

Cringleford Parish Council

ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY NOVEMBER 2021

Summary

Cringleford is expanding rapidly with more than 1700 new dwellings expected in the next 10 years. The Parish Council is aware that this creates safety issues for all road users. We wish to ensure that the needs of all users of the public highways are given equal emphasis and that those responsible for taking action make access and movement safer for our Parishioners and the public at large whatever their abilities. We have identified areas where safety issues currently exist and have developed a Strategy for improving them. The Strategy is an evolving document that we hope to refine with the help of technology and our Parishioners' insights.

Introduction

The concept of Cringleford as a stand-alone South Norfolk village has been whittled away by urbanisation over the last 10 years such that we are already recorded as 'urban fringe' in the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP). Cringleford has expanded rapidly with new housing estates to its south and west and is now a major suburb of Norwich.

The population of the Parish has almost doubled in that time (current estimate 5,600; Norfolk Insight 2020) and will increase further with the GNLP's commitment to 1700 more homes [1], many more than agreed in Cringleford's own Neighbourhood Development Plan (CNDP) [2]. With all the extra dwellings, most designed to take cars, added to the ever-expanding Norwich Research Park comes, inevitably, more local and through traffic. In addition, in the past couple of years, more people can be seen to be walking and cycling, and recently scootering, especially on e-bikes. Electrification of vehicles, however, is unlikely to decrease the amount of traffic – that can only be achieved by a major shift to public transport.

Recent figures from the Department for Transport (DfT) showed there was a two-thirds increase in deaths of countryside road users in 2020 compared with 2019. The mix in Cringleford of increased population, diversity of users and increased road traffic means the likelihood of accidents in the Parish will increase. The Parish Council recognises the potential issues that may arise and, therefore, has been looking at ways to make our roads safer for all users – vehicles, pedestrians, runners, cyclists and horse riders – as have Local and National Government faced with the same issues.

Background

The DfT has published several documents examining the relationship between street users. For pedestrians it considers:

"The propensity to walk is influenced not only by distance, but also by the quality of the walking experience. This will depend on how stimulating and attractive the environment is, together with how safe and secure people feel within it." [3]

It goes on to say that ease of crossing streets and low traffic speeds can enhance the environment for pedestrians. For cyclists, however, it considers a carriageway with dedicated infrastructure is the correct place, although where traffic volumes and speed are low the infrastructure would not be needed.

More recently, Government has increased the priority for cyclists by providing funding to numerous local schemes. Norfolk County Council (NCC) and partners are committed to encouraging people to walk and cycle more. The County with its partners has produced its own strategy to encourage such activities [4] and is in the process of producing a Local Transport Plan [5] and an Infrastructure Plan [6]. The infrastructure plan is designed to “improve our quality of life, benefit the environment and enhance local productivity” as well as helping our physical and mental health. The Strategy addresses two local policies [5, 7] directed at ease of use, safety, healthy and sustainable ways of connecting the county [7], and to improve connectivity, accessibility and safety of our transport network [5]. Two of the Infrastructure Plan’s improvements directly impinge on Cringleford, notably the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Mobility Hub [6; Reference 20] and a new Yare Valley River crossing [6; Reference 52]. In its Local Transport Plan, NCC has adopted the five pillars of the ‘safe systems approach’ viz: safe speeds; safe roads; safe road users; safe vehicles; post-crash responses to emphasise that not all responsibility is on the road user [4]. With Norwich, South Norfolk and Broadland, the County are developing the ‘Pedalways’ cycle routes using DfT funding. Cringleford itself is blessed by several green areas for walking notably at UEA and Cringleford Woods which connect to the Yare Valley Walk, and is crossed by two major cycle routes – Sprowston to Wymondham via the A11 and B1172 and the Outer Circuit that runs along Colney Lane for part of its route. Even these, however, could do with improvements to make them safer and accessible for all users.

This year Government has brought in changes to the Highway Code following positive feedback to a consultation [8]. New rules establish a ‘hierarchy of road users’ (Rule H1) that they hope will ensure that “those road users who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they may pose to other road users” The next rule (H2) gives a greater priority to pedestrians – if one has started to cross the road ahead of you have started to cross the road ahead of you, they have priority so you should give way. Cyclists also get improved priorities. For example, a driver should not cut across the path of a cyclist going straight ahead when they are (a) turning into or out of a junction, (b) changing direction, (c) changing lane (Rule H3). It is also clear, as has always been the case, that cyclists must not cycle on a pavement as it is illegal (Rule 64).

Context

In the Parish several measures have been put in place already to make the local roads safer for users. We have 20mph zones in place along the old Newmarket Road extending from Eaton. Signs have also been put up on Cringleford Bridge to indicate you must not cycle along the Bridge’s footpath as it is illegal to do so (see above). With the agreement of NCC Highways and the bus companies, some stops have been relocated to make them safer and additional bus stops have been or will be put in place along Roundhouse Way to avoid the difficulties the buses had negotiating traffic and parked cars on our estates. The additional stops will make it easier to access buses from all the new developments. The unused bus shelters from Roundhouse Park will be relocated to Roundhouse Way as has already happened at the Interchange by the A11. The new developments – Roundhouse Park, Roundhouse Gate and Cringleford Heights – will all be 20 mph zones eventually, and the process has been initiated already along Fern Drive, Jasmine Walk and Lobelia Lane on Roundhouse Park. Many of the measures we are putting in place are done as joint ventures with County under the Parish Partnership Scheme. The speed platforms on Keswick Road and the speed sign outside Cringleford Primary are examples of these.

Most recently, under this scheme we have purchased three SAM2 mobile speed monitors. They check the number and speed of cars passing them and will help us identify problem areas in need of further action. Finally, a parking scheme is in the process of being introduced across two areas of Cringleford which should reduce traffic movements at certain times of the day.

Despite all these measures, more can be done to make Cringleford's roads safer for all users. The following section and Appendices outline the Parish Council preliminary Strategy that we will propose to Highways and Councillors. This Strategy is just the first step; it will evolve with time and as we collect more information from our Parishioners and the SAM2 cameras.

Strategy

The Parish Council's Road Safety Strategy is:

1. To ensure that the needs of all users of the public highways are given equal emphasis by working in collaboration with local highways authorities,
2. To do all it can to ensure that those responsible for taking action make access and movement safer for our Parishioners and the public at large whatever their abilities.

The users of the public highway are defined as:

- Car users; motor bike users; lorries and commercial vehicles
- Users of public transport
- Cyclists
- Users of mobility scooters
- Pedestrians including buggy and wheelchairs users
- Horse riders

Responsibility for the ownership and maintenance of land upon which the public highway is situated and, equally, responsibility for taking action to ensure better road safety is vested variously in:

- Highways England
- NCC Highways
- The District Council
- The Parish Council
- Landowners.

Whether you are a pedestrian, in a car, cycling or running, speed is an issue. Norfolk has produced a Speed Management Strategy [9] which states there is "there is overwhelming evidence that lower speeds result in fewer collisions and less severe injuries". It outlines criteria for speed limits on principal and main distributor roads, how to set them, and what measures to implement to make them safer.

The more recent Local Transport Plan [5] elaborates further on what speed limits should be based on, although all three assessments may not apply in a single area:

"1. What is the function of the highway corridor and the surrounding environment? Where ease of access or a sense of place are of greater importance, quality of life and social interaction may benefit from a lower speed limit.

2. Casualty numbers. Are the accident rate and/or severity pattern higher than expected? A lower speed limit or interventions to improve existing speed limit compliance may be appropriate.

3. The need to increase walking and/or cycling and whether a lower speed limit would help encourage this. Whilst likely to apply in urban areas and in the vicinity of schools this may also warrant consideration in tourism areas.”

The Parish Council’s two principal actions to underpin our Strategy, therefore, will be:

- to slow down traffic by requesting as much as possible* of Cringleford becomes 20mph zones or, where not possible, to introduce traffic calming measures,
- to request separation of routes where there are joint users of pavements, footpaths or roads.

* NCC Highways have ruled out a blanket 20mph speed limit across Cringleford.

The Parish Council have already identified a number of problem areas within the Parish and have made suggestions as to what could be done to improve the areas, indicating which agency/organisation is responsible for any action that can be taken. Attached in Appendix 1 is a table of issues. The list, by its nature, is not exhaustive and will evolve as more issues are identified by our Parishioners and using our SAM2 cameras. It forms, however, the cornerstone of our current Strategy.

Resources cited

1. Greater Norwich Local Plan 2018 to 2038. Greater Norwich Development Partnership (2022 pending)
2. Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013-2026. Cringleford Parish Council (2014)
3. Manual for Streets: a summary. Department for Transport (2007). P4.
4. Norfolk Walking and Cycling Strategy. Norfolk County Council, <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/campaigns/walking-and-cycling-in-norfolk>
5. Norfolk Local Transport Plan 4 Strategy 2021-2036. Norfolk County Council, (emerging).
<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/roads-and-travel-policies/local-transport-plan>
6. Greater Norwich Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. NCC May 2021.
7. Norfolk access improvement plan (2019 – 2029)- Norfolk County Council/Broads National Park/National Trails, <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/public-rights-of-way/norfolk-access-improvement-plan>
8. Sharing our Roads Safely: Report of qualitative and quantitative findings. Logan, Bond and Williams. Kantar for DfT (2021).
9. Norfolk Speed Management Strategy, NCC 2014.

Cringleford Parish Council December 2021

APPENDIX 1
AREAS OF CONCERN

	Identified Problem	Potential Solutions	Who needs to be involved?
1	Crossing Junction of Intwood Road and Newmarket Road heading north towards Cringleford Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placing a mirror on the north side of Intwood Road Introduce a one-way system along Intwood Road to Oakfields Road from Newmarket Road (bridge end) 	CPC/NCC
2	Timing of Traffic Light Controlled crossing on A11 [St. Giles Park]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce speed limit from 50 to 40 [as per the south side of the roundabout] Increase the time delay between vehicles getting red light and pedestrians getting green light Reducing the delay between a crossing user requesting a stop signal and the signal appearing 	NCC/HE
3	Cyclists using Pedestrian footpath across Cringleford Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting Cyclist Dismount signs at the start of the pedestrian path across the bridge: Increasing by <i>about</i> 10 seconds the delay on the red light and the introduction of a green cycle filter to coincide with red lights 	CPC/NCC
4	Junction of Intwood Road and Brettingham Avenue [See photos in Appendix 2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the wide of the green verge to allow for easier vehicle access and egress in either direction. Widen the footpath to enable easier pedestrian access 	Parish Partnership/NCC
5	Lack of Footpath along Intwood Road from Brettingham Avenue to Keswick Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use road markings to alert traffic to speed limits 	NCC/Parish Partnership

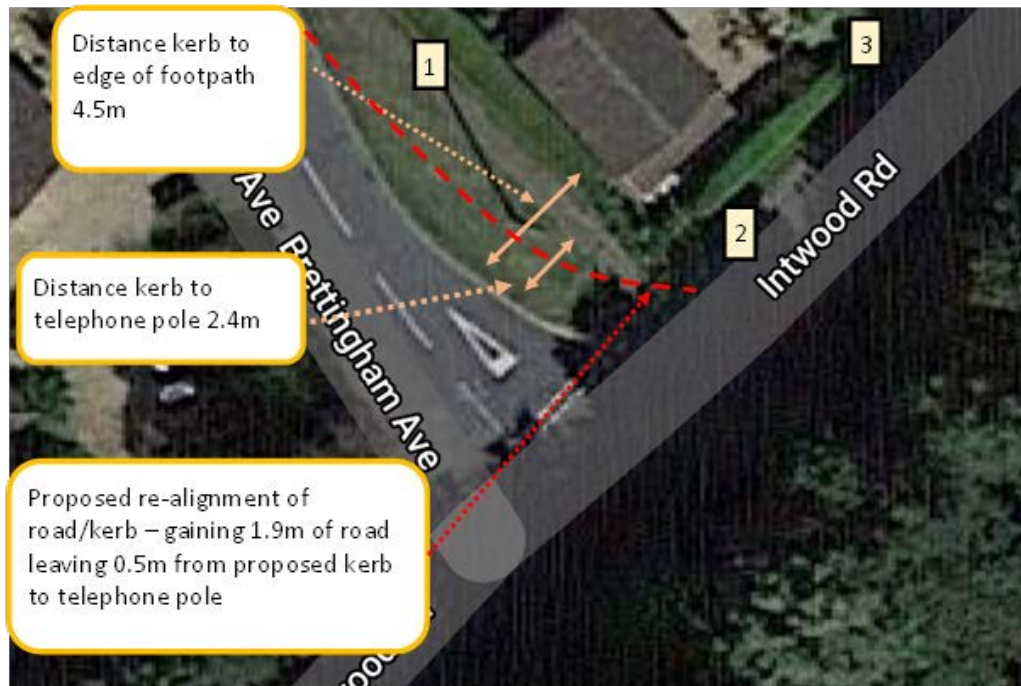
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install safe footpath from Brettingham Avenue to Keswick to Keswick Road • Install two full width 'cushions' either side of the bend just before/after the bend near the bottom of Brettingham Avenue to slow traffic at junction 	
6	Non-observance of the double yellow lines outside Tesco Express preventing pedestrians, especially wheelchair users, from crossing at the lowered curb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible signage (Tesco signage) on the Tesco side asking customers not to park on the double yellow lines due to access needed from curb. • Greater enforcement 	SNC/Tesco/CPC NCC Parking Enforcement
7	Excess speed on Roundhouse Way after the Pines roundabout up to Colney Lane roundabout.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce speed limit from 40 to 30 • Have more visible speed limit signs 	Norfolk Constabulary/Parish Partnership for signage
8	Pedestrian/cycle path on All towards Colney Lane bridge (Roundhouse side) obstructed by overhanging vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have works scheduled regularly to cut back growth 	CPC/NCC
9	Shared pedestrian/cycle paths Colney Lane/Roundhouse Way/Thickthorn Roundabout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark out separate lanes with clear demarcation between cyclists and pedestrians • Ensure pavements are wide enough to support mixed use 	NCC/HE
10	Overgrown hedgerows and verges obstructing use by drivers and pedestrians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPC to communicate to responsible organisation 	NCC/CPC/Householders
11	Crossing unsafe for pedestrians at junction of Cantley Lane and Keswick Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paint white lines to indicate road narrows • Install a 'pedestrians crossing' flashing light 	NCC/Parish Partnership
12	Undergrowth obstructive view for pedestrians forced to cross Colney Lane near to Harts Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of scrub/trees regularly 	NCC/CPC

13	<p>Unsafe refuge island on Roundhouse Way between A11 and Dragonfly Lane roundabouts adjacent to bus interchange</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of traffic light-controlled crossing equidistant between the two roundabouts. • Installation of flashing lights to warn of pedestrians crossing [pedestrian operated] 	NCC Highways
----	--	---	--------------

DRAFT

APPENDIX 2

A CASE STUDY: Junction Brettingham Avenue and Intwood Road - poor road layout on junction and lack of safe pedestrian pathway from Brettingham towards Keswick junction



Index to Photographs

- 1— view of junction/distance to kerb and position of telephone pole
- 2— view of current state of road/kerb at junction
- 3— view looking towards Brettingham junction of mud paths created by pedestrians alongside the hedgerows of the two houses neighbouring the junction

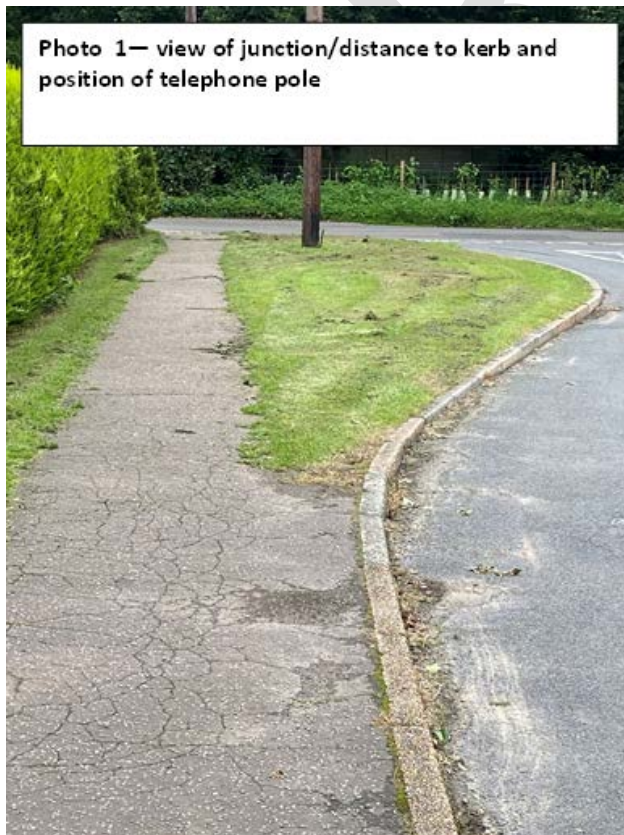




Photo 3— view looking towards Brettingham junction of mud paths created by pedestrians alongside the hedgerows of the two houses neighbouring the junction

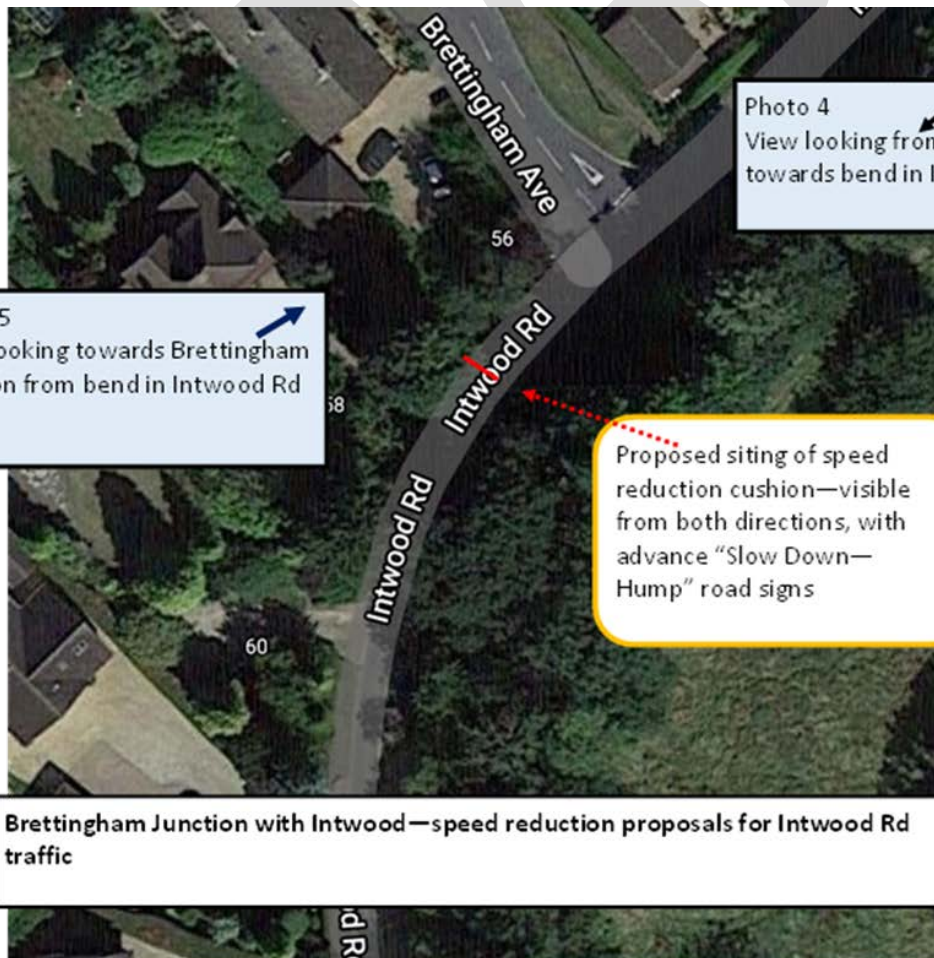


Photo 4
View looking from Keswick Rd end towards bend in Intwood

Photo 5
View looking towards Brettingham junction from bend in Intwood Rd

Proposed siting of speed reduction cushion—visible from both directions, with advance “Slow Down—Hump” road signs

Brettingham Junction with Intwood—speed reduction proposals for Intwood Rd traffic



Photo 4
View looking from Keswick Rd end towards bend in Intwood



Photo 5
View looking towards Brettingham junction from bend in Intwood Rd

DRAFT