



Report 28th January 2021

Aspley Heath Speeding and Parking Survey 2020/21

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Executive Summary

SPEEDING

- Speeding was seen as a problem by over 80% of respondents.
- Overhanging hedges forcing pedestrians into the path of speeding vehicles was highlighted in the comments, with stronger enforcement requested.
- The speed control measure that had the strongest support was 20mph speed limit (>70% agree or strongly agree)

PARKING

- Slightly over 50% of respondents felt there were parking issues prior to March 2020, however over 90% of respondents agreed that parking problems have become worse since March 2020
- Parking issues occur the full length of Church Road, with the most serious issues occurring at the top and bottom of Church Road.
- Parking issues also affect residents emerging from Heath Lane, Silverbirches, Narrow Path and the top and bottom of Sandy Lane.
- The most popular suggested measure to control parking was double-yellow lines both the junctions with side roads (>60% strongly agree, 15% agree) and along narrow sections of Church Road (>50% strongly agree, 18% agree). However residents of the narrow sections were concerned that they would be unable to park. Some form of residents' parking, carefully enforced, that would also act as traffic calming was suggested.

IMPACT OF VISITORS TO THE WOODS

- The increase in visitors to the woods have resulted in many additional negative environmental impacts on the woods (litter, toilet paper, overflowing bins, churned up footpaths and byways, overcrowding, lack of respect for other woods users and other road users).
- One respondent regularly detected the smell of cannabis in the woods when walking in the evening and was concerned that this drug use would attract drug-dealers.
- One resident reported that her dog had found eaten some cannabis in the woods, become ill and had to be rushed to the vets. Greensands vets said that this was an increasing problem.
- Visitors are causing a nuisance by knocking on the door of Aspley Heath Lodge asking to use the toilets. Also, the enormous churned up puddle on the BOAT is directly outside Aspley Heath Lodge making it hard for the owners to drive out.
- The Bedford Estates were cited by several respondents as being responsible for the increase in cyclists, and it was suggested that they should provide parking and toilet facilities to mitigate the problem.
- The creation of additional parking at the Lonslade Lane end of Church Road and the redevelopment the disused Steetly works (including café and toilets) was suggested to mitigate the problems caused by increasing usage of the woods.

Background

Aspley Heath is a small parish of some 350 households. It consists of Church Road, Sandy Lane, Heath Lane, Silverbirches, one side of Hardwick Road and Mews. Sandy Lane runs all the way up the hill, turning into a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) on land owned by the Bedford Estates. There is no through road, though 4x4 vehicles can manage the bumpy terrain. There are numerous small roads and lanes running off Church Road, but none of these join up with any other road. Thus, there is only one way for vehicles to drive into or out of Church Road, and that is via the double roundabout at the bottom of the hill where Aspley Heath joins Woburn Sands High St., to the North, the Woburn Road to the South and Aspley Hill in Aspley Guise to the East. Despite its small size and the fact that all the roads in Aspley Heath are essentially dead ends, speeding and inconsiderate parking have caused problems, and these problems are becoming visibly worse.

Residents have repeatedly raised issues concerning parking and speeding on Church Road with Aspley Heath Parish Council (AHPC) over the years. Recently AHPC has received increasingly urgent complaints from residents that inconsiderate parking by visitors using the woods is preventing them from exiting their driveways, or is making it dangerous to emerge from Narrow Path, Heath Lane or Silverbirches onto Church Road. Attempts to request that visitors park more considerately have been met with aggressive replies.

In response to residents' concerns voiced in previous years, AHPC has given 6 motorway grade traffic cones to St Michael's Church to put out to ensure that passing places are reserved on church service days. More recently in response to current concerns from residents, AHPC have put traffic cones at the top of Church Road to discourage visitors from parking at the junctions between Church Road and Heath Lane, and also between Church

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Road and Sandy Path. The Parish Council also organise periodic speed surveys each year both to gather information on whether or not there is speeding on Church Road, and to discourage speeding.

The traffic cones have had some success at the top of Church Road, but when used at the Church, it has been reported that people have sometimes got out of their cars and simply moved the cones in order to park. The cones at the top of Church road seem to be preventing parking, as intended. The speed survey has not shown any evidence of speeding, but this may be because the survey group are required to position themselves in a very obvious place and it may be that drivers slow down when they see the speed survey.

The subject of speeding and parking has been discussed at many PC meetings, along with possible solutions such as speed humps, double-yellow lines at junctions, residents parking permits, “20s plenty” signs. However before attempting to initiate any changes, the PC decided to ask Aspley Heath residents for their views.

The Speeding and Parking Survey

AHPC published an online Speeding and Parking Survey to coincide with the AHPC Winter Newsletter. The newsletter contained a link to the survey on the front page and was distributed to residents. In addition, the link was publicised on the Aspley Heath Parish Council Facebook page, and promoted twice. A paper version of the survey was also created for people who were unable to use the online version. Appendix A contains the text of the survey.

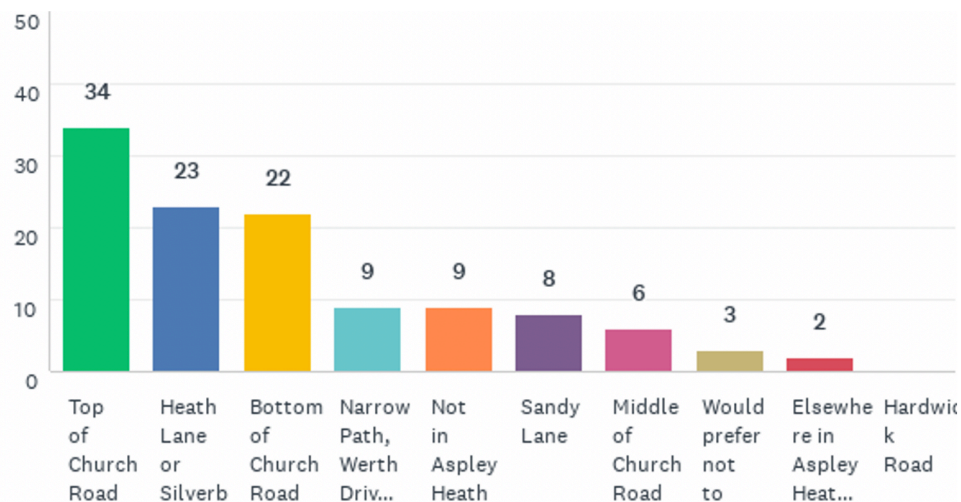
Survey findings

The survey generated 116 responses and of these 67 people provided free text comments at the end of the survey. We have analysed these comments and used them to expand on the responses to survey.

Question 1 asked where respondents lived. This was designed to help identify any patterns in the issues faced by people living on different parts of the Heath, and to identify how many non-residents were completing the survey. Out of the 116 responses, 9 came from people who did not live on the Heath, and 3 preferred not to say. This is a good response rate and suggests that the survey responses are reasonable reflection of the views of a good portion of the Aspley Heath community.

Q1: Where do you live?

Answered: 116 Skipped: 0

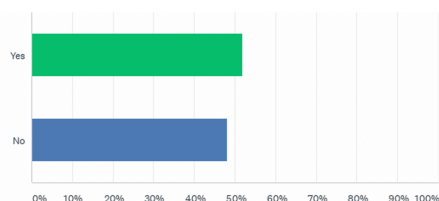


Parking issues increasing since March 2020 lockdown

Questions 2 and 3 asked about issues with parking, specifically was parking an issue prior to March 2020, and have parking issues got worse since March 2020.

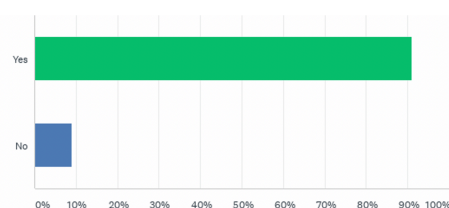
Q2: Prior to March 2020, was parking a problem in Aspley Heath?

Answered: 112 Skipped: 4



Q3: Have parking issues become worse since March 2020?

Answered: 112 Skipped: 4



March 2020 was when the first COVID-19 lockdown was imposed. At time of writing, we are now experiencing lockdown number 3. In the absence of alternative leisure activities there has been a definite upswing in visitors coming to the woods and this has brought with it increasing parking problems, particularly at weekends and during fine weather.

Responses to the second question on whether there were increased parking problems after March 2020 demonstrated a strong consensus (>90% agreed) that parking problems had increased.

These parking problems were demonstrated on 22nd November – a fine Sunday, when visitors came out in droves to use the woods. One Aspley Heath Parish Councillor cycled around and counted the cars at 11:50am

- Top of Church Rd, from No.80 to the top: 56 parked cars
 - Carpark area at top of hill down to the BOAT:104 parked cars
 - Church road: 20 cars manoeuvring and trying to park
- TOTAL: 160 cars

Turning right out of the bottom of Church Road onto the Woburn road there were:

- Woburn road left side: 77 parked cars
- Bikers' car park on Woburn Road: 40 parked cars

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- Lonslade lane: 65 parked cars (not counting those at the bottom of the BOAT)

TOTAL: 182 cars

The parish Councillor did not continue to the Bow Brickhill church, so there were likely more parked cars than the 342 that were included in this count.

In their survey comments, as well as in comments directly to Parish Councillors, respondents highlighted a range of other negative impacts:

- Dog waste bins now permanently full to overflowing due to increase in visitors to woods.
- Much litter left in woods
- Cannabis-taking in woods in the evenings
- Discarded cannabis being eaten by dogs who then became very ill.
- Enormous puddle on BOAT due to turning vehicles makes it difficult for residents of Aspley Heath Lodge to drive on and off their property.
- Visitors knocking on the door of Aspley Heath Lodge asking to use the toilet.
- Grass verges at top of Church Road become mud
- Church Rd made dirty from mud at top
- Dogs out of control not on leads
- Speeding cyclists
- Aggression and stand-offs occurring with cars refusing to give way

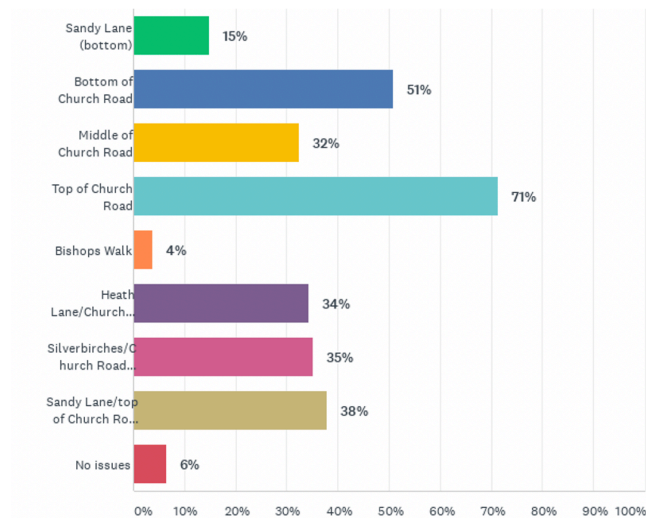
Visitors have always parked to use the woods, but the numbers are increasing and causing huge problems. A key question for which we do not have the answer is, now that people have discovered the woods due to the closure of all other leisure activities, will they continue to come once society returns to normal? If they do so, are there any measures we can take to mitigate the problems this is causing.

Parking issues affect the full length of Church Road and side roads

Question 4 asked “In your experience, which areas experience parking issues? Please select all that apply.”

Q4: In your experience, which areas experience parking issues? Please select all that apply

Answered: 108 Skipped: 8



From these responses, it is evident that parking issues affect the length of Church Road as well as the sideroads. Respondents used the comments section to provide detailed descriptions of the sorts of problems caused by inconsiderate parking. Some of the recurring themes are listed below:

- Parking on junctions reduces visibility
- Danger for cars emerging from Heath Lane/Silverbirches
- Issues with builders and tradespeople parking inconsiderately
- Danger for cars emerging from the junction of Narrow path and Church road
 - parking up the hill means cars have to drive on the wrong side of the road
 - drivers often gather speed coming down
 - by time cars get to Narrow Path junction, on wrong side of road and travelling at speed.
 - very dangerous to pull out of Narrow Path or one of the adjacent driveways
- People park on blind corners increasing risk for residents trying to emerge onto Church Road
- Poor parking causes makes it difficult, and sometimes impossible for residents to leave their homes and get out of their driveways by car.

There was also concern that safety was affected:

- Many respondents cited the danger that emergency vehicles such as fire engines and ambulances would be unable to pass

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- One resident describes being unable to get an ambulance out to their 94-year old father due to parked cars
 - A Sandy Lane resident described how visitors parked in Sandy Lane to go walking in the woods, but left their cars such that emergency vehicles could not pass. Because the car owners were walking in the woods, it was impossible to get the cars moved.
- One respondent said that emergency vehicle access was impossible at top of Church Road with Cars parked all down one side and cars queueing to get in and out of car park at top.
- Several respondents felt that we must do something before a serious accident occurred

Sandy Lane residents who responded to the survey were extremely concerned about parking:

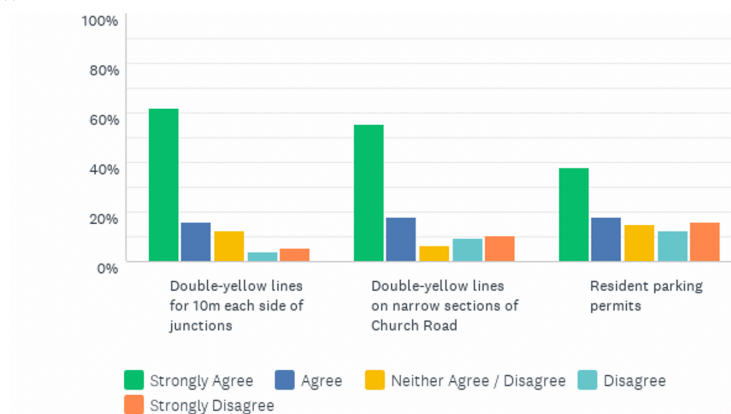
- Scout hut development has removed the unofficial facility to turn around so larger delivery vehicles are reversing onto church road or turning in a resident's driveway
- Redevelopment of 3 church road restricted parking availability on Sandy Lane further.
- Parking at the top junction of Sandy Lane and Church Road blocks access for residents of Sandy Lane. Visitors do not realise, or care, that there are houses on Sandy Lane.
- If there were more restriction for parking on Church Road this would push more parking in Sandy Lane, with all the attendant problems
- Parking is now occurring at bottom of Church Rd with visitors cutting through Narrow Path to get to the woods.

Majority are in favour of double-yellow lines

Question 5 aimed to assess the level of support from residents for parking measures that the Parish Council could realistically pursue. Many respondents suggested speed humps in their comments. We considered speed humps and other traffic calming, but the likelihood of persuading the Council to fund this for a road such as Church road is very slim, so we omitted these options.

Q5: Which of the following parking measures would you support for Church Road?

Answered: 107 Skipped: 9



Strongest support was for double-yellow lines either side of junctions (>60% strongly agree, 15% agree). There was also support for double-yellow lines on the narrow sections of Church road, although residents living on those sections expressed concern in their comments that they would be unable to park. There was some support for resident parking permits. In their comments, some residents recommended double-yellow lines around the junctions with side roads. One respondent thought the majority of Church Road should be double-yellow. However, others suggested that this would just “push the problem elsewhere”.

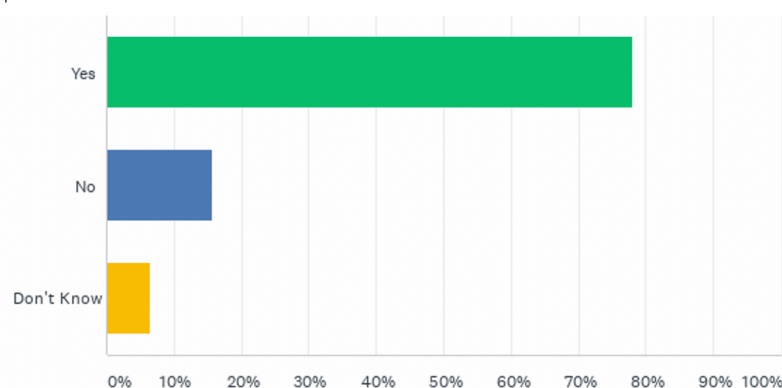
Concerning residents’ permits, one respondent asked the question “Where will church goers park?”. It was also felt that it was “important to protect parking for residents by administering such that permits not issued without legitimate reason”

Speeding is an issue

Question 6 asked whether respondents felt that speeding was a problem on Church Road.

Q6: Do you feel that speeding is an issue on Church Road?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 7



The response was overwhelmingly that there is a problem with speeding, with almost 80% replying Yes. In their comments, respondents described some of the impacts:

- Danger to pedestrians from cars mounting verges
- Several respondents suggested that parking on pavement should not be allowed

- Pavement parking forces pedestrians onto road with speeding vehicles

Cut back hedges that overhang the pavement

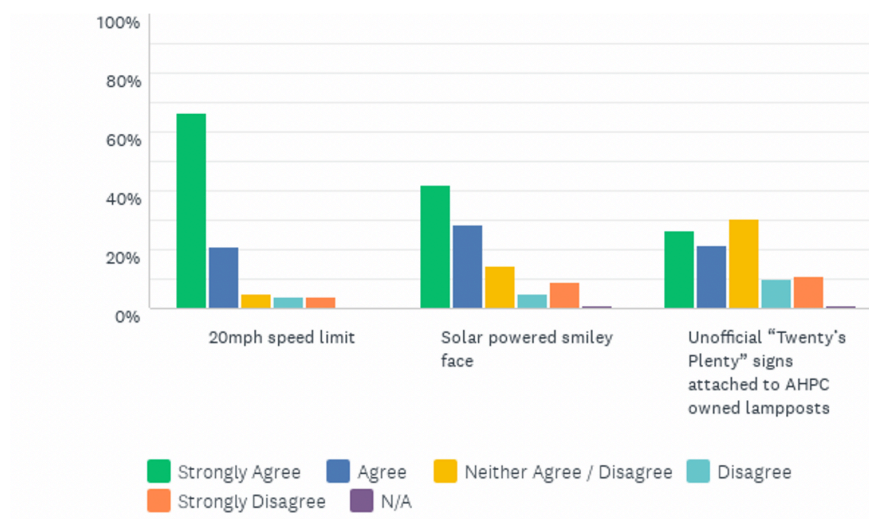
Five respondents commented on the problems of overhanging hedges “stealing half the pavement” and forcing pedestrians, some with buggys or prams, to walk in the road in the path of speeding vehicles. It was suggested that AHPC instigate stricter enforcement on cutting back hedges, though one respondent did point out that AHPC have failed to resolve the problem of overhanging hedges in the past 30 years.

Put in place a 20mph speed limit

Question 7 asked what speed control measures had the most support.

Q7: Which of the following speeding measures would you support for Church Road?

Answered: 108 Skipped: 8



There was strong support for a 20mph speed limit. As Woburn, and Woburn Sands have a 20mph limit, it may well be possible to get one for Aspley Heath. The comments highlighted both positive and negative considerations :

- speeding is more urgent to address than parking
- 20mph might encourage drivers to slow
- 20mph limit is justified by absence of pavement on East side of Church Road.
- Slower speeds are much safer for pedestrians and cyclists
- Polite notices are ineffective

In their comments, several respondents thought a 20mph limit would probably be ineffective. Others pointed out that we “need consequences for non-compliance”, i.e. enforcement. One highlighted that it would cause “unnecessary street clutter and visual pollution”, another felt that residents of Aspley Heath should not be trying to impose restrictions that were essentially aimed at stopping others from enjoying the woods.

Suggestions from Comments

Many respondents took time to suggest solutions to the parking and speeding problems. We have collected them together from the comments and list them here.

- Develop parking at old cement works, Steetly (2 comments)
- Encourage residents to use own off-street parking if they have it.
- Provide residents' parking on problem sections that can then double as a form of traffic calming.
- Gated community
- Improve parking on other side of woods to ease pressure on Church Road side
- Limit Church Rd to 7.5 ton trucks.
- Provide a parking ticket warden
- Provide better parking at top of hill
- Put a no Parking sign at top end of Sandy Lane
- Put up no parking signs.
- Restrict parking to pavement side of road
- Signage at top and bottom of BOAT to prevent cars from parking both sides
- Speed bumps
- Bedford Estates introduced cycle paths that have increased traffic to the woods, they need to supply parking on their land to accommodate the extra traffic

Conclusion

Aspley Heath is experiencing speeding and parking issues. The responses to this survey suggest that there is support for a 20mph speed limit. The responses also highlight the extent of the problems arising from the increasing visitors to the woods (inconsiderate parking and anti-social behaviours). There is support for double-yellow lines, and certainly putting double-yellows around the junctions with the side roads where it is becoming dangerous could well be the solution. The survey responses have provided AHPC with information about the extent of the problem, and a range of potential solutions.

Appendix A – Survey questions

Aspley Heath Parish Council would like to hear the views of parishioners on issues around traffic and parking in the parish. These questions relate specifically to Church Road and surrounding lanes. We have had separate feedback from residents of Hardwick Road and are now engaging with MK Council about traffic issues there.

Since COVID has triggered the closure of many leisure venues and the cancellation of many physical activities, we have seen more visitors to the woods, and pressure on parking has increased. Many are unaware of the challenges faced by residents getting into and out of driveways and sideroads and park inconsiderately.

Please take a few minutes to complete this short survey to inform our priorities in trying to address Church Road traffic and parking issues.

* 1. Where do you live? Please choose one of the following

- ☐ Sandy Lane
- ☐ Bottom of Church Road (No.1 to level with Cottage No.52 and Laurel House)
- ☐ Middle of Church Road (No 54 up to Werth Drive)
- ☐ Top of Church Road (Above Werth drive to top)
- ☐ Narrow Path, Werth Drive, Holly Walk or Bishops Walk
- ☐ Heath Lane or Silverbirches
- ☐ Hardwick Road
- ☐ Elsewhere in Aspley Heath Parish
- ☐ Not in Aspley Heath Parish
- ☐ Would prefer not to provide

2. Prior to March 2020, was parking a problem in Aspley Heath?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. Have parking issues become worse since March 2020?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

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4. In your experience, which areas experience parking issues? Please select all that apply

- ☐ Sandy Lane (bottom)
- ☐ Bottom of Church Road (No.1 to level with Cottage No.52 and Laurel House)
- ☐ Middle of Church Road (No 54 up to Werth Drive)
- ☐ Top of Church Road (Above Werth drive to top)
- ☐ Bishops Walk
- ☐ Heath Lane/Church Road junction
- ☐ Silverbirches/Church Road Junction
- ☐ Sandy Lane/top of Church Road junction.
- ☐ No issues

5. Which of the following parking measures would you support for Church Road?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Double-yellow lines for 10m each side of junctions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Double-yellow lines on narrow sections of Church Road	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resident parking permits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To capture the views of residents on speeding on The Heath

* 6. Do you feel that speeding is an issue on Church Road?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't Know

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7. Which of the following speeding measures would you support for Church Road?

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree / Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
20mph speed limit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Solar powered smiley face	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unofficial "Twenty's Plenty" signs attached to AHPC owned lampposts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Residents opportunity to feed back any other thoughts

8. Do you have any further comments or suggestions on parking or speeding

Appendix B – Comments

Question 8 was a free text box to allow residents to add any suggestions or comments they might have. Sixty-seven people responded and the result was a rich collections of views and suggestions that is reproduced (anonymised) below.

Comments
Stronger requests for hedges that overhang pavement Church Road be kept cut back.
Provide better parking area for woodland users at top of church road .
It's not clear who has right of way at the junction between Heath Lane and the top of Church Road - those exiting Heath Lane or those exiting the woodland car park. And when cars are parked on the left at the top of Church road, you can't see if there's traffic coming up. It can be risky pulling out.
Speed bumps to force cars to slow down and double yellow lines to prevent there being no space for cars to pass when visitors to the heath park all along Church. Also causes difficulty with certain residents exiting their driveway.
Speeding is a major issue and as Drivers currently don't follow 30mph speed limit - I don't believe they will adhere to a 20mph limit. Speed bumps are required. As for parking - it has become a dangerous area to walk due to the number of cars parked and venturing up and down the road trying to pass on narrow roads. There is a lack of respect and cars will drive up over grass verges to get by a few seconds faster than it would be to wait. The grass verges towards the top of church road are mud banks and the road needs cleaning more frequently as a result. Permits would be good for residents of Church road or double yellow lines towards the top as the cross roads (Sandy Lane (top) Church Road and Heath Lane have too many blind spots when parked vehicles are parked on Church Road and Sandy Lane - despite this being a single road track. In addition to this - could we have some signs up reminding walkers that dogs should be on leads at all times. Everyday o experience dogs out of control off the lead
No parking on pavement should be allowed, even for residents.
Improved parking on other side of the woods (golf course side) which would not be accessed from our residential street would ease church road parking/traffic
standing water in parking area for woods means lots of slippery mud/dirt spread out at top of Church Road making the road very slippery
Current parking issues due to covid and building works are temporary. No need to panic.
Parking could be restricted to the side of the road where the path is. It is quite difficult when people park on the other side and I dread to think sometimes how an ambulance or fire engine would get past in an emergency
Parking has been absolutely terrible since the first lockdown and while we would hope that there would be some relief to this now the lockdown measures have been slightly lifted, I do think that the woods will continually be a key resource for people (living outside of aspley Heath). Parking will only get worse. Double yellow lines and resident parking will help alleviate this problem.
If we introduced resident parking permits where would the visitors to the church park? This is an important issue as the Church is the reason for the area being a conservation area and is a vital part of our community. Yellow lines will just push the problem somewhere else. What we need to be looking at is providing better parking at the top of the hill and introducing a lower speed limit along the road so that drivers can become more aware and courteous to other road users.
Parking is the main concern for me, mainly on pavements and at junctions. Both are very dangerous, pavement parking forces pedestrians onto the road, often with buggies, children or dogs and junction parking restricts visibility. I favour double yellows at junction and also on narrow section to prevent pavement parking. In addition, we should have enforceable signage to stop pavement parking. With increased visitor numbers, it should be easy to walk on the

pavement. Additionally, residents should have stricter enforcement on keeping hedges cut back on both sides.
Church Road should also be limited to 7.5 ton trucks maximum. Polite notices that rely on goodwill are of no use and restrictions must be legally enforceable. The type of person that does not respect the nature of the road will not respect goodwill notices.
Based on my observations walking regularly along Church Road, nearly every vehicle is driving at well under 30 mph in a safe and careful manner. There is no evidence that supports there being a speeding issue. Introducing more street clutter and visual pollution is ineffective as the recent 20 mph changes in Woburn Sands and the white line along much of Church Road demonstrate. Reference parking, we live in a pleasant area which people like to visit in the covid crisis with little else to do. We should accept that peak of traffic as being good for their mental health instead of putting razor wire on our grass verges. To change anything, there needs to be consequences for non-compliance (which there rarely is except for speed cameras - which no-one is yet proposing for Aspley Heath!). So please leave things alone. Where there is a danger is pedestrians, particularly those with pushchairs, having to walk in the road to avoid parked cars and overhanging hedges. Sadly the Council has failed over at least the last 30 years in resolving this.
We have issues with people parking around the Church Road/Sandy Lane junction often blocking our way, and that of delivery drivers to our house. We have an official sign outside our home saying 'no parking' which is doing nothing and could be much more useful being repositioned to the top of Sandy Lane (where someone has kindly placed some traffic cones, which help). I am not sure how to go about getting the sign repositioned.
Of the 2 issues Speeding is the long term one that needs addressing - Faster vehicles injure and kill people more effectively than slow ones. Slower vehicles cause less noise and pollution - including fumes and particulates locally. The slower moving vehicles will make it safer for the increased numbers of people walking and biking. You cannot force people to drive slower and perhaps although only a few go more than 30mph, if the signs and message is 20mph the overall vehicle average speeds would be lower. CBC waiting for a serious/fatal accident is not a proactive approach to improving road safety and wellbeing on Aspley Heath
THERE WAS NO OPTION TO COMMENT ON THE JUNCTION OF NARROW PATH/CHURCH ROAD. THIS IS ONE OF THE WORST AREAS FOR PEOPLE PARKING INCONSIDERATELY. NOT ONLY DO SOME RESIDENTS OF NARROW PATH CONSISTENTLY PARK ON CHURCH ROAD RATHER THAN ON THEIR OWN DRIVEWAYS, BUT CHURCHGOERS, DELIVERY DRIVERS, VISITORS ALSO COMPLETELY IGNORE THE WHITE LINES AND PARK MAKING IT VERY DIFFICULT & DANGEROUS FOR OTHER ROAD USERS & PEDESTRIANS COMING OUT OF NARROW PATH. IT IS OFTEN IMPOSSIBLE TO WALK UP CHURCH ROAD WITHOUT HAVING TO WALK ON THE ROAD ITSELF, ESPECIALLY PAST THE COTTAGES OR WHERE BUILDING WORK IS BEING CARRIED OUT. IF PUSHING A BUGGY OR PRAM IT IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS TO HAVE TO WALK IN THE ROAD FOR A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE WHERE THE ROAD IS VERY NARROW AND WHERE DRIVERS HAVE LIMITED VISIBILITY. RESIDENTS ARE NOT ALWAYS CONSIDERATE WHEN LEAVING THEIR BINS/RUBBISH BAGS OUT AND THEY OFTEN OBSTRUCT THE PAVEMENT. SOME OF THE HEDGES ALSO RESTRICT THE WIDTH OF THE PAVEMENT ESPECIALLY WHEN PUSHING A PRAM OR BUGGY. THE HEDGE OF HAVERFIELD LEANS OUT ONTO THE PAVEMENT AND ALTHOUGH IT IS ALWAYS NEATLY CUT, IT DOES LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF SPACE ON THE PAVEMENT. A LOT OF DRIVERS COMING DOWN CHURCH ROAD EXCEED THE SPEED LIMIT OF 30MPH, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY HAVE PASSED THE COTTAGES AND REACH THE STRAIGHT PART OF THE ROAD PAST THE OLD DAIRY. IF CARS ARE PARKED ON THE CHURCH SIDE OF THE ROAD, IT MEANS THE CARS ARE COMING DOWN AT SPEED ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE ROAD AND IF ANYONE IS TRYING TO COME OUT OF NARROW PATH OR ONE OF THE DRIVEWAYS NEARBY THEY ARE IN DANGER.
As a visitor, I have only parked next to the woods in the parking bays. I find most traffic is slow and considerate. I appreciate that this is a residential area.

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Yes. Firstly, thank you for organising this survey. As a Woburn Sands resident who enjoys walking in Aspley Heath, I find the whole experience of walking up Church Road thoroughly unpleasant at the moment. This is partly because of the number of people parking half on the road and half on the pavement, partly because of the aggressive driving of people who don't like having to give way to other vehicles, and partly because of the number of residents who have "stolen" half the pavement with their hedges.
Double yellows won't work unless they're enforced (note: by side of Tesco, people still abuse and cause risks) I don't feel safe pulling out of silverbirches lane because of cars parked either side of junction. Speeding - I see and at night I hear. I worry for the children up here what with navigating parked cars and speeding taking place. Cyclists coming up the road I have seen drivers not giving space. I would like cyclists coming downhill to also adhere to speed limits. I've been worried when I'm driving up and I meet a speeding cyclist downhill. How about a gate community??
It is vital to 'protect' parking for residents, and if a permit system is introduced, it must be administered in such a way that permits aren't issued without legitimate reason... Residents should also be encouraged to use their own off street parking if they have it, and to park considerately (often see one car parked in the middle of 'two car spaces') Since the development of the Scout hut site in Sandy lane, and the 'unofficial' facility to turn round has been lost, meaning vehicles either have to reverse onto church road or use a residents drive to turn around. Combined with the redevelopment of the No. 3 Church road site, this has restricted the space available to park at the bottom of Sandy Lane..... combined with that fact these properties remain unsold, there is still the possibility, when they are sold, there may be insufficient parking provided, and the new owners may need to park on the lower section of Church road, which is already at saturation.
I have lived there for many years and have never experienced anything like it. I used to enjoy walking my dogs in the woods being so close but now all the dog poo bins are either full or full of rubbish. The bins are avert lowering and the are dog poo bags and dog poo all over the woods. I actually saw some one cooking egg and bacon on a stove outside my house from a camper van. I found bottles are so much litter all over the verges. I have also had all my verges ruined from people not giving way and having to pull on. At weekends it is a constant traffic jam god forbid there was ever a fire or someone needed an ambulance because they would not be able to get through. Something needs to be fine about this before a disaster happens!!
Parking has long been an issue from Charleswood House down to the hill's bottom and especially at the weekend. We now have people parking to go walking and cutting through Narrow Path, and my concern is what happens when the Church resumes. There are no passing points, and with the work vans, it is getting worse. Speeding is an issue as people become frustrated with the parking and so zoom through to avoid getting stuck. We have regular standoffs at the bottom of the road with cars refusing to move or give way.
Parking ticket warden to come up every weekend to give out charged tickets
Signs saying no parking. People park over my drive constantly, impossible to get an ambulance to my disabled 94 year old father
We have enough street furniture without adding to it. Double yellow lines are ugly and unnecessary - as with smiley faces. 20mph limit would make walking and cycling safer and thus reduce traffic. Parking could be resolved by developing facilities and parking on the Woburn Rd at the old cement works.
One important reason for a 20mph speed limit is the absence of a pavement on the east side of Church Rd. It is a fact that injuries are reduced if cars travel more slowly. The provision of a car park for the increased number of mountain biker cars is essential preferably with toilets, which would be best maintained by a cafe. Cycling paths were expanded and numbers coming have increased as the area is now well known. Please pass this on to the planners before a serious accident occurs. Thank you
It would be great to have double yellows on the splays where Silverbirches joins Church Road. It would also be good to have a 20 mile an hour limit. Thank you.

AHPC Speeding and Parking Survey – 28-1-21

Blind corners are so dangerous. And now people park on them everyday. It's impossible to get out safely and yet people block the drive every day.
There should be signage at the top and bottom of the byway (car park to Longslade Lane) to prevent cars from parking both sides thereby blocking emergency vehicle access. Currently emergency vehicle access is also impossible at the top of Church Road. With cars parked all the way up one side and cars queuing to get in and out of the car park, any emergency access is severely restricted.
The 20mph speed limit should be supported with speed humps, the majority of church road should be double yellow with residents permit bays where houses have no off street parking. This would have the additional benefit of controlling the builders parking which is becoming out of control, notably atm in the area of silverbirches junction. There have been many occasions when it would have been impossible for emergency services vehicles to pass, this is an ongoing problem for the length of church road as various builders work arise and the issue moves along the road
Speed bumps, have these been considered? Speed humps have been proven to reduce speed and make neighbourhood's safer, some critics claim that they can cause damage to vehicles, increase emergency response time, and increase traffic noise. Many of these issues can be mitigated through proper speed cushion planning. Motor vehicles are likely to travel at around 15 mph over a speed hump. If there's a series of speed humps, vehicles are likely to travel at 20 mph between them (trafficchoices.co.uk). Trying to reverse out of my property I've experience many near misses because of speeding, this is from visitors to Aspley Heath but also current resident's. I have double yellow lines outside my property yet many people still park. Would we be able to have a parking attendant patrol Aspley Heath, especially if the double yellow lines are extended for the whole of Church Road? Very dangerous with vehicle owners parking on the pavements, forcing people to walk on the road with speeding vehicles. I've often experienced this.
Something needs to be done before there is a serious accident
A couple or more speed bumps might help
Every junction with Church Road creates blind spots caused by thoughtless parking particularly at weekends. The junction going onto the Heath is an accident waiting to happen.
The Woburn estate have introduced cycle paths that start or pass by close to the top of the Heath. if they are encouraging this activity then they need to supply parking on their land kit accomodate the extra traffic.
Speed humps would be a pain but might work.... I would prefer the Duke to put in a proper carpark like Rushmere down at Steetlys and then that should help. My biggest issue is right of way around the parked cars and People not having respect for others, coming either up or down the hill...
speed bumps, residents only road, parking permits,
speed bumps, parking ticket monitor, residents only road, parking permits, close off car park
Both parking and speeding on Church Road is a real and consistent problem, greatly exacerbated post COVID, with inconsiderate drivers driving over and ruining grass verges. In addition to a max. 20 mph speed limit, speed bumps are required to enforce behaviour. Church Road has long become an over-spill car park for Aspley Woods and restrictions for on-road parking along the lines suggested (double yellow lines and resident only parking) are urgently required. It is imperative though that any restrictions implemented are subsequently monitored and enforced.
Provision of a no parking 'passing bay (s) by St Michael's would be great, especially on 'Church days'
Parking has always been an issue at the bottom of the road, from Charleswood House down. The Parish Council needs to do something before someone gets hurt. I am pleased that you are asking for our views and would have liked to see action taken sooner, as it appears now the problem has stretched to the top of the road the council wants to act.

AHPC Speeding and Parking Survey – 28-1-21

Only that the parking probably slows the traffic down! There should be a decent car park and toilet facilities provided by the Duke of Bedford at different sites on the Heath but especially at the old barn ruin on the road to Woburn (old Fullers Earth place?)
Parking on Church Road has obviously increased a lot during lockdown but I don't see that residents should impose restrictions that are basically intended to restrict people enjoying the Woods - which are not solely for residents to enjoy. We all have to help each other here, not just clamp down because of minor annoyances caused by parking. Parking down by the cottages (where the road narrows by 56 Church Road) has always been an issue for people who don't want to slow down - but in fact it's the best deterrent for speeding vehicles and to my knowledge I have never known there be an accident there (I've lived here for 30 years). Other measures such as sleeping policeman are less desirable deterrents and introducing double yellows would be a disaster as it will speed the traffic up when the parked cars are no longer there to slow them down.
Maybe some notices for 'polite parking'! Not blocking drives and parking on grass verge areas.
Passing places would be a good idea
Top of Church Road is bad because vehicles park on the pavement rendering it impossible for pedestrians in wheelchairs or with pushchairs. This has been a problem since before 2020
We live in Aspley Heath and walk daily up to and throughout the heath. When my husband and I walk up to the heath in the evenings, (usually 9pm onwards) there is almost always a very strong smell of cannabis, often coming from several cars. We walk fairly deep into the woods (down by the ponds for example) and have encountered small groups of teenagers who sound as if they are from good families, but smelling of cannabis. Working in a secondary school in a deprived part of Milton Keynes, I've seen the insidious effect of county lines on children from less supportive families and also on the area in which drug dealers operate. In the summer, we saw someone drive up to the Sandy Lane car park who had the same dress and demeanour of the type of young person I would expect to be involved in county lines. It's a short distance from living in a nice area and tolerating a bit of soft drug use and being 'discovered' as a market for some very undesirable characters. For my part, the parish Council should be taking a very hard line on this. Hidden cameras, police *not* turning a blind eye, even if the 'customers' are otherwise nice children from good families. Both of these things would be a start. Hidden cameras from the Sandy Lane car park down the road towards the golf club would also deter the fly tippers who regularly speed up Church Road after 9pm.
Sleeping policemen ramps for speed control; no parking sections every 200 yards at lower road to allow cars to pull in & so improve traffic flow up & down
Parking on pavement, even half across the pavement puts pedestrians at risk.
We should implement some form of traffic control at the church to the bottom of Church Road when church services, weddings, funerals are taking place. We could have a rota of volunteers with Walkie talkies to control traffic flow.
Pressure the duke as it was him that started inviting all the cyclist here & then filled the plug on the cycle hub.
NO
In narrow areas parking on pavement must not restrict pedestrians or prams
We would like to see no parking on pavements at all enforced. Also dead end sign at the bottom on church road so people understand it is not a through road. Dead end and no turning for Silverbirches Lane needs to be reinstated? All builders need to park within the house working on not on the pavements and roads. parish council or Bedford estate introduce or should consider wheel clamping at clearly defined area such as junctions/entrances to houses.
Double yellow lines on narrow parts of the road may restrict residents parking not visitors. Just a suggestion to slow down would probably be ineffectual.

AHPC Speeding and Parking Survey – 28-1-21

1. 20 mph needed urgently 2. Ways should be found to slow traffic past the cottages on the Church Road bend and hill and at the bottom of Church Road. Provision for these houses to park safely is essential and could form part of general traffic calming.
A 20mph limit should introduced as soon as possible. Woburn Sands and Woburn both have such limits with no problems as far as I know.
Parking should not be permitted either side of residents drives for at least the length of a car as it is very difficult to exit ones drive because of visibility issues.
The speed cars come down church road is a joke and action needs to be taken. ASAP
My concerns would be that the more restriction for parking on church Road will push more parking in Sandy Lane. People park in Sandy lane and go into the woods sometimes making it very difficult for emergency vehicles to pass and because they have gone into the woods it is impossible to get them to move
Not sure how anyone manages to speed with all the parking problems but if parking was resolved it might be relevant. People not knowing Highway Code or courtesy to others is equally frustrating!
Please don't ban any parking outside the cottages , upwards, it's difficult for us as it is and we are very conscious of walkers and emergency vehicles access. Speeding is the worst issue with cars and motorbikes going way too fast , very surprised there haven't been any accidents to date , speed humps ?
Woburn estates have encouraged biking in the area by creating cycling routes close Church road. The estate should now provide parking to facilitate their extra traffic
Need to stop the speeding and the quantity of traffic - someone will get hurt soon
Speeding is my main concern, i do not believe it is restricted to visitors to the area, as also witness residents speeding on a regular basis and fully support a 20 mph limit.
Stronger requests for hedges that overhang pavement Church Road be kept cut back.