

West Lothian councillors to consider road safety measures on B-roads

More problems at a notorious West Lothian accident blackspot have prompted councillors to consider road safety measures on the B-roads.

The plea followed the latest accident last month on a blind bend in the village of Harburn – the second in a month.

There have also been calls for updates on a long running project to build safer footpaths around the “island village” of Stoneyburn, as it is known to local campaigners, where locals say they have no safe pedestrian or cycle access to local facilities.

At the recent Fauldhouse and Breich Valley Local Area Committee a representative of West Calder and Harburn Community Council said: “There was a car smash at the railway bridge at Harburn last night. It was the umpteenth time and it’s lucky there has been no fatalities.

“Is there anything in the locality plans to introduce accident measures or promote road safety? It’s something that is going to become a greater and greater problem.”

There was another serious accident in mid April at the same site when the 31-year-old driver of an Audi was taken to hospital after a crash .

The narrow B7008 road links West Calder to the Lang Whang, the main Edinburgh to Ayr A70 road which skirts the Pentlands. The road through the village passes the Harburn Golf Club car park before crossing a blind bridge over the railway lines onto an almost 90 degree bend.

Chairing the committee. Councillor Craig Meek said: "I am aware there's been quite a few accidents in that one area. I think it would be good for a report to be brought back on any safety measures that can be considered in that area."

Committee officer Douglas Benson said: "I'd be happy to take that back to colleagues."

Provost Cathy Muldoon also asked for updates on the plans to link Stoneyburn to Fauldhouse with a new footpath and cycleway- and also plans for a path from the village to Whitburn.

The council has been actively working with Sustrans on proposals to build a safe route to Fauldhouse for the past four years. Money has been secured to pay for the design of a bridge to safely cross the A706 and provide a safe traffic free route. Fauldhouse is the nearest village with shops and also the medical practice serving Stoneyburn.

Campaigners have long fought for better pedestrian access out of the village. Almost in the geographic centre of the county, there are no footpaths out of the village and few buses. It's difficult to walk anywhere because of the danger on the roads.

Access to the village is along the narrow, twisting, B7015 which is lined for most of its western length with dense foliage.

Officers agreed to provide an update to the local area committee, which next meets after the summer recess, on 10 September.

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter