

# Parish Newsletter November 2024



**Welcome** to the Parish Council's special newsletter about highways. As you can see, behind the scenes, a great deal of work has been undertaken to try and improve road safety through Oare; our long-term goal is to make Oare a much safer place to live and for the children around our Parish to be able to get to the school easily. The PC also managed to get the engineering works implemented at the top of Oare Hill to remove the dangerous flowing on the bend, and works in Wilcot which are ongoing or in the pipeline (!) to try to reduce flooding on the Alton Road. **Councillor Dee Nix**

## SPECIAL EDITION - A345 ROAD SAFETY - SPECIAL EDITION

During the Second World War, the rural lane through Oare was classified as an A-road to facilitate military vehicle movements. It was never de-classified.

Oare is now one of the two worst speeding hotspots in the Pewsey Community Area, as shown by Police Enforcement data.

The parish council appreciates the regular attendance by Police Speed Enforcement Officers, who support all the other measures in place; over the years, the parish council has taken advantage of any initiatives available:

- 30mph limit and signage
- Village 'gates'
- Community Speed Watch (CSW)
- Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs)

Despite all the above, vehicles are frequently recorded travelling through Oare in excess of 45mph.

In March 2023, the parish council considered requests from residents to explore the possibility of installing more pavement – 'footway' – along the A345 through Oare. The parish council also received a suggestion that CIL monies could be put towards a southbound bus shelter on the A345 at Sunnyhill. (See *overleaf*)

The conversation was opened with Wiltshire Highways, and included a site visit with engineers to review the situation.

As a first step, Highways have conducted a full review of signage, and new signs are due to be installed imminently, funded by the parish council and the Local Highways & Footpaths Improvement Group (LHFIG).

New road markings will be painted on, at no cost to the parish council, when the road is resurfaced in due course.

In addition, the Oare Village Hall Committee is funding a new pole on the verge near the church to provide an additional SID location. The SID cooperative, of which this parish is a member, is in the process of purchasing a third SID, thus enabling a more rapid turnaround in the rota of SIDs serving the member parishes.

The parish council appreciates three more residents volunteering to join the CSW team; the more members, the more sessions that can be held. Although the team was frustrated by recent advice that the route to their operating site is too dangerous to be walked, this irony does provide the parish with a very strong argument for additional safety improvements.

The parish council requested that Highways reconsider their decision in 2013/2014 to limit the section between Prospect and Oare to 50mph, which the parish council and many residents would like to see reduced to 40mph, or 30mph.

Wiltshire Highways policy reflects that of central government, which establishes the criteria for setting speed limits; unfortunately, the A345 south of Oare does not qualify for 30 or 40mph due to the small number of house frontages.

### **New bus shelter at Sunnyhill**

The parish council has progressed this suggestion through LHFIG. Highways engineers viewed the site and are willing to support the project, including some pathway across the verge from Sunnyhill Lane so that residents can reach the new bus shelter without having to walk on the A345. The project includes refurbishment of the existing northbound bus shelter.

LHFIG has agreed to put £5000 towards the project, to be matched by £5000 from the parish council (including CIL monies). The remaining £12,500 can be met by:

- The Substantive Highways Scheme Fund (SHSF)
- Other connected bodies which may be willing e.g. Salisbury Reds
- Private individuals who may wish to contribute

The parish council will shortly be submitting a bid to the SHSF, which is highly competitive and scores bids according to deliverability, cost, and benefit measured according to current objectives. Initial indications are that a bid for the bus shelter project has a high chance of success.

### **New pavement**

The process for financing new pavement would be the same, but on a much larger scale. The parish council has noted that neighbouring parishes (Woodborough, North Newton and Rushall) have all obtained pavements by dividing their projects into manageable stages, and going through the bidding process for considerable amounts of public money several times over the course of many years. This parish has received very little during the last few years, other than a grant from the Pewsey Area Board towards necessary treeworks in the Greensward.

Wiltshire Highways have advised that a minimum cost for a pavement project is £360.00 per metre, and this does not allow for utilities which may be in the way.

**In order to build up a sizeable reserve of money to support a series of bids to the SHSF, the parish precept will have to be increased.**

### **Comparative precepts**

During 2024/2025, a Band D (average) household in this parish paid £34.75. By way of contrast, neighbouring parishes charged their residents as follows:

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Band D precept 24/25</u>
Wilcot, Huish & Oare	£34.75
Manningford	£46.46
Altons & Honey Street	£57.16
Woodborough	£64.72
North Newton	£77.76
Pewsey	£99.27
Rushall	£116.67

### **Parish Council Meeting Dates 2024/2025**

*All meetings start at 7.00pm*

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November, Wilcot – **to discuss a draft budget for 2025/2026**

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025, Oare – **to finalise the budget and set the precept for 2025/2026**

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025, Wilcot

(April 2025, Oare – date to be confirmed)

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025, Wilcot – Annual Meetings

### **Local Elections 2025 – reminder**

Local elections take place in May 2025 and the current parish council will automatically stand down. The Clerk will have information available about the nominations and elections process from March 2025; please contact her if you wish to know more about how to serve as a parish councillor.

### **Wilcot, Huish & Oare Parish Council**

**Chair:** Dee Nix

**Vice Chair:** Dawn Wilson

**Clerk:** Ruth Kinderman

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