

Your ref:
Our ref: ME17451/Grooby



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20 March 2014

Dear Ms Hunt

Response of Warwickshire County Council to Report to Prevent Future Deaths issued by Mr McGovern, Senior Coroner dated 7 February 2014 following an inquest into the death of John William Grooby

Mr Grooby died as a result of a road traffic collision on 24 October 2013. He was travelling along the A3400, approximately 100m south of Puck Pits Farm near Shipston on Stour, on his motorcycle at 14.30pm.

Notification of the collision was received by the County Council on or around 13 November 2013. Following this notification [REDACTED] a Road Safety Engineer, from the Traffic and Road Safety Group attended the site with [REDACTED] of Warwickshire Police's Road Safety Team. This site visit is a normal procedure following any fatal road accident. The notes of this visit indicated a lack of warning signs to alert drivers of the possibility of deer in the road.

The County Council assesses the need for the introduction of road signs according to the type of sign and the location. It also considers the cost benefit of introducing signs, particularly with regard to the future prevention of road accidents.

PC [REDACTED] was notified by a colleague PC [REDACTED] prior to the site visit, that there were records of non-injury related accidents along this stretch of road involving deer. PC [REDACTED] had recorded 5 previous incidents since 2010. This information was new to the County Council, and informed officers of the tendency for deer to be present in the road at this location.

The accident data base has been interrogated to determine the frequency of collisions with wild animals across the county and the locations where such accidents occur. The information for the last 5 years (01/02/2009 to 31/1/2014) shows there have been 29 recorded injury crashes with animals. Of these crashes 10 were recorded where a vehicle has hit a deer in the road. Of these 10 crashes, seven involved motorcyclists. It is clear from this evidence that motorcyclists are particularly vulnerable when in collision with deer in the road.



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There are no previously recorded injury accidents involving deer at this location. The total cost of improvements requested in a year exceeds the budget available by many times. The council determines the Casualty Reduction Scheme budget each year by balancing the need to reduce road casualties against its other priorities. The casualty reduction scheme budget is prioritised by cost effectiveness – that is the schemes which are expected to prevent the most casualties for each thousand pounds invested. The cost of introducing deer warning signs in this location is approximately £600.

The guidance provided by the Department for Transport in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002, Chapter 4 (2013) Warning Signs, states that:

Signs to Diagram 551 (wild animals) may be used wherever such animals are likely to be found in the road.

There are no legal duties to erect signs warning of Deer or other wild animals in the road; it is left for the Highway Authority to determine if it is relevant or necessary on a case by case basis.

Warwickshire County Council has reviewed the evidence supporting the Coroner's view that action should be taken to prevent future similar deaths by introducing signs to warn motorists that deer use this area as a 'game track' and the decision has been taken to introduce signs on this section of the A3400. An instruction has been passed to the Council's contractors to install two signs. These signs are in accordance with the Traffic Signs, Regulations and General Directions 2002, signs to diagram 551 "Wild animals likely to be in the road".

The order for the installation of the signs was raised on 12 February 2014. An estimated time for installation is approx. 6-8 weeks.

Yours sincerely



Head of Law & Governance