

## Requests for Revisions to Speed Limits

Kent County Council (KCC) receives many requests to reduce speed limits or introduce traffic calming measures. With limited funding available<sup>1</sup>, KCC must prioritise and focus actions to roads where there is clear evidence that a lower speed limit would have an impact on reducing casualties. **Without a crash history record at a particular site, KCC will not take any action to change an existing speed limit.**

The issue of drivers' excessive speed (above the legal limit) affects both the quality of life for residents and the severity of injury should a crash occur. Whilst the enforcement of existing speed limits is the responsibility of Kent Police, KCC has a role to play in ensuring limits are set appropriately for the location<sup>2</sup>.

Programmes are developed each year to contribute to reducing road casualty figures on Kent's roads. Subject to crash records and available funding, there are a range of different speed management approaches that can be applied, such as using safety cameras to enforce speed limits, using signs that react to speeding drivers and other traffic calming measures. **Because these are relatively expensive, we only install these at locations where speed-related crashes in the last three years have resulted in injury.**

Ultimately drivers have control over the speed they choose to travel at and it is the driver's responsibility to obey the law, whether they consider the limit appropriate or not. Education and awareness raising measures are focused on appreciating the impact of speeding, how to judge an appropriate (and legal) speed and how to recognise and deal with hazards.

The KCC Road Safety team seeks to influence driver behaviour through a range of activities including local and county-wide awareness raising campaigns, educational programmes for young people, speed offender education schemes and promoting driver training.

On a district level, the KCC Road Safety team can provide advice to Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's) that may be set up to address local speed and other road safety issues and seek to provide expertise and direction for local action. The enthusiasm and interest for local issues are a key strength of CSP's and can provide a valuable resource to help the KCC road safety team identify local issues and the needs of local people. They can also provide valuable opportunities for local input to shape both local and county-wide activities. Please see the following link for further details:

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/community\\_and\\_living/community\\_safety/working\\_with\\_partners/local\\_csps.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/community_and_living/community_safety/working_with_partners/local_csps.aspx) )

In support of the "localism" agenda, communities can also get involved in helping themselves through initiatives such as speedwatch. Please see the following link for further details:

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads\\_and\\_transport/road\\_safety/speed\\_management/community\\_speed\\_watch\\_scheme.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport/road_safety/speed_management/community_speed_watch_scheme.aspx))

<sup>1</sup> 2011/12: Cuts of up to 50% in road safety / traffic scheme staff and a total budget of £200k for all safety critical schemes.

<sup>2</sup> Based on [Department for Transport Circular 01/06; Setting Local Speed Limits](#).