

Ide Parish Council

Report to IPC meeting 20 March 2024 on Balls Farm Road

In December 2023 we received reports from parents of children at Ide School about illegal vehicular use of Balls Farm Road (BFR), with fast aggressive driving, and verbal abuse of pedestrians and cyclists. Balls Farm Road lies inside Exeter City boundary. It is not part of Ide Parish, but forms a vital link between Ide and Exeter for cyclists and pedestrians especially school children, and it is a rural lane used for horse riding and recreational walking and running.

NB wrote to Devon Highways requesting assistance with involving the police; and asking that they consider adding repeater signage at the junction of BFR and Little Johns Cross Hill (LJCH), and the junction of BFR with Crabb Lane; or re-defining the zone of "Access Only" restriction (TRO = Traffic Regulation Order) to BFR alone, since LJCH is a wide uncontested road.

DCC have been responsive. They have made contact with the police to request an episodic presence to enforce the restrictions.

DCC have looked at our signage and redefinition suggestions, but have rejected them, despite NB pushing back with fresh arguments in three iterations of correspondence. There is no provision for repeater signage in the regulations and they will not do that. Redefining the zone would mean creating a potential U-turn potential at the foot of LJCH, and the Crabb Lane junction, which is deemed dangerous.

NB has developed a working relationship with Ian James of DCC, whose colleague Christopher Rook of the Traffic Team is liaising with the police. There may be additional enforcement powers that Devon CC can invoke under new devolved regulations, and Mr James has undertaken to investigate what might be possible, and report back to us.

MT and LB have plans to set up informal, early morning traffic surveys to gauge the current extent of the problem.

NB 14 March 2024