

A229 ROAD TRAFFIC REPORTS

The Parish Council, in co-operation with KCC Highways, commissioned Transport Traffic Systems (TTS) to conduct a week-long survey at four sites along the built-up area of the A229 during mid-November 2021. This was to mirror the survey carried out in 2018.

In the 40mph **Maidstone Road**, near Tower House, at 64,603 there has been an increase of over 5.5% in vehicle movements of which about 42% are speeding with 288 vehicles at over 60mph.

The 30mph **Station Road** site was positioned in a different location due to roadworks which totally skewed all figures on speed. 78,699 vehicles passed through, an increase of nearly 6.5%. Despite the new roundabout and roadworks, a quarter were still speeding. 312 vehicles would have received points on their licence for exceeding 45mph.

In 2018, the 30mph **Church Hill** site saw speeding uphill at 72.66%. In 2021 it reduced to 34.95% (which is still high approaching the blind summit, especially the 197 in excess of 45mph). **However, the reduction of 37.71% is brilliant!** Southbound, the 57.34% shows minimal change, with 7,123 travelling at 36mph or more. The 74,451 movements are just over 6% lower than in 2018.

The 40mph **Cranbrook Road** had traffic calming measures installed by KCC Highways in early 2021. Around 70,000 vehicles passed along this stretch of road in the week; a comparable number to 2018. Travelling towards Cranbrook, 25.53% are speeding of which 188 exceeded 60mph. **Towards our village centre, the reduction in speeding has been dramatic; from 39.90% in 2018 to 9.27%.** Over 90% are keeping to the speed limit! This is undoubtedly due to the repeated visual reminders.

Expectations that there would be a reduction in vehicle numbers due to working from home and reduced rail travel have been totally overshadowed by the increase of Supermarket journeys and increased housing numbers. The Cuckolds Corner junction has long been at capacity during peak times and the increased volume has stretched that frustration factor further.

Headcorn Road Traffic Survey

The Parish Council also commissioned TTS to conduct a week-long survey in the 30mph Headcorn Road, just east of Poppy's Nursery, during mid-November 2021. Travelling towards the village, uphill, 8,471 of the 15,880 vehicles (53.34%) were logged speeding, with 163 exceeding 45mph. Travelling east towards Hawkenberry, 9,227 of the 17,084 sped through the site; 54.01% breaching the speed limit, with 3,221 at 36mph and above.

Nearly one in five vehicles would be stopped by police along this road. The way to get more official activity at any of our locations is by increasing the data we provide. These surveys cost the Parish Council money. Staplehurst has a **Speedwatch Team** that can operate at police approved sites, submitting such data at no cost, except the time and energy of the volunteers. Sadly, personal reasons have impacted on the team's ability to deploy regularly in 2021, but with more help, more can be achieved. Go to the Kent Police website and follow the CSW (Community Speed Watch) links to see what the scheme entails, give your details to join the Staplehurst Team and watch the training video. Roadside training is then organised here in the village. Help slow the traffic. Make a difference!