

20's Plenty for Scotland – The case for a national 20mph default for roads in villages, towns & cities across Scotland

A 20's Plenty for Us Press Release – Feb 21st 2015 www.20splentyforus.org.uk/PRe/20sPlentyforScotland.pdf

20's Plenty for Us calls for the Scottish Government to reduce the default urban speed limit to 20mph.

20's Plenty for Us

...making your place a better place to be

Wide-area 20mph limits are being rolled out across most roads in many of the UK's iconic cities. Already most of inner London (including the City of London itself), Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Oxford, Cambridge, York, Bath, Bristol, Edinburgh, Lancashire and many more places have already implemented or approved 20mph speed limits for their residential and shopping streets. In all of these places the national 30mph limit is seen as “no longer fit for purpose”.

The benefits are not just the reduction in casualties but providing lower emissions, less noise, calmer and more liveable streets, and importantly a foundation for active travel. And wherever 20mph limits are implemented support for them increases as people see the value of a better and calmer urban realm.

All this is being done far more cost effectively than earlier physically calmed and isolated zones. By combining wide-area roll-outs, which maximise the number of drivers getting benefits on their home street and combining with public engagement then complete communities are developing a new social consensus about how to share their streets.

Transport Scotland has already published a new “Good Practice Guide on 20mph Speed Restrictionsⁱ” that updates the previous 2002 guidance for Scottish Authorities and recommends implementing 20mph limits for all residential streets and those in town centres, around schools or with potential walking or cycling traffic.ⁱⁱ

And the Scottish Government has recently published its “Long Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030ⁱⁱⁱ”. This states that “All schools have safe routes for pupils who are confident to walk or cycle to them along with 20 mph or lower speed limits.”

So there is a clear national aspiration and intention to set 20mph limits for most restricted roads^{iv}. But these aspirations and clear economic benefits are being hampered because whilst 20mph limits only cost £3-5 per head of population this is far more than they need to. The major costs involved are requiring the streets to have a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and a rather ancient requirement from the 1990s, when 20mph limits were the exception rather than the rule, that they must have 20mph repeater signs every 100m.

With its shortly to be devolved powers on setting national speed limits and signage regulations the Scottish Government could immediately remove both of these costs by setting the national limit for restricted roads at 20mph and then only requiring the TRO and repeater signs on any excepted 30mph roads^v. There are numerous benefits to this :-

- It reduces administrative costs because TROs only have to be raised for the excepted roads.
- It reduces signage costs because repeaters are only required on the minority of 30mph roads.
- It allows for national public engagement on the change so maximising cost effectiveness.
- It provides a national and consistent basis that is easily understandable and clear in signing.
- It makes a clear statement that 20mph is the appropriate maximum speed for most streets.
- It transforms an intention and aspiration for active travel into clear action and benefit.

There would be challenges, but Scotland has already shown that in many areas it can aspire to, and deliver, socially inclusive policies that break free from the confines of a UK perspective and implement an initiative that is common in so many countries in Europe. It also aligns with the EU Road Safety Policy^{vi} that “strongly recommends the responsible authorities introduce speed limits of 30 km/h in all residential areas and on single-lane roads in urban areas which have no separate cycle lanes.”

Whilst the logistics of simultaneous adoption throughout Scotland may require attention, this could be overcome by local traffic authorities being allowed to implement independently in advance. This would allow a city such as Dundee to declare itself a 20mph city with appropriate signage at all entrances and then adopt the new signage (ie repeaters only on 30mph roads) within its borders.

There is also the advantage that savings in signage costs could fund the segregated facilities which would make any excepted 30mph streets much safer and more convenient for pedestrians and cyclists.

20's Plenty for Us is therefore launching its campaign with its Scottish local branches for Scotland to adopt a 20mph limit as the default for its restricted roads on a national basis. This will be complemented with a new Scottish website and social media messaging.

Rod King MBE, Founder and Campaign Director of 20's Plenty for Us commented :-

“As a devolved government, Scotland is in a favoured position. It can follow its neighbour in a ‘hands-off’ approach to the way community streets are shared to meet its national economic, public health and equality aspirations. But we suggest it should provide a progressive and pragmatic Scottish alternative that enables all of its communities to quickly move forward with a common shared value to ensure that all children and elderly have mobility options, that urban noise and emissions are reduced and to provide a firm foundation for active travel.

MSPs should be confident that wherever implemented the vast majority of people in 20mph communities value them and see them as the ‘right thing to do’. Delivering it for the whole of Scotland will be popular and effective.”

On 12th March 20's Plenty for Us will be holding the 6th annual UK conference on 20mph limits with presentations from cities implementing 20mph limits, public health and active travel commentators.

Councillors, Officers, Media and Campaigners are all welcome to book for the “20mph – It's miles better” conference in Cambridge see - http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/20mph_it's_miles_better.htm

ⁱ See <http://tinyurl.com/Scotland20mph>

ⁱⁱ See <http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/PReL/Scotland20mphGuidance.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ See <http://tinyurl.com/ScotlandActiveTravel>

^{iv} Roads where the street lighting is no more than 200yds apart

^v Note that boundary signs where a limit changes would still be required.

^{vi} See http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdfs/news/expert/background/20110926BKG27515/20110926BKG27515_en.pdf

20's Plenty For Us campaigns for a 20mph default speed limit in residential streets without physical calming. It has local campaign groups across Scotland.

Web www.20splentyforus.org.uk

Twitter [@20splentyforus](https://twitter.com/20splentyforus)

Rod King MBE
Founder & Campaign Director
rod.k@20splentyforus.org.uk
07973 639781

Anna Semlyen
Campaign Manager
anna.s@20splentyforus.org.uk
07572 120439

Web www.20splentyforus.scot

Twitter [@20sPlentyScot](https://twitter.com/20sPlentyScot)

Email info@20splentyforus.scot

Jeremy Leach
London Campaign Co-ordinator
jeremy.l@20splentyforus.org.uk
07415 243015