

9 Guiding delivery – next steps: better safety and security

Council Plan priorities 2011-2014: Giving children the best start in life; confident and safe communities

“Local road safety strategies should bring together the efforts of local authorities, the emergency services, other public agencies, the private sector and the voluntary sector to enable the most to be made of the talents and resources available to improve road safety delivery.”

“Local authorities have the democratic mandate to lead the development and implementation of local road safety strategies.”

Advice about Local Road Safety Strategies, Department for Transport, 2009

The goal of the road safety strategy is to deliver continuing reductions in the numbers of people killed and injured on the roads of Derbyshire.

We have achieved considerable reductions in casualties over the last 10 years, 1,474 fewer people killed or injured on County roads compared to 10 years ago. However, that still means in 2009 on the County's roads:

- 449 people were killed or seriously injured,
- 2,525 people were slightly injured,
- 239 children were injured.

Our goal of continuing these reductions will be achieved through the continued use of a data led, evidence based approach, where the analysis of data directs our work and resources to the areas where they can most effectively deliver meaningful results.

In addition, we will continue to predict changes in the medium and long-term that may affect road safety and plan effective responses to them.

We will continue to work with local, regional and national partners to share skills and resources to deliver these reductions.

Our analysis will consider regional and national information, collision data from the Police, information from the NHS and other sources and information relating to the use, type and vulnerability of vehicles and road users. We will also take account of the wishes of local communities in shaping how we work towards reducing casualties in those communities.

9.1 Safety and security priorities

Analysis of data has shown that currently the priorities within Derbyshire are:

- Reducing vulnerable road user casualties.
- Reducing motorcyclist casualties.
- Managing occupational road risk.
- Tackling problem routes.
- Reducing young driver casualties.

Cross cutting these groups are issues of drink and drug driving, changes in the profile of road users (for example, increases in the population's average age), and modal shift from cars to pedal cycles and walking.

Priorities within reducing crime and fear of crime will be to improve public transport waiting areas and routes to them, and targeted small scale street lighting improvements where there are areas of concern.

9.2 Safety and security core business

As our approach to improving road safety is evidence based, this allows us to tailor work to meet the challenges facing us. The core business of the work is done in partnership with the Derby and Derbyshire Road Safety Partnership (DDRSP); in addition we work with other appropriate partners to address particular issues, e.g. Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) to deliver a consistent and appropriate road safety education message.

We will use our analysis to identify the groups that require our main casualty reduction effort to make the biggest improvement to the largest number of people, regardless of district. For example, we know that some deprived areas have a disproportionate child casualty rate; we will strive to reduce that to match or beat national levels.

Currently our focus includes the following:

Road safety education and training

Our Road Safety Officers deliver road safety education on a range of topics, including pedestrian training, cycle training, alcohol misuse, driver and rider training, and defensive strategies to deal with peer pressure. These interventions are used across all ages from pre-school to adult, and all road users, including those who walk, are passengers or cycle or use powered vehicles.

In addition, we support work done by other agencies, such as the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Institute of Advanced Motorists, by subsidising training and education. Our approach to reducing motorcycle casualties has a large element of rider training using selected partner driver training providers who we subsidise to improve accessibility.

Road safety publicity

Publicity is an important arm of our road safety work, through the County Council's Environmental Services Department, or working closely with DDRSP's publicity officer.

With effective publicity we can inform road users of dangers, changes to behaviour that will benefit them, and inform and encourage participation in training programmes.

In addition, we can increase public confidence to use roads in a more sustainable and healthy way. The mistaken perception of cycling being a dangerous activity militates against modal shift; changing that perception will improve individuals' health and our environment.



Road safety engineering

Road engineering forms a significant part of the success we have achieved so far in reducing casualties. Introducing physical improvements to road layout, geometry, signing and control have all played a part in reducing risk and casualties. Measures include Safer Routes to School, 20mph schemes, junction improvements, and route treatment.

Changes to speed limits, in conjunction with appropriate enforcement, education or engineering measures, also significantly reduce collisions and casualties.



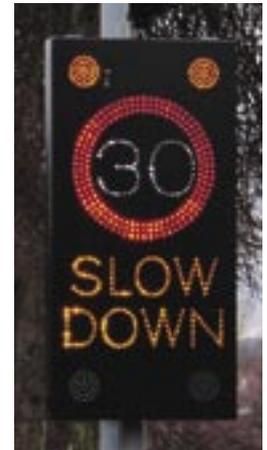
Revised speed limits and crossing point on Loundsley Green Road.

To build on this foundation, the selection of road safety schemes will continue to be based on the road safety

benefits achievable. Other engineering schemes could be prioritised on their road safety benefits. The inclusion of road safety audits for more schemes could help to glean further road safety benefits.

To make certain that lessons are learned, all engineering schemes will be monitored as to their effectiveness and the results will be valuable in shaping future schemes and engineering responses.

The use of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) and speed reduction schemes, such as 20mph areas will be actively considered and introduced where there are road safety benefits. However, the proliferation of VAS over recent years has devalued their impact. We must ensure they are only used where this is an appropriate remedy which will yield benefits and we will develop a policy to ensure this is the case.



Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS).

Similarly, 20mph areas can significantly reduce casualties, but they are not an appropriate measure everywhere. Studies have shown that they are most effective in areas of relatively high casualties, hence we will consider their introduction in such areas, and not as a blanket measure across urban areas.

Improvements to the roads by using, where appropriate, antiskid surfacing will help to improve the road's inherent safety and prepare for future demands caused by increased heavy rainfall and likelihood of flooding through climate change. We are working to identify sites where flooding/climate change could cause casualties and remedy them.

Road signs play a vital role informing road users, this includes helping them to understand and deal with dangers and risks on the road. This signing can be passive or, where necessary, active. However, the proliferation of signs can be both costly to install and maintain, visually polluting and, importantly, can actually pose risks by overloading the road user with information to the point where the vital road safety element is missed. Our continuing audit of signs will ensure that only those that are necessary remain, and that they are adequately maintained.

Road safety and asset management principles will be linked together regarding the use of new infrastructure such as signing. This approach will ensure that decisions will deliver the best outcomes for the best value across the County. The asset management review is covered in Chapter 6.

The maintenance of our roads must be effective. We will ensure that repairs are completed quickly and enhance safety, e.g. replacing crash barriers on a route regularly used by motorcycles with motorcycle friendly barriers.

In addition, we will continue to analyse routes and collision hot spots to identify road safety risks and appropriate remedial measures.

Road safety enforcement

Enforcement, alongside education and engineering, is one of the three key pillars which have formed the basis of our success in reducing casualties over recent years.

Enforcement is the responsibility of the Police and by working directly with Derbyshire Constabulary as partners and through the DDRSP, where both the County Council and Derbyshire Constabulary are principal partners; enforcement work is aligned with our road safety problem areas.

In addition, a key part of DDRSP is CREST (Casualty Reduction Enforcement Support Team), this unit has developed from the original Safety Camera Team. Whilst it still has operational responsibility for the static and mobile safety cameras across the County, it now has a much wider role working with neighbourhoods and Safe Neighbourhood Teams to educate and enforce across the whole range of road safety issues; this will continue to

develop. The benefit of mobile and static cameras, when used appropriately, has been proven beyond doubt. We will therefore continue to use them, but will continually evaluate their effectiveness to ensure their use is where need is proven. Local communities will be included in the debate. Following the reduction in resources available to CREST, efficiency savings have been made, e.g. mobile enforcement will be prioritised over fixed enforcement.

9.3 Safety and security opportunities

Monitoring and evaluation of all road engineering schemes will ensure best use of limited funding which can be directed to areas of proven highest road safety need.

Use of roads is not restricted by County boundaries; similarly, our road safety problems do not respect such arbitrary limits, so we will enhance our regional partnership work. For example, currently approximately 50% of motorcycle casualties in the Peak District in the summer are from outside Derbyshire; to effectively reduce the numbers of these becoming casualties, we must extend our work to work with partners experiencing similar problems and improve our best practice and spread our knowledge and skills to benefit others.

The pooling of knowledge and experience in the effort to make the roads safer is important; we will be contributing to and sharing knowledge from the National Road Safety Knowledge Centre initiative (launched 2010).

9.4 Safety and security long-term projects

Looking to the long-term, road safety will face new and unfamiliar challenges. Our continuing analytical work will allow us to identify trends at an early stage and address them.

In addition, we must prepare for those challenges we know will come.

The demographics of the County will change; there will be an increasing proportion of residents and visitors who are older. Furthermore, these will be of a generation accustomed to the unlimited freedom and use of their own vehicles. This change in age profile will change the type and nature of casualties we must address.

The numbers and frequency of walking and cycle journeys across the County will increase; this has the potential to increase the numbers of casualties in these groups, and we must be proactive to prevent this and encourage these beneficial changes in behaviour.

Climate change is a fact; it is anticipated that rainfall will increase which requires us to prepare roads to deal with this, ensuring that road and path surfaces are well maintained to reduce the likelihood of flooding and aquaplaning. Drainage systems in turn must be able to deal with increased rainfall, and we must identify those areas more likely to flood and alleviate this.

It is also possible that we will see increased vegetation growth on the roadside, which impacts on visibility and driver safety; our maintenance regime will need to adapt to this.

9.5 Guiding delivery – sources of evidence

In guiding delivery of better safety and security, we will use many sources of evidence. Examples are as follows:

- Derbyshire transport challenges.
- Road collision statistics.
- Traffic speed data.
- Public complaints/requests.
- Road safety audits.
- Environmental assessment.
- Crime and anti-social behaviour statistics.
- Graffiti and litter.
- Improvement and Scrutiny Reviews.
- Best Practice advice.

9.6 What we want to achieve in five years

- Continuing reductions in casualties across the County, in particular reductions in the numbers of people killed or seriously injured, motorcyclist casualties and vulnerable road user casualties such as pedestrians and cyclists. However, we must recognise that future budget cuts will impact on our ability to achieve these reductions; our challenge is to minimise this.
- Small-scale community safety improvement schemes where this will contribute to a reduction in crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.