

## Statement - 'Road safety in Marlpit Hill, Edenbridge'

Our petition relates to the B2026 from the 30 mph sign north of Homestead Road to the railway bridge (740m), which has seen 31 accidents recorded since 2000. The 260m stretch between Homestead Road and The Row has seen 19 recorded accidents since 2000. Under KCC's Vision Zero Plan, this represents at least two 'cluster sites'.

For 20 years+, individual community members have raised concerns which have been ignored. In the 3 days following a serious accident on 25/06/20, 125 individuals wrote to Tom Tugendhat MP who has supported the initiative. The Marlpit Hill Action Group (MHAG) was formed representing some 400 local drivers.

The subsequent e- petition was supported by well over 1000 people after Elizabeth Bineham at KCC said that this section shows "no pattern of collisions." We strongly refute this.

CrashMap data shows **there is a pattern of collisions:**

- 17 collisions, with a further 2 as yet unrecorded serious recent collisions, in 160m between Oakfield Road and The Row since 2000, resulting in 29 casualties. Majority in fine weather.
- 12 of these accidents happened within 10m of each other on the junction with Hilders Lane and Hillcrest Road.

Looking closer there are immense concerns:

- 2 known fatalities: 1995 – Stephen Leech, 2001 – Ruby Kempton
- 4 serious accidents since 2000 totalling 5 casualties with life changing injuries.
- 15 *recorded* incidents listed as 'slight'. One of these (26/03/07) left the casualty with 3 broken ribs and a fractured sternum and another casualty with serious concussion and a large head wound.
- The Air Ambulance has been deployed for three of these accidents.

This road is a strategic through route into Edenbridge from the north and is a deceptive stretch of road with multiple visibility issues.

However as a community we know that the primary problem is speeding, in both directions.

Drivers pass Scamperdale Farm at speed continuing down the hill passing the 30mph still at speed, then pass Homestead Road and continue speeding up the hill past the flashing 30mph sign to the blind brow, leaving little time for drivers to react on approaching the road junction. Recent informal surveys show around 80% of drivers exceed 30 mph (some substantially) as they pass the flashing speed sign near Fairmead Road.

SpeedWatch was active at Fairmead Road until 18/12/18 and found 20-30 vehicles in each one hour session exceeded 35 mph, with speeds up to 50 mph. Drivers noticing high-vis jackets meant many braked hard, otherwise numbers exceeding 30 mph would be higher. The Fairmead Road site has been reapproved.

There are higher traffic volumes over recent years with the advent of large stores and considerable residential development. The population of nearly 10,000 has increased from 8901 in 2011 and 7808 in 2001.

As this information shows, urgent action **must** now be taken. Community consensus is for a speed camera in addition to greater warning coming down the hill from the north, and any additional road safety measures deemed appropriate to ensure further life changing injuries are not sustained in the future.