



West Midlands
Combined Authority

Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030



Foreword from the Mayor – Andy Street

In 2019, we launched the Regional Road Safety Strategy 2019-2028 aimed at reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on our road network. The primary objective of the strategy was to achieve a 40% reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on our road network by the end of 2028.

Data for the second reporting period (2019-2022) of this strategy shows a very promising 16% reduction in the number of fatal and serious injury already, although this will undoubtedly have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This reduction has also supported our plans for stronger economic growth, with the average annual societal of killed and seriously injured casualties reducing from £320m between 2015-2017 to £295m in 2019-2021. This performance is testament to the commitment and expertise of all our local and regional partners.

Nevertheless, it is imperative that we continually review and refresh our approach to road safety to ensure that the partnership is working towards a common goal with a long-term mission, whereby nobody is killed on our roads – Vision Zero. To support this, we need a strong mandate for action on road safety that reinforces implementation of a Safe System through evidence-based collaboration, clear roles and responsibilities, alignment with the Local Transport Plan and a challenging intermediate target.

As such, we have refreshed our strategic approach to road safety. This includes adoption of Vision Zero, greater emphasis on the systematic approach to make the road network safe, recognition of local and regional delivery and how the collective effort works more effectively towards a common goal. The refresh enhances the intermediate road safety target and introduces four key performance indicators to provide a broader understanding of overall improvement. In addition, it acknowledges the contributions to wider transport policies around active travel, behaviour change, civil and criminal enforcement, congestion management and public transport efficiency.

This Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 succeeds the previous strategy and extends the intermediate target to a 50% reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on our road network by the end of 2030.

It is not expected that Vision Zero can be achieved within the timeframe of this strategy. However, it is vital that we create the right building blocks for future success so that residents, visitors and people travelling within and to the region for work can travel without the risk of death and serious injury.

The effective implementation of a Safe System drives collaboration between all partners and disciplines. It also recognises the positive impact that individual road users (our biggest stakeholder) can play in contributing to achieving safety and efficiency on our network.

We believe that the adoption of this refreshed strategy heightens the importance of road safety in our region. It not only guides the effort towards a safe road environment, but also contributes towards delivery of a reliable road network, a more vibrant and stronger regional economy, increasing use of sustainable modes of transport and enhancing public transport efficiency.

Message from the Police and Crime Commissioner

In my Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025, I made a commitment to ensure that road safety is at the heart of existing and new forms of transport. To achieve this pledge, we need an ambitious and strong road safety strategy, that encourages collaboration and drives the partnership towards the delivery of a safe road network.

I am pleased that we are not resting on our laurels, following the early success of the Regional Road Safety Strategy 2019-2028. It is important that we continually review the strategic approach, to ensure that it is fit for purpose and provides all road users with the level of safety that they are entitled to.

The integration of Vision Zero as the region's long-term mission is a necessity, not only for addressing today's challenges, but also applying evidential foresight of the challenges that will arise from future mobility. I wholeheartedly agree that we simply cannot accept death and serious injury on the region's road network.

As stated in the Police and Crime Plan, I will work in collaboration with the wider Road Safety Partnership, to achieve five overarching themes:

- Reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on the Strategic Route Network and the Key Route Network, seeking to achieve the United Nations General Assembly target of reducing road deaths by 50% by 2030;
- Continuing to ensure support is available for the families of those bereaved, through fatal road crashes;
- Reducing congestion and improving network resilience;
- Reducing the carbon footprint, wider environmental impact and negative public health consequences associated with road travel;
- Reducing criminal use of the roads, by addressing, for example, street racing, speeding, uninsured drivers, and denying use of the roads to organised crime.

I will continue to support our local authority partners, to seek the transfer of moving vehicle enforcement from the police, as part of the national policy shift in this area. Key to this, will be a co-ordinated regional approach for how these powers are administered. I will work to support this. We will also review how policing can support network resilience, on an operationally effective and sustainable basis.

Proper enforcement of speeding and other offending on our roads is vital in creating a safe environment. However, income from fines currently goes to central government and is not retained locally for investment in road safety initiatives. As a result, schemes are small in number and do not address the scale of the problem. I will continue to campaign to change this.

This Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030, provides the building blocks to effectively implement a Safe System approach to these issues and strengthen the institutional structure, to promote road safety to all local and regional stakeholders, while working towards the establishment of a dedicated and sustainable road safety fund.

Simon Foster - Police and Crime Commissioner



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Purpose of the Refreshed Strategy

While central government sets the regulatory framework for roads, vehicles and road users, road safety delivery occurs primarily at local and regional levels working in partnership with many other stakeholders. The Mayor of the West Midlands and the seven constituent local authorities of the region have concurrent statutory duties under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to:

- Take steps both to reduce and prevent road traffic collisions;
- Prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety;
- Carry out studies into collisions arising out of the use of vehicles on roads or part of roads, other than trunk roads, within their area; and
- Take such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to prevent such collisions.

Local authorities have formulated and delivered strategic road safety policies for the last four decades using local data to identify issues and improve the safety of road users and satisfy the statutory duties. To deliver on the Mayor's statutory duty, a Regional Road Safety Strategy 2019-2028 was launched. This was aimed at applying a regional approach to the improvement of road safety, working alongside our local and regional partners to enable and coordinate further evidence-based interventions.

In September 2021 an interim review was undertaken of the Regional Road Safety Strategy 2019-2028. This review concluded that while current performance against the target of a 40% reduction of killed and serious road casualties (KSIs) by 2028 was positive, the rapidly developing road safety landscape requires an enhanced transformational approach to reducing risk levels to those most at-risk of death and serious injury on the West Midlands Metropolitan Region's road network.

In the second reporting period of the current Regional Road Safety Strategy (2019-2021), the number of KSIs reduced by 14.1% compared to the baseline period of 2015-2017. Whilst this progress is encouraging, in part thanks to the commitment and dedication of partner organisations, it is recognised that wider factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis will have impacted upon travel demand and modal choice, influencing this result.

Despite progress, considerable challenges remain. These include the growing use of e-mobility modes of transport, increases in the use of vehicles with varying levels of connected and autonomous functionality, the success of the region's policy to reduce car dependency by encouraging active travel and the prioritisation of road space to enhance the efficiency of public transport.

The Refreshed Road Safety Strategy needs to sit within the context of overall transport policies and ensure that it adds value by recognising the impact that each intervention has on the implementation and operation of a safe, efficient and green road network. For example, the use of new local authority powers to enforce moving traffic contraventions will impact positively on safety but will also help to reduce congestion, improve air quality and ensure the free movement of traffic, including public transport, at specific locations.

Alignment to the new Local Transport Plan is vital. West Midlands Combined Authority and the seven city and metropolitan borough authorities are legally required to deliver the Local Transport

Plan through the use of all their powers and functions. This will support clarity on roles and responsibilities at both local and regional levels and assist in identifying areas for collective delivery.

It is important that we harness the growing momentum shown through current road safety performance figures and push further and faster. The scale of the road safety challenge requires a step-change in the approach that we take. The purpose of this Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 is to:

- Deliver on political ambitions to integrate Vision Zero as the region's long-term road safety mission, acknowledging that death and serious injury on our road network is unacceptable;
- Enhance implementation of a collaborative Safe System, acknowledging that road system failures allow incidents to become fatal or serious ;¹
- Recognise that reducing fatal and serious injuries is a collective responsibility between all stakeholders, including road users;
- Align with the Towards Zero Foundation's casualty reduction target of a 50% reduction in the number of KSIs by 2030 as defined in the developing new Local Transport Plan and target 3.6 of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Encourage innovation to identify risks and determine quantifiable solutions;
- Use the Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 as a lever to identify and secure a sustainable funding framework (over and above the current programme of work) that enables delivery of the Regional Road Safety Action Plan, drives innovation, focusses on a common goal, and builds upon the work of local authorities and other partners;
- Ensure the level and quality of data available is fit for purpose and accessible in a workable format / tool to help beneficial and accurate strategic decision making and
- Monitor and evaluate a broader dataset that demonstrates overall performance in road safety improvement and provides a robust evidence-base in which to make strategic decisions.

Casualty Reduction Performance

Between 2007 and 2013, the Region had seen a steady and sustained reduction in fatal and seriously injured road casualties. Advances in vehicle safety, enhanced road safety engineering, improved driver training, better road safety education and improvements in trauma care positively contributed to this reduction. However, since 2013, road collisions and casualties had started to rise on the region's road network.

¹ Salmon et al (2012) 'Managing error on the open road: The contribution of human error models', *Safety Science*, 48: 1225-1235.

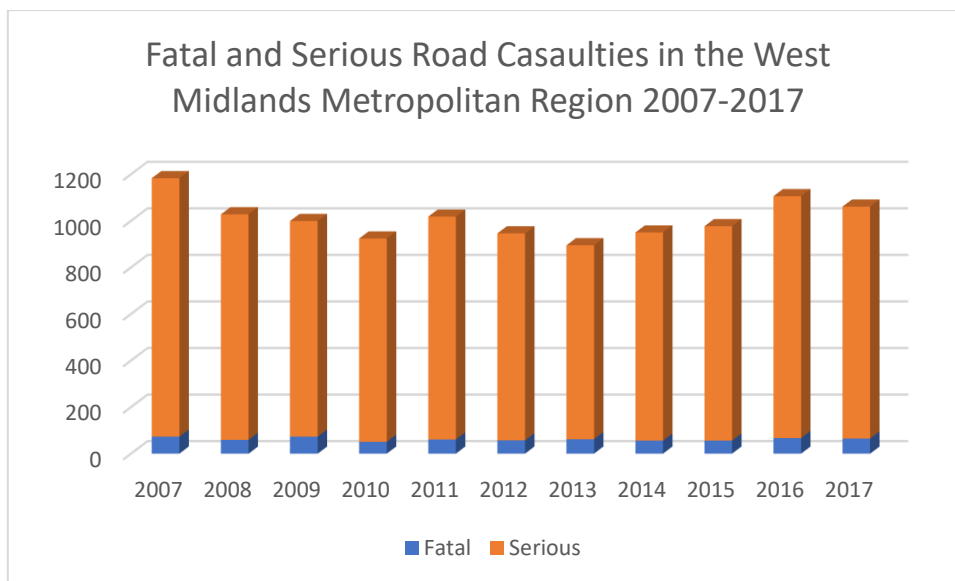


Figure 1: Annual killed and seriously injured casualty performance in the West Midlands Metropolitan Region 2007-2017

This increased risk to safety, health and wellbeing of road users within the West Midlands Metropolitan area showed how important it is to develop a regional road safety strategy. The role of the refreshed strategy is to work with the Road Safety Partnership to build on long-standing local and sector-based road safety activity, and guide and coordinate regional action to reduce the social, health and economic losses associated with road collisions.

The Regional Road Safety Strategy 2019-2028 used data to provide critical understanding of the causation of road traffic collisions in order to identify road safety priorities for those road users most at-risk of death and serious injury and communities or locations. Those identified as most likely to be killed or seriously injured were pedestrians, pedal cyclists, motorcyclists, car/taxi occupants and public transport occupants. This intelligence was subsequently used to develop and implement proven solutions to the growing transport challenge.

The Strategy also set the ambition for the region by stating a target of a 40% reduction in KSIs among the targeted road user types by 2028 based on a baseline period of 2015-2017. This was aligned to 'Movement for Growth: The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan'. Reporting against this target is undertaken by adopting a three-year average rolling period.

The table below shows the progress made towards the 2028 target in the first two performance reporting periods.



Table 1: Progress towards the 2028 KSI reduction target in the first two strategic reporting periods based on the 2015-2017 baseline (by targeted road users defined in the current Regional Road Safety Strategy)

	Baseline 2015-2017 annual average	2018-2020 annual average	2019-2021 annual average	2028 target
Overall WMCA area KSI figures	1048	948	900	629
Percentage change from baseline (2015-2017)	-	-9.5	-14.1	-40

In absolute terms the number of KSI's reduced by 9.7% in the 2018-2020 reporting period and 16% during the 2019-2021 reporting period. A per capita comparison taking account of variances in population² shows the number of KSI's has reduced by 13.2% per 100,000 population in the 2018-2020 reporting period and 16.2% per 100,000 population during the 2019-2021 reporting period.

It should be noted that these results are likely to have been influenced by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, research suggests that lock down periods and travel restrictions resulted in decreases in traffic flow, increased vehicle speed, adoption of risky driving behaviours and changes in travel modes³.

Comparing overall 2019 KSI data (pre-pandemic) to 2022 performance, the number of KSIs remained the same (52 fatalities and 941 serious injuries). However, when comparing 2022 data to the 2015-2017 baseline figures by individual road users we can see several variances.

Table 2: Variances in KSI by road user group 2015-2017 vs 2022

	2015-2017	2022	Variance (%)
Pedestrians	365	333	-8.8
Pedal Cyclists	126	106	-15.9
Motorcyclists	182	128	-29.2
Cars/Taxi	345	369	+6.9
Goods Vehicles	12	16	N/A*
Public Transport	7	9	N/A*
Other	11	31	N/A*

* Variance levels are less meaningful due to the low actual numbers of KSIs

²

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalescotlandandnorthernireland>

³ <https://agilysis.co.uk/2020/07/09/new-research-shows-increased-vehicles-speeds-during-covid-19-lockdown/>

Table 2 shows that the number of KSIs involving vulnerable road users (pedestrians, pedal cyclists and motorcyclists) has reduced by an average 18% in 2022 based on the 2015-2017 baseline period. While positive, these figures remain too high.

Despite traffic flows for cars/taxis in 2022 being lower than those seen pre-COVID (20.9 million miles travelled by cars/taxis in 2022 compared with an average 24.7 million miles travelled in the 2015-2017 baseline period⁴), KSIs for this road user group continue to increase. Significant progress is required to arrest this issue, not only by the delivery of effective road safety interventions but also through the success of other transport policies, including those relating to reducing reliance on private motor vehicles and increasing the use of active travel modes.

Casualty data is not the only source of information to measure the impact of improved road safety. Each year, the Department for Transport issues ‘Annual Value of Prevention’ figures⁵ that show the societal costs of road collisions and each casualty type – with the average value of prevention for a fatality in 2021 being £2,114,526 and £237,614 for a seriously injured casualty. When calculated against the number of KSIs within the region for the baseline period (2015-2017) and the reporting periods of 2018-2020 and 2019-2021, the results show a significant reduction in the societal cost of KSIs (see Table 3). However, the two reporting periods of 2018-2020 and 2019-2021 were impacted by travel changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. When assessing 2022 as a post-COVID year, Table 3 shows a 4% increase in the societal cost of KSIs compared with the baseline period.

Table 3: Societal cost of killed and seriously injured road casualties for each reporting period based on the Department for Transport’s Average Value of Prevention figures

	2015-2017	2018-2020	2019-2021	2022
Societal cost of KSIs in the West Midlands Metropolitan Region	£320 million	£308 million*	£295 million*	£333 million**

* Impacted by the COVID pandemic

** Calculating 2022 KSI data with the latest average value of prevention figures (2021)

Robust and reliable data relating to KSIs is vital when measuring performance against an intermediate strategic target. However, use of a broader dataset can provide a balanced understanding of overall improvement at both the local and regional levels. Later in the Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030, a list of data is ascertained to provide wider assessment of performance. It also identifies other data sources that may provide an opportunity to informally assess improvements in road safety. Vulnerable road users will be targeted in the most vulnerable areas in each of the West Midlands local authority areas.

⁴ <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/regions/10>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/reported-road-accidents-vehicles-and-casualties-tables-for-great-britain>

Vision Zero

Vision Zero is an overarching strategic goal that aims to eliminate road death and serious injury. The concept is based on an underlying principle that “*it can never be ethically acceptable that people are killed or seriously injured when moving within the road transport system*”⁶ and that “road users have a right to expect that they should be safe”⁷.

Despite the recent success in reducing KSIs on the Region’s roads, the number of road traffic deaths on our network remains unacceptably high. Achievement of the current 40% reduction target would still mean that 629 people will die or be seriously injured each year in the Region due to a road traffic collision.

As such, it is a necessity that our ambitions go beyond the current target. While the existing and refreshed strategies provide the building blocks for reducing harm to road users, the longer-term mission must be Vision Zero.

However, it is unrealistic to expect that zero road deaths and serious injuries can be achieved in the timeframe of the Refreshed Regional Road Safety 2023-2030. As such, sustainable and long-term activity is required that accepts the validity of Vision Zero and creates a holistic safe system based on shared responsibility. This includes all involved in planning, building, maintaining, and operating a road transport system, but also all road users.

Safe System

Traditionally, road safety adopted a reactive approach to preventing collisions, using collision causation data to guide the development and implementation of individual or isolated interventions. While this has proven successful in reducing collisions over the last few decades in the UK, recent performance in reducing KSIs has plateaued. There is now industry consensus that true collision cluster sites are becoming increasingly rare, and so we need to proactively manage risk before collisions accumulate. This requires the development and operation of a road transport system better able to accommodate road user error and frailty – a Safe System.

A Safe System recognises that regardless of the interventions used to prevent road collisions, people will continue to make mistakes. It also acknowledges that the human body has a limit to which it can absorb the forces experienced when involved in a road collision⁸. This principle applies to all road users, whether vehicle occupant, motorcyclist, pedal cyclist, pedestrian or e-mobility user.

A Safe System provides resilience; meaning that if one part of the system fails, other components of the Safe System accommodate for the failure to retain a level of safety that does not result in death and serious injury.

The Safe System uses a broader qualitative and quantitative data set to measure and better understand current and future risk exposure to road users. This knowledge is then used to identify a systematic approach to delivering a safe road network, ensuring that all disciplines and stakeholders

⁶ Swedish parliament, 1997

⁷ OECD/ITF (2016), Zero Road Deaths and Serious Injuries: Leading a Paradigm Shift to a Safe System, OECD Publishing, Paris

⁸ *Ibid*

(designers and road users) work collectively to produce a summary effect greater than the sum of the individual treatments⁹. Delivering an effective Safe System requires all disciplines and stakeholders to share responsibility and work in collaboration towards the Vision Zero goal and intermediate targets.

A Safe System aligns safety management decision making with broader transport policies too. These include economic, health and wellbeing and environmental goals¹⁰.

There are five essential components of a Safe System, as shown in Figure 2.

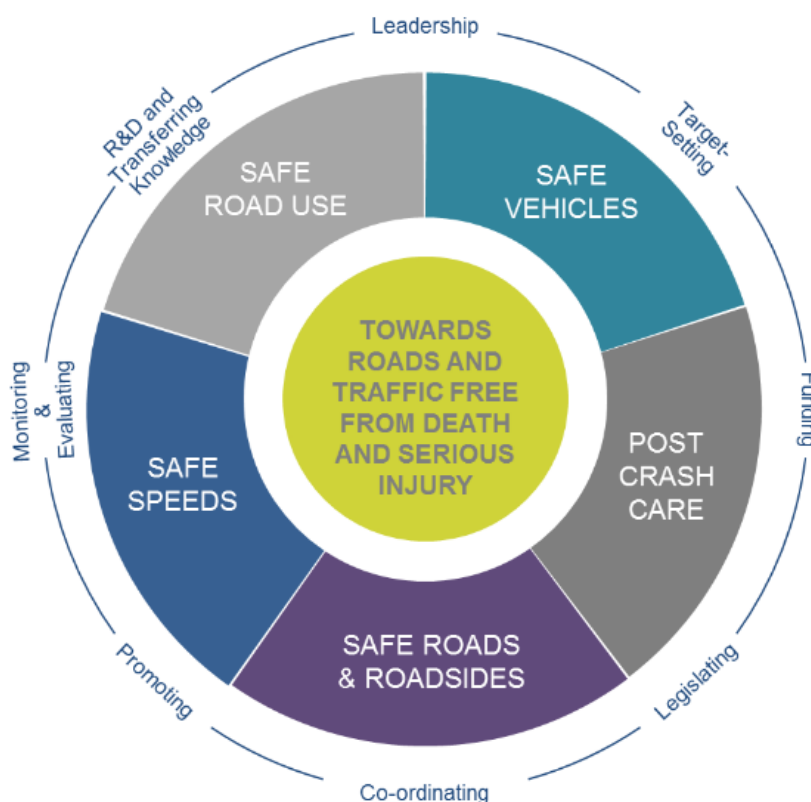


Figure 2: Safe System Diagram¹¹

While these appear to be individual components, it is important that all components work collaboratively towards a common objective/ goal.

Safe Vehicles

Motor vehicles have become much safer with the introduction of passive and active technologies.

⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁰ OECD (2008). Towards Zero: Ambitious Road Safety Targets and the Safe System Approach. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

¹¹ Loughborough University Design School Safe System Course, 2017, with PACTS modifications, 2022. <https://www.pacts.org.uk/safe-system/>



- Passive safety devices include airbags and crumple zones and focus on reducing the severity of the collision and injury to vehicle occupants.
- Active safety devices include electronic stability control, autonomous emergency braking and intelligent speed assistance. These devices work to prevent a collision occurring. The introduction of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems helps identify a situation that could result in a collision and either take automatic evasive action or alert the driver through warning signals.

Despite the introduction of more advanced vehicle safety technologies, KSI car/taxi occupant casualties (drivers and passengers) increased by 7% in 2022 compared with the 2015-2017 baseline. The problem here may be more around how vehicles are being operated, although there is scope to ensure that the benefits of new safety technology are realised by encouraging the use of more modern vehicles that include tools such as Intelligent speed assistance (ISA - a system which informs, warns and discourages the driver to exceed the posted speed limit).

Future vehicle technology will need to operate in a much more intelligent transport system that develops around greater connectivity and an increase of the vehicle fleet consisting of autonomous functionalities. Vehicles of the future will likely benefit from connected and autonomous technologies, and these may offer significant safety benefits. However, these may take a long time to penetrate the region's vehicle fleet (the majority of vehicles may not be autonomous by 2050 for example) and the technologies will initially work best on motorways rather than where most of the region's KSIs occur.

The West Midlands Road Safety Partnership will need to collaborate with vehicle manufacturers, engineers, regulators, researchers and risk management experts to ensure that vehicles and road infrastructure are fit for purpose, although full autonomy is not expected within the timeframe of this Strategy. The increase in autonomous driving technology will bring many benefits for mobility but will also result in challenges as autonomous and driver-controlled vehicles interact, where drivers will take further risks assuming that the automated vehicle will see them and react to avoid potential collisions¹².

In the meantime, the partnership needs to work alongside external collaborators to benefit from advanced driver-assistance system (ADAS) technologies. These include sensors and cameras to warn drivers of lane deviation when indicators have not been used, tyre pressure monitors, and systems alerting the driver (through a noise) to a potential collision when approaching another vehicle closely or at speed.

Safe Roads and Roadsides

The way that roads are designed has an impact on safety and encourages road users to lead healthy and active lives. There is a growing desire among partnership local authorities to improve safety and liveability by reducing the impact and presence of motor vehicles and increasing cycling and walking through the implementation of low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs). Research suggests that LTNs also

¹² OECD/ITF (2016), Zero Road Deaths and Serious Injuries: Leading a Paradigm Shift to a Safe System, OECD Publishing, Paris

have a positive impact on air quality, crime and personal safety¹³ and when applied using good practice could support in reducing KSIs.

Road infrastructure, such as vehicle restraint systems (barriers) can play a major role in the severity of a collision and the resulting injury. A study in Sweden found that vehicle safety, road infrastructure and road user behaviour contributed collectively to improve road safety but found that road-related factors were most strongly linked to fatal crash outcomes¹⁴. The study determined that road infrastructure must be based on a road user's tolerance to the forces of a crash through good road and vehicle design¹⁵.

All road users must be considered when designing or upgrading road infrastructure. This should begin by considering the needs of road users most at-risk of fatal or serious injuries and use evidence to determine the appropriate function, speed, road space and design features¹⁶.

To support active travel, Safe System principles demand either low operational speeds (e.g. below 20mph) or segregation from faster moving traffic to provide good protection for vulnerable road users, such as pedal cyclists and pedestrians. Where segregation is not possible, posted speed limits should be modified to reduce risk levels and the severity of collision an injury should a collision occur.

Safe System tools, such as the International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP) (already used on many routes within the region) provide a proactive approach to identify and manage risk levels on road infrastructure through the implementation of countermeasures proven to reduce road fatalities and serious injuries.

The focus for safe roads and roadsides is to implement a proactive approach to identifying risk and working with other Safe System components to create a safe and forgiving road environment; one that recognises that people will make mistakes but is suitably designed to demand lower operational speeds and prevent deaths and serious injuries should a collision occur.

Safe Speeds

Excessive or inappropriate vehicle speed is the biggest determining factor of both the severity of collision and the severity of injury. This is due to the levels of kinetic energy and forces that need to be absorbed by both the vehicle and the involved road user. Small changes in vehicle speed also influence the effectiveness of road and vehicle interventions aimed at preventing death and serious injury.

¹³ Aldred, Rachel; Goodman, Anna (2020-09-10). "Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Car Use, and Active Travel: Evidence from the People and Places Survey of Outer London Active Travel Interventions". Findings: 17128. doi:10.32866/001c.17128

¹⁴ Stigson, H., M. Kraft and C. Tingvell (2008), "Use of fatal real-life crashes to analyse a safe road transport system model, including the road user, the vehicle and the road", in Traffic Injury Prevention, 9

¹⁵ OECD/ITF (2016), Zero Road Deaths and Serious Injuries: Leading a Paradigm Shift to a Safe System, OECD Publishing, Paris

¹⁶ *Ibid*

Research shows that a 5% increase in average speed typically leads to a 10% increase in the number of injury crashes and a 20% increase in the number of fatal crashes¹⁷. Additionally, as vehicle speed increases above 19mph, the risk of a pedestrian being killed in a collision increases sharply¹⁸.

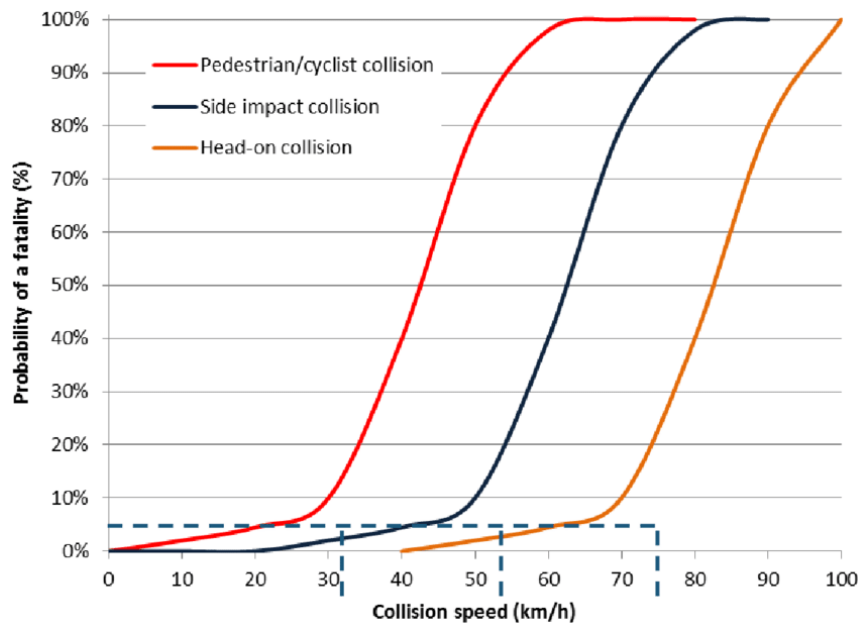


Figure 3: Wramborg's model for fatality probability versus vehicle collision speeds

Speed management is one of the biggest challenges facing the implementation of an effective Safe System. To reduce the likelihood of a collision and reduce the severity of injury following a collision, many components of the Safe System need to work collaboratively together.

- Safer roads can be achieved through the removal of, or protection from roadside hazards and the setting of appropriate speed limits that are based on the road design and that are acceptable to road users, although the latter can be more challenging to achieve;
- The safe vehicles component can contribute by designing and implementing new passive and active safety devices (including object detection technology to increase pedestrian and cyclist safety), and encouraging consumers to purchase vehicles based on the results of the New Car Assessment Programme (crash testing research programme);
- Driver training and rehabilitation, behaviour change programmes and speed limit enforcement are tools that must be applied to bring about safe road users.

The need to reduce vehicle speeds, particularly in residential areas has led to the increase of 20mph zones/areas in the region. 20mph zones use traffic calming measures to reduce the adverse impact of motor vehicles on built up areas. 'The principle is that the traffic calming slows vehicles down to

¹⁷ Nilsson, G. (2004). Traffic safety dimensions and the Power Model to describe the effect of speed on safety. Bulletin 221, Sweden, Lund Institute of Technology, Lund University, 2004

¹⁸ Wramborg, P. (2005). A New Approach to a Safe and Sustainable Road Structure and Street Design for Urban Areas.

speeds below the limit, and in this way the zone becomes self-enforcing¹⁹. Without the appropriate traffic calming, enforcement of the reduced speed limit could become a burden on police resources. The need for engineering measures, such as speed humps/tables, rumble strips, chicanes and road narrowing are important interventions. This reinforces the importance of support and collaboration between members of the West Midlands Regional Road Safety Partnership.

A collaborative approach to managing speed is vital if we are to achieve our intermediate targets and ultimately Vision Zero.

Safe Road Use

Designers and those who manage our roads play a vital role in developing, implementing and operating a safe and efficient road environment. Equally, the role of road users is critical in collectively supporting the mission for zero deaths and serious injuries. Too many people die and are left with lifechanging injuries due to a culture of risk taking, in particular through inappropriate and excessive speed, and aggressive and inconsiderate driving and riding.

While the Safe System accepts that as people we make mistakes, the impact of these mistakes can be minimised through positive road use behaviours, such as driving within posted speed limits, watching out for vulnerable road users, and reducing distractions (e.g. mobile phone use).

Enforcement is an important tool to deter dangerous road user behaviour that is likely to result in fatal and serious collisions. West Midlands Police have specific responsibilities for managing inappropriate and excessive speed and adopt a three-pronged approach:

- Using mobile units to target specific locations;
- Highway Agency Digital Enforcement Cameras to enforce variable speed limits;
- Average speed cameras.

Local authorities share data with the Police to inform mobile enforcement programmes to ensure they are targeted at priority locations.

The National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme (NDORS), managed by the police, is also a proven tool for changing driver behaviour and addressing inappropriate and excessive speed.

Broader initiatives, such as Operation Close Pass that adopts a collaborative approach between the Police, local authorities, fire service and other partners support enforcement activities to improve road safety. This initiative targets drivers who endanger the safety of cyclists by driving without due care and attention using enforcement powers as well as providing education.

This activity can be further supported by third-party reporting whereby road users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists can inform the police and wider Road Safety Partnership of specific risks or incidents affecting safety. A review of how data/information collated from third-party reporting can be effectively used to improve road safety is currently on-going.

Local authorities have various powers for the civil enforcement of some traffic issues that contribute towards modifying driver behaviour. The recent Civil Enforcement of Road Traffic Contraventions

¹⁹ RoSPA (2020). Road Safety Factsheet: 20mph Zones and Speed Limits Factsheet. Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. Birmingham.

regulation allows local authorities securing a designation order to enforce against moving traffic offences, such as disregarding one-way systems, ignoring yellow box junctions or entering mandatory cycle lanes. As well as delivering on a safer road network, the regulation also contributes broader policy objectives, including reduced congestion and improving public transport efficiency.

To support enforcement and offender retraining, education and campaigns in schools, businesses and communities provides opportunities for collaboration between multiple partners in this Safe System component. The purpose is to develop positive attitudes and behaviours to safe road use, particularly for vulnerable road users.

Local authorities, West Midlands Police and West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service use well-established local plans, strategies and delivery programmes as a framework to provide data-led road safety education activities aimed at improving knowledge and skills for safe road use. The Department for Transport has recently established an expert panel to develop a new framework for the development, delivery and evaluation of road safety education initiatives in the UK. Once released, the partnership will consider its contents to consider if/how the delivery of this discipline can be enhanced.

Post-Crash Care

Effective emergency care is at the heart of post-crash response. It can make the difference between survival and death and can prevent injuries becoming permanent and life-changing²⁰. Health outcomes for seriously injured victims of a road traffic collision are heavily reliant on the ability of emergency medical services to provide first responder care to stabilise the victim and provide transport to an appropriate trauma care hospital. In some instances, fire and rescue services are required to support emergency medical teams to assist in creating a safe environment for medical teams to operate and, where necessary, extricate victims from vehicles.

The role of the police is to secure the scene of the collision, gather evidence, manage traffic at the immediate location, document the collision and conduct an investigation where a crime may have been committed. The management of traffic can be further supported through engagement with urban traffic control centres located within local authorities and the Regional Traffic Co-ordination Centre within TfWM. Control centres provide direct day-to-day opportunities for each highway authority to manage traffic on the road network.

Protocols to ensure effective coordination of all emergency services is vital. This ensures every service knows their role and what to expect from others.

Also, key to the effectiveness of the post-crash care component is the sharing of collision and casualty data between partner organisations. This enables partners to collectively identify specific safety issues and inform future interventions/programmes of work.

An important component of the post-crash care work is support for people bereaved or seriously injured in road crashes (e.g. family, friends and colleagues). Support can include opportunities to talk to others who have survived a similar loss, building resilience to deal with grief and guidance on police investigations and court proceedings. RoadPeace is a formal partner of the Regional Road

²⁰ EBRD (2021). Post-Crash Emergency Toolkit. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development



Safety Partnership, providing all of these services as well as contributing to evidence-based policy to secure justice for victims and enhancing road safety²¹.

Knowledge Sharing

The shift from traditional road safety approaches to the Safe System is a relatively new concept in the UK in comparison with Sweden, Finland and Norway - Sweden adopted Safe System in 1997 and are seen as the forerunners of the concept. Yet in 2020, Sweden recorded 204 road fatalities, despite an 85% reduction since the road safety movement began in the country²². Norway adopted Safe System in 2002 and after 18 years, are close to achieving Vision Zero. Experience shows that the Safe System is not something that can be delivered in a short period of time.

Learning the lessons of Sweden, Norway and other countries, and improving the effectiveness of a Safe System regionally requires further qualitative and quantitative analysis, research and development to enhance knowledge sharing and to further build capacity amongst stakeholders²³. This will assist in the consistent implementation of a long-term systematic approach that is forgiving and provides effective protection for all road users.

Some local authorities within the West Midlands Metropolitan Region have specified their commitment to implementing a Safe System through their local policies since 2017. The latest KSI results (2019-2021) show a positive reduction in killed and seriously injured casualties, albeit to some extent due to the delivery of conventional road safety interventions that have proven effective. However, moving to a Safe System is a learning by doing process and the subsequent Action Plan to follow this refreshed strategy will provide opportunities for enriching knowledge transfer among all stakeholders, including road users, to facilitate the continued transition to a Safe System.

Building Capacity

In order to enhance and strengthen capabilities collectively across the partnership, a programme of capacity building activity will be established. Capacity building will include assessment of the current situation and the use of tools to predict risk exposure to road users, learning the lessons of best practice and innovation, identifying training needs, sharing knowledge established through applied and academic research, training and mentoring, broadening the evidence base and monitoring.

Summary

While relatively new to the UK, some of the region's local authorities have developed and delivered road safety strategies committing to the implementation of the Safe System. Performance against the existing KSI reduction target arising from the successes generated by local and regional delivery is encouraging. This is influenced by the continued delivery of proven traditional measures.

²¹ <https://www.roadpeace.org/>

²² ITF-OECD (2021). Road Safety Report 2021: Sweden. International Transport Forum

²³ OECD/ITF (2016), Zero Road Deaths and Serious Injuries: Leading a Paradigm Shift to a Safe System, OECD Publishing, Paris



However, implementation of the Safe System moves the Road Safety Partnership away from a traditional reactive approach to one that is 'holistic and proactive in essence and integrated so that the sum of the individual parts of the system combine for a greater overall effect'²⁴.

The transfer of knowledge and enhancement of capacity are important contributions to supporting the effective implementation of the Safe System.

The implementation of a Safe System recognises that:

- People make mistakes;
- Human bodies have a limited physical ability to tolerate crash forces;
- Those developing, managing and operating a road network, along with road users themselves, have roles and responsibilities that collectively can assist in making a safer and more liveable region;
- Road safety contributes to the delivery of broader transport policy objectives and wider transport policies should also contribute to the improvement of road safety;
- Evidence must be at the heart of all development and delivery;
- An ambitious long-term goal is required with the intention of eliminating road deaths and serious injuries; and
- Robust interim targets that focus performance are needed to provide the building blocks toward the long-term goal;
- Building capacity is critical if a Safe System is to be implemented effectively, both in terms of institutional reform and resource knowledge and capabilities.

²⁴ *Ibid*

Local Transport Plan – Core Strategy

On behalf of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) produces a Local Transport Plan (LTP) that applies to the seven metropolitan boroughs of the West Midlands. Under the Transport Act 2000, Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) have a statutory duty to produce and review an LTP and WMCA is the LTA for the seven constituent metropolitan districts/boroughs.

The LTP sets out the overall aims, vision and approach to guide the development and delivery of transport policies, including those arising from the Mayor's and local authorities' statutory duty to take measures to prevent road traffic collisions and injuries.

It should be noted that while the LTP is an important policy document that applies directly to WMCA and the seven constituent local authorities, there is no statutory obligation on road safety partners external of WMCA and the local authorities to deliver its objectives. Partners, such as West Midlands Police, West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service and National Highways have their own organisational strategies to support local and regional efforts, working in collaboration with WMCA, TfWM and local authorities.

The West Midlands LTP Core Strategy provides the approach for how TfWM will reimagine transport in the region. It sets out the need to improve transport to deliver progress against five Motives for Change through three broad ways that we need to change the transport system:

- Improve accessibility;
- Reduce traffic; and
- Electrify the transport system.



Figure 4: Five Motives for Change and Broad Ways to Change the Transport System

The LTP sets out policies to promote safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within the area as well as plans to implement those policies. WMCA and the seven metropolitan authorities (councils) are legally required to deliver this plan through the use of all their powers and functions.

6 Big Moves

To help deliver the changes needed and to meet the aims of the LTP, the Core Strategy sets out action across six 'Big Moves'. The Big Moves form the building blocks of our longer-term vision and provide actions to deliver rapid transformational improvements to address motives for change, including those related to a safer road network for all.

The 6 Big Moves are a framework for the actions to improve safety, mobility and accessibility and encourage AVOID, SHIFT and IMPROVE behavioural changes.

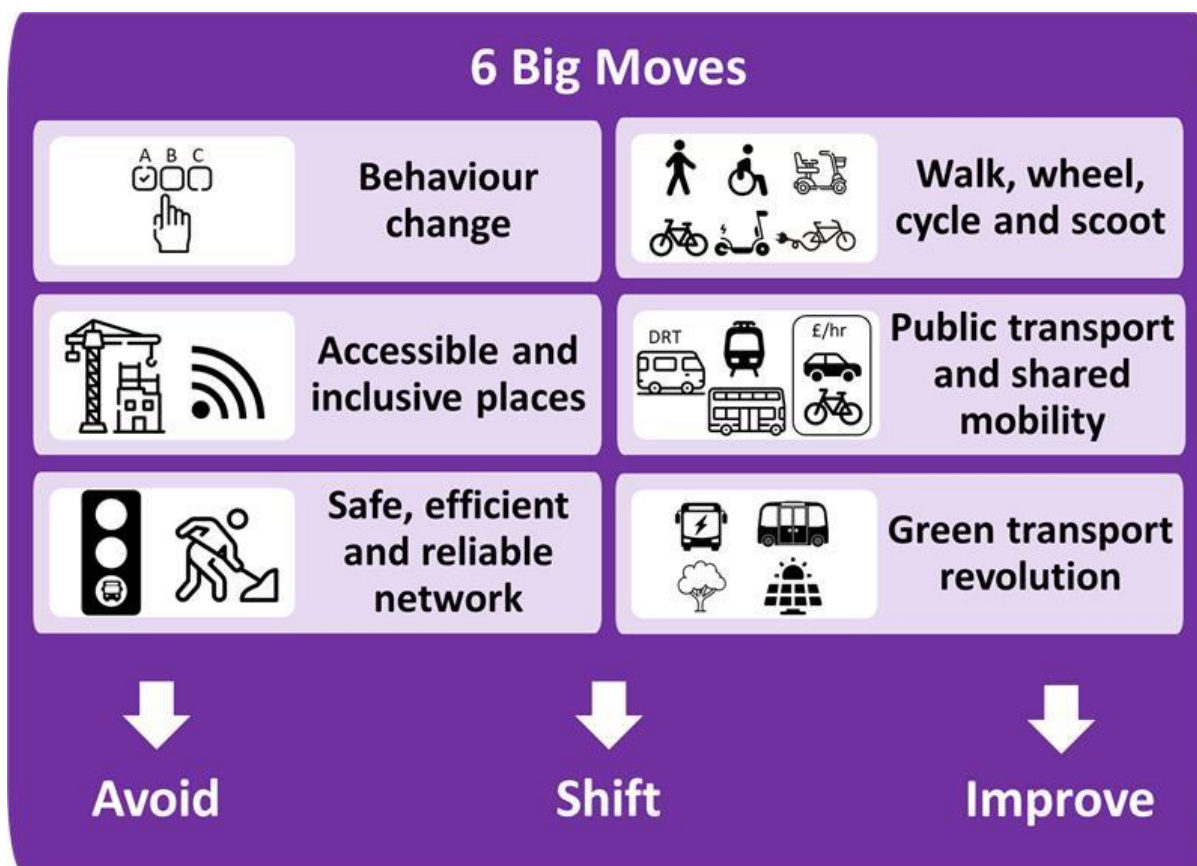


Figure 5: West Midlands Local Transport Plan Avoid, Shift and Improve Behavioural Changes

Behaviour change is at the heart of the LTP, with positive road safety behaviours being critical to its success. Road safety is implicit across all of the 6 Big Moves but more specifically within the following:

Big Move 1: Behaviour Change

This Big Move is fundamental to both the overall Core Strategy, but also the other 5 Big Moves. To enable the region to be more prosperous, inclusive and sustainable, we need to tackle the high levels of car dependency in the region. If we cannot support more people to travel less, use cars less and live more locally, then we will be in danger of not meeting the core goals of the Local Transport Plan.

This Big Move does not just require different conversations with businesses and communities about how they travel, but also requires TfWM and its partners to work differently to deliver better outcomes for the region, based on a deeper understanding of people's travel needs and the challenges they face in accessing opportunities. This Big Move requires changes in how we govern the transport system, how we change people's experience of the transport system, and how people choose to travel:

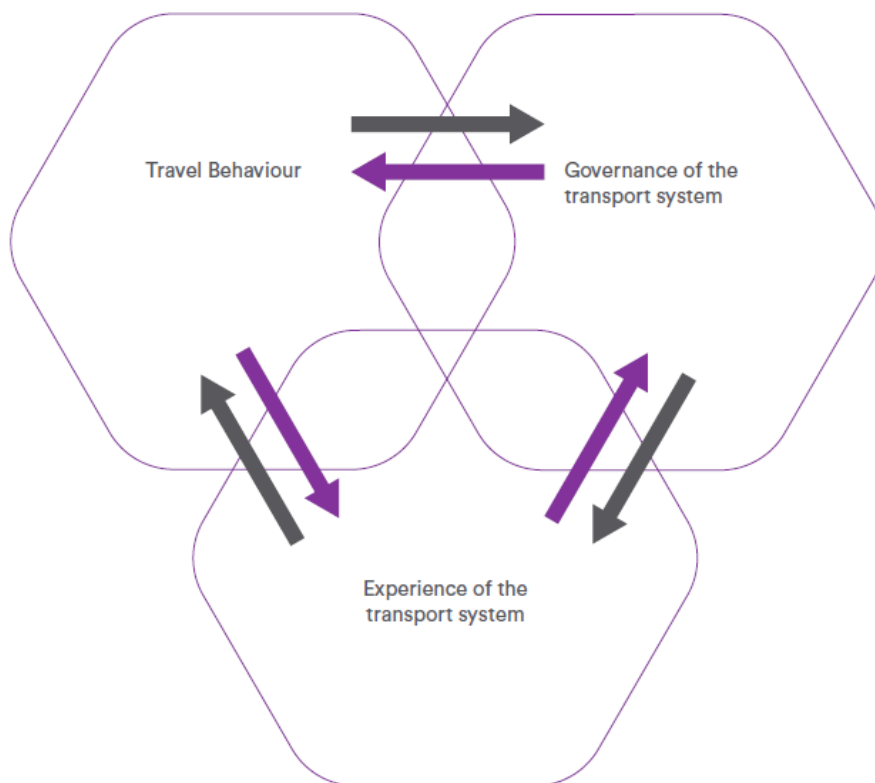


Figure 6: A Framework for Change

This Big Move is all about:

- How the public sector can take a leadership role to change behaviours in the region, both in terms of how we make decisions and how our residents and businesses make travel choices;
- How we will focus our work toward policies and decisions which understand the users of our networks, their needs, the barriers they face and how they make choices;
- How we will engage with the public to help them to understand the problems and issues we're facing, what they can do to help tackle the big challenges we face and, importantly, how they will be part of the decision-making process; and
- How we can manage the demand for transport in our region to help us meet the objectives of the LTP Core Strategy.

We need to work closely with our communities and businesses to deliver change.

Big Move 2: Accessible and Inclusive Places

This Big Move is all about creating more accessible places where people don't require a car to live good lives. This entails more careful planning of places with accessibility in mind, as well as improving sustainable transport and digital connectivity to allow people to access opportunities without needing a car.

The vision for change in this Big Move is that most existing communities and new developments are planned around the needs of the private vehicles, with sustainable transport modes an afterthought.

Success for this Big Move includes all communities having excellent walking, cycling and public transport access to local schools, shops, healthcare and leisure activities so that most local trips are made by sustainable modes of transport. As a result, neighbourhoods will have less traffic, better air quality and people will be more physically active because they can safely and easily walk, wheel, cycle or scoot for everyday journeys.

Big Move 3: Walk, Wheel, Cycle and Scoot

This Big Move is needed to support people to walk, wheel, cycle or scoot when and where they want, safely and conveniently. Our vision is: Everyone in the West Midlands should be enabled to safely access a range of local destinations on foot, in a wheelchair or on a bike or scooter; with the aim of at least half of all trips in our area to be made by active modes by 2030.

TfWM and the local authorities need to understand and address the barriers to achieving this vision for the different places and people of the region.

The two focus areas include:

- **Walking and Wheeling** – travelling on foot or in a wheelchair are everyone’s fundamental modes of travel; every journey at least starts and ends by walking or wheeling. In our vision, they underpin 15-minute neighbourhoods as these modes are essential for navigating all places such as residential estates, town centres, retail parks or villages, and for citizens to access local amenities and services.
- **Cycling and Scooting** – bikes and scooters are light personal vehicles, powered or unpowered, that help people access what they need without needing a car and without being constrained by the timetables, fares/ticketing and coverage of public transport modes. They can help people navigate local places quicker than walking and wheeling or perhaps where distances to local services/amenities are beyond a comfortable walking or wheeling range, but also -depending on the individual and the reasons for travel – they can help people make longer journeys between neighbourhoods and centres.

This Big Move is all about:

- How important leadership will be in making bold decisions to create the best possible walk, wheel, cycle and scoot facilities for our residents and visitors;
- How we will plan and deliver infrastructure and networks which are compliant with the government’s highest design standards (LTN1/20);
- How we can support more people to get access to vehicles (e.g. powered scooters/ hire bikes etc) to give them real choice for their journeys and how we can integrate these with the wider public transport network; and
- How we can raise the awareness, skills and knowledge of the options and opportunities available to people to help them travel confidently and safely.

Big Move 5: Safe, Accessible and Reliable Network

This Big Move sets out the need to develop and manage the West Midlands highway network in a way that improves its reliability and resilience and better supports travel by more sustainable modes of transport.



Our ambition is to develop, operate and manage a network that:

- Adopts a shared approach to safe streets;
- Responds to the needs and wants of existing and new road users; and
- Provides short- and long-term benefits to users.

We want to use our road network to:

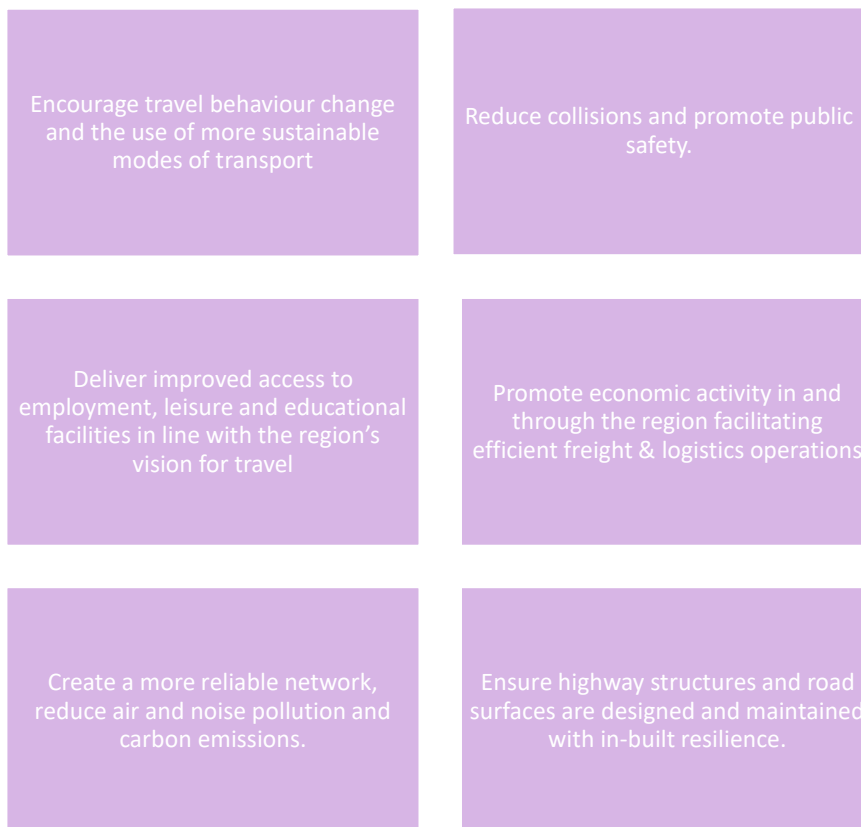


Figure 7: Desired outcomes for our road network

How we make best use of the space that is available is vitally important. TfWM and local authorities will develop a more consistent framework for guiding decisions on how the region will use and improve different types of streets, to enable more people to travel safely and securely by sustainable modes.

Regional Road Safety Policy in the Local Transport Plan

In the full Big Move document this is expanded further: The West Midlands will integrate Vision Zero into its future work and thinking on road safety – a long-term mission that recognises that deaths and serious injuries on the road are not an acceptable price to pay for mobility. Vision Zero road safety strategies are underpinned by the Safe Systems approach, based on:

- Safe road users
- Safe vehicles



- Safe speeds
- Safe roads and mobility
- Post-crash response

In addition to achieving a 40% reduction in the number of KSIs across the region by 2028, the West Midlands Metropolitan region will also adopt a more stretching target of a 50% reduction in the number of KSIs by 2030.

This Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 sets out more detail on the type and focus of measures. We will work with our regional partners to improve safety and to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour on the transport network. Through the LTP Area Strategies there are opportunities to design out hazards and create safe streets using a range of measures that will be pursued to support the regional road safety ambitions. These measures will aim to make streets safe for all users and more attractive for active and personal mobility travel options.

Partnership Working

There are many public sector organisations, private companies, charities and individual stakeholders that can contribute towards the delivery of improved road safety beyond those with a statutory duty, like the Mayor and local authorities. These include:

- West Midlands Police;
- The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner;
- West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service;
- Transport for West Midlands Transport Skills Academy
- Public health - Department of Health and Social Care;
- National Highways;
- Motor Insurers' Bureau;
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents;
- Road Safety Foundation; and
- RoadPeace.

The roles and responsibilities of the organisations above, along with WMCA and the seven constituent local authorities, towards the road safety effort are formalised in Terms of Reference documents for both the Regional Road Safety Officer Group and the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group.

In addition to the organisations listed above, it is important to recognise the benefits of engagement with universities, specialist private sector road safety companies, teachers, community leaders and individual road users.

Universities have a wealth of knowledge and skills in researching themes and topics around road safety and applying that evidence to support identification and development of solutions. Specialist companies can also create and apply robust evidence to the development, implementation and evaluation of interventions. There is also the opportunity for private companies, such as those in the insurance sector, to invest in the delivery of targeted initiatives to support the road safety effort.

Teachers and community leaders have regular and direct access to road users of all ages and mode types providing a unique opportunity to deliver core messages and maximise opportunities to create positive safety behaviours. We will work with the TSA who are raising awareness of occupations in transport safety and through its work with schools, colleges and universities. To collaborate effectively and break down existing silos, coordination is key²⁵. Effective coordination 'concerns the orchestration and alignment of interventions'²⁶ delivered by all partners within the Region aimed at achieving the overall mission, intermediate target, and key performance indicators. The core responsibility for collaboration and coordination is shared between all partner organisations. However, the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group, consisting of TfWM, the seven local authorities and an additional eight organisations, has a dedicated Lead Coordinator to support alignment of activities.

²⁵ Matt Staton (2022). Putting Safe System into Practice: A local perspective. National Highways

²⁶ Bliss, T. and Breen, J. (2013). Road Safety Management Capacity Reviews and Safe System Projects Guidelines – Updated Edition. Global Road Safety Facility. Washington DC

There is already strong evidence of partnership working and collaboration across the region. Examples of this include through the average speed enforcement programme, education and behaviour change campaigns, and the 'Close Pass' cyclist safety initiative. Partners will continue to ensure a collaborative approach to road safety throughout the region, using evidence to guide activity.

There are many road safety champions within the regional road safety structure aimed at reducing death and serious injury on the road network. These include those playing a prominent role in the improvement of road safety through their work, but also must include those adopting safe road user behaviours. These champions include individual people working, living and visiting our region. To effectively deliver this refreshed strategy and drive us towards the long-term Vision Zero mission, more road safety champions are needed, working collectively and collaboratively, and recognising the role that they play in eliminating death and serious injury.

A summary of the listed partners is provided below.

West Midlands Police

WMP are a core delivery partner for the improvement of road safety in the region. Their strategy aligns with the National Police Chiefs' Council strategy, delivering 4 key objectives:

1. Preventing harm and saving lives.
2. Tackling crime.
3. Driving technology and innovation.
4. Changing minds.

Through the delivery of the Road Harm Prevention Team, a range of issues that present a danger on roads are tackled in collaboration with other regional and national enforcement partners.

WMP also take the primary role to investigate collisions where people are killed and seriously injured alongside providing ongoing family support to those affected by these tragedies.

As the only partner able to enforce excessive speeding in the region, WMP deliver a speed management programme in collaboration with local authorities and National Highways. There are a number of routes across the West Midlands where fixed average speed enforcement (ASE) camera systems are in operation. WMP also enforce variable speeding on our motorway network and deploy a number of mobile camera vans to tackle 170+ proven speeding hotspots.

West Midlands Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025 sets out the needs, priorities and objectives of the people of the West Midlands in relation to policing, crime and criminal justice²⁷. This includes a commitment to fewer people killed and seriously injured on the road network, including vulnerable road users.

²⁷ West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner. West Midlands Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025. <https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/your-commissioner/police-crime-plan/>

In doing so, the Police and Crime Plan aims to ensure that safety is at the heart of new forms of transport, new and enhanced transport schemes, and appropriate and workable regulation for e-scooters.

The Plan also pledges to work collaboratively to achieve the intermediate target of reducing the number of road deaths and serious injuries by 50% by 2030 and adopting Vision Zero as the long-term mission.

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service (WMFRS) are vital partners in the delivery of local road safety activities. WMFRS attend serious and fatal road traffic crashes, playing a key role in the management of incidents, the extrication of road traffic casualties and potential first aid to victims of road traffic collisions. They are very active in developing, implementing and evaluating road safety education and awareness campaign initiatives, including joint educational campaigns in partnership with local authorities, the Close Pass cyclist safety initiative and developing virtual reality education programmes.

Transport Skills Academy (TSA)

We will work across the West Midlands with the TSA to raise awareness in schools of road safety. The TSA works across Transport for West Midlands to support young people across all our key priorities to ensure our local communities and young people have access to resources and events that will support them in making choices on transport, their career choices and understanding the sector by showcasing the occupations it has.

Education is a critical part of the plan so that we can support any changes in behaviour, better inform those travelling around the West Midlands and make an active contribution to the Road Safety priorities.

Public Health - Department of Health and Social Care

It is important that road safety and public health professionals work together to raise awareness of the health and wellbeing priorities for all road users. Public health funds several school road safety initiatives in local authority areas through grants. These include pedestrian training, digital road safety, school travel plans and school crossing patrols.

Road safety has a much wider impact on health than preventing injuries because some forms of travel (i.e. walking and cycling) brings more health benefits than motorised transport. However, the way that people travel is influenced by concerns about actual or perceived safety; effective and evidence-based interventions to reduce exposure to road risk can encourage more people to travel by these active, health-promoting modes²⁸.

National Highways

National Highways' aim is to ensure that no one is killed or injured on the strategic road network by 2040²⁹. This is to be achieved through improving the strategic road network. Delivery of their

²⁸ National Road Safety Committee (2015). Making Road Safety Count: Spending Choices which Protect Your Community.

²⁹ Highways England (2019). Putting Safety First: Our Story So Far. National Highways.

national strategy impacts on the safety for all vehicle occupants travelling on the strategic road network passing through or around the West Midlands Metropolitan region, including the M5, M6 and M42. The strategy aligns to the region's Regional Road Safety Strategy and this refresh, with an adoption of a systematic approach and where there is an acceptance of the human fallibility and vulnerability.

Members of National Highways Road User Safety Delivery team are active within the region's Strategic Group providing advice and guidance in relation to vulnerable road users, effective implementation of the Safe System and understanding the importance of a long-term mission.

Motor Insurers' Bureau

The Motor Insurers' Bureau (MIB) is at the heart of the fight against uninsured and hit and run driving. This is a problem that seriously affects the lives of those involved in road collisions and costs millions of pounds annually.

Each year thousands of people are injured or killed by uninsured drivers and without the correct insurance their compensation comes from the MIB. The bill is paid for through the insurance premiums of all law-abiding motorists. Evidence suggests that uninsured vehicles are consistently used to conduct wider criminal activity and more likely to be involved in a collision so targeting uninsured drivers we can help to deter criminal activity and remove their means of transport making our roads safer and protecting the public from harm.

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

RoSPA is a not-for-profit organisation that has worked for more than 100 years to help people recognise and reduce their risk of collisions. With its headquarters in Birmingham, the organisation's work focusses on data and evidence, sharing knowledge and working together.

The Road Safety Department at RoSPA produces a vast array of advice and information on all areas of road safety and collision prevention. Drivers, riders, pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders will all find information related to their mode of transport.

RoSPA plays an important role in the strategic approach to road safety in the region and is a member of the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group.

Road Safety Foundation

The Road Safety Foundation is a UK charity advocating road casualty reduction through simultaneous action on all three components of the safe road system: roads, vehicles and behaviour. The Foundation plays a pivotal role in raising awareness and understanding of the importance of road infrastructure at all levels and has provided technical advice to members and road safety practitioners within the region, both as their role as UK International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP) lead and formerly as chair of the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group.

RoadPeace

RoadPeace is the national charity for road crash victims in the UK, which provides information and support services to people bereaved or seriously injured in road crashes and engages in evidence-based policy and campaigning work to fight for justice for victims and reduce road danger.



Founded in 1992 by Brigitte Chaudhry MBE (MBE awarded in 2003 for her pioneering work for road crash victims), a bereaved mother whose son was killed by a red-light offender, RoadPeace is a membership organisation whose work is informed by the needs and experiences of road crash victims. RoadPeace is governed by a board of trustees, has a small staff team and a network of active members and volunteers.

Its vision is for a world where road danger is not tolerated and where road crash victims receive justice and compassion.

Road Users

In a Safe System it is imperative that all road users acknowledge their role in making the region's road network safe. As such, the collaborative approach to identifying, developing, implementing and evaluating interventions extends directly to the road users too. All stakeholders, including road users must work collectively in establishing a relationship of shared responsibility. Positive user behaviours towards road safety are essential in addressing risk levels that result in death and serious injury.

Influences and Innovation

Future road safety activity in the region will be in part driven by identified national, regional and local influences and the need to integrate Safe System tools. Some of these are summarised below.

National Strategic Framework for Road Safety

The Department for Transport (DfT) is due to launch its updated Strategic Framework for Road Safety. This is likely to emphasise the key topics/themes affecting road safety in the UK and present guidance and advice on its view on how further reductions in the number of killed and seriously injured casualties can be achieved.

This will be reviewed against the approach adopted in the West Midlands Metropolitan region with consideration of how this will guide and inform the development of the Regional Road Safety Action Plan 2025-2030.

Legislation and Regulation

In May 2022, the Civil Enforcement of Road Traffic Contraventions (Approved Devices, Charging Guidelines and General Provisions) (England) Regulations 2022 came into effect. This regulation allows local authorities to apply for civil enforcement powers to enforce road (moving) traffic contraventions, powers previously held by the police only but will now become a concurrent power.

Road traffic contraventions include entering a yellow box junction when the exit is not clear, illegal turns, driving through a No Entry sign and driving where motor vehicles are prohibited. The benefits of enforcing these contraventions are:

- Reduced fatal and serious road incidents and casualties;
- A lessening of incidents that cause road traffic delays that impact on the free flow of traffic, public transport efficiency, and increase in location specific air quality;
- A decrease in the estimated societal cost of road incidents and casualties across the region.

The first Designation Orders enabling enforcement within the region are expected in July 2023, with more being issued in March 2024. Locations for enforcement will be based on analysis of robust compliance data and implemented in a targeted way. The analysis will consider where significant benefits can be made in road safety, congestion management and public transport efficiency.

The Government is currently running trials of electric scooters (e-scooters) in different locations within the UK; Birmingham is one of those locations. The results of these trials will be used to inform future legislation/regulation on the use of e-scooters. At present, the only e-scooters that are legal to use on UK roads are those taking part in government-approved rental trial schemes.

The Transport Bill aimed at providing regulation for the use of e-scooters is unlikely to come to fruition until 2024 or beyond but it is important that we use the results of the trials to consider what changes to current law might arise and plan for the impact that this might have on our road network.

Future Mobility

The Government is developing a new Self-Driving Safety Framework to ensure that the road network is fit for purpose when self-driving vehicles are deployed onto our roads³⁰.

It is believed that self-driving vehicles provide the opportunity to make journeys safer, greener and more reliable. To achieve that, the Government has set out several principles. These include³¹:

- New modes of transport and new mobility services must be safe and secure by design;
- Walking, cycling and active travel must remain the best options for short urban journeys;
- Mass transit must remain fundamental to an efficient transport system.

Working alongside Government, WMCA and the seven constituent authorities will need to respond to the safety challenges of self-driving vehicles. These will be considered in the soon to be published UK Strategic Road Safety Framework but are likely to include the implementation of a process to provide safety assurance, the use of trials to fully understand the implications, ensuring how all road users are to interact with such vehicles and to increase public understanding of the benefits to society. Government states that the risks and challenges of this new technology need to be addressed by “adopting a safe system approach”³².

Active Travel

TfWM has been awarded a £17 million Government grant to boost active travel and make it safer for people to cycle, walk and wheel – the third such grant. The West Midlands has bold ambitions to increase journeys taken by cycling, walking or wheeling in order to help ease congestion, clean up our air, enhance safety for cyclists and pedestrians and improve the region's health.

The new grant will fund the delivery of twelve schemes which will form part of the Starley Network, including protected cycleways, school streets and safer crossings - The Starley Network is a network of cycling and walking trails in the West Midlands covering 500 miles of connected routes.

TfWM will be working closely with DfT, Active Travel England and WMCA's Cycling and Walking Commissioner to ensure the schemes are LTN 1/20 compliant and are of the highest quality to ensure safety, inclusivity and accessibility to all.

20mph Areas

Speed is the biggest factor in determining the severity of a collision and the severity of injuries arising from an incident. The implementation of 20mph zones or areas are becoming more prominent across the UK as well as the West Midlands Combined Authority authorities.

The law permits two distinct types of 20mph speed limit³³:

- 20mph limits, which consist of just a speed limit change to 20mph which is indicated by the speed limit (and repeater) signs; and

³⁰ HM Government (2022). Connected & Automated Mobility 2025: Realising the benefits of self-driving vehicles in the UK.

³¹ *Ibid*

³² *Ibid*

³³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-local-speed-limits/setting-local-speed-limits>

- 20mph zones, which are designed to be “self-enforcing” due to the traffic calming measures that are introduced along with the change in the speed limit.

Local authorities are responsible for determining which of these are appropriate by using a robust evidence base to identify appropriate locations. However, there are implications for choosing either of these options.

20mph areas that do not include self-enforcing infrastructure (traffic calming measures) may not result in significant compliance levels. As such, these schemes are likely to require a speed enforcement that is administered by West Midlands Police.

The Government’s guidance note ‘Setting Speed Limits’³⁴ states that all speed limits should encourage self-guidance. This may require the implementation of traffic calming measures, such as changes to geometry, chicanes and measures that promote liveable neighbourhoods.

It is important that local authorities and West Midlands Police work closely together in determining, or considering, any changes to speed limits. The full range of speed management measures should always be considered before a new speed limit is introduced³⁵. As the implementation of 20mph become more utilised, it is vital that local authorities analyse all appropriate data and engage with the police.

To increase compliance with speed limits (e.g. the maximum speed a vehicle should travel), support should be sought from local communities, the police and local services. In addition, a programme of education and awareness is required that would need to raise awareness of the benefits of the chosen speed limit.

If a speed limit is set unrealistically low for the particular road function and condition, it may be ineffective, and drivers may not comply with the speed³⁶.

International Road Assessment Programme

The International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP) is a Safe System tool that uses a robust and reliable evidence base to identify locations where risk exposure is high. It uses a comprehensive dataset to estimate/predict where fatal and serious injuries can be reduced or eliminated through the implementation of proven countermeasures. The dataset includes identification and coding of roadside hazards, traffic flows and vehicle operating speeds, casualty data, and economic and countermeasure costs.

Outputs include:

- Star Ratings, Risk Maps and Safer Roads Investment Plans; and
- Training and support aimed at building regional and local capability.

³⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-local-speed-limits/setting-local-speed-limits#section-1-introduction>

³⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-local-speed-limits/setting-local-speed-limits#section-3-the-underlying-principles-of-local-speed-limits>

³⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-local-speed-limits/setting-local-speed-limits#section-2-background-and-objectives-of-the-circular>



Star ratings are attributed to every 100 metres of an assessed route. These ratings indicate the level of safety or risk for that section. A 1-star rating indicates the highest level of risk. A 5-Star rating signifies the lowest level of risk.

Star Ratings for pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and vehicle occupants provide an objective measure of the likelihood of a crash occurring and its severity.

The West Midlands has a mission to ensure that all assessed roads achieve a minimum 3-star rating.

Studies of differing sizes have already been undertaken across the region, although implementation of the recommended countermeasures to create safe road environments may take some time as they are integrated in broader transport schemes.

Safe road environments are often conducive to sustainable forms of transport; when people feel that an environment is safe, they are more likely to feel comfortable walking and cycling.

A New Way of Thinking

Road safety cannot afford to work in silo from broader transport policies and disciplines. Road safety contributes to the delivery of a safe, efficient and green transport network. It impacts on topics such as health and wellbeing, air quality and environmental issues, congestion, public transport efficiency, modal shift and societal economic growth. Conversely, policies addressing these topics can also have a direct or indirect influence and impact on the achievement of road safety.

The ever-growing diverse nature of the West Midlands Combined Authority area means that we can no longer look at communities as a whole when developing targeted initiatives. We need to dig deeper into the data to better understand issues relating to sub-communities and social groups and engage with them to identify the right solution(s).

The Safe System emphasises the need for an enhanced collective and collaborative approach, with all partners and stakeholders fully understanding their role, responsibility and accountability towards a common goal – Vision Zero.

Funding and Investment

The Safe System requires the use of new insights into the nature of fatal and serious collisions to build a strong business case for investment in a competitive environment to secure valuable funding and resources.

Proactive emphasis on reducing the types of crashes that result in serious injury or death contrasting to earlier reactive approaches focussed on preventing all crashes (including property damage) is changing road safety business cases and opening new possibilities for funding sources³⁷.

There is high level commitment in the region to strive towards Vision Zero, noting that this is an ambitious goal but one which we must not waver from. Supporting this is an intermediate target to deliver a 50% reduction in the number of killed and seriously injured road casualties by 2030. Following on from the launch of this Refreshed Strategy and adoption of Vision Zero and a challenging intermediate target, the Regional Road Safety Strategic Partnership will work to establish a sustainable and dedicated road safety budget to facilitate its delivery. This will be led by the Funding and Investment sub-group using the Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 as a lever to identify and secure sustainable funding that enables targeted delivery of the Road Safety Action Plan 2025-2030, as previously stated when describing the purpose of the refreshed strategy.

The evidence base demonstrating the need to improve safety on the road network will be regularly communicated to senior managers and politicians. This will not simply identify the problem but will quantify the benefits to be achieved from sustainable funding for the road safety effort. However, funding sources are not yet clear.

While the road safety budget will support delivery of vital evidence-based interventions that will be outlined in a subsequent Regional Road Safety Action Plan 2025-2030, a partnership Funding and Investment sub-group focussing on identifying and securing capital and revenue budgets will be established. The role of this sub-group will be to:

- Identify a range of potential funding sources to support delivery of the refreshed strategy and associated Action Plan 2025-2030;
- Consider the possibility of securing funding through the levelling up agenda to free regional leaders within our regional partnership organisations to be more effective;
- Support the opportunity to negotiate a Trailblazer Devolution Deal that enables us to celebrate and capitalise upon our successes in improving road safety by going further and faster, and addressing the safety concerns of communities;
- Collaborate with partners to explore economies of scale in the delivery of interventions like average speed enforcement and civil enforcement of moving traffic contraventions – e.g. maintenance costs of enforcement equipment;
- Collaborate with partners regarding expansion of schemes, such as average speed enforcement activities;

³⁷ OECD/ITF (2016), Zero Road Deaths and Serious Injuries: Leading a Paradigm Shift to a Safe System, OECD Publishing, Paris



- Leverage proportionate contributions from transport schemes – quantifying the proportion of an active travel initiative that delivers safe infrastructure and initiates a behaviour change campaign to affect modal shift as well as positive road safety behaviours;
- Recognise the potential benefit of Highway Development Control; to secure funding through Section 106 and contributions to bring about improved safety and active travel possibilities in the network surrounding new developments if an impact is identified;
- Engage with external partners and Government to offer the region as a test bed for innovation similar to the current European funded Urban Road Safety project (Project Phoebe), Road Safety Trust Funded Speed Telematics project and the Office of National Statistics funded Speed Limit Mapping project;
- Submit bids for grants through organisations such as The Road Safety Trust to bring in targeted investment; and
- Learn from the lessons of pioneering cities, such as Oslo and Helsinki where Vision Zero has been achieved.

Measuring Performance

Road deaths and serious injuries are not just unfortunate collisions. They are predictable, preventable, and unacceptable. Evidence shows that setting a road safety target is an effective way to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured in traffic crashes³⁸.

Pioneering cities, regions and countries are setting ambitious and challenging targets that are well researched and data led. This is vital in a Safe System.

Mission - Goal

The goal for the West Midlands Metropolitan Region is **Vision Zero** – No deaths or serious injuries on our road network.

While this is extremely ambitious, when supported by robust short-term interim targets, regular measurement of progress towards Vision Zero can be used to demonstrate performance to all stakeholders, including political leaders, to push for enhanced delivery support.

Interim Target – 2023-2030

The Updated Local Transport Plan aligns with the Towards Zero Foundation’s campaign to halve road deaths and serious injuries by 2030. In accordance with that commitment, the Regional Road Safety Partnership accepts the challenge and will work collaboratively at both a local and regional level to achieve that commitment.

As such, the target for the Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 is:

An overall 50% reduction in the number of killed and serious injured casualties by 2030 compared with baseline average figures for 2015-2017 (1,048).

Performance against this target will be measured using an overall 3-year rolling average. This method reflects a more accurate picture of the real change in road safety performance and ensures that small year on year numerical changes that are not statistically significant do not provide a false impression of success.

Intermediate Outcome Indicators

To provide a broader understanding of road safety improvement across the region, and to support strategic decision making, the following intermediate outcome measures will be monitored throughout the timeframe of the strategy:

- Variance in fatal and serious incidents by strategy road user group;
- Variance in fatal and serious casualties by strategy road user group;
- Variance in the casualty rate per billion vehicle miles travelled; and
- Variances in societal cost of KSIs in the region.

Governance

To deliver the Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 (RSSS) and subsequent Action Plan 2025-2030, all stakeholders will need to work in the spirit of effective collaboration. This requires each stakeholder to adopt a proactive, transparent and ‘one partnership’ approach where all partners

³⁸ Towards Zero Foundation: <https://www.towardszerofoundation.org/50by30>

fully understand their role, responsibilities and accountabilities, whether operating locally or regionally.

Reporting on outputs, outcomes and benefits from projects, programmes, and formal requests that require high-level decisions to be made requires a governance structure. The governance structure for regional road safety in the West Midlands Metropolitan region is outlined below:

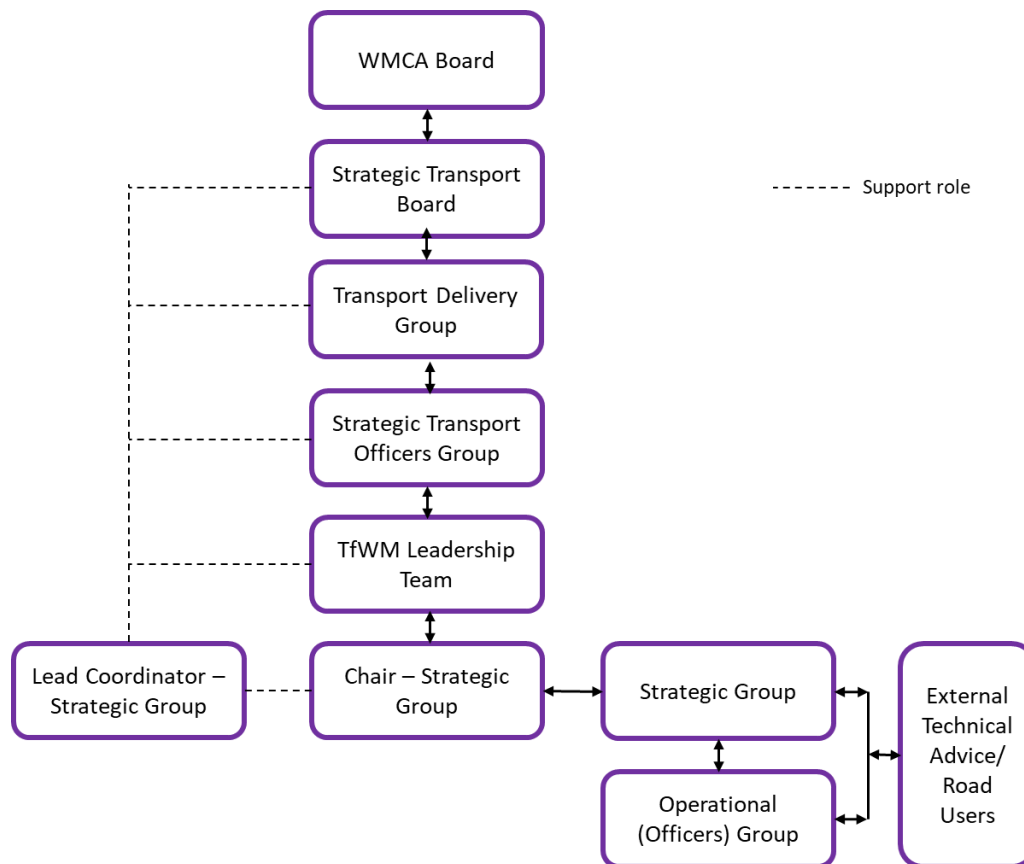


Figure 8: Regional Road Safety Governance Structure

Regular monitoring of activity and performance against KPIs and the intermediate target will take place at the Strategic Group level. This will be informed by the use of at least quantitative and qualitative data, evaluation of targeted initiatives, external technical support (where required) and engagement with road users.

An annual progress report focussing on performance against the target and KPIs and contributions to the achievement of broader transport policies will be produced at the Strategic Group level, with the support of the Operational Group. This will then advance through the governance structure to Strategic Transport Officers Group (STOG) for awareness raising, comment and approval. Where requested, this may also be presented to the Strategic Transport Board and WMCA Board.

Significant changes to the road safety landscape, such as new regulation, the development on a new action plan, or changes to the regional road safety delivery approach may need approval at the highest level. Relevant reports and briefing notes outlining the impact of issues/changes will be

initiated at the Strategic Group level, with the support of the Lead Coordinator. These will then be passed through the governance structure to the appropriate level.

What Next?

The Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 provides the policy-based approach to the improvement of road safety within the region. The document outlines:

- The need for a long-term mission that goes beyond the intermediate timeframe of local and regional policies;
- A better understanding of the Safe System as a concept and how it can be delivered to strengthen the institutional structure, build capacity and collectively implement a systematic evidence-based method;
- The importance of aligning with the regional Local Transport Plan to emphasise the statutory obligation to deliver this plan through the use of all their powers and functions, which in turn enables road safety activity to contribute towards the success of broader policy objectives;
- How partnership collaboration can assist in maximising the benefits through the adoption of a collective approach;
- Some of the major influences on future road safety (e.g. legislation) and the need for innovation;
- That the Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 needs to be used as a lever to identify and secure a sustainable funding framework (over and above the current programme of work);
- The long-term mission, intermediate target and interim performance indicators; and
- The Regional Road Safety Group will monitor performance towards the mission, intermediate target and KPIs, as well as establishing a sub-group mechanism to support and enable regional delivery.

However, a more detailed action plan is required to guide local and regional activity, that ensures that all partners are working collectively towards a common goal.

The current Regional Road Safety Action Plan 2021-2024 will need updating to provide an agreed list of Safe System evidence-based local and regional road safety activities up to 2030. The process for the development of this will begin immediately in collaboration with all partners and stakeholders, considering the need for alignment with local road safety strategies.

The public will be consulted at different periods as the new Road Safety Action Plan 2024-2030 is developed. This will initially be undertaken as part of the consultation exercise for the LTP.

In addition, the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group will review and update its Terms of Reference upon any change in the Chairperson. The Terms of Reference have recently been updated following agreement with the Police and Crime Commissioner to take over the role of chair for the group. In the update, there is an action to establish three sub-groups. These are:

- **Funding and Investment Sub-Group:** Bringing partner organisations together to identify and initiate opportunities for creating a sustainable and dedicated road safety delivery budget. The Refreshed Regional Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030 should be used as a tool to source additional income into the region to enhance and build upon what is already being delivered at local and regional levels by local authorities and partners;



- **Data Insights Sub-Group:** Measuring performance against the intermediate target and KPIs, while identifying and assessing a broader dataset that informs future strategic activities;
- **Enforcement Sub-Group:** Consisting of West Midlands Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, TfWM and all seven local authorities together to review evidence-based priorities and policies, such as the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025, and consider modifications to the approach based on quantifiable good practice.

The Operational (Officers) Group will annually review and update its Terms of Reference to reiterate its objective, the group's responsibilities, membership and ways of working to ensure alignment with the Strategic Group.