resources I am not able to accept you invitation to meet on site.

As requested please find a link to information on our website that explores various highway issues.

<https://www.trafficchoices.co.uk/somerset/>

Regarding speed limits we are now guided by the Government advice set out in new guidelines

"Setting Local Speed Limits" which can be viewed on the following link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-local-speed-limits> The advice stipulates - In most instances, consideration of a collision history, road function, mix of road users including presence of vulnerable road users, road geometry, engineering and environment, the density of the settlement and actual traffic speed should enable traffic authorities to determine the appropriate limit.

Setting speed limits at the appropriate level for the road, and ensuring compliance with these limits play a key part in ensuring greater safety for all road users. Before implementing speed limits we now first ascertain the level of the problem prior to seeking the support of the police and the local community. The DfT Guidance on the introduction of 30mph speed limits is that actual vehicle mean speeds need to be 34mph or below before the limit could be considered.

We have found that merely lowering a limit with lines and signs, it is not always respected or successful, unless accompanied by engineering measures in the form of horizontal or vertical traffic calming features. This type of engineering can have the knock on effect of causing noise pollution, discomfort for public transport users and result in complaints from nearby residents."

09/01/18 County Councillor for Mendip south ward, Nigel Hewitt-Cooper replied (his County Council e-mail address had been having some problems) agreeing to meet in the village to review.

Commentary:

The issue of speeding traffic and heavy lorries has come up regularly over the years. Annual Parish meeting minutes regularly refer to the issue, going back over decades...

Please take time to look at the suggested links from the Officer to better understand the current legislation and practical issues regarding reducing speed in a village setting (refer esp to section 7 of the Govt circular) and weight restrictions.

The Officer has been asked to give examples of similar villages which have been able to tackle these issues in recent times.

If you have any comments or observations on this matter, then please let the Parish Chairman know. The meeting with the County Councillor will be held at the end of next week and Caryl and Romy will also attend.

Paul Chadwick

Update 19/12/2017

Issue of heavy lorries through Lamyatt.

Timeline

25/10/2017 Parish meeting was advised that AMBeaton would notify us if there were to be a large number of heavy vehicle movements

28/11 First batch of heavy lorries through the village – we believe there were 42 movements

29/11 Tel Con with AMBeaton asking that they advise us of numbers of vehicle movements for villagers to be notified

05/12 Email to AMBeaton asking for them to continue to update us; E-mail to all on village e-mail to know of the situation; AM Beaton confirm that there will be '4 lorries' on 06/12

06/12 In fact we believe there were 32 movements on this day. Phone and e-mail contact made with AMBeaton to clarify and complain about numbers being excessive compared to intended '4'. Various residents noted that lorries had difficulties passing parked cars and pedestrians; and vehicle photographs were taken as necessary.

06/12 Email to SCC Highways Roads team (Mendip Division of SCC) and to SCC Highways Traffic Regs Team. Roads Team (Neil Corp) rang back following day advising that it was for Traffic Regulations Team to sort out issues about vehicle speed & weight etc in the village. Response still awaited from SCC Traffic Regs team (Chris Berry) despite follow up e-mail on 12/12 & 19/12 requesting he give us some dates for a meeting.

07/12 Nigel Hewett Cooper (SCC elected member) advised by email and requesting his support and that he advise us on other villages that have faced the same issues and how they have resolved the same. Awaiting response from Nigel.

07/12 Dick Skidmore (Mendip elected member) advised by email and Dick acknowledged the issue.

Many thanks to those residents who took the time to e-mail , or write, to AMBeaton, or who may have contacted Councillors or Highways direct. Further updates will be posted as we have news.

Paul Chadwick