

Walk

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MEASURING DANGER ON THE ROAD

PEDESTRIANS AND THE POLICE

SAFETY & BEHAVIOUR AT MANCHESTER PELICANS

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(WALK free to members)

'Education is the bogus substitute
for law and reliance on it is the
greatest cause of the motor slaughter
in Britain today.'

J.S. Dean (1947)

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Vagrants, Heavy Commercial Vehicles and Pedestrians

After the Napoleonic Wars members of the House of Commons were annoyed by the sight of disabled ex-soldiers begging in the streets of London. They therefore introduced the 1824 Vagrancy Act to rid the capital of these embarrassing wretches. Having succeeded in what it was intended to do, the Act largely fell into disuse.

In the last couple of years, with the large rise in the numbers of homeless young people and the appearance of 'cardboard city' by Waterloo Station, the Metropolitan Police have once again been vigorously implementing the 1824 Vagrancy Act.

What does this have to do with pedestrians? On the face of it, not very much. In any list of illegal obstructions and dangers daily faced by London's pedestrians, beggars and people sleeping in subways are unlikely to feature prominently. Judging by the letters and phone calls which pour into the Pedestrians Association, pedestrians are bothered most of all by reckless, speeding motorists, cars, and lorries parked on pavements, broken, uneven pavements and footways unlawfully blocked by builders, shopkeepers and people who dump sacks of rubbish there.

Heavy Goods Vehicles are a particular nuisance. A single heavy lorry can cause as much damage as 200,000 cars. Section 19 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 makes it an offence to park a heavy commercial vehicle wholly or partly on any verge, land between two carriageways or footway. The offence applies nationally.

On any reckoning the problems caused by heavy commercial vehicles on London's pavements surely massively outnumber those caused by vagrancy. Lorries driven onto pavements are threatening, dangerous, obstructive and immensely damaging to the footway surface.

In 1989 the Metropolitan Police prosecuted 1,268 people under the 1824 Vagrancy Act. And how many drivers of heavy commercial vehicles were prosecuted under the 1988 Act for parking on London's pavements?

"Some 300," says Scotland Yard. Less than one a day across the whole of London!

Could there be a clearer example of the police indifference to pedestrians than the astonishing fact that in our capital city four times as much effort is put into cracking down on vagrants as is devoted to lorries parked on pavements?

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Can You Help?

The Treasurer has told us that he does not feel able to continue to do this work much longer. We are accordingly looking urgently for a replacement. The position is a working and honorary one and takes one or two days a week. Preferably, anyone interested should have some financial knowledge, be able to keep a simple set of accounts and have worked in a manual accounts office. Much of what is required could be picked up from what has been done before. It is varied and interesting and would be attractive to a retired person with time on his hands. Reasonable travel expenses etc. to Vauxhall would be paid. For further information please contact Charles Maher at the office, giving him some brief information of your experience.

High Performance

Just before last year's Motor Show, a new 176 mph Lotus Carlton was reviewed in the *London Evening Standard*. The car's speed capability was said to be a cause for concern among police and environmentalists but the manufacturer, Vauxhall Motors, assured readers that it "will be bought by committed and responsible motorists and driven in a committed and responsible manner".

A few days later the Pedestrians Association chairman was quoted in the same paper as asking what research had been done to support the claim that those who bought this car were such motoring paragons. No one was able to tell him, so he then put the question direct to the police, the manufacturer and the industry.

The Association of Chief Police Officers said they suspected the sort of person attracted to such cars is likely to be tempted to test the upper speed capabilities on public roads. Vauxhall blamed the press for headlining the maximum speed potential. The Institute of the Motor Industry remained silent.

The IMI's failure to respond prompted the chairman in November to write to its president, Prince Michael of Kent, himself no stranger to

Life After Death?

Yes, at least so far as your money is concerned as it can still go on working for your interests if you leave a legacy to the Pedestrians Association. This Association has always been very much under-funded. It still is and probably always will be. Legacies are therefore greatly welcomed and, as the P.A. is a registered charity, a legacy to it will attract exemption from Inheritance Tax.

Everyone should make a Will because of the problems that might arise in its absence for those left behind. Your Estate too might also in such a case not be passed on as you might have wished.

It is best to obtain advice from a solicitor in the drafting of a Will and this perhaps is not as expensive as might be thought. In straight forward cases, however, Wills can be made on a 'do it yourself' basis using, if preferred, a form obtainable from legal stationers. To leave a legacy to the P.A. a simple clause in such a Will on the following lines will suffice.

"I give (insert here the details of the legacy) to the Pedestrians Association of 1, Wandsworth Rd., London SW8 2XX for its general purposes and furthermore declare that the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being or other proper officer shall be a sufficient discharge to my trustees."

It is very common for the residue of an Estate to be left to a charity and this is often of great worth because of the increase in value of some assets between the date when the Will was made and that of death. To give effect to this in a Will, just insert in the blank space in the draft clause above "the residue of my Estate".

high-performance cars. He was asked what information his Institute had on whether those who buy and drive such cars are committed and responsible drivers.

We still await a reply with interest. Sadly the motor industry's performance in dealing with our inquiries is not as high as the performance of some of its members' supercars.

Drivers and Child Pedestrians

A speeding driver is indebted to local children if he or she reaches the end of a residential street without killing or injuring one of them, says the Pedestrians Association.

In a submission to the Department of Transport on the draft guidelines recently published for the new 20 mph speed limit zones, the Association says that 'if children played out in the streets in the numbers that were customary up to fifty years ago, there would be wholesale slaughter. With children well out of the way of motor traffic, drivers are able to travel down residential streets at speeds which are not compatible with safety.'

The Association would also like to see another category of zone in which vehicle speeds would be reduced to walking pace as in the Netherlands. It calls for the introduction of such low-speed zones to be linked with a campaign calling for strict observance of speed limits on all roads.

Children and Road Safety

In a comment on the Department of Transport's booklet, *Children and the Roads: A Safer Way*, the Pedestrians Association has made the following points to the Department:

"The booklet refers to the one-third casualty reduction target by the year 2000. It is important to remember that this anticipated reduction is an overall one affecting total road casualties but, as such, that could conceal rising casualty rates in any single category of road users, e.g. teenage pedestrians."

"Britain's overall road safety record is described in the booklet as 'one of the best in Europe'. This statement may have a tendency to induce a mood of complacency in the driving public many of whom interpret as a personal affront any suggestion that they are unsafe drivers. Only when a safety record means *nil casualties* can it be said to be a good one. Safety is the very antithesis of casualty. As long as road deaths total some five thousand each year, road travel safety should be described as bad."

"The booklet quotes a recent survey (presumably the one made by the Automobile Association) as finding eighty per cent of child pedestrians involved in accidents to be 'at fault'. It is important to realise that the research

criteria for 'at fault' were understandably technical and did not take account of the moral obligations of well-protected drivers at the controls of potentially lethal machines to show a suitable degree of consideration for unprotected pedestrians who may be immature, elderly or handicapped. It is also important to remember that three out of four 'accidents' involved no pedestrians at all. The 'fault', even in the technical sense, in the majority of road crashes must therefore lie with the driver."

"The Department fails to substantiate its allegation that 'so many children behave thoughtlessly and unpredictably'. Judging from the findings of Professor Ian Howarth, Head of the Department of Psychology at Nottingham University, it would seem that the reverse is true. His studies show that it is child pedestrians who take the avoiding action and very rarely the drivers of approaching vehicles."

"The Pedestrians Association is astonished to read the Department's statement that 'the primary role of the police is the enforcement of the law. This is not usually a major factor in child accidents'.

The enforcement of parking restrictions is however recognised as being vital in certain circumstances, but the Association has evidence to show that a desire on the part of the police to foster what it believes to be good community relations (i.e. with drivers) is often given a higher level of priority than the enforcement of parking restrictions. As regards pavement driving and parking for example, the police refer to the exercise of 'compromise' and 'balance' and they often seem to rate these factors as more important than the safety of

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Reporting Faults on Traffic Signals in London

In Greater London traffic signal maintenance is the responsibility of the Traffic Control Systems Unit. Faults on any set of traffic signals in Greater London can be reported direct to the T.C.S.U. Fault Control Centre by telephoning the 24-hour Faultline on 071-821 6391. With over 2,950 sets of traffic signals to operate and maintain, T.C.S.U. welcomes local information on traffic signal operation from members of the public.

Measuring Danger on the Road

Frank West-Oram
MScTech., M.C.I.T., Finst.E.

Introduction

The conventional wisdom is that the safety of road travel in Britain has shown immense all-round improvement through the decades. This has not been the case.

The mistaken belief seems to have arisen from the fact that, in the long term, total annual road deaths have fallen alongside a massive increase in vehicle numbers.

Largely, what this reflects is a massive change in social habits. The pattern of road travel has undergone huge changes, with much less motorcycling, pedal-cycling and walking – the vulnerable modes – and much more motoring.

Road deaths

	1954	1987
Motor vehicle users (excluding motor cyclists)	940	2 419
Motorcycle users	1 148	723
Pedal-cyclists	696	280
Pedestrians	2 226	1 703
Totals	5 010	5 125

The decline in use of the three vulnerable modes, linked with their high fatality rates, has had the effect of disproportionately offsetting the increase in fatalities to motorists – and producing an almost unchanged total. In point of fact, the ‘low’ fatality total in 1987 – the lowest since 1954 – has been achieved largely because of the increase in motoring, not in spite of it!

Thus, to measure long-term changes in road-travel safety, it is not statistically acceptable to use changes in overall numbers of casualties. Neither is it acceptable to use rates derived simply by dividing overall casualties by total vehicle traffic.

Public Announcements. Unfortunately, in its public announcements, DTp has repeatedly

used both of these functions, apparently intending to demonstrate improvement.

For example, a 1986 Press Notice reported (on 1985 figures) ‘About 5 200 people died on Britain’s roads last year ... the lowest death toll since 1954’. DTp added: ‘Yet there was five times as much traffic last year as in 1954’.

The Government’s inter-Departmental review of road-travel safety policy, reported by DTp in 1987 under the title *Road Safety: The Next Steps*, spoke about ‘the downward trend in road casualties’ (it made low-key qualifying remarks later in the text, but these have invariably been omitted in quotations).

In a 1988 Press Notice, Peter Bottomley, then Minister for Roads and Traffic, reported (for 1987) the lowest number killed on the roads – 5 100 – since 1954 (final figure was 5 125); a fall in pedestrian deaths to the lowest total – 1 700 – ever recorded; and the lowest motorcycle deaths for 40 years.

Upward trends. The above statements were perfectly true factually. The point is that they concealed some major upward trends, which if mentioned at all were treated cursorily as minor blemishes.

Taking them at face value, the Road Traffic Law Review Report in 1988 spoke of ‘improvement over the years’ in the road casualty figures. The Chairman of the Review, Dr Peter North, stressed this ‘improvement’ in a television interview, supported by a DTp representative. The present author also appeared and challenged their statements.

The National Audit Office Report (1988) noted ‘a marked improvement in road safety’. The 1988 Press Notice said: ‘This country has the safest roads in the European Community.’

These reports were certainly *not* true, for example, for walkers, who make up a third of



A severely handicapped woman in a wheelchair finds her passage along the footway of Wingfield Road, London E17, obstructed by an illegally parked car.

total road deaths, The UK’s pedestrian death rate is fifth highest out of the 12 EC countries.

DTp’s annual report *Road Accidents Great Britain (RAGB)* has regularly featured ‘overall accident rate’ or ‘overall casualty rate’ in its opening paragraphs.

For example, *RAGB 1986*, Review paragraph 1.2, referred to the ‘overall casualty rate (casualties per vehicle-mile travelled)’, saying that since 1970 ‘the casualty rate has nearly halved’. *RAGB 1987* again referred to the same function and reported a fall by a quarter since 1980.

These statements have no meaning. There is no such thing as an Average Traveller.

Road Safety: The Next Steps gave as its objective a reduction in overall annual casualties (all severities) by one-third (from 320 000 down to 220 000) by the year 2000. This also has little meaning. If it happens, it could conceal some unpleasant upward trends in casualty rates to vulnerable road-users.

Method. We have to study rates, not numbers. Moreover, it is essential to examine each category of road-user separately. These are the key factors.

Following a test comparison using death rates, the author concluded that, despite under-reporting of injuries, it was advantageous to use killed-and-seriously-injured (kSI) data for long-term comparisons. This practice is followed here. Casualty rather than accident data are used, being available in much more detail.

Motoring. The good news is that the overall kSI rate per vehicle-km for car drivers has fallen to well under half that in the 1950s. The bad news – detailed below – is a strong indication of increased collision rate per driver.

Separate data for car drivers are published only from 1958. The fall in the years 1967 and 1968, following the drink-drive laws, is noteworthy. So is the fall between 1973 and 1975 during the energy crisis, which reduced speeds alongside an increase in traffic.

A further drop is evident over the recession years 1979-80, also following compulsory use of seat-belts from 1983. However, Durbin and Harvey reported increased deaths to pedestrians and pedal-cyclists following the seat-belt measure. Adams attributes this to risk compensation on the part of some drivers. The present author agrees.

In general, changes in casualties do not reveal changes in collision rates, as RAGB only features reported injury accidents. However, using data supplied by the Association of British Insurers (ABI) RAGB 1986 and 1987 looked into this and concluded that there were 8-10 times as many 'damage-only' accidents as those involving injury. There has been an increase in claim rate per driver (mostly involving damage) from 1 in 6 to 1 in 4 in recent years. The Guardian Royal Exchange Insurance Company attributed the increase to declining standards of driving. In many of the so-called damage-only crashes, there could have been unreported injuries to vulnerable road-users.

Walking. To measure the danger of walking, one should relate casualties to distances walked (or to time spent on the highway). However, there had been little useful information on this until the National Travel Survey (NTS) covering 1985/86. For casualty rates, therefore, it has been customary to relate casualties to population.

This system gives a reduction in overall ksi rate, for all pedestrians, from 37 ksi per 100 000 population in 1954 to 32 in 1987. For children aged 5 to 9 years the rate fell from 90 per 100 000 in the age group to 68 in 1987. However, this does not give a satisfactory measure of danger of walking, as it does not take exposure to risk into account. With the huge increase in use of cars, walking must have decreased, thereby reducing overall exposure. This probably applies to the majority of walkers, including younger children.

Older children. We can reconsider population-based rate. This can be applied to 10- to 14-year old pedestrians, because this group has not changed its walking pattern much through the years – or, therefore, its basic exposure to risk.

It is of interest, although the data cover only one year, that the 1985/86 NTS shows 11- to 15-year olds (nearly the same age group) walking about 13 km a week. 5- to 10-year olds walked only 7 km a week. The average for all ages was 8.7 km.

The rate rose from 32 ksi per 100 000 population in 1954 (1 061 actually ksi) to 68 in 1987 (2 318). From all these considerations, there is strong evidence that the substantial rise since the 1950s indicates *increased danger of walking for all ages*.

Monheim's work in Germany supports the hypothesis. He reports.

- (a) an increase in pedestrian casualties for children (all ages to 15) *in relation to time spent on the streets* from an index of 100 killed or injured in 1960 to 225 killed and 344 injured in 1980; and
- (b) an increase in accidents to pedestrians (all ages) *in relation to trip length* from an index of 100 killed or injured in 1960 to 149 killed and 157 injured in 1980.

In Britain, casualties to pedestrians from being hit by motor vehicles actually on pedestrian territory remain unacceptably high. RAGB 1987 shows 4 760 killed or injured (all severities) on footways or refuges and 4 749 on pedestrian crossings out of a total of 57 453. A further large number must result from vehicles failing to give way to pedestrians when turning at junctions, under Highway Code Item 65; and from pedestrians, particularly the elderly, being unable to judge the speed of traffic approaching at well over the legal speed limit.

Reports. The Pedestrians Association (PA) dealt with most of the above concepts in its submissions to the House of Commons Transport Committee's Road Safety Inquiry of 1983-84. Goodhart in his submission complained about DTp's 'anodyne' reporting and the resultant press and public apathy.

The official report on the Inquiry acknowledged PA's and Goodhart's comments. However, what could be called 'the report on the report' (*Road Safety: The Next Steps*) glossed them over. DTp's announcements have continued to give a distorted picture of 'improvement', playing



She is forced out into the middle of the road, as a car speeds by.

down major reasons for changes and treating important adverse trends as unrelated issues.

The announcements are inevitably followed by truncated and simplistic reports in the press. Unfortunately it is these reports, read by millions, that result in the conventional wisdom. This in turn has resulted – understandably – in bland attitudes and dilution of resources and effort on reducing danger.

Conclusions

- (1) The conventional wisdom on all-round improvement in road-travel safety has no validity.
- (2) The fall in overall annual road fatalities through the years in relation to motor traffic has been largely *because of* increased traffic, not in spite of it.
- (3) Since the 1950s, walking and pedal-cycling have on the best criteria become much more dangerous. There is some evidence that motorcycling is more

dangerous. More car drivers survive crashes, but there are strong indications of an increased crash rate per driver.

- (4) Motorway casualty rates are unacceptably high considering the immense advantages (and cost) of those roads.
- (5) Statements from the Department of Transport make unreal suggestions of improved safety based on changes in overall casualty numbers or artificial rates and play down unpleasant upward trends as unrelated issues. The objective of reducing annual casualties by one-third by the year 2000 means very little. Injuries are under-reported.
- (6) To measure danger on the road one must study: each road-user category separately; rates rather than numbers; exposure to risk; influences such as legislation, social changes and fortuitous events.

This is a shortened version of an article which originally appeared in the magazine Traffic Engineering & Control. Offprints of the original article (complete with footnotes) are available from the Pedestrians Association, price £1.

vulnerable pedestrians put at risk by the behaviour of motoring offenders."

The booklet also admits that the enforcement of speed limits can be vital in certain circumstances. In this connection, the Association would remind your Department that when speeds fell in the 'seventies (which happened to be in response to the oil crisis) total road deaths fell by 18 per cent from a peak of 7,763 in 1972 to 6,366 in 1975."

Greener Streets

"Do road safety measures need to be ugly?" asks the Pedestrians Association.

In its comments on the Department of Transport's recently published guidelines for the new 20 mph speed limit zones, the Association calls for a 'greening' of residential streets. It welcomes the proposals in principle, but says they are long overdue.

"Forests of road signs and some traffic-calming installations can be visually unfriendly," says the Pedestrians Association, which calls for more imagination to be shown to make them aesthetically acceptable as well as effective in safety terms. "Planting trees and shrubs would help to do this. The gatewaying of the zones and the traffic calming itself should be sufficient to alert drivers. If drivers ignore these, then no amount of road signs will help."

The Association deplores the requirement that local authorities must obtain the consent of the Transport Secretary before installing a 20 mph zone. "This is in the worst tradition of Nanny Whitehall," it says. "Casualty-reducing improvements which are desperately needed now would be delayed by excessive bureaucracy."

Money savings made as a result of casualty reductions in these zones would largely benefit central government, adds the Association. Local authorities would gain little in financial terms but it is on them that the costs of zoning schemes would fall.

"One way of financing the zones would be payment by results," says the Association. "When a local highway authority demonstrates that it has achieved a casualty reduction on those roads for which it is responsible, some of the money saving accruing thereby to central government should be passed on to that local authority. This would encourage the creation of more 20 mph speed limit zones."

Transport Department Reveals Its Pro-Car Bias

The Department of Transport proposes to discriminate in favour of private car travel in its plans for London's traffic, says the Pedestrians Association.

According to the Department's discussion document, *Traffic in London*, published alongside the Stage Two Options of its Assessment Studies, it is "a fundamental part of the Government's approach that people's aspirations to own and use a car should not be artificially constrained."

"So in one telling sentence," says Felicity Rea, the Association's secretary, "the Department has scuppered any pretensions it may have had that it intends to keep an open mind on the subject".

"If the Department is serious," she adds, "how can it square this assurance to the road and motor lobbies with its commitment to serve the best interests of travellers in London? Does the Department not realise that the aspirations of people to enjoy reliable public transport, to cycle and to walk have already been artificially constrained for decades by the increasing use of the private car to and from central London."

Pedestrian Victims 1

- Two children each aged two were taken to hospital in Manchester, critically injured after being crushed against a wall when a car mounted a pavement. Kathleen Moore, 39, was also seriously injured.
- Three children were run down and killed by a hit and run driver in Millisle, County Down. The victims were a boy of 14 and girls aged 14 and 10.
- An elderly spinster died almost instantly when she was knocked down by a car when crossing New Road, Chingford. Grace How (85) was knocked down by Kenneth Grant, who told Walthamstow coroner's court that he "felt something knock on the front of the car. I didn't see anything. When I stopped I saw a person lying in the road." Accident Investigations Unit WPC Alison Parris said lighting in the street was restricted and that "a pedestrian wearing dark clothing would be difficult to pick out". She added that Mr Grant "could not have been travelling much faster than 30 mph". Verdict: accidental death.

Road Toad

Poop poop! I am one with my galloping steed:
All other road users had better take heed.
My interests are paramount, pushing and plain.
Look out there! Move over! Don't do that again!

I got up this morning a mild-mannered man;
I munched pretty quietly my muesli and bran;
I picked up the paper and kissed my dear wife
Then I clunked myself in and drove for my life.

At once I was powerful; I swung the wheel round
And out without caring, my neighbour's green ground.
Poop poop! I pushed out with my fenders a-gleaming
And heard in the distance the sound of brakes screaming.

I like to go fast between houses and shops
And I swear at the fellow in front if he happens to stop.
A signal? I missed it, it's only a touch
And my *paint's* all right, so it won't matter much.

Poop-poop! I am lost in a motoring dream ...
Now why did that woman shrink back with a scream?
O, was it a crossing? I didn't see red
Except with that slow-coach in front as I said.

I'll park where I like, for I'm big and I'm strong.
It's none of your business - I won't be here long.
'The pavement's for people'? You must be insane!
This pavement's for *me*, and I'll do it again.

At home I'm a model as husband and friend;
I help to wash up; I've a mower to lend.
But something takes over when I'm on the road
And most people find me a bit of a toad.

I do what suits *me* and the rest can go hang.
I hurtle about with a bump and a bang.
My world is my motor. I'm *king* in my coop,
And no one else matters. Poop-poop! O poop-poop!

L. David

Get the police working for you

by Cyril Myerscough

But the police are working for us, you might say. They deal with murder, rape, terrorism, mugging, hooliganism, all manner of crime. And of course, they carry out road traffic duties as well.

This is where WALK readers sit up and take notice. What road traffic duties? Good question. WALK readers, whether they happen to be motorists or not, see themselves as pedestrians – that is, road users who are more dependant on police protection than most people.

Most people – and this includes the police – see traffic duties as easing the flow of motor vehicles, taking action to prevent vehicle congestion and, when jams do occur, sorting out the tangle. About seven per cent of police costs are devoted to this valuable work, but how much is spent easing the flow of pedestrian traffic? Walking is a very important travel mode. Indeed it is the basic travel mode, and it still accounts for a considerable number of journeys. According to the National Travel Survey 1985/86, eighty per cent of journeys under one mile and one third of all journeys are walks.

Motor traffic is the biggest problem pedestrians encounter on their journeys. Crossing the road is fraught with danger because drivers frequently exceed the speed limit, and the police rarely prosecute even when they know a vehicle is travelling at up to fifteen miles an hour above the limit. On motorways, for example, the Association of Chief Police Officers (*Autocar & Motor*, February 28 1990) recommends that police patrols do not normally prosecute speeding motorists unless travelling at ten or fifteen miles an hour above the 70 mph limit. In practice, that recommendation applies to other roads as well.

Traffic police go about their duties as if afraid of alienating the motorist. But the low level of traffic law enforcement shows that they are not afraid of alienating the pedestrian.

Yet the pedestrian's safety depends on the police ensuring that motorists behave responsibly. Police attitudes indicate a preference for accommodating the convenience of motorists (most of whom are in the 20 to 65 age range) at the expense of the safety of pedestrians, most of whom are children or the elderly. These two groups are the most vulnerable and least articulate members of the community.

Take pavement driving and parking for example. As well as being at risk crossing the carriageway, pedestrians are also at risk walking along their exclusive right of way. So it is hardly surprising that the Pedestrians Association receives more letters about footway dangers than about any other subject. Over four and a half thousand people are killed or injured each year in 'road accidents' involving motor vehicles on the footway – one out of twelve of all pedestrian casualties in Britain. A further half million adults receive medical treatment each year for injuries sustained in falls on footway surfaces broken up largely by the weight of these motorised invaders.

Many of the members and non-members who write in tell us about police reactions to their complaints. Typical ones are amazement, helplessness, disinterest, irritation, even hostility. The responses received by officials of the Association are equally disturbing.

In the Association's experience, senior police officers seem to come in two varieties: those who are sympathetic at our concern; and those who are indignant. Happily most of them fall into the former category. Unhappily they all invariably point to the shortage of manpower and resources. None of them are encouraging. A tiny minority even go so far as to refer to the need for compromise or balance between the motoring offenders and the unfortunate pedestrians. This leaves us with the nagging worry that such outspoken honesty may well conceal a general police practice of compromise and balance



A police van parked on the pavement in a double-yellow line section of Mill Road, Cambridge.

throughout Britain. So is this declared permissiveness merely the tip of an enormous iceberg?

One senior officer sought to excuse his Force's attitude by saying that when told to remove their vehicles from pavements, car-owners ask: "What else am I supposed to do?" It is only natural for drivers to prefer using the pavement for parking so as to avoid getting their paintwork damaged by passing traffic. But in so doing, do they (and the police) not understand that the safety of the elderly, the disabled and the handicapped is being put at risk for the sake of the parker's own convenience?

Yet those who endanger other people's lives and limbs by leaving their belongings parked out on the street for hours – perhaps days – on end behave as if they expected the police to stand guard. This is at a time when car theft has reached an all-time high. Burglars would never expect police protection while they committed the offence of larceny. So

why do car-owners who flout the parking laws expect this nursemaid treatment? The police are not employed to aid and abet offenders.

Sadly many police officers fall for the pathetic pleas made by these selfish motorists. Unwittingly the police are exercising discrimination which is clearly in violation of section 18 and the Second Schedule of the Police Act 1964. The legislation warns police not to show "favour or affection" towards some and "malice or ill-will" towards others. No prizes are offered for saying which road user category receives one treatment and which receives the other.

It is scandalous that the police so often resort to the easy way out. The reason of course is that their manpower and resources are over-stretched. But suitable funding from the Home Office should not be difficult to get. For we have been told that "if they (the police) need more men, more equipment, different equipment, they shall have them.

We don't economise on protecting life and property". That undertaking was made by the then prime minister on October 11 1985.

Five years on and the police have been saying every year that they still do not have enough manpower and resources. Meanwhile, according to the Department of Transport (*Traffic Quotes*, 1990), "public demand for better enforcement is growing".

We seem to have wandered away from the problem of how to get the police working for the pedestrian. But we have not wandered far. The previous few paragraphs are highly relevant. They explain the present situation, and they serve to strengthen our resolve to secure an improvement of the pedestrian's lot. Pedestrians should seek this improvement by making their point of view known to:

1. The police. Show sympathy for the demands placed on their limited manpower and resources, but point out that the number of pedestrian deaths in Britain (let alone deaths of car occupants, motor cyclists and pedal cyclists) far exceeds the number of murder victims.
2. Your local council.
3. Your Member of Parliament.
4. The Department of Transport, most of whose traffic regulations can have little effect without their active enforcement by the police.
5. The Home Office, which holds the purse-strings for traffic law enforcement.

In putting on this pressure do not allow yourself to be put off by the claim that road deaths have been coming down over the years. It is true that they have been coming down, but it has all been in the natural order of things. These casualty reductions are due largely to there being more motoring (which is less dangerous thanks to stronger cars and better hospital care) and less walking (which is more dangerous). Because fewer pedestrians are around to get hit, it is hardly surprising that the annual number of pedestrians killed is getting smaller. But with more motor traffic on the roads, it is hard lines for those who are still using shanks's pony.

The Pedestrians Association is continually drawing the attention of the proper authorities to the lamentably low level of traffic law

enforcement. Meanwhile the Department of Transport introduces its traffic regulations, but as long as the police turn a blind eye to the flouting of these regulations the ongoing road tragedy will continue as it has been doing for decades.

Governments however will only go so far in taking steps to curb road traffic violence despite their pious promises. The reason is simple. Putting realistic constraints on motoring, even for the sake of the more vulnerable of our fellow-citizens, does not win votes. Most votes are cast by those who are no longer inexperienced child pedestrians and have yet to experience the traumas suffered by elderly pedestrians.

Do not let this reflection discourage you however. It is only your basic right as a citizen and as a pedestrian that you are demanding. The police have had plenty of aggro from motorists over the years — and see how many privileges this pressure has won them.

So take a tip from the motorist. If you have to give the police aggro, give it to them in full measure. But stay within the law at all times.

PEDESTRIANS, DRIVERS AND THE POLICE

* The Department of Transport and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) are reported to be considering raising the speed limit on motorways to 80 mph. The proposal has been attacked by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, which has said that the claim that an 80 mph speed limit would be "rigorously enforced" is a bogus one. "Why can't the police rigorously enforce the 70 mph speed limit?" asks ROSPA. The Chairman of ACPO says that he believes the 70 mph limit is "out of date" and that a poll shows 63% of drivers believe 70 mph is "not a realistic speed limit". "The public don't accept it", says ACPO. ROSPA retorts that there are thousands of shoplifters do not accept the laws concerning theft, and asks if the police intend pressing for shoplifting to be made legal. The proposal has also been criticised



Vehicles park every day on the pavement outside Greenleaf Primary School, Walthamstow — in the yellow zig-zag line area, right by the "DO NOT PARK ON SCHOOL MARKINGS" sign. The building in the background is Walthamstow police station.

by motorway traffic police, who say that standards of driving on motorways are atrocious, and that drivers are quite unfit to handle cars at 80 mph.

* The Metropolitan Police has been attacked by the Conservative-controlled London Borough Association (LBA). LBA Chairman Sir Peter Bowness has accused the Met. of deliberately budgeting for too few traffic wardens. The LBA says that the Metropolitan Police is failing in its duty to enforce the law by deliberately keeping the numbers of traffic wardens well below the accepted figure. The Metropolitan Police's ceiling figure is 1,892 but there are only 1,300 wardens in service. The LBA says that the most revealing thing is that the police are budgeting for only 1,700 wardens, "something that suggests the undermanning may be a deliberate policy".

* The National Federation of the Blind (UK) has conducted a survey regarding pavement parking, sent out to the Chief Constabulary of Police. Of the 49 County Constables only 6 bothered to reply. Only one, Cheshire Constabulary, had provided

the Federation with statistics.

* Alan Blows, secretary of the London Association of Neighbourhood Watches, has complained that "hundreds of used cars are being offered for sale on our streets every day, creating dangers to traffic and pedestrians". Mr Blows, from East Ham, is urging Newham Council and police to pounce on "Street corner salesmen". But Chief Inspector Angus Ross of Leyton police, says that although he is aware of the problem other priorities take up police time. "We are more concerned with assisting traffic flow, obstruction and bad driving", he said.

* T.W. Harris of Cyncoed, Cardiff, complained to his local paper, the *South Wales Echo*, that motorists on Rhydyphenau Road "persistently exceed the speed limit, blatantly ignore the double white lines in the centre of the road, overtake dangerously and generally flout many other road traffic laws. In this time two vehicles have struck trees, one demolished a front garden wall and another ended up careering along the road on its roof. My

please for some kind of traffic control met with the Chief Constable's opinion that the percentage of accidents in the area did not warrant any concentration of police action. I have never seen a vehicle stopped by a policeman until recently at 9 pm one Sunday, when to my surprise an officer stopped a car outside my house. At last, I thought, the full weight and majesty of the law is about to descend on one of the suicidal speeding maniacs that use this road as part of the city's eastern by-pass. But to my chagrin, do you know what the policeman said to the poor chap? He said, 'Why were you driving so slow?'

* MP Tony Banks was about to step on to a pedestrian crossing in Parliament Square, after leaving the House of Commons, where he had criticised high-speed police chases. As he did so he saw a police car drive through a red light - hitting a Montego saloon.

* MP Jeremy Corbyn has criticised the Metropolitan Police for what he calls "class bias policing whereby stretch limousines are parked all along Charing Cross Road, on double yellow lines, for the entire evening, while the police walk up and down protecting them while the traffic builds up and buses are delayed".

* Spending on the police has increased 55% in real terms since 1979.

* Paul Whitehouse, deputy chief constable of West Yorkshire, has attacked some definitions of value for money with regard to policing. Mr Whitehouse said that if the same police effort had been put into road safety and traffic patrol work as was devoted to the hunt for the notorious murderer "the Black Panther" the lives of 200 of the children killed on our roads every year could have been saved.

Stupid Drivers

The County Surveyor of Shropshire County Council, Mr K. Madelin, criticised MPs and drivers who blamed 'poor co-ordination' for the transport chaos caused by the snow which swept much of the Midlands and Wales during early December. Mr Madelin says that the basic problem was the sheer stupidity of drivers:

"Co-ordination was never the problem; the real problem was too many drivers travelling in

deteriorating conditions. They had a touching faith in their own driving ability and an expectation that roads would never be slippery, even when snow was falling.

Many of our gritting crews complained of the incredible selfishness of many drivers despite frequent radio appeals to stay at home. Roads were opened, only to be blocked by jack-knifing lorries which had no business to be moving. Drivers abandoned vehicles which blocked roads for snow ploughs. One plough got stuck in some snow but could not even reverse because vehicles had followed too closely behind. People demanded to be dug out of a drift so they could finish the Christmas shopping! On Sunday scores of drivers took families out to take pictures of the snow - and then complained when they got stuck!

In desperation we closed several main roads including the A5. The M54 was kept clear until blocked by an accident, caused by drivers overtaking the snow plough."

Speeding Driver Escapes Ban

A machine operator who broke the speed limit by almost 50 mph escaped a driving ban. Hexham magistrates fined Edwin Cathrae £300 with three penalty points, but decided not to disqualify him after hearing he would lose his job as a result. Cathrae, 24, of Eastgate, Hexham, admitted doing 118.5 mph on the 70 mph A69 - dubbed "Death Alley" by locals as it has one of the worst accident records in the region.

Missing - the Highway Code

A WALK reader has made the following calculations. In July 1989 the number of substantive driving licences on record at the DVLC, Swansea, was 27,890,645. By the same date the total sales of the Highway Code amounted to 4,122,975. This indicates that the total number of people licenced to drive a motor vehicle who do not possess a copy of the Highway Code comes to the staggering figure of at least 23,767,670. The reader comments: "Infringements of the Highway Code are a common feature of 'accidents' on the road, and an important aspect of road safety might well be seen as the requirement that the road user should be conversant with the current Highway Code. The car can be car-nage. It is interesting to note that the Government has prepared 15 million copies of a recent Food Safety pamphlet."

THE PEDESTRIAN'S ALPHABET

(in no particular order) drawn by Frank Key.



Thanks to Ellis Sharpe.

xxx.1.91



The London Borough of Barnet has seized scores of shopkeepers' signs unlawfully placed on the footway. Shopkeepers must pay a fine of £15 to reclaim them, and risk prosecution if they do it again.

PRICE LIST

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PEDESTRIANS

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In the last issue of Walk our Secretary Flick Rea described the setting up of the PAVING THE WAY COMPETITION. Pictured below at the award presentation in Herne Bay are John Griffiths, Chairman of the National Kerb and Paving Association, Cllr Jim Nock, Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Flick Rea and Rob Vickers of Interpave.



Join the Pedestrians' Association

The Pedestrians' Association is the only body in the country that campaigns for improvements in conditions for people on foot. It relies for income mainly on subscriptions and donations from individuals and affiliated organisations. The minimum annual subscription for ordinary members is £6 (retired persons and full-time students £4). Members receive WALK free.

I/We wish to join the Pedestrians Association and enclose a first annual subscription of _____

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Postcode _____

Against Road Pricing

Chris Bainbridge, Senior Transportation Engineer with Haringey Council, criticises the popular view that road pricing is the true solution to road congestion.

This is a personal view, not the official policy of Haringey.

Would companies give employees cash to pay for their journeys to work under a road pricing regime?

They don't give cash to buy company cars, they supply them direct and would be just as likely to pay road pricing bills direct. As for creating privileged classes of employees, this happens now: some get company cars, some don't. Such a system would provide another incentive for some workers to switch to car for the journey to work.

On public opinion, a study carried out for the North East London boroughs of Camden, Islington and Haringey and the London Planning Advisory Committee by MTRU, showed that the most popular form of traffic restraint was physical reallocation of road space to buses, pedestrians and cyclists. This is the method advocated in the *Blueprint for Transport* developed by Haringey Council and Archway Alert, which has won widespread support. This North London survey found 69% of respondents in favour of redistribution of road space, 46% in favour of a fixed

charge to drive into Central London (arealicensing) and only 34% in favour of charges by the mile in Central London (electronic road pricing).

The message is clear. Concentrate on improving public transport, which in the short term means bringing back the buses and putting in bus lanes and bus priorities at traffic signals. This is

"... the most popular form of traffic restraint was physical reallocation of road space to buses, pedestrians and cyclists."

by no means as simple as it sounds. But is it any more difficult than overcoming the resistance to road pricing, then

fitting thousands of loops in roads and millions of meters in cars, then setting up the bureaucracy to deal with it all?

I think a theoretical advocacy of road pricing can be useful as a challenge to economists and Thatcherites (is there a difference?) who oppose public transport subsidies on the principle that all activities should 'pay their way'. If that principle holds for public transport, why not for cars? But in general, road pricing is a red herring, a 'technological fix' that diverts attention from the things we can be doing here and now to improve transport and the environment in London.

The Behaviour and Safety of Pedestrians at Pelican Crossings in Greater Manchester

by Barbara Preston, BSc, MSc

Introduction

It is now over 20 years since it was shown to be safer to cross on a Zebra crossing than elsewhere. In 1968 the first Pelican crossings were installed and it was claimed that they were safer than Zebra crossings. More recent reports have thrown doubt on this. Some studies have reported that the provision of a Pelican crossing did not lead to a reduction in the number of pedestrian casualties. It seemed important, therefore, to reassess the relative risk of crossing on or within 50 metres of a Pelican crossing and – for those crossing on the crossing – the relative risk of starting to cross when the 'steady green man' is showing and the pedestrian has precedence or at other times when the vehicle has precedence. This was attempted for the Greater Manchester area. The present study was restricted to adults (aged 15 years and over).

A Two Part Investigation

The investigation was in two parts: a study of the accident statistics; and a study of pedestrians crossing the road on or near Pelican crossings.

A list of the accidents occurring on or near Pelican crossing in Greater Manchester in 1986 and 1987 was obtained from the computer print-out and further information was obtained from the police reports of these accidents. For those accidents occurring on Pelican crossings the phase of the lights was noted and for those accidents occurring near the Pelican crossings information was obtained to see whether the accident was relevant to the present study.

The study of pedestrian behaviour on or near Pelican crossings presented more problems. There were 580 Pelican crossings

in Greater Manchester and they vary very considerably in the type of Pelican – whether or not they are linked to the Urban Traffic Control system, whether they are staggered crossings, whether they have guardrails, the volume of traffic, and the type of pedestrian typically using the crossing – young or old, male or female. There were two possible ways of coping with this diversity: either (a) to take a large random sample; or (b) to study the behaviour of pedestrians crossing the road on and near to Pelican crossings with different characteristics of the crossing, traffic or pedestrians, and hope to determine enough about the behaviour of the pedestrians under different conditions to estimate the likely behaviour for Greater Manchester as a whole.

The second alternative was chosen as representing a better return on the time devoted to it and also giving more interesting results. Twelve Pelican crossings were studied and they were chosen to represent different types of crossing, traffic and pedestrians. Four were in the centre of Manchester (one was near to the Town Hall, one in a busy shopping area, one in a business area and one near to a railway station). Four were on busy roads leading out of Manchester (two of these were staggered crossings). Four were in the centre of peripheral towns (in two cases just outside the county boundary), and three of these were not linked to the Urban Traffic Control system. Three of the crossings had guardrails and one was on a one-way street.

Casualties

The casualties to pedestrians on the Pelican who did not start to cross on the 'steady green man' phase included those who crossed when the light was green for traffic; those who

started to cross too soon after pressing the button, when the lights were amber for traffic but the vehicle could not stop in time; and those who started to cross too late when the flashing green man showed. Pedestrians who start to cross on the 'steady green man' phase have the right to continue to cross when the green man is flashing, but if they start to cross on the 'flashing green man' phase they do not have precedence.

Of the relevant accidents for males 72 per cent of those injured on or near to Pelican crossings were injured within 50 metres of the crossing and for females the percentage was 53 per cent.

For those crossing on the crossing there was a big difference between males and females. For males, for those accidents for which information was available 34 per cent of the casualties were to pedestrians who started to cross on the 'steady green man' phase, but for the females this percentage was 77 per cent.

The Behaviour of Pedestrians

There are two aspects of pedestrian behaviour at Pelican crossings: the proportion of pedestrians crossing on or within 50 metres of the Pelican who cross on the Pelican; and the proportion of pedestrians crossing on the Pelican who start to cross on the 'steady green man' phase. These are considered separately.

Whether pedestrians cross on or near a Pelican appears to depend primarily on the volume of traffic. However, the presence of guardrails increased the proportion crossing on the Pelican. When the guardrails were on one side of the road some people crossed diagonally, thus exposing themselves to danger for a longer period than if they had crossed at right-angles, and even on one crossing with extensive guardrails on both sides of the road and both sides of the Pelican some people still crossed diagonally.

Pedestrians walk to the Pelican, then (generally) press the button and wait. When the 'green man' appears they cross but if there is a sufficient gap in the traffic while they are waiting they cross before the lights change to stop the traffic. The proportion crossing on the steady green man depended

on both how long the pedestrians had to wait for the light to change and how many gaps there were in the traffic. The waiting time, from pressing the button to the appearance of the 'steady green man', varied very considerably at different types of crossing. If the Pelican is not linked to the Urban Traffic Control system then, if no-one has crossed recently, when the button is pressed the lights are activated at once, there is a 3-sec. amber period to allow vehicles to stop and then the lights are red for traffic. When the Pelican has been activated then, after the 'steady green man' and 'flashing green man' phases, there is a period when traffic has priority and the pedestrian has to wait. This period is normally 20 sec. At one Pelican, when not many people were crossing, the delay to the pedestrian was often only 3 sec. and the median delay was only 4 sec. When the Pelican is linked to the UTC system the lights will not change until a preset period of the cycle regardless of whether pedestrians have recently activated the Pelican or not; also the green phase for traffic is longer, it may be up to 60 sec. This means that the average waiting time for pedestrians is much greater. The longest recorded in this survey was 69 sec. but the wait could be longer. The aim of the UTC system is to keep traffic flowing; the phase of the lights showing green for traffic is longer at busier times, so that pedestrians have to wait longer during the peak periods when more people need to cross the road.

The proportion crossing correctly was much lower on all the staggered crossings than on any of the other crossings. This might have been because pedestrians were more likely to cross when the traffic was in one direction only. The percentage crossing correctly at the Pelican on a one-way street was low, but higher than for any of the staggered observations. One-way traffic does not seem to be the sole explanation. Pedestrians have to wait at least twice as long on staggered crossings and this may well lead to them not waiting for the lights to change.

It would seem that it is the number of gaps in the traffic that occur while the pedestrian is waiting on the Pelican for the lights to change that determines people's behaviour on most Pelican crossings. There is no way of estimating the average number of gaps per median

wait at Pelicans in Greater Manchester. From the Pelicans studied one might guess that the percentage of pedestrians crossing on the Pelican who crossed when the lights were in favour might be about 50-60 per cent for males and 60-70 per cent for females.

For males 35 per cent of the casualties were to pedestrians crossing with the lights in their favour; even if the above guess is very inaccurate it seems highly unlikely that as few as 35 per cent of the males were crossing at that phase. For males, therefore, it appears to be safer to cross on a Pelican crossing with the lights in favour of the pedestrian; the risk of crossing on the Pelican at other phases of the lights may be about twice the risk of crossing correctly.

For females the proportion of the casualties to pedestrians on the Pelican that occurred when the pedestrians were crossing with the lights in their favour was 77 per cent.

There is no evidence that, for women crossing on a Pelican, the risk is less if the pedestrian starts to cross on the 'steady green man' phase; the risks may even be greater when the pedestrians cross with the lights in their favour than when they cross with the lights in favour of traffic. This is very odd.

Conclusions

Whether pedestrians cross on a Pelican or within 50 metres of the Pelican appears to depend on the amount of traffic. Females are more likely than males to cross on the Pelican and older people are more likely to cross on the Pelican than younger people.

Whether the pedestrians who cross on the Pelican cross when the lights are in their favour or at other times appears to depend on the number of gaps in the traffic that occur while they are waiting to cross. Females are more likely than males to cross when the lights are in their favour and older people are more likely to cross at that time than younger people. For both males and females the risk of crossing within 50 metres of a Pelican appears to be, roughly, four times the risk of crossing on the Pelican.

For those crossing on the Pelican the risks of crossing when the lights are in favour of the pedestrians are different for males and

females. For males it is safest to cross when the lights are in favour of the pedestrians; the risks of starting to cross at other phases are possibly twice as great. For females it does not appear to be any safer to cross when the lights are in favour of the pedestrian; it may even be more dangerous than crossing at other times.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank the Manchester Accident Investigation Unit for information on Pelican crossings and the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester for permission to consult the Police Records.

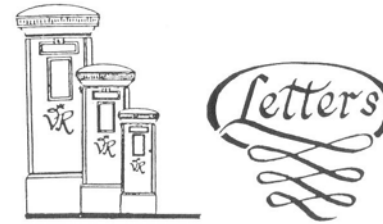
Note

This is a very abbreviated version (omitting footnotes and tables) of a substantial study which originally appeared in the December 1989 issue of Traffic Engineering & Control. Anyone with a special interest in this subject is advised to consult the original.

Pedestrian Victims 2

- The 18 year-old driver of a Ford Escort hit a parked van and careered off the road hitting three pedestrians waiting at a bus stop. One of the pedestrians suffered a broken leg, and all three were taken to hospital with leg injuries. The collision happened in Highams Park, London. The press described the pedestrians as being "in collision with a car", even though they were stationary at the time of the crash!

- One man died and three of his friends were injured when a car driven by Paul Clelland of Whitsun Grove, Bedlington, mounted the pavement and smashed into them. Store manager Michael Common, 39, of Hadston, suffered fatal skull fractures. Clelland had been drinking but was below the drink-drive limit. Police said that Clelland's car had faults in the braking system but this was not a factor in the crash; they also said that Clelland did not react to the presence of the pedestrians, even after he had collided with them. The Crown Prosecution Service has recommended that a charge of careless driving be brought against Clelland. Coroner's verdict: accidental death.



Cyclists and Pedestrians

You report the big drop in convictions for pavement cycling (WALK, No. 12, p.13). Perhaps the decrease in convictions is partly responsible for the increase in pavement cycling? Certainly there has been a considerable increase in pavement cycling in Chester over the last few years, also cycling against the traffic on one-way streets.

I have been a member of the Pedestrians Association almost from its start. I am proud to have known T.C. Foley, if only slightly. He did a great job, nearly single-handed at times. May I congratulate you on the magnificent job you are doing and the marvellous way you maintain the journal's standard.

A.S.J.G. Walsh, Chester

In Defence of Cyclists

I acknowledge and respect the legal situation regarding cyclists and pavements, the law is quite clear. However I am also aware and pleased to note that some pedestrians are conscious of the problems that cyclists encounter, especially as one of the most vulnerable road users.

I write in response to the letter from Ms Pamela Rowley (Autumn/Winter WALK), in particular to her comments:

'Perhaps if cyclists have to pay a fee to ride they will become more responsible.'

The majority of cyclists are car owners, so they are usually paying some kind of road tax, furthermore all cyclists over the age of 18 should by law be paying their community charge, for local services; including highway maintenance. If a case is to be put for cyclists paying a specific charge, then so be it for pedestrians.

I find it disappointing that groups spend their time bickering between themselves about poor conditions, lack of facilities and identity, instead of actually working together, putting forward a more united front, which can only help both causes. We provide planners and decision makers with the greatest excuse for ignoring the needs of

pedestrians and cyclists because of inhouse fighting.

Fortunately we at the Cycling Project are involved in working with pedestrians for improved subway facilities, and to improve access to recreational routes: such as canal towpaths, we work with the Ramblers Association, Northern Anglers Association and a Towpath Action Group. It annoys us that much time and effort is being wasted by some groups fighting each other, remember 'united we stand divided we fall.'

Elizabeth Parry, Project Officer,
Greater Manchester Cycling Project

In Defence of Pavement Parking

Many times I have seen large lorries and ambulances unable to pass because of cars parked properly at the kerbside and causing considerable delay. What would you do if in similar circumstances a house were on fire? Divert the fire engine to ensure the blaze keeps going? Nobody uses the pavement unless it is necessary, not even the police.

C. W. Parsons

This letter was sent to the Pedestrians Association without an address. C.W. Parsons is presumably a motorist. (Editor)

Crossing Lights (1)

Recently one set of pelican crossing lights on a busy road near me was hit by a car one weekend. The lights were out of action until the following Wednesday. Pedestrians, including children, had to get across the busy road as best they could. There was no sign asking motorists to slow down and let people cross. There were no police on duty. When I see traffic lights for vehicles out of action they seem to be so important.

P. Clare, London

Crossing Lights (2)

If the road traffic control lights at a road junction go out of order, the police are there in a few minutes and the contractors in not much more, but when I dialled 999 to report to the police that the pedestrian lights of the pelican crossing of Seven Sisters Road connecting bus stops on both sides of the road and entry into Finsbury Park were out of order following collision of a road vehicle with one of the posts, she refused to put me through to the police because she said it was not an 'emergency'! I am quite sure that if it had been a road traffic intersection, the call would have gone through to Scotland Yard at once.

T. A. Ende, London

Tax the Cyclist?

Ms Pamela Rowley is not the first, nor will she be the last, to advocate taxing cyclists. Most chancellors of the exchequer during the past 70-odd years have looked at the idea and firmly rejected it. The impost would have to be fixed in relation to the damage the bicycle did to the road, which is almost non-existent, and the cost of collection would probably be more than the amount collected.

Paying a fee to ride would not make a cyclist more responsible. A motorcar driver pays heavily for the privilege of driving a potentially lethal vehicle on the roads, but the toll of deaths and injuries inflicted by car-drivers shows that in many cases they behave completely irresponsibly. Examples abounded in the Autumn/Winter issue of WALK. The Royals and the aristocracy are shown as road-hogs; a motorist deliberately runs down a pedestrian (and gets away with a few weeks in jail). Cyclists – usually youngsters – may behave badly at times, but do let us keep things in perspective. They can irritate, but they very seldom kill or maim. Our main enemy is the motor-vehicle driver who drives too fast for safety, who does not drive within the limits of his or her vision, who uses a car or lorry to intimidate others, who drives while under the influence of alcohol, and who gets a feeling of power when sitting behind a steering-wheel. Cyclist-bashing is easy, and it attracts support from motoring organisations, but its exponents are side-tracked from the main issues.

Councillor Derek Roberts, Mitcham, Surrey

Slogans

The TEXACO petrol company recently ran a commercial on TV about child pedestrian accidents. Although well-intentioned, the implication was that children are themselves to blame because they don't wear reflective markings at night. TEXACO offered free stickers and reflective materials in response to the problem. Its effect on drivers was brought home to me when I saw a car with the campaign sticker across the back window: Children Should be Seen and Not Hurt. Where had the car been driven and parked? On the pavement. Not just on the pavement but a hundred yards down the road from a primary school.

Last week I saw a car with a sticker in the back window which said 'I swerve and hit people at random.' As an example of motoring 'humour' I can't say I found it very funny.

S. Murray, Southampton

Advanced Motorists Who Park on Pavements

As one who is a member of both the Pedestrians Association and the Institute of Advanced Motorists, I was sorry, although not surprised, to read Mr Dickens' letter on pavement parking (WALK, Autumn/Winter 1990) in which he claims that IAM members are sometimes guilty. Since the IAM's motto is 'Skill with Responsibility', we are expected to show due regard for pedestrians as well as other motorists.

If PA members come across offending cars which bear an IAM badge, they should note the member's number, which the badge normally carries, and write to the IAM secretary, who has assured me that reports of traffic violations can be taken up with the member concerned. (Noting the registration number of the vehicle, apparently, is insufficient, since the IAM cannot obtain details of the driver from the DVLC.) Complaints should be addressed to the Secretary (Mr R. B. Peters), IAM House, 359 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4HS.

It is no excuse for a member to claim that someone else was driving or parking. When members renew their subscriptions each year, they are required to sign that they promise to cover or remove their badge when a non-member is at the wheel. What Mr Dickens describes simply should not happen!

Dr G. D. Chrystides, Plymouth

Footways

With reference to 'Pedestrian Safety' by Alec Samuels in the last issue of WALK, and in particular the paragraph headed 'Pavements' (p.22).

While I agree in principle with everything that is said I think that in some ways it does not say enough.

Let me deal with item *iv*. Ramps for the disabled or elderly are excellent, but what purpose do kerbs serve anywhere? The answer is that they discourage the intrusion of vehicles. But they do not prevent that intrusion, they cost money and they impede (or even endanger) pedestrians and others who are entitled to use the footway.

Why cannot both footway and roadway, where they are contiguous, slope very gently to a shallow depression between them, analogous to a gutter, designed to carry away the water in time of rain? Along this gutter, on the footpath side, could be erected bollards, which would give walkers etc. a feeling of security to which they are entitled. At least it should virtually do away with pavement parking and mayhem from vehicles on the footway. There is an example of this in Northgate

Street, Chester. Of course it would have to be a gradual change and quite expensive, but conversely there would also be considerable savings if it were not necessary to install or replace the kerbstones, guardrails, etc. of the earlier bad system.

Incidentally why must the footway always be alongside and exposed to the roadway? There is often no reason why the footpath should slavishly follow, and be unprotected from, the road and its vehicles. The presence of speeding lorries and other traffic at one's elbow, without any protection between, can be rather alarming and the incessant noise virtually prevents all conversation. If you don't believe it try walking in a real pedestrian precinct.

Where there is no possibility of separating vehicular and pedestrian traffic, danger and noise

pollution could be vastly reduced if there were a far lower speed limit, and surely four or five times as fast as a walker should be adequate in such places as shopping streets and roads outside schools. Enforcement is easy: an appropriate ramp ('sleeping policeman') at each end.

As a footnote it will be observed that bollards are now widely used to prevent encroachment by motor vehicles onto places where they are forbidden. They are given favourable comment in the Department of Transport's letter quoted on page 35 of WALK, but the answer to the comment about double kerbing is 'No, No, No'. Like the motorist the pedestrian is entitled to a clear right of way, with no obstruction and nothing over which he might trip.

M.A. Turner, Shropshire

Cyclists in Pedestrian Zones

At the 1990 Annual General Meeting of the Pedestrians Association, speaker George Perkin was asked if he felt that cyclists should be allowed into pedestrian zones. Mr Perkin, who has very wide experience of pedestrian zones around the world, said he felt strongly that cyclists and pedestrians did not mix, and that cyclists should be kept out of pedestrian areas. (Mr Perkin also said that he was a keen cyclist, and had never owned a car).

However, it now looks as if the Department of Transport may be considering opening up pedestrian zones to cyclists.

ABT Planning & Highways Consultancy Limited, Newbury, have been awarded a contract by the Transport and Road Research Laboratory to investigate cycling in pedestrian areas.

The aim of this new study is to determine whether any real factors contribute to the exclusion of cyclists from some pedestrian areas. Three towns in England will be studied in detail, together with a comparable location in Europe.

Peter Trevelyan, director of the study, comments:

'I am aware that cyclists are excluded from many pedestrian areas and that certain local authorities are seeking to introduce new restrictions, following pressure from interest groups. Such measures may result in cyclists being forced onto a busy Inner Ring Road – hardly a satisfactory outcome.

It is understandable that local authorities are cautious about allowing cycling in pedestrian areas, bearing in mind the wide range of conflicting interests that have to be reconciled. Nonetheless, cyclists have successfully been integrated in some pedestrian zones. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to this important issue.'

WALK welcomes comments from readers on this topic.

CONFERENCE NEWS

by Frank West-Oram

European Pedestrians

Your scribe was privileged to attend a high-level conference of European Pedestrians Associations (EPA) in Brussels on 5 November 1990, organised jointly by Mrs Boukje Hansen-Marsman (NL) and Mrs Gert Zuallaert (B)¹. Objectives were to promote the European Charter of Pedestrians' Rights and continue the liaison between EPAs reported in WALK (Summer 1990 and Autumn/Winter 1990).

Mrs Hansen-Marsman opened the morning session, introducing European Transport Minister Karel van Miert and stressing the need for a European agency to improve the pedestrian's lot, reducing domination by the motor car. In attendance were European Members of Parliament and officials, representatives of the handicapped organisations and EPAs, about 70 in all.

Mr van Miert promised his best efforts. There were obstacles. The UK, for example (under the then Prime Minister) tended to resist joint European policies, some other countries likewise – for transport, at least; Germany opposed a top speed limit. By contrast, Netherlands wanted an independent European Agency for Road Safety (above). He believed the majority of EMPs were sympathetic to pedestrians' needs. Resources were scarce.

In a lively discussion, Jef Foubert (B) complained about too much 'technocracy' promoting motorways, with pedestrians' needs neglected (*not unknown in GB – FWO*). The handicapped delegates voiced their problems. The Minister listened attentively and spoke to individuals afterwards, including this writer, as did the EMP for Brussels, P. Cornelissen.

EPA delegates met in the afternoon. Mrs Paola d'Avella (I) supported a European Agency, as did this writer. Mr Foubert urged members to lobby their EMPs, 'to give the Charter teeth'; he wanted Switzerland and Eastern Europe in the movement.

Mrs Zuallert gave a 9-point presentation calling for – *inter alia* – more meaningful statistics and car speed control. Roger Huron (F) proposed 'countdown' signs to reduce speed of vehicles approaching pedestrian crossings. Jurgen Brunsing (D) outlined the position on crossings (too few; pedestrians not having sufficient priority) noting that speeding was not a popular subject for discussion.

Your delegate, using also a paper from Anthony Ramsay, reviewed crossings in GB and reported

the new design under evaluation, monitored by infra-red beams; and emphasised need for centralised direction of safety effort with attention to driver training and policing. He also noted the spuriousness of present national targets for reducing casualty numbers.

While the task is immense, this writer is even more convinced than before of the value of international cooperation and pressure; and the need to suppress parochial attitudes.

¹ NB use of international symbols for countries, e.g. NL for Netherlands.

Road Safety Congress – Northern Ireland

Your reporter was a guest speaker at this 28th Annual Congress of the Road Safety Council of Northern Ireland, a body run by a network of volunteers in towns throughout the province under a RoSPA official, George Templeton MBE. Congress was at Enniskillen, 28-29 September 1990, with the theme "Wider Horizons". About a hundred people attended – local-government Councillors, officials, police and private individuals.

K. Barnes of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders opened admirably on "Green safety", calling for avoidance of speeding and violent acceleration; and for sharing cars. A. Rosser, Glamorgan's County Road Safety Officer, spoke at length of training child cyclists and pedestrians.

In the session "Personal views" chaired by J. Melville – Council Deputy Chairman – G. Allport, a former Chairman, spoke of dismissive attitudes on the part of central Government and need for a coordinated approach. Your reporter enlarged, calling for centralised direction – of education (mainly drivers), engineering (traffic), and enforcement (especially speed limits). There was good support from free-lance motoring journalist Mike McKimm commenting that speeding was antisocial. He later interviewed this writer on Radio Belfast.

The interviewing panel did not seem to like the way things were going. Barbara Sabey, a RoSPA Committee Chairman and Consultant to the AA's Road Safety Foundation, quizzed this speaker on irresponsible behaviour of pedestrians. I replied detailing the problems of the unprotected elderly and handicapped in coping with cars speeding, driving on and blocking footways, and jumping red lights; and Professor Howarth's reports praising child-pedestrian behaviour. A. McLaughlin of the Confederation of British

Industry supported the general approach in principle, but with reservations. A third member, J. Bach, described as a broadcaster and lecturer and wearing a permanent designer grin, was apparently there only to enhance his own image – success debatable.

Syndicates later reported, with qualified approval of the all-round approach, including improved driver-training; one Chairman – possibly a motoring enthusiast – felt that elderly pedestrians needed training.

The Volvo car company put on a display, with emphasis on Passive Safety, i.e. cars safe to have crashes in, with Active Safety features such as brisk acceleration and anti-lock brakes, which some people might regard simply as go-faster devices – not a lot here for walkers and cyclists. The influence of the motoring lobby in Northern Ireland seems to be rather strong.

Outstanding speech of the Congress, however, given with dry humour, was a summing-up by the Rev. Paul Clayton-Lee, who, quoting John Donne – "No man is an island" – called for road-safety work to be part of a wide moral framework with

India – an International Conference

I was privileged to speak – helped by some generous sponsors – at the International Conference on Traffic Safety (ICOTS '91) in New Delhi 27-30 January 1991, held at the splendid conference centre in the Taj Palace Hotel. Theme was *The Vulnerable Road User*.

Contributions came from forty countries world-wide. Twenty-five sent delegates, some withdrawing on account of the Gulf crisis. About two hundred people finally attended, half from India itself. Four programmes ran simultaneously (one could move between them) with eight presentations daily in each, plus several plenary sessions. Over two hundred papers were printed in the bound volume of *Proceedings* handed to delegates on registering. The whole affair was a masterpiece of organisation.

Topics ranged through Alcohol and Drugs; Bicyclists; Biomechanics, Children; Drivers; Economics; Education; Epidemiology; Hazard Reduction; Injury and Trauma Care; Motorcyclists; Pedestrians; Policy; Traffic Control; Urban Safety; and – inexplicably – Vehicle Safety (for the occupants) for which, in one study, "intact human cadaveric heads" were lobbed against steering wheels to see the effect (honestly).

The organising Committee included Ralph Hirsch, Secretary General of the International

Federation of Pedestrians, who did a superb job, including negotiating the formation of an Indian Pedestrians Association during the conference. I gave a short talk on PA's sixty years' work, present objectives and mode of operation.

Immensely gratifying was the opening plenary address by the Secretary General of the Conference, Professor Dinesh Mohan of the Indian Institute of Technology, on *A Safer World for the Vulnerable Road User* (VRU). Quotes: "... a disproportionately high share of research funds, time and energy have been spent in making the car occupant safer in the past four decades"; and (on needs) "providing more and safer road space for the VRUs, and improving traffic control methods to make life easier for them"; "increasing public transport"; "rationalisation of vehicle speeds to reduce variation and lower average speeds".

India taught the West some more lessons, too, notably by its refusal to use the word "accidents" (*crashes*, please; cf my usage, quite independently, in a paper published last year); referring to *traffic* safety, not just road safety; and calling for a multi-disciplinary approach – not just seat belts and helmets.

There was a little over-emphasis on treating injuries rather than on crash prevention. On prevention, however, there were some outstanding contributions, for example by David Singleton, engineer, Nottinghamshire County Council on *Adjusting Drivers's Focus of Attention to reduce VRU Casualties*; Esther Malini, engineer, Madras University, on *Measures to Improve Pedestrian Safety*; Dr Roger Ingham, psychologist, Southampton University, on *Passenger Effects* (e.g. effect on young drivers of their peer groups as passengers); Dr Kirsten Backström, consultant psychologist, Sweden, on *The Child in Traffic – Teaching is Not Enough*; Professor Donna Nelson, civil engineer, California State Polytechnic University, on *An Ecological Approach to Traffic Safety Research*; R.W.G. Bennett, engineer, Hereford and Worcester County Council on *Vehicle Speed Management*; and C.J. Lines, engineer, Transport and Road Research Laboratory, UK, on *Urban Safety Management in the UK*.

I was honoured by my own paper being featured as one of nine keynote presentations, which may have led to an attendance of sixty of so (gratifying after months of preparation). In the chair was Ralph Hirsch. Subject was *Preventing Pedestrian Crashes*, divided into analysis, a case study, obstacles to progress and needs – strategic and tactical. Copies of full text are available. It seemed quite well received (particularly a couple of sentences in Hindi at the beginning).

After the conference, I visited the Deputy Commissioner of Police for New Delhi, Mr Maxwell Pereira, who is responsible for traffic and is greatly interested in safety. Delhi, with a population approaching 9 million and with very mixed traffic including motor-tricycle rickshaws and elephants, had 1,581 road deaths in 1989 including 666 pedestrians. London, with roughly the same population, had 460 deaths including 244 pedestrians – a higher proportion. Possibly in years to come, as motoring increases and walking decreases in Delhi, total road deaths will fall (but walking get more hazardous, as in Britain).

Developments in Town and City Centres Who Are the Men in Suits?

by Flick Rea

The men in suits are planners, highway engineers, developers, architects and they are responsible for planning the way our towns and cities will be in the next twenty or thirty years – motorists to a man. A sweeping statement, but about 90% true as far as I could judge from the attendance at the conference I attended 13–15 February put on by Coventry Polytechnic, where men outnumbered women by about nine to one. This was the third National Conference on Pedestrianisation (a series that is the brainchild of Dr Chris Pratt, Head of the Department of Civil Engineering and Building at Coventry Polytechnic), at which I had been invited to give a paper on the Pedestrian's Viewpoint – the consumer view of pedestrianisation.

Not an ideal week to laud the beauties and charms of what I had called a "potential paradise" about walking, sitting, shopping in the great outdoors as it coincided with the "big snow". But the weather had at least provided some compensations – a perverse pleasure perhaps in several inches of snow and wrapped up like an Eskimo, but the absence of noise and fumes rendered delightful necessary trips to shops, hospitals or for the really hardy, to work. A rare treat!

The conference aimed to examine a number of possible developments in town and city centres with the approach of the 21st century. Papers ranged widely from commercial developers, planners and engineers on a variety of different topics including lighting and security, new shopping developments and changes to old High Streets, technical matters such as surfacing and the effects of climatic change, traffic calming and provision for parking, and for cyclists. There was also a paper presented with her usual efficiency

and charm by Anne Frye (head of the DTP's Disability Unit) and an unusual and delightful presentation on "public art" and its part in urban regeneration from the director of a project in Dundee. However, the actual users of the town centres were represented only by me, both as Secretary of the PA and also as representative of the consumer female majority. An excellent paper given by Sheffield's Chief City Engineer, Derek Pearson, on user-friendly surfaces, revealed that a recent survey in Sheffield showed that the ratio of female to male in the city's shopping centre was 70%–30%. So, I returned to my theme – who were they planning for and were they succeeding? Patchily, I told them, from the consumer view! To do them all credit, they seemed somewhat shamefaced and I received a number of invitations to go and visit their own local schemes – which, they assured me – had none of the faults I had pointed out in general. (These included poor surfaces, badly maintained, draughty, dirty, concrete sixties-style shopping centres with nowhere to sit, modern soulless U.S. designer shopping malls, with the ubiquitous 'food courts' and artificial greenery, no access to public transport and full of intrusive vehicles. But I was kinder to some schemes, including Ashford and Herne Bay, the winners in our Paving the Way competition this year. I renewed contact with some friends met during this competition, including Canterbury City Engineer, Tony Parker (responsible for the Herne Bay scheme), who gave a paper on parking strategy, and with our sponsors for the competition, from the NPKA. Overall it was an interesting and stimulating conference and I came back fired with enthusiasm and ideas (Alastair Hanton, watch out) for new projects. Travel – even if it's only to Coventry in the snow – certainly broadens the mind!

P.S. One phrase I don't want to hear again for a while – "quality of life"; and I don't like the developers who want us all to spend our time in their shopping "experiences" in a "controlled environment". There is overall an oversimplified equation of pedestrianisation with "shopping". Top marks go to consultant Cy Paumier for describing city and town centres in terms of "activity zones".

Driving Ban for Healer

A Hampshire faith healer who treated England football captain Bryan Robson during the World Cup has been fined £450 for drink-driving and banned for 18 months. Olga Stringfellow claimed she needed drink as part of the healing process.

REVIEWS

Camminare e Vedere: un Concetto, un Patrimonio, una Filosofia di Progetto [Walking and Seeing: a Concept, a Heritage, a Design Philosophy] (in Italian, with abbreviated text in English).

Edited by Aldo Capasso (trans. M. T. Pignoni). Studi sul Mezzogiorno. 359 pp. (based on research project 'Lo Spazio Pedonale a Napoli' ['Pedestrian Space in Naples']) carried out 1985–89 and sponsored by Camera di Commercio, Industria, Artigianato e Agricoltura di Napoli, via S. Aspreno 2, 80133 Napoli, tel 081-5527788).

This is an unusually well produced report of a civic design study carried out by a team of academic experts in architecture, town planning, industrial design, economics and geography from the University, Municipality and Chamber of Commerce in Naples.

Their research project stems from a belief in the potential of Naples' heritage of built form to satisfy much more fully the needs and wishes of citizens as pedestrians; and so it aims to remove the prevalent bias towards vehicular traffic by finding ways of better exploiting relevant elements and environments within the city for the benefit of pedestrians.

The work divides into three parts. The first of these is an extended introduction, presenting the general arguments for improved conditions for walking with a particular focus on spatial organisation and townscape as perceived by someone walking in the city.

The second part considers the urban heritage of spaces used by pedestrians. It includes chapters on tourism and commerce and on environmental quality and place-names; and deals in turn with various categories of place for walking – steps and stepped ramps, footways, arcades and canopies, and underpasses. Its most substantial chapter presents a systematic record of the survey of selected locations in Naples, appraising their potential generally for improvement, rehabilitation or revival.

The team's general approach, or 'design philosophy', is expounded in the first two chapters of the third part. These are followed by a longer chapter setting out the team's proposals: first, the framework of environmental standards (best, intermediate and minimum) for each type of facility, then the classified list of schemes and the proposals elaborated for various sites.

The text conveys a strong understanding of the city and the life of its inhabitants, and an enthusiasm to build upon the existing fabric so as

to create an enhanced walking experience for the citizens. A central idea in this relates to the hilly nature of Naples, viz. to work towards a network of 'short-cut' footpaths, equipped with steps, ramps, lifts, escalators and travelators as appropriate, and made more attractive and secure by the opening or refurbishment of retail, art, craft and recreation facilities alongside the routes.

In true Italian style, the tone is inspirational, and the emphasis is architectural and artistic – the text is copiously and beautifully illustrated. In order to elicit governmental or municipal support, however, a more precise picture of traffic flows, both pedestrian and vehicular, will presumably be required; and the elaboration of a contextual traffic strategy.

Equally, more formal economic evaluations of the individual schemes proposed are bound to be called for, especially in view of the number of substantial excavations and mechanical installations implied by the more financially ambitious of the proposed schemes.

The translation into English of what is a fairly technical text has presented a few problems, one of which is the complication of whether or how far to 'go American'.

This book would serve as a very useful model for anyone involved in formulating proposals for the benefit of pedestrians in towns. Although it refers to various examples internationally in the earlier chapters, it should not be thought of as a textbook on pedestrian planning, but rather a study reported in a stimulating way.

Anthony Ramsay, Lecturer, Centre for Planning, University of Strathclyde

"Traffic Quotes": Public Perceptions of Traffic Regulation in Urban Areas Dr Peter Jones, Transport Studies Unit, University of Oxford. Published by H.M.S.O., £15.

Commissioned by the Department of Transport, and based on questionnaires and interviews with 2,400 members of the public, this 58 page document offers fascinating insights into public attitudes to traffic law, traffic signs, priorities in the allocation of road space and a range of other matters affecting transport. Pedestrians explained that they were infuriated by pavement parking, parking on corners, vehicles turning at junctions without signalling (or only signalling at the very last moment), lack of provision for pedestrians when the pavement is obstructed by excavations, the lack of footways in some areas, traffic blocking pedestrian crossing areas and misuse by drivers of pelican crossings. Motorists, however, were quick to blame pedestrians, calling them "very inconsiderate". One driver commented, "I fail to see why I should

be nice to pedestrians when all they want to do is walk to the pub when I'm trying to get somewhere", while another said that if pedestrians get knocked down it must be their fault because they do not belong on roads: "I don't see how it can be the motorist's fault if he's on the road".

With regard to traffic offences, 35% of drivers said they "just occasionally" parked on pavements if they thought the road was narrow, 8% said they did it if they felt they could get away with it, 5% said they "often" did it, and 49% said they never parked on pavements. With regard to speeding at 40 mph at a quiet time in a 30 mph area, 48% of drivers said they "just occasionally" did it, 18% said they did it if they thought they wouldn't get caught and 8% said they often did it. Only 23% of drivers said they never broke the 30 mph limit.

Cyclists admitted to ignoring many regulations but said they would normally comply with them if driving a motor vehicle. Business drivers showed fewer qualms about breaking traffic regulations than other road user groups, and one person revealed that some companies allow reps £100 a week just for parking tickets. A courier driver said that when he was out delivering he "had to break the rules in order to get the job done"; another professional driver explained, "I speed because time is money".

The survey revealed public support for physical measures to calm traffic, general support for better enforcement and the use of "red light" cameras and widespread support for towing away vehicles very badly parked.

Some drivers were hostile to traffic calming. "I work from the premise that the roads are there to be used and not blocked with gates and bollards", and examples were quoted of lorry drivers *deliberately* knocking down posts, removing grates and smashing traffic restraint devices.

On the question of enforcement, drivers disliked traffic wardens and preferred the police, on the grounds that traffic wardens rigidly enforced traffic regulations, whereas the police would be happy to turn a blind eye. It was felt that £12 was an inadequate penalty for illegal parking, partly because the worst culprits were either business people or people with expensive cars for whom £12 would be insignificant. One suggestion was to increase the parking penalty to £50, as in Jersey, coupled with more effective prosecution of those who don't pay fines.

There was strong support for improved provision for cyclists and pedestrians, and growing awareness and acceptance of the need for some form of traffic restraint. There was strong support for pedestrianisation and pedestrian crossing facilities, and in general there was a preference for vehicle free pedestrian zones, rather than ones

with exemptions. There was a preference for Pelican over Zebra crossings, particularly in London, but people complained about the length of time involved in waiting for the green man to appear, and about the shortness of time allowed in crossing. There was a lot of enthusiasm for comprehensive cycle paths, but those who were against additional cycle facilities were not against the principle but felt it had to be introduced in a safer way before they would be happy.

Local authority highway engineers and police who co-operated with the survey revealed their usual prejudices. For example, they treated as "unrealistic" demands from the public for lower speed limits and more pedestrian crossings. The police felt that some Councils focus too heavily on the needs of residents at the expense of drivers passing through.

The police revealed little interest in enforcing loading restrictions and felt sympathy for the plight of "the guy doing his job". The police generally noted a change in public attitudes and behaviour in the last few years, with an increase in speeding, red-light jumping and a general deterioration in driving standards. The police felt that enforcement could only operate effectively with the general consent of the public.

Public demand for better enforcement is growing, but the survey revealed friction between local authorities and the police, with the former believing that the police do not give enough attention to enforcement of traffic measures. However, the survey reveals that "the professionals" in the police and local authorities deliberately refrain from enforcing regulations which they perceive to be "unrealistic" (e.g. some speed limits), ambiguous (e.g. "access" restrictions) or widely ignored (e.g. pavement parking), and where there is generally a lack of support for them.

This is a fascinating compendium of views, revealing the widespread lawlessness of many drivers and the indifference of the police to transport issues which affect the most vulnerable groups (e.g. blind pedestrians). It is lavishly illustrated with photographs of outrageous driver behaviour. It contains a pious little foreword by Christopher Chope, Minister for Roads and Traffic, stating that "Above all, regulating traffic means balancing the interest of *all* road users, whether on wheels or foot". If Mr Chope really means what he says he needs to speak urgently to the Home Secretary, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and the Association of Chief Police Constables. This survey diagnoses the disease - what we need is the cure, and that means a very much tougher attitude to a wide range of motoring offences.

Ellis Sharpe

Crack Down on Speed Maniacs, Say Residents

An extensive pedestrian road safety survey of public opinion has been undertaken by Hart Road Safety Council by means of a fully circulated questionnaire.

This questionnaire has given every household in Hart District the opportunity to indicate their views on pedestrian safety on our roads and whether pedestrian facilities can be improved. The questionnaire further sought written replies to identify areas of special need and to suggest directly ways to improve pedestrian safety.

An overwhelming 84 per cent of the 5,362 residents who replied to Hart Road Safety Council questionnaire complained of speeding.

"Numerous people expressed outrage at the gross irresponsibility of speeding motorists, lorries and tearaways," said Mr. David Stearn, chairman of the road safety sub-committee which instigated the survey.

Numerous respondents are demanding law enforcement leading to prosecutions and disqualifications.

Mr Stearn said the worst speeding blackspots included King's Road, Avondale Road, Aldershot Road, Albany Road, Connaught Road, Clarence Road and Albert Street in Fleet, and Rosemary Lane in Blackwater and Bracknell Lane in Hartley Wintney.

Six key questions were asked of each resident:-	Yes	No	%
1. Are the footpaths of adequate width?	62.9	31.2	%
2. Are the footpaths in a safe state of repair?	51.1	41.1	%
3. Is pavement parking a hazard to pedestrians?	60.2	34.0	%
4. Is cycling/skate boarding a hazard to pedestrians?	40.4	52.1	%
5. Are there places where excessive speeds of vehicles are a hazard to pedestrians?	84.3	12.6	%
6. Are there adequate safe places to cross the road?	35.7	59.3	%

"Most complaints came from mothers with pushchairs, and from the elderly," said Mr Stearn.

Mr Stearn said the committee would now press for roads to be narrowed, chicanes installed and speeds reduced to 20 mph in certain residential roads.

Parking on pavements by older children and adults and lack of safe places to cross the road were also highlighted in the survey.

The Road Safety Council is now pressing for:

1. The furtherance of law enforcement of the various Road Traffic Acts, working with the Hampshire Constabulary.
2. The installation of traffic calming devices in the appropriate situations, working with Hampshire County Council Road Surveyors Division.
3. Adjustment of traffic lights - timing cycles to allow for pedestrian crossing in safety, where possible.

Note. David Stearn is an active member of the Pedestrians Association and a member of our National Committee. Members are invited to copy the splendid example set by Hart Road Safety Council!

21st MARCH 1991

Spring Clean the Planet – National No Car Day!

Green News, the independent environmental news magazine is calling for everyone to help *Spring Clean the Planet* in a *National No Car Day* on Thursday 21st March 1991.

This day will be the culmination of a "Go Green, Go Public!" campaign, on which a major petition supported by Friends of the Earth, The Railway Development Society, *the Pedestrians Association* and thousands of concerned members of the public will be presented to the Government, calling for urgent measures to improve transport.

On the first day of *Spring Green News* is calling on everyone who owns a car to make a fresh start for our environment's sake, and at least for this one day, not to use it, and either not to travel, or to use public transport, a bike, or to walk. Individuals and environmental groups are being encouraged to show support in peaceful and legal ways such as displaying banners or placards by busy roads, to hold bicycle rallies, or to leaflet at traffic lights.

While it is not envisaged for a moment that there will be no traffic on the roads on this day, even a reduction will be a start, and the idea may encourage people to think twice before driving. The action is intended to include motorcycles, vans and trucks as well, but it is recognised that some categories of vehicles such as those used by the disabled, buses, and emergency vehicles may be considered as essential traffic.



Cable Television

Over the next four years almost every pavement in towns and cities in Britain is to be dug up in order to install cable television. Complaints are beginning to pour into the Pedestrians Association about (i) footways on both sides of the road being dug up at the same time (ii) the driving and parking of cable TV vehicles on the pavement (iii) lack of warning signs (iv) trenches left unprotected (v) no consideration of the needs of disabled people and others with a mobility handicap. WALK will look in detail at the Cable TV problem in our next issue. In the meantime, please let us have cuttings from your local newspapers about problems for pedestrians caused by Cable TV excavations, as well as your own experiences. WALK also welcomes cuttings of photographs from local newspapers. Newspapers usually allow us to reprint their photographs free of charge, but when sending in cuttings do please identify (i) the name of the newspaper; (ii) the day on which it was published, and the relevant page; (iii) the full address of the newspaper.

Vic Pottinger Dies

WALK regrets to announce the death of Vic Pottinger at the age of 57. He became Vice Chairman of the South Glamorgan Group of the Pedestrians Association in 1985, and Chairman from 1987 until his resignation last October. Apart from all his work on behalf of pedestrians, Vic Pottinger also did an enormous amount of voluntary work for the National Federation of the Blind. He was awarded the B.E.M. in the last Birthday Honours list. The Association sends its sympathy to his wife Janet and daughter Catherine. Lisbeth David writes: "His contribution to the establishment and activity of the South Glamorgan Group was considerable and an example to the rest of us. His good sense, courage and perseverance were an inspiration to all who knew him".

A CAUTIONARY TALE

At the beginning of 1990 the South West Area branch of the Pedestrians Association issued a claim and advice sheet to a woman who had fallen over an uneven paving slab in the main shopping area of Bristol.

Having read the advice sheet she contacted her family solicitor as she had a broken humerus. The break being so high the hospital

were unable to set it in plaster and she suffered bruising and great pain and arranged for her family to take photographs of the site and her injuries. She arranged for the solicitor to pay her a home visit as travelling was uncomfortable. On this visit he, the solicitor, saw the advice sheet and claim form we had supplied.

The solicitor wrote to the lady several days later advising her that a claim would fail because of the precedent of *Meggs v Liverpool Corporation* 1967 and *Littler v Liverpool Corporation* 1968. He enclosed an account for over £80.00 to cover the cost of his expenses making the visit.

The local P.A. branch advised the woman to pursue her claim against the Council on her own, using the P.A. form. She was sent another form as her solicitor had the first one. The woman's claim was successful and she has accepted £2000 in settlement. After correspondence between the P.A. branch and the firm of solicitors involved they have agreed to refund their client the sum of more than £80 which they had charged her for their advice. The lady involved has very generously made a donation to the Pedestrians Association.

Since this is not the first time this situation has occurred the Association is taking steps to alter the wording on its Footway Falls leaflet. In future claimants will be advised to contact their local authority personally, and only consult a solicitor if their claim is rejected out of hand.

Footnotes

John Prescott MP made headlines in January with some remarks about the Gulf war. A couple of days later he was in the news again, but this time only in the small print. Watford magistrates fined Prescott £200 and banned him from driving for just 3 weeks after police caught the MP driving at 105 mph. Prescott, of course, is the Labour Party's chief transport spokesman. According to the Evening Standard it is the third time Prescott has been caught breaking the speed limit. This makes the sentence imposed upon him even more of a bad joke.

Prescott is a high-profile transport campaigner, who has launched many bitter attacks on the Government for its lack of investment in public transport. So what mode of transport does this fiery man-of-the-people use? You guessed. A Daimler.

If the Labour Party is serious about its transport promises shouldn't Prescott have been sacked on the spot?

Talking of MPs and fast cars, Sir David Steel is selling his 1986 Jaguar Lynx XJS. Its top speed is a very illiberal 150 mph. Sir David hopes to sell it for £28,000.

And talking of MPs and their love of cars, a private bill authorising a new tram service in the Itchen constituency of Christopher Chope MP, the junior transport minister, was voted down by Mr Chope and his cronies. Mr Chope is reported to be "adamant against the scheme". Fifty other local authority schemes for trams and light railways are likely to be voted down by Tory rightwingers. Apparently trams and railways are dangerous socialist inventions, whereas cars stand for freedom and individualism. So whereas on the continent Conservative administrations introduce pedestrian zones, light railways and traffic

restraint, in Britain our towns and cities continue to get dirtier, more congested and more polluted—all in the name of "freedom".

Before awarding the Hypocrite of the Year award to John Prescott MP, let us consider two other serious contenders. Chief Superintendent Alan Thorne, head of the traffic department of Gwent Constabulary, masterminded the Xmas crackdown on drunk driving. And who was subsequently arrested after failing to supply a specimen of breath and bailed on 4 February by Cwymbrian magistrates on a number of drink-driving offences? Yes, Chief Superintendent Thorne.

Secondly, Northamptonshire County Council's Chief Highway Engineer, Phil Brocklesby, has been in the news. Mr Brocklesby launched a new road safety scheme aimed specifically at driver error and behaviour – just one week after being fined £150 and receiving an endorsement of three points from Daventry magistrates for speeding at 99 mph. Mr Brocklesby is very indignant at the criticism he has received. "That happened on a Saturday night and the two are not related at all", he helpfully explains.

Before Christmas, the Environment Secretary Chris Patten made an impassioned plea to drivers to fit catalytic converters and cut down on pollution. Of the eight ministerial cars in the Department of the Environment fleet how many have them fitted? Just one, actually. And of the Government's total fleet of 180 plush cars how many? Fewer than 20, actually. But not to worry. Just to show how important this matter is the Government has promised to convert them all by – wait for it – the year 2003.

A. Walker