

Harden Village Council traffic report – emerging findings and feedback

June 2020

This document summarises key findings and emerging conclusions from Harden Village Council's commissioned traffic report, following discussions between councillors, feedback for Met Consultancy, and suggested next steps to discuss with Bradford MDC.

1. Traffic speeds and road danger:

- In all locations except in the St Ives estate, the average speeds are around 30-40mph
- On two main roads into the village (Harden Rd & Wilsden Rd), the average is 40mph, with the vast majority of drivers (85th percentile) doing 20-30% over the posted speed limit.
- Speed at entry and exit on Long Lane is a concern
- Even on Narrow Lane, a small residential side road, the average speed is nearly 30mph
- There are particular safety concerns and crash histories on Keighley Rd; on Twines/Harden Rd near main St Ives entrance (Blind Lane); and on Goit Stock Bridge

The report aligns with residents' views, expressed through neighbourhood plan consultation, and through numerous approaches to the Village Council, of traffic speeds being threatening and frightening for people on foot and bike. Average speeds on village roads with houses, shops, pubs and significant numbers of pedestrians and cyclists, are 50-100% higher than what World Health Organisation recommends is the suitable speed limit (20mph) for places where people live, work, walk and cycle.

***Emerging conclusions:** The report makes a strong case, both for measures to reinforce and enforce speed limits, especially at village entry and exit points, alongside a 20mph limit throughout the village, a lower lead-in speed limit on Keighley Road, plus specific measures to improve protection for pedestrians and cyclists (below). This tallies with national government guidance on setting local speed limits and Bradford's aims to improve safety and promote active travel.*

2. Traffic volume:

- Harden Road, and the village centre junction, are at full capacity at peak times, and traffic is forecast to grow by a further 15% over the coming decade
- About half of traffic recorded is through traffic, half has a local origin or destination
- There are high levels of large goods vehicles for a residential area – over one in 20 vehicles
- Traffic volumes are surprisingly high in St Ives (550 vehicles a day)

This means the village is subject to the resultant air pollution, noise, disruption and congestion, and there are queues at the centre of the village and towards Bingley at peak times, holding up those travelling by bus and car, making cycling and walking more unpleasant, and restricting access to our nearest major conurbations, with its services and onward transport connections.

***Emerging conclusions:** This provides strong evidence of the need to improve alternatives to driving (especially single occupancy car use), including a walking and cycling path to Bingley and bus timetabling improvements, plus other local developments that reduce the need to travel at all or by car. It reinforces the need to work with neighbouring villages, as well as engaging residents, businesses and BMDC. It also suggests a need to guard against rat-running and suggests some options for restricting through-traffic.*

3. Opportunities to improve walkability and safety

- **The report recommends 20mph limits in various locations – a measure evidenced to improve safety and confidence for people walking and cycling**
- It also proposes a footway on Goit Stock Bridge, improved signage and markings in several locations, and re-engineering the central junction to create a more people-friendly focal point for the village

Given the importance of green spaces and outdoor recreation to the village, and the opportunity to reduce congestion and pollution, and promote more active lifestyles, by encouraging more people to walk and cycle, wide-ranging benefits could be achieved by making the village more walkable and cyclable.

***Emerging conclusions:** The report supports local interest and enthusiasm for developing Harden's walking and cycling facilities, including a 20mph speed limit, plus a number of (some relatively low-cost) improvements that should significantly enhance the safety and appeal of getting around on foot and bike.*

Specific measures that the report provides supportive evidence towards:

- i. 20mph limit throughout Harden and accompanying signage and markings
- ii. Walking and cycling path connecting Harden with Bingley and St Ives
- iii. Improved village gateways and lead-in speed limit on Keighley Road, and lower 30mph limits on connecting roads with Cullingworth and Bingley
- iv. Place-based junction re-engineering in the village centre
- v. A footway over Goit Stock Bridge
- vi. Replacing the ineffectual speed activated sign on Harden Road with a speed camera
- vii. Police enforcement of speed limits, and other reinforcement measures such as community speed watch and awareness campaigns
- viii. Call on bus operators and WYCA to improve bus timetabling
- ix. Work with Wilsden and Cullingworth to coordinate activities and show a multi-village approach to tackling speeding and promoting walking, cycling and public transport
- x. Local engagement and communications to involve residents and visitors in improvements, e.g. survey of St Ives users, promotion of climate emergency declaration