

Notes of Travel Clinic - Friday 12th January 2018

Present:

Cornerstone Academy Trust – Jonathan Bishop, Dave James, Henry Massey
Westclyst Community Primary School (WCPS) Local Advisory Board – Helen Neal
Slow Broadclyst - Liz Straw
Parish Council – Natasha Curwood
Parish Council Traffic Committee – Henry Gent
National Trust – Richard Jackson
Victory Hall Committee & Clyst Caring Friends - Claire Ratcliffe
Victory Hall - Simon Staddon (also CAT parent & trustee)
Red Lion Pub – Richard Jenkins
Robin Williams

This was the inaugural travel clinic meeting. It was noted that a previous meeting had been held in the summer of 2017 which had been positive and subsequently reported to the Parish Council.

Mr James outlined the purpose of the meeting and gave a presentation (slides attached).

The following was highlighted:

- Most parents travelling to the Broadclyst Community Primary School (BCPS) site travel from Exeter. 25% of children walk to school, with 66% travelling by car. This exceeds the average number travelling by car across Devon. The number of children walking has, however, grown whereas the number travelling by car has not.
- There are 154 children with one or more siblings on the BCPS site.
- 110 families use the drop off service at the front of the school and therefore don't park in the village at the beginning or end of the school day.
- 20 families regularly use the breakfast club, reducing congestion 8.30am – 9am. Parents are notified that they should use the drop off service for the breakfast club rather than parking in the village. **ACTION (CAT): Parents would be reminded of this again.**
- Of staff who work on the site, 20 park in the village. Staff have been encouraged to car share through the introduction of a guaranteed car parking space on the school premises. **ACTION (CAT): Further analysis is required to identify the impact of part time workers.**
- There are currently 41 families with children at WCPS. Most use the daily bus service. A 3rd minibus was introduced September 2017 to reduce car congestion and spare seats on the WCPS bus have been offered to BCPS parents to maximise its use. Higher numbers of children use the bus service in the morning, compared with the afternoon.
- CAT has undertaken spot checks of parking in the village, taking a range of photos at the beginning and the end of the school day. Available parking spaces were identified at the Pavilion, in Holly Close and the village car park just before 9am. Congestion was noted outside the surgery and at the bottom of School Lane but no evidence of chaotic or inappropriate parking.

- It had been noted that parents were parking on the verges of the main road (B3181). The Parish Council could consider fencing off the area. Poor parking by parents had also been reported by residents of Holly Close.
- Delegates attending Teaching School events at BCPS were encouraged to park on the school premises or in the village car park. These events were planned to ensure that they didn't coincide with the school drop off or pick up.
- Parents were regularly reminded of the importance of reducing traffic congestion and parking considerately in the village.
- Statistics were based on the Devon County tool and would be updated when new data was available.

Further suggestions to improve traffic management in the village included:

- Coloured 'tarmac'.
ACTION (HG): Mr Gent to ascertain if coloured 'tarmac' is an option.
- Travel section on BCPS website.
- Walk to school competitions.
- Further discussion with parents re: environmental pollution.
- Encouraging parents to car share.
- A 'good neighbour' code of conduct to encourage considerate parking. Examples of this exist elsewhere.
- Designated staff parking in the village.
- Parking restrictions or speed limits on the B3181.

Parent Car Sharing Scheme

It was noted that, due to safeguarding concerns, CAT was unable to manage a car share scheme and actively pair parents. In addition, properly fitted car seats would be required to meet legal requirements. The ratio of parent initiated car sharing was 6%. This was slightly above the average for Devon though sharing had dropped slightly since 2014.

A Good Neighbour Code of Conduct

It was highlighted that a 'good neighbour' code of conduct would be helpful to village residents. However, CAT was sceptical that those parents who were difficult to engage in considerate parking would sign up to, or abide by, a code of conduct. It was noted that CAT can exclude parents from the school site but have no additional powers. School staff need to request the police to resolve issues, where necessary, as do local residents.

CAT reported that the majority parents were polite and respectful. However, occasionally even otherwise rational parents got frustrated and could speak or behave inappropriately. Parents wanted a solution to congestion and parking problems, just like local residents. The frustrations could be exacerbated by the location of the school at the end of village and time constraints at the school drop off.

Designated Staff Parking

It was highlighted that the National Trust owned 80% of the parish. The Trust was unable to promote parking in the village but wanted to contribute to the discussion of the issues. Parliament was required to change the designation of land as an inalienable asset. However, the Trust could look at the possibility of using small areas for parking.

Use of the scrubland near the Red Lion was discussed. This land, belonging to the National Trust, was leased along with the adjacent property. It was noted that this option had been explored by BCPS in the past but, due to the complexities involved (leases, drainage, road crossing etc) a plan had not been realised.

It was noted that congestion at the bottom of School Lane would continue to be an issue since it was the closest point to the school site.

Congestion and parking problems might simply be moved to another area if issues were solved in the centre of the village. Residents did not want to see double yellow lines painted at Town End.

B3181

It was noted that there are currently no restrictions on the B3181. Traffic management usually encouraged parking on the main road through a village to slow the traffic. However, parent parking on the B3181 caused problems with car doors opening onto oncoming traffic and children getting out of cars in a dangerous area. There were no yellow lines on the main road to allow residents to park.

Consideration could be given to reducing the speed limit to 20 miles per hour, perhaps at designated times of the day. It was highlighted that there was already an illuminated sign adjacent to the school to alert drivers to slow their speed through the village.

ACTION (NC): To investigate why the speed sign adjacent to BCPS is not currently operational.

It was highlighted that one of the concerns for local residents was the amount of traffic coming and going during the day. The perception was that the school site was getting bigger and busier.

CAT noted that there was a midday drop off and collection at the school nursery, in addition to the drop offs and collections at the beginning and the end of the school day. The nursery was also now offering 30 funded hours per week to families, in line with government expectations. However, BCPS was not expanding. It remained at 2 classes per yeargroup with approximately 420 pupils on roll. This number would fluctuate slightly from year to year depending on parental choice, the outcome of admissions appeals, and other decisions outside the school's control such as the admission of children with a special educational need.

There were 57 children on roll at WCPS. The school's development included a funded travel plan with a minibus and driver. It could not be guaranteed that BCPS would be able to continue to allocate the current level of funding to a bus service when WCPS was no longer on the BCPS site. However, the service was currently reducing the number of journeys to the BCPS site to such an extent that there were now fewer journeys to the school site than there had been before the temporary siting of WCPS on the BCPS site.

It was noted that the bus service was free of charge to WCPS parents. BCPS parents paid a small contribution of 50p per journey to the running costs.

WCPS Opening at Westclyst

It was noted that the delay of the opening of WCPS on the Westclyst site was out of the control of CAT. There had been a delay as a result of the legal discussion between parties regarding access to the sports pitch on the school site. This was now resolved. However, funding issues resulting from the delay now needed to be resolved. It was hoped that the school would open on the Westclyst site September 2019. Mr Bishop confirmed that the Westclyst build will be the result of a Department for Education competitive tender.

Two teachers currently on the BCPS site would be moving to the Westclyst site when it opened. WCPS, like BCPS, would be a 2 form entry school.

WCPS Temporary Location on BCPS Site

There would need to be a further extension of the temporary WCPS building on the BCPS site to accommodate an additional year group for the 2018-19 academic year. It was confirmed that the National Trust would not allow a permanent building, or car park, to be constructed on the BCPS site. The Parish Council would only support the planning application for temporary classrooms if a travel plan was in place. Mr Gent hoped that all parties could continue to work together over the project.

Financial Contribution

Mr Bishop highlighted his understanding that the planning condition to produce a travel plan and mitigate the effect of additional traffic had been met by the provision of a bus service. The financial contribution to the project for this mitigation had been paid to Devon Highways. It was noted that the location of the funding needed to be ascertained.

ACTION (CAT): To check with project manager the location of funding.

Conclusions

CAT highlighted that it was keen to work in partnership with stakeholders to seek solutions to the issues raised. The trust wrote regularly to parents and discussed traffic management at parent consultation meetings. Further analysis would be undertaken to provide up to date information for future discussion. It was requested that those attending the meeting fed back discussions to the groups they were representing. It was felt that some individuals had been promoting an unnecessarily adversarial campaign against the schools and posting unreasonable and personal comments on social media. It was hoped that these negative campaigns, which undermined the work of the schools, would cease and thereby enable all stakeholders to work effectively in partnership.

Slow Broadclyst highlighted that they would strongly encourage the introduction of a code of conduct for parents.

ACTIONS
1. CAT to remind parents that they should use the front car park to drop children off for the breakfast club rather than park in the village.
2. CAT to further investigate the impact of part time staff on traffic and parking in the village.
3. Parish Council to ascertain if coloured 'tarmac' is an option in the village.
4. Parish Council to investigate why the speed sign adjacent to BCPS is not currently operational.
5. CAT to ascertain the location of funding.