

ROAD SAFETY CONCERNS OF FARRIERS CHASE RESIDENTS & FRIENDS

There is an on-going concern within our community regarding the dangers posed by the traffic using the roads within our estate. In most instances this danger is caused by a few inconsiderate drivers either travelling too fast or parking inappropriately. There are also other instances where the danger comes from a combination of poor kerb side visibility and inadequate road markings.

In addition to our homes, our estate roads also give access to the St Helens Hospital, a children's play park, Dringhouses School our community car park, the Mayfield Pond entrance and the Mayfield Nature Reserve. In such a busy community where families, many with young children, hospital patients and their visitors as well as dog walkers and fishermen are going about their daily business using roads and pavements where safety does not seem to be the highest priority. Why should we accept the risks of traffic moving too fast often on the wrong side of the road, cars parked inappropriately, blind junctions and ambiguous junction priorities? The simple answer is we should not accept these risks. Hoping that it is not our child or family pet that gets injured by a car travelling too fast on the wrong side of the road or hit by a car travelling too fast past a blind junction is not an acceptable option.

Whatever the cause and wherever the location the Chase Residents Committee, on behalf of the following street locations has initiated action to mitigate such dangers.

Nelsons Lane
Hobmoor Terrace
Widdel Close
Briery Close
Hillcrest Gardens

Goodwood Grove
Lingfield Crescent
Mayfields Grove
Ainsty Avenue
Aintree Court

The Committee has presented the situation as we see it to City of York Council Road Safety and Highways Departments. The outcome has been mixed in that there have been some successes, some failures and some opportunities still to take up in the near future. A summary of the active topics and their current status is as follows:

MAINTAINING CLEAR SIGHT LINES

Maintaining clear sight lines has been successful on Nelsons Lane through the s-bends where City of York Council Street Scene have accepted their responsibility and now regularly cut the undergrowth.



Unfortunately we have been less successful in our attempts to improve visibility at the junction of Hob Moor Terrace and Nelsons Lane with a proposal to use a convex mirror. CoYC Traffic Management advised that such mirrors are not authorised for use on the highway as they reflect light and interfere with a driver's vision, reduce the ability to judge speed of oncoming vehicles and distort the view, especially when dirty. But at least a mirror would inform drivers of an approaching vehicle.



Could a mirror be sited on private property and what would be the legal ramifications in the event of an accident? If a convex mirror is not possible then would prohibiting parking on a section of Nelsons Lane be acceptable? Further resident consultation is needed on this issue.



A combination of all-day parking by fishermen and overgrown kerbside vegetation along Aintree Court and the end of Lakeside often produce serious risk when the pavement is not accessible. CoYC Street Scene has given a commitment to manage this area in the short term pending the outcome of the S106 land transfer.

REDUCING THE SPEED LIMIT

Reducing the speed limit has thus far been unsuccessful although some encouraging statements have been made.



Following the submission of a 'speeding complaint' to the North Yorkshire Police (NYP) 95 ALIVE initiative and a subsequent survey of vehicle speed along Nelsons Lane, both the NYP Road Safety Partnership Team and the CoYC Road Safety Officer advised that the measured speeds were well within the 30 MPH limit. Also, as no speed related accidents had occurred within the last three years no action in relation to the speeding complaint would be taken. They did state that our community location was suitable for a Speed Indicator Device (SID) which just tells drivers their actual speed. Such an 'information only' device may not have sufficient impact on the few inconsiderate drivers exposing our families and friends to risk of injury or worse.

If the comments of the Moor Lane residents, observed at the recent Ward Review, are to be believed the installation of a SID has done little to solve the speeding problem. Further consultation with residents on the best way forward is needed with regard to the estate speed limit.

ESTABLISHING JUNCTION PRIORITIES

The CoYC Traffic Management Unit states that establishing junction priorities through the use of give way markings and signs are not a statutory requirement on minor residential estate road junctions. They state that national research studies on unmarked junctions show they perform well on low speed estate roads, with negligible accident and injury occurring. Unmarked junctions tend to make people more aware of their surroundings, which from a safety perspective is beneficial and as such many estates built in recent years have been designed with this in mind.

CoYC Traffic Management stated that a technician or engineer would make an assessment of the junctions within the Farriers Chase estate and should it be deemed necessary give ways markings will then be considered.



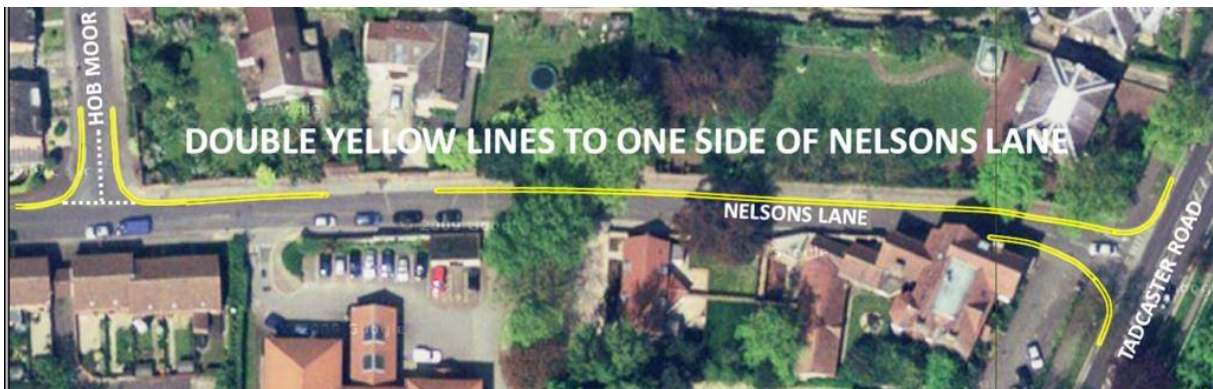
With regard to our request for centreline marking CoYC TM state that this is not used on roads with an overall width of less than 5.5m and as much of Nelsons Lane is under that limit the use of such a line would not be recommended. CoYC TM seem to have ignored the fact that we were only looking for a centre-line marking through the s-bends in the vicinity of the children's play park.



ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE PARKING LIMITS



CoYC Traffic Management state that establishing effective parking limits and restrictions is dealt with periodically on a ward by ward basis so as to provide best value due to the considerable expense entailed and the legal process that is required to be adhered to.



CoYC Traffic Management also stated that our suggestion to introduce waiting restrictions along part of Nelsons Lane will be added to the next Dringhouses & Woodthorpe Ward review, scheduled for Thursday 7th July. Unfortunately, the subject of parking was not a formal agenda item at the review and while the issue was discussed nobody from Traffic Management was present to answer specific questions. Councillor Ann Reid did however give a commitment to bring the issue of parking in the Ward to the next review and ensure that Traffic Management was represented.

As a community we need to act. Whether as individuals or as part of the Chase Residents Association we need to continue to present our case to City of York Council Highways and even to our local councillors at Ward Reviews and Surgeries. The recent action by the Council to restore the sightline through the bends on Nelsons Lane demonstrates a willingness to listen and act effectively, so let us keep up the pressure for action on our road safety concerns.

In support of such action the following contact details, email addresses and web links will be of assistance:

Road Safety Officer, Transport Planning Unit, 9 St Leonard's Place York YO1 7ET
tel: (01904) 551331, fax: (01904) 551340, email: road.safety@york.gov.uk

City of York Council web link

http://www.york.gov.uk/transport/roads/traffic_restrictions/Speed_limits/

Application form for speed limit change

<http://www.york.gov.uk/content/45053/64877/64887/571/Speedlimitapplicationform.pdf>

D A Munley: Vice Chairman of the Chase Residents Association