

Update on Petitions submitted to Kent Highway Services

A report by the Head of Transport & Development to the Joint Transportation Board

Summary

1. A report to update the Board on the current status of petitions received by Kent Highway Services (KHS) and notification of any new petitions received since the last meeting.

Traffic Calming Measures, Heath Road, Coxheath

2. A petition was submitted in April 2008 by some 59 residents, lead by Mr A R Monk of Westerhill Road, Coxheath. It sought action to improve the traffic calming measures installed along Heath Road, Coxheath as the petitioners felt these were dangerous.
3. Since the last meeting of this Board KHS has made some necessary amendments to the existing scheme to ensure it compiles with current highway standards. Following a recent meeting between the Parish Council and County Council Cabinet Member for the Environment, Highways and Waste it has been agreed to carry out a before and after review of the crash statistics for the scheme currently implemented before any further decisions on the scheme are made. It is expected that this review will be completed by May 2010.

Safe Crossing for Marden Road, Staplehurst

4. A petition was submitted in May 2008 by Staplehurst Parish Council with over 150 signatures requesting a safer crossing in Marden Road, Staplehurst.
5. Kent Highway Services have investigated this request following a meeting with the Parish Council and have submitted a bid for the provision of a new crossing, pedestrian guard railings, interactive speed sign and bus stop improvements as part of the 2010/11 Integrated Transport Programme for Kent. The details of this bid has been previously reported as part of the Integrated Transport Programme for Maidstone and future updates on this scheme will be included as part of that programme.

Request for the Implementation of a Weight Restriction through Yalding

6. A petition was submitted in September 2008 by Yalding Parish Council with over 570 signatures supporting a previous request for a weight restriction through Yalding and that surveys of lorry movements through Yalding and East Farleigh be undertaken.
7. At a recent meeting with Nick Chard, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste and the Chair of this Board it was reaffirmed that Kent Highway Services would not be carrying out local lorry movement surveys in the Yalding area but would target resources at tackling the issue on a countywide basis. The County Council are currently preparing a freight strategy for Kent which outlines a list of actions as to how it proposes to achieve this.
8. It was agreed at a previous meeting of this Board that Members would arrange a meeting with KHS officers to discuss the potential scope of a traffic survey for this area to enable an accurate cost estimate to be obtained but as yet no approach has been made to KHS.

Closure of Pheasant Lane, Maidstone South

9. A petition was submitted in August 2008 by some 120 residents, lead by Mr David Frais of Osborne House, Loose Road of the Pheasant Lane Action Group which sought the closure of Pheasant Lane to vehicles other than for residential access. The petitioners felt the lane was being used as a rat run, was too narrow for the volume of traffic has too many blind bends with drivers driving too fast and pedestrians are at great risk.
10. At the October 2009 meeting of this Board it was approved to close Pheasant Lane to all through traffic by means of lockable bollards on an experimental basis. KHS are making the necessary arrangements for this closure to come into operation in the Easter school holidays.

Fant Traffic Calming Scheme, Maidstone

11. It has previously been reported to this board that a petition was submitted in December 2008 by Maidstone Green Party on behalf of 346 residents of Bower Place, Upper Fant Road, Gatland Land and Glebe Lane, Maidstone requesting measures to slow and reduce the volume of traffic in these roads.
12. At the October 2009 meeting of this Board it was approved that the traffic calming scheme for Fant Ward proceed to detailed design and implementation. Future updates for this scheme will be reported as part of the regular Highways Improvement Schemes report.

Resurfacing of Haste Hill Road, Green Lane, Brishing Lane, Church Street, Meadow View Road and Lewis Court Drive

13. Kent Highway Services received a petition regarding the above roads with 432 residents' signatures. The petition was acknowledged by the Community Delivery Team Leader and confirmation was sent to the Lead Petitioners. Haste Hill has subsequently been resurfaced and the other roads are currently being assessed for resurfacing in 2011.
14. The remaining roads listed will be monitored as part of the routine safety inspection regime and any repairs deemed necessary to ensure public safety will be arranged by the Highway Inspector for the area.

Road Safety Measures along Walderslade Woods Road

15. Kent Highway Services have received a petition from Mrs Gillian Tatnell from Walderslade Woods with 212 signatures requesting a reduction in speed limit with traffic islands and hatching. The petition has received the support of Boxley Parish Council although Walderslade Woods Road falls within both Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling. The petition has been previously reported to this Board indicating that KHS would investigate the issues raised in the petition. This investigation has now been concluded and I can report the findings below.
16. Following submission of the petition a seven day speed survey was undertaken in November 2009. The survey was located in the derestricted length of the road adjacent to the pedestrian footbridge. Vehicle speeds were found to be lower than the existing posted speed limit with combined direction 85th %ile speed of 53mph, whilst the mean speed was 47mph.

17. Recorded personal injury crash data for the A2045 has been analysed. In the 3 year period up to September 2009, there were 11 personal injury crashes for the entire length of the road. Of these, 6 were within the derestricted length, whilst 5 were in the current 40mph limit section. From the 11 crashes, 3 were reported as serious. These crashes are typically located at the side road junctions. There have been no fatalities in the past three years, however there was a fatal crash involving a motorcyclist in March 2005, this was in the 40mph section.
18. A review of the current speed limit was undertaken as part of the ongoing speed limit review process on all A and B class roads in Kent. The review looked at both of the 40mph and derestricted speed limit sections. It found the existing 40mph limit section between the A229 and Fostington Way was consistent with the new guidance but concluded the national limit section between Fostington Way and Boxley Road was suitable for a reduction to 50mph because of the alignment of the carriageway and the number of junctions. It also concluded that improvements to the signage and maintenance tasks were required to improve visibility to the signage.
19. With these recommendations in mind, Kent Highway Services are intending to submit a bid for funding through the Local Transport Plans Integrated Transport Programme for 2011/12 to undertake the gateway signage improvement works identified by the review team, improve the side road junction warning signs and also to provide traffic islands to protect right turning traffic at the Tunbury Lane, Impton Lane and Forestdale Road junctions. It is intended that these works including the reduction of the speed limit in part of Walderslade Woods Road will reduce vehicle speeds and the crash record hence improving road safety for all users along the road.

New Petitions Received

20. At the time of writing this report Kent Highway Services have received one new petition since the last meeting of this board.
21. In December 2009 KHS received a petition from residents of Harrietsham and Lenham in response to the review of speed limit on A20. 48 Pages of signatures were received highlighting residents' extreme disappointment of the review carried out but the County Council on the speed limit on the A20 through Harrietsham and Lenham. The petition requests that a new review is carried out which looks at implementing speed reduction measures along the route.
22. This petition has been passed to the speed limit review team who will respond to the issues raised in the petition.

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