

Speed Limits

Literature Search for Priddy Parish Council

This literature search consists of two parts.

First is the national guidance from the Department for Transport (DfT)

Second is a digest of the minutes of Parish, Parish Council and Public Meetings held in 2010 and 2011.

National Guidance

Guidance on the introduction of speed limits is contained in the DfT circular *Setting Local Speed Limits*¹

The key points identified in the guidance are:

Speed limits should be evidence-led and self-explaining and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. They should encourage self-compliance. Speed limits should be seen by drivers as the maximum rather than a target speed.

Traffic authorities set local speed limits in situations where local needs and conditions suggest a speed limit which is lower than the national speed limit.

This guidance is to be used for setting all local speed limits on single and dual carriageway roads in both urban and rural areas.

This guidance should also be used as the basis for assessments of local speed limits, for developing route management strategies and for developing the speed management strategies which can be included in Local Transport Plans.

Traffic authorities are asked to keep their speed limits under review with changing circumstances, and to consider the introduction of more 20 mph limits and zones, over time, in urban areas and built-up village streets that are primarily residential, to ensure greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists, using the criteria in Section 6.

The guidance applies to England.

Underlying Principles

Section 3 of the circular outlines the underlying principles of local speed limits. Again, the section opens with a list of key points.

The Highways Agency is responsible for determining speed limits on the trunk road network. Local traffic authorities are responsible for determining speed limits on the local road network.

It is important that traffic authorities and police forces work closely together in determining, or considering, any changes to speed limits.

The full range of speed management measures should always be considered before a new speed limit is introduced.

The underlying aim should be to achieve a 'safe' distribution of speeds. The key factors that should be taken into account in any decisions on local speed limits are:

- history of collisions
- road geometry and engineering
- road function
- composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users)
- existing traffic speeds

¹

- road environment

While these factors need to be considered for all road types, they may be weighted differently in urban or rural areas. The impact on community and environmental outcomes should also be considered.

The minimum length of a speed limit should generally be not less than 600 metres to avoid too many changes of speed limit along the route.

Speed limits should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards, such as a single road junction or reduced forward visibility, for example, at a bend.

Legislation

Section four deals with the legislative framework.

Paragraph 42 of the Guidance states that “most road traffic law pertaining to speed limits is contained in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA 1984). Other relevant legislation includes the Highways Act 1980, in particular Sections 90A-F concerning the construction and maintenance of road humps and Sections 90G-I concerning other traffic-calming works.”

Paragraph 45 of the Guidance states that “All speed limits, other than those on restricted roads² or special roads (a highway which is a special road in accordance with s 16 of the Highways Act 1980), should be made by order under Section 84 of the RTRA 1984. This includes the making of a 30mph speed limit on an unlit road.

SIGNAGE

Paragraph 53 is part of the Guidance which deals with signage and states “Under Section 85 of the RTRA 1984 it is the duty of the traffic authority to erect and maintain prescribed speed limit signs on their roads in accordance with the Secretary of State’s directions. The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 prescribe the designs and conditions of use for traffic signs, including speed limit signing, in England, Scotland and Wales.” The following paragraph 54 says, “Traffic authorities should generally follow these Regulations when signing speed limits. If a traffic authority wishes to deviate from what is prescribed, it must first obtain the Secretary of State’s authorisation, and signing that is not in line with the Regulations must not be installed without such authorisation.” The consideration of signage concludes by saying that Chapter 3 of the *Traffic Signs Manual*³ provides guidance to local traffic authorities on best practice when signing speed limits.

Chapter 3 of the Traffic Signs Manual refers to what are called Regulatory Signs. There is guidance about design (size, shape, colour font) and location of signs. Section 8 of chapter 3 of the Manual deals with speed limits. In respect of the speed limits there are terminal signs (where a speed limit begins and ends, including junctions with roads not covered by the speed limit) and repeater signs along the roadside within the speed limit.

² Section 82(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 defines a restricted road in England and Wales as a road on which there is provided “a system of street lighting furnished by means of lamps placed not more than 200 yards apart”. Section 81 makes it an offence for a person to drive a motor vehicle at a speed of more than 30 mph on a restricted road.

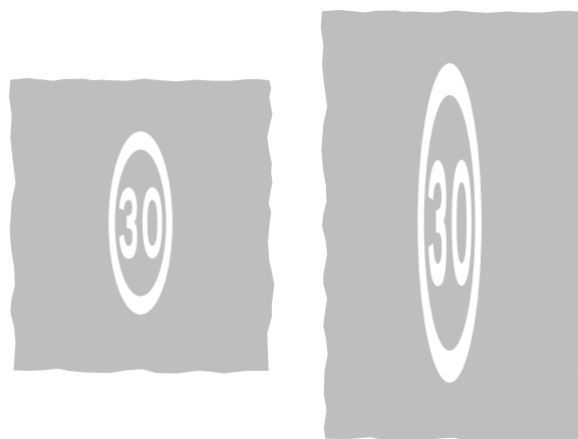
³ *Traffic Signs Manual* (DfT, 2008)

Subsection 3 contains guidance as to speed limit repeater signs. Subsections 8.3.1. states “Whilst there is no specific requirement to provide repeater signs, it is for the traffic authority to determine how many are required and where they are placed. However, to ensure that drivers are fully aware of the speed limit in force it is recommended that repeater signs are provided at the intervals shown in Table 8-4. An extract from the table is shown below:

Speed limit and type of road	Size of sign (mm)	Maximum distance (m) between		Clear Visibility Distances
		Each repeater sign	Terminal sign and first repeater ³	
30 mph (lit road)	-	No repeaters	No repeaters	-
30 mph (unlit road)	300	250	200	30
40 mph	300	350	250	40

Note 3: Repeater signs are unlikely to be needed where the length of the speed limit is less than the distance shown in this column.

Subsection 8.3.4. concludes by stating a road marking roundel “... may be used as a repeater, either on its own as an alternative to the upright sign or together with the upright sign.” Later (in section 8.18.1) there is further treatment of road marking roundels and restates that “...may be used to supplement upright signs, or on their own as repeater signs or traffic calming features in 20 mph zones.” It continues, “The road marking roundel must not be used on its own where a speed limit commences; if provided it must be used in conjunction with an upright terminal sign ...” It concludes with guidance as to the size of road markings (dealt with elsewhere in the Manual), and, after dealing with the size of roundels associated with terminal signs (smaller if a 30mph limit follows a 40mph limit), states “The size of repeater markings should be appropriate to the speed indicated, with the smaller roundel being used where the limit is 40 mph or less.”



Making the Decision

Section 5 of *Setting Local Speed Limits* introduces the Speed Limit Appraisal Tool (SLAT) which is part of the DfT *Strategic Framework for Road Safety*⁴. The tool is not mandatory but its use is recommended in the interests of consistency and transparency. The SLAT is available, free of charge, not only to Traffic Authorities but others.

Rural Speed Limits

Section 7⁵ addresses rural speed limits and begins by identifying some more key points:

The national speed limit on the rural road network is 60 mph on single carriageway roads and 70 mph on dual carriageways.

Rural dual carriageways with segregated junctions and facilities for vulnerable road users would generally be suitable for 70 mph limits. However, a lower limit may be appropriate if, for example, a collision history indicates that this cannot be achieved safely.

⁴ *Strategic Framework for Road Safety* (DfT, May 2011)

⁵ Section 7 follows a separate section (6) which deals with speed limits in urban areas

In 2011, 66% of road deaths in Britain occurred on rural roads, and 51% of road deaths occurred on single rural carriageway roads subject to the National Speed Limit of 60 mph limit.

The speed limit on single carriageway rural roads should take into account the history of collisions, the road's function, existing mean traffic speed, use by vulnerable road users, the road's geometry and engineering, and the road environment including level of road-side development.

It is government policy that a 30 mph speed limit should be the norm in villages. It may also be appropriate to consider 20 mph zones and limits in built-up village streets.

It is recommended that the minimum length of a village speed limit should be 600 metres. However, traffic authorities may lower this to 400 metres, and in exceptional circumstances to 300 metres.

VILLAGES

Subsection 7.3 refers specifically to villages. This subsection is reproduced here in its entirety.

131) Fear of traffic can affect people's quality of life in villages and it is self-evident that villages should have comparable speed limits to similar roads in urban areas. It is therefore government policy that a 30 mph speed limit should be the norm through villages.

132) It may also be appropriate to consider 20 mph limits or zones in built-up village streets which are primarily residential in nature, or where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high. Such limits should not, however, be considered on roads with a strategic function or where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function.

133) Traffic Advisory Leaflet 01/04 (DfT, 2004) sets out policy on achieving lower speed limits in villages. It suggests that reasonable minimum criteria for the definition of what constitutes a village, for the purpose of applying a village speed limit of 30 mph, would be that there were: □ 20 or more houses (on one or both sides of the road) - and a minimum length of 600 metres.

134) If there are just fewer than 20 houses, traffic authorities should make extra allowance for any other key buildings, such as a church, shop or school. Where the character of a village falls outside this definition, local authorities are encouraged to use their discretion in deciding whether a lower speed limit is appropriate.

135) The criteria above should give adequate visual messages to drivers to reduce their speed. It is recommended that the minimum length for the new limit is at least 600 metres to avoid too many changes in speed limits along a route, and to aid compliance. Traffic authorities may, however, lower this to 400 metres when the level of development density over this shorter length exceeds the 20 or more houses criterion and, in exceptional circumstances, to 300 metres.

136) In some circumstances it might be appropriate to consider an intermediate speed limit of 40 mph prior to the 30 mph terminal speed limit signs at the entrance to a village, in particular where there are outlying houses beyond the village boundary or roads with high approach speeds.

For the latter, traffic authorities might also need to consider other speed management measures to support the message of the speed limit and help encourage compliance so that no enforcement difficulties are created for the local police force. Where appropriate, such measures might include a vehicle-activated sign, centre hatching or other measures that would have the effect of narrowing or changing the nature and appearance of the road.

137) Where the speed limit commences at the village boundary, the village nameplate sign (prescribed in diagram 2402.1 of TSRGD 2002) and speed limit roundel may be mounted together. The combined sign should be located at the point where the speed limit starts, and it may be helpful if drivers can see housing at the same time as the signs, reinforcing the visual message for reduced speed.

138) If there are high approach speeds to a village, or the start of the village is not obvious, village gateway treatments can also be an effective way to slow drivers down. Advice can be found in Local Transport Note 1/07 Traffic Calming (DfT, 2007) and Traffic Advisory Leaflets 01/94 VISIP – A Summary (DoT, 1994a) and 01/04 Village Speed Limits (DfT, 2004).

139) In situations where the above criteria for a village are not met and there is a lesser degree of development, or where engineering measures are not practicable or cost-effective to achieve a 30 mph limit, but a reduction from the national 60 mph speed limit is considered appropriate, traffic authorities should consider alternative lower limits of 40 or 50 mph.

140) A recommendation to use the framework for the assessment of speed limit options on rural single carriageway roads, in place since the publication of the previous Speed Limit Circular (01/2006), is withdrawn.

Proposed introduction of a 30mph Limit in Priddy 2010 / 2011

An offer of funding for a 30mph limit was received from the divisional county councillor. In the minutes Annual Parish meeting held in May 2010, there is a reference to the fact that the Parish Council had been asked to look at ways of traffic calming, including a speed limit, but that no decision had been made. It was further stated that no decision would be made without further consultation⁶. The minutes Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, which followed the Annual Parish Meeting on 5th May 2010, recorded that correspondence had been received from parishioners in respect of a 30mph speed limit⁷.

In June 2010 there had been a suggestion that there might be traffic calming measures rather than a 30mph speed limit. The divisional county councillor was of the opinion that traffic calming measures could only be put in place within a 30mph limit⁸. The Council was also read five letters received from parishioners about a 30mph limit.

At the meeting of the Parish Council in July, a deadline for correspondence relating to a 30mph speed limit should be set for mid-August. It was agreed that there should be a Public Meeting prior to the September Council meeting to debate the issue of a 30mph speed limit⁹.

The divisional county councillor told the Council in August 2010 that the grant for a 30mph speed limit, but no other traffic calming measures, was still available despite budget cuts at Somerset County Council. A decision was required as the grant was a “one off” and time limited. It was confirmed that the speed limit would be for the village only and that an AONB wide speed limit was not likely. There had been some discussion of signage¹⁰.

At the Public Meeting on 1st September¹¹, the offer of a 30mph covering the “inner village” was confirmed as was the fact that funds were not available for other traffic calming measures. other works such as traffic calming as some had suggested. The Chair of the meeting (Chair of the Parish Council) summarised the conclusions as:

- the majority of the attendees were in favour of reducing the speed within Priddy.
- that a majority of those present were concerned about the impact of the signs associated with the proposed limit.
- that, given that the current proposals are the only option available at present, the majority of those present were in favour of the scheme as proposed and were prepared to give the scheme a trial period to monitor the effects.

⁶ Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 5th May 2010 – item 7

⁷ Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 5th May 2020 – item 16

⁸ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd June 2010 – item 8f and 9

⁹ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7th July 2010 – item 8f

¹⁰ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th August 2010 – item 9b

¹¹ Notes of the Public Meeting held on 1st September 2020 to discuss the proposed 30mph speed limit for Priddy.

At the Council meeting¹² which immediately followed the Public Meeting, it was noted that most people who had attended the Public Meeting were in favour of some form of speed limit, though there were concerns about signage. One parish councillor expressed a concern about an adverse effect on speed which might be produced by de-restricted [national speed limit] signs which would mark the end of the speed limit. It was agreed that a meeting be arranged to discuss signage in more detail. On a related note, the vulnerability of cyclists, walkers and horse riders was raised. It was stated that the reduction in the cutting of verges and hedges had added to the difficulties experienced by these vulnerable road users. It was acknowledged that both greater awareness required from motorists but that the vulnerable groups should also be aware of the fact that they need to make themselves visible to other road users¹³

At the October meeting of the Parish Council it was confirmed that a meeting to discuss signage had been arranged for 3rd November¹⁴. Notices were posted advertising the meeting.

The November meeting of the Parish Council was held later the same day as the meeting about signage. A report was given a meeting with Somerset County Council Highways and it was noted that the speed limit had been extended to the "Townsend Crossroads". The cost of advertisement of the proposal to the wider public was estimated as £500 and it was thought that the limit could be in place by March 2011. Objections to the speed limit were summarised as: too many signs, low accident rate in village, little or no police enforcement, the fact that speed checks in the village had shown speeds of less than 30mph. The divisional county councillor had spoken with the Police who had confirmed that they would respond to persistent offences, although the speed limit would not be a high priority item. At a vote it was resolved to proceed with the advertisement of the proposed speed limit as a first step to completing the implementation¹⁵.

Under Matters Arising at the Parish Council meeting in December 2010 a letter from a couple of parishioners was read. This letter included concerns about the way in which the decision to proceed with the 30mph proposal had been taken, about the lack of consultation and the waste of public money on a proposals which, it appeared, would have little effect; it concluded with by requesting assurances that there would be appropriate information and details circulated around the village. There also appeared to be an issue as regards the costs of signage being higher than had been given. Clarification would be sought before further discussion of the topic at the January meeting of the Parish Council¹⁶

The first meeting of the Parish Council in 2011 included the reading of letter which expressed concern that that the Council was reconsidering the decision to proceed with the 30mph speed limit. The letter also outlined the work previously undertaken from the year 2000 about ways of reducing the speed of traffic which was also included in the Village Design Statement. It was explained that the need to confirm funding had meant that the matter had not been progressed. Revised funding arrangements were to be funded from Somerset County Council, the Priddy Charity Trust and the Parish Council. As Somerset County Council Highways had required funding before implementation, confirmation of funding sources was required.¹⁷

The Parish Council meeting held on 2nd February was attended by approximately 19 members of the public. Objections to the proposed 30mph limit were voiced by members of the public and it was noted that a number of letters of objection had also been received. Funding from the Priddy Charity Trust was also queried and a member of the public indicated that he and others would force a poll if the Council proceed with proposals without taking further opinion from villagers. The Clerk advised that the resolution passed in November 2010 could only be rescinded at that time by a special motion proposed by at least three councillors¹⁸.

¹² Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1st September 2010 – item 8a

¹³ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1st September 2010 – item 8b

¹⁴ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd October 2010 – item 4b

¹⁵ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd November 2010 – item 10a (8a)

¹⁶ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1st December 2010 – item 6

¹⁷ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5th January 2011 – item 9

¹⁸ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd February 2011 – item 4

The Parish Council meeting held in March was attended by approximately 25 members of the public. In response to a query about funding from the Priddy Charitable Trust, it appeared that the funding which was thought had been promised, had not been. The Priddy Charitable Trust denied having received a request for funds, as did the Sheep Fair Revenues Advisory Committee. Histories of the 30mph speed limit proposal were offered and challenged and there was a call for a clearer mandate. The clerk advised that a poll could be called for at the Annual Parish Meeting (rather than calling another Parish Meeting) and it was agreed it would be acceptable that the matter was included on the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting¹⁹. Also at the March meeting, the special resolution, referred to in the meeting in February, was proposed by the requisite three councillors. At a vote, it was agreed to rescind the decision taken on 3rd November 2010 to proceed with the advertisement and subsequent of a 30mph [speed] limit within the village of Priddy. Thank were offered to the divisional ward councillor for the offer of funds and it was noted that the funds would not be available after 31st March 2011²⁰.

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26th April and Declaration of Result of Poll on the next page are reproduced in their entirety.

Full minutes for meetings are available on the Priddy Parish website (priddyparish.org) in the minutes archive section.

William Newton Newey
Parish Clerk of Priddy
16th August 2020

¹⁹ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd March 2011 – item 4

²⁰ Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd March 2011 – item 8

MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING HELD ON 6th APRIL 2011
AT PRIDDY VILLAGE HALL

The Chair of the Parish Council, Indra Cotton, opened the meeting with 35 persons present and confirmed the purpose of the meeting was to discuss a 30mph speed limit for Priddy and to call for a Parish Poll on the matter.

Stuart McManus raised a query about the Notice convening the meeting. After discussion the Chair asked the meeting if they were in agreement in proceeding with the meeting on the basis of the Notice issued, this was agreed nem con.

A number of those present raised issues with the limit previously discussed by the Parish Council including the signs, extent of the limit and it's effectiveness.

Concerns were also expressed about the speed of traffic outside the area of the limit once it was in place, the cost of any Poll (estimated to be £600) and whether those outside the area of the limit would decide to take part in the poll.

Nick Furze called for a Parish Poll to be held on the matter and the Chair of the meeting agreed. After discussion, the question to be put was agreed - 21 in favour, 3 against

The agreed question was:

“are you in favour of establishing a 30mph limit with legally required signage in the village of Priddy – yes or no”

Gwyn Thomas asked that all present be aware of their speed when travelling through the village in motor vehicles.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

<p>DECLARATION OF RESULT OF POLL PARISH POLL PARISH OF PRIDDY</p> <p>I, the undersigned, being the Deputy Returning Officer at the parish poll held on Monday 16 May 2011 on the question “Are you in favour of establishing a 30mph limit with legally required signage in the village of Priddy”, do hereby give notice that that number of votes recorded for and against the question is as follows:</p>		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">Number of votes recorded</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">FOR</td> <td style="text-align: center;">35</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">AGAINST</td> <td style="text-align: center;">160</td> </tr> </table>		Number of votes recorded	FOR	35	AGAINST	160				
	Number of votes recorded											
FOR	35											
AGAINST	160											
<p>The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">a) Want of Official Mark</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b) Voting for more answers than the voter is entitled to</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c) Writing or mark by which the voter could be identified</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d) Unmarked or void for uncertainty</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> </table>		a) Want of Official Mark	0	b) Voting for more answers than the voter is entitled to	0	c) Writing or mark by which the voter could be identified	0	d) Unmarked or void for uncertainty	0	TOTAL	0	
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c) Writing or mark by which the voter could be identified	0											
d) Unmarked or void for uncertainty	0											
TOTAL	0											
<p>And I do hereby declare that the proposal to which the question relates has been lost</p>		<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Steven Lake</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Steven Lake Deputy Returning Officer</p>										
<p>Dated: Monday 16 May 2011</p>												
<p><small>Printed and Published by the Deputy Returning Officer, Mendip District Council, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT</small></p>												