

20mph Myth Buster

20's Plenty



Where People Live

A 20's Plenty for Us Briefing April 2014 www.20splentyforus.org.uk/briefingsheets/myth_buster.pdf

Wide area 20mph limit critics cling to various myths. Learn to bust them!

Myth	Reality
20mph vs 30mph journey time	20mph (esp side roads) doesn't significantly alter trip times or inconvenience drivers. Jams & stops do. Constant 30mph is rare due to bends, junctions etc. Going fast between obstructions = extra wait at next stop. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZECXi_qQGL4&feature=youtu.be https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW_fyuybDYw&noredirect=1 http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/20mph_Improves_Traffic_Flow.pdf
20mph is OK near schools in term time at drop off & pick up times only	80% of child casualties happen on non-school trips. Families need wide area limits for child protection from road injury – their top risk. Older people are even more likely to die or be seriously injured – 20mph is 10 times safer (than 30mph) for 60+yr olds compared to 7x for others http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/How_school_safety_zones_are_not_a_priority.pdf http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/older_people_deserve_20mph.pdf http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/Wide_20mph_Limits_Help_Children_and_Families.pdf
Variable limits only eg not at night	Variable limit digital signs are costly & can't go on a wide network. So limits end up inconsistent, confusing & don't reduce fear of speed or increase active travel significantly.
Casualties fall, but what about Killed & Serious Injuries KSI?	Detractors cherry pick data, pointing to raised KSIs in some places - by tiny, insignificant amounts. KSIs are rare events. Small datasets are unreliable. In most 20mph places KSI fall along with total casualties.
Numbers of injuries on 20mph roads	The number & length of 20mph roads is rising (& 30mph roads falling). Absolute numbers of injuries on 20mph roads could rise, whilst casualties per km fall. Denominator matters!
Income generation from fines –	Compliance is by engagement, pacer vehicles, speed watch volunteers, warning letters, speed awareness courses, occasional enforcement days with a few Fixed Penalty Notices & very rare points or prosecutions http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/Press_Releases/Police_Toughen_20mph_Limit_Enforcement_Guidance.pdf
Drivers could lose their licences	Police are not using 20mph limits to add points to licences or remove driving rights http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/Press_Releases/Police_Toughen_20mph_Limit_Enforcement_Guidance.pdf
Speedometer watching distracting	Drivers must check their speed whatever the limit. Speedometer checking should happen at 20 & 30 & 40mph, especially in urban areas. Highway Code
On 20mph roads people might take more risks	20mph is 7-10 times safer than 30mph. It is unlikely that people become 7-10 times more careless where 20mph limits are signed. Massive risk compensation is an unproven fallacy http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/Wide_20mph_Limits_Are_Effective.pdf
Drivers don't obey 30mph & won't obey 20mph	Average & faster road speeds decrease eg in Portsmouth by 6-7 mph slower on previously 25mph+ roads. Even 1mph matters. Every 1mph less reduces casualties & severities by 6% http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/Wide_20mph_Limits_Are_Effective.pdf
Educate pedestrians	Yes educate. Yet studies show road safety education alone hasn't reduced casualties. Slower speeds works & is recommended by WHO. Don't blame the victims! http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/Dont_blame_pedestrians.pdf
20mph & efficiency	Modern vehicles are efficient at 20mph. A lower gear isn't always needed. Fuel use and pollution fall due to smoother driving. http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/pollutionbriefing.pdf
Popularity effects	Drivers want 20mph & support rises post implementation. It's a vote winner! http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/20mph_Support_Rises_Briefing.pdf
Nanny state	Drivers cannot self select the limit. All UK roads have a limit Highway Code
UK has safe roads	Not if you are a pedestrian or cyclist, where the UK is very high risk on international comparisons. Pedestrians are 24% of fatalities
Business effects	Businesses pick up the bill now for road danger & injuries. Profits & tourism rise with slower speeds as footfall rise http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/Businesses%20Profit%20from%2020mph%20limits.pdf http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/BriefingSheets/20mph_Attracts_Tourists.pdf

20's Plenty For Us campaigns for a 20mph default speed limit in residential streets without physical calming.

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