

## Newsletter of Living Streets (The Pedestrians Association) for the Wirral Area

July 2010

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### Progress Report

We are pleased to be able to report some progress since the last newsletter in January. The Council Cabinet allocated £1.1m in February for the introduction of 20 mph speed limits in all residential areas over a 4 year period; and we have had several meetings with the Council including two meetings of a new Pedestrians Forum (see below).

#### **20 mph speed limits in residential roads**

On 22 February 2010, Wirral Council Cabinet approved "a comprehensive new policy to introduce a statutory speed limit of 20 mph on non-major routes in all residential areas and variable speed signs for schools on major routes."

The sum of £1.1m has been allocated over 4 years, with £275,000 allocated for 2010/2011.

We are delighted at this announcement. Slower traffic speeds elsewhere have resulted in a large reduction in road casualties. These are particularly high on the Wirral for pedestrians and cyclists.

We would like to see the introduction of 20 mph speed limits as soon as possible, once adequate consultation of the Wirral communities has been achieved. In other parts of the UK, consultation has shown a majority of residents in favour, and there has been good compliance with the new speed limits by most drivers and appropriate enforcement by the police. There is also a need for discussion at a local level about precisely which roads will remain at 30 mph.

At a recent meeting, Cllr Lesley Rennie (the new Council Cabinet Member for Streetscene & Transport), confirmed that the new Council administration is as committed to 20 mph as the previous one. Discussions will be needed on (1) how quickly the limits can be introduced within the budget allocated and (2) which roads will be included. We will

be pressing for a scheme similar to that in Oxford (see below).

#### **20 mph nationally**

Progress was reported earlier this month at the Annual Conference of Living Streets (the Pedestrians Association). In Oxford, all residential roads are now 20 mph except for some residential roads that are bus routes. Most bus routes have remained as 30 mph, but two stretches are 20 mph. The total cost of the scheme was £240,000, which was spent almost entirely on 20 mph signs (road humps have not been used). The Oxford campaigners are pleased with the compliance so far. In Southwark, where all residential roads have been 20mph for some time, the police have now started enforcement using speed guns to tackle motorists speeding on "rat runs". Islington has recently decided to switch all residential roads to 20 mph.

The **Department for Transport guidelines** were reassessed earlier this year. The new guidelines (currently awaiting approval by the new government) will make widespread introduction of 20 mph limits easier to introduce.

#### **20 mph: Get involved**

The national *20's Plenty for Us* group has produced A3-sized 20 mph **stickers for wheelie bins** at £1.20 each. Why not get some for your bins to show support for the

introduction of 20 mph in your road and spread the message? Contact us if you would like one.

You can also join our Facebook group - see <http://tinyurl.com/249g4vg>

### **Pedestrians Forum**

Wirral Council has set up a Pedestrians Forum which will be meeting four times per year at the Cheshire Lines Building (Canning Street, Birkenhead CH41 1ND), just 5 minutes walk from Hamilton Square station. Two meetings have been held so far, in March and June, and discussions have mainly concerned membership and the Terms of Reference, which have now been settled. Pedestrian safety was not initially included in the first draft, but we argued successfully for it to be included.

At the June meeting, council officers were shown photographs of Wirral Council and contractor vehicles parking on pavements, and agreed to take action.

The next meeting is on **Tuesday 28 September** at 10 am - all are welcome.

### **November 2009 Actions Survey**

This was a questionnaire survey of what actions Wirral pedestrians would like to see taken. Copies of the Report have been sent to Wirral Council and Wirral Police. The actions requested to be taken by the Council were recently discussed with Cllr Lesley Rennie. We are hopeful of progress in all the areas discussed.

However, we have been disappointed by the response so far from the Police. We have been told that "the issues raised will be given proper consideration", but we would like to see a detailed response. A new Wirral area commander has been appointed, and we will be asking for a response from him.

### **Merseyside Third Local Transport Plan**

Plans are being made for the transport plan for Merseyside for the next 15 years. We have made a submission to the first stage of

consultaion. Wider public consultation will start in September and last 3 months.

### **Parking on Pavements letter to Merseyside Chief Constable**

Driving onto a pavement is legal only to gain lawful access to property, or in the case of an emergency. Yet increasingly many drivers are driving onto pavements to "park", causing difficulties for many. We have received several reports of near-misses involving pedestrians.

If you feel as strongly as we do, why not write a letter to the Merseyside Chief Constable. You could use our standard letter, which you can download from the link on the home page of our website. For greatest impact, you could modify our letter with your particular concerns, or maybe write your own letter.

### **Wirral Council "A" board consultation**

We responded to the Council consultation in February 2010. Wirral Council is currently revising its policy.

### **Best Local Group Award**

At the recent Living Streets Annual Conference in London, the Wirral / Chester branch (that's us!) was given the Charles Maher award for **Best Local Group**.

### **Newsletter frequency**

We have sent these newsletters twice per year so far, but with the number of current developments, we will be increasing this to three times per year.

### **Your involvement**

Do let us know if you would like to get more involved with the group.

### **Contacts**

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### **Links**

Living Streets: Wirral & Chester area: <http://www.livingstreetswirralchester.org.uk>  
Merseyside Chief Constable: Jon Murphy, Merseyside Police, Canning Place, Liverpool L1 8JX