

# A Solution to road safety, noise and speed issues on A32/A272

Report & Plan by Communities Against Noise and Speed (C.A.N.S.)

11th October 2018

## Executive Summary

We are Communities Against Noise and Speed (CANS). A campaign organisation representing the communities living along the A32 and the A272 in Hampshire. Our objective is to stop the noise produced by the illegal modification and racing of motorbikes on the roads of the Meon Valley and the A272 in Mid and East Hampshire.

We recognise that noise annoyance and pollution is a complex problem to enforce. However there appears little motivation on the part of the authorities to consistently and effectively prosecute those involved in the illegal activity of racing on the public highway that gives rise to that noise.

It is well recognised that there is a clear correlation between those who race modified motor bikes and the incidence of accidents causing death and serious injury. This is therefore not only a problem of the injurious effects of noise but one of road safety. We need to make these roads less attractive to those who set out to break the law by racing on the public highway.

This plan is designed to manage both issues. Prevention is better than cure. We therefore propose that Hampshire County Council and the Road Policing Unit take step to implement these measures: To install average speed cameras, to set up vehicle check points with Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency, and to identify and prosecute the offending bikers. Thereby fulfilling their public duty to improve road safety, deal with antisocial behaviour, and reduce the incidence of death and serious injury on the roads.

## Our Proposals and plan

### The Plan

**1. Install average speed cameras in the following sites:** Also see map at Appendix A

<b>A32 North of West Meon Hut (WMH) (Total distance covered 4.9 miles)</b>			
Camera Site	Location	Comms/signal	Power
1	at the start of the national speed limit of 60 mph south of East Tisted	4G	Nearby residential properties
2 (provisional)	south side of the Hedge Corner cross roads	3G/4G	Power supply requires further survey
3	200m North of the Meon Hut	4G	Adjacent to road
<b>A32 South of Meon Hut. (Total distance covered 4 miles)</b>			
Due the number of villages and the varied speed limits in use there are only two sites suitable, those being South of Droxford and North of Wickham. This has two speed limits in its length of 4 miles, 50mph and for a short stretch of road 60mph. It would be necessary to implement the lower of these throughout that distance.			
4	South of Droxford	3G/4G	Residential properties close by

5	North of Wickham at the transition from 40mph to 50mph	4G	Street lighting approx 100m
<b>A272 East of West Meon Hut (total distance covered 3.6 miles)</b>			
Here again there is inconsistent speed limit signage. At Bordean travelling West the road transitions from 40mph to 50mph. Approximately 1 mile short of the Meon Hut it changes to 60mph, only to return to 50 mph at the cross roads. In order to install ASC's, there would need to be a consistent limit of 50mph along the whole distance.			
6	West of Bordean at 50mph zone	3G	nearby
7	East of WMH.	4G	onsite
<b>A272 West of WMH. (total distance 4.6 miles)</b>			
8	west of Cheriton Cross Roads.	3G	Nearby
9	East of A272/A31 junction Winchester	4G	Street lighting nearby

## 2. Targeted vehicle (motorcycle) checks in conjunction with Road Policing Unit and the DVSA

These checks to be carried out intermittently throughout the summer at peak times of activity. i.e. Wednesday evenings and Sundays in randomly selected but suitable locations along the A272 and the A32.

(Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency - "They carry out roadside checks on drivers and vehicles" DVSA is an executive agency, sponsored by the Department for Transport.)

## 3. Targeted identification and prosecution of frequent offenders by the Road Policing Unit during peak times

3. The Hampshire RPU to conduct targeted policing, on random evenings and weekends at peak motorbike times, of the A272 and A32 using video-capture in unmarked vehicles and on motorbikes to identify road traffic offences and prosecute those involved.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### Introduction

Key Words: A32, A272, Sports Bikes, Modified Exhausts, Noise, Speed, Rural, Communities, health, businesses, costs, public purse, funding, Road Casualty Statistics, enforcement, policing, road calming measures, average speed cameras

On the remote and normally peaceful A roads of our National Parks and other rural areas there is increasing recreational use of high-performance sports bikes (HPSB) capable of speeds of over 180 mph, some with illegal number plates and modified exhausts not designed for the public highway. This activity causes excessive noise, and a tendency for the biker to ignore road signs, speed limits and double white lines leading to reckless and dangerous riding. This report describes the background to the problem specific to the A272/A32 in Hampshire. It is causing problems for the 20,000 or so residents (2011 Census) <sup>i</sup> that make up the rural communities living and working alongside these roads. We highlight the impact it is having on the health, lives and businesses of the rural population and the effect it could have on the recreational use of the South Downs National

Park (SDNP). We also identify the higher than average deaths and local road casualty figures from accidents involving motor-bikers. We assess the high cost of this to the public purse. We ask who is responsible and accountable for the lack of action so far. We discuss funding. Finally, we identify measures that can be implemented to make the A32/A272 less attractive to speeding bikers and motorists, including better targeted and more responsive policing, road calming measures within the villages, and more consistent speed limits on the longer stretches of A Road enabling the installation of ANPR & average speed cameras.

## **Background**

The residents of West Meon and the villages of the A32 South of the Meon Hut have for the past 18 years been campaigning to reduce the noise caused by HPSB and their riders using the A32 and the surrounding roads (A272) for recreational racing on what are single carriageway public roads. This can occur on any day of the week but particularly on a Wednesday evening, and on fine weather days at weekends, often starting at 6 a.m. when the road is relatively empty through to dusk, in summer 15 hours later. That's three out of seven days of every week for much of the year.

Since 2003 there have been increasing sales and use of these powerful HPSB. The communities along the affected roads have sought support from their local MP, Mr George Hollingbery MP, Hampshire County Councillors and since its inception, the incumbent of the office of Police and Crimes Commissioner (P&CC) for Hampshire to reduce the impact of this activity on this otherwise peaceful rural area of the SDNP.

Much progress was made with the support of the first appointed P&CC but with an election and change of Commissioner the plans to trial average speed cameras was shelved due to a shift of policing priorities.

Frustrated by lack of progress a public meeting was called in November 2017 at West Meon by the then Chair of West Meon Parish Council. 164 residents attended and from volunteers formed a campaign committee. The aim being to widen the campaign, collect evidence, impact statements, seek support of all local parish councils and encourage the authorities to act.

## **Campaign Progress**

- We have identified that road casualty statistics for the area of concern, particularly accidents involving motorbikes, are greater than in the whole of Hampshire. This should therefore be a road safety priority.
- Our research has shown there is a national problem with the use of these HPSB particularly along quieter A roads in rural and national parks of the country.
- Dashcam evidence is being collected of dangerous and reckless riding.
- Research into monitoring levels of noise using handheld devices with locals collecting evidence.
- We have met and obtained support from 10 of the local parish councils.
- We have met the Police & Crimes Commissioner for Hampshire and the Police Inspector for the Road Policing Unit.
- Our Facebook page in three months has a membership of over 140 and we have 120 members who correspond by e-mail.
- We have conducted an impact survey of nearly 300 residents.

- We are writing a constitution and are exploring how to raise funds to support the campaign.
- The local MPs for East Hampshire and Meon Valley are both supportive of our aims.
- We now propose a plan to control the noise and recreational racing along the A32/A272 in the SDNP.

## **The Roads**

The A32 transects the eastern part of the SDNP. It is single carriageway throughout its 20 miles in the park. Although never designed as such it has become a major transport route, between Fareham and the A27 in the South and Alton on the A31 to the North. The A272 runs through the middle of the SDNP in an E-W direction through East Sussex, West Sussex and East Hampshire to Winchester. Quartix Vehicle Tracking <sup>ii</sup> has named this as the fifth most dangerous road in the country. and similarly, Motorcycle News<sup>iii</sup> in April 2018 reported research by Motorcycle finance company Moneybarn indicating that for motorcyclists the A32 was the sixth most dangerous road in the UK. These roads are heavily used despite being narrow with many hazards including bends, wooded margins, poor sight lines, and many smaller roads adjoining, both out in the country, but particularly in the villages through which these main roads form the main thoroughfare and centre of the community. The danger is most pronounced in the national speed limit (60mph) and 50 mph sections of road outside the villages as many bikers consider these sections "unrestricted" or "fair game" for exceeding the limit. Consultation with bikers, even those who would consider themselves responsible, along with dashcam evidence confirm this assertion.

## **The location**

One of the main attractions to the area for the bikers is Loomies Moto-Cafe at the Meon Hut crossroads on the A32/A272. The proprietor has been involved in earlier multiagency meeting and appeared sympathetic and understanding. However, despite the installation of a sign at the entrance high-lighting to bikers the noise problem and his engagement with them here is no evidence that these efforts to educate or curb the activities of his clients are having an effect. The Police RPU access the site from time to time to provide information on safer biking.

When the Cafe is shut the roads remain relatively quiet. It opens as early as 8.00 am on Sunday mornings, further encouraging the early morning racers to arrive for breakfast having disturbed the sleep and peace of the villages and villagers along their route. The number of motorbike movements at busy commuter times on a Wednesday and through the day on Saturdays and Sundays number many of hundreds and present a significant danger to other users of the A32/A272 and at this busy and major road junction.

## **Motorcycle Noise**

HPSB have engines that are designed and tuned for racing rather than daily use. They produce a lot of power, but their power bands are narrower and located well up the rpm scale. As these engines turn over at a much higher rpm than cruisers or touring bikes, the sound they make is more of a scream than a roar.

80db is the current maximum permitted noise level for a motorcycle. This from the DfT:

*"Motorcycle noise can be especially intrusive. Existing maximum noise limits for motorcycles are significantly higher than for cars, and even from June 1999, when a more stringent 80 dB(A) noise limit will be applied to new motor cycles over 175cc, limits will still be 6 dB(A) higher. These relatively high limits reflect the limited scope on motorcycles for cladding and other noise suppression techniques. Furthermore, the fitting by some motorcyclists of inappropriate or altered silencers, mainly on older machines, can exacerbate the problem of motorcycle noise. The UK now has one of most stringent series of regulations in force to control both construction standards for, and the sale of, replacement silencers for motorcycles."* <sup>iv</sup>

Despite these "most stringent series of regulations" we continue to be bombarded by noise from these machines. Our roadside measurement show levels can reach well over 100dB on a meter.

All Motorbike exhausts should be E marked that confirms they are road legal. However, there are many pipes sold aftermarket, that are E marked, and legal, until the rider removes the baffles, which renders the pipes illegal. Not all pipes have removable baffles, but many do.

Any after -market exhaust that is non-compliant with UK law, must have "not for road use" engraved on the inner side. From our research and observation motorbikes with these exhausts are being used along the A32 and A272.

### **Other Road Users**

There is increasing development around the urban conurbations of the South Coast. There is a plan to make Junction 10 of the M27 with the A32 bi-directional. This will lead to increased flow of commuter and commercial traffic along this already busy road and increasing the risk of accidents.

As a popular tourist route the A272 winds through the South Downs and with the formation of the NP there is increased use at weekends and public holidays.

The sheer volume of this traffic as well as cyclists, walkers and horse riders using these busy roads or crossing them on the many paths that crisscross the region and, along with slow moving large agricultural machinery, add to the high risk from the unregulated use of HPSB on these rural roads both to the bikers and the general public and other road users.

### **Road Safety**

Much emphasis has been placed on educating Bikers on road safety and motorbike craft. BikeSafe is a police led motorcycle project that is run by most forces throughout the UK. They run workshops and observed rides helping to identify a rider's strengths and weaknesses. They also recommend post test training from the Institute of Advanced motorists (I.A.M.), and the Royal Society of Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). However, the impression given from website is one of encouragement of riders to ride to the limits of their ability, rather than well within, maximising the experience of speed and cornering safely rather than riding defensively.

Brake is a road safety charity that encourages among other things "motorcyclist to slow down and ride defensively".

Many Constabularies including Hampshire encourage the community to report antisocial and dangerous driving. Isolated crackdowns at specific hotspots on particular days are

expensive and can only be sustained for short periods of time due to lack of resources. These measures while important are ineffective and waste resources.

### **The Cost of Accidents**

A total of 3,056 incidents were recorded on roads maintained by Hampshire County Council in 2016.

This included 34 fatalities, resulting in an average of £1.8m for each death on the county's roads.

Another 607 accidents were categorised as 'serious' with 2,415 labelled 'slight'. This cost an average of £206,912 and £15,951 per incident respectively.

In total, Hampshire's economy lost £226.7m. This does not include incidents on motorways and major A-roads, which are operated by Highways England.<sup>v</sup>

Our own Statistics gathered from CrashMap.co.uk show that in the area of concern 44% of accidents involving KS casualties involved a motorbike. For the whole of Hampshire according to National produced statistics in 2016 the figure was 28%.

While bikers make up just one per cent of total road traffic, they account for almost a fifth (19 per cent) of all fatal and serious crash victims.

### **Noise and Impact on Health**

Noise can seriously impact the health of the exposed population. This may be directly, living close to loud noise that damages hearing, or indirectly where sustained and repeated noise which disturbs sleep, or the ability to relax or enjoy a peaceful environment. The consequences include raised blood pressure and its related damage to internal organs, as well as the mental health issues that come from stress and frustration both at the disturbance but also the inability to ameliorate the problem.

Most would consider their home to be a place of peace and calm where they can relax on returning from work. Not so in the Meon Valley along the A32 and the A272. It is this infringement of our rights to a refuge in our own homes and gardens that places most stress and harm to health.

**The results in August 2018 of a survey of the local population is at Appendix B. This clearly shows the impact on the local population's lives.** Of those 76% felt that motorbikes were the main cause of noise in our locality and 69% considered the speed of these bikes to be a major factor.

The report "Burden of disease from environmental noise" was prepared by the World Health Organisation in 2011. It talks about the DALYs - disability-adjusted life-years lost to illness caused through traffic noise. It includes the statement:

it is estimated that DALYs lost from environmental noise are 61 000 years for ischaemic heart disease, 45 000 years for cognitive impairment of children, 903 000 years for sleep disturbance, 22 000 years for tinnitus and 654 000 years for annoyance, in the European Union Member States and other western European countries. These results indicate that at least one million healthy life years are lost. Noise kills and blights lives in Europe<sup>vi</sup>.

It must be understood that the campaign against exhaust tampering is not against a petty annoyance but rather we are fighting a known killer - noise.

Sleep disturbance and annoyance, mostly related to road traffic, comprise the main burden of environmental noise.

## Local Business

With rural and farm diversification into tourism many visitors to the area choose to spend weekends camping in sites on farms in and around the Meon Valley and the A272. The Meon Springs Fishery and the local Livery and riding establishments attract those who seek relaxation pursuing their rural pastimes. The blight of noise from motorbikes often at 6am on a Sunday is having a negative effect on these local businesses and preventing visitors from enjoying the peace and tranquillity of the SDNP.

## Legislation

There is ample legislation to cover many of the offences witnessed on our roads.<sup>vii</sup>

- Motor Racing on the highway
- Exceeding statutory speed limits on public road.
- Failing to comply with a double white line.
- Modification of bike leading to lack of insurance.
- Driving without due care and attention.
- Driving without reasonable consideration for other road users.
- Dangerous/Reckless driving.
- Manslaughter or culpable homicide while driving a vehicle.
- Causing death by dangerous driving.
- Antisocial Behaviour Orders.
- Motor Cycle Noise Act 1987
- The Road and Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986.
- The Motor Cycles Etc. (E.C. Type Approval) Regulations 1999.

## Enforcement

The Police have few options due to technological difficulties or lack of funding.

Fixed Camera's are of little deterrent as once known about can be circumvented by briefly slowing down, similarly mobile camera vans as they are only present for short times and can also be avoided once known about by the perpetrators.

Police motorbikes and those officers operating in unmarked police cars are expensive resources and lack the capacity to identify perpetrators. A pursuit on busy rural A roads is both dangerous and difficult. The tendency for some bikers to "hide" or make difficult to read their number plates makes the in-car camera technology of limited use in gathering evidence. Weak legislation for motorbikes allows only a fine rather than a licence endorsement and points for an illegal noisy exhaust or illegible number plate. It is evident from the scale of the abuse of the law and the lack of progress so far in enforcing it, that **more consistent and effective measures of prevention that treat motorcyclists and car drivers in a consistent and equitable manner must be sought both locally and nationally.**

## Responsibility

The responsibility for effective enforcement of the law, prevention of road accidents involving KSI casualties, and improved road safety falls to the County Councils, Highways Authorities and the Police. For too long the problem has been bounced from one to the other. The Government made safer roads a manifesto pledge in 2016 and the DfT commissioned a study in 2017 which discussed the Safe System approach and makes recommendations. The final report Road Safety Management Capacity Review (RSMCR) was published on 17th May 2018.<sup>viii</sup> This stresses the need for better control of average speeds and for more effective enforcement. It builds upon positive experiences in Netherlands and Sweden.

While Hampshire Constabulary now have a website where the public can upload dash-cam evidence and report breaches of the law, dangerous or reckless driving there is a natural reluctance for the population to do so. This may be due to the possible threat of retribution from the perpetrators. **This means of reporting should not be a substitute for robust policing and permanent enforcement measures.**

In the area of concern the roads are the responsibility of Hampshire County Council. Over the 10 years since this problem first became evident there is a perceived singular lack of leadership or will to resolve the problem. This may in part be due to the expense and lack of the technology to install permanent average speed enforcement cameras. As we will show this is no longer the case and we would exhort those who hold the budgets and the responsibility to attend to this matter with the greatest of urgency.

## Other Regions

This not just a local issue so we have sought examples of where other county councils have taken the initiative of installing average speed camera's and warning signs on rural accident black spot roads. They include, North Yorkshire, A9 in Scotland, The Peak District and the Cairngorms.

## Average speed camera

### The Cameras

Technology is advancing rapidly. The latest SPECS3 VECTOR camera provides flexibility in application allowing it to be used on single carriageway roads and bi-directional. In our inquiries to various suppliers and installers of this camera we have established that this is both the newest and most widely used average speed camera system in the world (with more than 80 permanent installation in the UK alone since receiving UK Home Office Type Approval in 2014).

### The Power

Our survey of potential sites, 9 in number (see Appendix C), reveal that power is reasonably close at hand and in many of the sites adjacent to the road already.

## G3/G4 signal

Recent upgrades to mobile phone masts within the Meon Valley and surrounding countryside has improved the signal to key potential sites of installation. Our own survey reveals that this should not prevent the use of this technology. All suggested possible locations have a minimum of 3G and most have 4G.

## Cost of installation

As the cost of cameras comes down the feasibility of installation increases, it is the cost of supplying the power line to the device that is likely to incur the greatest cost.

## Suppliers

There appear to be three major suppliers of average speed technology used on the roads in the UK. JENOPTIK, Redspeed International, Siemens and Pipstechnology.

## Advantages:

- Better driver behaviour would reduce pollution and vehicle emissions;
- A smoother traffic flow would reduce noise and contribute to a calmer and safer environment;
- Controlling vehicle speeds should make using the footways and crossing the road safer;
- Access to and from adjacent buildings and properties would be eased and made safer;
- Turning into and out of side roads would be safer;
- Less conflict may improve traffic flow and reduce congestion, especially at times - the summer period;
- less damage to footways, kerbs and roadside furniture which might reduce maintenance costs
- average speed system would be better than physical traffic calming measures where these measures may be unpopular with residents, due to the additional vehicle wear, the noise and exhaust emissions caused by vehicles slowing and speeding up and slowing down emergency vehicles. It would also be unrealistic to consider these for an "A" road.

## Conclusion

The economic benefits of reducing speed, thereby reducing noise and improving road safety and cutting the number of KSI on these rural A roads are obvious. We are told a lack of resources leads to an inability to routinely enforce the law or install measures to discourage speeding. However, the cost of installation of speed cameras would be more than offset by the savings achieved in reduced police time, reduced use of all the blue light services, admissions to hospital and, long term disability payments due to life changing injuries.

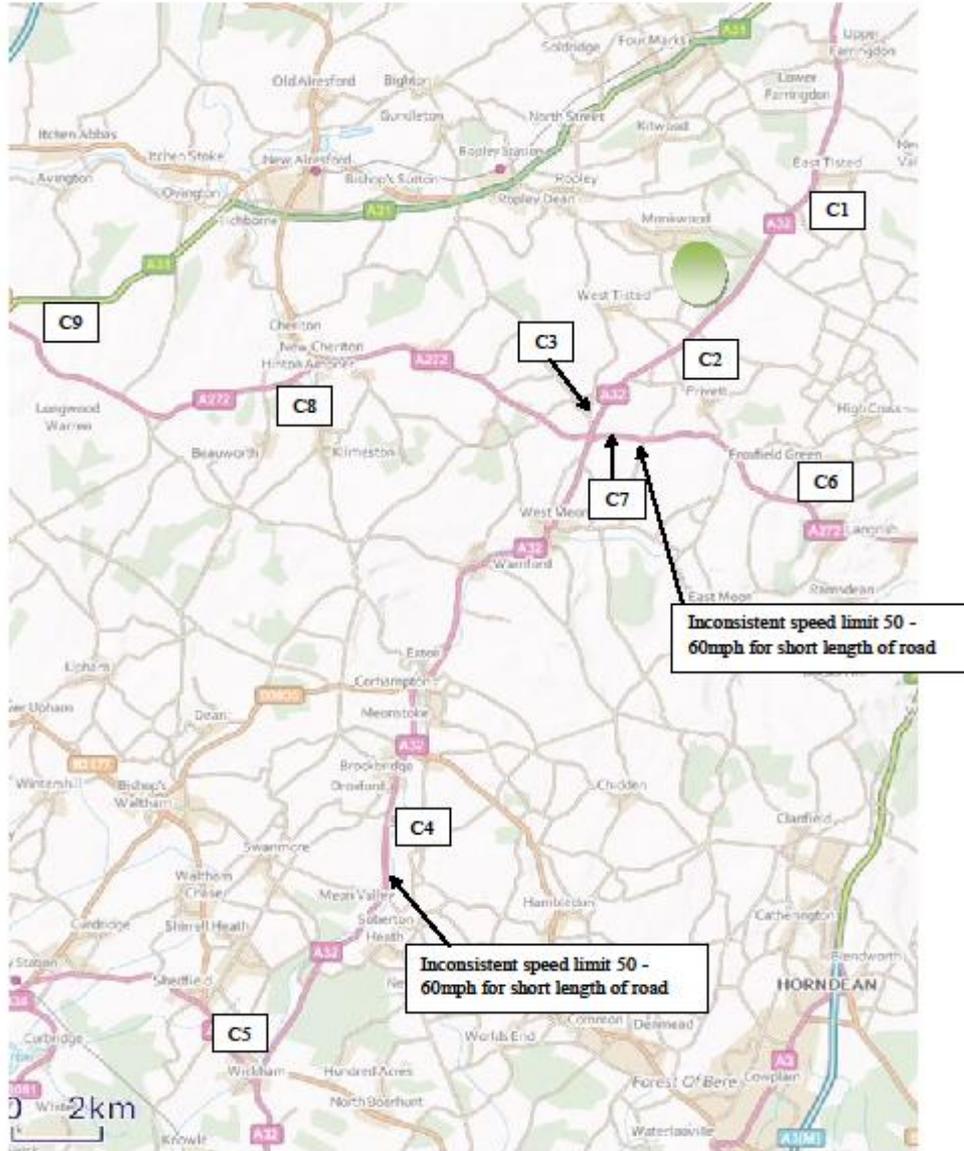
The recreational use of our main roads for racing and using illegally modified bikes is against the law. The law must be enforced.

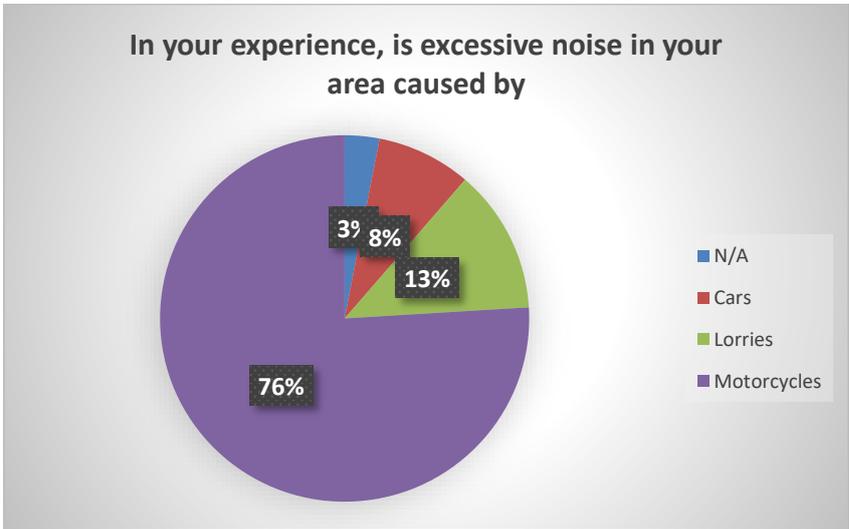
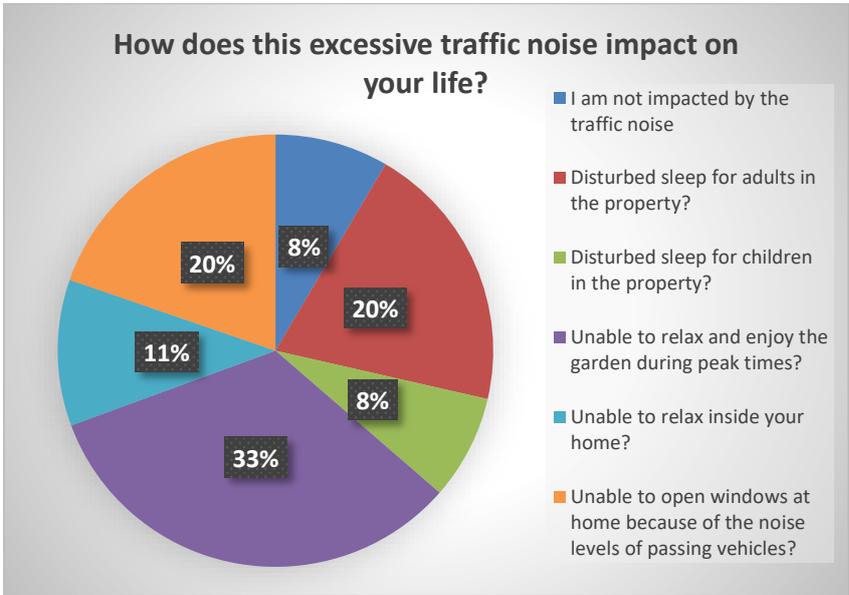
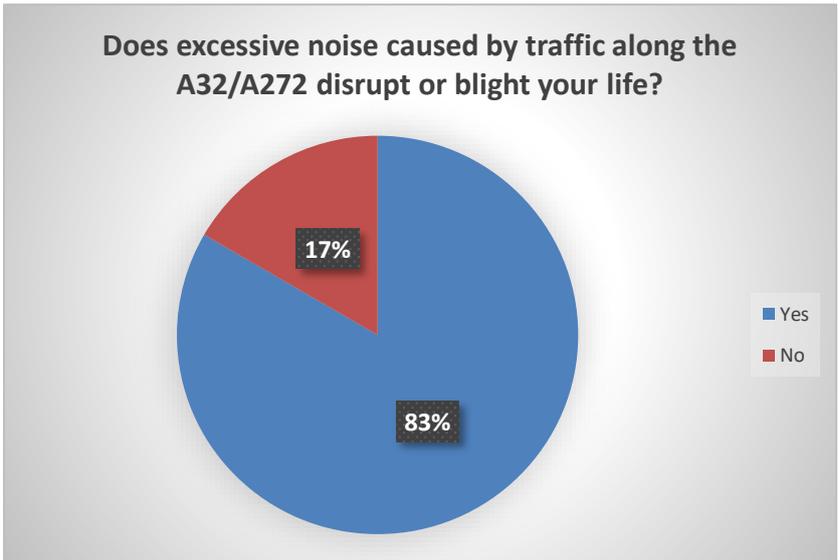
Traffic calming measures introduced thus far have had little effect. It is evident from the RSMCR there is a national need for authorities to develop joined up, transparent plans to deal with noise, road speed and develop their strategy in line with the Safe system approach. The study further recommends Government should direct that greater resources be allocated both to enforcement and road safety measures to reduce speed and educate the road users.

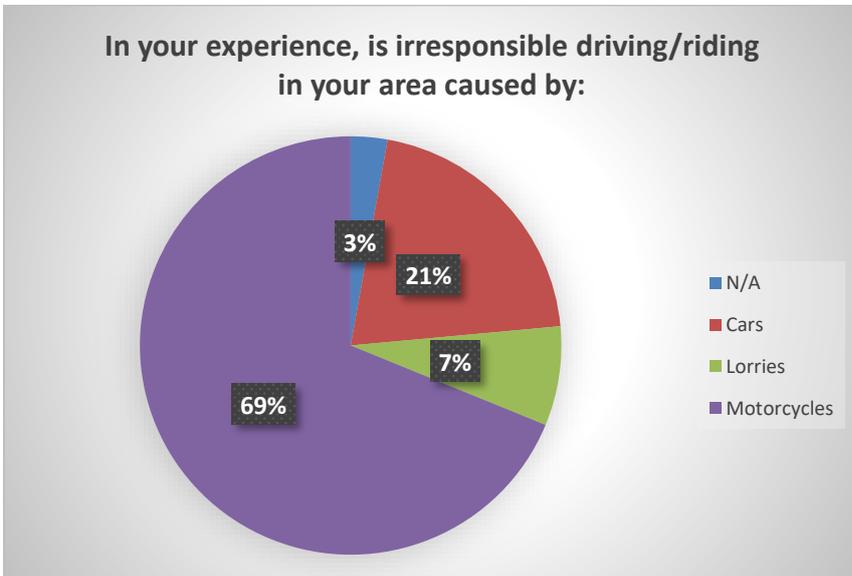
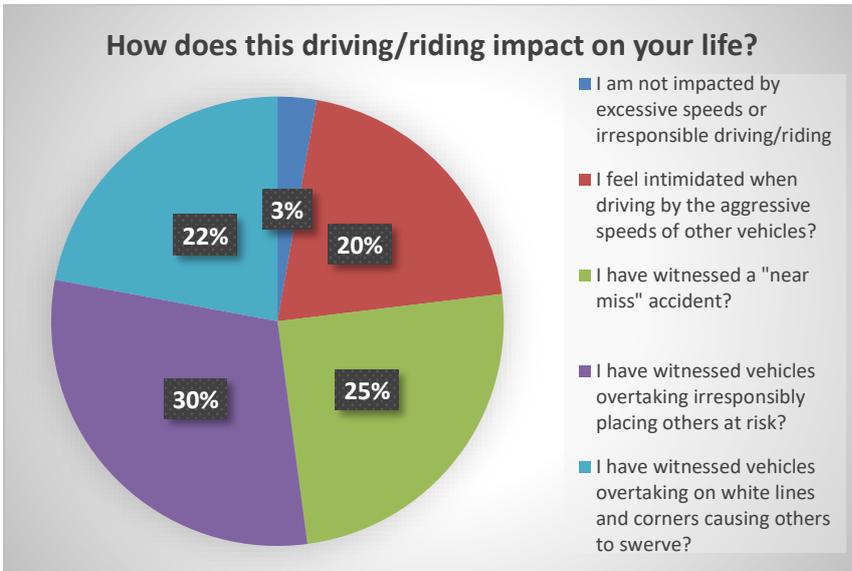
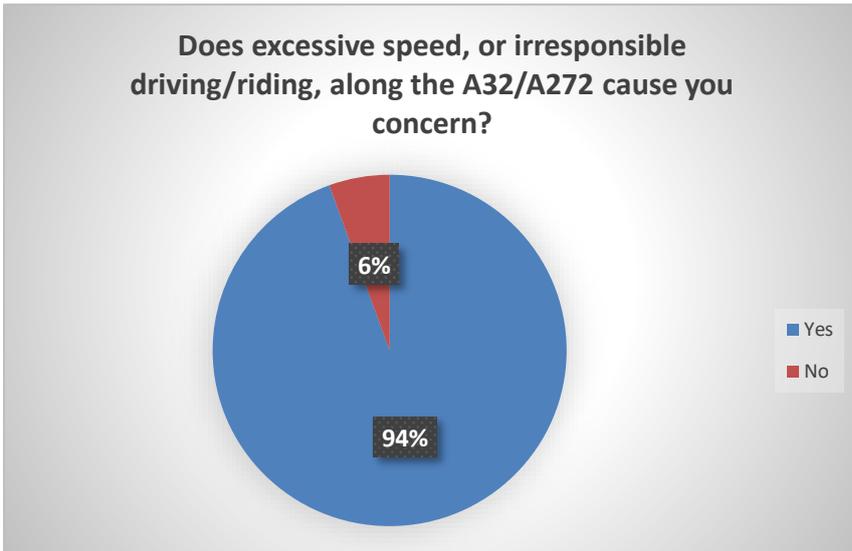
We ask for the following:

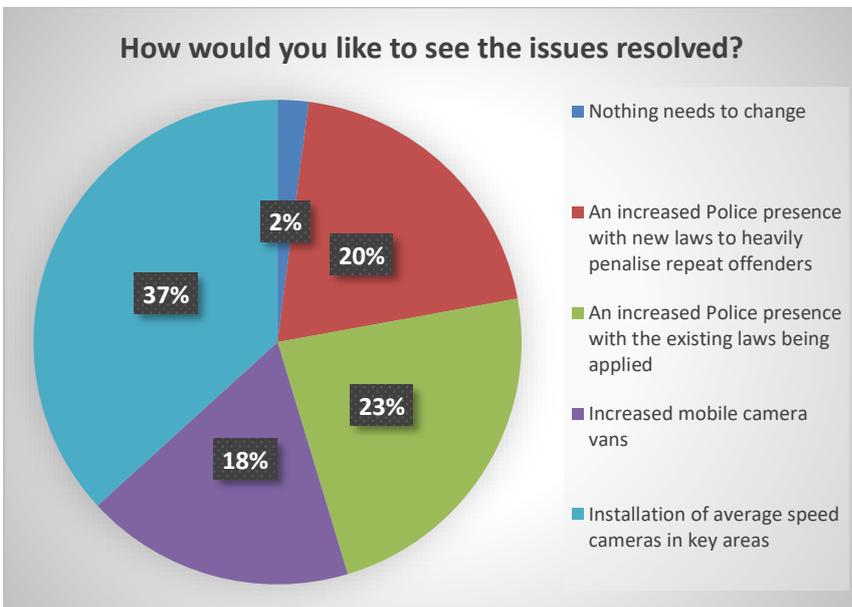
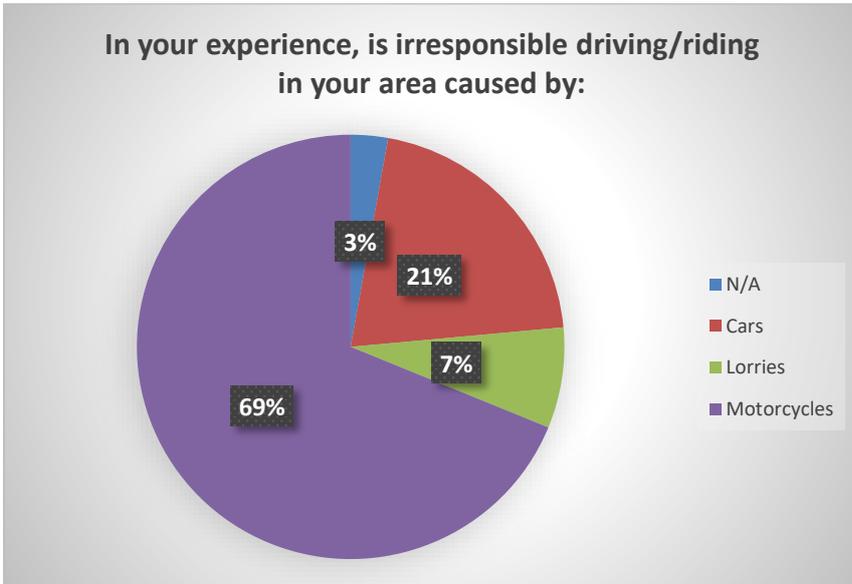
- A level fair playing field for all road users with respect to the law.
- A change in national legislation to make exhaust and licence plate offences licence enforceable.
- The introduction of average speed cameras at the recommended sites.
- Targeted intelligence led policing on relevant days and times using video evidence.
- More consistent speed limits along the high risk/speed stretches of A272/A32.
- A strategic review of road speed limits in the SDNP and East/Central Hampshire.
- Greater transparency from local government and involvement of the local communities in planning safety and noise control measures.
- Involvement of this campaign group in planning with the county council the measures described above as necessary to make our roads less noisy and safer.

**Appendix C: to Plan for Solution to Road Safety, Noise and speed issues on A32/A272 showing Average Speed Camera Sites**









## References:

<sup>i</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.quartix.net/company/news/research-from-quartix-says-speed-limit-is-26-too-high-on-dangerous-roads/>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.motorcyclenews.com/news/2018/april/the-uk-most-dangerous-roads/>

<sup>iv</sup> [www.publications.parliament...a/40525wa1.pdf](#) Para 2.2

<sup>v</sup> [http://www.hampshirechronicle.co.uk/news/16200296.Road\\_accidents\\_costs\\_local\\_economy\\_\\_\\_226m\\_in\\_12\\_months/](http://www.hampshirechronicle.co.uk/news/16200296.Road_accidents_costs_local_economy___226m_in_12_months/)

<sup>vi</sup> <https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn20326-noise-kills-and-blights-lives-in-europe/>

<sup>vii</sup> **Police Reform Act 2002**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/30/section/59>

**Police Reform Act 2002**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/30/section/59>

**Road Traffic Act 1988 (c. 52)**

Public Order Act 1986 (c 64) Sect 14

Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003 Pt 7 Section 57

[Section 57](#): Public assemblies

<sup>viii</sup> Road Safety Management Capacity Review Final Report ref 105990/12 dated 17/5/2018.

<https://tinyurl.com/yc2jmgw4>