

Greens welcome report on Edinburgh's 20mph scheme

Scottish Green MSP Mark Ruskell today welcomed the evaluation of The City of Edinburgh Council's 20mph scheme.

According to the report (which you can read in full below) Edinburgh's scheme has lowered the average speed limit by 1.3mph, which has in turn made the capital's streets safer. According to research, every 1% drop in speed **can** lead to a six per cent reduction in casualties on our streets.

[Mark Ruskell's members bill](#) to introduce a 20mph speed limit for all residential streets in Scotland was defeated after The Scottish Government sided with the Tories.

Mr Ruskell said: "The evaluation from City of Edinburgh Council is hugely positive, and criticism of the pioneering scheme ignores the overwhelming evidence which shows even small reductions in average speed can have a huge impact on road safety.

"1.3mph is also a significant speed reduction because it's an 'average', it means dangerously high speeds have reduced.

"Thankfully Stirling is greatly expanding its 20mph speed limit streets, showing that 20mph remain the way forward for road safety across Scotland.

"That's why it is so disappointing that the SNP sided with the Tories in the face of all that evidence to reject my members bill which would have rolled these safer speeds out across the country and made the places where we live, work and play much safer.



Green MSPs supported the bill introduced by their colleague Mark Ruskell and debated in June 2019 PHOTO ©2019 The Edinburgh Reporter

“Councils, including Edinburgh backed my bill because they recognise a national approach could drive culture change and dramatically improve compliance.

“Instead, the people of Scotland are stuck with a postcode lottery of safety and simply have to hope their local council choosing to provide safer streets for them.”

The report was prepared by Progressive for the council and will be considered by councillors on the Transport and Environment Committee this Friday.

Some of the Key Findings in the report include:

- Walking was the most common mode of transport among those surveyed
- Just under one fifth said they ever cycle
- There is no clear cut picture of the impact of the 20mph speed limits although more of those who use a car said

- they had decreased their usage
- Twice as many who travel by bus said they used the bus more (15% as opposed to 7% before)
 - Most children travel to school on foot depending on their age but more primary school children now go to school in a car.
 - The majority of people who answered the survey said they felt the traffic speeds on their street were about right, and more said that the speed on main roads was too slow
 - Almost 60% said they were aware of the 20mph scheme – and the key information source was speed signs and road markings
 - Support for the scheme has increased and the proportion of those opposed to it has decreased
 - Those who drive are more likely to support it

All in all the survey found that there is a high level of support for the 20mph speed limits, and although one third of those who responded said the limits had a positive impact on the quality of life in their neighbourhood the overall impact is less conclusive.

What is perhaps most telling of all is that in the committee papers there is a long list of streets where residents have reported non-compliance or speeding.

Local walking campaigners have called on the Council to step up enforcement and to introduce traffic-calming measures at key speeding blackspots across the city. Don McKee, the Convenor of Living Streets Edinburgh Group said: 'We strongly support the 20mph initiative which has already made a significant improvement to Edinburgh streets. However, because there is so little chance of being caught by the police, in free-flowing traffic situations too many motorists are able to drive at excessive speeds. We can't rely on signage alone to eliminate this kind of antisocial behaviour. We want to see more enforcement action by Police Scotland, including wider

use of speed cameras, and traffic calming measures introduced on particular problem streets.”

You can watch the Transport and Environment Committee from 10.00am on Friday online [here](#).



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