

## **PITSTONE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION & ANSWER FEEDBACK**

The parish council would like to thank everyone that attended and participated in the annual parish assembly on 18 May, either as a speaker or a member of the public.

You can read the minutes of the meeting on the Pitstone.co.uk website. A number of questions were raised by residents to the various speakers, and we are providing you with updates to these here, and this will also be replicated in the next edition of Pitstone Parish Post (PPP) in case any other residents had the same queries and to ensure everyone keeps up-to-date.

### **Question raised to Thames Valley Police re anti-social motoring offences (especially speed of traffic on Westfield Road and wheel spinning in the business park, but the response below includes general information about speed of traffic, rather than just Westfield Road)**

These are tricky issues to resolve, as they require changes to individuals' personal behaviour rather than physical/purchasable interventions.

In recent years, Buckinghamshire Council (BC) have installed a number of physical measures along Westfield Road including roundels and dragon's teeth road markings and improved signage. Thames Valley Police and Buckinghamshire Council work jointly to monitor road safety and BC prioritise expenditure on physical interventions in areas across the county where there is a poor accident record. There have been few accidents in Westfield Road since it was constructed (and most have not been attributable to road design) so this location is not a priority for further physical measures by BC at present. They review annually.

Thames Valley Police (TVP) agreed (once the road was adopted by the highways authority), and do, carry out regular speed-van enforcement along Westfield Road, in rotation with other approved sites. Neither TVP nor BC are supportive of the installation of fixed speed enforcement cameras in the parish. The parish council has gained permission from TVP & BC to install 'Police Speed Check Area' signage at either end of Westfield Road and this has now been purchased and installed. The permissions granted are for 'temporary' signage, so residents may see them disappear for short periods of time and then re-appear again.

The parish council owns and utilises our two mVAS units (which flash when a speeding vehicle enters its field of vision) to both remind drivers and monitor speeds (alternating between the Warwick Road and Bolebec End locations), in rotation with all the other approved sites in the parish (in Cheddington Road, Marsworth Road and Vicarage Road). The units are in place for 6 weeks, and then move to their alternate site, providing approx. 6-weeks on and 6-weeks off for each road. This type of unit has been found to be more effective when it appears/disappears/reappears, rather than being static. When located in one position, drivers become used to the sign and are more likely to ignore it. Data is published to our website and shows that speed of traffic can be an issue in all our through roads, rather than being unique to Westfield Road (which was originally designed and built as a 40mph road for business park access). In fact the average speed in Cheddington Road can sometimes exceed those recorded along Westfield Road, despite Cheddington Road not having the benefits of Westfield Road, for example clear visibility, few parked cars, a grass verge & cycle path to protect pedestrians, and less reasons to cross. Further flashing devices such as a SID (speed indicator devices) were considered earlier in the year, in the hope that rotating the type of sign/message displayed, would still be enough of a difference to trigger changes to motorist behaviour. However, technical reasons that the suppliers can't resolve at present, meant that they couldn't be rotated. Fixed signs will not provide a resolution to the issues and reduce the ability of the existing signs to rotate. Therefore, this was not progressed for the moment (but may be reviewed once the technical issues have been resolved) and the council continues with its existing policy to support all residents, located along all through roads, with equal provision of our two mVAS units.

TVP suggested that if speed of vehicles was important to local residents that people may like to volunteer to set up and run a Community Speedwatch scheme. The parish council has promoted this on several occasions but insufficient levels of interest from residents has been received. If you feel strongly about vehicle speeds, please do check out the information on our website at

<https://pitstone.co.uk/ppcnews/speedwatch/> and get in touch if this is something that you'd be keen to participate in.

Most of the traffic (excluding freight) in our village is likely to be local, and speeding issues exist in all the local villages (as well as within the county and nationally). Drivers may be particularly careful to mind the speed limit in an area close to their home, but not be quite as respectful passing through another location. We may all be part of the problem, and part of the solution. Please do keep your speeds down, wherever and whenever you are driving. We will continue to explore any other opportunities that arise that may be useful to reduce traffic speeds across the parish.

With regard to Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) in the business park, the parish council had sought, and been declined, permission to plant screening trees in either the BC verge or the Taylor Wimpey business park banks opposite Dover Close. TVP encouraged residents to report all instances of ASB (whether speeding, wheel-spinning, drugs, teen-behaviour etc) via their email ([greatbrickhillwingivinghoeNHPT@thamesvalley.police.uk](mailto:greatbrickhillwingivinghoeNHPT@thamesvalley.police.uk)) or via their website (<https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/>). They may not be able to respond straight away, but your information helps them build intelligence and better target patrols.

#### **Question raised to TVP re parking near junctions in Old Farm & Rushendon Furlong**

Like the above, this is a difficult issue to resolve, as it requires people to be respectful of the needs of others, rather than being easy to change with a physical solution. TVP agreed to check these locations if they were patrolling the area and speak to offenders or issue advice letters. As above, please report any regular vehicle issues to TVP via their email so that they can identify vehicles, build intelligence, and better target patrols.

#### **Question raised to Buckinghamshire Council (BC) re potholes**

BC advised that the budget had been increased to try and address the backlog and encouraged residents to report any issues identified via Fix my Street so they could be addressed. The Local Highways Authority inspect surfaces at intervals, with the regularity dependent upon the classification of the road. In between, they are reliant on your eyes and co-operation to report issues. Category 1 issues (eg a deep pothole in the tyre line on an A road) will receive a faster repair than more minor issues reported, and you may find that whilst one pothole in a street is fixed urgently, another a little further along takes much longer to get repaired. Please report anything you spot here: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-transport/> so that we have the best chance of getting issues logged, identified and resolved.

#### **Question raised to BC regarding resurfacing**

BC has already included Marsworth Road on their list of roads requiring attention, but scheduling will depend on county wide priorities, so no anticipated date is yet available. The Buckinghamshire Councillors work in conjunction with the BC team to prioritise the most important roads within their area.

Also on the agreed, but not yet scheduled, BC list of highways work to be undertaken are: fixing the failing road surface down by the Cheddington Road railway bridge (due to be done in conjunction with some other works to improve pedestrian safety under the bridge), reconstruction of the Vicarage Road footpath from Tun Furlong towards Church Road and repair of a collapsed section of footpath in Queen Street.

#### **Question raised to BC relating to highways weed killing**

Buckinghamshire Council has not allowed for any weed killing (by spraying) or weed removal (by hand) beside the highway within its budget for the current financial year. The parish council was granted permission (but not provided with any funding) to remove weeds from the pedestrian island refuges (around both the Westfield Road and Marsworth Road roundabouts, and along Marsworth Road) and the build-outs along Marsworth Road and the Recreation Ground roundabout. Our contractor has now undertaken this work and hand cleared all these areas to improve aesthetics and safety.

#### **Question raised to BC re road sweeping**

Buckinghamshire Council are hoping that sweeping the roads will prevent weeds from taking root. They plan to attend twice per year. The first visit to adopted highways has been undertaken and it

subsequently came to light that an administrative problem within the Street Scenes department at BC (the road sweeper is managed by the open spaces department rather than their highways department) had meant that the roads adopted by BC over the previous 12-months hadn't been added to the work schedule provided to the staff. This has now been resolved, BC apologised, and the sweeper returned to clear the previously omitted roads.

If your road develops a problem in between the cyclical visits (eg if there is a spillage etc) this can be requested via this link to the BC website: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/street-cleaning/report-a-street-that-needs-cleaning/>

Private roads are excluded from this service, and queries relating to roads that are still maintained by their respective developers should be directed to the developer in question.

### **Question raised to BC re zebra crossings (both instead of pedestrian refuges along Marsworth Road, and for Westfield Road)**

Buckinghamshire Council have previously advised that both the Vicarage Road crossing and the Marsworth Road crossing by the pavilion did not qualify for zebra crossings (hence the installation of the provided island refuges). The most appropriate type of crossing for each location is based on traffic volumes/speeds, distance, location, and the length of time that pedestrians have to wait to cross safely. The parish council had requested a zebra crossing on Westfield Road as part of the planning application feedback for the retail unit at Portland House but the planning has been refused by BC and thus the crossing not progressed by the developer. BC estimate that each zebra crossing costs in the region of £80k+ to provide.

The last proposals put forward by Buckinghamshire Council for the Ivinghoe & Pitstone Safety Scheme, included coloured tarmac at some pedestrian crossing points to raise visibility. The parish council has agreed to revert back to Buckinghamshire Council and the BC Community Board to ask if they can re-assess if any locations along Marsworth Road or Westfield Road would meet the criteria for zebra crossings and if not, if any locations qualified for coloured tarmac to enhance visibility.

### **Question raised to Pitstone Parish Council re tidying the Ravensmoor community plots**

The two plots that were due to house a children's day-nursery and a restaurant/pub/café remain undeveloped at present as Nicholas King Homes (NKH) are seeking permission to build further residential properties rather than the promised community facilities. NKH had taken an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate who had agreed that planning permission should be granted for the homes. Buckinghamshire Council has now challenged this decision and the matter is now subject to Judicial Review, so the plots are likely to remain in limbo for some time. The Parish Council has written to NKH, who have agreed to attend site and tidy the two areas.

### **Question raised regarding the possibility of making the Recreation Ground roundabout more attractive**

The parish council has been working with Buckinghamshire Council and MarketingForce (who administer the Buckinghamshire Council roundabout sponsorship scheme) for some time. Buckinghamshire Council will not grant permission for the roundabout to be re-developed to have a planted/grass centre, and it has been frustratingly difficult to get any permission to put planters etc on the roundabout. Our Buckinghamshire Councillors have also been trying to obtain the necessary permissions within BC on our behalf.

MarketingForce has agreed that the roundabout could be included within the sponsorship scheme, but this would only provide signage for the sponsor, and they would not install/maintain planters etc so this would not address the issue of aesthetics. If there are any commercial companies that would be interested in sponsoring the roundabout, they can contact MarketingForce direct via this link: <https://www.marketingforce.co.uk/>

In the meantime, a resident has kindly donated and cares for four planters on the roundabout (our thanks are extended to them). We are continuing to work with BC to find a more permanent solution. Our contractor also cleared the roundabout surface of weeds (our thanks are extended to the resident that undertook this work last year), along with the pedestrian island refuges (see above).

**A question was raised re grass cutting at the junction of Glebe Close (Fairhive)**

Fairhive have been experiencing difficulties with their grounds maintenance contractors this year. They are aware of the issues and working to resolve them as soon as possible. In the meantime, if there are any areas of Fairhive maintained grass verge in Glebe Close or Yardley Avenue that are getting overgrown, please report them to Fairhive via this link <https://www.fairhive.co.uk/contact-us>

**Parish Council delivered services**

There were no queries raised with regard to the parish council delivered services eg street lighting, play spaces, sports facilities and litter collection, nor the budget. We welcome feedback at any time. Please feel free to (a) come to our meetings (b) make an appointment to meet us in person (c) email [parishclerk@pitstone.co.uk](mailto:parishclerk@pitstone.co.uk) (d) telephone 01296 767261 (e) message us via Facebook or Twitter. If the matter is not something that is within our legal powers to resolve (eg highways issues where the legal duties fall to the highways authority) we will try to escalate the matter with the relevant body.