

“Your Speed” - New interactive signs in the village

You may have noticed new signs in the village that are designed to help slow traffic to Safe and Legal limits. At the time of writing they are located at

- St Neots Road, measuring traffic from and to village entrances
- Cambridge Road, measuring the speed of traffic as it passes between Kesters Close and Egremont Road by the school.

In the Hardwick Village Plan, top of the list as central to Hardwick’s future was SAFETY. In the top three concerns about Safety came “Reduce Traffic Speed”. In response, a Hardwick Parish Councillor produced a document, “Traffic Calming in Hardwick”, the Parish Council engaged County Highways as consultants and are following Highway’s recommendations on how best to achieve lower traffic speeds. First on the list was re-introduction of Community Speed Watch followed by these “flashers”, formally known as Moveable Vehicle Activated Signs or MVAS for short. These signs are therefore part of the program of reducing speed in the village and will be moved to various village locations from month to month.



Vehicle approaching over the limit on St Neots Road

The displays are viewed by the Police and Highways as driver education tools instead of physical barriers. They provide reassurance that drivers and the public can see the Speed Limits are being respected but also evidence for physical traffic calming measures - as seen in pretty much all the villages around us and summarised on the Village Web site Community Speed Watch page.

St Neots Road

First results comparing speeds with display lights switched OFF then ON. It shows generally the speeds are lower when the display is flashing. Make your own judgement on whether you find these speeds acceptable.

Data for St Neots Road WESTBOUND from Village entrance east towards Cambridge Road

St Neots Road westbound from Cambridge	Display OFF 19 th March to 18 th April 4 weeks	Display ON 01/05/20 to 29/05/20 4 weeks
Average Speed mph	37	35
Maximum Speed mph	101	97
Vehicle count	27,742 – 4 weeks	36414 – 4 weeks
41mph and over	35% - 9,709 vehicles	21% - 7,647 vehicles
46mph and over	13% - 3,606 vehicles	7% - 2,549 vehicles

If there were average Speed Cameras, there would have been plenty of tickets – 6000 over 46mph in the 8 weeks data, nearly 12,000 in the opposite direction – see table below. Bear in mind vehicles travelling at excessive speed towards Madingley are being driven past residents’ homes, past the bus stop, alongside any cyclists risking the on-carriageway cycle

lane and the DVSA entrance with complete disrespect for this part of the village and disregard for Road Safety. It seems to show a lot of drivers anxious to get out of Hardwick at any cost!

Data for St Neots Road eastbound towards the village exit east

St Neots Road eastbound to Cambridge	19/03/20 to 18/04/20 No display to drivers	01/05/20 to 29/05/20 No display to drivers
Average Speed mph	40	40
Maximum Speed mph	95	93
Vehicle count	25,562 – 4 weeks	33199 – 4 weeks
41mph and over	48% - 12,270 vehicles	48% - 15,938 vehicles
46mph and over	20% - 5,112 vehicles	20% - 6,639 vehicles

Cambridge Road



Display location in Cambridge Road, LEDs not yet switched on

The “Your Speed” display in Cambridge Road is by Kester’s Close. With modern technology, the radar competently reaches up Cambridge Road as far as the bend at Egremont Road.

The figures so far show nearly half of drivers are exceeding the 30 mph speed limit. The display includes any bikes it picks up so the average will include 10 to 20 mph cyclists. The display went up on 6th May and will be OFF until the end of the May. The data collected will then be compared with the results with the display turned ON during June to check the effect of drivers seeing their speeds publicly displayed. At the time of writing we have 23 days data, shown in the table below.

Summary of Measurements

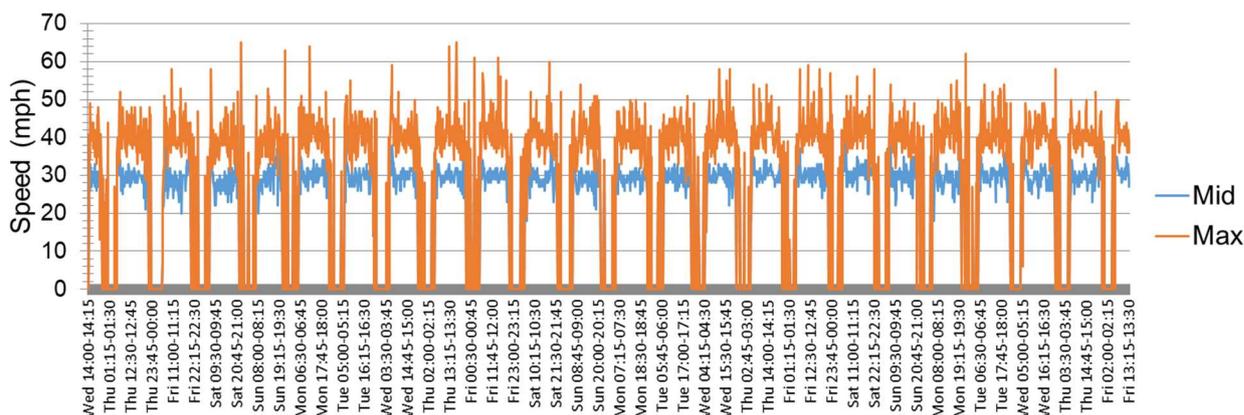
6 th to 29 th May 2020 Display OFF	Southbound from the school	Northbound towards the school
Average Speed	30	30
Maximum Speed	65	62
Vehicle count	15,940 – 23 days	18,067 – 23 days
Travelling 31 mph and over	46% - 7,332 vehicles	48% - 8,672 vehicles
Travelling 36mph and over	15% - 2,391 vehicles	16% - 2,890 vehicles

On the stretch from the school, Speed Watch usually records and reports about 10% of vehicles to the police but of course Speed Watch has their display ON and there are three volunteers at each check wearing yellow Hi-Viz vests so frankly *any* speeds over the limit are surprising. The data above gives the village a good indication of what happens when Speed Watch is not there.

Detail from the measurements shown as a graph

There is a great deal of data collected by the display and although difficult to read in the context of Hardwick Happenings, these graphs should be up on the Village Web site. Below shows average and maximum speeds over time. You may have seen this sort of graph on the Speed Watch page of the Village Web site.

Cambridge Road southbound 6th to 29th May 2020
Average (mid) and maximum speeds



Calming Traffic around the school

Hardwick Parish Council commissioned Highways to produce a scheme to reduce speed on Cambridge Road around the school especially at the Limes Road and Egremont Road junctions where residents have experienced vehicles dangerously cutting the corners. This section already has a 20 mph zone for the school anyway! The scheme is termed a Local Highways Improvement, an LHI. Highways have recommended speed cushions on this stretch, an Optimum of 4 sets.

From the Highways Project Engineer, "Give way features and traffic islands are not as effective at reducing speeds as speed cushions, and the width is too narrow for traffic islands." He added in correspondence, "I have not progressed the proposal for junction tables- although these work well they cost significantly more and are likely to be around £30k each." Hardwick would need 2. A junction table or speed table is used for example in Dry Drayton on Park Street by their school. Because this is an LHI, the cost of the speed cushions will be almost 90% covered by Highways. The cost to the village is £2,000.

Just to be clear there is **NO recommendation for Speed Humps**, (or bumps as they were called in the Village Plan) but the whole village knows these speeds and something permanent needs to be put in place before someone is seriously hurt.

Suggestion: Drivers know the speed limits and we all know Hardwick residents are not the only people on our roads. But if Hardwick drivers keep below the limits, the people behind us also have to?

Alan Everitt

Visit Community Speed Watch on the Village Web site

