20mph speed limit on restricted roads in Wales

Kaarina Ruta, Transport Assistant, WLGA
1. Evidence supporting the introduction
The case for change

Road safety

Modal shift

Health and wellbeing

Placemaking

Safeguarding the environment for future generations
• ‘Road safety is more than about the avoidance of being injured. It must also address the perception of risk of harm and freedom from harm and its manifestation at the individual, community and societal levels.’

• ‘Loss of children’s independent mobility is a key indicator of how casualty reduction alone cannot deliver a healthier, safer society’

• ‘There is overwhelming evidence that lower speeds result in fewer collisions and in reduced severity of collisions and injuries.’

• International evidence suggests a strong relationship between speed and the number of collisions, i.e. a decrease in mean speed is associated with a decrease in the number of collisions and injured road users. (TRL Report 2000, IRTAD/ITF/OECD report 2018, Elvik et al 2019 etc.)
Phase 1/Pilot Settlements

- 8 settlements – villages, towns, cities
- Mostly 20mph, reflecting TfW maps
- Initial monitoring reported
- Successful in speed reductions and other outcomes
National conversation: are urban streets for people or cars?

Pass legislation and consult on local exceptions

Legislation comes into force – start active enforcement

Show 20mph works

Counter the myths

Monitoring and Evaluation

Speeding becomes socially unacceptable

Celebrate the benefits

Promotion and Communications Recommendations

2021 2022 2023 2024 2025
20mph. A bit slower, but a whole lot better.

Across Wales, new 20mph speed limits mean fewer collisions, safer streets and more of us getting out and about.

#BetterAt20mph
Comms – what actually happened!

- No ‘National Conversation’ pre-legislation
- Law passed July 2022
- Comms (PNs, Interviews etc) only started in Sept 2022
- Campaign began in earnest on 17 April – ‘6 months to go’
20mph speed limit: Drivers tie red ribbons to cars in protest

By Rowenna Hoskin

Stop the change of speed limits to 20mph on 17th September.
This decision is not representative of the broader public opinion and as such, it is not democratic to implement the changes. An alteration to road laws on this scale should be subject to much more extensive polling or possibly as part of a Welsh referendum on the matter.

More details

This petition is now under consideration by the Petitions Committee.

Orders that collect more than 500 signatures are discussed by the Petitions Committee.

Find out about the Petitions Committee's discussion of this petition.

21,920 signatures

Show on a map

The Petitions Committee will consider this for a debate.

The Petitions Committee considers all petitions that get more than 10,000 signatures for a debate.

Date closed
31 May 2023

Get petition data (OSDN format)
About petition data
Social Media

• Vitriolic disagreement is a feature, not a bug
• Misinformation stokes conflict
• Conflict draws clicks
• Clicks sell
• Misinformation has been monetised
The Goodwin Curve


Prof Phil Goodwin, UCL and UWE
From:

The Stockholm congestion pricing syndrome: How congestion charges went from unthinkable to Uncontroversial

Centre for Transport Studies, Stockholm

Figure 1. Would vote "yes" in referendum about congestion pricing (excl. "Don't know").

Public Support for Congestion Pricing, Stockholm
Figure 9: Road pricing acceptability may vary with time

Speed limit

Wales is here!

Public norm develops

Support by all main Senedd parties

National limit devolved to Wales

Rod King, 20 Plenty for Us, after Goodwin (2006) and Owen et al. (2008)
3. Lessons learned from the rollout

- Meaningful engagement with public is key
- Awareness of the policy change before coming into force was high, but still caused a lot of confusion
- Confusion amongst drivers was also exacerbated by the media using the factually incorrect narrative of a blanket 20mph
- The Welsh approach has created a ‘common standard’ albeit with local variations of residential streets and streets where pedestrians and cyclists and motorised vehicles mix to have a 20mph speed limit
Individual vs. societal benefits

- Seemingly negative impacts (‘I have to drive slower’) are instantaneous and individual yet the positive impacts (modal shift, health benefits, community cohesion) will take time and are societal.

- Behaviour change is a process not an event and we are but at the beginning of it
Most people seems to support slower speed limits on their street but not on the roads they need to drive through (the ‘selfish’ driver syndrome).

The way we think a 20mph or 30mph street should ‘look’ and ‘feel’ for the driver needs to change to allow/accommodate for safe walking, cycling and wheeling.

Drivers contradict their support for 20mph limits with their actual driving (intention-action gap).

Drivers often speed due to social pressure and acceptability of speeding.
4. National monitoring framework
Figure 1: Objectives of default 20mph speed limit implementation

Policy measure: Reduce default speed limit on restricted roads to 20mph

- Reduce injury and death
- Reduce the number of pedestrians and cyclists killed or seriously injured on the road network
- Encourage a change in travel behaviour
- Encourage mode shift from private car to walking and cycling for shorter journeys in built-up areas
- Reduce motor vehicle dominance in vehicle and pedestrian interactions
- Reduce negative effects of vehicle use on the wider environment
- Reduce carbon emissions from transport
- Maintain or improve local air quality

Improve the well-being of people in Wales (health outcomes, social interaction, NHS costs, local economies)
### Figure 2: KPIs for assessing the effects of the default 20mph speed limit implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Key performance indicators (KPIs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1: Traffic compliance with 20mph speed limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2: Change in 85&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; percentile speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3: Change in mean speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4: Vehicle journey times and journey time variation on main through routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(difference between 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; and 95&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; percentile journey times)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the number of pedestrians and cyclists killed or seriously injured</td>
<td>2.1: Casualty rate for child pedestrians (aged 5-11 years), by sex and deprivation fifth, also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the road network</td>
<td>by sex and urban/rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2: Casualty rate for pedestrians and cyclists aged 12-74, by sex and deprivation fifth, also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by sex and urban/rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3: Casualty rate for older pedestrians and cyclists (aged over 75 years), by sex and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>deprivation fifth, also by sex and urban/rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage mode shift from private car to walking and cycling</td>
<td>3.1: Change in attitude to active travel use in built-up areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce motor vehicle dominance in vehicle and pedestrian interactions</td>
<td>3.2: Change in vehicle and pedestrian yielding behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3: Change in public attitudes to 20mph speed limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce carbon emissions from transport</td>
<td>4.1: Change in local air quality – NO&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain or improve local air quality</td>
<td>4.2: Change in CO&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt; emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.1: Change in public attitudes to 20mph speed limits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Engagement and enforcement

- Police and GoSafe will continue to enforce pre-legislation 20mph limits across Wales
- Start adopting new sites from January 2024
- Support more Community Speed Watch groups (presentation to all community and town councils in January 2024)
- Op Ugain: The South Wales Fire and Rescue developed a roadside presentation which will be scaled up and rolled out across Wales by three dedicated regional teams
5. Next steps

- Gathering feedback from all highway authorities about the application of the exceptions criteria
- Engagement and Enforcement
- Understanding speeds and compliance, to prioritise roads for speed management
- Continued monitoring for 5 years
- Communicate realised benefits
- Embedding 20mph into wider context of road safety, active travel and modal shift
Vision for Wales

These changes will be:

✓ Good for people and communities
✓ Good for the environment
✓ Good for places and the economy
✓ Good for culture and Welsh language
Any questions?

Diolch yn fawr iawn a pob lwc
Yr Alban