



The first vehicle activated road warning sign in Tandridge

26 March 2004

KEY ISSUE

To describe the arrangements for a new vehicle activated road warning sign to improve road safety at the junction of Snatts Hill and the A 25 at Oxted.

SUMMARY

Improving road safety is a key priority, as identified by residents in fear of crime surveys and also in the Tandridge Community Strategy consultation. A number of counties now have signs that are vehicle activated to warn drivers of hazards on the road. The Community Safety Partnership has agreed to fund a warning sign to improve safety at the Snatts Hill junction. This report explains the reasoning for this, and the benefits locally. This also links with a countywide Partnership Public Service Agreement, which would give added financial benefits to Tandridge.

BACKGROUND

1. Vehicle activated signs have been developed to address the problem of inappropriate speed where conventional signing has not been effective. They are not a substitute for standard signs and do not normally target all drivers, but concentrate on people who are driving too fast for the conditions.
2. The Tandridge Community Safety Partnership, (which includes the District and County Council and Police), is keen to take action to improve road safety in Tandridge, and has been exploring the possibility of putting up vehicle activated signs in suitable locations where there is a serious accident record.
3. The County Council is developing a Partnership Public Service Agreement (PPSA) with Surrey partners and the government. The Surrey partners agree to improve on current service targets in the county, and in return the government gives pump priming money and a reward grant if these targets are improved.
4. One of the PPSA proposals is to reduce accidents on Surrey's roads by putting up vehicle activated signs. The Tandridge Community Safety Partnership is very interested in this, and proposes to put up a first sign, to link in with the PPSA. If the PPSA is successful, funding will be available for another sign and also for three semi-mobile signs for use in Tandridge.
5. Vehicle activated signs complement the enforcement work being done by the Police Neighbourhood Support Officers in local communities with their speed cameras (one of which has been purchased by a Parish Council). The Casualty Reduction Officer, who undertakes traffic management education and enforcement, is fully involved in setting up vehicle activated signs in Tandridge.

DECISION ON WHERE TO PLACE THE FIRST SIGN

5. At a meeting with representatives from the District Council, Local Transportation Service, County Council Traffic and Road Safety policy team and local police, a number of suitable locations for a vehicle activated sign were suggested. These had been highlighted as a result of accident working group analysis and also as a result of concern from the community.
6. Detailed accident analysis was completed and site visits undertaken to assess the suitable sites for a sign. As a result of this activity it was clear that the greatest priority was the junction of Snatts Hill and the A 25. There have been more accidents here than at any other site, including one fatal accident and four serious injuries.

Item 8

7. There is a poor visibility distance between vehicles exiting Snatts Hill on to the A 25 and eastbound vehicles on the A 25. This problem is increased if eastbound vehicles on the A25 are unaware of the side road and approach the junction too fast. The sign would have a picture of a side road junction in a red triangle with the words 'SLOW DOWN' underneath, and would be placed approximately 60 to 100 metres west of the junction for eastbound vehicles.
8. A speed measurement study of eastbound traffic coming from the viaduct up to Snatts Hill showed that the 85th percentile speed was 36 mph. It is suggested that the slow down sign would light up for vehicles travelling at or above 35mph. This would mean that the sign would light up for around 20% of vehicles, warning them that there is a side road ahead.
9. The sign is currently being purchased and arrangements are being made for it to be erected. It should be in operation by May 2004.

FUNDING

10. The funding for the sign, including the column plus erection, is estimated to be £12000. £6000 has been agreed from Police contributions to Community Safety Funding and the remainder will come from the £18,000 that the County Council contributes to the Partnership. At the Local Committee meeting on 18 July 2003 Members identified vehicle activated signs as a priority use for County Council funds. The Chairman and Local Director were authorised to act on behalf of the Local Committee to agree the details of funding with the Partnership, within the parameters set by the Local Committee.

LEAD OFFICERS: Ann Osborn, Local Director, Tandridge
Charlie Marsh, Local Transportation
Director

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01883 732759

BACKGROUND PAPERS: Community Safety paper to Local
Committee on 18 July 2003
