

Ripon Together Survey
Public Attitudes to a 20mph Speed Limit
in Ripon

1. Purpose and Background

Ripon Together ran an online survey between **15 September and 3 October 2025** to understand local attitudes toward a possible **20mph speed limit** in Ripon. The survey was initially shared with members of Ripon Together (approximately 250 people) via email and later promoted more widely through social media, including Facebook community groups. A total of **408 responses** were received, including **163 written comments**.

The aim was not to make a decision but to gauge public opinion, inform discussion, and help identify what further information or evidence might be needed before any policy proposals are developed.

2. Headline Findings

Responses showed a **strong division of opinion**.

Response	Percentage of total (all 408 responses)
Strongly Oppose	38%
Strongly Support	26%
Others (neutral or mixed)	36%

Early responses (from members and followers of Ripon Together) were broadly balanced, with similar proportions strongly supporting or opposing the idea. However, once the survey was shared on wider Facebook groups, the overall pattern shifted, with opposition increasing sharply.

3. Data Review and Integrity Check

An in-depth review of the dataset was carried out to assess its reliability.

- Around **150 responses** were found to be **textually identical** across several questions — especially among those expressing *Strong Opposition*.
- These clustered heavily around **30 September and 1 October**, coinciding with the wider Facebook sharing.
- There is **no evidence of deliberate manipulation**, but the repetition suggests that online sharing led to groups of respondents submitting near-identical answers.

To illustrate how sensitive the results are to these patterns, four analytical scenarios were considered:

Scenario	Strongly Support	Strongly Oppose	Observation
Original dataset (408 responses)	26.7%	38.2%	Opposition dominates
All duplicate-style responses removed (294 responses)	29.6%	26.5%	Roughly balanced
Only “Strongly Oppose” duplicates removed (311 responses)	35.0%	19.0%	Support clearly ahead
Only “Strongly Support” duplicates removed (393 responses)	19.2%	42.2%	Opposition dominates further

These comparisons show that **the headline balance depends strongly on how duplicate or coordinated responses are treated**.

The finding reinforces the need for future surveys to use controlled sampling or unique response identifiers if statistical accuracy is required.

4. Interpreting the Findings

The survey reveals **high engagement and strong feelings** within the community.

Both supporters and opponents expressed their views with conviction, suggesting that any future proposals regarding 20mph zones must be **evidence-led and transparently explained**.

Ripon Together concludes that any next stage should focus on **establishing and sharing clear, factual information** on the likely impacts of 20mph limits.

This should include:

- Evidence from **other towns and cities** where 20mph schemes have already been introduced (e.g. changes in accidents, injuries, emissions, and public satisfaction).
- **Five-year accident and casualty data for Ripon**, to understand local safety patterns and where risk is highest.
- Consideration of **enforcement feasibility**, cost, and community compliance.

5. Themes from Public Comments

163 respondents left written comments. A thematic analysis found the following recurring subjects:

Theme	Number of mentions	Summary of sentiment
Zones / where 20mph should apply	70	Support for 20mph near schools and residential streets, but opposition to a citywide or blanket limit.
Safety	56	Strong belief that lower speeds would protect pedestrians, children, and cyclists.
Enforcement	42	Doubts that 20mph limits would be obeyed without policing or cameras.
Congestion / flow	31	Concerns about traffic build-up and slower journeys.
Emissions / environment	25	Mixed opinions — some saw 20mph as greener, others feared more idling and pollution.
Scepticism / hostility	12	Small number dismissed the idea as “pointless” or “nonsense.”
Evidence / data	4	A few called for clear proof of benefits before moving ahead.

Overall, these comments show that while the community is divided, there is widespread **interest in understanding the evidence** rather than simply taking sides.

6. Conclusions and Next Steps

The Ripon Together 20mph survey demonstrates:

- **High engagement and polarised opinion** within the community.
- **Sensitivity to how online surveys are shared and analysed.**
- A shared desire, even among opposing groups, for **credible evidence** about the benefits, drawbacks, and local implications of a 20mph scheme.

Ripon Together proposes that the next steps should include:

1. A **review of published research and case studies** from towns that have implemented 20mph limits.
2. Collaboration with local authorities to access and analyse **five years of accident and casualty data** for Ripon.
3. Preparation of a **public evidence summary** to inform future discussion and policy development.

Ripon Together will share both the full dataset and the de-duplicated version to maintain transparency and encourage informed, respectful debate.