



# New Alresford Town Council

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Councillor Roy Perry  
Leader of Council & Executive Member for Policy & Resources  
Hampshire County Council

by email: [roy.perry@hants.gov.uk](mailto:roy.perry@hants.gov.uk)

17 April 2018

Dear Councillor Perry

## **Western Approach to New Alresford - B3047, The Avenue and Winchester Road**

New Alresford Town Council is a signatory to a recent letter requesting the installation of a Pelican Crossing between Perin's School and Arlebury Park on the Avenue, New Alresford. However, whilst we are supportive of the installation of such a crossing, we believe that the greater danger posed along this stretch of road is, without question, speed.

### **History of the Road**

On 3 July 2007, milkman Allan Knight was killed when he was struck by a lorry whilst delivering milk to homes on Winchester Road.

On Friday 10 August 2007, Alresford resident Roy Norgrove was killed when he was struck by a car on the junction of Winchester Road and New Farm Road, 150m from where Mr Knight was killed.

After these two deaths, a report concluded that the 40mph speed limit on the road was safe and subsequent requests to the County Council for the speed limit to be rejected have all been rejected, principally on the grounds that the injury accident record did not warrant intervention.

The Town Council is concerned that the injury accident statistics previously used by the County Council to form its view of the road's safety are inaccurate. In addition to the injury accident Hampshire County Council is aware of, on 17 May 2016 and the 'no injury accident' on 5 May 2017, we are aware of a further accident on 31 January 2014 and enclose a copy of a letter from the resident involved.

The details of that letter bear testimony to the fact that speed, specifically the lorry driver's inability to slow his vehicle in time on the downhill section of the road before hitting a vehicle turning into a driveway, was a major factor in that particular accident which did result in injuries and hospital treatment. If the County Council has made previous decisions without the benefit of the full accident history including this accident, the Town Council is concerned that there may also have been other accidents that have not been recorded.

We understand that the County Council has completed a pilot study of villages to be considered for a reduction in speed to a 20mph limit, from their current 30mph. The Town Council acknowledges that whilst there may well be a case for some villages to be considered for such a reduction in their speed limits, a reduction from 40mph to 30mph along this section of the B3047 is equally or more urgently needed and we are aware of significant popular support for such a measure from within our town.

### **The Town Council's Concerns**

In the ten years that have passed since the study that followed the two fatal accidents, we understand that the volume of heavy goods vehicles along this road has increased significantly. The number of houses in the town has also risen and brought with it more cars. The volume of traffic is due to rise very substantially again in the near future, with a total of 500 new homes being built in our town as a result of our commitments under Winchester City Council's Local Plan Part 2.

During the same period, the increase in popularity of cycling has added a large number of vulnerable road users to the traffic on Winchester Road as many cyclists visit Alresford's town centre and residents cycle from the town for recreation.

There is a significant number of vulnerable residents living on the populated stretch of Winchester Road, including pensioners and young children. In the first 175m, there are 11 people of retirement age and a further 21 children of primary school age or younger, one of which has Autism Spectrum Disorder, a condition recognised as a disability. The young child with autism has particular difficulty in processing the information required to safely use the pavements and cross the road.

According to Hampshire Constabulary's Driver Awareness Training, out of every 10 pedestrians hit by a vehicle, 8 would be killed at 40mph. This falls dramatically to the 2 out of 10 who would die if that speed is reduced by just 10 miles per hour to 30mph.

The current speed limit of 40mph is of particular difficulty and danger for residents of the four homes where the only means of parking in the driveway is to reverse into or out of the main road. An additional danger to all road users is the fact that the arch railway bridge at the western end requires that high vehicles must use the middle of the road at a point where sight lines past the side walls of the bridge are much reduced due to the bend in the road.

At the eastern end of this stretch of road, towards the centre of our town, is Perin's School. We believe that the greatest danger posed to schoolchildren and others crossing between Arlebury Park and the school is the speed of traffic. All too often, vehicles fail to slow down in the distance of less than 200m between where the 40mph limit reduces to 30mph and the crossing from Arlebury Park to the school in the final approach to the town centre.

The topography of Winchester Road is such that vehicles leaving Alresford generally speed up as they go downhill westwards towards the A31 dual carriageway and frequently have not slowed down once they have left the long downhill section from the A31 as they approach the town in the other direction from the west.

The latest data collected by our own Speed Limit Reminder (SLR) shows that many drivers far exceed the 40mph speed limit, with the highest recorded speed in March 2018 exceeding 75mph. In its previous assessments of the road, the County Council has used mean average speed as its measure. We believe that this approach does not reveal the true picture. This particular stretch of road has a high volume of tractor and bicycle movements, both of which are often followed by traffic at greatly reduced speeds, particularly as all measurements are currently taken on the uphill section. In addition to these factors, residents are stopping and turning to park or enter the service road. All of this means that *average* speeds are significantly reduced and so do not represent the true danger of the speed of the traffic that is not impeded.

The greater danger comes from the volume of cars traveling at higher speeds and we believe that, for the reasons set out above, any statistical analysis should concentrate on these and not mean speed. Our SLR data shows that during a 14 day period in March 2018, 7,200 movements were recorded in excess of 45mph, 1,373 of which were above 50mph. The Town Council is currently in the process of repositioning our SLR device, as we do not believe that it currently measures at the part of the road where vehicles reach their highest speeds. The current location is the same position where the County Council has measured speeds from itself.

In the period since the two fatal accidents, there have been repeated requests to Hampshire County Council by individual residents and a petition that was unanimously signed by all the residents living along the route for the speed limit to be reduced to 30mph and for greater enforcement to be carried out. The requests made in the petition were endorsed by the Town Council in its resolution no. 3529 of 2017. However, as recently as May 2017, the County Council has rejected the requests to take the step of reducing the speed limit and there remains little or no enforcement of the current speed restrictions along the road by Hampshire Police.

### **Road Improvements Requested**

One factor raised in the residents' petition was the poor road surface and the Town Council gratefully notes that the County Council are part way through a programme of works addressing this issue. Before the surface is relaid and new lines are painted on the road, we believe that these works present an opportune moment for the County Council to give careful consideration to our request for a series of complimentary safety improvements that would provide safety, health and economic benefits for our town.

The Town Council has consulted Sustrans, the national charity that has developed the National Cycle Network (NCN). Sustrans agrees with our assessment that the current route of NCN Route 23 (as shown in Schedule 1) is unsatisfactory, as it takes an indirect - and thus improbable - route through housing in order to bypass The Avenue/Winchester Road. It does this as the NCN minimum provision standards for the rate of traffic flow and speed limit along the road are not currently met. We believe that this has led to a dangerous situation whereby, almost without exception, cyclists leave the NCN route and instead follow the obvious and picturesque tree lined avenue route straight into our town along a road which is not fit for the purpose; The Avenue/Winchester Road.

Therefore, the Town Council would like the existing NCN Route 23 to be diverted from the point at which it currently turns south, at the cross roads where Alresford Road meets the B3047, to follow its obvious and natural course along The Avenue to join up with the route at West Street. Sustrans is undertaking a comprehensive review of its network through its Strategic Improvement Plan. The organisation's Head of Network Development has made it clear to us that Sustrans too would like to make this change to its route provided that Highways England's standards, as set out in Interim Advice Note 195/16, are met.

In addition to improving the safety of the road to all users, including school children attending Perin's School which the route would then pass directly by, the extension to the cycle route will help to promote cycling as a means of sustainable transport (and thus reduce motor vehicle movements and alleviate parking issues) for our existing residents as well as those that the town will welcome in the near future as Alresford adds the 500 new homes to its existing stock. As you may know, tourism plays a vital role in Alresford's economy and we believe that the inclusion of a safe cycle route into the town from the most populated areas to the west, including Winchester, will encourage more tourism with additional touring cyclists wanting to use the town's cafes, restaurants and other hospitality facilities.

This improvement to the town's cycling access will bring a reduction to the width of the road's carriageway and we believe that this would provide further justification for a reduction in the speed along this section of the B3047 from 40mph to 30mph. Therefore, we are asking the County Council

for just such a reduction in the speed limit from the point at which the NCN Route 23 turns south up to the existing 30mph limit before the entrance to Perin's School.

Hampshire Police have stated that they would not support a 30mph limit unless physical speed reducing measures were also provided to ensure compliance with the lower limit. The inclusion of a cycle route would be just such a measure, as would the addition of a crossing for residents in the community living in Winchester Road, which would also serve people using the popular walking route around the outskirts of the town.

The Town Council would like to see a crossing point incorporated between the homes on the north side of Winchester Road and the service road on the south side, to include a pedestrian refuge island and/or a built out kerb. All of this work could be included in the current resurfacing programme and so there would be cost efficiencies for the County Council by combining them.

### **The Town Council's Contribution**

In order to demonstrate both its level of concern and its commitment to take positive steps to address those concerns, as its contribution towards the project the Town Council has resolved to make a substantial contribution from its reserves to relieve the County Council of the majority of the financial burden of making these changes.

The Town Council believes that in order for you to fully appreciate the nature of the road and the residents' and Town Council's concerns, it would be very beneficial if you would attend a site visit with us. Should you wish to visit us or you would like to discuss any aspect of our request, please would you contact Cllr Andrew Sprott (telephone [REDACTED]) who is leading this initiative for us. He would be very glad to arrange a meeting.

We very much hope that you will agree with the Town Council's assessment of the merits of these proposed safety measures and that they can be put in place before any further accidents occur.

We are grateful for your attention and look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Margot Power  
Chairman, New Alresford Town Council

copy:

Steve Brine MP

Simon Pratt - Sustrans Head of Network Development, England South [simon.pratt@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:simon.pratt@sustrans.org.uk)

enclosures:

Petition to New Alresford Town Council from all residents of Winchester Road

Letter dated 3 September 2014 from Alresford resident in relation to injury accident

# Schedule 1 – National Cycle Network Route 23

