

Silsoe Pc traffic management report.

I am the Silsoe Parish Councillor responsible for traffic management within the village. The Parish Council are acutely aware of the current and apparently worsening situation within the village. This is caused by increased development, Clophill roundabout works and increased traffic to Wrest Park.

As a Council we have attempted to keep everyone up to date with what we are doing, particularly with regards to mitigation during the roundabout works both in Facebook and in the Silsoe News. Understandably there have been some posts recently about traffic issues and several parishioners have written to our Ward Councillors, CBC and Wrest Park to raise concerns.

As far back as early 2023 I have been engaging with CBC highways officers, who have continually promised action and not delivered. We met once a month with CBC and the contractor of the Clophill roundabout to discuss mitigation issues. Unfortunately, CBC, have extremely limited budgets and change staff regularly which makes it very difficult to make progress and this is as frustrating for the Parish Council as it is for you.

In February I and our Ward Councillors, Cllr French and Cllr Childs, met with Wrest Park to discuss traffic issue, particularly, in relation to the Christmas event and how these issues can not be allowed to be repeated next year.

There is a hope things will improve when the Clophill works finish at the end of March but we need to wait and see.

In late February we met with a representative of the Traffic Management department at CBC and walked him round the village showing the key issues, such as speeding on Amtphill Road and the High Street and problems children have crossing the roads to reach the buses. He has some ideas and will be putting in traffic monitoring in the next financial year. However any improvements from CBC will not come until 2025 or 2026 due to budget.

In my opinion, this is not acceptable, and we will continue to put pressure on CBC and provide evidence of speeding and traffic numbers, be it from our own monitoring and Speedwatch. However, I am starting to believe that our only chance of something happening quicker is by resident action. The first resident focus group traffic will take place on the 17th April to discuss ways forward. We would, of course, be very happy to have more people involved.

There was a 5 day road closure in February that caused unacceptable issues around the Vicarage Road/Fir Tree/Holly Walk and Church Road rat run. I, and the ward councillors were in constant and heated contact with CBC (Central Beds Council) regarding the lack of planning signage and diversion. Eventually the signage was removed but of course the horse had bolted and this shortcut became the accepted route. In my mind, and this was made clear to CBC, this epitomises the lack of care CBC have for Silsoe residents safety.

In March I met again with English Heritage and they are starting to work with us, supplying traffic management plans for major events and keeping residents updated with articles on Silsoe News.

We are working hard, and will continue to do so, but we are up against CBC who are budget constrained and being asked by all villages to help them.