



Pedestrian Road Safety along the A38 at Twigworth

Within the last 4-years, the villages of Twigworth, Down Hatherley and Norton, have grown considerably with their new housing developments; Twigworth alone, has more than doubled in size with their new housing developments with up to 1000 additional homes, though at the same time, this growing urbanisation has not been supported by improvements to our local roads, footpaths and other infrastructure.

With ever increasing numbers of pedestrians and cyclists deciding to commute, (others by car or public transport), they are finding the footpaths very narrow and unsafe, with no safe crossing points (other than A38 Twigworth Green roundabout), no cycle lanes and with M5 incidents becoming more frequent, the A38 becomes the main diversion route, where as you know, there is a 40mph speed limit through the village.

The Parish Council recently received an email from a concerned resident and thought it worthy of sharing with GCC Highways and our County and Borough Council members, as this highlighted very clearly the road safety concerns that residents are faced with, when they negotiate this busy trunk road at Twigworth along with their young families.

The Parish Council, previously reported to GCC about a dangerous section of footpath, which presents serious hazards to pedestrians, from the Church, up to the lay-by; whereas, the section opposite the Petrol Station is much less dangerous.



The Parish Council received replies from both the GCC Highways Manager and County Councillor Paul McLain, where they stated that they have discussed this concern with the dedicated Road Safety Team, to liaise with the Police and investigate the possibility of a suggested crossing.

They further stated that the issue with the hedges has been something which they have looked to act upon in the past. The overgrown hedges fall to the adjacent landowner to maintain, unfortunately there is not always have full compliance. Standards state that footways should be a minimum of 1.2m wide.

Cllr McLain has also asked for GCC Highways to action the weeds / accumulated mud/soil, particularly where it has narrowed the pavement on the bend opposite the garage.

The GCC Manager stated that they have logged the issue of the narrowness of the footway to the Area Highways Representative to investigate in the first instance and hopefully provide a solution.

Cllr McLain also asked the GCC Manager to explore what more might be done re the overgrowth and encouraging the landowners to take responsibility for maintaining the hedge-line effectively throughout the year.

As soon as we hear back from GCC and the Road Safety team, we will let everyone know the outcome.

Chestnut Tree Farm - Planning Ref. 24/00457/FUL

Summary

At a Planning Appeal last year, the HM Planning Inspectorate ruled in favour, to permit the Planning Application 24/00457/FUL for the proposed Chestnut Tree Farm development, with 85 new homes but with conditions.

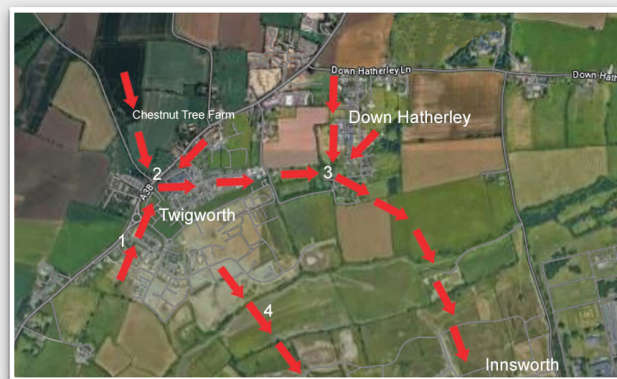
One of those conditions, specifically, Condition 12, stated that “no dwelling was to connect to the public sewer until upgrades have been carried out to the public sewerage system”.

The Developer, L&Q Estates Limited wanted to vary this condition and instead, make the connection subject to drainage plans approval by the Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) Planning authority, on the basis that by the time the connection will fall due, Severn Trent Water (STW) will have upgraded anyway!

History

All the residential areas in this map frequently experience foul water flooding; arrows show the direction of sewage, arriving from Sandhurst, and then on to Innsworth.

Heavy or persistent rain infiltrates the crumbling network of pipes and pumps, and both villages frequently suffer faeces swilling about on pavements and in people’s properties, forced up by surface floodwater – which shouldn’t be entering the system.



1. Twigworth lay-by Pumping Station - People in the area experience human waste backing up in their toilets.
2. Pumping Station by entrance to Wallsworth Lane - Human waste mixed with floodwater comes up through manholes as a matter of routine. One resident has negotiated a reduction in their bill from STW, which should be available more widely.
3. Ash Lane Pumping Station - Pumps break down when floodwater enters the system, causing widespread backing up and foul flooding of public areas and private properties.
4. New pipeline from Twigworth Green to Innsworth - Clogged pipes have caused manholes to burst at least twice in the past two years. Drains are frequently blocked.

Planning Committee - 18th February

Tewkesbury Borough Council’s planning committee considered the proposal at their meeting on Tuesday (February 18) and were recommending that a variation to Condition 12 be accepted by the Planning Committee.

However, before a crowded public gallery, Cllr Sharpley, Twigworth Parish Council, challenged this recommendation on behalf of the Twigworth Parish and Down Hatherley Parish Councils, along with the concerns of residents, he called on the Planning Committee to keep the condition unchanged.

He said, “... the condition imposed by a planning inspector requires the new houses not be connected to the sewage system until they are upgraded. The developer’s plans for drainage will no doubt pass muster but that is entirely missing the point, it’s the additional pressure off site where the problem lies in both Twigworth and Down Hatherley where the drainage is closely linked.

Whenever we have heavy or persistent rain, floodwater enters the crumbling network of pipes and pumps and both villages suffer frequently; the condition was put there because the inspector saw “widespread evidence of faeces mixed with floodwater forced up drains and manhole covers by surface water.

Severn Trent's response, if we're lucky, is to send in tankers to scoop up the poo and take it away with a lot of smell, danger, noise and congestion and that's days after the problem has exploded all over the street, into people's gardens and houses and back up into their bathrooms.

Cllr Sharpley continued by stating... “the inspector's condition provides critical leverage for the much needed improvement, you know that Severn Trent has a statutory obligation to accommodate new houses, we also know that this council has no statutory power to enforce Seven Trent to do anything at all. So the inspector's ruling is a line in the sand for us all. Many, many people have pinned their hopes to it. Please do not turn your back on a community that urgently needs this to remain in place to protect their health and well-being.”

[illegible]

Since June 2023, Severn Trent have confirmed they have no objective principle to the developments on the site at the airline application stage. In most recent discussions with Severn Trent and Tewkesbury Borough Council planning department, Severn Trent have confirmed that works have been carried out in the area, these works involved lining, to reduce groundwater infiltration and increased capacity. Therefore, upgrades have been carried out and the conditions should be amended as suggested.”

for quite some time now and we've been hearing issues in this area around foul water and sewage," she said. "There is no other area in the borough I've heard about this, we have to consider the effect it is going to have on people further downstream. It's impacting families' lives."

There were powerful contributions from all members present, who voted unanimously to reject the change, which was greeted with applause by villagers present in the public gallery.

Clearly, TBC Planning Officers and the Developer now need to work with STW to plan and agree a way forward and it will be interesting to see how that pans out given past experience, especially if the Developer chooses to appeal this decision.

Down Hatherley - Our Neighbours!

Down Hatherley is a civil parish and village in the Tewkesbury Borough, between Cheltenham and Gloucester, Gloucestershire. It has approximately 165 houses and a population of approximately 450.

In 1022, the village name of Down Hatherley was combined with Up Hatherley, and was known as "Hegberleo." Down Hatherley was listed as "Athelai" in the Domesday Book of 1086, this name was recently chosen for the new housing development which has been constructed adjacent to the A38 road junction, in 1273 it was known as Dunheytherleye and in 1221, Hupheberleg.

"Up Hatherley" and "Down Hatherley" derived from the Old English upp meaning "higher upstream" and dūne meaning "lower downstream". Up Hatherley is a separate Parish three miles upstream on the Hatherley Brook.

Down Hatherley has a church, St Mary and Corpus Christi which dates from the 15th century.



The oldest grave identified in the cemetery is that of William Drinkwater, who died on 17 January 1615.

The tower and the base of the east wall of the chancel are the only remaining parts of the original construction.

The rebuilding of the main body of the present church took place during 1859-1860.

Hatherley Manor Hotel & Spa is a 17th-century manor house in Down Hatherley.

This is great venue for occasional parties and weddings or just chilling out in the spa.

The Hotel & Spa is set in 37 acres of gardens and grounds.

Jemmy Wood, The Gloucester Miser, was a former owner of Hatherley House and estate.

Down Hatherley has an excellent Cricket Club set in lovely grounds.

It is located just off Down Hatherley Lane, towards Staverton, continue until you reach



Wood Lane, and turn in.

Follow the road for 100m, and the club and grounds are on your right.

Twigworth Parish Council has agreed to feature posts from Down Hatherley Parish Council and their residents in our regular Newsletters.

We look forward to hearing from them!

Twigworth Green - Take Pride in our Community

Have Fun... but responsibly!

Please could we ask that our young electric bike riders (must be 14+), to ride responsibly when they're out and about having fun but without tearing up the footpaths and grassed areas of the estate, some of which are wild flower areas, such as the Swale which have been cut back for the winter.



As with all two-wheeled bikes, riders should wear a helmet for their own protection and we ask that parents take some responsibility for ensuring that all legal requirements are met when using electric bikes... see page 2

Please have a Tidy Up!

Following the winter storms, aside from the persistent rain, flooding, the high winds also created their own problems and left their mark!

Developers banners have been ripped from their flagpoles, while residents wheelie bins were blown over along with their contents spilling out onto the roads, pathways and green areas.

All of this has left Twigworth Green looking untidy, with litter and debris strewn everywhere, particularly around the Local centre, in the hedgerows and open grass areas.

It would be appreciated if residents and retail units could just spend one or two minutes checking the immediate areas around their properties/businesses and remove any debris, this would be very welcomed.

We also have some serial litter offenders discarding their beer bottles, cans and litter at the bus stop and elsewhere, if anyone witnesses this, please notify us of the details and we will follow up.

The Gateway Management Company are contracted to look after our estate grounds, including the removal of litter and debris but we have not seen any activity recently to address some of the long-standing issues, such as flooding footpaths, removal of construction debris in hedgerows left by builders, tree saplings which have been uprooted and there are even one or two that have broken in two.

We have brought this to the attention of Gateway our Estate Management Company.

Cllr Redfern has a site meeting arranged with the Grounds Maintenance Team to discuss and review the issues residents have raised.

Please have pride in our Community!

Flooded Footpath

After nearly every rainstorm, we have a number footpaths which flood continually, blocking access for residents...these have been reported both to Vistry and Gateway.



Riding an Electric Bike: The Rules

Electric Bikes are fun if they are used responsibly and yes, there are rules that govern their use; you can ride an electric bike if you're **14 or over**, as long as it is an 'electrically assisted pedal cycle' (EAPC); you do not need a licence to ride an EAPC and it does not need to be registered, taxed or insured.

When your bike is an EAPC - An EAPC must have pedals that can be used to propel it; can have more than 2 wheels, for example a tricycle; it can be propelled up to 15.5mph without pedalling but only if it's been approved.

Its electric motor must have a 'continuous rated power' output of no more than 250 watts and must not be able to propel the bike when it's travelling at more than 15.5 miles per hour (mph)

What your EAPC must show - Markings on the bike must show both the continuous rated power output and the bike manufacturer. It must also show either the battery's voltage or the maximum speed the motor can propel the bike

Where you can ride an EAPC - If your bike is an EAPC then you can ride it on cycle paths and anywhere else pedal bikes are allowed. You cannot ride it on pavements

When your bike is not an EAPC - If your electric bike does not meet the EAPC rules then it's classed as a motorcycle or moped.



Your bike is not an EAPC if it - can be propelled at more than 15.5 miles per hour (mph) by the motor; has a continuous rated power output higher than 250 watts; does not have pedals that can propel it

If your bike is not an EAPC - it must be registered and taxed. You need to get a valid driving licence to ride one; wear a motorcycle helmet that meets British safety standards; insure your vehicle

If your bike is classed as a motorcycle or moped but has not been insured, you may get a fine or your bike may be seized by the police.

Where you can ride if your bike is not an EAPC - If your electric bike is not an EAPC then you can only ride it on the road; cannot ride it on cycle tracks or cycle lanes

When your electric bike needs vehicle approval - an electric bike must be approved if either it can be propelled up to 15.5mph without pedalling, for example, a 'twist and go'; it does not meet the EAPC rules

This should have been done by the manufacturer or importer before you bought it, if it's been approved, it will be marked with the approval number, if it has not been approved, you can apply for Motorcycle single vehicle approval (MSVA).

Twigworth Green - Road Safety Issues

Car Parking - Shared Surfaces

We have several “shared pavements” areas at Twigworth Green, these are designed to give road users more freedom in the way they are used, maximising space and prioritising pedestrian movement over motor traffic whilst encouraging motorists to reduce their speeds.

There has been some concern recently about cars parking on these roads with “shared surfaces” at Twigworth Green, with cars parking and blocking pavements.

These are shared surfaces and vehicle owners are requested to park responsibly, consider your neighbours, pedestrians and children when parking... it is not acceptable to block the path families with pushchairs, disabled people and dog walkers. Cars parked half on the pavement and the road is an acceptable way of parking.



Examples of Shared Pavements



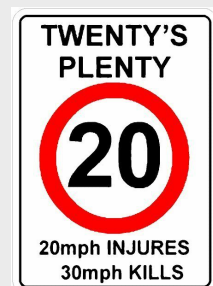
Please do not block entrances, driveways or use other peoples car spaces.

PLEASE PARK RESPONSIBLY

Kill your speed before YOU Kill!

We are receiving many reports of vehicles speeding on TWIGWORTH GREEN roads...including residents... this is an accident waiting to happen with small children playing and animals around, plus many of the roads have not yet had their top surface applied, there are raised ironworks, mud on the road and ramps!

Unfortunately this is not going to get resolved by installing speed humps, which of course in themselves would help... but heavy lorries, buses and other traffic negotiating them could create other issues like noise and vibration.



The one thing that can help reduce speed immediately and cost nothing, is that the speeding drivers take individual responsibility while driving their car.... be it on the development or elsewhere.

Unfortunately, there will be those who think that this doesn't apply to them.... we appeal to all drivers to drive responsibly.

There are 10mph signs which have been erected for construction traffic but they seem oblivious to construction traffic drivers... Vistry have been advised... the only traffic that seems to adhere to that speed is the road sweeper!

The development roads are still the responsibility of the developers until such time they are adopted by Gloucestershire County Council Highways.

Any official traffic speed signs will require a Traffic Regulation Order and our understanding is that this will be for a 20mph limit throughout the development roads, however this is still some way off.

**PLEASE DRIVE RESPONSIBLY
AND REDUCE YOUR SPEED!**

Gas & Electrical Meter Housing Covers - have you checked yours?

External meter boxes may be a convenient solution for locating gas and electricity meters on housing properties but, unfortunately, they are susceptible to damage as they are usually made of plastic.



There are Gas and Electricity Regulations that govern the requirement of these meters which should have secure protective housing covers to protect the meters against the elements.

Following the recent winter storms, at Twigworth Green there appears to be quite a number of properties with these Gas and Electrical Meter housing covers, either missing completely or left open in an insecure state.



Check your Gas and Electrical meter cabinets now to make sure that your housing is fitted correctly and that it is locked secure, you should have been given a key for this.

If you are unable to find your missing cover or unable to secure it for any reason, you should contact your Housing Developer or Landlord for this to be attended to.

A38 Waste Bin



The Waste Bin which has been dislodged and damaged in the A38 Lay-by opposite the Church of St Matthew has been reported to Tewkesbury Borough Council

Local Issues - Under Review

The following issues have been brought to the attention of the Parish Council and are currently being investigated:

- ◆ Anti-social Dog barking and foul smells near A38 lay-by
- ◆ Littering at Co-Op, Janes Pantry, TG Bus Stop and other public areas
- ◆ Flooding footpaths at Twigworth Green
- ◆ Construction debris left in Hedgerows by the builders at Twigworth Green
- ◆ Household waste tipping in communal waste areas at Barley Drive
- ◆ Speeding on Ironbridge Road
- ◆ Dog Owners not collecting of dog waste and disposing correctly, caught on camera, at Twigworth Green
- ◆ A38 Pedestrian Road Safety

Next Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 19th March @ 19:00 - 21:00

Down Hatherley Village Hall

This meeting is open to the public if you wish to hear what's going on in and around Twigworth or to raise any issues or ideas.