

Intervention 2 – Expansion of 20mph zones and limits

1 Description of Package

This theme will develop a national strategy for 20mph zones and limits in Scotland to support a range of policies that assist those Government national outcomes and indicators relevant to this area. Related policy drivers include better road safety and health outcomes, promotion of active travel, climate change mitigation and place making. The strategy will identify a number of outcomes to assist in the further delivery of 20mph zones and limits on those roads where it is appropriate to do so. It seeks to reduce perceptions of road danger, encourage people to walk, wheel and cycle, and create more pleasant streets and neighbourhoods by providing a more equitable balance between different road users, thereby promoting inclusivity.

Once the strategy has been completed we will consider the outcomes alongside local authorities and other key stakeholders, including the need for revision of any national guidance. The work will draw on best practice and available evidence relating to 20mph zones and limits to inform the development of an implementation plan. The implementation plan will include consideration of:

- Resource and funding requirements for 20mph zones and limits (e.g. for design and installation of new zones/limits, and complementary awareness-raising and attitudinal change campaigns);
- Support for local authorities (and other partners where appropriate) to implement 20mph zones and limits (where appropriate) in urban areas and on roads that are active travel routes to key trip generators e.g. schools, hospitals; and
- Implementation of national road safety campaigns aimed at supporting 20mph zones and promotion of better driver behaviour in relation to 20mph zones.



20mph Zone in Edinburgh

2 What we have heard?

Findings from the online survey undertaken for STPR2 in 2019/20 show that 45% of Scotland-wide respondents expressed dissatisfaction with road safety. When examining the opportunities identified by respondents, both Scotland-wide and regionally, the development of 20mph zones and lower speed limits in urban areas were widely supported themes in relation to both roads and road safety.

This support for 20mph zones and limits is further captured in a separate survey carried out regarding views on reducing 30mph speed limits. This found that 72% of respondents supported the lowering of speed limits to 20mph in Scottish towns and cities¹. Meanwhile, the most recently-published RITS: Driver Attitudes and Behaviours Tracker survey² found that 72% of vehicle drivers agreed that “Introducing a 20mph speed limit makes communities better places for people to walk, wheel and cycle”, albeit that 53% of respondents to the same survey agreed that “20mph speed limits are frustrating for drivers”.

3 The evidence base to support a case for change

In 2018, 86% of cycling casualties and 95% of pedestrian casualties in Scotland occurred on built-up roads, with a speed limit of 40mph or less³. Evidence suggests that accident survival rates are between about three⁴ and five⁵ times higher when a pedestrian is hit by a car driving at 20mph, compared to 30mph.

The Scottish Government is committed to encouraging more people to travel by walking, wheeling and cycling. NTS2 highlights the on-going commitment to active travel in Scotland through the sustainable travel hierarchy. However, there is still a myriad of barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling which impact individuals undertaking more active travel journeys. One of the main barriers is concern around safety on the roads: a recent Cycling Scotland survey identified that fear of road danger was the biggest single

¹ Holyrood, Three quarters of Scots support 20mph speed limit in towns, 2019, https://www.holyrood.com/news/view,three-quarters-of-scots-support-20mph-speed-limit-in-towns_10027.htm

² Transport Scotland, RITS: Driver attitudes and behaviours tracker, 2020, <https://roadsafety.scot/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/RITS-Wave-19-2020.pdf>

³ Definition of a built up road is one with a speed limit of 40mph or less as per the DFT classification

⁴ Jones, S., Brunt, H., Twenty miles per hour speed limits: a sustainable solution to public health problems in Wales, 2017, quoted in <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/the-state-of-the-evidence-on-20mph-speed-limits-with-regards-to-road-safety-active-travel-and-air-pollution-impacts-august-2018.pdf>

⁵ Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, Road Safety Factsheet, 2017, <https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/drivers/20-mph-zone-factsheet.pdf>

factor limiting take up of cycling⁶. The provision of a package of measures which supports 20mph zones on appropriate urban roads, and reduced traffic speeds, could help to reduce this specific barrier to active travel.

On-going investigation suggests that there are more road traffic accidents in more deprived areas. Analysis carried out by Sustrans Scotland (2019)⁷, indicates that children travelling by foot or bike are three times more likely to be involved in a traffic accident in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland than those in the 20% least deprived areas. Therefore, the introduction of a package of measures which supports the delivery of 20mph zones and limits could reduce the number and severity of accidents that affect children in disadvantaged and deprived communities, leading to an improvement in health opportunities and longer-term benefits in reducing inequalities.

Findings from the evaluation of Edinburgh’s recent widespread introduction of 20mph zones reveal a broad support for the introduction of 20mph speed limits. Surveys found that 58% of households supported the scheme before it was introduced. This increased to 65% supporting the scheme post-implementation, while over a third of respondents stated that they believed the that introduction of 20mph speed limits had a positive impact on the quality of life in their neighbourhood⁸. Recent research has noted that road casualty rates in Edinburgh have fallen since the introduction of the zones, which “provided compelling evidence that a structural change occurred...which can be associated with introduction of the 20mph speed limit”⁹.

Research to remains to be completed, however, into the full road safety and community benefits (and disbenefits) of 20mph zones and limits in Scotland.

⁶ Cycling Scotland, Attitudes and behaviours towards cycling in Scotland, <https://www.cycling.scot/mediaLibrary/other/english/4209.pdf>

⁷ Sustrans, Children in Scotland’s poorest areas more likely to be injured by road traffic, 2019, <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/news/2019/may/children-in-scotland-s-poorest-areas-more-likely-to-be-injured-by-road-traffic>

⁸ City of Edinburgh Council, Evaluation of the 20mph Speed Limit Roll Out, 2019, <https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s9492/Item%207.3%20-%20Evaluation%20of%2020mph%20with%20appendices.pdf>

⁹ University of St. Andrews, Fewer accidents in capital since 20mph limit, 2021, <https://news.st-andrews.ac.uk/archive/fewer-accidents-in-capital-since-20mph-limit/>

4 The Strategic Rationale

The Scottish Government has set a strong policy framework for supporting road safety and active travel as well as placemaking and carbon reduction. Transport Scotland, through the *Road Safety Framework 2030*, is committed to creating a safer, healthier and greener Scotland, with the long-term aspiration of Vision Zero, the aim to achieve a road network with no fatalities or serious injuries involving road traffic. The introduction of a package of measures supporting the wider delivery of 20mph zones and limits will help contribute to both the safe speeds and safe road objectives of this framework.

A strategy to support implementation of 20mph zones and limits in urban areas is supported through the aspirations of Transport Scotland's *Cycling Action Plan (2017-2020)* and *A long term vision for active travel in Scotland 2030*. Both documents support the introduction of "20mph limits across urban areas, enhancing the strategic approaches to active travel and supporting the development of local walking and cycling infrastructure".

As well as national policies, the package of measures delivering 20mph zones and limits supports aspirations in regional and local road safety and active travel action plans, including:

- Nestrans: The *Active Travel Action Plan (AcTrAP)* has identified that the introduction of reduced speed limits of 20mph zones and streets should be considered and encouraged, particularly in residential areas, to improve the safety of active travel users and improve the street environment.
- Glasgow: The *Traffic and Road Safety Plan 2020*, is committed to reduce vehicle speeds and therefore reduce the number and severity of casualties, delivered through the expansion of a 20mph zones programme.
- Stirling: The *Walking and Cycling to a Healthier Stirling Active Travel Action Plan*, is committed to a 'Residential Streets for All' objective, which will see the roll out of traffic management and 20mph measures.

Implementation of 20mph zones has already been carried out by some Scottish local authorities. Between 2016 – 2018, the City of Edinburgh Council implemented 20mph zones across 80% of Edinburgh's streets in order to, "*reduce the risk and severity of collisions, encourage people to walk and cycle and create more pleasant streets and neighbourhoods*"¹⁰. And, in October 2020, Scottish Borders Council announced that, through the Spaces for People programme, 91 towns and villages were to be included within their 20mph programme, "*the aim of this scheme is to make it easier and safer for people to travel actively as the country*

¹⁰ City of Edinburgh Council, Evaluation of the 20mph Speed Limit Roll Out, 2019, <https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s9492/Item%207.3%20-%20Evaluation%20of%2020mph%20with%20appendices.pdf>

*moves out of lockdown*¹¹.

Why now?

- There is a strong national, regional and local policy support for the promotion of road safety and active travel, supporting a healthier, greener and safer Scotland.
- Existing schemes in Scotland have evidenced that well-designed 20mph zones are supported and have a positive impact on the quality of life in neighbourhoods.
- 20mph measures can support the reduction in barriers to active travel such as fear of road danger, encouraging an uptake in active travel, developing a safer environment and supporting inclusivity.

¹¹ Scottish Borders Council, Spaces for People 20mph trial gets underway, 2020, https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/news/article/3936/spaces_for_people_20mph_trial_gets_underway#:~:text=Five%20communities%20in%20the%20Scottish,more%20communities%20later%20this%20week

5 Meeting the STPR2 Transport Planning Objectives

TRANSPORT PLANNING OBJECTIVE	CONTRIBUTION	SCALE OF IMPACT (-3 to +3)
A sustainable strategic transport system that contributes significantly to the Scottish Government’s net zero emissions target.	A package of measures supporting the wider roll out of 20mph zones and limits can positively support the development of quiet streets, making cycling and walking a more attractive alternative to urban car journeys.	✓✓
An inclusive strategic transport system that improves the affordability and accessibility of public transport.	A package of 20mph measures can improve inclusivity by reducing barriers to travelling actively, such as fear of traffic speeds by vulnerable road users. This can particularly benefit some often-excluded groups, including children.	✓✓
A cohesive strategic transport system that enhances communities as places, supporting health and wellbeing.	The implementation of 20mph measures in urban areas can lead to a positive impact on neighbourhoods, alongside the creation of a more pleasant environment, promoting inclusivity and encouraging people to make active travel choices and improve health and wellbeing.	✓✓
An integrated strategic transport system that contributes towards sustainable inclusive growth in Scotland.	This measure may help more people to become economically active in their local communities, but more evidence is required to support this.	0
A reliable and resilient strategic transport system that is safe and secure for users.	The implementation of a package of measures to support the roll out of 20mph zones in urban areas can support the delivery of a reliable and resilient strategic road system which is safe, secure and attractive for all road users.	✓✓

6 Addressing the Post COVID-19 Priorities

POST-C19 PRIORITIES	CONTRIBUTION
Employment	The implementation of a package of measures to roll out 20mph zones does not directly impact on employment priorities.
Environment	20mph zones can positively support the development of quiet streets, enhance placemaking and develop higher quality urban environments.
Education	The implementation of 20mph zones will aid healthy, safe and inclusive access to schools and further/higher education, helping to promote sustainable transport, and healthier young people.
Equalities	20mph zones will work to reduce the fear of road danger, which tends to be particularly severe for members of priority groups.

7 SEA, EqIA and Other Impact Assessments¹²

ASSESSMENT	COMMENTARY
SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment)	20mph zones may help promote a shift to more sustainable travel choices, thereby reducing the adverse environmental impacts of the transport system. They will therefore complement the SEA and help progress the SEA objectives.
EqIA (Equality Impact Assessment)	20mph zones can reduce perceptions of road danger, something which disproportionately effects specific groups of people including young and older people and people with reduced mobility (including pregnant women), so providing improved transport choices to people in these groups will improve accessibility.
ICIA (Island Communities Impact Assessment)	This intervention is potentially relevant in urban areas in all areas of Scotland, including those on islands.
CRWIA (Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment)	Children and young people comprise one of the groups that is currently most affected by fear of road danger, as it severely limits the independent travel horizons of many. Provision of 20mph zones and limits may allow more children and young people to safely and independently walk and cycle.
FSDIA (Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment)	By reducing perceptions of road danger, 20mph zones can be part of providing a transport system that is fairer to the many people in Scotland that do not have access to, or choose not to use, a car.

¹² All of these impact assessments are currently underway but no formal assessments have yet been undertaken. Please note SEA and EqIA scoping reports have been produced and consulted upon.

8 Implementability and Interdependencies

IMPLEMENTABILITY CRITERIA	COMMENTARY
Feasibility	20mph measures are feasible in many of Scotland’s urban areas, though much detailed development work is required to identify benefits and costs, and the most appropriate networks or routes.
Affordability	Overall implementation costs for a network of 20mph zones in urban areas could be substantial, though there may be significant scope for phasing of work.
Public Acceptability	Information from national surveys and local authority-led evaluation shows good overall levels of public support for 20mph zones post implementation, but that debate and challenge should be expected during design and implementation phases.

Key Interdependencies

A package of measures supporting the roll out of 20mph zones in urban areas will, in many instances, have interdependencies with existing or proposed active travel or placemaking infrastructure measures.

There may be additional independencies related to 20mph zones and the strategic road network in urban areas; care is required in the detailed planning of any new zone or limit.

There is a strong national, regional and local policy context for road safety and active travel, supporting a healthier, greener and safer Scotland. Early evidence from existing schemes in Scotland have shown that well-designed 20mph zones are supported and have a positive impact on quality of life. 20mph zones can also be effective at improving the quality of urban neighbourhoods and reducing fear of road danger, which is a significant barrier to active travel for many people. It has also been shown that accident survival rates are three to five times higher when a pedestrian is hit by a car driving at 20mph, compared to 30mph. Care is required to ensure that 20mph zones or limits are introduced only where appropriate, and Transport Scotland will support development of a 20mph strategy and enhancement of the evidence base of the benefits and costs of implementation before working to facilitate implementation of good value interventions.

