



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S
LOCAL COMMITTEE (TANDRIDGE)**

PUBLIC QUESTION

14 DECEMBER 2012

On the subject of speeding vehicles on Felcourt Road, the FAST (Felcourt Against Speeding Traffic) group asks:

The FAST (Felcourt Against Speeding traffic) group with the support of both the Parish councils of Dormansland and Lingfield are concerned about the following on Felcourt Road:

- 4 serious (KSI) accidents in the last 3 years
- 21 slight injury accidents in 2km in the last 3 years
- Numerous minor accidents, including damage to vehicles, which have not been recorded in the Surrey accident data
- Anti-social driving; including tailgating, obscene gestures, horn blowing and other forms of road rage directed at drivers keeping to the limit and/or turning
- 78% drivers recorded above the speed limit in 1 week
- 8,000 cars in 1 day in June 2012

Felcourt Road is an unclassified road passing through a small rural and agricultural community and suffers from the following due to the road being a faster alternative to the A22 which has 30mph speed limit and operational speed camera:

- High percentages of drivers exceeding the speed limit
- The 50 mph limit at the northern end of Felcourt Road encourages drivers to maintain inappropriate speeds
- Danger to local traffic turning onto or off the road from vehicles overtaking

- The ever increasing amount of traffic generated by development in the wider area

The Dormansland Speedwatch Volunteers, who have been very active in the area, Police Speed Data and the accidents statistics (Surrey Safety Engineering Team) have provided evidence of the volume of traffic flouting the speed limits and there is now the view that the speed limits need to be reviewed, including for the roads leading into Felcourt Road. Police speed trap activity along with the Speedwatch volunteers has only a temporary effect on the drivers exceeding the limits and a permanent and enforceable speed reduction strategy is sought throughout Felcourt. Measures are also required to protect residents who sustain damage to their vehicles, which is not recorded with the police, when entering or exiting their properties or the side roads; the greatest risk coming from vehicles attempting to overtake, especially from those attempting to pass more than one car.

The following suggestions could be considered as calming measures for Felcourt Road:

1. Speed cameras at 2 locations or 1 with other appropriate calming measures to restrict speeding beyond the camera location
2. The addition of central double white lines to prohibit overtaking
3. The reduction of the speed limit to 30 mph
4. Entrance gates to Felcourt hamlet and cattle crossing signs either side of Felcourt Lane (for Felcourt Farm)
5. Roundabout at junction with Blackberry Road

Is Surrey County Council, in collaboration with the Police able to put in place practical and enforceable measures to prevent vehicles travelling at excessive speeds on Felcourt Road?

Local Committee response:

A location plan is attached at the end of this response. It is the view of officers and the Police that the length of Felcourt Road where there is the greatest potential for drivers to speed is the straight section between The Grange and the start of the 40mph limit north of Felcourt Lane. This is also the section where there are side road and private vehicle accesses onto Felcourt Road and associated turning movements. Vehicle Activated Signs which display the speed limit and the message Slow Down have been installed at either end of this section of Felcourt Road. The sign to the north is not working at the current time and is due to be assessed in the New Year to determine the nature of the fault. The repair will be carried out this financial year, subject to it being economic to carry out.

The Police carried out a speed survey between 31 May and 6 June 2012. Mean speeds were recorded as 43mph northbound and 46mph southbound. This is the measure used when assessing speed limits. However, the survey also recorded 77.3% of all vehicles over the 7 day period exceeding the 40mph speed limit. Of

these, 60.9% are recorded as travelling at between 41 and 50 mph and 14.5% at 51 to 60 mph.

A 3 year period is used when looking at the collision history of a road. A summary is given below for the period 2009 to 2011. Speed was recorded as a contributory factor in the one serious collision in the 50mph section of Felcourt Road.

Road	Speed Limit	Fatal	Serious	Slight
Felcourt Road (East Grinstead Road to speed limit change north of Felcourt Lane)	50mph	0	1	0
Felcourt Road (speed limit change north of Felcourt Road to The Grange)	40mph	0	1	6
Felcourt Road (The Grange to Lingfield Road)	40mph	0	2	0
Lingfield Road (Felcourt Road to County boundary)	40/30 mph	0	0	1
Total		0	4	7

Provisional records for 2012 (up to September) show one additional collision at the entrance to Chartham Park Golf Course which resulted in serious injury to a motor cyclist.

The collision data for East Grinstead Road has not been included in this analysis as drainage works have been carried out to resolve the high incident of single vehicle loss of control collisions on this road.

Felcourt Road together with East Grinstead Road to the north and Lingfield Road to the south are included on the Tandridge Speed Management Plan. Speed management plans have been compiled for every District and Borough to identify with Police colleagues the sites that need the most enforcement attention to reduce speeds and what can be done to tackle the high priority sites. The Police currently carry out speed checks, including joint operations with West Sussex Police and there is also a Community Speed Watch that operates in Felcourt Road.

The petitioners concerns were raised at the Road Safety Working Group in November 2012. This group consists of road safety experts from both Surrey Police and the County Council as well as engineers from Surrey Highways. As a result, a site meeting was held on 27 November attended by the Police and officers from both the road safety team and the South East Area team.

There is no dispute that traffic speeds are of concern in Felcourt Road. However, it was agreed by all present at the site meeting that there is no straightforward engineering solution to the problem. It was agreed that Officers would audit the existing speed limit signing to ensure sufficient repeater signs are in place and to upgrade the existing signing by placing the signs on yellow backing boards, subject to the allocation of funding. The Police also agreed that they would carry out further enforcement in Felcourt Road.

The petition puts forward a number of suggestions to slow traffic and a response is provided below to each of these proposals.

1. Speed camera

It is not possible to introduce permanent fixed cameras on all roads where there is speeding. They are reserved for the very worst collision hotspots where there has been a serious history of collisions. The collision data shows that there have been a number of collisions in Felcourt Road but only 1 of these had speed recorded as a contributory factor. Consequently the council would not install a permanent fixed camera on this road.

The Police currently carry out roadside enforcement on Felcourt Road using either a hand held laser or a tripod mounted unit. They have also considered the use of a mobile unit which is operated by an officer from within a van parked at the roadside. However, it has not been possible to identify a suitable location to safely site the van in Felcourt Road. The Police have been asked to consider if there is a location where a hardstanding could be provided to allow a van to park, but this requires sufficient verge width and safety margins.

2. Double White Line System

The Department of Transport set out strict criteria for the introduction of double white line systems, based on forward visibility. Contravention of the markings is an endorsable offence, enforced by the Police. The straight section of Felcourt Road where speeding is a particular issue would not meet the criteria for a double white line system and the Police advised at the site meeting that they would not support their introduction.

3. Speed Limit Reduction to 30mph

Experience has shown that lowering a speed limit on its own will not guarantee that average speed will be reduced. If a speed limit is set much lower than the existing traffic speeds then some motorists may ignore the limit unless the character of the road or environment indicate otherwise. Surrey's speed limit policy therefore recommends that a speed limit should only be reduced on its own where existing speeds are close to the proposed new limit.

The acknowledged problem with speeding in Felcourt Road means that a reduction in the speed limit to 30mph alone would not comply with Surrey's speed limit policy. Any speed limit reduction would need to be accompanied by the introduction of speed reducing features.

4. Signing

Gateways can be provided at changes to speed limits and could be considered both terminal points of the 40mph speed limit. This would be subject to there being sufficient highway land available on which to site the gateways. Officers could also consider the provision of cattle crossing signs either side of Felcourt Lane.

5. Roundabout at the junction with Blackberry Road

For roundabouts to operate successfully, balanced flows are required across all arms. Otherwise if side road flows are too low, then the main road will effectively operate under free flow conditions. Traffic counts would be required to determine if this condition is met at the junction of Felcourt Road and Blackberry Road.

Mini-roundabouts are not suitable at junctions where vehicles approach the junction at high speed. The Department of Transport advises that mini-roundabouts should only be used on roads with a speed limit of 30mph or less. Therefore a mini-roundabout at the Felcourt Road/Blackberry Road is not feasible under existing conditions. An initial assessment of the Felcourt Road/Blackberry Road junction suggests that there is insufficient land within the existing highway boundary to provide a small, kerbed roundabout.

It is proposed that the petitioners' request for a speed limit reduction, which would require accompanying measures to slow vehicles, is added to the Integrated Transport Scheme (ITS) list of potential future schemes. Schemes on the list are assessed and prioritised against set criteria (Congestion, Accessibility, Safety, Environment and Maintenance) in accordance with the County's Local Transport Plan. Officers are currently working with Members to develop a two-year forward ITS programme which will be presented to Local Committee for approval in March 2013.

In the meantime Officers will investigate improving the existing speed limit signing, the provision of gateways and the erection of cattle warning signs, the implementation of which would be subject to the allocation of funding.

