

COMMUNITY ROADWATCH(UK) C.I.C

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A COMMUNITY ROADWATCH (CRW) PROPOSAL

TO

INVEST IN EXPERIENCE - USE OF SIDS

INTRODUCTION

1. Ever since Speedwatch was introduced to the St Ives & Ramsey area in 2009 (and I am sure elsewhere) volunteers noticed that most drivers slowed for one or more of 3 reasons:
 - a. On **seeing the large temporary Black on Yellow tell-tale SPEEDWATCH signs** placed ahead of the mobile Speed Indicating Device (SID) and not wishing to receive a letter if caught.
 - b. On **seeing the Team in hi-vis** in the distance, and mistaking them for Police and not wishing to get caught by anyone, drivers slowed **before** their speed was displayed.
 - c. On **seeing their speed displayed** on the mobile Speed Indicating Device (SID).

2. However, once the Team left the location (and had removed all 3 of the elements that individually contributed to slowing drivers) residents complained to us that the cars merely reverted to speeding. As a consequence, I sought a solution to address each element whilst retaining the principles as laid down in the Guidelines that existed at the time.

SOLUTIONS ADOPTED

3. **Solution to 1a.** To address the removal of the effective but **temporary** mobile kerbside **SPEEDWATCH** signs when the team left, I proposed the use of permanent traditionally-representative (black on yellow) fixed signs under the limit signs and – in the spirit of providing adequate warning of a possible Speedwatch session ahead - signs were repeated if the Speedwatch location was more than 1km from the limit. The size of font used was extensively road-tested to ensure the single word **SPEEDWATCH** stood out and could be seen/understood at a glance (without the driver having to read the sign) and the colour of Black on Yellow (the international – and nature’s – warning colours) were used because by 2014, when the fixed signs were introduced, drivers had come to recognise a Speedwatch presence and slow just on seeing its mobile black on yellow kerbside signs. So, rather than re-invent the wheel with a different design or the use of other colours, we invested in that effective, simple one word method of communication. My design and proposal was accepted by the Constabulary and County Council. By the end of 2014, some 40 Black on Yellow **‘Community SPEED WATCH Operates Here’** signs had been purchased by Councils at £68 each and installed by the County Council in 18 villages with some sprawling parishes – like Hemingford Grey - needing up to 6 signs to ‘bookend’ our operating locations. Once fixed signage had been installed Speedwatch was allowed to operate without additional upstream signage because the kerbside SIDs had **SPEEDWATCH** (in large yellow lettering) to identify the operation/team. The use of fixed signs was more effective than the mobile ones because, as intended, they were **effective when the team was not there**.

4. **Solution to 1b.** The Guidelines at the time – written by Clinton Hale who was the original Force Speedwatch Lead - advised the Team that because it was using a SID (rather than a Speed Gun) **it should not be visible** as an active confrontational, Police-look-a-like deterrent as deterrence and education were the roles of the Speedwatch signs and the SID respectively. Thus Teams, albeit in hi-vis, operated as **'passive observers'** and set themselves back from the kerbside and out of harm's way in a position where they could see the SID and the road such that drivers would see them 'in attendance' but only after their speed had been displayed on the SID and the vehicle details noted and generally by then it was too late for any confrontation. In fact, the original Guidelines in 2009 (copy available on request) recommended that the Team retire to a vehicle and observe the SID safely from there. We never did that in this area but did hear of other teams adopting that 'as gospel' and they explained that they felt more secure and anonymous in doing so. CRW adopted this sound Police advice and mainly operates from parked cars.

PROPOSED INVESTMENT IN EFFECT 1C – DRIVERS SLOWING ON SEEING THEIR SPEED

BACKGROUND

5. Broadly speaking, Speeding falls into 2 categories :

- a. **Intentional** – because they are totally irresponsible, over-confident in their ability to drive or over-confident in the ability of their car to stop in time.
- b. **Inadvertent** – because they do not know the limit or do not realise the limit has changed, are unable to judge speed, or simply are just not paying attention.

6. In both cases a quick reminder may cause the driver to slow. This 'jolt' on entering many villages is currently vested in flashing Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS's) that if set too low (more often than not) causes everyone to set them off be they travelling at 31 mph or 51 mph. Also, because of their long hysteresis - where the VAS continues flashing for some time after the triggering vehicle has passed - everyone annoyingly seems to get tarred by the same brush. Thus, VASs set like that cannot be used to identify a particular vehicle and are not liked by many. So, these days, whilst a VAS might deter the odd driver who is inadvertently speeding, they do little to deter the majority and are largely ignored. However, certain VASs, if set accurately at 35 mph and the hysteresis reduced, could be used by Speedwatch to simply report over 35's (as once suggested by me in 2013). This would reduce the demand on the Constabulary for Speedwatch SIDs and also allow CRW to monitor speeds.

7. Observations, from over 2000 Speedwatch sessions, clearly demonstrated that drivers slowed when seeing their speed displayed - but more importantly they slowed when they knew others could also see their speed. So, in Nov 15, after all efforts by Speedwatch and the Police had failed to calm speeds, especially outbound speeds in Colne Rd, Colne, I pursued another solution that would use a very powerful weapon – peer pressure. Consequently, after researching and finding justification for SIDs in the report 'The Effectiveness of SIDs' (on line) I approached the Police for approval and via Cllr Steve Criswell, obtained County Council approval prior to requesting sponsorship from Mick George personally for a SID to be permanently fitted in Colne Rd to address OUTBOUND speeding. That SID was installed by Westcotec on 25 Oct 16 and immediately – from observations and data downloaded, **it immediately reduced both the numbers speeding and the level of speeding by 50% and continues to do so. RESULT.**

PROPOSALS/SOME IDEAS TO MULL OVER

8. **Proposal 1.** Where no Speedwatch SID is readily available and no funds available to purchase one, and Speedwatch is desperate to operate in a 30 zone, consider setting certain well-placed VAS's to trigger @ 35 mph with short hysteresis for use by Speedwatch and where resultant Speedwatch advisory letters would merely state the speed as being '**in excess of the ACPO limit**'.
9. **Proposal 2.** When VASs become 'beyond economical repair' - that many currently are approaching - the CCC/BBLP should replace them with mains-powered SIDs that Speedwatch can also be authorised to use so that money is not wasted by buying special Speedwatch SIDs. Westcotec generally will fit mains-powered SIDs for free.
10. **Proposal 3.** For the Constabulary in future to purchase for its SID pool Westcotec portable Mini-SIDs (30 day battery life) + Adaptor Bracket (a CRW idea). Thus, these SIDs can be both tripod and post mounted by Speedwatch for its session **and they will be able to leave it on a designated post to work its magic using peer pressure** between sessions (changing the battery every 30 days). Also, if Speedwatch fails or takes an extended Winter break or operates just once a month, this avoids wastage with kits languishing in Police pools or volunteers' garages.
11. **Proposal 4.** Recommend to parishes that intend to purchase their own SIDs at a cost of almost £3k, to purchase the flexible mini-SID option (described) from Westcotec. This will make such purchases so much more useful and worthwhile because the SID can be post mounted and produce traffic calming results even if no Speedwatch team subsequently exists. It just means someone will have to change the battery every 30 days or so. Not an onerous task.
12. **Proposal 5.** Include SIDs (mains-powered or min-SIDs) in County Council 1st Stage Traffic calming proposals possibly with advice to approach CRW to manage monitoring at least initially and especially if data modules (RS232 or Bluetooth) are included in the specification.
13. **Proposal 6.** **CPRSP, District and County** to support CRW in its bids for Grants – From the Big Lottery Fund, A14 Community Fund etc - to obtain SIDs for installation in the County at locations where CRW along with the Police has determined that the level of speeding is serious.

FINALLY

14. There is little doubt that SIDs when properly and intelligently placed, rather than VASs that are being largely ignored these days, are a very effective non-obstructive means of calming traffic using peer-pressure as its primary lever. Consequently, CRW commends their use in hotspots and by Speedwatch. We look forward to working with County, District and Parish Councils in providing expertise and advice in locating/operating SIDs and for possibly obtaining funding for them.

Regards,

David McCandless

12 Jan 17

BALL-PARK COSTINGS FOR WESTCOTEC SIDS (AS AT 1 JAN 17)

1. WESTCOTEC MAINS POWERED SID – BBLP LAMPOST MOUNTING
(As installed in Colne Rd, Colne)

SID (With a 'YOUR SPEED' sticker) installed Free	£2300
BBLP Survey/Isolator fitment	£ 212
Optional Bluetooth Data Module	£ 350

Total Cost	£2862 + VAT @ 20% = £3434

1a. or without a data capture Module £3014

Note: If these mains-wired/lamppost mounted SIDs need to be moved to another lamppost, that will incur a Westcotec charge of £250 and a BBLP charge of £212. All prices subject to confirmation at the time.

2. WESTCOTEC BATTERY POWERED MINI-SID –TRIPOD & BBLP LAMPOST MOUNTING DELUXE

SID + 2 3-wk batteries and Post Mounting Bracket	£2625
Optional Bluetooth Data Module	£ 350
Optional Tripod (M10 centre bolt mounting)	£ 165
Tripod Bracket for Kerbside use	£ 95
BBLP Survey of Lamppost (if required)	£ 30

Total	£3265 + VAT @ 20% = £3918

3. WESTCOTEC BATTERY POWERED MINI-SID –TRIPOD & BBLP LAMPOST MOUNTING BASIC

SID + 2 3-wk batteries and Post Mounting Bracket	£2625
Tripod Bracket for Kerbside use (use own tripod)	£ 95
BBLP Survey of Lamppost (If Required)	£ 30

Total	£2750 + VAT @ 20% = £3300

¹ e.g. <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/effectiveness-of-sids.pdf>

<http://www.roadsafetyevaluation.com/docs/speed-indicator-device-evlauation.pdf>
[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/3486481/Evaluation_of_the_Herefordshire Council Speed Indicator Device Programme.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/3486481/Evaluation_of_the_Herefordshire_Council_Speed_Indicator_Device_Programme.pdf)