

Shorne Parish Council

Borough of Gravesham



A STATEMENT FOR GRAVESHAM JOINT TRANSPORT BOARD TO BE HELD ON 29th MAY 2024

Shorne Parish Council has seen KCC's report, and whilst we welcome the immediate actions KCC proposes to take, and the further review they intend to commission, we do not consider that the proposed changes to signage go far enough.

We do not accept that lowering the speed limit will have little effect. Whilst there will always be some irresponsible drivers who disregard speed limits whatever they are, the majority of drivers try to adhere to speed limits displayed. In fact, in 2021/22 KCC itself proposed and consulted on lowering the speed limit to 40mph, effectively extending the existing 40mph limit through Higham westwards from Hollytree Drive through Shorne Crossroads to Crown Lane, but they subsequently abandoned their plan.

What is clear from KCC's report is that Shorne Crossroads is ranked joint 6th out of 148 give-way crossroad junctions on "A" roads across the county in terms of collision numbers. If it is 6th in the whole county, it is likely to be one of the worst, if not the worst, in Gravesham.

It is also clear that the majority of accidents are T-bone type collisions, where one of the vehicles is attempting to cross the A226 or turn right at the crossroads. There are many, many more similar collisions and near-misses at this location that go unrecorded; we see them with depressing frequency. It is a wide road, and people frequently underestimate the speed of approaching vehicles.

What the report fails to identify adequately is the risk to pedestrians and the genuine fear felt by pedestrians who have to cross this wide, 50mph road at this point. There are bus stops at either side of the A226 at Shorne Crossroads, and anyone who needs to use the bus services between Gravesend and the Medway Towns must cross the A226 on at least one leg of their journey. This includes children going to and from secondary schools in Gravesend. Children in Lower Shorne who attend Shorne Primary School must cross the A226 in both directions, as do any residents who want to visit the shops, doctors' surgery, or other facilities in Shorne village. It is small wonder that many residents choose to drive their children to the school or bus stops rather than allow them to cross the A226 on foot.

Almost all accidents are a result of driver error (or pedestrian error), but where these errors occur frequently it is our responsibility to reduce the opportunity for these errors and accidents. If drivers and pedestrians are finding it difficult to judge the speed of approaching vehicles and are consequently making unsafe manoeuvres, we need to make it safer for everyone by slowing and stopping the traffic.

Board members may recall that we used to have a similar situation at the crossroads at Pear Tree Lane and Villa Road. This was addressed by lowering the A226 speed limit to 40mph and installing traffic light controls at the crossroads.

We strongly request the JTB's support to implement similar measures at Shorne Crossroads.

(500 words)