

BOWNHAM PARK



Speeding and Traffic Calming on Bownham Park Estate

A summary of efforts to date as on 20th June 2009

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1.0 What's this all about?

- 1.1 For many years some people have believed that speeding is an issue on Bownham Park, each year this subject is raised at the AGM and there are very mixed feelings across the population of the park on whether this subject is an issue that concerns them or not and it must be said that obviously within any group there will always be differences in opinions.
- 1.2 This document summarises all efforts to date, and provides a single document for any resident to understand what has been done to attempt to resolve speeding issues, it should also clarify certain questions such as "how private is our road" or what does "private road" actually mean seeing as anyone can, and does pass through.
- 1.3 What has happened up to now is that we have all voiced our concerns over the years and rightly or wrongly some residents feel that the Council haven't actually done anything with these concerns and comments. I promise you this is not the case but admittedly "we" the council and the residents have not found a resolution that satisfies all.
- 1.4 This document attempts to record all efforts, opinions and reactions to the whole "Speeding" issue and various speed calming measures that have been suggested and considered.
- 1.5 Please note: We have all referred to the "Committee" in the past but we are actually a "Council" and will from now on refer to ourselves as such verbally and by the written word.

2.0 Strategy

- 2.1 The BPRRA council is here to support the interests of the residents, however we will probably never have a situation where a suggestion is unanimously agreed to. For this reason the only way to understand if an action is to be carried forward is to put it to vote and resolve by majority. This is not suggesting that we do not respect the opinions and concerns of the minority especially with regard to safety, but by a majority agreeing to carry something forward this is potentially giving the committee the authorisation to use funds built up through your yearly subscriptions. If a majority does not wish for a particular issue to be resolved (this may be because they do not feel that there is an issue) then the council must stand by this democratic decision.
- 2.2 Two of the current council members highlighted that although the speeding issue is brought up at each AGM no one had ever actually understood how many residents wanted the council to pursue a resolution. For this reason it seems logical to understand how many want action before any council members spend allot of their time trying to resolve the issue only to find that the majority were never in support. For this reason a survey seems a reasonable approach.
- 2.3 So here is how we the council approach this issue:
 - a. By survey, establish how many people feel that speeding is an issue and needs resolving
 - b. If a majority requests action then the council collate all possible ideas
 - c. Council discuss advantages and disadvantages of each option
 - d. Select best solution
 - e. Council establish that chosen idea can be practically put in place and is safe and legal
 - f. Resolve any issues with location of speed reducing measures (e.g. would you resist having a chicane or sign outside your house?)
 - g. Council implement speed reducing measures.
- 2.4 **Please Note**: If a majority is against a proposal then no further action can be taken by the council. This does NOT mean that nothing can be done, but the "council" must stand by a majority decision and take no further action themselves. However this does not mean, and never has meant that residents cannot try to resolve a matter themselves. This is discussed later in this document.

3.0 **So what have "we" done so far?**

The council has:

- 3.1 Consulted Gary Handley, Road safety officer for adults for Stroud District council to gain experience knowledge of effective speed calming measures. (of which is documented in section 8.0)
 - a. Continually reiterated at every AGM that residents must obey the 20mph speed limit.
 - b. Written within all newsletters a polite reminder to residents to respect the 20mph speed limit.
 - c. If residents report other residents driving inconsiderately we offered to politely approach them on the matter.
 - d. If residents report trade vehicles driving inconsiderately we offered to politely approach the companies on the matter.
 - e. Had numerous discussions on possible speed calming measures.
 - f. Written to manufacturers of speed detection equipment

4.0 **Possible resolutions**

The council has considered the following resolutions:

4.1 **Speed humps**

The suggestion of speed humps has been met with a majority of negativity for many years for the following reasons:

- a. They are considered noisy; many people would resist having them outside their own home.
- b. Aesthetically they are not pleasing, they may even need to be a certain type with yellow cross hatches to ensure they are legally visible enough; "bright" coloured humps will therefore have some impact of the visual appearance of the Park.
- c. It is debatable whether they are actually effective and trade and delivery vehicles' will probably not slow down as the drivers may not care about a company vehicle.
- d. Cost of speed humps are relatively expensive, approx £200 to span road.

4.2 **Reduce the speed limit**

- a. Some residents suggested that we reduce the speed from 20mph and there was quite a debate on the Google group about this.
- b. At the AGM many considered that 20mph was slow enough.
- c. The Stroud District Council considers that 20mph is the correct maximum speed for such an estate.
- d. Some people asked why anyone that ignored a 20mph speed limit would actually drive any slower, which is a very good point.

4.3 Additional road signs

Additional road signs have been considered, again many people express that people ignore such signs.

- a. It has been suggested that we create small "A" frame signs and place them around the Park to attempt to remind those of the speed limit in hope that they will reduce their speed, however this may be effective for the people that "just aren't paying attention" to their speed but for the individuals that "don't care" only obstructions may force them to slow down.
- b. Free standing "A" frame signs are cheap to make ourselves and are a mobile and temporary measure.
- c. Additional signs on poles around the park are also unfavourable, and again, would you want one in view of your lounge or directly outside your home.
- d. They would be permanent, and must be fitted into the ground securely and in an appropriate position that does not cause an obstruction themselves.
- e. It is debatable whether they are actually effective.

4.4 Road markings

- a. Additional road signs have been considered, again many people express that people ignore such markings.
- b. We are pursuing the cost of some "20mph" road markings at the top and bottom entrance. (20mph white roundels painted on the road)

4.5 Permanent chicanes

- a. Many people take the opinion that the way the Park has been designed, with its open fronted gardens and downhill swooping bends does not encourage slower speeds, the park has no natural obstacles and the only effective way of making people drive slowly is to force them by means of chicanes. There is a fair amount of evidence that changing the road architecture is the only effective way to slow traffic down. This has been implemented extensively in Germany and Holland.
- b. A permanent chicane could be created and made to look like an extension of the nearest garden.
- c. Someone would have to take the responsibility of looking after and maintaining the chicanes. Or possibly the individual that lives closest and thus share the maintenance.
- d. The two halves of the chicane would need to be at a distance apart that allows long vehicles through.
- e. There would need to be some consideration not to obstruct or unsettle drains that are laid along the haunchings to avoid damage and further drain repair costs.
- f. This speed calming measure would, in some peoples views look the most attractive.
- g. This measure is probably the most expensive to implement.
- h. We could experiment with locations using a non-permanent chicane and if the location was successful create a permanent chicane at a later date.
- i. If it were deemed necessary to locate a chicane outside your home, would you object?



4.6 Non permanent chicanes

- a. As effective as a “permanent” chicane but obviously removable.
- b. Could be created with railways sleepers and shrubs, but possibly not as aesthetically pleasing as a permanent chicane.
- c. This would be a lot cheaper than a permanent chicane as there would not need to be proper kerbing etc.
- d. We could experiment with locations using a non-permanent chicane and if the location was successful create a permanent chicane at a later date.
- e. Using railway sleeps and shrubs in pots to create a non-permanent chicane may not be as aesthetically pleasing at a permanent chicane.

4.6 Speed gun survey

- a. This has been suggested by Gary Handley (read “his advice” further on in section 8.0)
- b. This could be carried out to establish how fast traffic is travelling.
- c. This would quantify the extent of the issue.
- d. You would need volunteers to perform this.
- e. In my own opinion, if the Council had suggested the use of a speed guns some residents would say that this is a typical attempt by the Council to be “Big Brother” and “headmaster like”, these are perceptions we are trying very hard to change.
- f. It would not be suggested that people are confronted or registration numbers are recorded.

4.7 SID's (Speed Indication Device)

Speed Indication Device, generically known as a SID's. Some of these devices log speed readings, so that you can create a report on the speed of each vehicle passing the sign.

We could hire a SID to check speed and take numbers?



Examples of SID's (Speed Indication Devices)

Gloucestershire Highways Traffic Monitoring group could possibly arrange a loan device but as our road is not 'adopted' we would expect a charge to be made.

Contact:

Members of the Team are:

- Kathryn Haworth: Team Leader - Transport Monitoring
- Tina Knight: Senior Transport Monitoring Officer
- Paul Stroud: Transport Monitoring Officer

You can email them at transportmonitoring@gloucestershire.gov.uk or call or write to them at Gloucestershire Highways.

They will also advise on traffic calming, see: <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1220>

* Additional links:

<http://onsitertools.com/measuring/traffic/speed-sign/detail/CR100/>

<http://www.c-a.co.uk/ProductCat.aspx?id=6>

<http://www.radarlux.co.uk/products.htm>

You can hire a SID from CA Traffic Ltd. The cost is £100.00 per week or £300.00 for a month.

Sue Preston at CA Traffic Ltd:

32-36 Lodge Farm Business Centre, Wolverton Road, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes MK19 7E

Tel: +44 (0) 1908 511122

Fax: +44 (0) 1908 511505

Web: www.ca-traffic.com

Opening Hours Monday to Thursday 08.30 to 16.45 Friday 08.30 to 15.30

4.8 Reduce the speed limit

Some residents suggested that we reduce the speed from 20mph

Gary Hadley considers that roads are engineered to a speed, and reducing the speed limit e.g. to 10mph on a road designed for 20-30 does not work.

5.0 Survey results

5.1 The survey results are (from a total of 71 households):

- 37 did not reply
- 10 responses expressed that speeding is an issue and action is needed.
- 14 responses expressed that speeding is not an issue and no action is needed.
- 6 expressed no opinion either way
- 4 did not answer the question however did comment

5.2 So although a small majority, the majority request no further action. This to some, may not seem a large enough majority to base a decision on, however it is not unreasonable to assume that the **37** that did not reply at all have no desire to see further action, the combined 37 and 14 now provide a large majority for no action.

As the council can only act for the majority decision within the survey then NO further action will be taken by the council.

6.0 How “private” is our estate?

6.1 Bownham Park is often described as a private estate or private park. It is made up of all privately owned houses on single dwelling properties. All the roads within the park are owned by our company, Bownham Park Rodborough Residents ‘ Association Limited.

We understand there is a public footpath running behind property no: 4,6,8,10, & 22

Our roads are not adopted by the local highway authorities which gives us a degree of exclusivity and control over our immediate environment. Residents have a Private Right of Way to use the roads.

6.2 The roads are for the private use by residents, residents’ visitors, trade vehicles, and emergency services. There is no Public right of way for vehicular access

Legal issues- Legal issues are best left to the lawyers! -

6.3 BPPRA, as owners of the roads, regularly review our legal liability for duty of care, pedestrian and children safety in particular, we have set a 20mph speed limit and regularly remind residents of their responsibility to take care.
Any alteration we might consider to reduce speed such as humps etc would require technical and legal advice.

6.4 We are members of PRS an advisory service for Private Road owners.

7.0 Issue/facts to be established:

7.1 “specification” that traffic calming measure need to abide by. For example signs and chicane may not need to be to the same specification as those used on public highways

7.2 Any legal issues, if any at all that may arise in positioning such measures as chicanes

7.3 Are non residents technically trespassing if they use the estate as a shortcut by vehicle?

8.0 Gary Handley advice

Gary Handley is the Road safety officer for adults for Stroud District council.

8.1 The committee has consulted Gary and the initial discussion suggested the following:

8.2 Before a campaign, get everyone to agree that it is a good idea to tackle the problem.

8.3 Identify the problem and survey using radar gun. (not in a negative way – do not name offenders) is it outsiders? or residents?

8.4 Radar gun training is given for this – when, where and how with forms to help complete survey. This is done in pairs and it is best to involve community in this effort. Apparently those with guilty conscience are the most likely to complain about this!

8.5 The main thrust of the argument being that we all want to have a good quality of life and that includes safer roads and we need to do this together.

8.6 Roads are engineered to a speed and reducing the speed limit e.g. 10mph on a road designed for 20-30 does not work.

First plan of attack:

- 8.7 Your first line would be a survey using speed gun – to identify the extent of the problem. This is something that the council can provide free of charge with the necessary training for us to do it ourselves. Only cost to us would be printing of forms etc and is best performed in pairs and with support of the estate. (Please note that many people on the estate have expressed quite negative views on the use of speed guns)
- 8.8 Publish results. Do not point out error of ways and identify who – rather encourage i.e. 90% adhering to limit.
- 8.9 Then work out how to sustain good behaviour and pull into the fold those who offend.
(We suggested to Gary that while doing a survey everyone would drive within the speed limit and there would be no speeding problem therefore the results would not represent the true situation, however Gary said actually that would be good, we would publish this report of 95% driving really well etc and then try various methods to sustain good behaviour, he had some ideas for this such as stickers on bins, extra signs, leaflets and so on, standard letters etc.
- 8.10 Gary has various strategies for dealing with repeat offenders and would be able to offer further advice on request.
- 8.11 You could try hiring a SID? (see section 4.7) Visual – less policing?

Second plan of attack

If the speeding problem became really bad then as a last resort:

- 8.12 More extreme traffic calming measures are necessary. Rubber strips bolted to the road – these are subject to design standards and have to be highlighted by paint or lighting so drivers are alerted to them and slow down.(This may not be necessary as our estate is not adopted) They also make noise. He suggested this would not be popular.
- 8.13 Please note that when Gary refers to “design standards” he is referring to public highways”, as Bownham Park is not a public highway it is possible that we would not need to abide by such standards however we would have to ensure that any speed calming measures are not dangerous obstructions themselves.
- 8.14 The council member that discussed this thought Gary was very helpful and had some excellent ideas however we could only implement such ideas if Bownham park residents want to go ahead with this. Please refer to survey results in section 5.0.
- 8.15 Gary made it clear that “continual ticking off” does not work in the long run but rather creates a negative feeling and people become immune.
- 8.16 Gary pointed out roads with 20mph limits are usually engineered to suit that speed.
- 8.17 In addition he provided examples of speed signs (see below) and an eBooks on the most recent thinking about traffic calming on roads like ours, these are rather American but has many of the features that create uncertainty in the driver so they tend to slow down.



9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 Only due to the results of the survey (as stated in section 5.0) can the council can take no further action.
- 9.2 I would suggest that the people that wish to see further efforts to resolve their concerns get together as a group and, with the aid of the information within this document continue to find a way of resolution. This group is welcome to ask for further experiences from council members, however the council cannot be seen to instigate further action as it would contradict the survey result. If we were to continue then the council would no doubt be accused of "asking our opinion and then doing their own thing anyway".
- 9.3 It has to be said that even though some residents suggested that they would take notice of inconsiderate drivers and pass names and car registration numbers on to the council, and the council offered to politely approach these individuals, to our knowledge not one person has come forward and done so and with the greatest of respect the council members cannot be the eyes and ears of 71 households on their own.
- 9.4 I am aware of one person that has reported people speeding through the park directly to the police and of which resulted in them being visited at home and given a "ticking off".
- 9.5 I have attempted to collate all thoughts and efforts to date so that we have a single point of reference for anyone interested in this issue. Hopefully it has clarified a few issues and hopefully highlighted that more effort has been put into this issue than some may have realised, but with so many different opinions on the estate it will always be a subject that takes allot of effort and time to resolve one way or another.
- 9.6 It would be recommended that anyone taking on a speeding resolution as suggested in para 9.2 should update this document with any additional information. This will in turn help others in the future.
- 9.7 Please note any comments in this document are my own and should not imply any legal authority

Many thanks for your time.

Jason Lloyd

BPRRA Council member