

HARBURY & DEPPERS BRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT WITHIN DEPPERS BRIDGE

This report is based on a total of 22 responses to the questionnaire sent out to residents. **Of those 22 people, 20 (i.e. 90%) identified traffic volume and speed as being their major concern.**

The B4451, being little more than a country lane, was never envisaged to carry such high volumes of traffic, as clearly evidenced by the frequent damage to both its surface and grass verges. The opening of J12 of the M40 some years ago, together with the more recent expansion of Jaguar Land Rover in nearby Gaydon, has exacerbated a growing problem which can only increase significantly once again if, and when, the proposed new Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath village development comes to fruition.

Over the years, residents have expressed increasing concerns about road safety, noise and pollution associated with the speed and volume of traffic during peak travelling times. Traffic calming measures have been put in place, but these have proved unsuitable/inadequate for the task. Heavy good vehicles and juggernauts continue to flout the 7.5 tonne weight restriction on the railway bridge and demolish the traffic calming bollards, while even small buses abide by those regulations and leave elderly residents and children without a convenient and safe form of transport.

While traffic calming measures may have gone some way towards improving safety by reducing overall speeds – there are now fewer collisions with parked vehicles – they have not altogether achieved the intended goals. The 30mph speed restriction is largely ignored and seldom policed. The road restricting chicanes are poorly signed and badly lit. Drivers often race through the chicanes disregarding the designated right of way and race between chicanes; bollards are frequently demolished and vehicles damaged driving over the road restricting kerbs.

Deppers Bridge has a footpath to the north of the road only, serving the majority of houses, but nothing other than grass verges for those 5 houses on the southern side. There is no footpath extending towards the stile and public right of way across the fields adjacent to the river. At the upper end of the hamlet, beyond the residential area, the footpath crosses to the south side of the road where it continues, barely wide enough for two people to walk side by side. While it is possible to walk most of the way to Harbury along the footpath, there is no such provision at all in the direction of Southam.

Cycling through the hamlet and the roads beyond can be distinctly hazardous during peak travelling times and not an altogether pleasant experience at other times due to existing road conditions. This tends to discourage cycling in the hamlet, for all ages, even though Harbury and Southam services and leisure facilities are well within easy cycling distance.

The lack of adequate footpaths, poor cycling conditions and absence of a local bus service, means residents are entirely dependent upon cars for transport. This makes for yet another

inconvenience in that residents having to travel at peak times, sometimes have great difficulty getting in and out of their own driveways due to the volume of commuter traffic.

Suggestions for improving current problems include:

- Improved and more clearly visible signage warning, well in advance, and at the approaches, of the 7.5 tonne weight restriction on the railway bridge. More regular monitoring of those ignoring the limit (and some indication that perpetrators will be dealt with).
- Redesigned, possibly more robust bollards on the traffic calming chicanes that would not be so regularly demolished.
- Better lighting on or around the chicanes so that they are more clearly visible at night.
- Clearer indication of the right of way at each chicane.
- Consideration of other methods – possibly speed bumps?
- Stronger enforcement of the 30mph speed limit by the use of speed reactive, flashing '30' or 'too fast' indicators. More regular monitoring of traffic speeds.

Objectives (to be included in the plan)

- The community wants to minimise the impact of additional traffic generated by any large developments in the area.
- To work with the council to improve traffic management schemes to make the road and our community safe for our residents as well as other road users.
- To ensure that there is a good, regular public bus/transport service available for those (especially, the young and the elderly) who require it.
- To facilitate and improve the experience of cyclists, walkers and horse riders in their country pursuits.

N.B. The 'objectives' themselves do not need to include any of the information given above which would form part of a separate dialogue. They are the simple straightforward aims we would hope to achieve by way of the measures set out in the plan.