REPORT ON PARKING ISSUES ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE GREEN AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION THROUGH THE HIGH STREET.

Following a number of complaints to the Parish Council about parking issues, adjacent the Village Green, Cllr Andy Anderson volunteered to look into the reported problems with the view of trying to establish possible solutions. Cllr Anderson's Terms of Reference were to investigate and report back to the Parish Council with recommendations. In addition to the Village Green Cllr Anderson was also asked to look into the congestion and parking issues around the High Street.

THE VILLAGE GREEN

Concerns had been raised regarding the increase in the volume of vehicles that were being parked around the Village Green. On occasions this was causing disturbance to local residents by vehicles being parked across or close to driveway accesses thus causing access and egress issues with the owners of those properties. In addition inconsiderate parking was also reported, by the residents, as creating problems for traffic servicing local businesses. Finally, concern was also expressed regarding pedestrian safety, especially around school time, where parked cars were obscuring the visibility for passing cars, who on occasions were also speeding, this adding to the possibility of an accident. The village green is located within a 20 mph zone.

I conducted a number of visits (around 50+), to the village green at various times of the day in order to see for myself the issues experienced by the village green residents. It quickly became obvious that the village green is a popular place to park vehicles; however, this was mainly due to the unavailability of parking spaces within the Parish Council car park. Nevertheless, I often witnessed inconsiderate parking where drivers had parked their vehicles without much consideration for other road users or the local residents (this included parking on junctions and parking adjacent to or opposite driveways, consequently making it difficult for other road users). Despite this, it should also be noted that there are no parking restrictions within the village green.
In addition to my many visits to the village green I also met with some of the village green residents and canvassed for suggested solutions from local residents within Curry Rivel, through CRN and the CR Website. I received a number of emails with suggestions to assist in the solution.

Possible solutions:
1. Impose parking restrictions within the village green.
    a. This solution is expensive, would require extensive consultation prior to it being approved (no guarantee that it will be approved), will be subject to a Traffic Regulation Order and will only serve to move the issues to another part of the Village. **This solution is not recommended**.
2. Installation of painted white lines.
    a. The exploration of this solution would only be possible for implementation outside the multiple car access in water street. The painting of white lines outside individual properties is only approved in exceptional circumstances and therefore is not likely to be a suitable solution for those bordering the village green. **This solution is not recommended.**
3. Explore the provision of an additional car park within the village to accommodate the increase in traffic loading around the village.
    a. This solution is subject to identifying available land and then purchasing it for a car park. This could prove expensive but could be a long term solution to the problem. It is **strongly recommended** that the Parish Council continue to explore this possibility?

4. Write to local businesses to ask them to remind their staff to be considerate when parking their vehicles outside of an allocated car park. (Although I am currently assured that they do)
   a. Whilst new and popular businesses provide employment and encourages visitors to our community they also bring with them the mode of transport to get to here; this is unavoidable and with our current lack of parking will result in both employees and patrons parking in adjacent residential streets. This is perfectly acceptable provided they park legally and with consideration for other road users and adjacent residents.
5. Encourage local residents to report incidents of obstruction to the local police using the 101 non-emergency number.
   a. Obstructing someone's access to their property by parking across driveways and/or parking in a manner that prevents an owner from getting out of their property should be reported to the appropriate authorities by using 101. This will permit the police to take the appropriate action against the offending vehicle owner and will hopeful discourage future episodes of inconsiderate parking. Similarly illegal parking, such as on school zigzags, should also be brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities. **Recommended**.
6. Although not a solution to the problem a possible contributor to reducing the speed around the village green would be an increase in the frequency of speed watch within the vicinity of the Village green.
7. Write to the Devon and Somerset Police Force to request a visit to the area to target illegal parking and take the appropriate action. **Recommended**

I will continue to monitor the situation within the village green and will maintain a momentum to identify a suitable area in which we can park cars. As the village increases in size this will become more of an issue in the future and we therefore must strive to establish a solution that is acceptable to all.

Main Street
There were surprisingly few emails relating to the traffic issues within the high street. Those emails that were received concentrated on inconsiderate drivers driving in the opposite direction and failing to give way, the difficulty in passing through this area when cars are parked on the south side of the street, occasional speeding traffic and the problems faced by pedestrians crossing the street. The issue with Main Street is the lack of visibility of oncoming vehicles from both directions due to the layout of the road, buildings, adjacent parked cars and the narrowing of the road in places. Ironically, the parking of cars to the south side of the main streets currently acts as a traffic calming measure thus reducing the speed of traffic; however, this also contributes to the lack of places for motorists to pull in in order to give way to traffic in the opposite direction. When few or no cars are parked here then speed tends to increase through this portion of the street.
There are perhaps many solutions that could be adopted in an attempt to placate those that believe problems exists within this stretch of the road; however, adopting one solution over another may have additional impacts on the community that could prove counterproductive overall. I recommend that should we wish to peruse change to this part of the road then professionals should be consulted and we should have a clear understanding as to what we are trying to achieve. Whilst it is generally accepted that our main priority is road safety, there are a few reported issues with this site that may not be resolved by adopting a single solution; Do we want to:
Improve the flow of traffic through this part of the village by providing passing places?
Provide a safe place for pedestrians to cross?
Provide safe parking areas for residents whilst maintaining an orderly flow of traffic through this part of the village?
Consider single way traffic, controlled by traffic lights?
Or do we want to do something completely different or nothing at all?