

BEECH ROAD SAFETY WORKING GROUP (BRSWG)

MINUTES OF THE SECOND MEETING HELD AT 19:00 ON 9 March 2020

1. Attendees:

Charles Cockburn (CC)
Tony Ransley (TR)
Nick Ward (NW)
Roger Ison (RI)
Malcolm Ward-Close (MWC)
David Walker (DW)

Apologies for absence: Simon Cooper (SC), Brian Wagstaff (BW), Eric Baker (EB)

2. The Chairman welcomed the following members to the team: Roger, Malcolm and David (plus Simon and Brian in absentia).
3. The Minutes of the previous meeting on 5th February were reviewed and approved unanimously. Approval was proposed by Tony Ransley, seconded by Nick Ward and signed off by the Chairman, Charles Cockburn. There were no matters arising from this review.

- 4. Declaration of Interest** – (in accordance with the National Association of Local Councils Model Code of Conduct adopted July 2018) Councilors are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, or vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State under the Localism Act 2011. You must withdraw from the room or chamber when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter. –

Given where they live Charles Cockburn, Tony Ransley, Roger Ison, Malcolm Ward-Close and David Walker will have an interest in improving the safety of Medstead Road specifically. At this time no detailed proposals about Medstead Road are being discussed or voted upon so there was no requirement for members to withdraw from the room.

5. Appointment of Officers

Chairman: Tony Ransley proposed that Charles Cockburn be appointed as Chairman of this Working Group. Malcolm Ward-Close seconded this appointment.

Secretary: David Walker proposed that Nick Ward be appointed as Secretary of this Working Group. Charles Cockburn seconded this appointment.

Both appointments were carried unanimously by the attendees.

6. Objectives and Scope of Work

The meeting discussed at length the requirement to state and agree to a set of objectives for the Working Group. In addition the “Draft Scope of Work” set out in the original

presentation from Beech Parish Council was reviewed and adopted by the Group. Following the meeting the Secretary has pulled together the ideas discussed and coupled these with the statements in the BPC presentation and created a draft Objectives, Strategy and Scope of Work statement for review/amendment by the team and approval and adoption at the next meeting.

Action: NW to issue

Action: ALL to review / amend / endorse

7. Feedback and update on Actions from previous meeting:

- a. Obtain Ian Gibson's plans. Understand why these weren't progressed at the time.

ACTION: CC - Completed (See Appendix for details)

- b. Contact HCC (possibly via Mark Kemp-Gee) and get access to the land registry to understand land ownership adjacent to Kings Hill and Medstead Road.

**ACTION: NW - Progressed – 3 options considered. (See Appendix for details).
Meeting with Hampshire Highways planned.**

- c. Contact Seong-Gi SEO re. possibility of putting a footpath through his land at Bushy Leaze.

ACTION: TR – Progressed – Agreed in principle but with conditions. Further discussion planned (See Appendix for details)

- d. Research Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan [LCWIP] and see what funds are available, who the key players are in EHDC and what the plan is after the survey.

ACTION: CC – Completed (See Appendix for details)

- e. Promote the EHDC LCWIP Survey within Beech. **ACTION: EB - Completed**

- f. Speed Cameras with fixed VRN recognition + actual speed display. Tony to get quote. Also review what signage improvements/positioning might be achieved.

ACTION: TR – Completed (See Appendix for details).

- g. Eric to get estimates for path's costs via an organisation that Tony knows who have done this work locally.

ACTION: EB – Progressed – initial estimate received (See Appendix for details)

- h. Contact Forestry Commission (possibly via George Gate) re the possibility of running a footpath on their land adjacent to Medstead Road.

ACTION: NW – In progress – contact made but no response yet (See Appendix)

- i. Find out if there are any other Road Safety Groups operating in adjacent areas, particularly Medstead, so we could potentially share ideas / provide a larger, more powerful lobby.

ACTION: CC – Completed – (See Appendix for details).

The meeting then went on to discuss what options might be available for improvement of safety in and around the narrowest and windiest part of Medstead Road with interesting reviews of options adopted elsewhere. The main conclusions from this discussion were:

a. that segregated pathways are unlikely to be feasible because of the narrowness of the highway and the steepness of the land adjacent to the road. Also a number of households have a letter from a local solicitor stating that Hampshire CC has decided not to continue to persist with a road widening scheme that would have included a pathway in that section of Medstead Road. Whilst this letter is old (1979) it could well be used in any objection to new pathways today.

b. that, whilst HCC has a policy of not introducing any more 20mph limits, this now runs counter to central government recommendations. Indeed the HCC Report that is used to support HCC's current policy appears somewhat flawed and potentially challengeable. No definitive conclusion or actions were forthcoming from this complicated subject this time but some themes were developed:

- That we should consider lobbying for 20mph in Beech again given the recent pronouncements from central government.
- That we should liaise with other local groups / PC's who have similar objectives to strengthen the case.
- That we should collate evidence of speeding traffic in Beech from the data available from the Beech speed camera.
- That we should recognise that there are two options here – a 20 mph **zone** (which involves physical measures to ensure traffic does not exceed the speed; a 20mph **limit** - effectively a series of signs - that then requires a separate enforcement methodology, for example deploying the police mobile camera currently used to enforce the existing 30mph limit. (The problem with the latter approach is that the local Police are overstretched and currently unable to engage due to more pressing priorities).
- **ACTION – Item to be put on Agenda of next meeting. NW**
- **ACTION – ALL to consider and investigate viability and preferences for different options.**

8. Identification of Financial Options

A brief discussion of possible sources of finances took place. There appears to be some funds available from the PC together with the possibility of a small contribution from EHDC.

ACTION: Review potential options for Grants through “Groundworks”. TR

9. Communications within and beyond BRSWG

Policy: Information shared within the Group stays within the Group. Charles will “own the relationship” with key Public Officials and manage the formal communications with the Parish Council and other official bodies as and when they arise. **ACTION CC.**

Charles to request key contact information from Group members with a promise of keeping that data confidential and a commitment to destroy it once the BRSWG is disbanded. **ACTION CC**

NOTE TO ALL – please use Tony's gmail address when communicating with him on BRSWG matters (not his Beech Parish Council email).

10. Date of next meeting: Monday 20th April at 7.30pm at West Dene House, 84 Medstead Road (NB Virus - this is subject to confirmation closer to the time.)

APPENDIX – DETAILED RESPONSES TO ACTIONS REPORTED IN SECTION 4

Action 4a) Obtain Ian Gibson's plans. Understand why these weren't progressed at the time. Are these reasons still relevant today?

I spoke to Ian Gibson – he was a member of the Parish Council (I think from its inception in 1999) and drafted the attached report in 2012 and Chaired the Beech Highways and Traffic Panel.

I thoroughly recommend that you read the three pages of this report, which are helpful and constructive in putting some ideas to the Parish Council about how traffic through the village might be calmed.

Among the documents sent to me by Ian were some photos (attached) of a footpath scheme in the village of South Perrot, Dorset, which features a through A-road, albeit a very narrow one - with similarities to the built up areas of Beech. Using Google street view it is possible to follow the camera through the village and view the footpath, at times with a slightly raised kerb, at times with a white line, but always with a different colour of grit on the pedestrian zone. Note that as in Beech, the central white line has been removed, to suggest that this is a residential area, though it is in fact a major thoroughfare. What is not clear is what happens when one vehicle meets another on the narrowed part of the road. Here is a link to Google street view:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/South+Perrott,+Beaminster/@50.8580867,-2.7532792,3a,75y,180h,81.63t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sPRmHSNliR05N-enrzeuaAQ!2e0!7i13312!8i6656!4m5!3m4!1s0x48726f272fa5b819:0xe50f70a2621a7b88!8m2!3d50.8581867!4d-2.7510104!5m1!1e4?hl=en-US>

I asked Ian directly why his proposals were not followed up. Here is his response.

"Briefly, my concept idea was only prepared for the parish council so we would have an outline idea to discuss with parishioners should that question arise. BPC didn't have the funds at the time to consider doing anything. The only part implemented was the path from Basingstoke Road to the first houses on the south side of Medstead Road which in the end was under by EHDC. We didn't approach the Peagram family for access over their land (now the Korean's) nor do I recall any discussion with the Forestry Commission. Discussed in principle with the Engineer from the Highway Authority when he visited but he didn't seem very interested."

I also asked Ian what the thinking was behind discouraging villagers from parking their cars on the road, since this could achieve suitable traffic calming by creating a series of de facto chicanes. His response:

Parking on the road side was an idea, I think put forward by a resident. Don't now recall if it was discussed by Council, if so it was not thought a serious solution. That idea went as far as purchasing cheap 'wrecks' so that if hit no significant money would be lost. Of course it would be necessary to tax such a vehicle and ensure it was roadworthy which raises the financial ante. I'm certain the police would not approve!

There have always been a number of residents suggesting short speed bumps and/or chicanes. We proposed both verbally to HCC Highways who resisted due to bus route and restricting travel by emergency vehicles. The police would not approve due to enforcement difficulties, HCC will take their opinions into account. The fire service and health trusts will object because these are disliked by all emergency vehicles. The bus companies would object because the road is a bus route; double deckers in particular roll considerably on speed bumps. Also residents alongside would not appreciate the additional traffic noise and fumes they generate; noticeably during acceleration and braking. My concept of longer stretches of single lane working, without speed bumps, which leaves room for pedestrians and cyclists alongside, is an attempt to mitigate those concerns whilst not completely preventing two-way traffic use in extremis.

In the sense that there is still no money around for projects, the issues confronted by Ian have not changed. Indeed, with HCC setting its face against 20mph limits, things may have become tougher.

Action 4b. Contact HCC (possibly via Mark Kemp-Gee) and get access to the land registry to understand land ownership adjacent to Kings Hill and Medstead Road.

This key information is difficult to source so, with support from Tony and Charles, I have approached it on 3 fronts hoping that one of them will provide the required level of detail:

1. I have had discussions with Mark Kemp-Gee of HCC and he believes that Highways are the most likely source of the data. On our behalf he has contacted Andrew Wood, the Area Principal Engineer, who has come back with a pdf of the expandable map he uses, which may zoom in enough to detail the area adjacent to Medstead Road and Kings Hill. Unfortunately this response did not arrive until 17.05 on Friday 6th March. I have responded to Andrew explaining our objective and asking him to see if his map does zoom in sufficiently and, if it does, what level of detail and accuracy it provides.
2. I have researched both Land Registry and Ordnance Survey websites to see what I could find. I came across a tool called "Parish Online" which appears to provide "as standard" both the OS Master Map and the Land Registry boundaries - which appear to be what we need for this assessment. This tool is available for use by Councils, including Parish Councils. After a bit of effort Charles and I have persuaded Beech PC to gain access to this tool on a 30 day free trial, as only PC officials can sign up. This was completed on Friday 6th and both myself and Charles were given access rights. Unfortunately the sign on codes do not work! I have raised a Trouble Ticket with the website provider and am hopeful of a resolution tomorrow so that I can update the meeting tomorrow evening with what I have discovered. If the data gives us what we need there is then a charge of £75 (+VAT) to keep it (assuming we need to) which the PC has agreed to fund.
3. Tony has approached John Geoghegan on the subject, who is the Community Liaison Officer at EHDC. John has passed us on to a colleague of his, Mathew Fisk who again may have access to maps that would help. I am seeking a time when I can travel to EHDC in Petersfield to mark up the area we want to review, after which we would need to submit an application to Land Registry. This appears a more convoluted approach so I would rather see if either of the other two approaches yield the desired result before committing to this.

Action 4c. Contact Seong-Gi SEO re. possibility of putting a footpath through his land at Bushy Leaze.

Response from Seong-Gi to Tony Ransley:

“Regarding the footpath, I am all for it. I am sure the whole village will benefit from it. Please, proceed with getting a quote for it. (I did not realise that you needed my allowing it. Does getting a quotation involve me in any way?) I am anxious to see the footpath built and to walk on it without worrying about the cars coming and going. It would be even nicer, if it can be made in such a way that the people would feel as if they are strolling through the woodland. I would really like to see it soonest.

I was also very glad to hear that, with the construction of the footpath, you do not need to pursue the three Right of Ways in the woodland.”

NB CC has pointed out that there can be no quid pro quo. This is not within our gift, since the County Council are responsible for footpaths and rights of way.

Action 4d) Research Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan [LCWIP] and see what funds are available, who the key players are in EHDC and what the plan is after the survey.

1) John Geoghegan is the Community Officer for NW whose parishes include Beech, Alton and the surrounding parishes. He reports at the political level to Cabinet Member and Deputy Leader of EHDC, Julie Butler whose portfolio includes Communities. The senior officer responsible for Housing and Communities is Tracey Wood. It is from the Communities budget that Geoghegan’s team is funded.

Asked about funding, Geoghegan explained that all the funding available was derived from developers’ contributions - S106. Currently there is nothing in the budget for transport related projects. However, there are two pots in which funds are available:

- a) Environmental improvements - £3,674
- b) Open space and recreation - £3,977.

We will need to get creative to draw down the small pots of money that are available for Beech. It is possible that we could pay, say from the Opens Spaces and Recreation pot, for two finger posts on the Recreation Ground, indicating the bridleway/footpath leading from Wellhouse Road to Medstead Road. (This would require liaison with the Village Hall and Recreation Ground Trust’s committee.)

2) Emma Baxter is responsible for EHDC’s Local Cycling and Walking Plan and for the survey, which is the work of an outside contractor. The aim of the survey is to discover people’s priorities. As well as individual responses to the survey, Emma confirmed she has received a response from Beech Parish Council, which she read last week. I attach below an extract from the minutes of Beech Parish Council’s meeting of 24 February 2020 which includes the formal response to the survey. It provides a useful summary of the position along with arguments that we can deploy in future.

The deadline for completion of the survey is 22 March 2020. I mentioned that we had posted the link to the survey on Nextdoor Beech, which went down well (though she had never heard of the platform). She asked if we could post it may be a couple more times before the deadline. Once they have collated the responses these will be sent off to the contractor for analysis and a report. The hope to publish a Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan around the end of 2020 having completed scrutiny from the relevant senior officers and council committees. It is intended that this should be a living document which will be updated. They particularly welcome proposals that enable two points to be linked together by footpath, cycle route, etc. where they are not currently well connected.

Action 4f. Speed Cameras with fixed VRN recognition + actual speed display. Tony to get quote. Also review what signage improvements/positioning might be achieved.

To: -

Tony Ransley

Beech Parish Council

Tony.ransley@gmail.com

27th January 2020 Our Ref WSQ10062

Dear Tony,

Thank you for your valued enquiry regarding vehicle activated signs. I have pleasure in submitting our quotation as below.

ANPR Systems integrated with SIDs: -

Post Mounted Mains Powered ANPR System including bracket and all associated software, on site Wi-Fi download, mains powered for a cost of £5,495.00 each excluding VAT.

Post Mounted Mains Powered ANPR System including mounting bracket and all associated software, Remote 3G/4G Download including two years' worth of SIM charges, mains powered for a cost of £6,336.00 each excluding VAT. ➤□ Sim card charge after the two-year period of £288.00 per year, per camera excluding VAT.

Portable Battery Powered ANPR System including post mounting bracket and all associated software, on site Wi-Fi download, battery powered complete with 'intelligent charger' for a cost of £5,995.00 each excluding VAT.

Any of the below signs can be integrated to work alongside the above ANPR cameras:

Mini Speed Indicator Device (miniSID), mains or battery powered for a cost of £2,300.00 each plus VAT.

Speed Indicator Device (SID) with SLOW DOWN Legend beneath, mains or battery powered for a cost of £2,500.00 each excluding VAT.

Speed Indicator Device (SID) with Smiley / Angry Face beneath, mains or battery powered for a cost of £2,600.00 each excluding VAT.

Speed Indicator Device (SID) with Thank You / Slow Down Legend beneath, mains or battery powered for a cost of £2,875.00 each excluding VAT. ➤□ Our ANPR camera comes complete with our comprehensive

TWO-YEAR WARRANTY which covers everything except vandalism, impact damage, theft and batteries*.

**** Batteries include manufacturers ONE-year warranty***

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING MAINS POWER: -

Our mains powered signs will require a double pole single fuse isolator fitted within the base compartment of the column prior to installation. When using a street lighting column, a double pole twin fused isolator is required.

At present we could deliver the above products within approximately

6 – 8 weeks from receipt of written Official Purchase Order.

This quotation is valid for a period of thirty days from the above date and is subject to our Terms & Conditions of Trading as per attached.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information and I will be happy to help.

Best Regards,

Will

Will Spinks, Sales & Marketing

Action 4g. Eric to get estimates for path's costs via an organisation that Tony knows who have done this work locally.

Notes from Eric:

Overview

The phone discussion was a Q&A on the routes and options for us as a village to create a pedestrian walkway parallel to Medstead road.

As the pathway will be mixed use (Pedestrian, Cycle, Bridleway - Katy advised for longevity the pathway will be designed to be 2.5m wide.

Goals

1. Primary use will be Pedestrian traffic (Dog walking, Pram pushing, Joggers)
2. Secondary use will be road cyclists (MTB) , and the width of 2.5m will allow for Horses; advised to Specify as this is a 'Community funded project' - horses will need to be 'walked' (ie no cantering - to prevent pathway damage).
3. Key Prevention of the new walkway **not** to be used by motorised vehicles (Dirt bikes / 4x4 enthusiasts)
4. Any works must be Ecological and Natural England Forestry Approved - with rainwater drainage ditches planned in key areas.

Specifications

Based on the location and other works done in the area, Katy advised the pathway will be constructed in the following specifications:

Total = 300mm depth / 2.5m width

A - Geotech Style Membrane - Weed and drainage protection

B - 200mm Chalk Base (Clean and allows for drainage)

C - 100mm Capped with Sittleworth Sandstone (Neutral pH for surrounding soils)

NB The new road will look inviting for prospective 4x4 drivers / Motocross and highway laws state we cannot as a village bar access to this use - but design it in a way to look unappealing or have an entrance sign saying it is a Community funded project.

Advised to contact Highway Countryside Gang (TBC - Next meeting)

Contact details for James.Ennet@hants.gov.uk - who can advise us on detracting / restricting use for 4x4 on basis of community funded pathway.

Quotation Guideline Pricing:

Total estimated length (no current site visit to confirm - so these are projected costings from Katy based on an over the phone explanation of site.

Estimate - 1,500m Pathway to Bushey Lease entrance (2.5m wide, 300mm depth)

£130-135k (+VAT)

I asked for a rough costing for additional 500m Routes
(If we were to consider joining Kings Hill to Bushey Lease Woods)
A 500m span of same construction comes to +£45k(+VAT)
We are advised to go see the recent construction at Langrish House Hotel (map above) - to see what the road looks like and if it is suitable for our Working group.
I have requested Photos in the meantime which Katy will send across if we cannot reach a date for a site visit.

Milestones and Next Steps

I. Availability

Suggested route for Poulson to come for an April Site Visit and a walkthrough of the planned route.

Then we will receive a formal quote based on diverting on flat ground in a proposed 'windey nature trail' (added benefit of avoiding the larger felled tree stumps)

II. Contract of Quoted works

If we were to go ahead - they can be scheduled with her team to start works as early as August 2020.

There will be a courtesy 1 week follow up call by Poulson to explain duration of works and any road closures that need to be notified for delivery of materials.

Action 4h. "Contact Forestry Commission (possibly via George Gate) re the possibility of running a footpath on their land adjacent to Medstead Road."

George Gate kindly responded to my request and eventually provided the name of an individual in the new organisation "Forestry England". I say eventually in that the old "Forestry Commission" organisation is in the middle of a major restructuring exercise that has inevitably led to some turmoil and people churn.

George's contact, whilst sympathetic to our objectives here, is not a decision maker on such an issue so has passed our enquiry onto his colleagues in the Estates team. I await their response.

Action 4i) Find out if there are any other Road Safety Groups operating in adjacent areas, particularly Medstead, so we could potentially share ideas / provide a larger, more powerful lobby.

I have made contact with Mike Smith of Medstead Speedwatch and Medstead Parish Council and circulated a report of the telephone conversation. It is clear that they would be glad to be included in any campaign to slow traffic through the two villages, which share the same road. He told me of a Speedwatch group in Four Marks, with whom I have yet to make contact. I have managed to persuade EHDC to supply me with the contact details of Clerks and Chairs of all the Parishes in East Hampshire. This should make tracking down the relevant Speedwatch bodies and groups similar to ours in the future. We need to be singing from the same hymn sheet - in my view, it helps if we have drafted the hymn sheet in question. Mike Smith would prefer that Beech Speedwatch reopens for business!