

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

media service

From Clare Taylor , Exeter 383226, September 19, 2001

NEW BID TO DRIVE DOWN SPEED IN NORTH DEVON

A NEW BID to cut road accidents in North Devon has been launched by Devon County Council.

From Friday - September 21 - the County Council will reduce the maximum speed limit on seven stretches of road in the area from 40 mph to 30 mph. (News Eds. See Notes for details.)

In North Devon last year there were 295 casualties as a result of road traffic accidents, 10 of these were fatalities. The largest contributing factor for these accidents was speeding traffic.

Over the last four years the Council has introduced a programme of 30 and 40 mph limits at settlements on A and B roads. This programme has promoted the culture of slower speeds through communities but in the new "speed" agenda, there are some areas where 40 mph speed limits required reassessment and have been lowered to 30 mph as part of Devon and Cornwall Police and Devon County Council's Road Safety Plan.

These changes will help to meet the Government's ten-year target to reduce road casualties in Devon by 40%.

The North Devon initiative follows a local study and consultations at several locations within Barnstaple where there are concerns about speeding. Some of North Devon's villages will also benefit from the new 30 mph limits.

The County Council has targeted safety for children by ensuring that routes to school in the area are covered in the new changes, this is hoped to encourage more parents to walk their children to school and leave the car at home.

Cllr David Morrish, the County Council's Executive Member with responsibility for the Environment, said: "We have set ourselves vigorous targets to reduce accidents on our roads. It is one of the County Council's top priorities. We know that speed is the most significant factor in accidents and in particular makes all the difference between a bad bruising and severe injury or death. I am pleased to see this action in North Devon."

Michael Newcombe, County Council Road Safety Officer for Northern Devon, said "Walking to school is an important part of our agenda. By leaving the car at home parents can help reduce congestion especially in the vicinity of their children's schools and ensure that their children are participating in regular daily exercise".

Devon and Cornwall Police also see these changes as crucial to road safety in the area. Sgt Andy Morley reiterated the recent Government speeding campaign which states that: "At 35mph you are twice as likely to kill someone than if you were driving at 30mph".

He said "These speed limits have been reduced with everyone's safety in mind, tomorrows casualties have not happened yet. Every driver can make a difference".

Local County Councillors have also given these changes their full backing. Councillors are in agreement that the new lower speed limits can only be good for local communities who will benefit from these changes.

NOTES TO NEWS EDITORS:

The details of the new 30mph limits are:

1. B3233 Anstey Way and Rectory Lane at Instow.
 1. B3232 Roundswell Link between Bickington Road
and the Barnstaple by-pass.
3. A361 Eastern Avenue in Barnstaple.
4. Goodleigh Road in Barnstaple.
5. A361 Braunton Road in Barnstaple.
6. A361 Knowle near Braunton.
7. A39 Burr ridge near Shirwell.

For further information, contact David Netherway on 01271 388503.

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