



**Kent  
Police**

**Protecting and serving the people of Kent**

**Chief Inspector Andrew Reeves**

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Mr Keith Taylor MEP,  
Suite LG1,  
344-354 Gray's Inn Road,  
London WC1X 8BP

Dear Mr Taylor,

Thank you for your letter regarding the use of 20mph speed limits in residential areas outside of schools. There are two types of scheme which may relate to your enquiry.

The first is 20mph speed limits. These can be placed in roads or on small groupings of roads in towns or village centres, which are narrow and contain existing features, which tend to slow the speed of vehicles. Speed limit signage is placed throughout such schemes but no additional traffic calming measures are required.

In accordance with Department for Transport guidance Kent Police will not generally support the introduction of 20mph speed limits unless the average speed of vehicles using the location is already 24mph or less. Research indicates however that these schemes only achieve further speed restrictions of 1mph on average and do not significantly reduce crashes.

The second type of scheme is 20mph speed zones. Traffic calming measures are required in order to implement such schemes, and these zones are only signed at the point of entry.

Kent Police will not support the introduction of zones without sufficient traffic calming measures being in place of an appropriate design to reduce the speed of most traffic to 20mph or less, making them in effect self enforcing, as per current Department for Transport guidance.

In the case of the Portsmouth speed limit scheme, which you refer to in your letter, the average pre-implementation speed on most of the roads within this scheme was 24mph or less. There are however some roads within the Portsmouth scheme where the average speed pre-implementation was in excess of 24mph, as these were included to avoid inconsistencies in the signed speed limits in Portsmouth.

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The scheme in Portsmouth was supported by Hampshire Police, and we would consider supporting such schemes if proposed by the local highways authorities in Kent, as indeed we would be happy to consider any applications proposed to us by our local highways authorities which meet the criteria for either of the schemes mentioned above.

A key point local authorities and the police must consider when assessing any application for either a 20mph speed limit or speed zone is that the scheme should in effect be self enforcing, with no requirement for any additional enforcement activity. We will be happy to consider any scheme of either type which meets the Department for Transport guidance.

I trust that this letter has clarified the position of Kent Police with regard to such schemes, however please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Reeves', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andy Reeves  
Chief Inspector  
Head of Roads Policing Unit