

# A35 Chideock speed limit set to stay after Highways England air quality trial

With responsibility for maintaining and improving England's motorways and major A roads, Highways England recently installed an electric vehicle charging point in the village.

And now a 30mph speed restriction is set to be made permanent following the outcome of an air quality trial carried out on a section of the A35.

Since 2015, Highways England has been investigating effective measures to improve air quality on and alongside the strategic road network and has developed a programme of measures to improve air quality at specific locations around the country, including traffic management and managing speeds to reduce emissions.

Chideock has been identified as an Air Quality Management Area by Dorset Council, the pollution control and monitoring authority, and working closely with the local authority, Highways England initiated a trial speed limit along a section of the A35 at the western end of the village in September 2019.

The 18-month trial – involving the installation of monitoring equipment, patrols by an emissions monitoring vehicle, and temporary 30mph speed restriction – is complete and following the collection and analysis of data, results have now been shared with Dorset Council.

Andy Roberts, Highways England Route Manager for the A35, said:

We have a responsibility to tackle pollution caused by vehicles using our network and we're working in partnership with Dorset Council to improve air quality in Chideock.

As part of our ongoing work, we undertook and completed a trial which saw additional diffusion tubes installed and an electric-powered van monitoring real-time pollution before and after the speed limit change.

This identified a small reduction in nitrogen dioxide levels following the reduction of the speed limit and as a result of the localised air quality benefit, we propose to make the extended 30mph zone a permanent fixture.

We have also funded and delivered an electric vehicle charging point in the village, and although the air quality challenge will ultimately be solved at the tailpipe by vehicle manufacturers and changes in vehicle use, we will continue to work with Dorset

Council and monitor air quality.

The electric vehicle charging point – installed in the central Chideock car park and operational since December – will offer more provision for local and strategic journeys using zero and low carbon emission vehicles, and in the meantime, Highways England will continue to work with Dorset Council on the preparation of their Air Quality Action Plan.

Cllr Ray Bryan, Dorset Council Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment, said:

I'm pleased to hear that the speed trial in Chideock has gone towards helping improve the air quality in the village, and the 30mph speed limit is in the process of being made permanent.

Due to the challenging topography of the village, the solution to improving air quality on this strategic route depends largely on wide-spread adoption of clean technology and other changes to travel habits.

In the meantime, we will continue to work with our partners at Highways England to monitor emissions in the area and continue to seek ways to further improve air quality for residents.

For further information, [visit our air quality web page.](#)