

Travel Wisely

Ideas for Action

20 MPH Zones



There is a national campaign to get 20mph zones in towns and villages and they suggest the following steps to run your own campaign to get the speed limit reduced in your area.

You can organise your campaign on your own, with a few other people or as part of an organised group. Getting other people involved will build local support and make your campaign more credible to the local council and the local media.

If you belong to a residents' association or community group, getting their backing will really help your campaign. If there is no existing group, think about setting one up yourself. It could be a residents' association or an action group. Try and give your action group a catchy name that is easily recognisable, for example "20's Plenty for Fairlee".

Make contact with other residents' associations on neighbouring streets as well and try to get their support for the campaign.

Decide on the aims of your campaign. You may want a 20 mph speed limit for your street but what about the surrounding area? Should neighbouring streets have a 20 mph speed limit as well? Are there local schools that should have a 20 mph zone on surrounding roads? An area with a 20 mph speed limit is more effective than just one road and is more likely to get support from people in neighbouring streets.

Does your campaign have other aims as well? Draw up a short list of no more than three or four specific campaign objectives. You may want more cycling facilities (such as cycle parking), seating for elderly people or more trees in your street.

You need to encourage local people to support your campaign so you need to think about how to do this. You could leaflet houses in your street and neighbouring streets. Remember to put the contact details of your campaign on your leaflet.

Ask local shops, businesses and churches to support the campaign and ask them to put a 20 mph poster in their window and distribute leaflets.

Meet with the head of the local school to discuss how the parents could support the campaign. Contact your local council and arrange to meet with officers to discuss why you want a 20 mph speed limit. Speak to your local councillor and the councillor with responsibility for transport and try to get their support.

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Organise a public meeting; prepare for it by arming yourself with the facts about why 20 mph speed limits are needed in your area, your council's policy and its track record on 20 mph limits and zones.

You may find it helpful to carry out some surveys to support your campaign demands. Ask local people if they want a 20 mph speed limit and use the results in a press release.

Carry out some basic surveys of people and traffic so you have some facts at hand when speaking to council officers. When you collect data is very important. For example, traffic surveys should be carried out on a weekday during the school term.

Collecting information about how many people on foot and bicycle are using the street(s) and the problems they have as pedestrians can be very useful.

Do this by selecting a particular point on a street and counting the number of people that walk or cycle past. You should note how many of those counted are children. You could time how long people are delayed by traffic when trying to cross the street. Counting for five minutes in each hour will give you a good sample to base a short report on.

A public event can be used to generate support from local people for your campaign, to get media coverage and influence your local council.

You might want to organise:

- A public meeting
- An action on the street
- A community consultation event
- A stall at a local fair

Publicise public meetings in local papers and by posters in shop windows. Combine the meeting with a consultation event in which you ask people what they would like done about traffic in their area.

Meetings should be held in a place that is accessible to the local community, such as a local community hall or school, and should have wheelchair access and toilets for disabled people.

An action on the street is a good way of attracting local press coverage. You may want to hold a breakfast in the street with tables and chairs, have a demonstration with placards or block the road to traffic. If you do want to block the road, even for just five minutes, you will need to speak to the local police in advance and get their permission.

The local media (print and broadcast) are vital for publicising your campaign. Writing to the letters page will get you some coverage but it is even better if you can get a journalist to cover an event or a meeting. You will need to write a press release which briefly explains when and where your event will take place, and why it is happening.

This information has been adapted from material created by Streets for People, Transport 2000's advisory service for local communities with traffic problems. www.transport2000.org.uk