

Moreton Valence Action for Road Safety (MARS)

Progress Report by Lyn Bushell – 10th January 2013-01-08

Since our last Parish Council Meeting the Moreton Valence Action for Road Safety (MARS) group has been busy. We met on 8th November to plan our action for Road Safety Week.

- **Road Safety Week**

Using suggestions from the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council Toolkit it was agreed to make scarecrows and signs to put along the roadside and put signs on the wheelie bins. As wheelie bin signs are usually only available in lower speed limit areas Garry Handley at the Road Safety Partnership made us some specially laminated signs which were stuck to our recycling bins and displayed along the A38 all week.

Highways rep Richard Gray came out to survey the route and advised on where we could safely locate our scarecrows. We held a scarecrow making workshop and competition, judged by Pam Weaver, on Saturday 10th November when the local press photographer came to take photographs. First prize went to Ben Dickenson.

Following a telephone interview with Jo Barber at Stroud Life on Friday 9th November we had articles in local and national press, Stroud Life, the Citizen and The Times.

During Road Safety Week the police were monitoring traffic speed and as a result of our efforts there was a 6% reduction in average speed from 52 mph to 49 mph.

Local schools in Whitminster and Hardwick were provided with information about our Road Safety Week activities and have expressed an interest in getting more involved next year. Pam Weaver has offered to host future MARS meetings to save Parish Council funds and to host the scarecrow making workshop/competition next year.

- **Speed Survey**

We now have the results of the police speed survey. The full report is available by email from Lyn Bushell Lyn@cspireplus.org.uk and will be posted on our website. In summary, average speeds were around 53 mph with maximum speeds of 111 mph by Yew Tree Farm and 132 mph by Gables Farm. 8.6% of all traffic exceeded the speed limit at Yew Tree Farm compared to 15.3% at Gables Farm with 17% on the Southbound carriageway.

- **Road Policing Checks**

On Friday the 14th December 2012 our Road Policing Unit conducted checks on the A38.

- These checks took place from the A38 Cross Hands Roundabout to Whitminster between 0830 hours and 1500 hours.
- The ANPR (Auto Number Plate Recognition) van was in situ on the A38 to carry out checks on number plates from the Cross hands roundabout out of Gloucester and a Traffic car was reading vehicles heading the other way. Anything that was picked up by this system was stopped by the floating road policing vehicles.

- The speed camera van was in situ on this stretch of the A38 to monitor vehicle speeds and other offences along the road in both locations.
- Vehicles were checked for red diesel and the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (<http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/>) were in the large layby to also assist with vehicle checks. VOSA ensures that vehicles are safe to be on the road, they also deal with large amount of offences such as overloading of vehicles.
- Road Policing were conducting these checks under the Drink Drive Banner/Road Safety/Fatal 4. (Fatal 4 is made up of Drinking and Driving, Speeding, Non use of Seatbelts and Mobile Phones.)

I have contacted PCSO Mark Lifton for feedback on the outcome of these checks.

- **Highways**

Parish Councillors attended an open meeting with Highways on 14th November where we met with Richard Gray, our local Highways Manager.

Our bid for a feasibility study was successful and will commence next financial year (April 13). However I have been advised by Richard Gray that his colleague Glenn Dooley has undertaken an initial review of the request , the potential gateways and extending the cycle lanes as we discussed, and they are now `formulating the extent of any further investigations required to allow consideration of any possible proposals'. At this moment we do not expect to be asked for any financial contribution towards any proposed traffic calming measures.

- **Speed Guns**

The police are now in possession of a mobile SDR device. This device can be set up on the road side and provides a visual display of the speed vehicles are travelling. The device can be attached to a hand held device with a 5M cable that also displays the speed. They are happy to train community volunteers in its use and it can be used in 50 mph and national speed limits. This is subject to the volunteers standing well clear of the road, ideally in a garden and reading the speeds via the hand held device. We now need people to come forward to train as volunteers. The training takes about an hour and entails a power point presentation and a demonstration of how to use the equipment.

- **Local Support**

Following informal meetings between Parish Councillors and local businesses we are confident of their support for our campaign.

- **Meetings attended**

Lyn Bushell attended the Stroud Road Safety partnership meeting on 31st October to report on our campaign. Maz Smith, Roger Dickenson and Colin Allwood attended the Severn Voice meeting on 18th December where neighbouring parishes expressed support for our campaign.