



Designing Streets for People

An inquiry into the design, management and improvement of streets

Pre-Consultation Draft



THE INSTITUTION OF
CIVIL ENGINEERS

CONCLUSION

Evidence provided by practitioners for this review of street design and management practice raised a substantial range of interesting and sometimes radical ideas. The working group review has analysed this information and looked at how improvements in current systems and practice can be achieved.

The working group recognise that local authorities are under considerable pressure of change at present, and that it is very important to avoid adding unnecessary additional burdens. The proposals put forward have come from working practitioners, with the aim of rationalising the system and easing existing burdens.

First proposals are:

1. The need to recognise the “street” as a place for people and the need to reflect this in working practices, guidance and the underlying legislation and regulations;
2. To introduce the Street Excellence Model as a comprehensive, cross-cutting method for Local Authorities to evaluate current practice in relation to the criteria identified as being important to good stewardship of the street and public realm; and
3. To improve the management of the street, by developing public realm strategies, street codes, design codes
4. To empower the community by forming quality street partnerships, conducting street audits, forming street agreements.
5. To improve skills by making the street a specific subject for academic study: introducing an MBA in Street Management; and tackling the shortage of skilled people with masonry and pavior skills pragmatic actions

Views are invited on these proposals: some of the are more “radical” than others and some require further research and development or pilot studies. Practitioners are invited to develop them further.

The recommendations develop on links with the Best Value regime as well as a range of other evolving agendas in a number of proposals.

Some of the proposals if initiated in the near future, may not bear fruit until the “medium” term (approximately 3-10 years), but there are many steps which can be taken immediately using existing tools and without any revisions to legislation. A few of these are set out in the box below- these could begin to achieve the Vision of “Streets designed for People”.

10 Steps which can be taken now to “Design Streets for People”

1. Establish Quality Street Partnerships
2. Carry out Street Audits/Placechecks
3. Undertake Sign Audits and set targets for sign removal
4. Prepare Public Realm Strategy
5. Pursue Considerate Contractor Schemes
6. Introduce Urban Design Codes
7. Involve communities more in street design and management
8. Build street issues into Best Value
9. Prepare and disseminate good practice
10. Introduce a single point of contact for street issues

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Streets are important:

- they account for about 80 per cent of public open space in urban areas.
- they provide the setting for thousands of billions of pounds worth of property,
- they are the routes for sewage, waste, electricity, communications, gas, and clean water
- streets are where the private world ends and the community starts
- streets are in essence a large portion of our lives.

Yet we overlook the street.

We do not manage or study the street as a whole, but look after the various different components and activities as if they had nothing to do with each other.

The authors of this report, and the many people who have contributed to the study believe it is time to take stock and see if there is a better way of Designing Streets for People

A report by the professional community

The Designing Streets for People report is owned by the professional community. The agenda was set by an initial survey, and the ideas in the report have come from many different sources.

The working group has taken these ideas and tried to develop out of them specific proposals which would help to create Streets for People. These document represents are the first proposals.

Consultation – Your views invited

We would like your views on these first proposals, whether you think these avenues should be developed further, whether you can identify improvements or alternative solutions, and whether you might be willing to test out some of the ideas in practice.

Please return your comments by 6th September 2000 to

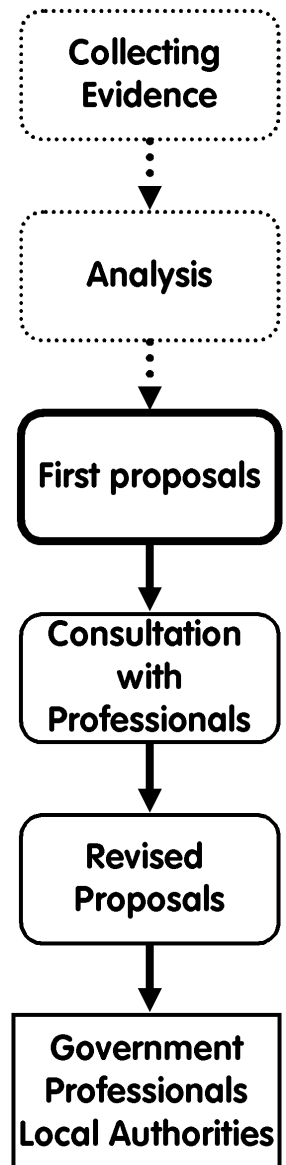
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For further information about Designing Streets for People, or on-line copies of this publication, or the companion publication *Returning Roads to Residents* please see

www.icenet.org.uk/streets/

To avoid legal complexity, the report has been written in relation to legislation applying in England, but the proposals are intended to be considered in terms of the UK as a whole.

Stages in the Designing Streets for People Initiative



1. Introduction

UDAL has recognised the need to review how the role of the street is changing within the urban environment, and how the complex mosaic of associated highway design standards and practices, maintenance, and control of street development, might be modernised and revised to better reflect current thinking in: -

- Urban renaissance - quality of life
- Integrated transport and land use planning
- Community empowerment and social inclusion
- Sustainability

The quality of our streets affects the way people feel about a place. It which may be where they live, shop, work, relax or are entertained. Streets vary in scale, function and purpose, each with a unique history. Streets are an essential building block to civilised living and as such should reflect the needs of the citizens who use them.

Over the latter half of the 20th century the design and management of the street has increasingly been dominated by the needs and demands of motorised transport. The street has been subject to uncoordinated change by a wide range of bodies: it is not treated as a whole, but as a set of unrelated components. Yet what the public require are attractive, functional streets: they require the whole and not the parts.

To meet the national objective of an urban renaissance, the design and management of our streets should take account of people, not just vehicles and be considered in a holistic way.

How can this be achieved?

A review of how streets can be designed for people

A Urban Design Alliance working party was established to review how streets can be “designed for people”. Work began with a survey of local authorities, followed by evidence provided by those involved in this field, both practitioners and academics. Its objective was to develop pragmatic actions that, taken together over the next 25 years, would achieve a real step change in the quality of the urban realm to encourage urban living and improve the quality of life.

The evidence taken was extensive and can be found in summary form on the ICE website at www.icenet.org.uk/streets/. This report concentrates on the key findings of the review. These range from

- actions which can take place today which will make an immediate difference;
- new tools which will enable professionals to negotiate the mass of organisations, and demands which impinge on the design and management of our streets; to
- legislative changes which should be considered over the period between now and 2025, when our Vision for streets is to be achieved

The proposed actions will help meet the aims of urban renaissance and social progress as promoted in government policy (such as “Planning for the Communities of the Future” and “A Better Quality of Life”), the Urban Task Force (“Towards an Urban Renaissance”), By Design, and the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. *

Continuous improvement and community engagement are core elements of the Government's agenda for modernising local government – achieving Best Value. People's perception of the quality of their street and neighbourhood are critical to the judgements they make about the performance of their Local Authority. The second phase of Best Value beacon authorities includes the theme on "maintaining a high quality local environment" which reinforces this view. Many authorities are increasingly using the European Foundation Quality Model as a way of analysing their performance and devising plans to address the gaps; this Model has been reviewed in terms of its potential for addressing issues raised in the evidence received.

The street is key to the quality of the public realm and its role is shaped by the application of current policies (e.g. urban regeneration and integrated transport) and the introduction of new technologies and changing lifestyles. But positive new roles for the street which attract people and investment back to urban areas will only emerge if: -

People and their communities become the focus of the street;

- all involved adopt a positive attitude to making the necessary improvements across a wide range of issues;
- responsibilities for implementation and maintenance of the street scene are better integrated and holistic;
- criteria and standards for street design, maintenance and associated development are brought in line with the wider policies; and
- revised and new legislation is introduced to facilitate improvement.

The report aims to bring the community plan concept to life in the context of the street.

2. Evidence - what professionals said

The group took evidence from a wide range of people on how streets perform and the way they are managed. Some of comments are given below: they give a good idea of the problems and many ingenious suggestions for solutions.. There is a good deal of consensus, particularly in relation to governance, community involvement, the need for partnerships, and the need to encourage innovation and flexibility.

General Comments

The general impression is that there is a great deal of enthusiasm to tackle the job, but people are being held back by complex procedures, lack of powers, and lack of funds.

- There is an immense amount of documentation which people have little chance of absorbing while under the day to day work pressures. Local authorities are going through continuous organisational change.
- People tend to be excited by new schemes but are less interested in looking after them. While the funds for improvements are far from plentiful, the funds for maintenance are inadequate.

Pride and Partnerships – Should we involve the community?

“create pride and understanding and a sense of place in your area

“pre-consultation by the public and private sector - talk with business and the community in advance

“consultation arrangements should be established and in place

“we need a sense of who the user is in order to hold effective dialogue

“there is a need for teamwork/common ownership of the street

“if they expect more they tend to become more involved and consequently respect decisions more

“establish elected mayors, experience shows that a strong mayor can make major changes to a city

“to confront the conflicts of interest which emerge between participants in the development process we have set up a working group with all interests represented. This has aided mutual understanding and is enabling a truly corporate guide to be put together.”

“create partnership streets”

“empower innovation and ownership. Promote local identity rather than county/regional standards.

“community involvement - ownership/respect of areas particularly in inner cities - use of space - displays - events, cafes etc.

Street Philosophy – What are streets for?

“it is time to review the status of the street which is almost always public highway and therefore subject to the ownership of H.A. and the empowered intrusion of the utilities.

“the primary functions of many ‘highways’ should not be vehicle related, but there will and should be a demand for public ownership (and service provision - lighting, cleaning, maintenance etc).

“it is essential to consider Cycling and walking as the two sustainable modes of travel which should influence the design of streets for people. To do otherwise will create even further divides between the alleged conflict between these two groups who should be allies in the terms of the car in urban areas.

The Legislative Base – does it create better streets?

“perhaps streets could become adopted under separate legislation, perhaps with individual community management charters if so desired. Opted out streets?

“planning obligation circular to be broadened, currently developers appear to see what they can get away with in term of green spaces etc

“the legal aspects of changing design standards in 3rd party claims should be addressed

“departing from official guidance means the council will have to defend any 3rd party claims itself, this is blocking innovation and distinctive design.

Funding - is there the money to create and maintain better streets?

“The lowest cost option, rather than the best design solution is almost always selected by developers and undertakers.

“Without funding, and change is going to be very slow. Consultation raises expectations. Non Delivery, for whatever reason, de-motivates all involved and it is difficult to recharge.

EVIDENCE

"It is clear that funding is a major concern when designing refurbishment's and in particular the way in which conflicting demands of retailers/deliveries impact on the eventual outcome.

"whole life cycle costing and how this can be funded as the capital cost of the scheme.

"Encourage designing to a standard not a budget

"difficult to spread the meagre resources across such a wide area. Rolling programme required? So if road not being done, we can tell the public when it will be.

"Many schemes cost £100s per square metre, but maintenance funds are hard to come by.

"With co-operation much can be achieved within existing budgets.

"Sufficient resources and commitment are needed to ensure the improvements are maintained to a high standard. It is important that this is achieved through consultation and agreement with all parties who will have responsibility for this ongoing maintenance.

"the availability of funding is a major issue

"public/private fiscal mechanisms must be enabled

"consistency and changes to investment in the long term: change the way we pay for cars

Knowledge Base – skills

"all professionals involved in the Streetscene should have some sort of "street" training as part of their professional qualification

"there should be an explicit new strand of study, street space studies

The Management and Design Framework

Design

"perhaps highways authorities need pressure to adapt a more flexible approach

"there is no need for more design guidance, but a change rules and a more flexible framework

"innovative ways of working can be less expensive than current culture

"faster innovation and national recognition of alternative materials needed. i.e. Internet database of good practice, results of trials, DETR acceptance.

"dissemination of good practice would help create good quality streetscapes

"new development should be designed upon good urban design principles - a change from old school development control on new projects

"promote opportunities for creativity and innovation by removing legislative barriers

"should some DETR "rules" be merely guidance?

"developers should undertake site appraisals and prepare Design statements prior to submission of detailed housing layouts.

"The County Councils all seem to have different Design Guides. These should be combined into a National Design Guide following the example of the Water Companies "sewers for adoption"

"Local Standards should concentrate on maintaining specific local features such as conservation areas or in establishing new "Village" environments.

"planning controls should be imposed on land adjoining the street eg private parking and servicing areas.

"There is a need for a partnership approach by all concerned to include compromises between standards (+except for specific and 'real' safety issues), planning centre and environmental 'perfection'.

"Relaxation of rigid rules in all areas would help - and also relaxation of professional pride/jealousy!!

"expertise is available to do the design & work, but we need to remove the constraints to innovation. Why do we need signals prohibiting parking where there are double yellow lines?

"Why do we need to design physical features to slow vehicles to 20mph? We don't have that requirement for 30mph in built up areas. Why do we need a forest of traffic signals at junctions?

"Regulations on street signage and road markings are prescriptive. They lead to street clutter and often fail to allow a well designed environment to be developed. We need a minimalist approach

"There is too much prescriptive signage. Some is quite redundant. Rules need to be changed if they are not just to be broken.

Clarity warrants prescription. The French have this one cracked. Each town is organised in a standard manner and it helps the visitor and local alike. In this case prescription is a good thing as it has a real purpose - clarity!

"more freedom from planning controls should be allowed. However some basic design criteria under Highway Design must be set.

“every LA should have a street use of public space audit asking questions about spaces between the building

“a liveability working group should be set up at DETR working on the urban white paper with senior people addressing these very questions

“A document containing details of material supplies, maintenance standards, intact points, agreements with utilities and other related matters is very useful. However, it will not work if the parties involved are not committed and suitably resourced to meet their obligations.

Design Practicality

“need balance between management and design

“in emphasising appearance, too many schemes lose practical maintenance largely through detail around corners and vulnerable buildings and bollards. More innovation is needed in these areas to monitor the balance.

“more thought must be given to maintenance, too many problems are caused by H.G.V’ s getting on pavements not designed for the large loads thus causing breakage.

“the range of materials can be limited by needs of maintenance by Highway Authority.

“Safety, serviceability and fitness for purpose are paramount objectives.

“there is an overemphasis on environmental concerns, go back to basics and focus on safety

“Encourage designs which stand the test of time not fads which fade!

“local authorities must be visibly flexible in order to encourage designers politicians and lawyers to feel more comfortable

Practical Measures for Streets

“quality maintenance and knowing how to look after materials is critical

“recognise the trade-off between capital and revenue

“allow authorities to set 10mph speed limits and design them to work

“encourage nationally funded urban wide 20mph speed limit areas and tackle speeding problems in villages

“reduce the emphasis on casualty reduction to promoting the idea that anyone, young or old, can cycle

“purge grey signage poles

“separate people from goods vehicles - off street access for goods vehicles - introduce night time curfews and facilitating the use of out of hours networks for goods vehicles

“revisit one-way streets with a critical and a view to returning them to two-way movement

“remodel urban streets (currently based on Public Health Act by laws 1875?)

“forget the past and look to the future (no more cobbles)

“the use of quality materials is essential to achieve a look and feel for the area

“improved signage and information for drivers (primarily goods vehicles but could apply to all vehicles) to optimise performance and minimise nuisance.

“The Proliferation of undertakers is a growing issue for residents in terms of frequency of disruption and ‘permanent’ scarring of non-modular surfaces.

“Statutory undertakers should complete their works with first time re-instatements

“Flat top hump/crossing points constructed in high quality materials lead to cars stopping for pedestrians on a courtesy basis.

“Designing our own street furniture gave local distinctiveness on functional level (tree grids, bollards, gully gratings).

“When converting footway/carriageway to flush surface, keeping kerbstone (used flush) and slightly dished channel articulates surface and provides line for guide dogs etc.

“Use street furniture made from recycled materials (i.e. bollards moulded from recycled tyres) They tend to be more resistant to impact and vandal damage.

“Street furniture connected/fitted into sockets therefore less disruption & excavations.

“The use of a coloured, patterned bitumen overlay as an alternative to paving. This minimises, excavation and delays arising from traditional paving methods.

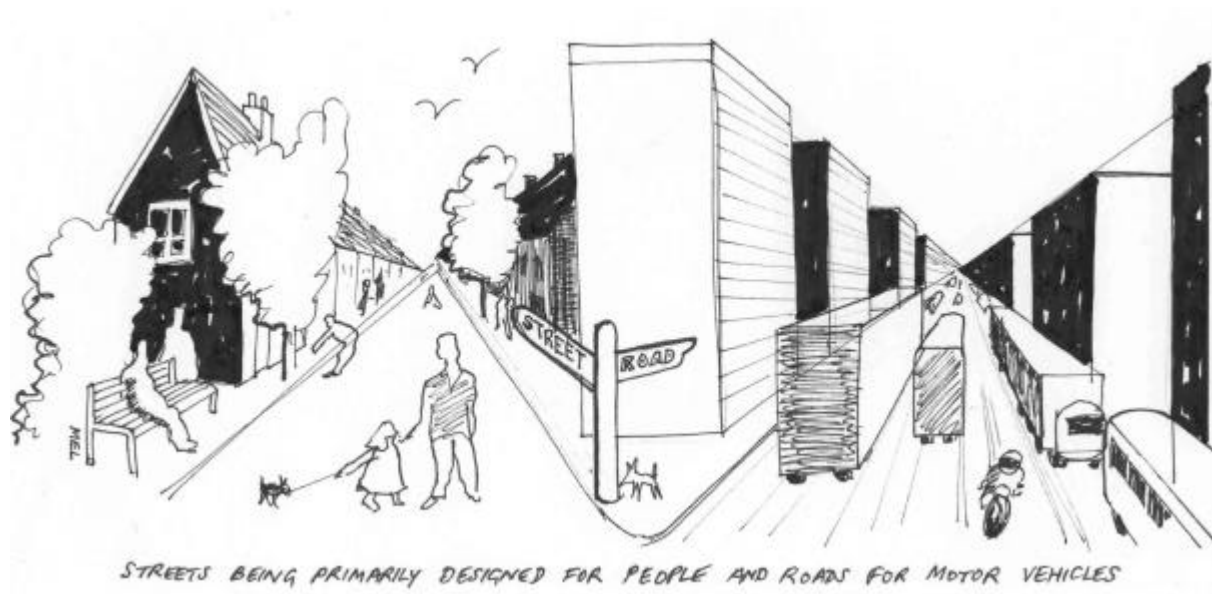
“Lamp columns have been designed to meet illumination requirements and to carry the load from Christmas Decorations, banners and other features. However all of the above have their cost!!!!

3. Key Findings to date

People focus

Currently highway design and management is weighted towards motor vehicles. A fundamental finding of the review is the need to clarify the distinction between roads and streets:

- roads being primarily for motor vehicles, though it is recognised that
- roads serve a dual purpose; and
- streets being primarily for PEOPLE.



By adopting this distinction PEOPLE become the focus for the Vision of the Street of the future. The street must be a place where people want to live and work and which functions as the core element of urban communities- not just as a “highway” for the passage of vehicles. The review recommends an approach to the street scene- its design, implementation, management and monitoring- which will deliver that Vision.

Up-to-date practices

Those giving evidence highlighted the issue of out of date attitudes held by some of those involved in decisions affecting the street scene. Attitudes which do not reflect current thinking and the wider cross-cutting objectives of urban regeneration, community empowerment, integrated transport, and sustainability. Street design and practice tends to follow long standing vehicle-orientated national guidance and tradition. It should be based on informed professional judgement which addresses broader issues including the context of the street, responsiveness to local needs, optimisation, innovation and fitness for purpose. But in practice the street is not treated as a single entity, but a set of unrelated components which are managed independently. As a first step we need to develop approaches and attitudes, which achieve overt recognition of the need to modernise the approach to street design and management of the public highway/public realm.

Complexity and absence of coordination



*A COMPLEX INTERACTION OF MANY INDEPENDENT AND
GENERALLY UNCOORDINATED PROCESSES*

COMMUNITIES:

Throughout this report this term is used to include residential, business and other communities of interest, which have a stake in a particular street.

Communities and their streets, along with those charged with stewardship of the streets, are overwhelmed by the current system, which comprises a complex interaction of many independent and generally uncoordinated processes. Processes which are characterised by conflict, dominance by motor traffic considerations, and the exclusion of those most affected: local people and local business. There is a growing recognition of the benefits of integrated working and greater collaboration. This review hopes to broaden this awareness through: -

- ▲ Identifying a Vision to provide a framework within which improvements can take place
- ▲ Developing a methodical review of existing practice, using a specially adapted version of the EFQM Business Excellence Model to identify areas for improvement to achieve the Vision
- ▲ Encouraging immediate improvements where action has already been identified and tools are available
- ▲ Illustrating how to improve collaboration and co-ordination in street management using a range of new and existing tools
- ▲ Proposing simplified and integrated responsibilities, including ongoing community involvement
- ▲ Developing relevant training programmes, including skills in masonry, multi-disciplinary collaboration and community development
- ▲ Proposing the overhaul aspects of the current system where necessary
- ▲ Ensuring monitoring outcomes in order to feed back into the processes for achieving the vision.

Cutting through the complexity

Progress will only be made if the “avalanche of complexity” can be better managed. Any new approach must have coherence, clarity, simplicity and be capable of identifying priorities for action across a range of functions and relationships. Such complexities are not unique, in that they characterise both business and local government. Many such organisations that are successful use the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Business Excellence Model (BEM) as a key part of their approach to continuous improvement. One of the fundamental recommendations of the review is the need for the development of a Street Excellence Model (SEM), based on the EFQM Business Excellence Model, for systematically evaluating current management practices, comparing performance over time and place, and identifying the required actions to achieve improvement. The application of this model to the street provides for best of practice to be encouraged and built upon, while challenging areas where more effective practices need to be introduced. The SEM is described in greater detail in Section XXX and Appendix 1.

For effective change a wide range of organisations/people must all move in the same direction to achieve holistic improvement in the long term. This includes officers and contractors in national and local government, professions, public utilities, cable TV companies, businesses, chambers of commerce and many others. * It is recognised that untried approaches may need to be “proven” through demonstration or pilot projects which can test new and sometimes radical ideas within a clear and structured framework, and with agreement to waive legislation to minimise the fear of litigation..

Body of knowledge

The report focuses on the areas which constrain improvement and which are manifested in processes which affect many people in many organisations. It does not cover the many related detailed issues as these are the subject of projects taking place elsewhere and there is a growing body of knowledge and guidance already available on most issues. In a few cases the report includes detailed proposals where the “system” gives a poor outcome at the detailed level (e.g. street sign clutter).

Other key findings

- ▲ The people involved in managing the quality of the street and controlling change do not perceive the street as a whole but focus on their particular responsibilities
- ▲ The majority of people do not have the requisite skills to undertake the task both at the management level and when implementing schemes on the ground.
- ▲ Local authorities’ fear of litigation constrains innovation
- ▲ The legislative framework does not support the changing role of the street
- ▲ “Urban renaissance” depends on the importance of the street being recognised

Street communities feel powerless to bring about improvements.

12 principles must underpin the recommendations in the report.

1. Forward thinking and visionary
2. Radical (tinkering will be unable to achieve the step change required)
3. People and communities-centred (rather than motor-vehicle-centred)
4. Effective in delivery
5. Foster of design excellence
6. Encourage innovation and risk-taking
7. Promote positive and collaborative working
8. Incorporate monitoring mechanisms
9. Be integrated into the Best Value regime and make effective use of available resources
10. Achieve sustainability ie. a balance between present needs and future resources
11. Challenge existing custom and practice, including regulations, criteria and standards
12. Cut across issues, professions and organisations – take a broad multi-disciplinary

3. A Vision for the Street of 2025

The urban environment is made up of streets. If we want a high quality urban environment then we need high quality streets. But what “standard” should we be aiming to achieve by 2025?

The Street of 2025

A place for people

The Street of 2025 is a place where people want to be- the focus for communities where people feel safe and comfortable in attractive and functional surroundings. It is people-orientated and not traffic-dominated.

A place which meets needs

- basic needs

The street meets vital standards of health such as pure air, low noise levels and cleanliness and supports an environmentally sustainable way of life.

- more complex needs

The street fulfils a range of community needs these include social and economic activities and human interaction, areas of peacefulness and tranquillity, liveliness and energy, and links between communities and businesses.

Quality of life

The street is an important feature of the public realm and is a quality attraction in its own right. It contributes to the people’s quality of life – whether they are residents or passing through.

Diverse and Distinctive

Each street reflects the diversity of the communities that use it and meets the unique set of needs generated by those communities. Each street is distinct: for example: -

- ▲ Residential streets – tranquillity, safety, links between communities
- ▲ Town Centre streets – bustle, vitality, links between communities and businesses
- ▲ Shopping Parades – friendly, intimate
- ▲ Streets in business areas – practical, accessible, attractive

Coordinated Management

Behind the scenes is a streamlined and holistic management approach characterised by a culture of collaboration, innovation, and co-operation to ensure a high quality of design, development and



A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP AND PRIDE

maintenance. There are open and simplified processes, clear responsibilities, and ability to deliver.

Community involvement and ownership

Communities are involved in their street. They have a vision for the improvement of the street, and are part of a partnership that is managing the street and actively trying to bring the improvements about.

People have a sense of ownership and pride in their immediate environment, and the street scene. They participate in local governance and have the confidence that they can improve and influence their environment.

4. Steps to Achieving the Vision

To achieve the Vision of the street of 2025, a set of positive and broad-based practical steps is recommended. Some of these steps are essential processes which bond and bind existing activities, while others are tools which may achieve improvement quickly and/or help take forward one or more of the processes. Taking action forward simultaneously and in a sustained way offers the greatest potential for realising the Vision of the street in 2025.

All actions should be initiated as soon as possible

Many of the actions proposed require neither change to legislation nor new funding.

The time-scales for outcomes vary from “soon” (about 1-3 years) to “medium” (about 5-10 years) to long term (15-25 years).

While the proposals generally stand-alone and are not interdependent, they are inter-linked and involve concerted action by a wide range of organisations and professions. Those professions likely to play a key role in taking an action are indicated..

The main subjects are:

Street Excellence Model An extension of the EFQM Business excellence model to provide a tool for local authorities to help review, monitor and improve the systems which runs streets.

Improving Management of the street and its environs Providing mechanisms which will coordinate the plans and strategies, the activities, the physical features, the professions, the organisations and the people who influence, use or provide the street.

Better Community Involvement Introducing the Quality Street partnership between the street community, local authority and other interested parties as a means of appraising streets, deciding what needs to be changed or improved, and the Quality Street Agreement as a means of implementing the vision of the partnership and providing funding.

Widening Training Opportunities Ensuring that there are the craft and management skills available to produce and manage the quality streets required.
Revising Legislation Ensuring that the legislative base allows modern needs to be met, encourages efficient operation, and promotes innovation and responsiveness to local needs.

A. Street Excellence Model - a breakthrough in street management

- Problem** **Complex structures and systems, and many different objectives to meet and customers to satisfy**
- Proposal** **Street Excellence Model** - a development of the EFQM Business Excellence model to provide a tool for local government to:
- ▲ evaluate current practice as it affects the street scene and public realm
 - ▲ monitor and provide a comparison over time and place and
 - ▲ identify actions to remedy gaps and problems.

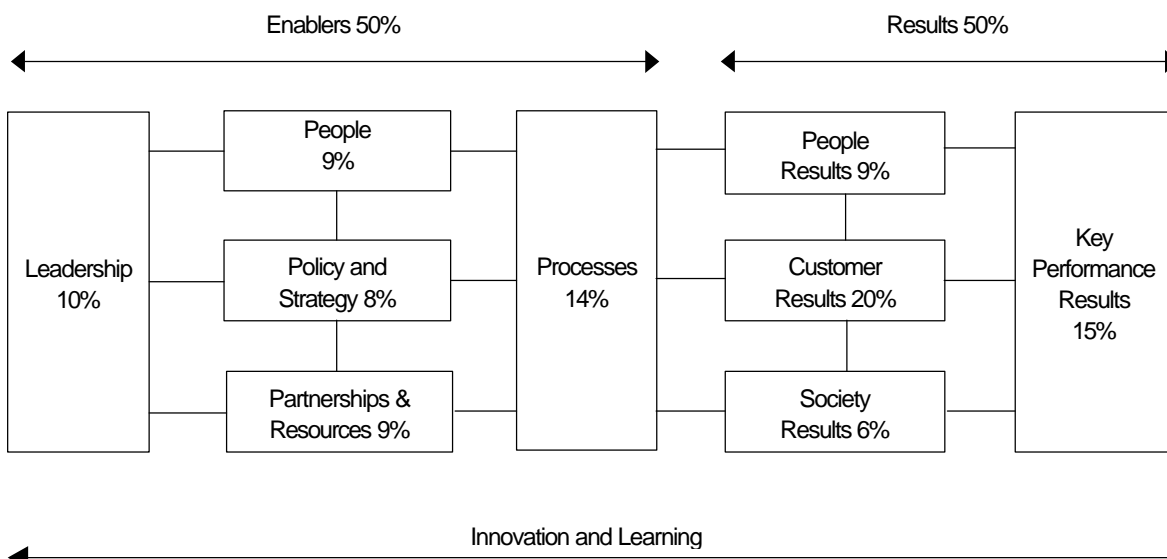
The EFQM Business Excellence Model (BEM) which is already used extensively in the private and public sector as an effective way of evaluating management activity and striving towards excellence. The general principles of the Business Excellence Model are summarised below..

EFQM Excellence Model – A Summary

The EFQM Excellence Model (also known as the Business Excellence Model) applies the fundamental principles of good management to any organisation no matter what its size or function. It is based on universally applied criteria that have developed following analysis of world-class organisations. The model is concerned with the pursuit of excellence and is applied through a process of self-assessment on an objective basis.

Self Assessment with the Model allows assessments of performance under 9 headings covering “enablers” and “results” identifying strengths and areas for improvement. It provides the scope to benchmark between different streets as to their “health” and to compare before and after assessments following implementation of improvement plans.

THE EXCELLENCE MODEL



The Street Excellence Model

Although no single body is responsible for all aspects of the “street” and therefore there is not a single business or organisation, the analytical processes involved in the EFQM Excellence Model can still be usefully applied to the street. It is assumed that the Local Authority takes the lead and is the “organisation” for the purposes of this process.

The concept is to seek to apply the principles of the Excellence Model to the “street scene” so that there is a coherent framework for assessing the strengths and opportunities for improvement of the street and the way it is managed and improved. The model provides potentially a rigorous management tool for evaluating the performance of the organisation (local authority) in delivering its responsibilities for policy formulation, design, maintenance, co-ordination, customer care, and involvement of stakeholders in schemes that affect the public realm. It can therefore be linked in with Best Value processes, Investors in People and benchmarking. Key indicators can be identified for evaluating performance, not just within an organisation, but in comparison with others. . It rigorously considers both inputs and outcomes.

The framework below, if agreed as an approach, will need to be fully worked up and refined through pilot work. This would be undertaken in conjunction with the British Quality Foundation to ensure that it is wholly consistent with the principles of the Model.



An SEM is not a plan or strategy in its own right but a way of thinking about and assessing existing practices. It has the potential, through the right choice of performance measures and performance outcomes, to take on board the characteristics and processes identified elsewhere in this report as important in achieving the Vision for the street of the future. Amongst others these would include people-orientated design, fitness for purpose, sustainability, proper maintenance standards, co-ordinated planning and management, and

STEPS TO ACHIEVING THE VISION - IMPROVING MANAGEMENT

collaborative working. Use of the model would help local authorities address the need for a renewed emphasis on People and community involvement (including Community Plans) and on high quality design.

The SEM model also has the benefit of challenging the historic mind-set underlying current practice and of securing continuous improvement and performance measurement. This approach will help improve efficiency and effectiveness generally by rigorous evaluation of performance against clear criteria and will also highlight the linkages and potential integration of existing activities as they relate to the street.

In order to develop this initial concept it is proposed that a new broad-based working group (formed by a partnership of UDAL, DETR, Local Government, businesses, local communities, and academics, plus a representative from EFQM) be established. This should be tasked with the further development of the SEM based on the framework established in this report. Additional research is necessary to adapt the basic Excellence Model for application to the street including the elaboration of relevant key criteria, local and national performance measures, and desired outcomes as they relate to the public realm and the street in particular. Consideration also needs to be given as to how this approach can be encouraged or required, for example by building it into the Best Value and beacon status approach or making its application a requirement of plans and proposals affecting the public realm/street scene.

Developing the SEM - Pilot schemes

Pilot Scheme will need to be established and funded (within a well-defined framework) to introduce this approach on a trial basis. Pilots would allow for the testing of the SEM and fine-tuning of performance measures, and include the provision of monitoring and assessment as well as training of facilitators in all 9 modules of the model.

Introduction of the SEM approach across all organisations with responsibilities in the public realm and led by the Local Authority is clearly a medium-term objective. In the shorter term steps should be taken to encourage innovation and challenge custom and practice by the preparation and dissemination of Good Practice in street scene, streetscape and street management issues.

Give the SEM a quick trial

Turn to the next two pages, look at the questions, think about the answers briefly in the context of your organisation, and your community. Would working through this process in a more rigorous way help your organisation and think about answers to the questions that are posed?

Acknowledgement is given to the contribution of The British Quality Foundation and it is hoped that this initial framework can be developed further in association with them.

QUESTIONS

- *Does your authority use the EFQM Excellence Model?*
- *Do you think the Street Excellence would be useful for your local authority?*
- *Would you be to consider piloting the model in your local authority?*
- *Would you consider using it if the authority had the time/resources?*
- *How could the model be improved?*

Using the Street Excellence Model

This section shows how to undertake a self assessment of the quality of the organisation and management of the street through a series of questions. A number of key aspects of the EFQM have yet to be worked up for the SEM e.g. sub-criteria, indicators, scoring.

Prior to the self assessment it is essential that who all the responsible parties are has been clearly defined and agreed, and also the “customers”.

For all the questions below it will be necessary to develop key performance outcomes and indicators of performance as well as identifying how the responses to the questions are to be obtained.

Criteria 1: Leadership

For the evolution and maintenance of quality streets it is essential that there is clear leadership within the responsible organisation. In addition the organisation needs to understand what it is trying to achieve. The organisation should therefore assess its leadership actions using the following questions:

- ◆ How is the leadership of management and maintenance of the streets organised?
- ◆ How are stakeholders involved in developing the vision for the future role and function of the street?
- ◆ How actively are those responsible involved in addressing the future?
- ◆ How motivated are key players?
- ◆ How do they facilitate development of a vision and mission statement?
- ◆ How do they identify action plans for implementation of vision?
- ◆ How do they ensure action is taken to effect implementation?
- ◆ How are the various service responsibilities of the organisation being co-ordinated?

Criteria 2: Policy and strategy

Excellent organisations have a clear sense of direction and ensure a consistent framework, which is owned by all relevant parties. The key questions are:

- ◆ Is there a clear and agreed strategy and policy framework?
- ◆ Are all stakeholders on board?
- ◆ Have clear performance indicators and targets been established?
- ◆ Has the policy been incorporated in the appropriate wider policy frameworks?
- ◆ Has the policy been reviewed and updated?
- ◆ Has the policy been communicated to all key stakeholders?
- ◆ By what methods have the policies been communicated to the stakeholders?
- ◆ Are effective linkages made to other policy areas in terms of implementation?

Criteria 3: People

People are critical to good organisations and management, and no less so in respect of the street. In the context of the “street” the people are both the staff who work for organisations which impact on the “street” but also those who live, work, pass through or in some other way have some “ownership” of the “street”. The key questions are:

- ◆ Have the local people in the local communities been involved in the process?
- ◆ How are the resources of the local communities being enhanced?
- ◆ Are the local communities empowered to become involved?
- ◆ How are the local communities rewarded for their involvement?
- ◆ How are all the staff who impact on the street being made fully aware of the strategy and action plan and the need for an holistic approach?
- ◆ How are you ensuring that the right staff are involved in delivering the service and that they possess the necessary skills?
- ◆ Have the staff received effective training?
- ◆ Is the right range of skills available?
- ◆ How effective are the communication systems with the local communities and staff?

Criteria 4: Partnership and resources

A wide variety of organisations and people inter-act with the street so the development of partnerships is critical to managing change and improving the quality. Improving and maintaining the street also demands resources from a wide variety of sources and these need to be identified and co-ordinated. The key questions are:

- ◆ Have the key potential partners been identified including for example landowners, leaseholders, and former public utility companies?
- ◆ Have their potential contributions been identified?
- ◆ What arrangements have been established to enable them to effectively contribute?
- ◆ What sources of finance have been identified?
- ◆ How are the financial programmes being co-ordinated?
- ◆ Have the opportunities for new partnerships been identified?
- ◆ What impact will new technology have?
- ◆ Has a street audit been undertaken to assess assets and liabilities?
- ◆ Is all the necessary information being gathered and effectively disseminated?
- ◆ Is there a clear inventory of assets?
- ◆ What arrangements have been made with other agencies that are responsible for aspects of the Streetscene and public realm to co-ordinate activity?
- ◆ Is effective use being made of IT technology?

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Criteria 5: Processes

Given the range of potential stakeholders both within and outside the responsible body, the availability of effective systems and processes for managing and maintaining the street is paramount. Key questions are:

- ◆ What systems are in place for co-ordinating action across departments and organisations that impact on the street?
- ◆ What systems are in place for mapping and analysing all relevant information?
- ◆ What monitoring arrangements are in place?
- ◆ What systems are in place for checking the implementation of agreed actions and their quality?
- ◆ What processes are followed to identify the need for remedial action?
- ◆ What systems are in place for getting stakeholder views?
- ◆ What systems are in place for informing stakeholders of decisions and actions and getting their support or involvement?
- ◆ What process has been instituted to co-ordinate all aspects on design on the street?

Criteria 6: People results

"People" are defined, in this context, as all the individuals employed by the service and all others who are in one way or another, directly or indirectly, are responsible for parts of the street. It is essential that they feel that they can contribute effectively to the management of the street and its improvement. The questions to be asked include:

- ◆ Do all "participants" have a clear understanding of what they should be doing and how it inter-relates to other "participants"?
- ◆ Do they believe they can make a difference?
- ◆ How well do the various participants co-operate?
- ◆ Is the management process effective?
- ◆ How well motivated are the individuals involved?
- ◆ Do they understand the vision for the street?
- ◆ How effective has staff training been in relation to delivering the service?
- ◆ How effective has collaboration with other services been in service delivery? What lessons can be learned?
- ◆ What are the key direct and indirect results?

Criteria 7: Customer results

A key test of the quality of the street and the way it is managed is the perception of those who use it. The questions to be asked include:

- ◆ What do the users of the street think about its ability to perform its functions?
- ◆ What is their view of the maintenance of the street?
- ◆ How easy do they find it to access those responsible for its management and maintenance?
- ◆ What do the partners think about the operation of the partnership?

- ◆ How effective do the stakeholders feel their involvement has been, and what improvements can be made?
- ◆ What is the evidence of the "popularity, vitality and viability" of the street?
- ◆ What are the nature and level of complaints about the street?
- ◆ Do people feel comfortable and safe using the street?
- ◆ How do the users of the street define the direct and indirect indicators of improvements in the street?

Criteria 8: Society results

The qualities of the street affect the quality of the neighbourhood, the local area and in aggregate the country. It is important that it contributes effectively to the overall quality of life and its sustainability. This section deals with the view of the street from the outside world. The questions to be asked include:

- ◆ How well does the street contribute to the image of the area?
- ◆ Does it function effectively in respect of the wider area?
- ◆ Is it attractive, comfortable and safe for people to visit?
- ◆ How well is the street managed?
- ◆ Is it easy to attract investment?
- ◆ How well does the street contribute to all aspects of sustainability?
- ◆ What are the key direct and indirect indicators of its contribution to the "quality of urban life"?

Criteria 9: Key performance results

The management of the street needs to achieve what the community and those responsible for it want for it. It is important to assess how successful the process has been and identify problem areas and deficiencies so that effective remedial action can be taken. The questions to be asked include:

- ◆ Have the capital and revenue targets for street works been achieved?
- ◆ How do the results compare with other authorities?
- ◆ Have the performance targets on street maintenance (e.g. litter, re-instatements, safety, footway & carriageway maintenance, etc.) been achieved?
- ◆ Was the performance of any key results less than expected, and if so, why?
- ◆ Is the community's perception of the street improving?
- ◆ Are satisfaction levels increasing?
- ◆ Does the street function more effectively and look better?
- ◆ What are the key direct and indirect indicators of performance in the short, medium and long term?

B. Improving the Management behind the street

Problem	Many different activities and policies – fragmented management
Proposals	<p>Public Realm Strategy – coordinating the many plans and strategies that impinge upon the street</p> <p>Streamlined management system – single point of reference – bring the control of the street to one</p> <p>Street Management Code – covering what can be done to and in the street</p> <p>Design Codes – covering what can and should be done to buildings and adjoining land.</p> <p>Guidance</p>

Current street management must balance historic priorities, functional requirements (e.g. cleaning, loading, traffic v pedestrians), cost and local community perceptions of function and amenity. This balance is difficult to achieve when decisions affecting the public realm are frequently made from a single-focus perspective, with

- ▲ **many professions and organisations** making unrelated, uncoordinated decisions on
- ▲ **many different features and components** and
- ▲ **conflicting activities** of the street scene. Examples include excessive areas being designated for vehicles, sign clutter, and the placement of street furniture, such as telephone kiosks and bus shelters, without reference to streetscape, pedestrian convenience or safety.
- ▲ **numerous plans and strategies** (e.g. Community Safety, traffic management, greenspace etc) which may each assume a different and sometimes conflicting role for the street.

Greater collaboration and integration of the relevant professions, disciplines and organisations needs to be part of the overall process in order to avoid this disjointed approach.

Public Realm Strategies

Problem	Numerous plans and strategies
Proposal	<p>Public Realm Strategy to bring coordination to plans and strategies where they impinge on the street. Prepared by Local Authorities the public realm strategy it would be a single consolidating strategy which deals with the provision, design, management, funding and maintenance of public spaces, including streets. Any strategy should specify a clear network and hierarchy of streets and open space based on accepted standards and a careful interpretation of local need. Though not a legal requirement, preparation could be encouraged in PPGs and District Auditor processes and incorporated as Supplementary Planning Guidance.</p>



The strategy could be a useful tool for improving collaboration and integration. Strategies would be prepared by the Local Authorities including the Highway Authority in conjunction with communities, local businesses, and public utilities /statutory undertakers. The Strategy would emphasise spatial integration, drawing from both the Local Plan and Transport Plan as well as giving voice to locally developed street visions. They could form an integral part of urban design frameworks for urban centres (see “By Design”) and identify functions for street spaces, including the scope for reallocating space from vehicles to people, and associated local design guidance. It would also link with Community Plans in taking account of diverse needs, lifestyles and cultural traditions.

Integrated transport planning highlights the importance of walking (see “Encouraging Walking”) and cycling in their own right, as well as forming a stage of all journeys by public transport. Therefore the Public Realm Strategy could clarify how the street can be designed to make these modes of transport safer, more convenient and enjoyable and to provide continuous routes.

QUESTIONS

- *Do you think there are inconsistencies between the different plans and strategies which affect the public realm?*
- *Do you think producing a public realm strategy would help your authority resolve the inconsistencies and improve the functionality and attractiveness of its streets?*

Streamlining Management

Problem **No common responsibility for a street** – responsibility split between different individuals, organisations, and legislative systems

Proposal **Single point of contact**

Fragmented management and maintenance of the street and the public realm often results in poor standards that may undermine good design. There are many different areas which impact on the functioning and the attractiveness street including:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Planning | Litter |
| Development control | Refuse collection |
| Licensing of street activities | Street lighting |
| Control of street works | Public order |
| Obstructions | Community Safety |
| Environmental health | Economic Development |
| Road safety issues | Community Development |

All these areas tend to be under separate control. With many different organisation responsible for the street, both “gaps” and overlaps can occur.

In the short term improved co-ordination between decision-makers along with improved linkages between single-focus agencies, organisations and plans would raise the standard of maintenance and help ensure that streets/public spaces appear cared for, as exemplified by the approach taken by the private sector in some shopping malls.



One “tool” is to introduce a single point of reference for street management and stewardship issues. A single individual or office within the local authority could be given consolidated powers to make decisions and to promote the interests of the community as a whole.

Two further proposals would enhance the value of the single point of reference street management:

▲ **Professionals qualified in the wider street management role** –proposals for an MBA in Street Management are given below.

▲ **Changes in legislation** which could enable powers to be consolidated. An example might be to rationalise the respective powers of local authority and magistrates.

The use of the Street Excellence Model may suggest improved and streamlined management systems, which may ultimately involve the consolidation of management/decision making regarding streets into a single entity providing a simplified management system which integrates and co-ordinates currently fragmented responsibilities. The Street Excellence Model also provides a means of monitoring progress towards the “Vision” and involving all the stakeholders in the process.

QUESTIONS

- Do you perceive a problem with a lack of coordination of control in the street.
- In which areas do the main problems lie?

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- Do you think a central point of contact, with authority and responsibility for the overall management and improvement of a street and its community would be a useful step?
- What alternatives can you recommend?

Street Management Code

Problem Some activities and functions in the street are rigorously controlled and regulated, while others which have a great impact on the street aspects are very loosely uncontrolled. Excessive controls block innovation, creativity and local distinctiveness; absence of controls lead to the rapid deterioration of carefully thought out street improvement schemes.

Proposal **Street Management Code** A code which covers the activities and features that take place in the street, such as

- Street cleansing
- Street café's carnivals and other events
- Location of street furniture
- Landscape
- Required standards for repair and reinstatement of the highway
- Policy on dropped kerbs
- Parking
- Litter control standards
- Development permitted under the General Permitted Development Order, such as the installation of telephone boxes etc

Organisations proposing works which are consistent with the code can do so without permission. If the organisation wishes to depart from the code they must seek approval. The code is drawn up by a partnership between local authority, wider community interests including business, residents etc.

The aim of the code is to coordinate the activities of the many different players in the street in the general public interest, by specifying clearly, but flexibly what they can do, how and where.

The Code would ensure that owners and managers took account of the wider street scene when making decisions and that high standards are sustained/enforced. It would apply to statutory undertakers, trade bodies, and Local Authorities.

There are plenty of examples where street apparatus, installed under the general permitted development order, reduce both the attractiveness and the function of the street. This is an example of a need for better control. But is important to avoid a bureaucratic system which would be time-consuming and costly to administer. Street Codes would give organisations better guidance on how to go about their business without compromising the attractiveness or the functioning of the street. In essence the GPDO rights would be removed, but restored for activities conforming to the street code.

Street Features

Banners	Bus Shelters	Bus Stops
	CCTV Cameras	Cycle racks
Direction Signs (Pedestrian)	Direction Signs (Vehicles)	Festive Decorations
	Flower basket poles	Fountains
Illuminated Bollards	Illuminated Advertisements	Lighting
	Litter Bins	Information Boards
Non-direction signs	Non-illuminated bollards	Pedestrian guard rails
	Pedestrian Crossings	Planters
Seating	Sculptures	Signal equipment
	Street lighting	Street Maps
Street Name Plates	Street Name Plates	Traffic Surveillance Cameras
	Tourist Information Boards	Trees
Cable TV	Data Cables	Electricity
	Gas	Telephone
Drainage	Sewerage	Water

On the other hand the need for licensing of activities such as street cafes may be an unnecessary administrative burden. Under the proposals, provided a café proprietor complied with the Street Management Code, for example, by keeping a minimum path clear and avoiding the use of furniture which visually impaired people would find difficult to detect; they would not need to apply for a separate licence.

In the short term, greater consideration of these issues could be linked to Best Value in terms of the review of practice, and could be built to evolving guidance on standards and Considerate Contractor Schemes.

The performance requirements in the local street code would ensure that individual organisation's actions in a street are in the overall interest of the community, rather than a single interest. This would coordinate between bodies with rights and obligations in the public realm.

The impact of Street Codes could be increased by changes to the legal framework which revises current controls but reflect the unique set of constraints and opportunities for that street and the Vision that has developed locally.

QUESTIONS

- *Do you think there is a problem with activities permitted under the GPDO adversely affecting the street?*
- *Are there areas which are over-regulated?*
- *Would the proposal for a street management code help?*

Street Design Codes and Guidance

Problem Buildings and use of land adjoining the street which reduce the attractiveness or the street or impair its function

Proposal **Design Code** A set of rules developed with the involvement of the local community that seek to guide the implementation of activities and development affecting the public realm. They may be formulated for existing areas or proposed development. The code is short and positive and helpful to land owners.

Streets must be interesting places for people, and the buildings and adjacent land must address the street. Yet many streets are sterile and bleak: buildings with blank walls, high fences, gardens converted into parking lots. Buildings and streets need to be well integrated, with buildings fronting onto streets incorporating a high frequency of entrances and windows.

Livelier frontages

It is important that the "comings" and "goings" to and from buildings takes place in the streets and that the street provides a stage for the celebration of public life. Neglect of this relationship can lead to inefficient use of street space, buildings which turn their back on the street producing "dead" frontages, an absence of street life, lack of human scale, and inappropriate building form. A suggested method of addressing this issue, including attention to the design, function, and maintenance of transitional space, is the development of new/revised Design Code(s), which could stand alongside embodied the Street Management Code and apply to both new development, alterations and improvements. Manchester's City Development Guide and Hulme's Design Guide are recent examples of design codes.

Simplifying and broadening the knowledge base

Problem **Large quantity of subject specific guidance** and regulations which it is difficult for an individual practitioner to keep abreast of.

Proposal **Knowledge Map** – maintained across the breadth of subjects which are associated with street design and management, with signposts to specific information.

The dissemination of Good Practice and guidance in Public Realm design co-ordination and management is very important. A growing list of useful guidance documents, Good Practice, Environmental Standards, Planning Guidance, and EU legislation and white papers) has evolved to guide decisions.

There is information on design, layout, air and water (run-off) quality, noise, access and mobility, natural surveillance and safety, landscaping and other amenities. But guidance tends to focus on specific aspects of the street rather than the street as a whole. For example design guidance tends not to consider drainage, road safety guidance tends to not to consider aesthetics.

The very extent of the guidance available is a problem in itself. There is a great deal of it, and practitioners have a challenge to keep abreast of the documentation. There needs to be a drawing together of the main practice, references and legislation which impact upon the street. This process would aim to see that the street is treated as an entity rather than a series of unrelated components.

Promoting innovation

Problem Difficulty or lack of incentives for local authorities to innovate. Tendency to adhere inflexibly to traditional standards.

Proposal **Evidence based engineering** - following the example of evidence based medicine, aiming to ensure practices recommended by guidance are fit for purpose intended, and the justified.

As technologies develop and needs change, it is important for practice to change as well. The Best Value process should help encourage local authorities challenge current practice. Guidance and regulations tends to be prescriptive, they instruct that things should be done in a certain specified way. It is not often that the reasoning behind this prescription is provided.

Guidance needs to include supporting justification . Following the principles of Best Value, practices should be challenged, justified and the, with the justification made publicly available, Key tests would include fitness for purpose, and a questioning of the very purpose itself. This approach would at the very least dispense with a considerable amount of street clutter and signage.

QUESTIONS

- *Risk aversion by individual practitioners has been suggested as one of the main obstacles to flexibility in applying standards. Do you believe this is the case, how might it*
- *Do you feel there is adequate explanation and justification for some of the practices undertaken in the street?*

QUESTIONS

- *Do you have difficulties in keeping track of latest developments in legislation and best practice right across the full range of your responsibilities and in allied subject areas?*
- *Would a summarising service be of value?*
- *Would some system whereby you were alerted to changes and their significance be of use?*

Should street design and management be following the example of the medical profession with the examples of evidence based medicine or the Institute for Clinical Excellence?

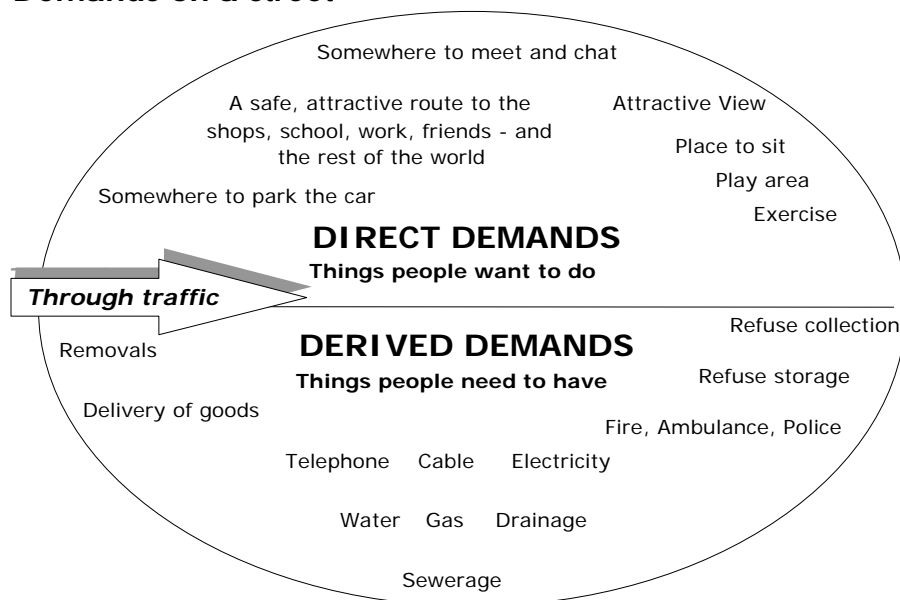
C. Modernising Community Governance

Problem Ensuring the different needs in a street are properly recognised and reconciled.

Proposal **Partnerships** between the street community, local authorities and others to manage, maintain and improve the street
Street audits/Placecheck
Formal Street Agreements under which the exchange of land and money can take place in return for specific actions or services.

There are many different demands on a street. What tends to happen is that each party tries to meet their own needs from their own perspective, without considering the impact they may have on other street users.

Demands on a street



Quality Street Partnership

Problem No means for a person or organisation in a street to invest ideas or funds in the improvement of the street

Proposal **Quality Street Partnership:** A partnership between stakeholders in a street whose objective is the improvement in the attractiveness and quality of life afforded by the street. The main partners would be

- those individuals or organisations who use or are affected by what happens in a street;
- the Local Authority, an important partner in light of its considerable powers and impact; and
- professionals able to advise and facilitate the development of a community vision.

The partnership could be involved in all aspects of street planning and design, management and maintenance and link

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with other initiatives (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch), the vision (once developed) would generally guide its role.

Quality Street Partnerships can be formed under existing legislation. The aim is to get 100 % involvement of all the parties who use or have an interest in the street and a consensus as to how it would be.

The Quality Street Partnership would

1. **Assess the Street** – by a street audit process such as Placecheck
2. **Review the options for improvement** – using the skills of a professional
3. **Decide what is needed** – Create a vision for the improvement of the street
4. **Find the funds** – for example from the local authority, and from their own resources.
5. **Create a street agreement** – to provide a framework under which the improvements will be introduced.

In the street of 2025 the community are empowered to develop a Vision for their street and local environment. The existing decision-making process and imposition of standardised and technical solutions can discourage the community from taking responsibility for or feeling positive towards their environment. In urban areas there are few mechanisms to facilitate ongoing local community involvement at the street level. There is a need for new street governance systems based on “Quality Street Partnerships” to ensure ongoing process of community empowerment and cohesive action.

A Quality Street Partnership would be formed (for a specific street or group of streets) between the Local Authority and local community that would ensure ongoing community involvement. The community role would include development of the Vision through identifying users and their needs, clarifying objectives and responsibilities, attracting resources, resolving conflicts between activities (e.g. liveliness vs. tranquillity), assisting in management and monitoring progress towards their Vision. Good practice guidance on involving people in design through charrettes and planning for real is set out in the “Community Planning Handbook”. The Street Audit and the Public Realm Strategy would be helpful catalysts for the creation of “Quality Street Partnerships” but not essential prerequisites. The Quality Street Partnership has the benefit of providing a working relationship that allows an ongoing process of Vision formulation and monitoring.

In the short term community involvement in management and maintenance could be encouraged by improving communication and access to decision-makers - at least through the identification of a single point of contact within the existing management/stewardship system.

Other forms of street governance could reinforce the role of the street as a basic unit of democracy with its potential for social and economic progress and environmental action/conservation of resources, encouraging social support networks and strengthening local community ties. New street governance systems may entail new legislation, and all these issues could usefully be considered by an appropriate body (also see “Legislation” below).

QUESTIONS

- Would you be willing to pilot quality street partnerships
- Should there be a way of dealing with situations where agreement is not 100% but 90% or 60% in favour of a particular scheme?
- At what margin should the minority view hold sway?

Street Audits/Placecheck

Problem	Difficulty in obtaining a consensus on how the competing needs in a street should be addressed and balanced.
Proposal	Street Audit / Placecheck – a systematic assessment by the stakeholders in a street (the street community, the local authority and others) of what is good and bad about a street, the likely future trends, and how the street might be improved. Scope can include personal security, quality of landscaping, ease of movement, noise, quality of routes to other destinations within the town, eg the local primary school, or shops. The Audit can be done by professionals, but is best done by the local community and professionals in partnership. The aim must be to improve the street, rather than always be to improve the street rather than

UDAL Placecheck System - The UDAL Placecheck system is a system of urban design audit which offers street stakeholders a series of researched questions to assist with the formation of partnerships and the assessment and audit of a street or neighbourhood. It comprises 5 stages and suggests processes and techniques to ensure community involvement is facilitated in a systematic way. Further information on www.placecheck.com

To ensure recognising the need for professional input into street design and management, if streets are to genuinely be for PEOPLE then professionals will need to work with the communities to redefine the role of the street and establish streets as the focus for action; the Local Authority in particular must 'think street' and 'think people in the street'.

One method of achieving this is to involve communities in the carrying out of a Street Audit, based to an extent on the successful Parish Appraisal process, to initiate a more direct communication and encourage the community to access those responsible for action in the public realm. The Street Audit should feed into the Public Realm Strategy and be an integral part of it, as both provide a means of ensuring that community priorities are taken account of in the wider process of street management/stewardship. It can also feed into the Local Transport Strategy, and walking and cycling strategies. One form of Street Audit is the UDAL Placecheck Initiative.

In both cases the professions need to recognise the importance of being broad based and in reflecting community aspirations. Street management training, including community development issues, should be made available to Street Audit and Public Realm Strategy co-ordinators.

QUESTIONS

- *Do you think the Street Audit / Placechecks idea would be a good way of getting the community involved in owning the problems of their street and generating the solutions.*
- *Do you think that while it might be a good idea, in the absence of funding to make improvements, the exercise would merely generate false expectations.*

Street Agreements

Problem Difficulty in turning community consultation to action, especially where some of the actions are in the hands of the community itself. Inability to make improvements where the involvement of the community is required, such as changes in behaviour, additional funding, or exchanging land.
Free-rider problem – where an individual or organisation benefits from the expenditure of others, without making a contribution. In a town centre where some retailers contribute to a town centre improvement scheme, but not all.

Proposal **Street Agreements:** made between the parties involved in the Quality Street Partnership, which is a formal 'contract' to clarify responsibilities, the improvements that are to be made to the street (such as the reallocation of street space to new uses), and the sources of funds. It could be voluntary in the case of minor improvements to the street, or legally binding where funding and maintenance are involved or the transfer and reallocation of land in or adjoining the street.

A key theme of this report is the importance of decision-making at the community/street level, to allow local needs to be addressed and create scope for local creativity and innovation within a strategic framework. This may be achieved through the Quality Street Partnership approach already outlined, and through the associated "Street Agreements". In terms of the legal framework, further work is needed to develop the underlying principles, and to determine what current legislation would need to be revised (if any) to back up Quality Street Partnerships and enable effective Street Agreements (i.e. in relation to Local Authority liabilities and duties).

The street agreement could be highly effective where the improvement of a street depends on cooperation of the street community, through changing the way they use the street, allowing private land to be included in schemes to remodel the street, or enabling the frontagers to fund improvements and higher standards of maintenance.

There is a need for a programme of pilot projects and associated research/draft legislation to ensure that Street Agreements can deliver the community focus. This might sensibly be incorporated into the remit of an appropriate body (also see "Community Governance"), in order to consider what legislation requires modification or replacement to facilitate new forms of community governance generally.

QUESTIONS

- *Do you think the street agreement would need to be legally binding on all parties?*
- *Should there be any element of compulsion – for example to tackle the free-rider problem – where someone wants to benefit from an improved street, but does not want to pay for it?*
- *Would the scope of the improvements to streets be increased if the frontagers were able to contribute to by giving land, funding, or changing the demands they place on the street?*
- *Is there a problem with the aftercare of street improvement schemes?*
- *Would your authority be willing to consider piloting street agreements?*

A possible example of a street agreement

The agreement would be made after an extensive process of community involvement – a partnership, an audit of the street, and a formal scheme for the street settled upon. The street agreement then binds the street community, the local authority and other players to that scheme.

I as an occupier agree to:

- *keep my property free of litter and refuse*
- *keep my property attractive and in good repair*
- *ensure cars accessing my premises are parked in designated areas and not the pavement, verge, or grassed areas*
- *permit the local authority to undertake works in the first 2 metres of my front garden to allow the creation of parking spaces*
- *permit the local authority to place a charge upon my property to recoup the cost of the work when the house is next sold.*
- *Other conditions as appropriate*

The local authority agrees to:

- *undertake the work in remodelling the street as agreed by the street partnership.*
- *to maintain the street to the standard agreed by the street partnership*

*signed
for the local authority*

*signed
the resident*

D. Funding

Problem Lack of funds to undertake improvements to streets, lack of funds to maintain the street environment to the same quality as private estates, no mechanisms for the street community to invest in the improvement of the street.

Proposal This is the most difficult of all areas and where the proposals are most tentative. Possible ways forward identified are identified below. Views of practitioners are invited on these possibilities, and in addition other include:

Generally it is easier to obtain capital funding obtain than revenue funding. Unfortunately it is the revenue funding that is needed for maintenance and “refreshment” of features in the public realm that has the greatest bearing on the attractiveness of a street. Often high quality capital schemes are implemented, only to deteriorate as a through insufficient funding for maintenance. Local Authorities have very limited resources- which sometimes are insufficient to enforce standards , or sometimes are spread too thinly over large areas. Highways Maintenance funding has suffered from a long term decline.

To achieve a higher quality than currently achieved, substantially higher levels of revenue funding will be required.

Possible funding mechanisms which have been put forward by practitioners include:

- Earmarked central government funds or credit approvals for qualifying schemes, for example schemes produced under the Street Excellence Model
- Using existing local authority funding routes, for example the local transport plan, revenue from workplace parking schemes, or road user charging.
- Area-wide loans or bonds
- Raising funds from the street community for example through:
 - Street Agreement – creating an agreement that would commit frontagers to making additional annual payments for the improvement or up keep of a street, or to allow a charge to be placed on the property.
 - Privatisation of streets – engaging a management company to improve, maintain and manage the street –with payments made direct by frontagers
 - Using private streets legislation
 - Eparishment / Urban parishes to raise funds from frontagers
 - Resident’s association model with the street community assuming responsibility for certain of the street functions, and the local authority providing contingent funding.

Views are invited on possible means of raising additional funding for better maintenance. Clearly issues such as administrative efficiency, fairness and equity – including tackling the free-rider problem, central government expenditure controls, the relative wealth of an area must be considered.

QUESTIONS

Do you think more funding should be made available for maintenance.

Do you think there is a need to explore new routes for funding.

Please comment on the above routes or make alternative suggestions.

Do you think frontagers in your area would be willing to contribute to

E. Providing the skills and expertise

There are two main aspects of training where deficiencies in the current regimes have been identified – at a professional level that cuts across traditional disciplines and in respect of the skills of those who actually implement schemes on the ground.

Post graduate MBA

The challenges facing urban areas in the 21st century demand that the public and private sectors work more in harmony, and develop a more responsive partnership approach in meeting the needs of communities. Managers working in the urban realm need to have a more holistic approach to street design and planning with a broad-based understanding of how all the elements work together to produce the Vision.

A new cross-disciplinary qualification (MBA) in Urban Street Management is advocated to help ensure that practitioners are aware of the wider issues, policies and linkages, think across traditional organisational boundaries, and understand the complexities of legislation and funding sources. The qualification would be post-graduate and focus on management, urban governance and design and development. The content would include the development of skills in community involvement and empowerment in street issues, along with management approaches such as Best Value and the proposed Street Excellence Model and evolving concepts of sustainability.

Details of a possible course

The review has pointed to the need for professionals with well rounded skills who are able to take a holistic approach to the design, management, maintenance and improvement of streets. The concept of an MBA in urban street management has been developed to fill that gap

MBA IN URBAN STREET MANAGEMENT	
UNDERSTANDING STREETS History and interrelationship of social development, technology, and the patterns and mechanisms of the development of streets and the wider built environment, Street activities – understanding the range and requirements of the different groups that are involved in, around or under streets. Including economics, personal security, delivery, aesthetics, supply chain management, Covering all streets from culs de sac through to prestige city centres. Streets and the future – covering the changes and opportunities facing streets.	OPERATIONAL SKILLS Street design Street law and powers – highways, traffic, utilities, environmental health, licensing, planning etc Contracts, procurement, Best Value Finance of streets Communication and consultation Forms of community governance Street management skills – Street Excellence Model
CASE STUDIES Studies by mixed discipline work groups of different types of streets	
RESEARCH Research project by student on an agreed topic, related to an aspect of street design, management or enhancement	

Course target

Individuals who have a qualification in a built environment discipline such as environmental health, civil engineering, planning or social sciences, such as economic development.

STEPS TO ACHIEVING THE VISION - PROVIDING THE SKILLS

Course objective

To provide individuals with an holistic appreciation of the role and functions of streets; and practical skills on how to manage and improve streets and the activities that go on within and around them.

Format for the course

The course could be provided on a correspondence, or day release basis to allow individuals to continue in their work. Ideally it would be provided by a syndicate of universities to provide good geographical coverage.

QUESTIONS

- *Do you think the MBA in Urban Street Management would help provide the necessary skills needed to manage streets?*
- *Can you envisage many professionals taking the qualification.*
- *What would be the best way of providing the course.*
 - *Full time?*
 - *Part time?*
 - *Correspondence?*

Streetcraft

Problem Poor quality work, shortage of suitably skilled people

Proposals **Streetcraft skills**

The quality and standard of workmanship in the public realm is often criticised as a major detractor from the street environment, with more and more footway repair and enhancement schemes carried out by generalist personnel. Improved training opportunities in "streetcraft" are proposed to revive traditional masonry and pavior skills. Support should be given to the creation of a Modern Apprenticeship for street masons/paviors which builds on the NVQ system, and Local Authority contracting procedures should be revised to ensure high specifications (e.g. SCOTS Design Manual) and associated training programmes are incorporated into any major scheme.

QUESTIONS

- *Have you experienced problems with the quality of work?*
- *Is there a shortage of suitably skilled people locally?*
- *Do you think the proposal for the revival of masonry and pavior skills would help address the problem?*

F. Revising Legislation

Making people the basis of street legislation

Problem A complex system of legislation which attends to the individual components of a street, rather than giving cognisance to the street as a single entity. The legislation emphasises the role of the street as a right of way, and protects an individual's right of passage. The legislation does not recognise the rights or interests of the community around the street to the same degree

Proposal A review of the highways act and other relevant legislation

The current assumption amongst some of those responsible for highway design and traffic engineering- largely stemming from the current legal framework- is that traffic considerations are the main determinant of street design. Highway legislation has evolved over the last century primarily to meet the needs of the growing number of motor vehicles. Even though wider needs such as environment and access are now recognised, the legislation is still applied rigidly as the threat of highways liability claims discourages creativity, innovation and risk-taking. This also contributes to professional defensiveness rather than co-operation. There is a need to review the professional and legal framework in order to broaden and integrate the design criteria for streets to allow for local distinctiveness and to give priority to people, including walking, sitting, cycling and other street uses such as street cafes.

Revise Highways Act

The Highways Act was enacted in 1980 and needs to be modernised in a number of areas if the Vision is to be achieved. For example, there have been substantial changes in the whole of transport policy, which shifted from a focus on road transport ("Roads to Prosperity" policy of the 1990s) to multi-modal movement and the protection of the environment. The legislation does not reflect the change in emphasis nor adequately control activities that have been introduced since its drafting (i.e. statutory undertakers run as private companies and Cable TV).

The philosophical basis of the Highways Act is the right of travellers to pass and repass and the duty of the Local Authority is to protect those rights. But this "right" now results in the street becoming a place of danger, where people are killed and where other street-related activities are now difficult or impossible due to the levels of motor traffic. The Act needs to be updated to make it more relevant to modern usage (for example, introduction of pedestrian priority where the speed limit is 20mph or less) and to remove historical anomalies- such as parking on the footway being legal even though it is illegal to drive on the footway.

When the Act is reviewed it particularly needs to distinguish between roads and streets in terms of the legal framework and to acknowledge the wider role-played by streets for people and as public space within the community. The revised legislation might be entitled the Highways and Streets Act and would usefully include modernised sections which:

- ▲ enable flexibility and creativity to develop Street Management and Stewardship Codes and local design criteria
- ▲ formalise pedestrian priority
- ▲ impose on motorists a duty of care for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists
- ▲ impose on operators a duty of care and stewardship
- ▲ revise requirements for signing etc.
- ▲ regularise licensing procedures
- ▲ clarify liabilities of Local Authorities and users
- ▲ enable Local Authorities to effectively manage action/activities in or on the street.

QUESTIONS

- Do you think the Highways Act and other legislation related to the street reflect modern priorities?
- What key changes would you make?

Combined utilities ducts - a solution to the problem of streetworks?

Problem Disruption to streets, damage to the road and trees.

Proposal **Wider use of combined utilities ducts.** A review of the economic case for the installation of combined utilities ducts, and the legislative measures that would be required to introduce them in urban areas.

There is a problem with the growing web of services that lie beneath urban streets and there are increasing complaints about continual disruption to traffic, damage to street trees, and weakening of the road. At present each utility, gas, electricity, telephone, or Cable TV, digs its own trench for its own cable or pipe. Combined utilities ducts where a number of different utilities use the same duct are used in Europe, and to a limited degree in the UK. But more widespread use would probably require compulsion by legislation. The control over activities and installations in the street is divided between a number of different bodies, and there are opportunities to consolidate these powers.

QUESTIONS

- Do you think it is time to review the scope for combined utilities ducts?

Street Management Legislation and Regulations

Litter and Refuse <i>Environmental Protection Act 1990 Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse</i>		Litter Abatement Notices <i>issued by Magistrates under EPA 1990 1982</i>	
Flyposting <i>Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992</i>		Eyesores and Untidy Land <i>Untidy Land Orders under S215</i>	
Vehicle Obstruction <i>S37 Highways Act 1980</i>		Controlling Access by Vehicles <i>Traffic Regulation Orders SI Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984</i>	
Parking on the footway <i>not an offence unless an obstruction, or prohibited by specific local act</i>		Driving along the footway <i>S72 Highways Act 1985 Only enforceable by Police</i>	
Advertising within the highway <i>Permits issued under SI 15 Highways Act 1980</i>		Road openings by Statutory Undertakers <i>Rights exist under a variety of legislation especially New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991</i>	
Vending Stalls <i>SI 15B Highways Act 1980</i>		Shop Advertising Boards <i>not covered by Legislation unless obstructing highway</i>	
Licensed Obstructions Ships, Scaffolding, Materials, Hoardings <i>Highways Act</i>		Charity Collections <i>Police, Factories etc (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916 Charities Act 1992</i>	
Street Events <i>Highways Act and Health and Safety at Work Act</i>			
Highways Maintenance <i>Highways Act 1980</i>		Winter Maintenance <i>Highways Act 1980</i>	
Licensable Street Events <i>Only applies to private land where access is restricted</i>		Street Trading <i>Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1982</i>	
Street Cafes <i>Highways Amenities Licence under SI 15B Highways Act 1980</i>		Street Trading <i>License under S 20 Licensing Act 1964 issued by Magistrates</i>	
Noise on the Street <i>Alarms: S80 EPA 1980 Other sources: Control of Pollution Act 1974</i>		Air Pollution <i>from traffic (to be filled in)</i>	
		Air Pollution <i>from sites or premises Clean Air Act 1993</i>	
		Statutory Nuisances <i>Abatement notices can be issued by the Local Authority which it is an offence to ignore</i>	

Summary of Actions

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	Lead in taking action	Time-scale
STREET EXCELLENCE MODEL			
Develop the Street Excellence Model (SEM), a form of the EFQM Business Excellence Model, specifically applicable to the street and public realm	Establish broad based working group to develop the SEM as it would apply to streets and the public realm Develop Performance Measures and criteria (both local and national) for SEM Set up Pilot Schemes with associated training	UDAL, DETR, Local Government, business, local communities	M
Promote the application of the Street Excellence Model, as a means of ensuring current practice is effective in terms of design excellence, focus on people and communities, fitness for purpose.	Build SEM into Best Value and beacon status approach Investigate scope for application of Street Excellence Model a legal requirement of Plans and Proposals affecting the public realm/street scene	As above	M
IMPROVING MANAGEMENT			
Achieve greater collaboration and integration between professions, disciplines and organisations involved in the public realm and across Local Authority departmental boundaries	Produce Public Realm Strategy Prepare and disseminate Good Practice in street scene and management issues	L. A. to co-ordinate, businesses communities, public utilities/statutory. Undertakers Professional & academic institutions,	S/M S
Reduce fragmentation of responsibilities and streamline management in the public realm (see also Legislation)	Will come out of application of SEM Consolidate and simplify responsibilities; create one point of contact and possibly create single entity to integrate functions. Introduce Street Management and Stewardship Codes, following research and pilots	Local Authority, in conjunction with Stat. Undertakers and other operators	M M/L M
Address inter-relationship of street and surrounding buildings/uses.	As above Develop Design Code approach to streets, both for new development and alterations /improvements	As above	M
Improve quality of street design, implementation, and maintenance. Issues include access and mobility, natural surveillance and safety, allocation of space as between people and motor traffic, landscaping and other amenities.	SEM will indirectly contribute Planning Guidance (e.g. PPGs) EU Directives on Noise and Air Quality Public Realm Strategy Street Management and Stewardship Codes Design codes and other relevant Codes of Practice Good Practice/Design Manuals Training (see below)	Local Authority Government Local Authority Professional and academic institutions	M M S/M M S/M S S M

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE VISION - SUMMARY

MODERNISING COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE			
Facilitate community involvement in developing the Vision for their street/environment	Involve communities in Street Audit/Placecheck Involve communities in Public Realm Strategy Create direct access (at least one point of contact) to decision-makers and those responsible for action in the public realm	Local Authority, communities	S S/M S/M
Establish streets as the focus for action, with more direct community involvement in street management /maintenance	Establish Quality Street Partnerships and Street Agreements (see also Legislation) Research and introduce new forms of street governance systems which facilitate community empowerment	Local Authorities, communities Appropriate body	S/M L
OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	Lead in taking action	Timescale for outcomes
WIDENING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES			
Ensure more holistic approach to the planning and design activities in streets and the public realm	Establish new cross-disciplinary qualification (MBA) in Urban Street Management, to include collaborative management skills, SEM, urban governance, community development skills and sustainability	Professional and academic institutions	M
Encourage high standard of workmanship in the public realm	Increase accessibility of training in Street Crafts, such as apprenticeships and NVQ schemes in masonry and paving Contracts to require quality and training schemes	IDEA, Local Authorities	M S
REVISING LEGISLATION			
Review and change legislative framework to facilitate improvements, including all control mechanisms that relate to the public realm	When the Highways Act is next reviewed, incorporate revisions to enable improved design and management of the Street and rename "Highways and Streets Act" Set up project to research and develop how control mechanisms could be consolidated and integrated, and relate to Street Management and Stewardship Codes	Government in partnership with UDAL, Local Authorities	L M
Investigate new ways (positive, rather than prohibitive) to provide effective signing that reduces clutter etc	As part of above or separately look at simplified and less intrusive signing system based on signing zones	As above	M/L
Facilitate decision-making at the community/street level, including development of local design criteria	Incorporate consideration of new forms of street governance/new legal framework in the agenda of an appropriate body Initiate research/pilots in Quality Street Partnerships and Street Agreements (which require revised legal basis)	Appropriate body Local Authority with support from Government	L S/M
Facilitate increased funding for maintenance and refreshment (e.g. revenue)	Examine Local Transport Plan, LA borrowing controls Include long-term maintenance in contract requirements Facilitate private/public initiatives	Government, LAs	M/L S M/L



URBAN DESIGN ALLIANCE

UDAL aims to work with all parties concerned with the built environment - central and local government, local communities, the business community, property developers and investors and the professions.

Urban design provides a means of improving the quality of people's lives through the creation and subsequent maintenance of liveable and sustainable environments. Its principles can be applied in the countryside as well as in towns and cities and are relevant both to existing and new development.

All of the bodies participating in the Alliance share a belief in the crucial importance that urban design can play in the wider urban agenda of making our cities, towns and villages more liveable and enjoyable places. They recognise, too, that urban design is a matter which crosses many professional boundaries and must, therefore, be a shared responsibility.

The UDAL Members

Civic Trust
 Landscape Institute
 Institution of Civil Engineers
 Royal Institute of British Architects
 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
 Royal Town Planning Institute
 Urban Design Group

UDAL's Objectives

- ▲ to give practical effect to the principles of Planning Policy Guidance Note 1;
- ▲ to promote the importance of urban design as a means of improving the (built) environment;
- ▲ to show how paying attention to urban design can deliver better value and quality;
- ▲ to engage communities in the understanding and application of good urban design;
- ▲ to enhance the public's understanding and perception of urban design issues;
- ▲ to seek higher standards in the practice of urban design;
- ▲ to achieve a higher degree of understanding and co-operation between the professions engaged in various aspects of urban design.

What is Urban Design?

Urban Design is defined in Planning Policy Guidance Note No 1 (PPG1) as the relationship between different buildings; the relationship between buildings and the streets, squares, parks, waterways and other spaces which make up the public domain; the nature and quality of the public domain itself; the relationship of one part of a village, town or city with other parts; and the patterns of movement and activity which are thereby established; in short, the complex relationships between all the elements of built and unbuilt space. As the appearance and treatment of the spaces between and around buildings is often of comparable importance to the design of the buildings themselves, the Guidance also states that landscape design should be considered as an integral part of urban design. Urban design is not simply concerned with new development but also with the maintenance and enhancement of existing development.

Many benefits can flow from urban design. Good design can help promote sustainable development; improve the quality of the existing environment; attract business and investment; reinforce civic pride and a sense of place; underpin the role of towns and cities as centres of culture and social activity; and relieve pressure for developments in out of town locations and on greenfield sites. Through its emphasis on quality in development it can also help to secure continued public acceptance of necessary new development.

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