

20mph Limits Enhance 'Liveability'

Over 75% of people say 20mph is the right speed limit for residential streets. It's recognised as "best practice" where there are pedestrians and cyclists such as town centres, shops, workplaces or schools. Children are better protected if 20mph limits surround nurseries, parks and play areas. Quality of life and 'liveability' improves.

20's Plenty



Where People Live

Humps are not required to make 20mph limits. Slower maximum speeds reduce rat running, making our lives more sedate and civilised without affecting journey times. Here's how:

Safer	Everyone is more likely to notice hazards and stop in a timely way to avoid a crash. There are 22% fewer casualties ¹ . Injuries are less serious. Fear of road danger reduces, increasing the trips by sustainable modes like walking, cycling and public transport. Children need fewer escort trips with parents. Motorised traffic reduces and this further lowers road danger.
Cleaner & Greener	When 30km/h (18.6 mph) zones were implemented Germany, drivers changed gear 12% less often, braked 14% less and needed 12% less fuel ² , reducing pollution and climate impacts.
Efficient Roads	Slower speeds enable smoother flow of traffic therefore making better use of the roads ³ . Lower speeds also enable traffic to merge more easily.
Active	Up to 12% higher walking and cycling levels were found in Bristol ⁴ . Active lifestyles help to prevent obesity and heart disease. Exercise improves mental health too.
Health	Child protection is especially enhanced. Public health improves generally with cleaner air and as more people take regular exercise with active travel (eg cycling and even walking to the bus). Loneliness reduces due to a better connected community. Health inequalities between rich and poor narrow.
Sociable	Those whose roads are not dominated by traffic have more local friends and known neighbours ⁵ . Children have more local playmates. Neighbourliness brings a culture of exchange, 'looking out for each other' and favours that further enhance quality of life through a stronger community.
Accessible	The elderly, families with small children and those with mobility issues or without cars are more able to cross roads, reducing isolation. 20mph improves access to work, education and leisure opportunities to all.
Quieter	Compared to 30mph, 20mph means 3 decibels less traffic noise. People can more easily listen to each other and we all sleep better. In urban areas with speeds up to 35mph a 6mph reduction cuts noise by up to 40% ⁶ .
Local Amenities	20mph limits help to keep businesses alive with local customers. Small shops are better able to thrive, or at least compete with out of town shops or e-commerce. This means more sustainable, resilient communities.
Place not Empty Space	A sense of 'place' rather than just an empty space results when drivers slow down. Streets are no longer just thoroughfares, but a quality environment to savour, meet and even play.
Fair	20mph limits recognise and respect everyone's equal rights to share space. Up to 40% of all UK public space is roads or car parks ⁷ .
Extends Carfree Life-stages	Wide area 20mph limits extend the duration in which people will choose to not own a car. Young adults delay purchase and some people voluntarily give up a car earlier in life and use local facilities if they feel safe in a 20mph area. 16% of disposable income is freed up from car ownership for other uses.
Property Values	Pedestrianisation raises shop rental values. So do slower speeds. Property prices can rise by 2% where traffic speeds have reduced by 5-10mph ⁸ . This desirability premium proves that lower speeds are valued.

Please contribute to making your community a "better place to be" by driving slower and making it known that you support 20mph limits.

¹ Interim Evaluation of 20mph Speed Limits in Portsmouth. Atkins 2010 <http://www2.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/speedmanagement/20mphPortsmouth/>

² An Illustrated Guide to Traffic Calming. by Dr Carmen Hass-Klau 1990

³ Link to a copy of the COBA 2002 manual – Traffic Flow plots are in Chapter 9: http://www.leics.gov.uk/part_5.pdf

⁴ Cycling City / Active Bristol <http://www.betterbybike.info/sites/default/files/attachments/Cycling%20City%20end%20of%20project%20report.pdf>

⁵ Donald Appleyard Liveable Streets 1981

⁶ Campaign for Better Transport for the UK Noise Association 2009 http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/system/files/Speed_and_Road_Traffic_Noise_Dec09.pdf

⁷ <http://acocksngreenfocusgroup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Ben-Hamilton-Baillie-Improving-Traffic-Behaviour-and-Safety-Through-Urban-Design.pdf>

⁸ Evaluating Traffic Calming Benefits, Costs and Equity Impacts, Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute 1999. <http://www.vtpi.org/calming.pdf>

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