

COUNTRYSIDE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The continuing development a countryside traffic management strategy will meet the following SITS objectives:

- **All people should be able to move around conveniently and safely, regardless of their circumstances, with those able to pay doing so;**
- **That, in developing our planning policies with our partners, we will actively seek to reduce the number, length and need to make journeys;**
- **To encourage walking, cycling, and quality public transport, whilst reducing the number of journeys by car and promoting a healthier lifestyle; and,**
- **To ensure that Milton Keynes' economic prosperity is enhanced by our new transport policies by helping people to travel and where they want, but in more environmentally friendly ways.**

The Council area includes an extensive area of over 22,000 hectares. Traffic management plays an important role in protecting the safety of these areas for the local community. There must, however, be a balance between implementing measures (and their supporting signing) while retaining the character of the rural environment. We must safeguard and improve the needs of vulnerable groups such as pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

Enforcement is obviously a key issue. Local ownership of the measures will raise the profile and acceptability of the features and assist with enforcement by the Police.

It is important that a strategic approach is taken across the whole of the rural area but the features installed must suit the character of the local area.

The following form measures in our Countryside Traffic Management Strategy:

Speed Management

- **SpeedCHECK**
We will promote *SpeedCHECK* to all rural parishes who not yet signed up to this initiative.
- **Speed Limits**
In light of the conclusions of the Government's 'National Speed Limit Review' we will undertake review our Speed Limit Policy that was formulated in June 1998. We look to form a working party with

the Police to undertake this review. The review will however have due regard to avoiding sign clutter which otherwise could become a problem because the National Speed Limit Review concluded that there should be no change in the national speed limit of 60mph for single carriageway roads without a system of street lighting.

Following a review of our Speed Limit Policy we would intend to review all speed limits in the rural parts of the Councils area. This would be carried on an area basis rather than individual village basis.

We will review our present methods of signing speed limits to minimize the visual intrusion of the signs having due regard to the legislation and the need to ensure drivers are aware of the speed limit on each length of road.

- **Traffic Calming**

Road humps, road narrowings and similar 'urban' measures are generally not suitable for rural communities because of the increase in sign clutter and other street furniture. Schemes that are acceptable in rural communities tend to be very expensive because of the increase in design time and the quality of the materials used.

We will continue to work with Parish Councils to implement low cost village gateways and similar measures such as those installed during 2000/01 in Mulsoe funded by the Parish Council.

Quiet Lanes Initiative

We are implementing a pilot Quiet Lane scheme in the Filgrave area during 2000/01 following requests from the local community. This will be undertaken following a detailed consultation exercise with local residents so that the scheme meets their needs of reducing impact of vehicular traffic and preserving access arrangements for large vehicles to the local farms.

We will assess the results of this Quiet Lane scheme and develop a programme for Quiet Lane scheme for other areas.

Lorry Management

We will reinforce the designated or preferred routes for lorries travelling through or those accessing premises within the rural area, shown in Figure 1 with advisory lorry route signing and legal restrictions where appropriate. We will develop our liaison with the Police over the enforcement of lorry restrictions.

We will investigate the benefits of producing leaflets for haulage companies and lorry drivers to highlight the designated route scheme, legal restrictions, and the concerns of local residents about lorry movements in rural areas and facilities for lorry drivers within the Council's area.

Cycling & Walking

Cycling and pedestrian links between villages and between villages and the designated area are poor. Whilst there is a good redway system for pedestrian and cyclists within the designated area there is currently only one link beyond the designated area to a district centre, Newport Pagnell. During 2000/01 we will be developing a link between the redway network and Woburn Sands, including Wavendon.

Milton Keynes is a hub of the National Cycle Network (which is also available for use by pedestrians) with links north to Northampton and southwest to Oxford. We will assist Sustrans and local authorities in Bedfordshire in developing the routes east to Bedford and south to Leighton Buzzard. Sustrans aim to have these routes open by 2005 but we aim to have the route to Bedford open by 2002/3.

We will look to develop links from villages to the National Cycle Network to encourage use of cycles and walking.

Buses

We will undertake an audit of the road environment and bus stops for all rural bus services during 2001/02. This will include the layout of the road, overhanging trees, ensuring the kerb height is correct for the type of buses using the route, the quality of bus shelters, hardened verge areas for passengers waiting at bus stops and footway links to the bus stops. We will implement the recommendations of this audit during 2002/03.

Walking

During 2002/03 we will consult the parish councils in the rural areas to assess any difficulties their parishioners have when walking in their Parish. We will include within the consultation a request for lengths of road where they feel that there should be a footway or other improvements to pedestrian links. We will implement these requests during the lifetime of this plan.

Horse Riding

Horse riding is a significant leisure activity that takes place on roads and bridleways in the countryside. We will look to increase the opportunities for horse riding and to introduce measures to ensure the safety of horse riders and their horses where these are identified during the lifetime of this Plan. The Quiet Lanes initiative will improve the conditions for horse riding in these areas.

Motorcycling

Motorcycling is a more sustainable form of transport for many single person journeys in rural areas than the use of cars. Motor cycles can preserve the freedom of mobility and accessibility offered by the private car, which can be difficult to achieve with public transport in rural areas.

We will promote the use of motorcycles as detailed in the section on powered two wheelers.

Motorcyclists are however 35 times more likely to be injured in an accident than a driver of a car. We will continue, as part of our accident reduction strategy, to protect motorcyclists as well as other road users.