

## Transport and Travel Tea Party 10 October 2024

Our second tea party discussion was held at Wisbey's Yard on the topic of connectivity, transport and travel and those attending included three members of the neighbourhood plan steering committee, a parish councillor and our district councillor as well as other residents. There was a good level of participation by everyone, lots of lively discussion in threes, in small groups and all together. Participants shared many concerns and had lots of ideas, too, about changes that are needed to increase connectivity between Haslingfield, the surrounding villages and Cambridge.

Transport and travel features in most neighbourhood plans, and while the National Planning Policy Framework's section on Promoting Sustainable Travel states that: *"Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making"*, the Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap 2018 makes the key point that: *"A neighbourhood plan may deal with transport insofar as it relates to new development. It may not deal with things like traffic management of existing networks, unless such management would be necessary to allow development to be approved."*

The facilitators made it clear that everyone's concerns are valid and deserve attention whether they are appropriate for inclusion in the neighbourhood plan itself or not. It is also possible to add an annex to the plan, identifying further issues of concern and suggestions about how to address them.

The issues of concern to participants which motivated them to attend the meeting included the following:

- The large number of cars with just one person in going to Cambridge each day. The need to change our mindset and embrace car-sharing.
- How limited public transport makes life difficult for non-drivers and prevents older children from becoming more independent.
- There is a need to make cycling safer, so more people are willing to adopt this healthier, more environmentally friendly option.
- The best transport solution is not needing to go places – instead, having the necessary amenities, including a pub, here in the village.
- We need more cycling and walking routes between villages.
- Potholes are a big problem for motorists, and are even more dangerous for cyclists.
- The community car scheme could perhaps be expanded to include social trips as well as medical ones.
- Concerns about the impact of East West rail, and whether seeking funds from EWR in mitigation diminishes the argument against building the railway and particularly the proposed southern route.

Following discussion, it was agreed that there is a need for a public meeting for residents of both Haslingfield and Harlton before the EWR consultation ends on 24 January, to share information and consider appropriate mitigation proposals. Suggestions for the latter included a construction Ombudsman as well as funding for cycle and footpaths to neighbouring villages.

After a short break for refreshments, we divided into two groups to look at some of the issues in more depth. The following recommendations were made:

- Given that the government has promised monies to repair potholes a new village WhatsApp group should be established where people can report potholes, and the

findings are forwarded to the County Council each week. Action: CB to set up this group.

- That we include in the neighbourhood plan that this village strongly values sustainability and connectivity and that a better bus service is required to achieve this, including both Sunday and evening services.
- Slightly wider pavements are needed on some parts of the High Street to make them accessible.
- Park and Ride buses should run later in the evening.
- There is a need for better connectivity with transport hubs, e.g. the Park and Ride sites and Barton and Harston where there are more frequent buses. This could be via shared car journeys or by cycleways and should include bike parking facilities near Barton and Harston bus stops.
- A WhatsApp group to facilitate car sharing should be set up. CS had started one last year and it needs more people to make it viable. He will re-invite the eco group, the neighbourhood plan steering group and all at this meeting and will operate it for a two-month trial before extending it further.
- We should explore the option of a community-owned, ideally electric, vehicle. This could be a Zip car, which purportedly takes 15 cars off the road.

At the end of the meeting participants' comments included:

Interesting – Useful – Great to meet other people and talk about important issues – Good that we were consensual and came up with cohesive ideas – It was fun and what I had hoped for – Well organised, can we have another meeting please?