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30 mph speed enforcement by police in London (2012)

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Key points

- In 2012, 7275 drivers were given a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) for exceeding the 30mph speed limit by police in London –20 drivers a day on average.
- Only five boroughs had more than one 30mph FPN issued per day whilst another five had less than one 30mph FPN a month.
- With such low enforcement of 30mph by police, their role in determining speed limits should be reconsidered.

Introduction

The vast majority of speed enforcement in London is conducted by safety cameras with some 100,000 notices intended for prosecution issued annually. But police can have a deciding role in 30mph speed limits being reduced to 20mph, on the basis that they have a key role in enforcing speed limits. The extent to which they fulfill this function and merit this decisive role is reviewed below.

In 2012, 7275 FPNs were given by police for speeding in a 30 mph limit. This accounted for over half of all the 13,831 FPNs issued for speeding by police. The vast majority were given by the Roads Policing team as borough police are not equipped to enforce speed. Only 325 FPNS were given for excess speed in 20mph roads, with most given by the parks police. For comparison, police issued over twice as many FPNS for mobile phone use than for speeding.

How often?

- Croydon and Barnet had the most issued with 1142 and 1050 respectively (3 a day).
- More than once a day: Only 5 boroughs (Barnet, Croydon, Ealing, Greenwich, Newham).
- More than once a week (but less than once a day) 13 (Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Bromley, City of Westminster, Enfield, Havering, Kingston upon Thames, Lewisham, Merton, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth) .
- More than once a month but less than once a week Nine boroughs had 30mph FPN issued less than once a week: Bexley, Camden, Harrow, Hounslow, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Sutton)
- Less than once a month 5 (Epping Forest, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Islington).

Conclusion

Manual speed enforcement of 30mph speed limits in London is so rare that the role of the police in determining the appropriateness of 20mph speed limits must be questioned.

Table 1: FPNs for exceeding 30 mph enforcement (2012)

Local authority name	Total	Per week
BARKING AND DAGENHAM	84	1.6
BARNET	1050	20.2
BEXLEY	55	1.1
BRENT	128	2.5
BROMLEY	196	3.8
CAMDEN	38	0.7
CITY OF WESTMINSTER	241	4.6
CROYDON	1142	22.0
EALING	391	7.5
ENFIELD	65	1.3
EPPING FOREST	6	0.1
GREENWICH	691	13.3
HACKNEY	5	0.1
HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM	10	0.2
HARINGEY	13	0.3
HARROW	17	0.3
HAVERING	142	2.7
HILLINGDON	275	5.3
HOUNSLOW	54	1.0
ISLINGTON	6	0.1
KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA	46	0.9
KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES	251	4.8
LAMBETH	75	1.4
LEWISHAM	109	2.1
MERTON	153	2.9
NEWHAM	739	14.2
REDBRIDGE	52	1.0
RICHMOND-UPON-THAMES	52	1.0
ROYAL PARKS CONSTABULARY	325	6.3
SOUTHWARK	300	5.8
SUTTON	33	0.6
TOWER HAMLETS	129	2.5
WALTHAM FOREST	236	4.5
WANDSWORTH	164	3.2
total 30 mph speeding FPNs	7275	139.9

Note: This does not include those drivers who contested their FPNs at the Magistrates Court.