

Speedwatch

Dartmoor Speedwatch held it's first session on the 9th July 2016. Since then we have managed to conduct 269 sessions of which I have myself carried out 262.

We have come in for a lot of criticism over the years from a small minority of people who see this as us trying to dictate what they should do. This of course it not correct, the law states what they can do we are only acting on behalf of the police to try and educate drivers to the need to abide by the given speed. Since 2016 I would estimate over 600 animals have been killed on Dartmoor, this is the only reason we need to be out there. The very least we can achieve is to reduce the number of animals who are killed or injured.

As these sessions are usually 90 minutes long it means we have spent 403 hours or 16.8 days out on the moors trying to be the voice of the animals. So what is that voice, well maybe it's:-

- I cannot read the highway code
- I do not know the stopping distance of the average car
- I do not understand road conditions
- I do not know about looking left and right before crossing
- I do not understand the implications of a high speed impact
- My mum is on the other side why can't I cross the road
- The road is warm and tastes of salt I did not know it was a dangerous spot to lie

I could go on but seriously the way some drivers pass by the animals it hard to believe the drivers do not expect all of this from the animals. They almost seemed surprised when the animal just steps out in front of them instead of expecting it.

I think the ownership of Speedwatch needs to be considered. When I set it up, I believe I did it off my own back. It was not a DFPC Initiative but has over the years been supported by the Council. In return I have always provided monthly updates to the Council. The council has never supported Speedwatch financially and I have no plans to ask them to do so. I would like the council to consider adopting this initiative so it ceases to be mine alone if indeed that is what it is. I was a Councillor when I set it up and that is the only link if my memory serves me well. It would give the programme more weight and as the issue of safe driving on the moors must be a concern of the council I believe it can be justified. The only issue I can see which may have prevented this from the beginning is the fact that most of the sites used by Speedwatch fall outside of the DFPC parish. I would ask that this matter be added to the next agenda so we can discuss this.

My apologies for the lateness of this paper but I have been so busy putting other papers on the website I almost forgot this one.

