

Paper From Fovant Parish Council, 29 September 2022

FPC Chair Tony Phillips and VC David Horne

Vehicle speed data from SIDs in Fovant, Wiltshire

Background leading to the purchase of three SIDs for the village

Fovant is a village of about 700 souls, on the A30 some 7 miles west of Wilton, sitting in the SW Wiltshire Area Board. It is bordered by a short stretch of the A30 with a speed limit of 30 mph, and from that junction there are two internal village roads heavily used by private and commercial traffic. These roads are now in 20mph limits. One of these internal roads leads in four miles to Tisbury, which has a population of about 2,400: the other route leads through other villages to the A303. These roads in Fovant are each more than ½ mile long - with a heavy density of houses, few footpaths, narrow in many places and winding often with poor visibility for drivers. With a heavy footfall, pedestrians often must share these roads with vehicles in potentially dangerous circumstances. The considerable expansion of housing in the locality, both updating and new developments, and the number of SMEs, all support the assumption that much of the traffic is regular. It would follow that some of the speeding is likely to be persistent.

After metrocounts were carried out on these internal village roads, in 2016 we were allowed to change their speed limits from 30 to 20 mph. On advice from Highways Engineers the parish paid for these roads to be well signed with 20mph roundels and repeater posts. Then in 2018, the Area Board part funded the purchase of SIDs to groups of parishes, and Fovant Parish Council (FPC) agreed to share a SID with the nearby villages of Swallowcliffe and Ansty. This device needed to be moved from village to village at approximately three week intervals; when the SID was in Fovant, it attracted positive comments from residents, but then there were criticisms during the longer periods when it was absent. The fact that some speeds showing on the SID were in the high 20s reinforced concerns about the survivability risks for pedestrians. It proved not possible to extract data indicating numbers and speeds of vehicles over particular time periods during the day.

In response to continuing pressure from residents, in 2021 FPC asked the Area Board for a grant towards the purchase of three SID devices, to be based at fixed locations on the internal roads, all on privately owned roadside land. FPC decided to relinquish its share of the existing SID so that the other two villages could increase their usage. Our new devices would be up to date and accessible, and the FPC or other volunteers would provide a service to extract and present accumulated data to the Authorities. The primary objectives of the scheme were three fold:

- a) to increase the awareness of drivers in these 20 mph limits;
- b) by working with the police, to provide speed data as a case for urgent police action in Fovant if there were significant numbers of vehicles exceeding unsafe and enforceable speeds;
- c) In due course to provide evidence for the inhibitory effect of a SID.

There was an implicit understanding that FPC would inform other parishes of the Area Board about progress towards these objectives, given that speeding is a frequently voiced concern in the group. All in all, we hoped our project would reflect the considerable contribution from the Area Board budget.

After an extensive professional survey of possible devices, the Fovant team decided to purchase Evolis SIDs from Elan City. They were installed in early 2022. Since then, visual observation of the speeds showing on these SIDs over the considerable distance from when the SID is triggered

indicates two different types of driver behaviour: conforming to the speed limit or slowing down a little to below or near the limit; or considerably exceeding the limit and not reducing speed at all during the approach to the SID.

Late in 2021, shortly before the SIDs were installed and operational, FPC asked for repeats of metrocount surveys at approximately the intended SID locations. Those data showed that 40-60% of vehicles were exceeding the ACPO recommended limit of 110% plus 2 mph, during any of the 1 hour periods throughout the day.

Data extraction developed in Fovant

In an attempt to try and direct police activity more efficiently, some post-processing has been done on data recorded by all three SIDs installed in Fovant, with the objective of showing when, between the hours of 6am and 10pm, speeding had occurred.

A sample spreadsheet generated for one of the three SIDs is **attached in a PDF file**. These SID results for the Dinton Road location in July 2022 are broadly similar to the metrocount results from a nearby location late in 2021. The July 2022 results for the Tisbury Road and High Street SID locations were also consistent with the last lot of metrocount data.

Liaison with Wiltshire Authorities

In April 2022, FPC wrote to Philip Wilkinson, the new Wiltshire PCC, to introduce our SID project. We said we felt ready to start the next stage, interaction with the police by providing data. We had inferred from the OPCC flyer put out by Zara-Ann Prendergast that this may be through contact with the new cadre of Community Enforcement Officers. We had heard briefings by CPT Police Inspectors at our Area Board, but these had only mentioned of data from CSW efforts. Over the years, FPC had considered trying to organise CSW, but lacking pavements and with narrow roads there were serious safety concerns and we had never managed to get volunteers.

The PCC replied that he would pass our case to John Derryman, Wiltshire CSW coordinator. Mr Derryman would be able to brief us on new moves to collate data to better target speeding 'hot-spots' and persistent offenders.

Wiltshire Pilot study. Shortly afterwards, FPC was invited to join an ongoing Pilot Study in South Wiltshire. The coordinator Adrian Turnbull explained to us that the objective it to define a standard data format which all SID locations should then apply. He said there were already 93 devices across Wiltshire. He stressed that the design of the format would very much be driven by what the databases maintained by Wiltshire Police will accept.

In early August FPC sent Mr Turnbull examples of our simple data readouts showing numbers of vehicles exceeding 25mph in 1 hour periods, a 'speeding' threshold chosen for the readout but which could easily be changed. These actual data were a direct indication of law breaking in Fovant by motorists, with a third and often more exceeding speeds where prosecution is accepted to be enforceable. In reply, Mr Turnbull spelled out the information categories proposed for the future Wiltshire-wide SID inputs to the police. These included number of measurements, average speed, and maximum speed. There was no mention of direct indicators of speeding such as demonstrated by our data handling process – for example as we have done by setting an illustrative threshold of 25mph for traffic in these 20 limits.

Utility for immediate alerts to the Police about law breaking.

We believe we have demonstrated an elegant scheme for data extraction, developed by volunteers in Fovant, that could be applied to provide a **direct and unambiguous alert** to the Police

- that a significant proportion of motorists are exceeding speed limits;
- describing the time periods when enforcement interventions are likely to succeed;
- that would require minimal IT processing by the police before they take action.

Rapid responses by the police to simple alerts of this type provided by volunteers, indicating lawbreaking would

- increase confidence in the police;
- act as the deterrent to persistent law breaking by some drivers that is currently largely absent;
- reinforce a benchmark that would influence future driver behaviour in that locality.

We suggest that this method of data extraction and presentation could be taken up more generally in Wiltshire as one of the executive tools to inform Community Enforcement Officers. It could be used in parallel with any assessment of more complex data bases to inform future policy decisions regarding high risk speeding locations across the County.