

Faulkland – A366 Speeding. A Review of the Data.

Councillors will be aware that the issue of speeding through Faulkland on the A366 has long been a matter of serious concern. As a consequence I thought it would be useful to briefly review and present a summary of the data collected by the AutoSpeedWatch cameras. AutoSpeedWatch was developed by Mr Tim Gibbs of Faulkland and in 2016 the system was trialled in the village before being made available as a commercial traffic/speed monitoring system.

Two AutoSpeedWatch cameras have been installed on the village outskirts since 2017. The system is also in use in our neighbouring parish of Norton St Philip. *The system is solar powered and will continuously collect data during day light hours*, recording the vehicle number plate and the time of the speeding offence. Persistent offenders are recognised by the system. Occasionally, bright or low sunlight, or dirty number plates may prevent the recording of an offending vehicle.

Faulkland has in the past had a Community Speedwatch scheme manned by volunteers and the collected data passed to the Somerset Community Speed Watch scheme and used to assist Somerset Police in the selecting the use of traffic police cameras to prosecute offenders. The drawback with this has been attracting enough volunteers to mount regular traffic monitoring in all weathers and, in contrast to AutoSpeedWatch, was often only undertaken once a week for no more than two hours.

The data collected by the AutoSpeedWatch monitoring is passed every week to the Somerset Community Speed Watch scheme. Initially this was undertaken by Councillor Jon Blake and following his resignation from the Parish Council this role has been undertaken by Mr Martyn Tovey of Turners Tower to whom thanks are offered.

The data collected makes very sobering reading. In the last year **8,048** offences in excess of 38mph being recorded, including 'repeat offenders'. In the last 12 months 16 vehicles have been verified as speeding through the village over 20 times and 1 vehicle has been recorded offending 65 times through Faulkland and our neighbouring parish of Norton St Philip.

In the last 6 months the *average* offending speed recorded is 50mph.

The success of the AutoSpeedWatch is self-evident. Although the data is passed on a weekly basis to the Somerset Community Speed Watch scheme, Avon and Somerset police will not use the identification data to prosecute persistent offenders, citing data protection issues. Councillors will recall that we wrote to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Somerset, Ms Sue Mountstevens, in November 2020 asking for clarification on the issue of using AutoSpeedWatch data to prosecute offenders. The response can only be described as curt and dismissive. At present we are still awaiting to hear from our local 'beat' police officer for a meeting in Faulkland to further discuss speeding, use of AutoSpeedWatch data and other issues relating to road safety in the parish.

Mark Corney

Chairman

Hemington, Hardington and Faulkland Parish Council

9th March 2021