

SMPC 20mph for Steeple Morden Centre – residents survey

Mar-Apr2023

FINAL RESULTS

To gauge interest in having a small 20mph zone in the centre of Steeple Morden, a survey was undertaken in the village. The questions asked were:

About you:

- *I am a resident of Steeple Morden but live outside of the proposed zone. Or*
- *I am a resident of Steeple Morden and live within the proposed zone. Or*
- *I do not live in the village but pass through regularly*

Your activity in the proposed zone (tick all that apply):

- *I am a parent with a child at the village primary school*
- *I am a regular visitor to the Church*
- *I regularly use the village garage*
- *I regularly go in and out of the recreation ground*

Your view on the proposal:

- *I would like to see the proposed 20mph zone implemented. Or*
- *I am not in favour of the proposed 20mph zone*

The survey opened in mid-March 2023 and ran until 7th April 2023.

To ensure good coverage, the Parish Council posted paper copies to all 58 households within the proposed zone. The school encouraged parents to complete the survey and the village website, newsletter and Facebook page all carried the survey with the option to complete on-line, to email or deposit it at the village garage reception desk.

Analysis

By the 8th April 2023, 125 responses had been received. 3 surveys were sent in by email, 22 paper surveys were returned and 100 on-line submissions were made. The analysis below is from this sample.

Total sample size:

458 homes in the village (as per the 2011 census), 58 households are within the proposed 20mph zone and 100 parents have children at the school. We assume we reached all these households.

Responses received:

125 – just one was spoiled (no vote cast).

105 out of 458 homes in the village responded, **an almost 23% response rate**

46 out of 58 homes within the proposed zone responded, **a 79% response rate**

48 families with children at the School responded out of a possible 125, **a 38% response rate**

Results:

In total, the people who would like to see the proposed 20mph zone implemented an **84% positive response**

From those living within the proposed zone there was an **87% positive response**.

From parents with children at the School in the proposed zone there was an almost **94% positive response**.

There were 19 responses from people who live outside the village but drive through and all but two of these were supportive (89%).

Comments and considerations:

The survey provided an opportunity for respondents to leave a short comment and it is useful to reflect on these inputs.

Concern about enforcement – if the 30mph limit is broken, so will the 20mph limit.

Indeed, we have been advised that the police do not have resources to enforce 20mph zones. However, the PC believe that having signs to remind people of the need to slow down in specific areas will help on many occasions. We also believe that providing useful guidance to the majority is valuable even though a few will always ignore limits.

Suggestion that the zone be extended to cover more of Hay Street or even the whole village

The PC believes that focussing the 20mph zone on the proposed section will provide focus and encourage discipline across the short lengths of road involved. If the area covered is too large, speeds will creep up again just as the need for adherence is greatest.

Requests for extra measures such as double yellow lines, mirrors, traffic calming measures, no-parking zones, traffic lights or three-way stop at junction

All these suggestions, whilst understandable and indicate the level of concern and frustration people have, are outside the scope of the existing proposal and consideration. In time, if further steps are found to be necessary, such ideas can be re-visited.

Concern about cost, extra street furniture

The PC is submitting a request for a 20mph scheme that will be funded by the district council and not adversely affect the parish funds. It is unlikely that the PC itself could fund the initiative. The PC is concerned at yet more street furniture and keeping the zone short will help reduce the need for repeater signs etc.

Limited times for operation

The PC consider that adding complexity by having the 20mph zone limited to certain periods of the day will be counter productive. More signage will be necessary, it is not always clear when the school is in operation and motorists trying to assimilate timing guidance just when they are supposed to be concentrating and slowing down could actually cause problems. Also, there are clear indicators that the need for slow speed in this area exists at all times and not just when the school is starting and finishing.

No need, given cars parked, bends and people present

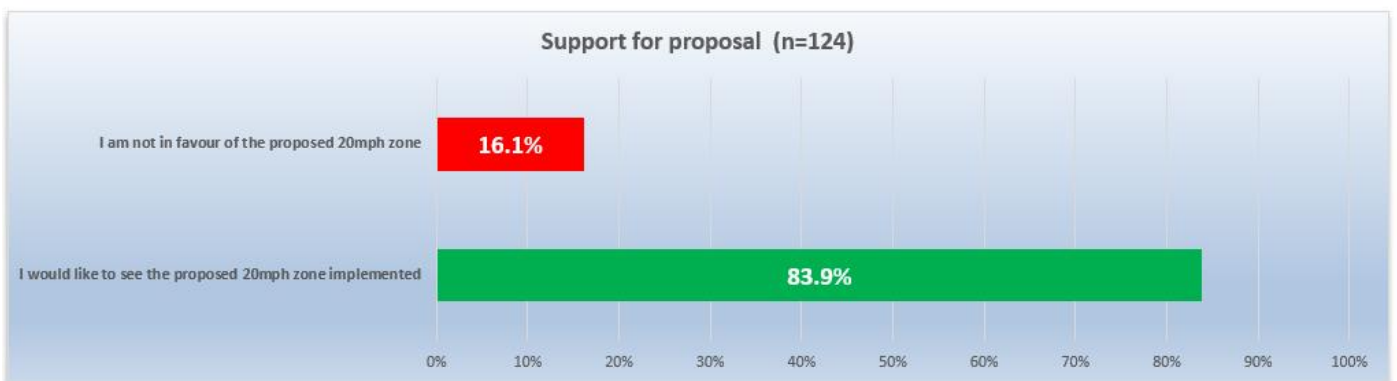
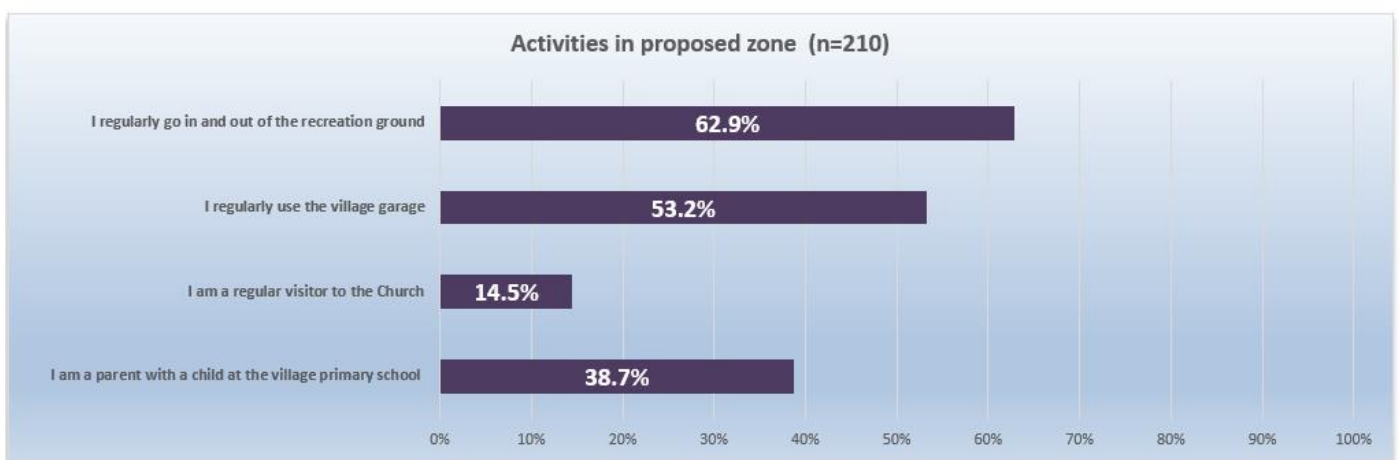
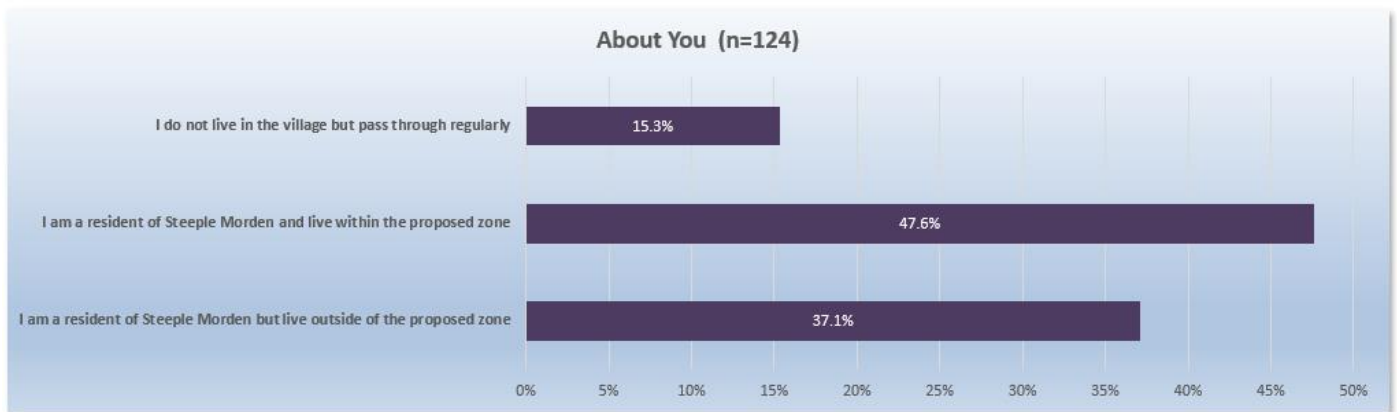
A view is expressed by some that the road layout and presence of many parked cars within the proposed zone mean that vehicles already slow down. Whilst this is sometimes the case, there are also calls to try and reduce the levels of parking, particularly at school times – the PC provided car park for school visitors is an aid to this end. Also, we have both anecdotal and measured evidence of high speed vehicle movements in this area which lead the majority to call for a 20mph limit to be introduced. Across 25 days in March 2023, speed camera measurements showed that over 86% of vehicles passed through the proposed zone outside the school at over 20mph.

Evidence of problem

A small number of comments have suggested that as no significant injuries or fatalities have yet occurred we do not need a 20mph zone. Unfortunately, there are a rather larger number of comments that relate to sightings of close calls, and dangerous situations that could so easily have ended tragically. Our speed measuring equipment has recorded some frightening events in the zone. It would appear that there is a high chance of a significant accident and we have only been lucky so far due the presence of mind of the many people who use the area.

Appendix – Survey responses

The breakdown of responses to individual answers is as follows:



And analysis of three important respondent groups show:

