



## **Leybourne Park Residents Association**

Tracey, Trudy, David, Ryan, Simon,

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The residents of the 372 properties that form the Leybourne Park development continue to raise concerns with the various local, borough and county councils around a number of pressing issues that are directly impacting our neighbourhood.

These include traffic levels on New Hythe Lane and its surrounding roads, traffic speeds and the associated risks presented to pedestrians crossing this busy road, the current location of two bus stops & the lack of any uncontrolled / controlled crossing points in this area.

Our community has sought, over a number of years, through engagement with all levels of council, to get safety measures implemented which will -

1. control the speed of HGVs and LGVs that ply this route from the numerous industrial units at the northern end of New Hythe Lane, Larkfield.
2. reduce pedestrian risks especially in the vicinity of the Papyrus Way roundabout which presents a blind crossing to those walking either to the rail station or seeking to cross to Leybourne Lakes country park.
3. improve the quality of life for the residents of our community.

Noting a lack of traction at a number of levels of governance, we escalated our concerns to MP Tracey Crouch who took time out of her busy schedule to meet and listen to our community, and thereafter question the relevant stakeholders on progress.

The Leybourne Park Residents Association is seeking to ensure that these concerns are included in East Malling & Larkfield Parish Council's Highway Improvement Plan submission for this year as follows -

1. Installation of speed control measure (bumps/humps) on New Hythe Lane in the vicinity of Blu3, north of the Papyrus Way roundabout, in support of KCC's Vision Zero Road Safety strategy noting the official response from KCC's West Kent Highway Improvement Programme Manager Ryan Shiel who confirms:

"Physically it is possible to install traffic calming (humps / cushions) on New Hythe Lane near Blu3. We would need to bid for funding as again there is no

crash pattern to prioritise this site from our crash remedials budget. Traffic calming has to be installed as a system of at least 2 features and must be alongside street lighting, such a scheme would cost between £10,000 and £50,000 depending on what type of cushions are used and how many cushions / humps are proposed. We had discussed this with East Malling and Larkfield Parish Council and suggested adding this as an item on their Parish HIP ready for the local transport plan bidding process which takes place each December."

2. A pedestrian crossing point on New Hythe Lane. You will be aware that our neighbourhood sadly suffered a fatality on this stretch of road - although we understand this was not related to a crossing RTC.

We continue to request relevant surveys are carried out to identify a suitable location for installation of an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, (understanding there are a number of factors including pavement minimum width restrictions that determine suitable positioning). The conflicting location of two (unused) bus stops may factor into any such survey – and as such is a matter that additionally requires consideration.

With the uplift in employers in our neighbourhood – there has been a noticeable increase in the number of foot users on this busy stretch of road walking to and from the railway station as well as the popular Leybourne Lakes country park. All levels of council should be actively supporting this sustainable form of transport as it aligns with KCC's Active Travel strategy. We need to see significantly increased focus on facilitating safe walking routes in this area.

Whilst there are a number of other matters that require further discussion (current location of the two bus stops at the north end of New Hythe Lane, driver behaviour aids including roundabout furniture / plantings, timelines for reintroduction of bus services to our community etc), we believe that the two priorities raised in our letter are the most pressing.

We are keen to meet with all relevant stakeholders at the earliest opportunity and are calling upon the Parish Council to provide a firm commitment regarding the inclusion of the above matters in this year's Parish Council Highway Improvement Plan, gripping these concerns, taking ownership and driving matters forward to a satisfactory conclusion. We look forward to your responses and a date in which we can all meet.

Yours faithfully,

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