

Flyford Flavell, Grafton Flyford and North Piddle Parish Council

Transport and Highways Plan

Jan 2021

Adopted 23rd March 2021

Forward

I am delighted that the Parish Council has invested its time and effort into producing a Transport and Highways Plan. The Plan will aid Worcestershire County Council, the Parish Council and residents to engage and promote what is important to the Parish over the coming years.

The forward thinking of the Plan has highlighted the major issues and concerns such as road safety, noise and congestion together with regard to heritage and the environment.

Rob Adams Worcestershire County Councillor (Until May 2021)

"It is pleasing to see a transport plan like this come to fruition, encapsulating the traffic management and safety concerns of people across the three parishes. It is a great example of how local issues and concerns can be captured and brought to the attention of those with the power to deliver.

I was pleased to receive the petition about road safety in the Parish last September and will continue to work with the parish council to fulfil its ambitions there.

I am particularly supportive of utilising existing legislation for the creation of Quiet Lanes to calm traffic in appropriate locations and will support any proposals that come forward. I encourage the relevant authorities to engage collectively and constructively with the parishes on locations where this is desired.

I wish the Parish Council much success in their aspirations set out in their transport plan."

Nigel Huddleston MP

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INTRODUCTION

During 2020 the Parish Council received more complaints and comments about road safety in the parishes than ever before. There were also many concerns about noisy motorbikes during the summer and this led to the Parish Council collecting names for a petition. The petition had an unprecedented high response, and was presented to Nigel Huddleston our local MP in September 2020. The council has also responded by bringing these concerns to the attention of the relevant authorities. It is considered that a wholistic plan is required in order to communicate the council policy effectively to the residents of the parish and the various agencies that are responsible for taking action. This report is an attempt to bring all those concerns together. It is based on an outline that was produced during 2020 and a response to a safety survey that was commissioned by the Highways Department as a result of the concerns raised by parish councils along the A422. It does cover ground beyond safety and it is hoped that it will provide a template for improvements to the road and transport system around the parishes for the next decade or so.es

Parish Council Strategy

In July 2020 the Parish Council approved a strategy that, among other things, called for the Parish Council to:

- a. Promote quieter lanes and improved cycle routes.
- b. Improve road safety and reduce speeding *currently on A422* and through Flyford
- c. Promote improved community transport.

Parish Council efforts to improve Transport and Highways over the past few decades

- In the 1990s the parish council ran a successful campaign to have a 50mph speed limit imposed on the A422 along the road through the parish.
- The parish council subsequently campaigned to impose a 20mph speed limit in Flyford Flavell and particularly outside the school. This was rejected by Highways on technical grounds.
- The Parish Council purchased a Speed Activated Sign which has been deployed in Flyford Flavell on the Radford Road and Bishampton Road since 2010
- Recently the Parish Council has contributed financially to the cost of 30mph roundels on the Radford Road and New Hill.
- The parish council has constantly campaigned for safer road conditions, including Flyford, the Bishampton Road, and the A422, but to date little support has been received from WCC Highways.
- The Parish Council ran a successful campaign to alter the school bus routes as there were safety anomalies which were not being addressed by the operating companies. For instance, the bus arrived outside Flyford First School and disgorged the children into the

road rather than the pavement. Children were dropped off on the A422 on the bend by North Piddle Lane and then had to cross the busy A422. We also made arrangements for drop off car parking at the Flyford Arms for children who were travelling into Worcester for school. This campaign also resulted in changes to the junction of the A422 and New Hill but the parish council has always thought that the improvements made were inadequate.

- The parish council has noted a considerable and continuing number of serious accidents, particularly on the A422 in the parish and nearby. The bridge across the Piddle Brook is a particular hot spot but fatal accidents have occurred outside the Red Hart and nearby bend and also between Libbery and Upton Snodsbury.
- In 2003 the parish council conducted a transport survey to consider the provision of public transport in the parishes. This informed the Parish Plan of 2008 which is still the current strategy of the council.
- The Parish Council has supported campaigns against the reduction of bus services in the area.

INFRASTRUCTURE

A422

The main artery road through the parish is the A422. This runs east - west and connects Worcester and Alcester and Stratford Upon Avon. It also serves as a link to Redditch and obviously to the villages and settlements along its route. Consequently, there is a variety of traffic. Large goods vehicles frequently use it as a short cut from the M5 to M40 as well as the main towns. connecting considerable amount of commuter traffic uses the route and it is noticeably busier at commuter times. The road is also used by agricultural vehicles which have got bigger over the years and it is a favourite route for motor bikers, cyclists and some horse riders.

The Villages

The three villages are dominated by the radial routes that flow from the A422. In Flyford Flavell this is New Hill which turns into Radford Road, In Grafton Flyford it's Grafton Lane and in North Piddle, North Piddle Lane. These routes attract a considerable amount of traffic and while not as busy as the A422 can at times see a quantity of varied traffic. They are also favourite amenity routes with a large number of cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

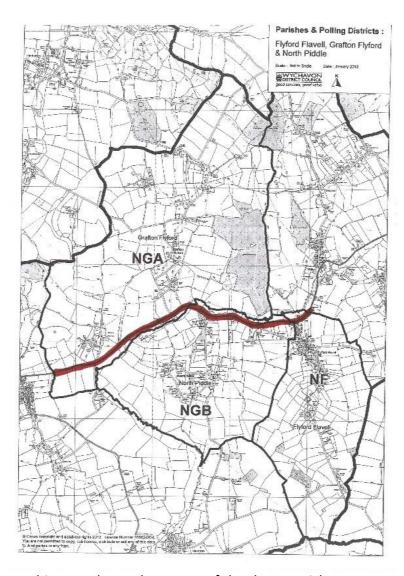
Each of the villages have minor roads off these radial routes. Bishampton Road is perhaps a radial route in its own right and has its share of safety concerns due to speeding traffic.

Footways

The footways are the pedestrian paths along the carriageway routes. These are only found on the A422 and are deemed inadequate by the Parish Council. More details of the concerns are raised later in the report.

Footpaths and Bridleways

The three parishes are blessed with an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways. The parish council works together with the County Council to keep these in good order but it is by and large the responsibility of the landowners to maintain the gates, stiles and paths. It is an essential priority for the Parish Council to ensure that these paths are kept in good repair for the public and it will resist any attempts to close or re-route paths that would inconvenience the public.



This map shows the extent of the three parishes making up the area of The Flyford Flavell, Grafton Flyford and North Piddle Parish Council with the A422 shown in red dissecting the area.

Bus Services

The parish is served by a reliable bus service running from Redditch to Worcester. The main stop is at the Flyford Arms but unofficial drop offs can be arranged with the driver.

The village hopper serves Flyford Flavell with the official stop outside the old post office. This provides a service to Pershore and the surrounding villages.

150A

Johnson's Excelbus

Worcester - Alexandra Hospital - Redditch - Wythall - Birmingham

150C

Johnson's Excelbus

Redditch - Maypole

350

Dudley's Coaches

Worcester - Inkberrow - Redditch

564

Astons of Kempsey

Pershore - Inkberrow - Evesham - Pershore

565

Astons of Kempsey

Pershore - Elmley Castle - Evesham - Pershore

R2

NN Cresswell

Pershore - Bishampton - Inkberrow - Redditch

The utilisation future of these services is unknown.

CONCERNS

Safety

- Frequent serious or fatal accidents on the A422
- Unsocial speeds being adopted on most of the roads in the parish. Although speed
 tests have shown that the percentile speeds are not sufficient to warrant
 enforcement action in the villages, they are nonetheless perceived as excessive and
 potentially dangerous. This includes some very high speeds by motorbikes on the
 A422.
- Lack of speed enforcement on all roads in the parish.
- The footways on the A422 are in poor condition and a section is missing between Grafton Flyford and Libbery.
- The number of cyclists and horse riders have increased considerably over the past few years adding to the concerns about road safety. There are also greater pedestrian movements as the government encourages people to exercise more. However, the road system has not evolved to accommodate these new uses and potential life threatening safety issues are growing.
- Maintenance of the carriageways has been good in recent years with few potholes or deteriorating surfaces.
- Little provision for wildlife resulting in regular roadkill.

Noise

• Very considerable noise nuisance caused by speeding motorbikes, predominately on the A422.

Congestion

The wide variety of users of the A422 now leads to congestion on the road. Horse riders, cyclists and large agricultural vehicles cause congestion.

Minimising CO2 Emissions

Residents in our parishes are dependent on their private cars. We are also very dependent on delivery drivers bringing goods to our doors. It is unrealistic to think that this can be changed very much and so the road network has to be fit for purpose. National initiatives will inevitably lead to more electric cars on the roads and the parish council will work to ensure that charging points are provided at suitable places like the village hall. Many parish

councils have introduced car sharing schemes and we are open to ideas and suggestion how such schemes might be able to work in our parishes.

vehicles in Britain, up from 22 million in 1990. Road traffic increased from 255 billion miles travelled in 1990 to 328 billion miles in 2018; in 2019, transport was responsible for a third of all

UK carbon emissions.

There are 38.8 million licensed

Pollution and Litter

Litter and fly tipping are regular nuisances in the parishes. The Parish Council ordinarily

organise litter picks on a regular basis. While that has not been possible during the pandemic the Parish Council has employed the lengthsman on extra hours to keep the area clean and tidy. Fly tipping can be reported to the clerk or direct to Wychavon District Council.

Heritage

Many people consider that there are too many signs on the roads. However, many of them are in poor condition and by improving the quality of some of the signs there will be an improvement in the quality of the environment. Heritage road signs would be a way of improving the environment. Such signs as these could be replaced with good quality signs that improve the visual impact and create a sense of place.





A heritage sign available from Finger Posts at http://www.fingerpostsigns.com

PROPOSALS

For Those On Foot or Bicycle

- Upgrade the footway along the A422 to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.
- Continue working to ensure the public footpaths are in good order between destinations.
- Provide a completely new footway/cycle lane along the line of the A422.
- Provide purpose built bus laybys for Flyford Flavell.
- Introduce or encourage more local services to alleviate the need to travel including better use of public buildings.

To Curb Excessive Noise by Motorcyclists

- To campaign for better enforcement of regulations on the A422.
- To campaign for better regulation of noise from motorbikes.

To Improve Road Safety On the A422

- Encourage the completion and publication of a safety report to inform WCC of possible enhancements to the A422. Campaign for engineering changes to the A422 to improve safety standards.
- Widening the road in narrow areas to accommodate the large agricultural and other vehicles commonly using it.
- Providing turning lanes at junctions like Grafton Lane and New Hill, and North Piddle lane.
- Completely reengineering the junction at New Hill to make the junction safer.
- Widen the road at the junctions with North Piddle Lane and Old Hill to improve sightlines.
- Reduce the speed limit to 40mph.
- Provide better warning signs and re-evaluate the double white lineage on the road.
- Provide smart signage and use speed cameras to help control speeds.

To Help with Traffic Through the Villages

- Introduce Quiet Lane initiatives on appropriate lanes such as North Piddle Lane.
- Introduce pedestrian signs on the small lanes to remind drivers of shared usage
- Introduce weight restrictions except for access on lanes such as Grafton Lane.
- Introduce road 'furniture' such as gates, planters and other fixtures to encourage lower speeds on roads such as Radford Road and Bishampton Road.
- Update the Speed Activated Sign for a permanent solar powered model on Radford Road and Bishampton Road.

A **Quiet Lane** is a form of traffic calming, similar to a <u>Home Zone</u>, but designed for use in rural areas. Both are governed by the Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006. This legislation allows highways authorities to designating, varying and revoking roads as Quiet Lanes or as Home Zones in England.

They also enable local traffic authorities to make use orders and speed orders, and specify procedures for making, varying and revoking them. The objectives of Home Zones and Quiet Lanes are for improving and maintaining the quality of life for local residents, which take precedence over general objectives to ease traffic movements. Roads in a Quiet Lane network or in a Home Zone are places where prescribed local activities may be carried out as well as being public thoroughfares. The speed of vehicles must be low enough to permit such activities to be enjoyed safely by people of all ages and abilities.

Road signs have been designed for the entry and exit a Quiet Lane, which appear first in The Traffic Signs

- Campaign for a 20mph speed limit in Flyford Flavell.
- Introduce a graduated speed limit on Radford Road on the approach to Flyford Flavell with a 40mph limit starting about 300m from the village boundary.

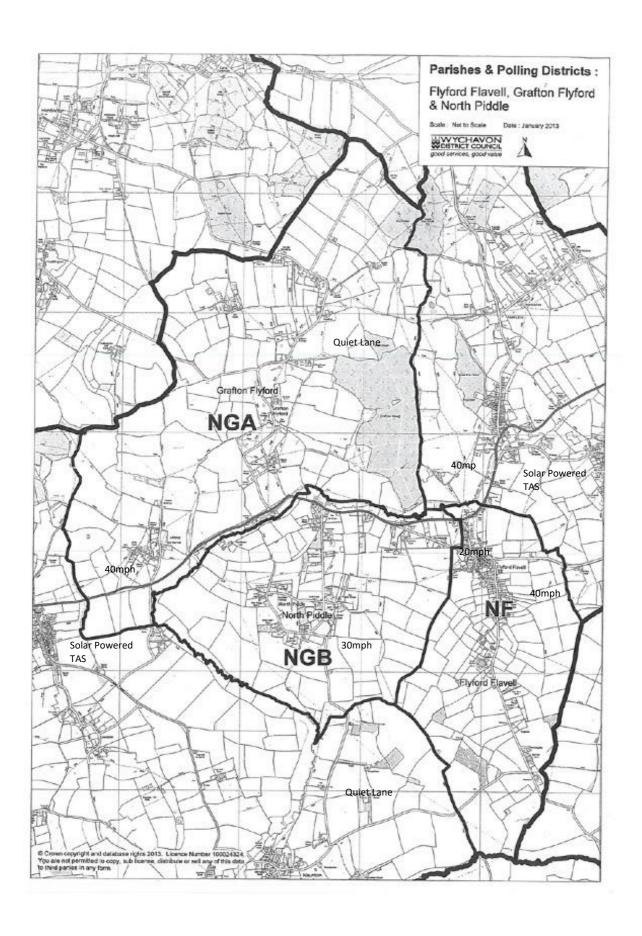
To Help the Environment



- Consider initiatives for sustainable transport systems for the parishes for the next 10 years. Such as the use of social media to encourage car sharing and the provision of an affordable taxi service. Encourage integration of individual home delivery services and support national initiatives to reduce the environmental impacts.
- Undertake a feasibility study to reduce the danger to wild animals and work with landowners to implement countermeasures.
- Provide charging points at our public buildings.
- Replace some of the name and direction signs with heritage signs.

It Takes a Lot To Make A Change! (Extract dated 17th August 1995)





Representation made to Highways concerning Safety On the A422

(These comments were submitted to the Worcestershire County Council Safety Review in October 2020)

- 1.2 The comments here relate predominantly to the length of road through the parish starting near the Libbery crossroads to the west and the turning to Kington to the east. There is a section at the end that refers to specific issues outside the parish which are obvious concerns to residents who use the road regularly.
- 1.3 The parish council note that in its latest assessment, the Road Safety Foundation graded the A422 as one of the most dangerous in Worcestershire, although it reported that it had improved since its assessment in 1999. This seems to be in line with overall safety improvements in road travel due to better designed vehicles.

2.0 Traffic Volumes

- 2.1 Residents report that there has been a considerable increase in traffic volumes on the A422 in the last 20 years. This is probably in line with general increases in traffic but there may also be some specific reasons which have exacerbated traffic flow on the road such as:
 - Changes to the hospital arrangements mean that there are now three main treatment hubs in Worcestershire. One of these is in Worcester and another in Redditch. There is often a considerable amount of movement between the two. Although the obvious route is to use the M5 and A448 the shortest route is along the A422.
 - Housing development in Inkberrow and other villages along the route has increased the number of local residents who rely on the A422.
 - Publicity of A422 as a leisure drive, particularly for motorcyclists has made the road very popular, particularly at weekends.
 - There also seems to be an increase in heavy goods vehicles which may be using the road as a rat run between junction 15 on the M40 and junctions 6 and 7 of the M5.

3.0 Vehicles

- 3.1 Twenty years ago, the A422 seemed to be a rural road predominantly used by local traffic. It has always been busy but the type of vehicle seen on the road would be motor cars and small goods or agricultural vehicles. Traffic flows would be noticeably busier at peak flow times in the mornings and late afternoons but weekends and particularly Sundays would be quite quiet. It would be a road that one would include in your weekly jog or circular walk. Today it is a road for pedestrians to avoid.
- 3.2 Agricultural vehicles have grown considerably in size over the past twenty years and these are frequent users of the road. The trailers, sprayers and combine harvesters

that use the road daily are often wider than the carriage way and cause queues of traffic with the resultant frustration and risk taking trying to get round. It can also cause problems for oncoming traffic in the pinch points.

- 3.3 There seems to be an increase in heavy goods vehicles using the road. These vehicles are more commonly seen on dual carriageways but are presumably directed on to the A422 by satnay. Again, these vehicles can cause queuing and congestion problems.
- 3.4 The A422 has always been a popular motorcycle route but in recent months there has been an invasion of motorcyclists, particularly at weekends. Motorcycle enthusiast website give the road five stars for enjoyment and challenge of the road, citing the bends, maintenance of the road and lack of police presence as particular reasons for visiting it. This has led to a serious environmental issue for local residents all along the route in terms of speeding bikes and excessive noise.
- 3.5 Cycling has also increased enormously over the past ten years. The quieter lanes around the parishes are exceedingly popular touring routes but require the use of the A422 for access. This results in more accomplished cyclists riding two abreast or in pelotons to protect themselves but causes the obvious difficulties and frustrations for motorists.
- 3.6 The A422 is a popular route from Worcester to Alcester and then on to Stratford upon Avon. This attracts cyclists and the road needs to evolve to provide a safe cycle route that is entirely separate from the traffic. This would also provide a safe haven for the increase in pedestrian use that government and environmentalists wish to see.

4.0 Black Spots

- 4.1 From west to east all the turnings constitute some sort of blackspot as there is no lane for turning traffic. Libbery and North Piddle Lane are particularly poor junctions as they are on bends. When turning right out of North Piddle Lane you only have a 2 or 3 second sightline for the traffic coming from the left. Again, there is no turning lane for New Hill up to the Village of Flyford Flavell. The parish council successfully campaigned for some improvements to this junction about 10 years ago but it is still a very difficult sightline. Turning left off the A422 is now an improved manoeuvre but the angle of the A422 to the bottom of the hill is such that it requires a real stretch to see the oncoming traffic from the right. The turning at Old Hill is often complained about. Again, it is on a bend and there is no turning lane to help with the manoeuvre and the Flyford Arms car park entrance can also be a distraction to drivers at times.
- 4.2 Old Hill and North Piddle Lane in particular are steeply sloping towards the main road. Old Hill used to be on the WCC gritting route but has been taken off. Local residents who live near the North Piddle junction have taken it on themselves to salt the road in icy conditions but they are now in their 80s and can't cope with it much longer. There is a real danger that vehicles cannot stop in icy conditions and will slide into the oncoming traffic.

4.3 The bridge over the Piddle Brook is a particular pinch point and is the scene of many accidents. Four accidents this spring resulted in the partial collapse of the bridge and its subsequent rebuilding. The brickwork to the side walls tell the story. These are rebuilt probably every five years on average due to collision. A particularly nasty accident some years ago involving a minibus on the bridge resulted in multiple injuries and a large number of people being admitted to hospital although I do not think this will be recorded by WCC as there were no fatalities.

5.0 Cyclists

5.1 As previously mentioned, the number of cyclists in the parishes has increased enormously over the past few years and there is much encouragement to increase the number of people to adopt a more active lifestyle. Most of the cyclist are visitors to the area. Although there are obviously local leisure cyclists it is not really a viable option for commuting, except for the particularly hardy. Many cyclists may therefore be unfamiliar with the A422 and the volume of traffic it takes. It is nevertheless a popular route with well known stops at the Twisted Spoon in Upton Snodsbury and Auntea Rita's in Flyford Flavell. This all amounts to an increasing trend in the number of cyclists which is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. It is a particular concern that the A422 does not address the safety of cyclists and it is seen as a clear priority to provide the necessary engineering works to provide a safe and secure cycle lane.

6.0 Motorcyclists

- As it has been made clear, our perception is that the A422 has become a firm favourite for motorcycle enthusiasts but that some are abusing the road.
- 6.2 There are clearly some motorcyclists who ride extremely fast and others that excel in creating as much noise as possible. No one has any objections to the road being used by motorcyclists within the parameters of the speed limits and the noise restrictions that exist. However, both these considerations are completely flouted and there is no attempt by the authorities to prevent this. The parish council recently organised a petition which raised 160 names (from 220 houses) in the parish in objection to the unsafe and antisocial behaviour of some of these bikers. This was an unprecedented response to a campaign by our parish council and demonstrates the concern that is felt by the residents. This petition has been presented to the local MP who has taken action to alert the authorities to our concerns.
- 6.3 The road to a certain extent is a victim of its own success. There is no doubt that in the past twenty years the condition of the roads has improved and Worcester Highways have done an excellent job of improving road surfaces and generally ensuring that the road is in good condition. As a parish council clerk of over 20 years standing it was a common complaint at parish council meetings that there was a pothole here or a raised grating there. One of the first jobs after a parish council meeting would be to send off a catalogue of complaints to the Highway liaison officer.

Today that is very rare. A testimony to the efficiency of the Highways Department. The flip side is that motorcyclists now see the road as safe to drive quickly on and the bends on the A422 are particularly enticing. It is not uncommon to hear bikes tearing up the road at 4.00am. It takes about 2.5 minutes for the noise to move around the arc and out of earshot in which time the piercing sound of an over revved engine dominates the whole environment.

6.4 Although the parish council is campaigning for better enforcement of the regulations it may well require engineering works to remove some of the bends which are so attractive to bikers. The Coneybury bends in particular to the east of our parish have been the scene of many accidents. Two are known to have been fatal. These bends are dangerous in that they tighten into the curve but are no doubt a welcome challenge to some bikers.

7.0 Speed Limit

7.0 About 30 years ago the parish council successfully campaigned to reduce the speed limit on the stretch of A422 through the parish to 50mph. There is now a call to reduce this further to 40mph. The parish council would at this stage welcome a feasibility study to accomplish this. There are a number of residential accesses onto the A422 and also a number of businesses. These have increased since the introduction of the 50mph limit and because of the increase in traffic there is a heightened perception of danger for the residents living on the road.

8.0 Nature and Environment

8.1 Like all main rural roads, the A422 sees its share of roadkill. Pheasants, badgers, foxes, hedgehogs and domestic animals meet their demise on a regular basis. Deer are also a prevalent mammal in our area and can be a menace to drivers as they jump out without warning. It is clear that this is causing environmental damage as well as being the cause of accidents as drivers swerve to try and miss the animals. Wider verges and even more complex engineering solutions are needed to alleviate this situation and the parish council would be pleased to work with environment agencies to find suitable solutions to the issue.

9.0 Residents

9.1 Our stretch A422 is home to at least 28 residences and businesses who have direct access on to the road. For these people the increase in traffic has been a particular concern. Several mirrors have appeared in recent years to provide better sightlines for them pulling off their drives and others have had to resort to other tactics to keep themselves safe. In a recent maintenance programme, the double white line outside Grafton Mill was shortened. This has meant that traffic starts to overtake just before their auxiliary entrance which is used for their holiday let business. Although we have asked Highways to reinstate the double white line, we have been told that it is to regulations. The residents and parish council believe that it is an invitation for an

accident and consider that in this instance the regulations have caused a serious safety risk which should be alleviated.

10.0 Buses

- 10.1 The A422 is the route of the 150A service which runs between Worcester and Redditch. It stops at the Flyford Arms where there is a narrow apron of land for it to pull into. It will also stop on request elsewhere if the driver is in a good mood. However, there is no safe stop on the east bound side of the road. The parish council would be pleased to work with the appropriate authorities to provide a safe and suitable bus stop on both sides of the road.
- 10.2 It is also noted that the school buses do from time to time drop children off on the A422. In the past the parish council has negotiated with owners of the Flyford Arms to use their car park for pick up and drop off but we have no arrangements in place at the moment. Other drop off places are the bottom of North Piddle Lane and the other junctions on the A422.

11.0 Pedestrians

- 11.1 It is clear from conversations with residents that they now consider the A422 to be an unsafe road to walk along. The parish council employs a lengthsman who has a limited mandate to keep the footways clear but very often there are problems with overgrown hedges and other obstructions which make the narrow footways dangerous.
- 11.2 There is also a section of footway missing between Libbery and Grafton Mill which makes a trip to a destination either side unfeasible. The footway also switches from one side to another on several occasions. No doubt when the road was planned many years ago this was an acceptable thing. Today it creates real and unnecessary danger which people simply avoid.
- 11.3 As we have suggested above, for cyclists the parish council consider that if more active lifestyles are to be encouraged a secure footway needs to be created along the A422. This should be separated from the carriage and be as continuous as possible on one side of the road.

12.0 Outside The Parish

- 12.1 Our stretch of the road is by no means the only area of concern and indeed most of the fatal accidents that have occurred have been outside our borders. The Coneybury bends as previously mentioned are a real concern as is the bend approaching Inkberrow at the Radford turn.
- 12.2 There is a persistent problem with speeding traffic through Upton Snodsbury. The solution to this is clearly a speed activated traffic light. We understand that this soft

policing option has been widely used on the continent and is now being introduced into this country.

Partners

Agencies to partner with for this process are:

Rob Adams – County Councillor - rob.adams@wychavon.net
Linda Robinson – District Councillor - linda.robinson@talk21.com
WCC Highways Department
CPRE
Possible private consultancy
Other Parish Councils
Nigel Huddleston MP

References

NALC 'The Good Councillor's Guide To Transport Planning' Transport Planning Society CPRE 's Guide To Quiet Lanes

Funding & Resources

Precept
Neighbourhood Plan Grant
Worcestershire County Council

Grant making Trusts etc CPRE

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