Dear Sir,

I have been copied on your proposal for increasing the number of 20mph zones around Scotland, and should like to make what I hope you will find constructive comment.

I would support the implementation of 20mph limits around schools, play parks, shopping areas and built up residential areas, as is much the case now.  However, a blanket wide approach would not be welcomed.  I live in a rural village with only a small housing estate that is 20mph, but the 4 main roads that pass through the village are 30mph.  Making these 20mph limits would be a waste of time, effort and funds, they are commuter routes, money and effort could be better spent on Police to catch people speeding or on their phones.

I’m a car / motorhome / minibus / motorbike / cyclist male of 60 years age.  I have passed my IAM motorcycle test and I’m ROSPA Gold motorbiker.

Over the years, I’ve had 2 accidents –

1st was changing a flat tyre on my car in a lay-by, when a woman driving by hit me and dragged me 100yrds before stopping, I nearly lost my leg and had 9 months in plaster.

2nd was 2 weeks after passing my IAM test, riding in a 20mph zone next to school, a woman came out of a side road right in front of me, I did an emergency stop but just touched her door.  She got out shouting and swearing at me and complaining that she had split her coffee down her dress.

I agree that the number of accidents on our roads is alarming, however, reducing 30 limits to 20 would I believe do little to reduce that vast number of accidents which occur outwit the 30 limits.  One issue with statistics is that the Police records do not, I believe, accurately record the event that lead up to the accident or what the main cause was, I have discussed this topic with a number of Road Traffic Officers over the years.

I firmly believe that the best way to reduce accidents and improve awareness of all is by education and training.  There are far too many bad drivers/riders on our roads that have scant regard for the law and safety of other people.  It is fact that once you pass your driving test at say 17 you are never tested again, I know some 80 to 90 year olds that have never sat a DVLA Driving test.

To make our roads safer, improve drivers/rider skills, improve awareness and observation skills, plan each part of their journey ahead, judge and assess risks as they drive/ride; ALL drivers/riders should be made to re-sit their test every 5 years.  I never bothered with IAM until I was 45 and I passed my RoSPA test at 58, I can honestly say that these have greatly improved my riding and driving skills, made me more relaxed, improved fuel consumption reduced stress and I enjoy driving/riding much more.  To maintain my RoSPA qualification I must be retested every 3 years, I pay for this and as a result my insurance is reduced.

Speed limits are broken all the time with great regularity my nearly all drivers/riders – why? Because they know there are next to no Road Traffic Police to catch them.  So, would 20mph limits work? Very unlikely! The main road in front of my house leading into our village used to be a 40mph limit, after many complaints and being hit by car wing mirrors the Police monitored the speed of traffic and found that over 75% of vehicles were exceeding the limit by more than 20mph.  After 3 years of complaining the limit was reduced to 30mph, has this made any difference – NO people still speed, I get overtaken regularly.  Are the Police interested? Not really, they advise they have more pressing matters and do not have the equipment and manpower to monitor the situation.  Is the Council Road Safety Officer interested? NO, they state that it is 30 limit with no white lines and as just all road users should obey the law and it is not their responsibility to enforce speed limits by placing restrictors, speed bumps, speed camera etc.

Thus, education and training must be the best way to reduce people speed, improve their awareness of risk and make our environment safer for all road users.  Just having 20mph speed limits will mean nothing to the clear majority of drivers.

I would urge you to promote Safe Driving through Education, Training and Re-testing of all road users.

Take Care