

FOVANT ROAD SAFETY GROUP

FOVANT TRAFFIC PLAN

***An independent report with
recommendations for improvements to
road safety in and around Fovant
village***

Date of Issue: 31st March 2009

Fovant Road Safety Group

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Introduction

For a number of years there has been a high level of concern amongst the citizens of Fovant about the speed of traffic through the village on the A30, the High Street and Dinton and Tisbury roads. There has recently been a fatality at the junction of the A30 and High Street and both the Post Office and Old Forge have been struck by out of control vehicles on more than one occasion. The construction of a traffic triangle at the junction of the two roads has made little difference to vehicle safety and no contribution to the safety of pedestrians. In the High Street the increased traffic flow and lack of pedestrian protection combine with an unrealistic speed limit to make a fatal accident only a matter of time.

It is important to point out that the official statistics relating to the number of accidents at the A30-High Street junction are incomplete and inaccurate.

The Fovant Road Safety Group (FRSG) has been established to address these issues with the support and advice of Fovant Parish Council.

Aim

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate how both the A30 and all other village roads could be made safer for the people of Fovant, at minimal cost.

Topography

Fovant lies astride the A30, some 10 miles east of Shaftesbury and 7 miles west of Wilton. The A30 runs from Salisbury to Shaftesbury and then on to Yeovil and the southwest. It is therefore a busy road, with 21,027 vehicle movements being monitored in the Wilton-Shaftesbury direction in the period 3-30 September 2008.

Whilst most of Fovant lies to the north of this road there are some 25 houses (plus one under construction) in Brook Street on the southern side. The people who live in Brook Street (some of whom are very elderly) and those who live in the 3 houses on the A30 adjacent to Brook Street therefore have to cross the busy A30 in order to access the village facilities (see below).

The High Street runs from the A30 for 0.3 mile (482 metres) to the Village Hall where it forks, one road going to Tisbury the other to Dinton. The High Street therefore acts like the spout on a funnel insofar as it has to absorb not only the traffic coming from Shaftesbury which wants to go to Dinton but also traffic from Tisbury and Dinton wanting to access the A30. This in addition to local village and commuter traffic.

Brook Street

We would point out that the speed limit in Brook Street is currently signed 40mph. Under Speed Limit Strategy guidelines this should be **no more than 30mph**. Signs are needed to indicate this.

The A30

The A30 running through Fovant is currently subject to a 40 mph speed limit. This follows the current Speed Limit Strategy as laid down by the Wiltshire County Council. The 40mph restriction signs are located 0.8 miles (1287 metres) apart some distance from the key point where the A30 and the High Street meet, which is on a sharp bend with an adverse camber.

There is a Vehicle Activated Sign on the Wilton (westbound) approach which flashes to warn of the imminence of the approaching bend but does not give a speed warning.

As mentioned above, those people who live in Brook Street and on the south side of the A30 have to cross this road to get to the village facilities. The major issue here is that there is **nowhere** to stand where one can see a safe distance in both directions before crossing – this is particularly so when crossing from Brook Street to access the facilities in the High Street. In essence every person crossing that road in either direction, including the young and infirm, has to listen for traffic noise before making a dash for safety to the other side. This has to be totally unacceptable, as to be hit by vehicle travelling at 40mph (or faster) would probably be fatal.

We draw attention to Paragraph 5 of Fovant Parish Council's letter FPC/HWY-FS.01-08 of 1 October 2008 to the Highway Network Improvements Dept WCC in which it is stated:

“Highways have no knowledge at this time of the results or recommendations on the ongoing County-Wide Review of Speed Limits proposals currently under review. Councillors made the observation that a 30mph limit would seem most appropriate bearing in mind the close similarities to Barford St Martin in the topography, village population dispersal on both sides of the A30, the junction being a major crossing point and traffic flows through that part of the village. Barford St Martin already has a 30mph speed limit.”

We appreciate that Wiltshire is a big county, that money is scarce and that there may be more urgent cases for consideration so it is not our intention to press for a roundabout or other expensive capital works to be undertaken. However we ask that the following low cost measures be put in place, bearing in mind that the Government's own advertising stresses the increased chances of surviving a 30mph impact:

- (1) That the 40mph speed limit be kept in place but the speed limit be reduced to 30 mph for a distance of 200 metres either side of the A30 - High Street junction, reinforced by double white lines.**
- (2) That the Vehicle Activated Sign be changed to reflect the speed limit.**

The High Street

In addition to the 40 houses which have access to the High Street there are also the following:

Post Office (open 6 days a week)
Pub (open 7 days a week)
Village Shop (open 7 days a week)
Surgery (open 5 days a week)
Chapel
Youth Club
Village Hall

As Fovant is a long linear village and these services are grouped at one end nearest the A30, most people use their cars to get to them instead of walking. Furthermore, the pub, post office, shop and surgery are used by people from surrounding villages. Therefore at certain peak times there is considerable vehicle and pedestrian congestion at the A30-High Street junction and in the High Street itself. With the exception of the shop, pub and post office frontages there are no pavements so pedestrians have to walk in the road.

HGV traffic through Fovant has increased in recent years, mainly due to vehicles destined for the three industrial and storage sites in Catherine Ford Road, Dinton. These are, from north to south, the Westfields Storage Park, Dinton Business Park and the TNT fireworks depot. HGVs either lose their way or rely on SATNAV, coming through Fovant via the A30 and Dinton Road via the High Street. As mentioned above these roads are residential, contain the shop etc and have considerable pedestrian traffic without benefit of pavements or street lighting.

Once a large vehicle has turned north off the A30 or, heading south, has passed the entrance to the TNT depot in Dinton, where it might be able to turn, it is committed to travelling the length of the High Street and Dinton Road via several "pinch points", some only 4.7 metres wide in the High Street and a length 3.3 metres wide in Dinton Road. This latter forces pedestrians to take refuge in the hedgerow if they are unfortunate enough to meet a large vehicle there!

Therefore it is proposed:

- (1) That signs "UNSUITABLE for HGVs" be installed to prevent entry to the High Street from the A30 and from Dinton.**
- (2) Possibly signs saying "Pedestrians in the Road" would also be helpful.**

At the A30 junction with High Street, vehicles coming from Shaftesbury at 40mph and turning blind into the High Street often do not reduce their speed thus imperilling the lives of people crossing the road between the Post Office and village shop.

In summary, the High Street now has to absorb a quantity and size of vehicle which it was never designed to do. This problem is exacerbated by people driving too fast, regardless of other vehicles and pedestrians. The end result of all this is that the High Street is now a dangerous place to walk and a fatal accident is a distinct possibility.

We cannot find any guidelines from Wiltshire County Council to support a reduction in the speed limit but we would suggest that commonsense would support the following measures:

- (1) A reduction in the speed limit in the High Street, Dinton Road and Tisbury Road to 20 mph.**
- (2) A restriction on large commercial vehicles accessing the High Street.**

Summary

To do nothing about the Fovant A30/High Street/village roads issues cannot be considered an acceptable option as, every day, lives are being put seriously at risk.

We consider our proposals to be measured, easily implemented and low cost.

We would recommend that the appropriate officials from Wiltshire County Council visit the village to experience at first hand what the villagers have to put up with on a daily basis.

A 30mph speed limit on the A30 and a 20mph speed limit on village roads are essential for the safety of pedestrians and the well being of the residents of Fovant.

FOVANT ROAD SAFETY GROUP

- Are you concerned about the speed and safety of traffic on the A30 through Fovant?
- Do you have difficulty safely crossing the A30?
- Do you think that traffic on the A30 is even an issue for the village?

Then join the Fovant A30 Safety Group. An independent voluntary group of local parishioners concerned with local road safety issues.

Although the Parish Council has had reasonable success in raising issue of traffic on the A30 with Salisbury District Council and Wiltshire County Council, which has over the years resulted in:

the lowering of the speed limit to 40mph;
the introduction of a high barrier kerb at the triangle;
erection of a flashing bend warning sign;
improved road markings when approaching the junction with the High Street;

Recent efforts to by the Parish Council include making representations for a further reduction the speed limit to 30 mph, and provision of improvements to the road signage at the A30 junction, an improved layout for vehicular safe exiting from the High Street onto the A30, and support for an improved pedestrian layout at the A30 entrance to the High Street at the Forge.

Despite ongoing representations made by the Council, the Highways Agency has made little progress to date as the Wiltshire Council has continued to delay the issuance of their County-wide A30 mph zone review – which was originally scheduled for release in early 2008.

**Do you have some time that you can spare to this?
Could you co-ordinate and contribute to a campaign?**

If you have any views or if you wish to get involved, then please pass your details to Beryl Paton the Road Safety Group (FRSG) Representative.

Please note that the Fovant Road Safety Group is independent of the Parish Council. The FRSG will be free to pursue whatever agenda they decide, The Parish Council has noted that independent, elector-run groups who could co-ordinate and maintain pressure on the appropriate Authorities has proved effective in the past in securing safety schemes and therefore supports the Fovant Road Safety Group aspirations.

FOVANT ROAD SAFETY GROUP

**Nigel Knowles
Chairman Fovant Parish Council**

Dear Nigel,

We have carried out a pretty comprehensive survey of The High Street, Dinton Road and Tisbury Road and have identified the following points where SID units would be most effective. Where these lie on private property then of course the necessary permission would have to be obtained from the land owner. We are under the impression that the unit needs to be fixed to a pole which would be permanently mounted in position.

High Street facing traffic from the A30

- 1. There is a post holding a 30 sign by Brookside Cottage**
- 2. Opposite Medland Cottage there is a garden owned by Mrs. Earle (Medland Cottage) who is quite happy to have a pole next to her garden hedge.**

Dinton Road facing traffic going North

- 3. Dinton Road/Mill Lane triangle**

Dinton Road facing traffic going South

- 4. On grass verge outside Highfields**

High Street facing traffic going South

- 5. Outside entrance to Surgery**

Tisbury Road facing traffic in the direction of Tisbury

- 6. Next to the hedge outside "The Croft"**

Tisbury Road facing traffic from Tisbury

- 6. On Tisbury Road/Church Lane Triangle**

We trust the foregoing is of assistance and look forward to further developments.

Les Law.

FRSG