

20mph Limits Recommended by North West's Directors of Public Health

A 20's Plenty for Us Press Release – Jan 2011

20's Plenty



Where People Live

The North West Regional Directors of Public Health have just published research entitled “Road traffic collisions and casualties in the North West”. 140 killed or seriously injured child casualties could have been prevented per year between 2004 - 2008 if residential 20 mph speed zones had been introduced across the region. It strongly recommends that wide-area 20 mph limits for residential streets (without traffic calming) be included in all Highway Authority's Local Transport Plans before 30 March.

The North West has the highest rates of all age and child road casualties in England. The report is a new milestone in Health Professional involvement with the wellbeing of people when in the public spaces we call roads. It contains essential information for professionals in transport, health and well-being, active travel, education and politicians on the way that roads play an enormous part in dictating the health of citizens - both in direct casualties and in deterring people away from active travel through the fear of collisions.

Authors estimate the safety benefits from driver behaviour change resulting from implementing wide-scale 20 mph speed limits (Total 20). They recognise that active lifestyles would also be enhanced. Benchmarking is done against national figures and between North West Health authorities on indicators such as total and child casualty numbers by severity, hospitalisation rates and life years lost due to collisions.

Some of the North West Highway Authorities, including Lancashire County Council, Warrington and Wirral, are already committed to road danger reduction through wide-area residential 20 mph limits. The report attempts to inform and ultimately persuade, other local councillors to debate and implement this most cost effective of public health improvement strategies available today. Total 20 is safer and reduces health inequalities between rich and poor.

When Portsmouth introduced wide-area 20 mph limits, in its first two years of operation there was a 22% reduction in casualties. In Dec 09 the Department for Transport changed its speed limit guidance. It said :-

“We want to encourage highway authorities to introduce, over time, 20 mph zones or limits into streets which are primarily residential in nature and into town or city streets where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high, such as around schools, shops, markets, playgrounds and other areas, where these are not part of any major through route.”

20's Plenty for Us Campaign Director Rod King said :-

“Our campaign for lower speeds has been very successful and now over 5m people live in local authorities with Total 20 policies. This report provides a critical review of how our road network in the North West is failing and aligns its recommended intervention with our campaign. Total 20 is winnable for communities and progressive local authorities are recognising that Total 20 delivers benefits not only across all their Local Transport Plan objectives, but also makes their cities, towns and villages better places to live. We welcome the report.”

The report is at http://www.nwpho.org.uk/RTCs_NW/

20's Plenty for Us welcomes comment/feedback. Please contact us if you have, or need, further information.

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

Rod King, Campaign Director

rod.k@20splentyforus.org.uk

07973 639781

Anna Semlyen, Campaign Manager

anna.s@20splentyforus.org.uk

07572 120439