Welcome

Back in February I made a number of pledges regarding Community SpeedWatch and this newsletter is an important method of updating the schemes.

I think it is worth reminding ourselves why we needed to make the changes that we are working through. It will not have escaped your notice that due to the financial changes on the service we are a smaller organisation than we were 5 years ago. It is certain that we will be smaller again in 5 years’ time meaning we have to look at things differently and yes change our approach.

Change can be bumpy at times, but as I said in February and will repeat here again, we need to work together to improve the system for all.

If you hear something that you are not sure of please drop Damien Devanny a line and he will provide you with a straight answer. We have been using different schemes to test some of the new approaches and feel this is sensible to ensure things work practically before releasing to all schemes.

Thank you again for all your hard work.

Supt Richard Corrigan
Road Safety Lead

Pledges – are we on track?

Adopt a problem solving approach in tackling issues
It was recognised that we need to think differently about problem solving and how we approach concerns regarding speeding. We will fully support and share best practice across the force to ensure we make a difference. Please do keep us updated and let us know of good examples of where things work well.

Provide clear process when evidence states enforcement is required
Enforcement support is available and information regarding this process is contained below. Speed Awareness Week confirmed the huge value in CSW and the Speed Enforcement Unit working closer together and deploying the enforcement support where the evidence states it is most needed.

Develop a standard training and risk assessment process that fulfils insurance requirements and provides timely support to the schemes
The risk assessment process has now been circulated to all network leads and I reiterate my commitment to have the Speed Enforcement Unit approve these new sites within 28 days.

The training package for new volunteers is nearly ready to go live and we will be testing this in North Somerset during June.

I have heard a couple of concerns about the knowledge check which forms part of the training. It is worth remembering one of my “red lines” and why we are doing this. It is to prove competence to ensure the insurance company underwrite the work you are doing. Nobody would wish to operate uninsured, so this process will protect and cover all volunteers. I am not expecting many to trip up at this stage.
Provide central support for LPT’s to ensure local ownership to a consistent standard

Damien is now dedicated to the delivery of the Road Safety Priority within the Police and Crime Plan which includes fully supporting CSW. It will help to provide consistent advice and guidance to Local Policing Teams as well as to our volunteers. This is a valuable investment to support the work that CSW performs and has not been in place before.

Provide a visible, appropriately sized consistent force wide sign

The new force brand for CSW was launched during the Speed Awareness Week in April. A single style “Kill Your Speed” sign incorporating the CSW brand was presented and agreed on at the February meeting. This is being progressed by Mendip CSW Network.

Develop one system across the force, building an evidence base & links to PNC & SEU data

This is the big one for many schemes and I remind you again that I knew the development of this would not be quick or easy.

I have secured the services of a specialist IT team to really bottom out what “SWAN” can and cannot do. It has been really frustrating for us as the person who built it in Devon and Cornwall has not been available for some time. We need to get the relevant IT people together to iron out some of the blockers to this administration system being available to our schemes, where required.

I do understand there is a lot of frustration and I can only assure you that we are not delaying things for the sake of it and I certainly do not want to make any promises that I cannot deliver on.

Further updates will follow on this as we have raised the priority of this piece of work.

“Along the roadside”

Mendip CSW’s Ashley Ward has provided some funny stories from motorists stopped by either a Beat Manager or an RPU officer whilst supporting CSW.

Here is a taster…………

A well-dressed man driving a Porsche stopped, parked and approached a group of RPU officers carrying out checks at a local school site.

“I wish to say that all of this is getting really unfair” he said.

“I had one of those warning letters yesterday, and today got a NIP for speeding along here and this morning at 7 am was no doubt caught again along here by a man in a police van. Can you offer a solution?” He said to the RPU officer.

“I can sir”, said the officer “slow down!!!!!!”

What has been happening?

Launch of the PCC Plan – Speeding as the 5th Priority

In March Road Safety became an additional priority for Police and Crime Commissioner Sue Mountstevens as part of a refreshed Police and Crime Plan for Avon and Somerset.

Speaking about her decision, Sue said:

“Road safety is something which is regularly raised with me when I go out and meet with people and in the mail I receive. It’s an issue which means different things to different people; for some it is drivers speeding near their homes and schools, for others it is people using mobile phones and sometimes it can be the potential for conflict between different road users. What is clear to me is that people want to feel safe on and near our roads and I believe it’s right that we should be clearly saying that this is a priority for us.”
Speed Awareness Week

In line with a Europe wide speed week Community SpeedWatch (CSW) groups were out in force across Avon and Somerset to help raise awareness of speeding.

The week of action was launched in Farmborough on Monday 13th April where the Speed Enforcement Unit (SEU) joined forces with the local CSW Scheme. This partnership was mirrored throughout the week as SEU vans and bikes were deployed to support a large number of key locations identified by the CSW networks.

Beat Managers and officers recently trained in using speed enforcement devices were out working alongside CSW volunteers.

Awareness and engagement events across the week also included:

- “Crashed Car” Roadshows at supermarkets in Mendip
- Supermarket stands held in Bristol to promote CSW
- Launch of the SEU partnership and new CSW branding

20 CSW teams from the South Somerset CSW Network monitored almost 22,000 vehicles during a successful SAFE Week which ran from the 7th to 12th April.

*If you have not received the Speed Awareness Week feedback sheet then please contact the LPD and we can send you a copy.*

What’s new?

Site Risk Assessments

We recently released the new process for carrying out CSW site risk assessments. This is one of a number of areas where we have joined forces with the Speed Enforcement Unit to increase the support offered to Community SpeedWatch.

All CSW network leads were sent a copy of the new guidance and the risk assessment form for local circulation. If you had not received this please contact them for a copy.
Support for persistent and high end speed

Persistent and high end speed probably provides the most concern to CSW schemes and in particular how we as a police force will follow them up especially, as highlighted above, the pressures on local neighbourhood teams is ever growing as our organisation changes.

We know some areas, such as Somerset West, have a volunteer resource to send out an increased educational warning letter to these offenders. We also have a number of trainers around the force who can train Police Officers in the use of speed enforcement equipment to support local targeting.

Where we can, a personal visit by an officer may still be considered the best way to educate an individual driver on his actions.

But where we have an issue with volume or there is real pressure on local police resources to carry out follow ups then we can task the Speed Enforcement Unit / Tri Force.

To do this evidence of the issue is to be submitted to the Local Policing Directorate who can work with you to find the most suitable approach.

Speed Guns

We have a couple of Ultralyte Speed Guns held centrally that are available for trained Police Officers to use in supporting the work of CSW. Please contact Damien Devanny for further details.

Date of next meeting

We agreed that a follow up Networks Lead meeting would be held 6 months from February to review the pledges and look at how we can make further progress with Community SpeedWatch.

The next meeting will be the week commencing 24th August – exact date will be confirmed shortly.

Contacts page:

We welcome your feedback and comment on all aspects of CSW:

Internal email: Community SpeedWatch (LPD)
External email: communityspeedwatch@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Avon and Somerset Constabulary website page
www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/csw