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Mrs. Caroline Braidwood
Clerk to Preston Parish Council
77 Pheasant Way
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 1BJ

Dear Mrs. Braidwood,

Please see this letter as exploratory, asking the opinion of all the parish councils in the Cotswolds. I am a former parish councillor in Shipton Oliffe, and a medical professional, and have an interest in public health.

In new residential developments and in some long-established communities, the road traffic speed limit has been reduced from 30 mph to 20 mph. Locally, Stow-on-the-Wold, Bourton-on-the-Water, Blockley, Dowdeswell and Cirencester, for example, have introduced 20mph zones.

There are many reasons why 20 mph zones are becoming more popular. They are safer for pedestrians, animals, and people riding horses and bicycles. Slower vehicles make less noise and cause less damage to village structures like kerbs and verges. Pot-hole formation is related to vehicle speed, so there are benefits for the local economy and the motorist too. Equally, there are arguments against 20 mph speed limits in residential areas, not least the difficulty in enforcement. Nevertheless, in my own travels around the Cotswolds, it is striking how many villages are independently taking measures, flashing signs, gates and obstacles, often at considerable cost, to try to reduce the impact of speeding vehicles.

This letter isn't intended to persuade or discourage; each village will have their own local factors to consider. Baroness Vere of Norbiton, the Minister for Roads, Buses and Places, has told me, via Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, that the current Government has no plans to impose a national 20mph limit in residential areas. Hence, if Cotswold villages want to do this, they will need to make the change themselves. Paul Hodgkinson, County Councillor for Cotswold, Bourton on the Water and Northleach, has expressed support for villages that wish to consider a change.

The process to adopt a lower speed limit is expensive. There needs to be a Traffic Regulation Order, and consultation with the local population and Gloucestershire Police along with new signage. Gloucestershire Highways has estimated the cost at £10,000, putting it beyond the means of most individual villages.

However, Gloucestershire Highways has offered to consider applications from groups of four neighbouring villages for a similar total cost. Funding could come from Parish council precept or from interested private individuals. **Hence this letter is asking whether your Parish Council feels that this is something it would be interested in pursuing.** After that, it would be a matter of linking groups of interested villages together and then going back to Gloucestershire Highways to begin the process.

Would you kindly consider this and let me know your thoughts? Given all that is currently occupying the world there is no urgency to this. Please be reassured that I will not publicise the replies. If Parish Councils are agreeable, I would like to share their (anonymised) comment with Paul Hodgkinson and Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, to inform the political process. Please let me know in your reply if you are happy with this,

With best wishes, and thanking you for your interest,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Morrish'.

Dr Paul Morrish