

Funding 20 mph Speed Limits (updated Mar 2012)

20 mph limits give fantastic value for money. Slower speeds are paid for in many ways and funds combined to make communities safer and improve their quality of life. 20 mph limits cost from £2 per head.



Where speed is an issue a first question is whether to implement with isolated, physically calmed zones or signed only limits as a default across the whole community.

20 mph policy	Cost Effectiveness Analysis	Cost £ per km
Zones (with physical calming)	Cost effective where there are over 0.7 casualties per km pa ^[1] .	£60,000 per km
Limits (without physical calming)	7.2 times more cost effective than zones per mph reduced for wide areas	£1,400 per km

In Portsmouth's 2nd year of authority wide limits there was a 22% drop in casualties compared to previous 3 year's average^[2], 8% better than the 14 % downward injury trend. Note that cost effectiveness analysis which only looks at casualty reductions fails to recognise other benefits such as danger reduction, noise and pollution reduction, fuel savings and higher quality of life.

Implementing a 20 mph limit involves a public education campaign and consultation, signage, signposts or road markings, changing traffic regulation orders through advertising in local media plus local authority officer time. 'Light touch' policing can enforce it. Portsmouth's Total 20 mph implementation cost £573,000 for 1200 roads (94% of its network). This is £477.50 per road, £1,398 per km or £2.75 per head. £0.5m is two signal controlled junctions. Oxford spent £300,000 (£2 per head). The "value" of fewer casualties from an area-wide 20mph limit has given a First Year Rate of Return of over 800%^[3].

Funding Options for 20mph Limits include

- 1) Local Highways/Transport planning department from central government funds - for instance the Local Transport Plan budget, or on going capital works programme. This is the most common route and was how limits were paid for in Portsmouth, Oxford, Islington, Bristol and many more.
- 2) Transport Authorities like Transport for London. For instance, Camden's public realm Corridors and Neighbourhoods schemes funding, which often involve road speed reduction, comes from TfL.
- 3) Local Sustainable Transport Fund. A local authority can bid to the Department for Transport's LSTF, which specifically includes 20 mph speeds. There are £5 million and £50 million pots.
- 4) Developer money as part of a Section 106 agreement to benefit nearby residents to new buildings. The New Homes Bonus and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) are also building related funds. Section 106 funds are being suggested for Worthing and Chichester's 20mph schemes, subject to public consultation approval.
- 5) Prudential or Private Finance Initiative (PFI) borrowing. E.g. Prudential borrowing, combined with New Homes Bonus money is how City of York Council have allocated £250,000 to 20mph limits in 2012/3.
- 6) Councillor vote in deciding amendments when setting council budgets. E.g. a York Green Party budget amendment in 2009 succeeded in winning £30,000 to set up a 20 mph limit scheme.
- 7) Partnership pooling with the NHS. Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and the new Health and Wellbeing Boards/Clinical Commissioning Groups gain if there are fewer injuries and increased physical activity due to slower speeds. Glasgow's Health Commission recommended 20 mph zones. Councillors agreed £100,000 for 280 streets in 20 areas, 2 each in the 10 area health committees in Dec 2010. Liverpool's PCT agreed 40% of funding for limits in November 2011 amounting to £665k of £1.665m. Bristol's PCT also contributed to funding 20mph limits and provided 57% (£20k out of £35k) towards a knowledge transfer partnership on understanding best practice in the social marketing of driving slower.
- 8) Local ward or assembly funding. This was suggested in Sheffield where the City Council offered money to those communities who wanted it. However this method creates patchy coverage, rather than a community wide limit.

One-off wide-area implementations are better value for money than if phased, e.g. by sector or pilots/trials. Trials serve little purpose given existing evidence. It is more cost effective per mph reduced to limit a community at one go since driver compliance is improved. Including arterials (as Islington are committed to) brings down the total cost as fewer signs are used.

Most importantly, where there is political will, then Local Councillors find a way to fund wide scale 20mph limit implementations. Community wide 20mph limits offer superb returns on public investment.

^[1] Grundy, Steinbach, Edwards, Green, Armstrong & Wilson – Effect of 20 mph traffic speed zones on road injuries in London www.20splentyforus.org.uk/UsefulReports/20-mph-zones-and-road-safety-in-london.pdf

^[2] Department for Transport – Interim Evaluation of the Implementation of 20mph Speed Limits in Portsmouth.

^[3] Warrington Borough Council – 20mph Speed Limit Pilots Evaluation Report – Para 13.10

20's Plenty for Us campaigns for 20mph speed limits without physical calming as the default in urban and residential areas

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