2021 sees a growing call from communities for 20mph speed limits throughout the UK

Wide-area 20mph schemes are already common in urban authorities and “20mph as a norm” is government policy in Wales and Scotland. Now, the desire for 20mph speed limits is sweeping across rural communities throughout the UK. County authorities are starting to answer a call to action from town and parish councils who are giving voice to local residents’ aspirations for 20’s Plenty.

In 2021, 20’s Plenty for Us saw a record number of 100 newly registered local campaigns across the UK. The majority of those campaigns are based in rural communities. This is part of the growing evidence that road safety and liveability is of equal concern to the residents in rural as well as more urban settings. In Wales, where a national default 20mph speed limit is set to be implemented by 2023, it is significant that there are many rural communities which will benefit greatly from the improvements in road safety and quality of life that this will bring.

Data from the Scottish Borders is showing that the greatest speed reductions are being seen on roads that, before the implementation of 20mph speed limits, had the highest recorded average speeds. These reductions are significantly more than those suggested by the DfT in their 2013 guidance and are influenced by a decade of change in social attitudes to speed.

There is also a country-wide move by town and parish councils, to represent the views of residents in smaller communities and pass motions in favour of 20mph speed limits. A growing number of counties are listening to residents and acting in response to developments taking place around the country. Most recently, Oxfordshire and Cornwall County Councils have been taking steps to make it quicker, cheaper and easier to implement a county-wide default 20mph speed limit; action that will bring significant benefits to the large rural populations in both counties.

Councillor Phillip Desmonde, Transport lead for Cornwall says: “Villages, towns and cities should be places where people are free to travel in ways that are safe, sustainable, healthy and fair. In many places inappropriate speed limits make movement dangerous where people live, work and play, particularly for vulnerable road users such as children and elderly people.

I would like to thank those who took the time to make the case for 20mph speed limits in their areas – your voice has been heard. Officers will continue feasibility work around plans for 20mph to become the speed limit for all residential roads in Cornwall and the pilot areas will help inform their work on this.”

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1 [https://www.20splenty.org/welsh_20mph_report](https://www.20splenty.org/welsh_20mph_report)
2 [https://www.20splenty.org/scotgov_says_20splenty](https://www.20splenty.org/scotgov_says_20splenty)

“28 million people across the UK live in areas where 20mph speed limits are, or soon will be, the norm. There is a growing desire for lower speeds from both rural and urban communities by implementing wide-area 20mph speed limits. It is becoming increasingly clear that the national 30mph limit set nearly 100 years ago is neither wanted nor is fit to serve the needs of 21st century communities. Changing it to 20mph in England is the logical next step.”

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