

Notes of the Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward Partnership (BWWP) Public Engagement Session held in Walditch Village Hall on Tuesday 17th September 2024 at 5.30pm

Present: Cllr Bridget Bolwell - *Bridport Town Councillor, Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward*
Cllr Anne Rickard - *Bridport Town Councillor, Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward*
Cllr Dave Howell - *Bridport Town Councillor, Dorset Council Councillor and resident*
Jo Hughes - *Ward Clerk*

13 members of public

Apologies: Cllr Andy Holdridge - *Bridport Town Councillor, Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward*

Cllr B Howell welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward Partnership and confirmed that the meetings would alternate between both villages in the village halls and between daytime and evening meetings.

20mph for Bothenhampton and Walditch

- Cllr B Howell opened discussions on 20mph by advising that Cllr D Howell was in attendance not only as a Bothenhampton resident supporting 20mph but also in his role as a town and county Councillor with knowledge and understanding of Dorset Council's 20mph Policy.
- Cllr B Howell commented that vehicle speeds are getting worse and pose a real danger for pedestrians particularly due to the lack of pavements along the roads in both villages. It was noted however, that the process for 20mph is complex. Dorset Council have a 20mph Policy which provides a guide to the principles, criteria and process that the Council uses to consider whether to introduce 20mph. Cllr B Howell advised any residents interested in receiving a copy of the policy to contact the Clerk or to look on the Dorset Council website.
- Cllr D Howell advised that one of the key criteria for 20mph is significant community support and he therefore advised residents to sign the petition/questionnaire that the Clerk had circulated amongst residents at the start of the meeting. It was suggested that an online system could also be set up to capture details of community support to include local groups i.e. Brownies, Guides, church and village hall groups and parents - Clerk to investigate. A resident also offered to assist with circulating copies of the petition/questionnaire through the letterboxes of neighbours - Clerk to liaise with resident.

UPDATE: The 20mph questionnaire/survey was circulated to all households in Bothenhampton and Walditch via the October edition of the Bridge magazine and was also posted on the B&W Ward Facebook page and B&W Ward page on the Bridport Town Council website. Closing date for residents to complete and return surveys 31st October. The survey results will be analysed in November.

- Cllr D Howell advised that Dorset Council use a Priority Criteria Matrix to prioritise schemes for 20mph based on several criteria - copies of the matrix were circulated to members of the public.
- Cllr D Howell commented that although separate and the responsibility of National Highways, the A35 Sea Road South would benefit a 20mph application for Bothenhampton & Walditch if the speed along this section of the A35 was dropped from the current 40mph to 30mph as it is difficult to go from a 40mph speed limit down to a 20mph limit. Cllr D Howell advised that plans for the A35 Sea Road South are in progress which include proposals to drop the speed limit to 30mph and put in a pedestrian crossing from Pasture Way to Asker Meadows.
- Cllr D Howell advised that part of the evidence towards a 20mph application for Bothenhampton & Walditch may involve Dorset Council carrying out speed watch sessions to capture traffic speeds and volumes of traffic in both villages.

Cllr D Howell left the meeting at 6.00pm.

Trees in Waldtich

- A resident raised concerns over the state of the trees on the parkland and avenue in Waldtich which are in the Conservation Area with many having TPOs (Tree Preservation Orders). A Veteran Beech tree suffered considerable damage to a major branch in August and there is concern that the landowner will not undertake the necessary tree works to save the tree and make it safe. Another resident raised concerns over the current dangerous state of the Beech tree which is located very close to the roadside, and it was commented that the avenue hedges are very overgrown and the trees dangerous making residents feel unsafe when they use the road. The Clerk confirmed that the Beech tree has already been reported to Dorset Council Highways due to the proximity of the tree to the road, but a site visit has not yet taken place. Cllr B Bowell advised that these issues would be discussed with the Town Council Surveyor.

UPDATE: A tree officer from Dorset Council carried out a site visit of the tree on Friday 19th September. The tree officer pointed out a fungal growth and believed the tree to be dying and recommended it be felled. On 25th September, a large branch of the Veteran Beech tree broke away and fell into the road on Lower Waldtich Lane, blocking the road. The tree was made safe by Dorset Council Highways on 26th September along with additional urgent tree safety work in the area on 27th September. A survey and site inspection of all the trees along Lower Waldtich Lane was completed by the Dorset Council tree team on 1st October with recommended actions. The survey was sent to the Highways team for enforcement with the landowners to maintain highway safety.

- Concern was also raised regarding the Horse Chestnut tree on Waldtich Green which is showing signs of disease and should be inspected on an annual basis - Clerk to follow up with Town Council Surveyor.

UPDATE: The tree was surveyed by Dorset Council in June 2024 which identified Horse Chestnut bleeding canker visible on the main trunk and main structural stems and branches and minor deadwood. Recommendation to crown lift to 3.0m within 6 months.

Other Issues Raised

- Recycling - Dorset Council have announced that food and drink cartons as well as foil trays and sheet foil can now be placed in household recycling bins for collection.
- Road erosion - the roads into Waldtich village are eroded on the edges due to rain erosion and poor drainage making it very dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians. Clerk to report to Dorset Council.
UPDATE: Having reported to Dorset Council, the following response has been received: *Highways Officer Notes: Thank you for your enquiry. This Road is inspected every month and any defects that reach an intervention level are repaired. The road surface is NOT dangerous for cyclists or pedestrians.*
- Flooding - issues with rainwater coming off the hill at Waldtich Knapp and flooding properties and gardens. Drainage needs sorting and more regular maintenance undertaken. Resident advised to use Fix My Street to report the issue which would then be directed to the relevant responsible authority.
- Paddle court - it was confirmed that a meeting had taken place at which it was agreed that for the time being the paddle court proposal would not be going ahead.
- A35 visibility issues - resident advised that the verges on the A35 exiting from Waldtich need to be done more regularly as visibility has been very difficult. Resident advised to report to Dorset Council using the online Report a Problem portal.

Meeting closed 6.30pm