

Highways and Road Safety Update

For background, see previous reports [WPC.24.01.02](#); [WPC.25.02.03](#); [WPC.25.04.03](#) ; [WPC.25.05.06](#) , [WPC.25.09.03](#), [WPC.25.11.02](#), [WPC.26.04.02](#) and [WPC.26.07.02](#).

At its July meeting (Min. **26.07.7.4** refers), the parish council agreed draft response to the draft report from Suffolk County Council (including a the response from Suffolk Constabulary) received in late June, to the parish council's formal request for a reduction in the speed limit from 40mph to 30mh on the A143 at Wickham Street (Min. 26.07.7.4 refers):

The meeting considered an update on Road Safety (previously circulated as [WPC.26.07.02](#)) which included the draft report from Suffolk County Council (Appendix B to the report) and, having considered the points raised at public forum, asked the clerk to draft a formal response to Suffolk County Council based on:

- 1. Comments set out in the table in the body of report WPC.26.07.02)*
- 2. Any further issues which Suffolk CC had not addressed or commented upon based on an AI comparison of the Suffolk CC response (including comments from Suffolk Constabulary) with the original formal report submitted by Wickhambrook Parish Council*
- 3. The inclusion of the recent data and summary report provided by Mr Gary Carre-Skinner*
- 4. The inclusion of the comments from Passenger Transport that they had considered the establishment of engineered bus stops at Clopton Green too dangerous within the current 40mph speed limit zone*
- 5. A request that the panel considers the full stretch of the A143 through Wickham Street/Clopton Green, with a statement that as a minimum, the parish council would want a reduction in speed limit over the 600 meters through Wickham Street*

The meeting further agreed that it would like Suffolk CC Highways to take forward the establishment of engineered bus stops (at Wickham Street) as applied for under the BSIP funding for bus stop improvements which had been reviewed by Passenger Transport.

The meeting asked the clerk to copy Cllr Bobby Bennet and Nick Timothy MP into the formal responses, and to investigate how existing speed limit signs within the 40mph zone could be cleaned, vegetation trimmed back and village gates replaced and installed.

The final submission is attached as **Appendix A** and was copied to SC Cllr Bobby Bennet and Nick Timothy MP. Cllr Bennet has responded to Suffolk County Council supporting our request (see **Appendix B**).

The clerk has also contacted Passenger Transport, Suffolk County Council confirming that it would like the proposal to establish engineered bus stops (at Wickham Street) under the BSIP funding for bus stop improvement works.

Responses to the enquiries with respect to cleaning of existing speed limit signs within the 40mph zone, trimming of vegetation and installation of village gates has now been received. In November '25 has now been received:

- the only equipment that is approved for official purposes is either Suffolk Highways own speed survey equipment (both the surface detection radar and tube type surveys), the speed guns supplied by Suffolk Police to Community Speed-Watch groups or data from a Third Party traffic survey company.
Data from Parish SID's (or other equipment) can be used to support the data collected using the methods above but unfortunately it cannot be used in lieu of this.*
- Suffolk Highways no longer maintains or replaces speed repeater signs. These used to be a requirement for speed enforcement and the repeaters had to be present throughout a speed limit at regular intervals – following a change in the law, only the main entry/terminal signs are now required at the start/end of a speed limit (i.e. entering a 30/40mph limit from the National limit, or where a speed limit changes). We maintain the main entry/terminal signs only.*

WPC.26.09.02: Road Safety Update

- *A number of Parish Councils are choosing to clean, refresh or replace missing or damaged speed repeater signs in the village themselves under the Community Self Help Scheme – either by cleaning the moss from existing signs, by installing new signs or by purchasing stickers to reface those signs that have faded etc.*
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highway-maintenance/community-self-help-scheme>
The link above leads to the relevant section of our website with further information and contact details etc.
- *With regards to the village gateways, I'm afraid this is also down to the PC to arrange and fund, as Suffolk Highways does not have the capacity to carry out this work.*

Attn: Matthew Fox

Suffolk County Council Highways Community Liaison
Officer

10 September 2026

By e-mail

Cc: Suffolk Councillor Bobby Bennett
Nick Timothy MP

Dear Sir

Response to Suffolk County Council Draft report on Formal Request for Reduction in Speed Limit A143 Wickham Street.

The parish council considered Suffolk County Council's draft response to its formal request for a reduction in speed limit on the A143, Wickham Street at its meeting on 29th July 2026 (Minute 26.07.7.4 refers). A copy of its full [report WPC.26.07.02](#) is available on its website.

This report included:

1. A response from Passenger Transport, Suffolk County Council to an application by the parish council for BSIP funding for bus stop improvement works in November '25 (**Appendix A**).
Due to the officer's concerns with respect to the speed of vehicles:
...whilst this is in a 40mph zone, my feeling on the day was that vehicles were often above this speed, which is a further cause for concern for any potential bus stop location.
They have identified proposals to construct hardstanding and improvements to the two bus stops at Wickham Street, but not the two bus stops servicing Clopton Green.
This is consistent with the response from Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, who's response to an earlier enquiry also set out Suffolk County Council's concerns that the A143 through Wickham Street to Clopton Green was a potentially dangerous place for the feeder service to transfer passengers (see e-mail of 20th May 2025 at Appendix F to our formal submission).
2. Correspondence from an elector at Wickham Street, sharing data collected by a radar based traffic monitoring system installed adjacent to their property in Wickham Street. Their findings are summarised below:
 - 31.7% of vehicles exceeded the 40 mph speed limit (18,834 vehicles)
 - 11.2% were travelling at 46 mph or above (6,642 vehicles) -- the threshold at which a driver would receive a 100 pound fine and 3 penalty points under the standard NPCC enforcement guidelines
 - 252 vehicles were recorded above 60 mph
 - 50 vehicles were recorded above 70 mph
 - The highest recorded speed was 105 mph
 - The highest recorded speed in the direction approaching the bend and crossroads was 79 mph, recorded on a Sunday afternoon at 16:38

A full report of the data shared with and considered by the council, is attached as **Appendix B** and a minute (WPC.26.07.05 refers) of the concerns raised by the resident at Public Forum is attached as **Appendix C**.

The parish council's agreed response to each point in the Draft Suffolk CC report is set out below:

Item	Page	Suffolk County Council Draft Report	Comments identified by Wickhambrook PC
1	1	Support from County Councillor	And also from Elected Member of Parliament, Nick Timothy MP
2	3	...This suggest that road users are identifying the road environment suitable for these speeds	It is not for the general public to identify the speeds suitable for the road environment.
3	3	The 85 th percentile speeds (...) were recorded to be 41-45 mph	The poor chance of pedestrian survival in the event of being hit by a vehicle: • At 40mph there is a 90% chance they will be killed • At 35 mph there is a 50% chance they will be killed • At 30 mph there is an 80% survival rate. These figures don't yet take account of the significant weight and height increase of SUV vehicles which now form a much higher proportion of domestic vehicular traffic.
4	3	The 85 th percentile and mean speeds suggest that a 30 mph may not achieve a high compliance without low-cost engineering measures...	Please back a reduced speed limit with low cost engineering measures which have been acknowledged as necessary to achieve a high degree of compliance.
5	4	5 collisions were recorded in total, all were categorised as slight injury...	These collisions have resulted not only in injury to individuals but an economic cost resulting from lost work time, closure of the A143 and call out of emergency services.
6	5	...considering the proposal against the speed limit policy set by SCC then this scheme does not make a strong case...	This case should be considered in conjunction with the Department for Transport 2024 Guidelines (the SCC policy is out of date and does not take DfT guidelines into account)
7	5	...it is important to try and adhere to the policy to insure (sic) drivers are not confused by conflicting limits for similar environments	In its reasons for rejecting a reduction in the speed limit to 30mph at Wickham Street in 2022, Suffolk County Council cited that 40mph was consistent with speed limits on the A143. This has been reviewed by the clerk, who has established, that in fact the 40mph speed limit at Wickham Street (and Stradishall) are outliers, and that the majority of village communities along the A143 between Haverhill and Diss have a 30mph speed limit, consistent with DfT 2024 Guidelines: • Chedburgh • Horringer • Bury St Edmunds • Great Barton • Stanton

Item	Page	Suffolk County Council Draft Report	Comments identified by Wickhambrook PC
			In fact, across the County, the majority of speed limits in village communities are set at 30mph (see Appendix G of the submitted report).
8	5	...any engineering measures that may be considered, should this scheme be approved, would need to be more than the low-cost measures you imply	This is not a reason to reject the proposal to reduce the speed limit.
9	6	The area shown in red represents the remaining area of interest which is not considered to provide village character.	This is not consistent with even SCC policy and its application – for example – the junction at Stowlangtoft on the A1088, where there are only eighteen properties with no village character at all. Clopton Green is a defined community, with bus stops, a play area, greens and easily recognisable as a village character.
10	6	There are no facilities other than residential development that require consideration	This is incorrect – two bus stops, a children's play area, two greens access to footpaths on the opposite side of the road from the majority of residential development. The passenger transport officer has identified their concerns that due to the speed of vehicles at Clopton Green, which were often above the 40mph speed limit, the two bus stops would not be suitable for engineered improvements.
11	7	Beyond the junction to the north there is predominantly open countryside and properties set back from the carriageway, where road users are less likely to understand the need for a reduced speed limit, this could result in poor compliance and driver frustration	It is not predominantly open countryside – going north, the fields are shielded by hedging on the left, and there is a short stretch of open field visible to the right before entering Clopton Green. This statement is not consistent with SCC's application of its policy. For example, at Horringer a large proportion of the properties are set back behind greens and hedging, but a 30mph limit has been set.
12	7	There are no facilities generating pedestrian/cycle activity – such as schools, shops...	This is incorrect – even were only Wickham Street to be considered, there are two bus stops to access public transport, pedestrians and cyclists crossing to access the Church and Wickham Surgery from Clopton Green and Denston.

The parish council has compared the draft response from Suffolk County Council, (which includes a response from Suffolk Constabulary) with:

- Our submitted formal request - **Appendix D**;
- [Suffolk County Council's Speed Limit Policy](#) (last reviewed in 2014) - **Appendix E**; and
- [Department for Transport 2024 Guidelines](#) - **Appendix F**
- Our submitted formal request, Suffolk County Council (SCC) Speed Limit Policy and the latest DfT 'Setting Local Speed Limits' guidance – **Appendix G**

and summarised the differences at the appendices identified above.

A key takeaway from the comparisons has been that both the Suffolk County Council response, and its reference to its Speed limit policy, is less flexible in approach than the more recent DfT (2024) Guidelines, with its emphasis on a more holistic, community-focused approach.

The parish council asks that this matter be referred to the Speed Panel at the earliest opportunity and that it considers a reduction in the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph for the full stretch of the A143 through Wickham Street/Clopton Green, with a request that as a minimum, a reduction to 30mph for the 600 meters through Wickham Street be approved.

Yours faithfully



Hilary Workman
Clerk and RFO
Wickhambrook Parish Council

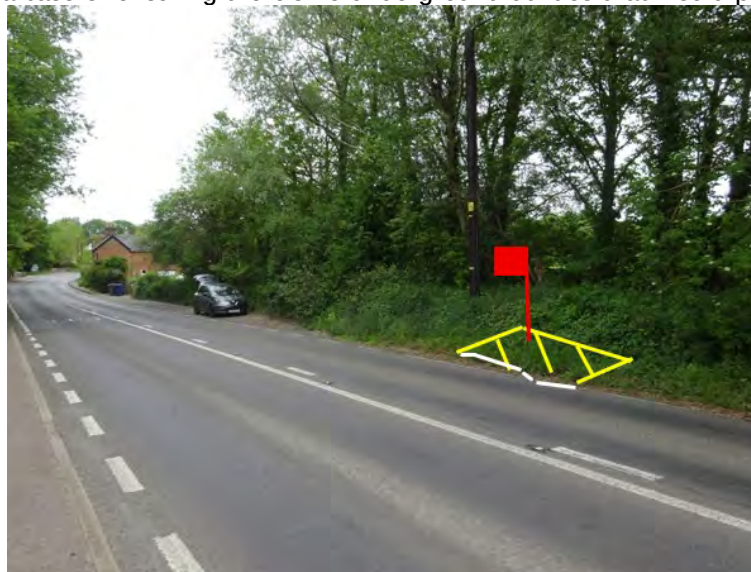
From: Robert Kemp
Sent: 16 July 2026 11:50
To: 'parishclerk@wickhambrook.org.uk' <parishclerk@wickhambrook.org.uk>
Subject: BSIP funding application

Hello Hilary

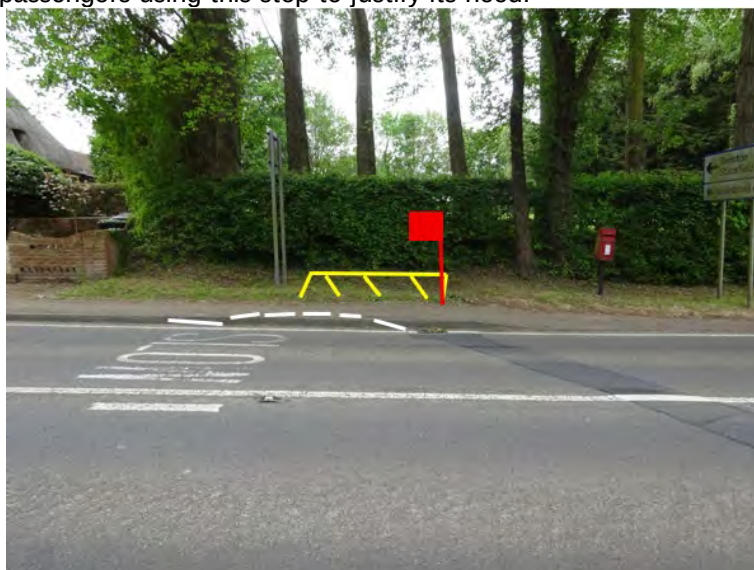
Following our conversation earlier this week, please see below my comments on the potential bus stop locations that you've requested.

Wickham Street – we could look to construct some hardstand at the end of the layby for any Bury St Edmunds bound services. This would include DDA raised kerbs to aid accessibility on/off the bus, plus a dropped kerb for accessibility to the stop.

From measurement taken and looking at our Highways records there should be sufficient verge width to do this, it's just a case of ensuring there's no underground utilities that would prevent construction.



On this side of the road, basic requirements would be to install DDA raised kerbs plus a dropped kerb for accessibility. The footway is approximately 2m deep so there is the potential to install a bus shelter with no sides. If a shelter with either half or full sides is required, then an area of hardstand in the verge behind would need to be constructed. Installation of a shelter is likely to be dependent on the number of passengers using this stop to justify its need.



Bury Road – I have concerns regarding locating bus stops on either side of the road here. For Haverhill bound services there is a wide junction splay here. Any new stop would need to be at least 15m from the junction. There is a bend to the south of the junction meaning this would not be a safe place for the bus to stop. To the north of the junction there is the brow of the hill.



For Bury bound services, I would assume this “pull in” is used for access to the fields behind. Whilst the verge looks wide enough to the south to install some hardstand, this would be located on a bend. North of this area, the verge isn't wide enough to construct any hardstand.



For both stops, in addition to the points raised above, whilst this is in a 40mph zone, my feeling on the day was that vehicles were often above this speed, which is a further cause for concern for any potential bus stop location.

Following your parish council meeting next week, if you have any further questions, please let me know. In addition, if you would like to proceed with the Wickham Street works please confirm.

Regards

Robert Kemp | Transport Development Manager

Passenger Transport, Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich,
Suffolk, IP1 2BX

01473 264085

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Traffic Speed Monitoring Report

A143, Wickham Street, Wickhambrook, Suffolk

16 May – 22 July 2026 · 283,600 vehicles recorded

Submitted to Wickhambrook Parish Council · 29 July 2026

Dr Gary Mark Carré-Skinner

1. Executive Summary

This report presents findings from a continuous traffic speed monitoring programme on the A143 through Wickham Street, Wickhambrook, conducted between 16 May and 22 July 2026. Over 283,600 vehicle passes were recorded using a ViaCount II radar traffic counter installed at the roadside. The headline findings are deeply concerning:

- More than half of all vehicles (52.6%) exceeded the 40 mph speed limit.
- 1,220 vehicles exceeded 70 mph — the maximum legal speed on any road in the United Kingdom.
- 28 vehicles exceeded 100 mph. The highest recorded speed was 134 mph on 19 July 2026 — more than three times the legal limit.
- Non-compliance has worsened steadily throughout the monitoring period, rising from approximately 32% in late May to over 90% in mid-July.
- All 11 vehicles recorded above 110 mph were travelling towards Haverhill, suggesting a small number of repeat offenders.

The data strongly supports the Parish Council's campaign for a 30 mph speed limit reduction. However, it also demonstrates that a change of limit alone will not be sufficient. Drivers who routinely ignore the current 40 mph limit will not automatically comply with a lower one. Enforcement — credible, visible, and consistent — is the essential complement to any limit change.

2. Background

The Parish Council has been campaigning for a reduction in the speed limit on the A143 through Wickham Street from 40 mph to 30 mph for a number of years. In December 2025, a formal request was submitted to Suffolk County Council at a cost of £750. Suffolk County Council is awaiting a response from Suffolk Constabulary, and no decision has yet been reached.

In the meantime, the author installed an independent traffic monitoring system in May 2026 to gather objective, continuous data on vehicle speeds. This report presents the results of that monitoring and is intended to support the Council's ongoing case for intervention.

3. Monitoring System

3.1 Equipment

The author wishes to thank Sam Sykes for generously lending the ViaCount II unit used in this study. Without his support this monitoring programme would not have been possible.

The monitoring system uses the ViaCount II radar traffic counter, manufactured by via traffic controlling gmbh (Campusallee 1, 51379 Leverkusen, Germany; www.viatraffic.com). The ViaCount II is a commercially proven, compact traffic data acquisition system widely used by local authorities and traffic planners.

For each vehicle passing the sensor, the ViaCount II records:

- Speed (measurement range 1–255 km/h, approximately 1–158 mph)
- A value proportional to vehicle length, enabling classification into up to 6 vehicle categories
- Direction of travel (negative values = towards Haverhill; positive values = towards Bury St Edmunds)
- Time gap between successive vehicles (net gap in seconds)
- Precise timestamp from an onboard real-time clock

The sensor uses Doppler radar technology housed in a compact, weatherproof enclosure. It is mounted on a timber post at the roadside at a height of approximately 0.5–1 m, positioned to capture traffic in both directions simultaneously. The unit is battery-powered, with a manufacturer-rated battery life of over two weeks per charge. Gaps in the monitoring data correspond to brief periods when the unit was removed for recharging; all data within recorded periods is complete and continuous.

Data is transmitted via USB serial interface to a Raspberry Pi single-board computer mounted in a weatherproof enclosure on the same post, which logs all detections in real time to daily files and serves a live monitoring dashboard. The complete installation is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2: The ViaCount II installation at Fort George, Wickham Street. The radar sensor and data logger are mounted in the weatherproof enclosure on the timber post. The red unit at the base is the battery charger.

Key technical specifications (via traffic controlling gmbh):

Measurement technology	Doppler radar
Speed measurement range	1-255 km/h (approx. 1-158 mph)
Vehicle classification	Up to 6 vehicle classes by length
Speed classification	10 speed classes
Direction capability	Simultaneous measurement in both directions
Data recorded per vehicle	Speed, length class, direction, time gap, timestamp
Battery life	Over 2 weeks per charge
Housing	Compact, lightweight, weatherproof
Memory capacity	360,404 vehicles per 4 MB flash (expandable to 8

	MB)
Manufacturer	via traffic controlling gmbh, Leverkusen, Germany
Further information	www.viatraffic.com

3.2 Location

The sensor is installed at Fort George, Wickham Street, Wickhambrook, CB8 8XJ (coordinates 52.1564°N, 0.5662°E). Fort George is a Grade II listed thatched cottage located on the A143, approximately midway along the Wickham Street hamlet.

The A143 at this location is a single carriageway rural A road with a 40 mph speed limit, connecting Bury St Edmunds (approximately 15 km to the north-east) with Haverhill (approximately 12 km to the south-west). There are no pavements on this stretch; the road is used by pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, and farm vehicles as well as motor traffic. The monitoring location lies on the approach to a bend and crossroads junction — conditions in which extreme speeds are particularly dangerous.

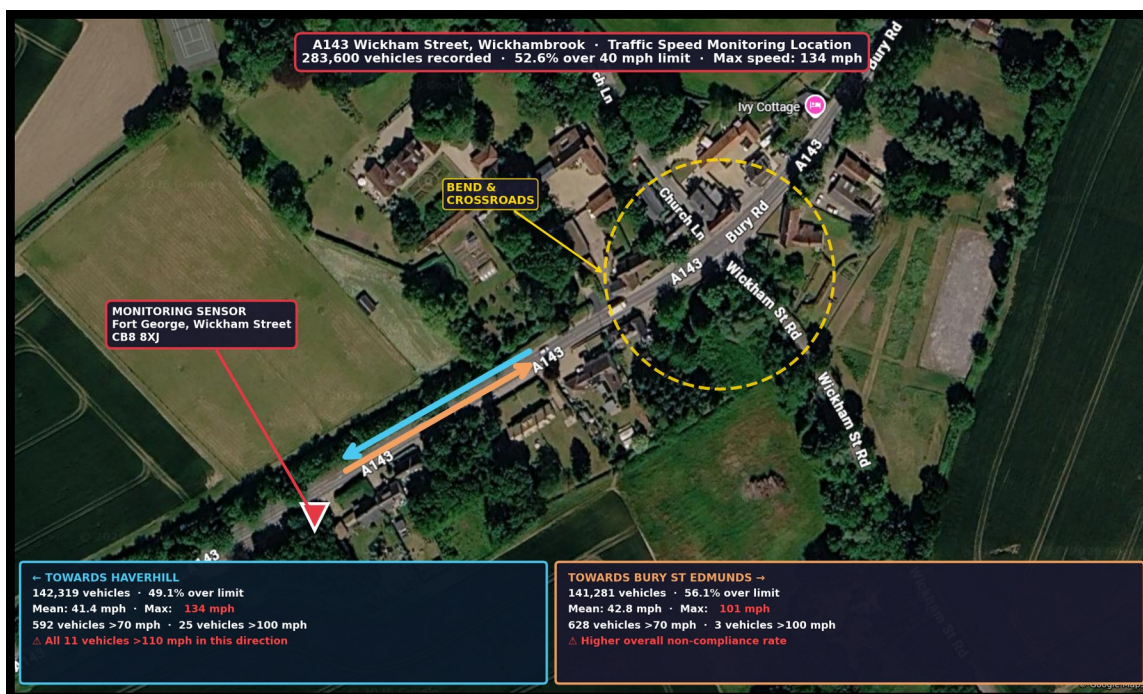


Figure 3: Monitoring sensor location on the A143 at Wickham Street, Wickhambrook, with directional speed statistics. © Google Maps

4. Data Summary

Monitoring period	16 May – 22 July 2026 (68 days)
Days with data recorded	57 (gaps due to battery charging)
Total vehicle passes recorded	283,600
Average daily vehicle count	4,975

Speed limit	40 mph
Vehicles exceeding 40 mph	149,260 (52.6%)
Vehicles exceeding 46 mph (FPN threshold)	62,847 (22.2%)
Vehicles exceeding 60 mph (A road national limit)	4,580 (1.6%)
Vehicles exceeding 70 mph (any UK road limit)	1,220 (0.4%)
Vehicles exceeding 100 mph	28
Maximum recorded speed	134 mph — 19 July 2026, towards Haverhill
Overall mean speed	43.1 mph
Towards Haverhill: non-compliance	49.1% · Max: 134 mph · All 11 vehicles >110 mph
Towards Bury St Edmunds: non-compliance	56.1% · Max: 101 mph · Higher overall rate

5. Analysis

5.1 Non-Compliance Trend

Figure 4 shows the daily non-compliance rate throughout the monitoring period. The upward trend is clear and sustained — from approximately 32% in late May to over 90% in mid-July. This smooth, consistent drift is the characteristic signature of habitual learned behaviour: drivers have progressively discovered that this road is unenforced and have adjusted their speeds accordingly.

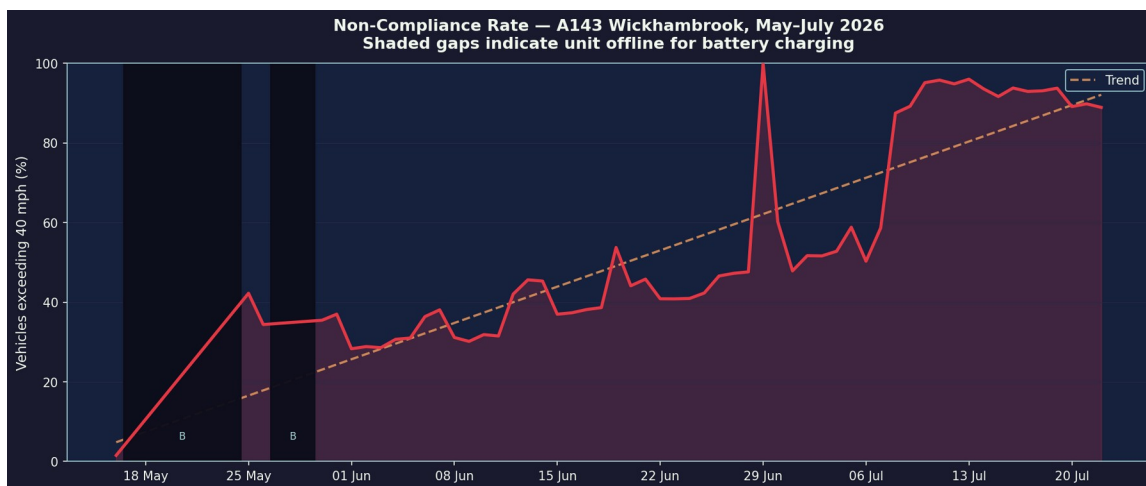


Figure 4: Daily non-compliance rate, May–July 2026. Shaded gaps indicate unit offline for battery charging.

5.2 Severity of Speeding Events

Figure 5 plots every vehicle recorded above the 40 mph limit, coloured by severity against UK legal thresholds. The increasing density of high-severity events towards the right of the chart reflects the worsening trend. 1,220 vehicles exceeded 70 mph — the maximum legal speed on any UK road.

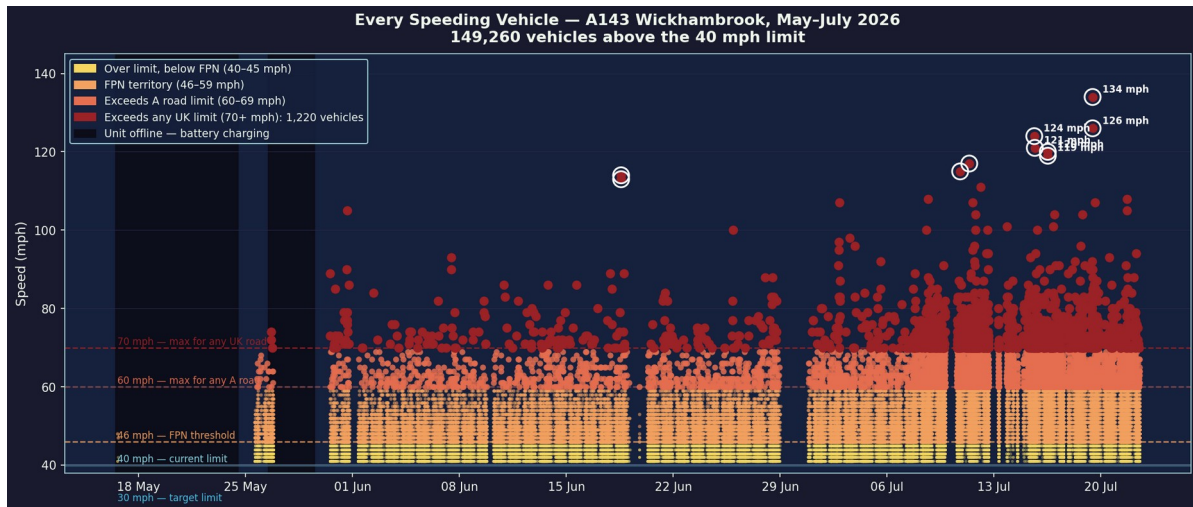


Figure 5: Every speeding vehicle coloured by severity against UK legal speed thresholds.

5.3 Direction Analysis

Figure 6 breaks down speeding by direction of travel. All 11 vehicles recorded above 110 mph were travelling towards Haverhill, strongly suggesting a small number of repeat offenders. Overall non-compliance is slightly higher towards Bury St Edmunds, consistent with a morning commuter effect.

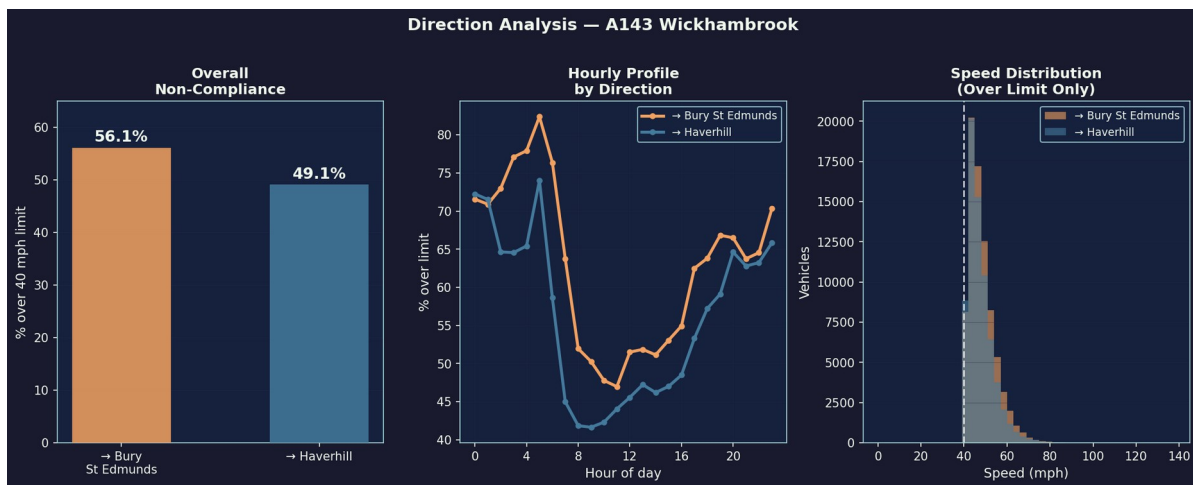


Figure 6: Direction analysis — overall non-compliance, hourly profile, and speed distribution.

5.4 Vehicle Type Analysis

Figure 7 analyses speeding by vehicle type, estimated from the length measurement provided by the ViaCount II. Minibuses and LGVs show the highest non-compliance at over 60%. HGVs have been recorded at speeds up to 75 mph — above the national limit for this vehicle class on a single carriageway — which may warrant separate referral to the Traffic Commissioner.

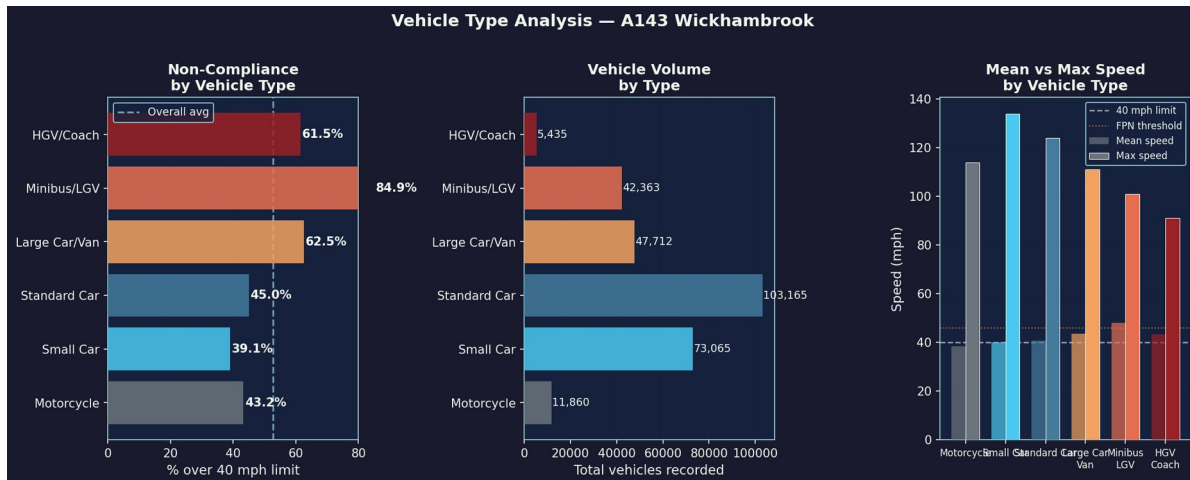


Figure 7: Vehicle type analysis — non-compliance rate, volume, and mean/max speed by category.

5.5 Speed Distribution

Figure 8 shows the distribution of all recorded speeds. The peak of the distribution sits above the 40 mph limit — meaning the most common speed on this road is already unlawful. The tail extends to 134 mph.

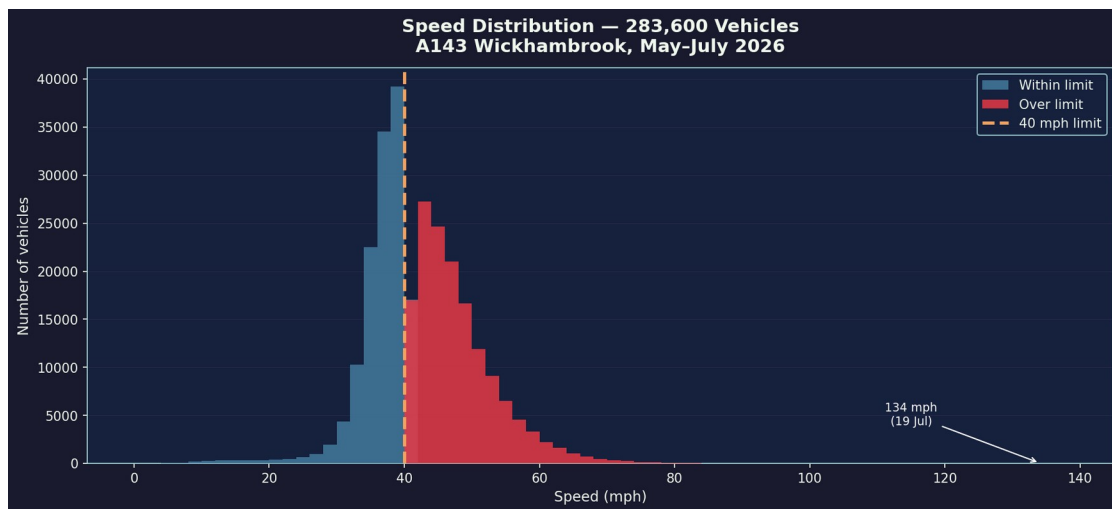


Figure 8: Speed distribution across all 283,600 recorded vehicles.

5.6 Hourly Profile and Day of Week

Figures 9 and 10 show that speeding is not confined to particular times or days. Non-compliance exceeds 60% overnight — low volume but extreme speeds, the most dangerous combination. Every day of the week shows elevated non-compliance, ruling out a simple commuter explanation.

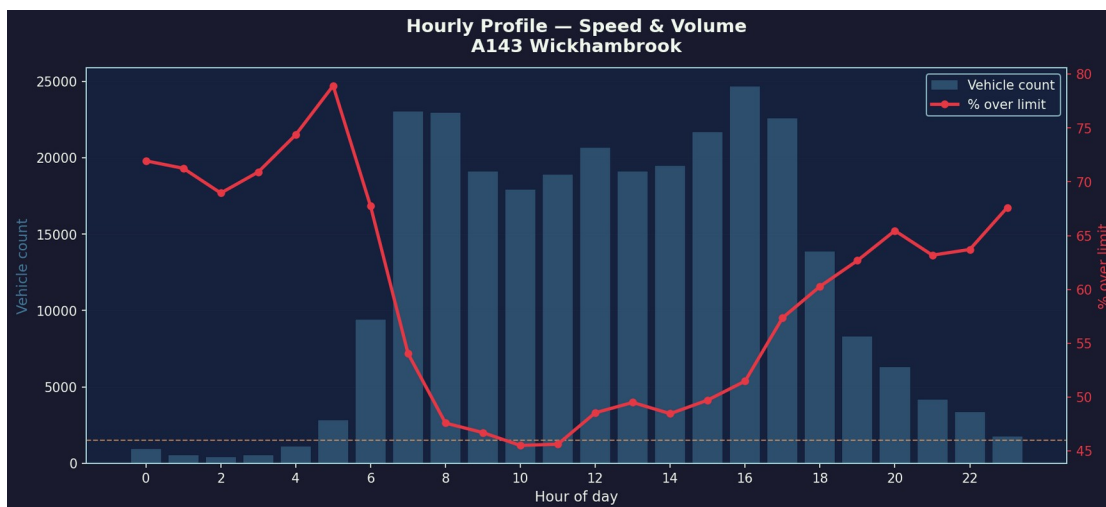


Figure 9: Hourly profile of vehicle volume and non-compliance rate.

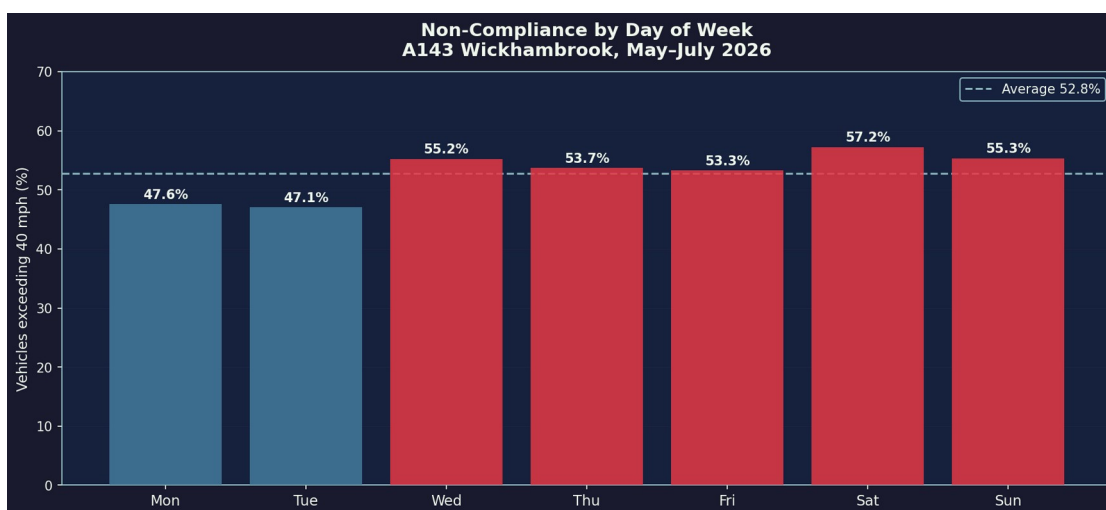


Figure 10: Non-compliance rate by day of week.

6. Response to the SCC/Constabulary Draft Report

The Parish Council's agenda paper for 29 July 2026 (WPC.26.07.02) includes the draft report from Suffolk County Council on the proposed 30 mph speed limit reduction, together with comments from Suffolk Constabulary. The ViaCount II monitoring data gathered since May 2026 directly addresses several of the conclusions and observations made in that report.

6.1 "Road users are identifying the road environment suitable for these speeds"

Suffolk Constabulary's response to the SCC draft report states that the recorded speeds suggest road users are identifying the road environment as suitable for those speeds. This monitoring programme comprehensively contradicts that conclusion. Over 68 days, 52.6% of all vehicles exceeded the 40 mph speed limit. The mean speed in July 2026 was 47.2 mph — above the Fixed Penalty Notice threshold of 46 mph, meaning the average driver was committing a ticketable offence. The maximum recorded speed

was 134 mph, recorded at 11:00am on 19 July 2026 — a weekday, in broad daylight. Drivers are not identifying an appropriate speed for the road environment; they are exploiting a road they have learned is unenforced.

6.2 The SCC Traffic Survey Data Is Out of Date

The SCC draft report relies on tube survey data gathered over 7 days in June 2025, showing 85th percentile speeds of 41–45 mph and mean speeds of 36–39 mph. This monitoring programme covers 68 days of continuous data across May–July 2026 — nearly ten times the survey duration. The data shows a clear and sustained deterioration: mean speeds in July 2026 reached 47.2 mph, and overall non-compliance rose from approximately 32% in late May to over 90% by mid-July. The SCC survey data, while valid at the time, does not reflect current conditions. The case for a speed limit reduction is materially stronger now than when SCC conducted its assessment.

6.3 "A 30 mph limit may not achieve high compliance without engineering measures"

The SCC draft report notes that the 85th percentile and mean speeds suggest a 30 mph limit may not achieve high compliance without low-cost engineering measures. This monitoring programme supports that observation — but it strengthens rather than weakens the case for action. Non-compliance with the existing 40 mph limit tripled from 32% to over 90% in the space of two months, with no change in road conditions or signage. This demonstrates conclusively that the limit itself is insufficient without supporting measures. The appropriate response is to reduce the limit and implement engineering measures simultaneously — not to use the risk of non-compliance as a reason to defer action.

6.4 The Danger Zone Extends Beyond the Crossroads Junction

The SCC draft report suggests that the collision criteria are met only in the vicinity of the crossroads junction, and implies that a limited 600m reduction centred on the junction may be more appropriate than the full 1,473m scheme. However, the ViaCount II data shows that all 11 vehicles recorded above 110 mph were travelling on the straight section of road to the south-west of the crossroads — approaching the junction at extreme speed, not at the junction itself. The monitoring sensor is located on this straight section, approximately 200m south-west of the crossroads. The data therefore demonstrates that the most dangerous behaviour is occurring on the approach to the junction, at speeds that would make any collision at the crossroads unsurvivable. The full extent of the proposed 30 mph scheme is justified.

6.5 Overnight and Off-Peak Conditions Were Not Captured by SCC

The SCC tube survey, conducted during a standard 7-day period, will have captured primarily daytime traffic. This monitoring programme records 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The data shows that non-compliance exceeds 60% overnight (22:00–06:00), and that some of the most extreme speeds are recorded in the early hours: 111 mph was recorded at 3:25am on 12 July 2026. This pattern — low traffic volumes combined with extreme speeds — represents arguably the most dangerous condition on the road. It is entirely absent from SCC's assessment.

6.6 Recommendation

On the basis of this data, the author supports the Parish Council's intention to request that the matter be referred to the Suffolk County Council Speed Limit Panel, and strongly recommends that the Council advocate for consideration of the full 1,473m scheme rather than the limited reduction suggested in the

draft report. The data demonstrates that the risk is not confined to the crossroads junction and that the situation has materially worsened since SCC conducted its assessment.

6. 7. Why Is This Happening?

The pattern is consistent with the habituation hypothesis: drivers have learned that the A143 through Wickham Street is unenforced. The absence of a speed camera or police presence has created a perception of zero risk. Speeds have crept upward incrementally as this perception has solidified.

The smooth, sustained upward trend — rather than the random spikes that would indicate seasonal or other external effects — is the characteristic signature of incremental boundary-testing. The concentration of all 11 vehicles recorded above 110 mph in a single direction further suggests that specific individuals have identified this road as a location where very high speeds can be achieved without consequence.

This has important implications for the Council's 30 mph campaign. A limit reduction without enforcement will not change behaviour on a road that is already perceived as consequence-free. The evidence strongly suggests that enforcement is the essential prerequisite for any speed limit change to have the intended effect.

8. Recommendations

On the basis of this data, the author respectfully asks the Parish Council to take the following actions:

- Request an immediate police enforcement presence on the A143 at Wickhambrook. A static patrol or speed check would be seen by thousands of regular drivers and would immediately disrupt the learned perception that this road is risk-free. This is the single most effective short-term intervention.
- Escalate the outstanding SCC and Constabulary request. The formal 30 mph request submitted in December 2025 remains unanswered. This data demonstrates that the situation has deteriorated significantly since the request was made. The Council should use this evidence to press for an urgent response.
- Request interim measures from Suffolk Highways — gateway features at the entry to Wickham Street, a Speed Indicator Device with real-time feedback, or average speed monitoring pending the limit decision.
- Consider referral to the Traffic Commissioner regarding HGV speeds recorded on this stretch.
- Place this as a standing agenda item with monthly data review, and escalate to West Suffolk Council if responses from the relevant authorities remain inadequate.

9. Data Availability

The full dataset, underlying daily CSV files, and live dashboard access are available on request. The monitoring system continues to operate and new data is collected daily. An updated version of this report can be produced at any time.

26.07.05 **Noted:** Public Forum – (Open Session)¹. 19:06

That when comments or questions were invited on any Agenda item or matter of concern from those members of the public present, the following:

- ...
- Mr Carre-Skinner raised his concerns with respect to the ongoing issue of speeding (particularly motorbikes at night) on the A143 through Wickham Street and his desire that the speed limit be reduced to 30mph with more visible enforcement. He had, with the assistance of a neighbour, monitored speed through Wickham Street over the past two months using a radar device and submitted a report (which forms Appendix D to report WPC.26.07.02) and slide presentation to the parish council and is attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Standing Order 10(a)x: Cllr Lavelle agreed to extend the time limit for speaking beyond 15 minutes

- Further points raised by members of the public were:
 - The police had advised there enforcement at Wickham St was limited because there was insufficient run in and visibility which could result in an increased risk of accident arising from road users breaking on seeing enforcement activity
 - Could the speed limit signs and repeaters be cleaned/replaced and vegetation trimmed back by SCC
 - There was a great fear that nothing would be done by SCC and Suffolk Constabulary until there had been a fatality
 - The addition of double white line markings through Wickham Street might reduce the risk of accidents (preventing overtaking) and reducing speeds (many residents in Wickham Street have concealed entrances, and accessing onto the A143 is difficult. Double white lines might further strengthen the case for enforcement requests with Suffolk Constabulary
 - Acknowledging that the radar had not been formally calibrated, they would like to see the data collected over the past two months shared with Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk County Council, and to explore whether there might be a process for future data collection to be relied upon formally by getting the existing unit calibrated.

In answer to questions, Councillors advised that:

- Neither Vehicle Activated Signage (VAS) nor Community Speedwatch (CSW) could operate in Suffolk unless within a 30mph or lower speed zone (the CSW camera is self calibrating)
- Locations for collection of data through VAS or CSW could only be approved by Suffolk Constabulary and had to meet strict criteria (visibility, distance of run in etc.)
- Until recently Police enforcement cameras had only two locations to operate from in the parish, but that this had recently been increased to four locations, with one enforcement event being undertaken each month
- The report submitted by Mr Carre Skinner would be included in the parish council's submission to Suffolk County Council as an anecdotal supplement (acknowledging that while the radar at present was not calibrated, it still gave a good picture of the current situation) and the clerk would investigate whether or not it would be possible for the unit to be calibrated to SCC's satisfaction
- A previous parish wide consultation on road safety had been undertaken in the summer of 2025 and responses included in the parish's report submitted to SCC. The parish council had been building earmarked reserves based on advice of the likely costs and time scales (estimated as £6-8K, and between 6 – 30 months) for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) should the parish council's request for a reduction in the speed limit be successful. Only once the SCC panel had reached a decision on any speed limit reduction would the parish council need to formally commit to and approve spending to fund the TRO.
- The parish council's preference was for a reduction in speed limit across the full current 40mph zone (Wickham Street and Clopton Green), not just the 600m at Wickham Street.

Session Closed - 19:48

¹ The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

Appendix D

Comparison of the Wickhambrook Parish Council's request to Suffolk County Council Highways and how each point is addressed in the Suffolk Constabulary report.

1. Request for a 30mph Limit on the Full Extent of the Current 40mph Zone

- **Parish Council Request:** Reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph along the entire stretch at Wickham Street.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** The report only supports a 30mph limit for the area around the crossroads (about 600m), where there is a clear village character and a collision history. The remainder should remain at 40mph due to lack of village character and likely poor compliance.

2. Installation of New Bus Stops at Wickham Street and Clopton Green

- **Parish Council Request:** Improve bus stop safety and visibility.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** The report notes the presence of bus stops but does not specifically address bus stop improvements. It focuses on the lack of pedestrian-generating facilities as a reason not to extend the 30mph limit beyond the crossroads.

3. Installation of a Pelican Crossing at Wickham Street Junction

- **Parish Council Request:** Install a crossing to improve pedestrian safety, especially for vulnerable users.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** The report acknowledges the lack of significant pedestrian activity or facilities that would typically justify such measures. It does not recommend a crossing, citing insufficient evidence of pedestrian demand.

4. 30mph Roundels and Traffic Calming

- **Parish Council Request:** Use roundels and other measures to reinforce the lower speed limit.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** The report suggests that low-cost engineering measures may be needed to achieve compliance with a 30mph limit in the crossroads area but does not support widespread traffic calming for the entire stretch. No specific suggestions are proposed for suitable low cost engineering measures.

5. Extension of 30mph Limit to Church Road and Coltsfoot Green

- **Parish Council Request:** Extend 30mph to Church Road, citing its narrowness and use by vulnerable road users.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** The report does not address Church Road or Coltsfoot Green specifically, focusing only on the A143.

6. Reinstatement of Pavement for Foot Traffic

- **Parish Council Request:** Reinstatement the pavement from Wickham Street to All Saints Church to improve pedestrian safety.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** The report does not address pavement reinstatement or pedestrian infrastructure improvements.

7. Consideration of DfT 2024 Guidance and Local Support

- **Parish Council Request:** Emphasizes the more recent DfT guidance prioritizing vulnerable users and local support as valid reasons for change.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** The report references the need to adhere to Suffolk County Council's Speed Limit Policy and applies its criteria. It acknowledges collision history and village character only at the crossroads, but does not broadly apply the new DfT guidance or local support as overriding factors.

8. Accident and Collision Data

- **Parish Council Request:** Highlights several collisions and near-misses, especially at the crossroads, as justification for a lower limit.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** Confirms five slight injury collisions in the last five years, with four at the crossroads and uses this to justify a 30mph limit only at the crossroads, not the full stretch.

9. Inconsistency of Speed Limit Policy Application

- **Parish Council Request:** Argues that other villages on the A143 have 30mph limits, so Wickham Street should too.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** Stresses the need for consistency with policy and road environment, but does not recommend changing the limit solely for consistency with other villages.

10. Community Speedwatch and Local Initiatives

- **Parish Council Request:** Notes active community involvement in speed monitoring and requests support for further measures.
- **Constabulary Report Response:** Acknowledges community efforts but maintains that policy and data must drive decisions, not just community initiatives.

Summary: The Constabulary report addresses most points by applying strict policy criteria, supporting a 30mph limit only at the crossroads where village character and collision history are evident, and not supporting broader changes or additional infrastructure.

Appendix E

A comparison of the Suffolk Constabulary draft response with Suffolk County Council's Speed Limit Policy, highlighting any departures from policy:

Areas Where the Draft Response Aligns with Policy

1. **Village Character and Minimum Length**
 - The draft response applies the 30mph limit only to the crossroads area, where there is a clear village character and at least 20 houses, meeting the policy's rural 30mph criteria.
 - The minimum length for a new speed limit (600m) is respected.
2. **Collision History**
 - The draft response uses the presence of five slight injury collisions (mostly at the crossroads) as justification for a lower limit, consistent with policy.
3. **Existing Traffic Speeds and Self-Enforcement**
 - The response notes that mean and 85th percentile speeds are above 30mph, and highlights the need for engineering measures to achieve compliance, in line with policy requirements for self-enforcing limits.
4. **Junctions and Accesses**
 - The draft response considers the number of junctions and accesses, as required by policy.

Areas Where the Draft Response Departs from Policy

1. **Pedestrian Activity and Facilities**
 - **Policy:** Significant pedestrian activity or facilities (schools, shops, play areas) are important for justifying lower limits.
 - **Draft Response:** States that there are no such facilities or significant pedestrian/cycle activity, and therefore does **not** support a 30mph limit for areas lacking these features. This is a strict interpretation, but the policy allows for discretion in special circumstances (e.g., community concerns, environmental impact, or to support walking/cycling routes), which the draft response does not fully explore.
2. **Use of Discretion and Local Circumstances**
 - **Policy:** Allows for discretion where the character of a village falls outside the standard definition, or for special local circumstances (e.g., environmental impact, community initiatives, or to support walking/cycling).
 - **Draft Response:** Applies the criteria rigidly and does not consider whether local concerns, environmental impacts, or community initiatives might justify a broader application of the 30mph limit, as permitted by policy.
3. **Consistency with Other Villages and Community Support**
 - **Policy:** Consistency and community support can be considered, especially for small changes or where Community Speed Watch is active.
 - **Draft Response:** Does not give weight to consistency with other villages on the A143 or to local community support, even though policy allows these factors to influence decisions in some cases.
4. **Intermediate Speed Limits and Supporting Measures**
 - **Policy:** Suggests that intermediate speed limits (e.g., 40mph before a 30mph zone) and supporting engineering/environmental measures should be considered to encourage compliance.
 - **Draft Response:** Mentions the possible need for low-cost engineering measures but does not propose a staged approach or more substantial supporting measures, even though policy encourages these where compliance is likely to be poor.

Summary: The Suffolk Constabulary draft response generally follows the core criteria of the Suffolk County Council Speed Limit Policy, especially regarding village character, collision history, and self-enforcement. However, it departs from policy **by not fully utilizing the policy's discretionary provisions** for local circumstances, community support, consistency, and supporting measures, which could justify a broader or more flexible approach to speed limit changes.

Appendix F

A comparison highlighting where Suffolk County Council (SCC) Speed Limit Policy departs from the latest Department for Transport (DfT) 'Setting Local Speed Limits' guidance (March 2024):

1. Use of Mean Speed vs. 85th Percentile Speed

- **DfT Guidance (2024):** Emphasizes that mean speeds should be used as the basis for determining local speed limits, with 85th percentile speeds as supporting data.
- **SCC Policy:** Refers to both mean and 85th percentile speeds, but places more emphasis on 85th percentile for self-enforcement and compliance, which may lead to less flexibility in setting lower limits where mean speeds are already lower.
- **Departure:** SCC's reliance on 85th percentile speeds for compliance is stricter than DfT's focus on mean speeds for setting limits.

2. Consideration of Vulnerable Road Users and Community Impact

- **DfT Guidance:** Strongly prioritizes the needs of vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians) and the impact of speed on community quality of life, including potential as well as existing activity.
- **SCC Policy:** Considers composition of road users and community impact, but tends to require evidence of existing activity rather than potential or latent demand.
- **Departure:** SCC policy may underweight potential increases in walking/cycling or community benefits compared to DfT guidance.

3. Discretion and Flexibility

- **DfT Guidance:** Encourages local authorities to use discretion, especially where local circumstances, community support, or environmental factors justify a lower limit, even if standard criteria are not fully met.
- **SCC Policy:** Allows some discretion (e.g., for key buildings or Community Speed Watch), but generally applies criteria more rigidly and is less explicit about using discretion for broader community or environmental reasons.
- **Departure:** SCC policy is less flexible in applying discretion for local or environmental factors than DfT guidance recommends.

4. Supporting Measures and Speed Management Packages

- **DfT Guidance:** Stresses that speed limits should not be set in isolation but as part of a package with engineering, education, and publicity measures to ensure compliance and support mode shift.
- **SCC Policy:** Focuses primarily on the speed limit itself and does not directly address supporting engineering, education, or publicity measures as part of the policy framework.
- **Departure:** SCC policy may not fully integrate supporting measures as recommended by DfT.

5. Assessment of Costs, Benefits, and Wider Impacts

- **DfT Guidance:** Recommends use of the Speed Limit Appraisal Tool to assess full costs and benefits, including environmental, health, and quality of life impacts, not just collision data.
- **SCC Policy:** Mentions the tool for significant schemes but does not require its use for routine speed limit changes and focuses more on collision history and road environment.
- **Departure:** SCC policy may not systematically appraise wider impacts or use the DfT tool for all relevant cases.

6. Potential vs. Actual Pedestrian/Cyclist Activity

- **DfT Guidance:** Considers both existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users when setting limits.
- **SCC Policy:** Tends to require evidence of existing activity.
- **Departure:** SCC policy may miss opportunities to support future increases in walking/cycling by not considering potential demand.

7. Minimum Length of Speed Limits

- **DfT Guidance:** Recommends a minimum of 600m, but allows reduction to 400m or even 300m in exceptional circumstances.
- **SCC Policy:** Also uses 600m as standard, with some flexibility, so this area is generally aligned.

Summary: While SCC's Speed Limit Policy is broadly consistent with national guidance, it is more rigid in its application, places greater emphasis on 85th percentile speeds, and is less explicit about supporting measures, potential demand, and the use of discretion for community and environmental benefits. The DfT guidance encourages a more holistic, flexible, and community-focused approach.

Appendix G

A comparison of the case for reduction in speed limit at A143 Wickham Street with both Suffolk County Council (SCC) Speed Limit Policy and the latest DfT 'Setting Local Speed Limits' guidance, highlighting any policy gaps:

1. Basis for Setting Speed Limits: Mean Speed vs. 85th Percentile

- **Case for Reduction:** Argues for using mean speeds as the primary basis for setting limits, in line with DfT 2024 guidance.
- **SCC Policy:** Continues to emphasize 85th percentile speeds for compliance and enforcement, which is stricter than DfT guidance.
- **DfT Guidance:** Clearly states mean speeds should be the basis for setting limits, with 85th percentile as supporting data.
- **Policy Gap:** SCC policy is not fully aligned with DfT guidance, and the case for reduction highlights this as a barrier to change.

2. Consideration of Vulnerable Road Users and Community Impact

- **Case for Reduction:** Emphasizes the needs and safety of pedestrians, bus users, and the impact on community quality of life, referencing DfT's prioritization of vulnerable users and community concerns.
- **SCC Policy:** Considers vulnerable users but tends to require evidence of existing activity rather than potential or latent demand.
- **DfT Guidance:** Prioritizes both existing and potential vulnerable road users and recognizes community concerns as valid grounds for change.
- **Policy Gap:** SCC policy is less flexible and less responsive to potential demand and community quality of life than DfT guidance and the case for reduction.

3. Discretion and Flexibility

- **Case for Reduction:** Requests SCC to use discretion, especially where village character or local circumstances justify a lower limit, and notes that policies should be regularly reviewed.
- **SCC Policy:** Allows some discretion but generally applies criteria rigidly and has not been updated since 2014.
- **DfT Guidance:** Encourages local discretion, especially for community/environmental reasons, and expects policies to be kept up to date.
- **Policy Gap:** SCC policy is less explicit and less flexible in using discretion for local/community factors, and the case for reduction points out the lack of policy review.

4. Supporting Measures and Speed Management Packages

- **Case for Reduction:** Proposes a package of measures (bus stops, crossings, roundels, pavement reinstatement) alongside a lower limit.
- **SCC Policy:** Focuses mainly on the speed limit itself, not on supporting engineering or education measures.
- **DfT Guidance:** Recommends speed limits be part of a broader package of engineering, education, and publicity measures.
- **Policy Gap:** SCC policy does not fully integrate supporting measures as recommended by DfT and as proposed in the case for reduction.

5. Assessment of Costs, Benefits, and Wider Impacts

- **Case for Reduction:** Highlights non-monetary costs/benefits (e.g., emergency response, community severance, quality of life) and references DfT's Speed Limit Appraisal Tool.
- **SCC Policy:** Mentions the tool for significant schemes but does not require its use for routine changes and focuses more on collision history and road environment.
- **DfT Guidance:** Recommends systematic appraisal of wider impacts for all relevant cases.
- **Policy Gap:** SCC policy may not systematically appraise wider impacts or use the DfT tool for all relevant cases, as advocated in the case for reduction.

6. Consistency and Local Support

- **Case for Reduction:** Points out inconsistency in speed limits along the A143 and strong local support for a 30mph limit.
- **SCC Policy:** Considers consistency and community support but does not treat them as decisive unless other criteria are met.
- **DfT Guidance:** Recognizes consistency and local support as important, especially for villages.

- **Policy Gap:** SCC policy is less responsive to local support and consistency arguments than DfT guidance and the case for reduction.

7. Potential vs. Actual Pedestrian/Cyclist Activity

- **Case for Reduction:** Argues for considering potential increases in walking/cycling if the environment is made safer.
- **SCC Policy:** Tends to require evidence of existing activity.
- **DfT Guidance:** Considers both existing and potential activity.
- **Policy Gap:** SCC policy may miss opportunities to support future increases in active travel.

8. Policy Review and Update

- **Case for Reduction:** Criticizes SCC for not updating its policy since 2014, despite new national guidance.
- **SCC Policy:** Last updated in 2014.
- **DfT Guidance:** Expects policies to be kept up to date and responsive to new evidence and guidance.
- **Policy Gap:** SCC policy is outdated relative to current DfT guidance.

Summary: The case for reduction at A143 Wickham Street exposes several policy gaps: SCC's reliance on 85th percentile speeds, limited flexibility for community and vulnerable user needs, lack of integration of supporting measures, insufficient consideration of potential demand and wider impacts, and an outdated policy framework. These gaps mean SCC policy is less aligned with current DfT guidance and less responsive to the holistic, community-focused approach advocated in the case for reduction.

Appendix B

Bobby Bennett (SCC Councillor)

TUE SEP 15 7:27 PMA143 TRO

Hilary Workman CiLCA, Matthew Fox, Nicola Crane, Nick Timothy MP, Cllr Mike Lavelle, Cllr Mel Karunaratne

Dear All,

I would like to reiterate the strongest support for the proposal to reduce the speed limit on the A143 at Wickham Street.

This is a busy road with houses on both sides, and children have to cross the road to get to the school bus. I have been campaigning on this issue since 2021, along side residents, the parish council and the MP because I have always felt that the current speed limit is too high for this stretch of road.

We have been raising concerns about speeding and road safety for years, and I really hope that we now have the opportunity to make this change.

I will continue to support this proposal and push for it to happen. It has taken far too long to get to this point, and I hope we can now get this over the line.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Bobby Bennett

County Councillor for Clare Division