

# **“ PPP ”**

## **People for Proper Policing in North Wales**

### **The 'naked streets' concept**

In recent years, several local councils in the UK have been testing an innovative Dutch technique to reduce traffic incidents called 'de-cluttering'. **In Wiltshire, white centre-lines were removed from the roads in Seend Village – accidents decreased by a third and the average speed reduced by five per cent. (PPP comments...**That means that the proliferation of signs etc has **INCREASED accidents by a similar amount.** Who should be held accountable!?) In Kensington, the High Street has been de-cluttered of devices originally installed to protect pedestrians. Barriers between pedestrian areas and the road have been removed, kerbs have been stripped away from junctions and the number of street signs has been reduced, **resulting in a drop in accidents.**

The idea originated in the Netherlands, where the concept (called 'naked streets') has been taken even further. Dangerous junctions have been stripped of traffic lights, road signs, directional markers and pedestrian crossings. To the approaching driver such intersections are totally ambiguous, and with nothing to tell drivers what to do they have to figure it out for themselves. As a result, drivers seem to approach it cautiously and with an eye on what everybody else in the vicinity is up to.

Supporters of the 'naked streets' concept argue that, drivers, pedestrians and cyclists are forced to interact, make eye contact and adapt to the traffic, instead of relying on signs and signals. They are given more responsibility for their actions on the road. Without the conventional rules of the road in place, drivers tend to slow down and develop an understanding of their environment. It may be that road users pay less attention to their surroundings if they feel protected by an array of signs telling them what to do.

Where 'naked streets' have been adopted, accidents have gone down as have average speeds, and as traffic moves more efficiently journey times have decreased. **DfT has commissioned research to explore de-cluttering, suitable speed restrictions and how to minimise the environmental impact of traffic signs and street furniture.(and Fatal distraction of drivers!)**

**The PPP Comments...this is a brilliant concept and needs to be pursued across the UK. Which Council in North Wales will be brave and intelligent enough to give it a go?. We have some brilliant examples in North Wales of the control freaks at work. At the round about to the Tesco store in Bangor sensible drivers want to form 2 lanes ....left & straight on to the city or right to Tescos. The council waste paint to produce a no go hatched patch on the left Why??.....Maybe our supporters can tell us of others at [info@properpolicing.org.uk](mailto:info@properpolicing.org.uk) (The PPP December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006)**