



Surrey fast to introduce slow speed limits?

20mph speed limits could soon be introduced across three Surrey neighbourhoods, with residents now invited to give their views.

Surrey County Council is consulting on new slower-speed zones in Barnsbury and Bonsey Lane in Woking, the Goodwyns estate in Dorking, and the Parsonage Road area of Cranleigh. The aim, the council says, is to make streets safer and more pleasant for people travelling on foot, bike and especially children heading to and from school.

Speed surveys carried out by the council show drivers in all three areas are already mostly respecting limits, meaning the new rules could be brought in without speed bumps or chicanes. In Woking, some “light-touch” measures such as vehicle-activated signs or painted roundels could be added on Bonsey Lane as an extra reminder to keep speeds down.

If approved, the schemes would each cost around £20,000 from a budget specifically set aside for 20mph zones. Details on the council’s website highlight that money cannot be spent on potholes or other road maintenance, which is funded separately.

Residents may spot a few extra road signs, though council officers say they will only install what’s needed and will make use of existing posts wherever possible to avoid cluttering pavements.

Currently, there are no plans for police to step up enforcement. Instead Surrey said the new limits must “self-enforce” and remain credible to drivers. Information online stressed that action should not wait for someone to be hurt: slower traffic means fewer crashes, and those that do happen are much less severe.

The consultation website read: “Research suggests 20 mph schemes do not increase air pollution. Slower vehicle speeds support a shift to more walking, scooting and cycling and then fewer polluting vehicles on the roads. 20 mph schemes can also encourage a smoother driving style with less acceleration and deceleration between junctions and pedestrian crossings.

“The amount of fuel a vehicle uses is mainly influenced by the way we drive – driving at a consistent speed is better than stopping and starting. Accelerating up to 30 mph can take twice as much energy as speeding up to 20 mph.

“Some people are concerned that 20 mph may lead to increased journey times. However, most of the delays that occur for motor vehicles in built up areas are at junctions, rather than the roads between junctions.”

Plans and maps for each scheme are now available online, and residents living in or near the affected roads are being encouraged to take part in the consultation and share their feedback.

Emily Dalton LDRS

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