

## Chideock Parish Clerk

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**From:** Chideock Parish Clerk <chideock@dorset-aptc.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 02 June 2021 11:26  
**To:** Sam Crowe (sam.crowe@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)  
**Subject:** Air Quality in Chideock and the Effect on Public Health

Dear Mr Crowe; Director for Public Health

### **Re: Air Quality in Chideock and the Effect on Public Health**

Chideock Parish Council is certain that you must be fully aware of the air quality issues in Chideock.

The village was declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in May 2007 and West Dorset District Council / Dorset Council Environment department has been monitoring roadside nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) levels since 2005.

Unfortunately, monitoring is all that appears to have been done for the past 14 years since there has been no reduction in the NO<sub>2</sub> pollution since that monitoring started (except for the results showing a reduction in NO<sub>2</sub> levels in 2020 due to the drastically reduced traffic numbers during the pandemic lockdowns).

Apart from that the pollution figures have got progressively worse throughout those 14 years, culminating in Chideock having the highest recorded level of NO<sub>2</sub> anywhere in England in 2019 (although this has not yet been published and agreed by DEFRA). This was recorded on Chideock Hill at 97 micrograms of NO<sub>2</sub> per m<sup>3</sup> air (Source: Friends of the Earth), which is over double the Government set limit of 40 micrograms NO<sub>2</sub> per m<sup>3</sup> air.

This, of course, coincides with the 46% increase in the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) flow from 11,000 vehicles per day in 1991 (Source; 1994 Inspectors Report) to over 16,000 vehicles per day in 2018 flowing through the village (Source: Highways England).

Further to this HE has estimated that there will be an increase of 50% in traffic volumes by 2050.

Yet, sadly, there has been absolutely NO road infrastructure investment from either Highways England or Dorset Council to support this increase in traffic, and NO measures implemented to mitigate the ever increasing air pollution associated with this additional traffic.

The Annual Status Report (ASR) for 2019 has not yet been published by Dorset Council despite criticism from DEFRA over the quality of previous ASRs, and there have been no proposed reduction methods that have got beyond "consideration stage".

Meanwhile the residents of and visitors to Chideock have been subjected to a Public Health disgrace.

The actual effect on an individual's health would be very difficult to ascertain but it is generally accepted medically that exposure to these high levels of NO<sub>2</sub> pollution is detrimental to health and in those more vulnerable with existing respiratory conditions the pollution can have dramatic effects.

Take for example the recent Coroner's ruling in London that air pollution from traffic was a cause of the death of nine-year-old Ella Kissi-Debrah in February 2013.

In addition to NO<sub>2</sub> pollution, which is at least monitored, there is the important question of PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution which was shown in a BBC Countryfile programme broadcast last year to be 130micrograms / m<sup>3</sup> air in the centre of Chideock against a current Government limit of 25 micrograms / m<sup>3</sup> air (and a WHO recommended of just 10 micrograms / m<sup>3</sup> air by 2030). Dorset Council currently refuses to monitor for this pollutant.

This issue is naturally of great importance to the villagers of Chideock and Chideock Parish Council would like guidance from you in giving advice to both residents and visitors regarding pollution. To date both Dorset Council and Public Health England have been reluctant to do so, except in general terms.

Chideock Parish Council is most concerned about the old, the young and those with respiratory problems, such as asthma, and lung and heart conditions and is aware of some general advice such as: -

- Avoid windless days coupled with sunshine
- Avoid strenuous walking or running during these days especially up hill and in areas known to be polluted
- Avoid standing in a bus shelter
- Walk on pavements (Chideock has only pavements on approximately 75% at Main Street – the A35) and further away from traffic (only possible with much wider pavements than those in Chideock).
- If outside in the garden and you smell pollution, go indoors, shut doors and windows
- If badly affected wear a mask that protects from PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

However, Chideock Parish Council would appreciate your “Official” advice in these matters.

Finally, Mr Crowe, as Director of Public Health for Dorset, Chideock Parish Council has two very simple questions for you:

1. Will you please tell the Chideock Parish Council just what is your opinion on the traffic related air pollution in Chideock? and
2. What measures would you recommend to be put in place to immediately start to safeguard the Public Health of this village?

This is especially important as Cllr Ray Bryan’s opinion appears to be that the village can continue to suffer this very real health problem until “widespread adoption of clean technology and other changes to travel habits.” (Bridport News 13th May 2021).

Just when does Dorset Council believe that this adoption and change may actually happen?

And, further to that, Cllr Bryan appears to ignore the impact of PM<sub>2.5</sub>, the reduction of which will not be achieved by the introduction of electric cars.

Chideock Parish Council looks forward to your response in due course.

Yours sincerely

Sal Robinson  
Chideock Parish Clerk