

20's Plenty's National Conference – A View from Berlin

A 20's Plenty for Us Briefing March 2015

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20's Plenty for Us

Visiting the “20's Plenty for Us” Annual Conference in Cambridge. A European view from Heike Aghte

...making your place a better place to be

Heike Aghte from Berlin is one of the leading campaigners for setting default 20mph or 30km/h limits in Europe and attended our 2015 20mph places conference in Cambridge on March 12th. Here we reproduce her notes on the conference.

*What an amazing conference that was. More than hundred delegates attended the annual conference dedicated to urban 20 mph (30 km/h) speed limits in the beautiful historic city of **Cambridge**. They were discussing current implementing projects, like in Cambridge, Manchester, Liverpool, London, and new plans, celebrating their campaigner of the year and other successes, and informing about aspects of special importance such as the effects of 20 mph on public health.*

The latter was of special interest because only few have perceived so far how close obesity, exclusion of disadvantaged people, and poor standards in the development of children's physical skills go together with dangerous streets frightening away so many from active mobility. The discussions on the conference gave inspiring insights into the benefits 20 mph can have regarding crucial matters such as economy, environmental justice, social and health benefits. In fact, 20mph speed limits have the potential to achieve a true culture change, putting people first instead of just cars.

*Regarding single cities, “Transport for **London**” announcing 20mph limits trials on certain red routes in London was a pleasant surprise. Red roads mean major roads in London on which vehicles are not permitted to stop. They make up 5% of the road network but carry up to 30% of the traffic.*

*Another city moving towards a city-wide 20 mph scheme is **Manchester**. Conference participants were glad to hear the announcement of 1800 new 20mph roads in Manchester, which is accompanied by a great awareness raising campaign activating many groups and neighbourhoods and gaining broad public support.*

Lessons learned:

- 20 mph speed limits have gained momentum in the UK and their campaigners are very well-informed, strong and confident, amazing people.
- Considering that there are about 250 local “20sPlentyforUs” campaigns I guess that UK is the leading country in the world when it comes to implement 20mph.
- Conference members made a case for 20mph as the national urban limit by 2020. If anyone, then the British campaigners will be able to achieve this. I hope, the European Union will follow. Thanks to you all!

Many thanks to Heike for coming to Cambridge for the conference and her perspective on the UK 20's Plenty movement.

20's Plenty For Us campaigns for a 20mph default speed limit in residential streets without physical calming.

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