

# DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

## *media service*

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From Paula Miles, Exeter 383262, December 07, 1999

### NEW SPEED MEASURES FOR DEVON

On **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December**, Devon County Council in conjunction with Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, will unveil a three year strategy for vehicle speed that will provide a sustained appeal to the 'hearts and minds' of drivers.

Having listened to the views of communities, individuals and victims of speed, Devon County Council has learnt that many people are reluctant to start cycling and are afraid to walk their children to school because of intimidating speeds. The County will explain how it will help to improve the quality of life of tens of thousands of people by bringing together measures to reduce the nuisance of anti-social speeds in rural and urban areas.

Measures announced will include:

- A sustained publicity programme for young drivers in urban areas using the slogan 'Driving Speeds Down in Town'. Posters will appear in bus shelters, on bus backs and in retail outlets, initially in Exeter.
- A new video pack and toolkit of ideas for rural communities. The video shows how villages in Devon have already taken the challenge to reduce speeds.
- Education programmes to be introduced for young and novice drivers.
- Greater awareness of speed issues for offenders.
- Support for employers to manage the risks of employee drivers. Employers throughout Devon will be encouraged to take a stronger interest in the driving practices of employees.
- Community wide reviews of the impact of vehicle speeds. Through community safety audits, local concerns about speed will be better understood and cost-effective solutions considered.

Devon County Council will also be offering the Police further support in its intelligence-led enforcement programmes including trials of the latest generations of speed technology.

Councillor Margaret Rogers, Devon County Council Executive Chairman for Environment said: "I feel that the Devon Strategy for Speed Management is correct to put new emphasis on the need to reach out to our motoring public and appeal to their sense of citizenship.

"Most people do not drive fast out of any malicious intent yet do not pause to think how their choice of speed can be yet another blow to those in local communities who want to live a life free of road crime, stress, danger and noise.

"The facts speak for themselves. A pedestrian hit at 40mph will most likely die. At 30mph the risk is halved and at 20mph the risk is negligible. The message from many of our public consultation exercises comes across loud and clear - in urban and rural areas

speeds chosen by some drivers are too fast for the comfort of those who go about their daily business on foot or two wheels.

"The Devon approach to speed reduction will also benefit car drivers and occupants. Not only will lower speeds in Devon lead to reduced injuries in car-to-car crashes, currently claiming 1,000 injured each year, but may also have the affect of creating a smoother flowing and less frustrating journey. How often are we overtaken by a speeding motorist only to find 10 miles further along the road that we draw up behind the driver at a set of lights? There is very little advantage these days to short risky bursts of speed to try and gain a time advantage."

Chief Inspector John Wood said: "The Constabulary is committed to working in partnership with Devon County Council to reduce the number of collisions causing death or injury. Driving too fast remains a significant cause of collisions and the measures contained in the strategy will help make Devon's roads safer by creating a greater awareness of the danger of speed."

**Cllr Rogers will be available for interview at the Devon Drivers' Centre between 11.00am - 12.00 noon on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Also present will be Peter Gimber, Devon Road Safety Manager and Chief Inspector John Wood.**

**For further information please call Peter Gimber on 01392 382118 or Paula Miles on 01392 383262.**

#### **Notes to Editors:**

- The new poster can be seen on the bus shelter in Prince Charles Road, Exeter.
- Copies of the new video, posters and strategy will be available to journalists on the day.