

8. SAFER ROADS

8.1 Road Safety Plan

The County Council has produced a Road Safety Plan which accompanies this LTP. The Road Safety Plan provides further detail on the issues and measures highlighted below.

Hertfordshire's strategy for tackling road collisions and casualties is based on in depth analysis of every injury recorded by Hertfordshire Constabulary on STATS 19 data forms. Education, engineering and enforcement programmes based on best practice and national guidance are developed to address the causes of road injuries.

In terms of casualty reduction, Hertfordshire is following the national trend, with fatalities levelling at just over fifty annually, there was a dip in 2003 with the lowest number of fatalities on record, at 38. Hertfordshire has specifically focused its programmes to reduce fatal and serious injuries as a priority. Using this approach, Hertfordshire County Council has been successful in reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured (KSI) and are already approaching the 40% reduction target set for 2010. This reduction is achieved by:

- Priority is established using a modified ranking system for casualty reduction engineering schemes that provides a greater emphasis on KSI collisions;
- The Hertfordshire Safety Camera Partnership has been formed to address speed related collisions, the main focus again being to reduce KSI's;
- Hertfordshire has also entered into an LPSA road safety stretched target to further reduce KSI casualties on all roads, excluding motorways by 2005. Further reductions could be achieved if the high levels of people not

wearing seat belts in fatal collisions could be reduced (see Section 3.1 in the Road Safety Plan 2006 - 2010).

In contrast, there has been very little change in the number of slight collisions and casualties. It is likely that reductions in fatal and serious collisions have helped to keep slights at a fairly constant level, and high levels of congestion in the county, together with a higher number of minor collisions being reported, may also contribute.

The delivery of education, engineering and enforcement programmes through working with a variety of internal and external partners to ensure support for partner strategies and plans.

Consideration will be given during the life of this LTP to using collision and casualty data and/or risk assessment information to add value and influence other transport programmes such as Integrated Transport Projects (ITP) and maintenance schemes. Casualty data is already one of the issues considered when prioritising and developing modal shift programmes such as Safer Routes to School and School Travel Plans.

In addition, although STATS 19 is the major source of information, the County Council propose to utilise other sources such as damage to street furniture, to help identify further areas of potential risk. Census data can assist in the identification of specific target groups for education, training and publicity programmes.

A review of the last decade of safety engineering schemes is to be carried out. The intention will be to ensure continued maintenance of the schemes, such as establishing durability of anti skid treatments.

8.2 Targets and best use of information

In 2000, the County Council adopted the casualty reduction targets set out in the national road safety strategy *“Tomorrow’s Roads - Safer for Everyone”* and indications are that total KSI’s have already reduced by around 35% (target 40%) and child KSI’s have reduced by 40% (target 50%).

Hertfordshire is a relatively affluent county with high employment and pockets of disadvantage. A social deprivation study is being carried out to investigate whether there is a significantly higher incidence of casualties in disadvantaged areas. The County Council intends to look at different road user types and groups to establish if there are any patterns that can be identified in these areas. Home postcode information from STATS 19 data will be essential to identify targets for supporting education and training programmes.

Performance is monitored through the LTP Annual Progress Report and Best Value Performance Plan, and reported in the annual Road Safety Plan Review.

Public misconceptions that it is safer to take children to school in a car than allowing them to walk, cycle or use public transport are challenged through the School Travel Planning and Safer Routes to School programmes. Road safety education and training programmes are incorporated to ensure safe skills and strategies are developed alongside these projects. Infrastructure improvements, such as pedestrian crossings and cycle facilities can also be considered through this process.

Another perception is that a fatality is required before any action can be taken and there are frustrations when a reported “safety” issue is not acted upon. The County Council proposes to develop a process to risk assess safety issues raised by Members and the public, and to base budget allocation for investigation and/or delivery according to the scheme position in the ranking list. Existing collision sites would receive the highest ranking but it is anticipated that this process could help to deal with areas that would not normally be considered.

8.3 Road Safety Policy Issues

The introduction of the modified ranking system, giving additional weighting for KSI’s has achieved good reductions, however this may have impacted on the number of slight casualties. Within the KSI identification process there is still a need to further investigate what measures can be taken to reduce the number of powered two wheeler KSI’s and the static but significant number of pedestrian KSI’s. Alcohol or drugs is a factor in adult pedestrian fatalities.

The largest number of KSI casualties remains car users, at around 50%. There are many factors that contribute to collisions involving car users, the majority of which relate to driver behaviour and attitude. Driver improvement, training and awareness raising programmes will continue to be run to tackle this. Speed awareness courses will also be implemented. A large number of people killed while travelling in cars do not wear seatbelts. Hertfordshire Police will record data about seatbelt wearing on STATS 19 forms, as a local project, which will provide data to inform casualty reduction and prevention programmes.

Children - Nearly half of all child casualties in Hertfordshire occur while they are travelling in vehicles, and pedestrians account for over a quarter. A child safety audit of KSI casualties revealed there were very few cluster sites in the county, hence an area approach was adopted that identified Stevenage and Hemel Hempstead as areas with high child KSI collisions. Several schemes have been implemented in Stevenage and work is planned in Hemel Hempstead.

Child pedestrian casualties peak at 12-15 years of age, having started to increase in the 8-11. The County Council have implemented a child pedestrian skills training programme in primary schools. Promotion of Walking Buses and child cyclist training is carried out across the county supporting the School Travel Planning process and Safer Routes to School programme which is becoming increasingly popular. The County Council also provides a School Crossing Patrol Service with approximately 200 sites county wide.

The County Council also run an in-car safety education programme to address the large number of children hurt in vehicles. These are run with parents and children, in conjunction with partners such as Primary Care staff, schools and Police. Emphasis is placed on the correct fitting of child car safety seats and ensuring children wear seat belts on every trip. Campaign activity to raise awareness of many issues is linked to the national THINK! campaign, both locally and regionally.

Motorcyclists - Motorcyclist KSI casualties have levelled at around 20% over the last few years but moped riders have risen recently. A county wide study of powered two wheeler KSI accidents will be undertaken, experience indicating that an area or route strategy will be the likely outcome. Education and training

programmes to reduce the number of casualties are run under the BikeSafe scheme in conjunction with the Police. Motorcycling groups will be invited to participate in the development of a county motorcycling strategy through a motorcycling forum.

Pedestrians - 16% of KSI's in Hertfordshire involve pedestrians with a high number of those fatally injured being the elderly. Also, there is a predominance of KSI's in the adult 20-29 age group. They are most likely to be injured at weekends between 10pm and 2am, indicating the likelihood that alcohol is involved. Child pedestrian casualties peak at the 12-15 age group, although they are still significant in the 8-11 age group.

Road safety at work - Research has shown that many casualties arise from accidents when a driver is travelling as part of their work. Journey type is now being recorded on STATS 19 forms and will provide data that will enable interventions to be developed for the workplace. The County Council is developing a policy to manage work related road safety for its own staff, in order to meet the employer's duty of care under Health and Safety legislation. We will also work with local businesses and voluntary organisations to promote effective management of occupational road risk.

Opportunities will be taken, where appropriate, to link with the Business TravelWise initiative to promote business travel planning as part of this process.

Speed management - A speed management strategy has recently been developed that sets out the County Councils approach to setting speed limits and the toolkit available for managing speed. It is anticipated that speed

limit reviews will be undertaken as part of the programme within the Area Plans.

Enforcement through the safety camera partnership is an integral part of the strategy.

Rural areas - In order to keep the county moving we have included rural areas in the road hierarchy. Due to the nature of rural roads, casualties and collisions tend to be more predominantly spread along a route, rather than clustered at individual sites or junctions. Where appropriate we will consider links to a variety of rights of way in order to encourage walkers, cyclists and horse riders to use routes that are more suitable for their transport needs. The county has implemented a Quiet Lanes Project in Ayot St Peter Parish.

Urban areas - Exceeding the speed limit was a factor in 16% of KSI's on 30mph roads. Safety camera enforcement in Hertfordshire occurs mainly on roads with 30mph and 40mph limits. This reflects the number of casualties that occur on these roads, as the criteria for camera enforcement is governed by the number of KSI's. Safety cameras, together with physical and awareness raising measures will continue to be used to encourage slower speeds. Many local communities request speed reduction measures.

The County Council has a road hierarchy and the proposed speed management strategy will help us to consider whether the road hierarchy needs to be amended. A balance must be struck between safety considerations and the need to ease congestion, another key indicator of this LTP.

Disadvantage - Hertfordshire is a relatively affluent county with high employment and very few pockets of disadvantage. Boundary changes have made it difficult to make

comparisons but a social deprivation study is being carried out to investigate whether there is a significantly higher incidence of casualties in disadvantaged areas. The County Council will be investigating different road user types and groups to establish if there are any patterns that can be identified in disadvantaged areas. Home postcode information from STATS 19 data will be essential in this process.

8.4 Links to other areas of work

Where relevant, links are made to local Health Improvement Plans (HIMPs) and Community Safety Strategies, where road safety has been identified as a local issue. A road casualty reduction partnership, including partners such as Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Ambulance and Paramedic Trust and the Health Authority is proposed, to bring added value to casualty reduction programmes.

8.5 Funding and Investment

The overall safety engineering budget is funded from both revenue and capital finance. Education, training and publicity (ETP) programmes, and School Crossing Patrols are revenue funded. Education programmes directly link to the capital funded Safer Routes to School programme, and where possible, links are made with accident schemes.

8.6 Making the most of investment

Predicted accident savings are calculated using the HEN note that is issued annually and reported through the DfT investment monitoring form.

The Highways Agency has joined the Hertfordshire Safety Camera Partnership.

It is hoped that this will lead to more dialogue with the Highways Agency with the view to create more opportunities for combined projects.

8.7 Summary of Key Actions for the next 5 Years.

- To continue to implement education, engineering and enforcement measures.
- To focus on target groups.
- To set up a Road Casualty Reduction Partnership.

Targets and Indicators That Deliver the Safety Shared Priority

The following indicators also support the delivery of the Safety shared priority:

Principal road condition
 Non-principal road condition
 Unclassified road condition
 Footway condition
 Public transport patronage
 Bus punctuality
 Accessibility
 Change in area-wide traffic mileage
 Cycling trips
 Congestion
 Rights of Way
 School travel plans
 Abbey Line

Indicator	Definition
Total killed and seriously injured	Number of people killed or seriously injured on roads in the authority (all ages)
Children killed and seriously injured	Number of children (aged less than 16) killed or seriously injured in the authority
Total slight casualties	Number of slight injuries (all ages)
Speed compliance	Percentage level of compliance with 30mph speed limit