

Driver Feedback Sign (DFS) 700 Newport Case Study



Positive Feedback

Residents, councillors and traffic engineers are united in their praise for 3M Driver Feedback Signs (DFS 700) in Newport. The signs were supplied by Standard Signs via Morelock Signs.

It is approximately three years since Newport City Council gave its first trial to a solar-powered DFS 700 on the Caerphilly Road, off junction 28 of the M4. Now, there are more than 120 units in use, some powered by electricity, others with solar powered batteries, and more orders are on the way.

Quick and easy

"We see several advantages from using these units," says Lee Benham of Newport City Council, "especially in areas where we know we have a need for speed reduction and where physical measures, such as speed bumps or chicanes, are going to be unpopular, too expensive, or too difficult to implement. A DFS 700 is quick and easy to install, and immediately effective in cutting down speeds."

Popular with people

One of the main reasons why the Driver Feedback Sign seems to be so effective in Newport is that they are widely appreciated by local residents. *"The feedback we get is all positive,"* says Lee.

"Local resident groups are using the signs to make their own surveys, and regularly report to us when they've observed traffic going too fast. This means we can report to the police and coordinate efforts to enforce the speed limits."

Most of Newport's DFS 700 units are located in urban areas, around approaches to schools or crossing points. The majority is fed off the mains, but in some more remote locations, the solar-powered units have proved very effective. *"We were dubious at first, but our first solar unit is still working well and it has had the same batteries for three years now. We've never had any problems with lack of power."* Their hard-wearing construction also means the DFS 700 is resistant to the kind of petty vandalism that has damaged other similar equipment in the city.

Keeping residents happy

DFS 700 units come with the facility to transmit their data back to head office remotely, although Newport chose the option to go on site and download data direct to a lap-top. The results back up anecdotal evidence that traffic speeds are being reduced, and that drivers respond favourably to a gentle reminder that they need to slow down.

"The hard data is good to have," notes Lee,

"but one of the most meaningful measures we have is the absence of any negative feedback from local people. Physical calming measures usually attract objections, but the DFS 700 seem to have universal approval, as well as being hugely effective, and easily installed. From our perspective, they are a fantastic tool for traffic calming in Newport."