

INTRODUCTION

Speeding continues to be a major concern to parishioners and is topic that is regularly raised at Parish Council meetings, in public consultations and on social media. This briefing note provides an update on the progress being made by the Parish Council since it agreed an Action Plan in 2021.

The Parish Council takes the issue of speeding very seriously and has been, for many years, proactive in responding to concerns. Although it has limited powers on this issue, it continues to lobby the agencies who are responsible for road and highway management and safety to take action. These include Leicestershire County Council (LCC) and the Police.

A good indication of the scale of parishioner's concern was obtained following the Sheepy Parish Neighbourhood Plan statutory consultation. More than 75% of the responses indicated that speeding was considered to be a problem.

Whilst we have achieved some improvements and positive changes, we would like to see further action to make our roads safer for both road users and pedestrians, and to tackle speeding traffic and other anti-social behaviour on our roads. Unfortunately, the authorities are reluctant to do more as they argue that they have limited resources and any new measures to reduce speeding must be evidence-led and based on priority. Therein lies the problem; prioritisation is based on reported accident history, and in particular fatalities. Whilst we are campaigning for action to avoid accidents and fatalities, i.e. make our roads safer, this isn't seen as a priority by LCC (Highways Department).

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS

In November 2021, the Parish Council agreed a list of priorities for action to both improve road safety (for pedestrians and drivers) and reduce speeding. The original list of priorities can be found [here](#). An article (blog) on our website has a description of how a speeding problem is defined (by the Police and LCC) and also presents data from across our parish. Some of speed reduction measures, for instance, changes in carriageway layout and speed bumps are not permissible on certain roads, and this was taken into account when considering the priorities, as was cost.

Since then, the Parish Council has continued to make progress on the identified actions where it could do so. To assist with delivering them it has allocated significant budget over the last three years (£22,500).

A summary of the progress being made on each the actions can be found below along with some new initiatives being pursued.

Sheepy Parish Road Safety Update – June 2024

Summary of progress on road safety improvement actions (June 2024)

ACTION/INITIATIVE (brief description)	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE FOR DELIVERY	STATUS
Purchase additional mVAS (mobile vehicle speed activated sign)	Jointly funded by LCC (Members Highways Fund) and Parish Council (Total cost c£4,000)	Parish Council	<u>COMPLETED</u> mVAS Purchased and now operating
Dragon's teeth – on entry to villages before speed limit change Requested by Parish Council (except last one)	Painted on A444 at entry/exit to Sibson Painted on B4116 at entry/exit to Sheepy Magna Requested for B585 at entry/exit to Sheepy Parva Other location(s): B4116 at entry/exit to Pinwall Cost: c £2000 per set	LCC Highways	<u>COMPLETED</u> <u>COMPLETED</u> Awaiting LCC to action New location
Village gateway signs – speed limit signs on yellow background with village name/safety message with wooden picket fence below	Requested for entry/exit to Sibson, Sheepy Magna and Sheepy Parva. All signs where practical include “Please Drive Carefully” message. To be installed by LCC. Wooden Picket Fencing to be supplied and installed by Parish Council. Cost: c£10,000	LCC Highways LCC Highways Parish Council	<u>COMPLETED</u> Gateway signs installed. <u>IN PROGRESS</u> Wooden fencing installation to be progressed.

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Speed limit reduction – South of Sibson (A444)	Reduction of speed: National to 50 mph LCC carried out a consultation in 2023 with a proposal to reduce the speed limit where currently national limit (60mph) to 50mph and replace all signage.	LCC Highways	<u>UNKNOWN</u> Awaiting outcome of consultation and we are following it up with LCC
Speed gateway speed limit signs - change all signs not included above to have yellow background	All villages and hamlets across Parish with speed limit changes Cost: c £2,000		<u>NEW INITIATIVE</u> Not yet requested. Awaiting completion of village gateway sign installations before progressing
Road sign visibility improvement	Hedge cutting/tree pruning to be requested at regular intervals	LCC Highways	<u>ON-GOING</u> Issue reported to LCC regularly as required.
Repaint road markings to improve road safety	Some locations markings had become virtually non-existent particular at junctions and on bends) Issues and problem locations reported to LCC for priority action	LCC Highways	<u>ON-GOING</u> LCC carried out a programme of improvements, but this is an on-going issue and requires regular reporting
Rumble strips (blue)	Locations being considered: main entries to Sibson (A444), Sheepy Magna (B4116) and Sheepy Parva (B585). Potential cost c£12,000	LCC Highways	<u>NEW INITIATIVE</u> Not yet discussed with LCC

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Road sign cleaning	Parish-wide	LCC Highways	<u>ON-GOING</u> Issue reported as required.
Fixed (static) vehicle speed activated sign (VAS)	Cost c£30,000. One site identified as suitable by LCC (north end of Sheepy Magna, Twycross Road)	LCC Highways	<u>NEW INITIATIVE</u> Parish Council considering funding options and feasibility
Speed limit reduction – Main Road, Sheepy Magna (B4116) 40mph to 30mph	Requires LCC and Police to support and approve following consultation. Parish Council has campaigned for this for many years and most recently enlisted support from MP and PCC (Police). LCC continue to reject the case presented.	LCC Highways	<u>ON-GOING</u> Continuing to pursue campaign but unable to make progress with LCC
Speed limit gateway location change – Twycross Road, Sheepy Magna (B4116)	The Parish Council has put forward this proposal to LCC, i.e. to move the start of 30 mph zone northwards further from the first houses on Twycross Road, Sheepy Magna.	LCC Highways	<u>ON-GOING</u> Awaiting response from LCC. With new data from the Community SpeedWatch (CSW) operation and the mVAS a further attempt will be made to persuade LCC to consider this proposal.
Speed limit reduction through W'borough (B585)	Proposal for a reduction in speed limit from 50 mph to 40 mph now there is a new housing development, the school plus increase industrial activity (turning lorries).	LCC Highways	<u>ON-GOING</u> Continuing to pursue campaign although LCC has rejected the proposal

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Pavement parking problems	The Parish Council regularly gets reports of vehicles parking on pavement and causing an obstruction to pedestrians. This is considered to be anti-social behaviour. Changes to the law are being considered that would make pavement parking an offence. For the time being, the Parish Council will encourage responsible parking and courtesy.	Residents	<u>ON-GOING</u> Article to be included in Parish newsletter and legislative changes are being monitored
Community Speed Watch (CSW) operation	Carried out CSW operation in Sheepy Magna/Parva in July 2023 Planning to carry out another operation in Spring 2025	Parish Council	<u>COMPLETED</u> (see note below) <u>NEW INITIATIVE</u> Needs enough volunteers for it to go ahead (see below)
Establish community volunteer road safety advisory group	Group to manage deployment of the mVAS, data processing and organise future SpeedWatch operation(s)	Parish Council	<u>NEW INITIATIVE</u> Advertisement for volunteers has been placed in the Grapevine magazine (July '24), Parish Council newsletter and frequent postings to be made on social media.
Engagement with Agencies to gain their support	Invitations to LCC Highways, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to attend Parish Council meetings Written correspondence with our MP, PCC and LCC	Parish Council	<u>ON-GOING</u> (see note below)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to the actions identified in 2021, further work has been undertaken to better understand the speeding problem by gathering our own data to support the case for getting speed limits reduced and better speed enforcement action by the Police. This has included:

- writing to our MP (Dr Luke Evans) to get his support for a speed limit reduction in Sheepy Magna (40 mph to 30mph) and along the A444,
- inviting the Police & Crime Commissioner (Mr Rupert Matthews) to a meeting with parishioners to discuss concerns and to get his support,
- sharing the prioritised action list with our County Councillor and requesting that officers from LCC Highways attend a Parish Council meeting.

Over the last year, the Parish Council has been in correspondence with our MP to gain his support for a reduction in the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph along Main Road, Sheepy Magna at the southern end of the village. We set out a clear argument for why the limit should be reduced, not least because it would make the road safer, but also because UK Government guidelines indicate that the road here should have a 30mph limit. The MP wrote to LCC (as the authority responsible for setting speed limits) to state our case. They wrote back to him refusing to consider our case (as they had done when we approached them directly) and explaining their justification. In doing so, they presented factually inaccurate information which is misleading. Following the General Election and the re-election of Dr Evans, we will contact the MP again to pursue this matter.

Following the Police & Crime Commissioner visit, he agreed to write to LCC to support our campaign to have the speed limit reduced. The Parish Council is aware that he did write to LCC, but as yet, we do not have a further response. Mr Matthews has been re-elected as our Police & Crime Commissioner and so we will also be following this up. A summary of the meeting with the Commissioner and his subsequent letter to the Parish Council can be found on the website [here](#).

LCC Highways declined to meet with the Parish Council, but instead sent written comments (June 2022) on the list of potential improvements we had identified. They also pointed us to their website where various speed calming measures are disused. The webpage can be found [here](#).

The Parish Council also organised a Community Speed Watch (CSW) operation in the summer of 2023, to gather more data and evidence of speeding. We struggled to get volunteers for this and only just managed to reach the minimum number for it to go ahead. A report on the CSW operation can be found on the Parish Council website [here](#). It is hoped to run another operation in Spring 2025, the earliest we are allowed to do it. Again, we will need volunteers to make it happen.