



Buckinghamshire Speed Management Strategy



Road Safety



December 2002

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Buckinghamshire Speed Management Strategy

Executive Summary

The County Council recognises that excess and/or inappropriate speed is a factor in many accidents and is a major concern to many residents and visitors to Buckinghamshire. We are committed to reducing inappropriate speeds, the fear of speed and aim to create safer communities by implementing and supporting measures that physically reduce speed, aid enforcement and raise driver's awareness of the dangers of speed.

This Buckinghamshire Speed Management Strategy sets out in more detail what the County Council has done, is doing and will do to manage vehicle speeds and is summarised as set out below:

The County Council will:

- Continue and develop its close working partnership with Thames Valley Police and other agencies, including the local community;
- Ensure the best use of available resources by adopting an intelligence-led approach to identify and address the worst casualty areas to meet the casualty reduction targets;
- Undertake a countywide review of speed limits, to address speed limit anomalies and to improve consistency of speed limits across the County, to be completed by March 2006;
- Promote and implement lower speed limits where there is a casualty accident reduction potential;
- Promote and implement lower speed limits, with a presumption that 30mph or 40mph will be the norm in built up areas and identifiable communities;
- Encourage and support local communities to provide appropriate community-funded speed limits and traffic calming using the Forbearance Fund (if appropriate) in areas that are unlikely to receive a high priority for County Council funding or action;
- Identify potential, and implement agreed safety camera housings or mobile sites to assist in enforcement at the worst speed related casualty sites;
- Continue to play a leading role in the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership;
- Identify potential, and implement agreed traffic calming schemes to physically reduce vehicle speeds at casualty sites;
- Take forward the lessons learned from the Central Chilterns Traffic Management Project for wider use in other areas of the County as appropriate;
- Participate in Government Publicity Campaigns aimed at spreading the message that inappropriate speed can kill both when driving above the speed limit or at an inappropriate speed for the conditions;

- Arrange and promote local activities and events to raise awareness of the dangers of speeding and inappropriate speed;
- Promote and develop the 'Traffic Calming by Example' publicity campaign;
- Promote and develop the use of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) and other speed dynamic signs to address concerns raised by local communities.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Speeding is a subject on which everyone has an opinion. Driving faster than the speed limit is seen as relatively harmless by many drivers - the same drivers may believe they are law abiding citizens who would not dream of drinking and driving. What is less well appreciated is that excess or inappropriate speed is a factor in a significant proportion of the accidents recorded on Buckinghamshire's roads every year. Half of all traffic accidents in which people are injured happen in 30mph speed limit areas.
- 1.2 Speeds that are inappropriate to the conditions can kill. If a car travelling at 40mph collides with a pedestrian, that person is likely to be killed. At 30mph, there is a 50% chance of survival. At 20mph, most people survive.
- 1.3 The County Council recognises the dangers of excess and inappropriate speed and the concerns that many residents of the County have in connection with this. The Council Plan 2001 – 2005 includes the following supporting policies:

Overall Aim 2 : Supporting policy (b)

- *Work with all partners, including the Police, to make Buckinghamshire a safer place in which to live, work and travel.*

Overall Aim 5 : Supporting policy (c)

- *Play a major part in developing a community strategy for all who live, work and travel in Buckinghamshire.*

Service Aim 7 : Supporting policy (a)

- *Promote safer communities, highlighting concerns to Police and other responsible agencies and using our own resources to support and develop improvements.*

Service Aim 10 : Supporting policies (a), (b) and (e)

- *Promote investment in the transport infrastructure of the County to ensure its long-term viability.*
- *Tackle the effects of increased traffic through the promotion of road safety and traffic calming schemes where appropriate.*
- *Secure maximum government funding, through the Local Transport Plan, to deliver the above aims.*

- 1.4 In our Local Transport Plan 2001 – 2006, the Vision includes key points to ensure a good quality of life, a safe County, the importance of partnerships and

the preservation of our special environment. From the Vision statement, the County Council wants to see:

- *A continuing improvement in the quality of life for Buckinghamshire's residents;*
- *All people not exposed to avoidable hazards, with pedestrians, cyclists, schoolchildren and horse riders made less vulnerable;*
- *All people able to enjoy comfortable and efficient journeys using a well managed and maintained transport infrastructure, including roads;*
- *All people choosing to travel in a way that does minimal harm to our special and beautiful environment.*

1.5 The recent MORI survey has highlighted four key Transportation Service priorities; Highways Maintenance, Public Transport, Congestion and Safety. Speed Management is essential to ensure that the County Council continues to address issues of Safety on its roads.

1.6 This Speed Management Strategy sets out how the County Council, in partnership with Thames Valley Police and others, aims to address the issue of speeding in Buckinghamshire. It is important to remember that the County Council can alleviate some of the concerns about speed but every road user can play their part in achieving safer communities and safer roads throughout the County.

1.7 The Speed Management Strategy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it remains effective and that any changes nationally are taken into account.

2.0 Speeding

2.1 Speeding and speed limits are emotive subjects. Most people want speed limits and lower speeds in their own roads...yet they drive at speed past other people's houses. Very often it is local people who are caught speeding on their own streets or close to their own homes.

2.2 The County Council has a very close working partnership with Thames Valley Police when dealing with speed issues. This ensures that any measures promoted are realistic and are likely to be effective in reducing vehicle speeds. The strength of this partnership has had mutual benefits for both authorities and has ensured a consistency of approach across the County.

2.3 Invariably, there are insufficient resources to deal with the many requests that both authorities receive in connection with speeding. Priority is always given to those sites where there are predicted to be casualty reduction benefits.

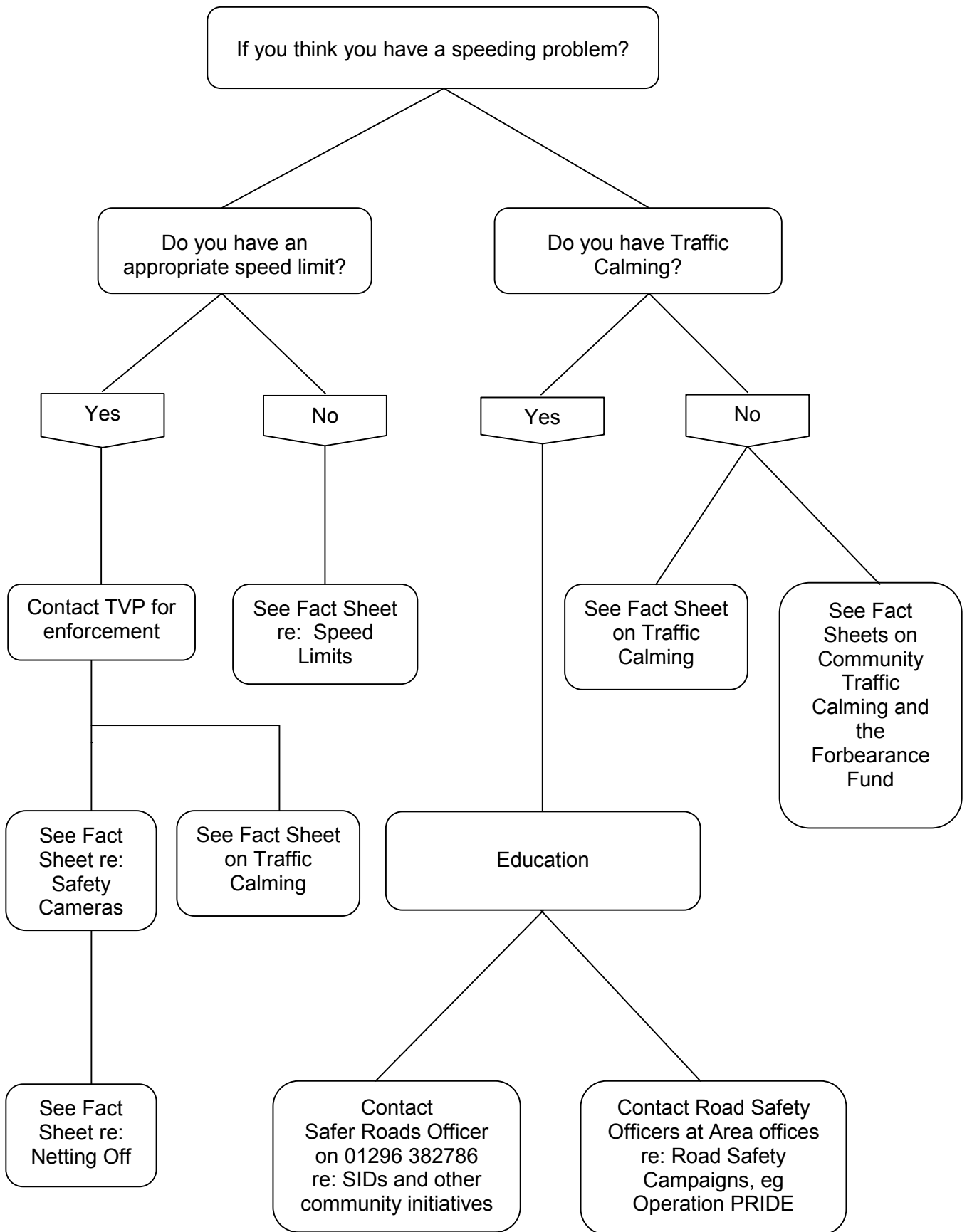
2.4 This approach is essential if the national casualty reduction targets published in the Government's road safety strategy 'Tomorrow's roads: safer for everyone' are to be met. In May 2000, the County Council adopted these national targets as its local targets and the reduction of excess or inappropriate speed will be crucial if these very challenging targets are to be met. These targets are:

By 2010, compared with the average for 1994 – 1998, we want to achieve:

- a 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road accidents;

- a 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured; and
 - a 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate, expressed as the number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kilometres.
- 2.5 Since the adoption of these targets, the County Council and the four District Councils have jointly signed with the Government a Public Service Agreement (PSA) and this commits us to achieving the first two casualty reduction targets by an accelerated date of 2008.
- 2.6 To ensure the best use of available resources and to achieve the PSA targets, an intelligence led approach has been adopted to identify the sites in need of most urgent attention and to identify where the biggest steps in achieving the targets can be made. This is proving very successful, for example, at identifying the best locations and times for enforcement of existing speed limits. It also provides reliable data for identifying sites where further action may be necessary to address a casualty problem.
- 2.7 The Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 place a duty on authorities to address issues of safety in their areas. From surveys undertaken recently in Buckinghamshire, it is clear that many people perceive the threat of traffic and speeding as important issues. Thankfully, at many of these sites where concerns are being expressed, there is no history of injury accidents. Nevertheless, the County Council recognises that these concerns are real and the perceived danger caused by excess speed needs to be addressed as well as actual danger.
- 2.8 The County Council has produced a series of Fact Sheets on speed related issues and these are reproduced in the Appendix 2 to this Speed Management Strategy. Included in the Fact Sheet titled 'Speeding' is a version of the flow chart shown in Figure 1 on page 7
- 2.9 This has been produced to assist in dealing with the many requests received from residents of the County who believe that they have a speeding problem. It aims to help people help themselves by highlighting what the County Council, the Police and other authorities can do and also what individuals can do to address speeding issues. Further Fact Sheets will be introduced as any new work, or areas of work come forward.

Figure 1



3.0 Speed Limits

- 3.1 Speed limits are an emotive issue and their effect on their own can be limited. They are not generally effective at reducing actual vehicle speeds unless there are physical measures to enforce lower speeds or unless the roads are 'self explaining'.
- 3.2 Many people over-estimate the effect of speed limits and see lower speed limits as a way of achieving what they really want, namely lower speeds. Having said this, appropriate speed limits can and do have an important role to play in achieving casualty reduction and community safety aims.
- 3.3 Following the publication in March 2000 of the Government's speed review document 'New Directions in Speed Management'; the County Council revised its speed limit policy to ensure that speed limits that are predicted to have a casualty reduction benefit were progressed as a priority as necessary. At the same time, those communities which have been campaigning for lower speed limits for many years but have never been able to meet the previously adopted national criteria were also given the opportunity to pursue lower community funded speed limits.
- 3.4 There is much work going on nationally including the National Speed Policy Review being undertaken by the Department for Transport (DfT). This is examining the whole speed issue including new lower national limits for rural roads and villages, revised criteria and procedures for implementing lower limits, amending the way limits are signed and a review of the level of fines.
- 3.5 Although the final outcome of the National Speed Policy Review is not yet known, the emerging ideas will be important in determining what is undertaken at a local level. Implementation of any new strategies is likely to be left to the discretion of the local Highway Authority and therefore changes to our speed limit policy are being undertaken now rather than wait for further national guidance.
- 3.6 In view of the delay in receiving revised national guidance and to address the many local concerns about speed and speed limits, a countywide review of speed limits will now be undertaken. The review will encompass and address the following:
 - ❑ Those de-restricted A or B roads with high casualty rates per kilometre;
 - ❑ Those communities that currently do not have a speed limit or where there is pressure to extend or lower existing speed limits;
 - ❑ Roads outside schools (in conjunction with Safer Routes to School);
 - ❑ Country lanes and other inter community routes.

Speed Limit Review

- 3.7 The speed limit review will be undertaken on an area-by-area basis. This will enable communities that do not receive a high priority for the implementation of a speed limit in their own right to be included when adjacent routes, with poor casualty records, are progressed. A small Working Group will be established for each area to determine the appropriate proposals for that area using some basic guidelines to ensure consistency across the County.

3.8 The Working Group will meet on four occasions and will comprise the following members whose details and roles are as set out below:

Meetings:

- 1. At inception, to confirm area etc;
- 2. To consider draft proposals;
- 3. To consider feedback from consultation;
- 4. After implementation to review effectiveness.

Members:

- BCC Traffic Management Officer – to advise and prepare proposals;
- BCC Safer Roads Officer – to manage publicity and consultation;
- Thames Valley Police Traffic Management Officer – to ensure proposals are enforceable (if necessary);
- Policy Advisory Group Member – to ensure consistency with policy across wider area;
- Local Member(s) – to represent the local community.

3.9 Appropriate speed limits will be promoted bearing in mind local conditions rather than treating all areas the same regardless of local conditions. However, the presumption will be that 30mph or 40mph will be the norm in all built up areas and identifiable communities.

3.10 When considering appropriate speed limits, the following factors will be considered:

- Existing average vehicle speeds;
Are existing speeds appropriate for proposed speed limit or are other measures needed?
- Existing casualty records;
High number of KSIs would indicate a high priority for action
- Existing traffic flows;
Including percentage of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs)
- Existing frontage development;
What is an identifiable community? (Presence of village nameplates?)
- Character of road;
Presence of footways?, road width, alignment, forward visibility etc
- Presence of vulnerable road users;
Pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, would a lower speed limit encourage use of the road by these users?
- Presence of traffic generators;
e.g. schools, surgery/hospital, Post Office etc
- Enforcement;
Ensure self-enforcing or that enforcement can take place - minimum length of speed limit to be considered

3.11 In some areas, additional measures may be required to support the imposition of lower speed limits. The County Council will fund these where there is a

casualty reduction potential. Where there is no casualty reduction potential, funding from a third party or the local community may be necessary.

- 3.12 The order in which areas are dealt with will be reviewed periodically having regard for where casualty reduction can be achieved, existing programmed schemes and the need to maximise resources to meet targets. Once an area is reviewed, the presumption will be that the area is not reviewed again until the completion of the review.
- 3.13 In line with the County Council's prioritisation of casualty reduction work, the proposed programme of reviews is based on those lengths of de-restricted A and B roads with the worst casualty records (KSI per km); see Table 1 below for all those lengths of road with more than 2 KSI's per km. See Appendix 1 for full list of de-restricted A and B roads with accident and casualty data.
- 3.14 See Figure 2 on page 16 for the area to be covered by each review and the expected timescale for when each area will be reviewed. The whole review is expected to take three years and should be completed by March 2006.

Table 1: De-restricted A and B roads ranked by KSI per km

Road No.	Location	Length	Casualty data based on 3 years to 30 September 2002.		
			KSI per km	Total Accidents	Total Casualties
A40	Denham Rbt to Tatling End (2)	2.5km	4.40	30	42
A404	Amersham Bypass to Hazlemere	6.6km	3.94	53	102
A412	5 Points Rbt to Slough Boundary	3.3km	3.33	39	55
A40	M40 J5 to Oxon Boundary	1.2km	3.33	6	10
A4155	Sheepridge Lane to Globe Park	1.3km	3.08	26	34
A4010	Cressex Rbt to Handy Cross Rbt (1)	1.0km	3.00	14	15
A421*	Tingewick Bypass	2.8km	2.86	19	31
A4146	Edlesborough to Eaton Bray Rd	0.7km	2.86	1	2
A4146	Beds Boundary to Stoke Hammond	3.0km	2.67	11	21
A413	Tatling End to Chalfont St Peter	4.4km	2.50	24	46
B482	Marlow to Lane End	5.1km	2.35	21	30
A413	Wendover Bypass to Marroway	1.3km	2.31	3	4
A4010*	Princes Risborough to Pictonville	6.9km	2.03	44	69
A418*	Coldharbour Rbt to Upper Hartwell	1.5km	2.00	13	17

Note: (1) 40mph speed limit implemented June 2002

(2) 60mph speed limit implemented March 2002

* Speed limit review already included in LS&ASS Programme 2002/03

Speed Management Initiatives / other

- 3.15 The County Council is currently undertaking with other partners a pilot traffic management scheme within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Central Chilterns Traffic Management Project (CCTMP) scheme will look at innovative traffic management techniques and will include lower speed limits. New ways of promoting and signing these speed limits, probably linked to a hierarchy of roads, are being considered as part of the pilot scheme and the lessons learned will be spread to other areas in due course.
- 3.16 Speed activated or 'dynamic' signing is being provided in a number of areas throughout the County. Different types of signs for different locations (e.g. outside a school, in advance of a hazard, speed limit reminder etc) are being trialled. The impact and effect of these signs will be closely monitored to establish their effectiveness and to determine whether they are suitable or appropriate for more widespread use.

- 3.17 The County Council occasionally receives requests for advisory speed limits to be signed at certain locations making use of 'Max Speed' signs. Whilst there is no stated policy on the use of these signs, they are only used in exceptional circumstances where other signing has proven ineffective and will be resisted in those areas already subject to a speed limit. Advisory speed limits will be considered as part of the Central Chilterns project referred to above when used in connection with Quiet Lanes, designated under the Transport Act 2000.
- 3.18 Speed limit roundels are not yet prescribed for general use on the highway although revised Regulations are expected shortly. This means that site-specific authorisation needs to be sought from DfT to enable these to be used. These will not generally be used until the revised Regulations are issued and further guidance on their use is established.
- 3.19 The current view of DfT is that roundels will need to be associated with upstanding traffic signs not as a replacement for the signs. This means in practice that their use will be limited to terminal sign locations or where repeater signs exist. This means that they will not be able to be used in many 30mph areas that are restricted roads by virtue of a system of street lights being in place (repeater signs are 'expressly forbidden' where a system of street lights exist).

4.0 Enforcement

- 4.1 The County Council recognises that enforcement of speed limits plays an important role in addressing speed issues. The County Council in partnership with the Police ensures that any new proposals are realistic, effective and enforceable or self-enforcing wherever possible.
- 4.2 As part of our partnership approach, the County Council has invested heavily, as have Thames Valley Police, in safety camera technology. There are currently 53 fixed camera housings in Buckinghamshire utilising front and rear photography. The Police service these with cameras and process any offences detected.
- 4.3 Evidence collected nationally indicates that well sited cameras reduce speeds by an average of 4.2mph and reduce casualties by 28%. In Buckinghamshire, analysis of the first 39 fixed sites has shown an average speed reduction of 6.6% and a reduction in casualties of 30.4%.
- 4.4 The County Council is committed to working with the Police to assist in the enforcement of excess speed and is continually looking to develop how this can be achieved.
- 4.5 After years of lobbying, the Government agreed to pilot a scheme whereby money collected as speeding fines would be returned to those agencies that undertake camera enforcement to prevent speeding. This process became known as Hypothecation or 'Netting Off' (the assignment of fine revenue to defray the costs of the criminal justice agencies - i.e. making the offender pay). The County Council together with other partners successfully put forward a bid to (the then) DTLR to be a pilot area and as a result the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership has been formed.

- 4.6 The Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership consists of the ten Highway Authorities in the Thames Valley area, the Police, the Magistrates' Courts Service and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Working together, the Partnership successfully piloted the process of Netting Off and this has now been rolled out nationally. The County Council is the leading Highway Authority for the Partnership, is represented on the Project Board and undertakes the role of Treasurer.
- 4.7 As part of the national roll out, the DfT have issued new rules to all Partnerships who use safety cameras. The new rules are very strict and must be complied with to remain in the scheme. The new rules state:
- Cameras, fixed or mobile, can only be used at sites where there is a casualty history and a history of excess speed;
 - Camera housings must be clearly visible, coloured yellow and must be preceded by a sign to remind motorists that cameras are in use and what the speed limit is;
 - Mobile sites should be clearly marked and those operating the sites should wear high visibility clothing;
 - The location of all camera sites should be publicised;
 - All sites must be monitored every six months to ensure that the new rules are complied with. Any sites that fail to comply should be removed unless the removal of the housing may lead to a deterioration of the casualty record;
 - All monies collected can only be used to recover legitimate costs of operating the cameras, any excess to be returned to the Treasury.
- 4.8 The County Council, as a partner in the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership fully complies with the new rules and will continue to do so. A new website is under development by the Partnership to provide further information, including camera locations, and is now on line. The address is www.saferroads.org.
- 4.9 The County Council will continue to identify potential safety camera sites annually. Each potential site is assessed in conjunction with the Police before any decision is made as to its suitability. Only those sites that fully meet the new rules can be considered for implementation.
- 4.10 As many of the worst single casualty sites that are appropriate for the provision of a safety camera have now been dealt with, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find sites where cameras can be used effectively. For this reason, routes with high casualty numbers are now being examined in more detail and it is likely that a combination of fixed and mobile sites will be used along these routes in the future. This will link to the countywide review of speed limits referred to in section 3 above and also to the work of the Safer Roads Officer.
- 4.11 As speeds and casualties are reduced along these lengths, the number of fixed and mobile camera sites may also reduce to ensure that cameras continue to be used only at continuing casualty sites.

5.0 Engineering - Traffic Calming

- 5.1 The County Council has actively promoted and supported traffic calming schemes for many years as a way of reducing accidents and addressing the many concerns expressed about speeding.
- 5.2 The current County Council policy for traffic calming states that County Council funding will be directed to those areas where traffic calming is likely to address an existing accident record. Priority is given to those areas where there are accidents involving vulnerable road users or there are a large number of recorded injury accidents. Priority will also be given to supporting Safer Routes to School particularly where this is identified as being necessary as part of a School Travel Plan.
- 5.3 Invariably, there are insufficient resources to deal with the many requests that the County Council receives for traffic calming. Priority is always given to those sites which meet these criteria and where there are likely to be casualty reduction benefits. The County Council identifies potential traffic calming sites annually and these go forward for inclusion in the Local Safety Schemes Programme after discussion at the Local Committees.
- 5.4 The County Council recognises that many communities are concerned about excess speed but conditions are such that most of these are very unlikely to qualify for County Council funded measures.
- 5.5 The County Council will support appropriate community-funded traffic calming providing that there is no detrimental effect on road safety and that the scheme is approved by the County Council. Many community-funded 'gateway' schemes have already been completed or are proposed.
- 5.6 In recognition that some local communities will be unable to raise sufficient funds quickly to provide community-funded traffic calming the County Council has launched the Forbearance Fund. This has provided £250,000 to enable local communities to fund traffic calming schemes and is intended to increase the opportunities, through partnerships, for providing these schemes throughout the County. The costs of these schemes can then be repaid over a period of up to three years.
- 5.7 A protocol giving full details of the Forbearance Fund has been produced and this has been distributed widely. Early indications are that several local councils are interested in making use of this scheme. The demand for community funded schemes means that they are currently dealt with on a first come, first served basis and this has led to some delays in processing these.
- 5.8 The support of the local community is vital to ensure that traffic calming schemes are well received and effective. Many local communities do not want schemes that are in place all day, every day when the 'problem' may only be at peak hours or during school times etc. Traffic calming can be very urbanising and can create the potential for accidents and increased noise and these detrimental effects need careful consideration.
- 5.9 The County Council will encourage (or require if necessary) developers to ensure that appropriate speed management and/or traffic calming features are designed into all future developments.

6.0 **Education**

- 6.1 The County Council recognises that publicity campaigns can change attitudes and behaviour and create a climate where people understand and accept road safety measures. Education, Training and Publicity will continue to play an important role in raising awareness and improving driver (and other road user) behaviour and will underpin all speed management and casualty reduction work.
- 6.2 Government Publicity Campaigns will continue to be supported by distributing publicity material and through local activities and events as appropriate. Particular emphasis is given to priority areas such as speed.
- 6.3 The County Council launched a ten-year Anti Speeding Campaign in 1994. The aim of the Campaign is to make speeding socially unacceptable, in much the same way that most people now see drinking and driving.
- 6.4 As part of the Anti Speeding Campaign, the County Council has worked, and will continue to work, in close partnership with Thames Valley Police. A good example of this is Operation PRIDE, a joint countywide Police and Road Safety Officer driver education initiative that takes place on a regular basis.
- 6.5 Getting the message across that driving at speeds that are inappropriate to the conditions can kill and that if you speed in Buckinghamshire you stand a good chance of being caught, underpin all the activities in this Speed Management Strategy. A significant number of 'Kill Your Speed' posters have been provided by the County Council in support of this campaign. These have raised awareness and are now recognised by large numbers of drivers. A newsletter 'Speed Matters' has also been produced in partnership with the Police and neighbouring local authorities.
- 6.6 The 'Traffic Calming by Example' publicity campaign was launched in 1996 and will continue to be promoted by the County Council. This asks drivers and organisations to make a particular effort, including a written commitment to drive at speeds that are appropriate to the conditions and within the speed limits, thus creating mobile traffic calming. This is particularly effective if promoted locally by Parish Councils or other responsible organisations.
- 6.7 All of the speed related work in the County and the work undertaken as part of the netting off project is now being promoted as part of the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership. This together with the national Think! logo will be used to raise awareness of the work undertaken by the County Council to address speed related issues.
- 6.8 Mark Oldfield, our Safer Roads Officer, wholly funded by the netting off project, has been appointed and will work with local communities to develop initiatives and address issues that concern them. He will also play a major role in publicising and developing new initiatives to support any new speed limits implemented as part of the countywide speed limit review.
- 6.9 The use of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) is being actively pursued and other self help measures will be developed. SIDs will be available for local communities to borrow and operate themselves after completion of a site

inspection and risk assessment. These will help to raise awareness of actual speeds for both drivers and the local community.

- 6.10 As part of the Safer Routes to School initiative, school children are being involved in road safety activities and are being trained to be aware of the hazards on the highway and how to deal with them. Educating the children appears to have a positive effect on the parents! To date, school children have been involved in designing signs for 20mph zones and designing posters and postcards to support the CCTMP.
- 6.11 Further work is needed and will be undertaken to develop driver improvement courses and continuing to target key driver and pre driver groups should assist in raising awareness.