



New safer, greener, healthier 20mph speed limits for busy Maldon town shopping area introduced from 23 June

Release issued in partnership by Essex County Council and Maldon District Council

Some new interim, signed 20mph speed limits on roads in the busy central shopping area of Maldon are being put in place starting from Tuesday 23 June.

Roads affected include Fullbridge, from its junction with Market Hill to a point close to Mill Lane, plus the entire lengths of Baker Mews; Bull Lane; Cromwell Lane; Edward Bright Close; Market Hill; High Street; Mill Lane; Old Mill Close; Saxon Court; and Tait Mews.

Working together, and adding to public safety measures introduced elsewhere, Essex County Council and Maldon District Council are introducing these speed limits as part of the continuing response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide a 'Safer, Greener, Healthier' environment for shoppers and other pedestrians and cyclists.

Along with measures already introduced locally, the new lower speed limits aim to encourage people to support their local businesses by increasing pedestrian and cyclist confidence when having to avoid other people, particularly where traffic is passing.

The new limits will be monitored to assess their effectiveness and may be tweaked or amended as part of the 'test and learn' approach Essex County Council are using across all the Safer, Greener, Healthier measures being introduced to many towns across the county. Further measures that could be introduced in Maldon are still being discussed.

The project is funded by part of the initial £1.9m Emergency Active Travel Fund for Essex announced by the government for such schemes.

The Maldon scheme, like others being introduced across the county, is driven by immediate public health requirements such as social distancing, but in encouraging walking and cycling it will enable healthier, more sustainable ways of getting around locally.

Dr Mike Gogarty, Director of Public Health at Essex County Council, explains: "Providing a good environment for the public to practice safe social distancing remains a core part of the measures we need to limit the spread of coronavirus. Helping people to social distance in traditionally busy urban areas will help immediate public safety; it will also make it easier as businesses resume trading.

"Walking and cycling are healthy activities in their own right, they can help to lessen traffic congestion and consequently improve air quality, so these new measures are very supportive of societal demand."

Chris Harvey, author of the Maldon District's Walking Guides and a Maldon High Street Volunteer said "The District (and town) of Maldon are great for walking, from coastal paths to historic and independent high streets. Promoting walking, active lifestyles and improving the safety of walkers/pedestrians are absolutely vital considerations at this time. A reduced 20 mph speed limit in Maldon would definitely be a great start."

Peter Bate, Land Manager, Sustrans, East of England said "The introduction of an interim 20pmh speed limit in Maldon is good news for cyclists. The historic town of Maldon is a wonderful part of Sustrans National Cycle Network but Maldon's bustling high street is challenging and we are supportive of measures that support active travel in the area."

Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader of Essex County Council and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, said: "Safety is the reason why we are introducing a 20pmh speed restriction in the centre of Maldon. We want to keep people safe from COVID-19 infection while they visit the shops and businesses in Maldon and this is how we are going to do it.

"While I recognise many people will still need to use their cars, this is a chance for all to think hard about driving for short journeys. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to greatly improve our air quality and our health as well as the life opportunities for the next generation.

"Maldon is among the first towns in Essex to get such a scheme, we're using this money to help people confidently return to shop and work, as lockdown measures continue to be carefully eased."

Cllr Adrian Fluker, Leader of Maldon District Council, said: "Helping our High Street businesses to reopen safely has been a key focus for us. I am delighted that we have been able to work with Essex County Council to implement a number of measures to enable Maldon High Street to be a safer and greener place for visitors and businesses alike and we are ambitious to do even more."

The total money that could be made available to Essex by the Government if further plans are approved is up to £9.6m.

People can share comments on the measures with Essex and Maldon District Councils at SGH.Routes@essex.gov.uk

See more about the Safer, Greener, Healthier measures on Essex Highways' website at: www.essex.gov.uk/safer-greener-healthier

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