

It's Time for 20 – Time for DfT to end the needless imposition of 20mph repeater signs and be more flexible

A 20's Plenty for Us Press Release Feb 2014 www.20splentyforus.org.uk/Press_Releases/TimeForFlexi-20mph.pdf

Whilst the Department for Transport and central government both encourage 20mph limits for residential streets, the DfT's needlessly stringent repeater signage regulations are a barrier to smoothly transitioning to slower speeds. The UK's road speed signage rules are out of date and a new 'Flexi-20' system is a proposed solution.



Successive governments have supported 20mph as the right speed limit for residential streets. Multiple British Social Attitude Survey results have shown over 70% of people surveyed agree. Those disagreeing are just 11%. Already Local Authorities with over 12.5m people have decided that, even with the expense of repeater signs on every such road, 20mph limits will benefit their communities. Yet signage regulations still date from the 1990's when a 20mph limit was the exception. The speed signage rules need updating.

As time goes by even more Traffic Authorities are adopting a Total 20 approach. However DfT thinking has not modernised. Whilst the DfT is intending to provide some relaxation on repeater signs it is not intending to remove their requirement on 20mph streets or to end the prohibition of repeater signs on 30mph streets. This does not fit with the developing best practice in so many UK cities where on 80-95% of the roads the limit is 20mph.

Simply doing more of "nearly the same" is not providing a managed and planned transition to what the UK is moving towards – i.e. where most residential streets will be 20mph. Sometime in the not too distant future the DfT will be forced to admit this and allow a reversal of the repeater signage requirements so that Traffic Authorities will only need to erect repeater signs on the minority of streets retaining a 30mph limit.

20's Plenty for Us believe that the government should pre-empt this by enabling local authorities to choose whether they will put repeater signs on their 30mph or 20mph limited streets. Clearly a place with 20mph repeaters will be 30mph where no repeaters are present and a place with 30mph repeaters will be 20mph where no repeaters are present. It's not difficult to follow. Where the default speed is 20mph this can be reinforced by entry gateways saying that it is a 20mph place unless otherwise shown. Signage at the boundary of speed limits will remain as current.

A 'Flexi-20' signage change would :-

- Reduce the signage costs for Traffic Authorities wanting to transition to 20mph limits, saving up to half of the budget which could then be spent on other priorities
- Enable local representatives to make decisions without the negatives of the cost or clutter of needless signage
- Give a clear indication for those roads where 30mph is permitted
- Give each locality the choice to progressively adopt a 20mph limit for their residential streets
- Allow the future adoption of 20mph as a national default when the time is right

At the 'Time for 20' national conference on 20mph limits on 18th February, Rod King MBE, Founder and Campaign Director of 20's Plenty for Us announced :-

"Today we are launching our "Flexi-20" initiative. This is a call for a change in signage to allow Traffic Authorities to choose to simply put repeater signs on the roads which are not 20mph. This will substantially reduce costs, reduce signage clutter and prepare the way for a national adoption of what most people believe is eminently sensible. It requires no change in legislation but merely a change in signage regulation. Once done we would expect the majority of local authorities to set 20mph limits for most of their streets. It really is now "Time for 20" and it's time for central government to consider and respond to the needs of local communities and authorities."

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

Web www.20splentyforus.org.uk Twitter @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

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