

At the last parish Meeting some proposals for improved highway signage were discussed.

Progress has been made and we now need to make some decisions.

New signs for H&V

Hollingsworth & Vose have made a planning application for a new sign on their land. This follows very much the sign proposed by Robert and shown to the parish at an earlier meeting, with multi-lingual, and national-flagged, directions. The application can be viewed on the LDNPA's web-site under reference 7/2013/5113. H&V will fund this work. It is hoped there will be no objections to the sign.

H&V will also fund a new 'distance warning' highways sign to go in the 'dip' 150 yards before the factory entrance (yes, yards because that is the highways regulation for short distances). It will replace the existing small sign. Robert has to get Highways approval first.

Valley 'warning sign(s)'

A draft proposed highway sign to give a clear indication to drivers of all vehicles, not just HGVs, of the nature of the Kentmere Road was shown to the last Parish Meeting. Funding has been secured for two signs although the formalities of this are a little unclear. We have been allocated £300 from the Upper Kent LAP and £900 from other community budgets under the auspices of Stan Collins, our local Councillor.

We have now to agree a version of this sign (or signs, as half the sum is set aside for a sign further down near the beginning of Kentmere Road near Fell Foot. This sign must be agreed with Staveley-with-Ings PCC).

The sign will be a standard Highways Agency blue 'Advisory' sign, with white lettering and white border edging.

The preferred wording is:

Single Track Road

Be Prepared to Reverse

Few Passing Places

Some comments were made at the last meeting regarding the use of Narrow Road as opposed to Single Track Road. The reason 'Single Track' is being now offered as the preferred wording is that there is no accepted highways definition of 'Narrow', whereas there is a standard meaning for 'Single Track'. A single track road is a road

on which it is generally not safe for two cars to pass each other in motion. The key message is to remind those less familiar with our roads that it is highly unsafe to presume that one can keep moving forward when another vehicle is encountered. Failure to stop, but try to squeeze past, is a recipe for accidents and unwarranted damage to walls, hedges and verges.

To put the meaning of 'Single Track' into context one should consider that the minimum width for a single track is set down as 2.5m (or down to 2.0m in special circumstances) and twin track 5.0m (i.e. where it is safe to have a white line down the centre). Parts of the Kentmere Road north of H&V's factory are only 2.8m wide and much around 3.0m to 3.1m. Thus, a standard Ford Focus - currently the most popular car in U.K. - with an overall width of 2.02m overall width occupies the greater part of the road and it is clear that it would be unsafe to assume you could always ride even a bicycle, let alone a car, past an oncoming Focus car without taking evasive action.. The fact that it is possible in some locations to pass with both cars in motion is merely a 'windfall' bonus, not the general expectation.

Longsleddale has a road running from Garnett Bridge to Sadgill and is of remarkably similar width to the Kentmere Road, certainly not generally narrower and even with quite a few superior surfaced passing places. Immediately after Garnett Bridge, it has a standard triangle 'road-narrows' warning sign with 'Single Track Road' lettering attached beneath. It is argued that Kentmere Road should have the same designation, at least north of H&V's factory.

Parishioners will be asked to vote at the meeting by signing for one of four options which will be presented on a side table. These will be:

- 1) All as noted above.
- 2) All as noted above but line 1 reading 'Narrow Road' and **not** 'Single Track Road'
- 3) Line 2 as noted above, but reversed in order with line 3 - this option is argued as having less beneficial impact.
- 4) Line 3 of above with 'very' added - this option is argued as having superfluous wording detracting from the clarity of the message, even if the statement is true.

A majority vote will be taken forward for final approval with Cumbria Highways

The sign is to be positioned against the dark background of trees on the left hand side of the road about 50m past the H&V entrance splay.

The options for the sign at Staveley will be deferred until consultation with Staveley-with-Ings PCC has taken place, but it is intended to be a similar sign. The question of the most effective location may be contentious.

Robert Courtier
7 April 2013