

Traffic Management - Part Two



I hope that many of you will have read the article in the February edition of the Parish newsletter setting out the details of the traffic management study – I am delighted to say that the study is now complete. I am grateful to the many residents, workers and passers-through who have taken the time to contribute and give their views. It is clear that many of them share our vision to create a safer, greener and more cohesive Otford. The findings of the study and proposed recommendations are now available. If you would like to see the report and details on the recommendations please visit the Parish Council website at: www.otfordpc.kentparishes.gov.uk and go to 'Documents' and then select 'Traffic Management Report'.

The report covers a wide range of traffic concerns and includes new measures to reduce traffic speed (20mph zone), improve pedestrian safety, ease congestion, free up parking, reroute HGVs, cut sign clutter and reduce the number of unnecessary short car journeys.

Do we need new traffic measures.....? If you are in any doubt about the need for new traffic calming measures please read through the background section of the report. Here you will find a compelling case for action, including a long history of campaigns for road safety improvements and official road traffic accident statistics for Otford which illustrate the need for new road safety measures throughout the village. A study of the proposed large-scale developments around the boundaries of the village show that traffic volume is set to increase significantly and that traffic calming measures will be necessary to deter traffic from using Otford as a rat run to all the amenities not included in the development plans, such as superstores and retail parks.

Worried that a 20mph limit will increase journey times.....? For those of you who might be worried that a 20mph limit would increase journey times, or congestion, please let me reassure you that this would not be the case. Firstly, optimal speeds for maximum urban traffic flow have been mathematically modelled and 20mph is more efficient than 30mph. Secondly, travelling at 20mph rather than 30mph only adds approximately 10 seconds for every mile travelled. To put that in context, if you were to travel from the start of the proposed 20mph zone on Shoreham Road at Hillydeal Road and travelled to the end of the proposed 20mph zone on Pilgrims Way West at Telston Lane you would add approximately 11 seconds to your journey. Adding just 11 seconds to your journey time seems a small price to pay when it improves pedestrian safety by up to 60% and 67% for children. A 20mph limit would also make our streets quieter, safer, cleaner and greener, and would encourage more walking and cycling reducing the number of short car journeys and local traffic.

Your chance to find out more..... A public consultation on the traffic management proposals will begin with a **Public Meeting on Saturday 3rd November** at the Otford Village Memorial Hall. Information on the traffic proposals will be on display from 1pm and a presentation covering the proposals will begin at 2pm followed by a question and answer session. The presentation will include a speaker from the 20's Plenty campaign for Kent, Adrian Berendt.

Have your say..... You will have an opportunity to let us know whether you support the proposals being recommended via a Traffic Management Questionnaire. The questionnaire and other details will be included in the November edition of the Parish newsletter.

And finally..... I would like to thank all members of the Traffic Management Working Party for all their hard work over the last year and help producing the report and traffic proposals.

I believe that Otford has an opportunity to protect itself from the inevitable creep of urbanisation that is going on all around us and that we must act now to do what we can to retain the rural character and charm of our village. I very much hope that you will be able to join us on November 3rd.

Cllr Irene Roy
Chairman, Traffic Management Working Party