

Parish Council (PC) Traffic Steering Group Meeting 2.7.2024

Location: Mechanics Institute

Attendees:

Steve Peace (SP)

Leslie Fretwell (LF)

Simon Gill (SG)

Sir David Richards (Sir DR)

Tony Airey (TA)

Paul Hunton (PH)

Joanne Hudson (JH)

Richard Mainprize (RM)

Absent : Tom Walbank (Estate Office)

Sophie Day (Post Office)

Sue Mastrototaro (Wvca)

Sharon Peace - minutes

1. SP started the meeting promptly and introduced himself as the chair because of his area of responsibility on the PC. He explained that the group been working as a single point of contact for a year now and that although some progress had been made, for which he was grateful, more was needed. He then asked all attendees to introduce themselves, say which body they represented, and what their particular interest was in traffic in Wentworth and Harley.

2. Introductions :
 - Lesley Fretwell : Police Neighbourhood Inspector. Lesley explained that her area of responsibility includes traffic and speed watch exercises. She has 9 officers and 5 PCSOs.
 - Simon Gill: Head of Heritage at Wentworth Woodhouse since January, responsible for buildings and landscape. He stated that Wentworth Woodhouse don't see the traffic beyond the mansion but are aware that what happens in the house will affect the village.
 - Sir David Richards; owner of the Old Smythie and the Wentworth wine shop. He is particularly concerned about the hazards caused by the narrow causeways in the village like the wine outside his shop.
 - Tony Airey : owner of Wentworth Garden Centre. He understood that the garden centre generated traffic but had provided parking to mitigate that and help alleviate the pressure on the village. He has seen these problems

throughout his 40 years in the village but felt there was some movement to mitigate problems now.

- Paul Hunton : Chair of the Wentworth Residents Association, particularly concerned about traffic on The Barrow & Barrowfields. He has been raising issues for 7 years and his brother for 30 years. He felt there had been negligible response despite the significant work the Association had done.
 - Joanne Hudson : RMBC engagement officer working on small scale projects and traffic.
 - Richard Mainprize: RMBC...been in post for 6 months, working on the backlog of requests and identifying next years projects.
3. SP asked TA if there was any possibility that haulage firms could be persuaded to redirect to avoid the Almshouses and Barrow. TA explained that he talked constantly to the haulage firms, and they delivered early and late to avoid adding to traffic congestion. JH pointed out that if they were redirected, they would simply transfer the problem elsewhere.
 4. SP asked if there had been any progress on the issues identified during the walk around the village twelve months ago. LF replied that there had been community speed watch exercises in the area which slowed drivers down by making them aware speeds were being monitored. Wider, more permanent measures were required to deal with the village transport issues – i.e. volume, speed and size of vehicles. TA pointed out that peak commuter times are the worst. LF stated that Wentworth was a thoroughfare. Roads were not their remit, but they would endeavour to help with education and enforcement. PH stated speed checks were pointless as they only slowed down one driver at a time. LF stated that if speed checks in conjunction with other measures only slowed down one person at a time that would still be an improvement.
 5. SP asked RMBC representatives why the village can't have speed bumps installed at either end of the village or a 20 mile per hour speed limit. JH replied that there is evidence that shows speed bumps cause vibrations which could damage the foundations of old buildings. SG asked if that evidence related specifically to Wentworth. JH replied it did not. JH also advised that speed bumps slowed vehicles down initially but that they were found to speed up between them.
 6. PH stated that the temporary traffic lights installed at the war memorial corner helped reduce traffic in the village. JH explained that this would again simply divert the problem to somewhere else. PH stated that all the approaches to the

village should be 40 mph. LF advised that 20mph limits could be introduced on an advisory only basis, and signs displayed. RM agreed to look at this and report back. JH advised that the parish Council could purchase further VAS signs for installation in the village as a deterrent. SP stated he would look into this. PH stated that if signs were purchased Barrowfields must be included.

7. TA stated that speed cameras would be the best solution and asked what the position was regarding them. RM stated that the installation of speed cameras used to be based on accident numbers, but he would confirm the current criteria. He advised that data regarding speeding incidents and injuries and the locations where they took place could be obtained from Mark Hill RMBC. JH agreed to obtain this.
8. SirDR asked who can allow us to have car parking in the village. There has been one fatality and several near misses due to the causeways being so narrow , and he regularly witnesses altercations between drivers and pedestrians because of the congestion caused by parked cars outside the village shop. He advised that there is an opening next to the village shop down to a field which would make an ideal car park. SP advised that he had raised this proposal with the Wentworth estate but had not yet received a response and he would pursue it. SG reported that discussions with Wentworth Estate were underway to ensure parking was in place for the forthcoming RHS event at Wentworth Woodhouse. Options included parking in the Doric House field and a potential park and ride arrangement from Meadowhall, supported by RMBC. The work on the Stables car park was due to be completed by September but other proposals for potential parking had been impacted by planning permission and conservation orders. JH suggested that the standard blue and white parking signs should be considered to make it clearer to drivers where they could park.
9. SP asked what progress had been made on the request for a 40 mph zone down Hague Lane by the Garden Centre ,starting from the Cenotaph. LH confirmed that the request had been submitted to the Local Neighbourhood Road Safety Scheme but that the Ward members had decided to go with the Harley improvements instead. The Harley design is being finalised. There will be a consultation exercise in August and the data from this will inform a report. The 40 mph proposal could be considered for 2026 but will need to be resubmitted to the Ward members. RM advised that it was possible to apply to central Government for funding, but it all came with structures. He agreed to talk to the Safer Roads Partnership as another possible source of funding.

10. JH suggested that the group could consider possible gateway features, which had been used in other locations, including pillars or columns at the entrance to the village or “dragon’s teeth” on the road alerting drivers to the fact that they should slow down.

11. SP thanked all for making the effort of coming to this very important collaborative meeting and advised that the next meeting would be in around six months’ time, to allow time to progress the actions discussed. Date to be confirmed.