

Speeding control ~ update for residents, Feb 26

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I have been working on the problem of speed on the roads in the ward throughout the time I have been the ward councillor. Much of the work I want to do has been delayed by two Welsh Government reviews, but the first one of those was completed in February 2026, and I will resume the work this year. I'm setting out below what's happened so far, what's been on hold and what I plan to do next.

In 2023 I organised two community events, one in Llangors and one in Bwlch, to bring together the community, Go Safe, the police, the Highways Service of the county council and the 20's Plenty campaign to explore what can and can't be done on our roads and to put together some ideas and plans for action.

The A40 is a trunk road and is the responsibility of the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (not the county council). I asked the Trunk Road Agency to attend the Bwlch event but it declined, because the new Wales-wide default 20MPH limit was about to be implemented and their preference was to wait until the new default had been both implemented and reviewed, so that they could speak to the final arrangements for Bwlch. This made sense, but the default was implemented in September 2023 and the review was scheduled to begin six months later, and I knew the review would take at least a year to complete. I went ahead

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with the events, because of how long the delay would be if we waited, and because the Bwlch event was also about the B and C roads serving Bwlch, and because I knew there was action we could take ourselves, before the review was completed, on all of the 20MPH default-limited roads if the community chose to do that. I intended (and still do) to hold more events if the final speed limits aren't effective and additional measures are still required.

The actions decided by the people who came to the community discussion events were:

- to establish Community Speed Watch groups, to gather data on speeding to inform a case for additional measures where needed.
- to explore installing flashing speed signs.
- to replicate Llangors Community Council's innovation using a mannequin dressed in hi-vis clothing positioned at the side of the road (Bwlch only).
- to report speeding to Go Safe, regularly, and encourage others to do so (individual resident action).
- to explore community-led initiatives to send drivers a message that they're driving through a community (such as planters, and signs on private land).

Update on work to tackle speeding on roads limited by the 20MPH default limit.

Speed Watch

The advice we were given by the Go Safe police lead, who was an expert speaker at the events, was to establish Community Speed Watch groups in each of the three villages with roads limited to speeds lower than the national speed limit. (Speed Watching is not permitted on roads with limits higher than 40MPH.)

The Speed Watch scheme is effective in three different ways. One is that anyone caught speeding by a Speed Watch group receives a warning from the police, and anyone caught three times receives a penalty. Another is that Speed Watch volunteers gather accurate evidence of the prevalence of speeding on the roads they're monitoring, and this provides local police forces with the evidence they need to make a case to the relevant highway authority to fund additional speed control measures on that road. The third effect is that the mere presence at the side of a road of one or two people in hi-vis clothing has a marked

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slowing effect on drivers; we've noticed this while doing Speed Watch in Bwlch and in Llanfihangel Talyllyn, and the mannequin previously used in Llangors, and currently placed outside Central Stores in Bwlch, has had that effect too.

We have two Speed Watch groups, one in Bwlch and one for Llangors and Llanfihangel Talyllyn. We learned last year that the Speed Watch sites in Llangors previously approved by Go Safe are due for reassessment and we're waiting for Go Safe to complete that before we can schedule sessions in Llangors. The sessions we've conducted in Bwlch since 2024 and in Llanfihangel Talyllyn in 2025 have evidenced the problem of speeding on those roads. In nearly every session we've done on the A40 in Bwlch, we logged at least one vehicle speeding every minute, and often two or three in a minute. The sessions at the corner of Berllan Deg in Llanfihangel Talyllyn logged routine, regular speeding both in and out of the village.

Neither of the Speed Watch groups is big enough yet to be a regular and consistent presence - obviously, the bigger the pool of volunteers to draw from, the more often Speed Watching can happen (it only needs two volunteers per session, although we find it easier with three). I'm not currently able to recruit more volunteers, because a Wales-wide review of the Community Speed Watch scheme was initiated in 2025, and the Welsh Government has suspended recruitment and training of new volunteers until the review has been completed.

In the meantime, the groups we have will start to go out again as the days lengthen in Spring 2026. (Speed Watch cannot be undertaken in the dark because vehicle registration numbers aren't visible and these have to be recorded without risk of inaccuracy.)

Flashing signs

I was advised by the Trunk Road Agency and by the county council's Highways service to delay exploring the use of flashing signs until the completion of the Wales-wide review of the 20MPH default.

The review looked at all roads in Wales subject to the default, both county roads, controlled by councils, and trunk roads, controlled by trunk road agencies under the Welsh Government. All councils in Wales, including Powys, completed and finalised their reviews of county roads, and finalised the speed limits on those roads, in 2025. The Welsh Government's final report on

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trunk roads subject to the default (including the final speed limits) was published on 13th February 2026. (You can read the report [here](#).)

I am now observing a 'bedding-in' period, to give drivers time to adjust to the finalised limits and comply with them. By late Spring/early Summer, with increased Speed Watching and increased Go Safe enforcement (see below), we will have data on the levels of speeding on all of our default-limited roads, and where speeding is still prevalent I will then approach the Trunk Road Agency (A40 in Bwlch) or the Highways Service of the county council (Llangors and Llanfihangel Talylyn) to explore additional measures, such as flashing signs.

Mannequin in hi-vis clothing

Residents on the road where in Llangors where the community council had experimented with reducing speeds using a mannequin in hi-vis clothing told me that it was effective, so I introduced the idea to the community discussions in 2023. Any community-led installation has to be on private property, because if it's placed on the Highway (including verges or pavements) it constitutes an obstruction of the Highway and has to be removed, by law, so following the Bwlch event's decision to try it in Bwlch, I and a local resident who attended the event began seeking suitable locations for the mannequin on private land adjacent to the A40.

An appropriate location was identified in Summer 2024 and I then wrote to the Trunk Road Agency, Go Safe and the Highways Service to check that there were no regulations or laws that the community and I should be aware of prior to placing the mannequin there, and to obtain any relevant advice, and consent to go ahead, from the Trunk Road Agency and Go Safe. Both agencies confirmed in early Summer 2025 that they had no objections, conditional on some provisions set out by the TRA. I then borrowed the mannequin from the Llangors community council. (The Head of Highways at the county council donated a new hi-vis jacket and I donated new boots and cap, because the old ones were disintegrating after the mannequin being outdoors 24/7 for a year in Llangors.)

I've had feedback from several different local people in Bwlch that the mannequin is having an ongoing impact on speeds. Practice shows that roadside installations reduce in effectiveness as drivers become accustomed to them and that the most effective approach is to rotate them around different locations. Once drivers stop reacting to the mannequin in its

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current position, we'll move it to another location in Bwlch, provided another landowner volunteers their property. When its effectiveness wanes there, we'll rotate it through Llangors and Llanfihangel Talyllyn, then bring it back to Bwlch (unless we purchase a separate one for Bwlch).

Enforcement of speed limits

Another important factor which has been determining when I can take the next steps to explore additional measures on the speed-limited roads is enforcement.

Go Safe's standard procedure is to suspend enforcement on any road where the speed limit is under review, for the duration of the review period, and for a further six months afterwards on roads where the reviewed speed limit changes following review. This is because any speed limit being reviewed might be found, by the review, to be an inappropriate speed limit for the road it currently applies to, and Go Safe will only enforce a speed limit which has been confirmed as the appropriate limit for that road. Go Safe therefore suspended enforcement of the default 20MPH speed limit immediately, throughout Wales, following the initiation of the 20 MPH review. The 20MPH default review is a unique situation in which the review forms a stage in a national new initiative, with all roads in Wales which are subject to the default being also subject to the review, but Go Safe views the principle as the same: enforcement of the limit on any road subject to the default would not have been appropriate before the correct limit for that road was confirmed.

Following the finalisation of a new speed limit, Go Safe reassesses the road to ensure that the conditions and enforcement sites on that road still meet the national criteria for enforcement operations. (The criteria for speed enforcement operations are set by the National Police Chiefs' Council, and are set out in the NPCC's Safety Camera Enforcement Site Criteria and Site Management policy, [here](#).) Where enforcement criteria are met following reassessment, Go Safe obtains consent to enforce speed limits on that road from the relevant highway authority and the local police force, and checks for any roadworks or other processes scheduled on the road which would impact on enforcement. Go Safe then schedules enforcement operations, where appropriate.

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Following local authorities' finalisation of their reviews during 2025, and an ensuing bedding-in period to permit time for driver behaviour to start to adjust, Go Safe began in January 2026 to reassess all county roads which remain subject to the 20MPH default limit. The process includes assessment of the enforcement sites, which are also controlled by the NPCC's criteria. Where roads still meet the criteria, but enforcement sites don't, Go Safe will attempt to identify new appropriate sites from which to enforce. Where roads and sites both meet the criteria, it will schedule enforcement operations. This process is underway on county roads in Powys and I have requested monitoring and enforcement by Go Safe on the B4560 through Llangors, the C0096 through Llanfihangel Talyllyn and the B4560 in Bwlch once the embedding period is complete.

As noted above, speeding is expected to reduce during the embedding period and the data on speeding collected by Go Safe, the police force and Speed Watch groups will more accurately reflect eventual driver behaviour once the final speed limits have embedded.

Following the embedding period, should speeding remain prevalent on our speed-limited roads, I will be able to make our case to the Trunk Road Agency and the Highways Service of the county council for additional formal speed control measures on those roads, such as flashing signs. If the highway authority declines to put additional measures in place, or if the waiting time would be extensive, I will organise a second round of community discussions to explore community-led action, and will support communities to take that forward.

Update on work to limit speeds on roads subject only to the national speed limit

Roads not subject to a speed limit lower than the national limit have fewer options for speed reduction. Community Speed Watching can only be undertaken on roads limited to 40MPH or lower. Flashing speed limit signs can only be used on roads which are formally limited to that speed; they can't be used to suggest a voluntary speed limit.

Highways authorities will explore the installation of measures such as cautionary signs warning 'pedestrians' and adjacent 'SLOW' road marking on roads without speed limits. Smaller, rectangular flashing signs which say 'ARAF / SLOW' can also be installed on signs providing the reason for the request, such as those cautioning the presence of pedestrians.

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In 2025, at the request of a resident there, I began working with residents in one hamlet limited only to the national limit, to assess and explore measures available to them to reduce the speeds of vehicles travelling through their community. I met with a small group of residents to learn about the speed hotspots and about the measures that residents would like to see in place, and to provide information where I could. I then arranged for the roads to be assessed by the county council traffic engineer.

The outcome of the work to date is that the Highways Service is willing to install a new village name sign, a pedestrians sign and an adjacent 'SLOW' road marking on each of the roads leading into the hamlet. However, the Highways Service does not fund name signs for villages and hamlets too small to feature on the Ordnance Survey 1:250,000 map, and the OS map does not include this hamlet. The service will design, produce and install the signs, but the costs would have to be met by the community. The service is in process of calculating the full costs, to inform the community's decision, and I have approached the community council to begin this discussion.

Community-led installations

A range of community-led measures is available to residents, provided that they are either installed on private land, or with the approval of the highway authority where they are installed on the highway (including verges and pavements). The mannequin in hi-vis clothing is an example, as are the signs cautioning the presence of children which residents have installed in some places in the ward. The 20's Plenty campaign has long experience in advising about community-led measures like these and was an expert speaker and advisor in the community discussion events in 2023.

The residents of the hamlet discussed above are considering privately purchasing, or creating, signs cautioning drivers about the use of the roads in their community by children and animals and installing them on private land adjacent to the road, in the speeding hotspot areas. Residents and I walked the roads in Summer 2025, identifying optimum locations for the signs. This aspect of the work is likely to be undertaken in Summer 2026.

It is believed that some of the drivers travelling speeds higher than are safe on the roads through the hamlet are customers and services travelling to two local businesses. I have met

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with the owners of the business closest to the hamlet and the meeting was helpful and productive, with the owners agreeing to add some information to the written communications sent to customers and services, setting out the roads' dual function as vehicular and pedestrian thoroughfares and asking all users to drive with care and caution.

I am happy to work with residents in any village with only the national limit to explore the prevalence of high speeds on their roads, and the options for speed control that might be available to them. Please contact me if you'd like to discuss this.

Assessing roads for new speed limits

Communities (and councillors) can ask their local highway authority to assess whether a given road subject only to the national limit should have a lower speed limit applied. I have asked the Highways Service to assess several such roads in the ward, but new assessments are suspended currently pending the publication of new Welsh Government guidance on the setting of speed limits for highways authorities, expected this year. The new guidance is expected to include new assessment criteria which are weighted more towards risk than the current guidance is. This will make it easier for local authorities to introduce lower limits based on risk of serious accidents happening. (Under the current guidance, this is difficult without evidence of serious accidents having already happened.)

The Highways Service wants to undertake all new assessments under the new guidance. In the meantime, the service is compiling a list of roads which residents want assessed for speed limits, and my requests have been added to the list.

Raising speeding concerns with Go Safe

Any concern about speeding, on any road, can be raised with Go Safe and all reports add to the evidence base which informs decisions about enforcement made by Go Safe and highways authorities. A decision to enforce is a joint decision, because Go Safe is responsible for assessing whether to enforce, and highways authorities are responsible for funding enforcement measures. Public sector finances are under relentless pressure, and the stronger the evidence base for a speeding problem on a given road, the stronger the case that funding

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be provided for speed control measures. Every report made by a resident adds to the evidence base. Multiple reports about the same road build the evidence for how prevalent the problem is on that road. Therefore, the more residents report issues, the better the case for action.

How to report to Go Safe

The website is at: <https://www.gosafe.org/>

Select 'Report' – the first in the row of five circular function tiles in the middle of the page.

Select 'Community Concern'.

Complete the one-page form – give as much detail as you can.

Then select 'Submit'.

If you do not use the internet and would like me to report a speeding concern for you, please let me know.

If you would like to discuss any of the above or discuss speeds in your areas do please contact me. Do also share this briefing, or the information in it, with anyone you think might be interested.

Sian Cox, County Councillor, Llangors with Bwlch

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