



# **Kingsway Traffic Calming Survey Results**

**22 January 2003**

## **KEY ISSUE:**

To report on the results of the survey held during September and October 2002, about the traffic calming scheme in Kingsway, Woking.

## **SUMMARY:**

The traffic calming scheme along Kingsway, Woking, consists of speed cushions covering the full length of the road, and was introduced April 2001. Traffic volumes and vehicle speeds have been reduced considerably since its introduction.

The survey has been carried out to ascertain residents views on the scheme. The majority of residents who replied to the consultation letter have stated that the scheme is successful.

**CONSULTATIONS:**

Residents of Kingsway and adjacent roads were consulted on 30 September 2002 by a letter and accompanying questionnaire. The location plan at Annex A shows the area within which residents were consulted. The residents were asked to comment on the success of the scheme and to also provide alternative suggestions/improvements to the current situation if they perceived the traffic calming to be unsuccessful.

The responses demonstrate an overall response rate of 56 percent and the majority of respondents have stated that the scheme is successful.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Committee is asked to agree:**

- i) that no further action is required concerning the height and quantity of the speed cushions,**
- ii) that the signing to Kingsway be reviewed by the Local Transportation service, and**
- iii) that residents are informed accordingly.**

## **INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND**

1. The traffic calming scheme in Kingsway, Woking, was introduced in April 2001 following extensive consultation with local residents, Borough Councillors and the emergency services.
2. The scheme was intended to achieve several transportation objectives:
  - make Kingsway more cycle friendly,
  - reduce vehicle speed and volume of through traffic along a residential road,
  - provide a safer environment for all road users,
  - retain existing on-street parking provision,
  - cater for the needs of the emergency services,
  - provide a cost effective solution, and
  - address residents' concerns about existing poor traffic conditions and perceived dangers from further deterioration of conditions with more traffic in Kingsway associated with the Safeway development.
3. The traffic calming scheme consists of fourteen sets of three speed cushions, 75mm high.
4. After completion of the scheme, a petition from 69 local residents and 23 minicab drivers was submitted to Woking Borough Council's Economic Programme Board on 9 July 2001. The petitioners felt that the cushions were too high, and wanted the scheme to be modified.
5. In August 2001, traffic speeds and volumes were surveyed in Kingsway and compared to those measured in December 1999, before the traffic calming scheme was introduced. The results show that the traffic calming has been very successful in reducing both the speed and volume of traffic in Kingsway [Annex B].
6. A meeting was held, on 27 June 2002, with the petition organiser. It was agreed that the set of cushions nearest to the western end of Kingsway would be removed (it was considered that this would not compromise the effectiveness of the scheme) and that the dimensions of the remaining cushions would be checked. All dimensions were found to comply with normal requirements.
7. During the Local Committee meeting on 1 July 2002, the Kingsway traffic calming scheme was referred over to the Local Transportation Service – Woking, in order for the issues to be resolved.

## **SURVEY PERIOD 2002**

8. Residents' views on the Kingsway traffic calming scheme were sought during October and November 2002 following a question raised by Councillor Bryan Cross at the Local Committee for Woking, on 1 July 2002 [Item 5]. Councillor Cross asked for Surrey County Council to issue a questionnaire amongst the residents of Kingsway and surrounding residential roads in an attempt to clarify their views on the traffic calming scheme.

9. A questionnaire and covering letter were distributed on 30 September 2002 [Annex C]. The questionnaire invited the residents to comment on the scheme's success and also gave the opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions.
10. Two hundred and eighty five questionnaires were sent out. Kingsway had a response rate of sixty one percent with the combined rate for the whole area being fifty six percent.

### **ANALYSIS and COMMENTARY**

11. Full details of the responses received from residents, with their comments, are given in Annex D.
12. Collectively, sixty four percent of respondents stated that the traffic calming scheme has been successful.
13. Many of the respondents that replied in favour of the scheme stated that they felt the road was now safer for children.
14. Residents living in the central areas of Kingsway [i.e. house numbers 25-71 and 36-90] were the majority of those that complained about the scheme. The number of speed cushions to be negotiated for access to and from these dwellings may be a contributing factor to the statistics.
15. Only 4 percent of residents who responded to the questionnaire stated that, in their opinion, neither traffic volumes nor speeds have been reduced significantly. Thirty two percent of respondents did state that the scheme was unsuccessful, however, only forty three percent of these commented with regard to traffic volumes and speeds.
16. Some residents suggested that the height of the speed cushions should be reduced. However, this is not considered desirable for two reasons:
  - i) Any reduction in the height of the cushions is likely to result in an increase in both the speed and the volume of traffic.
  - ii) In practical terms, it would be necessary to remove all of the existing cushions and construct new cushions at a reduced height. There would be significant cost implications involved.
17. Some residents suggested extending the cushions across the whole width of the road to form speed tables. Again, this would involve removing the existing cushions and constructing new speed tables, at significant cost. In addition, the emergency services would be affected, since at present fire tenders and ambulances are able to straddle the cushions, and this would no longer be the case.
18. Some residents mentioned damage to vehicles in general terms, but without being specific about the particular vehicles 'involved' or the nature of the damage. However, advice states that, at 75mm high, speed cushions should not cause damage to vehicles, provided that the vehicles have not been

lowered or otherwise modified, and that exhaust systems, etc. are in good repair.

19. Subsequent discussions with Councillor Cross and Councillor Kingsbury have taken place regarding the outcome of the resident survey, with emphasis being placed on the height and number of cushions in Kingsway.
20. It has been agreed that the height of the cushions in Kingsway will not be altered. However, it was requested that the frequency of the cushion sets be reviewed, even though only seven percent of all residents actually asked for the removal of certain cushion sets.
21. Having reviewed the current traffic calming measures it can be confirmed that the present scheme complies with specifications from the Traffic Advisory Unit (TA Leaflet's 7/96 & 1/98). If some sets of cushions were to be removed from Kingsway, it is likely that there would be an increase in both the volume and speed of traffic. In addition, drivers may accelerate and decelerate between cushions, leading to increased levels of noise and pollution. This could also be a potential danger to other road users. It is therefore recommended that no cushions should be removed, otherwise the success of the scheme will be compromised.
22. It was also agreed that the Local Transportation Service would review the location of the traffic calming signs, in order to ensure that motorists have adequate warning of the scheme.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

23. The traffic calming scheme has been successful in both reducing vehicle speeds through Kingsway and also by acting as a deterrent to through-traffic.
24. The success of the scheme has been measured by the before and after speed surveys and the residents' questionnaire responses.
25. It is therefore recommended that following consultation with residents, of which sixty four percent stated that the traffic calming has been a success, the scheme should be left unaltered.

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<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS:</b>	<b>Completed questionnaires received from residents</b>

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