

Swindon's Road Safety Strategy



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Foreword

Keeping people safe on our roads is a top priority for us and this review of Swindon's Road Safety Strategy is key to delivering on that pledge.

We are all road users, as pedestrians, cyclists, passengers and drivers so road safety affects us all.

Road collisions can have a devastating impact on the lives of individuals, friends, families and communities, and one casualty is one too many. This is why we want to develop plans through the strategy with the aim of eradicating deaths and serious injuries from our roads altogether.

This will not be easy and we will be working closely with other agencies and our partners to co-ordinate and link our resources to prevent accidents happening on our roads.

Measures such as traffic calming, driver education and speed enforcement will remain essential tools to deliver a safe road network.

Through working towards adopting a safe systems approach, we will seek to address safety concerns in a consistent and methodical way. This involves recognising the importance of an intelligent, data-led prioritisation for all road interventions to ensure a service that focusses our resources on the areas and user groups that need it most.

Building on our existing strong partnerships with key stakeholders and encouraging greater community involvement, we hope to reshape the future delivery of our road safety programmes.

As part of the strategy, we have carried out a consultation on how we might introduce 20mph zones in residential areas that need them, and our School Safe Environment Zone Scheme (SSEZ) is delivering a range of behavioural change initiatives, engineering and enforcement measures to improve road safety outside and on the approach to all schools in the Borough to keep our children safe.

There is no quick solution, but our strategy will set us on the right path and ensure we make our roads safer for everyone.

June 2021

Gary Sumner

Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet Member for
Strategic Infrastructure, Transport & Planning

Executive Summary

We recognise that collisions on our roads can have a devastating impact on the lives of individuals, friends, families and communities. The Road Safety Strategy is a crucial tool in making our roads safer for everyone.

In 2010, the Council launched its 'Strategic Plan for Accident Reduction - 2010 and beyond' and adopted a road casualty reduction target in 2012 to reduce the number of killed and seriously injured casualties (KSI's) on Swindon's roads by 40% by 2020.

Unfortunately, the target reduction of 40% has not been achieved - although this matches national and regional patterns where there has been little reduction in road casualties over the last 10 years. Casualty figures for Swindon in 2019 however remain below the south-west average for all severities and despite an increase in road traffic volumes of 8% the casualty rate per billion vehicle kilometres has fallen.

The Department for Transport's Road Safety Statement in 2019 – "A Lifetime of Road Safety" set out the government's approach to road safety and promoted the basis of an integrated approach looking at the transport system as a whole. This is a "Safe System" approach.

Therefore with changes to national guidance and best practice and the slowing of progress in road casualty reductions, it is timely that the Council's Road Safety Strategy be updated. It is not proposed to adopt a completely different policy in terms of how the Council seeks to improve the safety of Swindon's roads. However, the Council recognises now more than ever that it has to take a multi-agency approach, to co-ordinate and join its resources and intelligence to the best effect and to shift the focus to preventing catastrophic injury as a result of collisions - to take a "Safe System" approach.

The Safe Systems approach to road safety underpins the UN's Global Plan for Road Safety and is based on four key principles;

- People make mistakes that can lead to road crashes
- The human body has a limited physical ability to tolerate crash forces before harm occurs
- A shared responsibility exists amongst those who design, build, manage and use roads and vehicles and provide post-crash care to prevent crashes resulting in serious injury or death
- All parts of the system must be strengthened to multiply their effects; and if one part fails, road users are still protected.

The table below illustrates the differences between the traditional road safety approach and a safe systems approach.

| | Traditional Road Safety Policy | Safe System |
|--|---|--|
| What is the problem? | Try to prevent all collisions | Prevent collisions from resulting in fatal and serious casualties |
| What is the appropriate goal? | Reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries | Zero fatalities and serious injuries |
| What are the major planning approaches? | Reactive to incidents Incremental approach to reduce the problem | Proactively target and treat risk Systematic approach to build a safe road system |
| What causes the problem? | Non-compliant road users | People make mistakes and people are physically fragile/vulnerable in collisions. Varying quality and design of infrastructure and operating speeds provides inconsistent guidance to users about what is safe use behaviour |
| Who is ultimately responsible? | Individual road users | Shared responsibility by individuals with system designers |
| How does the system work? | Is composed of isolated interventions | Different elements of a Safe System combine to produce a summary effect greater than the sum of individual treatments – so that if one part of the system fails other parts provide protection |

Swindon Council is a member of the Wiltshire & Swindon Road Safety Partnership through which a number of road safety initiatives are developed and delivered currently. Given the greater emphasis on collaborative working associated with the Safe Systems approach the Partnership is working to develop a more formal longer term strategy against which all partners can operate.

As such this revised and refreshed Road Safety Strategy for Swindon sets out an interim approach that embraces a direction of travel towards the adoption of the Safe Systems approach while this cross-agency collaboration is developed further.

The Strategy (2021–2023)

The following vision has been set, to focus our efforts over the next two years;

Vision: to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads, compared to the 2017-2019 3-year average

To achieve this we will;

- Work with our partners to develop and agree a Wiltshire & Swindon wide strategic plan
- Improve collaboration between partners and stakeholders
- Develop a risk based approach to improve the safety performance of our network
- Embed the Safe Systems approach
- Review Swindon's speed limits with the safety of our vulnerable road users at the forefront of our considerations.
- Deliver improvements to the pedestrian and cycle routes across our network to promote walking and cycling

We will work towards achieving the following objectives/outcomes;

- Reducing the number of vulnerable people being injured on our roads
- Reducing inequalities in the likelihood of road collisions
- Ensuring casualties don't increase as local traffic volumes increase (measured as casualties per billion kilometres)
- Making road space safer for all users, thereby encouraging non-car trips and improving air quality

We will continue to involve and consult with residents of Swindon and stakeholder groups as we develop our plans to make our roads safer and to ultimately, eradicate deaths and serious injuries from our roads altogether.

Introduction

Swindon's "Strategic Plan for Accident Reduction – 2010 and beyond" was approved by the Council in December 2009 and since that time the Council and its partners have undertaken a number of positive projects to address road safety in Swindon.

The Council is now carrying out a review of its plan. We are not proposing a completely different policy in terms of how we improve the safety of our roads. Measures such as highway engineering, driver education and police enforcement are still very much essential tools to deliver a safe network.

However, we recognise now more than ever that we have to take a multi-agency approach, to co-ordinate and join our resources and intelligence to the best effect and to shift our focus to preventing serious injuries as a result of collisions. To help achieve this we aim to adopt a "Safe System" approach in Swindon. This will ensure that we set up our resources and efforts to target all elements that affect road safety through all who play a role. We cannot prevent all collisions from occurring, human error is inevitable, but we can ensure that we design our roads to reduce the risk and dangers they pose, so that when collisions do take place, they do not result in serious harm.

This review of the plan first introduced in 2010 is therefore designed as an interim position as we adapt to the Safe Systems approach as it would apply to road safety in Swindon and while we work with our partners to bring forward a longer term strategy and action plan using that approach.

Our priority remains to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads in Swindon. No amount of casualties is acceptable. We have a moral and statutory duty to make our communities safer and to preserve human life. Our long-term vision must therefore be to eradicate deaths and serious injuries from our roads altogether.

Where are we now?

The Council Plan 2016–2020, sets out the vision for Swindon and the priorities we are trying to achieve for our residents and the borough of Swindon. To achieve our ambitious "Vision for Swindon 2030", we have committed to six priorities and 27 pledges. These set out how we intend to provide services to residents and set key milestones to achieving our aims. The plan describes our work towards achieving the vision. Priority six is to "Make Swindon safer, fairer and healthier" and one measure of performance for this priority is to achieve a reduction in casualties on our roads.

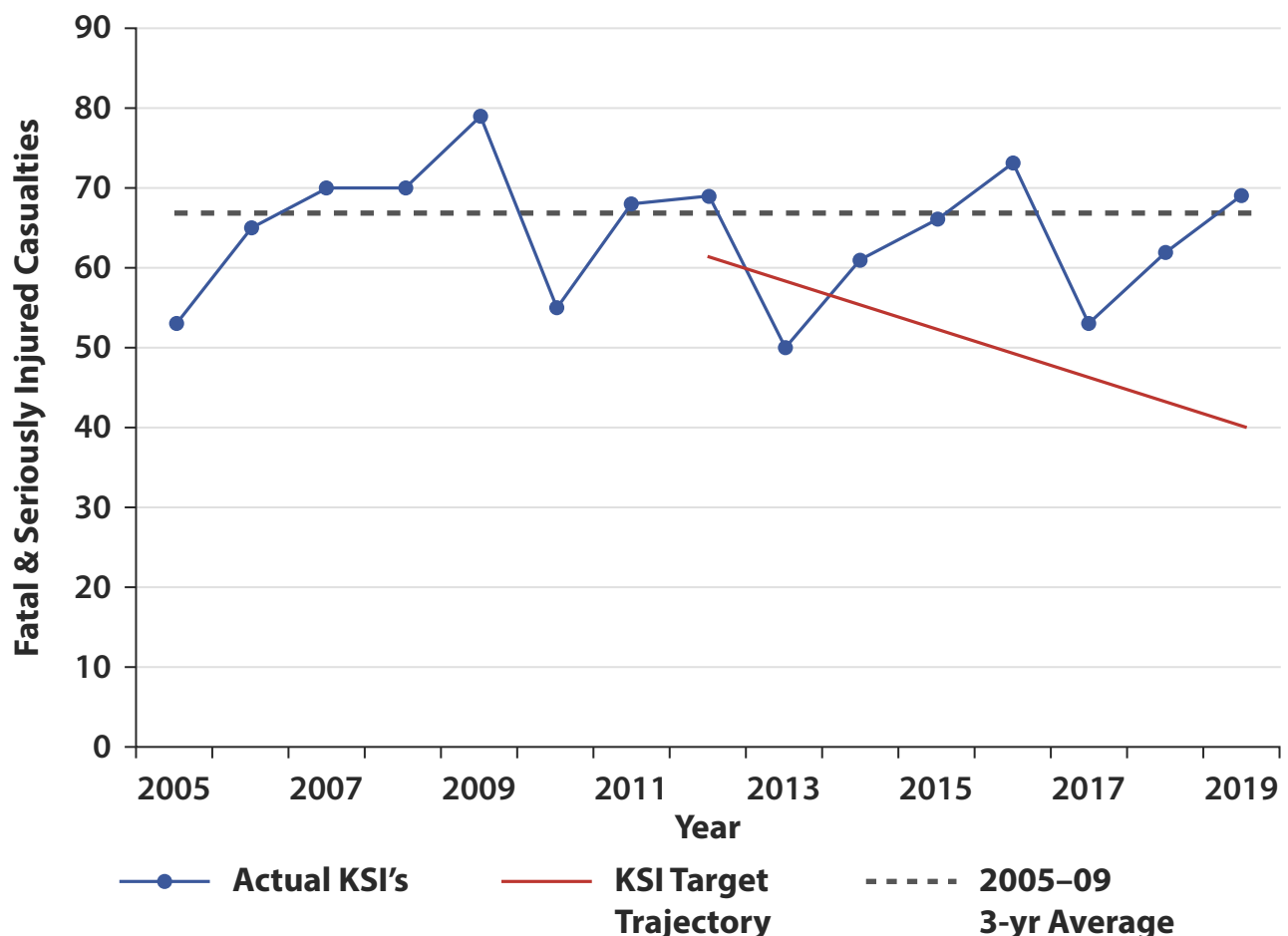
The Local Transport Plan (LTP) is the principal means of delivering the Council’s transport programme. It is the statutory document that contains the transport policies and programmes of the local transport authority. It is listed in Article 4 of the Council Constitution as a key document in forming the policy framework for the Council.

The Local Transport Plan is the transport delivery plan for the wider strategic objectives of the Council. It supports and is consistent with the Vision for Swindon and the Council’s planning policies; in particular the Local Plan and Central Area Action Plan. The Local Transport Plan has a key role in implementing the Corporate Plan’s priorities and objectives, particularly in relation to the Vision for Swindon priorities. It identifies improved road safety as one of the key transport outcomes to be achieved by the plan.

In 2010 our vision for road safety in Swindon was agreed “to reduce year-on-year the number of casualties on our roads and ensure our roads stay amongst the safest in the South West”. In 2012 this was endorsed by the adoption of a road casualty reduction target to reduce the number of killed and seriously injured casualties by 40% from a 2005–09 3-year average baseline by 2020.

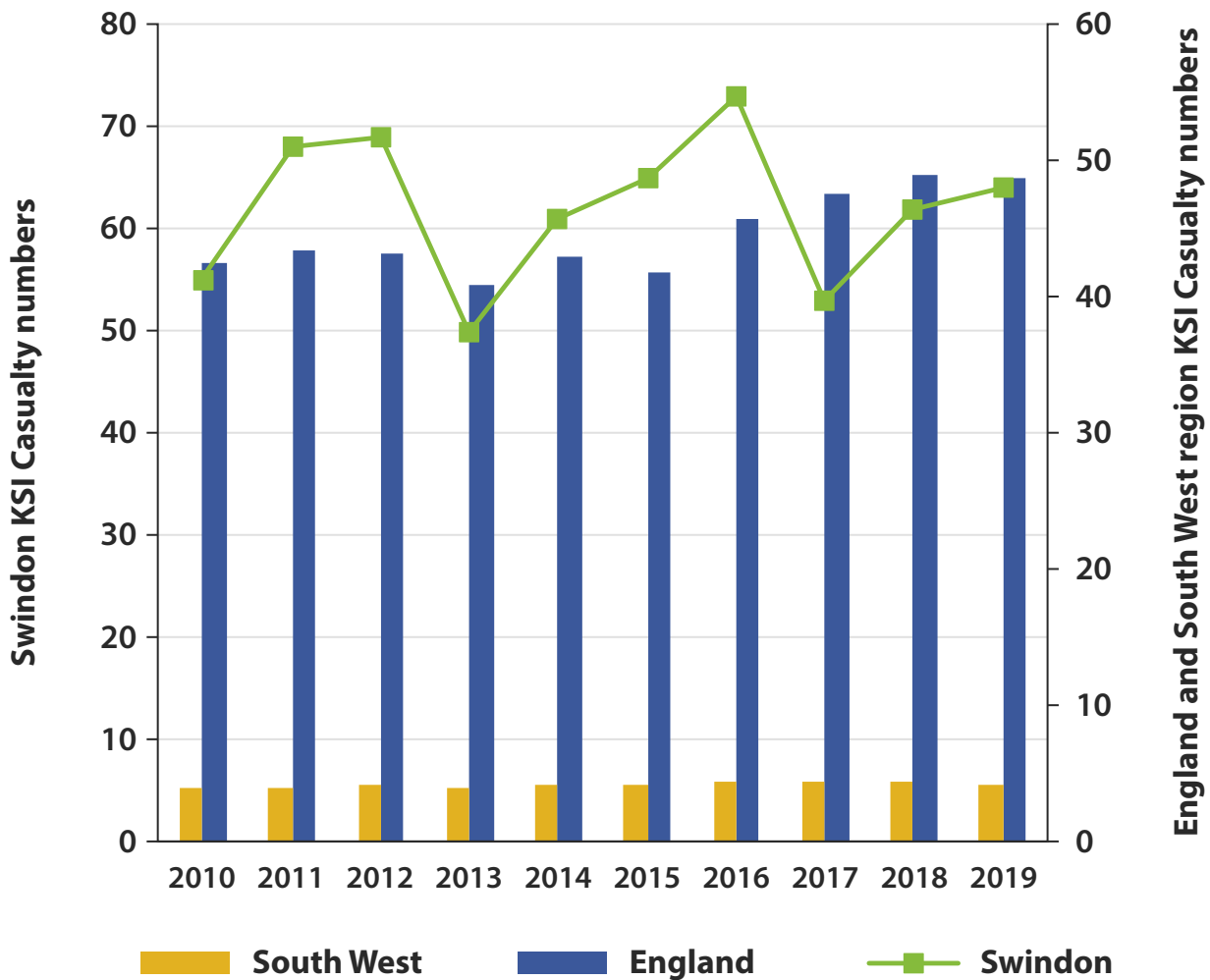
The following graph in Figure 1 illustrates that unfortunately we have not been able to achieve this target; the average number of killed and seriously injured (KSI) casualties throughout this period has largely remained the same.

Figure 1: 2020 Casualty reduction target trajectory & performance



However comparisons between road casualty numbers in Swindon since 2010 and those both nationally and across the South West as shown in Figure 2 confirm that the stagnation in numbers we've seen is consistent with those across the region and the country as a whole.

Figure 2: 10 year casualty trends



Nationally traffic volumes over this period have increased significantly, road traffic levels between 2015 and 2019 have increased by 8.18%. Despite this the casualty rate per billion vehicle kilometres has fallen, nationally, regionally and locally as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Casualties per billion vehicle kilometres

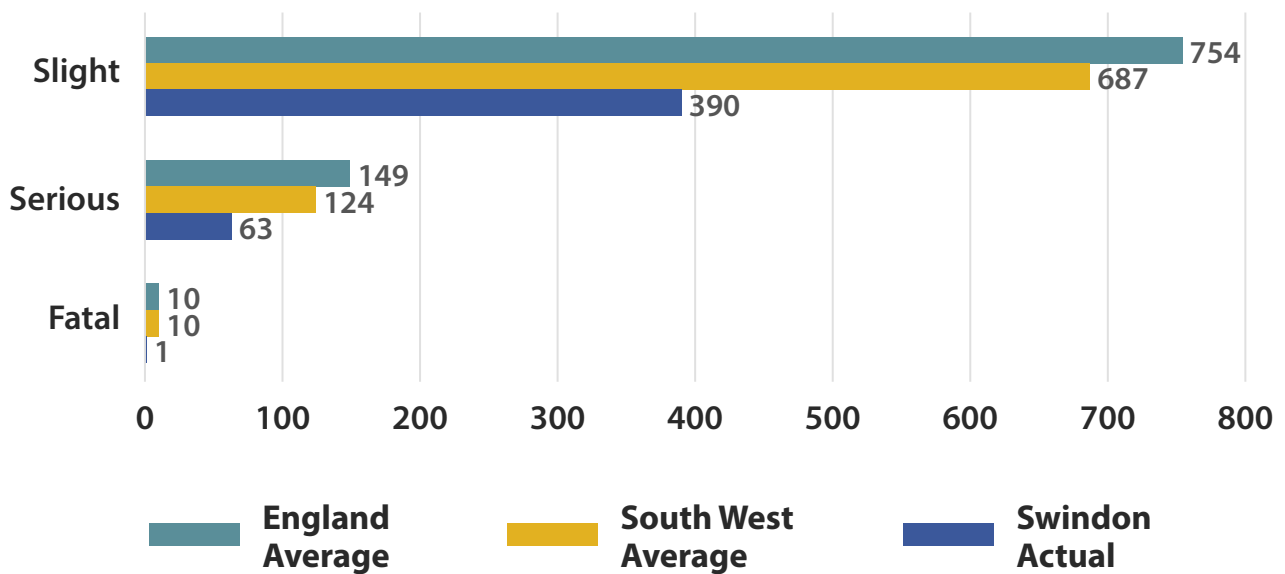
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | +/- 2019 v. 2015 |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|------------------|
| England | 586 | 558 | 519 | 483 | 451 | -23.04% |
| South-West | 448 | 430 | 391 | 368 | 360 | -19.73% |
| Swindon | 448 | 484 | 374 | 359 | 365 | -18.53% |

Road traffic collisions have fallen steadily due to safer infrastructure, improved vehicle design, targeted enforcement, changing social attitudes and improved emergency care.

More recently there has been a notable increase in reported serious collisions, but this can be explained in part by changes to the reporting systems used by the Police in some areas which have seen more accurate recording of the injury severity; therefore, care needs to be taken when comparing historical collision data from 2015 and earlier.

Comparison of the most recent data from 2019, illustrates that casualty figures for Swindon remain below the South-West average across all severities.

Figure 3: 2019 National, regional and local casualty figures



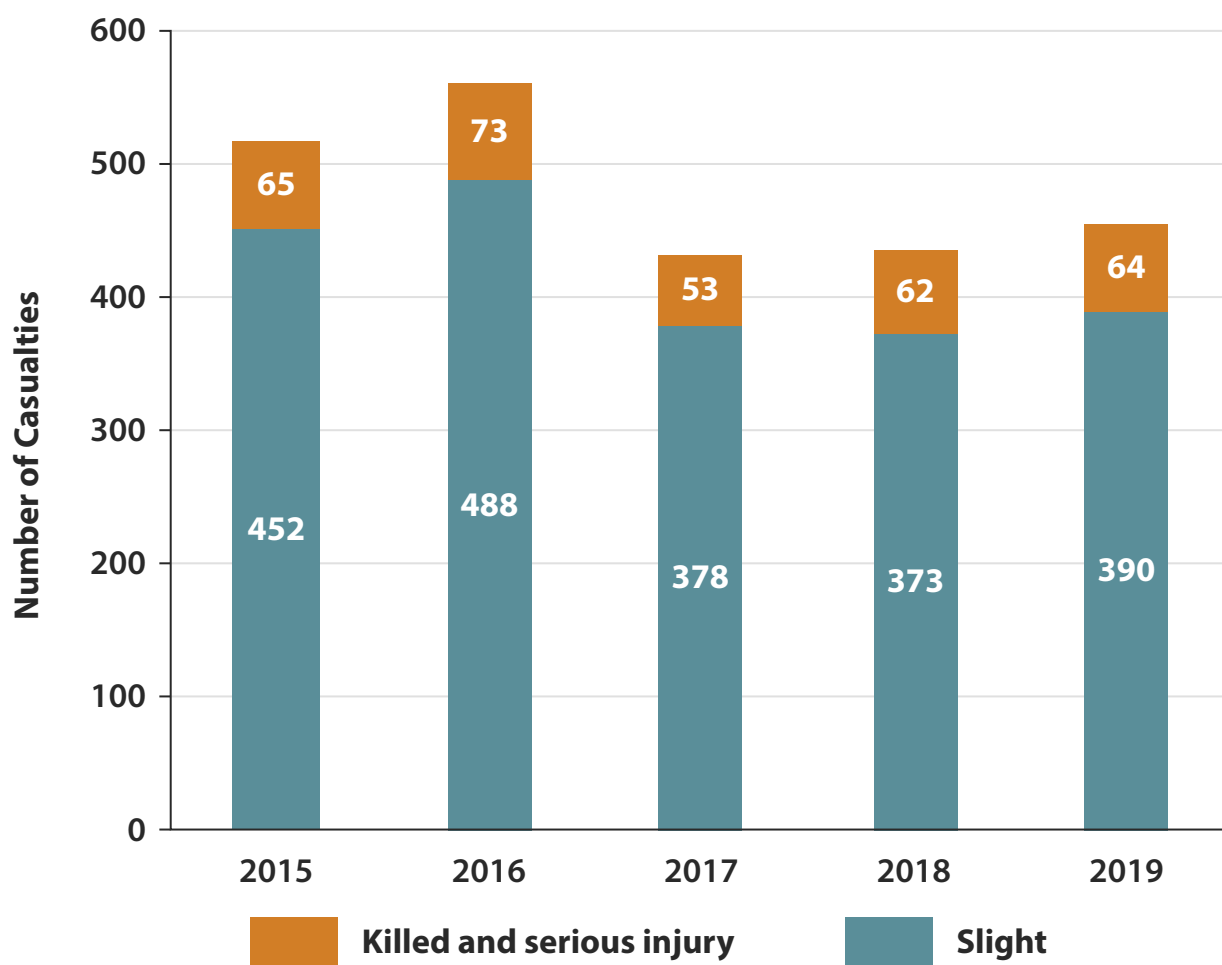
Understanding our data

A detailed review of collision data for Swindon has been undertaken and our local casualty trends identified. A full detailed breakdown of the historical collision data for Swindon is contained in Appendix A. All analysis has been carried out based on five complete years (2015–2019) of data to smooth out any data variances and the key findings are summarised below.

This review has considered collision data on all roads in Swindon Borough that as the local highway authority we are responsible for and can make changes on. Data from the M4 & A419 which are the responsibility of Highways England is excluded.

Figure 4 illustrates there has been a fall both in the total number of casualties over the 5 year period, and within the individual severity categories.

Figure 4: Casualties by Severity, 2015–2019



Vehicle drivers and / or passengers continue to account for the largest percentage of all injuries. Although the number of vulnerable road user KSI casualties – pedestrians and motorcyclists – have significantly increased in recent years.

Statutory Requirements

The Road Traffic Act 1988, Section 39 imposes a statutory duty on every Highway Authority in England to promote and improve road safety by disseminating information or advice relating to the use of roads. The Act states that each local authority:

- Must carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles on roads, or parts of roads, within their area
- Must in light of such studies, take measures as appear to be appropriate to prevent such accidents and
- In constructing new roads must take such measures as appear to be appropriate to reduce the possibilities of such accidents when the roads come into use.

Understanding where and when road traffic collisions occur across our roads and identifying patterns and trends within this data helps us isolate prevalent issues on the highway network. Analysing and investigating this data enables us to understand why the collisions occur and enables us to identify locations more effectively where risk of harm may be higher so that problems can be addressed. Further analysis of the characteristics of the road users involved in the collisions can also support the development of our education and publicity programmes that complement physical changes to the highway network; thus ensuring that we are delivering our statutory responsibilities and targeting our resources effectively.

There are many factors that contribute to road traffic collisions, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to establish trends or patterns than can be mitigated through a single approach. Having identified this some years ago Swindon was at the forefront of developing and integrating education, engineering and enforcement in equal measure in its approach to road safety interventions. This approach has allowed issues identified by the data to be addressed on a number of different fronts.

Historically, the Police are responsible for collecting and recording Road Traffic Collision data that have resulted in personal injury, through a process known as "STATS19". This process excludes "damage only" collisions as they are often self-reported and cannot be validated. Once the data is collated it is processed before being submitted to the Department for Transport. The resulting information is published annually in the Reported Road Casualties Great Britain (RCGB) annual report.

It is known that a considerable proportion of non-fatal casualties are not known to the police. As part of the Road Casualties Great Britain (RCGB) annual report, the Department for Transport continues to develop and review a variety of data sources to quantify the level of under reporting. Police data is not therefore a complete record of all personal injury road collisions, and this should be borne in mind when using and analysing the

data. It is however the most detailed, complete and reliable single source of information on road casualties covering the whole of Great Britain, for monitoring trends over time. Approximately half of English police forces have now changed their collision recording system to Collision Recording and Sharing (CRASH); although not Wiltshire Police. The new system records the severity of injury more accurately than STATS19, as it removes the uncertainty in determining the injury severity which was previously determined by police officers using their own judgement. This classification is now automated based on the type of injury sustained. Nationally, this change has resulted in a large increase (+20%) in reported serious collisions when comparing 2015 to 2016.

The annual review of collision & casualty data enables Officers to identify at-risk groups that are over represented within Swindon relative to their representation in the population as a whole, or specific locations on the network where there are a higher number of reported injury collisions than might be expected or a particular pattern in the nature of collisions occurring. This intelligence feeds through and informs targeted intervention proposals as part of the development of the Council's annual road safety programmes.

Looking forward

Despite the upturn in the casualty figures, 2019 remained below the average of the previous 4 years. However, we should not be complacent as 454 people were injured on Swindon's roads in 2019. The devastation caused by road traffic collisions is well documented and apart from the personal consequences there are also wider social and economic impacts. The Department for Transport provides estimates on the economic cost of prevention of collisions and based on this, the cost of the prevention of those collisions in Swindon in 2019 amounted to £37.2 million, up from £35.2 million in 2018.

Furthermore, as we have also seen, the longer term casualty trends are static and many of the injury hot-spots on Swindon's roads are recurring year on year with the obvious improvements having already been implemented. As a result, along with the predicted increase in trips and users on the network, further reductions may prove difficult to achieve. Therefore, it is felt an alternative approach to road safety management needs to be considered to continue to achieve road casualty reductions over the coming decade.

When considering and developing highway programmes we have analysed road traffic collisions to identify clusters of patterns and trends occurring across the network. Feasibility schemes were drawn up to address these collisions and the savings assessed. The estimated costs of delivering the scheme proposals were evaluated and the First Year Rate of Return calculated. Historically the Local Safety scheme programme was then produced, prioritised on the First Year Rate of Return.

Targeting highway improvements in this way has been highly successful in treating those locations with highest prevalence of road traffic collisions. However, it has been recognised that the number of cluster sites identified has now reduced, and there is a need to reconsider how we analyse collision patterns and develop programmes. Many authorities, including Swindon, are exploring different approaches in future.

Policy context

Great Britain continues to benefit from some of the lowest road casualty rates in the world, being one of only four countries to have less than 30 road deaths per million inhabitants – bettered only by Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

In December 2015 the Department for Transport published its road safety statement “Working Together to Build a Safer Road System”, setting out the government’s national vision, values and priorities for road safety. This statement promoted a Safe Systems approach to support road users and the economy whilst encouraging everyone to make safer choices. It also recognised the challenges faced in bringing safety improvements to all the varying road user groups on the highway network. An increasing number of local authorities in England and Wales have now either adopted the Safe Systems approach or are moving towards adopting it along with their local partners.

The statement actively supported devolution, empowering local authorities and Police and Crime Commissioners to make decisions on local road safety spending priorities to the benefit of the communities they serve. In support of this the Wiltshire and Swindon Road Safety Partnership brings together the key stakeholder organisations to coordinate and address casualty reduction across the area. The Partnership oversees this role and manages delivery at a local level.

In 2019 the Department for Transport published its Road Safety Statement – A Lifetime of Road Safety” which set out the governments approach to road safety and reiterated the basis of an integrated approach looking at the transport system as a whole i.e. a “Safe System” approach and recognising the key role to be played by local highway authorities as the holders of the statutory duty for road safety.

Safe Systems approach

In 2010 the United Nations published its Global Plan for Road Safety 2011-2020 which set a target to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic collisions by 2020.

Good progress has been achieved between 2011 and 2020 with road safety now firmly included on the global health and development agenda, laying the foundations for further progress in coming years.

A new Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 has been launched for which the Global Plan recognises that all stakeholders have a responsibility in bringing about a reduction in road deaths and injuries. The importance of ownership at a national, regional and local level, involving multiple agencies is also highlighted.

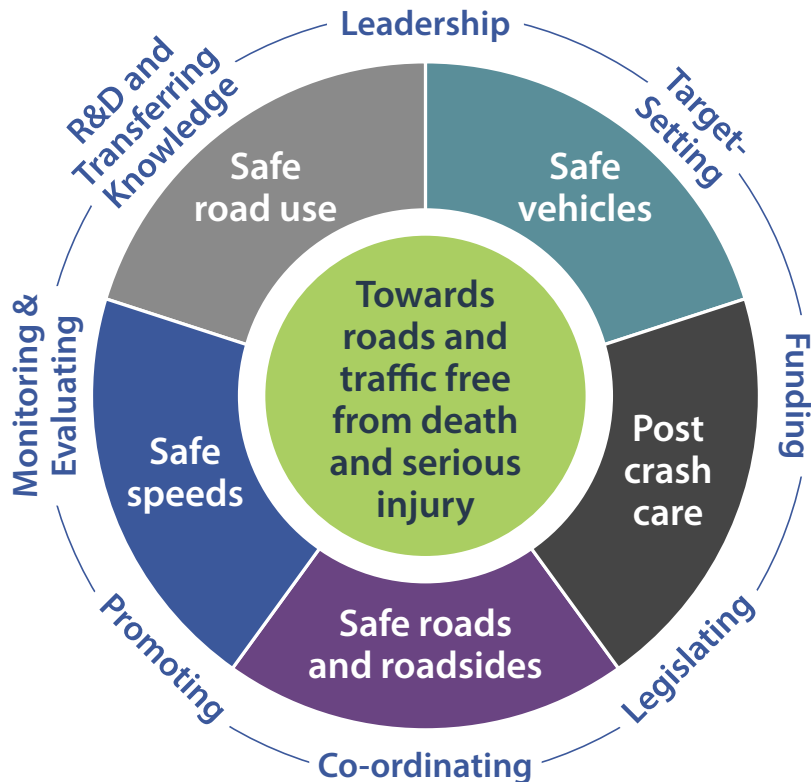
The guiding principle underlying the UN's plan is the Safe System approach which is underpinned by the following key principles:

- As humans, we will inevitably make mistakes and we will never entirely eradicate road traffic collisions
- As humans, we are vulnerable – our unprotected bodies can only withstand low kinetic forces before the risk of death increases
- We need to build a forgiving road system that can absorb our mistakes and limit the transfer of forces that result in serious injuries
- Road safety is a shared responsibility between everyone in the community

The Safe System approach isn't new – it has been at the forefront of road safety thinking for years and has been adopted throughout the world having become initially established in Sweden.

Planning for a Safe System approach centres on the understanding that humans are fallible and unpredictable; even the most experienced road users will make mistakes. There are physical limits to what the human body tolerates before harm occurs so our transport system needs to be forgiving, a collision should not result in loss of life or limb. It is incumbent on all organisations that have a role in road safety to design the whole network to ensure that when mistakes happen, the impact is minimised. The safe system advocates a conscious shift away from simply trying to prevent all collisions to preventing death and mitigating serious injury and is built on 5 Pillars of Action to support a holistic approach to delivery.

Figure 5: Safe System Pillars (source: www.RoSPA.com)



The 5 pillars of action and their supporting aims are:

Safe Roads and Roadsides

- Designing and maintaining our road network to reduce the chances of collisions occurring and the severity of injury when they do
- Delivering improvements to the pedestrian and cycle routes across our network to promote walking and cycling along routes that users feel are safe and accessible
- Identifying locations and areas of our road network with the highest level of risk, especially when this relates to the most vulnerable road users
- Modernisation and maintenance of the network. Ensuring where possible that roadside features are protected by vehicle restraint systems or are crash friendly such as passively safe sign posts and lighting columns that offer a lower risk of personal injury when hit by a vehicle

Safe Road Users

- Providing education and training to encourage all road users to utilise our road network safely, targeting key groups where required
- Supporting new drivers and informing them of the risks they face
- Encouraging and promoting the use of our road network in a safe and considerate way
- Ensuring that robust measures are in place to facilitate the compliance of the law as well as enforcement when it is broken

Safe Speeds

- Ensure that the speed limits on our roads are set appropriately taking into account the physical characteristics of them
- Developing and undertaking a series of speed enforcement initiatives
- Seeking educational opportunities to encourage reduced speeds

Safe Vehicles

- Promoting the use of newer and safer vehicles on our road network
- Ensuring the Council provides a shining example of best practice in terms of fleet management and employee code of conduct
- Aligning our procurement procedures to work with companies that share our road safety values
- Working extensively with other key stakeholders to ensure that the vehicles that are using our roads meet the required legal safety requirements

Post-Crash Response

- Enabling rapid response and understanding causation to prevent recurrence
- Understanding the limitations our highway network has on the ability of emergency services to attend collisions and treat casualties
- Working with all emergency services to identify and deliver improvements to improve the overall casualty response process.

Applying the Safe Systems approach requires a step change from the traditional means of tackling road casualties. Whilst partners will have an area of expertise that relates to one of the five pillars to focus on, it does not exclude them from also working with partner agencies to collectively deliver improvements across multiple pillars.

Aligned with the core objective of the Safe System approach efforts, individually or collectively, are focused on those factors and circumstances that lead to the most serious of incidents resulting in catastrophic consequences for road users.

Table 2: Comparing the traditional road safety approach and a Safe System
(source: ITF (2016))

| | Traditional Road Safety Policy | Safe System |
|--|---|---|
| What is the problem? | Try to prevent all collisions. | Prevent collisions from resulting in fatal and serious casualties. |
| What is the appropriate goal? | Reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries. | Zero fatalities and serious injuries. |
| What are the major planning approaches? | Reactive to incidents. Incremental approach to reduce the problem. | Proactively target and treat risk. Systematic approach to build a safe road system. |
| What causes the problem? | Non-compliant road users. | People make mistakes and people are physically fragile/vulnerable in collisions. Varying quality and design of infrastructure and operating speeds provides inconsistent guidance to users about what is safe use behaviour. |
| Who is ultimately responsible? | Individual road users. | Shared responsibility by individuals with system designers. |
| How does the system work? | Is composed of isolated interventions. | Different elements of a Safe System combine to produce a summary effect greater than the sum of individual treatments – so that if one part of the system fails other parts provide protection |

For the highway authority, considering the Safe System approach means protecting people against death or serious injury, by upgrading the road network through targeting sections and areas of highest risk. To this end, network design should seek to: separate on-coming traffic on high-volume, high-speed roads to prevent head-on collisions, provide crash protective roadsides to address run-off road collisions; achieve safe speeds at intersections to reduce the incidence and severity of side impacts; separate motor traffic from unprotected users except where speeds are low; achieve safe speeds to provide freedom for all responsible users wherever motor vehicles mix with other users of the street or space; and improve highway surfaces particularly on busy footways and those parts of the carriageway used by cyclists and powered two-wheelers.

This interim strategy defines the priorities and focuses for road safety in Swindon and outlines an action plan to address them over the medium term, whilst developing a new Safe Systems approach to effect change. Greater emphasis in developing an intelligent, data led approach for all road interventions and campaigns will ensure a cost-effective service, focussing resources on the areas and user groups that need it most. Continuing to work in partnership with other key stakeholders and encouraging greater community involvement will provide further support in the development and delivery of future road safety programmes.

Collaborative Working

Devolution and the government's decentralisation agenda now allows local authorities to decide on what safety measures are needed in their areas, and rather than having centralised national targets, local targets to address issues are encouraged. It is recognised that to achieve greater efficiency and collaborative working towards reducing casualties there is a need for regional partnerships.

A range of partners covering multiple policy areas including transport, public health, education, housing, planning, third sector and the emergency services work together in the delivery of casualty reduction. These partners are essential to the overall success of the shared vision and play an active role in road safety across the area. Local partners are fundamental to support the collaborative approach required to deliver road safety.

To support the development and delivery of road safety initiatives across Swindon and Wiltshire a Road Safety Partnership exists between a range of partners including Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Wiltshire Police, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire Service, South West Ambulance Service, Highways England

and Bath & NE Somerset, Swindon & Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Partners work closely to determine a strategic Wiltshire and Swindon approach to road safety and then develop and implement action plans to deliver the strategy. The partners are:

Swindon Borough & Wiltshire Council, Highways – responsible for the management and maintenance of the local road network, delivering infrastructure improvements to support strategic growth.

Swindon Borough & Wiltshire Council Public Health – promote the health and wellbeing of the local community. Gather data and report on the health of the local population to provide evidence to determine local health priorities.

Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner – the elected official who sets the strategic priorities for policing and community safety in Wiltshire through the Police and Crime Plan. Provides a link between the Police, local authorities, partner agencies and communities.

Wiltshire Police – works closely with other emergency services to manage the immediate aftermath of a collision and community response. Carries out post-crash investigations for fatal or life changing collisions to assess whether highway conditions or road layout contributed and where necessary liaise with the Highway authority on the implementation of appropriate measures.

Dorset and Wiltshire Fire Service – works closely with other emergency services to manage the immediate aftermath of a collision and community response. Also participates in a number of educational programmes and events promoting road safety including the annual Safe Drive, Stay Alive events for schools.

National Highways (formerly Highways England) – is responsible for the operation of the strategic road network (M4 and A419) and brings a national and regional perspective to local initiatives.

South West Ambulance Service Trust – works closely with other emergency services to manage the immediate aftermath of a collision and community response.

Although not represented in the Partnership the Third Sector also have a significant role to play. Swindon Council supports the campaigns of the Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and promotes them across the Borough. Swindon Council also recognises the importance of other road safety charities, notably Brake. The delivery of local road safety initiatives is also carried out by voluntary groups (such as Swindon Young Drivers) and individuals and the importance of this is valued by Swindon Council.

Governance

The Road Safety Partnership is a sub-group to the Swindon and Wiltshire Community Safety Partnerships.

Governance is through a high-level Strategic Group of senior representatives from each partner supervising the work of a Delivery Group implementing the agreed delivery plan.

Figure 6: Wiltshire & Swindon Road Safety Partnership Governance



The Strategic Group are currently looking at its future policies and programmes and how the adoption of a Safe System approach would work across all the partners. While this work is being developed this Borough Council review of Swindon's 2010 Strategic Plan for Accident Reduction will begin to signpost a direction of travel in line with government advice and the way in which many other local authorities are renewing their road safety plans.

Vision and Objectives

The success of work programmes and measures implemented will continue to be monitored through the annual collision data review and reported publicly.

We recognise that collisions on our roads can have a devastating impact on the lives of individuals, friends, families and communities. The Road Safety Strategy is a crucial tool in making our roads safer for everyone. The vision for road safety in our area is therefore:

“to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads, compared to the 2017-2019 3-year average”.

In addition, we will work towards achieving the following objectives;

- Reducing the number of vulnerable people being injured on our roads
- Reducing inequalities in the likelihood of road collisions
- Ensuring casualties don't increase as local traffic volumes increase (measured as casualties per billion kilometres)
- Making road space safer for all users, thereby encouraging non-car trips and improving air quality

Inevitably there are local challenges to delivering our vision and these have been identified as the following:

- Residents living in more deprived areas are more at risk of being involved in a road collision than those living in affluent areas
- Road safety concerns discourage people from walking and cycling and this is particularly an issue around schools when trying to persuade parents not to take their children to school by car
- Our population is growing. It grew from 209,156 in 2011 (Census) to 222,193 in 2019 (ONS mid-year estimate). It is predicted to increase to 264,300 by 2036 (Local Plan). More people mean more journeys on our roads, with the potential for increasing the number of collisions
- Public understanding and acceptance of measures to improve road safety such as reduced speed limits or highway engineering measures
- Co-ordination with wider Council priorities regarding economic growth and regeneration, carbon reduction, equalities and diversity

Measuring our performance

In its 2015 road safety statement – “Working Together to Build a Safer Road System” the government supported local decision-making rather than imposing centralised national

targets and as a result there are currently no national targets to reduce killed or seriously injured casualties. Measuring the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads is still however one of the most important indicators in road safety.

While our ultimate vision is that no one will die or be seriously injured on our roads, we are realistic and whilst our road network allows for human error, we must set ourselves challenging and realistic performance measures to monitor the impact of the strategy. As we move forward to develop the Safe Systems approach with our partners we will seek to agree a meaningful road safety target that we are all accountable for.

During this review period we will continue to aim to reduce the number of road casualties and to monitor the following indicators;

- Number of casualties Killed
- Number of casualties Seriously injured
- Number of casualties with Slight injuries
- Number of Child (U16) casualties Killed and Seriously injured

The above indicators will be monitored on a monthly basis. In addition, the annual review will report on a range of indicators including, but not limited to, the following;

- Number of collisions
- Severity of collisions
- Casualties per billion vehicle kilometres
- Comparisons of Swindon with national and regional patterns, and other comparator authorities
- Trend of killed, seriously injured and slight casualties over previous years
- Economic cost of casualties in Swindon
- Percentage of vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit at selected census points across the local road network

Casualties will be monitored by:

- Age
- Gender
- Mode of transport (car, motorcycle, pedal cycle, HGV/LGV & pedestrians)
- Environmental factors including;
 - Network location e.g. Urban vs. rural roads, classified road network
 - Road characteristics e.g. road layout, road side features
 - Adherence to traffic control measures e.g. Red Light running
 - Driver impairment / distraction
- Links with the local deprivation index

Resources

Delivering our vision for road safety will not succeed without the allocation and prioritisation, where necessary, of resources to the activities outlined in the Action Plan.

The Action Plan has been developed in line with current budget allocations as set out in the Council's annual budget rather than requiring new or additional resources.

Many of the activities will be delivered using staff funded through the general rate fund whilst schemes will be delivered through the Local Transport Plan (LTP) government grant, ring-fenced government grants such as Bikeability funding or other growth related funding.

Road Safety improvements may be delivered as stand-alone schemes or as composite schemes integrating with other programmes of work.

Action Plan

The two-year action plan in Appendix B has been prepared to outline the initiatives and activities that will be developed and delivered to help Swindon Borough Council work towards adopting a Safe Systems approach to road safety. Some actions build upon activities already underway but with a renewed focus on road safety, whilst others will be new initiatives built around the 5 pillars of action. A brief outline of the key initiatives and/or activities is provided below.

- We will work with our partners across the Road Safety Partnership to develop and agree a Wiltshire & Swindon-wide strategic plan for road safety that builds on collaborative working to collectively reduce harm on our roads. This strategy will be reviewed and updated to support the Partnership's strategy to 2030.
- The performance rating of Swindon's roads will be considered, areas of high risk identified and appropriate safety improvements, such as the use of passively safe street furniture, delivered to improve the performance of our network.
- Whilst improving road safety on the existing network we will also ensure that future roads for new developments are designed with the highest levels of road safety in mind. This includes the use of Road Safety audits for new highway infrastructure schemes.

- Collision data will continue to be used as a criteria for the prioritisation of highway maintenance investment in accordance with the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management (HIAM) Policy & Strategy. A “resilient network” of key routes has been identified that will be maintained to the highest standards during periods of adverse weather in order to avoid road safety issues caused by snow, ice or flooding.
- We will deliver local, intelligence-led educational road safety campaigns and support national campaigns that are aligned to local casualty needs and priority road users identified by the Partnership Strategic Group.
- The speed limits on Swindon’s roads will be reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate and enforceable. Particular attention will be given to the safety of vulnerable road users and the use of 20mph schemes on residential streets. In addition we will share data with the Police to aid effective and efficient targeting of enforcement resources.
- Identify and secure walking & cycling improvements around the network through the delivery of the Local Walking & Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
- This strategy will support the roll-out of Electric Vehicle Charging Points across Swindon to help promote the use of newer and safer vehicles on our road network.
- We will continue to carry out cross-agency fatal site assessments in the event of a fatality to identify any lessons that can be learnt and applied at the same location, or elsewhere, to reduce the likelihood of fatal road traffic collisions recurring.

Conclusion

With this Strategy we are building foundations for the future. This revised and refreshed Road Safety Strategy for Swindon sets a direction of travel towards adoption of the Safe Systems Approach with our partners in future years. It sets out an interim approach while this cross-agency collaboration is developed further. We will continue to involve and consult with residents of Swindon and stakeholder groups as we develop our plans to make our roads safer and to ultimately, eradicate deaths and serious injuries from our roads altogether.

Economy & Development

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