

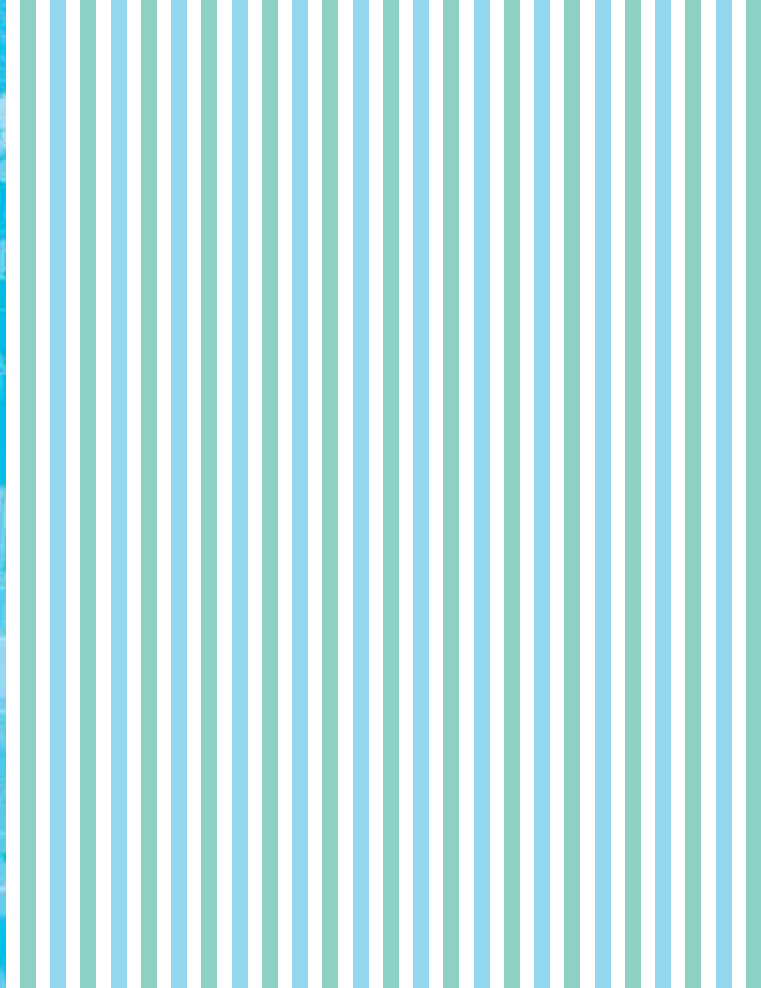


HOME ZONES

Challenging the future of our streets

Department for
Transport







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Ministerial foreword

Home Zones now in place around the country can inspire communities, local authorities and developers.

The streets we all use every day can have a huge effect on our lives. Streets that are safe and attractive places for people to live and work need to be the rule, not the exception. Everyone has a right to live in a decent neighbourhood, a place where children can play safely, and where there is a sense of community, pride and common purpose. *Home Zones: Challenging the future of our streets* demonstrates that Home Zones can contribute to these goals.

Home Zones help restore the balance between traffic and communities. This in turn can help make streets safer, more sociable, and better places to live in.

Our Home Zones Challenge programme has demonstrated what benefits can be delivered and highlighted issues to be considered when developing Home Zones. In *Home Zones: Challenging the future of our streets* we have drawn together these lessons, and it complements design guidance already published. It is not intended to be a design manual that provides a blueprint for Home Zones. Every scheme will, and should, be different.

Where successfully implemented, Home Zones have led to stronger, more vibrant and diverse communities, fewer empty properties and even reduced crime. One notable example is in Morice Town in Plymouth. Here residents say that their Home Zone has generated a new feeling of community and is improving the quality of life, making local journeys safer and contributing to the well being of the local population. This scheme has made a real difference to the area.

If we are to achieve such quality of life changes, residents must be involved in the Home Zone design process. Experience clearly shows that the key to achieving a successful Home Zone is to involve the local community from the outset so that it reflects the needs and concerns of residents – young and old alike.

Home Zones now in place around the country can inspire communities, local authorities and developers. We want to see Home Zone principles developed as common practice in urban design and for Home Zones to become a model for residential streets both in existing communities and in new developments.

Derek Twigg
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State





1 Introduction

The Prime Minister announced a £30 million Challenge fund in April 2001 to encourage the development of new Home Zone schemes in England.

1.1 This document

This document disseminates good practice in Home Zone design and scheme development, drawing particularly on the experience gathered from the Home Zones Challenge. It complements the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers' (IHIE) *Home Zone Design Guidelines* published in 2002.

1.2 Development of Home Zones

Shortcomings in the urban environment, and their impact on communities, have led authorities in a number of European countries to look for new solutions. They have tried to tackle a range of environmental, social and transport issues by integrating highway and urban design. The result is residential streets designed primarily to meet the needs of all pedestrians, cyclists and local residents, opening them up for social use, whilst still allowing vehicle access.

Inspiration for this approach originally came from the Buchanan Report, *Traffic in Towns*, published in 1963. This recognised “the conflict between providing for easy traffic flow and the destruction of the residential and architectural fabric of the street”.

In 1969, the Dutch city of Delft first introduced a design which integrated footways and carriageways into one surface, creating a shared environment where children’s play and other social activities could take place as well as vehicle movements. This is known in the Netherlands as a ‘woonerf’ or ‘living yard’. Similar shared-space designs were subsequently implemented in Germany, Sweden, Denmark, France, and Switzerland. In the UK, such streets are known as Home Zones.

1.3 What is a Home Zone?

Home Zones are a relatively new concept in the UK. They aim to extend the benefits of slow traffic speeds within residential areas and give greater priority to non-motorised users. Importantly, they use design to limit vehicles to very low speeds, well below 20mph. The aim is to improve the quality of life in residential roads by making them places for people, instead of just being thoroughfares for vehicles. This should encourage people to use streets in different ways. Drivers should feel that the car is a guest in the street.

The drive for this type of approach came from organisations such as the Children’s Play Council and residents’ groups. They were concerned that children in particular were denied the opportunity to play safely around their houses where they could be easily observed and supervised.



Dutch ‘woonerf’ scheme



Dutch ‘woonerf’ scheme



Morice Town, Plymouth



Northmoor, Manchester

Also, the increasing use of cars was turning traditional residential streets into nothing more than car parks. People were becoming isolated within their own homes, taking no part in, or responsibility for, the activities that historically have led to strong and close local communities. The car was seen as a disincentive to sustainable community life. However, it was not intended that these schemes would be 'anti car', merely that the dominance of the car would be reduced and residents would feel more able to use the streets as social spaces.

1.4 Home Zones in the UK

It was not until August 1999 that development of the first nine pilot Home Zone schemes started in England and Wales. These were shortly followed by four in Scotland. They were led by local authorities keen to develop an alternative approach to urban street use, over and above the benefits obtained with 20mph zones. An important aspect of the Home Zones approach was to involve the local community actively in their design and development.

These initial schemes were undertaken without additional funding from central Government, other than a commitment to monitor the wider social benefits that the schemes provided. These early pilot schemes seemed to improve substantially the social capital of the areas, the 'glue' holding communities together.

1.5 The Home Zones Challenge

The Prime Minister announced a £30 million Challenge fund in April 2001 to encourage the development of new Home Zone schemes in England. The Home Zones Challenge built on the early experience of the pilot schemes. It was intended to generate a rapid growth in the number of Home Zones in England, and substantially increase the knowledge base, by developing the concept further. It was also to act as a catalyst in encouraging authorities to take an holistic approach, creating Home Zones as an integral part of the residential environment.

In October 2001, 110 authorities submitted bids for 237 schemes with a total bid value of some £115 million. The 61 successful schemes from 57 English authorities were announced in January 2002, for completion by spring 2005. Schemes varied in size and complexity, and individual grants ranged from £90,000 to £1.5 million. However, all had a common theme of improving the quality of life for residents and included a commitment to involve the community closely in the design process. Inclusion within the Home Zones Challenge gave authorities the opportunity to address wider community concerns and develop schemes that improved the physical and social capital of the areas.



Portchester, Hampshire



Ashton West End, Tameside



Normanton, Derby



2 The process

There is no blueprint for a Home Zone. While individual schemes may use similar elements, each scheme needs to reflect the community's aspirations.

2.1 Introduction

The success of a Home Zone can be judged by the extent to which the people who use the street or live there recognise the need for the scheme and take ownership of it. Such ownership largely depends upon effective community participation and involvement at all stages, from the original selection of the area

through to implementation and beyond. There are wide ranging means to involve the community in developing a scheme, and no single approach is the most effective.

In developing schemes, authorities should bear in mind that a number of stakeholders, not just local residents, will have an interest. All stakeholders need to be involved throughout the process. It is important to involve existing organisations and build on initiatives that are already taking place. Home Zones are equally applicable to any residential area, new or existing. Only the approach will vary.

Effective community and stakeholder participation to develop a Home Zone scheme is likely to be time consuming. Authorities will need to make adequate resources available for this element of scheme development. It is also important that people's expectations are realistic as there is little benefit in encouraging the community to design a scheme that is physically, legally or financially impossible to implement or maintain.

2.2 Approach

There is no blueprint for a Home Zone. While individual schemes may use similar elements, each scheme needs to reflect the community's aspirations. The diversity of schemes within the Home Zones Challenge has led to different approaches being adopted.

It is important at the outset to identify the aims and objectives for the scheme. Authorities also need to outline their approach, together with how they will involve and consult with communities and fit this within existing processes. Authorities should also consider ongoing community involvement beyond implementation of the Home Zone.

Schemes across Europe, including the UK, have focussed on providing a shared space and initially many Challenge schemes favoured this. Although they aspired to deliver shared space throughout, modification by residents and concerns over defensible space and privacy sometimes meant that kerbs and footways were kept. In these instances emphasis was placed on strong gateways to treated areas.



Telford



Southampton



Exeter, Devon model



Staiths South Bank, Gateshead

2.3 Scheme selection

Selecting the area to be treated is one of the most important steps in the process. It is crucial that the area is appropriate for Home Zone treatment. It is considered that only roads which are predominantly residential and either have very low traffic speeds already (well below 20mph), or have measures applied to bring speeds down to these levels, are appropriate for consideration as a Home Zone. Home Zones can be designed as part of new residential developments, or retrofitted into existing residential areas by re-designing the streets.

Understanding the issues

It is important that authorities understand the issues facing the area. As part of the bid submissions for the Home Zone Challenge, each authority was required to identify the characteristics of the chosen areas, and the anticipated programme of expenditure. These characteristics included such details as:

- traffic flows and accident figures
- population
- housing mix and density
- links to, and significant generators of, walking and cycling
- parking density
- existing traffic calming and
- wider issues of community engagement and organisation.

Defining the area

There are a number of factors to consider in defining the area to become a Home Zone. There is guidance in the IHIE Home Zone Design Guidelines. In many instances the community itself and its natural boundaries will define an appropriate area. A key factor to bear in mind, however, is the need to sub-divide a large area into smaller Home Zones in order to get consensus amongst residents on the design of the scheme.

Within the Challenge schemes, the Home Zones vary from single streets to, in the majority of the schemes, a network of streets. The average street length of the 61 schemes is around 670 metres and layouts vary considerably, from compact terraces to open areas of semi-detached houses covering up to 80 hectares.

The number of households ranges from just 18 in the London Borough of Haringey scheme to 856 in Derby. In line with the IHIE Guidelines, schemes involving more than 300 households have generally been split into phases or reduced in coverage.

Defining the area

Three of the largest Challenge schemes adopted different approaches to modifying the size of their original schemes.

The Telford scheme is on an estate built in the 1970s, based on a Radburn layout with a series of culs-de-sac off a 20mph distributor road. Originally planned to cover six culs-de-sac, the Challenge area has been reduced to only two, coupled with extensive modernisation and reorientation of the houses so that they face onto the street. It will provide the model for a multi-million pound modernisation of the whole Woodside estate over the next 10 years.

Derby was a mix of terraced and semi-detached properties that fed onto defined distributor roads. Again the original bid area has been reduced to cover the first two phases of terraced property.

Bury was a large defined area with several access points, but very constrained streets. Here the approach was to develop 'feature areas' at key junctions, whilst relying on the constraints of the existing streets to keep vehicle speeds low. Rather than creating 11 separate Home Zones around each junction, Bury has combined the whole area into a single Home Zone.

Lesson Learnt

Home Zones work best when areas are contained within a defined homogeneous area with a clear focus for the community.



Normanton, Derby before treatment



Normanton, Derby after treatment



The community

The local community is key to the success of a Home Zone.

Identification

It is critical to identify the community that will be involved in developing the Home Zone at the outset. All sectors of the community, particularly groups that are often under-represented in the decision making process, need to be involved.

Under-represented groups include:

- children
- young people
- people with disabilities (especially those with visual or hearing impairments, wheelchair users or people with learning difficulties) and
- people from ethnic minority groups.

Many of the Challenge schemes already had an established residents' association with active involvement of residents and, in general, people taking an interest in their street environment. Some authorities used existing links to the community, for example through their housing departments. Other authorities did not have the community on board or the community was unaware of the intention to introduce a Home Zone until funding had been confirmed.

Lesson Learnt

It is important to identify and build on the existing activities within an area. Home Zones are not just about the physical changes but also about 'social engineering'.

Schools

Schools can be focal points in the community, attracting and generating significant daily trips, many on foot or by bicycle. A Home Zone can be particularly appropriate in these situations so that parents can allow their children to walk or cycle to school in a safer environment. Over two thirds of the Challenge schemes had a school inside or near the Home Zone area. Providing safer routes to and from schools is therefore an important consideration in developing Home Zones.

Nottingham

As part of the Kennington Road Home Zone in Nottingham, a derelict parking area was transformed into a 'drop and go zone' to serve the primary school within the zone. A new school entrance was provided with a colourful pathway protected by 'Billy' bollards.



Kennington Road, Nottingham – 'Billy' bollards



As part of the Challenge scheme in Redruth, Cornwall, a residents' office was provided using Neighbourhood Renewal funding, as a quick win to build trust with residents. The office is now well used as a meeting place for various community groups. It is also used for computer training, health groups, police liaison and other activities.

Community facilities

It is helpful to use a venue within the proposed Home Zone for meetings and consultation events. While few of the Challenge schemes had an established community centre, local libraries, shops and places of worship were all used as venues.

Lesson Learnt

Active involvement within a clearly defined community is vitally important to achieve consensus and belief within the community.



Scunthorpe



Scunthorpe, street lighting in back alleys

Identifying local concerns

Many existing residential areas were not designed for their current levels of traffic and parking. The streets have tended to become extended car parks, often with significant through traffic. Residents perceive them as dangerous for children. This has resulted in a breakdown of local communities as families become isolated within their properties.

Highway pressures are therefore a material consideration. In the Challenge schemes, the majority of areas identified pressures such as parking, 'rat running' traffic and congestion. In some cases local safety was a concern. Home Zones are not primarily safety improvement schemes, but the real or perceived road and personal safety concerns of residents, particularly with respect to children and outdoor play, are important.

There are of course non-highway issues that authorities also need to consider when identifying potential schemes. They will need to be guided by residents' concerns for their area. The main concerns in the Challenge schemes turned out to be the feeling of insecurity together with vandalism and graffiti and a generally poor street environment. Many areas had little greenery and lacked useable open space. Some residents were concerned about the lack of children's play facilities and inadequate facilities for young adults. However, once the consultation process was underway, residents usually opted not to provide formal play facilities or facilities for young adults.

A further concern from residents was the lack of, or inadequacy of, the street lighting, especially in back alleys. Some Challenge scheme authorities improved street lighting as a 'quick win' to get residents on board.

Lesson Learnt

It is important to identify all the local concerns at the outset. Issues that may seem irrelevant to the main aim of the Home Zone can be fundamental to local residents and need to be addressed.

2.4 Organisation

Identifying resources

Many of the areas selected for the Challenge were where communities have, to a greater or lesser extent, become isolated and insular. As a consequence, they have inevitably been the subject of a variety of different interventions. Whilst the highway authority is ultimately responsible for the public highway, other agencies need to be involved – and may even be more appropriate to take the lead. It is important that authorities identify the initiatives and lead organisations early on.

Clearly, the majority of the physical works to be undertaken in a Home Zone will be within the public highway. However, authorities need to include areas of public space under the control of other bodies and departments to develop an holistic approach to the area. Identifying these areas and making sure that appropriate powers exist to undertake works requires a clear understanding of the inter-relationship of different activities.

Many Challenge schemes were led by the highways department with periodic inputs from other agencies. Local authorities that deliver their responsibilities on an area basis across disciplines had a better understanding and closer integration of their schemes. Occasionally the lead role changed through the project when particular skills were needed. This was not confined to a single department but worked across the authority.

Multi disciplinary team

The development of Home Zones is an intensive and diverse exercise. It needs to be clearly organised from the outset, recognising that a wide range of skills will be needed at different stages.

The most successful schemes to date have had a dedicated officer throughout the process who understands the strategic view as well as the technical aspects of successful delivery. This central role requires the ability to engage and involve a wide range of people at different times, maintain communication and manage different activities.





For many of the authorities, the Home Zones Challenge involved a new approach to scheme development – heavily orientated to community involvement, but not always knowing what the final outcome would be. Indeed, the Challenge schemes in Dover and Bath were not taken beyond the consultation phase following representations from the local community and public votes.

Bringing a multi-disciplinary team together that can adequately cover all eventualities can be difficult. Although a core team will be needed throughout, there needs to be the capability and flexibility to involve a range of specialists at different stages.

Timescales and programming

In developing Home Zones, authorities have found that involving the community is a complex process that needs careful control, both in terms of timescale and the realism of what can be delivered. A clear understanding of both achievability and deliverability is needed.

All the Challenge authorities experienced difficulties in the early stages. This was in part due to the new approach that was required, but also to the fact that there were varying degrees of community engagement. Some followed a traditional approach of leaflets and notices, whilst others were more innovative. However, effective community and stakeholder participation to develop a scheme is time consuming, and the designs will require more revision and amendment than other traffic schemes. Detailed programming needs to recognise that this early development time is vital to a successful scheme. It is repaid in later cost and time savings, but budgets, programmes and detailed design need to allow for modifications.

Funding sources

Crucial to any successful scheme is the availability of funds. It is unlikely that all funding will be available from a single source and authorities should consider all budgets that are appropriate for the scheme they hope to develop.

The Home Zones Challenge made available £30 million for the implementation of the 61 schemes. Many of the authorities involved identified additional funding from a range of sources. This resulted in a total budget for the 61 schemes in excess of £50 million.

Telford and Wrekin Borough Council attracted the most additional funding (£6.6 million for Phase 1) as part of the Woodside Regeneration Programme. Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council increased their scheme budget from the original grant allocation of £390,000 to £1.8 million by involving Neighbourhood Housing. Plymouth City Council (one of the original pilot schemes) used a combination of Single Regeneration and Local Transport Plan funds as well as the £790,000 Challenge grant to fund the £2.3 million Morice Town scheme.

Other authorities have also used Housing Modernisation or Renewal funds, but these have not been the only identified sources. A mixture of local authority capital and revenue funds such as Local Transport Plan (LTP), lighting, leisure, maintenance, school and District Council contributions have been used in addition to Arts, Doorstep Green, central Government grants and European sources.

The majority of Challenge schemes involved existing streets (the only completely new build scheme being at Staiths South Bank, Gateshead), but several have had an element of new housing either within, or adjacent to, the planned Home Zone. This has given the opportunity to use direct developer contributions.



Moorside estate, Dewsbury



Staiths South Bank, Gateshead

Lesson Learnt

While the Home Zones Challenge has now ended, it is clear that there is a range of funding opportunities to develop Home Zones.

Chester

The Chester Home Zone area was subject to considerable development pressure, being the focus of a number of major new regeneration proposals. The area comprises 451 homes with proposals to deliver a further 400 new homes within the Home Zone over the next five to ten years and 500 more in the immediate area. The local authority secured contributions from the developer to make sure that these developments embrace the Home Zone ethic.



2.5 Programming

Funding timescales

Whilst it is vital to establish realistic funding for the Home Zone, authorities need to consider the varying timescales over which different funding regimes operate. This can lead to complications in programming, as assumptions will need to be made about what funding is available and when.

As part of their bid submissions, Home Zones Challenge authorities were asked to identify additional sources of funding. These could only be indicative as many were also subject to bid processes, whether external or as part of annual budget allocations.

As the schemes progressed and the scope of works was revised, additional funding from a range of sources also became available.

It is important to recognise that both the funding and scope of the scheme may not be fixed. It is worthwhile developing a strategy that can take account of these constraints – and opportunities – as they arise. Contingencies and alternative scenarios need to be built into the programme. Several of the Challenge authorities realised that a ‘blank sheet’ approach can raise expectations that it may not be possible to deliver.

The time needed to develop Home Zones can be a disadvantage when starting out. It has to be appreciated that the involvement of different agencies and funding streams will not bring quick solutions, even for small schemes. The balance between intensive periods of activity and times when little seems to be happening must be recognised and planned into the process.

Communication with the various bodies involved, especially the residents, has to be maintained throughout, with clear timetables and explanations. Even when there appears to be little tangible progress, activity in parts of the team can be intense. This is often not recognised in the conventional planning process.

Lesson Learnt

Schemes always take longer than anticipated. This needs to be planned for and communicated at the start in order to get the widest support.

Being realistic

Experience across the Challenge demonstrates that the authorities involved were over optimistic in their programming and underestimated how long activities would take, particularly involving residents in the process. Initial expectations were that schemes would be completed on a rolling programme throughout the period. In the event, a few schemes were finished early, but only 19 were complete at the end of 2004 – almost the end of the Challenge programme. It should be noted that programme slippage was not always related to the size and complexity of the scheme.





There were some notable successes. Nottingham City Council had particular problems with overhead cables, unexpected ground conditions and the quality of some materials, yet still kept to their intended programme. Wiltshire County Council even managed to compress their timetable and deliver one scheme ahead of programme, and the other on time.

Difficulties in keeping to detailed project planning not only leads to resident frustration, but also undermines the willingness of those key to the project to commit to involvement over the longer term.

Lesson Learnt

Planning needs to be realistic both in its detail and in its expectations.

Reading

Reading Borough Council developed a detailed scheme that was supported by the local community, only to realise that what was being proposed could not be delivered within the budget available. The council had to revise the design radically and personnel changes also resulted in a renewed emphasis on delivery.



Involving the emergency services and utility companies

As well as involving residents in the design of the Home Zone it is equally important to involve the emergency services and the utility companies. Their operational needs can significantly affect the final design of the scheme and may mean that some of the features favoured by the community cannot be achieved. Authorities should involve these organisations from the outset rather than as part of the statutory consultation process. This way, many issues can be resolved as the design evolves.

Dover

The Fire Service was consulted on the detailed plans for the Home Zone at a public exhibition. Unfortunately they felt that the plans were not workable. They insisted upon a clear 3.7m carriageway so they could quickly access equipment on the side of vehicles. Modifications to the design reduced the number of parking spaces. This was a prime consideration of the residents from the start and led to the scheme being abandoned.

Changes to the layout of the public space, creating multi-use spaces, will often involve changes in level and use of footways or the introduction of landscaping. This is likely to affect apparatus provided and owned by the utility companies. Initial reactions to such changes can be modified by early consultation and discussions. Being realistic about the possibilities and understanding constraints can ease the process.

Lesson Learnt

Involve the emergency services and utility companies from the start of the process and keep them informed as the schemes develop.



Emergency services negotiating trial layout



Joined up planning

Home Zones are not just about the physical changes to the environment, they are also about creating vibrant, sustainable and safe communities. A change in people's attitudes to where they live will be an important element. Schemes need to relate to their own unique environment and not be treated in isolation. The spatial planning process can be a good starting point in recognising the opportunities that Home Zones present.

There is no universal solution. Each scheme is bespoke to the particular circumstances. Authorities need to consider the area surrounding the scheme, in particular the planning and development of facilities and connectivity.

The majority of the Challenge schemes dealt with the regeneration of existing residential areas. However, many also considered the wider implications and acted as catalysts for further development. This ranged from improved housing, either from new developments or housing associations, to the introduction of new community facilities. The provision of art and facilities for children, women and older people has been particularly successful in support of the physical changes. Authorities need to consider the opportunities for such initiatives.

These wider opportunities further complicate the process, but this can be helped by involving groups on a neighbourhood basis. Home Zones, developed around an existing, recognised community facility, or the need for one, can add substantially to the success of the scheme.

Manchester

As part of the Northmoor Home Zone in Manchester, the Urban Art Project encouraged local creative people by promoting and helping to exhibit their work. The 'ImiTate' Gallery has been set-up in an empty terraced property, where local artists, including elderly residents who had never painted before, exhibit their paintings. This project won the prestigious British Urban Regeneration Association Award for Best Practice in Regeneration. The judges believed that the project contributed significantly to creating real community involvement in the area and has given many of the residents new skills and confidence. Using urban art as a means of generating community involvement and capability is unusual, but in this case it worked.

Phasing

Home Zones are still a relatively new concept and it can be difficult to get both professionals and residents to accept how much change is possible. It is not necessary to implement the whole scheme at once. Phased implementation around an agreed masterplan can demonstrate both commitment and the changes that can happen. It can also deliver alternatives that give a sense of place within communities. This needs to work within the overall programming for an area of which the Home Zone may only be a part.

Alternative approaches

There is no one solution to the development of a Home Zone. The programme needs to be flexible so that all stakeholders can be involved and to allow for alternative approaches.

Involving others

As already described, Home Zones involve more than the physical works on the street. Authorities have to identify the key players at the start and include their inputs during development. Residents are obvious players, but engaging them for the duration on a voluntary basis can be a time consuming task requiring specialist skills.



Northam, Southampton artwork



Wolverhampton play area funded by the education authority building on the success of the Home Zone

Other agencies can have the skills and networks in place to access the key residents and/or groups. However, authorities may first need to explain what Home Zones are and what might be involved. This could include making available general information on the Home Zones concept – for example likely benefits, potential negative impacts, and alternative options. The authority should, however, also explain what needs to be done to implement a Home Zone scheme.

Lesson Learnt

The Challenge schemes are showing clear improvements in many of the social, crime and health aspects of residential areas that can provide incentives for other agencies to contribute to their development. Good and effective liaison at an early stage and throughout the process is necessary to achieve this added value.

Legal procedures for Home Zones in England

In preparing their programmes for a Home Zone scheme, authorities need to allow sufficient time to complete the statutory processes including the resolution of any formal objections to the proposals.

Under the Highways Act 1980, streets are provided and maintained solely for passage. However, section 268 of the Transport Act 2000 enabled local traffic authorities in England to designate roads for which they are the traffic authority as a Home Zone, and introduced the concept of use orders and speed orders.

The Department for Transport has consulted on the regulations which set out procedures for designation and 'enable and provide' procedures for making use and speed orders. At the time of writing these are expected to be in place in late 2005.

The regulations will set out the minimum requirements for involving the community in the development of a Home Zone before drawing up designation proposals, as well as setting out the statutory consultation processes. These powers will allow authorities to designate non-movement activities and open up new opportunities for communities as part of the everyday function of the street.

Authorities should bear in mind that the Home Zone legislation does not remove the need to use existing legislation where traffic calming features are involved. Consequently, the programme needs to allow for consultation with the emergency services and relevant interest groups.

Involving the local community and other stakeholders from the outset through wider, less formal consultations should deal with most objections, but it is not always possible to satisfy all interests and authorities may need to consider some objections.

2.6 Design

The design process is iterative, involving a number of key features that give a clear message in relation to the use of residential streets. The main point is to reduce vehicle speeds and make drivers realise that they are not within a conventional highway. This means using the different elements that make up a Home Zone in an innovative way to constrain vehicle speeds. However, schemes need to adapt to various uses and activities.

Translating the concept

The Home Zone concept is to re-engineer the space around people's homes. Objectives for improving and maintaining the quality of life for local residents should take precedence over general objectives to ease traffic movements. A road in a Home Zone is a place where the whole of the space is available for a range of different uses. However, the speed of vehicles must be low enough to satisfy the local traffic authority that activities in the street may be enjoyed safely by people of all ages and abilities.





Northam, Southampton new doorstep green

Home Zones should be recognised as places where prescribed local activities can happen, as well as being public thoroughfares. They can help develop a greater pride and responsibility in residents for the care and well being of their surroundings.

Successful design translates these concepts into a different outdoor environment where traffic still has access and is tolerated, but not to the exclusion of other activities.

Conventional highway design is not always appropriate.

High quality materials and finish show that the space differs from a conventional highway. Footways and carriageways may still be maintained, but the emphasis is on reducing the free space for vehicles. Several highway authorities have developed their own Home Zone design guidelines based on the IHIE Guidelines and their own experience.

Until recently the lack of wide-ranging examples has led authorities to lean heavily towards past experience where the emphasis has been on free vehicle movement. Urban designers' development of concepts based upon European experience has met with a mixed response, from both residents and other professionals. However, the need to accommodate other uses within the street has required a different approach.

Whilst a significant proportion of a Home Zone will still be part of the highway and therefore the responsibility of the highway authority, many Home Zones include areas that are not part of the highway and where other parties will control the use of the space. An understanding that a different space is being created that is both safe and functional for different uses has to be developed.

The urban space specialists and highway engineers need to collaborate closely to ensure the practicality of the concept through delivery. This can take several revisions and the residents should not be excluded. It is important that access consultants are fully involved throughout the process.

Co-ordination/maintenance

An early issue to resolve is what materials are to be used, taking account of the affordability, ease of construction and future maintenance of the scheme. Several of the Challenge schemes proposed complex and expensive materials that have been accepted at the concept stage, only to be reduced or removed at the detailed design stage, to the detriment of the overall scheme. A successful scheme requires input from all parties in the design process and additional involvement from contractors and other services.

There are repeated issues with choice of materials because of long term maintenance and replacement concerns. Increasingly public space is becoming more complex and materials more varied. Many authorities are developing their own streetscape manuals, and there is more agreement on a palette of materials that is acceptable both in terms of creating a different visual environment and maintenance.

Lesson Learnt

The design process requires involvement of all parties to ensure the agreed concept is delivered successfully.

2.7 Implementation

Implementation is perhaps the most familiar aspect of Home Zones. It is construction within the street environment and should not present unexpected difficulties.

Funding constraints

The Challenge schemes have been funded from a range of sources, each with its own time and application constraints. In some instances, funding was only available for specific aspects of the work. It is likely that Home Zones outside the Challenge will have similar funding regimes. Any constraints will need to be allowed for in the planning and development of schemes.



Examples of materials



Additionally, several Challenge schemes encountered difficulties between the estimated costs at design stage and the returned tender price. In several cases, tenders were returned with higher prices than budgeted and resulted in either redesign or changes in materials. Occasionally, this reduced the extent of key features and meant that the traditional 'blacktop' surface was retained. This reduced the visual effect of the changes.

Bury

Due to budget constraints, the Bury scheme opted for 'feature areas' at key junctions, relying on the constraints of the existing narrow streets to keep vehicle speeds low.



Home Zones are likely to require more resources than other highway improvement schemes, where most of the funds are spent on construction work. Ensuring sufficient resources throughout the project will need more involved management. Early involvement with contractors and a thorough understanding of funding constraints and opportunities is important.

Utility companies

As part of the normal construction process, authorities consult and liaise with utility companies who have their own particular requirements. No matter how careful and detailed the design has been, this inevitably adds to the construction disruption. The need to accommodate separate service diversion contracts has added both to the time and expense in the Challenge schemes. Even relatively straightforward requests such as the siting of landscaping, modification of street lighting and creation of single surfaces can result in unexpected delays and changes during construction.

Where new materials are being used, there can be concern over the quality of future reinstatements. Renewal of all services is not always possible, but the reconstruction of streets is an opportunity to inspect and if necessary renew services. This needs to be planned into the construction process; early involvement of contractors and close liaison with the utility companies is important.

Nottingham

Nottingham City Council decided that telephone apparatus would be ducted underground to reduce street clutter. Despite this process being long and difficult with negotiations at the highest level, it was achieved successfully.



Raised planters for trees were used in Greenwich due to the location of services



Northmoor, Manchester



Silkmore, Stafford

To achieve constraints on vehicle paths, features have been designed based on computer modelling of vehicle tracks. Whilst the majority of vehicles were accommodated, problems did sometimes arise with the manoeuvring of refuse vehicles. This resulted in modifications to the layout. Some authorities overcame this difficulty by trialling the layout in a temporary way before full installation, or using features that could be moved with little extra effort.

Lesson Learnt

Constrained vehicle paths are best achieved through physical trials with local vehicles.

2.8 Monitoring

Monitoring is often an aspect of implementation that is overlooked, but it provides important feedback for future development.

Authorities involved in the Challenge were required to identify their objectives and monitoring methods at the outset.

They defined a variety of objectives, such as to:

- reduce vehicle speeds
- improve quality of environment
- increase play and other activities
- reduce real/perceived crime
- improve road safety and
- promote community involvement.

Generally the Challenge authorities have concentrated on before and after surveys of traffic speed/volume and accidents. A few have planned surveys of residents to seek opinions on the general feel of the area together with street audits and activity surveys.

Some authorities were even less specific on objectives:

- 'To provide an equilibrium of use between various stakeholders'
- 'Aid in community development'
- 'To provide a healthier, safer and sustainable lifestyle' or
- 'More attractive environment'.

All the Challenge schemes are now at a stage where more formal monitoring could take place but information so far is limited.

Authorities must establish at the outset how they will measure the success of these types of scheme and collect sufficient before data to cover most eventualities. Whilst it can be difficult at the start to define what will be implemented, the setting of specific objectives indicates what aspirations authorities and communities have. With increasing emphasis on delivering value for money on schemes, effective monitoring and evaluation will become an increasing requirement.

Data collection can be an expensive part of any scheme. In deciding what data to collect, authorities not only need to consider the relevance of the objectives that have been set, but also the available sources of data. Different departments and agencies are all required to monitor their service delivery and other departments cover many of the issues identified for the Challenge schemes. Access to police statistics for local crime reports and social services and housing vacancy information can supplement background information.





3 Community involvement

In devising a strategy to engage the residents it is important to consider how to involve hard-to-reach groups.

3.1 Introduction

The single most important driver in the success of a Home Zone is the level of participation of residents.

Participation not consultation

Traditionally, local schemes have been developed with minimal involvement of the public. Authorities often simply told residents what they proposed for their area. If a scheme was particularly important or controversial, authorities sometimes made a more concerted effort to gather opinions by way of a public meeting or exhibition. However, it is unclear how much notice authorities took of the views people expressed.

If a Home Zone sets out not only to improve the appearance of an area but also its social capital, then authorities must take a much more radical approach. It is not enough simply to present a range of options. Hard work is needed to build a sense of community and to develop a scheme that truly reflects residents' aspirations. This approach can establish community ownership of the scheme.

Social inclusion

In devising a strategy to engage the residents it is important to consider how to involve hard-to-reach groups. These may be people facing barriers such as caring commitments, mobility problems, visual impairment, poor literacy, lack of English, geographical isolation or young people or groups who feel excluded from society.

Newcastle-under-Lyme

It was agreed that as much participation as possible would be generated by word of mouth, as basic levels of literacy on the estate would be a barrier to written consultation. Residents' representatives knocked on doors to make people aware of forthcoming events. In addition 3D visualisations were successfully used so that residents with limited reading ability did not need to withdraw from the consultation. This technique can overcome many of the barriers experienced by socially excluded groups.



Examples of participation



Specialist skills

A wide range of skills is needed to successfully develop Home Zones as an integral part of the social fabric of communities. The whole process will involve more time and effort, and a wider range of skills, than has traditionally been used. Engineers will have an important role in this process, but they will need to be more flexible and responsive to others in applying and developing proposals. Strong multi-disciplinary teams will be needed to bring together the most appropriate expertise at the right point in the process.

Many non-professionals can find it difficult to interpret plans and layouts, so authorities will need to consider other approaches. One successful approach is to involve children – often through the local school – in producing models of the area. Another is to develop a three dimensional computer generated simulation so that residents can identify their surroundings. Established techniques such as ‘Planning for Real’, where residents are actively involved in assessing their area and planning the layout, have been useful in developing people’s understanding of how their surroundings currently work – or don’t. Even a computer game format has been used to get a younger audience involved.

All these activities require skills which are often outside those traditionally held by traffic engineers and transport planners. The best person for the job may come from one of the other local authority departments. Community development workers, if available, should be involved, especially early in the scheme development.

Time consuming

It is clear that the Home Zones Challenge authorities considerably underestimated how long it would take to engage the community and generate a local sense of ownership.

In many areas there was no sense of community prior to the scheme, with neighbours not really knowing one another. The key task for the authority was therefore to build a feeling of community. This is a time consuming job requiring specialist skills and considerable effort, but its importance should not be underestimated.

Despite the amount of time and effort that this inclusive process has required, all those involved agree that it is time well spent towards achieving a successful outcome.

Lesson Learnt

Allow an extensive period to involve the community and build that into a realistic timetable. Residents will expect decisions, once consulted upon, to be enacted quickly. A few early wins are useful.

Lesson Learnt

It is extremely resource intensive to fully engage the community in the process but is absolutely necessary to achieve a successful scheme.

Flexible planning

At the inception of the scheme it is important to set out how the community will be involved in its development. The key activities should be outlined along with milestones. However, if this is truly a community scheme then the community should have ideas for events and activities so it is important that the plan remains flexible.

Simplicity

Public participation in a Home Zone risks being a drawn out and complicated process. However, it is important that the overall objective is borne in mind at all times and the process does not become overly complicated. This is crucial to keep the residents on board.

Cornwall

A fun day was held at the beginning of the Cornwall scheme. A bouncy castle was hired and a good time was had by all while residents and neighbours got to know one another. Though important for community development this may have been a missed opportunity in terms of information gathering.





Chester garden party poster



Chester garden party

Chester

A garden party was held in the early stages of the Chester Home Zone. A marquee was set up on the small park within the area. Many activities were going on such as a circus workshop, films of yesteryear and bingo. However the 'work' came first. As residents entered the marquee they had to sign in by sticking a flag in a plan to show where they lived. A team member then chatted with them and noted their particular issues.



Leadership

The project manager is the key player in the development of the scheme and should act as the single point of contact for everyone involved, including residents. The Challenge schemes showed that an important success factor is the project manager's continuous involvement throughout development of the scheme.

It is also important that the professionals involved are seen to be active in both the process and the community. A strong and familiar presence throughout the process was essential to successful implementation of the Challenge schemes.

This required meetings and discussion groups, often outside normal working hours. Frequent meetings in residents' homes or local community centres were not uncommon. Professionals developed an informal, yet structured, approach to these meetings, often dressing casually and acting as facilitators.

Less successful was the more traditional approach of the design team working in relative isolation to set design standards and seeking approval to a series of increasingly more detailed designs. Eventually they had to adopt a more inclusive approach.

In order to be accepted by the community, the designated contact has to be able to address wider concerns, even if these are outside their normal professional remit. They have to be able to relay concerns expressed at meetings to those elsewhere in the authority. Their most important role however is to act as a single, committed driver to champion the scheme.

Derby

Two vital elements of the community involvement process were the appointment of a Home Zone co-ordinator and the establishment of an office base within the area. These provided residents and businesses with daily access to up to date information on design developments and acted as a one-stop-shop for all their Home Zone queries. This was assisted by the Home Zone co-ordinator being multi-lingual.

Lesson Learnt

It is vital that a single person leads and champions the scheme from start to finish. This champion can come from any discipline, but has to have a broad grasp of issues beyond their professional background.

Lesson Learnt

Continuity is essential. Residents can become frustrated at constant officer changes and the scheme can lose momentum.





3.2 Identifying the 'community'

The first step in the participation process is to take a step back and ask 'who has an interest in this area?'. The first group that should spring to mind is the people who live there. But don't forget that there will be other groups to involve, such as:

- people who live adjacent to the scheme
- commuters who park in the street each day
- disabled visitors and
- visitors to facilities within the proposed Home Zone.

It is important to identify from the very beginning who needs to be involved. The various groups may be involved for differing amounts of time and at differing stages along the way.

Who is the community?

- The residents of the area – fundamental to the process and to be involved throughout its entirety. Businesses located within the area should also be included.
- Residents adjacent to the area – it is important that they are made aware of what is going on and why. Be prepared for calls for the scheme to be expanded to cover their streets. It is important to explain carefully from the beginning the specific issues affecting the chosen streets that the scheme is trying to address. Neighbouring residents should be involved in addressing any problems or emerging proposals that affect them.
- Community organisations – housing associations, community centres, faith groups, etc should be involved in the scheme from the beginning as they act as a focus for the community and can provide a good meeting location.
- Users of the area – such as shoppers – can be informed about proposals but not necessarily have a key part in their development.

Lesson Learnt

Get residents on board right from the start. This makes the whole project more effective with a real sense of partnership.

Building communities

Many Challenge scheme areas had no sense of community before the scheme began. Residents did not know their neighbours and lived in relative isolation. The Home Zone scheme can be the catalyst for residents to get to know each other. It is therefore important to build a community before work on the scheme can even begin. Community development workers can be crucial to this.

Lesson Learnt

Using an external or specialist facilitator throughout the project can be very beneficial.



Working groups and street representatives

Meetings for the project team operate at a number of different levels. An overall steering group is necessary to ensure that the various funding bodies and agencies are fully informed of progress. More frequent design team meetings need to be established to maintain the momentum. In addition to the community representation on both these bodies, the involvement of the emergency services, local councillors, planning, education, housing, health and engineering professionals is also important.

A good way of involving the residents is to ask for street representatives at the very beginning of the process. A network of street representatives proved to be very successful in some Challenge schemes, not only in channelling information, but also in reinforcing the community spirit within the area. Street representatives tended to be those residents who were the keenest to be involved and able to give substantial amounts of time to collecting and disseminating information. A potential pitfall of this technique is that a relatively small number of very enthusiastic residents can become the unrepresentative spokespeople of the community. It then becomes harder to engage with the community at large.



Lesson Learnt

It can be difficult to reach out to the wider community beyond the enthusiastic working party that has been involved from the beginning. A process where officers engage in a dialogue with the working party who then themselves engage in dialogue with the wider community can be hard to achieve but very effective.

Involving others

Authorities should bear in mind that a number of other stakeholders will have an interest. It is important to involve all stakeholders so that their requirements are not overlooked. Those with an interest may include other sections of the authority promoting the scheme, for example maintenance and service providers, as well as:

- the emergency services
- operational services
- other local authorities
- businesses
- local access groups
- disabled persons groups and
- utility or service companies.

Lesson Learnt

It is important to involve all stakeholders from an early stage, particularly the emergency services.

3.3 Raising awareness

Once the decision has been taken to proceed, the next step is to raise awareness of the scheme amongst the community. It is important that the residents understand what a Home Zone is, what it can achieve and that it will involve more than just treating the roads. Their expectations need to be realistic as there is little benefit in encouraging the community to design a scheme that is physically, legally or financially impossible to implement or maintain. Authorities should also predict realistically what impact the Home Zone will have.

Lesson Learnt

Residents expectations in terms of what a Home Zone is and isn't able to achieve should be carefully managed.

Initial meetings with residents of some of the Home Zone Challenge schemes were mixed. Although generally all residents welcomed the ideas for improvement, they brought a number of wider issues to the meetings. Schemes varied in size from single streets to estates of several hundred houses and getting representation and consensus on what should be included was often difficult.

It was also clear that many other issues concerned residents as well as the general improvement of their streets. These included:

- parking
- speeding
- crime
- anti-social behaviour
- youth 'gangs'
- drugs
- litter
- maintenance and
- play or open space.





Raising awareness in Hull

It is important to involve the full range of residents in this stage of the scheme. The aim should be to engage all sectors of the community, particularly groups that are often under-represented in the decision making process.

An important aspect of raising awareness is to create confidence within the communities that something meaningful and different will be happening to their area. Initially, there was an understandable degree of scepticism amongst the Home Zone Challenge communities. Some thought that the authorities had already decided upon the proposals and any consultation would only be a token effort. Many suspected that either nothing would happen or that the authority had already prepared detailed proposals.

In preparing the initial bids for consideration, authorities had taken different approaches to involving residents. Some had already consulted on the possibility of submitting a scheme. Others had not made residents aware of the prospect of additional funds, so as not to raise expectations and risk disappointing them had they not been successful.

Those that were successful were therefore starting with varying levels of community awareness as to what might happen. In all cases (except the schemes in Plymouth, Peterborough and Manchester, which were already underway as part of the pilot programme) the concept of Home Zones was relatively new to all those involved.

Lesson Learnt

The extent to which the issue of on-street parking dominates much of the early consultation events cannot be over estimated. Robust surveys are essential. If it is a key issue, authorities are recommended to encourage residents to carry out their own parking surveys, combining results with the project manager and agreeing pre-scheme parking levels/demand.

Methods of involvement

Public meetings

The starting point in all the Challenge schemes was to invite all residents to an open meeting, usually via a door to door mailing or eye-catching posters put up in the street. This was, in some cases, seen as yet more consultation in areas where there had been extensive consultation already (maybe as part of an overarching regeneration initiative). All those involved made a significant effort to achieve as full a representation as possible.

Fun days

In addition to the public meetings and mailings, the use of 'fun days' proved very successful in getting a wide cross section of the community involved. It was important that in addition to the main effort of understanding the issues, activities were provided for all age groups. Street theatre, bouncy castles, refreshments and entertainment were provided in a street that traditionally had only been used for cars. This set the scene for more structured involvement of different age groups.

'Clean up' days

Some authorities organised events involving a wide range of residents. 'Clean up' days involving the siting of skips throughout the area and encouraging the removal of rubbish were very successful in getting people involved and demonstrating that things were happening.



Luton held clean up days



Public meeting



Warrington fun day



Reading fun day



St Helens fun day



Reading BBQ



Rochdale henna hand painting



Middlesbrough fun day

Social events

A number of authorities held social events simply to let residents meet each other and discuss issues affecting their area. These events ranged from summer-time barbeques, fish and chip evenings at the local community centre to henna hand painting. These are especially successful if the team can provide some means of recording views.

Lesson Learnt

It is important to have community building events such as fun days, barbeques etc, but remember the purpose of the event. As well as having a fun time and encouraging neighbours to get to know one another, it is important to gather information on what residents feel are the problems and issues that require attention.

Newsletters

Newsletters and information sheets are a simple but effective way of disseminating information quickly and easily to all residents. They can be as simple as pages of black and white text or, if facilities and skills allow, they can be very colourful and distinctive. All Challenge schemes used newsletters at some point. These can be produced by the project manager and team or by the street representatives and can keep all residents up to date on scheme developments. Some project managers have delivered newsletters personally to all properties to avoid claims later that they had not been received.

Lesson Learnt

No matter how much consultation is undertaken there will always be someone who says they do not know about the project!

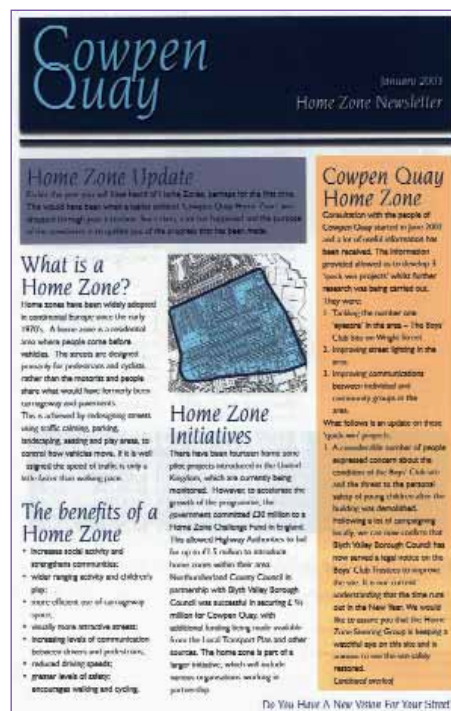
Visits to other schemes

The best way for residents to understand how a Home Zone works is to visit one. Many Challenge authorities took a group of residents on a day trip to visit a completed scheme such as Plymouth or Manchester. Residents there were usually quite happy to talk about their experiences in the development of the scheme, giving the Challenge residents valuable insight.

Door to door calls

Despite public meetings, newsletters and social events, some residents will still not be aware of the scheme. They may not want to get involved, but it is important that they are engaged to some extent. Authorities should take their views into account to avoid any possible problems later.

Although it can be a difficult and time intensive task, simply visiting each property and speaking to the residents to make sure they are aware of the scheme and to ask them what they feel are the problems it needs to address is the simplest and most inclusive method. If the project manager does this, it not only builds residents' confidence that the scheme is actually going to happen and raises the project manager's standing as a motivated single point of contact, but it also gives the project manager first hand understanding of what needs to be addressed.



Newsletters

Local news

Tuesday July 2 2000

PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY: project gives roads back to residents



Streets become 'Home Zones'

A PROJECT designed to improve people's lives in Poredowne is about to be launched on Saturday.

The road is a quiet, narrow residential street, but it is a busy thoroughfare for many of the residents who live along it. The project is a joint venture between the local council and the residents, and it is designed to make the street safer and more pleasant to live on.

The project is a joint venture between the local council and the residents, and it is designed to make the street safer and more pleasant to live on.

West Sussex radio interview

The local media

The local media can be a powerful means of conveying positive messages. However it is worth remembering that the efforts of a number of Challenge authorities have been hampered by the local media and in one instance this had a strong impact on the residents' view not to proceed with the scheme.

'Quick wins'

The Challenge authorities found that they needed to achieve some tangible improvement quickly to tackle residents concerns and initial scepticism. This could be as simple as dealing with refuse collection issues, improvements to street lighting or more regular maintenance. Alternatively, it has involved the early establishment of community facilities and 'drop in' centres where people can meet informally, both with neighbours and with contact officers. This has played a very important role in keeping the community on board.

One of the first tasks undertaken as part of the Cornwall scheme was to set up a Neighbourhood office for meetings and activities.

Northumberland

At the beginning of the Northumberland scheme, residents identified poor lighting as an issue. The council tackled this at an early stage, showing its commitment to the scheme.

Lesson Learnt

'Quick wins' work! Authorities should look to make them early on to get as much support as possible and help reverse distrust.

3.4 Involving residents in design

Having generated the early enthusiasm, the next challenge is to maintain this involvement. It became clear from the Challenge scheme that many residents did not appreciate the timescale needed to develop proposals fully.

Lesson Learnt

Be careful not to raise the community's expectations beyond that which can realistically be delivered.

Design meetings

Most Challenge schemes used a series of design meetings with selected groups of residents (often street representatives) who were then tasked with feeding back comments to and from the wider community. It is crucial that these meetings take place at a location within the scheme and at a time which is convenient for the majority, such as a pre-arranged Saturday.

Every scheme had its 'Mr or Mrs Angry' and a disproportionate amount of time often had to be spent in dealing with the minority view. Intensive, often one to one discussions have taken place to mitigate the disruption that strongly held minority views could have on the schemes.



Design meetings



Planning for Real

Inevitably, not all views could be incorporated within the final schemes and several iterations of the design layouts had to be considered. The involvement of those with differing views in design meetings was also a positive way of modifying the schemes to take all interests into account.

Planning for Real

Although professionals are used to dealing with plans, the wider community is often unfamiliar with them and can find them off-putting. 'Planning for Real' uses simple models as a focus for residents to put forward and prioritise ideas on how their area can be improved. It is a highly visible, hands-on community development tool, which people of all abilities and backgrounds find easy and enjoyable.

A large three-dimensional model of an area is constructed, preferably by residents including children, using cardboard cut-outs for buildings pasted onto a base plan fixed to cardboard. Participants place suggestion cards on the model indicating what they want to see happen and where (for example, playground, parking, tree). This is an effective method of involving residents in Home Zone design.



Southampton's Planning for Real exercise involved young and old alike



Bristol Visualisation

3D computer visualisations

A number of Challenge authorities developed computer based 3D visualisation models to show residents what the scheme would look like. Residents can interpret information given to them in this format much more easily than through two dimensional information. A detailed case study of this approach, used in Staffordshire, can be found in Appendix A.

Mock ups

A number of Challenge authorities arranged a community day where the final scheme was laid out in the street for all to see. Various ways of doing this have been used including the use of emulsion paint to mark out the street and also large pieces of carpet to show where parking spaces will be. This is a very effective way of physically checking with residents that the scheme will work and agreeing any last minute changes. However, it is also the time when residents not so far involved may emerge and possibly object.



North Lincs visualisation



Hull visualisation



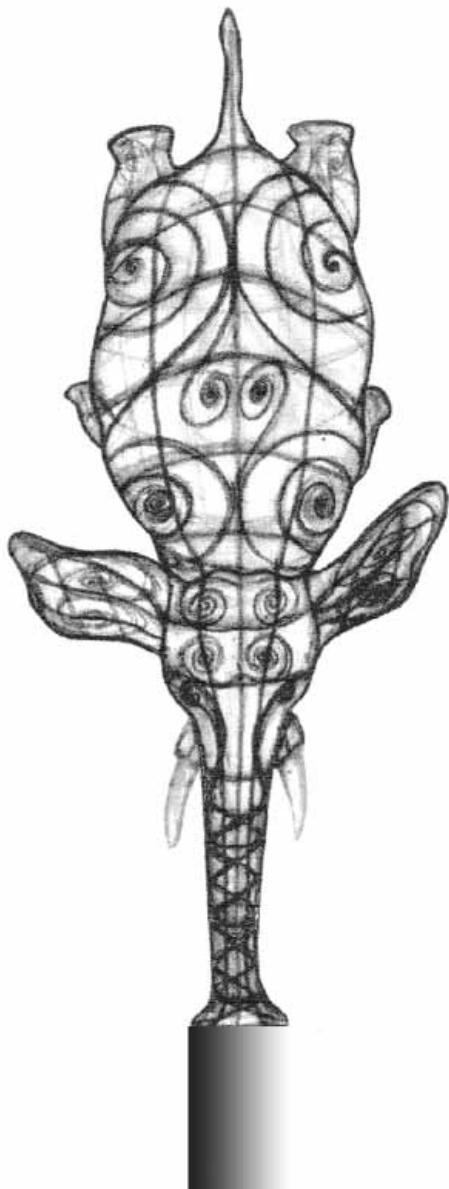
Manchester mock up



Bristol mock up



Public exhibition



Hull elephant artwork

Public exhibitions

Public exhibitions, though associated with the traditional public consultation route, are a useful way of exhibiting the final scheme design for all to see. They also allow residents to see the latest proposals and ask questions of the project team. It is crucial that any public exhibition be held in the proposed scheme area so that residents can easily attend. This can mean that a temporary venue has to be considered.

'Walk with engineers'

'Walk with engineers' is a technique where the project team meet up with residents in the street to tour the scheme area considering problem areas and potential solutions. This has been of some use in a few of the Challenge schemes.

Working with artists

Each Home Zone is unique in terms of its setting, community and physical make-up. This uniqueness has been reinforced in many of the Challenge schemes through the use of artists. By helping the residents to create a theme which is highlighted throughout the scheme through pieces of artwork, the artists bring the community together with a common goal. The artwork also sets the Home Zone apart, giving the residents pride in their environment.

Authorities have tried a number of different approaches to the use of artists. In Lowestoft an artist was appointed to lead the consultation, design and implementation. In other schemes artists have been involved in developing a theme for the scheme, producing artwork to reflect this.

Hull

Albany Street lies near to a park which was a Zoological Garden in the 1800s. Every day an elephant would be taken for a 'walk' down Albany Street. Reflecting this, attention grabbing sculptures have been installed, including aluminium bears and elephants at the top of poles. A piece of granite, unloaded into the River Humber once its use as ships ballast was over in the 1800s, has been recovered and carved into a hippopotamus.

Lowestoft

The idea of involving an artist in the Lowestoft Home Zone was central to the bid for Home Zone Challenge funding. An artist, who did most of the consultation, was appointed to the Home Zone design team at the start of the process. As well as designing the streetscape in a way that required traffic to use the street differently, the project artist also aimed to integrate a series of public art works that created a sense of place for the residents.

The artist's approach was to explore the history of the streets and develop a project around the past, present and future of the roads. This involved a phase of research and consultation focusing on the urban history of the site and working with the community to stimulate memories and thoughts on the identity of the area. Old photographs of the area were collected and the previous uses of the buildings on the street investigated. The artist shared this information with local people and spoke to them about their personal histories of the area.

This research informed the design of Home Zone features. An example is a scattering of paving blocks which spell out 'The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog'. This is a practice sentence used by printers and, in the scheme, marks the location of a former printer's shop.

From the 'after' survey of residents it was suggested that involvement of the project artist in the design process resulted in a Home Zone that is creative and unconventional and has tackled design issues in a unique and cost effective way. The project engineer felt that the artist provided insights into new ways of using traditional materials typically overlooked simply as a result of convention.



Rochdale – Artists helped to develop a theme for this scheme, based on fabric designs. This reflects the cultural background of the community and its links with the textile and garment industry of the area.



Bristol artwork



Trafford artwork



St Helens fish



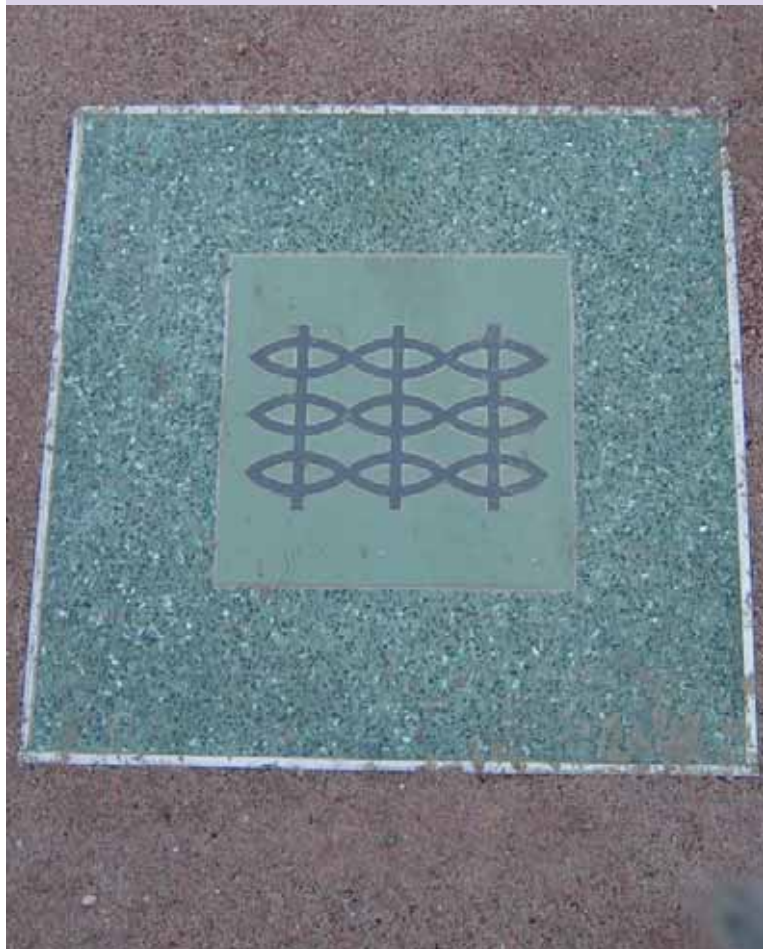
Camden bench



Camden school gates



Morecambe, this mural reflects its background as a fishing community



Kirklees paving inserts



Southampton acorns



Southampton sculpture



Hull bears



Wiltshire childrens plaque



Bristol – The site of the Bristol scheme was a pear orchard many years ago. This was used as a theme and tiles were made by residents for display throughout the scheme.



Devon sod cutting



Hull gates – before



Hull gates – after

Choosing materials

Choosing materials is an important part of the process. Nottingham City Council held a materials mini exhibition for the residents. A number of different surfacing materials and types of street furniture were available for the residents to see and comment on.

3.5 Implementation

Public involvement does not end when the design is complete and construction ready to begin. It is important that the residents are involved in the total process, including implementation.

Interviewing contractors

Some Challenge communities have been involved in contractor selection to ensure that a considerate contractor with a full understanding of the role of the community in the scheme is chosen.

Manchester

Since the successful contractor would have to work closely with local residents, the authority took the unusual step of inviting residents to interview the tendering contractors. This proved an interesting exercise for all involved and both sides developed a better understanding of the difficulties and concerns of the other before work began. Tenders were evaluated for quality as well as price. The quality evaluation took account of the contractors' proposals for dealing with the needs of residents as well as employing local labour.

Contractor communications

Constructing a Home Zone is particularly disruptive for residents, so contractors must keep in close contact with them throughout to advise on each stage of construction.

Kirklees

A leaflet was distributed to every property within the scheme before work started, telling residents who would be the project manager. The leaflet included full contact details and a photo. Residents were told to contact the project manager with any queries.

3.6 Completion

The scheme is complete and implemented and all the hard work is over. Or is it?

Opening celebrations

The completion of a Home Zone is a very good reason for celebration. Most of the Challenge schemes had some form of opening ceremony, from a full scale event with Government Ministers, marquees and speeches, to a simple gathering of the residents. Whatever is chosen, it is important that residents are involved.



Morecambe – opening



Plymouth – opening



Worcester – opening



Wiltshire – opening



Cornwall – opening



West Sussex – opening



St Helens – opening

Handover to the community

Despite involving residents in agreeing the overall designs and parking layouts, the time taken to implement the scheme may mean that the turnover of residents, particularly in non-owner occupied properties, sometimes results in new residents not fully appreciating how the street is meant to work. This can lead to inappropriate parking. The potential for this to cause obstruction was one of the main concerns of the emergency services during the design process of the Challenge schemes.

Self-enforcement is the ultimate aim within these areas and the strength of community ownership developed through the inclusive participation process encourages new residents to accept the ethos of the community. So far, no undue difficulties have been experienced in any of the completed schemes, despite the areas not being used wholly as intended. The most straightforward way of resolving this has been through a simple 'Welcome to our street' leaflet, explaining how the street works.

Maintaining the sense of community

Most of the Challenge schemes identified 'community building', as an objective. With a scheme complete, it is important that the sense of community built up over the months of designing is not lost with the completion of the scheme.

Community associations

A number of Challenge schemes have seen community associations set up as a result of the scheme, even arranging social gatherings. Some have gone on to bid in their own right for funds to develop their scheme further.

Southampton

Following the development of the Northam Road Home Zone in Southampton, the residents submitted a bid for Doorstep Green funding to develop an area of derelict ground into a park. This bid was successful and a park, designed by the community with the help of the City Council's Landscape Architect, was constructed.

Gardening clubs

Home Zones generally involve some form of planting to 'green' the streets, from trees to shrubs to bedding plants. Residents should take ownership of the planting and help with their maintenance, particularly watering and weeding.

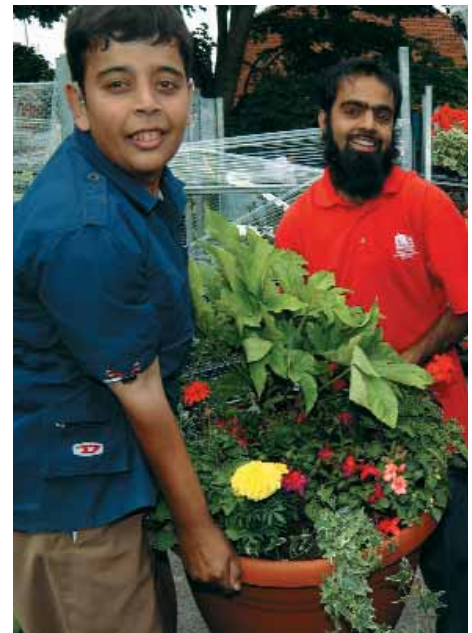
A Gardening Club was set up at Northmoor to maintain the green areas.



Manchester – gardening



Southampton – gardening



Southampton gardening



3.7 Potential problems

Unfortunately, public involvement in Home Zone design is not always straightforward. The Challenge schemes all struggled at one point or another with a particular problem and it is important to learn from them all.

Apathy

Apathy was an issue for a number of schemes during the early stages. The main issues were poor attendance at events, low questionnaire response rates and a general lack of enthusiasm and involvement. All schemes managed to get over this issue. They did this partly through some 'quick wins' and showing the residents that they were taking action, and partly through sheer determination and hard work on behalf of the project team to get residents involved.

Lesson Learnt

The local community must be demonstrably keen, even desperate, for the investment. Lack of interest in the concept is perhaps an early indicator that implementation of a successful scheme may be difficult.

The local media

As mentioned earlier, the local media is a powerful tool, especially if there is a positive view as the scheme develops. However, the local media can also be quick to report negative views, even if they are the minority. It is important to keep in close contact with the local media so that articles give a balanced view.

Exeter

The local newspaper serving the Wonford area of Exeter closely followed the development of the scheme. Towards the end of construction it published an article expressing the negative views of a small minority towards the scheme. Residents felt that this was unrepresentative and asked the reporter to interview them on their views. The newspaper then published a positive article, which demonstrates the positive impact that residents were able to have.

Dealing with disagreement

Between members of the community

Although communities share their choice of home or location, they will often bring a disparate set of opinions and views. Inevitably there will be disagreements over a wide variety of aspects of the design. It is important to find a compromise. This can often be reached by seating those with opposing views around the same table to encourage discussion. Failing this, the project manager could mediate. Keeping all residents on-board at all times is important.

Lesson Learnt

It is not easy to get a consensus regarding scheme design when dealing with a diverse range of people.

Between the authority and the community

Although Home Zone development requires the full involvement of the residents, it must be remembered that it remains a local authority scheme. If there is a disagreement between the residents and the authority, a compromise must be reached. Some schemes have used an independent facilitator to negotiate between the two parties at meetings. However this should be a last resort.

Lesson Learnt

Be prepared for difficult times. Sometimes people resist change and are often only concerned with single issues such as parking or access.



Local newspaper article



Denton graffiti



Local meeting



What to do when the community's design is not a Home Zone

Residents must be allowed an input into the design phase but the philosophy of Home Zones must be borne in mind at all times to ensure that that is what is achieved and not simply a traffic calming scheme. Compromise will be necessary throughout the development process to take on board the views of residents as well as the needs of others such as the emergency services and utility companies. However, if the designers are not confident that the result will produce very low vehicle speeds, then the design must be re-visited, with the residents' involvement. If this cannot be resolved, suitability for designation as a Home Zone must be re-considered.

Reaching a decision (voting)

If compromise cannot be reached, then one option tried in a few Challenge schemes was to resort to a vote to decide whether or not to proceed. This is fraught with problems and should be avoided if at all possible. If it is the only way to proceed then it must be carefully planned and totally transparent. All issues should be addressed before the vote is held. These include:

- Is it a vote per resident or per property?
- Do all residents/properties qualify?
- What proportion of votes must be returned for the result to be upheld?
- What proportion of 'yes' votes would allow for the scheme to proceed?

Lesson Learnt

Work closely with the community. While an approach by a few individuals might make it appear that a consensus exists for a scheme, opposition from others may make it difficult or impossible to proceed.

Lesson Learnt

It is important not to underestimate the difficulty of effectively involving residents at all stages of the project.

Bath

This scheme began with an initial meeting to announce the success of the bid and explain the concept. This was led by the local authority with assistance from a green charity-based organisation and a campaigner for non-car forms of travel. Subsequent open meetings, developed the design for lighting, traffic calming and materials.

Once the design was agreed internally within the council, a meeting was held to show the residents how it would look and to seek their approval.

However, there were firmly held opposing views about the scheme. Following a public vote, in which approximately a third of residents did not support the proposals, the scheme was abandoned.

Dover

The Dover scheme was modified following representations from the local fire service. Details of the revised scheme were distributed to residents with a simple voting slip. The response was disappointing, with only 51 residents (56 per cent of the total) returning the slip. Of those, 65 per cent in directly affected properties were in favour. However, this figure included people from a block of flats which, whilst having access from the proposed Home Zone street, had their own parking. Arguably they were less affected than those fronting the streets. Discounting these votes resulted in only 58 per cent in favour.

Although no specific percentage had ever been quoted, a 'substantial' majority (75 to 80 per cent of residents) was considered necessary for the scheme to progress. The actual figure achieved was less than this. With residents in 18 properties against the scheme and those in 40 properties not voting, it was agreed that the scheme should be abandoned due to a lack of active support.





3.8 New build

The current range of Home Zone schemes has concentrated on modifying existing streets, where communities are already established, even if they are not wholly integrated. However, the greatest potential for developing Home Zones in the future lies with new construction to meet the growing demand for housing.

In order to spread the concept of Home Zones into new build developments, housebuilders and developers need to take the concept on board and sell the idea to the wider house buying market. Their marketing activity might be geared towards highlighting the benefits of Home Zones in terms of a better quality of life.

Some new developments are now bought 'off plan', that is before being constructed. This may give the developer an opportunity to engage buyers in some aspects of the Home Zone design.

Gateshead

Only one Home Zone Challenge scheme has been entirely new build. This is the first phase of some 600 homes at Gateshead Staiths, on the banks of the River Tyne in Gateshead. In this case, as there was no community to consult, the design of the scheme was developed through a multi-disciplinary team of professionals involving architects, urban designers, transport planners, traffic engineers, maintenance engineers and emergency services.

The 'community' involvement was achieved by proxy, through the development control process, and by the house builder in its promotion of the final scheme to potential buyers. At the launch of the scheme, organised by the house builder in a local hotel, the designer explained the ethos and the key characteristics. The scheme has generated substantial national interest and houses have sold quickly.

Once the first phase of the development was sold and the properties occupied, the house builder sent residents a questionnaire to gain feedback on the scheme. The developer will apply the feedback to the subsequent phases of the development.



Staiths South Bank, Gateshead





4 Design

The design of a Home Zone is crucial to achieving the low speeds necessary for the scheme to be successful and for activities to take place safely.

4.1 Designing for people

Vehicles must be accommodated within the Home Zone as an integral part of daily life, but they must share the space with cyclists and people on foot. Motorists should feel that they are a 'guest' in the street.

Authorities have to take account of the needs of disabled people when designing Home Zones. The Department for Transport is sponsoring research to provide guidance on how Home Zones can be made fully accessible and safe for disabled people whilst maintaining the Home Zone shared space concept. Researchers will consider:

- navigation
- spatial awareness
- crossing the street
- conflict with motorists and other road users
- conflict with pedestrians and
- perception of safety.

Authorities developing Home Zone proposals will also need to consider these issues as an integral part of the design process.

The guidance is expected to be published towards the end of 2006. Meanwhile, the Department for Transport's Mobility and Inclusion Unit can be contacted for advice.

4.2 Gateways

It is important that a strong 'Gateway' feature clearly identifies to users that they are entering (or leaving) a different environment. These features distinguish the boundary of the Home Zone and should set the tone and character for the rest of the area.



Gateway at Scunthorpe



Gateway at Scunthorpe



Gateway at Warminster



Leeds – Ways can be found of accommodating a number of signs in a confined space



Kirklees gateway – Mixed messages can be given to drivers



Exeter horizontal deflections

The majority of the Challenge schemes have used the approach described in the IHIE guidelines, where the Home Zone is embedded in a wider 20mph zone so that the reduction of vehicular speeds is achieved gradually rather than in one step. This has also helped with the signing of the Home Zone and avoids confusion. In particular, it minimises the potential for 'sign clutter' at the entrance to the Home Zone, and more importantly, it avoids linking the Home Zone sign with the 20mph speed limit. It has been difficult to accommodate all signs together where the Home Zone boundary and other zone boundaries coincide.

4.3 Movement

One of the main criteria for the development of a Home Zone is the creation of an environment where pedestrians and vehicles use shared space at comparable speed. This means tighter clear vehicle paths and the introduction of constraints to easy and direct vehicular passage will be needed.

Home Zones have been seen by some as a development from 20mph zones. Many of the Challenge schemes thought first of all to introduce more severe and frequent traffic calming features. However, the response from resident discussion groups was that a different approach was required, and many wanted streets to be opened up rather than closed down. This introduced a particular conflict between the functional and visual understanding of the street.

A successful way of resolving this conflict has been to redefine the streetscape away from the conventional straight lines of carriageway and footway to incorporate a single shared surface between property boundaries, even blurring the distinction between private and public space. This approach has succeeded in creating areas where activities other than movement can be undertaken safely whilst still allowing vehicles access. However, consideration has still to be given to defining the vehicle path. Different surface textures and colours have been used to influence driver perceptions.

The preferred choice has been horizontal shifts in vehicle paths, rather than frequent vertical deflections. This has been achieved using a variety of features.

An important element to successful speed reduction is to eliminate long through vistas for drivers, so giving the impression that no clear straight route exists. The incorporation of vertical features (such as planting and the grouping of street furniture), blocks of parking spaces or the creation of defined activity areas in the former carriageway have been particularly successful.

However, these combined constraints need to accommodate vehicle movements and authorities should consider the overhang requirements of large vehicles.

Whilst the schemes have to accommodate vehicle movements, they do so under less favourable conditions than previously. Where response times for emergency vehicles might be compromised, early involvement of the local representatives is vital.

It has become apparent that there is not necessarily a consistent view between or within the emergency services. Different views have been expressed across the Challenge schemes as to what form of layout and clear path constitutes a problem, especially where unregulated parking could take place.

The introduction of larger vehicles by many emergency services and the need for side access has increased the amount of space necessary to negotiate such features. Again the involvement of these authorities throughout the design process is important to understand both the operational requirements and altered priorities within the street.

Some authorities have used full scale mock-ups to overcome these issues, marking out the alignments temporarily and modifying them where necessary to accommodate specific movements. However, in some cases it has still been necessary to modify features once implemented; in particular the over-swing of refuse vehicles with hydraulic rear loaders has still caused problems.



Portchester, Hampshire deflection



Northam, Southampton deflection



Chester mock up



Morecambe, Lancashire



Victoria Estate, Bury

4.4 Delineation

Whilst the overall concept is for pedestrians and vehicles to share the space, it is clear that in some cases definition of space is still necessary. Some residents preferred additional traffic calming and felt that the traditional carriageway and footway layout should be retained. Many preferred a conservative approach and this has resulted in a mixture of surfaces either by creating specific defensible spaces, by the use of contrasting surface colours and/or textures, or by creating specific feature areas. The creation of these areas is, however, still within what would otherwise have been conventional carriageway and has achieved the break up of the street's linearity and constant width. Authorities need to take care to ensure that the spacing of these feature areas still constrains vehicle speeds.

Lesson Learnt

There can be a reluctance to embrace the shared surface principle.



Haringey

4.5 Parking

Parking has been a major issue throughout the Challenge schemes, even where car ownership is relatively low. In most areas, existing parking spaces were at a premium and residents strongly resisted any reduction. Authorities have therefore had to maintain or increase parking provision.

They have done this either by improving parking adjacent to houses (in-curtilage parking) or by creating structural (echelon) parking blocks along the street with a reduced and variable running width. In some schemes, on-street parking provision has been increased by providing more formalised parking arrangements.

Self-enforcement of parking is the aim within Home Zones and the strength of community ownership developed through the inclusive participation process should support this. So far, no undue difficulties have been experienced in any of the completed schemes, despite parking not always being wholly as intended.

The best approach is a flexible one, identifying areas where people are able to park without causing an obstruction, even to the emergency services. Areas where parking is not acceptable should be readily identified by their restricted width.

A number of Challenge schemes have incorporated controlled parking zones (CPZs), mainly due to their location. This introduces additional concerns over the extent of signing and marking, plus the potential cost of enforcement. Where CPZ schemes already exist, extension is relatively easy and understood. Where no CPZ exists, its introduction is often met with resistance from both residents and authorities alike.

Lesson Learnt

Be aware of parking issues but don't let them determine the design.



Lowestoft, Suffolk



At the Chester scheme a CPZ was implemented



Southampton lighting



Exeter lighting



Greenwich play provision

4.6 Lighting

The level and quality of lighting in a Home Zone is important as it can increase feelings of safety and security. Lighting was often raised during the consultation period in the Challenge schemes.

Lighting columns can have both a positive and negative impact within a Home Zone. They can mark routes but can also strengthen linearity of the street. Factors such as style, height and spacing of columns and colour spectrum of the lighting will be important in determining both the day and night-time appearance of the Home Zone. It is also important to provide lighting only where it is needed and reduce intrusive light and light pollution generally.

Involving a lighting engineer in the design process will help resolve these and other issues relating to the long term maintenance of the lighting.



Manchester lighting



Bristol lighting

4.7 Accommodating play

One of the key objectives of Home Zones is to increase the opportunity for children to play in the streets. This can be achieved through the introduction of both formal and informal play spaces.

Formal play spaces have been developed as segregated areas with play equipment sited where they are well overlooked and cater for a range of ages. Sensitive siting is necessary to ensure that the play space can be adequately observed, but at the same time not creating a nuisance for neighbours.

In the Challenge schemes the provision of formal play facilities has been one of the most contentious issues during consultation.

Involving children and young people throughout the design process has been particularly important in achieving acceptable schemes.

Even without formal play spaces; the creation of a less formal street can encourage play and outdoor activities where it would otherwise have been unacceptable. It is important to understand the needs and apprehensions of the community in developing play space within the Home Zone.



Tameside



Kirklees



Northmoor, Manchester



Camden street play



Scunthorpe play area



Newham play area



5 Implementation

The selection of materials and their visual appearance is a very important aspect for residents

5.1 Introduction

The implementation of a Home Zone scheme is a period of intensive activity with complex issues to resolve. It requires particular skills from both the client and contractor. Continued liaison with the residents is important throughout the construction phase, as they can experience significant disruption.

5.2 Choosing the contractor

Authorities need to select the contractor to implement the Home Zone carefully. The detail and complexity of some of the works requires special care and planning, together with an understanding of the overall concept. It is important that the contractor has experience of undertaking more complex street renovation or construction work. The range of materials and the need to break up the visual appearance of the street requires a different approach to conventional renewal or maintenance. The involvement of specialist suppliers or sub-contractors can further complicate the construction programme. Authorities must allow for their involvement at the right time.

The Challenge authorities often let separate contracts for specific areas of work such as kerbing and surfacing, landscaping, or street lighting, while maintaining overall control within the project management team. However, this approach can be over complicated and may lead to delays and disputes over responsibilities. It is preferable, therefore, to have a single contractor in overall control. Authorities must relay the design concepts and key objectives before appointing the contractor, and make sure that they are fully understood.

A number of authorities in the Home Zones Challenge programme have interviewed prospective contractors before selection in order to understand their proposed approach. In some instances, these selection interviews have also involved the residents themselves. As a result, residents were generally supportive of the efforts put in by contractors and worked well together.

5.3 Early contractor involvement

Early contractor involvement in the design process can help to ensure that the ideas of the community, developed during the design process, are accurately translated to the physical works and that the various elements can be constructed in a practical way. A key element in community acceptance is the achievement of their expectations from the design to the finished work.



Chester construction sign



Construction at Abingdon, Oxfordshire



North Tyneside residents start the scheme



Telford completed cul-de-sac

The 'Best Value' approach has sometimes been interpreted as replacing expensive materials with more conventional highway surfacing to the detriment of the overall objectives.

Where contractors have been made aware of the importance of the design constraints, they have helped to select suitable materials and recommend better construction methods.

Telford

This project has been part of a major housing renewal scheme that involved major work outside of the public space. As part of the Challenge scheme, extensive discussion took place with residents to develop a design concept that could be replicated throughout the estate. Support from the Home Zones Challenge would set the pattern for future works. A contractor for the full regeneration scheme was appointed in April 2004, before the design was finalised. The contractor worked closely with the design team in the latter stage of development. However, the final scheme has removed many of the quality surfacing materials on the side roads and substantially reduced the impact of the planting and deflection on the proposed vehicle paths.



Telford concept view

5.4 Choice of materials

The selection of materials and their visual appearance is a very important aspect for residents. In the Challenge schemes the quality and type of materials has arisen repeatedly during the design process and expectations can be compromised if inappropriate materials are proposed.

Warminster

Throughout this scheme a very pale 'coat and scatter' material was used for the trafficked areas. However, these pale areas quickly became marked and shabby.

Lesson Learnt

Make sure all surfacing materials are well tried and tested on site in busy trafficked areas before sanctioning their use. Think carefully about their longevity, future maintenance requirements and reinstatements by utility companies.

Inevitably, during the construction process, modifications to the detailed design are necessary, whether due to the presence of utilities, requirements of the emergency services, access and safety audit concerns or concerns voiced by residents. Any design changes need to be sensitive to the overall objectives of the scheme and must be carefully assessed against the need to control vehicle speed and enhance the overall environment.

Greenwich

There was a strong desire in this scheme to plant trees in strategic locations to manage traffic flow. Initial enquiries and trial investigations were carried out to find out where services ran, so that tree pits would avoid them. Along one street in particular, tree pits were not possible but agreement was reached to provide trees in raised planting boxes within a low, kerbed planted area that could be moved to allow access to the services.



Warminster



Greenwich planter



Silkmore, Stafford

Raised planting areas were provided to protect parking areas and create deflection along the residential streets. Some residents improved the location of individual driveways, in part to take cars off street. This sometimes meant relocation of the planted areas which was easily achieved through the use of containers.

Lesson Learnt

It is important to carry out detailed investigations before proposing a design. The presence of services can restrict the use of street trees. Service diversion costs can jeopardise the financial viability of a scheme.

5.5 Phasing

Detailed programming and phasing of the works is important to manage the inevitable disruption. The phasing needs to consider not only the physical extent of works at each stage but also any other works that are needed, for example service diversions.

Nottingham

Nottingham City Council was keen to remove the overhead telephone lines from the street, but the service supplier proposed timescales and costs that would harm the overall programme and delivery of the scheme. Through extensive negotiation, agreement was reached for the council's contractor to provide underground ducting as part of its work, leaving the service provider to install the cables. This enabled all surfacing to be completed and reduced the overall installation costs.

Authorities need to keep residents fully informed throughout the process. In many of the Challenge schemes, authorities held regular progress meetings with contractors, designers and residents to identify problems and resolve them before they became major issues. Key contact personnel within both the authority and contractor teams have often been identified to maintain clear lines of communication and responsibility.

Denton, Kent

Three parallel streets on the Northcourt Estate in Denton were allocated Home Zone Challenge funding. The area suffered from considerable vandalism and anti-social behaviour. The Home Zone was designed in association with the residents, although there were differing levels of support from each street. The authority therefore decided on a phased approach to implementation.

The first street was constructed with the hope that the residents of the other two would feel positive towards the plans once they saw them in place. This phase was a success, with the creation of community spirit and a sense of ownership.

However, the next street was less supportive, with minimal resident involvement in developing the scheme. Work began but was affected by sustained anti-social behaviour. There was damage to the physical measures and threats to the workforce. Unfortunately the contractor was forced to withdraw from site with this phase 95 per cent complete. It is too early to say if residents will benefit from the scheme but early indications are that they will not.

Residents of the third street fluctuated between support and rejection and this phase has now been abandoned for the time being.



Denton, Kent



6 What has been achieved?

The main outcome of successful Home Zones has been the development of stronger and more integrated local communities

6.1 Review of the scheme objectives

Before we can understand what has been achieved, it is important to consider the scheme objectives originally set by the local authorities at the start of the process.

All Challenge authorities set objectives for their Home Zones based on their local knowledge. These varied considerably and only rarely were they SMART objectives.

SMART objectives

Constructing Excellence in the Built Environment (2005) advocates the 'SMART' formula when setting objectives:

- **Specific** – Use clear, concise and easily understood descriptions of what is trying to be achieved.
- **Measurable** – Ensure that it is possible to check off activities which contribute to success and which measure progress.
- **Achievable** – Set realistic and achievable objectives that are challenging but attainable. Do not set objectives which are outside the authority's control or dependent on others for decision-making or approval.
- **Relevant** – Objectives should be pertinent to achieving the ultimate goal or must contribute to successfully attaining it.
- **Time bound** – Clear timescales must be set to complete each activity or task. Deadlines must be kept otherwise the scheme will run off track.

Many of the Challenge schemes had similar objectives. The most frequent were to:

- reduce vehicle speeds
- improve quality of environment
- increase play and other activities
- reduce real/perceived crime
- improve road safety and
- promote community involvement.

As many of the objectives were not SMART, quantitative measurement of the Home Zone schemes may be difficult.



Northam, Southampton

6.2 Traffic impacts

The majority of schemes identified some form of monitoring to be undertaken after completion, but the timing of when this was to be done varied. At the time of writing, only a limited number of authorities have undertaken any monitoring of their schemes. For those that have, initial results are positive.

Most immediate monitoring has been of conventional traffic information such as speed and flow. Review of accident statistics and other 'softer' surveys will take longer to complete. However, all the schemes were asked to identify the current accident situation, particularly those involving children and older people. So far none of the schemes have reported any accidents following completion.

Data from the after surveys is limited, but 39 of the 61 schemes have reported on the immediate effect of Home Zones on traffic. Over half estimate that speeds have reduced to between 10 and 15mph. The lowest mean speed of 6mph has been reported at the scheme in Southampton, with both the Kirklees and Wirral schemes achieving speeds below 10mph.

Southampton

The Northam Home Zone in Southampton is a small pocket of terraced housing to the east of the city centre. The street has recently become a cul-de-sac due to highway improvements to enhance the environment. It lies close to a busy artery into the city, a major rail wagon works and a football stadium, so suffers from a high proportion of on-street parking. Gateway features, raised planters, and echelon parking have been introduced within a mix of shared space and retained footways. A new park provides a central focus adjacent to a new development that will also be a Home Zone.

A limited number of authorities have reported changes in traffic volumes through the treated streets. In these instances, all have reported significant reductions in traffic flow. Both Manchester City Council and the London Borough of Camden have reported around 60 per cent reductions in traffic flow within the treated areas. Whilst Camden has introduced a road closure within the scheme, none were implemented in Manchester. Home Zones have therefore had a positive effect on 'rat-running' traffic.

6.3 Wider impacts

The aim of Home Zones is to improve the quality of life in residential communities by developing streets that are shared equally between vehicles and people and encouraging different uses of the streets, especially play. An important aspect of the development of these streets is that they should be designed so that vehicle speeds are kept very low to allow activities to take place in safety. The local communities should also be actively involved in their design, development and ongoing upkeep.

All the Home Zone Challenge schemes achieved this aim to some extent. However it is important to understand the wider impacts. Many other community benefits have resulted from implementing a 'highway scheme'.

Delivering stronger communities

The main outcome of successful Home Zones has been the development of stronger and more integrated local communities. This has been achieved by the active involvement of residents at all levels in the design process and is evident through community events such as Christmas carol services and barbecues as well as the setting up of ongoing activities such as gardening clubs.

Home Zones have built on the natural affinity for people to socialise and provided them with opportunities to mix safely with others in areas where they previously felt intimidated.



Porchester, Hampshire



Bolton

During the initial public involvement in the development of the scheme on the Oldhams Estate in Bolton, unemployed residents were offered training in various consultation techniques. They were then tasked with delivering a variety of ideas and options to inform initial designs for the scheme. Following completion of the scheme, of the 12 residents who received the training, two have gone on to work for voluntary organisations, one has entered full time employment and two have enrolled at college. The majority have continued to be involved in local community activity.

Hull

The population of Albany Street in Hull was quite transient, being made up of a variety of owner occupiers, students and short-let tenants, many from ethnic minorities. The development of the Home Zone helped these different groups to work together with a common goal and establish a sense of community.

Bognor Regis, West Sussex

Through the Home Zone scheme, the Pevensey Orchard Community Action Group was formed. The group has written its own constitution with a view to applying for funding to improve the area further. The group continues to be a contact point for residents and is also overseeing the maintenance and watering of the plants.

Lesson Learnt

Retrofit home zones are as much about urban regeneration and community building as they are about traffic engineering.

Regeneration

In addition to adapting the existing streets, greater awareness of the wider range of issues facing communities resulted in substantial modification of schemes. Many schemes expanded their original remit to include demolition, rebuilding and new facilities. The support of the Single Regeneration Budget and Housing Renewal funding, as well as mainstream local authority funds, has succeeded in increasing the money available well in excess of the original Home Zones Challenge grant allocations. In some cases schemes have attracted funding in excess of six to seven times the original grant, delivering an end result that all the community has been involved in and that addresses issues far beyond the original scope of the scheme.

Telford

The Home Zone Challenge funding proved to be a catalyst in the regeneration of the Woodside Estate. The funding acted as a pump primer, encouraging other funding sources to open up. Consequently the whole estate will now be regenerated and redeveloped along Home Zone principles.

Scunthorpe

The Crosby Home Zone sits within a larger area now earmarked under a new initiative for housing regeneration and renewal. This initiative has recognised the huge visual difference and 'feel' of the Home Zone and there is a general consensus of wanting to replicate much of the style in other parts of this wider area.



Scunthorpe before and after



Kirklees – At the start of the works around 20 per cent of properties were empty. There is now a waiting list to move onto the estate



Kirklees – Residents have formed a group to ensure litter is placed in bins and the area is kept clean

As well as large scale regeneration schemes, Home Zones can act as a catalyst for smaller scale renewal. Many Challenge authorities have reported that home owners are taking more pride in their area and are carrying out external refurbishment of their properties. Housing associations and local authority housing departments also see Home Zones as adding value and often improve properties as part of Home Zone works. They are considered by some to be an ideal complement to housing improvements carried out as part of area based renewal programmes. Many schemes have reported reductions in the turnover of tenancies and the number of empty properties.

Bolton

The Bolton Home Zone has added value to the process of updating council owned properties by improving the environment and image of the area. Turnover of tenancies dropped from 32 per cent (2001-02) to 9 per cent (2004-05).

Other schemes have directly triggered the re-development of adjacent derelict areas.

Southampton

As a direct result of the need for certainty about the land surrounding the Home Zone, the team produced a development brief for an area of derelict land within the Home Zone. This created sufficient confidence for a local housing association to acquire the land for the development of 31 housing units. The development has now started and includes a new build Home Zone as an extension to the retrofit scheme.

Environment

All Home Zone Challenge schemes reported an improvement in the environment. This is due to the use of premium materials, the planting of street trees and the provision of planters. Authorities have reported that back alley space is now useable and residents take more care of their new environment, introduce their own plants and tend the planters.

Crime

It is too early to tell what impact Home Zones can have on crime levels. Early indications are that crime statistics show a reduction following the implementation of a Home Zone.

Available crime statistics are impressive. Most notable is Plymouth, where recorded crimes in the Morice Town Home Zone dropped from 92 in the year before the scheme started (2001-02) to just nine in the year after completion (2003-04), a 90 per cent reduction. In Tameside crime statistics for the wider West End area suggest that domestic burglary has reduced by 80 per cent in the last three years and vehicle crime is down by 50 per cent. This has been helped by the introduction of alley gates. In the Poulton Home Zone in Morecambe, Lancashire, crime has been reduced by 22 per cent between 2001-02 and 2003-04

It is certainly the case that the installation of new lighting enhances feelings of personal security. For example, in Northumberland residents reported that they felt safer walking to working group meetings.

Scunthorpe

At the start of the project the police Chief Inspector said, "A key aspect of the improvements are they will not only reduce crime through improved lighting and security provision – but also reduce the fear of crime by making the area less attractive to the criminal element of society."

Bristol

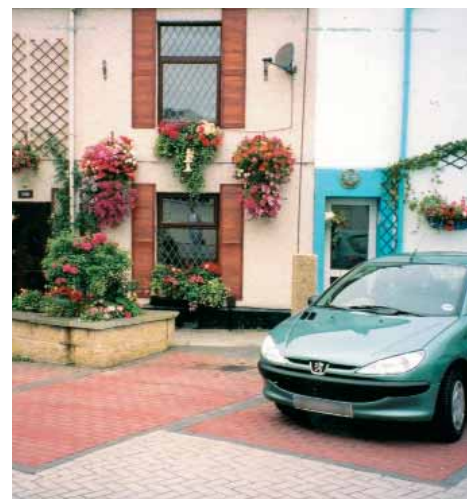
Liaison officers have worked with the steering group to promote better crime prevention techniques through improved street lighting and positioning of street furniture.



Greenwich – By giving a clear message that the area is being cared for, fly-tipping and other anti-social behaviour has reduced



Plymouth – Three-quarters of adult respondents thought that the appearance of the Home Zone was an improvement and almost a quarter spend more time outside the front of their homes



Plymouth



Newcastle-under-Lyme



The London Borough of Newham introduced formal play facilities within the street environment

Derby

Residents raised concerns during consultation over anti-social and related criminal behaviour. This led to the formation of a sub-group to tackle these issues. This has resulted in targeted action by various agencies to remove anti-social tenants and clamp down on drug dealing. The local community watch patrol has also been more present on the streets.

Southampton

The redevelopment of part of a car park within the scheme has stopped the prostitution and drug dealing that occurred there. Reduced vehicle speeds and limited access within the Home Zone area now deter drug dealers.

Children

Children can be seen as key to the success of Home Zones. One of the main objectives is to provide safe play opportunities in the street. However, concerns about children playing in the street can cause tensions within a community. It is therefore crucial that they are involved in the whole process. Many Challenge schemes set out to introduce play features, both formal and informal. In the event few formal facilities were introduced, due either to opposition from residents or authorities' concerns regarding their liabilities.

This can be overcome by contributing to play schemes adjacent to the Home Zone. In Bury, for example, a contribution was made to the Ball Zone, provided as an addition to a park next to the scheme.

Informal play is often the answer and just providing a safe space within the street may be all that is needed. Children will use their imagination to transform features of the environment. Large concrete balls in the street, designed to demarcate the vehicle path, can become anything in a child's eyes. Engineers from Devon County Council have reported that children are using the entire Wonford Home Zone area as one large playground.

Unfortunately there can also be drawbacks. A number of authorities have reported that the features introduced can attract teenagers into Home Zones. Concerns have been expressed about resulting anti-social behaviour, although few incidents appear to have materialised.

Peasedown St John

At the Peasedown St John scheme, the Home Zone project led to funding for play rangers to help develop children's play activities.

Bolton

The residents group that was developed as part of the Bolton scheme identified a lack of activities for younger children. A project was established to deliver a range of activities for young children across the estate. This provision continues.

Kirklees

Specific consultation events for children were run during the design phase. Children now feel they have had an input to the scheme and are helping to look after the area. Children are making full use of the play equipment and parents feel their children can play safely.

Camden

Eighty-two per cent of residents said that more children were playing in the street as a result of the Home Zone. Their children have been meeting and playing with other children who they would not otherwise have had the opportunity to meet.

Bognor Regis

The Home Zone is a useful resource for local schools in teaching lifestyle, environmental and human geography issues.



Staiths South Bank, Gateshead has table tennis fixed in the street



Kirklees play area



Camden



Health

It is difficult to quantify just how a Home Zone affects health. A number of authorities have suggested that their schemes look more attractive and this has a positive effect on health and well being. A number consider that Home Zones encourage more walking and cycling. Some have suggested that they contribute to raising morale and community spirit. The full effects on health will only become clearer over time.

Bolton

Health visitors used some of the Bolton Home Zone consultation events to build relationships with local residents and focus on healthy living issues, particularly relating to families with young children. They have maintained these links and Health visitors are now involved in several projects on the estate, including the development of an urban care centre.

Chester

A bid was recently submitted to central government for the development of an elderly persons 'extra care' facility in the Home Zone to help older people to live in their own homes longer. The Home Zone was referenced in the document.

House prices

House prices fluctuate and are affected by any number of local and national conditions. A number of Challenge authorities have suggested that house prices in Home Zones have increased more than in other areas. Estate agents are also using Home Zones as marketing features, extolling the virtues of city living in a greener, safer environment. With such a variable issue, again only time will tell.

Derby

The price of a typical terraced house in 2004 was £66,000. The average in 2005 once the Home Zone was complete was £80,000 – a 20 per cent increase and significantly higher than house price inflation locally.

Morecambe

House prices in the area were 58 per cent of the regional average in 2001. In 2004, after the scheme was introduced, they were 70 per cent of the regional average.

Middlesbrough

Early indications are that the price of three bedroom terraced properties within the Home Zone has increased faster (13 per cent) than those in adjacent areas (11 per cent).

Plymouth

There is anecdotal evidence of an increase of 10 to 15 per cent above similar properties outside the Home Zone.

North Shields

Estate agents suggest an increase of 15 to 20 per cent in the last year and properties are selling faster. People are asking about the availability of properties in the Home Zone.



Old Trafford

6.4 Summary

Early indications from the Challenge schemes are that increased activity is now taking place in the streets, residents are taking ownership for the areas around them, and the private and public sectors are investing more in sustaining and developing the areas. People are much happier with their environment, crime is down and the longer term funding required from the local authority in these areas is also reduced.

However, it is important that the Home Zone does not simply become a traffic calming exercise. Highway works are obviously a key consideration but must not distract from other outcomes that are achievable and equally important.



Appendix A

Case Study: The use of 3D visualisation in public involvement at Wilmot Drive, Staffordshire

Background

Staffordshire County Council implemented a Home Zone Challenge scheme on the Wilmot Drive estate in Newcastle-under-Lyme. Located within a former coal-mining region, the area scored high on indices of ill health, poverty, inadequate housing, unemployment and low educational achievement. Youth unemployment was just below 40 per cent. In recent years the estate had been characterised by an undercurrent of crime, disorder and social problems.

Council officers believed that a Home Zone could improve not only the physical infrastructure on the estate, but also road safety and the health, community spirit and social status of residents.

Community involvement

Creating and sustaining links with representative bodies on Wilmot Drive was a high priority from the outset. A steering group of representatives of the Tenants' Management Organisation, the Community Development Association and County Council engineers was supplemented by involvement from the Neighbourhood Management Initiative, Staffordshire Police's Architectural Liaison Officer and Landscape Officers from Newcastle Borough Council.

In devising a strategy to engage residents, the steering group was keen to learn from earlier pilot schemes, which highlighted the need to involve hard to reach groups in the consultation. Therefore as much participation as possible would be by word of mouth, as basic levels of literacy would present a barrier to written consultation. Representatives knocked on doors to make residents aware of forthcoming events.

A member of the Community Development Association, a local resident, visited Holland along with members of the design team to view at first hand how Home Zones work there. With help from the design team, this resident described what they had seen to other residents face to face.

Residents were also taken to view the Northmoor Pilot Home Zone in Manchester. Having seen the improvements and spoken with Northmoor residents, they were very keen to start the consultation process themselves.

The first consultation evening was well attended. There were display boards with plans and photographs to show residents what was proposed. However, representatives of the community groups later expressed their concerns at the residents' ability to understand the two dimensional plans. They also suggested that attendance might decrease unless more visual techniques were used. The loss of a large section of the community after the substantial interest at the first meeting would greatly harm the scheme.

3D visualisation

The housing manager from the Tenants Management Organisation asked whether three-dimensional (3D) computer visualisations could be used. Engineers had already used such software successfully on major bypass and land reclamation projects. However, using it in an urban area, showing the sort of detail needed for a Home Zone, would be a first for Staffordshire.

Modern computing power combined with a highly skilled operator makes the 3D visualisations so realistic that residents genuinely believe what they see. This is a great advantage, but also a potential drawback. It leaves no hiding behind the fact that the visualisation was indicative of the proposal only. In the mind of the viewer it becomes a reality almost immediately.

It was important for the model to be an accurate depiction of both the existing street and the proposed design features. A usable 3D visualisation must therefore be based on an accurate land survey, particularly in an urban environment. It must depict all distinguishable features such as hedges, fences and vehicular and pedestrian accesses. Only with the knowledge that the visualisation is based upon such a survey can the design team interact with the public and remain confident in the images. Textures and materials on the model need to be as realistic as possible.

The completed model gives the design team and residents alike the ability to view any object within it from any viewpoint. Local landmarks significantly improved residents' ability to pick out their own properties. Once residents had located their own properties they were quickly able to understand how the proposals affected them, particularly in respect of parking and planting. Where some residents were seen to be struggling in orientating themselves, others assisted, removing the engineer from the discussion and helping foster a sense of community.

Due to the size of the model, the estate was broken down into three routes. All future open evenings were divided into the same routes, with residents invited to view their part of the estate through the 3D visualisation. This enabled residents to discuss any particular problems such as preferred manoeuvres onto their driveways. This helped iron out any localised issues, particularly the positioning of planting areas that may have caused access difficulties.

The completed animations were used at a participation evening held in the community hall. Attendance was very encouraging and was a result of the residents' curiosity at seeing a 3D model of their home, news of which had spread principally by mouth.

Once the initial excitement and orientation process had been overcome, the engineering staff could concentrate on the Home Zone proposals and positive individual participation followed. Samples of the textured finishes were available together with a simple questionnaire allowing residents to help select the colour and pattern.

Interestingly, the residents' majority selection of red herringbone pattern was not that shown on the evening but was similar to the very first animation seen at the preliminary showing of the model.

The residents' choice of colour and texture has been implemented and they are happy with the result.

Minor changes were made to the model after the consultation, reflecting the views and choices of residents. The animation sequences were set to work again to produce the final design.

Copies of the animations were burned to CD to allow residents who could not attend the open evening to view the proposals at a more convenient time in the two community buildings on the estate. The authority considered making the animations available via the internet, but due to the relative deprivation on the estate this was not considered appropriate.



Benefits of 3D visualisation

From the County Council's point of view the use of 3D visualisations to enhance public participation has provided the following benefits:

- a higher level of public participation than would be expected using more standard plans and descriptions
- an increasing number of participants at each event, rather than the usual decline in numbers after the initial event
- increased awareness of the proposals throughout the estate
- residents much more able to interpret the information than through the use of two dimensional plans and photographs
- residents more able to hold informative discussions with engineering staff as to which measures they felt would work, and more importantly those that wouldn't work
- overcame the residents' initial reaction to reject change as they were genuinely excited at the proposals
- very little conflict and additional costs once work began relating to access problems or residents objecting to elements such as tree planting outside their homes
- the engineers found it beneficial to see a driver's eye view of the proposals so that they could judge the appropriate speed for the area, particularly given the relatively new Home Zone concept
- the Police Architectural Liaison Officer was better able to provide constructive advice on 'designing out crime' and
- the independent safety auditors had an additional resource for their input at the stage 2 safety audit stage.

Conclusion

Staffordshire County Council believes that the use of 3D visualisations has had a major impact on how residents have participated in the design process. It also believes that ownership of the scheme had started before works commenced and that the works ran more smoothly than had the visualisations not been used.

The cost of the model and creation of animations was approximately £6,000, which has been partly funded by a contribution from the local Neighbourhood Management Initiative. This represented less than 1 per cent of the scheme value (£645,000). The council believes that investment in the model has been most beneficial to the scheme. It may have saved on the construction costs by reducing the level of complaints and last minute requests for changes.

The visualisations also allowed residents with limited literacy to understand the proposals. This can help overcome many of the barriers experienced by socially excluded groups.

Appendix B

Home Zone information sources

Traffic Advisory Leaflets

TAL 10/01 *Home Zones – Planning and Design*.

TAL 8/02 *Home Zones – Public Participation*.

available from DfT Free Literature, PO Box 236, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS23 7NB, Tel 0870 1226 236, Fax 0870 1226 297, and on the DfT web site.

Guidance notes

Home Zones – A planning and design handbook. Mike Biddulph (The Policy Press, December 2001. ISBN 1 86134 371X).

Home Zone Design Guidelines (Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers, June 2002. ISBN 0-9542-875).

Inclusive Mobility – A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure (The Department for Transport November 2002). Available from the DfT Free Literature service at the above address and on the DfT web site.

Videos

At home in my street: exploring home zones in the Netherlands and Germany (Children's Play Council and Transport 2000, 1999).

Home Zones: The UK Experience (The Policy Press 2003).

Web sites

www.homezoneschallenge.com (available until February 2006).

www.homezones.org.uk (available from November 2005).

Research reports

TRL Report No 586 *Pilot home zone schemes: evaluation of The Methleys, Leeds* (TRL Limited 2003).

TRL Report No 625 *Pilot home zone schemes: evaluation of Northmoor, Manchester* (TRL Limited 2005).

TRL Report No 626 *Pilot home zone schemes: evaluation of Cavell Way, Sittingbourne* (TRL Limited 2005).

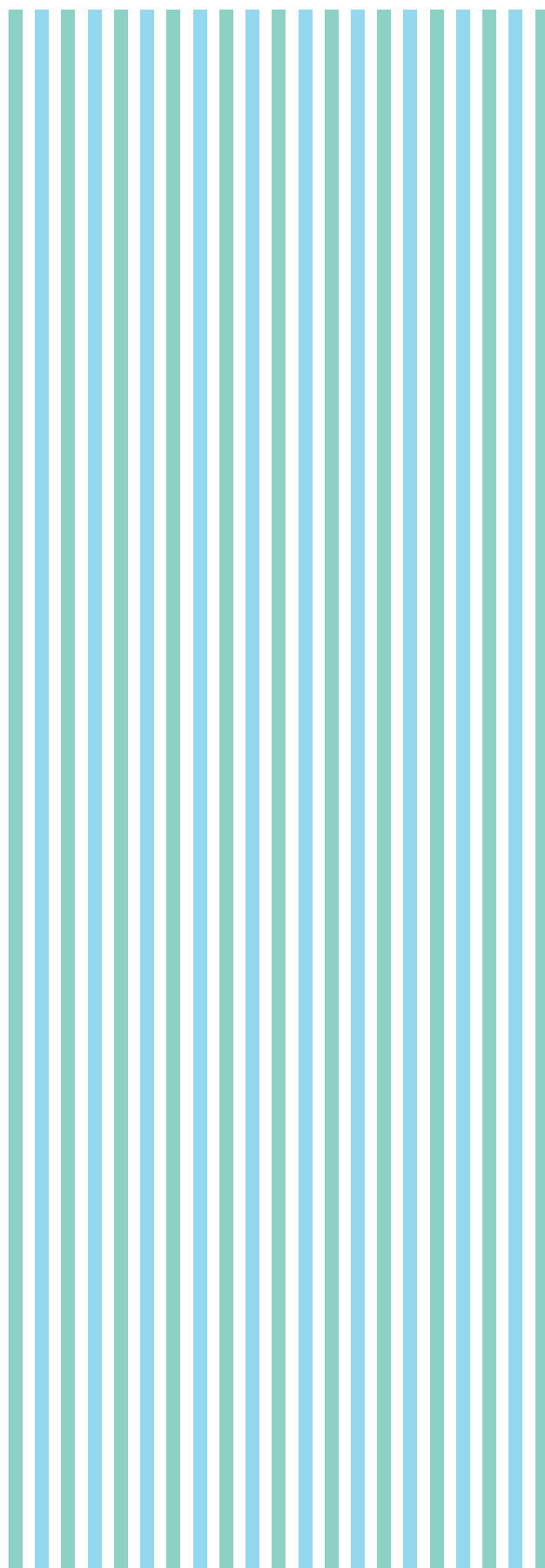
TRL Report No 633 *Pilot home zone schemes: evaluation of Magor Village, Monmouthshire* (TRL Limited 2005).

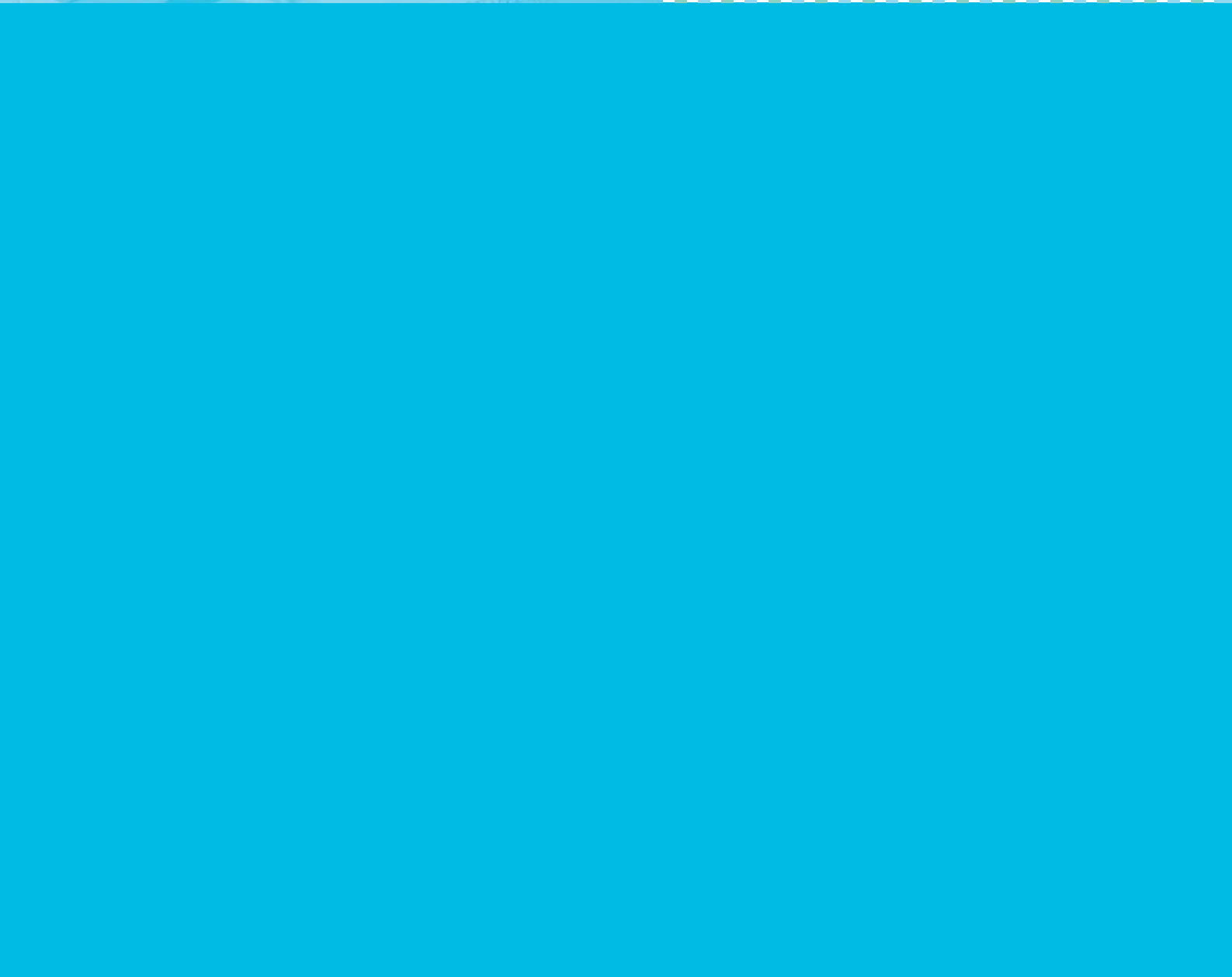
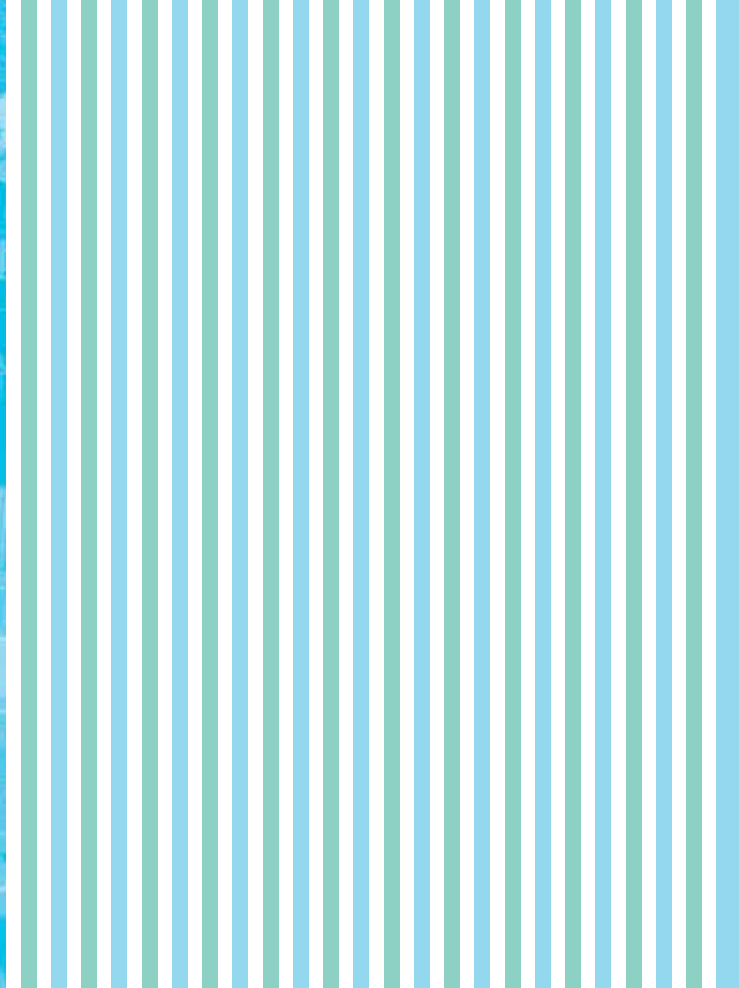
TRL Report No 640 *Pilot home zone schemes: evaluation of Morice Town, Plymouth* (TRL Limited 2005).

TRL Report No 646 *Pilot home zone schemes: evaluation of the Five Roads area, London Borough of Ealing* (TRL Limited 2005).

TRL Report No 647 *Pilot home zone schemes: evaluation of Nobel Road, Nottingham* (TRL Limited 2005).

Creative Neighbourhoods – the role of the arts in building sustainable communities (Aston Housing Consultancy, 2005. ISBN 0-9550110-0-0).







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