

Designers showcase innovative ideas

INNOVATIVE designs including a pocket Braille reading tool and a system to hold up speeding motorists have been created by university students.

Nine product ideas went on display at the University of Cambridge Institute of Manufacturing's Design Show, an annual event for undergraduate manufacturing engineers to showcase ideas to inventors, industrialists and designers.

Highlights included SpeedSmart, an intelligent "speed calming" system

which stops speeding motorists at red lights and identifies them to drivers held up behind.

Another innovation is the Braille Belt – a pocket-size device which captures text and translates it into Braille. The tool is capable of reading newspapers, novels, cereal packets and medicine instructions.

Peter Budge, one of three designers behind the project, said: "We have had strong interest from potential backers and the hope is our technology will

eventually lead to the production of pocket-sized Braille output devices that are much easier to carry around."

Other showcased ideas included the Clean Cup Sauna, an eco-friendly cup cleaning system which requires 85 per cent less water than traditional dishwashers, and Activ-Back, a device to help users strengthen their backs.

Dr James Moultrie, lecturer, said: "Hopefully some ideas will see the light of day in a commercial setting in the not-too-distant future."