

Dear Parish/Town Clerk,

Community 20s and Safer Roads initiatives

I am writing to inform you about an important initiative that Gloucestershire County Council is undertaking to enhance the safety and quality of life in our communities. Over the next three years, we are seeking to implement lower speed limits, across rural and urban areas of Gloucestershire **where there is public support and where they are appropriate for the location**. This will include 'Community 20s', 20mph limits where communities live and work.

The benefits of reduced speed limits are well documented. They contribute significantly to improving road safety, reducing the number and severity of accidents, creating a safer environment for vulnerable road users and encourage more cycling and walking. Additionally, lower speed limits have been shown to enhance the overall quality of life by reducing traffic noise and pollution, promoting healthier lifestyles, and fostering a greater sense of community.

To ensure the successful implementation of this initiative, we will be assessing requests for speed limit reductions so we can plan their delivery over the three-year period. It is essential that requests have the support of parish councils, or district councillors in unparished areas, and county councillors.

- Our Community 20s engagement will seek to understand the appetite for 20mph limits to be the norm in your area on roads where communities live and work and/or which are used by vulnerable road users such as children and older people.
- Our Safer Roads initiative will focus on reducing speed limits, on roads where there have been casualties.

In most cases, particularly for 20mph speed limits, we expect these will be signage-only schemes and therefore traffic calming works are outside the scope and will not be funded by us. Parish, town, and district councils may wish to fund traffic calming measures with our approval.

Initially we want to understand the level of interest in our proposals hence we'd like your feedback, **as an expression of interest at this stage** on two issues:

1. Whether you would like to be considered for Community 20s on some roads within your area, (yes or no). and
2. Whether there are other (higher speed) roads that you feel would benefit from a reduction in speed limit where you currently have safety concerns (yes or no).

We are asking that you provide this **initial feedback to us by 19 September**.

It's also important for us to confirm that the responses are formally supported by the parish or town council (in parished areas) hence the online forms will also ask you to **confirm the date or meeting at which this was considered**. I appreciate that many communities have already made their feelings known on this subject, but this is a new programme, and we would ask you to bear with us by responding to this letter.

Unfortunately, we are not able to just put up the signs introducing the new speed limits and each request will require investigation and consultation with the police and emergency services and other partners like bus companies where a speed reduction request is on a bus route. We started working on the speed reduction initiative as soon as we came to power and are committed to its delivery. However, if we receive the number of requests we are expecting it could take several years to implement them. We will keep you informed of what is going on, but please be patient so that we can focus on delivery.

We will provide a weblink on our website <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/road-initiatives/> to enable you to provide feedback (yes or no) on both these issues, and which provides some more detail about the initiative, including frequently asked questions.

In due course we will also provide a link from the webpage to an intuitive mapping tool which we've developed to capture your specific feedback. It will allow you to highlight roads and lengths of roads within your area, where you feel a lower speed limit is appropriate and also add relevant comments to the map. Alongside the webpage we also have a dedicated email address, should you need to contact us about any issues or questions about the online response form speedlimits@gloucestershire.gov.uk

There will of course be a **full public engagement process in every area** once an initial design has been produced, and it will be comprehensive. This will be informal and additional to the statutory consultation process which we are required to undertake.

We believe that our Community 20s and Safer Roads initiatives will bring substantial benefits to our communities, and we look forward to working with you to make our roads safer and our areas where communities live and work more pleasant for everyone.

Thank you in advance for your feedback.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Roger Whyborn

Cabinet member for Sustainable Transport and Road Safety