

Slower Speeds, Safer Streets, Stronger Communities: An Analysis of the 20mph Speed Limit's Impact on Health, Well-being, and Safety in Perth and Kinross

Introduction: A National Shift Towards People-Centric Places

The introduction of 20mph speed limits across the Perth and Kinross Council area represents far more than a simple adjustment to traffic regulations. It is a cornerstone of a fundamental and ongoing shift in public policy, both locally and nationally, that re-prioritises the health, safety, and well-being of people over the expediency of motor vehicle movement in built-up areas. This report provides a definitive, evidence-based analysis of this policy, examining its evolution, its profound safety implications, and its multifaceted benefits for community health and quality of life. The implementation in Perth and Kinross is not an isolated experiment but a key part of a cohesive national strategy, led by Transport Scotland, which aims to establish 20mph as the default speed limit for all appropriate urban and village roads across Scotland by the end of 2025.¹ This national commitment is itself anchored in the internationally recognised "Safe System" approach to road safety and the ambitious "Vision Zero" goal, which seeks to eliminate all road traffic fatalities and serious injuries.²

The journey towards a 20mph standard in Perth and Kinross has been a gradual and considered process, built on years of trials, consultation, and evolving evidence. The initial impetus for many of the now-permanent 20mph zones came from the "Spaces for People" programme, a Scottish Government-funded initiative launched during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴ This programme's primary objective was to create safer environments for walking, wheeling, and cycling while enabling physical distancing, thereby embedding the policy's origins firmly within a public health framework.⁴ It led to the installation of over 40 temporary 20mph limits in the main areas of Burgh towns and in villages with limited footways, targeting locations with the greatest concentration of pedestrian and vehicle activity.⁴

The transition from these temporary measures to a permanent, area-wide policy has been methodical. It has involved extensive local trials, public consultation, and a careful legal process using Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs), which allow for an 18-month monitoring period before a limit is made permanent.¹ This evidence-gathering approach demonstrates that the current comprehensive rollout is not a sudden imposition but the logical culmination of a deliberate strategy to create safer, more liveable communities. The progression of this policy, from ad-hoc school zones to a national standard, reflects a significant maturation in the understanding of how street design and traffic speed directly impact public life. What was once a niche, activist-led proposal—evidenced by the failure of a Member's Bill to introduce a national 20mph default in 2019⁸—has now become mainstream, evidence-based best practice, supported by a strong political and policy consensus.⁹ The "Spaces for People" initiative served as an unintentional, large-scale pilot, demonstrating the tangible benefits of reallocating road space and providing the necessary momentum for the Scottish Government to commit fully to the 2025 national strategy. The implementation in Perth and Kinross is therefore built upon a solid foundation of national learning and a changed political climate, representing not an experiment, but the application of a proven public health intervention.

Timeline/Date	Policy/Initiative	Key Driver	Scope/Locations	Status
Pre-2020	Ad-hoc School Zones & Local Limits	Local safety concerns, Scottish Executive school safety initiative	e.g., Stanley Primary School (2004), Auchterarder High Street (2010), Glover Street, Perth (2015) ¹⁰	Permanent, localised
2020-2021	"Spaces for People" Programme	COVID-19 pandemic, public health, physical distancing, active travel	41 temporary zones in 12 towns (e.g., Crieff, Blairgowrie) and 29 villages ⁴	Temporary

2020-2021	20mph Speed Limit Trial	Evidence gathering for future policy, assessing effectiveness of different measures	5 diverse sites: Aberfeldy (town), Comrie (residential), Errol (rural village), Kinnesswood (A-road village), Rattray (school) ⁷	Trial, findings informed permanent policy
2021-2023	Permanent Implementation of Trial Sites	Positive trial outcomes and community support	The 5 trial sites (Aberfeldy, Comrie, Errol, Kinnesswood, Rattray) made permanent ⁷	Permanent
April 2023	Permanent Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)	Making successful temporary measures permanent	Numerous "Spaces for People" sites made permanent (e.g., Alyth, Auchterarder, Bridge of Earn, Coupar Angus) ¹⁵	Permanent
2025	National 20mph Strategy Rollout	National Transport Scotland strategy, "Vision Zero", consistency, road safety	All appropriate unrestricted urban and village roads across Perth and Kinross (105 new 20mph limits planned) ¹	Phased implementation, ongoing

The Primary Dividend: Enhancing Community Safety on Perth and Kinross Roads

The most significant and immediate benefit of implementing widespread 20mph speed limits is the profound and demonstrable improvement in public safety. The policy directly addresses the fundamental relationship between vehicle speed and the severity of harm in a collision, offering a powerful tool to reduce the number of deaths and life-altering injuries on local roads. This section examines the incontrovertible evidence supporting this safety dividend, contextualises it with real-world data from large-scale rollouts, and connects it to the specific, articulated safety concerns of communities within Perth and Kinross.

The Incontrovertible Link Between Speed and Harm

The laws of physics dictate that the kinetic energy of a moving vehicle increases with the square of its speed. This means that even a small increase in speed results in a disproportionately large increase in the energy that must be dissipated in a collision, leading to a dramatic escalation in the severity of injuries. The evidence on the vulnerability of the human body to this energy is stark and unambiguous. A pedestrian struck by a vehicle travelling at 30mph is seven times more likely to die than one struck at 20mph.¹⁷ Further research quantifies this risk, showing that the chance of fatal injury for a pedestrian rises from less than 1% at an impact speed of 20mph to 5.5%—or one in twenty—at 30mph.² This non-linear relationship is the central, life-saving premise of the 20mph policy.

The scale of the problem on Scotland's 30mph roads underscores the urgency of this intervention. In 2022, these roads, which are typical of the residential streets and town centres targeted by the new policy, accounted for a staggering 69% of all pedestrian casualties and 54% of all casualties among people cycling.¹⁷ This data clearly indicates that the policy is being applied precisely where the greatest harm to the most vulnerable road users occurs. Furthermore, analysis of collision data shows that driver behaviour—specifically "exceeding the speed limit" or "travelling too fast for conditions"—was reported as a contributory factor in 19% of all fatal accidents across Scotland.² By lowering the legal and normative speed, the policy directly mitigates the deadliest consequences of this behaviour.

Projected Impacts Based on Real-World Evidence

The expected safety benefits for Perth and Kinross are not merely theoretical; they are supported by compelling empirical evidence from other regions that have already implemented widespread 20mph limits. The most significant and relevant case study is the national rollout in Wales, which commenced in September 2023. In the first twelve months following the change, roads subject to the new 20mph default limit saw a remarkable **26.2% decrease in total casualties**.¹⁸ This figure provides a powerful, data-driven projection of the potential safety gains achievable in Perth and Kinross. While some studies have questioned the effectiveness of small-scale, isolated 20mph zones¹⁹, the comprehensive, nationwide approach taken in Wales demonstrates that a default limit can achieve statistically significant reductions in harm at a population level.

The debate over the policy's effectiveness often focuses on the precise reduction in average vehicle speeds. Data from the Scottish Borders trial showed an average speed reduction of approximately 3mph²⁰, while the more recent Welsh data indicates a drop of 3.8mph.¹⁸ While these figures may seem modest to some, their impact on safety is profound. As established by the Transport

Research Laboratory, a 1mph reduction in average speed on urban roads is associated with an approximate 6% reduction in collision frequency.²² Therefore, a 3-4mph reduction in average speeds, as seen in the Borders and Wales, can be expected to yield a casualty reduction of 18-24%, a figure that aligns closely with the actual outcomes observed in Wales. This demonstrates that the success of the policy should be measured not by the number of miles per hour shaved off average speeds, but by the number of lives saved and injuries prevented. The 26.2% reduction in casualties on affected Welsh roads is the critical metric, providing a clear and optimistic forecast for the communities of Perth and Kinross.

Responding to Local Perceptions and Lived Experience

The implementation of 20mph limits is not a top-down imposition of a solution for a problem that does not exist. On the contrary, it is a direct and evidence-based response to safety concerns that have been repeatedly raised by communities across Perth and Kinross. In public consultations and feedback sessions, residents have consistently highlighted the negative impact of traffic speed on their daily lives.

For instance, community feedback from Blairgowrie and Rattray is replete with concerns about the "high volume and speed of road traffic," which makes local roads "feel unsafe" and discourages active travel.²³ Similarly, residents in Crieff have explicitly suggested the introduction of 20mph speed limits as a necessary measure to improve safety, particularly around the "five roads" crossing near educational facilities.²⁴ The policy also directly addresses the safety of the most vulnerable residents, a principle that aligns with public health goals of reducing health inequalities. People living in more deprived areas, along with children, the elderly, and those with disabilities, are disproportionately at risk from road traffic danger.¹ The focus of the 20mph rollout on residential streets, town centres, and areas around schools inherently directs protection towards these groups. The application of the policy in Jedburgh was explicitly justified with reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, citing the positive impacts on children's right to life, health, and development.⁶ By creating a safer road environment, the 20mph policy in Perth and Kinross serves as a powerful tool for enhancing equity, ensuring that the benefits of safer streets are felt most acutely by those who are currently most at risk.

Cultivating a Healthier Community: The Wider Well-being Benefits

Beyond the primary dividend of enhanced road safety, the widespread implementation of 20mph speed limits acts as a catalyst for a broad spectrum of public health and well-being improvements. By fundamentally altering the character of streets from conduits for traffic to shared community spaces, the policy fosters healthier lifestyles, creates a more pleasant sensory environment, and strengthens social cohesion. This section explores these holistic benefits, drawing on local data from Perth and Kinross to demonstrate how lower speeds can help unlock a healthier future for its residents.

Unlocking Active Travel Potential

A key objective of the 20mph policy is to "encourage active travel by increasing walking and cycling levels".⁷ Slower vehicle speeds create an environment that feels safer and more inviting for people of all ages and abilities to walk, wheel, or cycle for everyday journeys. This is not merely an assumption but a direct response to the expressed desires and current barriers faced by the residents of Perth and Kinross.

The "Walking and Cycling Index 2023: Perth," a comprehensive report by the active travel charity Sustrans, provides critical local insights.²⁶ The report reveals a significant latent demand for active travel:

50% of Perth residents want to walk or wheel more, and 45% want to cycle more. However, this ambition is constrained by a powerful deterrent: fear. The same report found that only 67% of residents feel the level of safety for walking is good, and this figure plummets to just **40% for cycling**. This disparity between aspiration and reality represents the crucial gap that the 20mph policy is designed to close. The public explicitly identifies lower speeds as a solution; the Sustrans survey found that **55% of Perth residents believe more 20mph streets would be useful to help them walk, wheel, and cycle more.**²⁶

This potential for a modal shift is substantial. Perth and Kinross Council's own Active Travel Strategy highlights that 41.7% of all journeys under 5km within the council area are currently made by car or van.²⁷ These short, local trips are prime candidates for being replaced by walking or cycling if the conditions are made sufficiently safe and attractive. The 20mph policy, therefore, functions as a foundational "keystone" intervention. Its success is a prerequisite for achieving the goals of other major council strategies, particularly the Active Travel Strategy. Investments in physical infrastructure like shared-use paths will only yield their full return if the on-road environment that people must navigate to reach them feels safe. The evidence suggests that infrastructure investment alone is insufficient if streets remain dominated by fast-moving traffic. The 20mph policy tackles the root cause of this perceived hostility, thereby unlocking the potential of all other active travel investments and helping residents translate their desire for healthier travel habits into reality.

Transforming the Sensory Environment: Reducing Noise and Air Pollution

The benefits of lower traffic speeds extend to the very air residents breathe and the sounds they hear, contributing to a less stressful and healthier living environment.

Noise Pollution: The evidence for the impact of 20mph limits on traffic noise is robust. Multiple studies have shown that reducing speeds from 30mph to 20mph can lower ambient traffic noise by approximately 3 decibels (dB(A)).²⁸ While this may seem like a small number, the decibel scale is logarithmic, meaning a 3 dB(A) reduction is perceived by the human ear as a

halving of traffic noise. This significant decrease can have profound positive effects on public health, reducing the stress, anxiety, and sleep disturbance that are consistently linked to chronic noise exposure.²² In the Scottish Borders, residents provided positive feedback that slower speeds led to less noise pollution, making it more pleasant to be outdoors and improving their sense of well-being.³

Air Quality: The relationship between 20mph limits and air quality is more complex. While some modelling suggests that smoother driving styles with less aggressive acceleration and braking at 20mph can reduce particulate and NOx emissions compared to typical stop-start 30mph conditions²², real-world monitoring has produced more neutral results. The comprehensive monitoring in Wales, for example, found no material difference in Nitrogen Dioxide (

NO2) concentrations in areas that changed to 20mph.¹⁸ However, this does not mean the policy has no air quality benefits. Perth and Kinross has two designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)—one in Perth and one in Crieff—where levels of traffic-related pollution have breached legal limits.²⁹ In these sensitive locations, any intervention that has the potential to reduce emissions, even marginally, is valuable. The most significant air quality benefit of the 20mph policy will likely be indirect, realised through the encouragement of a modal shift. As more people feel safe enough to leave their cars at home for short journeys, overall vehicle miles travelled will decrease, leading to a corresponding reduction in emissions.¹⁷

Reclaiming Public Space for Community Life

Perhaps the most transformative, albeit hardest to quantify, benefit of lower speed limits is the way they can change the social fabric of a community. The policy actively reduces the "perceived dominance of motor vehicles on our streets," helping to create places that are more attractive for people to "walk, wheel, cycle, and enjoy".⁴ This fosters a positive feedback loop: as streets become more pleasant, people spend more time in them, enhancing community life and social connection.

This shift has particularly important implications for the independence and development of children. In environments dominated by fast traffic, children's freedom to move around their own neighbourhood is severely curtailed. Lower speeds create conditions where parents feel more confident allowing their children to walk or cycle to school, visit friends, or play outside. Positive feedback from the public consultation on the trial in the Scottish Borders provides powerful testimony to this effect, with parents stating that the 20mph limit gave them "more peace of mind" and made them feel "safer" walking with their children.³ This contributes directly to children's physical health through increased activity and supports their social and emotional development by granting them greater autonomy. By making streets safer for everyone, from an elderly person walking to the shops to a child cycling to the park, the 20mph policy helps to mend the community severance caused by traffic, fostering neighbourhoods that are not just thoroughfares, but genuine living spaces.

Benefit Area	Specific Outcome	Evidence Strength	Key Supporting Evidence
Road Safety	Reduction in Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) casualties	Strong	A pedestrian is 7x more likely to die if hit at 30mph vs 20mph. ¹⁷ Wales saw a 26.2% reduction in casualties on affected roads. ¹⁸
Active Travel	Increased rates of walking, wheeling, and cycling	Moderate	55% of Perth residents say 20mph would help them walk/cycle more. ²⁶ Lower speeds reduce perceived danger, a key barrier to uptake. ⁴
Noise Reduction	Lower ambient traffic noise levels	Strong	Studies show a 3 dB(A) reduction, perceived as a halving of noise. ²⁸ Positive resident feedback confirms this effect. ³
Air Quality	Reduction in traffic-related pollutants (NO2, PM2.5)	Emerging / Indirect	Direct impact is neutral to minor. ¹⁸ The main benefit comes from enabling a mode shift away from private cars. ¹⁷
Child Independence	Increased freedom for children to travel and play locally	Moderate	Lower speeds directly address parental safety fears. ³⁰ Resident feedback confirms feeling safer with children on 20mph streets. ³
Community Cohesion	Reduced community severance, more pleasant public spaces	Moderate	Lower speeds reduce the dominance of vehicles, making streets more pleasant for social interaction and enjoyment. ⁴

From Policy to Pavement: Ensuring Effectiveness in Perth and Kinross

The successful realisation of the health, safety, and well-being benefits outlined in this report is not automatic. It is contingent on an implementation strategy that is both comprehensive in scale and intelligent in its design. Evidence from local trials, national rollouts, and academic research provides a clear blueprint for what makes a 20mph scheme effective. The core principle is that for speed limits to be respected, they must be perceived as credible and, wherever possible, be supported by a road environment that makes lower speeds feel natural. This section critically analyses the factors that determine success, using local and national evidence to build a model for effective implementation in Perth and Kinross.

The 'Signs-Only' Dilemma and the Necessity of Design

A crucial question in any 20mph rollout is the effectiveness of schemes that rely on signage alone versus those supported by physical traffic calming measures. Perth and Kinross Council's own 20mph Speed Limit Trial, conducted across five diverse sites in 2020-2021, provides invaluable local evidence on this point.⁷ The trial's findings were unequivocal: the installation of 20mph regulatory signs as a standalone measure resulted in only "minimal speed reductions," in some cases as little as 1mph.⁷ The report concluded that this approach was not effective in significantly reducing speeds on its own, particularly on roads where the pre-existing average speeds were already above 24mph.⁷

In contrast, the trial found that physical measures, specifically speed cushions, had the "most significant long-term impact on vehicle speeds," reducing them by up to 10mph at some locations.⁷ While police enforcement was found to be highly effective in the short term, its impact dissipated as soon as officers left the site, making it an unsustainable long-term solution given limited police resources.⁷ This local trial established a vital guiding principle, explicitly stated in the council's report: "speed limits should be self-enforcing and reflect the road environment".⁷ This acknowledges a fundamental reality of driver behaviour: as a major Department for Transport study also found, the speed at which people drive is influenced far more by the physical characteristics and "look and feel" of the road than by the posted speed limit sign.³² Therefore, to achieve meaningful compliance, the policy must go beyond signage and embrace a design-led approach.

A Tale of Two Precedents: Lessons from the Scottish Borders and Wales

The relatively modest results of the small-scale Perth and Kinross trial might seem to contradict the successes of the large-scale, signs-led rollouts in the Scottish Borders and Wales. However, a closer analysis reveals a crucial distinction: the effectiveness of a signs-led approach appears to be highly dependent on the *scale* of its implementation.

The Scottish Borders trial was the first in the world to examine the effects of a 20mph limit across a large, predominantly rural area, covering 97 towns and villages.²¹ This widespread implementation, though primarily signs-led, achieved a statistically significant

average speed reduction of approximately 3mph, with the largest reductions (up to 5.4mph) observed on the roads that previously had the highest speeds.²¹ Similarly, the national default 20mph limit in Wales achieved an average speed reduction of 3.8mph across its monitoring sites.¹⁸

The key difference between these successful large-scale schemes and the less effective isolated trial sites is the creation of a new social and psychological norm. When 20mph becomes the *default* expectation in all built-up areas, it changes the baseline for driver behaviour. An isolated 20mph zone, in contrast, is often perceived as a temporary anomaly or an unreasonable restriction that conflicts with the prevailing 30mph norm, leading to lower compliance. This "critical mass" effect is vital. It means that for the current comprehensive rollout in Perth and Kinross to succeed, it must be applied consistently across all appropriate roads, as planned.¹ Any perception that the policy is piecemeal or contains too many arbitrary exceptions could undermine its effectiveness and risk replicating the weaker results of the 2021 trial.

Furthermore, the evidence from these large-scale rollouts provides a powerful, data-driven rebuttal to one of the most common public and business concerns: the impact on journey times. Detailed analysis by the Welsh Government, considering billions of vehicle kilometres, found that the change to 20mph added an average of just **50 to 60 seconds per car journey**.³⁴ The national monitoring report confirmed this, finding that while journey times did increase, in the vast majority of cases the increase was no more than two minutes, even on long rural routes.¹⁸ This minimal impact is because driving in built-up areas is already characterised by stops, starts, and congestion, meaning that the maximum theoretical speed is rarely maintained for long. This evidence is crucial for reassuring residents and businesses that the significant safety benefits of the policy come at a very small cost in terms of travel time.

Metric	Perth & Kinross 5-Site Trial (2021) ⁷	Scottish Borders Widespread Trial (2020-23) ²¹	Wales National Default (2023-25) ¹⁸
Implementation Scale	Isolated (5 sites)	Widespread (97 towns/villages)	National Default
Primary Method	Signs, VAS, Physical Calming, Enforcement (tested separately)	Primarily Signs-led, with some Hybrid zones	Signs-led Default
Mean Speed Reduction	Signs-only: ~1mph. Physical calming: up to 10mph.	~3mph (overall), with greater reductions on faster roads.	3.8mph (overall)
85th Percentile Speed Reduction	Not specified for signs-only.	3.2mph	3.4mph
Change in Compliance (<24mph)	Not specified.	Not specified.	Increase from 20.8% to 54.0% of vehicles.
Reported Casualty Reduction	Not statistically significant for short-term trial.	Not specified, but expected based on speed reduction.	26.2% reduction on affected 20/30mph roads.
Impact on Journey Times	Not measured.	Not specified.	Average increase of ~1 minute per journey.

The Triangle of Success: The Council, The Community, and Enforcement

The successful implementation of the 20mph strategy in Perth and Kinross rests on a collaborative approach between the Council, the community, and Police Scotland. The Council's role is to lead with an evidence-based, nuanced strategy. The current plan for Perth and Kinross reflects the lessons learned locally and nationally. It involves a systematic assessment of all urban streets, undertaken in agreement with local ward councillors.¹ It employs a "hybrid" model, retaining 30mph limits on some key arterial routes and A and B class roads with limited buildings, a pragmatic approach also adopted in the Scottish Borders to enhance credibility and compliance.¹ Crucially, the Council has committed to using speed monitoring data gathered after the initial signs-led implementation to "determine where physical speed reduction measures may be needed".¹ This directly applies the key finding from its own 2021 trial and represents a sustainable, design-led model for long-term safety management.

Community consultation and support are vital components. Throughout the process, Perth and Kinross Council has engaged with local residents, Community Councils, and transport groups.⁴ This engagement is not a one-off event but an ongoing dialogue. The use of TTROs provides an 18-month window for feedback on new limits before they are made permanent, allowing for adjustments based on lived experience.¹ While some community feedback has expressed concerns, such as potential congestion in Crieff ³⁷, other feedback

has been overwhelmingly positive, with surveys in areas like Errol showing over 80% support for making the 20mph limit and its associated speed cushions permanent.¹⁴

Finally, while the goal is to create self-enforcing roads, the role of Police Scotland remains important, particularly in education and targeted enforcement. Police Scotland has stated that road safety is a priority and has urged drivers to respect the new limits.¹ However, as their own representatives and the Council's trial have acknowledged, they have limited resources and cannot be expected to police every 20mph street continuously.⁷ Their role is best focused on strategic enforcement at high-risk locations, while the primary responsibility for achieving widespread compliance lies with the Council's ability to design roads where 20mph feels like the appropriate speed. This shifts the public discourse from "Why isn't this being enforced?" to the more constructive question of "Does this road's design encourage safe speeds?"

Synthesis and Strategic Recommendations for a Safer, Healthier Perth and Kinross

The comprehensive body of evidence analysed in this report leads to a clear and compelling conclusion: the widespread implementation of 20mph speed limits is a profoundly beneficial public health policy for the communities of Perth and Kinross. It is a proven intervention with strong evidence demonstrating its capacity to significantly reduce road traffic casualties, particularly among the most vulnerable. Beyond this primary safety dividend, the policy acts as a powerful enabler for a wide range of well-being benefits, including the promotion of active travel, the creation of a quieter and more pleasant sensory environment, and the fostering of more cohesive and child-friendly communities.

The success of this policy, however, is not guaranteed by signage alone. Local and national evidence converges on a single, critical point: long-term effectiveness is contingent on a comprehensive, design-led implementation that creates self-enforcing road environments. While widespread, default 20mph limits can shift driver norms more effectively than isolated zones, the physical characteristics of a road remain the most powerful influence on vehicle speed. The data robustly counters common concerns about significant impacts on journey times, showing that the substantial gains in safety and liveability come at a minimal cost to drivers.

To maximize the health, safety, and well-being benefits of this landmark policy for all residents, the following strategic recommendations are proposed for Perth and Kinross Council and its partners.

1. Prioritise a "Design, Not Just Signs" Philosophy

The Council should fully commit to and operationalise the core principle established in its own 2021 trial: that physical road design is the most effective long-term determinant of vehicle speed.⁷ The current strategy of implementing signs and then monitoring for compliance is the correct starting point.¹ However, this must be backed by a clear, transparent, and adequately budgeted plan to introduce physical traffic calming measures on any road where post-implementation monitoring shows persistent non-compliance and average speeds remain significantly above the new limit. This proactive approach will ensure the creation of genuinely self-enforcing environments, shifting the burden away from unsustainable police enforcement and towards permanent, design-based safety solutions.

2. Launch a Sustained Public Benefits Communication Campaign

To build and maintain public support, the Council should lead a sustained communication campaign that frames the 20mph policy around its proven benefits to community health, safety, and quality of life. The narrative must move beyond the language of restriction and enforcement. The campaign should prominently feature the core, evidence-based messages that resonate most strongly with public concerns:

Safety: A pedestrian is seven times less likely to die if struck at 20mph compared to 30mph.¹⁷

Effectiveness: The national rollout in Wales led to a 26.2% reduction in casualties on affected roads.¹⁸

Journey Times: The average journey in a built-up area will take only about one minute longer.¹⁸

Well-being: Traffic noise will be perceived as being halved, creating quieter, less stressful streets.²⁸

This positive, evidence-based framing will help manage public expectations, counter misinformation, and solidify the understanding of 20mph as a community-wide improvement.

3. Integrate 20mph Implementation with the Active Travel Strategy

The 20mph policy and the Active Travel Strategy should be treated as two halves of a single, synergistic programme. The full potential of either policy cannot be realised without the other. The Council should use the 20mph rollout as an opportunity to strategically address the active travel infrastructure deficits identified in community consultations, such as the poor quality of footways and lack of safe cycling infrastructure cited by residents in Blairgowrie and Rattray.²³ Priority for active travel improvements should be given to newly designated 20mph corridors to create complete, safe routes. This integrated approach will maximize the return on both investments and do the most to close the gap between residents' desire to walk and cycle more and their current perception of safety.²⁶

4. Establish a Transparent, Long-Term Monitoring Framework and Public Dashboard

Building public trust requires transparency and accountability. The Council should follow the best-practice model established by the Welsh Government and commit to long-term monitoring of the policy's impacts within Perth and Kinross.¹⁸ The findings should be published annually on a publicly accessible online dashboard. This framework should track a range of key metrics, including:

Mean and 85th percentile vehicle speeds at representative sites.

Compliance rates (percentage of vehicles travelling at or below 24mph).

Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) casualty statistics on affected roads.

Counts of walking and cycling on key corridors.

Public perception and attitudinal survey results.

This commitment to open data will demonstrate the policy's effectiveness, allow for data-driven adjustments, and ensure the Council is accountable to its citizens for the outcomes.

5. Empower Community Partnerships

The Council should continue to build on its established practice of working closely with Community Councils, residents' groups, and other local stakeholders.¹ These groups possess invaluable local knowledge that is essential for a successful rollout. They can help identify specific speeding hotspots that require priority monitoring and enforcement, and they can play a crucial role in co-designing traffic calming solutions that are effective yet acceptable to the local community. This collaborative approach can help address specific concerns, such as the fears of increased congestion raised in Crieff³⁷, and ensure that the final implementation reflects the unique character and needs of each town and village within Perth and Kinross.

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