

## Matt Jenkins Interview 17/07/2020 – 20mph Zones

Elliott Webb - Matthew Jenkins in on from the Green Party in Worcester, good morning.

Matt Jenkins – Hello, Eliot, how are you?

EW – I see you've already sent a Twitter message out this morning saying you would like to see the speed limits brought down even more. Go on, then – explain.

MJ – Certainly where people live, in residential and urban areas, I think 20 miles per hour speed limits would be a really good idea. Most of Worcester goes at that speed a lot of the time due to congestion anyways, so...

EW – D'you know, where I live, I live in a 20mph zone, and it doesn't work, Matthew. Nobody drives at 20pmh, nobody.

MJ – [joking] What, not even you, Eliot?! I'm shocked, Eliot, I'm shocked, cause surely you drive at 20mph.

EW – [joking] Apart from me.

MJ – Well, okay, of course, of course. Well I live in a 20mph speed limit area as well, and the vast majority do stick to it, I mean some may be going a bit over it, but I think the point is that if you live in a 30mph area, people go a bit average over 30, and if you live in a 20mph area, people might average a bit over 20, but it does bring that average down. A fundamental thing I'm keen about with 20mph speed limits is just actually it makes it a better environment to live in, and it actually brings more people walking and cycling, because that's actually a big benefit that people don't realise, because if you bring the speed limit down, the evidence shows that certainly more people will cycle, and I know from my experience walking my son to school, when he used to go to Fort Royal, which is 30mph other than the last ten yards, which is a bit pointless, autistic son going to school, has no concept of road awareness however much you tell him, it makes a huge difference, 20 to 30, as a pedestrian, as a vulnerable road user it's a huge difference, so I think it's something we really should be looking at.

EW – The only problem is with a lot of these, yeah by and large people will try and stick to it, and again, I'm not playing devil's advocate, as I said, I live in one,

so I know what this is like, and I run a lot, so I'm a pedestrian, and a number of times a car whizzes past you, and you think you are definitely not going at 20mph, mate, so to enforce that what you end up having to do is put calming measures in, don't you; you put speed humps in, you put chicanes in, and all that, but that then, doesn't that do the exact opposite? There's a load of data that says in terms of air quality, drivers accelerating and then slamming their brakes on, it does the exact opposite, you get worse air quality than...

MJ – It's not ideal, sorry to interrupt, it's not ideal having lots and lots of that kind of thing, I think it was one of your previous guys who was on who was the driving instructor and former policeman saying a lot of it is about education, and you almost need to do it on quite a large scale, because I think Wales has just agreed, I think yesterday or the day before, for the whole of Wales to introduce 20mph in urban areas and in residential areas, so if you do it in a bigger, so if you say the whole of Worcester in residential areas, not main roads, but in residential areas, we're all going to go for 20mph, then there's the chance to explain to people this is why, these are the benefits, you get them to buy in, because actually if you go door, we've done it, the Green Party, knocking on doors, asking people would you like a 20mph speed limit where you live, and you always get the vast majority of people saying, "Oh yes, that'd be lovely", and...

EW – They'll say yes, but then they're stuck behind someone going 20mph and then they'll want to go round them, because this is the thing, it doesn't apply to them, it's everyone else but them, it's like lockdown, it applies to everyone else but me, that's sadly the mentality that we seem to have.

MJ – I think that actually that's a very negative view of how people, because actually in lockdown the majority, most people have behaved well and I think most people do. I think the majority...

EW – Did you see those pictures of the people on the beaches?

MJ – Yes, but it wasn't the whole country, was it? I mean I wasn't on the beach; you weren't on the beach...

EW – I think it was half the country...

MJ – There's lots and lots of people who weren't on the beach, so I think actually that's the trouble, you look at the negatives and it makes the big

headline in the newspapers, but the majority of people actually are being pretty sensible, so...

EW – Is, now here, here's a thing and it won't be popular, but there's a really simple way to solve this, isn't there? There's a really really easy way to solve this, certainly for 80% of the cars on the roads, now is you just use technology, because there's...

MJ – Yeah, it's out isn't it...

EW – You can have a speed limit so that's linked to GPS, so that would know what the speed limit is, it just stops you doing the speed. That's the answer, isn't it?

MJ – I'm sure that that will be introduced in various countries around the world, and there will be pressure to do that, you're going to get driverless cars, more cars are going to be electric anyway, but there is actually a shift anyway away from car-owning. Young people own far less cars than 20 years ago, you'd think you need a car to get anywhere, but that is actually going out of fashion. Maybe not in Worcestershire, but certainly in other places, in the big areas, owning a car in London is almost a freak...

EW – Yeah, but they've got a great public transport system, that's the problem...

MJ – Ah, well, we...

EW – And we don't have a public transport system here that's any good.

MJ – Well how about that. Have a phone-in about that. That would be nice, wouldn't it? We've got a county council who aren't too keen on cycling either, so it's a real problem if car is always seen as the main form of transport, and roads and cities are designed for the car, it's very difficult. You've got to change that mentality; you've got to take away a small bit of road space and start actually giving it to cyclists, and it's part of a bigger picture, I think. 20mph is part of a bigger picture of how to change people, to get that modal shift out of the car, and that's just one way, I think.

EW- Okay. Lovely to speak to you. Thank you very much, Matthew, have a good day, have a good weekend.

MJ – And you.

EW – He's right. Whether you like it or not, he does make some very good points, and I think that's the thing; if you want people to do more in terms of cycling or walking, you do have to slow things down and actually yes, I do think it is a case of taking some road space off cars.