



COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH: UPDATE

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)
13 OCTOBER 2006**

KEY ISSUE:

To note the uptake of the Community Speed Watch initiative in communities in Waverley.

SUMMARY:

Community Speed Watch is an initiative operated by Surrey Police and co-ordinated locally by its Casualty Reduction Officer. A group of residents is trained to operate equipment which records the speed of vehicles passing through designated areas; drivers of vehicles exceeding the speed limit are notified by the Police, although no enforcement action is pursued through this route. The report informs the Committee of the current coverage of the scheme in Waverley and of its possible future extension.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Local Committee (Waverley) should note the progress made in implementing Community Speed Watch in Waverley.

LEAD OFFICER: Simon Hall (Local Transportation Manager)

CONTACT OFFICER: PC Andy Crane (Casualty Reduction Officer)
E-MAIL: 1966@surrey.police.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1. Community Speedwatch has been launched in Waverley as part of the Surrey Police Surrey Road Standards initiative to tackle anti-social behaviour on the county's roads.
2. The Speedwatch schemes, run locally by volunteers supported by Surrey Police, aim to re-educate drivers about the dangers of speeding, as well as address residents' concerns about inappropriate speed, improve quality of life for local communities and reduce traffic noise and pollution.
3. Motorists who exceed the speed limit on rural and urban roads are often unaware of the impact their actions have on communities or other road users or of the dangers they are exposing themselves to. Community Speedwatch, as well as reminding car drivers and motorcyclists to watch their speed and keep to the speed limit, enables local people to take an active role in making their communities safer.
4. By working with the police and local authorities, residents identify areas of concern and are given full support in setting up and managing a Community Speedwatch scheme in their neighbourhood. At least six volunteers, who contribute a minimum of an hour a week, are required to set up a Speedwatch scheme. All volunteers are provided with specific training on how to use the equipment, safe working procedures for using the speed detection equipment, how to monitor the speed of vehicles safely and advice on dealing with enquiries from other road users.
5. The volunteers work in pairs at an identified location selected by local communities in consultation with Surrey Police, provided they are within 30 mph and 40 mph limits. They record speeds of motorists in a log and offenders travelling at excess speeds will be identified from the data provided and sent a 'yellow' letter of advice which will also ask for their co-operation in the future.
6. A maximum of two warning letters, along with safety information, will be sent to offenders and if they are caught speeding again, they will be targeted for enforcement by police, where appropriate. The aim, however, is for the presence of the Speedwatch volunteers out on the streets to make drivers think twice about their driving habits and slow down.

PROGRESS IN WAVERLEY

7. Currently five schemes are operational in Waverley:
 - Shamley Green
 - Ewhurst
 - Ellens Green
 - Churt
 - Chiddingfold

8. Interest has been expressed in taking forward schemes in the following communities:
 - Hindhead
 - Grayswood
 - Lower Bourne
 - Wrecclesham
 - Upper Hale
 - Badshot Lea
 - Weybourne

9. Currently four sets of equipment have been allocated to Waverley with the result that some schemes are sharing (Ewhurst and Ellens Green); it is envisaged that, as new schemes become active, equipment will be shared between Chiddingfold and Grayswood and between Churt and Hindhead. In relation to Farnham, an application for revenue funding from Mr D Munro, Mrs P Frost and Mr J Farmer is contained elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting which will enable the purchase of an additional set of equipment. This will be stored at Farnham Police Station and, once training has taken place, be made available to watches in the Farnham area.

10. Resourcing the project, particularly in terms of balancing the equipment available with the needs of active schemes, will continue to be a challenge. It is felt currently that there is a slight shortfall in the equipment available for the schemes which are active and pending.

IMPACT

11. Reports from volunteers have been positive and realistic. While immediate changes in poor driver behaviour are unlikely to take place, the visible presence of a watch in operation is having an impact on traffic speeds. Few second warning levels are being issued, suggesting that only a small proportion of drivers monitored are habitually exceeding the threshold speed.