

2 October 2023

Dear

## **ATISN 18918 – Request for Information**

### **Information requested**

Thank you for your request which I received on 4 September 2023. You asked for:

1. Details of the parameters and methodology that informed the statement “In the distance you can stop a car travelling at 20 mph, a 30 mph car would still be doing 24 mph”
2. Copies of the parameters and methodology that informed the statement “When someone is hit at 30 mph, they are around 5 times more likely to be killed than when hit at 20mph”
3. You state; “public health study estimates that the move to 20 mph speed limit will result in every year in Wales, in:  
40% fewer collisions  
6 to 10 lives saved  
1,200 to 2,000 people avoiding injury”

Please provide the full origin of this data and the context under which it was derived.

4. You state, “Most Journeys will be around a minute longer”

Please provide your rationale for arrival at this conclusion

5. You state; “When you see streetlights, assume that the speed limit is 20 mph”

Please provide your grounds for reinstatement.

6. You state; “Most people in Wales support a lower speed limit where they live”  
Please provide the question and data derived that substantiates your argument.

### **Our response**

#### **Q1. details of the parameters and methodology that informed the statement “In the distance you can stop a car travelling at 20 mph, a 30 mph car would still be doing 24 mph”**

We do not hold this information. The figures were taken from the UK Gov’s Dept of Transport Highway Code. Typical stopping distances are referenced in the Highway Code, rule 126 found here: [Stopping Distances - Highway Code Rule 126](#)

#### **Q.2 copies of the parameters and methodology that informed the statement**

**“When someone is hit at 30 mph, they are around 5 times more likely to be killed than when hit at 20mph”**

We do not hold this information. Our statement was informed by a review of evidence on the impact of speed and pedestrian fatality risk is detailed here: [Essential-Evidence-4-Scotland-No-63-Impact-speed-and-probability-of-pedestrian-fatality.pdf \(napier.ac.uk\)](#)

**Q.3 You state; “public health study estimates that the move to 20 mph speed limit will result in every year in Wales, in:  
40% fewer collisions  
6 to 10 lives saved  
1,200 to 2,000 people avoiding injury”**

**Please provide the full origin of this data and the context under which it was derived.**

These estimations are contained in a published public health research report (as referenced in the leaflet) - Jones, S and Brunt H 2017 [Twenty miles per hour speed limits: a sustainable solution to public health problems in Wales | Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health \(bmj.com\)](#). An additional estimation on casualty prevention was subsequently published and is available here: [TRI-Technical-Paper-101.The-value-of-Prevention.AD .pdf \(napier.ac.uk\)](#)

**Q.4 You state, “Most Journeys will be around a minute longer”**

**Please provide your rationale for arrival at this conclusion**

As referenced in the leaflet, the impact on average journey times is taken from the Explanatory Memorandum to the Restricted Roads (20mph Speed Limit) (Wales) Order 2022 available here: [Regulatory Impact Assessment – 20mph Speed Limits \(senedd.wales\)](#) and which includes a Regulatory Impact Assessment. The statement ‘most journeys will be around one minute longer’ is supported by the detailed technical assessment described within that document and which considers the population, car journeys and distances travelled in Wales. This shows that on average, each car journey will be around one minute longer because of the change in speed limits to 20mph. The types of trips made on the affected roads are typically short and involve stop-start travel conditions. This means that the actual impact of the change in speed limits is often marginal.

**Q.5 You state; “When you see streetlights, assume that the speed limit is 20 mph”**

**Please provide your grounds for reinstatement.**

Welsh Government does not hold information on reinstatement of criteria as none has been made. The legal change is to the default speed limit on restricted roads in Wales from 30mph to 30mph. Highway authorities can make exceptions.

The full phrase used in the leaflet is ‘When you see streetlights, assume that the speed limit is 20mph, unless you see signs that say otherwise.’ This phrase is being used to support our communities to understand where they may need to drive 20mph without using the descriptor of ‘restricted roads’ which may not be commonly recognised.

**Q.6 You state; “Most people in Wales support a lower speed limit where they live”**

**Please provide the question and data derived that substantiates your argument.**

As referenced in the leaflet, this information was in reference to an Omnibus sample from a survey in 2022. A summary of this survey – 20mph Public Attitudes Further Research – is published here: <https://www.gov.wales/20mph-public-attitudes-research>

The Omnibus sample was weighted to be fully representative of the adult population (16+) resident in Wales. The comment referred to ‘Most people in Wales (63%) support a lower speed limit where they live’ is reference to the responses to the question on page 8: QMH2 Would you support a speed limit of 20mph in the area in which you live?

**Next steps**

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government’s handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government’s Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,  
Welsh Government,  
Cathays Park,  
Cardiff,  
CF10 3NQ

or Email: [Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales](mailto:Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales)

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely