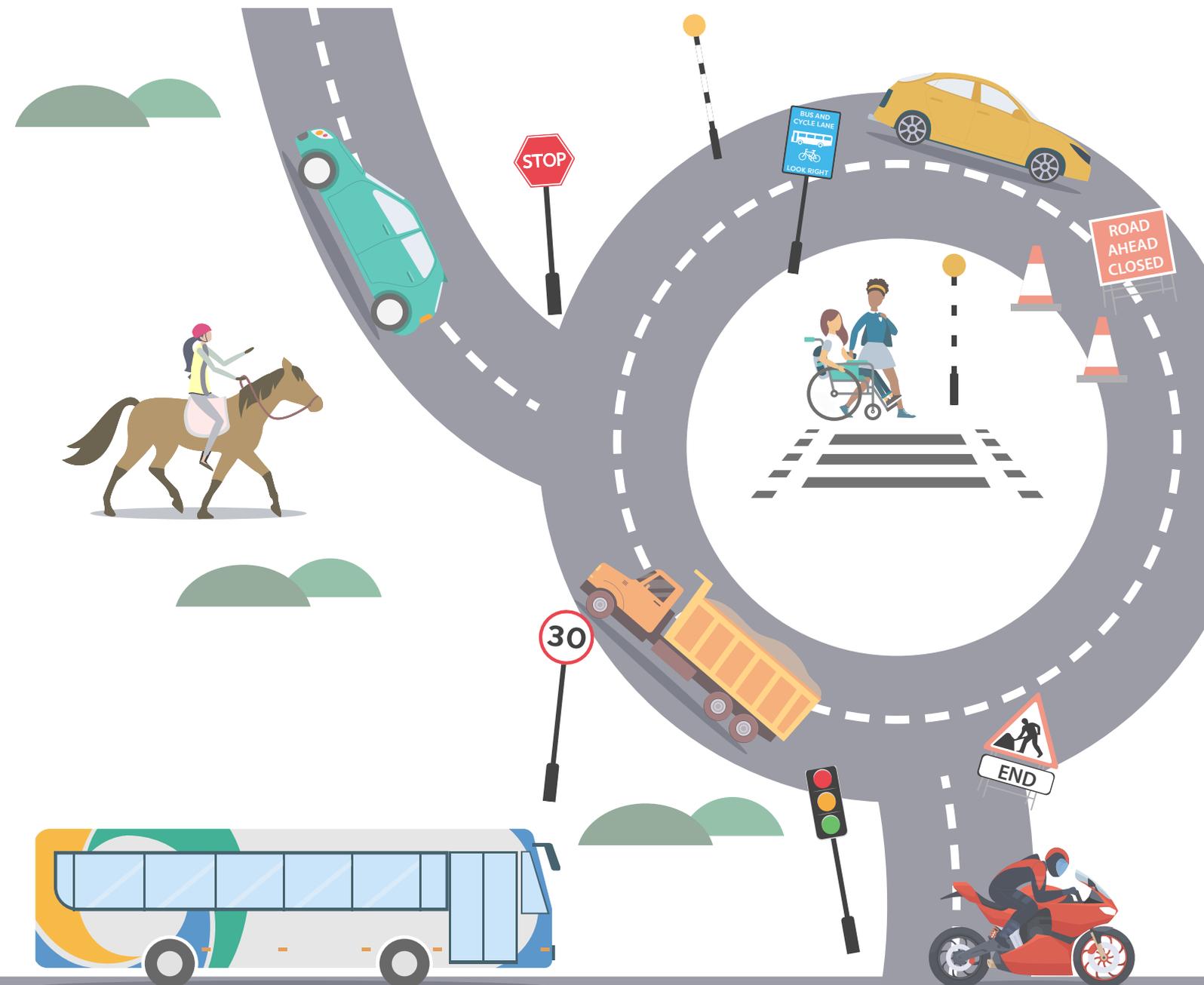




Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Road Safety Partnership Plan 2026-2040



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Foreword by Ministers

As Cabinet Secretaries for Transport, Health and Social Care, and Social Justice, we are proud to present this partnership plan for road safety in Wales. This plan sets out a robust governance structure, clear aims and priorities for reducing road-related harm, and a headline target to significantly lower the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. The Welsh Government together with its partners, should follow up with a detailed delivery plan, outlining concrete actions and safety performance indicators to guide our progress.

Road safety is a cross-cutting priority at the heart of our transport strategy. It is essential for building an efficient, effective, fair and inclusive transport system, one that enables everyone in Wales to access employment, services, and education, supports thriving communities, and drives economic growth.

Our approach to road safety is based on the principle that our life and health should not be compromised by our need to travel. To achieve this, we will use the Safe System approach to minimise risk and work towards Vision Zero, where there is no loss of life or serious injury on our roads.

Road safety is fundamentally linked to health and public health, as road traffic injuries not only result in immediate trauma but also contribute to long-term health burdens, including physical disabilities, psychological distress, and significant economic costs for individuals and health systems. Addressing road safety through a public health lens means adopting a systems approach that integrates injury prevention, health promotion and equity, ensuring that all communities benefit from safer roads and healthier environments, working together to reduce road related harms.

We will also address road safety through a social justice lens, where our policies and road environments protect the most vulnerable, integrating efforts across public health, education, and social policy, and ensure that the benefits of safer roads are shared by all.

For too long, road deaths and severe injuries have been seen as inevitable side effects of mobility. This is morally unacceptable. We are united in our commitment to eliminate these tragedies.

We are committed to aligning and integrating road safety with broader transport policy, and to working collaboratively across health and public health, occupational health and safety, environment and decarbonisation, education, and social justice. By maximising the benefits of partnership, we can truly deliver safer roads for everyone in Wales.

We welcome the publication of the [Department for Transport's Road Safety Strategy](#), which sets out an ambitious vision for reducing road deaths and serious injuries across Britain. The alignment between the UK strategy and our own Partnership Plan – both grounded in the Safe System approach and a commitment to Vision Zero – creates a strong foundation for collaboration.

Together, we invite all partners, stakeholders, and communities to join us in this vital mission.

Ken Skates

Cabinet Secretary for Transport

Jeremy Miles

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care

Jane Hutt

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice

Executive summary

The Road Safety Partnership Plan 2026–2040

sets out a bold, collaborative vision for transforming road safety, and reducing road related harms, across Wales. Rooted in the principles of the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** and the urgent need to decarbonise transport, the Plan aims to eliminate road deaths and serious injuries, and reduce road related harms, while fostering a transport system that is accessible, sustainable, fair and efficient for all.

Vision and Approach

At its core, the Plan adopts the internationally recognised **Vision Zero** philosophy: no death or serious injury on Welsh roads is acceptable. This is underpinned by the **Safe System** approach, which acknowledges human fallibility and vulnerability, and seeks to design a road environment that is forgiving of mistakes and proactively reduces risk. The Plan shifts the focus from blaming individuals to building a resilient, system-wide safety culture.

Strategic Priorities

The Plan's delivery is structured around five key Safe System components:

1. **Safe Roads and Roadsides** – Designing and maintaining infrastructure to support the hierarchy of road users, contributing to decarbonisation and to prevent serious collisions.
2. **Safe Speeds** – Setting and enforcing speed limits that reflect human survivability and local context.
3. **Safe Road Users** – Supporting education, training, and enforcement to encourage responsible behaviour.
4. **Safe Vehicles** – Promoting the adoption of advanced safety technologies for both vehicle occupants but also for the protection of other road users and ensuring vehicle roadworthiness.
5. **Post-Collision Response** – Ensuring rapid, high-quality emergency care and learning from serious collisions to improve future safety.

These components are supported by eight operational levers, including leadership, innovation, legislation, standards, design, education, enforcement, and robust monitoring and evaluation.



Ambition and Targets

The Plan sets a headline target of **40% reduction in road fatalities by 2040**, aiming for no more than 58 deaths per year by the end of the period. Additional targets will address those exposed to the highest risk and those with protected characteristics including those with disabilities. Progress will be tracked using both casualty data and a suite of Safety Performance Indicators (SPIs) tailored to Welsh circumstances.

Governance and Delivery

A new multi-tiered governance structure will oversee delivery:

- **Strategic Partnership Board:** Provides oversight and annual scrutiny, chaired by the Minister responsible for Transport.
- **National Partnership Group:** Sets targets, reviews progress and coordinates Safe System component groups.
- **Component Groups:** Focus on the four action areas—road environment, fleet, road users, and post-crash response—supported by a dedicated data and analysts' group and a communications advisory group.

The Plan is the product of extensive stakeholder engagement, including public consultation, workshops, and expert reviews, ensuring a shared sense of ownership and responsibility.

Key Priorities for Action

- **Enhancing the Environment:** Supporting the use of sustainable transport, integration of modes, upgrading infrastructure and managing speeds.
- **Improving the Fleet:** Raising vehicle safety standards and embracing new technologies.
- **Thriving Road Users:** Strengthening education, licensing, and enforcement, with a focus on vulnerable groups and risky behaviours (e.g., drink/drug driving, mobile phone use).
- **Upgrading Our Response:** Improving emergency care, data collection, and support for victims.

Commitment to Change

The Plan recognises that achieving Vision Zero is a long-term, incremental process requiring sustained commitment, innovation, and partnership. It calls on all stakeholders—government, local authorities, emergency services, industry, and the public—to work together, share responsibility, and build a safer, healthier, and more equitable transport environment for current and future generations.



Introduction

The Road Safety Partnership Plan is our route to implementing a shared national vision for road safety. We want to work with the Welsh people to tackle the unacceptable levels of road trauma and take forward this plan of action reflecting our commitment to improving road safety and reducing road related harms in Wales.

Wales finds itself in a unique position in the world to have adopted legislation for the Wellbeing of Future Generations. This legislation and the current climate crisis call for a bold paradigm change in how we think about road safety and the roads and transport more in general.

We want roads to be shared spaces, where everyone is safe and feels safe and welcome. We want to improve access and inclusion for all across transport in Wales. The freedom to mobility must be balanced against the freedom from fear and harm. Road safety has traditionally been understood as and translated into reduction in those killed or seriously injured (KSI). However, over the last decades, road safety (as measured by reported casualty numbers) has been 'achieved' through a rise in motorised traffic and safety technology that protects those in the cars with a marked fall of other modes of transport, including walking, wheeling, cycling and the use of public transport. The proportion of households in Great Britain without a car fell from 48% in 1971 (based on the Census) to 22% in 2023¹.

The traditional casualty reduction led focus misses a central challenge which is road related harm reduction at source. Hence, now is a time to re-think and re-calibrate in a world where recognition of climate change and the need to decarbonise the transport sector fits with the need to reduce the reliance on car use and reduce overall kinetic energy in the road transport system. Roads free from danger and harm are critical to building more resilient communities in Wales: strengthening our economy; living more sustainably and making everyone feel safe and welcomed when travelling in Wales.

We are focused on building capability to drive systemic improvements in road safety to benefit public health and wellbeing. This includes shaping safer environments through:

- Improvements to infrastructure, including pavements and separated cycle paths, and speed management.
- Advancing fleet safety.
- Fostering a culture of responsible road use.
- Strengthening the post-collision response.
- Cultivating a proactive, data-informed safety culture.
- Making sure we engage and communicate with the public and take everyone along on our journey.

¹ NTS 2023: Car availability and trends in car trips - GOV.UK



This will require the Welsh Government, Corporate Joint Committees², highway authorities, Councils, enforcement agencies, emergency services and our many partners from the commercial and voluntary sector to work with us in achieving our long-term ambition to reduce death and serious injury and other road related harms on Welsh roads.

This **Partnership Plan** draws on the experience of many stakeholders and embraces views from people across Wales who share a belief that our roads, and local communities, should not be marked by lives lost and life-changing injury, but instead roads being critical infrastructure to building a healthy nation for now and future generations.

² Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) are regional corporate bodies established under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. They have powers and duties like local authorities and are responsible for strategic development planning, regional transport planning, and promoting the economic well-being of their areas.

This Partnership Plan embraces Vision Zero, a concept to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. First implemented in Sweden in the 1990s, Vision Zero for us means:

1. **a moral and ethical guiding principle** meaning it should not be acceptable that anyone should die or be seriously injured in a road collision,
2. an understanding that **human beings have limited physical and mental capacities**. By acknowledging these limits, we can design road systems that are more forgiving of human error, reducing harm and improving safety outcomes across the transport network,
3. **a shared responsibility** between road users and all those who can affect road safety.



Our wider responsibilities

Based on the Safe System, the **Partnership Plan** is an extension of our commitments under **Llwybr Newydd – The Wales Transport Strategy 2021** and the **National Transport Delivery Plan 2022 to 2027** and forms a core milestone of Wales' new path towards a more prosperous, sustainable, and inherently safe transport system for generations to come. The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy provides a way to guide future investment giving priority to maintenance by managing and upgrading our existing transport infrastructure. Where we need new infrastructure, it gives priority to walking and cycling, public transport and ultra-low emissions vehicles over other private motor vehicles.

As we implement **The Road Safety Partnership Plan**, we recognise that safety is an integral part of these wider strategic objectives and of the transport system in Wales:

Accessible and Inclusive

Accessible and inclusive transport for all means that our road network allows everyone in Wales to use our roads safely and without physical, language, cost, or information barriers and creating opportunities for people to be involved in the design and delivery of our transport policies, infrastructure and services. If safety is disregarded as a principal objective, then road users exposed to the highest risk and those with protected characteristics including those with disabilities, cannot utilise the network to the same extent as others whose needs may already be catered for. This in turn limits opportunities of those with specific needs to access services and means inequities are maintained. In Wales, we strive for an accessible and inclusive transport system because this means we are increasing the inherent safety and reducing harms for all.

Sustainable

Sustainable transport means that our approach to designing, operating, and managing our roads is in line with our commitment to ensure we proactively mitigate against the effects of climate change, by way of a transport system that prioritises active modes and minimises our environmental impact. We recognise the value of more equitable journey experiences and quality journeys for different modes of travel. If roads are safe, and indeed, if they are perceived to be safe, people are likely to walk, wheel and cycle more often, which reduces the burden of pollutants from vehicle emissions and congestion. This leads to cleaner air for better health and ecological outcomes. Safe roads are, therefore, a key driver of sustainability as they contribute directly to the enabling environment needed for modal shift to occur.

Efficient

An efficient and well-maintained transport system that minimises disruption and delivers a reliable and convenient service. The system cannot be efficient if there are underlying harms embedded at multiple levels. As the number of serious collisions affecting travel decreases, disruption is minimised. We do this by delivering efficient travel through securing the safety performance of our road network, making it a complimentary action that builds capacity that is fit for the future of mobility in Wales.



Our legal duties

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** sets a legally binding common purpose for the national government. It defines seven well-being goals and five ways of working which we have signed up to as part of our statutory duties. This aims to help public services meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This means that actions that we are taking today should also have benefits for the future and secure the wellbeing of future generations to come. The Act supports our existing commitments such as those on the Welsh language, equalities, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Decarbonisation

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 sets the framework for Welsh Government to address climate change. The Welsh Government has committed to introduce legislation to achieve a net zero 2050 target, in line with recommendations from the UK Climate Change Committee³. To achieve this, we will need to meet a 63% reduction by 2030 and an 89% reduction by 2040. We have agreed to front-load action in the next 15 years to avoid the cumulative emissions which later action would incur, and to send a strong signal about the need to take action today rather than leaving the hard work for others tomorrow. The next carbon budget is due to be published in 2026⁴.

Duties of Highway Authorities

The network of roads in Wales is a shared re-source, used by people and to transport goods. Under the **Highways Act 1980** Welsh Ministers have a statutory duty to maintain the Strategic Road Network, this includes motorways and most of the A roads in Wales. Local authorities maintain other roads, including some A roads, B and C roads, local streets, and rural lanes.

All highway authorities (Welsh Government and the 22 local authorities) have a statutory duty under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, to run programmes that promote road safety. They must study road collisions and, based on their findings, take appropriate actions to prevent future collisions. These actions can include providing information and training to road users, improving or repairing roads they are responsible for, and implementing traffic management measures. When building new roads, they must also take steps to minimise the risk of collisions once those roads are in use.

The **Transport (Wales) Act 2006** places a duty on Welsh Ministers to prepare and publish a strategy setting out its policies and how they will be discharged. Covering all modes, it sets out our strategic priorities and desired outcomes, providing a link to the wider priorities as well as plans at the local authority level. The same Act requires Welsh Ministers to keep the strategy under review and provides the ability to revise it from time to time.

Active travel and road safety sit hand in hand. **The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013** and subsequent commitments acknowledge the importance of walking, wheeling, cycling as a practical and vital response to helping Wales meet its environmental and health imperatives,

³ [Wales commits to net zero by 2050, but sets out ambitions to get there sooner | GOV.WALES](#)

⁴ [Climate change targets and carbon budgets | GOV.WALES](#)

directly contributing to physical and mental health and wellbeing. The Act requires the Welsh Ministers and local authorities, in the performance of functions under the Highways Act 1980, to take reasonable steps to enhance the provision made for walkers and cyclists and to have regard to the needs of walkers and cyclists.

Duties of other partners

Section 8 of the **Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004** requires fire and rescue services to respond to road traffic accidents in their area.

The four Welsh Police Forces enforce road traffic laws and co-operate with other agencies, such as the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), to enforce specialised traffic laws, and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to investigate serious work-related road accidents. Roads policing is one of the eight operators of the safe system (see below).

Equality

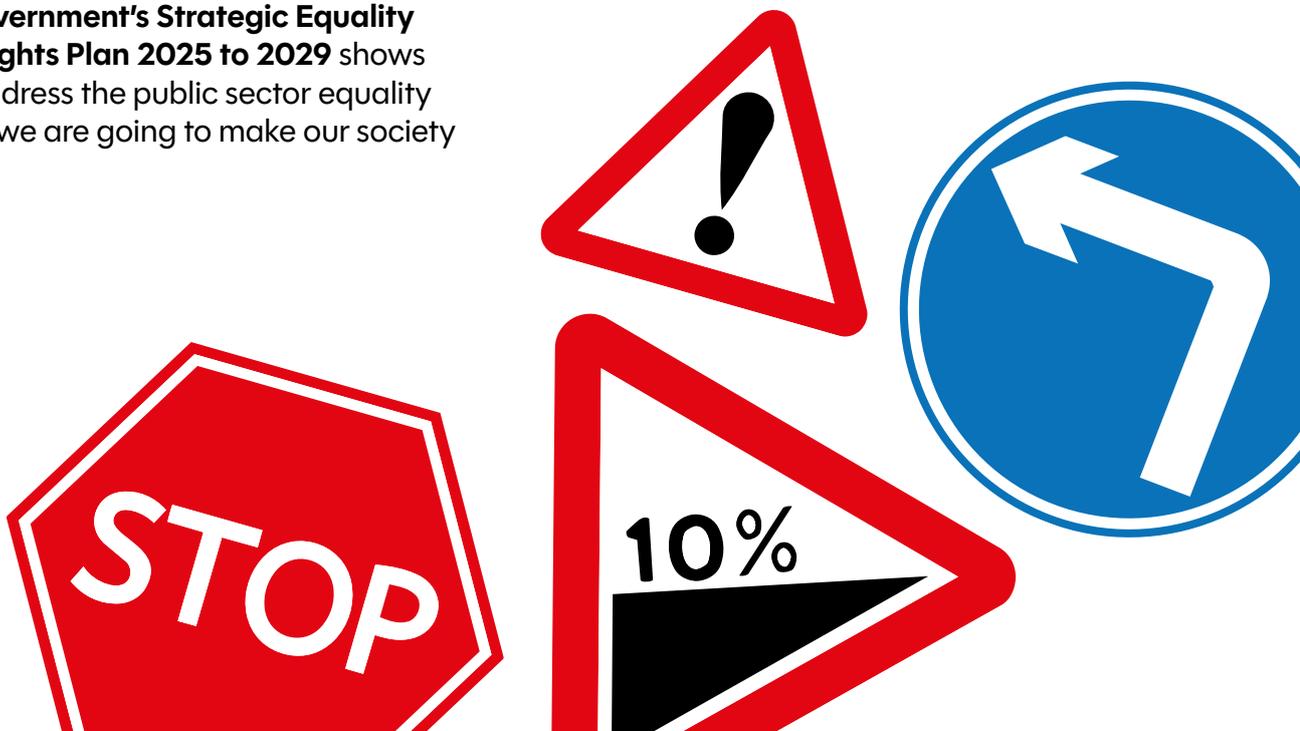
The Equality Act 2010 sets out the public sector equality duty, which covers discrimination because of protected characteristics including those with disabilities.

The Welsh Government's Strategic Equality and Human Rights Plan 2025 to 2029 shows how we will address the public sector equality duty and how we are going to make our society

fairer and more inclusive. There are separate policy and legislative processes for ensuring the right to receive public services in the official languages of Wales, which are being taken forward through the **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**. Together, the equality and Welsh language policy agendas complement and inform one another.

In relation to transport, our equality duties include issues such as the right to travel safely; the right to information in an accessible form; the requirement that disabled people should not be treated less favourably; and the need to make reasonable adjustments. There are also specific licensing and regulatory requirements around different transport modes that include provisions on equality and accessibility.

This new **Road Safety Partnership Plan** seeks to align and to complement these statutory duties and policy goals and help to develop an inclusive transport system that is safe and free from harms for all.



Our Vision for Safety

In 2024 in Wales 84 people were killed, 1,007 were seriously injured⁵ and another 2,914 people suffered slight injuries. These are similar figures to previous years, following a general downward trend. The estimated annual overall cost of road collision casualties in 2024 is a minimum of £569 million⁶.

This is unacceptable. One death on our road network is one too many. Serious collisions should not be regarded as unavoidable accidents. As a society, we should expect that individuals can conduct their everyday activities in safety. However, this sense of security is not fully realised on our roads, unlike in the rail, maritime, and aviation sectors, where safety is treated as an absolute priority.

Vision Zero

A Vision Zero approach is an essential part of the Partnership Plan based on the principle that our life and health should not be compromised by our need to travel and that ultimately no level of death or serious injury is acceptable on our roads.

Vision Zero seeks to achieve safe mobility by design, putting the human being at the centre of our planning, management and use of the road network. This means taking our fallibility into account, accepting that every person makes mistakes, but that they should never carry the ultimate consequence.

Of course, Vision Zero is ambitious, but it is a goal we must aspire to. Roads free from harm and danger allow us to build the kinds of healthy and resilient communities we want across Wales. Communities where children can walk to school with confidence; where local businesses thrive; where cycling and wheeling is pleasant; where people don't feel isolated by fear of traffic; roads that are calmer, cleaner and less congested. We want safe roads for all.

A Safe System

To deliver on our vision, we are shifting our approach and adopting the 'Safe System'. Recognised internationally, a Safe System is one where people, vehicles and the road infrastructure interact in a way that secures a high level of safety.

At the heart of the Safe System are six principles, that recognise the value of human life, the responsibility we share for our roads and the need to build and operate our roads in ways that recognise our vulnerability and fragility as humans.

From these principles, five safe system components emerge, these are action areas that we must strengthen to reduce the risk of collisions, especially those which have life changing consequences.

The complexity of our road system means we need to think about the interaction of things like traffic laws, training standards, street design and enforcement technology. These change mechanisms involve many organisations working together to influence the safety of the system.

⁵ [Police recorded road collisions: 2024 | GOV.WALES](#)

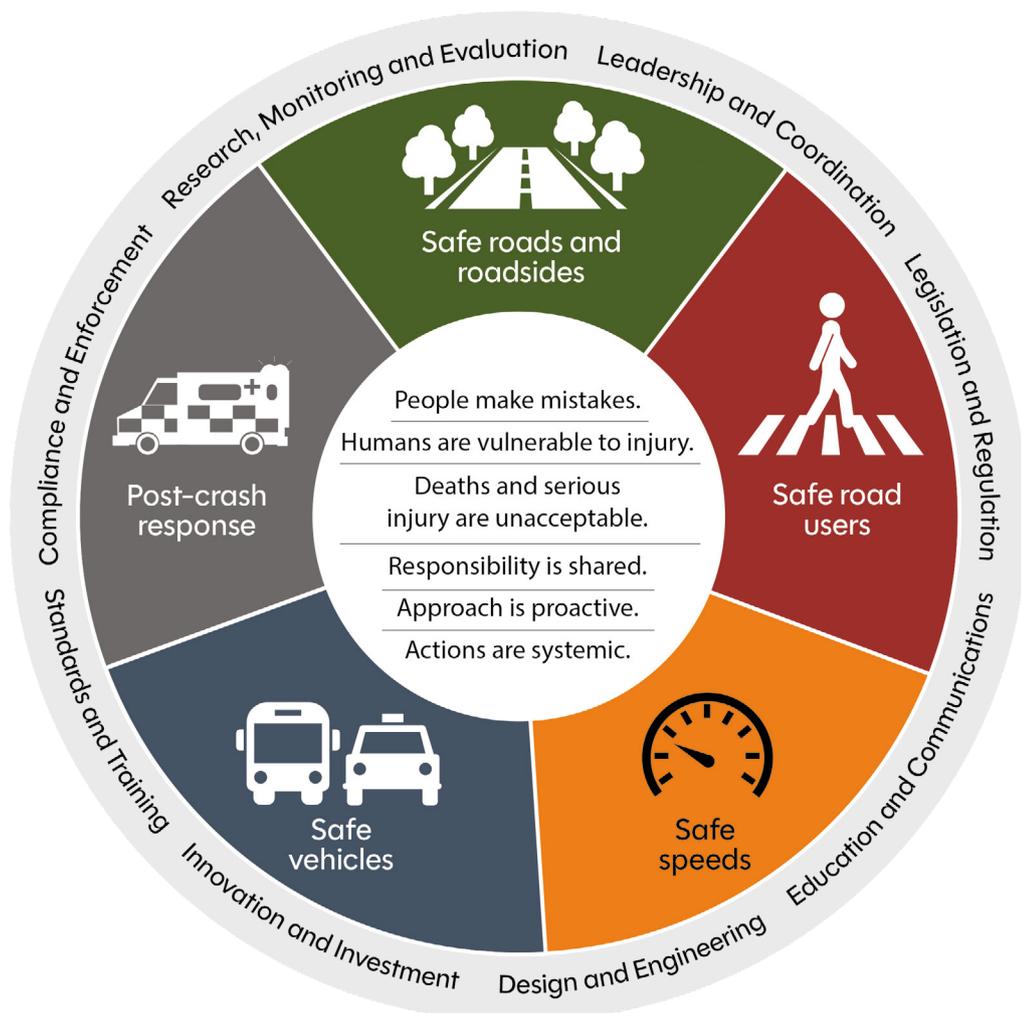
⁶ The figure has been calculated by multiplying average cost of a collisions by severity ([ras4001 ods](#)) and total collisions in Wales by severity ([Police recorded road collisions by speed limit and local authority | StatsWales](#))

In Wales, our statutory duties place us in a strong position to develop this systems-wide approach towards road transport and mobility safety. In a truly safe system the principles of operation, actions across different components of the system and the operators to support these actions are all implemented. The principles guide us to prioritise policies which are consistent with systems-level thinking; the components ensure that we are strategically building resilience across the different areas of the system; and the operators give us the means to deliver the policies and interventions agreed under this approach.

This approach provides a more holistic and less reactive focus on enhancing safety, where proactive measures and supportive actions increase overall resilience so that if one component falters, safety is embedded across the system to mitigate against harm. The approach shifts the focus away from a 'blame' culture which focuses on individual instances of behaviour to a much more integrated view of system performance based on outcomes.

Figure 1 : The Safe System

Source: Agilysis, 2023, building on models from Canadian Council of Motor Transport



The six principles

There are six principles or imperatives at the heart of the system.

- **People make mistakes.** It is important that road users are compliant with the rules of the road, but many fatal or serious injuries happen because an error or lapse took place, and the road system could not protect those involved. It is almost impossible to eliminate all mistakes so instead, we need to build a system which combines to reduce their impact.
- **Humans are vulnerable to injury.** We are not designed to withstand the forces involved in road collisions. This is particularly true for those most at risk who are cycling, walking, wheeling, riding a horse or motorcycle, as they don't have the protection offered by cars, vans, buses, or trucks. Even within vehicles, the human body is fragile, and this is particularly true for children and the elderly.
- **Death and serious injury are unacceptable.** Road traffic injury is not and cannot be a tolerated by-product of mobility. The Safe System does not only aim to reduce deaths and serious injuries but to eliminate them, hence the **Vision Zero** goal.
- **Responsibility is shared.** The Safe System is not about victim blaming. Instead, there is a recognition that a combination of factors leads to death and serious injury and that responsibility is shared amongst those who design, maintain, operate, and use roads and vehicles to eliminate risk. Everyone has their part to play.
- **Approach is proactive.** Rather than reacting to specific incidents and working in isolation to reduce casualty problems,

the Safe System is proactive. It is about adopting a systematic approach to building a safe road system, proactively identifying, targeting, and treating potential risk.

- **Actions are systemic.** It requires a combined approach. The Safe System requires us to bring together Safe Speeds, Safe Roads, Safe Vehicles, Safe Road Users, and high-quality Post Collision Response to reduce the impact of collisions and eliminate the likelihood of death or serious injuries. Only if all these elements are combined the system is safe. Risk would still be present if we concentrated our efforts on replacing all vehicles with the safest available, without thinking about the road design, the speeds travelled, and the way road users behave. It means that the Safe System does not just rely on road or vehicle engineering, enforcement, or educating road users. It requires us to strengthen the road network through a range of approaches, including legislation, regulation, standards, training, innovation, and research.

Figure 2: The six principles of the Safe System



The five components

There are five components within the Safe System, with actions required across all five.

- Safe Roads and Roadsides.** Roads should be designed (or modified where possible) to reduce the risk of crashes occurring and roadsides designed (or modified where possible) to be forgiving for occasions when mistakes occur. Segregating traffic where possible to protect those road users exposed to the highest risk, proactively prioritising the treatment of dangerous roads and improving both the actual and perceived risks to road users.
- Safe Speeds.** Road users' ability to avoid crashes and their survival in the event of a collision is directly affected by the speed and consequent energy involved. Safe speeds recognise human frailty, either in decision making or in surviving an impact, and ensure that higher speeds are only feasible where the environment and infrastructure, and vehicles, can support and protect them. We will work setting survivable speed limits for humans according to the type of roads and road users, monitoring actual driven speeds, engaging, educating and communicating and intervening by enforcement as last resort.
- Safe Road Users.** Road users are educated or regulated in their use of the roads, according to their modes of transport and the harm they can cause. Drivers receive high quality training and testing and are expected to comply with road traffic laws, meanwhile provision is made to support all road users to travel in safety. We will intervene and encourage safe road use, based on evidence and ongoing appraisal into the effectiveness of our actions.
- Safe Vehicles.** Vehicles can offer a high level of safety to both occupants and other road users. Fundamental safety systems, such as seatbelts, are augmented by more advanced active safety measures, like autonomous emergency braking and electronic stability control. Routine checks for all vehicles ensure that they are maintained to the highest safety standards. We will work with partners to encourage that both commercial and public vehicle fleets are as safe as they can be, promoting design and safety features that are known to work in protecting occupants and those most at risk.
- Post-Collision Response.** In the event of an incident, emergency medical response should reach any injured parties without delay and transit to high quality trauma care. Rehabilitation and victim support services should be readily available. After the incident, data on the causes of the collision feed into systems to evaluate how the system can be strengthened. We will work with responsible partners to build capabilities and collect, interpret and act upon evidence.

Figure 3: The five components of the Safe System



The eight operators

Traditionally, there has been a road safety focus on engineering, education, and enforcement (known as the three 'Es'). These activities are important to create a Safe System, but they cannot be delivered in isolation, and they are not the only approaches required.

Action is required across the Safe System, and these actions are supported in various ways, which we call 'operators.' Without design and engineering, there are no roads or vehicles; without legislation and regulation, there would be no established expectations around how they could be used; without research, monitoring, and evaluation, we would have no information around road safety performance on our network, or about the effectiveness of the interventions we deploy in eliminating death and serious injury.

The eight operators bring focus to what is being carried out, and indeed what we are committed to in the future. This focus helps to identify how existing actions connect to what is planned to implement the Safe System, allowing us to see where capacity building is required.



Leadership and coordination

Mobilising a multi-sectoral effort to improve safety, requires significant leadership and coordination between partner agencies.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring that our governance arrangements secure active participation of all stakeholders working collaboratively to achieve our overarching goals.
- Articulating a compelling vision, ethical imperative, and strategic direction which targets the eradication of serious harm from the road transport system.
- Defining areas of responsibility, accountability, and performance expectations for all parties and ensuring that resource requirements align.



Innovation and Investment

We already know some of the actions that will be required to help us achieve our future goals, but we will also need innovative approaches and fresh investment over time. We will do effectively through:

- Encouraging wide participation from across all sectors to find solutions, recognising the contributions of industry and civil society, not only public sector delivery.
- Working with the research community to explore new technologies and innovative interventions that reflect a systemic approach to enhancing safety, particularly the human behavioural component of the system.
- Creating an enabling environment for evidentially effective interventions to achieve scale, delivering improved safety and associated benefits.



Legislation and Regulation

Many of the greatest safety improvements over the last century have involved tightening up legislation and regulations. We will work with colleagues across government to address this by:

- Reviewing the regulatory framework for devolved matters and ensuring that it is consistent with a Safe System.
- Where primary legislation is required from the UK Government, the Welsh Government will collaborate with colleagues in the Department for Transport and devolved administrations to ensure that the case for change is clearly made.
- Ensuring that access to the required expertise is in place for the development of regulation that meets standards of public acceptability, practicality, and enforceability.

Standards and training

Given that a Safe System requires the sharing of responsibility, we will seek to ensure that the right standards are in place for all those who design, manage, operate and use the roads. We will do this by:

- Working with professional bodies and other strategic road authorities to enhance standards for road designers and operators, acknowledging the realistic limits of human capability and frailty.
- Managing access to the road system according to the risk that each road user contributes, such as standards and training requirements for large goods vehicles should be completely different from private motor vehicles, and the introduction of progressive driver licencing as drivers gain experience.

- Training road users to a standard consistent with their role, risks, and degree of professionalism.

Design and engineering

Understanding the limits of human capability and tolerance to injury requires that we put people at the heart of our approach. We will support this through:

- Working to place human-centred design at the heart of road safety practice, so that the built environment, vehicles, and technologies cooperatively make the road environment easier to navigate and more forgiving for all.
- Building environments that are consistent and reliable, giving priority to road users according to their vulnerability and access needs.
- Ensuring that vehicles procured and used for delivery of public services incorporate the latest safety engineering, and where possible exceeding minimum safety standards.

Education and communication

Bringing communities, businesses, and the people of Wales with us, requires effective communication about the measures we are implementing and how they contribute to a safer, healthier, more resilient road network. We will do this by:

- Campaigns and consistent public communication.
- Working through education, employers, professional organisations, and special interest groups to cultivate a widespread appreciation for shared responsibility and its application on our roads.

- Support road users navigate their environment in a manner consistent with the harm they are exposed to or the risk they bring to the network.
- Warning road users of the increased risks associated with non-compliant behaviour and providing mechanisms to address this.

- Denying persistent offenders access to the system in such a way that they could cause serious harm. This includes denying criminals the use of the road network as a means to further their criminal enterprises.
- Ensuring that the compliance framework, enforcement actions, and offence disposal methods convey a consistent sense of fairness and procedural justice.



Compliance and enforcement

Working with enforcement agencies to ensure high rates of compliance with the law by:

- Developing a rich understanding of the compliance issues and locations that generate risk for road users and reduce perception of safety for the most vulnerable.
- Penalising dangerous behaviour which jeopardises the safety and security of others.



Monitoring and evaluation

Determining the current and future levels of safety performance requires us to gather, analyse and share data to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of our interventions across all elements and impacts of road harms, to ensure continuous monitoring and improvement.

Figure 4: The eight operators of the Safe System



Our vision for harm reduction

We recognise that our Vision Zero is a long-term ambition, that we can only realise by making incremental changes over time. That is why we are setting targets to reduce road traffic injury with review points after each five-year period. This approach will allow us to maintain our direction and check that we are on course.

A rigorous approach to Safe System is supported by time-limited targets and performance indicators to reduce deaths and serious injuries. These targets and indicators are then used to drive effective, multi-sectoral interventions provided through enhanced mechanisms of delivery.

Overall target

There is a lot of international literature setting out the effectiveness and need to have road safety targets:⁷

- Setting targets communicates the importance of road safety.
- Targets motivate stakeholders and increase accountability for achieving results.

The House of Commons Transport Select Committee in reviewing the UK Government's latest road safety strategy from 2011 acknowledged that road safety targets have played an important role in driving the UK's positive road safety record⁸. Research commissioned by the DfT⁹ confirms the importance of setting targets and safety performance indicators in driving road safety performance.

From 2018–2024, excluding the Covid years, 2020 and 2021, 481 people died on roads in Wales, just over one person every four days or 96 on average per year.¹⁰ This is our 5-year average baseline.

By 2040, we are aiming for a 40% reduction in fatalities. This is a significant ambition that will require us to take a fundamentally different approach. At the end of 2040, we aim to have no more than 58 deaths per year when looking at the 5-year period of 2035–2040. This overall target will be reviewed every five years and can be adjusted depending on progress and performance.

A target for serious injuries will be calculated following all four police forces in Wales moving to an injury-based reporting system, for example CRASH and when an agreed methodology for adjusted figures can be used.



⁷ [Towards Zero : Ambitious Road Safety Targets and the Safe System Approach | OECD iLibrary \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](#); [Improving Global Road Safety UNDA Cover.eps \(oecd.org\)](#); [Halve road deaths and serious injuries by 2030, Towards Zero Foundation 50by30-Memorandum.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#); [Does empirical evidence support the effectiveness of the Safe System approach to road safety management? - ScienceDirect](#)

⁸ House of Commons, Transport Committee, Road safety, Second report of session 2012–2013, p. 31, [Unknown](#)

⁹ [Effectiveness of targets for road safety - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁰ [Police recorded road collisions by speed limit and local authority | StatsWales](#)

Additional targets

In addition to the headline target we would further like to address a number of specific road user groups and additional sub targets. This includes at least the following:

- Reduction in the number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured.
- Reduction in the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured.
- Reduction in the number of motorcycle riders killed or seriously injured.
- Reduction in the number of children under the age of 17, killed or seriously injured.
- Reduction in the number of young people aged 17-24, killed or seriously injured.
- Reduction in the number of road users aged 65 and over killed or seriously injured.
- Reduction in traffic associated air pollution.
- Increase in the number of people walking, wheeling and cycling.
- Increase in the number of people with protected characteristics including those with disabilities using the road network independently.

The precise means of calculating and setting these targets will need to be agreed during the first year, ensuring that rate-based data is accessible and reliably collected to ensure consistent reporting over time.

Safety Performance Indicators

The number of people killed or injured on our roads indicates the safety of the network, but this data needs to be supplemented with other indicators if we are to evaluate our current safety performance and we are eventually striving for systemic and generative safety rather than reacting to to killed and seriously injured. Safety Performance Indicators (SPIs) that inform us of risk and danger and highlight areas of the road transport system that we still need to strengthen to improve outcomes. These indicators do not simply measure outputs (e.g., number of traffic violations), but instead express factors that we are trying to improve because they are linked to our safety and equity goals.

Guidance on what to monitor is provided by the World Health Organisation and the European Commission amongst others¹¹. Wales will need to develop its own SPIs to meet its circumstances and priorities. These indicators can be measured at regular intervals, either across Wales or within individual local authority areas. A suggested set of SPIs will be developed by the safe system component groups supported by the data and analysts' group and will be published in a future action plan.

¹¹ [A long-term care system and Key performance indicators \(KPIs\) - Mobility & Transport - Road Safety](#)



Overseeing our commitment

How we developed the partnership plan

The previous [Road Safety Framework \(2013–2020\)](#) guided road safety in Wales but expired without a direct successor. Both the Wales Transport Strategy and the National Transport Delivery Plan have since committed to creating a new Road Safety Strategy that integrates transport, health, and decarbonisation objectives. A [final report on the Framework](#) was published in late 2022 and the Welsh Government affirmed its ambition in a subsequent [written statement](#).

In early 2023, the Welsh Government commissioned [Agilysis](#), a road safety consultancy, to conduct a policy and governance review involving input from

26 stakeholders. This work established the basis for a more integrated approach to road safety governance and delivery. The review included workshops held in April 2023, followed by further engagement with Age Cymru and Young Wales in January 2024.

A public consultation held from November 2023 to January 2024 gathered public views on road safety issues. Additionally, a November 2023 omnibus survey was conducted by Beaufort Research. Agilysis produced a [detailed report](#) on the stakeholder engagement, public consultation and omnibus survey results.

The Welsh Government held a road safety stakeholder workshop in April 2025, and the National Road Safety Partnership Group has met twice in July and September 2025.



A shared responsibility

Central to the Safe System is the concept of *'shared responsibility'*. **The Road Safety Partnership Plan** cannot be delivered by any one organisation; it will require a concerted effort by many stakeholders working in partnership and a new governance structure, fit for the task.

Throughout the development of this Plan, many stakeholders have been engaged through interviews, workshops, and surveys, developing an understanding of the contribution that different partners can make to our shared commitment.

This collaborative approach involves working across all Safe System components, identifying the interactions between organisations so that clear areas of responsibility emerge for some, and supportive roles are established for others.

A shared structure

Aligning these responsibilities with the need for multi-sectoral engagement requires the establishment of a new structure for overseeing road safety in Wales. We will ensure that all stakeholders are able to be fully engaged and that they are appropriately represented at the three tiers of partnership working to reflect their responsibilities and contribution.

Strategic Partnership Board

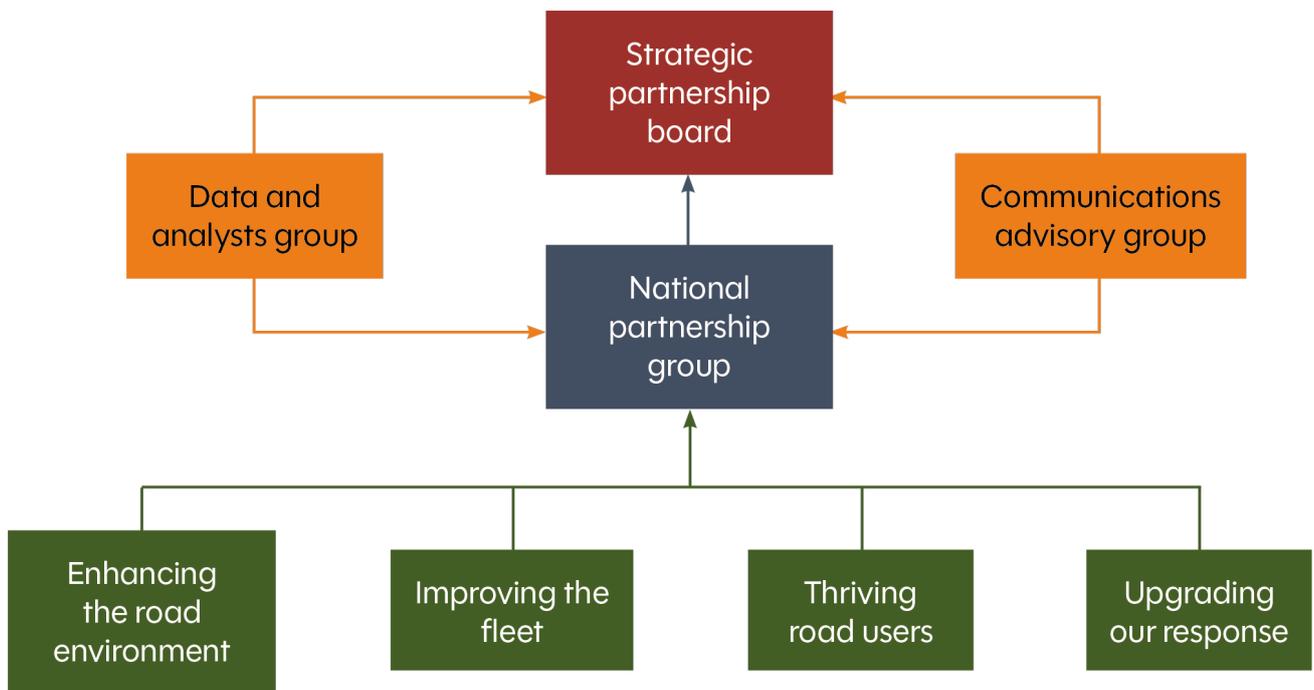
Appointed to formally adopt this **Road Safety Partnership Plan** and to sign off annual updates, mid-term and final reports and to oversee its implementation. The board will meet annually, with a focus on scrutinising annual performance and reviewing future planning.

The board is chaired by the Minister responsible for Transport and members should include:

- Minister responsible for Social Justice
- Four Police and Crime Commissioners
- Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Leader
- Assistant Chief Constable
- Fire service lead for Wales
- Public Health Wales
- NHS/Chief Medical Officer



Figure 5: Road safety governance structure



National Partnership Group

Bringing together partners working in road safety the **National Partnership Group** will set up the safe system component groups and give them an indication of actions to work towards. The National Partnership Group is responsible for drafting this **Road Safety Partnership Plan** for road safety 2026-2040 and for setting the targets.

It will be responsible for agreeing the SPIs suggested by the safe system component groups and informed and supported by the data and analysts' group. The Partnership Group will then annually review progress of agreed actions and performance against the SPIs and targets and report to the Strategic Board. The National Partnership Group is responsible for producing an interim report in 2030 and 2035 and a final report in 2039 and to review targets at these 5-year points.

The National Partnership Group is chaired by the Deputy Director with responsibilities for Road Safety in Welsh Government and should include (but not limited to):

- Welsh Government
- Welsh Local Government Association
- Corporate Joint Committees
- Public Health Wales
- GoSafe¹²
- Police
- Fire and Rescue Services (FRS)
- Transport for Wales (TfW)
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)
- Accessibility, inclusion and disability representatives
- Chairs of Safe System component groups

Safe system component groups

The Safe System Component Groups will be set up to support the National Partnership Group to delve deeper into the four areas of the five components of the safe system. These groups will start with defining a plan of actions and suggest SPIs to measure progress.

They will then be focused on delivery under each of the four themes:

1. Enhancing the road environment: Safe roads and roadsides and Safe speeds
2. Improving the fleet: Safe vehicles
3. Thriving road users: Safe behaviour
4. Upgrading our response: Post crash care

Data and analysts' group

The data and analysts' groups chaired by Welsh Government's Knowledge and Analytical Services brings together statisticians, analysts, researchers and academia to support the National Partnership Group and the safe system component groups. They will be able to advise and support the setting of realistic additional targets and safety performance indicators covering the full range of road related harms, allowing us to understand what is required to measure progress and how to best measure it. Making best use of both existing data, research, lived experience and suggesting new data collection methods.

Communication and Engagement advisory group

Bringing together communication specialists and behaviour change experts from the stakeholders to advise the partners on best ways of communicating the objectives of the Partnership Plan and any communication and engagement needed for future planned interventions.

¹² GoSafe is the Wales Road Casualty Reduction Partnership, which aims to make roads safer in Wales by reducing casualties and saving lives. It is made up of 27 equal partners, including 22 Welsh Unitary Authorities, four Welsh Police Forces, and the Welsh Government

Links to existing groups

There are various forums that are active in the field of road safety and can link to the new road safety governance structure being set up. It is intended that chairs and other members of those existing groups will be invited to contribute to the new governance structure through attending one or several of the safe system component groups or the data and analysts' group. They will then in turn feed back into those existing forums to create two-way exchange and knowledge sharing.

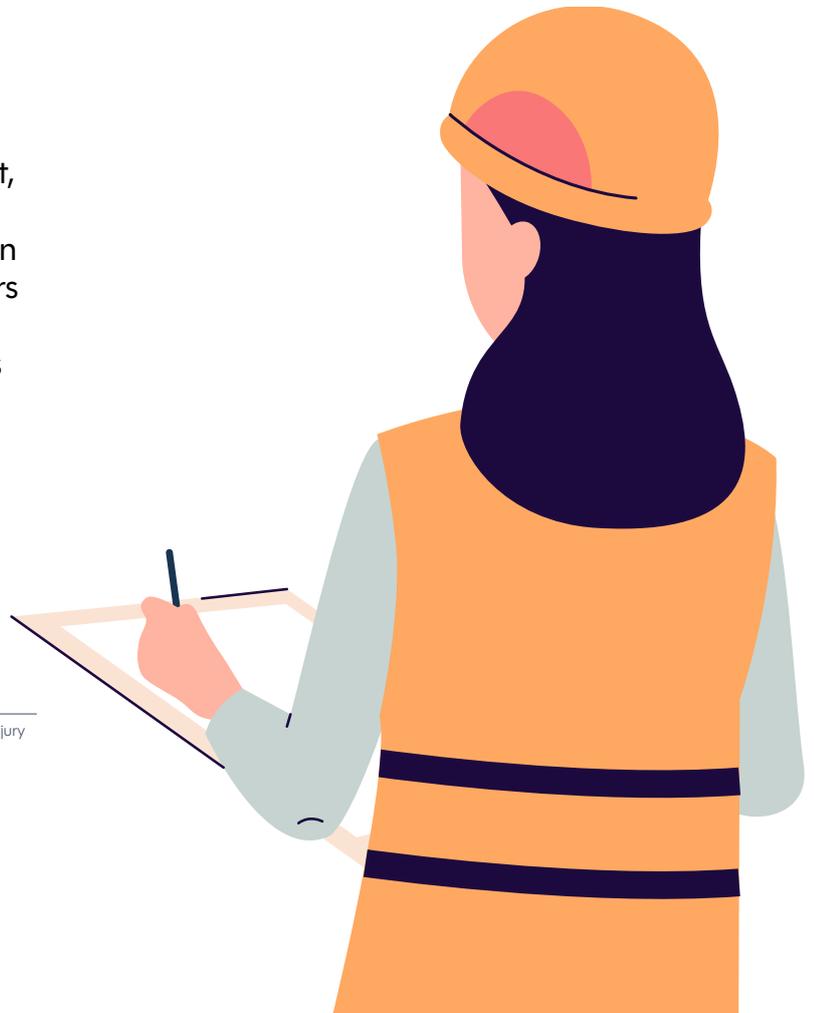
Under 'Enhancing the road environment' with 'Safe roads and roadsides' and 'Safe speeds' there is a link to the County Surveyors' Society Traffic Services Group and the work being undertaken by the Strategic Road Network team of the Welsh Government in updating the Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales Guidance.

Road Safety Wales runs a policy group that can feed into the 'Thriving Road Users Group'. The Wales Road Transport Advisory Group, a group set up in liaison with the Traffic Commissioner, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), Police Commercial Vehicle Unit, Logistics UK and Road Haulage Association to promote safety, compliance and best practice in the road freight and passenger transport sectors safety and the Fleet Managers group bringing together fleet managers of the local authorities will be able to contribute to the 'Improving the fleet' group.

The STATS-19¹³ group and Go Safe analysts can feed into the data and analysts' group.

At regional level, the North Wales Casualty Reduction Board brings together stakeholders, and the intention is to replicate the same format in all four Police force areas.

The Welsh Government road safety team members attend meetings with the Department for Transport (UK Government) and the other devolved administrations road safety counter parts and participates in the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) and Road Safety GB (RSGB) meetings to stay informed of the wider UK road safety landscape.



¹³ STATS-19 is the primary dataset used for road casualty statistics in the UK, capturing personal injury collisions report to the police

How we will deliver – Our overall priorities

We will put in place the appropriate structures to support our ambitions, building the capacity needed across our stakeholder community to deliver the **Road Safety Partnership Plan**.

The Safe System Component Groups will agree plans of work with agreed actions to take forward. This section firstly sets out some of our overall priorities and then suggests priorities that have emerged through research and stakeholder engagement for the four areas of action. These areas of action can inform the work plans of the Safe System Component Groups going forward.

What we will do:

- Support the governance structure to deliver the objectives of this Partnership Plan.
- Agree Safety Performance Indicators (SPIs), additional targets and actions.
- Support efforts to encourage active travel and public transport use.
- Review Outcomes and SPIs every five years and review actions annually.
- Continue to work with the UK government and devolved governments on road safety matters and continue to share best practice.
- Work with industry to foster a culture of proactive and eventually systemic and generative road safety.
- Work with police forces to ensure that STATS19 reporting is as thorough and complete as possible in a timely way to support national analyses and support the remaining three Police forces move to injury-based reporting system, for example CRASH.
- Work to publish more up to date data that can inform road safety decision making in conjunction with collision reporting.
- Review, update and standardise (where appropriate) all road safety education and communication to align with Vision Zero and the Safe System.
- Explore better data sharing between partners to avoid duplication and maximise efforts.
- Work with GoSafe to reduce the number of killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads.
- Develop a plan on work-related road safety, including grey fleet.
- Work with the National Fire Chief's Council and the three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales to explore an expanded role in prevention.



Priorities – Enhancing the Environment

We want road spaces that work for people and communities, allowing people of all ages and abilities to make journeys that keep them healthy and connected. We also want roads that are both self-explaining and forgiving; where we cannot separate traffic, we will slow it down to acceptable levels.

Research indicates that infrastructure has a significant impact on the prevention of collisions and the severity of injury sustained in a road traffic collision.¹⁴ Similarly, excessive speed continues to be a leading contributory factor in fatal and serious injury collisions in Wales and all across Great Britain.¹⁵ In general, expert literature agrees that an estimated 10 to 15% of all road crashes and 30% of fatal injury crashes are the direct result of excessive or inappropriate speed.¹⁶ As a key risk factor in road traffic, driving speed is associated with the number of crashes as well as with the severity of crashes.¹⁷

Suggested activities:

- Build on the implementation of 20mph roll-out, strengthening urban limits to support and encourage active travel through infrastructure improvements that are self-explaining, without negative effects from increasing air or noise pollution.
- Prioritise implementing active travel infrastructure schemes to support environmental, safety and health objectives.
- Prioritise improving roads and pavements ensuring that they are well maintained.
- Publish the updated Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales Guidance and plan for how the changes will be delivered and funded by highway authorities.
- Continue to invest in road assessment on the Strategic Road Network as a means of understanding the intrinsic safety of the network, providing the foundation for more forgiving roads.
- Support Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) and local authorities to develop a prioritisation plan for treatment of high-risk routes, reflecting traffic flow and vulnerability of users, with segregation where possible and make sure they feed into the delivery plans and programmes of work of the Regional Transport Plans.
- Encourage all highway authorities to take a safe system approach through all of their works and schemes.
- Work with transport planners, network managers and highway engineers, and their professional bodies, to develop practice that is consistent with Safe System.
- Work with GoSafe to conduct a review of existing speed enforcement capability and ensure it aligns with the ambitions of the strategy and prioritise updating guidance to align with this Partnership Plan.

¹⁴ International Transport Forum. (2016). Zero road deaths and serious injuries: Leading a paradigm shift to a safe system. Paris: OECD Publishing. <https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/zero-road-deaths.pdf>

¹⁵ Reported road casualties Great Britain, annual report: 2024 – GOV.UK

¹⁶ Adminaité-Fodor, D., & Jost, G. (2019). Reducing speeding in Europe. ETSC PIN Flash Report 36. Brussels: European Transport Safety Council. Retrieved from <https://etsc.eu/wp-content/uploads/PIN-flash-report-36-Final.pdf>; OECD/ECMT. (2006). Speed Management. La gestion de la vitesse. Paris: Les Editions de l'OCDE. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789282103807-fr>

¹⁷ IRTAD. (2018). Speed and crash risk. IRTAD Report. Paris, France: ITF – International Transport Forum. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11219-006-6001-3> and SWOV. (2012). Speed choice: the influence of man, vehicle, and road. SWOV Fact sheet. Leidschendam: SWOV Institute for Road Safety Research.

- Ensuring that the road environment reflects the speed limit by bringing in interventions that support drivers to choose lower speeds where they are needed and using physical infrastructure changes to support higher speeds where this can be done safely.
- Explore and review the use of connected vehicle data to move away from a reactive to a more proactive and eventually generative approach to safety.
- Embrace new research, innovation and technology and evaluate existing schemes and operations.
- Prevent use of pavement space for EV charging.
- Support the UK Government in its efforts in adopting key life-saving vehicle technologies as a regulatory standard.
- Review public procurement processes (for direct purchases and wider value-chain) to identify where contracts could facilitate adoption of safest vehicles by default.
- Promote, and where possible mandate, that vehicles used for public service transport incorporate enhanced safety features such as direct vision, intelligent speed assistance, and alcohol interlocks.
- Consider potential routes to introduce incentives for novice drivers adopting life-saving assistance technologies in the period immediately post-test.
- Develop communications to highlight the value of vehicle safety, emphasising star ratings for cars and commercial vehicles as well as the importance of regular maintenance.
- Work with employers to remove the ability for couriers and delivery services to ride for work while still only having learner status.
- Explore ways to intervene with growing risks in the gig economy associated with fatigue and impairment.
- Work with DVSA and police service to analyse and address priority areas for vehicles that do not comply with construction and use regulations.
- Examine the value of emerging technologies that can identify elevated vehicle related road risk.
- Promote the use of enhanced motorcycle safety technologies.

Priorities – Improving the Fleet

We want to ensure that all vehicles are roadworthy and that we embrace the benefits of emerging technologies to make mobility reliable, equitable, sustainable, and safe.

Over the past decades, improvements in vehicle safety design, achieved through a combination of legislative standards and manufacturing initiatives have contributed to the reduction in the risk of death or serious injury for car occupants. Maintaining a roadworthy vehicle and harnessing available vehicle safety technologies are critical to reduce deaths and serious injuries. In addition, there are now a range of vehicle safety features and technologies that can either detect and prevent potential collisions with pedestrians and cyclists or reduce the severity of injury sustained by them should a collision with a motor vehicle occur. The critical importance of enforcement in ensuring that the required vehicle standards are met must also be acknowledged.

- Encourage fleet operators to consider early adoption of new road vehicle safety technologies (GSR2) – and to adopt transport-related accreditation and quality schemes that support fleet safety, environmental performance, and operational excellence.
- Work with the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles to ensure any new vehicles are safely introduced on our roads.

Priorities – Thriving Road Users

We want to support road users according to their ability and the risk they bring to the road network, ensuring that standards of behaviour are compliant with road traffic law.

Supporting all road users involves setting road user standards (e.g. driver training and licensing requirements) and implementing targeted enforcement. It also includes public education and awareness campaigns and road safety education.

The aim of this priority intervention area is to assist road users, so they have the knowledge, capability, motivation and technology to use the roads and vehicles safely, so that if a collision does occur this does not lead to death or serious injury.

Collisions resulting from intentional behaviours, such as drink-driving or driving at excessive speed, can be prevented by road users making safer choices.

The importance of road safety education and training to develop long-term safe road user habits cannot be understated.¹⁸ Enforcement is critical in ensuring safe road use. Research has demonstrated that evidence-based, highly visible, unpredictable and widespread enforcement activities, followed by timely and proportionate sanctions, can achieve significant reductions in dangerous road user behaviours and road traffic collisions.¹⁹

- Promote the idea of Safe System as a shared responsibility, with roles for public authorities, private enterprise, and engaged citizens all contributing to safer roads.
- Conduct a review of current legal provisions, seeking views from stakeholders on changes that would support safety outcomes.
- Work with UK Government to identify a route to adopting progressive driver licensing, providing additional protection for the most vulnerable drivers.
- Explore deployment of new technologies for automated detection of offences such as seatbelt misuse or mobile phone use.
- Support businesses to invest in their corporate culture around work related driving.
- Work with enforcement agencies to identify and prohibit commercial vehicles that do not comply with drivers' hours across the network.
- Consider options to increase eyesight checks among drivers as they age, including incentivised or mandatory checks.

¹⁸ European Transport Safety Council. (2019). The status of traffic safety and mobility education in Europe. [ETSC-LEARN-Report-on-the-Status-of-Traffic-Safety-and-Mobility-Education-in-Europe.pdf](#)

¹⁹ Bates, L., Soole, D., & Watson, B. (2012). The effectiveness of traffic policing in reducing traffic crashes. In T. Prenzler (Ed.), *Policing and security in practice* (pp. 90–109). London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137007780_6 and TRL. How Methods and Levels of Policing Affect Road Casualty Rates, 2004, [Unpublished project report template](#); and The Police Foundation. The Future of Roads Policing, 2022, [future_of_roads_policing_FINAL.pdf](#)

- In line with almost all high-income countries, support UK Government to explore the potential for reducing the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit to 50mg, with a lower limit of 20mg for both professional and novice drivers.
- Work with the Home Office to reinvigorate efforts to introduce mobile evidential breath testing equipment, as well as the police service to increase the frequency of breath testing.
- Increase the rate of testing and explore the potential to speed up prosecutions for drug-driving offences, including through rehabilitation courses being piloted in England.
- Work with retail and businesses to tackle the sales of illegal e-scooters and e-bikes, create communications campaign to discourage the public buying them and support the Police in their enforcement efforts.
- Examine ways in which education on safety, sustainability, and active mobility (including programmes such as Kerbcraft and Bikeability) can be combined and co-developed for increased efficacy.
- Work with Education and Active Travel to make it a requirement for all schools in Wales to have an Active School Travel Plan.
- Explore the possibility of road safety to be embedded within the curriculum, supporting behaviour change from an early age and aligning with wider sustainable travel and health objectives.
- Explore delivering a voluntary driving for work standard and training programme in collaboration with industry and employers.
- Work with the Police, Fire and Rescue Service and other organisations to deliver roadside engagement and safety interventions.
- Ensure that changes to speed limits are widely publicised and updated digitally to facilitate vehicle safety systems reflecting these changes.
- Continue to communicate effectively with businesses and the people of Wales about the value of road safety and safe speeds, to enhance journey time reliability and improve the economy whilst reducing collisions.



Priorities – Upgrading Our Response

We want to deliver first-class care when something goes wrong, dealing quickly with collisions, carefully with victims and supportively with the bereaved. We will learn from crashes to make our roads safer.

- Address the current lack of representation and integration of emergency response services, particularly ambulance, in road safety governance groups.
- Introduce comprehensive injury-based reporting across Wales in order to align with international standards and comparisons.
- Explore ways in which emergency response times might be improved across Wales.
- Promote understanding of the use of eCall.
- Explore ways of expanding the availability of emergency assistance, particularly in rural areas – bystander training, community first responders, air ambulance etc.
- Create a rehabilitation pathway to ensure that road traffic injury victims have a clear route through the healthcare system.
- Trial the use of multiagency review boards to develop deeper safety insights from the worst crashes.
- Ensure emotional and psychological care and support to victims, families, and emergency response teams is available.

