

Proposal: Appoint a Parish Councillor as Lead Member for Highways & Public Rights of Way

For consideration by the Community Safety, Health and Sport Working Group

1. Purpose

This proposal recommends appointing a named Parish Councillor to act as the Council's Lead Member for Highways and Public Rights of Way (PROW). The role will provide a clear point of contact, strengthen liaison with the Highway Authority and other partners, and ensure that local concerns, ideas, strategies and comments are brought consistently into the Community Safety, Health and Sport Working Group's discussions and actions.

2. Background and Rationale

- Highways issues (e.g., safety, traffic management, road condition, drainage, signage and speed concerns) often require persistent follow-up across multiple agencies and timeframes.
- Public Rights of Way (footpaths, bridleways and byways) benefit from regular monitoring, timely reporting of defects/obstructions and coordinated community engagement.
- A dedicated Lead Member improves continuity, accountability and responsiveness, and helps ensure parish priorities are represented in external consultations and local projects.

3. Proposed Role and Scope

The Lead Member for Highways & PROW will champion relevant issues on behalf of Burwell residents, coordinate the Council's input, and act as the primary link between the Parish Council office, Parish Councillors, the Community Safety, Health and Sport Working Group, the Highway Authority (e.g., Cambridgeshire County Council), and other stakeholders.

3.1 Core Responsibilities

- Maintain an overview of highways and PROW matters affecting the parish, including emerging risks and opportunities.
- Work together with the office to gather, triage and present resident feedback and evidence (photos, locations, dates) to support effective reporting and escalation.
- Liaise with the Highway Authority/PROW team on reported issues, planned works, consultations and funding opportunities.
- Coordinate parish responses to consultations (traffic schemes, speed limit reviews, active travel proposals, development-related highways conditions).
- Work with local groups, landowners and volunteers where appropriate to support permitted maintenance and reporting (within statutory limits).
- Provide regular updates to Full Council and/or the Working Group, including a short action log of open items.
- Ensure issues are directed through correct channels (e.g., online reporting systems) and that follow-up is tracked.

4. Contribution to the Working Group (Ideas, Strategies and Comments)

The Lead Member will bring structured input to the Working Group by turning day-to-day issues into practical proposals and strategic priorities. Suggested mechanisms include:

- **Issue pipeline:** maintain a live list of highways/PROW issues, with status (new/reported/in progress/closed), owner and next action.
- **Meeting themes:** propose one theme for discussion (e.g., speeding hotspots, safer crossings, drainage/flooding points, footpath accessibility).
- **Evidence-led recommendations:** bring maps, photos, resident reports and on-site observations to support prioritisation.
- **Strategy suggestions:** identify quick wins vs. longer-term projects, and potential partners/funding routes.
- **Community engagement:** suggest surveys, walkabouts, or targeted communications to gather balanced input.
- **Consultation watch:** flag external consultations early and draft initial parish responses for group review.

5. Expected Benefits and Outcomes

- Clear accountability and a single, consistent parish point of contact for highways and PROW.

- Improved tracking and follow-up of reported defects, reducing duplication and loss of context.
- Stronger, more timely parish input into consultations and schemes that affect Burwell.
- Better prioritisation of issues based on evidence and community impact.
- Enhanced collaboration with residents and local groups while staying within statutory responsibilities.

6. Governance, Authority and Reporting

The Lead Member will act under the direction of Full Council and in support of the Community Safety, Health and Sport Working Group. The role does not replace the statutory responsibilities of the Highway Authority or landowners, and will not authorise expenditure or commit the Council to actions without the appropriate Council approvals.

- **Reporting:** brief written or verbal update to each Working Group meeting and/or each Full Council meeting (as agreed).
- **Escalations:** urgent safety issues to be raised promptly with the Clerk and Chair, and reported through the Highway Authority's emergency/non-emergency routes as appropriate.
- **Records:** maintain a simple action log so progress can be reviewed and handed over if the role changes.

7. Resources and Support Required

- Access to relevant contact lists and reporting links for highways and PROW.
- Agreement on where the issue/action log is stored and who can update it.
- Support from the Clerk for correspondence, where required.
- Optional: periodic site walkabouts with Working Group members or residents for evidence gathering.

8. Appointment, Term and Review

Discuss the role at CSHS, nominate at strategy day and resolve at Council.

CAUTION: This email originates from outside of Burwell Parish Council

Dear Katherine and Andy,

Thank you both for your prompt and thorough responses, I really appreciate the detail and it's reassuring to know this is being taken seriously.

Katherine, I'm glad to hear the June Community, Safety, Health and Sport working group meeting will be addressing enforcement, and that the Speedwatch coordinator has been made aware. I'd welcome the opportunity to attend or contribute if that would be helpful.

On the question of road narrowing versus speed bumps, I do have a view on this, and I think the experience at Stow-cum-Quy actually illustrates the key point very well.

The road narrowing at Stow-cum-Quy works differently at each end. At the Cambridge end, the narrowing has limited effect because traffic is already slowing for the roundabout and traffic lights, the calming is incidental rather than deliberate. At the other end however, the narrowing is positioned before the residential area begins, and this is where it demonstrably works. Drivers are forced to reduce speed before they reach houses, footpaths and pedestrians at exactly the right point. That is the model I would ask the council to consider for Swaffham Road.

Positioning a road narrowing at the village boundary on the Swaffham Road approach would also address what I believe is the most overlooked part of this problem, vehicles leaving Burwell. At present there is nothing to prompt drivers to reduce speed as they exit the village. A gateway narrowing at the village boundary would work in both directions simultaneously: slowing vehicles entering the residential area, and acting as a natural prompt for vehicles leaving to reduce speed before hitting the open road. One intervention, solving both problems.

On that basis, my thoughts on the options:

- Road narrowing: I would strongly support this, positioned at the village boundary on Swaffham Road, mirroring the effective end of the Stow-cum-Quy model. It is a proven, passive measure that does not rely on driver compliance and works in both directions.
- Speed bumps: I understand the mixed feedback and would not prioritise these over road narrowing. They can be disruptive for residents and emergency vehicles, and a gateway treatment would achieve more with less disruption.
- MVAS repositioning or additional VAS: The current MVAS on the Swaffham Road approach is positioned well into the residential area, by which point drivers are already among houses, footpaths and pedestrians. Moving it to the village boundary, or installing an additional VAS at that point, would make a meaningful difference. The Swaffham Prior direction handles this better, with the MVAS positioned before the houses begin that placement should be the benchmark.
- Speed camera: For vehicles leaving Burwell towards Swaffham Prior, a fixed or average speed camera remains the most effective deterrent. I appreciate this requires a collision threshold and sits with the police, but I would ask that it is raised as part of the enforcement conversation in June.

Andy, thank you for the detail on signage restrictions. I understand the position on 30mph repeater signs on restricted roads. On children walking to school signs, I accept the guidance around sparing use, but would ask that the Swaffham Road stretch is assessed on its own

merits the narrow footpaths, the bend, and its use as a school route represent exactly the kind of clear and continuing risk the guidance describes.

I'm happy to provide further information or meet on site if that would assist. I know I speak for a number of local parents who share these concerns, and I want to ensure this moves forward constructively.

Thank you again for your engagement on this.

Kind regards,

Paul

From: Katherine Hyett <burwellpc@burwellparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Date: Tuesday, 28 April 2026 at 3:31 pm

To: Road Safety Audit <RoadSafetyAudit@cambridgeshire.gov.uk>, Paul

Cc: Katherine Hyett <burwellpc@burwellparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Speeding cars on Swaffham Road.

Dear Paul,

Apologies for the delay in responding. I am really sorry to hear of your scare. The Parish Council is very aware of concerns about speeding on Swaffham Road and options such as speed bumps, road narrowing and reduction of the speed limit have all been discussed in the past. I will pass your email on to councillors so they are aware of your concerns. We had already asked the police officer responsible for coordinating Speedwatch to attend our next Community, Safety, Health and Sport working group meeting in June and one of the things we wanted to get a better sense of is how we can get enforcement happening in Burwell. I have also made our Speedwatch co-ordinator aware.

I will ask about the VAS and we also have MVAS which we actively move around the village. We have applied now for the 26/27 LHI (a parish council can only apply for one) but have an ongoing list of LHI's that we would love to apply for and speed reduction measures are always discussed. We get very mixed feedback about speed bumps and road narrowing (such as in Stow-cum-Quy) – I would be interested in hearing your thoughts on this.

From: Road Safety Audit <RoadSafetyAudit@cambridgeshire.gov.uk>

Sent: 27 April 2026 11:35

To: Paul Katherine Hyett <burwellpc@burwellparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Speeding cars on Swaffham Road.

Thank you for contacting us highlighting your concerns about speeding vehicles on Swaffham Road, Burwell, in the direction of Swaffham Prior. I understand your concerns, speeding is an emotive subject for many communities.

Speeding is an enforcement issue and as such is a matter for the police. Anyone who is caught speeding can be required to attend a safer driving course, can be fined and have a minimum of 3 points endorsed onto their driving licence or receive a court summons. Below is a link where you can report your concerns separately to Cambridgeshire Constabulary:

<https://www.cambs.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/wsi/watch-schemes-initiatives/community-s...>

Cambridgeshire County Council has a statutory duty to maintain the roads and review the safety of its road network.

The road safety engineering team concentrates specifically on sites where there is a history of injury collisions and where we can reduce casualties, focussing our resources on locations that have reached or exceeded the threshold for inclusion on our Cluster Site list.

A cluster site is a location, either at a junction or a 100-metre stretch of road, where 3 or more fatal or serious injury collisions, or 6 or more injury collisions of any severity, were recorded the previous 3-year period.

I have reviewed the collision history for the road from its junction with High Street to Burwell Road and have identified two police recorded injury collisions in the last calendar 3-year period, both at the Isaacson Road junction. One where a vehicle has run into the back of another in slowing traffic for a right turning vehicle in April 2023, the other where a vehicle turned across the path of another oncoming vehicle in May 2024.

Below is a link to the road safety dashboard where the collision history for the County can be viewed. This shows collisions from 2017. As you will see, over the longer period, the collision rate is low.

<https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/roads-transport-and-active-travel/road-safety/road-safety-dash...>

I see you have copied in the parish council. It would be worth you contacting them further, asking about a Local Highway Improvement scheme (LHI) for Swaffham Road, in the direction of Swaffham Prior. LHIs allow local communities to see improvements made to the roads in their area and to treat specific issues such as the installation of an additional Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS).

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/improving-t...>

With regards to a review of the signage. A system of street lighting is present therefore Swaffham Road is classed as a restricted road under section 82 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. On restricted roads subject to a 30 mph speed limit, 30 mph repeater signs are not permitted. This is because the presence of a system of carriageway lighting is considered sufficient to inform drivers of the applicable speed limit. Regarding additional children walking to school signs, there is no prescribed limit on the number of "children walking to school" warning signs; however, guidance requires they are used sparingly and only at locations where there is a clear and continuing risk, with repetition avoided unless drivers would not otherwise expect children to be present.

I have noted the 'SLOW' road markings and associated coloured surface dressing throughout the village are showing signs of wear. I have informed the Highways Maintenance Officer (HMO) for the area of this.

I hope you find this information useful.

Kind regards

Andy Coop

Road Safety Assistant Engineer

Place and Sustainability

My working day may well differ from yours, so please don't feel obliged to reply to this email outside of your normal working hours.

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From: Paul

Sent: 21 April 2026 09:09

To: burwellpc@burwellparishcouncil.gov.uk; Road Safety Audit

[<roadsafetyaudit@cambridgeshire.gov.uk>](mailto:roadsafetyaudit@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Subject: Speeding cars on Swaffham Road.

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Dear Burwell Parish Council,

I am writing to raise a serious road safety concern regarding Swaffham Road on the outskirts of Burwell, in the direction of Swaffham Prior.

Despite the 30mph speed limit in this area, it is a regular occurrence for vehicles to accelerate beyond this limit as they approach and navigate the slight corner on this stretch of road. The combination of the bend, narrow footpaths, and speeding traffic creates what I believe to be a genuinely dangerous environment particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

This concern became very real to me this morning. I was crossing the road with my son and his bicycle when a vehicle travelling well in excess of 30mph came around the corner. We had only a split second to make the decision to move back out of the road to avoid what could have been a very serious incident. It was frightening, and I do not want another family to experience the same.

I am particularly concerned about the safety of children travelling to and from school during morning and afternoon peak times. The footpaths along this stretch are narrow, leaving very little margin for error when vehicles are speeding. There appears to be no meaningful traffic calming measures in place, and drivers face no visible consequence for exceeding the speed limit at this point.

I would respectfully ask that the Parish Council consider the following:

- We need camera's to catch people speeding
- Additional Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) or speed indicator device as you enter village not a few houses in like it is now.
- Increased enforcement presence, particularly during school hours
- A review of signage to reinforce the 30mph limit as vehicles leave the village and children walking to school signs

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and would be grateful to know what steps, if any, can be taken to improve safety on this road and I know other local parents feel the same.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Paul

*A Proposal To Include All Vulnerable Road Users In Future
Infrastructure*

Active Travel Routes in Rural Villages

Active travel routes primarily cater to cyclists and pedestrians, providing safe and accessible paths for these non-motorized users. In the context of rural villages, it is essential that any new paths constructed are inclusive and available to all members of the community. This approach aligns with the policies established by Cambridgeshire County Council, as outlined in the Cambridgeshire Active Travel Strategy. Ensuring that these routes are accessible supports the Burwell Parish Council's commitment to promoting active travel and enhancing connectivity for both cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians within rural areas.

Cambridgeshire Active Travel Strategy (adopted March 2023)

“Cambridgeshire is a diverse county with transport, societal and environmental challenges that need to be faced to enable meaningful change locally, for the benefit of all.”

The strategy acknowledges *“implementing new and improved infrastructure for ‘active travel’ purposes can overlap and potentially conflict with existing networks of public rights of way and bridleways. Wider users of the network, ‘non-motorised users’ NMU, include those walking, cycling and horse riding as a leisure, recreational or commercial activity (e.g. riding schools), and must be considered and protected”*

Cambridgeshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan Updated April 2016

SOA2: A safer and health-enhancing activity Guiding principle GP2 *“Countryside Access provision should be safe for users and encourage healthy activities. Where significant potential conflict with motor traffic or railways can be demonstrated, then measures to reduce risk will be considered. Where rights of way are subsumed within urban development, then planners will be encouraged to ensure that path design is open and unthreatening and suitable for regular exercise. Safety-critical path infrastructure will be regularly inspected”*.

Safety issues are particularly important to users of the rights of way network, especially where the network crosses busy roads and railways. This is a particular problem for horses, which can react unpredictably to traffic.

SOA5 Filling in the Gaps Guiding principle GP5 Countryside access provision should build on the platform of the historical network to meet the needs of today's users and land managers.

A central action for the updated PROWIP is to improve the network as a whole, making connections with cycle network and wider transport network. **Given the lesser extent of the bridleway network, there is also a real need to provide a better connected network for horse riders too, as well as walkers, carriage drivers and 4x4 users.** This focus will help contribute to the Dft's Draft Cycling Plan (2014)

Green Infrastructure Priorities for East Cambridgeshire 5.5.2

- Develop a network of functional Green Infrastructure links that promote a better quality of life, place and environment in east Cambridgeshire.
- Improve social engagement, ownership and promote a long-term appreciation of Green Infrastructure, open space and wider countryside of East Cambridgeshire.

Inclusive Approach for Vulnerable Road Users

I proposed that all future infrastructure schemes actively include provisions for all vulnerable road users. These users are specifically defined as individuals who are walking, cycling, wheeling, and horse riding. Ensuring the inclusion of these groups is essential to create safe, accessible, and equitable travel routes that support a diverse range of community needs. By recognizing and protecting the interests of walkers, cyclists, those using mobility aids, and horse riders, future developments will contribute to a more integrated and supportive environment for non-motorized users.

Proposed By Hazel Barber

Second By

Recommend to Council?