20’s Plenty to reach a new milestone as it approaches 600 local community campaigns

Calls from communities across the UK for wide-area 20mph speed limits are increasing as the number of local 20’s Plenty Campaigns approaches a significant new milestone.

A nationwide demand for lower speed limits is gaining momentum as the total number of local 20’s Plenty Campaigns is on target to reach 600 soon. Already this year, 42 new places have decided that ‘20 is plenty’ for their communities, taking the current total to 591. The increase in demand was first noticed during the last quarter of 2021, when a record 49 new branches began. It reflects the growing influence of county level campaigners as well as parish and town councils voting for wide-area 20mph speed limits. The desire and need for lower speed limits is a major concern for residents across the country, in smaller towns and villages as well urban centres.

28 million people across the UK already live in local authorities where wide area 20mph speed limits are the norm and Wales¹ is leading the way by setting a 20mph national default limit on urban and residential roads (due in 2023). Wales is aligning with the global best practice outlined by WHO and the UN² who call for 20mph (30kmh) to be the maximum speed limit on roads where vulnerable road users mix with motor vehicles (with higher limits as an exception if vulnerable road users are protected). Scotland³, too, is following best practice where (by 2025) all appropriate roads in built up areas will have a limit of 20mph. A growing number of new cities and towns (Southampton, Faversham) and shire county local authorities (Oxfordshire and Cornwall) also realise 20mph should be the new norm. With growing awareness of the important role that lower speeds play in reducing danger, more and more people living in communities where 30mph speed limits are still in place, are demanding change too.

The multiple benefits of reducing speed limits are increasingly widely recognised. Wide-area 20mph makes it easier and safer to choose walking and cycling over car journeys for local trips and the significant reductions in air³ and noise pollution have a positive impact on physical health including reductions in heart and lung disease. 20mph speed limits serve to create better-connected, inclusive communities. Reductions in road rage, increased daily exercise, less fear and loneliness, and better-quality sleep from reduced noise levels bring mental health improvements.

As the groundswell of support for lower speed limits and significant increased demand for 20’s Plenty campaigns continues, it is only a matter of time before 20mph is the default speed limit across the UK.

¹ https://www.20splenty.org/welsh_20mph_report
² https://www.20splenty.org/global_ministers_mandate_20mph
³ https://www.20splenty.org/scotgov_says_20splenty
⁴ https://www.20splenty.org/new_research_on_emissions

“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 on a UK-wide basis is the logical next step.”

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

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