

# Community Speed Watch guidance

## 1. Aims and Objectives of Community Speed Watch

Community Speed Watch is a community-operated feedback scheme designed to allow unpaid volunteers to officially monitor and report to the Police the details of speeding vehicles in specific areas where speeding is of concern to the Community. Speed Watch is not enforcement.

## 2. What is Community Speed Watch?

Community Speed Watch supports local Communities to improve road safety. It does this by:

- Educating drivers by displaying their speed with a view to improving driver behaviour.
- Delivering locally based feedback schemes where speeding is of specific concern to the Community, operated by volunteers and supported by the Local Highway Authority and Police.
- Officially monitoring and reporting to the Police the details of speeding vehicles in specific areas where speed is of concern. These speed monitoring reports enable the police to:
- Send advisory letters to the Registered Owners with the aim to educate rather than punish.
- Use the data gathered to inform Police and others on the allocation of resources and general road safety issues.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 Community Policing maintains a centralised and strategic overview

of the scheme and provides administrative support, which involves sending advice letters, ordering new equipment within budget and maintains the SID machines and associated equipment.

3.2 The Watch coordinator provides the direct link with Volunteers and assist communities in setting up Speed Watch teams, obtaining equipment, training teams and by supporting them with enforcement activity when resources permit.

3.3 Volunteers will plan, carry out and fill out speeding reports on sessions that are carried out at Police-approved, risk-assessed locations where speeding is a specific concern to the community. Speed Watch groups will deploy to areas identified by their members, Town/Parish Council (or similar) or the Police and will operate in accordance with their formal training and these guidelines.

## 4. Volunteers

4.1 Volunteers must be over the age of 18 years.

4.2 Scheme coordinators will need to complete Level 1 Police Vetting to confirm suitability as they will be a point of contact for new members and will be responsible for overseeing the data submission and device care.

4.3 Bedfordshire Police Volunteer Cadets (aged 16 to 18yrs) who are not in uniform may assist Speed Watch groups provided that a minimum of 2 (adult) trained volunteers are present.

4.4 Volunteers will not be paid or be able to claim expenses for travelling. Volunteers will operate on behalf of their respective Communities and are not considered to be employees of the Police.

4.5 Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Police carry Personal and Public Liability Insurance, which covers the activity. Volunteers, who act in accordance with their training and the direction given in this document, and in line with the relevant risk assessment, will be indemnified, in the event that a claim or legal proceedings are issued against them. Important: Indemnity is applicable to volunteer members over the age of 18yrs, there is no upper age limit however, the maximum permissible claim percentage, is reduced at the age of 75yrs and again at the age of 85yrs.

4.6 The use of volunteers' private motor vehicles or other equipment in connection with Speed Watch operations is not covered under any Police insurance policies or those of any agency within the Casualty Reduction Partnership. It is the responsibility of team members to ensure that they have motor insurance in place to cover this activity.

## **5. Training**

5.1 To ensure consistency of operations and ensuring roadside safety, all volunteers will have to undergo some formal training either with the Police or a suitably Police-approved trainer who will be approved annually by the Force Speed Watch Lead to carry out training.

5.2 Conflict Management training must be delivered by an appropriately trained PCSO or duly Bedfordshire Police appointed, vetted and appropriately qualified trainer.

5.3 There is no plan to submit volunteers to any form of Police checks or to exclude anyone who has been convicted or penalised for motoring offences. However potential volunteers can be rejected or removed from Speed Watch without explanation by the Police. Volunteers will be asked to declare any issue or circumstance that could bring the scheme into disrepute - and be given direction during training to ensure they do not act in an unacceptable manner whilst a member of Speed Watch.

## **6. Equipment Provided – Comprises:**

- A free-standing Speed Indicator Device (SID) or other similar device as authorised.
- Portable Community Speed Watch sign.
- High Visibility Tabards for volunteers; Clipboards & Roadside Recording Sheets; Click Counters
- Digital voice recorders (not provided) may be used to assist in recording and later for verifying the session information gathered.

## **7. Health & Safety**

7.1 A full Risk Assessment template has been agreed by Bedfordshire Police. (See Risk Assessment Record Sheet – Reference GRA 28 – Speed Watch).

7.2 All Speed Watch locations and intended direction of detection or alternative signage need to be risk assessed by the Police before being used operationally by volunteers.

## **8. Deployment**

8.1 Community Speed Watch will only operate in 20, 30 and 40mph areas during hours of daylight. Speed Watch teams will only be deployed to areas where the local Community, the Town/Parish Council (or similar) or the Police have identified a Community concern.

8.2 Once the session location, date and time and the kit to be used has been agreed with the associated Co-ordinator, the Speed Watch Team will organise themselves to appoint a 'lead' volunteer who will ensure that the details of the location, time and date are notified to the Watch Schemes relevant department.

8.3 This will record the activity and will facilitate any Police support in the event of emergency. The Speed Watch team will be expected to bring one or more personal mobile telephones so that in an emergency, relevant assistance can be obtained. An accessible and clearly visible timepiece is also an essential additional 'must have' item.

8.4 Volunteers should not normally know the identity of drivers of speeding vehicles they report. However, it is now accepted that most volunteers would like to operate where they live and work and so some recognition is inevitable. In this event a professional attitude would be expected such that driver details should not be disclosed, and any personal information gathered should remain confidential with the police or local town/parish council only.

## **9. Team Composition**

9.1 An operational Speed Watch Team will comprise a minimum of 2 trained volunteers who have signed Indemnity Forms. All volunteers will wear single- colour (orange or yellow) high-visibility tabards to allow the Team to be recognised. A Police presence is not required for Speed Watch sessions to take place. However, patrolling police and community support officers will be encouraged to visit and support the volunteers when able.

## **10. SID Operations**

10.1 As a minimum, one sign needs to be placed ahead of the SID so that it is clearly visible to alert drivers being checked. In addition, this provides the Public with a means to identify Speed Watch activity. Where fixed 'Community Speed Watch Area' warning signs have been installed by the Local Highway Authority, Speed Watch sessions, do not need to display additional signs (but may do so).

10.2 The SID should be positioned so the edge of the unit is no closer than 3ft (1.0 m) from the kerb where possible and set to monitor the speed of all approaching vehicles. An upper limit of 60 mph is set on all SIDs to prevent dangerous drivers trying to get higher speeds displayed.

10.3 The stand/tripod on which the SID is mounted should not normally have its legs set less than 2 ft (0.6m) apart nor extended so much that the mounting bolt is at more than waist height with the display unit mounted on it as the assembly becomes unstable, increasing the risk of it being blown over. Additionally, one leg of the tripod should be positioned to the rear to oppose the forces from the bow waves of approaching HGVs.

10.4 A useful 'rule of thumb' is that if an average height volunteer cannot see over the top of the SID then it's too high for stability and also too high to be accurately aligned to give the best timely results from approaching traffic.

10.5 The Teams will passively monitor and record the details of vehicles exceeding speed limits at or above ACPO levels.

10.6 The SID has been calibrated/set by the manufacturer to a specific level and, as it is not being used for enforcement purposes, there is no requirement for further calibration unless there is reason to suppose the SID is faulty. Report suspect SID's immediately.

10.7 Wherever the Team decides to locate itself, it is vital that, to prevent a negative dangerous impulsive or startled reaction from motorists, there should be no sudden appearance of a hi-vis tabard, nor any rapid movement towards the vehicles being monitored.

10.8 Returns must include as a header:

- The Location (Town/Village, Road @ Junction or #House No), Post Code.
- Date; Time (From-To) using 24 hr clock system.
- Total Number of vehicles that passed in the time-period specified.
- Total Number of Offending vehicles that passed in the same time-period.
- Names / Initials or ID Codes (if known) of the Operators.

And for each vehicle:

- Speed.
- Vehicle Registration Number.
- Colour must be as accurate and precise as possible.
- 'Tints', 'Light' or 'Dark' tones are not permitted, if unsure leave blank.
- Make / Manufacturer is an essential item.
- Model or Chassis Type (i.e. 4x4, van, LGV (Large Goods Vehicle), People Carrier, Bus, Coach, Small car), also necessary item.
- Time of each speeding, using the 24hr clock (max 4 in the same minute).

10.9 The recording at session time should be manual (with voice recording as a backup if used); with the verified and finished return being typed in BLOCK CAPITALS and unambiguous with the minimum use of abbreviations. Returns must be submitted electronically on the Speed Watch Roadside Recording Form and should not be hand-written.

10.10 A suitable record sheet template is available. Nil returns (i.e. activity was conducted but no speeding vehicles were identified), also provides data and should be recorded. At the end of the operation, and within 48 working hours, this information should be sent to the Speed Watch email account which will in turn arrange for its timely processing.

## **11. Notification Stage**

11.1 The next stages of the operation will rest with the Police. An Advisory Letter will be sent to the Registered Keeper of those vehicles that are detected at or above the relevant speed limit.

11.2 Should the vehicle come to notice again and, it is the same registered keeper a second letter with a more direct message will be sent. If a vehicle with the same local keeper continues to be reported or drives at an excessive speed a personal visit will be arranged where more specific attention can be provided.

11.3 Data gathered through this process will be collated to facilitate appropriate conventional Police speed enforcement activity and shared with the Bedfordshire and Luton Partnership to assist in further initiatives.

## **12. Session Limiting Criteria**

12.1 Police administrative support for Speed Watch is not limitless. Consequently, police resources need to be conserved and shared equally across the County so each and every separate Village Team, or Town area can be offered exactly the same opportunity to mount sessions to address local speeding but within finite practical, transparent limits that will not appear biased nor take the capacity beyond the maximum number of letters sent.

12.2 At the start of the year, the limit of letters sent out for the County was, on average, 2,000 per month.

12.3 Additionally, the mounting of numerous sessions at the same place and same time on consecutive days is deemed 'aggressive' and merely serves to annoy all motorists, not just speeders, and should be avoided wherever possible as it can draw adverse comments and bring the reputation of Speed Watch and the Partners into disrepute.

12.4 In an attempt to contain Speed Watch letters to the limit set for the County and in the interests of fairness to all County Teams, submission limits for any one Village or Town Area Team is that once activity has taken place at one location the volunteers cannot return to the same location within 14 days.

12.5 Additionally, where teams wish to give the Speed Watch 'education' process every chance of working, by allowing sufficient time for the 'Advisory' letters to be processed by the Police and received and 'acted upon' by receptive drivers before they are subsequently re-checked, they are advised not to mount sessions at the same place/time where there is a high probability the same vehicles from the previous session will pass through.

12.6 Should a Team wish to mount a 1-off 'Action Day' or similar event during the summer where such an event could require a separate or increased allocation of letters, then the team should plan that in association with the Force Lead who will assess letter capacity to deal with that event in that month on a case by case basis. However, 'Action Days' that do not exceed the monthly limits do not need to be referred to the Force Lead

## **Bedfordshire Speed Watch Contact**

Email: [WatchSchemes@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:WatchSchemes@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk)

## **Volunteer Indemnity Form**

This records the understanding of indemnity to be signed by Community Speed Watch (CSW) volunteers before actively participating in any kerbside function or before handling any equipment.

1. Community Speed Watch Team members are volunteers, and there is no remuneration of costs or expenses incurred in carrying out Community Speed Watch operations.
2. All monitoring equipment will remain the property of the Local Highway Authority or the Police. Team members must take reasonable care of such equipment, in operational use or in transport or storage. When in storage, it must be kept in a secure condition and batteries kept in a fully charged state. Instruction books and paper records will be kept securely. Any loss of or damage to equipment should be reported as soon as possible to Bedfordshire Police.
3. I will ensure that only CSW members use the equipment and may only do so once they have been trained in the proper use of the equipment and the operation of the scheme.
4. If requested, I will immediately return all CSW property provided by Bedfordshire Police.
5. I agree to keep confidential any information that I become aware of as a result of the operation of this scheme recognise my liability under the Official Secrets and Data Protection Acts
6. At least three days before the commencement of any speed checks Bedfordshire Police Traffic Management must be emailed at [WatchSchemes@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:WatchSchemes@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk) and informed of the locations / times where checks that will be carried out.
7. There must be a minimum of two trained and Indemnity-signed Team members to conduct an operation and single-colour high-visibility tabards must be worn, at all times, by all of the Team volunteers including observers.
8. On site, having setup their monitoring equipment, the Team should then place themselves in a position of safety with the equipment in full view. If confronted, Team members should explain that they are acting with the knowledge and support of both the Bedfordshire Police and the Bedfordshire and Luton Casualty Reduction Partnership, in conducting a non-enforceable, traffic speed monitoring/education session. Team members must not get into confrontation – if confrontation arises, they should leave the area and contact the Police quoting the allocated Incident Number. A copy of the Speed Watch Scene Advice Letter may be given to any person who may approach any volunteers at the location of any check.
9. Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Police carry public liability insurance which covers Speed Watch activities and volunteers who act within their formal training and in accordance with the relevant risk assessment and Guidelines will be indemnified in the event that a claim or legal proceedings are issued against them. The use of volunteers' private motor vehicles or other equipment in connection with operations is not covered under any Police insurance policies or those

of any agency within the Road Safety Partnership, and it is the responsibility of team members to ensure that they have motor insurance in place that covers this activity.

10. I accept any letters issued or action taken under the CSW scheme will be at the discretion of Bedfordshire Police.
11. Bedfordshire Police will investigate any complaints against CSW members and their activity whilst undertaking this role so as to maintain the integrity, reputation and confidence in CSW members to act in 'good faith'. Personal safety is paramount.
12. The Speed Watch operation has been risk-assessed by Bedfordshire Police and is considered to be an acceptable activity in terms of health and safety. However, Community Speed Watch Team members have personal responsibility and must always act in a manner that will maintain a risk-averse and safe operation.
13. Whilst operating as a CSW member I will treat other CSW members, all other members of the community and officers and staff of Bedfordshire Police fairly and with respect and dignity.
14. Failure to comply with the requirements of the scheme may result in the immediate removal of one or all members of the scheme.

By submitting the registration form the volunteer acknowledges and agrees that he/she understands the above conditions, requirements and advice.

Training in relation to the use of the equipment and Health and Safety will be arranged via the Watch Scheme Coordinator.