

# Shared Space on Village Roads

*A letter to the Post, Feb 2008*

Sir,

Last Thursday's presentation on village road reform at West Meon village hall was inspirational. Ben Hamilton-Baillie demonstrated how villages in other countries had transformed through-roads to be spaces that vehicles and pedestrians effectively share, as in days gone by. These villages had reduced the clutter and ugliness of sometimes ineffective (or even counter-productive) signage and road markings, and re-laid road/pavement spaces in sympathy with the buildings and amenities around them. In so doing they had reduced traffic speeds, improved safety, made the village prettier, and enhanced its use and enjoyment for locals. Motorists were made to think differently about the place they were in – and take more personal responsibility for how they drive.

Hampshire County Council is to be applauded for evaluating this approach for traffic-blighted villages. Of course, there are risks, and we must proceed with great caution to ensure safety is actually enhanced. But in this innovative approach might just lie a solution more lastingly effective than just signs and lines and pink-tinted tarmac.

Sincerely,

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