

North Bromyard Group Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held at Upper Sapey Village Hall on Tuesday 25th January 2022 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs: R. Wilks (Chairman), A. Yarnold (V/Chairman), K. Harris, Cllr I. Dennis, Cllr H. Richards & E. Carpenter.

Also present: County Cllr N. Shaw, S. Hobbs (Snr Accident Investigator, Herefordshire Council), Parish Clerk Michelle Alexander. 29 public were present.

51.21 Apologies: Cllr S. Tomkins.

52.21 Declarations of Interests: Cllr Wilks declared an interest in matters relating to the Lengthsman scheme and P3 scheme.

53.21 Councillor Co-option: It was proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded Cllr Dennis to co-opt Kate Shrubbs as the second Parish Councillor for Tedstone Delamere. All agreed. Clerk to arrange with Herefordshire Council.

54.21 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 23rd November 2021: The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr Harris, seconded Cllr Carpenter, all agreed.

55.21 Upper Sapey Crossroads ongoing safety concerns: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited comments on this item on the agenda. All emails sent to Councillors regarding Sapey crossroads have been logged by the Clerk.

The following public comments were made to the meeting –

- Changes are still not sufficient to address the safety concerns at the crossroads.
- Speeding is still a major issue for residents.
- It is distressing for residents to witness accidents, and livelihoods are being affected.
- Upper Sapey needs a speed limit in place – 30mph through the village, Lockhill and Church Lane.
- There is insufficient mitigation from the Tenbury direction. It needs a lit sign to say 'crossroads' and 'stop'.
- Sat Nav errors remain a concern at this junction. Drivers are unaware of the dangers.
- Bromyard direction has a sweeping bend in the road – perhaps all directions need mitigation?
- Accident data analysis is needed to assess what is required.
- Rumble strips are not fit for purpose – not enough impact / not enough reduction. Dips in the road may also affect performance.
- There are so many potholes, the rumble strips noise isn't noticed!
- Sapey Common needs a 30mph limit in place. Can VAS be used?
- Upper Sapey crossroads to far end of Sapey Common is dangerous and needs urgent mitigation – VAS.
- Important for Hfds Council to recognise the depth of feeling on this matter – there have been near misses even since the recent works at the crossroads.
- Drivers are often oblivious to the dangers, despite signage! Mental complacency? Changes from 'give way' to 'stop' sign might help?
- Drivers shouldn't rely on sat-nav, but they do – not driving to road conditions.
- Urgent request for Herefordshire Council to undertake an assessment report.
- Main problem appears to be from Tenbury direction – long stretch of road and needs lit signage before the crossroads.

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- Could the road be redesignated as an A road from a B road? Signage could then be more appropriate?
- Residents attended a recent fatality – very distressing. Non-residents all use sat-nav and it tells you that it is a clear run from Tenbury – too late to slow down when you see the crossroads.
- Awful for residents to witness and needs urgent action – speed reduction essential.
- White gates option for approach to the village? Red tarmac? Signage?
- One way system same as at entry point to Pembridge?
- This problem has been in place for 30 years! Now urgent! Especially from Tenbury direction.
- Between Upper Sapey village hall and Kiln Cottages the state of the road is appalling – grips, ditches and culvert under the road by Yearston Ct all need clearing and cleaning out.

The Parish Council agreed with members of the public comments and welcomed the input to the meeting. It was noted that there had also been recent BT vehicles parking on the crossroads which Herefordshire Council has previously been made aware of. Cllr Shaw agreed to let them know again. The PC agreed to progress white gates options as previously agreed. A Traffic Regulation Order Assessment is also to be requested for Lockhill, Church Lane and Upper Sapey village – Clerk is progressing.

S. Hobbs from Hfds Council - agreed to feedback all comments made to the meeting to Lead Officers. In response to matters raised –

- Sat-Nav – the local authority has no influence on sat-nav provision. Central Govt would need to address overall issues. Sat-nav is also no defence in a court of law in reference to a driving situation.
- Speeding – it is a widespread problem across the county. Changing a speed limit also needs to change driver perception. Upper Sapey has lots of green space so this may be hard to achieve. It is always hard to mitigate against speeding and some drivers simply ignore everything put in place – there is lots of research which shows this to be the case. Enforcement is not enough of a deterrent and resources are stretched. A trial in 2012 monitored the A4103 east of Hereford (5 years prior to a speed limit and 5 years after a limit in place). Shucknall and Withington accident rates actually increased after the speed limit was in place – harsh reality!
- A request could be made for a VAS on Sapey Common.
- Road Signage Regulations – local council has to adhere to Govt guidelines of 2016. Recent collisions from Tenbury are mostly overshoots at the junction. Police enforcement would be needed for stop signage to work? Drivers may have ‘through vision’ to the other side of the junction and not even see the junction. This may have been addressed by recent works? Too much signage clutter however devalues the reaction to it. Special Dept of Transport permission is needed for STOP signage. Local authorities have power to improve visibility at junctions under the Highways Act but Sapey crossroads don’t meet the criteria for this unfortunately.
- Rumble strips – the ones used are not contained within the Highways Regs and are not actually ‘legal’ despite being used. The actual ones in the Regs cannot be used in this location as it doesn’t meet the Highways criteria. Rumble strips - 6mm max. height allowed by Regs. There may be a possibility for them to be condensed to increase the impact.
- Village markings and centreline removal has been used at Edwyn Ralph and does appear to work on drivers. It is currently being trialled over monthly periods to assess long term impact. Also being trialled in Eardisland, Pembridge and Bosbury. Hfds Council is actively encouraging parishes to consider and contribute funding to do a ‘shared space’ approach to create community space for driver perception. Management of green space can also have a positive impact on driver perception. No guarantees though.
- Drainage issues raised will be reported.
- Road surface issues are acknowledged and may affect collisions.
- BT vehicle parking will be reported.

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- Future plans? Balfour Beatty have been contacted recently. Issues at the crossroads are constrained by land ownership and land/highway boundaries. Traffic lights are not suitable for the junction. BB will survey the surrounding land and will produce an 'ideal world' report so options can be costed and discussed in terms of using adjacent land. There may be an option for a staggered crossroads, but it would need both legs of the junction to move, and land would be needed to do this. Another option may be a roundabout – compact size like Burley Gate. This would need road realignment. Options and costs will be produced for discussion in the future.
- Mitigation costs are very expensive, and Hfcs Council has a very limited Highways budget. If everything has already been done under the Regs then it is very hard to do anything else, even if you wish to. Give Way signs are now being addressed – apologies for the error.

Public comments continued –

- Could safety measures be put in place to protect adjacent properties and gardens? S. Hobbs replied that private property cannot be protected under the Highways Regs but there is nothing to stop residents doing something themselves if it does not affect driver visibility or requires planning permission.
- VAS seems to be a relatively simple option to achieve – please progress.
- Low winter sun may also affect drivers from Tenbury, although drivers should slow down for this.
- The problem needs a village wide approach to address issues and create an environment for drivers through the entire area.
- Tenbury road crossroad pinch point would reduce vehicle speeds and residents will support this together with a reduced speed limit through the village.

County Councillor Nigel Shaw comments –

- Thanked everyone for attending and S. Hobbs for attending from Hfcs Council.
- The county is unfortunately a poor county and less is spent per mile of road than any other English county due to lots of roads but lower population numbers, which means less Govt funding. Concerns are acknowledged.
- The website crashmap.co.uk shows all hot spots and the enormity of the issue across the county - we are not an isolated issue and there is only so much funding available. Decisions on spending are evidence based.
- All are encouraged to write to local MP to ask for more highways funding for the county.

Parish Councillor comments -

- Vehicles recorded from Clifton direction are often over the speed limit, and other parishes have exactly the same problems with speeding. VAS shows the data.
- Burley Gate often has a speed van parked in the village – could this work for our village?
- Some parishes have made home made signs to ask drivers to slow down – could we do this? These signs can be used on private land if not obscuring visibility or contra to planning regs.
- It was agreed to progress concerns with Hfcs Council, Local Policing as appropriate.
- Clerk to progress traffic regulation orders and white gates options with Hfcs Council.

56.21 Planning Matters:

56.21.01 Applications to be considered –

- 214183 – Hopelands, Edwin Loach, HR7 4PW – certificate of lawfulness (CLEUD) for the existing use as a dwelling house in breach of cond. 2 of permission MH238/82. No objections.

56.21.02 Decisions and notifications –

- 210439 – planning permission for installation of a WPL diamond wastewater treatment plant with discharge to a soakaway drainage field at Horners Barn, adjacent to Whitbourne Brook, Lower Thrift Farm, Clifton on Teme WR6 5RY.

- 214199 – listed building consent for variation of cond.2 of 203107 (proposal to reinstate the potting shed) To allow change to west elevation.

56.21.03 Other Planning Matters –

- Edwyn Ralph Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Public Consultation Notice – consultation from 17/12/21 to 12/02/22 noted.

57.21 Financial & Governance Matters –

57.21.01 Payments were proposed for approval by Cllr Yarnold, seconded Cllr Richards, all agreed –

- Clerks' salary £316.02
- HMRC PAYE Q3 £75.80
- Clerk's expenses £21.60 mileage / £24.47 BT
- Print-Serve Limited payroll fee Q3 - £60.00

57.21.02 Financial reserves – project ideas (deferred from Nov agenda). Deferred to next agenda – possible highways contributions re traffic issues? White gates?

57.21.03 Change to online banking (Unity Trust Bank) agreed. Clerk to progress.

57.21.04 Bank balances to 5th January 2022: Current a/c £24,120.22; Business Reserve a/c £3010.75.

58.21 Lengthsman and P3 Scheme: R. Wilks is progressing outstanding matters as agreed previously.

59.21 Highways Matters – the following matters were discussed and are to be reported:

- Potholes are still bad by Steeples Farm, Edwin Loach – Clerk to re-report.
- VAS – Clerk to check if one can be located at Sapey Common.
- Tidbatch Lane – resident vehicle damage has been reported to Hfds Council. Road very bad.
- County boundary issue still outstanding – Clerk to chase up.
- Cllr Harris has written to Whitbourne PC re an issue by the hunt kennels at Tedstone Delamere.
- B4204 – dips in the road reported to S. Hobbs (by the rumble strips).
- Pouk Lane sign finally repaired.
- Wolferlow signage off High Lane needs repair. Points in the wrong direction.

59.21.01 Lower Sapey Parish signage request – it was agreed to support the request for 'slow vehicle' signage along the High Lane - Harpley turn and Hollybush Lane junctions. Clerk to progress. Vegetation also to be kept clear where possible to improve visibility. R. Wilks will create a list of danger junctions as others are also an issue locally. Agricultural vehicles also create a lot of mud which remains a concern to drivers.

60.21 Ward Councillors Report: Report as circulated via email and will be uploaded to the Parish Council website.

61.21 Correspondence Received: Hfds Council Leaders report as circulated.

62.21 Councillor Reports on Parish Matters and Requests for Future Agenda Items:

- It was agreed to retain printed minutes on notice boards.
- Next agenda – Upper Sapey crossroads updates. Cllr Shaw gave apologies for the next meeting.

63.21 Date of next meeting: Tuesday 22nd March 2022 at 7.30 pm at Saltmarshe & District Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Michelle Alexander

Clerk

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