

# Chapter Seven

## Transport Issues and Impacts

### Introduction

This Chapter covers the following transport issues which have been identified through consultation, as being particularly significant:

- Future of rail services in Devon
- Air services and airports
- Taxis and private hire vehicles
- Distribution of freight
- Coach travel
- Access to ports
- Joint working with neighbouring highway authorities.

It also summarises the results of two assessments of the impacts of the Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011: an Equality Impacts and Needs Assessment and the Strategic Environmental Assessment.



*The Tarka line, connecting Exeter with Barnstaple and other communities in north Devon, is a vital local public transport link for the county's residents and visitors alike. The County Council is committed to supporting the future of this and other branch rail lines in Devon.*

### Future of Rail Services in Devon

Enhancement of services operated by Train Operating Companies (TOCs), improvements in access to stations and widespread publicity have led to a steady growth in rail patronage in Devon. Passenger numbers on local train services between Exeter, Exmouth, Barnstaple and Paignton have grown by 16.7% during the last five years. Service reliability and punctuality have recovered following the period of severe disruption in the aftermath of the Hatfield rail accident in 2000, which resulted in many speed restrictions affecting both local and longer distance rail services.



Devon County Council places a great deal of importance on strategic rail links to key destinations such as London, Birmingham and Heathrow. The County Council wishes to see the provision of: faster, limited stop journeys to and from London Paddington during the morning and evening peak periods; the retention of the current Cross Country timetable through Devon, linking the County to Bristol, the Midlands and North; and an hourly service to Waterloo. These services contribute to economic growth in the Exeter Sub Region and reduce peripherality.

Local rail journeys are particularly important for commuting, education and recreation purposes. The County Council works in close partnership with the rail industry through the ExeRail Partnership and Salisbury to Exeter Lineside Consortium of Authorities to:

- Financially support additional local train services where justified
- Promote rail travel - both through direct provision of publicity and timetables, and through support for the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership
- Implement station access and improvements
- Seek improvements to the local rail network.

This partnership working, particularly with Wessex Trains, has resulted in the operation of the best ever timetables running on local services (December 2005) which has generated the increase in passenger numbers on the local services in the County over the last 5 years.

The challenge for the County Council is to build on this growth and give services a strengthened role over the period 2006 to 2011, seeking to retain recent improvements to train service patterns. There are some trains which are currently operating at capacity, particularly in the peak hours and the County Council will seek to address this issue through discussions with the TOCs.

Local train services are becoming increasingly important and make a significant contribution to the range of measures to address congestion through modal shift. The County Council has welcomed the 'Devon Metro' initiative to link the Exmouth, Paignton and Barnstaple services into Exeter, with a clock-face timetable. This has improved cross-Exeter services, increasing access to employment opportunities and significantly enhancing accessibility to Sowton Industrial Estate.

The railheading principle on the Barnstaple (Tarka) line is a significant step forward. The existing running time on the line does not allow trains to call at many stations and concentrating on station calls at Umberleigh, Eggesford, Yeoford, Coplestone and Crediton presents better opportunities to maximise patronage from local communities as well as retaining the main flow between Barnstaple and Exeter.

The growth and improvement of these local rail services will need to continue to accommodate the new housing, employment and other development proposed over the period to 2026 in the Regional Spatial Strategy which has designated Exeter as a strategically significant city.

The expansion and development of Exeter includes the provision of a new railway station on the Exeter to Waterloo line, at the Cranbrook new community in East Devon. The new station is a crucial part of the access strategy for the new community and associated developments, which include Skypark and the new terminal for Exeter International Airport. The opening of the station is planned to coincide with the completion of 1,000 houses at Cranbrook new community and the County Council is seeking the inclusion of station calls in the South West Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy and the South Western Franchise on which consultation has just concluded.

Devon County Council is seeking improvements to the rail service on the Exeter to Waterloo line. As well as the desire to see the introduction of an hourly service to

Waterloo there is an aspiration for an additional hourly service between Exeter and Axminster to give a half hour local service in Devon. This has been developed through the Salisbury to Exeter Lineside Consortium of Authorities and more recently with Somerset County Council and the South West Regional Development Agency. A recent study concluded that the aspirations could be achieved with two additional passing loops, each around 3 miles long, at a total estimated cost of £23 million. The County Council is currently considering how to promote the next phase of investigation, which would be the preparation of a business case for the scheme. The scheme is recognised in the SW Region's advice to Government on Regional Funding Allocations as a high priority for investment.

Devon County Council is an enthusiastic participant in developing the Community Railways initiative, through its involvement in the joint pilot for the Tamar Valley and Looe Valley branch lines. This concept is a means of increasing patronage and reducing subsidy per passenger. The development of lower cost models for railway operation may help the case for re-opening the former rail line between Bere Alston and Tavistock. The County Council supports the designation of the Barnstaple (Tarka) line as a Community Rail line later this year.

Rail services make a significant contribution to leisure and recreational opportunities throughout the county. The existing rail services and recent enhancements and promotions have provided additional opportunities to visit coastal areas, areas of outstanding natural beauty and local centres. The County Council will continue to support train services to Okehampton as part of the successful Dartmoor Sunday Rover public transport network and the development of an interchange at Yeoford.

The Greater Western Franchise presents a particular challenge. Draft timetables produced by First Group include significantly reduced service levels. The County Council will be working with the TOC and interested parties to seek to minimise the adverse impact these proposals may have on the local rail network and in particular the contribution they make to congestion and modal choice. Train capacity and access to stations will be included in the discussions.

The County Council has made representations to the Department for Transport and prospective bidders in the South Western franchise on aspirations for the Exeter to Waterloo line.

The County Council has worked in partnership with Network Rail and the TOCs to improve access to rail stations. Plans are being developed to improve access to and interchange with other modes at Exeter St Davids, Exeter Central and Newton Abbot rail stations as well as additional car parking at Tiverton Parkway.

The County Council has recently undertaken a detailed survey at smaller stations to identify deficiencies and assess potential. This includes access for persons with disabilities, car parking, passenger facilities and real time information. An annual programme of improvements in partnership with the rail industry is undertaken through the ExeRail initiative but the County Council will be discussing the potential for future improvements with the TOCs following this survey and the development of the new franchises.

One of the key issues at stations is platform height. The gap between the platform and the train at Exeter St Thomas, Starcross, Exton, Lymptone, Copplestone and Newton St Cyres stations is a particular cause of concern and discourages travel. Network Rail are reportedly addressing the issue at Exeter St Thomas and Starcross and the County Council is in discussion with Network Rail and the TOCs regarding the other stations. It is intended to address this issue through partnership working. The use of blockades by Network Rail, where complete closure of branch lines with bus replacement for 2 weeks twice a year for maintenance and renewal, is an opportunity to undertake this work.

Over the period of the Local Transport Plan the County Council's objective is to see improvements to the rail infrastructure in Devon including:

- Passing loops on the Exeter to Waterloo line to enable the introduction of an hourly service to Waterloo, together with an hourly local service to Axminster/Honiton
- A new rail station at Cranbrook new community
- Gateway station improvements at Exeter St Davids, Exeter Central, Newton Abbot and Tiverton Parkway
- Accessibility improvements at rural rail stations including raising platforms and car park provision.

## Air Services and Airports

At present many of the air journeys of Devon residents and business people have to be made through Heathrow and Gatwick airports. Devon County Council supports the thrust of the Government's Air Transport White Paper, which sees a significant growth in travel from regional airports.

The County Council has enthusiastically supported the growth in regional air services from Exeter International Airport since 2003, which have resulted in annual throughput at the airport rising from 400,000 to 850,000 passengers per year in 2005. The County Council is keen to see continued expansion in the number of routes operated from Exeter International Airport, and in order to facilitate this continued growth it is looking to move the airport from Council ownership into the private sector. This will enable the significant capital investment needed to achieve a major expansion in terminal facilities, which already has "minded to grant" planning status.

The Trans European Network identifies Exeter International Airport in the airport network serving Europe as an "Accessibility and Regional Airport" together with Plymouth and Newquay. The Exeter International Airport has expanded to become the main airport for routes and passenger volumes handled in the far South West. The designation is particularly important in giving more importance to the wider role of air in connecting with neighbouring regions and strengthening business, tourism and social links. The need to support expansion at Exeter International Airport is recognised in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy and the airport policy contained in Chapter 2. One of the key issues prompted by expansion of air travel is the provision of adequate surface access, including development of public transport links.

The access needs of Exeter International Airport are covered in Chapter 5, as part of the programme 2006-2011 for the Exeter Sub Region. These include the provision of a new railway station on the Exeter to Waterloo railway line approximately 1.5 km from the airport, and the development of bus services linking the new community, Skypark and airport with other development to the East of Exeter and the city centre. Devon County Council will continue to support the preparation and implementation of an employers travel plan for Exeter International Airport.

## Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

The Department for Transport's March 2004 "Action Plan for Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles" explains their integral role as part of local transport provision. Taxis and private hire vehicles play a vital role in Devon helping deliver the objectives of Tackling Traffic Congestion and Delivering Accessibility. Conventional bus services can only meet certain needs and more flexible alternatives must be used to fulfil



everyone's transport needs, particularly in relation to vulnerable users and when addressing personal safety concerns.

Devon County Council has a guiding role in disseminating best practice and ensuring there is a consistent standard of service available across the county. To continue developing the role played by Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles the

County Council facilitates a joint forum with the Licensing Officers of the eight Devon District Councils and the unitary councils of Plymouth and Torbay which has progressed:

- The development of the innovative Fare Car programme
- Closer working on vehicle standards and development in terms of Disability Discrimination Act compliance and maximising the provision of accessible taxis
- Implementing initiatives on improving access for those with mobility impairment across all Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle operations
- Collaboration on the application of consistent standards of driver vetting, and investigating the scope for training to provide for any specific needs of older and less-able passengers
- Co-operation on information exchange; facilitating a joint approach to compliance and quality checks
- Jointly identifying improvements to ranks, and enhancing interchange facilities
- Integrating taxis into other infrastructure projects by allowing their use of bus lanes.

The County Council over the 2006-2011 period will be working with Licensing Officers on:

#### **Text message booking of Private Hire Vehicles**

Many people with communications difficulties have trouble booking taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs). Discussions with groups representing people with communications difficulties – including the deaf, stroke victims, and people with learning disabilities – have revealed that the ability to book a taxi or PHV by text would be very beneficial. Given the widespread use and availability of mobile phones, this can be introduced universally with minimal problems and without additional costs to operators.



*Flexible Fare Car services are one of Devon County Council's range of innovative approaches to meeting the local travel needs of people in remoter rural parts of the county.*



*Passengers board Exeter's new low floor Ring and Ride bus, which was launched in 2005. The travel needs of people with disabilities are one of the key areas addressed in the Equality Needs and Impact Assessment undertaken for the Devon Local Transport Plan.*



*The Devon Access Pass launched in Spring 2006*

### **Devon Access Pass**

The Devon Access Pass being launched in spring 2006 is available for people with communications difficulties to use on public bus services. It is intended to cut down the need to communicate with the driver to a minimum, while being able to provide all the information needed to issue a ticket etc., and to signify to the driver (through being a pass holder) that the person concerned may have communications difficulties. This will enable them to modify their approach accordingly and make due allowances to ensuring they deal with these customers in a positive and helpful manner. It is proposed to extend use of the pass to taxis and PHVs which will bring similar significant benefits.

### **Public Information on Accessible Taxis/ PHVs**

The transport network can only be considered accessible to people who need accessible taxis/ PHVs if they are able to rely on their use with confidence. This means that anyone travelling to a station, express coach service bus stop, bus station, airport, ferry terminal or other "significant" well used destinations where there may be a regular need for such information should be able to access such information at any time, by means of a clear and easily visible display. Devon County Council will work with Licensing Officers to collect this information and ensure it is displayed at these points and other relevant places.

### **Removing restrictions on the number of licences issued**

District Councils, as licensing authorities, have, in compliance with the Department for Transport's Action Plan, conducted reviews of their local policies relating to restriction of the number of taxi licences issued. Five of the eight Devon District Councils no longer place limits on the number of licences issued. The remaining three authorities of Exeter City Council, Torridge District Council and Teignbridge District Council are to continue restricting the number of licences issued as their surveys showed that there was no significant unmet demand. The County Council will work with these authorities to ensure that this is the most suitable course of action in terms of public interest and the industry as a whole.

### Town Centre Enhancements

Devon County Council will include assessment of current taxi rank provision as part of town centre enhancement works. This will consider if existing arrangements are sufficient or in need of improvement as well as the feasibility of taxi hailing points. Consultation with the local taxi trade when such schemes are planned will also take place.

## Distribution of Freight

Nationally, nearly 90% of all inland freight is road based accounting for approximately 15% of road miles (Derived from DFT Transport Statistics).

In Devon, the efficient movement of freight is important to the prosperity of the area especially given the rural nature of the county and scale of the local road network. Agriculture is a major industry which is largely dependent on bulk vehicle movements, and the provision of a good quality, well maintained and clearly signed road network is therefore essential to the maintenance and stimulation of the rural economy.


The movement of freight can have significant environmental implications, and not all roads, especially in the rural hinterland, are suitable for the passage of large vehicles. The predominance of road based freight over other, more sustainable, modes of freight movement also raises issues about pollution, the use of resources, and other environmental impacts.

The Strategic Road Network (SRN) for Devon has been identified as having a primary role in accommodating road based freight movements. In performing this role, the identification of the SRN helps to reduce the overall impact of freight movement by concentrating such traffic onto those parts of the network most able to accommodate it.

### South West Regional Freight Map



#### Key

- |   |                 |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|
|  | National Routes |  | Regional Routes |
|  | County Routes   |   |                 |

The development of a South West Regional Freight map including routes within Devon will assist the haulage industry by reinforcing the status of roads most suitable for use by large vehicles.

The impact of goods vehicles can be significant both in urban and rural areas. Access for service vehicles into the centre of urban areas is an important requirement if their economic vitality and viability are to be maintained. At the Principal Urban Areas and Sub Regional Centres, freight distribution is being scrutinised in order to identify the most sustainable and environmentally acceptable means of operation.

Freight Quality Partnerships have been set up as the mechanism help to develop an understanding of local freight distribution issues and problems, and to promote constructive solutions taking account of the need for access for goods and services and environmental and social concerns.

In addition care is being taken in the design of the new communities at Cranbrook and Sherford to ensure that the impact of service and freight vehicles is minimised.

The rail network is an under-utilised resource for freight movement, and scope exists for the expansion of long distance rail freight services.

Sea transport is very efficient in the use of energy and, while the opportunities to expand the role of water based freight haulage are limited, the increased use of coastal and European shipping and ferry links for both freight and passenger traffic is encouraged.

Multi-modal freight terminals can play an important role in encouraging the use of rail rather than road based freight networks. It is considered that the strategic priorities for such terminals in Devon, in terms of their importance to the local economy and their ability to influence modal choice, are at Exeter and Plymouth.

The Strategic Road Network within Devon has been developed in order to cater for the needs of the local community and also industry. In particular it has been defined to provide a well signed hierarchy of routes which can enable both strategic journeys, and those between local communities to be made easily and efficiently. The principle is that road based freight movements should make best use of the higher road classifications within the Network, only using the lower categories of road and the rural network at the beginning and end of journeys. The Network is closely linked to road maintenance regimes to ensure that appropriate standards are met. The Network has also been defined so that with appropriate signing, freight journeys can be made efficiently with least impact on the environment.

The Network has also been used to determine the most appropriate routes for inclusion on the South West Regional Freight map.

### **Freight Quality Partnerships**

Freight Quality Partnerships (FQP) have been set up in Devon in response to the Freight Transport Association/Local Government Association publication "Delivering the Goods", the Government's White Paper "A New Deal for Transport" which placed emphasis on the formation of FQPs, and the subsequent document "Sustainable Distribution: A Strategy".

They were introduced as part of the freight strategy for the Devon Local Transport Plan 2001 to 2006. They are an important tool in promoting the need to achieve the sustainable, efficient and economic movement of goods by all modes, while having regard for the social and environmental issues raised by freight movement including impacts in rural areas and on walkers, cyclists and horse-riders and optimising future opportunities for inter-modal movement of freight. This is reflected in the varied members of each of the partnerships which include representatives from Local Authorities, the Road Haulage Association, the Freight Transport Association, local businesses, the police and environmental groups.

Four area based FQPs in Devon were set up between 2000 and 2004 and these are centred on Exeter, Newton Abbot, Northern Devon and the South Hams. Newton Abbot FQP was the first group convened and published its first report in January 2002. The report included an Action Plan of improvements to address issues raised.

Exeter and Newton Abbot have now both successfully completed the implementation of their initial Action Plans which are currently being revisited to monitor the actions taken. Air Quality Management Areas have recently been declared in both Exeter and Newton Abbot and this is a specific issue that will need to be addressed by the FQPs.

The Northern Devon FQP is progressing successfully with implementation of the Action Plan in progress. The construction of Barnstaple Western Bypass has created issues which have been addressed, and completion of the project could bring further freight distribution issues to the town which will need consideration.

The South Hams FQP is developing its first report / Action Plan in 2006. As one of the most rural areas covered by the Devon FQPs, it has a strong focus on the environmental issues resulting from freight movements on the rural road network. The FQP encompasses three small towns within its area, Totnes, Dartmouth and Kingsbridge, with the rest of the area being predominately rural. The Action Plan will address the need for an improvement in signing to industrial estates and areas around these towns, and will promote an increased awareness of the appropriate routes to be utilised between communities. It will consider the demand for improved large vehicle parking and overnight parking for HGVs, the need to improve air quality and minimise noise, vibration and disturbance from freight movements, and to maximise the use of modern high specification vehicles.

### **Rail Based Freight**

The current Regional Transport Strategy identifies the need to upgrade the gauge on the Great Western main line via Bristol for freight movement. The Trans - European Rail Freight Network now includes the main Penzance to Bristol line and all rail lines should be fully integrated with the rest of the operational network by March 2008.

### **Multi-modal Freight Terminals**

The provision of a multi-modal freight facility in the Exeter area, which has a strategic location in relation to national and regional transportation networks, will support economic development and encourage the use of the rail network for the movement of freight.

## **Coach Travel**

Devon is served with a network of long distance scheduled coach services, with the main destinations being London and Heathrow airport. The main destinations for travel to Devon are Exeter and Barnstaple. The operators have low operational costs compared to rail and connect a larger number of communities.



*The County Council is working with National Express and other operators to better integrate coach services with other travel modes.*

Coaches cater for a varied market including day trips and excursions, package holidays, and school trips, in addition to long distance scheduled services. In Devon, by bringing large numbers of residents and visitors into the centres of Exeter, other towns and villages, the coach contributes to Tackling Congestion, Improving Accessibility and the Sustainable Leisure Recreation and Tourism objectives.

Consultation with local and national operators has highlighted a number of key challenges including:

- Lack of appropriate facilities for loading of passengers
- Poor and non existent signage to pick up and drop off points including bus stations and coach parks
- Delays due to increasing traffic congestion
- Providing fully accessible coaches
- Ensuring provision of as wide a range of services as possible in rural areas.

Specific problems have been highlighted in Barnstaple, Totnes, Honiton, Torrington, Lynmouth and on Exmoor. These are being reviewed and schemes to improve the situation included within the Towns, Villages and Rural Communities programme. In addition, feasibility studies will be carried out looking at applying the model of the highly successful Dartmoor Coach Drivers handbook to other locations across the County including: Exmoor, the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site and the West Devon and Cornwall Mining World Heritage Site.

Devon County Council will support and promote coach travel by:

- Enabling timetabled coach services to take advantage of time savings offered by bus priority measures
- Improving stopping and waiting facilities
- Working with operators to integrate services with other modes so as to offer a wider range of connections
- Improving route signing
- Developing coach driver manuals for specific locations around Devon.

## Access to Ports

"Ports in the South West are extremely diverse. The largest serve national markets; others represent vital passenger and trade links to the Continent; others cover local and regional markets which have a high importance to local communities." (British Ports Association).

In its Transport White Paper of September 2001, the European Commission proposed the development of "Motorways of the Sea" as a "real competitive alternative to land transport." Four corridors have been designated for the setting up of projects of European interest. One is the "Motorway of the Sea of western Europe" (leading from Portugal and Spain via the Atlantic Arc to the North Sea and the Irish Sea) which includes the ports in South West Britain and offers potential for Devon Ports to play an increasing role in inter-modality and sustainable transport choices.



Devon's central position along Europe's Atlantic Area seaboard, and astride one of the world's major shipping routes (the English Channel), is identified explicitly in the Devon Structure Plan (2004). Policy TR13 recognises the following strategic functions for the main ports in its area:

- Plymouth as a commercial and fishing port linked to the European Transport Network
- Teignmouth as a commercial port
- Bideford as a commercial port
- Brixham as a fishing port.

The significance of these ports has been underlined by the Devon Strategic Partnership, whose task group report on Devon's Transport Connections identified the priority to maintain and enhance port access in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Specific issues surrounding access to/from the port facilities at Plymouth and at Brixham are addressed in the Plymouth and the Torbay Local Transport Plans.

### **Bideford**

In 2004 the County Council completed its Bideford Quay enhancement scheme, which secured the immediate access needs for the workings of the commercial port for 30 vessels a year and the Lundy ferry. Linked to this, the County Council is promoting a significant strengthening scheme for the nearby Bideford Long Bridge, while its major scheme for the Barnstaple Western Bypass and Downstream Bridge will also provide access improvements for the port. The County Council's Barnstaple Area Freight Quality Partnership provides the context for addressing access issues over the coming years.

### **Teignmouth**

Teignmouth is an important port for shipping ball clay to international markets and for animal feed and fertiliser. It handles over 300 vessels a year with more than 600,000 tonnes of cargo. The port company has recently made a £4million investment in enhancing the port's facilities including the provision of additional on site storage. Alongside this investment, traffic management arrangements have been reviewed in order to ensure that congestion issues are addressed in accordance with the County Council's Newton Abbot Area Freight Quality Partnership.

### **Ilfracombe**

Ilfracombe is currently an example of a smaller port serving local functions. There are ongoing feasibility studies for the development of Ilfracombe and its Harbour which could result in the establishment of a new maritime gateway to the region. Any future development would aim to establish light ferry links with South Wales and Ireland. This would provide a springboard for future market opportunities and enhance tourist access to the region.

## Joint working with neighbouring Highway Authorities

There are five highway authorities with boundaries with Devon County Council

- Cornwall County Council (CCC)
- Somerset County Council (SCC)
- Dorset County Council (DCC)
- Torbay Council (TC)
- Plymouth City Council (PCC)

Movement of people across authority boundaries for access to employment, town centre facilities, education, health services and recreation/leisure is an important issue. Joint working between the authorities is essential to providing an effective transport system.

The joint working with PCC in relation to the new community at Sherford, and with TC in relation to the Kingskerswell Bypass, are explained in Chapter 5. Many other examples of cross boundary working are referred to throughout the document.

There has been close liaison with all neighbouring authorities in preparation of the Local Transport Plans to ensure consistency on cross boundary issues. In addition DCC and TC attended the Panel Hearings described in Chapter 3.

Some further examples are summarised in the following table:

<b>Cross boundary issue / initiative</b>	<b>Authorities working with Devon County Council</b>
Plymouth, South East Cornwall and South West Devon Joint Study Area of the Regional Transport Strategy	PCC, CCC
Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership	CCC, PCC, TC
Joint support of cross boundary bus services	CCC eg X9,X11 SCC eg 398, 20 DCC eg X53 TC eg12 PCC eg 83,84
Public transport information through Traveline	CCC, SCC, DCC, TC, PCC
Transport initiatives related to access to National Parks, AONBs and World Heritage Sites	CCC - Tamar Valley AONB and potential WHS SCC - Exmoor National Park and Blackdown Hills AONB DCC - Jurassic Coast WHS
National Cycle Network	CCC, SCC, DCC, TC, PCC
South West Coast Path	CCC, SCC, DCC, TC, PCC
Standing Committee for Traffic and Safety and the Safety Camera Partnership	CCC, TC, PCC
Traffic Management Duty and South West Counties Traffic Managers Forum.	CCC, SCC, DCC, TC, PCC
Salisbury to Exeter Lineside Consortium of Authorities	SCC, DCC
Regional Freight Forum	CCC, SCC, DCC, TC, PCC

## Assessment of Equality Impacts and Needs

An Equality Impact and Needs Assessment (EINA) has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 to ensure that its objectives, targets and programme do not discriminate, and, where possible, actively promote equality.

The assessment considered the impacts on, and needs of, the following different groups of people:

- Women and men
- People of different racial groups
- People who are part of the settled and travelling community
- People who use different languages
- People of different religions or beliefs including those who do not have a religion or belief
- Disabled people
- People of different sexual orientations
- People of different ages.

The responses to the consultation on the Provisional Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 from the following groups and organisations were particularly considered in undertaking the EINA:

- Age Concern
- Bus Users UK
- Clyst Vale Community College
- Community and voluntary transport groups
- Connexions Cornwall and Devon
- Countryside Agency
- Devon and Exeter Racial Equality Council
- Devon Public Health Network
- Exeter College
- Fair Play South West
- Help the Aged
- Pilton Community College
- Rail Passenger Council
- Rail User Groups
- University of the Third Age
- Wheels to Work scheme coordinators



There is a link to the EINA at [www.devon.gov.uk/transport](http://www.devon.gov.uk/transport). Some of the impacts and needs which it highlights are:



**Tackling traffic congestion** – recognising the need to improve the accessibility of buses and trains, and provide information about public transport services, to people of different ages, disabled people and people who use different languages.



**Delivering accessibility** – understanding the impacts of variations in the accessibility of services and facilities on people of different ages.



**Making roads safer** – recognising the needs of people of different ages and disabled people as part of the Devon road safety strategy.



**Improving air quality** – tackling any particular impacts of poor air quality on the health of people of different ages.



**Improving recreation, tourism and leisure** – providing for the needs of people of different ages, disabled people and people who use different languages in improving access to the countryside.



**Promoting health and well-being** – understanding the needs of people of different ages and people with disabilities in promoting healthy travel and active lifestyles.



**Improving public spaces** – recognising the different needs of men and women in planning improvements to the quality of public spaces.

## Assessment of Strategic Environmental Impacts

The Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 has been identified as a plan that is subject to the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment”. Known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment or SEA Directive, the aim of the Directive is to “...provide for a high level of protection for the environment and contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans...with a view to promoting sustainable development.”

An SEA has been carried out alongside the development of the Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-11. Reflecting and incorporating, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidance for Transport Plans and Programmes, and the New Approach to Appraisal, its purpose is to support the integration of sustainability considerations within the plan making process and inform and influence its development.

The SEA of the Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 comprises the following three elements:

### 1. Scoping Report (submitted November 2004)

In November 2004 a “Scoping Report” was submitted to the four statutory environmental bodies; the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature and the Environment Agency, as well as other interested parties for consultation. Its purpose was to establish the scope of, and methodology for, the Strategic Environmental Assessment and to provide the basis for consultation related to the range and level of detail of the Environmental Report.

## **2. Environmental Report (submitted alongside the Provisional Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 in July 2005)**

The Environmental Report has been made available for public consultation alongside this document. By examining the likely environmental effects of the four Options, the Environmental Report outlines the extent of the likely positive and negative environmental impacts of different versions of the Plan and the potential sustainability issues that may arise. Utilising the responses gained from consultation on the Scoping Report, the Environmental Report (ER) is therefore the key written output of the SEA.

## **3. SEA Statement (submitted March 2006)**

The "SEA Statement" has been submitted alongside the Local Transport Plan.

The purpose of the SEA Statement is to explain how consultation comments on the SEA Scoping and Environmental Reports and the Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 have been addressed by Devon County Council. It also summarises why the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 was chosen over other alternatives, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan, and how the plan will be monitored.

The majority of responses from the Consultation Bodies have been addressed. In reference to comments from the public, Devon County Council and addressed many of the public's main environmental concerns in the preparation of the Provisional Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011. Quiet lanes were the only suggestion left out of the Provisional Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011, as it was determined that the lack of convincing evidence in support of the benefits of Quiet Lanes made it difficult to justify them as a priority.

The assessment identifies strategic environmental issues regarding the Kingskerswell Bypass. However, it is acknowledged that the benefits to the economy of Torbay and the quality of life in Kingskerswell need to be weighed against the strategic environmental issues.

The majority of significant environmental effects have been addressed during the preparation of the final version of the plan, or mitigation measures put in place. The final Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 has been genuinely influenced and modified as a result of interaction between the officer undertaking the SEA and the team preparing the Local Transport Plan.

A general monitoring programme has been devised that will measure the performance of the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 in relation to the SEA Objectives, aiming to identify unforeseen adverse environmental effects.

The SEA Statement on the way in which environmental considerations have been integrated into this Plan has been published separately. Links to information about the SEA are available at [www.devon.gov.uk/transport](http://www.devon.gov.uk/transport)





*The Exeter Riddle, a 6.5 metre high sculpture to mark the completion of the High Street enhancement scheme was unveiled in March 2005. The Riddles are taken from the Exeter Book, the foundation volume of English literature, being the oldest of four known manuscripts which contain poetry in Anglo-Saxon.*