



What is Community Speed Watch?

Research has shown that many locals speed in their area without realising they are doing so and, in many cases, an awareness of speed is needed to slow drivers down and make our roads safer. Community Speed Watch is a partnership initiative operating in Northamptonshire using the combined efforts of the local Police, the County Council, Northants ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) and Parish Council/local residents. Community members are given training on the use of hand held speed guns, which are used to monitor the speed of traffic through their village. The community cannot of course issue speeding tickets, but the information gathered is sent to the Police, who send letters to owners of speeding vehicles explaining the project and stating that repeat offenders could face prosecution.

The prime aim of the project is not to prosecute motorists, but to encourage communities to take action and to become involved in their village and issues important to them. The main purpose is to promote a culture change among drivers towards speeding and so improve the quality of life of all residents. If just a few drivers become aware of their speed, other motorists are forced to slow down when driving behind the 'speed aware' drivers.

Community Speed Watch was launched in April 2005 as a one-year project. It has continued each year and the number of Parishes involved in the scheme has grown dramatically. In the 2007/2008 scheme 36 Parishes were involved. For the 2008/2009 scheme the number of Parishes involved doubled to 72, which is continuing through 2009/10. Six Parishes work in pairs, sharing the equipment on a one-week rota basis for a total of six weeks. The equipment is then moved on to the next group of Parishes. There are times of the year when the project cannot run, e.g. Christmas due to volunteers' personal commitments, dark nights/mornings etc, but the project currently runs from April to March.

Aims of Community Speed Watch

- To reduce excessive speed in your village (within 30mph limits)
- To change people's attitudes towards speeding
- To create a safer environment
- Empowering communities to work together

Which villages are eligible?

All Parishes can participate in the scheme through the support of the Parish Council, with the endorsement of the local Community Beat Police Officer. To

qualify to undertake the project, the Parish Council needs to gather 20% of population or 500 signatures (whichever is the lesser) in support of the project, and recruit a minimum of ten volunteers to be trained to use the cameras. The project will only be operated within speed limits of 30mph. Once pledge forms and volunteers names have been returned to the Speed Watch Co-ordinator at Northants ACRE, the Parish will qualify for the project and the details will be forwarded to the Police who will make contact to arrange training.

What benefits will the village receive?

Depending upon the scale of the speeding problem, as identified by the Safety Camera Team, a number of measures can be implemented. These include:

- A monthly visit from the Safety Camera mobile unit
- Use of portable Speed indicator devices
- High visibility Community Speed Watch Boards for erection on lamp posts/telegraph poles
- Loan of a hand held speed gun for use by locally trained community members
- Raising awareness and risk of speeding in villages
- A safer environment.

Speeding is a serious problem but it is not an inevitable one. Community Speed Watch is a positive and proactive way in which local communities can act together to tackle this important issue. We have received a very positive response for those who have participated and those wishing to become involved. The prime aim of the project is not to prosecute motorists, but to encourage communities to take action and become involved in their village and issues important to them and so improve the quality of life of all residents.

Currently we do have a couple of spaces left on 2009/2010 timetable and these will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

If you require any help or advice please do not hesitate to contact:

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