



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 24 MARCH 2021
SUBJECT: WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS
DIVISION: WOKING

Question 1: Linda Murray, resident of Vale Farm Road

What do Councillors plan to implement to resolve the traffic issues with the drive through McDonald's at 80 Goldsworth Rd in Woking GU21 6NX? There are several issues of concern:

1. The traffic is often backed up from the roundabout on Goldsworth Rd/Vale Farm Rd to Barn Bridge in one direction and as far as the Coign church on Goldsworth Rd in the other direction.
2. The cars are idling while they queue releasing noxious exhaust fumes into the air, polluting our local environment and this will result in long term health issues for residents.
3. To avoid the traffic jams, cars are turning down Oaks Rd and travelling at speed in the wrong direction along Vale Farm Rd. which is one way from Oaks Rd and narrow with poor visibility on some sections. It is only a matter of time until there is an accident. I regularly observe cars traveling the wrong way along Vale Farm Rd outside my house, and recently narrowly avoided a collision with a car doing exactly that.

I look forward to hearing what Councillors plan to implement to resolve these issues.

Answer

As the response to the petition about this issue states, no traffic management measures could be identified during the meetings that were held prior to the McDonald's Drive-thru reopening last year. Although we will hold another such meeting, it is unlikely that any solution will be identified.

ITEM 5

Routing traffic along Poole Road, as the petition response mentions, comes with its own problems and the lengths of queue that Ms Murray refers to suggests that traffic would still back up on to Goldsworth Road.

Unfortunately, we cannot compel drivers to turn their engines off when they are in stationary traffic.

The issue of traffic driving against the one-way in Vale Farm Road has not been reported before and having discussed this with one of our points of contact at Surrey Police, he could find no previous report of it. He will, however, aim to visit the site during a period of queuing to witness the situation and take any necessary enforcement action against any offending drivers.

Q2 Phil Stubbs, Knaphill resident

BROOKWOOD COUNTRY PARK

Who is responsible for the section of the park that lies between Brookwood Farm housing and the Basingstoke Canal? Woking Borough Council or Cala Homes?

I ask this question because of the state of the hard surface footpath and the waterways that cross the land. The hard surface footpath is a disgrace and frequently flooded. Two years ago I was informed by a senior WBC manager that the footpath, constructed by Cala Homes, was below standard but it appears no action has been taken to improve the footpath.

The waterways that crisscross the park are full of silt and vegetation. This does not help in the flow of water off the land and contrary to the Council's own guidelines on the maintenance of waterways and ditches.

Answer

“The open land between the Basingstoke Canal and Brookwood Farm housing is still the responsibility of CALA homes as it has not yet been officially transferred to Woking Borough Council. There are still some outstanding planning related issues that need resolving before the official hand over can occur and Woking Borough council officers are working with CALA Homes to get these resolved.

The footpath mentioned is one of the issues that has been raised with CALA especially the lack of surface water drainage, plans have been submitted which involve the creation of swales adjacent to the footpath and will also include re-profiling of the footpath to allow it to drain to these swales, however where the footpath crosses the floodplain of the Cowshot Stream it will still be subject to occasional flooding.

Although the land is still the responsibility of CALA homes, Woking Borough council has carried out vegetation clearance work to the watercourses to allow them to be surveyed and further vegetation clearance is planned this month

which will involve removal of any blockages within the waterway. This will continue annually as with all other council maintained watercourses within the Borough”.

Q3 – Adam Kirby, local resident

Will the Woking Joint Committee urgently install better lighting for the darkest parts of our local paths?

This would be a start towards making everyone, and women in particular, feel safer and more confident walking after dark. I have spoken to dozens of local people to identify a starter list of darkness "crunch points" in Horsell. We have a number of local paths that start off partly lit and then for short distances (often where lighting is prioritised only for road vehicles) pedestrians face dark and often intimidating dark "gaps".

This is a starter list of locations I have heard repeated several times each locally and which due to their relative shortness could be easily improved with a few light fittings.

Urgent "dark spots" in Horsell (but totalling just 150 metres length unlit)

- 1) Path between Horsell Moor and the Basingstoke Canal near WWF (approx 20 metres length unlit)
- 2) Path connecting Well Path to Merrivale Gardens (approx 20 metres unlit)
- 3) Path alongside Bullbeggars Lane running between a section with tall trees on both sides (approx 20 metres length unlit)
- 4) Path connecting Bridge Close and Arthur's Bridge Road (approx 30 metres unlit)
- 5) Grobars Avenue to South Road (approx 30 metres unlit)
- 6) Well Path to Holyoake Crescent (approx 30 metres unlit)

Further areas to consider for better lighting:

- * Path network connecting Pares Close, Horsell Vale, Wilson Way and Ridgeway
- * Remaining path network between Cheapside, Momrton Road and Grobars Avenue
- * Side road sections connecting Horsell Moor and Brewery Road

Here are a selection of anonymised direct quotes from local people I've received in Horsell just in the last 24 hours:

- "There are a number of areas in our immediate area which are particularly dark and have never really felt safe to me"
- "It makes for a very anxious walk home"
- "After the tall hedge starts... I always quicken my step when it's dark... even if it's only 5/6pm in winter."
- "I've always thought the path... is very dark and creepy. So if that was lit, it would be a great result."

ITEM 5

- "I have always found it stressful to walk in these areas at night, especially knowing people have been attacked yet they remain poorly lit and unsafe."
- "We have just accepted this constant state of anxiety as part of our everyday lives for a long time... just a small addition of better lighting would definitely alleviate some of that anxiety."

Wildlife, neighbours, cost and light pollution considerations can all be managed with lower height fittings and/or motion sensitive lights in places.

People locally do feel that pedestrian safety should be better prioritised.

AND

Q4 – Kate Wright, Horsell resident

I wanted to request council support/ funding for putting in some lighting on both sides of Bullbeggars Lane near the Sythwood junction.

Both sides of the pavement are very dark for long stretches with no lighting on either side (when it is dark in the evenings). When you are walking along either side this feels dangerous and unsafe. Anyone could be waiting there and you wouldn't know and no one would be able to see if anything happened to you or if you needed help. They are also enclosed, with high hedges on one side and trees/hedges on the other side.

It can be very scary to walk through on your own at night or just when it's dark in the winter and not even late. If I have to walk that way I run through as fast as I can! Several other local residents have commented that they are scared of walking through that way on either side of the road because of the lack of lighting and enclosed nature. One mum told me she was walked on the road to avoid it which I have also considered, but clearly not a great option either as also dangerous. This demonstrates how vulnerable people feel walking through there and particularly women.

Are Surrey CC able to support putting lighting in place on both stretches of that pavement and also consider cutting down the hedging on one side so it is more open? myself and other local residents would be very grateful for the support.

Answer to Q3 and Q4 from Michael Dawson, Customer Service & Information Manager, Local Highway Service

Thank you for raising your concerns. Surrey County Council takes safety and crime prevention very seriously. We always want to listen to residents and work together to provide the safest environment possible. While a blanket approach to every area and community across Surrey would not be appropriate in terms of street lighting, we work closely with the police to consider any necessary

changes to deal with crime. If there are concerns over crime or safety these should be raised with Surrey Police.

Where streetlights are present they are only switched off between 1am and 5am and those on main roads and in town centres remain on all night. Lights on high pedestrian routes and around train stations remain on for an hour after the last train which may be later than 1am.

In certain circumstances it is possible for third parties; councillors, parish councils, etc. to fund additional lights, or for committees to allocate funding. If Members wish to promote any of these schemes over and above existing priorities, these can be considered for future inclusions, subject to feasibility, crime levels and other priorities

Answer to Q3 and Q4 from Camilla Edmiston, Woking Community Safety Team

The different organisations within the Safer Woking Partnership work closely together to address any areas or issues that are highlighted to us where there is a concern of crime or antisocial behaviour. We use a problem solving approach and effective partnership working through the Joint Action Group (JAG) that addresses problem locations or series crime. When a location is identified and nominated to the JAG, the multi agency group considers what can be done to address the problems and identifies the agencies to do this. For example, this can include reviewing hedge height, cutting back vegetation or improving lighting where applicable and then working with the relevant department or organisation to achieve an outcome.

We would encourage all residents to contact Police if an incident occurs or Woking Borough Council regarding antisocial behaviour in order to identify any emerging trends at the earliest opportunity.

Q5 – Marian Malcher, local resident

"Will Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill?"

A proposed Council motion is here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gqbQzig0ljFfM-LGlcQ_LxUcQ87hRgBeSUV8oWupjPk/edit

More information may be found here: <https://www.ceebill.uk/bill>

Answer from Nicole Clucas, Climate Change Programme Manager at SCC and Woking Borough Council

Thank you for your question regarding the Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) bill.

ITEM 5

The Government is due to publish a comprehensive Net Zero Carbon strategy in the lead up to COP 26. I believe this will encompass several of the elements outlined in the CEE bill including ensuring the UK's carbon footprint is more fully accounted for and protecting biodiversity and natural capital. Our collective response will be dependent upon what is included in this strategy and so we are not in a position to support this bill at present.

The ethos of the CEE Bill is demonstrated locally through the activities shown in the [Woking 2050 strategy](#), [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#), and [Planet Woking](#) initiative, and through [Surrey's Climate Change Strategy](#). Coupled with our respective climate and ecological emergency declarations and the many accelerated actions we are delivering towards the goal of carbon neutrality, supported by the continued political will and strategic frameworks of both councils, our local MP and others need no further encouragement to support the Bill.

Both Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council are fully committed to delivering our respective strategies and officers are currently working on a number of programmes including those covered by the CEE Bill. This includes the development of a Land Use Management Framework. The Framework will inform decisions about how we use land to ensure the environmental values of the land (be they carbon sequestration or biodiversity and the secondary benefits – such as public health, local economy) are understood. It includes work to value Surrey's natural capital as a whole and identify priority sites for investment to improve biodiversity and enhance natural habitats. We are also committed to planting more trees and woodlands in the county and are providing free trees and hedgerows at all Surrey Schools, free trees for urban areas and along the highways and new woodland sites on SCC land.

We will continue to work in partnership on climate change and other environment issues and we are committed to delivering approaches that build economies of scale and support the delivery of our ambitious carbon reduction targets.

We trust this provides you with a sufficient overview of our work to date and how it aligns with the proposed bill.