



Gateshead Council
Speed Management Plan

February 2007

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1 Why Manage Speed in Gateshead?

A Speed Management Plan for Gateshead

- 1.1 Speeding traffic affects people in many different ways. In particular it affects their:
- *Safety* – making the roads more dangerous for all users, but especially vulnerable groups such as the young and the elderly;
 - *Environment* – increasing the noise, intrusion and disturbance from traffic, and making it harder to cross the road.
- 1.2 In 2003, over 750 accidents occurred on Gateshead's roads, with more than 1100 people being injured as a result. The cost to the community of these accidents is estimated to be more than £32 million. A survey undertaken by the Council in 2003 indicated that 51% of local residents considered speeding traffic to be a problem in their area.
- 1.3 In the light of this, Gateshead Council believes that any responsible community must recognise the benefits of reducing traffic speeds, and take the issue of speeding traffic seriously. However, in so doing it also appreciates the importance of maintaining effective access on important through routes, especially to meet the needs of the emergency services and the local economy.
- 1.4 This Speed Management Plan has been produced in order to set out how the Council intend to develop and implement their approach towards speed management in Gateshead. Further information on it can be obtained from the following address:

Transport and Highways Service
Development and Enterprise
Civic Centre
Regent Street
Gateshead
NE8 1HH
e-mail: transportplanning@gateshead.gov.uk

2 The importance of reduced speed

Speed as a factor in accidents

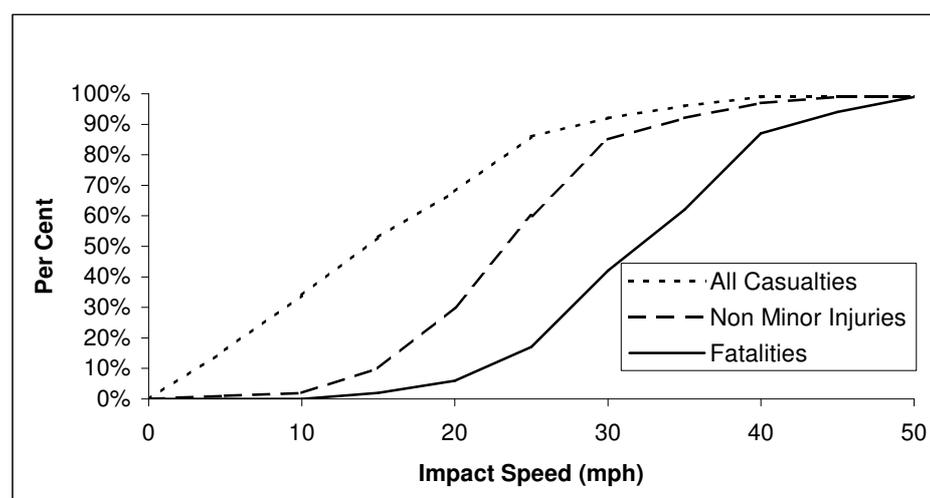
- 2.1 Most personal injury accidents take place as a result of a number of factors, including driver error, highway layout, vehicle malfunction, adverse weather and inappropriate and/or excessive speed. Government figures have indicated that speed is a major factor in around one-third of all accidents, although other evidence suggests that this figure may be an under estimate.
- 2.2 One of the most powerful research findings of recent years has been that an increase in average speed of 1mph results in an average 5% increase in the total number of accidents. Correspondingly, a 1mph reduction in average speed results in an average 5% reduction. This indicates that even marginal reductions in average speeds can result in major road safety gains.
- 2.3 Research by the Transport Research Laboratory shows that the reduction varies by road type, as follows:
- around 6% for urban roads with low average speeds
 - around 4% for medium speed urban roads and lower speed rural main roads
 - around 3% for higher speed urban roads and rural main roads

Using these figures, it can be seen that, in Gateshead, a 2mph reduction in average speeds could result in an annual saving of over 100 casualties.

Speed and the severity of accidents

- 2.4 The link between speed, accidents and their severity is well established and there have been a number of successful interventions to reduce speed in situations across the world.
- 2.5 Fatality rates increase sharply with speed. Drivers are twice as likely to kill someone when travelling at 35mph as they are at 30mph. Yet already 90% of pedestrians hit by a car travelling at 30mph will be seriously injured. Nearly half of them will be killed. Overall (see figure 2.1):
- In accidents at 40mph, 9 out of 10 pedestrians are killed
 - In accidents at 30mph, 5 out of 10 pedestrians are killed
 - In accidents at 20mph, 1 pedestrian is killed, but 9 survive.

Figure 2.1 Impact Speed and Severity of Injury



Wider Benefits of Reduced Speed

- 2.6 In addition to reducing the number and severity of accidents, environmental benefits would result from drivers choosing appropriate speeds on all classes of roads. These include:
- Reducing the relative attractiveness of the car for shorter journeys. Half of all journeys made in Britain are less than two miles in length. When driven from a cold start, these journeys produce disproportionate amounts of CO₂. A road environment that encourages more people to make these shorter journeys on foot or by bicycle should, therefore, be a priority in the quest for CO₂ reductions.
 - Road traffic is an important source of noise nuisance, and noise increases with speed. In addition, lower and better enforced speed limits could reduce the pressure for road building by increasing the capacity of the existing highway network. Lower speeds can also help to reduce the damage done by heavy goods vehicles, and thus reduce road maintenance costs.
- 2.7 Health benefits from reduced speeding include:
- Reduced pressures on health, hospital and emergency services. Evidence from a police enforcement programme in Victoria, Australia showed that between mid-1989 and 1997 the programme saved 130,000 hospital bed days that would have been needed to deal with road traffic casualties;
 - By increasing the attractiveness of walking and cycling for shorter journeys greater levels of activity and consequent health benefits would be realised .
- 2.8 In a predominantly urban area, such as Gateshead, it is most unlikely that allowing an increase in traffic speeds will lead to any noticeable reductions in journey times. These are far more likely to be affected by factors such as congestion and the need to slow down and stop at road junctions.

3 Public Attitudes to Speeding

- 3.1 The majority of drivers regularly break speed limits. This is true for all classes of roads, at all times of day and on all days of the week. Many drivers treat posted speed limits as minimums rather than maximums, and fail to recognise the risks they pose to themselves, their passengers and those outside their vehicles. Speeding is still not considered, in most drivers' minds, to be culturally unacceptable, as has become the case with drinking and driving.
- 3.2 Research in the UK reinforces the lack of importance attached speeding in many motorists perceptions, with speeding justified on a range of counts, including the suggestion that breaking a speed limit is not a 'real' crime. Reasons given include:

- It was unintentional
- I was in a hurry
- The limit is wrong
- My modern car can stop more quickly than those which were around when the limit was set
- The same limit does not apply at all times (e.g. at night, on an empty road)
- The limit does not apply to me because I am an 'above average' driver
- It was not a lot over the limit and others abuse the limit more flagrantly

Importantly, factors that influence a speed 'feeling right' to a car driver are:

- Self-image as a driver
- The vehicle
- The road environment
- Cultural factors
- Presence of passengers
- Perceived risk of detection and prosecution

This shows that a range of cultural, psychological, environmental and technological factors influence the speeds at which people choose to drive, often above the legal limits.

- 3.3 A better understanding among drivers of the impacts of speeding, and the benefits of reduced traffic speed generally; will be an important part of the Speed Management Plan. Overall it is intended that the Plan will promote a combination of the four Es of speed management – Engineering, Enforcement, Education and Evaluation – and that through this the required change of attitude will follow.

4 The Gateshead Speed Management Plan

Aims

- 4.1 Development of a Speed Management Strategy for Gateshead is identified as a key challenge in the Council's Community Strategy. The adoption of a Speed Management Plan, with a coherent strategy aimed at encouraging drivers to adopt a more responsible attitude to their speed, should therefore lead to a reduction in accidents and associated casualties.
- 4.2 The core aims of the Speed Management Plan will be to:
- bring about a real and sustainable reduction in vehicle speeds
 - achieve significant reductions in personal injury accidents and associated casualties
 - reduce the severity of road accidents that do occur
 - ensure that the support of the community at large is maintained.
- 4.3 In seeking to achieve the aims the Plan identifies a number of elements that together contribute to a more reasonable and realistic approach to dealing with the problem of inappropriate speed in Gateshead:
- Review of speed limits
 - Urban speed limits
 - Rural speed limits
 - New development
 - Introduction of ultra-low speed limits
 - use of variable speed limits
 - Northumbria Safety Camera partnership
 - monitoring speeds on the highway network
 - increasing public awareness
 - marketing speed management.

Review of speed limits

- 4.4 In order to ensure that speed limits across the borough are appropriate and consistent with the perceived character of the road, all limits are to be re-examined and assessed in accordance with an agreed hierarchy for both urban and rural roads, and a new consolidated speed limit order made. The overall approach is set out in subsequent sections, and is summarised in Appendix A. This has been developed in the light of revised national guidance set out in Department for Transport circular 01/2006.
- 4.5 The review of speed limits, and implementation of any changes will be an extensive task, requiring significant resources. In particular the implementation of lower speed limits such as 20mph zones will routinely require changes to existing road layouts and provision of physical traffic calming measures. As a result implementation of the review will need to be staged over a number of years.
- 4.6 The review of speed limits will not cover the A1 or A194(M) which, being trunk roads, are the responsibility of the Highways Agency rather than Gateshead Council.
- 4.7 In implementing any changes in speed limit, it is important that the possible impact of such changes on the Council's Standard Spending Assessment is considered.

Urban speed limits

Residential areas

- 4.8 Given the large numbers of vulnerable road users it is proposed that 20mph will become the usual speed limit within built up residential areas. Exceptions to this are likely to arise where roads provide

through routes where the need to cater for rapid access by emergency services and also by larger vehicles is incompatible with the kind of traffic calming measure needed to ensure adherence to a 20mph limit.

- 4.9 Higher speed limits (40 or 50 mph) would normally only be appropriate where there is a reasonable degree of segregation from residential areas, and high quality provision is made for pedestrians and cyclists through segregated routes and high quality footways and crossings.

Town/retail centres

- 4.10 In town and other local centres where there are again likely to be large numbers of vulnerable road users 20mph should again increasingly be the normal speed limit. Where centres lie on through routes a balance will need to be struck between the desire to improve security and the environment, and the practicality of lower limits given the requirements of through traffic and the emergency services.

Employment areas

- 4.11 Given the lower numbers of pedestrians and vulnerable road users, and the need to accommodate large vehicles, 30mph will continue to be the normal speed limit in employment areas.

Schools

- 4.12 20mph should be the normal speed limit outside schools. Consideration will be given to the introduction of variable speed limits, where a limit is in force only during morning and evening periods when children are travelling to and from school in specific locations. The introduction of such variable speed limits would, however, require the support of the local police.

Rural speed limits

- 4.13 Circular 01/2006 identifies suggested speed limits for rural roads exhibiting specific characteristics. It is considered that seeking to apply different speed limits to individual roads using these criteria would lead to a confusing and fragmented set of speed limits. Given the nature of the roads within the rural areas of the borough the following approach is considered the most appropriate:

- A limit of 50mph on roads outside built up areas;
- A limit of 40mph in built up areas not classified as villages;
- A limit of 30mph on through roads in villages;
- A limit of 20mph in self contained residential areas within villages and on roads designated as 'quiet lanes'.

- 4.14 Appendix B provides a schedule of built up areas in terms of their proposed speed limit.

- 4.15 Many of the rural roads within Gateshead cross the borough boundary into adjoining local authority areas. Application of speed limits on such roads will require liaison with the relevant authorities to ensure consistency between adjoining local authority areas.

New Developments

- 4.16 As far as possible, within the Council's development control powers, it is intended that developers will be required to have a greater awareness of speed related problems generated by their proposals.

- 4.17 In this way, for example, new residential developments should normally be designed as 20mph zones at no cost to the Council, or contributions obtained from developers towards the addressing of other related speed management issues.

- 4.18 All new street lighting schemes, whether installed as part of a private development or by the Council, will be assessed for their possible effect on speed limits.

Ultra Low Speed Limits

- 4.19 There are locations, such as Home Zones, where even 20mph may be considered to be inappropriate. In these locations, which must always be within a 20mph zone, a lower limit of around 10mph will be

implemented by means of constructing appropriate physical measures to ensure that vehicles can not be driven at speeds significantly in excess of walking pace.

Northumbria Safety Camera Partnership

4.20 Gateshead Council will continue to support the Northumbria Safety Camera Partnership (NSCP), which oversees the operation of fixed and mobile safety cameras. This was formed in 2002, and became live on 1st April 2003. The partnership, covering more than 2,000 square miles, consists of the following full partners:

- 5 Tyne and Wear Local Authorities, including Gateshead Council as lead authority
- Northumberland County Council
- Northumbria Police

With the following associate partners:

- The Highways Agency
- Her Majesty's Court Service
- Newcastle University
- Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
- Nexus

4.21 Among the aims and objectives of the NSCP are:

- To reduce collisions on the roads of Northumbria.
- To reduce the number of drivers breaking speed limits at known collision hotspots.
- To raise public awareness of the dangers of excessive and inappropriate speed.
- To facilitate integration between partner road safety messages throughout the North East Region.

4.22 Camera enforcement is intelligence led with all core sites meeting strict criteria in terms of collision history and speed profile, to ensure that the cameras are able to deliver collision reduction in support of the Local Authority 2010 targets. All sites are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that cameras remain the most effective and appropriate intervention. If engineering, or other measures have been implemented sites may be decommissioned in line with the agreed decommissioning policy. Sites of public concern are monitored for speed and evaluated to determine whether camera enforcement would be beneficial. Up to 15% of the partnership's time may be spent at such sites.

4.23 In order for the scheme to achieve its aim of casualty reduction it is important that the public are fully aware of the scheme. To this end a communications officer has been appointed who runs a proactive media and publicity campaign and to ensure that the public are fully informed of the schemes activities.

4.24 Included in the media campaign are coordinated press releases, advertising, leaflets etc. There is also be a website which contains a host of information on the scheme, including the location of all of the partnerships fixed and mobile camera sites, there are also links to all partner websites and relevant road safety websites. The address of the website is www.safespeedforlife.co.uk.

Speed Monitoring Network

4.25 Some 50 locations across the borough, including sites of permanent and mobile safety cameras, have either speed measuring equipment installed in the carriageway or have temporary loops installed twice a year, so that speeds can be monitored, with a view to determining changes over time. In this way, the impact of the Speed Management Plan and its associated initiatives can be monitored.

4.26 With the establishment of a vehicle speed database, it will be possible to examine the potential link between excessive speed and personal injury accidents at these locations across the borough.

Increasing Awareness

- 4.27 In order for speed management to be effective it is important that it has a high profile in the minds of the public, especially in view of the generally negative reporting (especially with respect to safety cameras) in the media.
- 4.28 It is, therefore, essential to continue with, and expand on, on-going campaigns, both local and national, that are aimed at individuals and organisations to highlight the problems that inappropriate and/or excessive speed can create.

Marketing Speed Management

- 4.29 As part of the process of raising the profile of speed management, the opportunity will be taken to inform the people of Gateshead that speed matters to them all, and that inappropriate and/or excessive speed will not be tolerated.
- 4.30 As identified earlier in the Plan, the NSCP employ a communications officer to run a proactive media and publicity campaign, and the activities of this officer will be supplemented, where appropriate, by additional road safety education, training and publicity initiatives, aimed at specific target audiences, such as:
- Members of Parliament
 - Local councillors
 - Council staff
 - Local firms with significant numbers of employees (especially professional drivers)
 - Other road safety groups
 - Professional bodies
 - Local media
 - Local opinion formers and organizations.

5 Achieving Speed and Accident Reduction

- 5.1 The main purpose of this Speed Management Plan is to help bring about a significant and permanent reduction in personal injury accidents through a reduction in vehicle speeds and an increased compliance with speed limits.
- 5.2 Current national targets for improved safety are for a reduction in casualties by the year 2010 (compared to the average of the years 1994-1998) of:
- 40% in the number killed or seriously injured
 - 50% in the number of children killed or seriously injured; and
 - 10% in the slight casualty rate, expressed as the number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kilometres.
- 5.3 As part of its Public Service Agreement (PSA) with the Government, the Council set a stretch target of reducing total numbers killed and seriously injured by a further 5% beyond the national target over the period 2003-2005. This target has now been achieved.
- 5.4 The main monitoring of the effectiveness of the Speed Management Plan will be through its contribution to these overall targets. Additional monitoring of the wider community impacts of speeding traffic may also continue to be monitored through:
- Attitudinal surveys;
 - Monitoring of speeds at particular locations

Appendix A – proposed speed limit hierarchy - summary

SPEED LIMIT	URBAN	RURAL
<20 mph* (without TRO)**	Only within Home Zones when also within a 20 mph zone.	Only within Home Zones when also within a 20 mph zone.
20 mph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Zones in residential areas that contain physical traffic calming measures. ii. Limits with existing low speed – consideration to be given to conversion to zones as funds permit. iii. High Streets – shopping areas with significant pedestrian crossing movements. iv. Outside and adjacent to schools. 	As urban.
20 mph* (without TRO)	-	Quiet lanes.
30 mph****	Most classified, and some unclassified, roads, not subject to other limits.	Villages. ***
40 mph	<p>Higher quality suburban roads with few vulnerable road users and little or no residential development fronting onto it.</p> <p>Good width and layout, parking and waiting restrictions and buildings set back from road.</p> <p>Good segregated provision for non-motorised users with adequate footways and crossing places.</p>	Development but not to village standard. ***
50 mph	Completely segregated classified road	Most roads outside settlements.
60 mph	–	High quality single carriageway roads with good segregated provision for non-motorised users and frequent, safe crossing facilities for vulnerable road users.
70 mph	–	Dual carriageway roads.

* While it is not anticipated that Home Zones and Quiet Lanes will be subject to the introduction of formal speed limit orders, it is intended that they will be designed in such a way that speeds will be limited, by the provision of physical measures, to around 10 and 20 mph respectively.

** TRO – Traffic Regulation Order

*** See Appendix B

**** 30 mph limits may be introduced by virtue of the existence of a system of street lighting, as defined in circular 1/93, so that when new systems of lighting are introduced it is essential that they should be audited for speed limit implications.

***** For narrower, minor, rural roads, especially where recreational use is to be promoted, a lower limit will be the norm.

Appendix B - Village schedule by Ward (with proposed speed limit)

(maximum normal speed limit within village boundaries)

a) **Chopwell and Rowlands Gill Ward**

- Blackhall Mill (30)
- Chopwell (30)
- Rowlands Gill (30)
- Sherburn Estate (30)
- Highfield (30)

b) **Crawcrook and Greenside Ward**

- Greenside (30)
- Coalburns (30)
- The Folly and Dyke Heads (30)
- Crawcrook (30)
- Clara Vale (30)
- Crawcrook Lane to Clara Vale (40)
- Ryton Woodside (30)
- Blaydon Burn (30)

c) **Lamesley Ward**

- Kibblesworth (30)
- Eighton Banks (30)

d) **Ryton, Crookhill and Stella Ward**

- Stargate (30)
- Ryton (30)

e) **Whickham South and Sunnyside Ward**

- Fellside Road (40)
- Marley Hill (30)
- Byermoor (40)

f) **Winlaton and High Spen Ward**

- Winlaton Mill -A694 (40)
- Winlaton Mill (30)
- Barlow (30)
- Lockhaugh – A694 (40)
- Lockhaugh (30)
- High Spen (40 Strothers Terrace to West Street)
- High Spen (30)
- High Spen (30 Highfield to Hookergate)
- Winlaton (30)