

Transport and infrastructure issues
Bold & Clock Face Action Group

Good Morning / Afternoon

My name is Beverley Foy I have lived in Bold for 21 years. During the last four years I have become more aware of transport and infrastructure related problems on Gorsey Lane, Travers Entry and Neills Road.

Looking specifically at Gorsey Lane, I was aware it was a fast road and it certainly has earned that reputation.

This road has seen several road traffic collisions and fatalities, even though the speed limit has been reduced to 40mph due to ongoing issues with speeding. Parts of the road are in a poor condition and for long stretches, it is poorly lit with overhanging trees and in some cases the road is not lit at all.

Due to the frequency of speeding cars/motorbikes it is only a matter of time before another accident occurs, ironically one occurred Monday on March 22 this year, where two vehicles collided mid-afternoon resulting in one leaving the road and ending up in a farmer's field. More recently on Wednesday 12 May this year a young boy was knocked off his scooter on Clock Face Road the road was closed for two hours while he was treated. The incident was so serious that an air ambulance had to land nearby. This shook the local community and has served to highlight ongoing issues regarding the current infrastructure.

I am aware that Bold Parish Council have been working with Merseyside Police to provide some speeding enforcement. At weekends though Gorsey Lane quite literally turns into a racetrack for motorcycles. The speeds and noise generated from these machines is unbearable they do not have any consideration for other road users. I have witnessed time trialling using Hall Lane to Clock Face Country Park as a timed length of road. This really is a crazy pastime.

Just imagine what it would be like with all the new proposed houses with an average of 1.8 vehicles per household that equals 6568 extra vehicles in

Bold. That doesn't seem very sensible to me with the extra pressures that will be placed on an already unsuitable transport system.

So Just where is the infrastructure. In February 2013 a planning application was submitted for 38 houses on a former derelict site on Gorse Lane. The application was refused by both St Helens Council and then the Planning Inspectorate accessibility being one of many issues.

In January this year Gorse Lane was closed for two weeks due to severe flooding. It was that bad that Merseyside Fire Fighters had to rescue people from their stranded vehicles.

At one point there were four abandoned vehicles left in the floodwater and even one of the recovery trucks became stuck. Seeing specialist firefighters wading waist deep through water to rescue people on Gorse Lane was a first for me. I have never seen anything like it before in Bold.

Travers Entry is also a common area for flooding, and it happens regularly, especially after heavy rain the drains cannot cope.

An increase in new properties will only make this situation worse that I'm sure. There are examples of this around several new estates in the area including Travers Entry (adjacent to 4HA), Lowfield Lane and Warrington Road.

Another area of concern for me is the Footpath on Gorse Lane which leads to Neills Road they are very narrow and not fit for purpose.

Only last week I saw a young woman pushing a pram in the road as her pram was too big for the footpath, so how wheelchair users are supposed to use the path is beyond me. Access should not be restricted due to disability especially on well used routes.

The footpath situation is compounded by the fact that Neills Road [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has no footpath at all for over 100 meters [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I don't it's just not safe.

The other end of Gorse Lane by Clock Face is a different story, but it also has several problems with many side access roads having very little visibility

when entering Gorse Lane. It's a nightmare trying to gain access to the main road. Most houses do not have off road parking.

When I visit the Post Office on Clock Face Road, I always take a detour and walk through Clock Face Country Park.

I do not feel safe on the narrow and undulating footpath. Even in inclement weather I do not drive as parking is scarce and to be honest it's so difficult to find a spot it won't be long before the surrounding estate of Hall Street and Crawford Street is gridlocked.

Gorse Lane is the main arterial route into Neills Road the home of Hi-Tech Steel Services this is a major engineering company which manufactures steel drums for offshore use. These drums are huge and require specialist transport. The size of the lorries which pass my road carrying steel to produce the drums is a sight as often they need a police escort which requires the road to be closed.

Only last week a lady was telling me that her house on Gorse Lane has bricks shearing off the front of her property through the sheer weight and regularity of the lorry's. These roads are not fit for purpose and that is something I witness every day and it really concerns me.

Ironically these lorries cannot travel through Burtonwood which is close to the motorway as there is a 7.5-ton weight restriction the other routes are impassable.

I feel I am highlighting the genuine concerns of residents and I say this as I like to cycle but would never cycle down Travers Entry, Neills Road or Gorse Lane.

It would be madness to even attempt to ride on those roads.

The area has received quite a bit of attention from Merseyside Police with speeding operations and one which was aimed at equine users.

This was called 'operation safe pass' and several people were prosecuted for careless driving whilst overtaking and getting too close to horses that were being ridden. We see lots of horse riding in Bold.

The equestrian sector in Bold is massively limited by the lack of bridleways forcing riders to use the road network. This would fine if the infrastructure in place was suitable but with most roads in the area having parked cars on both sides this causes lots of issues for riders and car drivers. Lots of riders travel outside of the area to work their horses due to this unsuitability of the infrastructure and dangers faced.

You may not be aware that mental health is a big issue in St Helens, as we have one of the highest suicide rates in the country. The Covid pandemic has highlighted the need for green open spaces for mental wellbeing.

If these well used fields are built upon there will be a huge restriction on access to green spaces and walking routes that have been a vital resource for people in the last few years. These areas should be protected and used for the benefit of the people of St. Helens.