

Wide 20 mph Limits – A Winning Opportunity

A national campaign is seeking to spread the word about the benefits of 20mph speed limits – including reduced accident levels, public health improvements and noise reduction. Councillor Anna Semlyen explains.

We became councillors to help people. 20 mph limits are a win-win policy supported by 70-80 per cent of voters. An increasing number of authorities are funding 20 mph limits. Make sure yours joins the club.

20's Plenty for Us, the National Campaign for 20 mph limits, supports people wanting slower road speeds. Many councillors are involved, either running campaigns or supporting activists. Others are regularly receiving requests and petitions.

As an organisation of grass roots activists, each 20's Plenty for Us branch aims to explain to councillors three principles:

- 1) That 20 mph is safer than 30 mph on residential streets.
- 2) We don't need expensive speed bumps to introduce 20 mph limits.
- 3) Everyone deserves safer, quieter, cleaner streets.

Tick those you agree with. If it's yes to all three (like most people) then you support community wide 20 mph limits.

What are the benefits? Community wide residential 20 mph limits enhance child protection and health equalities. Slower speeds provide the basis for active travel, lowering obesity, heart disease and stress. 20 mph limits save 12 per cent of fuel, reducing climate change emissions. They smooth traffic thereby cutting congestion. Noise is 40 per cent less and road maintenance and signage lighting costs fall. Improved accessibility, helping the vulnerable and community cohesion are further quality of life gains.

20 mph limits without humps are mandatory and enforceable with light touch policing. Portsmouth had 22 per cent fewer road casualties two years afterwards. In Portsmouth roads which previously were at 25-29 mph reduced by 6 mph.

Limits do not have traffic calming and are seven times more cost effective than zones that do. Indeed wide area limits are much more helpful at promoting active travel to school than short stretches of road humps.

Professor Danny Dorling, Human Geographer at The University of Sheffield says 20 mph limits are "the most cost effective way to improve Britain today". Warrington found 800 per cent

first year rates of return on its pilots in casualties avoided. Yes, it paid for itself in six weeks.

7.5 million British people live in authorities with a 20 mph residential speed limit policy – like Oxford, Lancashire, Hackney, Darlington, Bath, Cambridge and Brighton. LTP, Section 106, Local Sustainable Transport Fund, PCT, borrowing, the New Homes Bonus, Community Infrastructure Levy or PFI funds are all being earmarked for the installation of 20 mph limits. Liverpool's PCT is paying 40 per cent of costs, including public engagement. Where there's political will the approximately £2.50-£3 per head is found to pay. Islington is so happy with its residential limits that it is extending 20mph to arterial roads. Examples of council spending include: £300,000 for Oxford; £465,000 for Portsmouth; £460,000 for Cambridge; £750,000 for Warrington; £9m for all of Lancashire.

To further 20mph limits where you live – my calls to action are:

- 1) Get informed – see the www.20splentyforus.org.uk site. We have videos, Frequently Asked Questions and briefing sheets. Attend the conference on 1 May in London or send officers. Ask us questions. Our services are free.

- 2) Suggest 20mph residential limits for your manifesto.

- 3) Consider a petition. Write 20 mph into

political newsletters. Find a campaign leader.

- 4) Submit a motion, or question to Full Council.

It often wins cross party support

- 5) If the above isn't working then consider a scrutiny topic. All 20 mph scrutinies to date have favoured the policy.

On 1 May the 20mph Places Conference in London features Transport Minister Norman Baker, who is urging councils to bring in 20 mph limits. Plus public health, police, social marketing and campaigner speakers. Learn 20 mph implementation best practice. Contact Bini. Kaur@ptrc-training.co.uk

Contact me for advice Anna.s@20splentyforus.org.uk. My fantastic job is to support and grow the 118 local 20's Plenty for Us groups, www.20splentyforus.org.uk

30mph is out dated where people live. You'd be hard pressed to find anyone in a 20mph street who wants it back at 30mph! Don't get left behind in introducing wide area 20mph limits without humps. It'll make you popular and have a lasting public benefit. 🇬🇧

