

Local Highway Panels Members' Guide

11 Quiet Lanes



Image courtesy
of Ian Dunster

1. Introduction

Local authorities are able to designate country lanes as 'Quiet Lanes' in rural areas, under the Transport Act 2000. Country Lanes are an integral part of our rural environment but the volume and speed of traffic, and the presence of heavy lorries can make them uninviting and intimidating.

Quiet Lanes are a positive way of:

- Providing a chance for people to walk, cycle and horse ride in a safer environment.
- Widening transport choice; and protecting the character and tranquillity of country lanes.

They should be designed to protect and enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the countryside.

2. Typical Problems

'What can we do to make the road safer for walkers and horse riders'

'We want to slow cars down on the country lane'

'Walkers and horse riders use the road more than cars'

3. Things to consider

PR1 and PR2 routes cannot be designated as Quiet Lanes.

If the road carries more than 1000 vehicles per day, then it will not be suitable for a Quiet Lane. The speed of vehicles using the road is also important and the 85th percentile should show speeds less than 35mph.

Narrow, single-track roads are the most suitable to be designated as Quiet Lanes. They should be rural in character, though they do not necessarily have to be in a rural area.

Community involvement is required to encourage a change in behaviour of road users. It will be important to ask the community to identify possible roads to be designated as Quiet Lanes.

Once the potential Quiet Lanes have been identified then formal consultation will be necessary with both the local and wider community.

Designation as a Quiet Lane does not bring about any enforceable restrictions nor does designation prohibit use by any types of vehicle or regulate their speed. The sign reminds users of the types of traffic they will be expected to see and encourages them to respect each other, NB the motor car is the smallest and last pictogram on the sign suggesting where they fit in the hierarchy of use.



4. Typical Measures

A national Quiet Lanes sign has been developed to identify entry into and exit from a Quiet Lane. At the exit, the Quiet Lanes emblem is crossed out.

Local authorities that have introduced Quiet Lanes have tried to ensure that these signs are inconspicuous. Specific DfT authorisation may be required to allow signs to be combined with other restrictions such as speed limits and HGV restrictions.

Fingerpost destinations can be revised so as not to encourage through traffic.

Landscape features, such as hedges, verges, walls and wayside trees can be sensitively managed to improve the landscape, retain local character and make travel easier for cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

5. Scheme Investigation

Speed surveys and traffic counts will be required in order to validate a potential Quiet Lanes scheme as they are only appropriate for minor rural roads, C or unclassified routes, which are single-carriageway.

It must be possible to position signs in discrete locations whilst indicating clearly to road users that they are in a Quiet Lane.

6. Costs and Timescales

The Essex County Council contract with Ringway Jacobs is a target cost contract and not a fixed price contract. This type of contract was chosen as the best type of contract to deliver savings and efficiencies and also to promote partnering between ECC and Ringway Jacobs.

An explanation of the process including costs and timescales for typical schemes can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

7. Glossary of Terms

AVL	Automatic Vehicle Location (similar to RTPI)
CMA	Cabinet Member Action
CMB	Cabinet Member Briefing
EA	Environment Agency
ECC	Essex County Council
EH	Essex Highways
LHP	Local Highways Panel
NEPP	North Essex Parking Partnership
PP	Parking Partnership
RTPI	Real Time Passenger Information
S106	Section 106 (Money provided by a Developer to County Council to implement infrastructure as an obligation of the planning permission)
S278	Section 278 (Infrastructure required to be implemented by the Developer as an obligation of the planning permission)
SERP	Safer Essex Roads Partnership
SID	Speed Indicating Device
SEPP	South Essex Parking Partnership
SLO	Speed Limit Order
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
TSRGD	Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions
VAS	Vehicle Activated Sign