

Chideock bypass Working Group Update - May 2017

The recent survey on the Chideock Bypass Proposal has revealed significant support for a bypass following the recommended route.

The survey, conducted by the Chideock Bypass Working Group (CBWG) reveals that:

- 80 per cent (178) of the votes recorded were in support of a bypass for Chideock; while
- 20 per cent (45) were against a bypass.

During March CBWG members personally visited 359 properties in Chideock, North Chideock and Seatown talking to residents whenever possible and leaving a questionnaire at every address. At least 34 properties were identified as either vacant or only occupied for holiday lets.

Of those in favour of the bypass:

- 56 per cent of those expressed a preference for the original route proposed with a tunnel (cut & cover) under North Road;
- 24 per cent favoured a tunnel (cut & cover) along the entire route; while
- 20 per cent preferred the original route with an embankment over North Road.

The next step is to seek the support of the newly elected MP for West Dorset after the general election and to meet with Highways England, Department of Transport and other relevant parties. The aim is to get a bypass for Chideock included in the National Road Investment Strategy for 2020 to 2025.

Derek Maxwell, Chairman of the Working Group said: "The response to the survey with 120 questionnaires returned (37 per cent return) representing the views of 223 residents (a 45 per cent response rate - or turnout¹) reflects the importance locals attach to this issue. The number of vehicles increases every year and the size and weight of HGVs has risen dramatically in recent times. Most residents who know about the Chideock bypass, which has been talked about for over 50 years, support the scheme. After the council and general elections, all parties should respect the opinion of Chideock residents and back proposals for a bypass."

NOTES TO EDITORS:

The survey was carried out by the Chideock Bypass Working Group setup at the end of 2016 after a public meeting with Rt. Hon. Oliver Letwin MP in May 2016.

Five questions were asked:

1. Is the number, size and weight of HGVs passing through Chideock too high?
2. Is the amount of traffic passing through Chideock too high?
3. Are residents and pedestrians at high risk due to traffic and pollution?
4. Is traffic vibration, noise and pollution harming Chideock and its residents?
5. Do you support a bypass for Chideock?

If respondents answered YES to question 5 they were asked to rank the following three options in the order they found most acceptable bearing in mind the affordability of each option.

- a) Original route with embankment **over** North Road
- b) Original route with tunnel (cut & cover) **under** North Road
- c) Original route with tunnel (cut & cover) along entire route

Maps, photos and diagrams outlining the proposed route and options were made available to residents in hard copy, printed in the Chideock News and available on the Chideock & Seatown Community Website

¹ Dorset4You estimated population of Chideock, North Chideock and Seatown based on 2011 Census - approximately 500 permanent residents over the age of 18