

Traffic Beat & Parking Beat Surveys

Whilst it is accepted that traffic beat and parking beat surveys are not often required, the following outlines the methods of which they can be conducted:

Traffic Beat Surveys

Traffic surveys aim to capture data that accurately reflects the real-world traffic situation in the area, it may be counting the number of vehicles using a road or collecting journey time information for example, but there are many other types of data that traffic surveys collect.

Cameras

A traffic video survey provides a highly accurate record of traffic or pedestrian activity taking place in a specified area. Traffic and pedestrians are less likely to alter their behaviour when passing video cameras than if they are observed by staff in high visibility jackets.

ATC's

Automatic traffic counters are normally identified as two rubber tubes laid across the carriageway linked to a road side recorder box. These tubes can measure both speed and number of vehicle movements and in some cases the weight of the vehicles passing over (e.g. cars, HGV's).

They are used to provide more detailed information than the manual survey and are put in place to record data over a 24/7 period or where traffic flow is very light and a manual survey would be impractical or costly.

Speed surveys can be carried out either manually by hand held device or by tubes laid across the road known as 'automatic traffic counters (ATC's)'. Manual traffic counts have the benefit of providing more precise details of the circumstances of the local highway, such as weather conditions, constraints to free flow conditions, high speed emergency vehicles, and by noting and removing 'platoons' of traffic from the survey.

ATC's are in place for 24 hours, 7 days a week and therefore a greater range of results and traffic flows is obtained. However, due to their nature, they will not take into account the factors which an operator would record as part of the manual survey.

Parking Beat Surveys

A parking beat survey was traditionally carried out by enumerators recording parking data at regular intervals, often half hourly or hourly. Now, video methods are increasingly used because they are most cost effective than manual methods. Both off-street and on-street parking trends can be assessed,

Once the study area has been identified, there are several types of parking studies that may be required. These can consist of:

- Inventory of parking facilities
- Accumulation costs
- Duration and Turnover surveys
- User information surveys
- Land use Method of Determining Demand