New 20mph Speed Limit to be Introduced in Llanelli

A new 20mph speed limit is being introduced in a large area of Llanelli as part of a Welsh Government rollout to reduce the national default speed limit.

Llanelli North, which covers Dafen, some parts of Felinfoel and the Llanerch area, has been chosen as one of eight communities in Wales to trial a reduced national speed limit from 30mph to 20mph in residential areas and busy pedestrian streets.

Evidence shows that lower speeds result in fewer collisions and reduces the severity of injuries, and in particular, where 20mph limits are introduced, there is a reduction in the number of casualties.

Executive Board Member for the Environment Cllr Hazel Evans said: "Slower speeds benefits the community in a number of ways, not only does it reduce the number of collisions and casualties on our roads, but it has a positive impact on our overall wellbeing and the local environment."

If the Welsh Government goes ahead with the proposal to reduce the default speed limit to 20mph, Wales will become the first region in the UK to bring in the change.

It is being rolled out in eight communities across Wales to gather data and develop a best practice approach before the proposed full rollout in 2023. The other areas are St Dogmaels in Pembrokeshire, Abergavenny, Central North Cardiff, Severnside in Monmouthshire, Buckley in Flintshire, Cilfrew in Neath Port Talbot, and St Brides Major in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Welsh Government Minister for Climate Change, Julie James said: "Slower speed limits save lives, the evidence is clear. By making 20mph the default speed limit on busy pedestrian streets and in residential areas across Wales we can make our streets a safer and more welcoming place for cyclists and pedestrians, and help create a positive impact on our environment.

"Llanelli is the latest of eight communities that will be trialling the new reduced speed limit ahead of a full rollout in 2023."

The Welsh Government has launched a consultation for people to have their say on the proposal, to submit your views visit the consultations section on the Welsh Government website before October 1st.

IN THIS ISSUE:

20mph Speed Limit in Llanelli
Highway Code Changes
See It, Snap It, Send It
Privately Owned E-Scooters
Don't Drive Tired
Keep Gwynedd Safe

New Highway Code to Make Active Travel Safer and Easier

Changes to the Highway Code, including putting pedestrians at the top of a new "road user hierarchy", have been announced by the Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps.

The proposed changes, which are due to receive parliamentary approval in the autumn, will also give pedestrians priority at zebra crossings and junctions as well as raising further awareness about the dangers of speeding.

The Department for Transport has announced that in order to build on the active travel boom seen throughout the pandemic and to enhance safety for cyclists and pedestrians, the new version of the Highway will include updates on:

- **a hierarchy of road users that ensures road users who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger they may pose to others**
- **strengthened pedestrian priority on pavements and when crossing or waiting to cross the road**
- **guidance on safe passing distances and speeds and ensuring that cyclists have priority at junctions when travelling straight ahead**

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said,
"Millions of us have found over the past year how cycling and walking are great ways to stay fit, ease congestion on the roads and do your bit for the environment. As we build back greener from the pandemic, we're determined to keep that trend going by making active travel easier and safer for everyone."

Further details can be found here.

See it, Snap it, Send it!

Members of the public can now submit evidence of anti-social driving, owing to the work of Gwent Police and the safety camera partnership, GoSafe.

Through the existing scheme, Operation SNAP, road users have been able to submit evidence of dangerous driving recorded on dashcams. Now, members of the public will also be able to send footage of anti-social road use directly to the police.

Footage can be submitted from many different sources including mobile phones, CCTV and other recording devices.

As part of the scheme, Gwent Police is publishing a locally targeted campaign on social media, to educate local residents about how they can make a difference to local communities and residents.

Chief inspector Amanda Thomas said, "Keeping our roads and communities safe is a priority for all our officers.

"Anti-social behaviour can blight communities, and when this type of behaviour moves across to our roads, it can result in harm or even worse.

"This scheme, encourages local communities to have the confidence in coming forward and reporting any concerns they might have about their streets and roads, and provide policing with the evidence required to take action."

Evidence of anti-social driving can be submitted via the GoSafe website through a simple online form. By making a report, members of the public might be required to attend court in order to confirm the information given is accurate and represents what has happened.

You're Illegally Riding a Privately Owned E-scooter – STOP!

This summer, some people may be considering purchasing an e-scooter, which have become an increasingly common sight as people are still looking at alternatives to public transport or a way to reduce car use.

However, it is illegal to use a privately owned e-scooter on public roads, pavements or cycle paths.

Road Safety Wales would like to advise anyone contemplating purchasing or using an e-scooter, that they risk being issued with a £300 fine, 6 penalty points on their driving licence and having the e-scooter seized.

Additionally, for any driver or motorcyclist that has passed their driving test in the last two years it could result in a driving disqualification and the need to re-take both the theory and practical driving test.

Teresa Ciano, Chair of Road Safety Wales said, "Trials of rental e-scooters are taking place in some parts of England, but e-scooters should only be used within the local area hosting the trial.

"Currently in Wales, the only place to legally ride an e-scooter is on private land with the permission of the land owner – everywhere else it is against the law."

Some people may not realise that they are affecting anyone by illegally riding an e-scooter, but they can be incredibly frightening to someone with sight or hearing loss.

Teresa Ciano added, "We are asking people to consider how they would feel if they, or a member of their family with a visual or hearing impairment, were genuinely afraid of being knocked down by an e-scooter every time they went out."

"We are aware that some people are selfishly riding e-scooters on the pavement with no regard for the safety of others. This is totally unacceptable and we are grateful that our police colleagues are taking robust action against these individuals."

Andrea Gordon, External Affairs Manager, Guide Dogs Cymru said, "We are very concerned about the increase in e-scooter use. People with sight loss, who cannot hear or see them approaching, are particularly at risk.

"We don't expect to find e-scooters on the pavement, and a near miss caused by an e-scooter can be so frightening that a person with sight loss stops going out independently. E-scooters will have a dramatic and irreversible effect on the street environment. Our pavements should be safe for everyone."

Although reducing car use is welcomed, particularly for local journeys, purchasers of e-scooters could unwittingly be putting the safety of themselves and others at risk.

There are many other eco-friendly methods of travel, such as walking or cycling, which are both encouraged by Road Safety Wales and legal.

Please don't waste your hard-earned money on buying an e-scooter – retailers may be happy to sell one to you but it can be seized the moment you attempt to use it in a public place.

Wishing You Could Have Stayed in Bed a Bit Longer Today?

If you've had a tough night sleeping because of the weather or have had things on your mind keeping you awake, fatigue can catch up with you the next day – often long before you'd usually go to bed.

The dangers of operating a vehicle when tired shouldn't be underestimated. A driver or rider who has fallen asleep cannot brake or swerve so unfortunately collisions tend to involve high speed impacts, often resulting in death or serious injury.

It may be difficult to avoid driving or riding if you rely on a vehicle to get home from work, but if you start feeling tired it is essential that you don't continue your journey - even if home is just a couple more miles away. Stop, take a break and make sure you only start off again when you're alert enough to do so.

Most methods drivers and riders use to try to keep themselves awake and alert on the road are ineffective and should only be regarded as emergency measures to allow time to find somewhere safe to stop.

Drinking at least 150 mg of caffeine and taking a nap of around 15 minutes are the only measures that help to reduce sleepiness, for a temporary period.

Collisions caused by tired drivers are most likely to happen:

- **on long journeys on monotonous roads, such as motorways**
- **between 2am and 6am**
- **between 2pm and 4pm (especially after eating, or taking even one alcoholic drink)**
- **after having less sleep than normal**
- **if taking medicines that cause drowsiness**
- **after long working hours or on journeys home after long shifts, especially night shifts**

Teresa Ciano, Chair of Road Safety Wales said:
"Many people have opted for 'staycations' this year instead of their usual holiday abroad. As a result, a number of people may not be used to driving long distances across the country to reach their holiday destination.

"As well as checking your vehicle is safe and roadworthy before leaving home, please make sure you plan your route to include regular rest breaks (at least 15 minutes every two hours) and if necessary plan an overnight stop if the distance is too much to reasonably travel in one day."

Road Safety Wales is reminding everyone that ignoring or underestimating the risks of continuing a journey when tired is naive and irresponsible.

Whether you're travelling 2 miles or 200 miles, if you're tired please be honest with yourself: stop and take a break.

Urging Motorists to Respect the Rules and Keep Gwynedd Safe

Gwynedd Council and North Wales Police are once again working together to tackle problems associated with illegal and irresponsible parking.

With an unprecedented number of people choosing to visit Gwynedd, irresponsible parking in some of the county's major destinations is a cause for concern.

Officers have been specifically targeting parking these areas to help keep the area safe for all road users.

Councillor Gareth Griffith, Gwynedd Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment, said:

"Following the incredible weather at the start of the summer holidays along with travel restrictions meaning that people aren't able to travel abroad, many Gwynedd communities are seeing high numbers of visitors at present.

"We are working with our partners to encourage motorists to use common sense when visiting Gwynedd to keep the area safe for everyone.

"We ask people to plan their trip in advance, use the bus services like the Sherpa if you plan to go walking in the mountains, and if a car park is full for them to look for another suitable location.

"There have been various examples this summer of people parking inappropriately, endangering other drivers, cyclists and pedestrians and causing serious access problems for emergency service vehicles, including mountain rescue volunteers. That is totally unacceptable.

"Our message simply is to enjoy the area but follow the rules, they are there to keep everyone safe. If you ignore the rules, you're likely to face a fine or your vehicle may be towed away by the authorities."

Signs have been placed at several locations to warn motorists that the vehicles of those who are breaking the rules are likely to be taken by police.

Superintendent Neil Thomas, North Wales Police added: "We are working closely with our colleagues at Gwynedd Council and the National Park to help reduce the risk to walkers, cyclists and other road users.

"The irresponsible and dangerous parking we have witnessed in some areas not only risks lives but also prevents emergency vehicle access.

"Whilst we appreciate that people are getting out and about to enjoy the weather and stunning scenery, we are urging people to be responsible and think about where they park and to make full use of the park and ride facilities that are available.

"Anybody found to be parked on the clearway or causing an obstruction will have their vehicle removed at their own expense. Please heed the warning."