Safer Travel Strategy

Warwickshire
County Council

Overview

Warwickshire County Council's vision is to make Warwickshire a better place. The creation of vibrant places with safe, healthy and inclusive communities is central to this vision.

We want all of Warwickshire's residents, visitors and commuters to live, work and move around the county in safety. Everyone should be presented with travel choices which allow them to reach their destinations free from harm.

Our vision aligns with the wishes of Warwickshire's residents. During the various stages of drafting the Local Transport Plan (LTP), residents we consulted highlighted that the general wellbeing of transport users should be a key theme: reliable, safe, punctual transport opportunities should be our aim. Our Safer Travel Strategy will therefore seek to deliver this requirement.

As Highways Authority, WCC's main area of responsibility focuses on road safety. Road collisions result in injury, congestion, delay and lost productivity. In addition to keeping our communities safer and healthier, improvements in road safety will have large benefits for Warwickshire's economic wellbeing.

However, travel safety is more than simply seeking to reduce vehicle collisions. Safe and convenient access to bus and rail facilities will encourage public transport use. Pedestrians and cyclists need secure and reliable routes to promote active travel over car usage and enjoy the positive mental and physical health benefits that cycling and walking can bring.

"Love the opening paragraph – everybody should reach destination safe from harm".

Citizens' Panel member

Road Safety Overview

This strategy will adopt a long-term vision for a transport system which is ultimately free from death and serious injury.

In the last 15 years the number of people killed or seriously injured on Warwickshire's roads has almost halved. We want to build on this success. We have set ourselves a challenging target of a further 50% reduction in KSI figures by 2030, with a view to working towards zero serious casualties or deaths on Warwickshire's roads by 2050.
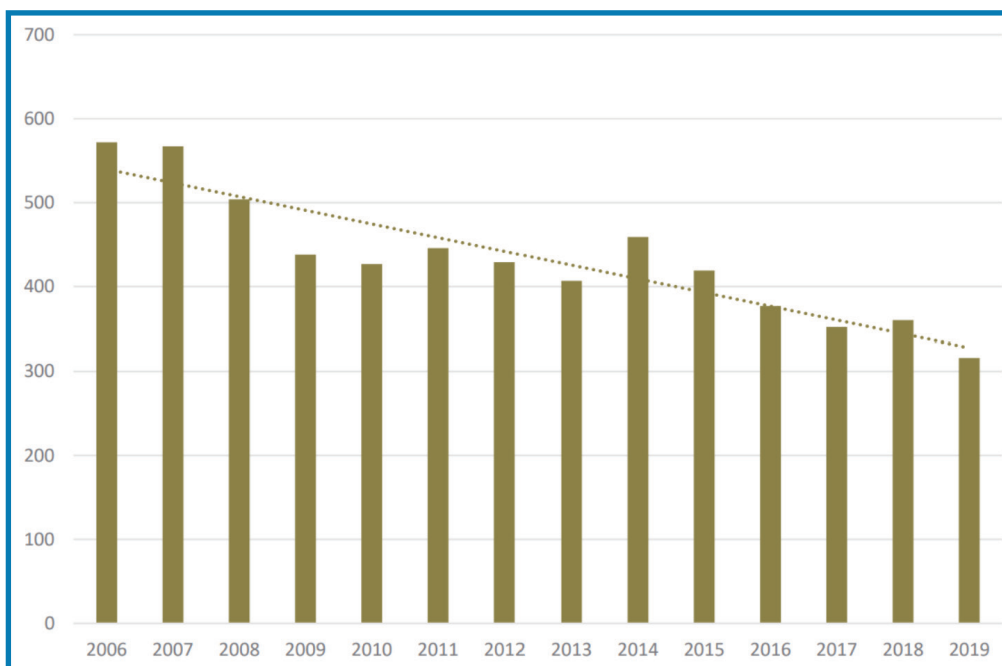

Figure 9. Number of people killed or seriously injured on Warwickshire's roads 2006 to 2019

"Great to see the KSI numbers, and what a fabulous target to aim for".

Citizens' Panel member

Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership

Warwickshire's approach to road safety is to work closely with partner organisations – the police, other emergency services, local communities, schools and external road safety groups. We believe that working together is the most effective way of reducing transport casualties.

This partnership method allows us to deliver a road safety strategy in an effective and joined-up way. We know that engineering interventions such as our casualty reduction schemes, targeted enforcement and education solutions such as school and young driver courses provided by ourselves and our partners have all contributed to the success of our road safety work to date. These three processes will continue to be at the heart of everything we do in tackling road safety issues and helping to improve the wellbeing of Warwickshire's communities.

To build on the success of our collaborative work to date, WCC has entered into a formal arrangement with numerous other organisations to create the Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership (WRSP). This group will help to shape all aspects of road safety engineering, enforcement and education interventions using a "safe systems" approach. Examples of these interventions are provided in the policies outlined later in the strategy.

"I love partnership working, it's the best way to get everyone working towards the same goal".

Citizens' Panel member

Wider Transport Safety

Whilst road safety initiatives will continue to be where WCC can have the largest direct influence, we recognise that people want to travel and feel safe using other forms of transport.

If we are to tackle climate change, there needs to be a shift towards more sustainable forms of transport. To help to achieve this, safety, cost and convenience will be important factors in allowing people to consider alternative forms of travel.

The County Council is not involved in the direct operation of public transport. Private companies run the bus and rail services which criss-cross the county and connect to areas outside Warwickshire. But we can have direct influence by working with partners to deliver safety benefits beyond immediate road safety measures.

We know that people would like to use forms of transport other than the car and that concerns about personal safety discourage people from doing so. We can control some factors related to feeling safe, such as well-lit, well-maintained footways, cycleways and public areas where people access transport.

Safe Systems

In moving towards zero serious road casualties, WCC intends to adopt the Safe Systems approach to road safety across the county.

Safe Systems is the term used internationally for an approach which

- recognises that, despite preventive efforts, road users are fallible and collisions continue to happen on the roads

- places responsibility upon providers of the transport system for the safety of the system and responsibility upon users of the system for complying with its rules and constraints

- aligns safety management goals with wider sustainability goals including social, economic, environmental and health goals

- seeks out and shapes actions to reduce death and serious injury with the Vision Zero approach in mind. These actions will address problems in the road system across all types of transport, in vehicles, in user behaviour and in the care of people injured in collisions.

All of Warwickshire's road safety activities will therefore tie in with the Safe Systems method, which has a five spoked approach:

- safe roads
- safe road users
- safe vehicles
- safe speeds
- post-collision response

Our engineering, enforcement and educational interventions will be designed to contribute to one or more of these five themes.

- Engineering – casualty reduction schemes such as road realignment, reduced speed limits or improved road markings

- Enforcement – working with the police in the Speed Working Group

- Education – school visits and young driver courses

More information about Safe Systems and all of our work areas is available in the WRSP Strategy, which can be found here: **Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership Strategy.**

Safer Travel Policies

Policy Position ST1

Working with Partners to deliver road safety improvements
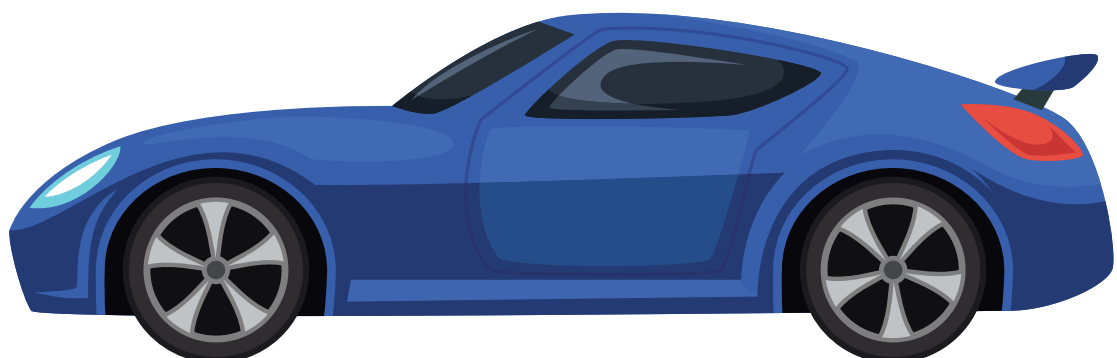
Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Road Safety teams will own and deliver the activities identified as their responsibility within the Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership strategy. We will engage fully with the process to create, manage and fulfil a successful WRSP.

We recognise that there are three broad areas which combine to create safer roads for all road users. These are education, engineering and enforcement. To bring about road safety improvements via all three of these approaches will require both interventions by Warwickshire County Council and close working relationships with other organisations, such as the police and other emergency services.

Policy Position ST2

Evidence-led road safety engineering interventions

WCC will use all available data and evidence to inform its engineering interventions and responses. The WRSP strategy describes the numerous ways that each partner organisation will contribute to the overall road safety approach. These include, but are not limited to: casualty reduction schemes, road safety audits, traffic calming initiatives and speed management measures. A full list of WCC road safety engineering activities is available in the WRSP strategy document.

Policy Position ST3

Wide-ranging community engagement to improve road safety

Warwickshire will continue to carry out a wide range of community engagement activities, helping to promote road safety through various approaches under the general banner of 'education', from primary schoolchildren, through secondary education, driver offender courses, mature drivers and vehicle specific campaigns, including motorbike and cycling initiatives. Again, a full description of WCC road safety education schemes is available in the WRSP strategy document.

"Community engagement activities are really good to know about, as I wasn't aware so much is going on. Public showcasing seems really important here so that all people get to realise your hard background work".

Citizens' Panel member

Policy Position ST4

Road engineering design to align with appropriate quality standards

Our Engineering Design Services (EDS) teams will continue to ensure that all new road construction in Warwickshire and improvements to existing road layouts will be carried out in accordance with the latest, most appropriate British construction and road design standards.

EDS will engage with the road safety auditing process as part of the initial design and in the pre- and post-construction stages of projects. This will ensure that safety remains at the forefront of all design decisions.

Policy Position ST5

Promoting safety in all travel choices

Travel safety is not just about road safety. We want people to feel personally secure whenever and however they choose to move around the county. We will work with partners including the police, private sector bus and rail companies, district and borough councils and developers to seek improvements to other forms of transport so that modern, convenient, cost effective and secure alternatives to car usage are available.

We will seek safety improvements to facilities such as bus stops, bus and rail stations, pedestrian and cycle routes so that they are safer and, just as importantly, feel safer to potential users.