

Sleepers Hill Association

Newsletter No. 4 – January 1998

Looking through the records I see that the last Newsletter was in December 1994 - they are obviously not a regular feature but only appear when there is extra information to impart.

A few items that came up at the AGM (Minutes attached) have been acted upon, here is the situation to date.

Verge outside St Marys

Your Committee have decided to go ahead with the new kerb and verge which should be a vast improvement for pedestrians and other road users alike. The work will start during the first half of February but an exact date cannot be given. There will be some excavation of the road surface on the right going downhill, starting above the access to Hollycot and finishing at the access to St Marys. The contractors hope to complete the works without the use of traffic lights, but this may not be possible. Please be warned that if there is no traffic control, the width of the road will be restricted for two way traffic during the construction period.

Financial help from City/County

Once again I have written to Winchester City and Hampshire C.C. requesting help with the funding of works on Sleepers Hill. I have pointed out that there has been a vast increase in the volume of traffic etc etc , but I think you can guess the reply. It would appear that private roads do not appear on the list of priorities for Council spending.

It has been suggested that we may be able to reclaim VAT on expenditure. I am in consultation with the Customs & Excise but the wheels grind extremely slowly and I am not holding my breath.

Traffic Calming

The Committee have taken another look at the problems and have engaged our Consultant Engineer, Ron Hewitt, to walk the Hill with Steve Harte, Christopher Croft and me to point out the various possibilities (and pitfalls).

Steve Harte has produced a small paper on the subject which I attach. It has been suggested that the Committee were a little negative in their approach, but the problems of traffic calming on a steep narrow hill are legion. It has been generally agreed by Committee Members over the years that speed humps are too dangerous and costly to contemplate for Sleepers Hill. I attach an article from the Sunday Times which you may have already seen, which points out a number of other problems.

The best solution would appear to be a number of width restrictions, which also have to be thought about carefully. We have identified a number of verges which could, in theory, be extended into the road and consultation with the frontagers on either side of those verges is in hand. There appears to be two options for width restriction:

i) Road width reduced to 4.1 metres:

This would allow the passage of two standard sized cars to pass with care and is effective in reducing speeds. The associated problems are; difficulty in entering/exiting driveways, problems with guest parking in the road outside a house where there is a width restriction and larger vehicles mounting the soft verges on either side.

ii) Road width reduced to 3.5 metres:

This is similar to the measures adopted in Airlie Road and St James Lane. It is even more effective, but in addition to the above there are the problems of traffic increasing speed to enter the chicane before another opposing vehicle can, and queuing of vehicles at either end of the restriction at busy times.

As you can see, there is a great deal to think about, but we are continuing our efforts to arrive at a solution which will have the desired effect and will not inconvenience residents too much.

As an aside, the cheapest and most effective solution is to park cars at strategic points on either side of the Hill. I am not advocating this course of action but it is worth thinking about.

Finally, the Committee will be discussing traffic calming at their next meeting but if you have any ideas of your own, please do not hesitate to call Christopher or me and we will raise them at the meeting on your behalf.

Regards

Steve Osborne
Hon. Secretary