

Committee, group or subgroup: **Road Safety Group**

Meeting Date & venue: **Thursday 26th March 2026, 7pm @ SPC Office**

Report author: Cllr A Sharp - chairman

Present: A Sharp (AS), M. Alesi, Josh Melville (JM), Bill McLaughlin (BM), C. Rhodes.

Apologies: M Buller (MB) Speedwatch Rep. and SID data expert), M.Wakeford

Matters Arising: **Wednesday 11th February 2026, 7pm @ SPC Office, 7pm** Minutes agreed.

1. Clerks feedback: No movement for a lot of items despite chasing.

2. SID data– SID is currently out of order and being sent for repairs

Date Road				45-59 60+	day	site

Action: Await repairs

Note - permission at Headcorn Road, Marden Road, Bathurst Road sites. Best sites Headcorn Rd and incoming Marden. **Camera should change every 2 weeks, no longer than 3 weeks in same location.**

Batteries last 5 – 11 days depending on traffic going past i.e. drain quicker on Headcorn Rd

Headcorn Road facing east for 2 weeks then west for 2 weeks (some leeway allowing up to 3 weeks subject to availability to turn the camera.)

Bathurst Road for 1 week (this should ideally be 1 in term time / 1 in holidays)

Marden Road facing west for 1 week then facing east for 2 weeks

3. Speedwatch - The WhatsApp group had a discussion about doing a session, but nothing happened yet.

Action: Suggested clerk could retrieve the equipment, store at SPC and see if WhatsApp group can get a session arranged.

4. Accidents/incidents reported – staplehurstroadinfo@gmail.com website and FB

The Kent County Council Highways Helpline phone number is: 03000 418181

Car hit the Staplehurst Gateway signs coming from Knoxbridge (can we enquire re the being repaired if we can claim on the person's insurance) , Lorry fell off road going to Monks Lake, Marden Road motorbike forced off the road into a telegraph pole.

Headcorn Road surface repairs been done today 26.3.25.

5. Hedges – letter (previously agreed at full council) – AS delivered 3 letters in person. 2 have trimmed their hedge, 1 expressed an inability to pay for someone to cut it back. To be honest neither of the trimmed hedges are cut back to the extent that they should have been.

Hedge letters given out to RSG members so can post through letter boxes – email who you've sent one to. Ask clerk to notify Kent Highways about dangerous ones, (e.g A229 hedges need trimming in Staplehurst as pedestrians struggling to use pavement in some areas).

Action: Suggest we advise KH we have notified the resident and send the residents 2nd letter end of August as its now bird nesting season.

6. Standing item - Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) – Kent Highways contact: **Amy Cartwright – now Stuart?**

Please note ALL HIP requests should be on the HIP document, ideally in order of our preferred importance.

Previous directive that MBC only allow us to have 2 'live' projects and our other projects / wish list are 'archived' is not correct.

March 2026 The clerk informs us that Kent Highways have informed us that our chief items – the crossing and Hawkenbury Bridge – are separate projects as they are too big a project for a HIP. see updated HIP

HIP 1. The Quarter - Bus stop / crossing & 30mph / elderly crossing sign on hill. Cranbrook Rd

Note -Funding for this is from SPC S106 money, not KH, for improvements for bus services – i.e. we really want a safe crossing to the bus stops.

Re work with Amy at Kent Highways, we have never received any paperwork or designs for the updated proposed crossing (smaller than first set of proposals). Group increasingly frustrated about the lack of progress made on this.

18.3.26 AS chased KH, Amy– replied that as per her December email, she has moved departments and 'Stuart' is now in charge. Her email 17 December trying to rearrange a meeting made no mention of this. No contact details or drawings.

28.1.26 Chased KH, Amy - no response.

17.12.25 Teams meeting cancelled by Amy

9.10.25 Teams meeting cancelled due to Amy ill

6.8.25 AS followed up with Amy KH:

1. Discussion that Amy believes the Services (SGN - Gas, BT & water), likely minimally affected by proposed crossing.
- 2) landowner discussion regarding hedge – keen to assist with discussion - later declined to assist.

Hill sign Chased KH Emily 28.1.26, said she would chase up re children crossing sign, no further detail.

Supposed to be a part of this crossing development.



Action: Chase a contact at Kent Highways and get things moving again.

HIP 2 Hawkenbury Bridge



Background – It's a grade 2 listed bridge so can't demolish and rebuild wider. We would need to be gifted some land to enable the widening of the bridge. There is no good, easy electrical provision. (we note there are houses next to it with electricity). Need some way to indicate to traffic going over the railway bridge they could be about to encounter stationary traffic; could this be achieved by a higher traffic light indicator?

There is historical precedence - Wye bridge grade 2 listed bridge, close to a railway crossing, was widened to comply with EU regulations of width and weight needs. However a house was demolished providing the extra space needed. Looking at £100,000 to £150,000 to install power.

Hawkenbury Bridge – No meeting yet arranged between KH, KCC Brian Black and SPC to try to find a way forward.

Action: Chase meeting re Hawkenbury Bridge. Continue to liaise with Headcorn PC and monitor crashes.

Previous efforts

1. Drivers should drive responsibly and toot horn as cross the bridge – not happening
2. Install traffic lights – KH have said no as not a close enough electric source and solar powered lights would not be reliable enough. No Budget for this.
3. Widen or second bridge – bridge is listed so can't change it. KH only own the road bridge not the land either side so would have to buy land - No Budget for this.

As the clerk says KH have advised him that the 2 chief items – the crossing and Hawkenbury Bridge – are too big a project for a HIP we need to change our 3 main HIP items. RSG recommends:

HIP 1. Crossroads – cameras

HIP 2. Bower Walk drop bollard to stop cars accessing pavement

HIP 3. Double yellow lines (DYL) on main road A229 and Chapel Lane extension, single lines (SYL) on Cornforth Close, Chestnut Avenue and Poyntell Road. Hurst Close & Newlyn Drive

- + crossing sign at top of hill – this is supposed to be included in the A229 crossing
- + Sainsburys sign – this comes under maintenance as it is replacing something KH removed

HIP 1. Crossroads – cameras. There may be a CIL joint pot of money we might be able to apply for. KCC Cllr Black had agreed to chase this possibility.

Action: chase up progress and continue to lobby. Question was raised as they would not be monitored but in the event of an incident could be checked / downloaded. Given current complaints it could be a bonanza in fines for MBC!

Crossroads capacity – Is this an official Kent Highways view? How do we check? Traffic survey important to do. Online figures suggest £299 - £350 / £950 + VAT urgent matter

Crossroads capacity – Rob Jarman, in an SPC planning meeting, stated KCC Highways have revised the figures due to change in driver numbers - working from home / teams meetings etc. Therefore the proposed development on Marden Rd, would cause only an additional 3sec wait at traffic lights. Is this an official Kent Highways view? How do we check? RSG recommend a Road Traffic Survey of the crossroads be done again as we have more residents since 2018 & 2021.

2018 one showed that 39.9% of the traffic from were speeding, with 2.84% doing 60+ compared with 2021 9.27% & 0.17% - but this was during covid!

Action: ask clerk to investigate costs of a traffic survey – chase. Online figures suggest £299 - £350 / £950 + VAT 1 week 24 hour - cost? Streetwise 2018 £? Transport Survey systems 2021 £Kent Highways paid for Cranbrook Road and SPC funded Headcorn Road. (Maidstone Rd near Tower House , Station Rd near Free church Churchill by 30mph flash sign , Quarter by flashing 40pmph – near Poppies Headcorn Rd in 2021)

HIP 2. Bower Walk drop bollard to allow emergency vehicles but to stop cars accessing pavement.

HIP 3 Double yellow lines (DYL) on main road A229 and Chapel Lane extension, single lines (SYL) on Cornforth Close, Chestnut Avenue and Poyntell Road. Hurst Close & Newlyn Drive

Kent Highways have previously said that they will not do this as there are no current road safety issues. Also see clerks report above.

Discussed that even after Churchill development is built, this remains on the HIP as there is likely to be a lot of vehicle movement around the site and we believe that there will be safety issues.

Action: continue to lobby KH

Kent Highways Maintenance items (not HIP work) Emily

* leaks and flooding on A229 – top of hill - repaired, by crossing near Kiri's – drains dug out but gullies not so much!

See photos. Kin coffee – need to chase as still a leak.

* road surface repairs needed, e.g. Offens Drive main route by shops at Parade

* Sainsbury Roundabout Chased KH Emily 28.1.26 - said she would chase up - no further detail

* Yellow lines refresh- currently so poor they would be unenforceable on the a229. Only done on corner of Cornforth Close - chase KH maintenance up.

7. AOB:

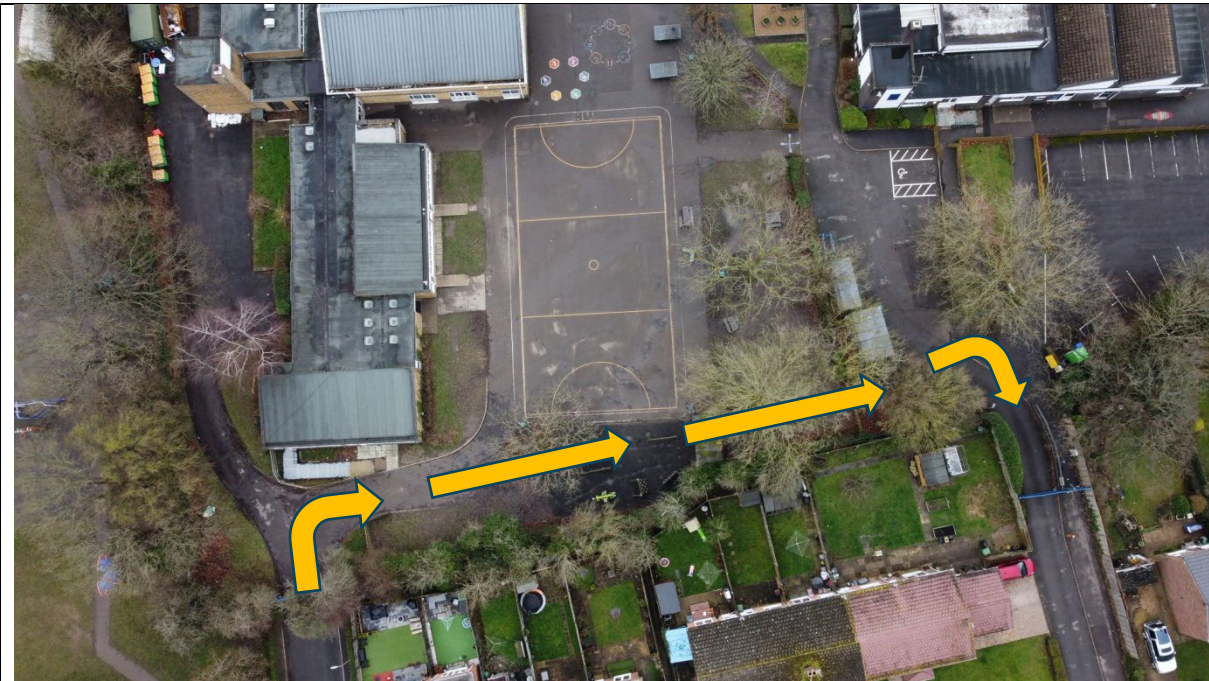
School parking – Borough Councilor Mr Riordan arranged a meeting 9.2.26 at the Primary School, inviting PTA, members of the public, School parents, MBC officers, SPC, School Governors and teachers, KCC Councillor Mr Black and our MP. We await further development following this meeting.

Action: Recommend the overall plan produced by RSG to show the work SPC has completed with KH, goes to full council to be agreed to be sent to the school, MBC, KCC, MP and residents on website and FB page. This will emphasise that SPC still have no powers to enforce parking TRO's, only MBC can. Only KH can install TRO's in line with their budget.

SPC has via the correct process of the HIP, had KH install bollards, double yellow lines, zig zags repainted and no waiting time signs. See below pic



Residents have suggested a through route to drop off children in cars – see below – but this is outside the purview of SPC and would have to be a conversation between the school and KH.



* Water Leaks - Headcorn Rd just past Long Strakes but water co says there isn't a leak!
Also Reeves Close, repaired, next day leaking even worse.

Dates of forthcoming meeting: Next meeting Thursday 30th April 2026, 7pm at the office.