

Speed Awareness Cameras fully operational

It is with a significant amount of relief, that Painswick Parish Council are able to say the speed awareness cameras on the A46 and B4073 are finally operational, with our first batch of registrations of vehicles recording persistent, excessive speeds sent to the police on Friday 19th January.

This Gloucestershire Constabulary initiative, in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, was first launched in the summer of 2022 with all local Parish Councils invited to take part. As a pilot we have all been learning as we go along, with many parishes around the county expressing an interest and taking part.

The cameras are only triggered by speeds over the ACPO limit (eg 36mph and over in 30mph zones). They take a photo of the vehicle and record the time, date and speed. On the linked, secure software, each record is verified to confirm the registration, make and model. Each camera location has been approved by the police as being suitable for this purpose.

Within the software, Gloucestershire Constabulary have established a protocol to select the data to be provided to the police (up to 10 vehicles per camera each week). Primarily, this protocol considers persistence ie the number of times the camera has recorded that vehicle travelling as excessive speed. This is on the basis that if those using the road frequently have a greater awareness of speeding, they will act as pace cars for other traffic. Secondly, the data is considered based on the degree of excess speed.

On receipt of the data, the police identify and write to the registered owners of the vehicles, regarding their recorded excessive speed. This is not enforcement through fines, but about speed awareness. The equipment being used is not Home Office approved so cannot be used as a tool for enforcement but the data provided will be collated by the police to identify areas for enforcement activity (eg police with approved speed recording equipment monitoring the traffic).

Concerns about privacy and data protection have been raised by some members of the community. With UK GDPR laws, these have been central to the development of this initiative, the cameras, the software and the associated processes and protocols followed by all involved. As a Parish Council, we have additionally carried out a specific GDPR risk assessment and set out an operational process with only verified access to the software and all records in kept secure folders, in accordance with our gold-standard, GDPR-compliant management systems.

So, the specifics for Painswick. Gloucestershire County Council gave us one camera and the Parish Council voted to buy a further 2 cameras, at £500 each. The total of 3 allows us to monitor each of the main approaches to Painswick village. Also, as a parish we have 4 villages within our boundaries, this number of cameras can be dispersed in other parish villages too, where approved by the police to do so. So far we have 3 locations in each of Painswick and Edge approved. The cameras are not hidden but we are not widely publicising their precise locations in hope that we can build improved speed awareness throughout the village, and not contribute to drivers only slowing down as they approach a camera and then speeding up again after it.

The greatest delay in the deployment of our cameras has been waiting for associated signs, but after 8 months of waiting it was confirmed they weren't coming soon and the police encouraged us to go ahead without additional signage. However, we are fortunate to already have speed camera awareness signs at the start of each 30mph zone in Painswick which relate to the official sites within the village where the police carry out occasional enforcement activity. Hopefully, drivers will take

heed of these signs more with the addition of our speed awareness cameras and the resulting letters from the police.

There are number of parishes who have had their static speed awareness cameras in place for many months and the results are looking positive. Through using the cameras to raise awareness of speeding, targeted at regular road users, they have noticed an overall reduction in excessive speeding, bringing with it an increased sense of road safety within their community. We hope the cameras will have a similar impact in our parish.

If there are any concerns or questions, please do get in touch.

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