

Report to Witnesham and Swilland Parish Council

Community Speed Watch

During the past twelve months, forty-two surveys have been conducted in Witnesham and Swilland by members of the Community Speed Watch Group, resulting in seven hundred and twenty (720) vehicles being reported for travelling at a speed in excess of thirty-five miles per hour, some as high as sixty miles per hour. This compares to seven hundred and forty (740) vehicles being reported in forty-seven surveys during the same period last year.

The surveys were carried out between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00, on all seven days of the week. On several occasions more than forty vehicles per hour were reported, with one survey recording sixty one offenders in the hour. The vehicles reported included cars, vans, taxis, lorries, tractors, coaches, busses, motorcycles, a dustcart and a driving school car.

On several occasions other offences were noted including no MOT and/or road fund licence, using a mobile phone and overtaking. On three occasions a vehicle was reported twice in the same hour, travelling in each direction. It is particularly disturbing to note that many offenders were recognised as being residents of the village.

As a direct result of the work undertaken by the group, the Constabulary are now including Witnesham in the deployment of a mobile enforcement camera. It is reported that on one occasion forty fixed-penalty notices were issued in one hour in Witnesham. However, resources do not permit deployment as often as we would like.

The Witnesham Community Speed Watch Group has access to a mobile VAS sign which is owned by Suffolk County Council and placed in pre-designated approved locations by CSW volunteers. Unfortunately, this sign became defective in June 2016, and a replacement is still awaited.

The concept of subscribing to the scheme proposed by SAVID for VAS signs to be mounted on posts is to be welcomed, as it would afford advantages not currently available. The inclusion of the data recording facility would provide evidence as to which locations are most problematic, during which times and on which days, all of which could be made available to the police for targeted enforcement action.

It is clear that driving at excess speed through our villages is a serious problem, and it may only be a matter of time before there is a serious injury or fatal collision. The availability of the survey equipment could enable more surveys to be undertaken, however, this level of activity is not sustainable with the current number of volunteers and additional volunteers are urgently needed.

The Parish, District and County Councils, together with the Constabulary, are encouraged to implement additional measures to safeguard the residents and road users of our villages.

Graham Saward

Coordinator, Witnesham and Swilland Community Speed Watch. 19.04.2017.