

Results of Speed Monitoring in the High Street – November 2024

Aims: To get some up-to-date, 24 hours-a-day data on traffic speeds and flows in both directions on the High Street and to compare that with data from 2018 and 2021. It is hoped that analysis of this data can help inform future Speedwatch sessions and additional measures which may be needed to boost speed awareness.

Acknowledged Shortcomings: The wires were only down for 9 days. The data provided by OCC contains a lot of averages, which are rather useless on our High street given stationary or very slow moving traffic twice a day.

However, individual speeds are also provided, so I have focused on analysing those as they are much more meaningful.

Q: Have the 20mph limit and Speedwatch sessions had any effect?

A: Yes! In our sample week in November 2024 **61%** of northbound drivers (9020 of them) were doing between 15& 25mph as were **65%** of southbound drivers (9694).

Compare that with 2018 when just **49%** of northbound drivers and **56%** of southbound drivers were doing between 15&25mph.

Likewise **23%** of northbound drivers and **20%** of southbound drivers were in the next speed bracket (25-35mph) in 2024 against **39%** and **41%** in 2021 and **35%** and **31%** in 2018.

In addition we have had confirmation from Thames Valley Police that over 1,000 letters have been sent out to people caught doing 30mph and over since the Speedwatch group started in April 2023.

Q: Has the percentage of drivers doing a higher speed (40-50mph) changed between 2018 and 2024?

A: No. In percentage terms they remain the same: 0.2% northbound and 0.1% southbound. However, because the overall traffic level was higher in 2024 than 2018 the numbers of vehicles doing 40-50mph in 2024 were greater: 41 northbound and 15 southbound.

Q: What was the highest recorded speed in the sample week in Nov 2024?

A: 65-70mph! 2 cars, driving northbound between 10am & 11am. (There is always the possibility that these might have been emergency services).

Q: What time of day is the worst for speeding?

A: In terms of frequency it was 8am – 9am (5 cars, doing between 55 & 60mph). But there were speeders recorded throughout the day (lunchtime and between 3pm and 4pm and the occasional early morning).

Q: Which direction is worst for speeding?

A: Northbound. Interestingly, in our sample November week there were **no** speeds recorded above 50mph going southbound.

Volume of Traffic:

Q: Is there less traffic in the High Street in 2024 compared with 2018 and 2021?

A: Yes and no, and not what one might assume: There appears to be a higher number of vehicles in 2024 than in 2018.

The 2-way, 7 day total in 2024 was **29,357** vs 27,880 in 2018. However when you compare 2024 with 2021, it is 2021 which sees the much higher volume of traffic with **36,165** over a 7 day period (2 way).

Likewise there appears to be no fixed pattern for the volume of traffic in November 2024 with daily totals ranging from 2533 to 5372.

Conclusion:

1.The 20mph speed limit has been a good thing and Speedwatch sessions have been worthwhile as speeds are demonstrably lower in 2024 than they were in either 2021 or 2018.

2.Speedwatchers cannot be out early or late for several months of the year due to lack of light. They will therefore never be able to report excessive speeds which take place at these times of day. However, there are still persistent offenders who will speed during the day.

3.Given the sheer volume of traffic going up and down the High Street with some alarmingly high speeds as well as cyclists, mobility scooter users and

pedestrians, there is a strong case to be made for additional measures which are now common in surrounding villages such as speed indicator devices. The Parish Council and members of the Speedwatch group are discussing these possibilities with OCC.

Hardwick Road: We won't forget about Hardwick Road as we know that speeding is a problem there too. Because of the much higher volume of traffic in the High Street it probably makes sense to sort this out first, but there is nothing to stop us having a speed survey done in Hardwick Road later this year.

Councillor Frances Parkes, February 2025