

Our ref: 21728804

Miss Sal Robinson
60 North Allington
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DT6 5DY

Andrew Page-Dove
Regional Director (SW)
Highways England
Brunel House
930 Hempton Court
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Almondsbury
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19 October 2020

Dear Miss Robinson,

A35 Chideock

Thank you for contacting Highways England on behalf of Chideock Parish Council regarding the council's ongoing concerns about the A35.

I understand that the council remains dissatisfied following our previous correspondence, so I have reviewed the issues you have raised in line with our complaints procedure.

Village Flooding

All the gullies in Chideock were cleared or checked to ensure they were clear and running on five occasions between 24 September 2019 and 13 July 2020. This does not include the clearing of gullies, which we do when the need is identified by our inspectors or following feedback from communities. I have not been able to identify any specific reports of blocked gullies at the east end of the village between 13 July and the event on 27 August.

I am sorry if there was any damage or distress resulting from the 27 August 2020 rainfall event. This event was of an extreme intensity and it exceeded the capacity of the drainage system, which was built many years ago and was not designed to accommodate such extreme events.

If any gullies appear to be blocked then please feel free to report these by email to Connecta30@balfourbeatty.com or by phone on 01404 823381

Andy Kirby is the Operations Manager responsible for the A30/A35. If you wish to discuss any specific issues, then he can be contacted by email at andrew.kirby@balfourbeatty.com or by phone on either 01404 823 381 or 07814 969 105

30mph Speed Limit Trial

Speed monitoring has been carried out before and after the start of the trial. This will help us understand the impact of the speed limit on vehicle speeds and pollution levels. The speed limit isn't currently enforced because it is in place for environmental reasons rather than safety. As we are not an enforcement organisation we are reliant upon the police agreeing and undertaking this activity. If the speed limit is reduced permanently, we will talk to Dorset Police again to see if their view has changed.

A35 Chideock Safety & Severance 2019 report

In respect of the adverse pavement cambers, we understand the difficulties that these can cause and sympathise with those residents and visitors affected by them.

Earlier this year we conducted a detailed assessment to review the situation and identify any potential solutions. I attach a copy of our subsequent report 'A35 Chideock Crossfall Footway Assessment', which details the advantages and disadvantages of the options we considered.

Our letter of 4 March 2020, clearly set out that a viable solution was not able to be identified within the existing highway boundary. Other solutions would require measures that would go beyond what is reasonably practicable. Having given careful consideration to our obligations under the Equality Act, it's clear that the physical constraints of the highway prevent us from making any reasonable adjustments to improve the level of the footpaths.

Air Quality

I acknowledge that the NO₂ levels found in Chideock exceed the objectives set out in the government's Air Quality Strategy.

My team have considered a wide range of possible measures to reduce emissions from vehicles on the A35 or reduce pollution reaching nearby properties. We are still in the trial phase of the only feasible measure within the constraints of the village and existing highway so far identified, which is the trial of the reduced speed limit on the western side of the village.

While we are responsible for managing the Strategic Road Network, including the A35, we are not the polluter directly responsible for the air quality in Chideock. It is the individual road users who are ultimately the polluters. Highways England can only affect changes within our remit.

I understand that Dorset Council and DEFRA have previously written to the Parish Council regarding PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ particulates. For clarity, Dorset council do not monitor for either PM_{2.5} or PM₁₀ within their Air Quality Management Areas.

Additionally, we have no exceedances of PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} alongside the SRN in England and measured roadside concentrations elsewhere in the UK of both PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}

are below the UK Air Quality thresholds. Neither w, nor Dorset have any plans to undertake monitoring of either PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} alongside the A35 in Chideock.

Liaison meetings

I understand your dissatisfaction in relation to the level of engagement we are able to have with you specifically. I have a small team that provides liaison with 15 local highway authorities, 28 planning authorities and hundreds of parish councils. Given the size of the region and the number of organisations that we engage with, it is simply not possible to provide dedicated and face to face liaison. It is for this reason that we have offered to meet you along with the A35 Working Group and Chris Loder MP.

I am conscious that you have now written to us on numerous occasions on very similar subjects and this has led to the current complaint. If it would be beneficial, then I would like to offer to have a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Parish Council to discuss your concerns. If this is something you would like to do, then please contact my Route Manager, Andy Roberts, whose contact details are:

andy.roberts@highwaysengland.co.uk or mobile: 07810 527167

Our formal complaints procedure can be found by visiting:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

This response concludes my review at stage 2 of the complaints procedure. If you remain unhappy you can ask us to refer the complaint to an Independent Complaints Assessor (ICA). Please bear in mind the ICA cannot consider matters of policy or legislation.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Page-Dove
Regional Director (SW)