

Community Speed Watch

volunteers help improve road safety



More than 770 volunteers across Northamptonshire have been helping to improve road safety after taking part in the 2019 Community Speed Watch programme.

The volunteers from 62 Community Speed Watch groups gave up their spare time to work alongside the Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance to reduce speeding across the county.

Community Speed Watch is an initiative which sees fully trained residents use speed detection devices to monitor vehicles travelling through their towns and villages on roads with limits of 20, 30 and 40mph.

Warning letters are sent to the registered keeper of any vehicles caught exceeding the speed limit, which aims to increase awareness of the dangers of speeding and encourage drivers to reduce their speed.

The drivers' details will be also held on record to identify any repeat offenders and anyone caught exceeding the speed limits more than twice can expect a visit from the police as well as targeted enforcement.

Between April and November, a total of 686 Community SpeedWatch sessions were carried out by the groups, which resulted in 4,875 warning letters being sent to drivers caught speeding.

Alongside this, members of the Northamptonshire Police's Safer Roads Team have completed an additional 756 enforcement sessions in these communities during 2019, which resulted in more than 10,000 offences being detected and processed for prosecution.

Safer Roads Operations Manager at Northamptonshire Police, Matthew O'Connell, said: "Our volunteers are passionate about improving road safety within their local communities, and their dedication and commitment makes a real difference.

"Wind, rain or shine, they do a fantastic job not only providing invaluable data but also helping to raise awareness of the dangers of speeding and educating drivers on the importance of sticking to the speed limit.

"We are very grateful for all their efforts throughout this year, and we would like to thank them for the significant level of commitment they have made to the Force through their volunteering."

Speeding, along with drink/drug driving, seatbelt and mobile phone use, makes up the fatal four offences, which are often recorded as a contributory factors in road collisions in the county.

In 2018, 31 people were killed on the county's road networks, 257 were seriously injured and 1172 sustained slight injuries in road collisions, but despite this, road safety in Northamptonshire has improved significantly over the last 20 years.

The Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance (NSRA) brings together key partners to work with members of the public on initiatives such as Community Speed Watch, to help improve road safety across the county.

Chair of NSRA, Chief Superintendent Mick Stamper, said: "Our main priority is to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads by clamping down on the fatal four offences.

"Speed is often recorded as a contributory factor in collisions, and it not only increases the risk of serious injury and fatalities on our roads, but is one of the most common concerns in communities.

"The Community Speed Watch programme is a great way for the local community to support the countywide effort to make our roads safer and is a more effective and efficient way of delivering road safety."

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold said: "I know that safe and responsible road use is a major concern for people in Northamptonshire.

"Community Speed Watch is a great way to get involved and play a part in creating a safer county and I have been able to visit several Speed Watch groups to see them in action. I strongly support the work of these volunteers and am grateful for the significant contribution they make to their neighbourhoods."

If you're interested in becoming a Community Speed Watch volunteer, please visit www.northants.police.uk/CSW for more information.

Set up last November, the Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance is a partnership between the Force, Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service, The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Northamptonshire Highways, which represents the County Council.

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