

HOLTON ROAD SAFETY SURVEY 2017 - REPORT TO HOLTON PARISH MEETING

In May 2017 a survey was made of the opinion of Holton residents about road safety in the village. The outcome was reported to the Annual Village Meeting and a summary is reproduced below for those unable to be there.

The survey results were circulated in the form of a set of bar charts supported by a list of comments made by respondents. (Click [here](#) to see charts and comments.) The principle points arising from the survey were highlighted to the meeting as follows.

The purpose of the survey had been to clarify:

- whether there was a shared concern in the village about road safety and,
- what resident's first thoughts were about safety measures that might be needed.

The survey was intended to be an initial exploration of the issues, not the basis of a final definitive plan.

A good response had been received from 85 people which approximated to a reply from over half the village households.

The survey revealed:

- There was widespread concern about road safety:
 - Virtually 80% of pedestrians felt at risk and 73% of drivers felt at risk too
 - 91% of respondents supported the idea of a 20 mile per hour speed limit

But

- The balance of opinion was significantly against physical barriers, such as speed cushions, or chicanes that provide enforcement measures

(Over 50% opposed this type of measure.)

Conversely

- There was good support for psychologically based measures, such as white gates at the village entrance, combinations of road marking and electronic speed indicators

(Up to 72% supported this type of measure.)

- The survey was deliberately brief omitting several other potential safety solutions meriting further consideration. A significant one was the provision of pavements to which several respondents had referred.
- The concern of residents about safety was matched by an evident and encouraging willingness to consider ways of dealing with the issue.
- Whilst significant action was called for, realism was required about the complexities of achieving progress.
 - Whilst safety measures appeared simple to introduce this was frequently not so. Regulations were complicated, costs high, resources limited and opinion often divided.

- A 20 mph speed limit was possible to achieve but would take time and negotiation with authorities who would require convincing about need, possibly through accident statistics.
- Even simple measures like road marking or gates were expensive and currently funds were scarce, even for pot holes.
- Despite these and other difficulties, the message of the survey was that safety issues needed to be pursued. Difficulty should not be made the excuse for inaction though the length of time required to achieve progress had to be recognised.
- Though not mentioned in the survey, the easiest immediate actions that could be implemented were those that residents and the PC could take themselves with little cost and no permission required from other authorities. Examples included:
 - Residents dedicating themselves to observing a 20 mph speed through dangerous sections of village roads. (A show of hands gave very strong support for this idea.)
 - Actively promoting the '20 is Plenty' campaign.
(See: www.20splentyforus.org.uk)
 - Encouraging pedestrians to be more safety conscious. It was suggested that road safety should not be made the sole responsibility of drivers. E.g. The almost universal failure of pedestrians in Holton to wear high viz. jackets, particularly at night, was mentioned.
 - Further enhancing roadside refuges with more mowing and bush control.
 - Mounting once or twice a year short sharp road safety campaigns.
 - Using the SID electronic speed detector more often.
- Following the meeting, the next immediate step would be for the Parish Council to decide on the priority they should give to residents' road safety concerns. The Chairman of the Parish Council signified that this would be done.
- Depending on the Parish Council's view, a detailed plan of action could be required for which parishioner's support and assistance would be needed.
- An invitation was extended to those present, and to others who were willing, to register with the Parish Clerk their interest in providing that support and assistance.
- Thanks were expressed to the Parish Council for their support for the survey and to the Parish Clerk, Sonja Barter, for her efforts to resolve road safety issues over a protracted period.

Ian Beach

26.05.17