

How to set up a Community Speed Watch scheme?

As a member of the public, if you feel there is an issue regarding speeding in your community, then setting up a Community Speed Watch (CSW) scheme could help to tackle this issue.

The first step is to contact your local police division to ask how to set up a CSW scheme as a PC/PCSO needs to be assigned to be the Police contact for the scheme.

The CSW coordinator at the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership should then be contacted with the new scheme leader details.¹

The coordinator will then provide information about setting up a CSW scheme and advise them to organise the volunteers and funding. In addition, the coordinator will send training availability sheets to the scheme leader to help facilitate the gathering of volunteer details. On average, 6 volunteers are required for a particular scheme to run effectively. The funding required is approximately £1000 which could be sought via your local County Councillor or from local businesses. Each County Councillor has £10,000 to spend on community projects in their area through the Staffordshire Local Community Fund.

All you need to do is download a form and send it to your local County Councillor available at <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/yourcouncil/slcf/>. They will then choose which applications to put forward to the County Council for consideration, following appropriate consultation.² If all avenues for funding generation have been explored, the Partnership may be able to provide funding to support a CSW scheme. This funding covers equipment including a speed radar gun (£801); fold out signs (£107) and high visibility waistcoats (ranging from £5 to £9 each).

When volunteers and funding have been arranged, the coordinator will order the equipment as well as providing a supply of documents and prepaid return envelopes. These documents help record vehicle details of those found speeding including the vehicle registration, make and colour.

Training will be organised by the coordinator as well as arranging for the assigned PC/PCSO to conduct risk assessments of the area.

Once the paperwork has been signed off and received by the coordinator, the CSW scheme leader and the police contact will be informed that the scheme can proceed. The scheme will become active once the equipment has been supplied to the scheme leader.

Once the scheme is up and running, any vehicle found speeding with their details recorded will be entered onto the police database at the Partnership's office. If the DVLA database matches the vehicle details recorded by a scheme volunteer a letter will be sent to the registered vehicle owner. The letter states that the vehicle in question had been driven above the speed limit and had been recorded by a CSW scheme. If the same vehicle is then caught speeding through the CSW scheme or any CSW scheme across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, a second letter will then be sent signed by a Staffordshire Police Superintendent. A third offence will result in the police contact or a police officer nominated by a Road Safety Sergeant to make a visit to the offender's home.

The CSW coordinator will examine all records from all schemes and any scheme demonstrating a high number of offenders, especially those where vehicles are travelling excessively above the speed limit may result in a mobile speed camera van visiting the area. In addition, a vehicle driven seriously above the speed limit will be visited by a police officer regardless of whether the offender has any previous history of speeding.

1) Currently Lucy Stone is the Partnership's CSW coordinator and can be contacted on 01785 232702.

2) Your County Councillor may decide to recommend spending all of their Community Fund allocation in any one year on one project, or choose to support a number of proposals. In addition, your County Councillor may decide to recommend spending all or a proportion of their Community Fund allocation at any time before the final deadline. Therefore you may want to enquire if your local County Councillor has allocated the money before you make any application.