

Record of the Open Forum on Highways 19:300 June 16th 2025

This forum was arranged by Coldridge Parish Council following comments raised at the Annual Parish Meeting and a suggestion from DCC Councillor Steve Keable.

Present: Coldridge Parish Councillors: Andrew Green chairman, John Smith vice -chairman, Malcolm Bedford, Marion Born, Chris Burrows, John Quick. Apologies Ivan Krisnik.

DCC Councillor Steve Keable

There were 20 members of the public and 2 representatives from C&R Construction.

The forum included a wide-ranging debate on several issues of importance to the residents. This record will note the main topics discussed and any actions agreed. It is not a chronological account of the forum.

Topic	Main points	Actions and comments
Road conditions and surfaces	There are many locations within Coldridge Parish where the road surface is poor and damaged, the drainage is ineffective, and vegetation impinges on the boundary of the road and grows over the road surface itself. The road from West Leigh to Thorn Corner, known locally as “The sump buster” has been reported many times, with DCC saying they will look at resolving this, but no action has been taken to do so.	All Highways issues to be reported residents using the DCC website. https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/ This will generate an incident number. If the issue has not been dealt with in a reasonable time, please escalate to Cllr Steve Keable steve.keable@devon.gov.uk with the incident number and he can follow up with DCC officers. DCC Highways Officers must ensure that work which it’s subcontractors say has been done is actually done, especially with regard to drainage gulleys and pipes, which is not currently being done.
Overgrown vegetation	Overgrown vegetation causes problems with visibility on bends and narrows the usable amount of the highway.	All landowners and householders must ensure that none of their vegetation overgrows the highway. This applies to domestic properties as much as to field hedges.

	This also reduces the amount of safe space for vehicles and pedestrians to cross and thus creating dangerous situations. Whilst there are some restrictions on when farm hedges can be trimmed, these can be over-ridden in the cause of safety.	All residents asked to ensure their vegetation does not impinge on the highway. C&R Construction have offered to cut the hedges on Church Lane and the road from the village to Frogbury Cross, subject to the permission of the landowners. Andrew Green will provide a map indicating which landowners have agreed to this.
Volume of traffic	Concerns were raised over the amount of traffic using the roads in Coldridge and the size of some of the vehicles.	Use of highways in England is governed by UK legislation, which allows for vehicles of up to 44 tonnes to use any highway unless there is a specific weight restriction, such as on a bridge. Traffic in Coldridge parish has grown in recent years with the growth of on-line shopping and there is no way to prevent this.
Timing of heavy goods vehicles traversing the village.	Complaints were made that HGV's are travelling through the village from about 06:00 interrupting sleep for some residents.	Whilst not all these vehicles are going to and from C&R Construction, they have a policy that no vehicles can arrive at their premises before 07:30. This will be reinforced by them with their suppliers. C&R Construction's own vehicle may leave the site before this as it has to take staff and materials to the site the buildings are being constructed. C&R arrange for all timber, roofing materials, fixings etc to go direct to site not to C&R. C&R have stopped Saturday working.
Courtesy of drivers.	Some residents reported they had met less than courteous drivers when encountering them on the road	Residents are advised to obtain details of the vehicle and report it to the company. This is often not possible due to the number of plain white vans and hire vans being used, but most large vehicles have the company name on them.

Speed of vehicles within the built-up area of Coldridge	Some vehicles are travelling too fast for the prevailing conditions, giving pedestrians little time to move out of the way, and leading to near misses between vehicles. Two government publications give differing definitions of when a 30-mph limit applies, which is confusing. (Highway Code and the Department of Transport)	Coldridge Parish Council to work with Steve Keable to seek a 20mph limit in the built-up area of Coldridge.
Peak traffic times	Just before 07:00 and just after 17:00 There is a peak of staff traveling in their own cars to work at C&R. 15 to 16 staff work in the office.	All C&R staff have been told to respect the 20 is Plenty signs. This work pattern has been the case for the past 40 years
Pedestrian refuges	Is it possible for there to be pedestrian refuges on Church Lane?	DCC is likely to say no, due to the initial cost of funding these and the on-going cost of maintenance.
Laybys on approach roads to Coldridge.	It was noted that some laybys on roads have either not been maintained or have been removed	It was not felt that if these were re-instated it would help lorries visiting C&R
South West Water	It was suggested that SWW tend to treat what is normal maintenance as an emergency, thus avoiding the need to set up proper highway closures and diversions. Recently the SWW diversion in Church Lane was not suitable for lorries.	C&R have already asked SWW to work more efficiently and consider all road users. Coldridge PC to write to SWW about giving proper notice of road closures
Signage	Missing finger posts fingers	Although DCC are responsible for these, over the years Coldridge PC has purchased and volunteers have fitted replacement fingers. The one at Hobby Moor Cross saying "Coldridge 2/3 mile" disappeared last harvest. A parishioner has offered to remake this. C&R have offered to redesign their signs to give a more uniform approach to signage.

		In the past DCC officers have agreed that anything which assists vehicles to reach gtheri destination is useful, and if the PC approve, they will give tacit approval. This is the same with the “20 is Plenty” signs.
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The forum closed with the agreement that some progress had been made, that face to face meetings are often the best way to resolve differences and a reminder that parishioners can contact the clerk on clerk@coldridge-pc.gov, They are always welcome to attend the Open Meeting held before each Parish Council meeting which are in the Village Hall starting at 19:30. Next ones are July 17th, Sept 18th, Nov 20th. They can also contact individual Councillors by visiting the Parish Council website <https://coldridge-pc.gov.uk/>