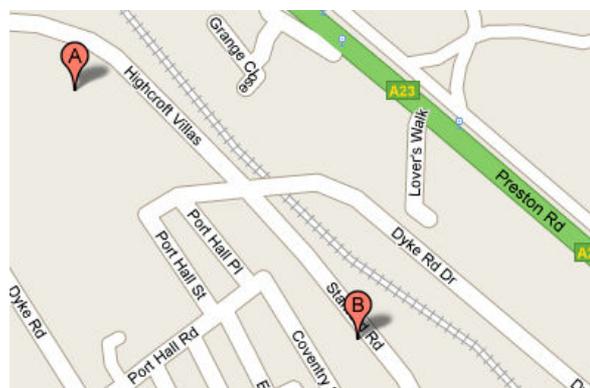


DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes following which the Cabinet Member may speak in response. The deputation will be thanked for attending and its subject matter noted.

(a) Deputation concerning primary school allocations in BN3.

Mr Keith Turvey (Spokesperson)



(Figures 1 & 2)

This deputation would like to bring to the council's attention a road safety issue that has come to light at the junction of Highcroft Villas, Stanford Road and Dyke Road Drive (Figures 1 & 2). Although there are times of day when the volume of traffic at this junction is relatively low, during the morning rush hour it is a particularly difficult junction for pedestrians and cyclists. Many of the pedestrians in the morning are children and families on the morning school run dropping children at Stanford Infants and Stanford Junior schools, which the junction separates.

The threat posed to pedestrians and particularly children crossing here in the morning has been the subject of discussion and concern at the separate Governing Body meetings of both the Junior School and the Infant School. Both Governing bodies have recorded separate and potentially fatal incidents that have occurred at the junction in the last few months.

Stanford Junior School has been for several years been working with Sustrans and Bike-It to encourage children to cycle to school. One issue which has been identified as a barrier is this junction: parents are reluctant to allow their children to cross from Highcroft Villas to Stanford Road on bicycles. Visibility is particularly poor because cyclists coming down Highcroft Villas are obscured to cars coming up Dyke Road Drive by the high wall over the railway line. In addition, cars coming up Dyke Road Drive frequently cut the corner, swerving on the wrong side of the carriageway at the bottom of Highcroft Villas.

These incidents stem from two key issues with the junction. Firstly, many cars travelling up Dyke Road Drive and carrying straight ahead or turning right into Highcroft Villas approach the junction at a speed, which is inappropriate for the area at this time of day. This is compounded by the fact that there is no signage on the Dyke Road Drive approach to the junction alerting drivers to the fact that they are in the vicinity of school children. Such signage could warn drivers to check their speed on approach.

Secondly, it is unclear to many drivers who has priority at the junction. There is often a queue of traffic in Highcroft Villas, Porthall Street and Stanford Road, giving way to cars travelling up Dyke Road Drive at speed. This means that children often end up crossing between queuing cars.

Whilst the addition of signage warning drivers of the presence of school children in the Dyke Road Drive approach would go some way to making this a safer junction, this deputation would like the council to consider a range of options.

The provision of a mini roundabout at the junction: This would have the effect of clarifying priorities and also force traffic on the Dyke Road Drive approach to slow down.

A 20mph speed limit in Highcroft Villas, Stanford Road and Dyke Road Drive during school start and finish times.

A pedestrian crossing at the bottom of Port Hall Avenue.

Installation of traffic calming measures in Dyke Road Drive approach such as speed camera and/or speed bumps.

Change of priorities at the junction

Signage – together with signage warning of school children, stop signs could also alert drivers of the need to take care on their approach to this junction.

This deputation of representatives from both Governing Bodies and the Prestonville Community Association believe the council should respond to this request as a matter of urgency as the issue has been raised by a number of different parties and the verbal and formal reports of incidents involving near misses has increased recently. The only way to ensure the safety of the pedestrians, cyclists and young children using this busy junction in the mornings is to ensure that cars all on the approach to the junction are both aware of the fact that there are school children in the area and that they respond appropriately by slowing down and being extra vigilant. To this end we request that the council consider the range of measures suggested to address this issue.

(b) Deputation concerning Road Safety in Chalky Road, Portslade.

Ms Stacey Howard (Spokesperson)

“The issue of road safety in Chalky Road and Fox Way is one that presents an ongoing concern for many. We do appreciate the measures that have already been put into place such as the flashing LED light and the 20mph zone but we feel that these need to be seen as a starting point which can be built on rather than a completed project.

We hope that we have demonstrated both the need and the benefits of the provision of an additional ‘green man’ crossing system and we have many other ideas such as painting ‘20mph’ actually on to the road surface, adding railings at any crossing points and the removal of some pinch points that cause many problems rather than solves them.

We really feel that if we are going to promote sustainable transport from an early age within schemes such as healthy routes to school, bike it, walking buses, etc, the environment in which we are expecting people to travel needs to be made as safe and user friendly as possible. I, as do many others within the local community, look forward to working with you all in order to make this happen.”

(Appendix 1 – Document submitted to Council on the 16 July 2009).

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR THEOBALD, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

Provided at the meeting of the Full Council on 16 July 2009.

“I am well aware of the situation in Chalky Road, indeed there was at least two petitions that came to my Cabinet Member Meeting from Councillor Alford and I think from a Councillor on that side drawing my attention to the situation, particularly after the very sad death of Henry.

I went up to Chalky Road and I stood there with our Road Safety Officer and Councillor Alford for at least half an hour trying to consider what we could actually do in this situation. I watched the movements, I watched the buses coming up and down, I watched people coming off the buses and at that time I think officers were thinking, well we are not sure that 20mph would really suit the situation but I was quite adamant here that I really did think the 20mph should be put in and I was very pleased when officers did that. It is possible, you refer to the other accident, that the fact that this was 20mph may well have made that injury less severe than it was.

The problem here, and I am sure you recognise that, is what I have already alluded to that there are a number of desire lines and it all depends where the pedestrians cross the road. It’s quite a long strip as you know and if you stand there you can see some pedestrians crossing the road at point A, others at point B, others at point C and others further along the road. Now, that means that any formal crossing would probably only suit one set of people, the other sets of people because it wouldn’t be on their desire line wouldn’t use it, so that is the problem that we actually have here.

Having said all that the Road Safety Team have been up there since this other accident. They have reviewed the location and they are looking into this again to see whether there is anything that we can really do to alleviate the situation there, so I must just leave it at that particular stage, you know, what you are saying is well understood and I certainly sympathise with the situation there. It's just that there are so many desire lines there and buildings in different parts of the road that people wish to actually go to that makes it extremely difficult to know what you can do to alleviate the situation."

“CHALKY ROAD/FOX WAY

The history

- A year since the fatal incident that saw 9 year old Henry Nugent lose his life
- Another recent incident on Monday 6th July 09 that saw a 10 year old boy being hit by a car, and although he wasn't seriously injured, this caused much distress to both the child and driver alike.
- Many near misses that go unreported
- Local community expressed much concern over this stretch of road and how unsafe it was.

Recent actions

- Road Safety officers visited the site shortly after Henry's death and proposed no further action
- Two petitions, one presented by Cllr Trevor Alford and another presented by myself, asked for further action/a safety audit
- After further dialogue the introduction of 20 mph zones along some of Chalky Road went live earlier this year
- Further feedback from Mark Prior stated that “officers have made numerous site visits to the area and their observations suggest that, although this road is perceived as quite busy, there are sufficient gaps in the traffic for people to choose to cross where they wish”.
- He also explained that “Government guidelines are followed when considering sites for pedestrian crossings. This guidance advises against installing crossing points where the facility will be unused for a large part of the day because ‘drivers who become accustomed to not being stopped for a large part of the day at the crossing may begin to ignore its existence, with dangerous consequences’”.
- Review of Mile Oak Safer Routes To School scheme, proposed in April 09, to be completed during the Summer term 09.....awaiting outcome of this.

Responses to some of the above points

- Regarding “sufficient gaps” – This would depend on what time of day one is talking about. Are children/teenagers able to make the same informed decisions as adults? Have different circumstances been taken in to account, eg elderly, disabled people, parents/carers with buggys and toddlers, children on scooters/bikes etc.
- Regarding “Government Guidelines and unused crossings” – If a green man system was in place, it would be very clear when a red light was on, and further signage would promote awareness for drivers. Drivers **should** be and **need** to be aware, the statement that they may ignore its existence could be applied to any crossing on any road.
- If a crossing was to be provided, parents would have the opportunity to educate their children to use this appropriately, and it would provide increased safety for other vulnerable members of the community.

Specific proposals

- A green man crossing system to be introduced in the Thornhill Rise area, and a further crossing system at the bottom of Fox Way, in the Downs Park vicinity, with appropriate signage
- Bigger signs that highlight the 20mph zone

- The removal of the “pinch points”, that give pedestrians a false sense of a safe crossing place, and also create a situation where some drivers race to beat the oncoming traffic.

Positives of the proposals

- Increased safety for both residents of the local community, some of whom may be deemed as being vulnerable
- Increased safety for pedestrians and motorists alike
- If a crossing was to be provided, parents would have the opportunity to educate their children to use this appropriately.
- Increased chance of parents feeling that their children can embrace sustainable travel to school, eg walking, biking, walking bus schemes etc.

Final point

Accidents will always occur, because by their very definition, they are accidents that cannot always be prevented. However, I feel it is time that we pushed to reducing the risk of this happening time and time again, as volume of traffic increases. It is time to reduce the risk and look at providing increased safety for the local community and all those who travel within it.”