

7 Road Safety Strategy and Accidents & deprivation project progress report

7a Road Safety Strategy

Introduction

The 2000 Road Safety Plan was the result of continuous development of the 1995 Plan through annual reviews published in March each year, and included increased emphasis on partnership working.

This year, for the first time, there is joint ownership of this report by the County Council, the Police and the Health Authority.

The County Council's second Road Safety Plan was produced in 1995, following a review of the first Road Safety Plan and the Council's road safety activities by the Road Safety Select Panel in 1994. The Road Safety Plan 1995 established a new corporate road safety strategy built upon the achievements of the 1990 Road Safety Plan. The 1995 strategy augmented the 1990 Plan by making explicit the need to develop a road safety alliance embracing the whole county if a permanent improvement in road safety in Cambridgeshire is to be achieved.

Since 1998, the County Council has been a key partner in the development of the Cambridgeshire Health Improvement Programme (HIMP), which identified reducing road traffic accidents as a key priority. The work is detailed in the Health for Cambridgeshire chapter of the HIMP.

Health for Cambridgeshire is a formal working group of the HIMP and aims to reduce health inequalities and promote the health of people living in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The County Council contributes to the partnership approaches and actions, which are addressing the wider determinants of health. Health for Cambridgeshire has a particular focus on promoting road safety and reducing accidents. This year we have:

- updated the Joint Data Report – drawing together data on road accident casualties to inform decision making about road safety priorities
- produced a first draft of a joint Action Plan for Road Safety Education, Training, Publicity and Encouragement, focusing on driver behaviour, the active passenger, child safety and experiential learning, and
- worked together to promote safer cycling.

In addition, the County Council contributes towards Crime and Disorder partnerships, which identify and respond to local views on crime and safety. These partnerships have the potential to promote a shared road safety approach.

All HIMP partners are seeking a change of attitude and behaviour towards road safety by all in the community. Encouraging responsible road user behaviour by changing the attitudes of all road users, but especially motor vehicle users who are most frequently involved in accidents, is our long-term objective.

Excessive vehicle speed has been shown to be a factor in up to one-third of all accidents, and reducing speed is a high priority.

During the course of 2000 the Council reviewed its speed management strategy and its speed limit policy in light of the Government's document New Directions in Speed Management. The key element of the speed limit policy is that the Council will move toward the introduction of 30mph speed limits in all villages together with complementary speed reducing measures.

Table A7.1 The road safety strategy is based upon the following

Information	<p>Maintaining a comprehensive accident database and analytical system to inform priorities for action, and ensure the effective monitoring and evaluation of initiatives.</p> <p>From 1 April 1997, the County Council has maintained trunk road accident data on behalf of the Highways Agency.</p> <p>From 1 April 1998, Cambridgeshire has continued to maintain accident data for Peterborough and provide information to Peterborough City Council under a service contract. Figures quoted in Chapter 3 include casualties on trunk roads. Figures for Peterborough are not included in this report (but are in the separate Joint Accident Data Report as noted below).</p> <p>During 2000 the County Council has continued to work with the NHS and the Police to develop a systematic approach for sharing data about the causes and location of road accidents. We have updated our joint data report, which draws together information on accidents in both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to underpin decision making about future priorities for road safety investment.</p>
Engineering	Ensuring that safety is an integral part of the County Council's transport strategy. Broadening the Council's accident remedial works programme so that further reductions in casualties are achieved.
Education & Training	Directing education and training efforts into areas where they are most effective in reducing casualties.
Enforcement	Directing enforcement efforts into areas where they are most effective in reducing casualties.
Encouragement	Promoting changed attitudes, in partnership with others, towards road safety, including changing attitudes to transport use generally.

The Council expressed its wish to enter into a concordat with the Police in respect of the enforcement of speed limits.

In 1999, the government published a white paper called "Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation". This highlights reducing road traffic accidents as a national priority. The paper emphasises significant inequalities in accidental road deaths, most notably amongst young people and in districts with a significant rural population.

The paper also signals that partnerships – between statutory and non-statutory organisations and local communities – should be developed, if not already in place, to develop shared approaches to reducing accidents.

Locally, in Cambridgeshire, reducing road traffic accidents has been identified as a priority for all HImP partners. Through the Health for Cambridgeshire HImP working group, the Council is working with other agencies to develop co-ordinated approaches to prevention, focusing on education, training and publicity measures.

Road accidents also affect the wider economy. It is calculated that accidents involving personal injury in Cambridgeshire cost the community £166 million per year.

The County Council is in a national scheme to pilot local Public Service Agreements, and additional funds have been allocated to target our accident blackspots in order to achieve "stretch" casualty reduction targets.

The Local Transport Plan forms one element of the transport strategy for the county, and also identifies the key targets and objectives we hope to meet. In addition to this it sets out how we will spend capital funds allocated to us by government to improve transport infrastructure across the county over the five-year period from 2006-2011.

Cambridgeshire's settlement for this period was announced in December 2000 at £15.6 million for 2001/02, with indicative allocations for future years of £17.3 million for 2002/03, £18.2 million for 2003/04, £13.7 million for 2004/05 and £13.8 million for 2005/06.

To ensure effective implementation of the transport strategy it has been essential that key stakeholders are fully involved in the preparation of the LTP. The Cambridgeshire Transport Forum has been established specifically for this purpose. The first meeting of the forum (which included representatives from other local authorities, transport operators, business, community and interest groups) took place in November 1999, with subsequent meetings in April and November 2000. The Forum body welcomed the approach being taken in the LTP.

Road Safety initiatives are being developed in tandem with other initiatives the Council are promoting to support its Local Transport Plan, in particular the aim to promote use of public transport, cycling and walking. Partnership approaches to developing safer cycling campaigns in the context of promoting cycling are currently being piloted.

Although in the long term, promoting public transport, cycling and walking may have safety benefits, the environmental and other benefits of this approach must be balanced against the possible risks to more vulnerable road users, who for the foreseeable future must share roads with heavy levels of traffic.

As part of the Local Transport Plan process, separate strategies for pedestrians and cyclists have been produced. Both form key parts of the Local Transport Plan. The County Council produced a bus strategy in 2001 which sets out the approach we will take to improve bus services across the county.

The Council has a comprehensive road accident database, which informs the road safety activities in Cambridgeshire. Given limited resources our strategy should continue to be data-led with priority given to real not perceived problems. We will, however, continue to promote and evaluate innovative approaches towards road safety whilst learning from best practice elsewhere.

Table A7.2 The Road Safety Strategy

Overall Objectives	
Objective 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall objective of the Council's road safety strategy is to achieve targets of no more than 360 deaths and serious injuries and 3000 casualties in total by the year 2010. These targets were developed following the issuing of targets by central government in March 2000. Following an investigation of child deaths and serious injury this year, we are proposing a further target of no more than 24 child deaths or serious injuries by 2010. This represents a reduction of 50% from the 1994-98 average baseline and is in line with the Government's target. Under the Public Service Agreement mentioned in paragraph 1.15, the Council has set more challenging stretch targets to achieve no more than 481 deaths and serious injuries and 3230 casualties in total by 2003/04. This represents an additional saving of 19 deaths or serious injuries (two of whom will be children) and 46 slight injuries.
Objective 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change public attitudes to encourage responsible use of the County's roads by all road users especially vehicle drivers.
Partnership commitment	
Objective 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a shared strategic approach to road safety with partners from the NHS, Police, Peterborough City Council, the District Councils and the wider community through Health for Cambridgeshire, part of the Health Improvement Programme (HlMP). Pilot this initiative with the development of safer cycling campaigns (based on a shared understanding of the needs, shared understanding of the most effective interventions and shared approaches to action). Develop closer links with Education Service to enhance the provision and impact of road safety messages in schools.
Objective 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve and encourage businesses and major employers to promote road safety to their employees through the Cambridgeshire Road Safety Forum, an alliance of businesses and statutory agencies.
Objective 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Police and other interested bodies on the Crime and Disorder task group, to address anti-social behaviour, specifically where drivers and other road users are identified as being the target group.
Information	
Objective 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain an accident database and analytical system so that road safety programmes in the county are targeted on areas of most need, and where they are most likely to have an effect in reducing accidents and/or improving road safety for vulnerable road users.
Objective 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission research as appropriate which develops a more complete understanding of problems, allows the targeting of resources or evaluates the effectiveness of existing or proposed road safety programmes. If appropriate we will commission research through HlMP partners.
Engineering	
Objective 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure transport infrastructure, including public transport infrastructure and associated traffic management measures have road safety as well as environmental and economic benefits.
Objective 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that safety audits of all proposed road and other development proposals are undertaken and that safety features, and where appropriate features which encourage alternative travel modes (public transport, cycling and walking), are built into schemes.
Objective 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake appropriate accident remedial works to reduce road accidents on county roads: Target accident remedial works on those accident sites where the greatest savings can be achieved, taking into account environmental and other road user benefits; Instigate programmes of remedial action at all sites which share common characteristics likely to cause accidents; Develop and evaluate experimental and innovative accident remedial measures, in consultation with other transportation authorities and the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions where appropriate.
Education & Training	
Objective 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop effective road safety programmes in schools and colleges relevant to all ages (5-18 years) linked to the National Curriculum where appropriate.
Objective 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote road safety campaigns, and encourage others to do so, aimed at encouraging responsible road using behaviour, in partnership with HlMP partners.
Objective 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote road safety awareness amongst County Council staff and the staff of other HlMP partners.
Objective 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer cycle training programmes to all primary school children in the county, and encourage all those attending to wear cycle helmets.
Objective 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage all major organisations employing staff, who drive as part of their job, including the County Council, to pro-actively manage the 'Occupational Road Risk' of its staff. This will involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing the whole road safety 'culture' of the entire organisation Implementing a 'package' of road safety measures to reduce occupational road risk Offering appropriate driver training courses to relevant staff.
Encouragement	
Objective 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, in partnership with others, awareness raising campaigns which encourage responsible road use.
Objective 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop initiatives, in partnership with the media, business, local communities and others, which encourage a greater awareness of, and local action for, road safety.
Objective 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise the effectiveness of remedial works in achieving significant reductions in road accidents.
Enforcement	
Objective 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support co-ordinated high profile enforcement, with a particular focus on the enforceable aspects of accident causing driver behaviour.
Objective 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the use of automatic enforcement methods where they have been shown to have a positive effect on road user behaviour.

7b Accidents & deprivation project progress report (July 2005)

Background

In 2002, targets set by national Government required local authorities to reduce child casualties by 50 % by 2010, paying particular attention to casualties in areas of social disadvantage.

In response, a study was undertaken, during 2003, of the numbers of child road accidents in Cambridgeshire, during 1999–2002, in all electoral wards. The study looked at casualty rates and deprivation scores. The picture emerging from the study was somewhat mixed, with:

- high incidences of child road accidents in some of the more advantaged wards, as well as in those with high deprivation scores
- relatively low levels of child road accidents in some wards with fairly high deprivation scores
- child cycling casualties in the Cambridge city schools emerging as an issue
- car occupant casualties in the rural wards emerging as an issue

A more detailed analysis of the data, in the 9 wards with above average casualties, regardless of their deprivation score, was undertaken. This identified the age, gender, type of accident, injury severity etc of the child casualties and also helped to identify the key schools in the ward with pupils, who were having accidents, i.e. Primary or Secondary school pupils.

Approach agreed and implementation 2004–05

Using this information, a planning sheet for each electoral ward was devised, giving details of:

- all schools in the ward
- a detailed child casualty summary for the ward
- an overview of current Road Safety Education/Safer Routes to School work at the schools

This amounted to 33 schools – 8 Secondary schools & 25 Primaries. (NB Infant & Junior schools were grouped together to count as one school).

During the Autumn school term 2004, the two Road Safety Officers (Education) contacted each Headteacher, to raise their awareness of the project, acquaint them with the casualty figures for their ward and to agree an action plan for increasing the level of appropriate Road Safety activity, to tackle these accidents.

Primary Schools

To this end, Road Safety Officers have now met with all but four Primary schools on the list. In one case, numerous attempts to contact the Headteacher have failed to produce any response. One school has been contacted twice and has not yet responded. Another school has contacted Road Safety Officers on their own initiative to request Road Safety Education classroom input, but has not yet met regarding the project. One remaining Primary school has not been contacted yet, other than by letter.

Secondary Schools

There have been no meetings with any of the Secondary schools, mainly because the Primary school visits have not yet been completed. However, most of these schools had Theatre-in-Education (TIE) in the autumn term of 2004. Indeed, Soham Village College took TIE for the first time for a number of years.

Progress to Date

Road Safety Officers have found that overwhelmingly Headteachers are responding similarly:

- they do not have time to develop 'Action Plans'
- they do not have time in the curriculum to plan programmes of Road Safety Education.

The most common requests for support/input to tackle the project are:

- direct Road Safety Officer input in the classroom
- Road Safety 'Activity Days', when the whole school takes part in a road safety activity during one day, which is given over to road safety issues
- school assemblies on a Road Safety theme - two of these have already been delivered at Primary schools
- TIE productions
- Attendance at 'Safety Zones' – centralised 'experiential' Road Safety Education events for upper Primary school children.

Issues to Address in 2005–06

The original approach of devising school 'Action Plans' may need to be reviewed, in light of the demands this places on schools. Headteachers are certainly receptive to receiving Road Safety Education input from Road Safety Officers and TIE, but little time for tackling the 'wider' issues, e.g. deprivation, in a 'whole school' project.

A future approach might be to look at the 'School Travel Planning' process in conjunction with this project. This will enable schools to incorporate the accidents and deprivation issue into an existing school planning process, with which many are already engaged. This also provides a fully comprehensive way to address cross-cutting issues.

The educational resources we normally offer to schools are now somewhat limited and need reviewing, to more fully meet the needs of the schools on the project list. This will need to include a more 'creative' approach to supplying these.

In prioritising the large number of schools on the project list, it is anticipated there will possibly be implications for the Road Safety Officers workload/time supporting the other schools not on the list. This will require further monitoring to more precisely quantify.