

Guilden Sutton Parish Council Newsletter September 2010, no 139

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Your newsletter.

Welcome to a bit of a bumper bundle of news of current activities the Parish Council is involved in on behalf of the village with some tips from Homewatch and Trading Standards.

If you would like to have any further information please contact any of the councillors listed on the back page or the Clerk.

Highways and Byways

In the last issue, we suggested that occupiers may have noticed improvements being carried out in the village by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC).

A list of highways issues appeared in an earlier issue and the response of the Area Highways Manager to outstanding points appears in the centre pages on a street by street basis. Action already taken ranges from white lining to filling potholes.

Following action by the parish council and by local CWaC Cllr Brian Bailey, street scene improvements have been in hand including clearing overgrowth from the footway behind Orchard Croft leading to the primary school and similar work on the dingle path behind the Oaklands estate and on the "old" section of Cinder Lane leading down from Cinder Lane to the Bird in Hand. A request for wire fencing and barbed wire to be removed from a ditch near the children's play area was also dealt with as was a request for long grass in the dell to be cut.

The council will continue to raise issues and is keen to hear from occupiers if they have concerns where they live.

CWaC managers have been helpful in achieving the work completed so far.

A41/Guilden Sutton Lane junction

Regular readers of this newsletter and the Council's annual reports will be aware of the concern that a minority of drivers join vehicles already waiting in the gap in the central reservation to turn right into the dual carriageway. The issue has been raised with the highway authority by both the Council and by CWaC Cllr Brian Bailey.

Cllr Bailey has put forward possible measures which might help to improve the situation. In the meantime, please be patient and do not enter the gap if another vehicle is already waiting.

The response of the highway authority to questions raised by Council as to the present position of the crossing for pedestrians and the possibility of traffic signals is printed below.

"I have looked at the crossing provision and do appreciate the comments. However, having looked at the Hoole roundabout side of the junction I do not consider there is a suitable location to provide a better crossing point. Vehicles parked in the lay-by on the Guilden Sutton side would mask pedestrians waiting to cross and obscure their visibility and on the Hoole side, the junction with Pipers Lane and the acceleration lane on to the A41 would create a lot of conflict for pedestrians to negotiate.

"With regard to the provision of traffic signals. As you will be aware signalling a junction involves a considerable cost which must be justified. The most common justification, if no new development is taking place, is due to a high level of collisions occurring which it is expected that signals would reduce.

"Having checked my most recent 3 year collision data for the junction, I have found there to have been 2 slight injury collisions, 1 of which did not involve turning vehicles.

" Given that our road safety engineering team are currently using an intervention level of 7 collisions in 3 years before they investigate a location, as unfortunately we have many locations with at least this many, I am sure you will appreciate that we will not currently be looking to take any action at the A41/Guilden Sutton Lane junction.

"It is also worth noting that traffic signals do create on average between 1 and 1.5 collisions per year and that before any safety schemes is progressed, a full investigation is undertaken to establish the type of collisions which are occurring. Therefore given the current collision data it is very unlikely that traffic signals would be appropriate for this location."

Speed limits

The Council is supporting a bid by CWaC Cllr Stuart Parker for a 30mph limit on Station Lane following the extension of the Greenway to Mickle Trafford and the increase in the number of cyclists and pedestrians using the road which has a 60mph limit outside the 30mph restrictions. The Council has told the highway authority:

“The Council fully supports the view the limit should be reduced for the arguments which have been put forward. As you know, the road is unlit, has no footways and is a rat run. These issues were raised by my Council at the public inquiry into the designation of Guilden Sutton Footpath no 7 as a BOAT, later a Restricted Byway, for the same reasons which now apply to the Greenway.”

“Members are anxious the matter should be reconsidered or if not kept under very close review. There is increased pedestrian and cycle footfall on Station Lane by those seeking to access the Greenway. It is clearly a nonsense to expend a great deal of public money on creating a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists while obliging users to follow a hazardous route to reach it.”

The proposal for a 30mph limit on Guilden Sutton Lane is also being pursued.

Greenway access

The Council has also informed the highway authority, Cllr Parker and the Greenway project officer of its concerns at conditions at the access to the Greenway on Guilden Sutton Lane.

Councillors believe a signage scheme is required to warn users on Garners Lane they are exiting onto a heavily trafficked road and similarly on Guilden Sutton Lane to warn drivers of the likelihood they will encounter pedestrians and cyclists emerging into the carriageway or turning across it. A nearby occupier has also informed the Council of his concerns.

Meanwhile, a suggestion has been made that the surface of Garners Lane should be improved to assist people with pushchairs and wheelchairs.

Community grants

The Council agreed grants of £500 towards the cost of the village fete and £200 for the holiday club organised by St John's, Guilden Sutton and St Peter's, Plemstall. The club takes place in Guilden Sutton Church of England Controlled Primary School.

Highways issues update

(Area Highways Manager's comments in italics).

Belle Vue Lane

Haunching/pot holes. *Area Highways Manager will arrange for inspection of Belle Vue Lane which will attend to all Category 1 defects.*

Church Lane.

Condition of cycle route Church Lane - Cinder Lane. Raised with Streetscene Area Manager. Request for barrier to prevent reported use by motorcycles. *Update requested from Streetscene Area Manager.*

Flooding. In carriageway at foot of Fox Cover steps, possible BT manhole problem near junction with Wicker Lane. *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection in wet weather.*

Cinder Lane

Overgrown hedges, Cinder Lane/condition of footway. *Update requested from Streetscene Area Manager.*

Guilden Sutton Lane

Steps, Heath Bank to Guilden Sutton Lane. Untidy condition reported. *Area Highways Manager to arrange for inspection*

A 41/Guilden Sutton Lane, road rage, double parking in the gap, reinstatement of crossroads, installation of traffic signals, provision of crossing for cyclists and pedestrians as part of a safe route to school, traffic conditions on car boot Sundays. Ongoing apart from response to signals issue. *Not sure what can be done in the short term. Area Highways Manager to comment further.*

Boundary sign, Guilden Sutton Lane by reservoir. Reported. Requires refixing. *Inspection organised.*

Damage to verges, truncated length of Guilden Sutton Lane. Request for road widening to accommodate HGVs. Concerns at effect of possible work by Scottish Power to their plant in the verge which would affect this. *Not sure what can be done in the short term. Area Highways Manager to comment further.*

Drainage issue in footway at field entrance opposite access to restricted byway. Gulley claimed to have been installed not at the lowest point. Recent flooding. *Area Highways Manager to arrange for inspection in wet weather.*

Obstruction of footway by nettles etc at one location, brambles at the approach to the diversion from the village. Ongoing. *Some works carried out – Parish Council to confirm.*

Guilden Sutton Lane, trip hazard at the site of a fall adjoining fence (Gresty's field). No defect revealed, local Member not satisfied. *Joint site meeting required, Parish Council to arrange with K. Collins.*

Signing and lining: Guilden Sutton Lane at playing field, extend red patch "SLOW" marking to both carriageways and restore disturbed surface. *Area Highways Manager will arrange inspection.*

Bus stand opposite houses between Moorcroft Crescent and Wilding Business Estate. Growth obscuring view of approaching traffic for alighting passengers. *Area Highways Manager will arrange inspection.*

Condition of carriageway under A55 bridge. NEW

Hare Lane.

Speed of traffic, double parking in vicinity of Rugby Club. With highway authority/Police. Club understood to have issued advice re parking. *Monitor.*

Oaklands

Shops area –

Concern that installation of a further dropped kerb from the shops car park to the pathway of the village hall car park is leading to vehicles over riding the footway to reach the Village Hall car park. *Area Highways Manager will arrange inspection.*

Perceived defect with the more recently improved ramp closer to the Village Hall.

Elsewhere –

Footpath 2, condition. Raised with Streetscene Area Manager. *Update requested from Streetscene Area Manager.*

School access to rear of Orchard Croft. Raised with Streetscene Area Manager. *Update requested from Streetscene Area Manager.*

Need to edge out footway at Cathcart Green. *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection.*

Carriageway defects on Oaklands approaching junction with School Lane at Wood Farm. *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection.*

Carriageway defect in vicinity of the dell (site of previous collapse). *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection.*

School Lane

Porters Hill, remove centre line, add in edgeline, increase width of footway, provide rumble strips, install signals, reduce tree canopy. Issues raised by Members and the public. *Area Highways Manger to inspect and comment upon completion of inspection.*

Encroachment onto the highway. Posts and chains in verge. Council assured highway land could not be lost by default. Notices erected by occupiers requesting pedestrians not to use the verge at a second location where there is no footway.

Flooded gulleys/depressed covers in vicinity of Arrowcroft Road. *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection.*

Condition of School Lane nameplate at the war memorial. *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection.*

Station Lane.

Renewal of SLOW sign when leaving the village. *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection.*

Speed review.

Wicker Lane

Gully kerb, Concerns re the position of this kerb in the carriageway. *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection.*

Visibility issue Wicker Lane/Church Lane. Overgrowth on corner, previously cut back by highway authority. *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection.*

Surface water running from S bend towards Wicker House. *Area Highways Manger to arrange for inspection in wet weather.*

General

Planters. NEW. Possibility of planters being provided on highway land at a central location in the village. Policy? *Detailed location to be provided by Parish Council.*

Speed reviews, A41, Guilden Sutton Lane, Wicker Lane, Hare Lane, Station Lane. Ongoing. Update needed on proposed 30mph on Guilden Sutton Lane and reduction in the limit on Station Lane. *Will provide further comment in due course.*

Chester Marathon

As previously reported, the Council raised concerns over aspects of the traffic management during the Marathon which closed roads in the village on the Bank Holiday Monday at the end of May preventing a number of occupiers from reaching their homes.

Marshals, the Police and parish councillors received a number of complaints.

The difficulty will not arise in 2011 as the route has been moved into Chester to take account of the increased number of competitors it is hoped to attract.

Our new police officers.

Following the retirement of PC Mal Baker, the new police officers for Guilden Sutton, PC Rob Boulton and PCSO Lyam Beddows, have been welcomed by parish council chairman Cllr Trisha Paterson.

PC Boulton is making a welcome return to the village. Both officers are based at Mickle Trafford Police Station.

PC Boulton has told councillors he intends to ensure a consistent presence in the community. The Homewatch scheme is also to be rejuvenated. The council has thanked PC Baker for his services to the village.

The local contact number for Mickle Trafford Police Station is 0845 458 6394. This may be used if you wish to inform our local officers about a non-urgent issue or if you want them to get in touch. Otherwise, for non urgent calls contact 0845 458 0000 but in emergencies you should always dial 999.

Dog fouling

Sadly an ever present concern which can attract a penalty.

The Council's attention has recently been drawn to instances where owners walking their dogs have failed to clear up after them. The majority of owners act responsibly and help to keep the village tidy but areas where fouling occurs are brought to the attention of the authorities and action is requested.

There are a number of dog bins around the village and these should be used. Please note the litter bin inside the playing field on Guilden Sutton Lane, where dogs should not be walked, is not a dog bin and should not be used as such.

A41 lay bys.

Councillors were asked for their views by Cheshire West and Chester Council on proposals to introduce waiting restrictions in the lay bys either side of the A41 close to Pipers Lane. It was agreed to support the restrictions but concern was expressed the problem may move to nearby roads which do not have parking restrictions. Cllr Parker has been informed of the Council's view.

Summerfield Road shops steps

The Council has been pursuing concerns that improvements at the Summerfield Road shops to provide a level disabled access to all the units, which it welcomes, have led to an irregular rise in the steps to the adjoining parking.

Parish car park boundaries

Estimates are being sought for possible improvement to the side and rear boundaries of the parish car park in Church Lane where a previous scheme involving mulch has not been successful.

Signs spruce up

Cheshire West and Chester councillor Stuart Parker has been thanked for his assistance in obtaining a grant of £350 from his members personal budget. This will enable the replacement of a rotten sign on the parish car park and a vandalised "no ball games" sign in Fox Cover.

Planters

The possibility of providing planters at locations in the village is under consideration. The approval of the highway authority would be required. Locations could include the boundary signs at the entrance to the village. If you have any ideas, contact any councillor with your suggestion.

Public seats

Estimates are being sought for repairs to the public seat in Wicker Lane which has been damaged and for the repainting of the seat on Guilden Sutton Lane.

School parking

Councillors have heard the primary school is hoping to display a banner to be designed by the children which would promote road safety by encouraging parents to use the village hall car park rather than Arrowcroft Road.

Homewatch advice

The following advice is from Homewatch.

Charity collection bags: Trading Standards has received several reports relating to charity collection bags. Household collections are a popular way for charities to collect donations, but beware some collections are bogus. Unfortunately some may try to exploit your generosity for their own gain, so please always take the time to read the small print. Know where your donation is going as it may not be where you think.

If you have any doubts about the organisation asking for donations, you can check by ringing the Charity Commission helpline on 0845 300 0218 or visit www.charitycommission.gov.uk or just simply donate your unwanted clothing to a charity you know and recognise.

You can also call Consumer Direct for further advice on 08454 040506 or visit the watch out section on their website www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

Distraction burglaries: Residents are being reminded to check for identification when someone calls at their door after reports of thieves conning their way into homes by pretending to be from utility companies.

Police have received reports from across the west of the county of people posing as water board officials and workmen to distract residents by calling at their door while an accomplice enters the house and steals valuables.

Thieves are specifically targeting elderly or vulnerable people and claiming there is an emergency which they need to be let into the house to help with. Neighbours, friends and family of elderly or vulnerable people are also being asked to stay vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour to the police.

Personal details: Cheshire Police and Trading Standards are reminding residents not to supply personal details over the telephone after four people were tricked into giving out their bank details in the last month.

In most cases the call, aimed predominantly at the elderly, comes from a man calling himself Mr Parry. Claiming to represent a high street bank he explains there is a problem with the customer's debit card and suggests a visit to the branch to pick up a replacement. In the meantime account details are requested in order to cancel the current card then minutes later fraudulent purchases are made.

Residents are urged not to disclose bank details to anyone who telephones and asks for them, even if they claim to be calling from a bank or a service provider. Genuine companies will never cold call and request bank account information from you. Please let your bank know if you have been contacted in this way.

If you or anyone you know has received a similar telephone call please contact Cheshire Police on 0845 458 0000.

Councillors' surgeries

For a trial period, surgeries are being held outside the Summerfield Road shops (or in the foyer of the Village Hall if wet) at 10am on the Saturday preceding the parish council meeting. This is another opportunity for you to have an informal chat with your local councillors and to raise issues.

Stephen Mosley MP

Chester MP Mr Stephen Mosley, who was congratulated by the council on his election, has told councillors he is looking forward to working with them.

Parish Plan

Councillors heard the parish plan is moving forwards with drafting in hand.

Quality Council

A meeting has been held to discuss the steps which would be necessary for the council to achieve Quality Parish Council status following the clerk gaining the required qualification.

Grounds maintenance/lengthsman

A site meeting has been held with Messrs Gresty of Wood Farm, who are contracted to provide grounds maintenance and lengthsman services for the council, to discuss progress with the 2010 contract.

Play area fencing

Repairs have been carried out to damaged fencing on the front boundary of the play area off Hill Top Road at a cost of £90.

Green/clean issues.

Work has been carried out by Cheshire West and Chester Council to edge out the footway at Cathcart Green.

Overgrowth at the junction of Wicker Lane and Church Lane has been cut back following a complaint from a local resident which was referred to the highway authority.

Council accounts.

The council has received a clean audit from the Audit Commission for its 2009/10 accounts.

Wheelie bins

Cllr Bailey has been informed of concerns that on occasion collection crews leave wheelie bins in positions where they block the footway.

Cheshire West and Chester consultation extended

An invitation to residents to influence how the Cheshire West and Chester Council spends their council tax over the next decade has had a record response.

The public interest, over 700 replies by earlier this month, was said to be so encouraging the council extended the "Capital Vision" consultation for a further fortnight until tomorrow (Friday, September 24).

Have Your Say forms went to every household across the borough in July this year, as part of the Council's Talking Together publication.

The initial response from residents has indicated that schools, roads and social care facilities are among their top priorities.

The first three priorities from partners and stakeholders are schools, housing and technology.

Stage two of the consultation involves discussions with private sector partners and stakeholders and stage three - meetings with local residents on the Council's 2,500-strong Citizens' Panel.

Final results will be analysed in detail by Cheshire West and Chester's Research and Intelligence Team at the end of November and the results will help the council plan its expenditure over the next 10 years.

The Have Your Say document can be accessed on the Capital Vision consultation page on the council's web site.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Jones, said: "We are delighted with the response.

"We all face challenging times financially which makes it extremely important that the Council spends its money wisely and with the backing of our residents."

Information. The Council's e mail address is info@guildensutton.org.uk and its web site is at www.guildensutton.org.uk

Future meetings: Future meetings of the Council are due to be held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on 4 October, 1 November and 6 December 2010.

All meetings include public speaking time and residents are welcome to attend and address the Council.

For a trial period, councillors' surgeries are being held at 10am on the Saturday before each council meeting at the Summerfield Road shops or in the Village Hall entrance if wet.

Contact Councillors Trisha Paterson (Chairman), 300307, Imogen Brown 300812, Alan Davis 303022, Danny Fisher 301398, Derek Hughes 300185, Jane Hughes 300863, Michelle Kerfoot 300644 and Bill Moulton 348473 or the Clerk, David Norbury, 1 Orchard Croft, Guilden Sutton, CHESTER, CH3 7SL, 300783.

Mr Brian Lewin 301501 is the Rights of Way Warden. The Parish Tree Wardens are Cllr Brown 300812 and Mr Alan Young, 301558. Cllr Jane Hughes deals with recycling issues. Cllr Moulton is the Local Bus User Contact.