

Speech by Adrian Johnson at 26 March 2010 IPC AGM

Good evening, my name is Adrian Johnson, and I'm here to represent those opposed to Ickleford road humps. Firstly however, we recognise that the IPC work as volunteers and we do appreciate their hard work for Ickleford.

The IPC believe that their surveys provide a clear mandate to endorse this scheme, and they were led to believe that road humps were the only solution.

Without the credibility or resources of the IPC, 437 Ickleford residents and over 600 Hertfordshire residents in total have already registered their vote against the road humps. **(ed. As of 29 March, 445 Ickleford residents in 253 Ickleford Households against road humps)**

So why didn't we do something sooner? We believed we were a minority. However in the last month collective evidence casts serious doubt on the reliability of the survey results, and suggests better solutions do exist.

It started with the Parish Plan 2006 Questionnaire (see http://www.icklefordpc.com/Questionnaire_March_2006.pdf)

- **The questionnaire was leading:** The statement "*Speed is a major concern*" was immediately followed by the question "*Do you think speed is a major concern?*"
- **The questionnaire was ambiguous:** When households answered "*YES I do consider speed a major concern*" it appears IPC assumed that of the 30 roads in Ickleford, each respondent was referring only to Turnpike Lane or Arlesey Road.

Traffic Proposals Survey 2008 (see http://www.icklefordpc.com/Ickleford_Traffic_consultation_October2008.pdf and <http://mostsimply.com/trafficProposalsSurvey2008.pdf>)

- **Once again the survey was leading:** In this survey the writers provide arguments "for" and "against" the proposals.

The arguments "for" the proposals were headed "*Why should you support the recommendations?*" Here is a selection.

- **"Excessive traffic speed through the village is a proven issue".** Between 7am and 7pm, at the zebra crossing location in one week on the run up to Christmas 2007, 97% of motorists were within the speed limit, 1% were above 40mph.
- **"Ickleford Primary School has had representation during the process, and is fully supportive of these recommendations".** There have been no injury accidents at or near the location of the school zebra crossing in the last 30 years. During this consultation, at the Public meeting on the 8 October 2008 residents were clearly told that in order to have the school zebra crossing, the road humps were essential.

- ***“These proposals will provide £155,000 investment in the village and represent a real chance to eliminate the danger of speeding traffic in Ickleford”***. This is scaremongering. In the last 3 years no pedestrians were injured, there were only 7 slight injury accidents, and only 1 accident was serious due to no seatbelt and occurred on Greenfield Avenue. Speed may have been a contributory factor in only one accident. This is significantly below the national average. **ed. Note that according to the feasibility executive summary at [http://www.icklefordpc.com/TT_Ickleford_Feasibility - Executive Summary.pdf](http://www.icklefordpc.com/TT_Ickleford_Feasibility_-_Executive_Summary.pdf) that if this proposed scheme had been in place during 1 March 2005 to 29 February 2008 (the 3 year accident study period), then it ***might have prevented only one single accident***. A single accident in which speed was *“given as a contributory factor”* and even then the report doesn’t say on which road that accident occurred, or what the other contributory factors were, or whether it caused serious or slight injuries.** Since 29 February 2008 and up to 30 November 2009 (I only have accident data up to then) no additional injury accidents occurred in Turnpike Lane and no additional injury accidents occurred in or near the section of Arlesey Road where any safety work is proposed. **Therefore if the proposed 15 sets of road cushions and a humped zebra crossing (which heavily punishes residents and the majority of safe and sensible road users), costing £155,000 of Hertfordshire Council Tax payers money, had been in place for the last 5 years, then it only may have prevented one single road injury accident.**
- ***“If we reject the measures, we need to accept that we will probably live with the speeding problem in Ickleford for many years to come”***. This emotive statement was unnecessary and unfair pressure. There have been no fatalities due to road traffic accidents ever recorded in Ickleford.

In the arguments *“against”* the proposals the survey writer heads the section with *“Some people have strong reservations about the recommendations”*

- I quote the entire section. *“They don’t like speed cushions. They find speed cushions too noisy. They feel that speed cushions may damage their car. These plans may spoil the aesthetics of the village.”*
- Despite well documented case studies and objective evidence, the reader was not fully informed of the benefits, implications and safety risks associated with the proposals.
- The arguments *“for”* and *“against”* the proposals, given on this survey, could be regarded, at best, as amateurish and, at worst, as blatant manipulation or even emotional blackmail.

For both IPC consultations:

- **There was no expert advice on survey construction.**
- **Furthermore the survey results were not independently checked.** We have no assurance that the completed surveys have been archived safely but every indication that annotated objections were ignored.

Hertfordshire Highways Consultation 2009 (see <http://mostsimply.com/highwaysLetterApril2009.pdf>)

- A letter in April 2009 was not sent to the whole village and then only invited “*views and comments*” that at most might lead to “*minor changes*”.

Traffic Proposals

- **No alternatives given.** All guidelines that we have read from the Department for Transport suggest alternatives do exist although some may require special authorisation from the Department for Transport.
- **Proposals are disproportionate.** In one week on Bedford Road, 31,000 vehicles were found to be speeding. The biggest cluster of injury accidents has occurred around this location in the last 30 years and yet safety work here is negligible and nothing is planned to protect children walking to Priory school.
- **Criteria unchallenged.** No one has been able to challenge the statement that road humps were the only solution since the criteria used to justify these proposals has not been supplied. It appears the IPC allowed itself to be railroaded into making a decision by Highways and in doing so failed to facilitate an open and honest debate about the proposals.

What we want

- IPC say “*There are many parts of this process which we think could have been handled more effectively*” (see http://www.icklefordpc.com/html/ipc_letter_mar10.html)
- Although most actions were well-intentioned, the only mandate the IPC have is based on two leading and ambiguous surveys.
- We do recognise that speed is a concern, and we do want safe roads, and we do support effective alternatives that work for all road users.
- We respectfully ask the IPC to immediately revoke their endorsement of the entire road hump aspects of the traffic calming scheme pending full and open analysis of all traffic calming solutions and an unbiased re-consultation

I would like to thank the IPC for the opportunity to speak, and I hope that the IPC, Highways, and Police will work together with the village to find an effective solution. Thank you.