

James MacCleary MP

Proposal for 40 mph speed limit on all unclassified roads

Dear Mr MacCleary

You may be aware that for many years the residents and parish council of Westmeston campaigned for a speed limit on Spatham Lane in East Sussex. During the years that this campaign ran, the volume and speed of traffic increased mainly due to the building of hundreds of new homes to the north of us. Our small lane became a rat run for drivers going north to south and visa versa. Like many rural lanes in the South East and indeed across our country, this lane was never built for the volumes it has to carry and as a consequence, conflict between local users living on these lanes and drivers using them increased.

Very few rural lanes have a safe space to walk and therefore walkers, horse riders and cyclists are in daily conflict with vehicles travelling far to fast for the conditions. We had numerous accidents, and cars clipping each other became a daily occurrence, our litter picking team were picking up wing mirrors and bits of car every month. More seriously we had a number of head on collisions and in 2017 a very serious accident when a rider was hit by a speeding car. The result was a long hospital stay for the rider and the dreadful sight of a horse having to be shot at the side of the road.

Unfortunately, this isn't just Westmeston's story, these incidences are happening everywhere on a daily basis.

Whilst a 40 MPH limit won't solve the problem of volume in our increasingly overcrowded counties, it does bring the overall speed down, increases the quality of life for residents, enables parishes and town councils to bring in traffic calming measures and enables the use of Speedwatch which is a very valuable tool in keeping awareness in the forefront of driver's minds.

We all know that speed kills, but bringing in a national limit on unclassified roads can bring nothing but good. Signage does not need to cost a fortune but the cost must be offset by the saving of lives, the cost to the NHS, police time and the distress caused to families up and down the county.

The change in the speed limit on Spatham Lane has led to a change in driver behaviour and residents and local users are happy to testify to that fact. Care will always be needed while using rural lanes but with vehicles travelling at slower speeds, accidents and casualties will be reduced.

We are asking you to represent the case for this change and continue the work started by your predecessor. We would be very happy to meet with you to discuss this matter.

Kind regards