

<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Engaging the Community</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>17 November 2005</b>
<b>Project:</b>	<b>Southville, Bristol</b>
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Southville is situated to the south west of the city centre and consists of traditional Edwardian townhouses similar to those in many places around England, built during the early 1900s and with small front gardens. It is in an area of the city that has recently seen large-scale growth in house prices and, with its close proximity to the city centre, has become a very desirable area of the city in which to live.

A largely professional community, the scheme was funded as part of the 2002 Home Zone Challenge and is a rather unique Home Zone project as it is not in a regeneration area. Since the appointment of a dedicated Home Zone team, the project has flourished and the secret of this success was communication.

Rather than a local authority-led design process, the development of a Home Zone is an opportunity for the collective involvement of a residential community through a structured consultation process. This should lead towards an acceptable scheme design with majority support.

In attempting to achieve this goal, the steps as outlined in the panel below were undertaken.

The residents of the Southville Home Zone Challenge streets – Milford Street, Stackpool Road cul de sac and Stackpool Road Focal Point – already had numerous road safety and environmental concerns. Chief amongst these were pedestrian safety – particularly in the vicinity of Southville Primary School – and excessive vehicle speeds. These had been a cause for concern to local residents for some time, and were reiterated during the detailed consultation process.

Although some comments voiced support for the scheme, other residents' had concerns, such as – the necessity of the scheme, possible disruption, and the effect the scheme might have on the future availability of on-street parking. Early worries regarding bus services were resolved when bus routes were more appropriately accommodated in the scheme proposals. At the Beaufort Road/Stackpool Road junction, a scheme of waiting restrictions was promoted, for example.

However, the chief concerns were pedestrian safety - particularly in the vicinity of Southville Primary School - and excessive vehicle speeds. In view of the long straight characteristics of many of the local streets, there was an opportunity for travelling at excessive speed by a minority, anti-social element of drivers. This was one of the major concerns born out during the consultation process.

Now that the three Home Zones are completed, phased implementation of a surrounding 20mph zone will begin in 2006.

### **The Communication Programme**

- **November 2002:** The first six official newsletters were published and distributed in order to keep the wider community aware of the plans and progress made. Others were published in February 2003, November 2003, February 2004, September 2004 and March 2005.
- **December 2002-February 2003:** A doorstep interview questionnaire to all the households affected by the Home Zones and 20mph zones, some 400 in total. Southville Primary School, Southville Methodist Church, and the Southville Community Centre were also consulted.
- **December 2002-May 2004:** Fourteen minuted working party meetings were held over this period with volunteer street representatives from each of the affected streets, in order to develop a scheme acceptable to the whole community and within a budget.
- **December 2002-September 2004:** Regular updates on the scheme's development were posted in Southville Community Centre, including design plans, photos and 3D models.
- **January 2003-March 2005:** Regular updates were posted on the national Home Zone challenge website.
- **March 2003:** A detailed resident and commuter parking survey was carried out.
- **May-June 2003:** Presentation of workshop folders to both 20mph zone and Home Zone street representatives with information plans, aerial photos, websites etc, to aid their understanding.
- **December 2003:** A consultation leaflet of the draft proposals was sent to all householders inviting comment/observations.
- **December 2003-January 2004:** The posting of traffic regulation orders (TROs) and speed hump notices in the press and on site began, inviting comments/observations.

- **January 2004:** Two 'information bus' visits to the community were made. One on a weekday (4 January) and one on a weekend (18 January) to allow residents to view the proposals, meet the Home Zone team and address any further inquiries.
- **May 2004:** Exhibitions held at the Southville Community Centre.
- **June 2004:** Further information events were held in the playground at Southville Primary School on 28 and 29 June in order to promote the planned works and provide a greater understanding of the proposals for children and parents.
- **July-August 2004:** Individual workshop meetings were held for residents of each of the Home Zone streets. With various technical specialists in attendance, these were used to develop detailed design characteristics for each Home Zone.
- **September 2004:** Start notices were despatched and works commenced in Stackpool Road and Milford Street.
- **8 September 2004:** An assembly was held at Southville Primary School. Two representatives from Jarvis, one of whom was a health and safety officer, showed a 'stay safe' PowerPoint presentation to the children and underlined site safety issues and precautions they needed to understand while works were carried out.
- **February-March 2005:** Planting days with the council parks department and volunteer residents.
- **February-April 2005:** Residents prepared individual clay tiles as artwork to go on the wall of the Stackpool Road cul de sac.

Other stakeholders were also involved in the Southville Home Zone. Formal consultation letters were sent to the police, ambulance and fire services, public transport provider (First in Bristol), and local elected members for Southville.

The Home Zones team has worked closely with the Department for Transport, which funded this scheme, and with a number of specialists, including landscape architects, planners and security consultants, drawing on their expertise as the proposals developed.

It was one of the most comprehensive public consultation exercises ever taken by the city council.



Milford Street Before



Stackpool Road Before



Milford Street After



Stackpool Road After



Focal Point Before



Focal Point After