

# COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH



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NEIGHBOURHOODS



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## **What is “Community Speed Watch”?**

Community Speed Watch (CSW) schemes arose from an idea to involve local residents in speed reduction activity in the village of Ash, Somerset. After a successful pilot in the eastern area of Norfolk, the scheme is now being rolled out county wide. Put simply, speed monitoring is carried out by trained volunteers from the community, with follow-up work on education and enforcement by Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership, Norfolk Police and your Local Authority.

Initially, letters are sent to registered keepers of offending vehicles asking for their assistance in keeping speeds down in your community, with persistent offenders targeted for police enforcement. Local Authority Road Safety staff can help with supporting initiatives, including the use of Speed Awareness Messaging Devices (SAM's).

Any community could be considered for a scheme. Originally it was envisaged CSW would be better suited to villages and rural areas rather than towns, however initiatives involving Local Action Teams within towns are viable. Smaller communities could link together with others.



## ***Isn't this a police job?***

Norfolk Constabulary is committed to achieving casualty reduction targets, and include "reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on the road" as part of their Policing Plan. With ever-greater demand it is simply not possible to carry out speed enforcement checks in every community that wants them on a regular basis. Indeed, having to prioritise resources means that some communities that have a speeding problem without a corresponding collision record may be unlikely to see meaningful levels of enforcement. This is where working together can help.

## ***Does it work?***

In 2007 the scheme was trialled in Hopton and was quickly rolled out across a number of Parishes within the Eastern Area of the County with great success. There is no reason why this could not be as successful in other areas provided that schemes are set-up and run in accordance with guidelines developed during the trial.

Other Police forces across the country implementing 'Speedwatch' can show a reduction in overall average speeds, and a significant reduction in the proportion of drivers travelling well over the limit. This objective measurement is obviously a good indicator, but means little if people do not actually perceive that things are better. The good news is that they *have* noticed a difference.

## ***OK. So how do I start a scheme in my community?***

If you and other members of the community think that speeding traffic has a dangerous or negative social impact on your area, then involve your local Council as their support will be vital. If it appears that there are others who would like to volunteer to take an active role in speed monitoring, then forming a group is a good next step - maybe there are other small parish councils nearby with similar issues you could link into, making a geographical connection to a common purpose?

Contact the Community Speed Watch Administrator based at the Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership, (details inside the back cover), who will guide you through the process, and will facilitate training and risk assessments.

Norfolk County Council road safety team, fully support CSW, and should be contacted at an early stage to discuss what they are able to offer your group. Again, their details are on the back page.

## ***What equipment will be required?***

Each team will be issued with 'Speedar' Radar, two Community Speedwatch signs, four reflective jackets and a paperwork pack. These are the property of Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership, who will issue the packs to teams demonstrating the required criteria combined with local speed related issues. Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership will also withdraw and re-distribute packs if the use or need of Speedwatch teams is greatly diminished or the codes of conduct are not being met.

## ***How much will it cost to set up and who pays?***

The initial scheme has been funded by a donation from a local business and by Norfolk Constabulary; however there must be agreement from the 'Speedwatch' area to look after the equipment. The cost of training volunteers, risk assessing potential sites, and ongoing administration is borne by Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership.

## ***Is it dangerous?***

Experience so far has shown that the vast majority of drivers either support, or are neutral to, volunteer speed monitors. It is true that some driver's wave or gesture in a less than supportive manner, but actual confrontation has been extremely rare, and our training covers how to deal with such situations.

Risk assessment of sites is aimed at making your presence at the roadside as safe as possible, and is mostly common-sense. The Safety Code of Conduct also gives some guidance in this area.



### ***Still interested? Then read on.....***

As you may anticipate, many drivers slow down on seeing volunteers in high-visibility jackets at the roadside, and the numbers of drivers recorded may not be as high as you think it will be. This is a good thing, as the aim is to encourage people to slow down without having to involve any further action. Most of the time most drivers co-operate, and the trial has shown that volunteers operate with little or no risk to themselves or others. It would be wrong, however, not to insist that new schemes adhere to some basic guidelines and safety practices. Here are the current guidelines:

## ***Scheme Composition & Operating Guidelines***

1. There should be a minimum of six volunteers in the scheme, each willing to contribute a minimum of one hour per week. Small communities who are unable to reach this figure are encouraged to link with other interested local councils/groups, with a view to joining together for a wider-area scheme and sharing the equipment.
2. Volunteers must be over 18 years of age and will be subject to a vetting procedure (please contact our Volunteer recruitment team if you require further information on vetting guidelines). Volunteers who do not wish to be involved in speed monitoring may assist with administrative support, and each scheme must include at least one person in this category. Some volunteers may, of course, be able to do both.
3. The scheme is to have a designated co-ordinator and deputy, responsible for the equipment and administration.
4. Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership will nominate an administration officer, for processing the activity log recording sheets and for ongoing support.
5. The Parish or local Council must support the scheme.
6. The locations for monitoring are chosen by the community, based on their experience and knowledge of the area. Supporting data may be available from the police or local authority.
7. Risk assessments will be carried out by a trained officer, who will approve the nearest safe site to that chosen. All sites must be within 30 mph or 40 mph limits.
8. Training for volunteers will include use of the equipment, and health and safety issues both general and site-specific. This training may be cascaded to new volunteers by scheme members but direct approval must be given by Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership following vetting. New members must sign the scheme Codes of Conduct, one copy being sent to the Community Speed Watch Administrator at the partnership.

9. Registration numbers of vehicles exceeding the speed limit must be recorded in full by volunteers - partial numbers will not be accepted. The number must be verified as accurate by at least two volunteers (minimum three on site), or not recorded at all. There should also be two other pieces of information noted on the return about the vehicle, i.e make, model, or colour to ensure that the letter is being sent to the correct registered keepers address. This will also alleviate letters being issued to the incorrect parties and lessen complaints against the scheme.
10. The aim is to encourage drivers to choose to drive at or below the speed limit. For practical purposes recording of vehicle details should be restricted to those travelling at 35 mph or more in a 30 limit, or 46 mph or more in a 40 limit.(The limits were reduced to these levels in October 2015)
11. Offending drivers vehicle details are recorded on a timed and dated Activity Log Sheet. Completed sheets are forwarded to the Community Speedwatch administrator, at the partnership, by email at, within 48 hours of the session being carried out,  
[communityspeedwatch@norfolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:communityspeedwatch@norfolk.pnn.police.uk) , who will arrange for letters to be sent to registered keepers. Letters will be sent in accordance with the availability of administrative support, but Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership will endeavour to contact as many offending drivers as possible.
12. A maximum of two letters will be sent to the same registered keeper. After this, the vehicle details will be circulated for targeted police intervention.
13. Human Rights considerations in sending letters to registered keepers may be considered by some to be an infringement of an individuals' privacy. In the case of Community Speed Watch, the following factors would mitigate a challenge on privacy grounds:
  - *There is a social need*
  - *It pursues a legitimate aim*
  - *It is a strategy in the reduction of crime and disorder*
  - *It promotes and protects public safety*

- *It protects the rights and freedoms of other members of the community for a safer environment*
- *It is the least intrusive method*
- *It is proportionate to the problem*

## **Safety - A Code of Conduct**

The safety of the volunteers and all road users is paramount, and the following safety rules must be adhered to:

1. Volunteers must not stand in the road at any time.
2. Volunteers or freestanding signs must not obstruct the footpath or the Highway.
3. Approved high-visibility jackets must be worn at all times. These can be privately owned should the jackets provided not be of good fit, but must be Hi Vis yellow and have sleeves fitted and meet the relevant British Standard.
4. Volunteers will only use approved equipment and will only use the equipment following final approval by the Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership.
5. Volunteers will only use the equipment at locations which have been agreed in advance by the Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership.
6. When traffic is being monitored, the signs provided will be placed and erected in accordance with the instructions given.
7. The device must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
8. Volunteers must not attempt to conceal their speed monitoring activities from passing motorists.
9. Monitoring to be undertaken by a minimum of three volunteers at anyone time.
10. It is strongly recommended that at least one volunteer be

in possession of a mobile phone.

11. Monitoring only should take place. NO signals or gestures are to be made to drivers. Volunteers MUST NOT attempt to stop any vehicle.
12. Checks should be carried out in daylight hours and in 30mph and 40mph speed limit areas only.
13. Drivers who stop to enquire your purpose should be treated politely and courteously. Letters explaining the scheme will be supplied to you to hand out to drivers enquiring about your activities; if they are not satisfied with an explanation of the scheme they should be given the contact details of your police liaison officer. If a confrontation occurs, abandon the monitoring and if necessary call the police by dialling 999.

If all of the above sounds a bit formal, don't worry there have to be some reassurances that the scheme is properly organised before it can be supported by Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership and your Local Authority. It will be *your* scheme, not ours. Monitoring sessions for volunteers are set by you to accommodate the time people are able to give, and there should be no expectation that monitoring will take place in all conditions at all times of the year - volunteers will quickly disappear if expected to stand in the rain on a cold February afternoon.

The scheme will work if we are all able to give what we can, when we can.

Together, we can make a difference.



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## ***We're definitely interested - what now?***

Please contact us if you require further information or an application pack.

Telephone us on **01603 276433** and ask to speak to the **Community Speed Watch Administrator**. Alternatively you may contact us by e-mail at [communityspeedwatch@norfolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:communityspeedwatch@norfolk.pnn.police.uk)

You can also speak to your local **Safer Neighbourhood Team** by telephoning **101**, asking for the administrator or officer in charge of YOUR LOCAL Safer Neighbourhood Team. The email address for each team is available on the Norfolk Constabulary website.

***Please be prepared to leave your details and any contact details for the initial co-ordinator of your proposed Speedwatch team.***

If you require assistance with traffic and the SPEEDWATCH scheme, please contact Janet Overton at the Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership, on 01603 276433 or go to [www.norfolk-safety-cameras.org.uk](http://www.norfolk-safety-cameras.org.uk) or [communityspeedwatch@norfolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:communityspeedwatch@norfolk.pnn.police.uk)

There is an expectation that communities wishing to be involved in Community Speed Watch will sign up to the scheme. This is a road safety initiative supported by Norfolk County Council Road Safety team, where the community undertake to observe the speed limit.

You may wish to make contact with your County Council Road Safety team who can discuss ways of helping you with other road safety issues in conjunction with Community Speedwatch.

They are contactable via the Highways Services switchboard: **0844 8008009** Alternatively you can go to the 'Transport and Streets' section on the Norfolk County Council website and fill in an online form registering your enquiry at [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)