

Leading Charities' Call for 20mph Default Speed Limit

A 20's Plenty for Us Press Release July 2019

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

A group of ten leading transport and active travel charities call on the UK Government to introduce a default 20mph speed limit in England. 20mph limits are the foundation for lower road casualties, getting more people walking and cycling and improving social justice but once again are being largely overlooked by the Department for Transport.

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The call by ten leading charities for the Government to adopt a 20mph default speed limit in built-up areas in England follows the recent Road Safety Statement from the Department for Transport¹ which set out the UK Government's road safety action plan. Amongst the 74 actions, there was little focus on reducing speeds in built-up areas in spite of the fact that research shows that casualties in built-up areas are reduced by up to two-fifths when vehicle speeds are kept to 20mph or below.

A group of ten charities, 20's Plenty for Us, the Bicycle Association of Great Britain, Brake, British Cycling, Campaign for Better Transport London Group, Cycling UK, Living Streets, London Cycling Campaign, The Ramblers and RoadPeace, all of whom are keen to see more people walking and cycling safely in our cities, towns, villages and countryside, have now come together to call for the Government to go further and introduce a default 20mph limit.

The letter to the Minister of State for Transport, the Rt Hon Michael Ellis MP, sets out the evidence for lower speed limits and the benefits they offer. It also makes clear the widespread support that there is for 20mph limits both from the public and also from many national and international road safety and public health specialists including the WHO and OECD and the Public Health bodies in England, Wales and Scotland.

20mph limits are already widespread across the UK with more than 20 million people across the UK living in Local Authorities which are adopting or have adopted 20mph speed limits. This includes many of the UK's leading Local Authorities such as Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow and Edinburgh and large parts of London.

The charities are careful to stress it is the default speed that needs to change but this would not mean a blanket speed limit; Local Authorities would still be free to retain higher limits on roads where they believe this is appropriate.

Rod King Founder of 20's Plenty for Us said

"The imminent arrival of new technology such as speed limiters on vehicles and Government policies encouraging more people to walk and cycle makes the speed limit we set all the more important. Moving to a default speed limit of 20mph is an essential building block in making our cities, towns and villages safer and more attractive places to walk, cycle and spend time outside. The UK Government should follow the lead of the Welsh Government and move quickly to introduce a 20mph default limit across England".

¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817695/road-safety-statement-2019.pdf

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