

THE SLOWER SPEEDS INITIATIVE

SPEED KILLS

- individuals and neighbourhoods
- freedom of movement for millions
- freedom of choice of transport
- respect for the law

The Government wants to run away from the problem of speed.

Most of us won't be able to.

It's time for the Government to choose between communities and cars.

THE UNDECLARED WAR

Our roads are battlefields.

- 264,000 died in active service during WWII
- 311,000 died on Britain' s roads between 1945-1998

The leading cause of death for young men under the age of 24, a war we send 43,500 children to fight every year. Over 200 never come home and nearly 6000 of them are seriously injured. (1) An undeclared war in which people die senselessly, without a cause.

IMAGINE

Two and a half Paddington rail disasters a week, a Lockerbie air disaster every month. The daily loss of life on our roads is equivalent to these horrifying scenarios. Why isn' t this daily death toll, and its terrible wake of devastated lives and communities, news?

The Government say "road casualties ... are not always noticed." (2) In fact, the scale of notified casualties alone would people a city larger than Coventry every year. (3) To include

their family and a narrow circle of friends would occupy the whole of London. Who hasn't been touched by a road tragedy?

Judith's story

Judith Moore was seriously injured when a 36-tonne lorry went out of control while travelling at 58 mph in a 40 mph limit in poor weather. The lorry overturned onto Judith's stationary car, with her and her two children in it. The children were pulled out through the windows, but it took firefighters one and a half hours to lift the lorry and cut Judith from the wreckage. She suffered injuries and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, as a result of which she had to give up her job as a secondary school teacher. The lorry driver was not prosecuted for any offence.

THE MOST BRUTAL FORM OF HIGHWAY ROBBERY

Strangers casually rob one another of a right to life with the Government and police turning a blind eye. 3600 people die annually and 320,000 are injured on our roads.

To concentrate efforts on burglaries, police budgets for traffic operations have been cut back from 15% to 6% in the last 10 years. Yet more people are killed and hurt by bad driving than all other crimes combined.

"Crime and Disorder Audits" carried out by the country's police forces show that 86% of people think road safety is as important as mugging and burglary.

"The political neglect of road danger must be one of the great unsolved mysteries of the 20th century". Dr Ian Roberts, Director of Child Health Monitoring Unit, University of London

SPEED MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Speed is the biggest single contributory factor in road crashes, inflicting hundreds of thousands of casualties every year. The relationship between speed and road crashes is straightforward: as speeds go up, the likelihood of crashes goes up, for any given set of road conditions. The reason is simple: increased vehicle speeds are not accompanied by increased thinking and reacting speeds. Because of this the distance needed for responding and braking increases with speed.

And as speeds go up, the severity of crashes goes up. Inappropriate speed choice - driving too fast for the conditions - is the major factor in up to a half of road crashes and contributes to many more. (4)

Speed reductions cut casualties. The likelihood of crashes decreases as speeds are reduced. Although the relationship varies according to road conditions and average speeds, there is an association between speed reduction and crash reduction - every 1 mph reduction in speed reduction in crashes is accompanied by an average 5% decrease in crashes and a 7% decrease in fatalities. (5)

A 10% drop in speeds resulted in a 40% drop in fatalities and serious injuries after speed cameras were introduced in West London. (5)

Where 20 mph zones have been introduced and enforced, all casualties have fallen by around 60%.

"Driver error is found to be a contributory cause in over 90% of accidents, and driving too fast is a driver error in judging what is safe." DETR, Road Safety Division, Speed Policy Review Discussion Paper, August 1999.

SPEED IS THE ROAD SAFETY ISSUE

The wrong speed choice kills three times as many people as drink driving. And yet speeding is considered by most drivers to be the moral equivalent of parking on a double yellow line. 85% of drivers admit to breaking the law by exceeding the speed limit. (6)

The casualty statistics are only the tip of the iceberg. Inappropriate road speeds are the biggest source of danger on our streets, causing anxiety for loved ones, curtailing the freedom to walk and cycle and disrupting access to local facilities. With low levels of enforcement, low political priority placed on speed control, and cars still dominant in our transport system, it is drivers who determine who uses the streets and how. **It is drivers who decide what is safe for everyone else.**

A RAW DEAL

The 30 mph limit for built up areas is the most well known of our national speed limits. 97% of drivers understand it. (6) But 70% of car drivers and 55% of HGV drivers exceed the 30 mph speed limit. (3) A pedestrian knocked down by a vehicle travelling at 40 mph has only a 5% chance of surviving; at 30 mph it is 45%, but at 20 mph the chances of surviving rise to 95%. (5)

In 1998, 10,481 pedestrians and 3,312 cyclists were killed or seriously injured by motorists. A third of these people were children. Over a fifth of the pedestrian deaths and fatalities were people aged 60 and over. For every kilometre travelled a pedestrian's risk of death or serious injury is 7 times greater than that of car occupants; for cyclists it is nearly 17 times greater.

What are your chances?				
Your average chances of surviving a collision if you are struck by a car while walking or cycling:				
Vehicle Speed	Chances of Surviving	% of vehicles exceeding that speed in built-up areas		
		Cars	HGVs	
20 mph	95	95	91	
30 mph	45	72	55	
40 mph	5	12	5	

Quite simply, the majority of traffic is moving at or above the speed which would kill the majority of pedestrians and cyclists. The blunt reality of the status quo is that people must risk their lives if they wish to walk or cycle. Despite these stark odds, the majority of drivers consider that "moderate" speeding is not a crime. (6) Very low enforcement makes this attitude socially acceptable. Even where speed cameras are in use, they are often set for very excessive speeds to avoid overloading local police with processing penalties. (7)

Road safety is seen by many drivers as less important than pollution or congestion. And although half say that the safety of pedestrians and cyclists is "a major problem", (8) the extent to which speed limits are flouted indicates that drivers are unwilling to accept responsibility for the safety of vulnerable road users, or for their share in creating a dangerous environment. UK traffic law supports this by assuming that all road users, including child

pedestrians, have equal responsibility for road safety. By contrast, health and safety legislation requires those who create the hazards to take primary responsibility for safety. (9)

"The law treats a road death as an unfortunate consequence of a traffic offence instead of looking first at the loss of life and then investigating how this happened. A death caused by bad driving should be no different under the law from any other death caused by negligence. It should be tried in a Crown Court in front of a judge and jury, not by a lay magistrate as a summary offence only". Brigitte Chaudhry, founder of RoadPeace

CHOOSE LIFE

In Pilton, the deprived Edinburgh estate where the cult film Trainspotting was filmed, the lives of 10,000 residents greatly improved after the Council installed speed-reducing measures. £57,000 was spent on traffic calming. The result was a 37% reduction in casualties.

THE WRONG KIND OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

Each of us has a 1 in 17 chance of being killed or seriously injured in a road crash. But children, especially from poorer families, the elderly and those without access to a car are particularly exposed to our obsession with speed. A child is 50 times more likely to be killed by a motorised vehicle than by a stranger. (10)

Road crashes are the single biggest killer of school age children, accounting for two-thirds of premature child deaths. More than 200 children die each year on Britain's roads, with nearly 6000 seriously injured. (1) Speed plays a major role. In residential areas where car speeds have been reduced from 30 to 20 mph, child pedestrian casualties have fallen by 70%. (1)

Poorer children are five times more likely to be killed on the roads than their more well-to-do schoolmates. Why? A higher proportion of them live beside main roads with fast traffic. 67% of the poorest households have no access to a car compared to only 6% of the richest.

Denmark had one of the worst child pedestrian accident rate in Europe until it passed a law to deal with the problem. The police, local authorities and schools were made responsible for protecting children "against the dangers of wheeled traffic on their way to and from school." As a result of speed limits, traffic calming and designating "living streets" with pedestrian priority, serious injuries were reduced by 78%. Now most children in Denmark walk or cycle to school, with rates of cycling as high as 60%. (9)

"Transport is the single biggest issue in preventative child health. Never before have children's horizons been so limited, their freedom so curtailed, their environment so circumscribed". Dr. Ian Roberts, Director of Child Health Monitoring Unit, University College London

Parents' fear of speeding traffic is leading to a generation of kids growing up with a new kind of deprivation: they are being deprived of the social and physical freedoms essential to normal development.

Our cooped-up children are becoming obese. And sedentary children are likely to become sedentary adults. (12) Heart disease, diabetes, brittle bones will cost the Health Service far more than the traffic calming that would turn mean streets into home zones where children could grow up safe and sound.

60% of men and 70% of women are so physically inactive that they risk coronary heart disease, diabetes, stroke, obesity and even mental illness. These diseases and the burden on the Health Service that they represent could be prevented by 30 minutes of moderate activity

for most days of the week. (13) Walking and cycling to work and to the shops provide ways of integrating good health habits into daily life. Cycling just two miles five times a week improves personal fitness rapidly. Walking is a form of activity open to all. But our dangerous roads discourage this equitable path to good health.

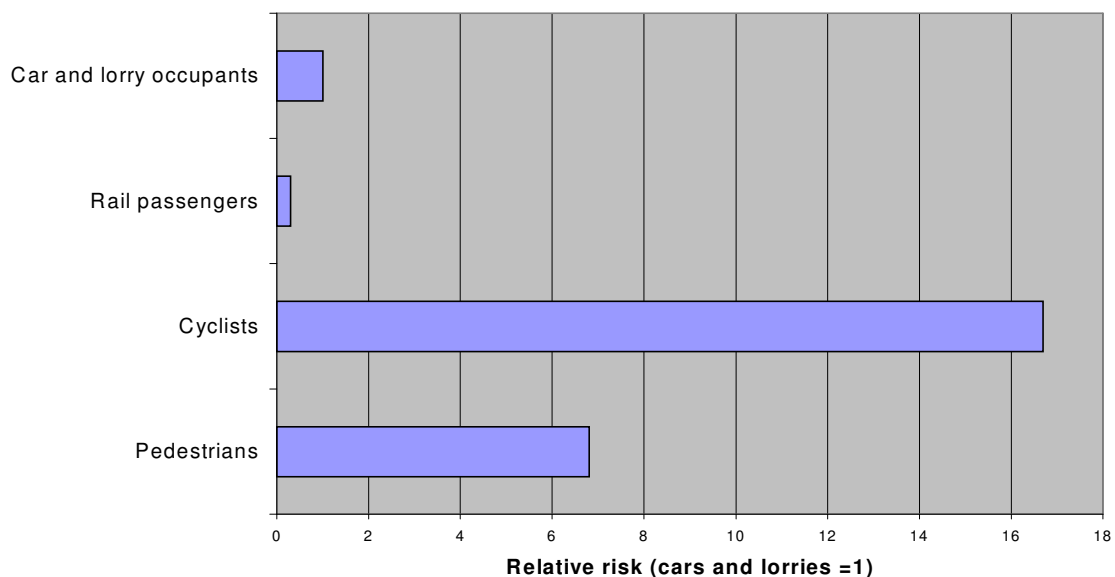
RUN OFF THE ROAD IN OUR TOP-GEAR TOWNS

How many injuries and near misses would you tolerate before giving up walking or cycling to work?

Every year an increasing number of pedestrians and cyclists are literally run off the road. The main reason people do not cycle is fear of being hit by a car. Traffic danger is the main reason our children are no longer allowed to walk or cycle to school. Now 20% of peak hour congestion is due to the school run. (14)

Against a background of increasing car mileage and an increasing number of vehicles on the road, walking and cycling are in steady decline - by 21% and 35% respectively since 1985. This decline has played a major role in the overall reduction of pedestrian casualties in that period. Despite the dramatic fall in cycle traffic, the casualty rate for cyclists have **increased** by a quarter. (3)

Casualties per bn km travelled relative to car and lorry casualties (1994)
Source: Stephen Potter (1997) *Vital Travel Statistics*



Today' s drivers enjoy unprecedented power and comfort. Drivers are ever more insulated by their car-coons¹ from the effects of speed. (6) From seat-belts to side-impact-protection-systems, car safety features are making life inside the "cockpit" ever more reassuring. The risks of driving are transferred outside the car to vulnerable road users. Most drivers consider themselves to be "above average". Four-fifths in one survey were reluctant to accept that even speed-related crashes were their fault. Instead others, even child pedestrians, get the blame. (6)

"The car offers a cocoon of protection against the threatening outside world. The irony is that increasing levels of traffic contribute enormously to the danger, alienation and

anonymity from which we seek protection". Mike Baugh, Road Safety Engineer for Bath and North East Somerset Council.

The predominant form of traffic-calming in our towns is congestion. Under other conditions, drivers choose the speed that "feels right". (6) The speeds that "feel right" to a majority of drivers represent potential death to the majority of pedestrians and cyclists. The need for speed has turned residential areas into rat-runs and town centres into twilight Silverstones.

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME

Motorbikes roar past the front door at 100 mph. The postie is terrified to step out of the delivery van. Heavy goods vehicles smash up traffic calming measures. Continual noise. This is life in the village of Six Mile Bottom in Cambridgeshire. Local resident Bernard Davis says, "**With noise from speeding vehicles we can't hear ourselves think and it's only a matter of time before someone else is killed.**"

THE DEATH OF THE RURAL IDYLL

60% of fatal crashes occur on rural roads, the majority on A-class roads. However, by length and amount of traffic, B-roads have the highest rates of fatalities. (15) Speed is the major contributory factor in most of these rural crashes. It's hardly surprising that 65% of people questioned do not feel safe when walking, cycling or horseback riding along country lanes. (16) In 1997, there were 15,000 horse related crashes, many of them involving speeding vehicles.

Speeding is high on the parish agenda. At least 60% of parishes in Shropshire, Herefordshire and Warwickshire have real problems with speeding. Over half have made representations to the local authority or the Police about speeding traffic. Around 50% of these parishes have witnessed serious crashes and in 86% of them people live in fear of further serious casualties. (17)

Ruth's story

Ruth Hogarth's husband David and two sons, Matthew, 12 and Andrew, 10, were killed on the A515 when a lorry driver, speeding in thick fog, pulled out into oncoming traffic. The driver was charged with 'Causing Death by Dangerous Driving' to which he pleaded not guilty until the day of the hearing, when he changed his plea to guilty. He was sentenced to four years in prison and a six year driving ban, both reduced to three years on appeal. He served 18 months.

Danger is ever present and there is great anxiety about the safety of village life for children and the elderly because of speeding traffic. Fear of traffic is forcing people to use their cars for trips to very local facilities like the post office, village hall, doctor's surgery and schools.

Rural areas are seeing a disproportionate growth in traffic. If nothing is done about the problem of speed, things can only get worse for them.

DANGEROUS FUN

"The consumer's appetite for personal expression through his or her car becomes more keen ... We are today in the entertainment business" J. Mays, vice-president of design, Ford Motor Company (18)

What is speeding for? What good does it do anyone? It seems that self-image has a lot to do with it. For many young drivers it's a fatal form of self-expression that leads to a quarter of serious crashes. (19)

Julian' s story

Julian Tristram, 22, was killed as a front seat passenger in a Ford Fiesta, being driven at excessive speed, when the driver lost control and collided head-on with an oncoming car. The driver was charged with Causing Death by Dangerous Driving but the judge directed the jury to return a Not Guilty verdict because the car had been scrapped before the defence had examined it.

85% of drivers admit to speeding and a large minority speed consistently. 42% speed because they "enjoy the sensation of accelerating rapidly". A substantial minority have a point to prove: "It' s important to show other drivers they can' t take advantage of you." (6) There is so much competition between drivers in our towns that they hardly notice pedestrians and cyclists. (20)

Yet many drivers justify speeding as unintentional, or because they are in a hurry or because other drivers are setting the pace. (6) The trivial nature of these justifications and forms of private pleasure are nothing less than shocking in the context of their real world impacts.

BAD MEMORY LANE

Residents of Vine Lane in Hillingdon, London, are paying for their children to be brought back from school by taxi because of traffic fears. Mr Colehan of the Vine Residents Association says, "**When my daughter comes to visit she would like to be able to take my grandchildren for what should be a pleasant walk along the lane, but the threat of speeding traffic makes it impossible.**" For 25 years the residents have been pressing the Council to reduce speed on the road.

THE NANNY STATE?

"We have been told officially that there will have to be three deaths on the lanes before official action is taken." Sara Newman, Tunbridge Wells resident

The law favours drivers

- Responsibility for road safety lies with the most vulnerable groups who are exposed to the greatest danger. The emphasis is put on getting children to behave like adults. The result is one of the worst child pedestrian casualty records in Europe. (14) A 20 mph limit in residential areas could save 70% of the children who will otherwise continue to be casualties of the car. (11) What objections could there be to this restriction on drivers?
- One half of all penalty points on licences are the result of convictions for speeding. (9) Drivers who are persistent speeders say that only heavier and swifter penalties will stop them from speeding. "Catch us and fine us on the spot." (8) But bad driving is effectively condoned. Under-resourcing of traffic police operations has led to low levels of prosecution for speeding violations picked up by speed cameras. Of the 40% of drivers snapped by speed cameras, only 13% get prosecuted. (8)
- Speed cameras are often set to detect only the most serious violations of the speed limit because police fear being swamped with fines to process. At present all fines go to the Treasury. None of the money goes back to the authorities who bear the costs of speed limit enforcement even though speed cameras typically cover their costs of installation and maintenance five times over. In 1995 the Treasury collected £30m from speeding drivers.
- The existing penalty for a routine speeding offence is £40 plus a few points on the licence. Combined with the low likelihood of detection, the deterrent effect is nil.

- In 95% of the cases where a driver has killed someone the charge is driving without due care and attention¹. These cases are heard in the Magistrates' Court, where the maximum fine is £2,500 and a discretionary driving ban. Magistrates are not allowed to take into account the consequences of the offence. The typical sentence for a driver who kills is £250 and a few penalty points. (9) This represents a serious injustice to crash victims and provides no deterrent for drivers.

Joyce' s story

Joyce Spencer' s only son Ian, 27, was knocked down on a pelican crossing by a speeding driver, who was travelling at 43 mph in a 30 mph zone. Ian Spencer was in intensive care from 22nd April to 26th May, without regaining consciousness. His death will not become part of the fatality statistics since he did not die within 30 days of the crash. The driver was charged with Driving Without Due Care and Attention and Driving with Excessive Speed. He was fined £260 and given 7 and 6 penalty points respectively for each offence, but in spite of accumulating 13 points, his licence was not removed.

"Failures by the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and magistrates to take road traffic law enforcement seriously are sending a faulty signal to all drivers about the risks and seriousness of road traffic offending". (7) Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety

Driver error is responsible for over 90% of crashes. Cars are tested annually for their road worthiness. Drivers are tested only once for theirs. Even though there is support for the new written part of the driving test as a way to improve road safety, 59% of drivers thought they would fail if they had to take it again. In fact 75% failed a mock exam based on the new test. (8)

"Until Paddington no-one had died on the railways for two years; and in that time 7,200 people had been killed on the roads. That' s the staggering difference." Rob Gifford, Director of PACTS

If our road tragedies were neatly packaged for the media into the two and a half Paddington rail disasters a week or the monthly jumbo jet crash that they represent, the public outcry would undoubtedly shut down the rail and aviation industries.

Money is now no object for the Government where rail safety is concerned: Advanced Train Protection will cost an estimated £14 million for every life saved. Why is road safety so different?

ONE FALSE MOVE

Melplash is a small Dorset village on a narrow A-road. The speed limit is 40 mph and a single step puts you into a steady stream of HGVs thundering by. People are so terrified that they hardly dare step out of their doors and many use their cars to visit neighbours only a few doors away.

ROAD TAX? WE ALL PAY THE PRICE OF SPEED

The costs are huge: loss of life, pain, grief and suffering for the crash victim and relatives, friends and witnesses; the loss to society of the productivity of crash victims; the costs to the

Health Service for ambulances and treatment; damage to vehicles and property; costs to the police; insurance costs.

When Government economists take these into account, the total value of road crash prevention to society is £16bn a year including £1m for every life. (21) Preventing these deaths and casualties would bring as big a benefit to society as saving a quarter of the NHS budget or cutting 5p off the basic rate of income tax. (22)

The costs of disruption to traffic caused by crashes is not included. Nor is the bill for improving and maintaining a highway network which encourages higher speeds. Nor is the value to society of the environmental improvements that would result from decreased congestion and pollution if walking and cycling were safe. Nor is the value to the Health Service of reduced rates of respiratory and heart disease that could be achieved with cleaner air and healthier lifestyles.

While the Government could produce benefits to the whole country of between £5 and £12bn a year - a conservative estimate of the value of crash preventions achievable through speed reduction - it spends at most £3bn on road safety. Local authorities only spent 7% of their £1.2bn transport funds on local safety schemes in 1996. (23)

NO MONEY TO DO ANYTHING

Paul and Jenny Knocker formed Beaminster Road Traffic Action Group after over 200 people turned up at a public meeting. The group is calling for their road to be downgraded to a B-road, a 17.5 tonne weight limit to be imposed, the 30 mph zone to be extended and a 20 mph zone to be implemented in the town centre. Yet Dorset County Council say there is no money to do anything and the Police don't seem interested in enforcing the existing limits.

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Despite the uproar stirred by the possibility that the Government might dare to begin to enforce speed limits or even reduce them, there is an emerging consensus that something must be done. With greater resources given to raising awareness of the problem that consensus could grow.

Drivers do not understand the reasons for speed limits. The AA has said that a speed hierarchy needs to be developed to reflect "all activities, not just traffic needs". Drivers are not aware that speeding takes more lives than drink driving. Even so, 44% believe that there should be more spending on Government campaigns to get people to drive more slowly in towns. Around a third of drivers agree that more anti-speeding measures and heavier penalties should be introduced. 78% support speed cameras to enforce speed limits and there is universal consensus that, at the very least, the 30 mph should be enforced. If drivers were better educated about the threat they pose to vulnerable road users, there would be better understanding of the need for 20 mph limits in built-up areas. A fifth of drivers already support a 20 mph limit. (6)

Another recent MORI poll showed that almost 50% of people questioned believed that a 20 mph limit in town centres should be introduced. One-third said they would consider using their cars less if a 20 mph limit in built-up areas was combined with safer conditions for walking and cycling. (24)

The Government's Urban Task Force recommends speed reduction and a minimum spend of 65% of the Government's transport budget on walking, cycling and public transport. They say: "There is no reason why limits of 20 mph should not become normal in residential areas and high streets". (25)

Communities around the country are calling out for protection against speeding drivers. The chaos of speed limits in villages and higher traffic speeds leave people in rural areas particularly exposed to danger.

Country dwellers overwhelmingly want 30 mph limits or less for their villages, according to the results of a survey of parishes in the rural West Midlands. For most rural single carriageway roads the majority want a limit of 40 mph or less. (17) The high rates of fatalities on rural roads show that the 60 mph limit is giving drivers the wrong message. And there are good grounds for lowering the limit, since average speeds are 46 mph. For C-class and unclassified roads, 99% of people asked supported a speed limit for 40 mph or less, with 20 mph the preferred speed. (16) For rural communities, speeding lorries pose additional terrors: 72% of HGVs exceed their 40 mph limit on these roads. (3)

In 450 Suffolk villages where 30 mph limits have been introduced, casualties have been cut, traffic noise reduced and people feel less overwhelmed by cars and lorries.

A RESTRICTION AND INFRINGEMENT ON THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE

"My name is Sara Newman and I come from Tunbridge Wells in Kent. Many country lanes, including my own, are dangerous. They are not designed to take the volume of traffic and its speed. Residents have been campaigning for 10 years and the situation continues to deteriorate, with increasing volumes and speeds of traffic, ratrunning and disturbing incidents of road rage.

"There have been so many crashes the residents no longer report them. In the winter the surface water freezes, drivers continue to speed. They crash through our hedges which date from ancient times so that these are no longer stock proof. One farmer on the lane became so incensed that he drove his biggest and slowest tractor along the lanes one morning to slow the drivers down.¹

"The residents are now prisoners along what were once quiet lanes. The lanes are too dangerous to walk along. We are part of the National Cycle Network and we still have a 60 mph limit which the Police will not enforce so drivers can drive as fast as they like and never get caught. We have been told officially that there will have to be three deaths on the lanes before official action is taken. This is extremely alarming to a community of disabled people who live on one of the lanes as they are the most vulnerable members of our community."

We need lower speed limits because

- The roads are not designed to cope with the speed of traffic -they are narrow, twisting and turning.
- There are no pavements and the verges are long gone, so pedestrians have no protection. They are either imprisoned in their own homes, or have to use a car which only adds to the traffic problems.
- Children are especially affected. They cannot walk, or cycle. There are no Safe Routes to School or horse riding in safety.
- Farmers cannot move their livestock safely along the lanes.
- Residents who try to drive at realistic speeds are continually harrassed and subject to road rage.
- Residents have to drive to see their neighbours. If they do walk,they have had vehicles deliberately driven at them.

"All this adds up to a restriction and infringement on the rights of people who live in the area."

EASY TARGETS

Road Casualties

In 1986 a target was established to reduce road casualties by a third by the year 2000. The reductions which have been achieved have depended in large part on vulnerable road users everywhere surrendering to cars. Children whose families can afford it are chauffeured everywhere. People walk and cycle less. Even so, on current levels of safety expenditure, we are falling short of the target. Total child casualties have fallen by only 14%. Slight casualties for adults under the age of 60 have increased by 21%. (1)

Inappropriate speed choice by drivers is directly responsible for at least a third of the country's yearly 320,000 crashes. A programme to reduce and control road speeds could achieve the Government's casualty reduction target rapidly and bring with it major health and environmental benefits.

"The enforcement of speed limits is potentially one of the most effective ways of reducing casualties among vulnerable road users." (14) DETR 1997 Road Safety Strategy

Cycling and Walking

National Cycling Strategy is to double the number of bike trips by 2002 and again by 2012. The forthcoming National Walking Strategy is expected to have targets to increase the share of journeys walked from 28% to 33%. Similar targets are already being built into Local Transport Plans.

Higher casualty reduction combined with local targets for increased walking and cycling - including as links to public transport - will make speed reductions even more compelling.

Road Traffic Reduction

All local authorities must have targets for road traffic reduction in their local transport plans.

Speed reductions will be essential to meet these targets and bring about the change in transport habits this country desperately needs.

Our Healthier Nation

The Government's strategy to give us longer and healthier lives and 'a fairer country' sets national and local targets which a national policy to control and reduce road speeds would help to deliver. Speed management alone could deliver the target of preventing 12,000 accidental deaths by 2010. Coronary heart disease and stroke reduction targets could also be assisted. In addition, the Government has promised to address the risk factors which have a bearing on these targets. (26)

Housing on Brownfield Sites

The Government has set a target for 60% of the new homes we need to be built on brownfield sites in our towns and cities. For this to happen we need a "year on year growth in the number of people living in towns and cities". (25) Improvements to transport safety as a major feature of the urban environment will be crucial to achieving Government targets and resisting urban sprawl.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Speed has wider environmental impacts. High road speeds contribute disproportionately to global warming. Merely enforcing the 70 mph limit on motorways would achieve between 1-6% of the Government's carbon dioxide reduction targets. (27)

A BUNCH OF CARROTS FOR MR BLAIR

Much greater reliance on walking and cycling for short journeys is essential to cut congestion and air pollution, revitalise our towns and cities and reduce the incidence of obesity, heart disease and stroke. Government plans to promote walking and cycling as alternatives to short car journeys will increase casualties without enforcement and reduction of speed limits. Speed control is central to an integrated transport strategy. Speed control is the only cost effective way to give pedestrians and cyclists a fair chance.

The reversal of a number of important trends will be "performance indicators" for the Government in areas of transport, health and urban regeneration. Controlling road speeds has an important part to play in tackling all of them.

- Reducing and enforcing road speeds will help to reverse:
- decline in walking and cycling
- rising car use and congestion
- increased obesity and low levels of fitness among the entire population, especially the young
- deteriorating urban air quality
- flight from our cities due to diminishing quality of life and fears for personal safety which a car-dominated environment have helped to create
- pressure on greenfield sites and dispersed development which intensify the speed culture rising levels of traffic and traffic danger in rural areas

If we're going to reduce car use our streets must be safe for everyone. This means traffic moving at speeds which respect vulnerable road users. It means speeds that will give pedestrians and cyclists a better than 50/50 chance.

SPEED KILLS - CUT THE BLIGHT OF SPEEDING TRAFFIC

Britain is blighted by speeding traffic. It need not be that way. In the interests of freedom and fairness, we need:

- LOWER LIMITS:

A new vision for the main roads in our towns and cities. We need to recognise that these roads are also hugely important for pedestrians, cyclists, shoppers, and for the people who work or live beside them. Main roads would become safer and much more pleasant for all these people if 20 mph rather than 30 mph was the typical speed limit.

20 mph limits in residential areas in towns and cities have cut casualties by 60%. All built-up areas - including rural settlements - deserve this benefit.

Home Zones are commonplace in Germany and the Netherlands. These traffic-calmed "play streets" provide a freedom that most British children can only dream of. A nationwide programme of 10 mph Home Zones should be drawn up immediately, along with a Safe Route to School for every primary school child. Safe Routes to School are already proving their worth in Britain.

60 mph is simply too fast for many of our rural roads. People in rural settlements should have as much right to slower speeds in their communities as people in urban areas. 30 mph should be the maximum speed for rural communities. 40 mph should be the norm on single-carriageway rural roads, with a 20 mph limit on country lanes.

- BETTER ENFORCEMENT OF SPEED LIMITS

Poor and patchy enforcement encourages law breaking. Police forces need the resources to enforce speed limits effectively.

Speed cameras are highly cost-effective deterrents. The Police and local councils need to be able to retain some of the fines so that they can cover the costs of enforcement.

In-car speed limiters would be the best form of enforcement. Installed in the vehicle, these gadgets can be activated by drivers to prevent them exceeding the speed limit. The technology is available for experiments to be set up.

- TOUGHER PENALTIES AND SENTENCES

The existing penalties and sentences offer neither deterrence nor justice. Drivers, the police, the CPS and the courts all need to take speeding more seriously.

A NEW RESPECT FOR LAW AND COMMUNITY

At the 1999 Labour Party Conference, the Prime Minister said a top objective for his Government in the 21st century would be a "new respect for law and community." If the Prime Minister really wishes to achieve this objective, he cannot overlook the problem of excessive and inappropriate road speeds. How can this "new respect" be fostered in a Britain of speeding drivers who break the law and endanger communities?

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT IN A FREE SOCIETY

The sheer danger of our roads removes this right from many. The freedom to make short journeys by healthy modes that would bring environmental benefits to the whole community is being sacrificed to the freedom to move at speeds which are deadly to the unprotected. The right for the many to break the law and drive at the speed of their choice is now accepted as more fundamental than the right to life for all, the right to travel freely and safely by foot and by bicycle and the right to a safe local environment. ***In 21st century Britain let's have road speeds that benefit everyone.***

THE SLOWER SPEEDS INITIATIVE

The Slower Speeds Initiative was founded in 1998 by the Children's Play Council, Cyclist's Touring Club, Environmental Transport Association, Pedestrians' Association, Pedestrians' Policy Group, Road Danger Reduction Forum, RoadPeace, Sustrans and Transport 2000. We believe that lower speeds will bring important all-round health, environmental, transport and social benefits. Our approach has been endorsed by 17 local authorities, over 30 national organisations and nearly 200 community groups.

"Speed Kills" was researched and written by Paige Mitchell, John Stewart and Ben Shaw

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USEFUL SOUNDBITES

3600 people die annually and 320,000 are injured on our roads.

70% of car drivers and 55% of HGV drivers exceed the 30 mph speed limit.

A pedestrian knocked down by a vehicle travelling at 40 mph has only a 5% chance of surviving; at 30 mph it is 45%, but at 20 mph the chances of surviving rise to 95%.

Where 20 mph zones have been introduced and enforced, all casualties have fallen by around 60%.

The typical sentence for a driver who kills is £250 and a few penalty points.

"We have been told officially that there will have to be three deaths on the lanes before official action is taken."

6 children are killed every week on our roads.

Road crashes are the single biggest killer of school-age children, accounting for two-thirds of premature child deaths.

Poor children are five times more like to be killed on the roads than richer children.

A 12 - 15 mph increase in speed results in noise levels going up by 4 -5 decibels. A car travelling at 31 mph makes one tenth as much noise as one going 56 mph.

The Transport Select Committee has called for a maximum 30 mph limit through villages.

In 1997, there were 15,000 horse related crashes, many of them involving speeding vehicles.

5000 barn owls, 40,000 deer and 50,000 badgers are killed on the roads each year by drivers driving too fast to take evasive action.

Merely enforcing the 70 mph limit on motorways would achieve between 1-6% of the Government's carbon dioxide reduction targets.

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