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- Courses p14
- Tenders p16
- Appointments p17

IN THE NEWS

Hampshire's 'demand restraint' plan put to Ministers ... Page 2

Devon launches traffic calming guide ... Page 5

Devon launches major traffic calming guide

A major hardback book of traffic calming guidance has been published by Devon County Council. It presents 19 different ways of controlling the speed and behaviour of traffic in an urban environment and is expected to be used as a reference by other authorities.

The book has been compiled by Devon County Engineer and Planning Officer Edward Chorlton and his staff with South Bank Polytechnic lecturer Tim Pharoah. Chorlton said, "Traffic calming is likely to provide the most satisfactory solution to living with motor vehicles in built-up areas in the 1990's."

The 185 page book, extensively illustrated in colour, tackles the subject in four sections;



Traffic calming in Exeter

approaches to traffic calming; implementation; specific measures; and scheme examples.

The illustrations include road humps; chicanes and carriage-way constrictions; footway widening; special paving; planting and street furniture.

The book draws on Devon's

experience in a number of schemes in the past ten years as well as that of others in the UK and abroad.

● *Traffic calming guidelines* costs £20 plus £3.50 p & p, copies are obtainable from Devon County Council, County Hall, Exeter.



David Howard: champion of the integration cause ... Page 8

Rifkind finds money for BR & LT ... Page 10

AY 26 June 1991 3

● ● EVER WONDERED HOW to gain control of a Minister's mind? The answer would seem to be to give one a big, glossy, colourful book packed with your ideas and let nature take its course, leaving him to forget the contents were ever someone else's idea...

This appears to be what Devon County Council have done with Roads and Traffic Minister Christopher Chope, who was given a pre-release copy of their bright new book *Traffic Calming Guidelines* while in Exeter on Monday. It is full to the brim with impressive pictures of road humps and road narrowings, raised pedestrian and cycle crossing points, planting schemes and street furniture.

Come Tuesday Chope was addressing a London Boroughs transport conference and, while eulogising the benefits of the road route system for residents living in the side roads, launched into a (somewhat tangential) list of measures that could help non-drivers: "There could be road humps and road narrowings, raised pedestrian and cycle crossing points..."

Maybe the ALA and LBA should have put on a private slide show with taped recordings of their *Moving Forward* in London statement - and simply learn to say, "Yes, Minister."

REGULAR FEATURES

News 1-9, 20
Opinion 2
In passing 3

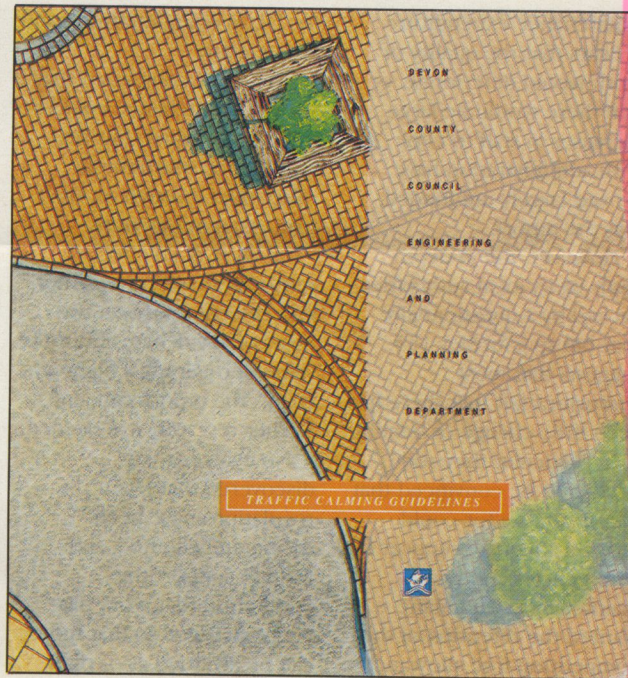
TRAFFIC CALMING GUIDE

Traffic calming has become a buzzword: a technique for which miraculous effects are claimed, but which is not always fully understood. The most obvious aim is to slow down traffic, especially in residential and shopping streets, to safe speeds, and to make the environment more attractive at the same time.

Devon County Council's engineering and planning department has taken upon itself the role of disseminating best practice on traffic calming in an attractive, hard backed book, packed with examples, drawings, plans and colour illustrations.

As a practical guide, it challenges some of the long held convictions of traffic engineers about site lines and corner radii, carriageway design and road markings, and offers intelligent, attractive solutions which dictate pedestrian priority and place the car in a less dominant role.

The book has been compiled by county engineer and planning officer, Edward Chorlton and South Bank



Polytechnic lecturer Tim Pharoah, well known as an exponent of traffic calming techniques. It usefully considers both the positive and negative aspects of 19 specific treatments, such as road humps, roundabouts, shared surfaces, carriage way construction, street furniture and lighting. It covers different approaches, implementation, specific

measures and examples, and concludes with information on bodies involved, design and construction issues, maintenance, funding and, importantly, monitoring. *Traffic Calming Guidelines* £20 plus £3.50 p&p from County Engineer and Planning Officer, Devon County Council, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW

ENERGY AND TRANSPORT

The link between energy and transport is made in a publication from Transnet. The report, *Energy, Transport and the Environment*, suggests that new models are needed to understand the true energy and environmental costs of our transport needs. Energy consumption has tended to be seen only in terms of fuel usage, not the energy involved in vehicle production, provision of infrastructure etc.

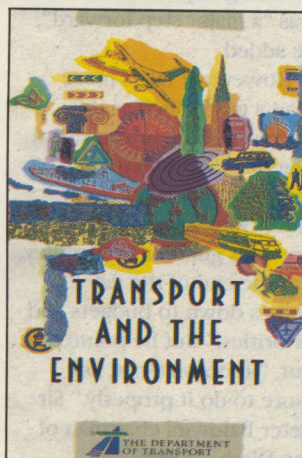
The book also looks at some of the options to tackle the environmental impact of transport — such as alternative fuels, catalyst technology, energy efficiency, planning and taxation

It concludes that a broad based strategy is urgently needed, taking on board both the technological developments and political commitment.

Energy, Transport and the Environment, £25 plus £2.00 p&p from Transnet, 16 Warren Lane, London SE18 6DW

WISING UP ON THE GOVERNMENT VIEW

The Department of Transport has produced a new version of its 1988 publication, *Transport and the Environment*, in the style of a post Environment White Paper report, on 50% recycled paper! It is a useful reference work for anyone who wants to check out what the Government says it is actually doing in this area, and the way it sees the problems (in full colour with a lot of fancy graphics). But it is more of a public



relations document than anything else. It concedes that "difficult choices will have to be made" but steers clear of telling people what they should do, suggesting that "the more that can be achieved voluntarily, the better." Do not expect any hard hitting discussion of fiscal policies. But if you don't already know some of the techniques being used, grants available or Government research then it may help.

RURAL GRANTS

The Rural Transport Development Fund has £0.5m available this year to improve services for people living in rural areas. These have degenerated since deregulation of bus services in 1986, according to fund manager Peter Evans. The aim is to encourage flexible transport services such as car sharing and taxis through grants of upto £25,000. Inquiries are invited to local Rural Development Commission offices.

Other potential major perils are road narrowings, emanating from a variety of sources but all likely to squeeze the cyclist at pinch points. In some a separate cycle 'channel' allowing continuous straight ahead movement is possible. Elsewhere, throttling devices should not be used alone but be combined with other measures to reinforce the message of 'Slow Down'.

When central refuges are used, consideration should be given to whether they are large enough to accommodate cyclists wishing to turn right, or to cross a busy road. Space should also be allowed for prams and pedestrians.

Some common themes should be obvious but are all too often over-looked. Among them are:

- A need to ensure cyclists do not lose too much momentum;
- Clear signing and good sight-lines;
- The need for good night-time visibility;
- Lay-outs which design out illegal car parking, so often the scourge of cycle facilities.

Traffic-calming will be one of the biggest civic developments of the 90s. If we can learn from the best of foreign experience Britain could catch up quickly, bringing safe and attractive streets back in our cities. But these streets must be 'cycle-friendly' from the outset, or else we shall simply be building in a whole new set of problems. *Cyclists and Traffic-calming* is an invaluable guide to the future.

● ***Cyclists and Traffic-calming***, by Johanna Cleary; Published by the Cyclists' Touring Club and available from their Godalming office. Price £10 (£6 to CTC members), including post and packing.

2 Doing it Devon's way

One of the keys to successful traffic-calming is a high quality approach. In this respect Devon County Council is already successful, for their *Traffic Calming Guidelines* is an exquisitely-produced publication, a design triumph packed with colour photos, clear illustrations and a mercifully brief text.

The Guidelines are in four sections: the background to traffic calming, implementation, specific measures and an assessment of scheme examples from Britain and abroad. The work owes a heavy debt to Tim Pharoah of London's South Bank Polytechnic, whose contribution shines through most of the pages, not least in the photographs.

Cobbled surfaces can be dangerous to cyclists in the wet, particularly when they are cornering (Photograph: Cyclographic, from 'Cyclists and Traffic-calming')



But the County Engineer assembled a project team for this publication and congratulations are due all round, not least to the graphics section. If your Chief Executive says: 'What's Traffic Calming?' put this book in front of him. It is the one that enthused Christopher Chope.

Quality of life

Devon says quite clearly that we are talking about a quality of life issue. 'Many streets are now carrying volumes of traffic for which they were never intended and to which they are highly unsuited'. Therefore traffic must be either removed or slowed down: 'the immediate environment needs to convey to the motorist that it would be wholly inappropriate and anti-social to drive at other than a low speed'.

But getting this new environment will not be easy if you do not take the community with you. Residents may complain about loss of parking, emergency services about lack of access, traders about falling incomes, and police need to be involved at all stages. Great patience seems to be needed with groups who can be the strongest objectors to a scheme, and often end up as the firmest supporters.

As for the actual measures, nineteen are listed, each given a description, a speed reduction rating, and an assessment of their positive and negative factors. There is a nice photo of a road constriction in Camden with separate cycle gates to allow riders safe and unimpeded progress. Some of the other examples shown look as if they need this feature, and a few of the fancy surfaces look the type of bone-jarring ride Jo Cleary warns us against.

Cyclists can also be put at risk by buses and lorries turning at small roundabouts with insufficient radii. As a converse, pedestrians throughout the country are being permanently put at risk by excessive radii at side-road junctions which encourage traffic to speed round corners. It is good to see this menace forcefully highlighted.

Thirty-three schemes

The thirty-three schemes briefly described include fourteen from Devon, varying from Exeter High Street to Torquay's Fleet Street. The larger projects from Frankfurt, Eindhoven and Buxtehude come as an urgent reminder that we should not just be thinking about rejuvenating the odd shopping street here and there. Particularly interesting are figures from the German demonstration town of Buxtehude, near Hamburg, showing enormous changes in public attitudes in favour of lower speeds once the projects were in place. There were also clear reductions in vehicle pollution, with nitrogen oxide emissions falling by a third.

The Guidelines end with a look at two German examples of traffic-calming on main roads going through small villages. This, surely, is the next topic requiring urgent action in this country.

Elsewhere it is not completely certain that the Germans have got it right, with an apparent insistence on separate cycle paths even in traffic-calmed streets. At lower speeds cycles can co-exist much more easily with other road users, as the Danes and Dutch seem to accept. Equally, some of the British bans on cycling in pedestrian-only streets now look clumsy and inflexible.

Such discussion flows naturally out of a reading of Devon's publication. One of its main aims, surely, was to raise the level of awareness and debate on the subject of calming and in this alone it is a success. This multi-coloured hardback is likely to be amongst the most thumbed reference books in the growing traffic calming library.

● ***Traffic calming guidelines***, available price £23.50 (including postage) from: County Engineer and Planning Officer, Devon County Council, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW.

AUTUMN BOOKS

Traffic Calming Guidelines.

Prepared by the Engineering and Planning Department of Devon County Council in conjunction with Tim Pharoah. £20

This admirable book should be used by any authority or individual contemplating the introduction of traffic calming experiments. It shows ways in which traffic calming can be achieved and is full of useful ideas and examples. Section one, 'Approaches to Traffic Calming', considers the need for traffic calming, the limitations of traditional approaches, the objectives of traffic calming, the policy framework, specific issues and County Council traffic calming policy. Section two, 'Implementation', deals with public involvement, scheme design, scheme construction, maintenance, programming, funding and monitoring. Section three, 'Specific Measures', considers the categories of traffic calming measures. These two main categories being those designed to reduce vehicle speeds and those designed to help create an environment conducive to calm driving. The final section, 'Scheme Examples', covers schemes on various types of area including residential areas, city centres, urban main roads, small towns and suburban main roads and village through roads. For each of the schemes examined, there is an analysis of context, objectives, description, cost and assessment. The schemes come from UK, Germany and Netherlands. There is a wealth of plans, diagrams and photographs which adds to the usefulness of this important study.

JB

GIS Dictionary. An alphabetical list of the terms and their definitions relating to geographic information and its associated technologies.

Prepared by the Association for Geographic Information. Available from AGI, 12 Great George Street, London SW1P 3AD at £8.50 to AGI members and £15.00 to non-members.

Given the current interest in the expanding field of Geographic Information Systems, this timely and very useful publication is to be welcomed. For each of the terms, many of which have a strange kind of poetry, there is a definition drawn from a wide range of sources. This is a necessary book to have.

JB

Cities in transition. The Regeneration of Britain's Inner Cities by Michael Middleton. London: Michael Joseph, 1991

This book, by the recently retired director of the Civic Trust, presents an overview of urban regeneration over the last fifteen years in the major conurbations in Britain. Part One, entitled 'Problems and Policies' considers the inner city and beyond and the various programmes and policies that have been developed. It sets out the conditions of urban decline, including poverty, increased crime rates, homelessness and the state of that housing which actually exists. The author then describes succinctly those policies and programmes designed to ameliorate these conditions. Part Two, 'Places' brings together in a very useful way descriptions of what has actually taken place in the areas that the author visited. These areas include London Docklands, Merseyside, Glasgow, South Wales, the North East, Leeds, Sheffield and Bristol, the West Midlands, Greater Manchester and west Yorkshire. Part Three, 'Prospects' is in two parts. Part one, 'A change of perspective' considers derelict land, community initiatives, the role of the arts and the pursuit of quality. The second part, 'An attitude of mind' as part of a general discussion puts forward three considerations; the need for the modernisation of urban infrastructure; the concern with long term programmes, fifteen to thirty-five years and the consequent need for continuity and thirdly, how the cake is cut, 'the priorities we attach to competing claims.'

JB

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Closing date: Friday 6 December 1991. Interviews for short-listed candidates for the Senior Planner post will be held on 17 December 1991, and the Planner/Planning Assistant post on the mornings of 18 and 19 December 1991.