


From:   
To: [A303 Sparkford to Ilchester](#)  
Subject: A303 Sparkford to Ilchester  
Date: 14 January 2019 18:06:00

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### REF PINS 1.7.10

Hello, I got an email from our West Camel Parish contact Les Stevens. I am glad he emailed me otherwise I am not sure how else I would have heard about this as I haven't had anything in writing or email as a request direct from you?

### **In response to your query with your ref above - I would like to explain the problem in more detail**

a) There needs to be clarity on where and over what period of time the traffic was monitored. We remember seeing a contraption in Fore Street but were not told explicitly the purpose of it.

The important point to raise here is (after clarity of point above) is the traffic monitoring wasn't in the periods of high flow so the results won't provide a true to life picture.

Every work day morning and afternoon between 7am - 9am & 3.30pm - 6pm (approx) traffic flow and speeds grow through the village.

Effectively vehicles will enter the village in one of 3 points and travel through and exit at one of the other points. Unless of course these are residents the village unclassified tight roads are used at a cut through / rat run to get to one of the main roads either north or south of West Camel.

Our observations are based mainly on the 2 access points from the A303 heading south - in particular the Howell Hill access point as we live on the hill.

Please factor in we drive down the hill from time to time ourselves and in our experience we join the Howell Hill from the A303 and in order to stick to the 30mph limit we do not have to use the accelerator much if it at all as 'physics' kick in and gravity and momentum will take the vehicles down the hill. It is necessary to use the brakes to stop going over the 30mph limit.

Worryingly this is not the case with a very large percentage of drivers on the hill. We regularly have close calls whilst walking in the road. Sometimes I have waved at drivers to slow down and am often greeted with rude gestures or beeping the horns indicating I am at fault!

I do worry that it is extremely dangerous for pedestrians, walkers, dog walkers, horse riders and cyclists using the Hill.

It is similar heading North up the Hill to meet the A303. This time however as drivers see it as a hill the natural (not necessarily the right thing though) response it to accelerate to get some speed up. This is in fact when it makes it dangerous again and we have seen a few near misses especially when other vehicles are heading in the opposite direction.

It is similar at some points through the village especially where the roads narrows at certain locations.

The speed limit through the main village is 30mph.

People follow their sat navs and do not pay much attention to the actual surroundings and conditions around them. Proof of this has been 5 or more collisions in the last 2 months alone in and around the village.

So, that is the problem!

### **What we hear is happening.....**

There is review of the crossroads where many collisions have taken place.

There is talk there is going to be some traffic calming measure - although nothing has been proposed just yet and no ideas have been put forward for serious discussion, and is not part of the formal Highways proposal so we feel this is lip service and may not even happen.

The speed limit and speeding / use of roads as rat runs is a huge safety issue.....

The large majority of drivers do not currently stick to the 30mph where appropriate as it is at the moment. There is talk of making it 20mph but this will only work if policed / monitored correctly otherwise it is just hot air again and nothing will change.

b) I have highlighted above when the traffic is busier through the village. On top of the day to day timings it also gets busier when -

- \* there is traffic on the A303 and sat navs re route drivers through the village to save valuable distance (not really a saving)

- \* holiday times / bank holidays....when schools are off you can guarantee increased traffic volumes especially Fridays and Mondays as non regular drivers are heading east or west for holidays etc

- \* when there are accidents on the A303

None of the traffic surveys were done in or around these times / occasions which again doesn't give a true reflection of how things really are.

Indeed, as and when the inspectorate visit the village and surrounding roads, they will visit from 10am and be gone by 3pm on a quiet weekday out of any school holiday and therefore won't see what happens day to day in reality.

We would welcome the chance to show any observer what it is like over a normal period of time...we'll supply chairs so they can sit on our driveway and even give them tea or coffee too!

We would even undertake studies for you if you provide equipment for us to use.....you could get accurate vehicle measurements and the average speeds etc which will prove the current issues against safety for the villagers.

To get a really accurate picture you would need to have cameras at the entrance points to the village and more cameras at the exit points to see and understand driver behaviour / speed and direction.

We really hope this is taken into account and investigated further to help provide why this one point of ours means the flow of traffic and local roads / rat running / cut through needs rethinking!

We also hope that this isn't just going to be another 'box ticking' exercise as part of this whole process. We get the distinct impression that although we're being asked for our thoughts - nothing is really being listened to and acted on but simply a process to say we offered these things by the proposer of the new road. Highways

seems to have agreed everything already in fact before the start of the process and are now keen to just deliver things quickly as the funds have been earmarked already....and before Brexit or the effects of Brexit may change things for them. After all it is a huge amount of money to spend at this current time.....to widen a not very long stretch of road.....to make journey times 3 - 4 minutes quicker for users.....until they reach the Podimore roundabout where they will be stopped potentially at the traffic lights as this area doesn't come under this scheme!

Hope to hear back that this has been received and genuinely offer an invite to anyone who wish to see things first hand in our village from our local point of view!

Cliff Baker

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