

SAFER and Staunton Coleford Parish Council

Road Safety Strategy

1. Background

1.1. Staunton is a village of approximately three hundred inhabitants on the western edge of the Forest of Dean. It sits astride the A4136 which is the major route to and from Wales from the Forest. There is housing to both the north and south of the road and a rest home situated near the eastern entrance to the village. The A4136 is used by local companies, services, utilities, commuters, shoppers, tourists, and schoolchildren. Additionally motor cyclists use it as a fun route to test their skills and machines and cyclists enjoy the challenge of the ascent and descent to and from Monmouth. Both motor cyclists and cyclists enjoy the twisting, undulating nature of roads across the forest.

1.2. The village is popular with walkers, road cyclists and mountain bikers who use the forest for recreation. It has a pub frequented by villagers, tourists and attracts people from the local area. There is a limited bus service serving the village but in general the villagers and visitors use cars.

1.3. According to the Department of Transport GB road usage increased by approximately 271% between 1951 and 2011. There is nothing to suggest that the Forest of Dean experience is significantly different. Data for Gloucestershire is not available for the same period but between the years 2000 and 2008 traffic increased across the county by 13.76%. It subsequently fell during the recession but is once again on the increase.

1.4. Lorry size has of course increased as manufacturers have responded to the users' needs for ever greater capacity whereas the A4136, originally constructed for light rural traffic, has seen little improvement. A 19th century turnpike improvement by-passed the village centre and in the 21st century the church bends were slightly widened, which incidentally makes them faster. The original plans for this improvement included:

- a) An extended 30 MPH speed limit;
- b) The introduction of gateway features at either side of the village;
- c) The introduction of speed limit count-down signs;
- d) Widening of footways and;
- e) The erection of bend warning signs.

See Richard S Waters letter to J Flynn October 9th, 2001.

1.5. In a follow up letter of January 14th 2002 the countdown signs were removed. The reason is not known but presumably cost issues took precedence.

1.6. Six known incidents have occurred on the straight passing through the village within the last 4 years but none have entered the road statistics as no injuries were incurred.

1.7. Against this background the Parish Council has received an increasing number of road safety comments and complaints from the community. It was therefore decided to call a parish meeting to consult parishioners and for the parishioners to express their concerns.

2. Recent History

2.1. In July 2012 a speed survey was undertaken at the western entrance to village. The survey methodology used is not known other than traffic was monitored traveling both east and westwards. The survey identified:

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- 4100 vehicles/day passed through the village of which 25% were HGVs and;
 - An average of 81.5% of the traffic exceeded the 30 MPH limit, 82.6% traveling westwards and 79.8% traveling eastwards. A proportion of the traffic would have been from the village and therefore not have attained any great speed exiting the village or would have been slowing entering the village.
- 2.2. A road character assessment was undertaken by the Parish Council to identify signage and road markings already in existence. See appendix 1.
- 2.3. A meeting was held on 15th October 2013. It was well attended by villagers who expressed a range of issues and brainstormed potential solutions. See appendix 2.
- 2.4. Additional issues were raised after the meeting. See appendix 3.
- 2.5. Subsequent to the village consultation Gloucestershire Constabulary and Gloucestershire County Council Highways Dept. were invited to attend a parish council meeting to explore ways in which road safety could be improved. Unfortunately only the police were able to attend. It was agreed the police would meet with highways and report back to the Parish Council with ideas the parish, police and highways might be able to investigate. No report was received.
- 2.6. A village road safety committee has been formed to improve road safety. **Staunton Action Force to Enhance our Roads. (SAFER)**. Its objectives are to:
- Reduce average speeds through the village and in particular reduce the number of vehicles traveling above 35mph;
 - Explore ways to reduce HGV usage of the A4136 and;
 - Improve conditions for pedestrians.
- 2.7. The following problem statement has been developed by SAFER:
Staunton village is subjected to excessive through traffic on the A4136, some of which travels too fast with freight traffic volumes beyond the design capacity of the road.

3. What Next?

- 3.1. Using the 2012 data it is clear traffic in general through the village exceeds the speed limit. Further data to understand traffic speed at the eastern end and centre of the village are needed. It is also likely this would show increased traffic volumes as the UK economy has expanded in the last two years.
- 3.2. Existing signage both on and by the side of the road appears to have had little impact on driver behaviour. Work needs to be undertaken to identify which of the existing signage should remain and what additional effective signage is available.
- 3.3. SAFER, with the Parish Council;
- To investigate what innovative tools are available to assist improve road safety;
 - To engage with the Gloucester Constabulary and Gloucestershire County Council Highways Dept. in developing long and short term actions and;
 - To engage local businesses to assist resolving HGV issues.

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3.4. Additionally sources of funding available to support potential solutions needs to be identified.

3.5. It is believed that a county wide road safety effort is being co-ordinated by Gloucestershire County Council. If so the Parish Council should join the group. This will assist learning from other efforts being made in other parishes.

3.6. It is imprudent for the Parish Council to suggest immediate solutions which may be costly and may prove to be ineffective. However funds need to be set aside to implement inexpensive, effective measures if these can be identified.

3.7. Village wide acceptance of SAFER's aims might possibly be achieved by the adoption of Street Champions.

Record of Document Change		
Issue	Date	Change
Draft 1	1 September 2014	Document created in draft form for consultation with Councillors
Draft 2	4 October 2014	Document revised following feed back
Final adopted version	14 October 2014	

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Appendix 1.

Staunton Coleford audit of existing road character and safety measures

#	Location	Road character and safety measures
1	Parish boundary (east) to the Robin Hood junction (A4136) from Berry Hill	<p>Speed limit: 60 mph</p> <p>Road form: flat and gently curving through woodland</p> <p>Junctions: none Junction left to Newland& Redbrook. Westbound layby (both maybe outside boundary)</p> <p>Road markings: centre dotted line with cat's eyes; road edge line on (westbound) eastbound side of A4136.</p> <p>Signs: Part time signals warning sign.</p> <p>Other safety measures: reflective posts on westbound side of A4136.</p> <p>Other: Robin Hood Junction direction sign for Monmouth, Coleford, recommend route for goods vehicles to Stowfield Quarry. Recommend route for goods vehicles to Stowfield Quarry.</p>
2	Robin Hood junction	<p>Speed limit: 60 mph</p> <p>Road form: flat and straight through woodland</p> <p>Junctions: Junction with the (B428) B4228 (very good visibility)</p> <p>Road markings: On the A4136 stop road markings east and west bound at traffic lights; on the (B428) B4228 stop road markings (at traffic light) then give way to traffic sign on major road marking at junction beyond.</p> <p>Signs: None Lighting: (7) 3 street lights on approaches to traffic lights</p> <p>Other safety measures: Three sets of traffic lights (part time)</p> <p>Other: Recommend route for goods vehicles to Stowfield Quarry sign; direction sign to Coleford; <i>Tourist destination sign (Perrygrove, Clearwell Caves, Dean Heritage Centre, Bells Hotel)</i> Tourist sign does not exist</p>
3	Approach to Robin Hood junction (B428) B4228 from Coleford	<p>Speed limit: 60 mph</p> <p>Road form: flat and gently curving through woodland</p> <p>Junctions: junction with the A4136 (very good visibility)</p> <p>Road markings: Centre dotted line with cat's eyes</p> <p>Lighting: 2 street lights on approaches to traffic lights & 3 at lights</p> <p>Signs: Part time signals warning sign</p> <p>Other safety measures: 2 vertical chevrons on western verge indicating sharp right.</p> <p>Other: Direction sign for Monmouth, Coleford and Staunton. & Gloucester</p>
4	Robin Hood Junction to the Long Stone (A4136)	<p>Speed limit: 60 mph</p> <p>Road form: straight and flat through woodland</p> <p>Junctions: none</p> <p>Road markings: Centre dotted line with cat's eyes; road edge line (westbound) Eastbound; keep left arrows westbound</p> <p>Signs: none eastbound sign for Cinderford, Coleford, Gloucester, Crematorium</p> <p>Lighting: none 2 street lights</p>

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#	Location	Road character and safety measures
		<p>Other safety measures: none</p> <p>Other: Recommend route for goods vehicles to Lightmoor eastbound; tourist destination sign (Clearwell Caves caves not mentioned , Dean Heritage Centre, Bracelandsl) eastbound</p>
5	<p>Long Stone to layby (A4136)</p> <p>These two are almost immediately adjacent. Do they need to be split?</p>	<p>Speed limit: 60mph</p> <p>Road form: gently curving and undulating through woodland</p> <p>Junctions: layby</p> <p>Road markings: Double white lines (overtaking westbound only)no overtaking then double white lines (no overtaking) with cat's eyes, road edge line westbound Eastbound ; give way markings at layby junctions.</p> <p>Signs: Part time signals warning sign eastbound</p> <p>Lighting: none</p> <p>Other safety measures: Parking sign (eastbound only) exists but turned through 180 degrees and cannot be seen</p> <p>Other: Layby; Robin Hood Junction direction sign (Cinderford and Coleford, crematorium)this does not exist, sign exists for Monmouth, Chepstow; recommend route for goods vehicles to Stowfield Quarry sign eastbound</p>
6	<p>Layby to village boundary</p>	<p>Speed limit: 60mph</p> <p>Road form: straight and flat descending through woodland and fields</p> <p>Junctions: layby; forestry track</p> <p>Road markings: centre dotted line with cat's eyes; road edge (westbound) Eastbound; keep left arrows eastbound; four red rumble areas (one marked 30, one marked 'slow') the slow does not exist on approach from west; 10m before 30mph (yellow) White arrows; 10m before 30mph double white lines (over taking eastbound only)</p> <p>Signs: Double bend, first to left warning and 'reduce speed now' sign</p> <p>Lighting: none</p> <p>Other safety measures: none</p> <p>Other: none Eastbound lorry info sign(blue)</p>
7	<p>Village boundary (west)at to Whippington's Corner junction</p>	<p>Speed limit: 30 mph</p> <p>Road form: curving and rising through fields/residential</p> <p>Junctions: Whippingtons Corner (good visibility)poor looking west</p> <p>Road markings: Double white lines (overtaking eastbound only) with cat's eyes; give way to traffic markings at Whippington junction</p> <p>Signs: 2 x Staunton village , please drive carefully message and do not exceed 30mph sign The do not exceed 30 does not exist</p> <p>Lighting: none</p> <p>Other safety measures: none</p> <p>Other: none Payphone sign</p>
8	<p>Whippington's Corner junction to Well Meadow</p>	<p>Speed limit: 30mph</p> <p>Road form: undulating, curving left right at the church and right left at the Butts through residential/fields</p> <p>Junctions: The Cross (visibility east and west onto A4136 poor); The Rectory</p>

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#	Location	Road character and safety measures
	junction	<p>(very poor visibility eastbound); occasional entrances into private properties.</p> <p>Road markings: Double white lines (no overtaking) with cat's eyes; give way to traffic markings at the junctions with Rectory Lane, and at the Cross.</p> <p>Signs: Single vertical chevron at the Butts (west bound); 2 x vertical chevrons at the Butts (east bound);</p> <p>Lighting: none 1 street lamp</p> <p>Other safety measures: Reflective posts at Church Farm (5) and The Butts (5).</p> <p>Other: pavement westbound Eastbound(to Rectory Lane), pavement eastbound Westbound from The Cross</p> <p>Traffic westbound regularly crosses both the central lines, eastbound traffic crosses the central line at right hand bend prior to the church, the soak away for surface waters inadequate prior to Wellmeadow westbound, the width of the westbound pavement is regularly reduced by encroaching vegetation.</p>
9	Well Meadow junction to Frog's Mouth	<p>Speed limit: 30mph</p> <p>Road form: rising, curving through residential</p> <p>Junctions: Well Meadow (limited visibility westbound); White Horse (limited visibility westbound); multiple entrances into private properties</p> <p>Road markings: Centre dotted line with cat's eyes; keep left arrow westbound; give way to traffic markings at Well Meadow and White Horse junctions</p> <p>Signs: Bend to left warning sign.</p> <p>Lighting: 1 street light after the White horse westbound.</p> <p>Other safety measures: none</p> <p>Other: pavement eastbound from Well Meadow to Frog's Mouth; westbound pavement to Frog's Mouth</p>
10	Frog's Mouth to village boundary (east)	<p>Speed limit: 30mph</p> <p>Road form: Undulating and curving through residential and woodland</p> <p>Junctions: Frog's Mouth (poor visibility westbound) to traffic from the west</p> <p>Road markings: double white lines (no overtaking) with cat's eyes</p> <p>Signs: do not exceed 30mph sign, bends for three miles westbound</p> <p>Other safety measures: none</p> <p>Other: none</p>
11	Village boundary east to layby	<p>Speed limit: 60mph</p> <p>Road form: gently curving and rising through woodland</p> <p>Junctions: forestry tracks</p> <p>Road markings: eastbound one red rumble area (marked 30), yellow arrows 10m before 30mph and 4 sets of yellow rubble strip bars; double white lines (no overtaking), then double white lines (overtaking eastbound only) with cat's eyes</p> <p>Signs: junction to the right information sign eastbound; double bend, first to</p>

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#	Location	Road character and safety measures
		right and 'reduce speed now' warning sign; 1 x please drive carefully through village sign; keep left arrows eastbound. other signs welcome to FOD Gloucestershie, attention sign for deer and sheep, parking sign eastbound, Welcome to Fod District Council Other safety measures: Other: none
12	Layby to Parish Boundary (west)	Speed limit: 60mph Road form: curving rising through fields/woodland Junctions: layby (eastbound); layby (westbound); field entrances Road markings: centre dotted line with cat's eyes; give way signs at junction for westbound layby Signs: Park sign eastbound (at junction for eastbound layby) Other safety measures: none Other: Monmouthshire County sign; layby (east and westbound); information sign

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Appendix 2.

Issues Raised at Parish Community Road Safety Meeting

- Some vehicles travelling too fast causing them to cross the centre of the road on bends.
- Some vehicles travelling too fast causing them to leave the road and damage property.
- Too many HGVs.
- Risk of collision from behind when vehicles are slowing to turn into side roads and properties off the A4136.
- Some vehicles overtaking within the 30 miles per hour zone.
- Poor visibility from Buckstone Lane, Well Meadow and High Street (at both ends) on to the A4136.
- Lorries getting stuck in the snow on the A4136 at Whippington's corner.
- Vehicles parked outside the White Horse (to make phone calls prior to heading into the Wye Valley where there is no reception) block traffic flow and inhibit pedestrian use of the pavement.
- Parking on the High Street (due to lack of parking in Tillis View).
- Difficulty for pedestrians crossing the A4136 safely.
- Steep camber of pavement between the White Horse and the Laurels on the A4136 which can be slippery in the wet/cold.
- Poor drainage on certain parts of the A4136 causing road flooding.
- Deer and domestic livestock crossing the A4136.

Potential Solutions Suggested at Parish Community Road Safety Meeting

- Extension of double white lines on the A4136 from the Well Meadow junction west towards Monmouth
- Additional road signage:
 - Light-up 30 mile an hour signs
 - Chevrons or similar at Whippington's Corner
 - 30 miles an hour repeater signs through the village
 - Welcome to our village, please drive carefully at village entrances
 - Elderly people crossing signs at the Elms
 - Sheep/deer/wild boar signs
 - Speed camera signs
 - Cats eyes
- Pedestrian crossing
- Volunteer led speed check (in partnership with the police)
- Additional planting at the village entrances to provide displays during the summer, autumn and winter
- Haulage company speed pledge and request that HGV's utilise other haulage routes more
- Engineering works to reduce camber on pavements
- Bollards to prevent on pavement parking

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Appendix 3.

Additional Issues Raised Post Road Safety Meeting

- Poor visibility from house drives which exit directly onto the A4136.
- Noise from lorries and motorbikes.
- The absence of speed camera activity by the police.
- Extreme difficulty for wheelchair users crossing the road causing them to take lengthy diversions.
- Poor clearing of the pavement narrowing the area for pedestrians thus forcing them to walk closer to passing traffic.
- Use of mobile phones by drivers.