

## Leicestershire's Road Safety Initiatives

### Providing a Safer Road Environment

#### Development Control

1. Most individual applications are for quite small sites and, in total during 2023, the Council made approximately 1968 minor responses to consultations on planning applications. In granting planning permission, the local planning authority considers comments made by Leicestershire County Council as the local highway authority. When making comments on planning applications, the account is taken of where the proposal is located and whether it is in an accessible location with appropriate provision for walking, cycling and public transport. The Council also aims to ensure that the highway infrastructure required to serve new development is designed to minimise the risk of road traffic accidents.
2. These principles also apply to large sites. Throughout Leicestershire, several strategic development sites are planned for delivery over the next 10-15 years to meet housing need across the County. These strategic sites can vary in size from a few hundred to several thousand dwellings. During 2022, plans for highway infrastructure at a number of these strategic development sites across the County were worked on, and in total, approximately 1,783 major responses to these consultations were made.

#### Road Safety Audit

3. Whilst road improvement schemes are designed in accordance with established guidance and standards, unintended safety problems can arise. To guard against this, improvement schemes are subject to road safety audit by accident investigation staff that use their experience of looking into why accidents have happened at other locations throughout the County to identify and correct potentially dangerous features within an improvement scheme. The design of the scheme is checked at least once before construction commences and the scheme is checked again once construction is complete. 28 audits were undertaken on improvement schemes in 2023 and 26 were completed in 2024.
4. Road safety audits are also undertaken on developer schemes by the private sector, as part of the development process.

#### Traffic Management Schemes

5. There is an ongoing programme of low-cost improvements aimed at managing existing traffic flows more effectively and thereby enhancing road safety. Such schemes generally deal with:
  - the provision of double yellow lines around junctions to prevent parking and improve visibility,

- the imposition of parking restrictions to prevent parking at locations where a potential hazard existed,
- the implementation of signing and lining schemes to improve driver perception of hazards and consequently their behaviour,
- the imposition or amendment of weight restrictions to reduce the dangers caused by HGV's using inappropriate roads.

## **Managing Speed**

### **Safety Cameras**

6. The Safety Camera Scheme is administered by the Road Safety Partnership. 25 fixed safety camera sites were in operation (ten speed, two bi-directional speed, six red light and seven combined red light and 'speed on green'). There were 161 mobile camera sites/routes (59 core sites, four core routes, seven motorcycle specific routes and 91 community concern sites). In addition, the Mobile Safety Camera Vans supported Community Speedwatch in Leicestershire and Rutland in 15 towns and villages. Locations and further information on the scheme itself can be found at [www.speedorsafety.com](http://www.speedorsafety.com)
7. Since the break-up of the National Camera Scheme in 2007, the national site selection guidance has been used when considering the potential for new permanent camera sites. This guidance has allowed mobile camera enforcement at locations where traffic speeds and accident numbers are insufficient to justify a permanent camera site, but there are genuine local road safety concerns. In 2016, there were some local revisions to criteria, however, they fundamentally adhere to national guidelines as recommended by the Department for Transport (DfT).
8. Throughout 2023, the Camera Scheme identified 62,907 drivers travelling at excessive speeds and/or running red traffic signals across the police force area (City, County and Rutland).

### **Driver Education Workshops (DEW)**

9. Driver education remains an important part of speed management and, in 2023/24, 23,451 drivers completed a Speed Awareness course in Leicestershire as an alternative to receiving a fine and points on their driving licence. The DEW operation offers a blended approach with both online and in person classroom provision made available to clients.
10. In addition to the Speed Awareness Workshops, many drivers accused of other motoring offences were offered the opportunity to attend workshops. A total of 4,688 drivers have completed the national What's Driving Us course in Leicestershire in 2023/24. This three-hour classroom-based course has also been adapted to be delivered virtually and can be offered to drivers committing traffic light offences and other offences such as using a mobile phone whilst driving.

11. In 2023/25, 123 drivers accused of careless driving (often involving an accident) chose to attend the Safe & Considerate Driving Course, which combines classroom activities and practical driving instruction, as an alternative to prosecution.
12. In 2023/24, 5,878 drivers completed the National Motorway Awareness Course. The theory course aims to increase knowledge of the meaning of smart motorway signs, as well as improve understanding of variable speed limits and lane closures and complying with the rules on smart motorways.
13. Workshops are offered to offenders in 30 and 40 mph speed limit areas. The aim of the courses is to help drivers understand the adverse consequences of their driving behaviour. In total around 102,000 hours of training per year is provided through the DEW in Leicestershire - a significant road safety input.

### **Advisory 20mph School Safety Zones**

14. Since 2002, the Council has been implementing advisory 20mph safety zones at schools that have produced School Travel Plans. The zones include prominent signing and flashing amber lights to indicate their extent and times of operation. They are aimed at reducing vehicle speeds to improve safety and encourage walking and cycling to school. the programme was completed in summer 2014 with over 250 zones being created and maintained.

### **Mandatory 20-mph Speed Limit / Zones**

15. The requirements for a 20mph speed limit are set out by the DfT - Setting Local Speed Limits. The guidance set out by the DfT suggests that mean speed for a village/road that is being considered for a 20mph limit/zone should be at or below 24mph. 24mph is the suggested speed due to the fact it falls in the lower end of the 20's and, therefore, the implementation of a 20mph limit would be self-enforcing, such as without the need for any physical traffic calming measures.
16. Where the mean speeds are higher than 24mph, physical calming measures such as speed humps and chicanes would be required in order to control and maintain speeds.

### **Traffic Management**

17. It is important for the safety of all road users that drivers are advised of the maximum speed that they should be traveling at along any length of road, this is the speed limit. In 2013, speed limits on a number of local roads were changed in order to ensure, as far as possible, that the speed of traffic was reduced to a level consistent with the environment of the road and the hazards on it.
18. Any speed limit changes are implemented in line with the DfT national guidance on setting local speed limits, which were published in January 2013.

## **Community Speed Watch**

19. Community Speed Watch (CSW) continues to be a popular initiative which encourages local communities to get involved in identifying speeding motorists and thereafter encouraging them to drive at more appropriate speeds. CSW is an educational scheme to help people reduce speeding traffic through their community. The scheme enables volunteers to work within their community to raise awareness of the dangers of speeding and to help control the problem locally. CSW incorporates poster campaigns and a pledge system linked to direct action using speed detection equipment all under the supervision of the council. The use of speed detection equipment does not lead to prosecution – drivers receive a letter from the Police instead to help support and underline the community's commitment to road safety. In 2023 15 Leicestershire communities were supported by road safety education officers to run volunteer based schemes. Further information can be found at:  
[www.communityspeedwatch.org.uk](http://www.communityspeedwatch.org.uk).

## **Education Training and Publicity**

20. Human error is a significant factor in many accidents. Various available training and publicity educates, alerts and informs road users about hazardous behaviours. The diverse array of initiatives which are currently employed within the County are described below.

## **Drink Drug-Driving**

21. Whilst the police continues to target drink drug drivers throughout the year, the two main month-long campaigns reminding drivers of the risk they take if they choose to both drink and drug drive are held throughout December and June.
22. Local media, including daily and weekly newspapers, radio and TV remain very supportive of the summer and winter drink drug drive campaigns and there is ongoing newspaper coverage along with regular interviews of police spokespersons to remind people not to drink and/or drug drive and/or consider alternative means of transport such as buses, taxis or identifying designated sober drivers in order to get home safely and legally.
23. During December 2023, across the Leicestershire Police force area 75 people were caught drink driving, 18 drug driving and nine failed to provide a sample (December 2022 saw 129 drink and 36 drug drive arrests). Of these, 30 arrests were made following a road traffic collision, and although 54 of these arrests were made in Leicester City the remainder were across our rural towns and villages. There is no formula to determine how much any one person can drink in an evening and be okay to drive the next day as it depends on several factors, including weight, gender, age, metabolism and how much food has been eaten. The penalties for drinking and driving are a minimum 12-month disqualification, which rises to three years for a second offence within 10 years, a fine of up to £5,000 and up to six months in prison.

24. Leicestershire Police now use roadside drug testing kits to help enforce legislation introduced in March 2015 which makes it illegal to drive with certain levels of illegal and prescription drugs in the bloodstream. The law can be enforced with the use of kits that detect traces of cannabis and cocaine in saliva. More traditional “field impairment tests”, including measuring the size of a driver’s pupils or asking them to walk in straight line, can also be used where impairment through other drug groups is suspected.

### **Pre-Driver Training**

25. In 2023 there were six events and over 140 participants, concentrating on driver responsibility, peer pressure, impairment, and the costs of motoring. Each participant had two driving sessions with approved driving instructors on the Mallory Park circuit where they were introduced to the basics of car control. The Official Theory Test was also explained and tried by the participants on iPads equipped with the test. The events were also supported by the Road Safety Partnership with presentations from the Fire Service, Hazard Express and the Safety Camera Team attended with a safety Camera van.

### **Older Car Drivers**

26. The ‘Safer Driving with Age’ (SAGE) scheme for drivers aged 60 and over operates throughout the County. Older drivers need to ensure that they have undertaken an eyesight check, answered a health questionnaire and undertaken a driving assessment in their own vehicle with an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI). During 2023, there was continued interest in the scheme and work continued to encourage ADIs to deliver this scheme and drivers to take part. Administration of the scheme has now moved over to the Driver Education Manager and will re-launch in the coming months. It is noted that there is ‘an aging population’ and continuing to drive safely helps to tackle social isolation and can contribute to general wellbeing.

### **Winter Driving**

27. Driving conditions throughout the winter months can be very different from those experienced by motorists throughout the remainder of the year, with clear road safety implications. Alerting motorists to these changing conditions is an integral part of the Council’s ongoing road safety advice.

### **Publicity Campaigns**

28. Much of the campaign work is now channelled and supported by the Road Safety Partnership. During 2023, campaigns reminded drivers of the change to the Highway Code (Hierarchy of Road Users in 2022) and focused on the risks to vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclist, horse riders) and a reminder about the illegality of private e-scooter use on highways and pavements.

### **The FATAL4 Clinics**

29. Over the past 13 years, Leicestershire Police, with the support of the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Road Safety Partnership, have held a series of FATAL4 clinics at locations across the police force area. These are designed to reinforce concerns about speeding, using mobile phones (while driving), not wearing seatbelts along with drink drug driving.
30. Since 2013, FATAL4 operations targeting Heavy Good Vehicle (HGV) drivers and other drivers using the local motorway and trunk road network have taken place. Police officers travelling in an unmarked HGV tractor unit covertly filmed those drivers seen to be committing FATAL4 offences who were then escorted by a following patrol car to a nearby safe place off the motorway to be dealt with accordingly.

### **Improving Road Safety for Vulnerable Road Users**

31. In looking to improve safety for vulnerable road users, motorcyclists, pedestrians and cyclists are primarily targeted. Details of the initiatives employed for these three groups are given below.

#### **Motorcyclists**

32. The Enhanced Rider Scheme is a national rider training scheme for post-test riders. The cost is typically £130 but, with a £70 subsidy from the Road Safety Partnership, the rider only pays £60. In the financial year 2023/24, 91 riders took advantage of this scheme which is slightly up on the 89 of the previous financial year. A variety of different methods are now being used to publicise the scheme, including social media, and promotion through events and with training providers.
33. Compulsory Basic Training (CBT+) offers four hours of additional on-road tuition to newly qualified riders allowing them to focus on areas where they need to improve their confidence. The Road Safety Partnership provides a £75 subsidy towards each course with the rider paying £30. In the financial year 2023/24, 147 courses were delivered, compared to 127 in the previous financial year.
34. Bike Safe workshops are run by Police Class 1 Advanced riders from the police motorcycle section, accredited for the delivery of training. The purpose of Bike Safe is to reduce casualties among bikers by giving them an insight into safer/smooth riding and a heightened awareness of possible hazards.
35. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) launched their #DoltForDave campaign in 2023 with the aim of raising awareness about motorcycle safety and highlight the life-saving potential of the free BikerDown courses, which the LFRS hosts. The campaign tells the inspiring story of Dave, a dedicated motorcycle rider who survived a cardiac arrest, thanks to individuals who had attended BikerDown courses. Dave's journey serves as a powerful testament highlighting the importance of acting quickly and using the invaluable skills acquired through these courses, the video is available to watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CuOZBpGVm2k>

36. The Road Safety Partnership, in conjunction with Leicestershire County Council, purchased a Triumph motorcycle to be used for Road Safety purposes including the promotion of training for motorcycle riders. To help promote this further, the bike has been transferred to staff at the LFRS who have the capacity to use this resource. The bike has been re-branded as "FireBike". The bike has featured at many events and biker meets.
37. The Council remains a supporter of The Shiny Side Up Partnership (SSUP) an East Midlands motorcycle safety partnership. The group is presently made up of Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council. Originally set up to try and drive down casualties relating to Sports Bike riders, this has now broadened to include lower capacity scooters and motorcycles. The website has been redesigned and carries a wealth of useful information: [www.shinysideup.co.uk](http://www.shinysideup.co.uk).
38. The County Council uses a variety of SSUP roadside posters at sites that have a poor motorcycle casualty history; these messages include Bike Crash Site Ahead and Think Bike. The roadside posters are bright yellow and have become a regular seasonal way of reminding riders and other road users to take extra care and look out for each other.

### Road Safety Education in schools

39. Road Safety Education – there has been a gap in road safety education delivery in schools and for a number of years. To address this, the Council's Traffic & Safety team have developed age appropriate road safety presentations and messages to build on children's knowledge year on year. Through cooperative learning and behaviour change techniques, the Council aims to give young people the skills they need to stay safe and to then have the skill set to become active road users. The programme is a blended approach to teaching with a mix of live visits and digital resources to enable maximum reach. All year group lessons are outcome led, link to the national curriculum, are inclusive, have clear learning objectives and will be evaluated (internal quality assurance and where appropriate externally validated) to ensure that the programme is fit for purpose/ measure the effectiveness. The development of the Road Safety Education programme will support the Choose How You Move team in the delivery of its active travel programme by building the foundation 'feeling safe' to then encourage more to travel actively.
40. The Council is currently working with a test group of primary schools to engage feedback from teaching staff, children and parents before wider roll out in January 2025. Through the delivery of exciting 'Top Secret' challenges and missions, children in Foundation Year to Year 6 will cover the following objectives:
  - **Foundation** – To be able to identify road users, safe and non-safe places to play. To be able to explain the five key steps to cross a road safely (Stop / Look / Listen / Think / Hold Hands).

- **Year 1** – Building on prior learning (Foundation) - Safe places to cross and introduction to key vocabulary (Zebra Crossing / Toucan Crossing / Puffin Crossing / School Crossing Patrol / Under and Over pass).
  - **Year 2** – Reinforce prior learning - Scooter safety (how to use the road safety code when travelling actively / scooter and self, safety check / balance and control / pavement etiquette).
  - **Year 3** – Reinforce prior learning – introduce how to cross a road safely using the green cross code (safer places to cross / tricky crossings – how to safely cross between parked cars / tricky junctions if there is no other option). Be Bright Be Seen and Car Seat rules.
  - **Year 4** – Reinforce prior learning (Foundation to Year 3) – introduce speed and what might affect a drivers stopping distance (distraction / speed / road conditions / tyre grip / weight of vehicle / tiredness) – making good judgements and cross like a boss.
  - **Year 5** – Building on prior learning and introduce dangerous distractions and hazards (focus on responsibility / safe choices / distractions (mobile phones, listening to music) / coping strategies to minimise risk) – key steps to independent travel.
  - **Year 6** – By Year 6, most pupils will be familiar with the road safety code and know basic road safety skills but can fail to deploy this knowledge because they act on impulse – they go for a short-term gain rather than a long-term safety gain, so Year 6 will focus on impulse control (distractions / peer pressure / time pressure / poor decision making) to prepare them for transition to secondary school (independent active travel / plan journeys and strategies to avoid acting impulsively).
41. Years 7-13 – once the primary roll out has been launched, work will begin on developing the programme for the secondary school cohort.
  42. The Junior Road Safety Officer (JRSO) scheme has been operating in Leicestershire since 1987 with a good number of Leicestershire primary schools involved. The JRSO is now primarily a website-based scheme. There were three main themes for academic year 2023/24: Autumn Term (September – December): Pedestrian Safety; Spring Term (January – March): Cycle / Scooter Safety; and Summer Term (April – July): Active Travel to School. Since the move of Road Safety Education to Traffic & Safety the JRSO scheme has been reviewed and teacher resources added to our new Road Safety Education Page – Schools Resources.
  43. Road Safety Tutors continued to provide cyclist training (Bikeability) to primary school children, training to National Standards. Level 1/2 training usually takes place in the last year of primary school and can encourage children to cycle when they move to high school. Funding has been secured to March 2025 to support the delivery and upscale of Bikeability training to reach up to 80% of children in Year 6, such as the target of 6,531 children. Bikeability Level 3 will also be undertaken by more than 175 children.
  44. The School Crossing Patrol service continues to help children and parents across busy roads at school journey times. A number of patrollers have



involved themselves in wider aspects of road safety work, such as road safety talks in schools and pre-schools.

### **Pedestrians and Cyclists**

45. Cyclist training has been offered to those over-16s who either cannot cycle, have not cycled for a while or who wish to develop their skills and confidence through on and/or off-road training. Leicestershire County Council is working in partnership with providers who have received funding through Cycling UK, which enables residents of Leicestershire to access adult cycle training for free. If and when this funding agreement ends, Leicestershire County Council will resume providing the service. During 2023, 48 individuals have taken part in e-bike training. The Fire Service has developed a cycle safety virtual reality (VR) film as part of their VR education programme (existing young driver film). Such films are very engaging and use 360-degree camera footage and are played using a mobile phone connected to a VR headset.
46. Walking to school is a genuine safety concern for many parents, as children living less than three miles from the catchment area school for their home address (two miles for primary school age children) are only provided with free transport by the Council if their walking route is assessed as 'not available'. The availability of such a route is assessed against local criteria (based on national statutory guidance) which look at highway-related safety issues. Walking route assessments look at the issues which might affect a child walking to school, accompanied (as necessary) by a responsible adult. When walking along the road, the main issue is the presence or otherwise of a footway but, where there is no footway, the assessment asks:
  - Is there a verge to step onto to avoid oncoming traffic?
  - What is the traffic flow?
  - Are there suitable sightlines?
47. The crossing of the road is also assessed, and here the main issues are the visibility of approaching traffic and how long pedestrians must wait for a suitable gap in that traffic.
48. School Keep Clear – Camera Project aims to change the behaviour of parents when taking their children to school by ensuring the entrances to schools are clear of traffic, reducing the risk to children.
49. The School Streets initiative addresses parking, congestion, air pollution and safety around schools during school drop off and pick up times. A School Streets four-week pilot ran in August/September 2022 at three County schools. In June 2023 the pilot was further extended with the two of the pilot schools. Evaluation showed across the two schools, there was an eight per cent increase in the number of parents and their children cycling, walking or wheeling to school, others said they had been actively travelling for a while already, but the scheme had made their journey very much safer and enjoyable. When surveyed, 93% of parents across both schools thought the scheme was a positive one. Also, during the second phase of the trial, the

objection rate fell to zero per cent, primarily because of adjustments made during this phase, such as slightly amending the times when the closure was in place (a pedestrian and cycle zone put into action between 8.15am and 8.50am and 2.30pm to 3.30pm). A recommendation has been put forward to make these schemes permanent with a plan to extend the scheme to another two schools. This initiative prioritises pedestrians such as parents and children by providing a safe space for people to walk and cycle in the vicinity of the school through a hard or soft closure of the road or street.

50. Sustainable Travel programme for schools - travelling actively to schools is a great way for pupils to start the day, with research finding a link to improved behaviour and concentration as well as contributing to the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity a day for those aged 5-18. The Sustainable Travel Team works with schools to reduce school gate congestion and create a safer environment for pupils, staff, families and the wider community. The Schools Officer offers practical advice and support to increase levels of cycling, walking and scooting to school. There are a number of ways schools can get involved and more information can be found here:  
<https://www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk/schools-programme-2/>