

A318 Byfleet Road, Speed Camera Digital Replacement Briefing Note March 2019

What work is being undertaken?

We are installing a new digital speed camera to provide enforcement on the A318 New Haw Road shown in the image below and via [this link](#).



There is an existing “Gatso” brand wet film spot speed camera positioned on the eastern side of the road that currently provides enforcement in the southbound direction on this stretch of road. This is becoming obsolete because the old wet film technology is now being phased out. This camera housing will be replaced with a digital speed camera system in the same location. This will mean that it will be possible to provide enforcement of speeding without the need to change the film.

When will the cameras “go live”?

It is intended that the camera will be installed during March 2019, and then will “go live” shortly afterwards.

Why are we upgrading safety camera sites?

The existing “Gatso” brand safety camera was very effective in reducing road casualties, but the technology is becoming obsolete. The old “Gatso” cameras used traditional “wet” camera film which has to be changed regularly and then developed for offence images to be viewed. The supplier has advised that the technology is now so old that they can no longer guarantee that spare parts will still be available. Replacement of the existing “Gatso” cameras will maintain the reduction in casualties that has been achieved at sites that had previously suffered a history of collisions.

How effective are they?

International, national and local data shows that safety cameras are very successful at reducing road collisions where speeding and red light jumping have previously been a problem. For example data for Surrey shows that there has been typically a 40 per cent reduction in collisions at fixed camera sites (comparing the number of collisions in the 3 years prior to each camera with the number of collisions in the most recent three years).

Will the upgrade result in more penalties being issued?

No, not necessarily. The overall number of penalties being issued is limited by the capacity of the administration office to process offences. The aim is not to issue more penalties, instead the aim is to deter motorists from speeding and jumping red lights at locations that had previously suffered a history of collisions. If however drivers ignore the warnings of enforcement and continue to commit offences, then they risk the possibility of being issued with a penalty.

Who is paying for the upgrade?

The digital replacement and then ongoing operating costs of safety camera enforcement is fully self-funding at no cost to the police or county council tax payer. This is because all costs are recovered from part of the fee charged to offenders for attending diversionary courses (such as speed awareness courses) instead of paying the usual £100 fine and 3 penalty points. Should there be any operating surplus, then this is reinvested in improving road safety through the Drive SMART Partnership.

Who is responsible for safety (speed and red light) cameras in Surrey?

Surrey police are responsible for the provision of enforcement, for processing speed and red light offences and offering diversionary courses such as speed awareness courses in place of the usual £100 fine and 3 penalty points. Surrey County Council maintain the road side camera infrastructure and associated signing and lining on county council roads, and monitor the speed and casualty reduction success at camera sites.

Is this happening elsewhere in other local authority areas?

Yes, all local authorities where old wet film "Gatso" cameras have been used in the past will need to upgrade their cameras if they want to maintain the use of cameras to reduce road casualties. Some local authorities have already completed their digital upgrade, whereas others like Surrey are in the process of doing this.

How are safety cameras used in Surrey?

An important principle of the fixed site safety camera enforcement provided in Surrey is that it is reserved for collision hotspots where excessive speed or red light violations have been measured and confirmed as a problem. Another important principle is that the enforcement we provide is visible and well signed. For example cameras are coloured bright yellow, and conform to minimum visibility standards. At all sites there are signs reminding drivers of the speed limit and of the presence of the enforcement camera in view to the driver at the same time as the camera.

In Surrey we are proud that there are electronic vehicle activated signs on the approach to many of our cameras too. These will illuminate to remind of the speed limit and warn of the enforcement if drivers are approaching too fast.

These principles ensure that safety camera enforcement is deployed effectively and fairly and so helps to maintain public support for safety cameras.

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