



20mph Frequently Asked Questions

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Why is the Council rolling out 20mph speed limits?

We want to make Edinburgh a better and safer place to live, work, visit and play. Slower speeds are safer for all. Traffic speed is often too fast in our residential and local shopping streets. This can be a barrier to walking and cycling and increase the risk and severity of accidents.

Reducing traffic speed helps people feel more confident about using their local streets. It is safer for children to walk to school, while older people feel more able to travel independently and safely.

Calmer road speeds lead to better health, less noise, more social interaction and stronger communities.

Where will 20mph limits be applied?

Around 50% of Edinburgh's streets already have a 20mph limit. The project extends the 20mph speed limit to the city centre, main shopping streets, residential areas and areas with high levels of pedestrian and/or cyclist activity. Streets that do not fall within these categories will generally have a speed limit of 30 mph and 40mph.

A map of the 20mph network and implementation timetable is available at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/20mph.

When will the 20mph limits come into effect in my area?

Zone	Area	Speed limit applies from
One	City Centre and Rural West (including South Queensferry, Kirkliston, Ratho, Currie and Balerno)	31 July 2016
Two	North	28 February 2017
Three	South Central/East	28 February 2017
Four	North West	31 July 2017
Five	West	31 July 2017
Six	South	31 January 2018

How will I know when I am on a road with a 20mph speed limit?

20mph signs will mark the entrance and exit of a 20mph area where the speed limit changes, these will be supplemented by smaller repeater signs or road markings with speed limit roundels.

Will slower speeds increase congestion?

Research indicates that slower speeds encourage a smoother driving style with less stopping and starting which helps traffic to flow.

Will air pollution get worse?

Studies have so far not conclusively proven either a positive or negative effect on the environment: driving at 20 mph causes some emissions to rise slightly and some to fall. Reduced acceleration and braking may help to reduce fuel consumption and associated emissions.

Some environmental benefit from the change is expected from helping to unlock the potential for walking or cycling short distances instead of driving.

How will the new limits be enforced?

Police Scotland is supportive of improved road safety across the city and is working with the Council to achieve this. Police Scotland recognise speed management is an important element of this and will continue to enforce speed limits across the city road network.

The new 20mph limit will also rely on a change in driver behaviour and we will be working to achieve this through road safety education, awareness raising and prevention activities.

What impact will slower speeds have on businesses?

Businesses can benefit from a more pleasant environment for shopping, work and leisure.

Will we see speed humps all over the city?

20mph is designed to be self-enforcing with no new speed humps.

Will journeys take a lot longer?

Research in other cities and results of the pilot project in Edinburgh, suggests that journey times will not significantly increase. We would expect changes not exceeding around 25 seconds per mile, probably significantly lower (around 10 seconds per mile has been found in central parts of Bristol where a limit has now been introduced) . We recently tested the journey times of 6 typical routes from the city centre to the suburbs at 20mph and again at 30 mph. Findings from this trial indicated increases of less than a minute.

How much will it cost?

The overall cost of the project is budgeted at £2.2 million over a three-year period. The Council expects that the majority of funding will be provided from successful bids for external funding or through ring-fenced funding from the Scottish Government. The Council's contribution from its own budgets is expected to be around £430,000 split over three financial years. Thorough monitoring will assess the impact of the scheme, to be reported in due course.

What is the evidence that roads will be safer with 20mph speed limits?

Driving more slowly can prevent injuries and save lives. Research by the UK Transport Research Laboratory has shown that every 1mph reduction in average urban speeds can result in a 6% fall in the number of casualties. It's also been shown that you are seven times more likely to survive if you are hit by a car driving at 20mph, than if you are hit at 30mph. If a child suddenly steps in front of a car, you are much less likely to seriously injure or kill them if you keep to a 20mph limit.

Will cyclists be prosecuted if they are caught exceeding the 20mph speed limit?

Every road user is expected to travel according to the road conditions at the time. If a cyclist were travelling so fast in a particular location, where, for example, they would be unable to stop properly, they could be charged with dangerous or careless cycling.

Will there be an increase in street clutter?

The design will rely primarily on signage and road markings. A careful balance will be required between adequate signage and minimising street clutter. Each street will be considered on a case by case basis. Extra care will be taken in sensitive locations such as conservation areas and around historic buildings.

Existing signage, no longer needed, will be removed and reused where possible.

Will emergency services be affected?

All speed limits contain an exemption for vehicles on emergency calls, so ambulances using blue lights could travel as quickly as was safe to do so, based on road conditions rather than the speed limit.

What was the decision to introduce the 20mph based on?

There has been a high level of support for 20mph speed limits amongst Edinburgh residents for a number of years. The 2012 Edinburgh People's Survey suggested a generally very high level of support for extending 20mph speed limits. The highest level of support was for such limits in 'residential' streets, with 75% in favour, 2% opposed, 23% unsure. For busy shopping streets support was 69 % with 4 % opposed and 27 % unsure. For all city centre streets support was 67 % with 5 % opposed and 29 % unsure.

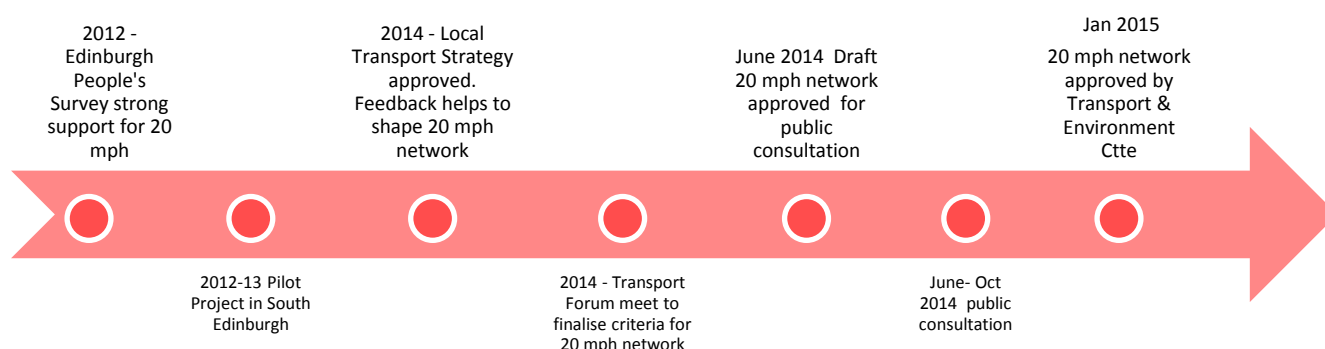
The Council's decision to implement the new speed limit citywide was outlined in its 2014-2019 Local Transport Strategy. The new limit is proposed to help make the city's streets more people-friendly, encourage travel on foot and by bike and reduce the risk and severity of road collisions in Edinburgh.

The Council implemented a pilot scheme in South Edinburgh in March 2012. As part of the evaluation a survey of 1000 local residents was carried in February and March 2013. The results of the survey were very positive, with 79% supportive of the new speed limit and only 4% against it. There was also an increase in people's feelings of safety and in

how happy they felt to walk or cycle in the area. The average speed in streets with the new limit fell to 20.9mph, a fall of just under 2mph.

What consultation was carried out?

There has been extensive consultation and research carried out over a number of years which shows a high level of public support from the Edinburgh People’s Survey, the South Edinburgh pilot project and the public consultation held in 2014. Following a statutory consultation process, the Speed Limit Order to support 20mph was approved by the Transport and Environment committee in January 2016.



Are other towns and cities doing something similar?

20mph speed limits are in force in an increasing number of towns and cities across Europe and the UK. Bristol, a city very similar in size to Edinburgh, has introduced 20mph limits on a similar scale to Edinburgh. Portsmouth and Oxford have citywide 20mph limits on most roads. Several London Boroughs have introduced a 20mph limit on all roads that they control.

Do 20mph speed limits work?

National evidence has shown that sign-only 20mph speed limits can help to reduce average speeds and improve safety. Evidence from the pilot scheme in South Edinburgh showed similar results, with average speeds reduced to just over 20mph, and with larger falls in speeds on the roads that had higher average speeds before the limit was introduced. Of 1000 people surveyed in the South Edinburgh pilot area, 79% supported the 20mph limit, just 4% opposed it.

Why do 20mph speed limits apply 24 hours a day?

While the majority of casualties happen during daylight hours, there are a significant number of people injured at night particularly in the autumn and winter months and at weekends. It is also important that operating hours are clear to avoid any confusion.

Won't it make driving harder?

This will be a change and it will take some conscious decision making as a driver to make a difference. It will take some time to become second nature.

In reality we are rarely driving at a consistent speed, particularly in a city where we are constantly accelerating, decelerating and braking to respond to current traffic speeds, traffic lights or junctions, and other road users.

What has the reaction been to those areas involved in the pilot scheme?

The reaction from south central Edinburgh residents where a 20mph speed limit is in place has been overwhelmingly in favour. 79% are in favour of 20mph, with only 4% opposed after the pilot was in place.

Aren't 20mph limits just another way of unfairly targeting motorists?

Our aim is to balance the needs of drivers with the safety and environment of local residents. 20mph creates a safer environment for everyone, including motorists.

Why can't it be rolled out more quickly?

This proposed change for the city is large and so we need to ensure that we are communicating the proposed change properly.

Who do I contact if I want to know more?

You can visit www.edinburgh.gov.uk/20mph or email 20mph@edinburgh.gov.uk