

Residents comments received regarding the A21 School Route petition

**Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan:
Education and Training task group**

Evidence Document # 2

Note: Comments appear as written by residents in 2016. For reading ease, any obvious spelling mistakes have been corrected, and any abbreviations used have been written out in full and inserted within square brackets.

In 2016, local resident Charlie Epps created a petition about walking to Hurst Green school.¹

The petition wording was: *“I would like to have a safer walk to school for our children. Slow the traffic down by having an extended 20mph zone, make road users more aware that it is a school zone and to create safer footpaths along the A21.”*

The petition had 151 supporters, many residents left comments on their reasons for signing the petition, these comments have been reproduced in this evidence report.

Phyllis Smith

I have walked the pavement between the centre of the village and the school. I find it frightening that HGVs pass so close to the pavement that wing mirrors etc overhang. It would take only a momentary lapse or misjudgement for a pedestrian to be badly injured or worse, so I fully support the request for an extended 20mph zone and safety measures to separate pedestrians from vehicles, to make these pavements safer.

Kevin Tomasetti

Parents and children are encouraged to walk to school which many at this magnificent school do. Therefore, they deserve to walk to school in a safe manner.

Lorraine Clark

The pavement is very narrow and for parents negotiating with a buggy/pram and school aged children it is not always possible to keep them on the pavement.

Angela French

I live opposite the school and am fearful that the volume and speed of traffic will one day catch us out and a child will be harmed. The road is straight and the sign to show increase to 40 mph is in view from by the school so vehicles start to increase speed as soon as they see it. Hoping the other way vehicles don't get down to 20mph ever unless a vehicle has stopped that they have to go around.

Arron Epps

As a HGV driver I use this route pretty much on a daily basis and am often astounded at the speed in which vehicles (HGV's) included travel through this village acts of erratic behaviour by impatient motorists of whom are not content with the 30mph speed limit as it is they feel it necessary to overtake!!!!!! The footpaths are very poor and at the fish & chip shop if two HGV's pass each other the room left for pedestrians is just not enough!!!! The mirror of the northbound vehicles is overhanging the footpath!!!!!! A 20mph zone extending to the entrance to Harper & Ede will help!!!! I have video footage shot from my dash cam of vehicles overtaking me through Hurst Green if required!!!!!!

¹ <https://www.change.org/p/charlotte-epps-a21-school-route>

Kate Thomas

I agree that this bit of the road is dangerous and needs to be slowed.

Seth Gulliver

I can't understand why the parents of this wonderful school have to always fight for the council and highways agency to do the right thing, we fought for the 20mph, half the village had to sit in the A21 just to get a crossing, the bypass has been talked about for at least 20 years and now that the cars have begun to ignore the 20mph we have to fight again surely someone in the council took the job to do the right thing, well now is your chance.

Emma Coleman

I walk to school daily and is so dangerous along A21. The paths [are] so narrow as well it does help.

James Stockdale

I don't want to feel that I'm putting my children and my life in danger every time we walk to or from school. The road is awful with very narrow pavement in places and speeding traffic only a foot or so away from you! Please implement lower speed restrictions than are currently along the road (most traffic that passes us whilst we're walking to school is going a lot faster than 30 miles per hour!). Thank you.

Jeremy Simon

My grandchildren go to school on the A21. We have the same problem in our village and Highways are considering a permanent speed limit throughout the whole village.

Sydney Yeoman

I used to live in the village and agree that that route is so very dangerous.

Sally Unnell

Having walked to the school both as a parent and a childminder it is a very scary route. Over the years I have witnessed road rage incidents and overtaking through the village as there is a straight stretch of road....perfect for those who feel that 30 mph is too slow!

Malcolm Hutchison

We all need to slow down and the be more aware of pedestrians. They don't have steel shells!

Mark Roby

The school run is unsafe along the A21, too many people speed and overtake through the village and something needs to be done about this BEFORE A CHILD IS KILLED!!!! Please do not wait until this happens!

Malcolm Hutchison

We all need to slow down and the e more aware of pedestrians. They don't have steel shells!

Anne Millea

Local children should be able to get to school safely ! This road is a busy A road and needs better restrictions than it has currently.

Felicia Chavasse

I'm signing because it is imperative that children can get to school safely and without stress.

Jody Tier

I live just off the main London road, with two young children the road does need to be made safer.

Francisco Munoz

The A21 is very dangerous and the pavements are not suitable for kids to walk to school.

Kellie Compton

I live on this road and have witnessed many accidents, a couple fatal. There have been near misses with children that have to walk this busy main road every day to get to school. There have been many campaigns for this road to be made safer with speed cameras and traffic calming but unfortunately the villagers were informed that we needed at least 3 fatalities in a 2 year period.??!!!! 3 fatalities too many. Please think carefully and make this a safer road for the parents and children of this community that have to walk to school.

Katherine Clark

I'm concerned about safety and emotional happiness before getting to school.

Melanie Nunn

I want my friend's children to be safe on their walk to school.

Cathy Baker

It's clearly very dangerous for any child - let alone young children to have to walk along a narrow pavement directly next to the busy A21. It only takes one child to trip or one driver not concentrating for there to be a fatality.

Maria Skinner

Traffic doesn't seem to slow down even in the pouring rain so doing this walk every day with a young child and a pushchair is often very stressful. Some places are incredibly narrow and cannot fit both pushchair and child side by side. We are all encouraged to walk to the school because there is a lack of parking at the school and it's good for you to walk yet it's so dangerous! We really need something to change to make this a safer journey!!

Laura Jarvis

Safe footpath for parents and children to walk to school.

Louise Wood

My children both have to walk that route twice a day.

Hannah Osborne

The road is awfully dangerous I've lived her just under a year and there's been 2 crashes right outside my house it's not safe.

Lisa Bugden

I believe that parents of the children that use this route should be able to do it safely.

Emma Day

I used to live in Hurst Green and know the dangers.

Kirsty Rice

I have to walk along here with 4 children cars drive far too fast and there is no safety barrier between the cars and us.

Amanda Guile

For the safety of children and their family's. ... safety first and always!

Sarah Anderson

Both my youngest went/go to the school.it is a perilous journey for mums with very young children and the traffic speed through with no consideration for parents.the path at some points is so narrow that people have 2 squeeze to let people pass.a potential risk for any child.

Marianne Rosewell

I think that children need to get to school without being afraid to walk along the A21, we need a bypass badly.

Anne Wells

When my children were young they had to walk along the A21 in Robertsbridge and know how scary that was.

Edwin Thompson

It is a major arterial road. My grand kids go there and I worry for their safety

Lorane Thompson

My grandchildren attend the school.The main road is so busy and the traffic is constant, please make it right, make it safe it can be done.

Nicola Smith

Every parent and child should feel safe walking to school each day! Such a dangerous road and something should definitely be done to protect all pedestrians

Laura Bilsby

It's scary walking with 3 young children along this road to the school and back especially where the path gets tight and with the massive lorries and cars when they disregard and exceed the speed limit - something definitely needs to be done.

Sarah Collins

I believe everyone had the right to walk to and from school feeling safe. Having walked only a few times I still felt unsafe for my children and myself, could not imagine having to do this a couple of times a day!!! Make children and their safety a priority.

Rhoda Sombrero

My two small granddaughters walk along this stretch of road to school every day and I worry about them as the road is so busy and the pavement so narrow.

Deborah Connell

I want my god daughter's children to be safer on their walk to and from school.

Linda McDuffie

Too often safety zones are employed AFTER a fatality. Let's not learn from an unhappy accident, let's be smart and make the necessary changes BEFORE it's too late!

Melanie Wale

I travel on this road most days and I see children and their parents walking their children to and from school. The cars come flying along this road and it's just a matter of time before someone is hurt or even killed. Let's make it safer for the children and parents of this village.

Kate Langdown-Smith

I recently bought a house on London Road and have watched the children walking to and from school and it worries me everyday that there is going to be an accident. I see parents, who take all the right steps to make sure their children walk safely, harassed and obviously worried about the journey.

The parking outside the school also causes issues and this would no doubt improve should access for children to safely walk through the village be provided.

The road is extremely busy and traffic does have a tendency to flow very fast. There must be an alternative route that would be much safer for local children to use.

As a parent to a 9 year old I have worries about my daughter accessing any local amenities, such as the shop or park, on her own purely due to the fact that the only access is via a pavement adjacent to the main road.

Pete Heasman

There is too much traffic at peak times, sometimes going too fast but always going too close to the kids walking up the very narrow footways - anyone using that route as a pedestrian is vulnerable.

Victoria Davis

I live on the road and very aware of the speeding and my children also attend the school and have to walk along the road.

Sherry Norton

I live on the A21 and know how busy it is. As a driver and will happily drive at 20mph.

Jennie Clease

My children go to school in the village. Drivers constantly disregard the speed limit. Living outside the village we have to drive and park outside the school. My car has been hit on a number of occasions by cars travelling far too fast and with disregard for the fact they are passing a school. In once instance it was hit with such force my wing mirror literally exploded. We cannot accept as a community that there has to be a tragedy before more is done to control the through traffic. This is entirely unacceptable. Extending the 20mph zone, introducing methods to enforce the speed limit and improving the pavements are not a 'nice to have' they are an absolute necessity.

Christy Cole

I live on the A21 and walk my daughter who has autism along this road, it's a nightmare.

Nicola Wetherell

It's seriously dangerous walking children to school Along this road. There's going to be a serious accident before long.

Fiona Northover

I'm signing because the safety of our children is paramount. Parents and carers are encouraged to walk their children to school to help ease the parking and congestion (and the consequent safety issues THAT brings) but understandably, parents would rather deal with the parking hassle than walk and dice with the traffic that hurtles along the A21 in the morning. The pavement is SO narrow in places it can barely call itself a pavement to be honest and it only takes a child to stumble and fall in the way of the speeding traffic for tragedy to occur.... We desperately need the Highways Agency or other authority to get involved and help make the route to school so much safer.

Anne Wrout

The stupid council² cancelled the bye pass.

² Highways England

Candy Cramer

The A21 is a horrid fast road that goes through the middle of a village. Of course cars should go slower.