

30mph is Unjust and Unjustified: Choose 20mph

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http://www.20splenty.org/30mph_unjust

There is no justification for 30mph as the national speed limit. 20's Plenty for Us say far too many people are hurt on 30mph roads. 30mph is unjust and unjustified. 20mph is safer and best practice. It results in 20% fewer casualties – about 21,000 p/a.

20's Plenty for Us

...making your place a better place to be

The 30mph limit for built up areas was decided over 80 years ago in 1934. 30mph was chosen in an arbitrary way without evidence or research on survivability.

Of the 129,837 reported casualties on built up roads in 2016, 105,981 were on 30mph roads. 588 (11 a week) were killed and a further 12,849 (246 a week) were seriously injured on 30mph roads¹. **This is unacceptable.**

Some say that “it's 30 for a reason”, but with so many casualties this is not a safe speed for our modern, congested urban roads where motor vehicles and vulnerable road users mix. In fact, the World Health Organisation (WHO) says “A safe speed on roads with possible conflicts between cars and pedestrians, cyclists or other vulnerable road users is 30 km/h (20mph)²”

Neither does a 30mph limit satisfy the “sustainable system” approach that looks for a road environment where mistakes do not end in death for either those making them or their innocent victims.

When serious injuries happen at work, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigates how many were predictable and preventable. A change to well enforced 20mph limits could prevent 20% of casualties³ - about 21,000 casualties p.a. fewer. The policy costs about £2 p/head for individual local authorities to implement and £1 p/head if implemented nationally by central government⁴.

Depending on age, survivability at 20mph vs 30mph is about 7-10 times higher and stopping distances are halved (12m vs 23m or 3 vs 6 car lengths). We all, as drivers or pedestrians, favour near misses to being hit.

Urban speeds above 20mph are also unjust because excessive speed is the main reason that many people fear using roads to walk or cycle. Our young, elderly and many others are losing their active mobility because 30mph vehicle speeds are currently endorsed where people live, work, shop and learn. This has huge implications for our nation's health and the cost of obesity and cardio-vascular treatments.

Rod King MBE, Founder of 20's Plenty for Us commented:

“Across the world 30mph (50kmh) limits are being replaced by 20mph (30kmh) as the right standard where motor vehicles mix with pedestrians and cyclists. The 30mph limit that was plucked out of the air in 1934 as being better than no limit is no longer fit for purpose. It is unjust, unjustifiable and needs to be consigned to history. A routinely enforced 20mph limit should be the new urban norm with higher speeds only allowed on those roads that protect pedestrians and cyclists with appropriate crossing and segregated facilities. It would transform our urban/village environment and be the foundation for a healthier and more productive nation.”

¹https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647911/ras30006.ods DfT – Reported road casualties 2016,

² WHO – Managing Speed Page 8 <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/254760/1/WHO-NMH-NVI-17.7-eng.pdf?ua=1>

³ http://www.20splenty.org/we_love_our_safer_20mph_limits

⁴ http://www.20splenty.org/20_scotland_options

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

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