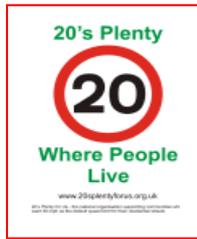


## Traffic Management - Part Fourteen



**The Pickmoss Pinch Point** For answers to frequently asked questions on the misinformation circulating on the Pinch Point at Pickmoss on the High Street, please read on.

**Pinch Point Safety** The Pinch Point is fully compliant with DfT regulation and has been subject to two independent Road Safety Audits carried out on site, a third Audit will be carried out several months after installation. The only issue with the pinch point relates to the design of the northern buildout. This was changed at the last minute by the contractor, and whilst this was not what was agreed, the chicane does meet all road safety standards, and as mentioned last month, the northern buildout is being reconstructed as per the approved drawings.

**Pinch Point Give Way** Whilst many chicanes are designed with the obstruction on the Give Way side of a pinch point, there is no regulation that states the obstruction must be this way round. This is because there are occasions when site requirements dictate that the obstruction has to be on the priority side of a pinch point. DfT regulations do, however, state that priority must be given to vehicles leaving a traffic-calmed area; the DfT regulation is designed to both prevent undue congestion and decrease speeds entering a traffic-calmed area.

**Pinch Point Design** The Pinch Point has therefore been designed around the specific site needs of the location to provide extra footway width where the pavement is reduced in width at the property Pickmoss. Pedestrians, school children, or those with buggies and wheelchairs, are often forced into the road and oncoming traffic to negotiate the narrow pavement, and on too many occasions have fallen into the road or been hit by the wing mirrors of passing vehicles. Due to the large developments planned to the west of Otford, traffic volume is set to increase, and safety measures are now imperative.

Unlike motorists, there is not an alternative route into the village from the west side for pedestrians, including the majority of Otford children attending the village primary school and vulnerable users. Those cutting through Otford have the option of using the main A-roads.

**Driver Behaviour** The issues being cited are down to driver behaviour, not the design of the chicane. If drivers adhere to the Highway Code and Give Way as they are supposed to, the Pinch Point works perfectly well. As mentioned earlier, motorists need to be aware that ignoring a Give Way sign is an offence, and if caught, they will be prosecuted and automatically liable if they cause an accident.

**Pollution** As mentioned last month, slower and calmer styles of driving reduce emissions. Whereas higher speeds in built-up areas, increase the incidence of acceleration, deceleration, and braking, all of which increases air pollution. Studies show that traffic calming reduces idle times by 15%, gear changing by 12%, brake use by 14%, and fuel use by 12%, calmer driving therefore produces greater reductions for most emissions and net fuel savings, except where speed bumps are used; it is universally accepted that speed bumps increase emissions.

The reduction in emissions from higher speeds to lower calmer speeds along the High Street is more than outweighed by the tiny amount of pollution from the momentary waiting of vehicles at the Pinch Point. If for some reason queues do build and traffic comes to a standstill, drivers without electric vehicles or an automatic stop-start engine should turn off their engines.

Motorists not obeying the speed limit and driving erratically are the biggest cause of vehicle emissions, as has been found in study after study on accelerating and braking which this leads to. Driver education is therefore the answer to reducing pollution not taking away traffic calming measures to encourage lower speeds.

**And Finally** The village had a unique opportunity to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety at the same time in this location, the Pinch Point has therefore been designed with the obstruction where it is needed most to protect the safety of pedestrians, and in particular vulnerable users.

We of course understand that healthy debate is part of any lively community, however, contrary to some of the observations, the traffic plans have been produced and designed by professionals and implemented with the support and knowledge of the vast majority of the village. I hope now that we can move forward and work together to improve the safety and wellbeing of everyone in the community.

Cllr Irene Roy, Chairman of the Traffic Management Group