



Community Speed Watch
Training Handbook
2023/2024



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Introduction

Thank you for becoming a Community Speed Watch volunteer and supporting the work of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP).

SERP is a single mission organization, dedicated to reducing the number of Deaths and Serious Injuries on Essex roads.

Your presence within communities, monitoring speeds on local roads, and demonstrating that road safety is an issue for you personally (as well as for your community), plays a significant part in the reduction of Death and Injury.

Vision Zero is SERP's ambition to eliminate road deaths and serious injuries by 2040.

We cannot achieve this ambition alone. We need the support of the whole community, so **thank you** for taking on this important volunteer role; it makes a huge difference.

The Safer Essex Road Partnership (SERP) has been established for over ten years and is a high-level strategic partnership between the agencies below:

- Essex Police (EP)
- Essex County Council (ECC)
- Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS)
- The Office of Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC)
- National Highways (NH)
- Thurrock Council (TC)
- Safer Roads Foundation (SRF)
- Southend City Council (SCC)
- Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust (EHAAT)
- East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST)

Community Speed Watch (CSW)

Community Speed Watch is a community-operated initiative, designed to allow volunteers to officially monitor speeding vehicles in areas of concern to the Community.

Community Speed Watch is not enforcement.

Essex Police, alongside partners within SERP, seek to further promote road safety.

They intend to work closely with local communities to reduce speed and educate drivers. This will be achieved through the continuation and development of CSW across Essex.

Aims of the Scheme

Community Speed Watch is a scheme to enable trained volunteers to address speed concerns in their communities.

This is achieved by:

- Undertaking high-visibility roadside operations to ascertain the actual speed of speeding drivers, with a view to improving driver behaviour.
- Reporting to Essex Police the details of speeding vehicles in specific areas where speed is of concern. These speed monitoring reports enable the Essex Police to:
 - a. Send advisory letters to the registered owners to confirm to them that their vehicle was travelling more than the speed limit.
 - b. Use the data gathered to inform Essex Police and others in the Safer Essex Roads Partnership on the allocation of resources and general road safety issues.
- Delivering locally based feedback and problem-solving schemes where speeding is of specific concern to the Community.
- Speed Watch is not enforcement: it is about raising awareness of speeding within communities and educating drivers.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Community Speedwatch Scheme sits at the heart of the SERP partnership, with key organisations undertaking various roles and responsibilities to ensure its success.

There is a dedicated CSW Co-ordinator, employed by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, and funded by ECFRS, OPFCC, and SERP. The CSW Co-ordinator oversees the recruitment, registration, and retention of groups, and acts as the main liaison between volunteers and the SERP partners.

Essex Police regulates the scheme, underwrites the insurance for CSW volunteers, and has developed operational procedures and good practice. Essex Police are responsible for all, and any action required following a monitoring session, including sending letters to motorists. Police Officers regularly support groups at the roadside.

Essex Highways deliver all training to CSW Volunteers, both online and in person. They risk assess sites and support volunteers throughout the County, also providing support at the roadside.

Volunteers

Trained CSW volunteers will operate on behalf of their respective communities and groups.

Volunteers are not employees or agents of Essex Police. Essex Police carries public liability insurance which will cover Community Speed Watch activity. Volunteers must, therefore, act in accordance with their training and the relevant Community Speed Watch guidelines for this cover to be valid.

Volunteers will not be paid or be able to claim expenses for travelling or personal equipment.

The use of volunteers' private motor vehicles or other personal equipment in connection with CSW operations is not covered under any Essex Police insurance policies.

Communication

Each CSW group should have an appointed Group or Village Co-ordinator. This person will be the named lead for the group, and the person that SERP's CSW Co-ordinator

will liaise with the most. The Group or Village Co-ordinator should keep an up-to-date list of volunteers who support their group.

Contact from all volunteers should be via the SERP CSW Co-Ordinator who can be contacted on: community.speedwatch@essex-fire.gov.uk

Training

To ensure consistency of operations, all volunteers must be aged 18 or over and will undergo training with a suitably approved trainer. All volunteers will complete the Confirmation of Training form, confirming they have received their training and understand the health and safety risk assessment of the role before they participate in any Speed Watch activity.

Behaviour

The CSW scheme is operated under the governance of Essex Police. There is no plan for volunteers to any undertake Police checks and we do not exclude anyone who has been convicted or penalised for motoring offences. However, SERP retains the right to remove volunteers without explanation. Volunteers will be asked to declare any issue or circumstance that could bring the scheme into disrepute. They will be given direction during training to ensure they do not act in an unacceptable manner whilst a member of Community Speed Watch.

Equipment Allocated

Comprises:

- A hand-held radar that meets the approved Essex Police specifications. Only these speed detection devices should be used by volunteers.
- Portable Community Speed Watch warning signs. No other signs are permitted. The portable signs must be deployed whenever a scheme operates, even where fixed signs have been installed near a check location.
- High visibility jackets for volunteers.
- Clipboards and recording sheets.

Personal mobile telephones should also be taken as a means of communication, if required in an emergency. Video and photographic equipment must not be used as they are likely to lead to confrontation and unnecessary personal risk. In an emergency always call 999.

The hand-held radar guns have been calibrated/set by the manufacturer to a specific level and, as they are not to be used for enforcement purposes, there is no requirement for further calibration unless there is reason to suppose it is faulty.

Checks before use are recommended, to ensure that the portable equipment is in good order. Users should ensure that when charging battery powered equipment that this is always monitored and supervised (just in case any unforeseen fault should occur, for example, the internal battery overheating etc).

A number of parish councils have purchased equipment for use within their area. To participate in the scheme, the equipment must be approved by Essex Police. Essex Police/SERP will not be liable for costs/repairs/insurance for equipment owned by third parties.

Volunteers are not to video record or take photos of vehicles during the Speed Watch checks.

Health and Safety

The personal safety of the trained volunteers is of primary consideration.

The operation of Speed Watch has been designed to encourage teams to function as passive observer/recorders of vehicles as they pass. Deployment locations should be:

- Safe for volunteers to operate in.
- Able to accommodate the equipment, including safe positioning of CSW signs.
- Highly visible to motorists, to maximise educational impact and reduce risk of sudden reactions.
- Have been approved by SERP/ Essex Police/CSW Co-ordinator.
- Have an Essex Police-issued Location Code.

If all these principles cannot be adhered to, then a location is not suitable for deployment. Once evaluated and approved, the Police will issue a site code. Each group will be given a **maximum of 3 sites**. One additional new site, per year, can only be requested after the group has been active for ONE year.

Although a risk assessment has been completed for all designated sites, volunteers should re-evaluate the site, prior to each monitoring session.

Five steps to making a dynamic risk assessment:

1. Identify a hazard – Has anything changed at the site?
2. Weather conditions, potholes, obstacles?
3. Identify who may be affected – Volunteers, pedestrians stepping into the road, drivers on slippery roads?
4. Estimate the risk – Could the changes put anyone at risk?
5. Implement control measures – What actions could you take to make the site safer?

Are any new risks temporary or permanent? If the site needs to be reassessed or moved, contact the CSW co-ordinator at your earliest convenience.

Confrontation

Volunteers are instructed that in the event of any confrontation, they should simply explain that they “are engaged in a community initiative with the full support of the Essex Police”. A letter of explanation about the scheme is provided (at Appendix A) and can be handed to motorists, during monitoring activities.

Personal safety is paramount and in the event of any risk to personal safety, volunteers are instructed to secure themselves, leave the equipment and contact Essex Police.

Risk Assessments

A full risk assessment for CSW is available from Essex Police. All Speed Watch locations need to be risk assessed by our Partners in Essex Police/SERP and must be registered before being used for deployments by volunteers (see Operational Procedures, Appendix B).

Deployment

Community Speed Watch groups will operate in approved 20, 30 and 40 mile per hour areas during hours of daylight. Speed Watch teams will only be deployed to areas where the Town/Parish Council or Essex Police have identified a community concern.

The Community Speed Watch team will be expected to bring one or more personal mobile telephones so that in an emergency, relevant assistance can be obtained by ringing 999 and speaking with a police operator.

Trained volunteers should not normally know the identity of drivers of speeding vehicles they report. However, it is accepted that most volunteers operate where they live, so some recognition is inevitable. In this event, a professional attitude would be expected (such that driver details should not be disclosed, and any personal information gathered should remain confidential).

Locations

Monitoring locations should be overt and safe for volunteers, pedestrians and motorists. Teams should not deploy to locations where speeding is a concern if these principles cannot be adhered to. It is vital that, to prevent a negative, dangerous, impulsive or startled reaction from motorists, there should be no sudden appearance of hi-vis jackets, nor any rapid movement towards the vehicles being monitored. Locations should be highly visible for at least fifty metres and, ideally at least 100 metres by oncoming traffic.

Team Composition

An operational Community Speed Watch Team will comprise a minimum of three trained volunteers. All trained volunteers will wear the supplied single-colour (orange or yellow) high-visibility, long sleeved jackets, to allow the Team to be recognised. New groups should have a minimum of 8 volunteers, although this is at the discretion of the CSW Co-ordinator.

Team Positioning

Ideally and where possible, the team should be no closer than 3ft from the edge of the road and set to monitor the speed of all approaching vehicles.

Signage

The road signs need to be placed ahead of the team, one in each direction, so that they are clearly visible to alert drivers being checked. In addition, this provides the public with a means to identify Speed Watch activity. Fixed 'Community Speed Watch

Activity' warning signs installed by the County Council should not be considered a replacement for the portable signs in each kit bag. The more conspicuous the activity, the greater the impact is likely to be. For the educational impact of Speed Watch to be maximised, any Speed Watch activity must be highly visible to the drivers we are seeking to educate.

Returns

A suitable record sheet template for use at the roadside is provided (Activity Log). This will include the location and details of all speeding vehicles. At the end of the operation, and within 48 working hours, this information should be submitted to the Essex Police Processing Team, (via the allocated email CSWatch@Essex.police.uk) who in turn will arrange for its timely processing. Paper forms should then be shredded. The resources which Essex Police can devote to the processing and sending of letters is not limitless and will be monitored. Groups should be aware of the educational impact of their presence and that this alone will impact the occurrences of speeding. Feedback is provided to groups via the SERP website, CSW tab, Power BI dashboard.

Notification Stage

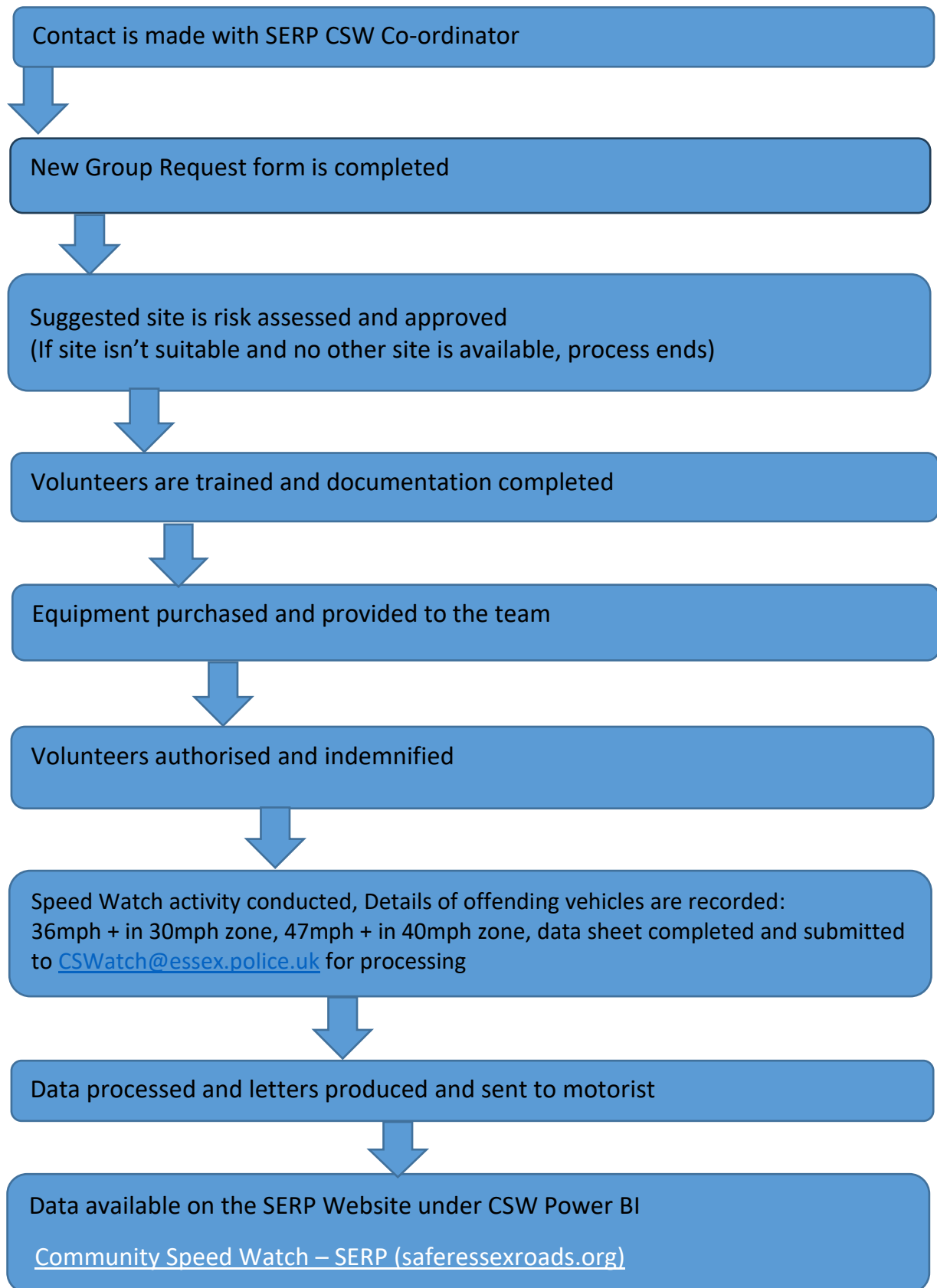
The next stages of the operation will rest with Essex Police. An advisory letter will, in most cases, be sent to the Registered Keeper of those vehicles that are detected in the relevant speed limit. Should the vehicle come to notice again, and it is the same registered keeper, a second letter with a more direct message will be sent. If a vehicle with the same local keeper continues to be reported or drives at an excessive speed, information should be sent to Essex Police via CSWatch@Essex.police.uk where they will consider the next appropriate response.

Use of Data

Information about speeding gathered through this process will be collated to facilitate appropriate conventional speed enforcement activity and shared with Essex Police to assist in further initiatives. **The data will not be used for any other purpose.**

Community Speed Watch

The process for setting up a new group and starting activity:



Codes of Conduct

These codes of conduct must be adhered to at all times

- Volunteers must not stand in the road at any time
- Volunteers or freestanding CSW signs must not obstruct the footpath or highway
- Volunteers need to park safely and responsibly if they have to drive to the site. Vehicles must not be parked in the line of sight or obstructing driveways etc.
- Fluorescent/reflective jackets must be worn at all times and must remain done up
- The device must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- Volunteers must not attempt to conceal their speed monitoring activities from motorists
- Monitoring is to be undertaken by a minimum of three volunteers
- At least one volunteer should be in possession of a mobile phone
- Only monitoring should take place - Do not signal or gesture to drivers
- Do not attempt to stop any vehicle
- Monitoring will only take place at designated and approved sites during daylight hours. Monitoring must not take place in adverse weather conditions (including poor visibility, the rain or in slippery conditions).
- Confrontation should be avoided through conversation or by handing over the roadside motorist explanation letter. Should the situation escalate, abandon the monitoring immediately and call the police by dialling **999**
- **Please remember: Community Speed Watch is education and engagement; it is not enforcement.**

Community Speed Watch Dashboard

Records and maps of the active community Speedwatch sites across Essex can be found on the Safer Essex Roads Website here -

<https://saferessexroads.org/policecommunity/community-speed-watch/>

Date

01/04/2021

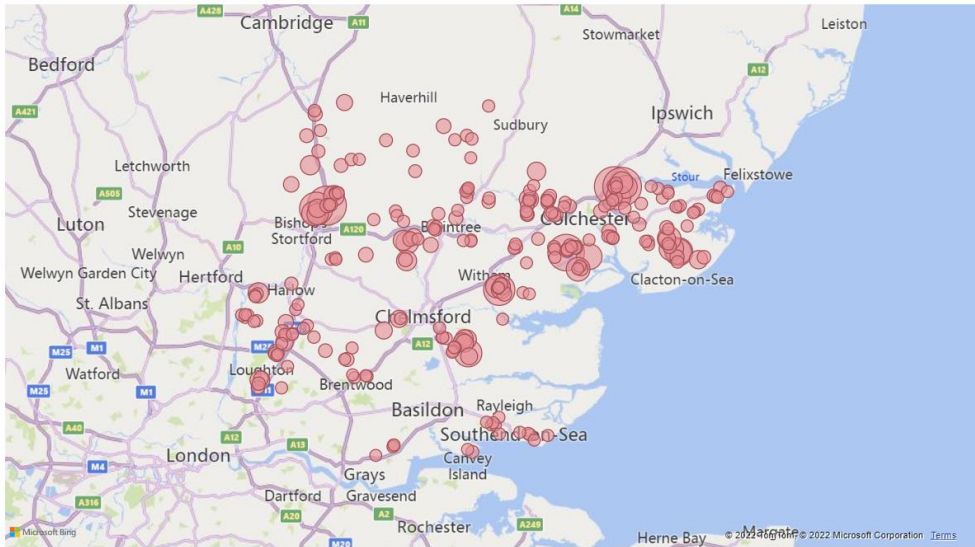
15/10/2022



Site Town

- Select all
- (Blank)
- ABRIDGE
- ARDLEIGH
- BANNISTER GREEN
- BEAUMONT CUM MOZE
- BERDEN
- BERECHURCH
- BICKNACRE
- BIRCH
- BOCKING CHURCHSTREET
- BRADFELD
- BRADFELD HEATH
- BRAINTREE
- BRAN END
- BRENTWOOD
- BUCKHURST HILL
- BURES
- BUTTS GREEN
- CANVEY ISLAND
- CASTLE HEDINGHAM
- CHAPPEL
- CHIGWELL
- COPFORD
- CORNISH HALL END
- CRESSING
- DEBDEN
- DEDHAM
- DEDHAM HEATH
- EAST HANNINGFIELD
- EIGHT ASH GREEN
- ELSENHAM
- EPPING
- FEERING
- FELSTED
- FINCHINGFIELD

Site icon size reflects number of records, hover over icon for details



Community Speed Watch Data


On completion of your Community Speed Watch training, your details will be held on the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service database. We take the security of personal data very seriously and the information that we collect will only be used for Community Speed Watch purposes. You have the right to be removed from our data base at any time, please contact: Community.speedwatch@essex-fire.gov.uk

A monthly Community Speed Watch Newsletter will be emailed. Please let us know if you would prefer not to receive this.

CONTACTS:

For all general Community Speed Watch enquiries: -

 Community.speedwatch@essex-fire.gov.uk

 Tel: 01376 576230

Activity Logs only:-

 CSWatch@Essex.police.uk

Safer Essex Roads Partnership:

 <https://saferessexroads.org>



 [Vehicle tax, MOT and insurance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Welcome to the Highways Service Information Centre

[Apply to install a VAS or SID illuminated sign](#)

Activity log – Version 10

CSW Microsoft Excel 365 Activity Log v10.0						
Community Name:						
Name:						
Location:						
Site Code:						
Speed Limit:						
Date (dd/mm/yyyy):						
Start Time (hh:mm):						
Finish Time (hh:mm):						
Notes:						
Time	Make	Model	Colour	VRM	Speed	Notes

Completion Essentials:

Community Name: Stanway

Name: Names of volunteers attending the monitoring session

Location: SCHOOL ROAD, J/W CHURCH GREEN, LITTLE STANWAY

Site Code: CSW007

Speed Limit: 30

Date: 16/10/2023

Start Time: 07:35 (start of first recorded speeding motorist, not time of setting up)

Finish Time: 08:17 (start of last recorded speeding motorist, not packing up time)

Notes: Do not complete - Data in the 'Notes' section is not processed or recorded

Time: Mandatory – 24 hour clock (13:47)

Make: Ford)

Model: Kuga) – MUST complete at least 2 out of these 3

Colour: Charcoal grey)

VRM: Record vehicle registration mark with care

Speed: Mandatory

Notes: Do not record No Tax/No MOT here

Nil Returns: Do not submit Nil Return activity logs



APPENDIX A – Roadside Motorist Letter

COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH

Essex Police and the Safer Essex Roads Partnership support the activity currently being undertaken by residents; to address and enhance driver behaviour through their villages.

Whilst the volunteers have no powers to sanction a prosecution, offenders' details will be passed on to Essex Police, in order that the force can forward correspondence to the registered keeper, outlining a request for the driver to respect local speed limits as they would wish them to be respected within their own community.

Essex Police remains committed to improving road safety and addressing anti-social use of the County's roads, with efforts towards reducing road casualties. They look to the community to enhance its activity, making residents feel safer - thus improving their quality of life.

Speed is recognised as a major contributory factor to many fatal and serious injury collisions, and a great deal of time and effort is dedicated to addressing this issue at a strategic level.

In 2022, in Essex, there were **46** people killed in traffic collisions and **851** serious casualties.

Essex Police dealt with over **152,530** excess speed cases, which were finalised by the following methods:

- **17,108** by way of formal warnings having been detected by Community Speed Watch
- **1,619** Careless Driving Offences prosecuted (these are not included in the total 152,530 figure)
- **105,237** National Speed Awareness Courses delivered
- **23,299** by way of fixed penalties, resulting in 3 penalty points and a minimum £100 fine
- **6,886** by way of court appearance.

Should you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact the Community Engagement Team on Traffic.management@essex.pnn.police.uk

Yours sincerely,

Road Crime Team, Essex Police



101 is the national non-emergency number but always dial 999 if it is an emergency



[Follow Essex Roads Policing on Twitter.](#)





APPENDIX B – Operational Procedures

Operational Procedures

Community Speed Watch (CSW) activity is regulated and conducted as part of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) Vision Zero strategy. Community Speedwatch is an education engagement activity; it is **NOT** enforcement.

CSW volunteers undertake a proactive role in supporting our Partners, by reducing speeding incidents; being one of five layers of protection around making roads safer for all users. To this end, CSW volunteers play a vital role in monitoring motorist speed through their local communities and submitting data to Essex Police, who will issue formal warning letters to motorists recorded as exceeding the speed limit.

These Operational Procedures will be included in the initial training package. Contributions to this document have been made by members of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, including Essex Highways and the Essex Fire & Rescue Service. However, it is designed to comply with the Essex Police Policy which regulates and underwrites all CSW activity.

The following safety rules must be complied with on every occasion that a CSW group carries out monitoring activity. **Failure to comply with these safety rules may result in an individual or a group being suspended from CSW activities, until such time that they fully comply with the set conditions.**

The specific point of contact for all CSW groups is the CSW Co-Ordinator, who will provide feedback on the group's activities to all interested partners.

VOLUNTEERS:

- For Health and Safety reasons, a minimum of three volunteers are to be present at each monitoring session. On every occasion, a mobile phone is required to be available for emergency calls.
- Each CSW group is to have a minimum of 8 volunteers per group. Where this is not possible, numbers of volunteers per group will be at the discretion of the CSW Co-ordinator. It may be possible to combine volunteers with another local group, to provide additional support.
- All volunteers participating in roadside monitoring must be aged 18 years or over. There is no maximum age limit for CSW volunteers.
- CSW volunteers are covered by insurance under the umbrella of Essex Police. Volunteers need to be aware that Personal Accident insurance cover significantly reduces at age 75+, 80 and 85 years of age.

TRAINING:

- Training must be completed by an approved partner of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, either face-to-face or by an online platform. Training is provided free of charge. Members from other groups may be invited to attend a training session. The premises must have suitable access for all participants.
- All members will be required to undergo refresher training, as required.
- Once CSW volunteers have attended a training session, they must complete the MS Confirmation of Completed Training form (to prove they have attended the training and, thus, will be covered by the relevant insurance). [Confirmation of Completed Training Form](#)

CSW MONITORING SESSIONS:

- Monitoring may take place only in daylight hours (between sunrise and sunset).
- Monitoring must not take place in adverse weather conditions (including poor visibility, the rain or in slippery conditions).
- Signage must be displayed appropriately prior to monitoring – this should be 100m either side of the site and not obstructing the pavement.
- There must be a safe place to stand off the road which does not obstruct any pedestrian right of way. This should not be on private land. If there are no pavements, you may be able to use a village green or wide verge. Volunteers must not walk in the road and put themselves at risk or cause pedestrians to need to walk in the road.
- Hi-Viz, long-sleeved jackets must be worn at ALL times during the monitoring session and must be fully done up.
- The speed monitoring device must only be aimed at vehicles.
- Volunteers must not attempt to conceal their speed monitoring activities from passing motorists.
- Monitoring is to be undertaken by a minimum of three volunteers at any one time.
- One volunteer must be in possession of a working mobile phone.
- Confrontation should be avoided and, if necessary, the Police should be called **by dialling 999**.
- Volunteers need to park safely and responsibly, if driving to the monitoring site. Vehicles cannot be parked in the line of vision or obstructing driveways etc.

SITES:

- All CSW site locations will be risked assessed, approved, and issued with a Site Code by our Partners. No other sites/locations are to be used at any time.
- Newly onboarded CSW groups will be issued with a maximum of 3 sites at the time of commencing activities. Requests for additional sites will not be considered for a further 12 months from the start-up of a new group.

DATA and GDPR:

- All data supplied to Essex Police by CSW groups will be subject to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018. Therefore, data must only be retained for the purpose of providing the information collected to Essex Police, after which it must be deleted/disposed of fully by the CSW group concerned.
- Each CSW group is responsible for the correct management of any data acquired during the course of their monitoring sessions.
- Where Essex Police have been notified by the registered keeper and they are satisfied that a misread of the original VRN has occurred, the incorrect details will be removed completely.



In order to ensure compliance with changes to the Highway Code; Government legislation or Essex Police policy, these Procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated accordingly.

YOUR NOTES