

**ISSUE FOR YEARS**

Dover Grammar School for Girls (DGSG), which is directly on Frith Road, says it has been trying to make the route safe for years.

It has had regular meetings with local organisations, councillors and bus company Stagecoach to try to get the traffic speed reduced.

The school supports this latest campaign and head teacher Robert Benson said: "The safety of our students, staff and parents is always a priority for us.

"There have already been a number of accidents outside the school, one of which, several years ago, a Year 7 student and her grandmother were both injured.

"We have also lost count at how many times our wall has been repaired.

"So this issue has a serious impact on DGSG and we would like to see a speed reducing system implemented as soon as possible."

"There is a petition available for any of our parents and visitors to sign on our main reception desk."

A spokesman for Charlton Primary School, by the corner of Barton Road and Frith Road, said: "We have raised concerns with KCC about the safety of our children using Barton Road. The road also floods onto the pavement, meaning the children have to walk onto the road to avoid getting soaked."

The petition summary says: "For many painful years, residents of Barton Road and Frith Road (A256) have endured in dangerous conditions with speeds and blindness across the bend.

"Residents have been airlifted to hospital, children and adults alike have been ignored by local authorities."

It specifically asks for: "A full-bodied consultation by the residents of Dover, Buckland and Tower Hamlets wards be permitted to seek permanent action through support of our local MP, for traffic-calming measures to be assured for speed safety to protect the lives of families across our community."

# Hundreds sign petition to see safety measures on danger road

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A mass community push is being made to tame a dangerous road with a long history of crashes.

Hundreds of petition signatures have now been gathered demanding traffic calming for the one-way route of Barton Road and Frith Road in Dover.

It endangers the thousands of children from six neighbouring schools, they claim, plus those walking through the area to reach other schools.

The petition is being carried out by the Tower Hamlets Community Forum (THCF) as the district council ward covers the area.

Manda Heafey, chairman of THCF, said: "The road is sometimes a race track but there is a combination of hazards.

"There is a lot of speeding but other cars weave in and out of the traffic.

"In addition there are parked cars on either side of the road, which can affect the view of drivers. They suddenly see mothers with pushchairs appear from between cars.

"Four schools are directly on the route or very close and children sometimes run across the road. But there is also danger for children walking through the area to get to other schools.

"About 20 years ago a friend of mine was killed there and now there are far more cars on the



Petition has been launched for traffic-calming measures

road with some families having as many as four vehicles."

The route, a key way into the town centre, is also a hazard because of the blind bend as Barton Road turns into Frith Road.

At a meeting on Monday last week, THCF agreed to carry out the petition.

It has been given to the four schools closest to the route: Barton and Charlton primaries and Dover Grammar School for Girls, which are directly on the route, and St Edmund's RC School.

It has also gone to two other nearby schools, St Richards' RC and Shatterlocks Primary.

THCF says even pupils from as far away as Dover Grammar and Astor College walk through the area to get to their schools.

Ms Heafey said: "The schools are 100% behind us. Accidents are happening here all the time.

"Just before Christmas a car speeding along Barton Road went straight over the junction

and hit another car at Castle Avenue."

THCF member Augusta Pearson said: "Schools are keen to get some safety measures in place.

"Nobody can claim that it's a recent problem so maybe the residents need to get more vocal.

"It will cost money to implement a safe system but what price should we put on a life?"

"Why should a life be lost before it is deemed serious enough for them to spend some of our taxes on our safety?"

"Maybe some of the money generated by speed restrictions on the A20 (Dover TAP) could be used to fund this."

A Kent County Council spokesman said: "We prioritise available resources on where measures will have the most effect.

"At the current time Barton Road and Frith Road do not meet the intervention criteria for action but we will continue to monitor this location."

## Catalogue of accidents and injuries continues to grow

Four people were once struck by a car as they walked to church.

Mum Karen Gilham had to be airlifted to hospital with a fractured skull after the crash on Frith Road on August 1, 2010.

She finally recovered after being in a coma for almost two days. The impact had thrown her against a postbox.

Two of the other victims - Sue Jarrod and her daughter Lauren, 15 - were driven by ambulance to the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. They suffered hand and foot injuries.

A fourth woman suffered minor grazes and was treated at the scene.

They had all been on their way to morning service at Charlton Church.

A black Vauxhall Corsa, travelling down Frith Road, had turned 180 degrees at the junction with Avenue Road and ended up facing back towards Barton Road.

The route has had a series of crashes year after year.

On December 8, 2008 a 12-year-old girl and her 59-year-old grandmother were injured as they walked to school. The driver involved was arrested on suspicion of drink-driving.

That same month, Cllr Gordon Cowan called for the road to have a 20mph speed limit.

On this morning of July 7, 2009 a girl of 14 was hit by a car in Barton Road.

It happened at a time when hundreds of children were making their way to school and workers were driving into the town centre.

The girl had a minor head injury and was taken to hospital as a precaution.

There were complaints that parents often stopped their cars on zig-zag lines and on the approach to a pelican crossing.

In August 2010, locals complained of boy racers hurtling around the blind corner to beat each other to the lights at the Charlton Green crossing.

The next month, on September 9, a Peugeot on Barton Road crashed into railings on the pavement between Connaught Road and Castle Avenue.

Nobody in the car was hurt but the driver was later charged with drink-driving.

Then on October 11, 2010 a badly-driven Vauxhall Astra on Barton Road caused another driver to swerve and hit parked vehicles near the junction with Frith Road.

That month police revealed that one vehicle stopped for speeding along Barton Road had been going at 60mph in the 30mph zone. Two others were recorded at travelling at 37mph and 43 mph.

On Christmas Eve 2010, a woman passenger had to be cut from a car when it was in collision with a taxi at the junction of Frith Road and Castle Avenue.

Calls for a 20mph limit continued after, on April 6, 2013, a driver crashed with a parked car in Frith Road, shunting it into other cars and causing four vehicles to be damaged.

In May 2015, Cllr Simon Bannister reported that he had noted more than 1 in 25 drivers in Barton Road using their phones.

## COUNCILLOR'S MOTION FOR ACTION GIVEN SUPPORT

One crashed car on the danger road ended up in the river.

And in another accident a woman lost the use of her legs, says ward district councillor Ben Glayzer.

He said: "It has been referred to as a rat run. Reasons for accidents are due to vehicles speeding and the blind bend is a

factor when jostling into lanes.

"The schools surrounding the area have been placed in jeopardy due to the various incidents. One lady lost the use of her legs after an accident."

Cllr Glayzer placed a motion for action with Dover District Council last July, getting unanimous support.

Dover and Deal MP Charlie Elphicke said: "There have been too many incidents along that stretch and even more near-misses.

"Thousands of schoolchildren cross this busy road every day. "KCC must listen and seriously consider putting in sensible traffic-calming measures."

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