

Towards Zero Lancashire: Road Safety Strategy for Lancashire 2016-2026

Executive Summary

Road safety affects everyone. Most of us use the roads every day, as drivers, passengers, cyclists and pedestrians, and for many people driving is the main part of their job. It is essential, therefore, to ensure that, as far as possible, we can all use the roads in safety.

Over the past decades, significant progress has been made in making Lancashire's roads safer, reducing the number of casualties and improving the road network for all road users. Unfortunately, since 2013, like many areas across Great Britain, casualty numbers in Lancashire have risen. Every death and serious injury on the roads is one too many. Road collisions have devastating effects on individuals and communities, often disproportionately affecting the young, as well as having a significant economic cost.

Towards Zero Lancashire: Road Safety Strategy for Lancashire has been developed by the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP), the coordinating body for road safety in Lancashire. It sets out our joint response to road safety and covers the two unitary and twelve district council areas in Lancashire. It builds upon our successes, strengthens our commitment and elevates our ambitions

The Strategy is built on the principles of the globally-recognised Safe System approach¹ which recognises that we can never entirely eradicate road collisions because there will always be some degree of human error, but we should manage our infrastructure, vehicles and speeds to reduce crash energies to levels that can be tolerated by the human body. At the heart of the Safe System is the belief that no one should be killed or seriously injured as a result of using the road – 'vision zero'. By adopting this principle all Lancashire road users will benefit, be they motorcyclists, cyclists, pedestrians or drivers.

Road safety is not just about the mechanics of roads, vehicles and street design, but as much about attitudes, perceptions and the way that we value and share our roads. It is our vision that 'people are safe and feel safe on Lancashire's roads' and we are committed to delivering the following four aims:

1. Reduce road traffic fatalities by user group and age
2. Reduce severity and numbers of road traffic injuries by user group and age
3. Improve outcomes for vulnerable road users
4. Improve and change road safety attitudes and behaviours

We recognise that we need to work hard to achieve these aims and to do so we have agreed to focus on delivering four key priorities:

1. Coordinated and evidence based response to road safety
2. Enabling, engaging and educating individuals and communities to influence road user attitudes and behaviour
3. Intelligence led enforcement
4. Engineering for safety

For the purpose of the strategy, vulnerable road users are those who are represented disproportionately in the casualty data for Lancashire. This includes both the frequency of involvement and severity of injury.

For Lancashire this means:

- Pedestrians (all ages)
- Cyclists (all ages)
- Motorcyclists (16-24 and 45-60+)
- Young car occupants (16-24s)
- Older Road Users (65+)

Towards Zero Lancashire covers 10 years to ensure that, as well as putting in place immediate measures we also implement initiatives that require more extensive planning and development. This overarching strategy is underpinned by regular analysis reports which communicate contextualised patterns, trends and statistics of road traffic collisions and a detailed annual implementation plan, with measurable outputs, identifying each partner contribution and road user groups we will target. The action plan will reflect any differences in priorities across the geographies of Lancashire and is a live document to ensure we can respond to changing needs and priorities.

Context

In Great Britain (GB) since the early 1960s, the number and severity of reported road collisions has reduced. In 2012 there were relatively fewer road fatalities in Great Britain than in other countries across Europe and the rest of the World². Unfortunately, since 2013 reductions have stalled with most areas of GB, including Lancashire, seeing a rise in the number of casualties across different road users³.

The number of Killed and Seriously Injured casualties in Lancashire has increased from an exceptionally low level of 695 recorded in 2012 to 784 in 2013 and 859 in 2014 of which 43 resulted in death⁴. This rise is against a year on year rise in the number of vehicles on the road, for example 2014 saw an increase of 2.4%⁵.

Improving road safety requires collaboration across different organisations and sectors. In 2001, the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (then the Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety) was set up to implement the Department for Transport's National Safety Camera Programme. The partnership's remit has expanded over time to become the coordinating body for road safety. Partners are Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Blackpool Council and Highways England. A joint strategy was proposed to coordinate and direct the action of the partnership.

In December 2015, the Department of Transport produced *Working Together to Build a Safer Road System, British Road Safety Statement*⁶ which sets out the government's vision, values and priorities in relation to British road safety. It advocates a safe system approach and recognises the United Nations' 2010 *Global Plan for Road Safety*⁷ strategic approach for managing road safety and creating a truly safe system.

The goal of a safe system is to ensure that accidents do not result in serious injury, while accepting that human error will always play a part. Interventions should focus on road users, vehicles and the road network / environment in an integrated manner. Management of road safety activities should be co-ordinated, underpinned by data and evidence and evaluated and the post-crash response should ensure that that collisions are effectively responded to and investigated⁶.

It is in this context that LRSP has produced *Towards Zero Lancashire: The Road Safety Strategy for Lancashire 2016-2026*.

Understanding the Challenge

Road collisions have a significant impact on individuals, communities and the economy of Lancashire. Road traffic collisions can cause life-changing injuries. Loss of limbs, spinal injuries and head injuries are the major cause of morbidity⁸. Health effects can be both physical and mental^{9,10}, individuals often experience traumatic flashbacks of their collisions with post-traumatic stress, depression and anxiety being common after a serious road collision¹¹. Road collisions remain one of the main causes of premature death among children and young people, nationally accounting for 41% of unintentional injury deaths among 1 to 9 year olds, and 77% among 10 to 18 year olds¹². As children become more independent and start to travel on their own an increase in the casualty rate is seen, with both child pedestrian and cycle casualties increasing progressively with age.

In addition to Human Cost, road collisions cost approximately 1-3% of a country's annual Gross National Product (GNP)¹³. These are resources that no country can afford to lose. Since 1993, the valuation of both fatal and non-fatal casualties has been based on a consistent willingness to pay (WTP) approach. This approach encompasses all aspects of the valuation of casualties, including the human costs, which reflect

pain, grief and suffering; the direct economic costs of lost output and the medical costs associated with road collisions injuries. In addition to collision casualty related costs, there are also specific costs such as damage to property, police costs, and the costs of insurance administration. Table 1 highlights the economic cost of preventing road traffic collisions.

Average value of prevention ¹ of reported road collisions ² by road type 2014			
	Road Type		
Type of collision	Built-up roads ³	Non Built-up roads ⁴	Motorways ⁵
Fatal	£1,982,923	£2,129,474	£2,202,179
Serious	£226,399	£255,296	£269,798
Slight	£23,531	£28,399	£34,149
All injury collision	£63,109	£128,642	£91,786
Damage only	£2,085	£3,050	£2,931
All collisions	£5,349	£17,322	£13,263
1 The costs were based on 2014 prices and values			
2 The number of reported road accidents were based on 2014 data			
3 Roads with speed limits of 40pmh or less, excluding motorways and A(M) roads			
4 Roads with speed limits greater than 40mph, excluding motorways and A(M) roads			
5 Includes motorways and A(M) roads			

Table 1 RAS60002 – Department for Transport statistics (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2014>)

Lancashire’s economic prosperity

Movement in and around the county is critical to Lancashire’s economic prosperity. It has a large economy, producing an estimated £23 Billion Gross Added Value and is home to over 40,000 businesses employing in excess of 600,000 people¹⁴. The safe movement of goods and services is, therefore, vital for the local economy. The Health and Safety Executive estimate that more than a quarter of all road traffic incidents may involve somebody who is driving as part of their work at the time¹⁵.

Health and Wellbeing gains

Road safety has a much wider impact on health than just preventing injuries, some forms of travel (i.e., walking and cycling) bring more health benefits for individuals and society than others. Physical inactivity is the fourth largest cause of disease and disability in the UK and around a quarter of us are still classified as inactive, failing to achieve a minimum of 30 minutes of activity a week¹⁶. The All Party Commission on Physical Activity report¹⁷ estimates that physical inactivity leads to 37,000 premature deaths in England alone each year.

Active travel is the easiest way for most people to incorporate physical activity into everyday life. However, many people perceive a threat from traffic and lack of safe facilities as the rationale preventing them from walking and cycling as a transport choice for work and pleasure¹⁸. The Department for Transport has set out its ambition to "make cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey" in the draft *Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy*¹⁹. To achieve this the Strategy recognises that cycling and walking should become safer, and, importantly, be perceived to be safe. It aims to deliver "better safety, better mobility and better streets". A cycling and walking strategy is currently being developed for Lancashire which will set out how we will develop our walking and cycling offer over the next 10 years, and recognising the fundamental role that active travel plays in our everyday lives.

The Way Forward

The vision of *Towards Zero Lancashire* is that people are safe and feel safe on Lancashire’s roads. Supporting communities and people of all ages and abilities, no matter how they travel, is our focus and we are committed to delivering the following 4 aims:

1. Reduce road traffic fatalities by user group and age
2. Reduce severity and numbers of road traffic injuries by user group and age
3. Improve outcomes of ‘vulnerable’ road users.
4. Improve and change road safety attitudes and behaviours.

Key Priorities

We recognise that we need to work hard to achieve these aims, and to do so we have agreed to focus on delivering four key priorities that also contribute to delivering a safe system:

1. Coordinated and evidence based response to road safety.
2. Enabling, engaging and educating individuals and communities to influence road user attitudes and behaviour.
3. Intelligence led enforcement.
4. Engineering for safety.

Figure 1 highlights how our priorities advocate a safe system approach, with focus on road users, vehicles and the road network, together with a co-ordinated and evidenced based approach to management of road safety activities.

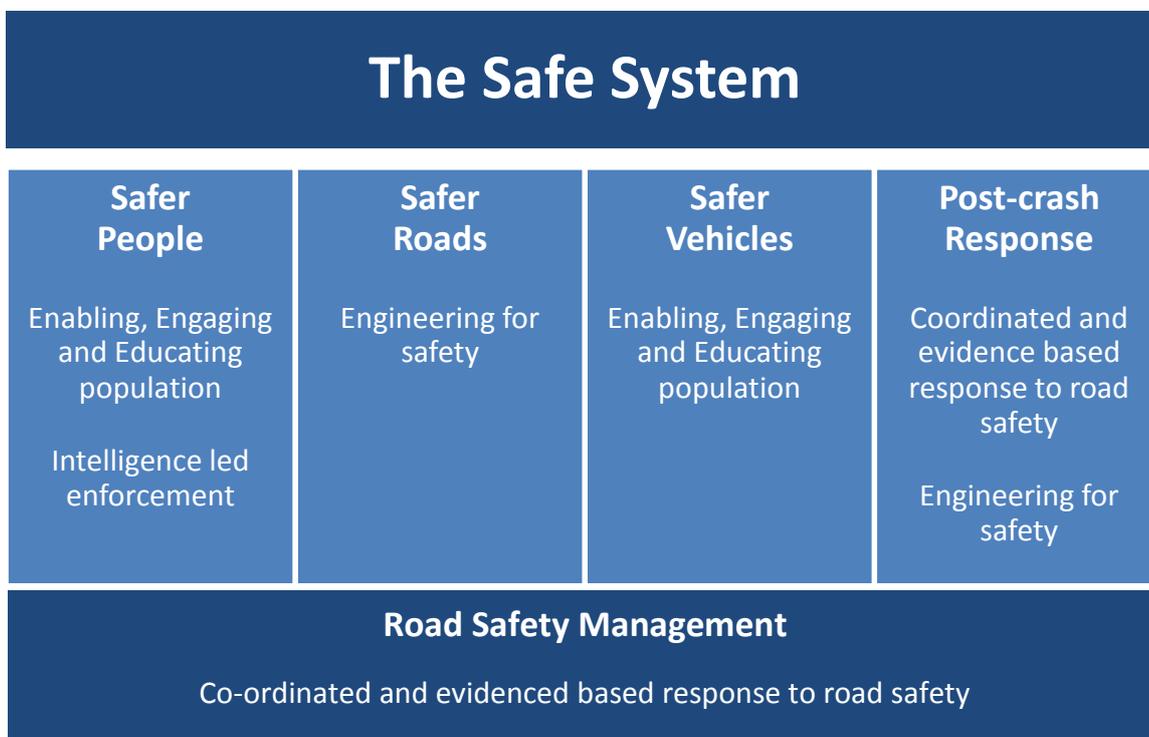


Figure 1 – How our priorities support a safe system

Implementation plan

An annual implementation plan will detail the road user groups we will target and the action to be taken against the priority areas. Regular analysis of road user risk, behaviours and causes of collisions will ensure we can respond to changing needs and priorities and the differences across the geographies of Lancashire in terms of collisions trends. A partnership service level agreement is in place setting out the roles and responsibilities of each partner in delivering the plan and achieving the Strategy's aims.

Measuring Success

'Towards zero' means that we do not accept that anyone should be killed or seriously injured on our roads. Realistically we understand that it is not practical to achieve zero serious injuries by 2026, but we do not accept any death or serious injury as inevitable. We want to see a year on year decrease in killed and seriously injured casualties across all ages and user groups to ensure we're moving in the right direction 'towards zero', our aspirational vision.

We will measure our success through an agreed performance framework, with targets established in the implementation plan based on the expected outcomes from specified interventions, as a means to evidence how we are systematically moving towards the strategy's aims.

Priority 1: Coordinated and evidence based response to road safety

Coordinated response

There is a lot of great work happening at ground level on road safety across Lancashire; predominantly led by individual organisations. A coordinated response is essential to prevent duplication and to ensure partners can both manage issues and maximise the potential solutions. Consistent evidence across all fields suggests that a coordinated response across partners produces more sustainable outcomes often supported through a coordinator role. The partnership has agreed to fund a Coordinator to provide direction and management in the delivery of the strategy. This will include creating deliverable action plans, joint communications and engagement, identifying funding streams and producing collaborative bids. A partnership service level agreement sets out the roles and responsibilities of each partner.

Building the Evidence Base

Towards Zero Lancashire will rely on the interrogation of a wide variety of data sources, information and intelligence such as STATS19 Road Accident dataset. Data analysis is currently carried out on an organisational level, but this needs to be carried out on a pan Lancashire level. To support this process, a partnership analyst post has been created to analyse and interpret numerous datasets on casualties and collisions to highlight risks, trends and priorities. These will enable the partnership to deploy the most appropriate response. The analysis will also support the monitoring of progress against the 4 priority areas. Currently there is limited evaluation of road safety activity in Lancashire. Understanding the effectiveness of our activities and approach is crucial. Evaluation will support the implementation of the strategy by highlighting what approaches/activities have worked for whom in what circumstances and in what respects, and how.

We will:

1. Recruit a road safety coordinator and analyst to drive the implementation of the strategy.
2. Identify and examine road user risk, behaviours and causes of collisions to prioritise action. This will be through detailed analysis on numerous datasets, such as, traffic flows and speeds, lifestyle, behavioural and weather datasets.
3. Develop coordinated evidence based action plans against the priority areas, monitor progress and report to the LRSP through due process and governance.
4. Develop a communications plan.
5. Review the effectiveness and outcomes of road safety activity across the partnership on a continual basis. Make and implement recommendations.
6. Build an evidence base on effective road safety interventions, understanding delivery channels, barriers to access, cost benefit and promoting innovation.
7. Ensure information flows and agreements are in place in and between partners, for example findings from road safety audits informing and supporting road user behaviour activities.
8. Ensure our different workforces have competencies, skills and knowledge to improve road safety outcomes

Priority 2: Enabling, engaging and educating individuals and communities to influence road user attitudes and behaviour

Worldwide evidence suggests that communities accept and acknowledge that behaviour is important to road safety. The *Social Attitudes to Road Traffic Risk in Europe Study* highlighted that many people's perceptions are out of line with official statistics on contributory factors to road casualties. The most frequently recorded contributory factor to road collisions is failing to look properly but only 10-15% of respondents mentioned 'road users not paying enough attention to the road' as a factor²⁰. Many people believe it is mostly risk taking behaviours (mainly by young males) that cause road deaths, however, many collisions are caused by the mistakes that drivers and riders make, such as errors of judgement or momentary lapses of concentration. In Lancashire, 41.9% of collision causing serious injuries were caused by failing to look properly²¹. Our road safety activities, therefore, need to address road user errors as well as 'risk taking'.

Currently there are widespread road safety activities taking place across Lancashire aimed at tackling road user behaviour, perceptions and attitudes. These are both targeted, by user group and age (aligned to the latest trends and analysis) and universal activities carried out by and in collaboration with partners. Our activities need to be co-ordinated, evidence-based and effective. They must produce desired outcomes, and such investment must target the correct audiences, deliver appropriate information, and use the most effective ways of engagement. For example, we need to take forward and implement the recommendations cited in the review of the primary school road safety interventions (Brainbox Review²²) and complete similar reviews for other user and age groups.

Towards Zero Lancashire can, however, only achieve its aspirations if we have support and the involvement of local people. Local residents and communities often have a deep insight into road safety issues in their localities and therefore are key to creating viable solutions. Local Community Safety Partnerships, parish councils and neighbourhood policing are well placed to support communities delivering activities aligned to strategy.

We will:

1. Develop and implement evidence based co-ordinated activities and interventions that influence and change road user behaviour taking a life course approach.
2. Work with stakeholders such as local community safety partnerships, district and parish councils and the voluntary sector to target and deliver enabling, educating and engagement activities to address need.
3. Explore the expansion of community- led activities building on the successes of school and community road watch.

Priority 3: Intelligence led Enforcement

Road users do not always obey the rules, therefore, enforcement is necessary. *Towards Zero Lancashire* supports the local implementation of “Policing the Roads in Partnership – 5 Year Strategy 2015 – 2020”²³, which prioritises enforcement on the “Fatal 4” offences of drink and drug driving, the non-wearing of seat belts, excessive speed and driving whilst distracted. It also aims to secure our roads as free from the threat of serious organised crime and terrorism.

Currently, there are various activities that aim to address the Fatal 4 across the county. Speed affects both the risk of being involved in a crash and, more importantly, the subsequent outcomes should a crash occur. The enforcement of safe speeds with safety cameras and associated automated devices is one activity. Lancashire’s safety camera operations focus on educating offenders with less serious breaches of the speed limit, rather than penalising/prosecuting them, to improve their speed compliance. The Association of Chief Police Officers in their written evidence to the Transport Select Committee highlights the benefits in diversionary schemes²⁴. Evaluations of courses show that they are more effective in changing driver behaviour than punishment by way of a fine and penalty points. It is recognised that these need to be pitched at the correct level of driver behaviour. Lancashire offers a variety of nationally and locally approved diversionary courses appropriate to the user group and offence such as Speed Awareness and the on line seat belt course, Your Belt Your Life. These courses aim to change attitudes and improve skills. Courses need to be adapted and developed to address new emerging priorities.

The Lancashire speed tasking group collaborates to investigate the public’s concerns and reports of inappropriate speeding, determining appropriate action based on information recovered from traffic surveys together with casualty records. The interventions available include mobile enforcement, deployment of speed indicator devices and community engagement.

We will:

1. Carry out enforcement activities to address illegal and antisocial road user behaviour, such as tackling the Fatal 4.
2. Deliver nationally and locally approved diversionary courses across Lancashire.
3. Ensure the national team are aware of emerging issues in order to explore new diversionary courses or to improve or amend existing courses where necessary.
4. Upgrade, improve and maintain Lancashire’s safety camera network.
5. Deliver a collaborative approach and response to road safety complaints and concerns utilising the speed tasking group, traffic surveys, deployment of police and mobile enforcement units, installation of a temporary speed indicator display and/or community engagement.

Priority 4: Engineering for Safety to produce a safer road environment

Lancashire has a large road network across both rural and urban settings. The nature of roads and the type, level and speed of traffic they carry differs significantly between urban and rural roads, this means that the risks people face, and the type of accidents they suffer, also differs. Although there are more accidents and overall casualties on urban roads, more deaths occur on rural roads²⁵.

Road safety management and safety improvements contribute to safer and more sustainable environments. The three local highway authorities (Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council) and Highways England have a duty to manage and maintain Lancashire's roads as well as implementing appropriate measures to promote road safety. Engineering solutions are one such measure, this involves the physical construction or alteration of road infrastructure to minimise safety hazards. They are implemented to address safety issues identified through collision analysis, such as poor visibility, defective carriageway surfacing or sub-standard pedestrian links to create safer roads. Engineering measures have contributed to the reduction of collisions at many of Lancashire's collisions black spots.

The investigation of collisions is a statutory function of the Highway Authority²⁶. Fatal accidents investigations are completed to provide an understanding of the contributory factors of collisions and to develop appropriate remedial action where necessary. Road Safety Auditing will be carried out to assess highway schemes in order to identify and mitigate potential safety issues for road users. We will ensure new roads are built or upgraded without building in new safety problems. It is essential consideration is given to the safety of all road users and, in particular, vulnerable road users including those with mobility, sight or hearing impairments. The roads present a challenge for people with a wide range of disabilities. We will ensure Lancashire's streets will be designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists of all ages and abilities by using appropriate UK and international guidance.

In conjunction with the road infrastructure, the maintenance of vehicles has an impact on the safety of the road environment. Improvements in vehicle safety have contributed significantly to reducing road deaths and injuries. However, if the vehicle is not regularly checked and maintained, the benefits of modern design and technology are lost. There are currently vehicle safety interventions carried out on an organisational footprint such as tyre maintenance checks. These need to be evidence based and coordinated to provide most impact.

We will:

1. Carry out Road Safety Auditing to assess highway schemes to identify potential safety hazards and provide recommendations to mitigate these.
2. Carry out investigation of fatal accidents to provide an understanding of the contributory factors and develop appropriate remedial action where necessary.
3. Develop capital programmes of works for road user safety to be considered as part of the three Local Authorities and Highways England's commissioning processes.
4. Identify Higher Risk Routes and prioritise maintenance accordingly.
5. Involve LRSP so any impact on existing safety camera schemes can be considered.
6. Support delivery of the Lancashire Cycling and Walking Strategy

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