

Letchworth Residents Group Newsletter October 2026

Where in Letchworth is 20 Plenty?

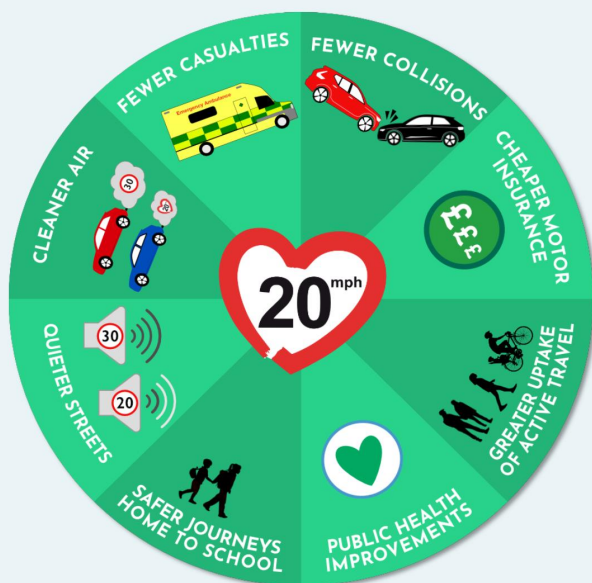
At our October meeting we were fortunate to be joined by Adrian Berendt from the CIC “20s Plenty for Us”.

Adrian explained that over 20 million people (1/3 of the UK population) live on 20mph streets and 69 out of 154 of England’s Highway Authorities are committed to their introduction.

Safety is the main rationale for 20mph streets, but their implementation improves the quality of life in many ways, as illustrated by this slide from Adrian’s presentation. For example, more people are willing to cycle on roads with a 20mph speed limit.



Benefits of 20mph default / wide area



A 20mph default speed limit brings wide-ranging benefits for local communities:

- 20 Safer
- 20 Healthier
- 20 Quieter
- 20 Cleaner
- 20 More liveable neighbourhoods
- 20 Cheaper motoring costs for drivers

The governments recently published Road Safety Strategy has the ambitious targets of reducing deaths and serious injuries on UK roads by 65% overall and 70% for children. In Hertfordshire 50% of casualties on roads take place on roads that currently have 30mph speed limits. Almost all the casualties involving cyclists and pedestrians occur on 30mph roads. Reducing speed limits to 20mph will be a key policy to meet the new road safety targets. The Department for Transport publish casualty data, this data should be a factor in determining if a road speed limit should be lowered to 20mph. In Letchworth there are a number of roads where drivers speed has been a problem and traffic calming has been introduced, for example, Bedford Road, Sollershott West and Wilbury Road.

Introduction of 20mph zones is not expected to come with any additional traffic calming measures, these would only be considered if compliance proved problematic. When 20mph was introduced in Wales the police did not start enforcement for 6 months so drivers had time to adjust to the change. If further calming is needed the 20s plenty campaign team recommend that wide ramps are introduced across the road at locations where pedestrians want to cross, so any new infrastructure provides a benefit beyond slowing traffic.

Faversham was cited as a town where there had been a successful implementation of 20mph. Arterial roads were identified and excluded from the outset in response to community engagement. If Letchworth can identify the streets where drivers currently travel routinely and safely at 30mph and we reflect on the many streets where we perpetually speed up and slow down, and probably have an average speed below 20mph, it seems likely that a well-considered implementation of 20mph could make Letchworth a calmer, better place without much impact on our journey times.

Contacting Us: If you would like to help run the Letchworth Residents Group, or perhaps you have a topic you would like to run a meeting on, then get in touch by emailing letchworth-residents@lalg.org.uk.

Discussions on the Appropriate Speed Limits on key Letchworth Roads

Attendees to the Residents Group Meeting identified key connector roads in Letchworth and debated whether these roads should remain with a 30mph speed limit. Factors taken into consideration were the prevalence of residential properties, community services along the road and the characteristics of the road infrastructure.

There was consensus that the A505 from Pixmore Way to the A1 speed limit should remain 40mph.

Spring Road, Norton Road (Norton Way to Bikerdikes), Baldock Lane (A505 to Willian Village) were all considered 20mph roads whilst there was discussion whether parts of Wilbury Road, Norton Way North and South, and Broadway should remain at 30mph.

No roads were considered as suitable for a 30mph speed limit on the Grange estate. There was more debate about Lordship and Jackmans estates where Radburn Way, Howard Drive and Penn Way are arterial roads connecting to the A505. Both Lordship and Jackmans estates have path networks which allow active travel away from main roads.

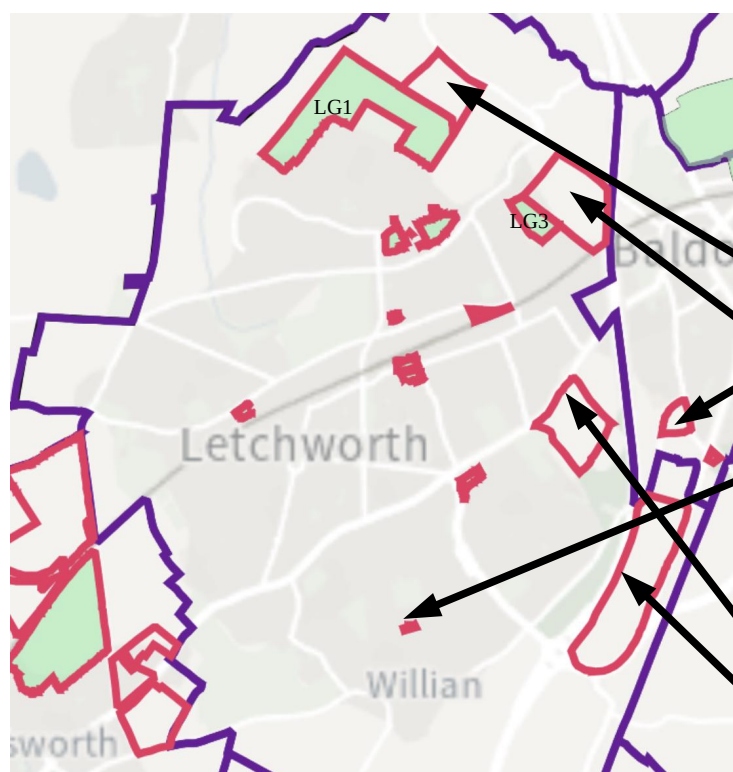
The existing traffic calming and road markings on **Bedford Road** are seen as problematic. It was reported that cars speed up between the humps, manoeuvre in odd ways to avoid humps and car debris is found related to inappropriate traversing of humps. Road traffic incident data shows Bedford Road as one of the hot spots.

The initial assumption was that the industrial area would remain at 30mph, but with the infill housing developments on Icknield Way and Blackhorse Road, lowering the speed limit on these roads to 20mph could be an enabler for more cycling into the town centre from periphery housing developments.

North Herts Council (NHC) Consultation on the Call for (Local Plan) Site Submissions

NHC are consulting on sites recently submitted for residential and employment development. They are also consulting on existing Local Plan allocations where work on the site had not commenced by 31 March 2026 (including sites yet to receive planning permission). The consultation (north-herts.gov.uk/call-sites) is open until 24th November 2026. Letchworth sites are listed under North Herts Unparished.

NHC is making a further Call for Sites focused on identifying smaller sites and brownfield development opportunities in order to meet the National Planning Policy Framework 2026 requires at least 10% (about 1,100) of housing requirement on sites less than one hectare and a further 10% on sites between one and 2.5 hectares



Agreed local plan sites where development is yet to begin (shaded green on the diagram) include the large developments, LG1 (North of the Grange) and LG3 (off Flint Road).

Four new Letchworth plots of land are proposed for residential development.

49112: Land between LG1 and Norton Road (14.75ha)

49115: Land between LG3, Norton Road and A1 (23.87 ha)

49120: Land between Baldock Lane and Weston Way (3.51ha)

49020: Land to the rear between Nos 100 and 112 Howard Drive (0.2ha)

Two Letchworth plots are proposed for employment sites.

49117 (E1): Land east of B656 Baldock Road (17.97ha)

49122 (E2): Land between A1 and A505/B197 London Road (42.3ha)

Significant additional development sites (68.7ha) have been put forward to extend Hitchin on land which borders Letchworth. The main access roads will be Cambridge Road and Stotfold Road.