

Response from local Resident to KCC

Thank you for your response, it is much appreciated.

I realise that the Highways have bigger issues, with roads that have serious accidents recorded frequently, but it really is very frustrating that the onus is put back on the residents to prove that there is a problem.

I am afraid that your response still doesn't explain why Burham (the next village to Eccles) has 20mph signs up but Eccles doesn't, despite HGVs coming through our village every few minutes. It's also along a lane which has a park and school either side and for years we have been trying to find a way to reduce the speed of vehicles, but especially over the last couple of years due to more and more HGVs passing through Eccles each day. Sometimes they are travelling so fast that you can't even take a number plate down.

I did send my initial email to Aylesford PC, as you have suggested, and I have copied them into this email also, in the hope they can shed some light on this matter and advise why Burham have 20mph signs but Eccles do not.

I know that Aylesford PC have also spent their time over the years to try and make Bull Lane a safer lane for its village residents, but seem to have the same problem with no-one from the Council wishing to help them either.

Unfortunately I do not have the time to record vehicles or phone the police every time I see a speeding vehicle. I realise there are procedures you are following and it's not your fault personally, but I do find this all very frustrating, patronising and quite frankly a waste of time, as again nothing will be done by the Council about the problem.

Why would we all spend time out of our busy days to report concerns if they were not true?

The main problem with anyone doing a speed survey is that when the drivers see a high vis vest, they of course slow down, so how do villagers gain their evidence?

I will await APC response in the hope they can help with this matter.

Original E Mail from KCC

Thank you for your enquiry regarding your concerns of speeding heavy goods vehicles on Bull Lane.

I have read your email in detail and I can sympathise with your concerns of speeding vehicles through the village as a result I have inspected and analysed the road remotely. I can imagine after reading your email that my response will not bode well, our decisions are based on priority, there for as you read through you will find there are other options to explore.

As you can no doubt appreciate we receive many requests for the implementation of improvement and safety measures on the highway and, as such, all requests are reviewed and prioritised. We use an evidence-based approach to prioritise investment in Casualty Reduction Schemes as we seek to ascertain if there is any pattern of personal injury crash records for the past three years that could be addressed by engineering methods.

In this location there is no such pattern; it is therefore very difficult to prioritise this site against a number of areas across the County, where a pattern of incidents is occurring and our engineering intervention could help reduce crashes. Therefore, at this stage we have no programmed works at this location, although we will of course continue to monitor the site and should viable engineering solutions be identified that would reduce the number and the severity of crashes then we will seek to implement them.

Enforcement is the responsibility of Kent Police therefore concerns over speeding should be directed to them, they can be contacted on their non-emergency telephone number 101.

However there is a scheme which may assist you in reducing speeding. Speedwatch is a police initiative which is education centred to support concerned citizens to improve road safety and the quality of life within their local communities.

Operating at carefully selected sites on roads in 20-, 30- and 40-miles per hour (mph) speed limits, a group typically of three CSW practitioners monitors the speed of passing vehicles using a portable speed indication device.

Details of vehicles travelling at or above nationally-specified thresholds (25-, 35- and 46-mph) are recorded and reported. The registered keepers of vehicles observed repeatedly or 'high-end' speeding anywhere in Kent in the previous 12 months are then sent advisory letters by Kent Police.

In order to access this scheme, communities will need to identify a number of volunteers to carry out Speedwatch. You will need to gain access to Speedwatch equipment which includes a speed gun and interactive signs. Speedwatch equipment typically costs in the region of £2,500 however it is common for groups adjacent to other active Speedwatch groups to share equipment on an agreed rota.

You need to contact Kent Police to discuss where you would like to operate Speedwatch in your community; they will be able to run through the site risk assessment process and training for operators.

There is more information available on: www.kent.police.uk/speedwatch

The other alternative is to contact your local parish council (<http://www.aylesfordparishcouncil.org.uk/>) to see if they are able to support your request, they can then add it to their Highway Improvement Plan. It may already be on their agenda. The other option would be to contact your local County Member (peter.homewood@kent.gov.uk) who also holds a budget for highway improvements

I would like to reassure you that Kent County Council takes road safety very seriously and reducing the number of people injured on our roads is one our top priorities. Full details of the work we do to prevent and reduce road crashes can be found in our Casualty Reduction Strategy for Kent which can be viewed at:

www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/14520/Road-Casualty-Reduction-Strategy-for-Kent.pdf