

IAM are not so RoadSmart in their interpretation of the latest DfT report on speed limit compliance

A 20's Plenty for Us Press Release June 2017

http://www.20splenty.org/20mph_compliance_report

The annual report¹ on speed limit compliance from the DfT has been seized upon by IAM RoadSmart as evidence of the public being “confused” about 20mph limits. In fact the roads in the report are atypical of most 20mph roads and even then show increasing compliance on these roads.

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DfT measure traffic flows and speeds across the country and a sample of these (116) are at locations chosen to exclude “external factors that might restrict driver behaviour”. Only nine of these have a 20mph limit and DfT state in their report that these “may not be typical of most 20mph roads”. Indeed, most of these roads are arterial without any sign of housing and clearly not residential. We have mapped their location on Google Maps at <https://tinyurl.com/DFT20mphATC>. In most wide-area 20mph roll outs such roads would probably be excluded and left at 30mph, or be given additional signage, engineering or enforcement.

The report notes that on these nine roads 20mph was exceeded by 81% of cars. Rather than ask why drivers are speeding at these specific, atypical 20mph locations, IAM RoadSmart headlines its press release² on the report with “Progress on making speeding unacceptable may be hampered by confusion on 20mph limits”.

A closer analysis of the report and its findings show that it is IAM RoadSmart who seem to be confused. Besides these atypical roads having no bearing on most residential 20mph schemes, the DfT report includes data for these specific roads for 2015 and 2016. These demonstrate that compliance is, year on year, increasing on even these atypical 20mph roads for almost every vehicle category.

% changes between 2015 and 2016	Year on year reduction in %age of vehicles exceeding the speed limit (eg 18% 2015 to 16% in 2016 = -2%)					
	Cars	LCVs	Short Bus	Long Bus	Rigid HGV	Artic HGV
Exceeding limit	-2%	-3%	-7%	-1%	-5%	-3%
Exceeding limit by 5mph or more	-3%	-5%	-26%	-8%	-9%	-1
Exceeding limit by 10mph or more	-1%	-2%	-8%	-4%	-4%	1
Change in average speed (mph)	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	0

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

“The nine 20mph roads detailed in this report have very little in common with most residential and high street roads where communities set 20mph speed limits to make them safer and more comfortable. Even then, this report shows that compliance on these nine roads is improving. IAM RoadSmart keep complaining about “blanket 20mph limits” yet most authorities are using discretion to exclude such roads as this report references or add the appropriate engineering or enforcement to gain compliance. IAM RoadSmart would be more credible if they called on all speed limits to be obeyed rather than trying to undermine 20mph speed limits where people live, work, shop, play and learn. The call for default 20mph limits with exceptions is echoed by many health and road safety organisations, including WHO saying that 30kmh(20mph) is the right speed limit where vehicles conflict with pedestrians and cyclists.³”

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623261/vehicle-speed-compliance-statistics-2016.pdf

² <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/media-and-policy/newsroom/news-details/2017/06/29/progress-on-making-speeding-socially-unacceptable-may-be-hampered-by-confusion-on-20mph-limits-says-iam-roadsmart>

³ http://www.20splenty.org/duty_of_care_mandates_20mph

20's Plenty For Us campaigns for a 20mph default speed limit in built up areas without physical calming.

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