
Quiet Lanes

To: Swale Joint Transportation Board, 5 December 2022

By: Tim Read – Head of Transportation, Kent County Council

Classification: For Information

Summary

The Swale JTB requested an information item on Quiet Lanes.

The objectives of Quiet Lanes are to preserve the character of country lanes, to reduce traffic dominance and vehicle speeds, to encourage drivers to look out for and be more mindful of non-motorised road users and, thereby, to encourage more journeys on foot, by bike or by horse.

1.0 Introduction & Background

- 1.1 The aim of Quiet Lanes is to help preserve the character and tranquillity of rural areas and encouraging an increase in non-motorised users, whilst maintaining vehicular access. The idea is to make motorists more aware of non-motorised users and, over time, to reduce the number and speed of motor vehicles by changing attitudes ('hearts and minds' of local residents and other road users) rather than lowering the speed limit or using physical measures for enforcement. Ideally Quiet Lanes link homes with shops, bus routes, schools, workplaces, village halls, pubs and other local amenities, allowing people to use non-motorised modes of transport in preference to cars for short journeys. There can be quiet lanes in urban areas and sometimes referred to as Quiet mixed traffic streets, Quiet streets, Home Zones, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN) and Quiet ways.
- 1.2 Generally a Quiet Lane in urban areas will have a speed limit of 20mph and daily traffic flows less than 2,500 traffic flows and in rural areas a speed limit of 40mph and daily traffic flows of less than 1,000. They will have good visibility for all users and include traffic signs and road markings. Drivers of vehicles should be expecting to see walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design suggests that most people, especially with younger children, will not feel comfortable on mixed traffic streets and lanes if the above criteria is not in place.
- 1.3 Between 1998 and 2002 Kent County Council was involved in a national demonstration project with the Countryside Agency and Tonbridge & Malling

District Council to trial a new traffic management intervention for rural roads called Quiet Lanes.

- 1.4 The scheme, implemented in 2000/01, principally involved modifying signing (fingerpost destinations were removed so through traffic would not be encouraged), entry treatments (a simple post and Quiet Lane sign at the entry and exit of the network). The scheme involved extensive engagement with local people and interest groups. It was viewed as a partial success and any future schemes should be seen as long-term projects which need continued attitude changes brought about by regular road safety messaging and continued local community input.
- 1.5 A report was produced by TRL Ltd for the Countryside Agency back in 2003 following the implementation of the above trial (40km in total). The summary of the report concluded:
 - No change in measured traffic on Quiet Lanes, despite large increases on adjacent roads
 - No significant change in measured vehicle speeds on Quiet Lanes
 - Observed increase in pedestrians but numbers remain low
 - Sustained strong support for the scheme but about half say it is not working in practice
 - Small, declared increase in non-motorised use
 - Small, declared decrease in motorised use
 - Declared increase in careful driving
 - There remain some concerns over safety
 - There remain perceived problems with quiet lanes
- 1.6 Active Travel England (an executive agency of The Department for Transport) released their strategic framework in July 2021 with a commitment for half of all short journeys to be walked or cycled in towns and cities by 2030. It is still to produce a "Rural Guidance" document for local authorities however it is imminent. This document will have additional information and guidance for local authorities on Quiet Lanes.
- 1.7 Local Cycling and Walking Plans (LCWIP) should highlight routes that may be suitable for Quiet Lanes.
- 1.8 Sustrans is working to develop a network of Quiet Lanes both in rural and urban locations primarily along National Cycle Routes and involving KCC and other local authorities and stakeholders.

2.0 Procedures for progressing Quiet Lanes

- 2.1 Implementing a Quiet Lane or series of Quiet Lanes must be progressed using The Quiet Lanes & Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006 which set

the procedures the local traffic authorities must follow for designating, varying and revoking roads as Quiet Lanes or Home Zones.

- 2.2 The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 prescribe the signs to mark entry and exit points of a road designated as a Quiet Lane. See examples below:

	
DfT approved sign	Non prescribed signs with words

- 2.3 Before developing a proposal, a comprehensive public consultation, including at least one local public meeting is required along with publishing the intention in a local newspaper and allowing at least 21 days for formal replies.
- 2.4 Monitoring and evaluation of the project requires data to be collected to understand existing speeds and traffic volumes. This will help to decide what measures are required to implement the scheme to aid compliance and then determine the effectiveness of any measures implemented.
- 2.5 Local buy-in for the idea is essential as is a robust and continued road safety campaign to highlight to all traffic the purpose of the Quiet Lane.
- 2.6 The speed limits within Quiet Lanes should not rely on enforcement by Kent Police. 20mph speed limits should be self-enforcing and therefore suitably designed so all users are aware.

3.0 Finances

- 3.1 There is no specific KCC budget for identifying and implementing Quiet Lanes.
- 3.2 The cost of implementing Quiet Lanes will vary depending on the measures required to aid compliance as they can range from just simple entry/exit signs on wooden posts to vertical and horizontal treatments, surface treatments and road markings. Quite often on rural lanes, this can detract from the rural nature of the road and so needs careful and sympathetic designs. The advertising and road safety campaigns can add a significant amount to the costs. The Greensand Ridge Quiet Lane scheme (40km) costs £200,000 in 1991 and comprised £135,000 of engineering measures, £15,000 for monitoring, £2,000 for leaflets and publicity and £50,000 staff costs.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 A community-based approach to Quiet Lanes is required to develop a consensus and to encourage a change in road user behaviour of local people in a rural context. Quiet Lanes can be resource intensive to develop and deliver and an ongoing programme of engagement and publicity is needed to maintain the benefits in the long term.

5.0 Contact details

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Background Documents

Department for Transport Circular 02/2006 – The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006 - [The Quiet Lanes & Home Zones Regulations 2006.pdf](#)

Explanatory Memorandum to The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006 and The Traffic Signs 9 Amendment) Regulations 2006 – [EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO THE THE QUIET LANES AND HOME ZONES \(ENGLAND\) REGULATIONS 2006 NO. 2082 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006 - [The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Campaign to Protect Rural England – CPRE's guide to Quiet Lanes - [CPRE's Guide to Quiet Lanes - CPRE](#)

The Countryside Agency June 2004 Traffic Advisory Unit - [\[ARCHIVED CONTENT\] \(nationalarchives.gov.uk\)](#)

Cycle Infrastructure Design Local Transport Note 1/20 July 2020 - [Cycle Infrastructure Design \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 - [The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 \(tsrgd.co.uk\)](#)