

## **STAG Press release 28 November 2009**

The Starkholmes Traffic Action Group (STAG) held a public meeting on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November at St Giles School, Starkholmes. It was very well attended with approx 200 people in the audience, all residents from the Starkholmes area including Willersley Lane and Church Street.

The meeting was addressed by Councillor Chris Jackson (Deputy Leader of the Derbyshire County Council) Councillor Ian Milne (Matlock Town Council) and their full time executives Neil Hickman and Peter Leigh. PC Jon Bewley and PCSO Karl Millward, of the Matlock Police Safer Neighbourhood Team were also invited to speak at the meeting as they had been instrumental in helping the STAG team to initiate the campaign.

Despite many residents feeling extremely angry and frustrated about the serious effect the Cawdor development has had on the traffic flow through Starkholmes, the meeting went off in an orderly fashion and was viewed by most as a positive step forward in the campaign for a safer village. It was a surprise to see that Sainsbury's Chief Exec Justin King had given his weight to the campaign, urging the council to re-think the traffic flow over the bridge at Crown Square. Sainsbury's provided a large sum of money to the council to help deal with traffic problems in the Matlock area resulting from the Cawdor Quarry development, so there is some finance available to take the relevant traffic calming action.

The council have now agreed that a traffic calming scheme will be introduced but not until the Crown Square development is complete. They have also promised to consult with the residents as to how this scheme will be designed and implemented. This will hopefully serve to reduce the horrific speeds reached by some vehicles along the stretch of road from Willersley Lane to Matlock Green, although Highways Project Manager Peter Leigh did not believe that the volume of traffic would be significantly reduced.

The problem of excess volume and speed of traffic along this road is a major issue, as the route winds through a charming and once-quiet village, and past two schools, but is now being used as a main road artery for the town, despite the fact that it isn't even a B road. This is resulting in major problems including some serious accidents and dangerous subsidence around the Willersley area. Many at the meeting agreed that the only way forward seems to be to reopen the bridge at Crown Square. This would probably satisfy the vast majority of people living in Matlock and the surrounding area. The retailers need this to happen, Sainsbury's want it to happen and many of the local community want it to happen. No adequate explanation has been given as to why this cannot be done, so why not have a trial and see what happens?

The STAG team would like to thank all of those people who gave their time to attend the meeting, including the police and council representatives, and remind everyone that they can have their say by visiting [www.sortoutstarkholmestraffic.co.uk](http://www.sortoutstarkholmestraffic.co.uk).