

Wirral Pedestrians Association Newsletter



Number 1 May 2012

Wirral Pedestrians Association formed

We are pleased to report that a new Association has been set up to campaign for the safety and convenience of pedestrians in the Borough of Wirral. We have a committee of seven, have agreed a constitution and a promotional leaflet, and have opened a bank account. Membership subscriptions have been set at £2 per year (but larger donations will be welcome). Our website is at <http://www.wirralpedestrians.org.uk>.

Everyone interested is warmly invited to our first **Annual General Meeting on Saturday 2nd June 2012 at the Birkenhead YMCA** (56 Whetstone Lane, Birkenhead, Wirral CH41 2TJ) at **10:30 am** (doors open from 10:00 am). For further information on joining the committee or the Association, please see the contact details overleaf.

20 mph speed limits on residential roads

Wirral Council now seems to be making good progress on the rollout of 20 mph speed limits on most residential roads (without speed bumps) on the Wirral. There are plans for 132 areas to have 20 mph limits, to be introduced over the next three years. Maps showing which roads are included and which are excluded were recently published as part of a report to the Council's Cabinet. There are four maps:



West Wirral: <http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50003482/Plan%201.pdf>

Wallasey, Birkenhead: <http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50003483/Plan%202.pdf>

Heswall: <http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50003484/Plan%203.pdf>

Bebington, Bromborough, Eastham: <http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50003485/Plan%204.pdf>

National surveys have shown 20 mph speed limits to be gaining in popularity. The latest (2011) British Social Attitude Survey found that the proportion of people in favour of 20 mph speed limits in residential streets has risen to 73%, and the proportion against has dropped to 11%.

Merseyside Police refusing to enforce 20 mph speed limits routinely

The Merseyside Assistant Chief Constable has written to Wirral Council to say that the Police will not be routinely enforcing 20 mph speed limits. In his letter, Mr Ward describes 20 mph as a "very low speed limit". We are dismayed that the Police are not showing more enthusiasm for reducing road casualties through slower speeds, especially as Merseyside is the fourth worst police area for serious pedestrian casualties per head of population. We also do not understand the basis on which the police feel they can decide which laws are enforced in Merseyside, and which are not. The Assistant Chief Constable quotes the 1999 Department for Transport guidance as the basis for the refusal to carry out routine enforcement, but his letter ignores the updated guidance of 2006, the further update in 2009 and recent statements by government ministers, all encouraging wider implementation of 20

mph speed limits for all the benefits they bring. The Assistant Chief Constable's letter has been published on the Wirral Council website at <http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50003439/20MPH%20Speed%20Limits%20Appendix%201.pdf> It does not appear that Merseyside Police have carried out any public consultation on this question, and so readers might like to give their views to the Merseyside Chief Constable (Mr Jon Murphy), via contact details below.

We are hoping that the policy on enforcement will soon be reviewed and reversed. We would like the policy to be that, while the police clearly cannot monitor every road around the clock, the new speed limits will be enforced to the best of their ability within the resources available.

Progress on illegal parking on pavements

Wirral Council has been working with Merseyside Police and a new information leaflet has been produced to educate drivers about the many problems that they can cause by parking on pavements. This is being printed and will be distributed for use by council and police officers.

We were therefore dismayed to see photographs of a police vehicle parked on a pavement in Greasby appear in the 22 February issue of the *Wirral News*. Merseyside Police initially said that the parking of the vehicle was not illegal, but the Chief Constable later said that the behaviour was "unacceptable". We are hoping for better clarification from Merseyside Police.

Police Community Speedwatch

Merseyside Police and Wirral Council run a scheme whereby volunteers help monitor motorists' speed using speed guns. Speeding motorists are then sent warning letters which also explain the problems that speeding can cause. For more information on becoming a Community Speedwatch volunteer, phone Carlyne Hankey on 0151 606 5448, or email carolyne.a.hankey@merseyside.pnn.police.uk.

Contacts

Chair: Geoff Dormand 07903442632 geoffreydormand@yahoo.com

Secretary: Ian Campbell 0151 625 1449

Treasurer: Victoria Doran

Email: wirralpedestrians@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.wirralpedestrians.org.uk>

Wirral Council Streetscene: Tel: 606 2004, email: streetscene@wirral.gov.uk

Merseyside Police: 0151 709 6010 or 101, or PO Box 59, Liverpool L69 1JD