

Briefing on WG 20mph default speed limit programme

Local Authorities

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Background and Rationale

- The [Welsh 20mph Task Force Group Final Report \(July 2020\)](#) (TFGR) set out a strong case for introducing a default 20mph speed limit on **restricted roads** across Wales.
- The report cites overwhelming evidence that lower speeds result in fewer collisions and a reduced severity of injuries, and consistent evidence that casualties are reduced when 20mph limits are introduced.
- All 21 recommendations of the TFG [were accepted by WG](#).
- It should be noted that these benefits are achieved even when average speeds do not drop to 20mph. Any speed reduction leads to a positive outcome.
- Speed reductions are expected to increase over time as people become accustomed to the lower limits and slower driving is normalised
- There is some evidence that 20mph limits lead to more walking and cycling, which is strongly supported by legislation and policy in Wales including [Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy 2021](#) and the [Active Travel \(Wales\) Act 2013](#), and these may increase over time.
- 20mph will also contribute to other WG strategic priorities and [well-being goals](#) such as decarbonisation goals linked to the climate emergency, improved physical and mental health and cohesive and vibrant communities

First Phase

- November 2020: Welsh Government commission Transport for Wales (TfW) to take forward Recommendation 18 from the TFGR: '*Welsh Government should invite local authorities to express interest in being part of a Pilot Settlements Project*'
- January 2021: [8 First Phase settlements selected](#): Abergavenny and Severnside (Monmouthshire), Buckley (Flintshire), Cardiff North, Cilfrew (Neath Port Talbot) St Brides Major (Vale of Glamorgan), St Dogmaels (Pembrokeshire), Llanelli North (Carmarthenshire)
- The first settlement that went live was St. Dogmaels in June 2021. The last ones due to go live are Abergavenny and Severnside in May 2022



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The First Phase has been used to test the processes and potential issues arising in advance of the National Rollout phase of the 20mph default speed limit; not for deciding on the viability of 20mph itself (sufficient national and international evidence already available)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing and refining the 30mph Exceptions Process through close collaboration with the LAs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining the Speed Enforcement Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining the Communication and Engagement Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trialling design features in order to develop a Technical and Procedural Guidance document to assist Highway Authorities in their work on the National Rollout phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring effects on speed, driver and pedestrian interaction and air quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is being collected, collated, and will be made available in September 2022. Indications from the first three First Phase settlements (St.Dogmaels, St. Brides and Llanelli North) are encouraging - mean speeds have dropped everywhere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating longer term effects, i.e., social interaction, modal shift
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing various Behaviour Change initiatives including encouraging active travel to schools through the WOW Tracker (Living Streets), 'Just One Minute' options presentation by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS) delivered in partnership with Police, GoSafe and LA Road Safety officers (educational presentation instead of speeding motorists receiving a fine and penalty points on their driving licence), engagement in schools, Community Speed Watch etc. with a view to selecting the most effective ones to adopt in the National Rollout phase

National Rollout Programme

Expected Timeline (at mid May 2022)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2020: 20mph Public attitude survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July-October 2021: Public Consultation to reduce default speed limit to 20mph
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 2022: All eight first phase settlements become live and operational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer 2022: Publication of National Monitoring & Evaluation Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of May 2022: TfW issuing final version of Exceptions maps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21st of June 2022: Laying of legislation and publication of Integrated Impact Assessment and Regulatory Impact Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12th of July 2022: Vote in the Senedd, expected passing of the main Statutory Instrument



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 2022: Public information pack and FAQs made available for Local Authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 2022: DataMapWales: Draft Exceptions maps published for public awareness raising and early engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2023: Welsh Government launch high-level, overarching national Communication and Marketing Campaign and issue toolkits to Local Authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2023: Consequential legislation, a Welsh Addendum to the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of 2022/January 2023: Statutory TRO process for 30mph Exceptions commences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17th September 2023: Coming into Force date for the 20mph default speed limit in Wales

Legislative Change

Welsh Ministers have powers to amend primary legislation to introduce a national, default, speed limit of 20mph on restricted roads, as defined [in Section 82 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act \(RTRA\) 1984](#). This will be done by the Senedd passing subordinate legislation. Similar legislation will be needed to change the signing rules (Addendum to the TSRGD).

Once the new legislation comes into force in September 2023:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All restricted roads will have a limit of 20mph (save some Exceptions identified by the Local/Highway Authorities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricted roads will still be defined in the same way by virtue of street lighting (or on rare occasions unlit, see Section 82 (2) (b) of RTRA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeater signs will no longer be lawful on 20mph roads but will become lawful on roads where 30mph Exceptions have been identified by the Highway Authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical 20mph zones and limits will become redundant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 6-month period after Coming into Force date will come into effect to enable Local/Highway Authorities to take down redundant traffic signs (including those outside schools) and remove redundant road markings on their network
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other signing matters will be addressed: Erecting of signs before Coming into Force date and a phased revealing of the signs, signs on borders (including ports and airports), signs around schools and rules on the use of temporary white text on red background signs reminding drivers of the new speed limit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: Roads that are currently 40mph (or above) are out of scope for the 20mph National Rollout Programme. Any changes required will be covered under the Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales Guidance 2009 (WAG Circular No



[24/2009](#)). An updated version is expected to be released later in 2022)

Exceptions Criteria

The 'Exceptions Process' was developed by the Wales 20mph TFG and further refined through the First Phase settlements, with a consistent approach to 30mph Exceptions needed as part of the National Rollout.

Welsh Government recognises that a final decision on local county roads remains with the Local/Highway Authorities.

Place Criteria have been developed to identify where it would be unsuitable for speeds to remain at 30mph. These are as follows:

- Within 100m walk of any educational setting (e.g. primary, secondary, further education and higher education)
- Within 100m walk of any community centre
- Within 100m walk of any hospital
- Where the number of residential and/or retail premises fronting a road exceeds a defined density (20 properties per km equivalent) e.g. 250m link with > 5 residential properties

Automatic adjustments applied to fill any short gaps:

- < 300m between sections meeting the above 'Place Criteria'
- < 100m between roads automatically becoming 20mph and sections meeting 'Place Criteria'
- Over-riding exception to 30mph A/B classified roads defined as 'dual-carriageways'

Note: All 30mph unclassified roads are currently assumed to default automatically to 20mph. Place Criteria are only applied to A and/or B classified 30mph roads although unclassified roads e.g. in low density industrial estates can also be identified as Exceptions at the Highway Authority's discretion. It is recommended that Place Criteria are used to inform these decisions in order to maintain consistency across Wales.

Communication and Marketing

- The 20mph Communications and Marketing Focus Group will develop a high quality and all-inclusive, nationwide, multi-media campaign.
- The Group will work collaboratively with Local/Highway Authorities in developing an assets toolkit which can be used by Local/Highway Authorities for their communications channels e.g. web and social media banners, posters,



infographics, animations etc. This will also include assets for fleet vehicles, buses, vans, refuge vehicles etc.

- An external agency is being appointed by Welsh Government (to be in place by beginning of July 2022) to work along the 20mph Project Delivery Team

Enforcement

- Where operational demand allows, the Police will continue to address road safety and community concerns in relation to road safety, on a Threat, Risk and Harm basis.
- The Police have always worked closely with partners within this arena and will continue to do so as we move to the 20mph default speed limit across Wales.
- Within the existing First Phase settlements both the Police and GoSafe have employed several enforcement and educational tactics that have been proportionate in response to the speed data.
- In order to employ those tactics in the future, the Police will continue to make best use of an existing framework of partnerships and good relationships between GoSafe, Local/Highway Authorities and other road safety partners.
- Policing in Wales will align to the NPCC Roads Policing Strategy and its key objectives, as well as supporting Welsh Government to make our roads safer.

Delivered together by Welsh Government, Local Authorities, Transport for Wales and the Welsh Local Government Association

